



George Morrison Papers

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COMPOSITION

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Holman Building, Dayton, Ohio 45402

Mpls. - Sept 30, 1982

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I begin this journal on my 63rd birthday and it is my first journal, or anything that may be related to a "journal" or "diary", or any attempt to something that may be towards a large idea - like a biography, a body of words, sentences, thoughts, essays that reflect my life and art. It might end up ^{too} as just ~~Memories~~ ~~of~~ a sort. I make no claims at knowing how to write or being a writer. ~~as a~~ Many painters probably want to be more prolific and be the great writer as well as wanting to be the great artist. Some have. Delecroix wrote his great "Journals" and Van Gogh's letters to his brother Theo are some of the most beautiful and poetic insights that have ever been written by a painter.

I have written some short statements about some of my life and art for academic purposes: ~~the~~ excerpts for ^{art} articles, ^{art} catalogues and brochures. It is slow and tough for me. Oh yes, I did do some book reviews for the book section of the ~~the~~ Sunday Minneapolis Tribune. Four books. I got paid for them too. Twenty bucks a book plus the book. I suppose this might be considered my first serious attempt

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at writing. It took much time and I had some help with it, too. And they were "published" in the paper. Also I wrote a verse for Ruth Richards ^{over}, a humorous one on her health condition. I will add those and any other that I have done in the past to these pages.

Also, in 1975 I started drawing again in earnest, in small format, in those black ~~at~~ store sketchbooks with bad paper, recalling some earlier periods of the forties and fifties when I filled up books with mostly pen and ink works. Along with these later sketchbooks, I started adding words - the first one ~~to~~ was diagramming and writing a dream, and then right along at random intervals, I would write quotes from various sources, relating one way or another to art. Some were just about things that interested me. One was an attempt to write a very short short story about a writer's friend, Roger Brown. I will also add some or all of those writings to these pages.

We drove up here yesterday, starting out at about 4 pm and getting here around 11 p.m. It is always a tiring drive especially when we have already put in a day in the city. Hazel teaches until 2:30. I didn't but I was doing some errands and chores and getting things in order there and preparing for the trip which is only a short weekend trip. Returning tomorrow, Sun.

Our trip is the last of the season and H. wants to get some color photos of the Witch Tree and the trail leading to it. This is for an on-going project of hers - a large extended idea on the subject of growth, in this case ~~the~~ what I'm calling the "Witch Tree Series". This year she did a series (within the series) of a number of ^{color} monoprints of the tree. The color photos are used in conjunction with other graphic works, and they show the tree and environment in different seasons.

It is rather a bleak day, raining most of the time. We thought it might open up and for awhile it almost did. No photos. We will see how

it is tomorrow. We drove the 34 miles to Grand Marais, ate lunch at one of ^{our} favorite north shore eating places, Nanabajou Lodge, ran into Harvey Turner there, proceeded to G.M., stopping at the Chippewa City cemetery to see what my brother Mike did in his project of "brushing" out the "old" east section of the cemetery.

I walked to my fathers grave as well as Uncle Joes and brother Bernards. I was aware of a row of newly or recently constructed crosses and markings designating the family of Bill Drouillard, our cousins and neighbors in Chippewa City, the village where I was born. The Drouillard family are all gone except Georgie and Dorothy, now about 53 and 55 years old.

We intended to make a short visit to Marian Quick which we did. also, to Colin Tierney, our contractor and construction worker who is renovating and enlarging our cabin-studio property at Red Rock.

I'm glad we saw him because we would have missed him on Sun. We also visited and saw the recently opened Art Gallery of Jan Sivertson in G.M. before returning to G.P.

An interesting part of this trip happened today before we went to G.M. We were in the village to get some trout and we happened upon Jim Corcoran, Ray Olson and two of their friends just completing a butchering of a medium bull moose, perhaps a half ton. The two half ^{HANGING} carcasses looked huge, and the head with 40 inch antlers were there on the ground. Jim asked me if I wanted the horns and I said no, but suddenly H said she would like this head with antlers to add to her collection of bones and skulls of animals that she uses for her own art work as well as subjective material for her students at S.P.A. (Saint Paul Academy and Summit School.). Well, we have it and it is now at Red Rock and we are

wondering how we will or what we will do with it. The plan is to leave it with our next door neighbor ^{in RED ROCK, HOAGLAND} Don and he will hang it and it will just decompose and eventually reach a bleached bone state - taking a year or two in time. We will take care of this tomorrow as well as take care of photos and a few other things before going back to Mpls. We hope it will be better and lighter weather

AFTER THOUGHT OF COOK COUNTY: It was all here that my life began and probably where it will end. If I retire after this year at the U. of M., the plan is to make H.P. our headquarters - to live and work here, and perhaps to have also more leisure time to write more of background, beginning years and reminiscents of the locale and the people.

~~On~~ Sunday, Oct 3, turned out to be a beautiful sunny fall day, and it certainly made our trip worth while and we did most of the chores we intended - namely the Witch Tree project I did a drawing and H. her photos - spending a good hour and a half. We moved the moose head and hope Don will hang it up.

We did not have time to visit or have lunch on the "Chippewa City" beach, (where I played as a child and at the point where the water meets the land). When I was younger I just accepted the fact that the lake was there, but in later years when I had been gone for one, two or more years at a time, it was always that part of the locale - the water - that I "returned" to. Then it was "coming home" to the family and people as well as to the environment of the water, the land, of ^{EVEN} trees, woods, rocks, sand, and the climate. Now, it is always going back to the source. The immediate family is not there. Only some relatives.

Mpls. - Oct. 15, 1982

In recalling the G.P. trip of Oct 1-2-3 I wanted to bring up more of the recollections of other years, some of the memories of Chippewa City, the village of my birth, and some times in visiting the cemetery, there is the memory of fragments of my father's life, Bernards' life, ~~and~~ my life, other lives and incidents.

