Hand of the Spirit:

Documents of the Seventies
from the Morris/Trasov Archive

UBC Fine Arts Gallery, Vancouver
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detail from portfolio edition –
Arts Birthday/Decca Dance
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This book is a sample of documents, corre-
spondence and ephemera covering twenty-five
years of collaborative research into the nature
of art and life and the subsequent networking
that these activities involve. 1969–1974 was the
period of greatest activity and excitement. Ini-
tially contacts with artists were made and main-
tained via the postal system. Subsequently peo-
dle met and friendships arose. Activity took
many forms. Everything was open to approipa-
tion: banks, schools, churches, companies,
countries, even politics and individuals’ perso-
nae. Activities included the forming of fan
clubs, holding meetings, publication of artists’
directories, books, zines, postcards and video-
tapes. All was performed in a spirit of a play-
ful utopia. The groundwork for an independ-
ent artist network was established, the inter-
pretation of which would be developed by the
agenda and priorities of the individual artists
participating in it. Our contribution is the
Morris/Trasov Archive and the development of
the themes and projects it contains.

Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov, Berlin 1994
Scott Watson

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The Morris/Trasov Archive contains correspondence with other artists in the mail art network of the time, first editions of artist's books, Image Bank files on various subjects developed from Image Bank image request mailings, ephemera and objects associated with performances and artist's visits, photographs, drawings, collages, media clippings and documents associated with ongoing research concerns such as Colour Bar Research, the Cultural Ecology Research, etc. In the fall of 1990 at the Banff Centre for the Arts, as a project initiated by Lorne Falk, the approximately ten thousand items were accession-numbered, boxed and entered on disc by a team led by Art Metropole archivist Amy Maggiacomo and Banff Centre librarian Bob Foley. The archive now occupies some fifty running metres of boxes as well as several crates and is currently housed by the UBC Fine Arts Gallery.

The Morris/Trasov Archive is not an ordinary archive, but something more slippery to define. The Archive itself contains earlier attempts to file and catalogue its holdings. Many of the files are not closed, but contain as yet unrealized potential for projects and exhibitions. The Archive, in a certain sense, is meant to be considered as a work of art, or perhaps more accurately, as a vehicle for artistic research, as a working model for research as art, art as research.

The history of the Archive begins with the formation of Image Bank. Image Bank was founded in 1970 by Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov as a "bank" for mail art projects. The term "Image Bank" was borrowed from
Claude Lévi-Strauss. A citation from *The Savage Mind* served as a cornerstone, “The decision that everything must be taken account of facilitates the creation of an image bank.” The project was communal and collaborative, or idealized as such, in an attempt to create a shared consciousness. As Morris put it, “Image Bank implies the mechanics of a collective creative consciousness.”

The bank was oriented toward process rather than product, to creative exchange rather than the production of masterworks, to artists and the lives of artists rather than the terrain of the gallery or the museum. According to Morris, the bank was “not an elaborate filing system or an access or retrieval agency . . . but a reflection of responses, attitudes and positions that have been part of the constant redefining of the creative process in our time.” By the time the bank did its first mailing in the spring of 1970, its co-founders had assumed personas for their artistic and network activity. Morris was Marcel Dot (a.k.a. Chairman Dot, Marcel Ideal); Trasov, Mr. Peanut (after briefly assuming the more aristocratic Marquis d’Arachide); Glenn Lewis became Flakey Roschips; Robert Fones, Candy Man; Gary Lee-Nova, Art Rat; Eric Metcalfe and Kate Craig, Dr. and Lady Brute. The personas made identity fluid, situational and circumstantial, signalling that this group of artists rejected the idea of the artist as solitary explorer of the psyche.

The first Image Bank mailing was a rapid, off-the-rack “recycled” image of a fashion model riding an inflated swan stamped “Image of the Month” accompanied by a list of addresses and a list of requests for images that was mailed to fellow artists. The response was positive and immediate although some who received the mailings were put off by it. One prominent Vancouver collector fumed that Image Bank was trying to derail high art and had embraced kitsch. Through the mailing, Morris and Trasov had made contact with the main players who would “become collaborators in creating a shared mythology of the times.”

Subsequent mailings provided a frame of reference. The Fetish mailing was a border into which the recipient could insert anything, as it were, into the fetish file. A Cultural Ecology Project asked for “nips pics,” the 1984 mailing asked for images of the future. As the first (and only) Image Bank Report (January, 1972) noted: “Feedback resulting from exchanges created a kind of decentralized filing system.”

Image Bank did not appear in isolation. As early as 1968, Morris had been contacted by New York artist, Ray Johnson, who had seen Morris’ painting *The Problem of Nothing* reproduced in *Artsforum*. Johnson wrote that lots of people were doing happenings but he was interested in doing nothing. Johnson’s involvement with mailings went back to the 1950s, or by his own account, the 1940s. He is often given the paternity for the mail art network, a position that makes him uncomfortable as his own aesthetic emerges from rather different values than those which animated the artists of the 1970s. Another lineage could be drawn through the activities of Fluxus, especially Robert Filliou, who broadcast the concept of “the eternal network.” There are precedents for mail art in the activities of the French Nouveau Realists, some of whom, notably Daniel Spoerri, would be associated with Fluxus. There is also a precedent in the activities of the various Dada formations and references to Dada against the punning and collaging that was circulated through the network but as international as Image Bank was in its connections and as knowing of a counter...
Goldberg produced the first Video Exchange Directory, "with the aim of promoting videocassettes moving by mail all over the place." Goldberg's interest in video was based on his search for visual methods of communication that could transcend international language barriers. He was especially interested in establishing contacts in Japan. All this activity was interrelated and had not only a common local context but international aims shared by Gary Lee-Nova, Jack Iain and Ingrid Baxter, Kate Craig and Eric Mencalf, Terry Reid, Ken Friedman and others working in Vancouver at the time.

