THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date March 23, 1943

To: Mr. Barr
Miss Hawkins
Miss Newmeyer
Mr. Warren
Mr. Wheeler

Re: New therapy show

From: Mr. Soby

The Armed Services Program, pending approval all around, would like to schedule a small therapy section of material from the Chicago School of Design to open in the Auditorium Anti-gallery the week of April 5th and the exact date to be settled by Miss Hawkins and Miss Newmeyer. Miss Carson is doing the layout for the exhibition. The material is already mounted and installations should be very simple.

JTS:mc

on Art in American Education and Society and showed the use of the Fine Arts Media, as opposed to the crafts, in therapy practiced from the psychiatric viewpoint. Apart from examples of work executed by patients of various kind, it included a certain amount of instructional material on the nature and purpose of psychotherapy.

RESULTS OF THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition as a whole has created great interest in the problem of therapy. It has been asked for by more than thirty museums, institutions and colleges. It has been carried over into actual practice in two ways, one for each section of the exhibition.

1. From the Occupational Therapy section a plan has evolved for using artists and craftsmen as instructors in military hospitals. This plan is administered by the Red Cross "Arts and Skills" unit. The unit does not use the word "therapy." Its work is primarily recreational craft work among patients, conducted under the supervision of medical men and professional Red Cross workers in the military hospitals. Presumably

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Mar. 23, 1943

To: Miss Dorothy Miller
cc Mrs. Switzer
Mrs Catlin

Re: various duties and such

From: Mr. Barr
Mr. Soby

Result of conference with A.H.B.:

1. Soby to take over all Ax Com. details from beginning to end except for final formal receipts to donors which are to be done by Mr. Barr. Soby to work throughout with Mrs Catlin.

2. All artists wishing to show works to someone in Museum to be referred to Miss Miller, unless personally known to Soby.

3. Miss Miller to take care of showing new acquisitions of painting and sculpture except in special cases.

8

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date March 22, 1943

To: Mr. Soby

Re:

From: Mr. Barr

Dear Jim: I am asking Leslie Switzer to show you the lists of duties, etc., in which the Director's Office is involved, including the tentative outline of your duties. Would you study these and put down any questions that may have come up during the past three weeks which need more specific allocation - the question, for instance of who should put pictures on the 6th floor.

8

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date March 9.

To: Mrs 0971 60 Sparks St.

Re:

From:

Dear Alfred: I am enclosing a letter from Lincoln which I think will amuse you. I have a copy here. Pernas says she will not have any proof for you before the end of the week, probably Friday. We are in a divine vacuum, a lull between the storms, having read proof madly for the past two days. Hawkins is worrying about the list of people to invite to the opening of the L.A. exhibition, Luis is starting a list, including all exhibitors. I have added the few I am sure of, the Martins, Losadas, Matta; I have a letter here for you from Gattorno in New York, saying me too, of course. Luis says he will out-Dali Dali if we invite him to the opening. Will you please be mulling the list over?

Do hope you are really resting up and are enjoying your visit. Be assured that the MOMA front is quiet.

Lodie

The installation shots are going out to you tonight. Airmail.

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Mar. 18, 1943

Memo on Therapy

THE ARTS IN THERAPY EXHIBITION

Occupational Therapy section: This section of the exhibition was undertaken at the request of the American Occupational Therapy Association for the purpose of bettering craft design and workmanship in therapy by calling upon the suitable talents of American craftsmen for designs and suggestions. It was not in any way meant to be instructional as to what therapy is or should be. It was planned simply as a means of calling attention to the therapy problem in the war emergency and of freshening the supply of available designs and ideas to be used by therapists.

Creative Therapy section: This section was arranged by the Museum-sponsored Committee on Art in American Education and Society and showed the use of the Fine Arts media, as opposed to the crafts, in therapy practiced from the psychiatric viewpoint. Apart from examples of work executed by patients of various kind, it included a certain amount of instructional material on the nature and purpose of psychotherapy.

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Occupational Therapists will soon take part in such supervision and the Red Cross instructors will work under them. Such a solution would be welcomed by both therapists and Red Cross workers, and depends primarily upon authorization from the Surgeon General to include Occupational Therapists on the staffs of military hospitals. The "Arts and Skills" unit is already functioning nationally and with excellent results. In the Manhattan area, the Museum's Advisory Committee on Arts and Skills has appointed a number of leading craftsmen to work in the hospitals. This Committee meets regularly and will supervise the quality of work done as well as determine personnel.

2. The Committee on Art in American Education and Society, sponsor of the Creative Therapy section of our recent exhibition, is holding courses in psycho-therapy under Dr. Edward Liss, a practicing psychiatrist. There is at present no concrete plan to use the graduates of these courses in military hospitals through Red Cross or any other organization, but presumably such a plan will be evolved, pending the approval of military authorities.

POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF OUR THERAPY PROGRAM

Since the exhibition closed here, a number of suggestions have been made as to further activity the Museum might undertake in the therapy field.

1. That the Museum publish a book of designs or models in the crafts, to be used by Occupational Therapists as prescribed work for patients. Mrs. Misson and myself have opposed this plan on the grounds that a) such a book of designs would be quickly exhausted by the patients and could not accomplish as much as artist-instructors could accomplish in the military hospitals through personal inspiration, actual contact with patients, the example of their own skill, and so on b) such a book would tend to freeze craft design and craftsmanship at a given point c) commercially speaking, the designs included would have a very short life in most cases d) the similar book published by the Junior League, with designs by top men in the field, fall far short of

achieving its purpose by the admission both of the Junior League and the Occupational Therapists.

2. That the Museum publish a book of instruction on the use of the arts and crafts in both Occupational and Creative Therapy - a textbook to be used in the numerous courses in therapy now being started all over the country. The book could also accompany the travelling exhibition of "The Arts in Therapy," and would supplement the issue of the Museum's bulletin which was extremely summary in dealing with the problem at hand.

a) The book could go into the whole problem of what therapy is and what it might be. Everyone concerned with the Museum's role in therapy is now more or less agreed that this approach would be primarily a medical one and hence beyond the Museum's scope.

b) The book could be confined to the role of the arts and crafts in Occupational and Creative Therapy with a section of the book devoted to each. In this case, the Occupational Therapy section would consist merely of the craft designs referred to in heading #1 and objected to by Mrs. Misson and myself. The Creative Therapy section, if it did not go into the definition of psychotherapy as related to the arts, would consist only of reproductions of water colors, soap sculptures, finger paintings, and so on. The fact is that psychotherapy can only be explained in terms of psychiatric theory if its real point is to be made. But this point should be made by the psychiatric profession, and it is Mrs. Misson's and my belief that the Museum is not qualified to distinguish between conflicting theories within the profession nor even to present a clear, over-all picture of what psychotherapy is.

Finally it should be pointed out that, so far as we know, none of the College and museum courses for which the instructional book would be designed has in any way been authorized by military authorities. There is a real danger that such courses have been inaugurated to bolster the colleges' and museums' function in wartime, without

regard for military needs or plans, and without assurance that graduates of the courses will find real work to do. And as a matter of Museum policy, we should probably not put ourselves in the position of claiming that the arts and crafts can play more than a minor part in curative medicine whether psychological or physiological.

2. That the Museum arrange and schedule one or more additional exhibitions on therapy, as follows:

a) an exhibition designed to be instructional, to explain what the arts and crafts can do in both Occupational and Creative Therapy. But Occupational Therapy is more or less self-explanatory. It is craft work prescribed as a means of repairing physical injuries or disabilities and for its recreational value. There is almost nothing to make clear about it unless the exhibition were to go into the medical or anatomical side of the question, which would be very difficult (the regular course taken by Occupational Therapists requires three years of study). As noted above, the Creative Therapy section of our exhibition contained instructional material, assembled by the Committee on Art in American Education and Society. Mr. D'Amico, as chairman of the Committee, did an extraordinarily fine job in assembling this material under painfully difficult conditions. It is no discredit to him whatever to say that the instructional material was not entirely clear due to conflicting theories within the psychiatric profession, to the specialized jargon of the profession, and to the theoretical nature of the subject as a whole. I personally believe that the same difficulties would arise again in preparing an instructional exhibition of Creative Therapy. Until the psychiatric profession has come to some sort of unity of theory and clarity of expression, I do not believe we can expect a straightforward account of their premise in therapy. This is not said to minimize the profession's accomplishments, but to point out certain difficulties which would arise if an art institution were to try to present psychiatric theory as it relates to the arts and therapy.

3. Miss Courter has suggested that the Museum prepare two exhibitions to go directly into military hospitals. The first of these would be designed to arouse the interest

of patients in working with the arts and crafts, including material on how objects are made, how pictures are painted, and so on. The second would be a straight art exhibition for the benefit and recreation of "up" patients. Both these exhibitions are sorely needed in military hospitals and would be an excellent help in morale among wounded men. Personnel is available in the hospitals to care for details of unpacking, hanging, etc., and space is available. Moreover, the hospitals are actively interested. But subsidy would be needed, since no hospital funds are available for the purpose.

CONCLUSION

The theory has been advanced that the Museum, having undertaken a therapy exhibition, is now obliged to go on and clarify the problem of therapy so far as possible. Neither Mrs. Misson nor myself feels that this is entirely true. Our exhibition was held as a means of stirring up interest and activity in therapy, since no institution with adequate publicity value seemed to be facing the problem. Moreover, we were naturally anxious to call upon American artists and craftsmen to do a job for which they were clearly qualified. Both of these ends have been accomplished to a certain degree. Medical circles, both governmental and civilian, are more interested than they were and perhaps soon will be more active. American artists and craftsmen all over the country are going into military hospitals to do what no book or exhibition can ever hope to do - inspire, cajole and encourage wounded men to make objects or pictures so that for some of them time will pass less slowly, for some of them, who are permanently disabled, ~~to learn~~ a new skill will be learned which will be of great service to them in the future.

J. J. S.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Feb. 8,1943

To: Mrs. Newhall
c.c. Mr. Barr
Miss Hawkins
Miss Ulrich
Miss Dudley

Re: Photography Dept.

From: Mr. Soby

Nancy: I'd like to confirm the points we agreed upon this morning, as follows:

1. All photographs to be acquired will be given preliminary approval by you, Alfred and myself.

2. A list of photographs which have received this preliminary approval will be attached to the minutes of the Photography Committee. Members of the Committee will not vote on the photographs but of course may express their opinion. A copy of the minutes will go to Miss Ulrich so that the list can be used in checking against Acquisitions Com. lists of photographs.

3. As before, all acquisitions of photographs, whether through gift or purchase, must be approved by the Acquisitions Committee and will not belong to the Museum until so approved.

4. No bills for photographs acquired or ordered will be sent to Miss Ulrich(s office for payment until transactions have been completed and the photographs been received and approved by the Acquisitions Committee.

5. Miss Dudley will not assign Museum numbers to photographs acquired until these photographs have been formally accepted by the Acquisitions Committee.

6. All appointments to the Photography Committee, after being approved by members of the Committee, will be cleared through Miss Hawkins, i.e. notification of appointment will be made by Mr. Clark on behalf of the Museum as a whole.

Hope that does it.

Jim

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Jan. 25,1943

To: Mr. Barr

Re: Coordinating mtg.

From: Mr. Soby

Alfred: Frances says, quite reasonably I think, that it would be helpful if we could report on my duties and responsibilities at the coordinating mtg. Wednesday. Perhaps we could clear away at least a few major points tomorrow and settle them at the meeting. Any time tomorrow would be fine for me. If you have the time, maybe we could go over the problem in the morning and meet with Hawkins after lunch.

forward, why not face it now? The uncertainty is inhibiting. Could you clear this with Jim and let me know? I am all for going on and believe that a really constructive program can be handled quite inexpensively".

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Jan. 5,1943

To: Mr. Barr ✓
Mr. Abbott

Re: Photography Dept.

From: SOBY

Attached is a copy of excerpts from a letter from Dave McAlpin just received by Nancy Newhall. It's more or less self-explanatory, and I should think should be kept in mind when plans for the Dept. are made.

forward, why not face it now? The uncertainty is inhibiting. Could you clear this with Jim and let me know? I am all for going on and believe that a really constructive program can be handled quite inexpensively".

EXCERPT FROM MR. MCALPIN'S LETTER TO MRS. NEWHALL - January 3,1943

"I am prepared to match within reason other funds for Department of Photography --- provided a definite program is undertaken for 1943 --- including at least 2 or 3 shows, however modest. I don't feel in a position to initiate a program but will be glad to discuss and consider promptly any suggestions. I am not going to make any contribution other than for Stieglitz acquisitions --- [A new group of Stieglitz photographs has been proposed but Mr. McAlpin wants to remain anonymous. N. Newhall] however, until assured that the Museum intends to carry on thruout the year --- not just on a 60 day basis. As far as I am concerned if they aren't prepared to carry on and go forward, why not face it now? The uncertainty is inhibiting. Could you clear this with Jim and let me know? I am all for going on and believe that a really constructive program can be handled quite inexpensively".

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date November 8, 1943

To: Mr. Soby

From: Mr. Barr

Re: your memorandum

Dear Jim: I have your memo of November 2nd about the Maillol or Despiau which might be purchased by Laurence Rockefeller. It seems to me that this is a question that under present circumstances you and Dorothy will have to decide.

Sunday, September 27:	5:00 P.M.	79	176

The following statistics were made recently with the Airways to Peace show on the second floor:

		II	III
Saturday, September 4:	5:40 P.M.	41	53
Monday, September 6:	4:30 P.M.	144	156 (holiday)
Saturday, September 11:	6:05 P.M.	12	23
Friday, September 17:	4:25 P.M.	26	31
Saturday, September 25:	2:30 P.M.	55	41
Wednesday, October 27:	3:00 P.M.	23	20

There are certain discrepancies caused perhaps by the time of day or the fact that the movie had let out, but on the whole the Museum Collection seems to me to have held its own or better. Of course it is possible that there was not actually a greater attendance on the third floor, but simply that people stayed longer.

