

R H I N O P H I L I G H T S

We proudly introduce a rhinophile whose name belies his obsession with rhinos. Meet A. Stan Bland, III of Portland, Oregon:

My allegiance to the rhinoceros spans most of my thirty six years. The evolution of my fascination with rhinos segued from my devotion to dinosaurs when I was a child - I suppose this came as a result of my identification of the rhinoceros as a survivor of the Mesozoic era. This champion offered living, breathing, and thundering evidence of this mystical age, and served to maintain a foothold for me in the primordial miasma of what could have been.

My affinity for rhinos, as well as the resultant nickname, followed me through my high school football days as a lineman - a period that I was somehow able to survive. By this time I had begun putting together a modest collection, and researching the rhino. At this point, I had my first experience with people who would look at me curiously with pinched expressions on their faces, and ask, "Why? What's so great about rhinos"? Any rhinophile is all too familiar with this question. It is typically asked by people in a tone of voice that smacks of a mitigated accusation of lunacy. Typically, the stock response regarding my reverence for rhinos addresses their true character and their fragile existence. To me, the rhino's character is one of detached docility - unless of course, someone messes around with her/him. Which brings us to the fragility of the rhino. There are many people who are driven to mess with the rhino due to the cross-cultural value of their horn. Whether obtained for circuitous sale as a sexual stimulant or for carving into dagger handles, the price paid for rhino horn may well reduce the species to a myth. Even when provoked, these juggernauts are defenseless against high-powered rifles.

The most frequently asked question regarding my personal collection is one of quantity. I haven't the slightest idea of how many rhinos are grazing within my home. I do know that it is hard to find a free spot for each rhino that comes through our door. I have often thought of herding them together into one room to let them get acquainted with one another, and to swap stories, compare horns, etc. However, if I were to do this, I would probably have to count them - then I would know exactly how many there are. I don't want to know; I just want to take care of them.

Years ago, rhino collecting was truly a challenge. There weren't that many around. To find a new and unique rhinoceros was a distinct coup. I spent a good deal of time scoffing at people who collected frogs, owls, unicorns and the like - far too easy pickin's, and far too cute. Today, there seem to be more rhinos out and about in the marketplace. The thrill of the search is mollified a bit, but on the other hand, this indicates that rhinos are grabbing for and receiving more public attention; perhaps more support.

My collection consists of rhinos made from most every medium imaginable, large to tiny, primitive to intricate, black to white, here to there. The only type of house-rhino that I do not collect are the cutesy rhinos. The words "cute" and "rhino" have no business being near one another unless they are describing a calf. The cute rhinos that I have been presented with do a terrific job maintaining law and order in my sock drawer. As is the case for any collector, each piece is valuable to me in terms of its origin, background, sentimental value, etc. I do try to deploy my rhinos tastefully around the house so that it doesn't look saturated. Some are out in the open and rampant, others are tucked

back in dark crannies. Still others only come out at night to cavort and push the furniture around.



Throughout the ages, the rhinoceros has come to be equated with unbridled toughness and resilience, as is evidenced by the adoption of the rhino as a logo for several companies and corporations. The tenuous existence of the rhinoceros has created a different symbolic image: one of hope, and one of fear for its right to survive amidst demand for its death.

I have chosen the rhinoceros as my personal endangered species. I certainly cannot give adequate attention to all of the other species. The readers of *Really, Rhinos!* are of the same ilk, I assume. I implore all rhinophiles to continue to support the rhinoceros on whatever front, and by whatever means are available to them.

continued on next page...

...Rhinophilights continued

Write, donate, legislate, educate, pray. It would truly be a shame to have to show our grandchildren these silly little figurines that we collect, and explain to them that they were not really dinosaurs or unicorns. [ed note:- and it was not mythology or meteors that destroyed them, but the most "intelligent" species on earth]

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P.S. Ask Stan about the rhino t-shirt he found. It has an original rhino on it that I doubt you've seen before. Thanks, Stan!

What? You get enough ZOODOO at work? Then adopt-a-coat rack instead! For only \$47.83, you too can have a (23"wide x13"high x 10.5"deep) rhino rack for your very own home. Write to: K-M Concessions, Train Station-City Park, Denver, CO 80205.

PACHYDERM POETRY



A Rhinoceros on My Head

*Every day I wear a rhinoceros,
right on the top of my head.
And every night I take him off before
I climb in bed.
I hang up my rhinoceros on the
bedpost by the horn
Then I put my rhinoceros back on my
head the first thing the next morn.*

Guy Gilchrist

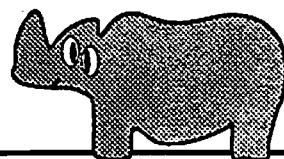
"Night Lights and Pillow Fights:
A Trip to Storyland"

Endangered Rhinos.

New homes sought. One-of-a-kind Sergio Bustamante ceramic. Facsimile of Chinese roof tile rhino. Bronzes. Soapstones (large). Watercolors, batiks, fine art posters, ALL BEAUTIFULLY FRAMED. Must sell before July 20th. Send your wish list if you collect a specific species or medium. Sadly must pare 1,000+ rhino collection down to 100 max. Help me out and increase your collection simultaneously. Call me at (602) 881-0018 x125 (M-Th from 4:30-8:30 MST) or write to Judyth Lessee, Really, Rhinos! PO BOX 1285, Tucson, AZ 85702-1285.

BETTE DAVIS EYES?

Check out your local card shop or supermarket. Hallmark is selling a sheet of puffy, padded stickers which have elephants, hippos and of course rhinos. The beady little eyes roll around. One sheet costs \$1.60.



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Reader feedback is encouraged. All correspondence should be sent to Judyth Lessee, Editor, Really, Rhinos!, Ltd P O Box 1285, Tucson Arizona 85702-1285 USA (602)327-8277

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