Memorial Resolution for Emeritus Professor Robert Von Neumann

Robert Von Neumann was born in Rostock, Germany in 1888 and died in February of 1976. He served in the German Army in World War I and saw action on the Russian Front. In 1918 he attended the Royal Academy in Berlin as a master pupil of Professor Doepler. After his graduation he worked in Berlin as an illustrator of books and magazines. In 1926 he immigrated to the U.S. locating in Milwaukee where he worked as an illustrator for the Guggler Lithographic Company, the Milwaukee Journal and the Chicago Tribune.

In 1930 he joined the faculty of the Art Department of the Milwaukee State Teacher's College, later, the Wisconsin State College, later the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and served until his retirement in 1959.

In 1970 he was the recipient of the first Honorary Doctoral Degree given by UWM to a member of its faculty.

Mr. Robert Von Neumann's career as a faculty member and as an artist is a remarkable one. As an artist his resume of distinctive awards and exhibitions is most extensive. His work is in public and private collections both in the U.S. as well as in Europe. His paintings and graphics of his favorite theme - that of the sea and the men who derive their work from it - will live because of the intrinsic quality as fine and distinctive works of art. Mr. Von Neumann never found it necessary to break from this thematic form; to him it was a matter of quality. To describe his works one must indicate their honesty and sincerity, their intensity and power.

Robert Von Neumann's influence and contributions as a teacher were a major factor in establishing Wisconsin as a vital center of visual arts. He was an inspiring teacher. In his quiet and philosophic manner he brought into play a rare and special kind of insight which searched for and brought to the surface the uniqueness of each student; a search in which the students participated and by which they would find their artistic personality. He had a remarkable ability to grasp the strength and weaknesses of a work of art. His attitude was most often serious but never without a light touch. His contributions to art and art education will be felt in this area for generations.

His talents as a teacher were based upon his excellence as an artist. His great concern for quality in the creative abilities of his students depended on his own excellence as an experienced artist.

The State of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee are uniquely in debt to Robert Von Neumann for his contribution to art. We are fortunate that he chose this area in which to paint, to teach, and to live.

The Robert Von Neumann
Memorial Resolution Committee
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