

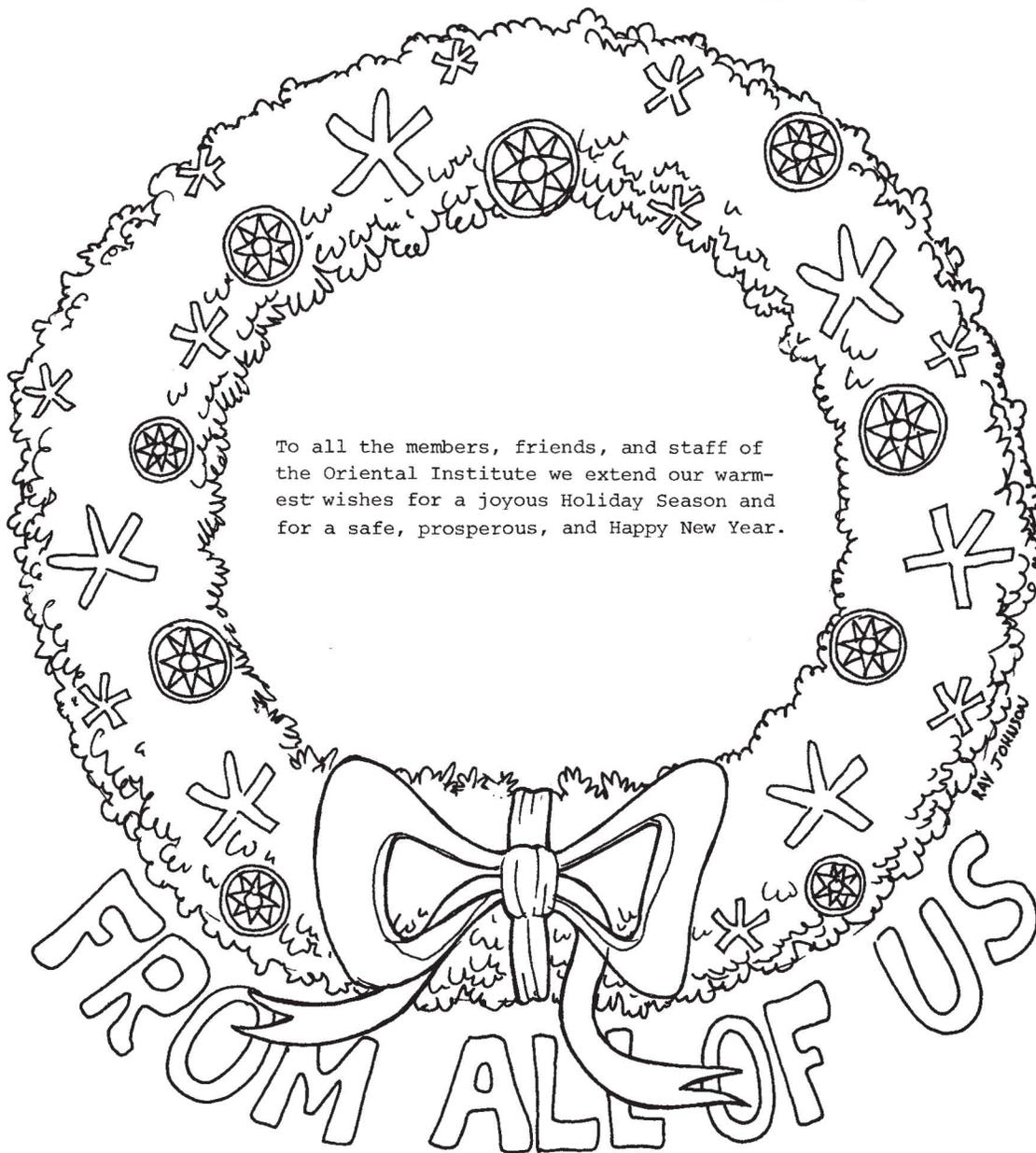
News & Notes

The Oriental Institute

*Issued confidentially to members and friends
Not for publication*

No. 38: December, 1977

SEASON'S GREETINGS



To all the members, friends, and staff of the Oriental Institute we extend our warmest wishes for a joyous Holiday Season and for a safe, prosperous, and Happy New Year.

