

MAIL-ART STATEMENTS 2013

New statements by Ruud Janssen about Mail-Art.

In 2013 the postal rates have gone to extreme highs. Facebook and social networks are integrated for a large group in the communication rituals. The amount of sent Mail-Art for most mail-artists has decreased and also the old generation of Mail-Artists is slowly leaving us. Digital archives are being made and the speed of our communication has become very fast.

DIGITAL ARCHIVES OF MAIL-ART

Mail Art on the Internet has become a large collection of sometimes unstructured or structured images and texts. On many places Mail-Artists have started with putting their digital collections online, trying to show their view of the network they are in contact with.

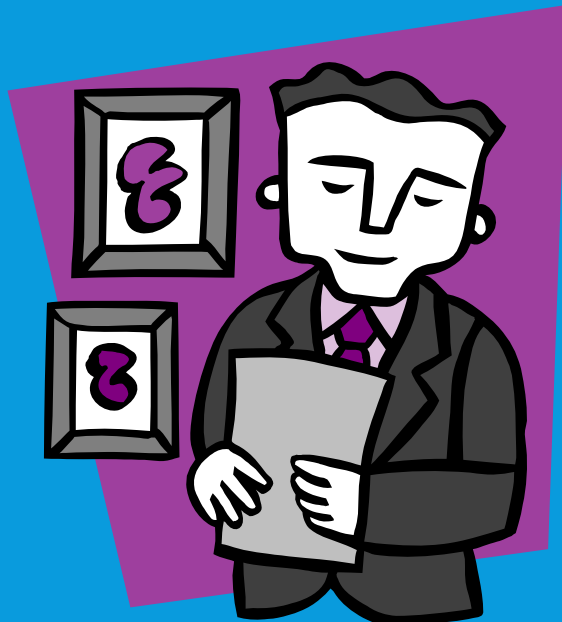
Also newcomers to Mail-Art discover these pages and try to understand what it is all about. Is it art, is it conceptual art, is it kitch, is it a hobby thing. All ideas are mixed together. There is no-one from inside that actually succeeds in explaining what mail-art is.

When people try to explain what Mail-Art is there are two ways: get involved and describe the experiences. The other way is to try to see it as an artform and describe how it fits in with other artforms.

Somehow a definition of Mail-Art is always a problem.



MAIL-ART AND MONEY STILL DON'T MIX



The historic statement of Lon Spiegelman (1941-2002) is that Mail-Art and Money don't mix. For a large section of the mail-art network this is one of the unwritten rules and is still true.

Yes, collections sometimes are sold. Books on Mail-Art, Artistamps and ATC's are produced and sold with a profit. But mostly the Mail-Art that is sent out is still a gift to the receiver.

There is not one network with a consensus on how things are. Everybody has his own specific network and is the center of this. Mostly the networks around a person have some form of consensus and they feel like a comfortable group or at least homogenic group.

So in some smaller networkgroups the views on Mail-Art and Money are different then other networkgroups. There is not that one network with a central idea or view or definition.

NEW AND OLD MAIL-ARTISTS MEET

The old generation and new generations of Mail-Artists meet. Online, through correspondence or in real life.

Traditions are passed on and the the new network learned from the old network. Yet the old network learns from the newcomers too.

In the 90s there were a lot of mail-artists against the digital influences. In this year 2013 some have changed their views and are now publishing all online and only send out small portions of mail.



THE OLD GENERATIONS



There is still the 'hardcore' mail-artists that refuses to go online and ignores the Internet and E-mail world. They still send out mail-art as long as they can and decide that is the only form acceptable.

There are also the Mail-Artists that have stopped because the digital communication took over. They don't like the massive communication like on facebook and other social networks and try to keep things small and on one-to-one basis

MAIL ART PROJECTS

The old Mail-Art projects always resulted in an exhibition of a documentation and those were real events.

New Mail-Art projects are sometimes started in digital form only and the organisers expect snail-mail. The documentation however is a blog of website. Some Mail-Artists ignore these projects because they think the balance (what you send is not in balance with what you get). A new generation thinks this is how it should be.

