Christmas 1966

Season's Greetings;

This has been a year of travels and changes. In April I was awarded a Wenner-Gren research grant at the San Diego Museum of Man. With this as a start, the Museum has arranged to add me to their staff as Curator of Archaeology when the Wenner-Gren job is completed.

These arrangements left me with a free summer, which I spent in Europe, looking at paintings, sculpture and the Parthenon, the Prado and the Louvre.

It was a great summer of wandering through eight countries, sometimes as a guest, sometimes alone, for two weeks with a German girl whom I met on the train between Belgrad and Athens, with a delightful Greek couple (THANK YOU, Soso and Arri) with my sister and brother-in-law, and with English friends...John and Rhoda, William and Nan.

I talked lousy French in Paris, worse German in Vienna, got along pretty well with Russian in Jugoslavia and invented a composite lingo which I call DESPERANTO...you just string along any words in any languages as they pop into your head. Funny how many people understand you! I find I know pieces of about nine languages but have good control of none.

I lived for a week in a little fishing village on a remote Greek island off the coast of Turkey; saw the shores of Africa; trailer-camped through Spain with sis and her husband (who refers to Frankie and myself as The Davis Blisters); climbed the great wall at Kotor; sailed past the fantastic coast of Dalmatia; learned to like Greek wine with resin in it; floated around on a sea of Pilsner beer in Czechoslovakia; saw the mammoth kill site at Dolni Vestonitsa; and spent hours arguing about the painting techniques of El Greco. I travelled by bus, train, plane, boat...and even by bicycle. Ate broiled fat-back sopped into bread in Hungary and was propositioned by an old Gypsy violinist.

Never a dull moment.

Greece was fiercely hot; Hungary and Czechoslovakia cold and gray. Paris is the most beautiful of cities. Hildegarde showed me its nooks and corners by night and I walked its streets for miles (the only way really to see the Medieval, core areas of European towns).

I found that you don't have to understand the language to enjoy a movie.

I thought long and long about communication and drafted an article entitled "An Artist Looks At Anthropology". This was begun in a Greek village (working from five to six A.M., wrapped in a sheet to keep the flies from tickling while my German room-mate slept). It was continued in a student hostel in Vienna and finished in John Cowen's study in London. Thank you, John.

I visited Latzy and Agnes Vertes in Budapest...two kindred spirits, sharing a love of the same kinds of sculpture, painting, music.

I got the feel of a new Europe...of migrations and communications, with the old, provincial barriers dissolving. Americans go home with European ways while European students wear bluejeans and drink cokes. Vive Le 'Ot Dog.

Merry Christmas,

Gary

TWIN FALLS, IDAHO
PM
DEC 21
1966

Dr. Emma Lou Davis
1236 Concord St.
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