

Indian Arts Museum of Western Art

3501 CAMP BOWIE BOULEVARD, FORT WORTH 7, TEXAS PERSHING 2-2847

October 3, 1962

Miss Laura Gilpin
Box #1173
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear Laura:

This is a brief explanatory note with a copy to Chap to inquire re Indian Arts Fund, Inc. As you know, the Carter Museum is interested in doing documentation of things, institutions, people, places in the West. We are as concerned with history as we are with art and anthropology, and we like to relate the objects of our exhibitions to people, events, etc. We always like to do a publication which will serve as a permanent record of not only the exhibit but also the story which we are telling.

I have been thinking about the Indian Arts Fund and the important role it has played in the preservation of the best of southwest Indian art. I am well aware that the bylaws of the corporation place very stringent controls over the collection. However, I have a suggestion which, I hope, might be considered and which I think would be of interest to everyone interested in Indian art and the IAF.

The Fund was established long enough ago that it now has a rather long history. The bylaws go back far enough to include such names as Herbert Hagerman, Mary Austin, Charles Springer, et.al. To be exact your organization came into being at 4:00 p.m., November 6, 1925. (I still have my vast stack of paper work from the program study I did in 1958.) Since that time much has happened. Of the 25 original directors I don't even hazard a guess as to how many are still around, but Chap, Dasburg, and Miss White I am certain of. We would like to do an exhibition telling the story of the Indian Arts Fund from the time of its earliest founding through its many ups and downs to the present. We would wish to document the story with photographs of people, Indians, activities at the laboratory and in the field and, of course, exhibit a selection of materials from the collection. Details would have to await discussion, but briefly the Museum operates on the following plan.

First we must have an expert consultant completely familiar with the subject matter. I would assume that Kenneth Chapman is this consultant. I know that Chap is very busy with his own work but would hope that he might have the assistance of Betty Toulouse in running down materials. We supply the necessary staff support--i.e., bibliographic and library sources, photographic expenses, etc. In this case I would look to you for photographic materials both for the exhibition and the publication.

Miss Laura Gilpin

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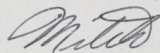
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The Museum would, of course, handle all expenses of packing, transportation, and insurance of any materials loaned. If the Indian Arts Fund were interested we would be happy to assist in seeing that the exhibit were shown elsewhere in such locality as you might prefer. I believe that an exhibit of this sort would do much to assist the Fund and would bring to the attention of a much wider the work that has been done over a period of 40 years and the need which exists. In a sense we would be joining forces to make a point on behalf of Indian art.

I hope I am not placing either you or Chap in an embarrassing position in making this proposal. It just seems to me that here is a most important institution which has labored long and lovingly at the task of collecting and holding onto the best Indian materials. When I look over the list of names I am impressed how it reads-- a veritable "who's who" of individuals who are identified with the studies in this field. I think it would make a wonderful exhibition and publication and it would put down in permanent form the record of these 40 years. I hope that you agree.

Lastly, I think it is very important to do this before everyone from the original group has faded from the scene. Please let me hear from you. My fondest to you and the boss.

Sincerely,



Mitchell A. Wilder
Director

MAW:mjw

cc: Kenneth Chapman

Dictated by Mr. Wilder and signed in his absence.