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'I softly caressed the granite with my blistered fingers. I felt the minute asperities of the rock, still warm from the sun. These heavy, terrible, soulless stones were everything to us: the cause of our friendship, the purpose of our activity, the source of our feeling of fulfilment.'

The West Face / Guido Magnone / 1955
Welcome to issue thirteen of The Blue Notebook

Many thanks to our writers for an inspiring selection of essays for this issue, in order of appearance:

Holly Pester reviews the publishing collective Information as Material’s anniversary event at the Whitechapel Gallery, London in January 2012. The event, Sucking on Words was a celebration of both sonic poetry and conceptual writing. The article examines how the group figures the two approaches to text-based art, and what each mode of practice reveals about the other. Also explored is the output of IAM over the past ten years and how their year-long residency at the Whitechapel manifested their key objectives for art and publishing.

Barrie Tullett of the Caseroom Press, Lincoln, UK, selects key works from the last 250 years as he looks at the book from a design and content perspective, from the novel to the artist’s book and back again.

From the USA, an essay Publishing Exhibitions, written alongside the organisation of WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists, 1978 - 2008, an exhibition organised by Andrew Blackley for Golden Gallery, Inc (NY.) The essay describes a curatorial methodology that has been influenced by the author’s artistic and curatorial experiences in publishing.

From France, Invent the digital artist’s book! Nicolas Frespech presents a short essay exploring some ideas for digital developments in artists’ e-publishing.

Some thoughts on artists’ books in HE teaching and learning. Exploring the collection at Chelsea College of Art & Design Library in London, Gustavo Grandal Montero - Academic Support Librarian believes it is time for library staff to consider a re-evaluation of the use of their artists’ books collections, to enhance and improve the quality of learning and teaching activities in Higher Education.

From Australia, Julie Barratt talks to Monica Oppen about the catalogue and exhibition, The Silent Scream: Political and social comment in books by artists, launched at Monash University Library Rare Books, Melbourne, last September. The project evolved over four years, and includes 77 books and bookworks by artists responding to history’s darker moments: from William Blake, through the two world wars and on to contemporary publications.

Many thanks to the artists who accepted Tom Sowden’s invitation to produce artwork for this issue:

Rodrigo Arteaga (Chile), David Dellafiora (Australia), Jeremy Dixon (UK), Dave Dymt (Canada), Bas Fontein (The Netherlands) and Kate Morrell (UK).

And many thanks to Anwyl Cooper-Willis for this issue’s super retro badge, sticker and cover designs!

Thank you to our referees, Dr Anne Béchard-Léauté (France) Maria Fusco (UK) Susan Johanknecht (UK), Jeff Rathermel (USA), Dr Paulo Silveira (Brazil) and Ulrike Stoltz (Germany) for their continual duties.

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We welcome your ideas for articles for future issues - submission guidelines can be found on our website at: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bnotebk.htm

The address for the online colour version of this issue is: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/blue_notebook/x130/959r/thn13.pdf

And finally, many thanks as ever, to you, our readers and contributors for your ongoing support for The Blue Notebook through sending ideas for essays, articles, reviews and artworks, and of course subscribing.

Sarah Bodman
Sucking on Words Sounds like This –
Review Article of Information as Material
Event and Residency at the Whitechapel Gallery,
London, 18th January 2012

Holly Pester

Cruising the Web for new language. The sexiness
of the cursor as it sucks up words from anonymous
Web pages, like a stealth encounter. The dumping
of those words, sticky with residual junk, back into
the local environment; scrubbed with text soap,
returned to their virginal state, filed away, ready to
be reemployed.

Sculpting with text.

Data mining.

Sucking on words.

Our task is to simply mind the machines.

(Goldsmith)

Sucking on Words is an odd sounding and an odd
feeling phrase. From it we get meanings of drawn-
out articulation and thespians over-indulging on
pronunciation. We also get contradictory ideas of
mumbling (“don’t suck on your words!”) and the
enunciation of a foreign language that pushes your teeth
and tongue into unfamiliar shapes. The phrase is the
impossible combination of a physical, mouthly act on the
abstract immaterial word. Within the phrase there is an
alternation between the sensation of speaking words and
the conceptual moves that come with them. Speech acts
and speech operation.

This process of materialising immaterial language
is key to the practices of the collective, Information
as Material, which seek to make language tangible
and malleable. It became clear during their one-
year residency at London’s Whitechapel Gallery that
their practice is also about the disparate processes of
giving unrefined information form and texture and of
deconstructing literary configurations into raw data.

Forming and sculpting, sterilising and reformatting.
This was the mixed bill of directives presented at
Whitechapel Gallery’s ‘Sucking on Words’ event,
which saw IAM host an evening of sonic poetry and
performance. And, as will be examined here, it is the
necessary mix of ‘drives that comes with an event
combining sonic poetry with conceptual writing.

Information as Material is a group of publishers, writers,
artists, film makers, critics, theorist and poets named
Craig Dworkin, Christine Morris, Simon Morris, Nick
Thurston and Simon Zimmerman. Their output and
activities address ‘conceptualist approaches to writing’
and ‘performative approaches to reading’ which can
take shape as one-off events, gallery pieces, documents,
workshops and collaborations. Their position as
‘writers in residence’ at the Whitechapel incorporated
a programme of staged events, such as a three-day
Summer School for Literary Perverts, discussions and
lectures on piracy in publishing and screenings including
a documentary on the sound-sculpture artist Pavel
Büchler. One significant piece that adds to their body
of work is the ‘Man Booker Prize Shortlist Quiz’ they
devised for the literary award night in October 2011.

The quiz, which was handed out to attendees at the
Prize event, is made of multiple choice questions asking
you to match a generic plot synopsis with the canonised
novel, for example “His journey - if he survives it - will
push faith, love and friendship to their utmost limits”
The work is a situationist style reproach against the
Man Booker’s ethos that a novel “must be an original
work”(www.themanbookerprize.com [no date]) and
continues their project for debunking the fraud of
originality in literature.

The mainstream publishing world with its incongruities
and pretence is a prominent apparatus for IAM to ‘push
up against’. They approach publishing as an artistic
practice, incorporating attitudes from digital culture into
sleekly crafted bookworks. However their intention to
expand boundaries also has a keen eye on the histories
of radical publishing and disseminating text. The finale
exhibition of their residency saw IAM present an ode
to independent, renegade publishing. Do or DIY was a
celebration of the cavalier attitudes writers like Lawrence
Sterne paraded in order to finance and distribute a work
like Tristram Shandy. The exhibition comprised of
display cabinets showing editions of significant texts, while on
the wall descriptions and manifesto-esque graffiti detailed
the histories of these avant routes into print. Influential
works of literature that were first turned down by official
publishers, including Whitman’s Leaves of Grass,
and Proust’s In Search of Lost Time, are credited not only for
fighting their way into existence but for setting up models
for further works to exist. The knock-on consequences
of Virginia Woolf’s frustration in getting her work
published led to the creation of her own Hogarth Press.
This in turn pushed her to explore and experiment in
her writing. It’s a pattern that continued throughout
the century along with the avant-garde. LANGUAGE
poet presses in 1980’s North America, such as Lyn
Hejinian’s Tuumba Press provided a space for much of
the instrumental works that influence investigational
writers and poets now (Information as Material 2012).
The message being that dynamic self-publishing leads to
a perpetuation of artists’ practices and breeding zones
for experimental art.

The leading idea is that publishing is about creating
contexts. IAM have made a praxis out of interacting
and reconceptualising literature that has forged a place
Simon Morris and Rob Lavers perform The Voice and Nothing More
Image courtesy of David Weill www.danweillphotography.co.uk
in the median. This negotiation with sourced texts takes place both at the level of the print, with the network and also with the physical presence of books. Works like the Invisible Bookshelf, a z-shaped transparent structure built for the Whitechapel based on a 1999 design by architect Michael Farion, are about positioning the book object within viewing strategies of a gallery context. This particular design was commissioned with the situational aesthetics of Victor Burgin’s 1969 Photopath in mind, thus ensuring that the objects and texts relate to the outside worlds, and the network continues to spreads outwards.

Primarily their practices as a collective and as individual artists promote ideas of ‘un-designing’, antiexpressionism and plundering texts. For example Nick Thurston’s text Reading the Remove of Literature is a ‘re-make’ of Blanchot’s L’Espace littéraire, with every word of Blanchot’s original text erased. By leaving chapter and sub-headings as readerly signposts, the work promotes reading as a performance and text as a negotiable entity. This is in keeping with the IAM practice of inhabiting and taking over a text, parasitising its function and treating text as code. This attitude was exemplified by the fact that the whole ‘Sucking on Words’ event occupied another artwork, the then Bloomberg Commission, Josiah McElheny’s installation, The Past Was a Mirage I Had Left Far Behind. McElheny’s piece converted the Bloomberg space into a ‘kaleidoscopic hall of mirrors’, with seven large mirrors arranged as reflective projection screens for various videos. For this evening the screens were used for Canadian sound poet Christian Bök’s invited VJ set of voice artists performing various interpretations of sound poetry. This looping playlist continued silently as a backdrop during the performances, keeping the audience mildly distracted yet aware of the multiple ventriloquisms at play.

The ‘Sucking on Words’ night was programmed to commemorate Information as Material’s ten years in activity. That their chosen medium for the celebration was an evening of ‘sonic poetry’ presents some interesting questions about the collective’s objective for concept-driven writing and how they view the tradition of sound poetry in relation to this. Present to perform were Simon Morris and saxophonist, Rob Lavers, Nick Thurston and the invited guest, Dutch sound poet virtuoso, Jaap Blonk.

The evening promised a heady mixture of noise and performance, with promotional material pictured a Cabaret Voltaire-esque composition of Morris and Blonk’s screaming mouths. The question that arises is how does the procedural, constraint-driven, ‘anti-expressionist’ impulse of conceptual poetics fit with the noisy, meandering forms of sound poetry? The two modes of approach to poetic practice have moments of shared history, so how they were figured together at the event should inform us about the IAM project overall.

Returning to the leading phrase, ‘sucking on words’, and its suggestiveness of texturing, draining, or rather downloading, the life of texts, we are reminded that it is both the name of the IAM anniversary event and also the title of Simon Morris’s 2007 film on Kenneth Goldsmith. (Morris 2007) As a pioneer and ambassador of conceptual writing Goldsmith’s poetics are closely associated with works of IAM, particularly via Dworkin who co-founded Ubu web and co-edited the influential Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing with him. There is evidently a fair amount of exchange at work in the concerns of IAM and Goldsmith’s ‘uncreative writing’ (Goldsmith 2011). This article’s epigraph comes from Goldsmith’s essay on conceptual poetics where he typically propagates amassing text from the media and internet pages, treating the universe of published words as a single database for generating artworks. In Morris’s documentary Goldsmith says that to be a conceptual writer you must have the “expertise of a secretary with the attitude of a pirate”. A text like Day (Goldsmith 2003) is produced according to a Warholian extremity and dedication to reproduction. The aim is to bring out the materiality and opacity of texts, and of their component words and phonemes. Perhaps this is where the sonic comes into play, where the sense of words is inverted to reveal a sound quality.

At the Whitechapel event, Simon Morris’s set opened the evening. His was a textual double-helix of two source texts. He alternatively read script from Beckett’s theatre piece, Not I from 1972 and sections of Mladen Dolar’s theory book, The Voice and Nothing More from 2006, from which Morris took the title of his performance. Morris alternated between reading the Dolar descriptions of laughter, coughing, and common utterances in a lecture or public address tone, while his delivery for the Not I fragments were performic, emulating the theatrical whisper of Beckett’s disembodied mouth. The performance was accompanied by improver musician, Lavers on saxophone. His consistently frantic paced tones on one hand cohered the two texts into a single event, and on the other acted as interference on the text, keeping it from too didactically putting forth an idea about the voice and making it more a performance of the voice. Employing extended technique the instrument at times made very vocal noises, blowing unsounded air and exposing its internal mechanics. This linked with Dolar’s notions about the voice’s projection into air and significances forming according to its linguistic shape. A performance like this would usually be described as ‘energetic’ but here the pace and
Christian Bök’s VJ set featuring Michael Winslow’s *The History of the Typewriter*
Image courtesy of David Weill www.danwellphotography.co.uk
dynamics were more about keeping the rhythm of breath between the saxophone, the text and the two men.

As a work Morris’s set was about the gesture of pitting the texts against each other. Dolar’s is about the fundamentals of the voice through theory and psychoanalysis, considering the linguistics, metaphysics and ethics of the voice, its social apparatus and its bodily mechanisms. In a pertinent section on the ‘drama of the voice’ Dolar talks about the scream, our first vocal act of pure speech, being nothing but an appeal and desire for attention from an other.

