The Blue Notebook is published in two formats: an online colour version, and a paper, black and white version. An annual subscription covers both formats for two issues, UK or international. For subscriptions, please visit: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bnotebk.htm

We welcome submissions of writing on contemporary artists' books and related issues for The Blue Notebook. Please email Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk for guidelines or see: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bnotebk.htm

Artists' contributions are by invitation from the Art Editor, Tom Sowden.

The Blue Notebook journal for artists' books is published by Wild Conversations Press, Bristol www.wildconversations.isophia.co.uk

Editor: Sarah Bodman
Art Editor: Tom Sowden
Cover, badge and sticker design: Molly Lemon

Editorial address:
Impact Press at the Centre for Fine Print Research
UWE Bristol, Kennel Lodge Road, Bristol, BS3 2JT, UK
Tel: +44 (0)117 328 4915

Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk
Tom.Sowden@uwe.ac.uk
www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk

The views expressed within The Blue Notebook are not necessarily those of the editors or publisher.
Contents

Artist's page - Emily McVarish 4

Introduction - Sarah Bodman 5

After midnight
The workings of the Two a.m. Press
Lisa Wigham 7

Books about nothing
Amir Brito Cadór 15

A Place Where Things Meet:
Creative and Conceptual Blending
Emma Robertson 19

FORMATIONS
A research residency in artists’ books at the
Edinburgh College of Art Library
Julie Johnstone 25

Futura has always been the future
Antonio Claudio Carvalho 35

Reading Cabinet
Amador Perez 41

Artist's page - Pineapple Falls 48

Artwork Contributors 49

Artist's page - Craig Atkinson 50

Referees' Biographies 51

Artist's page - Nathan Walker 52
Each call's erasure casts a new light, a bright shot, a mood shell,
Welcome to issue seventeen of The Blue Notebook

Many thanks to our writers for a great selection of articles, essays and reflections for this issue, in order of appearance:

After midnight - The workings of the Two a.m. Press
Lisa Wigham co-founded The Two a.m. Press in 1997, prior to the wave of digital self-publishing and fluidity of public declarations that infiltrate the present day through the Internet and social media. In her article, Lisa charts the journey of The Two a.m. Press as a vehicle for sharing and disseminating ideas via printed multiples and public art, focusing on her choices of media; from digital print to fine art etching and its implications as both a viewing experience and for its democratic intent.

Books about nothing
Amir Brito Cadôr's appropriately concise article explores some examples of blank books, and is based on an excerpt from his forthcoming book Visual Encyclopaedia, to be published later in 2014.

A Place Where Things Meet: Creative and Conceptual Blending by Emma Robertson, considers a model of creative thinking where two different things are brought together to influence the formation of something new. This is the story of the relationship between two people who live on different continents, Iain McCaig and Charles Santoso, and of their different but interconnected creative outcomes. Both men have produced small-scale artists' books in different formats, using new publishing techniques.

In the essay FORMATIONS, Julie Johnstone writes about her recent Research Residency in Artists' Books at the Edinburgh College of Art Library in May 2014.

Futura has always been the future
Antonio Claudio Carvalho asks: Why is the P.O.W. (poetry/oppose/war) series inspired by the FUTURA series, more than forty years later?

Reading Cabinet
On the eve of two major exhibitions of his work in Brazil Amador Perez reflects on the reproductions, publications and drawings that have inspired his own creative journey in drawing, printmaking and artists' books over the last forty years.

Many thanks to the artists who accepted Tom Sowden's invitation to produce artwork for this issue: Craig Atkinson, Emily McVarish, Pineapple Falls and Nathan Walker. Many thanks also to Molly Lemon for this issue's lovely cover, badge and sticker design.

Thank you, also 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.

Volume 9 No.2 comes out in April 2015.

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/x180/674c/tbn17.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

Image: Copyright CJ Griffiths Photography
After midnight
The workings of the Two a.m. Press

Lisa Wigham

Introduction

I was raised in the British seaside town of Blackpool, a place of illusions and surreal juxtapositions dressed in folly and fiction, that function through a reliance on the transience of a seasonal audience to retain its showmanship. I have participated in this illusion from behind the scenes, working backstage in theatres or attractions on the Golden Mile, knowing many secrets of the conjurer’s tricks; this sentiment informs my work and my desire to bring contrast and contradiction, or opposites into the frame. There is a hide-and-seek element to the way I reveal this information.

There is an instinct to subvert expectation of visual traditions, such as the picturesque when making prints, and everyday spaces in towns, cities and objects. Tension of contrasts, and crashing expectation with a reduction of information has occurred both on book pages and within a train station waiting room, a living, working vitrine at the heart of a busy transport intersection for the north, west, south and east routes of the UK. A uniquely silent room between train platforms where pause and thought occurs.

My work encompasses printmaking and artists’ books where sequences of pages or angles of a public place are used as a device for presenting short narratives as instances captured. In my work, universal themes of love, motion and the perception of beauty feed into a re-imagining of loss as a process of change. The work has stillness, but it is not static. This is intended to offer an impressionistic view to echo the fragmentary experience of memory.

When making artists’ books, this information is offered as captions of text, and in printmaking this is purely image-based, using the dramatic tension of fragility and weight, and the tactile qualities of line to suggest a proximity to the actual experience. The economical use of text reduces information to its essence in an overcrowded world. I would like to master the art of working with such an economical use of line or text that it promotes magnitudes of thought, and to rise to the challenges of applying this within a diverse range of spaces.

Thinking and making

The Two a.m. Press was co-founded during a frenzied storm of typewriting, hand printing and page folding, one summer night in the historic British city of Canterbury. This took place in 1997, in the latter months of my art school education when my friend and collaborator Semonara Chowdhury and I traded sleep for productivity. We told jokes, recounted our observations of the day, conjured surreal stories and collaged it all into a hand-made book entitled Two Moths - a midnight publication. The problem was; how could we both own a copy of this book as something we both considered precious, seminal and important to keep personally as a physical object? The following Monday, we two nocturnal students went in search of the college photocopier, to duplicate our efforts and the Two a.m. Press was officially established.

During those heady days I was on the cusp of graduation from my supportive community of art school. The prospect of beginning a career as an artist by exhibiting in contemporary galleries was mysterious and daunting, so I initiated a route that minimised the obstacles between making and sharing my art.