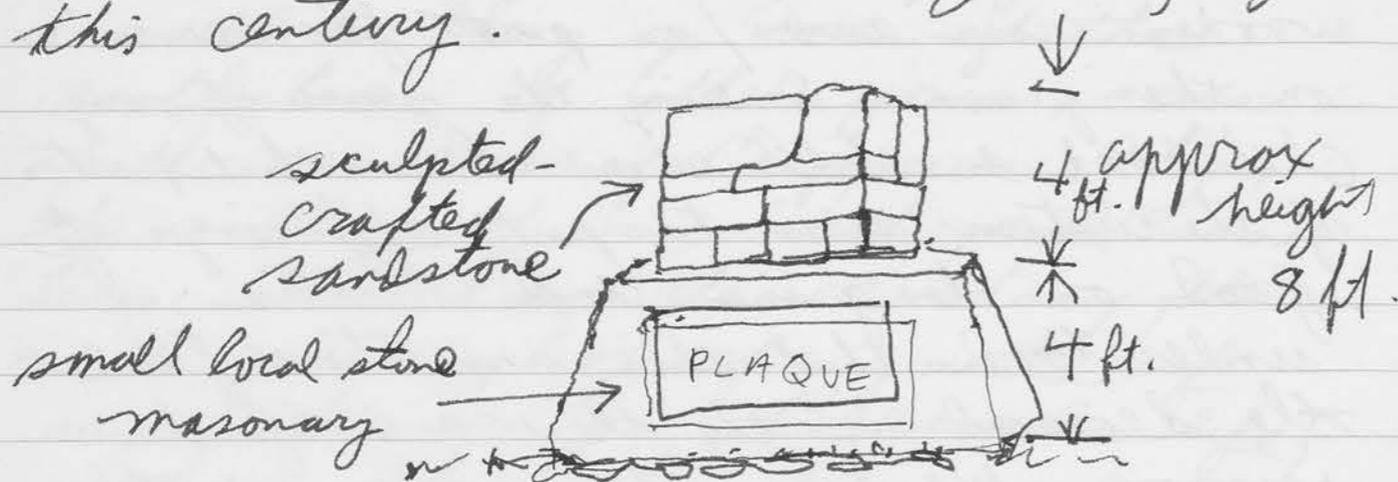
For the sake of these writings I wanted to begin to mention some of the beginnings of where it all began, and certainly by no means could it all be written down in one chunk, in one sitting. Perhaps for now I could touch on a few points, some facts, and come back later to other flash backs.

The "old" cemetery on the right has fallen into disrepair and utter mess (miscare) and abandonment thru the years. At times it looked downright pitiful and every once in awhile someone would "brush" it out, so that some of the gravestones could be visible, or that some distant

relative would repair or make a new wooden cross and/or put flowers on the grave. During the years of my childhood I still remember that part of the custom was to put offerings of food on the grave and it was understood that this was to "feed" the deceased or the the soul of the person. We even ate some of this food.

In recent years it was more of Mike's wish to restore the old graveyard to better and cleaner order, to have it re-surveyed, and then to "brush out" to its outer perimeter, leave all existing crosses or markers (which were not many). My own thoughts were more elaborate: The center, the south and towards the south east were completely devoid of any markers. I would like to see it brushed plus some kind of landscaping plan, a sort of a park-like area with some kind of a central monument, a variation on a totem idea, along with a plaque (bronze) which would name all of people

buried there since ^{about} the beginning of this century.



I would design the monument to better and correct specifications, and with the help with funding by local patrons and/or subscription to pay for cost of materials, fabrication of plaque, cutting stone etc., plus labor. (Hopefully there would be donated labor).

I would like to see this as a monument to ^{the bulk of the} people who lived in the thriving ^{once} village of Chippewa City - to commemorate them as well as to the remnants of descendants of these mix-blood full bloods Chippewas - including of course my paternal and maternal grandparents.

my father's mother Mary Caribou Morrison is there. I know the approximate dates of my grand father James Morrison, Sr. born Grand Portage in 1847 and died in Chippewa City in 1924 my mother's foster parents are there: John and Mary Mesaba.
 Father: James Morrison, Jr. born and died in Chippewa City 1890 - 1949
 brother: Wilfred died in infancy 1931-32?
 brother: Edmund died age 8 in 1929?
 brother: Bernard born Fort William, Canada in 1916 died Mpls in 1979.

Many other Morrisons and other relatives are buried there plus many of the old old people whose names and descendants are now lost. It would take a bit of research to make up that list of names.

More on Chippewa City, G. M., G. P. and the north shore later.

Mpls. Oct 19, 1982

Tony and Elspeth Vevers were in Mpls and stayed with us from Oct 14 to Oct 17. The occasion was an invitation from WARM (Womans Art Registry of Minn) to Elspeth to exhibit in their auxillary space at the WARM gallery.

The Vevers drove the 1500 miles from Provincetown in order to specially transport E's work about 12 small pieces (constructions - assemblages of cut aluminum and sand, mostly), illusionistic works that are reflections of the tip of the Cape - light, water, sky and sand. The works almost had to be brought in person because of the nature of the work.

It was in conjunction with 4 other WARM members including Hazel (E. Erickson, Jantze Vischer, D. Odland). In all respects it was a good show and received well by that ^{small} segment of WARM followers who give it ~~the~~ continued support. Elspeth fits in well - as an outside exhibiter with another view. The opening was well intended and they were impressed by this.

New York City - Oct 21

It was good to have the Vevers as guests. I have known them for 30 years ~~(E)~~ and H for 20 years. We have known them more or less casually all these years - through some mutually good friends and with the art community of Provincetown - locals but mostly New Yorkers.

It brings back the memories of the Cape and Provincetown, where I have spent many summers since 1945. I came first because fellow students Harry Sexton, Cecily Ackman and perhaps mostly - Marty Bloom, who told me about the fabulous art colony with the famous "light" the water, sand and air, along with the artists and people in general of many levels who have been attracted there since before the turn of the century. It had the notoriety of the people who spent ^{their} formative years there and the romance that is imbued with the likes of Eugene O'Neill and "Bound East for Cardiff"; the title "10 Days that Shook the World", the author I can't think

JOHN REED

of at this moment; Norman Mailer; painters Hawthorne to Hofmann; my own teacher Morris Kantor; colorful and interesting locals; and, certainly, the many friends ^{& met} and experiences that are connected with this area. It would take more thought and words, and I want to go further on these.

The Ververs, especially Tony and I talked of many past characters, mentioned many who are gone now, like Bob "Buster" Olafson, and also painter Jack Tworkov, who died this past summer at age 84 and who the Ververs were close to. I am going to come back to write about Provincetown and my connections with it - later.

New York City - Oct 31, 1982 ¹³

I am here for 5 days and will go back to Minn. today. I was invited by Adema Agard, Indian painter, and director of the program, "So the Spirit Flows", at the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, at 155th St. and Broadway.

