

2-24-14

Dear Kimberly Rhodes and Members of the Selection Committee,

Thank you for considering me for the Andrew W. Mellon Artist-in-Residency at Drew University. It is an honor, an opportunity, and a responsibility I very much hope I have the chance to fulfill. Among other considerations, I believe my dedication to both interdisciplinary understanding and to fine art as a model for engagement in everyday life would find an unusually rewarding level of expression in the residency. And I think my background, my unique array of experiences, and the spirit I bring to bear would serve me well as teacher, colleague, and creative presence – and would enable me to make a lasting, richly-layered contribution to the Drew University community.

A practicing artist since earning my MFA in 1985, I also have degrees in Environmental Science and Religion and did a stint as research assistant for Christopher Lasch in American Intellectual History – to give some sense of my range of interests. Since 2000 I have devoted most of my energy to social outreach art projects, such as the Itinerant Artist Project (IAP). Designed to be a model of art as civic engagement, the IAP is described further on my CV and discussed on my website (which also has links to reviews, media coverage, and portfolios). Most of my projects are multi-layered and interdisciplinary in spirit – drawing on my outside interests to create a meaningful social context for the making and sharing of art.

With respect to the residency tasks, such as curating an exhibit, giving public presentations and organizing campus events: My outreach projects and related talks, exhibits, and residencies have prepared me well. My tours, especially, require strategic preparation; coordination and execution of a complex array of tasks, schedules, and logistics; interacting intensively with people from diverse backgrounds; and working with the media. I have organized, prepared and mounted several exhibitions of my own work. For notes on relevant teaching experience, please see my Teaching Philosophy.

Perhaps I don't need to add that the enthusiasm in the first paragraph is genuine. While I have not yet visited Drew University, what I've gathered from correspondence, conversations, and research has made an unusually favorable impression. The school's priorities, values and academic community strike me as most congenial, and the setting would allow me to build on work I have planned for this summer: making an artistic study of wetlands and shoreline in the Greater NY City area.

Support materials are attached and/or found on my website at the following dedicated page. I look forward to hearing from you, and please let me know if you have any questions: [www.jimmott.com/drew.html](http://www.jimmott.com/drew.html)

Sincerely,

Jim Mott

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