...the moment it emerges it is immediately seized by the other. The first scream may be a cause by pain, the need for food, by frustration or anxiety, but the moment the other hears it...the moment the other is provoked and interpellated by it...scream retroactively turns into appeal (Dolar 2006)

This provides an axis with Beckett’s terror-voice ‘who’ early on negotiates its ability to effect a scream,

“screaming for help for example...should she feel so inclined...scream... [Silence,]...then listen... [Silence,]...then listen again... [Silence,]...no” (Beckett 1973)

Morris performed this line with the scream, though his was more in the vein of a Futurist cabaret than the horrific altered-human of Billie Whitelaw’s best-known performance. Even given Morris’s performative tones, to extract a text like this and recontextualise it is to flatten out the rounded drama of the work and filter it down to script. The inbuilt instruction to scream therefore becomes like a Fluxus event score, where the text and the act co-habit the artwork at altering moments. As Dworkin has said, Fluxus scores present “sufficiently abstract models of potential, rather than completed events or crafted objects, and so required thought both on the part of the performer, who had to work the cryptic sketches into concrete forms, and on the part of the audience, who had to make the mental connection between the score and the performance.” (Dworkin, Goldsmith 2010, xxxvi). The tortured soul in a theatrical rendition of Not I is a fictional character, not a performer or reader. Beckett said of the piece, he wanted it to “work on the nerves of the audience, not its intellect”. But the scream presented on this occasion by Morris was analytical and textual. The imported Beckett script was used for its material property, with its folding, looping discursiveness, and for its conjunctural intersections with Dolar’s account of the voice as theory, which in turn was undone from the text-book and dramatised.

However, alongside the concrete gesture of conflating the two texts we have the improvised noise of the saxophone. How does this messy improv fit with conceptual poetics and its ‘data mining’ and ‘information management’? Are these clashes and contradictory moves or are they part of the same objective for poetry and writing? It’s worth remembering that while Goldsmith takes pride in the boredom his work provokes, their live rendering is fully anchored in performance and showmanship. When Goldsmith reads No. IIII (Goldsmith 1997), a text composed of found words ending in ‘r’ giving the main body of the text a repetitive “shwar” sound, the piece is pure performance, routed in the tradition of performed sonic poetics, like Hugo Ball reciting a phonetic poem. Following on from this, the conceptualist approach to language showcased at the Whitechapel is on one hand concerned with a text’s context and criticality and on the other with its potential to echo the background noise of the everyday. Like a scream that is both an essential piece of communicative signalling, yet it also blood curdling and affective.

Nick Thurston presented next and toured some of his own work and classic sound poetry pieces. Thurston read through (rather than performed) a Kurt Schwitters alphabet piece. In doing so he cited this historical moment of devising poetry formed of ‘letters’ rather than words, as definitive in releasing writing from the confines of literary expression. The reduction of language to component elements allows for an approach to writing that performs like sculpting binary digits. Historically, Schwitters’ letter-based writing progressed to poetry being formed of phonemes and vocal noise in a generally accepted narrative of ‘Sound Poetry’ that leads to Bob Cobbing. Honouring this trajectory Thurston also read from Cobbing’s ABC in Sound, 1973, including ‘Alphabet of Fishes’, in another nod to poetry composition being a gathering of themed ‘bits’. In this case it’s a reminder that layers of litany and organised data do indeed provide a vigorous score for sound poetry.

Thurston also read the text for his 2009 visual piece, He Wore, a rendering of a passage from Beckett’s Watt, which famously catalogues the combinations of shoes and socks worn by the protagonist, the ludicrous variations being like a dismantling of sense and narrative. As another interruption on Beckett, it reiterates his significance in the conceptual writing project. The Beckett archive is treated as a database of work that reveals text materiality through word saturation, and language as code. In Thurston’s treatment of Watt, every noun in the text (‘sock’ and ‘shoe’) is removed and replaced with the word ‘noun’. A thick stream of phrases like, “He sometimes wore a noun, or a noun and a noun, and sometimes just noun”, giving the text that opacity and inflection that sees it undermine original creativity.
Jaap Blonk performs *Underlands*

Image courtesy of David Weill www.danwellphotography.co.uk
The piece first existed as a screenprint, formatted in the graphics of the Beckett Calder publication. In this case the performance opened up the text and revealed its repetitions. It became a sound composition that fully embodied the autistic rhythms of the Beckett passage. As a reading it also gave a sense of the physical effort that is required for such an exhaustively processed work. A piece for ‘grammar geeks and sore jaws’ it takes its toll on the performer, reminding us how the extremities of a conceptual work can become a bodily act.

A key moment in the evening was Thurston’s ‘live listening piece’, Esperanto Rhythm, a live mix composed of multiple dial-a-clocks in various languages. This neatly brought in another emphasis in Thurston’s practice and the IAM project, the linkage of transmission and signalling to processed-based texts. Broadcasting through sound media is indeed the perfect representation of materialised information. The incoming signals from the world outside the room marked the occasion as single of many, and the concentrated sensation of audio set the scene for Jaap Blonk to continue exploring the sonic event.

Blonk is a famed inheritor of the Schwitters and Dada mode of sound poetics. He is expert in re-performing monumental audio works of the avant-garde, like Die Ursonate and Artaud’s To Have Done with the Judgement of God (Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu). In the tradition of these figureheads Blonk has devised compositions in a devised language that reflects, or inflects, the phonic qualities of his own Dutch. Underlands (a deformation of Netherlands) is written employing the sounds of Dutch without giving into any of its semantic meaning. Underlands has its own mutating cultural heritage, also existing as a drinking song and an Underlands ‘bebop’ song. His setting of a Raul Haussman text, Nightmare further secures his own heritage as a ‘traditional’ sound poet. His objective seems to be to keep these compositions and methodology alive, treating the scores with the preciousness of a folk archive or dying language that someone must remain fluent in. He is indeed impressively proficient in this mode of performance but his skill is made clear when he moves from the third movement of Ursonata into his own composition. In this switch the audience gets a sense of his personalised articulation and individual vocal technique.

Blonk’s use of a computer console game pad for generating and ‘playing’ synthesised sounds added a striking dynamic and brought a necessary spontaneity to the otherwise diligently rehearsed set. This element of improvisation picked up the thread from Morris and Lavers’ set and cohered the aspect of chance with predetermined scores. A conceptual gesture that contains a dependency on chance and the accidental detail is reflected in much of Morris’s work. The Royal Road to the Unconscious, 2003 (see page 14) was an event-work that performed the ‘aleatory moment’ of a rigid instruction incorporating accident. The piece used Ed Ruscha’s book Royal Road Test as a readymade instruction, in a process that saw every word cut from a book of Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams then thrown from the window of a Renault Clio Sport on a Dorset road at 90mph. The video document of the burst of paper shows a concise combination of intent and randomness.

This John Cage approach to enacting a score helps to reconcile what at first seemed like a clash of sound poetry and conceptual writing in the IAM output. Détournement texts and situational aesthetics necessarily involves a work escaping its parameters in moments of given excess. The framework is devised based on a planned diaspora of noise. Craig Dworkin says that conceptual writers work within the realisation that “if an artwork could be self descriptive and made of language, then that language could describe itself.” (Dworkin, Goldsmith 2010, xxviii). When language does reveal itself in a sound-driven text it reveals itself to be musical and meandering. Its self-descriptions are of the materials of speech and processes of voicing. It’s a combination that was exemplified in Christian Bök’s VJ set all along. The most prominent that featured is Michael Winslow reciting the History of the Typewriter (Winslow 2009) in which he mimics, with amazing accuracy versions of typewriters and their developing technologies. Another is Japanese beatboxer, Hikakin, who vocalises a stupefying rendition of the Super Mario theme tunes (Hikakin 2012). At the other end of the scale is competition winning auctioneer Emily Wears (NAA IAC auction contest 2011). Each artist is either directly mimicking machine or has become machinic in their extreme vocal techniques. Breaking the parameters of common speech in a way that is perversely reminiscent of Schwitters. It’s a further example of clean-cut, mechanical execution that leads to excessive, aleatoric sounds.

Bök’s presenting of disparate materials that combines footage of avant-garde poets and other youtube plunderings, is in the spirit of the remix culture IAM celebrates. Appropriation, recycling and DJing textual elements allow the process and the media to engage on a mutual level. IAM works and events share this highlighting of methodology. This is what the Whitechapel event and residency emphasised, that practice is at the centre of what they do.
The Royal Road to the Unconscious; the aleatory moment (223,704 words travelling at 90mph). 1st June 2003, Simon Morris

The Royal Road to the Unconscious was conceived by the artist Simon Morris in order to conduct an experiment on Sigmund Freud’s writing. Utilising Ed Ruscha’s book Royal Road Test as a readymade set of instructions, seventy-eight students cut out every single word from Sigmund Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams.

On Sunday, June 1st, 2003, the artist, Simon Morris (thrower) threw the words out of the window of a Renault Clio Sport on Redbridge Road, Crossways, Dorset, travelling at a speed of 90mph (in order to access the unconscious, it may be necessary to transcend the national speed limit), approximately 122 miles southwest of Freud’s psychoanalytical couch. The action freed the words from the structural unity of Freud’s text as it subjected them to an ‘aleatory moment’ – a seemingly random act of utter madness. Daniel Jackson (filmmaker), Maurizio Cogliandro (photographer), and Dallas Seitz (photographer), documented the action as 222,704 words erupted from the window of the car. They also recorded the stream of words strewn along the side of the road. Dr. Howard Britton, a psychoanalyst (driver) directed them to any slippages or eruptions of the real that occurred in the reconfigured text.

The poetic act of liberating Freud’s text allows us to engage with Jacques Lacan’s register of the Real. The concept of the Real is far removed from anything that we conventionally attribute to reality. It is the experience of a world without language. If language names, it is all that escapes the name - an encounter beyond images and words.

http://www.informationasmaterial.org
http://vimeo.com/11387673
**Holly Pester** is a sound poet and researcher based in London. She performs at text, art and poetry events including the Serpentine Poetry Marathon 2009, Text Festival 2011. She is researching Sound Poetry and its Intermedial Field for a practice-led PhD at Birkbeck, University of London.

Pester’s poetry collection, *Hoofs*, was released with *if p then q* press in 2011. More info and contact can be found at www.hollypester.com

Information as material can be found at:
http://www.informationasmaterial.org

**Notes**

1. *Photopath* is a series of photos on the floor of the gallery that exactly correspond to the floorboards, in other words, a photo of the floor on the floor.

2. *Day* is an entire transcription, including adverts and paratext, of the 1st September 2000 issue of *The New York Times*.

**Bibliography**


There is but one difficulty in the way of this conjecture, which is this, that the moderate are five times better than the moderate seventy times more knowledge of the human heart; and in my opinion, discovered a thousand times more great and to crown all, are infinitely more entertaining. Sermons are offered to the whole people, and are not in the way of treating the rest, he

Though not very offensive, for it is at least a hundred and a half of distance from, and below the

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman © Visual Editions; designed by A Practice for Everyday Life
I am currently reading a modern edition of Laurence Sterne’s *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, originally published in 1759. This new edition is a lovely thing, with beautiful typographic detailing, two-colour printing throughout, a luxurious choice of stock, paper-engineered pages and the most handsome attention to detail from cover to cover.

But the actual reading of the grammar of the page – the column width, the folios, the title pages, the chapter headings – remains essentially unchanged from that first edition of 1759. Even its typographic and narrative tricks are lifted from the original. Visually (and linguistically) it would appear that we have moved on very little in the last 250 years.

When Sterne wrote *Tristram Shandy* he broke all the rules: events occur out of order, stories and asides are often left unfinished and there are pages filled with asterisks or dashes or, indeed, left entirely blank. Of course, this level of innovation and experimentation draws down criticism. Samuel Johnson, for instance, is quoted in Boswell as saying that: “the merely odd does not last. *Tristram Shandy* will not last.” There was certainly nothing else really like it before, nor has there been since.

In fact, most narratives still consider the story element within a text to be like “a waterfall …something that can be poured into any container” (Craig Mod – *Books in the Age of the iPad*).

From our initial understanding of the page as a vehicle to hold text, our tacit assumptions regarding readability and legibility have been founded on a series of evolutions, not revolutions: from the hand-written manuscripts of mediaeval monks, to Gutenberg’s forty-two line bible; from the addition of word spaces, to text that reads in one primary direction; from the invention of a standardised dictionary to a system of punctuation marks that indicate how words on a page should be delivered when spoken aloud.

Of course, there are those who have nothing to do with such fripperies. In 1802 Lord Timothy Dexter (who had never learnt to spell), self-published his autobiography, *A Pickle for the Knowing Ones*. It had 8,847 words, 33,864 letters, no punctuation, and capitals were added as decoration to make the words look less boring. Apparently he could see no other purpose for them. A large number of complaints led him to publish a second edition, which had a page of punctuation at the end so that the reader could “peper and solt it as they plese.”

Aside from Lord Timothy, most published works followed the conventions that culture and technology dictated. Metal type, the only effective medium for the production and dissemination of information for most of our 500 years of printing history, is easiest to set in blocks, each line being set within a certain length and each column having the same depth. This makes perfect sense in terms of the design and production of books. You can work out your characters per line, your words per page and then the number of pages you will need to print your book. Budgets are clear and prices are fixed.

The question is, why are we still so beholden to this approach? Why do we take it as a given? When paste-up replaced composing with hot or cold metal type, the method changed but the delivery – a column of type – remained the same: a consistent line length matched to a consistent depth of column. Yet today, we have the opportunity to rethink everything regarding the page and how we read it. We have had that opportunity since the Mac Plus was launched in 1984 and the world went WYSIWYG.

As long ago as 1923, El Lissitzky wrote the *Electro-Library* manifesto, in which he told us that “the new book demands the new writer,” and that the “design of the book space set according to the constraints of printing mechanics no longer matters to us.” This new book is undeniably here. Indeed, we now have an opportunity to integrate the writing on the page with the design of the page. Keith A. Smith has asked why we still consistently retain our archaic notion of the page, with the depth of a column always being the same. This approach may have made typesetting, paste-up and the mathematics of calculating the number of pages needed extremely simple, yet today, you can adjust page layouts on screen and immediately view the effects of tweaking designs. One of Smith’s suggestions is that each column of type
Double Or Nothing, Raymond Federman, (see also, page 21) images reproduced by kind permission of Erica Federman.

