

## Dear Mom,

Derek Coté

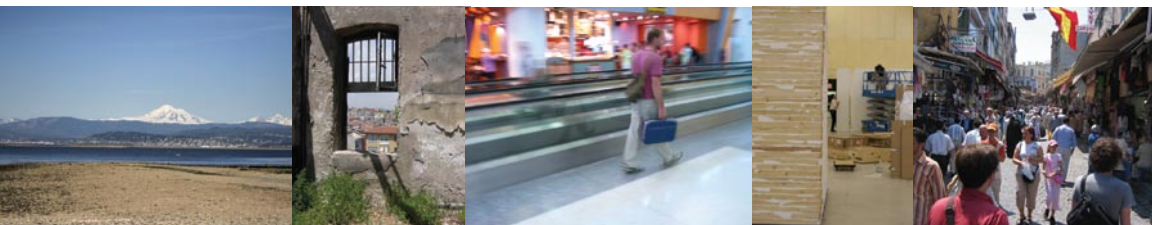
Ahhhh, home sweet home. I have been traveling quite a bit this summer, mostly to places with limited internet and cell phone service. I even had to use an outdoor glass phone booth in British Columbia. Can you imagine? I was executing a project called 22 Hideouts which entailed visiting and documenting all the places we have ever lived, twenty-two in all, and as you know some of them are pretty “out

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there.” While documenting one of the “Hideouts”, in Alberta, I had an encounter with a Mr. Powderface, a very large and serious looking Native American from the Stony Tribe. Let me just say he wasn’t very happy with me taking pictures on his property, which had me very nervous, seeing that I was running solo in the Canadian Rockies, with no cell

phone service. We chatted a little bit, me in my car with my window barely cracked, he standing boldly outside my car door. After a few minutes of communicating through our glass barrier, I mentioned your name and Mr. Powderface lit up, then proceeded to show me around the place. Thanks for being nice to him...

I also went to Istanbul with John. That’s in Turkey. It was nothing like Midnight Express, except for the Turkish bath we experienced. We were there to participate in an exhibition and symposium about Globalism and thought it would be a good opportunity to distribute many copies of Daily Constitutional, whatever we could fit in our luggage. Unfortunately, our luggage missed the flight from Paris to Istanbul. If you’ve ever been to Charles de Gaulle airport, you know why our luggage failed to make the flight. Istanbul reminded me a lot of New York City only much cleaner, friendlier and more efficient. There was little or no trash on the street which was less impressive than the Turks’ restraint from using their car horns, despite the utter chaos that surrounded them on the street. Tea was served on the street and on ferries in little glass cups, which had



to be returned rather than thrown away on the street next to an empty garbage can. It's funny how progress has only made us lazier, less aware, and increasingly self-centered. It was truly a mind-blowing experience, as were the bathrooms – but that's another story for another time. I wish I could go back for about two months. That's what I want for Christmas this year.

I am also happy to report that the second issue of Daily Constitutional was released in Easthampton, New York, this summer. I know what you are thinking. Be nice. What can I say? The art community will only settle for the most fabulous and exotic venues for events like Basel, Athens, Kassel, Venice, London, Berlin, Seoul and Easthampton. You see, we tend to gravitate towards places with a rich history and sophisticated culture, great food, drink, and a wealth of love and support for artists and their undeniable contribution to society. Okay, maybe sometimes we gravitate towards places with a history of... well, rich. So what. You can blame capitalism for that.

Not only were we there to release issue 2, we also had to install a program of three audio sculptures for SoundScope, the fair's first sound/audio installment to their eclectic program. We arrived at ScopeHamptons the day before the event around 3:00pm, after driving almost nine hours, and began installing immediately. Eight and a half hours later, as we were finishing up for the day, two gentlemen approached us with a curiosity as to what we were doing. At this point, we were tired and hungry and all we wanted was get out of the building and scare up a cold beer, as opposed to chat with two guys who looked freshly showered and spry. We mentioned we were from Richmond, Virginia, and one of them came alive with excitement. I remember him saying in an accent that was part French, part German and part unplaceable "Ahhh, Richmond. It's always good to hear Richmond." What could he possibly be talking about, I thought? No one ever says it's good to hear Richmond, though Richmond, Virginia, is a fine place to be. Perhaps he misunderstood or was thinking of another Richmond. Nope. It turns out they were exhibitors from Switzerland and the loquacious one had been sent to Richmond years ago to attend High School in order to learn English.

It was their first fair in America. They had flown into Newark, rented an RV, and embarked on a somewhat perverse version of the Great American Road Trip. From dank parking lots to swanky private yards, the whole of the Hamptons was their hotel. We became very fond of our new friends in the proceeding days; we seemed to possess a lot of the same ideals. They, like us, were there to have fun. That's the key to...well, almost anything.

This fair was a bit different from the Miami fairs in December. It was less of a spectacle and was much more relaxed. That might be due partly to the fact that Scope was the only fair



that weekend, requiring less running around in order to see everything, and that the Hamptons are notorious for being quiet. That meant more time at the beach for us, after all, Easthampton has some of the most spectacular beaches on the East Coast. The down side is there was less competition and some of the work shown seemed highly catered to “Hampton Style.” But all was not lost. There were some real gems amongst the exhibitors as well as some refreshing and unorthodox things to see like Cinema Scope, the Queen Bee Bar and the Perpetual Art Machine, otherwise know as (PAM).

You know how I hate to compare, but the Hampton fair still had a few things in common to the Miami fairs. Both were set in beach communities, both experienced a critical mass of patrons in the million-dollar tax bracket, and neither venue had a shortage of white pants and gold belts. At times I felt as though I was attending a Dynasty reunion party. The parties in the Hamptons were less pretentious and increasingly social, boasting a healthy assembly of dealers, artists, and patrons commingling in a low-key atmosphere synonymous with a beach setting. Though I am certain one of the goals for exhibitors and organizers was to inflate their respective bottom lines, this fair also served as an equal opportunity for producer and purveyor to interact on a somewhat level field, kind of like the good ol' days. Forget about the exclusivity and pretense typical of larger fairs, this was an event truly conducive to networking on a positive level without too much ass kissing. Thanks to our RV-loving friends, we spent our last night at a superb sushi restaurant, in Amagansett, where we shared an internationally represented table with twenty other people eating sushi, drinking, and recounting tales of the past few days. It's hard attending events like this only to go home and face the bombardment of emails, errands, and obligations, but somebody's got to do it.

It has been a busy summer but I am looking forward to more traveling, more issues of Daily Constitutional, and more Turkish baths (there's a rumor going around of a Daily Constitutional European tour next summer). By now you are probably asking yourself “When is my son going to get a real job?” I find myself wondering what a real job is for an artist with a Master's degree. What are we qualified to do; Art handling, working in or for a gallery, carpentry, hanging sheet rock, waiting tables, slaving away in an office, or working at a mall or movie theatre? Though these are all real career possibilities worthy of my masters level education, there is always the teaching option. You have always said that I should do what makes me happy and for now I'm not sure that happiness can be measured in dollars. Let's face it, In the endall we're doing is guarding the cheese anyway.



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