

Friday eve' 25 Sept. 1998
London

Dearest Janet, Edward and Button Valore,

I can't believe I got over here without your new address!! I've gone through every sketch book I brought over twice and, if I did write it down, I didn't bring it with me. This is probably more a comment on the shape I was ~~at~~ in before I left than anything else.

Well, Finlay put me on the plane and probably no one else could have, and I'm here, and after a couple of very rough weeks am starting to catch my balance and feel a little better about doing this artist in residency. What has made the difference is finally getting into the physics shop and starting to make sculpture. I'm being well accepted by the other 12 guys in the shop and, in truth, this has become my haven - my hold on sanity. My next generic letter will deal with the shop, and all the good stories. In spite of the late start (two weeks of press interviews and lectures out of town) I'm getting more sculpture done per day than planned and am more than caught up. And I am reasonably happy with the direction they are going.

I started with the goal of making 3 reliquaries (with supporting drawings). Now I think I can do 5. There are a lot of hurdles of staying within budget but I feel like I might be on a roll and, as I have become accepted in the shop, the lads keep finding scrap or left-over metal that I can use without having to go through purchasing. As for the shop it really couldn't be working out better. My lectures are good (I really work hard at preparing them). And I am trying to shut down all the press interviews. I feel that if I'm going to make this work I need to have time to make sculpture and time to myself.

and I want to thank you two so much for having me over to your new home in my last week in the states and inviting all my close friends too! It was a great evening and made no small or inconsiderable contribution to my making it over here. Thanks a lot!!

I hope you guys have had a chance to read "A Beautiful Mind". I know you will both enjoy it. I'm sure you are still busy settling into your new home and may not have much time to read. I hope Edward's new job is working out OK and that Honkworm is up and running still.

And as for myself I miss you a lot. It looks like my 3 month residency will be extended into next year but I am adamant about getting on that plane 30 November and being back with my friends through the first of the year. Then I can decide wheather or not to return for spring. So, as I go about my appointed rounds as an Artist in Residency at "Imperial" College, and do my best (inspite of the indscribable metal monsters that haunt me) at least I know I'll see you in December even if you don't make it over for my opening on 4 November. By the way, I have enough room to put you all and friends up at my flat.

Much love and every best wish, Jim