The People of Paper, Salvador Plascencia (see also, page 21). Copyright © Salvador Plascencia
should end on a paragraph, rather than cutting the text as it crosses the page. He suggests that we respond to the needs of the narrative as a reading experience, rather than the needs of the page as a commercial product.

The first real attack on the entrenched conventions of page layout came at the end of the 19th Century when writers and artists began to dictate the look of their work. Some became directly involved in printing rather than leaving a compositor to decide upon the aesthetics of their piece. Visual language began changing with the advances in technology that led to the invention of the lateral router, a machine which allowed the speedy and accurate milling of wood and, by extension, wood type. New fonts appeared regularly, each outdoing the last in an attempt to gain the attention of the passing passererby. The Victorian Playbill poster with which we are all so familiar began to appear and dominate the typographic landscape.

In 1865 Lewis Carroll published Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. In it, The Mouse’s Tale was typeset according to a drawing by the author. If you look at the various editions of the book, its shape is highly dependent on the artistry of the compositor. As with Guillaume Apollinaire, whose handwritten Calligrammes: Poèmes de la paix et de la guerre 1913-1916 (Poems of war and peace 1913-1916) was often typeset with varying results, it would appear that the author had little real say, or perhaps interest, in the translating of the sketch into printed matter.

This period was significant in other ways – the Illustrated London News began to use a revolutionary form of visual communication – one that we now take for granted: the double page spread. This single affectation created the beginnings of the magazine as something specific and distinct from the book, and saw the beginnings of the divergence between the two mediums. Of course, artists used this new visual space too. In 1897 Stéphane Mallarmé published Un Coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard (A throw of the dice will never abolish chance). Although the definitive version was not published until after his death in 1914, Un Coup remains a huge step away from “text as columns” and “the compositor as king.” It is an abstract poem, which first used the “pregnant white space of the page,” a space where what you leave out is as important as what you put in. From that point, space was no longer considered to be a mistake or an unsold advertising slot, and gained the potential to be conceived of as silence.

By the early 1900s, artists began to create increasingly complex visual narratives, building on the simplicity of Apollinaire’s Il Pleut (It’s Raining). The poem was typeset by the retired owner of a jobbing printers, and despite the poet’s lack of interest it was a beautiful translation of his text. Cigarette papers and matchsticks were used to hold the type up long enough to print it. Apparently, Apollinaire took the poem, still wet, to a soirée and a famous opera singer was asked to read it. She cried because she could not perform it, assuming that it was some form of cruel joke.

By the time the Futurists had hit their typographic stride with the publication of Filippo Marinetti’s Zang Tumb Tumb, in 1914, all convention had been thrown out in an attempt to capture the insanity and confusion of modern life and specifically, the turmoil of the Balkan War. Zang Tumb Tumb is in effect the sound of the conflict made into text: a Turkish balloon flies over telegraph poles as shells fall around it and a train journey takes place under the watchful eyes of the spotter’s high above. In a similar vein, Paul van Ostaijen’s Bezette Stad (Open/Occupied City) uses hand drawn and typeset elements to create its visual narrative: a Zeppelin flying across London, the terror of bombs falling in the darkness, and a series of deserted streets. The Futurists created an immersive, calligraphic world.

This environment of invention, in which El Lissitzky searched for the “new reader,” led to the glorious period of creativity in which Pierre Albert-Birot published his Dadaist sound poems. These were not simply pages to be read to oneself. Rather, they were pieces to be performed – scripts and scores to be interpreted as the audience saw fit.

This is the artist/designer flying in the face of convention. The works were shocking and were affronts to all that was considered cultured, right and proper. Marinetti’s A Tumultuous Assembly could not have been a more potent statement of intent. Visualized, it created a new way of seeing the spoken word. A “geometry of sound” was explored by the Avant-garde in visually inventive ways throughout the period, from Ilya Zdanovich’s Le-Dantyu as a Beacon, with its tables of symbols, instructions and visual conceits, to Jan Tschichold’s almost deadpan interpretation of Kurt Schwitters’ Ursonate.

The defining moments in the creation of these pieces were the relationships between the artists, authors and designers. In most cases they were one and the same thing, or the people involved were working very closely together. The more disparate these elements were, the more diluted the results. In Alfred Bester’s 1956 science fiction novel Tiger! Tiger! (also known as The Stars My Destination), the anti-hero Gully Foyle’s madness was rendered typographically – a madness that seems to alter with the technology available to each designer of subsequent editions. This is perhaps a direct descendant of the different translations of Carroll’s The Mouse’s
Once inside THE HOUSE
I looked into the front room. It was dark but still warm and cozy from the dying embers of the fire. COCKRAT was asleep on the ARM of the chair and I could see from the light in the hallway that Mary had eaten a TANGERINE and left the peel on a saucer.

And there, hanging over the back of the chair, was the DRESS I held it up to examine it as best I could in the poor light.

There were a few loose threads but otherwise it looked as though it was pretty much finished.

SINGER machines really do make light work of everything you sew. It was then, more than ever, that I wanted the whole evening to have happened differently. I wanted to have stayed in with Mary, watching TAKE YOUR PICK and Bottle and Bridge. I wanted us to have had our Supper sandwich and slept together while I tried on the new home-made dress one more time before going off to bed. Lovely clean bed, where it’s snug between sheets as white as your nightie. As shining white as all mother’s white things.

There were a number of doorbells at number THIRTY-ONE. None bore the name of Mr. Hands. Had I remembered the number correctly? I opted for the one labelled SYMS. I half wondered if I would be greeted by SYLVIA SYMS, star of stage and screen who keeps her skin so young-looking. There was a pane of frosted glass near the front door but no light shone from within and there at the downstairs window where the curtains were not quite drawn. After a moment, there was movement from within and a light shone in the hallway. The door was opened by a wheezy, wide-hipped woman whose resemblance to Miss Syms could be measured in tactual miles. She had thin, frizzy hair and cheeks that looked as if they had been stopped.

FORTY TIMES
At her feet, a small, highly strung puppy wriggled and worried until into a rich, creamy lather. She hooked her index finger into its COLLAR to restrain it, though this did nothing to hamper its enthusiasm. It rattled and coughed, interest

I didn’t go straight home. I knew I had to get back before Mary so that I’d have time to change, but she wouldn’t be home until five plus. I decided to catch the bus instead of walking, so that gave me a bit more time. It had stopped raining, so I would have gone for a nice stroll over to Marcia Modes, but my busiest feet were beginning to pinch a bit.

The heel. NOTHING SERIOUS: an Elastoplast would do. A couple of dabs of Germolene would make to feel blissful, even to the going-over of the shoe.
Similarly, the modern novel *Guantanamo Boy* by Anna Perera, uses typographic experiments to express the horror and the effects of torture on the body and mind of the book’s protagonist, Khalid. Whether subsequent editions will exhibit typographic experiments and alterations associated with future typographic technologies remains to be seen.

Along with the playscript as a constant companion for invention – Robert Massin’s interpretation of Ionesco’s *The Bald Soprano* being one of the most famous examples – we have artists’ books. These works encompass the typographic choreography of Dier Roth’s *Bok* series, the generative solutions of Wolfgang Schmidt’s *Synthetic Scripts*, and the constantly evolving visual creativity of Tom Phillips’ *A Humument*. But these works are very different from the novel *Tristram Shandy* which was created not by an artist, but by an author. These artists’ books were driven by people with creative agendas that supported the licence to play with format and convention.

So, which books subvert the conventions of the novel? Raymond Federman’s *Double or Nothing* is a delight. The text for the original 1971 edition was created directly on a typewriter. Each page is as much a visual piece as it is a literary work. The two are intrinsically linked and a clear narrative exists. The modern edition, typeset using the Mac, has little of the original’s charm. Federman has a spiritual father in Earl Conrad’s *Typoo*, an even more abstract typewritten novel, where the narrative text is led by the visuals. It may also contain the first use of an “emoticon.” From the same period, but using teleprinters rather than typewriters, Willard S. Bain’s *Informed Sources* presents a traditional narrative that at various points becomes word play and word pictures. While some writers were using limited technology to drive their visual narratives, the collaboration between writer William H. Gass and designer Larry Levy on *Willie Masters’ Lonesome Wife* exploited new Phototypesetting machines to create texts that bubble and weave across the page. They created Furnivalesque towers and typographic illustrations that mixed photographic imagery with typeset elements.

Recently, modern fiction has yielded a number of extremely odd novels, which, despite Johnson’s assertion, will hopefully last. In Mark Z. Danielewski’s *House of Leaves*, disconcerting typographic visuals resonate with the sense of unease described within the narrative. The book contains many shifts in tone, from pages set in a traditional single column, to those where two columns, with inserts and annotations become the norm. The text is set in a variety of fonts and point sizes, each having its own emotional and narrative ticks. Sometimes the page spreads are reduced almost to blanks. Other times, the text is an apologetic visitor. The text matter expands, contracts and even gives way to sketches and photographs.

Salvador Plasencia’s *The People of Paper* (below) is a story told by a series of narrators with texts divided into several parts on each page. The novel uses its form to explore our own relationship with the story we are reading and the lives that we are both intruding upon and directing. Thanks to black bars obscuring the text at various points, the reader is not allowed to fully read or understand the work.

Graham Rawle’s *Woman’s World* draws upon an almost insane working method to create its signature look: a collaged novel. The original story was plotted traditionally, then the novel itself was pieced together over a five-year period, each word cut and pasted from women’s beauty magazines. The resulting narrative, occasionally altered due to the source materials, captures the typographic feeling of a turn of the century experimental playscripts. Words appear in different fonts and readers assign them particular “voices” at odds with the rest of the text. Is this because the words are intended to have a different “delivery” as part of the narrative? Or simply due to the limitations of the
source material? Either way, the resulting fiction is, as Joanna Lumley tells us on the cover quote, “as mad and believable as a dream.”

Steven Hall’s *The Raw Shark Texts*, with its sublime mixture of literal, visual and textual explorations, offers a similarly disconnected narrative. The hero literally does not know himself and the novel follows his gradual understanding of his past. It is a story that is perfectly interwoven with plays on words that can have a deadly effect – the letterbomb for example – and the typographic compositions that give physical form to the conceptual creature that stalks him, the Ludovician.

Barrie Tullett is currently working with Ken Cockburn on a new series of poetry translations, the first of which *Snapdragon*, featuring the work of Arne Rautenberg was published in August. *The Book of Days*, a collaboration with the poet Angus Reid has just been published by The Caseroom Press, and is funded by subscription: http://www.angusreid.co.uk/present/writing/poetry/

Barrie Tullett and Philippa Wood are founder members of a collective called The Caseroom Press; an independent publisher whose work explores the function and format of the book, from single limited editions to multiple copies; from poetry to prose; from the artist’s book to traditional print; from stencils to typewriters; from wood and metal type to litho and digital print processes.

Do these contemporary books represent not only the realisation of El Lissitzky’s *Electro Library Manifesto*, but also the continuation of Sterne’s early innovations? Are we likely to see a generation of authors who embody Lissitzky’s new kind of writer, reader and designer? Let’s hope so. Everything about the page has become new again. Everything we think we know about narrative fiction, book design and typography cries out to be reinvented in order to imaginatively exploit the possibilities of both the physical book and the virtual novel.

We are now at a stage where the opportunities offered to us by the new book and the new writer, allow us to reinvent and reconsider the way narratives are generated and delivered. We must reconsider every aspect of page design, from the details we understood to represent the craft of typography to the elements of the page itself. The “design of the book-space, set according to the constraints of printing mechanics” no longer matters. Pages represent an undiscovered landscape of opportunity and possibility. In the hands of a writer, designer, publisher or reader, the surface can truly transcend space and time and the “printed” surface can be re-invented to release infinite possibilities. The rules no longer apply.

Barrie Tullett and Philippa Wood are founder members of a collective called The Caseroom Press; an independent publisher whose work explores the function and format of the book, from single limited editions to multiple copies; from poetry to prose; from the artist’s book to traditional print; from stencils to typewriters; from wood and metal type to litho and digital print processes.

They collaborate with a number of artists, illustrators, designers, painters, poets, sculptors, students and musicians. A recent Caseroom press publication includes: *Open House*, Philippa Wood in collaboration with Angie Butler of Pet Galerie Press. www.the-case.co.uk
Due to the constraints of copyright, I was unable to show images of many of the books I mention in the text and I’ve also neglected to mention one or two things that some readers will find an unbelievable oversight; B S Johnson’s *The Unfortunates* and *House Mother Normal*, Stefan Themerson’s *Semantic Poetry* or Christine Brook-Rose’s *Thru* to name a few.

Here is a list of the book details as a bibliography. If you search online, images from these books are readily available on the websites of many institutional collections. The British Library also have also published *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text* by Alan Bartram, which is a wonderful visual resource.


