

April 15, 1986

MEMO TO: All Trustees
Michael Hooker
Ted Milek
Jim Vanderpol

FROM: Lois Chazen, Chairman Art Committee

RE: Progress Report

Sixty-two percent of the \$400,000 budgeted income in 1985-86 for "sale of art" has been received. The remaining \$153,085 is expected before the end of the fiscal year, June 30.

Three very different categories of art are included in this process.

1. Works of art from the permanent collection available only if, by written agreement, the work will be donated back to the College within a specified time. Many of these works reflect the history of the College, the artists who taught and worked here as well as significant periods in contemporary American art. Therefore, their value to the College, its very legacy in the teaching of art, is inestimable.
2. Generous gifts from art faculty members Pat Adams, 220 prints of her own work "Endlessly Rocking"; and Philip Wofford, 57 monoprints by the artist entitled, "Hidden Idol: Symmetry" offered to the alumni for the benefit of the College. Announcements for this event were designed and underwritten by committee member Karen Boyd.
3. Paintings, sculpture and prints not relevant to a teaching collection and available for sale outright.

Offering the outstanding art in the collection on the basis of its return as a gift to the College in the future was a compromise reached following the trustees' split vote decision to sell part of the collection to make up the annual budget deficit. Several members of the Art Committee have worked on a draft of an art policy statement included for review at the end of this report. It deals with the issues of careful selection of art for the collection so that deaccession is rarely an issue and assurance to the donor that endowment gifts of art will be maintained in the collection and used for study and exhibitions. A statement of this sort is necessary to protect the collection and essential to solicitation of major gifts of art. Museums and educational institutions with art collections have endorsed similar guidelines.

Hofmann Painting

The first of several gift back transactions was completed last month. A benefactor paid the College \$225,000 for a Hans Hofmann painting, "The Breakers", 36" x 48", a beautiful work completed in 1962. A binding agreement insures that the painting will be given back to the College in the future. The painting will be available to the College at any time for exhibitions. Since this was a private transaction, no commissions were involved. Had the painting been sold at auction, an institutional commission of 6% or \$13,500 would have been due. Special thanks to College Attorney Peter Holden and to Ken Noland for their part in this project.

Nine works of art are currently under consideration under the gift back plan. Success of a few of these transactions will bring us to or beyond the budget goal.

The purchase price was derived from two appraisals, updating one in 1983 by the Art Dealers Association of America. Sotheby's and an independent appraiser, Ken Lensner, who sits on an art review panel for the Internal Revenue Service, completed their appraisals of the entire college art collection this year. The resulting figures were averaged. The value of the Hofmann painting rose \$45,000 since the gift was made to the College three years ago.

1985-86 Art Income Recap

Hofmann, Hans	"The Breakers" 36" x 48" Oil on canvas, 1962	Private Sale (to be returned to College)	\$225,000
Zorach, William	Untitled landscape Watercolor, 1927 14½" x 21"	Private Sale (to be returned to College)	\$ 4,000
Epstein, Sir Jacob	Bust of John Dewey Bronze, before 1955 20½" x 21" x 14"	Private Sale (to be returned to College)	\$ 5,500
Edmund Wilson inscribed	Glass window panes (1 broken in many parts-1 unbroken pane reserved for College library, inscribed by John Wain)	Swann Galleries	\$ 3,000
Various items of furniture and a falsely attributed painting		Manhattan Gallery	\$ 2,390
2 Pat Adams prints, 1 Philip Wofford monoprint			<u>\$ 1,025</u>
			\$240,915

