

January 1, 1938

Dear friend:

Considerable progress has been made toward realization of our plans for the National Gallery of the American Indian. We have reached the stage of practical steps toward gathering together a large group of sponsors acting as an originating committee which will meet during this month to elect a Board of Trustees and launch a national publicity and money-raising campaign.

We cannot too strongly emphasize that this is not "just another museum". The Indian Gallery will not duplicate the work of any existing institution or organization. It will cooperate with all of them, but it is a radical departure from the traditional and conventional methods of museums and galleries. In the first place, the physical construction of the Indian Gallery is different; the architect has avoided stereotyped museum style and building plans. Every effort will be made to ensure the comfort of the visitor, to give him an interesting and delightful experience, whether he is child or adult, so that he will want to return again and again and to pursue his newly discovered interest in a culture hitherto so largely neglected and unappreciated by most white Americans. The usual cold, unimaginative and confusing display in an unsympathetic environment will be replaced by a new scheme for utilizing the vast amount of material available in the museums as well as materials the Indian artists are now producing.

An important feature of the gallery will be its exhibition of paintings, sculpture, etchings, etc., of Indian life by white artists as well as those produced by Indians, thus stimulating interest among artists now devoting their talents to subject-matter of far less intrinsic interest and enduring values.

We wish also to emphasize that the gallery in Washington will be only the center from which exhibitions and other activities will be organized throughout the country, in cooperation with all museums, schools and colleges, libraries, civic and social organizations. This will make available to the largest possible number of people, contact with Indian culture. In the interim period, before the gallery is built, our minimum program provides for such activities, even if we do not quickly realize the entire, maximum program.

Our plans are frankly bold and ambitious, with a wider scope than any previous project, and their success depends upon the enthusiastic aid, financial and moral, of every individual who wants justice for the Indian. We are not asking you for money, although we need funds, but we do ask for more than your endorsement. We request your assistance in giving the projected Indian Gallery the widest possible publicity.

Will you tell us what you can do toward getting publicity in the local press, toward organizing a local committee of sponsors, and whatever other ideas occur to you?

Above all, will you write an article or series of articles on whatever phase of Indian life interests you most? These articles may be placed by yourself or your literary agent, or if you prefer, we will arrange for publication. We have a splendid collection of photographs available for illustration, which we would be glad to have you use.

We expect to have funds soon for a national publicity campaign on a larger scale; after it is well under way, the John Price Jones Corporation, the largest firm in the field, will assume direction of the campaign to raise \$5,000,000.00. In this preliminary period we must depend upon those friends of the Indian, like yourself, who are really in earnest about helping him to preserve and develop his native culture.

We will welcome your assurance of interest and support, and any suggestions you may have to offer. This is your project as much as ours.

Sincerely yours,

118 East 40th Street
New York, N. Y.