

it coming, then

I should have seen this hardening of the
resolves of ^{of Museums and their personnel} ~~against~~ private collecting of antiquities.
Perhaps I found it difficult to such institutions
which had been the primary whose collections
of pre-colonial art were the primary
beneficiaries of private collecting through
gift or purchase

It should have seen it coming, then hardening
of the resolve of Museums and their personnel
against the private collecting of antiquities.
Perhaps I found it ^{not} to take seriously those
institutions whose collections of pre-colonial
art have for so long been the beneficiaries
of private collectors through either gift
or purchase. Case in point, a telephone
call from Virginia Field, Curator of Pre-colonial
art from The Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

She was calling me from Mexico City
where she had been told about Scott and
me. She was assembling material for
a planned exhibit "Journey to Aztlan"
and she wanted to see Scott's models
of the Temple Mayor. I enjoyed her visit
to our studio though ^{she} ~~we~~ turned down a
^{request for an} ~~invitation to show~~ ^{to show} with Actor
Gregory Peck that day when our local
Annual Film Festival presented him with
one of our framed color plate of a Mockingbird
from our book "Of Birds and Trees."

Painting

After requesting the loan of Scott's model
of the Temple of Huixtliopochtli and Tlaloc
she said in an off hand way that several
of our Aztec Birds would look beautiful

in the system exhibited. I responded that Scott and I would be delighted to loan some pieces.

"Oh No," she said. "It is now our policy not to exhibit pre-Columbian art from private collections."

"May I ask why?" I said.

"We certainly do not want to support looting or the illegal trade in such art," she responded somewhat sheepishly, and ~~at once~~.

"Well then," I said. "Why doesn't the J.A. County Museum take the really ethical thing and return its pre-Columbian antiquities to their countries of origin since most of them were looted and brought here surreptitiously?" I might then be possible to negotiate a 99 year lease to return the art to the museum for a more ethical display?"

I ^{remember} ~~said~~ — Dr. Field simply smiled.

Strangely enough, all exchange was not ^{at all} acrimonious. It was even rather light hearted. The museum did honor the Catepill model from our studio and I later by simple coincidence had the honor of showing it to ~~Miss~~ Mrs. First Lady Laura Bush at the Austin art museum when Mrs. Bush made a secret visit to a book signing party held for Scott and me and ~~our~~ recently published book of birds and trees. The Catepill exhibit just happened to be at the museum. She remained at our book signing

telling her about
party for the entire two hours and I had
the pleasure of ~~talking with her~~ explaining to her
the beautiful examples of Aztec art in
that show. Perhaps I should mention
that Scott has painted one official portrait
of President Bush for the Texas Capital
Building and has been asked by the
President to paint both her and Mrs. Bush's
White House portraits. Scott and I currently
have two of our large watercolor paintings
hanging in the family quarters of the White
House. They depict scenes from the Bush
Ranch at Crawford, Texas.

I mention the Austin show because
it was in the Aztec exhibit that I saw
a truly remarkable mixtec vase with
wonderful iconography. It belonged to the
J.L. County museum but I knew that
it had only recently been acquired at
Sathulap^{of} had marveled at the piece
in the ^{Smithsonian} Catalogue but ^{they} \$40,000 bid that
attained placed it in the hands of the
Museum was simply beyond Scott and
my means at the time.

I was shocked to see that
the museum was ^{still} purchasing pre-colonial
in the light of their new ethics. As the
Native, ~~Colo~~ I have served on many
cultural boards of directors here in Fort
Worth including the Fort Worth Museum
of Modern Art. I have dealt with
many reputable dealers and auction
houses in collecting all sorts of art,
not just pre-colonial materials. I

know how that ~~system~~ works. Special
synergy between ^{Philanthropists} Museum Boards, Curators
~~and~~ art dealers and Auction houses really
works. Beneath the veneer of civility and
high culture is a system that ~~supports~~ has
supported and still supports the illegal
trade in National Patrimony. ~~And~~
Scott and I are ~~also~~ a part of it. And
the Country of origin ^{has} had their
part to play in this mess as well. Sadly,
as long as there is corruption and
greed throughout the world and a
demand for antiquities the trade will
continue regardless of pious declarations
from Museum like the J. Paul Getty Museum
whose ^{continued} purchases of antiquities at least
in some small way help to sustain
the trade.