I myself made the count which I assure you is exact.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Nov. 2,1943

To: Mr. Barr ✓
Miss Dorothy Miller

From: Mr. Soby

Re: sale of Maillol or Despiau

Laurance Rockefeller wants to give his wife a smallish Maillol or Despiau for Christmas and has inquired whether we have anything by either artist which we would like to sell from the Permanent Collection.

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART DATE November 9

REQUEST FOR PUBLICATIONS

Kindly send 2 each **copies of the following publications:**

paper
cloth Annual Reports 1939-40
1940-41

To:

Charge to: Direct to Office **Department** **Personal**

Authorized by AHB Dr
per GS.

NO. _____ REC'D _____

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I myself made the count which I assure you is exact.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date November 1, 1945

To: Mr. Soby

Re:

From: Mr. Barr

Dear Jim:

For your use I offer you the following attendance statistics which I made on two occasions in order to discover the comparative numbers of people on the second and third floors.

The following was made in September 1942 when Road to Victory was the much publicized competition for the third floor with its unpublicised and static Museum Collection. Dates and exact time are given:

		II	III
Saturday, September 12:	3:15 P.M.	31	31
Friday, September 25:	5:00 P.M.	9	26
Sunday, September 27:	5:00 P.M.	79	176

The following statistics were made recently with the Airways to Peace show on the second floor:

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I myself made the count which I assure you is exact.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date October 29, 1945

To: Miss Hawkins

Re: memberships

From: Mr. Barr

Dear Frances: Will you please send gift memberships to the Museum to the three names starred on the attached list, and send the bill, with the att ched list, to Miss Clinton, Edgar Kaufmann's secretary, as per request on the list.

of men in the hospitals are interested in photography and would welcome lectures by competent authorities on the technique, history and esthetics of photography. The men are intensely interested in film programs related to the areas in which they faught, i. e. the South Pacific and Africa.

The project as outlined by Major Barton is a straight educational one and has nothing to do with vocational training or rehabilitation except very indirectly. The program would be undertaken on a regional basis, that is we would provide shows, lectures, etc. only for the 2nd Command Area (New York, New Jersey, Delaware).

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date October 22, 1943

To: Mr. Barr, Miss Dudley, Miss Miller

From: Mr. Soby

Re: Acquisitions Committee meeting

There will be a meeting of the Acquisitions Committee on Wednesday, October 27, at 4:30 p.m. in the Trustees Room.

of men in the hospitals are interested in photography and would welcome lectures by competent authorities on the technique, history and esthetics of photography. The men are intensely interested in film programs related to the areas in which they faught, i. e. the South Pacific and Africa.

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JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date October 4, 1943

To: Mr. Barr
Department Heads

Re: Educational Services for the Army

From: Mr. Soby

Major Walter Barton, who is in charge of therapy in the Army's Surgeon General's Office, has asked me to prepare a report on educational services which the Museum might provide for wounded men in military hospitals. These services would consist primarily of exhibitions, lectures and film programs. Subsidy would be arranged either by the Army, from private sources, or both.

Various Museum Trustees feel this is one of the most important jobs the Museum can undertake in relation to the war, and the report to Major Barton should be both specific and comprehensive. Could you therefore prepare rough lists of exhibitions, lectures and lecturers. We could then get together and discuss this in a week or so. Sorry to ask this favor when everyone is so busy but without the help of your departments we could not undertake such a program.

To give a specific example of what Barton is interested in: a great number of men in the hospitals are interested in photography and would welcome lectures by competent authorities on the technique, history and esthetics of photography. The men are intensely interested in film programs related to the areas in which they faught, i. e. the South Pacific and Africa.

The project as outlined by Major Barton is a straight educational one and has nothing to do with vocational training or rehabilitation except very indirectly. The program would be undertaken on a regional basis, that is we would provide shows, lectures, etc. only for the 2nd Command Area (New York, New Jersey, Delaware).

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date October 21, 1943

cc: Mr. Abbott
Mr. Barr
Miss Newmeyer
Mr. Wheeler

To: Miss Hawkins

Re: last Museum Council meeting

From: Mr. Soby

Frances:

At the meeting of the Museums Council last night, copies of the attached Inter-Museum Schedule were given all members present. According to the Council and to Dr. Irene Cypher, of the Natural History Museum, who has been acting as secretary for the schedule, the list includes every exhibition of which Dr. Cypher was informed. It was promptly pointed out on all sides that the list contains not a single opening date for this Museum. This general charge was followed by Horace Jayne's statement that this Museum was the single serious offender in scheduling exhibitions and insisting on retaining opening dates even if in conflict with those scheduled by other Museums. Jayne was backed up by nodding heads all around the table.

Since I had assured the Council on two separate occasions that we would inform Dr. Cypher of our exhibition dates, my position of representative of this Museum was awkward to say the least. I could only assure the Council that I would try to investigate and see that we took care of the matter in the future. It seems to me of the greatest importance that we do so or, if we are not willing to do so, that we resign from the Council and go our own way without regard to the other Museums which we all agree would be a great mistake.

The Council has established a new system for recording exhibition dates. Dr. Cypher has been officially appointed as Registrar of the schedule with the Council. Each month her office will issue a yearly schedule similar to the one attached which will give all dates shceduled with her. She will of course need to know so far as possible in advance. I explained that the terrific pressure of our schedule sometimes made it impossible for us to know [redacted] very long in advance when we were going to open an exhibition. But I do think that under the new system there can be no real excuse for our not playing ball with the other museums. Won't you please see that this is done?

JTS:mc

MUSEUMS COUNCIL OF NEW YORK CITY

Inter-Museum Schedule of Exhibits, 1943-1944

FALL, 1943

DATE	MUSEUM	EXHIBIT
October 1	Brooklyn Museum	"Wood Blocks in Color"
" 4)	Metropolitan (Cloisters)	"Saints for Soldiers"(Press)
5)	" "	" " " (Public)
" 7	Museum, City of New York	"Photographs of Children of Harlem War-Workers"
" 9	Metropolitan (Junior Museum)	"Fashioned in Wood"
" 18)	Metropolitan Museum	"W.P.A. Prints" (Press)
19)	" "	" " (Public)
" 26)	Museum of Costume Art	"Asiatic Design; Russian Costume
27)	" " " "	" " " "
" 28	Museum, City of New York	"American Counterpoint"
November 1)	Metropolitan Museum	"Beauty of Greece" (Press)
" 2)	" "	" " " (Public); also Opening of Holiday Shop
" 3)	" "	"Russian Art in the War"(Press and Private)
)		
4)	" "	" " (Public)
" 8)	" "	"Classic Revival" (Press)
" 9)	" "	" " (Private)
10)	" "	" " (Public)
" 13	" (Junior Museum)	"Children's Book Week"
" 14	Am.Mus. Natural History	"Children's Book Week"
" 16	Museum, City of New York	Date and Title to be confirmed
" 23	Brooklyn Museum	"Painting of 'The Eight'"
December 6)	Metropolitan Museum	"Blumenthal Collection"(Private)
7)	" "	" " (Press)
8)	" "	" " (Public)
" 12	Am.Mus.Natural History	"Pictorial Photographers of America"
" 14	Museum, City of New York	"Fun and Folly in New York"
" 14)*	Metropolitan Museum	"Penn.German Design" (Press)
15)*	" "	" " " (Public)
	[This reservation tentative - museum to clear conflict]	
" 16	Brooklyn Museum	"Exhibit of Ceramics"

Inter-Museum Schedule of Exhibits (continued)

SPRING AND FALL 1944

DATE	MUSEUM	EXHIBIT
January 10)	Metropolitan Museum	"Naval Aviation" (Press)
" 11)	" "	" " (Private)
12)	" "	" " (Public)
February 3	Brooklyn Museum	"Top of the World"
" 14)	Metropolitan Museum	"Polish Paintings" (Press)
" 15)	" "	" " (Private)
" 16)	" "	" " (Public)
April 5	Brooklyn Museum	"Brooklyn Artists"
May 26	Brooklyn Museum	"150 Years of American Costume"
October 10	Brooklyn Museum	"Paintings of Theodore Robinson"

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date October 7, 1943

To: Mr. Barr
Department Heads

Re: ~~pictures for offices~~

From: Mr. Soby

Staff members have recently complained that paintings from the Permanent Collection have been removed from their offices and not replaced by other works. The Department of Painting and Sculpture regrets that this has been true but would like to make clear the reasons for it.

1. Constant demands on the Permanent Collection for outside loans and exhibitions in the Museum make difficult the task of replacing pictures for thirty odd offices.

2. The Department of Painting and Sculpture cannot replace pictures taken from offices for several weeks due to the pressure of the exhibition schedule.

3. Even when the department can care for office requests promptly there is often a delay in hanging due to the shortage in manpower in the Production Manager's office.

To help remedy the situation the following procedure has been established: each office will be required to request pictures or replacements of pictures by written memo to Miss Dorothy Miller specifying what pictures would be preferred and by which artist. Choice must be based upon a written list of available pictures to be prepared at four months intervals by Miss Miller's office (the Museum's policy is not to use major works in offices since donors might be offended at seeing their pictures there rather than in the galleries). Requests will be complied with in order of arrival and hanging will be arranged in that order by memo from Miss Miller's office to Mr. Warren's office.

Much of the present delay can be avoided if each office will follow this procedure.

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Oct 16

To: Alfred

From: Mimi

Re:

the envelope is stamped so that you can mail it. I hope it is o.K.

Mimi

Jim took Tangy and because Pierre wants it back.

warm or less about the Cuban show, though I said you were the only one qualified to say how interesting such a show would be. I do think the drawing show would be more interesting, especially if done by Agnes, provided she has the time. But as I said over the 'phone the Ex Com. agreed to reconsider the Cuban show if you felt strongly about it. I gather you do, though I somehow didn't think so from your memo which Monroe read complete. Morgan's industrial show was approved for half the ground floor rather than the whole space. Everyone agreed that this show was not to replace the Since 1918 show but was merely a filler-in.

Guess that does it, but anyway you can always reach me at Farmington 349. Best.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

James Thrall Soby · Farmington · Connecticut

To:

From:

Aug. 21,1943

Dear Alfred:

I'm trying to work out some sort of schedule for our publications dept. on the text for the Romantic book. I've gone terribly stale on it the past two days from reading up so steadily and fussing with the text, but I hope to have the 19th century section done, in fairly final form, by Sept. 1. I'll then come up here for two weeks and do the 20th century part. I've told Dorothy that I'd leave a copy of the 19th century section for her and Eddie to go over and mail one to you Sept. 1 if convenient. Would that be O.K.? Just drop me a card. I think if we get the whole works in by Sept. 15th, we'll be done in time. Meanwhile we'll get some plates started. Dorothy, Monroe and I are all strong for the Graves blind blackbird in color - a kind of symbol of Romanticism and also a very recent work discovered by the Museum. For a 19th century color plate, D. and I would like the Ryder, Jonah and the Whale, but it won't be in the show and we may not be able to borrow it long enough for a plate job. Maybe another Ryder would do, or have you other suggestions. It seemed to D. and me that Jonah was perhaps the peak Romantic picture of the 19th. It's going to pieces rapidily and a good color plate would be a valuable record.

In rough numbers the show now stacks up as 75 19th century pics, 100 20th, a good proportion I think. But you may be horrified to learn that the text, as it stands, will run to around 50 typewritten pages on the 19th century, around 15 on the 20th. Dorothy thinks this is O.K. and I do too now that I've got over the shock. Since no book exists which sets up a Romantic continuity in the 19th century, it was

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

James Thrall Soby · Farmington · Connecticut

To:

From:

Alfred:
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hard to compress this section. As a duffer in the field, I perhaps shouldn't have tried to establish this continuity, but the material was fascinating, etc., etc. And there is less to say about the 20th century boys, and that section isn't complete yet so that I'll have to do it in the last two weeks before the deadline. I'd like to use much of it to build a chronological order with references back to the 19th century, i.e. Hartley to Ryder, Hopper to Homer, Graves to the Ryder Dead Bird, etc. Anyway, you'll have the 19th century part soon. We'll have plenty of plates even with this fairly long text, since the publications dept. dummy called for 25,000 and, so help me, I won't go over 20,000 words.

When you get back in September, perhaps we can make another stab at the industrial photo show with Goodyear. Nancy is very enthusiastic about it, Morgan in no way discouraged by his first rebuff, the new quarters very handsome. Incidentally, Beaumont recently wrote: "In retrospect, the lack of definite plan was the weakest point in the 1937 show. What Paul Strand said was more true than I could admit, that to include x ray, scientific photography and cameras was like putting a section on house painting in a general painting show." I mention this in a spirit of formal debate, in reply to your charge that I might be listening to anti-Newhall propaganda in thinking the Photo Dept. needed broadening. Actually I talked with Beau many times and at length about photography and I know how broad his taste was. I feel sure he would approve the industrial show as Nancy does, and I think they're both right in feeling it should be done separately rather than as a section in an historical-fine arts show like the Since 1918. In saying I thought the Dept. needed broadening, I wasn't attacking Beau or Nancy, but the era of limited funds, secret meetings, and general kicking around which - as I've said many times - I never believed was Beau's fault.

(over)

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Aug. 30, 1943

To:

From

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Didn't mean to go on about this at such length, but with the prospect of getting the Last Word I turn indefatigable. Best, love to Marga.

Jim

P.S. I was perhaps touchy on this last subject because I had defended Beau against the assembled pack until a late hour at 21, the night before your letter came. But I had an ally in Gregory who, though a little tipsy and flushed from the success of his Bali opening that afternoon -it has been well liked by the public and military and got fine publicity - was still able to say in a sonorous voice from time to time; "The Museum needs all the intellectuals and scholars it can get." He's got something there.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Aug. 30,1943

To: Mr. Barr ✓

Re: general

From: Mr. Soby

Alfred: I'm leaving this afternoon for Farmington, but will be back for the day next Wednesday, Sept. 8. Hope we can have lunch together then. I feel a trace guilty hopping off at this point, but I must work on the 20th century section of the R. show in peace and quiet or I'll lever get it done, particularly since it has to be wrotten out of the head rather than with the help of books.

After a long correspondence with K. Dreier, the Duchamp glass is arriving on September 9th (I've told Leslie where the correspondence is in case something comes up). As you'll see, I finally didn't send Sunami out to photograph the condition of the glass since there are adequate photos available. I assumed that you didn't want to put the glass up right away, and Marcel can come back to supervise that,or if you do want it up now he can stay and tend to it.