As a film maker, Lee-Nova was inspired by William Burroughs and Brian Gysin's "cut-up" technique. His interest was shared by Morris, Trasov and many of the artists. The technique, invented as a literary tool for creating new meanings, involved the chance cutting up of texts. Randomly rearranged, a new text appeared. This new text would open up surprising coherence. By shattering the order of the source texts these new readings were thought to infiltrate and disrupt the dominant ideology of the day. Their model was viral, to invade and infect dominant structures, rather than reform them. Lee-Nova was also influenced by film artists Stan Brackage and Bruce Conner. As Al Razozi accounted for it, "The year of its creation [Lee-Nova's film Steel Mauroms, 1967] was dominated by television reportage of disasters, violence, the Vietnam War, demonstrations and riots. Lee-Nova recalled that it was in the form of a reply to the media that the impulse for making the film first developed. Bruce Conner, as early as 1957 (A Movie), had "framed" society, history and culture within a kind of "action art" that used the wreckage and excesses of society, its stock footage as materials for film. Steel Mauroms carried forward a part of that tradition; its formal design was also influenced by the Burroughs/Gysin "cut-up," the fragmenting of narrative and juxtaposition of elements by chance until an "intuitive" correspondence/meaning was found."

Collage and cut-up became important means for transforming images from the mass media. "Collage or Perish" and "Cut-up or Shut-up" were network commands meant to mobilize the troops on the network of image exchange.

The manipulation of images invariably pointed to their fetish and ritual characteristics, provoking an awareness of the circulation of the subliminal. Found images and parodic sayings were recycled through the network to create a sense of a shared utopian vision and a shared critique of the West's obsession with mastery and progress. Yet the relationship between art and the images of the image industry was also contradictory, dialectical and critical. By embracing the emptiness of mass culture one broke its mes-
NOTHING BY MOUTH

Image Bank, 4436 west 2nd
Vancouver B.C.

Postcard for Space Atlas, 1971
Michael Morris, Vancouver

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merising spell and transformed the power of the spell by speaking through its very instruments.

The figures of Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol loom especially large behind the artistic manifestations of the network, but for specific, not every, aspect of their activities. The network was fascinated with Warhol's exploitation of celebrities through an empaed-out persona that seemed to receive important cultural forms uncritically. The Warhol attitude was a net or a mirror for a culture obsessed with image. Duchamp's example was in the adopting of personas, the pursuit of the androgynous as a new creative type and formulating a dialectical critique of aesthetics through pun and allusion.

Robert Smithson's imagination of a voided-out contemporaneity was also important to the theoretical beginnings of Image Bank. To the Warholian void, a world-view centred in the fame-game of New York, Smithson added a cosmos and nature. The Canadians living in (especially in the case of the artists living in British Columbia) a frontier, resource-exploitation based economy considered the culture/nature binarism as prime borderline case. Smithson's work with mirrors influenced Morris and his visits to Vancouver for his abortive "Glass Island" project coincided with the founding of the bank. Smithson's own mirror work, which involved the "displacements" of a landscape by placing mirrors in it, had in turn, sought its sanction from Lévi-Strauss. "Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan" opens with a quote from The Savage Mind, "The characteristic feature of The Savage Mind is its timeless ness: its object is to grasp the world as both a synchronous and a diachronic totality and the knowledge which it draws from there is like that afforded of a room by mirrors fixed on opposite walls, which reflect each other (as well as objects in the intervening space) although without being strictly parallel." Morris, Lee-Nova and General Idea worked extensively with mirrors. Lee-Nova and Morris built the mirrored environments, Prisma, at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1968. The Fire Mirror Video produced by Goldberg, Image Bank and General Idea in 1971, was one of the pioneer works of Canadian video. Smithson's influence was important to others in Vancouver and Canada, especially to Jeff Wall, Ian Wallace and Toronto's General Idea. Early contact between General Idea and Vancouver gave a national context to the network and the first issues of their File Magazine (April, 1972) gave extensive coverage of Image Bank and West Coast activity.

The Image Bank Request Lists appeared in General Idea's File Magazine (1972). File was a parody of Life magazine and meant to be its antidote. Life's injunctions to wallow in the American postwar order of consumer bliss, materialism and the subjugation of the peoples of the world were inverted by File's call for transgression, disobedience and the pursuit of good times, glamour and fame.

Image Bank was theorized by General Idea's A. A. Bronson in his article "Pabulum for the Pabulum Eaters" in terms of its concerns with history and myth. Bronson, "History is the story of the great and the wealthy and the powerful few. The poor and the renegade are left with myth, legend and folklore. Myth is the past brought into the present, that we may be masters of our own culture... In myth it is all very clear that everything must be accounted for. One starts with a vision and names the parts."

Bronson saw the method of Image Bank in dialectical opposition to the method of conceptual art; the conceptual artist started with parts and revealed structure, "Image Bank starts with the structure and names the parts."
strategy related the bank to myth, "It is the function of myth and art to reestablish correspondences and the sense of the possibility of correspondences that may allow description of the universe as a vision named now. We may no longer move beyond the image, nor beyond the image of the images." There was both subversion and utopia in Bronson's account of Image Bank. It was a project to end history and place culture in the atemporality of mythic time, a project to conquer alienation, arrest progress and restore the bond between humankind and the natural world. It was a project to end the dominance of the Cartesian grid of space/time continuities on the imagination, to erase the time gap between past and future, to erase then the sense of progress of historical process and create a continuum of discrete presences. The strategies for achieving this revision or restoration of reality were conceived in three inter-related terms: fetish objects, ritual and archives. "The fetish object is the intersection point of potent images," a point around which rituals gather and concretize. The ritual releases "the resident imagery of fetish objects," tying together the past, present and future. Its references are temporal; "the ritual acts as a means of stepping outside of the historical process and placing oneself in the context of a dense mythical network in order that one may view simultaneity." The archive is "a means of making present, of establishing the past as an existing presence." In this the archive functions like ritual. In his appraisal of what it was that Image Bank was doing, Bronson suggested that the archive was becoming "specific collections of imagery filling in obvious gaps in the cosmology attempting by these collections to define whole areas of emerging consciousness." Image Bank's 1984 project was a case in point. "The 1984 project op-
Marcel Dot.

