



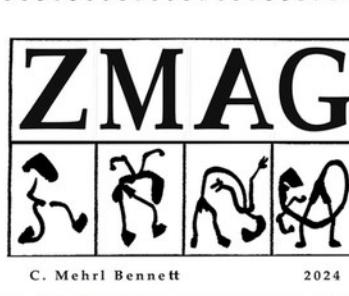
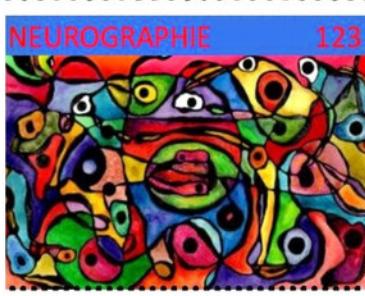
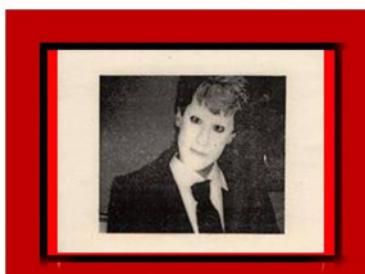
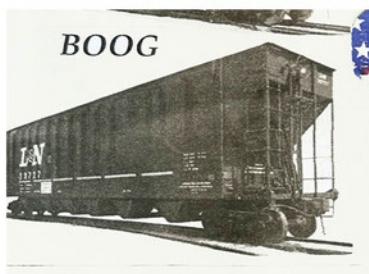
ZMAGazine No. 1

Internal Organ of the Zoom Mailart Group

ORGANGRINDER

Caution Upon Opening

開ける際はご注意ください



240603

Really a Magazine!
WEINER

SCHEINDE MARKEN

SEARCH
LOVE

Welcome.

The **Zoom Mail Art Group** is a small community of mail artists who enjoy using Zoom video conferencing to round out our connections. The group originated during the COVID shutdown in response to a controversial mail art issue - pornography. We found that teleconferencing added a welcome dimension to our mail art practices. Since then, we have met monthly to share new projects, present techniques or historical perspectives, and discuss issues relating to mail art. Our meetings prioritize group discussion, consensus decision-making, and a cooperative, positive atmosphere.

Our monthly meeting attendance is usually 15 to 20. Well over 100 different mail artists have come to at least one meeting in the past 4 years. Our backgrounds, styles, and viewpoints are quite diverse. It's always a joy to see these artists gather, converse, and collaborate on projects. The ZMAG community has shared numerous presentations, mail art calls, and personal mail art, as well as many good friendships. This magazine, our newest project, may or may not be the first of many - such is the world of mail art.

ZMAGazine started with an idea suggested by one of our members to collect and publish our members' written work. We formed a publishing group to develop project guidelines and implement the work. We also decided to include visual art. Anyone who attended at least one ZMAG meeting was invited to submit up to five 8.5" x 11" pages and one smaller image for the cover collage. With minimal editorial suggestions and no corrections, we accepted essays, visual art, fiction and poetry contributed by members of our group related to mail art, art, or our ZMAG group. We asked that submissions coincide with our principles - positive in nature and neither prurient nor offensive to readers. The final book was approved by the publishing team.

For a broader perspective of ZMAG, check out zmagmailartistgroup.com

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MAGAZINE

#1 2024





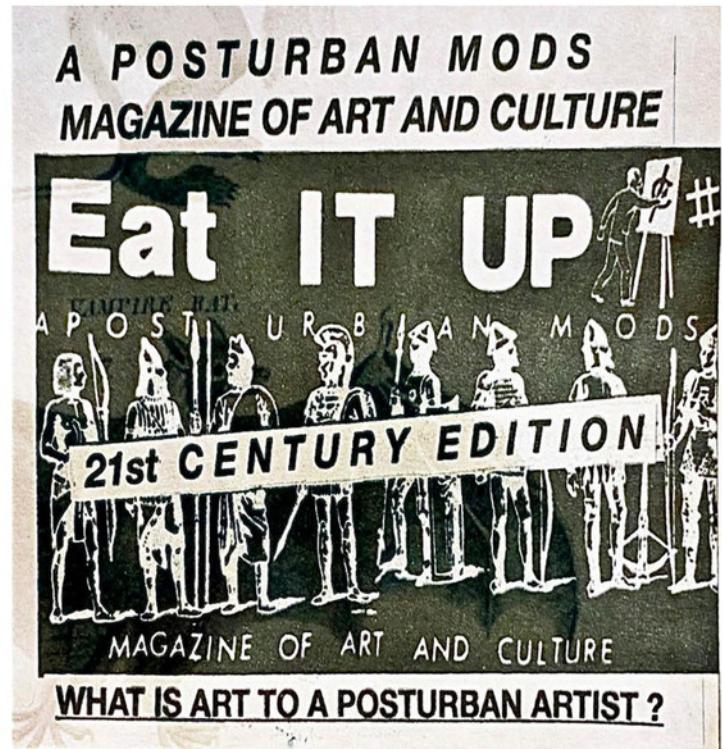
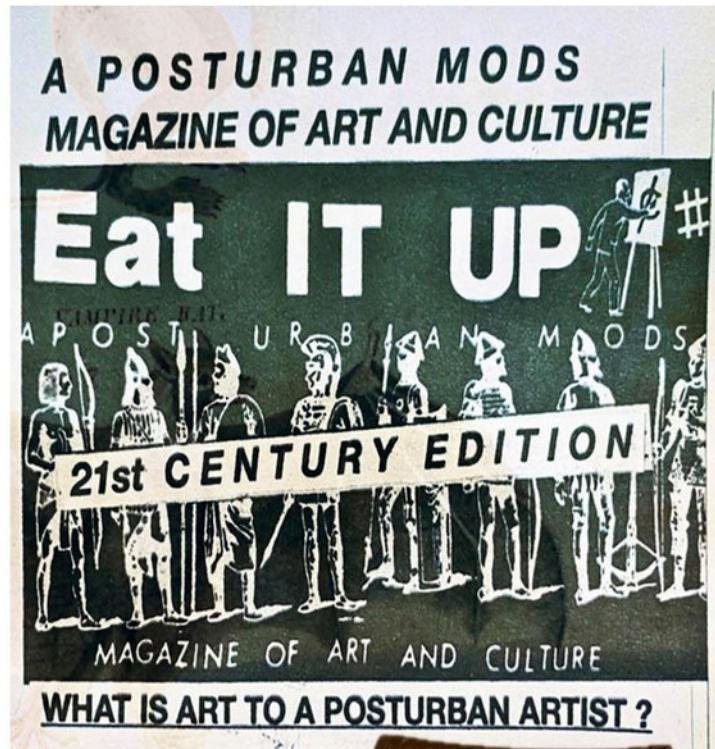
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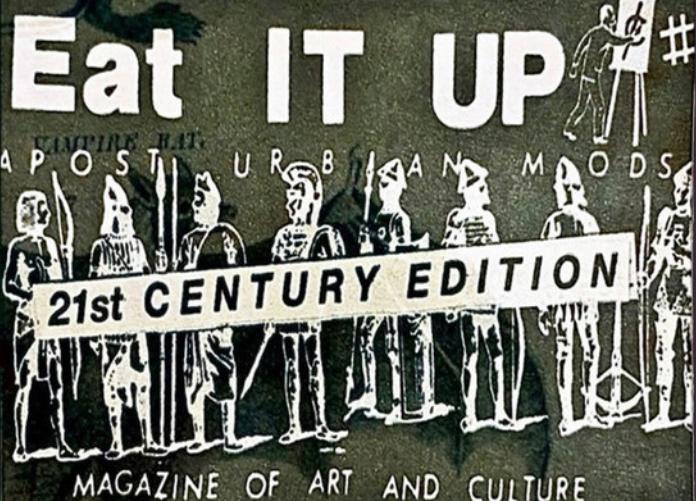
ZMAGAZINE PUBLISHING TEAM:
Adam Roussopoulos, Carl Chew, Jon Foster, Joel Cohen,
Joey Patrickt, Nonlocal Variable, Pedro Pescador



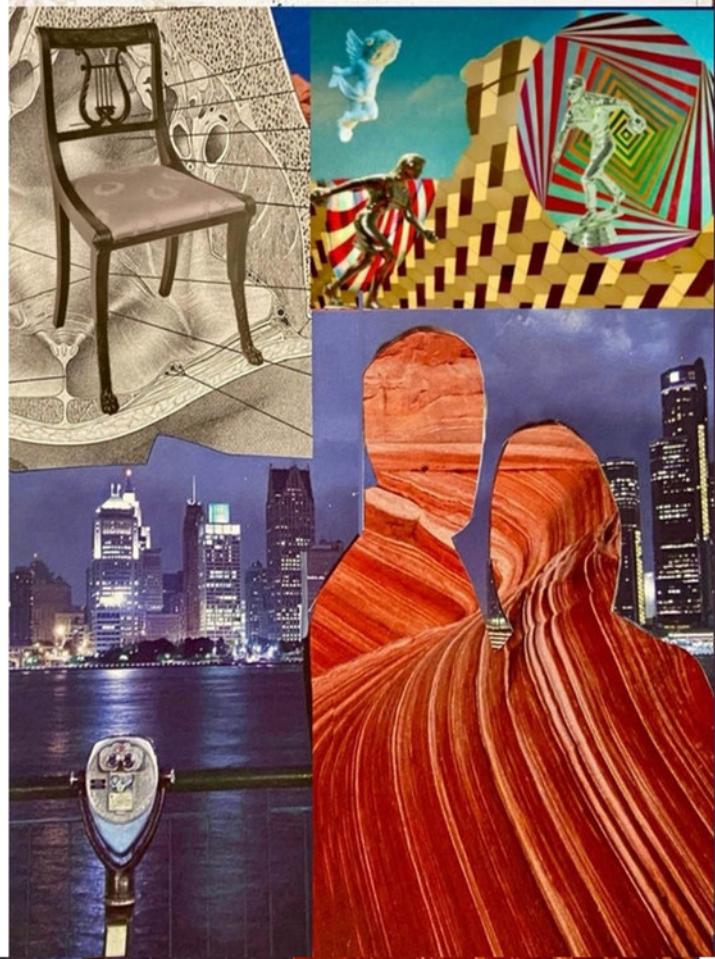
NO ANIMALS WERE HARMED WHILE ASSEMBLING THIS MAIL ART



A POSTURBAN MODS
MAGAZINE OF ART AND CULTURE



WHAT IS ART TO A POSTURBAN ARTIST ?



A POSTURBAN MODS
MAGAZINE OF ART AND CULTURE

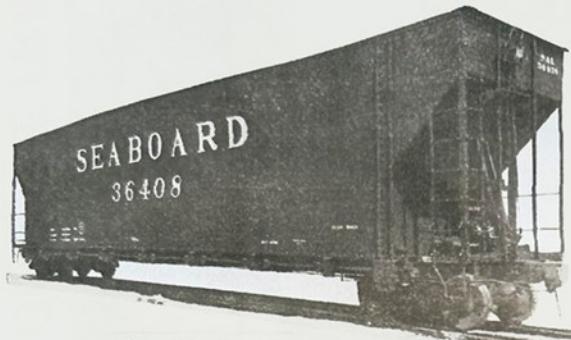


WHAT IS ART TO A POSTURBAN ARTIST ?

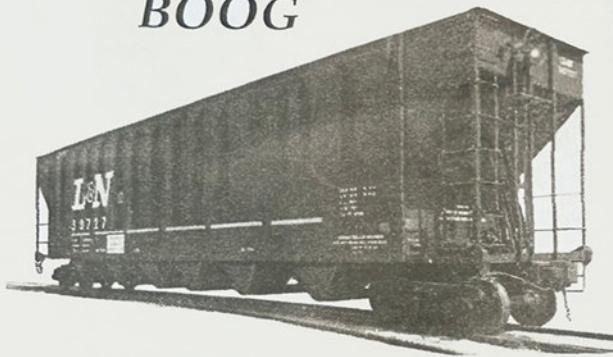


APRIL 2024

STICKER DUDE



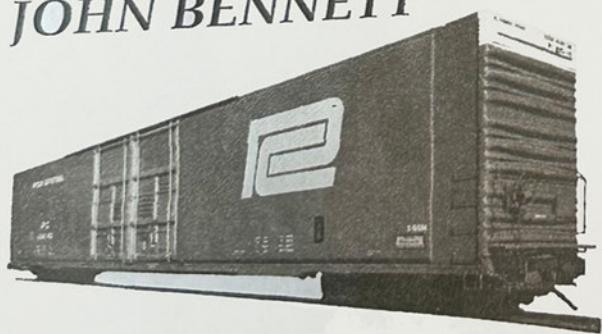
BOOG



ADAM ROUSSOPOULOS



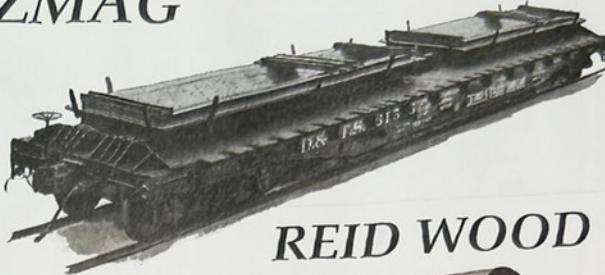
JOHN BENNETT



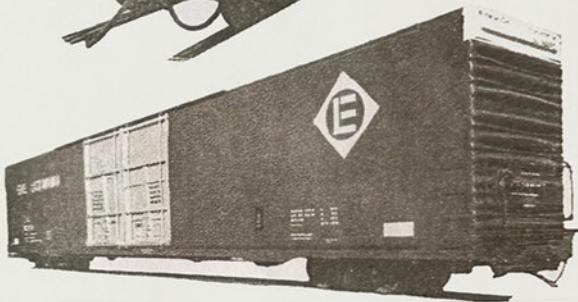
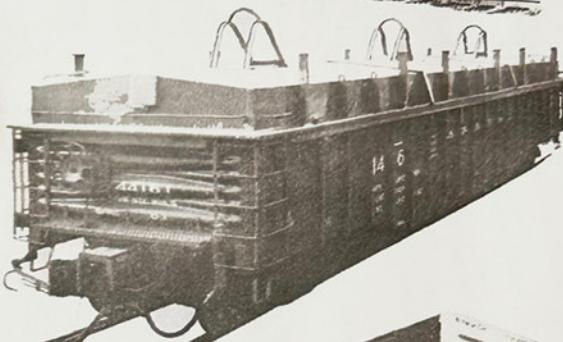
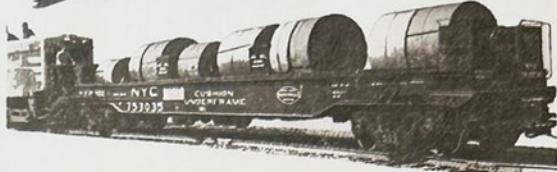
JOHN HELD, JR.

GOOD-BYE TRIBUTE TO BUZ BLURR

ZMAG



REID WOOD

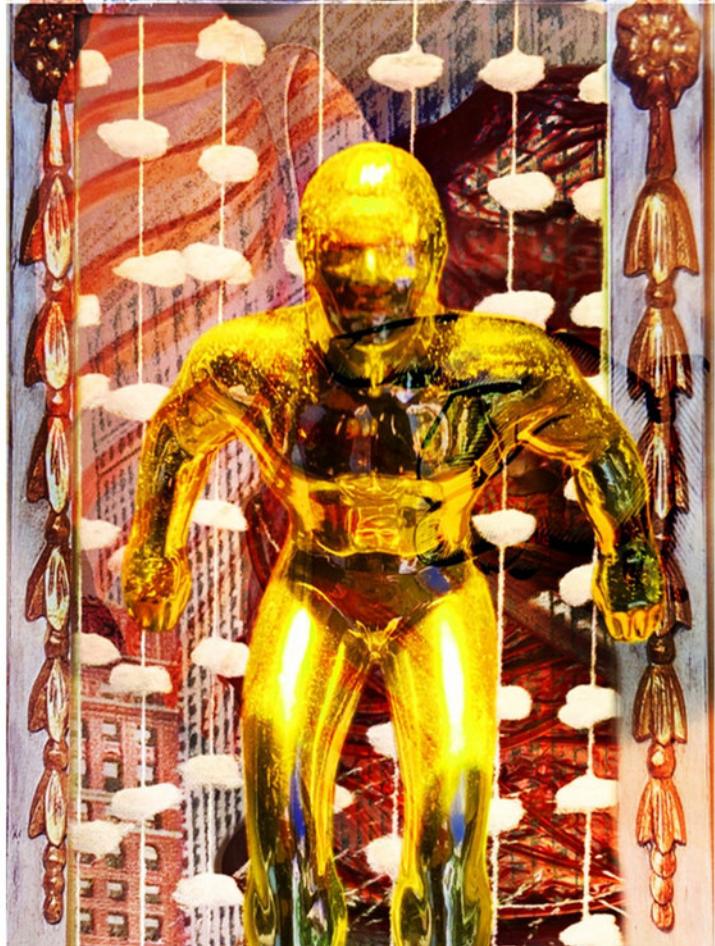
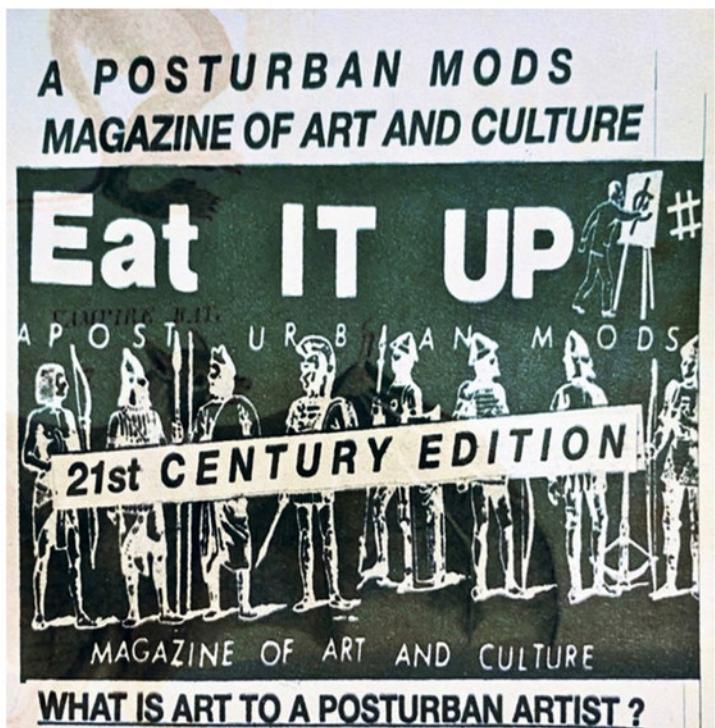
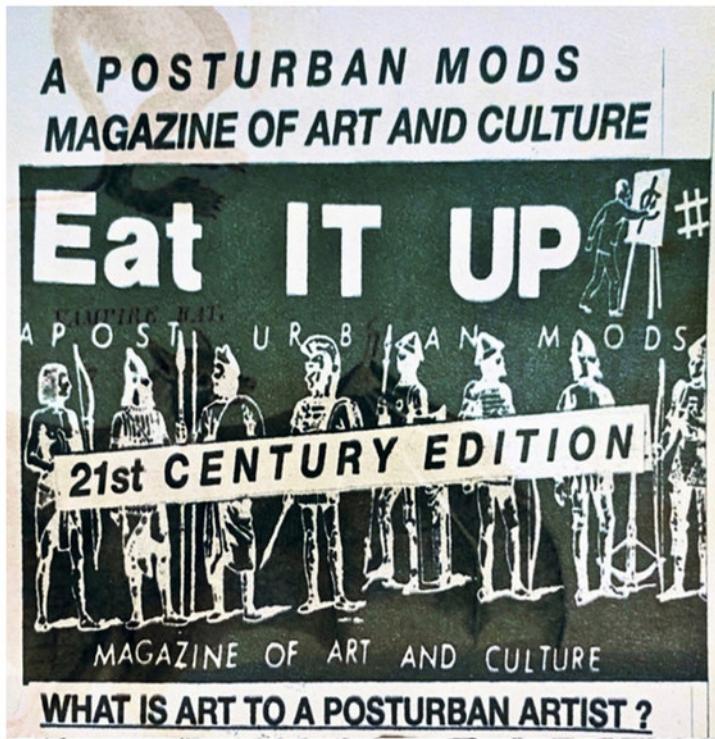


