

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Weber
100 Beacon Road
Bethany, CT 06524

10/3/93

Dear both,

We appreciate the invitation we'd love to be able to accept, but for some years any travel has been too dangerous for me and I'm never out of town except for being driven to Johns Hopkins. My skin has become so friable from the medication that keeps me alive that I've peeled two inches of a forearm back in my sleep when a forearm rubbed over my nose!

But if you can make it to here the day after the lecture that would be wonderful! Not much over an hour from the Gallery, depending on traffic.

I hope Kathy's period in the peace, quiet and beauty in Ireland if I remember correctly stimulated the muses and that her writing went well and is completed.

Life is a different kind of writing and my muse is the angle who hasn't tired of being on my shoulder for so many years now. I'm lamenting, not bragging, when I say that in the past month, with all else I've had to do, I've about 100,000 words of a book I won't take time to describe in draft. It is being rushed for April publication. I should finish the draft in two weeks or less. A much larger one I did under forced draft last fall and winter is not being rushed, is more important, and is in the hands of the copy editor. These will both be historically important and extraordinarily controversial. Rushing and good writing are not a probable combination but my objective is to perfect the historical record to the degree I can while I can because, depressing thought, much knowledge of that tragic event that really did turn the world around will disappear with me. That is what has me catching up on yesterday's mail, one to go, at 2:15 a.m. Right now I'm nearing the end of an evisceration of a despicable Judenrat who is currently one of the more common guests on all the talk shows for his wretchedly dishonest rewriting of that event as I think is unprecedented in history and in writing.

It has been a long time! I've just remembered that you do not know of the honor we both enjoyed in August. I'll enclose a bit on it. We enjoyed it, more because some of my family was able to get here for it along with friends from around the country.

Please tell your mother I hope she is well and happy.

If you can get here, if I've not told you, from several medical problems I lead a convoluted life that, in my experiments in coping with it have made me more productive. I was wide awake this morning at 1:00, close to present norm. To get some sleep I aim for bed at 7:00 and last night made it only a half-hour late. The early hours are never interrupted and I get much work done rapidly.

The odd way things pop into our minds when there are so many years to remember. I was thinking how long it has been since I saw you. You then were less than 10 and a remarkably bright and attractive child, albeit a bit on the quiet side with me. My eye happened to

fall on a thick yellow pencil with a thick and black lead that I use for labelling file folders. It is one left over from my OSS days, and then I remembered that I took you a selection of different colors of paper-wrapped ones for your drawing of that for your age really extraordinary family you used to sketch single-sheet cartoons on. With the notice of Nick's lecture on my desk that took me back in a different way. For a brief period of time, each of us getting there separately, Sidney and I were in the same strange, catchall OSS component, "Presentation." It had two parts, artists and writers. (I also did some investigating and trouble shooting.) Eero Saarinen and Henry Koerner were among the artists. I was quite fond of Henry and an admirer of the skill with which he used his art for those special wartime purposes. Last I heard of him was when I was still reading THES and he did some covers for it.

Thanks for the invite, I hope you can make it up daytime, and love to you all,

Harold



The Phillips Collection

29 September 1993

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Weisborg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, MD 21702

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Weisborg,

At Mr. Nicholas Fox Weber's request, I am sending to you an announcement for his Duncan Phillips Lecture entitled *Patron Saints: Five Rebels Who Opened America to a New Art in the 1930s*. His lecture is scheduled for Wednesday, October 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the John Wesley Powell Auditorium, 2170 Florida Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/387-2151, ext. 203.

