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The Museum of Modern Art

Mr. Koch, Mr. Rubin, Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Naramore

cc to: Mr. Lieberman
Mr. McShine

Elaine L. Johnson

April 8, 1971

Trial of Hendricks, Ringgold, and Toche

Since last communicating with all of you, I had a final telephone conversation with John Hendricks this morning at 11:30.

John Hendricks said that he "would appreciate it if someone from the Modern came down to be an observer and, if need be, to testify on our behalf or on the issues involved".

He continued that the "presence of the Museum there (in court) would be important to the case and to the morale of the art community (to show that the Museum was interested in) freedom of speech".

He said that Richard Feigen said he would "drop everything" and come down if needed, and that Klaus Kertess and Howard Wise would, I believe, be present.

I asked John Hendricks if the defense would try to get a postponement today seeing as one of their lawyers is on another case and Flo Kennedy is out of town. He said probably not, as the two lawyers they do have, Bob Projensky (of Ardover Rosenberg and Rosen(sp)) and Burt Newborne (sp?) of the ACLU thought that would not be the wisest strategy. He said he did not know whether the case would be over today or go on tomorrow.

John Hendricks said the case had been "thrown out of Federal Court."

The trial will be held today, April 8, at 2 pm, in Room 550, at 100 Center Street. Persons interested in the defense will meet in the corridor at 1:15 pm.

Mr. Hendricks has long been a thorn in our side. In October of 69, he removed a painting from the 1 floor gallery, and was stopped by Ray Clarke and Security Guard. He and his group should be told that he will have to do his thing on the sidewalk, not in the lobby. I am sure that the members of the Security Force will be able to control themselves, but what I concerned about, is the visitors who are totally against the demonstrators, and might start a fight in the lobby. Then we will really have some thinking and explaining to do. We came very close to such a situation last Friday. I personally feel that they are a bunch of cowards who are taking advantage of a good thing, and a good group of people.

The group arrived around 2:15 PM, and departed at approx. 3:00 PM.

* in front of Judge Ringle.

ELJ:erf

Robert Lieberman

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The Museum of Modern Art

To Richard Koch
From Roy Williams
Date January 14, 1971
Re Disturbance by Art Workers Coalition

On Monday January 11, a group of people who have caused disturbances here before, and who are all members of the Art Workers Coalition, came into the Lobby and created quite a scene. The group was about (10) to (12) in number, and they were led by Mr. John Hendricks. They blew loud whistles, which annoyed the visitors, they blocked (for a moment) and prevented visitors from donating any money to the cashier; blocked the entrance to the ticket-takers, and kept telling the people that the museum is free, "DON'T PAY. Mr. Hendricks kept repeating, that the public should not be intimidated by the guards, that they could go right through.

Mr. Hendricks and his group used all sorts of insulting and abusive language to us, and I understand that he did the same thing to "Chuck" the cashier in one of the booths. I was not a witness to this.

The group tried to force their way into the museum, but was stopped by me, and the other Security Offices.

Mr. Koch ^{spoke} to Mr. Hendricks and asked them not to blow the whistles and not to prevent the visitors from donating what they wished. Mr. Koch offered and did give money to a few visitors who were told by Hendricks, that they should not pay. Mr. Hendricks claimed that he would like to get in, but he hadn't any money. At this point, Mr. Koch offered him money, but he refused stating that he will not accept charity.

Many of the visitors were angry with the demonstrators, and on a few occasions, we almost had a battle in the lobby.

Mr. Hendricks has long been a thorn in our side. In October of 69, he removed a painting from the 3 floor gallery, and was stopped by Roy Clarke and Security Guard Pittman. I feel that this man and his group should be told that he will have to "do his thing" on the sidewalk, NOT, in the lobby. I am sure, that the members of the Security Force will be able to control themselves, but what I concerned about, is the visitors who are totally against the demonstrators, and might start a fight in the lobby, then we will really have some thinking and explaining to do. We came very close to such a situation last Monday. I personally feel that they are a bunch of cowards who are taking advantage of a good thing, and a good group of people.

The group arrived around 2:15 PM, and departed at approx. 3:05 PM.

Roy Williams

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The Museum of Modern Art

JAN 18 1971

To Mr. John B. Hightower cc: Liz Shaw
From Richard H. Koch Roy Williams
Date January 15, 1971
Re Art Workers Coalition - Incident of January 11, 1971

The letter of Jon Hendricks and Jean Toche prompts me to go on record with respect to their activities, and those of their friends, last Monday.

