

March 23, 1955

Dear Miss Schramm:

Thank you very much for your kind letter. I have read it and reread it and studied the pictures which you enclosed. I keep wondering how it is that my pictures appealed to you so. Fundamentally, even from the very first picture I think I ever made, I was more simple than you. I can only be helpful to you now if I tell you frankly just how I feel about your pictures.

Each one of us must please ourself. This is the only possible way. Since you are not yet sure of yourself, I can at least make you think.

First of all, your negatives are, I should say, better than average quality and quite adequate for good salon prints. That in itself is a long step of the way.

There are two words in your letter which I feel are the key to your trouble. They are the words "model" and "pose," for this is exactly what they convey to me.

My first advice to you would be to make pictures of something very dear to you, something very real, and something very simple. Forget all about salons,

March 14, 1955

Photography Magazine:

Am enclosing an ~~un~~opened letter to Miss Dorr in your care.....as per your instructions you would forward it to her. Thank you very much for this favor.

From: Rebertha Schramm  
545 W. Roosevelt St.  
Freeport, Ill.



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exhibitions or critics. Make it of something you like, make it say things for you that are true. Try it on something and send me a print.

The little baby is quite adequate but I feel that you are not at home with it and that the baby looks terribly uncomfortable. Certainly he is quite conscious that he is having his picture taken. The table on which he is sitting all dressed up looks very hard and slippery and as if he might squirm out of the lady's hand any minute.

The other table on which he is lying so naked seems equally inappropriate. The telephone and distractions on the rear wall only add to the feeling of inappropriateness for the subject to its environment. The case of the valentine is even more contrived and busy and confused.

You must start on something very simple, even if it is a flower or a bowl of fruit, or a pair of hands at a typewriter -- anything that can be, itself, true.

In all my life I never made a picture for exhibition, although many of my pictures have been exhibited. But the picture must essentially be made with no thought of this in mind. One must be very humble for any



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form of exhibitionism, even the trying to please, is very obvious in the picture.

This sounds very unappreciative but it is only meant to be helpful. Please feel that you can send me more pictures any time, but do not try so hard.

Sincerely,

Miss Rebertha Schramm  
545 W. Roosevelt Street  
Freeport, Illinois