

JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER  
FAX

TO: Seymour Rosen

FAX NO. 213-4163-11029

FROM: Ruth DeYoung Kohler

RE: John Ehn

DATE: 02-25-94

TOTAL # PAGES (INCLUDING THIS ONE): 11 pages

JMKAC FAX #: 414-458-4473

CALL 414-458-6144 IF YOU YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE NUMBER OF PAGES INDICATED ABOVE.

john michael kohler  
608 New York Ave., P.O. Box 489, Sheboygan, WI 53082-0489 414/458-6144 arts  
center

Dear Seymour -

Thank you for your patience. Illness and stints out of town have left me inundated. I hope this is not too late for you and Rosemarie. Copies for you and her are being sent out today.

Best wishes. Please call me with questions or comments at 414-458-6144 or 414-452-9258 home.

john michael kohler  
608 New York Ave., P.O. Box 489, Sheboygan, WI 53082-0489 414/458-6144 arts  
governed by the Sheboygan Arts Foundation, Inc. center

February 19, 1994

Ms. Rosemarie Farish  
John Ehn Family Trust  
10340 Lorne Street  
Sun Valley, CA 91352

Dear Rosemarie:

Please excuse the delay in responding to the materials regarding the work of John Ehn. The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is most appreciative that the Ehn family has selected JMKAC as a potential giftee for a portion of their father's oeuvre.

As I discussed with you last summer, the Arts Center Board and staff have focused a major part of our efforts on the preservation, exhibition, documentation, scholarly research, and publishing of the work of self-taught and visionary artists. During the past decade, through generous grants and gifts, JMKAC has been able to acquire over 500 major works by America's self-taught artists. Unlike other public collections, the Arts Center has chosen to concentrate on relatively large bodies of work in order to present the depth and the breadth of these extraordinary artists. The collection now includes approximately 270 paintings, photographs, bone sculptures, and other works by Eugene Von Bruenchenhein, 30 bone sculptures by Reverend Mary Le Ravin, over 100 large pen and ink drawings by Norman Pettegill, 5 mixed-media sculptures (up to about 15 feet long and 11 feet high) by Frank Oebser, nearly 20 "dioramas" by C.M. Powell, etc. Catalogues such as Religious Visionaries and Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Obsessive Visionary will give you and your family some indication of the Arts Center's level of commitment and scholarship.

JMKAC is now planning for a new wing, for which the highest priority is support and exhibition space for the collection. Very recently, we were able to purchase adjoining property from the city, the first major step toward the new wing.

In regard to the draft of the Letter of Agreement, I do have a few questions/comments. The Arts Center generally attempts to accept gifts with no specific stipulations so we must be certain that we can comply with all of your family's desires.

Re paragraph 2: Will an agreed-upon time frame be listed, and must work be kept on display at all times? The latter might be very difficult, and we ask that this be kept flexible. We would want to show the works publicly as soon after their arrival as possible, but such a presentation will have to accommodate the present exhibition schedule.

Re paragraph 3: JMKAC will, of course be open to loans to other institutions, for we, too, wish to have the work seen in substantive exhibitions. Borrowing institutions are expected to comply with all environmental conditions, security needs, and other factors that are standard with JMKAC loans. In addition, we expect that the borrowing institution will pay all expenses incurred.

Re paragraph 4: The Arts Center does have a deaccessioning policy which is enclosed. It is not as narrow as that in your letter, but we would be able to comply with your letter. We have, in fact, never deaccessioned a work.

Re paragraph 5: We will be pleased to acknowledge the Trust as stipulated.

Re paragraph 6: We will attempt to notify Spaces and the Trust, but this may be a difficult requirement as the years pass and personnel of JMKAC, Spaces, and the Trust changes, and possibly even addresses of Spaces and the Trust change. Is there some flexibility that can be written into this requirement?

Re paragraph 7: The Arts Center works with only skilled conservators and maintains the highest standards. We use Anton Rajer as an ongoing consultant to the collection. He has been a conservator at The Nelson Atkins Museum in Kansas City and most recently completed the conservation of the Panama Canal murals and was head of the conservation of the murals at the State Capitol of Wisconsin. He has been used extensively by Kohler Foundation, Inc. in the preservation of the work of self-taught artists. Again we fear, however, that notification in future years/generations may be a problem.