That stratum of society, not necessarily of the art world, which was reached through the image request lists. This was the world of fan clubs and zines circulated by hobbyists, cataloguers, fetishists and/or pornographers. This world, atomized from the mass media, contained many cottage industry communication networks, demonstrating that “ordinary” people could and did actively produce their own image worlds and did not just passively consume what the corporate image industry produced. Although neither General Idea nor Image Bank theorized this phenomenon in an academic sense, they thought what they were doing was something like ethnography, that they had uncovered the “primitives” of the Cold War order. Both groups used and re-circulated the zine material in the mailings and collages they would produce as artists. There were, however, significant differences in the tone and character of early General Idea and Image
Bank. General Idea's fascination for the fetish and kitsh was used as a weapon, the mode played on the anxieties of an urban scene caught between petit-bourgeois aspirations to glamour and the knowing hipness of caddish art world cool. Image Bank, especially after Trasov and Morris purchased some rural property near Roberts Creek in 1972, explored the pastoral, the promise of paradise and its ruin along the binary fault line, nature/culture. At the Roberts Creek property (Babyland) the Image Bank collective enacted one of its most luminous projects, Colour Bar Research, was an endless, infinitely variable, floating conceptual painting. Two thousand wooden colour bars were filmed, videotaped and photographed in a landscape populated with naked young people. In 1971, Vincent Trasov found the "original" Hand of the Spirit in a garbage can. Later, transformed into a silhouette or Plexiglas transpar-
ency, the hand was quickly circulated through the network to become one of a number of characteristic fetish icons. The references were multiple, conflicting and provocative. A hand with stylized, pointed extended fingers with index and middle-finger joined and the thumb rotated out makes an ambiguous semaphore. The hand is a clamp or a frame. The gesture is campy and precious, signalling glamour and artificiality while claiming an other-worldly spiritual presence. Its origin as an object trapped, a discarded vitrine prop, pointed to its origins as a fallen object and a sign of the fallen, a budge of allegiance to the semiotics of the transgressive and subversive power of the consumer fetish to mine the collective unconscious and throw sudden, shifting light on the structures and patterns desire had built beneath the surface of society.

Hand of the Spirit files were collected, cataloguing the appearance of the hand in sources that ranged from fashion ads to statues of the Buddha, drawing correspondences that privileged the ability of the image to have meaning that couldn't be pinned down through the established categories of discourse. So in the end the hand stood for the synthesizing ambitions of Image Bank and General Idea. The prototype now resides in Glenn Lewis' great index and endorsement, the Great Wall of 1984 (1973). Installed in the National Research Library, Ottawa, the wall was correspondence art transformed brilliantly to monument. Some 365 Plexiglas boxes contain objects culled from a request list. For Morris, Lewis' Great Wall was "the most anarchistic yet democratic and intelligent manipulation of official bureaucracy to date. It mirrors the complex implications of current artist/government interactions."9

In 1971, General Idea had commandeered an uneasy but desperate-to-be-hip Art Gallery of Ontario for their first Miss General Idea pageant. Artists in the network were asked to compete by sending in photographs. The winning entry was Trasov's picture of Morris. The picture, something of a small icon in the history of Canadian art, depicted Morris "wearing" a dress. The gown falls from Morris' shoulders, hiding his arms. A silhouette of the Hand of the Spirit supports his upward gazing face. It's a startling image, striking just that right note of the bizarre that was, according to Baudelaire, the mark of modern beauty. In subsequent years the hand appeared in performances, set-ups, photographs—it had become a "prop" with a wandering set of references.

Between the formation of Image Bank and the Decca Dance, a convention for the Eternal Network held in Hollywood in 1974, there are four years. Participants in the Morris/Trasov circle remember a frenetic time, fuelled by drugs, drink
and sexual exploration, the promise of internationalism, a place for art in society and a life devoted to art. The artists celebrated daily events and actions as the border between art and life was subsumed. Many of these are recorded in letters and snapshots in which the sense of occasion doesn't quite transmit into the future, that is, our present and future. Perhaps the devotion to the actual and the moment, an overarching ideal of not only these artists but a whole generation, resulted in the incommunicability of much of what was then to now. We also no longer witness the same phenomena. In many ways we no longer witness the same society. Then there was a healthy optimism that the mere unmasking of the great engines of society would dissuade their efficacy. No such illusions brighten our days now. However, a deep paradox was at work in the absolute value given to the fleeting moment. This was the archive itself—systems of filing, documenting, cataloguing that would transport the projects into the future.

The Decca Dance—titled as a provocation to the network's critics—was conceived to celebrate “Art's Birthday”—a concept circulated throughout the network by Robert Filliou when he declared February 2, 1965 as the one millionth birthday of “Art.” The event, held in Hollywood, was attended by about one thousand network artists and their friends. The evening was a mock Academy Awards ceremony with prizes for various categories. Although it attracted the attention of Esquire magazine, the Decca Dance—legendary as a moment of consolidation among the network—was ignored by the art journals. This must have been sobering for a movement that felt it could tantalize, fascinate and ultimately manipulate the mass media.

But later that year, the Vancouver artists would attempt to captivate the mass media by nominating Mr. Peanut for Mayor on an aesthetically platform. The media were captivated and Mr. Peanut's campaign received extensive coverage. For A. A. Bronson the “success” of the Peanut campaign was in the proof it offered that the empty image could be inserted into mass culture. “Mr. Peanut is an arrow pointing in an empty landscape, the cultural landscape of the mass media ... the very emptiness of the image, the very lack of content, that creates its desirability; it has no connection to any specific event, product or opinion. This lack of substance combined with its familiarity leaves it an open receptacle, a mirror on which the media can project anything they want. And they do ...” 9 In the final analysis we may find that the Mr. Peanut Campaign, confirmed rather than challenged the liberal consensus which hardly won that year's civic election. The Mr. Peanut Campaign marks the end of the effort to produce an active, collective, collaborating, avant-garde community. In Vancouver, the rediscovery, recovery, re-utilization of avant-garde strategies and stances, beginning in the late 1960s, flourishing in the early 1970s, ending in confusion and disillusionment by the end of the decade, was a period of coming of age for the visual arts in the city. Intermedia, the New Era Social Club, the N.E.Thing Co., Image Bank and the Western Front all began during this period; pulling together local and international artists in an effort to radically reform artistic practice in Vancouver. These efforts have often been characterized by noting the emphasis on collaboration, performance, experiments with new media and the hostility to the institution of art with its emphasis on the object and the notion of the individual "artist." The historian will also note, as Nancy Shaw did in her Vancouver Anthology essay on the period, the apparently contradictory phenom-
enon—a new dependence on state-supported funding. Partly this was due to the new availability of such funding through not just the Canada Council, but the Trudeau government programs of “repressive tolerance”: Opportunities for Youth, (OFY) and Local Initiatives Programs (LIP). The exchange that this engendered can now be seen to also have had a role in a language of obfuscation, assumed identities, corporate models, and an alternate, but also pernicious elitism, where networking and network knowledge meant mobility, visibility and support. The river of irony and camp that runs through the avant-garde manifestations of the period was partly an attempt to poison this seemingly easy exchange between bureaucracy and art and to thwart the inevitable structural similarities between the “system” and its artistic antagonists.

