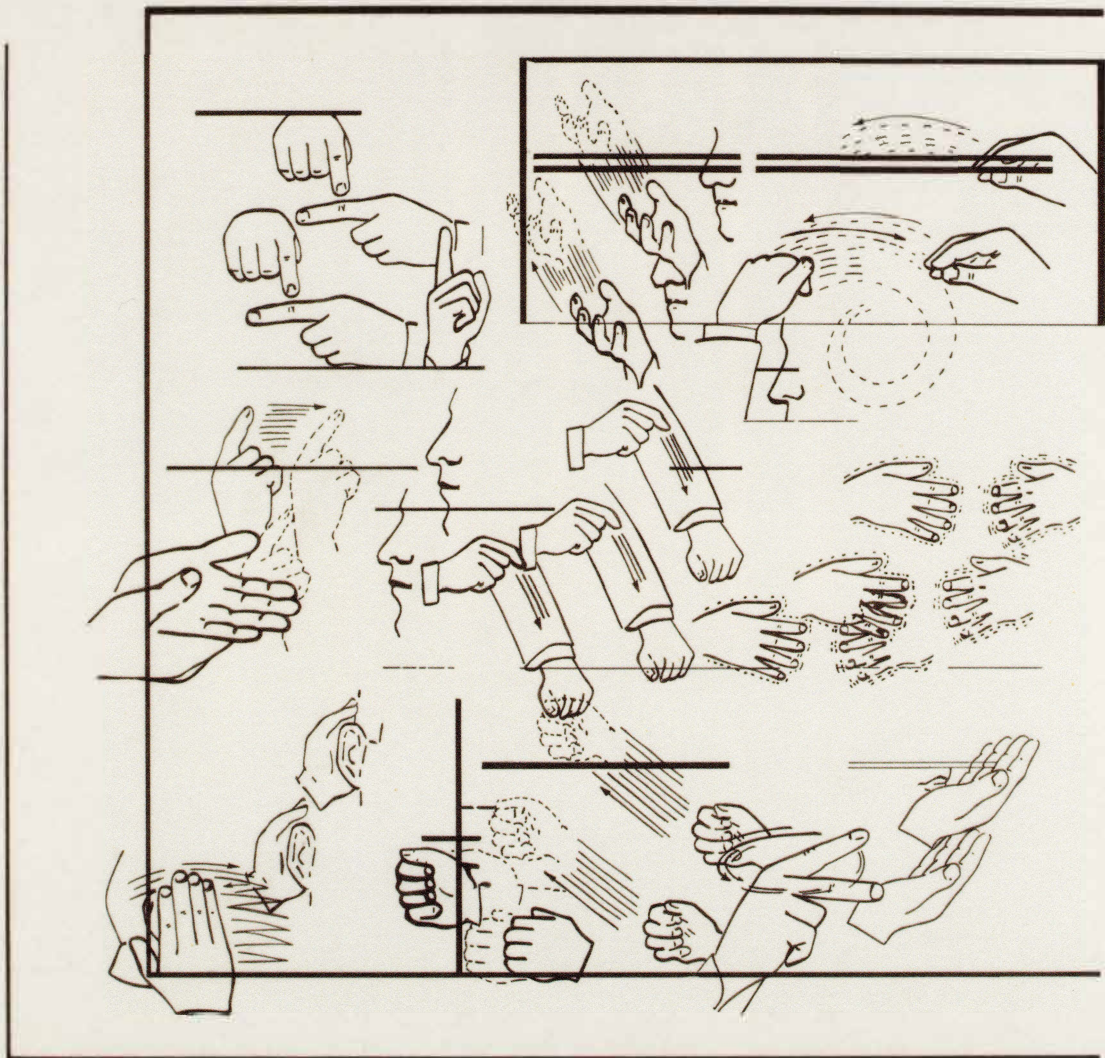


said. So #3, 2004
Pigmented ink on vellum
25 x 24 inches
Private Collection
(not in exhibition)



Richard Carlyon's studio, 723 West Broad Street, Spring 2006.



TAKE 5: OF MEMORY AND LANGUAGE

My great-uncle Alfred was 40 years old on the day that I was born. He died on my 24th birthday. During the years I spent with him, I never — ever — heard uncle Alfred speak as much as a single word to anyone. His only vocalizations consisted of beautifully hummed sounds. I learned a lot from uncle Alfred.

A childhood friend of mine — a kid named Zachariah — was a secretive kind of guy. He loved to bury “smallish things” in the ground. Two or three times a week (over a period of several years) he would say to me: “I buried something today.” When Zachariah was 63, he was caught and then trapped by an enormous mudslide from which he never escaped. His body disappeared and has never been recovered.

One of my aunts was neurotic to an extreme. She had a marked propensity for shrieking as she spoke and, as she did so, she would claw at the air with her left hand and tug at her hair with the right. The theatrics of her behavior fascinated me. I could never figure her out but that didn’t matter. Being in her company was always an adventure for me.

When I was 16, I fell madly in love with the image of the American film actress, Lana Turner. Everything about her image-persona enthralled and excited me. I once fantasized that a chance encounter placed the two of us on an empty dance floor where we tangoed the night away. My fantasy remained as such, but on my 17th birthday I changed the color of my hair from its natural brown to Lana Turner blond.

About four years ago (I recall it was one morning during the last days of November 1997) as I was re-arranging the placement of the drawing table in my studio, I suddenly (in a flash!) experienced two notions which caught me by surprise. The first: that art is not what it is about. The second: that art probably is not even about what it does. Now that I’ve given a public face to these notions, I have nothing more to say of them. As noted in the opening paragraph of this statement: Hum’s the word.