


The Graceful Envelope



Scripsit

Washington Calligraphers Guild
Vol. 36, No. 2 Fall 2014



Lettering artists take a leap at the start of every project — overcoming inertia and second-guessing to begin putting pen to paper. What propels us over that chasm of hesitation is inspiration.

Sometimes inspiration helps us choose from among the infinite possibilities of a blank canvas.

Often this spark is what we need when facing requirements set by a client, a competition or an exhibition. With inspiration, we find a way to channel our creativity to fulfill our personal vision as well as the guidelines we have to work under. This is the kind of inspiration that amazes me each year of the Graceful Envelope Contest.

I have been privileged to coordinate the competition since 2002. Every year I marvel at how artists from America and around the world discover new ways to interpret the annual theme,

incorporate stamps into their design, and make everything fit on an artistically addressed envelope they send through the mail.

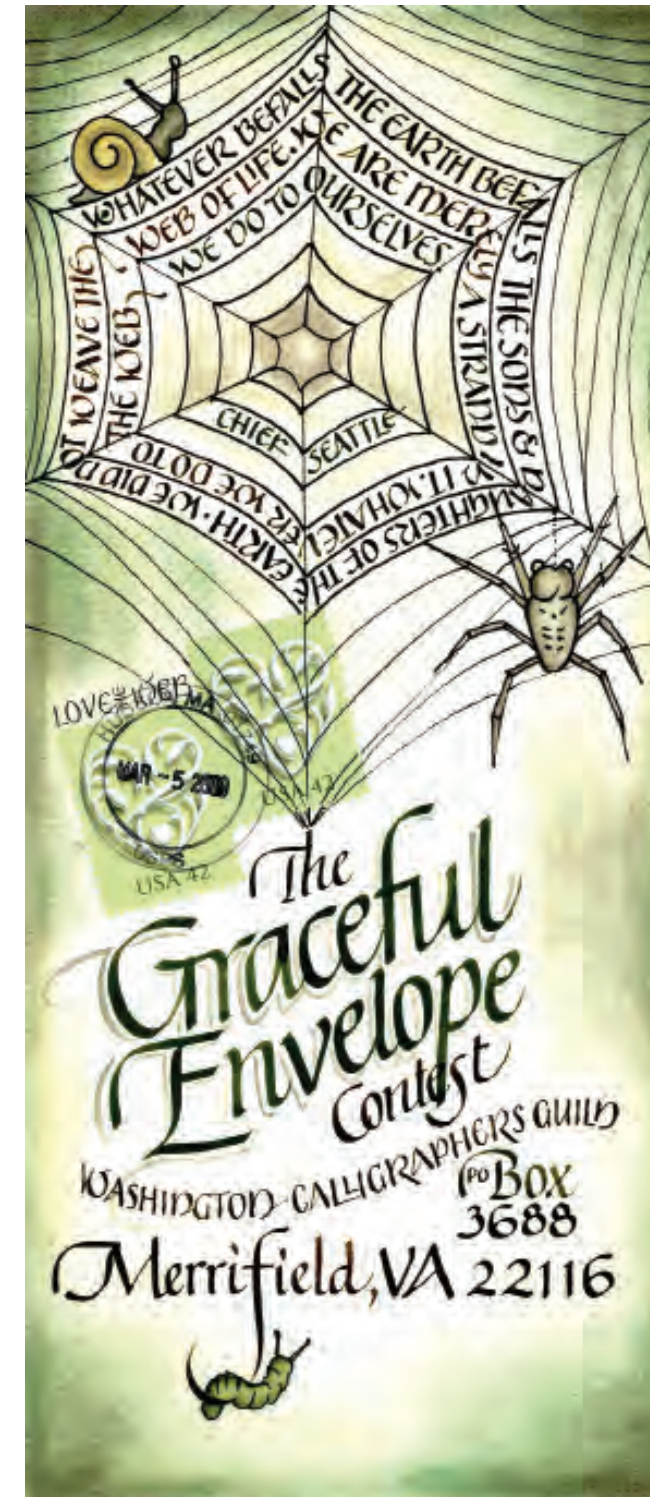
In this Scripsit, you can see the extraordinary results of inspiration in a selection of winning envelopes from 2009 through 2014, along with comments from contest judges about what makes a successful entry (p. 23). We can also be encouraged by two pages of winning entries by high school students (pp. 28-29).

Issues of Scripsit published in 2009, 2005 and 2002 showcased earlier competitions. All winning envelopes since 2001, in both adult and youth categories, are online at www.calligraphersguild.org.

— Lorraine Swerdloff,
Graceful Envelope Contest coordinator
for the Washington Calligraphers Guild

2009

Theme: Address the Environment



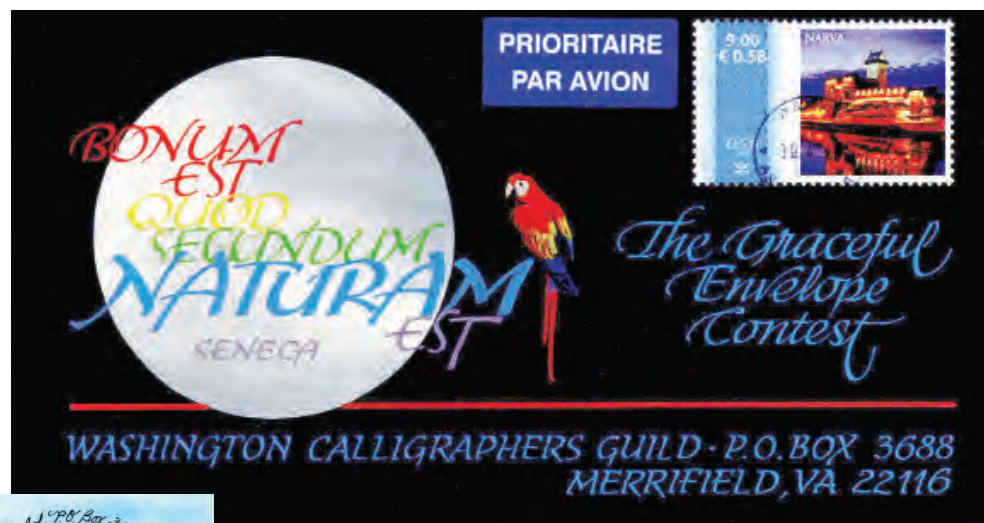
Gerry Jackson Kerdok
(Best in Show)
Hudson, MA

The theme for the 2009 contest, "Address the Environment," urged entrants to design an envelope that promotes the preservation of our natural world and address it artistically. A trio of judges looked for skill in lettering, effective use of color and design and creative interpretation of the theme: professional calligrapher Sammy Little, whose clients include the U.S. Capitol, the Supreme Court and the National Gallery of Art; Marta Legeckis, professional calligrapher and illustrator whose clients include the Department of State, the White House and the Department of the Interior; and Jane Broendel, secretary-treasurer of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

Best in Show:
Gerry Jackson Kerdok – Hudson, MA

Winners:
Kathy D. Barker – Bellevue, WA
Gloria Eckart – Plantation, FL
Linnae Frei – Scottsdale, AZ
Joan Gooderham – Fort Erie, ON, Canada
Julie Gray – Sandia Park, NM
Marilyn Gray – Newberry, FL
Maria M. Hyer – Plymouth Meeting, PA
Margaret Kubisch – Nuriootpa, S. Australia
Elizabeth Nuttle – Brooklandville, MD
Petra Pusch – Niederaichbach, Germany
Judy Rinks – Jacksonville, FL

Honorable Mentions:
Shirlee DiBacco – Voorhees, NJ
Karen Dilbeck – Montgomery, AL
Carol DuBosch – Portland, OR
Jane Ewing – Grand Haven, MI
Audrey Kincaid – Boise, ID
Tiffany Laws – Duvall, WA
Betty Locke – Duncan, BC, Canada
Marion McKenzie – Hampshire, England
Martha Noonan – Boise, ID
Jill Norvell – Reston, VA
Vello Paluoja – Parnu, Estonia
Sally Penley – Olympia, WA
Carole Sauter – Kent, WA
Yumie Tanaka – Kashiwa, Japan
Angela Tingle – Buena Vista, CO
Myrtilin von Glahn – Rocky River, OH
Lynn Zakevich – South Miami, FL
Luce H. Zolna – Chicago, IL



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- 1) Vello Paluoja
Parnu, Estonia
- 2) Angela Tingle
Buena Vista, CO
- 3) Margaret Kubisch
Nuriootpa, S. Australia
- 4) Shirlee DiBacco
Voorhees, NJ
- 5) Martha Noonan
Boise, ID

- 1) Gloria Eckart
Plantation, FL
- 2) Judy Rinks
Jacksonville, FL
- 3) Maria M. Hyer
Plymouth Meeting, PA
- 4) Luce H. Zolna
Chicago, IL
- 5) Linæ Frei
Scottsdale, AZ
- 6) Marilyn Gray
Newberry, FL

