

1988-2008

**IUOMA**

**20 years of**

**collective work**



In 1988 the idea of the IUOMA was born. In 2002 a Yahoo group was started. In November 2008 a IUOMA platform became the home for members.

This book is made to celebrate these 20 years.

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# INTRODUCTION

This publication has been made to document the 20 years celebration of the IUOMA. In these 20 years a lot has happened. The thought of this Union has survived the decades and is today even more active than ever.

After an initial start in the traditional mail-art network, the IUOMA nowadays has grown into an active digital platform with almost 800 members. This book tries to capture the spirit of this IUOMA and will document new and old material that has been created in connection to the IUOMA.

On the new IUOMA-Platform there were lively discussions about the things that should be done for the 20 years anniversary of the IUOMA. Some of the discussions itself are documented in this book. The results out of this discussions also have been integrated in this publication.

A separate book is the portfolio of every IUOMA-member that has its own page on the Ning-platform. Since the amount of members increased to hundreds I have decided to make that a separate documentation.

Both books are available as digital book for free. The hardcopy versions of the books include a small fee to finance the sending

of some books to International Mail-Art archives where these books should also find their place.

Ruud Janssen , Thursday, June 17, 2010



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# Membership Cards

## The Idea

As a normal Union the members normally get a membership card. Just to show others that they are a member. Right from the start these cards were produced. Originally by Ruud Janssen, but when a union has an anarchistic touch other members are allowed to design their own membership cards as well

Here is an overview of cards that could be traced. Sometimes the original design. Sometimes an originally signed one. The details are mentioned with each card individually.

## Some Cards

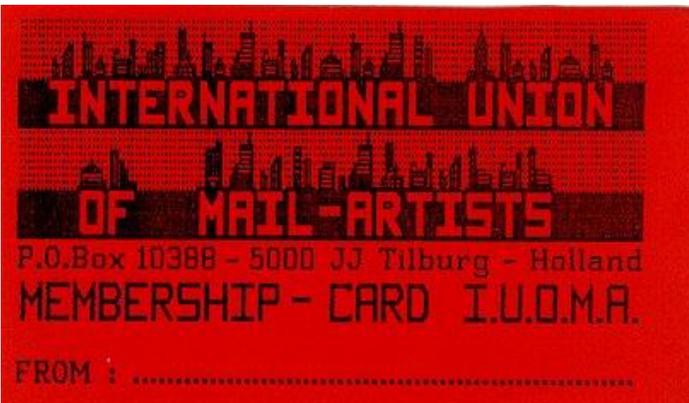


Fig M-1: The original first Membership Card as made in 1989

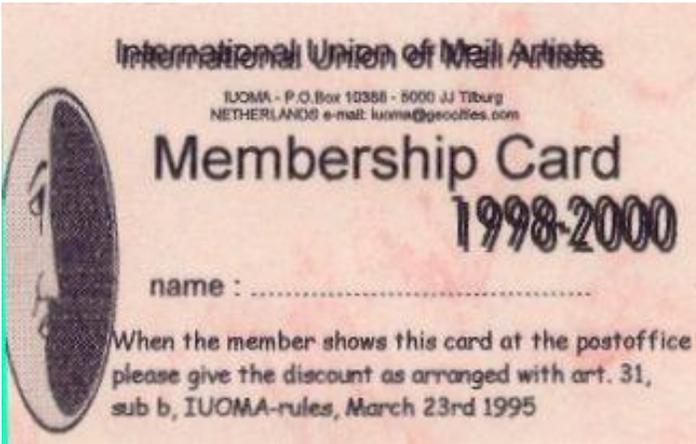


Fig M-2: A card issued in the end 90-ies. The card was valid for several years

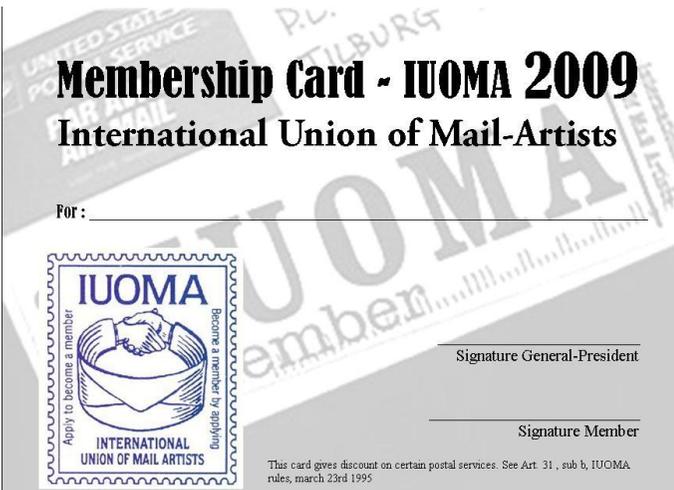


Fig M-3 : The newest membership Card 2009. Several variations were issued in the beginning of that year.



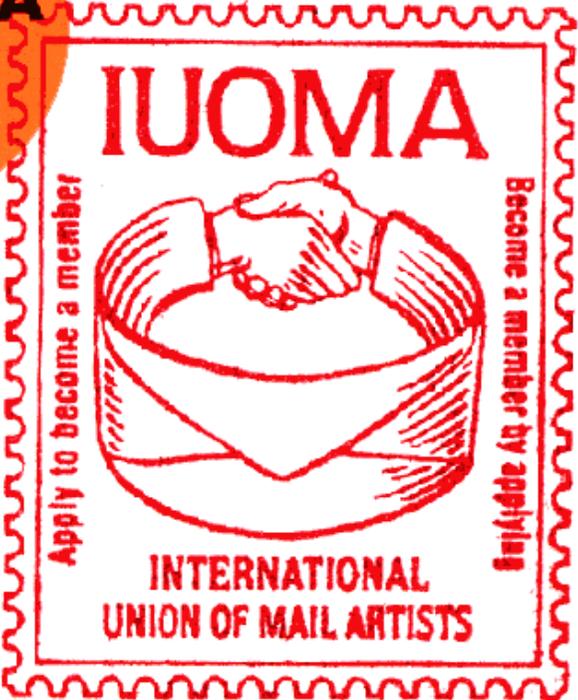
Fig M-4 : Very colorful design by Sean Woodworth – England. He even used a portrait photo of me published on my website in the design.



Fig M-5 : Card designed by Mick Wiggins – USA. He made the card in 2004 and send me the original to sign. As far as I know

there is only one of these cards which I scanned and the original went back to him.





# The International Union Of Mail Artists

(text published in the first IUOMA-Magazine 1991)



## The start

Somehow people always think that if a group of artists work together that then there must automatically be some kind of organization that coordinates it all. Well, in mail art there are many groups working together. These groups themselves also work together, but there is NO organization that arranges all the things that go on in the mail art network. The I.U.O.M.A. is the Union that mail artists can become a member of. The Union has no rules. Everybody who is active in mail art and hears about the Union can become a member just by saying so.



In 1988 the idea of the IUOMA was born.

I invented this name and made forms for people to become a member of this (fictive) union. About 300 mail artists reacted in a year, and official membership cards were made, even a official *Union Magazine* was published. Anybody who was a

member of the Union could also claim a special function within the Union.

Even today, people still join the Union. And somehow it gives power, to say that *YOU are a member of the International Union* too. The Main address of the Union is at the TAM-address. It is just the center for archiving all the things that are going on. But I am not in control of the Union. I just invented it. And to make it official, I made myself General-President of this Union. Sure was impressive when I travelled to the USSR in 1991 and went to visit some friends there who were also members of this Union.....

## Become

How to become a  
IUOMA-member?

Well, lucky enough for you it is quite simple to become a member of the I.U.O.M.A. First start to discover a bit about what MAIL-ART is all about, and then write a short message about what you think MAIL-ART is. By sending this message to TAM you automatically become a member of the Union! Send you e-mail to :



 [the GENERAL PRESIDENT OF THE IUOMA.](#)

## Read more about the IUOMA?

In The IUOMA-magazine that was published in 1991 there were some interesting details. Some of those details ended up in a brochure I made for people who were interested in the IUOMA-concept. If you are interested in the [IUOMA-brochure](#) you can read it in the library of TAM-Publications that is attached to this site.

In the past years I have been making membership-cards for those who write to the Union. The cards say that you get discount at your local post office. Sure, that is a joke as well, but when some mail artists played out that joke some actually did get discount. It seems to be not that unusual that a mail artists gets discount when mailing his mail isn't it? He or she does make a lot of people smile when they send out their - not so normal - mail. Sometimes I think the best audience for the mail artists aren't the mail artists themselves , but the postal workers who have to deal with this mail. Probably a lot of mail art is making their endeavors, to sort the mail electronically, very difficult.

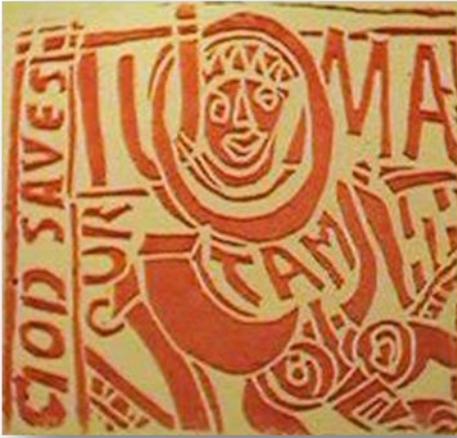


Since March 1998 the IUOMA has launched a new *advertising* campaign. New stickers are sent into the network to let people know who is a IUOMA-member , and Joel (the StickerDude from NY - USA)

has designed some new rubber-stamps for the union that are available for you as well (ask for details!).

Since more and more people start to design things for the IUOMA in digital form I prepared a special [LOGOS of the IUOMA](#) page for you where the details are mentioned. Feel free to use the images to make propaganda for the Union. Especially members are encouraged to do so!

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Eraser carved Stamp made by Litsa Spathi – 1996



# Post Revolution: Mail Art and the Internet

By John Held, Jr.

Let's start at the beginning. When Ray Johnson began the artful distribution of art and ideas through the postal system in the fifties, there was no Mail Art, only sporadic attempts by artists since the advent of the Universal Postal Union to decorate correspondence and distribute aesthetic concerns through the post. Johnson's systematic and enigmatic communications to artists and unsuspecting recipients initiated an inadvertent network, which Ed Plunkett termed The New York Correspondence School in 1962.

With Conceptual Art at a zenith in the late sixties and early seventies, art through the mail intending to circumvent the gallery system expanded as artists wrestled with issues such as the dematerialization of the art object, the merging of high and alternative cultures, multi-culturalism, and the development of alternative distribution channels, including artist's books and periodicals, multiples, assemblings, videos, zines and cassette culture. Johnson's correspondents engaged in this conversation along with a growing number of cultural intellectuals and activists, many gathered under the rubric of Fluxus.

Fluxus artists were concerned with seizing not only the means of artistic production, but of distribution. Puncturing the

Modernist fixation on individualize genius, Fluxus artists worked cooperatively. They developed their own communication channels (newsletters) and distribution systems (multiples, performance festivals). As the movement expanded internationally, the postal system began playing a larger role in their activities; the creation of artistic postage stamps, rubber stamps, postcards and stationary demonstrating their debt to creative correspondence.

By the beginning of the seventies, the Mail Art network grew in popularity, many participants unaware they were part of any such thing. Exhibitions of correspondence were mounted at the Whitney Museum of American Art and international art biennales in 1970 and 1971. Articles on artistic postal activity began appearing with more frequency in high circulation art publications. Various art collectives began to emerge, especially in Canada, utilizing the postal system to publicize and promote their activities. Increasingly, artists were beginning to find the postal system a primary means of international creative contact.

But what to call this activity? Johnson didn't call it anything. He just did it. Plunkett identified a correspondence circle brought together by Johnson, naming it the NYCS to honor his primacy. But by the end of the sixties, the beginning of the seventies, the field had expanded beyond the confines of the insular New York

art world. Some acknowledged this by naming their activity The New York Correspondence School of Vancouver, or the New York Correspondence School of San Francisco, further conceding Johnson's paternity.

There were those that thought the term Correspondence Art more befitting. It not only readily brought to mind postal activity, but acknowledged the universality of chance occurrence; so often encountered in the mailstream.

Others encouraged the use of the term Post Art, referencing both the postal service and branding the activity beyond the domain of Modern and Post-Modernism, adrift in some nameless territory between art and life.

In the end, the term Mail Art won out. It had been used first by Jean-Marc Poinot, who published a book documenting research for the inclusion of the activity in the 1971 Biennale de Paris. As Poinot explained in, "Mail Art: Communication a Distance Concept" (CEDIC, Paris, 1971),

The very notion of our subject derives from empirical observation of artistic activity. As spectator of current production, we are struck by the rapid growth of a new medium of artistic activity. The proliferation of 'envois', as they are called

in Parisian circles, seems to us symbolic of new concerns, and revelatory of similar, earlier activity

“Correspondence Art” and “Post Art” had ironic and meaningful connotations in English that were lost on non-English speakers. English confused “Mail Art” with “Male Art,” nevertheless, it was retained as the term of choice among practitioners due to its straightforward branding and accessibility across linguistic barriers

But the term could also be misleading. In his 1977 essay, “Mail Art and the Big Monster,” Ulises Carrion, stated,

The moment has come to declare that Mail Art has very little to do with the mail and a lot to do with art. In the expression ‘Mail Art’ the word ‘Mail’ can be replaced by multiplicity, by expediency, by distribution, or by many other words. On the other hand, in ‘Mail Art’ the word ‘Art’ is there for art, for art and for absolutely nothing else.

Carrion elaborates on his views in another essay, “Personal Worlds or Cultural Strategies?” written some years later for the Stempelplaats, Amsterdam, exhibition, “Artists’ Postage Stamps and Cancellation Stamps.”

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 Post Office catches the attention of artists and the public because of its strangeness when compared with other media. It is in fact the most complex, the least traditional of all the media that artists are using nowadays...

It was Carrion's contention that superseded media once freed from practical purpose, can be examined under conditions unforeseen or allowed under previous circumstances. He identifies envelopes, letters, postcards, rubber stamps, cancellation stamps and postage stamps as those postal elements that Mail Art has "transformed" from practicality into art. He ends his discussion noting that,

The process hasn't yet finished and we cannot foresee which direction it will take next, which aspect of the process will attract next the attention of the artists.

Mail Art lost a great spokesperson with the death of Carrion in 1989. His was a preeminent pre-Internet voice, the ideas he disseminated paving the way for Mail Artists to make a seamless jump from Postal Service to Internet, further expanding the meaning, effectiveness and outreach of the medium.

Carrion's contention that Mail Art used the postal service for support but did not rely on it was proven by the immediate acceptance of Mail Artists of computer communications. In the

United States, arto posteo [aka Dorothy Harris] use of Prodigy in the early nineties marked an early telecommunication/Mail Art milestone. By the mid-nineties, Cracker Jack Kid (aka Chuck Welch), and Honoria (aka Madelyn Starbuck), two active Mail Artists, were also venturing into Internet related Mail Art projects.

In Europe, Art Rat (aka Charles Francois) and TAM (aka Ruud Janssen) were early users of rudimentary computer bulletin boards before the arrival of the Internet for public use, and equally active in encouraging other Mail Artists to make use of the new technology.

It's interesting to note that the use of pseudonyms, so common in Mail Art, and used by these early Internet savvy artists, became common practice in the adoption of e-mail addresses. E-mails are accompanied by notice of time sent, just like a cancellation stamp. E-mails can be "carbon-copied (cc)," harking back to typewriter culture. One can refer to an "address book" when sending an e-mail.

Prevalent use of the Internet by Mail Artists enabled practitioners to further define their medium. That the Postal System is the sole support of Mail Art has been finally discredited. This became apparent by 1992 when Mail Artists initiated a Worldwide Decentralized Networker Congress, on the heels of an earlier Worldwide Decentralized Mail Art Congress

held in 1986. While the earlier Congress examined various aspects of Mail Art, the second attempted to initiate a dialogue between other artistic communication subcultures (cassette culture, fax, video, computer, pseudo-religions, zines, artists books) to discuss mutual concerns.

Mail Artists continue to ponder the meaning behind their activity. That it brings the individual a sense of connectivity to the world is at its core. The pioneering days of Mail Art produced a variety of structures allowing everyone who wanted to participate the opportunity to do so. If he or she wanted to be in an exhibition, they could send in their work without fee and be assured that they would be shown and perhaps receive a catalog documenting their contribution.

Mail Art periodicals gave the artist ability to contribute graphics and give voice to their artistic concerns. Through “Commonpress,” they were able to edit materials collected from correspondents. Through assemblings, they were able to distribute the work of their circle.

These fundamental Mail Art structures still exist, in both postal and digital formats. Our present situation in Mail Art is one of options. One can still contribute physical work to exhibitions. Even though these exhibitions are becoming more rare, those that occur are increasingly financed by major cultural

institutions, which are beginning to understand the power of the medium to initiate international dialogue.

Mail Art periodicals still offer voice to the concerns of practitioners. “Kairan,” published in Japan by Italian Gianni Simone, comes instantly to mind, as does, “Open World,” published in Serbia by Dobrica Kamperelic, which has been distributing notice of Mail Art activity since 1985. Ryosuke Cohen’s, “Brain Cell” has been periodically issued since 1985 as well, and it continues, as before, to be distributed on paper through the post. “Art Postale!,” published by Vittore Baroni, has now reached one hundred issues.

But more often than not, contemporary Mail Artists are more than likely to issue a call for contributions for an exhibition submission through the Internet, rather than mail out hundreds of invitations. The new technology has rendered invitation production and expense pointless. With an e-mail address list, adding an attachment if needed, one can instantly disseminate exhibition information.

The contributions for these Internet announced exhibitions are either physically or digitally produced. Those works constructed digitally can be sent through the Internet. They, with other received contributions, will be posted on a website. In short, the entire Mail Art exhibition structure, developed twenty-five years

before the advent of the Internet, can now be digitally replicated from invitation through documentation.

Printed Mail Art periodicals are becoming harder to find. Zines were once the cheapest way to distribute one's ideas and art in print. Just cut and paste, photocopy and mail, Now one can cut, paste and post...on a blog. It's faster, it's cheaper, and offers more options. One can post photographs and videos, refer hyperlinks. It's promotion. It's fellowship. It's community building.

