

MARKE UMETNIKA ARTISTS' POSTAGE STAMPS



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SREĆNA GALERIJA, SKC — BEOGRAD 1981 — HAPPY GALLERY, SKC

UMETNICI UČESNICI IZLOŽBE „UMETNIČKE POŠTANSKE MARKE“,
SREĆNA GALERIJA, Nov. 1981. Beograd

ARTISTS AT THE „ARTISTS POSTAGE STAMPS“ SHOW,
HAPPY GALLERY, Nov 81.

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| 1. Anonymous, Turkey | 44. Scott Helmes, USA |
| 2. Anonymous, Administrativ Art, Sweden | 45. Alberto Harigan, Brasil |
| 3. Anonomous, Vankuver, Canada | 46. Davi Det Hompson, USA |
| 4. Anonymous, P. O. BOX 31428, USA | 47. Harley, USA |
| 5. Art by scooter, USA | 48. E. F. Higgins III, USA |
| 6. Gary Allen, USA | 49. Ranko Igrić, Yugoslavia |
| 7. Lengyel András, Hungary | 50. Dobrica Kamparelić, Yugoslavia |
| 8. Artfoot, USA | 52. Jack Keguenne, Belgium |
| 9. Mario Borillo, France | 53. Eleonor Kent, USA |
| 10. Mike Bioner, Canada | 54. Novica Kocić, Yugoslavia |
| 11. Michael Bilder, Canada | 55. Ivana Korolija, Yugoslavia |
| 12. Paolo Bruscky, Brasil | 56. Magali Lara, Mexico |
| 13. Nenad Bogdanović, Yugoslavia | 57. Jupiter Larsen, Canada |
| 14. Russell Butler, USA | 58. Graciela Gutierrez Marx, Argentina |
| 15. Patrick Beilman, USA | 59. Richard Meade, USA |
| 16. Vittore Baroni, Italy | 60. Radomir Mašić, Yugoslavia |
| 17. Beach — Pelieu, USA | 61. Slavko Matković, Yugoslavia |
| 18. Peter Below, West Germany | 62. Eugenio Miccini, Italy |
| 19. Vincenzo Maria de Bernardo, Italy | 63. Opal Louis Nations, USA |
| 20. Slavko i Jelena Bogdanović, Yugoslavia | 64. Or Post — Dummism — George Brett, USA |
| 21. OFF CENTRE CENTRE, Canada | 65. Denis Poniž, Yugoslavia |
| 22. G. A. Cavellini, Italy | 66. Carlo Pittore, USA |
| 23. Michael Ouquette, Canada | 67. Pelieu — Beach, USA |
| 24. Karin Dekker, Holland | 68. Padma Press, USA |
| 25. Dogfish, USA | 69. Pawel Petasz, Poland |
| 26. Klaus Peter Dencker, West Germany | 70. Michele Perfetti, Italy |
| 27. Irene Dogmatic, USA | 71. Romano Peli, Italy |
| 28. Ne Plus Ultra DADA, Pat Fish, USA | 72. Jean — Marc Rastorfer, Switzerland |
| 29. Bela Egyedi, Canada | 73. Sam's Recycle shop, Canada |
| 30. John Evans, USA | 74. Robert Rehfelot, East Germany |
| 31. Silva Falves, Brasil | 75. Radiofreedada, USA |
| 32. Sue Fishbein, USA | 76. Elena Mary Siff, USA |
| 33. Leland Fletcher, USA | 77. Guy Schraenen, Belgium |
| 34. Nicola Frangione, Edizioni Armadio e Officina, Italy | 78. Lon Spiegelman, USA |
| 35. Claudio Goulart, Holland | 79. Matt Svetich, USA |
| 36. Johan van Geluwe, Belgium | 80. Chuck Stake, Canada |
| 37. Marco Sansoni — Mario Giavino, Italy | 81. Marco Sansoni — Mario Giavino, Italy |
| 38. Martina i Steffen Giersch, East Germany | 82. Sumeghy Péter, Hungary |
| 39. Šandor Gogoljak, Yugoslavia | 83. Świerkiewicz Robert, Hungary |
| 40. Bill Gaglione, USA | 84. Jaroslav Supek, Yugoslavia |
| 41. R. E. Gasowski, USA | 85. Svetozar Samurović, Yugoslavia |
| 42. Dr. Klaus Groh, West Germany | 86. Patrick T., USA |
| 43. Gino Gini, Italy | 87. Miroљub Todorović, Yugoslavia |
| | 88. Endre Tot, Hungary |
| | 89. Claude Pehiu Washburn (?), USA |
| | 90. Richard Wanderman, USA |
| | 91. Antonio Vigo, Argentina |
| | 92. La ZTZU, USA |
| | 93. Dragica Vukadinović, Yugoslavia |

