

Copy

January 10, 1934

Dear Dr. Leigh:

I note that you want a teacher of painting for next year. In that connection do you remember Nathalie speaking to you about Albers, her teacher at Bauhaus? Mr. Philip Johnson, of the Museum of Modern Art, arranged for him to come over here in November and Albers and his wife are now at Black Mountain College, Black Mountain, North Carolina, and off shoot of Rollins. I have seen Albers and his wife twice, when they first arrived and again six weeks later on the Christmas vacation when they were in New York. He is now teaching I gather for his board and lodging and I suppose for his transportation over. Apparently the faculty and students are all of them studying under him. His wife speaks English and he is starting to pick it up. I think you will remember him. He, I believe, initiated the course on the nature of materials, a part of which is described by Maholy Nagi in his book. The latter was one of Albers's students. At Bauhaus I think Albers taught the three subjects, the course in materials, drawing and painting. In talking with him I felt a profound sincerity and independence of thought. He also made me feel that to him teaching, in the sense of developing individual powers, was the great profession. All this makes me think he is worth consideration for appointment for next year.

I believe this Black Mountain School ends its session the first of May. The head of an important school wants to appoint him for next year if funds are available, but, I am writing to you about him, as I hear this is doubtful. If Albers is the great teacher that the Museum of Modern Art and others seem to think him, I imagine that should you appoint him to Bennington faculty, we would not be able to keep him for many years, but you might think it worthwhile, as I would, to have him set up his materials course at Bennington, and also to have the benefit of his most thorough discipline in drawing, even for a short time.

Em has gone off to Oxford with intense interest.

I hope you have a fine vacation,

Sincerely yours,

Nathalie Swan,

Copy

January 22, 1934

Dear Dr. Leigh:

I have just received your letter and am so glad you have not already found someone for the art work, and that you are interested in the possibility of getting Albers.

I have talked to Philip Johnson who brought him over here and he will write Albers today and tell him that he will hear from you, and that if it should work out that he was offered a position at Bennington that it would be an interesting place for him to work. So when he hears from you Albers will know that Philip Johnson approves and that no wires are crossed.

Albers knows nothing about Bennington, so far as I know, so it might be well to send him the literature.

Mrs Blagden is enthusiastic, by the way, over the last Bulletin--as am I. Albers' course on materials seems to fit in admirably. Mrs. Albers is an expert weaver, I believe and is interested in experimentation along that line, but has not taught. She speaks English so there is no embarrassment in writing to him in English.

Albers' name is Josef Albers  
Black Mountain College,  
Black Mountain,  
North Carolina,

Nathalie Swan,

Bennington College  
Bennington  
Vermont

January 31, 1934

Mr. Edwin Park,  
Bennington College,  
Bennington, Vermont,

Dear Mr. Park;

I have received two letters, copies of which are enclosed,  
from Mrs. Joseph R. Swan. Albers seems to me too good a man to let  
slip. I have written to him that I hope we can see him in the spring.

Sincerely yours,

*Rabert L. K.*