

# The TAM Rubberstamp Archive



*Rubberstamp design for the IUOMA by  
Joel Cohen & David Kerr, USA.*

**Exhibition  
at the  
L-Gallery  
Moscow  
Russia**

*(L-Gallery - Oktyabrskaya str. 26 – Moscow)*

**21<sup>st</sup> October – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2004** v1.

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## Introduction

At the end of 2003 I was asked if I was interested in doing an exhibition in Moscow connected to my mail-art activities. First I proposed to exhibit the private correspondence between Litsa Spathi and myself. This because it is one of the best visual examples, of how far mail-art can go. But during the e-mail discussions between Gik Juri and me it was chosen to exhibit a selection of the TAM-Rubber Stamp Archive that would be sent in by the Mail-Art network itself.

Because the TAM Rubberstamp Archive is now already quite old and large, a better documentation of it was needed, and so the production of this catalogue started. Some texts were published before and are also available on the internet. Also I included some articles that illustrate the history of rubberstamps in general. The collection of texts and illustrations as you get them here are the first larger publication that documents this collection.

Ruud Janssen,  
Sunday, 13 January 2008.



## History of the Archive

The Rubberstamp-Archive started in 1983 by sending out the first sheets into the network Ruud knew then, and is now over 21 years old. Still more contributions come in and only rarely the normal public can get a glimpse of what the archive contains. Several documentations about this archive are previously made, and in this catalogue you will find an overview of all important details mentioned in these previous publications. There is also a newsletter online (see [www.iuoma.org](http://www.iuoma.org)) .

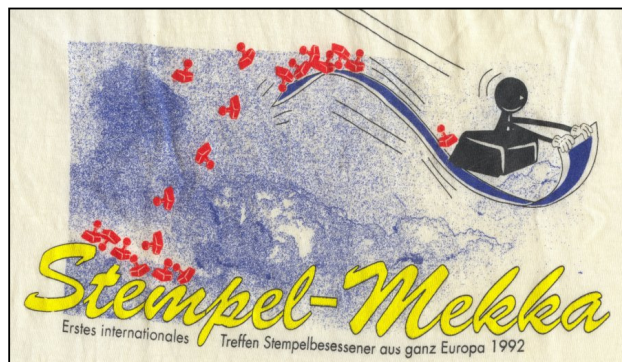
### ***Historic Overview.***

After the start of the archive in 1983 lots of things happened. What started with the collecting of prints of rubberstamps within the mail-art network grew into a large collection of historic items/facts of the mail-art years after 1980 and a collection of original rubberstamps and magazines. Here is a list of some facts concerning the archive:

October 1983	Start of the Archive.
1985	List with all contributors names ( 6 pages) was sent to contributors.
October 1985	The TAM-Rubberstamp Archive is mentioned in the American magazine 'Rubberstampmadness' in an interview by Kate Lanxner.
January 1987	The 5000th invitation (stamp-sheet) was sent out into the network.
1988	All addresses of participants are put into the computer (Reflex relational database). The address-list also contains old addresses of mail-artists that have moved. It is a historical list sorted by country and names. Because of the computerized form in a relational database-program all kind of statistical analyses are possible.
July 1989	Starting of a newsletter about the statistical spreading of the contributions sorted by country (1 page) with stamp-prints of original rubberstamps on it.
July 1989	An Info-letter 1989 about the archive was sent out (small circulation)
July 1990	The Info-letter 1990 was sent out (small circulation)
May 1991	Start of a computerized info-letter about the archive. Every two months a new version is printed and circulated into the network.



- August 1991 Because of the changes in the world old countries changed into smaller independent countries. The address-list is updated in this way , but it will stay 'historically'. So the name of the country is depending on the date the contribution arrived (like East-Germany or Germany depending on the date the contribution arrived). In August 1991 the USSR fall apart, and lots of new countries were formed. Also in Yugoslavia changes occur. The rubberstamp prints sometimes tell a lot about the situation the mail-artists are in.
- June 1992 The donated rubberstamps are all mounted on wooden blocks. It makes the use of the rubberstamps more easily. Ruud used the colors red, green and blue for the coloring of these wooden blocks. The archive-collection looks now quite colorful.
- July 1992 All original rubberstamps in the archive are printed in a special book. All donated rubberstamps can be found in this documentation.
- 1992 In the congressing-year 1992 Ruud met lots of mail-artists. For these meeting several rubberstamps are made, or sometimes rubberstamps are donated to the archive. In this year he traveled to Belgium, France, Sweden, Germany and Estonia.
- September 1992 In Hagen, Germany, Ruud gave some workshops together with Wolfgang Hein at 'Stempel-Mekka'. Hopefully this results in more people creating their own rubberstamps. As a result of these workshops he also wrote an article about how to make eraser-carved rubberstamps (available online at [www.iuoma.org](http://www.iuoma.org)).
- October 1992 A friend of Ruud brought some chemicals so he could produce his own rubber/plastics. The two components can be mixed and in a form it is transformed into a plastic stamp. This gives Ruud the possibility to make his own 'ready made' stamps.
- December 1992 The 9000th invitation (stamp-sheet) was sent out.
- 1993 Because of the 10th anniversary of the archive a special booklet is printed. Also in this year Ruud purchased some new tools for



carving eraser stamps. Only by practice you get to know the skill the best.

September 1993 In Hagen, Germany , the second 'Stempel-MEKKA' was organized again by Diana and Wolfgang (Heindesign). Of course Ruud was there again. He met with the few rubberstamp-makers that there are in Europe, and also some mail-artists like Peter Brandt (Germany), Iris-Ihring (Sweden) , Gerart Bot (Netherlands), and also Anna Banana (Canada).

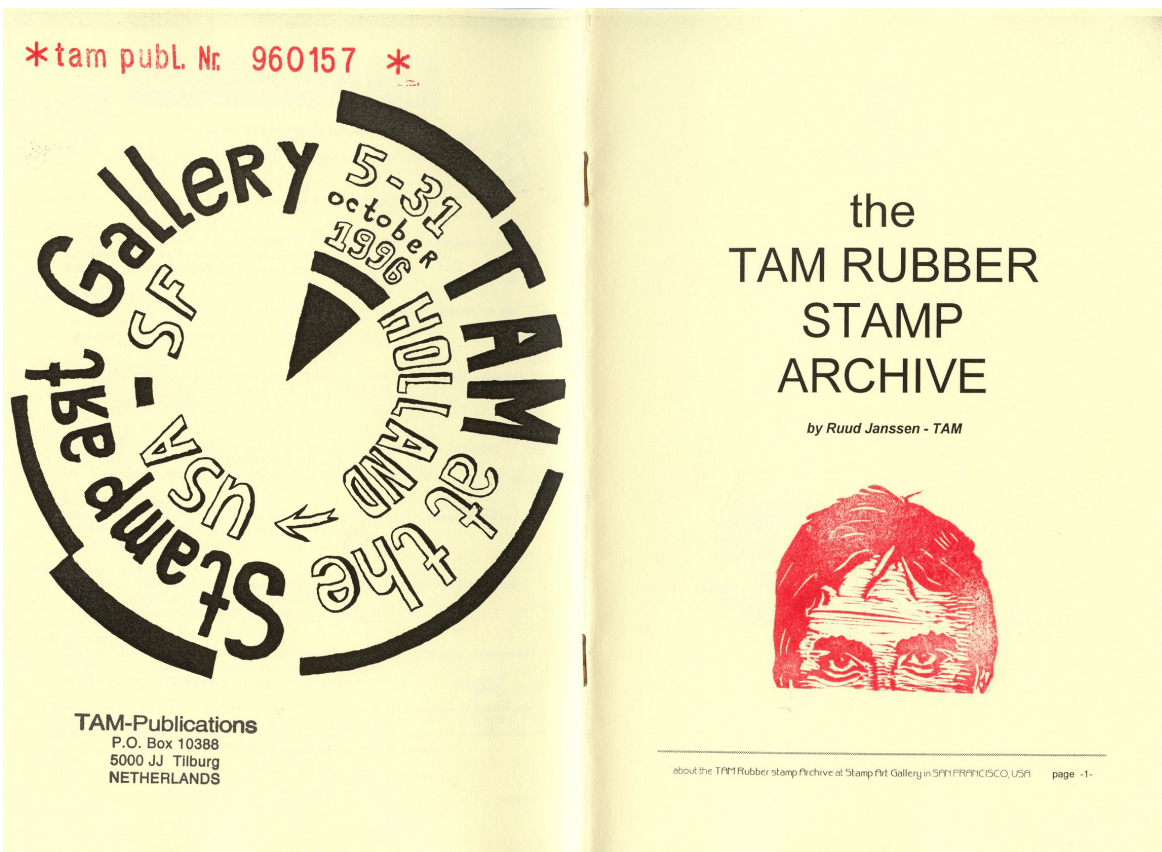
November 1993 At the KreaDoe-fair in Utrecht , Holland , Ruud assisted Heindesign (the Rubberstamp-factory from Germany) with their stand. For this event he translated their Rubberstamp-pamphlets from German language into Dutch language. He also demonstrated special techniques at the fair.

March 1994 A special rubberstamp was created and produced by Heindesign (the Rubberstamp-factory from Germany). The dies were sent to large contributors to the archive as a way of saying "thank-you".



September 1995 An exhibition was held in Ruud's TAM-Gallery. The collection "Stamp Trouvé" by Picasso (Bill) Gaglione was exhibited. He sent the collection by registered mail and indicated the value was \$ 10,000. This caused the funny reaction of the Tax-office to ask for a fee to be able to collect the 'found rubber stamps'. A letter and a fax explaining them the collection was just send for the exhibition and would be returned, got the collection free of charge at the Gallery. Later Bill decided to donate the collection, so it is still part of the TAM Rubberstamp Archive now.





