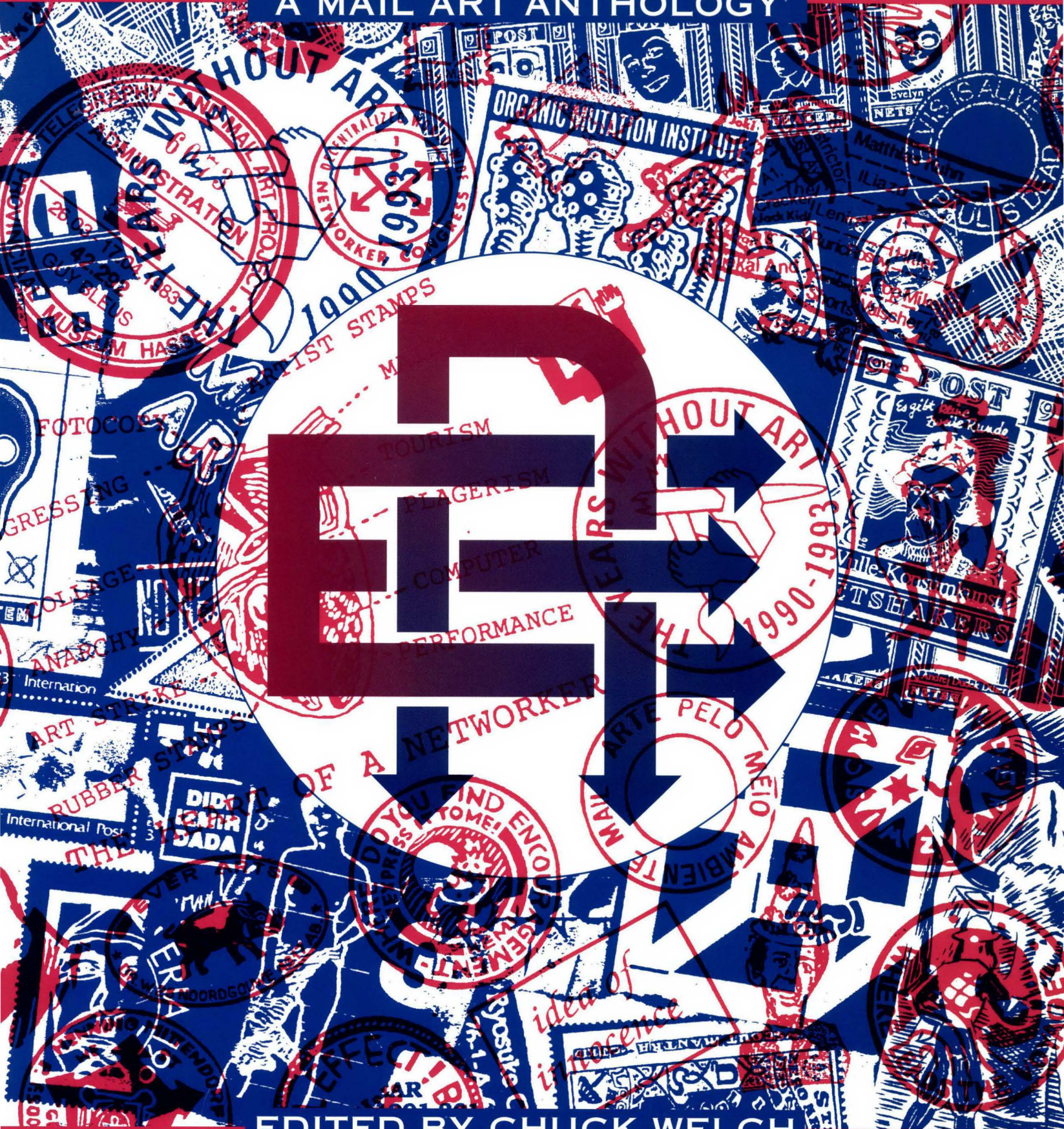


ETERNAL NETWORK

A MAIL ART ANTHOLOGY

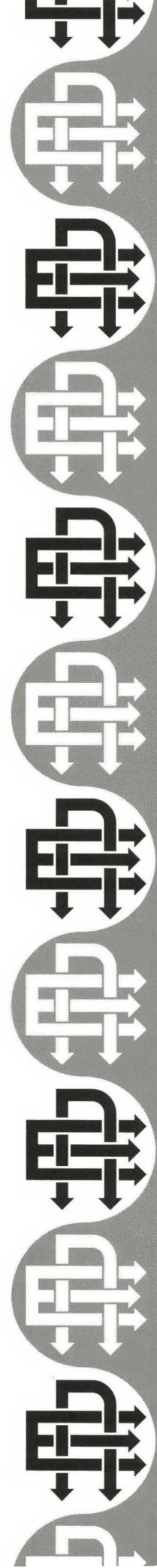


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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY PRESS

ETERNAL NETWORK

A MAIL ART ANTHOLOGY



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NETWORKING CURRENTS: Contemporary Mail Art Subjects and Issues

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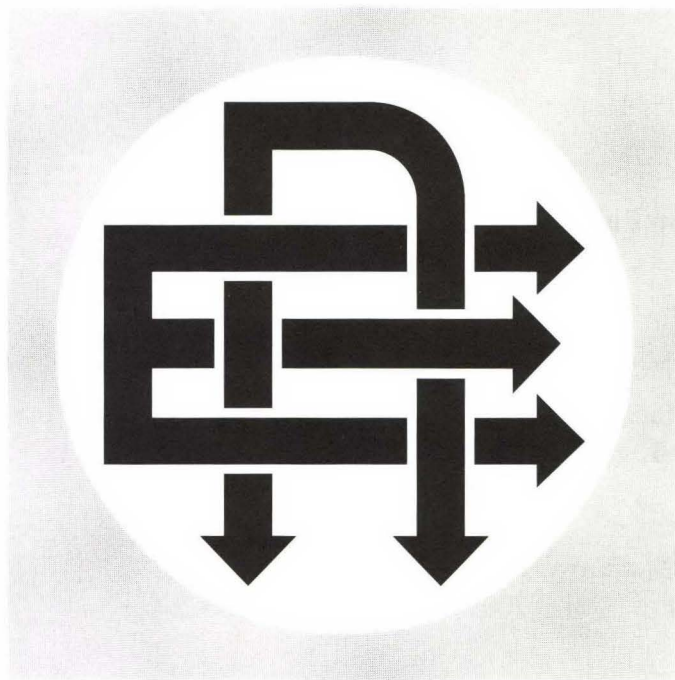
**THE AMBASSADOR STAMP ALBUM: Documentation of the Pan-American
Mail Art Expedition**

**SPRING GARDEN: A Mail Art Installation Bookwork
with David Cole, Sheril Cunning, and Marilyn R. Rosenberg**

NETSHAKER: A Mail Art Networker Zine

ETERNAL NETWORK

A MAIL ART ANTHOLOGY



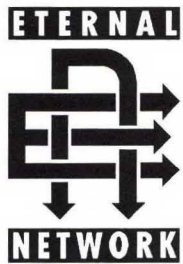
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Eternal Network is dedicated to the memory of

Jean Brown

1911–1994

friend of mail art



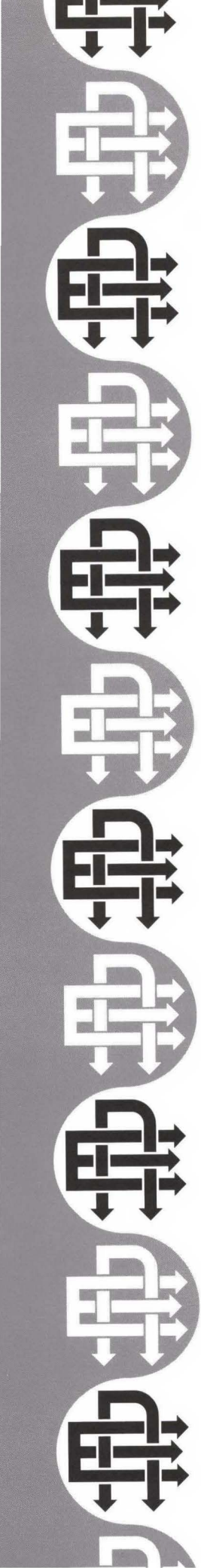
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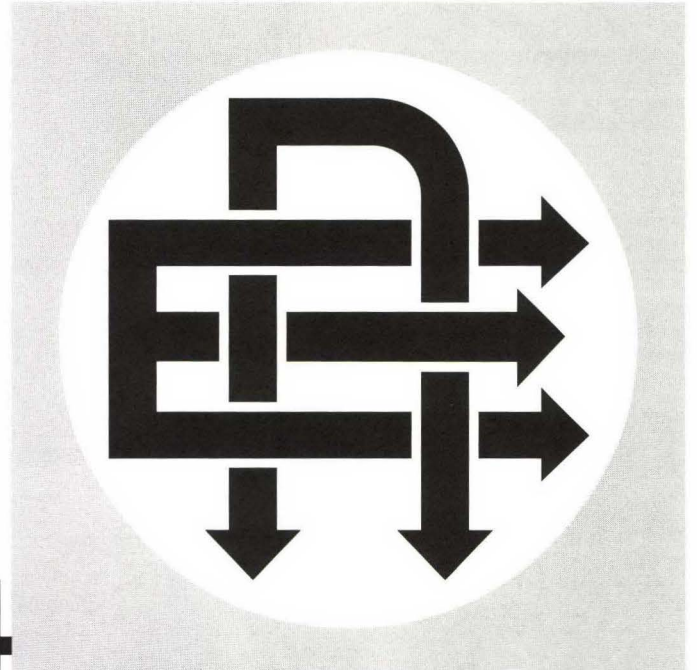
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Interconnection

The circle must be practiced
to be experienced. EachOne has a/turn
can voice it/all to all,
pass a feather a stamp a tick,
sayHave your piece.

Coco Gordon



PART 4 INTERCONNECTION OF WORLDS

Interconnection is the interaction of local artists in the international theatre of network activity. Directing, controlling or acquiring this communal play is transcended through active involvement, for interconnection isn't acquired, it is experienced. Networker artists in this section describe alternative and collaborative projects that create, expand and encourage interconnection in global networking.

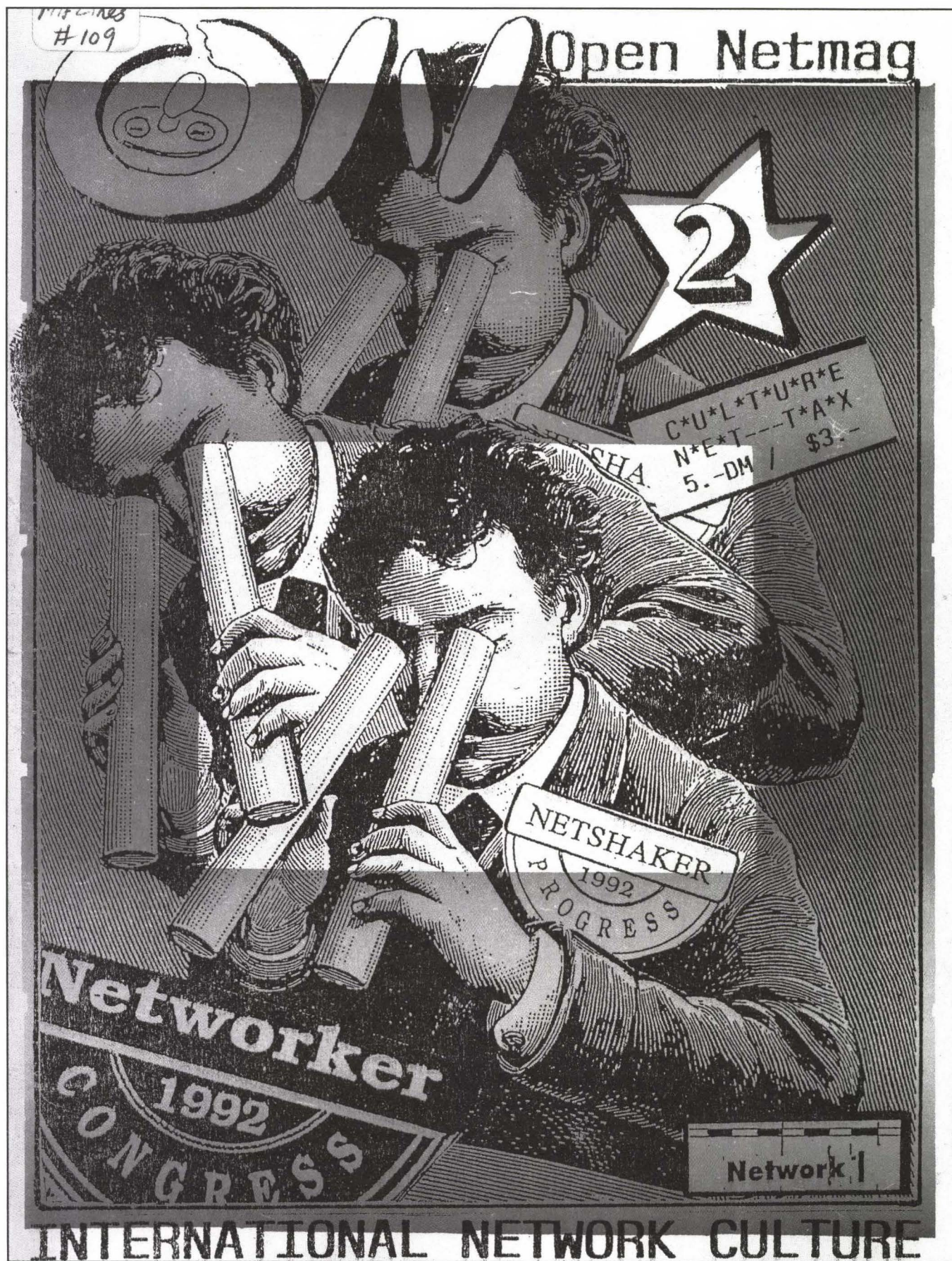


Figure 93. Joki. *On Open Netmag*, Issue 2. Germany. 1992. Mail Art Zine. The theme of Issue 2 is the Decentralized, World-Wide Networker Congress 1992.

THE HIDDEN LINK: A NETWORKING FABLE

Vittore Baroni

“Look into a telescope
 to see what I can see:
 baffled by the sight
 of constellations watching me.”
 – Luna Wilson, *The Network*

I mail out and receive many letters every day, and this has been going on since 1977, when I first discovered the existence of the mail art network. Ten years, 3,650 days, 20,000 or more pieces of mail received—and about as many sent out—and I never even invited my mailman in for a drink. Am I some kind of perverted blackmailer to waste such a vast portion of my hard-earned income in postage stamps? I will try to explain the reasons for this extensive process of tele-communications, to you as well as to myself: I am too broke to afford a psychoanalyst.

The world is full of dull, robotic and passive human beings who work dumbly to serve a higher power of materialist or ideological nature to obtain the crumbs of an unreachable cake. We are all a bit robotic at times. The world is also full of very nice and interesting people, scattered in the most unthinkable places, emanating strange currents of energy that attract and inspire other like-minded spirits. Since I was a kid, I perceived the traces of such arcane currents in magazines, books, records, faces and places. We all notice this energy at times, but it may be so subtle and feeble that no sophisticated instrument except the human heart can detect it.

A letter personally addressed to you from the farthest corner of the globe is a much warmer thread of energy than a show on prime-time TV. Through the postal system you

can uncover a planetary web of energy, a network of love, art and madness. Everything is possible, anything goes. It is partly like fishing at random in a swimming pool full of oddities. Others write essays that explain with logic and good sense this thing called mail art. I am just trying to find the real motivation for my becoming a mail addict. Be patient—it takes time to peel the onion, layer after layer.

Mail art is out there (since Ray Johnson or since the Pony Express) and it is like an invisible entity that some think they can use to get into art history, others to make the tour of the world in eighty postcards, others to break their isolation, or to fulfill their own delusions. There is a gentle and ephemeral side to the act of exchanging letters/postcards, but mail art is not simply “cute” or a lonely hearts club for would-be artists. If you only need a pen-pal, there are many organizations that can help you very efficiently (try, for example, *The Letter Exchange*, P.O. Box 6218, Albany, CA 94706-0218 USA). Mail art borders and crosses into other alternative fields of expression: underground music, literary/poetry magazines, graffiti and street art, street theatre and performance, the whole complex tradition of self-publishing, the surviving and metamorphosed fringes of the old counter-culture, etc. Therefore, the playful and ephemeral side of mail art is always balanced by more serious and lasting implications.

We have become saturated by mass-media communications; the brain short-circuits because there is too much data available at all times. A personally addressed message activates a direct response; it’s a totally different mental process from the passive consumption of art works

on a gallery wall. The artist comes down from his ivory tower and becomes once again a functional part of our daily life. Art, like music, was born in prehistoric times out of magic and functional preoccupations. Mail art can be a great learning experience, it is like a toy in the hands of a child; you invent different rules every time you put yourself at play. It is a micro-universe that you can monitor from your living-room, a kaleidoscopic landscape that is different from every point of observation.

I will not try to hide the boring and nefarious aspects of postal networking. Receiving small art items from around the globe sometimes turns into a greedy amassing of materials with no redeeming finality. Collecting may become a form of perversion nurtured by death instincts, like pinning live butterflies on a wood panel. Mail art also tends to become too predictable, organizing itself into new vicious circles (invitation-exhibition-catalogue) that substitute the old one (artwork-dealer-collector-museum). At their worst, mail artists exploit their association with hundreds of cooperative individuals to “create” their own illusory art movement, to push their name or “ism” up on the ladder to fame. You can endure happily the total chaos of clashing different egos and perspectives that coexist in the network (differences of age, color, skill, creed, etc.), or you may end up in bitter arguments, depending on your grade of flexibility and tolerance.

“There is always someone asleep and someone awake, someone dreaming asleep, someone dreaming awake...THE NETWORK IS ETERNAL.” This was written by Robert Filliou in the September 1973 issue of *FILE Magazine*, and that’s how the beloved definition of “Eternal Network” was born, referring to creative correspondence. Filliou, like Ray Johnson in a more oblique way, is very smart in detecting the characters of the networking philosophy, the mutations it incites in the artists’ spirit and role. In

the same text he writes: “If it is true that information about and knowledge of all modern art research is more than any one artist could comprehend, then the concept of avant-garde is obsolete. With incomplete knowledge, who can say who is in front, and who isn’t?” It is clearly no more a matter of being in front, but of going deeper; of rediscovering the magic and functional values of art, but not with the glamorous and superficial attitude of the art market. Art today, to have a real social meaning, must merge again with science, philosophy, and everyday life. The design of a ball-point pen I buy downtown is more interesting than the latest trendy vernissage.

Mail art is only one among many peep-holes spying on Networkland. I use this widely spread definition (mail art), but personally I prefer to think of an Ethereal Open Network (E.O.N.)¹ that includes all sorts of alternative networks operating today on the planet. Mail art is not enough; it’s very reductive and frustrating to limit your playground to a highly specialized ghetto of postcard-makers and rubber stampers. Networking, the search for a contact with other beings and the collective work on different projects, is interesting for me only when it opens the mind to new frontiers, when it does not shy away from Utopia. The 1970s and 1980s may be looked on as two decades that have forgotten all radical dreams of cooperation towards a better quality of life for all. It was an era of materialist dreams and hard competition, each one for himself. Yet these are only the photographs proposed by the media, by the corporations and sociologists, by the programmers of fads. The currents of positive energy always flow, the resistance never stopped, it only changes clothes now and then. The mail art network (Fig. 94) is only a leaf in the big tree of E.O.N. Unfortunately, even the leaves believe that the tree is barren. They can’t see the other branches in the deep smog.

Though the postal system is still the cheapest way to communicate with the various continents, eventually the computer-terminal will replace the mailbox, with postage costs ever-rising and modem/BBS technology expanding constantly. The days of *mailed* art may be already numbered, but something else will substitute for the good old envelope. On January 1, 1994, a mail art cyberspace e-zine entitled *Netshaker On-Line* became Internet's first electronic journal devoted entirely to the discussion of mail art. Contact editor Crackerjack Kid at the e-mail address (Cathryn.L.Welch@dartmouth.edu.). A direct meeting of networkers has been tried in various recent occasions with the result of festivals, congresses and nervous breakdowns, including telepathic experiments and a "Convention" on the astral plane (write to Hakim Bay for more details, c/o *Automedia*, PO Box 568, Brooklyn, New York 11211-0568 USA)

In the past decade there have been a few attempts to make a truly international mail art magazine, but with scarce success. Mostly, mail art publications are simply assemblages of pages submitted by participants; xeroxes, rubber stamp works, collages, etc. Consequently, they have a very limited circulation (100-250 copies). In most cases, these magazines are the effort of a single artist and last as long as he/she can find the time and money to gather and deliver all the copies. Some publications, more or less connected with mail art, were able to support themselves through grants, sales and subscriptions (*VILE*,² *Lightworks*,³), but usually mail art zines are traded and distributed for free (needless to say, the fact that you do not have to pay to get a piece of mail art is what really makes a difference in respect to the official art market!). What seems to be lacking today is a stable magazine about networking theories and problems, a publication where you can find in-depth essays on particular aspects of the

networking process and firsthand functional data to expand (or start from scratch) your personal involvement in the network. No professional critic or art scholar seems prone to do the work (as there are no profits involved!), so the mail artists themselves try to fill the gap. In the 1980s the only two comprehensive studies available about Mail Art and networking were written by former networker Mike Crane (*Correspondence Art*, Contemporary Arts Press, San Francisco, 1984) and active networker Crackerjack Kid, (*Networking Currents*, Sandbar Willow Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 1986).

You only learn what mail art is by becoming a mail artist. To make mail art you just have to compress your own ideas into a mailable format and send it to somebody. It's as simple as that. What you will receive in exchange depends very much on what you send out: A bad idea will not stir up exciting replies; a work full of passion will not pass unnoticed. Now you only need a few addresses to start with, then your contacts will grow harmoniously while you plunge more and more into the network. I will give you just some key addresses that will save me from printing pages and pages of names. As I said, mail art magazines appear and disappear overnight, but copies of these three should still be available (usually in exchange for your own stuff, or ask for details): Joe Kaffki, a.k.a. Joki, *S'mail Global Network Zine* (Postbox 2631, D-495, Minden, Germany) and Dobrica Kamperelic's *Open World* (Ustanicka 152/VII-73, 11000, Beograd, (Sumice) Yugoslavia). Also available is my own *Arte Postale!* (Near the Edge Editions, Via C. Battisti 339, 55049, Viareggio, LU, Italy). You can pick up contacts from these publications, add the addresses of your friends, start weaving your own web right now!

Mail art is a very small Freelandia. It is a working alternative to capitalist art and socialist state art. Other little bits of our space-time can be liberated and organized under



Figure 95 Vittore Baroni and Piermario Cianni, *Arte Postale! No. 63*. Italy, 1992. Mail Art Zine. This networker issue includes Piermario Cianni's computerized cover design and a vinyl recording of *Let's Network Together*, complete with ultrarare inverted labels.

new balances, open, happy and egalitarian. What is really imperative at this point is to start crossing between different underground networks, realizing how big and deeply rooted is the networking strategy, employed to fulfill urgent needs and practical common interests. A powerful (utopian) scheme of planetary reorganization in a networking perspective is devised in the book *Bolo' Bolo* by P.M., already a classic of

the underground and reprinted in many different languages. This book is a valid starting point to understand the far-reaching implications of the networking process, as are old texts by Timothy Leary, Buckminster Fuller, or Robert Anton Wilson. Here are some useful key addresses to verify the existence of different, sometimes overlapping, networks: *Semiotext(e)*, issue number 13, provides a

detailed map of underground-unconventional publications and groups in the USA today (552 Philosophy Hall, Columbia University, New York, New York 10027, USA—the English edition of *Bolo’Bolo* is also available here); *Whole Earth Review* (27 Gate Five Road, Sausalito, CA 94965 USA) is already trying to sew together the different aspects of the communication revolution, as did Mike Gunderloy while serving as founding editor of *Factsheet Five*,⁴ (PO Box 170099, San Francisco, CA 94117-0099). Gunderloy’s magazine, now edited by R. Seth Friedman, is an incredibly comprehensive list of reviews, independent zines, books, records, videos and tapes. *Encyclopaedia Psychedelica* (EPI, PO Box 833, London NW6 England) reshapes the counter-culture of the 1960s in the context of the contemporary computerized world; *Option* (P.O. Box 491034, Los Angeles, California, 90049, USA) is just one among many magazines devoted to alternative and home-made music; *Re/Search* (20 Romolo St., Suite B, San Francisco, California, 94133, USA) delves into bizarre and neglected subjects, giving voice to a very loose movement of media terrorists of the 1980s, referred to as “industrial culture;” *The Church of the SubGenius* (P.O.Box 140306, Dallas, Texas, 75214, USA) and *The Temple of Psychick Youth* (T.O.P.Y., Station 23, P.O. Box 687, Halfway, Sheffield S19 5UX, England) are two different projects that parody, with hilarious or scary language, the world of fanatic religious preachers and esoteric sects, creating a sort of international anti-cult.

If you are into rubber stamps, you can’t do without a copy of *Rubberstampmadness* (408 Southwest Monroe, No. 210, Corvallis, OR 97333) or *National Stampagraphic* (1952 Everett St., North Valley Stream, New York, 11580, USA); if you search for rare records you need *Goldmine* (700 E. State St. Iola, Wisconsin, 54990, USA) or *Record Collector* (43/45 St. Mary’s Road, Ealing, London W5

5RQ, England, United Kingdom). Specific publications exist for any subject you desire, from horror movies to the occult, from conspiracy theories to pro wrestling.

As you can see from these heterogeneous examples, the purposes of networking range from political activism to pure entertainment, from very general issues of vital importance to highly specialized interests. Likewise, the publications connected with the different networks may be independently produced, Xeroxed in very limited editions, or available in the news stands. You only have to keep your eyes open to discover, in good book shops, several more-or-less alternative publications devoted to ecology, survivalism, health food, unconventional music, etc. What is really important, instead of getting lost in the webs of contacts, is to find the hidden link between so many seemingly unrelated networks. Not everything that springs from the underground is automatically more valid or interesting than the “truth” that is generally agreed upon in official quarters. You have to travel through the networks with your mind open and your critical faculties on alert. But if you do not try this trip, you run the risk of never learning about books, ideas or experiences that may radically change your life. There exists a wealth of information suppressed or concealed from the public view, primarily because it questions the social structure and the balance of powers on which contemporary societies (Left, Center and Right) are built.

If the old saying “the medium is the message”⁵ is still valid today, all these different networking experiences show us that a planetary cooperation outside conventional political organizations, national or ideological barriers, is possible and already operating at certain levels. These networks are still numerically limited but are based on incredibly strong ties, as they grew out of real needs and function to fulfill them. Paradoxically, the hidden tree of networks is much

more concrete and efficient today that it was in the 1960s, a period of seminal researches and illuminations that were highly romanticized and polluted by the media. Today, we benefit from the experiences of the past, trying not to repeat the same mistakes. Mail art is not a futile game at all, if you see it in the light of a larger scheme, an open flow of amity, goods, and practical information. Maybe I have not wasted all of my thirteen years spent licking stamps and searching for that thin current of human energy. We are like pirates, looking for the treasure in Networkland. And we all own some gems to share. Join the adventure, and be busy for ever after.

* * * * *

1. "E.O.N." and "nEONics" are inter-related acronyms used frequently in collaborative correspondence between Crackerjack Kid (the editor of *Eternal Network*) and Vittore Baroni. The term "neonics" is an acronym that describes and defines the aesthetic and spiritual qualities of *networking process art*; new, ethereal, open networkers, inter-connected through communication and spirit. Throughout 1987 Vittore Baroni, Volker Hamann, and Crackerjack Kid discussed a mutually shared interpretation of Robert Filliou's "eternal network." The first international networking magazine, *Netzine*,

was edited by Baroni, Crackerjack Kid, and Volker Hamann as a strategy to open the "eternal network" beyond an exclusive mail art context. Baroni's new phrase for expressing this open definition of eternal network was the acronym Eternal Open Network, E.O.N. In the introduction to *Netzine*, Crackerjack Kid first used nEONics as a key towards unlocking the mail art "eternal network." "Break apart 'eternal network' and we are left with an 'Eternal Open Network.' Using this nEONics key to open our 'eternal network' offers endless possibilities for discovering many creative networks. *Netzine* is an inclusive, collaborative net-working tool for discovering Ethereal Open Networks."

2. For more information read Chapter 6, "*VILE History*."

3. *Lightworks Magazine*, edited by Charlton Burch, covers new, experimental and alternative art forms. Issue number 20/21, "Actions on the Outskirts: An Issue of Troublesome Art & Bothersome Ideas," includes the following description: "*Lightworks Magazine* has always been a forum for the oddball, the iconoclast, the artist that wants to push it just a bit more. And in that respect this issue is no different from our others." Always a beacon for mail artists and networking activities, *Lightworks Magazine* is available by writing to P.O. Box 1202, Birmingham, Michigan 48012.

4. For more information about artists' zines read Mike Gunderloy's "Access to Zines" in *Whole Earth Review*, Spring 1991, Issue #70, 90–93. Also available from Penguin Books, New York, is Mike Gunderloy's 158-page, fully illustrated *The World of Zines: A Guide to the Independent Magazine Revolution*.

5. Marshal McLuhan, *The Medium is the Message*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989.

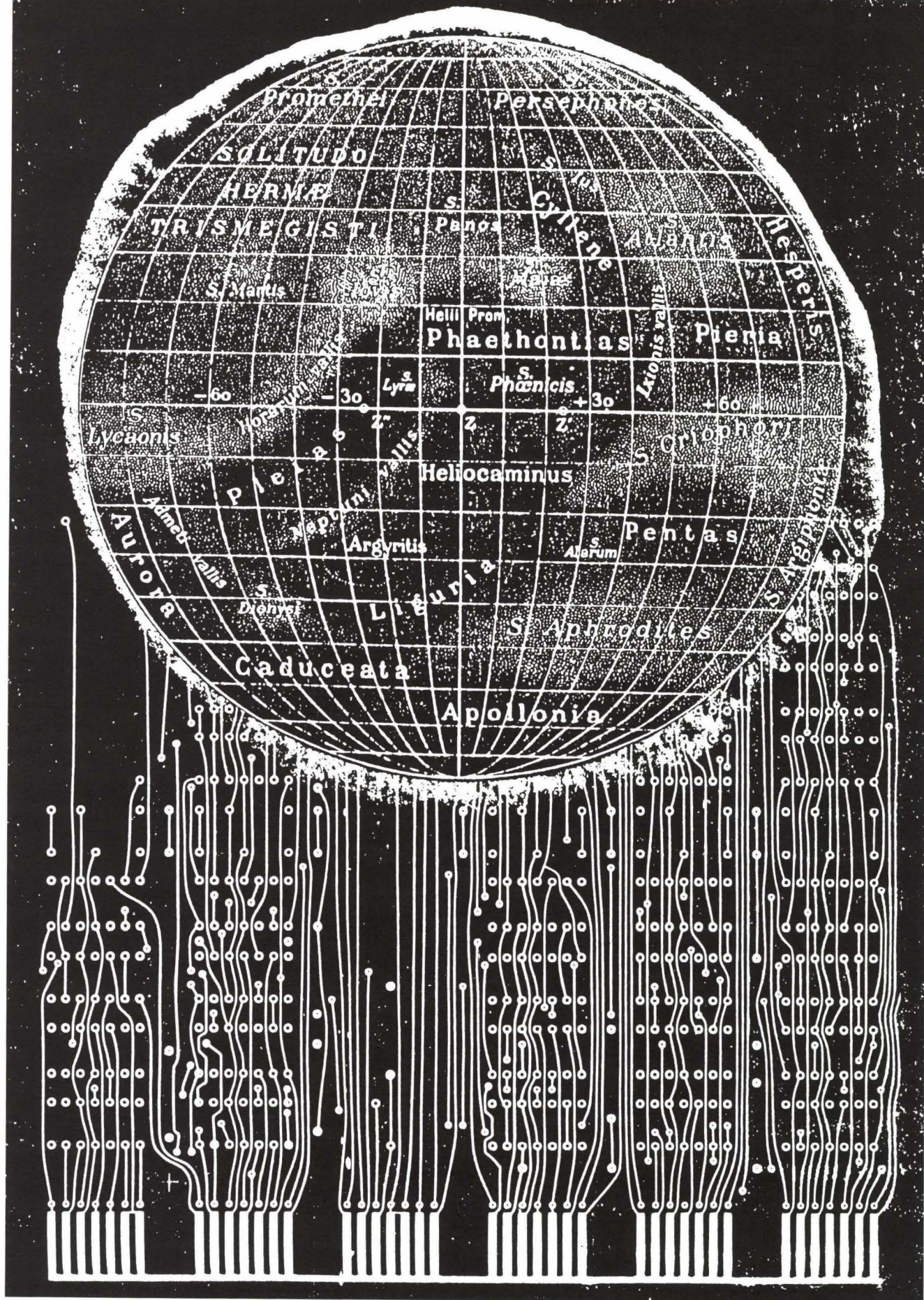
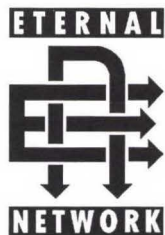


Figure 96. Carol Stetser, *Page from Currents, U.S.A.*, 1992, Artists' Book.



CHAPTER 24

INTERCONNECTION

Bern Porter

During my long association with Wilhem Reich he often said to me he was standing up vertically in a three-foot-diameter cylinder seven feet tall looking out at me through small swinging windows, and I was similarly encased peering out at him through my windows across the intervening space.

We were, as he said, “armored”—separated from one another in such a way as to easily induce hatred, misunderstanding, even permanent and deep personal dislike and open war with intense anger. Nations, he said, countries, cultures, areas of the world were equally estranged by such enclosing shields.

As a world-wide practitioner of mail art at the rate of four to six mailings a week, I received today in my mail box on the porch here:

one art/word note from Poland

one art note from Australia

one mail art letter from Germany

Valid and legal proof that three different people from three distinct cultures were in no way armored or separated from me. The four of us were, in actuality, bonded, together in mind, spirit, with a feeling that

only engenders human warmth, understanding and rapport.

That I could only surmise their physical appearances and immediate environment did not diminish my feeling that I had known them and they me for many years. That I might or might not ever see them or hear again via another exchange, either one way or both, merely crystallized the mutual warmth of the feeling all the more.

A total space experience, you might say.

Achieved with a stamp, a little paper, a little time!

How trite, you say.

But how major, I reply.

Needed to by all of us.

The governments of Uruguay and Mexico have officially recognized the importance of such interplay of peoples. What other countries, including U.S.A., will now establish such an encompassing endeavor so sorely needed at this time world wide?

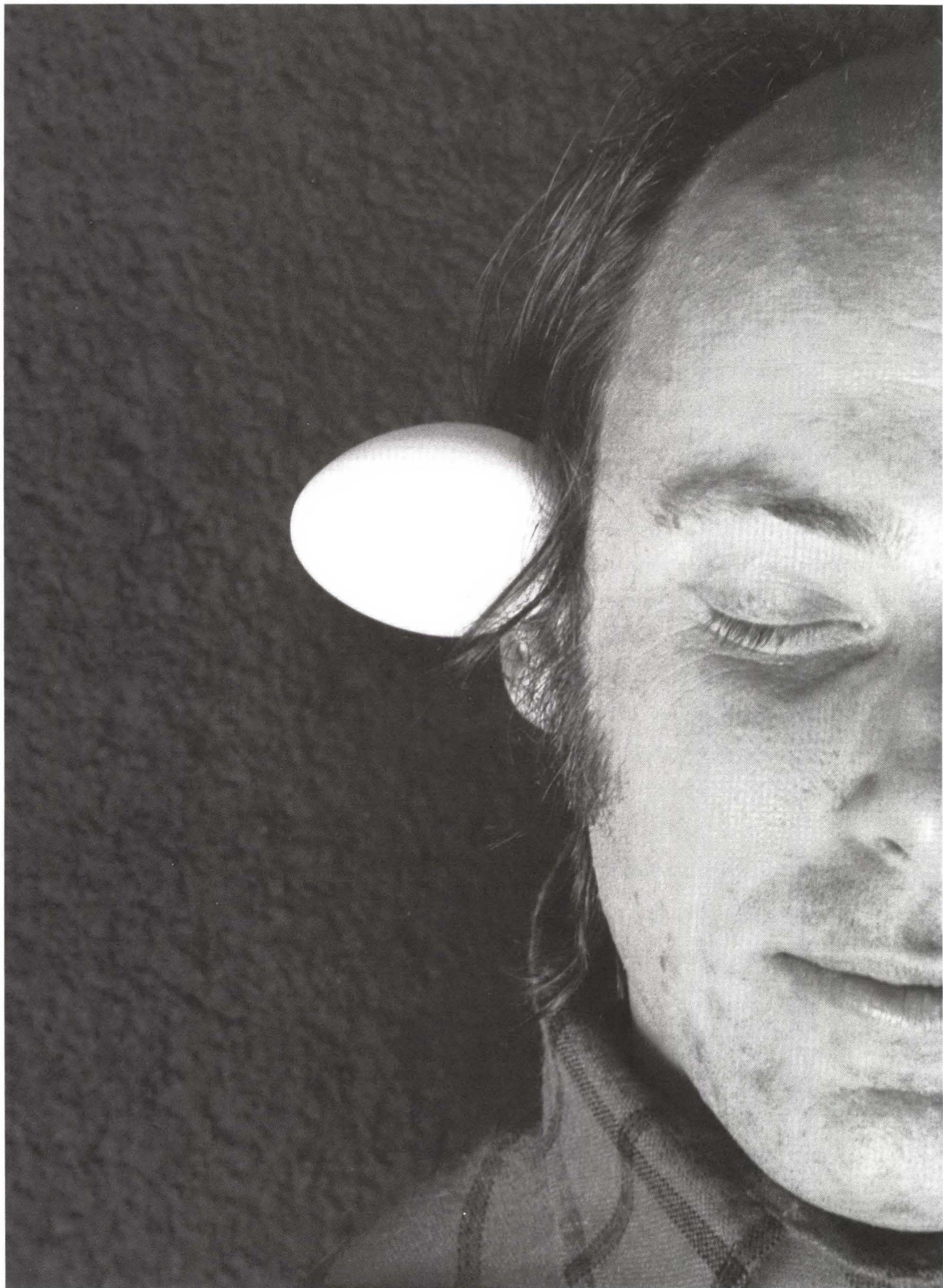


Figure 97. *Portrait of Peter R. Meyer.* Sweden. Photo courtesy of Anders Roth.



CHAPTER 25

MAIL ART IN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION

Peter R. Meyer

*"I always try for more notes than I'm sure I can hit."
— Miles Davis*

As far as I know, I am one of few people in the world who has made a living out of working with mail art—mainly electronic mail. As a professional radio/TV/film-director I had possibilities in Sweden from 1982–1987 to create a series of programs for the government-owned station, Sveriges Radio. During five years I produced *Nightexercise*, an international multimedia project with TV programs, radio programs, lectures, exhibitions, books/catalogues, records/tapes. My ambition was to inspire colleagues and provoke the ordinary listener/viewer with programs based upon audio-art and video-art created by the mail art network. *Nightexercise* was a very successful project that got a lot of quality awards and was broadcast in thirty countries for twelve million people. Never before had so many people been given the possibility to explore the "new" artform called "mail art."

Mail Art in Radio

Through artists like Rod Summers, Zev and Klaus Groh,¹ I got in contact with the mail art network in 1980. I sent out thousands of letters with invitations to take part in my *Nightexercise* project. The program was an attempt to renew and develop traditional radio. No program was to be alike and so I made use of different narration techniques. *Nightexercise no. 4* was also called *Ectoplasm*, an audiophonic search for truth in hidden roots of the ego," and was, as an example, an attempt to give a shape to the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s by private sound recordings, news,

art, music, literature and radioprograms. It was also a demonstration of different ways of using the radio medium as a form of art, as audio. A lucid picture of the compositional structure of "Ectoplasm" was given in the Swedish weekly TV/radio-magazine *Roster i Radio*, and an important concept in the project is described:

One of the basic concepts in the program is that one's own personal experiences have a large measure of universal applicability. Every fragment of a memory that a person can hold out for perusal has its equivalent in other people... As a listener one listens visually to the blended stream of memories. For example, to listen to Arne Thore'n reporting the assassination of Kennedy is a case of starting up one's own inner projector and letting the disjointed documentary film sequences rinse the white screen... Occasionally, Meyer pushes the whole time perspective aside in order to make way for thoughts and reflections that have criss-crossed his consciousness.²

The *Nightexercise* programs were broadcast in Sweden and in thirty other countries to millions of listeners. Over 200 audio artists, including Yoko Ono, Beth Anderson, Morgan Fischer, Terry Fox, Laurie Anderson, and Mitchell Kriegman participated in the project. Mail artists who actively participated in the programs included Rod Summers, Carlo Pittore, Vittore Baroni, Bern Porter, Kristian Jonsson, Mogens Otto Nielsen, Ruedi Schill, Peter Below, Mario Rondi, T.E. Paulsson, Dan Froberg, Daniele Ciullini, Enzo Minarelli, Bruno Talpo, Hank Bull, John Fekner, Randy Magnus, Klaus Groh, Allan Vizents, Andrej Dudek Dürer, Alex Igloo, Dimosthenis Agrafiotis, Mark Melnicove and many others. The participation and

cooperation of countless mail artists helped to transform the programs into a major avant-garde and cult event. *Nightexercise* took radio-listeners by storm. For the first time since the advent of radio, an avant-garde program had more listeners than traditional programs, and mail artists were being heard by people not engaged in art.

Mail Art in Television

Rather quickly, I learned that artists engaged in mail art and audio art often also produced video art. For this reason I was later asked to produce the *TV-Night Exercise*, employing the same stylistic mode as was used for the radio programs.

Every show was a collage of different tapes. They were characterized by two levels of creation: first, the artistic intention of the contributors and, subsequently, those of the production team. Our policy was, therefore, to inform all those taking part about our editing, shortenings and changes to the insert. We also sent our specially designed cassette copies to all contributors abroad.

As I had access to only a half-hour per week of national broadcasting time, I was required to make some controversial decisions. I selected tapes, some of which I also edited. If a tape was too long, for instance, I edited to allow the possibility of representing more artists. I also decided to pay each artist for his/her contribution and also expenses (\$200.00 per extract). This is how some of the members of the mail art network also came to be shown on commercial television. In any event, as a result of these activities, the whole movement became well-known, and also attracted many new participants. Among the three hundred video artists, we witnessed appearances by mail artists such as Carsten Schmidt Olsen, Peter Below, Carlo Pittore, Ray Johnson, G.A. Cavellini, Gerald Jupiter Larsen, Ed Higgins III, Anna Banana, Buster Cleveland, Bill

Gaglione, John M. Bennett, Arleen Schloss, Guy Bleus, John Held Jr., Turk Le Clair, Anna Arnold, Judith Hoffberg, Vincent Trasov, Randy Magnus, Dutch Knotts, John Fekner, Jaques Lizene, Rod Summers, Pat Oleszko, and many others.

