

3816 West Biddison
Fort Worth, Texas 76109

October 30, 1966 Sunday

Dear Nell,

We are just simply stunned by the beauty and mystery and depth and tenderness of this photographic-painting you sent us. Penn came in immediately from the airport last evening late because he could not bear to delay a moment getting the sublime picture to us. I think it is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen, we have it up in the living room, on the piano music rack (which seems marvelously appropriate) and none of us has accomplished anything this magnificent Sunday morning because we keep going back in to gaze at that "painting." My youngest son, Gregory, who has great photographic gifts is almost in anguish and has pestered me to know how you did it - how you got the marvelous gradations of tones in the hands without getting the actual pores. He has gone and got his folios again and again. What kind of paper did you use? We think it is an Agfa paper that we used in Mexico but which we cannot buy in this country. How did you get that lovely light tones around the baby's ear. He suddenly is very discontent with his printing and my printing and wants to come there and work in the darkroom so you can show him HOW. I told him you were a genius. He said I told him he was one, too, so why doesn't he do that kind of work. In Mexico, even when he was four and five (he is only nine now) he worked endlessly with a great master printer, Sereno, in the master's darkroom; and Berenice Abbot invited him to come and work with her in Maine, but now he has eyes only for your work. I told him that since you had a tape recorder, perhaps soon we would make a tape, ask you all these questions and perhaps you could tell us the details on a tape, which would be almost as good as seeing you do the work.

And Penn, well bless his heart. These are great days for him. He told me the greatest experience of his life had been to meet Jacques and go with us to Gethsemani. Last night he told me he now had two great experiences, the visit with you being the second.

I have good tape ~~max~~ equipment, but no talent for taping. However, we will make you a tape soon, now that we know you have a machine.

In the meantime, I am mailing you the two books ~~in~~ Penn autographed for you and your grandson, Chris, last evening. He is running in circles.

We will never be able to tell you what this gift means.

You had already, with your books and letters, walked into the deepest part of our lives. Now, with this marvelous work, you are constantly "visible" to us.

With great love,

Joe