October 1996

At the Stamp Art Gallery in San Francisco (USA) the first exhibition of the archive was held. The concept was thought out especially for the exhibition where the whole mail-art network was asked to send special prepared stamp sheets straight to San Francisco. A lecture about the archive was given by Ruud Janssen at the location (see article further in this catalogue). The rubberstamp included below this text is made by Tim Mancusi, who used a photo taken by Barbara Cooper while Ruud was visiting her. A nice souvenir from the USA.

November 1999

An experimental CD with scans of the sheets in the archive was produced. Since the scanner he used then only produced high resolution scans, he discovered that about 100 scans would go on a single CD-R. So only a first set was scanned on a single CD. With new techniques the collection could be digitized in the future. It will only take a lot of time to scan over 10,000 sheets...



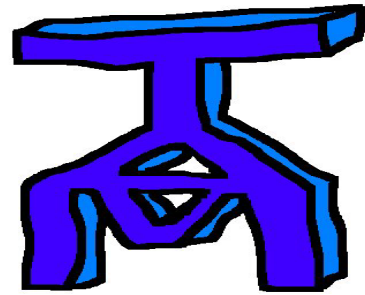


- December 2000      It was decided that no more sheets of the archive will be sent out into the network anymore that would fill up the archive further. All sheets that still come in are still archived. Special sheets that go to other archives are still produced. Examples: Series for the Guy Bleus Archives in Wellen, Belgium. Special sheets for Ed Giecek (USA) to collect his Egg Headz.
- September 2003      Some stamps from the collection are donated to other institutions. For example, a stamp was donated to the Museum of Temporary Art in Tübingen, Germany.
- October 2004      At the L-Gallery in Moscow (Russia) the second official exhibition of the archive is held from 21<sup>st</sup> October till 6<sup>th</sup> November. The sheets were printed and sent out especially for the exhibition into the global mail-art network. This catalogue is made especially for this exhibition.

## What is there in the Tam-Rubberstamp Archive?

The TAM-Rubberstamp Archive contains not only the prints of rubberstamps. As time passed by the collection started to contain:

- \* Magazines about Rubberstamps (RSM – also some of the historic first issues , National Stampographic, etc...
- \* Books about Rubberstamps.
- \* Original rubberstamps
  - prefab.
  - carved.
  - rubberstamps for special meetings.
  - donations by mail-artists & others
- \* Catalogs about mail-art projects concerning rubberstamps
- \* Catalogs from Rubberstamp companies around the world
- \* Tools used for the making of rubberstamps.

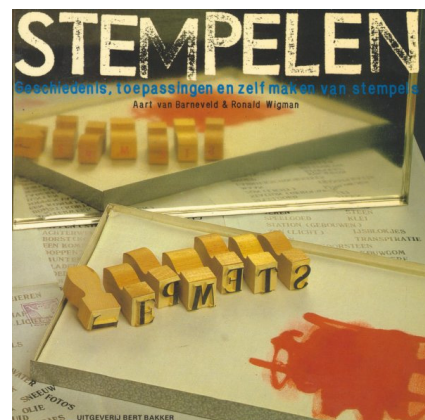


Sometimes an original rubberstamp from the archive is donated to a mail-artist Ruud meet in person. Some eraser-carved stamps he especially make for such a meeting. But always a print of this rubberstamp is kept in the archive.

The nicest and most complete book known about Rubberstamps , is the German book 'STEMPEL' by Hugo Hempel Jr. (ISBN 3-925817-41-7) 122 pages , Der Grüne Zweig 141 is the editor of the book. It gives an overview of all kind of stamps , and the way they are used.

Another (a bit older book) about all kinds of stamps is the book "Stempelen" by Aart van Baarneveld & Ronald Wigman (ISBN 9-060198-92-1). For a larger overview of publications see one of the appendixes in this catalogue.

Because the TAM-Rubberstamp Archive is a private archive, there is no money to pay for subscriptions to magazines concerning the subject, or to purchase large amounts of stamps. So the archive is the result of planned collecting and donations to the archive. Lots of mail-artists sent Ruud their carved stamps, but also issues of magazines like mentioned in the above list.



So , if you have anything concerning rubberstamps , and want to get 'rid' of it , just send it to the archive! It will be highly appreciated.

## Countries



Since the beginning of the TAM Rubberstamp Archive Ruud received contributions from lots of different countries. Because he put all names and addresses in a database he was able to keep track of where all came from. Ruud published several lists in the newsletters to let contributors know how the collection grew. In these list he put behind the names of the countries is the number [...] of participants.

In an appendix you can find a sample of such a documentation (updated till 1995).





## Numbers

The stamp-sheets Ruud send out are always numbered by hand. Over the years the rubberstamp he used for this has changed, but the numbers are always put on the sheets by hand to identify the papers.

This number also indicates how many sheets are sent out. Also it is a dating-system since he knows which numbers he sent out during which years.

Some details about the numbers are available in this overview:


Number	Sent out in	Remarks:
1	1983	The first sheets are sent into the mail-art network. They don't automatically return within a few weeks. Some sheets actually come back after decades....
1000	1985	Special documentation was made to illustrate the collection.
5000	1987	Special documentation
9000	1992	Special documentation
10000	1993	Special documentation
15000	1996	The special set printed for the exhibition in San Francisco. The number 15000 was sent out.
01-730	2001	A new numbering-scheme started in the new millennium.
04-534	2003	Special series were sent out that are collected on other locations.
07-127	2004	A last set of papers was printed for the Russia exhibition, and each time a new set was sent out the lead-number was increased with one.

The statistical numbers show that the average amount of invitations that is sent out comes to 1000 each year. Because the numbers with the special projects are a bit strange it isn't easy to see how many sheets actually were sent out.

No: **04-283**
No

VICENTE BARONI  
VIA C. BATTISTI 339  
55049 VIAREGGIO

STAMPS FROM: **ITALY**.....# 1

.....# 2

(use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

No: **04 - 128** No

STAMPS FROM: ..... #1

..... #2

*Anna Banana* *Anna Banana* #3

*Anna Banana* *Anna Banana* #4

000190 (use your name-stamp!)

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This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it on to someone else. When you are #4 send it to Russia (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia**. After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

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#1

Artist Trading Card by  
Anna Banana / /  
Series: No.

NO MORE  
WRONG  
MAIL ART  
FROM PLG

#2

INTERNATIONAL SALON DES  
ARTISTAMPS  
JAN 11 2004  
VANCOUVER  
CANADA  
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

#3

#4

#1,2,3 : stamp and pass on!  
#4 : send to Russia!

Info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
this sheet was printed on : **Saturday, 29 November 2003**

The number of sent out sheets till today, is about 21,000 sheets. About half of it got returned, so the collection is 10,000 sheets large.

The stamp-sheets are sized half-A4 , and contain besides the number also an indication of the month and year it was printed. With these statistics you also know that about 10,000 sheets are still out there.....! Probably some are stuck in archives and some just got thrown away..... When Ruud told John Held Jr. in San Francisco about the several number stamps he used over the years for the sheets, John proudly showed him his set of empty sheets. He has kept a sample of each one of them in his private archive.

The longest time it took for a sheet to return to the archive is now 15 years. (Someone was cleaning up his archive and returned the sheet he found after so many years to the address mentioned. He was lucky the address was still valid!

## The First Exhibition in San Francisco

The first exhibition at the Stamp Art Gallery in San Francisco (USA) was a very special event for me. It was combined with my first trip to the USA, and my large-scale project mail-interviews (a project in which I interview Fluxus and mail-art people).

The sheets were printed and sent out in Tilburg. Some sheets were made in the 'collage' version. So the one who gets the sheet can add his/her stamps, and

then pass it on to a friend of him/her. This way the sheets go into all kind of directions and also the artists are forced to interact with the stamps put on the sheets already. This concept brings some nice experiments and combinations.



After this trip to the USA Ruud wrote a special article which is reprinted here again to give you an idea about these two weeks:

## SAN FRANCISCO - CA - USA

(some details of my trip 20-10 till 4-11-1996)

Yes, I was in the USA, my first trip to this country. Lots of people ask me about details; who did I meet, what was it like, what did you do, how was the lecture, who was there to attend, etc. I did keep a travel-diary during the trip. This book contains my private writings, and I will see if I can transform it into a

publication. Besides these 115 pages of text, I also took about 300 photo's in the USA, and as you might guess, people took photo's of me as well (why?). I bought souvenirs, books, got gifts from friends, and just so many details that there are to tell.



## Cities I visited

20-10 till 26-10-1996 : On the 20th I arrive in the evening in San Francisco. John Held picked me up at the Airport. I stayed at Netlandia in **San Francisco**. Actually I was the last inhabitant of this place since John Held Jr. and Ashley Parker Owens already had moved to their new addresses. But the apartment of Netlandia at **24th Street in Mission** district, was still available (and empty besides a bed and a kitchen) so I had my own place for this first week thanks to John Held and Ashley. I visited the Stamp Art Gallery often, where it is always a surprise who you meet (like Steven Leiber passing by, Marcy Freedman with her concept-version of a CD-ROM) or talk to (phone calls with Bill Wilson from New York, Patricia Tavenner from Oakland, Tim Mancusi from Rohnert Park). One night I even landed at a poker-game at R. Seth Friedman's place (the editor of Factsheet5) and lost \$ 5,- (not bad since it was my first real poker game)

26-10 : On this Saturday I gave the talk/lecture about the exhibition and the TAM Rubber Stamp Archive just after Zack did the performance 'WET'. About 30+ people showed up (see names at the list later). Lots of old and new friends....! After the pizza I drove out of San Francisco....