TV-Night Exercise Nos. 11, 12 demonstrate the attractive frame-story that I created for the mass audience. A review in the English magazine *TV World* gives a summary of show no. 11 and a glimpse of show no. 12.

'Night Exercise No. 11' is a mixture of tragedy and comedy, irony and innocent jokes—all of them pearls in the necklace of art, where styles and concepts do not give an impression of eclecticism, but a feeling of synthesis. Witnesses, comments, sounds, and pictures help to keep the story within the framework, adding a new philosophical accent to the program.³

“‘Night Exercise No. 12’... We see a room filled with Swiss cuckoo-clocks (Raymond Hoepflinger’s ‘Kunstdefinition’) reminding us of the problem of time and feeling of being in a vacuum of well-organized modern society. Shalom Gorewitz’s electronically-stylized intercourse in ‘Sub-atomic Babies’ is climaxed in a spiritual rebirth of our protagonist from a huge white egg, but the reincarnational idyll is immediately disturbed by a woman, breaking the egg on her knee (Schedule 1 through 4’ by Randy Magnus)⁴

Night Exercise as Documentation

All the mail art and audio/video tapes that were sent to the project were also presented in the form of a touring exhibition. It was first shown at the Modern Art Museum in Stockholm in 1983. (Fig. 98) Later, it toured to major museums in Malmö, Södertälje, Basel and finally to Franklin Furnace in New York in 1985.

Jenny Dixon at WNYC radio in New York broadcast a radio interview with me, where I, at the end of the program, recommend to her to make new programs about the whole mail art network. Jenny Dixon did, and some of



Figure 98. Opening day, March 12, 1983 at Peter R. Meyer's *Audio Exhibition*, Moderna Museét, Stockholm. Photograph courtesy of Anders Roth.

those interviews were later reprinted in Chuck Welch's interesting book, *Networking Currents*.

Later on, in a 1986 visit to New York, I did a lot of tapings that later became a series called *Chelseatapes 1-3*. These tapes contained interviews with John Cage and his relation to the Fluxus movement. Also, members of the Fluxus group such as Ken Friedman, Yoko Ono and Christo, and curator Jon Hendricks talked about their relation to the mail art movement. Finally, artists and writers like Ray Johnson, Peter Frank, Carlo Pittore, Morgan O'Hara, Chuck Welch, Arleene Schloss, Jack Ox, Gianberto Vanni, Rosalind Solomon, Mark Bloch, and others spoke about the history of mail art and the mail art network's relationship to the whole art scene today.

It has not always been as easy as it might appear to introduce mail art to the average viewer, listener, etc. From the inception of *Night Exercise*, numbers of bureaucrats have created difficulties for further development of the project. Struggles with a variety of institutions and persons have delayed many other projects such as books and records. There are informative documentary catalogues of *Audiocatalogue* from Stockholm and Malmö Moderna art museums. From the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm one can find the *Audiocatalogue*⁵ and from the Södertolje we have the *Videocatalogue*,⁶ which dealt with mail art and video art. And finally, also a smaller, combination catalogue from Franklin Furnace in New York called *Night Exercise*.⁷

Excerpts of the programs are available for listening in different archives, museums and at Sveriges Radio Archive for films, TV-programs and audiotapes. There are also many bootleg recordings and tapes that, in a way, flatter me. I do hope that this material gives stimulus to others in their own creative activities and arouses a greater curiosity in audio, video and mail art as artforms.

After writing almost forty letters a day for ten years, I finally decided to take a break from mail art and from my job as a TV/radio director/producer at Sveriges radio/TV. Since then, I am directing documentary films and TV entertainment, but I have my own style thanks to mail art. It has been very interesting, educational and a good time that I will never forget and will never quite recover from. Maybe these were the best years of my life?

1. (Ed. note:) Rod Summers is a visual, concrete poet living in Maastricht, The Netherlands. His recorded avant-garde poetry and audio drama works (e.g., *Helgisaga*) have been played throughout Europe and North America. Zev is a European avant-garde drummer. Klaus Groh is a German Neo-Dadaist mail artist whose *International Artists' Cooperation* newsletter was created in February 1972 as a networking clearing house for artists' information and contact.

2. Rolf Stridh, "Blended Stream of Memories," *Röster i Radio*, April 1982, no. 18: 23.

3. Ilmar Taska, "Swedish Television's 'Night Exercise,' *Video Guide*, January 1985, VII: 31, 18.

4. Alison Homewood, "This May Be Art, But Is It Good TV?" *TV World*, August 1985, 36.

5. Peter R. Meyer, ed., *AUDIO, ljudkonst med Peter R. Meyer och radioprogrammet Nattövning*, Moderna Museet Stockholm, March 1983 (ISBN: 91-7100-226-x). This catalogue was used for exhibitions in Stockholm and Malmö.

6. Peter R. Meyer, ed., *Videocatalogue*, Södetälje Kulturnämnd, March 1984.

7. Peter R. Meyer, ed., *Night Exercise—Catalogue*, New York State Council on the Arts and The Swedish Information Service: Franklin Furnace, New York, April 1985.

* * * * *



NETWORKS WITH AND WITHOUT TECHNOLOGY: ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAIL ART AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS ART

MIT Mitropoulos

Mail art was a natural for me, because I come from the networks background of growing up on ocean-going boats, and my extended family were so many coloured pins on a world map—their selves never in one place for very long. Similarly, my Ph.D. work at Edinburgh University in 1974 was in the study of Space Networks.¹

When my female models and I found ourselves geographically separated due to today's lifestyles, we started creating and exchanging cultural objects by post to keep our energy flowing over distances. My models had to assume my presence over the distances; they used my mailed suggestions and materials to perform and record that performance. Later on I became aware of mail art as an established activity with a name, joined it, and referred to my artist-model work as MA-performance,^{2,3} which I extended to include models I had never met at the time, or ever will again.

As an environmental artist and communications researcher, since 1979 I have pursued parallel work in mail art and telecommunications art, the latter activity falling within the art-science-technology context. I owe mail art, because besides the pleasure of being part of the mail art network, mail art, as compared to telecommunications art, proved high in privacy (necessary for the intimate communications of artist-model) and low on logistics. Mail art was much cheaper, no special equipment was required (no compatibility problems either), and simultaneous performances in different parts of the world could be arranged. In one of my simultaneous performances, for example, three models performed separately, but

simultaneously in three different time zones. Conceptually together, but geographically separate, one model (Pat Larter) was in Sidney, Australia, another model (Anne Queudeville) was in Caen, France, and the third model (Rini Rubini) was in San Diego, California.

In later years I had incorporated mail art material into telecommunication art processes, and managed to gain an insight into communications processes in general. The latter I articulated and started feeding it into telecommunication art as early as 1981.⁴ At the time I was a Research Fellow at Center for Advanced Visual Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) and involved in research on communication aesthetics. I also worked as communications consultant during the 1979–1985 period for Educational Video Resources of M.I.T. on issues relating to organization of space using telecommunications, was a member of the city of Cambridge/USA Cable TV Commission, and did the research for UNESCO on 2-way interactive cable TV systems in the USA.⁵ These cable TV research projects remind me of the Reading, Pa/USA Cable TV system, an excellent example of technology suited to a public policy strictly for the benefit of the public. The mayor at the time, Karen Miller, described the system as “great community, although bad TV,” and this is what mail art activity is to me: high on community, low on aesthetics.

I believe in a twin identity for mail art: one, the everlasting, big, open, invaluable network of easy access, and two, some specific, demanding activities for in-depth exploration of the mail art process. The first one defines

mail art as a “cultural phenomenon,” will get you a bulky archive in no time, a long list of addresses, and the daily feeling of an ever-replenished community. This must be preserved at all costs. The second one is as demanding and fulfilling as any other creative activity either in art, science, or technology. Both identities afford us a relatively logistics-free platform to do research on communications.

Telecommunication artists, especially those who don't have any other communications background, have a lot to learn from entering the mail art networks, which means that mail artists have an advantage, if they see it and use it. For instance, having realized that meaningful communication was becoming inversely proportional to the growing channels of communication (whether with or without technology) made me take a look in the early 1980s for other mail artists with concerns similar to mine. But the replies I was getting to this think-about-mail art effort are best characterized by Vittore Baroni's answer (following his Think About Mail Art project) when I pressed him⁶ with a text making an analogy between mail art and CETI (Communications with Extraterrestrial Intelligence). He replied with a mixture of humor, social wisdom of the time and exasperation: “Well, who cares? I am not Batman!” and I loved it. Clearly it was five years too early for reflection.^{7,8}

Today, more mail artists look into science, and even more are using communications technology. Therefore, it seems to me the right time to briefly go through art-science-technology, at least the version I have been operating in. It is certainly not art as it used to be, where we simply would now produce it by referring to scientific processes or by using high tech tools (which would mean that aesthetics remained the same). Nor is it a cultural product as it used to be, now simply transported over a distance via a communications channel (which would also mean that

aesthetics remained the same). It is the reciprocal influence of art on science and technology. For instance, artists experience daily the *electronic space*⁹ reality, so it is only inevitable that new aesthetic elements will emerge — much to the chagrin and disagreement of the art market. Mail artists could contribute very well from their experiences.

Drawing from the network processes I've been involved in,^{10,11,12} I have summed up three new elements for New Aesthetics: 1) Control (of the networks, for instance); 2) Knowledge (as processed information); 3) Three Levels of Complexity of Interactivity: “Hi there!” (acknowledgement, without necessarily pursuing the exchange), “I am here! Where are you?!” (establishing common references, towards complex interaction), and finally Complex Interaction. I have used these three elements in MA-performance, interactive video installations, and for Geopolitical Art, like my project *Line of the Horizon*.

Science itself has moved from just separating things (and putting them into some order for our understanding and for solving problems) into focusing on the connections between things. In science there is beauty in simplicity: the simplest solution to a problem is very often the correct one.¹³ Similarly, the simplicity of the Pioneer-6 design is now being appreciated. Launched in the mid-1960s with an expected lifespan of six months, Pioneer-6 lent a helping hand to the landing on the moon (by locating solar storms), and is still operating. And I have just returned from a medicine-science-technology meeting (Advanced informatics in medicine, for the European Community) in Sevilla, Spain, where the confidentiality issue was strongly raised: the wide use of computers will make it impossible for patients to refuse their consent for having data on them stored in a computer. Terrorists, it was further hinted, may kill a politician through manipulation of his medical care data card.



Prehistory-old sundown (above) images are proposed to be exchanged between European capital cities, using sophisticated telecomm equipment. European «large satellite» Olympus footprint (left) ignores frontiers, and is here superimposed on Eurovision microwave network. Both systems are to be used in the live 2.5 hours Athens-to-Dublin exchange of respective sundown images, as the earth turns. Design below has image sent from remote site up to Olympus, and down to earth station in another country to reach its capital city's broadcast facility. The proposal (several versions) has been formally filed.

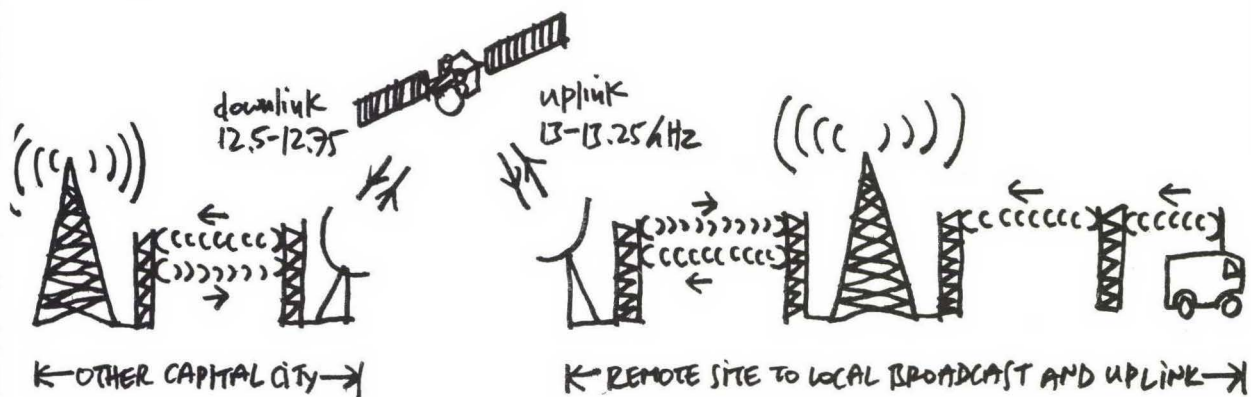


Figure 99. MIT Mitropoulos, *Geopolitical Art: Line of the Horizon*, Greece, 1989. Poster detail.

Technology is not all benefits. Privatization of computers has brought triviality. PCs, falling prey to human error, can also be targeted for attacks (intentional human errors). This is especially dangerous in computer networks and two-way “response” systems.¹⁴ Certainly it isn’t enough for artists to set up communication networks. The military and financiers have done it before us. We need to work on the content of interactivity as well. Otherwise, if we remain passive, the medium will remain the only message. On the other hand, since the setting up of a network for technology-mediated communication is both time-consuming and expensive, we naturally expect a proportionally consistent content. The geopolitical art project “Line of the Horizon” for example, has, since we carried it out in 1986, been presented to a telecommunications conference, an aesthetics conference, and is being published in a *Science of Human Settlements* review. It focused on the Mediterranean, then extended for 8,500 nautical miles. It was ten months of work, from original concept to collected data evaluation. The network of twenty-seven participant nodes (twenty-one Mediterranean cities, and two of the rest were ships in oceans flanking the Mediterranean.) and their compatible telefax equipment took 6.5 months to set up, and was activated for 6.5 hours. An east-west exchange of respective lines of horizon created a conceptual horizon from the Indian Ocean to New York, through the Mediterranean. Since in a network each node is both center and periphery, our facsimile network could have been activated from any node (which proved very useful when we were faced with administrative problems of control in the node we were situated).

Line of Horizon was a geopolitical art project¹⁵ in the art-science-technology context, the same as with current proposals in progress: they relate to the survival of the Mediterranean sea turtle, the division of the island of Cyprus by occupation forces, citizen participation in mass media, and the movement of the Earth as related to the 1992

European Union (Fig. 99). As in mail art, “Line of Horizon” was operated on a planetary scale. But we were simultaneously live. The 6.5 hours of activation had us operate in six different time zones simultaneously. In telecommunications art, unlike receiving mailed messages, there is hardly time for reflection, so you need to be prepared for a variety of alternatives, and have internalized the communications process well. Such live communications can either be limited to a pre-arranged exchange, like respective lines of horizon, or involve a more complex interaction that may develop.

Artists, scientists, technologists, we are all faced with the challenge of the planetary dimension, and the challenge of use of technology. Today’s technology, since communications tech merged with information tech in the mid 1950s, is what use we make of it. It is what Merlin the



Figure 100. MIT Mitropoulos, A 1986 mail art project later included in the 1989 *Line of the Horizon*. Bottles were thrown by Mitropoulos into the Mediterranean Ocean.

magician was in the Excalibur era: a blessing to some, a curse to others. Networking makes it possible to listen to a loved one's voice as s/he whispers over continental distances. Similarly, in one day an infection can take world-wide proportions: AIDS is as much a current term as a CETI, or INMARSAT,¹⁶ or a PCN.¹⁷ PCNs should start becoming available, allowing for person-to-person communication, and allowing us to be permanently in touch. But how desirable is this? How can we retain control—which will further allow us to choose, for example, to retain the participatory democracy that two-way interactive cable TV systems can offer?¹⁸

I will conclude this brief, autobiographical essay by expressing how lucky I feel to experience today's networking. It follows the natural human development from the obsidian prototradars¹⁹ to the eighth century B.C. Greeks who organized human settlements in the Mediterranean, to the navigators Dias, Columbus, Magellan of the fifteenth century, and others up to the eighteenth century, to today's exploration beyond the solar system. In the current geopolitical reality, access to communication networks, with and without technology, can be assured. Let us use it creatively and wisely.

* * * * *

1. In Space Networks space is considered as a network, and not space-as-place.
2. MIT Mitropoulos, "Towards Performance," *M.I.T. Humanities*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980.
3. Niti Salloway, "Dear MIT," book review of 'Towards Performance,' R.Ho.K. poster, Flemish School of Fine Arts: Brussels, Belgium, 1980.
4. Eric Gidney, "Artists Use of Telecommunications," correspondence with this author, *Leonardo*, 1983, 16:4.
5. MIT Mitropoulos, "Public Participation as Access, in Cable TV in the U.S.A.," in 'Communications With and Without Technology,' *Ekistics*, October, 1983, 50:302, 385–392.
6. "Dear Vittore," in 'From Communications to Telecommunications,' Pocket Guide to the 'Line of the Horizon' project, Ministry of Culture, Greece, 1986.
7. Chuck Welch's, *Networking Currents: Contemporary Mail Art Subjects and Issues*, Sandbar Willow Press: Boston,

- Massachusetts, 1986 reflects, in part, a philosophical, critical investigation into the phenomenon of networking art.
8. Günther Ruch's, "International Mail Art Network," and "Sightseeing," *Clinch*, Geneve-Peney, Switzerland, Nos. 7-8, 1985, documented, as did Welch, international networking projects.
 9. *Electronic space* is one type of Behavioral space, which at the turn of a switch or the push of a button is turned on or off. Behavioral space is the space as each one of us experiences it by being involved in an activity in it. This is in contrast to Euclidean space that is independent of anybody's behavior in it, and is described/measured in feet or meters.
 10. MIT Mitropoulos, "On Interactivity," in Theo van der Aa, ed., *Digital Media and the Arts*, The Netherlands: Limburg University, 1985.
 11. MIT Mitropoulos, "Aesthetics Reconsidered: Electronic Space, Mail Art, and Spaces for Communications," unpublished paper, CAVS, M.I.T., Boston, Massachusetts, 1983.
 12. MIT Mitropoulos, "Network Aesthetics," *Ekistics*, 55:330–331, May–October, 1988.
 13. Moreton Moore, "On Beauty in Science," International Aesthetics Congress, Nottingham University, England, 1988.
 14. A two-way *interactive* system differs from two-way *response* system. The former allows for either side to initiate the exchange. The latter has one side alone capable to initiate it, whilst the other side is best defined by its memory, from which it is called to retrieve specific information by responding to the caller (example: videotex). In the QUBE cable TV system (of Columbus, Ohio fame) the computer responds to subscribers, and its memory gradually builds a profile of each one of them according to their requests (what to buy, what to see, whom to vote for, etc.). That information may be sought by commercial organizations for gain, or national security agencies for purposes of control.
 15. A poster document on geopolitical art printed on the occasion of a slide presentation I did in 1989 can be requested from M. Santorineos, Art-technology section, Contemporary Arts Center I.T., 48 Armatolon + Klefton, Athens 11471, Greece.
 16. INMARSAT is the International Maritime Satellite Organization. It allows ships and mobile land units to check automatically on their latitude-longitude. It also picks and locates sources of distress signals in all oceans.
 17. PCNs are superphones of the Personal Communications Network, which uses ultra-high-frequency radio bands. Through them we will soon have a personal number rather than one home number, a second office number, etc., as in today's fixed-wire networks of place-to-place.
 18. MIT Mitropoulos, "Implications of Cable TV for Participatory Democracy," *Cities*, England, May 1985.
 19. Prototradars created maritime networks over surprisingly long distances. They exchanged goods for other goods or services, for survival purposes, rather than through any currency for the accumulation of wealth. In prehistory, the volcanic material obsidian was most precious since it was used for tools (to cut and pierce), weapons (spearheads and arrowheads) and means of decoration (body ornaments, floortiles, mirrors). Mariners took their chances, in an era before sails were invented, transporting obsidian over very long distances from original sources.

A
CRITICAL
(NINTH)
ASSEMBLING
(PRECISELY: 6789)

WILLIAM CLARE
RICHARD GRAYSON
MATTEO D'AMBROSIO
GUY DAVENPORT
DICK HIGGINS
GEOFFREY COOK
BRYANT HAYES
PETER H. BARNETT
DAVID COLE
MERRITT CLIFTON
PHILLIPPE DOME
RICHARD BURGIN
NAOMI RACHEL
RON SILLIMAN
CHARLES CARAMELLO
LAURENCE GOLDSTEIN
JAMAKE HIGHWATER
PAUL CHRISTENSEN
D. MUMM
ANTHONY J. GNAZZO
RICHARD KOSTELANETZ
RAYMOND FEDERMAN
DARYL CHIN
MICHAEL DYREGROV
JOHN M. BENNETT
HANNAH WEINER
BERNARD HEIDSIECK
GRZEGORZ DZIAMSKEI
WILLIAM L. FOX
JONATHAN ALBERT
WELCH D. EVERMAN
NORMAN FINKELSTEIN
AGNES DENES
BRUCE ANDREWS
AUGUSTO DE CAMPOS
STEPHEN FOSTER
R.H.W. DILLARD
C. DAVID HEYMANN
CHARLES HENRI FORD
HUGH KENNER
KARL KEMPTON
ERIC BAIZER
AUGUSTO CONCATO
DONALD HALL
JEROME KLINKOWITZ
ASCHER/STRAUS
JON WHYTE
DAVID DET HOMPSON
TOM CONLEY
DONALD BURGY
GEORGE ECONOMOU
JAMES F.L. CARROLL
ROBIN CROZIER
SCOTT HELMS
IRVING WEISS
GEORGE BOWERING
TOM KONYVES
ANNA BANANA
JOHN JACOB
KLAUS PETER DENCKER
JEAN-JACQUES CORY
RICHARD BUNGER
JAME-MACEO CAMIER
ROBERT FILLIOU
ROCHELLE H. DuBOIS
BLIEM KERN
WILLIAM CLARE

Figure 101. Richard Kostelanetz, Cover of *A Critical (Ninth) Assembling*, U.S.A., 1979. An assembling of camera-ready critical commentary on experimental literature around the world.

ASSEMBLING IN THE MAIL ART SPIRIT

Richard Kostelanetz

From my point of view, I scarcely thought of myself as participating in mail art, as commonly defined, though certain ideas that I've advocated over the past quarter century have influenced the climate. The principal idea was that aspiring artists and writers should not wait for the standard institutions of accreditation, whether publishers or galleries, to "take on" their work. They should publish/exhibit themselves, forming their own institutions if necessary, if their work would be circulated. I remember, when I was beginning my writing career, hearing conventionally ambitious writers say that they would "give" their work only to "the big six publishers." To the best of my recollection, none of those self-deceived wise guys are visible today. Where they went I cannot tell you; they simply disappeared and are, in professional terms, dead. In this respect, I supported mail art as an alternative to the gallery system. More important, in 1970 I joined a similarly situated colleague (who has since disappeared) in founding *Assembling* which would extend the alternative-distribution principle into collective self-publication.

What we did was invite artists and writers who were known to be doing otherwise unpublishable work to send a thousand copies of up to four pages (8 1/2" x 11") of whatever they wanted to include, which we assembled in alphabetical order, returning two bound copies to each contributor, ideally selling off the rest to defray collation and administrative costs. As I wrote in the preface to the initial *Assembling*:

As young writers of stylistically 'different' poetry and prose, we faced not only the inevitable objections to our precocity, but also the equally inevitable resistances to our wayward literary purposes. And so we wanted an institution that would publish alternative work by imaginative artists who genuinely believed in what they did. Since rejections often came with the excuse, particularly from editors pretending to sympathy, that "our printer can't handle this," it seemed best to overcome this obstacle by direct action—by becoming one's own publisher, which is more practicable in this era of easily accessible photographic reproduction processes; for the oldest truth is that, when other demands are more pressing, the writer must do more than just write.

While there is no doubt that artists and writers should ultimately be paid for what they do, there are times when every one of us feels that it would be worth a few dollars and a little effort to put into public print something that otherwise could not be placed. Indeed, such self-publication could stand as a fundamental test of creative seriousness—not just in pre-Gorby Russia, whose censorship was familiar, but in the United States as well. A further assumption I made at the time was that, in part because of the increasing number of aspiring young people entering every art, there would be a need in all the arts for "alternative institutions" simply to cope with the growing populace. (I still think this the most important cultural development of the 1970s, though disappointed in the policies and attitudes of those institutions that have survived.)

We advised our invited contributors to put their names on the faces of their work, as we ran no table of contents, and to center their contributions to the right, leaving at least



Figure 102. J. Nebraska Gifford, Photo collage of Richard Kostelanetz. Photograph © 1980 J. Nebraska Gifford.

an inch on the left-hand margin, because *Assembling* promised to collate the contents alphabetically (thereby avoiding invidious distinctions of placement). Since all copyrights, which are the literary form of “property,” were returned to the contributors, *Assembling* could make no money from subsequent republication. And once the thousand bound copies were gone, it would be impossible for us (or anyone else) to “reprint” the entire issue. For over a decade *Assemblings* were beautiful and thick (with one running to over 370 pages), with a wide variety of alternative artist/writers publishing at their best, unfettered by editorial authority.

We abrogated editorial authority not because we were rudderless or lazy (though we never agonized over whether something or someone would be “appropriate to our pages”), but because we wanted a compositional structure radically different from the restrictive, self-serving nature of traditional editorial processes. We wanted a genuine participatory democracy that successfully redistributed both initiative and responsibility. The only control left to us was the invitation itself, so that just as unfamiliar would-be collaborators were asked to show us examples of their work before receiving an invitation, so a few previous contributors were not invited again. The almost paradoxical reason was

not that we thought their work “no good,” whatever that might be, or that we wanted to impose a particular style or taste, but that their work was insufficiently unconventional, which is to say that it did not need *Assembling*. We were obliged, in principle, to keep the medium committed to alternative, “otherwise unpublishable,” imaginative work—a domain that was, to be sure, elastically defined.

We discovered that *Assembling* imposed a different creative psychology upon its artists and writers. A prospective contributor to a conventional magazine tries to blend into a circumscribed style and subject matter of that journal; he or she wants his or her work “to fit,” to please the editorial authorities. By contrast, a contributor to *Assembling* knew that, since “rejection” is not a worry, he or she was free to create something that will stand out. Rather than attempting to blend his or her work into the rest of the book, each contributor could compete, as aggressively as he or she wanted (and could afford), in technology and imagination; contributor freedom became, we found, a license to excel.

The resulting *Assemblings* confirmed our initial polemical point — both the book itself and its contents were unlike anything seen before. It also provided a radically different reading experience. Whereas most periodicals are designed to create uniform, uninterrupted reading, *Assembling* offers continual surprises from page to page—one contribution must be read, the next looked at; one is easily understood, another far more difficult. Furthermore, whereas most magazines come with an editorial imprimatur that implicitly suggests to readers that the material is good and thus worthy of attention, *Assembling* suggests only that its material is “otherwise unpublishable” and thus that the reader must decide how “good” any contribution is. Most readers will agree with our general assessment that, though

some contributions are extraordinary, much of it is junk. However, the editors are no more sure than any other reader which is which.

However, getting support for what we did was almost impossible, more than one granting agency scandalizing itself in the process. Since *Assembling* was much larger than other magazines, publishers who often doubled as grants-judges were envious; and the fact that our contributors paid to appear in our pages didn’t make them feel any better. Since we refused conventional editorial authority, *Assembling* was also different in ways that power-seeking personalities found unacceptable.

Though *Assembling* itself is not mentioned in any critical history of American literary magazines (other than my own) and recent similarly structured magazines never acknowledge its pioneering example, I was pleased to notice on p. 477 of Mike Crane and Mary Stofflet’s *Correspondence Art* (San Francisco, 1984) the results of a survey measuring which publications were most significant and had greatest influence. *Assembling* scored high in several categories.

The second failure of our dream has been the last step. We weren’t able to sell off the excess as easily as hoped for; and rather than destroy those copies—an unforgivable sin, given how much effort the contributors made—I have personally moved them through several storage places over the past dozen years, hoping (no, praying) that someday some dealer would take these off my hands, or that individual issues would finally sell out. All our copies of *Fourth Assembling* (1973) got lost somewhere, so I can’t even offer complete sets. What I can guarantee is that anyone picking up *Assembling* will find not only a model in the mail art spirit, but an alternative reading experience.

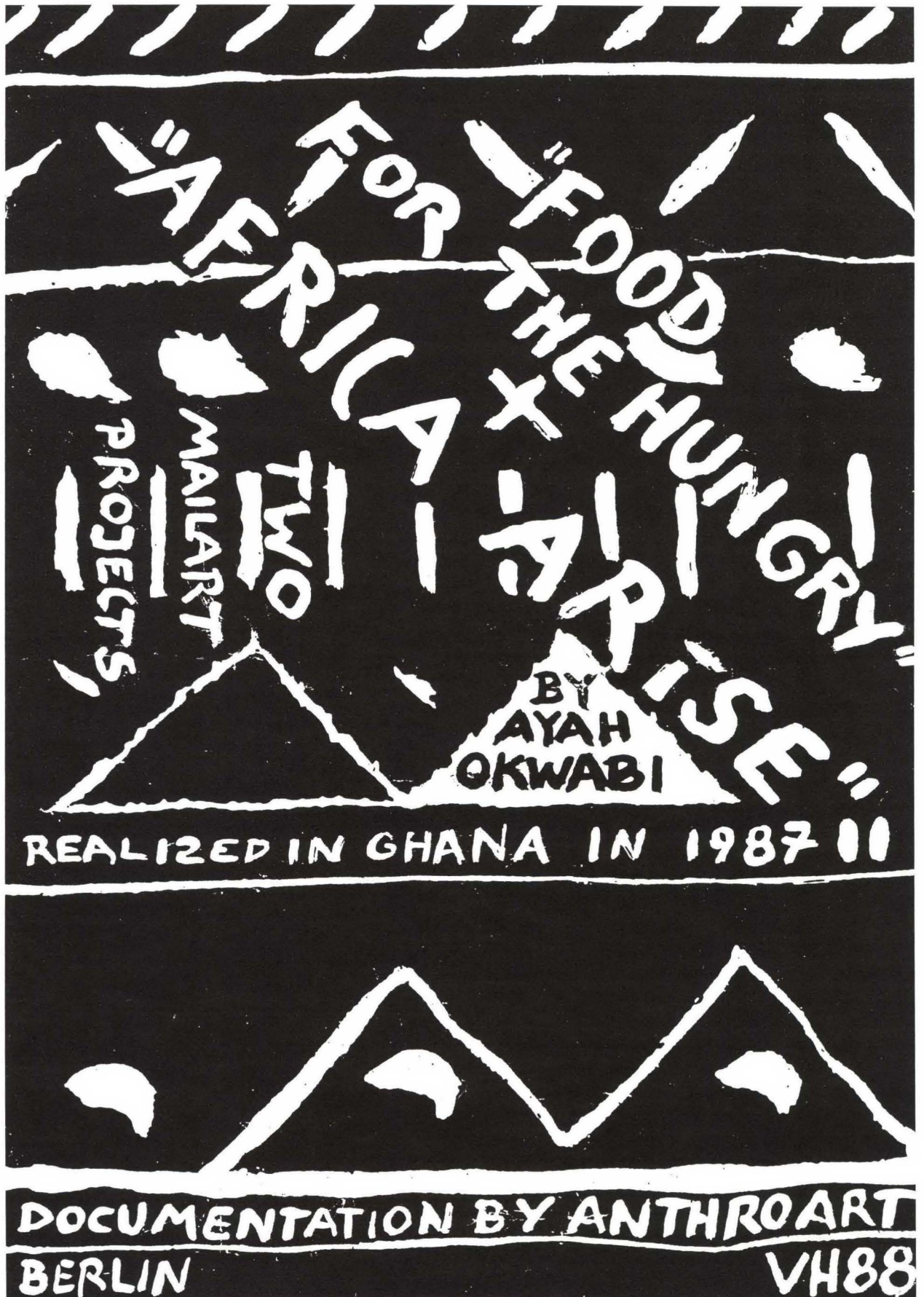


Figure 103. Ayah Okwabi and Volker Hamann, *Africa Arise*, Ghana, 1987. Mail Art Catalogue Cover.

NETWORKING STRATEGIES: AN AFRICAN VIEW

Ayah Okwabi

Networking Strategies—An African View is a mail art show theme intended to reflect the best view of the social, economical and political reality of Africa today. By projecting the African reality, one can inform the outside world about current situations in Africa. This view might mobilize international opinion for the transformation that is long overdue!

It is against this background that I selected the themes for my *Africa Arise/Food for the Hungry* mail art show in 1987 (Fig. 103). For example, Namibia, Africa's fifty-first state to achieve independence, has since then become free and Nelson Mandela, a staunch fighter against apartheid, has been released from prison. The food problem still persists in some African countries. Clearly, such themes address the practical needs and concerns of the African people, the majority of whom live in villages. At the same time, one venue of a mail art show was Kwamoso, a village in the eastern region of Ghana where volunteers at an international workcamp were constructing a Junior Secondary School (JSS) classroom. Again, the idea of a JSS is an attempt at reforming Ghana's educational system to orient it to job possibilities and the needs of the nation.

The theme of my last project, *Africa Arise*, was a look at the issue of population growth in Africa. Mail art is a relatively cheap form of small-group communication compared to the information revolution. This so-called information revolution is a myth to the people who dwell in the villages of Africa because it presupposes equipment,

which is either too expensive or inappropriate through lack of basic infrastructure.

Of course, there is no definite cutting point in the continuum between a collection of individuals such as one might find waiting for a bus or in a mail art catalogue and a fully organized "group." There is also no definite border between the intimate, face-to-face group and the large, formal "group." In order for a collection of individuals to be considered a group there must be some interaction. The following four features usually emerge as a collection of individuals that develop as a group.

First, members have one or more motives or goals that determine the direction in which the group will move. In the case of mail art, the objective is networking. Second, the members develop a set of norms that establish the boundaries in which interpersonal relations may be established and activities carried on, e.g., the conditions of no fees charged, no rejections, and documentation to all senders are values that all mail artists are expected to uphold, although it is difficult for me to show pornographic material under certain circumstances in Ghana for reasons of cultural sensibilities! Third, if interaction continues, a set of roles becomes stabilized and the new group is differentiated from other groups. Also, a network of interpersonal attraction develops on the basis of "likes" and "dislikes" of members for one another. In other words, a small group is any number of persons engaged in interaction, including face-to-face or long-distance communication in which each member gets some impression or perception of

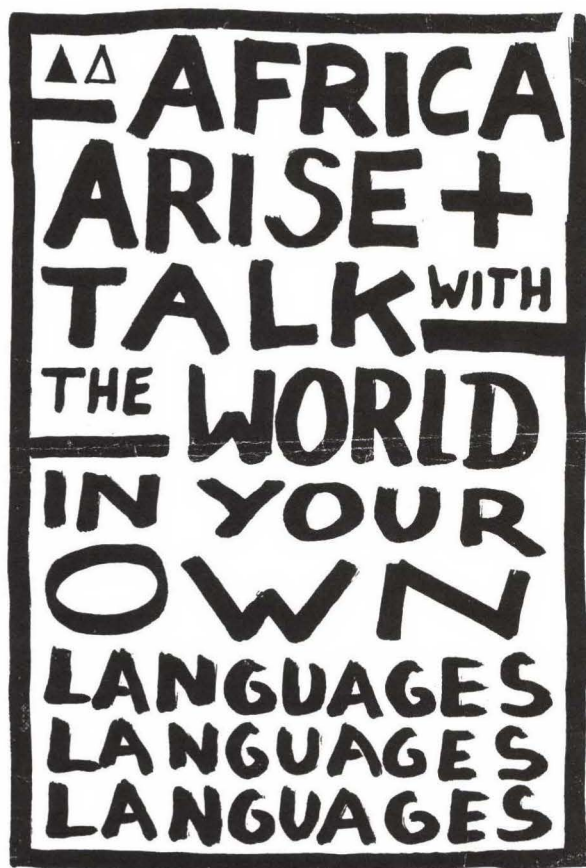


Figure 104. Ayah Okwabi, *Africa Arise and Talk with the World*, Ghana, 1987. Mail Art Show Invitation.

each other member. This perception is distinct enough so that one can, either at the time or in later questioning, give some reaction to each of the others as an individual, even though it be only to recall that the other person was present.

Out of my eleven years' experience working on various community-based projects in the villages of Ghana, I would suggest the following themes to mail artists as a basis for networking strategies from other cultures who want to relate to Africa: 1) addressing basic needs like housing, nutrition, clothing, etc.; 2) intercultural understanding—trying to understand the differences between cultures and to combine various approaches whenever possible; 3) use of pictorial presentation, e.g., postcards, photos, etc., as a means of overcoming language

barriers between cultures; 4) music—as a musically-oriented people, the exchange of audiocassettes with music or programs recorded from local radio stations or performances; 5) keeping objects that are to be exchanged within a reasonable size that facilitates affordable mailing costs; 6) finding out the different interests or hobbies of potential partners to bring about meaningful exchange; 7) children; 8) women.

Because of the ever-rising cost of international mail, one basic obstacle to a wider involvement of persons in Africa is a financial consideration. Nevertheless, whatever a person sows in mail art is to be reaped in the not-so-distant future. Postal services outside the urban areas are either very slow or virtually non-existent. Linguistic barriers exist because there are many languages spoken in Africa. Nevertheless, mail art via the international postal system offers the cheapest alternative for interconnecting the First world to the Third world, or the North to the South.

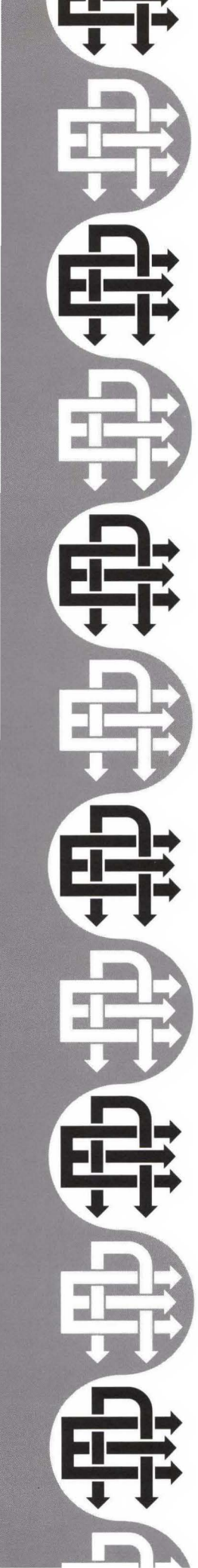
The reaction of the people who saw *Networking Strategies: An African View* was a mixed one. Some were impressed by the attempt to promote grass-roots communication, some saw it as a form of international communication aimed at promoting broader understanding between the North and the South, while others did not understand the significance of mail art, or were simply amused by some of the sayings or photos, or simply suspicious of what it all meant! Above all, the impact of the show has been a positive one. First, this form of communication, until now, was virtually unknown in Africa. A show of this kind cannot be expected to generate a uniform reaction from its audience. Second, from the perspective of the audience, one could see the way that outsiders reacted to the pertinent issues in Africa. The artifacts received for the show were a reflection of the pictures that

mail artists have in their mind about Africa. Indeed, the show provided a meeting point for the scattered impressions of artists, a kind of life-size collage of mind images!

Mail art represents an alternative communication, a way to respond to the communication challenges of our time—not only in the developing countries of the South, but also in the industrialized regions of the North and South-east Asia. The objective is free flow of information, democratization and grass-root development in the world of the African human-scale represented by the village or small urban neighborhood.

* * * * *

What is the future of mail art networking in Africa? Colonial barriers of language differences and communication patterns are big obstacles in the way of organizing a Pan-African Network. The rising cost of sending international mail is yet another problem. It is possible, however, that more people will become involved in mail art and in time a stronger bond of cooperation will be forged between Africa and the global mail art network. To achieve this end mail art will need to address themes that are interesting and relevant to an African perspective.

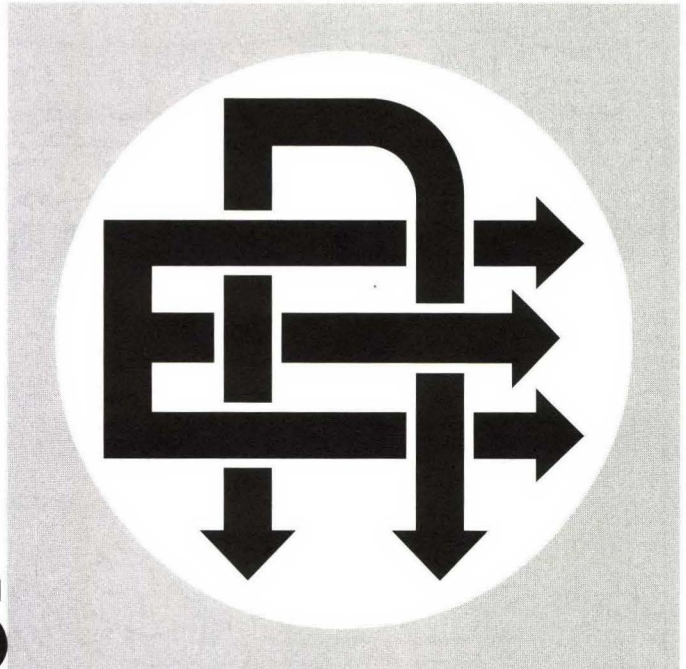


Communication

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Coco Gordon



PART 5 COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Network communication, process aesthetics and controversial issues are often an essential aspect of exchange among networker artists. Effective communication and criticism are necessary if mail artists who network are to develop aesthetically or ethically. The aesthetic value of mail art communication lies within its power to challenge, interpret, and transform reality. The ethical value of mail art lies in enabling artists to question and evaluate established knowledge and authority. Here, topics range from the aesthetics of communication, to criticism of medium and message from men and women active in mail art and art that networks.



Figure 105. David Zack, *The Correspondence Artist*, Mexico, 1983. Pen and Ink Drawing. Page from Zack's *Correspondence Novels*.



CHAPTER 29

CORRESPONDING WORLDS: DEBATE AND DIALOGUE

Chuck Welch

Mail artists create corresponding worlds out of correspondence exchange. Here artists struggle with relationships that harmonize, conflict, and sometimes emerge in passionate debate. Resolution of issues among mail artists is often elusive, but out of these conflicts a global community has been formed, creativity has flourished, and personal languages of the heart have evolved.

The Eternal Network is a decentralized art forum, both grapevine and global-village meeting house. Mailboxes and personal computers are open diaries where shared entries are drawn, read, and rewritten like endless visual chapters in a correspondence novel. Pluralism shields all networking sensibilities from any dominant leader or opinion. It is this shared, plural democracy that makes mail art revolutionary, yet vulnerable to petty factionalism, egotism, and jealousy.

