

November 13, 1968

Dearest Nell,

Thank you for your letter, so beautiful with the Haiku poems, so like the solitude of this workroom this cold and blustery morning, so like the studies I am doing these days in the writings of the Desert Fathers: how marvelous to go back to Jerome and Anthony and Macarius and Pachomius and read in them statements that find the deepest resonances in what we know or long to know.

About the letter heads. Actually, the darkroom adjoins my work room here, the door not six feet from my desk. In addition to tray development, I have a stabilizing processer that produces quite beautiful nearly dry prints in ten seconds. I do it two ways: 1) With trays, I still use a Mimosa stabilizing paper (owned by Agfa), usually one of their document papers. I make whatever print I want small, and then run it through the trays but do not use a hardener in the hypo. 2) With the stabilizer, I just make the exposure and shoot it through the stabilizing processer.

Whenever Gregory or I print, we just make a few sheets of stationary this way of any negative we particularly like, usually no more than five or six to send to friends we particularly love. If I am out and want to send one, I stick a negative in the enlarger, make the exposure, run it through the Fotorite stabilizing processer and in about ten or twenty seconds I have it done and can then type on it, after it dries a few moments.

Actually we started this because so many students write letters, many wanting a photograph. These permit me to make the photos of myself and at the same time provided a small card-space for answering their letters. Gregory usually keeps me supplied with these. He makes a few every time he works in the darkroom.

All for the moment. I am sorry the surgery cancelled your concert, sorry that that music did not go out in the air, but most of all that Mr. Symonds must go through the suffering involved.

Best, best love to you from all of us here,

John