

beantwortet:
7-8-68.

7:12:68

Liebe Frau Baumeister!

Vielen dank für Ihre Karte aus Italien. Isola del Giglio sieht sehr schön aus. Ich bin in Orbetello nicht gewesen. Ich habe nur Rom, Napoli und Isola d'Ischia besuchen. Im September werde ich nach Ascona (Schweiz) fahren. Ascona liegt an Lago Maggiore. Also, werde ich vielleicht mit dem Seeschiff nach Italien fahren.

Können Sie Italienisch sprechen? Sie ist eine schöne romantische Sprache, aber ich habe deutsch lieber. Bitte entschuldigen Sie mich, meine deutsch wird schlecht. Ich muss mehr lernen und üben.

Ich hoffe dass Sie in Stuttgart gutes Wetter haben. Das Wetter in New York ist soweit diesen Sommer gut gewesen.

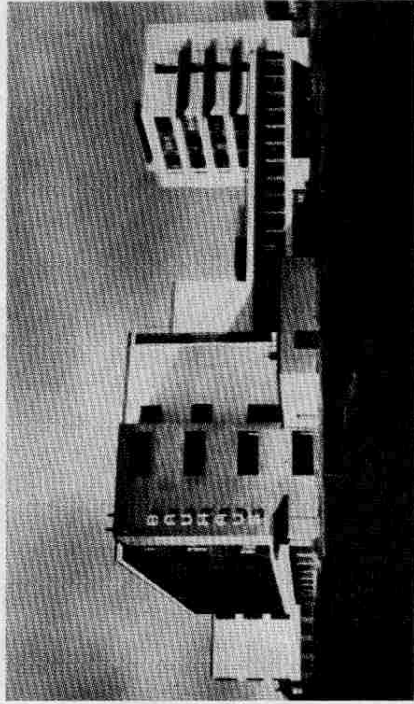
Ich bin dankbar weil ich ein
Wochenendehaus mit drei Freunde
gemietet habe. Das Haus ist
auf einer Insel am Atlantik
Ozean, nicht weit von New
York.

Ich sende Ihnen einen Artikel,
der von Walter Gropius behandelt.
Hoffentlich werden Sie ihn
interessant finden, Besonders
das Photo auf Seite 50.

Auch sende ich Ihnen
herzliche Grüsse! Ich denke
oft an unsere Schöne TEE
Reise!

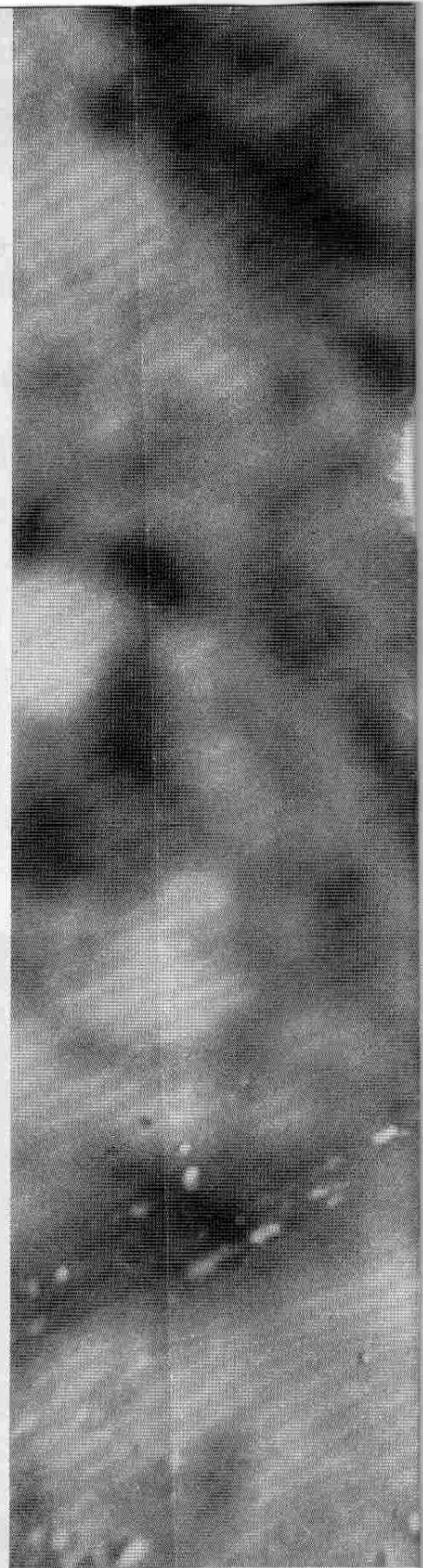
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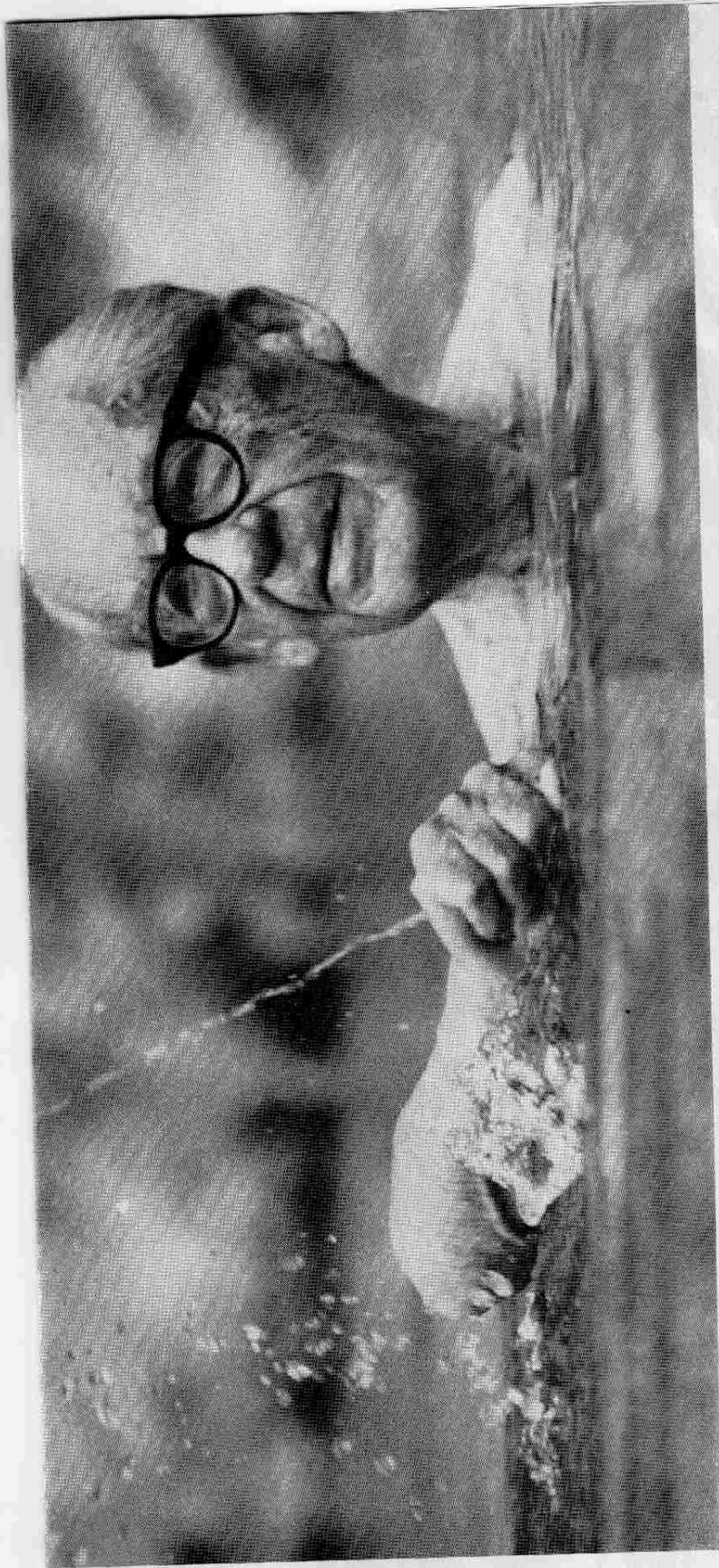
Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, the famous school's second home



