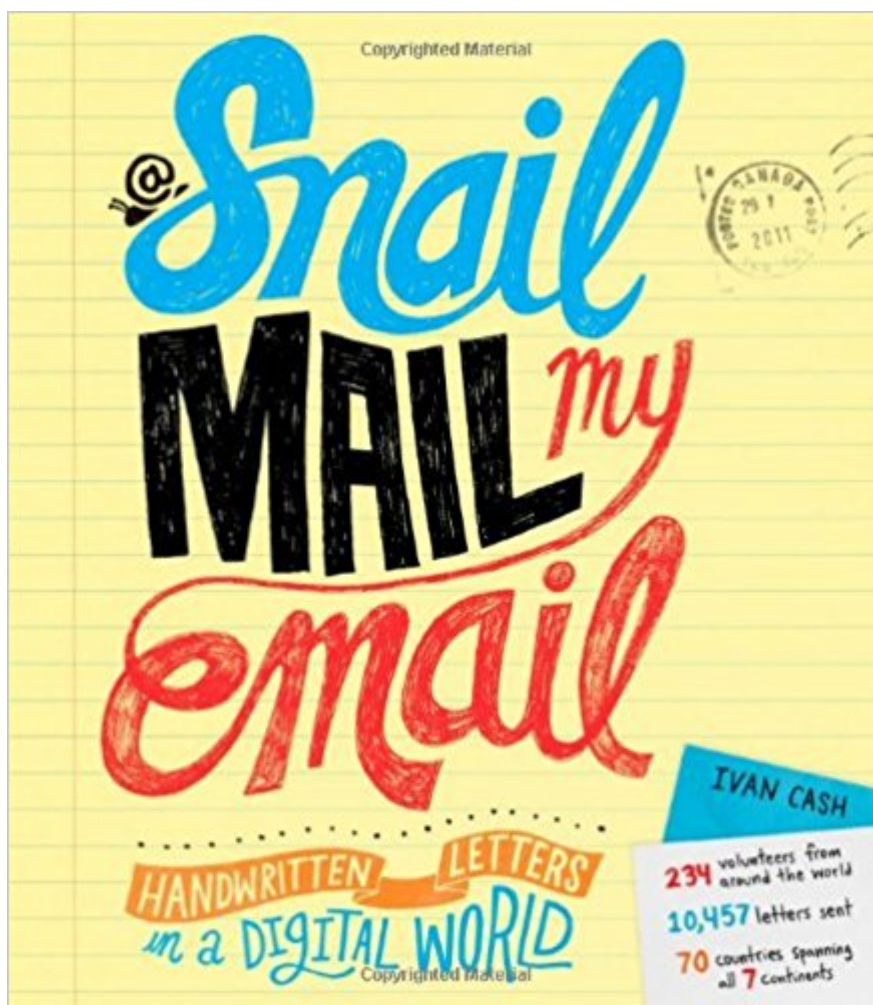




The book was found

# Snail Mail My Email: Handwritten Letters In A Digital World



## Synopsis

Feeling nostalgic for the almost forgotten written letter, author and former ad man Ivan Cash fell upon a simple idea: he invited anyone in the world to send him an email, and he'd write it out in a letter and mail it, for free. Participants could even request a doodle or to seal it with a kiss. What started out as a personal art project exploded into a worldwide event. As requests poured in, Cash enlisted an international army of volunteers who helped create more than 10,000 letters sent all over the globe. An addictive and artful window into everyday lives, *Snail Mail My Email* is a collection of the most memorable letters and moments from the project, and a reminder of the power of personal connection in a digital world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"How heartfelt emails become words of art." - PostSecret "Call it technology in reverse." - CNN "Marries the romance of analog with the convenience of digital." - GOOD "Ivan Cash, a San Francisco-based artist, presents a collection of hand-written letters, notes, and other personal communications, many with whimsical drawings and design. They are selected from a pool of over 10,000 letters that were sent out by volunteer artists working with Cash. He created a website where anyone could send an email intended for someone, which the volunteer artists then transform into a hand-written letters - shipped at the volunteer expense to locations all over the world. Many of the letters are in other languages, some of which have translations. The book showcases the scanned or photographed letters, which themselves are mostly reminders of affections, thank-yous, and some absurdity. Attached to each photo is a caption providing the

artist's name, as well as whence and whither it was mailed. The letter-artists are acknowledged in the back as well as other participants." - Book News Inc

Ivan Cash is an artist and designer based in San Francisco who creates socially engaging, interactive media projects. Nothing would make him happier than if you closed your eyes for twenty seconds after reading this and just listened to your breath.Â For more info, visit [IvanCash.com](http://IvanCash.com)