Willard S. Bain. *Informed Sources* (Day East Received). Doubleday, NY, 1969


Lord Timothy Dexter. *A Pickle for the Knowing Ones or Plain Truths in a Homespun Dress*. Self-published, 1802


Eugène Ionesco. *La Cantatrice chauve* (*The bald Soprano*). Designed by Robert Massin, Gallimard, 1964


Stéphane Mallarmé. ‘Un Coup de dès jamais n’abolira le hazard’. *Cosmopolis: A Literary Review*, London / Paris, May 1897


Kurt Schwitters. *Merz 24 Ursonate* with typography by Jan Tschichold. 1932


Paul van Ostaijen. *Bezette Stad*. Illustrated with woodcuts by Oskar Jespers. Sienjaal, Antwerp, 1921

**Publishing Exhibitions**

Andrew Blackley, Golden Gallery, Inc

Gregory Battcock’s 1977 essay *Art Exhibitions and the Negation of Art* opens with the following paragraph:

> The art exhibition itself remains the single most vital factor in art communication – more important perhaps than the artworks itself. Until recently, however, it has been thought of as no more than a bothersome yet necessary convention. Such an approach is inadequate in demonstrating the positional factor in art. The only art that seems to thrive on conventional art-exhibition techniques is negative or destructionist art, in which the man purpose of the artwork is to remove itself from existence.¹

Battcock’s essay serves - historically, and personally - as a precursor to my essay here describing a curatorial methodology I have developed while organising exhibitions in institutional and commercial venues. It is my aim to frame three exhibitions, described below, in the language of Battcock’s theories of positional and negative art. Alongside Battcock’s essay, my curatorial practice is deeply indebted to a conceptual and practical evolution of the magazine - and language-driven art - of the last three decades.

*John Neff* Prints *Robert Blanchon, Sleepless, WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists 1978 – 2008* have each addressed the book-form, printmaking, or the use (and reuse) of the document in form and concept. Each utilises a “draft” that published and transformed into a concretised “object” in its exhibition. In this way, publication influenced the ways in which the exhibitions have been conceptualised and designed for the public.

*WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists, 1978–2008* was exhibited at Golden Gallery, New York, July 13 – August 5, 2012. Founded in 1978 by Buzz Spector, Reagan Upshaw, and Roberta Upshaw, *WhiteWalls* began as an organisation to support and investigate artists working with language. The publication – taking for thirty years the form of a periodical artists’ magazine - featured contributions from a roster of prominent figures engaged with text-based practices and their writings, either critical or artistic.

In its present state, *WhiteWalls* continues to promote a wide array of “writings by artists,” though it has shifted its platform from serial publication to becoming a publisher of singular artists’ books and projects focusing on individual artists or collectives.

The *WhiteWalls* exhibition features the visionary serial publication’s complete run. Viewed retrospectively, the hundreds of contributions that constitute the history of the publication display a specific, however varied, account of contemporary art from the late 1970s to the present. The exhibition aims to embody this account and serve as a platform for the founding concerns of the publication in the present day, specifically the intersections of art and language, and the permeability of boundaries between textual art, poetics, and critical writing.

A selection of titles from past issues of *WhiteWalls* illustrates for the unfamiliar reader the breadth of concerns of the magazine and its constituency: *Palimpsests, Contextual Art and Text in Chicago, In Frame, When Worlds Collide, Art and Healing, Local Options, Regarding An/Other, Words as Images, Play, Fluxus, Verbally Charged Images, Performance, Drawing in the 80s, Fictions and Reminiscences*, and *Incidents of Travel*.

The exhibition is designed to be an engagement of the publication rather than attempting to serve as a comprehensive account of its history. This curatorial agenda allows the exhibition to takes seriously its own form as a temporary investigation, exhibition, event series, and study center. For five weeks, the gallery’s exhibition space was transformed into a reading room offering the public rare comprehensive access to the evolution of the magazine - and language-driven art - of the last three decades.

I invited a number of artists, former editors and contributors to participate in the exhibition by contributing artworks as a supplement to - and translation of - their involvement with *WhiteWalls*. Others involved were enlisted for multiple events during the course of the exhibition: their evenings ranged between readings, talks, and public conversations addressing their individual and collective engagements with the magazine. Numerous artists chose to read, alongside their own writings, additional texts other than their own. At the time of writing of this essay in July, the following artists and writers had agreed to participate: Dike Blair, Gregg Bordowitz, Mary Ellen Carroll, Cameron Crawford, Jeanne Dunning, Anthony Elms, Wendy Jacob, Silvia Kolbowski (with Simon Leung), Helen Mirra, A. Laurie Palmer, Mary Patten, John Ploof, Timothy Porges, Buzz Spector, Reagan Upshaw & Roberta Upshaw.

This essay is no less anticipatory than the exhibition it describes, despite a great amount of planning and conceptualisation. This period of the exhibition’s organisation is a critical moment for this type of exhibition. The relationship between the
WhiteWalls bookshelf. Image courtesy of Golden Gallery, Inc. and WhiteWalls. 
Photographer: Jacob Meehan
conceptualisation of an exhibition, and its debut, is one that I feel strongly influenced by my relationship to publishing. The moments prior to the opening of an exhibition of this sort serve as the period in which the conditions for experience and reception are being set, and in this way, any preemptive description of an exhibition is at once a description of planning, and is anticipatory for the forthcoming execution and experience.

Summoning Battcock’s criticism that “the only art that seems to thrive on conventional art-exhibition techniques is negative or destructionist art, in which the main purpose of the artwork is to remove itself from existence” I’d like to examine, in past practice, an emphasis of the self-aware exhibition, one that whose self-account takes itself seriously beyond of, though linked to, the artworks that constitute it. Additionally, I’d like to build a shared relationship between the moment of publication for an artwork – the state change mentioned above - and the opening of an exhibition of this sort as complimentary processes. Two previous exhibitions establish a working context for WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists, 1978-2008.

*John Neff Prints Robert Blanchon was an exhibition realised in cooperation with artist John Neff, the estate of Robert Blanchon, Visual AIDS, and the Fales Library and Special Collections at New York University.**John Neff Prints Robert Blanchon** revolved around Robert Blanchon’s 1995 photo-based conceptual work *Untitled (aroma / 1981)*, itself a collection of advertisements for queer sex products selected by Blanchon from pre-AIDS gay publications. As unfixed sepia prints, the artwork was intended to be printed - and slowly fade away - with every showing. Since Blanchon’s death in 1999, the negatives he made for *Untitled (aroma / 1981)* have disappeared. However, an assortment of the supposedly ephemeral prints (crafted in the 2000’s for a catalogue) remained. In this two-stage exhibition, Neff first displayed the posthumously-printed components of *Untitled (aroma / 1981)* and then, within the gallery space, used those remnants to recreate negative transparencies and - this time unfixed and intended to fade - sepia prints.

The exhibition was not intended to restore Blanchon’s work to an “original” state. Nor was it designed as a commemorative or a honorary event. Rather, the project was an investigative reflection on, and reprocessing of, the life and work of Blanchon - an effort to develop production and presentation methods that engage his daring, difficult work with the levels of attention and risk it deserves. *Untitled (aroma / 1981)* is - to echo artist Steve Reinke - not torn, but asunder from the very start.

*Sleepless*, Golden’s third exhibition with Chicago artist Doug Ischar drew from the artist’s institutional exhibition history from 1993 - 1995. Two large bodies of work, *Orderly and Wake* - presented at The List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; Museo de Arte Moderna, São Paulo; Mercer Union, Toronto; and SITE Santa Fe, among others - emerged at a moment when the exploration of media, and cross-disciplinary practices, were critical actions further complicating the then-peculiar state of semiotics.

*Sleepless* presented the opportunity for the artist, and the public, to re-approach selected components from those early 90s installations, nearly two decades from their original conception and exhibition. Ischar’s editing of moving image and static objects continues to address the practical and visual boundaries for definitions of masculinity, sexuality, violence and secrecy.

Like WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists, 1978 – 2008, both *John Neff Prints Robert Blanchon* and *Sleepless* were organised to enlist a dynamic similar to the interaction of matrix and substrate familiar to the traditional printmaker. By selecting disparate moments – for *Sleepless*, artworks presented in the mid 1990s – an overall “composition in time” was realised for a public audience. For *John Neff Prints Robert Blanchon*, the entire exhibition was intended to serve as an exploration of publishing both literally and metaphorically.

In organising exhibitions of this sort, I’ve developed goals and procedures that are dramatically distinct from the methods and expectations resultant from working with studio-based artists – as Battcock writes “a bothersome yet necessary convention.” In this curatorial perspective, I have drawn heavily from my own experience as a publishing artist and my professional experience working with writers and institutional collections focusing on prints, drawings, and artists’ books. All artworks have contextual histories, however published multiples have various contextual histories – each valid, and important comprehensively. I became very interested in the individual reception of an artwork that by design existed in multiple other collections or exhibitions in the present.

The three exhibitions described above initiate a dialogue with a particular relationship to an exploration of one of various histories, and effectively, they then create of an entirely new one. A self-awareness of the present in which an artwork or exhibition exists is key, and *John Neff Prints Robert Blanchon, Sleepless, and WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists, 1978 – 2008* share one important similarity: the sense of historical diagnosis addressing the relationship of a historical moment or document to the present. They each prioritise an autobiographical account of (their) history as determined by the boundaries of their
organisation. It is when contextual histories are taken seriously in their subjective and malleable nature that we can design engaging exhibitions that are *positional* and therefore reflect and maintain consequentiality.

The distributive potential of publishing is often viewed, popularly and pragmatically, as the defining characteristic of the field. While I find varied histories and contextual lineages of multiple artworks extremely interesting, and an important consideration of any distributive practice, my recent attention has often been supplemented to include the transformative processes of publishing generally. Published artworks – including, but not limited to ink on paper or the codex form – are a result of a state change, and reflect a concretisation of a malleable form. Published artworks have a double life: their state prior to publishing and how they exist in the world after. The separation between these two existences is secure and unique to the publishing process. Prior to publishing, the artwork exists within a fluid and abstract realm, and upon their being publishing the artworks are “finished” as to no longer be able to receive edits or additions in the same form as the already-published. A contrasting example can be found within the techniques of painting: an artwork in this tradition receives its finish at exhaustion or temperament of the maker. Additionally, as accumulative process, paintings can most often receive additional marks or gestures without any substantial contradiction to the essential characteristics, or conceptual stability, of the artwork or its formative process.

Even in an edition of one, and regardless of physical medium, an artwork having undergone this state change maintains the ethos of publishing. While it may be ill fitting to classify certain types of exhibitions “publishings” I feel a considerable overlap in the methodology and professional practices (and objects of consideration) characteristic to both curators and publishers.

In the *WhiteWalls* exhibition, participating artists and the visiting public share a similar role; the identification of links and affinities that are based on the experience of the individual *in the moment* of the exhibition. It is unclear, however, if *WhiteWalls: Writings by Artists 1978 – 2008* is an archival exhibition. *WhiteWalls* does still function as an organisation publishing engaging material, and it continues to address intersections of art and language through writings by artists. Yet, the magazine-style issues that are the subject of this exhibition are previous to the certainly current version of the organisation’s output. The exhibition aims to address the recent past of a still-present body.

*Andrew Blackley* is an artist and curator living in New York City.

**Notes**


2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.
Just find a rich old lady that wants to support you. Ideally, one with a driver's license, so she can drive you around.
Le livre devient mobile au bout d'un certain temps (passement...). The book becomes inactive after a while (induction...).

Le corps en action

- Lecture en fonction du calendrier
- On peut aussi envisager un paramètre temporel de la lecture au fil du réel
- Lecture en fonction du calendrier (pour lire...)
- Reading changes according to the schedule
- One can also consider a time parameter linked to culture or religion of the reader (delay...)

- Un livre d'artiste augmenté ?
- An augmented artist book?

- Licence Art Libre http://www.artlibre.org
- Nicolas Frespech http://www.freepub.com
- Mort à la langue ! S. Redman
- Mai 24-07-2012 V1.2 JY V1.2 - sept 2011

Freeplane mindmap of some thoughts about the augmented Ebook, Nicolas Frespech, 2012
The eBook has already been around for 41 years and was invented by Michael Hart, founder of Project Gutenberg, which now gives us access to thousands of digitised books. The American cultural activist quickly realised that the computer had a capacity for practically unlimited memory storage, and that reading would change with home computing. Forty years later, a major concern for Project Gutenberg and other online libraries, is that there are almost as many eBooks in the public domain as they hold; which is ideal for revisiting the classics, but not great for inspirational examples of contemporary books. As for the scope of the artist’s eBook … at the moment it is still mostly a desert.

2012 it's a carnival of tablets!

Apple’s iPad, the tablet that does almost everything, is revolutionising reading. 2012 has indeed been the year of show-stopping developments in e-reading technologies for the iPad, Kindle, iPhone, electronic ink, colour screens, touch or no touch, multi-touch … this is a strange show, in its reading materials, ditto in the variations of formats, proprietary or open. The nascent audience of digital readers does not always wish to consider the practicalities of e-reading, as they wander around the technology like digital nomads, let alone engage in the creation of a digital book themselves, even if 120 million tablets have been sold worldwide in 2012, and as of April 2012, 12% of US citizens owned an e-reading device.

So what is on offer then that is really new? And how do we experience all these new e-reading genres? In the realm of everyday texts (mainstream novels, thrillers, romance stories, psychological fiction, poetry, factual publications, reference books, theses, etc.), the transition to digital reading platforms is not complicated: the writing fits well enough to play on most digital media.

