

Chairman's Message

It's only \$300.00 and another stamp tool.

Recently I purchased a T3 electronic watermark detector to ensure my listings are correct and accurate. After weeks of trial and error, and several hundred stamps later, I guess I am not going to ask for a refund. I know watermark fluid or lighter fluid is much cheaper, but this new gadget has knobs, buttons and lights. Most men I know, including myself, love anything with knobs, lights and switches, no matter what the cost.

With the T3 you can select several colors, bright or dim, to see the watermark on the stamp you would like to value. Red, green or grey; bright or dull, it's up to you to discern which color works for you and the stamp in question at the flip of a switch.



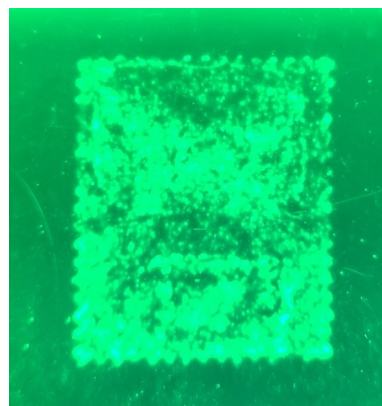
The stamp in question is Ireland, Scott #76, CV \$17.00 USD, and not Scott #117, CV \$42.50, thanks to the T3 watermark detector.



Scott #76 used hinged, CV \$17.00, not #117, CV \$42.50

Without going into a complete description of the parts and pieces of how the T3 works, let me give you the short version. After placing the stamp into the T3, you move the knob up/down to include left or right, to see the watermark. You select the color that gives you the best image of a watermark.

Here is the watermark- 'E' in green.



Wm# 262 in green light, T3. 'E' at bottom.

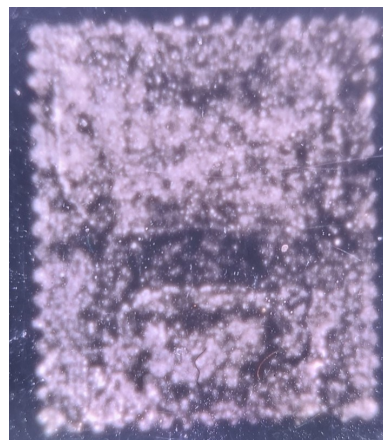
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Here is the same watermark in purple.



Wmk# 262 in purple, 'E' at bottom

Members by Country

at 28th June 2022

Algeria	1
Argentina	2
Australia	18
Belgium	2
Canada	8
Croatia	2
France	3
Germany	4
Gibraltar	2
Hong Kong	1
India	1
Italy	4
Japan	1
Mexico	1
Netherlands	6
New Zealand	1
Pakistan	1
Philippines	2
South Africa	3
Spain	2
Sweden	1
UK	26
USA	43
Total Membership	135

Watermarks



Wmk. 44 — SE in Monogram

The letters "SE" are the initials of "Saorstát Éireann" (Irish Free State).

The letters "SE" are the initials of "Saorstát Éireann" (Irish Free State).



Wmk. 262 — Multiple "e"

In order for my stamp to be Scott #117, and offered at a CV \$42.50, it would have to have a Watermark #44, seen at left.

Instead, it has the multiple 'e' Watermark #262, shown here.

Well, after comparing the known example of watermark #44 to what is on my stamp, it's not a Scott #117 with a value of \$42.50. I have a Scott #76 Used, with a catalogue value of \$17.00.

You know what they say, use the correct tool for the job and know what you're looking for. Always check a catalogue or known reference.

List quality and list often. Good Luck!

Lee Coen

Chairman 2021-2022



Members' Corner Chatter

Hello. A few topics I think worth a mention. Over the past months I have seen some constructive dialogue in the IPDA Facebook group. I know not everyone is a member or reads it, so I am going to repeat a few items here. Perhaps you will find this useful. I welcome comments and material for sharing in future Newsletters.

Fakes and Forgeries:

There has been an email circulating recently - some may have seen it - from mukundh1969@rediffmail.com which offers "ANTIQUÉ STAMPS for sale". Junk, fakes and forgeries, and image copies from the internet more like it, perhaps. Many are simple just image copies from the internet from Auction catalogues or listings from the likes of major dealers or just file images. While I know we all are suspicious of such "wow what a deal" opportunities and ignore them, I thought it worth just sharing this with you.

