

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 4-7040

December 17, 1959.

Dear Ansel Adams:

The meeting of the Committee on Prints and Drawings was held yesterday and I am very happy that they accepted all of the photographic offerings. This included your portfolio and the Newhall collection and if it is still available - the André Summer collection in Paris. It is long since I have been so happy.

I am delighted that your portfolio reached here in time for the meeting. It contains some of the most beautiful and moving of all the photographs I have ever seen. With the handsome text pages and text it forms a wonderful unit: a welcome volume from all the merely brilliant and passionless work which can be analyzed and talked about and explained. No one could ever explain Rembrandt and so we will ever explain these pictures of yours.

I have looked so long at this portfolio that I cannot see anything more than anything else. Are there others still

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unavailable and if so, is there any chance that you might have one, say as late as February? With Christmas, New Year's, musical shows, etc., I am quite broke, but the second month of the new year would make it possible for me to buy this one thing which I should like so much to have.

I am sending a newspaper clipping which I have been (glorified to send before today. This interview took place the day before I left for Rochester and was printed while I was away. You will curse me for the miserable reproduction and perhaps put me in prison. I swear I did not say "impressive collection", as is stated in the first sentence, but merely "exhibition". I beg you to try and forgive me to the harm I have done.

I was very disappointed Beaumont Newhall could not stop in Chicago. I am afraid that before he comes again, the Merrick ~~is~~ restaurant will be as much a thing of the past as the croquet of Frank Norris. And an hour's conversation with him would have been enough to stimulate me for the rest of the

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Chicago winter. Those days in Rochester were the happiest in my life.

Thanks for sending the invoice which came today. The check order goes to the business office tomorrow and you will receive the payment next week, early.

It is late and I must leave here. The Point Department has been entirely rebuilt since you were here and you will like it when you come again. Gordon Hunter, our conservationist, asks to be remembered - we will never forget the Sun at that day you were here. Next time it will be even better for there will be more for you to see.

Your "Merry Christmas" over the Telephone was the only authentic one I have heard for years. I send you mine, wishing it could have the same effect.

Sincerely,  
Hugh Edwards.

December 20 1959

Dear Hugh Edwards-----

Thank you for your wonderful letter and for the enclosure of your article on the "Moonrise". All is much appreciated---more than I can ever tell you!

You are a warm and understanding and constructive person--not many around!!! Thanks again!!!!

I am glad the A.I. liked the Portfolio and that your Program was so well received. Cheers!!!!

There are more copies of Portfolio TWO and Portfolio THREE is on its way. And then- Portfolio Four and Five -----etc.

I am desperately busy these days and you must forgive this hectic letter and more hectic typing. Your distinguished handwriting puts my IBM and me to shame!!

Much more soon---let us keep in touch. I would like to help you in any possible way.

MERRY CHRISTMAS !!!!!!!



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MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 4-7380

January 14, 1960.

Mr. Ansel Adams,  
131 Twenty-fourth Avenue,  
San Francisco, 21,  
California.

Dear Ansel Adams:

I was happy to receive your letter. Yes, I found David Magee and he is sending the Talbot Sun Pictures. I don't know why I didn't think of Magee as I have known about the David Magee Book Shop for a long time, but McGee had me all off the track.

We have a meeting of the committee on February 9th and I want to submit some items for purchase. It would be great to have your Portfolio One here and also Don Worth's - I like his work, but did not know about a portfolio. I will do my best to get a favorable decision.

The Westons are such a great gift that it is still hard to believe we have them here. For cataloguing I wish I could get a history of the prints made by Brett Weston during the last years of Edward Weston's life. In their book the Westalls state prints were made from 1,000 negatives and that there were eight sets. Printed labels on the backs of the mounts of our prints say they are from a selection of 830 negatives and that six sets of these were made. Mr. Max McGraw's gift consists of 204 prints which I understand are a personal selection Edward Weston made for him.

Thanks for writing and having taken so much trouble for us. Another letter soon and - unlike my last - it will not be loaded with questions.

