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Celebrating 175: Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Correspondence, Artists for Victory, 1942-1944

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ARTISTS FOR VICTORY
Incorporated

101 Park Avenue
New York 17, N. Y.
Murray Hill 5-6249

[[stamped]]
JOHN TAYLOR ARMS
GREENFIELD HILL
FAIRFIELD
CONNECTICUT
[[/stamped]]

February 2, 1944

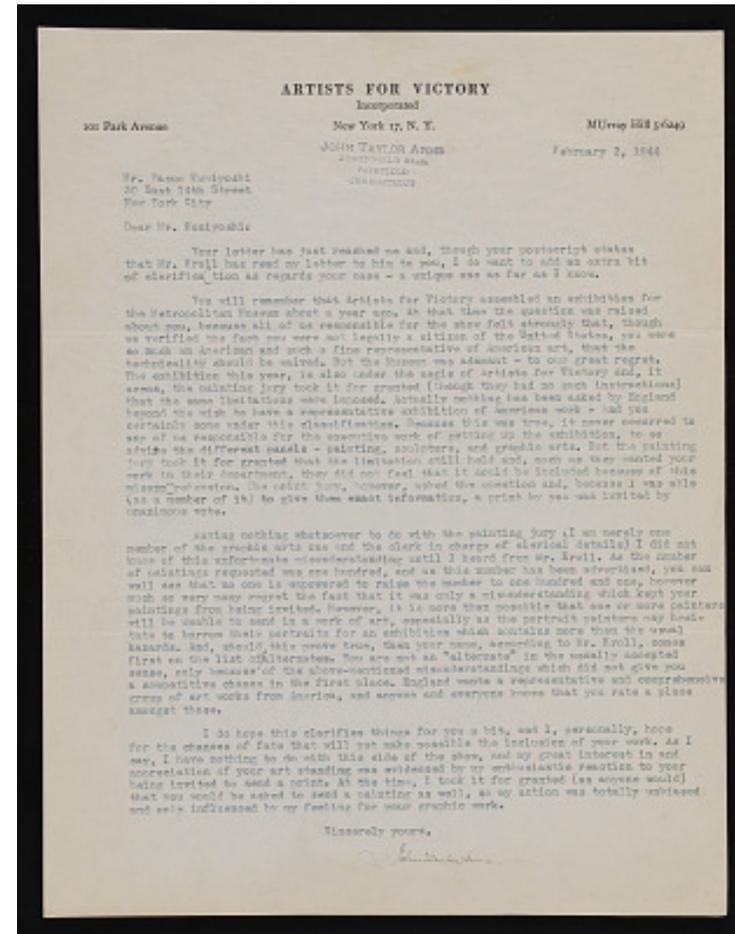
Mr. Yasuo Kuniyoshi
30 East 14th Street
New York City

Dear Mr. Kuniyoshi:

Your letter has just reached me and, though your postscript states that Mr. Kroll has read my letter to him to you, I do want to add an extra bit of clarification as regards your case - a unique one as far as I know.

You will remember that Artists for Victory assembled an exhibition for the Metropolitan Museum about a year ago. At that time the question was raised about you, because all of us responsible for the show felt strongly that, though we verified the fact you were not legally a citizen of the United States, you were so much an American and such a fine representative of American art, that the technicality should be waived. But the Museum was adamant - to our great regret. The exhibition this year, is also under the aegis of Artists for Victory and, it seems, the painting jury took it for granted (though they had no such instructions) that the same limitations were imposed. Actually nothing has been asked by England beyond the wish to have a representative exhibition of American work - and you certainly come under this classification. Because this was true, it never occurred to any of us responsible for the executive work of getting up the exhibition, to so advise the different panels - painting, sculpture, and graphic arts. But the painting jury took it for granted that the limitation still held and, much as they wanted your work in their department, they did not feel that it could be included because of this misapprehension. The print jury, however, asked the question and, because I was able (as a member of it) to give them exact information, a print by you was invited by unanimous vote.

Having nothing whatsoever to do with the painting jury (I am merely one member of the graphic arts one and the clerk in charge of clerical details) I did not know of this unfortunate misunderstanding until I heard from Mr. Kroll. As the number of paintings requested was one hundred, and as this number has been advertised, you can well see that no one is empowered to raise the number to one hundred and one, however, much so very many regret the fact that it was only a misunderstanding which kept your paintings from being invited. However, it is more than possible that one or more painters will be unable to send in a work of art, especially as the portrait painter may hesitate to borrow their



portraits for an exhibition which contains more than the usual hazards. And, should this prove true, then your name, according to Mr. Kroll, comes first on the list of alternates. You are not an "alternate" in the usually accepted sense, only because of the above-mentioned misunderstandings which did not give you a competitive chance in the first place. England wants a representative and comprehensive group of art works from America, and anyone and everyone knows that you rate a place amongst those.

I do hope this clarifies things for you a bit, and I, personally, hope for the chance of fate that will yet make possible the inclusion of your work. As I say, I have nothing to do with this side of the show, and my great interest in and appreciation of your art standing was evidenced by my enthusiastic reaction to your being invited to send a print. At the time, I took it for granted (as anyone would) that you would be asked to send a painting as well, so my action was totally unbiased and only influenced by my feeling for your graphic work.

Sincerely yours,

John Taylor Arms

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