Another one to watch out for: A well-known seller on Hipstamp, City Stamps Montreal, has been offering forged material. It seems Hipstamp do not take any action unless very focused concerns are repeatedly raised by members. A seller, and something to watch out for, perhaps.

Abuse of Mailing lists:

Again, some of you may have received an email offering to sell you an updated IPDA Member mailing list. This was spam or phishing as some call it. If this type of mail gets through our spam filters, we usually know it is spam and just delete. Sadly, there is little we can do about it as far as I know. Some of you may have read the same thing happened to APS members. So, we are not unique in this experience. If you see more, please let me know of course.

Auction Sites

A thread I read recently talked about places to buy your stamp inventory. A few useful and well known and larger auction sites were mentioned. There is no one-size-fits-all, of course, and choice may be influenced, say, depending on the country you live in or the material you might be looking for. That might mean different houses for different needs perhaps.

I say this because we have some excellent auction house members in the IPDA. Maybe you already use them. Well worth a look, I think. And sincere apologies if I missed someone. I hope I won't be embarrassed! Here is our list — rather impressive, I think.

UK:

UPA Universal Philatelic Auctions
<https://www.upastampauctions.co.uk/>

County Philatelic Auctions
<https://www.stampauctions.co.uk/>

Europe:

Classic Stamps
<https://www.letimbreclassique.com/>

Auktionshaus Christoph Gärtner
https://www.auktionen-gaertner.de/index_en.html

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Vaccari Auctions
<https://www.vaccari.it/>

Corinphila
<https://corinphila.nl/en>

Australia:

Ace Auctions
<https://acestampauctions.com/>

21st Century Auctions
<https://www.21stcenturyauctions.com.au/>

Asia:

John Bull Auctions - <https://jbull.com/en/home>

USA:

Harmers International
<https://harmersinternational.com/>

Cherrystone Auctions
<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/>

Membership Recruitment

Some of you may remember Director Jon Griffiths offered a rather nice stamp as a reward and thank you to the first member to get 5 new members signed up. Jon still has the stamp.

I know how difficult it can be to get a colleague dealer to join. By example, I sent out 15 invites, a month or so back, and had not one response — but it is worth a try. Ok, so you may not want or need the stamp Jon is offering but think of it like this: If you won it, it would make a nice giveaway to one of your special customers. Well, that is how I was thinking of it.

Facebook

And, finally, going back to the IPDA Facebook group. If you have Facebook access and do not follow us, you might enjoy looking in occasionally. We are here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ipdagroup>

There are informative chats, the sharing of stamp images, and getting advice on quality, and "is this genuine or a forgery" type of discussions. Basically, just a friendly way to keep in touch and have a channel for knowledge sharing.

I hope this has been interesting and/or useful for you. Comments are welcome, and material as well, please.

Michael Dodd — IPDA General Secretary



Engraved Die Proofs of France, Pt. 2

Introduction

In last month's newsletter, we reprinted an article from [Giorgio Leccese's website](#) on France's Deluxe Proofs. This was just one of several articles on his site covering the process of creating die proofs, during the production of postage stamps. This month, we will continue on the subject by going back to the introduction of the series, and in subsequent newsletters will continue, showing the intermediate steps involved with taking a stamp design from artist's conception to final dies. Many thanks go to Giorgio Leccese for his permission to reprint this information.

The wide variety of French Proofs has long been a source of fascination, yet puzzlement, to most philatelists. Amount the reasons for their desirability are their aesthetic beauty and their scarcity. The purpose of this exhibit is to present the variety of modern Proofs of the French Area; that is, those issued after 1938, explain their characteristics and show the differences between them.

Due to the method of distribution of French Proofs, a smaller number than actually produced will appear on the philatelic market. The printing of these Proofs is very limited, ranging from only 2-3 up to 30 copies per type of Proof.