CLOSE-UP | WALTER GROPIUS AT 85

All-Purpose Old Master of Design

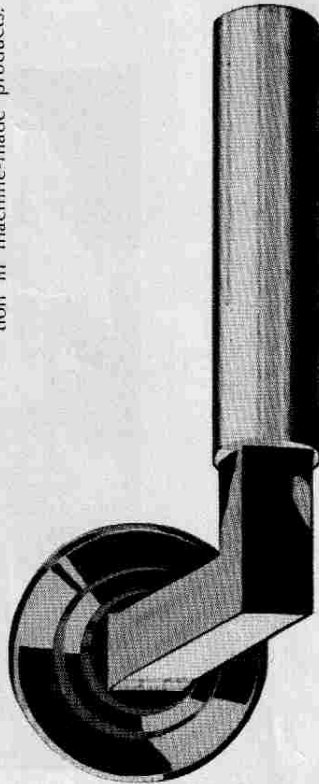




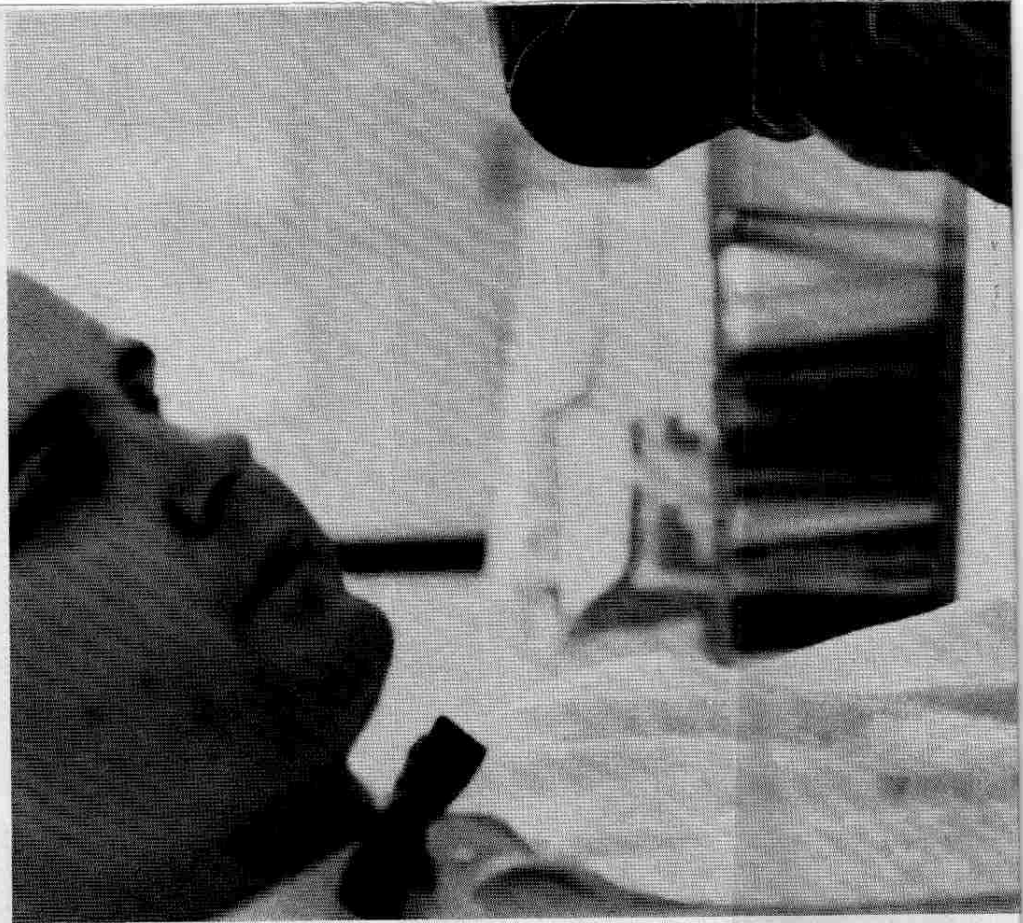
When Walter Gropius, vacationing in Arizona, playfully squeezes spurts of water skyward, the droplets in their trajectory trace a beautiful design in the air. They wouldn't dare do otherwise. Gropius is—and has been for most of this century—the acknowledged master of design. He led the turn-of-the-century revolt, threw out old forms and produced modern architecture. He founded the Bauhaus, the widely influential design school in Weimar, Germany, where the liberating idea that form follows function was applied to everything from locomotives to doorknobs. Last month “Gropie” celebrated his 85th birthday and, now a U.S. citizen, is at work still designing buildings, still teaching younger architects, still helping give shape to the world.

The varied products of his

The door handle below, made of nickel alloy, was designed by Gropius in 1922. Still a standard item, it sums up the Bauhaus' combination of form and function in machine-made products.

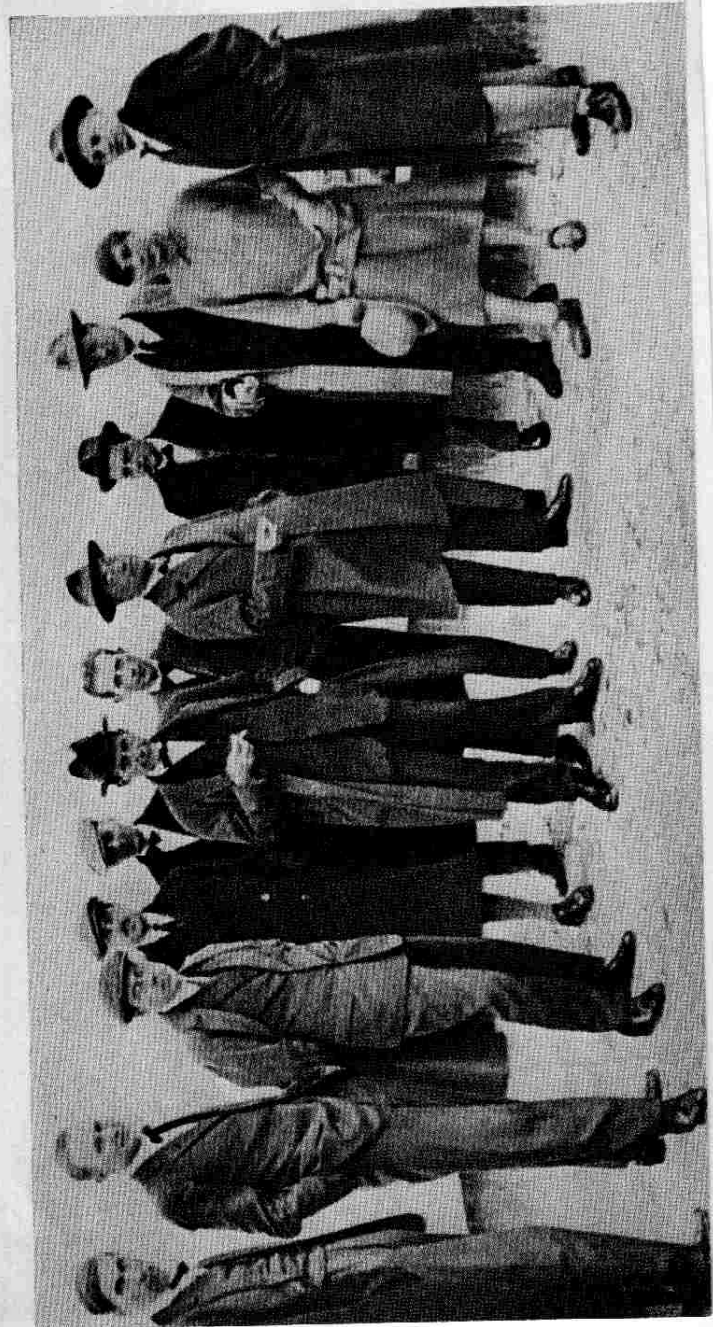


The Bauhaus flourished for a decade, producing an outpouring of design from the painters, architects, sculptors and designers attracted by Gropius' organizational genius. Gropius fled Nazi Germany in 1934 and in 1938 became chairman of the department of architecture at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, there bringing up a second generation of influential architects. He retired as chairman in 1952, and he recalls somewhat mischievously that "people thought that was the end of Gropius. They had a picture of the old gent re-