At about 2 o'clock I had simultaneous telephone calls from the Security Office and the Information Desk informing me that a number of persons known to be active members of the Art Workers Coalition had entered the outer lobby and were blowing whistles and generally haranguing the public in loud voices. I immediately went down to investigate. I found Messrs. Hendricks and Toche, together with Lucy Lippard and from ten to fifteen others whose names I don't know, engaged in blowing police whistles, loudly demanding free admission from the guards stationed as ticket-takers, and telling people waiting in line at the cashier's booths not to pay but to walk right in. Toche and Hendricks persisted in trying to force their way past the guards at the gates, also blocking the passage of people who had bought tickets and wished to come through. Both Toche and Hendricks physically pushed against Roy Williams, Bernard Silver and Jerry Hubel and me in their attempt to force their way in. I asked them repeatedly to stand aside and not to block the passage of other visitors. I also asked them to stop blowing whistles and making loud speeches, and to remove their demonstration to the sidewalk.

They persisted in their disruptive tactics, especially in blocking the gate. Finally I told Roy Williams and several of the other supervisors to push them aside so that people with tickets could get through. This developed into a slight scuffle as Roy and the others pushed Messrs. Hendricks and Toche away from the wicket and into the central section between the two cashiers' booths. They continued whistle-blowing and yelling for perhaps fifteen minutes more, after which the entire group left the Museum.

I can personally testify that only enough physical force was used to push Hendricks and Toche from the gate which they were blocking to the central area. If any apology is called for it should be from them.

I would like to discuss with you possible defensive measures which might be employed if this happens again -- as I am sure it will.

RHK

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November 18, 1970

January 4, 1971

Miss Faith Ringgold
345 West 145th Street
New York, New York

Miss Faith Ringgold
345, W. 145th Street,
New York, N.Y. 10031

The next meeting of the Ryers Sub-Committee on Community will be on Tuesday, December 1st at 10:00 A.M. in the Trustees Room at the Museum. I certainly hope we have fortunately been given the promised small grant with which to work on the exhibition "Transatlantic Cultures" for the New York Public High School Program, which you have been discussing with Mildred Constantine.

Within the week, Connie will be in touch with you and Ralph to start discussions as to the content and media in which to present this exhibition.

I know that she has spoken to you about serving as consultant to us on this project, and I am happy to offer you the sum of \$500.00 for this purpose. I hope this will be agreeable to you. I know that I and Connie look forward to the benefits from your active cooperation.

Sincerely,

John B. Hightower
Director

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November 18, 1970

Miss Faith Ringgold
345 West 145th Street
New York, New York

Since our last meeting in your apartment with Tom Lloyd
Dear Faith: Guess, a great many things have happened.
Perhaps too many to repeat in any incisive way their
effect by merely enumerating a chronology of events. I
The next meeting of the Byers Sub-Committee on Community
Relations will be on Tuesday, December 1st at 10:00 A.M.
in the Trustees Room at the Museum. I certainly hope
you can come to it and would appreciate it if you would
let me know.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Best regards,

(Mrs.) Elaine Naramore
Assistant to the Director

EHN:pmc

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much good and valid work being done by my number of other artists. This is true. By definition of limiting the show to two artists, the show will be imperfect from the standpoint of comprehensiveness. It will, nevertheless, be a good show. It will be the kind of show we should have done long before - but it will be a start - and you, along with others, are to be thanked for that.

November 4, 1970

In the coming weeks, the Museum will be talking to various members from the Black and Puerto Rican community variety of programs which would 345 West 145th Street and Puerto Rican art as well as New York, New York

Dear Faith:

Since our last meeting in your apartment with Tom Lloyd and Carroll Greene, a great many things have happened. Perhaps too many to reveal in any incisive way their effect by merely assembling a chronology of events. I can say that you and Tom Lloyd, along with others not the least of whom are Carroll Greene and Ralph Ortiz, have made an enormous difference in the outlook of the Museum of Modern Art and its awareness of valid artistic expression that has been overlooked by the Museum in the past.

As a result, several steps are already underway. Curatorial training programs for Blacks and Puerto Ricans will begin early next year; acquisition policy has already been augmented to include a conscious attempt to buy works of artists whose work reflects a sense of Black and "oppressed" consciousness. We are also revising our limited educational program so that the work of Black and Puerto Rican artists is more properly represented in order to relate more equitably to the school population in New York City. Our international program is also being analyzed and revised to provide more expression of other than so-called "mainstream" artists both in the United States and overseas. Finally, the exhibition of Richard Hunt and Romare Bearden, to which you refer in your letter, is scheduled for late March.