But the bureaucratic model remains among the chief problematics of the period. The banks, companies and corporations that artists formed in order to mainstream and legitimize their activity speak of a presumption that turned out to be false—that the world would not resist transformation by aesthetics given the opportunity. Image Bank and other groups defined themselves on their grant applications, not just to the art bureaucracy, but to the make-work bureaucrats of the Trudeau regime. Apparently their language was, to some small extent, understood. The bureaucratic models the files, indexes, banks and corporations formed by the avant-garde were an egalitarian alternative offered to a society mixed in administrative prerogatives. Critics of the network’s seeming fascination with anything bureaucratic should remember that the network had little use for order and that their banks were anti-instrumental, mirrors of structures subject to contamination.

The river of irony and camp that coursed through Image Bank also reflected the way in which sexuality and desire circulated in code among artists of the avant-garde network. It was a hedonist time—as far as such things go in Canada, marked by the appropriation of gay cultural idioms and tropes into high art. Following the Christopher Street riots in New York in 1969, the gay liberation movement, never dead but long dormant since the 1920s, resurfaced and entered the arena of public consciousness. But what was “out” in the network wasn’t necessarily out for its public.

The Trudeau government’s decriminalization of homosexuality in 1968 and the dandified, ambiguous figure of the bachelor prime minister himself allowed a seeming new liberty of personal styles based on sexual preferences. So did the new social phenomena of drugs, sexual freedom and the demands for the emancipation of women, civil rights for minorities, etc. “Family values” took second place to a new knowing sophistication as legions of mostly straight male artists and cultural bureaucrats received their first same-sex blow-jobs. This doesn’t mean that homophobia had been vanquished. The art world and its sustaining institutional support still settled for old hierarchies. Straight white men ruled the roost. Gays, as they still can, played the patriarchal game until asked to walk the plank. Women figured at the margin of this picture and people of colour not at all. The social scenes around General Idea, Image Bank and the early Western Front are storied with accounts of sexual initiation. The burnish of legend has grown around these years as years of not just freedom, but of a staging of a specifically gay sensibility. The irony and innuendo that characterize much of the artistic production of these groups has a source in gay culture—a
culture in which persecution and intolerance has nurtured a penchant for codes and camouflage.

One of the borders to be researched in the dossier of borderline cases was the one between tolerance and vilification. For gay people, then as now, this social border is one of the most important facts of social life. Identity, which other people seem to have as natural right, is under constant negotiation depending on context and circumstance. There was a homophobic backlash in the Canadian art world towards Image Bank and General Idea. Like other forms of discrimination that operate as gentleman’s agreements it would be difficult to offer the documentation and specifics. Morris refers to his crowning as Miss General Idea as “career suicide.” He’d always been out, but now he had flaunted it. After the first issue of File Magazine appeared in the spring of 1972, an article appeared in the Vancouver radical weekly newspaper, The Grape. Un-sighed, “File: the Great Canadian Art Tragedy,” lashed out at “the mindless masquerade” of General Idea and Image Bank. Seeing them as heirs to “the eclectic hysteria of experiments like Intermedia,” the anonymous author accused the new Canadian network artists of “decadence,” of “having no aesthetic” and of “merging themselves as a zoo of exotic phenomena.” The tenor of the article was vitriolic. The artists were charged with proposing a “parasitic” relationship to the dominant culture and its bureaucratic “instead of realizing solidarity with oppressed groups elsewhere in this society,” of becoming victim to a “survival—until-or-for-the-next-grant mentality.” They were even accused of being inadequate as homosexuals: “Shitting on their own homosexuality they have done an inestimable disservice by re-opening what remains for many a serious and actual struggle within this society. They have paraded their homosexuality as though that in itself gave the magazine some bizarre status within the enigma of the alternate society. Instead the problems of homosexuality as an actual way of life recede into the pageantry of camp parody.”

Robert Amussen and Myra Peanut, both members of the Image Bank circle, responded with spirited denunciations of whatever it was who wrote the article (who must have been in the art world). Amussen called the article “reactionary, badly written, ill-conceived, venal, counter-revolutionary, obscene.”

The article had been a strong condemnation from a leftist perspective and is evidence of a deep split in the community of avant-garde artists working in Vancouver at the time who saw themselves as alternative or outside the system. The positioning of those who argued for an aesthetic of resistance was fractured and complicated. Image Bank and General Idea were too rude and too queer for the establishment and too lacking in puritan rigour for a considerable number of the left artistic intelligentsia. For the former they posed a threat to the regime of normality in which the moneyed class who sit on gallery boards had invested so much; for the latter they offered an insufficient account of their suffering. In retrospect, armed with present day critical analyses of how difference and otherness are constructed, one can see that the attacks from the left and from the establishment were saturated with that revulsion we call homophobia. By the time the first File appeared, in April 1972, the Vancouver artists had already been buffeted by the artistic left. In March, Image Bank and others had travelled to the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design for their part of the Halifax-Vancouver exchange. NSCAD at the time had become an epicentre of conceptualism and critical thinking based on the dialectic of Marx. There the Van-
Couver artists had been challenged and attacked. Without critical theory they had nothing to stand on but their aestheticism and in some cases their Buddhism. The message from those who would later come to master the art world was clear: the world was for serious, adult straight men only.

The sexual references and jokes exchanged throughout the network took place in this social field of contained and measured tolerance; a field mined with explosive nodes of homophobia. Aimed at consumer culture, where the image industry larded sexual innuendo over its ideological mise-en-scène of family values, the new network mailings and archives set out to revise, revive and renegotiate post-war individualism and identity. The stance and persona of the artist in the years following the war had honoured the straight man, his go-it-alone, against the grain struggle with his creativity, the ever blank canvas, the booze and the broads. He had been hero and a master. He poeticized alienation, making it the very badge of his freedom. He swaggered and he painted. Warholism helped put an end to all this. So did the recovery of Marcel Duchamp’s influence and example. Identity became social, something one wore, something one collages. Suddenly the inner depths weren’t so deep after all and appearance and surface, with all their variety and differentiation, seemed to be a typography for new kinds of being and behaving in a society that needed new types and new consumers. Exiled from the moneysed class, yet uncomfortable with the labouring class, artists worked through petit-bourgeois aspirations and subjectivity. The craving for romance, empowerment, the insecurity and instability of manners and mores, the thrill with things that shine, dress-up parties, nostalgia and banqueting, all delivered paradigms to new artistic practices that had critical potential, expressed utopian yearnings and
promised to deliver life to art once and for all.

