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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series/Folder:
	JBH	III. 1.9

309 West 107th St., Apt. 3R
New York, N.Y. 10025
January 4, 1970

John Hightower
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
New York, N.Y.

Dear John,

I thought you'd learned something by now but the the hell is this shit of your writing Toche and Hendricks you'd be glad to see them outside the front door to gather signatures for their petition of defense for the Judson 3???????? Are you telling them to be "good niggers" and not mess up your pristine lobby with all those nice, obedient, respectfully proper white folks and uninvolved blacks and others? Are you pretending for one minute that the MOMA and all artists represented there are not also indicted for freedom of expression in this case and that the only reason you haven't been harassed in similar ways is that you're well protected by that S.O.B. Rockefeller you ran around supporting like a good nigger yourself, and all his minions on your Board of Trustees? You know damn well that the police should rip-off the Modern just like it did the Flag Show for court evidence. What a scream you'd let out then, what a stink and self-righteous, pious statement you'd issue, and all the establishment would rally to your support.

There was a time there when I was beginning to think you were a sincere, good guy, just trapped in the web of the machinations of the curators and trustees of that monster in whose belly you work, but now I think that the one lesson I learned from the AAM meeting applies to you too: museum people really hate artists; all they want is the objects we produce and the only way to deal with you is to deny you what we produce until you're willing to treat us, as well as the things we produce, with respect, (Love would be too much to ask...)

You should have called Jon and Jean in and given them a press conference. You should have had more petitions made up at MOMA expense and seen that everyone coming in the door had a full explanation of the situation and the danger it represents to all art institutions as well as all artists - and even to the people at large of this country and their right to dissent. You could even offer your own lobby for an emergency flag show, completely open, with hanging on a first come, first serve basis ^{by the artists}, like the original People's Flag Show. And take contributions for the defense fund. It's going to cost them \$5,000 to challenge the state and federal laws in the Supreme Court.

There is still time for you to act. But don't wait for the trustees to say "go-ahead Johnny." DO IT, MAN !



Yours for Freedom,
Jacqui Skiles
Jacqueline Skiles

of the Committee to Defend
the Judson 3

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309 West 107th St., Apt. 3R
New York, N.Y. 10025
January 14, 1970

Mr. John Hightower
Director
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
New York, N.Y. 10019

January 11, 1971

Dear Miss Jacqueline Skiles
309 West 107th Street Apt 3R
New York, New York 10025

Dear Jackie:

Your letter arrived. Mine to Jon and Jean had been to explain - and there has been a lot of discussion from our standpoint - the hustling they evidently thought they had received in our lobby on the most crowded day at the Museum ever. It was not to tell them "not to mess up our pristine lobby with all those nice, obedient, respectfully proper white folks". Some of those people were here - sure - because maybe they did not want to carry a lance in the crusade for the Judson Three. Is it all that bad? Does it mean that they are all categorically idiots because they don't feel like sharing your point of view right then and there to the degree of passion that you do? What if a Bircher were in the lobby soliciting signatures for a petition against Dial-a-Poem? That would also be acceptable by you?

As Bobby Dylan has said, if you want me to open each and every door for you, "It ain't me, babe." You defend the Judson Three in the way you think best. I'll defend them the way I think best. And if you haven't yet figured out that there is a difference in our methods (I am not yet as willing as you are to say there is a difference in our convictions), you are sadly mistaken and more naive than I thought.

Best regards,

John B. Hightower
Director

JBH:ehn

The confusion on your very busy Monday, by the way, seems to be caused by your forced contribution to what should be free Monday and your deductible sign that make those who can pay less than recommended amounts feel like beggars. Why must you humiliate them?

And one last question: would you have been so put out by a letter by accusing him of naivete because his interpretation of affairs was naive?

As to the Birchers - it's a free country. I don't have a secretary to type out my letters. I don't have a secretary to type out my letters. I don't have a secretary to type out my letters.