Sincerely,

Muyh k?

January 16 1960

Dear Hugh Edwards-

Thanks for your letter of the 14th.

I will try to get you a PORTFOLIO ONE.

I took the liberty of suggesting to Don Worth that he send you a copy of his Portfolio- just to see. It would be good indeed if the committee would purchase it! Georgia O'Keeffe told me she had given a copy to the Museum of Modern Art.

I can't help you with the details of the Weston print-making. I suggest you write Brett Weston, Route 1, Box 85, CARMEL, Calif. (end of Corona Road, Carmel Highlands). I have a suspicion that the prints McGraw gave you are Edward's own printing. But I just don't know!

Always glad to be of help!!!!

Warmest greetings

# THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 4-7080

February 17, 1960.

Mr. Ansel Adams,  
131 Twenty-fourth Avenue,  
San Francisco, 21,  
California.

Dear Ansel Adams:

Your card has just come and I feel much better for I have been very sad about not being able to do anything about Eugene Smith. I shall try to see him when I go to New York and do hope we will be able to get something for the collection. The machinery of these big places moves so slowly.

Mac Doty of Eastman House called me yesterday in regard to the Minor White show which we are having in May. I am almost afraid to approach Beaumont until next week is over. Hyatt Mayor, whom I admire very much and who is the Curator of Prints of the Metropolitan, has been very anxious for me to come to New York next week. So I hope everybody in the world will understand.

John Starkowski, who did The Idea of Louis Sullivan and The Face of Minnesota, was down for a day last week and brought eighty beautiful prints for a show of his work which we are having in the early summer. He enjoyed seeing your Portfolio Two very much and it was very inspiring to talk with him. We have bought the Talbot Sun Pictures and Magee also had a copy of The Pageant of History in Northern California which we were very glad to get. Magee seems wonderful and I hope to know him someday.

Your card told me (between the lines) that you are rid of the flu. Thanks always for your help - it would be hard to get through some of these days without your inspiration.

Sincerely,

Thayer K.

We put up the Eastman House Daguerrestype show just before I leave next week. I hope you keep Portfolio One in mind for us.

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MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 4-1990

May 23, 1960.

Mr. Ansel Adams,  
131 Twenty-fourth Avenue,  
San Francisco, 21, California.

Dear Ansel Adams:

Perhaps you will wonder how I can dare to come out of hiding. After Dmitri and a long silence I make another appearance! Well, I hope you can forgive me. I have had you in my thoughts all these days and hardly one has passed that has not contained something to tell you.

During that trip to New York I did accomplish a few things. I went to see Eugene Smith and he was very good and I liked him. I selected thirty prints, hoping to interest the committee in as many as possible but Smith could not give me any idea of the prices - this had to be handled by a lawyer who has turned out to be a redoubtable individual who seems to lust for quarrels. I was sworn to secrecy about the prices: it was high for us (with no endowment funds for photography) and I was told it was exceedingly low. So, at the last meeting of the committee, I could persuade them to purchase no more than eight prints. These have been ordered and although a letter, with the sting about not taking more wrapped in legal wedding, has arrived, the prints have not come. They are all great pictures and I like Eugene Smith both as artist and person - in fact, it might help, in this togetherness world, to have more people like him, but I am afraid all of them would have lawyers. At the same meeting we purchased Minor White's Song without Words sequence and Sequence 15. The showing here of his Sequence 15 was our biggest exhibition success so far and the reaction was unanimously favorable. I have shows planned for more than a year: George Platt Lynes portraits, Ishimoto, Syl Labret, Robert Frank, a group showing by four very interesting graduate students of Callahan and Siskind (Rodney Galarsen, Thomas Knutson, David Roudinski and Robert Sterling) and a one-man showing by Joseph Jachna, another of their students who - I think - has fine gifts. I want to have periodic exhibitions by unknown young talent here - there are some very good people ~~(see name card)~~ in this area.

