

Bennington College • Bennington • Vermont • 05201 • 802-442-5401

December 3, 1980

Office of the President

Mr. John Russell
The New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036

Dear Mr. Russell:

For some time now Bennington College has been contemplating the formation of an Arts Acquisition Committee. Despite its small size, Bennington has nurtured and fostered a surprisingly large number of vital artists and movements over the past half century. The list of artists who have taught at Bennington is a distinguished one and includes Pat Adams, Anthony Caro, Paul Feeley, Jane Ford, Dick Haas, Brower Hatcher, Ken Noland, Jules Olitski, Larry Poons, Tony Smith, Stanley Rosen and Sidney Tillim, among many others. The list of artists associated with Bennington who have made sizeable contributions of their work to the College include the faculty members already mentioned and Susan Crile, Helen Frankenthaler, Ralph Humphrey, Pat Johanson, Robert Motherwell, David Smith and many others. Due in part to our institution's peculiar nature, Bennington has never fully recognized the vast wealth of the tradition of which the College is a part. This is a situation which the Board of Trustees now hopes to rectify.

We are planning to have Bennington's long time friend, associate and former faculty member, Gene Goossen, establish and chair an Arts Acquisition Committee. He envisions the Committee as set up on three tiers. An executive tier would work with and coordinate the activities of an advisory committee (of perhaps a dozen or more people with arts backgrounds) and a Bennington Arts Trust to receive and dispense gifts of art or cash, curate a collection and sponsor various programs including exhibitions.

We would be pleased and honored if you would consent to serve on the executive committee of this endeavor. The Board of Trustees at Bennington considers the building of an important collection an exceedingly high priority and I can promise you the fullest support of both the Board and the College's President.

Cordially,

Susan Paris Lewis
Chairman, Board of Trustees

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