26-10 till 28-10 : With Barbara Cooper I drove up north to visit **San Rafael**, where she lives. The next day we drove to **Bolinas** and watched the ocean at **Stinson Beach**, ate a turkey Sandwich and drank a vodka-juice, drove through **Terra Linda** and listened to the concert of Aaron & band downtown in San Rafael

28-10 : John Held Jr. picks me up in San Rafael, and we drive over the **Golden Gate Bridge** to visit Robert Rocola at Geary Street. After that we pick up Picasso and visit the Art Institute to hear a lecture by Tom Marioni about performance art in the Bay Area in the 70's.

28-10 till 30-11 : In the afternoon I take the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transport) to **Oakland**, where I meet with Patricia Tavenner. She lives near **Berkeley**, and I visit this place when Patricia had to work in the morning. Patricia is doing video-interviews with mail



artists, and I am one of the 'victims'. I am curious of what the result will be..... I also visited one of Patricia's silkscreen-classes at the University California-Extension Courses.

30-10 : A surprise (?) party at Diana O. Mars's place, where I meet the people from the Stamp Art Gallery again. Patricia drove me to Diana's place in **San Francisco**, and as arranged I travel back with Tim Mancusi to Rohnert Park. The crowded city is left behind and the beautiful landscapes of California are all around me.

30-10 till 2-11-96 : I am staying with Tim Mancusi at **Rohnert Park**. We talk a lot, and in the afternoons we drive around in this beautiful California and see places like **Petaluma** and **Santa Rosa**. It is Halloween, and for an European like me this is something strange. At PSX I see how the people can dress up for such an occasion, and I do know now what 'trick or treat' means. On one afternoon we drove up to visit Jeff Berner at **Dillon Beach**, the landscape surprises you every time again. On November 2nd I take the bus back to downtown San Francisco.

2-11-96 : The last days in **San Francisco**. The new exhibitions at the Stamp Art Gallery start. Dogfish from Seattle was there, and also I meet with Harley. My chewing gum was needed to fix something of the exhibition from Tui-Tui, and is there now on display during November. Also the exhibition by Pawel Petasz was opened on this day. And again I meet with Bob Kirkman. Is he there every Saturday maybe.....? Had a short phone call with David Hunter, who just moved to San Francisco. The last night I stay at John Held's place. He has helped me a lot during my stay in California, and early next morning he drove me to the airport of San Francisco, where my plane leaves early in the morning. The last evening in San Francisco we also have time to visit the 'day of the death' parade at the Mission-district.

3-11-96 till 4-11-96 : The airplane leaves 45 minutes late, but what is 45 minutes when I know that the trip back to Tilburg (via **Washington**, where I have one hour left so I still had time to buy another T-shirt for my collection, and **Amsterdam**, where I arrive early in the morning of November 4th) will take over 26 hours on my clock. But time goes fast,

especially since twice I have to turn the clock forward.

## **People I met**

Well, here is the list of all the people I have met on all those days: John Held Jr, Picasso Gaglione, Diana O. Mars, Darling Darlene, Miriam Wolf, R. Seth Friedman, Mike Dyar, Patricia Tavenner, Carol Carson, Steven Leiber, Steve Hitchcock. Michael Harford, Marcy Freedman, Barbara Cooper, Anna Banana, Judith Hoffberg, Zack, Steve Caravelt, Geoffrey Cook, Irene Dogmatic, Ted Purves, Eleanor Kent, Gregory Fiorini, Juulee Peeslee, Bob Kirkman, Jennifer Rodrigue, Tom Marioni, Tim Mancusi, Jeff Berner. Robert Rocola, Harley, Dogfish, Chris (from Factsheet5) and Aaron (who plays his guitar perfectly). I just hope I didn't forget anybody..... I could tell you lots of things about some of the meetings, but this text is just meant as a small list with all the details for people who can't wait for a personal letter or a proper publication about my trip.

## **Places I visited**

Well, Of course I visited the Moma-museum in downtown San Francisco. Also I was at the 'Young Museum", where they had the new 'Beatnik-show' , where -to our surprise- were also three works by Ray Johnson at display. I visited the Golden Gate Park, walked through China Town, visited Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian, Thai and Japanese restaurants, and even once ate an American hamburger. Bought some typical american rubber stamps, and saw hundreds of homeless people walking everywhere. The contrasts are big in the USA.

## **Interviews in progress**

Besides the exhibition I had at the Stamp Art Gallery and the fact that I wanted to do some tourist activities in San Francisco and surroundings, I also had some activities for my mail-interview project. Some examples: When I met **Mike Dyar** at Tom's place I invited him for an interview. Because we met each other at more occasions, we were able to exchange some questions and answers during these two weeks. I forgot to ask **John held Jr.** the next question for the PART-2 of our interview, so I will have to send that to him later this month when I find the time. I met again with **Anna Banana**, who I already interviewed one year ago. I met with **Robert Rocola**, who's interview will be a visual one. he gave me some more illustrations when I visited him together with John Held Jr. I discussed with **Picasso (Bill) Gaglione** how to go further with the interview. But I forgot to take along the next question, and could find the copy of the question. It reminds me of the found stamps he sent me that were lost then, and were found



again later on. I visited **Patricia Tavenner**, and could give her the next question on the last day I was with her. When I visited **Tim Mancusi**, he gave me the next answer for the interview. I still have to retype his answer and will send him the next question when that is done. At the lecture I gave at the Stamp Art gallery on the 26th October I also met for the first time with **Judith A. Hoffberg**. She promised to send the next question when she finds the time. Also I met **Ashley Parker Owens** and had dinner with her and John Held Jr. Ashley's interview is already published, and I can now tell you that Global Mail will continue, but has a different editor. Ashley will still be doing the listings of projects.

So, believe it or not; in this short period I had meetings with 9 mail artists I am interviewing, have interviewed, or started interviewing. Yes, an intense trip.

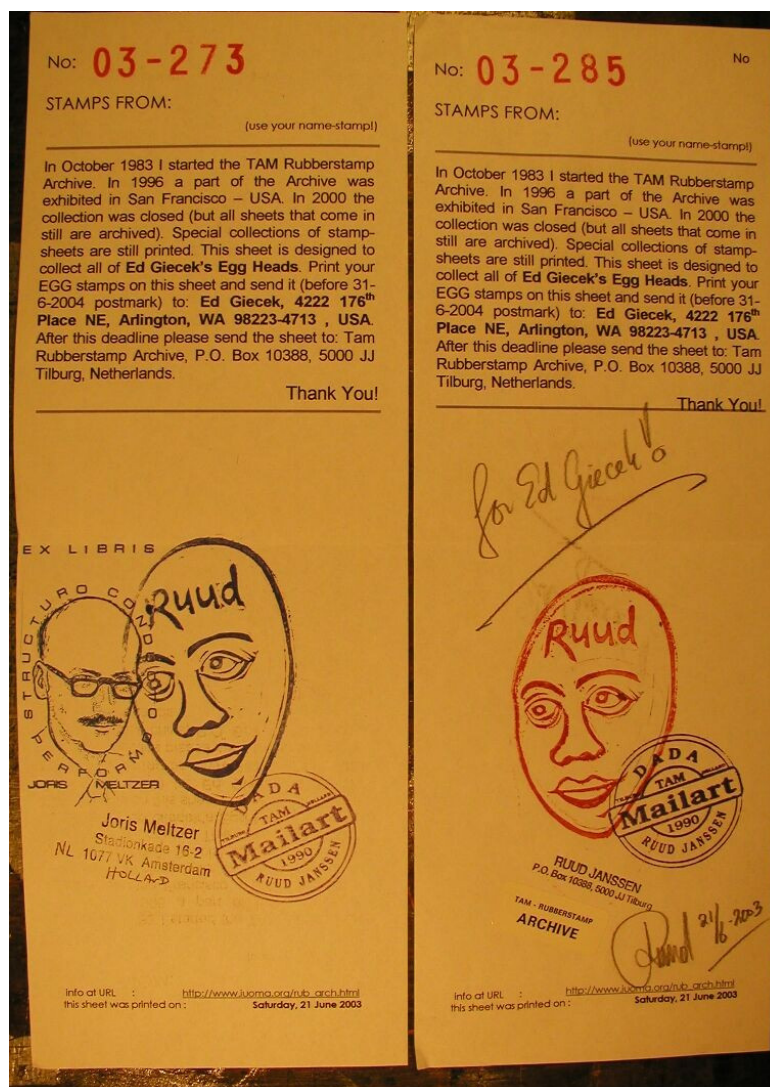
© 1996-2004 TAM-Publications TAM960164

The concept of the exhibition in San Francisco is an ideal one. The sheets are printed at Ruud's apartment in Tilburg and sent into the network. They go straight to the exhibition-place. After the exhibition some sheets are still somewhere in the network, so it is indicated on the sheet to return them then back to the TAM Rubber Stamp Archive itself.

Three more times this concept is done:

For **Guy Bleus** in Belgium Ruud made more than thousand sheets after he decided his archive shouldn't grow anymore.

**Ed Giecek (USA)** made a series of Egg Headz (also one for me), and when Ruud found the list of people who had received an Egg Head from Ed, he decided to send them all special sheets with a print of my 'Egg' on it, and asking them to print theirs on it as well. Besides this text two examples (a scan sent to me by Ed Giecek. Joris Meltzer sadly enough died on September 21th 2004. So I especially added this illustration to remember him after a correspondence of over 20 years.



For the exhibition at the **L-Gallery** in Moscow the same concept is used. Also a test to see if the snail-mail art network is still active and alive. This, because the Internet and the electronic communication and projects have taken over a lot of the 'old-fashioned' mail-art. The results are obvious. Lots of mail-artists returned the sheets and the exhibition shows that rubberstamps are still alive and well.

## The Second Exhibition in Moscow

In 2003 Gik Juri invited me for an exhibition in Moscow. At first the intention was to show a selection envelopes that are produced during the correspondence between Litsa Spathi and me. But Later on it was changed into a conceptual event, and the stamp sheets that are exhibited here now were sent from Tilburg into the worldwide network of mail-artists.