Just two months ago, Munch's "The Scream" sold for \$120. I was not one of those who used the Snail Mail My E-mail opportunity to send, for free, a one-of-a-kind verbal and visual expression to anyone, although I did receive one (not included in this collection). Munch's work expresses an "eternal" anxiety. This book can serve as an antidote to that stance. Just turn a page and realize you are the sender creating the text, and the artist transforming the words into an image, and the recipient seeing the letter for the first time. (A lot better than re-runs of The Best of Snickering Pundits Bickering for Dollars, brought to you by . . . whomever. Eh?) I didn't experience the book straight through. The pages aren't even numbered. For me, the collection is a meditation on the ephemeral, an homage to this now, and (turn page) this now, and (turn page) this one. There are illustrated letters to new borns, not-yet borns, a deceased puppy, and lovers: brother-sister, sister-sister, parent-child, all sorts of connectednesses-all sorts of connectednesses, and vice versa for all of the above. There are letters from or to teddy bears, the tooth fairy. Letters to and from China, Nebraska, Malaysia, Wisconsin, United Arab Emirates, someplaces near you and others not. You can easily sense my enthusiasm. See for yourself. Check out the LOOK INSIDE! option and then, after you decide to order the book or not, take the time to create and mail a snail mail to . . . . .

Okay, I must admit up front that I was involved in this project as one of the "letter artists." So, yes, I have a bias. However, this was such a cool project (fun, inspiring, artsy-craftsy, and just plain joyous) that I couldn't have given it 5 stars if the book didn't do a darn good job of capturing (in beautiful color and well-bound hardback at a great price) the essence of the Snail Mail My Email letter-writing campaign. No heavy reading here. Review it cover to cover or just flip through from time to time for a glimpse into human sentiments that are both delightfully unique and heart-warmingly universal. Cool Christmas gift for pen pal or other creative pal.

The illustration in the first few pages says it all: a man depicted in frames, one from the late 90s and

one from today. In the former, the man delights at the sight of a new email while lamenting the piles of paper bills and junk offers that arrive in his regular mailbox. Today, the script is flipped. In its own way, *Snail Mail my Email* traces the evolution of human communication by highlighting the simplest of pleasures in our modern age: receiving a handwritten letter from a friend. Except in this case, the "friend" was one of the project's 200+ volunteers and the letter a transcribed email that may have ordinarily gotten lost in the cacophony of spam and online offers that typically penetrate our collective gmail accounts. The project and book are brilliant in their ability to simultaneously promote an alternative to electronic communication in the age of the iPhone, while also demonstrating the possibilities for human "off-line" collaboration that our connected society still offers. At the most basic level, a project as inspiring as SMME wouldn't have been possible without the email component. Taking it a step further, the 200+ volunteers that helped make SMME a reality may not have been as easily recruited without the author's ability to go online and encourage people to do something a bit different. No one knows for sure whether Ivan Cash, the project's creator and the book's author, intended for this instructive irony to be a part of the final product. But given his vision in conceiving of the whole plan in the first place, I'd wager that he did. Demonstrating the possibilities of our internet-driven world together with an antidote to its occasional excesses, *Snail Mail My Email* falls into many categories. Underlying the beautifully illustrated emails on each page is the fact that the book serves as a chronicle of the impressively-coordinated mass mobilization effort on the part of Mr. Cash; these same illustrations add an artsy component to its documentary nature. Finally, the subtle message about taking a break every once in a while lends an air of social commentary, combined with the even subtler reality that our always-on society makes something like SMME within reach for anyone who is willing to stick their neck out. Thankfully for all of us, Mr. Cash did just that, and the whole world has been enriched with this fabulous book as a result.

I'm a pretty nosy person in that I am really interested in the lives of others -- so a chance to read letters that others have written (something that would normally be private) is a huge treat for me. As I flip through *snail mail my e-mail*, I find myself wondering more about the senders and recipients of each letter, what some messages might mean, what the recipient's face looked like when they received the letter, wanting to hear more about their stories. These letters are presented in such a fun and beautiful way, as they have been carefully visually embellished by each letter artist (and I find the letter artist's artistic interpretation to be a peek into their own private world as well). I'm so glad to have added this book to my collection!

I must admit that I am biased, having taken part in writing letters for this project, but the ones that have been included in this summary of the project are absolutely breathtaking. It brings a tear to your eye to see some of the heartfelt messages that were written to people all across the planet, and there are funny letters that you would never expect, as well! All in all, I'm glad that this project happened, and whether if you want your heartstrings tugged a little, or you want to feel a little nostalgic about a time when writing physical letters was commonplace, then this letter book is the one for you.

This gorgeous book has been an instant hit in my house. Everyone wants to pour over every page, examining every letter and each doodle. I know I'll be ordering a few as holiday gifts for friends who tried to sneak away with my copy! The project was fantastic to watch grow on the website and the only feedback I have is that next time they capture every letter written and put out a several thousand page version! Fantastic!!!

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