I wish I could elaborate on all this, as the above paragraph must seem a strange mélange. The lighting in our gallery is miserable and I am told by the building superintendent that one more tube would darken an entire floor, but the success of the exhibitions has been so great we have been promised another and better gallery. I hope it is large enough to divide into three rooms so that we could have a historical survey on the walls all the time and two exhibitions by contemporaries.

Has Portfolio Three been completed? If so, would you be so kind as to send one to us for we have another committee meeting on June 28th. There is a little money left and I want to use it and do not want us to miss this portfolio. You spoke once of the possibility of finding a copy of Portfolio One and I wonder if you have any further news of it. Portfolio Two is called



for almost every day and I am going to show some of the prints in our recent accessions show next September. Don North's photographs are greatly liked here and I wish the exhibition program had not become so crowded so that I might approach him for a show. Perhaps, if we get the new gallery, this will be possible sooner than I expect. There are so many good people who have never been heard of in the Middle West!

I shall write again very soon. I do hope that - so far as you are concerned - I am at least partly out of the Dairian thicket. (I voted for only about 40 pictures that day and most of those in the published catalogue are entirely new to me. So there is a short synopsis of the whole story. But there is much more.) All good wishes to you and more soon.

Sincerely,

Maude Edwards -

May 29, 1960

Mr. Hugh Edwards  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
Michigan Avenue at Adams Street  
Chicago 3, Illinois

Dear Hugh Edward:

It was certainly good to hear from you. I just arrived from the east having had six weeks in Cambridge and a few good days with the Newhalls in Rochester. All seems to have gone extremely well and I am sorry I could not have stopped off at Chicago to see you.

Your story about meeting with Smith is typical. Unfortunately, he puts every possible obstacle in his own way. I think it is a psychological condition of the utmost seriousness, but he is one of our greatest photographers.

Simply delighted with your report on Minor White's work. I saw some of his most recent prints in Rochester, and he really is doing a terrific job.

Your exhibit schedule sounds marvelous and maybe when I am in Chicago next time I will be able to see some of this work. What you say about the lighting is typical of most older buildings, and I am wondering if it would not be possible for you to do away with the fluorescent tubes and use 300 watt reflector flood-lights. The tungsten quality always seems superior in the showing of photographs, as the general scattered ambient light does not exist as it does with broad fluorescent lighting.

Portfolio III is completed except for the printing and for the cases. I would be able to send you a set minus the title page and text, etc. in time for your meeting on the 28th. I find it almost impossible to locate any portfolio I, although there are several of II left, but as you have one of these,

all is well in that department.

Don has been doing some excellent work, and I think he certainly deserves a show. Jerry Sharpe has a very beautiful show put together, and it made quite an effect in Cambridge. One of the difficulties today is to find truly expressive work in which both the art and the craft are fully expressed.

I suppose it is necessary to get mixed up in such things as the Dmitriev thicket that you mentioned but, there is something about that whole business which sounds rather bad to me, and I would certainly like to get your frank, personal, and confidential opinion, someday on how you relate the kind of work that they chose and the character of exhibit and publicity relating all this to the domain of really creative art.

It's always grand to hear from you, and I send my best wishes and kindest regards.

Ansel Adams

*Ansel Adams*

AA:cm

# THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 4-7940

File

June 9, 1960.

Mr. Ansel Adams,  
131 Twenty-fourth Avenue,  
San Francisco, 21,  
California.

Bear (may I at last call you) Ansel:

This will be only a note to acknowledge your letter which - as usual - was the strong moral tonic I needed so badly. The day will come when I shall tell you about all of my Photography in the Fine Arts adventures and discoveries. Once, when James Agee wrote a pessimistic account of the show Oklahoma!, he admitted he had not seen it, adding you did not have to visit the Sahara desert to know what it is like. But you do have to go to Photography in the Fine Arts to know what it is really like - I have been and I know and I'm still surprised.

However, my object in writing this hurried page is to ask if you will send the photographs of Portfolio III (or a representation of them) so that I may show them to the committee when it meets on June 28th. I shall try my best to get a favorable decision and after that the portfolio may be delivered whenever it is finished. I hope this will not be too much trouble for you. I want to be certain that we obtain this work before the summer is over.

