

Bruce Licher: Stamping Antarctica **Collection CAE1806**

Introduction/Abstract

Bruce Licher of Independent Press designed and produced Antarctic printed ephemera such as stamps, post cards, posters, and envelopes for sale in the gift shops of the three U.S. Antarctic stations. Materials include Antarctic stamps, printed ephemera related to the Antarctic and Independent Project Press, and a music CD.

Biographical Note: Bruce Licher

Musician, artist & designer Bruce Licher founded Independent Project Press after learning the art of letterpress printing at the Women's Graphic Center in downtown Los Angeles at the beginning of 1982. His initial projects centered around creating album covers, postcards and promotional stamps for his band Savage Republic. It didn't take long before he was producing work for other L.A. underground music groups, along with a growing number of clients in the Los Angeles design community. In addition to packaging and releasing music on his own record label (Independent Project Records), his other music-related projects have included work for clients ranging from R.E.M. to Harold Budd to Stereolab. Independent Project Press also produces elegant and creative business stationery, invitations, wine labels, promotional stamp sheets and booklets, and numerous other pieces of letterpress-printed ephemera for clients large and small. Licher was nominated twice for a Grammy Award for his album packaging and has been credited with starting the trend in letterpress-printed CD and record packaging using industrial-style chipboard. His graphic design and letterpress work have been featured in two major design exhibitions at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York City, and has also been exhibited in California, Arizona, and Paris, France. After 17 years living and working in Sedona, Arizona, Licher and his artist wife Karen have relocated Independent Project Press to the Eastern Sierra town of Bishop, California.

Scope and Content

From 2005 through 2007, Licher designed souvenir stamps using photography by Ed Anderson; the stamps were produced for Raytheon Polar Services Corporation for sale in the gift shops of the three U.S. Antarctic stations: McMurdo, South Pole, and Palmer Station on the Antarctic Peninsula. The stamps were commissioned by Jay Fox, then manager of the stores for Raytheon.

Stamps have a long history in the Antarctic with the first ones produced specifically for use in the Antarctic issued by the New Zealand Post Office on January 15th, 1908 when the current 1d Universal stamp of New Zealand with a special overprint reading "King Edward VII Land" was used on mail by members of the Shackleton Antarctic Expedition. Since then, there have been a large number of stamps issued specifically for use in the Antarctic. There have also been a large number of other stamps issued which show Antarctic designs or commemorate Antarctic events, but which themselves are not exclusively for use from the Antarctic. Stamps display the evolution of cultural attitudes over time toward specific places, and often use landscape art and species emblematic of place for their subject.

Materials include Antarctic stamps, printed ephemera related to the Antarctic and Independent Project Press, and a music CD.

This archive is currently in process.