However, in the 1970s art still provided itself
with the rationale of self-sufficiency. Despite the
disregard into which traditional practices had
fallen and regardless of the emphasis placed on
lifestyle, the notion of Art as an autonomous and
privileged precinct was still legitimate coin. This
contradiction was perhaps inevitable as the new
manifestations turned to the institutions of art
for support and often received it. For a time,
by the mid-seventies the moneyped class re-
gained control of the Vancouver Art Gallery,
turning out performances and special events, look-
ing again toward high art and the "visual arts."

The regrouping of the institutions around high-
art ideals ended their flirtation with the network
and its project to revolutionize the world through
the aestheticization of life. That had been too
messy. One too many stoned or drunk scenes in
the mansionette, one too many blow jobs on the
fur coat on the bed. For the young it was a de-
licious initiation into adulthood from those who
didn’t believe a word of it. For the moneyped class
it had been an indulgent nuisance and they went
back to purchasing canvas and steel. For the
archive it was the evidence upon which the fu-
ture might be rescued from its past. For the past
it might have been the vehicle of survival.

Image Bank never officially closed its doors.
The end came in 1977 after the publication of the
"Image Bank Postcard Show." This was a box
of postcards that could be conceived of as an ex-
hibition destined for the mail. Just as Life maga-
azine sued File Magazine to dissuade appropri-
ation of its logo, a New York company called Image
Bank threatened suit against Image Bank, stall-
ing distribution of the postcards through bookstores
and gallery shops. 15

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PARTIE
DU TOUT
A BEN

CERTIFIÉ ŒUVRE D’ART, LE

but realizable projects in its files, thousands of images that could be potentially recycled as high or low art. The exhibition at U.B.C. Fine Arts Gallery and the publication of the portfolio, 1992, are the first connotations of the archive as it enters the 1990s and approaches the end of the second millennium.

1 "Art and Correspondence from the Western Front." The text also appears in "Pabulum for the Palium-Eaters," File Magazine (May 1973). The citation appears in numerous malious and is, in fact, a misquote. The Savage Mind was published in English translation in 1966 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson); p. 16 reads: "The decision that everything must be taken account of facilitates the creation of a 'memory bank.'"


6 Smithson's article was published in Artforum, Sept., 1968.

7 Prima bore more than a passing resemblance to Lucas Samaras' Mirrored Room, 1966.


10 artnet, Spring, 1977.

11 The Grape, May 24-30, 1972. It is certain that the "anonymous" author was Dennis Wheeler.


13 There were two Image Bank Post Card Shows. The first was published by Coach House Press in 1971. The second in New York in 1977. The first edition was published on the occasion of an exhibition on collected postcards, The Image Bank Post Card Show. This was organized by the UBC Fine Arts Gallery and toured under the aegis of the National Gallery of Canada. The postcard editions argued for the form as a legitimate genre, with editions taking the role of exhibitions.

Keith Wallace

On the Set at Babyland

Image Bank was conceived in 1970 by three artists—Gary Lee-Nova, Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov—as a means of devising an art context for perceiving the world. Although Image Bank continued until 1978, the most intense years spanned 1970 to 1974, a time that paralleled the height of the correspondence art network, an elaborate exchange of images and ideas in which Morris and Trasov played an influential role.1 Image Bank's activities centred on debunking the systems in control of formulating and disseminating visual information, especially as it pertained to popular and corporate culture.

According to Image Bank, culture is an accumulation of myths, and Image Bank's conceptual mechanics demand a shift in our perception of the images and terminology that we are greeted with daily, allowing the imagination to enter a re-mythified world. Image Bank harnessed the fetishization of the visual icon within popular and corporate culture by aestheticizing and mirroring it back in often ironic and humorous ways. Yet they were serious in understanding that even the most banal image had incredible subliminal power and that strategies of appropriation and redesignation could provide a frame of reference through which to expose the relativity of the world.

The roots of appropriation and redesignation in Western art reach back more than seventy-five years when Marcel Duchamp took common objects—a urinal, a snow shovel, a boat-rake—and redesigned them as art objects simply by considering them in the context of art. In the 1960s, Duchampian tactics found new potency as a critical reaction to high-art canons and as a desire to engage with the real world. During this dec-
Mondo Artie
Episode No. 1681

Mondartie’s Birthday
The Hollywood Decadance

Air Date
April 21, 1974

Western Front Film and Video

Mondo Artie
Episode No. 1681, 1974
Glenn Lewis Vancouver

Felix Partz, Sandy Stagg, Dona de la Cruz, Hollywood 1974
Photo: Jorge Sala

ade, art was in the midst of reaching its formalist apex in the transcendent and material forms exemplified by Colour Field painting and Minimalist sculpture. Pop Art, Nouveau Realisme, Fluxus, the Situationists and Conceptual Art represented various approaches to placing popular culture and real life at the centre of artistic practice. While Image Bank does not fall neatly within any of these “isms” they were well aware of them and used appropriation as a tool to liberate images from their ideological bondage. This attitude was a precursor to appropriation in the 1980s which presented existing images as a means to question authorship, authenticity and truth. Appropriation and redesignation were not exclusive to the world of images. Buzzwords, puns and slogans populated Image Bank’s (and others within the correspondence art network) naming, writing and conversing. They circulated images rubber-stamped with declarations such as O.D., HARD CORE 20TH CENTURY, APPROVED, EXTRA FANCY and SOFT CORE SURREALISM as a way of instigating a new reading of familiar information through an alternate system of classification. Image Bank believed that once mass media images, or images from any source, have circulated through the public realm, they no longer have conceptual ownership and are open to the workings of the imagination. And when detached from their original frame of reference—the caption, the article, the publication—images are even more susceptible to various levels of interpretation.

Changing the frame of reference, the means through which we perceive, changes the truth factor. In the 1972 Image Bank Annual Report it is written that, "There can be no copyright on that which defines the imagination: recycling of media information in new contexts helps break down the control programmed into the origi-
uninformation enabled it to become legal tender. This statement suggested that it is through imagination and interpretation, through contrasting perspectives and freedom of the mind, that ideological norms can be questioned. According to Image Bank ethos, it was the role of the artist to take responsibility and determine the cultural ecology.

