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EXHIBITION  
FOR  
UNKNOWN ARCHITECTS  
ARRANGED BY THE  
ARBEITSRAT FÜR KUNST  
IN THE  
GRAPHIC CABINET

J. B. NEUMANN KURFÜRSTENDAMM 232

APRIL

1919

What is architecture? Isn't it the crystallized expression of the noblest thoughts of man, his ardor, his humanity, his faith, his religion? All this it used to be -- once. But who in our cursed period of expediency lets himself still be enraptured by its all-embracing message? We should cry out for shame about these wastes of ugliness when walking through our streets and cities. Let's face it: these drab, hollow and meaningless fakes in which we live and work will leave behind a mortifying testimony to the spiritual fall from grace of our generation, a generation who has forgotten the great and singular art of building. Let's not deceive ourselves in our European arrogance that the paltry architectural contributions of our age can change the depressing environment. All we build is piecemeal work. Forms which result from mere expediency cannot fulfill our longing for a fundamentally new world of beauty, for a rebirth of that unity of spirit which created the miracle of the Gothic cathedral. This experience has vanished from our lives. But here is our hope: that the power of the idea, a growing vision of a courageous, far-reaching new conception of the art of architecture will imbue the builders of a more



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fortunate future which is bound to come. Artists, architects, let us remove the barriers between the "arts" which a perverted academic training has erected, and let us all become "builders" in the true sense again. Together let us will, conceive, create a new architecture! Painters and sculptors, break through at last to the very realm of architecture and come to grips with the ultimate aim of art: the creative conception of a future cathedral which will embrace architecture, sculpture and painting in one great unity.

But ideas die as soon as they are compromised. Therefore: keep clear the boundaries between dream and reality, between the flight of imagination and ordinary daily work. Architects, sculptors, painters, we all have to rejoin the crafts. For "art" is not a profession. Artists are craftsmen in the original sense of the word, and only in rare blessed moments of inspiration, moments beyond the control of <sup>their</sup> ~~his~~ will, <sup>their</sup> ~~his~~ work may blossom into art. Painters and sculptors, be craftsmen again; destroy the picture frames which shackle you to the art of the "salon". Enter the buildings to bless them with poems of color, or to carve your thoughts into the bare walls, giving free range to your imagination without regard to technical obstacles. The blessings of imagination are more important than all technique, which will always submit to the formative urge of man. Today there are no architects; there are only precursors to him who some day will again deserve the name of architect, i. e., "master of the arts" who will transform deserts into gardens and will raise miracles of beauty into the sky.

WALTER GROPIUS