Like the San Francisco concept, also collage-sheets were sent out. Some samples you can find in this catalogue. For me these sheets are the most interesting ones. After its journey you can read the traces the mail-artists have left on the paper.

Gik scanned all the sheets and also the envelopes in which the sheets were returned. He put them on a CD and sent the results back to Ruud in batches. This way he was able to see what was returned to him, who sent what, and it also enabled me to use some illustrations in this catalogue. Because so many sheets were returned it was only possible to reproduce a small selection in the printed version of this catalogue. Because we live in digital ages, Ruud or Juri can however also produce a digital version of the catalogue, and include all the scans that were made. That way the Russian collection is available for all.



(sample of the cover made by Gik Juri for the CD's to document the collection, version August 2004).

## Latest news

Maybe there will be only one more exhibition with the rubberstamp-archive. Since the archive is quite large there will be needed lots of time to arrange things. Besides the prints, the exhibition will also show a selection of the other materials as mentioned in this info-letter. The Archive will keep everybody informed. All donations are still very welcome! Due to the fact that the archive is kept in boxes, it is not really accessible for visitors. If this changes the Mail-Art network will inform you by messages in the current mail-art magazines. For research purposes Ruud is always willing to coöporate.

Because in 2008 the Archive will be 25 years old, a special booklet is sceduled about this archive. Because the number of participants it will be a problem to send it to everybody. We will see how the Archive can work this out. Maybe there are some sponsors for the archive.....

Ruud Janssen,  
TAM-Publications.

## **Addresses**

### ***Ruud Janssen***

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5000 JJ Tilburg  
H O L L A N D

E-mail : [r.janssen@iuoma.org](mailto:r.janssen@iuoma.org) or [r.janssen@tiscali.nl](mailto:r.janssen@tiscali.nl)

URL-1: [www.iuoma.org](http://www.iuoma.org)

URL-2 : [www.fluxusheidelberg.org](http://www.fluxusheidelberg.org)

### ***L-Gallery***

Oktyabrskaya str., 26  
Moscow  
Russia

Nearest Subway:  
Rizhskaya ,Mendeleyevskaya

Working hours:  
Tuesday-Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Description: The gallery was founded in 1991. One of the oldest Moscow galleries that deals with conceptual art. The gallery works with international authors.

Detailed information: <http://eng.moscowout.ru/art/galleries/298/>

### ***Gik Juri***

141200, 2nd Dombrovskaja str. ,  
5-42 Pushkino,  
Moscow area,  
Russia

E-mail : [GikJuri@yandex.ru](mailto:GikJuri@yandex.ru)

The address above was also on the stamp sheets that were printed for the exhibition. So for all contributions this was the entrance-point



## Appendix 1 - Literature

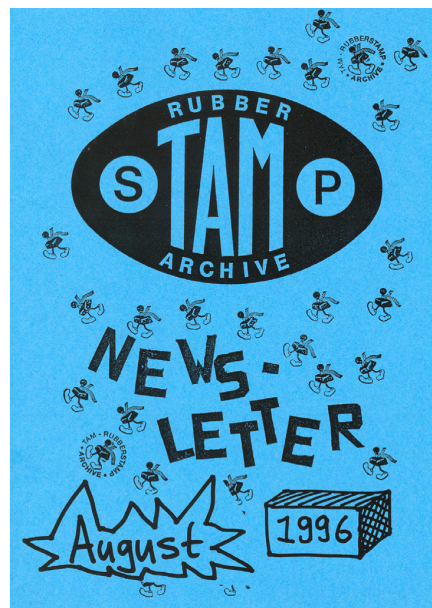
*Overview of some of the books published on the theme Rubber Stamps. Most of them are part of the TAM-Archive*

### **Newsletters TAM-Rubber Stamp Archive**

(several issues were published over the years with always the basic history and most recent details about the collection)

**Catalogue exhibition in San Francisco** at the Stamp Art Gallery (1996) with illustration of contributions to the exhibition and a text by John Held Jr. (reproduced in this catalogue).

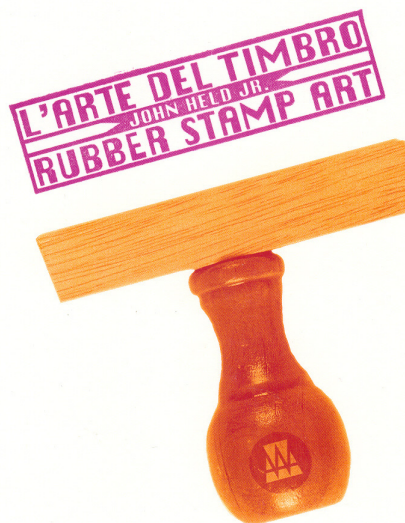
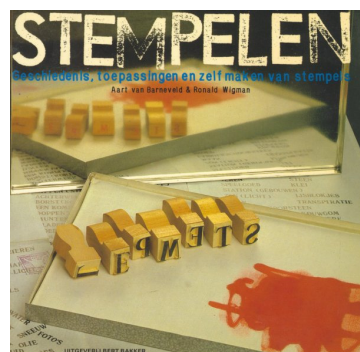
**The Rubber Stamp Album.** By Joni K. Miller & Lowry Thompson. The complete guide to making everything prettier, weirder, and funnier. How and where to buy over 5,000 rubber stamps. And how to use them. (ISBN 0-89460-045-0). 216 pages thick book published by Workman Publishing, New York. Design by Louise Fili. Historic issue, first publication 1978.



**Stempel**, (German Language) by Hugo Hempel Jr. (ISBN 3-925817-41-7) 122 pages, Der Grüne Zweig 141 is the editor of the book. It gives an overview of all kind of stamps, and the way they are used.

**Rubber Stamp Art – L'Art del Timbro**, AAA Edition1, Bertiole, Italy. Editor: Vittore Baroni. Text by John Held Jr. (ISBN 88-86828-23-3)

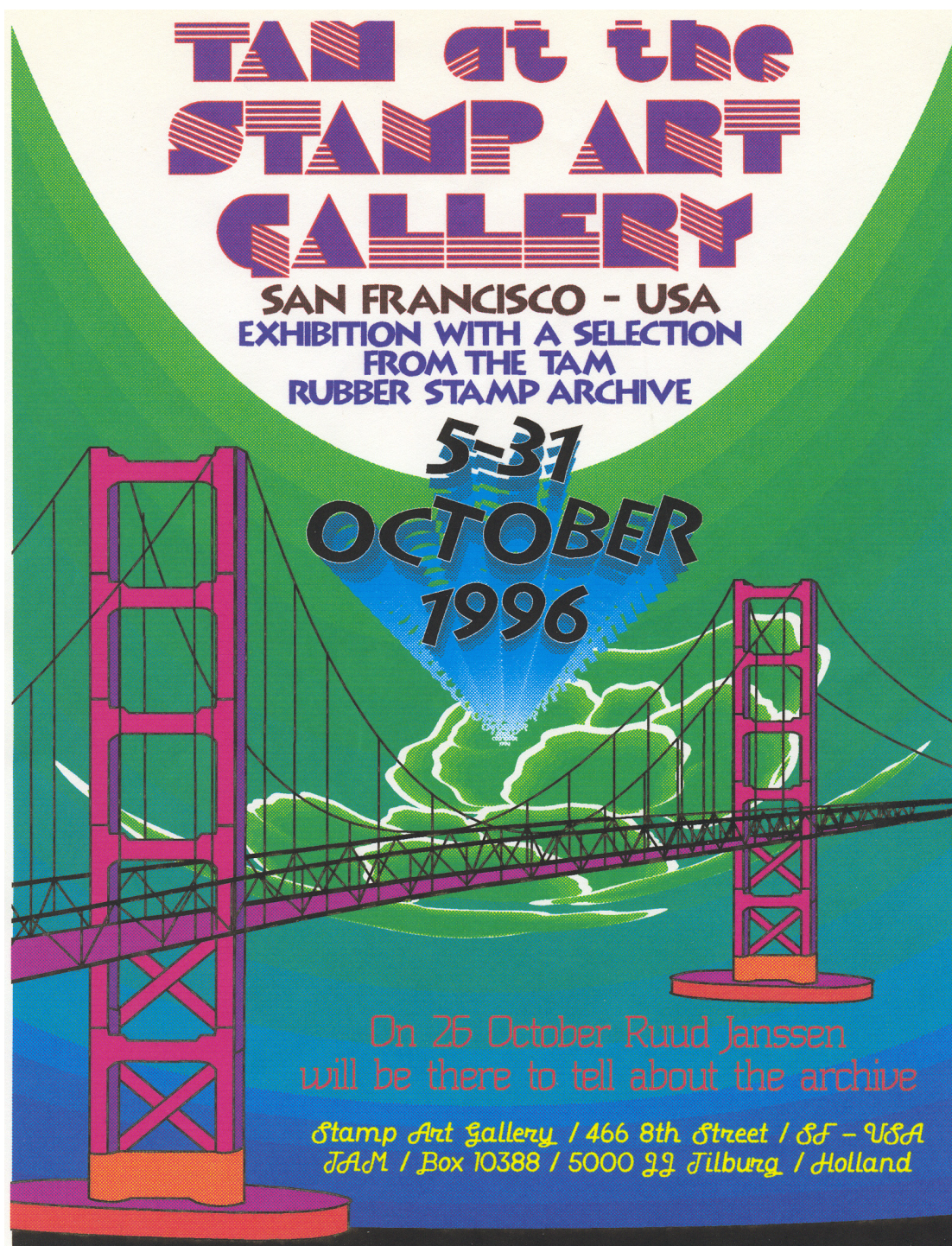
**Stempelen**, (Dutch Language) by Aart van Baarneveld & Ronald Wigman (ISBN 9-060198-92-1). 104 pages with lots of illustrations.





