‘A Book About Death’ celebrates postcards from the edgy

In the age of GIFs and Instagram, mail art might seem like a quaint idea. But when neo-Dadaist Ray Johnson pioneered the movement in the 1950s, it was considered rather radical. The reclusive artist, who eventually excised himself from the artist celebrity culture dominating the New York City scene by moving to Sag Harbor, connected to his colleagues primarily through correspondence. Johnson sent cryptic sketches and squiggles to a global network, notably through the unbound — that is, both physically and emotionally — “A Book About Death” and encouraged recipients of the postcards to respond. Now gallerygoers can do the same, to the small-scale multimedia works contributed here by some 250 international artists.

WHEN | WHERE 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 12-4 p.m. Saturday, through Nov. 2, Islip Art Museum, 50 Irish Lane, East Islip
INFO $5 suggested donation; 631-224-5420, islipartmuseum.org

LuAnn Palazzo’s collage is part of the exhibit inspired by Ray Johnson’s “mail art.”