Re paragraph 8: I am sure that the Board will welcome this stipulation.

Re paragraph 9: I see no problem with this stipulation.

When/if your family does decide to gift works to JMKAC, such a gift would have to go through the Arts Center's formal accessioning process which includes approval by the Executive Committee and full Board of Directors. A copy of the Arts Center's Deed of Gift form is enclosed for your perusal. I do not believe that this process will pose any problems.

If you need additional information, please feel free to call me at 414-458-6144 (JMKAC) or 414-452-9258 (home). Meanwhile, the enclosed list confirms the works by John Ehn in which the Arts Center is most interested.

Best wishes to you, your family, and Seymour Rosen.

Cordially,

JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER

Ruth DeYoung Kohler

RDK/ilk  
cc. Seymour Rosen

enc. Religious Visionaries catalogue  
Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Obsessive Visionary catalogue  
Deaccessioning policy of JMKAC  
Deed of Gift form  
Current newsletter

A numerical list of the works by John Ehn in which the John Michael Kohler Arts Center is most interested follows:

- |       |                                              |
|-------|----------------------------------------------|
| S-11  | Face Plaque-Carmen Miranda                   |
| S-12  | Face Plaque-Marianne w/long braid "by O.T."  |
| S-16  | n.d. 9 Hands & 3 Arms                        |
| S-17  | n.d. Feet x 10                               |
| S-18  | Face Plaque - Judy w/Long Braid              |
| S-19  | Face Plaque-Judy                             |
| S-24  | Bust - "Mary Ehn" O.T.'s wife                |
| S-28  | Bust - "John Ehn"                            |
| S-29  | Bust - Buxom Blond with Rouged Cheeks        |
| OT-10 | Sign "July 4, 1771 - You see here toes..."   |
| OT-19 | Memory Board. Dble rope border.              |
| OT-51 | Open Diary Board. Triple Painted Rope Border |
| OT-52 | Shells Board                                 |

The Arts Center is also interested in several of the photo-collages that present portions of John Ehn's life:

- |                                                                          |                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| OT-58                                                                    | Photo Board "Early Americans" |
| OT-59                                                                    | Photo Board                   |
| unnumbered works under OT-60                                             |                               |
| a. clippings and color photograph of Ehn sitting in front of sculptures. |                               |
| b. clipping "Old Trapper Buys Snakes" with photos.                       |                               |
| c. photos with Native Americans on horseback in upper right corner.      |                               |
| d. hunting photos, etc.                                                  |                               |

The following group of works is of second priority for JMKAC's collection:

- |      |                                                          |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| S-1  | Face Plaque -- "Lorraine"                                |
| S-2  | Face Plaque -- "Clifford"                                |
| S-3  | Face Plaque -- "Louise"                                  |
| S-4  | Face Plaque -- "Rosemarie"                               |
| S-15 | Face Plaque - Lorraine w/Rose Braid                      |
| S-22 | Face Plaque - Louise w/Long Braids                       |
| S-26 | Bust - "John Ehn"                                        |
| OT-2 | Fish Head on Wood Base                                   |
| OT-5 | Collection of 19 Indian Clubs, Spears, etc. Made by O.T. |

Other works on my original list will depend upon space limitations so I am somewhat hesitant to add them to this list at this time. They are:

- |       |                                                       |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| OT-8  | Sign "Cowboys: Remove Hats..."                        |
| OT-21 | Memory Board with Snake Skins Outlined in Red Leather |
| OT-23 | Memory Board with Guns & Snake Skin Cane              |
| OT-35 | Gun and Rifle Board                                   |
| OT-36 | Knife Board                                           |
| OT-49 | Trapper Figure in Shelter                             |

DEED OF GIFT FOR WORK(S) OF ART  
RESTRICTED

For the purpose of advancing the objectives and purposes of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, I (we) on a restricted basis hereby transfer, convey and deliver to the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, its successors and assigns forever, all of my (our) right, title, interest and possession to that work (those works) of art described as follows:

<u>Artist</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Medium</u>
---------------	--------------	---------------

It is understood and agreed that I (we) retain no right, title or interest therein and that this gift is on a restricted basis, restrictions attached.  
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I (we) hereunto set my (our) hand dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(City) (State)

Signature of Donor(s) \_\_\_\_\_

In the presence of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness)

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center, pursuant to the action of its Board of Directors, gratefully acknowledges the receipt of the work(s) of art described in the foregoing Deed of Gift. Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_.

JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

john michael kohler  
arts  
center

## COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

### John Michael Kohler Arts Center

#### I. Introduction

##### A. Purpose of document:

This document establishes policies and guidelines for future accessions to the collections of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center (Arts Center) of the Sheboygan Arts Foundation, Inc. (SAF) and delineates the circumstances and methods whereby materials shall be de-accessioned from the Arts Center's collections. The term "accession" includes gifts, purchases, exchanges, and any other transactions by which title to incoming material is transferred to the Arts Center; the term "de-accession" includes gifts, sales, exchanges, and any other transactions by which title to outgoing material is transferred from the Arts Center to another institution or individual, as well as by disposal by intentional destruction.

This policy statement will:

1. Develop basic priorities for adding new materials to the collections.
2. Affirm that the Arts Center, its staff, and the Board of Directors of the SAF shall be in full compliance with laws and regulations, both domestic and foreign, governing the transfer of ownership and movement of materials across political boundaries and affirm that the highest ethical standards continue to be met by the Arts Center, its staff, and SAF Board in all transactions.
3. Define the conditions of acceptance that may be placed upon materials to be accessioned by the Arts Center.
4. Define the conditions and the procedures for permanent removal of materials from the collections.

##### B. The mission of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center:

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is a not-for-profit organization established in 1967 for aesthetic and educational purposes. Its mission is to encourage and support innovative explorations in the arts and to foster an exchange between a national community of artists and a broad public that will help realize the power of art to inspire and transform our world.

- The primary focus of the program shall be exhibitions devoted to a wide range of concepts and directions in contemporary art, with particular emphasis on new genres, installation art, unconventional photography, the crafts, ongoing folk traditions, and the work of self-taught artists and visionaries. The exhibitions shall encourage the creation of new work and shall serve as the focus of substantive critical explorations.
- The performing arts shall also emphasize contemporary art forms in programming uniting the regional arts community and national visiting artists.

- In collaboration with American business, the Arts/Industry program shall provide support for artists in the creation of new work and in the investigation of new ways of thinking and working.
- Educational and interpretive services shall relate directly to the exhibitions, performing arts programming, and Arts/Industry and shall employ the integration of the arts as a primary educational tool. Such services may take the form of publications, artists' residencies, guided tours, lectures, demonstrations, classes, multi-arts events, resource center, and/or any other means which will encourage a continuing dialogue between artists and public and heighten their understanding of and sensitivity to the arts.

In all programming, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center shall nurture connections--between emerging and established artists, between local and visiting artists, between artists and public, and between art forms.

C. The purpose of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center collections:

Although the Arts Center is not generally "a collecting institution," it does own significant works of art appropriate to its mission. Fine arts materials to be collected should be of the finest quality of works by emerging and established artists. Future collecting will be primarily works of contemporary American art created in the Arts Center's Arts/Industry program and works by self-taught artists and visionaries.

D. Priorities for accessions and de-accessions:

Priorities for accessions to the collections of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center:

1. Aesthetic quality
2. Authenticity
3. Exhibition, educational value
4. Work is in keeping with the scope of the collections
5. Physical condition

The Arts Center may accept a gift of a work of art of acknowledged quality which falls outside the collecting guidelines of the Arts Center if it fits into one of these two categories:

1. It is a piece of unique interest which would strengthen the existing collections of the Arts Center, even though these holdings may lie outside current collection guidelines.
2. The monetary value of a work offers the potential for sale or exchange to acquire an object more suitable for the collections or to aid the Arts Center's mission and purpose in other ways. The acceptance of a gift on this basis would be with the agreement of the donor.

