

NINA CULLINAN PAPERS

Filmed by the Archives of American Art,
Smithsonian Institution. Lent for filming
by Miss Nina Cullinan, Houston, Texas in
March, 1979.

NINA CULLINAN PAPERS

Contents in order of filming:

1. Correspondence
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1954 - 1960

Correspondence

Miss Winifred Austin



Miss Maria J. Cullinan
~~Museum of Fine Arts~~
Houston 79
Texas
3694 Hilliard

Main St East

Norton, Mass

April 13, 1954

Dear Nina

April "Hobbies" page
39 speaks of a "Nina"
Is it possible that
this is the Ogontz
School or Juniper College
Nina of my remem-
brance? In case it
is, I congratulate
the Museum upon
such a find.

Most sincerely

Skiffred Austin

Ogontz

1900 - 1950

CRAIG F. CULLINAN, JR.
1006 BANK OF THE SOUTHWEST BLDG.
HOUSTON 2, TEXAS

UNFOUNDED LAMENT OF A PLASTER GAUCHO

Snide,

The critics smiled
at my unveiling.
My artist's meager
talent not prevailing.

Hide,

Would I this
mournful image.
Shield me from
the arty scrimmage.

Objet,

Poor, and all
just like you,
Await you not
the wrecking crew.

Artist,

Fear not. Good
news awaits you
Of the arts'
Madame Lupescu.

Muse,

Hear voices urgent
as call of mynah.
That will be my
Dear Aunt Nina.

She'll build you all a great museum.
And critics, you had best go-see-um.

*Happy birthday to Auntie N.
Love from
Nephew C.*

9/11/56

HOUSTON NATIONAL BANK
HOUSTON, TEXAS

January 21, 1957

MELVIN ROUFF,
PRESIDENT

Dear Nina:

After seeing the attached I felt impelled to write and congratulate you upon this most wonderful civic gesture and the benefit that will accrue to the community through your most generous donation.

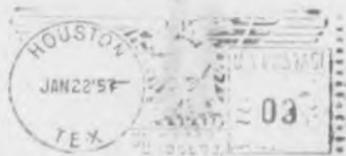
It also brought to my memory that many years ago when you, John and Craig were youngsters and lived on Crawford at Rusk, how much pleasure it brought me when I came over to the Cullinan home to play in the yard. I even recall the stable fire and the excitement it caused, not only among the neighborhood but also the dog Bozo.