We feel strongly that the exhibition will be first rate in every way. I would hate to think of it being the only exhibition of the work of Black artists that was to be put on by the Museum; I mention this only because there is an implication in your letter that somehow this is a one-and-only exhibit. In my opinion, it will show to the public some of the best work being done by Black artists in both "mainstream" and "black experience" painting. There are others beside myself who share this opinion, which I recognize is dismissable from your point of view because I am white.

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-2-

much good and valid work being done by any number of other artists. This is true. By definition of limiting the show to two artists, the show will be imperfect from the standpoint of comprehensiveness. It will, nevertheless, be a good show. It will be the kind of show we should have done long before - but it will be a start - and you, along with others, are to be thanked for that.

In the coming weeks, the Museum will be talking to various members from the Black and Puerto Rican community to advise us on the variety of programs which would be relevant to Black and Puerto Rican art as well as Black and Puerto Rican people at the Museum of Modern Art. We hope you will be able to attend one of those meetings and express your views on the wide range of concerns I think we both share about the plans and future direction of the Museum as it relates to the variety of communities it must try to serve.

Best Regards,

John B. Hightower
Director

Room 5600

30 Rockefeller Plaza

11/27

1970

To: Mrs. Elaine Nathanson

From: Richard E. Salomon

JBH:pmc

For our discussion, I have thanked Faith Chung for bringing these items to DE's attention and indicated that I was referring them to John for substantive reply.

Please keep me posted. Many thanks.

NOV 04 1970

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Room 5600
30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA

11/2/ 1970

To: Mrs. Elaine Narramore

FROM: RICHARD E. SALOMON *RES*

Per our discussion, I have thanked Faith Ringgold for bringing these gems to DR's attention and indicated that I was referring them to John for substantive reply.

Please keep me posted. Many thanks.

Miss Faith
345 West 14
New York, N

Dear Faith:

Your letter
you did in
programs of
The point is
to all of t

Your earlier

and I will try to get it off to you within the next week.

to John Hightower for more detailed reply. I am sure that John will
continue to keep him informed of the situation.

Best regards,

Sincerely,

Richard E. Salomon

John B. Hightower
Director

JBH:ehn

Mrs. Faith Ringgold
345 West 14th Street
New York, New York 10011

ENC: Mrs. Elaine Narramore

NOV 04 1970

Yours Sincerely
Faith Ringgold

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30 EAST 145TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021

Faith R.
at Workmen's yellow

COPY. Oct 26, 1970

November 2, 1970

October 29, 1970

Miss Faith Ringgold
345 West 145th Street
New York, New York

Dear Faith:

Your letter of October 26th and the impressive amount of work you did in putting together the analysis of all the exhibition programs of the museums in New York City was greatly appreciated. The point is well made, and I will make the material available to all of the members of the committee.

Your earlier letter deserves a more concerned and lengthy reply, and I will try to get it off to you within the next week.

Best regards,

Sincerely,

Richard B. Hightower

John B. Hightower
Director

JBH:ehn

Mrs. Faith Ringgold
345 West 145th Street
New York, New York 10021

CC: Mrs. Elaine Hightower

Yours Sincerely
Faith Ringgold

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Room 5600
30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10020

COPY.

Oct. 26, 1970

Dear Mr. Salomon:

The enclosed materials

November 2, 1970

are what I promised to send

you. I hope you receive them

Dear Mrs. Ringgold:

Mr. David Rockefeller has asked me to thank you for your letter of October 26 enclosing materials about Richard Hunt, the proposed conference on The Role of Women in Art, and the Women's Wailing Wall you wish to establish. He was interested to learn of your genuine concern about these matters and appreciates your thought in bringing them to his attention.

As I mentioned on the phone, Mr. Rockefeller's focus as Chairman of the Board of the Museum of Modern Art must be primarily on matters of broad policy rather than on internal curatorial, administrative, or operational questions. Since your inquiries appear to fall into the latter category, he has referred the material to John Hightower for more detailed reply. I am sure that John will continue to keep him informed of the progress of your discussions.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Salomon

Mrs. Faith Ringgold
345 West 145th Street
New York, New York 10031

BCC: Mrs. Elaine Narramore

Yours Sincerely
Faith Ringgold

10/26-21

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Oct. 26, 1970

Dear Mr. Salomon:

The enclosed materials are what I promised to send you. I hope you receive them before the meeting at the museum on Tuesday.