In terms of artists’ books though, it’s a very different story, or even a different culture to invent. Currently, the ideal format would be the ePub platform for electronic publications (http://idpf.org/epub), this is much more flexible than PDFs and much more universal, since it adapts the content’s design so that the text can be read on any medium. For its part, the Amazon Kindle does not run on a proprietary format full of DRM (Digital Rights Management is a control technology that limits access only to the digital content provided or sold by the vendor, and is used by companies such as Apple for the iTunes store, or the BBC for iPlayer) but it provides only a glimpse of what an e-book’s potential could be. The Kindle seems to be made only for reading novels, not for viewing artists’ books.

In various conversations with students and artists, it has emerged that their desires and fears as the authors or creators of their books, is to have some control over the final result, as if the Codex was immutable. That is reassuring, as reading has a long history of existing in dynamic forms and creative practices. Already, creations available on the Internet will have varying appearances depending on for example, if you are using Firefox or Opera as your browser, or are viewing the content on a large or a small screen. The Web is not a magazine designed with InDesign, the flagship layout software used in the world of newspaper publishing. And even if the PDF offers a type of standard, document-friendly, layout format - which is often that of a pale, scanned copy of the original paper version - PDF does not meet the expectations that we have today for a digital artist’s book.

The best basis from which to think about making an artist’s book that will run easily on digital tablets or mobile phones, small or large screens, is that of content, of not feeling obliged either to add a whole bunch of different media or tricks to make it a good book. A good digital artist’s book though, might offer the reader their own final choice of larger text or let them change the background colour and even highlight in digital fluorescent interesting passages and share bookmarks on a social network, just like an interactive ‘normal’ e-book. And if it is launched?

We can imagine the possibilities for the digital artist’s book actually increasing, but the tools to access the works that are produced still bind us to the hardware they are experienced upon (connected mobile equipment, software specific readings, unopened layers that cannot be accessed).
I searched the Internet for some examples of artists’ books produced in this format and DRM-free… but I couldn’t find much, apart from a collaborative digital book project by Franck Ancel, *Du LIVRE de Mallarmé au livre mal armé* produced as an installation as part of *Artistbook International*, at the Pompidou Centre, Paris in December 2010.11 To make an ePub artists’ eBook, however is quite simple: download Sigil, a multiplatform free editing software (and open source)12, insert images, text, metadata etc… and it’s ready. Test it on your iPhone, tablet or on your Mac or PC using the free download application Calibre13, is it good? And if you are familiar with InDesign desktop publishing software, the latest version allows you to export your publication in ePub format! Finally for those who have an iPad, check out the Book Creator app, it is super easy to use WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get)! Perfect, you just have to send your creation to your friends by email or make it available on your website.

For my part, I embarked on a major project: an artist’s book series that is experimenting with the digital metaphor of turning the page!14 What we need to do now is to think differently about the artist’s book. We need to delve again into its history, read Anne Moeglin-Delcroix or Leszek Brogowski, experts in the field, to immerse ourselves in a creative context that began in the early 60s (as paper-based), and to use that contextual base to think about new ways to experiment with what the artist’s book can be now, it is just that this time it is digital.

Books that deal with digital.15 What can I say? What will I show? Should we play with the user by offering joint reading hypertext-like versions of Gallimard’s old Folio Junior books *Livres dont VOUS etes l’hero*, that is, *Books where YOU are the Hero*? Should we give people augmented e-books with sounds and videos…?16 There are of course questions about the economic models we will use - will we sell our creations on commercial platforms with censorship and draconian conditions of use? Or will we opt for free trade, something similar to the approaches of free and premium business models proposed by Chris Anderson?17 And what about access to digital artists’ books? Should we invite libraries to offer their users the ability to download our creations?18 Should we create a platform that specialises in digital artists’ books or encourage self-publishing? Will the digital artist’s book really shake the world of publishing and design?

In 2011, I participated in the poet and bookseller Beau Beausoleil’s project *Af-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here*19, in order to build some foundations for the digital artist’s book following the attacks that had destroyed the bookstores of Al-Mutanabbi Street. I was left thinking that it is was a bit ironic, provocative even, that access to physical locations for the distribution of paper-based books was “obsolete” even immaterial, and that the distribution model that will follow (political and economic), will be that the things that survive the longest may not be necessarily found in a single location but globally? So I was the only artist in the project to offer a version produced entirely digitally, (and even then, I also needed to print out 3 paper-based versions of the book for the project’s purposes), suddenly I felt a bit isolated. But I am sure that things are changing, and changing quickly. So, let’s see what happens next!

Nicolas Frespech is a French artist b. 1971. He has worked with the World Wide Web since 1996, and taught net art at Paul Valéry University (France) between 2002-2005. Since 2009, he has been teaching digital practice at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Lyon (France).

His varied projects combine to form a concern that touches as much on identity and its virtual and commercial standardisation, as on the concepts and phenomena of intimacy, Webcams and digital surveillance, media, games, or fiction.

His best-known online work remains *Je suis ton ami(e)…tu peux me dire tes secrets* (I’m your friend; you can tell me your secrets), which was the first piece of net art to be acquired by a public institution in France (FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon), in 1998. In “I’m your friend…” you could scroll through secrets sent in by Internet users or gathered from public artistic projects (Contemporary Art Days organised by the Ministry of Culture and Communication). However, access to the project has been forbidden since 2001, provoking a debate on the presence of contemporary net art in the virtual and public space of the Internet.

Frespech chooses to explore the Internet because of its interpersonal and artistic qualities, playing with the paradoxes of the network and creating micro-creations that criticise the commercialisation of the Internet. He continually questions net art by creating ever new experimentations, particularly in artists’ eBooks.

An earlier version of it was published in French, in July 2011 as an article for *Poptronics* a website for the discussion of digital arts and culture (http://www.poptronics.fr/Inventons-le-livre-d-artiste). This version has been translated for *The Blue Notebook*, updated and edited with new notes and hyperlinks. This text is under a free licence.

www.frespech.com
See the image on page 32 of this essay, a Freeplane mindmap of some thoughts about the augmented Ebook.


More information on the project can be found at: http://blog.gravitons-editions.com/fr/2010/12/du-livre-de-mallarme-au-livre-mal-arme/

Free Software Foundation: http://www.fsf.org


More information on the project can be found at: http://blog.gravitons-editions.com/fr/2010/12/du-livre-de-mallarme-au-livre-mal-arme/

Sigil is a multi-platform EPUB ebook editor: http://code.google.com/p/sigil/

Calibre is a free and open source e-book library management application developed by users of e-books for users of e-books. http://calibre-ebook.com

See my website for digital book projects: http://www.frespech.com/ebook/ and for the eBook Tourner la page / Turn the page

For example, see David Paton’s essay, The Sound Of A Book: Sound As Generator Of Narrative In The Reception Of Selected New Media Objects As Books, free PDF download (select the 500kb published version) at: http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=research

Notes

1. http://www.gutenberg.org


5. http://www.sakasama.net/conservationnetart/these-fr.html


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14. See my website for digital book projects: http://www.frespech.com/ebook/ and for the eBook Tourner la page / Turn the page

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Liz Ward, Stephen Bury, Clive Phillpot and Michael Doran in 2003

Artists’ Books Collection, July 2012
Artists’ books in HE teaching and learning

Gustavo Grandal Montero

Learning resource, teaching collection, study collection, research collection or special collection: a historical collection of artists’ books like that at Chelsea College of Art & Design Library can (and probably, has) been used and referred to in all these different ways, at different times, responding to changes in education, audiences, users, etc. The focus on research within universities has led, over time, to a narrow view of such collections and their use primarily as research material, often to the detriment of their use in teaching and learning. With the rebalancing in recent years of the importance of these activities, seen again as central to the mission of Higher Education (HE), a re-evaluation of the use of special collections, and specifically artists’ books collections, to enhance and improve the quality of learning and teaching activities, is required.

1. Artists’ books at Chelsea: history of a working collection

The Artists’ Books Collection, like the other Special Collections, complements the main library collection and reflects its subject specialisms: modern and contemporary art, architecture and interior design, graphic design, and textile design, with an emphasis on the theory, history and practice of Fine Art since 1900. A resource of national and international importance, it documents the involvement of contemporary artists with the book as a form of artistic practice since the late 1950s.

The origins of the Collection go back to 1970, when Clive Phillpot, then newly appointed Librarian at Chelsea, started to collect artists’ books systematically, in response to the production of ‘democratic multiples’ in book form by Conceptual, Minimalist, Fluxus, Arte Povera, Performance or Land Art artists in America and Europe. As such, it is among the earliest public collections of artists’ books in the UK or abroad (the development of most UK and USA university collections of artists’ books started during the 1980s or later), and one where the majority of its titles are acquired at around the time of production, not retrospectively.

These new acquisitions made by Phillpot joined a small number of artists’ books already in the collection, purchased by his predecessor, Michael Doran. Doran had been appointed in 1962 by Principal Lawrence Gowing, two years before the opening of the new Chelsea School of Art in purpose-built new premises at Manresa Road (SW3), to develop a high quality art library that he saw as central to the theoretical and historical education of art students. A large collection of books and magazines, including an important amount of original avant-garde material and contemporary art publications, were acquired during his tenure (1962-1970).

The several hundred artists’ books available in the library by the mid 1970s constituted a ‘learning resource’, part of the main collection and integrated into the open access stock to support independent learning, primarily for Fine Art students and staff interested in exploring new developments in contemporary art and the relatively new formats of artists’ books and magazines, but where they could also be discovered and used by graphic design and printmaking students, and others. The interaction with them was the same as that with any other book in the library.

This policy of open access for all library users to what constitute original artworks was also closely related to the philosophy and intentions of their makers, keen to circumvent the conventions and structures of the art establishment, and to produce a new type of work accessible to all (or, at least, many). As complex and multi-layered works of art presenting information in a range of ways (tactile, visual, textual, etc.), artists’ books require direct contact and time. They can also support a wide range of learning styles, and offer students a way of developing an appreciation for a standard of quality – conceptual and technical- that can only be gained from handling specific successful examples directly (and this was a period abundant in masterpieces!).

Phillpot was not only a pioneering librarian, he was also active in early critical literature (his first article on artists’ books was published in ‘Studio International’ in the summer of 1972) and exhibitions, co-curating ‘Artists’ bookworks’ (British Council touring exhibition, 1975) and ‘Artists’ books ... since 1970’ (Arts Council touring exhibition, 1976) – books from Chelsea’s collection were used to illustrate the two catalogues. While working there, he produced a definition that is still influential in the way the collection is developed today: “Books or booklets produced by the artist using mass-produced methods, and (theoretically) unlimited numbers, in which the artist documents or realises art ideas or artworks.”

Librarian Stephen Bury developed and greatly expanded the Collection during the 1980s and 1990s, separating artists’ books from the main library collection and co-locating them as a study collection and, progressively, a research one. Dr. Bury used artists’ books in teaching sessions; he was responsible for a course in Theory and History of Modern Art, but also taught or supported Fine Art courses and a new MA Book Arts course created at Camberwell College of Arts (both colleges...
being part of the London Institute since 1986) in the mid 1990s, the first of its kind in the UK. As a consequence of this use, examples of particular techniques or use of materials were occasionally purchased to complement works of a more conceptual nature. However, this is not a collection primarily devoted to support and illustrate book arts, and its focus remains on the history of artists’ books as a medium for contemporary art.

In a period of growing scholarship, with a number of important monographs devoted to artists’ books contributing to the establishment of a historical narrative and the consolidation of a canon, Dr Bury furnished an important survey of the genre that is, at the same time, a survey of the Collection at Chelsea at the time: ‘Artists’ books: the book as a work of art, 1963-1995’. The book includes a definition of artists’ books that, if more comprehensive, is still close to the one that Phillpot had proposed nearly 20 years earlier: “Books or book-like objects, over the final appearance of which an artist has had a high degree of control; where the book is intended as a work of art itself.” He was also responsible for several other publications focused on this format and a number of exhibitions that borrowed from the Collection.

Co-locating artists’ books as a study (eventually “special”) collection had obvious advantages for their use in teaching, but also responded to changes in the art market and the increase in the value and rarity of many of them. However, this material was still accessible for use on request to college students and other library users, continuing with its role as an independent learning tool for those interested in the history of the medium, and contemporary art at large, as well as in technical and material issues – sometimes pursuing references to specific titles from staff or critical literature.

During this period, a separate collection of artists’ multiples, 3D artworks made in editions (that are “not books”), was developed, responding to historical (e.g. Fluxus) as well as contemporary developments (e.g. YBAs). An off-shoot of the Artists’ Books Collection, it integrated some sculptural items that were part of it, and both collections have continued to grow in parallel to document the evolution of distributed artworks within contemporary art.

After 2000, librarians Liz Ward and Liz Lawes made a priority of promoting and improving access to the Collection, including presenting an active programme of exhibitions, enhancing cataloguing practices (Lawes co-authored ‘Artists’ books: a cataloguers’ manual’ and working closely with Fine Art and other courses, a process continued as one of the main focus of activity since I arrived in 2007 (working with Emily Glancy and later Alessia Borri). They were also responsible for its move in 2005, when college, library and collections relocated to new premises at Millbank (SW1). The books were then shelved in purpose-made wooden shelves in conservation pamphlet boxes, within a dedicated room with sufficient space for the Collection (more than 2,000 items at that time) and for use in seminars (up to 15 people).

The expansion of the Collection has continued rapidly in recent years, currently comprising around 4,000 artists’ books. This reflects developments in artists’ publishing (e.g. the interaction between print and digital cultures, and related proliferation of publications), increased coverage (e.g. emergence of new centres of activity: SE Asia, etc.) and a number of important donations that have allowed us to fill gaps or build added strength retrospectively. Although the Collection has always been international in scope, works by current and former Chelsea students and staff are particularly well represented. New material is constantly being added to reflect contemporary art developments both locally and internationally.

