

SENTINEL

18 January 1999

Mr. Carl McQuerry
The Contemporary Art Center of Fort Worth
500 Commerce Street, Suite 104
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Dear Carl:

I have just learned that you have cancelled the exhibit of our bird paintings ~~that was~~ to be held at the Contemporary in late February and early March in conjunction with the festivities honoring the centennial of the Texas Audubon Society. Although I have been told only one side of the story, this does not explain why you should have unilaterally taken such action without at least extending the ~~common~~ courtesy of warning me or my assistant Ralph Carr that you were having problems with the exhibit.

I have dealt with non-profit organizations long enough ever to expect a high level of efficiency from employees who, though well-meaning enough, are too often overworked and underpaid. The Audubon Society should have kept you informed of their plans - I personally charged them with that responsibility - and you should have at least exhibited a reasonable degree of professionalism and made certain inquiries before summarily cancelling the exhibit without notice or proper warning.

The Audubon Society's celebration is going to be ^{A significant} ~~an important~~ cultural event in Fort Worth. There are 31,000 Texas members in the organization, a huge number of them in North Texas. ^{Most} of them are from the upper socio-economic level. A special tour of the Contemporary was to be ~~an important~~ ^{part} of their celebrations here, and most likely you would have been visited by ~~a number of important~~ ^{prominent} guests who might not otherwise darken the door of the center.

The Contemporary was to be the first venue of a statewide, yearlong tour of our bird paintings. When our exhibit was first contemplated (after Ralph Carr had received your OK) I personally informed the Audubon officials in Austin that I would stay out of their negotiations with venues to help prevent confusion - and apparently just the sort of thing that has happened here. Since I have already informed a number of ~~very important~~ people here and in Dallas about the upcoming show at the Contemporary, I am not just saddened but embarrassed by this unfortunate turn of events in my own hometown and by an organization which I have supported from the beginning as a founding artist member of the Contemporary Art Center and member of its Board of Advisors. I might also add that Scott and I are going to be selected by the Mayor and the City Council to represent Fort Worth as its sesquicentennial artists. Irony isn't it. You would have thought that Scott and I at least merited from you the simple courtesy of a phone call or the price of a postage stamp.

Scott Sentling