

# NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

S M I T H S O N I A N I N S T I T U T I O N

May 11, 1995

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

Dear Ms. Farish:

Some things just seem to take too long and then to no avail. I am sorry to report that the museum will not pursue the trust's offered donation of a group of works or a single work by John Ehn. I was simply not able to muster the group support that is required as part of our curatorial review process since the resources to care for our permanent collection are so dearly won from year to year.

While I share your disappointment, I would like to encourage you to persevere in your efforts to preserve Ehn's work by donating it to public institutions. Have you considered the Michigan State University Museum (West Circle Drive, East Lansing, Michigan 48824)? Its director is Kurt Dewhurst, trained as a folklorist and very oriented toward folk art. Given Michigan's history with trapping, etc., a large group of Ehn's material could be very useful and well used by such a museum. If you have not done so already, I would also contact Phil Linhares at the Oakland Museum, which is committed to collecting work only by California artists. Please also contact Ruth Kohler, the director of the Kohler Museum in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, which has a history dedicated especially to preserving the environments of self-taught artists.

I wish that my news had been more positive. Certainly, I appreciate the opportunity to have visited the trust's holdings with you and Seymour Rosen, and the museum does appreciate the offer of a donation, despite its decision to decline it. I'll keep my fingers crossed that you succeed in securing several good homes for the material.

Sincerely,

  
Lynda Roscoe Hartigan  
Curator of Painting and Sculpture