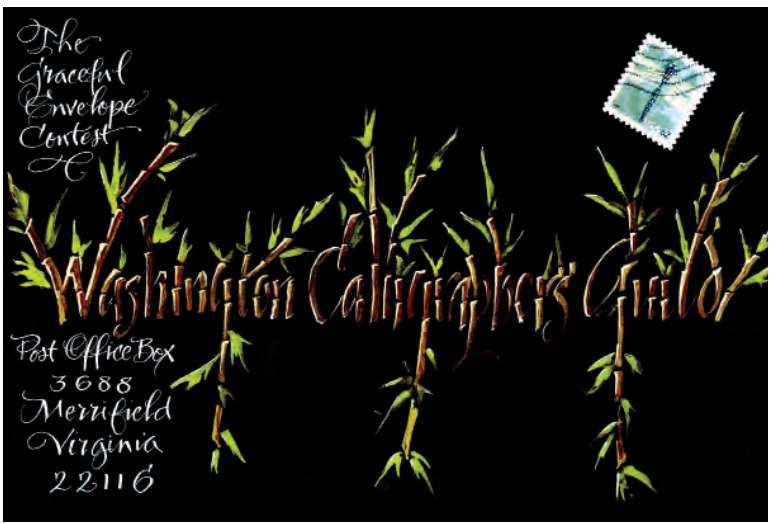
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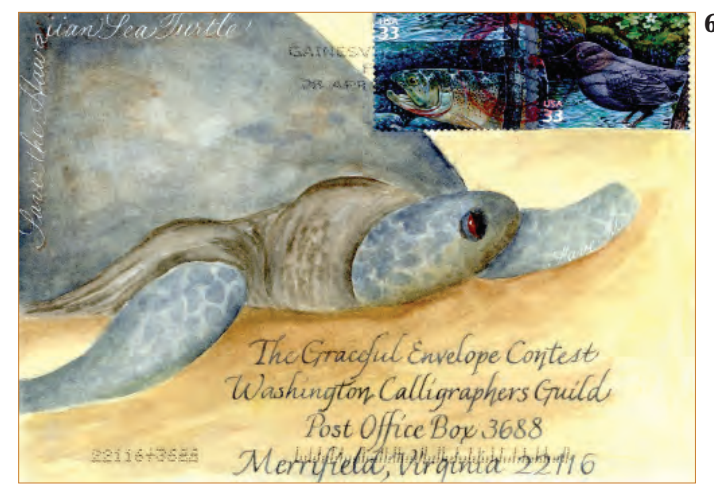
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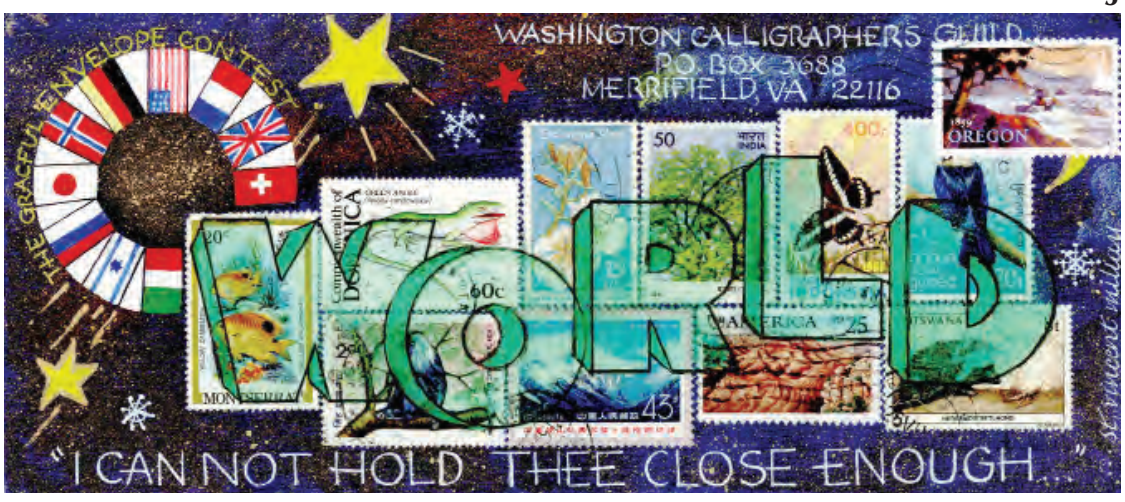
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- 1) Elizabeth Nuttle
Brooklandville, MD
- 2) Betty Locke
Duncan, BC, Canada
- 3) Joan Gooderham
Fort Erie, ON, Canada
- 4) Marion McKenzie
Hampshire, England
- 5) Sally Penley
Olympia, WA
- 6) Myrlin von Glahn
Rocky River, OH

- 1) Kathy D. Barker
Bellevue, WA
- 2) Carol DuBosch
Portland, OR
- 3) Petra Pustl
Niederaichbach, Germany
- 4) Yumie Tanaka
Kashiwa, Japan
- 5) Jane Ewing
Grand Haven, MI
- 6) Carole Sauter
Kent, WA



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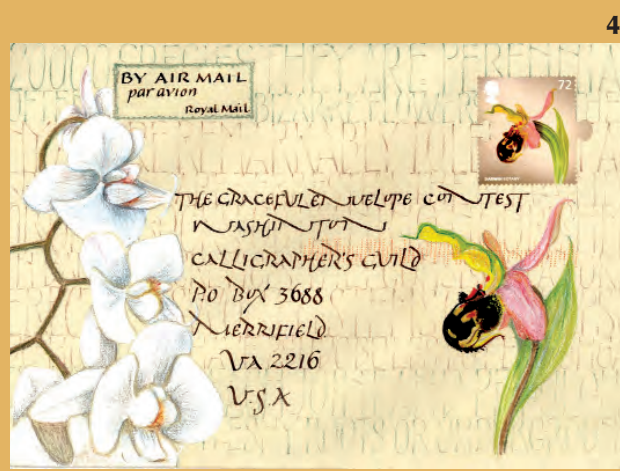
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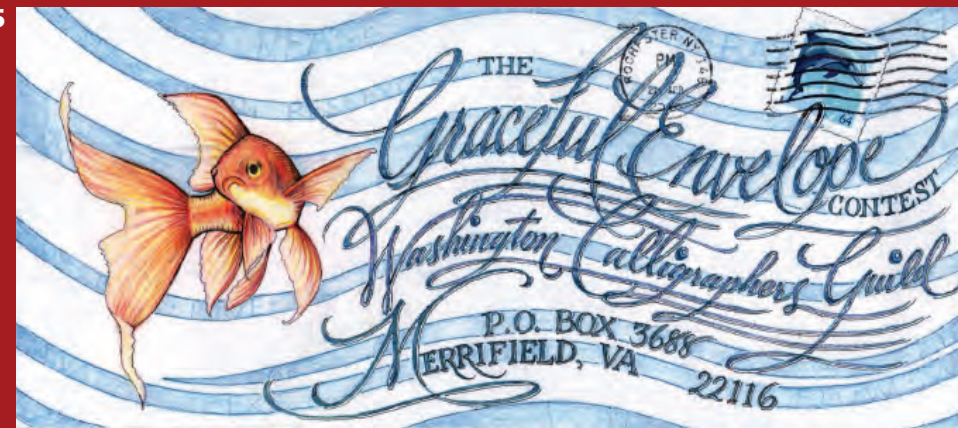
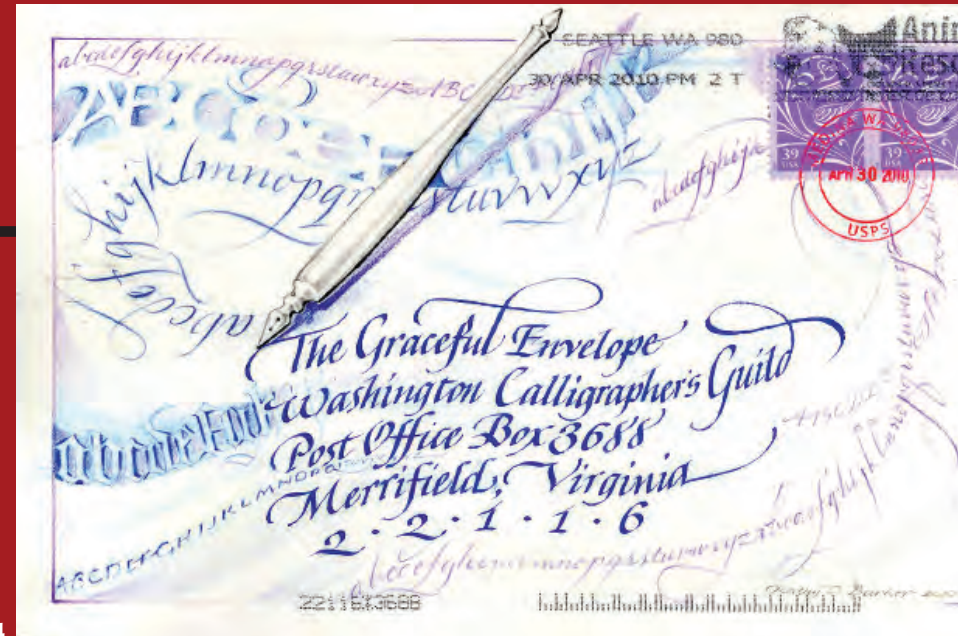
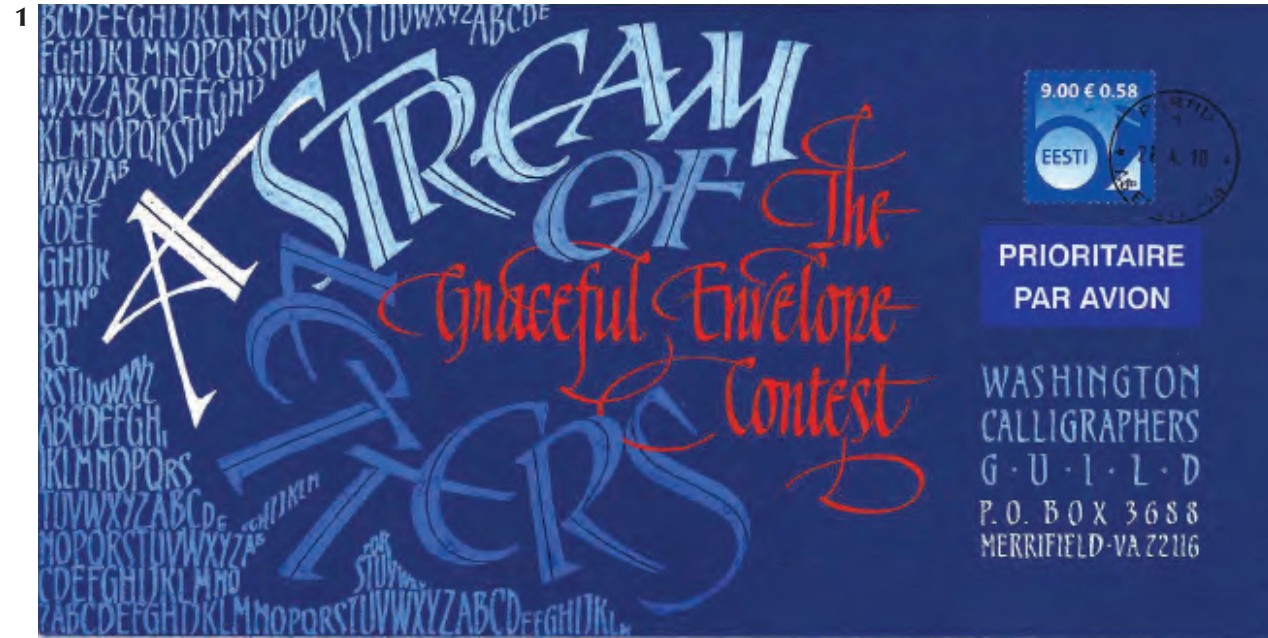
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2010