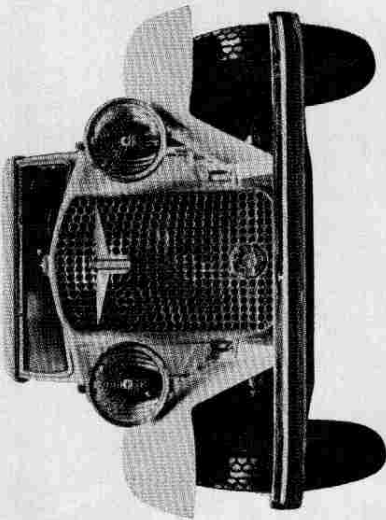
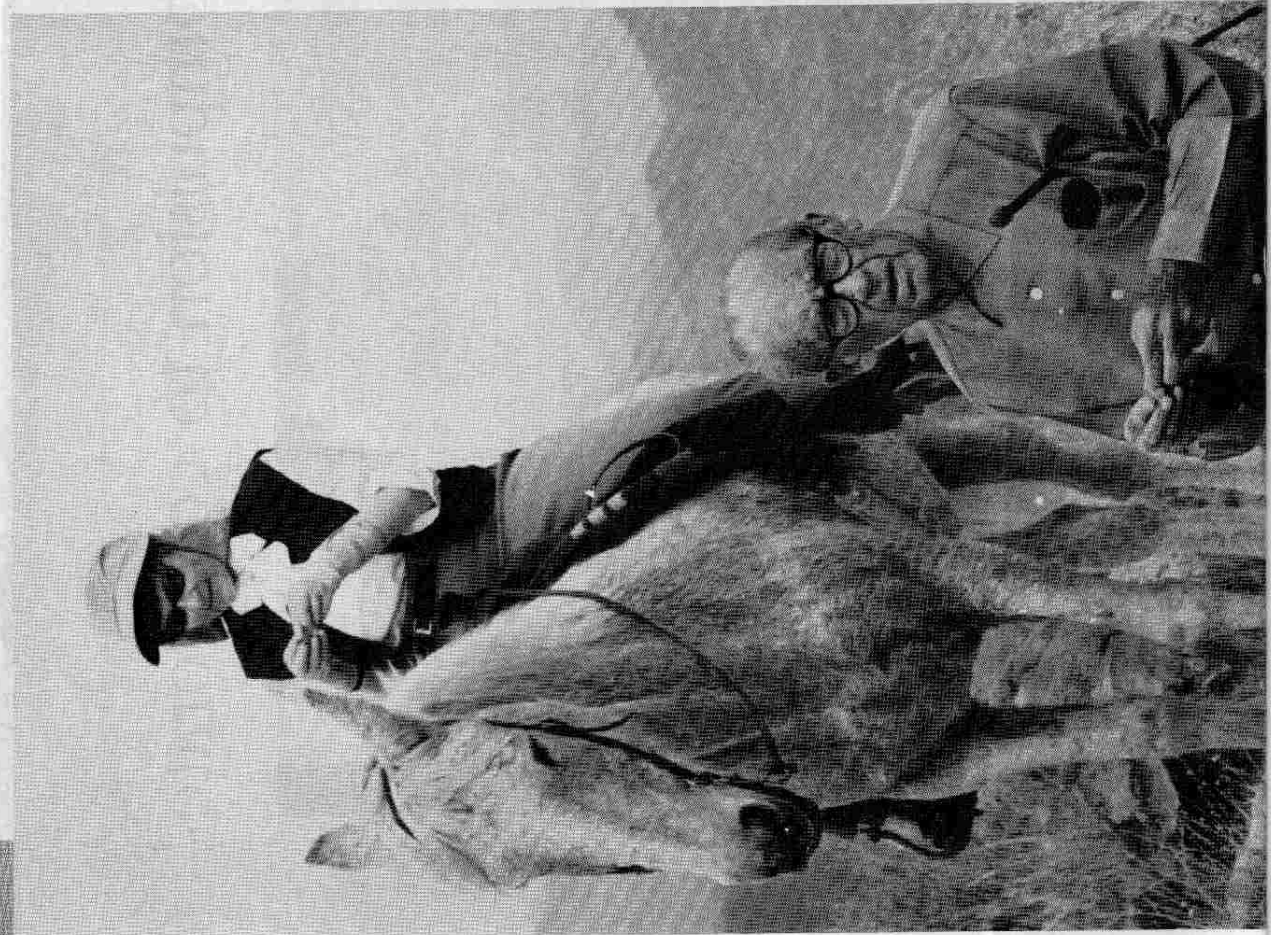


tiring from the world, sitting around under the trees."

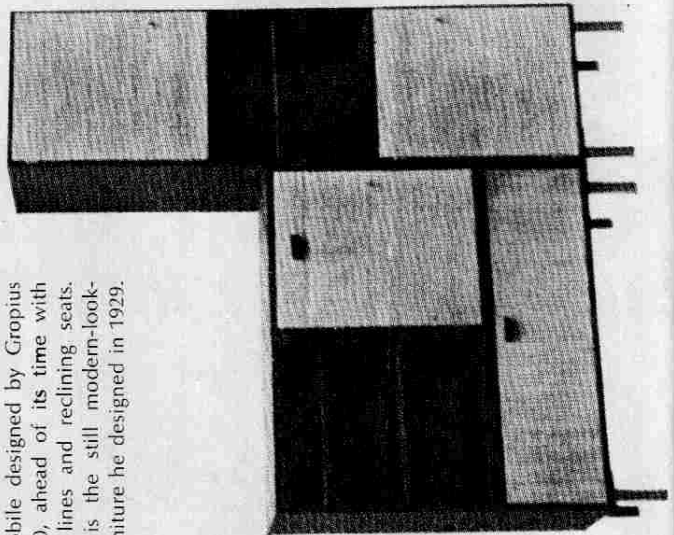
His retirement has gone like this: every workday morning at about 8:10, the "old gent" dashes from his house in Lincoln, Mass., often clutching a brown paper bag with one banana and one Swiss cheese on rye, no mustard. He takes the wheel of his golden Rambler and drives very fast through snarled Boston traffic to arrive at the Cambridge office at 8:55, five minutes before anyone else gets there. He has a compulsion to be first—on horseback, at the office, in front of mothers and babies in lines at airports. But in his work he is a team man, insisting on collaboration. And in the 16 years since he "retired," he and his associates have designed buildings from 42nd Street to Iraq.



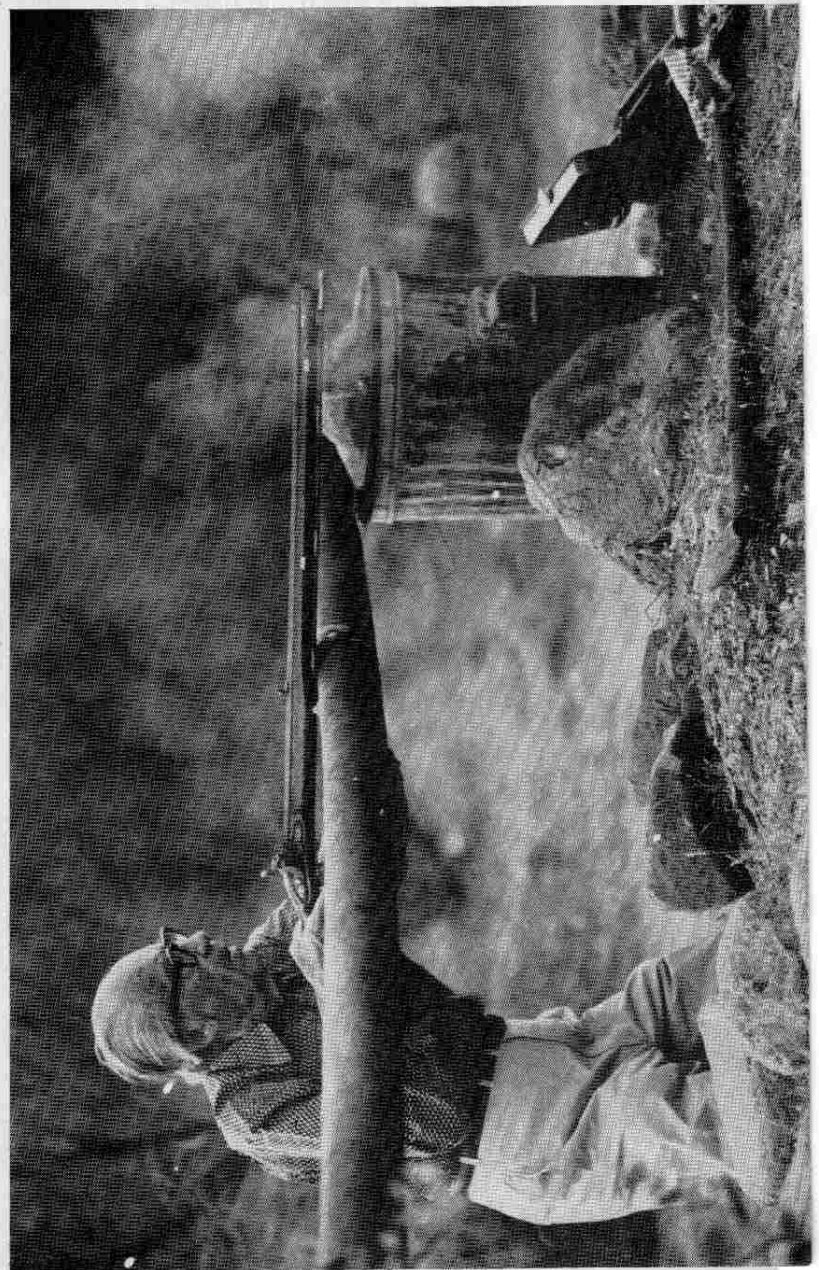
In 1925 the Bauhaus in Dessau boasted an extraordinary array of artistic talent, people who were to gain universal recognition in the fields of architecture and design. The staff then included (from left) Josef Albers, Hinrich Scheper, Georg Muche, Ladislaus Moholy-Nagy, Herbert Bayer, Joost Schmidt, Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger, Gunta Stoez and Oscar Schlemmer.



