

Harold H. Swift  
Union Stock Yards  
Chicago

October 23, 1924

President Ernest D. Burton,  
The University of Chicago,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Burton:

I return herewith the proposed letter to Mr. Nichols. Frankly, as I have considered the matter further, I am puzzled as to just what our field ought to be in the Fine Arts. I feel clearly that we never could rival the Art Institute in our exhibits and I doubt whether we should try. I think it would be happy if we could have a building of Fine Arts, but even then I think we should put our emphasis on starting a fundamental appreciation of the Fine Arts among our students and developing their abilities to appreciate the fine things of the Art Institute, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, etc., which the city has to offer, rather than any attempt to parallel these. This leads me to think that our money should be expended more for teaching, concerts, and lectures than for the collecting of art objects.

I am in entire sympathy with your thought of the fine music in connection with the Rockefeller Chapel, for the purchase of a great organ and to endow frequent fine concerts, perhaps daily. This would be one of the most splendid things I can imagine, both from its inspirational value to students and faculties and by way of interesting the public in the University.

This letter in the main is meant to agree with your suggestive one to Mr. Nichols although perhaps I put somewhat different emphases:

- (1) I like the idea of a building to call attention and to typify the thing we are trying to do, but I have little hope of securing many fine or at least costly objects of art. I doubt whether we could get them and believe on the whole they would better go to the Art Institute and I should hesitate to accept the responsibility of caring for them.
- (2) I am keen for the teaching of arts but more along the line of appreciation of them rather than how to do them.
- (3) I feel the same way about music, but think if it were well endowed we could reach even a broader field which would include not only our students and faculty but the outside public as well.

Yours cordially,

Harold H. Swift







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November 10, 1924

My dear Mr. Nichols:

I have given considerable thought since I saw you in New York to the question of the development of the Fine Arts at the University.

As I said to you in our brief interview I am increasingly impressed with the desirability of providing at the University such opportunities in the field of the fine arts as will complement the work of instruction and research which we have been developing so strongly and expect to develop still more strongly. Only thus can we give to the young people who come to the University a well balanced and symmetrical education.

I do not think it will be wise for us to develop schools for technical instruction in the arts. The first step at least would be to provide opportunities at the University, not simply somewhere else in the city, for students to see a few good pictures and good statuary, and especially to hear good music. With this should come courses of instruction calculated to develop appreciation and understanding but, not at first at least, training courses in the practice of these arts.

In our great University Chapel, which I now hope we shall be able to begin to build within six months, there must, of course, be a great organ and in connection with it there should be provision for organ recitals. These would have very great value from the point of view from which we are now speaking.

But in addition to this we should have much larger provision than at present exists for recitals and concerts of various kinds and for courses of instruction and public lectures which would make these concerts and recitals more thoroughly educative than they would be without such accompaniments.

We ought also to have a building in which there should be not an extensive but an illustrative and suggestive collection of works of art, painting, and sculpture and especially for the exhibition of loan collections. The Art Institute has a large stock of works of Art which are available for loan, and there are many private collections in the city. The University ought never to attempt to rival



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the Art Institute. But it might nevertheless always have on exhibition pictures and other works of art which would help to cultivate the taste of the students and lead them to the larger collections at the Art Institute. In this building there ought to be a beautiful concert hall.

In short our needs for the near future as I see them are:

1. An organ for the new chapel.
2. An Art Building for exhibition of a few choice paintings and sculptures especially of loan collections, and containing also a hall, a work of art in itself, and specially adapted to the rendering of music of the highest class.
3. A maintenance fund for this building and an endowment for the purchase of works of art, the expense of concerts, and recitals, and of courses of lectures calculated to cultivate in the faculty and students the appreciation of the higher arts.

If you find it possible in connection with your own business to direct the attention of any of your friends in New York and elsewhere to the desire of the University to increase in the way above indicated its services to its student body and to the community I am sure the University will appreciate your using your opportunities in this way. If at any time there occur to you suggestions as to ways in which we can interest men or women of wealth in this part of your work I shall be glad to receive them.

I must add, of course, that the urgent need of the University at the moment is the sum of \$6,000,000 for endowment of instruction, and, following this, the erection of buildings for the departments of work in which we are already actively engaged. In our active efforts to secure funds we cannot put the fine arts in the foreground, but it is not too early to begin a process of education looking to their eventual endowment, and we should be heartily glad if provision for them could be made at an early date. We should, of course, not hesitate to receive gifts for them at any time.



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We should, of course, not hesitate to receive gifts for  
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I have no doubt that you are familiar with the pamphlets which Mr. Kahn has published at various times on the subject of art for the people.