The most common printing processes used for stamps of France and its Former Colonies are: Photo-Engraving (Héliogravure, Photogravure) and Engraving process (Recess Printing, Intaglio process, Calcography, Taille Douce). For each issue, the French Postal Administration contracts an artist to prepare an original drawing or painting (maquette).

For Photo-Engraving issues, the printing plate is produced by a photographic process from this drawing. The Engraving process (Intaglio process), on the other hand, requires the talents of the engraver (figs. A1, A2), often the same

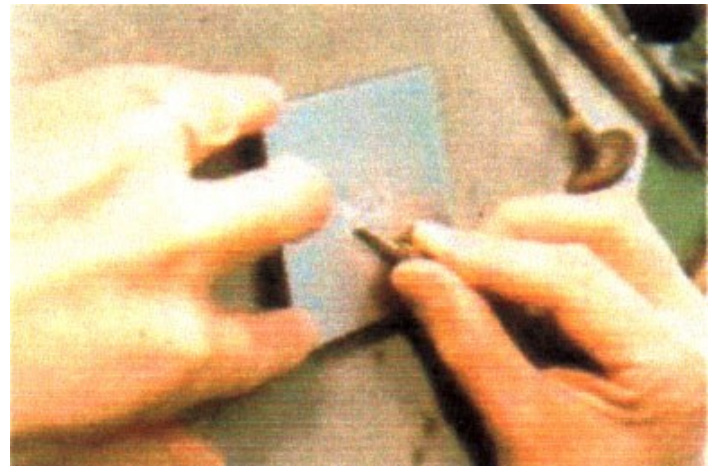


Fig. E28

by making use of tools called burins (fig. A3).

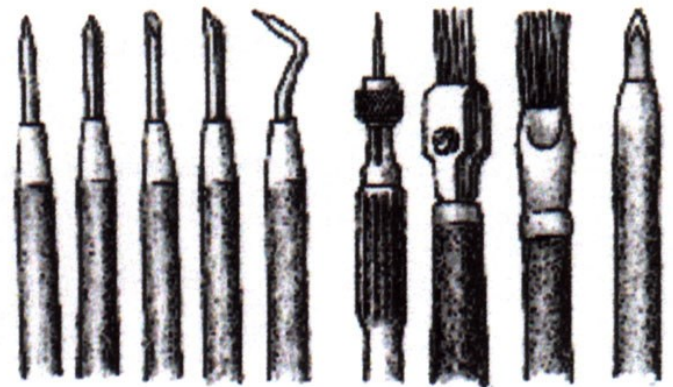


Fig. A3

Among the engravers, surely the most famous engraver is Czeslaw Slania (figs. A1, A2, A21),

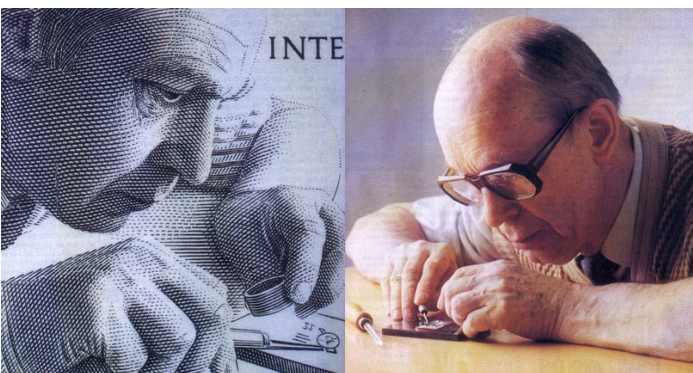


Fig. A1—Engraver Czeslaw Slania Fig. A2—Engraver Czeslaw Slania

artist who created the drawing, to reproduce the original design (maquette) on a small block of special, soft steel called a die (fig. E28),



Fig. A21

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who, in the year 2000, celebrated his thousandth philatelic engraving.

When the die is completed, it is then hardened (fig. E29) and will be used to produce the printing plate.



Fig. E29

The original die, referred to as the primary die, primitive die or master die, may be produced without a value inscribed, an un-denominated die (figs. A4, A5), or it may be produced with value, a denominated die.



Fig. A4



Fig. A5 — In the bottom left corner, the denomination is left blank.