To help achieve this, Image Bank struck alliances with a number of individuals and artist collectives, both locally and internationally within the correspondence art network. They played a pivotal role in facilitating connections among artists, first through monthly mailings that led to the Image Bank International Exchange Directory published by Talonbooks in 1972, then through the Image Bank Image Request List published in almost every File Magazine from 1972 until 1975. The Image Request List both spawned and responded to the rapidly expanding network; it created what became referred to in the pages of File as "image virus," with the postal system being the veins that transmitted the images. Names, addresses and the desired images were compiled for each Request List. Some requests were earnestly serious, some fed fetish files, while others were purely conceptual with the request itself constituting the work of art. The Request List functioned as a large decentralized image bank, a filing system, where artists had access to all the images in the bank through the index of addresses and requests. The barriers of geographical isolation fell to the victory of the postage stamp. And though the network was international in scope, an intimacy was possible in that one could find friends with similar interests or sensibilities. Through the Request List, scores of connections were made among artists who may or may not have been in direct contact with Morris and Trasov, but rather, became participants.
within what Fluxus artist Robert Filliou referred to as the Eternal Network, an endless self-generating communication system that claimed no geographical centre and that existed outside of institutions.

It was through a publication such as *File*, generated by General Idea and published in Toronto, that Image Bank and the correspondence network could make itself tangible. *File* functioned as a voice through which artists could construct their roles and publicize their "images." A. A. Bronson, one of the General Idea collective, has, in retrospect, described *File* as "a response to the networking then actively pumping images, manuscripts, ephemera through our mail slots and collecting in our archives. Now we needed a way to recycle this material back through the system it reflected, to allow a self-image, or the possibility of self-image." Fame and glamour were themes that surfaced in the first issues of *File*; a star system was put in place that listed the top ten artists, gossip columns reported the latest network news, letters to the editor were institutionalized and feature spreads focused on select artists.

As part of the emergent correspondence network, the artists of Image Bank assumed pseudonyms—Marcel Idea and Mr. Peanut were the two that Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov sustained the longest; Lee Nova acquired the anagrammatic name of Art Rat. The pseudonyms not only began a mythology of personalities and role playing, but also accommodated an exploration of the world through an alter ego, a frame of reference to the side of the specific individual. It meant serving as an art object within the spirit of another persona. This strategy had its roots in Dada, and is again most commonly associated with Duchamp who used a pseudonym and alter ego when he dressed in female at-
tire and photographed himself as the mythological personality Rose Silvery. In the network, alter egos were identified by pseudonyms, costumes, fetishes, image requests, rubber stamps or terminology.

Within the mythology that Image Bank created for itself, the role of Babylard, a sixteen-acre piece of property located on the Sunshine Coast, a two-hour car and ferry ride north of Vancouver, has received little attention outside of its appearance as a backdrop for a number of Image Bank projects. But Babylard played an important role in the early 1970s. While File offered a two-dimensional forum for photo spreads and network promotion, Babylard was a fully dimensional set that allowed Image Bank to explore its role playing in the flesh.

From 1967 to 1972, Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov had been headquartered in a large rented house on the west side of Vancouver. Although the Image Bank name wasn’t widely used until 1970, it was in this house that the archives were already taking form through the many connections developed within the correspondence network. But the house was sold and an eviction notice called for a change of set. Through Glenn Lewis (a.k.a. Flasky Rose Hip), a fellow network collaborator and founder of the New York Correspondence Dance School of Vancouver, the opportunity arose to buy shares in Babylard. The property featured a year-round creek, enormous sword ferns, lush treed areas, clearings and masses of blackberries which were picked by the bucketful and made into pies, jam and wine. The property was owned by Mick Henry and John Greg who intended to set up pottery studios and a kiln. The name Babylard was coined in 1969 during an oyster and mushroom feast that was attended by, among others, seven expectant mothers. The name stuck. However, Greg decided to sell his share and Henry needed a new partner.

The prospect of buying property outside of the city was an unplanned and somewhat daunting consideration for Image Bank. They were urban in their lifestyle and Babylard offered no central heating, electricity or indoor plumbing. Bathing took place outside, with gravity fed creek water heated by a fire under the tub. The tub was centrally located with a view on the extensive food garden and, at night, the stars. Mick Henry’s home was designed by an architect friend, Mo van Nostrand, but the other buildings were typical of the provisional “handbuilt” houses that marked the counterculture’s move from the city to the country in the late 1960s. Image Bank inherited a modest multilevelled shed-style cabin. Another shareholder recruited shortly thereafter, artist Carole Itter, would take over an even smaller structure nicknamed “the shack.” Lewis, acquainted with the forested West Coast landscape, already owned property further up the Sunshine Coast and persuaded Morris to take up the offer. Morris sold his set of Warhol Marilyn prints (except one he saved for his mother) and Image Bank descended upon Babylard.

Even though Image Bank disliked the bland urban environment as it was developing in Vancouver, they did not see themselves as part of the neo-pioneer movement of Hippies who left the city in quest of a more pure lifestyle. Their relocation to the Sunshine Coast was indeed an escape from the city, but it was also an opportunity to establish a set. The Hollywood concept of building sets to create new realities was lurking behind Image Bank’s perception of its new circumstance. The idea of a set was central to the conscious construction of mythologies that Image Bank had been building. When people were in
their alter egos, they were considered to be "on the set". Babyland was a place to act out fantasies, to set up the props and pursue a culture/nature debate.

As a set, Babyland was an imagined Arcadia. Its aesthetic/intellectual precedents could be found in Monte Verità, an early 20th century artist colony in the Swiss Alps; in Black Mountain College, which fostered an environment of workshops and discussion from the 1930s to the 1950s in rural North Carolina; and in Charleston, the pastoral estate for London's Bloomsbury coterie during the 1920s and 1930s where arts and crafts shared the stage with sexual libertarianism. Babyland's popular culture/nature precedents were the nudist camp and summer camp, with their choreographed activities, campfire discussions and glorification of physical culture. Artists, writers and craftsmen gathered and shared ideas and iconography at Babyland.

A summer of painting colour bars was one project for resident and visiting artists. Mick Henry incorporated thunderbolt designs (a common Image Bank icon) on an edition of plates fired in his new wood-burning kiln; weaver Joan Marshall used the same design on one of her handwoven blankets. Mr. Peanut produced peanut tiles. And as in the early 20th century paintings of Die Brücke: artists Erich Heckel, Otto Mueller and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, clothes were shed on the set of paradise in a search for innocence and in protest against prudish middle class values.

