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U.S. COMMISSION FOR S.A. ARTIST

A LONG-ODDS CHANCE brought Louis Steyn, the Pretoria batik artist, an important commission for an "Animals of South Africa" panel for America.

It arose because Mrs. Thomas Raeburn White, a writer from California, who has published one book on the French political scene, came to central Africa to collect material for a second.

Johannesburg was not on her itinerary, but when she wanted to fly from the Congo to Angola she could not get a direct flight. She had to come to Jan Smuts airport to make a connection.

With an unexpected day to spend in Johannesburg, she strolled through the city. Seeing Mr. Steyn's panel of South African birds, his biggest and finest work, through the window of a ground-floor gallery, she was so impressed that she bought it on the spot. She also commissioned Mr. Steyn to make a companion batik of South African animals and send it to her home.

The bird panel, nine feet high and four feet wide, took Mr. Steyn three months to complete, with 10 successive dyeing operations. He has depicted 12 species so accurately that a beginner at birdwatching can identify them.

Mr. Steyn has had incomparable opportunities of observ-

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ing wild life, for he was born in the Kruger National Park, where his father was a game warden. He has a post as an artist in the Provincial Nature Conservation Department and works on his batiks in his spare time.

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