Work to improve discovery and access has continued, including the creation of detailed in-house cataloguing guidelines based on international standards (AACR2, MARC21, LCSH, etc.) and tailored to the characteristics of the material collected, and the re-cataloguing of material with substandard records. A range of conservation measures (e.g. use of light filters in windows; adoption of archival envelopes for fragile individual items; temperature, humidity and light monitoring), documentation and policies (e.g. the creation of handling and use guidelines, user notices and staff training) have been implemented. Preservation is seen as an essential tool for long term access, and a balance between access and preservation is maintained, with the aim of making all material as accessible as possible, via direct handling, as long as no long term damage is sustained (a very rare occurrence, as a recent Preservation Assessment Survey has concluded).

All artists’ books are catalogued and listed on the online catalogue as Artists Book* (listings are available on demand). In addition to this, guides with collection level descriptions, and more detailed literature are also available. Access to the collection is also supported by a comprehensive artists’ books reference collection (catalogues, monographs, yearbooks, etc.), with additional material in the main loan collection, and a large collection of related ephemera (publisher and dealer catalogues, listings, press releases, invites, etc.)
2. **Artists’ books at Chelsea: current academic use and users**

The Artists’ Books Collection supports academic and creative/studio work, integrating practice and research. Artists’ books are used for object-based teaching with courses based at Chelsea, across University of the Arts London, and externally, from Foundation to PhD level, via general inductions, seminars and sessions, and integrated elements part of course units. Independent learning and research is also supported with weekly drop-in sessions and one-to-one sessions by appointment, and individual invigilated use of this material in the library.

A key element in promoting knowledge and use of the Collection are the general Special Collections inductions (where artists’ books are the main feature): all new students in all courses taught at the college (Fine art, Art theory, Art practice, Curating, Interior and spatial design, Graphic design, Textiles - from Foundation to MRes level) are timetabled to attend one, in small groups (up to 15), as part of their wider induction programme, plus a selection of those based at other colleges of University of the Arts London, on request by the course.

Specific artists’ books seminars (general introductions, or tailored to specific requirements: e.g. around the idea of appropriation) and taught sessions tied in with course briefs/projects, are arranged on demand. Most courses at Chelsea take advantage of this opportunity. Other courses within University of the Arts London do too (e.g. MA Book Arts, or MA Conservation at CCA), and several from external HEIs (Fine art, Printmaking, Art history, Medieval studies, Writing, Contemporary Poetry -BA and MA).

Inductions, seminars and the majority of the teaching sessions are delivered or led by specialist library staff, and held in the room where the collection is housed, for ease of access to the material. A large table and seating for up to 15 users is available (larger spaces can be used by arrangement).

An example of a seminar produced for a course project is the ‘Triangle Space Project’: several MA courses based at Chelsea (Fine Art, Curating, Art Theory and Graphic Design) work together at the beginning of the academic year for a week, in mixed groups, with each producing an exhibition and launching a manifesto. A seminar session is held with each course to see and discuss relevant artists’ books and magazines in preparation for the project. The work is finally presented in an event in the library. Other examples include the ‘Postcard brief’, where BA Graphic Design Stage 1 students produce a response to an individual artist’s book in the form of a postcard that is then mailed to the library where it is displayed. A group seminar looking at selected examples is held as the starting point of the project, although students also spend time studying their assigned book individually. Foundation Diploma in Art & Design students following the Communication pathway produce artists’ books as one of their earlier assignments, having attended an introductory session to the format based on a selection of classic examples. A sale of the new books is organised at the end of the project, from which the library acquires a selection for its archive.

Specific projects developed in collaboration between specialist library staff and course teaching staff can be formally integrated into the course curriculum, as an element of a course unit. This is a time consuming and demanding process requiring a close partnership between librarian and course staff, but can be enormously productive and very beneficial to students, improving both knowledge and use of library resources and the quality and enjoyment of the teaching. I have been privileged to be able to collaborate with Dr Ana Araujo, Senior Lecturer on the BA Interior and Spatial Design, in the development of a course unit that integrates the use of artists’ books in the delivery of the History and Theory unit of Stage 2. As part of the ‘Guided research and presentation. The archive: organising a collection’, students (working in groups of 8) are required to produce a presentation about an artist’s book addressing issues of collections and collecting. This is a marked element of the unit and includes producing historical/anecdotal documentation, visual documentation, a critical reflection and a research report. The start of the project consists of a briefing session in the Artists’ Books Collection room and a group tutorial co-led by lecturer and librarian, who also attends and provides feedback on the final presentations.

These projects were identified in the recent ‘Report of Quality Audit and Review Chelsea College of Art and Design’ (2012) as an “area of excellence”: “Library (…) staff and resources are integral to academic development and delivery.” (p. 2) “The panel was impressed with the role of library staff in enriching curriculums throughout the college. The creation of collaborative projects, utilising the college collections was identified as an area of notable good practice.” (p. 5) ‘Taught sessions and seminars focusing on artists’ books are also organised by arrangement with courses from external HEI, often from outside the art and design field (e.g. MA Poetic Practice, Royal Holloway; Centre for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, University of Oxford).

Independent learning and research is also supported with weekly drop-in sessions (open to all without need for appointment) and one-to-one sessions by appointment, also held in the room where the Collection is housed. The format of these sessions is very interactive and
flexible, and can accommodate individual and small group use, and academic research enquiries as well as practice/studio related ones. Individual use of artists’ books by students, staff and external visitors (researchers, curators, etc.) is available in the library during opening hours. Requests (made at any time by filling a short form) are retrieved and delivered to users hourly, for invigilated use in a designated area. This type of use represents the largest by far, with more than 1,000 items consulted per year on average.¹⁰

The Collection also plays an important role in curating and exhibition making. Since ‘Artists bookworks’ (1975), items are frequently loaned for exhibitions, with Arnolfini, Baltic, Barbican, Generali Foundation, Glucksman, Henry Moore Institute, MOT International, Norwich Gallery, Tate and Whitechapel being some of the venues where have been displayed. Library exhibitions by students (around 10 per year) and staff often use this material. In addition to this, artists’ books are used to facilitate work projects and placements for students and alumni (e.g. curators, conservators, librarians and archivists), research projects (e.g. AHRC funded ‘Transforming artists’ books’ network) and artistic residencies (e.g. Gasworks/TrAIN annual artist residency).

Academic use statistics 2009-12: attendance to artists’ books related inductions, seminars and other sessions:

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<th>2009/10</th>
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<tr>
<td>UAL undergraduates &amp; taught postgraduates</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>466</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduates &amp; taught postgraduates from other HEIs</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>540 (63 sessions)</td>
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Inductions, seminars, drop-in and other sessions (group and individual) are monitored for quality and relevance by using feedback forms.¹¹ The results for the last three years are very positive overall and emphasise the importance of the direct interaction with books and staff, and the engagement at intellectual, physical and emotional levels that comes from this. In 2009/10 of 363 evaluation forms completed 93% responded ‘Very Helpful’ / ‘Helpful’ to the question ‘How useful was today’s session?’, 92% responded ‘Very Helpful’ / ‘Helpful’ to ‘Will the session be helpful for your studies?’ Selected written comments (123 positive, 0 negative) included: “Great interacting with the books”, “I found it very useful and has given me lots of ideas and a different way of working”, “Friendly, informative staff. Great collection – is really inspiring”, “It was amazing because I didn’t know there were such collections which will really help me in my research: I’m determined to use this source for my studies”, “Very helpful and inspiring for my practice”. In 2010/11 there were 311 evaluation forms completed, of which 91% responded ‘Very Helpful’ / ‘Helpful’ to ‘How useful was today’s session?’, 89% responded ‘Very Helpful’ / ‘Helpful’ to ‘Will the session be helpful for your studies?’. Comments (118 positive, 19 negative) included: “Beyond informative. Interesting and enjoyable in many ways”, “I found it very useful to look at the way different artists’ books have been designed”. Finally, for 2011/12, of 390 evaluation forms completed 94% responded ‘Very Helpful’ / ‘Helpful’ to ‘How useful was today’s session?’ and 93% responded ‘Very Helpful’ / ‘Helpful’ to ‘Will the session be helpful for your studies?’ Comments (89 positive, 3 negative) included: “Widening of the resources available in Chelsea, very good resources for future projects”, “I absolutely loved seeing the collection, very interactive”, “I enjoyed being able to touch the books and handle them as it gave me a greater sense of what they’re about”.

Anecdotal evidence from academic staff (informal feedback sent by email), reinforces the feedback by students, while providing a wider context for it:

The Special Collections at CCW have been critical for the development and implementation of the learning strategy applied in the CCW Graduate School MA courses. In working through a ‘production-led’ ethos, the three courses engage students in practices that enable them to demonstrate their application of the ideas that they are developing. By providing a resource that demonstrates the broad range of visual arts strategies in artists multiples, the Special Collections has been central to this.

In 2010/11, the CCW Graduate School MA courses (MA Art Theory; MA Curating; MRes Arts Practice) were invited to produce a publication for the Bright Series - a range of publications showing the variety of approaches to research practice within CCW. The Special Collections at Chelsea College was both a starting-point and, unexpectedly, a destination for the publication the MA courses produced, titled ‘Relay’. The students on MA are drawn from a range of disciplines in respect of their first degrees. Special Collections enabled them not only to discuss different ideas for a producing a book, it also enabled them to see different examples with their own eyes. A sense of different formats, materials and approaches to working would not have been available to the students without their engagement with the Special Collections. David Dibosa, Course Director MA Art Theory, Chelsea College of Art and Design (2012)
Foundation students, introduced to the notion of ‘the book’ understandably have a very limited appreciation of the breadth of work that the term encompasses. Access to such a unique collection fundamentally changes their understanding and so I use the collection to introduce a book project every year. Wendy Carlton-Dewhirst, CCW Foundation, Visual Communications Pathway Option Leader (2012)

I refer students to specific items during tutorials. Items are in lecture & seminar bibliographies. I use the special collections in lectures, in college & outside, in teaching seminars & in conference papers & publication. Jo Melvin, Coordinator, BA Fine Art Theory, Chelsea College of Art & Design (2012)

The collections are a wonderful resource in general with regard to the subject and research focus of UAL. Specifically with regard to conservation it is invaluable for students to be able to view and handle artefacts in the Special Collections and where appropriate to be involved in their care in an institution of which they are members. I would cite the MA Conservation 2011 project of Ana Paula Hirata, entitled ‘Into the artists’ books: Conservation & collection survey at Chelsea College of Art & Design Library 2011’ as a particularly relevant example. Mark Sandy, Course Director MA Conservation, Camberwell College of Arts (2012)

In Fall 2010 my seminar, The Art of the Book, visited Special Collections for a behind the scenes view of some of the artist books in the collection. I taught the seminar for international students at the Centre for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Oxford. This was the first opportunity many of the students had to view artist books in person, and Gustavo provided a wonderful introduction to the collection holdings, and was able to provide all sorts of intriguing information about the artists and how the books were produced and distributed. After the visit and for the culminating project for the seminar, each student produced an artist book of their own and I know that the visit was instrumental in providing a contemporary context for the students’ work and ideas. We were thrilled with the visit. Sue Johnson, Visiting Scholar in Residence, 2010-11, Centre Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Oxford University / Professor of Art, St. Mary’s College of Maryland (2012)

The Special Collections at Camberwell and Chelsea College libraries are essential resources for the MA Book Arts (Visual Arts) - highlighted in both the prospectus and course literature. The initial inductions given by librarians introduce students to the historical significance of these collections, how to handle works and to access them for their research. Throughout the year staff-led seminars encourage direct dialogues between the students and primary research material, enabling hand-on discussions and the development of a critical language. The examples of past student work within the Collections, prompt discussions about the journey of projects from proposal to final works. MA Unit 1 essays depend heavily on the Special Collections resource as well as the invaluable support and guidance of CCW librarians. Susan Johanknecht, Subject Leader MA Visual Arts, Book Arts Pathway, Camberwell College of Arts (2012)

3. Artists’ books in HE teaching and learning

Central to the definition of the artist’s book is its dual nature as a “book” (a set of written or printed pages attached and bound together, primarily to record information in textual or visual form) and, at the same time, a visual, three-dimensional artwork, collected both by libraries, and galleries and museums. This duality is also essential to analyse the multiple ways in which artists’ books collections can be used, particularly in the context of object-based teaching and learning.

Object-based learning originated in museum education, and consists in exploring material culture by having direct access to an object to learn about it, but also about its relationships with other objects, people and ideas. By interacting with museum objects, learning becomes a richer and more active experience for the mind and the body (via different senses), integrating cognitive and affective elements. In addition to inspiration and enjoyment, direct involvement with, in this case, specific examples of artists’ books, increases the quality and richness of a learning or teaching activity, making it more memorable, and complex or difficult concepts easier to apprehend.

Artists’ books collections provide opportunities for enhancing and increasing the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and skills, supporting academic and creative practice work. This is their traditional role in subjects including art history, fine art, book arts, graphic design, etc., where they are used as a source of material, technical and historical knowledge, and also of inspiration. This is also the purpose for which most of the collections were created, particularly in art
school libraries, where they are the basis for producing new artists’ books. Cross-subject and multidisciplinary subject knowledge can also be gained when exploring common areas or themes (e.g. seminar on artists’ books and performance for MA Poetic Practice students), with the enormous variety of subject matters of the different books (e.g. Los Angeles urban landscape, family, English trees and plants, etc., etc.) offering a rich range of approaches to this type of project.