I should explain that at the Exhibitions Com. meeting yesterday I was lukewarm or less about the Cuban show, though I said you were the only one qualified to say how interesting such a show would be. I do think the drawing show would be more interesting, especially if done by Agnes, provided she has the time. But as I said over the 'phone the Ex Com. agreed to reconsider the Cuban show if you felt strongly about it. I gather you do, though I somehow didn't think so from your memo which Monroe read complete. Morgan's industrial show was approved for half the ground floor rather than the whole space. Everyone agreed that this show was <u>not</u> to replace the Since 1918 show but was merely a filler-in.

Guess that does it, but anyway you can always reach me at Farmington 349. Best.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Aug. 30,1943

To: Mr. Barr ✓
Miss Miller and Mr. Cahill

From:
Mr. Soby

Re: 19th cent. Romantic text

Herewith the 19th century section. I've worked it over several times, but there are still a few changes I want to make over the next two weeks.

1. I don't like the opening two pages, particularly page 2. They were done at the beginning, after Alfred and I talked about a general preamble and before I could see how the material was coming out. I'd like to have page 2 a more general chronological survey of American Romantic painting, and perhaps page 1 doesn't give full enough information about Romantic subject matter and what it is. So please don't consider these pages as final.

2. Maybe the Hunt section is out of proportion. There was so much material on him and I found it so fascinating that I made it a bit long. Will try to cut. The Allston and Cole sections are long too, but I think they rate it as key Romantics.

3. Vanderlyn and Inman are missing. I just plain didn't have time to work them in, but will try again.

4. I tried to base the order on dates of creative activity rather than birth. But in one case - Russell and Remington - I changed this procedure for the sake of continuity. There didn't seem much point in giving those two bang-bang boys a section to themselves later in the text.

5. The plate references are not final. I will rework them from cards which Dorothy and I made out.

6. There will be more about Ryder in the 20th century section. In fact I will start the section by picking up Ryder as the greatest single influence on the moderns

7. Please check factual material such as dates, names of artists, etc. Working at that speed it was impossible to be sure, though I went over this kind of material several times. I think it might help to give the dates of artists as they are first mentioned and will add them if you approve.

8. I hope the footnotes can appear at the foot of the pages a) because I personally hate fishing for them at the back of a book and b) because some are tied in pretty closely with the text. Perhaps too many references are given for short quotations, but ~~after~~ since the "magic realism" business I've been a burnt child and would rather have too many than too few.

Many thanks to all of you.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date August 13, 1943

cc: Mr. Barr
Miss Dudley
Miss Miller

To: Mr. Karpel

From: Mr. Soby

Re: negatives of new acquisitions

Bernard:
I think your idea of trying to acquire negatives of the photographs of paintings we acquire is a fine one. From now on in our letters confirming acquisitions deals we will ask the dealers involved to supply the negatives and will offer to supply them with prints when wanted at the standard price.

It will be important to assure the photographers used by the galleries that orders for prints will be routed through them so that they will not lose by this arrangement.

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date July 15, 1943

To: c. Mr. Barr
Department Heads

Re: Loans of pictures

From: Mr. Soby

In the minutes of the Coordinating Committee meeting of January 27, 1943 there is the following paragraph under the heading "duties of the Assistant Director":

> LOANS: All requests for loans from the Museum Collection to our own exhibitions or to other museums, etc., should be referred to Mr. Soby, who will in turn consult the curators and the Registrar. These requests must be confirmed in writing before the loans can be granted.

This provision was intended to include all requests for loans from the Museum Collection to be put on public display in the Museum whether on the 6th floor, the ground floor, the auditorim galleries or the 2nd and 3rd floor galleries, and was also to include small groups of pictures put up temporarily for a special purpose such as publicity and decoration for Museum functions or parties. Will you therefore kindly notify this office by written memo as far in advance as possible when items from the Permanent Collection are needed on the walls. I will then ask the appropriate curators to see that they are put up. This office will confirm such requests by memo. Without written confirmation from this office department heads should not count on the work being done.

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date July 6,1943

To: Mr. Barr

Re:

From: Mr. Soby

Mr. Clark 'phoned to ask whether he could pick up today a copy of your introduction to the survey of American painting. I think he meant the new survey of modern painting, but wasn't clear on this point. He said he'd pick it up at the Exhib. Com. this afternoon.

Have you any objection to the Magazine of Art being evicted from the Goodwin House on proper notice?

however that to get a wise and balanced list, some adjustments may be necessary after a straight ballot.

Sincerely,

Mr. James Thrall Soby
Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

AHB:mc

P. S. We are making some soundings as to saleability. Raymond and other dealers have been asked for opinions and I have asked Ruth Olson, our head docent, to do a little checking on six or seven things hanging.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date June 29, 1943

To: Mr. Soby cc. Miss Miller
Miss Dudley

Re: ~~Possible acquisitions~~

From: Mr. Barr

Dear Jim: Here are some notes on possible acquisitions:
1) Dorothy and I went to Julien Levy's and picked out three paintings by Maurice Grosser for consideration. You remember that some of his friends wanted to give an example to the Museum; the pictures are now here.
2) I looked again at the Vuillard ches Wildenstein and thought it so fine that I had it sent over. I have also asked Andre Weil to send us his picture of Roussel and His Daughter. I am not sure we want either of them but felt both were quite good pictures.
3) Extended loans: Philip Johnson's pictures have arrived. They include a Matta, two Klees and a fine Masson drawing.

however that to get a wise and balanced list, some adjustments may be necessary after a straight ballot.

Sincerely,

Mr. James Thrall Soby
Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

AHB:mc

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date June 25

To:

Re:

From:

Alfred:

A package arrived from Boston addressed to you containing the following:

2 Klees
1 Matta "Endless Nudes"
Masson ink drawing
Halberstadt "The New House" watercolor, owner Philip Johnson

What should be done with it. Will you let me or Dudley know.

Mimi

however that to get a wise and balanced list, some adjustments may be necessary after a straight ballot.

Sincerely,

Mr. James Thrall Soby
Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

AHB:mc

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date May 22. 1943

To: Mr. Barr

Re:

From: Mr. Soby

Alfred:
As I understand it you will write Mrs. Hare thanking her for the Lopez and will also write Mrs. Brixey regarding the Brixey Bequest and finally that you will write Nelson regarding the Martins sculpture and write "eyhe about the Archipenko.

however that to get a wise and balanced list, some adjustments may be necessary after a straight ballot.

Sincerely,

Mr. James Thrall Soby
Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

AHB:mc

P. S. We are making some soundings as to saleability. Raymond and other dealers have been asked for opinions and I have asked Ruth Olson, our head docent, to do a little checking on six or seven things hanging.

Soby

cc: Mr. Clark
Mr. Wheeler

June 23, 1943

Dear Jim:

This is a ballot which Mr. Clark asked me to send you on the color reproduction problem. In the first list are pictures which are being given serious consideration. In the second list are other suggestions which have come up. Mr. Clark suggests making a selection by vote among the four of us, himself, monroe, you and me. I think however that to get a wise and balanced list, some adjustments may be necessary after a straight ballot.

Sincerely,

Mr. James Thrall Soby
Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

AHB:mc

P. S. We are making some soundings as to saleability. Raymond and other dealers have been asked for opinions and I have asked Ruth Olson, our head docent, to do a little checking on six or seven things hanging.

cc: Mr. Clark
Mr. Wheeler

June 23, 1943

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Sincerely,

Mr. James Thrall Soby
Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

AHB:mc

P. S. We are making some soundings as to saleability. Raymond and other dealers have been asked for opinions and I have asked Ruth Olson, our head docent, to do a little checking on six or seven things hanging.

COLOR REPRODUCTIONS LIST I

Renoir: Moulin de la Galette (Whitney)
Seurat: Port Scene (Levy)
Seurat: Parade (Clark)
Cezanne: Pines and Rocks (MOMA)
Rousseau: Sleeping Gypsy "
Rouault: The Clown (Edward G. Robinson)
Picasso: Seated Woman (Soby)
Toulouse Lautrec: ? (Mrs. Levy)
Van Gogh: Starry Night (MOMA)
Hartley: The Wave "
Pickett: Manchester Valley (MOMA)
Sheeler: American Landscape "
Braque: Table (M)MA)
Picasso: Still Life with Bread (M)MA)

COLOR REPRODUCTIONS LIST II

Cezanne: Still Life with Cherries and Peaches (Levy)
Van Gogh: Self Portrait (Wertheim)
Derain: Le Cormuse (Soby)
Hopper: New York Movie (or another) (MMA)
Tamayo: Dogs (MMA)
Matisse: Blue Window (MMA)
Rivera: Zapata

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date June 23, 1943

To: Mr. Soby cc: Miss Miller **Re:**

From: Mr. Barr

Dear Jim:

Here are some bibliographical notes which Lloyd Goodrich gave me.

1. Vanderlyn: Miss Louisa Hunt Averill is doing a thesis - alas I have not put down where she is working.
2. Tuckerman: On painting c. 1830
3. Noble: On Cole
4. Noble: On Church
5. Carl Carmer: Hudson River School in book of Rivers of America series
6. Parker Leslie: On Thomas Cole in recent Art Quarterly.

AHB:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date June 18, 1943

To: Mr. Soby

Re: attached

From: Mr. Barr

Dear Jim: I think this is a really intelligent man. Perhaps you can think of some way in which he could find a job. Since he combines a knowledge of medicine and therapy with art. Thank you.

I met somebody at the Waldorf for Mrs. Lopez. Alfred was with Mrs. Dehm. This chap was extremely nice but remarkable in that he is going to cross the continent via the Amazon in a few weeks and he is partially blind - looking up to the ceiling all the time. Oh, how I wish I could talk to Alfred. Tell him this:

"We are starting an art gallery at the Instituto Chileno Norte Americano de Culture to help the Chilean artists sell their stuff and to create an art minded public. At present out of 150 professional artists in Santiago ninety per cent have never sold a work in their lives and the logical patrons of the arts commission only copies of 2nd rate European masters. We have a double plan: a three months rotating exhibition of 40 pictures by living Chileans, one picture to an artist. These fill the whole building, are meant to interest visitors in buying them. Price information in mimeographed form will be given rather than asked for. At the end of 3 months a new set of 40 pictures is put in. Sales will be replaced at the discretion of the Committee in charge. The second part of the plan is to use the huge living room of the new building for a gallery for consecutive special or one man shows. I drew the whole thing up in great detail and the Board ate it up. I will send a copy when it is printed."

Levine

P. S. I shall become a citizen on May 28th so that you won't have a enemy alien around the office anymore. I remember once when we had lunch with Tod and Jim you said that I got to look more like an enemy alien every day. None of that any more!

I.A.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date May 26, 1943

To: Mr. Barr

Re: letter from Tod

From: Mrs. Catlin

"I met somebody ~~who~~ last night who said he met Alfred at a cocktail party at the Waldorf for Mrs. Lopez. Alfred was with Mrs. Dehn. This chap was extremely nice but remarkable in the brief contact only because he is going to cross the continent via the Amazon in a few weeks and he is partially blind - looking up to the ceiling all the time. Oh, how I wish I could talk to Alfred. Tell him this:

We are starting an art gallery at the Instituto Chileno Norte Americano de Cultura to help the Chilean artists sell their stuff and to create an art minded public. At present out of 150 professional artists in Santiago nintey per cent have never sold a work in their lives and the logical patrons of the arts commission only copies of 2nd rate European masters. We have a double plan: a three months rotating exhibition of 40 pictures by living Chileans, one picture to an artist. These fill the whole building, are meant to interest visitors in buying them. Price information in mimeographed form will be given rather than asked for. At the end of 3 months a new set of 40 pictures is put in. Sales will be replaced at the discretion of the Committee in charge. The second part of the plan is to use the huge living room of the new building for a gallery for consecutive special or one man shows. I drew the whole thing up in great detail and the Board ate it up. I will send a copy when it is printed."

Jerome

P. S. I shall become a citizen on May 28th so that you won't have a enemy alien around the office anymore. I remember once when we had lunch with Tod and Jim you said that I got to look more like an enemy alien every day. None of that any more!

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date May 8, 1943

To: Mr. Barr

Re: letter from Tod

From: Mrs. Catlin

"The local committee has sponsored my idea to convert my lectures into a book - the first history of North American Art in Spanish - 36 lectures or chapters. Publication is up to Washington but they are allowing me sufficient help to whip it into printable shape. In addition: monographs on Autierrez (watercolorist) Herrera, Chillan Murals, and Chilean pottery are underway. Also there are plans afoot to make the Institute serve as a gallery and I am now arranging the first exhibition.

"I am also starting to work, in a modest way, on drawing and painting again. I am drawing from life in one of the evening classes on the days I don't have my evening lecture and getting the thrill of my life from it. In addition to my evening class on Tues. & Thurs, I am giving the cut part of the Life and Culture Course at the Institute and soon will be collaborating with Pereyra on the History of American Art (general). The real work comes, however, in preparing my big lectures for the Tues-Thus course.... (at the University)

"Try to make Alfred believe that all I do is think of him even if I don't write."

Mimi

Next - Officer's Training. There is a School for Special Service at Lexington, Va. However, it is only for those who are already officers. They can be sent there by their commanding officers.

In short, it will be necessary for the men you speak of to first take their 13 weeks basic training - then to apply for regular OTS in some arm or branch of the Service and then to go to Special Service School after that.

After they are in and permanently assigned, get in touch with Capt. Sackas. He will then give you some factual advice I'M sure.

I have been here .....

Sincerely,

Leslie Pearl
Major

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date May 28,1943

To: Mr. Barr ✓
c. to Miss Dudley

Re: Posters

From: Mr. Soby

Alfred: Dorothy Dudley has sorted out a great number of the posters by artist and nationality. If we could go over them any day next week, she could then go ahead and register the ones we want to keep.

Next - Officer's Training. There is a School for Special Service at Lexington, Va. However, it is only for those who are already officers. They can be sent there by their commanding officers.