We are certainly looking forward to hearing from you and Mr. Rockefeller concerning these matters.

Yours Sincerely
Fritz Koenig

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Oct. 26, 1970

Dear Mr. Negtowner

These materials are intended for your board members, yourself and Mr. Greene. I would much appreciate it if you would pass them on, before your Conference on Tuesday.

Faith Ringgold

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WHAT DO WOMEN ARTISTS WANT?

This question is surely to be asked by black and white men and women alike, in keeping with the "I don't know what they want" attitude which was so familiar during the civil rights movement of the sixties. Certainly black men can remember what it was that they wanted back then? Women want the same things now, and women come in black and white. Unfortunately, black women artists have thought for much too long that they were just black artists. However the benefits of the black art struggle which have come to the black male artist, have not come to black women artists. The answer to the question of "What do women want?" is a very simple one. Women want fifty percent of everything that men artists have and black women want fifty percent of that.

Among the benefits that men artists have monopolized for so long are:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| grants | fellowships |
| internships | retrospectives |
| media exposure | commissions |
| teaching positions | artists in residencies |
| magazine coverage | etc., etc., etc., |

The specific and immediate demands of women are for:

1. An extensive three day conference on the role of the woman in art, for the spring of 1971.
2. A multi-ethnic project to be called the Women's Wailing Wall proposed for Rockefeller Center.

The following statistics are part of a more intensive venture which many women are doing to establish the exact severity of the oppression of women in the art world.

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I Museums

Metropolitan Museum of Art

1969

Museum of Modern Art

1965 - 1970

Museum of American Art

one man shows for past 5 years men 42 women 1 (no blacks)

men 71 women 1 (no blacks)
(this one woman show was a photography show)

Whitney Museum of American Art

1969

1968 Oct.

Whitney Annual

Memorial Exhibition Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 5 (no blacks)

men 73 women 8 (3 blacks)

Venice Biennale U.S. Pavilion

1969, June

men 1 women 0

New American Painting & Sculpture First Generation included 536

men 41 women 1 (no black)

Leather Spoon Annual Exhibition

1969, Dec.

Spaces

Art on Paper

men 12 women 0

invited men 07 women 3 (no blacks)

jury selections 49 26 (no blacks)

1970, July

Information Show

men 96 women 4 (no black)

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Metropolitan Museum of Art

1969

30 Years of American Art

men 42 women 1 (no blacks)

Advisory Committee

Whitney Museum of American Art

men 26 women 3 (1 black)

1969

Museum Staff

Whitney Annual

men 3 women 2 (1 black)

men 138 women 5 (no blacks)

5 one man shows

men 5 women 0

Venice Biennale U.S. Pavillion

1970

men 7 women 0

(however the liberated Biennale was an open show and included 50% women)

men 4 women 0

1970, Jan

Weather Spoon Annual Exhibition

1969

Benefit for the Studio Museum sponsored by the Chase Manhattan Bank at the Martha Jackson Gallery

Art on Paper

men 49 women 3 (2 blacks)

invited

men 67 women 8 (no blacks)

jury selections

49 26 (no blacks)

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II Community Museums & Cultural Organizations

The Studio Museum in Harlem

1968 - 1970

Board of Trustees

men 14 women 4 (2 blacks)

1969

Advisory Committee

Black Artists

men 26 women 5 (1 black)

Museum Staff

(this show is currently on tour under the sponsorship of the Urban Center & United Federation of Negro College Graduates)

men 3 women 2 (1 black)

5 one man shows

men 5 women 0

Black Art Shows

1967

2 two man shows

men 4 women 0

1 four men shows

men 11 women 2

men 4 women 0

1968, Oct.

1970, Jan.

Benefit for the Studio Museum sponsored by the Chase Manhattan Bank at the Martha Jackson Gallery

1969

men 49 women 3 (2 blacks)

African-American Artists, Philadelphia Black Center

men 29 women 21

1970, April

African-American Artists, New York and Boston Boston Museum

men 21 women 9

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The Harlem Cultural Council

1966

Art of the American Negro

men 24 women 3

1969

Black Artists

men 12 women 0

(this show is currently on tour under the sponsorship of the Urban Center & United Federation of Art.)

III Black Art Shows

1967

New Voices: sponsored by Ruder & Finn

men 13 women 2

1968, Oct.

