BREAK BARRIERS – OPEN DOORS

In September 2013, the United Nations General Assembly held a High-Level meeting on Disability and Development to raise awareness about the work of the UN in ensuring the equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development. A social media campaign "Break Barriers - Open Doors" highlighted how persons with disabilities can have a positive impact in their respective communities.

On September 29, 2013, the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) issued six stamps on the theme "Break Barriers – Open Doors". Two stamps – 46¢ and $1.10 – were issued for use in New York; two stamps – S.f. 1,40 and S.f. 1,90 – for use in Geneva; two stamps – € 0,70 and € 1,70 – for use in Vienna.

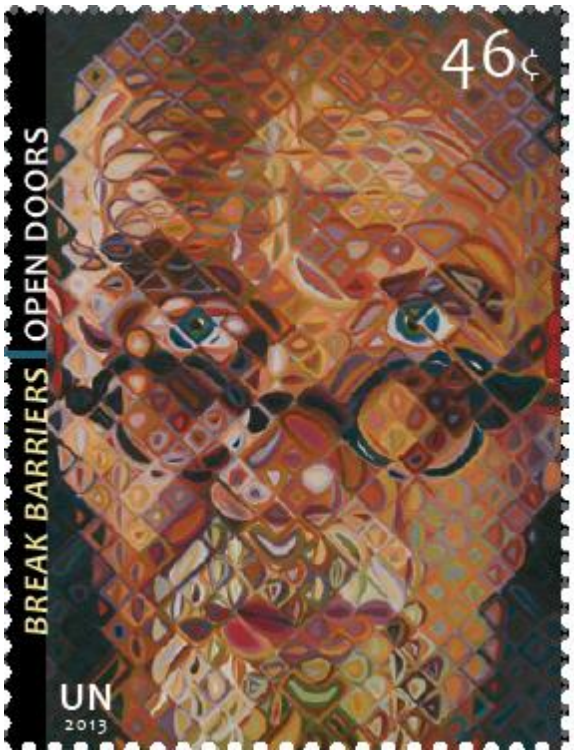
For this stamp issue, UNPA selected artists from around the world with incredible stories that highlight the positive power of full and equal participation of peoples with disabilities.

The Designs

US$ 0.46
Chuck Close (USA) ***Self-Portrait II*** **(2010)**

Chuck Close is an award winning visual artist noted for his highly inventive techniques used to paint the human face. He is best known for his large-scale, photo-based portrait paintings. He is also an accomplished printmaker and photographer whose work has been the subject of more than 200 solo exhibitions in more than 20 countries, including major retrospective exhibitions at New York's Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid and most recently at the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. He has also participated in nearly 800 group exhibitions.

Though a rare spinal artery collapse in 1988 left him paralyzed, he has continued to paint using a brush-holding device strapped to his wrist and forearm. Mr. Close studied at the



University of Washington School of Art (B.A., 1962) and at the Yale University School of Art and Architecture (B.F.A., 1963; M.F.A., 1964), receiving honorary degrees from both of his alma maters as well as 20 other institutions. Close is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and has served on the board of many arts organizations. He was presented with the prestigious National Medal of Arts by President Clinton in 2000 and was appointed by President Obama to serve on The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

US$ 1.10
Josephine King (United Kingdom)
Tears And Laughter**, France 2009**
Ink on handmade paper

My work is based on personal experience. My painting has progressed massively since I recovered from being severely ill and suicidal during a breakdown caused by my Bipolar illness. Since that experience my painting began to reach new depths that it never had before. I was newly compelled to express my darkest feelings and my work started to ava-

lanche. Even if I had wanted to, I would not have been able to stop its flow. When I am painting I reach a state of mind where I'm in another world, a world of unknown territory. I am not conscious of where I am. I paint through pure feelings. Hours go by, and when I awaken I hardly know where I've been. But then I see the painting in front of me. I use text in my paintings because I love to write as well as paint. I can express myself in both creative forms at the same time. They belong together, enhancing my story.



After my first show, the Bipolar returned with a vengeance but it couldn't stop my work. In my second show, 'I Told Him I Was An Artist. He Said "Can You Cook?"' (Riflemaker 2012), I am concentrating on women's issues and particularly what it can feel like to be a female artist in the 21st Century. The title was taken from personal experience. I think it sums up a lot of attitudes towards women in general. My voice is just one amongst millions but if there are people who identify with my work and are moved by it, then I feel I have succeeded. I tell a personal story, yet if I depict pain or suffering it is universal. I paint from the heart and with honesty. Josephine King is represented by Riflemaker London

S.f. 1,40
Sargy Mann (United Kingdom)
See the girl with the red dress on
Oil on canvas 60" x 44"



The British painter Sargy Mann was diagnosed with cataracts at 36, and went on to lose his sight completely. But in his mind's eye his vision did not fade. Mann found new ways to keep working and today his paintings, collected by Daniel Day-Lewis among others, are more acclaimed than ever.