It is a program that promotes and projects contemporary artists and craftsmen, showing and talking about their work. In the case of craftspeople they would demonstrate. I showed slides and talked and answered questions about myself and what I do.

This small job did not pay well - just covering the air fare and expenses such as eating out and cabs, buses and subways. There are always extra costs here: gifts, art catalogues, theater and the like. This trip there was the Metropolitan Opera production of Verdi's "La Forza del Destino" on Thurs, Oct 28.

I called this a job and it was like a job in a sense, working for 3 days from 10 to 12 and 1:30 to 3:30, and having to get up, get cleaned and dressed for work, walking to subway, taking subway which takes about 40-50 minutes, waiting time included. I say it's "strap hanging" to work, only it was going

~~the~~ apposite the tide - that is most of the subway travelers were already on their way to center of Manhattan or the the Wall St. area, so that the subways were relatively empty - no crush.

I didn't like the idea of having to do this; I would rather do it in "one shot." Give one lecture under 2 hours for the same pay or even get transportation and other costs besides. I ~~have~~ have gotten this and I certainly feel I'm worth that. (LOLOMARINE)

But - I did it just to get to NYC. to visit the city, to see some shows, visit museums, see some theater, etc, and stay with and see friends, which is exactly what I did. I'm glad that a poetry reading by Helen Duberstein at the Poetry Society of America, 15 Gramercy Park, coincided this trip, because Wed evening, Oct 27 turned out to be a pleasant evening, seeing some friends I had not seen for 15 to 20 years - namely two painters, David Lund and Joe Barnes who I had met in Paris in 1951. Ruth Richards was there. afterwards, we, along with some other writer and poet friends of

Helen and Victor, all ate at Peter's Tavern, a good, old eating and drinking establishment made famous by writers including O. Henry, at the earlier part of this century. It is at Irving Place and 19th St. after saying goodbye to Helen's friends, we, Victor, Helen, Ruth and Joe walked across town to the West Village, along 19th to 5th Ave, then along 13th St. to Abington Square. I took a cab from there to Tribeca and 80 North Moore Street.

It is an evening as such that always make it pleasant to be in NYC. sharing a rapport with former friends, friends ^{who} have gone thru and have the same concerns and struggles in art, and who are working with ideas in art that reach only a minute segment of people, ~~at~~ (at the reading at the Poetry Society there were under 30 people, a mere handful of people - in contact with what I consider good art.) It is interesting to note too, that the audience at American Indian Museum was sporadic, some lower school groups, and people at random, many of them foreigners.

On this trip I am aware that I have some lonely moments and I know there are a few reasons: I am alone and not with Hazel who has always shared visits and doing many things together in the city. I miss her and know that she would like to be here too. I am older and perhaps can't enjoy doing things in the spirit of younger days. I suppose it relates to the alcohol and the younger stamina that can tolerate social and other activity in moving around the city. I tire more easily and I know I must not overdo my activity.

Alcohol relates to the associations of New York and perhaps all of my younger days and with all of the 20 years I spent in New York. They are good and bad and I could write at great length about my alcoholism and how it relates^{to} and affects my life. I would like to get to the very core of not only the drinking but to the nature of compulsions and to my obsessions - what compels me to do what I do and why I do it.

↓

I guess it is these nostalgic thoughts of past years in N.Y.C. that stir up memories of many associations with the city, perhaps my formative years and my beginnings to what might be related to the intellectualism of art, the intrinsic qualities of art and certainly the complexities of art. It is a vast and complicated learning process, and doing process, and I am still learning. It takes a lifetime to learn.

This goes back to a thought about the drinking. It has destroyed a part of my life and has deteriorated my body and soul. It has taken a lifetime to learn that it is bad, and at this late date I hope to re-mend some of my body and life so that I can learn more and do more!

So it was here that I first came in Sept of 1943, coming from Minneapolis on a traveling scholarship, with a one-way ticket coming into the city at Penn. Station, and not knowing a soul, ~~to~~^{to} beginning another phase of my life.

Minneapolis, Nov. 12, 1982

This evening, Hazel and I had dinner at a fairly new Mexican restaurant in the St. Paul area of East Selby Ave., across the street from W.A. Frost's. It's called Mexico City Cafe. (Maybe they got their name idea from The New French Cafe. The food was fair. We had chicken mole and shrimp sautéed with garlic & coriander.

The idea was to go to a play at the lower school of SPA-SS - a play, a musical of sorts put on by the 7 and 8 grades, directed by Mike Rosewall. The work was "The Sultan's Portrait" by Tim O'Brien, an SPA alumnus. Not bad for junior high level. Mike does a good job and the musical was entertaining.

I want to ~~the~~ mention a few other things that began this month - working backwards to Nov. 7. (Hazel was out of town to Ohio to evaluate a school in Miamisburg, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton and just a few miles from Centerville, her birthplace, and this gave her a chance to see her mother and see her new grand daughter Rebecca Belvo. She was gone from Nov 2 to Nov 7 - 9 p.m.)

I went at about 3 p.m. to have lunch at the Walker Art Center and to see ^(Nov. 7) Nancy Randall's show, but I first came upon a free concert there which turned out to be a delightful experience - all new work. One piece, "Music For a Force (1938)", by Paul Bowles and "The Towers of Silence (1976)" by Donald Erb. Nancy Randall had drawings and prints - organic, lyrical, personal and from a series which have been on-going for the last 2-3 years. There is a certain intensity about the works, compelling with the textural surface and open light helped by a nice Japanese paper. I consider Nancy one of the best artists in the area.

My show along with Stuart Nielson opened on Friday, Nov. 5, at the College of St. Catherine. I guess I will have to wait and write at greater length - about the nature and quality of the work in this show, which was paper collage - the "artist series", based on fragments of other artists' work - a clever and good idea, I think. To my mind it is a successful show in that it is attractive and compelling and that artists friends and people in general like it. So far it is not a success, selling-wise. I sold 3, but hope to sell a few more.

Tues - Nov. 23, 1982

My show ends tomorrow Nov 24. I don't think it got the response it should have.

I suspect that there was some kind of error in the sending of the brochures by bulk mail because some people said they did not get their invitation. I think it might be that whoever was to take care of the addressing might have skipped every third name? I did not question this, but they would say up and down that they did no wrong.

