



BARNES WATCH

DELIVERY BY HAND

March 22, 2013

Derek Gillman, Executive Director and President
The Barnes Foundation
2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19130

Dear Mr. Gillman,

On Sunday, March 17, I visited the Barnes Foundation for the first time. My visit was planned specifically to see the exhibition about Dr. Barnes and the early history of the Foundation to which he devoted his adult life. It was a fine exhibition.

I am writing on behalf of Barnes Watch and Friends of the Barnes Foundation to protest the dismantling of the exhibit when no arrangements have been made for a permanent display on this subject anywhere in the building. Although I learned from your colleague Andrew Stewart that there have been discussions about such a display, the fact that no concrete plans were developed in advance indicates that this is not a priority for the administration or the Board of Trustees. This is deeply troubling.

Equally disturbing is the absence at the Philadelphia site of a prominent visual homage to Dr. Albert C. Barnes. As the benefactor who gave the nation a uniquely American model for education in arts appreciation and an unparalleled collection of art, surely Dr. Barnes is as worthy of recognition as the prominently acknowledged present-day donors to the construction project. Whether by accident or design, your decisions minimize the presence of Dr. Barnes in the Parkway facility and we protest.

In addition, we think that the extraordinary historic significance of the Merion complex of art, architecture, and horticulture warrants explanation for the benefit of the public. As you know from the Assessment published in 2007, the site was eligible for National Historic Landmark status prior to removal of the Barnes art collection.

We inferred a clear interest in these matters on your part from a letter written by Barnes Foundation Legal Counsel, the late Brett I. Miller, to the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission Director Jean Cutler. The letter (enclosed) includes numerous

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references to the "historic importance" of the Merion site. While no formal commitment was made to erect a permanent exhibition, the decision to remove the exhibit "Ensemble: Albert C. Barnes and the Experiment in Education" without advance planning for a suitable – and permanent – display is in extreme contrast to the spirit and aspirations contained in Mr. Miller's letter.

We hope that for the benefit of the public -- and especially for Pennsylvania taxpayers, who funded the construction of the building more heavily than any other single donor-- we hope that you and the Board will do something meaningful to address this situation.

Sincerely,



Evelyn Yaari
President, Barnes Watch

cc: Jean Cutler, PHMC
enclosures

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