

## **Barbara Balzer**

### *Artist Statement*

A man went where he wasn't wanted. He repeatedly became a guest on the talk show that propagated views antithetical to his own. At first, the host either interrupted or ridiculed him. But the man kept returning. Eventually, the host let him finish talking. Then the host began thanking him for stopping by. A reporter, impressed by the man's quiet tenacity, called him a "rhetorical assassin". I guess he meant to flatter the man, suggesting he was stealthily going into enemy territory. But when his friends asked the man why he kept returning to a program where he had been repeatedly treated disrespectfully, he explained that he had hoped to expose what were otherwise nice people to ideas they probably hadn't heard on the talk show and vice versa.

I thought the man's reasons were kind. So my figure is offering letters and symbols from the alphabet of different countries and tribes, contemporary and ancient, Arabic, cuneiform, hieroglyphics, Chinese characters, Babel-like.

More important than the contents of the offer is the gesturing of offering itself.