I would like to announce the closure
that Scott and I are seeking museum
venues and official approval of our
art collection to enhance its monetary value.
First of all, we are very successful artists.
Our latest project has cost us a fortune in
time taken from painting the portraits,
still lifes and landscapes from which
we earn our living. Our pre-Columbian
and Colonial is only one of many collections
we have acquired over the years. We
have never ^{before} sold a single piece of pre-Columbian
art in all these years.

If ~~that~~ ^{anyone was} observed the ^{market} ~~market~~ as
long as I have, they must conclude

Constantine
Bourgeois like frog

that pre-colonial art is not a good investment for the average collector. Only the finest and most expensive work have promising resale potential. ~~Most~~ Middle range examples, which are what most people buy, have not increased in value over the rate of inflation and many have declined. ~~I~~ ⁱⁿ Many years ago I once astonished a major dealer when I told him that I fervently hoped that the ~~market~~ ^{market} for values for pre-colonial art would absolutely collapse so that I and I could acquire more examples for study.

~~In our studies, provided~~
We have a wonderful library but

And there is no substitute for actually having the objects in hand to pursue our studies, ~~which~~ ^{they} to hope will add to in some small way to our understanding of the Aztec and other pre-colonial cultures. Especially in the field of iconography which surprisingly does not seem to be well understood by scholars or even of much interest to many.

Use objects in museum
to study pre-Columbian
art objects from
pre-Columbian
museum at

action

Collecting

Other aside for a moment, there is something to be said for the role cultural artifacts play as cultural ambassadors throughout the world. The Aztec exhibition that I saw at the Royal Academy in London recently was a perfect example. That the President of Mexico came to London to open the show demonstrated the importance that the Mexican government placed on the show. For me it was the show of a life time, though I have seen some of the best exhibitions mounted in the U.S. Since the _____ at the Metropolitan Museum in 19____, I have and I was honored to contribute paintings and models to the Aztec show in Denver in 199____. We also loaned the use of 13 or 14 images to Kevin Costner's 500 Nations series in connection with John Ford. No body is fooled that the Government of Mexico participates in these blockbuster shows purely for cultural reasons or that the ~~total~~ restoration of many archaeological sites are undertaken simply for scientific reasons. Tourist promotion dollars are certainly as important as cultural patrimony. And whether Mexican nationalists like it or not the riches of their past might still be a relative secret if it weren't for ^{the promotion of} men like Von Humboldt, Prescott, Stevens and Cuthbertson, and Seligman and those who brought the strong objects of Mexican past to Europe to eventually enter the renowned collections

of the British Museum, The Musee d'Homme,
the museum for Valkeuhanda, and the
Danish one of Vienna etc. etc. Many of
these things are national treasures
to be sure but their dispersal has
given potential young scholars their
first experience of ancient Mexican culture.
And in spite of Europe's own unstable
past (The loss of the ^{Prussian} feathered model in
Berlin in 1945 is almost a personal tragedy
for Scott and me) the ^{great} museums ^{offer} ^{the} ^{best} security for ^{their} objects that
is often missing in their countries
of origin. Of course ^{different events in} Iraq and Afghanistan
come quickly to mind.

So my greatest regret in light of the
growing opposition to collection of cultural
patrimony is that scholars in the field
may not wish to have anything to do
with us or may even be fearful
of doing so.

~~However~~ events may develop in the
future I cannot say. Whatever happens, I
will remember fondly my trip to Mexico
City in November of 1990. As delivers a
paper on the Templo Mayor at a
conference held at Carmen Parias El
Circ Gallery South of downtown Mexico
City. The gathering was there solely to
hear my lecture and I think the great
honor of being introduced to the
enthusiastic gathering by Eduardo Matos.