## Appendix 2 - The TAM Rubberstamp-Archive of Ruud Janssen

*written by John Held Jr. (USA), and published in the catalogue issued by the  
Stamp Art Gallery, San Francisco, October 1996.*



It has been sixteen years since Ruud Janssen became aware of mail art, and because of his interest in documentation, we have an excellent overview of his activities. In this catalogue we have reprinted both his lengthy Curriculum Vitae, and his latest "information-newsletter" of the TAM Rubberstamp-Archive.

To write a factual account of his work would therefore be repetitive. Let me instead impart some personal impressions of the man and his work, and why I believe Ruud has become such an important link in the mail art network.

I have been involved in mail art since 1976, beginning from an experience the previous year when I took my first trip to Europe and found myself at a rubber stamp store in Amsterdam, Holland, called Posthumous. I brought some stamps home with me and began research to learn if other artists were using them in creative ways. Soon, I discovered the mail art network, and began doing my own rubber stamp art.

I returned to Amsterdam for the first exhibition at the gallery Posthumous opened in a section of their store, which they named Stempelplaats. I spent two weeks there, and spent much of my time in the evenings going to a nightclub called the Melkweg (the Milky Way). So when I received an invitation in 1985 for a show at the Melkweg, it reminded me of my first steps in mail art, and I became interested in the organizer, Ruud Janssen.

Since then, we have become close friends. We met first in 1989, when I gave a talk and held an exhibition at De Media in Eeklo, Belgium. Our second meeting occurred in 1995, when I travelled to Europe with Picasso Gaglione for the opening of the Musée de la Post exhibition, The Art of the Rubber Stamp, in Paris.

After the Paris show, Gaglione and I went to visit two mail art archivists, Guy Bleus in Wellen, Belgium, and Ruud in Tilburg, Holland. We stayed with both, and a fuller description of our adventures can be found in The Stamp Art Gallery catalogue, The Fake Picabia Brothers: L'Art Tampon.

Suffice it to say, that our visit with Ruud was a most enjoyable one, and we were able to view firsthand his living and working space. Ruud is a good example of what sustaining interest and hard work are capable of. His apartment is small. He works a full-time job that demands much of his time and energy. Yet somehow he has found a way to make himself an undeniable presence in an international art network.

The activity starts early in the morning. While others on the train are reading their morning papers, Ruud has been to the Post Office to pick up his mail, and is busily reading the latest news from his worldwide correspondents on his way to work.

At home that evening, he is at the computer working on the Mail Art Interview project, creating stamp sheets and colourful envelopes, enclosing the TAM Rubberstamp-Archive sheets in his correspondence, issuing membership cards to newcomers in the IUOMA (International Union of Mail Artists) and responding to those all too frequent requests that demand more than a simple letter.



His training in computers prepared him well for his use of this new technology in mail art activities, and Ruud was one of the first mail artists to extend the communicative and archival potentials by combining these interests.

Now all the data concerning his Travelling Mail Art Rubberstamp-Archive can be retrieved easily from the computer, and distributed in both printed and electronic formats. And it's a good thing too, for since the beginning of the Archive in 1983, some 15,000 thousand forms have been distributed to over 60 countries, with the purpose of documenting the rubber stamp impressions of artists involved in the mail art network. To date of this article, over 1,600 artists have responded.

It is to his credit that Ruud is not only interested in the output of the artists, but what motivates them to continue their work. His Mail Art Interview Project is the first systematic attempt to gather in-depth information about the participants in the network.

How he does this along with all his other projects, I will never know. He does not have any sponsors for his projects. All the research and publishing activity results from his own limited resources. This is the same for most mail artists, whose work is under appreciated by the mainstream art institutions.

Without sponsorship of any kind, Ruud has amassed the most complete information on the creative use of rubber stamps. Someday, someone from the mainstream will come knocking on his door seeking to borrow the art and information for an exhibition or a publication.

Until that time, The Stamp Art Gallery has arranged to show some of the collection, as well as the many publications Ruud has produced in support of the collection, to a wider audience.

For the exhibition, Ruud has created a special form for the contributing artists in the TAM Rubberstamp-Archive to respond, and also in which to participate. Instead of having the artists imprint their rubber stamps on the form, and returning them to Ruud, as is the normal procedure, a special form has been developed, and the artists have been instructed to forward it directly to The Stamp Art Gallery.

All work received has been displayed, and we have reproduced at least one work by each participating artist in this catalogue. In this way, Ruud has used the opportunity of a gallery show to erect a structure by which all who want to can contribute.

This generosity of shared creativity is characteristic of Ruud's work, and we are grateful that he has collaborated with us in the first partial public exhibition of the largest rubber stamp archive in the world.

№ 15316

STAMPS FROM:

(use your name-stamp!)

(use your name-stamp!)

PERFORATIONS BY JOHN HELD JR

PERFORATIONS BY JOHN HELD JR

In **October 1983** I started the **Stamp** Archive. 13 years later there will be an exhibition about this huge archive. A selection will be shown, but you have the chance to send in your latest stamps to this exhibition by sending this sheet. (You may send out numbered sheets and unnumbered sheets are accepted) **Before October 1st 1996 to: STAMP-ART GALLERY, 266 8th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, USA** (this deadline the papers end up in the Amsterdam Stamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 1000JJ (Amsterdam, Holland). There will be a

**1983.** I started the TAM Rubber Stamp Archive. 13 years later there will be an exhibition about my huge archive. A selection will be shown, but you have the chance to send in your latest stamps to this exhibition by sending this sheet or previously send out numbered sheets (only original sheets are accepted) **before October 5th 1996** to: STAMP ART GALLERY, 406 8th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, USA. After this date the papers end up in the TAM-Rubberstamp Archive. Tel: 0031-20-610388, 5000 NJ Tilburg, Holland.



## Appendix 3 – Rubber Stamp History

### *The History of Rubber Stamps*

*From "The Rubber Stamp Album" by Joni K. Miller & Lowry Thompson, 1978, Workman Publishing, New York (currently out of print - 4/1998)*

Charles Marie de la Condamine, French scientist and explorer of the scenic Amazon River, had no idea there would ever be such a thing as a rubber stamp when he sent a sample of "India" rubber to the Institute de France in Paris in 1736.

Prior to de la Condamine, Spanish explorers had noted that certain South American Indian tribes had a light-hearted time playing ball with a substance that was sticky and bounced, but it failed to rouse their scientific curiosity.

Some tribes had found rubber handy as an adhesive when attaching feathers to their person; and the so-called "head-hunting" Antipas, who were fond of tattooing, used the soot from rubber that had been set on fire. They punctured skin with thorns and rubbed in the soot to achieve the desired cosmetic effect. The June 1918 issue of *Stamp Trade News* indicates that "rubber stamps were made hundreds of years ago...by South American Indians for printing on the body the patterns which they wished to tattoo," but we have been unable to verify this was actually the case. In New Zealand today, a version of such tattooing is making a hit in the form of rubber stamp "skin markers" which bear intricate figures of birds, snakes, flowers, tribal symbols, etc.

It wasn't until some thirty-four years after de la Condamine sent his rubber care package home that Sir Joseph Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen, noted: "I have seen a substance excellently adapted to the purpose of wiping from paper the mark of black lead pencil." In 1770 it was a novel idea to rub out (hence the name **rubber**) pencil marks with the small cubes of rubber, called "peaux de negres" by the French. Alas, the cubes were both expensive and scarce, so most folks continued to rub out their errors with bread crumbs. Rubber limped along since attempts to put the substance to practical use were thwarted by its natural tendency to become a rotten, evil-smelling mess the instant the temperature changed.

Enter Charles Goodyear. Upon hearing of the unsolvable rubber dilemma (from the Roxbury Rubber Company), Goodyear became obsessed with solving the whole sticky question once and for all. During his lifetime, Goodyear was judged to be a crackpot of epic proportions. Leaving his hardware business, he began working on the problem in his wife's kitchen, spending hours mixing up bizarre brews of rubber and castor oil, rubber and pepper, rubber and salt, rubber and heaven knows what. Daily life intruded on his experiments in the form of recurring bankruptcy and sporadic imprisonment for failure to pay his debts. At one point, Goodyear actually sold his children's school books for the cash required to embark on the next experiment. Goodyear's persistence and single-mindedness were legion.

In 1839 while fooling around in a kitchen, Goodyear accidentally dropped some rubber mixed with sulphur on top of a hot stove. Instead of turning into a gooey mess, the rubber "cured." It was still flexible the next day. The process, involving a

mixture of gum elastic, sulphur, and heat was dubbed **vulcanization**, after Vulcan, the Roman god of fire. Vulcanized, rubber lost its susceptibility to changes in temperature. The discovery paved the way for hundreds of practical applications of rubber. In June 1844, Goodyear patented for his process. Never one to rest on his laurels, Goodyear turned his formidable energies to developing a multiplicity of uses for rubber. These continuing experiments were costly and, bless his soul, in 1860 Goodyear died two hundred thousand dollars in debt. His last words reflected the pattern of his life: "I die happy, others can get rich."

### ***Prelude to the Invention of the Rubber Stamp***

The word "**stamp**," as used in historical documents, is not particularly explanatory. Neither is its cousin phrase "hand stamp." Early historical references to either can easily be mistaken for references to rubber stamps and this is not always correct. A basic assumption must be made that if the word "stamp" is used to refer to a marking device prior to 1864, it does not refer to a rubber one.