Above is the Adler cabriolet, an automobile designed by Gropius in 1930, ahead of its time with daring lines and reclining seats. Below is the still modern-looking furniture he designed in 1929.



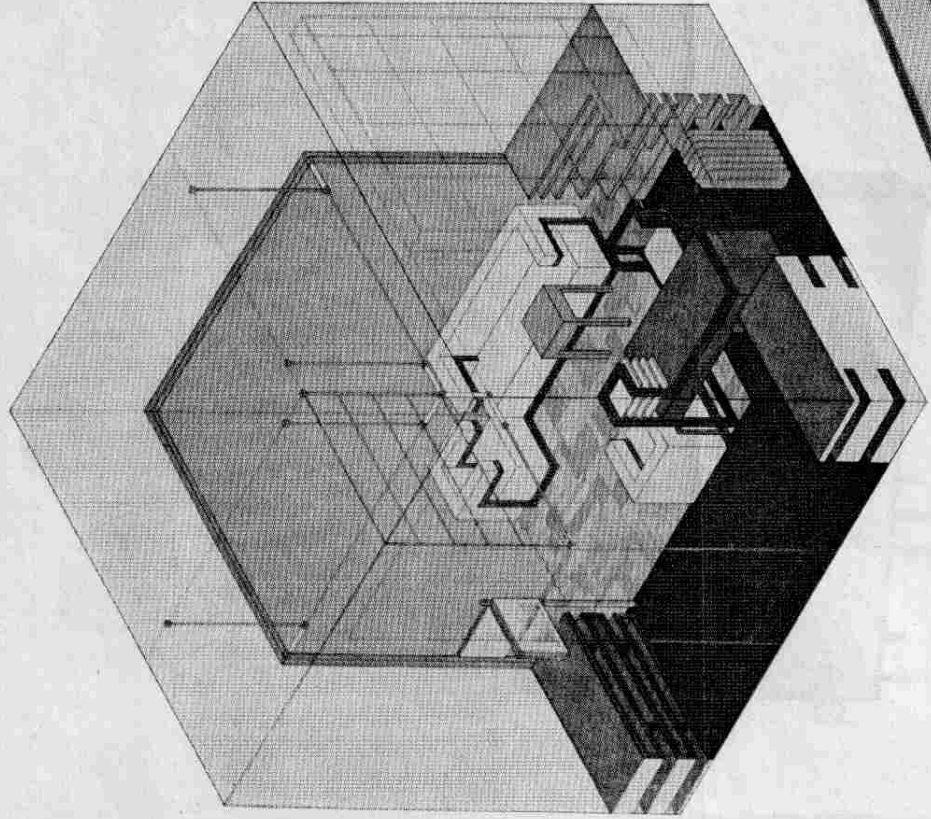
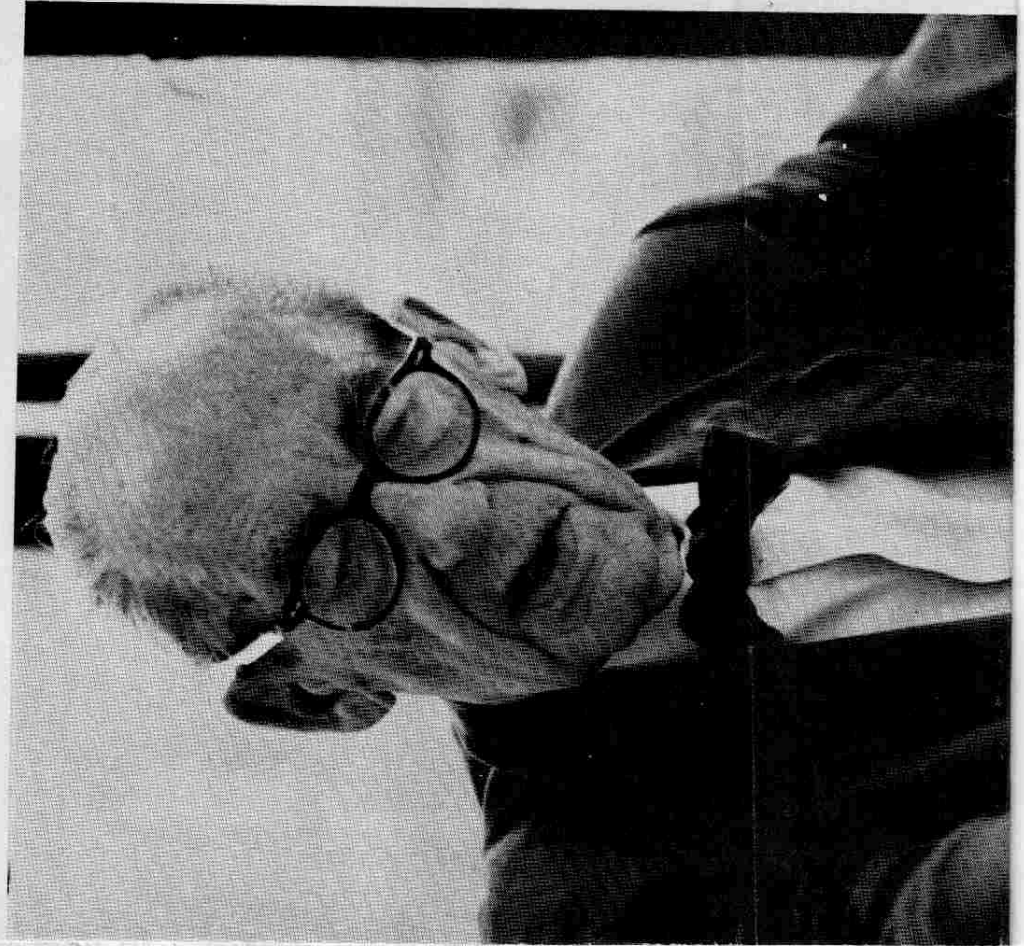
A sharp-eyed search for cactus and a shining bird