With my every good wish to you and your sisters,

Sincerely,



Miss Nina Cullinan
3694 Willowick Drive
Houston, Texas



Miss Nina Cullinan
3694 Willowick Drive
Houston, Texas

HOUSTON NATIONAL BANK
HOUSTON, TEXAS



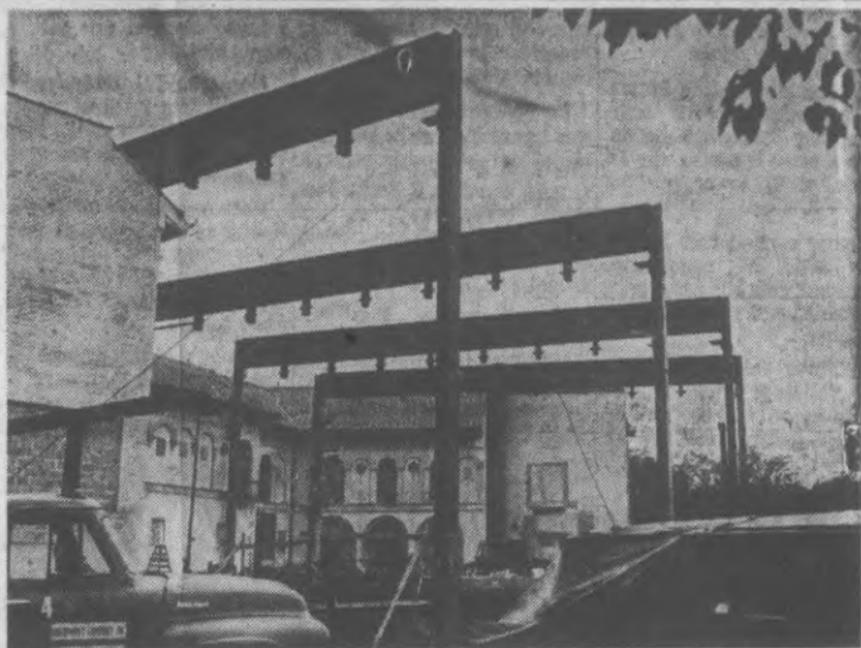
MUSEUM DEER HERE OFF TO NEW HOME

These two bronze deer, who have dwelled in the yard of the Museum of Fine Arts for almost 20 years, will be moved to a new spot just beyond the bushes in the background to make room for bulldozers and other equipment when construction starts on Cullinan Hall. The new hall, for which ground-breaking ceremonies will be held at 3 PM Tuesday, will be constructed at the rear of the present museum. Funds for the hall were given by Miss Nina Cullinan. It will be a memorial to Miss Cullinan's parents, Joseph S. and Lucie Halm Cullinan. —Post Photo

No. Chronicle Oct. 23 '57

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M.



Chronicle Photo by Tom Colburn
GIANT GIRDERS OF MUSEUM'S NEW CULLINAN HALL
Trademark of Architect Mies

THE SPOTLIGHT

Big Beams Now Aloft at Museum

BY ANN HOLMES
Fine Arts Editor



The great steel girders have been raised now over the skeleton of the Museum of Fine Arts' new Cullinan Hall.

After a delay of about six weeks on the delivery of the special-order steel required for the building, the giant beams—so much a trademark of the celebrated architect Mies van der Rohe—are now visible.

To many, eager to see the museum's new wing completed and to visit its newly remodeled interior, the job has seemed to go slowly.

There have been, in fact, several unexpected hold-ups in the building plans.

One was the delay of the steel, as mentioned. The rain has made further delays, according to Albert Howes of Staub, Rather and Howes, who are architects on the remodeling job and associate architects with van der Rohe on the Cullinan Hall.

Even in the remodeling there have been unexpected problems.

"Early in the work, we noticed that the older portions of the building on the Montrose side began to settle heavily, as the other side of the building had done before," Howes stated. He said additional shoring up of the Montrose side of the building was done, and that some of the work of remodeling the older parts had to be held up so that it could be done concurrently with construction of the new building.

"Air conditioning, for instance, could not be done sep-

arately in the two parts of the building," he explained.

The remodeled portions were originally to have opened this month with the showing of the Pierpont Morgan Treasures. The exhibit was placed instead at Rice Institute's Fondren Library, when the remodeling was not finished in time.

Now the revised building program calls for completion of the renovated portions in January with a special showing of the paintings of the Venetian artist Guardi.

The Cullinan Hall, whose five-foot-tall girders stretch some 82 feet out in a huge fan shape toward Bissonnet, is now scheduled for completion in late July, Howes said. The facade of the new wing will be glass.

The museum is planning a gala opening of all its galleries next fall.

In the meantime, there is much activity behind the closed doors of the museum. Not only are workmen busy but the museum staff is moving this week into new offices in the Montrose wing. Artists galore are bringing in their canvases for the Houston Artists show.

Friday is deadline for artists in the 50-mile radius of Houston city limits to submit their works. The jury will meet next week and the show will be on display in November at the Art League Bldg., 906 Tuam.

ROBERT FOLSOM LENT
5701 JACKSON ST.
HOUSTON 4, TEXAS

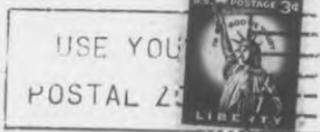
Oct 19/57

Dear Nina -

I had to tell you how exciting the museum is already - viewed coming up Main and also from Montrose.

I can't wait to see it completed! It will take people a while to catch up with it; that is to say it is a very far-sighted solution, I think.

Best regards
Bob.



Miss Nina Cullinau
3694 Wiltonjick Drive
Houston

ARTS STUDIOS:

SMU Adds 2 Names To Staff

Two new members will be added to the faculty of the SMU School of Music, effective for the fall term. Morton Siegel, instructor of opera, and Lloyd Plautsch, associate professor of sacred music.

Siegel, who holds a bachelor of science degree from New York's Juilliard School of Music and a master of arts from Columbia University, is a former stage director of the Metropolitan Opera Company and a past member of the drama faculty of Boston University.

