

A needy but good friend

Carl-Oskar Jonsson's favorite movie is *Amadeus* (1984, Miloš Forman) about the classical composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Before installing his exhibition, we rehashed a bit of history dramatized in the film.

Salieri, an older cotemporary of Mozart was an important and talented composer in his own right. However, his talent becomes a yolk as he is weighed down by his unique ability to see just how much Mozart has surpassed him.

Jonsson does not have ambitions to be as groundbreaking as Mozart, nor does he burn with the alleged jealousy of Salieri. What pushes his work forward is a desire to play the tune of sculpture and drawing competently. A commitment to measured work, with charcoal, welder's torch, word processor, and naturally, his mind.

The fruits of his labor outweigh their ambitions, and show something we rarely see: an artist using labor as material, without cynicism or contempt. Steel in the shape of ubiquitous cardboard boxes are strewn about the gallery's hallway to begin the show. They literally take the shape of work that almost no one wants to do, carrying heavy boxes. However, Carl-Oskar makes light of these burdens by making them heavy and beautiful. Why not leave them out in the open?

A text, hung like a mantra, but written like a story, sits above the place of almost everyone's daily rituals, the bathroom sink. It tells of more work, and of just who Carl-Oskar's is, a canvas to receive labor and make it into art.

The main space is our and Jonsson's sabbath. After a proverbial Monday- Friday, examining work. Jonsson looks at and celebrates, break time. Friends gaze out the window. A shining lantern leads the way to an envelope depicting a city scape including bellowing smokestacks. On the verso, is man, maybe Carl-Oskar exiting a barroom bathroom. He is relived, drunk, and happy.

The ambition of Mozart, the jealousy of Salieri, or the desire to avoid or make light of work that so many artists fall prey to would have ruined "A needy but good friend."