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Introduction

This number deals with the creation of holiday camps for children; the remarkable innovation of W. Behles: the Rapperswil Zoo; toys and games-developed by A. Berling, K. Naef and W. Kramer; the magic effects of night illumination and the possibilities offered thereby to town-planners, as shown by the experiments undertaken in Milan.

Christmas Illumination in the Streets of Milan

Each street was turned over to an artist or to a group of artists. What was aimed at was an effect that was as three-dimensional as possible, which invested the street with spatial depth regardless of the standpoint of any given observer.

Children's Zoo at Rapperswil

Architect: Wolfgang Behles, Zurich

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The Children's Zoo at Rapperswil belongs to the Knie Circus and by its very nature it is quite different from an ordinary municipal zoological garden. Whereas the latter employs mainly the resources of landscape architecture, here an attempt was made to leave the lakeside terrain as natural as possible, at the same time emphasizing all the more the design of the animal houses. The restaurant, the Arab casbah, the pony stable, the exotic animals' house and that of the hooved animals, each has its own playful and imaginative style of architecture, the purpose of which is not to conceal the barriers in order to give the illusion of a natural garden but rather to accentuate the specific differences among the animals.

Pro Juventute Holiday Camp in the Ticino

Architect: Dr. Justus Dahinden SIA, Zurich

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This holiday camp for families with many children is spread out through the wide scrub forest of chestnut trees in the Tresa Valley. A uniform type of house was developed, which permits on the inside three variant arrangements—for large or small families. The plan is economical, the building volume fully utilized and the technical installations centrally sited. Double-deck bunks were avoided. The living-room in each case is oriented toward the south, the glazed east and west fronts contain the bedrooms. On the north side are the utility rooms and the windows for cross-ventilation of the living-room.

Children's Holiday Camp at Fiesch (Valais)

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We publish here the three prize-winning projects of a competition for a holiday camp to accommodate a thousand young guests, who are organized into one or more groups (school classes, holiday groups, special courses). The main assignment was to harmonize the requirements of operational concentration with the need to integrate the complex in its natural surroundings.

Playing and Constructing

by Asta Berling

20

The author, a pupil of Poelzig, went from architecture over to the designing of toys. Her main principles are meaningful shape and flexibility of assembly. She develops various construction elements out of the simple block, which has always been the favourite toy. She has created wooden blocks with transverse grooves, blocks which can be piled up, attached side by side and inserted into one another and which, on a basis of repetition of similar shapes, stimulate the imagination to marshal together the most diverse things like houses, villages, cities. There are also painted wooden dolls of very simple design like stoppers in various sizes, which can be put in boats, swings or merry-go-rounds.

Combination Games by Kurt Naef, Basle

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The principle is again repetition by alignment, this time the rationale being geometric.

Toy Swiss Villages by Walter Kramer, Frauenfeld

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Villages from Thurgau, Ticino and Valais, painted as accurate representations.

Light in the Metropolis

by Gyorgy Kepes

25

The metropolitan landscape appears under two entirely different guises by day and at night. Also the study of twilight effects is rich with possibilities. Traditional urban architecture is solely concerned with the appearance of the city by day. No one has yet ventured to exploit consciously the effects to be obtained in twilight or at night.

Now the time has come when a planned metropolitan nightscape can be achieved employing all the means of private and public illumination. Such a programme would be much more than the mere floodlighting of individual monuments and buildings. If the isolated chance effects of lighting were integrated, there would result a coherent pattern which could at the same time define and articulate the urban nightscape: here entertainment districts, there promenades, somewhere else zones of through traffic, channelled by means of the lights, and still elsewhere quiet residential areas. In this way, very objectively, light could become a constituent factor in town-planning.

My Years with Bauhaus

by Johannes Itten

27

The great Swiss art teacher and painter, who celebrated his 75th birthday on November 11, 1963, outlines in his recent work "My Introductory Course at Bauhaus" the principles underlying his teaching activity at the Weimar Bauhaus (1919-1923). Itten had been an art teacher in Vienna toward the close of the First World War. In 1919 Alma Mahler-Gropius, the wife of Walter Gropius, who had become the Director of the Bauhaus in Weimar, drew her husband's attention to Itten. As one of the first teachers called there by Gropius, Itten proposed that students be accepted provisionally for one term and that this term be designated "Introductory Course". In this course, conducted by Itten himself, the aim was to elicit the pupils' creative talents, to facilitate their choice of profession and practical projects and to give them a basic training in design and colour, Itten building up his teaching plan on the basis of general contrasts.

On Mark Tobey's "Sagittarius Red"

by Dorothea Christ

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The composition "Sagittarius Red" by the American painter Tobey was originally created for the Seattle Opera House. However, since the site proved to be unfavourable, Tobey obtained a release from his obligations, and the Basle Art Museum acquired the picture in November 1963. The dimensions, 212 x 388 cm, are unusual for the artist, who is a master of the small composition, but he has succeeded in filling the composition with his spiritual substance; the countless strokes of his calligraphy awaken in the observer a feeling of the boundlessness of space.

Hugo Weber's Series of Portraits of Mies van der Rohe

by Hans Curjel und George Buehr

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Hugo Weber, born in Basle in 1918, began as a sculptor in the studios of Ernst Suter (Basle), Marcel Gimond (Paris), Aristide Maillol (Banyuls) and Hans Arp (Paris). In 1946 he was called by L. Moholy-Nagy to teach at the Institute of Design in Chicago, where until 1955 he gave courses on the problems of plastic design. Under the influence of American Action Painting, he also applied himself to painting. He was in Paris from 1955 to 1960, and since 1961 has been in New York. His portraits of Mies van der Rohe were made in a small improvised studio which he had installed for himself in the roomy offices of Mies in Chicago so that he could work while Mies was also on the job. In this way there were created a great number of drawings, several sculptures and twelve oils.

On the Painting of Carl Bucher

by Fritz Billeter

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The painter Carl Bucher (born 1935), resident in Zurich, first studied law. Decisive impressions: the work of Kandinsky, the desert, informal painting. His pictures, in subdued earth tones, are made out of a "soup", to which chalk, spar, pumice and paper have been added. He penetrates to the inherent substance, the "proto-shapes" resident in the materials and elaborates images which possess something of the actuality of a wall or a chunk of the earth's crust.