

MAIL ART EXHIBITIONS & COMPETITIONS

IT AIN'T (NECESSARILY) SO, MR. MORGAN A Mail Art rebuttal by Cracker Jack Kid

Robert C. Morgan's recent essays in *Umbrella* and *National Stampagraphic* make careful distinction between what is and isn't Mail Art. I'm somewhat amused by his unyielding belief that Mail Art lacks content expressing nuance, style, intimacy and most of all, meaning.

As an active Mail Artist, I've worked with many forms of expression including electrostatics, stampographics, book art, artistamps and efforts to conceptually unite Mail Art and Handpapermaking. I'm looking forward to future essays by Morgan featuring "what is not (necessarily) Mail Art" about all of the above media.

There is probably value in these exercises of semantics which will inevitably help shape a Mail Art definition. My belief, however, is that long-standing Mail Artist/philosophers are best able to make accurate definitions. Efforts are being made now through projects and essays by Guy Bleus, Vittorè Baroni, Ulisses Carrion, David Zack and most recently, a Mail Art Handbook produced and published for the "uninitiated" by Henryk Gajewski. "Injury by Jury," a year long documentation of Mail Artists about Mail Art, addresses many current issues in the medium.

In lieu of many notable dissertations by Mail Artists of varied backgrounds, I'm amazed at how the art establishment continues to ignore and incorrectly ascertain what Mail Art has been and is becoming.

Part of the problem is aptly described by Guy Bleus, a Belgian Mail Artist who recently published *The Mail Art Atlas*; "Whether a work can be classified under the heading Mail Art does not only depend on its esthetic qualities, but also, or especially, on the informative, communicative and cultural intentions included in the mailing of the work itself."

Morgan does take issue with considerations of communication using an equally dubious heading of what constitutes "personalization by media." Morgan believes correspondence and stampography are "much more personalized, more concerned with the interrelationship of personalized signs, ideas, objects, and images. Conversely, Mail Artists will say that their content, regardless of technique or media, does all that Morgan qualifies. I would contend, therefore, that Robert Morgan's essays are, if I may use his own words, "simply too raw and too ill-defined, regardless of how expedient the publicity might appear."

Mail Artist, Guy Bleus, voiced strikingly similar rhetoric a few years ago when he paraphrased a delineation between "gallery, Mail Artifacts" and Mail Art by practice; "Posted Art is undoubtedly 'Mailed Art' but not necessarily 'Mail-Art!' He goes on to say, "When freedom is a basic principle, it is not easy to indicate any limits. Therefore, it is no use to give strict standards to judge whether something might be false or real." And what about this further comment by Bleus? "The Mail Art structure is "chiefly" based on the international postal service but Mail Art does not necessarily depend on the postal service." Bleus is on target with these insights, but is bound to drive any high-art critic stark, raving mad.

There will be a landmark Mail Art panel discussion at The

Wooster Gallery in New York City when five Mail Art panelists will address "Critical Issues Facing International Mail Art". Ironically, Robert Morgan will be among Mail Artists serving on the panel rather than playing devil's advocate in the audience. Morgan will most assuredly, though not necessarily, contribute to controversial issues. Perhaps he'll get to know Mail Artists better at the party afterwards, but I strongly suggest that he re-discover his Mail Box and its Contents for several years hereafter.

—Cracker Jack Kid
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NEWS

- Guglielmo Achille Cavellini (1914-2014) has changed his address to Via Einaudi 11, Scala A, C.P. 73, 25100 Brescia, Italia. Telephone is 030/40336.
- David Hunter has changed his address to P.O. Box 867, Newcastle, CA 95658.
- La Galleria dell'Occhio in New York City (Carlo Pittore) will have Byron Black 21 September - 4 October; Artists at large until 16 October; Nenad Bogdanovic, 11-25 November; Ulrich Kattenstroth, 25 Nov. - 9 December; and Natale Cuciniello 6 January - 20 January 1985.
- Piotr Rypson showed all his mail art documentation from 1978 - 1984 with works from over 350 artists, different prints of the Sator editions on Xerox, and a whole small archive of smallpress, artist books, prints, etc. After the exhibition at Pracownia Dziekanka in Warsaw, the whole archive went to the archive of the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences. So for the first time, perhaps, in Europe—and surely for the first time in Poland—an official institution has received and gladly accepted a collection of mail art, documentation of communication activity of one mail artist. This, according to Piotr, terminates his activity in mail art *sensu stricto*. He now will concentrate on certain aspects of the art flow. The experience, together with a small anthology of texts on mail art by different artists, will be edited in a small book, accompanied by an address list for those who will want to join in the network. Piotr Rypson "passes a warm salute to all the people who keep the mail art system working and alive with creative spirit and hopes that all this energy of so many beautiful people will get really focused some day in some great and noble work, in an effort to spread the positive message to all those in need in these hard times and in these still to come. People Unite!"
- Kajco Design, c/o M. Nilsson, Ringvagen 82-1, S-11661 Stockholm, Sweden has cassettes, mail art, design, T-shirts, crafts. Fanzines, Cassettes, Mail Art also is at Hase & Igel, Box 41, S-425 02 Hisings Karra, Sweden.
- Keep in touch with Hans-Jurgen Hess, 9430 Schwerzenberg, Neuanbau 5 12-3, East Germany.
- Mail Artists in Portugal: Mandragora, Apartado 187, 2752 Cascais Codex, Portugal; Filigrama, Calçada Do Pico 35, 9000 Funchal, Portugal.