Theme: A Stream of Letters



- 1) Vello Paluoja (Best in Show)
Parnu, Estonia
- 2) Rosalee Anderson
Frankfort, KY
- 3) Carol Meetze-Moates
Julian, NC
- 4) Kathy Barker
Bellevue, WA
- 5) Rhonda Cavanagh
Hilton, NY
- 6) Beate Lommer
Griesbach, Germany
- 7) Joan Gooderham
St. Catharines, ON, Canada

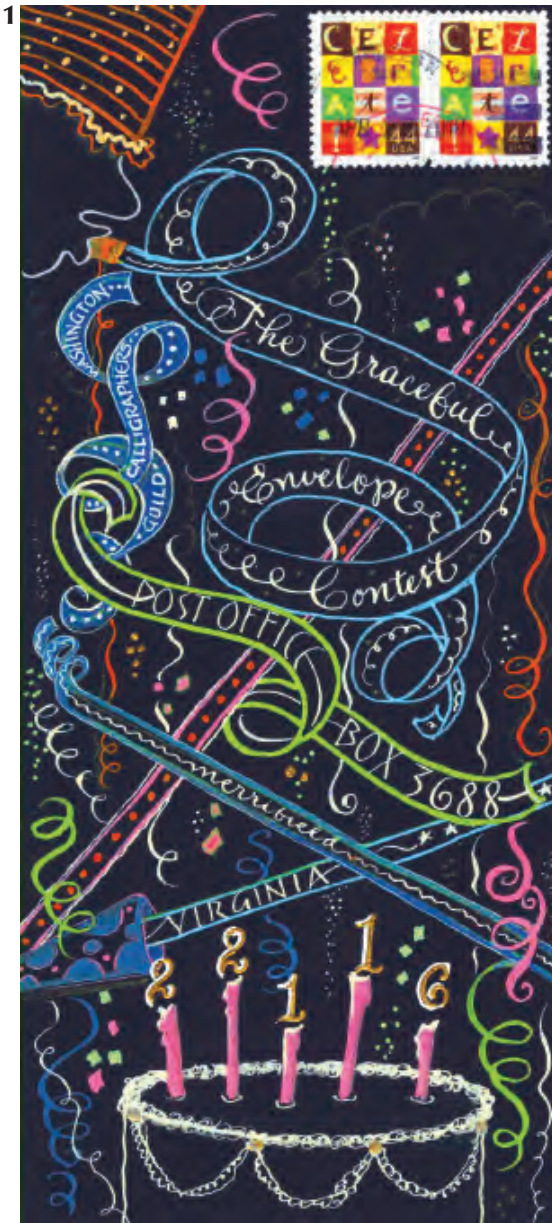


For the 2010 theme, "A Stream of Letters," artists were urged to design an envelope that celebrates letters or lakes, books or brooks, alphabets or aqua, words or water conservation, the mailstream or a mountain spring — "or any idea that flows from our theme and your creativity." Looking for skill in lettering, effective use of color and design and creative interpretation of the theme were judges Theresa Daly, Washington Calligraphers Guild past president; Tamara Stoneburner, professional calligrapher and illustrator; and Michael Shea, NALC graphic designer.

Best in Show
Vello Paluoja – Parnu, Estonia

Winners:
Rosalee Anderson – Frankfort, KY
Kathy Barker – Bellevue, WA
Rhonda Cavanagh – Hilton, NY
Jacqueline Davis – River Falls, WI
Carol DuBosch – Portland, OR
Joan Gooderham – St. Catharines, ON, Canada
Julie Gray – Sandia Park, NM
Carol Meetze-Moates – Julian, NC
Yumie Tanaka – Kashiwa, Chiba, Japan

Honorable Mentions:
Shirlee DiBacco – Voorhees, NJ
Gloria Eckart – Plantation, FL
Wendy Erich – Frederick, MD
Jo Forsyth – Shoreline, WA
Lorrie Frear – Canandaigua, NY
Karin Gable – Reseda, CA
Jeri Hobart – Iowa City, IA
Louise Jolly – La Chapelle-Rablais, France
Beate Lommer – Griesbach, Germany
Debra Lyman – San Diego, CA
Richard Paulicks – Niederaichbach, Germany
Elizabeth Walsh – Olympia, WA
Beverly Womack – Placentia, CA
Lynn Zakevich – South Miami, FL



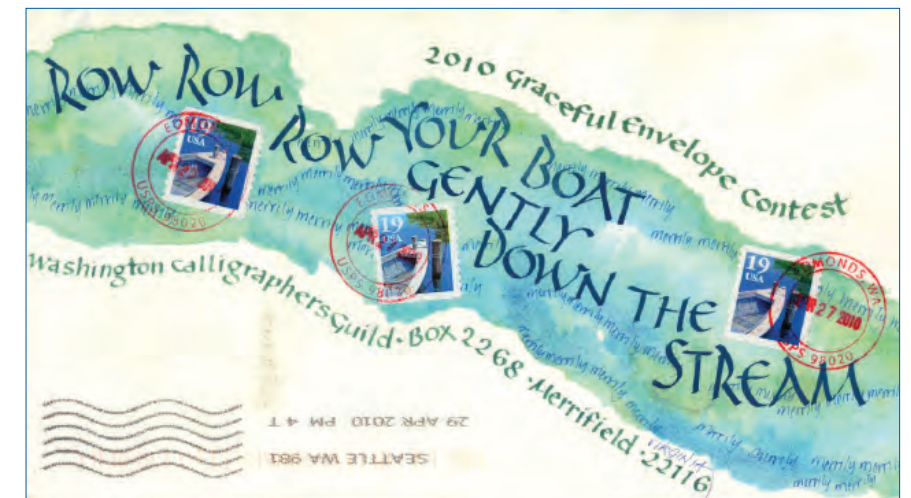
- 1) Shirlee DiBacco
Voorhees, NJ
- 2) Carol DuBosch
Portland, OR
- 3) Yumie Tanaka
Kashiwa, Chiba, Japan
- 4) Lorrie Frear
Canandaigua, NY
- 5) Karin Gable
Reseda, CA
- 6) Gloria Eckart
Plantation, FL
- 7) Wendy Erich
Frederick, MD
- 8) Jeri Hobart
Iowa City, IA