MARKE UMETNIKA — ARTIST'S POSTAGE STAMPS

Program istraživanja onih umetničkih aktivnosti čija je osnovna karakteristika da uporno zaobilaze tradicionalne umetničke institucije i time otvaraju polje jedne nove komunikacije, nezaobilazno obuhvata i široku oblast poštanske umetnosti. Ne tako nova, ali svakako pojava koja u ovom trenutku eskalira punim intenzitetom, „MARKA“ se izdvaja nizom karakteristika kao nova disciplina koja možda na najbolji način afirmiše i kompletira ideju MAIL ART komunikacije, baš možda zbog činjenice da potpuno otvoreno koristi sistem poštanske institucije. Kao i razglednice umetnika koje sigurno znače realnu alternativu tradicionalnoj produkciji, slična uloga se ne može poreći ni markama umetnika. Ako se tome doda činjenica da je MAIL ART i u ovoj grani zadržao svu konsekvencnost komuniciranja (direktnost, radikalnost, neposrednost, sažetost), veoma nezavisnu od umetničkih institucija, ostaje nam da konstatujemo da je MAIL ART (i marke takode kao jedan njegov vid) postao institucija po sebi koja je razvila jedan internacionalni jezik sa širokim poljem delovanja i velikom mrežom aktivnih učesnika (umetnika, pesnika, radnika i sl.) i velikim brojem nezavisno pokrenutih časopisa i publikacija, odnosno dokumentacionih centara, koji lišeni birokratizma velikih institucija, pokazuju neverovatnu vitalnost u realizovanju ideje neposredne planetarne komunikacije. Ova izložba nema nameru da se u ovom momentu bavi stilskim osobenostima ovog fenomena, mada će njena iskustva sigurno uticati da se izvrši i jedna analitička karakterizacija kako u okviru samog sredstva, tako i u odnosu na iskustvo celokupnog mail art pokreta, odnosno još šire, u odnosu na savremenu umetničku preksu. Stoga informativni karakter izložbe ima za cilj pre svega da afirmiše ideju „UMETNIČKIH MARAKA“ da ukaže na mogućnosti jedne nove umetničke komunikacije. Iz istih razloga u izložbu su uključeni i oni primeri koji nisu po strogim kriterijumima „ARTISTS' POSTAGE STAMMPS“ ali koji na najbolji način afirmišu ideju mail arta. To su RUBER STAMPS, MAIL KOLAŽI, i MAIL OBJEKTI koji nastavljaju tradiciju FLUXUS objekta, vrećice, znaka, poruke i slično.

