

# Olaf Martinus Brauner

*February 9, 1869 — January 3, 1947*

After fifty-two years of association with Cornell University, Olaf Martinus Brauner died at his home in Ithaca on January 3, 1947. He had served the University and the community as teacher and as artist all his mature life.

Professor Brauner was born in Christiana, Norway on February 9, 1869. He came to this country with his parents when he was fourteen years old. He received his art training in the Massachusetts Normal Art School and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and shortly after finishing that training received his first appointment in Cornell University as Instructor of Industrial Art in the Sibley College of Engineering. He was soon promoted to Assistant Professor of Drawing and Painting and received the rank of Professor of Drawing and Painting in 1909.

During the entire period of his association with the College of Architecture, beginning in 1896, he served as head of the Department of the Fine Arts. He retired from active duty in 1939 and received the title of Professor Emeritus. At different times he taught each course given in the Department, sculpture as well as drawing and painting. For over four decades every student of the College of Architecture came under his tutelage.

From the first, and even during those years when his teaching schedule was excessively heavy, Professor Brauner unceasingly pursued his professional creative work. He early established himself in the American art world as a landscape and portrait painter of distinction. Cornell University and Ithaca are rich in the series of portraits he painted during his long career. His productivity continued beyond his retirement until illness made further work impossible.

He was represented in the major national exhibitions for many years and was commissioned to do many portraits of prominent men in America and abroad.

Through his personal associations, he brought the work of many outstanding artists to Ithaca for exhibition. The one which he arranged here for the American Impressionist, Childe Hassam, was the most comprehensive ever held of that artist's work. These exhibitions in Cornell University were possible only because of Professor Brauner's devotion to his art and his untiring efforts to extend its influence.

Olaf Brauner's most important contribution, however, is not revealed or defined by the cataloging of his individual works or the listing of his professional services to the University. It was the status he achieved and the great monument erected for him by the affection and respect that he earned from all who knew him and who studied

under him. For them his memory inevitably includes the many lovable personal and admirable professional qualities that endeared him to all, his breadth of view and his tolerance for diverse approaches, his respect for and encouragement of talent wherever it appeared, his transparent honesty in all matters, and his insistence on the highest standards.

*W. K. Stone, O. D. Von Engeln, K. L. Washburn*