



Nevada State Council on the Arts

329 Flint Street • Reno, Nevada 89501 • (702) 789-0225

October 9, 1989

Dan Van Zandt
9470 Swede Creek Road
Palo Cedro, CA 96073

Dear Mr. Van Zandt,

The Nevada State Council on the Arts, after learning of your father's death, has begun to explore possible ways to preserve Rolling Thunder's art for posterity. We have not had much luck generating interest in a proposal that might keep Thunder Mountain intact. The Nevada Museum of Art, however, is interested in obtaining a broad sampling of the incredible variety of work created by your father. I have insisted that if they plan a major exhibition of his work and receive permission from you to execute it, they must present enough of his stuff -- sculptures, perhaps a length of fence, signs, and such -- so that when used with large color murals of the entire complex, an idea of the full context of his life's work can be obtained. To do less would be both unfair and unrepresentative.

I have talked with Ahtram about Thunder Mountain and she wants to sell the whole five and a half acres. After checking with the Pershing County Clerk's Office, however, I find that you are the sole beneficiary of your father's holdings. And, although his handwritten will is somewhat hard to read, I was told it appears valid; it has not yet been contested.

As you can probably tell, we are somewhat at a loss as to how to proceed. I talked with Seymour Rosen, Allie Light and Susan Orr about various ideas, and they suggested I contact you. Hence this letter. If you feel there is a way we might help preserve some of Rolling Thunder's work, please let us know. We are willing to assist you in any way we can. Rolling Thunder was an often unappreciated artist while he lived; we hope he does not remain unappreciated in death.

Sincerely,

Blanton Owen
Folk Arts Program Director

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Acting Governor

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