

Chouinard Art Institute

743 South Grand View Street, Los Angeles 57, California : Dunkirk 9-4138

February 12, 1959

Miss Laura Gilpin
Box 1173
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear Laura:

Thanks so much for your letter of February 8th. I gather from what you have said and the other drops of gossip which have come my way that things have quieted down so far as the Museum problem is concerned pending the decision of the Attorney-General. I can only assume from all that has been said that they anticipate an adverse ruling insofar as the present organizational set-up of the Museum is concerned.

In the event that any such device as a ruling which would prohibit the Museum from housing loan exhibits should become law, I feel that the Indian Arts Fund would do well to serve notice upon the Museum of New Mexico, the Regents, and any other authority in command. I am certain that once such notice of withdrawal of the collections has been submitted, there would be an immediate rush to the parapet in order to solve the problem. It would only be through direct action and not only an indication of carrying out the threat, but actually making good on it to the point of removing the collections and putting them in warehouse that you would be able to force their hand.

I am sure that Mr. Seth will have a more sensible solution to submit. My own thought on the matter is that if the Legislature sets up a body of Regents with power to make commitments such as the Regents of the University have power to enter into contracts and negotiate business, etc., it would then be possible for the Regents, speaking on behalf of the State, to make a contract with the Indian Arts Fund, the School of American Research, etc. Everything, of course, will depend upon the authority which is given the parent organization. This is much the same arrangement that you would find in any State organization which expects to operate with any degree of autonomy. The University must negotiate its affairs in this manner and, as you know, they have not too long ago negotiated for the sub-lease of certain properties near the University on which some of the Eastern interests are going to build a super-market and shopping center which will be operated on a profit-sharing basis with the University. If this isn't an authority to enter into contracts and negotiate one's affairs, I miss my guess.

Miss Laura Gilpin

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I am off this Saturday for the East and will be gone until March 7th. As plans now stand, it will be almost impossible for me to manage Santa Fe in either direction. However, let me know if I can be of any assistance. In the East I shall be at the St. Regis Hotel, Fifth Avenue and 55th Street.

I am delighted to know that something is being done to recognize Kenneth Chapman. Not that he has failed to secure the proper recognition, but it is always pleasant to be acknowledged in some way before you are six feet under. I shall be pleased to report this information on the New York frontier.

Fond greetings to you and Betsy.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Wilder", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Mitchell A. Wilder

MAW:had

GILBERT BOND

25% COTTON FIBRE

U.S.A.