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1) Louise Jolly
La Chapelle-Rablais, France

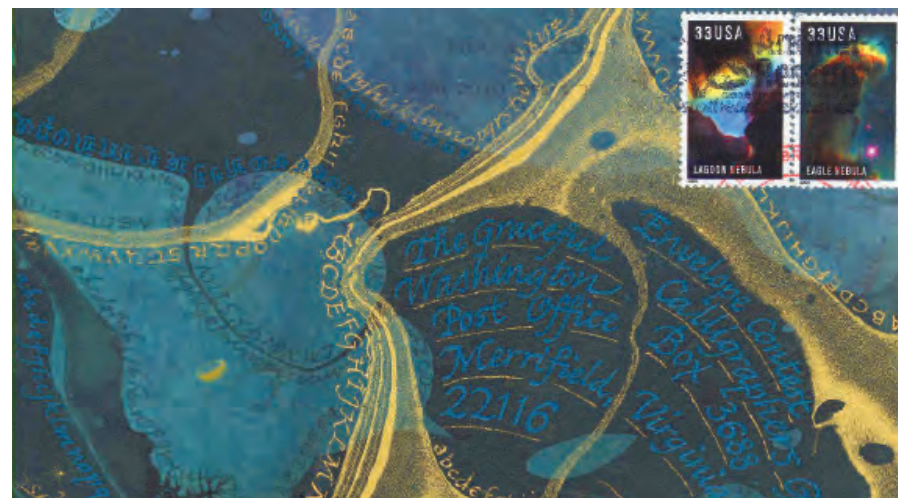
2) Debra Lyman
San Diego, CA

3) Jo Forsyth
Shoreline, WA

4) Lynn Zakevich
South Miami, FL

5) Julie Gray
Sandia Park, NM

6) Beverly Womack
Placentia, CA



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7) Jacqueline Davis
River Falls, WI

8) Richard Paulicks
Niederaichbach, Germany

9) Elizabeth Walsh
Olympia, WA



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2011

Theme: Time Flies

- 1) Louise Jolly
La Chapelle-Rablais, France
- 2) Beverly Womack
Placentia, CA
- 3) Angelamae Abbene
Marcy, NY
- 4) Margaret Kubisch (Best in Show)
South Australia
- 5) Rhonda Cavanagh
Hilton, NY
- 6) Jo Forsyth
Shoreline, WA

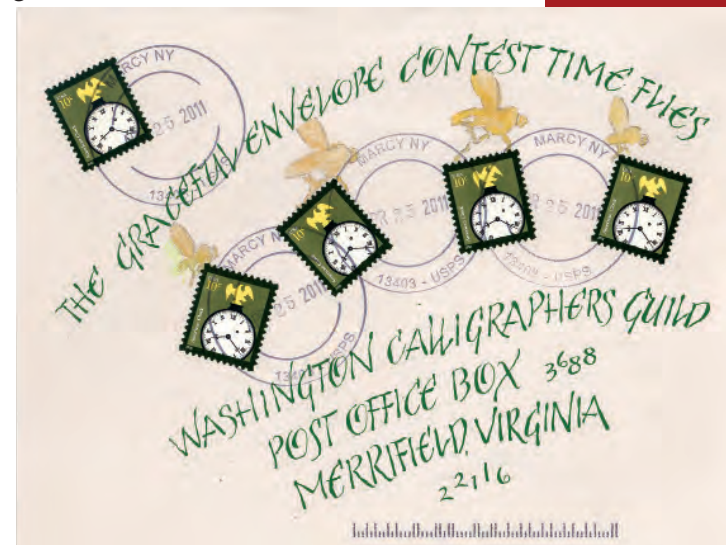


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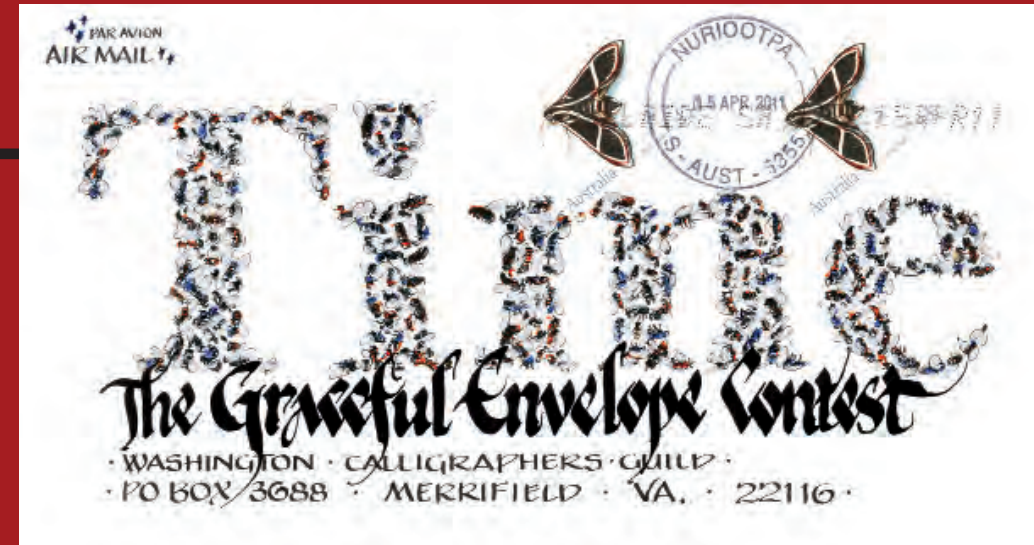
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This year's theme, "Time Flies," was inspired by the 35th anniversary of the Washington Calligraphers Guild. Entrants were urged to design an envelope that "explores good times, quality time, the times of our lives, time travel, or any other idea you have time to develop." The competition was juried by professional calligrapher Peggy Schiefelbein, whose clients include the National Gallery of Art, Freer and Sackler Galleries of the Smithsonian and the Folger Shakespeare Library; Shane Perry, calligraphy faculty member at the Smithsonian Institution and 2006 Graceful Envelope Contest best-in-show winner; and Alfredo Ratinoff, an internationally acclaimed ceramicist and Smithsonian faculty member.

Best in Show:
Margaret Kubisch – Nuriootpa, S. Australia

Winners:
Rhonda Cavanagh – Hilton, NY
Jane Ewing – Grand Haven, MI
Jo Forsyth – Shoreline, WA
Lorrie Frear – Canandaigua, NY
Linnae Frei – Scottsdale, AZ
Julie Gray – Sandia Park, NM
Jeri Hobart – Iowa City, IA
Louise Jolly – La Chapelle-Rablais, France
Beverly Womack – Placentia, CA

Honorable Mentions:
Angelamae Abbene – Marcy, NY
Rosalee Anderson – Frankfort, KY
Dick Borgstrom – Fountain Hills, AZ
Tina Cronkhite – Grand Rapids, MI
Brenda Cropper – Conroe, TX
Nan Deluca – New York, NY
Gloria Eckart – Plantation, FL
Joan Gooderham – St. Catharines, ON, Canada
Kath Harney – Bothell, WA
Julie Kechele – Plainwell, MI
Gerry Jackson Kerdok – Hudson, MA
Sue Kinsey – Tulsa, OK
Donna S. Koger – Martinsville, VA
Beate Lommer – Griesbach, Germany
Margi Long – Curtis, WA
Carol Meetze-Moates – Julian, NC
Sally Penley – Olympia, WA
Yumie Tanaka – Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Cynthia Towle – Brookfield, NH
Myrlin von Glahn – Rocky River, OH



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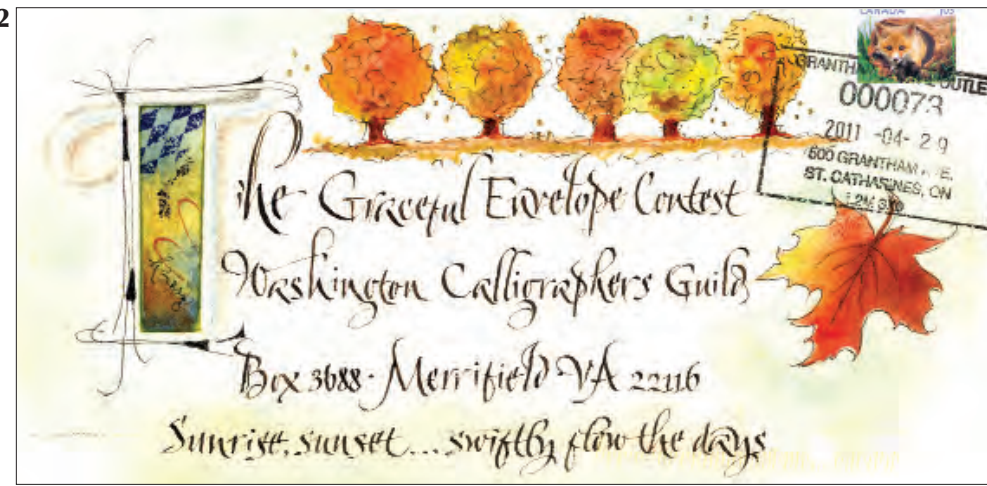