Sincerely,

Valerie G. Guffey
Administrative Assistant
to the Director

Enclosure

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Nicholas Fox Weber

October 20, 1993

Patron Saints: Five Rebels Who Opened America to a New Art in the 1930s

Two of the "patron saints" Nicholas Weber describes in this lecture, and in his 1992 book of the same name, are Lincoln Kirstein and Edward M. Wang, who together founded the Society for Contemporary Art at Harvard. The Society was the first institution in the United States to exhibit the works of Lachaise, Benton, Davies, and Hopper; it also presented R. Buckminster Fuller's then shocking and revolutionary Dynamaxion House, as well as Alexander Calder's *Grays*; and eventually brought George Balanchine to this country. The three other "patron saints" Mr. Weber will discuss are Agnes Mongan, associate director of the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, patron of the Harvard Society, and a woman challenging the male-dominated museum world; James Thrall Soby, tobacco heir and art critic for the *Saturday Review of Literature*; and Edward F. "Chick" Austin, Jr., director of the Wadsworth Atheneum, who mounted the first museum exhibitions of Picasso, Miró, Tanguy, and Dali, and hosted the world premiere of the collaborative ballet by Gertrude Stein (book), Virgil Thompson (music), and Frederick Ashton (choreography). *Four Saints in Their Aids*. Young, wealthy, and at the center of the American establishment, these five pioneering art patrons transported the excitement and energy of Europe to America and profoundly influenced the course of art in this country.

Nicholas Fox Weber is director of the Josef Albers Foundation and was curator of the 1988 Josef Albers Retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City. He is the author of numerous books, including *Leland Bell* and *The Art of Baker*.



William Christenberry

March 16, 1994

A Southern Perspective: 1961-1994

William "Bill" Christenberry needs no introduction to Washingtonians. One of the city's foremost artists and a popular teacher and speaker, his paintings, photographs, and sculpture of the rural South transform the mundane and familiar into what he characterizes as "poetic objects". His meticulously crafted walls of nested commercial signboards; the photographed grooves of churches, gas stations, and dilapidated grocery stores; and the maniques of wood frame churches and other structures, as well as such Southern folkways as gourd trees, evoke an entire culture and alter the viewer's way of looking at everyday life.

Christenberry's thirty-year career includes hundreds of group shows including several at the legendary Jefferson Place Gallery, the gallery-home of the Washington Color School. He has had more than sixty one-man exhibitions at museums and galleries, most recently at Pace/MacGill Gallery in New York; the Hummel Museum of Art in Alabama; and at Nancy Drysdale Gallery and Tartt Gallery in Washington. His work has been the subject of numerous museum shows at such institutions as the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art and is included in the permanent collections of both museums, as well as those of The American Art, the Yale University Art Gallery, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, The Merrill Collection in Houston, and many other public and private collections.

William Christenberry received his B.F.A. and M.A. in Painting from the University of Alabama. He has taught at the University of Alabama, Memphis State University, and, since 1968, the Corcoran School of Art, where he is a Professor of Art.



Mark Heprin

May 25, 1994

Against the Dehumanization of Art

Mark Heprin ranks among the most gifted writers of this generation. He has excelled as a novelist, short story writer, essays, and journalist. His thoughts about art have appeared in fiction—such as the discussions of George's *The Temples* and Raphael's *Portrait of Brando Alonzi* that appear in his novel *A Soldier of the Great War*—as well as in such essays as his introduction to *The Best American Short Stories, 1988*.

Mark Heprin was raised on the Hudson and in the British West Indies. After receiving degrees from Harvard College and Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, he did postgraduate work at the University of Oxford, and has served in the British Merchant Navy, the Israeli infantry, and the Israeli Air Force. His work has been published in *The New Yorker* for almost a quarter of a century, and his stories and essays on politics and aesthetics appear as well in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Criticism*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and many other publications in the United States and abroad. Mr. Heprin is a contributing editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, a Senior Fellow of the Discovery Institute, and a former Guggenheim Fellow. He has been awarded the National Jewish Book Award and the Prix de Rome. Translated into more than a dozen languages, his books include *A Dove of the East* & *Other Stories*, *Refiner's Fire*, *Ellis Island* & *Other Stories*, *Winter's Tale*, *Steen Lake* (with illustrator Chris Van Alsbury), and *A Soldier of the Great War*.

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