Every year there are participants who “burn out” of the network, prognosticating mail art’s death in the wake of their departure. But dropouts are always replaced with new, enthusiastic voices and the eternal network wheel endures, gaining momentum with each revolving year. The author tallied lists of mail art participants in sixteen 1993 mail art shows/projects and found over 6,000 individual artists’ addresses. What characteristic network ideals, ethics, debates, and dialogues fuel the continuous evolution of such an enormous phenomenon? Why do individuals leave, and how does the mail art phenomenon attract such a large, colorful, international diversity of artistic sensibilities?

Evolving Network Ideals

Independence, individuality, and democracy are the ideals most fiercely defended in network mailstreams, but these characteristics are often stronger than the spirit of dialogue. That’s why some issues bring network artists together almost by reflex action; they join to protest censorship, they admonish cultural authoritarianism, they fight system and hierarchy. But beyond these shared ideals mail artists sometimes have fallen into anti-art hierarchies, empty rhetoric, patriarchal manifestos, slogans, truisms, and guidelines intended to protect an ethereal, open realm that asks for no boundaries.

Looking back to mail art’s inception, individual freedom and democracy emerged as central ethics related to the volatile 1960s and 1970s culture: a time when definitions of social, cultural, religious and economic values exploded. Art and communication were being stripped of elitism, re-evaluated and made accessible in street art and Happenings. Buckminster Fuller predicted a networking Spaceship Earth and mass-media expert Marshall McLuhan had enormous influence envisioning an age when information would be recycled from one medium to another. Fluxus artist Dick Higgins, a friend and publisher of McLuhan, coined the term “intermedia.”

From the revolutionary cultural milieu of the 1960s and 1970s appeared Thomas Albright’s “New Art School: Correspondence.” Albright, an art critic for the *San*

Francisco Chronicle and regular contributor to *Art News*, made the first published reference to correspondence art in two issues (April 13 and 27, 1972) of *Rolling Stone Magazine*.¹ Here are found purposes, motives, ethics and values that encapsulate intense debates among advocates of correspondence art and mail art activities.

Among Albright's description of correspondence artists and their activities appear democratic objectives: 1) "guerilla ideals aimed to strip 'art,' 'education,' and 'philosophy' of their customary elitist trappings; 2) bringing art into everyone's mail as well as to the street; and 3) information exchange that disowns the 'artist' label."² Correspondence art objectives included: 4) "process, communication and evolving mass consciousness; 5) exploring and expanding the nature of the communication process itself; and 6) an interest in communication as spirituality and mysticism."³

Today over twenty years after his article, Albright's observations remain pertinent criteria for assessing network activities, debate and dialogue. All of Albright's descriptions prevail today partly because technology has revolutionized information exchange. Today's information networks are invisible, alternative express highways that circumvent hierarchy with freely distributed ideas, concepts and values. Prophetically, poetic Fluxus visionary Robert Filliou's "eternal network" is indeed today's invisible, ethereal, open, interconnected, planetary network.

Correspondence Art and Mail Art Exchange

From the mid-Sixties, debates among correspondence artists revolved around the central question of whether correspondence should remain an intimate, private club or a social and cultural forum. When Albright wrote in the 1972 issue of *Rolling Stone*, correspondence art was defined

with an open attitude for expanding the nature of communication as a process. Mail art, a term that hadn't yet been introduced, later came to be associated with concerns for social awareness and responsibilities. Fluxus artists advocating both viewpoints interacted with Ray Johnson's New York Correspondence School (NYCS) during the 1960s. Since 1966, Fluxus artist and NYCS member Ken Friedman was distributing contact lists that extended the boundaries of Johnson's "private correspondence school." From 1970 to 1973, two Canadian-funded artist publishing projects, *FILE Magazine* and Image Bank's *International Image Exchange Directory* became decentralized clearing houses that introduced correspondence art to a global audience in North American, South America, Europe and Australia. Albright's *Rolling Stone* article about correspondence art appeared (1972) and was followed a



Figure 106. Sally Mericle, *Mail Art My Ass: Looks Like Junk to Me*, U.S.A., 1989. Rubber Stamped Stampsheet.

year later by *Art in America*'s mail art essay by California "nut art" adherent, David Zack. Clearly, all the component parts for a mail art mass media blitz had informed and influenced an entire generation of international artists. Mail art arrived, emerging out of correspondence art, but arguments calling for intimate quality art exchanges widened the gulf between both sensibilities.

The Art in Mail Art: Quality Versus Quantity

Amidst the mail art media barrage, correspondence artists strongly objected to the junky, ephemeral quality of quick-copy mail art that was being generated and distributed in bulk throughout the international mails (Fig. 106). Conceptual artist Robert Cummings, admired and respected for his private, direct, one-to-one correspondence art, expressed disapproval in a letter review of a Neo-Dada exhibition appearing at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam: "The quick-copy mail art may pass in Vancouver or San Francisco as art, but wherever, it's not worth the paper it's on, nor the ink either; the utmost in idle activity."⁴ Cummings abruptly withdrew from the network. That same year (1973) the editors of *FILE Magazine* published several editorials condemning "quikkopy crap" and "junk-mail," an unexpected move, considering *FILE Magazine*'s effort to take correspondence art before an international audience in three major issues dating from 1972 to 1973.

FILE's scathing attack on mail art was perceived by mail artists as a betrayal, and many reacted with articles, letters and new publications, pioneering mail art publications commonly known today as artist zines. Canadian performance artist Anna Banana jumped into mail art as a reaction to *FILE*'s mail art criticism, and with Bay Area Dadaist Bill Gaglione founded the dadazine

VILE.⁵ In 1973, Ken Friedman organized Omaha Flow Systems, an exhibition that interconnected museums, colleges, shopping malls, public schools, and artists in a global mail art networking exchange that set a precedent for today's international mail art shows. According to Friedman:

Omaha Flow Systems was a contribution that the older parts of the (correspondence art) network did not entirely welcome: it opened up too much territory, it reduced the elite and special quality of information access and control that some key mail artists had at that time. It was another thing altogether for an unknown high school chemistry teacher or a bus driver or a housewife to enter the network with its implications of equality.⁶

Mail Art Shows

From Omaha Flow Systems to the present, mail art shows have remained an open gate to all individuals, artist or non-artist, and it has been the proliferation of these egalitarian shows that has given shape and form to the global network today. Mail art shows guarantee open accessibility to the mail art network and harken back to early network objectives stated by Albright in *Rolling Stone Magazine*: bringing art into everyone's mail as well as to the street, and exploring and expanding the nature of the communication process itself."⁷

Customary parameters for organizing mail art exhibitions continue to be simple and few: 1) anybody can organize mail art exhibitions; 2) a show theme is chosen and advertised in art publications or public spaces; 3) the organizer pledges to show all work entered; 4) there are no fees for entering mail art shows; 5) no work is returned to participants after the exhibition; 6) mail art show sponsors reciprocate with a free catalogue, usually including show documentation and the addresses of all participating mail artists.

These mail art show criteria have been designated as “guidelines,” an unfortunate association of terminology that implies mail art is governed by dogmatic rules. Disagreement continues today whether these mail art show criteria are rules, guidelines or a custom that generally exists. Many people can agree that the custom is a dominant trend, while still setting different guidelines for a specific show or project. When mail artist Harley of Oberlin, Ohio curated *Corresponding Worlds—Artists’ Stamps* at the Oberlin College Allen Memorial Art Museum (January 11, 1987–March 1, 1987), he clearly announced his decision to circumvent customary mail art guidelines. Instead, Harley selected stamps of “aesthetic quality” from the mail art network. In doing so, mail artists accepted his candor, trusted his judgment, and mailed stamp art for consideration. Yet in his opening catalogue statements, Harley challenged the contention that mail art and the art establishment remain separate worlds:

...I chose to curate an exhibition in the traditional manner as opposed to organizing an open mail-art exhibition. I realize that this is a controversial approach to the mail-art network that prides itself on its origins as an alternative to the labyrinth of the highly politicized “art world” of galleries, museums and collectors. Personally, I feel that the integration of the traditional art world structure and the mail-art network is inevitable. My response is that the mail-artist should play the pivotal role in this integration.⁸

In contrast to the Oberlin College stamp exhibition, Mail art’s most controversial debate occurred in New York City at Franklin Furnace when art critic Dr. Ronny Cohen was accused of failing to honor the customary mail art guidelines. She, too, desired to exhibit the “Art” in mail art, and what ensued became mail art’s first public debate.

The Franklin Furnace Mail Art Fiasco

The Franklin Furnace Mail Art Fiasco occurred in New York City, February 1984 because Dr. Cohen allegedly

refused to exhibit all mail art entries at Franklin Furnace’s *Mail Art Then and Now Mail Art International Show* (Fig. 107). Also at issue among mail artists who visited the show was the ambivalent manner in which the curator presented past and present mail artworks. Finally, mail artists never received a promised free catalogue from Franklin Furnace in exchange for the gift of individual artworks. A fiery declaration was addressed in an open letter to Dr. Cohen by New York mail artist Carlo Pittore.

In your Franklin Furnace Mail Art Then and Now Exhibition (January 18 to March 10) which you curated and for which you received substantial funding from the National Endowment of the Arts, and the New York State Council on the Arts, Mail Art has been badly served by someone who appears to be an ally, and who, in fact, has presented a precious and sanitized and edited exhibition that does not provide, even minimally, an accurate sense of what international mail art is all about. Because I am so bitterly disappointed and angered by your contempt for, and disregard of, long-established and unalterable traditions of the multi-national mail artist network, I am making this letter public.⁹

Instead of boycotting the Franklin Furnace exhibition, mail artists plotted to remove the curator from her position as moderator of a mail art panel discussion presented by *Artists Talk on Art* at 22 Wooster St. Gallery in SoHo, New York City. In a prepared statement read by the panelists to Dr. Cohen, they removed her as moderator while making it clear she was welcome to remain on the panel for discussion. Rather than remain on the panel an outraged Dr. Cohen chose to leave. A recorded account of the opening statements that night follows:

Dr. Ronny Cohen: There is no rule anywhere that every work has to be exhibited through the entire run of the show.... It was my original intention to have two rotating exhibitions of the

ARTISTS TALK ON ART

A forum for artists to meet, talk and listen to each other!!!



February 24, 1984 —

INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART: Part II—The New Cultural Strategy

Dr. Ronny Cohen, Intl. Mail Art Exhibition, NYC (Moderator)
David Cole, mc magazine, NYC
Cracker Jack Kid, Injury by Jury Mail Art Project, Omaha, NE
Jon Held, Jr., Mail Art About Mail Art, Dallas, TX
E. F. Higgins, Third Intl. Dooda Stamp Invite, NYC
J. P. Jacob/HYPE, Censorship & the Law, Intl. Mail Art Exhibition, NYC

Figure 107. Mark Wamaling, Front page of *Newark Press*. U.S.A., 1984. Mail Art Zine. The Entartete Kunst issue of *Newark Press* provides a thorough account of the Franklin Furnace Mail Art Mêlée. Wamaling's eyewitness cartoon of the mail art panelists captures the confusion of the moment.

mail art material. Because of the "Open Letter" (by Carlo Pittore) that was addressed to me and sent around the country, we decided to speed up the process... We live in a real world. Mail artists, too, live in a real world. And in the real world there are no ideal conditions. You may like to have total control over your art, the display and exhibition of your art, but that, in the real world, is almost impossible.

John P. Jacob: I think that it's important to know, too, that mail art was not created for the real world, or the real world galleries. It was created by artists, for artists. And a lot of what we are here to say is that if a gallery wants to show mail art, and if you say, "everything shown," then you show it. There was plenty of room on the walls. There was plenty of room for more books. You show it. You do what you've said you're going to do... A gallery doesn't need to show it (mail art) if it doesn't want to abide by the standards that are already set.

Dr. Cohen: Well, you don't need to send in work if you feel that you must have total control...

John Jacob: But we didn't know.

Dr. Cohen: No, this is what I'm saying: you want total control so you have... what didn't you know? You were told that all works would be displayed, yes.

Carlo Pittore: We've been down to the Franklin Furnace every day asking that the work be put up. We went to opening night and we said, "Where is the work?" And you said, "I wanted to display the 'Art' in mail art."¹⁰

Ironically, the valuable topic of discussion scheduled for that night, "Mail Art: A New Cultural Strategy," was never addressed and the proceedings were diminished by insults, jeering, accusations and heated arguments. Again, the issue of quality mail art emerged as mail artists viewed a formal presentation at Franklin Furnace of historical mail art placed under glass. This contrasted starkly with mail art overflowing in stuffed boxes because there was no space for exhibition. Some mail artists felt Dr. Cohen was a

victim of circumstances, that she was caught between the enormous international response to her show and the limitations of space and staffing at Franklin Furnace. The bitter proceedings surrounding these events at Franklin Furnace may have been avoided had there been constructive communication between Dr. Cohen and the mail artists who felt victimized.

Bridging Distances

Networking calls for facilitation and cooperation with others, not domination. Still it is likely that ego conflict, misinformation, and misunderstanding will always arise in some form because these are human aspects of communication. At the Wooster St. Gallery panel discussion, David Cole explained, "The reason that somehow we can pass through the ego is because we're so far apart, and because we have the time lag involved in mailing it."¹¹ Argentine stamp artist, Edgardo Vigo, upon discussing loneliness, isolation and distance in mail art correspondence, stated:

Well, I tell you that my best friends are far away from me, those who I probably will never meet I do not totally agree with those people I am in close contact with. With distance, communication is more sincere and remains intact for a long time.¹²

Distance is also about overcoming geographic isolation, or a preference to remain far from recognized centers of the art establishment. Carol Stetser, postmaster and mail artist in the Mohave Desert town of Oatman, Arizona thrives upon "life on the fringe." "Mail art's rightful place is life on the fringe."¹³ Stetser believes mail art shrinks the world by bringing information, stimulation, friendship and hope that make life open and free.

New York mail and performance artist Mark Bloch has created Panscan, a computer teleconferencing network, to overcome distances with immediacy. He prefers fast-paced discussion with mail artists about important issues rather than "snail mail."

Computer-based communication is more conversational. Discussions that take place through the mail are characterized by a time lapse in which to consider one's answer to responses and thus extend a over a long period of time. The subject at hand may resolve itself in an unplanned, undesirable way as the letters slowly criss-cross in the mails. Discussions may get derailed by letters that pass each other in the postal system, destroying the linear nature of the discussion.¹⁴

Artists corresponding in some closely-knit webs maintain a distance from other sensibilities out of personal preference. A faction of mail artists, for instance, believe the medium is getting too serious and that playfulness is being lost. These artists prefer creating visual rather than verbal dialogue. They question the need for questions, definitions, or written mail-art histories. Carol Stetser questions the motives behind what she perceives as "a sudden urge among mail artists to become historians."

My beef is not with the dissemination of information or the compilation of archives, but with the historicification of mail art... Is mail art being codified as *His Story* the way mainstream "art history" has been?... Those of us participating in the network know why we're doing it. We don't need to read a definition of mail art—we know what it is. We don't need to read about its aesthetics, the origin of its terminology, its future direction. As practitioners we are already engaged in its present and its future.¹⁵

But there are a growing number of mail artists who believe that the medium requires as serious full-time

involvement as any other form of art expression. Artist curator John P. Jacob in an editorial in *Posttype* stated that mail artists should raise the quality of mail art by demanding powerful, effective communication from others. Anything less is mere amusement:

... We must understand that only certain mail artists have been taken seriously because they have taken mail art seriously. They have used it as a part of the Idea of their Art, and have brought to it something important. In general, however, mail art has not been taken seriously because so few of the thousands who have participated have taken it seriously. They have filled the postal Network with the same ideas that fill the air waves, filling time and space with endless yakety yak.¹⁶

Too often, mail artists distance themselves by emphasizing differences in sensibilities such as serious versus playful mail art. Networking artists, however, acknowledge the “netplerking” of work and play. They defend individual freedom and fight censorship. Mail artist Sally Mericle, in a letter describing her New York City mail art exhibition, *Is There No Justice*, defends the right of free speech and dialogue in mail art:

If one supports the cause of free speech and free expression—which has to be a *must* in the world of “art”—even the quirky “anything goes” world of mail art—then there can be *no censorship*. Censorship is an anathema to mail art, always has been, always will be—and in these days of prominent censorship of high art, I guess we have to be even more open about the unspoken, unwritten “rules of mail art.”¹⁷

Does democracy exist in mail art? Are doors open to all or do active participants exclude newcomers that don’t meet personal criteria? Libertarian mail artist Alex Cheek believes he has been ostracized by some because of his political views, “Several (mail artists) have actually written back just to say they will not respond to anything I send them. Once I received a postcard,

without a return address, which simply said, “Get out of the network!”¹⁸ Guy Bleus is an active Belgian mail artist who, like Alex Cheek and Sally Mericle, defends freedom of expression and the right to be misunderstood by others:

If I like to think about the essence of mail art and/or to give a lecture about it, no other mail artist can forbid me to do so. One of the basic principles of art and mail art is “freedom” and this implies many things, such as the right to be misunderstood. But if the principle of freedom disappears, then networking is a dead body.¹⁹

There are other characteristics of mail art that limit personal freedom. As mail artists are overwhelmed by quantities of mail, they base their responses on personal preferences, or by how much time, money or energy is available. When mail art networker Crackerjack Kid met John Cage at a show of Cage’s handmade paper in Boston, Cage confided that he preferred mail art with personal correspondence. Cage also disliked all chain letters. Crackerjack Kid mailed out 1,134 pieces of mail art during 1992 with an average cost per envelope and parcel exceeding \$1.00. When a year of postal expenses reaches into thousands of dollars, it is understandable that active mail artists would prefer a selective audience whose responses are valued. According to performance artist Andrej Tisma, there is a natural selection for quality in mail art:

Authors of poor ideas, with faulty execution, and a weak potential of creative energy radiating from their work do not find any response from other participants in the mail art network. Their works remain unanswered, since in mail art nobody is under any obligation of answering, and they will find themselves excluded from the network after some time.²⁰

Often distances serve to protect and insulate networks rather than open them. Distance is also created from mistrust and suspicion between one camp of artists and another.

Suspicion, gossip, rumors, jealousy, sexism, censorship by groups of purists, and spreading false information are as evident in the mail art world as in life itself. In such cases is it plausible to suspect that mail artists who fear others have nothing to fear but themselves?

Tourism: Traveling the Distance

Between panel discussions and visitations to the heavily criticized Franklin Furnace mail art exhibition, new ideas for resolving issues were being enthusiastically discussed at John P. Jacob and Carlo Pittore's Manhattan apartments. Foremost among these informal discussions was a mailed proposal, as set forth by Harley of Oberlin, Ohio,²¹ to organize the First International Mail Art Congress where artists could meet and create together. Harley's proposal established the first substantial working plan for mail art congressing. There were discussion panels, exhibitions, mail art archival displays, and the presentation of papers to be published as documentation of the mail art congress. Open to public interaction, the diverse discussions were to cover "...the relationship of mail art to politics, the art establishment, the archive, the commercial art world and the history of art."

Swiss contextual artist Hans Ruedi Fricker, touring New York City during the mail art gatherings, spoke with the author about Harley's proposal and about the interest and feasibility of organizing mail art congresses. Eighteen months later, Fricker collaborated with Swiss mail artist Günther Ruch in orchestrating informal congress meetings with all mail artists who chose to meet, discuss or create mail art. Ruch, in the Jan/Feb. 1983 issue of *Clinch*, published a political collage of his fictitious First International Mail-Art Congress 82, evidence of an early

interest in mail art congressing. Indeed, Ruch among other networkers had been a strong advocate of networking sensibilities in the early 1980s and many of his networking ideas became points of discussion at the 1986 mail art congresses.

Is there a common base between different mail artists? If there is, how can one describe this base? What is the difference between mail art and networking? What can we do with the overflow of daily mail?...What can we do with our archives? What's wrong with interpretations of mail art coming from outside the network?²²

While the mail art congresses were widespread (over eighty worldwide) not all mail artists participated. Some felt that H.R. Fricker's "tourism" theme was too centralized a concept, even though (Fig. 108) the international congresses were touted as being decentralized. Tourism involves cashing in postage stamps for travel tickets—to meet, perform, or discuss issues. There were mail artists who wanted to attend congresses but couldn't because they hadn't time or money to attend. Others felt the congresses were more concerned about performances than networking strategies and new visions. Finally, meeting other mail artists in person somehow detracted from the mysterious and chance nature of mail art exchange. Belgian mail artist Guy Bleus viewed tourism as compromising democratic ideals in mail art:

Tourism is not a satisfying substitute for mail art. It does not entirely respect its democratic principles. For instance: I can send a letter to Japan, Brazil or Australia for a few dollars or less, but I can't visit Cohen, Duch or Tane without an expensive travel ticket. ...I don't think I'll ever be a good tourist. I actually hate travelling.²³

When H.R. Fricker proposed another congress year for 1992, stamp artist and networker Crackerjack Kid mailed

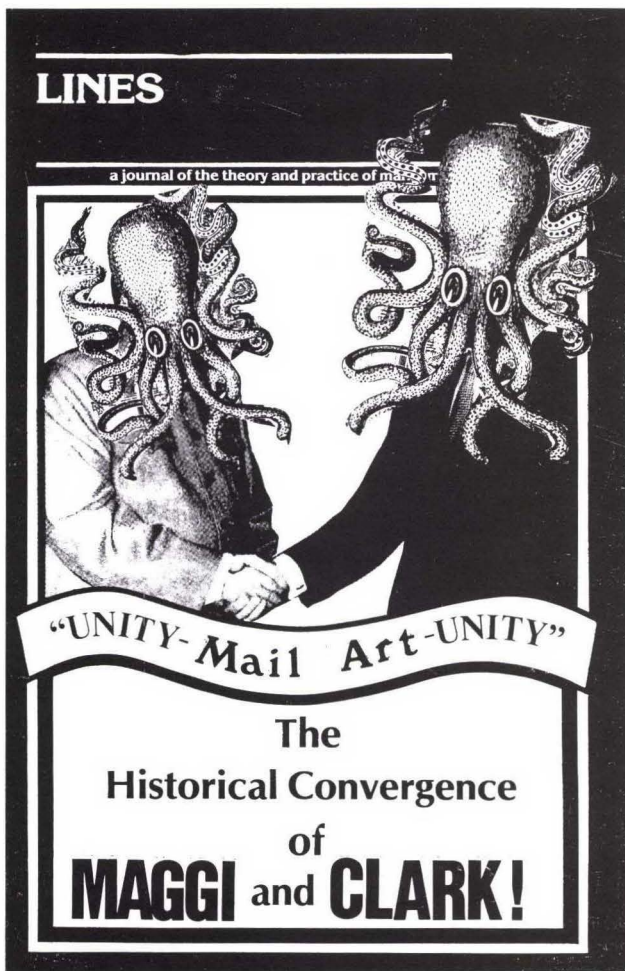


Figure 108. Allan Clark, *The Historical Convergence of Maggi and Clark!*, Canada, 1992. Collage.

flyers throughout the network calling for a meta-networker congress (Metanet). He created the neologism “netlink” and advocated congresses where mail artists could choose between meeting spirit-to-spirit or in flesh. The Kid distributed hundreds of rubber stamps with the declaration, “I meta-networker in spirit” and mailed a persuasive challenge to “congress in spirit.”

We, the invisible congress of ethereal netshakers, proclaim an ethereal open metanet; a harmonic divergence for those who can and can't meet in person. Let us gather and vibe in spirit on the vernalequinox, March 20, 1992. Perform alone or together, record chants, videotape all things and no things, net dance, hop, roll, jump, turn around, séance, post poems, read palms, teleconference or telepathy,

mind to mind, spirit to spirit, net-feast and net-fast, gather, set the last network supper, say a prayer, post a vision and quest, be a guest in spirit. Meta-spirit! Meta-post! Meta-network in 1992!²⁴

Corresponding Worlds

Whether by mail art or networker congresses, private exchange by post or public mail art exhibitions, sensibilities among networkers create corresponding worlds. Today, twenty-five years after visionary poet Robert Filliou coined “eternal network,” mail art has evolved into a networker's phenomenon. Clearly, a tradition of ethics, values, dialogue and creative interaction is continually evolving through networking channels. We have seen that this doesn't mean there isn't conflict among mail art families. In any thriving, global community, there are pockets of opposing attitudes from which vital debate is born. Rubber stamp artist and feminist Leavenworth Jackson believes that healing must occur within the network framework and should be based on at least two types of awareness:

One is a grounding awareness of how images of women are currently being treated or used (both within and without mail art) and what the effects of this treatment or use are. For men, this may call into question a whole range of attitudes towards ‘the other,’ be it the other sex, other races, other species or other manifestations of being. For women, this may cause issues of self esteem to unfold, it may involve questioning of culturally imposed hierarchies.

The other area of awareness is the one you are making a valiant effort at bringing to light. And that is the creative vision, prayer, dream or parable that either leaps ahead of current confusions and difficulties or maybe reaches back historically (as in the re-emergence of the goddess tradition) into a vision of a more truthful, harmonious and satisfying way of being.²⁵

Sharing creative information requires trusting and respecting equal authority. Daniel Plunkett, Texas mail

artist and editor of *ND*, describes the importance of ethics based on trust: "It (mail art) is a process that has re-established ethics of trust, honesty and creativity that have been killed or exploited in 'alternative' trendy art spaces and galleries. With the mails you get the guts, the unpolished, the process and the ideas that inspire other ideas."²⁶

Networking exchange calls mail artists to a sense of purpose, inter-relatedness, and cooperation. It involves a shift from patriarchal, hierarchical, anthropocentric thinking to a worldview vision. The networking process is like a continuous communications loop between individuals in search of visual and verbal dialogue. Visual poet David Cole views the process as governed by chance and by necessity; "This knowing way of art is looping round and round, and each sees oneself reappearing."²⁷ In the reappearing there is a metamorphosis of "I" manifested in "We." Out of this transition all distances dissolve and correspondence transports us to corresponding worlds.

* * * * *

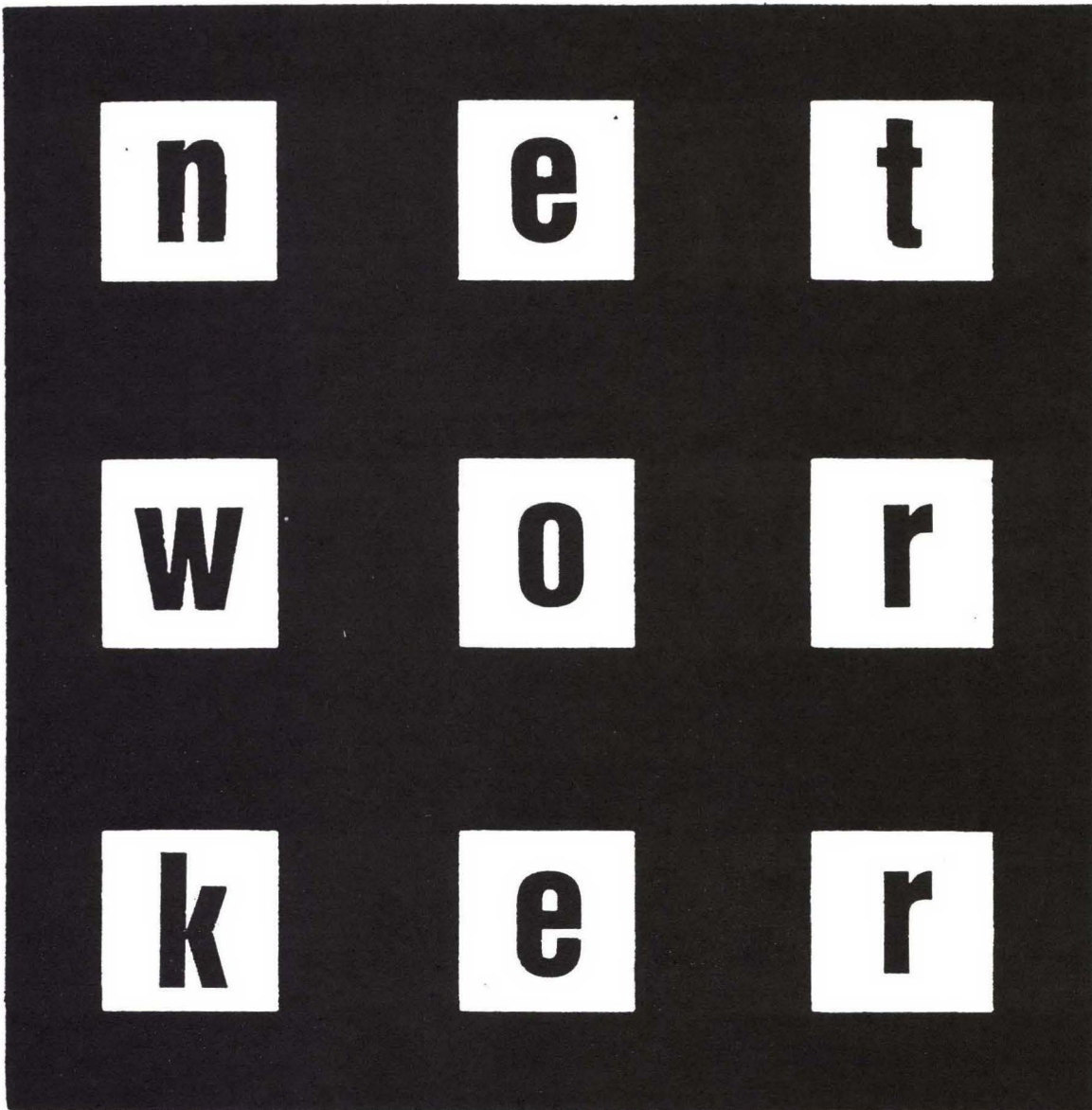
1. Thomas Albright, "New Art School: Correspondence," *Rolling Stone Magazine*, April 13, 1972, 32, and April 27, 1972, 28, 29.
2. Albright, "New Art School: Correspondence," *Rolling Stone Magazine*, April 13, 1972, 32.
3. Ibid.
4. Anna Banana, "Mail Art Canada," in Michael Crane and Mary Stofflet, eds., *Correspondence Art*, San Francisco: Contemporary Art Press, 1984, 252.
5. *VILE* was published between 1974 and 1980, concluding in 1983 with the book, *About VILE*. "VILE's mandate was to reflect the activity of the mail art network." Anna Banana in a letter to the author, November, 1990.
6. Ken Friedman, in a letter to the author, February 14, 1991, 7.
7. Albright, 32.
8. Harley, "Statement by the Guest Curator: A Labor of Love," *Corresponding Worlds — Artists' Stamps*, Allen Memorial Art Museum: Oberlin, Ohio, 1987.
9. Carlo Pittore, "An Open Letter to Dr. Ronny Cohen," in Daniel

Plunkett, ed., *ND Magazine*, June/July 1984, 23.

10. John P. Jacob, "Artists Talk On Art: Mail Art Panel Two, The New Cultural Strategy," *Posthype*, III: 1, 30.
11. John P. Jacob, 33.
12. Edgardo-Antonio Vigo, "Excerpt from Personal Correspondence by Edgardo-Antonio Vigo, Argentina," in Harley Francis, ed., *Corresponding Worlds—Artists' Stamps*, Allen Memorial Art Museum: Oberlin, Ohio, 1987, 12.
13. Carol Stetser in a letter to the author, April 30, 1991.
14. Mark Bloch, "Teleconferencing and Mail Art: Networks in Need of Each Other," an unpublished essay mailed to the author, April 1991, 1.
15. Carol Stetser letter.
16. John P. Jacob, "Editorial," *Posthype*, II: 3, 1983.
17. Sally Mericle in a letter to the author, September 25, 1990.
18. Alex Cheek in a letter to the author dated May 1991.
19. Guy Bleus in a letter to the author dated May 16, 1991.
20. Andrej Tisma, "Aspects of Mail-Art: The Spirit of Democracy," *Privatni Zivot* catalog, 1986, 6.
21. Harley's 1982 invitation to the First International Mail Art Congress was mailed extensively throughout the international mail art network and was scheduled to be held April 1–10, 1983 at the Image Resource Center, Cleveland, Ohio. Although the congress never materialized, Harley's September 28–November 16, 1981 European trip was sponsored by Cleveland's Image Resource Center expressly to promote mail art congressing. Even before the 1981 European trip, Harley established influential contacts in which the First International Mail Art Congress was discussed and supported by Jean Brown, Robin Crozier, Guy Schraenen, Marisa Da Riz and many others. His 1981 European tour and 1982 mail art congress invitation popularized and firmly established the international appeal for a mail art congress, thereby setting the tone for dialogue that was to follow from 1982 to 1984: "After a quarter-century of intense activity, it is an opportune time to attempt a thorough and organized examination of the diverse content and substantial influence of Mail Art. The convening of the First International Mail Art Congress in Cleveland will provide a much-needed focus for stimulating contact and exchange between Mail Artists from all over the world." Harley, *First International Mail Art Congress Invitation*.
22. Günther Ruch, "Introductory Statement," *Clinch Magazine*, No. 8, September 1986, Geneve-Peney: Switzerland, 4.
23. Guy Bleus, "Black Yellow Red Reflections About the 30.08.86 Mail Art Congress in Rainy Belgium," in Günther Ruch, ed., *Clinch Magazine*, No. 8, September 1986, Geneve-Peney: Switzerland, 8.
24. Crackerjack Kid, "Netshaker Harmonic Convergence," pamphlet invitation, May 1991.
25. Leavenworth Jackson in a letter to the author dated November 6, 1990.
26. Daniel Plunkett in a letter to the author dated April 26, 1991.
27. David Cole in a letter to the author dated May 7, 1991.

WORLD-WIDE

DECENTRALIZED



NETWORKER

CONGRESS 1992

Figure 109. Crackerjack Kid, *World-Wide Decentralized Networker Congress Logo*, U.S.A. 1992. Computer Graphic.



Figure 110. Tom Cassidy, a.k.a. Musicmaster, *Mail Art City, U.S.A.*, 1991. Collage.

“What is the social responsibility of the artist? Please comment for a ‘letter opening performance’ by John Held, Jr.” That rubber stamped message was a call for mail artists to participate in Held’s performance at the 1990 membership meeting of the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association. Unfortunately, the responses were not encouraging¹ The “answers” ranged from the disingenuous (“I give up”) to the absurd (“What blunder eaten before the TV news, the globe shaped like a stick?...”), from the self-centered and sexist² (“To be honest to himself”) to the egotistical (“To have... an emotion”), and from those admittedly ignorant (“What do I know about it?”) to those analytical about their ignorance (“My life stems from a passion to create, not from a knowledge of responsibilities”). How was it that only a few of the more than forty-five respondents even hinted about social consciousness? How was it that more of them focused on personal freedom as the supreme value, some even confusing the distinction between artistic freedom and social responsibility entirely?

Is there a mail art ivory tower, or what? Has the mail art network become complacent and self-congratulatory? Mark Bloch, for one, believes so, and cites its insular nature:

Everyone is happy that messages are being sent and received and no one is reading and interpreting the messages... We have grown comatose... Perhaps because they are all media and no content... we end up with... stuff in the mail that isn’t even worth interpreting.³

Bloch holds that it is often only when mail art connects

with “the larger world” that the messages transcend the medium, and writes, “Those of us who believe in our right to play in our own way must put away our toys for a while and instead work at sending meaningful messages that will be understood and have impact.”

Some mail artists, it should be emphasized, have operated that way all along. The resume of Uruguayan mail artist, Clemente Padin, for example, includes entries such as “The Artist is at the Service of the Community,” a 1975 project which included, along with symposia on topics like the role of the artist, activities such as street-sweeping and school-painting. There is Michael Duquette, whose mail art endeavors have frequently been part and parcel of his work within the Canadian labor movement.⁴ (Fig. 111) California poet Carol Schneck creates mailings that focus on AIDS education and related issues. All are mail art networkers who function as if justice, not freedom, were the paramount good. Held’s “Social Responsibility” call brought some of this attitude to light, but Carol Schneck noted, “The average artist has all the social responsibility of the average newt,” while Italian mail artist Ruggero Maggi spoke glowingly of “a human network in the sign of peace and solidarity.” California stamp artist Harley was one of few who was more radical and action oriented:

In the West the artist can do everything and it means nothing. In the East the artist can do nothing and it means everything. The social responsibility of the artist is to survive and to continue to nibble away at society’s thick hide with love and sharp teeth.

While some mail art projects have focused on issues of social justice (e.g., Reima Makinen’s 1989 “Artists Against



Figure 111. Michael Duquette, *I Support the Postal Workers*, Canada, 1988. Rubber Stamped Envelope.

Apartheid” and Ayah Okwabi’s 1987 “Food for the Hungry”), the mail artists who have truly “sharp teeth” are the ones who are building bridges—between Ruggero Maggi’s network of international friendship and the rest of the world that doesn’t know mail art from shinola. Sacred Run (p. 103 and p. 131), a case in point, found a group of Japanese mail artists joining with “outsiders” like Native American activist Dennis Banks for a cultural exchange tour across Europe.⁵ Another example, The 1990 International Shadows Project, featured work by peace activist Daniel Berrigan and Native American poet and editor Joseph Bruchac, names not usually noted in mail art circles.⁶ There are individuals like Ron Sakolsky who have fostered a network that somehow connects mail artists, university students, community radio listeners and librarians, to name just a few, around issues like the 1992 Christopher Columbus Quincentennial. It’s this kind of issue-oriented networking that interests us as library workers.

Are there librarians working in and around the mail art network? Yes, and contentious ones at that. While librarian

John Held, Jr. is the mail art bibliographer extraordinaire, a number of network-connected library workers in Minnesota have been busy for some years, organizing everything from programs (“The Columbus Quincentennial: Is there anything to celebrate?”⁷) to resolutions against U.S. military intervention in Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf. Members of the Minnesota Library Association’s Social Responsibilities Round Table (MSRRT) understand that librarianship is a contact sport. They point out that librarians are called—in the admittedly small print of the American Library Association Policy Manual—to be “proactive professionals” who contribute to “ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society.” Many librarians go about their work in the same frame of mind as that of the most engaging mail artists, with the spirit of sharing ever present.

The sharing in much of 1990 focused on efforts to prevent war in the Persian Gulf. A mass mailing sent from Minnesota in December 1990, for example, collated materials received from a dozen or more peace-seeking individuals and organizations, targeting activists in the



Figure 112. Madam X, *Madam X's Gazet*, Issue No. 26, U.S.A., 1988. Mail Art Zine. In the mailstream since 1975 *Madam X's Gazet* remains one of mail art's most enduring, laconic "zen-zines." Often merely a postcard, the *Gazet* revels in cosmic humor of mankind amok.

American Library Association. The care packages included everything from a newspaper column by outspoken West Virginia librarian Yvonne Farley⁸ to a statement by the Minnesota House Progressive Legislators' Study Group passed along by a Palestinian-American librarian colleague. And from a critique of the United States Institute of Peace⁹ to material provided by the Military Families Support Network that suggested sending large plastic garbage bags to President Bush "to symbolize the body bags being sent to the Persian Gulf." Not to mention photocopies of pertinent articles from publications like *Extra!* and *Midwest Pacifist Commentator* that MSRRRT received on an exchange basis.¹⁰

Why do librarians and mail artists create socially engaging activities? There can be no true interconnection in the world as

long as injustice exists. As long as one person goes hungry. As long as one person goes without a home. As long as one child dies of malnutrition. As long as one person is mistreated.

How do proactive librarians and mail artists communicate? Through the mail. Through collaborative writing. Through engendering contacts with interested members of the media. By exchanging publications. By attending community meetings on issues like police accountability and the hazards of garbage burning. By giving out names, addresses and phone numbers freely and taking the same in return. By telephone. By fax. By reading and sharing publications like *Z Magazine* and *Factsheet Five*.¹¹ By joining and participating in organizations like Women Against Military Madness. By marching against

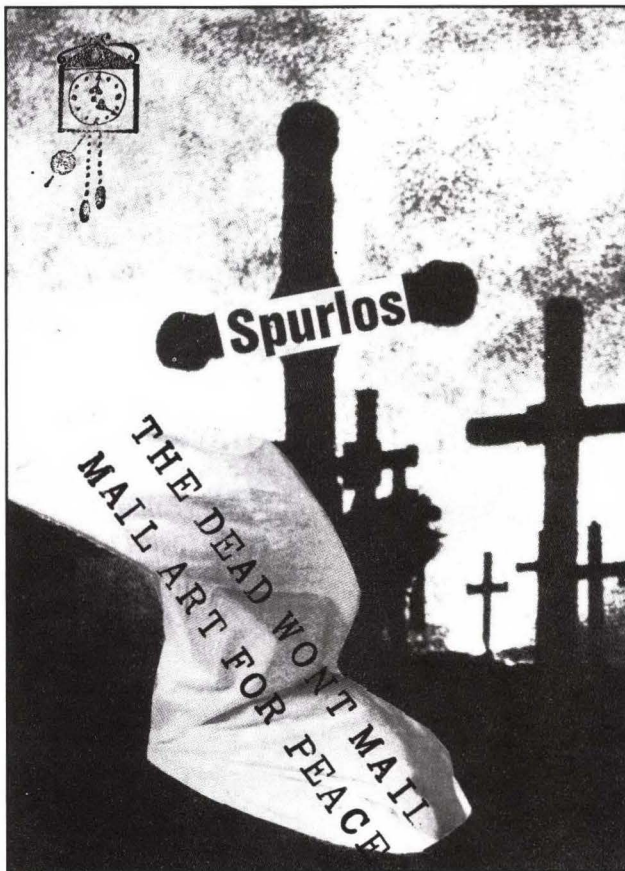


Figure 113. Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt, *The Dead Won't Mail Art for Peace*, Germany, 1988. Postcard.

military interventions, invasions, and wars by any name. By speaking out to family and friends. By being fearless. By being uncool. By supporting local independent bookstores. By paying attention to boycott and petition campaigns. By shopping at co-ops. By producing local cable television programs. By writing letters and reviews. By joining the efforts of other activists. By conducting workplace drives.

Only by becoming involved in a world larger than mail art and bigger than libraries can we challenge the status quo effectively. How many librarians or mail artists participated in the 1990 No Blood for Oil campaign that transformed empty film canisters into mailable "oil drums" destined for elected officials as a protest against U.S. military action in the Persian Gulf?¹² And how many of them mailed used styrofoam cartons back to McDonald's corporate

headquarters in the "McToxics" campaign generated by Citizens' Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes?¹³ Mail artists and librarians alike might do well to realize their common ground, and to ask not, "Is my work harming anyone?" but rather, "What is my work doing to make the world a livable place?" And to practice networking as if community really mattered... with love and sharp teeth.