Some background on this somewhat hair-splitting problem: Metal printing-stamps, also called hand stamps or mechanical hand stamps, preceded rubber ones by six to eight years. One of the first of these was the Chamberlain Brass Wheel Ribbon Dating Stamp, which came out in the early 1860s, and another was B.B. Hill's Brass Wheel Ribbon Ticket Dater. A prolific inventor, Hill is considered to be "the father of the mechanical hand stamp." Prior to 1860, hand stamps enjoyed limited use. Their heyday commences with the Civil War. The union financed the war by issuing revenue stamps which were required on virtually all business papers of any kind -- notes, drafts, bills, checks, etc. The government required that the revenue stamps be "canceled" with a notation of the date and the name of the person cancelling them. Clearly this procedure was a real pain. It was tedious and slow and begged for some type of technology to come to the rescue. It isn't difficult to imagine the instant popularity with which the first mechanical hand stamps were met.

The early days of rubber stamps and their creation are inextricably entwined with those of early dentistry. Around the same time that Goodyear received his patent on vulcanizing, anaesthesia was patented by a fellow named Wells. Relatively speaking, Wells's discovery made getting your teeth pulled a moderately painless experience, so teeth were being pulled left and right. This meant, of course, that the demand for false teeth was rising proportionately. Before vulcanization, denture bases had been made primarily of gold and were both costly and difficult to make. After vulcanization, denture bases could be made of vulcanized rubber set in plaster moulds. This process did not demand a great deal of skill, and soon scores of dentists had small, round vulcanizers with which to ply their trade. These were called "dental pot" vulcanizers and would be used eventually to manufacture the first rubber stamps.

### ***Multiple Choice for the Inventor of the Rubber Stamp***

The actual source of the first rubber stamp is still mired in mystery. It's a game of multiple choice for the inventor.



Candidate number one, L.F. Witherell of Knoxville, Illinois, caused quite a stir in June 1916, at the stamp men's convention in Chicago, by reading a paper entitled "How I Came to Discover the Rubber Stamp."

Witherell, noting that "nearly all great and marvellous inventions or discoveries have sprung into the world as a result of an accident," claimed his accidental discovery of the rubber stamp took place in Galesburg, Illinois, in 1866 while he was foreman for a manufacturer of wooden pumps. At that time virtually all identification marking was made with brass or copper stencils and paint. The pump company was experiencing problems with paint running under stencils and creating blotches on the pumps. Witherell decided to try cutting stencils out of thin sheets of rubber packing. It was while cutting letters out of a sheet of rubber, and watching the letters fall at his feet that his brainstorm hit. He promptly cut more letters out of thicker rubber, glued them to a piece of old bedpost, inked the creation on a leather ink pad, rolled the bedpost over a pump and made a good impression of his own initials.

Unfortunately, Witherell could not whip out his bedpost stamp for an historic show-and-tell. Two years earlier, in 1914, Witherell had claimed to have the bedpost stamp still in his possession as a "potato masher," but at the convention he told the curious audience that the "sacred treasure" had been stolen from him "some years ago."

Continuing with his saga, Witherell said he next came up with the idea of vulcanized-rubber stamps and went to a dental office in Chicago where he claimed to have vulcanized "the first genuine rubber stamp in the world." Witherell's claims also extended to "the creation of the first stamp ever sold for money," which he said was made in Knoxville with the assistance of printer's apprentice O.L. Campbell, who set the type for the stamp. It was used to print on tin ware.

Witherell then began to pursue his stamp career in earnest, havign G.D. Colton & Co. make him a vulcanizer. He produced stamps with a series of partners, the first being B.W. Merritt, "a jolly old bachelor yankee who sold gate latches." Finally he set up his own factory with his brother and a fellow named D.A. Dudley.

Shortly after he established the factory, the Dental Rubber Syndicate demanded that Witherell pay a ten-dollars-per-pound royalty, in addition to the three-dollars-per-pound he was already paying for the flesh-coloured dental rubber. Even at three dollars a pound the rubber was considered an expensive material, and Witherell found the economics of the whole thing too much to cope with. He sold the factory to Austin Wiswall of Princeton, Illinois, "who said he had friends who could make him cheap rubber that would not infringe on the dental patents."

Witherell devoted his later years to a variety of mining enterprises and his "scientific collection of pre-historic mammals." He never relented on his numerous claims and, while in his hearty seventies, continued to remind anyone who would listen that he was still making perfect impressions with stamps he had made almost fifty years earlier... and that he had sold over four-thousand-dollars worth of vulcanized stamps long before anyone else made a single one.

Candidate number two is James Orton Woodruff of Auburn, New York, whose historical honors were zealously and frequently defended in stamp-trade periodicals

for years by his cousin Alonzo Woodruff, who was himself to play a pivotal role in rubber-stamp history.

Perhaps as early as 1864, and no later than early 1866, James O. Woodruff visited a shop that manufactured patent washtubs where he observed the names and other identifying information being printed on the tubs with a curved wooden block which had rubber letters mounted on it. The letters had been carved from a flat piece of rubber by a man named Palmer. The lettering is said to have covered a surface four by six inches. When used with printer's ink, it left a decent, legible impression on the curved tub surfaces. While watching the tub marking, Woodruff speculated that if impressions of letters were made in vulcanizer molds, one could produce vulcanized-rubber letters.

Woodruff began playing around unsuccessfully with a vulcanizer, trying to set up a letter mold. Help was just around the corner in the person of his uncle Uriah Woodruff. A dentist, Uncle Uriah was very familiar with rubber, vulcanizers, and the practicalities of dealing with both. Additional experiments with a regular dental vulcanizer and Uncle Uriah's advice and cooperation netted some good-quality stamps. James Orton proceeded to outfit a factory with modified versions of the dental vulcanizer, which Alonzo Woodruff described in 1908 as follows: "...made of boiler iron that was about 18 inches in diameter by 24 inches high, which was placed upon a stove. From the ceiling above the vulcanizer was suspended a tackle which was used to place and remove the heavy top and flasks."

With the new equipment set up, James Orton ordered in a supply of fresh, new type and prepared to set his plant in motion. The mounts for his stamps were made of black walnut in nearby Seneca Falls, New York. He personally went to pick up the first batch. Alonzo Woodruff described the outing like this: "With a bag well filled, he started up a steep hill from the shop when he soon overtook an Irish woman pushing a heavy wheelbarrow, who, with an eye to business, asked if he did not want to put his bag in the barrow and wheel it up the hill, which proposition, after some bantering, was accepted to their mutual benefit."

Woodruff, now ready for action, ran a rubber-stamp advertisement in the *Northern Christian Advocate*, a Methodist weekly published out of Auburn, New York. Orders poured in, and it looked like the first rubber-stamp killing was about to be made when disaster struck. The stamps were ruined by the only available inks. These inks contained oil as a solvent, and the action of the oil on the vulcanized rubber was calamitous. The stamps were useless, and Woodruff faced an endless line of customer complaints. Nonetheless, during this uproar, a local optimist named Rolland Dennis bought a share of the business for fifteen hundred dollars and shortly afterwards replaced Woodruff as sole owner.

Two historical artefacts of James Orton Woodruff's pioneer stamp-making days were reported to be in the care of Alonzo in 1908: one of the original black walnut mounts and "an old stool, upon the bottom of which is a print of one of the first rubber stamps." The impression on the stool was probably that of an American Express Company C.O.D. stamp, which had been made in Uncle Uriah's dental office during the early experiments.

The least likely candidate appears to be Henry C. Leland of Lee, Massachusetts, whose cause was championed in the June 1910 issue of *Stamp Trade News* by rubber stamp manufacturer George W. Burch of Hartford, Connecticut, in an article entitled "The Invention of the Rubber Stamp." Burch had originally met Leland in Hartford in 1883. The article was the result of an interview conducted with Leland, who was then eighty-two and living in Hartford with his wife and unmarried son. The claim seems nebulous at best, but Mr. Leland has enjoyed his moment in the sun thanks to Mr. Burch's efforts. The saga:

In 1863, while on the road selling what were probably early metal-dating and cancellation hand stamps, a broom manufacturer suggested that "if he could supply a stamp that could be rolled around a broom handle to print a label, it would be a good thing."

Shortly after the suggestion, Leland moved to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, took a job in a print shop, and began toying with the idea. In his initial experiments, he set up a type form, made a plaster-of-paris cast of it, put soft rubber bands from an old printing press on the cast, set the cast on a kitchen stove, and made a primitive but successful attempt at vulcanizing with a flatiron. Encouraged, he moved to New York, took another job as a printer, and continued experimenting, this time with a dental vulcanizer. Leland worked in secret on his "invention," struggling to learn the mysteries of mold-making and the correct temperatures for vulcanizing rubber, without benefit of assistance.

Burch relates that "during the year 1864 he had got it into some shape when a near relative who lived with him and was in his confidence, gathered together what information he could...went to some novelty people and for a petty sum gave away all of Leland's secrets so far as he knew them. These people then came to Leland, offered to finance the patent, and induced him to accept a small sum of money for an interest in it." Leland fell for the offer, then presumably realized he'd been gulled and "in disgust threw up his claims for a patent and refused to go on with it." Shortly afterward, Leland left New York on a long trip, supporting himself by making and selling rubber initial stamps.

Who really invented the rubber stamp? As with so many inventions, the possibility exists that a number of men hit on the same idea at essentially the same time. Our vote goes to James Orton Woodruff.

### ***Early Days in the Rubber Stamp Industry***

Rubber stamps are considered a marking device. Today Thomas H. Brinkmann, Executive Secretary of the Marking Device Association, defines marking devices as "the tools with which people...add marks of identification or instruction to their work or product." The earliest roots of the marking-device industry lie with early stencil makers. Many of the first rubber stamps were made by itinerant stencil makers. Since both were marking devices it was a compatible combination. The years from 1866 onward were peppered with the establishment of new stamp companies. Some were stencil makers adding stamps to their repertoire while others focused entirely on making rubber stamps.

