

I guess, you know as you were describing how you went about working with Ed Scheidt. How you went about closing in and keeping prying eyes out and so forth. And also how you went about trying to (sirens in background) to make this – I'll just keep filibustering as the siren goes by -- To make this, in a sense, only partly accessible. And I just wonder, so much of what artists do is to open themselves to the world (more sirens in background). Do you think.... (more sirens) this must be a three-alarm fire.

Mmm, it's a biggie.

(pause for sirens to go by)

Do you think working on the sculpture has closed you in a bit? Made you more secretive?

Well, it's certainly changed my work. I'll say that. It's had a tremendous effect on my work. I mean, since, I'll venture to say that I'm going to be with this secrecy thing for awhile. As I said, I've always worked with invisible forces in the past. Perhaps I'm becoming a bit more invisible myself.

How do you feel about that?

It doesn't bother me, it's really intriguing. Y'know, the whole project out there has been very -- the most interesting thing I've ever done, in my life, and so in that respect I think I regard it as a very valuable experience, in whole effect.

What do you think people will say about you as an artist when the secret is finally revealed?

Um (long pause) let's see. Well I would hope that um, the level of complexity is such that I will be regarded as, ah, smarter than most. That would be nice, wouldn't it? (laughs) But, uh, I don't know. I -- It's hard to say. I don't know that we'll have -- Let's just say that I've been very careful all the way along whether it's interviews or what it is, to place my feet firmly on either side of this imaginary line, of... whether I'm for or whether I'm against the work of the Agency, things like this. I think in that respect the piece reflects some of that, um, I would hate to call it mediocrity, that's the wrong term. But I think that the piece -- I think the -- the text is very – because it's secretive, it's the discovery of what it says will be an interesting thing in itself. I don't know that it will ever be totally figured out. I'm not convinced it will be. And that would be great. I would hope that it's never clear – totally clear.

You know, some people say that great art is, by its nature, subversive.

Well I suppose you could say in some ways that what I'm doing out there – what I've done out there could be subversive in some respect, and that it, it could corrupt somehow. Not necessarily in a negative way. But it might cause the people at the Agency to think

about things a little differently. Perhaps think of things a little bit more -- less seriously perhaps.

Well the Agency is not reacting with any great humor about this.

No, I can't imagine any publicity is something which the Agency would love. And all the way along, there has never been a suppression, y'know...

They never told you not to talk to the press?

Well, they've told me not to say certain things, and, you know, not to be in certain places, but

Have they sent you the check yet?

Oh (laughs), well that was spent long before the piece was built, but

So you have a responsibility to them you feel? At least in certain...

I have a responsibility to my piece. I don't want to, um... That piece is going to be there for a long time. And I don't want to necessarily poison the relationship, because that just -- it lends negative associations to my piece that's sitting there all the time. I mean it's just, why would I want to, y'know, to make it a negative feeling when people went out in the courtyard and looked at the piece? I don't want that to happen. And that's one reason that I choose to be somewhere in the middle.

Anything about this you'd like us to understand that we haven't touched on?

I don't think so. You, you've done pretty well. We'll see what happens next! Y'know, the pulped pieces are going to be around for a long time, and I'm building a Code Room right now....

What?

...using Arabic text and Russian text, I'm building a room much like the rooms that the Agency operatives use in other countries to take the information that they've got and somehow transmit it to the Agency. These rooms are traditionally covered with some kind of copperscreen material to keep microwaves from penetrating the walls and keep the information from escaping also. And so I'm building rooms now using the pulp, and they're surrounded by this copperscreen in order to keep the secrets in or out. And so I'm going to be doing those for awhile.

Are they here in the st--, in this building?

Yeah, yeah, the first one.

Alright, well, thank you very much. Let me ask you to sit there for a---

(cut)

(different angle, from behind interviewer's shoulder. Muffled chat)

What I'd love to do is to show, do you have-- actually if you have any more work that you could be doing that you might show, it'd be useful. Whether it's

constructing the copper lining, or whatever else might be around, it's interesting, I've never... Right after 3-Mile Island I got sent to take tests (cut)

(different angle, from behind Sanborn's shoulder, looking towards interviewer. Ambient sound)

(mid-sentence) . . . **I'll do some kind of secret message. Did it come right to you, or did you have to think more about what you can do?**

Well, I thought about it for a long time. I mean it took, I probably researched it for 6 months or 8 months before I laid pencil to paper. And, um, came up with sketches or ideas. Things. I mean, I thought about the work of the Agency, I thought about the work of the Agency in context of my own work, um, and things like that.

What other things did you consider? I mean....

Well of course I considered the negative target that the Agency is. And the fact that y'know, the work that they do. The things that happened back in the 1970s, slowly began to develop what I wanted to do, and I based it on a lot of different factors.

You must have decided that if you put some kind of a negative message there, it would have less impact, or that it would be just...

Putting a negative message there was just too easy. It's just too easy. I mean, it's very easy to be part of ---

(cut)

<http://www.elonka.com/kryptos>