* * * * *

1. John Held, Jr., "The social responsibility of the artist is to comment pleasingly" is what I interpret to be the title of John Held's documentation booklet. The source of this quote is Ray Johnson who wrote Held, "Dear Mr. Help, The social responsibility of the artist is to comment pleasingly." Due in large part to perceived audience inattention, Held limited himself to opening less than half the mail he had received on the theme, concentrating, instead, on documenting the piece in writing.

2. What percentage of mail artists are white and male, anyway?

3. Mark Bloch, "How much work could a network net if a network could net work?" *Factsheet Five*, No. 37, pp. 93-95.

4. Michael Duquette is active with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

5. The artists, Shozo Shimamoto, Ryosuke Cohen, Mayumi Handa, and Shizue Kinami, had offers of logistical help not only from dozens of fellow networkers, but also from the likes of the Soviet Association of International Youth Initiatives.

6. "The International Shadows Project, Milwaukee, 1990." Catalogue published by Woodland Book Center, 720 E. Locust St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202.

7. Minnesota Library Association Annual Conference, November 7, 1990, St. Cloud, Minnesota. The program, which featured four community activists talking about countering the Columbus-as-hero myth, would—like most of MSRRT's work—not have been possible without the support of an extensive network of friends and colleagues. They provided books, articles, names and phone numbers, and artwork, and a host of other pertinent material, most arriving via the mail.

8. Yvonne Farley, "Nothing like war to hide problems," *Charleston Gazette*, November 20, 1990, p. 4A.

9. A more accurate appellation for that institution would be The United States Institute of Peace and/or Basic American Interests.

10. *Extra!*, 175 Fifth Ave., Suite 2245, New York New York 10010, (212) 633-6700; *Midwest Pacifist Commentator*, 5729 S. Dorchester, Chicago, Illinois 60637, (312) 324-0654.

11. *Z Magazine*, 116 St. Botolph St., Boston, Massachusetts 02115-9979, (617) 787-4531; *Factsheet Five*, PO Box 170099, San Francisco, CA 94117-0099.

12. Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, New York 10960, (914) 358-4601.

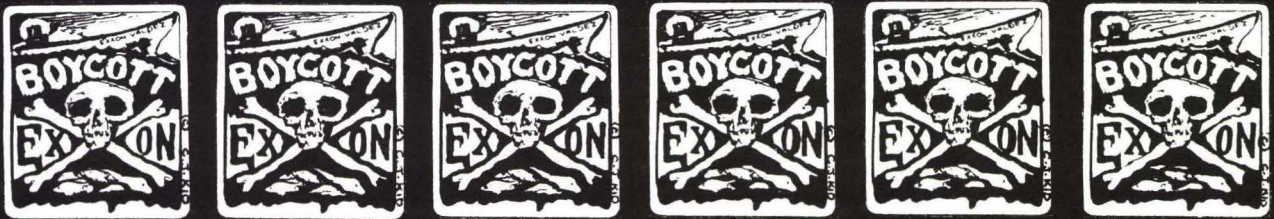
13. CCHW, PO Box 926, Arlington, Virginia 22216, (703) 276-7070.

REMEMBER THE EXXON VALDEZ



BOYCOTT EXXON

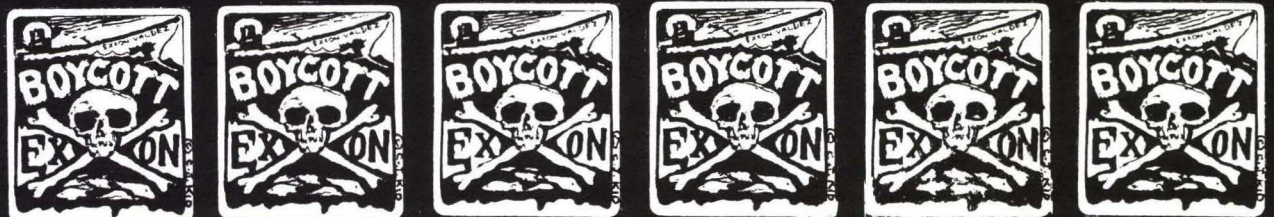
THE CRACKERJACK KID



PHILARTELIC POST



BOYCOTT EXXON 4141989



4141989 "CARIBOU LOVE THE ALASKAN PIPELINE. THEY RUB UP AGAINST IT" PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH

4141989

Figure 114. Crackerjack Kid a.k.a. Chuck Welch, *Boycott Exxon*, U.S.A., 1989. Artists' Stamps. The stampsheets appeared in North American newspapers such as *The Toronto Star* and *The Washington Post*. An Exxon stockholder who acquired the stampsheets reported that he placed the stamps on his cancelled stock certificates and mailed them to Exxon. Stamps were covertly placed on Exxon products and gas pumps.



Figure 115. Clemente Padin, *Uruguay*. 1975. Artists' Stamps. Padin's objective was to "denounce the inhuman and brutal repression of the facist government, 1975." Other stampsheets from the same period denounce transnational enterprises and state-run institutions such as the CIA.

THE OPTIONS OF MAIL ART

Clemente Padin

I. Biographical Background

My experiences in mail art date from approximately 1967, when Edgardo Antonio Vigo, Guillermo Deisler, Damaso Ogas and I interchanged our respective publications: *Diagonal Cero (Diagonal Zero)*, *Ediciones Mimbre (Osier Editions)*, *La Pata de Palo (Leg of Wood)* and *Los Huevos del Plata (The Eggs of Silver)*. From this list of publications we later assembled the testimony of our propositions.

I officially began creating mail art in 1969 when the Uruguayan magazine *OVUM 10* published my postcards and visual poems. At this time there were similar sentiments actualized by Lilian Porter and Luis Camnitzer at the Institute DiTella in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

In 1974, during the Uruguayan military dictatorship, I organized the first Latinoamerican Mail Art exposition at Galeria U. in Montevideo, Uruguay. My edition of apocryphal mail art stamps denounced the dictatorial regime for its brutal suppression of Uruguayan human rights and this eventually led to my imprisonment from August, 1977 to November, 1979. But in October 1983, I resumed my artistic activities with the *1st of May* exhibition at AEBU, the Association of Banking Employees of Uruguay. Thereafter, I proposed and organized the Latin American and Caribbean Association of Mail Artists, which was formed August 31, 1984, in Rosario, Argentina. Since then, I have participated in hundreds of mail art exhibitions throughout the world with combinations of my poetry, performance and videoart.

II. My Attraction to Mail Art

My attraction to mail art was the responsive, genuine nature of communication exchanges. Mail art is an artistic school without any "isms." As such, any "student" can enter this "school" and participate by using a diversity of new techniques or media for creating artwork in all disciplines. In this non-commercial, non-consumer domain, mail art has endured and remained a viable force for nearly thirty years.

Originality in mail art stems from the revolutionary communication of people through the mail. This and other characteristics of mail art are essential if we are to understand appropriate concepts. Mail art emphasizes the importance of communication as process rather than communication as a mercantile product subject to the laws of the marketplace. Mail artworks are not made for the art market to be consumed; rather, they are products of communication. The aesthetic value of mail art lies in the communicative effectiveness of transmitted ideas. Yet the cultural regime dictates in an oppressive system where certain privileged beings are "allowed," through divine mandate, to produce art. Mail artists should question this form of false cultural dialectic.

Sometimes the images and works that mail artists produce are created to please critics. The cultural regime is satisfied when artists create images and works that build an ideal world without contradictions and without wounds. This only succeeds in placing society under a blanket, which hides art in a false reality without purpose or function.

Ideological hegemony in society defines priorities of what is “beautiful” and what is not, that which is “art” and that which is not. Given free option to communicative proposals, the viewer’s rights and those of everybody else are affirmed in the decision-making process. Mail art and other conceptual disciplines permit the spectator to have direct interaction with artwork according to that which has living value for one’s self. Herein lies the propitiation of consummate creative activities that are applicable to every individual case.

Avoiding the active approval of art by ideologies that seek only to maintain hegemony is precisely what has made mail art a true democratic art with a viable ethic. We know that the art establishment has functioned for its own ends and is a system in which human values and one’s own breath of air is paid for at a price.

III. The Ideological Character of Mail Art Communication

Mail art is art, and its object is a product of human work that reflects social relations. As a product of communication, mail art is an inseparable part of social production, and it is from this social milieu that mail artists use whatever media are of useful value. Just as important, within the network of mail artists are interchanges of ideas, which are important factors for the production of mail art objects.

In whatever product of communication that I choose to transmit there are the characteristics of relationships between society and me. Of course, this includes the antagonisms and contradictions that these relationships present. Mail art reflects these relationships and reproduces the ideology of the social or political reality. The political sense of art is inseparable from its artistic sense. Art is revealed as a subliminal form of social conscience, an instrument of

knowledge whose function is auxiliary to that same society. Art is an instrument of change and transformation.

The ideological mechanisms of cultural control thrive in societies that favor a hegemonic system. No wonder that mail art, intended as a full expression of humanity, is distorted to the point that it can only be spoken of as an a historical or autonomous discourse, like an entity floating in space. Mail art is taken out of the world and is alienated from itself and from the social reality that it generates through certain media. It is necessary that we recover mail art from these tendencies and return it to its communicative efficacy.

Art that is outside a reflection of the social or economic conditions of society is exclusive. It is impossible to reduce the artistic to the political or to the social or vice versa, but the artists, only by reducing the concept of reality, can pretend to try in each level separately.

In conclusion, there are several options that mail artists can choose from:

- Mail artists can opt for social values already in existence or they can change the codes of social communication.
- Mail artists can qualify or try to measure the different mechanisms of control within the system, or try a new form of representation that will enable artists to question all established knowledge.
- Mail artists can reproduce work only for the art market that includes all work that is permissible, or propose works and texts that question the aesthetic, social and political status.
- Mail artists can resign their social responsibility by “l’art pour l’art” or...

* * * * *

(MAIL) ART
ISN'T
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Clemente Padín.

Figure 116. Clemente Padín. *(Mail) Art Isn't Sufficient*, Uruguay, 1990. Postcard.

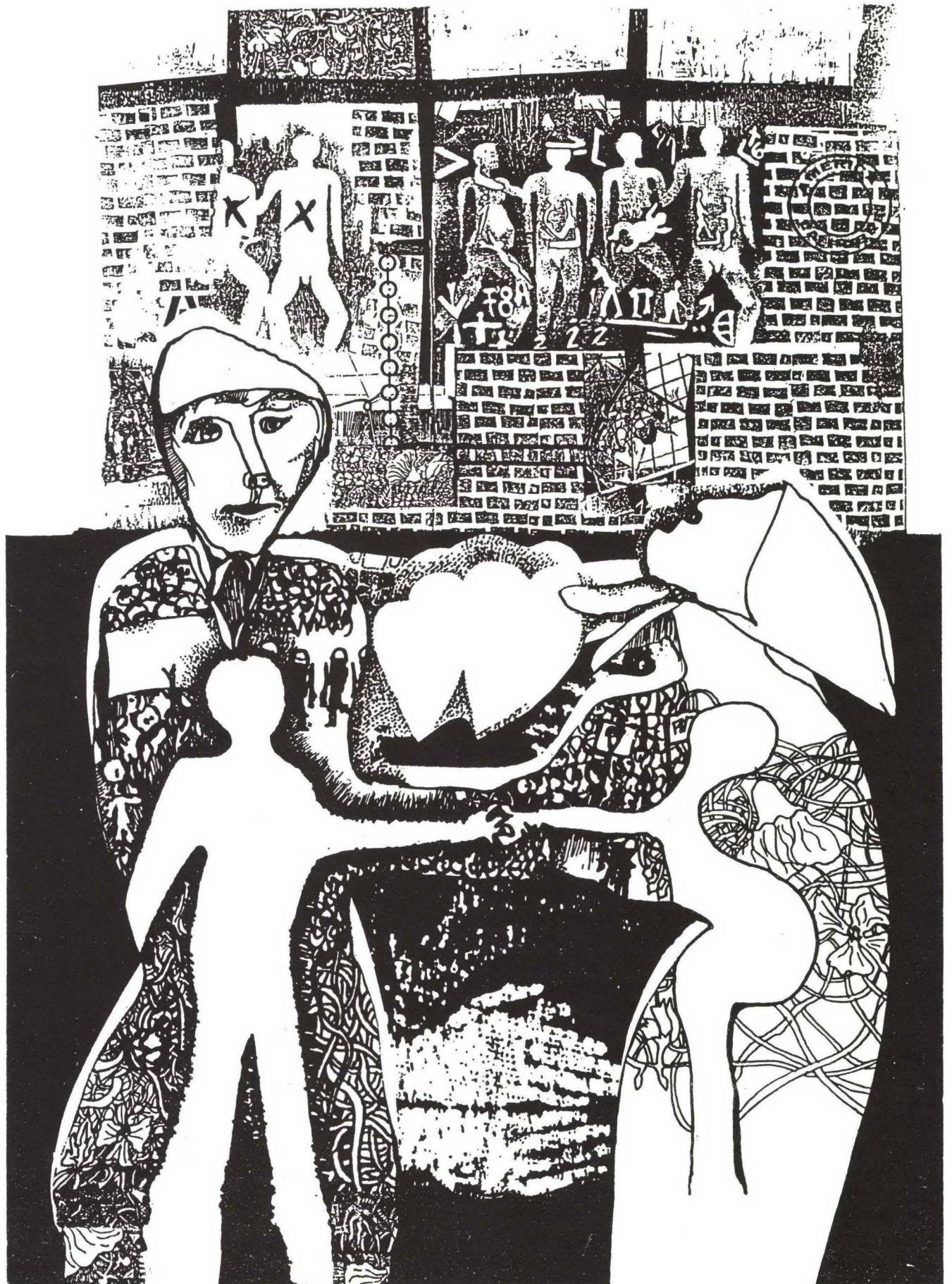


Figure 117. Graciela Gutiérrez Marx and Martín Raúl Eckmeyer, *They Are Still Alive*, Argentina, 1988. Print.

A FOLK ART WITHOUT ARTISTS

Graciela Gutiérrez Marx

“We must have a folk art without artists!” This controversial slogan, for which no solution has been found, is but a gesture I’m using to share some critical thinking regarding a very delicate situation: that of the South and Central American artist.

I despise theories, logical and rational foundations, test-tube analysis and aesthetic considerations. I only want to talk about a *necessity* as I understand it. Together, with many others, we must work urgently before the political space given to us in favor of freedom of expression is taken away. We must work before expressive illiteracy (by genesis or by disuse) continues to harm the creative possibilities of entire communities that have survived the social, economical and cultural depredation of the powerful—those who silence and sterilize us in our most everyday expressions through a pasteurization process of mass media communication.

I feel, as does Italian mail artist Bruno Talpo, that the best work of Latin American art is the work of survival. That as human beings, more than artists, we are trying to deliver a final message of *necessity*. We could speak of art as a new project of man (and consequently as a social model) that becomes credible and human in its struggle. To live is to be in contact with life. To create life and transform it into reality is much more important than simply giving form to new or old objects of art that indefectibly fall on a buying or selling market. The practice of aesthetic or historical criticism won’t be sufficient to incarnate our slaughtered peoples. We must abandon privileged positions and assume consciousness and commitment to firm, revolutionary, almost mystic positions.

“To live—that is to say, to maintain oneself with life,” as stated by Bertold Brecht, “has become an entire art... Who

feels like pondering how to maintain art with life?” The very sentence stated here seems cynical in our present circumstances. This is how goodwill and solid spirit is expressed by one European, who, like those of his geography, have difficulty understanding our struggles. Perhaps our hope, my own hope is centered in a heartbeat that’s barely audible. What we feel, I feel, is taking form here and in other places on this planet is more than building monuments made of noble materials or super-specialized universities. We choose, I choose, the modesty of a collective labor with equal rights for all men and women that populate these lands. I think of Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador... the Chile of Chicho Allende, the Brazil of Paulo Freire and the so many “olden days” or “future days” of our many ambushed nations. I think of Ivan Illich.

The creative act is by necessity a dialogue, a shared conversation created by the people... like a spontaneous birth, often painful and symbolic. It is like the paper doves made and thrown away by political prisoners, or the silhouettes of life painted by hundreds in our streets, that make the “present-absence” of our “missing” loved ones known to all. The creative act is the rumbling of a riot that reveals the intimate and the intimately lived. Yet creation is also present in the manipulation of tools, simply handled by innocent hands. This can be found in the corners of the underdeveloped nations of our world.

We must rescue the domestic and manual poetry of the American man and woman that has yet to be domesticated by technology; the women who knead dough by hand or sew with small and simple needle and thread; the women who wash their clothes with a scrub-board and a bar of soap. This too is ecology.

CASILLA DE CORREO 749 - C. P. 1900 - LA PLATA - REPUBLICA ARGENTINA

HOJE HOJA HOY

METANET 1992



Asociación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Artistas correo



Figure 118. Graciela Gutiérrez Marx, *Hoje Hoja Hoy*, Argentina, 1992. Mail art zine of the Association of Latin American and Caribbean Mail Artists. Edited by Graciela Marx (portrait above).

The Latin American reality is so strong and contradictory that it can almost permanently besiege us without weighing possibilities or stages of a patient consciousness in a change of situation. Ours is the land of great contrasts, and on a major or minor scale, South America is just that: colder than, yet as painful and penetrating as the Caribbean sun. We are always out on the ledge and we like that in spite of the fear and terror that are present.

Just the other day my good friend Gustavo Mariano said to me with a beaming face of true happiness, "We've tried everything, and everything has failed, that's why I have hope—because we have the privilege of having to begin again, to inaugurate." Now it seems that a new wind blows here like a sleeping need that begins to bellow. We must learn to live, we want to live together! We must work for a united anti-

imperialist front among ourselves (those within Argentina) and with all our brothers from Uruguay, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil and Central America. We must learn to be born again. We must be allowed to be born again, but this time with equal opportunities.

Only by means of a permanent and unrestricted exercise of freedom to critically express or represent reality can we produce new forms, or "languages of transformation," capable of modifying the horizon of our popular poetic consciousness. Only these creative events, by and for the people, will be both the answer and resistance to oppression and silencing as well as the first utterance in a new language of creation.

Here there must be only one privilege: that of the eternally subdued, oppressed and suppressed. That we, the intellectually privileged, must offer ourselves to them, so

that they can express and overcome the living contradictions of their being in the world, with dignity, justice and liberty!

And vanguard art? I believe we can't go back and ask ourselves how to communicate better to "ill-informed" spectators, or how to better articulate our individual "games" in social relations that our daily lives so niggardly propose. We can't "self-install" ourselves in apparent vanguard positions as seekers of new languages, and believe that a revolutionary art takes form beginning with conceptual, functional, and formal innovations.

To renounce ourselves as "creators" of works of art with or without profession is a complete statement and a re-acknowledgment of our limitations as well as an incarnate commitment to reality.

The great Latin American work of art should be the social practice of a new creative consciousness that will indefectibly fly into the birth of a new poetic that will mark the beginning, not the end of a liberating process that can no longer be professionalized.

We must create. This impulse to make something new, to construct another reality, the unhappiness that has gone before us in the past, the permanent insurrection in our people, is now almost a generalized and solid sentiment, a sentiment that will allow us to rescue, on all levels of human culture, creative and poetic processes that are also involved in the realization of acts of great simplicity.

Today's artists (Artist?) will offer themselves as project programmers (according to Neide de Sa), that will be poetically built by public heterogeneity and will be now an artist by and for the others. From this collective activity that we hope will determine new forms, rituals, and fashion will serve life and liberty.

Love is not obedient. It is eminently subversive. It never adapts. It's an eternal movement or change, nor does it run out or consume itself, and for that very reason, any kind of passion or creation, such as art, is generally understood as a danger to the stability of the civilized system.

Art is at the same time love, a form of knowledge (as our clever and radical professor of Philosophy and Aesthetic, Manuel Lòpez Blanco, taught us) and a transformation of reality. In every living culture, contemporary or archaic, poetry is a vital, social, even liturgical act. Therefore, the poetic function is at the same time a cult, a game, a celebration, craftsmanship, knowledge, an extension of the conscience and freedom. Hence, there will be confusion in languages and intimacy between the relation and knowledge of equal rights for the transformation and creation of an "another-same" reality.

We must create, we are creating, a work of art that will be within itself, a gathering of offering, an open proposal of education for voluntary modesty. Thus the sign will become again a tool to create and not the point of arrival for culturization. Only recently have we been able to defend collectively the right of all men and women to use their creative energy, without subjecting each message to one of "consumption" or "knowledge," which they are obliged to, as a necessity.

There are many paths to choose, in spite of the might of this world, and these paths are opening up in the poorest and most exploited regions of this earth. They are probably the only ones capable of initiating a new development of man, thanks to progress, or the lack thereof.

We can't convince ourselves of the idea that "only a handful of poets are born." Undoubtedly, the "systems" take an active role in exercising their controls to assure that "many more poets" aren't produced. But, when that happens, when "the man on the bottom rung" raises his voice to speak his mind—that in itself becomes a feat. There will be no armies that can silence him because his message will be incarnate and will always grow.

For the unity in creation, and as an homage to the marginal peoples of Central and South America, this pamphlet is written and delivered.

* * * * *

"We Must Have A Folk Art Without Artists" was read in Rosario, Provincia de Santa Fe, on September, 1984 by Graciela Gutiérrez Marx.

WHO'S WHO
WHO'S WHO
WHO'S WHO



The Happy Young Men and Women
With Nearly Perfect Lives, INT.

Figure 119. John P. Jacob, Rubber Stamped Folder of *Who's Who of the Happy Young People Enterprises (HYPE)*, U.S.A., 1982. Mail Art Project.

MAIL ART: AESTHETIC REVOLUTION OR PERSONAL EVOLUTION?

John P. Jacob

The root of mail art is communication, the cry of the isolated for community. Ideally, mail art is the communion of many voices, no two entirely alike, forming a strange yet delicate music. In such a communion of voices, a constant crisscrossing of information between individuals throughout the world, lies the foundation of the mail art “network.” As the individual grows within his or her community, new ideas and information are brought into the mail art network. Thus, the language of the network evolves with the individuals who comprise it.

Ideally, the language of the mail art network transcends the individual voices of its participants. The transcendent network forms the universal subconscious of all its participants, and they hold fast to it as a strong, firm ground, their individual voices within it evolving in increasingly rich harmonies. The evolution of the voice of the individual and the evolution of the language of the network become inseparable. A union is formed, and a truly creative language is born.

That many of those seeking communication in mail art consider themselves outsiders, on the fringe of their (non-network) communities, should come as no surprise. It is, above all others, such outsiders who seek in one another’s company refuge, comradeship, and commiseration. In his novel *The Joke*, a story of how people who have been ravaged spiritually and politically seek to ravish others, Milan Kundera writes, “Nothing brings people together more quickly and easily (though often spuriously and deceitfully) than shared melancholy.” It is precisely this atmosphere in which much mail art communication is conceived.

If mail art were an iceberg and its visible tip the ideal of communication, then the vast, underlying foundation of the iceberg would consist of the isolation of the individual mail artist. Such isolation is not based strictly in physical geography, however, but also in a sense of distance. For some, isolation is experienced as the distance between home and the known centers of the world. For others, it is experienced as the distance between their work and ideas and the more popular or successful work and ideas of others. In mail art, distance is the key to communication. It is the distance of one mail artist from another, physically, mentally, or temporally, which allows that individual to put to rest all manner of fears and defenses and to seek out what is important above all: community. And, in seeking community, to find communion; to merge with the universal subconscious of the network and to speak its language. Yet it is this same distance (or series of distances), making possible the passage from isolation to community, that permits spurious and deceitful activity. It is here that the dilemma of mail art lies.

Mail art offers a variety of opportunities and challenges. Among others, mail art offers the opportunity for criminal activity, for activities that break the rules of the art world as well, at times, as the rules of the larger world that we live in. The challenge that mail art offers to all, from those who live by the rules to those whose greatest goal is to break them, is to create artworks in the process. And, while mail art challenges some to see in ways that we had not previously considered, to accept each piece of mail art as an equal piece of information, it also offers the

opportunity to create works that challenge the limits of tolerance.

Mail artists have worked hard to establish and maintain the distance between themselves and the marketplace. To create an art world in which they and the work that they do may not be trivialized by commercialism and competition, mail artists send their works to one another, exhibit in their own spaces, and publish in their own books and magazines. Further, mail artists have established an “unwritten” set of guidelines by which all exhibitions and other treatments of mail art are to be measured. These guidelines are: All work sent to a mail art exhibition must be exhibited; No jury may select work for a mail art exhibition; No fee may be required for participation in a mail art exhibition; All works received become the property of the exhibition coordinator; All participants in a mail art exhibition should receive, in appreciation of the gift of his or her work to the exhibition, documentation of some kind.

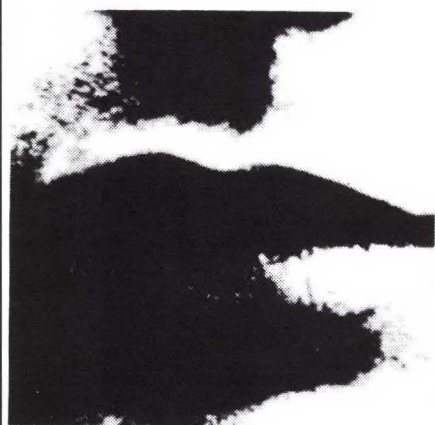
It is this set of guidelines, holding the activities of mail artists aloof from the art world and the marketplace, which appears to lend mail art its revolutionary aesthetic. Yet in the establishment of such guidelines mail artists have opened for themselves a Pandora’s box of problems. Rather than creating an art world in opposition to the marketplace, mail artists have simply created a parallel art world, an anti-art world with an oppositional rhetoric and stance, but with hierarchical values equal to those from which it seeks to dissociate itself. By the setting of guidelines, by the coming together of congresses and the writing of official histories, mail artists open the way for the banding together in clubs of those who agree, the disbanding of those who do not, for dissent among groups and, ultimately, for competition between mail artists and mail art clubs. The oppressive linearity of rules, associations, and histories is at odds with the playful anarchy of mail art.

Guidelines, ideal as they may seem in theory, serve best to keep the ideal of aesthetic revolution that mail art offers in the hands of the few who simply disregard them, opting instead for personal evolution. The rest, struggling with the politics of a system that demands no politics, are themselves politicians. Like the characters in Kundera’s novel, who inadvertently but mercilessly seek to ravish those who have ravaged them (who, no doubt, were inadvertently but mercilessly ravaged by others who...) mail art politicians seek, through guidelines, associations, and histories, to lose no opportunity available to any other mail artist in an art world antithetical to the marketplace where they may achieve the status of anti-hero. In real terms, this contradiction leads nowhere. Those who allow themselves to be tangled up in it are being led in the same direction.

Ethical guidelines, without a moral and aesthetic sensibility to back them, do not serve the mail art community in any manner beyond establishing a dogma on the basis of which the faithful may feel justified in banding together against those who, in some manner, stand against them. If mail artists must have guidelines, it is crucial they demand other mail artists live up to the same moral, political, aesthetic, and social responsibilities demanded of others. Only by approaching the world with a combined sense of ethical and aesthetic concerns, bearing in mind the needs of artists as well as their responsibilities as world citizens, will mail artists come to communicate with others. Although mail art is a potentially open door, the decision to hold it shut remains securely in their hands.

Mail art is potentially an open door to the world. In addition to the larger issues of communication, it offers artists the opportunity to discover new avenues for their work, and to grapple with the problems extant in today’s art world. This opportunity demands that mail artists work together with other artists working in different, sometimes

CENSORSHIP: THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE SENSES



Speak nothing



See nothing



Hear nothing

Figure 120. Stephen Perkins, *Censorship: The Dictatorship of the Senses*, U.S.A.

opposite, directions. If mail art's claim to be an open network for communication is to be perceived as honest, then mail artists must do more than allow all interests and treatments equal voice: they must actively participate in, and spread their influence among other forms of creative practice. Communication at its purest, which mail art purports to represent, implies freedom of speech. If mail art is as pure and spiritual an activity as its practitioners like to say it is, then surely both they and it can withstand the battering they may receive from the "corrupt arts," responding like demons to a piece of the true cross during a much-needed exorcism.

In 1985, when this essay was begun, there was much talk of mail art as an international movement, especially among those of us who lived in or near New York City. Over the years that this text has lain unused in my files; my experience of the world, and consequently my understanding of the place of the artist within it, have changed. If I were to begin to write again today, I would depart altogether from the issue of communication, which is central to the practice of mail art and needs no further elaboration. Today, I would like to raise the complex issue of marginalization in the many cultures in which it occurs. What, for example, is the nature of

communication between cultures that are marginalized, as mail artists working Eastern Europe were considered until recently, and cultures that adopt marginalization, as we who congregated in and around New York must be recognized? How can we hope to communicate with each other across the chasm that divides force from choice? And do force and choice result in different “qualities” of communication?

Marginalization is a tool of censorship. It is painful to me that so many American mail artists continue to regard marginalization as central to their anti-art status. By accepting marginalization, mail artists strengthen the culture of censorship that has developed in the United States during the Reagan years, and that is now finding its voice among the conservative right wing and the “moral majority.” It is my belief that mail artists must re-integrate themselves with their non-network communities, and fight against all forms of marginalization, social, political, and aesthetic. American mail artists might learn a profound lesson from Eastern Europeans like György Galantai, who used the mail to promote creative activity and communication among young Hungarian artists during the 1970s and 1980s, and in the process organized the largest public archive of alternative artistic works and documentation

in Eastern Europe; or like Joseph Huber and Karia Sachse in East Berlin, who, during the same period, managed to instill political activism in the rigidly controlled areas of public art and art education using mail art.

In 1985, in an article in *ArtForum*, Greil Marcus wrote mail art off as “an immediately quaint form that excused itself from history.” Articles were published, books printed, congresses convened, but the glory days of mail art as a movement seem to have come and gone. Since 1985, many mail artists have left the New York area; several (myself included) have dropped out of the network altogether. Nevertheless, for those who continue to practice mail art as well as for those who do not, the ideal of communication remains critically important. Among the practitioners of mail art today, as among the mail artists of every “generation,” are many who use it for what it is most: a network for democratic communication and the exchange of ideas. Such work needs no regulation, for it raises social consciousness on a global level. Such work offers all people, artists and non-artists alike, significant new ways for experiencing and representing the world. It offers a “new global strategy.” Ultimately, mail art must cross the distances, the isolation upon which it is based, and lead us back into the world.

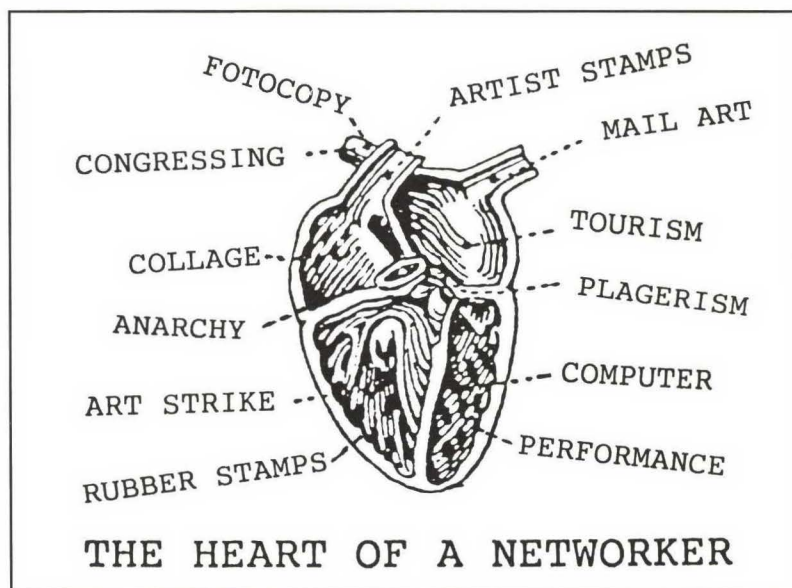
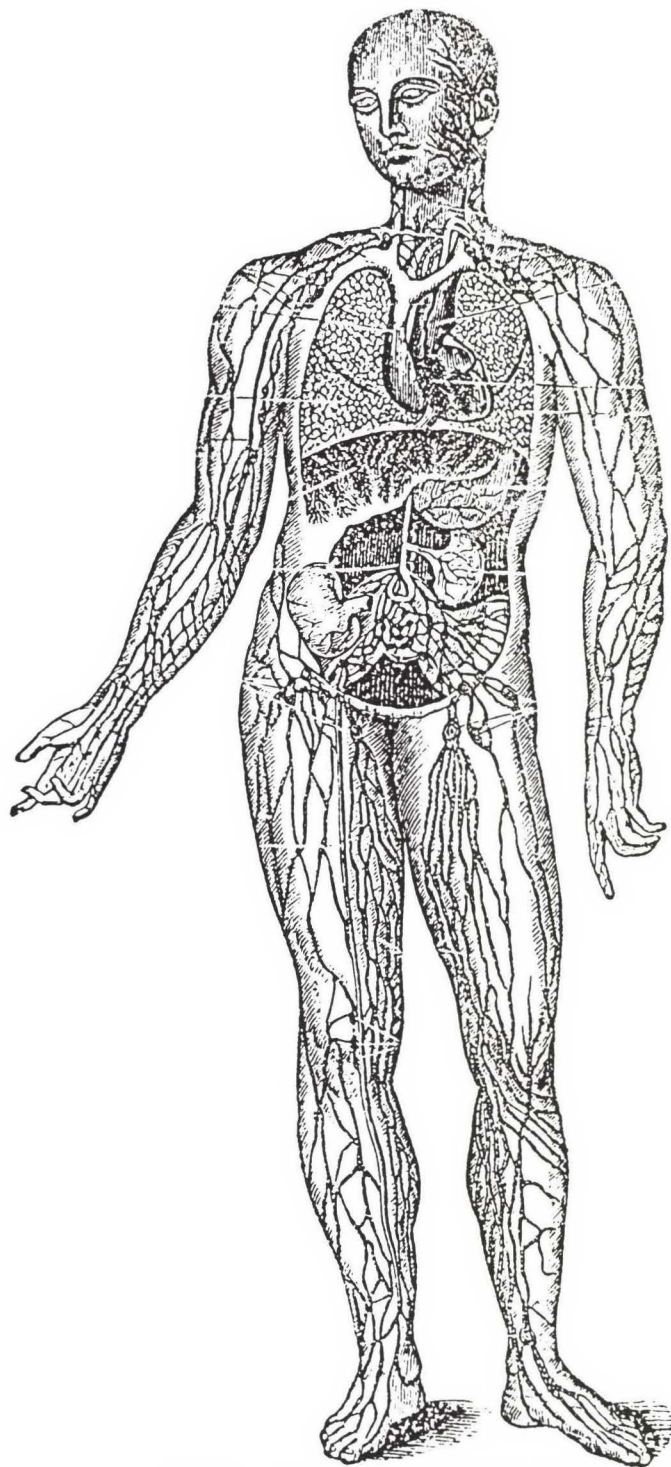


Figure 121. Mark Corroto a.k.a. FaGaGaGa, *The Heart of A Networker*, U.S.A., 1992. Postcard.



POSTHYPE

volume three · number one

Figure 122. John P. Jacob, *Posthype*, Vol. 3, No. 1, U.S.A., 1984. Mail Art Zine. A classic mail art issue based on the February 1984 Artists Talk On Art Mail art panel discussions at Wooster St. Gallery, SoHo, NYC. John P. Jacob recorded and printed the entire dialogue of the first public mail art debate. Participants included Dr. Ronnie Cohen, Carlo Pittore, Anna Banana, Faith Heisler, Roberta Sperling, E.M. Plunkett, John Evans, Alex Igloo, Mark Bloch, Ken Friedman, Dick Higgins, Richard Kostelanetz, John Held, Crackerjack Kid, David Cole, E.F. Higgins, Steve Random, Marilyn R. Rosenberg, Louise Neaderland, and Robert Morgan, among others.

MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS IN THE MAIL

Leavenworth Jackson

We live in an imperfect world. For those of us who are idealists as well as artists and visionaries, it may follow that we hunger and thirst for a better world. So we busy ourselves about the creation of alternative contexts in which to act upon our ideals. I have approached mail art in this way. Imagine our frustration when those ideally conceived networks predictably manifest the very same foibles that plague our larger world. Back to the drawing board! The good news is that as we develop skills to heal our networks and ourselves, we heal our larger, “imperfect” world as well, for they and we were never separate.

Imagine the dismay of femail artists who frequently encounter the question “Where are women artists?” The invisibility of women’s work in a world overflowing with the fruits of women’s labor is nothing new. Our work is everywhere apparent but seldom recognized. Femail artists abound. For twelve years now these “invisibly” artful women have filled my mailbox with quite visibly fabulous mail of every description. My amazement and gratitude continues for their diverse, abundant and endlessly inventive expressions of camaraderie. For those who continue to puzzle over where the women are, I offer the following:

Certain circles within the mail art network are overwhelmingly male insofar as they faithfully mirror so many aspects of the mainstream art world. Concerns such as establishing authorities, guidelines, documentation, manifestos, and hierarchies, either exclude or do not interest many women. Years ago, during the height of mail art manifesto mania, Freya Zabitsky carved an eraser stamp that read: “Men make manifestos, Women make friends.”

There are women and men who either have dropped out of (what I will call for lack of a better term) “official” mail art circles or who never bothered with them. We are active art correspondents, we have become friends, we travel great distances to meet, and our purpose seems to be to enjoy one another. We cultivate listening skills as carefully as we craft our statements. Our exchanges tend to be personal, exploratory, inquiring, playful and supportive, unlike the generally didactic, mass produced, proclamatory and random exchanges which often predominate in “official” mail art circles. We are not experts; we are participants. As Elizabeth Abraham wrote from the Greenham Common Peace Camps: “We have no leaders here. All the stars are in the sky.”

If I were to characterize “women’s work” on the broader mail art network, inclusivity and interconnectedness would be key features. Women (and men of kindred spirit) explore personal, political, environmental, and spiritual issues with an awareness of the patriarchal attitudes that frame and artificially compartmentalize these same issues in mainstream culture.

Does feminism relate to the “women’s work” mentioned above? Among the many viewpoints outside of mainstream white male culture that stimulate lively exchange, feminism is notable for including all beings in its purview. Mountains and rivers too. So I’d like to say that feminism is alive in mail art today when our activity is inclusive and cooperative. Sexism, racism, and homophobia have no place here. Laying down these burdensome attitudes is prerequisite to exploring ways of relating to one another and to our environment.

In a mail art questionnaire, I was asked to respond to the issue of pornography in mail art. I feel that violent pornography in mail art reveals a deeply conservative and misogynist element within the network that passively mirrors some of the most destructive aspects of mainstream culture. Pornographic imagery is a violently exclusive visual language that is well understood by female artists. This does not imply an advocacy of censorship. Since when has any suppression of the symptoms led to a cure of the disease? The dearth of women in some "official" mail art circles may be an indication of our frustration with a tiresome and remarkably obdurate male attachment to sexist attitudes and imagery. In this sense, perhaps ours is the original "Art Strike."

The above remarks are not intended to create or describe a new mail art hierarchy where personal exchanges, long devalued by their relegation to the women's sphere, are newly elevated to the lonely pinnacle of "most valid artistic

networking activity." Acknowledging the fact that some male artists have put down or ignored women's art for its personal and inclusive aspects does not imply a feminine backlash of similar hierarchical thinking, i.e., that "our way" is better, more authentic, more valid, etc. Different ways of networking can co-exist side by side on a level playing field. Honoring diversity fosters vitality.

* * * * *

Thanks to Sally Mericle, Susan Newell, Margaret Hoyt, Shirley Borchardt, Steve Frenkel, Elizabeth Abraham, David Orr, Connie Hwang, Jane Rosemont, the City of Berkeley, Anna Banana, Don Carr, Maria Moya, Anne Norcia, Susan Jokelson, Crackerjack Kid, Phyllis Cairns, Lynn Richardson, Lowry Thompson, Helen Wallis, Suze Weinburg, Julie Hagan-Bloch, Steve Sikora, Mark DeChagas, Andy Knapp, Moira Ann Collins, Nina Berg, Eleanor Kent, Richard Wanderman, Rick Banning, Susanna Cuyler, Ed Marthey, Howard Plummer, Ellen O'Donnell, Sue Nan Douglas, Candy MacMahon, Carol Stetser, Jenny deGroot, Freya Zabitsky, Christine Smith, Shannon Weil, Emma Goldman, Curtis Uyeda, Ron Dellums, Roz, Jeanne pasle-green, et al. ...without whom my networking would lack the stars in the sky.



Figure 124. Beth Jacobson, *Girlilla Post*, U.S.A., 1994, Handcanceled Artists' Stamp.

Их свободу или свободу в тюрьмах они не сами заревают. Мысль китайского человека относительно жизни приводит к этой точке. Подлинно не даром прожил свою жизнь, даже и тогда, когда она проходила под гнетом или в нужде.

