to figures & an office the opposite of the studio in its charms for the mind. — From the accounts which by the by are rather freely written, by Travellers — who think they confer honor, by their ephemeral productions I suspect you and "Allston" & myself — are near of an age — you have I think several years the advantage of us, as you assured by have in every thing else. — I wish you knew "Allston" you wd. love him, as speak one Brother another. — I now reluctantly leave you — & shall

Thorvaldsens Museums
ARKIV.

Al: Ill.o Albert Thorwaldsen
Scultore a Roma
Italia
To the Care of Mess.rs Pitray & Viel at Havre

LE HAVRE 8 JUIN 1832

DENTRO E FUORI

1861

anticipate the happiness of receiving a cheering communication from you — I know your kindness to Artists near you — you will not be less so to an amateur & an American. Mr. Morse is a personal friend of mine & hope you have seen him.

With the greatest veneration for your Character & Talents. I remain your Obed.t & Humble Serv.t

John Stephano Cogdell
of Charleston South Carolina
United States.

24 April 1832.

To Il. Illustrissimo Albert Thorwaldsen
Scultore in Roma
Italy

1832.
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Thorvaldsens Museums
ARKIV.

Dear Sir.

When a Stranger seeks to form a Correspondence, or desires to draw near unto Worth & superior Talents, it is natural to expect something of him corresponding; but Sir, I appear before you without pretensions of any kind, except a Warm & Sincere heart: relying on time & circumstances, to make their own developement — & on the liberality & nobleness of your Character — as transmitted to all parts of the Globe & by no individual hailed! with more enthusiasm & delight, than by myself. — Being the close friend of the greatest Painter now known, "Washington Allston" my heart has long beat with delightful anticipations of becoming acquainted with the only being whom I rank his Superior in Art — "Mr. Albert Thorwaldsen". — Our Sensibilities, like our sensitiveness — are acute & therefore for my sake — I pray you, do not let any sudden & unfavorable impression prejudice you ag.t me; arising from the very awkward & singular circumstance of an address from me so totally unknown! — When I visited "Canovas" Studio in 1800. I was young — in bad health — having just finished my studies for the profession of the Law — & not having yet commenced life: nor then did I dream I possessed any power for his Art — nor indeed until a few years since — & that discovered, thro the request of my friend "Allston" that I wd. make an Effort. — The last year your Studio was visited by Dr. John Edwards Holbrook & his Lady — friends of mine: under the Dr. I took my lectures on Anatomy, his Bust was the first I modelled; — after that the Bust of an American Hero, from a portrait of my own Painting: — then a fancy head — "Modestia" — next a Bishop of my own Church from Memory. — also a great literary Man of our State after death at the request of the Faculty of our Medical College: next I modelled a group ab.t 18 or 20 Inches high — the Subject suggested by my friend "Allston" viz. "Hagar & Ishmael" in the desert: — I managed it thus: The Mother kneels on her left knee — on the right; the head of the languishing Boy rests, she with her right hand, tenderly sustaining it, & a tittle inclining her person to the left, to resist the pressure of his Weight — her left hand with a part of her flowing mantle about it, raised to her left Cheek, she appears taking the last look at her expiring Boy — he is seated and reclining in front of the Mother, his knees drawn so as to be in front the right shoulder is pressed ag.t the thigh & leg of the Mother — the hand under his right thigh: the left arm is brought over in repose across the left thigh & finds with the hand ag.t the right knee some support for the Body — the right leg & foot pass, under the left leg, by which I have shown all his limbs — read what follows from the Pen of "Allston" who now has the Group & will exhibit it at the Athenaeum in Boston. — "Dear Cogdell. Cambridge Port, 27 Feb.y 1832: "It gives me great pleasure that I can bestow sincere praise on y.r group of "Hagar & Ishmael". It is decidedly y.r best work & much exceeds, what I had expected: it really does you great honor. And though it has a good many faults they are by no means of a kind to outweigh its merits. The attitudes of both Mother & Child are well conceived & they group well together. Perhaps, however the group might have been improved had the Boy's body been a little farther off. & his head resting where it is: I think it wd. have presented a better profile view. But its chief merit lies in the general conception & the expression; wh. are certainly the principal points in a work of art. It has indeed great power of expression