I began to self-publish books and produce multiples that embraced the Fluxus spirit of autonomy. This had been engrained in the Graphic Fine Art pathway of the degree I took at Kent Institute of Art and Design, spearheaded by my tutors Pete Nevin and Mikel Horl. In later years I began to understand the implications and motivations behind making artists’ books and prints as portable works of democratic intention, more widely.

In the years that followed my graduation I ran the Two a.m. Press from my base in London; and from here a series of multiples were displayed and shared in the form of: fly-posters, stickers, confectionary giveaways, books in bookshops or public houses, stands at book fairs, interventions in restaurants, through old cigarette vending machines and via public information monitors. This work embraced its inexpensive mobility via the postal system, and travelled to participate in projects in Cardiff, Belfast, New York and Toronto.

A major collaboration between other small presses and self-publishers occurred in 1999 when I was invited to participate in the exhibition Bookways: British Book Artists at the Museum of Foreign Art in Riga. Later in 2009 the Two a.m. Press travelled to Vilnius, Lithuania, the birthplace of Fluxus founder George Maciunas, to participate in Circle Bokartas 5th International Artist’s Book Triennial, a touring show curated and engineered by the artist Kestutis Vasilijunas. This exhibition was testament to the portability of artists’ books, enabling works by 330 artists from 56 different countries to co-exist, over a two-year period of exhibitions throughout Scandinavia, Venice and South Korea. This international collective encompassed the seemingly limitless interpretations of the artist’s book form.
Through those two exhibitions, a variety of different cultural interpretations of the book form were offered to audiences - sometimes prompting a bemused response (particularly in 1999 when I gifted confectionary multiples in the form of Blackpool rock to staff in the post-KGB monitored environment of Riga's Museum of Foreign Art). This was the first exhibition by British artists in Riga since liberation from all curators' decisions being vetted by the KGB. Some years later, in an age more familiar to the concept of the artists' multiple in Vilnius 2006, the book forms in Circle Bokartas explored universally understood themes of love, motion and beauty with the possibility to transcend language or expectations of the book form.

Now in 2014, I run the Two a.m. Press as a practicing artist immersed in self-publishing, printmaking, and sharing ideas and skills through educational projects and workshops. I also work on site-based research and commissioned public art projects. With each medium used or method of output there is a very deliberate consideration of technology, materials and space, where, as Marshall McLuhan stated in 1964: ‘The medium is the message.’

I exhibit in museums and contemporary art galleries, however my experiences working outside conventional gallery and museum spaces have given me a new sensitivity to museology. I have acquired some traditions and language of display, ones I may not have gleaned had I not felt they were something to kick against in my formative years as a graduate, when I deliberately sought out other kinds of spaces to display my work.

Since 1997 I have worked with a range of professional artists, curators, critics, and educators. I now feel that established routes to exhibiting in formal exhibition spaces are less inaccessible. I also realise that it takes time to build working relationships, understand existing networks and navigate the art world on our own terms. Finding a network that can support and stimulate the growth of making and showing work is not instantaneous.

Without the experiences of showing work in a broad range of settings - testing contexts through low budget means such as making artists' books and multiples - getting things wrong, getting things right, contradicting oneself and acknowledging this inevitability, we have less power as artists to make informed decisions.

In this sense my perceptions of career success have been redefined. I am now of the opinion that it is an advantage for artists to form a toolkit of strategies based on experience both inside and outside establishments, in order to understand both contexts.

The Two a.m. Press is now based in Blackpool in the north of England, where creative communities and a life force for the arts is being supported by the Leftcoast Creative People and Places project. I have been awarded funding by the Leftcoast Express project to develop working relationships with organisations and collaborators, and this focuses on cultivating the growth of the Two a.m. Press for the long term.

Processes and implications of limited edition prints as artists' multiples

The considerations of form and content for the production of multiples, is influenced by the practical matters of an edition size being directly proportional to the cost and labour involved in production. For example, the limitations involved in making fine art prints are sometimes equated to the number of images that can be physically printed from an engraved and etched plate before the image dissolves and wears away under pressure of the printing press.

This issue has a bearing on my use of the ‘low’ and ‘high’ technologies to express an idea through artists’ books or prints. The processes I use range from photocopy to etching, and I will attempt to explain the motivations for each.

There is a close relationship between the theme or narrative of an image I make and the technical processes I use to create it. In the case of Notes from a Transpennine Journal the process began by making instinct-led drawings in a sketchbook while a passenger on the Transpennine Express railway. These sketches were then re-drawn onto metal plates and put through the etching process. Prints were taken from these plates and made into a sequence of images that intend to conjure the transience and emotion of journeys, rather than a complete description of the landscapes I travelled through. There is always a slight impulse in my practice for subverting expectations of the form - such as the aesthetic ideal of the picturesque in British Landscape art, or a notion of filling an etching plate with information.

I have developed etching techniques and concepts through courses with the printmakers Martin Ware and Jason Hicklin, and with Tracy Hill during a Masters in Fine Art and Residencies at Art Lab Contemporary Print Studio at the University of Central Lancashire.

I was very deliberate about using the medium of etching in order to express the emotions of transience, fleeting relationships and incomplete recordings of landscapes. I work with etching for its alchemy of process and the way that it can mimic geological erosion. There is also the
His Blue Eyes / A Ten Past One Publication, 1997, photocopy book with felt cover, edition of 50

Installing excerpts from No More Last Minutes - a novel in an empty shop in St John's Square for Blackpool Culture Shops, 2011
possibility for making images that hold an intensity of line, with robust etched marks or engraving into metal by scratching the surface with delicate incisions.

Notes from a Transpeninne Journal is a multiple that explores sequence as set of loose-leaf pages; they re-order the narrative and depictions of the journey and use an experience of landscape as a vehicle to explore autobiography.

The prints are presented as a box set that is instantly portable. They exist in limited editions of five prints from each plate. Because of the limits of the process and materials used to make the work, the worth and value this imposes makes a box set of etchings a more precious alternative for anyone wishing to own the works. This value also promotes a view that time and labour is quantifiable.