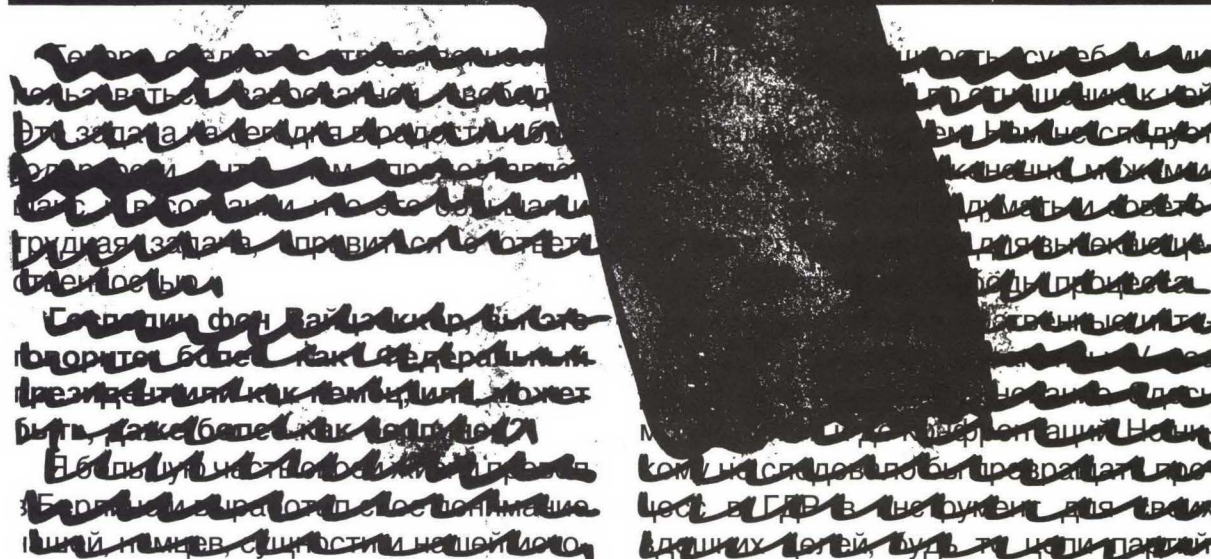
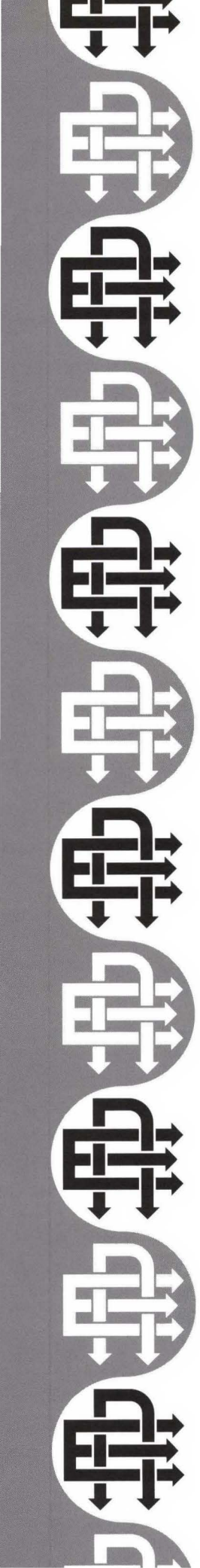


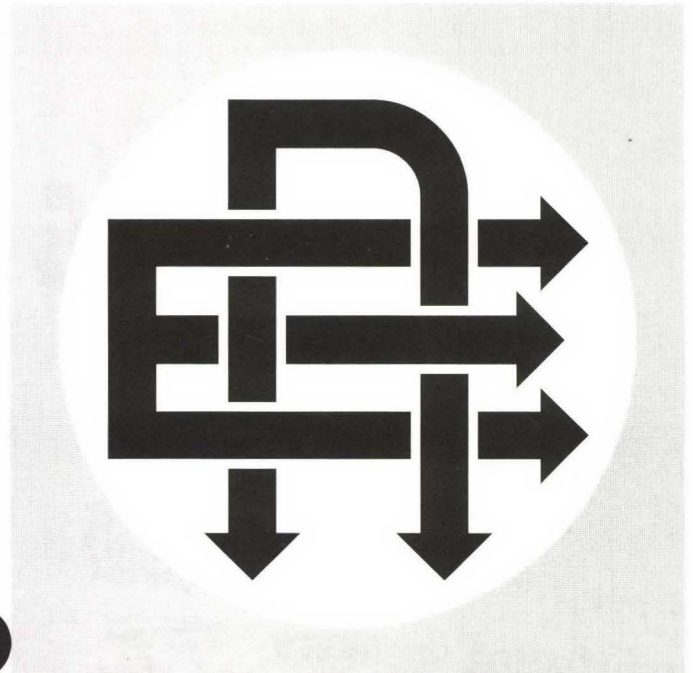
Figure 125. Rea Nikonova, *Untitled*, Russia, 1990. Pen and Ink Drawing.



Ethereal Realms

Dreamtime breaks constructs
Imposed by keepers of the strictures,
myths eject their gurustamp implants and
appear erupting asStampart asMailart.
Poems and fictions parallel allAction
con and uncon scious. When
mythology articulates itself
time recalls itself timeless
howEver short howEver distant.

Coco Gordon



PART 6 | ETHEREAL REALMS

Mail art can be a hopeful process that contributes to the humanization of global culture. Parables, visions, dances, dreams, and poems of the ethereal open network are presented here by artists who create, not to calculate, measure, define or break the ethereal dream, but to recall it. In doing so they seek to articulate a living mythology.

for everything gone oh oh oh
gone oh oh oh
gone oh oh oh
gone oh oh oh but magnolia!

A perfect spring day. sidewalk
Lightfooted sneakers ~~g~~ - g to scat song - skitter
bop round corners beat de bop scat sand slide step beat,

eyes meet, scan & echo sight, curve line curve delight -
applause tickles that fi

murmur flow, hm! gancy, hm! A pause within quick

Almost invisible between

spectators.

in moods quite various & winds twominded.
twominded.

WEBDANCE

Sheril Cunning

With a halting gait, the old man approached water's edge and waded out waist deep. The tranquility of my stroll amidst fragrant plumeria in deepening twilight was quickly shattered when I realized he was fully clothed. Feeling that this was no peaceful evening swim, I was in a state of alarm. Suddenly the man threw his arms upward and an enormous net unwound from his body and billowed in ever-expanding cloudlike forms across the star-studded sky. What had been panic pulsing through my whole being only seconds before now became a prayer of thanksgiving for this lovely and awesome sight. Several years later I learned that this is a time-honored fishing technique, but by then little did I care, for on that tropical shore I had seen a webdance, a net catching moon and stars.

This scene was enacted in 1980, a point in time midway between my first *participation* in a mail art exhibition in Auckland, New Zealand and the time in 1985 when I began *corresponding with* other mail artists. And although the beauty of that moment has stayed fresh in my mind's eye, I did not realize until recently that it is symbolic of the weaving together of words and images, life and work of thousands of artists worldwide to produce a net to catch the energies of stars and, in a rather mystical way, to bind up and heal the wounds of a humanity that has lost its ability to hear earthsong and starsong.

Being caught in this ethereal web is such a beautiful experience that the colors and songs and poems and stories of it need to be told as in the times of tribal storytelling. So it is that this story of one such experience is related, that it may go into the weaving as threads of hope and love.

Most mail art exhibitions are "documented" with a simple listing of names and addresses which are sent to the participants. These lists then often become the means of contact for other exhibitions, and they are usually very impersonal. But in 1985, a beautifully painted envelope appeared in my mailbox. It was one of 1200 invitations by David Cole to participate in *The Scroll Unrolls*, an exhibition he was organizing at the Janco-Dada Museum in Ein Hod, Israel. He had, indeed, thrown a net into the sky! Over 800 people sent work to that exhibition. Of that number, six became partners with David in exchanges and collaborations which have continued for several years.

One cannot factually account for why such sharing on a more personal basis occurs. It is, perhaps, a mysterious recognition of affinity. David and I continued to correspond after his return from Israel, and during a four-year time span we exchanged many Artists' Books, an art form of mutual interest. Then in January 1989, a dream I had provided the impetus for David to suggest that we do a collaborative book.

The only previous experience I'd had with such an endeavor was very unpleasant. But all the beauty of David's art—sublime colors, playful figures, sensuous line, wit and inventiveness, the rhythm and melody of his words—passed before my eyes, so I quickly accepted his invitation. I wanted to be a part of his magic world and the visual music he creates.

In 1982, David had originated a unique form of collaboration in which each person works directly upon, or contributes to, the same page with words or images that

either continues throughout to bring new thoughts to the total concept, or are a direct response to the “moves” the partner has finished making. It is a process that begins with both partners being equal, with respect for each other’s talents and beliefs, even though one or the other may be more knowledgeable or accomplished in some technical aspect. And so, in accepting, it was my goal not only to help heal the wounds of male/female antagonism that have existed in society, but also to go beyond the aspects of opposites and separateness to find the place of sameness, a place where both are fully human, a place where both laugh and both cry, a place where both are strong and weak, but not prideful of the strength nor ashamed of weakness, a place where both can sing and dance in celebration of unity.

There were also two challenging corollaries to working on the same page. The first was that each partner had the freedom to change, or even to reject, the contribution made by the other. This involves a willingness to go into a state of discovery, to be open to new ideas and possibilities, as well as a certain letting-go of one’s own ego. Along the way you learn patience, trust, tact and diplomacy, and perseverance. You learn when to encourage in the face of the partner’s dismay, or when the dismay is a correct judgment, to let go. In stretching and testing the limits, you learn to trust the partner’s choices even though you may be uncomfortable with them; and you peel back layers of self-protection to explore the sources of your discomfort.

The second corollary is that you start somewhere, without knowing the middle or the ending, and let the work just eventuate. The longer it takes to complete a piece, the more twists and turns there are in the road, the more you can then develop private jokes and a language that is nearly a code, and learn to respond in a way that challenges and brings out the strengths of the partner. Each addition and change requires a new evaluation so one’s vision becomes

increasingly focused, at the same time growing and taking in more.

As the work takes on a life of its own, you lose yourself in it and work toward *its voice* and the good of the whole. But the reverse can also be true when, for one reason or another, the partners lose the energy, a piece is not completed, and you realize the *friendship* is more important than the work. There is no blaming in this instance; rather, you value it as yet *another* learning experience and bring *that* to the next piece as well as to the relationship.

In a very literal way, you put your dreams, hopes, life and work into your partner’s hands and say, “Do with these what you will.” The result is that a new kind of intimacy is established as you look with another’s eyes, feel with another’s fingertips, and finally come to a state of heightened awareness. Understanding, compassion and tolerance grow as you confront your imperfections and weaknesses. You forgive these imperfections in yourself and in your partner to make the work of collaboration flow smoothly. And then you become aware that you needed to learn these lessons in order to progress along your individual lifepath.

Of course, you do not know any of these things when you begin; if you did, perhaps you would not have the courage to start. If you try to have these things happen, no doubt they would be as elusive as the will-o’-the-wisp. You eventuate in the same way the work does.

You cannot make things happen, but when they do, you become one with the energy and are given strengths and insights you never knew were possible. Each partner brings individuality and past influences to the work and these characteristics both remain and disappear. It is an “aha!” moment of wonder when *you disappear* but *see* the melding of two energies as one entity.

Although a dream inspired *Fig Nonce*, as our collaborative book was later titled, we did not try to use the



Figure 127. David Cole, Correspondence from David Cole to Sheril Cunning, appearing in *Fig Nonce*, U.S.A., 1990. Collaborative Mail Art Bookwork.

dream as a script. Nevertheless, the book begins and ends with a dreamstate of unity. We first chose dance as a theme because it is a subject of mutual interest and transcends our differences. But then, for nearly two months we struggled trying to decide *what* to do with it and to find a way to make our two very distinct styles and methods of working mesh. A trial-and-error period of exchanges, it was like choreographing a dance during which each person asks, "If I move this way, stretch that far, can you follow?" Then suddenly, letters were simultaneously exchanged declaring that we were, indeed, already dancing. From that time on there were many more instances of synergy, similar thoughts, dreams and works produced and exchanged on the same day. Still, no *direction* was forthcoming. Then one day while I was holding a work just received from David, I had a kind of vision which seemed to be a spirit message asking to be given physical form, a request to make a new myth of man/woman/fruit tree, one of laughter, happiness, equality, union, and renewal. Words and images then progressed as a dance of great joy toward the light and wisdom found in the fig, a "fruit" which is actually a pod containing both male and female flowers. They produce a sweet syrup to carry themselves back into the earth, the renewing cycle. The dancers ate the fruit, became one with the tree, knew their unity.

That all this could be accomplished through the postal system by two people who have never met is an extraordinary gift, one that is humbling as well as enlivening. This form of collaboration is like a symphony that can never be played the same way twice; even those making the music hear it differently. The dynamics happen according to need and readiness.

I believe that in the moment of our beginning, when two opposite forces combine, the energy of that fusion is of such magnitude it leaves a permanent imprint on our subconscious. That memory propels us forward, makes us seekers of union. As artists, when we create, for however brief a time, we return to that moment of rapture, lose ourselves and become part of the Universal Unconscious. However, most artmaking is a solitary activity. Mail art brings us out of that isolation by providing a nonhierarchical and nonjudgmental system for sharing. But it is not just the sharing of the artworks that is required of us. We must also communicate on a personal basis, share grief as well as joy and whatever gifts of insight come our way so that we *each* become more.

Perhaps this can best be described by an oriental concept known as "moon-in-water." The moon and the water are in a state of no-mind-ness; they are not aware of each other. But when all is in readiness, when the water is still and not churned by wind, when the moon is full and not veiled by clouds, they meet and in their togetherness a shimmer of great beauty is produced. The water holds the light but it is not the light; the moon appears in the water but it is not the water. They are both the *receivers of reflected light*. Neither intended to produce the shimmer but both are enhanced by it.

Throw your net into the sky.
Be in readiness to receive.
Be in readiness to give.
When the light shines in
Your net, glow with it.

– Sheril Cunning



CORRESPONDENCE POEMS

*Robert Filliou, Coco Gordon, Ayun Halliday, Marilyn R. Rosenberg,
Chuck Welch, Willie Marlowe, and Dick Higgins*

Telepathic Music No. 2

Robert Filliou

Dedicated but not limited to those Canadian members of the Eternal Network:
Véhicule, Montreal; General Idea, Toronto; W.O.R.K.S., Calgary; Image Bank,
Vancouver, and to Arman and to Corice, 380 W. Broadway, N.Y.C., R. Filliou

CONCENTRATING SILENTLY
SEND WAVES OF

GREETINGS
WEATHERLUCK
MANLUCK
WOMANLUCK

TO ANY OR ALL OF THE MEMBERS
OF THE ETERNAL NETWORK THE
WORLD AROUND

Duration: a split second to all day or all night or all day and night (all days and nights)

Performance Note: no proof of reaching or benefiting is necessary. Knowing
yourself, suspecting others, to be performers of Telepathic Music is sufficient.

Suggested by Robert Filliou, ADA-Aktionen der Avantgarde Berlin 1973, as
part of Research on the Eternal Network.*

* Poem courtesy of Hood Museum of Art, Fluxus Collection, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire.

MAIL

Ayun Halliday

The postage stamp
The stamp
The postage stamp
Meant more
Meant more
The postage stamp meant more
Than
The letter
When she thought
When she thought
Of its intimate
Hist-o-ry
With
His mouth.
His mouth.
The postage stamp meant more.

CORRESPONDANCE

Coco Gordon

with works I make observing food
while it dries and ages
Ray Johnson brings me under his hat
an avocado
he dried slowly in his fridge.
Can I do your
hand portrait
he asks,
lifts his hat,
I photograph double exposure
then
put my hand
on the floor.
He draws around it,
feet scribing
a concentric dance. correspondance.
We complete another
art/life
exchange
visible by chance chancedance
only
to those who may
(or not)
understand the art
of
prison-walk
Buddha University
Blue Eyes Club
New York School Betty Boop
correspondence.



N.E.O.N.I.C.S.
(knee-on-nix)

Net-workers
eThe-Real
open
new
interconnected
communication
spirit

Figure 128. (Above) Marilyn R. Rosenberg, *Network Dancer*, U.S.A., 1992. Visual Poetry.
(Left) *N.E.O.N.I.C.S.*, Marilyn R. Rosenberg and Chuck Welch.

C
 POST T DOCUMENTATION
 M A I N M L E A
 M A I N M L E A
 SEND FAX C N A K K W C B A
 OUTSIDE NETWORKING NEW T R A
 N C A Z I N E S I O L T O N A L
 STAMPS G R E I N A M E I T O U R I S M A T O N A L
 TELEGRAMS S O N S U R A P L A N E T L S K
 I Z P T
 TELEPATHY GLOBAL I C COPY
 F D R P E L E C T R O N I C I C O
 EXPOUND JOIN M O P U S M C O N F R O N T
 X C R E S P O N S E N G S N P R O F O U N D
 U I U A L P H A B E T S E U N D
 YES GRAPHIC LETTERS L L U C X N D
 P E A T E X T E R A S P A C E P O E T R Y P
 I A C E R A S P A C E P O E T R Y P
 FUTURIST EXHIBITIONS Y S S T R A N G E
 O I P X I C R A N D O M S O C
 DUALITY OUTLET SPACE R U C E Q U E S T
 N A N R E D G E R E F L E C T D U S
 U R E A C H I P H S A T T U N E D L I T E R A T E S
 S Y C P H S A T T U N E D L I T E R A T E S
 U C H S A T T U N E D L I T E R A T E S
 ADDRESS AFFIRM AFFRONT ATTUNED DADA T I
 L P T A F F I R M A F F R O N T O P L U R A L I S M P O N D E R
 T L O W R E A C T I O N A R Y A W A R E
 W R E A C T I O N A R Y A W A R E
 C
 I N V I T E

NETWORKING SCRABBLE

Willie Marlowe

americans at work

a chant for robert filliou's eternal network

by dick higgins

*and sheathing and bathing
and scything and scything
and breathing and fwathing
and breathing and scathing
and scathing and lathing
and bathing and scything
and foothing and breathing
and fwathing and scything
and bathing and feething
and wreathing and teething
and wreathing and fwathing
and writhing and writhing
and wreathing and scything
and sheathing and fwathing
and wreathing and lathing
and bathing and foothing
and breathing and sheathing
and teething and scything
and foothing and breathing
and sheathing and breathing
and foothing and writhing
and feething and sheathing*

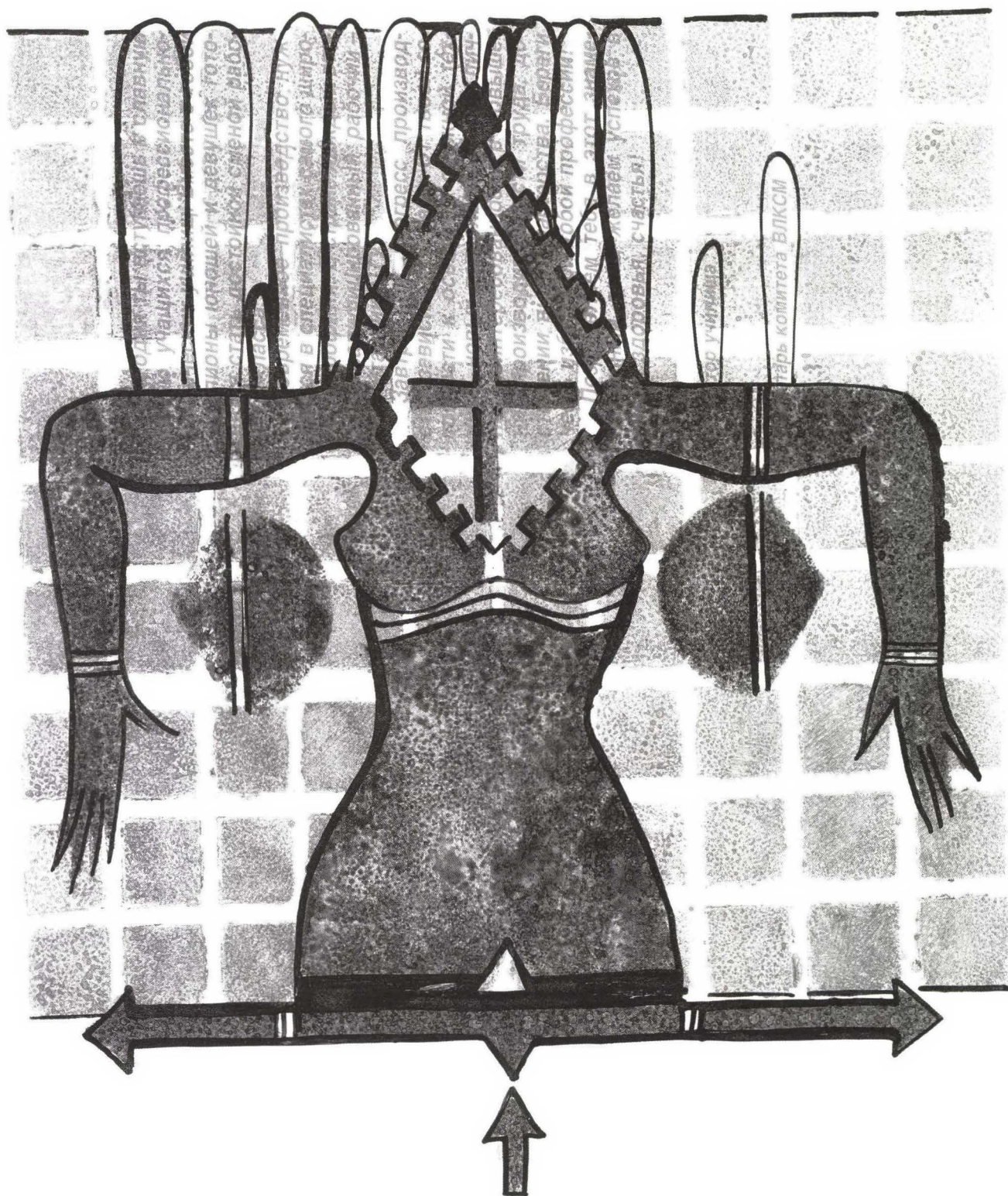


Figure 129. Rea Nikonova, *Untitled*, Russia. 1991. Mixed Media.

42 DREAMS ABOUT MAIL ART

Rea Nikonova

1. My dream is to make buildings, i.e., architectural mail art complexes, out of stamps (this is more easily done with scale models—in reality, they would be made of hardened stamp-sheets).

2. I love marginals (Segay and I are marginal people according to Soviet standards).¹ Marginals add to the space of the page, they are additional platforms for the text, they are outside of a book's format. It is the same with a stamp's format (as if they were interplanetary space stations).

3. Aura of mail art, braiding of tentacles and vectors, networks of any mail art organism. Tenacles are contacts. The octopus is the hero of our mail art age. The octopus has a plurality of hands and contacts.

4. Stamps in casings, stamp sheets covered by special film, envelopes within special over-envelopes. A covering, in principle, is a very mail-artistic form.

5. The displacement of one stamp in relation to a group of stamps in a stamp-sheet makes a dissident stamp. In the same way, a single page in a book is fundamentally crooked, and so on...

6. Altering stamp or envelope, i.e., sickness of the straight line, flexible mail art, wavy lines of the frame, "marine" envelope.

7. Multilayeredness of stamp-sheet fragments, i.e., a piece-work platform for several levels of surface.

8. Transparent, fibrous stamps and envelopes (Segay sent one like this to Canada once). Transparent envelopes are

convenient for the censors, and we have allowed them this pleasure.

9. Gesticular stamps, i.e., the frame (the edging of the stamp) turns from a fabricated window into a list of actions. The kinetic existence of the frame: this could be gestures that were drawn, but have become envelopes that turn around the letter.

10. Platforms of turned-down stamps, envelopes, pages, and even heads (see my drawing of Shozo Shimamoto with a section of his back turned down, in the documents from the "88" Emilio Morandi project).

11. Images "wandering" beyond their frames, or existing in the abyss between halves. A unique type of existence during an earthquake.

12. Adding your address, etc., to balanced structures—to printed matter, for example. Shaking firm things loose. Elastic, gum-like addresses and "courtesy" seals appear.

13. Borderiness, existence in a structure that has no central spot, where everything is concentrated in the edges. Everyone hides in the woods, for example, but in the center, there is, say, radiation. A bordered composition emphasizes the meaning of a vacuum's most banal aspect—emptiness.

14. A rip through the platform of a print, stamp, or envelope (Fig. 130) allows us to enter a different environment, a different world in which the governing laws are not always

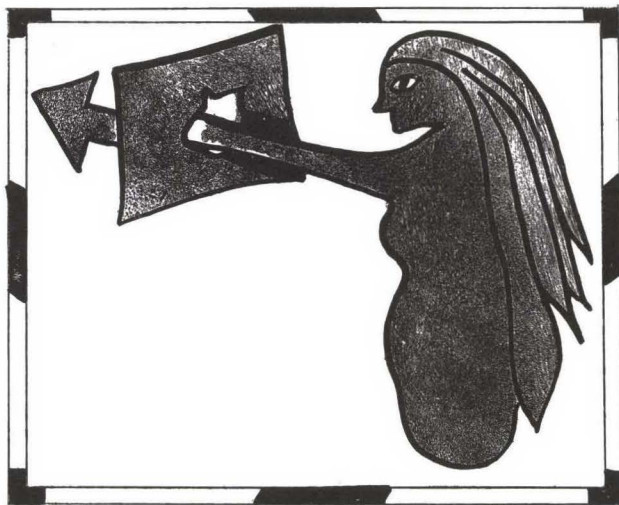


Figure 130. Rea Nikonova, *Untitled*, Russia, 1991. Drawing.

parallel to those of the previous one, but in our cosmic age, such rips are a simple necessity, and artists often use this technique. During a poetry performance in Leningrad, I tore through a sheet of paper with a howling fist that had letters in it. See the drawing concerning this in the Yugoslavian fanzine *Open World*.²

15. Phonetic mail-waves, waves of the global ocean of communication, i.e., the fundamental metaphor of communication.

16. Half of an imprint is a beautiful reticence that creates prerequisites for dividing art according to sex, i.e., into the aesthetic half of the cancellation, into the “strong” half, etc. Such a two-halved art rehabilitates the compromising idea of a *border* (the envelope with half of an imprint).

17. Eroded frame outlines, corrosion of the image, teeth torn off the stamp, unclear imprints—these are the aesthetics of a mail art snob.

18. Protuberances in the teeth and edging of a stamp, “splashes” in the straight lines of a stamp or envelope—this is called the “volcanic” style, which is very dear to me.

19. Auctionability of mail document and all sorts of invitations: add something, stick something on, tear off a

piece of the rubber cancellation stamp taking half of a last name for yourself, claim authorship (so many do this without recognizing the aesthetic roots of their actions).

20. Quantum existence of art torn into strips (I show my stampsheets like this). A smooth, *whole* surface is boring, it is false, there is nothing whole in our world.

21. Vacuous prints, stamps, imprints, empty envelopes, the absence of thought in the head—all of this is beautiful (Fig. 131).

22. Tactile stamps, rough envelopes, mail art for the blind, i.e., for everyone.

23. Wearing a necklace of stamps, or envelopes, prints on the forehead, imprints on the wrist instead of a watch, a brooch of sealing wax. Invoice and cover husbands (also hanging around the neck)—all of this will come in the course of time.

24. I am a package, you are a rubber stamp, all this together means a blow, a fight. Someone gets it.

25. Quantum existence of a more divided whole, where there is almost no hint at *whole*, i.e., pieces of envelopes, pieces of a print.

26. “Kulinart” is to eat stamps with a fork at the table with an envelope on its neck. Noodles made of stamps.

27. Letters are tattoos: on the hands, stomach, etc.

28. Doubled envelopes (like a pocketbook with two sections) and prints. Doubled envelopes with several addresses would be especially interesting. How would the post office react—they’re glued together—they can’t be torn apart and have to be sent to different people. Poor little postal official.

29. Mail principles turned inside out: envelopes inside of letters, an address inside a closed envelope marked with the words “address inside,” and so forth.

30. Spiral shape of stamps, prints, handwriting. Mail-tornadoes are born this way.

31. Accumulation of concentrated mail: an envelope completely covered with stamps on all sides and inside (hyper mail art).

32. Round envelopes and stamps, round stamp-sheets on a round little Earth. Mail art, Galilean style.

33. Anthropogenic stamps in the form of a man, envelopes, also, and imprints. Print in the form of an ear.

34. Anti-expositionism, i.e., placing stamps face down, glued surfaces on the printed side.

35. Stamp series: stamps in the form of a rosary connected together by printed image. A series of letters glued together, and so on.

36. Mail-membranes, sculptures (a bust of Cavellini or Shimamoto, for example) totally covered by stamps. Doing the same with a live person.

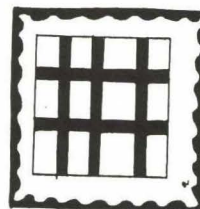
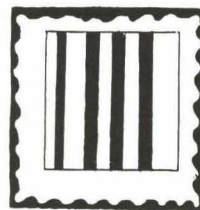
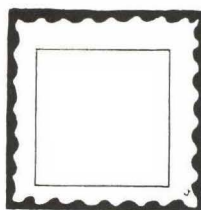
37. Glove-stamps, teeth-stamps (hopefully false).

38. "Rail" style. Images travel along special canals (like cable television). Letters can also be written this way. Narrow, linear paper for letters can be made this way.

39. Negation, crossed-out stamps (an old method of cancelling stamps), crossed-out addresses, crumpled envelopes, photographs, images painted over.

40. Correction as an aesthetic principle: correction of addresses, imprints, re-sealing envelopes, re-perforation.

41. Stamps as decorative mail-element, in visual poetry, for example.



REA NIKONOVA

Figure 131. Rea Nikonova, *Untitled*, Russia. 1990. Pen and Ink Drawing.

42. "Number" style: listing the number of stamps on a stamp-sheet, and nothing more (the stamps themselves are not seen). Listing the number of words in a letter, but let the receiver guess (what could be written); this is useful.

Yeysk, USSR, 1988–1989

* * * * *

(Ed. note:) The dissolution of the Soviet Union had not occurred in 1989 when this text was written by the author for *Eternal Network*.



Figure 132. Henning Mittendorf, *Decentralized Mail Art Congress*, Germany, 1992. Rubber Stamp Print.

MAIL ART IS HOPE

Henning Mittendorf

Mail artists live and work between the poles of life's profanity and holiness, mastering creative tasks that contribute to a new nature. They find truth in a spirit deeper than the reality of appearances; they possess a spirit of hope in finding identity of self within a harmonic paradigm of primeval wisdom.

Mail artists create within an inclusive world, a symmetrical totality in which all things are bound up together in a gigantic multidimensional net of intelligent, reciprocal actions. These actions are of the highest order in variety, complexity (freedom) and stability. And within this hidden structure of contrasting harmonies, "(wo)man" is a switching-point for understanding the omnipresent connection of spirit and energy.

There are two aspects of society which mail artists perceive. On the one hand, they see all human life and systems, including the official art scene, as the production of commodities that are blocking the holy. Authoritarianism, consumerism and necrophiliac insanity conspire to usurp the place of the holy. Within that paradigm the elites ruin the world with products that are rationalistic catastrophes. On the other hand, mail artists find alternative identities within groups that nurture survival through creative and collaborative exchanges. Creative survival is decisively important to nearly all mail artists and in their realm of multidimensional nets they work and thrive in co-sensibility, co-freedom, cognition, co-reflexion and co-evolution. These networking qualities constitute an immense source of power and are a measure of valuation.

Supported by their net of communication, mail artists risk their personalities to obtain identity. Using full body-and-soul-unity, mail artists are rooted in an energy and spirit-filled totality. Networking requires an intensive, well-balanced capacity to perceive process and develop signals pregnant with multiple possibilities. This demanding process involves the combination of "head" (consciousness) and "belly" (subconsciousness). Direct access to truth is attained in a difficult equilibrium beyond the objective domain of consciousness. By surpassing objective thinking, the separation of subject and object is suspended and truth emerges. Within this "supra-consciousness," spirit incarnates and masters reality in a new-work, new-life, new-nature. If other interaction partners are involved with this process of new-nature, they are included in the equilibrium and its new sight of things. The culmination of these reciprocal effects in networks of mail art exchange can become an effective, ever-changing ferment, hormone or catalyst for communicative enlightenment.

The mail artist widens self-awareness by steady, reciprocal work, appropriation, accommodation and transformation of time. Power of judgment, common sense, productivity, ability to organize and symbol-creativity improve. With this heightened clarity of purpose, mail artists can pillory the one-sided abuse of rationalism, determinism and functionalism. Together, the mail art community can regain totality's other side: qualities where rationalism is only a speciality. Mail artists can stop, perhaps invert the ongoing loss of reality before it splinters into nothingness.

Beyond completing, perfecting, purifying, and interpreting life, mail artists are themselves reciprocal effects within life. They balance a new symmetry between the profane and holy which contributes to the evolution of a new nature. Within a freely chosen net, the Eternal Net of mail art, mail artists defy modern systems of information

and traffic that are insanely blind to human survival. Mail artists can actively create a multidimensional and open new-nature; an island of life within the chaos of death. Mail art can be a symbolic bearer of hope for the humanization of global culture. United, mail artists are vital, reciprocal effects within an evolving, intelligent whole!



Figure 133. Henning Mittendorf, *Mail Art Seals*, Germany, 1992. Handcarved Rubber Stamps.



ART AS TELEPATHY, MEETING AND (SPI)RITUAL

Andrzej Tisma

Mail art and correspondence art are just stages in the development of a non-material art in which the work itself is not important as the artist behind the work. It is communication, an exchange of creative energy between artists. It works with the human psyche. Since I defined mail art as a “pulsating spiritual sculpture” (1985), I have been especially interested in working with the human psyche as artistic material.

It is only by temporary necessity that the exchange of mail art takes place via the postal system and other material and electronic means of carrying messages. True exchange will consist of the direct transmission of inspiration from artist to recipient, and subsequent feedback.

Since 1984, I’ve been taking part in the series of Andrzej Dudek – Dürer’s projects under the title Metaphysical Telepathic Project, and from the beginning I felt that there was something different in it compared with the rest of the mail art network. Maybe that was an important impulse for my later research in the art of meeting (meet-art) since 1985, and of spiritual art.

Andrzej Dudek, Polish mail artist and performance artist, claimed to be the reincarnation of the famous Renaissance painter Albrecht Dürer, and year by year he was asking us, the members of the mail art network, to take part in his projects, dedicated to the anniversary of Dürer’s birth (21st of May). We were asked to do something as an homage to Dürer on the exact day and hour of Dürer’s birth, and to send Andrzej Dudek the documentation of our act. It was obvious that the aim of the project wasn’t documentation, but rather the action that was happening all over the world at the same time. Metaphysics and telepathy

were on the scene during these two or three hours and that was the main content of the “exhibitions” that Dudek had organized as homage to Dürer.

In May 1987, while on my tour in the U.S.A., I remember carrying Dudek’s invitation for his Metaphysical Telepathic Project, having in mind to do something for him wherever I happened to be. So it happened in Philadelphia, where I had organized a meeting with several mail artists from that area (Des McLean, Sheila Holtz, and James Webster, Jr.) in the Commissary restaurant, where we all made an artwork together for Dudek in Poland between 5 and 8 p.m. We made a collage with rubber-stamps, stickers, and texts, but our real work was our telepathic connection with Dudek, and through him, with Dürer, and all the participants of the project from all over the world who were doing the same thing at the same time.

A similar thing is happening during the meeting of artists. Exchange of their mind and spiritual potential is going on while they are talking about art, showing each other their works or working together in a collaboration. It is happening more directly and intensively than in telepathy at long distance, because more senses are included, proving the telepathic connection, enabling participants to react faster and more directly.

In 1985, I began to consider my meetings with artists themselves to be works of art of artistic acts (meet-art). Producing original rubber-stamps, I immortalized numerous meetings with artists, and now experience each imprint of these stamps as an evocation of the meeting it commemorates—i.e., as a new artistic act. Together with these meetings, I also began to do performances by which

I hoped to directly affect people's spirits. My performance entitled *love* (1984) already constituted an attempt through telepathy and magic to transmit love to the entire world (aided by a map of the world). In New York (1987), I imprinted my rubber-stamp messages on people in the street, hoping to leave my mental stamp on them. With a series of similar performances (or interactions), in which I use conversation, lecture, distribution of printed matter and imprinting of stamps on viewers' bodies, I strive to imbue them with inspiration and enlightenment. I call my activities (spi)rituals—rituals of spiritual exchange. This is non-material art which is intended neither for the senses (like the fine arts), nor the intellect (like conceptual art). It is directed at the human spirit and its great potential, now more-or-less dormant, which needs to be awakened. Just as a sculptor shapes clay, I want my art to make use of the human spirit, that inexhaustible substance, which

when handled intelligently can be shaped, guided, expanded and absorbed. The ultimate artistic work is inspiration itself, that pure feeling of enlightenment and cleansing. It touches the meaning of existence, which, after all, is what all art strives for, except that here the path is shorter and effects direct, since there is no object as an intermediary.

My latest (spi)rituals consist of attempts to transfer spirit to artistically uninteresting objects and materials (pieces of paper, water, rock, etc.), that I mail or distribute in some other way, and which are supposed to radiate my inspiration to the recipient. I also carry out actions in a natural setting, sending out my positive spirituality to the surrounding world.

All these things as spiritual exchanges, inspiration, and telepathy are forms of the future non-material art which is now coming into sight in different parts of the world, and will be established in the next millennium.



Figure 134. Andrej Tisma's (SPI)RITUAL, Performance at Sr. Karlovci, Yugoslavia, November 27, 1990. Tisma appears at far left of photograph.



CHAPTER 40

NETWORK COMMUNION: THE SOLID INGREDIENT

Carlo Pittore

On a stormy Sunday morning, my sixteen-foot motor boat,—the one that I use to run the river,—sank. Because of a succession of mounting problems, from losing my painting studio and a cessation from painting to new studio construction that has stalled, to a case of itchy poison ivy inflammation, and the rupturing of a relationship with a friend, I saw the sinking of the boat as a metaphor for my life.

In the afternoon, the river people gathered at the town landing to salvage my boat. They hauled it to shore, righted it, pulled it out, refloated it, repaired my motor, dried the spark plugs and saw me through to a complete renewal.

It is a quiet exhilaration to have survived, and not on one's own merits, but because of the love and the knowledge of the community. My vessel seaworthy once again, I am ready to go by way of Cathause River into Merrymeeting Bay.

In Art, is our major concern the conception? the creation? or the reception?

In my correspondence, I have not always shared myself as the ideal of my mail art buddy, Michel Champendal of Paris, who says, "True hearts and clear spirits is all mail art needs."

What is inspiration?
Give me your spit, sagepoet.
From where come the sparks to ignite?
What is it that I need to unite?

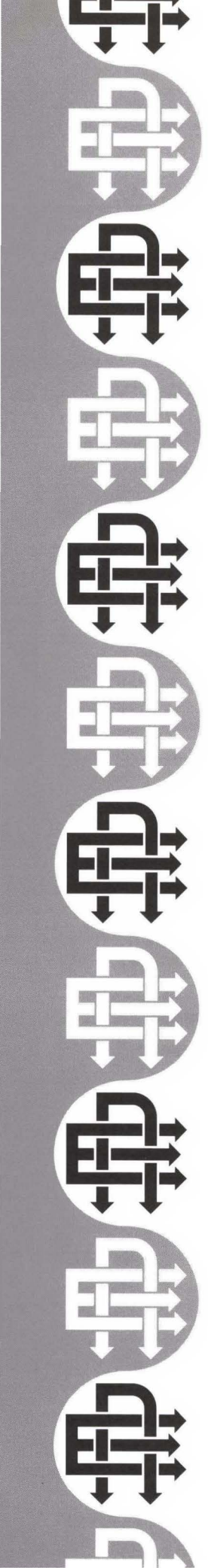
Sometimes when I am physically alone, I am in communion with you. If I am only me and alone, is not art as nothing? Is it the thinking or dreaming of you that establishes communion? What is it that unites us?

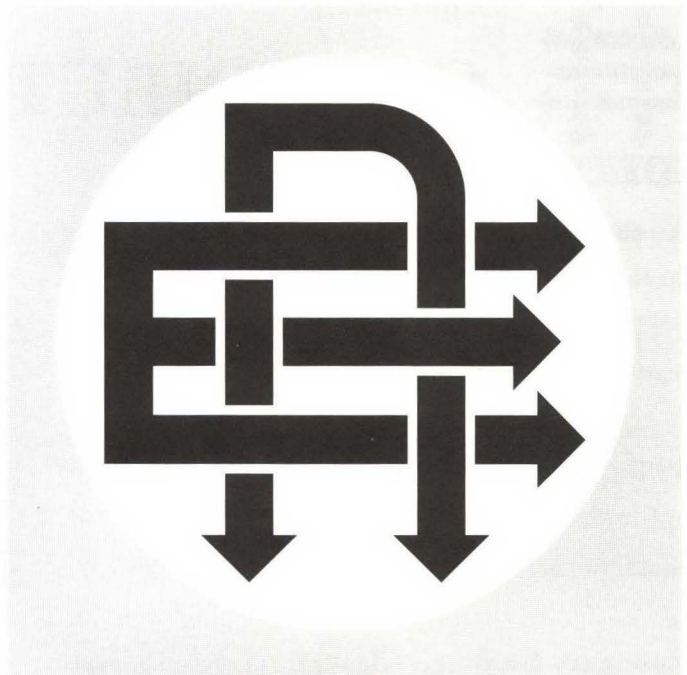
When the great sparks occur between the two of us, amongst the lot of us, there is communication between you and me. But it is greater than communication between you and me. For we share community. It is communion. It is red and green.

If all correspondence is between one time and another, is it not like riding on opposite sides of the same plank balanced in the middle, so that one end goes up, as the other goes down? For each of us, it is see/saw. We alternate. We send out. We receive. We hear. We reply. I know, somehow, that we meet in the instant of the present, in the space between the see and the saw, and the here and the heard. In communion!

There are many who hear the songs of the summer birds. I cherish the sounds of the familiar, and welcome the new. From my round, wooden hut in the woods, from the river and the little village where I live, this hoped-for communion with you keeps me alive and refreshed.

Art is as young and possible as ever! The network is eternal!





APPENDIXES

- 1 Contributing Essayists**
- 2 Essayists' Mail Art Addresses**
- 3 Mail Art Shows, 1970-1992**
- 4 Mail Art Archives and Collections**
- 5 Mail Art Magazines**
- 6 Networker Databank**

CONTRIBUTING ESSAYISTS

Anna Banana, active in mail art since 1971, is editor of the *Banana Rag* newsletter (1971–1990), and *Vile Magazine* (1974–1983). She edits the artistamp publication *International Art Post*, and *Artistamp News*.

Vittore Baroni, author, music critic, and mail art editor of *Arte Postale!* He has been a prolific contributor to mail art, alternative media projects, and artist zines since 1977.

Rosemary Gahlinger-Beaune is a communications artist and author of two non-fiction books, *Canadian Artist Survival Manual*, and *Not for Profit, You Say!* She is presently acting as a consultant and is doing research for a new book entitled *Artistamps of the World*.

Guy Bleus is a Belgian mail art theorist and performance artist who directs an extensive mail art archive The Administration Centre. His writings on mail art and networking subjects appear in many international magazines, catalogues, and books.

Tom Cassidy, a.k.a. Musicmaster is a performance artist who has been active in mail art since 1972. He has authored a series of mail art profiles entitled *Notes of a Basement Dweller*. He produced a comic strip, *Dr. Mail & Zip the Muse*, in the late 1980s, and recently created a collaborative booklet, *Wood Nymphs of the Sahara*, that features mail art and smallpress artists.

David Cole is a visual poet and correspondence artist who co-curated the first New York City visual and concrete poetry show in 1975. He organized The Scroll Unrolls

(1985) at the Janco-Dada Museum in Ein-Hod, Israel, with over 800 participants, and curated an entirely collaborative exhibition, *Within the Turning* (1989).

Mark Corroto and Melinda Otto. Mark Corroto is a graduate of Ohio State University and DePaul University. Known in the mail art network as FaGaGaGa, Corroto began his mail activity in 1982. He has organized two mail art shows *Mr. X* (1987), and *Jazz: Past/Future* (1990). Melinda Otto is a student of literature at Youngstown State University. Melinda Otto and her husband Mark Corroto traveled to Leningrad in 1991 to organize *Detective/Mail Art Against Terrorism*.

Sheril Cunning organized the first mail art exhibition in San Diego county at Palomar College in 1978. She is the author of *Handmade Paper* and creator of numerous collaborative artists' books.