There was some fault from me too, ^{HOWEVER} I should have made a better list (from the Society of Fine Arts ^(list) and from CUE, Committee for Urban Environment list) and mailed these with my own postage. Even tho most of them wouldn't come, maybe some would and these would be counted on ^{as} possible buyers of art. Some of them own some of my works.

Then again, people don't seem to budge these days. even the ones who can afford. It is the inflation. The people with money are holding back. I hear it is like this all over. Chicago, New York, the artists

are crying for lack of sales. The galleries are crying for lack of sales. Funding + grants are getting cut back, so the arts are suffering these days.

I hardly expected to sell anything, then again I certainly hoped underneath it all that perhaps more than four would be sold - at least 6 so that the framing from 1978 and 1982 which was about \$1200 (1200⁰⁰) would be paid for. I certainly thank Gove Hambridge, Mary Crosby and Maryann Ulyot for their interest to buy the 4 that were sold from the show. And they are not the rich ones either.

HAMBIDGE

I had this chance to show and I wanted to, one day, finally have one large shot - of showing one large batch of the "artists series" and I finally did it. 51 works. and it had to happen at a bad, inflationary time. Bad time for showing art. I admire the artists who show at times like this, let alone, students and lesser known artists who hardly sell anything ever.

Actually, I had a wild idea to (along with a show of the "artists series" ^{over})

have a book - a monograph of 50 collages as a very nice lasting document. But ----- out of the question. Too costly.

My idea of course, would have 50 color plates which would be exorbitant in cost and hard cover yet! It would have to be an expensive book (which people won't buy). an estimated cost of something like this would be between 30,000 & 50,000 dollars. Now, everything is up, up in cost.

Warren MacKenzie, the chairman of our dept. Studio Arts wants to propose a show at the University Gallery, and they have a slot open in the spring, as a gesture for an outgoing (retiring) professor, and I have talked with Susan Brown and Lyndel King. They can't afford to put on any elaborate show that would or could even come close to a retrospective. This is a very costly exhibition - what with borrowing works from all over the USA, plus

crating, shipping, insurance, catalogue etc.

They, the U. Gallery can only do a token thing at this time which I don't want. I said I would wait and shoot for a "real" retrospective at the N. Pls. Institute of Arts in 1985, 86 or 87. I don't like the idea of a token show, and my thoughts to Susan at this time is not to have a token show. Maybe just a drawing show or a repeat of the recent collage show. I'm still thinking about this and will talk to Hazel about it tomorrow.

Dec 5, 1982
Minneapolis

Today is Sunday and we just returned from a weekend trip from Grand Portage, and a bumper it was. We were stopped in Two Harbors and almost got a ticket for speeding, ^{and had car trouble.} Susan started getting sick. We got there late Friday.

On Sat. Susan was worse and that made it sad for Bill Harris, as he wanted to share the fur all around with his partner. It was a brisk, chilly ^{lamp} day. No snow. We did not go to Joan Harts as planned. We found out that Hazel's moose head with horns had been stolen from Don Hoagland's. We visited our property and found that Colin, our contractor had done nothing and the place looked awful.

To top off the worse, ^{we took} Susan to G.M. ~~top~~ hospital to check out her pains and it was a good thing we did as it turned out to be a pelvic infection. She was admitted to hospital for antibiotic medication and tests.

Today we checked out of G.P. Lodge early and got to G.M. Hosp. at 10:30 to pick up Susan. She was discharged and we left G.M. around 12:30. Susan is better but has to take it

easy for 2-3 days. We got home around 7:30-8:00. Hazel did get some photos at the witch tree, which was the main reason we went up. I did a 40 minute drawing, and will work more on it. all in all we tried to make the best of it and to maintain a sense of humor and balance. It was not ~~totally~~ totally in vain. I saw Colin and settled things with him.

Dec. 5, 1982

Ulla Birkved ^{from Copenhagen} was here a few weeks ago and stayed a few ~~nites~~ ^{nights}. I took her to see my show ^{at St. CATHERINES} and a visit to see my "totem" at Honeywell, a visit to see Carl Miller's ^{leg.} heroic piece at St. Paul Courthouse a visit to mph. Art dist. - and then to the opening at W.A.R.M. of the "House Show" - including Hazel's installation of, among other things, a bed, ^{+ other} ~~with~~ personal belongings + connections, including grandma Miller's quilt - and Briand and Ellen in the bed!

(We met Ulla at La Pralom in San Christobal, Mexico in the spring of 1981.)

Feb 2, 1983
Groundhog Day

an interesting trip happened since the last writing. On Dec 18, Hazel and I along with Bob Jewett and Judy Rood, took a plane to Albuquerque, rented a car for a sojourn in the S.W.

The intentions were to witness the Shalako dances (Kachina cults) at the Zuni Pueblo, near Gallup, N.M. I had intended to go down alone but it mushroomed into a sort of a planned trip with 4 people

Our first stop was to stay overnight with Jaime Quick-To-See Smith, Indian painter who lives and works in Corrales N.M. We had a good visit with Jaime and her family and they were very gracious.

after that we headed for Gallup, which is a very uninteresting place. We forsake our reservations at Holiday for a cheap motel - and cheap it was. But we saved 100 bucks a couple. We had trouble getting good food there.

On the day of the solstice
Dec 21 we went to Zuni, but were

disappointed, that Shalako had happened on Nov. 27. We saw only 3 Kachina dancers give away food - a "gino-away".

The next few days however made up for it; we went first to Window Rock, Ariz., then to Canyon de Chelly, near Chinle Ariz. Very spectacular in beauty - color and formations which moved us all. Very inspiring.

The next day was Chaco Canyon again spectacular and interesting ruins of these old (restored partially) pueblo housing units of the Anasazi people who lived there approx. a 1000 years ago. We took a very colorful back road back towards Santa Fe, Chimanya to be exact, the home of the Segalls who were in NYC and they lending us their house.

This was to be our headquarters, visiting in Taos and Santa Fe. The big highlight of trip which we didn't count on was a torchlit procession at the Taos pueblo after sunset on Xmas eve, then a superb Xmas eve dinner at Gus + Ruth Foster. Roast goose with pate stuffing.

We came back the next day to see

The Deer Dance - a very primitive dance involving the dancers to wear over their heads and bodies the antlered head plus the whole skin of the animal draped over their bodies. There were also a few buffalo heads. After this we went to the Fosters for food.