Six Painters: Metropolitan Applied Research Corporation

men 4 women 2

1969

African-American Artists, Philadelphia Civic Center

men 89 women 21

1970, April

African-American Artists, New York and Boston: Boston Museum

men 63 women 9

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Black Art Shows (cont.)

1970, Mar.

Coalition 70: Staten Island Museum

men 6 women 1 (no blacks)

1970, Apr.

Contemporary Black Artists: Hudson River Museum (organized by the Smithsonian Museum and the Studio Museum in Harlem)

men ? (80 works all women 1 inclusive)

IV Publications (articles on Black Art)

1968, Apr.

Afro-American Artists First Edition: Art Gallery Guide

artists listed men 120 women 15

illustrations men 35 women 5

1970, Apr.

Afro-American Artists 2nd Edition: Art Gallery Guide

illustrations men 49 women 11

articles about artists or curators men 12 women 2

1970, Apr.

Black Art: Time Magazine, Black America

illustrations men 8 women 0

1970, Sept., Oct.

Black Art in America: Art in America Magazine

men 22 women 2

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Publications (EGeneral Random Sampling)

1969, Nov.

Arts International, New York School of Design

articles about men 49 women 8 (no blacks)
or by artists

1969, Dec.

Arts Magazine

artists reviews men 42 women 7

1970, Oct.

Art News, New York

Shows listed men 83 women 6 (no blacks)

V Texts(Black Art)

1960

American Negro Art by Cedric Dover

illustrations men (too numerous to count)
 women 42

photographs of men 51 women 13
artists

total artists men 85 women 23
represented in text

1967

The Negro in Music & Art (Encyclopedia) Vol.V Edited by Lindsay Patterson

illustrations men 58 women 9

| | | |
|----------------|----|---|
| articles by or | 22 | 1 |
| about artists | | |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| photographs of artists | 9 | 1 |
|---------------------------|---|---|

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VI Conferences & Seminars

1970, Oct.

Artists Conference: Nova Scotia School of Design

men 28 women 0

1970, Spring

Black Artists Lecture in Residence Series: University of Delaware

men 12 women 0

Cooperatively Submitted by:

Faith Ringgold Theresa Schwartz

A. WORKSHOP ON WOMEN

Topic: The relevance of women artists in the cultural life of America

1. The historical background of women in the development of art in America.
2. The present cultural oppression of women artists in a male dominated society.
3. The future implications of the continued exclusion of women from the cultural mainstream of American life.
4. The development of women's art relevant to the family, the youth, the community, the nation, and the world situation.
5. The role of men in the women's struggle for cultural liberation.
6. The role of the classroom in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society.

B. WOMEN'S EXHIBITION

Goal: A comprehensive display of women's art

1. To cover a large spectrum of the contributions of women artists to the cultural milieu.
2. To be installed in a large public space, such as a museum or university.

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CONFERENCE: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ART

The conference is to extend for three days, and is to take place at a hotel or university in New York City during the spring of 1971. The conference is to be accompanied by a women's show at a large museum or university.

The details of the conference are to be worked out by a coalition of women artists and art students interested in art. The participants are to be of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Student representation is to be significant on all levels and throughout every aspect of the conference planning and execution.

The conference is to include the following:

A. WORKSHOPS OR SEMINARS

Topic: "The relevance of women artists in the cultural life of America"

1. The historical background of women in the development of art in America.
2. The present cultural oppression of women artists in a male dominated society.
3. The future implications of the continued exclusion of women from the cultural mainstream of American life.
4. The development of women's art relevant to the family, the youth, the community, the nation, and the world situation.
5. The role of men in the women's struggle for cultural liberation.
6. The role of the sisterhood in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society.

B. WOMEN'S EXHIBITION

Goal: A comprehensive display of women's art

1. To cover a large spectrum of the contributions of women artists to the cultural milieu.
2. To be installed in a large public space, such as a museum or university.

Estimated Total for Expenses: \$15,000.00

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C. DISPLAYS,EVENTS,SHOWS - This will include the showing of films and other multi-media events

D. SPEAKER'S PLATFORM

1. The invited guests are to share the speaking time with the general public.
2. Speakers are to enter into discussion with conference participants and observers.
3. There is are to be frequent question/answer periods

E. FINAL ASSEMBLY

1. Summary of events and findings
2. Summary of proposals and commitments
3. Prospectus for the future organization of committees to implement proposals,etc.

F. PUBLICATION CONFERENCE - The publication is to be a compilation of the conclusions,events and findings in a documented report which will be highly distributed.

G. FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. Physical Needs

- a. General assembly hall
- b. Individual meeting rooms
- c. Large exhibition space
- d. Hotel accommodations for invited guests

2. Technical Needs and Equipment

- a. Tape recorders,microphones,copy machines,typewriters,etc.
- b. Public Relations People
- c. Community Coordinator
- d. Student coordinator
- e. Secretarial Assistance

3. Financial Expenses

- a. Rent for Conference Space
- b. Food-two meals per day for invited guests
- c. Living accommodations for invited guests
- d. Consultants Fees
- e. Secretarial Fees
- f. Materials,equipment,supplies

Approximate Total for Expenses:\$15,000.00

→ This is a brief proposal for preliminary consideration

*Mrs Crump Faith Ruggald
Camille Billops Theresa Schwartz*

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| The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY | Collection: | Series.Folder: |
| | JBH | III .1.7 |

WOMEN'S WALLING WALL

Dear Governor Rockefeller;

Women artists, representing various ethnic and cultural groups, propose a Women's Wall for New York City in an attempt to project the culturally rich and historically significant role of women in the visual arts of this country. A location which has been suggested is Rockefeller Center. Twelve women artists, of various ethnic backgrounds will paint and sculpt a series of four exhibitions over a period of twelve months. There will be three women artists exhibited together in four groups. Each exhibit will last for three months. Later, the exhibits can be installed in colleges, churches and synagogues, or other public places where the very large population of women in this country can see them.

Each of every three artists is to have a 20' x 20' panel to work on. When put together each exhibition will cover a space of 20' x 60'. These exhibits will concern the special nature of the woman. As a tribute to womankind, the visual interpretation of the women artists will be subject to their visions and their particular cultural experiences. The wall, to be called the Women's Walling Wall, will invite contemplation and association. In addition this wall may very well become a landmark to which women from all over the world will travel to see, to meet with other women, and to take joy in being a woman.

Twelve women will require grants of \$10,000.00 each, in order to work on this project which will take at least one year to complete. The ethnic distribution will be four black women, four white women, and four third world women artists. This Women's Walling Wall can represent a giant step for men and women, alike, by partially eliminating the long standing separation of women artists from their cultural right to work and receive recognition and exposure of their work.

We await your affirmative reply and we would like to meet with you to discuss the implementation of this proposal.

His Excellency
Camille Billups

Faith Ringgold
Theresa Schenck

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| | JBH | III .1.7 |

Faith Ringgold
345 West 145 Street
October 13, 1970

Director
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Hightower,

It appears that most of the details of our previous meetings have been forgotten, or should I say ignored, as has been MOMA's policy in the past. It was agreed that an advisory board of twelve members (six men and six women) were to meet with you and your board in an effort to develop a program which would be relevant to black art and to black people at MOMA. The advisory board is eager to communicate, cooperate, and participate; and if what I hear is true, I would suggest that you need us almost as badly as Agnew needs his mouth shut.

In the name of Black Determination, Richard Hunt cannot have a retrospective at MOMA. Enclosed are several statements, from a symposium at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in which Mr. Hunt disavows all connections with being black, having a black experience, or black problem of any kind. It was Black Determination which got a retrospective in the first place. Surely a man like Mr. Hunt, who dares deny the existence of such a force, should not be the one to first sample the fruits of it. Mr. Hunt is an establishment artist who feels very unoppressed and satisfied that he is known to whites, though totally unknown to the black community. Black women who, along with Tom Lloyd, liberated that museum do not agree with Mr. Hunt. Rather we know that he is oppressed. Furthermore we know that until his art is ~~known~~ both known and supported by his own black society, he will, in fact, have no art. In fact, he is not even an artist, unless he is a black artist (Since your society has made it clear that not even Ralph Bunch and Senator Brooke are capable of being just politicians). And although he is not an artist, he will ^{remain} ~~be~~ black, and has been black for the past 400 years.

The difference in us, who have claimed the uniqueness of "being black",

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| The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY | Collection: | Series.Folder: |
| | JBH | III .1.7 |

oursm, and Mr. Hunt, who has disclaimed it, is that we were the ones who were able to get MOMA to listen. Mr. Hunt will not benefit from our blackness. Let him bring us something for our youth to give us strength and to help us to build a black cultural consciousness. Black women and students protest his retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. We consider this a WHITE ESTABLISHMENT BLACK ART TRICK, AND AN insult to the black community. We will not allow it to go uncontested.

