

Oct 16, 1998

Dear Patricia,

I have had a day to ruminate over our ~~Assess~~^{Austin} meeting in ~~At~~ last Wednesday the 14th. As is typical with Publishing Project I can see that ours will soon develop a life and momentum of its own as soon as we begin to focus on the direction we would like to go. It appears that we (The Texas Audubon Society and us) have the following options to consider.

1) Doing a Soft Cover Catalogue of all ⁵⁰ of our paintings from "Of Birds and Trees" as well as the ~~new~~ 28 or so Remarques. There would only be a bare minimum of text.

2) Doing a publication in book form (with possibly a Soft Cover printing as well) of all 50 paintings from "Of Birds and Trees" plus the 28 Remarques and a new text I have just drafted.

3) Doing a smaller version of our "Of Birds and Trees" with all the original Groves essay and Gentler's ^{plate} Commentaries. ~~the plates~~ preserved intact. To this would be added the ²⁸ Remarques that would give the re-issue an enhanced uniqueness all its own.

There are advantages peculiar to each of these three approaches. A Soft Cover Catalogue with minimum of text could possibly be printed in time to be sold at all or most of the venues you are selecting for the Bird painting tour. And, of

Course, this approach would be the least expensive. Alternative number two would result in a "book" ~~with the original~~ ^{the original} with my essay and perhaps Grimes' essay as well as the Remarques. The book would possess a distinct character of its own while being able to Capitalize ^{to some extent} on its relationship to our original "Of Birds and Trees" which was so well-received critically. This version would be much more costly, perhaps as costly as our third alternative.

Our ~~Third~~ ^{Third} alternative is the choice with the greatest ^{potential} cost but it may also bring the ^{most} interest among book people (not just bird book people) and has the best chance to be a lasting literary and artistic monument to the Centennial of the Texas State Audubon Society and to American natural history publishing.

The advantages of simply copying the book as originally published but with the added delight of the 28 watercolor ^{to create the work} bird studies is that all the work ^{has} ^{been} ^{done} ^{to} ^{create} ^{the} ^{work} ^{has} ^{been} ^{done}. We ~~are~~ ^{want to} offering ^{all} this material to the Texas State Audubon Society free of charge, and we would only ask to share in any revenues earned by the book after all the costs of its production are covered by ^{book} sales.

I do believe that this version ^{would} ~~will~~ be not only be a significant publication in its own right, it would appeal to a wider range of book lovers

It could be a major cultural event in addition to the A. S. Society's centennial!

than simply aficionados of bird books, and would ~~be~~ ^{show} the critical review earned by its The original book. By coincidence our smaller version of "Of Birds and Trees" echoes Audubon's own publication of his smaller "acton size" version of his "Birds of America". It was through sales of this smaller version that Audubon made his fortune. If ~~the~~ ^{the} book is consistently and properly promoted, I do believe it can be successful.

The disadvantages are, of course, its high cost and the fact that the book can not be published entirely for the early venues of the Audubon Society Tour of the Gentleman's Paintings. I do believe that it is possible to sell subscription to the forthcoming book at all the shows through a variety of sales approaches. (Scott and I signed up for the New York Historical Society's two volume set of the original paintings from Audubon's "Birds of America" 2 years ahead of publication. With a good brochure (which I would design free of charge) ^{we} could alert the T. S. A. S. ^{members} as well as book collecting clubs and authors and could prove very successful. ^{No} ~~It~~ ^{we} collected nearly \$300,000 from subscription for our original "Of Birds and Trees" more than a year and a half before publication - and that book was much more difficult to sell than the new one. It can be done.

Another disadvantage is, of course,

the initial publication costs, as well as a reasonable amount for promotion (Brochures, other materials, advertising, etc.).

Your suggestion that not one but several donors be contacted is, I believe, a good and practical one. I ~~am~~ prepared to ~~help raise the money~~. The production of a small Catalogue was my original thinking. A book, a smaller version of ^{an} *Bird and Trees* was not. You are in all likelihood far better prepared to get funding for this significantly more costly project than I, though I will do all I can if asked. ^{with} ⁱⁿ ^{expanding} ^{Centennial} The Audubon Society has the clout and access to major donors that could raise the publication monies more quickly than I could. Next to ~~financing~~ ^{time} is our greatest problem.

Scott and I are sending you a copy of *Bird and Trees*, plus a text from the book, promotional information and a mockup of an Optima II Book.