It's everything Mail Artists aspired to when I first got involved in the seventies, when it was so hard to be in touch. It took effort. You had to write letters to get letters. Your continued activity branded you as one of the community. You found your own place in the network, often after years of floundering around.

You curated a show, published a periodical, researched a particular aspect of the medium, be it postcards or rubber stamps, Fluxus or Ray Johnson. Somehow you found a way to contribute to the overall good. Somehow you found your way into the Eternal Network.

It's still the same today. The pathway is still open. But now you can get there on the back of your postal carrier or through the password of a service provider. It's your call.

I like to think that pre-Internet Mail Artists paved the way for this. The close relations they forged through long distance communication by post, once available only to subcultures, are becoming the norm.

We were the avant-garde. We're not anymore. It's a bad thing if you're an elitist, clinging to the past, whose time has come and gone. You're going to do what you're going to do, no matter what. Who cares if you're ahead of the curve or not? After all, you don't understand computers and couldn't begin to fathom where the next wave in communication theory is cresting. That's ok. Youth will lead the way. There are always forward scouts exploring new terrain others will one day tread.

If you're old school, like myself, and realize that the new technology has made contemporary communication theory completely incomprehensible, that it's way too late to retool and get up to speed, the only thing to do is fall back on what you know and go from there.

I take as a role model these days the Russian poet and book artist, Alexsei Krunchenykh, founder of Zaum, who unlike many of the former pre-revolutionary avant-garde, did not join the LEF or any of the artist cooperatives under the new Communist regime. Rather he toiled until old age in the National Library, trying to gather the remnants of the output produced by his friends before the Revolution.

He badgered the artists for their works. He scolded the relatives of deceased artists into donating them to the National Library. He cataloged and annotated the collection, giving each item its proper due, placing it in an accessible context. At the end of the day, through one man's diligence, a unique history, once known only to participants, was brought forth, reexamined and found to have a significant impact on contemporary culture.

Having placed Mail Art collections in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Getty Research Center, Los Angeles, and the Archives of American Art, Washington, D. C., I'm doing what I can to plant seeds for future investigation of the medium. My collection joins others around the world in conveying the spirit of "correspondance" in the late Twentieth Century. That is my link to the past and hope for the future.

San Francisco

February 2009



**IUOMA**

Logo for IUOMA by Jonas Nekrasius - Lithuania (1991)

# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MAIL-ARTISTS

by RUUD JANSSEN

text published August 1990

*The International Union Of Mail-Artists (I.U.O.M.A.) was a name invented by Ruud Janssen for a fictive Union which would stand for the rights for all mail-artists. In 1990 the I.U.O.M.A. (the International Union of Mail-Artists) was founded. Only one union-magazine came out (in 1991) and after that no central activities were undertaken anymore. But still I get mail addressed to the union (even today!). For those people I prepared this short text to inform them about what it was all about and give them some details. It seems the UNION or the NETWORK will never die because people just need to communicate in a creative way and want to explore all the possibilities...*

*Ruud Janssen*

Text originally written in August 1990 and reprinted December 1995.

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## 1. THE IDEA.

After reading a lot about Mail-Art and participating in the Mail-Art network for some time everybody understands the unwritten rules that exist in the network. Also everybody familiar with these rules knows that the first time one sends out a 'piece' of mail-art one has become a mail-artist. So one has joined the network just by participating. For out standers this isn't that easy to understand , especially when they don't know what Mail-Art is all about. For these out standers I invented the I.U.O.M.A. as a kind of joke. Also for the Postal Offices around the world something like this should be a nice thing to play with. For insiders the name I.U.O.M.A. is nothing new , except for the word 'Union' which implicates that it should be an organized whole. This might be a thought for the future , but is not the intention for this name for the time being.

## 2. THE START.

To proclaim the idea I wrote a standard letter which told what the Union was 'all' about. Also I asked people to

take a special function in this union. Most mail-artists understood it was a joke. This resulted in a number of 'members'. Members are all persons who write to me as the "general-president of the I.U.O.M.A." or to the union itself. So people who apply to become a member become a member just by applying. Some mail-artists understood the joke perfectly and returned the membership-form with a claim for a special functions.

To name a few:

Ruud Janssen : General-President.

Keith Bates : Treasurer.

Gina the Pig : MA-President.

State of Being : Sergeant at Arms.

Rora & Dob Kampereliç : Lawyer of the Union.

These first functions worked very well, I even used them in the -in between- documentation-letters I made for the I.U.O.M.A.. Keith Bates published a year-account as treasurer, and J. Spireoux wrote an angry letter to the Belgium Postal Office and in this letter he mentioned he also send a copy of his complaint to the I.U.O.M.A.

Pascal Lenoir (France) writes on all his mail-art magazines that he is a member of the I.U.O.M.A. after he found out the meaning of the Union-name.

### 3. THE REACTIONS.

Some reactions the I.U.O.M.A. got are worth mentioning:

1. Someone in Seattle, Washington, USA, was writing an article about mail-art for the local newspaper (The Seattle Times) and took the 'Union' as a real thing. He wrote in the article that people, who are interested in mail-art, could become a member of the union, and should write for info to the address mentioned at the bottom. For the reactions to this article I made a few special forms to play a bit further. A very complex application-form was designed (see for examples in the first I.U.O.M.A.-Magazine). People who filled this form were in fact applying for a living- space in my P.O. Box in Tilburg, and had to give lots of details about their private life. The form was only meant as a joke to see how much information people would tell to such an Union.
2. In the country Tui-Tui the 'Hoipoloi Soy Ifgog asked the I.U.O.M.A. for recognizing the brother

sisterhood as local #1 of the Union. He also writes:  
"The IUOMA should foster debate on the topic of help to countries where mail-art isn't that easy to do.

3. In Leningrad (USSR), The RAFT-group has founded the Russian department of the IUOMA in March 1991. In August 1991 I visited Leningrad together with Made Balbat and Reiu Tüür (from Estonia) and I was welcomed as the General-President at the railway-station there. (The coup in the USSR took place two days after we left Leningrad and were back in Estonia, which became independent a few days later.....)
4. Lon Spiegelman from USA designed a special pamphlet for the union in which it took stand against the Art-Strike. (there actually were two versions, one for and one against the strike to make it possible for people to take either side)
5. I got lots of requests from people to give official documents to people so they could prove that they were a member of this union. I designed Stickers (5000 red stickers were scattered into the network)

and membership-cards, letter-paper, etc....

6. Piermario Ciani (Italy) designed a logo for the Union and John Held Jr. (USA) made artistamps for the Union with this logo. (Piermario later on used the logo with permission for the starting of the congress-year in 1992)

#### 4. THE FUTURE.

In the future anybody who has proclaimed to be a member of the I.U.O.M.A. can use the name of the union as a kind of joke/presure for the official institutes. I myself have planned to write seriously to the postal offices in Holland and other countries to protest when the postage rates are going to be increased , and things like that. The membership-list (all names and addresses of people who reacted on the idea of the I.U.O.M.A. was published in the first and only I.U.O.M.A.-magazine that came out middle of 1991)

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS.

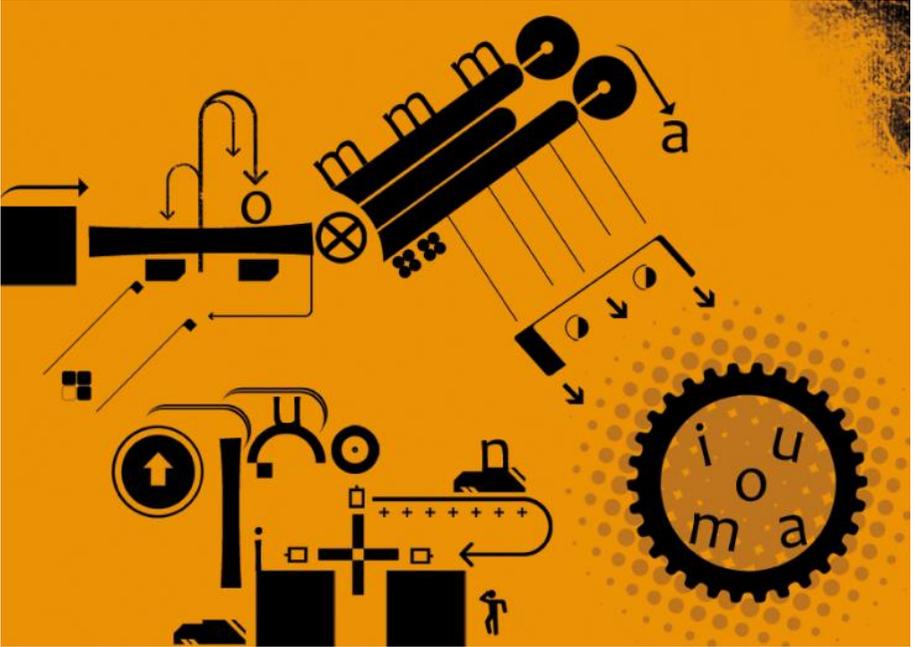
The I.U.O.M.A. was no project but started as a kind of joke. Like more jokes , they spread around very quickly and the result is that now most mail-artists know about this joke. If you want to use the name of I.U.O.M.A. , you

are welcome to do so. But please use uniform lay-out and things like that. Also the logo of the Union has to be used to let the joke work. If you use the I.U.O.M.A., please send a copy about it to me. If you want to use the logo and you don't have a good Xerox-original , just write to me and I'll send you one.

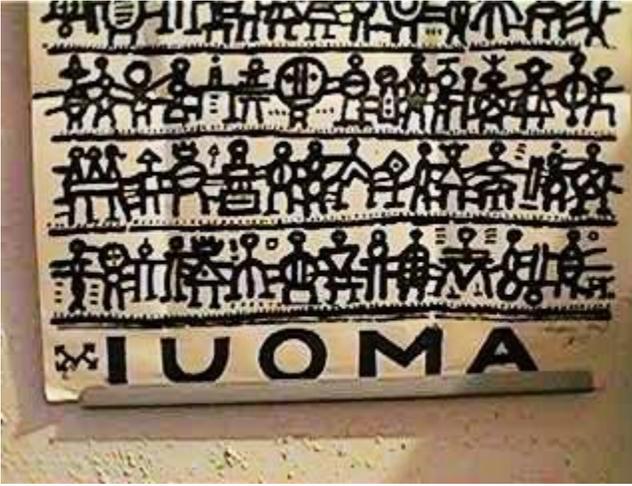
(Ruud Janssen , Aug. 1990)

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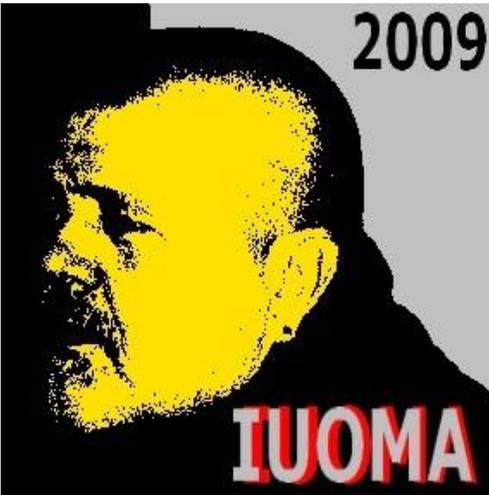
 [mail to info@iuoma.org](mailto:info@iuoma.org)



Isabelle Vannobel  
FLUXUSHEEP  
17 rue Blaise Pascal  
59240 Dunkerque  
France



Detail of a poster made by Hans Hess – Germany 1996



Artiststamp by Arttower – USA 2009

# How to promote the International Union Of Mail Artists.

As soon as you are a member of the IUOMA (and you are so when you apply to become a member)



you can start to promote the IUOMA. There are several ways to do so. Here are some *hints* of how you can do that:

1. Mention in all the documents that you produce that you are a member of the IUOMA. There are even stickers available for this! (the golden ones that say "*member of the IUOMA*" and a round orange ones that saying "*IUOMA member*".
2. Get the rubberstamp of the IUOMA and use it on you outgoing mail. More details of the stamps and other logos you can find on the [IUOMA-LOGOS PAGE](#). You can also design your own IUOMA-material using the logos available. If you create new material, don't forget to send one copy to the IUOMA-archives.
3. If you are online and have your own homepage or site,  use one of the IUOMA-logos on the main-page. Also try to make other people a member of the IUOMA by using

the special animated gif banner , and make a hypelink to the IUOMA-page. For this you only need to place the lines in your source-code of the page as I did in this page (have a look at the SOURCE-CODE on your browser!

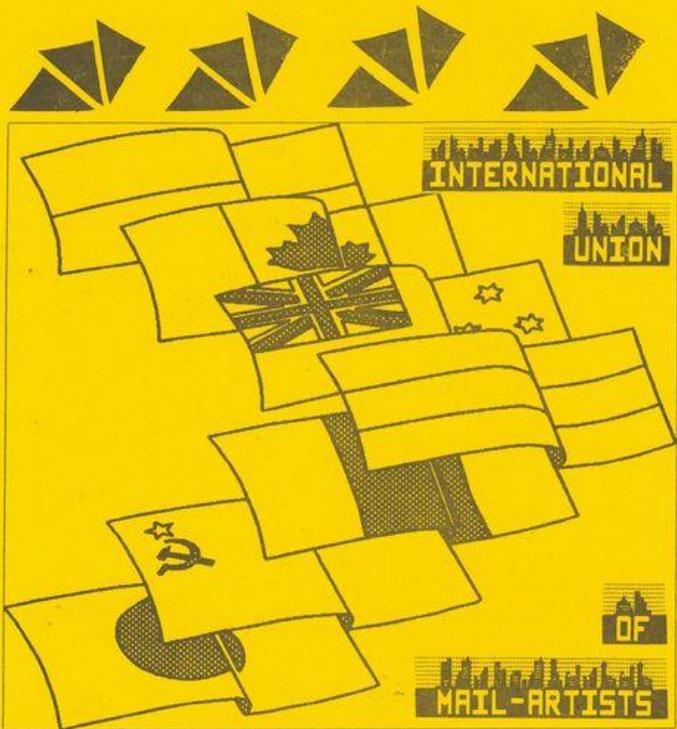
If you have placed these lines on your page it will, while automatically get the banner to the page, and when people click on it guide them to the IUOMA-main page.

4. Never explain the concept of the IUOMA in too much details. The fun is of course to proclaim yourself a member of the IUOMA without people knowing what it is all about. *We are an International Union of Mail Artists* just because we work together.
5. If you want you can claim your own function within the IUOMA. There are already lawyers , layout-people , ambassadors , you name it. If your role requires a special function, just let me know. But remember, when you ask if you can have a special function, just by asking you automatically acquire the function.
6. There is a form in which it is declared that you are an official member of the IUOMA. Please print this [FORM](#) and fill it out. If you send it to me I will be happy to sign it.

1996-2008 IUOMA.

The first IUOMA-magazine that came out in 1991

(next pages)



THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MAIL-ARTISTS  
(by Ruud Janssen)

# IUOMA

magazine

JUNE 1991

DOCUMENTATION I.U.O.M.A. BY Ruud Janssen (C) TAM . 1991 page -1-

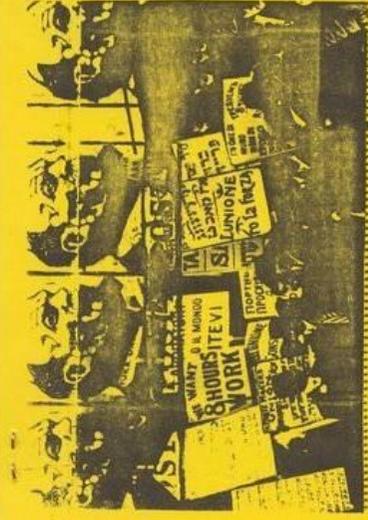


THE ADVERTISER OF THE INCREDIBLE LIBRARY  
CREATED AND WRITTEN BY JOSEPH W. GRANT  
Drawing Design: Phyllis Post  
4645 Columbia Ave. S  
Minneapolis, MN 55407 USA

MAR 21 1988  
To you as up to members  
of the International Union of  
Mail Artists... no more being  
kicked around, having mail art  
returned on technicalities, pretexts  
and so no reason  
whatsoever!  
(Send this  
to your  
P. O. P. P.  
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# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MAIL-ARTISTS

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## "They will go Underground"

by John Held, Jr.

When I first became aware of mail art through my interest in rubber stamp art, I was like a sponge trying to soak up all I could. Then in 1976, I read in *The Saturday Review*, an article by Katherine Kuh, "The Preservation of the Avant-Garde," about a remarkable woman named Jean Brown, who seemed to have her finger on the very pulse of the heartbeat I was seeking to discover.

"It is always the marginal she stresses-such manifestations as concrete poetry, rubber stamp art, the vagaries of video. She is after elusive connections, the small interstices that relate the recent past to less-publicized present-day directions...Other borderline movements she considers extensions of Dada and also perhaps Fluxus are Postcard Art and Lettrisme. For some years certain artists have denounced what they view as the sterility of museums and private galleries. They resent, too, the difficulty of breaking through the official barriers that prevent them from reaching a public, and as a result they are turning to 'mail art' via postcards and letters."<sup>1</sup>

Before I moved to Dallas in 1981, I visited Jean Brown's archive in the foothills of Massachusetts' Berkshire mountains many times, and she became a mentor to me. She was famous for lunches served to scholars and artists weary from rummaging through her collections of Dada and Surrealist ephemera, hard-to-find magazines on contemporary art from a myriad of countries, exhibition catalogs, letters, artist publications, the most complete information on Fluxus. It was a two pronged attack: nourishment of the body and soul. In 1962 Jean Brown was asked to lend a small number of works by Marcel Duchamp in honor of the artist's visit to Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley. Taking Duchamp by car to catch his train back to New York, Jean questioned him about the future of art with its current emphasis on consumer, rather than spiritual values. "What will happen to serious artists who hope to retain these qualities in their work," she asked. "They will go underground," Duchamp declared.<sup>2</sup>

There are many contemporary artists who consider themselves children of Duchamp. But for mail artists he holds a very special place. He was perhaps the initial practitioner of the artform when he posted the work, "Rendez-vous du Dimanch 6 Fevrier 1916," four postcards fitted together implying a message but without actual meaning, which Duchamp presented to his neighbors Walter and Louise Arensberg. French critic Jean-Marc Poinot has stated that, "This is to our knowledge the first

artistic phenomenon to derive its meaning from the use of the mails, and it is remarkable that it is in contradiction with the habitual means of utilization of the postal service. The meaning of the item is derived from the communication function of the institution employed, as well as from its nature as a complementary relay..."<sup>3</sup>

The practice of mail art has itself become a complementary relay. It bypasses the art and gallery system allowing the artist to convey his work among a variety of correspondents across cultural boundaries. Rather than join the fray in the marketplace of commerce, it is a gift among friends partaking in the marketplace of ideas. In fact, while there are few rules in mail art, there is one basic tenant that, though often debated, has held firm - mail art and money don't mix. And here's why: when you are interacting with a number of correspondents, often as many as several hundred, you can't maintain an open system if each and every one is asking one another a dollar for this and a dollar for that. You enter into the interplay of exchange on an equal basis, no one person's exchange more valuable than the next. You expand energy, and perhaps your capital, in an equation that presupposes that you will eventually reap what you sow.