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309 West 107th St., Apt. 3R
New York, N.Y. 10025
January 14, 1970

Mr. John Hightower
Director
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
New York, N.Y. 10019

Dear John,

I think you misunderstood the nature of my protest against the treatment Jon and Jean received in your lobby while petitioning in December. Never did I even think that everybody in your lobby should be forcibly enrolled to defend the Judson 3, but I do think they should have the opportunity to know about the case and sign up if they so desire without your guards interfering. It is a public place and there has already been one test case before the Supreme Court about the right to petition in public places - which the museum as a tax-exempt educational institution is. I cannot imagine Jon or Jean trying to force people into defending them...

I did see your letter to Jon and Jean, however, and it clearly told them to stay outside, in the cold, it might be added since that is the reality. It is against that attitude of yours that I vehemently object (and was applauded by the other Art-workers when I read them my copy of the letter I sent you).

It is not in your power to open all the doors we'd like to see open, not by a long sight, but you can at least not slam your ^{own} faces. I would have to be really 'naive' not to see that implication in your answer to my letter as well as in your letter to Jean and Jon. I am very glad to hear that you do plan to defend them in some way but I think it's quite a contradiction to be willing to do so and yet not permit them to solicit signatures in the lobby. Perhaps it's things like that which make me think there are real ideological differences. What are you really defending there?

It was apparent when you came down to talk to us during the Art Strike that you thought your head was much closer to ours than we feel it is, but I guess it would take a lot of clarification of positions on both sides to be able to clarify that. But you're too busy these days for that, I imagine, and what really matters to us is action, not words. Those of us who remain in the struggle have not forgotten the request of the Art Strike Ground Floors Information Committee to all museums for "liberated" space on ground floors for the dissemination of information and encouragement to action on the issues of Racism, Sexism, Repression and War. Our requests were largely ignored or denied with the exception of the Whitney bulletin board so we have been forced to take action in the ways we see fit to get the point across to the public. Jean's and Jon's actions were consistent with our ideals, strategy and tactical approach. May you see more of them in the future.

The confusion on your very busy Monday, by the way, seems to be caused by your forced contribution on what should be Free Monday and your intimidating sign that make those who can pay less than recommended amounts feel like beggars. Why must you humiliate them?

And one last question: Would you have tried to put down a man in a letter by accusing him of naivete because his interpretation of affairs differed from yours????

As to the Birchers - "it's a free country!?"

Yours for Freedom of the Judson 3

(Sorry I don't have a secretary to type nexter letters) Sackii Akiles

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MAR 11 1970

Lincoln
81 Linden Street
Englewood, N. J. 07631
March 5, 1970

Miss Grace Glueck
New York Times, Art Section
New York, New York

Dear Miss Glueck:

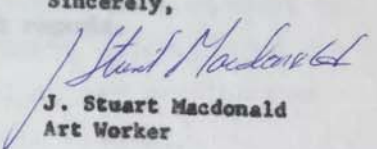
Everything said, about anything, doesn't matter much if what is said doesn't really matter; but nothing said about some things, matters. I refer to your article, New York Times, Wed. March 4. "Mr. Hightower" someone said admiringly as the meeting drew to a close 'you are an art worker'. I am that anonymous someone, and in this present context I would like to rescind all platitudinous or rhetorical statements attributed to the A.W.C. here and forever more.

The quoted statement at the time of delivery was not necessarily meant as a gesture of sublime confidence or as a procustean means to an end. "Mr. Hightower, you are an art worker" was posed as a statement of fact, as a question of degree and as a challenge to become a part of a living phenomenon. I addressed Mr. Hightower not for him to just consider demands, not to sit in judgment over the fallacious use of the terms GOOD or BAD art, not to succumb to what is merely fashionable one-up-man-ship or so-called Modern Art. His lot is, moreover, an act of will to become a part of the living, the as yet unborn, the becoming phenomena of art in all of its extensions.

I believe, as many do, that the idea of art is a process and not a procedure. The act of art is not an aesthetic, it is a way of doing things. And the fact of art is neither an exhibit nor a performance but an experiment in the will to create.

