

Dear Uncle Brad,

I'm embarrassed that this is how long it took for me to write you a letter since we visited you and Nicole at the end of June. But at least I am finally writing to you now. I'm not typing this to be formal or business-like, writing is just more fluid for me when i am typing. I am (with this package and letter) finally completing a project that you feature in. I had a dream, probably about a week before we came to visit you, that was really scary, horrible things were happening in most of it but at one point, I ducked into this door right off of the street and everything was calm inside of there. It was the kind of shop where you can barely turn around without knocking something off of a shelf, narrow, tall rows, like a tight hug. There could have possibly been someone working in there but I not sure. If there was, they did not speak but I was not intimidated by them, they weren't at all like anyone outside of the store. They could have been an elderly man wearing suspenders, a butchers apron, a red and white thin stripped shirt. Well I made my way around the store and I knelt down by this particular rack, which just consisted of a bar laid across where a shelf would be at a high right above my left kneecap. I had to short of crouch down to get close to it, really awkward because I had a large bag on my back stuff with something. The experience here was very intimate because of the tight space, the closeness to what I was examining. Either the T-shirts on the rack were back lit or they emitted light. All of the shirts to the right and left of the rack were darker, shades of deep blues and purples, colors of night. They had images and text on them but they were out of focus fuzzy, not edited just blurry. There was only one shirt on the rack that was bright white and it was near the center of the rack. I parted the shirts to see the white shirt and I discovered that it had a painting across its front and I recognized the shirt as one that you had made when you were in highschool. It was a painting of a specific picture that when I awoke, I immediately remembered to be located in a photo album in my parents house in Kansas. It is a picture of your family (our family) in probably the 70's. Let's see, you look to be about 6 years old in the photo if i remember correctly, I'm bad at math but that seems like the right time but everyone in the photo has on this familiar color palate. Ochres, and browns, and night blues that I love the best. Marky is on the far left, sort of sitting on the edge of the couch arm, then Freddy is standing on the inside of him, right above Grandma Rita. Then there is phoebe facing Freddy but looking at the camera, then my daddy, Granddad is sitting in front of him, and David is standing on the far right. You are are in the very center sitting on a chair. Your entire body is in the picture, you are sort of pointing your legs and grinning. This painting of this picture, it had a word on it, one that was not clearly written but the feeling of it was. It was similar to a word that Joseph Beuys would use, in German, the way that you can stick as many words together as you want to make new words with even more complex meanings, this one was a word about our family and about Kunst and warm properties.

There was more to the dream but i did not focus on it when i woke up because I left the store and it became very scary again.

I made a copy of the shirt that you had made, in highschool, in the dream. I made a word that was just right, 'Ursprungwarme': it means origin or source (as in source of a well or stream) of warmth, this can mean physical warmth such as that from a light or a fire or soup or synthesis, or, it can refer to cultural or love warmth, as from a family, or a kiss, or knowledge. I have enclosed a picture of the shirt.

In the beginning, before I painted the shirt, I thought that I would make the rack and the book-end shirts too, for it to hang with. But it didn't seem right. It was too static. No one would touch it or learn about it. I wanted the dream to be physical and the shirt to circulate. I began to think about having an art auction, only for the shirt.

We have an outbuilding behind our house that is two stories. The bottom was a garage when we moved in, and the top level (which is at the same level as our house, you have to go down some stairs in the back to get to the parking spot and the garage door) was just an exposed wood interior with a ceiling of four triangles meeting in a point with rafters and a lot of junk. We slowly pulled all of that out, cleaned a bit, and painted the walls white, the floor black, and left the ceiling exposed wood, in order to make into a gallery space. Our gallery is called 'They Won't Find Us Here' (gallery) and we had our first opening the last Saturday night of August. The show consisted of work from everyone in the house (we are all artists). Jennifer, Matt, Kelsey, Lauren, and I. Matt and Kelsey were both in Ireland with me. We lived in the same house while we were there (orchard house). At this opening, I held the auction.

I parted and greased my hair back. I wore brown stripped dress pants, a matching brown vest, a collared white-blue shirt, a dark blue tie, a black suit coat made of cotton, and my fancy dress shoes (they are brown and shiny, they have a sort of pointed toe and they are really good for dancing). Before the show, I found an incredible cardboard box on the Free-shelf (there is a place in the hall of my school called 'the free shelf'. People put things on it that they don't want anymore, it is full of treasures). This cardboard box had been used to ship a sink. It was EXACTLY the kind of cardboard box that would work as a podium. It's dimensions correspond directly to those of a podium and, it has a shallow rim around the top of it, to contain any material you may need to set on the surface. I painted wood grain on it to make it look like a solid block of wood podium. Then, I printed out a picture taken of you within the year that I found on facebook and I pinned it to the front of the podium. Then, I got out this fancy fancy box that I have that is of a very nice finished wood and has a latch on the front and has red velvet on the inside. I set that on top of the podium to hold all of the money. Then, I painted a sign on cardboard "Auction at 8". I also painted 30 auction bidding cards, all on roughly 10"x3" pieces on cardboard, the numbers i painted on them came from stencils that I made for that very purpose. The text and numbers on the sign and auction cards were all painted fairly neatly in black. I

sold the numbers for a dollar each. Here is a list of the people that purchased numbers and which numbers they chose:

Jennifer #1  
Morgan Hiscocks #2  
Curtis Allen#3  
David Frolich#4  
Peter #5  
Kelsey Olson#13  
Aaron Van Dyke#6  
James Parmenter#7  
Matt Lawler#8  
David Rich #18 (but he gave it to Lauren because she didn't have a dollar and he had to go) (when he picked 18 he said 'jewish mysticism', i still have to look up what that has to do with # 18)  
Raychel Steinbach... I didn't write down which number she picked  
Diana Chao#9  
Josh #17  
here I wrote down 'BF' as the name with #20. I don't know who that is  
Jack Randal #24  
Eric #25  
Alyssa #10  
Kay #28

I gave a spiel like this when I approached attendees for participation in the auction:

*Would you like to purchase a bidding number for the Auction at 8 30? Tonight the bidding is for this painting made by Bradley Tilman Atchison, my uncle, when he was in highschool. This is him (i would point at you on the shirt and pictured on the front of the podium), this is my dad's family (pointing at the shirt). (I would tell them about the dream then, and then about the word and what it means).*

The auction didn't actually begin at 8:30, it was postponed until 10 to insure that as many people as possible would participate. I've enclosed a DVD of the footage from the actual auction. James Parmenter was the highest bidder, I believe the bidding concluded at \$30.

As your gallery representative, I have enclosed a check of %50 of the profits from the sale of bidding numbers and the work of art. This comes to a total of **\$22.50**. Congratulations Brad!

Next time I write to you it will be more personal and about more of what I am doing in the rest of my life. In short: school is well, the end is drawing near,

Jennifer and I are the busiest we have ever been together: she with her new full-time job with Americorps, me with school and work, and both of us with our internship at the Minneapolis Institute of Art with the Minnesota Artists Exhibition Program. Our cats are still cute (p.s.-how is Columbo and Voila? Jen and I miss them), our house and our roommates are good companions, and we love this city; It's a good home for now. We are going hunting for Bollita's and Shantrel's (sp?!) this fall/early winter...

I hope you and Nicole are doing well, not too busy, enjoying the beginning of fall, making yummy crust for the bakery... I miss you guys. It was so so so good to see you this summer. All of my love,

-Emily