Expanding energy in the pursuit of art, rather than the pursuit of reputation in a corrupted environment, is perhaps why the artist

of today chooses to go underground. Duchamp had fame thrust upon him at the young age of twenty-six when his *Nu Descendant un Escalier* became a *cause célèbre* at the Armory Show. He then turned his back on the attendant notoriety. Society wanted to make him a clown. He confounded their expectations by giving up painting to pursue the issues raised by his explorations on *La Mariée mise à nu par ses Célibataires, même* (the Large Glass).

Few of us are immune to the lure of worldly praise, but it is easier and more legitimate to reject it once it's been obtained than to deal with the realization that it will never be secured. To survive a lack of mainstream recognition, the underground artist has formed an alternative system of his and her own. Within it he or she obtains feedback from colleagues, receiving satisfaction from a smaller, more knowledgeable, audience. Take the matter of exhibitions. The mainstream artist is forced to pay a fee to enter into a competition with peers. The pursuit of reputation becomes a contest. In contrast, the mail art show asks for no fee; accepts all work submitted; and provides each participant with documentation of the exhibition. In this alternative situation, cooperation, not competition, rules the day. A community is fostered that can move forward free from jealousy. Because let's face it - when you "make it" in the art world, it's at the expense of someone else. And that someone else is not necessarily less talented or motivated than you are,

but sometimes only less wise in the ways of the world. It has nothing to do with art, and everything to do with connections, posturing, and luck.

Aside from the occasional exposure generated by mail art shows, the mail artist has no real public. It is a process carried on between practitioners. To know mail art is to do mail art. At it's lowest common denominator mail art can be described as a global network of artists that decorate envelopes, share information, and collaborate on cooperative projects - but that doesn't fully explain it's appeal. When Ray Johnson began his postal activities in the fifties, it was a parlor game among art world intelligentsia that became known as the New York Correspondence School of Art. As it rippled outward and began attracting a broader-based audience, correspondence mutated into correspondance, a flowing ever-changing performance between practitioners. The act of the missive being anonymously marked by the post office, delivered to a mailbox, the addressee comfortably situating himself to begin the ritual of opening the letter, receiving news of a mutual friend, and then a following letter from the person in question - that's the magic of mail art: the world in a mail box, all its diversity delivered to one's doorstep. The disparate becoming apparent.

Mail art is not the only refuge of the underground artist, although it is an umbrella for a host of mediums operating away from the

mainstream such as rubber stamp art, fax, the artist postage stamp, photocopy art, artist's books, and cassette culture. Two of the largest fields that younger artists are populating are zines and telematic art. Both have connections with mail art, but operate independently. Zine culture arose from science fiction fandom, the small press, punk and independent music magazines, as well as artist publications. Long a stable of underground publishing, the field exploded in the mid-eighties with the appearance of Factsheet Five. Edited by Mike Gunderloy, the publication began reviewing the zines sent in from a variety of different scenes. Soon new publishers began appearing solely for the sake of being reviewed in, and receiving a free copy of, Factsheet Five. Whatever the case, the field exploded and there is now a worldwide movement of small independently published zines in the fields of poetry, music, art, queer, and alternative lifestyles.<sup>4</sup>

The Internet has generated a host of telecommunication projects between fin de siècle virtual correspondents. In many ways, mail art has served as a model of communication between this newer technology. Those on the "Net" are repeating the cooperative exchange of ideas that was done by snail-mail participants in the "Eternal Network," as mail artists have been calling themselves for over twenty years.

Duchamp rejected the professional life of the painter. He was

dependent on no public or dealer. Instead he was free to operate outside the system to pursue his own concerns on a trajectory of his own devising. The Large Glass was begun in 1912 and was eventually left unfinished in 1923. His final major work, *Etant Donnés*, was surreptitiously begun in 1946 and completed in 1966. The consensus was that Duchamp had given up art. But all the while he was working in isolation. Few were aware of the endeavor. His wife Teeny was pressed into service helping him to gather materials for the work, and his friend Bill Copley was let in on the secret, but to all practical appearances Duchamp had vacated his given field.

Duchamp had dropped hints that his work was continuing. Delivering a paper on March 20, 1961, at the Philadelphia Museum College of Art during a panel with the sculptor Louise Nevelson and the painters Larry Day and Theodore Stamos to discuss the topic, "Where do we go from Here?," Duchamp outlined developments in modern art that had lead him to the conclusion that artists were moving away from a purely "retinal art". The art movements of the last hundred years, Duchamp stated, "boils down almost entirely to the single dilemma of the 'representative and the non- representative'." "Therefore I am inclined, after this examination of the past, to believe that the young artist of tomorrow will refuse to base his work on a philosophy as over-simplified as that of the 'representative or non-representative' dilemma." "I am convinced that, like Alice in

Wonderland, he will be led to pass through the looking-glass of the retina, to reach a more profound expression." "The young artist of tomorrow will, I believe, have to go still further in this same direction, to bring to light startling new values which are and will always be the basis of artistic revolutions." "If we now envisage the more technical side of a possible future, it is very likely that the artist, tired of the cult for oils in painting, will find himself completely abandoning this five-hundred-year-old process, which restricts his freedom of expression by its academic ties."

In addition to its ties to academia, its concentration on matters optical, and the commodification of art, Duchamp envisions a "leveling down of present taste and its immediate result will be to shroud the near future in mediocrity."

"In conclusion," Duchamp stated to the panel and audience, "I hope that this mediocrity, conditioned by too many factors foreign to art per se, will this time bring a revolution on the ascetic level, of which the general public will not even be aware and which only a few initiates will develop on the fringe of a world blinded by economic fireworks."

"The great artist of tomorrow will go underground."5

For forty years mail art has brewed in the stew of a global cauldron. It has linked artists leery of commercial success and fleeting reputation. It penetrated behind the Iron Curtain and gave hope to artists in repressive societies. It became a model of interaction for new telecommunicative technologies. It accelerated the zine and independent music revolutions. The true nature of mail art's impact is still unknown. Its final chapter still unwritten.

But the tale is beginning to be told. One of the foremost chroniclers of the field is Texan Daniel Plunkett of Austin who edits the magazine ND6 . Called, "the premier avant-garde music and arts magazine," by no less a reviewing source than the intrepid bible of zinedom, Factsheet Five7 , the magazine has a simple credo, "Contact-Exchange-Document." Plunkett writes that, "The magazine is a document of a process of exchange and it serves to present artists and ideas which are vital and interesting to us. We are interested in those artists and activities which have something to say and who have overcome established frameworks and conventions. Our goal is to bring forward these dialogs and serve as a reference and document in the process."

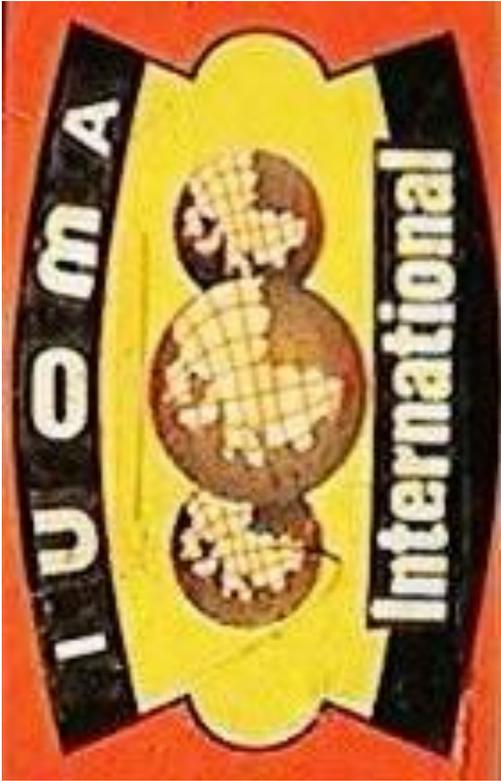
Plunkett's wide net, varied interests, and innate sense of inquiry is what distinguishes him from most publishers. "We are not limited only to music, or performance, or any other medium.

Many of the artists and musicians share some of the same questions and are active on many levels, and by exploring it all one can get a better grasp of possibilities. All I can hope is that you read the interviews and articles and get something positive from them. We are learning the same time you are."8

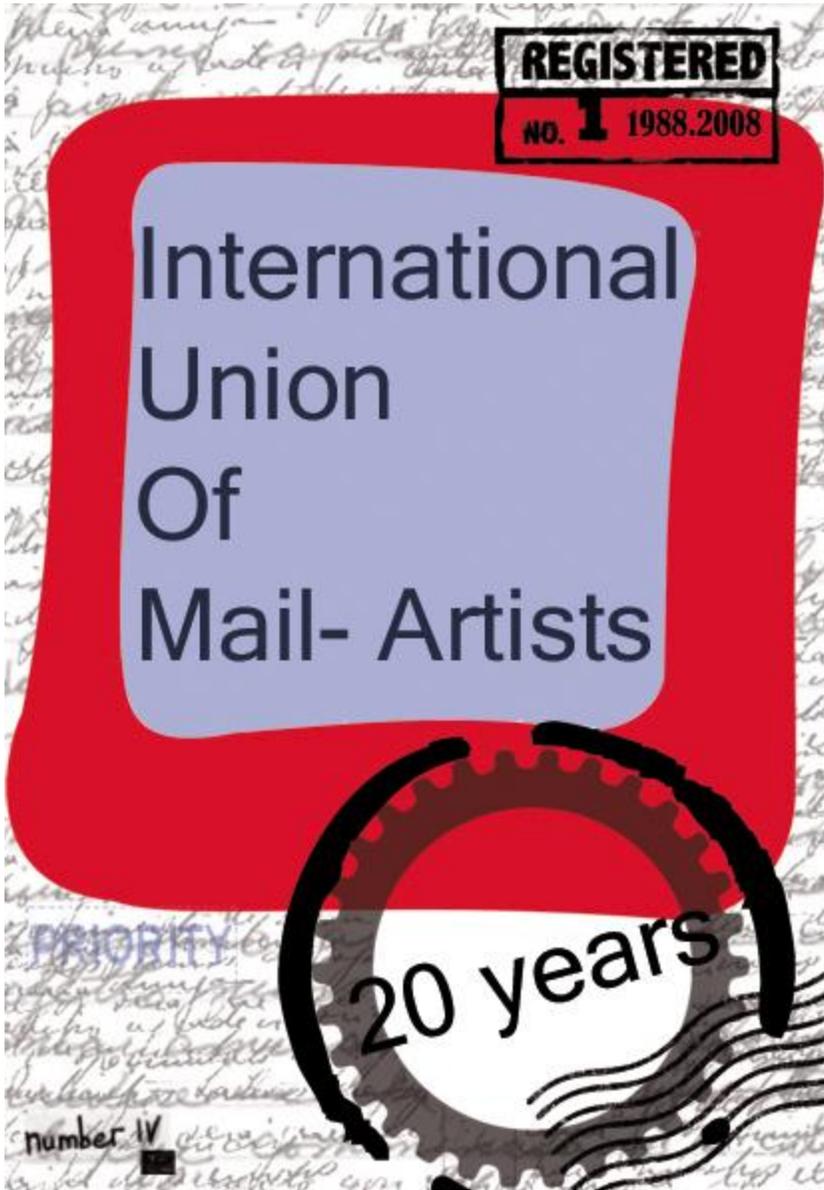
The fact that new mediums are appearing just as Duchamp foretold, that artists are increasingly turning to conceptual rather than visual concerns, and that they are more likely to be concerned with aesthetic rather than monetary ends, indicates that a new revolution in art may indeed come from an untraditional source. This is not to say that painting, or sculpture, or any of the more academic mediums are dead, or are not currently producing works of note, only that the next great leap effecting the direction of art in the next century is just as likely to come from a currently unappreciated source as a universally accepted one. Those interested in the future course of art must keep their eyes open, their prejudices to a minimum, and if necessary, to become personally involved. The future revolution in art may well be televised, but only after it has finished marinating away from the mainstream.

From: <http://www.geocities.com/johnheldjr/TheyWillGoUnderground.html>

Collage made by Michael Leigh - UK



Isabelle Vannobel - FLUXUSHEEP  
17 rue Blaise Pascal - 59240 Dunkerque - France



Collage by Michael Leigh – A1 – UK



Isabelle Vannobel  
FLUXUSHEEP  
17 rue Blaise Pascal  
59240 Dunkerque  
France



Collage by Joe Decie – UK

**RE** ...



*Michael Scott*



*Ray Johnson*

**REMEMBER**

Obamicon Me - results by Ruud Janssen









## **Ch-ch-ch-ch-change (and Face the Strange) in Mail Art**

**(by Vittore Baroni)**

Everything changes with time, so why shouldn't mail art also alter itself? In approximately half a century of history, any creative medium would have shown drastic signs of transformation, even without facing a global, epoch-defining revolution in communications like mail art did. In the second half of the Seventies, when I first discovered the postal network and became heavily involved in it, home computers were still a vague notion, and the possibility of instant multimedial communication with the whole planet was something not even dreamt of. You had your scissors, your glue and a limited amount of postage stamps. From a veteran mail artist perspective, we are living today in a science-fictional wonderland: through Internet we can exchange ideas at almost no cost with friends and strangers near and far, we can collaborate at distance with hundreds of authors and even launch blogs and web sites to build our own "social network". And yet, with all this epochal mutation from analogic to digital - in an incredibly fast process that lead us in less than twenty years from the earliest transmissions in BBS to the WWW in our cell phone - a very strange thing is occurring: the good old paper-based postal art refuses to die!

You would have been legitimated to think that, with the advent of Internet, traditional mail art would have dried out and died a quick death, replaced by *e-mail art*. Instead, today there are still hundreds of regular correspondents and thousands of occasional participants in an “Eternal (or ethereal, as I proposed) Network” that still produces exhibitions, projects and publications in dozens of countries. There is an intrinsic fascination in the physical and “unique” art object that no digital gimmick can replace. Plus, in a period when the activity of (social) “networking“ has been debased to an endless and mostly idle, superficial, over-hyped and time-consuming chattering (in FaceBook, Twitter and the like), the recourse to such outdated media as postcards and envelopes represents a sort of refusal to join the herd, a snobbish act of independence as well as a form of appreciation for links that are more flesh & blood than an hypertext on a screen. As long as there will be a postal service, there will probably be individuals prone to subvert its bureaucratic rules with wit and a creative agenda, favouring quality over quantity of feedbacks. This resistance at all costs does not come without a price: mail art in the third Millennium is very different from the mail art produced before Ray Johnson’s Correspondence School definitively closed down its courses.

You just have to compare some books and essays about mail art from different periods, to see how the medium has changed.

The classic volume *Correspondence Art* (Contemporary Arts Press, 1984) by Michael Crane and Mary Stofflet evidenced the strong connections between international postal art activities and contemporary avantgardes like Fluxus, Visual Poetry, Body Art and Conceptual Art, continuing the tradition of early postal works by Dada and Futurist artists. But if you examine recent books on the subject, like *Good Mail Day* (Quarry Books, 2009) by Jennie Hinchcliff and Carolee Gilligan Wheeler or the several titles now available on the mail art-related Artist Trading Cards phenomenon, you notice that the postal practice has taken a sharp turn in the direction of “crafts” and popular art rather than “high art” and militant art theory. The big ever-changing network of planetary contacts is still there, as well as the fun of trading stuff and making new art friends, but the general objectives seem to be quite different: from changing the (art) world forever (just think of the passionate Neoist and anti-Neoist debates of the Eighties, the Art Strikes, the Decentralized WorldWide Congresses) to decorating your fridge door.

In other words, mail art originated from relatively restricted avantgarde and “highbrow” circles to evolve (or regress, depending on your point of view) into a more democratic and open-to-all “grassroots” activity. Very gradually, in the past forty-something years, the bulk of postal art has left the realms of radical artistic research and critique in favour of (with many notable exceptions) a pen-pal mentality and the simple swap of

anyone-can-do-it types of artworks. As a result of this situation, if you flip through a contemporary mail art catalogue you have the impression of looking at works produced by primary school students, while a catalogue from the Sixties or Seventies overlapped evidently with cutting edge concepts and visuals. What has probably happened is that the more radically inclined fringes of mail art have been absorbed in the ranks of new media art (net art, digital art, hacktivism) or even street art (graffiti, stickers, stencils), leaving the postal practice mostly in the hands of crafty artisans and nostalgic neo-Luddites (or neo-Dada, neo-Fluxus, etc.). More a “social phenomenon” than an art trend, then, and no wonder if mail art slipped out of the radar of art critics and institutions. The fun and amity are still there, but what about Utopias?

