

Guggenheim Museum Archives Reel-to-Reel collection  
Five Letters from Rudolf Bauer to Hilla Rebay

MRS. SCHOEKOPF

[00:00] Dear Hilla. Of course, to be in time for the World's Fair does not leave much time for such a building. But with the American know-how, one should be able to manage, provided I can plan as I please. As long as the [territoran?] is cut up like Rockefeller Center, we run into the greatest obstacle. In that case, one would have to design a whole new building plan, that can, of course, never be as good as one for the large site. Before a plan can be drawn here, one would have to know the exact dimensions of the building site. Till (inaudible) time, any design is pointless. As I told [Kiefler?], when he spoke to me about the Rockefeller project, I am totally against the idea of a skyscraper for a museum. They don't even have to start something like that.

The reasons were all given. One of the disturbing elements are the stairs. But that might be eliminated, even in a skyscraper, provided it is not too high, because otherwise [01:00] the building code won't permit it, on account of the fire hazard, which one could eliminate from the beginning. In place of the staircase, I would propose a dumbwaiter type elevator, which will run continuously and will appear, upon entering it, like a small room, so that the viewer, when he enters this elevator from the last exhibition hall, automatically reaches the next floor. The installation should, of course, be made in such a way that the interruptions which usually occur with changing floor are, so to speak, eliminated and that the visitor is not interrupted in his meditation as he is when he has to find a staircase and climb. Thus, this problem could be easily solved in the aforementioned manner. Also, the concert hall could serve as an extra exhibition hall, not a separate room. Only, there, the architect would have to be very gifted in the field of acoustics.

My building should not be higher than four floors, with a recess towards the top. All around the museum's a corridor, with side and top light, the [02:00] window recess walls about two meters deep, this corridor with recesses for watercolors and small paintings. They cannot hang in a large square hall, as they are meant to be seen more intimately. Besides, [Karlik?] adores this arrangement for a museum. Instead of the word *museum*, I must try to find another one, perhaps something like *antimuseum*. Let's wipe the slate clean. For instance, I insist that certain music may not be played in the concert hall, like Wagner, just as [Boerplands?] and Rembrandts may not hang there either. All the old junk must be eliminated and be made impossible. Actually, I need a much larger space for my building. First, it should be placed alone and isolated, amidst a large lawn area, around the building a large plaza, out of concrete or, better yet, paved in large squares, each slab at least one square meter. And to this plaza should lead, from all sides, several very long staircases. All this for effect and isolation from the surroundings. [03:00] Before entering the museum, one must already be prepared for it from the out— from the outside, everything severely designed. From this exterior then, the crescendo towards the interior. If it will be materialized as I see it, it will be a great, great building, putting other cultural edifices in the shadow, not just modern but in a style that is timeless. This type has the advantage that the building will be impressive to foreigners, Europeans, French, English, et cetera, so that they, in time, will want something like it for their artworks too. All this is very well explained. A complete solution can be very impressive, while an inadequate one can only do a great harm, which will cost much more than might be saved. As long as the difficulty of the site exists, which would have been great for a skyscraper but with this it is different, unless a very great architect comes up with a solution that I do not know, I am in favor [04:00] not to rush into

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anything. But since the possibilities for publicity at the World's Fair are great and should be taken advantage of, we might have to be satisfied with a makeshift solution. But even for that, where and how?

Besides, yours and Guggi's idea about studios does not fit at all into my plans. That would have to be somewhat separate, not too far away but on its own, fir— (inaudible) —entity and the structure of the whole and, second, because those rooms, in view of the difficulty of the site, would have to take away from the museum and their content. And that should not be. For administration, there have to be at least — more — two rooms. It might be best to have these away from the main building. After all, there are no offices inside a church. And this is more than a church, as will become clear eventually to all those big and small heads.

Well, in any case, we could really throw a big thing [05:00] for the World Fair, like no one else. But for that, one needs really big collaborators, really big ones, besides the painters. It might be super to use Marinetti for that. I could talk everything over with him. But he should say that he does not again say nonsense, which is not necessary with the Americans, since they are relatively more generous in their contributions than those half-educated Europeans. Those imbeciles will be taken care of easily enough. Only everything must be perfect. I will be proven right, even if it takes a while before one realizes it. If I had thrown everything overboard three years ago, as I was advised to, then all hopes would be washed away and unknown to you. Because you never encouraged me to hold out. Nobody has, only talked against it. Too bad that I never got ahold of the Maharaja of Indore, because of that lack of gasoline, that he was looking for something and did not find anything better than Hollywood, no matter how great that may be, but [06:00] certainly not for maharajas. You can see from the enclosed note. Also, we must find for our opening at the World's Fair a few films by Fischinger. And how about a symphony by [Harwell?]? In any case, we can really throw a big bash.

But who would be approached over there as collaborator for all the work? The project is so enormous that there are no trained people for it, in the intellectual sense, who should know more than the others but who have to have courage and are enterprising. For instance, with Kiefler as architect one cannot do too much. At the most, he could be assistant to an architect. Strange that the Rockefellers want their architect to build it. Who is he, the one from [Wager?] City? That is not too much that they offer as a contribution. The *Palais des Nations* in Geneva is supposed to be a great thing but inside they have, of course, the run of the mill pictures. Such a big building, such a big site, even on the water, so much money, contributions, and then those pictures. [07:00] One could go crazy about such stupidity. Always those half-educated nitwits. They are worse than the Hottentots. Those, at least, one can give orders to.

So anyway, don't rush into anything, especially not here. If the site is not large, perhaps one could find a stopgap measure, as follows: The museum itself is meant for the permanent collection. That's why the walls are left for last, after the paintings are decided upon for each room, so that the material and the color of the walls can be suited to them. The rooms should not be stereotype, all the same but adjusted for the paintings, so that paintings and background were harmonized with ceilings and floors. That still leaves the need for an exhibition hall, in which one can organize exhibits of painters, of course on the avant-garde, before they become museum caliber but when they are ready to be exhibited and seen. With that, one would establish a

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certain flow, with the aim that the museum would be the ultimate top and goal. So perhaps one could put this exhibition hall on the [08:00] Rockefeller corner, in case one does not find a satisfactory to the museum. One can also have lectures in such a hall and nonobjective films, thus, important events but those that I would not like to transfer to the museum. Of course, this exhibition hall could also be a big attraction for the World's Fair, although a new museum, that is really something brand new, would be a bigger drawing card than a hall, since there are already some of those for modern art.

More I cannot tell you now, with regard to your questions. Next I would have to know the size of the site. Well and good that dear Guggi has bought again now and even better if it continues, because the more good pictures, the merrier, the greater the impact. And the greater the impact, the faster all opponents will be knocked out. And that would well and done. Regards.

Another letter.

Dear Hilla. Today I'm writing a duty letter. My whole life is really one big duty. [09:00] That's what makes it hard for me, as they are really cultural duties. Other duties, by contrast, are child's play, like providing for wife and children. What does that amount to? Even monkeys in the jungle do that. Oh, well. Those other little duties, about which the human animals in Parisian felt boots or Jesus sandals or big boots [wake?] such a fuss, with lots of noise, et cetera. A duty letter about Otto Nebel.

He has answered me promptly, a proof that he was probably waiting for it with impatience. And how he answered. That's Otto Nebel for you. From his reply, I learned plenty. During my lifetime, I ran into a lot of people, all sorts of people, upper-class, lower-class, empresses and excellencies en masse. And that's how I realized that Otto Nebel is a personality from whom, as they say in Berlin, the others could slice themselves a piece. [10:00] Besides, we have in our country so few collaborators that we cannot permit ourselves the luxury to be unscrupulous, wishy-washy, or so-so. Nebel sent me a list of his works, four sheets, everything accurately listed, lines made by rulers, clean, very clean.

Since I ask him for a gamut of colors, that was especially thorough, and as only Nebel can be. For instance, "#382, [*Autumnfest?*], horizontal, 45x63, canvas, [black-gray?] background, square in a central movement, yellowish, reddish, and terra cotta, gray, violet, green, 1,000 Swiss francs," "#450, *Gushing Forth*, upright, 140x60, canvas, stained rag technique, [uran?] synthesis, [11:00] in atmospheric pale green, blue circle, 3,000 Swiss francs," "#445, size 32x34, soft blue lights, the ink opaque quality, dominant pink, 1,000 francs," "#346, *Quintetto*, 33x39, gouache, five basic forms in a magical juxtaposition, rich scale of red red and gray earth, background [Atlas-like?] dull black, 1,500 francs," "#325, [*Sonora's?*] *Gold*, aquarelle and shellacked bronze, metallic configuration in black aura of terra cotta [fakes?], 800 Swiss francs," et cetera.

Following are more titles: "*The Well-Tempered Triangle*, aquarelle for Rudolf buyer, [12:00] otherwise not for sale, even to the most important collector"; "*Blue Cube*, quiet red, structural blue"; "*Blue [Cannon?]*, for great connoisseur and collector of renown"; *Quintetto*; [*Contabula?*]; *Melodic Equation 1 and 2*; *Black, Red Glissando*; [*Mortetti?*]; *Relaxation*; *Multiple Construction*; *Festive Blue*; [*Lord-Type?*] *Figure*.

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His titles or, better still, his color indications tell how his paintings are composed. His paintings are small and the prices are 800 to 1,000 francs. "*Red Concert, #403, 77x75*" costs 2,000 francs and 450, size 140x60, costs 3,000 francs. Then he writes especially that these prices are for me, I should add something for me accordingly to the prices when I resell. He wants under no circumstances [13:00] that his paintings will be undervalued. And he does not belong to those painters who have to get rid of his paintings at any cost. He does not say this out of a feeling of materialism, in order to make a good scale, but rather out of respect to their real value of mental work, which is just today so undervalued in those hungry democracies. It goes without question that I would let you have those paintings at the original price made for me. Then he added about some of the pictures that he would only sell if they would get into important hands and known collections. Otherwise, he would rather not sell and would rather wait until such a time. This is not empty talk or reason, with Nebel. I understand completely.

He asks again when I would come, as soon as possible, as he does not stay too long in Bern. It would be a good idea to see for oneself and to choose. But I believe one could buy the *Quintetto*, even sight unseen. In any case, as a favor to me, he would only [14:00] choose the best. And one would actually do well to take what the painter considers the best, since he should know. Nebel was here several times four years ago. The Duchess [Brockendorff?], a clever and well traveled duchess, told me that her best insight, unforgettably so, into our art and especially my paintings was given her by Nebel. It seems that theirs was the most stimulating conversation of the evening. In either case, I could be a valuable collaborator — I beg your pardon — in either case, he could be a valuable collaborator. He also has his own consciousness. I'm sure he is better than those like [Léger, Glaize?], Delaunay, et cetera, not only artistically but also intellectually. I think it would be well to take something from him, first for the collection and also for him and, thirdly, one should never disappoint a hope, if it is a good one, nurtured by a valuable human being. Only hopes by unimportant people, one can squelch.

[15:00] Nebel writes that he has big plans and that he works well and that he dedicated to me 11 color linoleum cuts, one print each, even though he only made 3 or 4 of a few of the works to increase their value, from the year 1936. He has again made progress, especially that he works again out of conviction, in a nonobjective way. Once, he wavered, since he was taught figuratively, which in this case could have been tempting. But if I want to, I can also do spray-painting, even though I have convictions about nonobjective art. The linos he sent as a small token, as a sign of loving connection to that imagery which was once so capable of carrying weight and might well be again, that corresponds to greater wishes for timeless harmony. "I don't want to be in the way." That's what he wrote.

The gouache *Quintetto* he considers a museum piece. Is the gouache technique actually represented in the collection? I would not [16:00] know. 1,500 francs or 3,000 for the big one. How many dollars is that? About \$1,000. Well, I did my duty. I thought it is better to take the larger one because of this representation than the smaller one, for 800 francs. In any case, here is his address. If you should buy something, I want to write him myself. So please let me know. If you want to, you can always write to him directly. His address, in case you send him money — he's well worth it and, secondly, he offers you something for it; perhaps he's a bit lucky with his capabilities:

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Otto Nebel  
Bern  
[Leifenbruweg?] 15

Is the money for the Kandinsky landscape on the way, and Chagall? And what did Guggi say to that? And Marc? Well, chosen, eh? Too bad Schwab is passing you by. He is marvelously lucid. If I should dri— or fly to Nebel, I will try to dig up Schwab. It is ridiculous that one cannot find his address. He has to be something. That of the most common [17:00] boxer is all over the newspapers, even in the Hurst papers, which does not go well with skyscraper— I think [our art's?] with the skyscrapers as well as anything, right? All the best.

Does he take the third picture in the meantime, dear Guggi? I have now \$3,000 and don't know quite if that is just the October installment. Unfortunately, I cannot lay out the money for the Kandinsky landscape.

Another letter.

Dear Hilla. The al fresco technique is out of the question for the museum, because one uses it only for decorative paintings or for certain types of murals. Those can also be artistic, but not for the museum. Then rather the use of marble, glass, copper, silver plate for raw compositions, evening colors, which one could incorporate into the walls. That's the picture, [*Il Fresco?*], not painted but constructed, similar to a mosaic, only [18:00] that one does not use small stones but the proper forms in the appropriate colors, something new and terribly effective. Besides, that is about how the center hall should be, without windows, all pictures, not painted but glass behind glass and conceived together as one work. Therefore, al fresco is out of the question. But perhaps something else, in case easels seem too old-fashioned to some, which should not really be, if properly used. The canvas paintings will not be hung on the wall but inserted into the wall, so that the paintings actually hang inside the wall, without frames, separate but joined to the wall. One can even put the paintings behind glass, by having the pane on a level with the wall. One could also light the recesses indirectly, which would permit the paintings to stand out more in the evenings rather than being part of the whole, similar to an aquarium. So something new, even in the way of installation. These pictures that should be mounted [19:00] on the walls present, of course, some difficulties. First I would have to paint them, so to speak, design them. Then I would need an artisan who could transpose them to the wall, then a glass expert, et cetera. One could have all the pictures already painted, executed in this fashion. There won't be glass paintings, like the stained glass windows in a church. They are somewhat different. But the method is similar. Oh, well. It could be some museum.

But as I see this museum, it cannot be built near Rockefeller Center. Now, it is important to decide if one should not first make an exhibition hall. On this point, the mayor makes sense, since he did not get used to the museum as yet, of course. That one would have to understand clearly and would have to continue to work towards the museum building with all one's thoughts and one's time, until that day the satisfactory solution can be found. It ain't easy.

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How can an architect say that the paintings would not have enough light? They most certainly have enough, because the ramp will have top [20:00] lighting. But even without that, they would get enough light, because there are enough large windows and the ramp should not be wider than four meters.

For the central hall, I would have a great idea for live paintings, where a picture develops, dissolves, and redevelops continuously, somewhat like on a screen, so that, for instance, there are some glass tubes, inside which colored liquids run back and forth. A circle appears suddenly, then disappears. To solve this technically is very difficult. Something completely new and, for the viewer, totally surprising. Do you understand what I mean? Also with color changes somewhat like the colored light changes during the ballet performances in Radio City Music Hall, with a color organ. That would be some attraction for the World's Fair, a real-world exhibit and never seen before. I only fear, since I cannot do this by myself, because I don't know how to mount light-works, that I cannot find any collaborators for this project. But I guess it would be still easier to [21:00] New York if I think of the light show at the Rockefeller ballet.

I bet it would suit those Rockefellers that the museum or exhibition hall would be put inside the Rockefeller Center and that it appears as if they built it all, without having lifted a finger. For that, we would have to invent another expression for *center* besides Rockefeller Center. But then again, it would have to be someplace else. Does Nelson have any kind of influence — what kind and on whom and with whom? Is he only superficially enthusiastic or really so? What would Ford say to all that and especially Mellon, who declared so strongly that he wants to create a new cultural center of the world? Since one hears so little from him, he might be the most involved, without that anyone suspects.

High time for the Duesenberg, because I have continuous trouble with my jalopy. Everybody enjoys his car, only, I, I have to have troubles with something like that. But why? I really don't understand.

Again, super-storm on the North Sea. And the Queen Mary [22:00] had even more injured this time, more than 50, 1 with a fractured skull. Super storm, that. And that one, no human model can produce, which I find especially super. This one was so tremendous that the fireboat *Elba* sank, with its entire crew.

How come Europe left on its last leg? I think, with all those grandiose projects, this one here is only peanuts. Because the place here as a branch is not investment of millions. It could be very much more useful in the future, in relation to its cost, even if right now it needs to be subsidized. If I had abandoned everything three years ago, as I was so urgently advised, then the whole museum would go down the drain, because not one of you really believed in it. You all thought it was just one of my pipe dreams. Not even Kandinsky would have tried to build a museum. Actually, no one, no emperor, king, no maharaja, no president, no Rockefeller, no one, just I. And our new museum is [23:00] truly something new and unique, which does not yet exist anywhere in the world. People actually are mean these days. And I don't hold them in any high esteem. That's why I would really like to know if Nelson is enthusiastic or just curious in order to sound us out, et cetera. And the architect, does he want to be informed about our ideas, because of the plan, so he can work out a beautiful one, or to use it for himself? Our projects are

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so grandiose that I can well imagine that one or the other would be jealous not to have thought of them himself and thus try with all his might to appear as though he had. In my experience, such a sudden spurt of interest is a bit suspicious, unless this should be an unexpected windfall, which is hard for me to judge from here. Let us hope the best. In any case, I am on the right track. That explains the sudden interest. [It is so?] for one reason or another is immaterial, since the fact that the interest exists is sufficient and speaks for itself. All the best.

[24:00] Dear Hilla. Have you given some thought that, if, [yet?], if there is to be a concert hall or auditorium, there has to be an organ built into it? And what an organ. But whatever may be, austerity is not indicated here. Either one does it right or not at all. Halfway measures of limitations can do more harm than the right way can do good tenfold. Not only better paintings than the others but everything must be much better. That's what counts, in art as with life. So do everything with all cylinders, not with the brakes.

By the way, how would Welfare Island work for the museum? That would be great. [The low?] prison should be torn down in any event and children's playgrounds put up instead, children's playgrounds on Welfare Island, then rather something for the grownups in the sunshine of the mind. Those nice children will come by themselves then and, with them, the playground.

LaGuardia. LaGuardia means as much [the wretch?]. [25:00] If means mean anything, then LaGuardia would have to stand [latched?], if the museum gets the proper site, what I don't come up with.

The other day, Dr. [Morganti?] wrote that, for him, the greatest and most far-reaching declaration of the philosophy of abstract art is the section of my pamphlet, [the *Geiskreit*?], meaning that nonobjectivity creates a new philosophy which, if not follow— makes all appear different than the infidels believe, without which all progress falls short or is just appearances, and that the earth is not the viewpoint [of think?] but rather the plaything of hands and the [globe?] of the spirit. At last, one who understands something. At last, one. I began to think no one would take notice.

About the theme of the New York's World Fair, "The world is tomorrow," we can certainly show that with paintings, as no one else. If the engineers make as much progress as we do in painting, then the enclosed [26:00] clipping, that one will be able to fly to New York in four hours, would soon be true, sooner than those Philistines think. And we'll even be able to go in three hours from Berlin to San Francisco. And the inventions would also solve man's adjustments to the speed. [All?] other problems will fall by the wayside and the biggest storms will be of no consequence. And towards this future, I want to hold on here to a grant of the *Geiskreit* and organize it. And even should the flight New York-Berlin take ten hours, even then, that's not any longer than New York-Chicago by train and lots of passengers are transported daily. But for this type of flight of fancy, one must be [predistant?]. Not everyone is.

As Nebel [wrote?] expressly, the prices are made for me and I should add to them something for my trouble. As you see, I do not make any use of that, although I could certainly have earned it. The money should therefore go directly to Nebel. [27:00] I think, of all the painters, not one is

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as thrilled as he. As I noticed, the doctor's check was out to [Brand?]. That's because not all is well with me. [As?] a cover picture for the catalog, #43, [*The Red Circle?*], is most suited, for its dimensions and also for its colors, with all that black and red. What kind of text is there going to be? And will there be color plates inside too? Before going into color plates, I would make a certain number of special prints. Horizontals are never good for books or portfolios. Those, one can only use a single sheet.

About my letters. You must read them at least three times. But many others you could throw away in the wastebasket unread. Duplicity of events.

The day the president of the United States is elected, the King of England makes a speech. Let's hope the one is regal and the other a real president. [28:00] Then things will improve for humanity. Otherwise, it will no longer be enough to be clever and wise but one will have to learn to be cunning.

I have not seen the *Quintetto*. But even if Nebel's pictures are not better than ours, they are so good one can take them sight unseen, especially those he loves, which is the case of the *Quintetto*. If it will be successful is another question. A painting can be very good and still not please all. But I do think these will be. Nebel is a very good technician in his paintings. In any case, it's better to have him in our camp than to have him grabbed up by others, which will not happen if they are not a lot smarter than we. And as long as I am alive, that won't happen.

I have been offered two more watercolors by Kandinsky, one for 400, the other for 600 marks. One should take those right away. Unbelievable how cheap something like that still is. I am almost ashamed to quote these prices. That in itself is enough reason [29:00] to act fast. We do need, anyhow, a number of smaller pictures and watercolors for the window area. Well, if there's not enough, I can always fill in, because I have still enough in my storage. I wish I could already today demand what I would get for them in the year 2000. By the way, I did find the portfolio of drawings which I had misplaced when you were here. Those are not [comic?] weeklies. They're already comic years. How good our pictures are one can see by the fact that a painting which does not appeal to one will please someone else. So in any case, it pleases, even though the two someones understand something. Yes.

I have to buy tons of paint, for several reasons, of which maybe you are unaware. I started two new pictures. The Duesenberg painting I have not started yet. And if I had already finished it, who knows how long it would stand around, how many years.

Another letter.

[30:00] Dear Hilla. What is life really all about, after all? If only halfwits and even nitwits build private houses and estates en masse and the intellectual artists not, something is wrong with our order of society. And then those halfwits and nitwits put their houses not just anyplace but exactly in front of my nose, so that I am continuously reminded of it, although I'm not at all anxious to watch this rumpus.



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[Baumeister?] is not nearly as good as Nebel. Therefore, what was planned to be bought from Baumeister one could eventually get from Nebel. And in view of the realization of our plans of the museum, for which I'm actually responsible, I hope to sell the extra pictures and to get something for it and maybe even sell a few more. I don't want to stand in the way. Hopefully, I will soon hear good news about that. I would love to be able to be happy about something again.

That's just wonderful, [31:00] that Nelson Rockefeller is a nice person. There are not too many. And we could sure use them. But being nice is not enough. I hope I will like him too.

Well, to form a committee, that is a bit ticklish. There should not be just those highly cultural intellectual ones but they must also think alike, but not one wants this, the other that or nothing or the opposite. What the mayor wants is out of the question. I can see it coming that the museum will not be at all what I imagine. It does not all depend just on the wall with which it's built but on the spirit and the purity, which is only pure when it is without compromise. I believe there is not enough understanding for this concept on the part of [Dudgins?]. It really is not easy, even not for me, when I see how hard it comes to others. Because besides the difficult work, I have to overcome the resistance and inhibitions of others and to carry those along. I would consider it beneficial if Mrs. G. [32:00] would go along wholeheartedly, for the reason that it looks much better to the outside world, [within?] an important matter like our art there's total harmony, than for the others to see that in our own camp there is dissension. That would give those envious and those that don't want to contribute, too much fuel for their dirty mouth. This pleasure, we should really not give them. Rather, let them get blue and green with envy and anger. And they should have to do that without our giving them fuel to their fire. And far better not to do what they're waiting for. Why do that, when we have the best collection and can put on the best exhibits? The older I get, the more philosophically I look upon such things, which some time ago might have annoyed me. But no more today, because they are too far beneath me. If it were worth the trouble, I could shake my head each day for three hours, just over what gets people excited, even though totally unimportant. Why there, where excitement is [33:00] indicated, they remain stubborn and stupid like animals? But I did not want to write that at all. And that's why, I guess, I did write it, as it happens sometimes.

That you like new old Kandinskys, I can well imagine, because you can see a lot of painting on them, especially on the one called *Fugue*. Would you ask Kandinsky, please, why he calls it *Fugue*, though it has nothing fugue-like about it? But better yet, don't ask, or else his [old onion?] will be mad that the painting was not bought from him at the studio but elsewhere. Aren't the Schwabs considerate? Today again, no reply about the Kandinsky landscape or the Chagall.

The [Ledinek?] house is also going up in price. But with his situation, [none of the?] (inaudible) have the opportunity, I mean, [Al's?] situation. There were, again, a few prospective buyers. And what clods they were. They run past the paintings like oxen. And that's the type who can afford to look at houses and have money for buying and building. Such clods. No wonder society is so unstable, if it is built on such crooked crutches. [34:00] About a year ago, however, there came a mine owner from the Rhineland to look at the house with his wife. Imagine, he tells his wife she should inspect the house, he would rather look at paintings. They interested him more. And he was very moved by them. He said he regretted not to live in Berlin and that

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he comes [here?] rarely. Otherwise, he would ask me to permit him to let him really soak them up, because for the first time in his life he's taken by paintings. The museums don't mean much to him. And he began to think that he had no appreciation for art. And he was delighted to hear that, according to my theory, he even has a lot. Too bad he does not live in Berlin. Well, one manages anyhow. His wife, of course, not even an iota of an idea. She did not even respond when he pointed things out to her. Her reply was [just?], "Do you think one could put a larger staircase in the entrance hall? And could one put in a service staircase?"

And yet is written somewhere by Goethe, I believe, that one should address oneself to noble ladies. My observation is that women would do better [35:00] to address themselves to noble gentlemen, that those cases where the wife advises her husband against buying art are much more frequent than those where she counsels him to buy art. My observation. But exceptions only confirm the rule. That too, I have not wanted to write. But so I wrote it anyhow, as it happened. But if women would only know how well it suits them to interest themselves, besides dresses and diamonds, also in Kandinskys, because that gives them something special, with which they can outdo any of their female sisters around who can afford that same great dress. Ha. The inner dress corresponding to the outer, that is complete harmony, not only doll up on the outside but inside too. And this goes for men too. How well it would suit [then?] their dress codes if they shine up, beside their top hats, also their artistic souls. And if one of them rides around in a Duesenberg, then he makes a better impression if one knows he has a beautiful art collection than if one has to say that he's a wholesale butcher and [36:00] one just says, "Oh, too bad. Such a beautiful car." One would like quickly to air it out and disinfect it. All the best. [36:10]

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*Five Bauer Letters to Hilla Rebay / Mrs. Schoelkopf, 1971/5/24.* Reel-to-Reel collection. A0004. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Archives, New York