In short, it will be necessary for the men you speak of to first take their 13 weeks basic training - then to apply for regular OTS in some arm or branch of the Service and then to go to Special Service School after that.

After they are in and permanently assigned, get in touch with Capt. Sackas. He will then give you some factual advice I'M sure.

I have been here .....

Sincerely,

Leslie Pearl
Major

Director's Office

C
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April 20, 1943

Dear Mr. Soby:

I was glad to get your letter of the 16th although I'm not sure whether I can answer it helpfully.

The thing is a little complicated. The Special Service Division is a Headquarters Staff Division, consisting of only about 100 officers all in Washington. All of them are either regular army officers or were commissioned direct from civil life. There are no enlisted men in the Division.

However, all units of the Army (from regiments on up) have Special Service men - officers and enlisted men - just as they have military police or signal corps men. However these are appointed by the Commanding Officer of the unit. They are not appointed by and are not answerable to the Special Service Division in Washington.

Generally speaking, the S. S. Division simply makes policy and prepares material for the use of S. S. men in the field.

How does a drafted man get to be in Special Service? Thats not easy to answer. About the best he can do is to request it at all times and hope for the best. When permanently assigned, he can seek out the S.S. Officer of his unit and explain his background and qualifications.

Next - Officer's Training. There is a School for Special Service at Lexington, Va. However, it is only for those who are already officers. They can be sent there by their commanding officers.

In short, it will be necessary for the men you speak of to first take their 13 weeks basic training - then to apply for regular OTS in some arm or branch of the Service and then to go to Special Service School after that.

After they are in and permanently assigned, get in touch with Capt. Sackas. He will then give you some factual advice I'M sure.

I have been here .....

Sincerely,

Leslie Pearl
Major

BUDGET

Department of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts

Office of the Director and Assistant Director

Framing, restoration, etc., including $250 for poster mounting	$1250.
Expenses, travel, complimentary catalogs, etc.	$200.
Travel (for scouting purposes and to see important exhibitions in other cities), complimentary catalogs, miscellaneous departmental expenses.	$500.
Departmental photography (collection)	$10.

BUDGET

Department of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts

Curatorial expenses:	framing or mounting, cleaning, restoration, etc., including $250 for poster mounting	$1250.
Travel (for scouting purposes and to see important exhibitions in other cities), complimentary catalogs, miscellaneous departmental expenses.		300.
Departmental photography (collection)		250.

BUDGET

Office of the Director and Assistant Director

Expenses, travel, complimentary catalogs, etc. $200.

CONFIDENTIAL

cc: Mr. Barr
Mrs. Newhall

April 30, 1943

Dear Dick -

I will be over in the morning. But meanwhile the whole photography situation is complicated enough so that I feel we should both have some written record of our beliefs in the matter. So as Chairman of the Department of Photography I will outline here some of the points I would like to recommend if and when the new setup is organized.

1) If, on the basis of his report and after consultation between those of us directly involved , Willard Morgan should be appointed Director of Photography I feel, and I think you agree, that Beaumont Newhall should continue as Curator. In his absence I feel that Nancy Newhall should be appointed Acting Curator since her present title would be almost meaningless under the new system.

2) I think that the differences in duties between the Director and the Curator should be roughly what they are in other departments of the Museum, that is the Curator would be in full charge of acquisitions, research, and so forth and would be called upon to do such exhibitions as were clearly in his province, i.e. general historical shows, exhibitions of acquisitions and of special subjects. The Director on the other hand would be responsible for the financial contacts of the department, for general promotion and public relations, and for exhibitions of which he might be appointed director by the Exhibitions Committee and Wheeler and Barr.

3) I think that the curatorial budget for expenses would have to be enlarged in line with the department's expansion as a whole. Also I feel that in all fairness the Director and Curator should receive equal salaries.

4) On Beaumont's return I feel he should become Curator on a fulltime basis since the combined jobs of Curator and Librarian would be too much for anyone to handle.

That covers all the main points I can think of at the moment. If other points occur to me I will put them in writing too so that we will all have a clear record. As I told you last night, I approve in principle of Morgan's being added to the staff. I like him very much and I believe he could add a great deal to our activity in photography. But I do think we should look at his report carefully before making a decision, and that you, Alfred and I ought to go over the situation before any definite decision is reached.

Best to you, see you tomorrow.

Mr. John E. Abbott
221 East 49 Street
New York, New York

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date April 7

To: Mr. Soby

Re: Ax Committee report

From: Mr. Barr

Jim -
I would suggest correcting the Ax Committee report in the last minutes of the Trustees Meeting by omitting the Hartley and Tunnard entirely since they are not yet purchased, and by adding the sources of the Latin American acquisitions; credit to donors or funds is essential to the listing in the Trustees minutes.

AHB:mc

REFUGEE FILE (Not active)

MR. BARR'S CORRESPONDENCE

FILES -

MR. SOBY:

THERAPY

ART IN WAR, armed services program

ACQUISITIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Director's Office

ACQUISITIONS COMMITTEE: work pending
preliminary and final reports

— Formal receipts + letters.

Cards to lenders, donors and artists re work on exhibition.

Soby — Work to be brought in for consideration from galleries and artists

Soby — Gifts to the museum of books, reproductions, etc. that do not come before the Committee

Soby — Work rejected without coming before committee

REQUESTS FOR LOANS — Soby

LATIN AMERICAN FILE

MISS MILLER'S CORRESPONDENCE

REFUGEE FILE (Not active)

MR. BARR'S CORRESPONDENCE

FILES —

MR. SOBY:

THERAPY

ART IN WAR, armed services program

ACQUISITIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Leslie Switzer

1/26/43

Work done now:

Requests for loans

Latin American file

Refugee File (not active)

Miss Miller's correspondence

Mr. Barr's correspondence

Files

Last Ax Committee report

AX:

1. Cards to lenders, donors and artists re work on exhibition
2. Gifts that do not come before the Committee: books, etc.
3. Some of the work rejected without coming before the Committee
4. Some of the work brought in for consideration.

Suggested work:

Mr. Barr's correspondence

Latin American file

N (1 - 4 above) Acquisitions Committee reports, etc.

Files

Perhaps helping Lisi on her work on exhibitions, lists, etc.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

J. T. SOBY
DIRECTOR OF THE ARMED SERVICES PROGRAM

THINGS TO BE DONE FOR ARMED SERVICES PROGRAM:

1. Finish proofs on therapy bulletin (today)
2. Placing of objects in therapy show opening Feb. 2
3. Labels for therapy show

4. Red Cross meetings and courses for artist-instructors, Feb. 1 and 3 (probably evenings 7:30 to 10:00).

5. General
   Complete reorganization of Armed Services files
   Back correspondence (very little)

POSSIBLE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JOBS (haven't really had chance to think about this)

1. Work out with D'Amico plan for better integration of Educational Dept. with museum.

2. Work with Karpel on methods of improving bookshop contacts, keeping museum informed on new publications for library, etc., etc.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date January 26, 1943

To: Mr. Barr

Re:

From: Miss Courter

The preparation of circulating exhibitions of painting, sculpture, graphic arts, posters and sometimes color reproductions is usually under the supervision of the Director, unless these shows have been assembled first for exhibition at the Museum, in which case any questions as to contents are referred to Mr. Wheeler. Most of these "special" traveling exhibitions are assembled from the Collection and it is therefore necessary to consult the Director regarding items which may be borrowed for tour.

The preparation of these shows also entails label material - explanatory and biographical - on which the Director's approval is requested.

(In the other departments - architecture, industrial design, films and sometimes photography, - the Director of Circulating Exhibitions usually suggests a special circulating exhibition which is then worked out by the Curator and after the material has been partially assembled the form and actual contents of the show are decided upon by the Director of Circulating Exhibitions. It would probably be more satisfactory if exhibitions of painting, sculpture, etc. could be worked out in the same manner. Factors against this procedure are the overwhelming number of such shows needed for tour and the lack of "blank periods" during the year when the e shows could be assembled by the department of painting and sculpture.)

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date January 26, 1943

To: Miss Hawkins

From: Miss Carson

Re: Mr. Barr and the Architecture and Industrial Design Departments

We consult Mr. Barr on the following for both departments:

1) Approval of acquisitions, either gifts or purchases

2) O.K. on loans of acquisitions to Museums, etc. and labels pertaining to same

3) Approval of large exhibition signs for Marquee, etc.

4) Exhibition plans

5) Plans for the Bulletin and larger publications

6) Approval of notes on Architecture Committee meetings

7) Membership on Architecture and Industrial Design Committees

8) Any structural changes in the Museum building for offices, exhibition space, etc.

---especially for the Industrial Design Department:

9) Deciding matters of policy and projects between the Museum, manufacturers and designers.

Alice C.

The Director's office has in theory no direct or supervisory responsibility for exhibitions which, after the exhibition and exhibition director have been approved by the Exhibitions Committee, are supposed to be the responsibility of Mr. Wheeler. However, the appointment of a curator to direct an exhibition must have the approval of Mr. Soby.

Mr. Soby is, however, available for consultation on the initiative of Mr. Wheeler or the director of the exhibition.

After the exhibition is up Mr. Soby will be free to criticize or make suggestions particularly in reference to future practice.

Acquisitions

From Mrs V Beck

Matters usually referred to the Director

Acquisition:

(a) Committee of pl purchases of pl.

(b) allocation of purchases to funds & according to fund restrictions if any.

(c) Valuations & identification of gifts for permanent acq record which is included in "Accts" of Museum & also included in individual gift record.

Acquisitions

Calling meetings – Soby

~~Assembling lists from departments (with curators and registrar)~~
~~Assembling objects~~
~~Supervising preparation of meeting~~

Assembling lists from curators

Assembling objects from outside building (curators and registrar)

~~Organizing and [illegible] minutes (with [illegible])~~

Organization of meeting agenda, planning and physical preparation (with registrar)

Minutes (including lists)

~~Report for Trust Chairman to read at Trustees meeting~~

~~and~~ Revision of minutes for report to Trustees

~~Final Revision~~

Final Revision of Minutes of report for Trustees minutes

Ph

New Acquisitions

Photographing

Soby to check lists before returning to registrar and curators

Accessioning (exact description, ~~[illegible]~~ relations with artist — Registrar + curators)

Exhibition

Soby to work out a schedule consulting with Curators, ~~[illegible]~~ Wheeler, and Hawkins

Soby

Acquisitions

Mr. Soby will be responsible for drawing up lists, arranging meetings of the Committee, making reports, etcetera.

Curators should submit proposed acquisitions to him.

Mr. Soby will also OK payments for acquisitions.

Loans

All requests for loans from the Museum Collection to our own exhibitions or to other museums, etc., should be referred to Mr. Soby, who will in turn consult the curators and the Registrar. These requests must be confirmed in writing before the loans can be granted. Mr. Soby will also initial triplicate receipts, etc.

Publicity releases

Mr. Soby will read all publicity releases in Mr. Barr's place.

Publications

Mr. Soby should be given the opportunity to read all publications before they reach the galley proof stage. This includes bulletins, circulars, handouts, etc., as well as books and catalogs (but does not include invitations and posters).

Committee Meetings

When Mr. Barr is absent from committee meetings Mr. Soby will represent him.

Minutes of Meetings

Mr. Soby will ordinarily read and approve minutes of committee meetings for Mr. Barr.

* * * * * * * *

Armed Services Program

Mr. Soby will continue to be Director of the Armed Services Program, assisted by Mrs. Misson.

The Director's office has in theory no direct or supervisory responsibility for exhibitions which, after the exhibition and exhibition director have been approved by the Exhibitions Committee, are supposed to be the responsibility of Mr. Wheeler. However, the appointment of a curator to direct an exhibition must have the approval of Mr. Soby.

Mr. Soby is, however, available for consultation on the initiative of Mr. Wheeler or the director of the exhibition.

After the exhibition is up Mr. Soby will be free to criticize or make suggestions particularly in reference to future practice.

McLANATHAN

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Co Soby

Painting
Sculpture

Date Nov. 14, 1947

To: Mr. d'Harnoncourt
Mr. Barr

Re: Dept of Ptg & Sculpture

From: Mr. Soby

November 14, 1947

Dear Susan:

A wire just came from Richard B.

McLanathan. It reads as follows:

"WILL BE THERE THURSDAY NOVEMBER 20th
AT FOUR THANKS"

It is addressed to Mr. Soby and I am

sending him a note in the same mail to let him

know.

Best,

Miss Susan Cable
Suite 5600
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York 22, New York

CONFIDENTIAL

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Nov. 8,1947

To: Mr. d'Harnoncourt
Mr. Barr

Re: Dept of Ptg & Sculpture

From: Mr. Soby

Just to complicate matters at the last moment, I wonder whether we shouldn't consider Samuel Lane Faison, now at Williams College, for the job of Director of Painting and Sculpture. He came yesterday with a group of museum people, and since both of us went to Williams, we talked for a long time after the others had gone.

I have seldom talked to anyone whose taste coincided so closely with my own, so naturally I thought him a man of the greatest discernment. But seriously, his ideas correspond at many points to those of the Museum. Examples:

1. He thinks the watercolors of Demuth among the best things produced by an American in our time, finds the Demuth oils weak and cold.

2. He thinks the pictures of Jackson Pollack & Co. vastly overrated, though Clement Greenberg has been trying to convince him of their importance.

3. He admires enormously such artists as Ben Shahn, Loren MacIver, Charles Burchfield (early watercolors), Morris Graves; wants especially to know better the recent pictures of Baziotes, Stamos, etc.

4. He thinks the big green recent Picasso at the Koots gallery a superb picture, as fine as anything Picasso has produced.

5. He likes Klee, earlier Gris (thinks our recent 3 Gris magnificent), etc.,etc.

There was no reason for him to volunteer these opinions, since he is obviously not the polite-diplomatic type.

I had never met him before, but liked him very much personally. I know little about him, except that he is forty, personable, and talks very well. I know that he is highly thought of at Williams. Indeed, since he is slated to succeed Karl Weston as head of all Williams art matters - now very active - he probably wants to stay there. He likes teaching, and is obviously content where he is.

He might be worth looking up more carefully. At least I was astonished at how well he knew the contemporary art scene in New York. Final recommendation: he thinks Mona Lisa's Moustache a silly, inaccurate and dangerous book.