The helpless extremity of the Son is very touching, & his physical suffering is affectingly contrasted with that of his Mother. She seems to have just said "let me not see him die" & to be taking a last look: the deep, silent, maternal agony of that look is of no common order. The calmness of the action too is finely conceived; it is the effort of one who strives not to look into the fearful future; who stands on the brink of an abyss, into which she must fall, but will not look. This is indeed great. I will now point out the faults. But you must not be frightened at the list - since they are only the faults of inexperience. The chief is the disposition of the drapery - the tiny one too often repeated & too abrupt. 2 The costume, the puffs on the arms & the folds on the breast are modern. 3. The right shoulder of the Boy is out of its place - it could not be so far projected without dislocation. 4 The protrusion of his Tongue is not in good taste, for tho' this may be physically true of one dying of thirst - it is one of those unpleasant truths which should be avoided in Art. 5 The Mother's leg is a little too short. These faults of shape & drapery are the faults of inexperience such as more practice of the Study of good models would very soon enable the youth to avoid." After these remarks apprehending from some Aspects that I meant to go to Italy to follow Modelling as a profession "Allston" is warm in his advice against it - unless I had means to reside there for a time without depending on Art for my bread. I replied from the Whispers I had sustained of more than half Scenes, tho' the improper Conduct in New York of one pretending to be a friend: I was unable to go to Rome - where I had been (Mentally) every day of my life since 1800 - that if my Government would be so kind as grant me some appointment I should go immediately, or if my means should still be found to answer - this my dear Sir, will be one of the topics I will endeavour to interest you with - because I feel on You, all reliance is safe and holy. My partner - the Wife of more than 20 years: dwells out when this one life would be a blank; is so passionately fond of the Arts, tho' exercising them not: that she is ready at a moment to fly with me - to England - France or Italy, the last she prefers: the impression from so many years repeated tales - & recitals & of late the very interesting accounts of talented Artists & chief among them yourself, makes her feel much of my enthusiasm & she is very much delighted with my efforts in modelling, casting & Sculpturing: - altho' I have never yet seen a Modeller & altho' I am without experience & all is done "con amore" as an Amateur, thus being neither Taste, nor liberality, nor demand in this State for any thing either in painting or Sculpture - beyond a mere miniature or 30 or 40 dollars Portrait - very few of these. ——— Altho' like yourself Protestant I was highly honored as a youth when in Rome - the head of the College of "S.t Ispidoro" Father James M'Cormick, met with me & became deeply attached to me and saved my life - when all but gone from the effects of newly expressed Wines - at a Vineyard at which we spent the day with Mr. & Mrs. Stone (at Bankes) their daughter & Mr. & Mrs. Lepri - all then of Rome. but alas! Mr. & Mrs. Stone my adopted Mother & my dear Father James - now rest from their labors & I trust repose in the bosom of the Saviour. It was my purity to be introduced to Pope Pius the 7.th by my beloved Father James - my heart young & warm I felt all gratitude. I procured from one of the prelates at the Palace on Monte Cavallo where I kissed his Toe: one of his Slippers & my dear Mother here (now dec.d) made two pair of splendid Slippers w.h I sent to the Pope - they were rec.d but not until they had been so fumigated at the Lazzaretto - in Leghorn, with brimstone &c that they were yellow & unfit for public display. a return of civilness was meant & divided to the Popes Consul at Philadelphia, whom I soon afterwards & he informed me the Ship had been wrecked. — In the last illness of the same Venerable - Pope Pius the 7.th (1823) a friend of mine Mr Thomas D. Condy visited Rome & took a letter to his Holiness from me - to which I rec.d a reply tho' the pen of Cardinal Consalvi. ——— you may yet see that very reply: & all my correspondence between Father James & myself & Mr. & Mrs. Stone — & the Popes Slippers. ——— I have now tired & tired too much with what I meant as infallible circumstances to make you feel there are strong inducements again to tread upon the soil of the "Eternal City" — on the lofty crest of whose celebrated Dome may be found my Name, put in with all the power of my own hand - with my pen knife. ——— Your friend W. Bowman the Painter spent the Winter of 1830 & spring of 1831. in this City - we of course became intimate & if his three quarter length of you, is a correct likeness - I shall be able to know you, see you where I may. ——— Now my dear Sir. to the Society - which I hope may draw as nearly correspondence or otherwise. — At this time I am the second Officer in the Customs for this place under the appointment of the Government of the United States: this is my chief dependence here - when I yield up this I w.d not be able to calculate at present on an income of more than from Nine hundred to one thousand Dollars per annum — - will you be so good as to give me as satisfactory an Opinion as may be in your power — whether with this Amount a family of two, with Economy - might reside comfortably in Rome or Florence or Naples? and have the Mind free from anxieties about such part - while it might be permitted to indulge in the Arts of Painting & Modelling &c.? all that may occur to you as likely to instruct us on this point you will inform me of: House — Restaurateur Servant's &c. — next is there not good English & American Society with which we c.d hope to become intimate as well as the Italian Society of Rome? and more important to me than all ——— sh.d I be able to go to Rome - might I indulge in the hope of your friendship & your hints & direction, in that branch of Art to which my mind has so strong a bias — I dare not use the word Talent: altho' my dear friend "Allston" has. Is the travelling from France frequent & is that the most expeditious mode of getting into Italy? has it of late years been safe? & how is at this time the tranquility of Rome? do the political perturbations of Europe disturb the Clay in the hand of the quiet Modeller & silence the sweet musick of the Chisel? When I hear how the Pope is annoyed the following lines come to my Memory. I know they are familiar to you.

"Se a ciascun l'interno affanno,
Si leggesse in fronte scritto —
Quanti mai, che invidia fanno
Ci farebbero pietà."

Literary kinsman Mr. Hugh S. Legaré, has been appointed Chargé to Belgium, his Sister spent her evening with us recently, all spirit at going with her Brother - they will probably visit Rome & Naples, as they sit down at Belgium - I have charged her to see you & say all her heart may dictate to pave the way for a favorable reception of us, when we may make ourselves known to you in your Atelier or Studio. ——— This letter goes by the Way of Havre (France) to be forwarded by the House of "Petray & Viel" & they will pay all possible portage on this & on your reply at Havre: which I beg you will address to their care. — I modelled for the Centennial Anniversary of the birth of the Father of our Country "Washington" - his Bust from the Portrait of my dec.d friend Stuart & I venture to say to you, I have never seen in Plaster or Marble a Bust I liked so much as to resemblance of Washington: I am ab.t sculpturing one to send to Philadelphia & if it shall be there approved, the City authorities will patronize it. I have a letter from "Sully" to that effect — My health is at this moment bad — too much confinement