J.F.W. Dorman is said to have been the first to actually commercialize the making of rubber stamps. He started as a sixteen-year-old travelling stencil salesman in St. Louis and opened his first business in Baltimore in 1865. In 1866 Dorman, who had enjoyed a brief career on the stage before the Civil War, learned the technique of manufacturing rubber stamps from an inventor. Dorman made his first stamps under cover of night with his wife's assistance in an effort to keep the process a secret. Dorman was quite an inventor, and his contributions to the industry were numerous. His eventual specialty was the manufacture of the basic tool of the trade -- the vulcanizer. His company continues in business today.

The first stamp-making outfit ever exported from the U.S. to a foreign country was shipped by R.H. Smith Manufacturing Company to Peru in 1873. Back on the home front, companies continued to spring up. In 1880 there were fewer than four hundred stamp men, but by 1892 their ranks had expanded to include at least four thousand dealers and manufacturers. An amazing number of these first companies are still in business today, frequently under their original names or merged with others whose roots lie in the mid- and late 1880s.

It was a small, tight-knit industry, characteristics it retains today. The longevity of the companies is no more astonishing than the attitude of stamp men themselves. Once in the business, people tended to stay loyal to it. During our research, we were amazed at the number of people who had spent forty or fifty or more happy years in the industry.

Early stamp makers tended to be colourful, and many frontier like exploits dot the landscape. Louis K. Scotford and his companion Will Day set off across Indian Territory to the settlements in Texas carrying their stamp-making equipment in an old lumber wagon. The country was wild and rugged in 1876, frequented by bandits and Indians. L.K. and Will solicited orders during the day, made the stamps at night, and delivered the following day in time for the intrepid pair to harness up and head out once again. It was a romantic adventure and not unprofitable. At the end of their three thousand-mile trek, the two returned to St. Louis with two twenty-five-pound shot bags filled with silver dollars.

Charles Klinkner, who established his West Coast stamp house in 1873, would have been the pride of any modern-day publicity agent. Kinkner was prone to calling attention to his wares in startling, unorthodox ways. He rode around San Francisco and Oakland in a little red cart drawn by a donkey rakishly dyed a rainbow of colours. To make his stamps sound like something extra special, he advertised them as "Red Rubber Stamps," and people were convinced it meant something. At the time, almost all stamps were made from red-coloured rubber. Ah, the power of suggestion.

After years of talk and numerous attempts to organize, the industry formed a national trade organization in 1911. M.L. Willard and Charles F. Safford, who had laboured long and hard toward organizing the stamp men, saw their work bear fruit when the first marking-device trade convention took place at the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago on June 20, 1911. It was the beginning of a new era and even pioneer stamp personage B.B. Hill (the "father of the mechanical hand stamp"), then eighty years old with fifty years in the business behind him, was on hand to hear the International Stamp



Trade Manufacturers Association voted into existence. Today the organization is known as the Marking Device Association and is headquartered in Evanston, Illinois.

A number of trade journals served the industry: *Stamp Manufacturer's Journal*, *Stamp Trade News*, *Marking Devices Journal*, and now *Marking Industry Magazine*, which is published under the efficient guidance of Albert Hachmeister, who acts as both publisher and editor.

...Since 1907, the trade publications have reflected serious industry discussions about trade ethics, price controls, planning by scientific management, and marketing, mixed with folksy anecdotes about who was playing which sport for charity and titbits about who caught a 175-pound swordfish off the California coast. Pricing information was colourful on occasion as witnessed by this quote from the February 1909 *Stamp Trade News*: "No blood flows from a turnip nor does wealth flow from rubber made into Rubber Stamps at 10 cents per line." The same issue proffered a real gem from a column called "Pen Points" – 'Rubber stamps made while you wait' is not a good sign to hang out. It looks too easy."

## Appendix 4 – Eraser Carving

*Article by Ruud Janssen.*

Originally written in 1993

Date of WWW-version: 14-9-1997

This is a small text which helps beginners to start with the making of eraser-carved stamps.

### *Materials Needed*

- Erasers (all forms are good).
- Sharp knife.
- Ball pen & paper.
- Mirror.
- Stamp pads.
- Plastic Folio (optional)
- Markers

### *Hints About These Materials*

The erasers should not be too soft. The surface and the other quality of the eraser determine how good the result will be (both with carving as with printing)

The sharp knife could be a graphic scalpel (e.g. Martor No. 22111 or No. 22113 or a ProEdge No.5 Knife).

The plastic folio should be thick enough so you can write on it with a marker- pen.

### *Making The Stamp*

Put the eraser on a white paper and mark the size with a pencil or pen. This is the maximum size of your eraser-carved stamp.

( © 1998 - sample of stamp beside this text made by José vanden Broucke, Belgium)



Make the drawing in this marked area. Remember that the finer the lines are, the more difficult it will be to carve the areas. Straight lines are easier to cut than curved lines. When you try things for the first time, make large areas, and use mostly straight lines.

When the drawing/design is made, the mirror-view of this design has to be put on the eraser. There are some methods:

When you have used a ball pen, you can press the eraser firmly on the eraser. The ink will be transferred partly on the eraser, because ball pen-ink doesn't dry quickly. The transferred image is the mirror-image! If necessary, make the design a bit darker with your pen till it is clear enough for you.

Another way is to use a plastic folio. Put it on the design (or photo or image), and make with a (not-waterproof) marker a copy. This copy you can place on the eraser and press it (see also the first method).

If you use a design from a magazine, there are also some chemical methods you get the ink of the design on the eraser.

Place the eraser in front of a mirror. This is to see if the design is correct. Remember that **ANYTHING YOU CUT AWAY CAN'T BE RESTORED**. So that is why it is important to cheque the design before you start carving.

The most important thing. Cutting away the parts of the eraser, which you don't want to be printed on the paper. Sometimes, to prevent to make mistakes, it is best to mark the areas you want to cut away. Always try to cut away sideways, so the print-surface has more strength. When you are cutting away parts, it is easy to see the in between result by just printing it on paper. It gives also a nice story about how the eraser-stamp was made. Also it is useful to see the whole process in case a (fatal) error is made.



*A nice example of an eraser-carved stamp you can see [here](#). It was a work made by Litsa Spathi from Heidelberg, Germany, as a gift for the TAM Rubber Stamp Archive. (© 1996 - image by Atelier Nobody Press)*

*This stamp shows how creative the subject can be. To make it more clearly for you how the actual print looks like I used the computer-trick to "mirror" the image so you can read the text.*



## *Stamping*

Important with the stamping is that the eraser is clean. Use a brush (Ruud always use an old toothbrush) and wipe the eraser clean. Don't forget to clean the stamp pad also, because the dirt on this stamp pad gets very easily in the holes of the eraser.

When you ink the eraser-stamp, press the stamp several times on the stamp pad while placing it on different part of the stamp pad. This insures that the structure of the textile on the stamp pad isn't printed too.

To get a good print, the pressure on the eraser-stamp has to be equal everywhere. A help for this in mounting the eraser on a piece of wood.

When you want to make stories with the stamp, try to use different colours. But when you use a new stamp, always test it on a testing-paper. Mistakes are easily made, and are difficult to restore.....

## *Special Effects*

You can use stamp pads where several colours are put on. They give some nice effects. But once you use a stamp pad for this, it will stay multi-coloured! Ruud uses special 'not-inked' stamp-pads for this.

To make a second stamp of the same image, you can use the carved eraser- stamp to make a (mirror-view) stamp.

For special prints it is possible to use special markers to colour you eraser-stamp. This gives a very nice colour-effect.

Once you decide you want to know more, then it might be good to try to get a hold of the newest issues of Rubberstampmadness (online as well!) , National Stampagraphic or the Eraser's Carvers Quarterly. All these magazines give special hints and information on the subject. But doing a lot yourself is the practice you need and it will help you to discover all the possibilities.



## **Appendix 5 – Samples of Stamp Sheets exhibited**

On the following pages you find some samples of sheets that will be exhibited at the L-gallery in Moscow.

The sheets themselves went through the following procedure:

1. The text-file was printed on paper (2 frames on one A4-sized paper)
2. The paper is cut into two parts.
3. Each sheet is individually numbered with a stamp (red ink).
4. The sheets are sent into the mail-art network. Sometimes also with normal outgoing mail, but always from Tilburg, the Netherlands.
5. The person that received the sheet, stamped on it and passed it on to someone else or to Gik Juri in Moscow.
6. The sheet was scanned by Gik Juri, and a CD was made with all the images (cover of this CD is used as illustration elsewhere in this catalogue).
7. Ruud includes the graphic images in this catalogue. The catalogue is published in printed and digital format.