Best.

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

57 PD=BOSTON MASS NOV 14 414P

JAMES T SOBY==MUSEUM OF MODERN ARTS=

WILL BE THERE THURSDAY NOVEMBER 20TH AT FOUR THANKS=

=RICHARD B K MCLANATHAN.20.459P..T

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

[illegible] director and MacAgy would seem to be the outstanding candidate on the West Coast.

I will investigate both men further this coming week and perhaps you, Rene, Alfred and I can talk about them at your convenience. Perhaps you would want Mr. MacAgy to come East for interviews with all of us, in which case I assume we would have to pay his expenses.

I am more and more convinced that the Department of Painting and Sculpture can function properly only with a full time director, and I really believe from the evidence so far that either of these candidates and especially Mr. MacAgy would fill our requirements very well.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

James T. Soby, Chairman
Department of Painting and Sculpture

I should think we ought to decide for or against late this fall at the latest.

Best.

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This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

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JOSEPH L. EGAN
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aDY 4- 28 Pd. Nov. 13

NOVEMBER 13, 1947

MR. RICHARD B.K. McLANATHAN
MUSEUM OF FINE ART
HUNTINGTON AVENUE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

TERRIBLY SORRY CANNOT ASSEMBLE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE ANY DAY EXCEPT THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, AT 4 P.M. HERE. WILL YOU KINDLY WIRE WHETHER THAT TIME POSSIBLE FOR YOU. REGARDS.

JAMES T. SOBY
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

[illegible] director and MacAgy would seem to be the outstanding candidate on the West Coast.

I will investigate both men further this coming week and perhaps you, Rene, Alfred and I can talk about them at your convenience. Perhaps you would want Mr. MacAgy to come East for interviews with all of us, in which case I assume we would have to pay his expenses.

I am more and more convinced that the Department of Painting and Sculpture can function properly only with a full time director, and I really believe from the evidence so far that either of these candidates and especially Mr. MacAgy would fill our requirements very well.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

James T. Soby, Chairman
Department of Painting and Sculpture

I should think we ought to decide for or against late this fall at the latest.

Best.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Dear Nelson:

We have at last found two very promising candidates for the Department of Painting and Sculpture. The first of these is Richard McLanathan who is assistant to Mr. W. G. Constable at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The second is Douglas MacAgy, now Director of the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco. Both are interested in coming to the Museum, though both have had such long and varied experience and training that I do not think we could interest either one in anything but the directorship of the Department. Both men appear to be in their early thirties and both have had extremely good museum training.

I talked for several hours last week to Mr. McLanathan; he is a most personable and intelligent man and his chief drawback, so far as we are concerned, is that he has never worked intensively in the modern field. I think, however, that with some coaching at the beginning he could probably take over the job very well.

On the whole, I think I am even more impressed with the record of Mr. MacAgy, though I have not yet met him personally. Unlike Mr. McLanathan he has done a great deal of work in modern art and this week end I shall go through the impressive number of magazine articles which he has produced. Alfred Barr, who talked to Mr. MacAgy when he was East, reports that he has an excellent personality.

I write you about these two men now, because it may be that if we are interested we will have to come to a decision fairly rapidly. I worry particularly about losing Mr. MacAgy, since the new Hollywood Museum of Modern Art is looking for a director and MacAgy would seem to be the outstanding candidate on the West Coast.

I will investigate both men further this coming week and perhaps you, Rene, Alfred and I can talk about them at your convenience. Perhaps you would want Mr. MacAgy to come East for interviews with all of us, in which case I assume we would have to pay his expenses.

I am more and more convinced that the Department of Painting and Sculpture can function properly only with a full time director, and I really believe from the evidence so far that either of these candidates and especially Mr. MacAgy would fill our requirements very well.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

James T. Soby, Chairman
Department of Painting and Sculpture

Either one would require a long time to get disentangled from his present job and I should think we ought to decide for or against late this fall at the latest.

Best,

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Oct. 17, 1947

To: Mr. Barr
Mr. d'Harnoncourt
From: Mr. Barr Wheeler

Mr. Soby

Re: Richard B.K. McLanathan

I spent several hours with McLanathan this morning discussing the Department of Painting and Sculpture and sounding him out as to his interest in it.

He is very definitely interested. He has a contract with the Boston Museum which runs until next summer, at which time the Museum will probably ask to renew the [illegible]. It might be, however, that if he did join our staff he would not be [illegible] until a later date - perhaps fall or winter 1948 - due to the [illegible] finish the catalog of the Karolik (sp.?) collection

RE: McLANATHAN

[illegible] as to personality and as to livelinesa of mind. [illegible] art, though this has not been his field except [illegible] interested in preparing publications and exhibitions, [illegible]cularly as to the sources of contemporary art. His [illegible]essive; he appears to know a good deal not only [illegible] also about architecture, literature and philosophy, [illegible]ed, well read, etc., etc. I hear from all sides [illegible] the younger museum men.

[illegible]s his lack of close familiarity with modern art. I [illegible] right and disciplined in mind that he would acquire [illegible]ly. More than anything else, he probably needs a few [illegible] shows of modern art. How long it would take him [illegible] the field is anyone's guess. I think he would need [illegible]ning.

[illegible] in terms of our Museum, is that what he wants to do [illegible]ously painstaking, and he is used to having considerable [illegible] three research assistants on the Karolik catalog. I explained [illegible]y that the New York pace was faster, but stressed the fact that our depart[illegible]ch as Library and Publications were extraordinarily efficient. Also that Margaret Miller was already in the Department and first-rate.

It's clear I think that he would not come except as Director of the Department and that he would need a salary of around $7,500. (His wife works too, but would probably have to give up her job if they moved; they need the money from both jobs and are entirely dependent on it.)

Of course I told him I had no authority to do more than sound him out and explain the workings of the Museum, which I did at some length. I think we should consider both him and McAgy (sp.) very soon and try to come to a decision. Maybe there are better candidates available, but I doubt it. Shouldn't we discuss the problem with Nelson, meanwhile getting as m c h more information and material about both men as we can? Either one would require a long time to get disentangled from his present job, and I should think we ought to decide for or against late this fall at the latest.

Best.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Oct. 17, 1947

To: Mr. Barr
Mr. d'Harnoncourt

Re: Richard B.K. McLanathan

From: Mr. Barr Wheeler

Mr. Soby

I spent several hours with McLanathan this morning discussing the Department of Painting and Sculpture and sounding him out as to his interest in it.

He is very definitely interested. He has a contract with the Boston Museum which runs until next summer, at which time the Museum will probably ask to renew the contract. It might be, however, that if he did join our staff he would not be able to leave Boston until a later date - perhaps fall or winter 1948 - due to the fact that he feels obliged to finish the catalog of the Karolik (sp.?) collection on which he is working.

I was most impressed with him, both as to personality and as to liveliness of mind. He is very much interested in modern art, though this has not been his field except incidentally. He is especially interested in preparing publications and exhibitions, in doing research , perhaps particularly as to the sources of contemporary art. His general knowledge seems most impressive; he appears to know a good deal not only about painting and sculpture, but also about architecture, literature and philosophy, that is, he is obviously well trained, well read, etc., etc. I hear from all sides that he is one of the ablest of the younger museum men.

The chief drawback, of course, is his lack of close familiarity with modern art. I personally feel that he is so bright and disciplined in mind that he would acquire detailed information very rapidly. More than anything else, he probably needs a few years in New York, with all its shows of modern art. How long it would take him to become really familiar with the field is anyone's guess. I think he would need considerable help at the beginning.

A second possible limitation, in terms of our Museum, is that what he wants to do most is research. He is obviously painstaking, and he is used to having considerable staff help - at Boston he has three research assistants on the Karolik catalog. I explained to him quite frankly that the New York pace was faster, but stressed the fact that our departments such as Library and Publications were extraordinarily efficient. Also that Margaret Miller was already in the Department and first-rate.

It's clear I think that he would not come except as Director of the Department and that he would need a salary of around $7,500. (His wife works too, but would probably have to give up her job if they moved; they need the money from both jobs and are entirely dependent on it.)

Of course I told him I had no authority to do more than sound him out and explain the workings of the Museum, which I did at some length. I think we should consider both him and McAgy (sp.) very soon and try to come to a decision. Maybe there are better candidates available, but I doubt it. Shouldn't we discuss the problem with Nelson, meanwhile getting as much more information and material about both men as we can? Either one would require a long time to get disentangled from his present job, and I should think we ought to decide for or against late this fall at the latest.

Best.

OCT 8 1947

PT6 + Sculp.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Oct. 7,1947

To: Mr. Barr ✓
Mr. d'Harnoncourt
From: Mr. Wheeler
Mr Soby

Re: McLanathan

I have an appointment to meet Richard B.K. McLanathan at the Museum on Friday, October 17 at 11:00 A.M. I think it's rather awkward if we all stare at him at once, so if it's agreeable to you, I'll sound him out a bit as to his interests and plans and then perhaps we can all meet for a few minutes. I hear excellent reports about him from all sides, the main difficulty being that modern art is not his field, though it clearly interests him very much.

married and has two children. He dislikes Boston and does not wish to make his career there. Although his training and work have been in classical art, he is passionately interested in modern art.

Kirstein said nothing whatever to him about the opening here. He did, however, ask Agnes Mongan about his abilities and without Lincoln having mentioned this Museum at all, Agnes said, "That's the man for Museum of Modern Art." McClanathan is now working on a large catalog of the Americana collection of the Boston Museum which will take him some months to complete, but I suggest that meanwhile we make an effort to see him.

MW

DEPT. PTG + SCULP.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date July 30, 1947

To: Mr. Barr
Mr. d'Harnoncourt
Mr. Wheeler
Mr. Soby
Mr. Barr
Mr. Wheeler

Re: ~~Dept. of Pte. & Sculpture~~
Dept. of Painting & Sculpture

From: Mr. Soby

I went to Boston yesterday but was unable to see Richard McClanathan, who is away on vacation. I did however learn the following discouraging facts from Philip Hofer. 1) McClanathan's primary interest is the history and practice of architecture 2) he likes to teach 3) he has a strong feeling about New England (especially Maine) and Hofer thinks he wants to stay there. But Hofer recommends him enthusiastically, says he is a first-rate scholar, a good writer and personally of the highest caliber. I'll try to see McClanathan when he returns in late August.

~~Kirstein has just been to see Richard McClanathan, who is the Assistant of W. G. Constable at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Kirstein was most impressed by his knowledge, taste, and energy and thinks that he is the likliest candidate he knows for the position of Assistant Director of our Department of Painting & Sculpture. He is thirty years old,~~ married and has two children. He dislikes Boston and does not wish to make his career there. Although his training and work have been in classical art, he is passionately interested in modern art.

Kirstein said nothing whatever to him about the opening here. He did, however, ask Agnes Mongan about his abilities and without Lincoln having mentioned this Museum at all, Agnes said, "That's the man for Museum of Modern Art." McClanathan is now working on a large catalog of the Americana collection of the Boston Museum which will take him some months to complete, but I suggest that meanwhile we make an effort to see him.

MW

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date July 15, 1947

To: Mr. d'Harnoncourt
Mr. Soby
Mr. Barr

From: Mr. Wheeler

Re: Dep't. of Painting & Sculpture

CONFIDENTIAL

Lincoln Kirstein has just been in Boston where he saw Richard McClanathan, who is the Assistant of W. G. Constable at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Kirstein was much impressed by his knowledge, taste, and energy and thinks that he is the likliest candidate he knows for the position of Assistant Director of our Department of Painting & Sculpture. He is thirty years old, married and has two children. He dislikes Boston and does not wish to make his career there. Although his training and work have been in classical art, he is passionately interested in modern art.

Kirstein said nothing whatever to him about the opening here. He did, however, ask Agnes Mongan about his abilities and without Lincoln having mentioned this Museum at all, Agnes said, "That's the man for Museum of Modern Art." McClanathan is now working on a large catalog of the Americana collection of the Boston Museum which will take him some months to complete, but I suggest that meanwhile we make an effort to see him.

MW

MacAgy

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

PARTICIPATING IN THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 3-2640

Private - Confidential

March 8, 1948

March 12, 1948

Dear Mr. Barr:

Private and Confidential

May 20 and June 15. In the meantime, I should greatly appreciate it if you would keep our initial conversation of last September in mind. This spring term, which is a fruitful one at the School, closes the first unit of the program I introduced three years ago. I am planning the second three-year unit now. But more [illegible] MacAgy and I are privately [illegible] seems appropriate to make the [illegible] Either or both of [illegible] during our visit in the late [illegible]. Although we are [illegible] in museum work primarily, educational [illegible] would be in order. Ideally, it would be fine if both of us were to find posts, but we know well enough that jobs rarely come in pairs.

In [illegible] proposed to Alfred Knopf [illegible] Mona Lisa's Mustache, [illegible] obtain a piece by a propagandist, one by a political scientist, another by an historian of science, etc. Today a polite note of refusal arrived, but I intend to try another publisher. Ordinarily, the book would not merit the trouble, but its remarkable circulation makes the picture more serious.

I earnestly hope that my request is not a nuisance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd St.,
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Mr. MacAgy:

Thank you for your letter. Unfortunately I shall be abroad during your visit but should a possibility occur to me I shall certainly let you know. It would be fine to have you here in the East.

I should think that the recent reviews of Mona Lisa's Mustache would make Alfred Knopf's face red, specially as his entire firm except Mrs. Knopf seems to be very much embarrassed by this piece of malicious charlatanry.

Sincerely,

Mr. Douglas MacAgy, Director
California School of Fine Arts
800 Chestnut Street
San Francisco 11, California

AHB:mc

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 3-2640

Private + Confidential

March 8, 1948

Dear Mr. Barr:

My wife and I expect to visit New York and New England between May 20 and June 15. In the meantime, I should greatly appreciate it if you would keep our initial conversation of last September in mind. This spring term, which is a fruitful one at the School, closes the first unit of the program that I introduced three years ago. I am planning the second three-year unit now. But as you know, both Mrs. MacAgy and I are privately interested in moving back east, and the time seems appropriate to make the change after the School's summer session this year. Either or both of us therefore would be available for interviews during our visit in the late spring. Although we are interested in museum work primarily, educational work would be in order. Ideally, it would be fine if both of us were to find posts, but we know well enough that jobs rarely come in pairs.

