

Michael^{M.} Thomas Tel 718 694 6872
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Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201
To:

Michael Thomas,

On November 2001 the University of Texas will debut the trade edition of our "Behemoth elephant folio" of "Birds and Texas." The new book is going to measure a glorious 10½" x 13" and will contain all the original material from the original book - fifty color plates of Texas birds and landscapes, John Gould's ^{now known} slightly revised and retitled "My Life with Birds." There will be an additional thirty bird studies and a new essay by me titled "Of Birds and Texas, Audubon and his ^{and purchase} wife tells the ~~near miraculous~~ discovery of an original Audubon painting and how it miraculously saved our ~~and~~ nearly bankrupt publishing project.

The University of Texas Press is very excited about the book and has given it their top priority. If it is properly promoted Scott and I have high hopes that it will succeed for them. I've just seen the first galley and the book is truly magnificent.

Now that this book is in the hands of the publishers, it is time to turn to the next book UT Press wants to do. They are pressuring us to sign a contract which must be specific as to ~~the content of the new book~~ You may remember that I asked you if you might be interested in contributing in some way. You said you

would, ~~be~~ ^{think} & have

I ~~have~~ ^{think} finally figured out how you might help. The new book will be titled "From Time to Time" ^{The painting of Shad & Scott's Century} & I will have about 100 reproductions of our still lifes, portraits and landscapes. The book will also contain among the 100 reproductions, images of our ^{design} work for the Bass Performance Hall, South portraits of famous Congressmen and some of our other paintings as well. (The UT Press wants ~~us~~ ^{also} to sign a contract for the other book to be titled "The One Red Year" and will be a two volume production. ~~I~~ That book will not be ready for at least five years.

Getting back to your possible contribution. I believe that if you could write an interview with Scott and me, such a piece would allow us to comment on our philosophy of art and our interests and ~~could~~ ^{could} mean an interesting profile. Ted Pitsburgh is going to contribute an essay on our art, and hopefully Dave Hickey - ^{a good friend and} - ~~modern~~ ^{contemporary} art critic will add a short essay on the re-emergence of representational painting in contemporary art. Scott and I will add some personal commentary to each of the Polar Plates.

All in all, I think such a ~~book~~ ^{as} combination will make an interesting and well as a beautiful book. If you agree

And would like to participate, Scott and I will pay for your plane fare and you can stay at my house on Bryce Street two blocks from our Harley Ave. digs. It's a quiet, clean and pleasant place filled with items from our various collections. It's a ~~pleasant~~ ^{nice} place to ~~work~~ ^{work} on.

To pay for your services, I would like to give you one of the few remaining copies of our original elephant folio, plus an original watercolor study for your little page. The books are currently valued at \$6,000, and a watercolor study will be worth at least \$3,000. When the trade edition of the bird book debuts next November I believe the original folio would be even more valuable.

As far as deadlines are concerned, I believe that if we could have all the text done and ready for submission to U.T. Press by early Spring of 2002 that would not put too much pressure on us. The editors have told me not to put too much text with this book, but they are easy to work with and, I think, will be receptive if the text is interesting. So far they have ^{agreed} ~~decided~~ to all my wishes.

Michael, perhaps you can think of a better "angle" than an interview. If so, I'm ready to listen. Let me know

What you think and whether or not you
will be able to do your end of the
project in a year's time.

Sincerely -

Stuart Gertler
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P.S. If you can do the project, I will send
you a thick packet of published material
on us plus photos of our work.