We spent one more nite at Quick-To-See-Smith, and barely managed to get out of Albuquerque. But we did get stuck in Denver for 6 hours. Storms were brewing all over the place, including Minn. We managed to get a direct flight to Mpls. Just made it - because Mpls St. Paul airport closed the next day.

Feb 11, 1983

ARTIST'S STATEMENT for catalogue "ENTRIES IN AN ARTIST'S JOURNAL"

Drawing has many meanings and answers for me and these have evolved and changed thru the years as well as the work itself.

Above all there is the love to draw and from the beginning there was a compulsion to fill sketchbooks - to accumulate these and many other drawings of various media and to have them around. There is a sense of intimacy of being able to have drawings on hand at any time just to look at - for a reference source, or that a sketchbook is available when not at the studio or when traveling.

Drawing became an intimate source of personal expression - first with a social and local narration, then progressing beyond the quick sketch and the immediate towards a probing of the subconscious by surrealist and automatic techniques, to record an inner solitude and loneliness.

My student and subsequent years enabled me to absorb very readily the European influences and the abstract expressionist movement of the New York school, which prompted very exaggerated figurative forms leading to non-recognizable and abstract elements.

In more recent years I have gone back to a so-called realistic manner, sometimes by direct observation and also by strict imaginative treatments of landscape and surrealist figurative forms. A combination of styles are used.

Another factor that is new is the use of words - that serve as a sort of diary, journal and almanac. This

helps as a reference guide as well as just to record quotes and pieces of writing that appeal to me. It is related to myself and art, again it is the personal and the intimate. I would like to see this combination of words and drawings accumulated, edited and put into a published form.

My drawing is a reflection of what I do in my large work - painting, wood collage and sculpture. I try to gain precision, refinement, ambiguity, a sense of the organic and with a preoccupation of the textural surface. ^{Some times I like to see the drawing as an ultimate work of art in itself.} - a complete work my underlying themes are landscape, structural and organic elements. I have a fascination for the mystery of the

horizon, the poetry of rocks, the phenomena of sky and water. I think these responses become part of the inner self, springing from a combination of many things, perhaps from my ^{early} background in northern Minnesota, later in Cape Cod, plus the urban experience of New York and the twin cities.

The above was just finished today after a struggle with it for a good ten days. It takes me forever and I keep putting it off - now it is due Monday, Feb 14, for a preparation of some sort of catalogue for the token drawing show they are giving me. It is scheduled now for March 31. I will show 35 of the paper collages in the President's office for 2 months, opening with a coffee reception on Wed, Feb 23.

Another thought I didn't write down is that, "... I have come not to be offended by some of the grotesque distortions of modern ^{art}, just as I am not offended by atonality or dissonance in contemporary or avant garde music..."

March 2, 1984
Red Rock - Grand Portage

I noticed that I haven't written in this journal for a long time - sitting here and noticing it there stacked with other files of correspondence, catalogues and other paraphernalia that is part of my desk and file system. (I'm not organized like Hazel in that regard).

I was about to do something "constructive" like drawing or writing something in my on-going sketchbooks, when I thought of looking into this journal and maybe writing something in it, and I was very surprised to note that it was over a year since I last wrote in it: Feb 11, 1983.

Life becomes shorter with advancing age and time becomes more precious. I'm so aware of time and how fast it goes and that there isn't enough time in a day to do everything I want to do, or that I have "goofed" most of my life and haven't done much of anything. I mention this now because of much (or less) of what has happened since Feb. 11, 1983. With me things happen slow, and much of what has happened since that date is indicative

of circumstances in my life and how and when they happen. Maybe what happened this past year should have happened long before, but maybe they couldn't happen either.

Great things did happen and perhaps they could not have happened at any other time. Rachel Linman Morrison, my first grandchild was born May 8, 1983, a very good, healthy and wonderful child.

We were in "quandry" about decisions with our house situations and our (lifestyle) lives and it seems that miraculous events and people, (and animals) happened to ^{help} alter and make changes.

It could be another story in itself of how Patty Bratnober, at a precise time and indecision (or decision) in her life, wanted a change of life style and change of abode, - and we wanted desperately to sell our house on Stevens Avenue in Mpls., in order to buy into a condominium in St. Paul, and use extra money to finish our studio projects in Grand Portage.

We bought the condo on Sept. 9, 1983 and Patty bought our house on Sept 16, 1983 I finish large mural commission for U of M Law school (after 41 days) on Oct. 14, 1983 I start living at Red Rock and the project is being finished in earnest on Oct 21, 1983

(also - show at University Gallery: March 31, 1983.)
Honor: Retirement one-man exhibition)

oh yes, I retired officially from
U of M art department on June 30, 1983.
And, I almost forgot, but when I mentioned
events, lives people (and animals), I want
to write now that Kobi II a wonderful
and almost human animal entered our
lives on the date of Nov 7, 1983. ^{ALMOST A RE-INCARNATION} of Kobi I!
Briand makes a change^(s) in his life, sadly
for one - a mutual separation with Ellen
and begins anew a shift in his
studies - starts in earnest at U of M, Sept 23, 1983.

How do I remember these dates?
I write them in my calendar, which
becomes a cross-reference for myself
and a connection with the beginning of
writings (as well as sketches & drawings) in
my sketchbooks (which in turn become
a title for recognition one-man show
at U of M, titled, "Entries in an Artists'
Journal" (mentioned above and elsewhere
in journal).

So in a sense it is a momentous
year. I say to myself it is ^(was) a powerful
year. I might add another very important
factor - that of the relationship of Hazel
and myself, the awareness of a more

personal and spiritual relationship. This
and many of the things I have now written
can be thought about and written at
greater length.

all of which - helps to explain
my own, and relates to my own
philosophy and religion: EXISTENTIALISM
- a modern philosophy that becomes
a religion. an enlightenment of the new
age. - after Freud, with new insights and
probing the inner mind, and - after
Einstein, the opening of new awareness
of time and space. That mixture of
fatalism and existence - what happens
- happens for the best and is the right
thing for that time. Man exists and
that's important for him. "I exist
therefore I am".

So now that I write these few
pages, I feel that I have done something
constructive, perhaps even more constructive
than making a drawing. I feel that this
entry was an important summation of
what happened in one year, and that
I write it at the right time.

April 23, 1984 11:15 p.m.
Shakespeare's birthday

I sit here listening to "Midsummer's Night Dream", by Felix Mendelssohn, I'm tired, and I should go to bed, but I will write first about this evening.