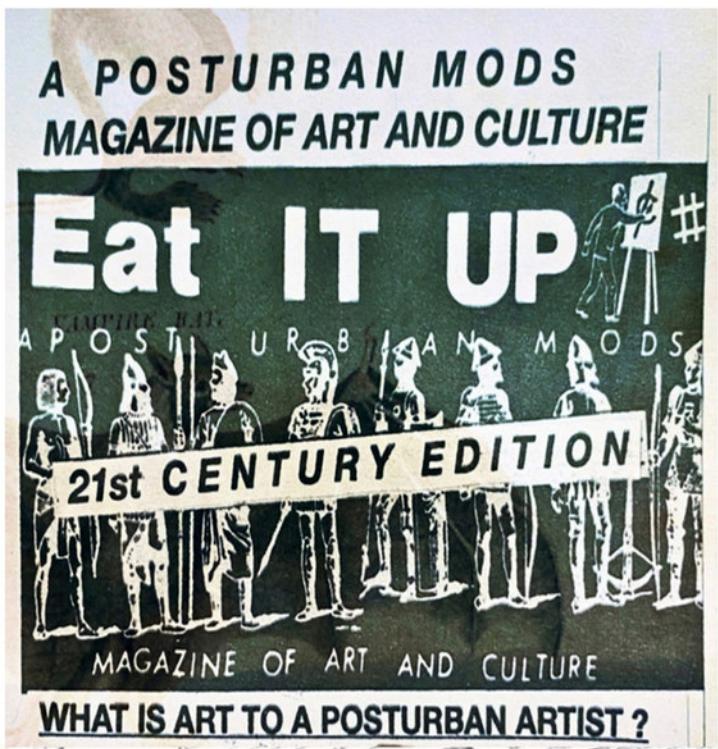
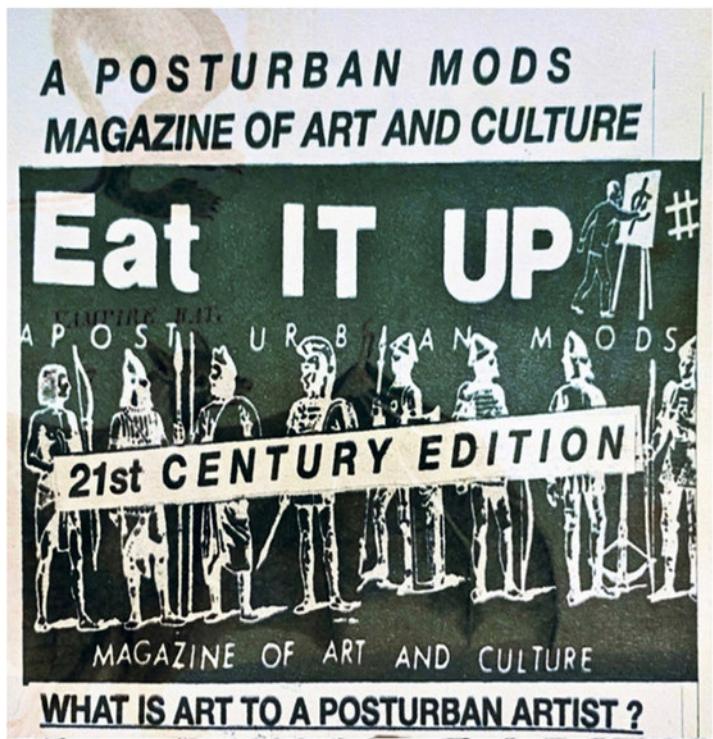
THOMAS CASSIDY
MATTHEW THOMPSON



CATHY BENNETT







THREE SANTA MONICA STORIES AND ONE STAMP

THE SIGN: VISION AT THE SYNANON SEAWALL

One day I walked to the beach down Pico Blvd. which ends at a blue seawall. It was maybe 1968 and the dead end signs were red and white striped instead of the yellow-themed signs you see now. The beautiful light, the warmth of the sun, and the brilliant red, white, and blue all combined to give me an intense vision of the sign rising into the sky. I painted what I remembered of the moment in oils on a masonite panel. I made this artistamp in 2007 to commemorate my experience.



PORN

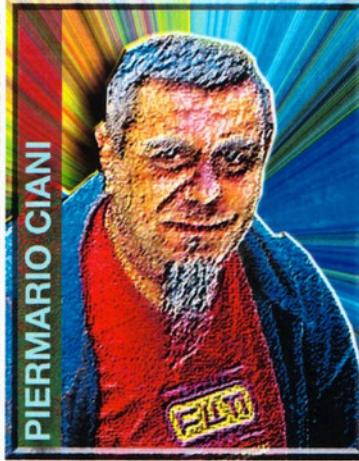
I was crossing a quiet street when I saw a paperback book in the middle of the road. I picked it up, read the first page, and noticed that I was standing in the exact spot described in the book...

CAPTAIN BIOLOGY TO THE RESCUE?

It was night time, the young couple in the apartment below mine started fighting, making a terrible racket. The guy was a bad dude who physically abused his mate. I hear a knock on my door and it is the wife. Her husband had beaten her, she called the police, and he had taken off on foot up into a residential neighborhood and had patrol cars and the police helicopter after him. The wife wanted me to follow the action, we jumped into my VW, followed all the sirens and the searchlight from the copter, and found the husband pinned down by the cops. She did not press charges and we all went home.



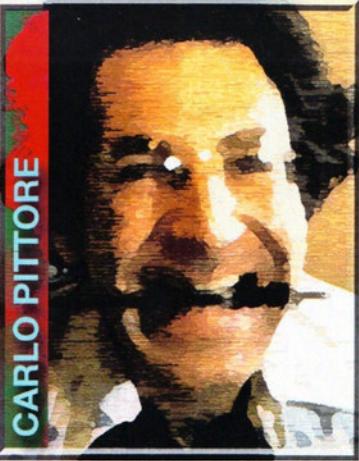
A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION



PIERMARIO CIANI

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

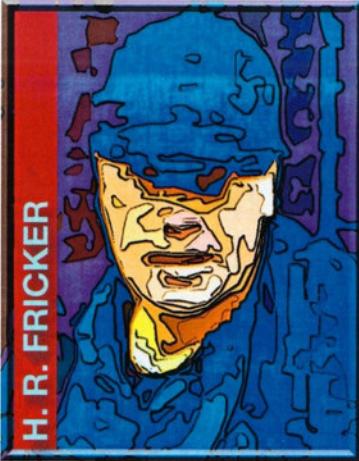
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CARLO PITTORE

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

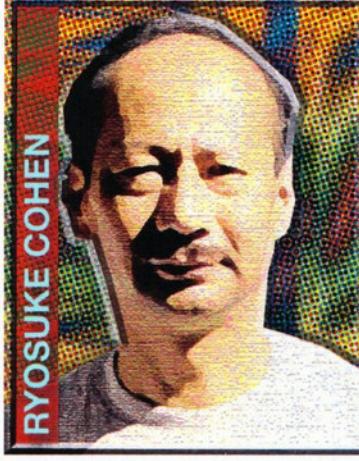
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H. R. FRICKER

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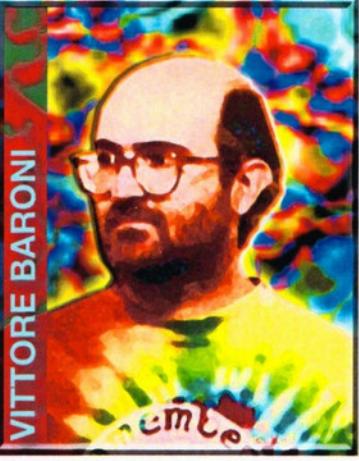
A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION



RYOSUKE COHEN

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

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VITTORIO BARONI

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

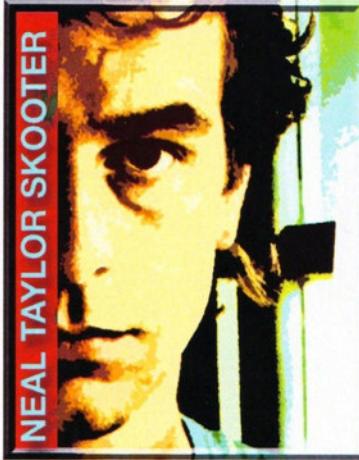
A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION



STUKA FABRYKA

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION



NEAL TAYLOR SKOOTER

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

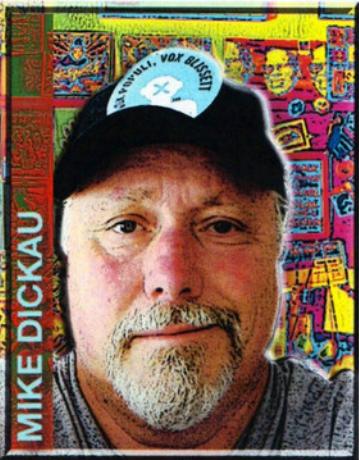
A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION



MARK FAGAGA

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION



MIKE DICKAU

E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007

**VITTORIO BARONI AND EIGHT OTHER MAIL ARTISTS
(RANDOMLY SELECTED FROM THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM)
A VITTORIO BARONI / MIKE DICKAU COLLABORATION
E.O.N. POST / BANANAFISH POST 2007**

A POSTCARD AND A STORY



MIKE DICKAU

"JUST ANOTHER BAD TV PROGRAM"

12.2.20

CSI SACRAMENTO (EPISODE 1: THE TRYPTOPHAN LSD CONNECTION)

I TAUGHT A SEMESTER OF FORENSIC SCIENCE TO MY ADVANCED HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS DURING MY LAST YEAR OF TEACHING. I FOUND A BOX WITH AN ENTIRE COURSE SYLLABUS, CHEMICALS, AND OTHER MATERIALS IN MY STOREROOM. IT WAS A VERY WEIRD ROOM WITH HOLES DRILLED IN THE WALL, AN ILLEGAL PARTIAL HUMAN SKULL, AND OTHER ODDITIES. APPARENTLY THE FORMER INSTRUCTOR WHO USED THE ROOM DRILLED THE HOLES IN THE WALL TO ALLOW BEES HE WAS KEEPING TO ENTER AND EXIT THE STOREROOM HIVE...THE GUY WAS A MAJOR LOON AND WAS FIRED, LEAVING A LOT OF "INTERESTING" EQUIPMENT, SPECIMENS, AND THE UNUSED FORENSIC SCIENCE KIT FOR ME TO ENJOY. THE KIT INCLUDED A UNIT ON DRUG TESTING. THE KIT PROVIDED THE NECESSARY REAGENTS FOR DETECTING ALL THE MAJOR ILLEGAL DRUG GROUPS, AND PROVIDED SUBSTANCES TO INDICATE ACTUAL RESULTS. I WAS AMUSED TO FIND THAT TRYPTOPHAN WAS USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR LSD...MIGHT EXPLAIN MY REACTION AFTER EATING SEVERAL POUNDS OF TURKEY FOR THANKSGIVING-YEP...STILL HAVING FLASHBACKS. I'LL RETURN SOMETIME AND WRITE SOME MORE...OR NOT.

AUGUST 28, 2020: REPORT FROM SACRAMENTO CA

SO, YEAH IT IS SUPER HOT HERE RIGHT NOW. I WENT NEXT DOOR TO CHECK ON MY NEIGHBOR WHO IS ONE OF THOSE HOLIER-THAN-THOU TYPES.



SADLY, HE HAD REFUSED TO BELIEVE IN SCIENTIFIC FACTS. HE NEVER LEARNED THAT IGNORANCE CAN BE FATAL. I COULD GO ON TO RANT-TERRITORY FROM WHAT WAS A LAME JOKE ABOUT HOLES IN THE SKULL...

WELL, I BETTER GO COOL OFF NOW. IT HAS HIT 115 DEGREES A COUPLE TIMES IN THE LAST FEW DAYS...

BE SAFE,

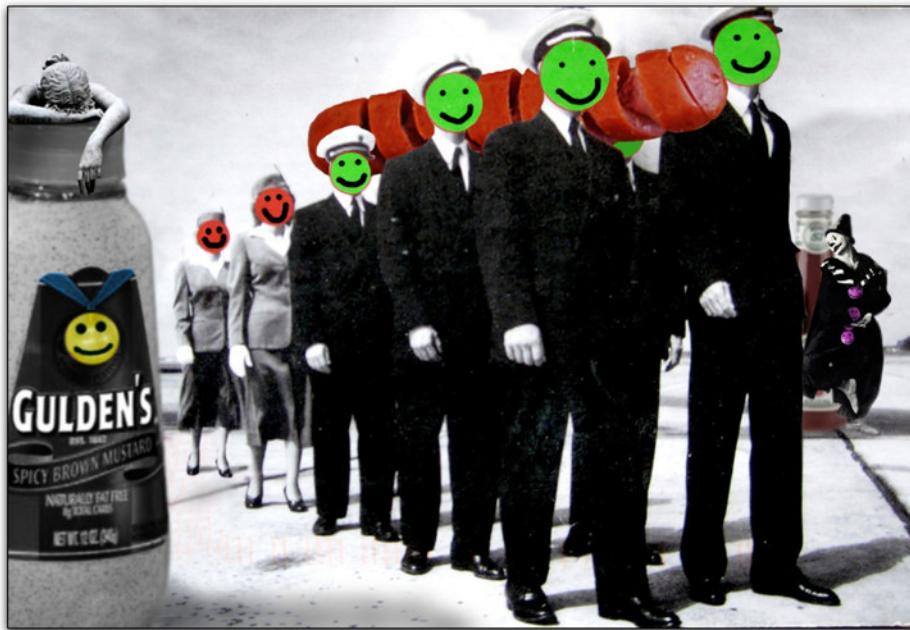
Exegesis of the Dead Hotdog Postcard

by RCBz



The original postcard K. S. Chambers sent to Frieder Speck

The original Chambers postcard was altered by RCBz.



The postcard altered by RCBz is known as The Dead Hotdog Postcard.

When I look at the postcard, *Dead Hotdog*, I see three groups: a large group in the center flanked on each side by a monument and a solitary figure. The center group consists of seven visible figures, but symmetry suggests there should be ten. To the left is a bottle of Gulden's Spicy Brown Mustard topped by a figure face down on the cap. To the right is a bottle of Heinz 57 Ketchup seemingly supporting the figure of Koko the Clown.

The plane of the postcard is given both depth and tension by the placement of the three groups. The mustard establishes the foreground by going out of frame to the left and bottom. The ketchup stays in frame on the right but recedes to establish the background. The center group figures, in two parallel lines, appear to be marching diagonally from the left rear to the right front of the plane. Their line of march would intersect in mid-middleground a line drawn from the mustard to the ketchup.

The center group figures are five presumed males and two presumed females. All appear to be wearing 50s era airline flight attendants' uniforms which lack either corporate or national distinction. (I have eliminated a disquisition on uniforms to spare us the tedium of recounting countless synaptic buzz blurs and simply stated the obvious deduction.) Although the figures themselves are black and white, their faces have been covered with colorful Smiley Face discs: green for the men and orange for the women. Green Smiley Faces are fringed in orange indicating they are a latterly added alteration. The five (but presumably six) men support a thoroughly lacerated hotdog on their shoulders.

The scene, then, is a cortege of flight attendants carrying a dead hotdog between common condiments to some point over our right shoulder.

So much can anyone observe; the context into which it can be placed, on the other hand, depends on whether that one has the mind of a magpie or a Norwegian minimalist.

Fixing on the obvious, I begin.

Is the hotdog an athlete dying young, a self-cutting transmorphic kielbasa manqué, an accountant done to death by a thousand paper cuts, the cheeky young "hotdog" pilot who tripped the flight fantastic once too often, or does it represent the geriatric aviation pioneer sucked into the props of later life reality by senile dementia and an innate inability to ever know when to stop pushing forward?

Are the green Smiley Faces indications of hope as in Gatsby, neurotic inarticulations of the chromatic scale from which everyone's only hum-a-long-dirge is drawn, or simply the bilious green-gilled blowback of last night's Last Call? And why are the women orange? Can these Brünnhildes no longer hie them through another Foon Fest? Or are they yet the reasons Foons have Fests?

And why mustard?

What other unguent than mustard comes to mind when preparing a hotdog for its first and final bun? Mayonaise? It's as bland as it is white. Kimchi? Caviar? Coracles of soured kraut? Bandoleers of habeneros? Megatons of Red Dye #2? Sparrow's tongue relish? Find me such images to use in my collage and the wan smile on the Gulden's medallion will soon have been becaused.

That ketchup stands with Koko obviates all else. Koko is the reason many who hate clowns hate clowns. An errant ink drip from an artist's pen in an early 50s animation, Koko the Clown acted the nihilistic Coyote on our organic vegan hobby-farm minds until sucked back into the dropper and returned to the bottle. He stands there now in a yogi's pose poised to blot the copybooks of the unwary. This presents a strong contrast to the mustard cap figure: face down in the spicy brown, a cherub/angel/lover mourns or swoons in frightful surfeit.

Are anyone else's contexts exactly the same as mine? Almost certainly not.
Does that matter? Not if the overall tone is essentially the same.
The closer to congruence the better, though.

What does it mean?

Never use a Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp radial engine as a mohel.

These two pieces are about as-about-art as I can get without telling every dancing raindrop that they needn't keep in step and every damn beached pebble that the mighty oak was once a nut like you.

The first piece is about playing with radio dials, having a teacher who didn't become the cowboy he was sure he'd become, and that Bobby Brown wouldn't have been so cool if he played French horn. All these situations exhibit a relationship with art that can grow in unsavory ways or scintillating drumrolls.