From the primary die, Progress Die Proofs, Sepia Printer's Die Proofs, Artist's Die Proofs (fig. A19), and Acceptance Die Proofs are printed by using a hand press (fig. A25).

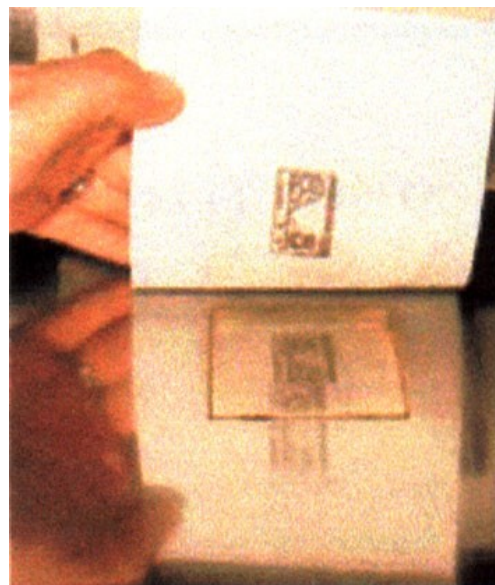


Fig. A19



Fig. A25

By means of high pressure, the finished hardened primary

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die is then used to produce secondary dies (figs. A8, A9).

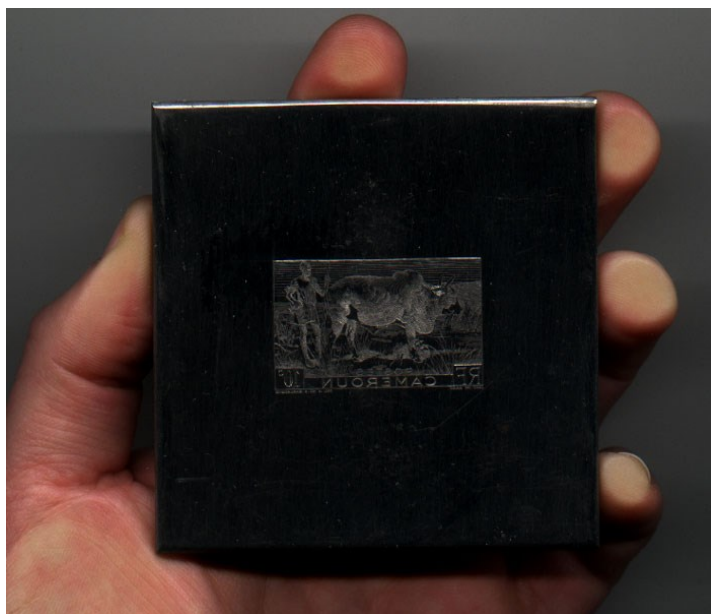


Fig. 8



Fig. 9 — Secondary die, with value inscribed in lower left corner.

These dies are used successively to print Trial Color Die Proofs and Deluxe Sheets (Deluxe Proofs).

The various types of dies differ according to size and thickness (fig. A18).

The Government Printing House, Atelier or Imprimerie, preserves practically all of the steel dies that are produced and they are not released for any reason. In fact, it is generally impossible to find these steel dies on the philatelic market.

Private Printing Houses, for example Institut de Gravure, on the other hand, did not have such restrictive policies for securing the dies that they produced.



Fig. A18

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This was especially so during the years 1930 and 1940, when several philatelic issues for France and its Former Colonies were produced by Institut de Gravure.

The steel dies produced by the Private Printing Houses are different from those of Atelier especially with respect to their size - rather than measuring 80 x 70 mm, these primary dies measure 69 x 47 mm (figs. A4, A5), or 98 x 70 mm, and the secondary dies, used for example for Deluxe Proofs, will measure 79 x 79 mm.

These dies, either primary or secondary dies produced by Institut de Gravure, can be found on the philatelic market, even if in very limited quantities.



Ukrposhta Announces Winner of 2nd Stamp Design Contest

Ukrposhta (Ukraine Post) held another contest to design a postage stamp, similar to what they did before producing the stamp depicting the warship off of Snake Island. The theme of the stamp design was "Good evening, we are from Ukraine," and out of more than 1500 entries, five finalists were chosen which were then voted on in a public poll.