Chris Dodge and Jan DeSirey, known through the mail art network as DeSirey Dodge Peace Post, edit and publish the *Minnesota Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter*.

Charles Francois, a sociologist working as Training Manager for Apple Macintosh, has been active in mail art since 1982. He created the host system RATOS in 1989 and dedicated it entirely to mail art, communication aesthetics, and networking.

Joachim Frank is a scientist, writer, visual and conceptual artist living in Albany, New York. Frank's scientific work involves processing images by computer.

He has co-edited *Chair Book*, an anthology of artworks by Christo, Rauschenberg, Beuys, Warhol, and others that have the chair as their subject.

H.R. Fricker is a contextual artist and the creator of mail art's first ism, "Tourism." He and fellow Swiss mail artist Günther Ruch organized The Decentralized World-Wide Mail Art Congress, 1986. His highly successful Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress, 1992 was first presented as an essay for *Eternal Network*.

Ken Friedman became the youngest member of the classic Fluxus group at the age of sixteen, when Wolf Vostell dubbed him "Der Fluxus Mozart." Between 1966 and 1975, he was the director of Fluxus West. Friedman divides his time between a studio in New York and an office in Oslo, Norway, where he directs planning projects for government and industry.

Coco Gordon is an Italian-born intermedia artist and poet. Her recent Italian solo show, *Il Sogno Del Tempo* at Messina's Padiglione, featured twenty-six installations as meditations calling awareness to our ecozoic age. She has published three books of poetry and twelve artists' books in editions.

Ayun Halliday is a performance artist and mail artist living in Chicago. She has been an ensemble member of the Neo-Futurists, creators of *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind*.

John Held, Jr., a Fine Arts Librarian at the Dallas Public Library, has written numerous articles on mail art including rubber stamp art, performance art, and other marginal artforms. He authored *Mail Art: An Annotated Bibliography* in 1991.

Dick Higgins is a Fluxus poet, performance artist, playwright, scholar, composer, publisher, musician, painter and filmmaker whose numerous theoretical essays pertaining to intermedia are major contributions to networking art. From 1964–1974 Higgins directed Something Else Press, an experimental, innovative publishing house that brought numerous avant-garde ideas to surface.

Judith A. Hoffberg, a librarian, archivist, lecturer, editor, publisher, art critic and consultant, maintains strong links with the mail art network as an active participant and as publisher of the newsletter *Umbrella*. Based in California, she travels the world lecturing on artists' books and curating exhibitions of them.

Stewart Home, author of *The Assault On Culture: Utopian Currents from Lettrisme to Class War* (1988), and *Pure Mania* (1989), has organized Festivals of Plagiarism in London and Glasgow. He recently authored *Neoist Manifestos—The Art Strike Papers*.

J.P. Jacob, editor of the mail art magazine *PostHype* (1981–1986), is an artist, curator and writer who has worked extensively with Soviet, Central, and Eastern European artists to develop such exhibitions as *Out of Eastern Europe: Private Photography* (1986), and *The Missing Picture: Contemporary Alternative Photography from the Soviet Union* (1990) for the List Visual Arts Center at MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Leavenworth Jackson is an artist, illustrator, rubber-stamp enthusiast, gardener, and Zen feminist currently living in Berkeley, California. Her global meanderings through the mail art network have spanned twelve years.

Richard Kostelanetz is an artist, writer, and composer living in New York City, where he was born in 1940. He is the author of numerous books including *The Old Poetries and the New* (1980), *Metamorphosis in the Arts* (1980), and other works of literary criticism. Among his books for 1991 include *On Innovative Art(ist)s* and *Politics in the Afro-American Novel*.

Willie Marlowe is a painter, visual poet and art professor at Sage Junior College of Albany, Albany, New York. Active in mail art since 1984, she has curated several mail art shows including Stamp Act (1987), Pony Express (1988), Mail Art Blues (1990), and Habitats and Shelters (1993).

Graciela Marx, an Argentine mail and performance artist, has edited *Hoje-Hoja-Hoy*, a publication of the Association of Latin American and Caribbean Artists. Some of her marginal artworks and performances are humble rituals performed anonymously, as in her *Testimony of Our First Sowing in the Water* (1983), and *Global Marginal Ceremony* (1990).

Peter R. Meyer is a Swedish film/TV director employed at Sveriges Radio in Stockholm. Meyer's numerous audio/video art programs, TV documentaries, and films include interviews with John Cage and many contemporary Fluxus artists. Among Meyer's writings devoted to audio art is his recent book, *Ljudkonst* (1993). His notable media productions include *Night Exercise*, *Hyland*, *Shivonne*, *Step One to Sweden*, and *Chambre Separe*.

Estera Milman is the founder and director of Alternative Traditions in the History of Contemporary Art at University of Iowa School of Art and Art History, Iowa City, Iowa. As associate director of the Program for Modern Studies, she has been placing mail art in the framework of historical concerns

running from Dada through Fluxus and to other contemporary forms. Among many books she has written and edited are *Fluxus and Friends: Selections from the Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Collection* and *Art Networks and Information Systems: A Source Book and Miscellany*.

Henning Mittendorf is a German stamp artist, philosopher, and mystic who has been an active mail artist since 1980. His collage, rubber stamp seals, and intricate, linear dry-point etchings reveal a fascination with mystical symbolism and art as process.

MIT Mitropoulos is a Greek telecommunications consultant, environmental artist, and researcher. He organized the first mail art show in Greece (Athens and Thessaloniki, 1980) at the French Institute as an homage to Manet's *Olympia*. He is a member of the Scientific Council of IDATE, France, and of the World Society of EKISTICS.

Rea Nikonova was born in the Krasnodar region in Russia during the 1942 German occupation. A prolific visual poet, painter and performance artist, she has emerged as one of the most significant and influential mail art activists in Russia. Nikonova and her husband, Serge Segay, have organized several pioneering mail art exhibitions including Scare-crow (Summer 1989), which evoked responses from nearly 100 participants from 23 countries.

Ayah Okwabi studied communication at the University of Legon, Ghana and serves today as chief sub-editor at the foreign desk of the Ghana News Agency. His numerous articles about mail art have appeared in the *African Arts*, *Culture & Entertainment Monthly*, *Uhuru Magazine*, and in the *Spectator*. Okwabi's mail art shows, combining local and Pan-African themes, include Africa Arise, Food for the Hungry, and Proverbs.

Clemente Padin, a prominent performance, video, and mail artist from Montevideo, Uruguay, has edited the magazines, *Los Huevos del Plata* (1966), *Ovum 10* (1969), and *Participacion* (1984). He has curated numerous mail art exhibitions and performance events in Montevideo, including Latin American Street Art Festival (1990).

Pawel Petasz is a Polish painter and visual poet. He attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk and has been an active force in international mail art since 1975. Petasz is renowned in mail art for the creation of *Commonpress Magazine*, a democratic, open forum founded in December 1977.

Clive Phillpot is Director of the Library of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. He has written extensively about publications by artists in such magazines as *Artforum*, *Art Journal*, *Print Collector's Newsletter*, and *Studio International*. He contributed to *Artists' Books*, edited by Joan Lyons (1985), and was co-editor of *The Art Press* (1976), and *Fluxus* (1988).

Carlo Pittore has been active in international mail art since 1978. His New York City studio served as the hub for many international mail artist exhibitions and happenings. La Galleria dell' Occhio (1980–87), Pittore's East Village window gallery at 267 East 10th Street, exhibited more than a thousand mail artists in group and solo shows. Besides publishing *Me Magazine* (1980–86), and *The Post Me Stamp Series* (1981–present), Pittore is a dedicated painter and draftsman.

Bern Porter is a scientist, visual poet, performance artist, and publisher who lives in Belfast, Maine where he runs a forty-acre estate known as The Institute of Advanced Thinking. Porter has conversed with such leading philosophers, artists, and scientists of our century as Gertrude Stein, James Joyce and Albert Einstein, and

was the first American publisher to print Henry Miller's prose. In 1945 Porter worked on the Manhattan Project.

Marilyn R. Rosenberg is a correspondence artist whose visual poetry and artists' bookworks are in a wide variety of university and museum library collections, including the Houghton Library, Harvard University, and Sherman Library, Dartmouth College.

Shozo Shimamoto is a founding member of the Japanese artists' group Gutai, and is a pioneering performance artist. Shimamoto has exhibited and performed at the Pompidou Centre in Paris (1986), and performed at the Gutai Exhibition in Madrid, Spain (1985). He is a professor at Kyoto Educational University and mayor of Ryujin Village, Wakayama prefecture.

Andrej Tisma is a Yugoslavian art critic, curator, and artist who has been active in many intermedia projects including solo performance and concrete and visual poetry. Among his mail art projects are *Mail Art Olympic Games* (1984), *Private Life* (1986), and *AIDS & Paradise* (1987). His published art criticism and essays have appeared in numerous magazines in Yugoslavia, France, Italy and the United States.

Ed Varney is a Canadian poet, critic, editor, and mail artist who has published numerous Canadian writers under the imprint of Intermedia Press. His most recent book of poetry, *What the Wind Said*, was published by the Caitlin Press.

Chuck Welch, a.k.a. Crackerjack Kid is a curator, lecturer, writer, publicist, and mail art networker living in Hanover, New Hampshire. A mail artist since 1978, he was awarded a Fulbright Hayes Grant (1976) and an NEA Hilda Maehling Fellowship (1981). He has written *Networking Currents: Contemporary Mail Art Subjects and Issues* (1986) and edits his mail art magazine *Netshaker*.



Appendix 2

CONTRIBUTORS' ADDRESSES

The editor of *Eternal Network* has included current mailing addresses of all contributing essayists to encourage interaction with the international mail art network. For various reasons of time, interest, or energy, newcomers to mail art should not expect returns from every mail artist contacted. The following address list includes phone and fax numbers when permission was given by the essayist. Electronic mail addresses were also given where applicable.

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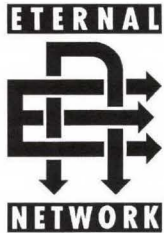
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Appendix 3

MAIL ART SHOWS: 1970–1994

This list of mail art shows was compiled from the approximately 1,200 exhibitions documented in John Held's *International Artist Cooperation: Mail Art Shows, 1970–1985*, from issues of *Rubberstampmadness*, *National Stampagraphic*, Guy Bleus' Administration Centre Archive, and from the Eternal Network Archive of Crackerjack Kid. The momentum of mail art exhibitions continued unabated since the last entries of 1985 were noted in John Held's sourcebook for mail art shows. In the February 1991 issue of *ND Magazine* there were fifty listings of international mail art shows and projects, which is testament to the continued popularity of mail art.

Mail art show listings include title of exhibition, location, and name of sponsor/organizer, if available. Selections of mail art shows were not based solely upon the importance of landmark exhibitions; rather, a wide range of criteria was chosen to emphasize diversity of show themes, mail art subjects, international locale, art media, and private, public or institutional sponsors. These entries are a sampling of many notable exhibitions. Not included are hundreds of international mail art projects that are centered on an individual's networking call for participation in collaborative publications, audio/video compilations, teleconferencing, conceptual performances, and events beyond the exhibition of mailed art for public or private viewing.

1970

Mail In–Mail Out

Southern Illinois University; Carbondale, Illinois
Lowell Darling and Sonia Landy Sheridan

New York Correspondance School Show

Whitney Museum of American Art; New York, New York
Ray Johnson and Marcia Tucker

1971

Multi Media

San Francisco Art Institute; San Francisco, California

Mail Art

VII Biennale de Paris; Paris, France
Jean-Marc Poinot

Image Bank Postcard Show

Western Front; Vancouver, Canada
Michael Morris, Vincent Trasov and others

1972

Fluxshoe

Seven-city tour in England
Fluxus West in England
David Mayor, Mike Weaver, Feline Ehrenberg and others

Exposicion Exhaustive de la Nueva Poesia

Galeria U; Montevideo, Uruguay
Enrique Gomez

One Year–One Man Show

Oakland Museum; Oakland, California
Ken Friedman

1973

Art in the Matchbox

Pocket Museum of Modern Art,
Friedrichsfehn, W. Germany
Klaus Groh

Omaha Flow Systems

Joslyn Art Museum; Omaha, Nebraska
Ken Friedman

The First International Quickcopy Mail Art Festival
Stedelijk Museum; Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Dadaland and TNWMV

1974

Artists' Stamps and Stamp Images
Simon Fraser University; Burnaby, Canada
James Felter

Buddha University Correspondence Show
Western Illinois University; Macomb, Illinois
Ray Johnson

Art Communication Marigale
Ecart Gallery; Geneva, Switzerland
Herve Fischer

Festival de la Postal Creativa
Galeria U.; Montevideo, Uruguay
Clemente Padin

1975

Artists' Postcards
Other Books and So; Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Ulises Carrion

First Ever Mail Art Show in South Africa
The Space; Capetown, South Africa
Dynamite Dave

Primeria Internacional de Correspondencia
Sao Paulo, Brazil
Santo Andre and Isamel Assumpao

Exposicao Internacional de Arte Postal
Recife, Brazil
Paulo Bruscky and Ypiranga Filho

1976

Correspondence, An Exhibition of the Letters of Ray Johnson
North Carolina Museum of Art; Raleigh, North Carolina
Moussa Domit and Richard Craven

International Exhibition of Art
Post Office Building; Recife, Brazil
Paulo Bruscky and Daniel Santiago

Resumes/Curriculum Vitae/Biographies
Parachute Center; Calgary, Canada
Don Mabie

Timbres and Tampons d'Artistes
Cabinet des Estampes; Geneva, Switzerland

1977

Art Documentation '77
Shiyuoka Pref. Exhibition Space; Japan
Tohei Horuke

In the Circle '77
Uniart Gallery; Elblag, Poland
Pawel Petasz and Mirosław Wrobel

2nd International Postage Stamp Exhibition
Intermedia; Vancouver, Canada
Edwin Varney

1978

Apropos/Audio Art Cassette Show
Apropos; Lucerne, Switzerland
Ruedi Schill

Artwords and Bookworks
Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art; Los Angeles, California
Judith Hoffberg and Joan Hugo

Assembling Assembling
Pratt Graphics Center Gallery; New York, New York
Richard Kostelanetz and Henry James Korn

First International New Dada Exposition
Galerie S.; Lund, Sweden
Jean Sellum

1979

Art and Correspondence from the Western Front
Western Front; Vancouver, Canada
Kate Craig, Glenn Lewis, Eric Metcalf, Michael Morris
and Vincent Trasov

Mail Etc., Art
University of Colorado. Boulder, Colorado; Southern Illinois University. Edwardsville, Illinois; Tyler School of Art. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Florida State University. Tallahassee, Florida
Jean Edith Weiffenback, Bonnie Donahue, Ed Koslow
and others

Postman Always Rings Twice/Test The Post Office
Santa Monica City College
Lon Spiegelman and Don Emery

1980

Everywhere in Chains
Postcard Preservation Society; Dubbo, Australia
Tane Burns

Void Show
Workspace Loft Inc; Albany, New York
Joachim Frank

Gallery Between the Staircases
Currier Gallery of Art; Manchester, New Hampshire
Robert Saunders

1981

Material Metamorphosis: International Mail Art Exhibition
Bellevue College; Bellevue, Nebraska
Crackerjack Kid

Artists' Postage Stamps
Happy Gallery; Belgrade, Yugoslavia
Miroљub Todorovic

Bern Porter International Mail Art Exhibition
La Galleria dell' Occhio; New York, New York
Carlo Pittore

1982

Correspondence as Art: An Historical Overview
Art Department Galleries, San Jose State University,
San Jose, California
Michael Crane

*The First International Mail Art Show in the Kingdom
of Saudi Arabia*
Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia
Wally Darnell

Seoul International Mail Art Exhibition
Growrice Gallery; Seoul, Korea
Kum-Nam Baik

1983

Audio and Mail Art
Moderna Museet; Stockholm, Sweden
Peter Meyer

Fe-Mail Art
Gallery Saloniki; Thessaloniki, Greece
Mirella Bentivoglio

Japan "Art Unidentified" Mail Art
AU. Hyogo; Japan
Shozo Shimamoto

National Women's Music Festival Mail Art Exhibit
Bloomington, Indiana
Becky Siefer

1984

Artistampex
Forest St. Gallery; London, Ontario, Canada
Michael Bidner

International Mail Art Show of the XXIII Olympic Games
Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee,
Los Angeles, California
Robert Fitzpatrick, Hope Tschopik and Gerry Bryant

Thinking of Mail Art: Towards an Information Art
Centro Studi "Pietro Mancini"; Cosenza, Italy
Enzo di Grazia

Inter-Dada '84
16th Note; San Francisco, California
Gail Alien and Donna Mae Shaver

1985

The Scroll Unrolls
Janco-Dada Museum
Ein Hod, Israel
David Cole

Mail Art: The Postal Collaboration
Museum of Natural History Gallery,
University of Wisconsin. Stevens Point, Wisconsin
Mark J. Spencer

Architecture of a Mailart Museum
Trogen, Switzerland
H.R. Fricker

Artists' Postage Stamps
13th Hour Gallery; New York, New York
E.F. Higgins III, Buster Cleveland

First International Mail Art Show in the People's Republic of China
Wally Darnell

1986

Is There No Justice?
Circle Arts Inc.; New York, New York
Sally Mericle

The Act of Stamping International Mail Art Show
Canadian Correspondence Art Gallery; Calgary, Canada
Don Mabie

World Art Post
Museum of Fine Arts; Budapest, Hungary
Gyorgy and Julia Galantai-Artpool

Decentralized Worldwide Mail-Art Congress
Where two or more people met to discuss personal experiences about networking. Over 80 mail art meetings world-wide.
H.R. Fricker and Günther Ruch

1987

Stamp Images
Museum of Fine Arts; Budapest, Hungary
Geskò Judit

Food for the Hungry
Accra, North Ghana
Ayah Okwabi

First International Bottled Art Exhibition
Recife, Brazil. Exhibition tossed away in Atlantic Ocean
Tarcisio Silva

Corresponding Worlds – Artists' Stamps
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College; Oberlin, Ohio
Harley Francis

1988

Hommage à Joseph Beuys (Travelling Exhibition)
Galerie d'Art Contemporain; La Valette du Var, France
Jean-Noël Laszlo

Container Con Amore
Hengelo, The Netherlands
Jennry de Groot

Hiroshima Peace Sun
Hiroshima, Japan
Ruggero Maggi and Shozo Shimamoto

Dudor Mail Art 1988
Helyi Muvelodesi Otthon Marcelhaza, Czechoslovakia
Juhasz R. Jozsef

Nature Gives Mail Art Show
Novi Sad, Yugoslavia
Andrej Tisma

1989

Coup d'Envois – Ou l'Art à la Lettre
Musée de la Poste; Paris, France
Pierre Restany, Marie-Claude Le Floch

Within the Turning
Gallery Judaica, North Shore Jewish Center,
Port Jefferson, New York
David Cole

Pony Express International Mail Art Show
Junior College of Albany; Albany, New York
Willie Marlowe

The Bridge Mail Art Project
Pakruojis, Lithuania
Jonas Nekrasius

Mail Art: The Artists from 25 Countries
Yeisk, U.S.S.R.
Serge Segay and Rea Nikonova

1990

*What is the Social Responsibility of the Artist:
A Letter Opening Performance*
American Library Association; Chicago, Illinois
John Held, Jr.

Festival of the Swamps
Madison, Wisconsin
Liz Was, Miekal And, directors of Xexoxial Endarchy

The Locals Show Canadada
National Convention of the Canadian Union of Postal
Workers, Convention Hall; Montreal, Quebec
Michael Duquette

Beuys & Girls

Gal. Monumental, Lisboa, Portugal
José Oliveira

Timbre d'Artistes

Espace Peiresc
Toulon, France

La Posta In Gioco

Uffizi, Florence, Italy
Gianni Broi

1991

Detective Mail Art Show

St. Petersburg, Russia
Oleg Yudin and Mark Corroto

No More Excuses: Human Rights, Now

Montevideo, Uruguay
Amnesty International

Message for Peace by Mail Artists

Kitano International Festival, Kobe, Japan
Shigeru Tamaru

Spaceship Earth: Approaching the Third Millenium

Vancouver, BC, Canada
Museo Internacional de Neu Art

1992

Art Travels, Mail Art Festival

Grand Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Quebec
National Postal Museum

Decentralized World Wide Networker Congresses 1992

Over 250 international congresses in twenty countries
Congress Facilitators as listed in June 1991 documentation:
H.R. Fricker, Peter W. Kaufmann, Mark Corroto, Chuck
Welch, Steve Perkins, Lloyd Dunn, and John Held, Jr.

Send Me Something I Cannot Understand

Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland
Ilkka Juhani Takalo-Eskola

1993

Kings and Queens Mail Art Show

Fresno Art Museum, Fresno, California
Mallory Moad, E.Z. Smith

Multiculturism International Mail Art Exhibition

Bunker Hill Community College
Boston, Massachusetts
Jonathan Stangroom

Divided

Dayton Visual Arts Center, Dayton, Ohio
Yolanda Brown

1994

Mailed Art in Uppsala

Uppsala Tourist Congress

Uppsala, Sweden

Lisen Hessner, Staffan Jonsson, Peter R. Meyer

“Interrelationships” – Open World, Open Mind,

Open Art Exhibition

National Foundation of Serbia, Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Mihailo Ristic, Dobrica Kamperelic

MAIL ART ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS

“Art is administration. Administration is Art,” according to Guy Bleus, who runs the Administration Centre, an austere, formally arranged archive considered by mail artists to be among the most extensive, diverse collections of mailed artifacts in Europe. Bleus, and more informal mail art “collectors,” like Lon Spiegelman (USA) and Michael Leigh (UK), gather mailed artifacts out of fun, habit, or obsession bordering on despair. The purpose for gathering mailed artifacts, however, is often for private perusal rather than public inspection. Clearly, there is no common definition in mail art on which to base any categorical differentiation between archives and collections, and so this appendix recognizes both.

Archives and collections are not necessarily burial grounds for objects and memories; an archive “lives” when it is a tool for exploring communication. When individuals hear and see what they read in print, then books, copy art, graffiti, magazines, posters, stamp art, etc., become animated sources to further communication. Might archives and collections be a stepping stone for correspondence exchange?

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of archive/collections, and each represents an important thread in the network web. Mail art archives reflect the individuality of each mail artist. Clearly, then, no two archives are alike and it is an impossibility to include them all here. This listing is a representative sampling of mail art archives and collections that are “open” by appointment to readers who might be interested in discovering mail art. Archives and collections listed here were chosen for their extensive focus upon a particular medium, for their international location, range of subjects collected, and continued operation for a period not less than ten years. Each listing of a mail art archive or collection in this appendix is based upon the following criteria:

- I. Institutions: Libraries, Museums, and Galleries
- II. Mail Artist Archives and Collections

- 1) Name of Archive/Collection
- 2) Curator
- 3) Address
- 4) Description
- 5) Specialty or Focus
- 6) Date of founding

Institutional entries listed here are more general than criteria used to describe mail artist archives and collections. Mail art archives in institutions such as the Getty Center’s Jean Brown Collection are so extensive that specific criteria cannot convey an accurate purview. When Dutch scholar Eric Vos catalogued ephemera from The Jean Brown Collection, he divided areas of research into four major sections: 1) mail art performance happenings, “special collections,” correspondence; 2) preliminary guide to the collection Happenings and Fluxus; 3) mail art, stamp art, and Xerox art; artists’ booklets and periodicals;

4) concrete, visual, and sound poetry. Entire mail art shows are included with stamp art and Xerox art shows and projects. While Eric Vos' research is extensive, his study does not represent the entire Jean Brown Collection as it exists to date. New acquisitions of mail artwork are frequently being added to the Jean Brown Collection. Furthermore, other mail art collections are also being gathered by the Getty Center.

Pertinent information about mail art collections in institutions requires thorough, complex research. This appendix represents the first major effort to assist scholars who are now beginning to inquire about mail art collections and archives. Prior listings of mail art archives have been sketchy at best, usually published in small editions of alternative publications. Some educational institutions like Colby College, Waterville, Maine have hosted mail art exhibitions and catalogued entries for their library. Nevertheless, the academic community knows little about mail art, although some important institutions are beginning to seriously inquire. Institutions such as the Getty Center, The University of Iowa Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Archive, and Henie Onstad Museum are emerging as significant, pioneering centers for scholarly research in mail art.

* * * * *

I. Institutions: Libraries, Museums, and Galleries

1) **Against the Clock Mail Art Show Collection**

- 2) Hugh Gourley, Director
Phone: +1 (207) 872.3229
Fax: +1 (207) 872.3555
- 3) Colby College Museum of Art
Colby College
Waterville, ME 04901
USA
- 4) According to Director Hugh Gourley, no show catalogue or other written documentation about this large exhibition exists, although all mail artworks are catalogued at the Colby College Museum of Art
- 6) Exhibition held April 1–25, 1985; curator: Janet Hawkins

1) **Alternative Traditions In The Contemporary Arts**

- 2) Etera Milman, Founder/Director
Phone: +1 (319) 335.1762
Fax: +1 (319) 335.2951
- 3) The University of Iowa
School of Art and Art History
Iowa City, IA 52242
USA
- 4) Conceptual art, correspondence art, multiples, book works, language works, etc. Collections of correspondence art include: Crane/Friedman (collection of originals intended for reproduction in Michael Crane's book *Correspondence Art*; the Steve Durland Collection; the Buster Cleveland Collection; Crackerjack Kid's Networker Databank; among others

- 5) Works from the post–World War II period that look to the Dada movement as their historical precedent
- 6) Established in 1980

1) **Artists' Books Collection**

- 2) Lynne Warren, associate curator, permanent collection
Phone: +1 (312) 280.2660
- 3) The Museum of Contemporary Art
Artists' Books Collection
237 E. Ontario
Chicago, IL 60611
USA
- 4) Collection is focused on artists' books and includes mail art, artists' recordings, artists' video, fine prints, art documentations, and photographs
- 6) 1980

1) **Art Metropole**

- 2) Amy Maggiacomo, Collections Coordinator
Phone: +1 (416) 367.2304
Fax: +1 (416) 365.9208
- 3) Art Metropole
788 King Street West
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5V 1N6
- 4) An artist-directed centre that publishes, distributes, collects and exhibits media-related, multiple format works from the 1960s onward. They hold an extensive collection of poster and mail art that is available to the public for research
- 6) Founded in 1974 by General Idea

1) **Art Unidentified**

- 2) Shozo Shimamoto, Director
Phone: +81 (798) 66.18.93
Fax: +81 (798) 64.57.23
- 3) Art Unidentified

- 1–1–10 Koshienguchi
Nishinomiya
Japan
- 4) Art Unidenitified (AU) is an organization of Japanese contemporary artists whose headquarters are located at Art Space, Nishinomiya, Japan. Mail art works at Art Space are located in the Mail Art Museum. Alongside this space is AU's Mail Art Archive room which contains archival boxes of mail art books, alternative magazines, stampart, postcards, and other intermedia related materials
 - 6) Established 1972

- 1) **Carlo Pittore Room of International Mail Art**
- 2) Oyvind Storm Bjerke, Chief Curator; Per Hovdenakk, Director
Phone: +47 (2) 54.30.50
Fax: +47 (2) 54.32.70
- 3) Henie-Onstad Kunstsenter
1311 Hovikodden
Norway
- 4) The Carlo Pittore Collection began as the personal archive of Carlo Pittore, the distinguished, controversial focus of much international mail art activity during the 1970s and 1980s. Pittore gave his collection to the Henie Onstad Museum, where it is now in storage during preparation. It will be housed in the museum's Carlo Pittore Room, where it will be available to researchers
- 5) The collection spans a wide range of mail art materials from correspondence and artifacts to zines and books. At the present moment, the collection is stored archivally, but it has not been catalogued
- 6) Established in 1987

- 1) **Circle Arts Inc.**
- 2) Matty Jankowski
Phone: (718) 338.9546
- 3) Circle Arts Inc.
1439 Ocean Avenue, #2F
Brooklyn, NY 11230
USA
- 4) Circle Arts is a non-profit organization whose programs and activities include performance parties, art parades, contributory magazines, collaborative cassette recordings and numerous networking contact lists
- 5) Circle Arts Archive includes extensive files and materials of correspondence artists. Mail Art video documentations include Is There No Justice Mail Art Show, and Peter Küstermann's *Endless World Art Video*, twenty video cassettes of over 160 mail artist interviews. Circle Art's Neoist News Agency helps circulate news of Monty Cantsin and Karen Eliot performances. Mail art and rubber stamp art workshops are among Circle Arts scheduled events
- 6) 1981

- 1) **The Fluxus Collection**
- 2) Kellen Haak, Registrar Hood Museum of Art
Phone: +1 (603) 646.2808
Fax: +1 (603) 646.1400
- 3) Hood Museum of Art
Dartmouth College
Hanover, NH 03755
USA
- 4) The nucleus of this collection was created as a memorial exhibition to the late George Maciunas. Organized by Hood Museum of Art Director Jan Van der Marc, the collection was devoted to educating students and museum patrons
- 5) Fluxus relics, kits, publications, artist stamps, photographs, music scores, Fluxinstruments, etc. by Ben Vautier, Robert Filliou, Alison Knowles, Joseph Beuys, George Maciunas, Ken Friedman, Yoko Ono, Dick Higgins, and numerous other Fluxus artists. A portion of the collection includes mail art works by Ray Johnson, E.F. Higgins III, Musicmaster, Crackerjack Kid, Richard C., and Stuart Horn
- 6) 1979

- 1) **Franklin Furnace Archive**
- 2) Michael Katchen, Director of Collections
Phone: +1 (212) 925.4671
Fax: +1 (212) 925.0903
- 3) Franklin Furnace Archive
112 Franklin Street
New York, NY 10013
USA
- 4) The mail art collection at Franklin Furnace is focused on materials sent to the 1984 Mail Art Then and Now Mail Art International Show
- 6) Established in 1984 and now as part of the collection of the Library, Museum of Modern Art

- 1) **The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection**
- 2) Jon Hendricks, Curator
Phone: +1 (212) 925.4697 or +1 (313) 353.5242
- 3) 488 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10013
U.S.A.
or
24321 Mullberry Court
Southfield, MI 48034
U.S.A.
- 4) The collection is devoted solely to the Fluxus art movement and consists of documentation and objects. The Silverman Collection has major holdings of George Maciunas produced Fluxus Editions and primary documentation of the movement. It is presently open to scholars on a very limited basis. Each written request will be considered based on area of study and availability of material elsewhere.
- 5) In a letter Jon Hendricks, Curator, provided the following

description: "Many Fluxus artists have in one way or another been involved in aspects of 'mail art'. For instance: George Brecht and Robert Watts' *Delivery Events*; Nam June Paik's *Monthly Review*...; Mieko Shiomi's *Spatial Poems*; Yoko Ono's *Draw Circle Event*; and La Monte Young's *Mailed Scores*. Some of these are listed in the four catalogues of the Collection, *Fluxus etc.*, *Fluxus etc.*, *Addenda I; Fluxus etc.*, *Addenda II*; and *Fluxus, Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*; also the *Fluxus Codex* is a useful tool. There are stamps of Robert Watts, George Maciunas, etc., and rubber stamps of Robert Watts, George Brecht, Ben Vautier, Yoko Ono, Addi Koepcke, James Riddle, Ken Friedman, etc.

1) **Independent Press Archive**

2) John Rudy, coordinator/research center
Phone: +1 (716).442.8676

3) Visual Studies Workshop
31 Prince Street
Rochester, NY 14607
USA

4) Archive contains some mail art, but is primarily devoted to artists' books. Presently, there are 4,000–5,000 books including artists' magazines, one-of-a-kind artists' books, and artists' book multiples.

6) 1972

1) **The Jean Brown Collection—A Repository of Post-war Avant-Garde Art in the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities**

2) Gene Waddell, curator, Special Collections Department
Phone: +1 (213) 458.9811
Fax: +1 (213) 458.6487

3) The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities
401 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400
Santa Monica, CA 90401
USA

4) In Jean Brown's quotation from an undated "Announcement" regarding her collection, the following passage appeared: "The Archive Jean Brown is the repository of original material covering a broad range of contemporary international art. One part of the Archive is devoted to recent avant-garde books, multiples and periodicals, with emphasis on Lettrisme, Concrete Poetry and experimental publishers such as The Something Else Press... The second section contains documents, publications and memorabilia of Fluxus and Happenings in the United States and Europe. A third division of the archive covers Pop Art and Conceptual Art."

6) 1954

1) **The Joan Flasch Artists' Books Collection**

2) Sally Alatalo, Keeper
Phone: (312) 899.5098

3) School of the Art Institute of Chicago
The John M. Flaxman Library, 6th Floor
37 South Wabash
Chicago, IL 60603
USA

4) Collects artists' books, mail art, rubber stamp art, artists' recordings associated to a book format, reference materials, and catalogues of book exhibitions.

5) Specializes in artists' books; 2,500 books. Among several boxes of mail art are works by Ulises Carrion, Vittore Baroni, Crackerjack Kid, and editions from Pawel Petasz' *Commonpress*. There are examples of correspondence art, rubber stamps, postcards, and artistamps. Several (anonymous) mail artists have donated entire collections to the Joan Flasch Artists' Books Collection.

6) 1970

1) **Milan Art Center**

2) Ruggero Maggi
Phone: +39 (2) 349.1947
Fax: +39 (2) 349.1947

3) Milan Art Center
Via Dell'Aprica 2
20158 Milano
Italy

4) Approximately 1,000 items about the Shadow Project and various other works about peace. Other mail art objects include three-dimensional works: bottles, playing cards, masks, etc.

5) Object books, artists' books

6) 1973

1) **Morris/Trasov Archive**

2) Scott Watson, curator
Phone: +1 (604) 822.2759
Fax: +1 (604) 822.9003

3) Fine Arts Gallery
University of British Columbia
1956 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC
Canada V6T 1Y3

4) The archive of Canadian artists Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov is the largest collection of mail art and related correspondence in Canada, as well as an important record of avant-garde activity in Canada and abroad during the 1970s. During an artist-in-residence program in the Art Studio at The Banff Centre (Fall 1990), work on the archive included the accessioning and conservation of the collection, as well as the conceptualization of a catalogue data base. It can now be contained in a running space of some fifty meters

5) Archive includes: *Image Bank (1968–1978)*; *Mr. Peanut Archive (1969–1974)*; *Babyland Colour Bar Research*

- Project (1972–1974); Cultural Ecology Project (1972); Art's Birthday—The Decca Dance (1974); Image Bank Exchange Directories (1972–1974)*
- 6) 1968
 - 1) **The Museum of Modern Art Library Special Collection**
 - 2) Clive Phillpot, Director of the Library
Phone: +1 (212) 708.9431
Fax: +1 (212) 708.9889
 - 3) Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
New York, NY
USA
 - 4) Scope reflects upon museum collections plus most media. Library includes books, magazines, manuscripts, audio/video tapes, pamphlets, 100,000 exhibition catalogs
 - 5) Special Collections include: Dada and Surrealist publications; Latin American publications; books and magazines by artists, among which are mail artists; documents of the avant-garde, etc.
 - 6) 1929
 - 1) **National Art Library**
 - 2) Jan van der Wateren, Chief Librarian and Curator
Phone: +44 (71) 938.8315
Fax: +44 (71) 938.8461
 - 3) National Art Library
Victoria and Albert Museum
South Kensington
London SW7 2RL
United Kingdom
 - 4) The National Art Library is the national centre for the documentation of art, craft and design, and contains over a million items on the fine, decorative and applied arts. As one of the world's foremost libraries in this subject area it acquires research materials of many kinds and has particular responsibility for collecting and curating the art, craft and design of the book as object
 - 5) Mail art, mail art magazines, reference works and exhibition catalogues, Concrete poetry, copier art, artists' books, book art, *Smile Magazine* and ephemera collection, Neoist publications, Plagiarism, Artists' manifestos, Punk fanzines, Coracle Press archive, Stephen Willats' printed archive, underground magazines and comics, Art Strike (1990–1993) material, and Situationist/pro-Situationist publications. The library also has information files containing press cuttings, letters and ephemera on individuals and institutions involved in these subject areas
 - 6) 1837
 - 1) **National Postal Museum**
 - 2) Chantal Amyot, curator
Phone: +1 (819) 776.8200
Fax: +1 (819) 776.8300
 - 3) National Postal Museum
100 Laurier Street
PO Box 3100, Station B
Hull, Quebec
Canada T8X 4H2
 - 4) The National Postal Museum collection is comprised of more than 1,200 multi-pieced items. The majority was collected by Canadian mail artist Sarah Jackson during the International Mail/Copier Art Exhibition in 1985 and then donated to the National Postal Museum. Many pieces were also gathered during the Mail Art Festival held at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1992
 - 5) copier art
 - 6) 1985
 - 1) **Pacific Northwest Artistamp Collective**
 - 2) Sam Davidson and James Felter, curators
Phone: +1 (206) 624.7684
 - 3) Davidson Galleries
313 Occidental Avenue S.
Seattle, WA 98104
USA
 - 4) Forty-five international mail art and stamp artists are represented in this collection of artistamps, stamps and stampsheets are placed in a cabinet of drawers for public viewing. Beginning in December 1989 Davidson Galleries held its first international Artistamp exhibition. In 1990 a decision was made to sponsor international Artistamp exhibitions every two years
 - 5) According to collection curator James Warren Felter, artistamps focus on these criteria: "Perforated images without the 'look and feel' of postage stamps as well as Poster stamps, Charity stamps and other recognized philatelic areas have been excluded as they are not true Artistamps; i.e., pseudo-postage stamps instigated and created by artists for themselves, their friends, and their patrons." (From the catalogue introduction of the *2nd International Artistamp Biennial 1991*)
 - 6) Davidson Gallery's Pacific Northwest Artistamp Collective was formed in 1990
 - 1) **PTT-Museum Bern, Mail-art Sammlung**
 - 2) Karl Kronig, curator of mail-art archive
Phone: +41 (31) 62.61.72
Fax: +41 (31) 62.39.27
 - 3) PTT-Museum Bern
Helvetiastrasse 16
CH-3000, Bern 6
Switzerland
 - 4) The Swiss PTT-Museum collects stamps, rubber stamps, envelopes, and mail-art documents that are related to Swiss mail artists. For reasons of documentation, however, they also collect significant objects of international mail artists
 - 6) Founded in January 1992

- 1) **Xexoxial Endarchy, Ltd.**
- 2) Elizabeth Was and Miekal And, Directors
Phone: +1 (608) 528.4619
- 3) Xexoxial Endarchy
Route 1, Box 131
LaFarge, WI 53649-9601
USA
- 4) A non-profit, artist-run, multi-arts organization devoted to the distribution and support of, and education about new experimental arts. Xexoxial Endarchy, according to Miekal And, "offers access to artist space, land, information, artist-made books, cassettes, floppies, video's, musical instruments and other artifacts of a culture that has yet to be invented."
- 5) Accent on networking and HyperMedia where media intersect
- 6) 1980

II. Mail Artist Archives and Collections

- 1) **The Administration Centre**
- 2) Guy Bleus
Fax: +32 (12) 74.14.15
- 3) P.O. Box 43
3830 Wellen
Belgium
- 4) Over 2,000 networkers from over fifty countries are represented in the archive
- 5) The Administration Center archive focuses on all categories of mail art media and is divided into separate units: artistamps, artists' books, artpaper, assemblings, audio-art, catalogues, computer art, copy art, fax art, graffiti, magazines, mail art, performances, postcards, posters, rubber stamp art, small press publications, video art, visual poetry, etc.
- 6) 1978

- 1) **Aleatory Archive**
- 2) Marcello Diotallevi
Fax: L'Elorapida, +39 (721) 80.44.51
- 3) Via Veneto, 59
61032 Fano PS
Italy

- 1) **Archive of Terra Candella**
- 2) Harley
Phone: +1 (415) 441.8761
- 3) PO Box 170579
San Francisco, CA 94117
USA
- 4) International collection of mail art from over 1,000 artists
- 5) Emphasis on artistamps
- 6) 1975

- 1) **The Archives Art Information Centre**
- 2) Peter van Beveren

- Phone: +31 (10) 476.4472
- 3) P.O. Box 2577
3000 CN Rotterdam
The Netherlands
- 4) A non-profit organization collecting information on contemporary art. The mail art materials are dated from the late 1960s to present
- 5) Specialize in documents as announcement cards, posters, artists books, catalogues, multiples and ephemera
- 6) 1972

- 1) **Archive Um**
- 2) Piotr Rypson
Phone: +48 (22) 33.6995
- 3) PO Box 796
00-950 Warsaw
Poland
- 4) Avante garde books and magazines; artists' books, mail art; visual poetry, audio art; ca. 1,000 items
- 5) Visual poetry and book art
- 6) 1978

- 1) **Artistamps of the World**
- 2) Rosemary Gahlinger-Beaune
Phone: +1 (604) 439.1915
- 3) Box 553
Lucan, Ontario
Canada NOM 2JO
- 4) A collection of stamp art representing 200 artists from eighteen countries. The collection contains more than 500 full sheets of artistamps and several hundred single stamp designs
- 5) Specializing in artist-designed stamps

- 1) **Artpool**
- 2) Julia and György Galántai
Phone: + (361) 121.08.33
- 3) 1277 Budapest 23
Box/Pf. 52
Hungary
- 4) Documentation of progressive contemporary art events in Hungary and abroad. Artpool collects and exchanges artists' stamps, bookworks, post-cards, soundworks, posters, slides, magazines, and organizes exhibitions from the collection. Among the extensive collection are over 200 volumes of artists' books, including many rare editions from the early 1970s
- 5) Artpool specialized in collecting artists' stamps. In 1988 they were bequeathed an extensive artistamp collection belonging to the late Canadian artist and philatelist Michael Bidner. Presently, they hold the largest collection of artists' stamps in Eastern Europe
- 6) 1979

- 1) **Avenue B School of Art Archive**
- 2) John Evans

3) 199 E Street
New York City , NY 10009
USA

4) Archive includes mail art by Ray Johnson, May Wilson, A.M. Fine, plus many other members of the New York Correspondence Art School

5) Works on paper and correspondence art
6) 1965

1) **Banana Mail-Art Archive**

2) Anna Banana
Phone: +1 (604) 876.6764

3) 287 East 26th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
Canada V5V 2H2

4) Twelve boxes of mail art correspondence, collages, printed sheets; 4 boxes of unanswered, unfiled mail; 4 boxes of mail art show invitations and catalogues; 4 boxes of mail art publications; 1 box of postcards; 1 box of artistamps; 3 shelves of mail art books and publications

5) Current focus is artistamps
6) 1971

1) **Clemente Padin Archive**

2) Clemente Padin
Phone: +598 (2) 56.08.85

3) Casilla C. Central 1211
Montevideo, Uruguay

5) postcards and envelopes
6) Began collecting in 1967, but the Uruguayan military robbed his archive in 1977 and imprisoned him. Padin resumed his collection of mail art in 1983

1) **Creative Thing Collection**

2) Leslie Caldera
3) 12331 Muir Ct.
Whittier, CA 90601
USA

4) According to Caldera, the archive... "is a file cabinet and a few boxes in my garage. It is not available for public scrutiny at this time."

