

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

December 14, 2006

Static Master & Power Shammy

Filed under: [goof](#) — alecsothblog @ 12:44 am

In three months of blogging, I've restrained myself by only mentioning [Paul Shambroom](#) three times. Paul has been a longtime hero. Beyond the greatness of his work, his career as a Minnesota artist has provided a significant role model for me.

But as Buddha said "Embrace nothing. If you meet the Buddha, Kill the Buddha." I guess this is why I have a need to tease Paul by calling him "[ruggedly handsome](#)" and "[Power Shambroom](#)."

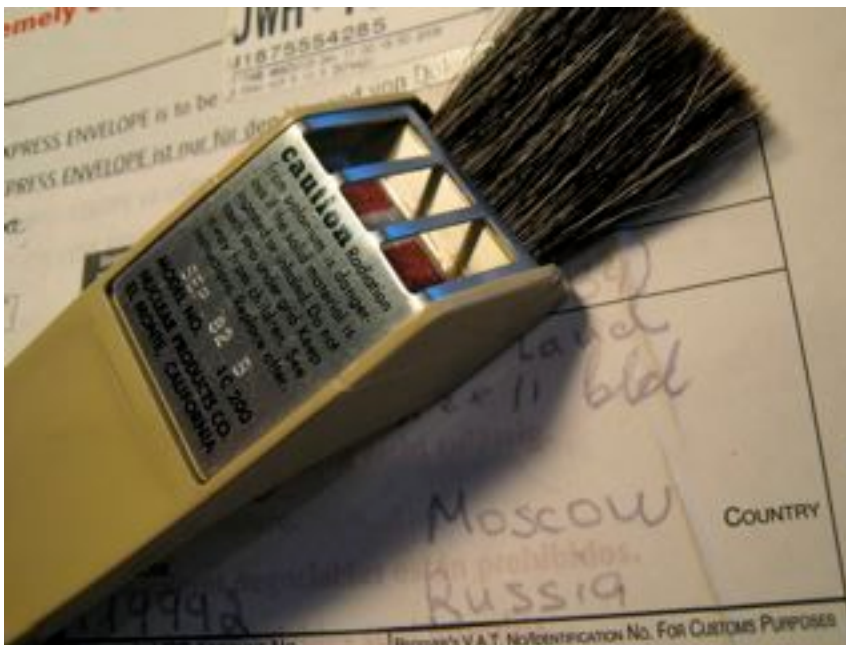
But now I have the ultimate material to take Paul down. He recently sent me an email with the Subject Line: **Dear "Eccentric-sad Americans by iconic water with big camera" guy**. Here is the content of the email:

Dear Mr. Soth-

Please help unravel a mystery. You seem like a smart guy, the kind of guy who understands complex connections between seemingly disconnected things. After reading on your blog about people like Mitch Epstein who don't have Wikipedia entries, I checked myself for the first time. (OK, it was the first time this week.) I discovered that I don't have one either! It's like I don't exist. Just then a strange thing happened. I took a sip of coffee and noticed a warm liquid seeping into my lap. Yes, I'm getting old, but not "Depends" old, if you know what I mean. It turns out that the coffee was coming out from between my ribs. I'm slowly disappearing. A look in the mirror confirmed that I'm not all there!



Are you with me so far? Now it gets REALLY complicated. I had just received a package, a Russian magazine with some of my photos in it. (Also lots of cars, electronics, and naked women. Competition for the Russian Maxim, I guess.) I noticed the UPS envelope from Moscow was sitting on my desk RIGHT NEXT TO my trusty 1982-vintage Static-Master negative cleaning brush. A while ago I did a calculation based on the half-life of Polonium 210 (138.4 days) after 24 years, which gave a result of $8.8383e-20$ for the relative strength of my Static-Master source. I don't understand scientific notation too well, but I know that's a REALLY small number. Feeling well in the safety zone, I had started using my Static-Master to stir my coffee. Yesterday (before the leaking episode) I noticed that my coffee was warmer AFTER I stirred it! A coincidence? I don't think so.



My physical self is fading AND I don't exist on-line because I don't have a Wikipedia entry. I'm fading away like a cyber-space Cheshire Cat! What's happening to me? Are these things connected?

Here's my theory- I think the Russians put a replacement Static-Master with a fresh Polonium source in the magazine package. Plus- I believe I used to have a glorious multi-page Wikipedia entry with links, illustrations, testimonials from old girlfriends, etc, but it was removed (by those same Russians) before I ever saw it!

There are some holes in this theory, though. I was hoping, Alec, you could help me tie up these loose ends:

- Why didn't the FBI agents (who usually sit in a truck outside my studio disguised as Qwest employees) do something to intervene? (sorry I'm getting ahead of myself and should explain- they've been there since my [nuclear weapons project](#), some other guys have joined them since I've been working on Homeland Security.)



- How did the Russians know I stir my coffee with my Static-Master? (Wait, I know- they hacked into the iSight camera on my new MacBook.)
- How did they switch my OLD Static-Master with the new one (nano-robots inside the UPS package?)
- Most puzzling- what was the motive? Were the Russians mad at me because I never photographed THEIR nuclear weapons (or their [town council meetings](#), as if godless ex-communists even have those)? Are they working WITH the guys in the Qwest truck?