But that was not the highlight of
that trip. ~~Earlier in the day~~ ^{and the slides of our painting diagrams and models} I had

An almost the entire day had been taken on a personal tour of most or all of the archaeological digs in ~~the~~ and around the Templo Mayor. My guide, a Señor Barrera whom I almost smothered in questions. We saw the dig in the National Palace, the work being carried on in front of Tlaloc's stair at the Templo Mayor. We descended to the excavations of the ball court and to the Temples under the Cathedral, ^{and, much more.}

The most exciting visit, however, was under the house of the Marques del Apartado to see for myself the exact alignment of the stairs discovered in 1900. It was something I have been wanting to do for almost thirty years. My excitement was almost dashed when we entered the courtyard only to find the metal doors to the stairs covered by a large pile of sand. The house was being remodelled at the time.

On seeing my obvious disappointment Señor Barrera found some workmen nearby and had them clear the sand away. I cannot begin to tell you what my thoughts were as I actually stood on the great stairway of what may have been the Coatlin of Tenochtitlan.

I had only an hour to clean up and prepare myself for my lecture when I returned from my tour. I was further honored to see ^{that} Señor Barrera and another archaeologist I met that day had made the arduous

drive to el aire gallery to hear me speak. ~~Ad~~ After Mator introduced me & delivered my in Spanish out of respect for my audience - almost all of whom spoke better English than I ~~did~~ spoke Spanish. I don't think I was ever more nervous in my life for I was in ~~a~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ a very real way delivering a criticism of the ^{version} of the Sacred Precinct of Tmolochten displayed at the Temples Mayor.

If that weren't nerve wracking enough I had seen that morning new evidence that would conflict with our own conception of the Sacred Precinct. So as I spoke and showed images on the white wall behind me, I already knew that much of what I was showing was wrong. This bothered me ~~more~~ but I simply had no time to change my paper. I should have at least been encouraged by the fact that we had gotten the orientation of the Temple of Tzacateopan and the ball court correctly in our model in contradiction of the margina model at INAH and the Temples Mayor museum model.

In our ~~first~~ ^{first} year search for as correct a vision as possible of the Temples Mayor South and I have always known that many of our guesses would be changed with future discoveries. We welcome new knowledge though it sometimes plays hell with our models and paintings which are very difficult to change. I will defend our model by saying that in spite of the need for

guesswork our model more clearly reconciles
 the Account of Sahagun and Duran, Cortez, ~~and~~
 Diaz and Gomara and offers a stage upon
 which can be seen and understood the
 Ancient festival, and supplem^{ent} the relationships
 of the Aztec deities, then with the model
 of the Temple Mayor Museum or the N.A.H.

It was Scott's and my deepest hope that ~~Mr.~~ Dr. Tate might be able to bring some of her Calligraphs to Dulbeach to ~~lecture~~ ^{lecture} for our exhibit. To spend even a few hours with William Smith who has done the only publication I know on ~~the~~ rural housing of the Eastern and Tionard Pepey Fujin whom knowledge of the Temple Mayor (we have read his book on the Tm. Chionantol must be encyclopedic. Their departure from the exhibit is a great loss to the public and especially to us. And they have lost the opportunity for a few new insights as well. many

Since they and other scholars don't really know us, we might always appear to be rich Dilatants who only want to attract official approval for ~~their~~ ^{their} work and to increase the value of ~~their~~ ^{their} ~~acquired~~ ^{acquired} collection of ~~books and~~ ^{books and} Pre-Columbian art.

I can only say that we are not
rich and that for nearly three decades
we have given our art to ruin thousands
and thousands of dollars for cultural courses
at home, for art museums, and ^{university} courses
both at home and abroad. It

pleased to say that Scott and I are going
to be working with Fresno Rosentzweig
to raise money for Mexican ~~will be~~
Conservations. He has visited ^{our studios} ~~his~~ friends in
Fort Worth has seen our collections and
believes in us.

Perhaps our ~~last~~ lives would be
easier if we simply divested ourselves
of our pre-colonial art collection. Scott
and I do see ourselves as mere custodians
of our collection and we will do everything
in our power to see that they find a
permanent public venue. A few of our artists
we want to return to Mexico no matter
what happens to our collection. I have
informed several important Mexican officials
of our intent, though, amazingly so, some
museums have advised ~~us~~ against it.