Oct 21, 1983 was the official beginning of Grand Portage. I have stayed here lived here mostly and have gone to St. Paul several times, anywhere from two days to 2 weeks at a time. Hazel was here twice: xmas, and one quick trip with Barbara Weiman to visit here while Carlos & Ruth were here.

Why I'm mentioning this is that I'm here during the lonely winter days and nites, and two things I have done to help stimulate my time and activity here was to join a sketch group (drawing from a live model) 5 weeks ago. It meets at Bud Sivertson's studio, ^{in Howland} every Tues nite.

And - two weeks ago I saw an ad in the Cook County News Herald - that there would be a free writers' workshop on 4-23-84 - 7pm which is tonight. It met at the Cook County High School

I didn't know who the conductor of this workshop was - John Fenn? But now I have the connection. I knew him but never could remember his name. He is none other than poet Jill Breckenridge's husband, and brother of Chad Breckenridge's husband of our good friend, painter, Sally Brown.

Apparently he gives this clever "game" at ~~workshops~~ workshops and it works - to bring out words ^{and ideas} from the heads ^{of people} by free association.

The words were air, parent and home, then writing as many words that you can within an allotted time that are associated with the above words - one word at a time, of course.

After that, circle the words that you think might have some association with personality and character, and I got suffocate from air, loved one + offspring from parent and isolation from home.

From this a real characters or characters evolve and then you make them say something and there begins

a dialogue. John Fenn is a playwright
 who teaches the craft, so what
 happens is that a drama begins
 to take place, and ~~what~~ what does
 happen is that usually the self
 begins to be one of the characters and
 the second character begins to be
 some one close: husband, wife, son or
 daughter, etc.

Mine was:

1st person - older man (myself) who
 wants again to breath the innocence
 of far-away days.

2nd person - young man (Brian)

DIALOGUE: FRAGMENT OF A DRAMA

1st: "I want to recall my past".

2nd: "Where do we go from here?"

1st: "Let us try and go back. Do you recall
 the statue of Liberty's underware?"

2nd: "This will be free and open".

1st: "How about the offspring of the offspring?"

2nd: "If and when we go on that canoe
 trip it would be an interesting journey
 of recollection."

FINI

Others, (group of ten) wrote longer
 dialogues, again based on common
 associations of husband, wife + offspring
 and more easier situations. I guess
 mine was more enigmatic, disturbing
 somewhat abstract and poetic. John
 sensed what was ^{trying to come out} coming out.

It relates to my teaching too or any
 other artist-writer-musician teaching
 a craft. We are analysts and
 psychologists sensing what is in there.

My writing, as I said before
 is a struggle to get out. It is
 slow. Others in the group wrote 2
 pages and I wrote only 1/2 page

The whole purpose was to check
 it out. It was fun and trying -
 and forces me to make an attempt
 to try a challenging lesson - which
 was a good one.

(evening)
 This was a one shot workshop for
 others, as John is apparently here for a
 week's writing-workshop for students
 and faculty at Cook County High School

There may be a weekly meeting of a
 like group this summer and I said I
 would be interested.

Red Rock
Nov 21, 1984

Seven months have passed since I last wrote here. Many things have happened. I always say it will be a good day. It will be a good month. It will be a good year. It will be a good decade. Indeed there is always a good month or year despite minor obstacles. And what happens is for the good.

It is also over 2 years since I started this journal - a slow process at the rate I'm going. I also continue my "entries in the artist's journal," the title of my retrospective show of drawings at the U of M in the spring of 1983. I save quotes that are of interest to myself and that also may be of interest to others as well - bits of trivia, anecdotes related to art, etc. These are alternated with drawings in the sketch books. In my daily calendar I use for reminders of dates with people, movies, plays, books, and ~~lect~~ lectures. Dinners and lunches are recorded - some important, most not - where and when, ^{if} Not everyday of course.

I also jot down birthdays of family, some friends, well known personalities of ^{the} past and present: musicians artists writers, etc. Somewhat like almanac info.

I guess I had mentioned that I would like to compile a lot of this material into some kind of a published book form - Combined of course with drawings, how they would relate or not relate remains uncertain. It would take some doing to edit this kind of material. It would be an extension of the "Entries in an Artist's Journal".

The summer has come and gone. It was good, and it went all too fast. Hazel and Kuli were here and Hazel had some good working time in - paintings she worked on for a possible sale to First Bank of Duluth. She eventually did not sell them but sold some large Witch Tree drawings instead. The paintings were not done in vain. They are good and will be used for other shows. I continued to do small works - nothing large. I spent much time preparing found and new wood for weathering and for future use. Organizing my own

space has been an on-going thing since May. Some additional carpentry has been done and heating systems, electric, etc had to be overseen.

We did get our "foot in the door" teaching-wise here in Grand Marais, so along with Hazel's mentor students and ^{OTHER} possibilities, there will be that experience that can be put to good use for future "retirement income".

We both taught at the M.M. Art Colony. I for 2 weeks and 4 for Hazel. It is time consuming but it serves not only an income source, but a connection with the art people (a rapport with them) of Cook County, in a sense a social contact which is necessary. There were some new people, some interesting that we met. Hazel had to get back the end of August to get on with her important job at SPA. She is seriously considering now cutting off the academic world and retiring and willing to make it here with less income - thru part time teaching lecturing and selling art.

one interesting and nice thing that happened the end of Sept. was a trip to New York. Months ago, Eloise Odegard wrote and said she was going to Albuquerque for 6 weeks in Sept.-Oct., and that her apartment on 53rd St. would be available for me if I wanted it. I owed myself a trip from last year so I thought it was time to take a trip to NYC to see some friends and shows, and that I should take advantage of this.

I had the brainstorm that Hazel would go for 4 days, at the beginning of this 2 week trip, since I left on Sept 26 and that my birthday (65th) would fall in this time and that Hazel should be with me and we would celebrate this with a party at Sally's.

So it worked out well. We enjoyed the privacy of our own apartment on 53rd Street between 1st and 2nd Aves. (It was convenient to midtown) and for jaunts to lower or upper Manhattan. The party was fun. We brought with us wild rice and pesto sauce so

there was too much food! Our usually standard "old" friends were there. I'm glad Marty Bloom was there, so he and Sol, Helen and Victor were the few friends I had kept ⁱⁿ touch with for all of these past 40 years - (from 1944-45-46) others were from the fifties. It is always great to be in NYC with Hazel and we always have fun eating out and seeing our friends at home or a favorite eating places - Chinatown, SoHo or the Village. And visiting ^{galleries +} museums!