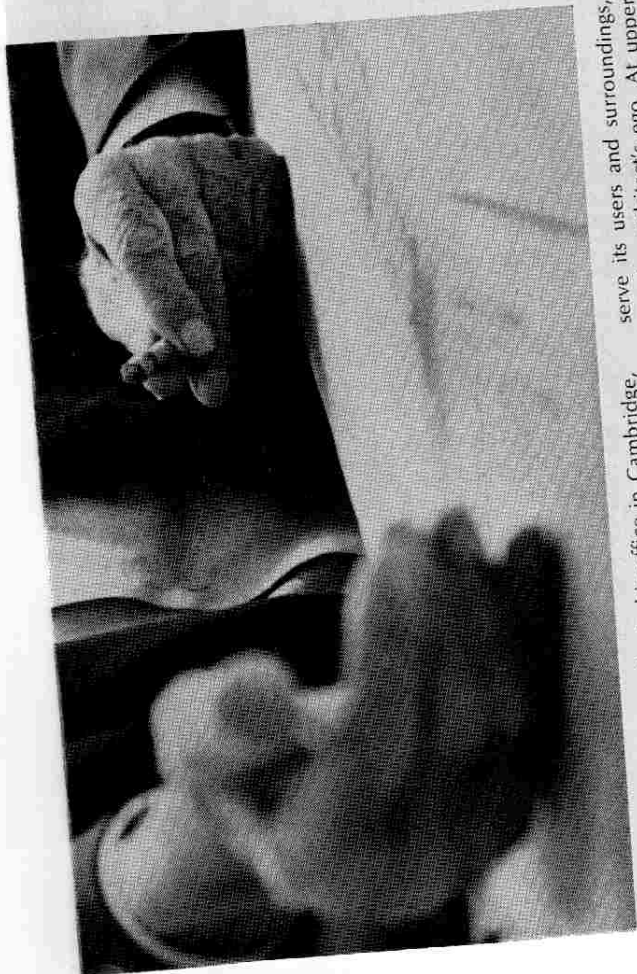
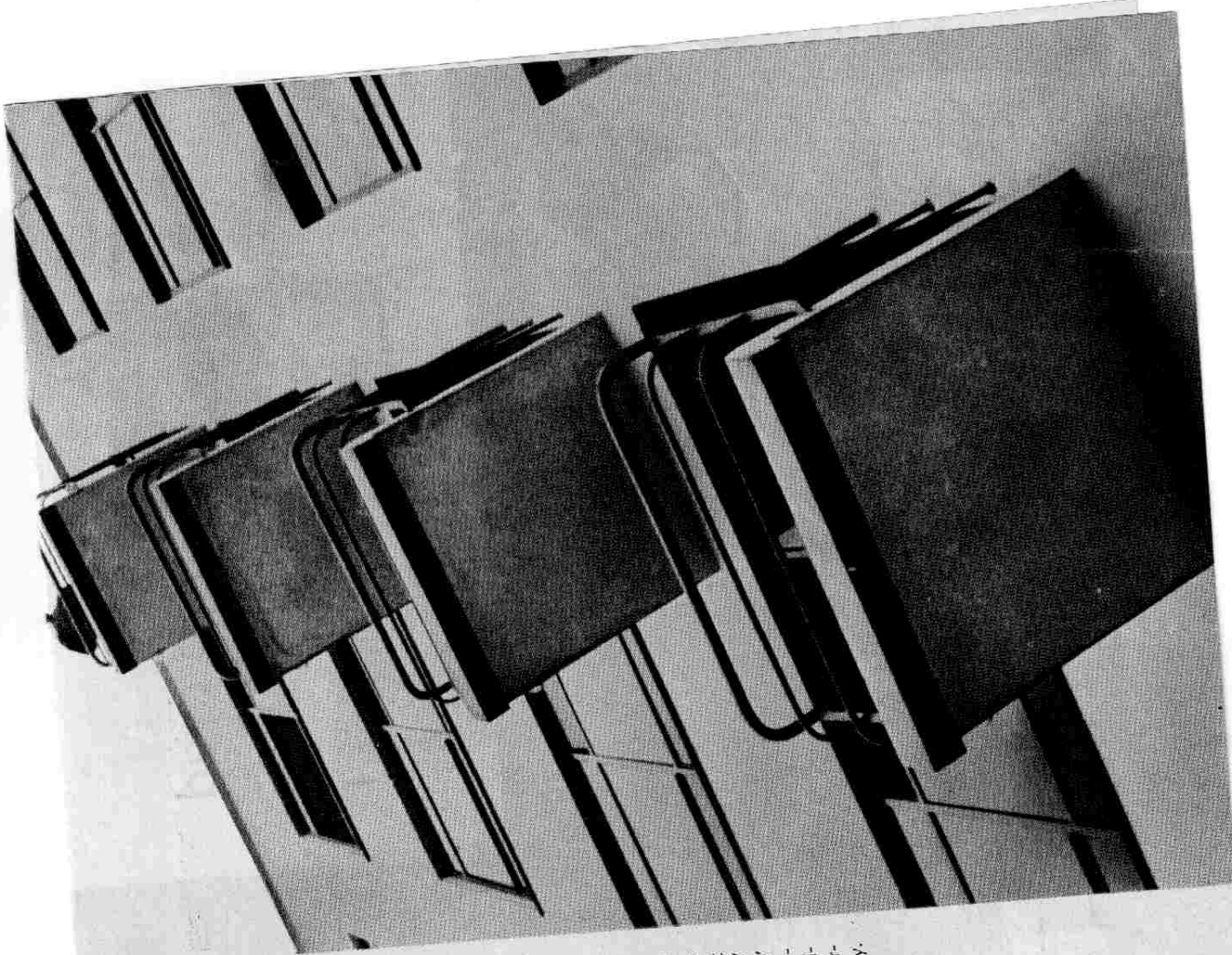


Every winter Gropius and his wife Ise leave Massachusetts for Castle Hot Springs, Ariz. A master horseman, he often rides for hours in the desert looking for flowers, budding cactus and birds. Above, he and Ise search for phainopepla, known as "the bird of shining dress." A sharp-eyed marksman (left), he fires off a couple of rounds at target practice. "It's never dull when you're out among the landscape," he says. "I'm surprised that Americans don't travel more in this country. There are such marvels here."

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compulsion to collaborate—and be first

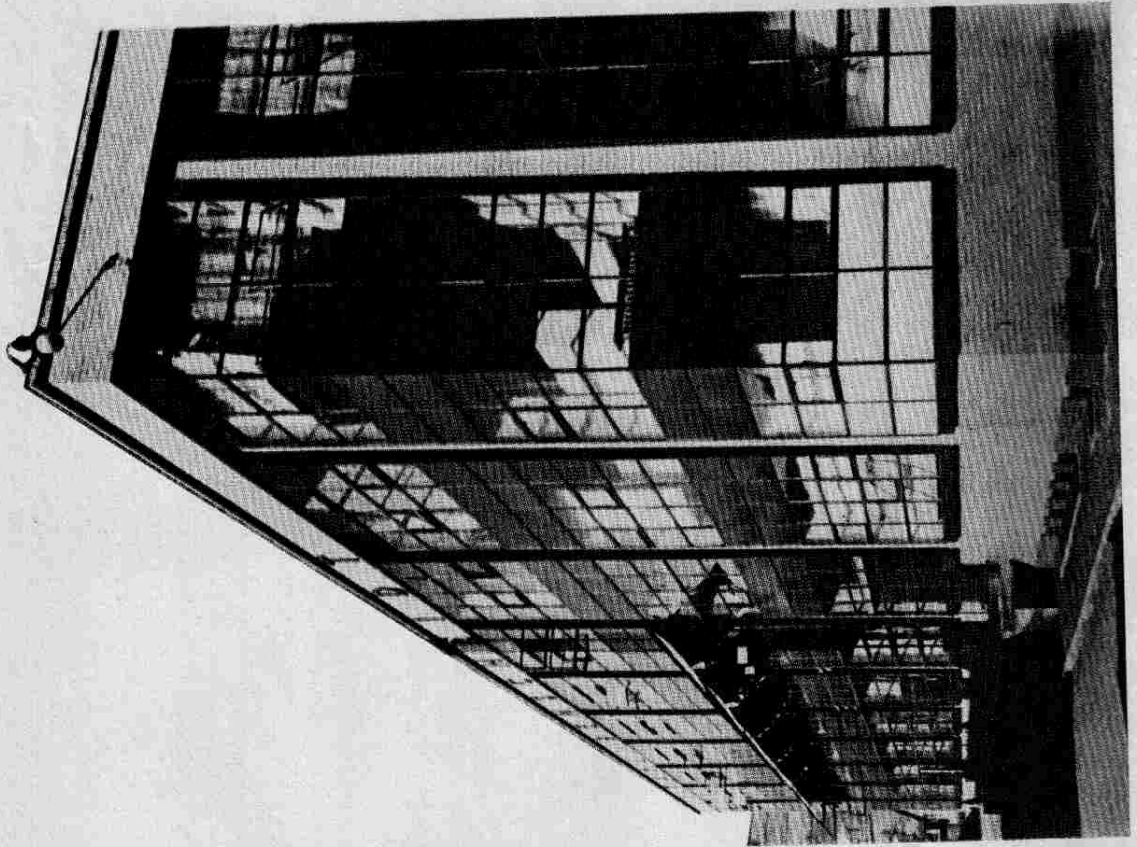
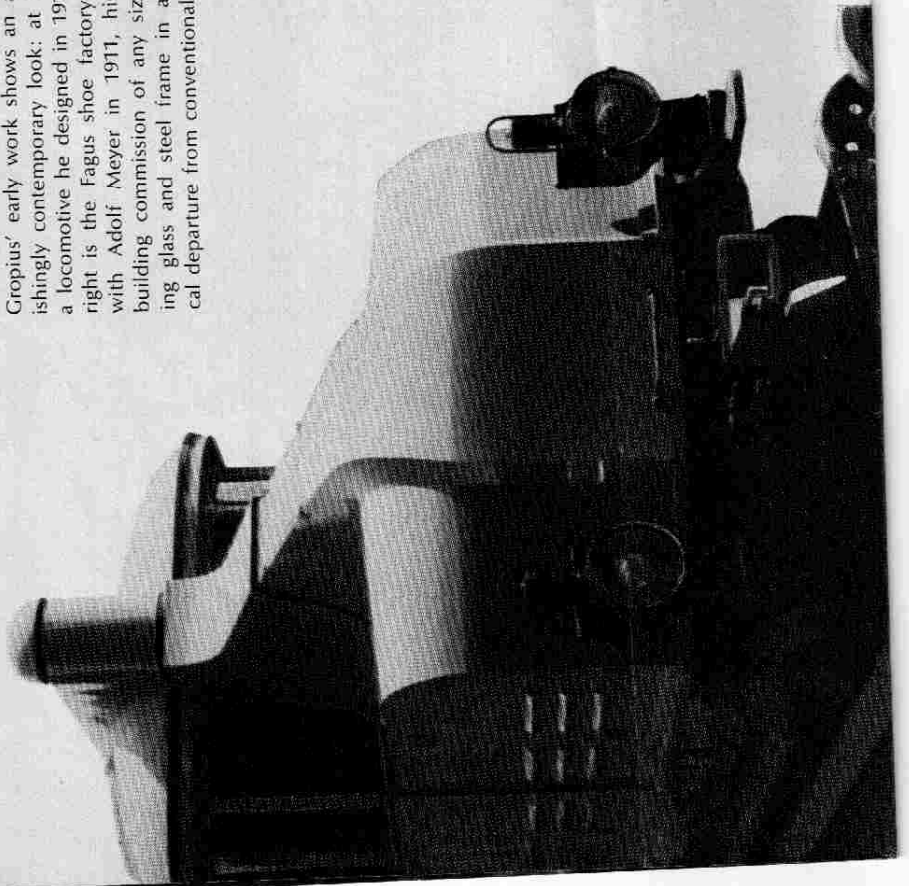