Siegel has pursued musical studies in Europe under a Fulbright Fellowship.

Plautsch has served on the music faculty of Illinois Wesleyan University, with the title of professor of voice and choral director for the music school there.

Plautsch holds a bachelor of arts degree from Elmhurst College and a master of sacred music and bachelor of divinity from New York's Union Theological Seminary.

During the academic year 1956-57, Plautsch was visiting lecturer and choral director at the University of Illinois' School of Music.

He is an alumnus of the Robert Shaw Choral, the radio choruses of NBC and CBS and choral performances with the late Arturo Toscanini. He has also served as guest conductor for the summer music camps of the University of Kansas and the University of Indiana.

CHARLES WEBB, formerly choral and administrative assistant at the SMU School of Music, will depart this fall as a member of the music school faculty at the University of Indiana.

IRVING DREISBRODT, a native of San Antonio, has been named new director of the Mustang Band at SMU, replacing Oakley Pittman, who will assume direction of the SMU Concert Band.

Dreisbrodt attended Baylor University (bachelor of music), the University of Texas (master of music) and the Southern College of Fine Arts, Houston (doctorate degree).

Previously, he had directed the bands of Baylor University, Brackenridge High School (San Antonio) and Trinity University. He was music conductor for the Cotton Bowl games of 1952, 1953 and 1955.

Dreisbrodt has played profes-



Four speakers in the Music Materials Clinic this week . . . top row, Miss Bara Niblo and Bomar Cramer . . . bottom row, Mrs. Eugenia Robinson and Mrs. S. W. Marshall Jr.



Mrs. Mary Kahle, . . . President of the Piano Class Teachers of the Dallas Independent School District.

new home in New York City. Mrs. Sprintz is currently coaching Dallas' Benny Gatteys in New York.

ART & ARTISTS:

Dallas Could Profit From Houston Study

By RUAL ASKEW
Just in case Dallas Museum of Fine Arts figures a way to expand its present facilities to better serve cosmopolitan Dallas or if Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts drums up the means to build itself a real home (possibly as part of a civic fine arts center?), it isn't far afield to study how Houston has doubled the size of its privately-endowed Museum of Fine Arts.

On July 16, 1954, a formal contract was signed by representatives of the Houston Museum and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe confirming the eminent architect as designer of Cullinan Hall, a \$625,000 addition which will open to the public Oct. 11.

Mies van der Rohe was chosen as architect of Cullinan Hall by a building committee appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Museum, of which Frank G. Coates was president.

Money to build a new Hall and to maintain it was given by Miss Nina J. Cullinan in memory of her parents, the late Joseph Stephen and Lucie Halm Cullinan, who were early benefactors of the Museum. (Potential givers to Dallas Historical Monuments Commission please take note that "memorials" can mean also support of the living arts.)

Miss Cullinan, in offering her financial gift, was concerned that the structure be designed and its construction supervised by an architect of international reputation for designing public buildings of the museum type. She did not stipulate what architect.

MISS CULLINAN'S only other request concerning the building was that the more than 10,000 square feet of exhibition space be made available on occasion to the Contemporary Arts Association of

Houston in addition to that Museum's existing building. (Dallas Museum of Fine Arts please note particularly.)

While Mies van der Rohe had never before built a museum he had long been fascinated with the problem. In an article in architectural forum, May, 1943, he said: "The first problem is to establish the museum as a center for enjoyment, not the interment of art."

Mies, in the same article, cites the ideal museum ". . . as one large area, allowing complete flexibility . . . The type of structure which permits this is steel frame. This construction permits the erection of a building with only three basic elements — a floor slab, columns and a roof

plate. The floor and paved terraces would be of stone."

TO A LARGE DEGREE Mies, who also put his ideas for exhibition buildings to work in the famous German Pavilion for the International Exposition at Barcelona in 1929, has followed his plans outlined in the Architectural Forum for Houston.

Basement and main floor construction is flat slab reinforced concrete, and the superstructure a welded structural steel frame. The roof is supported by four 82 foot long, five foot deep plate girders above the roof plate. This system allows a column free, flexible exhibition hall, approximately 10,000 square feet in area. The ceiling on the main floor is thirty feet. The building is enclosed with neutral gray tinted plate glass in steel bar frames supported by steel wide flange mullions on north, east and west, except for outer bays on the north which are of brick.