No: **04-012** **LITSA SPATHI**  
 Peterstaler Str. 194  
 69118 Heidelberg  
 GERMANY #1

STAMPS FROM: **POSTAL ART**  
**VITTORE BARONI**  
**VIA C. BATTISTI 339** #2  
**55049 VIAREGGIO**  
**ITALY**  
 (use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str., 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



#1 : stamp and pass on!  
 #2 : send to Russia! (DO NOT OPEN)

info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : Tuesday, 25 November 2003

No: **03-534**

STAMPS FROM: **A1** (use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow beginning 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-12-2003 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str., 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.



info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : Wednesday, 11 June 2003

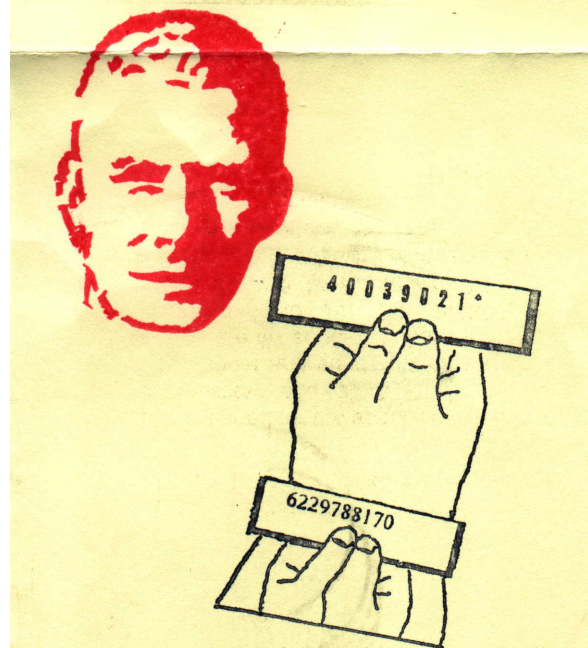


No: **04-139** **M. GREENFIELD**  
**P.O. BOX 409**  
**NEWCASTLE**  
**STAFFS. #1**  
**ST5 8ZG**

STAMPS FROM: ..... #1  
**MARYMARK RECORDINGS**  
**Mark Sonnenfeld**  
**45-08 Old Millstone Drive** ..... #2  
**East Windsor, NJ 08520** *USA*  
**State of Being** ..... #3  
**271 Elm St.**  
**Oberlin, OH 44074, USA**  
**reidwood@oberlin.net** ..... #4  
*(use your name-stamp!)*

This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it on to someone else. When you are #4 send it to Russia (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



#1,2,3 : stamp and pass on!  
 #4 : send to Russia!

Info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : **Saturday, 29 November 2003**

No: **04-166** *Mark Greenfield*  
*UK - England*  
**The Free**  
**International**  
**Correspondance**  
**University** ..... #1

STAMPS FROM: ..... #1  
**FLUXUS HEIDELBERG**  
**Litsa Spathi - Ruud Jonsson** ..... #2  
**Petersplatz, StraÙe 134**  
**0-69118 Heidelberg** *(use your name-stamp!)*  
**GERMANY**

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



#1 : stamp and pass on!  
 #2 : send to Russia!

Info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : **Tuesday, 02 December 2003**



No: **04-455**

**I META-NETWORKER IN SPIRIT**  
STAMPS FROM: **ROMEO MAGGI**.....#1

**CLAUDIO ROMEO**.....#2  
**MAIL ART**  
(use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



#1 : stamp and pass on!  
#2 : send to Russia!

info at URL : [http://www.juoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.juoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
this sheet was printed on : **Wednesday, 14 January 2004**

No: **04-466**

STAMPS FROM:

**Mail Art**  
Visual Poetry  
Language Mangling  
Wala splits served  
since 1990  
(use your name-stamp!)  
16 Feb 04

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-8-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



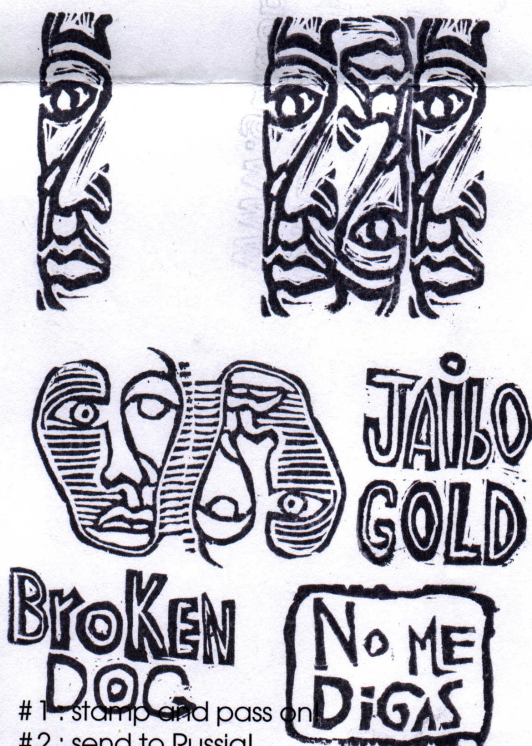
info at URL : [http://www.juoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.juoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
this sheet was printed on : **Saturday, 31 January 2004**



No: **04-216** No  
**GUIDO BONDIOLI**  
 APT. 22 PANAJACHEL  
 STAMPS FROM: 3701A . SOLOLA . GUATEMALA . # 1

**GUIDO BONDIOLI**  
 24955 BRUSH CREEK RD . . . # 2  
 SWEET HOME, OR 97386  
 USA (use your name-stamp!)

2004 137  
 In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.



# 1 : stamp and pass on  
 # 2 : send to Russia!

info at URL : [http://www.luoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.luoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : Tuesday, 02 December 2003

No: **03-546** **M. GREENFIELD**  
 P.O. BOX 409  
 NEWCASTLE  
 STAFFS.  
 ST5 8ZG  
 ENGLAND  
 STAMPS FROM: (use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for a possible exhibition to be held in Moscow beginning 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 30-04-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



info at URL : [http://www.luoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.luoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : Sunday, 06 July 2003

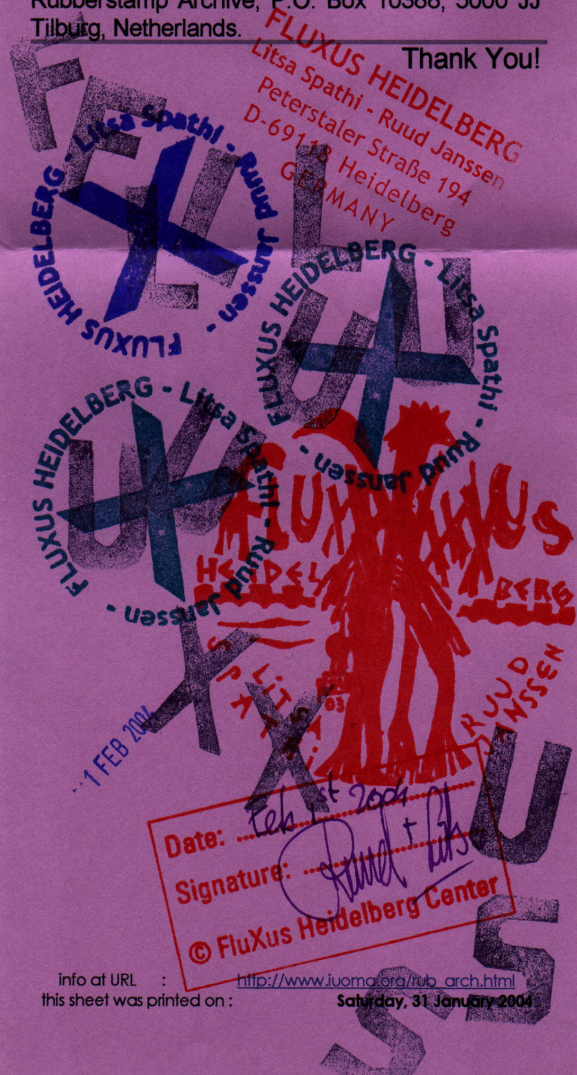


No: **04-484**

STAMPS FROM: **FLUXUS HEIDELBERG**  
 Litsa Spathi - Ruud Janssen  
 Peterstaler Straße 194  
 D-69118 Heidelberg  
 GERMANY  
 (use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-8-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : Saturday, 31 January 2004

No: **04-014**

STAMPS FROM: **LITSA SPATHI**  
 Peterstaler Str. 194  
 69118 Heidelberg  
 GERMANY... #1

MAIL ART PAUL TIILILÄ  
 Kuusitie 4 36600 PÄLKÄNE  
 Finland  
 E-Mail paul.tiilila@pp.inet.fi  
<http://personal.inet.fi/taide/paul.tiilila/>

**Paimenliitto... #2**  
 (use your name-stamp!)

In October 1983 I started the TAM Rubberstamp Archive. In 1996 a part of the Archive was exhibited in San Francisco – USA. In 2000 the collection was closed (but all sheets that come in still are archived). Special collections of stamp-sheets are still printed. This sheet is designed for the special exhibition to be held in Moscow end of 2004. Print your stamps on this sheet and send it (before 31-08-2004 postmark) to: **Juri Gik, 141200, 2<sup>nd</sup> Dombrovskaja str. , 5-42 Pushkino, Moscow area, Russia.** After this deadline please send the sheet to: Tam Rubberstamp Archive, P.O. Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Netherlands.

Thank You!



#1 : stamp and pass on!  
 #2 : send to Russia!

info at URL : [http://www.iuoma.org/rub\\_arch.html](http://www.iuoma.org/rub_arch.html)  
 this sheet was printed on : Tuesday, 25 November 2003



## Appendix 6 – Samples of list of countries (1995)

### the TAM RUBBERSTAMP ARCHIVE

Started : October 15th 1983

#### STATISTICS ON January 19th 1995

Participants	:	1425
Countries	:	67
Stamp-sheets sent out	:	11623
Stamp-sheets returned	:	3541



This is the information-newsletter Nr. 1995.01. Spread this news to you mail-art friends, since it is impossible to send this newsletters to all participants! Thank you, and keep sending in the prints of the new rubberstamps you make.  
Ruud Janssen - TAM

© TAM Publications 1995  
Nr. TAM-950051

Reference: TAM Rubberstamp-Archive.



#### 1. INTRODUCTION.

The Rubberstamp-Archive is now almost 12 years old and every day more contributions come in. Several documentations about this archive are previously made, and in this newsletter you will find an overview of all the other publications. This newsletter is updated every month and is sent to mail-artists, mail-art archives and magazines to inform about the rubberstamp archive.

#### 2. HISTORIC OVERVIEW.

After the start of the archive in 1983 lots of things happened. What started with the collecting of prints of rubberstamps grew into a large collection of historic items/facts of the mail-art years after 1980 and a

## **Appendix 7 – Newspaper articles about the Archive.**

Here are some newspaper clips of activities connected to the TAM Rubberstamp Archive: