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1980

## Letters (1980): Correspondence 154

Edwin L. Weisl Jr.

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# International Foundation for Art Research

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Hon. Claiborne Pell  
325 R.S.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Claiborne,

Supplementing our telephone conversation on Monday -- and you were most kind to return my call right after your return from Europe -- I write you to ask your support in connection with an application to the National Endowment for the Arts for support of our publication, the Stolen Art Alert. We have already spoken to Mr. Thomas Freudenheim, Director of the Museum Program of the NEA with respect to it, and he has encouraged us to submit an application for an emergency grant under the Services to the Field category of the program.

The Stolen Art Alert is the only publication in existence that addresses security problems in museums and cultural institutions. It is also a systematic compilation and updating of stolen art records, including all types of objects from fine and decorative arts to rare books and musical instruments. Our listings are comprehensive of the United States and Canada, Europe, and much of the Third World. In the two years that we have published it, we have seen dozens of instances where art works stolen abroad have appeared on the U.S. market, or the reverse. In several cases, we have provided information leading to the recovery of stolen works listed in our Art Theft Archive. As one example, a painting by Eugene Boudin that is listed this year among Interpol's Ten Most Wanted Works of Art was recently identified and recovered with our help.

This publication serves as an information vehicle for a much broader program through which we provide information, advice and counseling to cultural institutions, dealers, and police agencies relating to art security and to the identification and recovery of stolen objects. The attached letters attest the fact that this publication has won wide esteem and support. As you will see from our Board of Directors, we represent a distinguished and responsible part of the art community that comes together to support the resolution of this and related problems.

In 1981, we intend to further expand the scope of our publication to include coverage relating to authentication, expertise, and scholarly resources, as well as reviews of

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December 2, 1980  
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*pls come*

*write appropriate letters (not too)*

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*+ ltr to Dear Ed with enclosed copy of letters to LB*

books, equipment, and other resource offerings relating to the documentation, security, conservation, and exhibition of works of art.

The Stolen Art Alert cannot be published without subsidy. In 1979, when we began publishing it, we received seed funding from the Jerome Foundation in St. Paul, Minnesota. We are now appealing to domestic insurance companies to pick up the sponsorship of this publication, and pay its printing costs, which amount to \$25,000 per year. This subsidy would allow us to keep the subscription price within an affordable range.

For your information, we are receiving operating support on a continuing basis from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Reader's Digest Foundation, the Robert Lehman Foundation, the Billy Rose Foundation, and others.

I am optimistic that our appeal to insurance companies will be successful, as we have encountered initial interest from the underwriters whom we have approached. However, I expect that it will take some time to raise the funds we need. In the meantime, it is important to continue publishing without interruption. Accordingly, we would like to seek emergency funding for the next six monthly issues of the Stolen Art Alert, while we raise the necessary continuing support. We would need a total of \$12,000 from the Endowment to cover the printing costs during this six-month period. It is my hope that an emergency grant, or in the alternative, a Chairman's discretionary grant in this amount might be allocated.

Sincerely,



Edwin L. Weisl, Jr.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt Library  
Manuscript Division*