General lighting for the main hall is from the perimeter of the

ceiling and outlets for supplementary exhibition lighting are provided in the floor and ceiling. The building is completely air conditioned.

THE LOWER LEVEL of Cullinan Hall contains storage and service facilities as well as studios for the Museum school and minor exhibition space along the curving brick corridor.

The stairs at the east and west sides of the hall allow circulation to the basement and to second floor mezzanines, also used exhibition space, that lead to the existing second floor galleries and will connect with the future second floor. The raised terrace on the north forms the new main entrance to the Museum. The east and west entrances are for the

Museum school and receiving respectively.

Future plans call for an enclosed sculpture garden to the south around what is the present entrance of the Museum. The garden would provide the Museum with an outdoor space for the exhibition of sculpture. A raised terrace similar to the one at the new main entrance would form the connection between the building and the garden.

FUTURE PLANS also call for the erection of a two-story building, four sides of glass, which would connect with Cullinan Hall, making Cullinan a sort of enclosed patio between the early building and the latest.

Cullinan Hall then is the first construction stage in a proposed master plan for the museum.

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FRIDAY, AUG. 29
LES ELGART
AND HIS ORCHESTRA

BROADWAY:

Old Days Inspired Musical

(Editor's Note: While Walter Kerr is on vacation his column will be written by guest columnist. This week, Meredith Willson, "The Music Man" singer, reminisces about his early life in Mason City, Iowa. Willson will be on hand in Dallas for the opening of the State Fair presentation of "The Music Man," Oct. 4 to 13.)

By MEREDITH WILLSON

NEW YORK—I have had a couple of moments in my life when I was proud all right—the time when as a first-day freshman, I was trying to demonstrate familiarity with the Mason City, Iowa, High School steps from the assembly room floor to the ground floor by "ski-ing" down their low rubber-lined risers as though there were no steps there and there coming up those steps slowly and effortlessly—he didn't have to prove a thing—was Hootie Weston, star halfback of the Mason City varsity. "Lo, Hootie," I said out of a gulp. "Hello, kid," Hootie said.

And I was proud the time I asked Papa for a nickel there with a bunch of men talking in front of the court house and he gave me 50c—my cousin Phil had said "ask him in front of somebody."

And I was proud when Mr. Keeler, Mason City's famous musician who had studied in Boston, said I was good enough on the flute to play for the Kiwanis Club at the Cerro Gordo Hotel Wednesday noon.

And I was proud later that same summer that I was not only asked to play flute and piccolo in the Mason City Municipal Band but I was to be permitted to sort the music in the high school basement and carry it to and from the band stand every night. And twice on Sundays.

And I was proud when the last night that summer the leader of that band offered me a drink of dandelion wine he made himself.

BUT I WAS never prouder in my whole entire life than I was on the day Willow Creek became a River. When my mother was a young lady she went to the Armour Institute in Chicago, then married my father and went to Iowa, and outside of two trips to Aunt Lida's in Topeka and one trip to Charles City twenty-eight miles east on the Milwaukee to Uncle Ed's funeral, Mama never left Mason City till the day she died.

Mama was always preoccupied with nice things like Hawthorne's "Marble Faun" and suggesting that us kids behave nicely instead



Jimmy Giuffre. . . . Down Beat gave him the treatment reserved for the finest names in jazz.

in Mason City though in the play I called it River City.

And I was still prouder when my home town staged a parade with Music Man floats and 92 bands, the first one comprising seventy-six trombones and 110 cornets. I sure was.

BUT I WAS the proudest I've ever been in my whole entire life when Iowa's Governor Herschel C. Loveless stood up that night at a dinner in front of all my mother's old friends and people grown up from her Sunday School class and handed me a proclamation temporary but officially changing the name of Mason City to River City, and the Creek became a River at last.

(Copyright, 1956, by the N.Y. Herald Tribune.)

Sneak at Coronet

The Coronet will present a new British romantic action drama in a sneak preview at 8:15 p.m. Sunday along with the regular showing of "His First Affair."