Slavko Timotijević

ARTIST'S POSTAGE STAMPS

The program of investigation of those art activities which, as their basic characteristic, persistently avoid traditional art institutions, thus opening a field for a new communication, unavoidably encompass the vast domain of Mail Art. The „STAMP“, not so new a phenomenon but by all means the one which at the present moment is escalating at full force, is defined by a number of its salient features as a new discipline which, perhaps in the best way affirms and completes the idea of Mail Art communication, perhaps precisely due to the fact that it uses the system of the postal institution in an entirely open way. As is the case of Artist's Postcards which surely represents a true alternative for traditional production, a similar role cannot be denied to Artist's Postage Stamps. If we add the fact that Mail Art has maintained all the characteristics of communication in this field (directness, radicalness, immediacy, succinctness), communication which is autonomous in relation to art institutions, we may only conclude that Mail Art (and stamps, too, as one of its forms) has become an institution in itself, which has developed an international language with a broad area of activity and a large network of active participants (artists, poets, workers, etc.) and a large number of independent magazines and publications, i. e. documentation centers, which, freed of large institutions bureaucratism, show incredible vitality in realizing the ideas of direct planetary communication. The intention of this exhibition is not to deal with stylistic particularities of the phenomenon at the moment, although resulting experiences will certainly promote the making of an analytical characterization both within the context of Artist's Postage Stamp itself and the Mail Art movement as a whole, that is, on a wider scale, within contemporary art activity. Therefore, the informative character of this exhibition is aimed at, firstly, affirming the Artist's Postage Stamps idea, at pointing out the possibilities for a new art communication. For the same reason, the exhibition includes those exemplars which do not come under the strict criteria of Artist's Postage Stamps, but which best affirm the Mail Art idea. These are Rubber Stamps, Mail Collages, and Mail Objects which continue the tradition of FLUXUS object, bag, sign, message and so forth.

Slavko Timotijević

Translated by Rachel Nitzwah and Dragana Živković

ARTIST'S POSTAGE STAMPS

Poštanska umetnost u ovom trenutku dostiže svoj zenit. Organizuje se veliki broj izložbi, posebno u Americi, uz učešće više stotina umetnika iz celog sveta. Komunikacijska mreža ovog novog oblika umetnosti obuhvata čak više hiljada ljudi i stalno joj se priključuju novi umetnici. Zanimljivo je da se mejlartisti regrutuju kako iz redova umetnika (slikara), tako i među pesnicima, dizajnerima, grafičkim radnicima, pa čak i kod onih profesija koje nemaju nikakvih dodirnih tačaka s umetnošću.

Teoretski mail-art još nije dovoljno osvetljena. Pojedini teoretičari posmatraju je u kontekstu konceptualne umetnosti, kao neku vrstu njenog produženja, nastavka. Tome protivureči nedvosmislena činjenica da mail-art nastaje pre pojave konceptualizma. S druge strane kritičari, bliži književnosti (Spatola, Perfetti) skloni su da mail-art posmatraju u okvirima literature (pojam znatno šire shvaćen nego što je to u tradicionalnoj kritici i teoriji), zapravo kao neku vrstu novog manifestovanja konkretne i vizuelne poezije. Michele Perfetti čak uvodi novi izraz „telepoezija“. (Više o tome u zborniku „Poštanska umetnost — poštanska poezija“, časopis „Delo“ broj 2, 1980.).

Posle početnih kolebanja sâm se sve više opredeljujem da mail-art posmatram kao jedan sasvim nov i nezavisan umetnički oblik, koji se u potpunosti odvajava, i od konceptualizma i od konkretizma.

Poštanska umetnost se danas do te mere razgranala i razvila da i u okviru same nje počinju da se formiraju pojedine discipline i podvrste. Za sada su najuočljiviji Rubber Stamp Art (umetnost gumenih pečata) i Artist's postage stamps.

Istoričari umetnosti kada govore o tome ko je prvi od umetnika napravio i upotrebio (poslao) jednu umetničku marku pozivaju se na Duchampa i Mana Raya. Činjenica je, međutim, da se umetničke marke prvi put ozbiljnije proizvode u flukus pokretu početkom šezdesetih godina. Sredinom prošle decenije najupečljivije rezultate na ovom planu daje italijanski umetnik G.A. Cavellini s nekoliko serija maraka. Kraj sedamdesetih i početak osamdesetih godina sav je u znaku artist's postage stamps. Tome posebno, u Americi, doprinosi pojava kolor kseroksa, odnosno mogućnost brzog i lakog reprodukovanja umetničkih maraka u boji.

Do sada, najvažnije manifestacije ove vrste su: izložba Ulisesa Carriona „Artist's postage stamps and cancellations stamps“ održana u Amsterdamu 1979. godine i osamnaesti broj međunarodnog časopisa za mail-art „Commonpress“ koji je uredio i izdao njujorški umetnik E.F. Higgins III.

