

Dear Carey and Jim,

It was so great to hear from both of you and know that I must be finally getting the hang of sending attachments from the library, when I can not actually see them. Time press being what it is I will write this note to you both.

Truly things are going great for me in the Starlight. The one guy who was kind of a pain was arrested last week and the place is quiet again. I have nearly a dozen drawings going, the light is so great in this room that I was at work by five this morning. A friend loaned me a radio, the last creature comfort I pined for, and my bliss is complete.

I have become familiar with working out of the library a couple of mid-day hours each day. I know how to do searches on the WEB, which card catalog to go to, how to place holds for books to be sent out from other libraries, etc. And while I wait for an Internet machine to become available I can read a little of the daily paper. I have large format books checked out in my hovel: art of the dark ages and on prehistoric art to peruse the photos over morning gruel - and keep a copy of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* with me at all time to fend off madness. I wish the next two months would last forever.

Carey asked about my drawings so here is a sketch. About half my time goes into drawings of/for the Fourth Reliquary; the Reliquary of Transmutation. There are two parallel plans for this piece. One, if I do secure a commission at BNFL or RAL and have a good budget, shop and, most importantly, official coverage of somebody's reactor and international radioactive materials shipping license. This is the more formal of the two plans and I would really, REALLY like to do it. Two, is if I make the sculpture here in the States without any official sanction. This started out under the color/attitude/ design consideration of "Fuck you, I can do it my own self in a flophouse for a hundred bucks and nicked, salvaged, found parts and materials." But, in the marvelous way that repeated drawings, trying different solutions on the same problems, does, it has grown into a pretty cool idea of its own and I think I will make it even if a UK commission comes through, although I wouldn't hazard trying to ship it out of the States. Airports have gotten really tight.

So the above-mentioned batch of drawings deal with everything from how the whole thing would look mounted on the wall from twenty-five feet away through all the little details of door hinges and latches. I did one long series on 4 by 6 inch slips of paper on each of which I traced the same basic gothic-topped box and then tried ever imaginable pattern of the face/boarder plate of the opening... over and over again. Most ended up in the recycle bin but it was kinda of fun and I learned a lot.

And there is some personal stuff, remembered images from other times, which I can't let go of without dealing with them. A dying pidgin breathing out its last breaths in a parking lot in Richland as its mate walked solemn circles around it the morning after it was clear Margaret was moving out and I was going to stay and move to the studio. Three AM driving forklift in Taterboys zero-freezer and an English house sparrow flew out from behind the pallet of curly-fries I was moving. He flew right past me and up to

the ceiling beyond the lights. He was so dirty I could barley make out his markings but it was an English House sparrow and he lived in a zero degree freezer the size of a football field with no free water that had a dozen forklifts coming and going all three shifts a day seven days a week. I had never forgotten that bird and how out of place we both were and could not lay it to rest until I drew it. Stuff like that.

And the ol' "Drawing What You See Out Your Window" for an hour or two each morning. This one is the light post across the street with a street lamp and a maze of about 50 power, telephone, cable lines and wires going every direction. Actually it is starting to look pretty good this morning. It is good for my eyes to look at far away stuff some of the day, and that view is the FENG SHUI of the Starlight. And it is good exercise, I like doing it and it gets me into a good space for the more problematic drawing the rest of the day.

A combination of the above two are The Keys, which I also draw every day. I have a ring of seven keys that I have carried everywhere for about ten years, including each trip to the UK. And they have not fitted anything in my life for half that time. It is the key to the B-House, long ago sold. It is the key to the Hanford studio, long burned. Keys to toolboxes long ago abandoned at the failed Hanford Studio.

I cast them as dice, unpremeditated, onto a stiff paper and outline them with white glue that holds them in place until I finish in a couple of days. Draw What You See, As It Is. This is also a mental health exercise **exorcise**. As an aside I am working on formulating an equation as to the half-life, in Dolors, reduced per drawing of Objects Of Dolorous Memories.

And now I get to work on some drawings for Master Flint as well. I have two months left in the Starlight Jim and am able to get them done in that time. I think it will be fun. I will shoot for sending them in Beowulf then. I am running a completely cashless existence but can always make a phone call and trade a drawing for whatever I need. I wish it could always be that way.

And yes Carey, it is so nice to not be dealing with galleries, agents and the sharks, rats and weasels of the art world. If only it could always be so. Only Joey, who paid the three months rent, could be called well to do, the other dozen friends supporting my present work are people who already have some of my work (often received as presents over the years) and can come up with one or two hundred dollars for a small drawing. There is a waiting list and I have never had to call someone else. The only social pressure on me is making sure no one feels like they are not getting a fair turn. And I told you they have been trading amongst each other. I have produced (signed and released) so few drawings in the past ten years they are rather a rarity. The years at Hanford I had blackboards set up and did most of my problem solving on them for immediacy, which actually worked quite well. It is nice to work big, look at it for a couple of minuets, erase it and do it again.

And Carey, I so glad to hear you are having important exhibits, a book out on your work and that you and St. Jerome are still working at making art. And mostly I am so relived and comforted that we are back on the same page. Thank you for you're considered letter and I understand now it was a misunderstanding at a time when out stresses and strains were in convergence. And I do apologies for spinning out. My people skills are even worse then my cooking.

Time is almost up but we three are pretty caught up with each other and it feels good to my old withered soul. Know I am in the Starlight and doing good work. I promises to stay in touch a bit better and may land a weekend house-sit with a computer in the next month when people start going on vacation and that would give me some writing time... although it is hard to tear away from the drawing.

Jim, I am glad I had a clear picture of your Scottish Artist-in-Residency.

Be well and you are both with me now,

Jim