Artists’ books are also excellent material to facilitate the development of general knowledge and transferable skills. They can be used to inspire a range of core skills for university students including listening and verbal communication, discussion, presentation, organisation and team work, time management, independent thinking, lateral thinking, etc. This is demonstrated, for example, in the learning outcomes of the BA Interior and Spatial Design course unit discussed earlier: “communicate your understanding of a topic and present a coherent argument; demonstrate an understanding of how to accurately reference sources that influence your work; articulate observations of practice and present research results in an appropriate manner.” Similarly, the aims of the also mentioned ‘Triangle Space Project’ included: to “develop strong lines of communication and organisation within your group”, and “cultivate an energised atmosphere of communication, collective work ethic and cross course communication”. Valuable specific skills that are not subject related can also be gained (e.g. object handling, display, etc.)

An area where artists’ books can provide a unique opportunity for university students is that of supporting the development of a conceptual, process-led approach to the presentation of content in visual and textual form, particularly in print. The critical and self-referential nature of the artist’s book, its materiality, and its interest in production and distribution issues are ideal to foster an understanding of the importance of process, and a critical awareness of it. This can be applied to most fields, not just art and design, as can the ability to present information (visually, textually) in an original, sophisticated and critical manner. BA Interior and Spatial Design students gained, as a result of the course unit based around artists’ books, the capacity to look at their own professional portfolios with a new perspective and to be able to re-think and improve the presentation of their work in print form.

To realise these opportunities, an expansion of teaching and learning activities involving artists’ books (and, by extension, special collections at large) at university libraries is required. Support for research use and users, a core mission, should be maintained, in parallel with a rebalancing of resources to enhance teaching and learning support, also central to the mission of HE. This teaching turn is already a reality in other areas of library activity, and the librarian working with these collections as a curator and researcher must enhance his role as a teacher, collecting material, but also interpreting it and mediating it for different groups of HE users, and supporting and collaborating with others to teach using it.

The importance of close collaboration with courses and the development of professional partnerships with course staff are crucial to develop new projects using collections. A precondition for this is awareness of these resources, and collection inductions should be part of the induction programme for all new course staff, in addition to students. Projects should be advocated and promoted as a way to enhance the quality of teaching, emphasising the availability of support by library staff with the required subject and technical knowledge, and identifying learning outcomes, linked to those of course curricula (generic and subject specific). Systematic gathering and analysis of feedback is important to evaluate the success of the project.

As we have seen, when a collection of artists’ books reaches a certain size, depth of coverage and significance, it becomes a highly valuable, multi-purpose, multidisciplinary learning and teaching resource, in addition to an important research resource. It is paramount to communicate to stakeholders within and outside universities their importance and value, particularly in times of financial uncertainty, and the case for these collections as key assets and resources to be supported by academic institutions needs to be made not in narrow terms, but as central to the HE mission in learning and teaching, as well as research.

Finally, I would make the case for generalist university libraries (and education departments in museums) to consider developing holdings of artists’ books, particularly thematic collections, for use in multidisciplinary teaching and learning activities, taking advantage of their versatility as engaging artworks but also the fact that are resilient and relatively inexpensive resources. Artists, curators and others working with artists’ books can also benefit from this approach, not least as potential consultants and specialist teachers. At the same time, specialist libraries should work with non specialist courses and users, to develop a cross-subject and multidisciplinary range of seminars and teaching sessions (also emphasising transferable skills). This will not just constitute good public relations; it will produce wider engagement and appreciation of artists’ books, encouraging learning and, in time, new research from a range of perspectives and disciplines.
Gustavo Grandal Montero - Academic Support Librarian at Chelsea College of Art & Design, University of the Arts London, responsible for supporting fine art and other courses, their services and collections, including an internationally renowned collection of artists’ books.

Trained as an art historian, he writes regularly on art and librarianship topics, contributing a regular column on online resources for ‘ARLIS News-sheet’, and has curated and co-curated a number of exhibitions and events, most recently ‘Lynda Morris in conversation’. He was the recipient of the ARLIS UK & Ireland Travel & Study Fund Award 2010 for his research on the documentation of biennials and is a member of the AHRC funded ‘Transforming Artist Books’ research network. He is currently member of the ARLIS UK & Ireland Publications Committee, and Deputy Editor of the *Art Libraries Journal*.

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Notes


5. Current use and users described in detail in the next section


7. A collection description and other information is available on the Chelsea Special Collections website: www.arts.ac.uk/library/archives-collections/chelsea

8. In addition to the excellent survey by Stephen Bury ‘Artists’ books: the book as a work of art, 1963-1995’; other publications of interest include:


9. From the enormous range of possible examples, this blog posting documents a case of individual, practice based, drop-in session use: http://blogs.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/snapshot/2011/09/12/library-conversation

10. 2009/10: 1,009; 2010/11: 1,211; 2011/12: 1,732. These figures do not include items used in inductions, seminars and other sessions.

11. The mentioned ‘Report of Quality Audit and Review’ commended this: “the monitoring of the usefulness of the research support sessions was an example of good practice”. The brief form includes five questions: “How useful was today’s session?”; “Will the session be helpful for your studies?”; and “How would you rate the amount of information provided?” to be rated: Very useful/Useful/Somewhat useful/Not useful/Not sure; and two questions inviting open comment: “Are there any other library sessions you would like us to offer? Please describe:” and “Do you have any other comments regarding today’s session?”
The Silent Scream

Julie Barratt talks to Monica Oppen about the exhibition and catalogue, The Silent Scream: Political and social comment in books by artists

The Silent Scream: political and social comment in books by artists is not only a catalogue but a glimpse into some of humanity’s darkest moments seen through the books of artists who push for a humanism that tries to save us from ourselves. Reaching back to William Blake with a facsimile of his illuminated book America: A Prophecy it travels through the two world wars and on to the modern era. Divided into historical eras, each chapter begins with an essay that analyses the context in which these books were created. Each book is featured with images and an accompanying commentary.

Also published for the first time, five new translations into English, four from the German, including The War by Georg Heym from Umbra Vitae, the complete text of Die Neue Stadt (The New City) by Josef Luitpold and Otto Schatz and from the Russian, the poem City from Gorod Stibki by Alexandr Rubakin.

JB: What was the impetus behind curating an exhibition with accompanying catalogue specifically with a political and social bent?

MO: It was in 2007 that the Bibliotheca website went live and the collection was open to the public. The core idea behind the Bibliotheca is to promote the genre of book arts. A few years back I decided I would like to reach a wider audience. How to do this was obvious, exhibition.

Since I started cataloguing the books, I have thought a lot about the role of collections. I realised for any art practice to remain vital and dynamic three factors come into play, production of the work, purchase of the work and also exhibition of the work. Opening to visitors is one type of exhibition, an intimate one. Staging a show is another one, a more public but more distant one.

Both have an up side and down side but basically exhibition can be a driving force to further production, a source of inspiration. For the artist seeing the work of others there is the possibility to broaden or tighten the context of their art practice. Exhibitions link the artist to artist, to alternative art practice and art movements. Exhibitions also introduce the public to new work, to a new genre, to new concepts about the possibility of the book. Reaching this wider audience was the impetus behind curating The Silent Scream.

Why books with a political and social comment? It is a strong theme. It was quite easy to know whether a book fitted in or not. The books connect very specifically to the particular era they were produced in but there is also a common thread, the need to draw the reader’s attention to the suffering of others at the mercy of a political system. We witness the reaction artists have to the politics happening around them. There is a lot to write about. It opens a rich field of discussion.

JB: Is this what sets it apart from other book exhibitions that have happened in Australia?

MO: Recalling exhibitions of book arts in Australia, they tend to fall into three categories. The most usual is an exhibition generated by an award, the ‘Libris Award’ at Artspace Mackay, the Southern Cross University Acquisitive Award, the East Gippsland Regional Gallery ‘Books Beyond Words’ Award and now more recently the Manly Library Acquisitive Award. No doubt more awards shows are being created as we speak. These awards usually cycle every two years and the prize money runs to thousands of dollars. They have a particular quality, exhibiting a mix of contemporary practice and now with increasing numbers of entries most are now selective. The second category are the annual shows organised by Artisan Books in Melbourne, which is always themed and the Artbound show in Sydney, which is put together by the Sydney Bookbinding group. These shows are similar in form to the award shows without the prizes! The third category is the exhibitions curated by institutions with significant collections of artists’ books. The State Library of Queensland, the Baillieu Library at the University of Melbourne, the State Library of Victoria, Deakin University and Artspace Mackay all put on exhibitions featuring books from their collections. These collections are 99% Australian work. Rarely are there books from the international arena of book arts.

Here I must mention Noreen Grahame, who is and has been the most dynamic ‘operator’ in the field of book arts here in Australia for over a decade. It was the strength of her show Lessons in History in 2007 that made me realise a show with a theme was much more memorable than a random gathering of books. The show had energy and impact that was generated by the theme, which focused and unified the work, which was in many ways very diverse.

So getting back to the original question, The Silent Scream was different from the majority of shows here in Australia because it was themed, it included a significant percentage of work from non-Australian artists and it had a historical perspective. It reflects the freedom I have as a private collector to indulge in the books that I’m personally interested in.
Detail: The Silent Scream: political and social comment in books by artists

Detail: The Silent Scream: political and social comment in books by artists
JB: *The Silent Scream* was a collaboration with Peter Lyssiotis. How did this come about? How did you select the books?

MO: I started collecting Peter’s books in the mid 1990s. At that stage I had few books so his work formed a significant chunk of the collection. From 2005 until recently we worked together on various projects, mainly books, editing and giving feedback on both written pieces and images and collaborating on a couple of books.

The concept of the Bibliotheca, a private collection of books open to the public by appointment and then expanded to a public exhibition, was one of these projects. It was however, very much my drive and focus that realised the project. After we had decided on the theme an initial selection of books was made. It was when we came to writing the commentaries that some books were rejected again.

JB: Can you explain the process that was involved in creating the catalogue for *The Silent Scream*? Tell me about the structure of the catalogue.

MO: The first step was looking at other catalogues. In the reference section of the collection there are lots of catalogues from local and international shows. It was clear to us, that the ones that had real impact showed several openings of each book and had a commentary. So we decided on this format. I knew that the end result would be a book not a pamphlet.

The next step was selecting the books. Peter then wrote the majority of the first drafts of the commentaries. He wrote well from an intuitive general knowledge. I was more obsessed with detail. I did the fact checking and worked on achieving an overall even writing style. I wrote the commentaries for the German books. We did not write about our own work. As a co-writing project it worked very well.

When the different historical sections of the catalogue were finalised, we sought people to write the essays that introduced these sections. What is significant about the essays is that they are not about the books but about an aspect of the era in which they were made.

JB: At almost 200 pages the catalogue would have to be the largest to accompany a book arts exhibition in Australia. Is this so and why such a comprehensive catalogue?

MO: I guess *The Silent Scream* could be the largest catalogue to a book arts exhibition in Australia to date but to do ‘the biggest’ was not our driving motive. The problem with an exhibition is that it is so short lived. I wanted the impact of this work, which we believed to be of real value to the conversation about book arts, to have a much longer impact, a much larger audience. The only way to achieve this was to do a comprehensive catalogue, which would effectively double up as a reference book. The commentaries about the books are more than basic ‘manufacturer’s details’, so to speak. They are a personal response from Peter and myself, as well as an attempt to place the books in the social context of when they were produced. The point about political and social comment in books is that the artist is responding to the world around them. This is not an art for art’s sake form of expression. In a sense the work demands a commentary.

JB: Why did you choose Monash University Library Rare Books as the venue?

MO: In book shows these days it is more usual for galleries to allow a hands on approach. This is great, particularly if the books are for sale. However the books in *The Silent Scream* were from a collection and conserving the books is a very high priority. At home they are kept in specially made bookcases in a room where the relative humidity is maintained at around 45%. It would have been crazy to then allow them to be placed on tables in a gallery open to the elements and allow them to be handled.

I was very clear that the space had to be climate controlled and the books had to be in cabinets. Initially I hoped the exhibition would be in Sydney and although I might have found a space the likelihood that they would have cabinets for books was small and I did not have the finances to have the cabinets built.

This meant the possible spaces to show became limited. Peter had a long-term relationship with Monash University Rare Books. Richard Overell, the rare books librarian also has an interest in artists’ books. On visiting the library it was clear that the permanent exhibition
The exhibition at Monash University Library Rare Books, Melbourne, Australia
space they had in Rare Books was perfect. Also about a third of the books selected for the exhibition overlapped with the Monash collection. It was an obvious choice.

**JB:** Was it deliberately shown during IMPACT 7 (an international Multidisciplinary Printmaking Conference)?

**MO:** Yes, the timing of the exhibition when IMPACT 7 was on was planned. I believe it is important to work in with other events. They enrich each other. It is a win-win situation.

**JB:** What was the response to the exhibition and the catalogue?

**MO:** The response to the exhibition and the catalogue has been very positive. Sales of the catalogue have been steady. I didn’t expect it to be a blockbuster! Book arts is quite a specialist area. The catalogue does have a wider appeal because of the historical slant. It was real compliment when Oak Knoll Press offered to take on the worldwide distribution. The standard of the work produced by Oak Knoll Press is very high. Also they deal specifically with books about books so I felt *The Silent Scream* had landed in the right place.