Needless to say, I am quite unsettled by all this. I was hoping that you could help solve this. Or, if you're too busy farting around in Kentucky, or perhaps just not smart enough, maybe the brilliant readers of your blog could help. It would give me great comfort to have closure in my final days in the physical world.

Sincerely yours, Paul Shambroom

I'm worried about Paul. Can someone help? Can we get the guy a Wikipedia entry and/or an endorsement deal with [Power Shammy](#)?

13 Comments

1. who is paul shambroom?

Comment by martin — December 14, 2006 @ [2:54 am](#)

2. ha ha just kidding

Comment by martin — December 14, 2006 @ [2:55 am](#)

3. The Power Shammy endorsement it a tough nut to crack. But the Wikipedia entry isn't too hard.

A quick stab at it:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Shambroom

Comment by [Davin](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [8:54 am](#)

4. That's it. I am *so* asking [Scott Bateman](#) draw a "I'm exploring power in its various forms to get Maggie Gyllenhaal in the sack" cartoon.

Comment by [Clint](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [9:14 am](#)

5. Did you know that if you type in <http://www.wikipedia.com>, the title in the menu bar at the top of your browser says "Wikipedia does not exist."

haha

Comment by [m](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [9:32 am](#)

6. Great job Davin! Thanks so much.

Comment by [Alec Soth](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [11:36 am](#)

7. Alec, what other artists from Minnesota do you think one should know about? Yourself, Angela Strassheim, Todd Deutch, Shen Wei, Paul Shambroom. Those are the ones I can think of right off but I (obviously) don't know much about the art world.

Do you think there is a Minnesota aesthetic? If so, what is it?

Comment by [Clint](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [2:28 pm](#)

8. Be careful of the Wiki jackboots. They come knocking in the night and will demand your relevancy papers.

Slight tangent... I have always been fascinated by the fact that the Wiki entry for "Vulcan (Star Trek)" is as long as the entry for "human." I think it speaks volumes about the charmingly unique (and potentially socially awkward) nature of the Wiki community.

Comment by [Amy](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [2:39 pm](#)

9. ..."Did you know that if you type in <http://www.wikipedia.com>, the title in the menu bar at the top of your browser says "Wikipedia does not exist.""

Um...That's because it's a dot org not a dot com and doesn't include a comma in the URL either.

n.b. Having a wikipedia page doesn't give validation to one's existence never mind one's oeuvre. I would wear the "no wikipedia" page as a badge of honour personally. I think m. Shambroom's blog entry has flown over most readers heads with it's sarcastic tone.

Comment by [Michael K-S](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [4:08 pm](#)

10. Mr. Broomsham,

While not giving away too much of our corporate manifesto, Shammy™ admires your delicious photographs of democratic small towns, the strength of our national pride in its arsenals and the courageous efforts of our homeland's bravest brains to thwart the not if but when threats of tommorrow. However we regret to inform you that it is against our policy to endorse the magicky-shine-wax-away™ of Shammy with anyone who is listed on any internet site such as wikipedia, mspace, dudesgonewild or other sorts of websites that can trace a personality to our products.

It's simply to risky.

Thanks for your continued support!

-Chauncey W. Mackentire III

Comment by [Chauncey Wipesnbuff](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [8:08 pm](#)

11. Dear Mr Bramshoom,

let me take this opportunity as CEO of Mr. Muscle Inc. to formally step in and offer you the unique opportunity to be the face of our 'Freshen up Frankfort - Kleen up Kentucky Kampaign'.

As the UK's premier buffing spray, we're keen to jump in. We know a good marketing opportunity when we see it, and damn if we couldn't do with your access to heavy duty nuclear cleaning outfits to help our cause! All we need you to do is walk around downtown Frankfort for 3 days in an aluminized Level A HAZMAT suit, holding a placard saying 'I'm Paul Bramshoom, and I keep my suit shiny with Mr Muscle! Find me on Wikipedia!'

We can find you on Wikipedia, Mr Bramshoom? Only it's in our slogan... hell with it. Brad! BRAD!! What's Hulk Hogan's availability?

thanking you in advance,

Mr D E .Aerosol

Comment by [Dodge E. Aerosol](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [8:49 pm](#)

12. Mr. Shammy™broom,

On further consideration we would like you to decline Mr. D. E. Aerosol's request. It is simply ludicrous to fathom someone as wiki-celebrated as yourself to pledge allegiance to none other than the wipe-it-all-away patriotic pride of our star splangled Shammy™.

Our creative directors are already hard at work on the Power Shammy™Broom 2008. With one sweep of our the Shammy™Broom you'll be sure to erase a litany of muddy minded naysayers and digital vs. film argumenters from each and every blog post past and present. (We already removed all mention, pictures and 1's and 0's from any dudesgonewild website relating to your name and likeness, your ex-girlfriends may prove slightly more problematic).

Sincerely,

Mr. Chauncey W. McMackentirety IV esq.

Comment by [Chauncey Wipesnbuff](#) — December 14, 2006 @ [9:11 pm](#)

13. Do not worry about the guy. I believe he will cope with it himself.

Comment by [Patricia](#) — November 7, 2007 @ [7:44 am](#)