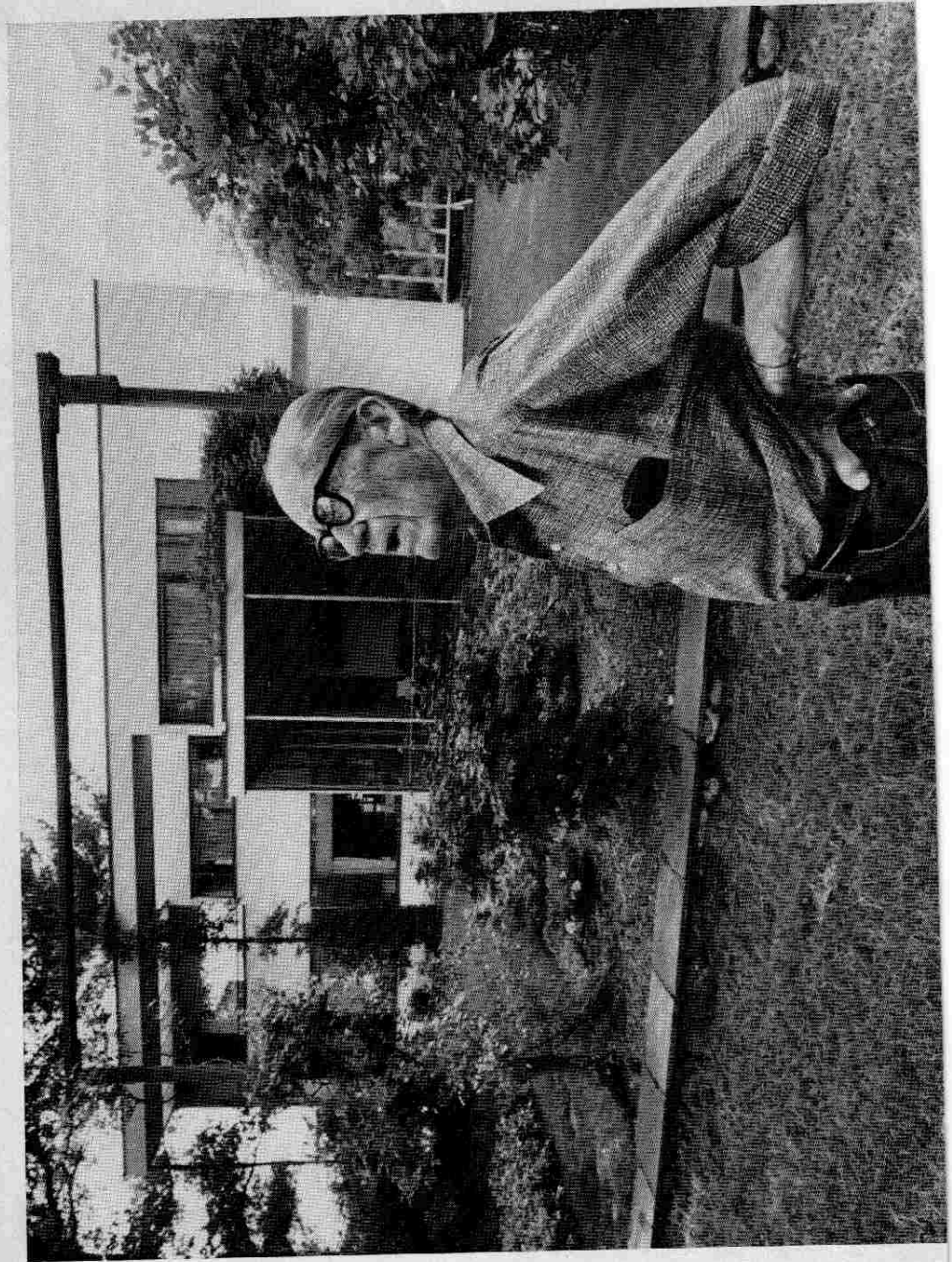
serve its users and surroundings, not the architect's ego. At upper right is Gropius' 1923 design of the Bauhaus' original director's office in Weimar. At lower right are the balconies of the students' studio building after the Bauhaus' relocation in Dessau. Revolutionary in their time, these buildings are the prototypes of the architecture of the 20th century.

Today in his office in Cambridge, Gropius and Architect Malcolm Ticknor discuss plans for a building project being designed by The Architects Collaborative (TAC), which Gropius founded in 1946 in equal partnership with younger architects. On this, Gropius' basic ideology is the same as on any building project: the building must be designed to

Gropius' early work shows an astonishingly contemporary look: at left is a locomotive he designed in 1913. At right is the Fagus shoe factory built with Adolf Meyer in 1911, his first building commission of any size, using glass and steel frame in a radical departure from conventional form



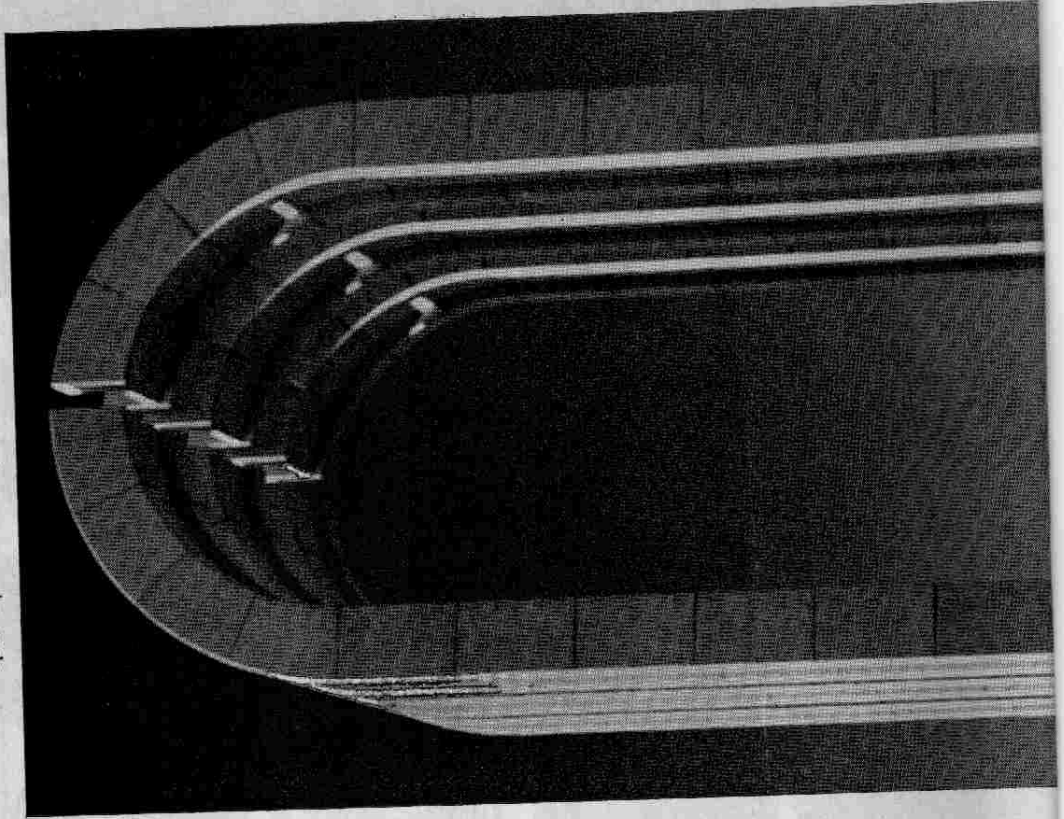
Two departures in form and a step ahead of the Adamases



Gropius surveys landscape outside his home, which he designed and built in 1937 on the crest of a hill in the midst of an apple orchard. Recently the house was declared a national historical monument as the first modern home on the eastern seaboard. Though now an accepted part of the local landscape, it was once the subject of much agitated local discussion, and Gropius himself was apprehensive about being a neighbor of the Adamases, descendants of John Adams. "But," he said, "old Mr. Adams took one look and to our surprise said that our modern house was more in keeping with the New England tradition of simplicity than quite a few other solutions that had been tried."