In the time being though we will
continue to pursue our researches and our
vision of Aztec Mexico, taking advantage of
all the new discoveries that come to us along
the way — with or without the help
of scholars and museum officials. When
we can, we will offer a few insights
of our own which as Dr. Tate and
others know might be helpful to fellow
searchers of truth. ^{Perhaps a book and that publish also some}
we will return ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the}
Can and when we have completed a
substantial number of paintings, will
seek some sort of venue to bring our
vision of the Aztec past to an increasingly
curious public. If we can get no help
from scholars and museums the loss

not just
will clearly be ours ~~and~~ done
the ~~it~~ will be theirs as well.
End with Peter Voss Dedication
Thankfully

One last point

P.S. The collecting of pre-Columbian art
is not a good investment strategy.
Only the most expensive and hence
the rarest objects in the finest condition
increase in value enough to justify
the financial ~~investment~~ commitment. Most
pre-Columbian art is of middle range
quality and condition and hardly
increases in value to keep pace with
inflation. This is not just true for most of
all pre-Columbian art. It is true for ~~all~~ of
art that is affordable to the average
investor. Don't buy art to make money
unless you are willing to invest huge
sums.

Carolyn
called us

Dear Carolyn -
Scott and I are disappointed of course at the withdrawal of ~~Donald~~ Lopez Tujon and William Smith from our Afro show in Fulebach. We certainly understand their reasons and will miss their presence. In the probably vain hope to lure them back we have decided not to display our Collection. Though it will diminish some of the spirit from the exhibit, the drawings, paintings and models will still present a unique offering to the public, not to be found anywhere else.

Whether or not they decide to participate in the altered exhibition I think they should understand that you asked us to show in Fulebach. We never lobbied for the show and were in fact reluctant to do it because we are not nearly finished with our planned paintings. We really have just begun on this part of the thing in spite of all the work that has been done.

Furthermore, we have acquired our Collection of Afro Art for its independent aid in research. In forty years of collecting pre-Colombian art we have never sold a ~~single~~ piece. We neither ask for nor need their imprimature. One Colombian Art, with the exception of the rarest, most expensive works, ~~is~~ as every knowledgeable collector should know, is not a good investment.

most pieces rarely keep pace with inflation
and some often declined in value.

It is because Scott and I are very
Successful Artists, that we are even able
to afford the indulgence of our scholarly
interest. If money were our aim, our
time would certainly be better spent on
our portraits, still lifes and landscapes.

I don't expect your scholar friends to
know this but Scott and I have helped
to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars
for Cattle and Conservation Causes over
the year. We are ~~even~~ going to be working
with Mexico's Foreign Representative in the
month ahead to aid in Mexican inland
Conservation programs.

Some day we hope to see an
Ozark project Collection of Paintings, drawings, models
and ~~some~~ original Ozark and Shaker
Art displayed permanently in a Museum
Setting. We have already had one
offer from Mexico through Jorge
Calleja Jorga. But we are not
ready for that yet. We would
like to donate the collection but
Gifts of this kind are rarely appreciated.
I have had enough experience with
museums to know that. The fate
of the Covadonga Collection in Mexico
is a tragic example.

If scholarship the future refuge to
help us in an official capacity, there is well
like our loss and ~~that~~ I think there as
well.

Ozark

Carolyn, we brought our first pre-colonial
object in 1960, made our first model (the
Aztec house at Chiconautla) in 1972 and began
the sporadic sketching and painting of Aztec buildings
~~in 79~~ around 1968. At that time we had
no master plan in mind to create a
collection and the ethical climate, especially
on the part of U.S. scholars ^{some guide books at the time} was more relaxed.
Important scholars in fact indirectly contributed
to the trade in antiquities by authenticating
objects brought to them by collectors and
dealers.

Rick Garcia
c/o U.S. District Court
1100 Commerce Street
Room 1452
DALLAS, TEXAS 75242

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT:

Three prints from the GENTLING
Album "OF BIRDS AND TEXAS" at \$100.00 each

1) Road Runner

~~100.00~~

2) Morning Dove

3) WRENS

TOTAL:

\$300.00

Balance Due:

\$300.00

Signed

Steve G

4801 Harley Ave

H. Waco TX

76792