## II. Policies and Guidelines for Accessions

### A. Legal requirements concerning accessions:

Objects will be acquired only when they have been collected, exported, and imported in full compliance with the laws and regulations of the country or countries of origin and of the federal government of the United States. Every reasonable effort will be made to insure that these conditions be met, that title to the objects may be properly transferred to the Arts Center, and that the Arts Center keeps up-to-date with the changing laws and regulations concerning collecting, ownership, and movement across political boundaries.

### B. Ethics of accessions:

1. Objects shall not be accepted that have been collected in such a way as to impair their artistic value.
2. Materials of comparable value and kind to those in the collections should not be purchased by staff members of the Arts Center until first offered for sale to the Arts Center when knowledge of these materials has been gained as a direct result of functioning in their professional capacities.

### C. Standards of documentation:

Minimum requirements of documentation vary within the areas of collection, and these standards must be met for objects to be added to the collections. Objects with less than complete data but of artistic or historic value may be accessioned at the recommendation of the director and Executive Committee with Board approval.

### D. Procedure for accession:

1. The director shall notify the Board when objects are offered to the Arts Center.
2. The director shall make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee shall confer with the director who shall submit its recommendations for appropriate action to the Board.

### E. Conditions for acceptance of gifts and purchases:

Objects will not be accepted for the collections of the Arts Center unless the following conditions are met.

1. The objects are relevant to and consonant with the purposes and activities of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center.
2. The Arts Center can provide for the storage, protection, and preservation of the objects in keeping with professionally accepted standards.

3. Title to all objects acquired for the collections shall be obtained free and clear and generally without restrictions or limitations as to use or future disposition. If a potential donor wishes to impose restrictions or limitations as to use or future disposition, such restrictions or limitations must be approved by the SAF Board at the time of the acceptance of such a gift.
4. A legal instrument of conveyance, setting forth an adequate description of the objects involved and the precise conditions of transfer, will accompany gifts and purchases and will be kept on file at the Arts Center. This document will be signed by the seller or donor and accepted by an authorized Arts Center representative.
5. Records of accession will be made and retained by an authorized Arts Center representative.

F. Evaluation of accessions:

No member of the staff or Board, in his or her official capacity, shall give appraisals for the purpose of establishing the tax-deductible value of gifts offered to the Arts Center nor shall he or she appraise, identify, or otherwise authenticate for other persons or agencies objects under circumstances that could encourage or benefit illegal, unethical, or irresponsible traffic in such materials. Identification and authentication may be given for professional or educational purposes and in compliance with the legitimate requests of professional or governmental bodies or their agents.

III. Policies and Guidelines for De-accessions

It is important that the Arts Center release from its holdings objects which may have no part in its educational and exhibition programs. However, all de-accessioning of objects must be done in a most thoughtful spirit, with special care not to let changing fashion or the immediate desire to acquire something else dominate the deliberations.

A. Procedures for de-accessioning:

The director will recommend work to the Executive Committee for de-accession. The director will review its reasons for de-accessioning, together with facts concerning the object's history in the collections and current market value if this can be estimated. The Executive Committee may request the opinion of one or more outside experts in reaching a decision to de-accession a work. If the Executive Committee approves the director's recommendation, the Committee chair or director will propose de-accessioning of the object to the Board, which will then vote on the matter.

Minutes will be taken and maintained of Board meetings in which de-accession action is taken, and a catalogue record of the object will be kept in a permanent file. The acquisition number of a de-accessioned object will not be reassigned, and acquisition cards will remain in their original place in the master catalogue file.

B. Procedures for the sale or exchange of de-accessioned objects:

Work will be offered for public sale or auction outside Sheboygan or to dealers residing outside of the immediate area for direct purchase or consignment, or may be sold or exchanged with other public institutions. No de-accessioned work will be sold privately to staff, Board, or immediate families of such person. The only exception to this rule will occur when works of nominal value (under \$500) are approved by the Board for sale to such individuals.

All monies derived from the sale of objects from the collection will be consigned for purposes approved by the SAF Board.