

Thursday 28 Oct 1999 - Nottingham
6:30 pm

Dearest Janet, Edward and Push-Button,

I more closely resemble a character that Samuel Beckett might have created every day. My deafness is magnified by British accents, the pair of spectacles (my last I have) are both broken and glued back together and a 10 year old prescription that is so bad I can't read the number on the bus until it nearly runs me over or, if I'm on the bus, can't read street-name signs until I'm passed my stop, I just ^{have} to laugh at myself; deaf, dumb and blind in a strange land on an impossible quest. Only my CAT shoes keep me moving.

A week ago today (in the morning) I returned to Nott'm from London and have taught/lectured seven days in a row straight - sometimes at three venues in a single day, and done rather well too.

And today, in a feckless act of courage or stupidity, I changed my return ticket to Friday 26 November. This will give me a chance to explore every last option for reactor use. My residency with the Arts Cat ends on 5 Nov and I am free to strike any deals in industry that will begin after the millenium. No hard feelings either way, just the way it is. I've been a good "poster boy" for them for a year (their funding went way up largely because of my good work last year) and I'm sorry that this "the science-art agency" doesn't have the courage to associate with an artist working with scientists working in industry, but, on the other hand, the scientists running Imperial College's reactor don't have the courage to work with an artist either.

My stock is way high with Blackett Labs and Imperial College in general. I can keep my Artist-in-Residence there as long as I like - no money but an office, address and, most important SHOP TIME. The prestige of being artist-in-res. in Imperial's Physics Dept. is worth its weight in gold. And the lads in the shop and Jim Gibb, head of Physics really brought me to tears when I visited there last week. I explained my fundless position and were I ~~sto~~ stood (sp? past tense of stand)

My ref: JA02

22 October 1999.

Dear James,

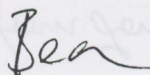
I wanted to pass on a **big** thank you for the wonderful evening you provided us with at the Art Exchange on Friday 15th October. It was a real treat to hear you speaking so openly and generously about your work and life.

Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed, it as did the artists that I have seen subsequently, having nothing but positive feedback and appreciation.

I wish you all the best with the remainder of your residency in Nottingham and of course the future of your work. It is a rare thing when art holds the possibility for the good of the planet - you truly are on an epic journey, and thank you again for sharing it with us.

Best Wishes, keep in touch!

Yours sincerely



Bea Tobolewska

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in this project. They were way "no problemo", they assured me that any materials I needed to create the last, completing, final, transmuted, long-sought, reliquary sculpture could be easily and comfortably hidden in the budgets of all the other projects they are working on. It means so much to me to have the respect and support of this cadre of skilled workers - they aren't into the London art scene - they aren't even sure what it is that Jim trying to do... but through my diligent work and skill I have earned this respect. It means a lot to me - really a lot.

So it was Edward who first counseled me to not quit early and return to the States (such advice as I also received from Linley and Phil Mungy since) - Ed stating the half-life of all this bad publicity for nuclear endeavors would die down, ^{However} the bad news just keeps coming here (see inclosures) and it will take the Japanese workers a few more weeks to die (bless their souls) and then the funerals, the protests, the demonstrations... there will never be an easy time for this project so I'll give it all I can now. When I entered U.K. this time I was given a six month visa so my deadline for flying out is the expiration of my plane ticket in Dec. and the fact Jim going to be running on empty for the month of November. I may have to have sex with my Landlady (see enclosure on Darby House) to stay here... ~~if~~ if I can remember how to have sex.

Janet - I counseled the numbers with Mark & Jim and other friends/supporters at Imperial last week on neutron flux of our "kitchen counter-top" transmutation operations. We used five ^{241}Am alpha sources from smoke detectors on a 3 mill. ^7Be foil as source and were equally divided in our results as the Neutron flux being 10^4 or 10^5 (one very bright Pakistani grad. student, who seems to be stalking me, came up with 10^3 and made a strong case for his results). With 10 mill-grams ^{99}Tc glued to the obverse side of the Beryllium foil this will give us a 10% chance of transmuting one atom of ^{99}Tc to ^{100}Ru in one hour and a 90% chance

James Acord
Artist-in-Residence
Arts Catalyst
Imperial College

20 October 1999

*first Draft
in London on Jim
Flint's computer.*

Imperial College
Director of Reactor Operations and Safety

Dear Simon Franklin,

I write to you at this time to thank you for your time and consideration in meeting with me at Penney Labs on 23 September regarding my current Artist-in Residency at Imperial College's Blackett Laboratories. I will say that I understand your concerns in managing the Consort Reactor and also gather that you are not adverse to my sculpture project of using nuclear process for the creation of Fine Art.

