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41

Chaloner Prize

After six months of sober thought, judges and trustees of the Chaloner Prize Foundation last week finally made up their minds and awarded a three-year scholarship to lucky Robert E. Weaver, 24, of Peru, Ind. for a canvas entitled *Circus Performers*. Painted somewhat in the manner of Manhattan Artist Gifford Beal (one of the guest judges), it showed four shapely young women balanced on three bouncing white horses under the bright cone of a circus spotlight.

Ignored by far too many young U. S. art students, the Chaloner Prize is actually one of the most valuable awards a young U. S. art student can win, more sought after by the knowing than the better publicized Prix de Rome. Founded in 1890, it provides a fund of approximately \$2,000 a year for three years, a furnished studio rent-free, and a separate allowance for travel. One of the few restrictions is that at least one of the three years must be spent in foreign travel, which shall include a visit to Paris. Applicants must be under 30, residents but not necessarily citizens of the U. S. They are supposed to be unmarried, but this restriction can be got around.

Applicants for the Chaloner Prize must submit before March 1 every two years three 8-by-10-in. photographs of a full-length drawing from the nude, to test draughtsmanship; a painting of a nude torso, to test technique; a composition containing several figures, not necessarily complete. When these have been winnowed, semi-finalists are asked to submit actual works and to come to Manhattan to meet the trustees and judges, for social qualifications, though not stressed, are important for the Chaloner Prize. Only 79 U. S. art students bothered to show up last spring.

ples of so-called "functional" design. After the fine economies of Colonial building disappeared in the U. S. during the 19th Century, isolated architects of talent were lost in a great drive of construction at any cost. New standards of design and a new rationale of architecture have not since been established in U. S. minds and efforts to establish them have been scattered, tentative and personal.

Frank Lloyd Wright, the most uncompromising and one of the most fertile U. S. architects of the 20th Century, has worked with no school or organization except his own small colony of disciples at Taliesin, Wis. What another gifted architect, Manhattan's William Lescaze, calls "the first principle of architecture—building what

years of training, a chosen few were admitted to the Structural School to work out, in practice, on commissions given the Bauhaus, a rational architecture.

Relinquished by Gropius in 1928, the Bauhaus was directed successively by Functionalist Hannes Meyer and by Miës van der Rohe, a German architect famed for the elegance he has added to functionalism. In 1932 the school in Dessau had to be closed because an unfriendly Nazi Government would no longer support it. By that time, however, the designs of Bauhaus workmen had permeated German industry, their liberated minds had produced two sound inventions now familiar in Europe and the U. S.: indirect lighting, tubular furniture.

New. The three-story, 25-room mansion in which the Bauhaus method was incongruously reborn this week was built 60 years ago by the first Marshall Field, given outright last year to the Chicago Association of Arts & Industries by Marshall Field III. The association, headed by grey-haired President Edward H. Powell of Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., and endowed a few years ago by midwest business blue-bloods, gave its support to the School of Industrial Design at the Chicago Art Institute until last year it decided to use its \$262,000 fund to establish a more ambitious school of its own.

To head it, the association's astute Executive Director Norma K. Stahle first tried to engage Architect Gropius. Having just accepted Harvard's invitation (TIME, Feb. 8), Gropius declined, suggested that Moholy-Nagy, then working on photography and cinema in London, was "the best man they could get." In response to a flood of cables and letters from Miss Stahle and from Gropius, chunky Moholy-Nagy finally accepted a five-year contract. Last summer, while workmen were knocking down walls in the old Marshall Field mansion and making parlors into draughting rooms, the New Bauhaus director arrived in Chicago, genially explained that in England he had been called "Holy Mahogany" but the right way to pronounce his name was Mòholy-Nodj, sat down to compose a curriculum for the school on which Professor Gropius had hopefully bestowed his old school's name.

Last month Moholy-Nagy's prospectus was published and he drew a highly interested—and remarkably large—audience of 750 architects, designers, socialites and students at a preliminary lecture in which he affirmed the complete opposition of his school to Beaux-Arts principles. The course at the New Bauhaus will start with a year of preparatory training similar to that at the old Bauhaus but taking in new plastics and new advances in scientific knowledge. After that there will be three years of technical and practical work in any one of six divisions: 1) wood, metal, plastics; 2) textiles; 3) color in decoration; 4) light, photography, typography, cinema; 5) glass, clay, stone; 6) display, staging. A diploma from one of these courses will entitle a student to proceed with two years of architecture. Chicagoans, impressed by Director Moholy-Nagy's long-renowned versatility, energy and pleasant manners, thought the success of his school was a foregone conclusion. Tuition: \$335 per year. Eligibility: high-school education, ability and character.



Bernard Hoffman

MOHOLY-NAGY (LEFT) & PUPILS

"Holy Mahogany" in London, impressive in Chicago.

New in Old

In Chicago early this week 30 bright young men filed into a big, weathered mansard mansion on Prairie Avenue to begin a year's study of principles which have made that house and houses like it as ugly and obsolete as a dinosaur. The school in which they were enrolled and whose chances appeared excellent of profoundly affecting the habits of U. S. builders had a name exciting to all architects and designers: the New Bauhaus (Building House). Its right to that title was as clear as the glass with which its students will be taught to build, because its director was fresh-faced, ingenious Hungarian Designer Ladislaus Moholy-Nagy, a teacher and leading spirit of the famed Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, and its chief adviser was Professor Walter Gropius of Harvard, founder of the old Bauhaus and its director until 1928.

If any term last week needed a thorough rugbeating and airing in the minds of U. S. citizens it was "modernism" in architecture and design. A fact long apparent to thoughtful people was that there is often something fake, ill-fitting and hothouse about the designs for public buildings and monuments which graduates of great architectural schools turn out every year. Also apparent was the fact that there is something faddish and affected or else starved and forbidding about many exam-

ple we need out of what we have that best serves the purpose, using the best tools available," is not studied in schools of architecture so much as is the record of the needs, materials and tools of architecture in the past. This is the eclectic tradition fostered for years by the great Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Many architects consider this tradition inadequate because, while not necessarily inimical to modern developments it is "paper architecture" which fails to get at the root of modern building needs.

Old. The first impressive rival to the Beaux-Arts school appeared in Germany after the War when Walter Gropius looked around him at a mechanized, technically refined civilization and persuaded the city fathers of Weimar that artistry would have to be combined with it, not sugared over it. By the time his *Staatliche Bauhaus Weimar* moved to Dessau in 1925, its faculty and students were able to collaborate on a set of workshops and dormitories which have become classics of intelligent architecture. The city of Dessau helped support the school. Its students were given a thorough ground-breaking course in the possibilities of all materials employed in building and manufacture, were taught simultaneously by a technician who made them use their hands and a designer who made them use their brains. After three