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2082 Melville  
Johannesburg  
South Africa  
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Director Steingrim Laursen

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

DK 3050 Humlebzsk

Denmark

Dear Steingrim Laursen

Ernest Mancoba

The publication of my book The Art of Ernest Mancoba - A Lifeline out of Africa is due towards the end of this year. I am also including a reasoned catalogue and as I was unable to see the pieces of Mancoba in your private collection when I visited you at the Louisiana in Humlebzsk - you explained to me your apartment was rented - I shall appreciate it if you could supply me with the necessary documentation of these works of art. Could you let me have photos too?

I consider the 1958 drawing which you presented to the Silkeborg Kunstmuseum as well as the drawing in Dr Jeppesen's collection as major pieces of expression in Mancoba's oeuvre. Therefore I am very anxious to acquaint myself with the other images of Mancoba which you have.

The Johannesburg Art Gallery will be holding an exhibition of Mancoba's art early next year. I have been asked to curate it. Will you assist us with your expertise and kindly let us have on loan some of the pieces in your collection? What is the insured value of his art which you own?

Dr Karel van Stuijvenberg of Caracas has expressed his willingness to let us have on loan the Mancoba painting in his Cobra collection for this exhibition.

I am attaching photocopies of some of Mancoba's work of which I am uncertain of the whereabouts. Will you spare a moment to identify these images.

It is evident from exhibition catalogues that I have not contacted all the art collectors who own one or more Mancoba work. I have been unable to trace: S. Bille (do you think this person is related to the painter Ejler Bille?), Jan Groth, Leif S. Hansen, P.R. Hansen, O. Schou and Chr. N rgaard. Does any of these names ring a bell? Could you add to the list?

I must admit, it is very difficult to locate Mancoba's early carvings in South Africa. So far I have had very little success in locating pieces which exist either as photographs or descriptions. As a matter of fact since I spoke to you, I have only found one relief carving of an African woman.

May I count on your invaluable expertise?

Yours sincerely

Elza Miles