JAN 12 1978

DIRECTOR'S LIBRARY
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

JOHN CARSWELL THE NEW MUSEUM CURATOR



AT THE BEGINNING OF DECEMBER, a new curator of the Oriental Institute Museum assumed his responsibilities. He is John Carswell, formerly Professor and Chairman of the Department of Fine Arts at the American University of Beirut. Mr. Carswell is a specialist in Middle Eastern Art and Archeology.

He was born in London in 1931 and studied painting at the Royal College of Art. After graduating in 1951, he worked in the Near East for such archeologists as Kathleen Kenyon, Seton Lloyd, Sinclair Hood, and Alan Wace.

After five years as an "itinerant draughtsman" (as he described it), he took a position in 1956 on the faculty of the American University of Beirut. His intention at the time was to remain for only a year or so, but, as fate would have it, he remained there twenty years. He distinguished himself by being promoted to full professor in 1967, by serving as Secre-

tary for the University Research Board, as departmental chairman three times, and by serving on the University Senate. He resigned from the University in 1976 after the Lebanese civil war and spent last year as a Research Fellow at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

Through the years, Mr. Carswell has been active in his own research, including the study of Islamic ceramics and the import of Chinese porcelain to the Near East. Recently, he has been cataloging a large quantity of Chinese porcelain found in Syria and has been studying trade patterns between the Near and Far East. During a survey of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) this past summer he located a site filled with over 500 pieces of Sung Dynasty porcelain.

He has traveled extensively in the Near East and has made surveys of Islamic material in Egypt, Sinai, Israel, Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Jordan.

In the field of museology, he has chosen material and designed exhibitions for the Palestine Exploration Fund and the World of Islam Festivals. He helped to reorganize the Islamic collection in the Brooklyn Museum (New York) in 1971. In September this year, he organized an exhibition, entitled "Royal Performance," of works by members of the Royal Family from the Seventeenth Century to the present day; the show was held in the Ringing Chamber of Windsor Castle.

As a scholar, Mr. Carswell has written several books, including two monographs, on Seventeenth Century Armenian churches in Isfahan and Kutahya tiles and pottery, both published by Oxford University Press. It is not just all art history for Mr. Carswell either, as he is a practicing artist who has shown in Europe and the U.S.; in New York he had a one-man exhibition at the Fischbach Gallery.

One of his first projects as curator will be to organize a special showing in the Institute of the late Ursula Schneider's photographs, entitled "Images of the Thirties," which was shown at the Bergman Gallery and received excellent reviews from Chicago art critics.

All of us here at the Oriental Institute would like to welcome Mr. Carswell and his family to Chicago and to wish him a successful tenure and good luck as Curator of the Oriental Institute Museum.

THE WESTERN SUBURBS AFFILIATE GROUP of Oriental Institute members continues its lecture series on Friday, January 14, 7:00 P.M. at the Monticello Center, 600 West Ogden Avenue, Hinsdale. Donald Whitcomb of the Oriental Institute will speak on "The Archaeology of Iran, Before and After the Advent of Islam." For further information, call 354-4285.

VOLUNTEER WORK

Volunteers are always needed to help out in the Suq gift shop or as museum docents. For information, call the Volunteer Office at 753-2573.

MEMBERS' COURSES - WINTER 1978

Three courses will be offered to the membership this winter—"The Bible Lands: Problems, Peoples, Politics, and Pottery"; "Ancient Egyptian Literature"; and "Reading Egyptian Texts." Information on these courses and registration forms have been mailed separately. Additional registration forms are available from the Membership Office.

URSULA SCHNEIDER'S "IMAGES OF THE THIRTIES"

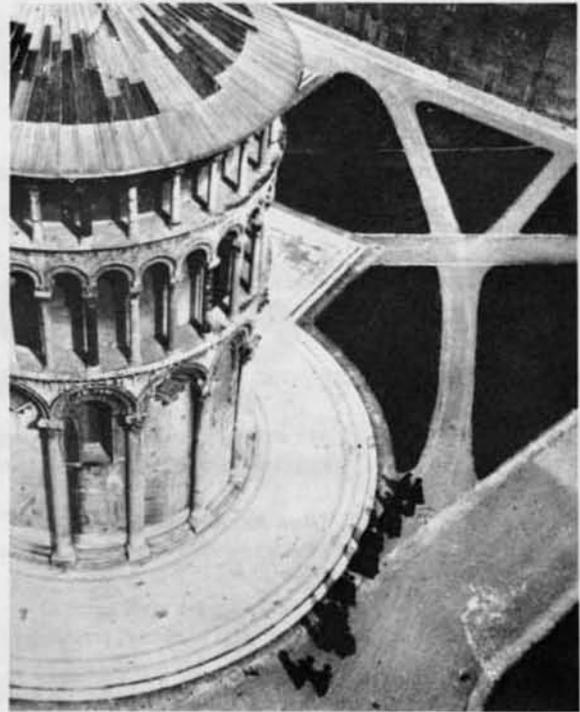
WITH THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBIT of the late Ursula Schneider's photography, entitled "Images of the Thirties," a new dimension was added to the history of art photography.

Ursula was a photographer for the Oriental Institute from 1942 to 1973 and was noted for her fine photographs of ancient sculpture and buildings. It was not known until recently that, before she came to this country in 1937, she was an accomplished feature photographer for two of Germany's largest newspapers and that she also owned studios in Berlin and Hamburg. This fact was revealed after her death last summer when several portfolios of her photographs were discovered among her personal effects.

The quality of those photographs was so fine and the subject matter so unusual that it was decided to put them on exhibit as a tribute to her photographic talents. Christina Madej, the Institute Research Archivist, coordinated all the necessary details. Several Chicago art galleries were enthusiastic to mount the exhibition, but it was decided to hold it close to the University of Chicago. Therefore, the Bergman Gallery on the university campus was chosen. Forty of the most appropriate photos were selected, a difficult task since the variety was so great.

Many of Ursula's friends, co-workers, and family attended the opening of the exhibit. Her brother, Dr. Emmanuel Wolff, flew in from New York. Students, faculty, and staff from all over the university came to view the works, and articles began appearing in the local papers with excellent art reviews. The curator of photographs at the Art Institute of Chicago was so interested in the exhibit that he was given several photos to place in the permanent collection of the Art Institute. At present, there are plans to exhibit the collection in an Eastern art gallery and also here in the Oriental Institute early next year. The *Chicago Magazine* intends to do a feature article on the collection sometime in the near future. Dr. Wolff, in the meantime, has been gathering additional photographs from Ursula's friends in Germany to add to the collection.

The photos, themselves, are daily life scenes taken by Ursula in her travels through Europe. They are of the Bauhaus style, which was popularized in Germany in the 1920's and 1930's, and are of such quality that they have been compared to the works of David Seymour, Man



Ray, Brassai, Cartier-Bresson, and others.

Some of the images in the exhibit are so evocative of their time and place that they actually convey the feeling of what Europe was like and what people were doing in the 1930's. Some of the photos are rather frightening, as they portend what was to happen in Germany several years later. And in some we see a strange bit of surrealism, such as the image of a middle-aged couple sedately breakfasting on a beach in front of their car, which has been carefully covered with a tent.

Her photo, taken in Italy, of tiny men in black robes walking by a huge dome is not a classic only because it has not been seen by the people who publish the art histories. These are all the opinions of the art critics.

Ursula Wolff Schneider right now stands on the threshold of fame and immortality, and it is only a matter of time before her works are accepted as photographic masterpieces. And at the Oriental Institute we can say that at one time she belonged to us.



The Oriental Institute cordially invites you to attend a lecture:

"Architecture and Environment in the Near East"

by John Carswell
Curator, The Oriental Institute Museum

Tuesday, January 17

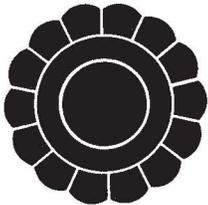
8:00 P.M.

Breasted Hall
1155 E. 58th Street

(The Quadrangle Club, 1155 East 57th Street, will be open to Oriental Institute members who wish to make dinner reservations. Please call Mrs. Schlender, 493-8601. Please remember that the privilege of the use of the dining room at the Quadrangle Club is a courtesy extended to members of the Oriental Institute only on nights when there is an Oriental Institute lecture.)

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP LECTURES

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 17 | "Architecture and Environment in the Near East:
John Carswell, Curator, the Oriental Institute Museum |
| Feb. 20 | "New Excavations in Iraq"
McGuire Gibson, the Oriental Institute |
| Apr. 11 | (Title to be announced)
T. G. H. James, the British Museum |
| May 22 | "Mummies and Magic: An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian
Funerary Beliefs and Practices"
Lanny D. Bell, Director, Chicago House |



The Oriental Institute
The University of Chicago
1155 East 58th Street · Chicago, Illinois · 60637

FIRST CLASS MAIL