An essential component to the choice of different materials is that they prompt a critical discussion of the wider implications for the technology utilised. Particularly when presenting etchings in contemporary art contexts I would like to encourage critical discussion of what we lose and what we gain from our technology choices? I am motivated by an urge for preservation of the craft of etching and raising the debate on implications of replacing manual tools with digital tools. An essential component to the choice of different materials is that they prompt a critical discussion of the wider implications for the technology utilised. Particularly when presenting etchings in contemporary art contexts I would like to encourage critical discussion of what we lose and what we gain from our technology choices? I am motivated by an urge for preservation of the craft of etching and raising the debate on implications of replacing manual tools with digital tools. An essential component to the choice of different materials is that they prompt a critical discussion of the wider implications for the technology utilised. Particularly when presenting etchings in contemporary art contexts I would like to encourage critical discussion of what we lose and what we gain from our technology choices? I am motivated by an urge for preservation of the craft of etching and raising the debate on implications of replacing manual tools with digital tools.

Book production and the mobility of the 'limitless' edition

I make both limited edition prints and limitless edition artists’ books because I see the value of debate in both processes. This strategy for using both disciplines increases the mobility of ideas and can begin wide conversations. When artists’ multiples are made with less costly materials and in larger editions they have an immediate declaration of democratic intention. The ease at which a paperback book can travel by post, be passed around a family home, infiltrate a library bookshelf, or sit proudly spine-beside-spine in a bookshop with literary works is of interest to me. There are endless possibilities for the journey of the books I make (as works of art) made possible by their portable guise.

Over an eighteen-month period I wrote and re-wrote Lost Luggage Revival- a novel and self published the book in 2006. This was made through a process whereby what was erased or missing from the page is as noticeable as what is present. It is a digitally printed, machine bound, open edition book. To date over 200 copies have been sold to libraries, galleries, bookshops and individuals through exhibitions, events and meetings I have hosted intermittently across the UK and overseas.

Like artists before me such as Ed Ruscha in Twenty Six Gasoline Stations, I am interested in banality as a starting point. I wanted the format of Lost Luggage Revival to seem unassuming and neutral in presentation, conventional and inconspicuous on the exterior, yet within, play with the expectation of the viewer.

The artist Sara Ranchouse self-publishes paperback books that play on romance novels of the Mills and Boon variety; she uses this format to subvert stereotypes. I initially planned a gentle subversion of the novel format for Lost Luggage Revival as it was first to be exhibited in BOOK, London 2006, in a domestic reading room in a private house. This exhibition brought together a group of 23 artists including Oreet Ashery and Sonia Boyce - who placed artists' books made over the course of a year around the home of Gillian Daniel for visitors to explore by invitation. I was always excited by the mobility of the novel format, and wanted to make a flip-type book that could be experienced in the mere moments that a reader may have to spare during a visit to an art gallery exhibition, or browsing a bookshelf in a home, bookstore or library.

During my time as an artist taking a DIY initiative to making and publishing, my interests have often been with work that has sub-culture associations, being an early collector of zines at punk gigs in my late teens. These pamphlet books were often accompanied by a narrative from the author. They came to fruition by any means available such as printed surreptitiously on someone's Dad's office photocopier or by hours spent photocopying in their local Xerox shop. It is the particular aesthetic of the photocopy form that invites my gaze, the accidental delicacy of tone that can be created by playing with light and shadow, and the potential of richly contrasting black and white.

Pamphlets and periodicals from the early 1900’s by Russian Futurists provide another example of how the output of avant-garde artistic expression or political statement became alive through publishing. This dialogue and exchange between artists, writers and creative thinkers possesses an urgent declaration through the immediacy of the pamphlet’s form.

Integrating the book with site-based work

The challenge of presenting the contents of a book and projecting its thoughts and ideals, was presented to me in 2011 with a commission to create site-based work for the Blackpool Culture Shops project. How was I to recreate the intimate, one-to-one encounter a reader has with a book page, on a much larger scale?
The Waiting Room, Preston Train Station, gold metallic vinyl lettering on glass windows, 2012
Image: Copyright CJ Griffiths Photography 2014

Archives and Conversations/Shadows Pass for Blackpool Culture Shops, vinyl lettering on glass, 2013
In 2012, I went on to work with In Certain Places for a site-based commission for Preston Train Station's waiting room, where the work is installed to date. The democratic intention for making and sharing works of art beyond gallery spaces and museums has now extended to public art projects and interactions through educational workshops with participants of all ages.

By scattering fragments of text in public places I seek to play with unresolved explorations. Moving thoughts are placed on windows as something to glance upon, see your own reflection in, spark a memory or pose a question. I make responses to the life of a place- in the hope of creating something symbolic and poetic. I seek to excavate and reveal. In the way that Lost Luggage Revival - a novel plays with perceptions of the book's exterior and the page; I work with public spaces to play with the unexpected. I am interested in the way people encounter, approach or pass through the sites I work with. I try to find out about the expectations, assumptions or lived experiences of a place. This site-based work seeks to be mindful of a practical-emotional function, such as to re-focus attention on an architectural element of a space or generate new thinking about a neighbourhood.

Making artists’ books and multiples from conceptual angles and disseminating work in alternative gallery settings through my activity as the Two a.m. Press has informed my approach to making site-based, public art works. The texts I use in site-based works are sometimes excerpts from artists' books in progress. These fragments are intended as suggestive signposts to bigger ideas. Language is a tool for poetic or playful responses to place; the experience this extends to the viewer has been described by Professor Lubaina Himid as “close encounters with your-self.”

Lisa Wigham

Visit The Two a.m. Press at www.twoampress.com or on Face book.

References


The Leftcoast Creative People and Places project is supported by The Arts Council of England. www.leftcoastuk.org

Klaus Scherübel: *Mallarmé: Le Livre*  
Montréal, Optica / Luxembourg, Fondation Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, 2005

Klaus Scherübel: *Mallarmé: The Book*  
Printed Matter Inc. 2003
Books about nothing

Amir Brito Cadór

The most perfect poem is a blank page
Mallarmé

The most beautiful and perfect book in the world is a book with only blank pages
Ulises Carrión

The artist’s book is a book assumed as the artistic medium in itself. For the purposes of this essay, it is not a vehicle for ideas and independent texts, but is taken here as a place for aesthetic experimentation itself (Osório, 2004). As a blank canvas highlights the specificity of painting, a blank book draws attention to the material from which it is made; paper and book affirm their essential material affinity (Moeglin-Delcroix, 1997). These books contain nothing, the nothingness (or emptiness) is their content, and ‘reading’ them means to understand their concept.

