

May 13, 1978

Dear Mrs. Stetting:

I've just returned from Indianapolis, Ind. where I received an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Indiana Univ. I saw my old art school alma Mater, and old friends - also made a few new friends, among them Dear Arthur Weber of the Art School & several members of his faculty. Everyone was very nice, cordial and, I think, genuine. So, I'm very tired needless to say. Hospitality, while very flattering, can take its toll also.

I'm now busy trying to wind up preparations for my one-afternoon-show which takes place next Sunday May 21 - 2 to 6 pm - only! at the home of a couple interested in promoting sales for artists. It was their idea, so I agreed - now we'll see. I'll keep you informed.

I read over the chapter on the Atlanta Annual Art Show which you sent. I think you, as always, did a thorough and insightful job on it. Just one or two observations which you can consider or just forget - as you may see fit:

(2)

Rufus Cleghorn

1. When the late Pres^{of A.U.} University declined to approve the integration of the A.U. Annual art shows - several artists of my then immediate acquaintance decided to refrain from entering future works in the shows - (Shall I say "boy-cotted" the show?)

They were Chas. Alston, Romare Bearden, Norman Lewis (he never seemed over-enthusiastic about the show) and myself, Hale Woodruff. Perhaps Jake Lawrence refused further participation - I'm not certain of this. Charles White might have been among the "with-drawing" artists - I'm not sure of this either. (I should say that later on I did relinquish a bit and enter my painting, "Yellow Bird" which took an award of \$100⁰⁰ - This painting was selected by R.A. Long to be included in the A.U. Show of 1973 - This is the show which did bring the A.U. shows (the collection) out of the so-called moth-balls. My hat never off to Richard Long for this insightful and sensitive and enterprising action on his part: that is to clean up, re-assemble and make available selected works from the back-log of the A.U. Collection.

(3)

2. During the decade(s) up to the time of the Art. Min. annuals (1941-2 and thereafter) it should be remembered that Negro (black) artists were showing in exhibitions over the country. While the purpose of the A. M. annuals intended to offer exhibition facilities to Negro artists, especially those who had none at all, = This was not to claim that Negro artists were denied all accesses to exhibit. The enclosed sheet from the A. M. Bulletin can support this. Also, my inclusion in the 1939 World's Fair show - my work was not on the basis of "race" but as an accomplished artist worthy of representing the State of Georgia. The selection of my "Little Boy" was placed, as a work of art, in competition to all other Georgia artists who competed. I don't recall any suggestion of race as a factor at that time. It may indeed have been a factor - (who knows?) but no mention of it was made at the time. Incidentally I showed in many museum shows in the 20's (late) and the 30's along with other artists whose race or nationality was not, I think, a factor.

(4)

Did I tell you that the Metropolitan Museum here in NYC, has just acquired one of my major paintings for its 20th century collection. It is a work (abstract or semi-abstract) which I call "Figure." Its size is 40" wide by 34" high, painted in 1958. But more on this later.

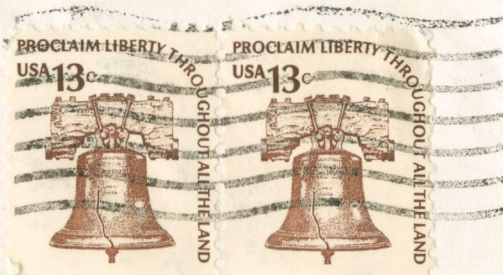
Again, I like how you handled the Atlanta Annuals -- it is scholarly, human, and quite sensitive. You got to the chore of things.

At a later date, Mrs. Storking, I want to bring up the subject (the matter) of my A. U. Library Murals, "The Art of the Negro." This would have great meaning to me as one who labored to create this work over a long period, and ~~it would not have~~ any bearing on my "Atlanta Years" as they are featured in your dissertation. This would be something quite apart from your present study. I shall write you again quite soon. Thanks for everything. Sincerely,
Ralph Rusk

May 13, 1978

This looks quite good - Please see comments on the enclosed as suggested in my letter of May 13, 1978. You may decide whether they may be referred to, commented upon, or included in some form in your final draft, or whether any reference to these suggestions may be made at all, whatsoever.

A.W.



Mrs. Winifred Storting
#23A — 2920 Chapel Hill Road
Durham, North Carolina
27707

2920 CHAPEL HILL ROAD