

Scarlett Point Lightstation
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CANADA

April 19, 1979

Dear Mr. Porter,

I am writing you, I guess, somewhat in apology for Jurgen Boden, who is producing my book of photographs. After receiving your gracious letter explaining how busy you are, I assumed that that was that, and was embarrassed to find he had approached you again. He is a sensitive and ethical person, but his aggressive business-self at times gets the better of him, coupled with a sometimes-abrupt use of English (not his native language). He is looking for a "known" writer to introduce this unknown's book of nature photography, and I suggested yourself because I have long admired your work and the feeling it expresses -- although I wasn't sure how interested you are in writing. I will be seeing Mr. Boden in about three weeks and will try to make it clear to him.

Still, I was so tickled to have received a letter from Eliot Porter....the only originals of your work I've seen was the display on dye-transfer from 4x5 transparencies at the Eastman House in Rochester, NY, which is still vivid in my mind. I consider myself still a rank beginner, and this book idea (Boden's, not mine) still has me boggled. Your book "Summer Island" has an especial significance to my husband and myself -- he spent his childhood summers on Devil Island, just off Stonington, and thoroughly enjoyed and empathized with your memories. Now we live on a westcoast island as lighthouse-keepers -- the finest occupation wilderness lovers could have. Our coast is much wilder (in terms of habitation -- our station is 12 miles from the nearest people), but winters are much milder, rarely any snow or freezing temperatures (but stormy!). As lightkeepers, we are responsible for sending out marine weather observations, and generally maintaining the place, the generators, light and fog-horn, and making sure everything works when it should. (In Canada we are members of the Coast Guard, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transport -- ie. not paramilitary, as in the States). We consider ourselves extremely fortunate!

Anyway, I'd like to wish you the best of luck with your forthcoming exhibit at MOMA, and book, and please do not feel obligated to answer this letter, we've bothered you enough as it is. Have a happy Spring,

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Young

(Ms.) Catherine M. Young