Over 800,000 votes from Ukraine were received. The stamp designs, in order of their finish in the voting, were:

#5 — Rooster with background text, "Good evening. We are from Ukraine."



#4 — Duck (or goose, depending on who is reporting) in the field with the military, wearing a bucket hat, in a nod to the trademark headgear worn by the lead singer of Kalush Orchestra, the winner of this year's EuroVision song contest.



#3 — Depicts a soldier from the city of Kalush and the lead singer of the EuroVision contest winner, Kalush Orchestra.



#2 — Arm reaching out for the shoulder of Russian President Putin.



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#1 — Tractor towing a broken down Russian tank.



Ukrposhta announced the five finalists on their Facebook and Instagram pages on June 9, and voting also opened at that time. Voting ran until June 15, at which time Ukrposhta announced the results, with “Tractor towing tank,” being declared the winner, receiving a total of 340,000 votes, more than twice as many as the 2nd place design, depicting the hand on Putin’s shoulder, which received 146,000 votes.

The total vote count of 834,000 stands in dramatic contrast to the first contest, which led to the Russian Warship stamp. That contest attracted only 8,000 voters.

Farmers have become folk heroes in this war, with many photos appearing online showing tractors towing captured, broken down, and abandoned tanks and other military equipment, to be repurposed by the Ukrainian military. These farmers have come to be known as “Tractor Troops,” locally, and their exploits have been celebrated in songs, on telegram stickers, memes, and video games.

The theme, “Good evening. We are from Ukraine,” comes from a song released by the Ukrainian group PROBASS Δ HARDI, released in October 2021. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, in February, the line became a popular military salute, and in March, 2022, the song reached #8 on the Apple Music chart.

The stamp is expected to be released sometime in mid-July; an exact date has not been announced yet. It will be released in two versions, one for domestic mail and one for international. 3 million of the domestic mail stamp will be produced, while the international letter rate stamp will have a production run of 2 million stamps.



Ireland’s Commemorative-Definitives

By Ted Tysza

In 1944, Ireland issued a pair of stamps commemorating the 300th anniversary of the death of Mícheál Ó Cléirigh, or Michael O’Clery (b. 1590—d. 1643), a Franciscan monk and historian who oversaw the compilation of one of the most important works of Irish scholarship, *Annals of the Four Masters*, which chronicles the history of Ireland from antiquity up to the year 1616. The “Four Masters” refers to O’Clery and the three lay-scholars he brought together to work with him on the project.



(Scott Nr 128-129, SG Nr 133-134),

The stamps depict a scribe — Michael O’Clery? — writing at a desk. Inscribed above the desk is the text, “To the glory of God and Ireland.”

At the time, Ireland’s current definitive, or regular issue stamps were the set from 1940, and before that, 1922, with four designs, depicting the map of Ireland, the coat of arms, the Celtic cross, and the Sword of Light. This last design was used on the 1/2p and 1sh stamps.



Scott Nr 106, 117. SG Nr 111, 122

Although issued as commemoratives, the Michael O’Clery stamps were kept in production, replacing the 1/2p and 1sh Sword of Light stamps in the definitives set. The stamps remained in use for 24 years, until the new set of Mythical Creatures definitives set was released in 1968.



Raspberry Awards for July

By Ted Tyszka

It never fails to amaze me, the audacity displayed by many online stamp sellers, in representing (or misrepresenting) their products. One might think it should go without saying that a dealer should provide accurate, honest descriptions, as well as images that are faithful to the original item. However, we all know that is not the case, which is the *raison d'être* for the IPDA's existence.

In this column, I will be showcasing some of the dealer fails I have encountered or have been made aware of, during the previous month. I know our members don't need to be told what's right and wrong, when listing stamps, but I hope that these examples will serve as reminders and inspiration to keep integrity and professionalism uppermost in your mind at all times. Because, the common thread running through these examples is lack of integrity and professionalism.



Cuba 236 VFU SHIP Z7968-1

Exhibit "A" is Cuba, Scott #236 (1905). It's described by the dealer as VFU, or Very Fine Used. I would be interested in this dealer's rationale for grading it as such.

