

Eduardo Cardoso / Sines, PORTUGAL

- interviewed by Bella VF Gagarin by email on
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<https://mailart.yzonk.com/eduardocardoso>

Some could say that Portugal ain't a country of mail artists... and they are somewhat correct. Mail artists come and go around here and few are those that keep producing or even kicking. The truth is that mailart isn't seen as the single path de per si but as part of a learning curve or a side-path that you go and stroll once and awhile or eventually do it once for the fun or trying it out.

From these "passers-by" and Sunday strollers, we can grasp a small handful of active personas. Eduardo Cardoso is one of the few that you can point out and say "Go check his artwork." so... community, this is Eduardo Cardoso... Eduardo Cardoso, this is the community.

... well... younger blood is being tutored and we might see some changes in 10 years or so. Let's keep working on that folks.

- Monsenhor enVide neFelibata // December 12th 2019

Let's start by kidz questions? As in... When and how and why did you started mailing art and when did you got in touch with the word mailart?

I started doing Mail Art around 2008. At the time I was visiting a local gallery and there was an exhibition which included works of Mail Art. At first it didn't say much to me, but after some days I felt compelled to try Mail Art. I did some research online about the process and found a blog with a Mail Art call. I sent my first work there and when I saw it really worked, I never went back.

What's your opinion regarding mailart being shown on museums and exhibitions? Is mailart a private relationship and exhibitions should be avoided or this is a matter that does not concern you?

In the beginning one of the objectives of the movement was to avoid the art market and to avoid galleries. But, paradoxically, it ended in galleries and exhibitions. And I think that was a good thing. If it never happened most people wouldn't know about the movement. I wouldn't have started doing art and doing specially Mail Art if the works I saw back then weren't in that exhibition. So I don't think exhibitions should be avoided. Mail Art still is non-commercial and non-conformist with the art world in a certain way. The point is to show art and show the world Mail Art exists. Not sell it. Mail Art is safe even when it circles the context of galleries and the art world.

In your opinion is there a difference between MailArt or art being sent by mail? Is this really a question?

It depends of the context. Mail Art is not just sending art by mail. There's a whole process and artists involved that makes it Mail Art. Art being sent by mail is just art being sent by mail. It doesn't make it necessarily Mail Art.

Mailart is said to be the Eternal Network and indeed, with all its ups and downs, it has survived the world wide web and it has grown exponentially. In your opinion what are your bullet points on the subject? How can it grow even further and evolve? In your opinion is there any underlying misunderstandings and/or any behaviors that are or might disrupt the network?

I think that while there is a mail system / postal service, the digital world is not a threat. On the contrary, it makes physical addresses easier to find. And makes the art of letters and correspondence even more visible.

It is important to show younger people that Mail Art exists and that there's lots of fun involved in the physical process. The digital world is very good to spread the word and to gather new artists, but they have to experience it to understand. They have to send and receive. As the older mail artists retire, new artists must join the Eternal Network.

Mail Art is not just about art and correspondence. It's also about people willing to connect with each other and giving without expecting something in return. That's the true force of Mail Art. The only thing that could

disrupt and even kill the Eternal Network would be it's own commercialization. As soon as money got involved I think things would go very wrong.

Looking into your work it seems that you create in series or collections. Like you are exploring a subject or idea and you create a set of artwork trying to find some kind of answer. Am I thinking too much or is there a method, a moment in time or even a mindset?

I usually feel a spark. An urge to create art and my mind starts exploding with ideas that roll out with a great spontaneity. I gather my tools and works just start coming out one after the other until there's no more good ideas to work on. I work very fast. Or else I lose the train. If I think too much about a piece, I end doing nothing of it. That's why my works resemble series and collections most of the time. But in fact they are not. Nonetheless I work in series from times to times.

For those that follow you online... It captures our attention your joy in reading and computer science. Can you spare some time to tell us how and if they connect to your minimalist artwork? Some could say that your artwork is minimalist but going deep to the intrinsic details and textures you instead present us a more complex piece instead.

As my mail art friend Diane Keys said in a review to my work, I'm not a minimalist. I'm a Distillist. I edit my works in an effort to distill things down to their source. I think she accidentally created a new movement inside Mail Art. Distillism. And I enjoyed that idea so much

that I've been using that title to define my work since then.

My fascination with simplicity comes from my love for traditional Japanese and Chinese arts and aesthetics. And there was a time I was very interested in Zen Buddhism, where simplicity plays an important role. Minimal art and architecture are also an inspiration.

As for my joy in reading and computer science, the first influences me more than the latter. I love computers and I used to code when I was younger, I cannot deny that influence, but it is poetry the thing that moves me the most. I read and write lots of poetry. A lot of my works are related to poetry. I often use text and words in my compositions, specially when I'm composing visual poetry. My body of work wouldn't be the same without it.

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