Very sincerely yours,

P.S. I am hoping to answer your recent letter at an early day.

Mr. F. D. Nichols  
411 West 114th Street  
New York, New York



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411 West 114th Street  
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# The University of Chicago

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Office of the President

October 3, 1924

My dear Mr. Nichols:

I have given considerable thought since I saw you in New York to the question of the development of the Fine Arts at the University.

As I said to you in our brief interview I am increasingly impressed with the desirability of providing at the University such opportunities in the field of the fine arts as will complement the work of instruction and research which we have been developing so strongly and expect to develop still more strongly, and thus <sup>give</sup> to the young people who come to the University ~~for an education a more balanced and symmetrical education, than would otherwise be possible.~~

*Only*  
*a few*  
I ~~doubt whether~~ <sup>do not think</sup> it will be wise for us to develop schools for technical instruction in the arts, ~~though they might come in time.~~ The first step at least would be to provide opportunities at the University, not simply somewhere else in the city, for students to see <sup>any</sup> good pictures, <sup>any</sup> good statuary, and to <sup>especially</sup> hear good music. With this should come courses of instruction calculated to develop appreciation and understanding but, not at first at least, training courses in the practice of these arts.

In our great University Chapel, which I now hope we shall be able to begin to build within six months, there must, of course, be a great organ and in connection with it there should be provision for organ recitals, ~~which themselves~~ <sup>there</sup> would have very great value from the point of view from which we are now speaking.

But in addition to this we should have much larger provision than at present exists for recitals and concerts of various kinds and for courses of instruction and public lectures which would make these concerts and recitals more thoroughly educative than they would be without such accompaniments.

*should*  
We ought also to have a building in which there can be not an extensive but an illustrative and suggestive collection of works of art, painting, and sculpture. ~~Quite possibly~~ <sup>might</sup> In this building there <sup>might</sup> be a beautiful concert hall.

In short our needs for the near future as I see them are:

1. An organ for the new chapel.

*and especially for the exhibition of loan collections. The Art Institute has a large stock of works*



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I doubt whether it will be wise for us to develop schools for technical instruction in the arts. The first step at least would be to provide opportunities at the University, not simply somewhere else in the city for students to see good pictures, good statues, and to hear good music. With this should come courses of instruction calculated to develop appreciation and understanding but, not at first at least, training courses in the practice of these arts.

*The students + lecturers at  
the larger collections at  
the Art Institute*

*of Art which are available for loan, and  
then are many private collections in the city. I  
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to rival the Art Institute. But it might nevertheless  
always have an exhibition pictures + statues other  
works of art which would help to cultivate the taste.*



*exhaustively  
loan collection*

The University of Chicago

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Office of the President

*a few choice*

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2. An Art Building for exhibition of paintings and sculptures and containing also a hall, a work of art in itself, and specially adapted to the rendering of music of the highest class.

3. <sup>A</sup> The maintenance fund for this building and an endowment for the purchase of works of art, the expense of concerts, and recitals, and of courses of lectures calculated to cultivate in the faculty and students the appreciation of the higher arts.

If you find it possible in connection with your own business to direct the attention of any of your friends in New York and elsewhere to the desire of the University to increase in the way above indicated its services to its student body and to the community I am sure the University will appreciate your using your opportunities in this way. If at any time there occur to you suggestions as to ways in which we can interest men or women of wealth in this part of our work I shall be glad to receive them.

I must add, of course, that the urgent need of the University at the moment is the sum of \$6,000,000 for endowment of instruction, and, following this, the erection of buildings for the departments of work in which we are already actively engaged. In our active efforts to secure funds we cannot put the fine arts in the foreground, but it is not too early to begin a process of education looking to their eventual endowment, and we shall be heartily glad if provision for them could be made at an early date. We should, of course, not hesitate to receive gifts for them at any time.

I have no doubt that you are familiar with <sup>the</sup> pamphlets which Mr. Kahn has published at various times on the subject of art for the people.

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EDB:NG

Mr. F. D. Nichols  
411 West 114th Street  
New York, New York

*P.S. Launching to answer your recent letter at  
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I must add, of course, that the urgent need of the University at the moment is the sum of \$5,000,000 for endowment of instruction and following this the erection of buildings for the departments of work in which we are already actively engaged. In our active efforts to secure funds we cannot put the fine arts in the foreground but it is not too early to begin a process of education looking to their eventual endowment, and we shall be heartily glad if provision for them could be made at an early date. We should, of course, not hesitate to receive gifts for them at any time.

I have no doubt that you are familiar with persons who have been interested at various times on the subject of art for the people.

Very sincerely yours,

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411 West 118th Street  
New York, New York