I regret that Ruth Richards was not at this party. She has been fighting cancer, and at this time was in "rather painful situation. Hazel and I did have a ~~short~~ good evening with her - a short visit to her loft and then a dinner at Arnold's Turtle in west Greenwich Village.

A birthday cake was had at this party. I am so happy that Hazel came for that weekend. She had to leave on Sunday, Sept 30.

GRAND PORTRAIT - APRIL 20, 1988

I did stay on until Oct 6, I was near the area of 57th and 7th Ave, after some openings of Ernie Briggs (memorial) and one other artist, ^{near the} ^{Carnegie} ^{hall} ^{area}. I had the notion to visit old haunts, so I had a bite to eat at Carney's Pub, ^{AN OLD ART STUDENT HANGOUT,} around the corner from the Art Students League, and then to the ^{THIRD} ~~fourth~~ floor of the League itself, ^{on 57th St.} I stepped into the garret type classroom and at that moment there was a nice class in session, which immediately brought back the nostalgia of, as Harry Sexton's friend, Dick, put it, "the smell of oil and turpentine in garrets. with dark haired girls ~~scratching~~ scratching at repressed visions - - -", the girls of course being Phyllis, Doris and Cecily working on their experimental paintings. It was a strange feeling.

I visited Helen DeWitt who I had not seen for years - on east 9th St. - diagonally across from my old studio loft on 209 East 9th Street. I usually make it a point to see Bud Wirtshafter and the Ashbys on Cornelia St.

Instead of returning directly to
Minn. I went to Provincetown
via Boston - taking the propeller
plane 20 miles across the Cape.
Tom & Debbie ^{BEGNER} let me stay in their empty
apartment on 535 Commercial Street -
"The Waterfront Apts." They were heated
so I was comfortable. I saw some
old friends, ^{PAUL KOCH GED. GROTZ HOWARD MITCHAM} missed some, had
a few good seafood dinners ^{including}
including squid stew at Cook's,
picked up driftwood, did some
drawing, before returning after
4 days in Provincetown. It was
lonely, but there was some inner
satisfaction of capturing certain
nostalgic longings of people
and places of the past.

Back in St. Paul, Hazel
was preparing for another guest trip
to NYC with Barbara Wieman
- pleasure and business. I
was to have Kobi for 2 weeks
plus, so Kobi and I have ^{feel the}
been here watching the winter ^{AND} cold
rapidly approaching. Hazel, Briand and
his friend Mary will be here ^{at 11 pm}
tonight, ^{FOR THANKSGIVING!}

GRAND PORTAGE - APRIL 20, 1988

It is unbelievable that it almost 4 years
that I last wrote in this book. The last entry
was dated 21 NOV. 1984, the day before Thanksgiving
when Hazel, Briand and Mary Strub arrived ^{IN THE} evening
for ^{the} holiday weekend + dinner. As I mentioned be-
fore, it is good that I jot down important dates,
doings, people, anecdotes and other trivial in-
formation in my calendar, which has been an
on-going thing since 1971. I am referring now
to the calendar ^(S) at the end of 1984, ^{85, 86,} and events
since, and ^{MY} illness. Much has happened. I'm lucky
to ^{be} alive.

The ^{MOST} crucial event was to begin on the morning
of Feb 2, 1985, here in G.P., when I noticed
the skin on my lower legs were turning dark-
almost black (splotches), and itching terribly.
I thought it was infantigo. I didn't think it
was all that serious, but I decided to check
it out at the Grand Marais clinic - perhaps
to get some medication to clear the skin and
itching. I drove the 28 miles to G.M., and
the doctors suspected something and made blood
tests - which revealed the platelet count ^{WAS}
at a dangerous low level of 5000. The normal
rate is about 200,000. They were not sure, but
that something was definitely seriously wrong.

They could not / or not able to give platelets by transfusion, so they took me to St. Mary's in Duluth by ambulance - in order to insure ^{an} absolutely safe trip and care. otherwise there might be death by bleeding ~~with~~ with the slightest possible cut or accident or ^{OTHER} infection.

at St Marys I was hooked up immediately for transfusions - and many tests. at first the diagnosis was lymphoma and other complicated relations to ^{THE} immune system and the blood. It was later (and possibly confirmed, too) by U of M Oncology Ward, that the final diagnosis was Castleman's Disease, a blood and immune condition, similar to leukemia, not cancerous, but a very serious disease, and just as deadly.

Initially, the Castleman's was checked - at least momentarily, the platelet level was increased to normal. I was there for 2 weeks and discharged, and went to St. Paul to recuperate.

As I see it, in my own simple terms, was that the disease must have made a hold. I was apparently momentarily well and normal, but that possibly - the slightest infections or (germs) were probably

making some infiltration in ~~the~~ ^{my body.} My immune system was probably off.

I returned to N.P. on April 3. Apparently, something triggered, possible small infection, blood tests off, that prompted Hazel to come after me and return to twin cities and ~~return~~ and go into U of M Masonic III for treatment and tests on April 14. It was ^{on} up and down ^{SITUATION} and it was a very sick time for me. Except for a few immature discharges of 2 days to 4 days, I spent ^{the} entire month of May ^{in the hospital} and finally discharged June 11. I was on chemo therapy (prednisone and other minor drugs) and using a Hickman insertion on my body for IV possibilities. Hazel changed and cleaned this Hickman weekly during the summer. There was an elbow infection in Sept. and spent ⁴ 4 days in North Shore hospital and a trip to U of M clinic ^{MPLS} for a check-up with my oncology doctor Dr. Bruce Peterson. Returned to N.P. Sept 13. Another trip to twin cities, Oct 1 and back to G.P. Oct 6.

I was weak but recuperating, and was able to start lg. collage (4 x 12 ft.) which would go on into 1986. finished Feb 24, 1986. Hazel helped finish and sand pieces toward the finish in order to "get it done".

Commission for Mrs. Fine of Palm Springs, Calif.