My understanding of your concerns, and our conversations on the 23 rd, leads me to believe that my best chance at doing a Tc>Ru transmutation at Imperial College is through a third party such as BNFL, RAL, Rolls-Royce, etcetera. I am planning to extend my residency in hopes of achieving this important art-science interaction. I would like to have your candid opinion on this pursuit and know if you would consider such a working relationship to create this art work.

There are certain concerns with arts organisations with which I work about my working with the nuclear industry to complete this project. Imperial College, however, seems comfortable with my endeavours, I believe my artist-in-residency at Blackett Labs can survive my engaging a second party to undertake this work.

Additionally I would like to invite you to collaborate with me in applying for a Science and Art partnership grant based on our proposed transmutation. I spoke with a representative of the Wellcome Trust at the dedication of the New Age Modern gallery (sic) at u. of something at Loughborough and, although he is not on the policy and/or selection committee he felt the project was a worthy one and encouraged me to find a scientist with whom to collaborate with. I have enclosed a leaflet on the next round of application for their development grant.

of transmitting Tc(N)Ru in 10 hours. These are very rough figures but probably in the ball-park. The beautiful AmBe source-in-a-box that I have been offered to steal from the radioactive waste storage shed isn't much stronger and (although it is totally beautiful and I would love to have it as a paper-weight on my desk) my chances of importing it into the states without a long prison sentence are remote... so I decided to pass.

I very much want to do our project in all the ways we have talked about and, if I get the opportunity to do this at BNFL or other industrial entities, set it up for a web-site broadcast of the instrumentation of the work. Simon at the ^{Imperial College's} Consort reactor will not let me photograph the reactor or control-room but someone else probably (if they agree to work with me) will. The students at Guildhall (who made the 4 CD Roms on my art work, two of which you now have) are very keen on doing the camera and computer work. The second CD, which I sent to Linley a couple of weeks ago, are my favorites from that class. For reasons I don't understand they got a low grade on it... for technical reasons reasons - bad sound or something.

Well, I'm tired, have a bad cold (it rains here all the time) and have an early lecture tomorrow morn'. This will be my last letter to friends until.... I ask you to share it with Linley (Tom Putnam - all our friends you might see) and I've put a package off to Linley that has additional info in it that I have asked him to show you. I have enough money to run two weeks and am staying five so, from here on out it will be post-cards - I purchased £10 worth of post-card stamps today. Any small gifts of tobacco or coffee kindly accepted. This project is the culmination of my intire life as a sculptor and it has become do-or-die. Oddly enough, I feel very comfortable with that. I've certainly become a cult figure with my students, both here and in London, and that is some comfort.

With every best wish and much love,

Subject: Fw: From James Acord

Date: Thu, 30 Sep 1999 13:43:42 +0100

From: "Nicola Triscott" [REDACTED]

To: "James Acord" <xdg71@dial.pipex.com>

-----Original Message-----

From: Roger Wiltshire [REDACTED]

To: nicola [REDACTED]

Date: 23 September 1999 15:34

Subject: Re: From James Acord

*
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*
Please give me a phone number.

the message that defines the problem of the project.

Roger Wiltshire

[REDACTED]

Roger Wiltshire

AEA Technology

220 Harwell, Didcot

Oxfordshire, OX11 0RA

UK

[REDACTED]

>>> "Nicola Triscott" <nicola@artscat.demon.co.uk> 22 September 1999 15:54:47 >>>

I am contacting you on behalf of James Acord. Please could you reply to him at

jmr [REDACTED]

Could you let Mr Acord know the availability of technesium 99 in powder form. He would need a very small amount and would like to know cost and time for delivery.

He would be very appreciate if you could reply by tomorrow morning, prior to a meeting we are having at Imperial College at 1pm.

With thanks,

Nicola Triscott
for James Acord

Nicola Triscott
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The Arts Catalyst
Toynbee Studios
28 Commercial Street
London E1 6LS

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sure!