Mr. Hightower, you do need the advise of the artists who are concerned and involved enough to act in protest. Obviously, the ones with which you are in contact agree with you; but then Uncle Tom always agrees with "whitey".

Yours In Peace & Progress?

Faith Ringgold

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| The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY | Collection: | Series.Folder: |
| | JBH | III .1.7 |

Faith Ringgold
345 West 145 Street
October 14, 1970

Director
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York City

Attention: David Rockefeller

Dear Mr. Hightower,

It appears that most of the details of our previous meetings have been forgotten, or should I say ignored, as has been MOMA's policy in the past. It was agreed that an advisory board of twelve members (six men and six women) were to meet with you and your board in an effort to develop a program which would be relevant to black art and to black people at MOMA. The advisory board is eager to communicate, cooperate, and participate; and if what I have heard is true, I would suggest that you need us almost as badly as Agnew needs his mouth shut.

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| The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY | Collection: | Series/Folder: |
| | JBH | III .1.7 |

MR. LLOYD: I want it to be where I'm at.

MR. HUNT: The kind of thing Jake Lawrence is talking about was going on in Chicago during the WPA days. There was the South Side Community Art Center, for instance.

It's interesting to see how things have gone one way at one point and another way at another point. After the war a few Negro artists were more integrated in the larger scene, and now things are sort of going backward—Tom Lloyd is getting more and more identified with the Negro community, he's sort of going back into it. The kind of history that Jake Lawrence is outlining gives you a kind of perspective, something that you can start from—like maybe not making the mistakes of the past and helping you develop this idea of making your art relevant to the Negro community.

I must say I think you're talking about two different things. Okay, you're a Black artist and living in a Black community. That's fine. Whether your art is Black or not doesn't make any difference, I think you needlessly confuse the issues by insisting that there's something about living in a Black community that makes your art Black. That's just not true.

MR. LLOYD: I'm not just talking about me. The white community hasn't accepted Black artists for years and years, and they're not even ready to now, really. And so I'm not just an artist. Therefore I'm a Black artist. If white society is not going to accept my work, I'm a Black artist. I'm not a white artist.

MR. LAWRENCE: I've seen a couple of your pieces and I would put it this way: I think you are an artist who happens to be Black, but you're not a Black artist. See, that's the difference.

MR. LLOYD: No, I'm a Black artist who has refused to be conditioned . . .

MR. LAWRENCE: Wait a minute. From what I've seen of your work—although you may be a terrific artist—there's no possible way that I can see anyone in the Black community relating to your work. They may respond to it aesthetically, they may feel that it's a terrific piece—but I can't see how anyone would relate to it, and I don't see why they should.

MR. LLOYD: They would relate to it if they knew that I am Black. That's very important.

MR. LAWRENCE: That's not important in a work of art.

MR. LLOYD: It's important to Black people, you know. I'm not only concerned with art. With me art is a secondary thing.

MR. LAWRENCE: I think you're begging the question here and you're making an excuse that you don't have

to make. You can be a very fine artist and I think you'll be contributing. There's no reason why you have to paint or work in a certain way, and have the image of Blackness written on your work to be a fine artist.

MR. LLOYD: It doesn't have to be written on. But don't tell me that Black people can't relate to my work. When they see me and they see my work, I know what they say. They say, "Dig it, a Black cat did that." And that means something to them, I know it does.

MR. WILLIAMS: But what happens when you're not there?

MR. LLOYD: I'm talking about my work being meaningful to Black people, and that's very important.

MR. BEARDEN: Suppose the Black community didn't accept your work and the white community did. Suppose you had been accepted by the white community, fully accepted. Would you have gone to the Black community to show your work if you had that kind of acceptance? Think about it.

MR. LLOYD: I've thought about that before. I've made it—I'm making a living off my art, a pretty good living. I can just keep my mouth shut and go ahead and make nice constructions for people to buy. But I'm not talking about me. I'm talking about Black artists. I'm talking about Black artists in the past, Black artists in the future. Simply because they're Black, there are millions of roadblocks in front of them.

MR. GILLIAM: I think I worry more about the quality of the experience coming to the Black community. And I think there is a need to raise the visual orientation of the Black community. During the riots in Washington, when the whites didn't come in from the suburbs, gallery attendance fell way off. If Washington has a sixty per cent majority of Black people, why does museum attendance fall down when something happens so the whites don't go? It's easy to see that we could easily hustle up to Harlem or over to 14th Street and put up a lot of structures that would be meaningful. But instead, isn't it that museums as such have not served the total community? Why can't museums really emphasize the kind of programs that will bring a person from where he is to where the better facility is? And when he's there why can't you make him actually welcome? This is the kind of point we should pursue, not dwell on "art meaningful to Black people." What we should be talking about is the quality of aesthetic experiences available to persons within the Black community, and raising the level of this quality. But let's not forget about what has gone before, let's not forget about Black history. In fact, let's emphasize this more.