Dallas After Dark

By TONY ZOPPI

Giuffre May Try Fronting a Band

Jimmy Giuffre, the Dallas native who now heads one of the nation's finest jazz groups, received Down Beat magazine's "Cross Section" treatment in the issue now on the stands.

The 37-year-old clarinetist has just recorded a new album on the Atlantic label entitled "Trav'lin' Light." He is accompanied by Bobby Brookmeyer on trombone and Jim Hall on guitar.

Giuffre has been in the news locally during the past six weeks as a result of the Jazz Workshop conducted every Sunday at The 90th Floor. Owners Dick and Kiz Harp, teaming with the Paul Guerrero combo, feature Giuffre's works almost exclusively in the weekly sessions at their McKinney St. night spot.

DOWN BEAT describes Jimmy as a serious, sincere, soft-spoken jazz man who expresses himself clearly and with dignity.

In the course of the well-written piece by Dom Cerulli, the Texan admits a desire to someday lead a big swing band.

He was a sideman with Jimmy Dorsey, Boyd Raeburn, Woody and Shorty Rogers earlier in his career. One little known fact brought out in the article, is that Giuffre once played in the Dallas Symphony.

Asked to comment about guitarist Herb Ellis, one of the current jazz greats, Giuffre recalled that he and Ellis roomed together at North Texas State Teachers College in Denton.

"We'd play like my trio does now. I'd just sit on the floor and

blow tenor, and he'd feed me chords," he reminisced. Jimmy's compositions are well worth a trip to The 90th Floor.

AROUND THE TOWN: Don Cornell's version of "Volare," the new Italian hit also known as "Nel Blu, DiPinto Di Blu," rates

with the finest. Don stops his Century Room show when he presents copies of a record album to lucky ring-siders and tells 'em he made the recording when his name was Pat Boone. . . . Nino Nanni's Empire Room show lured excellent weekend business, and little wonder. His intimate way with a song, and that beautiful rendition of "What Is A Boy," are entertainment classics. . . . Fran Warren, who will open at the Shamrock next week, may stop off in Big D en route to her Houston engagement. . . . A word here

about the wonderful job Henry Youngman is doing as replacement for TV's Jack Parr. One of the great talents in show business. . . . All you Texas belles who would like to join the chorus line at The Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, are invited to contact this department. Producer Jack Entratter will be here in mid-September to select ten girls from the Dallas area for his Copa line. Those selected will make their Vegas debut with either Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin or Judy Garland.

. . . Jean Shannon and the Brooks Brothers are currently appearing at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D. C. Bob Cross' band is backing the show, which also features Bud and Cece Robinson.

Fine Arts Sneak

The 8 p.m. Sunday sneak preview at the Fine Arts will be a new French murder-suspense thriller. The regular film is Marisa Allasio in "Poor but Beautiful."

'FBI Story Set For Production

BURBANK, Calif. (Sp.)—Producer-director Mervyn LeRoy has okayed sketches for 177 sets, one of the largest number ever used in a motion picture, for Warner Bros., "The FBI Story," scheduled for early production at the Burbank studios. James Stewart, Vera Miles and Murray Hamilton have been announced for the film adaptation of Don Whitehead's best-selling book.



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MEMORANDUM

27 August 1958

Dear Nina:

Enclosed is a clipping from the Dallas Morning News, of last Sunday, in which there was a nice write-up of your museum wing. It truly is a beautiful addition to the Museum.

Sincerely,


Preston

Miss Nina Cullinan
3694 Willowick

Encl.

BOLTON AND BARNSTONE

ARCHITECTS • 811 LOVETT • HOUSTON 6, TEXAS



Miss Nina Cullinan
3694 Willowick
Houston, Texas

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE

512 - 28 THOMAS STREET
HOUSTON 2, TEXAS

ANN HOLMES

FINE ARTS EDITOR

Dear Miss Callinan:

We hadn't forgotten to send these along. But The Chronicle was completely sold out that day, and we have been scrounging in the files to find these.

Wish we could have picked a few more, but they just weren't to be had.

We think the picture was a great enhancement to our pages that day.

Hope to see you soon.

Ann Holmes



THE LADY AND THE HALL

In a rare photograph Nina Cullinan is seen poised at the foot of the stairs which lead up to a second level in the handsome exhibit, "Totems Not Taboo," on current view in Cullinan Hall at the Museum of Fine Arts. Miss Cullinan gave the hall as a memorial to her late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph S.

