

LG WILLIAMS

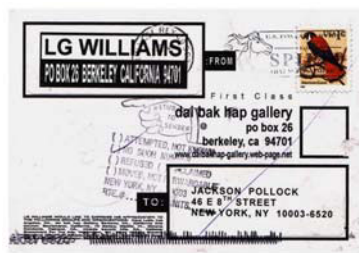
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Wayne L. Youngblood
Editor/Publisher, Stamp Collector
Publisher, Goldmine and Discoveries
youngbloodw@krause.com

Hi Wayne,

Thank you so much for taking the time to contact me (4.7.03) concerning (what I believe to be) a postcard from my recent MAIL ART project entitled, "Postcards To Past Artists."

I am an artist and professor (<http://www.lg.web-page.net/>) who makes artwork in a variety of mediums, including, as you recently discovered, Mail Art. I was an avid stamp collector in my youth and adolescence, and my extended family would have, if we were to pull our resources, a very handsome, though modest, stamp collection. Hence, my interest and fascination with Mail Art.



The following, per your request, will be a brief description of the aforementioned Mail Art project:

Although I have not seen a scan or picture of the piece your reader found, I think the postcard in question is one in a series of artworks that I sent out to some of the most famous artists of the 20th Century—all of them, unfortunately, no longer living. The artwork attempts to bridge time, space, history and personalities through direct action by unconventional means—namely, errors upon errors writ thru the medium of a simple, innocent-looking postcard.

I began the project by seeking out and carefully researching my favorite 20th Century artists, patrons, and benefactors of the visual arts. I wanted to discover their former addresses, either home or studio, so that I could send them a postcard. Thus the project operates on many levels: it is (1) an obvious homage, recognition, and declaration on my part to the important role these artists have played in my



PO BOX 26 BERKELEY CALIFORNIA 94701
510.649.0863 la_sf_lg@yahoo.com www.lg.web-page.net

personal life and professional career in the field of art. In other words, this project is a personal "thank you" to all the modern artists I most love and admire.

Upon further inspection, though, artifice quickly comes into play through the subtle ironies and inconsistencies which appear in the physical and conceptual structure of this artwork. For example, there is the (2) blatant absurdity implied by trying to connect with past historical personages through present means, since (3) NONE of the legendary people to whom all the postcards are addressed are living today. Therefore, (4) the postcard will have to be immediately returned to the sender.

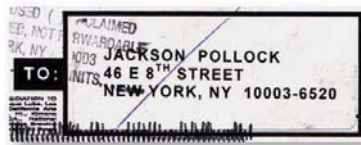


However, there is the possibility that (5) the postcard may be delivered to the listed address. In which case, most likely, the people receiving the card in these busy and bustling times will (6) NOT recognize the famous person/addressee on the postcard, nor will they (7) be aware of the fact that they are living at the very address where such-and-such famous artist once lived once upon a time. Lastly, (8) this will, through admittedly uncanny circumstances, introduce random people to the towering but long forgotten geniuses of 20th Century Art.

Additional ironies occur in the postcard/artwork, too, in that (9) I have placed insufficient postage to cover the expense of the delivery of the artwork, not only because I am frugal (given that fact that I am a poorly paid, part-time professor), but because I also wanted to see (10) how many of the postcards actually were going to be carefully examined by the USPS. In effect, and as a direct result of this specific and thrifty act, many of the artworks in this project are literally getting (11) "a free ride." Notice too, that on the artwork/postcard, there are (12) in fact TWO return addresses: (13) my address underneath the stamp and (14) the name of a close friend or colleague placed in the traditional "return address" space.



Furthermore, additional acts of temporal/spatial dislocation occur when (15) the unsuspecting mail carrier has to determine which address he or she should return the postcard to. Moreover, in those instances wherein the postcard is "returned" not to myself, but to a friend or colleague, those persons will (16) notice that they have seemingly sent a postcard to somebody whom they cannot recall sending a postcard to—and, (17) more astonishingly, to somebody very famous in the history of art whom they would immediately recognize and probably revere. In point of fact, they would very well know indeed, too, that (18) this person is no longer living, so (19) why on earth would they have written to them in the first place!?



Finally, in their temporary puzzlement and surprise, the unsuspecting cardholder will hopefully, (20) examine the passage (both intended and unintended) that the postcard has traversed, represented plainly and quite explicitly on the postcard through all the various postage cancellation marks and postmaster scribblings (I especially like this record!) and, finally discovering (21) the author of

this troubling, far-reaching, and multi-layered prank/artwork, as well as (22) a nice big happy smiley face staring back at them when they flip the card over to its other side.

From an artistic standpoint, I believe that this project is novel in its scope and execution. It breaks new artistic ground for the genre by fact of its (23) expansive, inclusive, kinetic, and multi-institutional approach to Mail Art in particular, and (24) Art in general. Its process is provocatively multifaceted and circuitous—



directly opposed to the traditionally static and two-dimensional Mail Art approach of, let's say, other great Mail Art artists like On Kawara (http://www.essogallery.com/web_images/SM_OK_JPEG) or Letter Art artists like James Lee Byars (http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/3775709398/qid=1049741023/sr=1-2/ref=sr_1_2/002-0047526-1454441?v=glance&s=books).

Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, the artwork (25) unexpectedly brings us in direct contact with our artistic heritage through the notoriously famous lyric line, "RETURN TO SENDER".

All in all, I would estimate there are only 65 such artworks in existence, 12 of which were returned to my PO Box listed on the card.

I hope this brief description gives you a rough introduction to and explanation of the recent discovery you have made. Your query put me to the task of writing down the important features of this particular project, which is something that as of yet, I had not found time to do. If I may be of additional help to you, please feel free to write again; I would be more than happy pass along to you an appropriate color image or black and white picture of these artworks. Finally, if any portion of this project does make it to publication, I would appreciate having a copy for my records.

Thanks again for you message and interest. Please convey, too, a warm, heartfelt thanks to your curious and intrepid publication reader.

Continued success!



LG Williams