54 CONTINUED ON PAGE 58

Gropius stands before the towering entrance of the unfinished University of Baghdad in Iraq. His open-top structure symbolizes the "open mind."



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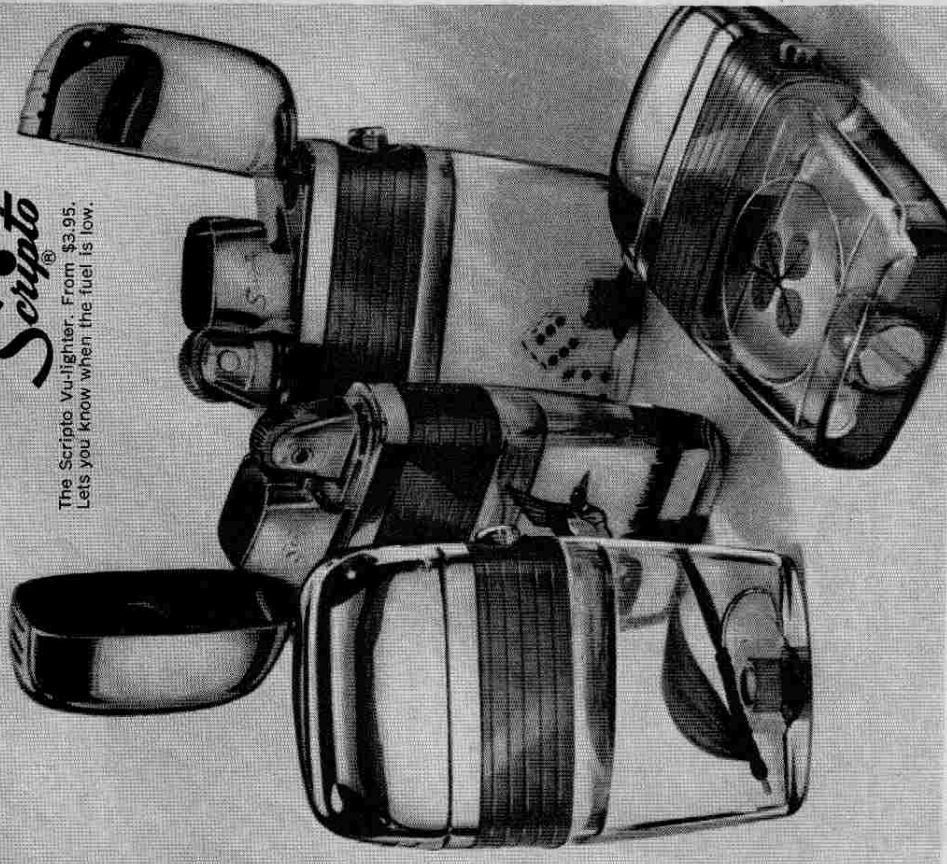
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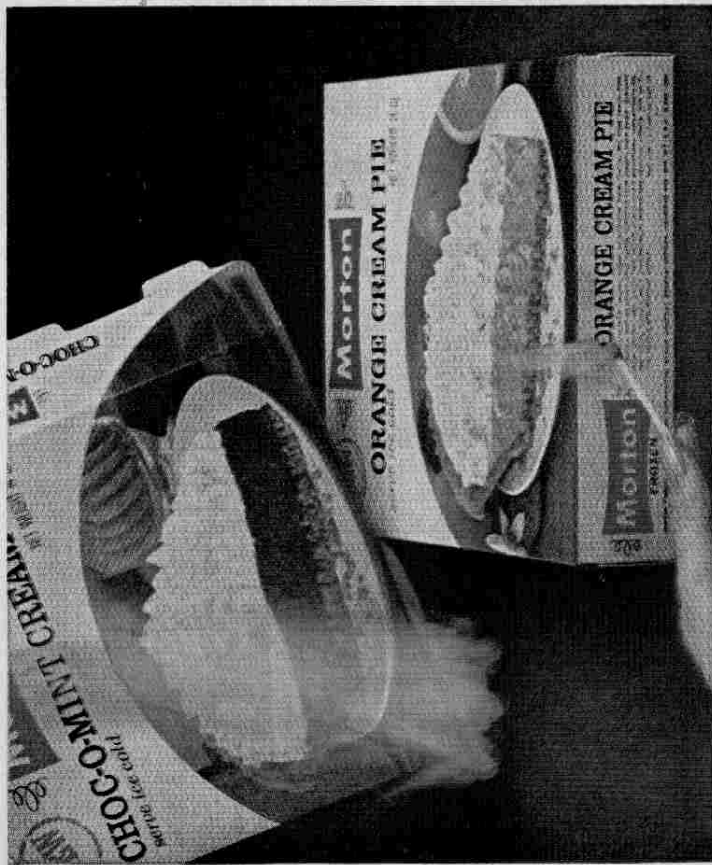
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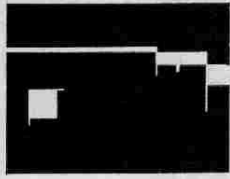
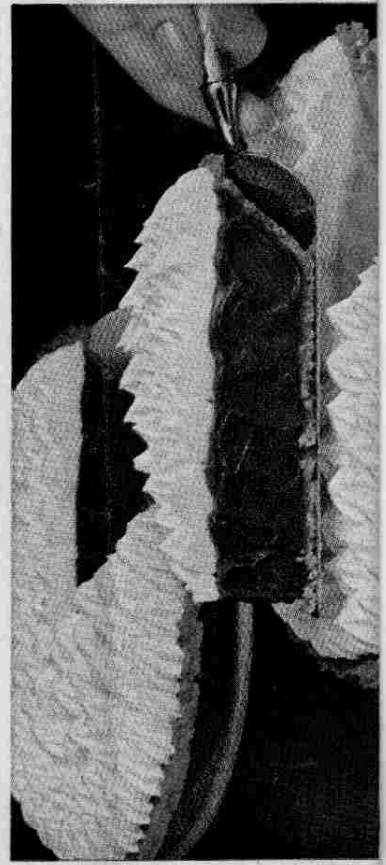
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'Gropé' brought everything in the range of his vision

by PETER
BLAKE

Editor, Architectural Forum

During the first two or three decades of this century, a few men fashioned what we now call "modern architecture"—unadorned buildings of steel, concrete, plenty of glass and plenty of nerve.

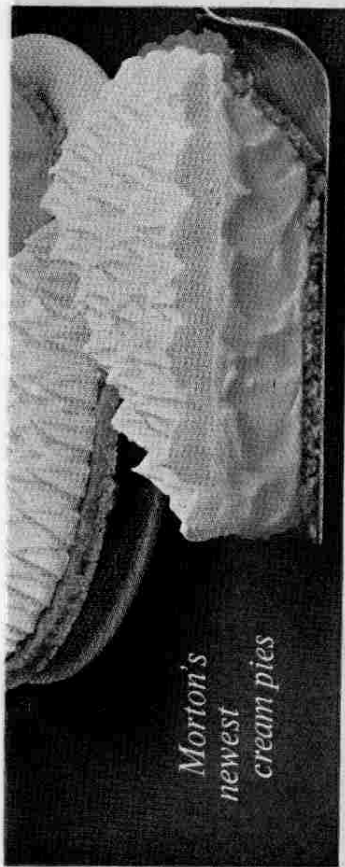
There was Frank Lloyd Wright, who supplied much of the initial vision and many of the most beautiful buildings. But Wright never understood (or liked) the 20th Century and its huge cities. Wright's followers today are few in number and uneven in talent.

There was Le Corbusier, who died three years ago—Gropius calls him "the greatest architect of our time." But although Corbu has many talented followers all over the world today, he was never particularly interested in teaching. He was a wonderfully articulate pamphleteer, a fine poet,

his resolute self-discipline, has concentrated all his considerable efforts upon a strictly circumscribed area of creativity.

These men, and perhaps one or two others, were and are the heroes of the modern movement. But each of them has been, to some degree, a specialist. Only Walter Gropius has been a true universalist.

