

# Loeffler Angel - The Sincerest Form of Flattery

by Arthur H. Groten M.D.

It's been a long time since I've seen a truly remarkable use of a poster stamp image. At first glance one might say, good grief, a full proof sheet (see below) of Berthold Loeffler's design for the 1908 Vienna Secessionist Art Show, known as the Loeffler Angel? But, in fact, that iconic design (Figure 1) was adapted, in 1980, for use by Kate Hendrickson, at the time an art dealer and now a full-time fine artist still working in Chicago. The story of its development follows.



Figure 1



Figure 2

After completing her MFA in drawing and printmaking, Kate Hendrickson spent time in Europe, moving to Chicago and working for David Gartler at Posters Plus, Inc. in 1976. There she immersed herself in the graphic designs of the 1890s to 1930s. During that time she made the acquaintance of Thomas Tomc, known to Cinderella collectors as "Fly By Night" who introduced her to poster stamps. She fell in love (who wouldn't?) with the Loeffler Angel: "It seemed to express me," and adapted it to her needs. She became a well-known independent dealer of posters and graphics, selling her posters to another dealer in 1995 to concentrate on watercolors, drawings and fine prints. In 2005 she began the transition from dealer to full-time artist.

Her re-imagining of the Angel was first done in full color in 1980 in sheet of 18. (Figure 2: the imperforate proof sheet was then perforated)

Figures 3a-d show a few of her hand-drawn (!) color separations for the original lithograph.



Figure 3a



Figure 3b



Figure 3c



Figure 3d

The original stamp used her then current 1443 W. Waveland address. She placed it on her business envelopes. (Figure 5a) The black and white filigree work, appropriately, came from a 1910 Viennese Secessionist style advertising cover (perhaps by the Austrian graphic designer Hans Schimmel). (Figure 5b) Later the stamp and her letterhead reflected her new address, 1211 N. La Salle (Figures 6 and 7) After her move to 230 E. Delaware the design became black and white instead of color.



Figure 5a



Figure 5b



Figure 6



Figure 7

The 230 design has been through four iterations, 1) like 1211 with a Secessionist border and text (Figure 8), 2) no border with Secessionist text for her new letterhead (Figure 9) 3) no border with simple san serif text (Figure 10) and 4) without any text. (Figure 11)



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

My thanks to Kate for her remarkable homage. Through her, Loeffler lives!

Her current work may be seen on her website: [www.katehendrickson.com](http://www.katehendrickson.com)

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