

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK 19

11 WEST 53rd STREET

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

THE DEPARTMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

EDWARD STEICHEN, DIRECTOR

January 14th, 1962.

Dear Nell:

How lovely of you to send me such a beautiful New Year message, and so many thanks for your spirit-warming words, of which I am all underswimming. Those who come to our door - you high among them - minister to me, and not I to them. The enclosed is just an example of how far the courage of youth goes to keep us young. It comes from a girl in her beginning twenties - a good photographer - who is with her journalist-husband in far places, and gives one hope for a future that may never be ...

I am so sorry that you are tied to home and hospital, and believe that the "Happy Remembrances" will further your wonderful husband's convalescence. Please congratulate him for me, belatedly, on achieving a landmark birthday. To keep you company in these difficult days, we will send you Gene Smith's Spanish beaver, which we have been holding for the ransom of a visit. If you wish to thank him, his complicated address is

c/o Cosmo P.R. Corporation

Tokyo Building

marked "Personal" 6-7-Chome Gintza Nishi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, Japan

We are busily preparing for our Callahan.

Frank exhibition, and, since it will remain on view into the early days of spring, I am hopeful that you will see it. We miss your presence and the holidays your appearance makes. Incidentally, if I were to find myself on a desert island and had to make the proverbial choice, the work of Callahan would be a likely selection. Then, on February 15th, Mr. Steichen will give a lecture on "Toward Abstraction," illustrated with color slides by Rudi Haas, Suzanne Hausammann and other experimental minds and eyes. Meanwhile, his book is approaching the deadline stage, and he is looking forward to directing the F.S.C. show in the fall. What a wonderful lead for all of us to follow!

Now that the Chagall windows are on their beautiful way to Jerusalem, it is possible to walk on 53rd Street again. The crowds were incredible, and people stood four deep in lines, waiting in all weather. To me, these masterworks held all the wonder of a latter day Charité.

The drive is going so well that the Edward Steichen Photography Center may come into being before too long, and then photography will be better served at the most beautiful museum in the world. He must be here to see this greatest tribute to what he has wrought. We have just had a preview of four TV programs based on his achievement and will let you know when they are released, for they form a summation of his credo. Of course, the director of the series made the usual quota of mistakes (for instance, he uses a truncated version of the famous Morgan

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portrait - as a "snapshot") but - all in all "Heritage"
constitutes a record for whatever posterity there may be.

A delicious Matisse story for your amusement -
it seems that - when the artist - came to America
René d'Hamoncourt, also newly arrived, was delegated
to accompany him to a baseball game. And all
the long, hot afternoon, Matisse kept asking
"Qu'est-ce qu'ils font?" and, up to the seventh
inning, René kept replying "They're practicing,
I guess." So that - life always has its moments
of loveliness....

So manage to come soon - and may the new
year improve for you.... Gratefully and affectionately always -

Trace