The second piece is a representational lines-drawing of my brain riding the rush hour bus where all the grievances, insuppressible growls, UnEmailAble sketches, Ack's Hacks, traumaderies, preforgotten slivers, Grecian Urns, human briefcases, sad songs, anthemic heaving, what Dawn would categorize as unmet needs, and occasionally a mid-80s boombox try to go somewhere else.

Musicmaster 2024

solitary confinement with the eighth-grade prison band

it would be fun to play the Sousaphone
but Grover Cleveland junior high
only has one and Billy Botto
barely visible below the golden knot
somehow got it
because the thing's so heavy
he only blows a note or two
every now and then

bothered by our presence
and clarinets trumpets cellos we don't want to play
Lavorak is grumpy but distant
waving his baton like the tired arm
of a pageant winner in a parade
a Soybean Prince suddenly aware
of the grind that celebrity entails

I'd really like to play the drums like Buddy Rich
get a long solo smack in the middle of
My Country Tis of Thee at the beginning of assembly
I'd get on Ed Sullivan but my Dad says
I'd have to practice on the other side of Van Houten
where they don't even like the kids
who don't play drums

annoyed with us and all the noise
from instruments our parents helped us pick
Lavorak raises his voice arms flailing
face contorting yelling
what you're playing isn't music!
he's so insanely mad at us

we don't know what to do so we play louder
Lavorak is our science teacher too
but never gets upset in science class if we crack jokes
or when Cathy says her uncle can see atoms
he restates the facts politely
and reminds us to study and succeed
because in science class
he treats us like we're human

attacked by our lack of talent
and sheer disdain for Colonel Bogie
Lavorak screams *I can't take it anymore!*
he hurls the baton it hits the bell
of Billy Botto's gigantic tuba
then ricochets into an arrow
that pierces Bobby Brown's bass drum

he settles down a bit and points at us
with a finger instead of the baton he says
*even if you become a good maybe great painter
or poet or a singer and musician both
you might not make money from that
and you'll get stuck with a crappy job
where all the music is awful and
you're the only one who cares*
Lavorak leans forward sighs straightens up
shakes something out and off
then says *okay let's call it a day good work*



overnight trip

(the second piece)

on the bus I imagine
my office is a gallery
that my art is my work
the droning motor applause
other passengers
ask for my autograph
ask for the time
ask if the seat I'm in is taken

I write a manifesto on the bus
it goes like this
shoe horns are for weaklings
vegetables for cowards
movies for illiterates
college for perfectionists
ethics for the damned

when i was nine
I wanted to be a bus driver
wear the cap and uniform
handle all the change
be the master to the oarsmen
their sorry nodding heads
and all their worries only
fuel the ship I crack the whip
shout *PULL* they pull
and that dear God is history
I write a manifesto on the bus
it goes like this
lotion is for weaklings
vitamins for cowards
politics for illiterates
glasses for perfectionists
confessions for the damned

everything i write is late
if not too late
early on occasion
but rarely on time like
everyone on the bus
and of course the bus itself
(do we make the bus a joke
or vice versa?)

I write a manifesto on the bus
it goes like this
matches are for weaklings
local news for cowards
talking for illiterates
medicine for perfectionists and
the amount of information that it takes
to make us wise or duped or dumb
or just a catnip toy to words
is for the damned



the bus always stops
sooner or later somebody *ruins it*
for the rest of us
pulls the cord
and makes the engine sigh
everything imagined
grumbles down aisle
stumbles outside
sinks into the lava
barely struggles as it dies

we burn with puny flames

the title *survival of the dying*
chapter one: eyes ache for vision
chapter two: brain whines for
thoughts
three: stomach growls for money
concluding that we're so asleep

it's only sleep we need

watches for the bourgeoisie
morals for the undersexed
metaphors for eccentrics
holidays for inmates
clothing for the pampered
threats for optimists
peace for the blind
trees and clouds for decorators
painting for kings and popes
pets for those well-fed
flashlights for sinners
buses for the damned

Anonymous Networking

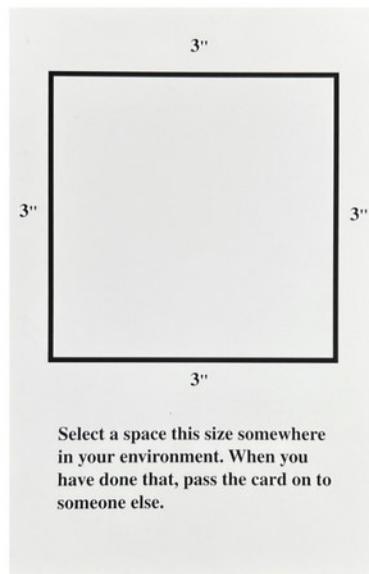
Reid Wood, 2024

Networking

When we talk of mail art we often use the phrase “the mail art network.” Robert Filliou, a member of Fluxus, described an Eternal Network that linked artists.

Indeed one of the joys of mail art can be the collaboration that takes place between two or more artists. Obviously this is networking amongst participants who know each other. But what about anonymous networking?

In 2004 I created a card with a 3” square and the statement “Select a space this size somewhere in your environment. When you have done that, pass the card on to someone else.”



I sent this card to various artists in the mail art network. Obviously, I knew who was receiving the cards, but not who the cards were passed on to (and I did not request that information).

In 2004 I also attended the Independent Arts Festival organized by Geert deDecker in Sint-Niklaas, Belgium. Vittore Baroni was present at the festival, and he spoke of 2004 as being a year of “Obscure Actions.” I decided that leaving the cards anonymously in public places would certainly constitute an obscure action.

By 2006 I began working with a different type of card, one about the size of a business card (2" x 3"). I used matboard with collage and rubberstamping. It was then placed inside a coin envelope.



The idea was to create a card with enough visual appeal that the recipient would be torn between keeping the card, or following the instructions to give it to someone else.

Between 2006 and 2010 I left some of the cards anonymously in public places for people to find. I also gave or sent groups of cards to various mail artists to be distributed in the U.S. and also in Europe. On these cards there was very little identifying information and no request that the recipient contact me. In some cases mail artists who passed on the cards told me where they did so.

Here is a comment from Matthew Rose, a collage artist who lives in Paris and was in Berlin setting up an exhibition:

Say, I handed your work of art to a waitress in a pub in Kreuzberg just as we were leaving the Democrats Abroad drink after the Obama speech. She didn't exactly know what I was handing her and I didn't have a camera to capture the confusion on her face, but she had it that night last week and who knows what she did with it.

So, it moves on...

I also offered some of the cards for sale (with the "When you find this ..." phrase on them). In one case that resulted in this comment from a collector to the gallery owner:

A funny story: You know the Reid Wood piece I purchased from you...I brought it home and proudly hung it in a prominent place in my foyer. A few days later, I noticed it was missing. The frame is still on the wall; the card is gone! Someone took it, and its message "if you find this, pass it on", literally!

Here is an example of what a card and frame looked like:



In 2009 as part of their *C'est Mon Dada* series, Francis van Maele and Antic Ham published a book featuring some of my cards. Entitled *Work Anonymously*, it presented my cards larger than life size, but at the inside back cover there was a small envelope which contained one of the actual cards.



In 2010 I chose to take the remaining cards I had and put them into little books.



Between 2010 and 2020 I sent them to various mail artists, or left them for the taking at mail art and performance art festivals.

In 2018 I was invited to exhibit work in a show entitled “Scale.” I immediately thought of the cards, since their small scale would be a good contrast to any larger scaled works. Cards were placed on two racks.



Viewers were encouraged to take a card, and these cards did have the “When you find this, give it to someone else” phrase. While visitors to museums and galleries are usually told to not touch the artwork, there were some visitors to this show who took a card. I had additional cards to refill the racks for those cards that were taken.

By 2020 I thought that all the cards created to be distributed had been accounted for, but in 2023 I discovered a stash of extras that I had made for a mail art festival in Minden, Germany in 2008. I took these cards and left them anonymously in galleries and museums during a trip to New York City in November. And because my interest in the cards had been reignited, I made a new set of cards and distributed them on another visit to New York at the end of December.



I am now working on a series of cards that I will leave anonymously when visiting the Venice Biennale in June of 2024. The cards will include not only “When you find this, give it to someone else,” but another phrase that I have included on some cards: “Work anonymously.”

This is the coin envelope in which the card will be placed.



So ... what is my wish for these cards that go out into the world anonymously? It might be best described by an experience I had with one of them. I was in the old location of the Whitney Museum (Madison & 75th). I was in one of the upper galleries, and I had left a card in the restroom nearby. I saw a teenage boy emerge with the card in his hand. He was showing it to his sister(?) and seemed to be delighted and excited. This sense of wonder and excitement is what I hope all would feel in finding the card. And a sense of mystery.

OURstory Is In the Mail

by Chuck Welch

Ray Johnson, the father of mail art, said, “Mail Art isn’t a history; it’s a present,” I believe he was half right. It is a present and a gift, and I would add that mail art is a radical gift because it is the only art form that functions outside of monetary branding. I’m fond of saying, “You don’t make a living out of mail art; you make an art out of living.”

My mail art pseudonym arrived in 1978 as I ate caramel candy popcorn with nuts in a rectangular cardboard box known by the trade name CrackerJack. This popular American candy holds a toy surprise in every box, often games, whistles, badges, and stickers. So, one day, as I was reaching for mail art in my mailbox, I realized how magical and exciting it was to receive a gift arriving in a mailbox from someone in Italy, possibly Ruggero Maggi or Vittore Baroni. I reasoned that “Mail art is a surprise in every mailbox,” which is why I agree with Ray Johnson’s statement that mail art is a present. The presents are a surprise and a prize.

Ray Johnson never liked the term “mail art.” And no wonder; mail art is more than a one-gender narrative. It’s also femail! Better to call it postal art or correspondence art, as Ray was inclined to call his postal activities. I would venture further and say that HIS in HIStory is a sad term that signifies a tradition of exclusion, not inclusion. I love HERstory better, but mail art is an aesthetic embracing collaborative activity. I would call postal art’s story, “OURstory.”

Mail art’s tale is a multi-cultural narrative, a story to be told. So I’m sorry, Ray Johnson, “Mail Art is both history and a present. I would add that Ray Johnson’s story evolved with the international Fluxus movement and, in Japan, with Gutai. Mail art tells thousands of stories, and I have nearly 2,000 mail art friends with whom I have shared art for nearly fifty years. A friend without knowledge of mail art visited my home-based ETERNAL NETWORK MAIL ART ARCHIVE and stated, “Chuck, I have more than twice as many friends on Facebook than you have in your hundreds of boxes.” He didn’t realize that analog mail art is cursive writing, possibly the last gasp of the age of letter writing. My mail art archive is evidence of a network language. The late US visual poet and mail art networker David Cole wrote: Mail art is the literature and art of our time. It is a diary - honest, sincere, and beautiful.”

In 1967, Guy DeBord wrote a highly influential book titled THE SOCIETY OF THE SPECTACLE. He said, “The spectacle is not a collection of images but a social relation among people mediated by images.” Mail Art is the grandfather of social networking and relational aesthetics; Ironically, the global postal bureaucracy has been oblivious to having served one of the largest, longest-lasting art movements since paleolithic cave painters first communicated in the caves at Altamira, Spain, or Lascaux, France.

During the global pandemic, mail artists proved how relevant mail art was in helping people escape social lockdown through correspondence art by mail. Mail art also remained a vital force over the Internet through such online projects as ZMAG, a mini-community of mail artists who used Zoom to connect with each other during COVID.

Mail art remains the first analog network before net.art. Mail artists birthed the proto-internet, and Mail art is humorously known as the Internet’s underwear. Last year, I wrote a booklet tracing the evolution of mail art into emailart. The title is MAIL ART IN CYBERSPACE. Mail art networker Hans Braumüller designed and published my book in Hamburg, Germany. A few years earlier, Hans collaborated with Ruggero Maggi, Clemente Padin, and me in a mail art text we titled UNITED IN MAIL ART. This text

was published in five languages and can be read and downloaded online, as can MAIL ART IN CYBERSPACE, over academia.edu

Creativity provides a time of healing and discernment. Without creativity, there isn't unity, collaboration, sharing, and experiencing art as life. Without art, there is no hope for living through the daily existential fears that shatter our common life. In 2012, I wrote A New-Net Manifesto, issued in four languages. It was read by the late Argentine mail artist Graciela Marx during a live Internet teleconference linking England, Serbia, Italy, Canada, and Argentina. More a networking credo than a manifesto, the lines trace beliefs and aims that resonate within many participants in the international community of mail art networkers:

We work all web-lines of communication because we are networkers.
We revel in the process of multi-cultural collaboration.
We contribute as one among many for all.
We celebrate individuality, tolerance, decentralization,
and overcoming marginalization.
We erase the central point.
We counter central coordination
 No oligarchies!
 No arbitrage!
 No corporate finance!
 Only free trade bARTer
We eradicate traditional boundaries of art,
space, and communication
 We network art
We celebrate free mind and will
 We mutate from I to WE
 WE are NETWORKERS

Chutter



Inner shadow links
behind the wall your
shirt memo valia
boiler of dormir don de morir

lumis matico lumen a
your thre your foot a float a
lon che lamen a afloat
down the flood a
tucco trucec o
turd after all tum bon en bos ta

Collapsoration eyesigh
shutters on a sli
pes ant e pul po
desk it's not
pusi lamen a puen te
hand spills

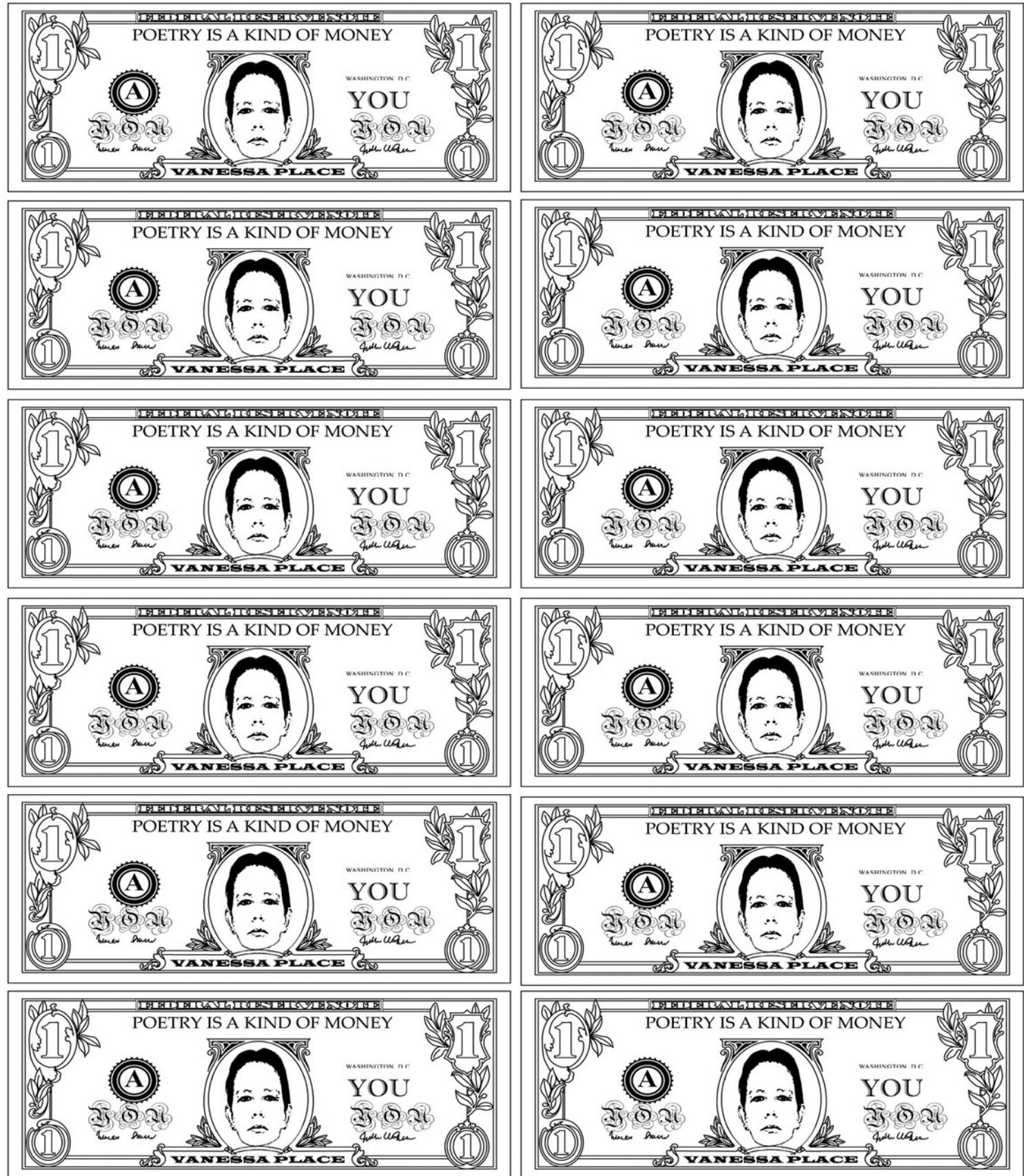
palli dosis pos

Just yr shorter
pen deijo pis ante
flamer in the dusk

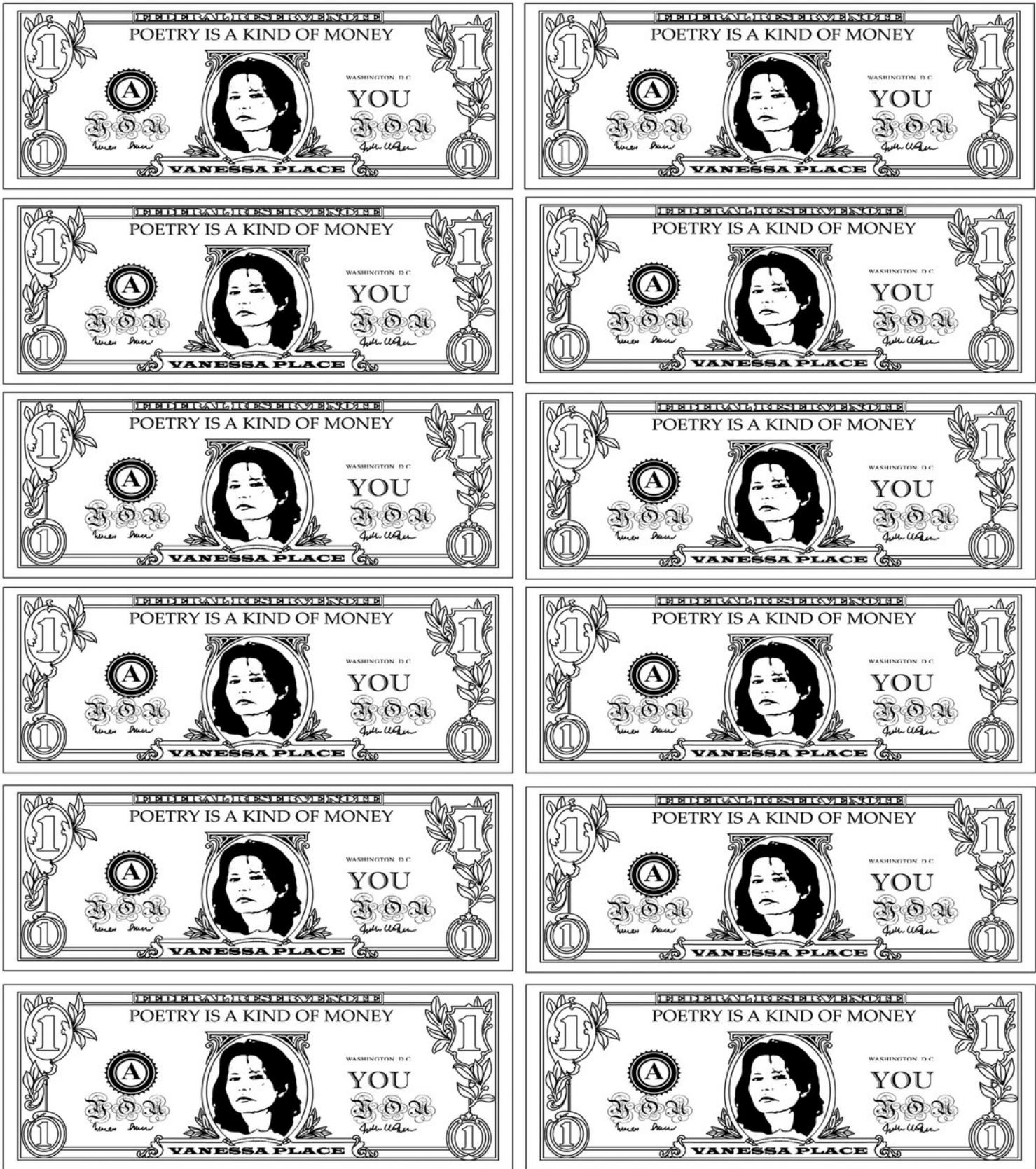
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bibiana padilla maltos



