



January 23, 1989

Dear Seymour,

Enclosed is a copy of what I put together from the newspaper obits. All that shrinking and fitting just to get it on one page! The other page contains my personal thoughts, hastily written, the morning of Grandma's Memorial Service. The warm personal feelings of those lines were written from my heart, and they barely cover the anger and resentment I feel each time I think of the deterioration and ruin that is Bottle Village. It's anger at a society that worships at the shrine "fine art". A society that has purified art as an activity, removing from it all the associations of life lived. In particular, devaluing virtually anything associated with women, with private life, with material culture as related to daily life. Separating art from life, from real life; from women's real lives.

Call it folk art, outsider art, visionary or eccentric. Bottle Village stands as a revelation in the post-Renaissance history of art. A perfect distillation from all those elements, which, for over 400 years were purposely filtered from the blend that is truly art. Bottle Village-- built by a woman, reflecting many aspects of her private life, revealing the material culture of a growing community and redefining the word "garbage" as we make our daily trips to the trash cans.

Perhaps I have over-indulged my intellect and over-emphasized the importance of what some have called "the billion-bottle nightmare on Cochran Street." Perhaps I'm just another impassioned zealot sniveling about the lack of support for my pet project. No, restoring Bottle Village may not (could it?) change the course of art history, but it would honor the dream of one woman who worked hard at making art-- art that tugs at emotions, challenges reason, and defies classification; art that questions the values which formed the foundation for post-Renaissance art appreciation.

Grandma told everybody she was having fun. I'm sure she was. What a kick!

So Seymour, there you have it-- some thoughts from my heart, some thoughts from my brain, and some of the usual recycled BV stories. I really like to think about Grandma and her Bottle Village. Fascinating.

Take care,