Minor White writes he will be here around the 15th, on the way to Oregon. I am anxious for him to come and hope he has enough time for dinner at Henrici's ("Chicago's oldest and most famous restaurant - no orchestral din") which Beaumont Newhall has wanted to see for years and has been frustrated in every attempt.

I'll write again soon. How I wish I could see you and have a talk. All good wishes now and more soon.

Sincerely,

  
Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography.

Please tell the Sierra Club to send the Art Institute of Chicago a bill for PORTFOLIO THREE (\$100.00) as the entire set is complete. Better telephone Mr. Marryat of the Club YU 2-2822 about it.

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MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-1045

*file*

October 20, 1960.

Mr. Ansel Adams,  
131 Twenty-fourth Avenue,  
San Francisco, 21,  
California.

Dear Ansel:

I returned to Chicago on October 11th after three reviving weeks in Kentucky. Today we are much occupied with hanging the show of Ishimoto's photographs and I am sorry I have time for only a note.

It is to tell you the cover and text for Portfolio Three have arrived in good condition and I am proud and happy we have the photographs so handsomely housed. Congratulations on the entire project. I assure you it will be a great inspiration to many people here.

As yet, we have received no invoice. Would you like me to write the Sierra Club for one. However, I believe you wrote you would ask them to bill us, so I shall wait until we hear.

Best regards and forgive today's haste. I'll write again soon.

Sincerely,

*Myrl*  
Myrl Edwards, Curator of Photography.

October 22, 1960  
(dictated from Cambridge, Oct. 13)

Mr. Hugh Edwards  
Department of Photography  
Art Institute of Chicago  
Chicago 3, Illinois

Dear Hugh:

Thank you very much for your card. I am here in Cambridge for about five weeks and am dictating this to my daughter who will type it up and send it to you. I am terribly rushed with the teaching projects here.

I passed through Chicago about two weeks ago but was unable to see you as I had a very short time there which was entirely consumed with business. I think that you were out of town anyway because several people had mentioned that fact to me.

I am pleased to say that you will get the Foreword for Portfolio III and also the case in a very short time. It is now completed. You are supposed to get two copies, which, of course, will facilitate a complete exhibit of the text along with the pictures. I do not know if the Sierra Club has billed you for this, but may I suggest that you drop them a line when you receive the text and case merely affirming that fact. It is my recollection that the bill was sent but marked "Hold until completing material is received."

I look forward to seeing you as soon as possible. I will be at the conference at Eastman House, arriving there about November 4.

Warmest greetings,

Ansel Adams

AA:am

# THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60602 TELEPHONE CENTRAL 3-7000

June 6, 1967.

Mr. Ansel Adams  
Box 455  
Yosemite National Park  
California  
95399

Dear Ansel:

Your letter to Wynn Bullock and your card have come. Wynn Bullock left for California on Saturday and if you have not heard from him, I am sure you can reach him at 155 Mar Vista Drive, Monterey, California. I am returning your letter herewith - the envelope was torn, as you see, when it was received here.

I have never forgotten that Saturday you spent with us eight (7) years ago, so that even the suggestion you may be here again fills me with anticipation. I hope - somehow - things work out so that we will see you again. You are the one unshakable center in photography and it is always reassuring to remember you.

I have been very busy. So much of my time has to be spent not turning away visitors that it seems I have little left for anything else. Last year, in the second semester, and this year, I have taught large classes in the school in the history of photography and we have had some interesting results. In the recent Parke-Bernet sale we acquired the Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War, 33 Crimean War portraits by Roger Fenton and two handsome half plate size daguerreotypes. Earlier in the year we added fifteen platinotypes by Frederick H. Evans to the collection as well as fifteen calotypes of the finest quality and condition by Fox Talbot.

I leave for Kentucky next week and will be gone a month, so it was good to hear from you before I left. All good wishes to you.

Sincerely,

