

August 17, 1962.

Mr. Beaumont Newhall, Director,
George Eastman House,
900 East Avenue,
Rochester, 7, New York.

Dear Beaumont:

It was good to talk with you yesterday and I hope it is the beginning of a new and frequent correspondence.

I shall appreciate any attention you give Robert Riger. I saw his work first when his book was published and finally found him last spring in New York. Of course the photographs were made as preparations for the more or less documentary drawings which have thousands of fans among pro-football enthusiasts, but I believe they convey the beauty of movement in the fractions of gestures which any photograph must be better than any others I have seen. The subjects retain the suggestion of life and are not shot dead. Robert Riger's admiration of Italian artists must inspire him to these grand compositions and to project the wisdom of Uccello and Pollaiuolo in the purity of photographic idioms is admirable in his work. I am impatient to see his pictures here.

I am enclosing a copy of André Jammes' article of which I spoke and hope you enjoy it for I thought it both excellent and just.

All good wishes to all of you.

Sincerely,

Hugh Edwards.

December 8, 1962.

Mr. Robert M. Doty, Assistant Curator,
George Eastman House,
900 East Avenue,
Rochester, 7,
New York.

Dear Mac:

I made a trip to New York and when I came back found your letter. Within a few days I'll write you again and send you as much information as I can.

Right now I am overwhelmed by a million things but I want to thank you - at last - for your welcome note about the Robert Riger show. It has been a big success and I must tell you, someday of the adventures I have had with it. The arty, ready-made-metaphysician kind of people didn't like it (of course) and as Edward Albee said of his last play, "it was panned by the right people", but they are not a large or even representative number. And - like the majority - the minority is not always right. I want to have another exhibition of his work someday - perhaps the bullfight pictures. I had a fine evening with the Riger family in their unforgettable apartment in Brooklyn. I do want you to meet him and see not only his photographs but the great drawings he has made of jockeys and football players. The shallowness of modern aestheticians is proved better by no other fact than that these works of his fail to be accepted merely because they are of football players and jockeys.

It is always good to hear from you and your encouragement means a lot to me. I'll send another letter and try to tell you what you want to know. How I wish I could send you a complete report of the memorable talks with Walker Evans. My best to you and your family and I wish I could see you.

Sincerely,

February 16, 1963.

Mr. Robert Riger,
9303 Shore Road,
Brooklyn, 9,
New York.

Dear Bob:

I have tried to write you several times about the success of the book and how happy it made me, but my enthusiasm always got the better of me and ended in another unsuccessful attempt. The picture on page 90 got me the first time, but each new trip through the book added to its number until the whole thing (text and all) has become a large and consistent accomplishment, thrilling in every way. So my pride in knowing you and what you do is twice as great as it was before.

When you receive this I will undoubtedly be at the Hudson Hotel and I'll call you just as soon as I can. I do hope to see you. And then I'll say - more to my satisfaction - something of my pleasure in the book and your admirable solution of all its great difficulties.

All good wishes to all of you.

Sincerely,

Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography.

July 30, 1963.

Dear Bob:

The pictures and article in the new Esquire are the best yet - the beautiful photograph of the track (entirely unlike anything of its kind) evokes so many things that one doesn't take time to stop and note its photographic excellence. The article is a fine piece of writing - there is so much body and quality, the color touches in it are in the right places and the sunny melancholy of the past and a dig at the present.

I am surely proud of you and proud to know you - I looked at those pages two whole days and walked around on the lake shore and thought of them. I'll try to get the color reproduction out and piece it together somehow to frame. I wish you were here. I'll telephone soon.

All best to all of you,

More soon.

April 30, 1964.

Mr. Robert Riger,
9101 Shore Road,
Brooklyn, 9,
New York.

Dear Bob:

The transparencies arrived in fine shape this morning at nine o'clock. We started at once to lay out the show and now I am happy indeed about how well everything is going to work out. Your sequence has been followed and by using large mats (which enhances the handsomeness of the pictures) the walls of the gallery will be adequately filled. In the end we found the walls would be required to accomodate the American pictures so that we can use the panel in the center of the floor for the French ones.

I am grateful you sent the transparencies right away and did not wait to write the list but I hope you will be able to send it so it will be here by Tuesday.

The photographs are beautiful and I want to thank you for having plotted the sequence so successfully. Although smaller, this show will be as fine as The Pros - of course, very different. And that is because you did it. I hope you will be able to see it and surely something will bring you here for the exhibition period has been extended to eight instead of five weeks.

Thanks again for your wonderful help and I don't know how to tell you how much I like these pictures. Good wishes to all of you,

Sincerely,