The broader response to the catalogue and exhibition is that the profile of the collection has been raised. I have connected with other collectors, notably with Jack Ginsberg in Johannesburg and Hubert Kretschmer in Munich. Both these collectors have been collecting artists’ books and literature about the book arts since the 1980s and have significant collections. Also here at the Bibliotheca Librorum apud Artificem, the number of visitors booking to visit has increased, which is great, and also more artists are submitting work for consideration for collection.

**JB:** Tell me about the IPPY Award.

**MO:** The Independent Book Publisher Awards, the IPPY Awards have been running in the US since the mid 1990s. They have become the biggest independent publishers award in the English-speaking world. This year there were just over 5,000 entries. There are over 72 categories covering all genres of publishing. *The Silent Scream* won gold in the writing/publishing category, which is thrilling. It is quite expensive to enter but at the time I thought, either I believe in the book and think it stands a fair chance or not. Entering was about believing in the book and our work. But still I am very pleased to have received a gold medal.

**JB:** Where can readers buy a copy of the catalogue?

**MO:** Internationally it is available through Oak Knoll (www.oakknoll.com) and on Amazon, which links you to Oak Knoll. In Australia it is available from Australian Scholarly Books in Melbourne (www.scholarly.info). You can order on line or through your local bookshop.

**JB:** Would you do it again?

**MO:** Yes. But not for a few years! I have a number of themes that I’m interested in exploring, such as environmental issues in books by artists, the use of the linocut/woodcut by book artists ... and others. I guess when and where will depend on my circumstances at the time and what other events that are happening.

*Monica Oppen* - Bibliotheca Librorum apud Artificem
The Library for the Artist’s Book, Australia
http://www.bibliotheca.org.au

*Julie Barratt* - Barratt Galleries, Australia
www.barrattgalleries.com.au
About the book

Commentaries and introduction by Monica Oppen and Peter Lyssiotis. Preface by Sarah Bodman.

Sections & Essays
Section: Across Two World Wars 1918-1950.
Essay: ‘The stupidest times that have ever been’ by Walter Struve (librarian State Library of Victoria)

Section: Cold War in a Nuclear Era: Alienation and Engagement 1960-1990 Essay: ‘Distant wars, cool screens’ by Dr Scott McQuire (Associate Professor and Reader, School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne)

Section: Imperialism, Fundamentalism, Democracy, Oil and its Shadow 1990 to the Present Essay: ‘The End of Everything Else’ by Humphrey McQueen (freelance historian)

Section: Along the Tangent: Books on the Edge
Essay: ‘Encounter’ by Des Cowley (Rare Printed Collections Manager, State Library of Victoria)

Artists and Writers
William Blake (UK), Norman Lindsay (AUS), Nathalia Goncharova (Russia), Alexandr Rubakin (Russia), George Grosz (Germany), Ernst Kirchner (Germany), Georg Heym (Germany), Lazar (El) Lissitsky (Russia), Josef Luitpold (Austria), Otto Schatz (Austria), John Heartfield (Germany), Max Beckmann (Germany), Stephan Lackner (Germany), Noel Counihan (AUS), Klaus Staeck (Germany), Ian Howard (AUS), Glenn Clarke (AUS), Peter Lyssiotis (AUS), Paul Zelevansky (USA), Michael Pevan (USA), Sonia Balassanian (USA/Armenian), Jean Pinataro (USA), James Casebere (USA), Ted Hopkins (AUS), Helen Malone (AUS), Noreen Grahame (AUS), Cerise Ward (AUS), Brad Freeman (USA), Gerhard Richter (Germany), Robert Frank (CH), Josely Carvalho (Brazil), Colin Mattthes (USA), Erik Ruin (USA), Josh MacPhee (USA), Nicolas Lampert (USA), Richard Tipping (AUS), Monica Oppen (AUS), Tim Mosely (AUS), Sarah Bowen (AUS), Darren Bryant (AUS), Liz Deckers (AUS), Rebecca Evans (AUS), Louise Irving (AUS), Jo Kambourian (AUS), Noga Freiberg (AUS), Susan Goddard (AUS), Doug Spowart (AUS), Glen Smith (AUS), Theo Strasser (AUS), Kirk Crawford-Watts (AUS), Ross McMaster (AUS), Anne Twigg (AUS), Jas Duke (AUS), Vivienne Méhes (AUS), Gilles Peress (France), Eric Stover (USA), Robert Colvin (AUS), Caren Florance (AUS), Travis Paterson (AUS), Telfer Stokes (UK)

The Silent Scream: political and social comment in books by artists
Size 24.5 x 20.5 x 2.5 cm. US $45.00
www.bibliotheca.org.au/bibliotheca/publications.cfm
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David Dellaflora
Field Study Retail Cargo Cult Shopper

Photocopy this page onto sticker paper. Cut out logo and stick on the window of a vacant shop in your town. Retail Cargo Cult will do the rest!
ARTWORK CONTRIBUTORS

**Rodrigo Arteaga** (page 54) *Ranifications*, is a one-off piece, of cut out Chilean road maps hung from a nail, that delves into theories about micro and macrocosm that reflect detail and structure, the individual and the universe. The work is driven by an interest in crossings and relationships between disparate sciences of anatomy, botany, and cartography.

Rodrigo Arteaga produces drawings, collages, sculptures, books and installations with direct reference to human anatomy and its projection into other organic and ordered systems, for example rivers and maps. For him, the human figure and its interior constitute a landscape worth observing and revering through representation that is almost accurate, linear and objective. As the body and the earth consist of layers and interlaced systems, Arteaga develops his creative process in a similar manner that often consists of accumulations and juxtapositions of drawings, collages and interventions on tracts and books. The book installations can be read as encyclopedias, drawings and video are incorporated to provide another dimension to the experience.

www.flickr.com/photos/rodrigoarteaga/ loloarteaga3@hotmail.com

**Anwyl Cooper Willis** (cover, badge and sticker designs, and page opposite). There is a strong sense of the ridiculous in my work. My interest is in how we humans jostle and politic, making our way through society: the posturing, the pomposity, the hubris, the hypocrisy. Pieces attempt to dominate through size, placement, or complexity. Accumulations of data are organised so meticulously the underlying logic is not questioned. Absurd attempts to keep a frightening world at bay through order, classification, archiving and collecting give the illusion of order and of power. There is a certain challenge in the work, an aggression which attempts to prevent the viewer seeing beyond the bluster to the ridiculous in my work. My interest is in how we humans jostle and politic, making our way through society: the posturing, the pomposity, the hubris, the hypocrisy. Pieces attempt to dominate through size, placement, or complexity. Accumulations of data are organised so meticulously the underlying logic is not questioned. Absurd attempts to keep a frightening world at bay through order, classification, archiving and collecting give the illusion of order and of power. There is a certain challenge in the work, an aggression which attempts to prevent the viewer seeing beyond the bluster to the ridiculous in my work.

http://acooperwillis.wordpress.com acwfolreat@hotmail.com

**David Dellafiopa** (page 51) is a cultural worker whose practice mines themes of duality and the unconscious mind in a state of revolt. His work takes a variety of forms including installation, public art, multiples and artists’ books. He is also the coordinator of the Neo-Fluxus network, Field Study. Field Study publishes a number of assembling publications including the *Field Report*, *WIPE*, *ReSite* and *KART*.

Publications are in numerous international collections including the Museum of Modern Art New York, Tate Britain, Victoria & Albert Museum and the Sackner Archive of Concrete & Visual Poetry.

Field Study: P.O. Box 1838 Geelong, VIC 3220 Australia email: fluxusstudy@hotmail.com

**Jeremy Dixon** (Endpage, 56)

This artist’s page features material relating to ‘In Retail’ the latest publication from Hazard Press. The book is a sequence of poems inspired by working part-time for a High Street chemists. The binding of each copy contains a shopping list found abandoned in the store. Here is one of those shopping lists, together with two short poems.

Hazard Press is run by, Jeremy Dixon, who writes, designs, and makes books, micro-books, and badges in rural South Wales. To find out more please visit: www.hazardpress.co.uk

**Dave Dyment** (pages 24 and 25)

Filmmaker Chris Marker died yesterday (29/07/2012), on the same day that he was born (29/07/1921). He was 91. *Spiral Jetée (for CM and KH)* is the first page of a planned and abandoned bookwork consisting of all of the stills from Marker’s classic film *La Jetée*, accompanied by found images that approximate their composition. It was made by using Google Images search function, which employs a mathematical model based on shapes, lines, proportions, colours and other elements, in the hope of matching the uploaded image to one existing in the Google index. When this is not possible, the page analysis returns an approximation.

www.davedyment.com

**Bas Fontein** (page 31)

When I tell people that I am an artist with a part-time job, they often give me unsolicited advice on how to make money through art. For years I collected these quotes and in 2010 I made the book *WHAT TO DO/WAT TE DOEN* in an edition of 300, which sold out. With increasing demand for my books from abroad, I have now made *WHAT TO DO/WAT TE DOEN* in 2012.

More information can be found at: www.basfontein.com
To order a book, please email: basfontein@gmail.com

**Kate Morrell** (page 4) is a London-based artist whose work explores ideas of history and it’s representation through a focus on landscape. Her research-led practice takes the form of sculpture, drawing and book works. Kate Morrell gained an MA from the Royal College of Art in 2010. Recent projects have been realised at the CCA, Glasgow, English Heritage’s Landguard Fort, Suffolk & The Armitt Museum, Cumbria.

*Alpine Spoilers* is a new bookwork commissioned by The Armitt Museum & Library, Cumbria for their Centenary Exhibition ‘Sublime Transactions’. *Alpine Spoilers* was risograph printed by Ditto Press, London in an edition of 200.

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@MorrellKate
**REFEREES’ BIOGRAPHIES**

**Dr Anne Béchard-Léauté** is a Lecturer at the University of Saint-Etienne, France, where she teaches design and English for the Department of Applied Languages and the Visual Arts Department. In 1999 she obtained a PhD in Art History from the University of Cambridge and has since developed a special interest in intercultural studies and the relationship between design and languages. She has also translated a number of design and art history books, mainly for Phaidon and Thames & Hudson.

Since recently working as co-author on the 10ºN/10ºS Design Exchange project between England and France she has developed a close working relationship with design curator Charlie Arnold. They are now starting an innovative and sustainable new contemporary textiles project called *Habitacle* between France, England and Italy.

**Maria Fusco** is a Belfast-born writer, based in London. Her collection of short stories *The Mechanical Copula* was published in English by Sternberg Press (Berlin/New York, 2010) and in French by editions eré (Paris, 2011). Her screenplay for the film *Gonda* was commissioned by Film London, and is directed by Ursula Mayer.

She is founder/editor of *The Happy Hypocrite* a semi-annual journal for and about experimental art writing (www.thehappyhypocrite.org).

In 2009-10, she was the inaugural Writer in Residence at Whitechapel Gallery in London, and in 2008-9, the inaugural Critic in Residence at The Kadist Art Foundation in Paris. She is currently Director of Art Writing at Goldsmiths, University of London.

www.mariafusco.net

**Susan Johanknecht** is an artist and writer working under the imprint of Gefn Press.

Her recent publications include *Baring Antebellum* and *Bishopsgate Within.CITY A.M.* She is currently co-curating *Poetry of Unknown Words* with Katharine Meynell, which is a development, transcription and homage to Iliazd’s *La Poesie de mots inconnus* (1949). The first section of this on-going project was launched at the Saison Poetry Library, South Bank in March 2012. Susan Johanknecht is Subject Leader of MA Book Arts, Camberwell College of Arts.

**Jeff Rathermel** is an artist, educator and arts administrator who lives and works in the United States. He is Executive Director of Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA), the nation’s largest and most comprehensive institution dedicated to contemporary artists’ books. In addition, Rathermel is a visiting assistant professor at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota and a faculty member at the College of Visual Arts in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

He holds Bachelors and Masters of Fine Arts degrees from the University of Minnesota where he studied printmaking, hand papermaking, digital arts and traditional binding. He has curated and organised countless book art exhibitions and his personal artwork has been shown and collected internationally.

**Dr Paulo Silveira** lives in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

He has degrees in; Fine Art (drawing and painting) and Communications, and a PhD in Visual Arts - History, Theory and Criticism, from the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS).

Paulo is Professor for Art History of the Instituto de Artes at UFRGS, and also a member of the Comitê Brasileiro de História da Arte, CBHA (Brazilian Committee for the History of Art). He is the author of *A página violada* (the violated page) 2001, and regularly writes articles on contemporary art and artists’ books. He is a member (heading the artists’ books section) of the research group Veículos da Arte - Vehicles of Art.

**Ulrike Stoltz** is an artist who lives and works in Germany and Italy. Her focus is on books, typography, texts, drawings, and installations.

Ulrike is the Professor for Typography and Book Art and Design at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig, Germany (University of Art and Design, Braunschweig). Her current academic research project is on non-linear reading in books. Co-founder and member of Unica T (“a ficticious person making real books”) for 15 years, until the group split in 2001. She has continued in artistic collaboration for 21 years with Uta Schneider as usus. www.boatbook.de
Dove
Towels
Shampoo
Vaseline
Fresh
Deodorant
Nail varnish remover

In Retail (ix)
Friday girls buy false nails and fake tan.

In Retail (xii)
You’re in pyjamas, screaming through the late-night hatch. It’s Christmas Eve. Someone is dying in your front room.