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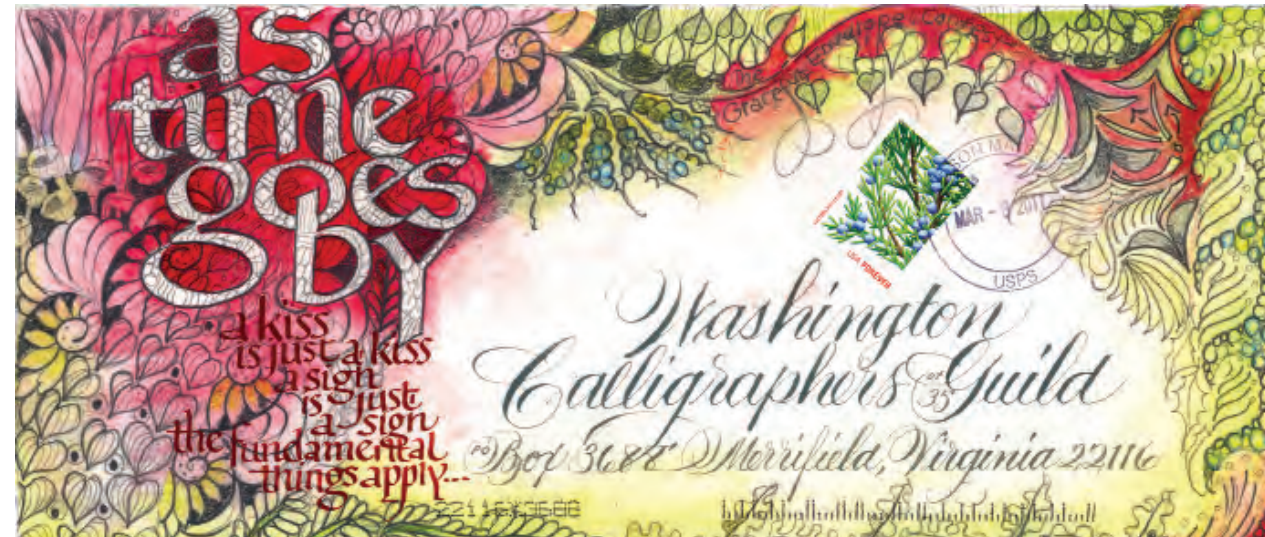
- 1) Myrlin von Glahn
Rocky River, OH
- 2) Joan Gooderham
St. Catharines, ON, Canada
- 3) Linae Frei
Scottsdale, AZ
- 4) Gerry Jackson Kerdok
Hudson, MA
- 5) Gloria Eckart
Plantation, FL
- 6) Jane Ewing
Grand Haven, MI



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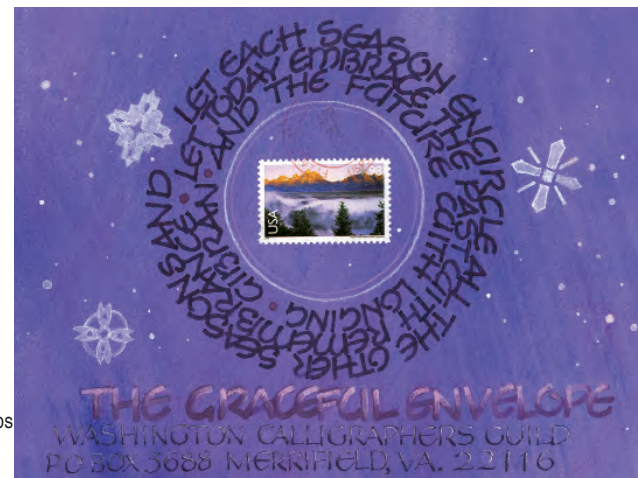


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- 1) Dick Borgstrom
Fountain Hills, AZ
- 2) Brenda Cropper
Conroe, TX
- 3) Lorrie Frear
Canandaigua, NY
- 4) Tina Cronkhite
Grand Rapids, MI

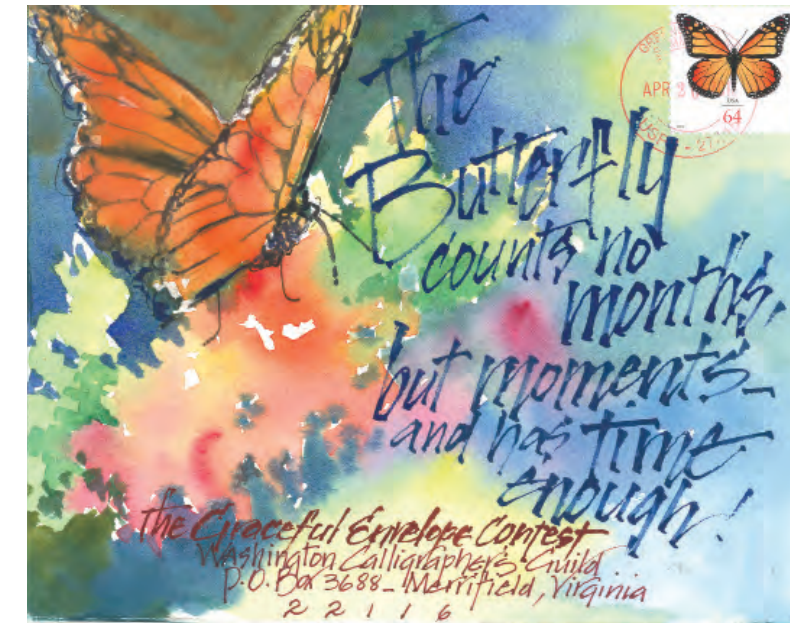


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- 1) Julie Kechele
Plainwell, MI
- 2) Nan Deluca
New York, NY
- 3) Jeri Hobart
Iowa City, IA
- 4) Sally Penley
Olympia, WA

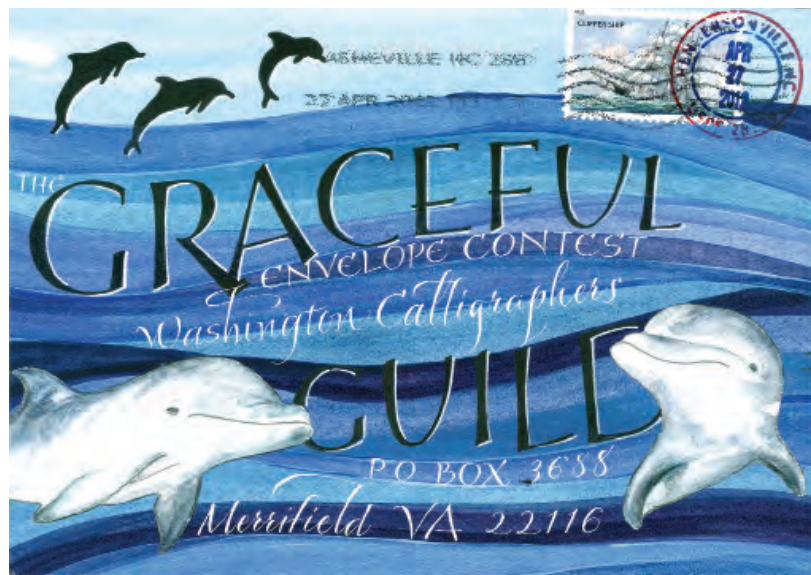


- 1) Donna S. Koger
Martinsville, VA
- 2) Carol Meetze-Moates
Julian, NC
- 3) Sue Kinsey
Tulsa, OK
- 4) Kath Harney
Bothell, WA
- 5) Cynthia Towle
Brookfield, NH

2012

Theme: D-liver D-letter D-sooner D-better

- 1) Catherine Langsdorf
Hendersonville, NC
- 2) Karin Gable
Reseda, CA
- 3) M. Dwyer
Raleigh, NC
- 4) Jill Norvell
Reston, VA



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- 1) Ruth Korch (Best in Show)
Santa Cruz, CA
- 2) Beate Lommer
Griesbach, Germany
- 3) William Stewart
Vineyard Haven, MA
- 4) Julie Kechele
Plainwell, MI