Carrionova izložba posvećena je u podjednako meri umetničkim markama i pečatima. Deo materijala (učestvovalo je 150 umetnika iz 25 zemalja), sa uvodnim tekstom organizatora pod naslovom „Personal worlds or cultural strategies?“, objavljen je u holandskom „Rubberu“ („a monthly bulletin about the use of rubberstamps in the arts“).

Projekt E.F. Higginsa, u okviru „Commonpressa“, odnosi se isključivo na artist's postage stamps. Autor projekta odredio je temu: „Nudes on stamps“ i veličinu originala koji mu je trebalo poslati. Mada su povezani u časopis normalnog izgleda, listovi sa markama štampani su tako da je svaku marku (zbog perforacija) moguće lako odvojiti i upotrebiti u međusobnom komuniciranju.

Marke umetnika objavio je, ali ne na ovaj način s mogućnošću upotrebe, u informativnoj rubrici svog časopisa „Doc/k/s“, u više navrata, i Julien Blaine tokom 1979. i 1980. godine.

Ove godine u „Libellusu“ (a monthly mail-art publication), koji izdaje International Cultureel Centrum iz Antwerpena, (urednik Guy Schraenen), objavljeno je dosta maraka, na sličan način i sa sličnim motivima, da bi u jednom broju artist's postage stamps bile štampane po svim poštanskim pravilima.

U našoj zemlji mail-art tokom poslednjih godinu dve dana stiče nešto veći broj privrženika nego što ih je ranije imala. Vredne teoretske priloge o mail-artu, i avangardi u celini, daje slovenački pesnik i kritičar Denis Poniž. Možemo slobodno reći da je on, u jugoslovenskim okvirima, jedan od veoma retkih kritičara koji ovim problemima posvećuje punu pažnju. Ne smemo zaboraviti ni Ponižov praktičan rad na mail-art produktima, koji nije nimalo u senci njegovog bavljenja teorijom, već se, naprotiv, ta dva angažmana skladno dopunjuju.

Artist's postage stamps, u našim prilikama, trenutno sa uspehom proizvode i distribuiraju, verujući duboko u novinu i nekonvencionalnost ovog još nedovoljno definisanog umetničkog čina, mladi umetnici i pesnici: Jaroslav Supek, Ranko Igrić, Radomir Mašić i Šandor Gogoljak. Da mail-art i njegovi oblici nisu pak privilegija samo mladih istraživača, što se u jugoslovenskoj kulturi tek afirmišu, pokazuju i izvanredni radovi, kojima se ovoj našoj akciji pridružuje poznati slikar srednje generacije Svetozar Samurović. Njegove artist's postage stamps, ustvari minuciozni crteži u obliku poštanskih maraka, još jednom potvrđuju činjenicu da u mail-artu, toj „umetnosti na rubu umetnosti“, čija intermedijalna, interdisciplinarna, čak i dvosmislena priroda „nudi... stalno promenljive mogućnosti“, nema utvrđenih kanona i pravila, da je ona „živa i otvorena“ za brojna i različita estetska istraživanja.

Mail Art is, at the moment, reaching its zenith. A great number of exhibitions has been organized, in the United States in particular, with several hundreds of artists from all over the world taking part in them. Several thousands of people is included into the communication network of this new artists keep on joining it. It is interesting to note that Mail Artists are recruited equally from the ranks of artists (painters) as well as from among the poets, designers, print workers, and even from among those who seem not to have any touching points with art in their profession.

In terms of theory Mail Art has not yet been sufficiently clarified. Certain theoreticians tend to view it the context of Conceptual Art, as a kind of its extension, its continuation. This view contradicts the unambiguous fact that the Mail Art appears on the art scene prior to Conceptualism. On the other hand, the critics who are more closely related to literature (Spatola, Perfetti) tend to view Mail Art in the context of literature (with its meaning considerably broader than it is in terms of the traditional criticism and theory), that is, as a kind of a new manifestation of the concrete and visual poetry. Michele Perfetti even introduces a new term — *Telepoetry*. (For more details see *Mail Art — Mail Poetry* (Poštanska umetnost — Poštanska poezija) *Delo* magazine N°2, 1980).