Piero Manzoni wanted to make a book with a completely blank surface, fully neutral in colour and appearance. Known as “The Transparent Book”, he produced a work consisting of 100 translucent pages each containing nothing, except for the cover, made from the same material and printed with the title, publisher and the artist’s name (Jes Petersen: Piero Manzoni. Life and Works. Flensburg / Glücksburg: Petersen Presse 1963). When viewed individually, the pages produce an effect of “colour film”, a thin, transparent and translucent colour; the overlap produces an accumulation effect of “solid colour”, which darkens with each new layer; the book becomes darker if looked in the opposite side of the light, and the same layers seen from the direction of light will appear becomes clearer if placed away from the light source (Albers, 2009).

Within the formalist terms of Clement Greenberg’s aesthetics, the blank canvas was the embodiment of painting’s ultimate specificity, its flatness and two-dimensionality. The subject of modernist art, Greenberg insisted, is the medium itself. In such a manner, the absence of texts and images can be used to reveal the structure of a book. Reflex (1978) is a book by Heinz Gappmayr containing 40 white sheets, and a black sheet in the centre of the book. The black pages act as a kind of double mirror; the two sides are identical, with the pages symmetrically reflected, which is also indicated by the reversal of colours (black/white). This symmetry, commonly applied to a double page, here occupies the entire book, and the reading / handling can start at either side. The scarce materiality of these books poses questions of our reading habits. Accustomed to reading printed text on the pages of a book (the book as speech), the reader does not know how to read the blank book without texts (the book as object). (Brogowski, 2010).

Is it really possible to think about nothing? And would making a book about nothing, as Gustave Flaubert once wanted, become a reality through creating blank books? Jiri Valoch, a Yugoslavian poet, published his Book about nothing in Brno in 1970, with 54 blank pages, except for the word “nothing” written on one of them. If the book had been entirely blank, it would be a presentation of nowhere, its substance made of the emptiness and the absence of things. But the word “nothing” is a representation of this same emptiness, introducing a paradox: it ceases to be a book that has nothing to become a tautology, a self-referential work whose theme is nothing, and one that uses a verbal description declaring a self-evident property of the work. A tautology is the conceptual equivalent of the monochrome, so the book becomes materially and conceptually empty.

Despite having the exterior features of an ordinary book, Poème collectif (1968) is a “book on potentiality, a virtual space of poetry” (Moeglin-Delcroix, 1997). This is a small book (13.5 x 11 cm) with only 24 pages, 16 of which are blank. On the cover “Robert Filliou et Cie”, appear as authors/artists confirming the collective authorship indicated in the title. At the beginning and end of the book are short texts, the first of them consists of “instructions” on how to use the book: each page must be completed by a different person, who writes the name of 5-7 objects - things, emotions, feelings, etc. – that “you want to get rid of (wedding photographs, the army, rheumatism)”. Then we are told not to read the preceding list before writing our list. The texts introduced by each person should be ignored until the book is complete. This incompleteness, the book ever to be made, is in the vein of the ‘book to come’ envisioned by the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898). For Aristotle, all potential to be or to do something is always also potential not to be or not to do, without which potentiality would always have already passed into actuality and would be indistinguishable from it (Agamben, 2009, p. 245). Taking this idea one step further, Klaus Scherübel made possible Mallarmé’s unfinished project, a “wonderful work” that he simply called The Book (Le Livre). Scherübel produced a “cover” for The Book in the dimensions specified by Mallarmé over 100 years ago. Mallarmé, The Book bears all the hallmarks of an ordinary dust jacket, including an ISBN and a back cover text, and thus it is the book that contains the sum of all books. It was published in Dutch, English, French, German, and Portuguese (2014).

Blank artists’ books are books that can mean everything. This is the premise on which the artist and critic Michael
Various Blank Pages and Ink, Doro Boehme and Eric Baskauskas, 2009. Perfect bound book, digital print, edition of 500, 205 x 150 mm
Gibbs based his work *All or nothing: An anthology of blank books* (2005). The book is, paradoxically, a critical essay on blank books and an artist's book at the same time. The essay, printed in black, occupies half of the book, while the other half is a small anthology of blank pages, with a caption on the back of each page indicating title, author and year of publication. It includes not only artists' books but also works of poetry and humour, such as *The Official Government Nuclear Survivors Handbook - Everything that is known about Effective Procedures in Case of Nuclear Attack*, 1982. There is an identity between the pages of Michael Gibbs' anthology and the pages originally published: in neither case have they received a deposit of ink, so they are completely identical.

The duo Doro Boehme and Eric Baskauskas created another type of paradox. For *Various Blank Pages and Ink* (2009), they reproduced all the blank pages of SAIC’s holdings of artists’ books by Ed Ruscha, scanned directly from the originals belonging to the The Joan Flasch Artist's Book Collection, a parody evident in the title. The pages have been printed, but show nothing beyond the format of the books and the empty space in their pages. Ruscha’s books are based upon the idea that to print a book you need a certain number of pages (multiples of four if you want to make signatures to folded, bind and trim to form a book or pamphlet). As such his books always have a number of blank pages interspersed within the book. They are like a printed non-verbal statement: the artist’s book is something made, not something written. This is, of course, true for all books, not only for the artist’s book. Lao-tzu says that “the usefulness of what is depends on what is not”. It is the space created between the pages that make them useful.

**Amir Brito Cadôr** is a Brazilian artist and researcher. He is professor of Graphic Arts at the School of Fine Arts, EBA/UFMG and curator of the special collection of artists’ books at the UFMG. He is member of the research group *Pensamento Impresso* (*Printed Thoughts*) with Paulo Silveira and Regina Melim. This article is based on an excerpt from his doctoral thesis, *Visual Encyclopaedia*, to be published later in 2014. In 2013 he published a version of *Blanco*, a poem by Octavio Paz, printed white on white.

http://gramatologia.blogspot.com

http://andantelivros.blogspot.com.br

**Bibliography**


A Place Where Things Meet: Creative and Conceptual Blending

Emma Robertson

In teaching design I have been fascinated by the way that applying new and different Models of Thinking can change creative outcomes. As a practicing artist working with paper and books, I have used and applied these sorts of models to also consciously evolve my own outcomes, and I have observed others doing the same.

The simplest model of creativity is bisociation, first described in the 1964 edition of the book The Act of Creation by Arthur Koestler. In more recent times we have described bisociation as conceptual blending – the bringing together of two things which were not previously interconnected to provide a new creative outcome as they combine. Conceptual blending does not just occur with objects, ideas and processes however – it occurs between people, too.

This is the story of a relationship between two men on different continents, whose meetings over a period of years creatively inspired them both, conceptually blending their ideas and insights. It is also about their own individual conceptual blending, in the imaginative ways that they have produced new forms of artists’ books.

Iain McCaig and Charles Santoso first met as teacher and student, and through a shared passion for storytelling and books became friends. Some years ago, Iain, the extraordinarily talented character designer of Star Wars, Harry Potter and other films came to the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia to give a lecture. Sitting in the front row was Charles, and I watched him lean forward, enthusiastically observing the entertaining and absorbing presentation Iain gave.

During Iain’s short visit he agreed to mentor a few students, and Charles was one of those chosen. Iain’s advice to Charles included, amongst other things the suggestion that he ‘draw every day – always’ and Charles subsequently followed this advice to the letter. Through a renewed sense of personal drive, Charles established an even higher level of discipline and dedication in his own unique visions and illustration work. As Iain has said of the skill of drawing ‘It’s a language…it usually takes six months, one hour a day’ to remind yourself that ‘you already know how to speak it’. It is, he says, ‘the first language that you learn as a child’.

The second time Iain visited Sydney, he taught a Masterclass, and enrollments were so popular that we offered it twice in one week. Charles enrolled in both the Masterclasses. I asked him why, since each two-day workshop covered the same content? Charles said that he knew he would learn from paying attention to the different stories and anecdotes that Iain might tell, and from watching him draw each day.

Shadowing Iain, being coached and mentored by him, watching, and hearing him describe how important books were to his life, developed in Charles an understanding of the level of focus and discipline required to become a lifelong learner, and further refine his skills, techniques and creativity in storytelling.

One of the stories that Iain told the class was of how important the book Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll was to him as an artist. Starting as an undergraduate at Glasgow School of Art in Scotland, Iain has continued to draw Alice, every year, as a type of touchstone to his ongoing creative practice. In an unusual example of synthesis, Charles was asked by Kinokuniya Bookstore in Sydney to design an in store display using the story of Alice, which was called a Wonderland of Books. Charles created the characters from the story, each with a book in their hands as they went on an adventurous journey together.

By the time of Iain’s third visit to UNSW, Charles was a fully fledged graduate, working as an animator and designer at Animal Logic, based in Fox Film Studios in Sydney. They met this time as equals, and over dinner in my home, Charles gave Iain a gift of his first small, beautifully illustrated, limited edition artist’s book. As Iain unwrapped the present, Charles said that the book expressed his thanks for Iain’s ongoing mentoring and teaching. Iain remarked enthusiastically on the balance Charles had achieved on each page, and the refined and sensitively drawn images.

Ever the storyteller, Iain then described the remarkable endeavour that was required in creating his own commercially published book Shadowline. Iain’s book holds a secret, and it is what I most love about it. A story within a story, inside Shadowline are six
envelopes, which each contain a small artist’s book. This creates a wonderful sense of surprise, and it is a realisation of a vision to embed another form of book creation, within a mainstream publication. What is the Shadowline? Another form of conceptual blending. In Iain’s words, ‘The shadowline is the place where things meet. Light and shadows. Hope and despair. Good and evil. It’s a universal watering hole. Ideas gather there. So do artists.’

Where do Charles and Iain’s books sit within the evolving history of traditional artist’s books? In the 2010 Volume 5 No. 1 of The Blue Notebook, Doug Spowart wrote a fascinating and thought provoking article on the rise of the photobook in contemporary self-publishing, and he described the emergence of a new creative form of artist’s book. Charles, in his self published small books series also uses such aspects of digital photography, and includes sequential and systematically designed formats - page by page, the story evolves and changes, image by image - and often word by word. Using sometimes just one word and one drawing per page, the interplay and way one provokes and inspires responses in relation to the other is continuously explored. Charles calls these daily drawings Random Word Doodles.

Charles often consciously uses the creative thinking tool of word play to help him generate his ideas. He challenges normal boundaries of presentation, first drawing either on paper or digitally, and then publishing the completed drawings online. He then selects and edits compilations of these images, and groups and collates them together in a new sequence and series. His favourite tool is a simple pencil, and he has achieved a superbly subtle ability to utilise this medium to its full potential, rendering texture, light and composition in evocative and emotionally engaging, memorable ways.

In 2008 the UWE Artist’s Book Seminar 1 posed the pertinent question ‘How are artists using and investigating new media for publishing?’ within a framework that explored both digital and traditional publishing. Looking at the way Charles works, this merging of approaches and interplay between forms of publishing is a demonstration of the potential overlaps...
that now exist. A book can evolve from a word, then an image, posted on a blog, and finally printed in small books, to nestle in real time in our hands as we turn the pages. The story they tell is communicated on multiple platforms chosen for different purposes by the artist.

Similarly, Iain initially designed his small books digitally. He first drew, scanned, designed and compiled the series as both a form of education, and as beautiful things in themselves. The small books are a complete set of ten, and he gives the books away free to educators and students in PDF form. It was interesting then, to see the different physical format realised within the pages of Shadowline, with six of the ten books printed and housed in such subtle, small envelopes, two to a page. The envelopes themselves are beautifully created to hold each unique 'story'. They both teach and inspire us.

Where once we posted paper letters, now we send emails. Charles lists the ways he can be contacted by email, Twitter, Tumblr, and we can view his works on his blog and website. In the midst of this digital world, it is wonderful to see that it is vitally important to both Charles and Iain as artists to still create and have their tangible small books physically exist, on paper, for us to hold.

Emma Robertson, BA (Hons), MA, FRSA studied at Glasgow School of Art and Manchester Metropolitan University, and works as Associate Professor at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia.

www.cofa.unsw.edu.au/about-us/staff/65 e.robertson@unsw.edu.au

Bibliography


The Blue Notebook, Volume 5 No. 1, Spowart, D. (2010) ISSN 1751-1720 Pages 7-15


Further information

Iain McCaig interviewed by Emma Robertson, on The Art of Visual Storytelling: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNu4xzHTP60

Charles Santoso
http://charlessantoso.tumblr.com
www.charlessantoso.com/wp/

Wonderland of Books
www.charlessantoso.com/wp/wonderland-of-books/
Richard Long
*Selected Walks 1979-1996, 1999*

Thomas A Clark
*The Flowers of Ben Lawers, 1989*

Barry Lopez
*Occupancy, 1993*
FORMATIONS
A research residency in artists’ books at the Edinburgh College of Art Library

Julie Johnstone

‘If we can perceive ourselves in the work – not the work but ourselves when viewing the work then the work is important. … Perceiving is the same as receiving and it is the same as responding.’
(Agnes Martin, 1992, p89)

What happens when we step into the space that an artist’s book offers us? What is it that we are perceiving or receiving? How do we respond?

And when we perceive, do we then begin to truly observe? Or might we then observe differently? Might we see what has always been present but had until that moment remained invisible to us?

In May this year I was fortunate to be appointed the first artist to take up the Research Residency in Artists’ Books at the Edinburgh College of Art Library. During this month-long residency I was asked to look through their collection of over 1,000 artists’ books, create a display of the works I was particularly drawn to, and develop a new book of my own to be added to the collection. I was also to give a talk or workshop, but instead suggested that I experiment with the idea of an artists’ books reading group. The collection in the ECA Library was rich and wide-ranging and a great pleasure to wander my way through. Inevitably this article will barely touch on the variety of different work to be found there, and I will be mentioning only a handful of the many books I enjoyed engaging with.

Each book I make is a note to myself, a next step in a project of ongoing investigation. In my own books I explore visual perception in as distilled manner as I can. I work to create a place of contemplation, a space where a moment of perception can occur, or a process of perception can begin. I’m interested in how a book can be a meaningful way to perceive the process of perception.

Working through the ECA collection, I found that the books that I tended to be drawn to were those that isolated, distilled and investigated in order to alter the focus of the reader’s (or artist’s) attention.

An artist’s book might be a window through which we observe – or perhaps it is more like a magnifying glass.

The artist is a witness, and the book is the form chosen to contain that which has been observed, that which has been perceived.

As I looked at the books in the collection, the artist in me was aware of how certain books might tangentially feed into my own making. I might be drawn to one small aspect of a book, perhaps a physical one. The way a page turned, how the eye came upon an image, how a colour influenced expectation. I could see myself visually ‘gleaning’. That process of gleaning occurs in any reading process – the reader takes things from a book that might have no real bearing on the writer’s intentions. A single phrase from a novel or a poem might linger, influence and open up a process of understanding and discovery.

Sometimes I was drawn to books purely because they coincided with a direction I had started to work in. Working with semi-transparent, thinner paper was one of the processes I was taking the opportunity to experiment with during the residency, and it was interesting to reflect on how other artists had used it. I could analyse with what degree of success an approach had been implemented, why it had been attempted, and what it had achieved.

But ultimately when a book really ‘worked’ for me, it was about a ‘wholeness’, a oneness – that mysterious union of the material, content, concept and intention coming together to produce a moment of perception that transcended the physical object. Sometimes this moment of revelation might come through the barest of means – this was when I was most impressed.

As I worked through the collection I saw myself, as expected, respond to simplicity, clarity of concept. I enjoyed discovering interesting uses of the book form’s potential for sequence, for repetition and for variation within repetition. I could also see from my resulting display that I am attracted to a quality of modesty, reticence. And behind all of my choices I could detect a fascination with visual resonance and how that might relate to external reality or to internal understanding, or how it can be an authentic experience in its own right. I can see that navigating a sense of distance and impossibility when attempting to translate a physical reality or experience into book form also interests me as a reader.

Aesthetically I was drawn to a lack of visual noise or clutter. I’m seduced by the pure pleasure of colour, yet also by a lack of colour, a sense of fading from view or coming into view, of near invisibility or erasure –
books that provide me with a glimpse or partial view. I was drawn to books that spoke of complexity through the means of simplicity or abstraction. I didn't need expensive productions (in fact I found myself strangely unmoved by books that had obviously cost a lot of money to produce), but I was looking for beauty – however one might define that quality – and I found this too can often be found in works made with the simplest of means.

***

‘A lingering sense of surprise and delight at being allowed witness to these occurrences finally urged the making of this work.’ (Thomas Joshua Cooper, 2001, p22)

Thomas Joshua Cooper, in his small book *Wild*, is sharing scenes of animals and birds he has witnessed in the wild. I like his use of the words ‘surprise’ and ‘delight’. I knew his work of making photographs, but to come across this small hand-bound pamphlet was a little epiphany. The book is quiet – I like quiet books. Books that slip themselves into the reader’s consciousness. Opening it I found myself stepping into his experience through the pale minimal text, into a place of gentle observation. The book blends intimacy and wildness and sets up a way of perceiving that admits to being on the outside of something but yet being touched deeply inside by the moment of observation.

***

‘Whatever there is in a landscape emerges if we just sit still’. (Thomas A Clark, 2000, p101)

So too we might say, whatever there is in an artists’ book reveals itself when we step inside the space it offers us and stay there a while. I believe too that the artist is also stepping inside that space when conceiving and making the book, and the reader may follow the artist into that space, or find their own way through the artist’s intentions. What is revealed, or perceived, depends on where we were before we made or entered the book as much as what the book might contain or explore.

I found myself drawn into the pages of works in the collection that used quiet suggestiveness to create a window into a much larger experience. One that could exist only in the memory of the artist, motivating them to make the work, or in the imagination of the reader who must make a leap of their own to explore the wider experience the book referred to. I didn’t like books that told me everything; I wanted books that acted as starting points rather than being ends in themselves.

Richard Long’s *Selected Walks 1979-1996* contains his minimal, factual, yet oddly poetic, descriptions of walks he has undertaken, written in a tentative upper case pencil. It is as if the book is drawing attention to the fact that the reader cannot relive the walks, to the fact that the book lives in a space of doubt and unfeasibility, or is actually about that impossibility of translating experience from the walker to the reader. The reader can only imagine, and the walks imagined will be their own, not those of the artist. Long’s book seems to question its own plausibility. The pencil handwriting – there something so delicate, personal and yet honest about the content on the pages despite the feeling that the reality of his walking experience is ungraspable by the reader.

***

Thomas A Clark's *The Flowers of Ben Lawers* seems to me to be doing something similar to Long’s book, yet also something very different. On each page of the book there is a simple phrase, a place where you might come across a wild flower – but that flower isn’t named: ‘among rocks, in shade’, or on another page: ‘on ledges and exposed ridges’, or ‘on damp turf, among mosses’. We presume the artist has witnessed flowers in these places. The book itself, as with Long, might relate a day’s walk passing through a landscape, by referring to places along the way. The book challenges me not to try and understand the experience of the artist, but instead to think about how I might learn to observe my physical environment, how I might perceive something as quiet as a wild flower in my own daily walks. The book is a topology of observation, and a template for looking, for noticing.

***

Both Long and Clark create an imaginative space that opens up as the reader navigates the physical object in their hands. They demand a degree of mental visualising, and initiate in the reader a different kind of observing.

Barry Lopez does something like this too in his *Occupancy*. Here we are presented with a relatively simplistic yet poignant hand-drawn map of the tract of land where he lives – but it is a map that attempts to relate his interaction with it, his intimate knowledge of it, rather than a map that will show us how to find our way if lost. It cannot really tell us what it has been like to live there, but it enables a perception of the ongoing meaningful contact with the physical world on a day-to-day basis that is contained in one person’s life.

***

Another group of works captured my attention in the collection – these were books that used repetition to explore difference, that used similarity to reveal individuality. This exercise of observation is something I began to see often as I worked through the collection, expressed in many forms and focussing on many objects of attention, whether that was people, flowers or gasoline stations.

In our reading groups during the residency we looked at Laurie Clark's 100 Buttercups. She gives us 100 pages, a drawing of a different buttercup on each. Only 100 flowers, but a taste of the infinite variety that awaits our observant eyes in the physical world. Fragile, delicate, but quietly powerful in its exploration of uniqueness. A frequent comment in the groups was that 'reading' the book made the reader literally start to see differently, encouraged a different kind of looking. The book inspired a process of perceiving the overlooked or the everyday in a newly relevant way.

Bernard Lassus takes this a step further and photographs the same three tree trunks over and over again at different times of day throughout the year. In Les Pins, he shows us the familiar and how even the same thing is never precisely the same. We are asked to notice subtle shifts in the daily reality of what we observe.

***

I don't have space to write about many more individual books here. But one particular discovery for me was the work of Birgir Andrésson, through his book Graent (Green). Here the content was purely visual and again the reader is asked to take an imaginative leap to imagine what the abstract visual might represent in a physical reality. He gives us page after page of large colour swatches, with their percentage mixes or Pantone reference stated, all called 'Icelandic', somehow representing what it means to use the word 'Icelandic'. Stunning tints of greens, blues, browns. As my own work uses percentage tints of the basic cmyk colours, I was drawn to this book at that level, but the visual encapsulation of the Icelandic character was captivating and intriguing.

The more I reflected on the artists' books I was seeing the more I came to feel that in any book, but perhaps even more so in an artists' book, there is a process of translation occurring. Sometimes this is explicit and verges on a form of 'representation' – such as in Andrésson's work. Alison Turnbull's Spring Snow: A Translation also uses colour swatches, this time to create a 'version' of a novel. The novel itself, by Yukio Mishima, provides the reader who opens it up a revealing insight into a small part of reality, in all its beauty, fragility, transience and complexity.

***

Whilst I was happily delving into the ECA collection, I was also able to spend time developing my own practice. The space to reflect away from my usual full-time job as Librarian at the Scottish Poetry Library was invaluable and I had a couple of areas that I wanted to experiment with.

I wanted to spend some time creating larger books, exploring size transition and what it meant for content, and what might or might not work. One can imagine books in one's mind, but one needs time to make prototypes to see what actually happens in the physical and visual when an idea becomes a physical reality. I produced two larger books during the residency.

The first, 2-20% | 20-2cm, combines two visual or mathematical transitions, each working in reverse. Starting on the front cover with an inkjet printed band of a tint of 2% black, each following page then moves up by 2% increments through the book to reach a 20% tint of black on the final page. At the same time the tinted block begins at a height of 20cm on the front cover, then reduces in height through the book by increments of 2cm to become effectively a line of 2cm on the final page. The book works in a landscape orientation (240mm x 280mm), and I like the way the larger size gives first of all an expanse of the 2% tint, and how, as each page is turned, the sense of a distilled line begins to emerge.
New work by Julie Johnstone developed during her residency at the ECA Library
New work by Julie Johnstone developed during her residency at the ECA Library.
Julie Johnstone
2-20% | 20-2cm 2014 (detail)
New work by Julie Johnstone
developed during her residency at the ECA Library

Julie Johnstone
2-20% | 20-2cm 2014 (cover)
New work by Julie Johnstone
developed during her residency at the ECA Library

Julie Johnstone
material | immaterial [2]
2014 (cover). New work by Julie Johnstone developed during her residency at the ECA Library
I’m interested in how the human eye and mind engages with small transitions and also what physical realities these pages might evoke.

The second larger book became an addition to my material | immaterial series and also looks at transitions. The first in this series consisted of photographs of the shadows of trees on city pavements, and looked at the overlooked that was literally under our feet. Printing these images inkjet on watercolour paper created a slightest bleed and helped me give them a textured, painted, abstract nature. The new work in the series is much larger, 280 x 260 mm. Each page (again printed inkjet on watercolour paper) has an image of an almost monochrome grey cloudy sky, the same sky taken over the course of several minutes. I found that the larger size of the pages suited the subject matter, gave the images of sky literally room to breathe and ‘move’ in front of the reader’s eyes. Here I wanted to take images that had only the barest amount of detail but let viewers of the book begin to see the subtle density transitions in the sky. I was also interested in how images of almost no detail and colour could still be visually appealing or provoking.

