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Title	[Typed letter] 1948 November 22, Woodbury, Conn. [to] Mr. Hayes
Call Number	YCAL MSS 541
Creator	Gabo, Naum, 1890-1977
Published/Created Date	1948 November 22
Collection Title	Naum Gabo papers
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Container information	Box 1 Folder Addison Gallery of American Art ... 1948-1949
Generated	2022-05-31 15:11:56 UTC
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View in DL	https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/2055112

Woodbury, Conn.
phone 435 ring 2
Nov. 22, 1948

Dear Mr. Hayes,

Thank you for your letter of Nov. 18th. I am in principle always agreeable to cooperate in show organized by art institutions, and I feel the same about the exhibition which you have written to me about. But before committing myself I would like to know some more details about the purpose of this exhibition and the works which are to be exhibited. Who are the other artists participating and can you give an approximate idea of the character of their work?

Will the kind of material be the only pivot of the exhibition?

You will allow me to explain why I am asking these questions. I consider that the main weakness of the actual situation in art, and in particular of modern art, lies in the fact that the public is intentionally kept in ignorance of what to look for in a work of art. Their attention is deliberately attracted to all which lies on the surface of art and not to that which represents the very heart of any work of art, namely its message, its image, and the psychological impact which it makes on the person of to-day. The public is told more about the means, the technique, the materials, and I am therefore wondering whether this exhibition which you are now planning is not going to contribute just a little more to this misplaced emphasis?

I am strongly convinced that art as well as the artist must be independent from any particular material. One can create a work of art out of the dirt of the earth or out of the rays of the sun. It does not matter what provided the esthetic is clear and its impact powerful.

I am afraid that an exhibition compiled exclusively of work done in one particular material may turn out mere a propaganda for the material than for the art.

I know about you from my friends and I am sure that you will endeavor to do as much as anyone can do to clear up misunderstandings on that account, but I cannot help wondering whether any one is capable of undoing with words what will be done by the immediate experience of the exhibition. I will be glad if you can write me more about it and dispell my doubts.

As far as availability of my work is concerned; the exhibition in Washington is now over and I am expecting the work back here by the end of this month. I also have a few works here in Connecticut.

There is one other point which I would like to discuss; as I have no dealer in this country, I have to look after my affairs myself. I would like to know whether the Addison Gallery is interested in acquiring something of my work for their collection?

Looking forward to hearing from you furthur,

Yours,

ADDISON GALLERY OF AM ART