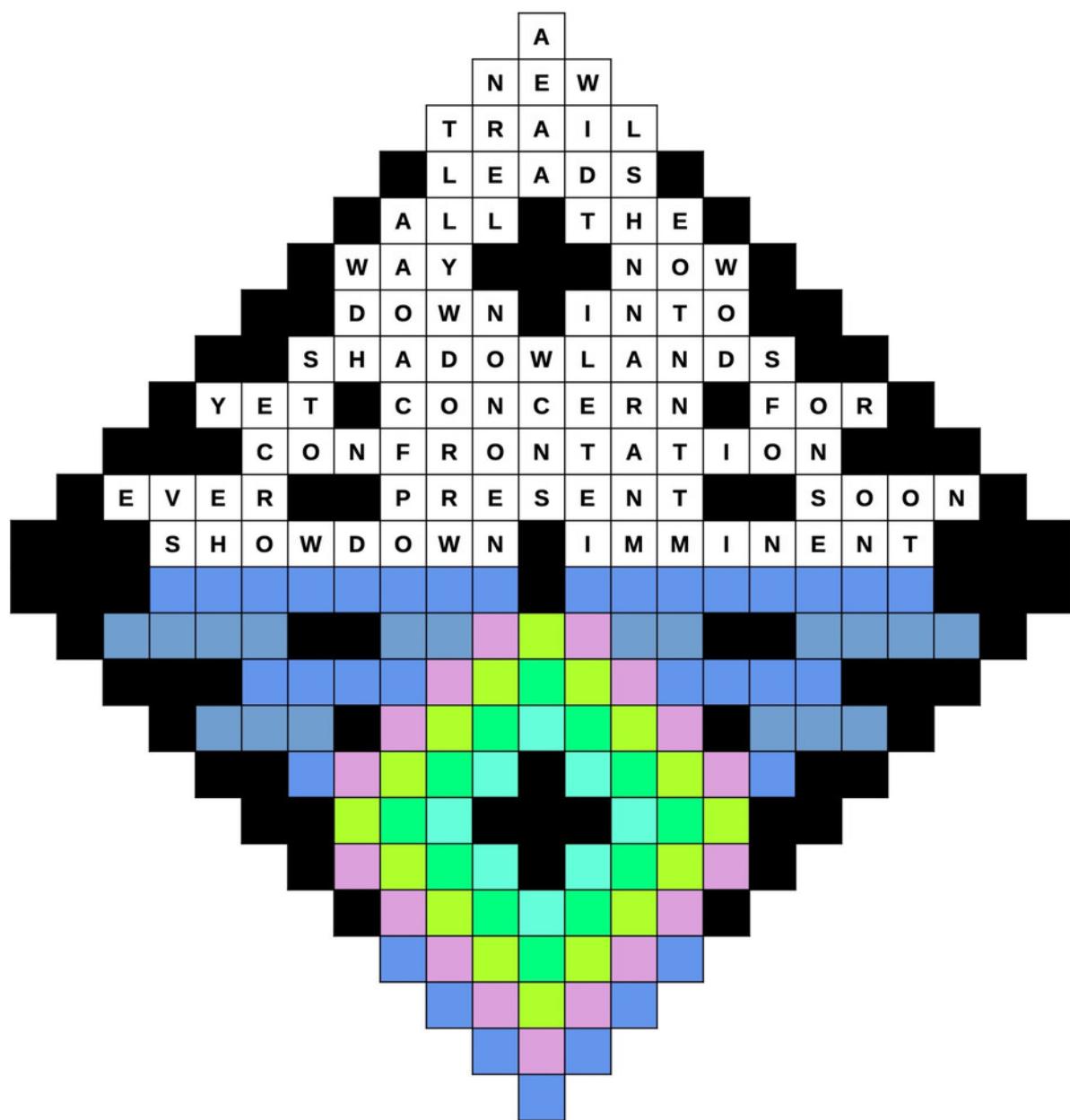
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bibiana padilla maltos







CONFIDENTIAL MEDICAL INFORMATION

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PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING AND EVALUATION

Name: Jokie X Wilson Age: 8-5
Birthdate: 12/12/65
Test Date: 5/15/74
Referred By: Lillian Osborne, ACSW
Tested By: Veena Kapur, Ph.D.

Jokie Wilson, an 8-year-old 3rd grader was referred to PFMH because of behavior and social problems. He does not seem to be able to get along with others children, chases boys and girls in the playground and kisses them and gets picked on by other boys. Also, he cannot sit still, is fearful and has trouble falling asleep. Although bright (testing at age 5 indicated superior intelligence) he is not doing school work and often daydreams. Mrs. Lillian Osborne requested psychologicals to get an assessment of Jokie's current intellectual and emotional functioning, and to determine if there is any organic basis for the presenting problems.

BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS: Jokie is a thin, somewhat awkward-looking youngster with spectacles. He sat at the edge of the chair, was fidgety, and often nervously rubbed his mouth against his sleeve. Despite his restlessness he seemed to enjoy the testing experience and was very willing to volunteer information about his school and family.

Jokie likes to be dramatic and sometimes comes across as a little old man. For instance, when I asked him if he knew anyone who fit his description of his human figure drawings ("nice and happy"), he put a hand on his cheek, let out a false, cynical laugh, and said "In this world today, no siree!" This tendency to sound like a grownup must be contributing to Jokie's alienation from his peers.

TESTS ADMINISTERED: WISC, Bender-Gestalt, Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (VMI), H-F-D, K-F-D, Rorschach, and TED.

TEST INTERPRETATION

Intellectual Aspects: On the WISC, Jokie obtained a Full Scale IQ of 126 (Verbal IQ = 126, Performance IQ = 121) which places his present intellectual functioning in the superior range. The pattern of subtest scores indicates that Jokie has an excellent capacity for conceptual and associative learning; indeed he may even prefer fantasy abstractions to the routine of academic requirements to hold his interest and

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RE: Jokie Wilson

attention. It would be important for school work to be presented in a manner that stimulates and challenges his creative abilities. Despite his nonperformance in school, however, Jokie has acquired a good deal of factual knowledge and word-meaning and numerical skills; thus there is no doubt that he is indeed learning in school.

There is evidence of perceptual-motor dysfunctioning. On the Bender, Jokie made 5 errors, 3 of which were rotations; his age score was 7-3. On the VMI he received an age-equivalent score of 6-10. On this test design #5 was swiftly (and wrongly) done by Jokie before he really even looked at the stimulus. Although he immediately realized his mistake, this reproduction was scored as an error as the VMI format allows only one trial per design; otherwise, his score would have been 7-4. This kind of impetuosity was also seen on the Arithmetic subtest of the WISC where Jokie would sometimes reply even before I had completely stated the problem; it is probably a result of both anxiety and constitutional factors. The impulsivity and hyperactivity was not a major handicap to Jokie's functioning on the tests, and he was able to sit and work through an entire 3-1/2 hour session with only one break. However, if it is creating problems in his functioning in school (which undoubtedly is a more distracting place) a trial of medication may be useful.

Emotional Aspects: On Card III of the Rorschach Jokie saw "two people making stew, and vegetables flying in the air cause they are making it so fast ... they are so excited that they invented this stew." This response is a pretty accurate statement about Jokie. He is an energetic boy who enjoys working creatively, but in his excitement he can get so carried away that he doesn't quite know when to exercise control; this would be particularly true in social situations. While he has the capacity to relate to others, he has difficulty in interpersonal situations because he is more responsive to his internal needs than to the outer stimuli. This creates problems for him among his peers. He wants to relate to them and believes he can win them over by helping them and advising them. Unfortunately, this is exactly the attitude which alienates his peers and contributes to their rejection of him.

Jokie very much wants to be the "good" boy, especially one who is pleasing to mother. Although he verbalized some conflict with both parents during our conversation, he avoided focusing on the parent/child conflict in his stories; his child heroes were rather obedient to the wishes of the parents. The anger and resentment that usually accompanies (or underlies) the striving to be good in children like Jokie, doesn't show up in his test protocol. However, I do believe that underneath he is quite angry and resentful and that his withdrawal into intellectual pursuits is, in part, a defense against the

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PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING AND EVALUATION

RE: Jokie Wilson

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expression of these emotions. Also, his perception of the world as oppressive, and of other people as hostile, is probably to some extent, a projection of his own feelings.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Jokie Wilson is an 8-1/2 year old boy of superior intelligence, who, despite his academic nonperformance, is indeed learning in school. He does have difficulty in the perceptual-motor area of functioning and his restlessness and distractability are probably constitutionally based. Therefore, a trial of medication might be useful. In addition, placement in a school that is oriented towards providing a stimulating and challenging atmosphere for bright energetic children like Jokie would be good. Jokie also needs to learn how to relate to children his own age, to get in touch with his feelings, and to free himself from the pressures (internal as well as external) of needing to be a good boy. Placement in group therapy would be beneficial for him. In addition, the parents should be seen in collateral counseling to help them understand and better meet Jokie's needs.

Veena Kapur
Veena Kapur, Ph.D.

Rona Eisner PhD
Rona Eisner, Ph.D.
Chief Psychologist

VK/bjd

The Eternal Mailart Network

by C. Mehrl Bennett - May 2024

I.U.O.M.A. (Int'l Union of Mail Artists) is a ning.com website started by Ruud Janssen 35+ years ago. Janssen as well as others have since started Mailart Face Book groups. IUOMA is a useful resource for communicating with other members, checking for details on a mailart return address, finding/posting mailart exhibit calls, etc. Once Ruud mailed out IUOMA seal stickers that read, "Approved of by IUOMA General-President." Ruud is to be commended for being one of the first to create a community space for mailartists on the net and for writing books about the mailart scene. John Held Jr., Ginny Lloyd, Chuck Welch, and Jennifer Hinchcliff have written and published books about mailart. ZMAG (Zoom Mail Artists' Group) was started by Joel Cohen aka The Sticker Dude and Gerda Osteneck around the time of the Covid-19 epidemic; Other Zoom mailart groups have since been started by Gerda Osteneck (Canada) and Coco Muchmore (USA).

Early years – I went to college at the Minneapolis College of Art & Design, then transferred to a college in Dubuque IA to explore more liberal arts classes. After graduating in 1975 I found a mailart exhibit at a gallery near my apartment. The call had been put out by Mike Dyar (aka EAT ART), and the gallery exhibited the mailart in a box. Because I'd become friends with Dyar and the gallery manager, I was permitted to take the mailart collection home one evening to choose and create a list of addresses; I wanted to begin my own mailart practice. I met my spouse via that address list. It took me awhile before I warmed up to John M. Bennett's idea of mailart, which was all printed materials. However, his poetry interested me enough to arouse curiosity, and eventually grew on me. These days mailartists often meet up via introduction through the internet. In the 1970's, not so. Then most met by answering an advertised or mailed call for mailart; The custom was for the exhibit host to return via mail an address list of and to each participant. We find our creative community where we can. An early moniker in my return address was "The Apostolate of Time" and then "Lady C." Eventually I dropped "Lady" to remain genderless, and just used "C. Mehrl", which changed to "C. Mehrl Bennett" in 1980 after I married John M. Bennett (JMB). A documentary of this union is available online thanks to our youngest son, John Also Bennett...
cmehrlbennett.wordpress.com/2012/12/27/two-16mm-films-from-1982-by-john-mcclintock/

The Internet(works) – Many mailartists today like to verify the receipt of their mailart through social media or scan everything mailed or received to document or acknowledge it online. This adds additional layers of processing to the original mailed piece. Perhaps when one grows up with social media and has less experience communicating via snail mail, one's focus is more on the wider internet community and less on the individual m.a. exchange? It's true that more people than the recipient will see a mailart piece in its digital version. I'm

guilty of occasionally posting scans of my own or others' mailart online for that reason. The internet strengthens some aspects of the mailart network in that it facilitates translation of languages and dissemination of mailart exhibit calls and provides color documentation of ALL submissions to mailart exhibits (Mailings of color printed pamphlets and the postage required is expensive!) and makes digitized color images accessible to the public. But it can also box people into separate social media groups like rubberstamp carvers, artistamp makers, visual poets, artist's book makers, collagists, A&P circulators, etc. Individuals must reach out to pull from various online factions they have an interest in. Traditional mailart exchange has that personal and tactile feel to it that digital images don't have, and lists of participants' addresses are not normally shared online. It's good if address lists are at least shared via snail mail or e-mail, with a link to the online documentation. I enjoy Ryosuke Cohen's mailing of Brain Cell in that he always includes an address list with each issue. Sharing of participant addresses helps to proliferate the network, though people do exchange addresses via social media private messaging as well.

Visual poetry – Many old guard concrete and visual poets feel a strong connection to a tradition of black and white, but I think mailart (collage and other techniques used, including Photoshop and other apps) opens poetry up to color and more playful aspects of text collage. NO RULES is a good thing all around, especially for poetry. We can even abandon words in favor of the symbolism of objects to get our message across globally; mailartists Horst Tress (Germany), Clemente Padin (Uruguay), and a number of Spanish poets are good examples. It was a Brazilian writer, Augusto de Campos, who first used the term "Concrete Poetry" for his works in the 1950's. Visual poetry is, in a manner of speaking, an evolution of concrete poetry, though concrete poetry stands on its own today as well. Asemic writing is a field of visual poetry first proliferated by mailartist Jim Leftwich, Tim Gaze (Australia) and Michael Jacobson of Post-Asemic Press in Minneapolis, MN. It was also initiated by John M. Bennett who called it "spirit writing." Asemic calligraphy is often presented in black and white, which is less expensive to print. Colorful aspects of visual poetry have been presented by Marilyn R. Rosenberg (NY) and Cheryl Penn (S. Africa), both with whom I've collaborated by mail and email to make artist's books. In the 1980's, Jim Leftwich and I came across the technique of ripping clear tape off an image/text and sticking it on paper as collage. Here is a list of a few *femail* asemic &/or visual poets: Sheila E. Murphy (AZ), K.S. Ernst and Alicia Starr (NJ), Sylvia Van Nooten (CO), Fátima Queiroz (Brazil), Rea Nikonova (Russia, d.2014), Anna Boschi Cermasi (Italy), Tiziana Baracchi (Italy, d.2018), Ptrizia TicTac (Germany).

Text rubber stamps – Someone mailed to me a rubber stamp which reads "Confusing yourself is a way to stay honest." Another rubber stamp quote I own reads, "This is not art." If that confuses people, at least I've got them thinking about what art might be. I had a rubber stamp made of a short poem I wrote in 2019 titled "Bent Dirt." I use an alphabet ink stamp set

to spell out phrases such as “Ask A Cow” on my mailart envelopes and for Artist Trading Cards (ATCs). “Stamp Out Kitsch” is another text rubber stamp I had made. I use it in jest as even Kitsch has its merits.

Sending mailart – I look at it as a freeing process once I’ve posted something. Once you drop it into the mailbox, you have no control so put it out of your mind and focus on the next m.a. exchange. Overseas mailart calls still get my attention, though because of soaring postage costs it’s not worth sending packages internationally anymore; unless it’s to participate in Patrizia TicTac’s *Pmats Zine*, a well-produced assembling project from Germany, or perhaps Nicola Winborn’s color-themed assembling from England. I maintain an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of when and what I sent out and to what address. If all I received is a postcard or an Add/Pass, I don’t feel the need to return more than a postcard or an add/pass. Yet, postcards can be great! Steve Dalachinsky (d.2019), Jonathan Stangroom, Honoria Starbuck, and David Stanley Aponte send postcards using their chosen media which I always appreciate. Rod Summers (The Netherlands), J.F. Chapelle (France), Jude Weirmeir (CA), D.C. Spaulding, and others have sent wonderfully conceptualized printed postcards. Not everyone makes add/pass art to circulate through the network nor does everyone add to them and pass them along. Once I circulated a diagram of a Xerox machine which I altered and asked people to add, pass, and return to me. The results were an interesting array of six or seven returned sheets. I do not make copies of add/pass art for my archive after I make my addition and send the original on. Unfortunately, that’s why my Ray Johnson mailart archive consists mostly of empty envelopes.