Babyland, Image Bank kept in touch with the correspondence network through the mail that flowed to their address of General Delivery, Roberts Creek, B.C., Canada. Numerous participants in the network came to visit and Babyland became a destination where artists arrived to experience West Coast nature as formulated by Image Bank. Props, role playing, eating, drinking, smoking marijuana and dropping acid, sex, reading the mail, telling stories and painting and photographing colour bars set the tenor of the visits. Among those who arrived in the first year were: the Toronto contingent of Victor Coleman and Stan Bavington from Coach House Press, Marien Lewis of A Space, and General Idea; Lowell Darling (Dudley鳍) of the Fat City School of Finds Arts and Robert Cumming from Los Angeles; Tom Dean from Montreal; Art Farm from Texas and California; Robert Fillion from France; Robert Fones from London, Ontario; Kate Craig and Eric Metcalfe (Dr. and Lady Bruce) and Glenn Lewis from Vancouver; Willoughby Sharp from New York's Avalanche Magazine; and John Jack Baylin (Count Fanzini) from Garden Bay, B.C.

John Jack Baylin lived an hour's drive north of Roberts Creek and became a regular visitor to Babyland. He shared much of Image Bank's attitude towards the non-urban environment and had accumulated an archive of images of the plastic covered structures beginning to populate the West Coast with the counterculture's move to the country and called it his Plastic Country Museum. He also developed Burn Bank and held his own network meetings of the John Dowd Fanny Club; his meticulously recorded minutes were interpretations of the gatherings and visits and illustrate just how complicated the terminology and role playing with alter egos had become. One person, knowingly or not, was delegated to play the role of John Dowd, a network personality living in Brooklyn, New York who was fetishized by Burn Bank and who eventually made a visit to Vancouver (The Grand Torte). Baylin's texts were filled with double-entendres and needed decoding. It was through
Bum Bank that the whole gay component within
the network became most visible.2

The props—the Hand of the Spirit, the col-
our bars, General Idea's full scale figure photo
cut-outs, mirrors and costumes—were impor-
tant accompaniments to the role playing. The
Hand of the Spirit was derived from a window
display accessory which had the forefinger and
thumb forming an "O" with the rest of the fin-
gers expressively splayed out, much like the hand
gesture for O.K. Several versions of the Hand
of the Spirit were made; one set was cut out in
clear plexiglass and attached to a long handle that
transformed it into a kind of wand that infused
the spirit of the network upon all that it touched.

It was one prop of several shared by both Im-
age Bank and General Idea; ownership was not
a major concern at the time. From their initial
meeting in 1971, an instant rapport developed
between these two collectives. Each had similar
concerns and sensibilities in how they viewed the
world and how images and information circu-
late in culture. Both had amassed collections of
images and delegated them to various areas of
research. Both were interested in alter egos and
role playing, in mirrors and reflections, in the
spectrum, and, especially, in the idea of a frame
of reference.

The colour bar was another central prop that
functioned as a frame of reference. The two sets
of colour bars were the most ambitious and long-
term projects that grew out of what Image Bank
referred to as Colour Research. Colour Research
was a field of inquiry that initially generated col-
laborative projects between Gary Lee-Nova and
Michael Morris. During the mid-1960s, both
noticed a similar exploration of colour relation-
ships in each other's painting. Both were nation-
ally recognized for paintings that were seemingly
aligned with the formalist formats of colour re-
lationships and geometry that characterized hard-
edge painting. Yet both Morris and Lee-Nova
questioned the sanctity of formalist painting.

While Lee-Nova undermined abstraction by in-
roducing hard-edge landscape shapes within the
geometric space of shaped canvases, Morris
snubbed the rhetoric of the flat surface and the
purity of the taped edge with exaggerated
illusionistic planes complemented with hand-
painted bands of luminous colour. In 1967 Lee-
Nova, Morris and Dallas Selman each made
paintings with the word "Menthol" in the title
and explored the idea of menthol through a study
of greens. But it would be the colours of the spec-
trum (and the grey scale) that occupied the at-
tention of Lee-Nova and Morris.

By 1970, Lee-Nova, Morris and Trasov were
working as Image Bank and a collaborative
project from that year solidified the idea of
Colour Research. The National Film Board made
available to artists film and Super 8 camera equip-
ment through training workshops. Lee-Nova
already had considerable experience with film,
and Image Bank painted wooden planks and vari-
osely scaled plywood circles with the colours of
the spectrum. They were placed in gardens, parks
and on the beach, then documented with film
and slides. The planks and circles, or colour bars
and dots as they came to be known, functioned
as gauges for experiments in depth of field. When
projected, a slide of a seven foot colour bar placed
in a field would be followed by a slide of a seven
inch colour bar placed amongst plants. The
viewer would have no other sense of scale, and
thus reality. The dots which were referred
to as the "Dot Depth of Field Project," func-
tioned similarly, and were photographed as gra-
dating circles that gently interrupted how one
looked at the landscape. Like the colour bars used
to gauge "real" colour in colour transparencies,
On the set at Babyland, summer of 1972-74
Photos: Morris/Tasov Archive

the spectrum in Image Bank’s project was literally placed in the real world as a frame of reference, as “nature seen through the eye of culture, culture through the eye of nature.” In the months prior to the move to Babyland, Image Bank, under the sponsorship of Intermedia, a multidisciplinary arts collective in Vancouver, received a Federal Government Local Initiatives Projects grant to produce an edition of colour bars. Work began on sanding and applying the ground to the 7 x 1 3/4 x 3/4 blocks of yellow cedar at the New Era Social Club, headquarters for the New York Corres-Sponge Dance School of Vancouver. But it was Babyland that changed the focus of how the colour bars would be used. The nature/culture relationship first explored in Image Bank’s “Dot Depth of Field” project of 1970 was intensified by the possibilities that the landscape in and around Babyland presented. By the end of the summer of 1972, somewhere around one thousand colour bars were handpainted with enamels in an outdoor studio.

The bars were painted in variations of colours mixed by Morris. One set had close to five hundred bars, each painted with the seven colours of the spectrum. By gradually adding white to the enamel pigments, the intensity of the colours would gradate in a systematic manner as they worked through the set. Another set had each bar painted with one colour of the spectrum with the gradation of colour occurring in nine stages on each bar. Yet another smaller set was painted in the grey scale. The colour bars painted at Babyland were arranged in a multitude of configurations—ziggurats, chevrons, and zigzag thunderbolts—that resulted in striking colour relationships. The colour gradations created a blurring effect where one colour would blend into another. These configurations were placed in fields, under trees where the light and shadow changed, scattered in streams or left to drift in a lake, then documented with film and colour slides. The colour bars seemed to accommodate endless permutations, and although this project was presented in a photographic form, Morris also saw the dots and bars in the landscape as proposing a new form of landscape painting by “expanding the notion of painting by not painting.”

