

3 August 1998

Mr. Baird Ryan
Gerald Peters Gallery
1011 Paseo de Peralta
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Baird,

I just got home from a two week trip to Mexico - part vacation and part business. The business part (and the pleasure too) was going with friend Cina Alexander (her family, the Klebergs, are part owners of the fabled King Ranch) to meet Miguel Sanchez Navarro at their huge and ancient hacienda, literally in the shadow of the great pyramids of Teotihuacan. Miguel is owner-publisher of " Mexico Desconocido " a very important pictorial magazine somewhat like our " National Geographic," but entirely about Mexico's past and present.

The Sanchez-Navarros are one of the oldest and richest families in Mexico - they own most of Mexico's breweries among other vast holdings - and they flipped out over my notebook photos of Scott's and my watercolors and Aztec works. Miguel wants to publish something soon. He particularly loved my painting "Earth Lord" which is of a Mayan earth monster mask sculpture deep in the jungles of Piedras Negras - a painting which you have in storage. In fact he asked me to give him my photo of the painting along with a few written remarks about the work so that he could publish them.

I also visited the famous hacienda of Las Lajas near Queretaro. This hacienda is home of the widow of Juan Sordo Magdalena. Juan Sordo Magdalena was one of the greatest 20th century Mexican architects. He was both friend and rival to Luis Barragan. Las Lajas with its ultra simple 17th century facades in deep red was Barragan's favorite colonial building and very influential on his style. Juan Sordo Magdalena's wife Malena genuinely wants me to spend time at Las Lajas to paint. She loves our work and is very well connected to the Mexican art world - both artists and important collectors. If I have time to pursue these and other connections, they most certainly should benefit us and the Gerald Peters Gallery as well. The problem, of course, is time. There is never enough of it.

Which brings me to the subject of the grand opening of Gerald Peters Gallery. Except for the two weeks that I spent in Mexico, I have for more than a month been working on a large painting of Scarlet Macaws in deep jungle - very similar to a picture which caught Jerry's eye when he was in Fort Worth and which he subsequently suggested I do for the big opening. Although the painting is coming along well, I simply cannot have it properly completed by the time of your August opening. I should, however, have the painting finished before the show comes down if I have no unforeseen interruptions. (Jerry said that, if possible, he would like to have one painting to show and one painting for back-up).

Scott has told me about his talk with you on the phone the other day. What I have discerned from that conversation, and one or two others I have had with you has led me to believe that you are unaware of the fact that Gerald Peters Gallery has eight of our paintings in its possession which are probably stored in one of its warehouses. When Scott suggested the other day that you choose two of these works to show, you said that they had already been shown two years ago at what I assume was your big summer landscape show of 1996. Baird, only one picture - my painting of the dinosaur track titled "Quarry" was exhibited in that show. To the best of my knowledge that one was the only painting that Gerald Peters Gallery has ever exhibited.

So much time has passed since we first met and discussed our future with Gerald Peters Gallery. With the Bass Hall project and several other prior commitments absorbing so much of Scott's and my time - and, of course, the new gallery building commanding the attention of gallery personnel, we have not been able to sit down and outline a concrete plan for a debut exhibition of our own at the new gallery. When I delivered our eight paintings to Jerry in April of 1995 I requested that they not be exhibited formally but saved for our eventual two man debut. In the meantime the paintings were to be at your disposal to show prospective patrons the range of our work in order to build interest in a future show.

Because of the passage of three years and you have been so busy, you probably have forgotten that you had eight of our paintings in your inventory. They are as follows:

SCOTT GENTLING

- 1) A' Marat
- 2) Prairie

STUART GENTLING

- 1) Earth Lord
- 2) Maine Seascape
- 3) Autoretrato para el Dia de los Muertos
- 4) Eclipse
- 5) Cruz, Cantos y Flores
- 6) Quarry

Several of these paintings are among our best works and have never been exhibited for sale. In fact only "A' Marat" has ever been offered for sale.

Although personally Scott and I would prefer to save our paintings for our own debut exhibition at the Gerald Peters Gallery sometime within the next two years, we want to cooperate with you in every way. We certainly do understand the importance of participating at such an outstanding event as the upcoming opening.

Baird, I have enclosed photos of two of our paintings currently in your possession which I think would make a good showing at the grand opening. One of them is my painting titled "Cruz, Cantos y Flores" - a major work filled with ancient Mexican symbolism and an effort of three months. The other with the horse skull and rocks is Scott's painting titled "Prairie" and is one of his most ambitious landscapes. Both are among

our largest watercolors and should make a handsome showing in a large gallery setting. As I said, neither of these paintings has ever been offered for sale by us. And I don't think you have either, since we have never been consulted as to the prices of these works.

As soon as reasonably possible, Baird, we need to sit down together - either here or in Santa Fe - and make some substantive plans for a firm show date, a possible catalogue and promotional strategies so that Scott and I can focus on seriously working for the Peters Gallery and the gallery for us. I have every confidence that Scott and I can make an important contribution as soon as we can coordinate our mutual needs and responsibilities. As I have told you, we can sell our paintings quite well on our own at our current prices, but the time has come - infact it is long passed - when we should become better known outside of our home base of Texas and that our prices should more accurately reflect the quality of ourwork in relation to the art of other better known artists who work in our medium.

Since Scott and I still have one 80 foot ceiling mural left to do for the Bass Hall as well as the Macaw painting and two portraits, we have decided to not to come to Santa Fe for the grand opening. I know that it will be a very busy time for you and that we will not really have the opportunity to seriously get together. If Ralph Carr can fit it into his schedule, I am going to ask him to stand in for us. He knows our work better than anybody and has been our liaison with the public for many years. He has also been a major hekp in dealing diplomatically and adroitly with the myriads of complex issues and people involved in our Bass Hall project. He would be in Santa Fe not only to stand in for Scott and me but to be entirely at the disposal of the Peters Gallery. I know that he could be a tremendous help to you personally, since you are bound to be pulled this way and that by swarms of out of town visitors and clients.

There are a couple of final items that I think you should know about. Scott and I have been chosen by the Mayor and the City Council of Fort Worth to be honored during the 1999 Sesquicentennial of our city's founding. We will be doing some sort of painting for a commemorative poster to be sold by the city, and there will be other hoopla. It is a parochial affair, to be sure, but Fort Worth's growing reputation as a sophisticated and internationally recognized art museum town, and the fact that I have always worked to improve the atmosphere for art here make this an honor I truly value.

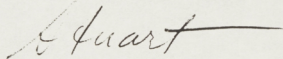
Quite coincidently, the Texas State Audubon Society will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 1999 and has approached Scott and me to be honored with a statewide tour of our original bird paintings from our huge elephant folio " Of Birds and Texas. " They are going to launch their statewide celebrations with a big opening party at - of all places - the Bass Hall!

If we have the time, we will also do a painting for a poster to honor the centennial and to accompany our traveling exhibition. All this will be promoted in the newsletter of the society and perhaps by the national Audubon Magazine as well

which has a very well-educated and prosperous readership. When I mentioned that this would perhaps be a very good time to publish a small version of our bird book for general consumption, the president of the Texas Audubon Society said that she and the Texas society would endorse the book. It may be too late for such a book to be published by mid 1999, but all the work is done so that there just might be a chance.

Baird, I hope all is going well for you and that Jerry's opening is everything you could wish for. If you do decide to show our work, then the paintings I have suggested will, I believe, be an excellent representation of what Scott and I can do as artists. They are not "used" works. They were planned to be a very important part of our debut exhibition at Gerald Peters Gallery.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stuart", followed by a long horizontal flourish line.