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05/ 03/ 1 992

Dear Comrade Serota,

May I thank you once again for all of your help with the resPect to the Foreward by Nelso  
n

Mandela, The book looks very stunning and I am sure that it will be a credit to Nelson  
Mandela to John Muafangejo and Thames and Hudson. It is very wonderful because it is  
the very Em time, as far as I know, that a Southern African Artist, has been published by  
a  
major international publishing house. In fact I am not even sure if other African artists  
have

acheived this. It might interest you to know that Thames and Hudson are so pleased with  
the book that they have asked me to write a number of books on African art and other  
interem of mine such as Islamic art and Oceanic art.

As promised we would very much like to involve you and the ANC and Mr. Mandela in  
one of the most major cultural and educatiuonal projects of its type this century. I encl  
ose

a brochure of The Hope and Optimism Portfolio which gives you details. As you will  
notice this is the worlds first global art project and involves the participation of every  
country in the World. The essays, the various interviews make it most unique and a  
wonderful source of contamporary human values, ideas, concepts and expressions of art.  
You will no doubt notice that the funds raised from the portfolio, are there to establish  
the

Heynitz Castle Art Centre and Studios of N amibia. This non-proiit organisation has the  
Foreign Minister of Namibia as its patron. I enclose a letter from the Education Minister

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which introduces myself and the importance of the project for the Namibian people.  
Aside from the advice that you could give to me regarding the portfolio, in countries for  
which we have no representation, I have the following recommendations to make:-

1. We are establishing at Hope and Optimism Trust as a UK. charity. The former  
Foreign Minister of Sweden, Mr. Sten Anderson has greatly assisted us and was very kind  
to the portfolio as well as Ben Kingsley and others have agreed in principle to be patron  
s to  
this trust. We would very much like to know if Mr. Mandela would like to associate

himself with this trust and become one of it's patrons. My intention is to have patron's from all five continents, but certainly no more than one from one particular continent in its

field. Thus if Mr. Mandela accepted, he would be the only statesman from Africa. Mr. Sten Anderson is the statesman from Europe. You will probably notice the consultants to the portfolio include experts in almost all the fields of contemporary art from the ex-director of the Pompidou centre in Paris to the director of the MOMA in Oxford to experts in Islamic art and Southern American art.

Ideally we are looking for one main benefactor to enable us to see this project through to

fruition and its full potential. The estimated cost of organizing and producing 200 portfolios as well as coordinating the interviews and essays, will be 5 million Rand. To date we have managed to keep our expenditure to a minimum by obtaining the generous support of all the artists, who make no personal charges and the assistance by some governments and organisations, paper manufacturers and photographers who are able to make small donations or offer their services at a reduced cost (please see brochure). Therefore, the costs incurred are the supplying of artists with paper, the printing of their

work and also the freighting from their country.

I would very much like to ask you to approach Nkomo Mandela to use his influence and connections with Mr. de Klerk, to obtain the financial assistance of the South African government towards this portfolio and thereby also to Namibia. I am convinced that the vision and scope of this project needs the backing of a visionary man, like Nelson Mandela, a man who is clearly a statesman and who is sensitive and perceptive at the same time.

Such a sum of 5 million rand would mean that the entire project, the world's first global art project would have been not only initiated in southern Africa, would not only have benefited the peoples of Southern Africa but would have been funded from Southern Africa and in particular the new South Africa. I do not believe it is a coincidence that the UNESCO peace prize was awarded jointly to Mr. Nelson Mandela and Mr. de Klerk and as you know this project has the HAUT Patronage of UNESCO. It is as I understand the first time UNESCO has awarded its HAUT patronage to a project of this nature. I realise of course that in Southern Africa the economy is not so buoyant and that such a sum

(which I might add, may be spread over two or three budget periods) is a large amount that could also be used for other matters and other priorities. However, I know that if such

a sum or even part of such a sum it would bring untold revenue back to Southern Africa in terms of good will and tourism and would, unquestionably establish the new educational and cultural ministry of South Africa, with unique links, prestige and connections to every

single contemporary artist in the world, every single National Gallery in the world and set

the most wonderful president for the world, let alone Southern Africa or Africa of the vision and role the new South Africa will play in the years to come. A sum of R1 million enables 40 countries to participate (average R25,000 per country). SA R25,000 enables the sponsorship of the two South African artist's editions.

I can send you so many letters of support about the greatness of this project from cabinet

ministers, from artists and from National Galleries. Certainly the works from the portfolio will be exhibited in Gibraltar in June/July at the National Gallery there, and later on in Brasil. Moreover, many artists have indicated their desire and wish to travel

to Southern Africa. I believe therefore it will be possible, if sponsorship was considered,

to arrange a conference in a year's time, inviting all the participating artists to visit Southern

Africa. Indeed such a portfolio could be organised every five to ten years with the new generation of artists and a Huge and Optimism prize could become in its own light, in the humanities, arts and cultures a prize and a participation W): similar to the Olympic Games. Certainly the contribution that these artists are making are very important and worthwhile.

I might also mention to you that clearly the funds are needed in rand terms. There would be no need for the funds to be allocated in foreign currency. Of course if Mr. Mandela was

interested in taking up this matter, one might find that he would only be able to obtain funds of a lesser amount. Clearly any funds would be welcome.

Should Mr. Mandela wish it, I would be very happy to fly out to South Africa with the prints that are available at the moment, with letters from the artists and all the information

on the centre and show that, particularly if he and Mr. de Klerk were in principle, in favour of such a project and its funding by South Africa. I would also be so happy to hand

over something like the conference possibility and cultural connections etc, to the new government in South Africa and in any way assist that I could possibly.

With kindest regards and once again I hope that I am not taxing you or Mr. Mandela or imposing on you or your time.

With kindest regards,

Orde Levinson

ps. A draft newsletter is enclosed.