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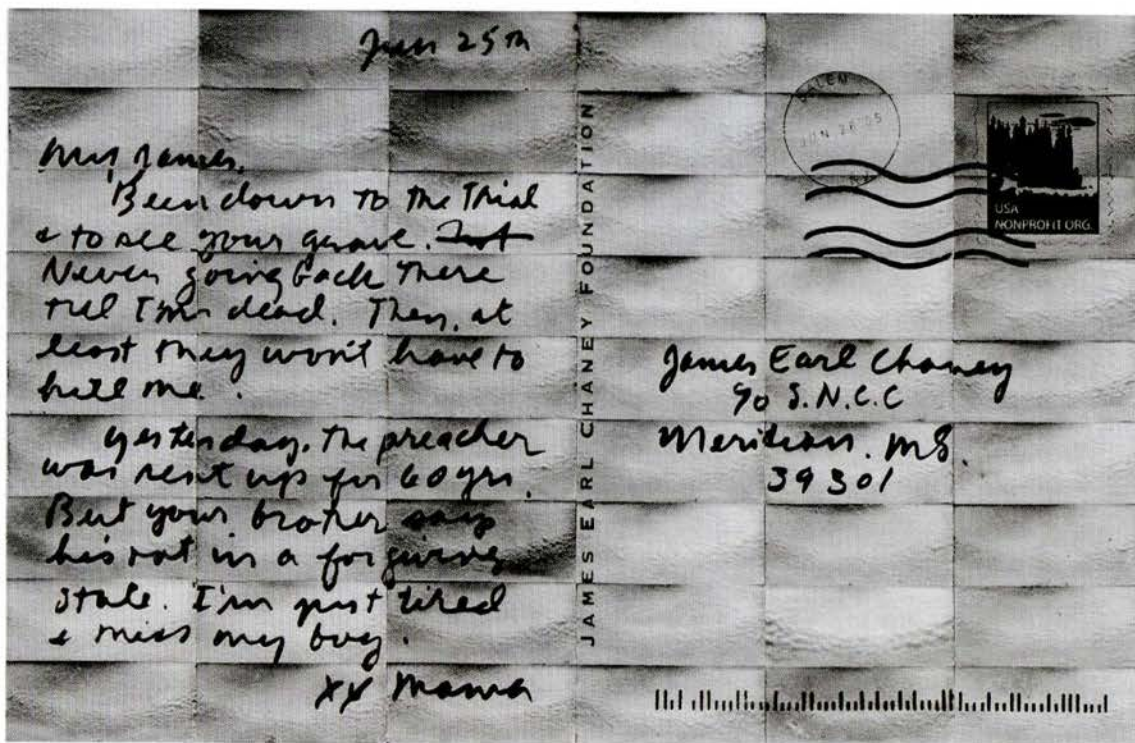
Mary Kelly

Rosamund Felsen Gallery // November 16–December 22, 2012

THIS EIGHT-WORK EXHIBITION continues Kelly's long-term investigation into the enduring effects of war and its passage into everyday life. By adapting found objects—statements and artifacts—each work becomes an askew stage on which we glimpse what the artist has elsewhere termed a “political primal scene.” Such scenes, whether lived as historical fact or imagined, are the political moments that constitute our intimately personal yet deeply social origin stories.

Cast in a unique technique that compresses lint onto a support, *How to build a bomb shelter at home*, 2012, is a framed blueprint for a couple constructing a Morrison Shelter, an item mass-produced for domestic use in Britain during World War II. It is then built in small scale and set for an English tea in *How to use the shelter as a table*, 2012. The images depict a defense against annihilation, the motor of which, the hetero-normative couple, stands in for an ideal of

Mary Kelly
Installation view of
Habitus, Type I, 2010.
Laser-cut acrylic,
mirror, and words.



Mary Kelly
My James, 2008.
 Compressed lint cast
 in low relief, vinyl, and
 cardboard, 49 x 73½ in.

unknowingly caught in another person's endless revision and repetition.

On *Habitus, Type I*, 2010, also made in cooperation with Barrie, anecdotes by a generation born during or just after World War II are perforated into the shedlike sculpture, which mimes the mass-produced Anderson Shelter. It is then mirrored in three postwar global phenomena recorded in other works in the show: Cold War paranoia in *Mimus*, 2012, the international struggle for the rights of women and workers in *7 Days*,

middle-class respectability under threat.

Habitus, Type II, 2012, made in collaboration with Ray Barrie, extrudes the Morrison unit in the lint works with a tabletop, protective grill, and bedchamber below. Yet a gap widens between the diagrams and the written first-person recollection of family life growing up

during air raids cut into the tablecloth. The narrator cannot distinguish money from food stamps and walks around craters to get to school, where girls learn to decorate shelters in Home-Ec. This waking life streams into the mirrored floor of the sleeping space. As viewers peering into this metaphoric unconscious, we are

2012, and the vigil for civil rights in *My James*, 2008. Kelly traces political history displaced in everyday clothes that are harvested for lint, in architectural structures that remap the home, and in searching conversations that unveil the visages on which we build our lives.

—Tejpal S. Ajji