- Jaroslav Supek sends copies of the First Mail Art in the USSR in facsimile. For more information, write to Supek, 25250 Odzaci, J. gagarina 3, Yugoslavia.
- All Mail Artists are invited to attend a conference on Saturday, 3 November 1984 in Tarpon Springs, Florida. Its purpose: Friendship, Camaraderie, and pleasant socializing. You can send works if you cannot attend. Send to Epistolary Stud Farm, 429 Hope St., Tarpon Springs, FL 33589. (813)938-6653.

• TAM or Travelling Art Mail has a monthly bulletin as well as original sheets where Mail Artists are invited to draw, snip, stamp, etc. The collection will therefore travel from place to place. When it is big enough, it travels. Write to Ruud Janssen, Postbus 10388, 5000 JJ Tilburg, Holland.

The Bulletin is a service to the Mail Art Network. When one sheet is full, that is when it is copied and sent out.

• MW is an artist's tabloid on newsprint which contains artists' texts and images. Published by Martina Wagner Giezen, subscriptions are for 4 issues for F 20 in Holland, 20 DM in Germany, £5 in Great Britain, 60F in France, 400 FB in Belgium, 12000 L in Italy, and \$10 in the US. Please make check or international money order payable to MW Giezen, Box 113, Noordwijk, Holland.

• Doo Daa Florida is a satiric paper that comes from Paul Rutkovsky usually with a theme, 227 Westridge Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32304.

The Tropical Trousersnake is another mail art fanzine from 408 E. Ridgewood St., Orlando, FL 32803.

• Contact the Radio Art Foundation if you want to be on Dutch Radio. Send any of your sounds on cassette to VPRO Radio, c/o Mr. Willem de Ridder, Postbox 11, Hilversum, Holland. There is also a booklet of Instant Audio Demonstrations of De Ridder Works. Write to the Radio Art Foundation, Alexander Boersstraat 30, Amsterdam.

• REJECTION AND CENSORSHIP IN MAIL ART. The Political Censorship Mailart Archive is interested in political control of art communication by government institutions, and the Rejected Mailart Archive concentrates on rejection by art institutions. Please send any information concerning your accidental experiences or systematic work on these subjects to:

Political Censorship Mailart Archive, Volke Hawan, Feurigstr. 61, D-1000 Berlin 62, West Germany and for the Rejected Mailart Archive, send to Mark Wamaling, 8123 19th Place, Adelphi, MD 20783.

• Guy Bleus writes what a big success the European Cavellini Festival was with many artists coming to meet the First President of Europe! For the Aerogramme Project, Bleus received contributions from 570 artists from 40 countries (and from 30 states in the United States). There will be a microfiche catalog free to all the participating artists. Commonpress Edition no. 56 will also include a Commonpress Retrospective.

• Mail Art About Mail Art is a catalog available from Modern Realism Gallery, 1903 McMillan Ave., Rm. No. 1, Dallas, TX 75206 for \$5.00 plus 50 cents postage. This is

Commonpress 55.

• Clemente Padin is very busy in Uruguay with a newsletter called Participacion, a Mail Art information tool. To exchange, write to Clemente Padin, Participacion, For-teza 2713-3 Montivideo, Uruguay.

Another project of Padin is ARTE CORREO (Mail Art in Latin America) which was shown at the DAADgalerie in Berlin from 26 May through 30 June. A remarkable catalog accompanies the exhibition with an introduction by Rene Block and an interview with Padin in German.

