

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK 19

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

DEPARTMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

September 18, 1963.

Very dear Nell:

How to thank you I do not know! You have answered a unfathomable question with the most beautiful of all descriptions of beauty in the absolute, and defined it forever. When Mr. Steichen suggested the inquiry, I said "Paul - his whole life is his answer," and I could tell that he had always known that this was so and could not be otherwise. I have sent him a copy of your poem, since it belongs to him, too, and I know that he will read it - as I have - with joy and tears, and that it will be with him through the days, as it is in my heart, too.

It came at a bad time, for our wonderful Ilavis Pratt - who came to us with "The Bitter Years" - is leaving us, and Mr. Steichen's beautiful Department is infinitely poorer. Your words helped me to bear a real loss, for, as you know, the companionship of work is a very real and precious thing. I know that you must miss Harold's encouragement, too. Stupidly, I am still puzzled about your

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dear Mr. Craybuck. You call him Heroman, but his initials appears as "M." Which is correct - or both - please?

Thanks, too, for having Mayfield Parrish's lovely letters with me once again. These treasures are on their way home to you. I once questioned him about his "King Cole," and he answered in that exquisite calligraphy of his "Its popularity is something of a puzzle, but I dare say any painting hanging over a famous bar is bound to be that.... This old relic has not traveled far but often, and may be some day will come to rest for good.... There will no doubt be an impulse to move it again, and it ought to be on easels." His words went into my little Once, and made it beautiful, as yours will give meaning to the inadequate piece.

I guess "King Cole" will be in a Museum some day. And that brings me to your magnificently generous offer to give us the fruits and flowers of your years of beauty and your summer in the dark-room. John Dyakowski joins me in deep thanks and pure gratitude. As you know,

all preferred gifts must be passed upon by the Committee on the Museum Collections (which consists of such wonderful people as Alfred Barr, Jim Soby, and the others) and then the final ratification is made by the Trustees. It is customary for the staff to give a little talk before both groups, displaying the new treasures, and I (who ask few things of John) am going to ask for the privilege of laying your life before them. They cannot but share my delight and pride in you and your work, and in your tribute to Mr. Steichen, for I know that this superb offer is to honor him. You realize, of course, that the decision is with these two Committees, but it cannot be otherwise than a "Yes" loud and clear. They meet once a month, so whenever you wish, it will be my joy to pass your gift on to the Museum we love. And thank you over and over again from all of us.

With love always,
Grace