



### **What is mail art?**

The [Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus](#) defines mail art as "works produced by artists, often in postcard format, specifically intended to be mailed to other artists or be displayed in an exhibition."

Mail art began in the 1960s when artists sent postcards inscribed with poems or drawings through the post rather than exhibiting or selling them through conventional commercial channels. Its origins can be found in Marcel Duchamp and Kurt Schwitters and the Italian futurists. But it was the New York artist Ray Johnson who, in the mid 1950s, posted small collages, prints of abstract drawings and poems to art world notables giving rise to what eventually became known as the New York Correspondence School. Mail art can take a variety of forms including postcards, packages, faxes, emails and blogs. In the 1960s the Fluxus artist On Kawara sent telegrams to friends and family that informed them he was alive. In the mid 1990s, the artist and curator Matthew Higgs set up Imprint, which posted art by young British artists, among them Martin Creed, to critics and curators. David Opdyke "this land" altered vintage postcards and combined them into large-scale works and the list goes on.

Around the world, a network of creative people share artistic envelopes, postcards and packages through the postal system. The postal element of the Mail Art movement is the essential aspect of the artwork being produced. Selecting or creating relevant stamps for your piece adds a unique quality to the work that a traditional painting or drawing doesn't possess. How to incorporate the recipient's address into your creative composition is also to be considered. Plus, the journey that your postal artwork takes adds a further, uncontrollable component due to the postage marks that will be added en route.

Doris Purchase has made our own PAG 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary stamps, available at the [gallery](#) for your mailing. They show the PAG anniversary logo. Thanks Keijo and Doris!

### **Why a Mail Art show at Propeller?**

This show was proposed as a feasible solution to the problems of receiving an open call show with the pandemic protocols. All artwork arrives by mail and will leave by mail if the artist sends an SASE. (follow link below for full call details)  
[www.propellerartgallery.ca/mail-art-unlimited-dada.html](http://www.propellerartgallery.ca/mail-art-unlimited-dada.html)

### **What kind of theme or materials?**

A suggested theme is your own reaction to the pandemic. Your feelings, your memories, your hopes for the future.

Materials are open. You can print, draw, paint, embroider, transfer, papercut on paper, fabric, cardboard or other materials. Thin birch panel has been mailed in small sizes. This challenges the imagination.

**Please look up the artists mentioned in the definition and description of Mail Art. It is a large field of practice. Have some fun! Check out the community.**

<https://www.facebook.com/MailArtWorldwide>