Luna Bisonte Prods (LBP) books about some of our close mailart friends – Al Ackerman (born William Hogg Greathouse Jr.- d.2013) contributed under 18 pseudonyms to *Lost & Found Times*, a journal of avant guard writing and art, published by LBP editor, John M. Bennett (JMB) for 30 years. After Al died from brain cancer, LBP published *THE COMPLETE WORKS from LOST & FOUND TIMES 1979-2005* (Introduction by Jack A. Withers Smote - Compilation and Afterword by C. Mehrl Bennett) by Blaster Al Ackerman, 2013. Another anthology was scanned from newsletters that mailartist Musicmaster used to mail to his network and leave in public places: *Internal Rhyme* by Thomas M. Cassidy, 2022, LBP. In memoriam to mailartist David-Baptiste Chirot (d.2021) LBP (edited by JMB & myself) published *POET ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY* on 12/17/2021 with an essay from Tom Hibbard (d.2022) who had initiated the project, images of David’s visual poetry, and tributes from David’s mailart, visual poetry, and writing network, and friends and family. LBP has published books by other poets/writers/artists who were involved in mailart: Davi Det Hompson (d.1996), K.S. Ernst, Sheila E. Murphy, Marilyn R. Rosenburg, Jim Leftwich, Luc Fierens, Steve Dalachinsky (d.2019), Bibiana Padilla Maltos, and César Espinosa (d.2021). For these books and more go to www.lulu.com/spotlight/lunabisonteprods/

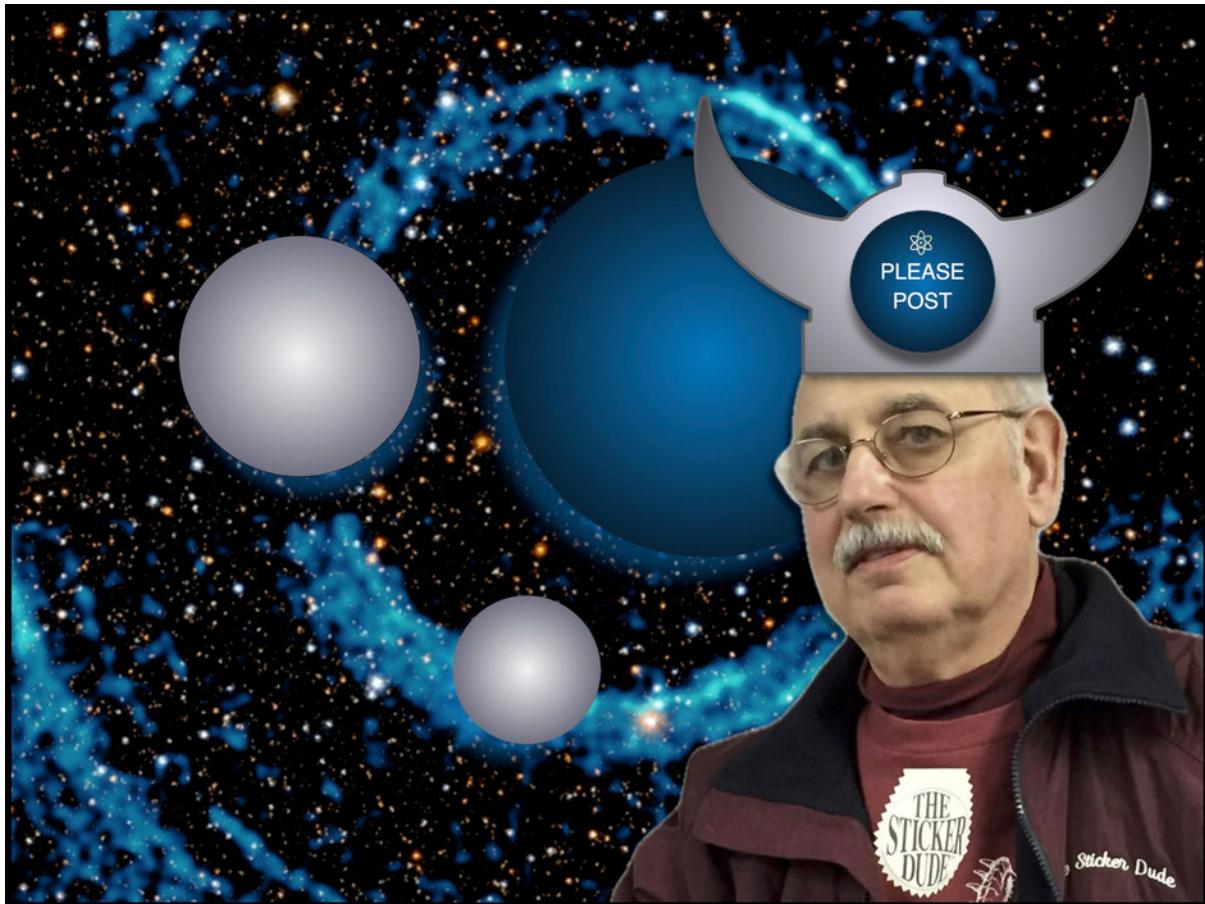
Mailart archives – They continue to exist in library or museum special collections, or places like Art Pool in Budapest, Hungary, where artistamps are especially collected. I am comforted in having placed my mailart archive at a library, partly because JMB worked for the Ohio State University Special Collections Library and he also has an archive there. I store artistamp sheets in plastic page protectors in binders. Two fat binders are archived for stamps received through 2018, plus a binder for copies of my own artistamp designs. I'm still in the process of compiling more current archive boxes. Sometimes I add the envelope to an artistamp sheet binder sleeve when the envelope images connect with the artistamp sheet, for example with Darlene Altschul's envelopes. I was heavily involved with interviewing women artistamheip makers and wrote the forward for Ginny Lloyd's book *Women in the Artstamp Spotlight*, pub. Tropichacha Press, 2012. The experience helped me to build an interest and knowledge for creating artistamps via the expertise of my interview subjects. Ginny Lloyd's impressive physical collection of artistamps was stored in a temperature-controlled environment while she lived in Florida. Before moving to California, she passed on her archive to Chuck Welch (aka Crackerjack Kid). He has mailart archives at The Smithsonian Museum of American Art and at the Alternative Traditions in Contemporary Arts (ATCA) at The University of Iowa Special Collections Library.

Latin American mailartists – Quote from Wikipedia: “Brusky was a pioneer of Mail art in Brazil in the 1960s and was later associated with Fluxus in the 1970s.” I’ve seen a Paulo Brusky animated film at our local Wexner Art Center, and it’s cool to see him publicly acknowledged as such. My impression of Brazilian mailart is that it was first on the scene of visual poetry, felt more romantic & poetic to me than mailart from other countries, and politics was front and center in Brazil and other Latin American countries. There, poets/writers are more political and more respected by the general public. An example is mailartist, performance artist, poet, visual poet: Clemente Padín of Montevideo, Uruguay, who organized the first Latin-American mailart exhibition in 1974 at Gallery U in Montevideo. He was jailed in 1977 by the military dictatorship when he put down the government in his artistamps. The mailart community sent letters to his government which may have helped obtain his release in 1979. One more recent Brazilian mailart contact, Suyan de Mattos, was a big organizer of mailart projects via Facebook (Carta/Obra groups), though Brazil’s economic problems have since limited the available grant money for artists. In 2014 we were invited by visual poet Javier Alejandro Robledo to show video poetry as part of *VideoBardo*, and to exhibit visual poetry and perform poetry and fluxus events in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Fernando García Delgado (Vórtice Argentina) and his son, Dylan, made a tour of his North American mailart correspondents in 2019. They stayed with us for many days, did video interviews, and visited the OSU Special Collections. We’ve visited our mailart friends, César Espinosa (d.2022) and Araceli Zúñiga in Mexico City, where JMB exhibited in their Biennial visual poetry exhibits. In a separate visit we both performed in a gallery event

and student lectures they organized. We participated in a visual poetry symposium organized by Clemente Padin in Montevideo, Uruguay, and returned there a few years later to perform at Mundial Poético de Montevideo 2020.

Fluxus – Robert Watts, one of the historical Fluxus old guard, was the first to produce an artistamp sheet in 1961, though Dadaist Raoul Hausmann had created a self-portrait stamp & affixed it to a post card in 1919. (Researched via Wikipedia) Those of us who attend Fluxus Festivals pay homage to the historical Fluxus old guard by performing events written by Maciunas, Higgins, Brecht, Vautier, Knowles, Ono, Paik, Patterson, Filliou, Hendricks, Watts, Spoerri, and others. AND we write/perform our own or other's contemporary event scores. The Fluxus attitude lives on, like mailart, and can be adopted by anyone who "gets it." Most event scores written in the '60s by the original practitioners are still interesting to perform today. Because LIFE is in flux, event performances are not simply repeated, but they become contemporaneous interpretations. Fluxus came about around the '60s and '70s as Zen was introduced in the West, John Cage taught classes at Black Mountain College, and performance art and small press came into being. JMB and I have attended Fluxus Festivals (aka Flux Fests) in Chicago and NYC/Staten Island (more recently in Toronto and Los Angelos) since 2011. Being in a big city is also a chance to catch gallery or museum exhibits or see Fluxus publications (E.g. special collections at Otis College of Art & Design in L.A. and at the Joan Flaisch collection of The Art Institute of Chicago). Flux Fests might include a dinner to which mailartists are invited to congregate for a mailart congress. Mailart exhibits may be held in conjunction with Flux Fests. I've met close to a hundred mailart contacts via Flux Fests or mailart congresses. Mailartists and other artists have donned the "retro" bowler hat for performance, a costume prop left over from the days of vaudeville. The bowler hat is an old hat, but still fluxus. Mailart and fluxus events serve to democratize elitist art and to blur the boundary between Art & Life. Fluxus has always been difficult to explain. *It Is What It Is* and especially, "It" still "Is." In conclusion, here are a few fluxus concepts in my outgoing mailart: TLP (Tacky Little Pamphlet) called *A Square is a Circle / Rubber stampings of ART on shoestrings wrapped around cards printed with ART ON A SHOE STRING / The STAY AT HOME FACEMASK made with open netting, mailed out during the Covid-19 pandemic / A coriander seed mailed with instructions to tie the enclosed gold thread around the seed / Instructions for a HOT/COLD event / A hat and then a mask mailed for Susan Smith Gold's calls to celebrate Art's Birthday, first proclaimed by French Fluxus artist Robert Filliou in 1963. He suggested that 1,000,000 years ago, on January 17 to be precise, Art was born when someone dropped a dry sponge into a bucket of water. Note: Jan. 17th was Filliou's birthday.*

For further information, including images, search my blog via tags for mailart, visual poetry, fluxus, etc. here: <https://cmehrlbennett.wordpress.com/>



A NOTHING IS HAPPENING



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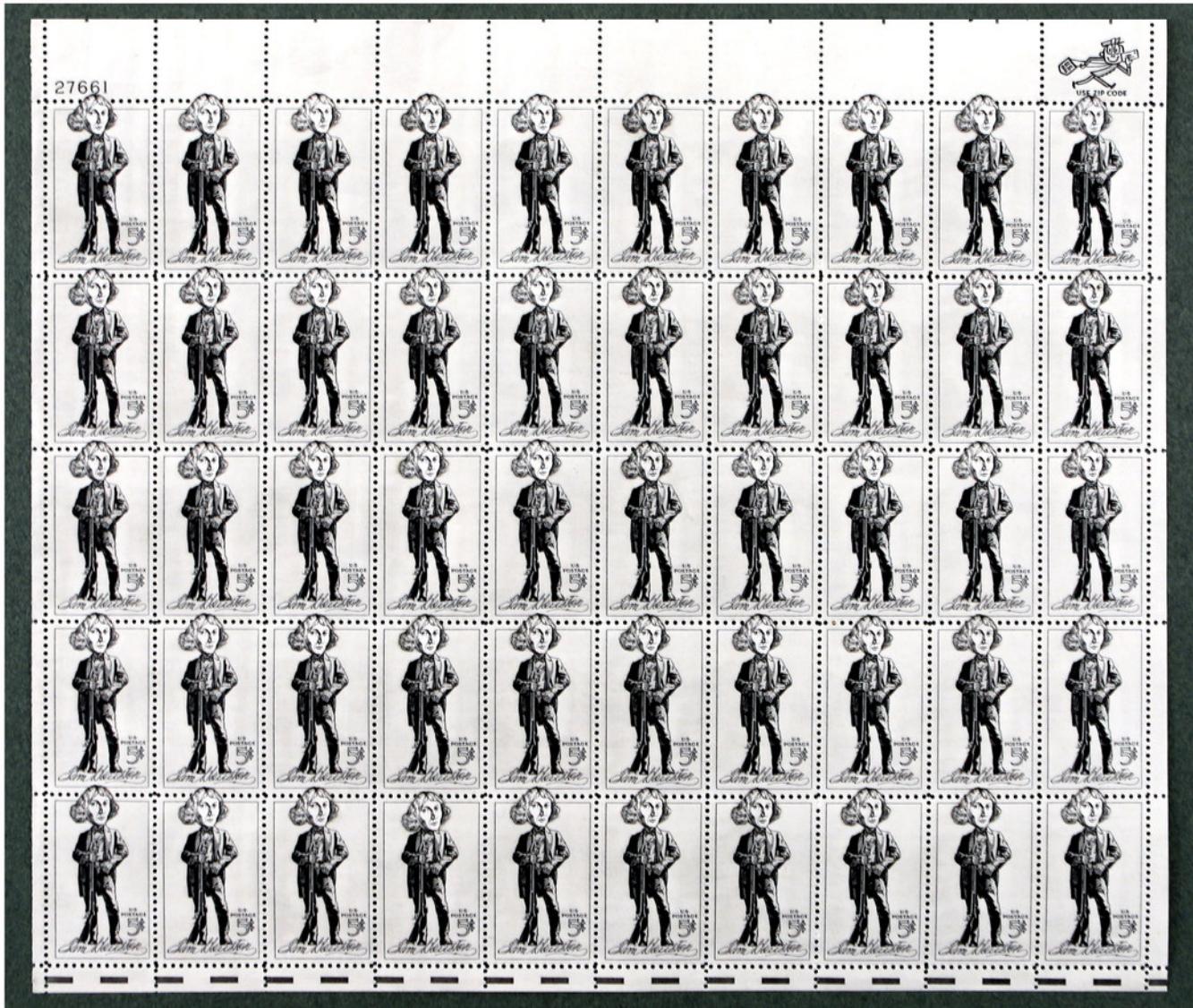
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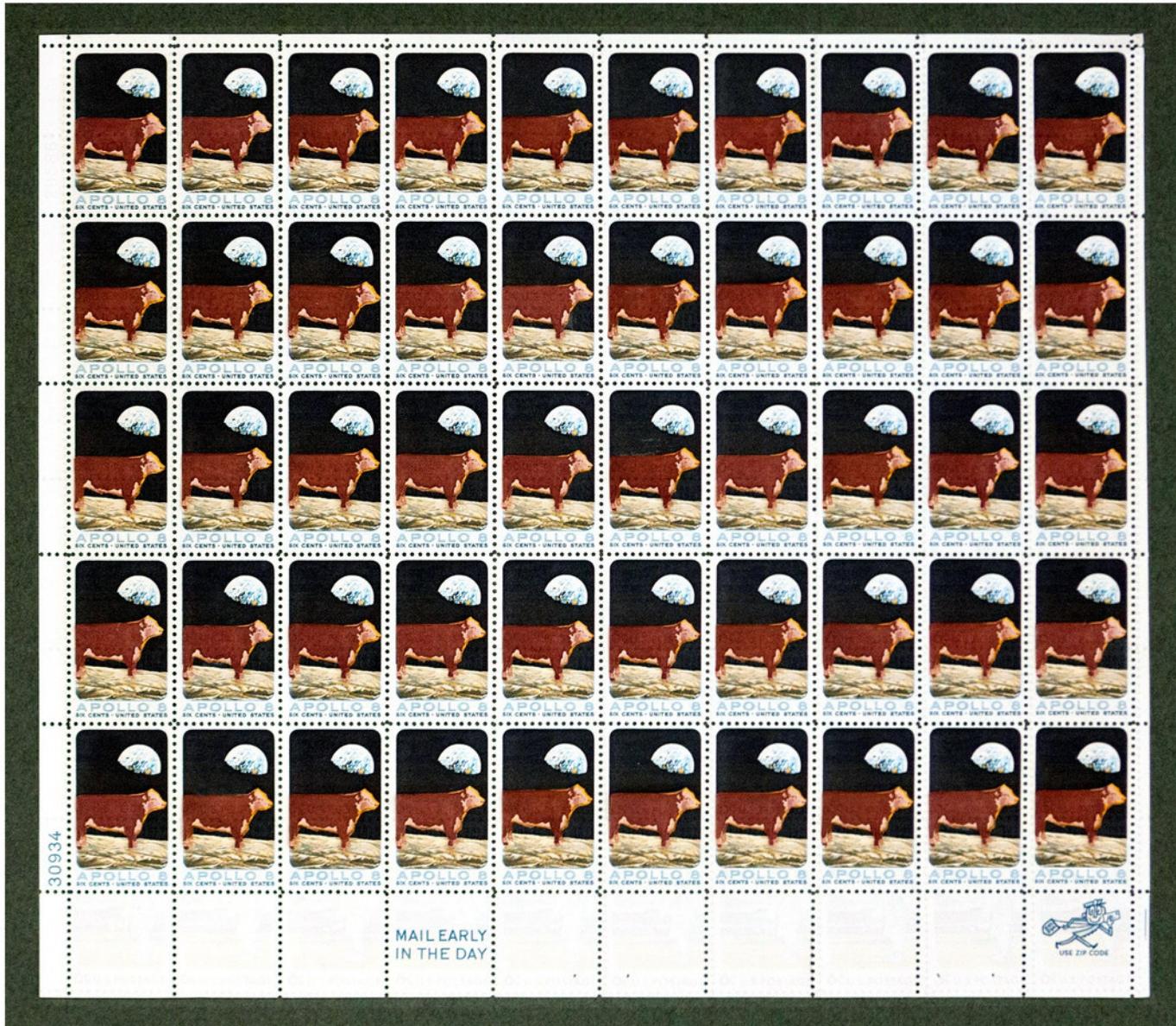
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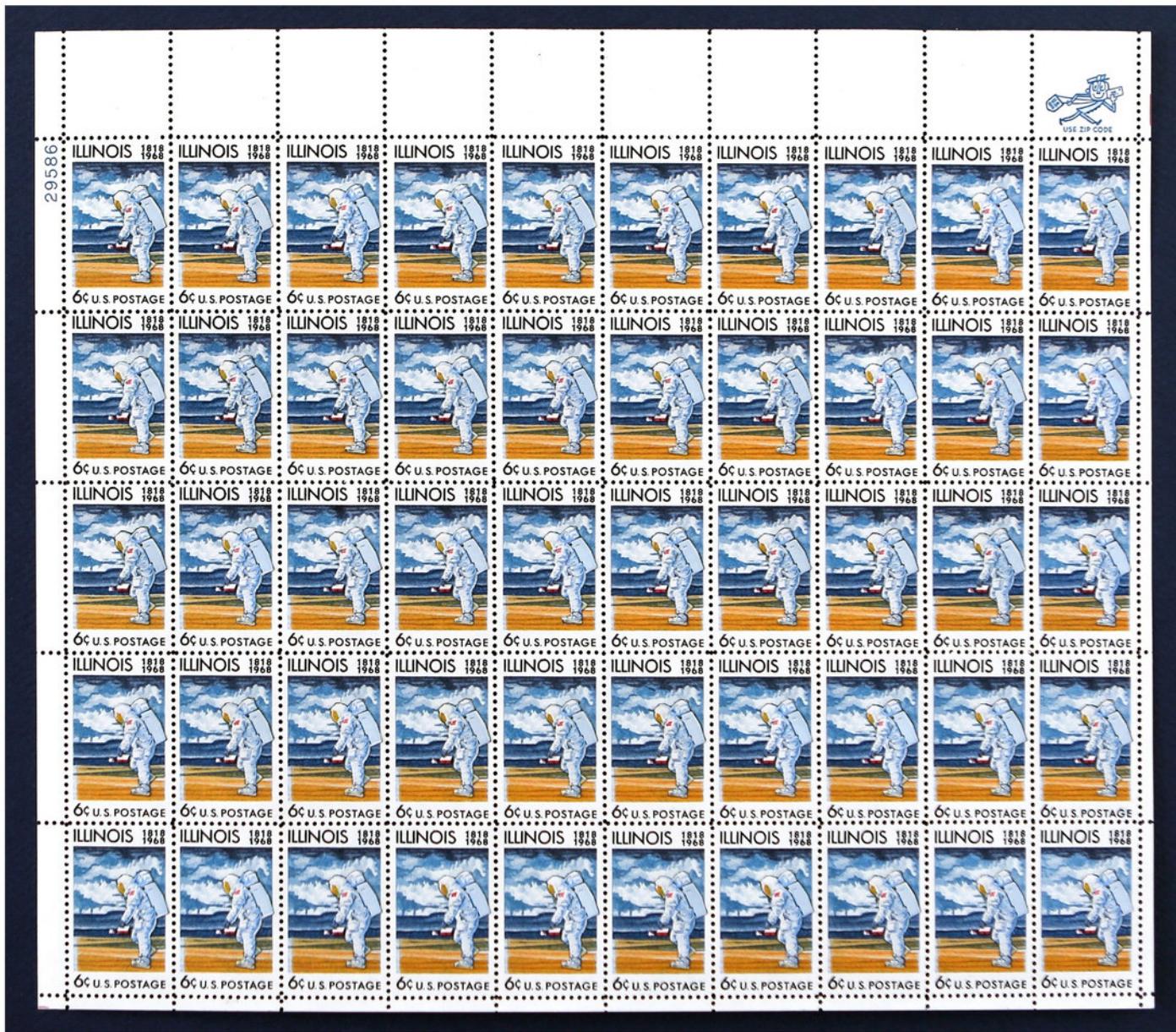
PLEASE
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We all miss you Ray... skooter