• Thermos has its next deadline for 21 November with "Absolutely NO-SEX" as its theme. Send 125 copies on each page that you create. Send to Thermos Magazine, c/o Edgar Allen Bushmiller, Art Dept., Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA 23508.

EXHIBITIONS & COMPETITIONS

OCTOBER DEADLINES

Multiple Choice Mail Art Show. 5 - 30 Nov. 1984.

Themes: Emotional cul-de-sacs; idiot wind; enlightenment through your own phenomena; its 1985 and 451 degrees in the shade; other. All media from postcard size to maximum 8½ x 11. No fee, no limit, no returns, all works exhibited rated PG13. Self-addressed stamped envelope for documentation. Send entries to Multiple Choice, Maucker Union Gallery, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50614.

Campaign '84. Promise Them Anything. Mail Art Exhibit. No limits, no returns, all media shown. Exhibit 31 Oct. - 30 November. Chicago Gallery. Catalog to be sent to all entrants. Deadline: 24 October 1984. Send work to Chicago Gallery, 346 CCC University of Illinois, Box 4848, Chicago, IL 60680.

NOVEMBER DEADLINES

Mail Art on Racism. Deadline: 1 November 1984. No limitations, no rejections. Exhibit in winter 1984/85 with documentation. Send to Cellini, 1321 Dwight Way H, Berkeley, CA 94702.

FACES for Data File. Send 150 copies 14 x 21.5cm or 5½ x 8½ to Richard Meade, 2241 Ewing St., no. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90039 USA. Deadline: 31 Oct.1984.

MADS, PIRATES. Send tape recordings with music, films, slides, photos, drawings, paintings, to be exhibited in an exposition/spectacle in February or March 1985.

Also Children's Art in a Mail Art Exhibit. Send to Mandragora, Apartado 187, 2752 Cascais codex, Portugal.

Horatio Alger Project. Exhibition to take place November/December 1984. Deadline: 15 November 1984. Size: 8½" high (with ½" clear at top for binding) x 5½" wide. What do you have to say about the ever-present Mr. Horatio Alger? Does he do more harm than good? Actually who does he work for anyway? Send 100 copies to The Horatio Alger Project, Memorial Gallery Art Dept., c/o Des McLean, Glassboro State College, Glassboro, NJ 08028 USA. A copy will be sent to each participant and exhibition documentation.

Total. Send me 133 copies of your art work for review
Total. Size: 15 x 21 cm. **Deadline: 1 November 1984.**
Copy of review to all. Send to Nenad Bogdanovic, S.
Markovica 41, 25250 Odzaci, Yugoslavia.

You can exhibit your artworks in Yugoslavia for only
\$100 in Odzaci. Catalog and reproductions with biography
of artist too. Send to Exhibition, Nenad Bogdanovic at the
above address.

The Envelope Show. Send artworks in your very special
envelopes. Everything will be shown. After the show, the
artworks and letters will be cut into an "envelope-catalog-
envelope". All mail **until 15 November** to Jurgen O.
Olbrich, Kunoldstr. 34, D-3500 Kassel, West Germany.

DECEMBER DEADLINES

The Half-Life Network. Size up to 8½ x 11 and 150 copies.
Format: cover, table of contents and pages all contained
in stationery type Ziplock bag. Copyart Magazine Invitation.
Copy to each contributor. Catalog, media reportage/
criticism from exhibit. **Deadline: 7 December 1984.**
Send to The HalfLife Network, Memorial Gallery, Art
Dept., Glassboro State College, Glassboro, NJ 08028.

Network. Send 100 pieces of artwork (originals or
copies) to David Weinberg, P.O. Box 0127, Brooklyn,
NY 11214. Also send return postage by **December 1984.**

Danger Mail Art Show in Chicago. Mr. Bop and End All.
Deadline: December 1984. Catalog will be sent to all
participants. No jury, no returns. Send to Mr. Bop,
Box 7838, Chicago, IL 60626.

Book. Send black and white passport sized photo, two
or three of the most important comments. Size 8½ x
11 inches, **Deadline: 1 December 1984.** Makkom
Haarlemmerdijk 39, 1013KA Amsterdam, Holland.

Orange. Afzet's Palmbank. Send 60 copies size A5.
Deadline: 5 December 1984. Free copy to partici-
pants or 15 Dutch guilders for one, 60 for one year
of 6 issues. Send to Afzet, Postbus 14864, 2501 GW
S-Gravenhage, Holland.