Mr. Hightower, art does not begin or end in the museum or galleries. It begins and unfortunately ends, sometimes tragically, in people.*

Sincerely,


J. Stuart Macdonald
Art Worker

* Mark Rothko et. al.

CC: John B. Hightower
A.W.C.

John B. Hightower, incoming Director
Museum of Modern Art, New York City

Art Workers Coalition, Museum
729 Broadway
New York, New York

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ALEXANDER GROSS
104 2nd AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

7777409

January 25, 1970

*Spoke to Mr. Gross
about this, and
he said he would
handle it directly
w/ Alex Gross*

Mr. J. Stuart Macdonald
Director
Museum of Modern Art
53rd Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

May 27, 1970

Mr. J. Stuart Macdonald
81 Lincoln Street
Englewood, New Jersey 07631

Dear Mr. Macdonald:

My apologies for taking so long to get to your letter to Grace Glueck regarding her report of the evening I appeared at the Art Workers Coalition. It probably makes little difference now, but I was very much aware of the fact that your comment was not said admiringly. I like to think that I also understand something of the quality of activeness and caring and process that is implied by the term "art worker". Although we were not

Thanks anyway for the clarification which I sensed then and appreciated even more fully as a result of your letter.

Wilder Green that we should send a request in writing to attend next month's meeting of the board on February 12. I am now writing for the Coalition to make this request.

Best regards,

John B. Hightower
Director

JBH:ehn

John B. Hightower
Director
Museum of Modern Art
104 2nd Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10003

cc:

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Memorandum

To *Walter Bareiss*
From *Wilder Green*

Date

Re

2/16

*Spoke to Hightower
about this, and
he said he would
handle it directly
w/ Alex Gross—*

W.

ALEXANDER GROSS
104 2nd AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

777-7609

January 29, 1970

ter Bareiss
Director
Museum of Modern Art
53rd Street
N.Y. 10019

Bareiss:

As you are aware, the Art Workers Coalition requested permission to send a delegation to attend last month's meeting of the Board of Trustees on January 9. Although we were not permitted to attend at that time, we were informed both by your secretary and by Mr. Wilder Green ~~that~~ we should send a request in writing to attend next month's meeting of the Board on February 12. I am now writing for the Coalition to make this request.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Gross
Alex Gross
Frazer Dougherty
Irving Petlin

CC:

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ALEXANDER GROSS
104 2nd AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

777-7609

January 29, 1970

Mr. Walter Bareiss
Acting Director
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

Dear Mr Bareiss:

As you are aware, the Art Workers Coalition requested permission to send a delegation to attend last month's meeting of the Board of Trustees on January 9. Although we were not permitted to attend at that time, we were informed both by your secretary and by Mr. Wilder Green ~~that~~ we should send a request in writing to attend next month's meeting of the Board on February 12. I am now writing for the Coalition to make this request.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Gross
Alex Gross
Frazer Dougherty
Irving Petlin

CC:

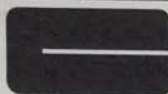
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MAY 5 1970



URBAN
ARTS
CORPS



26 West 20th Street / New York, N.Y. 10011 / 212-924-7820

April 29, 1970

Mr. John B. Hightower
Director
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, New York 10019

My dear JBH:

"They" are pressuring me to get the fund raising brochure for the Urban Arts Corps to press. It would seem that the two (2) things that are holding it up are, (1) a broad statement from you as head of one of the great museums of the world, about the role of the minority artist as ambassador, as interpreter and as viable force in this ever changing revolution.

"Golly I sure would appreciate it as soon as you can"! MY SANDPAPERING FRIEND!

Affectionately,

Vinnette Justine Carroll
Artistic Director

VJC:mr

P.S. Of course we know the second thing holding it up is my statement.

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Awe

May 4, 1970

Mr. Carroll Greene, Jr.
1311 Delaware Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Greene:

Faith Ringgold, whom I believe you know, suggested I get in touch with you regarding some of the plans for the Museum of Modern Art. I would like very much to meet you and wonder if you are going to be in New York City any time soon. If so, I would very much appreciate having the chance to meet with you.

Best regards,

* John B. Hightower
Director

JBH:ehn