One of the more emblematic colour bar events took place at Lake Yago (a pseudonym for Mисal Lake in Pender Harbour, B.C.), in the territory of Bum Bank. This event was a collaboration between Image Bank, Bum Bank and the New York Corres-Sponge Dance School of Vancouver, with a cast of independents such as A.C. McWhorter, Taki Bluestiner, Robert Fones in the role of John Dowd, and a bevy of local non-practicing artists (a term of General Ideas). A shallow lake as warm as bath water in the August sun was an ideal location for the Arcadian quest of nature, Colour Research and role playing. The late summer afternoon was spent eating and drinking. The colour bars were dispersed in the lake and synchronized swimming was directed by the Corre-Sponge Dance School. All was photographed, videotaped and compiled as documentation for the Colour Research project.

Image Bank had no intention of living in the country on a permanent basis, and in late 1972, another opportunity to buy property arose in the form of an old labyrinthine Knights of Pythias Hall that came up for sale in Vancouver. Eight artists, musicians, writers and an architect—Marrin Bartlett, Kate Craig, Henry Greenhow, Glenn Lewis, Eric Metcalfe, Mo Van Nostrand, and Morris and Tasov—pooled their resources, bought the building and renamed it the Western Front Lodge. It contained ample living and working spaces as well as two large halls, one of
which has continued to be a staple in Vancouver's performance, literary and music scene. The Western Front went on to become one of the most active and stable artist-run centres in Canada.

Image Bank moved back to Vancouver and Babyland became the summer set. The "Summer of '72, '73 and '74" were highlights in the role of Babyland. These years saw more visits, social gatherings and photo shoots. Mr. Peanut and Granada Gazelle posed for a photo narrative that turned into a love story between a human and a peanut. General Idea arrived with a set of the wand-like Hands of the Spirit that played their magic with colour bars and bodies in the landscape. And more Colour Research was carried out.

By 1978, Image Bank as it was defined had played itself out. Many artists within the correspondence network had hit the saturation point. Robert Cumming had announced his farewell to the network pointing out that he could "no longer answer a bad piece of mail ... I used to answer everything I got, but now I find myself ignoring 3/4 of it out of principle and lack of energy. There's too much of it."13 For others the role playing became too ingrained or confining. The Request List petered away by 1975.14 With the Western Front, priorities changed as attention turned to programming, administration and maintenance. The need to break the isolation of the West Coast had been achieved with contacts made through the correspondence network. Mr. Peanut retired his papier-mâché shell and returned to being Vincent Trasov. Both Trasov and Morris continued to collaborate with performance and video, but each pursued their own practices as well. Morris returned to painting and Trasov developed a body of "fire paintings" and "word paintings". In 1981, the two artists moved to Berlin as guests of the Berlin visiting artists' program, D.A.A.D., and have remained there ever since.

Image Bank threw nothing out and their files have become a vast archive that stands as an important and abundant chronicle of their activities and those of the network, concrete poetry and Fluxus. With the dozens of binders filled with correspondence, the collection of rubber stamps, the boxes of colour bars, the books, magazines and catalogues, the postcards, prints, ephemera and, of course, the thousands of images, the archive is now intended to function as a resource pool for a spectrum of future exhibitions.

Babyland still remains. Its role is now that of a quiet residence and retreat, although it has served as a set for post-Image Bank projects such as the photographs produced by Morris for a 1980 exhibition at the Musée d'art contemporain in Montreal. And the colour bars still remain, although they are somewhat battleworn from the many manipulations they endured. They resurfaced in Banff, Alberta in 1990 to be once again configured and photographed.15 There have been suggestions of a possible interactive computer program whereby an individual could create their own Colour Research on database. The colour bars have become the endless painting.

Image Bank's effort to devise an alternative way of looking at the world was utopian. Babyland offered a version of a utopian environment. However, as they never attempted to propose solutions to the complexity of twentieth century society, they never expected to attain a utopian state. As a project of social engagement, Image Bank was not about social change. What they did was create a re-reading of culture through specified frames of reference—the alter egos, the
Hand of the Spirit and the colour bar. Utopianism existed in their programme of manipulating the systems that govern our lives—especially the corporate and state systems that attempt to regulate cultural perception, political ideology and sexual morality—and interpreting them to satisfy their own desires. The intent of Image Bank was to encourage and nurture freedom of the imagination and to provide a context that permitted an exploration of one's fantasies in relation to the existing social order.

1 By 1972, Gary Lee-Nova had removed himself from his affiliations with Image Bank. At Morris and Trasov became more of a fixture within the correspondence art network, Lee-Nova's participation lessened and his interests became directed more to sculptural objects that dealt with systems of grids and structures that affect perception. In September 1972, he signaled his stepping out of the network by mailing an announcement for a Dead Letter Funeral. The subsequent responses, some of which were reproduced in *JS* 12/13 (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1973), comprise his first network archive.

2 In the 1980s, appropriation has taken on new connotations with cultural appropriation—the taking of images, stories and ideas from cultures that are not one's own—becoming a contested field that has instigated a re-thinking by the artistic community.

3 Fanzines or photocopy books were a common way of compiling and distributing work that circulated through the network. *File* was a more ambitious combination of the two.


5 Mick Henry and Glenn Lewis had met each other in St. Ives, England while studying ceramics at the Bernard Leach studios.

6 The minutes from a number of these meetings are recorded in *JS* 12/13, (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1973).


9 This grant included a number of projects by different groups of artists who applied for funding under the umbrella of Intermedia.

10 Another set of approximately one thousand colour bars was painted during the following year in Vancouver.

11 Interview with Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov, August 10, 1992.


13 The Spring 1976 edition of *File* announced that the Request List was finished and directed interested artists to *ART DIARY*, edited by Giancarlo Politi in Milan. Correspondence art is still very much alive, but the network has changed. The idea of mythologies and pseudonyms has shifted to more thematic formats. In Vancouver, Anna Banana and Ed Varney (both early participants) continue to develop correspondence projects.

14 Morris and Trasov were part of a residency program at the Banff Centre for the Arts in the autumn of 1990. Here, the Image Bank archives were brought together for the first time in a decade and went through the first stages of organization through an accessioning process.
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