It was fortunate that Hazel had taken
a SABBATICAL ACADEMIC 1985-86
this year off from her teaching job at S.P.A.
She spent many hours, days in helping me
with the trips to the cities and return to G.P.
always putting up with me in my hyper
condition. One of the things she wanted to
do was to go to an anniversary exhibition
of Radcliff scholars in Boston, opening
on March 7, 1986. We started on this trip on
March 4, leaving G.P. via Canada thru Niagara
Falls (visiting Turtle Indian Center), on to Boston,
meeting ~~Glenn and Nancy~~ and Nancy Helfant
and Barbara ^{and Barbara} Surprenant
there and going on to Providence
to stay with Barbara, visit friends for 6 days,
then leaving for Ohio to visit Hazels mother
& son Danny and family. This was the imp-
ortant reason too for the trip ~~to~~, staying almost
3 weeks. Hazel did all the driving and Kobi
was along too. He is a good traveller. I was
weak but was propped up well with pillows
for the trip. We also went to Tulsa, Oklahoma
for an opening of big exhibition, "What is
American Native American Art?", at ^{THE} Philbrook
Art Center. A big post opening, many people
met some ^{NEW AND} interesting. ~~people~~. Back to twin
cities on April 6.

Grand Portage - April 21, 1988

To continue with ^{the beginning of my} being sick up to now,
it seems all of 85 and 86 was a series of
set-backs and recoveries, check-ups and tests, and
continuation of medications. My last time to the
VofM hospital was, I think, prompted by a sprained
left ankle and having to use crutches which
cause an infection near my left armpit. Also, I
think I might have been chilled from the cold
weather prior to this, in mid December. I
sprained ~~the~~ ^{my} ankle on Dec 26, 1986, and with high
fevers I went back to the hospital right after ~~to~~
~~start of the year~~ Jan 1, 1987, and spending
most of that month in bed very much immobile.
It was the worst time with many tests and
much medicine, IV as well as oral. I must
have been near death because it seems that I
wanted to die. At times I felt I wanted to
hasten death by some possible means of
suicide. I had gone thru a period of,
not suicide, but preparing for death
during the spring and summer of 1986
when I was struggling for a recovery
and knowing that the mortality rate
for Castleman's patients was 30 months
and under. At that time I was preparing
legacies, writing burial services, etc, with
Hazel and others in the Morrison family.

It seemed that I was going down, down and down. My weight was down to 126 and my temperature did not want to equalize. There must have been a rallying point near the end of that month, ^{and} forced my eating to gain weight and to exercise, but more than anything it was probably my strong will to survive.

Another factor that I attribute this amazing come-back was the power of prayer and magic of other people. of course there was the power of the so-called "white man's medicine" with the care and the powerful drugs, as well as the power of "Indian medicine". Then an article written by Pulitzer prize journalist, John Camp of the St Paul Pioneer Press & Dispatch, about my coping with this devastating disease and my life and art, also created an upsurge of interest and concern from friends and others far and near who sent letters of thoughts and prayers. Hazel and many friends and other artists also gave me what I call "magic" - prayer cloths, earth powders, rocks (that had connections - such as my totem stone jasper or feathers from my totem bird raven - as well as the powerful eagle feather(s)).

Grand Portage - April ~~19~~³⁰, 1988 (FULL MOON)

Everything is very slow for me these past few or more years (one reason why this journal has been slow). It takes me so long, it seems to do the things I want to do. I procrastinate and dream. But I do rationalize it too, to spend time - in morning to do exercises for a half hour and sometimes start my daily one hour walk, and then in afternoon I try to nap for 1 hour sometimes for 2 hours. I do write letters and cards and that sometimes takes time. I try to be constructive. Since April 20, my first trip here since Feb., I did spend some time drawing. 5 hours one day and 5 for another. I want to get back to some painting too.

Also, since April 20, I was to St. Paul and back for an eye exam and for opening of Ojibwe EXPO show, at Augsburg College on Mon. April 25. I won an award at this show for my "Cube". So, I'm puttering around, as I call it, doing many little things. Today I bought a volume by Gerald Vizenor and did some reading. Went to have lunch at the G.P. Lodge, and stopped at the Portage Valley store to say hello to ^{Joyce} + Curtis Gagnon. It seems there is not time enough to do the things I want to do.

To continue about my illness, there was a period in the spring and summer of 1986 when I was preparing to die and when I thought death was imminent, my brother Mike who was in Grand Portage, had consulted with Walter Caribou, an elder and distant relative, (my paternal grandmother was a Caribou, and I've found out this past year that is our family clan - or was, when those kind of things were recognized by families), to have a healing ceremony for me, which, he, Walter did sometime in the spring of 1986. Walter, I think is a practitioner of the medicine society, *midewiwin*, perhaps not in the strict sense that it was done in the "old" days. Walter sings and prays and drums in Chippewa. He dances at pow-wows at every opportunity, and that is a power in itself. Some people were invited and food was eaten after the ritual.

Walter told Mike later that he had a dream, wherein he dreamed a name (s) for me, and that I should in the near future have a naming ceremony.

As I understand it, it is important for the healing subject and naming subject to be prepared (with name) for the hereafter as well as for the present.

The naming ceremony was scheduled on short notice in March 1987, my first trip back to N.P. - after a long recuperation and hospital stays in the twin cities. It was at our house at around sunrise. Hazel had prepared an "Indian" meal - namely moose meat burgers and fry bread. Walter made ready his paraphernalia - drum, prayer banners and pipe. He prayed at length, sang with drum, after which we ate. There was a continuation of the ritual - and smoking, and passing around of pipe ^{ceremonial}, after which point he gave the names: *Wway - Kwi - go - nay - ga - bow* (turning the feather around) and *Way - wa - tay - go - nay - ga - bow* (standing by the northern lights).

It is interesting to note that around c. 1955, in New York City, I painted a painting titled, "Aurora Borealis" (northern lights); and in 1974, I was commissioned

and received a large grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, to do a ^{wood} mural on the front of the American Indian Center in Minneapolis. I chose a theme of feathers, taking a Chippewa feather design and "rearranging" or "turning" the feathers around to suit the design which forms the geometric pattern of the mural. Also, in 1977, I had a dream myself - of which, within the dream fragment there is a vast field of feathers instead of grass. That inspired me to do a paper collage titled, "I Dream of Feather Field".

There must be some great connections of past and present with people and dreams, and the significance of certain magical events that happen - that can make for change. This has happened when I picked up a pottery fragment from Hazel's family "Sebring" (by a million to one chance - on a beach in Provincetown) She had been looking for that "connection" for years! or, the story of Hazel's magical dog "Kobi II" connected with my magical dog "Kobi" of over 30 years earlier.