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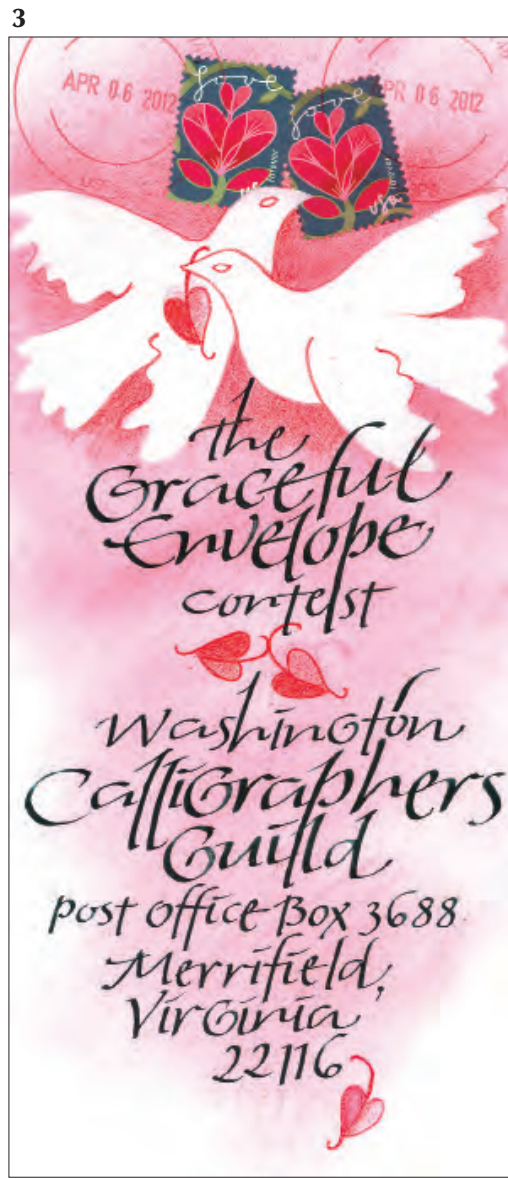
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The 2012 theme, "D-liver D-letter D-sooner D-better," saluted the nation's letter carriers, who D-liver 170 billion pieces each year. Entrants designed envelopes around anything beginning with the letter "D" and addressed them creatively. A panel of professional artists determined the winners: Designer and calligrapher Lee Ann Clark, calligrapher and illustrator Tamara Stoneburner, and NALC designer Michael Shea.

BEST IN SHOW:
Ruth Korch – Santa Cruz, CA

WINNERS:
Linea Frei – Scottsdale, AZ
Julie Kechele – Plainwell, MI
Catherine Langsdorf – Hendersonville, NC
Tina Lee-Cronkrite – Grand Rapids, MI
Judith Leitch – Lake Mary, FL
Sue McKendrick – Mechanicsburg, PA
Janneth Morales – Camden, NJ
William Stewart – Vineyard Haven, MA

HONORABLE MENTION:
M. Dwyer – Raleigh, NC
Karin Gable – Reseda, CA
Julie Gray – Denver, NC
Gerry Jackson Kerdok – Hudson, MA
Tommaso Landini – Milano, Italy
Betty Locke – Duncan, BC, Canada
Beate Lommer – Griesbach, Germany
Margi Long – Curtis, WA
Linda J. Lundy – Ellensburg, WA
Jill Norvell – Reston, VA
Rose M. Smutko – San Diego, CA
Paula Vena – Aitkenvale, FNQ Australia
Beverly Womack – Placentia, CA



- 1) Janneth Morales
Camden, NJ
- 2) Gerry Jackson Kerdok
Hudson, MA
- 3) Judith Leitch
Lake Mary, FL
- 4) Sue McKendrick
Mechanicsburg, PA
- 5) Linda J. Lundy
Ellensburg, WA
- 6) Tommaso Landini
Milano, Italy
- 7) Beverly Womack
Placentia, CA
- 8) Rose M. Smutko
San Diego, CA





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- 1) Betty Locke
Duncan, BC, Canada
- 2) Tina Lee-Cronkhite
Grand Rapids, MI
- 3) Paula Vena
Aitkenvale,
FNQ Australia



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Each year three judges – two from the calligraphic and arts communities and one from the National Association of Letter Carriers – spend much of a day reviewing all the entries and selecting the winners. Always there is lively debate, some amount of disagreement and ultimate compromise. Below, several past Graceful Envelope Contest judges share their thoughts:

Advice from Jurors

For the Graceful Envelope Contest, I look at a compelling design that grabs my attention and that conveys the theme, either directly or even indirectly if it is cleverly done. The lettering needs to be well-executed and congruent to the overall design. Also, the use of the stamp needs to be well-considered, since it is part of the envelope, and therefore is part of the design.

Envelopes that are expertly painted and/or drawn but contain lettering that seems like an afterthought would not be considered a winner. Expert lettering that does not produce a pleasing overall design though it adheres to the theme would not be considered a winner.

I don't believe it is the best calligrapher that will always win, nor the best draftsman or painter – it is the artist who is able to use both effectively to execute the theme in the most compelling way.

– Shane Perry (2011)

I see each envelope as a miniature narrative of three parts: Solid lettering; innovative design or illustration; and selection of stamp relating to theme and its incorporation into the overall composition (though it isn't imperative to use the stamp in this fashion, it can make a much more dynamic presentation).

The very best envelopes bring all of these elements together and relate to each other. Great lettering and weak design or vice versa bring down the impact of the whole. It is really a synergy of the parts reflecting the theme.

My advice to entrants is to think outside the box regarding the theme of that year – reject the most obvious ideas, especially the corny ones! Really let yourself go in thinking of different approaches to the subject.

I entered the competition five or six times early on and found it a very interesting and challenging exercise. Just looking at the innovation of winning envelopes from previous years stimulates creativity.

– Peggy Schiefelbein (2011)

Being a juror is a chance to use one's experience and knowledge to give special recognition to art that excels. It is also a surprisingly humbling process.

A juror is first struck by the vitality and variety of the work. You not only see the artwork, but feel in each piece the artists' intention of creating something wonderful.

Then the layers start revealing themselves. Like getting to know a person, the recognition of strengths and weaknesses grows with closer looking. Sometimes strengths are off-putting and weaknesses endearing. Sometimes what works is so successful that it can blind you to what is not working.

This is where judging can go from being "thumbs up or down" to a real quandary about which aspects of the art should carry the most weight in the jurors' decision. These aspects include color, technical skill, harmony of elements, unity and clear communication of theme, and use of space. Then there's the additional level of give-and-take with the other jurors.

We enjoyed getting to know your work and feel privileged to have spent the day engaged with it. Your work inspired some lively conversations, laughter at the humor in many of them, and appreciation for the loving effort you put into them.

– Rose Folsom and Pat Blair (2014)

2013

Theme: A World of Change

- 1) Cheryl Tefft (Best in Show)
Maryland Heights, MO
- 2) Carol DuBosch
Portland, OR
- 3) Jeri Hobart
Iowa City, IA
- 4) Kathy Barker
Bellevue, WA
- 5) Hannah C. Holder
Knoxville, TN
- 6) Rebecca Sinnen
Milwaukee, WI
- 7) Toi Clawson
Fairport, NY