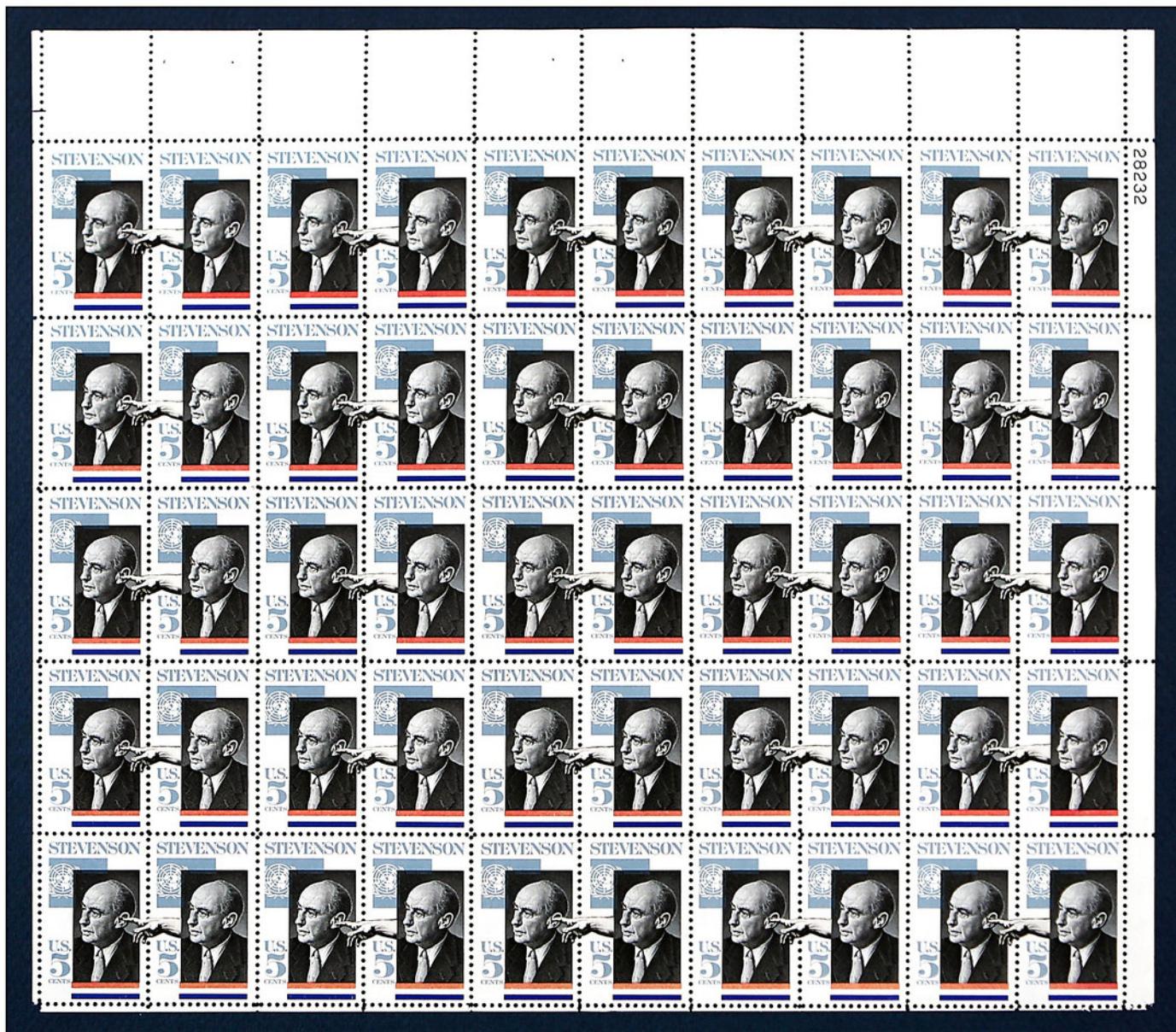


The Hale Stamp Company









Mail Art Meetings: NYCS to ZMAG

By John Held, Jr.

Jumpstarted by the poetic postings of Ray Johnson in the early 1950s, his continuing underground reputation throughout the 1960s as the “most famous unknown artist in New York”, to his adoption in the 1970s by the Canadian art collective General Idea, who spread his credo of cultural community through the publication of FILE “magazine,” Mail Art emerged as a functioning means for global artists at all levels of accomplishment to mingle in what Fluxus artist Robert Filliou described as an Eternal Network.

In the essay, “Personal Words or Cultural Strategies?” the late Mexican artist/philosopher Ulises Carrión wrote that, “Mail Art shifts the focus from what is traditionally called ‘art’ to the wider concept of ‘culture.’ And this shift is what makes Mail Art truly contemporary. In opposition to ‘personal worlds,’ Mail Art emphasizes ‘cultural strategies’.”

Carrión also stated that, “The Post Office provides the artist with a distribution network but it doesn’t define the work. The Post Office is not an essential element of the work and it could be replaced by other transportation systems.” The Eternal Network, creates community by any means, be it by mail, publications, exhibitions, alternative communication technologies (telephone, fax), or direct contact. The Internet’s infinite possibilities of communication, creativity and community have overtaken many functions of the postal service.

The desire of letter writers to engage in collective action, vaulted Mail Art beyond personal correspondence toward social significance. Correspondents of Johnson were often asked to “add and pass” his enclosures. As a result, relationships through the mail were

established. Johnson sought to bring correspondents face to face with one another, in contrast to the isolation of the studio.

Johnson fostered physical encounters between correspondents by planning New York Correspondance (sic) School and Buddha University meetings. Fifty such events were organized over a fourteen-year period (1968-1983). Invitations to these events, sent out as enclosures, contained seating plans with correspondents represented by the artist's signature bunny heads. None of those listed were asked if they wanted to participate. They were selected as one composes a fantasy dinner of favored conversationalists.

Many of the NYCS and Buddha University meetings were thematic, some for Fan Clubs honoring such disparate personalities as Marcel Duchamp, Anna May Wong, Paloma Picasso, Shelley Duvall, and David Letterman. Other meetings were event oriented: a stilt-walking event in Central Park, a moment of silence, floor rolling, performances featuring spaghetti and honoring an "unopened letter." Some NYCS meetings were held in conjunction with lectures and exhibitions, but all were held to extend Mail Art's spirit of networking into the public sphere.

San Francisco artist Dana Atchley, at the completion of his Space Atlas Mail Art project in 1970, which had attracted some 120 participants from seven countries, set out to distribute copies of the resulting assembling directly to as many contributors as possible. In her history of Canadian Mail Art, Anna Banana writes that Atchley's project was "one of the first projects that began the consciousness of a network...Atchley received a Canada Council grant to meet participants...This started him off on a ten year Road Show."

Shortly after Atchley's wanderings, Mail Art received successive jolts caused by unprecedented public exposure in Rolling Stone and Art in America magazines. Longtime correspondents and newcomers alike met in Hollywood, California, February 1974, to celebrate the emerging Mail Art community. Many remarked that this was a demarcation point in the expanding network, culminating in correspondents gathering in what Anna Banana described as a

“grand finale of all this cross fertilization, and which does seemed to coincide with the end of the first wave...the DeccaDance...It was in fact, the most incredible collaboration between artists from Toronto, Vancouver, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.”

Following DeccaDance, artists from Northern California associated with the Bay Area Dada group, organized an Interdada '80 festival in Ukiah, California, featuring the appearance of Italian artist Guglielmo Achille Cavellini, artist of “self-historification” fame, who did indeed, publish a book chronicling his adventure among the West Coast Dadaists. The festival, organized by Steve Caravello and Polly Esther Nations, was consisted of a parade, dance and fashion shows, performance art, book sales, film and video presentations.

It's success inspired Ginny Lloyd and Terrence McMahon to organize Inter-Dada '84, again attracting the attendance of Cavellini, German Mail Artist Jürgen Olbrich, and many from around the country partaking in a week-long series of events culminating in the publication party for the classic Mail Art reference book, *Correspondence Art*, by Crane and Stofflet, at La Mamelle art space.

As Mail Art gained increased momentum in the 1980s, Swiss artist H. R. Fricker was promoting “Mail Art Tourism,” and Italian Mail Artist Ruggerio Maggi was portending, “The future of Mail Art? After letters, audio, video, computer...the personal contact!” Informal meetings of correspondents were becoming more frequent, and their documentation in Mail Art info-zines prevalent.

In 1985, H. R. Fricker and Gunther Rüch proposed a First International Swiss Mail Art Congress. Receiving a positive response, but with many unable to travel, it was decided that in keeping with the decentralized nature of the medium, the congress concept would come to include the encouragement of Mail Artists to meet and form a Decentralized World-Wide Mail Art Congress for the year of 1986... “where two or more people meet to discuss personal experiences and general problems concerning networking.”

At the conclusion of the yearlong event, Gunther Rüch issued a report documenting 80 congress sessions with over 500 participants from 25 countries.

The success of the Congress Year exceeded all expectations and six years later, a renewed effort was made by Fricker and new collaborator, Pete Kaufmann, to replicate the previous gatherings by staging a Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress in 1992 to examine the relationship Mail Art had with other alternative cultural communities, such as zines, DIY music distribution, visual poetry, rubber stamps, and emerging digital possibilities.

Fricker stated that, “the Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress will serve as a meeting point for all kinds of networkers. The meaning of the common role as networkers should be the focus of the discussion.” At the conclusion of the Networker Congress year, Swiss co-organizer Peter Kaufmann reported that over 250 personal encounters between correspondents had occurred.

The Mail Art Congress years of 1986 and 1992 encouraged participants in the Mail Art network to consider the importance of personal meetings, as well as correspondence, in being an essential component of the Mail Art/Networking experience. Carrión’s assertion that the medium harbored a social strategy was born out by the adoption of “Tourism” and “Congressing” as essential elements for a healthy environment of peaceful cross-cultural personal interaction. Mail Art had proven to be a harbinger of a social networking.

From the unique outpourings of Ray Johnson, the communal underpinnings of Fluxus, and the global gathering of artists it engendered, Mail Art anticipated a submerged desire for friendly cross-cultural interaction through technological mediation, not only for the creation of artworks, but for increased personal contact fracturing language, political, and religious hindrances.

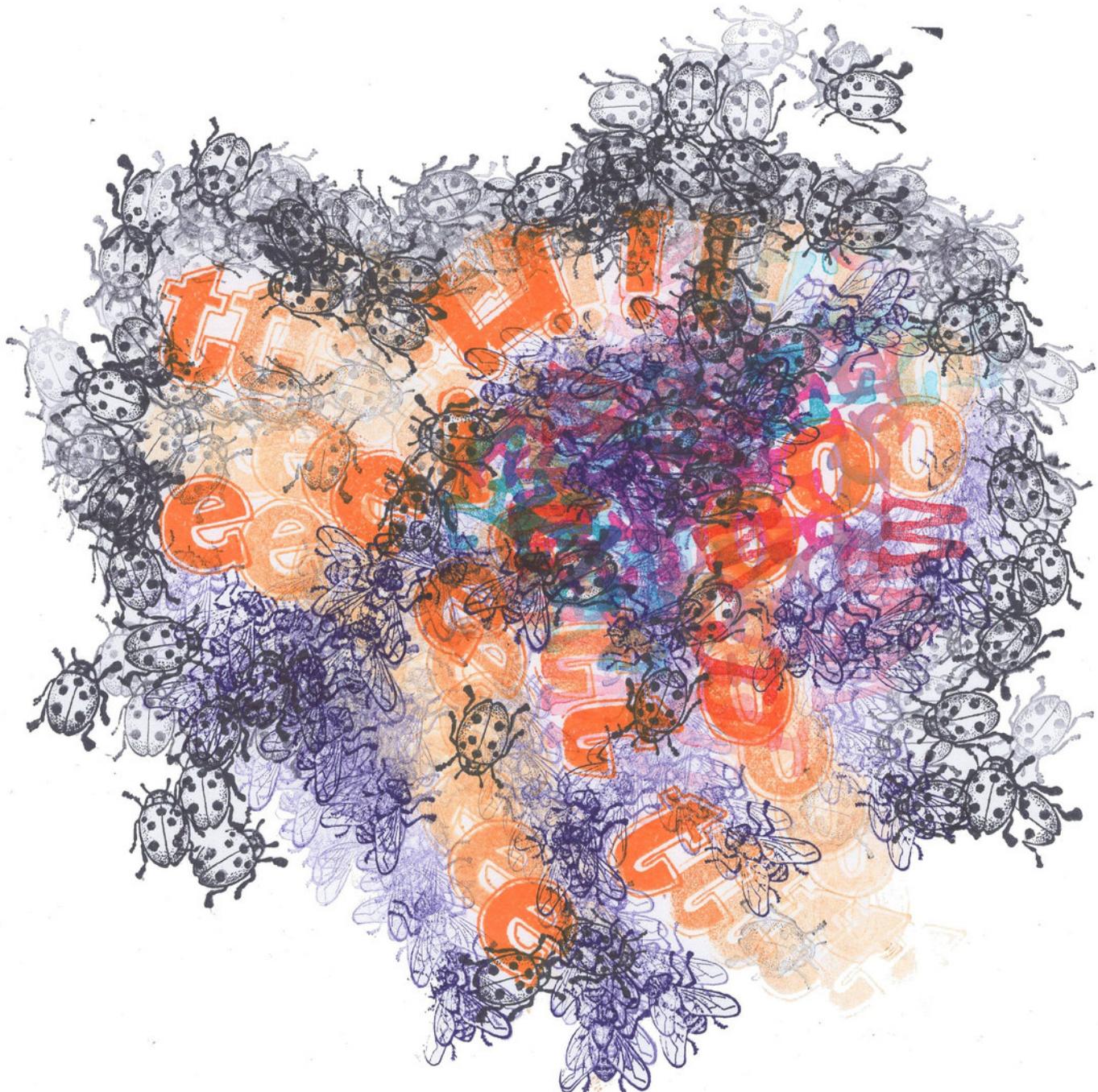
In the 1970s and 1980s, Mail Art rose to the occasion by providing collegial comfort to politically repressed South American artists, resulting in the freeing Clemente Padín, while concurrently providing a

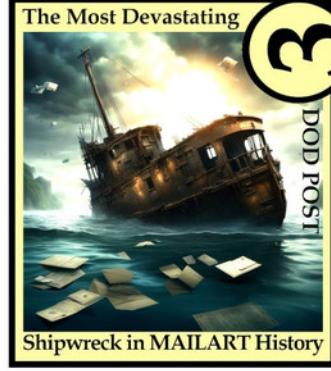
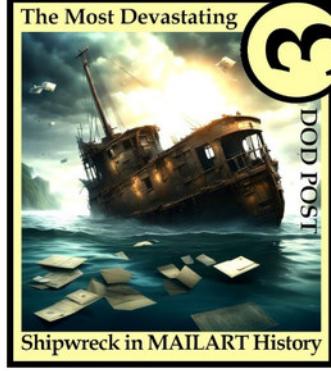
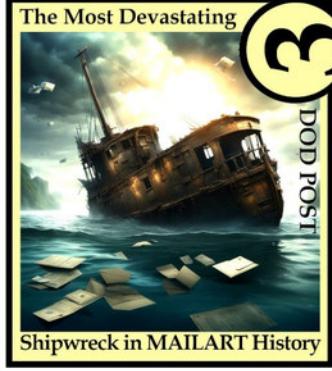
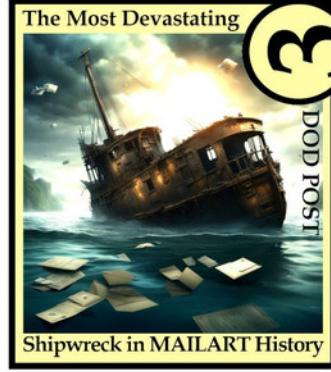
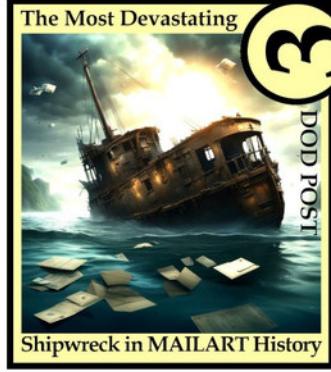
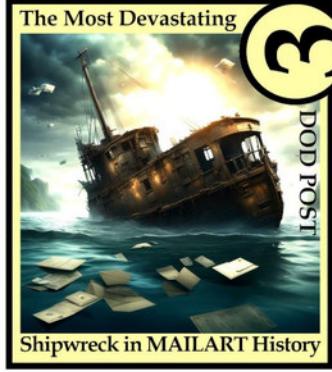
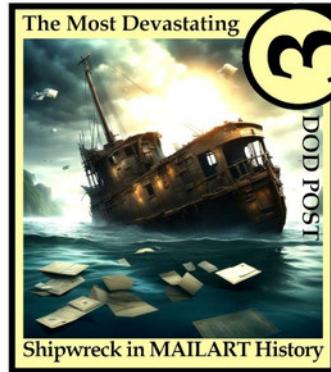
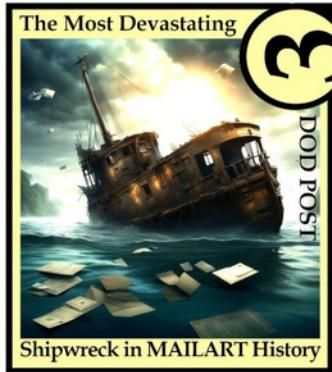
gateway of cross-cultural thought for Soviet and Eastern European artists. The pandemic provided Mail Art an elevated platform, situating it not as a quaint and outdated art form, but as a weapon against isolation in search of a cause.