I am not writing this out of bitterness or hostility toward a form of expression that I still love and practice, but as a chronicler as well as a champion of mail art through several books and essays, I must point out an objective truth: the Golden Age of correspondence art is behind our backs. The wave of unbridled creativity brought about by the first intensive exploration of the different postal formats and constitutive elements (postage stamps, rubber stamps, postcards, envelopes) has reached a peak in the late Seventies and early Eighties, then mail art mostly repeated itself with diminishing freshness. If you want to find new imaginative postcards today, you should look in the

field of graphic design (e.g. the anthology *Postcard*, curated by Agather Jacquillat and Tomi Vollauschek for the FL@33 editions, 2008) rather than in mail art publications. Through habit and repetition, the original mail art concepts and ideas have been spread too thin, and there is a noticeable lack of new ideas, recruits and ambitious schemes in the field. What can you do with a bunch of trading cards, apart from collecting them in an album?

I do not want to whine about the old times, I am a terminal optimist so I prefer to see the bottle of mail art still half filled, rather than half empty. Now that the mystique and communal spirit of the enlarged “mail art family” is fading - the whole mythology of the Eternal Network mined by the death or disappearance from the circuit of many notorious figures - maybe postal art has become just one among many given possibilities in the artist’s bag of tricks. With Ray’s school closed and the Web dictating the rules for state of the art “networking”, mail art today is not a definite and organic movement (if ever it was) but rather a “moving concept” that can be (re)activated at will, for a children workshop or a project inside (or aside) big art Biennials, or as a private game played in the intimacy of our studio. Mail art (like watercolor, or graffiti...) is a medium available to all, that can be used at different levels. The continuing relevance of this practice is tied to a multi-task use of its rich tradition: on one hand, we need more scholarly

researches into the largest mail art archives, to bring to light many untold tales and underrated wonders; on the other hand, we must encourage the free-wheeling contamination of postal strategies with old and new media (like it is already pursued in the IUOMA and DodoDada blogs), as well as with live situations, conventions, festivals, street actions and installations.

For example, in my most recent project, the show of artist's musical instruments *Bzzzoing!* part of the sonic arts festival *Klang!* (Viareggio, August 2009), I tried to "push the envelope" by requesting something I had never encountered before in a mail art project: postal works that could emit *real sounds*. It was a difficult task, and in fact I received very few mailings that really startled my postman with bizarre noises, but it was worth trying. I also employed a diversified approach, combining an invite open to all (I received some contributions from total strangers, who found it by chance on the Web) with works and installations from selected local and international artists, as well as a live programme of sound poetry, audio performances and electronic music. In actual fact, I have been supporting for decades the view that mail art should come out from the niche of envelope-and-stamp purists to interact more freely with other creative networks and cultural groups, experimenting new hybrids of postal, virtual and live actions, reclaiming its role as precursor in the use of "the Net as Artwork" (subtitle of Tatiana Bazzichelli's

interesting essay *Networking*, Digital Aesthetics Research Center, 2008) but not shying away from odd and unheard of crossbreedings. This is a right time to push on the pedal of radical and extraordinary switch-overs. “Ch-ch-ch-ch-changes”, as Bowie used to sing, are beneficial and refreshing, but to make them really work, we must not forget to add some beauty, imagination and love of the unexpected.

## **Vittore Baroni**

November 2009, for Ruud Janssen - TAM - IUOMA

Postcards by I.Q.C.M. - Spain





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# Mail Art Alphabet

By John Held Jr

A is for AAA Edizioni

The Something Else Press of Mail Art. Vittore Baroni and Piermario Ciani have published key contemporary works on Mail Art, rubber stamps, artist postage stamps and other aspects of alternative art. They are dedicated and endearingly self-effacing. Baroni provides the theoretical muscle, while Ciani supplies state of the art graphics. Together they are creating a legendary series of publications.

B is for buZ blurr

Been around since 1972. Never stops. Has built up an impressive body of artistamps, many chronicling his travels in Netland. In the mid-seventies Ken Friedman took blurr's Hoo Hoo Archives to task for producing "quick-kopy-krap." It is a lesson showing that a Mail Artist should never be judged too early in his apprenticeship. blurr is also an accomplished land artist (Papercide Park) and graffiti artist.

C is for Correspondence Art:

Source Book for the Network of International Postal Activity (Contemporary Art Press, San Francisco, 1984) Still the best book on Mail Art, although out-of-print for many years. I just (August 2000) had dinner with one of the co-authors, Mary Stofflet, who is currently working at the San Francisco airport on their exhibition program. The other author, Mike Crane, has long since left the field, driven from it by the criticism he received after the book came out. I was at the publication party for the work at La Mamelle artspace in San Francisco in 1984. As a protest, some Mail Artists that were present, ate pages from the book. But, it remains the substantial document of Mail Art Activity in the sixties and seventies.

D is for Duchamp

He's the father of it all. His premonition that the artist of the future would go underground, completely validates contemporary Mail Art practice.

E is for the Eternal Network

Fluxus artist Robert Filliou envisioned a continual rebirth of the creative spirit among an international community. Mail Artists love his Utopian vision of a poetic future.

F is for Fluxus

The emergence of Fluxus in the early sixties signaled a new way of art making: intermedial and indeterminate. Fluxpost Kit was a summing up of their Mail Art activities: postcards by Ben, rubber stamps by Friedman, and postage stamps by Robert Watts.

### G is for Gaglione

Daddaland, Picasso, Jerk-call him what you will, but he was in the first generation of Mail Artists, who were devoted to Mail Art, not painting and Mail Art, or conceptual art and Mail Art. Just Mail Art. Along the way he has become adept at rubber stamps, artistamps, and neo-fluxus.

### H is for Higgins

The late Fluxus artist Dick Higgins conceptualized the theory of intermedia. He was one of the very first artists of note to pay any attention to me. Through him I felt accepted into a community of artists. For that I will always be grateful.

### I is for the Internet

Which has transformed Mail Art for better or worse. It's all about communication, of course, and if anything, the Internet extends the reach of the Mail Artist. But think of all those lost letters.

## J is for Johnson

A legend, not just among Mail Artists, with whom he had a love/hate relationship, but with scores of artists both known and unknown. Johnson seemed to know instinctively that fame was more curse than blessing. His domain was the underground, and we just players in it. Since his death, the art establishment has gathered him to their breast, and attempted to re-make him in their image. His Mail Art activities take a back seat to his more expensive collage works. Johnson is sold as a Pre-Pop artist, not the father of a new underground. The twisted legacy of his work propagated after his death, reminds me once again, why I distance myself from the corrupting world of the gallery and museum system.

## K is for Kairan

Which joins a growing list of Mail Art innovations in periodical publishing. Commonpress, started by Polish artist Pawel Petasz, changed editors after each issue. Smile magazine was a magazine of multiple origins, in which various editors published under the same title. Now Wilfred Nolde has passed on Numero to Gianni Simone, who has retitled the magazine Kairan, but has kept many of the same features, of which this Mail Art Alphabet is one.

## L is for Letters

Let's not forget them. They don't have to be long, but they should be included in your Mail Art. For me, the joy of Mail Art is meeting others from afar. I want some sense of who the person is behind the postmark. It's about communicating, and what better way than to spend some minutes at a desk focusing on another person a continent away. Of course, I love to receive art from others, but not when I get the feeling that I am just one of many persons receiving the same thing in the mail. I want a personal connection that goes beyond a name on a mailing list. That's why I like to travel and meet my correspondents, as well as linger over a comforting letter from a friend.

## M is for George Maciunas

The pack leader of Fluxus. I met him shortly before he died, when the late collector Jean Brown arranged for me to stay overnight with him at his farm in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. I remember mostly his flipping through the pages of a book on medical curiosities. It seemed bizarre to me at the time, but I was thirty, and he near the completion of a life. Our interests at the time, could not have been more distant, but I feel that I have grown to understand him. Above all, Maciunas was a utopian thinker, making plans for a Flux Island, starting

cooperative housing in Soho, and most of all, gathering an international band of artists, and almost forcing them to collaborate on various publications, multiples, performances and events. His detractors (for example Alan Kaprow) saw him as manipulating, wanting to co-opt their talent, but Maciunas hated the ego-artist, wishing to channel various talents into a cohesive unit, bigger than themselves.

### N is for Netland

That space beyond national boundaries that connects Mail Artists. Mail Art has made the world a more rewarding place for me. I feel a kinship with an international community of artists, reaching out like I do, to others in spite of borders. My travels in Netland, have brought me to South America, Japan, the Soviet Union, all over Europe and throughout the United States. And when I travel, I feel like I've reached another knot in the web. This world is so big, yet so interconnected. Mail Artists have realized this fact through their art, like the alchemists that changed themselves as they sought to turn lead to gold.

### O is for Open World

The magazine edited by Dobrica Kamperlic, which runs to over 100 issues. It is, without a doubt, the best record of Mail Art activity over the past 15 years. In it you will find notices of

upcoming projects and Mail Art shows, news and notes on various Mail Arts, photographs of various Networking events, and all of it collaged together in such a way as to mirror the jumble of activity in Mail Art. It is sadly ironic, that this great proponent of an Open World, is currently trapped in the political situation that has overrun the Balkans. Invited to Minden, Germany for the Time of Change Festival, Kamperelic is trying for a visa to attend. It doesn't say much for the present state of an Open World.

## P is for Performance Art

Which for me has always complemented Mail Art. Letter writing is such a solitary activity. The counterbalance of performance art is a good way to get one's art out to the public in a more direct manner. Almost all my performances are related in some way to my Mail Art involvement. The first performance I did, was to read a weeks' worth of mail in public. Then I collaborated with other Mail Artists in the Shadow Project. My most recent performance was in San Francisco with fellow Mail Artist Jokie X. Wilson, who I rubber stamped while he was naked, and his girlfriend was whipping him. If Mail Art is a powerful art medium, which I believe it is, it should be able to hold up in a public venue, as well as a mailbox. Judith Hoffburg once said that. "The Mailbox is a Museum." I say that the mailbox is a starting point for action on an international stage.

## Q is for Quarrels

Of which I have had many. I suppose it is inevitable since I write, and others will take offense at not mentioned enough, or not mentioned to their satisfaction, or not mentioned at all. One mark of a writer is that they not get distracted by too much outside influence. Those with a thin skin should not apply. Mike Crane dropped out of Mail Art after authoring Correspondence Art. Crackerjack Kid fled soon after his Eternal Network was published. My philosophy has always been that if someone is taking you to task, at least they are paying attention to your work. If they don't like what you've written, well, they can write their own version. I try not to respond to these attacks, My best advice is never send negative energy through the post, as it always comes back to bite you.

## R is for Rubber Stamps

The door through which I entered Mail Art. Authored L'Arte del Timbro in 1999. Although I own literally thousands of stamps, I only have thirty or so on my desk, and they tend to stay there for years. They are my arsenal of signs and symbols. Relics of my past outlasting friends and wives. Clement Greenberg once took me to task for using rubber stamps in my artwork, calling them a "novelty." But more and more they feel like an authentic art

medium to me, and one that has escaped the formalist structure of the art world, which Greenberg epitomized.

### S is for the Situationists

Their blend of art and radical politics, still serves as a model for pushing the art/life model. "Think Globally, Act Locally," is one of their slogans written on the Paris streets during the 1968 student riots. One wonders if Mail Art could have been more effective if it contained more concerted direct political action. The Padin/Caraballo affair of the mid-seventies comes closest to a Situationist action, but on the other hand, the informal contact that occurred between Eastern European and Western artists during the "Cold War" may have been one of the most effective means of breaking down international barriers in art history.

### T is for Tisma

I have a Tisma postcard on my wall reading, "Keep this and feel the transmission of my art." It constantly reminds me of my many Yugoslavian Mail Art friends Tisma's rubber stamps chronicle his life, especially his touristic exchanges. His carved eraser stamps are charged with social, cultural and political meanings, and are masterpieces of the form. Today, he mostly limits his exchanges to the Internet.

## U is for Uruguay

The home of Clemente Padin, and because of him, a constant presence on Mail Art documentation lists around the world for over thirty years. The Dean of South American Mail Artists, outliving his other pioneering Latin American contemporaries, Vigo and Ogasz, Padin was arrested in the mid-seventies for his Mail Art activities. His release was secured by an international letter writing campaign, which became mail Art's finest moment.

## V is for Ben Vautier

One of my favorite Fluxus artists. He never takes himself too seriously, but there always seems to be some deeper truth buried in his wit. An artist who has always balanced on the edge of art and life, Vautier lived in a gallery front window for one week, which always struck me as the perfect way to express the fine division between living and creating. His Postman's Choice postcard, having an address printed on both sides of the card, so that the mailman would have to choose where it was delivered, is a Mail Art classic .

## W is for Wallace Berman

Berman was a West Coast artist, living in both Los Angeles and

San Francisco, who was a pioneer in propagating artist communities. His Semina magazine was one of the first assembling projects. His use of the verifax duplicating machine, was a precursor of photocopy art. He was a correspondent of Ray Johnson's in the fifties. Read all about him in his biography, Support the Revolution (ICA, Amsterdam, 1992)

### X is for Xerography

The process by which I make the majority my artist postage stamps. Mail Art is about the exploitation of cheap technologies. Photocopying is one of the marvels of the twentieth century, and something we take for granted. Yet, think about the difference this process has made in our lives. What a splendid artist tool it is. It brings any collage together into a united whole. It can be combined with other mediums, as well. I like to blow up images on the copier and then go over them in oil stick. It flattens the image, giving it a particular look: photo realistic, yet somehow washed out and dreamy.

### Y is for Yves Klein

Creator of the first significant artistamp: the Blue Stamp of 1957. Even better was his serving of IKB cocktails at a gallery opening that had the guests pissing blue the following morning. Or his staged jump out of a window and into The Void. Dragging nude

women on canvas. It just goes on and on. His work is a conceptual goldmine.

Z is for Zaum

My recent passion. Pre-revolutionary war Russia circa 1913 was a gathering of avant-garde geniuses. And fun ones, who painting their faces in public, plotting the overthrow of language, and aspiring to the conquer the very fundamentals of their medium. Zaum, or "transrational" poetry, were first published in inexpensive, mimeographed and rubber stamped editions, staple bound on pages of wallpaper. The first rubber stamps used creatively by the avant-garde. I owe my knowledge of Zaum to Serge Segay, who used to write me about the movement when he was living in Russia. It's taken me ten years to fully appreciate the important impact they made.

August 2000

San Francisco

From: <http://www.geocities.com/johnheldjr/MailArtAlphabet.html>

Ik ben vanmiddag toegelaten als IUOMA member en ik ben er heel blij mee! Ik heb op de IUOMA site member logo's gevonden wat me geïnspireerd heeft om zelf eentje te maken.



Regards/Groetjes/Grüsse

Herma

In these albums you'll find some of my creations

In deze albums vind je een greep uit mijn creaties

In diesen Alben sind ein Teil meiner Kreationen

<http://hermaf.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.picturetrail.com/hermaf>



Card by Real Mail, Goes, Netherlands (2001)

## > **Decentralized Networker Congress /**

The 'Decentralized Networker Congress' in 1992 (DNC'92) is the second 'Congress year' of the Mail-Art network, organised by Hans Reudi Fricker (Switzerland) who formulated the world wide call and Peter W. Kaufman (Switzerland) who was the co-ordinator.

In the 'Congress year' of 1992 Fricker and Kaufmann tried to broaden the concept of the project, to open it beyond Mail-Art circles, by also involving people related to other kinds of creative networking activities. Fricker wanted to have the "Networker Congress" be different from the "Mail-Art Congress" because Mail-artists often do not reflect what they really do, they just follow a mainstream. He was looking for those who reflected their roles as artists and who were interested in using different media. Chuck Welch aka. Kracker jack Kid for example was important for the 'Decentralized Networker Congress' because he linked many artists who already worked with computer nets when internet became a new networking tool. Networking is a very different social structure then the common artist group, many Mail-artist have seen themselves as a group which separates its activities from others.

In the very initial stages Fricker asked help of about a dozen

other networkers from different countries. These networkers were called 'Netlink' and acted as co-ordinators for organising the congress. They acted as sites for the dissemination of congress propaganda and contacts for information. Also the official invite was written by a team of networkers to formulate the call for the world wide 'Congress Year'. Piermario Ciani (Italy) aka. Stickerman did the co-ordinated graphics, logo, postcards, stationery (1), stickers, ... which helped in giving an identity to the event.

As co-organiser Kaufmann did send out a chronology of congress sessions planned for such places as Paris, London, Stockholm, Milan and San Francisco. At the conclusion of the 'Congress year', he issued a book documentation listing all the events which occurred during the period. Over five hundred artists from twenty five countries participated in about 250 events. Mail Artists reached out to other networkers to bring together various artistic networks, such as: zine publishing, fax artists, street artists, rubber stampers, computer bulletin boards, flyposters (2), home tapers, ... to explore similarities in networking experience.

Beside personal meetings there was also an electronic meeting, mentioned in the 'Congress year' documentation as 'TAM Computer Sessions'. This session was organized by

Ruud Janssen (the Netherlands) who transformed his paper TAM-Bulletin in 1992 into a bulletin board version, a computer network before the internet technology. Mail-Art pioneers in electronic links of computers has explored this meeting like Mark Bloch 'PAN' (U.S.A.), Charles Francois 'RATOS' (Belgium), Rod Summers 'VEC' (the Netherlands) and Ruud Janssen 'TAM' himself. As part of the 'Networker Congress' Peter Küstermann (Germany) and Angela Pähler (Germany) took a personal delivery service around the world, carrying two hundred kilos of Mail-Art from one Mail-artist to another over more than hundred thousand kilometers, meeting 350 Mail-artists. Küstermann dressed in an antique German postal, they travelled around the world meeting Mail-artists in Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and the United States.

In the beginning of the nineties the Mail-Art network was tested in its international dialogue, when Yugoslavia came under an embargo on June 1, 1992, including a cultural embargo. The Yugoslavian contingent is an integral part of the network from the beginning with participants in intercultural communication art. Andrej Tisma organized an 'Anti-Embargo Net Congress' from 1 until 3 September 1992 where eight Serbian networkers signed the 'Deblockade of Creativity'. This congress was the start of "Anti-Embargo" actions which lasted till November 1995 when the embargo

was lifted.

During the 'Congress year' Chuck Welch (U.S.A.) aka. Cracker Jack Kid introduced the terms 'metanet', 'metanetworker' and 'netshakers'.

