

March 19, 1998

(I nformal) Proposal

Did you ever have a pen pal? (I had one when I was about 12 and she lived in India. I can't remember how long it lasted but I'm pretty sure I was the one who broke it off.) Well, this project is about a series of visual correspondences. I did something that touched on this as part of a film course I was in. The assignment aspect was to keep a journal in response to the films screened & subsequent class discussions. I was pretty close with both the teacher (my advisor) and his boy friend (also a student vis a vis a faculty partner degree program) who was helping him by commenting on (grading?) our writings. I chose to make my journal totally visual and Mark responded in kind. Now I want to take that one step further.

Basically this project is the same as having a pen pal, I write to you, you write back, I respond, except that there are no words exchanged, just art. I haven't exactly formulated where this will go but since it's starting with people with whom I am close I figured we could just jump in without too formal a proposal or having all the details worked out. Following however are various ideas and issues that have come up in my mind pertaining to goals and logistics that will need to be addressed (soon).

A. PRACTICAL/LOGISTICAL CONCERNS

1. All correspondence is strictly visual and basically (for the moment) 2-D
2. In the interest of manageability (and also just for the moment) keeping the scale small might be helpful (under 11 x 14 maybe) but this is not engraved in stone.
3. Discussion of the project in terms of logistical or practical stuff is OK but I don't want to dilute anything that might happen visually by discussing:
 - a. individual pieces
 - b. emotional involvement with the project
 - c. is it "working"
 - d. anything process related

B. ULTIMATELY I WANT THIS TO BE "SEEN" SO TO THIS END:

1. I am going to document everything before I send it
2. I am going to document and archive everything I receive
3. I am going to send everything in a way that it can be stored safely but at the moment I am not dealing with how participants choose to deal with the work they receive keeping in mind that
4. It would be optimum to have both sides of the correspondence for whatever format(s) it finally takes
 - a. show
 - b. book
 - c. web site project

C. OWNERSHIP

1. This is clearly something that will need to be formalized, basically around how the project is perceived. Issues I see that need to be dealt with are:

- a. Are the individual pieces seen as part of a total project, if so then ownership would be joint
 - b. or once you send a piece does it become in effect a gift to that person
 - c. and if that is the case who has the rights to that piece vis a vis
 - i. publication
 - ii. display
 - iii. etc.
2. I figure that for the moment we could go ahead with out this stuff being firmly in place.

Well, thatís the gist of it. Feel **NO** pressure about doing this, I completely understand that not everyone is as captivated by correspondence, archiving and documenting as I am and I think that for each arm of this to sustain itself there has to be a creative commitment that is greater than just a whim and more personally connected than it íseeming like an interesting ideaî at the time..

But your mission should you choose to accept . . . is simply to respond anyway you want. The only things I ask are

1. that if you want to discuss the logistics of all of this before you decide whether to do it or not, letís talk before you open the correspondence. Then most of the practical crap will be out of the way.
2. I f you just want to go ahead and do it, YEA (but donít communicate that in any other way but visually, I íll be patient).

And I f you arenít interested thatís fine too, you donít even need to respond to this.