6) 1978

1) **DeSirey Dodge Archives**

2) Chris Dodge, Jan DeSirey
Phone: +1 (612) 823.1214

3) 4645 Columbus Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407
USA

4) International mail art works, catalogues, posters, flyers, zines, audio cassettes, etc., and radical books, periodicals and ephemera (documents, pamphlets, manifestos). Size: 3-4 large boxes of mail art archives

5) Focus on political mail art, zines, anarchism

1) **DOC(K)S**

2) Julien Blaine

3) Le Moulin De Ventabren
13122 Ventabren
France

5) Work about Ludismail, 5,300 post cards, 6,000 artistamps, art, and artists' books

6) 1974

1) **Ecart Archive**

2) John Armleder
3) Ecart 6, rue Plantamour

P.O. Box 1438
CH-1211, Genève 1
Switzerland

4) Approximately 10,000 items from the 1950s to the 1990s

5) Avant-garde art including conceptual, Fluxus, and mail art
6) 1968

1) **Electric Bank**

2) Fred Truck
3) 4225 University
Des Moines, IA 50311
USA

5) Electric Bank is an electronic archive of performance art covering text, images, and animation of digital video. Among their extensive documentations of performance events is The Memory Bank devoted to publication of proposals for performance which have not been performed, as well as documentation of events done elsewhere by the originating artist

6) 1979

1) **Eternal Network Archive**

2) Chuck Welch, a.k.a. Crackerjack Kid
Phone: +1 (603) 448.4797

3) 108 Bluberry Hill Drive
Hanover, NH 03755
USA

4) A portion of Crackerjack Kid's Eternal Network Archive (Networker Databank) is located at the University of Iowa, School of Art and Art History, Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Collection, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. Over 2,000 documentary materials of the Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992 are part of the Networker Databank. Bulk of archive in Hanover, NH where approximately 10,000 items include 400 mail artist files, 400 artists' books, 200 mail art fanzine titles, 200 mail art catalogues, numerous mail art essays and correspondences, 1,000 artistamp sheets, envelope covers, postcards, posters, audiocassettes, videos, and show invitations. Items are catalogued on Hypercard database

- 5) International Registry of Artistamps includes over 1,000 stampsheets by 150 artists from 40 nations
- 6) 1978
- 1) **Ethereal Open Network Archive (E.O.N.)**
- 2) Vittore Baroni
Phone: +39 (584) 96.39.18
- 3) 3rd floor
Via Battisti 339
Viareggio
Italy
- 4) Two small rooms and a large working space located in the artist's home. The audio section of the archive (cassettes, records, music magazine) is stored on the first floor of the artist's studio
- 5) "I have tried almost every facet of mail art, but do not have a precise area of specialization." (Vittore Baroni)
- 6) 1977
- 1) **Five/Cinq Archives**
- 2) James Warren Felter
Phone: +1 (604) 926.3917
- 3) 2707 Rosebery Avenue
West Vancouver, BC
Canada V7V 3A3
- 4) About fifteen cubic feet of mail art material. Archives currently being inventoried for a computer database
- 5) artistamps
- 6) 1960s
- 1) **Guillermo Deisler Collection**
- 2) Guillermo Deisler
- 3) Thälmannplatz 12, D-4020 halle/saale, Germany
- 5) Visual poetry, artists books
- 6) 1963
- 1) **HeMiSphere**
- 2) Angela and Henning Mittendorf
Phone: 069 529388
- 3) Allendorfer Strasse 20 B
6000 Frankfurt/Main 50
Germany.
- 4) Innumerable selected pieces from ten years of mail art communication
- 6) 1980
- 1) **H.R.Fricker Mail-Art-Networking and Tourism Archive**
- 2) Hans Ruedi Fricker
Phone: +41 (71) 94.22.49
- 3) Büro für künstlerische Umtriebe Hüttschwende
CH-9043 Trogen,
Switzerland
- 4) Personal correspondence, exchange, and collaboration;

- Networking material; over 200 mail art show documentations; Decentralized World Wide Mail Art Congress documents (1986); art stamp collection; copy-art; bookworks; mail art magazines; the tourism archive
- 6) 1981
 - 1) **Knickerbocker Archive**
 - 2) Joachim Frank
Phone: +1 (518) 474.7002
 - 3) 278 South Manning
Albany, NY 12208
USA
 - 4) Mail art postcards, correspondence, audio art, visual poetry. Archive includes Workspace Collection and Prop Collection
 - 6) 1978
 - 1) **Mahamat Hall**
 - 2) Jo Klaffki
 - 3) Kunst-Bahnhausen
PO Box 2631
D-495, Minden
Germany
 - 5) Stamp art, artists' books, zines, audio art, etc.
 - 6) 1979
 - 1) **Mail Art Research Archive**
 - 2) Klaus Groh
 - 3) Heidedamm 6
D-2905 Edewecht/Klein Scharrel
Germany
 - 4) Over 4,000 items; posters, artist books, artists' stamps, etc. East Europe, depressed countries; artists stamps, book works
 - 6) 1970
 - 1) **Marilyn R. Rosenberg Inter-Media Collection**
 - 2) Marilyn R. Rosenberg
Phone: +1 (914) 737.2052
 - 3) 67 Lakeview Avenue West
Peekskill, NY 10566
USA
 - 4) Collection includes mail art, artists' books, visual poetry publications, mail art zines, small press publications, exhibition catalogues, correspondence, artistamps, and postcards
 - 5) David Cole, Lord Byron, Kathy Ernst, Crackerjack Kid, Harley, and 50 other artists
 - 6) 1977
 - 1) **Mark Bloch Post Art Network Archive (The Pantheon)**
 - 2) Mark Bloch (a.k.a. Panman)
Phone: +1 (212) 982.8454
 - 3) PO Box 1500
New York City, NY 10009
USA
 - 4) Archive consists of two sections, 1) The Pantheon, which

- contains mail art catalogues, projects, artistamps, audio art, postcards, personal correspondence, and an extensive interview of mail artists from 1983 to present, 2) Pan Peace Archive, formed in 1988 and housed at the Special Collections Library of Kent State University. The collection includes show announcements, mail art objects, and mail artists whose work, according to Bloch, "demonstrates peaceful coexistence through teaching by example and do-it-yourself communications."
- 5) Experimental and non-traditional forms of long distance communication. Also numerous notes taken from telephone conversations with Ray Johnson. Books about Dada, Surrealism and Marcel Duchamp
 - 6) 1977
- 1) **De Media Archive**
 - 2) Jan De Boever
Phone: +32 (91) 77.93.94
 - 3) Molenstraat 165
9900 Eeklo
Belgium
 - 5) Mail art and small subcultural magazines
 - 6) 1982
- 1) **Modern Realism Archive**
 - 2) John Held Jr.
Phone: +1 (214) 553.1116
 - 3) 1903 McMillan Avenue
Dallas TX 75206
USA
 - 4) Fifteen years of correspondence with mail artists and participation in mail art projects and shows. Over 100 individual artist folders arranged by specialties. The archive includes a strong collection of primary and secondary source reference materials in addition to representative mail art of Japan, the Soviet Union, Eastern and Western Europe, South America, as well as all areas of the United States
 - 5) Artists' books, Artistamps, mail art catalogs, mail art exhibitions, poster collection, historic reference library of mail art sourcebooks in book and magazine form, rubber stamps by artists, video collection, mail art magazines, photography collection
 - 6) 1975
- 1) **Museo Internacional de Neu Art**
 - 2) Ed Varney
Phone +1 (604) 266.8289
 - 3) 2268 West 45th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
Canada V6M 2J3
 - 4) Over 15,000 pieces representing work by 1800 artists
 - 5) Artistamps, postcards, mail art, prints, correspondence, poetry. Also catalogues and invitations pertinent to mail art and the eternal network
 - 6) 1970
- 1) **Museum of Museums**
 - 2) Johan van Geluwe
 - 3) Jan Bouckaertstraat 8
B-8790 Waregem
Belgium
 - 4) Meticulously collects everything that is related with the format idea of an art museum and in recycling findings in documents-and-archives-transformed-into-museumart.
 - 6) Early 1970s
- 1) **Network Archive**
 - 2) Géza Perneczky
 - 3) Grosse Witschgasse 3-5
D 5000, Köln 1
Germany
 - 4) Over 400 network catalogues, 500 volumes of artists books and other network publications, 460 titles and 1800 issues of network magazines; mail art, graphism, visual poetry. All magazines and publications are catalogued
 - 5) Mail Art material, letters, graphics, etc.
 - 6) 1970
- 1) **Networker Museum**
 - 2) Angela and Peter Netmail (Peter Küstermann and Angela Pähler)
 - 3) PO Box 2644
D-495, Minden
Germany
 - 4) A one-room, smoke-free, hands-on working space, and networker museum/hotel for visiting mail artists
 - 5) Archive centered on artistamps, catalogues and over 280 video features of networkers. We are also free-lance curators of networking activities at Minden, Germany's Civic Center in Old St. John's Church
 - 6) 1982
- 1) **The Nomad Museum Mail Art Archives**
 - 2) José Oliveira
 - 3) Avenue Antonio Aug. Aguiar
27-5 esq., 1000 Lisbon
Portugal
 - 4) approximately 2,000 works including stamp art, book art, zines, audio art, visual poetry, postcards, etc.
 - 5) artists' books
- 1) **Open World Archive**
 - 2) Dobrica Kamperelic'
Phone: +38 (11) 46.13.76
 - 3) Ustanicka 152/VII-73
11000 Beograd (Sumice)
Yugoslavia
 - 4) Mail art and Fluxus documentation; magazines, catalogues, artworks, objects, correspondence, sound poetry, audio and video cassettes

- 5) Focus is upon mail art magazines and fanzines, photo archive of mail art friends
- 6) 1980

1) **Other Books And So Archive**

- 2) Juan J. Agius
- 3) Case Postale 5243, CH-1211 Geneva 11, Switzerland; Phone: +41 (22) 781.14.05; Fax: +41 (22) 321.77.15

1) **Paumonock Traveller Archive**

- 2) David A. Cole
Phone: +1 (612) 224.8932
- 3) 412 Laurel Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102
USA
- 4) Archive includes visual poetry, artists' books, and collaborations
- 5) Major collection of works by Betty Danon and Marilyn R. Rosenberg
- 6) 1981

1) **R.A.T. Mail Art Archive**

- 2) Charles Francois
Email Phone: +32 (41) 41.05.43
- 3) Quai Churchill, 35
4020 Liege
Belgium
- 4) Includes approximately 3,000 pieces of international mail art from the 1980s
- 5) No focus. Everything is kept with the envelope as received in the mail box, by chronological order. Each month all the pieces received are put in a cardboard box. A database allows immediate retrieval of any stored piece and can be used to produce statistics. The purpose of the collection is to provide some view of what is in the mail art stream. In 1991 a host computer called RATOS was created to collect and spread by phone electronic documents now produced by the mail art network. There are two clearance levels for access to RATOS that are available to mail artists and the public
- 6) Collection: 1982; Database: 1987; RATOS: 1989

1) **Robin Crozier Archive**

- 2) Robin Crozier
Phone: +44 (91) 522.7294
- 3) 5B Tunstall Vale
Sunderland
SR2 7HP England
- 4) Mail art and associated materials are housed in a 8 ft. x 12 ft. room
- 5) Contains works by Robin Crozier and documentation of his activities that would not appear elsewhere. Also contains original works by other artists contributing to projects initiated

by Robin Crozier. Items from the 1960s include surrealist reprints, Fluxus, Something Else Press, concrete poetry

- 6) 1972

1) **Ruch's Archive**

- 2) Günther Ruch
+41 (22) 753.1221
- 3) 315 Route de Peney
1242 Genève-Peney
Switzerland
- 4) Ruch's Archive reflects mail art activities between 1970 and 1990 and includes over 7,000 letters, zines, stamp art, and 300 mail art books. 100 international stamp sheets representing fourteen countries were donated to the Swiss Postal Museum in Bern.
- 5) Focus is upon 400 artist made books, sixty international mail art show posters, 400 handmade postcards from forty countries, and 150 original stamp-sheets.
- 6) 1974-1988

1) **Spiegelman's Mailart Room**

- 2) Lon Spiegelman
- 3) 1556 Elevado St.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
USA
- 4) An extensive collection of mail art shows, projects and publications
- 6) 1978

1) **Subspace Archive**

- 2) Stephen Perkins
Phone: +1 (319) 351.3035
- 3) 1816 E. College St.
Iowa City, IA 52245
USA
- 4) Approximately 500 files on mail art contacts/correspondents, 700 international publications. Archives of San Francisco Art Strike Action Committee, San Francisco Festival of Plagiarism photo-documentation
- 5) Primarily image/text based Xerox publications. Presently preparing a comprehensive hypercard database of publications in the archive

1) **TAM Archives**

- 2) Ruud Janssen
+31 (13) 36.61.03
- 3) PO Box 10388
5000 JJ Tilburg
The Netherlands
- 4) Archive includes rubber stamps, chain letters, mail art letters, postcards, catalogues, buttons, artistamps and mail art books
- 6) 1980

1) **Umbrella Collection and Mail Art Archive**

2) Judith A. Hoffberg

3) PO Box 40100

Pasadena, CA 91114

USA

4) Umbrella Collection includes roughly 1,000 artifacts; 75 real umbrellas, 40 volumes of paper ephemera, mobiles, magnets, thermometers, dishes with umbrella motif. Mail art archive is organized alphabetically in envelopes by name of mail artist and includes stamp art, copy art, rubber stamp art, audio, records, and a reference collection of books about mail art

5) Both collections focus on anything having to do with umbrellas, mail art, stamp art, book art, audio art, etc.

6) 1978

1) **VEC (Visual Experimental Concrete)**

2) Rod Summers

3) Postbus 1051

NL-6201 BB Maastricht

The Netherlands

4) Audio art and poetry on cassette, tape and record. 735 entries. Cross-referenced cardex system of archive. Over 1,000 mail art and related publications

5) Focus is on personal contact between artists and poets through correspondence. Audio art and poetry publication

6) 1973

1) **Zaum Mail-Art Archive**

2) Rea Nikonova and Serge Segay

3) Sverdlova 175

Eysk 353660

Russia

4) Part of the mail art collection includes twenty-six visual poems from the First in Russia International Visual Poetry Exhibition—all donated to Eysk's Museum, Sverdlova 104, Eysk 353660, Russia

5) Manuscripts and drawings of Russian Futurist poet Vasilisk Gnedov (1890–1978), manuscripts of Russian Zaum poet Igor Bachterev, manuscripts of Russian Contemporary avant-garde poets such as Prigov, Monastyrsky, Laydermann, Sapgir and many others, mail art, visual poetry, etc.

6) 1979

* * * * *



Appendix 5

MAIL ART MAGAZINES

Mail art magazines, often referred to by mail artists as “zines,” are non-commercial, subculture publications. “Zine” is an abbreviation of fan magazine, or “fanzine,” a term describing anything printed outside the usual mainstream publications that one can find on local newsstands. From a commercial viewpoint, zines are small-fry, no-slick, tawdry rags, lost in the underworld of leftist ideals and values. The zine scene proudly retorts they’ve “kept the faith,” “haven’t sold out,” and are the last independent, democratic publishers to relate truth uncompromised by profit.

Artists who edit mail art zines escape commodification by using the international postal systems for the exchange or barter of their publications. Mail art zines may vary according to the political disposition or creative philosophy of individual artists. Generally, they are independent endeavors, but they also include international collaborative efforts of shared editorship (assembling magazines), under bannerheads like *Smile Magazine* or *Commonpress*.

Mail art zines are network galleries reflecting a wide range of intermedia art. Like mail art, there are no rules that dictate the subject or content of zines. Quality, quantity, method of production, subject matter, frequency of publication, page layout, selection of graphics, guidelines, selection of contributors, editing, distribution, and cost are all determined by the artist. Varieties of mail art zines range from single spreadsheets and broadsides to a complex, thematic edition of many pages. With the increasing affordability of computer software such as PageMaker and Illustrator, sophisticated typographic publications are now finding their way into the mail art network.

Among the first mail art fanzines to emerge in the early 1970s were dadazines published by such Bay Area Dadaists as Anna Banana, Bill Gaglioni, and Tim Mancusi. Ken Friedman’s first twelve issues of *The New York Correspondence School Weekly Breeder* began in 1971, then was passed on to Stu Horn for a few months in 1972, and eventually was edited by Bay Area Dadaists Tim Mancusi and Bill Gaglione until 1974.

Over 300 mail art fanzines flourished in the 1970s, including Clemente Padin’s *Ovum*, Don Milliken’s *OR*, Opal L. Nation’s *Strange Faeces*, Bill Gaglione and Anna Banana’s *VILE Magazine*, Pawel Petasz’ *Commonpress*, Chuck Stake’s *Images and Information*, and Julien Blaine’s *Doc(k)s*. As mail art evolved as an international phenomenon with thousands of participants, mail art zines mushroomed, too, with hundreds of publications: Japan: *AU Magazine*, ed. Artists Unidentified; Italy: *Arte Postale!* ed. Vittore Baroni; Switzerland: *Clinch Magazine*, ed. Günther Ruch; Canada: *Banana Rag*, ed. Anna Banana; Argentina: *Hoje-Hoja-Hoy*, ed. Graciela Marx; United States: *ND Magazine*, ed. Daniel Plunkett; Yugoslavia: *Open World*, ed. Dobrica Kamperelic, etc.

Mail art zines, artists’ books, catalogue essays, and assorted articles appearing in mainstream newspapers and magazines are primary sources in which historians, archivists, curators, critics, and scholars can research the development of international mail art. Fortunately, librarian and mail artist John Held, Jr. has published *Mail Art: An Annotated Bibliography* (Scarecrow Press, 1991) wherein alternative magazines are listed. However, many of Held’s bibliographic entries constitute rare editions primarily available by contacting private mail art archivists and a few museums or educational institutions.

Another authoritative text on mail art zines is *A Háló: The Magazine Network—The Trends of Alternative Art in the Light of Their Periodicals 1968–1988*. Edited by Géza Perneczky (Hétorony Edition, 1991), the 300-page illustrated survey contains an extensive bibliography of theoretical works, catalogues, references, conceptual art, visual poetry, rubber stamps, copyart, art reviews, situationism, and neoism. The first edition is in Hungarian, but an English edition was released in July 1993.

Reaching beyond the galaxy of mail art zines, readers can find a universe of networker magazines ranging from computer hackers to the international cassette culture (audio art and sounds) in Mike Gunderloy and Cari Goldberg Janice’s illustrated *The World of Zines: A Guide to the Independent Magazine Revolution* (Penguin Books: New York, 1992, 158 pp). Boise State University English professor Tom Trusky is the first to introduce zines to academia with his show catalogue edition *Some Zines: American Alternative & Underground Magazines, Newsletters and APAs*. Trusky’s catalogue accompanied the Fall 1992 zine exhibition at Student Union Art Gallery, Boise State University.

An interesting explorative study of the 1980s networker zine scene was published in 1992 by Steve Perkins; *Approaching the '80s Zine Scene: A Background Survey and Selected Annotated Bibliography*, (Plagiarist Press, Iowa City, IA). In defining alternative art publishing, Perkins digs into the underground of self-publishing activities by declaring what zines are and what they do:

All zines are magazines, but not all magazines are zines. The dropping of the 'maga' to arrive at 'zine' denotes a particular set of attitudes, economics, and technological practices that are intertwined in this type of self-publishing. Non-commercial, self-published in small editions and very often photocopied, zines arise out of particular subcultural milieus united by their common needs and interests. Their circulation, predominantly within these particular environments, places them deep under the web of cultural activity. (p. 1)

This "Mail Art Magazines" appendix is compiled from the collections of Marilyn R. Rosenberg, Crackerjack Kid, James Lewes, Vittore Baroni, Guy Bleus, Ed Varney, Géza Perneczky, The University of Iowa's Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Archive (designated ATCA in listings), The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities (designated Jean Brown Collection in listings), and the Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry.

The sequence of data in this appendix is as follows: 1) Title. 2) Name of editor (publisher), artistic organization. 3) Place of publication: Country. 4) Date of publication (first issue). 5) Archive/Collection in brackets. 6) Issue Vol. s and numbers. The editor acknowledges that some valuable information has been excluded from this appendix, such as the size format for each zine and printing techniques employed by artist/editors. Few mail art zines accommodate such neat categories, and more often forms and techniques in each mail art zine vary from issue to issue. Efforts are equally elusive in determining whether mail art zines in this appendix are still in print. The problem exists, in part, because the appendix covers thirty years of mail art zines. Obviously, many of the artist/publishers are difficult to locate. For these reasons it is sensible to help readers locate archives and collections where examples exist, a research tool which at the time of this writing has not been indicated in previous publications about mail art zines.

Archives and collections that appear in brackets are: (ATCA), Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Archive; (Sackner Archive) Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry; (Jean Brown Collection) The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; (Lewes Collection) James Lewes; (Perneczky Collection) Géza Perneczky; (Baroni Collection) Vittore Baroni, Ethereal Open Network Archive; (Bleus Collection) Guy Bleus, The Administration Centre; (Varney Collection) Ed Varney, Museo Internazionale de Neu Art; (Rosenberg Collection) Marilyn R. Rosenberg Inter-media Collection; (Crackerjack Collection), Chuck Welch, Crackerjack Kid Eternal Network Archive. Readers may acquire mailing addresses and additional information about these archives in Appendix 4.

* * * * *

A

Abraxus. Naoko Masuda and J. Akoitashi Akitaken. Japan. 1970. (Sackner Archive) Nos. 4–13, 14–20, 23–30

Ace Comix. Tim Robertson, Joe Acme. Canada. 1979 (Perneczky Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1

The Acts the Shelflife. Mickal And, Liz Was. U.S. 1986. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 2

Adenoidi. G. Romizi. Italy. 198(?) (Baroni Collection) Nos. 4, 6, 7

Aerosol. Metallic Avau. Belgium. 1978. (Sackner Archive) 1981 Nos. 15–17; 1982 Nos. 18–20; 1983 No. 22; 1984 No. 23

Afzet (Art Zendings). Sonja van der Burg, A. Margot van Oosten. The Netherlands. 1980. (Jean Brown Collection) 1982 No. 3; 1985 3-dimensional issue

The Agent. Geezette Munday produced by Jim Holt. England. 1979. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 2

Algo Pasa. Manuel Marin. Mexico. 1981. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 9, 12

Alto. Jean Paul Morelle. Italy. 1986. (Baroni Collection) Nos. 0–5

A Margem. Falves Silva, Franklin Capistrano. Brazil. 1987. (Perneczky Collection) Vol. 2 No. 12

Anatole au Cafe de l'Aube. Thierry Tillier. Belgium. 1976. (Perneczky Collection) No. 9

Anthropology/Anthro Art. Volker Hamann. Germany. 1981. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 2

Anti Isolation. Mielke And & Liz Was. U.S. 1985. (Baroni Collection) 3/4; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 2, 3/4

Antivalues. Leszek Przyjemski and Pawel Petasz. Poland. 1977. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 2; 1977 No. 2

Apocrypha. Sybil Coffey. U.S. 1992. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 5

Art Communication Edition. Super Vision Publication. Canada. 1977. (ATCA) Vol. 1, Nos. 5–7, 9; Vol. 2, No. 1

Artcomnet. Larry Smith. U.S. 1982. (Crackerjack Collection) 1988 February issue

Art Contemporary. Carl E. Loeffler and Mary Stofflet. U.S. 1976. (ATCA) Retrospective Issue; Modern European Art Issue; Catalog Issue; Vol. 2, No. 2; Vol. 3, No. 2

Arte(f)actos. Damaso Ogaz. Venezuela. 1980. (Baroni Collection) No. 1

Arte Postale! Vittore Baroni. Italy. 1979. (ATCA) Nos. 3, 5, 6, 13, 17, 20; (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–10, 15, 18, 29, 30, 32–35, 37, 38, 40, 43, 44, 48, 54–66; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 1–49; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–56

Art Extreme. Waisnis. U.S. 1981. (Rosenberg Collection) Fall–Winter 1981–1982

Art Ink. Terri Humphrey. U.S. 1978. (ATCA) spring/summer 1980; fall 1980; winter 1981; summer 1981; fall 1981; winter 1982

Art In Opposition. Gianni Becciani. Italy. 1979. (Baroni Collection) Nos. 1, 5

Art Life. Joe Cardella. U.S. 1981. (Sackner Archive) Vol. 1, Nos. 8, 11; Vol. 2, Nos. 5, 8–10; Vol. 3, Nos. 1–11; Vol. 4, Nos. 1–11; (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 4, Nos. 2, 5, 9

Art Rite. E. Deak, W. Robinson, and A. Canepa. U.S. 1973. (ATCA) Nos. 7, 10; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 7, 8, 12–15, 17–19

Artist (Formerly Punk Artist). Marco Cy. Italy. 1979. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 13, 17

Artistamp News. Anna Banana. Canada. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, Nos. 1, 2; Vol. 2, No. 1; Vol. 3, Nos. 1, 2

Artistamp Supplement. Michael Bidner. Canada. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) 1983 Nos. 1–4

Artists' International Newspaper. Ruth Howard. U.S. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1; (ATCA) Vol. 1, No. 1

Artpolice. Frank Gaard. U.S. 1974. (Jean Brown Collection) unidentified issues; (Perneczky Collection) 30 issues

Art Zone. Vincent Rossi. U.S. 1979. (ATCA) Vol. 2 No. 1

Assembling. Richard Kostelanetz. U.S. 1970. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 10–12

AU Magazine. Artists Union: Shozo Shimamoto. Japan. 1976. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 63, 68, 70–72, 74–78, 81, 83, 96, 101, 102, 104, 105, 110–119; (Jean Brown Collection) Nos. 62, 65

B

Bambu. Ubaldo Giacomucci. Italy. 1981. (Crackerjack Collection) 1993 No. 13; (Perneczky Collection) No. 2

Banana Rag. Anna Banana. Canada. 1981 (ATCA) Nos. 9, 10, 12, 14; (Jean Brown Collection) one issue from 1980—issue number not identified; (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 19, 21–26, 28; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–27

Bandes. Atelier du 3x3:33. French. 1986. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 3, 5

The B.A.T. Vittore Baroni. Italy. 1987. (Crackerjack Collection) 1987 No. 1

Beef. Pakka K. Kavan, Marina Racine. U.S. 1981. (ATCA) Nos. 4–6

Bela Lugosi's Magazine. Lambi Caravita. Italy. 1986. (Bleus Collection) 1986 Nos. 2, 3

Benzine. Allan Bealy. U.S. 1980. (Sackner Archive) Vol. 1, Nos. 1–8

Bibliozone. John Held, Jr. U.S. 1992 (Crackerjack Archive) Nos. 1–10, 12–15, 19, 20, 23–25

Bikini Girl. Lisa Baumgardner. U.S. 1979. (ATCA) Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8

Bile. Bradley Lastname. U.S. 1978. (ATCA) Homage to Mal D' Oror Issue; Aunt Fitz Issue; Insect & Safety Pin Issue; Tracing Paper Issue; Rose Selavy Issue; 3D Molecule Issue; Organ in Sand Issue; UBU Issue; Tony the Tiger Issue; Skulls as Dada Issue; Glue Issue; Official Target Issue; Pyramid Eye Issue; Red/Black Cover Issue; (Sackner Archive) May 1980; Memo from DADA long legs; Overnight they lost that dizzy and billious feeling; Have image bank will travel; Untitled (1982); Floridade (1982); Thus Spake Dadathrustra (1982)

Biulletin Maximal Art. Grzegorz Dziemski. Poland. 1978. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 2

Black Boat. Tony Bradley, Ron Crowcroft. England. 1979. (Perneczky Collection) No. 3

Blood & Gold. Ines Ruf, Graf Haufen. Germany. 1987. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–8

Box of Water. Stephen Perkins. U.S. 1985. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. Nos. 1–4

Brain Cell. Ryosuke Cohen. Japan. 1985. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 5, 13, 17, 20–40, 49, 61, 81–100, 118, 126, 128, 130–133, 136, 162,

182, 185, 190, 199–201, 207, 211, 214, 219, 221–260, 263, 266, 270, 272–274, 276, 283, 287, 290

The Bridge. Howard Munson. U.S. 1982. (Bleus Collection) 1982 Vol. 1, Nos. 1–3

B.T. G. Celant, M. Diacono, D. Palazzoli, T. Trini. Italy. 1967. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 2, 5

C

Cabaret Voltaire. Steve Hitchcock. U.S. 1977. (ATCA) Nos. 1–5

Cage: Anti Embargo Magazine. Jovanovic Alexandar. Serbia. 1992. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–4

Camberra Telegraph. Bob Kerr, Terry Reid. Australia. 1975. (Perneczky Collection) No. 1

Camera Obscura. Stephan Barbery. Belgium. 1982. (Bleus Collection) 1983 Nos. 1–3, 5–8; 1984 Nos. 10, 11

Camolawa–Pish. Carlos Montes De Oca. Chile. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 1

Capsa. J.M. Calleja. Spain. 1983. (Bleus Collection) 1983 No. 4

Care. Bart Boumans. The Netherlands. 1982. (Jean Brown Collection) issues not identified; (Sackner Archive) 1982 Nos. 1–3; 1983 No. 4

Cart. Stampa Alternativa. Italy. 1987. (Baroni Collection) Nos. 1–3

C(art)a. Damaso Orgaz. Venezuela. 1978. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 3–10, 13, 15, 18, 19, 26–36, 38

Cavellini. Giovanni Achille Cavellini. Italy. 1975. (ATCA) The Diaries of G.A. Cavellini 1975; Nemo Propheta in Patria; Cavellini in California & Budapest; In the Jungle of Art; Cimeli; Continuo La Serie Delle; 25 Quari Della Colexione Cavellini; (Crackerjack Collection) The Diaries of G.A. Cavellini 1975; Nemo Propheta in Patria; Cavellini in California & Budapest; In the Jungle of Art; Autoritratti, Self-Portraits, Autoportraits, Selbstporträts

Certain Gestures. David Tiffen. England. 1982. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7

Chimera. Chimera. U.S. 1982. (Sackner Archive) 1983 Nos. 5–8; 1984 Nos. 9–13; 1985 Nos. 14–16; 1986 17–19, 1987 No. 20

Cirque Divers. Antalei C.D. Belgium. 1980 (Bleus Collection) Nos. 100–139

Cisoria Arte. Damaso Ogaz. Venezuela. 1975. (ATCA) Nos. 1–4; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 1–3

Classified Magazine. Paulo Bruscky. Brazil. 1978. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 1

Clinch Magazine. Günther Ruch. Switzerland. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) 1983 No. 1, Mail-Performances; 1983 No. 2, Mail-Music; 1983 No. 3, Visual Poetry; 1984 No. 4, Earcut and Social Engagement; 1984 No. 5 Mail Art History; 1985 No. 6, Endless; 1987 No. 7, International Mail Art Congress; 1988 No. 8, Sight-seeing; 1988 No. 10, The Last Exchange; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 1–5; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–10

Colectivo-3. Cesar Espinoza. Mexico 1982. (Crackerjack Collection) 1982 Nos. 5, 6; 1983 Nos. 8–11; 1984 No. 13; 1985 Nos. 9, 10; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–A, 2–B, 6, 13

Collective Farm. Rimma Gerlovina and Valeriy Gerlovin. U.S. 1986. (Sackner Archive) Nos. 1–4

Commonpress. Pawel Petasz. Poland. 1977. (ATCA) Nos. 1–3, 6, 11–13, 18, 22, 23, 33; (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1, 2, 4–6, 8, 10–19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 32–34, 36, 37, 39, 42a, 46–49, 51, 53, 55–57, 60, 64, 77, 100; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 2, 3, 8, 9, 11–13, 17, 19, 23, 25, 26, 33, 37, 39, 47; (Bleus Collection) Nos. 1–6, 8–20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31–34, 36–39, 41, 42a, 44, 46–51, 53–57, 59, 60, 64, 77, 100

Con-Fusion. Graciela Gutierrez Marx. Argentina. 1982. (Bleus Collection) 1982 Vol. 1, No. 1

Constrictor Magazine. Alessandro Aiello, Enrico Aresu. Italy. 1984. (Bleus Collection) 1984 Nos. 1–3

Convolutions. Cerebral Shorts. Australia. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–5

Copy Left. Manfred Vanci Stirnemann. Switzerland. 1984. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 2, 4, 5, 9, 10

Correspondence Life. Ruth Howard. U.S. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1

Correspondence Novels. David Zack. Mexico. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) March 1983 “What’s A Formular?” pp 57–60; “Petasz’s Commonpress,” pp. 73–80; “The Cracker Jack Kid’s Peach Folio,” pp. 81–88; “Sr. Zabala, From Argentina,” pp. 97–104; “Carrion’s Slow P.O.,” pp. 105–112; “Spiegelman’s Dilemma,” pp. 129–136; 1985 Chapter Outline of *Modern Mail Art* : (Collection of Correspondence Novels in 25 Chapters); “Correspondence Novel (short story)” pp 1–19

Couch Potato Magazine. Monica Dunlap. U.S. 1986. (Crackerjack Collection) April 1986 issue

Crash. Franco Piri–Focardi. Italy. 198(?). (Baroni Collection) No. 15

Crazy, Old Poets’ Magazine. David Zack. Mexico. 1984. (Crackerjack Collection) January 1984 issue

Creative Art Revue. Guy Stückens. Belgium. 1983. (Bleus Collection) 1983 No. 3; 1984 Nos. 5, 7, 9; 1985 No. 10

D

- Dada Daily.** Madeline Behrens–Brigham U.S. 1980. (ATCA) 1980 August, September, October, November, December; 1981 January, June, July, August
- Dadazine.** Bill Gaglione. U.S. 1975. (ATCA) Fall 1975 issue; Rubber stamp issue
- Data File.** Richard Meade. U.S. 1983. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–26
- Delfin.** Rheda—Wiedenbruck. Germany. 1983. (Sackner Archive) No. 1
- Doc(k)s.** Julien Blaine. France. 1976. (Sackner Archive) 1976 Nos. 1–6; 1977 Nos. 7–11; 1978 Nos. 12–14 Special Postcards; 1979 Nos. 15–22; 1980 Nos. 23–34 Special Postcards Destination Paris; 1981 Nos. 35–40; 1981–82 Nos. 41–45; 1982 Nos. 46–53; 1983 Nos. 54–59; Mail Artists of the World 1979; International Mail Art Fair 1979
- Doewa Mail Art.** Filip Goubert. Belgium. 1991. (Bleus Collection) 1991 No. 1
- Double.** Rea Nikonova. Russian. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–5
- Dragon Rouge.** Llys Dana/Horus. France. 1975. (Bleus Collection) 1976 No. 5; 1977 No. 7
- Dreamtime Talking Mail.** Miekal And & Elizabeth Was. U.S. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–4
- Dumb Ox.** James Hugunin. U.S. 1976. (ATCA) Nos. 1–4, 8, 9
- Duplex Planet.** David Greenberger. U.S. 1979. (ATCA) Nos. 4–34

E

- Eat It Up.** Tom Patrick. U.S. 1981. (ATCA) No. 20; (Jean Brown Collection) Nos. 1–15; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–46
- Edition.** Rick Hambleton/Intermedia Press. Canada. 1978. (ATCA) No. 1
- Egozine.** Robert J. Lambert. U.S. 1975. (ATCA) No. 4
- Ekstraktion.** Piotr Aakoun. Belgium. 1984. (Bleus Collection) 1984 No. 2; 1985 Nos. 3–5; 1986 No. 6; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 3
- El Djarida.** Idiot Press. Norway. 1985. (Baroni Collection) Nos. 3–7; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–8
- Ephemera.** Ulises Carrion. The Netherlands. 1977. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 2, 4–7; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 2–6, 9, 10; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–12; (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–3, 7; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–12
- Ephemeral Art.** Pawel Petasz. Poland. 1980. (Crackerjack Collection) 1980 No. 2; 1981 No. 1
- Epod.** Kirby Malone, Marshall Reese. U.S. 1978. (ATCA) No. 1
- Eraser Carvers Quarterly.** Mick Mather. U.S. 1990. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 3
- Estra.** E.G. Scalini. Italy. 1980 (Sackner Archive). Nos. 1–9
- Estudio.** Shiela Holz. U.S. 1988. (Lewes Collection) Nos. 10–14
- Everybody's Creativity.** Albrecht D. Germany. 1971. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 2

F

- 4-U-2 Post Magazine.** Mick Mather. U.S. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) 1985 September issue
- Face of the Congress.** Mark Corotto. U.S. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–4, 6, 7
- Factsheet Five.** founding editor, Mike Gunderloy; present editor, R. Seth Friedman. U.S. 1982. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 35, 36, 38, 42, 44, 47–52; (Lewes Collection) Nos. 32–42
- Fall Out.** Winston Smith et al. U.S. 1981. (ATCA) Nos. 3, 4; (Lewes Collection) Nos. 3–5
- Faltblatten.** Klaus Peter-Fürstenau. Germany. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 2, Nos. 8, 9
- Farm Pulp Magazine.** Gregory Hischak. U.S. 1990. (Crackerjack Collection) 1990 No. 1; 1991 Nos. 9–12; 1993 Nos. 16, 17, 19
- Fatuous Times.** O. Jason. England. 1992. (Crackerjack Collection) 1992 Nos. 1, 2
- File.** A.A. Bronson, J. Zontal, F. Partz/General Idea. Canada. 1972. (ATCA) Vol. 3, Nos. 2, 4; (University of Iowa Art Library) Vol. 1, Nos. 1–4, Vol. 2, Nos. 1–4; Vol. 3, Nos. 1–4; Vol. 5, Nos. 1–4; Vol. 6, Nos. 1, 2, 25–29
- Les Fils de Mr. Hyde.** Daniel Daligand. French. 1975. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 12, 15, 31, 32
- Flash.** Nevenko Petric. Croatia. 1986. (Crackerjack Collection) 1988 Nos. 9, 10
- Flug Flux Blatterung.** Albrecht/d. Germany. 1968. (ATCA) Nos. 6, 11, 12
- Foist.** Foist Collective. U.S. 1986. (Baroni Collection) Nos. 5, 6

G

- La Gazette de Monsieur Môme-Môme.** Bruno Deprez. Belgium. 1986. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–3
- Generator.** John Byrum. U.S. 1988. (Rosenberg Collection) No. 1
- George's Bhagdad Bizarre.** Augustin Bolanos. U.S. 1991. (Lewes Collection) Nos. 0–3
- Get.** Paul Rutkovsky. U.S. 1984. (Bleus Collection) 1984 Vol. 1, No. 1; 1985 Vol. 1 No. 2; 1986 Vol. 1 No. 3
- Global Mail: Newsletter of International Mail Art Events.** Ashley Parker Owens. U.S. 1992. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–7
- Going Global Post.** Peter Ahlberg. Sweden. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 1
- Gong Gong Magazine.** Ayah Okwabi. Ghana. 1993 (Crackerjack Collection) No. 1, No. 2
- Gurgle.** Rhoda Mappo, Sub Waxin Haddock. U.S. 1977. (ATCA) No. 4

H

- HalfLife Network Magazine.** Des McLean. U.S. 1984. (Crackerjack Collection) 1987 No. 6; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–6, 9
- Havoc.** John Lucas. Canada. 1992. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1, 4–6, 8–11, 13
- Herd.** Jennifer Huebert. U.S. 1993. (Crackerjack Collection) 1993, No. 2
- Hexa'gono '71.** Edgardo-Antonio Vigo, Horacio Zabala. Argentina. 1971. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1971, '73, '75
- Hoje-Hoja-Hoy: Assn. of Latin American and Caribbean Artists.** Graciela Gutierrez Marx. Argentina. 1985. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, Nos. 1–3; Vol. 2, No. 5; Vol. 3, Nos. 6–10
- Hype Magazine.** John P. Jacob. U.S. 1982. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 2, No. 3

I

- Images and Information (Sort of a Magazine).** Don Mabie. Canada. 1975. (ATCA) Vol. 1, No. 1; Vol. 2, No. 2
- Imps.** Musicmaster. U.S. 1975. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 20
- Industrial Sabotage.** Curvd H and Z (J.W. Curry). Canada. 1987. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 38, 42
- In Remembrance.** Jenny Soup. U.S. 1987. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 11
- Instant Media Dispatch.** Andrew Nevai. U.S. 1978. (ATCA, Perneczky, and Crackerjack Collection) Journal of Quick Art Issue
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Povis. Jose Medeiros. Brazil. 1977. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 2, 4–6

Prop. Joachim Frank/Workspace Loft Inc. U.S. 1979. (ATCA) Nos. 1, 5; (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–9, 11–13; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 2–12

Punho. Paulo Bruscky. Brazil. 1973. (Crackerjack Collection) 1973 Issue 0, No. 1, No. 2, 1978 No. 4

PunKomik. Don Jarvis/Aard Press. England. 1985. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 31, 35

The Punk Surrealist. G. Sutton Breiding. U.S. 1982. (ATCA) No. 1

Punto Graphico. Carlos Zepa. Venezuela. 1979. (Perneczky Collection) No. 6

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R

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Reaktion. Verlagsgalerie Leaman. Germany. 1975. (Sackner Archive) Nos. I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII

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Rhubarb. Anne Bernstein. U.S. 1982. (ATCA) No. 1

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S

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Scarabeus. Ladislav Guderna. Canada. 1978. (Varney Collection) Vol. 1, Nos. 2, 7–9, 13, 16–19

Second Manifesto. Nenad Bogdanovic. Yugoslavia. 1984. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 3

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Sellografias. Cesar Espinoza. Mexico. 1982. (Perneczky Collection) No. 1

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Shimbu. R. Comings. U.S. 1984 (Bleus Collection) 1984 Vol. 1, No. 1

Signpost. Serge Luigetti. Italy. 1985. (Perneczky Collection) No. 4

The Single Eye. Allan Clark. Canada. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) Autumn 1989 No. 1; Winter 1990 No. 2; 1990 No. 3

S'mail: Global Network Zine. Joki, . Germany. 1993 (Crackerjack Collection) March 1993 No. 1

Smart Police. Michael Devoni. Canada. 1985. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1

Smegma. Alex Torrid Zone Igloo. U.S. 1978. (ATCA) Nos. 1–4; (Jean Brown Collection) No. 3; (Crackerjack Collection) No. 4

Smile. Vittore Baroni. Italy. 1985 (Crackerjack & Perneczky Collections) No. 1

Smile. John Berndt. U.S. 1984. (Perneczky Collection) 3, 4, 6, 7

Smile. Graf Haufen. Germany. 1986. (Crackerjack Collection) 1986 No. 63; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 63, 64

Smile. Stewart Home. England. 1984. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 7, 9–11; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–11

Smile. Pete Horobin. Scotland. 1985. (Perneczky Collection) 4 issues

Smile. Matty Jankowski. U.S. 1987. (Crackerjack Collection) 1987 Smile (again); 1988 No. 24 Perpetual Motion

Smile. Jo Klaffki. Germany. 1985. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–11, 13; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 2–5

Smile. Mark Pawson. England. 1984. (Crackerjack Collection) 1987 Smile History Lesson edited Mark Pawson; (Perneczky Collection) 3 issues

(Smile) imMortalLIES. Monty Cantsin (István Kántor). Canada. 1985. (Perneczky Collection) No. 1

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So-called. Sonja van der Burg and Margot Van Oosten. The Netherlands. 1986. (Baroni Collection) No. 1; (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–3

Soft Art Press. Max Bucher, Noémi Maidan. Switzerland. 1975. (ATCA) Nos. 14, 15, 17, 18

The Soo Thing Devo Dada. Michael Devoni. Canada. 1985. (Varney Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1; 1985: Gene Davis issue; 1989: Salvador Dali issue

Il Sorriso Verticale. E. Aresu and A. Aiello. Italy. 1986. (Bleus Collection) 1986 No. 1

Spiegelman's Mailart Rag. Lon Spiegelman. U.S. 1983. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, Nos. 2–4; (Perneczky Collection) Vol. 1, Nos. 2–4

Spinne. Dirk Fröhlich. Germany. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1

Stamp. Dorothy Harris. U.S. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 5

The Stamp Act. Steven Bryan Bieler. U.S. 1989. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–8

Stamp Art. Bill Gaglione and Joel Rossman. U.S. 1979. (Sackner Archive) Nos. 1–4; (Crackerjack Collection) No. 2

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Start Magazine. Helen Oh, Eric Schwartz. U.S. 1982. (Bleus Collection) 1982 Vol. 1, No. 1

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Strange Faeces. Opal and Ellen Nations. U.S. 1969. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 20

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T

Tabu/Totem. J. Branco, P.J. Ribeiro. Brazil. 1979. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1–8

Tacit. Steve Durland. U.S. 1979. (ATCA) Vol. 1 Nos. 0–4; Vol. 2, Nos. 1–6; Vol. 3, No. 1; (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 3, No. 1

Tam Bulletin. Ruud Janssen. The Netherlands. 1984. (Crackerjack Collection) 1985, No. 6; 1987 No. 1

Temple Post. José VdBroucke. Belgium. 1990? (Crackerjack Collection) June 1991, October 1991, January 1992

Tensetendoned. M.B. Corbett. U.S. 1992. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–16

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Tracce. U. Giacomucci. Italy. 1982. (ATCA) Vol. 1, Nos. 6–8; Vol. 2, No. 31; (Sackner Archive) Vol. 1, Nos. 1, 2; Vol. 2, Nos. 2, 3; Vol. 3, Nos. 7–9
Transmog. Ficus Strangulensis. U.S. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 13
TRAX. Piermario Ciani, Vittore Baroni, Massimo Giacon. Italy. 1981. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 0185, 0785, 1285, 0286, 0386, 0586, 0686, 0786, 0886, 0986, 1186, Last TRAX
Tuyau (Quotidien). (Mail Art Daily) Didier Moulinier. French. 1987. (Perneczky Collection) No. 137

U

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V

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Verticalismo. Salvatore Commercio. Italy. 1975. (Bleus Collection) 1982 Vol. 8, Nos. 21, 22
Views. Robin Crozier. England. 1977. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 83, 84
Vile. Anna Banana, Bill Gaglione. U.S. 1974. (University of Iowa Art Library) Nos. 1–6; (Sackner Archive) Nos. 1–8; (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8
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Vomit. Neo Screw. U.S. 1987. (Lewes Collection) Nos. 1–8

W

Wall. Kristof D’Haeseleer. Belgium. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 4, 7–9
Wellcomet Bulletin. Gilberto Prodo and Lucia Fonseca. Brazil. 1985. (Baroni Collection) Nos. 3, 5, 6, 9, 10; (Perneczky Collection) 2–6, 7/8
West Bay Dadaist. Arthur Craven, Charles Chickadel, Bill Gaglione/Trinity Press. U.S. 1973. (ATCA) Vol. 1, No. 4; Vol. 2, Nos. 5, 6
Wow. Slavo Matkovic, Bálint Szombathy. Yugoslavia. 1974. (Perneczky Collection) Nos. 1, 3, 4–6

X

Xero Post. Sheldon Polsky. U.S. 1981. (ATCA) Nos. 5, 6; (Crackerjack Collection) Vol. 1, No. 1

Y

Yawn. Lloyd Dunn. U.S. 1989. (Crackerjack Collection) Nos. 1–38; Issue No. 38 includes Stewart Home’s “Assessing the Art Strike 1990–1993”

Z

Zeroscopic 845. Julien Blaine (Ed. Nepe). France. 1980. (Bleus Collection) 1981 No. 5
Zig-Zag-Post (ZZ Post). Lucio Kume. Brazil. 1986. (Perneczky Collection) No. 2
Zippily. Kristof D’Haeseleer. Belgium. 1991. (Crackerjack Collection) No. 1



THE NETWORKER DATABANK

The Networker Databank conveys the role of the artist/ networker in over 500 entries documenting 2,000 artifacts including correspondence, rubber stamps, artists' stamps, stickers, networker statements, computer disks, audio and video cassettes, photographs, drawings, magazines, artists' books, T-shirts, and 3-D objects. Most of the materials were mailed by marginal network artists between August 1, 1991 and March 15, 1993, but the Networker Databank continues to serve as an essential telenetlink between mail art networkers and the global telematic community. Crackerjack Kid (Chuck Welch) organized the databank with a two-fold purpose; 1) as an on-going project for the Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992, and 2) as mail art's first on-line database connection to Internet, a worldwide web of interconnected, decentralized telecommunication networks.