The Scott Catalogue defines VF centering as being "slightly off-center on one or two sides." On some early issues, Scott relaxes the standards a bit, but even then will provide an explanatory note. There is no note for this stamp. And what about the perfs cut off of the bottom edge? It is not a natural straight edge, as remnants of some perf holes are visible.

Trimmed perfs, worn perfs, short perfs, heavy cancellation . . .



This next example shows the images included with two listings for Egypt, Scott #39, SG #55b (1879). Some dealers need to have their image editing software confiscated.



What makes them think that increasing the color saturation and or vibrancy to exaggerated levels is the proper way to depict a stamp you are selling?

While, on the lower stamp, the dealer laid off the color-enhancing controls, he is still not off the hook. He, along with the dealer for the upper stamp, used the flood-fill tool, in his image editor, to create a completely black background for the stamp image. However, because the postmarks touch the edges of the stamps, the black flood also filled those in, creating abnormally deep black cancellations.

These are not innocent mistakes: scanners and cameras do not create such exaggerated images naturally. It requires conscious user adjustment of color controls on scanners and editing software to create this nonsense.

To these dealers, I say



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My last example for this month involves not only inadequate images in the listing, but an appalling lack of customer service and professionalism from the dealer.

On the HipStamp forum, a poster related his experience with a dealer — let's call him M__Stamps — who has the following listing:



US Stamps #573 Mint OG NH PSE Graded XF-SUP 95
\$800.00

Not only is this dealer asking 78% above the SMQ (Stamp Market Quarterly) catalogue value for a stamp in this grade, but he says it has a PSE certificate, and then fails to provide a picture of it with his listing.

When the poster sent the dealer a message, requesting an image of the grading certificate, the dealer refused, saying that the storage location of the stamp is different than his image processing location, and he was not willing to have the stamp shipped from the storage location just to take an image for him. Once they had a sale, he would provide the image.

This is utterly beyond my comprehension, that a dealer could deem this to be acceptable behavior: Pay me first; then I'll show you what you've bought.

Incidentally, one of our fellow IPDA members had an even worse incident with this seller. He bought what was described as a MNH \$5 Columbian (Scott 245). He sent it off for certification, and it came back 5 weeks later, with the certificate stating the stamp was regummed. When the buyer contacted the dealer, he was told, sorry Charlie, it's past our 30-day refund period.

This dealer is a long-time veteran, going back to 2005, the StampWants days, and has a feedback count of over 45,000. And for all his bad-faith dealing, M__Stamps gets a big fat . . .



St Helena's Dual Currency Semi-Postal/Charity Issue

By Ted Tyska

On 8 October, 1961, a large earthquake caused by volcanic activity forced the evacuation of the eastern settlement of the island of Tristan da Cunha. By October 10, the heaving ground had become a volcanic cone, and a decision was made to evacuate the islanders.

To aid in relief efforts for the Tristan residents, the island of St. Helena decided to raise money through the sale of semi-postal, or charity stamps. The St. Helena post office took four stamps of Tristan da Cunha currently in use, and overprinted them, St Helena/Tristan Relief, and added a surcharge to each of them of 1p, 3p, 6p, and 9p Sterling.



St Helena, Scott Nr B1-B4, SG Nr 172-175

However, the original denominations were expressed in South African cents. When the home office in London found out about the comingling of currencies, they were none too pleased, and ordered a halt to the sale of the stamps. On 19 October, the stamps were withdrawn, after only 434 sets had been sold.

Today, the set of stamps has a Scott Catalogue value of \$7,600 MNH/\$3,250 Used, and SG value of \$8,550 UMM and \$3,950 Used.



THE BACK PAGE

Stories Behind the Stamps

by Mr. Enthusiastic on Monday, January 13, 2020

A Cool Stamp from Oman

My favorite stamp collecting theme is Arab philatelic propaganda against Israel and there is a lot of material out there. I have shown some of the items on this blog. I have provided many lectures on this issue and written many articles.

Today I would like to highlight one specific stamp, because it shows the issue quite vividly. I have spoken about this stamp briefly but one of my readers asked for it in more details.