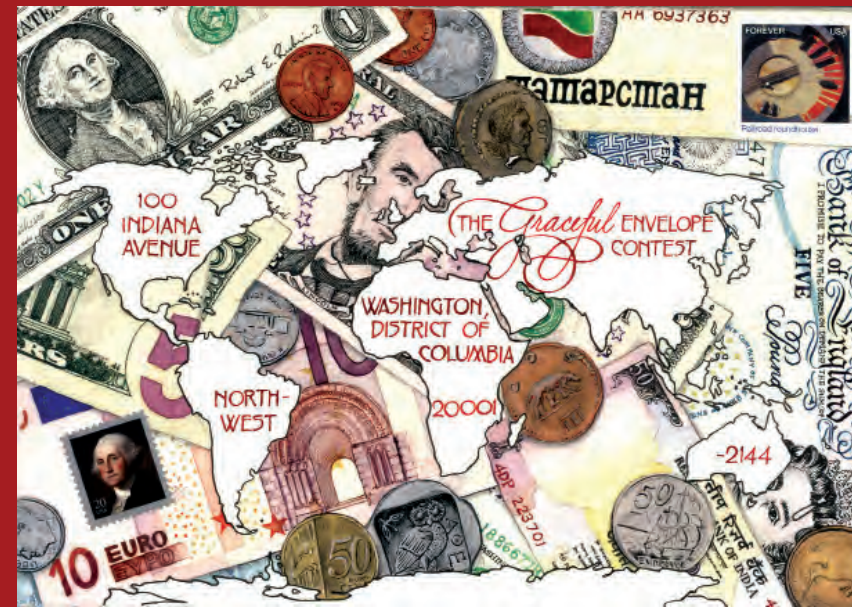
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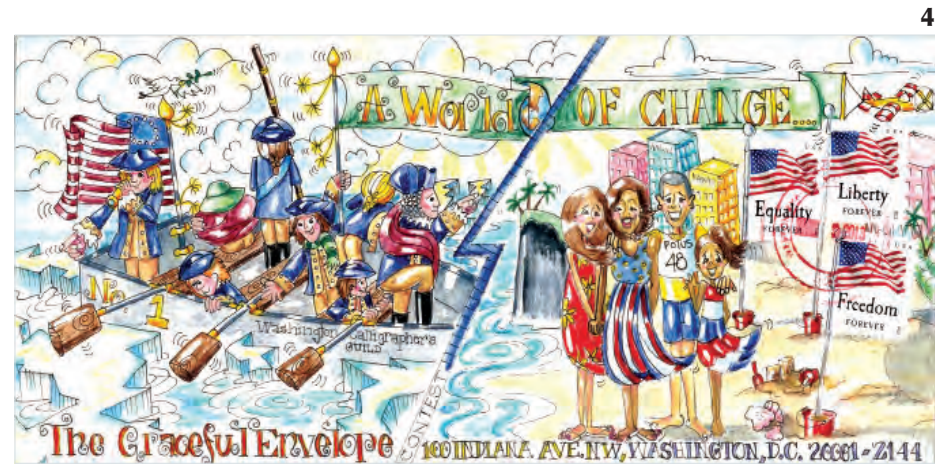
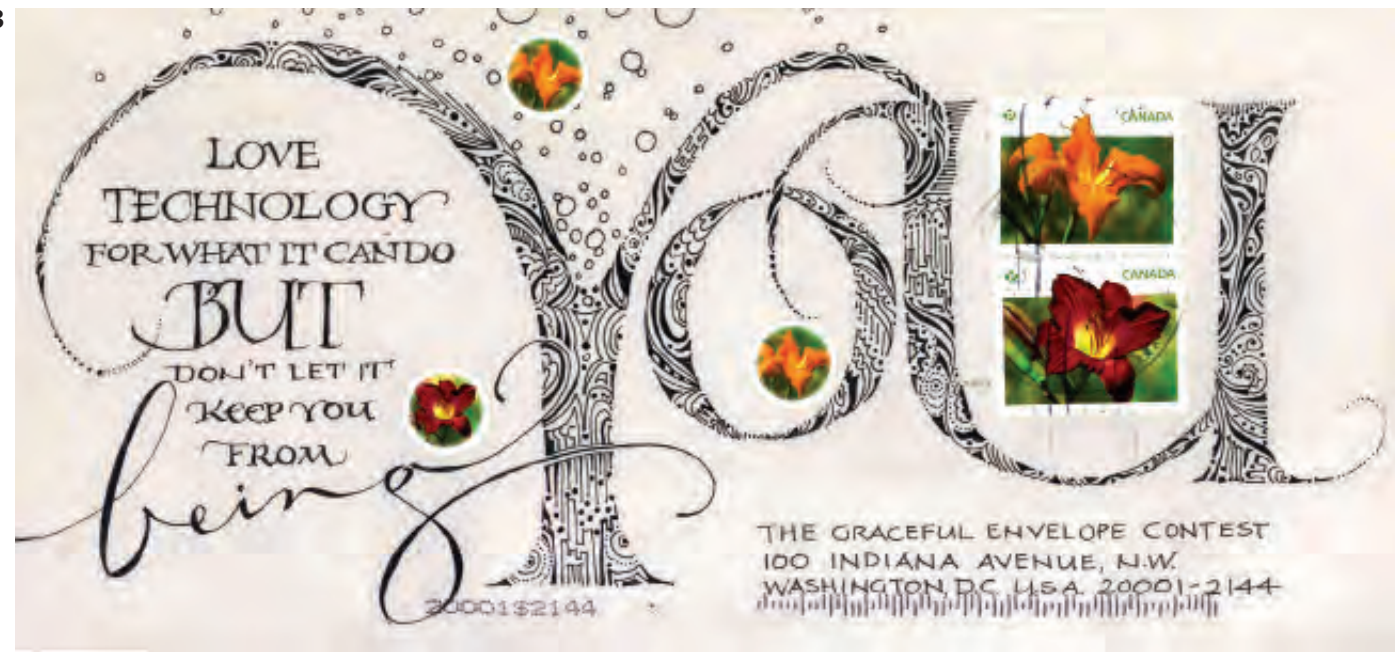
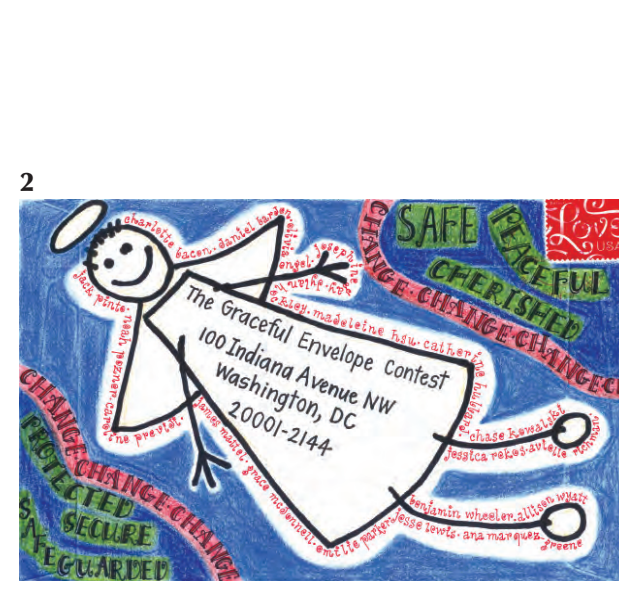
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The 2013 theme, "A World of Change," challenged artists to ponder a change from the past or look into the future to the kind of change they would like to see in the world. The competition was juried by professional calligraphers Christine Tischer and Gilda Penn and National Association of Letter Carriers graphic designer Michael Shea.

BEST IN SHOW:
Cheryl Tefft – Maryland Heights, MO

WINNERS:
Kathy Barker – Bellevue, WA
Toi Clawson – Fairport, NY
Lynda Demke – Moorhead, MN
Carol DuBosch – Portland, OR
Julie Gray – Denver, NC
Jeri Hobart – Iowa City, IA
Hannah C. Holder – Knoxville, TN
Phyllis Macaluso – Ancaster, ON, Canada

HONORABLE MENTION:
P.L. Brooks – Weston, FL
Charity Goodwin – Stanberry, MO
Junko Ishikawa – Saitama-ken, Japan
Glenn Leung – Philadelphia, PA
Betty Locke – Duncan, BC, Canada
Carol Meetze-Moates – Julian, NC
Rebecca Sinnen – Milwaukee, WI
Yumie Tanaka – Tokyo, Japan
Mary F. Vivo – Hartford, CT
Florence Vogel – Sandusky, MI



- 1) Julie Gray
Denver, NC
- 2) Florence Vogel
Sandusky, MI
- 3) Betty Locke
Duncan, BC, Canada
- 4) P.L. Brooks
Weston, FL
- 5) Phyllis Macaluso
Ancaster, ON, Canada
- 6) Charity Goodwin
Stanberry, MO
- 7) Lynda Demke
Moorhead, MN
- 8) Junko Ishikawa
Saitama-ken, Japan
- 9) Carol Meetze-Moates
Julian, NC

Student Artists

The Graceful Envelope Contest expanded in 2005 to include student entries — at the same time that countless school systems were dropping art from the curriculum. Many elementary schools have also discontinued teaching cursive. And, in this era of electronic mail and text messages, rare is the young person who knows how to address an envelope.

Yet children and teens continue to tap their creativity and submit Graceful Envelopes that delight and surprise us, as you can see from the sampling of entries on these two pages (all student winners are online at www.calligraphersguild.org).

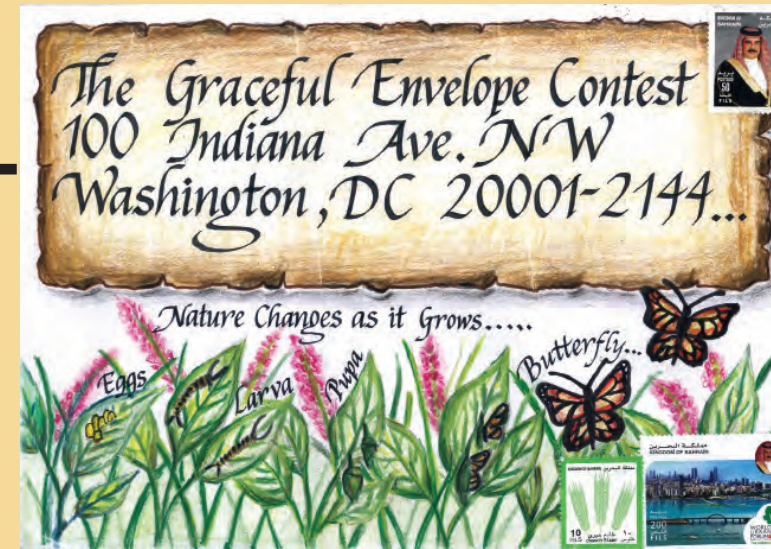
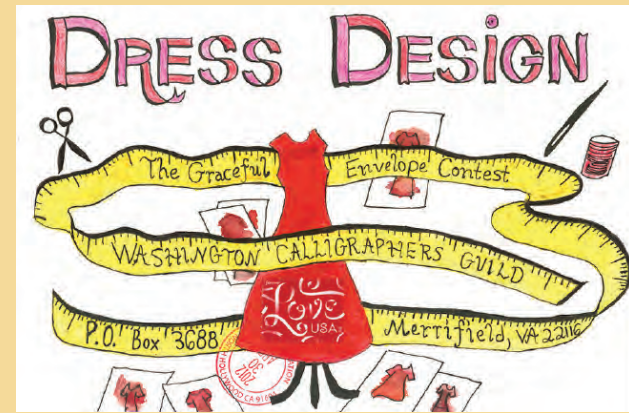
One school even bases its visual arts program on the contest. Weekly art classes are mandatory for 10th-12th graders at Valley Torah High School in Valley Village, CA. Teacher and graphic artist Hedy Harris says her students benefit from the Graceful Envelope Contest in numerous ways, including learning to consider different approaches to the annual theme.