The Networker Congress was first proposed by Swiss conceptual artist H.R. Fricker in "Mail Art: A Process of Detachment, a text presented in March 1990 for the *Eternal Network* anthology. In early 1991 Fricker met with fellow Swiss artist Peter W. Kaufmann and together they drafted an invitational flyer entitled, *Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992*, "Where two or more artists/networkers meet in the course of 1992, there a congress will take place." The Networker Congresses grew into a huge forum of over 250 congresses in approximately twenty-five countries, far exceeding the Mail Art Congresses of 1986.

Fricker and Kaufmann sought active, creative input from networker artists on six continents. American artists Lloyd Dunn, Steve Perkins, John Held, Jr., Crackerjack Kid, and Mark Corroto joined Fricker and Kaufmann early (summer 1991) in the development of the NC92 concept and served as active "netlink facilitators." final drafts of the Networker Congress invitations (Fig. No. 87, p. 144) included netlink contacts from Africa, South America, North America, Asia, Europe and Australia. The year-long collective work by networkers of NC92 represented a first major effort among artists to cross-over and introduce other underground networks to each other. Until this moment countless marginal network cultures, often operating in parallel directions, were unaware of one another.

The Networker Congresses were based on the acknowledgment that a new form of artist, the networker, was emerging from international network cultures of the alternative press, mail artists, telematic artists, flyposter artists, cyberpunks, cassette bands, rubber stampers, and stamp artists. Most networkers use technology to detourn or jam dominant culture, to serve political and social interests, to collaborate, disseminate or distort information, to play, exchange art, and to diminish competition through the spirit of giving art rather than selling out. Networkers don't make a living out of art, they make an art out of living.

Among the scores of networker congress themes were John Held, Jr.'s *Fax Congress*, Jennifer Hubert's *Woman's Congress*, Miekal And & Liz Was' *Dreamtime Village Corroboree*, Crackerjack Kid's *Netshaker Harmonic Divergence (Metanet)*, and Telenetlink Project, Rea Nikonova and Serge Segay's *Vacuum Congress*, Bill Gaglione's *Rubberstamp Congress*, Mike Dyar's *Joseph Beuys Seance*, Guy Bleus' *Antwerp Zoo Congress*, and O.Jason and Calum Selkirk's *Seizing the Media Congress*.

Numerous, on-going networker projects included Peter Küstermann and Angela Pähler's global tour as "Netmail carriers," a creative, extravagant version of congressional tourism as popularized by H.R. Fricker during the 1986 mail art congresses. Throughout 1992 Küstermann and Pähler travelled over 100,000 miles through fifty national borders while carrying 200 lbs. of mail art to 300 networkers. Their global performance combined congressing, lecturing, and hand-delivering mail person-to-person. Italian mail artist Vittore Baroni helped create and record a networker congress anthem, *Let's Network Together*, and American mail artist Mark Corroto produced *Face of the Congress* networker congress zine.

Most of the organizers of NC92 congresses have been active international mail artists. They emerged from the year of activities with a deeper awareness of intermedia involvement in global network communities, and a realization that "I am a mail

artist, sometimes.” While many mail artists visited friends in the flesh, others, unable to travel, “meta-networker spirit to spirit” in Crackerjack Kid’s *NC92 Telenetlink Congress*, a homebased telecommunication project conducted with networkers using personal computers and modems connected to the Internet. Serbian and Croat mail artists established networker peace congresses, one such congress taking place in a village where a battle raged around them.

The Networker Databank functions as an open repository. Among the Networker Databank appendix listings are varied networker definitions which complement essays the editor of *Eternal Network* collected between 1988 and 1991. Indeed, over half of the essayists appearing in the *Eternal Network* anthology eventually participated in the 1992 networker congresses.

Within the swirling vortex of NC92 activities, Peter W. Kaufmann (Switzerland), John Held, Jr. (U.S.A.), Mark Corroto (U.S.A.), Peter Küstermann (Germany), Angela Pähler (Germany), and Crackerjack Kid (U.S.A.) all worked to collect materials with the purpose of making them accessible to NC92 participants and to a larger audience. Mark Corroto’s objective was to form a pictorial collage of NC92, John Held, Jr. established a 324-page annotated bibliography, Peter Kaufmann wrote *Congress Chronology DNC ’92*—an elaborate accounting of all the networker mail he received in 1992, Peter Küstermann and Angela Pähler kept a 500 page travelogue as they visited scores of congresses around the world, and Crackerjack Kid created the NC92 Telenetlink Project and Networker Databank, both made available, in part, through Dartmouth College’s computer mainframe to the international telecommunication networks—Internet.

All five NC92 documentary projects intersect each other in various documentary objectives, and so there is some duplication of printed matter, photographs, catalogues, audio cassettes, videos, computer disks, and other NC92 items. But none of the five major NC92 documents correspond exactly because the wealth of information generated by 251 congresses made a single authoritative text impractical.

While the Networker Databank project invitations were widely disseminated through the Internet and by mail to congress participants, some congresses didn’t create documentation for lack of time, money, or interest. Furthermore, some congress participants who did create congress documents failed to mail them to the Networker Databank. Still, networker congress materials arrived in large numbers and numerous entries require acknowledgment, though space in this appendix is limited.

Readers wishing to acquire research information and access to the Networker Databank materials can write to Estera Milman, Director of “Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Archive” School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242, or contact the Library, Museum of Modern Art, New York City. The entire databank is also available in hard copy or on computer disk by writing to Networker Databank, 108 Blueberry Hill Dr., Hanover, NH 03755. Electronic mail access via Internet can be made through connection with Canadian Jeff Mann’s Artcast Project: send the message “Netlink files” to: <listserv@intacc.uucp>.

Artists who are active in the international networker culture are welcome to send (duplicate copies welcome when possible) mail art/alternative culture zines, artistamps, audio art, video documentaries/projects, rubber stamp art, correspondence, copy art, artists’ books, articles, research, personal archives, or any materials exploring the role of the artist as global networker. Mail all materials (no returns) to the Networker Databank, 108 Blueberry Hill Dr., Hanover, NH 03755. Artifacts are assigned a catalogue number, recorded in the Networker Databank, placed on-line through the Internet, and placed in Chuck Welch’s Networker Databank at University of Iowa’s Alternative Traditions In the Contemporary Arts Archive.

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Audio and Video Cassette Recordings

Baroni, Vittore, Enrico Marani and Manitu Rossi. *Let’s Network Together*, Viareggio, Italy: Le Forbici Di Manitu, 1992. 45 RPM vinyl single. Netbank No. 234: The unofficial spiritual hymn of the NC92. Recording accompanies Issue No. 63 of Baroni’s *Arte Postale!* (Netbank No. 504)

Del Prete, Raimondo and Franco Santini. *I Santini Del Prete*. Vada, Italy, 1992. C-60 audio cassette. Netbank No. 494. Networker songs and performances including *Networker Blues*, written by Vittore Baroni, *Chanson Performing Martello*, written by Joki and Del Prete, and *Long Live Mail Art* by Raimondo Del Prete.

Del Prete, Raimondo and Franco Santini. *Networker Congress Vada, Italy*. Vada, Italy, May 22, 1992. One hour, 21 minute video. Netbank No. 494.

Kid, Crackerjack. *Netshaker Harmonic Divergence Video Tape*, Hanover, NH: Eternal Network Archive, 1992. Two-hour video cassette. Netbank No. 354. Documentation of Crackerjack Kid's March 19–22, 1992 metanet gathering featuring Spirit Netlink Performance, Telenetlink Congress, Timeless Capsule Burial, and congress artist book documentation entitled *Spring Garden, Vol. 1*.

Moad, Mallory and E.Z. Smith. 1992 *Desensitized World-Wide Nutcracker Congress*. Fresno, CA, 1992. Thirty-minute video cassette recording. Netbank No. 373. Netrocker seance, mail art exhibition at Gallery 25, and *Three Minute Networker Cassette Performance*.

Nikonova, Rea and Serge Segay. *Metanet Congress in the Eysk Museum*. Eysk, Russia, March 22, 1992. Sixty-minute audio cassette. Netbank No. 492. Contents include a poetry reading by Russian poets living in America, concert music by American composer Janecek, and a *Spirit Netlink Performance* as proposed by Crackerjack Kid.

Shimamoto, Shozo. *Head Networking*. Nishinomiya, Japan: Shozo Shimamoto, 1992. One-hour video cassette recording. Netbank No. 354. Networking projects initiated by Shozo Shimamoto including performances, installations, exhibitions, and mail art works. In autobiographical accounts Shimamoto relates his participation in the Japanese avant-garde group Gutai, as well as his personal philosophy of networking.

Alternative and Mainstream Magazines

Baroni, Vittore, ed. *Real Correspondence*. Viareggio, Italy: Near the Edge Editions 4 (February 1992): 1–4. Netbank No. 290: Contains essay by Baroni and description of the March 22, 1992 *Meta-Concert (In Spirit)*.

Daligand, Daniel, ed. *Le Timbré*. Levallois, France: Daniel Daligand (August 1992): 1–10. Netbank No. 372: Special issue of *Le Timbré* devoted to the *Liege-Maastricht Networker Congress* session, August 7–9, 1992.

Dunn, Lloyd, ed. *Retrofuturism*. Iowa City, Iowa: The Drawing Legion 15 (August 1991): 1688–1741. Netbank No. 371: This quarterly zine includes letters among networkers involved in the formulative stages of NC92.

FaGaGaGa. *The Face of the Congress*. Youngstown, Ohio: Mark Corroto, Issues Nos. 1–4, 1992. Netbank No. 316: A portrait zine of the Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992.

Joki. *Open Netmag*. Minden, Germany: Kunst-Bahnhausen-Academy, Nos. 1, 3, 1992. Netbank No. 343: Thematic issues with artistamps, projects, and articles relating to networking and NC92.

Kaufmann, Peter W. *Chronology of the World-Wide Networker Congress 1992*. Ebmatingen, Switzerland: Peter W. Kaufmann, 1992. Netbank No. 370: A diary of the NC92 by major congress coordinator Peter W. Kaufmann.

Kid, Crackerjack. *Netshaker*. Hanover, NH: Crackerjack Kid, Issues Nos. 1, 2, 1992; No. 1, 1993 Netbank No. 371: First issue lists 250 entries of the NC92 Networker Databank. Issue 2 includes “NC92 Contact List” and “Netshaker Seance with Joseph Beuys.” Issue 1, Vol. 2 contains “Introducing Mail Art: Karen Eliot Interviews Crackerjack Kid and Honoria,” and the essay “Networker Databank.”

Marx, Graciela G. *Hoje Hoja Hoy*. La Plata, Argentina: Association of Latin American and Caribbean Artists, March 1992. Netbank No. 288: Issue devoted to the NC92 *Spirit Netlink Performance* and Metanet 1992 proposals.

Perkins, Stephen and Lloyd Dunn. *Networker Congress Statements*. Iowa City, Iowa: The Drawing Legion, September 1991. Netbank No. 164: Booklet contains numerous networker statements intended to open up debate and provide a vehicle for Congress discussions.

Ruggiero, Greg. Noospapers. Westfield, NJ: *The Immediast Underground*, Issues Nos. 8, 9, 1991. Netbank No. 188: Issues include NC92 and an international collective of networking artists, writers, hackers, pirate broadcasters, and posterists.

Books and Catalogues

And, Miekal, Liz Was, and networkers of the 1992 Dreamtime Corroboree. *Molecular Juice Glue*. Dreamtime Village, WI: Xexoxial Editions, 1992. Netbank No. 360. Catalogue documenting Dreamtime Corroboree and NC92.

Del Prete, Raimondo, and Franco Santini. *The Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress at Vada*. Vada, Italy: Del Prete and Santini, 1992. Netbank No. 494. Congress theme was "Peace and many discussions related to the war in ex-Yugoslavian republics." Statements, exhibition photographs, and list of participants are also included in the Vada Congress catalogue.

Francois, Charles. *A Networking Operation*. Liege, Belgium: Charles Francois, March 21–22, 1992. Netbank No. 366: Congress pamphlet documents telecommunication project connecting two events; La Norme Et Le Caprice, Liege, Belgium, and the Netshaker Harmonic Divergence, Hanover, NH (USA)

Held, John. ed. *Fax Congress Catalogue*. Dallas, Texas: Dallas Public Library, May 2, 1992. Netbank No. 365: Section of this documentation contain Held's Bibliography of International Networker Culture and 45 networker statements.

Küstermann, Peter and Angela Pähler. *Free Personal Deluxe Net Mail Delivery Documentary Catalogue*. Minden, Germany: Küstermann & Pähler, 1993. Netbank No. 511 This scrapbook diary records Küstermann and Pähler's year-long global tourism trek. Recorded in the document are 173 DNC events in which both networkers hand distributed over 4,000 registered pieces of "netmail."

Kaufmann, Peter W. *Congress Chronology DNC '92*. Ebmatingen, Switzerland: Peter W. Kaufmann, 1993. Netbank No. 512. Written by Peter W. Kaufmann, chief NC92 congress coordinator, the handbound book includes a complete chronological listing of all correspondences Kaufmann received from 1991 to 1993. Over 250 congress sessions are listed as are the names of nearly 200 networker contacts.

Maggi, Ruggero. *Photographic Report of the Metanet Congress 1992*. Milan, Italy: Milan Art Center, March 22, 1992. Netbank No. 364: Congress document includes Gianni Broi's text about metanetworking in spirit.

Morandi, Emilio and Giovanni Strada. *Ponte Nossa Networker Congress*. Bernardino, Italy: Artestudio, May 1992. Netbank No. 367: Catalogue includes statement, stamps and lists program activities.

Nishimura, Seiei and Iida B-Ken Art Group. *1992 Autumn Sahara Congress*. Iida, Japan: Iida B-Ken, May 1992. Netbank No. 353: Documentation of *Limited Physical World 1992*, *Limit = Flesh Life* event (May 17, 1992), and the *1992 Autumn Sahara Congress*.

Wohlrab, Sabine, and Lutz Wohlrab. *Post-DDR-Mail-Art-Congress*. Berlin, Germany: Wahnsieblabor, 1992. Netbank No. 485: Photographs of congress participants taken at the Art Strike Café, Berlin, September 12, 1992.

Articles

Held, John. "Crossing the Cactus Curtain: Politics and Isolation Test the Commitment of Latin American Artists." *ND 16* (1992): 37–40. Netbank No. 362: In December 1991, John Held visited mail artists in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile from which material in this article was drawn.

Held, John. "Sustaining the HyperKulture: A Session of The Decentralized Worldwide Networker Congress 1992." *Molecular Juice Glue: 1992 Dreamtime Corroboree* (August 22, 1992): 6–9. Netbank No. 360: Diary of the networker congress at Dreamtime Village, West Lima, Wisconsin.

Nikonova, Rea. "In Eysk, America, Italy..." *Near Azov Steppes* (April 4, 1992) 55:1 Netbank No. 368: Russian newspaper article explaining Rea Nikonova and Serge Segay's *Metanet Performance and Congress* held in Eysk Museum, Eysk, Russia.

Plunkett, Daniel and Crackerjack Kid. "Crackerjack Kid." *ND 16* (1992): 41–43. Netbank No. 362: Interview of the Crackerjack Kid by Daniel Plunkett. Dialogue focuses on books and networker projects organized by Crackerjack Kid from 1978 to 1992.

Welch, Chuck. "Art That Networks." *Whole Earth Review* (Summer 1992): 126–127. Netbank No. 369: This article focuses on the *NC92 Telenetlink Congress*. Also listed are all the networker congress organizers' addresses and some reference listings.

Computer Discs

Kid, Crackerjack. *Networker Databank*. Hanover, NH: Crackerjack Kid, 1992. Computer disc, Microsoft Word, Version 3. Netbank No. 420: All documentary entries for the Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992 are listed on one disc.

Francois, Charles. *NC92 Rat Sessions*. Liege, Belgium: Charles Francois, 1993. Computer disc, MacroMind Director, Version 2. Netbank No. 495: Situated in a whimsical outer-space environment, viewers are enticed to open three networker congress files, Nos. 17, 19, and 20 (*Bonzai Congress*, Dec. 20, 1992; *Pig/Rat Congress*, Dec. 20, 1992; *Black New Shoes Congress*, Oct. 29, 1992), three of twenty congress "meetings" Charles Francois created during NC92.

Francois, Charles. *The Radio Network*. Liege, Belgium: Charles Francois, 1993. Computer disc, Macromind Director, Version 2. Netbank No. 510: A color postcard complete with sound effects and a note to Crackerjack Kid. Color photo on other side of postcard shows Networkers H. R. Fricker, Rod Summers, and others in a swimming pool.

Networker Databank Entries

Note: NC92 is an abbreviation of Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992

No. 5: Name: H.R. Fricker; Address: 9043 Trogen, Switzerland; Date: July 30, 1991; Item: Letter to Crackerjack Kid from H.R. Fricker discussing Crackerjack Kid's introduction of a "Metanet" concept for NC92, "I meta networker in spirit." Crackerjack Kid's response to Fricker.

No. 53: Name: Walter Alter; Address: Studio 26, 4001 San Leandro, Oakland, CA 94601; Date: September 25, 1991; Item: *Little Wally's Anathema* floppy disc with extensive text. Alter begins, "This book was written because contemporary western and anti-western artists are in trouble, particularly those comprising the underground avant-garde. This book is a repair manual for that trouble."

No. 91: Name: Judy Malloy; Electronic mail address: jmalloy@garnet.berkeley.edu; Date: October 24, 1991; Item: NC92 Telenetlink Congress networker statement, "Although I miss sending and receiving visual, tactile mail art, I believe online environments and networks will be a more pervasive and lasting medium, particularly for artists who work with words, ideas, and information and who are interested in working together to broaden the art base."

No. 96: Name: Sue Harris; Electronic mail address: suephil@ped.apc.org; Date: October 22, 1991; Item: NC92 Telenetlink Congress networker statement, "We have been grappling with defining the networked environment we inhabit—how do we define the difference between the virtual and physical environments? Anecdote 1: This place is filled with black holes and Blemyaes."

No. 106: Michael J. Stotts, prison inmate; Address: No. 17829-034, PO Box 5000, Oakdale, LA 71463; Date: October 30, 1991; Item: Networker statement, "I thought I was lost on a wave of loneliness, reaching out for life, for love, and for happiness, while chasing dreams of yesterday. I didn't really see yesterday, and I haven't even found today, yet I'm trying to catch tomorrow. I seek brothers, sisters, and friendship."

No. 108: Name: Crackerjack Kid; PO Box 978, Hanover, NH 03755; Date: October 31, 1991; Item: Issue of electronic magazine, *ArtCom*, November 1991 issue, Vol. 11, No. 10: Crackerjack Kid, NC92 facilitator, is guest editor of this issue. His essay, "Telenetlinks," introduces the international telematic community to NC92.

No. 110: Name: Andrej Tisma; Address: Novi Sad, Yugoslavia; Date: November 1, 1992; Item: "Networker Statement No. 2 for the Netcong 1992." "the Yugoslavian war is a result of selfishness, extreme nationalism, lack of love, understanding, readiness for

dialogue, compromise, exchange. So, I think, if I give up my international dialogue, exchange, understanding, friendship and love, then I am supporting the war, or its cause,”

No. 115: Name: Byron Grush; Electronic mail address: (School of Art, Northern Illinois University) byron@art.niu.edu; Date: November 1, 1991; Item: NC92 Telenetlink Congress networker statement, “The present role of the networker artist is to explore, learn, and adapt to the expansion of telenetworking technology. Unfortunately, not everyone has access to Internet or Bitnet communications—so it is the role of we who have become explorers to create new ways of using existing networking processes in order to interest others.”

No. 117: Name: Pomona Anupol Valero; Electronic mail address: (Carnegie Mellon University) <pvOb+@andrew.cmu.edu>; Date: November 1, 1991; Item: A Reflux Network Project participant responding to the NC92 Telenetlink Congress, “One no longer thinks of the distances that their messages, thoughts or statements travel, or the amount of days or weeks necessary for conventional networking (i.e., USPS). Rather, a networker thinks more of their participation or interaction with others on their network.”

Nos. 122–123: Name: Bob Gale; Electronic mail address: well!bgale@apple.com; Date: November 7, 1991; Item: NC92 Telenetlink Congress networker statement, “My guess is that there really is a very small and fragmented arts community here online. Very infant compared to postal nets. Lots of potential though—so online we have fragmentation because 1) we’re not a continuation of the ‘homogeneous’ offline art world, and 2) the hardware/software is still at an early stage in its evolution, though mature enough to be quite usable. There is a ‘flashpoint’ not too far away on the horizon where the general public will become involved. We’re just waiting for the right ‘format’—not unlike the introduction of VHS tape.”

No. 134: Name: Jeff Mann; Electronic mail address: intace!mann; Date: November 1991; Item: Jeff Mann, director of Canada’s rec. arts.fine Usenet newsgroup, explains how the NC92 Networker Databank can be listed on Matrix, a public-access UNIX bulletin board service that is accessible over regular phone lines to anyone with a computer and modem.

No. 135: Name: Anna Couey; Date: November 1991; Item: NC92 Telenetlink Congress networker statement, “It (networking) subverts the idea of authorship bound up within the solitary individual. It subverts the idea of individual ownership of the works of imagination. It replaces the bricks and mortar of institutions of culture and learning with an invisible college and floating museum.”

No. 154: Name: Clemente Padin; Address: Casilla C. Central 1211, Montevideo, Uruguay; Item: Spanish text entitled “El Networker Latinoamericano-1” Included in the eight-page pamphlet is the Networker Congress invitation, a statement by Hans Braumüller of Santiago, Chile, and a text by Clemente Padin, “El Network en Latino America”

No. 158: Name: Artestudio; Address: 24028 Ponte Nossa–Bergamo, Via S. Bernardino 88, Italy; Date: December 12, 1991; Items: Poster announcing Artestudio’s May 9–10, 1992 Networker Congress. Stapled assemblage of miscellaneous Artestudio congress stamps, announcements, covers, etc.

No. 159: Name: Jacqueline Wolven; Address: 2421 Elden Ave. No. 1, Costa Mesa, CA 92627-5111; Date: December 12, 1991; Item: Proposal for an NC92 Women in the Mail Congress, “All women who are interested in sharing their thoughts, ideas, creativity, and energy on the issue of ‘Women in the Mail,’ please feel free to express yourself! You can join this congress by sending in a piece that encompasses how you envision your role as a woman involved in the networking process.”

No. 163: Name: Graciela G. Marx; Address: Casilla De Correo 266, C.P. 1900, LaPlata, Argentina; Date: December 24, 1991; Item: Networker statement and information about congress meeting, “We’ll MET-a-NETWORK in the Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992. We’re planning to meet with our close mail friends in 1992. It will be perhaps on April at the ‘Galpon de la Loma,’ in LaPlata, in the ancient playing landscape of the Compania de la Tierra Malamada, to talk about art and colon-ization.”

No. 168: Name: Ruud Janssen; Address: PO Box 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, The Netherlands; Date: November 1, 1991; Item: Congress proposal entitled *Congress-Idea 1992*, “Since I work a lot with computers (I have my own Host-System, and the computerized TAM-Bulletin) I would like to organize a few congress computer sessions.”

- No. 179: Names: Marsha Anne Runner and Jimmy Runner; Address: 996 Coppet St., Fairbanks, AK 99709; Date: January 6, 1992; Item: Rubber stamped postcard for NC92 Netshaker Harmonic Divergence.
- No. 191: Name: Jennifer Huebert; Address: Women's Studio Workshop, PO Box 489, Rosendale, NY 12472; Date: January 28, 1992; Item: Letter expressing desire to serve as a facilitator and organize a networker congress involving women in the project. Mailed a networker congress T-Shirt with oval logo.
- No. 241: Name: Leon Bellin; Address: 1122 Maple Avenue, Evanston, IL 60202; Date: March 3, 1992; Item: Networker statement, "There are all sorts of academies in the art world which conceive of themselves as unique, and in the center of the mainstream. To acknowledge that there is something meaningful happening elsewhere, however peripheral, must imply that the academy is less important than it has thought itself to be."
- No. 245: Name: Edgardo-Antonio Vigo; Address: Casilla de Correo 264, 1900 LaPlata, Argentina; Date: March 10, 1992; Item: Postcard with the inscription, "My 'physical presence' annuls the 'absence' which is my 'real presence.'"
- No. 251: Name: John Held; Address: 1903 McMillan Avenue, Dallas, TX 75206; Date: May 1992; Item: "A Bibliography of International Networker Culture," a checklist of 31 books, magazines, and exhibition catalogs included in the Dallas Public Library Exhibition accompanying the *Fax Congress*, May 2–9, 1992.
- No. 254: Name: H.R. Fricker; Address: CH-9043 Trogen, Switzerland; Date: March 8, 1992; Item: Correspondence: "I think that a networker congress should be more than just an exciting meetingplace for networkers. It should be a link to the whole society. We are experts in communication—personal communication. Maybe you would say that we are experts in 'spirit transfer.'"
- No. 267: Names: Rea Nikonova and Serge Segay; Address: Sverdlova 175, Eysk, Russia; Date: February 2, 1992; Item: Correspondence reads, "The congresses? Mail artists from the West are afraid of the journey to our country and they have not been inviting us to visit them. We don't have money, but we can go if we receive a 'private invitation.' Serge and I will perform the March 22 spirit to spirit netlink."
- No. 270: Name: Rachel Kopel; Address: PO Box 371375, San Diego, CA 92137-1375; Date: April 29, 1992; Item: Postcard that states, "On Wednesday, April 29, 1992 Hollis Dixon and Rachel Kopel, two mail artists who had never met, and Hollis' friend, artist Lynn Wade, made a road trip to Pasadena, CA to see the Freedom, International Mail Art Exhibition. They are returning to San Diego filled with inspiration, addresses, and a determination to catch up on unfinished projects."
- No. 273: Name: Peter Brandt; Address: Totenberg 58, D-5760 Arnsberg 1, Germany; Date: April 30, 1992; Item: A pop-up networker congress postcard.
- No. 275: Name: Chuck Welch; 108 Blueberry Hill Dr., Hanover, NH 03755; Date: May 1992; Item: "Mail Art Network: Source and Flow," *Real Life Magazine* Nos. 21/22, 1991, pp. 48–52. The first art magazine publication to list the Decentralized World Wide Networker Congress Invitation.
- No. 279: Item: Invitation, *Pushing The Envelope: A Weekend of Events in Conjunction with the Decentralized Worldwide Networker Congress 1992*; Dates of Congress: April 11–12, 1992. Coordinated by Robin Moore at Bookworks/WPA, Washington, DC.
- No. 293: Name: Reid Wood; Address: 271 Elm St., Oberlin, OH 44074; Date: March 21, 1992; Item: Correspondence and Reid Wood's mail art show invitation, *State of Being Celebrates Cohen's BRAIN CELL and Kustermann's Personal Delivery*.
- No. 301: Item: Invitation, *Freedom International Mail Art Exhibition: Homage to Christo's Umbrellas*, curated by Judith Hoffberg. Location: The Armory Center for the Arts. Date held: March 22–May 10, 1992.
- No. 311: Name: Clemente Padin; Address: Casilla C. Central 1211, Montevideo, Uruguay; Date: August 12, 1992; Item: Photograph of participants in the Network Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay. Also, a summary which reads: "Stop the blockade to Cuba. End the war in Yugoslavia. Preserve the peoples and ethnics menaced of extinction. Save the environment."

- No. 317: Name: Volker Hamann; Address: In Der Lehmkaul 2, D-5064 Rösrath, Germany; Date: September 9, 1991; Items: Documentation of French performance artist/painter NATO, also audio cassette of the *Liege/Maastricht Networker Congress*.
- No. 319: Name: Invisible Congress; Address: PO Box 10355, Portland, Maine 04104; Date: September 2, 1992; Items: Two plastic Eternal Network ID cards; "Dear new cardholder, These cards authorize you to withdraw and circulate ideas from our collective Memory Bank. Simply insert card No. 1 into any of over 5 billion temporary site-specific installations worldwide. Punch access code—It's just that simple! The Eternal Network, at your service."
- No. 321: Name: Dogfish; Address: 32351 Fairview Ave., E. Seattle, WA 98102; Date: September 2, 1992; Item: Postcard documents *Seattle Networker Congress*; "The Congress greeted the network mail carriers Peter Küstermann and Angela Pähler on their yearlong worldaround personal congress mail delivery performance."
- No. 325: Name: Societe Anonyme; Address: Rue Reynier, 24, 4000 Liege, Belgium; Date: August 24, 1992; Item: NC92 Congress documentation of July 14–15, 1992 meeting of Richard Adam, (Belgium); Cecile Charlier, (Belgium); Flore Malet, (France); Baudhuin Simon, (Belgium); Société Anonyme, (Belgium); Michel Trani, (France). Photograph of participants included in mailing. Themes discussed were: Homage to the postman F. Cheval, mail art in Hauterives, why? and creation of a postal museum.
- No. 330: Name: Carol Stetser; Address: PO Box 20081, Village of Oak Creek, AZ 86341; Date: September 10, 1992; Item: Announcement of a *One Day in the Eternal Network Networker Congress* scheduled for November 10, 1992; "You can participate in this congress by sending me a piece of paper 8 1/2 x 11 with your name and address and a description of your activities during the day and night of November 10, 1992."
- No. 331: Name: Calum Selkirk; Address: B.M. JED, London, WC1N 3XX, England; Date: September 12, 1992; Item: Invitation to *Seizing The Media: A Networkers' Congress*, October 24–25, 1992, Bloomin' Arts, Princes Street, Cawley Road, Oxford, OX4, United Kingdom.
- No. 334: Name: Ayah Okwabi; Address: Ghana; Date: September 14, 1992; Item: Photograph of NC92 congress with people of the village of Toh-Kpalime. Newspaper article explains the creation of a classroom by Okwabi and members of Operation Crossroads Africa and VOLU (Voluntary Workcamps Association of Ghana). Note states, "We had the mail art networking congress over the weekend at one of the VOLU camps in the Volta region. I introduced a catalogue from my 'population project' as a basis for explaining what the network is all about to fellow campers."
- No. 336: Name: Rod Summers/VEC; Address: V.E.C., Postbus 1051, NL-6201 BB, Maastricht, The Netherlands; Date: 09-14-92; Items: Two photographs of the Antwerp Zoo Networker Congress organized by Guy Bleus; Networker Congress report of the *VEC Congress* in the volcanic crater Viti (Hell), the *PTT Museum Congress* in The Hague, The Netherlands, the *RAT/VEC Congress* from Liege, Belgium to (*Heaven*) Maastricht, the Netherlands, and the *Antwerp Zoo Congress* in Antwerp, Belgium.
- No. 342: Name: Peat O'Neil; Address: Box 65054, Washington, DC 20035; Date: September 24, 1992; Item: Networker statement; "To be one, a networker commits to turning information or goods to the next likely or needy person. Information broker, catalyst of energy in the realm of nature. Thus, I might meditate over a patch of ground while walking, and receive involuntary information, sensory response as a human, out and at one, with nature."
- No. 344: Name: Rene Joseph; Address: 719 10th St. So., Minneapolis, MN 55404; Date: September 12, 1992; Item: *Spirit Netlink Performance*, "I draw on my own, then send it out into the world. I don't want personal contact. I want to see what happens when I communicate in an arbitative, but strictly visual way."
- No. 347: Name: Peter Küstermann; Address: Minden, Germany; Date: September 23, 1992; Item: "Hair Art and Net Mail" written by Peter Küstermann, an article explaining his *Free Personal Net Mail Deluxe Delivery Service*, a year long project which is a part of the networker congress. Also included is Küstermann's collaborative interaction with *Hair Art Project* by Japanese networker Mayumi Handa.

Nos. 348–349: Name: Nenad Bogdanovic; Address: S. Markovica 41, 25250 Odzaci, Yugoslavia; Date: October 14, 1992; Items: Mailed catalogue documentation of the August 18, 1992 *Odzaci, Yugoslavia Networker Congress*, “Participants of the congress were Nenad Bogdanovic, Aleksandar Jonvanovic, Dobrica Kamperelic, Ratko A. Radanovic, Jaroslav Supek and Andrej Tisma. All six artists accepted the suggestion of the organizer, Nenad Bogdanovic, that the content of their performances be the justification of its theme, “Make Art—Not Politics.”

No. 497: Names: Andrej Tisma, Crackerjack Kid, Livia Cases, and Metallic Avau. Papers, interviews and correspondence circulated among these networkers regarding the international embargo of Serbia. Correspondence exchange between C.J. Kid and Andrej Tisma centers on the controversial anti-embargo congress and declarations made by Serbian networkers at Sremski Kalovci. Also included is Vol 2, Issue No. 1 of *Netshaker* in which Andrej Tisma’s “In War And Under Blockade” appears. Crackerjack Kid’s “Networkers and Blockades” follows as a rebuttal to Tisma’s essay.

No. 499: Name: Charles Francois; Address: Quai Churchill 35, 4020 Liege, Belgium; Date: April 5, 1993; Item: A *Pig/Rat Congress* session report written by Francois documenting his meeting with Baudhuin PigDada Simon on December 17, 1992. The event was recorded on a 35–minute video tape.

No. 501: Name: Joki; Address: Postbox 2631, D-495 Minden, Germany; Date: June 3, 1993; Item: *Smail Global Network Zine* Issue No. 1. The premier issue of *Smail* sets forth artists’ stamp themes relating to the networking culture. Featured are vignettes of Vittore Baroni and H.R. Fricker’s stampart. Stampworks represented are by Gerard and Fernand Barbot, State of Being, David Cole, Peter W. Kaufmann, Marcello Diotallevi and others.

No. 506: Name: Reid Wood; Address: 271 Elm St., Oberlin, OH; Date: August 19, 1993; Items: photographs of Art in the Mail exhibition and congress at Stocker Center Gallery, Lorain County Community College, Elyria, Ohio. Exhibition brochure included with a note from Reid Wood.

* * * * *



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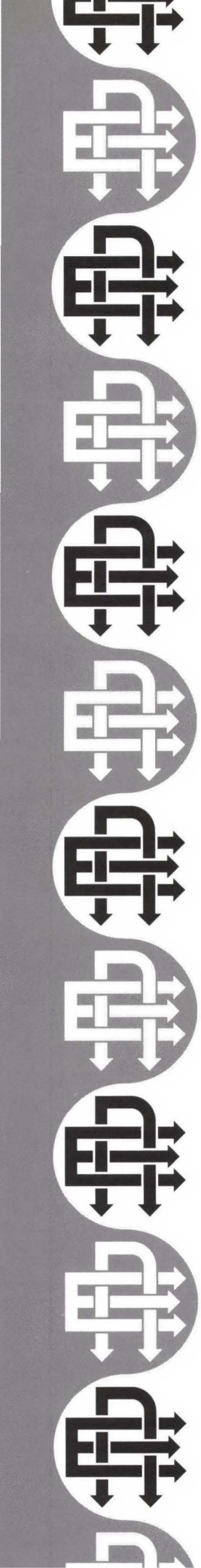
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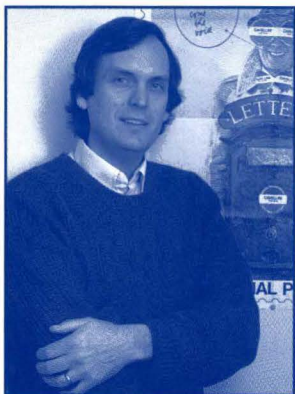
A MAIL ART ANTHOLOGY

ETERNAL NETWORK is the first university press publication to explore the historical roots, aesthetics and new directions of contemporary mail art in essays by prominent, international mail art networkers from five continents. This forty-chapter illustrated book examines the free exchanges and collaborations of an international community whose mailboxes and computers replace the museum, where the address is the art, and where "mail art is not fine art, it is the artist who is fine." Readers will find numerous photographs of mailed artifacts, performance events, congresses, stampsheets, posters, collages, artists' books, visual poetry, computer art, mail art zines, copy art and rubberstamped images.

The book is divided into six parts: Networking Origins, Open Aesthetics, New Directions, Interconnection of Worlds, Communication Issues and Ethereal Realms. Appendixes include mailing addresses, mail art exhibitions, a listing and location of over 350 underground mail art magazines and a comprehensive record of public and private international mail art archives.

Edited by Chuck Welch, longstanding mail artist and writer, ETERNAL NETWORK is an illustrated philosophy threading its course through the fabric of networking theories, ethics and values from 1960 to the present. Artists, non-artists, students and scholars are invited to corresponDANCE with global village artists who quickstep beyond establishment boundaries of art. The texts, proposals, poetry, parables and visions of ETERNAL NETWORK are a testament to the future of alternative art and the role of artists as networkers.

Chuck Welch has been an active participant in mail art since 1978. He is an educator, papermaker, writer and visual artist whose first book *Networking Currents* (1986) is a pioneering text about mail art subjects and issues. His current edition *Eternal Network* represents five years of extensive research and collaboration.



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