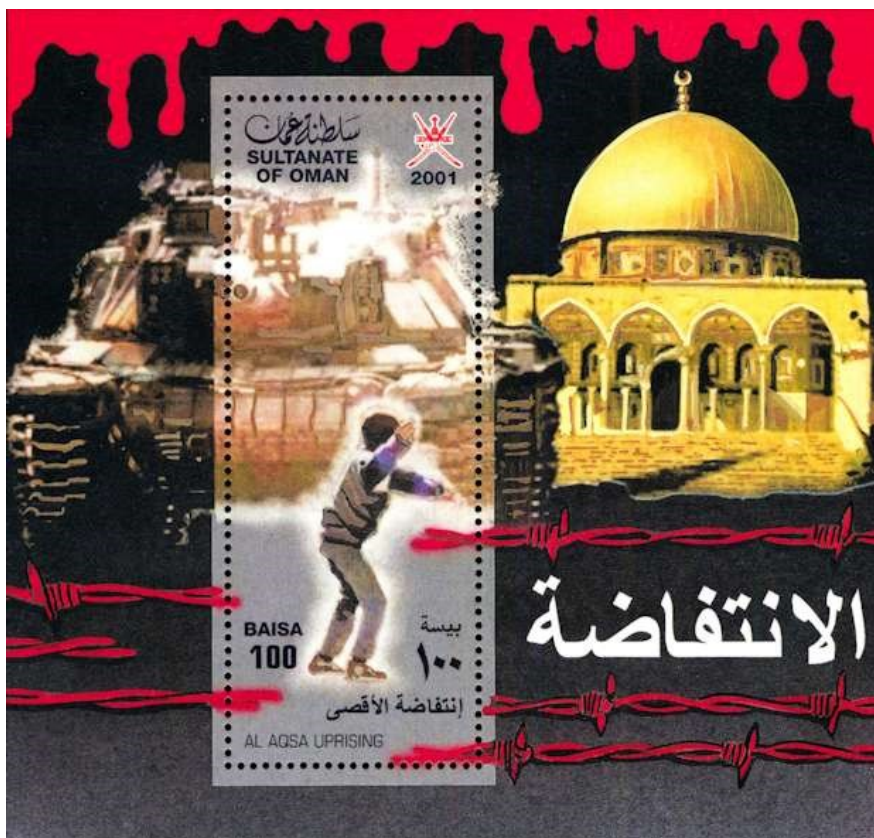
The stamp (souvenir sheet) was issued by Oman in 2001 for the Al Aqsa Uprising, commonly known as the Second Intifada. An Intifada is an Arabic word for an uprising of the people. The white Arabic writing on the right says Intifada.

We see a child throwing a rock at a tank, which is presumably an Israeli tank as this took place in Israel. The mosque on the right, is not the Al Aksa Mosque but the Dome of the Rock. The Al Aksa Mosque is a few hundred meters away. This is actually a common error in the news when they display this mosque.

Having been to Jerusalem many times, I can honestly tell you that there is no way that a tank can get to the Temple Mount, unless it was dismantled and carried up piece by piece and put back together. Before they managed to do this, they would have been lynched. No Israeli government would allow that.

But let us assume that this is for graphical effect (propaganda effect), it does get the point across. The boy throwing the rock at the tank is another propaganda issue. A rock thrown at a tank will not even dent the armor, that is why there is armor. The point of this image is merely to bring back memories of the 1988 Chinese Tiananmen Square issue.

The background of the stamp is **black** and that is the symbol of **death**! We see barbed wire in red, the color of blood, which is new but the barbed wire is a common motif in Arab stamps depicting Jerusalem, it is to symbolize that Jerusalem is a prisoner and must be liberated. This imagery was sparked by Iran when they nominated the last Friday of Ramadan as the day for liberation of Israel.



But the best part is the blood dripping from the top. Not sure how that fits into the point that the Oman designer was trying to get across, unless he was trying to say that a lot of blood was spilled. But it really adds to the beautiful gruesomeness of this issue.

This stamp is in my collection, but not in my exhibit. Yet, it is one of my favorite stamps.



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