

Synopsis: Carol Gordon Cachets

2026 Chicagopex

Purpose: To explore in depth the career and first day covers of the extraordinary cachetmaker Carol Gordon

The exhibit has been completely revised since it was last shown in 2022 and updated with new material, a revised plan and current census figures.

Treatment: The APS Manual of Philatelic Judging and Exhibiting, Seventh Edition, revised August 2025, APP. 2.1.7 First Day Cover Exhibits states: *"Studies of a single cachet maker also are popular. ...the treatment of such exhibits usually study the chronological evolution of their careers through their artwork and production changes. These exhibits also would include a brief biography of the cachet maker."*

Sections 1.0 Introducing Carol Gordon and 2.0 Changing through Time address these guidelines directly. They provide biographical details and track physical changes in her body of work. Section 1.0 is built around **quotations from Carol's writings** to tell her own story in her own words. Section 2.0 analyzes her production methods, design influences and stamp selection.

Sections 3.0 Connecting with Art and 4.0 Connecting with Folk Art build on her statement that she usually looks for a connection with art and folk art in her cachets.

Section 5.0 Designing for Impact focuses on the powerful impressions created by Carol's best designs - their colorful, visual impact, her unconventional perspective, outspoken expressions of her convictions, and deeper examination of historical events.

Exhibit Importance: My exhibits are the first and only ones to draw attention to this unconventional cachetmaker, her career and her cachets. My research indicates that Carol created at least 678 different cachets and 2100+ stamp-cancel combinations. This 8-frame exhibit includes examples from the entire spectrum of Carol's work.

Philatelic/Subject Knowledge; Personal Study and Research: Qualitative and quantitative analyses of

- More than 6000 covers (i.e., my personal collection of over 1400 of her stamp-cancel combinations including 441 of 678 cachets; images provided by other collectors; dealers' stock; online auction listings).
- Advertising materials created by Carol which provided biographical and philatelic information.
- Philatelic literature (items written by and about Carol).

Interviews with collectors and dealers who knew Carol from the 1980s through her last public appearance in 2010.

Publication of the first Gordon cachet catalog with images for 660 of her 678 known cachets, a checklist for the 1800+ stamp-cancel combinations known in 2021 and the first attempt at census numbers for her cachets.

Ongoing census research documenting 2100+ stamp-cancel combinations in 2026 that form an integral part of her design aesthetic.

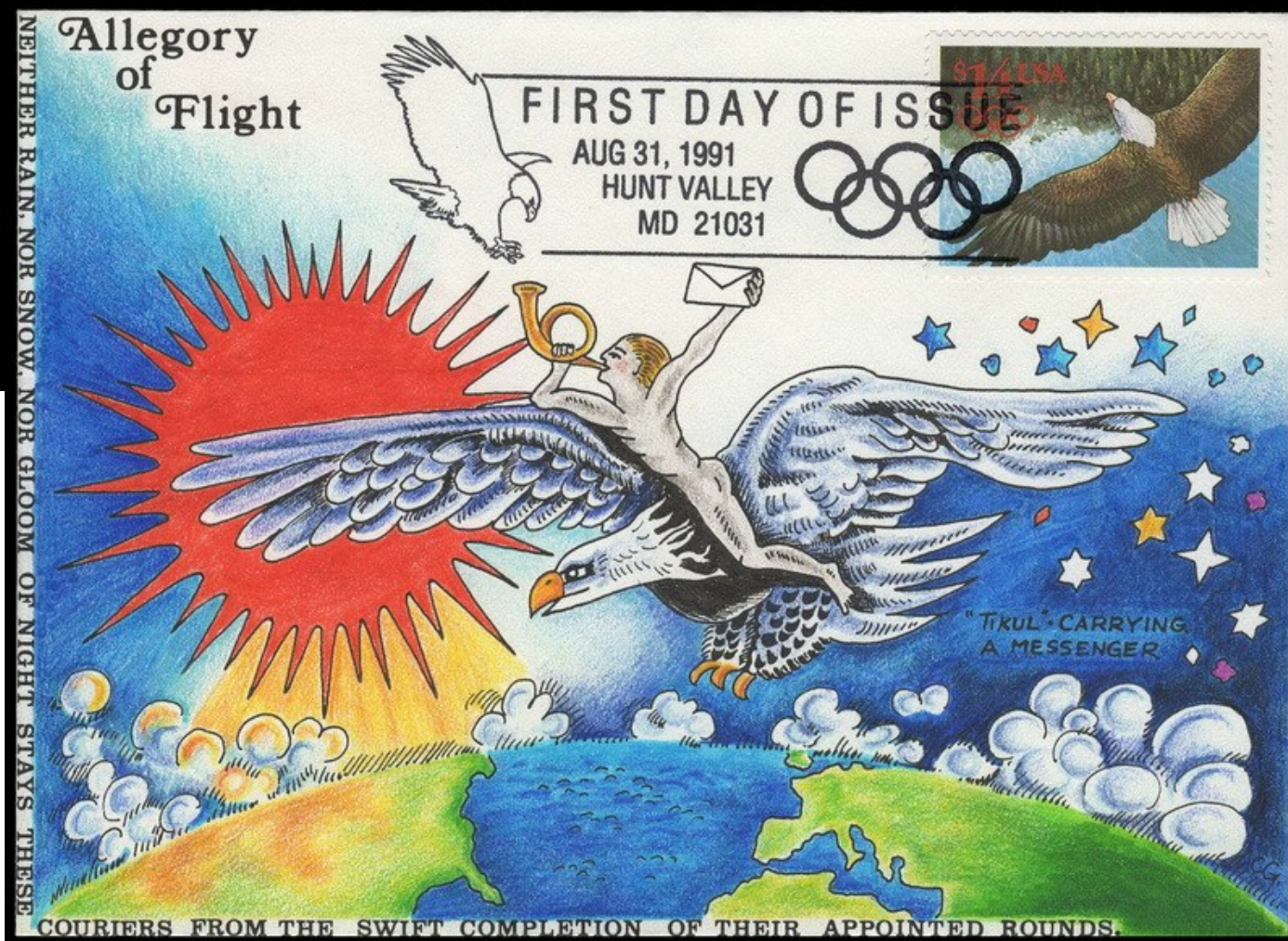
Condition: Gordon's covers were not meant to be mailed, therefore covers are in mint condition.

References:

- Susan Jones, (2021). Carol Gordon: Unconventional Cachetmaker. Cachet catalog published by The Claude C. Ries Chapter #48 AFDCS. 249 pp. (at APRL)
- _____, (2020a). 'Carol Gordon: Cachetmaker,' *The American Philatelist*, vol.134, no.3, whole number 1430, March 2020, pp. 244-249.
- _____, (2020b). 'Carol Gordon: Inspired by Native America,' *First Days*, vol.65, no.4, whole number 455, November-December 2020, pp. 43-53.
- The American Philatelic Research Library, (ca.2010). File on Carol Gordon, useful for understanding the types of primary sources of information available for the exhibitor's research.

Carol Gordon Cachets

An eight-frame first day cover (FDC) exhibit that explores the career of graphic artist Carol Gordon, who produced visually stunning covers from 1980 to 2004.



A CLASSIC GORDON CACHET

1991, \$14.00 International Express Mail - Eagle in Flight, hand-colored, 10 made.

Turul, a mythological bird and national symbol of Hungary (adapted from Hungarian airmail stamps; mislabeled 'Tikul').

Border quote by Herodotus (and the USPS motto inscribed on the 1914 New York City Post Office).

Carol Gordon, a professional graphic artist, created distinctive first day covers (FDCs) with bold images and odd sizes, often reflecting her love of art and folk art.

Original research indicates that she created at least 678 cachets and over 2000 stamp-cancel combinations. Her covers are offset printed and were sold with or without hand coloring, unless otherwise noted.

Carol's knowledge of art history inspired cachets from many cultures and time periods. She also became an early proponent of using cachets to express her views about social and political issues, to advocate for human rights and the environment, and to record the effects of war on individuals and nations.

PLAN

1.0 Introducing Carol Gordon

2.0 Changing through Time

3.0 Connecting with Art

4.0 Connecting with Folk Art

5.0 Designing for Impact

Epilog

Quotes from Carol's writings appear in blue italics.

NOTEWORTHY or RARE items

Rare = cachets or stamp-cancel combinations numbering five or fewer.

Noteworthy = reasons explained in captions.