"... "Netshakers," a play upon the Shaker religious community who would gather and dance in spirit ..... quaking and shaking in utopian bliss ..... rather like the endless vibes that were continually generated through the international mailstream." Welch, C. (2002). [e-mail]

'Meta-networker' is a term that was intended to spiritualize Fricker's materialistic call in 1986 and 1992 for networkers to meet each other through "Tourism". The 'meta-networker' as a Mail-artist persona is more akin to Robert Filliou's (France) concept of an 'eternal network'. As such, Welch always preferred the utopian, global context of Mail-Art as a spiritual multi-cultural communications form, aligned to some aspects of Fluxus networking as typified by Dick Higgins (U.S.A.), Robert Filliou (France), Ken Friedman (U.S.A.) and others.

Welch has catalogued over two thousand congress items at the 'Networker Databank collection' in his 'Eternal Network Archive' and has been donated to the 'University of Iowa's' 'Alternative traditions in the Contemporary Art Archive'.

(1) Stationery: envelopes and sheets of paper for correspondence personalized with a logo.

(2) Flyposters: underground art form medium, political or cultural posters from artists or activists spread along public spaces.

From: [http://www.sztuka-fabryka.be/encyclopaedia/items/networker\\_congres.htm](http://www.sztuka-fabryka.be/encyclopaedia/items/networker_congres.htm)

# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MAIL-ARTISTS

U.I.O.M.A. - P.O. Box 15556 - 5049 JF Tuborg - Netherlands

## CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP



This certificate proves that the person  
below is a member of the IUOMA

Name *Vortice Argentina*  
Address *Fernando Garcia Delgado*  
*Bacacay 3103*  
*C.1406 GEE Buenos Aires*  
Country *Argentina*  
Member since *~1998~*

  
Signature

General-President IUOMA

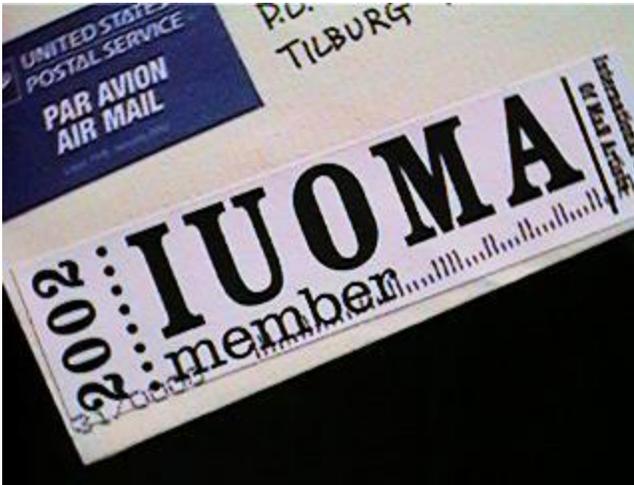


  
Signature

Member IUOMA

[WWW.IUOMA.ORG](http://WWW.IUOMA.ORG)

Sticker made by Travis Medford, Atlanta, USA – envelope



Graphic logo for IUOMA designed by Tine Vercruysse



(Belgium).



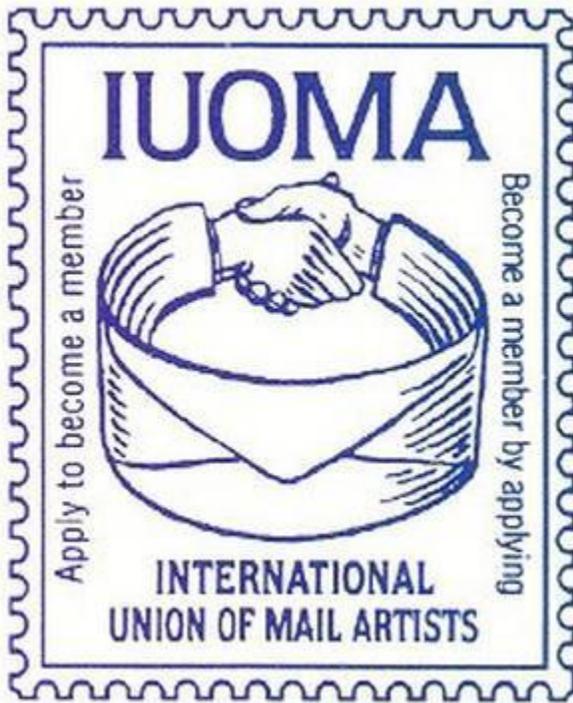
# The IUOMA group at YAHOO!

The history of the IUOMA group at yahoo can be best viewed in the list of historical activity that the online community has generated:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2009	<a href="#">38</a>	<a href="#">22</a>	<a href="#">24</a>	<a href="#">10</a>	<a href="#">20</a>	<a href="#">14</a>	<a href="#">13</a>	<a href="#">8</a>	<a href="#">15</a>	<a href="#">14</a>	<a href="#">7</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
2008	<a href="#">26</a>	<a href="#">24</a>	<a href="#">25</a>	<a href="#">27</a>	<a href="#">42</a>	<a href="#">72</a>	<a href="#">31</a>	<a href="#">55</a>	<a href="#">57</a>	<a href="#">73</a>	<a href="#">85</a>	<a href="#">31</a>
2007	<a href="#">32</a>	<a href="#">23</a>	<a href="#">24</a>	<a href="#">59</a>	<a href="#">111</a>	<a href="#">71</a>	<a href="#">22</a>	<a href="#">41</a>	<a href="#">66</a>	<a href="#">54</a>	<a href="#">40</a>	<a href="#">44</a>
2006	<a href="#">82</a>	<a href="#">53</a>	<a href="#">77</a>	<a href="#">71</a>	<a href="#">59</a>	<a href="#">27</a>	<a href="#">96</a>	<a href="#">107</a>	<a href="#">54</a>	<a href="#">163</a>	<a href="#">38</a>	<a href="#">40</a>
2005	<a href="#">117</a>	<a href="#">71</a>	<a href="#">87</a>	<a href="#">114</a>	<a href="#">69</a>	<a href="#">66</a>	<a href="#">83</a>	<a href="#">75</a>	<a href="#">81</a>	<a href="#">107</a>	<a href="#">65</a>	<a href="#">48</a>
2004	<a href="#">142</a>	<a href="#">98</a>	<a href="#">49</a>	<a href="#">115</a>	<a href="#">49</a>	<a href="#">67</a>	<a href="#">41</a>	<a href="#">65</a>	<a href="#">52</a>	<a href="#">47</a>	<a href="#">88</a>	<a href="#">67</a>
2003	<a href="#">145</a>	<a href="#">164</a>	<a href="#">82</a>	<a href="#">134</a>	<a href="#">123</a>	<a href="#">139</a>	<a href="#">165</a>	<a href="#">73</a>	<a href="#">193</a>	<a href="#">148</a>	<a href="#">243</a>	<a href="#">98</a>
2002						<a href="#">8</a>	<a href="#">79</a>	<a href="#">85</a>	<a href="#">112</a>	<a href="#">95</a>	<a href="#">126</a>	<a href="#">80</a>

Over 6000 messages were placed since the beginning in June 2002. At the moment 527 active members have been subscribed to the group.

The introduction text of the group has been changed several times and has evolved into this text. It also contains links to the other online communities that have been built after the beginning:



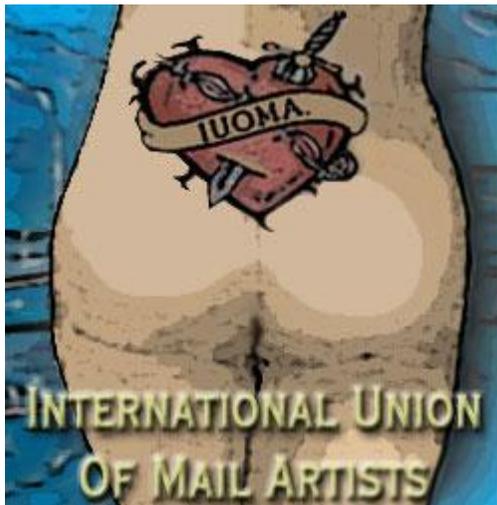
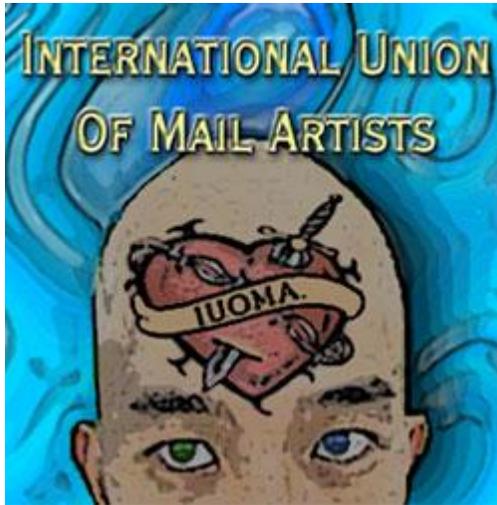
The International Union of Mail-Artists is more than two decades old and lots of members have joined in over the years. The IUOMA was founded in 1988 as a platform for all mail-artists. Now there is this online GROUP where members can put all their information for everybody to see. Visit also the IUOMA-site at [www.iuoma.org](http://www.iuoma.org) , on this site there is a special section for the IUOMA which explains the concept and lots more. For Mail-Art projects see: [Mail-Art Projects](#).

You also can be an author there and on the new blog. Maybe join in at the [Mail-Art Discussion](#).

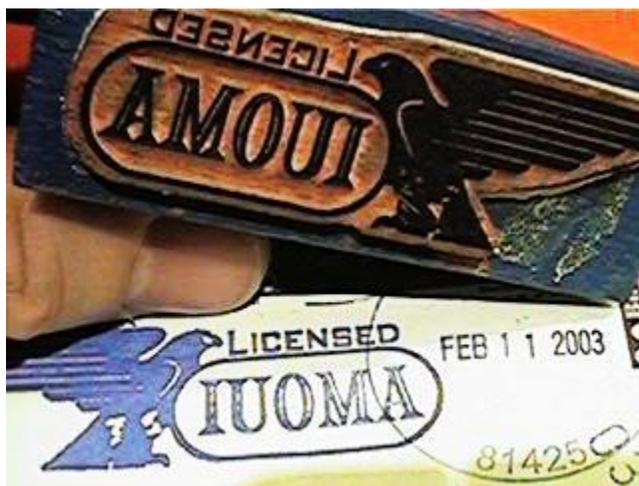
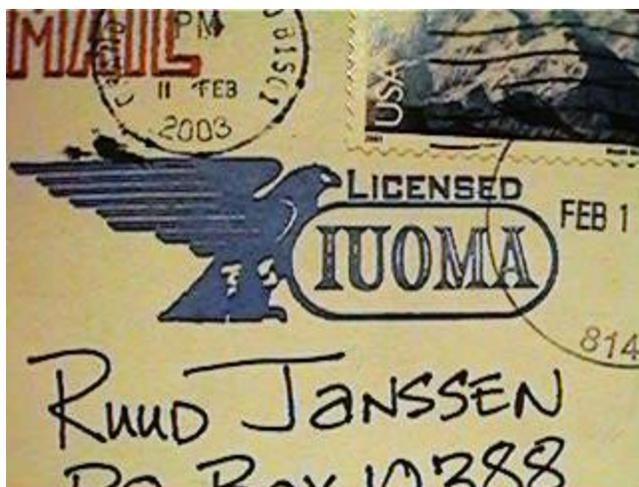
The online group started in June 2002 and is a communication-platform for all the IUOMA-members that are online. The messages are made public for all visitors. Whenever you have serious questions you think I should answer

in a more formal way, there is quite strange structured interview online at: <http://rjinterview.blogspot.com/>. I will answer every comment with a serious question with posting that answers it. Those posting might create new questions and generate new answers. We will see how it goes. Have a look at. A kind of mixed interview where all questions and answers are interconnected.

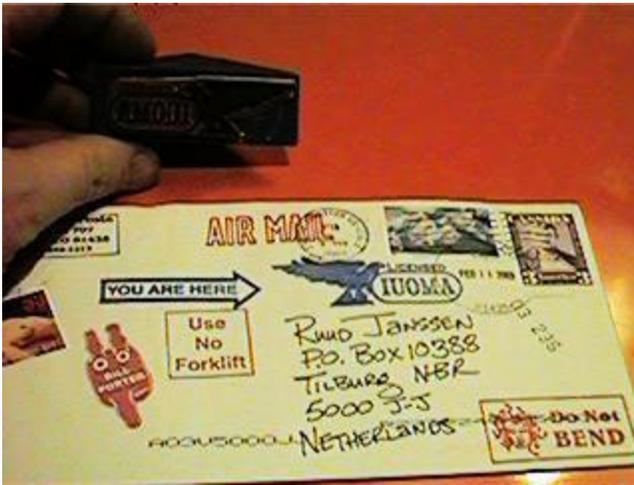
See also the Photos in the new [IUOMA Flickr Photo Album](#) or explore the [NEWEST IUOMA-Platform](#) that might replace this yahoo-group eventually.



Tattoos design by Kiyotei, USA - made in 2003.



Rubber Stamp made by Bill Porter, USA (2003).





## My Introduction to Mail-Art

By Wilma Duguay (Canada)

Ruud Janssen recently produced a new stamp which reads ***Mail-Art Changed My Life*** ! How well I can identify with that statement ! Even though the Mail-Art process started at different points in our lives, it most certainly applies to me as well and I suspect it applies to a large number of other mailartists in IUOMA.

My first exposure to Mail-Art was at the home/studio of Enid Legros-Wise, RCA who is a visual artist in ceramics and sculpture. She had a major installation underway named ***Veritas*** which is Latin for Truth and Verité in French. Her goal was to create 1000 veri-tasses by having local participants and others from around the world send her an original saying or a quote, the latter having to be at least 100 years old. Enid then wrote each individual's choice on a veri-tasse. There would be three showings in museums in the Gaspésie: Carleton, Paspébiac and the Town of Gaspé. The exhibitions took place over the months of April, 2006 and ended in November, 2007. My job was to do the database for all entries and help out with setting up and taking down the installations.

Enid received an incredible response which included letters along with the sayings and/or quotes. One letter in particular stood out...actually it shouted out to me!! It was my initial exposure to Mail-Art and the participant who mailed it was Réjean F. Côte from the City of Québec.

My second exposure to Mail-Art was at the second exhibition of Enid's in Paspébiac, Quebec in the Gaspésie. It was there that I met Réjean F. Côte. He was passionate in his description of Mail-Art and all that it entailed. I attempted to ask intelligent questions which he answered but I really couldn't get my head around this new concept. Réjean (Reg) was very considerate and kind when repeating the same answer over and over. I must admit that I felt intellectually challenged and hoped that he didn't think that I was a total moron.

Several weeks later, I received a copy of Circulaire132, a zine of Réjean's and an offer to participate in his blogspot and his monthly zine. Producing my first piece of Mail-Art and 20 identical pieces for his zine took me forever. Réjean was a wonderful and kind mentor! At that time, I only knew how to produce art through my scrapbooking. Soon after, I started checking out blogspots on Réjean's links. Naturally, I gravitated toward the blogs of Carlos Botana (A Coruna, Spain) and Jean Luc Cavellec's (Plumélia, France). I soon became part of this group of Sea lovers who sent in "Les Coques Marines" Mail-art

to Jean Luc who started this project. I loved it!!! Of course, Réjean was also part of this group.

I started with scrapbooking, moved on to collages and later on took pictures of Les Coques Marines. My attempts at photography were dismal yet I persevered and kept at it. My Sea buddies accepted my work even though it was inferior to what they were producing. Another lesson was learned. They were not judgmental of my work!! If anything, they encouraged me.

And then I was introduced to IUOMA and felt totally out of my league yet I loved it. I did quit once because I was comparing my work to more accomplished members and felt discouraged and inadequate. Not too long after, I rejoined IUOMA with a completely different attitude. By this time, I had bought a new camera with loads of pixels and a super zoom lens for taking pictures of boats on the Sea. I just needed to practice and get good advice on taking photographs.

I made friends in IUOMA and also enemies. I would really love to read comments by mail artists who have been around since the days of Ray Johnson. In fact, I wish they would publish articles and books on different aspects of Mail-Art. Newcomers need guidance and guidelines although I've been told there are no rules in Mail-Art by a few and a few other mail artists have

clearly defined the rules for me. At this time, I choose to do what I want in Mail-Art.

Naturally, soon after joining IUOMA, I started my search for affordable and available books to buy and build a library. Ruud was a godsend in recommending books and authors. At this time of writing, I now have six books; two of which are books of poetry given to me by Guido Vermeulen, three books of Ruud's, Networked Art by Craig J. Saper, several articles from Ruud and also the video How To Draw A Bunny. Last but not least, Rod Summers/VEC has sent me many CD audio performances and also pictures of Venice and Iceland. I believe a library is a must in any serious collection. I feel that I have been quite successful and lucky in having these books, articles and CDs since becoming a member in November 2008.

My friends and family were at a loss when they first saw my Mail-Art. They slowly began to understand the concept when I started mailing my work to them. They are very supportive of my endeavors. They had to feel the process: they had to receive, hold and read my message to understand the concept of Mail-Art. In my humble opinion, Mail-Art cannot be explained. Our senses need to be engaged in a tactile manner to truly appreciate it. My artist friend has told me to write down my title now in any form I need to fill out for the governments as a visual artist in mail art. My sisters consider me an artist. They are also visual artists in oil painting.