Even before he lost his sight, Sargy Mann was obsessed with ways of seeing. As a young painter he was tutored by singular realists – Frank Auerbach, Euan Uglow – who insisted that an individual artist must be exactly true to what he saw. For much of his working life Mann taught students at Camberwell School of Art all he knew about representing light and color on canvas, with particular reference to Bonnard and Matisse, and he put all of that complex understanding into practice in his own, often gloriously sun-drenched landscapes and interiors. "I was

saying to someone… how incredibly lucky I have been. I had about 25 years' apprenticeship for going blind. It was a bugger, but I kept working out how to paint over those 25 years, and my brain kept finding new ways to see the world... ” *Text excerpts from Tim Adams “The Observer”*

S.f. 1,90
China Disabled People’s Performing Art Troupe (China)



The China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe was founded in 1987 to provide people living with disabilities a platform to express themselves in a special art. The Troupe's guiding principle is the pursuit of Truth, Honesty and Virtue which it emphasizes in all of its activities. The performers, with varying degrees of hearing, visual and physical disabilities, impart their glamour through dance and performances with spectacular sets and elegant, colorful costumes. The program includes songs, Chinese classic dance, folk dance, ballet, Latin ballroom dance, modern dance, opera, jazz, instrumental music and poetry conveyed through sign language.

For over twenty years, the China Disabled People’s Performing Art Troupe has produced extraordinary performances such as “My Dream” allowing the organization to travel to more than 80 countries. The cast of talented performers have been referred to as “Messengers of Beauty and Humanity” by the international community and “Ambassadors for People with Disabilities” by the Disabled People's World Assembly. They have also participated in the closing ceremonies of the Paralympic Games in Athens and the opening and closing ceremonies of the Paralympic Games in Beijing. The Troupe was also designated a “UNESCO Artist for Peace” by the United Nations. The artists are true professionals who dramatically illustrate the creative spirit and potential that lies at the heart of every person, regardless of physical challenges imposed through disability.

€ 0,70
Pete Eckert (USA) ***Electroman***



I didn’t take photography seriously until I went totally blind. I was trained in sculpture and industrial design. I have always been a

visual person and planned to study architecture at Yale, but then I started to lose my sight. A doctor coolly told me I had Retinitis Pigmentosa (R.P.) and left the room without further comment. I learned a person with RP gradually loses their sight until they go completely blind. There is currently no cure for R.P.

I was on my own to find a path. It took me two years to recover and figure out what to do. My first photography outing after a thousand questions at the camera store started it all. People liked the photos. I had found a medium. I view my work during the event of taking the shot in my mind's eye. I "see" each shot very clearly, only I use sound, touch and memory. I am more of a conceptual artist than a photographer. My influences come from my past memory of art and what I now find in the world at large.

I am trying to cut a new path as a blind visual artist. It is important to me that the sighted think about blindness. What I get out of taking photos is the event not the picture. I do the large prints to get sighted people thinking. Talking with people in galleries builds a bridge between my mind's eye and their vision of my work. Occasionally people refuse to believe I am blind. I am a visual person. I just can't see.

€ 1.70
Matt Sesow (USA) ***Dive Bomb***

Born in 1966, Matt Sesow was raised in rural Nebraska while enjoying a normal childhood. On a summer evening when he was eight at an airfield near his home, he was struck by the propeller of a landing airplane. The accident resulted in his left arm being severed and the loss of his left hand. Through the support of his family, Matt's physical disability was minimized as he was encouraged to participate in a variety of academic and organized sporting events. Eventually he attended and graduated University with a degree in Computer Information Systems and a professional career with IBM as a software tester.

Without formal art education, Matt Sesow discovered painting as a hobby while working at IBM. In the evenings and on weekends he played with painting and began selling his work to Self-Taught and Outsider art collectors in 1995. Throughout the 1990s he continued to paint and participate in art exhibitions while working full-time at a variety of computer firms including AOL and Netscape. Returning from a stint with the Peace Corps in 1999, Matt began to focus on his love of painting and developing a path to create art full-time.



In 2001, after establishing himself within the art community as a powerfully diverse and independent painter, Matt Sesow retired from his computer career to pursue his art full-time. With the ability to focus entirely on his painting, Sesow exhibited and traveled across the United States while also securing new collectors internationally including significant exhibitions in Spain, France and Slovenia. Currently living and painting in Washington, DC, Matt continues to be an independent artist who makes a living by selling his work directly to fans visiting his studio and from his webpage sesow.com