

DRAFT

Special Committee for the Zoo Gallery
Nicole M. Holland, Chairman
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THE ZOO GALLERY Mission Statement

I GENERAL AIMS

A. Introduction

The Fort Worth Zoological Association (FWZA) holds an important cultural trust in the form of a collection of 25 oil paintings by the renowned nineteenth-century German painter of wildlife, Wilhelm Kuhnert, given to the FWZA by Fort Worth collector F. Kirk Johnson. Through accomplished brushwork and magnificent coloration, these paintings convey the texture of life in the South East African wild, and the quality of Victorian concepts of nature, romance and adventure. Thus, this collection of paintings possesses both high aesthetic value and important educational significance.

B. Purpose of the Zoo Gallery

The FWZA is committed to creating a permanent display for the Kuhnert collection, the largest collection of works by the artist in the United States, so that the paintings can be made accessible for the enjoyment and enrichment of the public on a continuing basis, as well as being cared for properly. The present storage and display facilities for the paintings are woefully inadequate. These paintings require a suitable home, in the form of the proposed Zoo Gallery, to be located on the grounds of the Fort Worth Zoological Park.

C. Scope

Consonant with its overall commitment to the preservation and conservation of wildlife, the Zoo Gallery aims to create a pleasing and uplifting architectural structure in which the Kuhnert paintings can be both conserved for generations--through adequate climate, storage and security controls--and displayed publicly on an ongoing basis today, so that this generation may be able to reach a deeper understanding of the place and value of wildlife in man's imagination, past, present and for the future.

The Gallery is committed, first and foremost, to the display of the Kuhnert paintings. From time to time, works of art

(paintings, prints, sculptures, objets, fine books, photographs) relevant to the collection may be offered to the FWZA through gift, loan or purchase. Where it is judged that their acquisition would enhance the quality of the FWZA collection both in terms of aesthetics (that is, works of the highest quality, which are definitive of their maker and/or cultural period) and also educational value, and that the Zoo Gallery can physically accomodate their possession, such works may possibly be acquired for the Zoo Gallery collection.

Furthermore, given the nature of the FWZA collection, it is possible that the Kuhnert holdings might be refined in the future through acquisition of key Kuhnert paintings which would extend the reach of the collection, which presently excells in many fine smaller studies of single animals and several large-scale tableaux of wildlife.

D. Program

Consistent with the purpose of the Zoo Gallery, the paramount aim of the Gallery program is to display the Kuhnert collection as frequently and as perfectly as is feasible, according to the most advanced standards of architectural and gallery design and within the most reasonable economic boundaries. The final goal of the Gallery is twofold: the care of the collection, and the educational enrichment of the public through the display of this collection.

From time to time, the Zoo Gallery will also display traveling loan exhibitions as they are deemed relevant to either the Kuhnert painting collection itself, or to issues regarding the collections and mission of the Zoological Park. In our era, environmental issues concerning the future of the natural world represent key items on the international cultural and geopolitical agenda. Through the careful selection of occasional temporary loan exhibitions--which will broaden the aesthetic and/or educational impact of the Zoo Gallery and the Park--the program of the Zoo Gallery can function as an important educational tool in the Fort Worth/Dallas community. (There is no other gallery space at present in Fort Worth exclusively dedicated to exhibitions on flora and fauna.)

Consistent with its commitment to public education, the Zoo Gallery will also include space for a small library, whose holdings would, most generally, come via gift. Research into what a work of art means--either the trained digging of the scholar or the thumbing through a book by an interested child or curious adult who wants to know more-- is the lifeblood of

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education, appreciation and understanding. Tools in the form of books should always be available (following proper guidelines, of course, for use of the library by appointment and etc.) to the person who wishes to learn more. A gallery is a living complex of objects, as well as the means, using all the available means of display techniques, wall labels, research tools, and etc. to unlock the secrets of those objects.

FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1) site selection
- 2) exact physical and programmatic relationship of Zoo Gallery to Education Center
- 3) type of architectural competition to call

WILL BE ADDED TO MISSION STATEMENT THIS WEEK:

principles governing possible acquisitions
principles governing possible temporary loan exhibitions
principles governing philosophy of building
principles governing relationship of building to educational center

Also to be included:

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Towards the beginning of
PRE-ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAM

will include description of architectural competition, conducted under guidance of professional advisor, according to standards of American Institute of Architects

descriptions of environment, selection of site, requirements of building including, but not limited to, security requirements, climate control, administrative facilities, parking,