He involved himself in all the disciplines and in all the opportunities he considered to be within the range of his vision. He has been one of the leading architects of the century; he has been, almost, the inventor of modern industrial design; and he has been, quite simply, the most influential educator in architecture, city planning and design of the past 50 years. He and his longtime associate Marcel Breuer revolutionized architectural education in the U.S. when they came to the Harvard Graduate School of Design



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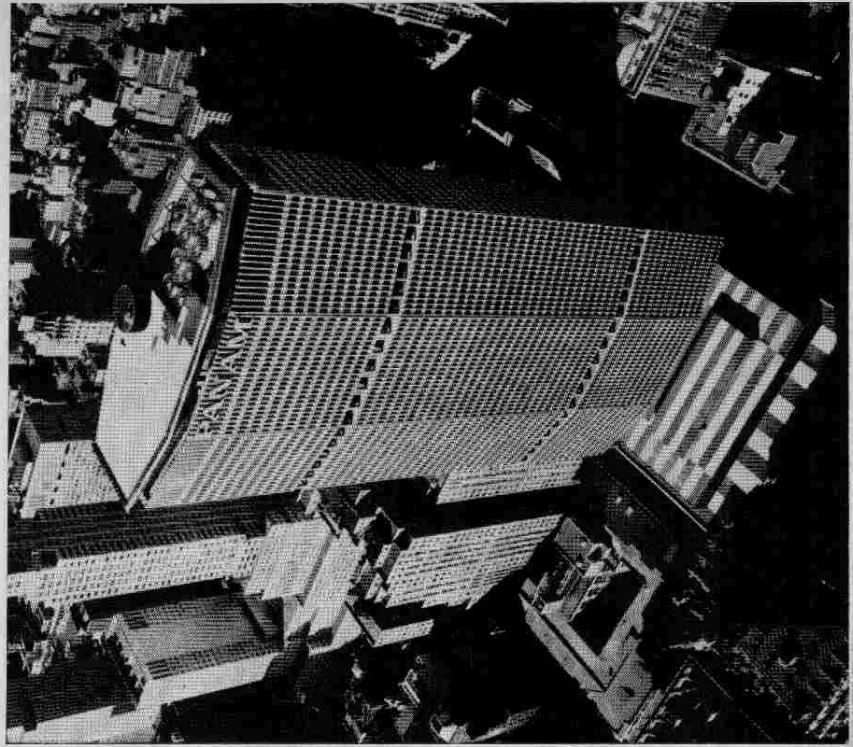
painter and sculptor and an occasional industrial designer, mostly of furniture.

There is Mies van der Rohe, now in Chicago, who, according to Gropius, "penetrated to the essentials of design." But Mies, in

Gropius, along with a team of TAC associates, acted as architectural consultant for New York's Pan American Building.

in 1927. Without them, most of today's leaders in the rebuilding of this country—men like Ed Barnes, Ulrich Franzen, John Johansen, Philip Johnson, I. M. Pei, Paul Rudolph, Jack Warnecke and dozens of others—might never have blossomed forth to their present eminence. Nor would the 50-odd architectural schools across the United States, influenced by Harvard's example, have produced their crops of outstanding designers.

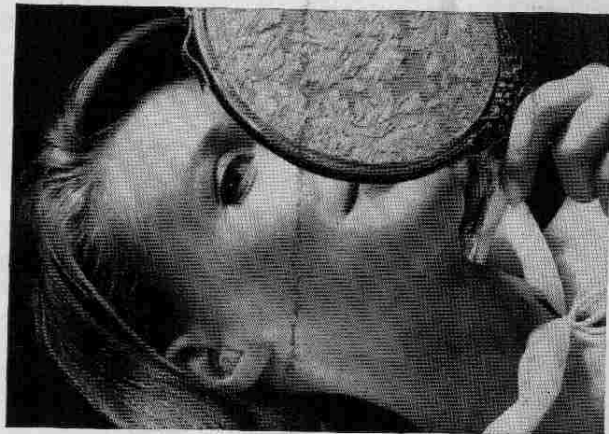
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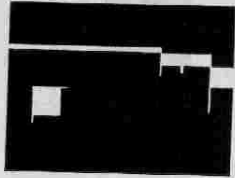


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Gropius did not start teaching at Harvard; he began teaching 18 years earlier in Germany, when he was appointed head of the Bauhaus in Weimar. It was an extraordinary school (its symbol is seen above), and those who taught and learned there, from 1919 on, have profoundly influenced most of modern architecture and modern design. Although Gropius has said that it was never his intention to "introduce a cut-and-dried 'modern style,'" there very definitely is a Bauhaus style. Before the Bauhaus, architects and designers were enamored with the forms of natural things—trees, leaves, ocean waves—or with the forms of earlier styles—Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque. But the Bauhaus was enamored with a new vocabulary of forms: the forms of machines, the forms of our century.

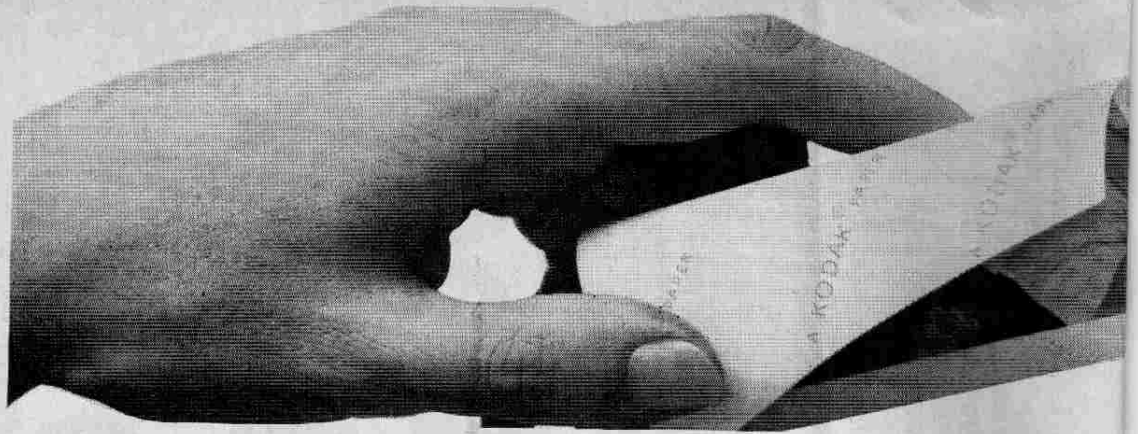
These forms are pure geometry—cylinders, spheres, cones and cubes, generally of polished or plated steel, with clean edges and sleek surfaces; the sort of hard-

a near-plagiarism of the very products which were designed, more than 40 years ago, in Gropius' school in Weimar.

As much a part of the Gropius tradition as the Bauhaus is his concept of group design, the notion of the team as a creative force, of teamwork architecture as opposed to prima donna architecture.

To him, teamwork is what this century and the next are all about. There are so many disciplines—sociology, economics, technology, psychology—that go into the shaping of our physical environment that the prima donna architect, according to Gropius, cannot possibly master them all. An architect must assemble experts in these disciplines and translate their ideas into three dimensions, using his own talents to make those three dimensions become art.

But teamwork has had its pitfalls, too: the buildings that result from it may turn out good, bad or indifferent, depending upon the quality of the other members of the team. Alone or in tandem, Gropius has done some great buildings, like the Fagus factory in 1911, which still outshines most modern architecture in Germany today. But he has also done some rather pedestrian jobs, presumably under the influence of less inspired teammates—for example, the Pan Am Building in Manhattan,



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where he acted as a consulting architect. It is a dull clod of a building, heavy-handed and rude to its street. It chops Park Avenue into two parts, interrupting the swift flow of space so characteristic of the American street. By comparison, Gropius' light and airy structures of the first 30 years of his career—done either alone or with one talented collaborator—seem to have come from an entirely different hand.

Architects around the world refer to the masters of the modern movement in a revealing shorthand: Frank Lloyd Wright is always "Mister Wright" (i.e., God). Le Corbusier is always "Corbu" (a variation on the word *corbeau*, or raven—as a rather pugnacious bird). They refer to Gropius as "Gropo," a man who at 85 is still asking questions, still in search of answers.

It is a very nice tribute to him. Today Gropius is still rather more sprightly than all the Beatles put together and quite prepared to fight for architecture-through-teamwork, come what may. "The ivory tower man is out," Gropo said not long ago. "The artist needs to swing." And Walter Gropius is still in there swinging.

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were you would expect to find under the hood of a Rolls-Royce. These polished cylinders and cubes might be combined to form a door handle or a table lamp; some variations on the theme might end up as chairs and tables—like Marcel Breuer's tubular steel furniture, chromium-plated and derived from bicycle handlebars. But regardless of the ultimate form or function, the Bauhaus objects looked machine-made rather than handcrafted. They appeared to be part of an industrialized century rather than products of simple artisans.

Some say that the Bauhaus style is cold. But a lot of younger people nowadays would call it "cool" instead. It remains a controversial style. Today's leading designers are either Bauhaus disciples or profess to be anti-Bauhaus, but both the talk and the action in design circles still relate to the Bauhaus. Two years ago Bauhaus was the principal theme of the International Design Conference in Aspen, which is the annual summit conference of the Chrome Set. A few weeks ago, the home furnishings page of the New York Times celebrated a new anti-Bauhaus direction in contemporary furniture design—ironic because every example shown was, in fact,

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