



## News

# Professor Bernhard Kucken from Kunstakademie Düsseldorf gives lecture about two representative modes of artistic creation from germany

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Classroom of Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. Students are working together with professional instruction of professors and technical staff.

(Photo provide by Kay Cui, Professor Kucken's coworker.)

Wednesday evening, March 27, 2019 an NNU (Nanjing Normal University) lecture hall on the fifth floor of the Yuanmei building was filled with students, teachers and visitors interested in fine art. They were here for Professor Bernhard Kucken from Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, Germany. "Kunstakademie" is German for Art Academy; and Düsseldorf is a lovely German city that has cultivated plenty of marvelous artists with unique styles, including Professor Bernhard Kucken, a talented and dedicated sculptor and painter who was born in the city and now is developing his artistic creations there.

The lecture focused on comparing and contrasting two representative modes of artistic creation from two pioneering German institutions that represent two different modes of artistic creation: the studio-oriented mode of Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and the major-oriented mode of Bauhaus-Universität Weimar.

"The studio-oriented mode of Kunstakademie Düsseldorf focuses on a studio that consists of about one hundred students and a teacher who gives them training in a specific field", said Professor Kucken. He himself was appointed the person in charge of all studios of the School of Art in 2010.



Professor Bernhard Kucken  
(Photo from "99 KÜNSTLER")

During the years 1998-2003, Professor Kucken was a visiting professor at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar giving

artistic lectures there. Bauhaus-Universität Weimar is a comparatively modern university developing majors like Architecture and Urbanism, Civil Engineering, Art and Design, and Media in the unique, cultural city of Weimar.

According to what he had experienced at Bauhaus, Professor Kucken explained, "The major-oriented mode of Bauhaus focuses on a project team that is made up of a smaller group of students from different majors, helping each other to finish an art creation together." There are other differences between the two academies such as their origins, locations and facilities, etc.

The question-and-answer session featured some lively exchanges. When he was asked about the main differences between Bauhaus-Universität Weimar and Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, he said, "They didn't simply mean the traditional art academy and modernized university, though it seemed that the major-oriented mode of Bauhaus is, in a sense, more advanced than the studio-oriented mode of Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. But still, it depends on leaders or teachers."

"What was more important," he continued, "was the intention of your artistic creation. If you can't decide which road to take and you still want to try something new and fresh, you can go to Bauhaus to explore your interests, because the studio-oriented mode provides such a good platform that combines various majors together. For example, if you focus on sculpture creating but you want to use some new high-tech materials instead of the plain clay, you can ask the students majoring in chemistry to join your project. But if you have determined your direction and want to go straight through it, you may choose Kunstakademie Düsseldorf because the teachers will give you the professional training just in one particular field."

As to inspirations for creation, Professor Kucken has his own opinion. "When I encountered lack of inspiration, I would check my notes on some small ideas I gathered every day." He always has stickers with his tiny ideas written on them on his desk. "When I choose one idea, I will think a little bit more deeply and carry on with it until I finished it and turned it into a total artistic creation."

He said he has never quit. "I'm always interested in a lot of things". Interest, in his eye, becomes the first priority when talking about good qualities needed to be an artist.

"When we choose some students, who intend to enter our academy, the first thing we must make sure is that they are interested in making something. If one just keeps repeating others' ideas without his own thoughts, it is pointless for him to be an art creator. The goal of artistic creation should be expressing oneself, then bringing the idea into materialization," he said.

The comparisons and contrasts, made by Professor Kucken, between a studio-oriented mode and a major-oriented mode, expanded every listeners' horizon and brought new understanding of artistic creation to for NNU students, especially those from The School of Fine Art.

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