After some hesitation at the beginning, I am more and more determined to view Mail Art as a completely new and independent art form, which is entirely separated from both, Conceptualism and Concretism.

So far, Mail Art has expanded and developed to the point that, even within its own context, some disciplines and subgroups begin to form. The most significant, at the moment, are Rubber Stamp Art and Artists' Postage Stamps.

When speaking of innovators in the field, explaining who was the first, among the artists, to make and use (i. e. send) a postage stamp, art historians cite Duchamp and Man Ray. However, the fact is that Art Postage Stamps are for the first time produced in a more serious form by Fluxus Group in the early '60s. The most significant results in this field by the mid '70s are yielded by Italian artist G. A. Cavellini who created several series of stamps. The late '70s and early '80s are entirely marked by Artists' Postage Stamps. The emergence of color xerox, in the United States in particular, greatly contributed to such a situation. The use of this technology offered a possibility to a fast and easy reproduction of colored art stamps.

So far, the most important manifestations of this art form are: *Artist's Postage Stamps and Cancellation Stamps*, exhibition by Ulises Carrion held in Amsterdam in 1979; and *Commonpress* N°18, International Mail Art Magazine edited and published by New York City artist E. F. Higgins III.

Carrion's exhibition was equally dedicated to both art postage stamps and rubber stamps. A part of the exhibited material (works of 150 artists from 25 countries) has been published in *Rubber* (a Dutch monthly bulletin about the use of rubber stamp in the arts), with an introduction by the organizer and entitled *Personal Worlds or Cultural Strategies?*

E. F. Higgins' project, within the *Commonpress*, relates exclusively to Artist's Postage Stamps. The author of this project has defined the subject — *Nudes on Stamps* — and the size of the original work which artists participating in the project should send back to the organizer. Although they are bound in the magazine of usual outlook, the pages containing stamps have been printed in way so that, due to perforations, it is easy to separate them and use in interpersonal communication.

Artist's Postage Stamps have also been published on several occasions during 1979 and 1980 by Julien Blaine in the information section of his *Doc/k/s* magazine.

This year, *Libellus*, (a monthly Mail Art publication of International Cultureel Centrum from Antwerp, with Guy Schraenen being its editor-in-chief), has published, in a similar fashion and similar motives, quite a number of stamps. One of *Libellus* issues contained Artist's Postage Stamps printed according to and fully respecting the mail rules.

In Yugoslavia, Mail Art is getting a somewhat greater number of protagonists than it has gotten them in period prior to the current increasing interest in it. A valuable theoretical contribution to Mail Art, and to Avant-Garde as a whole, has been made by Denis Poniž, Slovenian poet and critic. We may openly say that, within the Yugoslav context, he is one of the rare critics who pay their attention to issues dealing with Mail Art. We should not forget Poniž's practical involvement in Mail Art yielding Mail Art products, which has not at all been shadowed by his theoretical work, but, on the contrary, these two lines of his activity complement each other harmoniously.

Within the Yugoslav context, Artist's Postage Stamps are currently produced and distributed prosperously by young artists and poets such as Jaroslav Supek, Ranko Igrić, Radomir Mašić and Šandor Gogoljak, who deeply believe in innovative character and unconventional form of this insufficiently defined artistic act. The fact that Mail Art and its forms are not a privilege of only young innovators, who are yet to get recognition by Yugoslav cultural circles, is demonstrated by outstanding works by Svetozar Samurović, a well-known painter of the middle generation, who joined them in this movement. His Artist's Postage Stamps are, in fact, minutely executed drawings in form of postage stamps, which once more confirm the fact that Mail Art, — this form of art „which is on the margin of art,“ and which, with its inter-media, interdisciplinary, and even ambiguous nature, „offers... ever changing possibilities“ — does not have its established canons and rules, that it is „alive and open“ to all numerous and various esthetical investigation.

Translated by Rachel Nitzwah