

41 West 53 New York 19  
24 September 1946

Dear Miss Gilpin,

Delighted to hear of your progress---we admire you very much! And do forgive if you can my delay in answering your letter. The book Paul Strand and I are doing is fast approaching its deadline, and what with one thing and another---days on our knees with layout, months of library dessication, insomnia etc.---we do little but plunge into work in the morning, emerge briefly at night to see our respective husband, wife, and more importunate friends, and fall into bed. Paul will sympathize with you about the drought---he was dogged persistently by rain or bald skies all this spring.

Beaumont and I left the Museum in May, after a considerable upheaval, and are devoting this year to our own long cherished projects. Ann Armstrong---you remember my lovely blonde assistant?---is in charge of the Department at present, and I shall forward your letter to her for her suggestions.

Of course you would be eligible for the Fellowship. But the first one was a private gift and I do not know if the Museum plans to get another donor to continue it or not.

As for portfolios of original prints: after my own experience in trying to promote one, of twelve prints, each by people like Ansel, Edward, Charles Sheeler, etc, for \$100 a portfolio in an edition of a hundred, I feel that your best attack would be letters to those museums which have exhibited your work, appealing directly for subscriptions. Museums in general are still unaware of the value of original prints, even when they constitute an exhibition, and are not willing to pay for more than hack work. You of course are presenting material of art historical significance, which is a help. Have you figured what the time, presentation, etc will cost you? I planned that each of the photographers in my project would receive \$500.; sent letters to 90 museums and colleges; received about 15 subscriptions (considered a good response by experts, for such a pioneering field) and ~~would~~ planning a further campaign when the Museum decided to postpone the project, basing their argument on their experience with books and portfolios of reproductions: in the early 1930s they dared publish only 1500 or so in an edition; now 15000 sell out in a few months. Aside from the most forward looking institutions, your forthcoming book with Hastings House is likely to satisfy the needs of most.

The best suggestion I have to offer is some such arrangement as Paul and I worked out for him: a loan of \$1000 to be paid back through royalties. Surely you have staunch admirers---I have met a number myself! If neither Charles Duell, nor Walter Freese, nor Ann, nor Steichen ( who may take over the Department at the Museum if enough money can be raised) can find anybody, let me know!

Beaumont is working on a book on American daguerreotypes. Do any historical societies or collectors in your neighborhood have rich depositories to work in? We hope to be coming west this winter, and shall undoubtedly come to New Mexico.

Best of luck! Do let us know how you get on and if we can help.

*Handwritten signature: Nancy Newhall*  
Nancy Newhall