1984-85 Art Income Recap

*Avery, Milton	"Girl on a Victorian Chair" Oil on canvas 23½" x 17"	Christie's	\$14,000
*Bombois, Camille	"Clown Emile Jannings" Oil on canvas 18½" x 14"	Christie's	\$ 6,000
*Bernard, Emile	Untitled (pastoral) Oil on canvas, c.1900 29½" x 40" (torn and badly repaired in 3 places)	Christie's	\$ 1,100
*Gherardini, Alessandro	"The King" Oil on canvas 33" x 25"	Sotheby's	\$ 2,500
Johnson, Albert	Stage sets (5) for "John Henry"	Sotheby's	\$ 1,100
Jones, Robert Edmund	Costume sketch	Sotheby's	\$ 400
Falsely attributed paintings (2) and (2) prints		Litchfield Gallery	\$ 2,025
Feeley, Paul	Silkscreen, unsigned		\$ 250
Adams, Pat	"Endlessly Rocking" (2) prints		\$ 520
Bosee, Phyllis	Drawing		\$ 250
Country furniture, some antique, all deteriorating and in need of expert repair from student living rooms and attics		Sotheby's	\$12,350

Venetian secretary, Bingham attic	Sotheby's	\$ 3,000
American Empire arm chair, Bingham attic	Sotheby's	\$ 2,000
Rebate on commissions	Sotheby's	\$ 1,933.50
Pilgrim table	Private sale	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
		\$48,428.50

*These paintings were poor examples of the artists' work. The Art Committee examined each one and determined they were not needed in the college collection.

Prodigious detail and planning went into this two-year project and special thanks are due to Becca Stickney for considerable effort in this regard.

Recent Acquisitions

<u>Artist</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Donor</u>	<u>Curent Appraisal</u>
Gianakos, Steve	Miniature golf course	Hester Diamond	\$ 25,000
Scott, Tim	Untitled plexiglas, steel & aluminum 60" x 60" x 51"	Kenneth Noland	25,000
<u>1985</u>			
Feeley, Paul	Untitled portrait Oil on masonite, 1950 23½" x 17½"	Armstrong Gallery	3,100
Feeley, Paul	"Star Jack" Sculpture 6' x 6' x 6' (Shown at Guggenheim Retrospective, other in permanent collection of Smithsonian Institute)	Helen Feeley Wheelwright	N/A
Frankenthaler, Helen	"Red Square" Oil on canvas, 1959 68" x 126½" (trade for "Cool Summer"--painting on extended loan to College both paintings of comparable value)	Artist	145,000
Noland, Kenneth	Untitled monotype on handmade paper, c.1983 29½" x 24½"	Artist	11,000
Noland, Kenneth	"In Florescence" Acrylic on canvas, 1972 97 3/8" x 74 1/8"	Artist	65,000
Olitski, Jules	"Flaming On" Acrylic on canvas 144" x 72" (shown at Fogg Museum, late 1960's)	Robert Rowan	46,500
Knaths, Karl	Untitled still life Oil on paper mounted on canvas, c.1946 17½" x 17½"	Sally & Elliott Robinson	5,600

Serra, Richard	Untitled drawing Pencil on paper 5" x 14"	Susan Ginsberg	2,000
Kipp, Lyman	Fragments of student work collected into wall sculpture by the artist	Muriel Cummings Palmer	N/A
Murray, John R.	Untitled Acrylic on canvas, 1965 72" x 60"	Lois Chazen	4,500

Future Plans

Several foundations which represent the work of major artists no longer living but with strong Bennington connections and a number of major collectors have been approached and have indicated great interest in making significant gifts of art to the College. Before final plans for these gifts can be concluded, a statement from the Board along the lines of the draft following is necessary.

June 3, 1986

Memorandum To: Jim Stevens

Re: Your June 2 Draft of an Art Policy for the College

I think the art collection should serve three purposes: the primary purpose should be to build equity for the College by collecting donations of art; the secondary purpose should be a public relations one, to exemplify to the world the importance of Bennington to the history of American art and to its contemporary standing; and, the tertiary purpose should be to serve as a reference collection for instruction in the Art Division.

You will note that my thoughts represent a radical departure from your own. In my judgment, we don't really need a teaching collection very much. What we need is to attract donations of art which we would not otherwise receive as donations of money. Bennington is almost unique in its importance to the history of American art, and that puts us in a great position to argue for donations of art. Once we have an important collection, it should be used to the hilt for public relations purposes.

I'd be happy to amplify these thoughts, but I think you will see the drift.



Michael Hooker

MH:hdm

cc: Ted Milek