

POSSIBLE VIRTUAL LONDON INTERVIEW?

Dear Linley, Janet and Tom,

To quote from my last letter to Dave Wark of a few days ago: "Although I hope we short-list, I am a bit apprehensive about the expense of a trip to London on short notice. I have given two paid lectures in January with two more possible. The sums are small, however, and the exhibit I have up is drawn from private collections with nothing for sale. I considered e-mailing Wellcome Trust inquiring if they planned financial travel assistance to short-list'ers but decided that not communicating with them was a better course. I'm certain I can raise the travel fare, whatever it is, and am sending note-cards to friends, former interns, Jim Flint, etc., in London, hinting I might need a couch to crash on for a few nights mid-March." (Letter, Acord to Wark - 16 Feb. '00)

Well, my optimism is admirable, but if I **do** have to go to London, a long string of armed robberies might be necessary in early March. The \$300 in lecturer fees isn't holding up to well with all the postage, copying, closing up The Bush Company every night and the hour-long taxi ride to and from my heroin dealer's motel room. Soooo, I got to thinking.

This **is** a sci-art grant, right? What if the Designated Project Coordinator (me) was out of the country and wished to interview and defend his grant application for the required 20 minutes in mid-March by... some virtual reality, high-tec, streaming video format from some exotic, far-away place, like, say, Seattle? Would they go for that? They might. True, I might have to go in person and that is that. And if I don't make the short list it wouldn't matter anyway, but, if they called for an interview I would love to be able to **offer** a virtual interview and it would save me having to raise \$1,500.

I remember when I was at the British Association for the Advancement of Science's Annual meeting in Wales years ago I talked with a group of physicist at the CERN accelerator in Grenoble with live video and sound. I mean we really **talked**; they asked me questions about my transmutation art project and I asked about the energies they were attaining compared to fission reactions, ionizing events of great energies occurring in deep space and producing the incredibly energetic particles striking the Earth's upper atmosphere..., you know, that kind of stuff. I remember that afternoon quite well; the video image seemed to move in jumps or jerky spurts, but was always there. The sound was quite good with what seemed like a slight delay, but not much; like long-distance telephone calls to Alaska 25 years ago. I just sat at a table in a conference room in front of a television camera with ear-phones on and a couple of mic's in front of me. So, I thought to myself, "I know **I** don't know enough about this technology but I'm lucky enough to have some really bright, creative friends who do". So I thought I'd ask the three of them to think about it.

Tom has all new, high-tec digital cameras, Linley can set the interview into some deep 'Dungeons and Dragons' alchemical laboratory with images of the interviewers as a moving back-drop constantly being blown away by an accurately depicted pulsed spallation neutron accelerator gun (based on ISIS) and Janet can make me into a giant talking fish having a beer in "The Miracle of Science Bar and Grill" across the street from the MIT II reactor in Cambridge, Mass. where I have been and remember well enough to help recreate.

Really, you guys, please think about it. If Wellcome Trust calls me for an interview I want be able able to say authoritively ;"Well, you'll need a standard X Y Z format and we can video-conference Thursday at 10:00 GMT by telephoning if you have a modem with 20,000 terabytes of A B C at international Ljubljana standard frequency X". Then, when they call up (at Putnam Films, Honkworm, Zombie, etc. at 3 AM) we can have a real-time interview with me as a large fish or something.

Plans narrowing down to Leap Day or 1 March being travel day. Will keep you posted.
All best wishes,