Devil/Paradis. Send postcards to Thierry Tillier, Blvd.
Joseph 11, 52, 6000 Charleroi, Belgium. **Deadline: 31
December 1984.**

JANUARY AND LATER DEADLINES

Bambu 13: Administration. Theme is administration.
Send 100 copies (max. size 21 x 15 cm) to Guy Bleus,
42.292, P.O. Box 43, 3830 Wellen, Belgium, Bambu 13.
Deadline: 1 January 1985.

Private Life. All free, catalog. **Deadline: January 1985.**
Send to Andrej Tisma, 21000 Novi Sad, Modene 1, Yugo-
slavia.

First Soviet Mail Art Show. Ever seen a mail art
contribution from the Soviet Union or Mongolia?
What would it be like? You are invited to adopt a
Russian name and send this artist's work in for the
Pochta Show. Black and white bookwork will be
published. Free format, no jury, no returns. **Deadline
18 January 1985.** Send to Pochta, c/o D. Jarvis, Aardverk
Studios, 15 Ambleside Ave., London SW1 1QE, England.

**International Mail Art Show. Deadline: 15 January
1985.** Send to Helmut Lohr, Krahestr. 40, 4000
Dusseldorf 1, West Germany.

Pig Art. No fee, no returns. All entries exhibited.
Documentation to each participant. **Deadline: February
1985.** Send to Byron Bay Arts Factory, P.O. Box 97,
Byron Bay 2481 NSW, Australia. No size limit.

Echo International Mail Art Show. All work displayed,
no work returned. Documentation to all participants.
All media accepted, no limit to size or number of
entries. 7,000 square foot gallery to fill. No postage
due accepted. All pieces must arrive via the local and
international mail systems. Mail to Diverse Works
Gallery, 214 Travis, Houston, TX 77002.

STILL ALIVE IN 85. An epitaph for survivors, and the
victims, of U.S. Imperialism abroad and on the mainland.
Are we going to have four more years of Reaganism, or
what? Are we artists victims of Reagan's '50's idealism:
"The only good art is safe art?" I say it's time we take a
stand ("Make art, not weapons"). Exhibit from 14 January
through 2 February 1985 at Leonard's Artspace, 307 H St.,
Modesto, CA 95351. Send artwork to Randy Magnus, c/o
Leonard's Artspace, 307 H St., Modesto, CA 95351. **Dead-
line: 5 January 1985.** All work accepted, no returns unless
accompanied by return postage and a reusable shipping con-
tainer. Documentation to all participants.

ART PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Obituaries: Ansel Adams, Roland Penrose, Marcel Ianco,
Bill Brandt, Adja Yunkers, Douglas Cooper, Gary Wino-
grad, Hollis Frampton, Joan Miro, Jimmy Ernst, William
Suhr, Gjon Mili, Brassai, David Stuart, Lee Krasnow.

Awards: Richard Meier, the Pritzker Architecture Prize;
Paul Goldberger, Pulitzer Prize for criticism; James Turrell
and Robert Irwin, MacArthur Fellowships.

Promotions: James Demetron, director of the Hirshhorn
Museum; Douglas G. Schultz, director of the Albright-
Knox Art Gallery.

Activities: Amy Chaiklin did site-wall paintings in San
Francisco in 7 different venues under the auspices of the
Eyes & Ears Foundation. Stephen s'Soreff attempted an
interstellar communication broadcasting a special videotape
consisting of an opening signal, a showing of examples of
Earth art, and a closing signal with a request for reply. For
further information, write to Agar at 79 Mercer St., New
York, NY 10012. Saskia Bos was named director of De
Appel in Amsterdam. Mierle Laderman Ukeles performed
and then has showed her Touch Sanitation Show at the
Ron Feldman Gallery in New York City. Geoffrey Hen-
dricks had a recent retrospective of paintings, environment,
and drawings at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton.
Ruth Laxson performed sound poetry and had an exhibi-
tion at Emory University in Atlanta Georgia in September
and October. Joseph Nechvatal showed recent works on
paper at Brooke Alexander in New York City. Tommy Mew
showed a retrospective of drawings 1975-1980 in Germany
in September at Galerie Bernd Lobach in Cremlingen. Carl
Heyward showed assemblages, constructions and an installa-
tion at New Generic in San Francisco in August.