



Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Art

Celebrating 175: Charles White Files, Burroughs, Margaret and DuSable Museum, circa 1949-circa 1971

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Greetings
of the
Winter
Solstice
Season

December 25th

by the Julian calendar, was the winter solstice. This day, originally regarded by the pagans as the day of the nativity of the sun, the shortest day of the year - when the light began its conquering battle against darkness - was celebrated universally in all ages of man.

Taken over by the Christians as the birthday of their mythological Christ, this ancient holiday, set by motions of the celestial bodies, survives as a day of rejoicing that good will and love will have a perpetual rebirth in the minds of men - even as the sun has a symbolic rebirth yearly."

GO PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE & HASTE, & REMEMBER WHAT PEACE THERE MAY BE IN SILENCE. AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT SURRENDER BE ON GOOD TERMS WITH ALL PERSONS. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud & aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater & lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism.

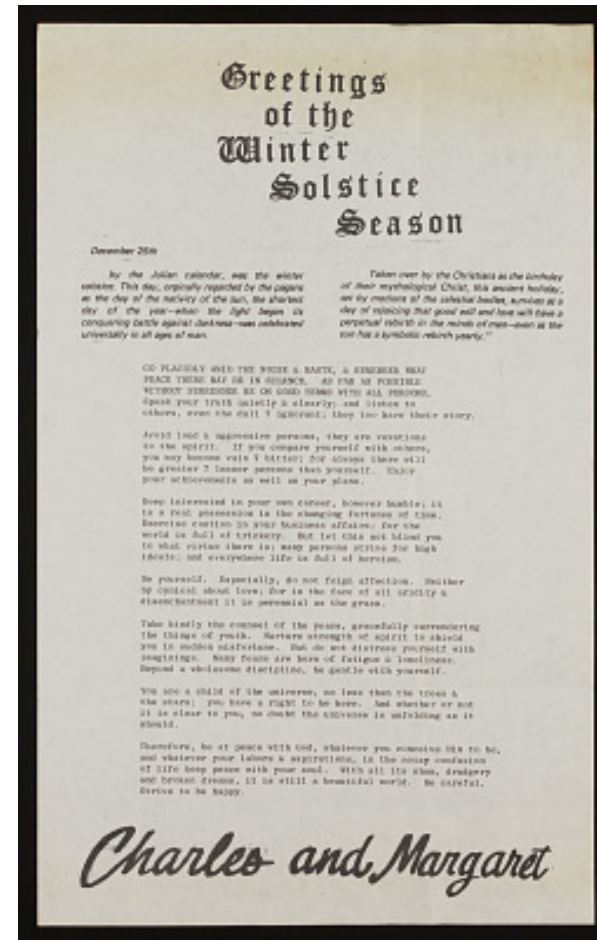
Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affections. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees & the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labors & aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.

Charles and Margaret



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