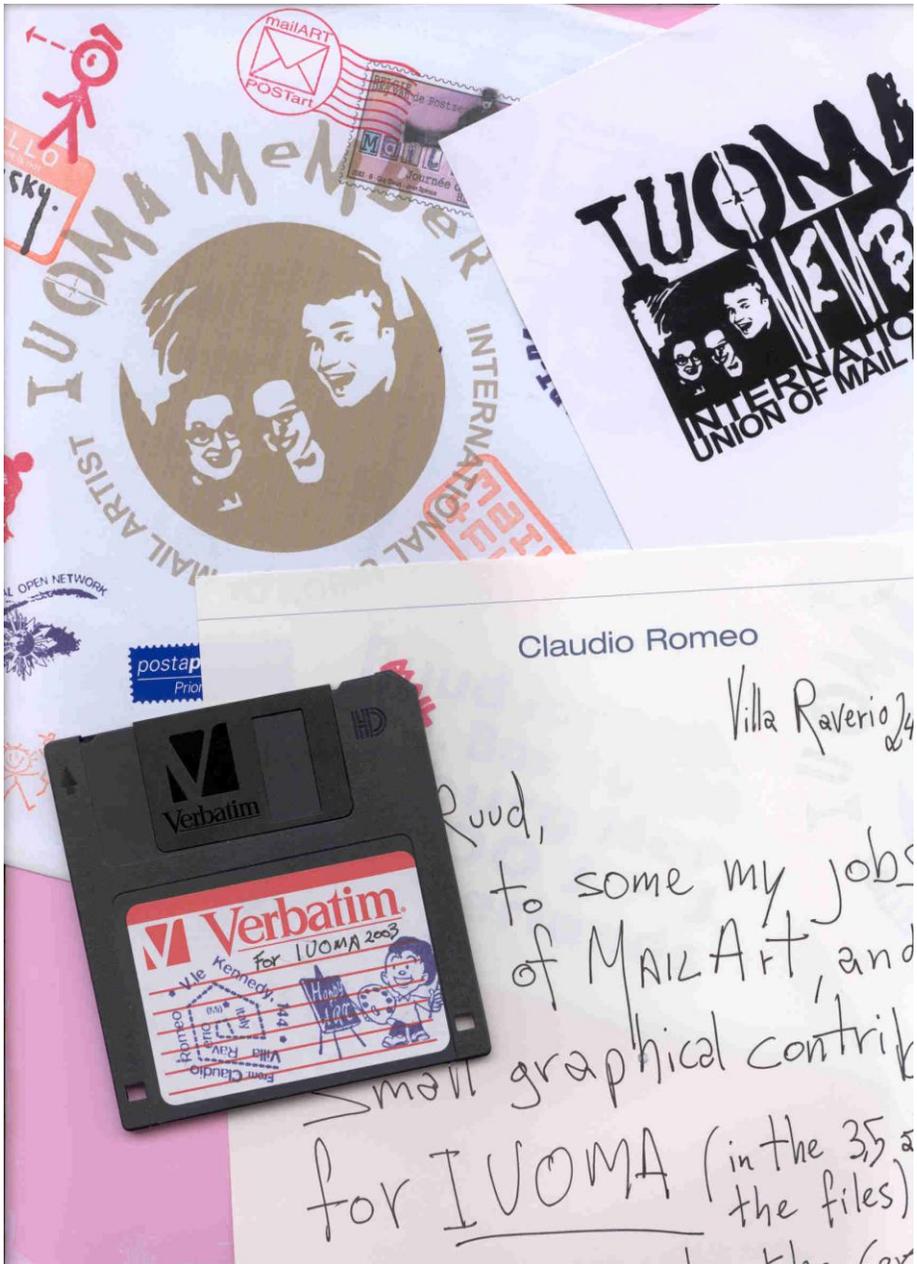
This past September, I had a vernissage and exhibition on The Sea...La Mer. I received many beautiful works of art. Having a successful vernissage and exhibition requires a lot of time and hard work...and good friends to lend a helping hand.

Not only did I have an exhibition but a close friend and I collaborated on a book called Postcards From the Sea. The book consists totally of Sea postcards which we mailed to each other through the postal system. Our messages to each other are on the back of them. Many have been sold and profits from the sales went to Research into Parkinson's Disease. My co-author and friend's sister has Parkinson's Disease. Our book is dedicated to her. My friend is not a mail artist but she has done a spectacular job in creating beautiful Sea watercolors on our postcards and I have taken photographs. I put up a blog for this book and also another blog with all the beautiful Sea Mail-Art which mail artists sent to me. I have received only positive comments. There will be a sequel to this book in the summer of 2010.

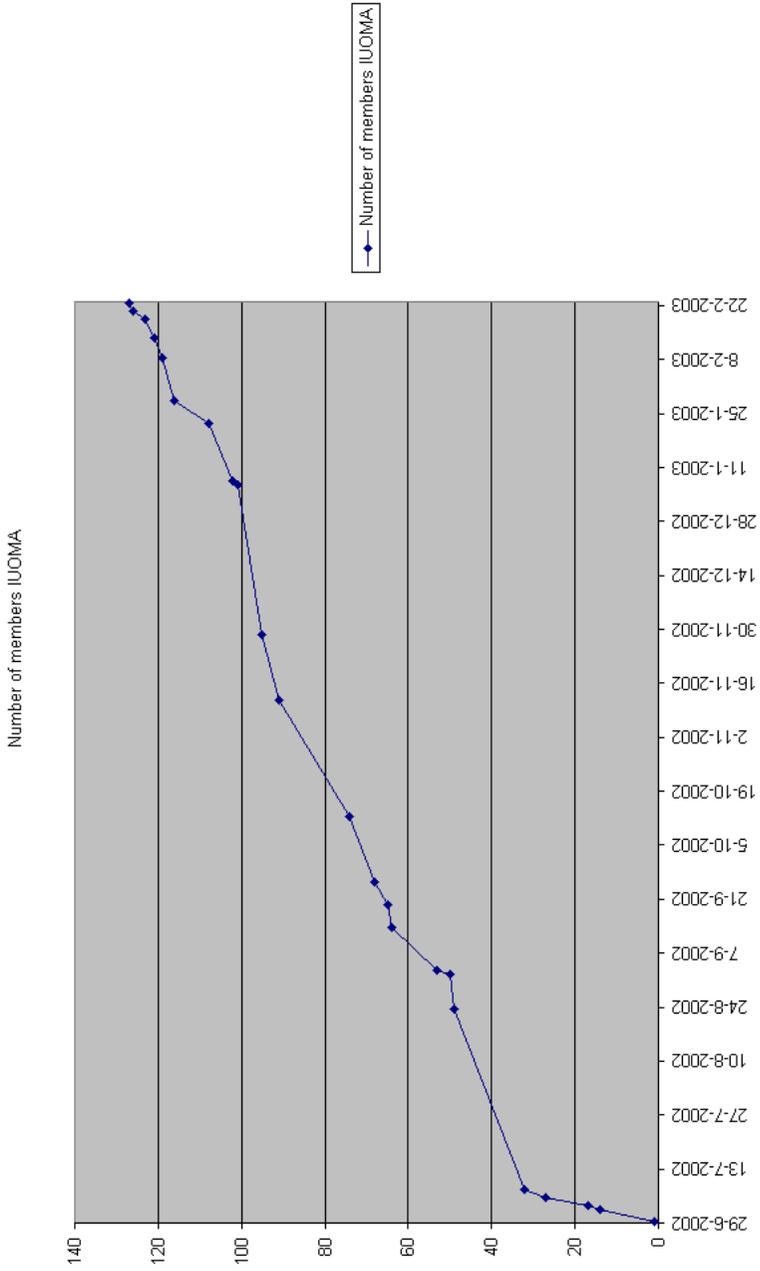
When I think back to my early days in IUOMA, I am appalled at the way I treated some members in a discussion. I was often rude in my responses. I regret this behavior since one ought to show respect for the opinions of other members even when they are at a crossroads and perhaps dislike each other intensely. I do not "suffer fools gladly!" Common courtesy ought never have to be considered a rule, however, I do need to work harder in

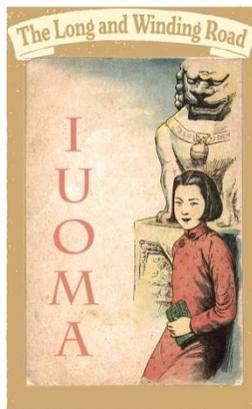
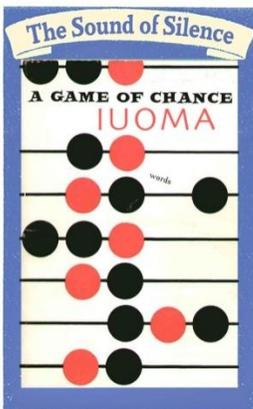
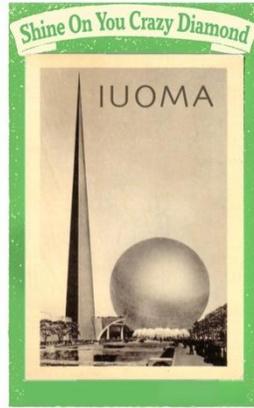
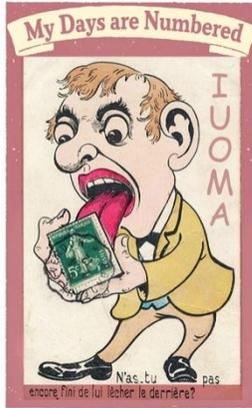
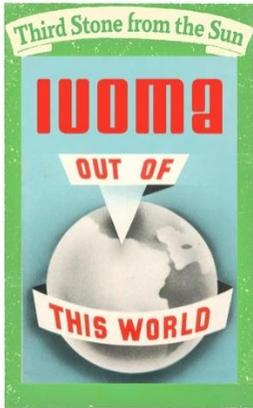
being more considerate and sensitive with regards to their feelings and egos.

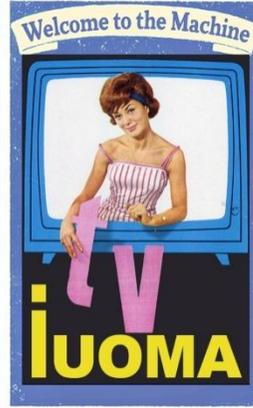
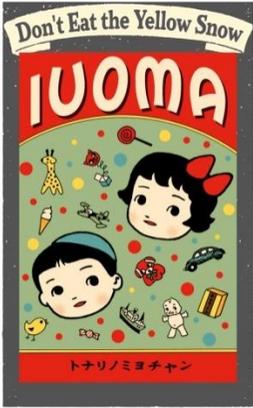
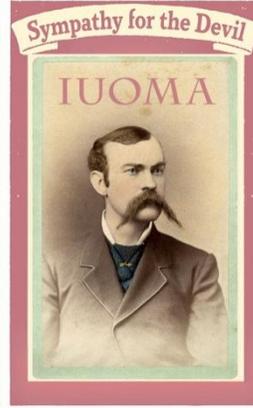
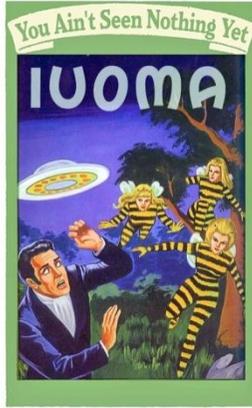
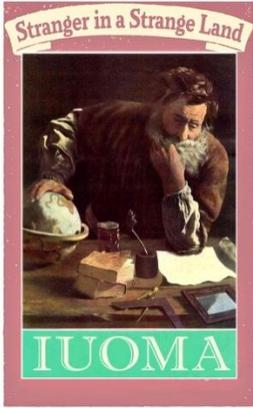
Submitted by Wilma Duguay of Bonaventure, QC, Canada.



Graphic work from Claudio Romeo – Italy

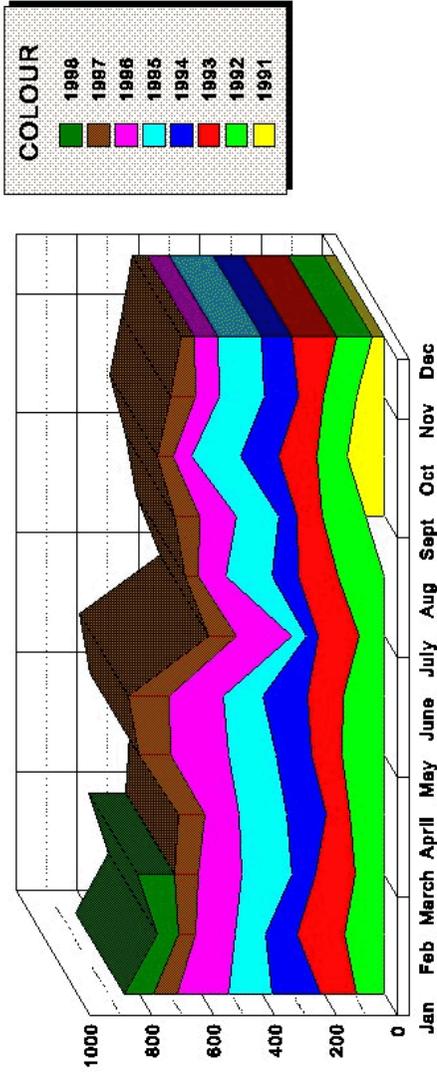






Artistamps created by Wackystuff - Canada

# Period Sept. 1991 till March 1998



Outgoing mail-art by Ruud Janssen



**MUGS designed for the IUOMA**

**POSTSDATA**  
**INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT**  
**ARTS CENTER – EAFIT UNIVERSITY**  
**MEDELLIN - COLOMBIA**  
**23 OCTOBER TO 21 NOVEMBER 2008**



**Plotter Mural - Visual Picture**  
**POSTDATA INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT**  
**Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**  
**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**

**By Tulio Restrepo Echeverri**

Postdata is the theme of invitation to the international exhibition of Mail Art & Net Art, in Spanish it can be called as *Arte Correo*, *Arte Postal*, *Arte por correspondencia* o *Arte de Redes*. This exposition will take place in the Center of Arts, first floor of the Luís Echavarría Villegas library, at EAFIT University (Medellin, Colombia), from October 23rd through November 21st 2008. This sample is part of the research and curative project called "Art by mail in Latin America. A view from cyber-culture ", conducted by Professor Tulio Restrepo Echeverri, a member of the Research Group in Cultural Studies (*GEC* in Spanish) in the area of visual culture, from the School of Humanities and Sciences, of the EAFIT University.

The project's purpose is investigating the art background, principal exponents, aesthetic expression, social and political view and the influence in the work of art of Latin American Mail Artists. Another purpose is to register each artist's activity in the International Mail Art movement as an expression and contemporary artistic practice which circulates and distributes these pieces of art through the postal system and cyberspace, independently from the official art circuit and galleries.

The Postdata display was proposed as an alternative of the investigation mentioned before, which evidenced direct actions of this world wide movement of exchanging communications through postal mail in a tangible way.



## **POSTDATA**

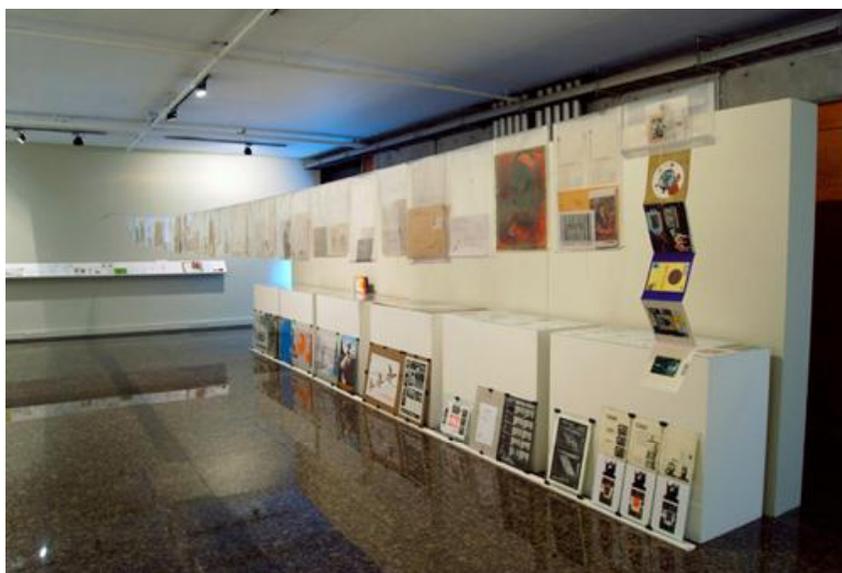
**INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT  
Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**

**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**

The work as a curator included among other things, the conception and organization of the event, the cultural management of the area of the exhibition, the selection of the postal art artists, the graphical design of the image of identity for the diffusion and finally the paper work for the call of the press media.

Other responsibilities include the creation and design of the montage, the continuous communication and follow-up of the pieces received via postal mail and internet before the deadline.

Finally, the protocol for receiving and sending documentation to the participants is required in order to transmit and exchange information. The requirements to complete the cycle of communication are the return of the documents given to the participants in the circuit. Many areas of common interest are experienced between the issuer and the recipient through an interpersonal communication process where information is conveyed and exchanged through messaging.



## **POSTDATA**

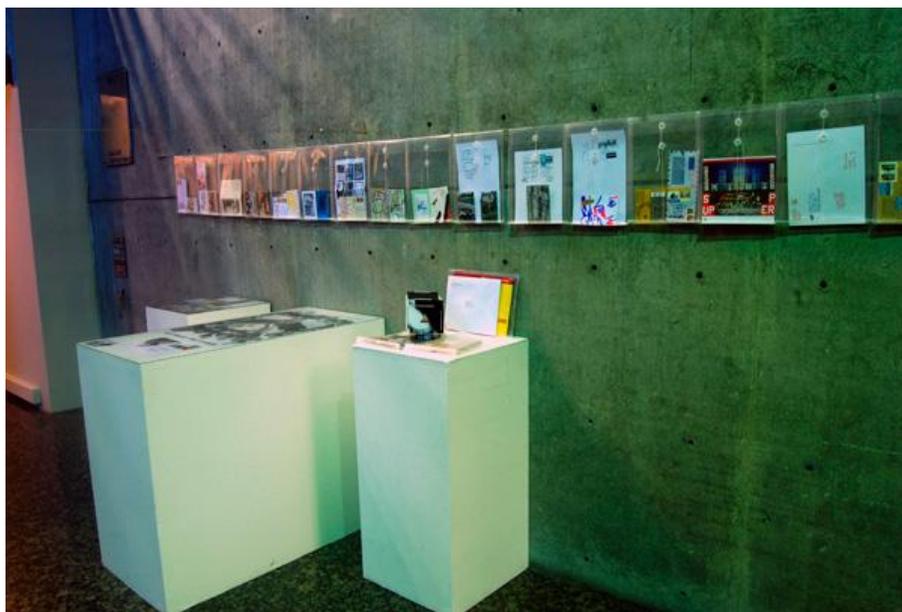
**INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT  
Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**

**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**

The curatorship also consists of an alternative to obtain and register the postal art. These postal arts become a primary and secondary source for the establishment of a structured study from epistemology, communication theory, new media and contemporary art.

