

McCurry: Oh, yes. For any large office to function properly, it has to be able to have that spirit of cooperation in which one person will probably have charge of the project. It's his task to organize the project and to exercise some decision-making, in terms of practicality and in terms of aesthetics, over the team. And there may be fifteen or twenty people involved who have to be coordinated. If you haven't learned to cooperate you aren't going to be a very useful person in an office. So, I think the Beaux-Arts system has been excellent. Now, in this system of Beaux-Arts design you attend, normally the instructors were products of the Beaux-Arts School of Design in Paris. We were certainly conscious in our senior year—this was in 1926—of what was happening in the outside world, in terms of the Bauhaus, in terms of all of the publications that were coming in from foreign fields, the experimental work that was being done at MIT under Carlu, and at Harvard under Haffner, and Paul Cret was at the University of Pennsylvania, and Hornbostel at Carnegie Tech.

Blum: Was it through the publications at the Art Institute that you became aware...?

McCurry: Yes, I'll show you some of those, if you haven't seen them. At the conclusion of each of the projects and its judgment in New York, three or four photographs of the winners of first medalists and the second medalists were always published and distributed to all of the seniors at the various colleges, so that you could keep track of what the judgments were, what the criticisms were, and also a list of students in their mentions or their successes or failures. Within the framework of the Beaux-Arts Institute, numerous prizes were awarded, the chief one being the Paris Prize, which was won by Harry Bieg in 1924.

Blum: What did he win?

McCurry: He won the Paris Prize, which was a two-year fellowship or scholarship at the Beaux-Arts Institute in Paris, a real success story. So we were delighted with Harry Bieg's success. The following year, Vale Faro placed second in the Rome Prize, which was probably only second in importance to the Paris