Harris teaches them basic art skills such as watercolor and sketching, and provides calligraphy instruction so they can “look at letters from a different point of view.” She says the contest also “encourages life skills such as neatness, organization, determination, presentation and self-confidence.”

“Students who win recognition are over the moon,” Harris reports. “They never thought of themselves as artists.”

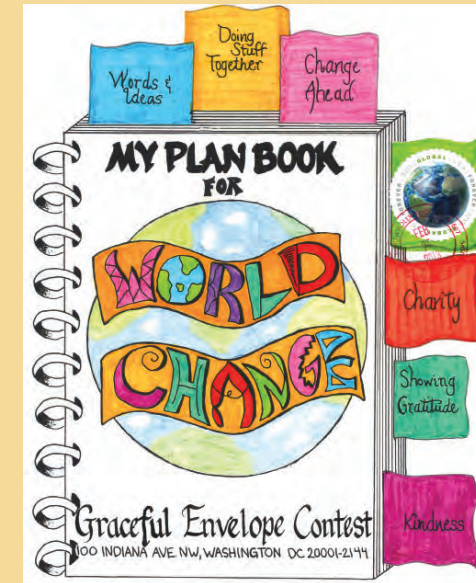
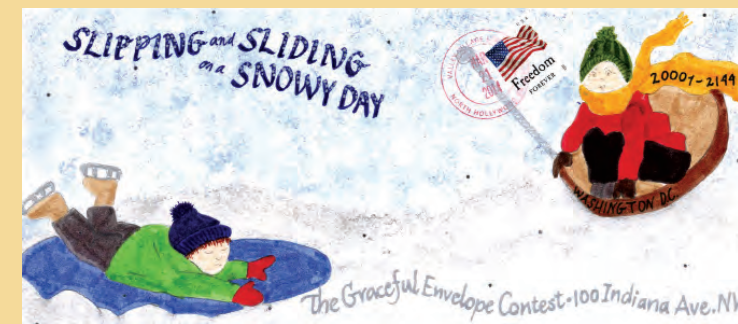
2012 theme: The Letter D

From top: Bracha Smith – Valley Village, CA; Jerry Sanchez – San Bernardino, CA; Grace Sun – Escondido, CA; Sarah Khodorkovsky – Tarzana, CA.



2014 theme: The Letter S

From top: Yehudis Levine – Valley Village, CA; Elly Winchell – Valley Village, CA; Geling Lee – Ann Arbor, MI.



2013 theme: A World of Change

Clockwise from top: Ayesha Hamid Dhopavkar – Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain; Hilla Levi – Tarzana, CA; Chani Kahnrose – Valley Village, CA.



2011 theme: Time Flies

Above, Cristina Morales – San Bernardino, CA; left, M. Thomas Glenchur – West Chester, OH.

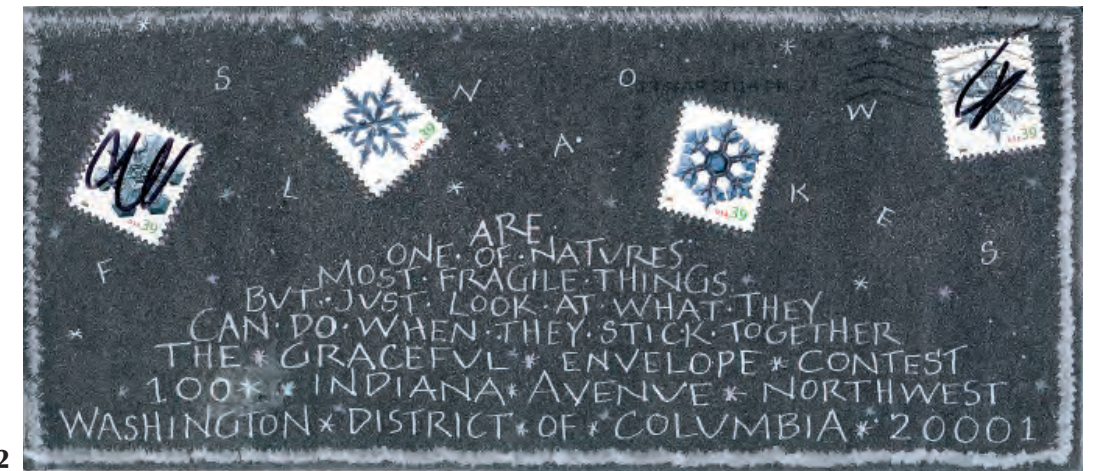


- 1) Yumie Tanaka
Tokyo, Japan
- 2) Joan Iversen Goswell
Valencia, PA
- 3) Betty Locke
Duncan, BC, Canada



- 1) Kathy Barker
Bellevue, WA
- 2) Jill Norvell
Reston, VA
- 3) Tori Bell
Tacoma, WA
- 4) Pamela Day
Dayton, OH

1



2

3

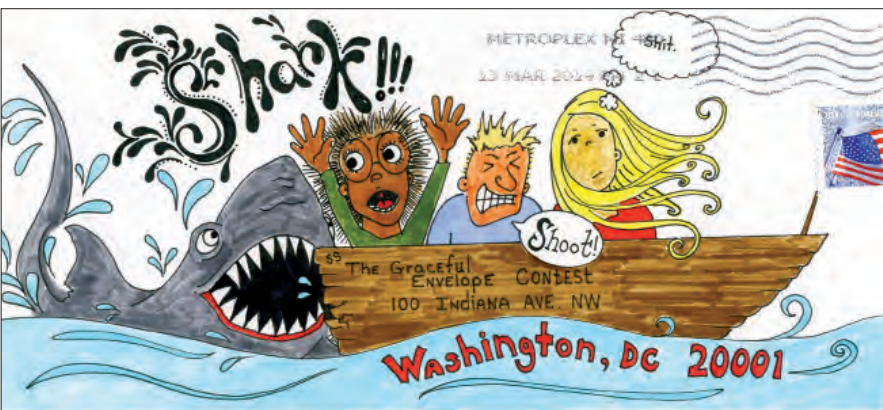
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3



2



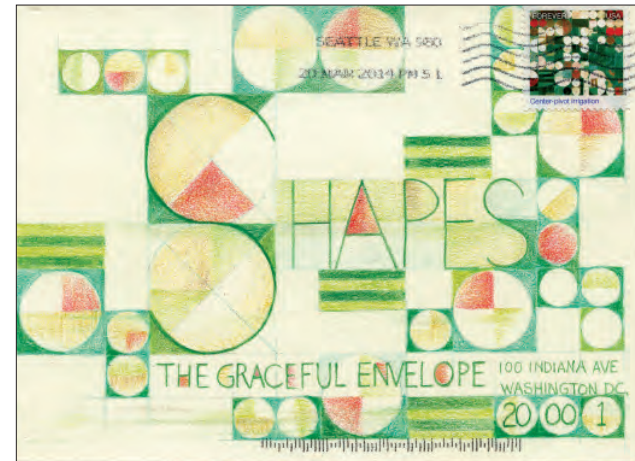
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5



6

- 4) Molly McNeece
Farmington Hills, MI
- 5) Mark A. Hicks
Phoenix, AZ
- 6) Elizabeth Walsh
Olympia, WA



The Graceful Envelope

The Graceful Envelope Contest celebrates the art of the beautiful envelope. The Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum originated the competition almost by accident in 1995 when it decided to mount an informal display of expert calligraphy to accompany an envelope workshop. Hundreds of calligraphers responded to the invitation to mail in envelopes artfully addressed to "The Graceful Envelope."

The result was an annual contest and exhibition, which the museum turned over to the Washington (DC) Calligraphers Guild in 2001. Two years later, the National Association of Letter Carriers agreed to co-sponsor and exhibit the winners in their lobby on Capitol Hill.

Each year participants from around the world are encouraged to incorporate the given theme in a creative design while using artistic hand lettering to address the envelope. Students are also invited to enter in three grade categories.

The theme and call for entries are announced in the Fall on the Washington Calligraphers Guild's website, where winning envelopes since 2001 can be viewed online: www.calligraphersguild.org.

Winning envelopes of the 2014 Graceful Envelope Contest include these by (from top) Gerry Jackson Kerdok of Hudson, MA, Carol DuBosch of Portland, OR and Catherine Langsdorf of Hendersonville, NC. The theme was "The Superlative Letter S."

