

NEW ORLEANS  MUSEUM OF ART
P.O. Box 19123 • City Park • New Orleans, Louisiana 70179-0123 • (504) 488-2631

July 20, 1984

Dear Mr. Rosen:

In response to your letter of July 10 the attendance figures on the David Butler exhibition are not readily available. The videotape by Chester Kasnowski on David Butler is owned by New Orleans Museum of Art.

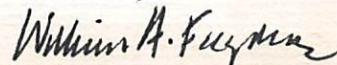
David Butler is very much alive. When I proposed to do the exhibition in 1976, I had very strong concerns about revealing this man and his art work to the public. I felt that he was not prepared to deal with the possible consequences of becoming a well-known figure whose art might be sought by collectors, dealers, and museums. We attempted to establish mechanisms which would protect David from this possible threat. Rather than go into all the details which transpired, I would be very happy to relay this information to you, possibly in a phone conversation.

Unfortunately, my fears were not unfounded in spite of our efforts. I am afraid that David has suffered as a result of his new fame. He continues to work and now has a dealer here in New Orleans who I and others feel is most sympathetic to David and has treated him extremely fairly. The dealer is Richard Gasperi, owner of Gasperi Folk Art Gallery, and he has taken the pressure off David and acted as a "safety valve" for him.

Yes, I am fearful of what will happen to David's house and yard once he has passed away. I have attempted to prepare for this inevitable event by setting up certain arrangements with him and the community in which he lives. I have also approached the Folk Art Division of the Louisiana State Arts Council about this problem. They have not been very helpful in assisting or been sympathetic. Again, I would be happy to discuss what transpired with you possibly on the phone. So much has happened that it would be cumbersome to write it all to you at this time.

I hope that you are sympathetic to his predicament. I am sure that it is not unique. I am hoping you might give us some guidance and direction in overcoming some of these problems.

Sincerely,



William A. Fagaly
Assistant Director for Art

WAF/sdp

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p.c 8-2-84 - thanks - will call