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| The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY | Collection: | Series/Folder: |
| | JBH | III .1.7 |

very strongly. I want to know how Tom feels about this kind of thing.

MR. LLOYD: That's fine with me.

You know, so much needs to be done. There has to be such a tremendous effort on the part of the Black artist, on the part of the cultural power structure. I'm not too sure, Mr. Lawrence, that the government is going to get involved with the Black artist; the government isn't going to give you something when you're going to turn around and hurt them with what we create.

MR. WOODRUFF: I think the real thing that's bugging Tom is very evident. We want these doors open so that the Negro, the Black man, can move in and share and share alike. But the topic we're discussing is the aesthetic problems that the Black artist faces.

MR. LAWRENCE: I think we need a definition of aesthetics. Are we talking about space, line, form, or something much more broad and abstract—"experience" or something like that?

MR. WOODRUFF: Well, I used the term because the phrase "Black art" seems to suggest something that is different in its structure and its formal manifestation. We've been making differentiations in terms of economics, social impact, gallery facilities, museums being closed to Black art, and so forth, and I think this should be considered in terms of whether the art really does have some particular, special form.

MR. HUNT: Well, "the aesthetics of Black art" is a problem I really don't address myself to, in either my work or my thinking. The problem of the Negro in terms of the contemporary situation in art—showing in museums and galleries and all those things—seems to be more or less tied up with the prevailing currents in art itself. For instance, an artist who's working with kinetic, light, or minimal things might have a better chance of breaking into the scene than somebody who's painting figuratively. All these things don't really seem that much different from the problems that white artists or any other kinds of artists have. There are certain kinds of social biases on the part of some of the establishment people that you mentioned that might influence things, but you know, I really don't think those things are all that important. I don't really like to go into definitions, but in terms of my feeling about my relationship to my art I sort of separate it from my life as a Black man in America. Given I'm a Black man in America, I live from day to day and take things as they come. In terms of my work, I have a certain kind of ideal that I want to attain and I find myself being able to do that as a Black man in America and living in a Black community.

As Hale was talking about things that characterize Black art, and art growing out of the soil, it came to my mind that I'm kind of regionalist. I come from Chicago and I like living there. Listening to Tom's description of life here, I feel lucky that I was born in Chicago and haven't had to contend with the sort of problems that exist here. I come from a rural background: my father's from the rural South, my mother's from the rural Midwest. I remember the thing that impressed me about visiting my father's relatives in Georgia, one time when I was a kid, was that they had some land that they cleared, and they took the logs to the sawmill and built their house out of them. It's kind of nice thinking about how my uncle could do all that stuff; I think about things like that—and maybe this is what Tom is talking about, being able to identify with positive male images. It's like the things you read about pioneers doing. Of course they were living in Georgia, segregated and all, but at the same time they could exercise this ability to make things. I see myself as a sculptor as being a person making things. I may not make as good a sculpture as I want to make, but those are my limitations, nothing ever comes out exactly the way you want it. At the same time I feel like I can do anything I want to do. That has to do with family experiences and school experiences. I had Negro art teachers—Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Curran—who encouraged me and urged me to go on to the Chicago Art Institute. Then I had other instructors who were white and they encouraged me too.

It's a combination of things. I don't see how a Negro in America, even with segregated situations, can escape having influences that come from his family, from his background in the ghetto or wherever he happens to be, from his formal education, from his exposure to the arts. The thing gets pretty much mixed up, and the idea of separating out these experiences, good or bad, Black or not, seems sometimes rather useless and sometimes rather tiresome.

MR. LLOYD: Well, I don't think so. You know what I think, Mr. Hunt, is that you are a conditioned Black man. I think you are oblivious to what's happening.

MR. GILLIAM: Tom, I think you're acting more for the conditions...

MR. LLOYD: That may be so, but I've got to say what I think.

MR. HUNT: That's perfectly all right.

MR. LLOYD: To me you don't seem like a man concerned with Black people, with Black kids, with Black culture. I don't think that enters into your feelings. And that bothers me, that bothers the hell out of me. You