

49 West 12th St,

May 7th, 1924.

Laurie dear:

I'm christening a new typewriter in this letter to you. Bear old Mummy, you see, is insisting on spending some of her East Cambridge land money on me, so this is part of it. It's not a brand new machine, but a good second hand one, and works wonderfully smoothly compared to my old war horse. But it is only part of the present. Another part is a grand tool cabinet from Hammacher and Schlemmer, with a handy tool or two in addition, so I can put my things in a safe and tidy place instead of in those dilapidated old baskets by the back door.

And still another gift is a couple of balcony seats for a series of chamber-music concerts to be given next winter by the Elshuco Trio and others, of all the chamber music of Brahms. Can you imagine a greater treat?

Hate to think I've been so long about giving suggestions with regard to the "Thoughts on Portraiture". Ere now, you've probably got it all printed and out. But in case you haven't, I'll give you my reactions, and you can take 'em or leave 'em as you see fit. My first and principal criticism is that it is a little too long, or rather, too verbose. I think there are several sentences where you have repeated yourself, and which could be boiled down to a single one. Your points are well taken, though non-painters as well as painters may cavil at your saying that the photographer has to "draw" just as much as the painter. I don't, myself think that is quite accurate, nor does Mother. I see what you mean, of course, but think it might be put differently. In the last paragraph, I think you have put material which should go in the same paragraph as the one before "Then comes the making of the print".

In other words, all it needs, it seems to me, is boiling down, and some re-building. I'd stress, if I were you, the fact that the sitter must come prepared to do his or her share of the work. That it takes two to make the sittings a success, and that the sympathetic cooperation of the sitter goes a long way toward getting a likeness.

I was up against an awful problem of a like nature with Bodanzky. He was amenable enough, in a way, but he hadn't the faintest glimmer of understanding of ~~why~~^{the} pose of the head, or the open mouth, etc. I've decided that both he and Casals are so utterly unconscious of what they are doing and of how they look when they are working, that they simply can't visualize themselves enough to take the characteristic pose on request. I would say to Bodanzky, "The first fiddles are here, over your left shoulder. They're lying down on the job. Can't you make them bring that theme out? Go for 'em!" And he'd meekly turn his head round for a moment with tight-shut mouth and lack-luster eyes, and immediately drop back again into a perfectly non-descript pose. He just couldn't think it! Gee, it was hard, because of course with a vivid pose like that, even the two sides of the face should be different, not to speak of the neck, which is absolutely opposite on either side, and which has to express almost as much as the face.

Mrs B. came down to see it yesterday, and she said it was "wonderful", and "the first real portrait he has ever had", etc. She

doesn't want me to touch it, but of course there's quite a bit of work on it yet?

Have asked Bauer if any more sittings are to be forthcoming this spring, and he says he will give me some in June. Wrote a very charming letter, and told me again how delighted he is with the pedestal of the Beethoven bust, and how grateful he is, etc.

So between my two unremunerative musicians heads, I am sandwiching in a new baby figure, which I hope will be enough of a pot-boiler to justify it's existence. The figure is 28 inches high, of a standing babe, just at the staggering age. Haven't had a model yet, and rather doubt if I'll need one. The thing's has seemed to "go" from the start.

Shall probably begin Marie next week.

Mrs K. was in here the other day. She was lamenting the fact that she simply couldn't write letters, (as usual). Said she wanted me to tell you about a girl she knows, apropos of post-cards. This girl worked in her studio for a while, and later set out for herself, trying to make a living doing portraits. She most starved. Then some enterprising friend sent her to one of the New England college towns, (I forget which), to make postcards of the buildings and scenery to sell to the students. She not only did it well, but made enough to support herself and her Mother and an invalid sister. So Mrs K. says she's all for the postcard idea, and hopes you'll get right at it, hard, and be content to derive your income from that source, rather than trusting to portraiture.

The kittens are getting quite lively and playful now,--it is too bad they don't look more like her. One has quite a pretty face, but it's nose has black spots on it which make it look dirty. The yellow one is a nice color, but he has a long nose and pointed face, rather like the one Maizie brought in. And the black and white must surely favor Pa !

Here's a copyright card for you. Nothing else. Mr Eggers hasn't turned up yet. Hope he won't disappear again before I even set eyes on him. If I knew where he was, I'd invite them to a meal, but he telephoned from the station, before they had an address.

Hope you're still feeling O.K. again, old dear, and your Mother, too. And Betsy. How is the poison ? You haven't said lately, so I hope it is disappearing. We're having a pest of rats just now, and the exterminator man has put poison around, and we're sure a number have died in the walls, the smell is so horrid.

Nighty-night, Laurie, must digest a few latin declensions before I tumble in. The patience of that dear man with my slowness !

All love -

Brendie

49 WEST 12TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY



LET'S GO!
CITIZENS
MILITARY
TRAINING
- CAMPS -



Miss Laura Gilpin,
22 East Espanola Street,
Colorado Springs,
Colorado.