This new view is also from the articles, essays and theory about the art by mail made by the same postal artist who recollected pieces of art and experiences of other individuals in groups which debate and feel through the media, techniques and diverse technologies.

In the same way, the vanguard of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with philosophical, literary and political roots which have a bit of futurism, constructionists, Dadaism and surrealism by the hands of neo-vanguard of the mid-20th century as the conceptual art and the fluxus are the references for the creative actions that recall the postal artists' expression through practices like collage, sound art, music, video art, fax art, performance and visual poetry.



## **POSTDATA**

### **INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**

**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**

From a cultural studies approach, this research aims to analyze the phenomenon of communication that manifests as an everyday cultural practice, a direct artistic self-initiative of an individual or group through the exchange of mail art of communicative interaction, which is done through the cyber-media that inserts into a specific social and political context as a place where culture is manifested.

In the same way, it is intended to investigate the communicative paradigm and expressions of Latin American Mail Art from the

emergence of cyberspace, thanks to the characteristics of time-specific means and the consequences that the mass phenomenon of the Internet has contributed in the formation of a virtual community and its artistic activity in networks; by opening a new aesthetic communicative dynamic that changes the fact of the production, the bill works, the intersection of messages and the implementation of projects due to the recent use of digital technologies determined by the evolution of the Web and its current development characterized by the use of social software; articulating spaces outreach websites, blogs, e-mail Art and Net Art, among others, which currently distribute correspondence in two adjacent networks, the international postal network art and *telematic* network of cyberspace via the Internet.



Postal call (draft), Graphic Design: Tulio Restrepo  
 Postscript Project, International Exhibition - Art & Net Mail Art  
 Arts Center - University EAFIT - Medellín - Colombia - 2008



Postal call (draft), Graphic Design: Tulio Restrepo  
Postscript Project, International Exhibition - Art & Net Mail Art  
Arts Center - University EAFIT - Medellin - Colombia - 2008

## **Why use Post Script?**

Searching for an excuse to call out to the international Mail Art network, I chose this concept of postscript as the theme of the meeting because it felt appropriate for several reasons.

The first is that the word is exclusively meaning communication through mail and an option to add information caused by an omission or emphasis of the general idea.

The second reason is that it proposes an expression wide enough for various esthetic interpretations, which are vulnerable to be transformed into different formats or means.

The third reason is about the word being a culturally mnemonic term activating a part of the memory.

Next I quote its literal meaning to connote indirectly this voice: "The postscript (from the Latin expression Post datum or post data, which means" after the date ", abbreviated PS) is the annotation that is added at the end of a letter, after having completed and signed, as an alternative to add information not known or remembered while writing. Its meaning refers to what

was written after the data, as the date written at the end to indicate when the letter had been completed. "(1)

This type of "foot note" or explaining message at the end meant a clear and traditional representation in the postal mail. This last message was hand written or with a typewriter, which once mapped out was difficult to change the written text. On the contrary, electronic mail has made the postscript unnecessary due to the fact that information technologies allow the writer to make any modification to the body of the text whenever is needed before the letter is sent.

Returning to its meaning, this so-called "post-date" or postscript, becomes the object of reflection from which each artist would receive a postcard of invitation, they would have complete freedom to send by mail or electronic mail their visual, sound, conceptual performance or multimedia annotation.

All of this in order to add reference information describing their powers from something objective about the realities and global developments on the political-social or self way to publicize its new aesthetic experiences, renovate its communication in a Still Live in the Network of International Postal Art.

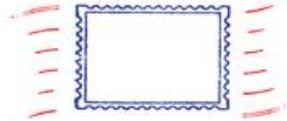


Inauguration Invitation Postcard (draft), Graphic Design: Tulio Restrepo

Postscript Project, International Exhibition - Art & Net Mail Art  
Arts Center - University EAFIT - Medellin - Colombia - 2008

# POSTDATA

Mail Art & Net Art  
International project exhibition  
Curator:  
Tulio Restrepo / Mail Artist & Networker



Inaguración - Opening Exhibition:  
Jueves 23 de Octubre de 2008 / 7:00 p.m.  
October 23 2008 / 7:00 p.m.  
Centro de Artes - Universidad EAFIT  
Medellín - Colombia

Entrada libre - Free Entrance  
Informes - Information:  
Departamento de Comunicación y Cultura  
Teléfono - Phone: 2 61 95 00  
Ext: 9656 y 9657  
Abierta hasta - Opening until:  
Noviembre 21 de 2008 - November 21, 2008



Fotografía: Mauricio Granados



Inauguration Invitation Postcard (draft), Graphic Design: Tulio Restrepo

Postscript Project, International Exhibition - Art & Net Mail Art  
Arts Center - University EAFIT - Medellín - Colombia – 2008

## Between Postdata and Postscriptum

A similar expression to the postdata is the postscript (PS); Latin expression meaning "after writing" used when the author, without needing to modify the body of the text, wanted to include additional information that wasn't necessarily related with the principal subject of the message.

Taking into account that both postdate and postscript are models to fix or add something after the text is concluded, metaphorically the text is the object and the option so that the content of the postal pieces of art gathered in this presentation can articulate some information, without quitting the artistic practices or thoughts. This turns into a re-reading of historical, artistic, cultural or social events, it can also be an up-to-date reading about the global or local context under postal

Each sample of Mail Art has a particularity of including and using all types of languages and techniques to communicate in diverse codes, visuals, sounds or texts. Most of the times there are no limits to the dimensions, techniques or expressions to which these lead to, considering that there are no judges to see, prizes or distinctions to be given out or speculations of monetary kind.

Therefore, there are no cultural mechanisms of control as the ones just mentioned, that can introduce a sort of external and abnormal noise to the artistic production of the mail artist. In the mean time, this represents a historical opportunity to build and organize with this information aspect relative to the behavior and evolution of the work of the new networkers, by sending their messages to different contacts near or close which results as evidence for the investigation concerned.



## **POSTDATA**

### **INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT**

**Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**

**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**



Video Performances of Eugenia Serafini - Italy  
INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT  
Arts Center - University EAFIT - Medellin - Colombia - 2008  
Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas

### **Postdate**

#### **From Analog to Digital in the mail art**

In December 2007 by post mail and e-mail the postal invitation was sent, in the back of the invitation a script was written to allure participants to send works which reflected about the concept mentioned, surrounding genre and techniques as:

Postal Art Archives (retrospective material), letters, envelopes, post cards, stamps, books of artists, newspapers assembled magazines (*fanzine*), stencils, catalogs, sound art, music, video art, photocopies (copy art), drawings, engravings, paintings, sculpture, collage, fax art, objects, visual poetry, performance, happenings, correspondence, interviews, installations, Internet: cyber creations in art network (called by contemporary critics and curators as Net official art), e-mail art, art blogs and Web mail, among others.

The presentation of the following pieces of art is not done according to preferences or categorical judgments; it is done to engage in the visualization in shape and depth of works that are redirected by conviction towards the postal art circuit. They are also redirected towards the circuit through the adoption of a philosophy that explains the artistic practices inherited from the manifest and the theories of vanguard.

Therefore a theory and a base were created for the interactions and communications in the analog network of the postal art, the personalized and cared registry of art work in non-official archives, producing publications, exhibitions, meetings, conferences and digital networks of the postal art due to cyber activity in virtual communities, also known as “The digital mail art networking”.



## **POSTDATA**

**INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT  
Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**

**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**



## **POSTDATA**

### **INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART SHOW & NET ART PROJECT Arts Center - EAFIT University - Medellin - Colombia - 2008**

**Photo: Daniel Felipe Agudelo Rojas**

### **Analog letter vs. Digital letter**

The letter in the postal art is a piece of art and a vehicle for who desire to communicate concepts using only hand, mechanical or digital writing or typing. The following example highlights the work submitted by the Belgian networker, Charles François, which is directly related to the practice of conceptual art that objectively reflects on the role of art as a cultural practice and expression, the values aesthetic, ethical and social implications

of artistic work in a particular social historical context and the on scope of cultural industries on behalf of this institution.

The book is a handwritten letter whose message consists only of expository text, arguments and questions the loss of sense of collaborative work of art in the postal network. With the arrival of Internet, the book states that have been conducted during the period between years 1981 and 2001, for 20 years and has continued, in his words, to communicate by this means for the following reason (apart from his statement and I quote).

[..] “I think that since the arriving of Internet, “mail art networking” has no sense anymore...”

“That’s why now I am only interested in archiving (of the last millennium “paper” activities or “pre-Internet” technology).

Liege Belgium  
August 25, 2008

Dear old friends,

i have been a "mail art networker"  
from 1981 → 2001

so approximately during the last  
twenty years of the last millennium.

i think that since the arriving  
of the internet, "mail art networking"  
hasn't any sense anymore ...

that's why i am only interested now  
in archiving (of the last millennium  
"paper" activities or "pre-internet"  
technology)

my name is Charles FRANCOIS  
(former known as R.A.T.)

i am still living at Quai Churchill, 35  
4000 liege Belgium

my e-mail is : charfra@skynet.be

Charles

Carta enviada como Postdata por el networker de Bélgica,  
Charles Francoise



### **Sobre carta enviado como Postdata por el networker de Bélgica, Charles Francoise**

The above gives a good reason for a network debate; while it becomes necessary to explore and determine if there has been a loss of value and a connection of the exchanged in the postal art, of the characteristics as a cultural construction capable of being collected, reprocessed into other works, etc.

ICT's (information and communication technologies) have given a meaning and scope in the implementation of multiple services for the exchange of messages.

An example of this is the current letter, replaced by the electronic model of e-mail, whose mode of transmission and reception involves the transfer and appropriation of new technologies and the transformation of languages, gradually moving the traditional document towards the idea, meaning that

in the context of a specific interface for managing email, the electronic letter, has an anti-object sense, which confirms the formulation of conceptual, being more important what was communicated than the object aspects, as: support, its nuances, its characterization or personalization, which are no longer needed and they open a path to the introduction of a multimedia dimension to the body of the message by promoting the theory and communicative interaction between peers or members of virtual communities of postal art all of this thanks to the engineering, graphic design and cognitive disciplines.

Between old and new technologies we can establish some other known value on the channel or medium that carries messages through the postal mail and e-mail, which would be listed:

1. The shape of the current e-mail summarizes the three communication media, personal and professional standards, in turn, letter, fax and telephone.
2. We can consider the e-mail as a mean that Mail Art adopted in order to call for the expositions in networks declaring the email art as a conceptual expression.
3. An e-mail art can be printed over many substrates, including paper, once it is modulated and demodulated by the technology of the Internet server that carries the message.
4. The immediate transmission and digital reception of the art is priceless

In terms of efficiency in transmitting the message (a test used to prove that an auto e-mail with multimedia data returns from the server to the user in only 3 seconds!!) with this, the anti object model of email is virtually capable of forwarding, update, edit, copy and send to additional recipients.

5. Provides feedback information for the urgency of the parties that exchange messages, as opposed to analog flow, which can only be fully perceived by an artist who is experienced postal work in both transmission systems of correspondence, or practiced before and after the birth of cyberspace.
6. The virtue of the Mail Art network is its dual functionality, the handling of two channels, the postal and electronic form and that's constitutes hemispheres and alternative communicative dimensions that allow to communicate art through a network.
7. It captures our attention that our friend Charles François had quoted his email in the letter, while being able to digit and send this message in just only a few minutes, preferring to send it by postal mail so he can send a Postdate. My most sincere gratitude towards this honorable gesture of our colleague who validates the exchange of physical documents increasing postal archives and allowing having a magnificent example for future studies of Postal Art.

An example of counterproposal is the e-mail art sent Postdate by Graciela Gutierrez Marx a xylographer, teacher and pioneer of mail art in Argentina. Her activities are developed in the art of action, the FLUXUS, the visual poetry and International Networking in which she participates continuously since the 70's.

The images below illustrate two successive messages sent on September 30, 2008 18:02:25 GMT-05: 00, and October 1, 2008 9:33:45 GMT-05: 00, on which attached an electronic facsimile as record of release.

The first image shows the letter Mrs. Maria Isabel Chorobik de Mariani addresses to her granddaughter Clara Anahí Mariani, who disappeared during the military dictatorship in Argentina 1976. The message shows the identity of the kidnapped baby along with pictures of her parents also abducted and disappeared by the conflicts of the government. The Postdate, updates a protest calling for life, love and company of their loved ones while it illustrates briefly on the family and about the events in which the Argentine armed forces removed the Justicialists from the power on March 24, 1976, remove from office Maria Estela Martinez de Perón.

Graciela Gutierrez Marx has to go through this social and political conflict of power called by the military as "Process of National Reorganization," which extends the concept of ideological subversion in all manifestations, including mail art, as opposed to the economic model wanted to be imposed.

30527482

**Clara Anahí Mariani**  
te seguimos buscando








Sus padres: Diana Turuggi y Daniel Mariani, asesinados durante la dictadura

25476305

**DOCUMENTO NACIONAL DE  
IDENTIDAD DE:**  
*MARIANI*  
*Clara Anahi*

nombres:

Clase *1976* N° *25.476.305*

Sexo  VARON  MUJER

(tachar lo que no corresponde)

Nacido/a el *12* de *Ago*sto  
de *76* en *La Plata*

Part. o Deno.

Prov. *Buenos Aires*

Nación *Argentina*

Doc. del denunciante *LC: 6241.284*

N° de documento

*Clara Anahi Mariani*  
firma denunciante

- 1 -

Querida nieta:

Soy tu abuela "Chicha" Chorobik de Mariani, te busco desde el momento en que Etchecolatz, Camps y su tropa mataron a tu madre y te secuestraron de tu hogar en la calle 30 n°1134 de La Plata, República Argentina. Era el 24 de noviembre de 1976 y tenías 3 meses de edad. Desde ese momento con tu padre te buscamos hasta que a él también lo asesinaron.

A pesar de que trataron de convencerme de que habías muerto en la balacera, yo sabía que estabas viva. Hoy está comprobado que sobreviviste y estás en poder de alguien. Ya tienes 31 años y tu número de documento probablemente sea cercano al 25.476.305 con el que te anotamos. Yo quisiera pedirte que busques fotos de cuando eras bebé y las compares con las que acompañan este texto.

Quiero contarte que tu abuelo paterno se dedicó a la música y yo a las artes plásticas; que tus abuelos maternos se dedicaron a las ciencias, que tu mamá amaba la literatura y tu papá era licenciado en economía. Ambos tenían un gran sentido de la solidaridad y compromiso con la sociedad. Algo de todo esto tendrás en tus inclinaciones de vida porque, a pesar de que hayas sido criada en un hogar distinto, uno guarda internamente los genes de sus antepasados. Seguramente hay muchas preguntas sin respuesta que aletean en tu interior.

A mis más de 80 años mi aspiración es abrazarte y reconocerte en tu mirada, me gustaría que vinieras hacia mí para que esta larga búsqueda se concretara en el mayor anhelo que me mantiene en pie, el que nos encontremos.

Clara Anahí, mientras te espero seguiré buscándote.

Te abraza, tu abuela "Chicha Mariani"

e-mail art\_postdata\_parte I - Graciela Gutiérrez Marx - 2008

**De:gmarxeck@ciudad.com.ar**

**Asunto: Fw: Sumemos fuerzas II**

**Fecha:30 de septiembre de 2008 18:02:25 GMT-05:00**

**Para:mamanucha@yahoo.com.ar**

We can have an idea, thanks to her words in her article, published in kairanzine number 7 which was directed by Italian Mail Artist Gianni Simone, which is called: "My Life in Mail Art - The invisible artists or the net with no fisherman"; from which I excerpt the following: "In 75, the first exhibit of Mail Art was carried out (organized by Vigo and Zabala), and received the premonitory name of *ULTIMA* (LAST in Spanish). In *ULTIMA*, the "state intelligence services" started to execute censorship which quickly turned to repression. I was the censored one: I had provoked the establishment with that first stamp sent to Holland which represented a stereotyped hand shaped dove, an icon of a slogan implanted by Minister Lopes Rega, which was shown on television. Peace and silence (from the tombs?) were what promised our Nation's progress. My dove dripped red blood and had a cross which said "*pacem pueblo*", a perspective of the unknown people sepulchres, which the military dictatorship inaugurated shortly." (2)

De: gmarxeck@ciudad.com.ar

Asunto: Re: Fw: Sumemos fuerzas II Tulio Restrepo

Fecha: 1 de octubre de 2008 9:33:45 GMT-05:00

Para: [tulio.restrepo@une.net.co](mailto:tulio.restrepo@une.net.co)

Holamiqueridotulio!

Te pido me perdones por el aparente abandono. Hay mucho trabajo por hacer, aquí en mi país, e inclusive en La Plata, la ciudad en la que habito.