Incidentally, you might be amused to learn that I proposed to Alfred Knopf that he publish a pamphlet of brief essays on Mona Lisa's Mustache, to contain a piece by a propagandist, one by a political scientist, another by an historian of science, etc. Today a polite note of refusal arrived, but I intend to try another publisher. Ordinarily, the book would not merit the trouble, but its remarkable circulation makes the picture more serious.

I earnestly hope that my request is not a nuisance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

Douglas MacAgy

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd St.,
New York 19, N.Y.

MACAGY

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 2640

December 29, 1947.

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd St.,
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Barr:

The news of current snow storms in New York sound a little alarming, but I hope that the results are not without the charm snow holds at least for a California exile.

I write because a letter from Charles Howard recalls the conversation I had with you and Mr. Soby in November. He has written to ask if I have any notion about what he might do with his paintings which remain now at Nierendorf's. It seems that they can be returned to England for only a six month's period, during which none could be sold. Naturally he hopes that they could be placed so that they would be available for circulation in this country. I remember that we spoke of this dilemma, then in prospect, and that you and Mr. Soby said something about seeing Kirk Askew and Curt Valentin about it. If it would not put you out to speak to them, I know that Howard would be deeply appreciative.

This brings my warm greetings to you for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

Douglas MacAgy

MACAGY

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 2640

MACAGY

Good
able
nice fellow
1935 illness
convalescent
special student
Univ. of Toronto
impressed by him
Anthroposophist got his
scholarship at Barnes
- degree at Wellesley
Russian working under
Munro. Admirable
in every way

Mr. Alfred
The Museum
11 West 53r
New York 19

Dear Mr. Ba

Mr decision.
I am sorry have been
to work wi s provided
by the occ rateful for
the experi

T o return to
the east, t our initial
conversati ing you for
possible l ngland areas.
The visit some alarm.
There is t of the San
Francisco at present.
This would arm) and I
suspect th I intend to
stall the case.

en in Cordova
for some ross still
stands in es at word from
me. I di sh-Americans,
not to me e of overtures
that migh o scout about
for a pho ave one because
he was in thirties.

The short article I mentioned is being held up by a snag, but I shall be pleased to send you a copy when it is finished.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

MACAGY

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 2640

Just note avoid
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and intuitive
taste

Will read
Museum thanks

Mr. Alfred H.
The Museum of
11 West 53rd
New York 19,

Dear Mr. Barr

Mr.
I am sorry be ecision.
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MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 2640

December 3, 1947

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd St.,
New York 19, New York.

Dear Mr. Barr:

Mr. Soby has written me about the Committee's decision. I am sorry because I know how rewarding to me it would have been to work with you. On the other hand, the opportunities provided by the occasion were extremely stimulating, and I am grateful for the experiences of the visit.

This visit in particular stirred my desires to return to the east, and I sincerely hope that you will not forget our initial conversation in October when I took the liberty of asking you for possible leads towards a move to the New York or New England areas. The visit has led to a situation here which causes me some alarm. There is talk of "elevating" me to Executive Director of the San Francisco Art Association — a job that does not exist at present. This would mean a long-term contract (the cause for alarm) and I suspect the duties would exclude many of my interests. I intend to stall the prospect off for as long as possible in any case.

Charles Minton has replied that he has not been in Cordova for some time, but that as far as he knows the Lopez cross still stands in the churchyard. He is ready to make inquiries at word from me. I did not mention your interest because the Spanish-Americans, not to mention the Church, are quick to take advantage of overtures that might be considered important. I shall ask him to scout about for a photograph as discreetly as he can. He might have one because he was in charge of the Writers' Project there in the thirties.

The short article I mentioned is being held up by a snag, but I shall be pleased to send you a copy when it is finished.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

MACAGY

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 3649

November 20, 1947

December 1, 1947

Dear Mr. MacAgy:

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Barr:

I am looking forward to seeing your article about Picasso when it comes out, or before if you care to send it to me.

I am delighted to have your confirmation of the quality of our new Baziotes.

I want to thank you for the understanding way in which you and your friend Minton can take one some time. Better than news that the Lopez cross still stands would be a photograph of it or a snapshot if your friend Minton can take one some time.

Apart from the point of my visit, our conversations were extremely in[illegible]. Reviewing them on the train, I was struck by the many things I had neglected to say. For example, I overlooked the Picasso show, which of course is acknowledged one of the supreme achievements of the Museum. Also, when reciting remarks made at the trustees meeting, I mentioned Picasso's connection with a Renaissance attitude without qualifying the statement adequately. The basis of this remark may be found in Ivins' recent distinction between two types of "space intuition." My interpretation, which goes rather against Ivins' application of his own theory, tends to place Picasso's form (except early cubist work) as a type that also characterizes much of Renaissance [illegible] is not the place to go into the question [illegible] the liberty of sending you a copy of [illegible] article which outlines this approach. The article [illegible]. It would be helpful to me if you would discuss it the next time I am in the east.

Incidentally, the memory of your Baziotes haunted me throughout the return trip. I looked again at the Chicago picture during the stop-over between trains, and even more strongly agree with you in favoring the one you selected.

Sincerely,

Mr. Douglas MacAgy, Director
California School of Fine Arts
800 Chestnut Street
San Francisco 11, California

AHB:MC

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 2640

November 20, 1947

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, New York.

Dear Mr. Barr:

I want to thank you for the understanding way in which you and Mr. Soby received my questions last week, and for the considerable time you spared for the purpose.

Apart from the point of my visit, our conversations were extremely interesting and stimulating to me. Reviewing them on the returning train, I was struck by the many things I had neglected to say. For example, I overlooked the Picasso show, which of course is acknowledged as one of the supreme achievements of the Museum. Also, when reciting remarks made at the trustees meeting, I mentioned Picasso's connection with a Renaissance attitude without qualifying the statement adequately. The basis of this remark may be found in Ivins' recent distinction between two types of "space intuition." My interpretation, which goes rather against Ivins' application of his own theory, tends to place Picasso's form (except early cubist work) as a type that also characterizes much of Renaissance tradition. A letter is not the place to go into the question, but I am going to take the liberty of sending you a copy of a short article which outlines this approach. The article should be ready shortly. It would be helpful to me if you would discuss it the next time I am in the east.

Incidentally, the memory of your Baziotes haunted me throughout the return trip. I looked again at the Chicago picture during the stop-over between trains, and even more strongly agree with you in favoring the one you selected.

Today I shall write Charles Minton, a friend who drove us to Cordova five years ago to show us the Lopez cross, to ask if the cross is still in the churchyard. I shall let you know what he replies.

Again let me say how appreciative I am of your generosity last week.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

Douglas MacAgy
Director

DM:f

WESTERN UNION

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date November 14, 1947

FA616 NL PD=SANFRANCISCO CALIF 5

To: Miss Ulrich

JAMES SOBY MUSEUM OF MODERN ART=

From: Mrs. Catlin

Re: new director for the Department of Painting and Sculpture

WILL BE IN NEW YORK ON 12TH FOR MEETING REGARDS=

DOUGLAS MACAGY

At the request of the trustees Mr. Douglas MacAgy came East for an interview. The Museum agreed to pay for the trip. His expenses amount to $302.63. Will you please have a check sent to him at

California School of Fine Arts
800 Chestnut Street
San Francisco 11, California

I am attaching receipts. The check should be made out to Douglas MacAgy.

12= NTO SOBY=

"internal squabbles."

Asked about MacAgy's health, Francis said that it was excellent and that he could scarcely have handled his current job - an institution of some 700 people - without vigorous health.

Asked about the report of tuberculosis, Francis said that that had happened fifteen years before and that he believed MacAgy to be completely cured of after-effects.

Francis volunteered that we would probably not get an enthusiastic report on MacAgy from Mrs. Morley with whom MacAgy had worked in the San Francisco Museum after he left the Cleveland Museum; that he thought that Mrs. Morley was famous as a difficult person to work under. He also added that MacAgy's wife, née Smart, was very capable as Acting Director of the San Francisco Palace of the Legion of Honor during the war. Both MacAgy and his wife had worked in the Cleveland Museum.

Finally Francis referred us to Thomas Munro, Director of Education, with whom MacAgy had worked most of his time.

AHB:mc

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

1201

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

FA616 NL PD=SANFRANCISCO CALIF 5 1947 NOV 6 AM 3 21

JAMES SOBY MUSEUM OF MODERN ART=
11 WEST 53 ST NYK=

WILL BE IN NEW YORK ON 12TH FOR MEETING REGARDS=
DOUGLAS MACAGY.

12. NTO SOBY..

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

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and

"internal squabbles."

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Finally Francis referred us to Thomas Munro, Director of Education, with whom MacAgy had worked most of his time.

AHB:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

CONFIDENTIAL

Date November 5, 1947

To: Mr. Soby cc: Nelson Rockefeller
René d'Harnoncourt

From: Mr. Barr
AHB

Re: Douglas MacAgy.

Telephone conversation with Henry Sayles Francis, Curator of Painting, Cleveland Museum of Art

I have known Henry Francis for twenty-five years. He is rather cautious, unenthusiastic and without a great deal of imagination. He is a specialist in the history of painting and prints.

Francis said that MacAgy had worked with him over a short time particularly during the installation of our Picasso show five years ago. He said that MacAgy was very industrious and capable, quite original in his ideas and deeply interested in modern painting. He had installed the Picasso exhibition with ingenuity and imagination, adding a great deal of interesting comparative material from the arts of the past.

Asked if MacAgy can work under pressure and meet a deadline, Francis replied that he could.

Asked if MacAgy worked well within an institution, Francis said yes, that he had a mind of his own and could be stubborn about his convictions but that he was not quarrelsome or belligerent in the various "internal squabbles."

Asked about MacAgy's health, Francis said that it was excellent and that he could scarcely have handled his current job - an institution of some 700 people - without vigorous health.

Asked about the report of tuberculosis, Francis said that that had happened fifteen years before and that he believed MacAgy to be completely cured of after-effects.

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Finally Francis referred us to Thomas Munro, Director of Education, with whom MacAgy had worked most of his time.

AHB:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

CONFIDENTIAL

Date November 6, 1947

cc: Nelson Rockefeller
René d'Harnoncourt

To: Mr. Soby

Re: MacAgy

From: Mr. Barr

AHB.

A couple of weeks ago I had lunch with Mrs. Morley of the San Francisco Museum (now UNESCO) and asked incidentally about MacAgy. I could see that she had some reservations but was not able to get more from her beyond the fact that he was very capable but had difficulty in handling the heavy physical work in connection with exhibitions. She then made some reference to the previous tuberculosis.

Confidential note: Mrs. Morley has the reputation of being an extremely exacting and difficult person to work for in a subordinate position. I personally do not see how MacAgy could have handled his present very difficult job of reorganizing a very large art school and running it successfully without excellent stamina.

AHB:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

CONFIDENTIAL

Date November 6, 1947

cc: Mr. d'Harnoncourt
Mr. N.A.Rockefeller

To: Mr. Soby

Re: Douglas MacAgy

From: Mr. Barr
A.B.

Phone conversation with John Alford of the Rhode Island School of Design:

I have known Alford for seven or eight years. He was formerly head of the Department of Art at the University of Toronto and is now a member of the faculty of the R. I. School of Design. He is a man of mature judgment and well known as an authority on esthetics, art theory and methods of teaching.

Alford said that MacAgy was very good, able, "a very nice fellow indeed", that he had known him as a student twelve years ago when MacAgy was convalescing from tuberculosis, which he had had in high school. He was a special student with Alford for some time, after which Professor Lismer of Toronto got him a scholarship at the Barnes Foundation. Since then, Alford has seen him occasionally, but has no first-hand knowledge of his work. Alford thinks him admirable in every way, with an excellent mind - though not a first-rate philosophical mind - excellent in character and in his aims in life; very good taste, well-read; and would scarcely be a trustee of the American Society for Esthetics if Munro were not convinced of his abilities.

AHB/ob

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

CONFIDENTIAL

Date November 6, 1947

cc: Mr. Barr
Mr. d'Harnoncourt

To: Mr. Rockefeller

Re: MacAgy

From: Mr. Soby

I talked today on the telephone with Thomas Munro at the Cleveland Museum where Douglas MacAgy worked for a full year as assistant in the Painting Department. Munro recommends MacAgy in the most enthusiastic terms. He says that MacAgy is most agreeable to work with, works easily and well under pressure, has excellent taste in both modern and earlier art, is a good writer, etc. Munro was surprised that MacAgy would consider leaving the California School of Fine Arts because, to quote Munro, "he has built up there the best and most progressive art school in the country in a very short time."

I asked Munro about MacAgy's health explaining that, since this job would be rather strenuous, we should be sure, for his sake as well as ours, that it would not be too much of a strain. Munro said that MacAgy did have tuberculosis some fifteen years ago but is now in excellent health and has since filled several important and strenuous jobs without damage to his health.

Munro adds that MacAgy's wife would be an important asset, not that she would work in the Museum but that she could perhaps help him at home, she being a trained fine arts scholar, a product of Radcliffe and the Fogg Museum.

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

CONFIDENTIAL

Date November 6, 1947

To: Mr. Rockefeller

cc: Mr. Barr
Mr. d'Harnoncourt

Re: MacAgy

From: Mr. Soby

I telephoned Martin Baldwin, Director of the Toronto Art Gallery, regarding Douglas MacAgy. Mr. Baldwin, according to MacAgy's letter to us of October 12, had previously made inquiries about MacAgy before offering him a job which MacAgy declined.

Mr. Baldwin feels that most of MacAgy's training and experience have been in the direction of technical education among art students and in the general field of philosophy. He is not sure that MacAgy has a positive enough sense of quality to do the job we have in mind, namely, to prepare and install loan exhibitions. He adds, however, that he does not know how much work of this kind MacAgy has done since his own interest in MacAgy was as a possible teacher for the Toronto Art School. He suggests that we check with Dr. Morley. I feel, however, that the Cleveland references are more important in this regard since it was at Cleveland that MacAgy installed an important exhibition and selected much of the material included.

As to MacAgy's personality Mr. Baldwin reports that he is extremely agreeable and self-confident with a tendency to be autocratic, which he may since have outgrown. Mr. Baldwin has discussed the question of MacAgy's health with MacAgy himself. There has apparently been no recurrence of MacAgy's illness of 15 or 20 years ago and so far as Mr. Baldwin knows, he would be perfectly capable of undertaking a strenuous job. Mr. Baldwin believes in fact that MacAgy can work efficiently under great pressure.

This is perhaps the least enthusiastic report we have had. On the other hand Mr. Baldwin quite frankly says that he has investigated carefully only MacAgy's ability to teach the technical side of art. On the latter score he says that MacAgy has done a superlative job at the California School of Fine Arts.

JTS:mc

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Nov. 3,1947

To: Mr. Nelson Rockefeller
. c. to Mr. d'Harnoncourt

Re: Douglas MacAgy

From: Mr. Soby

I have now read all the articles which Douglas MacAgy sent on for our inspection. These articles are impressive in number for so young a man, and they have appeared in a wide range of publications - scholarly, popular and in-between. None of them, I think, shows the exceptional brilliance of Richard B.K. McLanathan's article on Poussin in the Bulletin of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the single piece by McLanathan that I have been able to find and read. But MacAgy's articles make clear that contemporary art is his main field, whereas McLanathan has worked primarily in earlier fields.

The MacAgy writings fall into four main categories: book reviews; forewords to exhibitions; "theme" articles; and descriptions of the plans, methods and problems of a modern art school such as the California School of Fine Arts, of which he is now director.

The books reviews are clearly and carefully written. They nearly all cover books on modern art, and it is quite clear that MacAgy's sympathies lie with the more advanced kinds of contemporary painting and sculpture. The best of them have appeared in the College Art Journal whose standards are high.

The exhibition forewords are mainly for shows by California artists, chiefly Charles Howard, perhaps the best of the Western abstract painters, and James MacGray. Their enthusiastic tone may seem a little exaggerated by New York standards, but I believe that a few years in New York would give MacAgy a broader basis of reference, and his training at the Barnes Foundation, with its superb collection of late 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture, should stand him in good stead. He seems to have got a great deal of good out of the Barnes Foundation and little of the bad.

The most important of the "theme" articles is one which examines the revival of interest in Victorian furniture in terms of its relation to contemporary fantasy in art. This seems to me perhaps his best article. I especially like his awareness of the way contemporary art teaches us to revalue the past and to find in it forms of expression related to our own. The article seems to me a guarantee that MacAgy is not one of those self-conscious "modernists" who believe that all art begins with Cezanne and Picasso. I like his sense of historical continuity, and the illustrations for this article were in some cases brilliantly chosen, with a real eye for illuminating parallels between past and present.

I am not qualified to speak of his articles on art school methods. They are clearly advanced in conception. They seem to make sense and to suggest a good equation between discipline and experiment. They do not fall into the new academism of "self-expression." They seek particularly to train students to be imaginative, through advanced visual methods - the making of movies, experiments with texture, etc. - but they recognize the value of thorough grounding in conventional draftsmanship and use of pigment.

I do not think, as noted above, that any of these articles is of the distinguished quality of McLanathan's Poussin piece. But MacAgy already knows the modern field, and this seems to me so important and essential a qualification that I suggest we ask him to come East for interviews as soon as possible.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Nov. 3,1947

To: Mr. d'Harnoncourt

Re: enclosed memo

From: Mr. Soby

Dear René:

Herewith a copy of the memo on MacAgy's articles which I have sent to Nelson. It occurs to me that since MacAgy is a likely prospect, it might be better to hold the announcement of my own position as Chairman of the Dept. until he or some other Director of the Dept. is appointed. The announcement could then read "Mr. X has been appointed Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture of which Mr. S is Trustee-Chairman." It makes no difference to me which way the announcement is made. I only think that friends such as Miss Genauer would be less likely to cry "mystification" if the announcements were combined and my part made subordinate and casual. Do what you think best, of course.

As I explained this morning I am delighted to help in any way I can and, as it happened, initiated the contacts with MacAgy because he came in to see me about another matter. However, insofar as possible, I think Nelson ought to work through Jim Soby who has been asked to handle the problem of studying the candidates for this job.

Sincerely,

Soby

Miss Susan Cable
Nelson Rockefeller Office
30 Rockefeller Plaza - Room 5600
New York 20, New York

AHB/ob
enclosure

October 31, 1947

Dear Susan:

You will receive direct from Jim Soby two copies of the long letter from MacAgy, and I am enclosing copies of the list of his writings. Since his letter arrived, he has sent the publications which Jim Soby has read through carefully, and I have read most of them too and find them reassuring as to MacAgy's ability to write, both for scholars and for the general public. He seems to be well informed professionally with a background not only of art history but also of philosophy and esthetics. What impressed me most is his real interest and enthusiasm for modern painting with which he has considerable experience both as a museum man and student, critic and teacher. I won't go into further detail in writing since I believe we are meeting with Nelson on Wednesday.

As I explained this morning I am delighted to help in any way I can and, as it happened, initiated the contacts with MacAgy because he came in to see me about another matter. However, insofar as possible, I think Nelson ought to work through Jim Soby who has been asked to handle the problem of studying the candidates for this job.

Sincerely,

Soby

Miss Susan Cable
Nelson Rockefeller Office
30 Rockefeller Plaza - Room 5600
New York 20, New York

AHB/ob
enclosure

Oct. 31,1947

Miss Susan Cable,
c/o Mr. Nelson Rockefeller,
30 Rockefeller Plaza,
New York 20, N.Y.

Dear Miss Cable:

I'm enclosing two copies of the letter written to Alfred Barr by Douglas MacAgy, one of the candidates for the position of Director of Painting and Sculpture in the Museum of Modern Art.

I've spent several days this past week reading various magazine articles written by Mr. MacAgy and sent us as samples of his work. I'm now preparing a report on these articles, and I will try to send you a copy this weekend, with another copy for Mr. d'Harnoncourt.

There is one further thing to report. Mr. MacAgy is perfectly willing to fly East to discuss the matter with us at any time. He offers to do so at his own expense, though this seems to me rather much to ask of him, since he is dependent on his salary at the California School of Fine Arts.

I think he is a very likely prospect indeed. I will be in New York from Tuesday through Thursday next week, Nov. 4-6, and I would be very glad to talk to Mr. Rockefeller about the matter at any time convenient for him.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Soby

Arc + Sc Dept

PERSONAL
CONFIDENTIAL

October 24, 1947

Dear Mr. Macagy:

The magazines and pamphlets have arrived with your pieces in them. I must say that I think they seem very impressive. I am leaving for Chicago and shan't be able to read them, but I have given them to James Soby, the Trustee Chairman of the Department of Painting and Sculpture. He is going to read them carefully this weekend, but after a half an hour's leafing through them he remembers having read many of them before - as I did - and seemed to be much interested.

When do you expect to come East again? I ask this because, as I think I told you, we are looking for someone to take the directorship of our Department of Painting and Sculpture, and believe that you said you might be interested. You must not regard this letter as anything but a bulletin, but I wanted you to know that your letter and publications had made a very favorable impression.

Sincerely,

Mr. Douglas Macagy
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
Lincoln Park 21
San Francisco, California

AHB/ob
cc: Mr. James Thrall Soby

Pt6 + Sc. Dept.

October 17, 1947

Dear Mr. MacAgy:

Many thanks for your letter of October 12. It is just what we wanted to have; I very much appreciate your trouble.

I can't write you more at this time except to say that my colleagues here seem to be really impressed by your outline.

Sincerely,

Mr. Douglas MacAgy
California Palace Legion of Honor
Lincoln Park 21
San Francisco, California

AHB/ob

Pt6 + Sc. Dept.

October 17, 1947

Dear Mr. MacAgy:

Many thanks for your letter of October 12. It is just what we wanted to have; I very much appreciate your trouble.

I can't write you more at this time except to say that my colleagues here seem to be really impressed by your outline.

Sincerely,

Mr. Douglas MacAgy
California Palace Legion of Honor
Lincoln Park 21
San Francisco, California

AHB/ob

read by MW

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

MAINTAINED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION · AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · DOUGLAS MACAGY, DIRECTOR

800 CHESTNUT STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 11, CALIF.
PHONE ORDWAY 2640

October 12, 1947

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.,
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd St.,
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Barr:

Once again let me thank you for your kindness in arranging to see me at short notice on a busy Monday and for your thoughtful consideration of my remarks. Following is the recapitulation of the outline of my experience which you requested. Enclosed you will find a list of written material; the starred items are being sent to you under separate cover by regular mail. In case the unstarred items should be useful, I shall be pleased to have copies typed from periodicals and files that are out of reach at this moment.

My initial education at college level occurred at the University of Toronto in the Department of Fine Arts, which was inaugurated at that time under the chairmanship of Professor John Alford. By means of special concentration, I was able to condense a three-year course in this department into two calendar years. The lack of available primary material in Toronto prompted this arrangement. During the period I acted as tutor in classical and mediaeval art at the request of Professor Peter Brieger of the Department of Fine Arts. (In explanation of this, perhaps I should add that I had spent three years of independent study in art history before entering the university.) Courses there included anthropology, archaeology, history of art, architecture and European culture, aesthetics, drawing, model-making and related subjects.

The next move was to Philadelphia, where I studied at the Barnes Foundation for two years. Through the second year I was the only student with the privilege of free access to the collection at any time. While this was of inestimable value to me as an opportunity for close and sustained study of the material, it proved to be embarrassing when I discovered that I was being "groomed" to join his lecturing staff -- a job I didn't want. Throughout these two years, weekends and some vacations were spent in study at museums and galleries in New York and other neighboring cities. Also at this time I took courses in Celtic literature in the English Department of the University of Pennsylvania.

Before moving to Western Reserve University to study with Professor Thomas Munro, I spent a number of months in Europe. Aside from a brief period at the Courtauld Institute, my studies there were restricted to personal investigations of museums and cities. This tour took in England, France, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia, Holland and Belgium. In the company of friends from England I made a special expedition following Romanesque architecture from the north of France to Spain and across the south of France.

I studied at Western Reserve for a year and a half under Dr. Munro's direction (taking a Bachelor's degree there) and worked concurrently in the Education Department of the Cleveland Museum of Art. This work included the department's outside lectures on Christian art as well as more or less superficial lectures and radio talks on a wide variety of subjects in and out of the museum. Also it involved some research in aesthetics under a grant to the museum from the Carnegie Corporation. During this time I concluded a career of teaching children which had started at the Art Gallery of Toronto and had continued through the Philadelphia sojourn. For what it is worth, my grades (including extra-curricular courses such as the history of music at the University of Toronto) never fell below A - . Another year was spent at the Cleveland Museum as assistant to Henry Sayles Francis in the Painting Department. This year's activity still fell under the general heading of learning, but as "assistant" my chief unassisted act was to organize a special installation of the Museum of Modern Art's Picasso show. The installation was a product of many weeks of careful research, by means of which text, photographs and original material from the museum collections were incorporated in the presentation. In its own terms, the installation was judged to be successful, but now I question the terms. At any rate, in combination with other information, it caused Dr. Grace Morley to stop over in the course of one of her eastern trips and to offer me a job at her museum.

My work at the San Francisco Museum of Art was extremely varied. It ranged from the organization and installation of large exhibitions to the handling of all publicity and a large measure of "public relations." During a six months absence of Dr. Morley in South America, I was left in charge of the museum in a curatorial capacity. Soon after my arrival I took charge of the museum's active educational program. The job also called for the re-institution, editing, and for the most part the writing, of a monthly News-Letter, along with the writing of what amounted to several hundred press releases, a number of radio programs and the organization of special publicity campaigns. Responsibilities included preparation of catalogues, monthly printed schedules, and the museum's Quarterly Bulletin (although the budget often forced the last to appear less than quarterly). Apart from scheduling events and other speakers, I lectured frequently on a variety of topics and conducted about a dozen "courses" extending from four to ten weeks each over a period of two years. A few samples of titles in published announcements will be enclosed with the examples of articles.

Because the San Francisco Museum from the start had played a remarkably active role in the community, it seemed an ideal setting for further ventures in that quarter. I conceived a series of activities which would attempt to disclose unexpected aesthetic aspects in forms of unquestioning public acceptance, and was given the opportunity to produce two of the series. The first of these, a large exhibition of circus arts, is described on pages 40-41 of the museum's Bulletin which will be included in the accompanying package. I should be glad to send you clippings and installation photographs of the three galleries at your request. The second venture took the form of a sequence of lectures, analyses and demonstrations of jazz conducted by Rudi Blesh (who at this point abandoned his interior design practice for the career which led him to New York). The museum sponsored a search which located early players such as Bunk Johnson, Mutt Carey and Kid Ory, and brought them from the rice fields and pullman cars to San Francisco for a concert in a large downtown theatre.

Besides these rather picturesque affairs, which probably had some cultural value, it was my job to schedule many small shows and to organize a few larger ones. You will find a clipping with the publication package which refers to one of the latter, called "Ten Artists."

I resigned from the San Francisco Museum of Art to enter the O.W.I. I started in the Propaganda Analysis Division and ended as chief of the section which analyzed enemy broadcasts and correlated inferences with intelligence about Japan. On an average, this meant the writing of several daily reports to a deadline.

In June, 1945, I accepted an appointment as director of the California School of Fine Arts under a two year agreement that called for a total revision of the curriculum and selection of a completely new faculty. Now in the fifth term of the new program, the school has proved to be an extremely stimulating and highly cooperative undertaking. In spite of unprecedented expansion (from 100 to 500 students), shared with all schools of the country, we have managed to set a course that admits change and experiment without risking the balance of the whole enterprise. In addition, we have hit upon a few devices that might be of value to educational procedure in general artist training. The accompanying package contains information pertaining to this. My own part in this development covers curriculum planning, administration of all departments, and the conduct of one course per term.

The reason my wife and I wish to return to the east is not easy to explain. The west has offered us remarkable opportunities and there is no sign that this will stop. In the case of my wife, a graduate of Radcliffe and the Fogg, the Legion of Honor museum provides work of interesting scope. During the war she was Acting Director in the place of Tom Howe, when she organized the large show of Contemporary American Painting for the United Nations Conference. In spite of this situation, neither of us feels quite at home in western culture; frequently we feel out of touch with values which are important to us.

You asked me about my chief interests. From the beginning my primary concern has been with contemporary art in its individual and collective phases. Otherwise, mediaeval art still holds some fascination, and the development of classicism from the Renaissance grows more interesting to me as I relate it to the oppositions with which I sympathize today. Perhaps because I have done very little original work in the contemporary field, now I am anxious to concert my inquiries in this direction. Writing and lecturing seem to me to be the best instruments of inquiry. Although I have done far more lecturing than writing, I favor the latter. I state what for me appears ideal, but naturally one's hopes and expectations are qualified by past experience.

For supplementary information and outside opinion you might consult John Alford at the Rhode Island School of Design; Peter Brieger of the Art Department at the University of Toronto; William M. Milliken, Henry Sayles Francis, and Thomas Munro at the Cleveland Museum; A. C. Barnes at the Barnes Foundation; and Martin Baldwin at the Art Gallery of Toronto. I suggest Mr. Baldwin because recently he acted as agent in making me a confidential offer, before which I later discovered he had made inquiries in the San Francisco area about my work here. I declined the offer, but perhaps the replies to his inquiries are still available. Men who have had some contact with my work here include Robert Tyler Davis, now at

the Montreal Art Association, and Andrew Ritchie at the Albright Gallery in Buffalo. It would be awkward for me at this time to have word that I am interested in leaving this area reach here. For this reason I shall reserve local references for a later occasion if plans are further advanced.

The package of written matter contains a variety that is close to hodge-podge. Some of the material is frankly promotional (especially of the school) and much of it is styled for one periodical or another. Most of it is published, but I have included a paper or two delivered to the American Society for Aesthetics (of which I am currently a trustee) and at least one manuscript due for publication soon.

I am sorry that I could not stay over another day or two in New York, but I had received an emergency recall. Without in any sense imposing commitment or obligation on you, I should be glad to make a flying trip to New York at any time for further interviews. Thanks once more for your interest and patience. It is embarrassing to reflect on the number of appearances here of the personal pronoun.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas MacAgy

Douglas MacAgy

LIST OF WRITTEN MATERIAL (Douglas MacAgy) Starred items separately mailed.

THE BAUHAUS — A FOUNDATION FOR ART AND INDUSTRY — Department of Education, Cleveland Museum of Art. January 1940. (A two-page mimeographed hand-out to accompany the exhibition.)

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MARK ROTHKO — to be submitted to the Magazine of Art this month. (Deals with a possibly fruitful line of approach to Rothko's vision, as against current habits of approach.) I shall send a copy of this in about a week. DM

October 12, 1947

PTG + SC. DEPT

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

cc: Mr. Wheeler
Mr. Soby

Date October 7, 1947

To: Mr. d'Harnoncourt

From: Mr. Barr

Re: Dept. of Painting and Sculpture

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear René:

I talked over an hour and a half yesterday with Douglas MacAgy, now Director of the California School of Fine Arts (?), San Francisco. He struck me as a possibility for the head of Painting and Sculpture or for the not impossible head of Education.

He is about 35, well mannered, business-like. University of Toronto, studied with ~~Alford~~ Alford, head of Art and Philosophy. Two or three years at Barnes Foundation, studying the collection and painting. A couple of years Cleveland Museum, assistant to Munro, head of Education and to Harry Francis, Curator of Painting; lectured in the galleries, arranged exhibitions - including our Picasso show. A couple of years with Mrs. Morley as curator (?) at San Francisco museum. Then took directorship and reorganisation of School of Fine Arts, which I understand he has done brilliantly both as teacher and administrator.

However, does not want to stay in California: wants job in east preferably New York. Present salary $6,000. Wife formerly assistant to Tom Howe, Director of California Palace of the Legion of Honor and acting Director during Howe's absence throughout the war. Primarily interested in painting and has written articles.

Asked for copies of articles and a short autobiography. Will forward when received.

Returned to California last night.

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Page 3 -- bibliography (MacAgy)

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October 12, 1947

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Mr. Soby

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From: Mr. Barr

Re: Dept. of Painting and Sculpture

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Asked for copies of articles and a short autobiography. Will forward when received.

Returned to California last night.

June 4, 1947

Proposed Set-Up for
Department of Painting and Sculpture

1. That a new position of Chairman of the Department be created.

2. That the title of the Director of the Department be eliminated for the time being.

3. That two new titles be created from among the following three:

Assistant to the Chairman,
Assistant Director, and/or
Associate Director.

4. That a panel of twelve Guest Directors be appointed, which would be made up of leading Museum people throughout the country and possibly abroad. That each time a plan was made for an exhibition, one of the Guest Directors would be selected to arrange and hang the show. He would be assisted in carrying out his work and in his contacts with the various departments of the Museum by either the Assistant Chairman of the Department or the Assistant or Associate Director. Naturally, from time to time members of the staff themselves would take responsibility for certain of the exhibitions.

Reasons for this suggested system of Guest Directors are as follows:

(a) It would give the Museum a chance to test in action various men who might later be considered for the job of Director of Painting and Sculpture.

(b) If appointed from other areas than the East, the men appointed might increase interest in the Museum's activities in their various parts of the country. Similarly, there might be an advantage in appointing Guest Directors from Europe occasionally.

(c) The Guest Director system might tend to diversify the Museum's program. There is a very decided danger in this as well as a

virtue, but it is questionable whether any one man should do all or the great majority of the Museum's painting and sculpture shows, since no one's sympathy covers all the many facets of contemporary art. This is perhaps especially true now that the great survey shows - Abstract Art and Fantastic Art - have been done, with the exception of Expressionism. If in the future we are to depend primarily on one-man exhibitions, it may well be better to have them done by different men.

JAMES THRALL SOBY
29 MOUNTAIN SPRING ROAD
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT

Jan. 17,1947

Dear Alfred:

I mailed the collection report from the Hartford station last night, but I'm afraid you won't be able to read a word of it. I got to the station in time for the train but was suddenly so exhausted from all that crowded talk at lunch that I repaired to the oyster bar, stuffed myself with sea food and took the 8:00. So some of the comments got written in the steady station, but I added more on the train, fierce wobbly, as the N.Y.N.H.& Hfd. roadbed always is. Anyway, I think it all fine now except for page 1. I understand the reasons for that, but I don't really think that double-talk - giving the Director of P.&S. a power which he must immediately give away - will impress anyone with sense. Indeed, it would seem to me more flattering to the intelligence of the incumbent if he were told right out that the collections was not his. I don't at all agree that getting someone good for the job will hinge on this, especially if it's to be someone young. He'll have his hands full as it is.

Well, I know what the difficulty is, and a more practical solution, it seems to me, would be to revive the sub-committee on acquisitions in an advisory capacity only, with the Director of P.&.S. as a member. This would give him the title and let him say his say -automatically, both in the sub-com. meetings and at the big committee, if he disagreed with the other members. Seems to me cleaner than the end-around-end play which I remember from my shinguard days never fooled anybody.

Many, many thanks for letting me see the Cooper letter. What he said about the Chirico naturally cheered me very much. I found it here last night, and was alarmed to think that you might have waited lunch for me; do hope not. I remember saying that I had to go to the Connolly thing this week, but I should have written. Anyway, never again; I look forward to the quiet of the Valmarr next Thursday, and will come to the Museum to get you around 12:15 or so.

If it will help, do tell Rene that I read the report and how I feel about page 1. I hope he'll agree; I suggest bringing me into it only because I do know what the job is and did work on the original report.

Best, see you Thurs.

Jim

Alfred: This seems fine except for p. 1, which I think should be rewritten. I know the reasons but I don't think they will persuade anyone to take job of Director of P & S unless he is also interested in the collections. If he is interested he will take it whether the duties are broken up or not.

CONFIDENTIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

The Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture shall, within the administrative setup of the Museum, be responsible for the preparation and execution of all loan exhibitions and of publications connected with such exhibitions. He shall conduct the Museum's contacts with artists, art galleries, art scholars, art students, and the public at large on all matters related to painting and sculpture, except those concerned with the Museum Collections which shall be ~~referred by him~~ referred from him, with ~~his~~ the recommendations, ~~to~~ of the Director of the Collections.

I can't see the sense, but I do not handout for the responsibility should be the responsibility of C and authority, & not taken from Sally Hunter to Dan.

The Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture shall also be responsible for the content of traveling exhibitions in his field and for the supervision of the building up of the Museum's photographic files, files on artists, collectors, etc. Since matters related to painting and sculpture are dealt with in most of the meetings of the Committee on Exhibitions and the Committee on the Museum Collections, the Director of the Department shall ex officio attend the meeting of both committees and be a voting member of the first.

Why not have these conditions (Dir. of P & S) fulfill P & S approval of both the Committee on Exhibitions and the Committee on Museum Collections after consultation with department heads. Before acceptance, the Director of P & S will be expected to find them. The difficulty is not to persuade certain candidate others, but to find someone to take a job where opinions are clear they are immune in [illegible] people-work, but to take someone away from his job to find them. Also it is not power but [illegible] which will decide the candidate; most of the people already have a job; the power is a tentative & only [illegible]

In general this breakup for the director of P & S & Sculp seems exaggerated. Either we recognize the collections as important or we don't, & I think we should do it one or more specifically.

Don't recognize it - or refuse to

CONFIDENTIAL

THE COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The Director of the Collections shall be responsible to the Committee on Museum Collections and the Board of Trustees. He will generally be responsible for the planning, organization, care and use of the collections as a whole, including acquisitions and eliminations. Under his general supervision, the heads of the various curatorial departments will assume responsibility for their respective sections of the collections and will be expected to initiate and carry on the work related to their fields. In Painting and Sculpture, however, the Director of the Collections will retain the specific responsibilities of conducting the activities of that section of the Collections with the understanding that he may delegate responsibility for this section of the Collections. The amount of time to be devoted to the Collections by the various departments shall be established by agreement between the Director of the Collections and the Directors of Program Departments, the Director of Curatorial Departments, the Business - Manager, and the Secretary of the Museum.

I. ACQUISITIONS

All proposed acquisitions shall be presented to the Committee on the Museum Collections by the Director of the Collections after consultation with department heads. Before acceptance, they must have the approval of both the Committee and the Director. Disagreements between them will be referred to the Board of Trustees. Disagreements between the Director of the Collections and the Department heads will be referred to the Committee on the Collections.

ACQUISITIONS, continued

The Committee on the Museum Collections may delegate to the Director of the Collections authority to make purchases for the Museum involving limited amounts (a renewable sum of $5,000 with individual purchases up to $1,000), and he in turn may delegate this authority to department heads within the limits and purposes of the available funds. These purchases are to be subject to approval by the Committee on the Museum Collections before becoming part of the Museum Collections. If such approval is not given, the items involved become part of the study collection.

II. ELIMINATIONS

The Committee on the Museum Collections will review the eliminations recommended by the Director of the Collections. Eliminations approved by the Committee will then be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Once approved for elimination, objects may be sold or exchanged by the Director of the Collections at his discretion, with the exception of objects appraised at over $5,000, the selling price of which will be approved by the Committee on the Museum Collections.

Gifts of objects to other institutions must be approved by the Trustees upon recommendation of the Committee on the Museum Collections.

III. CARE

While the physical protection of the Collections will be the responsibility of the administrative heads of the Museum,

CARE, continued

the Director of the Collections will be generally responsible for their technical care including cataloging, arrangement of storage space for study purposes, and the establishment of valuations for insurance and other purposes.

IV. USE OF THE COLLECTIONS

The Director of the Colections will be responsible for the display of the Collections in the gallery space permanently assigned for this purpose and for those temporary exhibitions designed to show specific aspects of the Collections and consisting exclusively of items from the Collections.

He will be responsible for loans internal and external, except that in external loans, if the insured value of an item is over $10,000 the Director shall obtain the approval of the Chairman of the Committee on the Museum Collections.

All publications, publicity releases, films and telecasts concerning the Collections shall be approved by the Director of the Collections or his delegate.

Dir/n Pt G + Sc.

185 BRYANT STREET
BUFFALO 9, N.Y.

?

March 5th, 1948

Mr. René d'Harnoncourt
333 Central Park West
New York City, New York

Dear René:

Thank you for your telephone call explaining the reactions of members of your committee to the conditions I had placed upon the position in question. I have given careful consideration to these reactions and have reached the following conclusions.

First, on the question of salary I can well understand why you cannot meet this condition since, as you have told me, your offer of $10,000 is already $2,500 more than your present restricted budget calls for. However, with the increased cost of living in New York as opposed to Buffalo by accepting less than I proposed I should, in effect, be coming to New York at a lower salary than I now have.

Secondly, I can see very well that since, as you tell me, no member of the staff of your museum has a contract determining his tenure, you cannot and should not give one to me. On the other hand, while I am willing to take many risks of a professional nature I dare not under present circumstances give up the requested period of assured tenure.

Finally, with reference to the condition that the director of the department of painting and sculpture should serve on the Coordinating Committee. I can readily see your reasons for having to find an additional title for the director before he can serve in this capacity. However by having to add a title yet to be determined there is an implied admission that the job itself is not of sufficient stature to warrent the director being placed in a superior position to the directors of some of your other curatorial departments. In short, by granting this condition on these terms, the Board would be placed in the position of complicating an already complex and delicately balanced administr tive organization.

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All of which leads me to only one conclusion: the position as at present envisaged is better fitted for some one with fewer conditions than mine. I can now see that the type of position I had envisaged, with the status in the organization I thought necessary to the execution of the work involved, is out of the question. You cannot make a curator into anything other than a curator, and you should not.

I am only sorry that my desire to assist the Museum of Modern Art during the period of attack on modern art led me to propose an impossible set of conditions.

Whatever the outcome of the present wave of criticism I shall try to support, through our own Room of Contemporary Art, the principles of individual freedom of expression on which the whole modern movement is based.

Sincerely

Andrew C. Ritchie

ACR/jr