Cullinan. The exhibition, which will continue on daily view through next Sunday, has been a notable success and has attracted hundreds of gallery viewers. It was staged there by Dr. Jermaine MacAgy of the Contemporary Arts Museum, which has an invitation to use the hall from time to time.

FROM THE DESK OF

Lots M. Follics

Enclosed

"The Great Lady"

Let me know when I can
pick up the checks &
correspondence I returned
- also any other you may
receive.

Mrs. Follics

3/24.

JAMES H. DURBIN

30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA
NEW YORK 20, N. Y.
March 25, 1959

Dear Nina,

The Museum of Fine Arts sent me, at your suggestion, a copy of the catalogue for the contemporary arts exhibit "Totems Not Taboo" which is now being held in Cullinan Hall. The booklet is well and attractively done, and I do appreciate your having it sent to me.

Mrs. Follis sent me the clipping from the March 22nd issue of "The Chronicle" giving that very striking picture of you on the stairway of the Hall. The picture is you to the life, and the setting is both unusual and interesting.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Miss Nina J. Cullinan
3694 Willowick Road
Houston 19, Texas

jc

3363 SAN FELIPE ROAD
HOUSTON, TEXAS

May 6, 1959

Miss Nina Cullinan
Houston

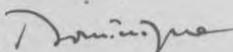
Dear Nina:

Just before leaving for Paris, John asked me to be sure to see to it that you received these pictures that he had selected.

We were so thrilled when they arrived. They are a wonderful record of a great show made possible by a great woman. We shall never be able to tell you what it meant to us and to many in the city.

Much love from both.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs. John de Menil

DdM:cp

Miss Cullinan
3694 Willowick road

3363 SAN FELIPE ROAD
HOUSTON, TEXAS

January 30, 1960

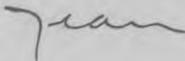
Miss Nina Cullinan
Houston

Dear Nina:

I thought you would be amused by these photos which I snapped of you at the opening of the Renaissance Show.

You might be interested to know that Jerry MacAgy has been giving, from time to time, a few conducted tours of the exhibition, preceded by a short lecture. Dominique, quite by chance, ran across one of those performances and found it remarkable: It was for a group of student nurses. Jerry will do it again tomorrow, Sunday, at 4 PM.

Yours sincerely,



JdM: cp





TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

TIME & LIFE BUILDING
ROCKEFELLER CENTER
NEW YORK 20
JUDSON 6-1212
PUBLISHER'S OFFICE

July 14, 1960

Dear Miss Cullinen:

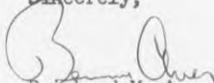
You were very thoughtful to write to me.

I, too, thought the evening was a particularly enjoyable one. As I said in my very brief toast, I have never attended a dinner where I felt so much that the hosts were really the guests. This is a great tribute to all of you for making all of us feel so much at home. Dinner with you was great fun.

All of us from TIME were very much impressed with Cullinen Hall. It is truly magnificent and I thought just perfect for an exhibit such as ours.

Again, thank you for all you did to help us -- and it was most enjoyable meeting you.

Sincerely,


Bernhard M. Auer

Miss Nina Cullinen
3694 Willowick Road
Houston 19, Texas

TIME

TIME & LIFE BUILDING
ROCKEFELLER CENTER
NEW YORK 20



Miss Nina Cullinen
3694 Willowick Road
Houston 19, Texas

CHARLES F. MONTGOMERY
WINTERTHUR, DELAWARE

Dear Miss Cullinan,

Since you have given so many, including me, such pleasure, I want to tell you how much I enjoyed your new wing at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Without question that great room is the most beautiful of any in any museum I have ever been in, either in America or Europe.

Not only is it beautiful, it has the quiet dignity, the grandeur, - the nobility - of the greatest architecture. The generosity of your gift is matched only by the achievement of your architect. What a happy combination!

With pleasant memories of your building and of meeting you at Miss Hogg's dinner party,

I am sincerely
Charles Montgomery

July 19, 1960

VIA AIR MAIL



Miss Nina Cullinan
3694 Willowick Dr.
Houston, Texas