Acabo de llegar de Mar del Plata ( situada a 500 kilómetros de mi casa), donde mantuve un encuentro con artistas marginales, que me insuflaron muchas energías y esperanzas. Las utopías están vivas....no en la "masagente" pero sí en muchos seres luminosos....ésos que son muchos más que dos.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo con que incluyas la imagen de Clara Anahi Mariani que te envié, solamente te pido que le agregues este pie:

*Postdata:*

*La abuelachicha es una artista invisible. En su juventud estudió bellas artes y pintó... pintó con colores plenos de amor... después recreó la vida... y todavía, ya anciana, sigue pintando la búsqueda de una nieta expropiada por el terrorismo de estado... ése que cubrió con su capa negra la sangre derramada... ése que estalló las conciencias con golpes de botas, culatas y disparos en los días y las noches de nuestra Argentina herida... invadida por fuerzas aliadas a la superpotencia... ésa, a la que hoy se le caen las máscaras... ésa que todavía opera para saquear pueblos inocentes...*

*La abuela Mariani siempre florece y hace florecer... si ella tiene esperanzas ¿ por qué no todos nosotros? ¿por qué no todos los otros todos... esos que sufren hambre y sed de justicia, en este bello planeta azul aguamar?*

*El pasado no pasa. Podemos crear un cutopos que nos aloje a todos los que laboramos y luchamos... ¿ Hasta la victoria de la poesía... SIEMPRE !!!*

*graciela gutierrez marx*

Mail de 'Chicha': [mariaisabelchorobik@sinectis.com](mailto:mariaisabelchorobik@sinectis.com).

e-mail art\_postdata\_parte II - Graciela Gutiérrez Marx - 2008

De:gmarxeck@ciudad.com.ar

Asunto:Re: Fw: Sumemos fuerzas II Tulio Restrepo

**Fecha: 1 de octubre de 2008 9:33:45 GMT-05:00**

**Para: [tulio.restrepo@une.net.co](mailto:tulio.restrepo@une.net.co)**

# ArtNexus

ARTE EN COLOMBIA No. 116 Sep - Nov 2008

Leandro Erlich

Abraham Palatnik

Gerd Leufert

Tania Bruguera

Keith Edmier

Fotofest

Arte no es vida

Museo Gurvich



**WE RESPOND DIFFERENTLY TO THIS ONE, TO THAT ONE THE ONLY WAY TO UNDERSTAND IS THROUGH PARTICIPATORY ACTIONS, RAY JOHNSON**

**DUCHAMPOSTAL**

**WORLDWIDE MAIL ART RESOURCES**

**FLUXUS**

**RECORD OF POSTALITY**

**POSTDATA INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART & NET ART PROJECT EXHIBITION**

**POSTDATA**  
 CURATOR: TULIO RESTREPO  
 SEND MAIL ART TO: A.A. 65-376 - MEDELLIN / COLOMBIA  
 e-mail: tulio.restrepo@une.net.co  
 ALL TECHNIQUES & FREE SIZE DIMENSION

**PLACE: CENTRO DE ARTES / UNIVERSIDAD EAFIT**  
 CRA 49 N° 7 SUR - 50 / MEDELLIN - COLOMBIA  
 http://www.eafit.edu.co

**OPENING EXHIBITION: OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 28 - 2008**

**MAIL TODAY ART TOMORROW**

**POST STAMP Replica Planet**

**BRAIN CELL LIFE FORM**

**ACTIVE MAIL ART CORRESPONDENCE**

**"THE FUTURE OF MAIL ART? AFTER LETTERS, AUDIO, VIDEO, COUNTRY... THE PERSONAL CONTACT"**  
 R. MAGGI

**The Eternal Network**  
 Vittore Baroni  
**FIRST DAY OF ISSUE**  
 Ambassador of the Artists Republic

**BEFORE INTERNET WAS MAIL ART BUY MY ART NEOISM NOW!?!?**  
 ON FILL STAMPS YOUR NOSE

**PAPER PLOIA**

**SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE** R. MAGGI

\* MAIL ART \* ARCHIVE \* ENVELOPES \* RUBBERSTAMPS \* ZINES \* INTERVIEWS \* ARTISTAMPS \* POSTCARDS \* COLLAGE \*  
 \* SMALL-PRESS \* ARTIST'S BOOK \* MAGAZINES \* CATALOGUES \* COPY ART \* STENCIL ART \* ANTICOPYRIGHT \* FAX ART \*  
 \* SCULPTURE \* VISUAL POETRY \* VIDEO ART \* DRAWINGS \* ENGRAVED \* PERFORMANCE \* INSTALLATION \* SOUND ART \*  
 \* OBJECT \* LETTERS \* INTERNET \* E-MAIL ART \* NET ART \* BLOGS \* MAIL ART WEB SITES \*

Publicidad, Exposición Internacional Proyecto Postdata,  
 Mail Art & Net Art - Medellín - Colombia - 2008  
 Portada y página interior, Revista Art Nexus - Arte en  
 Colombia, Nº 116 Sep - Nov 2008  
<http://www.artnexus.com/Default.aspx>

## Fuentes: Cibergrafía y Bibliografía

(1) <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postdata> (lenguaje)

(2)

<http://www.geocities.com/kairanzine/kairan7/ggmarx.htm>

<http://www.escaner.cl/signos.html>

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mail\\_art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mail_art)

<http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carta>

**MARCHAN FIZ, Simón, Del arte objetual al arte de concepto. Ediciones, Akal, S.A., 1988. Madrid, España. 1988. 483p.**

**PARCERISAS, Pilar. Conceptualismo(s) Poéticos, Políticos y Periféricos. En torno al arte conceptual en España, 1964 - 1980. Ediciones Akal, S.A., 2007. 544p**

**Archivo, Exposición Internacional - Proyecto Postdata, Mail Art & Net Art - Medellín - Colombia - 2008**

**Concept for an Artistamp Sheet by Bruno Pollacci (Italy)  
made in 2008**



## Discussions on the IUOMA Ning platform (selection).

My great and dear Friend,

yes, it's a very important and particular event, the 20th years of I.U.O.M.A, and to celebrate this event I suggest a special MAIL ART PROJECT with subject the same word "I.U.O.M.A.". Could be interesting to see how all the new and old International Mail Artists feel "I.U.O.M.A" (Conceptually and artistically, like a sort of Visual Poetry).

An embrace, my dear.  
Bruno Pollacci – Italy



Reply by [Judy Skolnick](#) on January 10, 2009 at 8:57pm

[Send Message](#)

-

I love this idea. Thanks. My contribution to mail art is participating in as many projects as I creatively can and this is excellent.



Reply by [Carla Cryptic](#) on January 10, 2009 at 9:14pm

[Send Message](#)

-

I know I do! :)

I still like the idea of an artistamp

commemorating IUOMA's 20th anniversary but that could fit into a mail art call easily.



Reply by [Isabelle Vannobel](#) on January 15, 2009 at 10:08am

[Send Message](#)

-

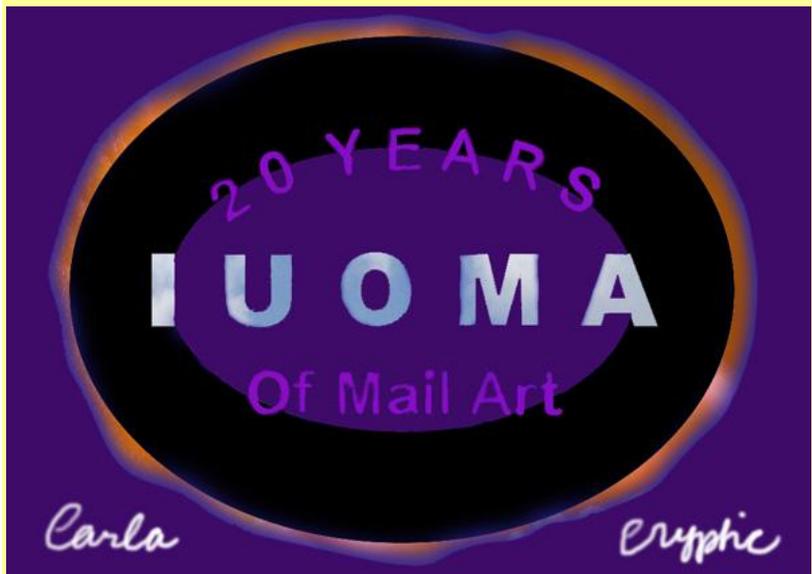
I love this idea of a special mail art project to celebrate the 20 th anniversary : visual poetry about IUOMA -



Reply by [Carla Cryptic](#) on April 15, 2009 at 4:52pm

[Send Message](#)

-





\_\_ Reply by [Carla Cryptic](#) on April 15, 2009 at 4:54pm

[Send Message](#)

-

Bruno - I love your IUOMA 20 logo and it finally inspired me to get off of my butt and do mine. :)

Comment by [Ruud Janssen](#) on November 26, 2009 at 9:25pm

\_\_ The new deadline for the book is set December 2009. You can still send in your texts. After that the book will be published.



Comment by [Ruud Janssen](#) on November 2, 2009 at 8:54am

\_\_ just sent out the first bunch of mail-art with this stamp on it.....



Comment by [Adamandia](#) on October 31, 2009 at 1:12pm

\_\_ I love your new stamp. Thanks for the reminder...I'll try not to let the internet distract me from making art...and mail art...8^)



Comment by [Ruud Janssen](#) on October 31, 2009 at 10:04am

\_ I hope the promised book will be ready before this year ends. Some promised text still have to come in. It all takes a bit more time as expected....



Comment by [Ruud Janssen](#) on October 28, 2009 at 2:25pm

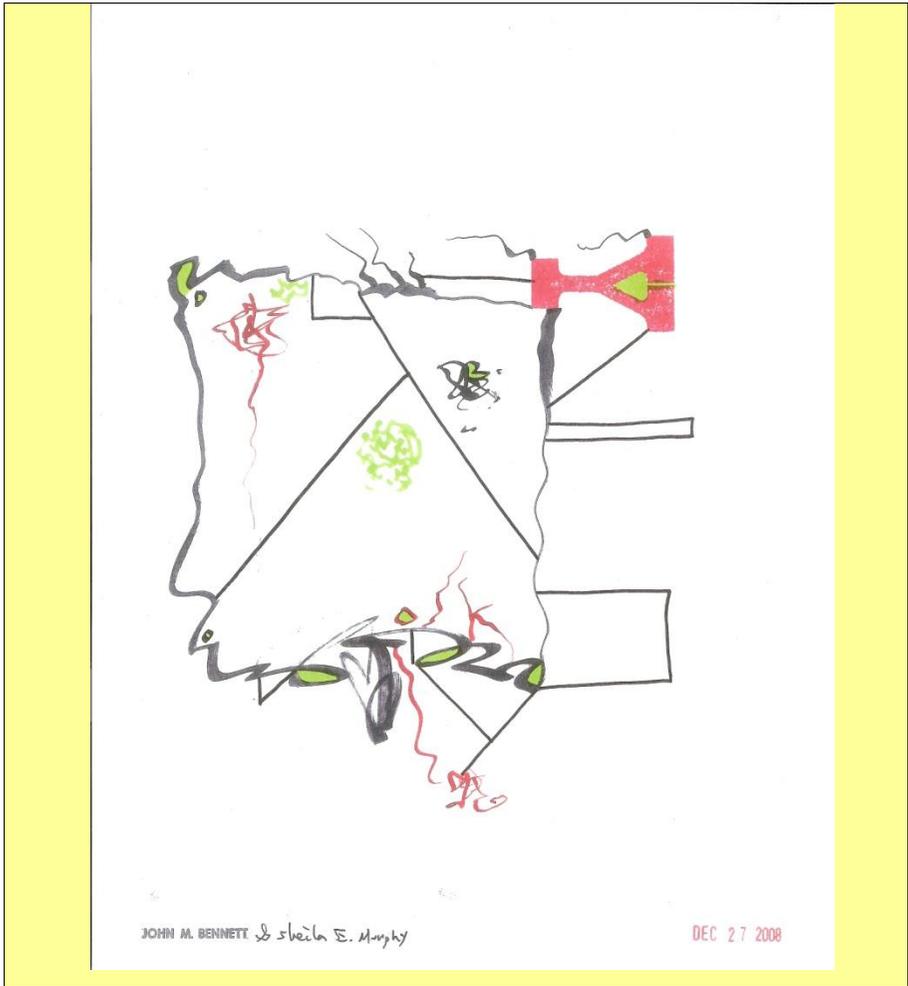
WHILE ON INTERNET  
DON'T FORGET TO  
SEND OUT MAIL-ART  
<http://iuoma-network.ning.com/>

This rubberstamp was ordered today to be used on my outgoing mail-art. When you get something in the future you will be able to see the result



Comment by [John M. Bennett](#) on July 14, 2009 at 9:15pm

\_ the "Sot" drawing below is a collaboration with Sheile E. Murphy, as is this one:



Comment by [John M. Bennett](#) on July 14, 2009 at 9:14pm

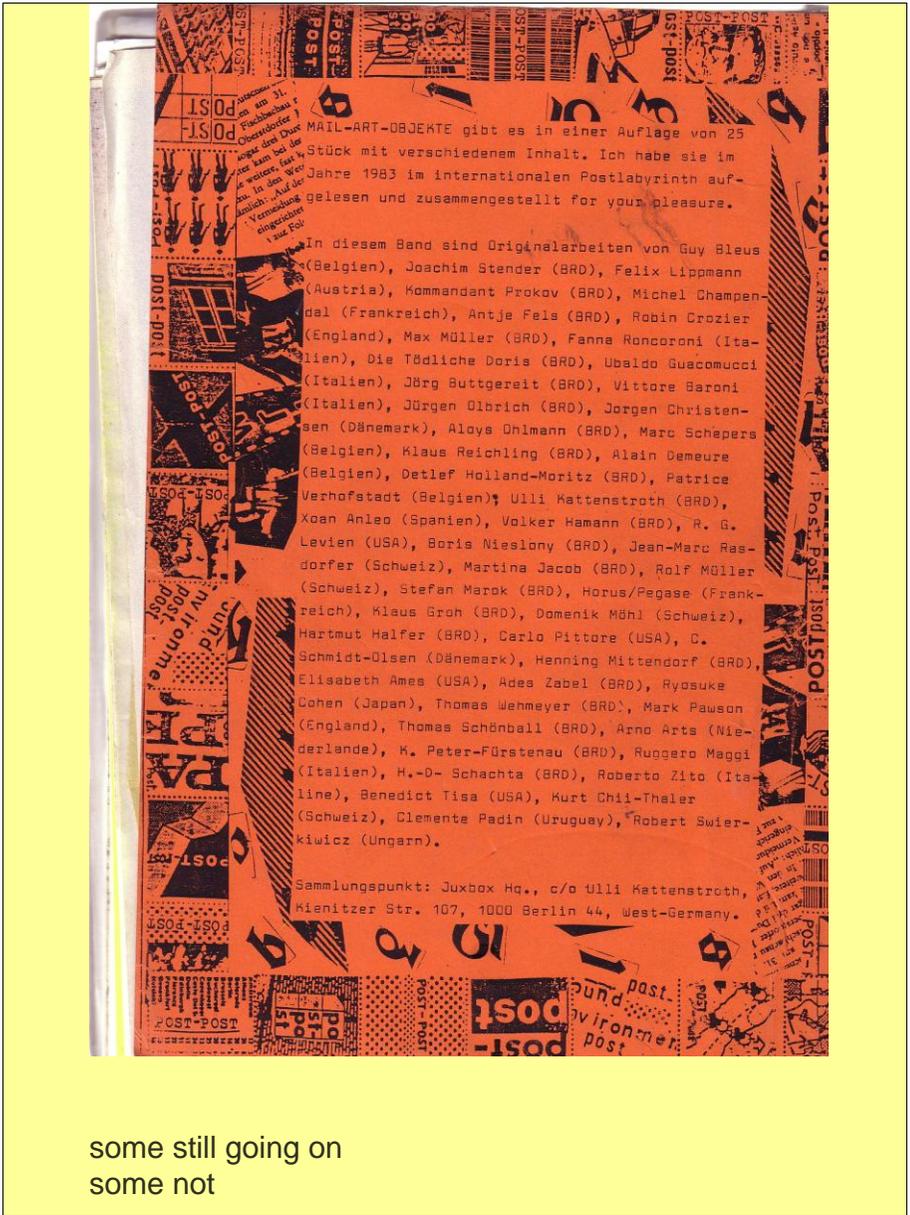




Comment by [John M. Bennett](#) on July 14, 2009 at 9:13pm



Comment by [yves maraux](#) on July 14, 2009 at 8:49pm



some still going on  
some not



Comment by [John M. Bennett](#) on May 5, 2009 at 4:37pm



Reply by [Mail Art Martha](#) on January 17, 2009 at 5:15pm

[Send Message](#)

If you feel a book will be very expensive in effort and money, I suggest a show of commemorative artistamps instead. Or more appropriate, perhaps, of rubber stamps, the subject being the celebration of 20 years of IUOMA



Reply by [Flora Raducan](#) on January 11, 2009 at 7:08pm

[Send Message](#)

-

Definitely it's worth the trouble!!!



Reply by [Mad Max](#) on January 11, 2009 at 4:47pm

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-

A book is a good idea - there are places where you can upload a book and people can buy a digital copy or will print it for you. I'm guessing the biggest problem with printing it yourself is the cost. How about an art show of work as well? You could do a travelling one and send it from one member to another in a different country and have the show in as many countries as you can. I could do one in Toronto in my space if you are interested let me know.



Reply by [Mirta Toledo](#) on January 11, 2009 at 12:44am

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Hola Ruud,  
I think the book is a great idea, but not to make it

available in digital form for free.

Blurb is one possibility that could be great, because you only have to buy one sample. After that, people can buy the book whenever they are ready.

You created IUOMA twenty years ago, I bet there is a lot of experiences that you have to share, not only to the IUOMA members, but for people from all over the world. I can't believe that I didn't know about mail art two years ago, and there are many things that still I do not know and I want to learn. I tell my students about Mail Art and they are fascinated. The book is not for vanity, I think, is a great and needed document not only for us, but for generations to come, and for the new artists that are beginning now.

And even for people who are not artists at all, the internet is all over the world and people may get to see it and get involved. There are something magical about mail, envelopes and their contents, a feeling of having that piece coming from far away in our hands. There is a similar feeling when having a book in our hands something that we can share with others, even children. Internet is great, and I love it. But still, books are cozy, intimate, and beautiful objects to cherish.

I will buy your book about the 20 years of IUOMA, and I bet it will be good to buy for presents too



Reply by [MailWorks](#) on January 11, 2009 at 12:28am

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of course, it's worth the trouble. MailWorks



Reply by [Carla Cryptic](#) on January 10, 2009 at 9:20pm

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It's a thought - are you up for it? It would be a lot of work, as you know from publishing your other books. :) OTOH, why not, if you are willing... one thing which would be cool would be to have a page for each artist who participates in this 20th anniversary call. That could be an interesting combination - a tribute to IUOMA and a tribute to the artists, too. We could each send you a sentence or two (max) of our mail art credo or something. Just a thought. :)

I like the digital form of the book being available for free but can you afford to do that? We could probably each contribute something (1 - 5 dollars, for example?) to pay for the time to make the book work (I am a graphic artist so I know how much time this can take, no matter how devoted one is to a work, it takes time from other work which pays, you know?). Still, these are just

thoughts - I will go along with whatever you decide to do. :)

1988-2008

**IUOMA**

**20 years of  
collective work**