Previously the reserve of unacknowledged New York artists and intellectuals, pioneer Mail Artists were believers in an avant-garde that scouted the culture for obscure signs of the future that would become painfully obvious to the public years later. The Internet has borne them out. Mailings became e-mail, enclosures became attachments, congressing begot Facebook. Artists adapt to upgrades in technology in creative ways, paving the way toward increased personal connection. The Internet now affords us the opportunity to meet in zoom meetings with live video streams linking participants from around the world in real time.

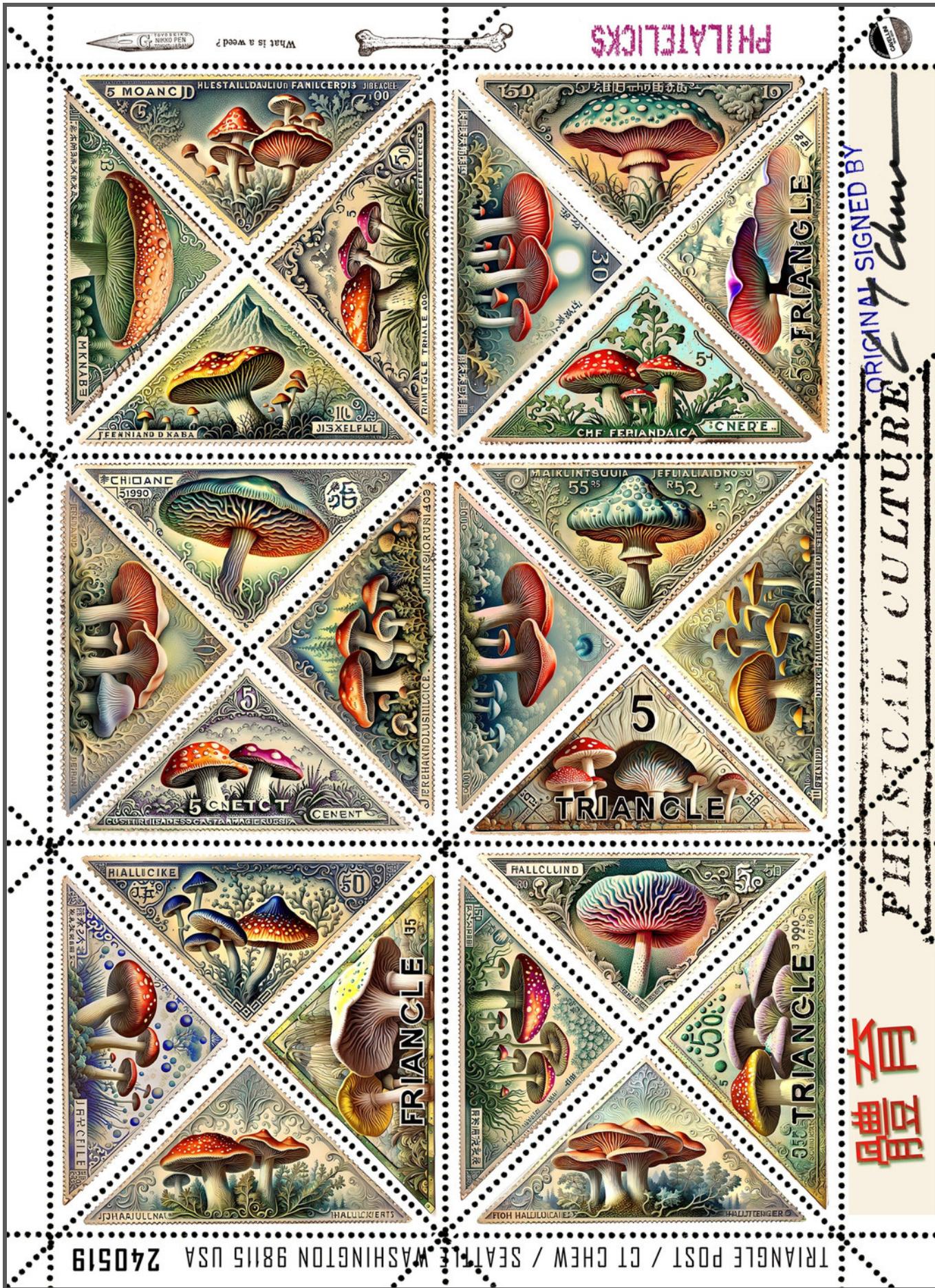
ZMAG brings to fruition the foundational communalism that drove Ray Johnson to convene his New York Correspondance School Meetings, and steered Dana Atchely toward the road to meet his cultural collaborators. Communalism inspired H. R. Fricker to conclude that tourism, like the postal system, could be elevated from everyday occurrence to a creative solution confronting cultural and personal estrangement.

Meeting in shared time and digital space, ZMAG further extends the range of Mail Art, endowing it with a renewal of energy and purpose befitting a technology unimagined in the musty hallways of the New York Correspondance School. In the present moment, zoom meetings may seem just another immediate consequence of the Internet's range, but in the context of fomenting "social strategy", ZMAG is as formidable and revolutionary a weapon in the arsenal of our communitarian aspirations, as the first time Ray Johnson licked a stamp.







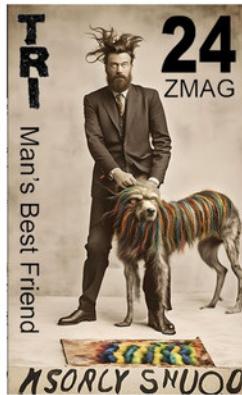
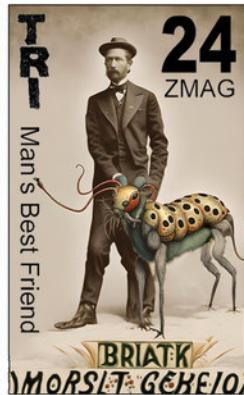






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TRIANGLE POST SEA * * * MA



MAILART: MAN'S BEST FRIEND

ZMAG: The Back Story...and How I Host a Zoom MailArt Group

"Whenever I'm up in front of an audience I'm thinking: How can I create the broadest possible coalition for peace and freedom in the world?"

Pete Seeger, a response directly to me, The Sticker Dude, in a workshop on political folksinging.

An Enraged Mail Artist Objects

What women do want: The ability to dress comfortably, speak out, walk safely through the streets, or through the park, get out to the car without fear, be recognized for our intelligence, to be able to laugh when something is actually funny, to have the power to say, "No, this is wrong" without being shunned or demoted or punished. We do **not** want to be judged by our cup size or the makeup on our faces.

We **do** want to be accepted as artists without being ghettoized by the placement of our gender as a qualifier in front of our chosen medium. We **do** want to send MailArt without harassment and without Dicklash. Don't get us wrong. Sex is good, if both people are into it. The human form, in all of its variations, is a beautiful thing. Celebrate nudity respectfully.

Photo by G. Osteneck 1974.



By and large the MailArt community is an exhilarating life-affirming community, but there are some posts that are deeply offensive. This collaboration piece is intended to spark a public discussion about what is unacceptable content. I've received the occasional Add & Pass sheet with dubious images from different male artists letting most of them slide but commenting on the worst of them until I was bombarded with 55 Add & Pass sheets containing prurient, even pornographic images from Moreno Menarin. This pile of blatant hatred informed my decision to stop participating in making my mark on any of them. I don't want to blindly participate in someone else's offensive ranting or become a censor of myself, or anyone else. Enough. I **do** want to use my time to make art, not to analyze the intent of an Italian man, or any man for that matter. There are numerous other forms of collaboration that are artfully satisfying. Live and Let Live.

Gerda Osteneck

Silence is NOT an Option

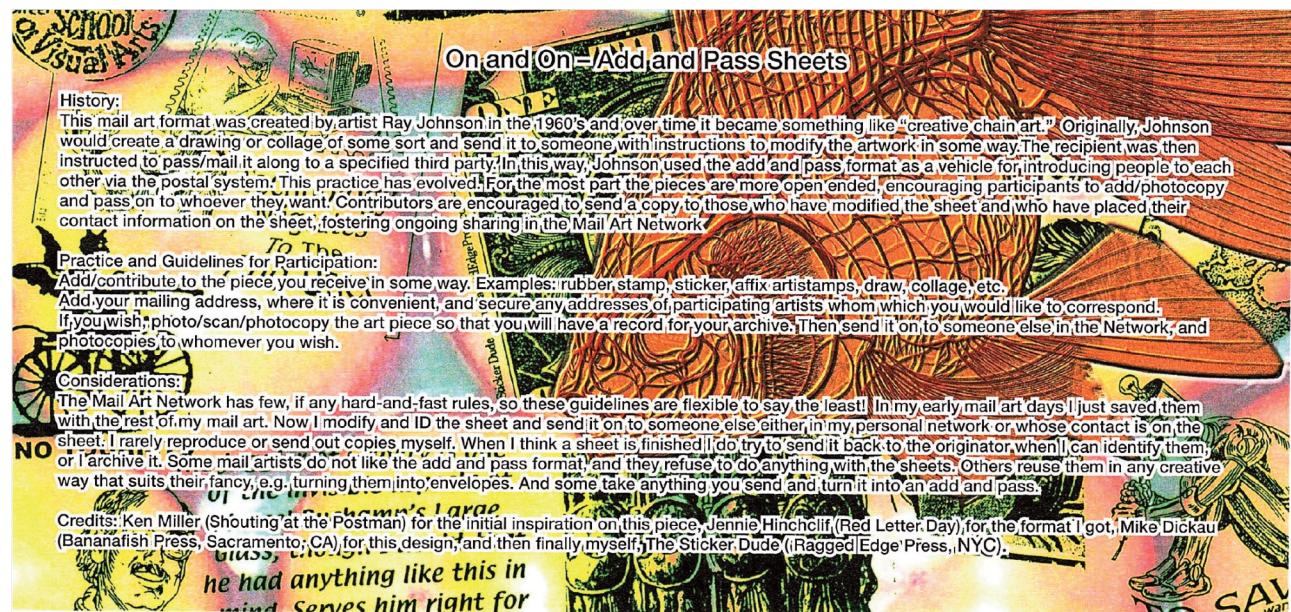
The Historical events of recent years, e.g. #MeToo, and Black Lives Matter, have convinced me that oppressive people - in this case targeting women in the MailArt movement - must be confronted. We need to speak up against abrasive material that goes beyond artistic freedom and is actually another form of Hate Speech.



I've long felt uncomfortable, even offended by receiving, and guilty for passing on MailArt pieces that I've thought were exploitative of women. Often I took to covering up the lewd, smutty material. One artist whom I'm sure has been criticized by others sometimes even writes "Moreno is not sexist", next to his artwork which doesn't negate it's sexist nature.

Gerda's letter hit me where it hurts. Many other mail artists have decided not to participate in Add & Pass sheets. I wonder about the nature of their objections. One recently made a postcard depicting all of his collection shredded. For too long I've remained silent, thus this collaborative piece emerges.

The Sticker Dude, Joel



ZMAG grew out of a chronic problem in the MailArt movement. Several mail artists were creating and sending Add & Pass sheets with unwanted pornographic content. Sometimes they were sent by dozens, to women in the Mailart network. Gerda Osteneck of Regina, Canada was terribly offended by them. In the Spring of 2020, in COVID lockdown she sent out a letter protesting to her mail art contacts, including me. I had been upset myself at these distasteful images, but really was at a loss how to react – sometimes I covered the offending images up, sometimes sent them back, sometimes I just threw them away. I received her letter and we started a telephonic friendship. I suggested to Gerda that we co-author a broadside about it and send it out in a large mailing. (See the completed piece above.). It was well received. Then I suggested that we start a Zoom discussion group to discuss this issue. In August 2020 we had our first session with 9 other MailArtists. It went well and we decided to meet again in 4 weeks. We found that teleconferencing during COVID lockdown added a rich new dimension to our MailArt practices and we basically kept meeting every 4 weeks, until we switched to once a month.

The ZMAG acronym started with Gerda, who was doing the bulk of the writing for our fledgeling group. She wrote the agendas, minutes and other documents while I did the online hosting and approached more MailArtists to speak with the group and perhaps join. After a few sessions we realized that we had exhausted the topic of porn in mailart, so we started to include other topics of interest. We had a session on the history of Mailart meetings led by historian John Held,Jr., who said that as far as he knew we were the only group of mail artists regularly doing a Zoom meeting. We began to share on an array of topics. Members began showing their studios, new mail art pieces and projects. We all displayed notable MailArt received and some of us demonstrated art related techniques for each other. Of course we also discussed issues related to MailArt. When needed, we held memorial meetings for MailArtists who had "Returned to Sender." We also tried to start our own collaborative projects and participated in other group projects, but they mostly didn't go over very well. We found that we were most content meeting and sharing once a month, so our group waxed and waned with a frequent changing of participants, though a few core members stayed and regularly attended. Gerda left the group in December of 2021 due to demands elsewhere, leaving the helm to me.

We soon settled into our unique identity: The Zoom MailArt Group, a small, respectful community of MailArtists who enjoy using Zoom to round out our connection to each other. Our meetings prioritize group discussion and consensus in decision making when necessary, in a positive cooperative atmosphere.

Hosting

Gerda and I scheduled topics and presentations until she left the group after about a year and a half. We invited new members slowly. Since no one else wanted to, I took on the job of hosting each session and over time intuitively developed a set of what I felt were acceptable guidelines and practices for leading the group. This is the bulk of what I want to share here for anyone who wishes to start their own Zoom MailArt group. I believe that MailArt is an experimental art and communication form which prefigures the kind of groups and relations I would like to see in a Utopian Socialist society.

I've always got on my mind: "What will keep this particular group interested enough to stay and keep coming?"; and "Are the presentations and discussions welcoming to all who attend?" And I'm trying to practice what Pete Seeger inspired above. I first recommended sharing the job of hosting these meetings, but I got no takers. I do most of the meeting planning myself, but I encourage others to participate in it also.

Topics

Schedule topics which will interest mail artists, e.g. actual showing of mail art, any other interesting artistic topics, especially any other art pursuits mail artists have. Furthermore let individuals share how they became mail artists, let them show their studios, workspaces, any work in progress. Let participants artists share any specific skills or talents they have, like bookbinding skills, paper making, envelope construction, etc.

Plan and send out an agenda for each meeting, with the Zoom link for the event. Clearly indicate who's leading each topic, include a time frame for each topic and gently, respectfully enforce the time limits. Though I occasionally let some presentations go overtime if I feel they're interesting or important, but not if it will eliminate another artist's prepared talk.

Practices

Keep discussion and differences on a respectful level avoid personal attacks.

We try to make all decisions, other than simple planning and maintenance decisions by consensus. We've never voted and done something by majority. We talk it through and compromise. Though many decisions are not important to discuss with the whole group, so are just announced.

Avoid letting audience members go on and on with their comments and sharing, especially if the extended monologue is self referential and not adding much to the group experience. Also keep in mind that men tend to speak longer and more often than women in a mixed group, so try to be wary of this gender imbalance.

Leave some unscheduled time in the meetings for people to share their current mail art received and other appropriate happenings. Listen carefully during unscheduled discussion times because other interesting topics for future agenda items emerge. I always start meetings with a scheduled go around time, and also use this time to let new participants introduce themselves. I always schedule a voluntary "Happy Hour" after the regular 90 minute Zoom session for participants to share whatever they want. It usually lasts about 1/2 hour. Note that our meetings settled on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM Eastern Time because it was the most convenient time for North and South American participants.

Be careful about making value judgements, especially assumptions about what people are feeling or thinking. For example I am extremely anti-Donald Trump (and I think most members are similar), but whenever it comes up in passing I try to make sure to say that this group is open to Trump supporters.

During the meeting I let individuals keep their microphone on except when there's a presentation. I always ask whether the presenter wants audience to ask questions during or after their presentation.

Group Management

I never put out an open call for new members, contrary to most mail art projects. I didn't feel that an open call to many mail artists was appropriate for small group intimate sharing. New members are invited at about 1 or 2 per meeting, either by myself or another member of the group. I usually talk to them first to find out about themselves and describe the group and I never refused entry to anyone. Currently I think that about 20 meeting attendees is the optimal number, but that has grown in my mind from about 8 to 12 when the group first started. It seems that most of our participants don't want to speak too much, they would rather just listen. Anyone who attends a meeting and generally kept to the mores of sincerity and comradely behavior, is always welcome back, even if they've been absent a long time. Only once in 3 1/2 years have I not invited someone back.

I originally thought that we would have a pretty stable group from month to month, but soon found out I was wrong. A handful come consistently with more than half changing from meeting to meeting. People dropout completely all the time, so recruitment is important. The good thing is that our group culture of respect and positive contribution seems to counsel new participants by itself.

In regard to group projects, like mail art calls or collaborative work they are strictly voluntary, as are tasks to maintain the group itself. No one gets coerced or guilt-tripped to take on a task. Even dues to support the Zoom account or our website are voluntary. If a task or project is not volunteered for, it just doesn't progress. Expenses not covered by donation were paid for by me, though they came to relatively very little.

Support

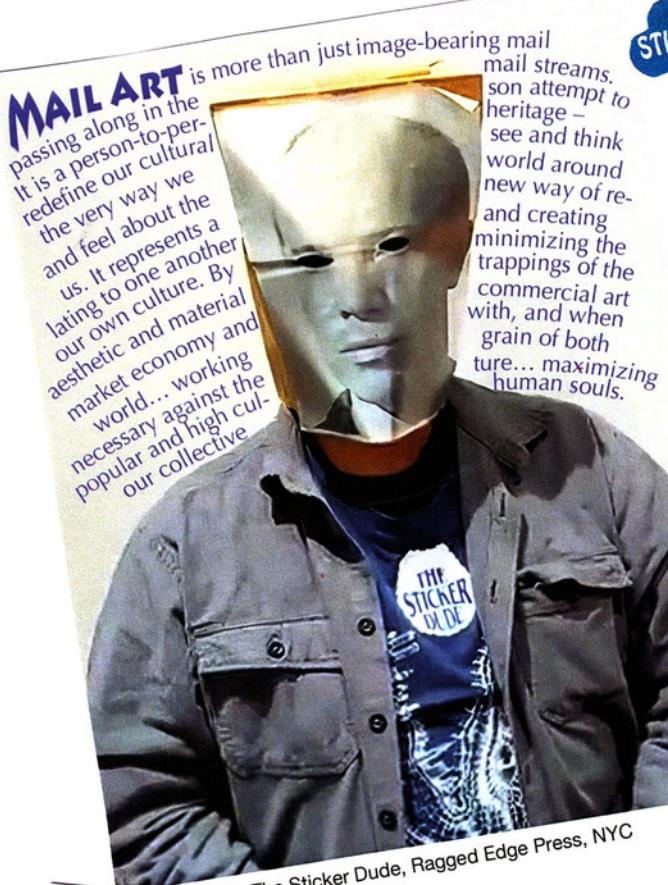
Presenters need to plan their presentations to include appropriate art, photos, texts and anecdotes. It doesn't have to be all scripted, but should be thought out in advance.

With presenters who are not tech savvy or Zoom savvy, we run practice Zooms before the meeting and get them the help they need to complete a presentation, most people need to share the screen with graphic materials such as pictures of the things they are talking about. Many new presenters have to be taught how to do this. If they can't organize a slide show they can just open up all the photos on their desktop and close them one at a time. Make sure to counsel them in advance, and to monitor it as they are presenting, so they do not show the pictures too quickly. The same goes if they are holding work up in front of the camera and make sure it is in focus.

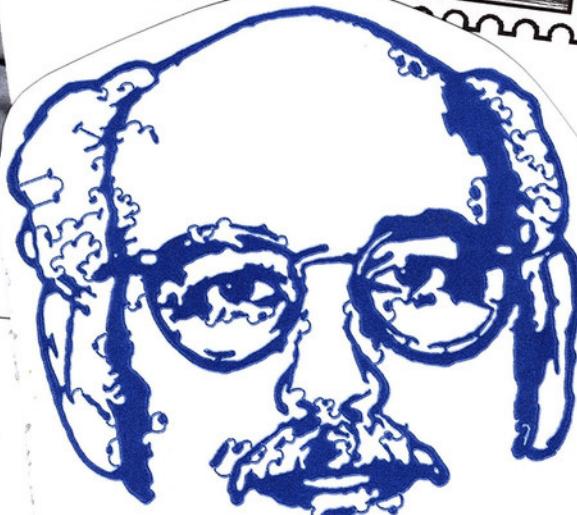
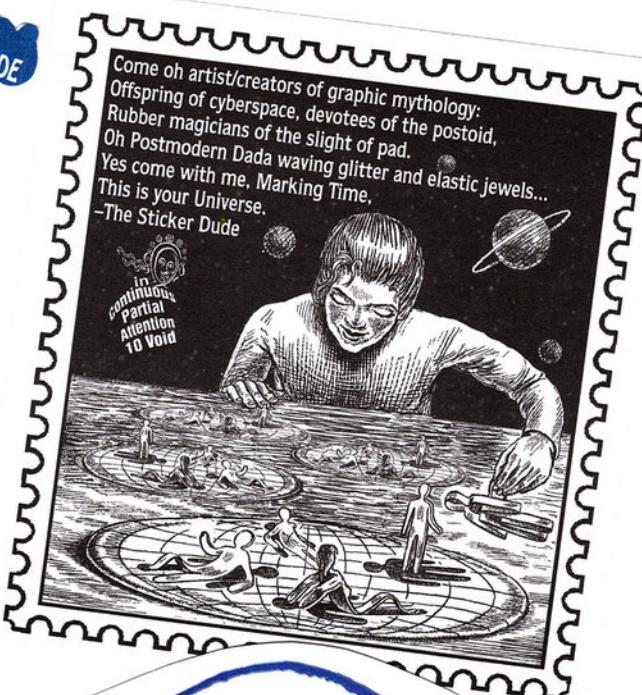
In conclusion, I welcome any readers to share or suggest other ideas or improvements. This genre of Zoom MailArt meetings, of course builds upon many years of MailArt meetings, gatherings and festivals, but of course it will morph as this, and other groups, forge their own paths... in Cyberspace.

– The Sticker Dude, Joel





THE
STICKER DUDE



I would like this to be my lasting contribution to The Eternal Network!

Over the years I have received many, many pieces of documentation for Mail Art Calls and Projects. I have also sponsored many projects and produced concurrent documentation myself. When I hold the finished work in my hands for final reflection, most often, I am dazzled by the creativity, the effort, and the caring that went into each project, but I am acutely aware that something is missing from many of them. The original mail art call for each project.

I bet I'm not the only Mail Artist that never archives the original call in a way that it can easily be retrieved – memory is spotty. So when looking at a finished project, I often feel an important piece is missing from the documentation.



Without the spark that started things, I don't know the exact theme and requirements of the collection I'm looking at. Without reproducing the original call, the documentation just floats in history. A nice piece of Mail Art without its exact purpose.



Without reproducing the original Mailart call, the documentation just floats in history.

- The Sticker Dude
Ragged Edge Press, NYC

What every artist does is unique, but
What makes ones artist's work special
Are those who beat to the work's pulse
Bring it to their lives
And help carry on its tradition.
- The Sticker Dude.
Ragged Edge Press, NYC

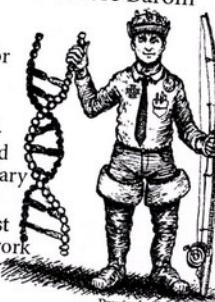
Fillet of Soul: A MaiLife Manifesto for Vittore Baroni

IF WE ASSUME THAT...

1) A life devoted to Mail Art is one immersed in the creation of art for art's sake, and

2) The process of fostering an open experimental artistic/communications network can be accomplished largely without concern for monetary gain,

Then we can assume that a Mail Artist is a form of Utopian Radical whose work in the present previews the artistic relations of a more humane society.



Design by The Sticker Dude, Ragged Edge Press, NYC, and Roger Silverberg, 2007, 2023

Notice to Guests

Let no one assume that the smallest social act of goodness is wasted upon society at large. The growing good of the world is partly (if not largely) dependant upon the seemingly unhistoric acts of those who live (perhaps) uncelebrated lives.

Taken from *Gates of Prayer: A Gender Sensitive Prayerbook*
Edited by Chaim Stern ©1994 Central Conference of American Rabbis

Dada—as it seeks to destroy traditional separations within art, such as images & text—is organized chaos in art as a statement against mainstream artistic values.
—The Sticker Dude

THE
STICKER DUDE

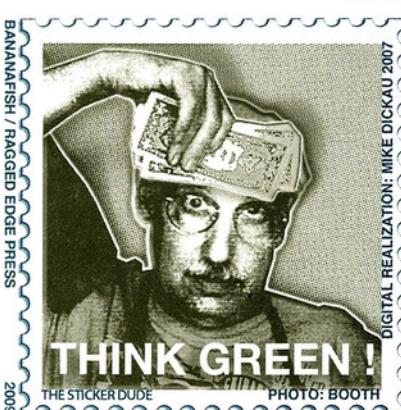


© 1997 Ragged Edge Press, NYC



When a one meter piece of thread falls (horizontally or vertically) from a one meter height, a new measure emerges when it comes to rest.

- after Marcel Duchamp

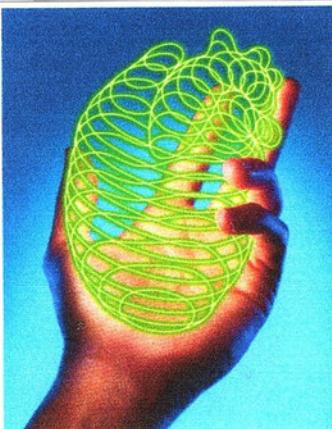


©Ragged Edge Press,

DIGITAL REALIZATION: MIKE DICKAU 2007

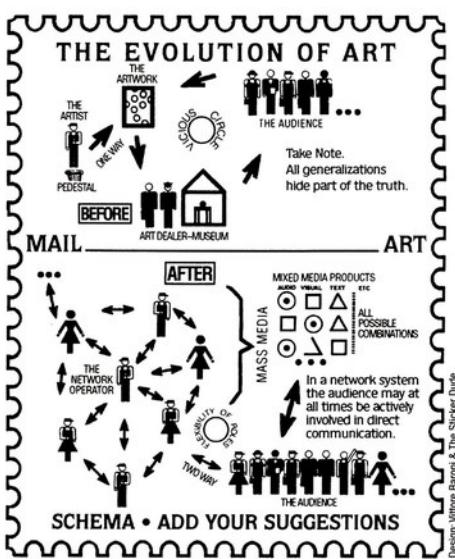
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BANANAS / RAGGED EDGE PRESS

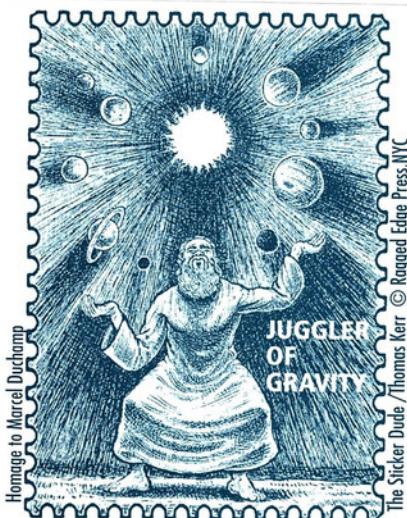


I was handed a strange and wonderful present to take back to my world.

They named it Art.
— Ed Giecek & The Sticker Dude



Design: William Baroni & The Sticker Dude



Homage to Marcel Duchamp © Ragged Edge Press, NYC

The Sticker Dude



If you think romance, sex, childbirth are ecstatic, you haven't tried completion of a new work of art.

—The Sticker Dude

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www.nybn.com/ragged-edge

Mail Art Cocktail

**1/3 Fantasy
1/3 Irony
1/3 Madness**

Serve Hot or Cold au jus

Original Design: Claudio Romeo - Italy
Redesign & Production: The Sticker Dude, Ragged Edge, NYC



To Save
One Warm Soul of a Nation
From Slipping
Through the Cracks
—The Sticker Dude
©1995 Ragged Edge Press, NYC

#travelshow

In 2022, pandemic travel restrictions had been lifted from several countries. Germany and France were two of the first countries that I visited because they had eliminated COVID testing and quarantine. I have always been passionate about travelling and exploring the world. These adventures are filled with learning and once in a lifetime experience of many diverse cultures and the natural beauty of this world.

The concept of "*travelshow*" was conceived on one of the train rides from Strasbourg to Colmar. Initially, it was a means to send souvenir postcards franked with foreign stamps to myself because philately has always been a favorite hobby of mine. It was philately that inspired me to create artistamps and to join mail art networks for exchanges. *Travelshow* is an ongoing mail art project that includes not only mail art, but also sketchbook drawings, collages, and impromptu public art exhibitions while on a trip. The nature of the project is loose and ambitiously multidimensional; It is part art journal, part travelog, part art exhibit and part correspondence art.

Moreover, travel experiences offered the best memories from this life. From the many explorative street hikes, I tried to locate local post offices where I could send my correspondence and buy collectible stamps. Moreover, discovering obscure post boxes (e.g., MahaNakhon SkyWalk Building post box- highest post box in Bangkok) has offered fantastic opportunity to send items with unusual points of origin.



(1) King Power MahaNakhon building post box next to a postcard vending machine

(2 and 3) Postcard and collage dropped from MahaNakhon SkyWalk Building post box

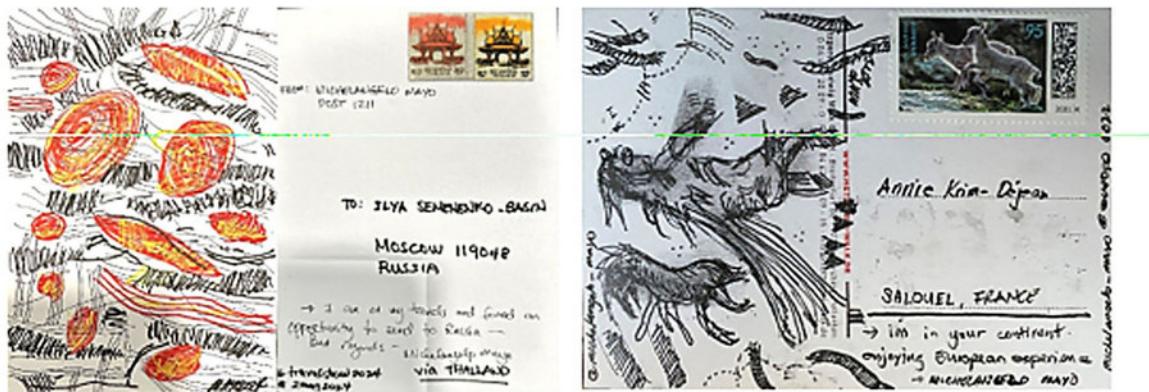
travelshow gradually turned into a more multifaceted art project. From putting small sketches and drawings on the back of postcards to gradually pasting collage elements, to making more elaborate mail art composition, I began to use "*found materials*" (e.g., newspaper, magazines, supermarket ads, hotel brochures, and stickers) for collage and ephemera (hotel invoices, shopping receipts, hotel stationaries, and free postcards) for sketches and drawing paper in the spirit of the Dada movement to create my mail artworks. These works were mixed media in nature with acrylic paint, markers, ink, and pencil drawings. In addition, this project has also evolved into multimedia and video art. Images and travel videos were manipulated using phone apps (*Megaphoto*, *Instagram* and *NOMO* camera filters) to create experimental video clips that have been uploaded on *Instagram* and other video platforms.



(1) "how can I be sure" – app based (*Megaphoto*/*NOMO* cam) digital audiovisual available at <https://www.instagram.com/p/C2ocgVtxlpb/?hl=en>

(2 and 3) Mixed media art using "found" materials and ephemera-museum map (2), elephant poop paper (3) sent to ZMAG member- Adam *Roussopoulos*

Artist friends I met on social media were the first people that were on my mailing list. Several of my art collaborators and exchange network friends (ZMAG, IUOMA, Add N Pass, etc.) were also recipients of *#travelshow* mail art in subsequent trips. I have also sent mail art submissions and entries while on my travels, especially in Europe since most of the mail art calls and exhibitions were organized there. It made the transport of my participation pieces travel faster on local mail routes. Moreover, some countries that have no mail service coming from USA due to political reasons were accessible from abroad. I was able to reach mail network friends from Russia and Belarus by mailing in the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Thailand.



(1) Mail art sent to Ilya Semenenko-Basin (Moscow, Russia) from Thailand

(2) Postcard sent to collage collaborator -Annie Krim-Dejean while in France

Lately, I have discovered *Postcrossing*, an online international postcard exchange community. A postal worker who was working at the Postal Museum in London has introduced me to this dynamic community of postcard enthusiasts whom I can exchange with. Most of the members are not mail artists. Postcrossing, as an exchange platform, has become a way to introduce more unfamiliar people to mail art networking.



Postcrossing.com has opened a new venue to meet people from many countries that are not usually represented in mail art. I have sent and have received postcards from Luxembourg, Lichtenstein, Malaysia, Finland and other exotic locations and principalities.



(1) *Postcrossing* (Postcrossing.com) postcard with artistamps.
 (2) Initial *Postcrossing* postcard sent from the British Postal Museum
 (3 and 4) *Postcrossing* (Postcrossing.com) postcard with artistamps.

Mail art, just like any art movement, must evolve. There is an organic need for it to be updated and be redefined in contemporary times as a medium of communication. One of the biggest components of mail art is also its most basic definition that art is passed through the postal system to reach another individual or group. Mail art activities create networks of artists and correspondent communities. The idea of travelshow is to connect mail art to other people who were not pure mail artists (collagist, hobbyist, and art purist). It is a way to impart my own experiences during my journey around the globe through art. The project is a dynamic entity that is still evolving and is continuing in its innovation. Travelshow is a lo-fi, analog travel blog filled with creativity and interaction.

Gallery of #travelshow works

- 1 - Quick sketch left in Charles Dickens Museum, London (United Kingdom)
- 2 - Sketch done in train travel from Strasbourg to Colmar (France)
- 3 and 4 – Mixed media work using found magazine pages (Thailand)
- 5) Digital sketch in interactive kiosk of Tate Modern London (United Kingdom)
- 6) Mixed media on found free advertisement postcard (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- 7) Postcard to ZMAG member – Neosho (Denise Colletti)

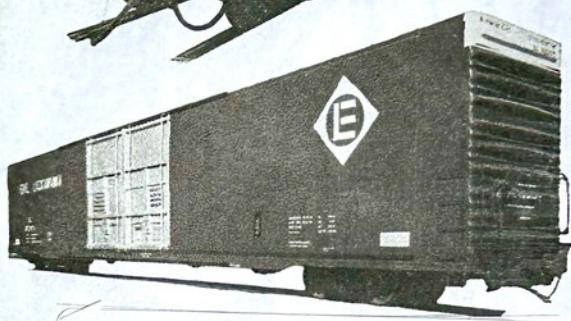
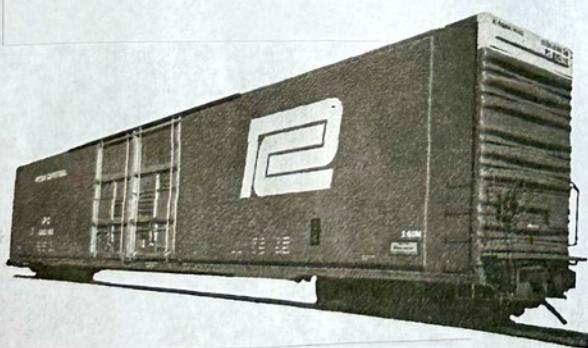
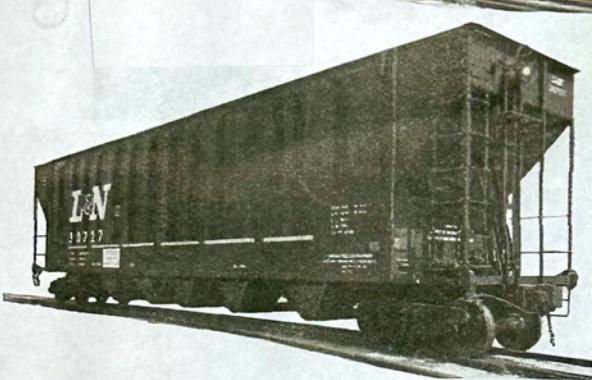
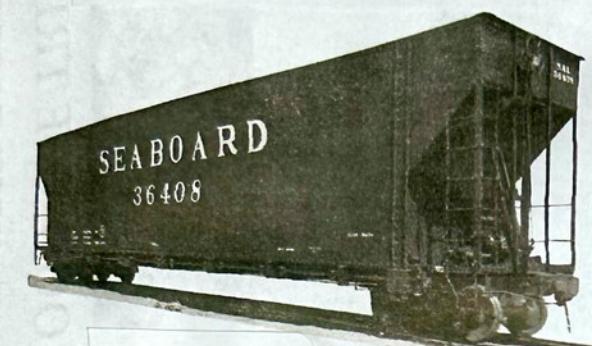




It's over. Go home.

APRIL 2024

ZMAG



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