As well as taking time to explore working at a larger size, I experimented with moving away from the heavy weight watercolour paper I have been using and tried out some ideas that looked at semi-transparency. Using 80gsm Sumi-e paper, I began with a simple idea to create a book called 3%. I printed a rectangle of the same 3% tint of black on every facing page of a small book. Here I wanted to investigate whether in fact each page would appear to be perhaps a darker or lighter tint, depending on whether the block was viewed from the verso of the page, or whether it was viewed with another page's block underneath it – how a block on a page inside the book might look darker due to the bleed through of the page underneath, compared to the block on the final page which had nothing underneath to influence the perceived density of the tint. I also found that the perception of the tint shifted even as the page was being turned.

I also created a square book, 3-18% using the same paper. On each page I printed a square in increasing tints of black from 3%, moving up by 3% increments through the book to 18% on the final page. The tinted square begins at a height and width of 18cm, reducing through the book by increments of 3cm to 3cm on the final page. I was interested to see how the shift in size and tint would be perceived when the page below was visible, and what sort of visual effects might arise when two blocks could be seen simultaneously.

It was a great pleasure to be able to exhibit these works over the summer in the library space in a display entitled FORMATIONS. The residency allowed me to bring many thoughts together about how artists’ books can trigger perceptive experience. I am very grateful for the experience and for the avenues of thought and investigation it helped to inspire.

Special thanks to Jane Furness, Academic Support Librarian: Edinburgh College of Art at the University of Edinburgh. About the Edinburgh College of Art and its Library: 'ECA is a vibrant and creative community of students and academics: a place of experimentation, exploration, intellectual stimulation and exciting collaborations. We enjoy an international reputation for the quality of our teaching and research across the disciplines of art, design, architecture and landscape architecture, history of art and music. The College Library lies at the heart of the ECA Evolution House Learning and Research Zone, providing an innovative environment for learning, teaching and research resources in art and design.'

Julie Johnstone's artists' books are held in several collections including at Tate Library, National Art Library (V&A), Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, University College London, Yale Center for British Art, Saison Poetry Library, and in private collections. She is the editor of Essence Press and occasionally publishes the work of other artists and poets. She is also the Librarian and Curator at the Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh. www.essencepress.co.uk

Bibliography

All the *p.o.w.* covers, 26 editions and 4 posters, one for each series.
FUTURA HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE FUTURE

Why is the P.O.W. (poetry/oppose/war) series inspired by the FUTURA series, more than forty years later?

Antonio Claudio Carvalho

2012. “How did it get there?”

“How did it get there?”

Opal was asking, after I told him that our book - BUILDING UPON RAGA SHREE’ - was now in the Library of Congress, in Washington.

“But how did it get there?”

This was the first time we had spoken for almost forty years. BUILDING UPON RAGA’ SHREE’ was published in 1972 by The Man Ray Dog Rocket Society, in collaboration with Strange Faeces Press.

Opal L. Nations ran Strange Faeces and was the editor, publisher and co-author of the book. The reason it got there was that I had met Charles Mingus a few years after we published it and Mingus got a copy of Raga’ Shree’.

He liked “…it’s musical title and the wonderful illustrations that made the poetry dance and improvise…” They were Opal’s drawings.

After Mingus died, his personal library was donated to the Library of Congress.

And there it was.

Where are you Opal L. Nations?

Opal had disappeared from the poetry scene in London a few years after Raga’ Shree’ was published, when he decided to go to America. Or maybe Canada. No one knew for sure where he was.

I found him in 2012. The letters we used to exchange in the seventies were now fast emails, back and forth. That’s when I decided that we should do something together again. And I told him that I was going to publish a new series of poetry.

“How?”

Simple.

Just like Hansjörg Mayer with his FUTURA series.

“I am in…” he said.

There are 26 letters in the alphabet.

There are twenty six letters in the alphabet.

Was that the reason why Hansjörg Mayer decided that his wonderful series should have 26 editions?

Mayer’s FUTURA is probably the most important collection of concrete poetry put together so far. It was published in Stuttgart in the late sixties. Think of anyone. And they were there.

Bob Cobbing, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Edwin Morgan, Dick Higgins, Edward Lucie-Smith, Augusto de Campos…

Twenty six editions was too much of a challenge. But P.O.W. should have at least six editions. So I just had to get another five poets. P.O.W. only had Opal so far.


Gestetner.

This was a magic word in the early seventies. If you ran a small press or a poetry magazine, you would dream of having this stencil duplicate wonder mimeograph machine. It was clean. Easy to use. And fast.

Opal and Ellen Nations had one in their basement flat in Notting Hill, where they ran Strange Faeces Press, and produced the magazine of the same name.

Poetry was abundant in London in the early seventies. If you weren’t in a rock band you would probably run a small press. Or edit a poetry magazine.

Strange Faeces published the best poetry you could find, from both sides of the Atlantic. The magazine covers were designed by people like John Giorno and Ben Vautier.

It was breaking ground.

Besides being the editor and publisher, Opal is also an amazing artist. His drawings for BUILDING UPON RAGA SHREE’ - an epic poem - are still fresh and powerful today.
A selection of *futura*, edition Hansjörg Mayer

A selection of small press publications from the early seventies
Above and below: BUILDING UPON RAGA’ SHREE’
Antonio Claudio Carvalho, drawings by Opal L. Nations, 1972

Some of the magazines made on the gestetner
The complete p.o.w. series edited by Antonio Claudio Carvalho, unit4art, 2014
This is what Kontexts magazine, edited by Michael Gibbs, said about Raga’ Shree’ in its “U.S. Edition”:
“An interesting experimental prose piece, reminiscent of Sam Beckett, with drawings by Opal L. Nations…”

Peter Finch, in Cardiff, was the editor of SECOND AEON. In 1972 he published - in collaboration with Something Else Press - the now iconic TYPEWRITER POEMS.

In SECOND AEON, Finch published poetry by Bob Cobbing, Eric Mottram, Dick Higgins, Hans Clavin, Pablo Neruda, Charles Bukowski, Jiri Valoch amongst others…

Back in London, Paul Brown was running TRANSGRAVITY PRESS. Together, we produced a few books, including: SILHOUETTE IN RAINBOW GARDEN, ALL THROUGH THE PIG FASHION, with Transgravity, and WE SPECIES, with OASIS BOOKS.

Pierre Joris, was also in London in the early seventies. His magazine was SIXPACK. Published from his studio flat in Stanhope Gardens, SIXPACK was beautifully printed, and published works by Jeff Nuttall, Allen Fisher, Claude Peulieu, Bill Griffiths, Eric Mottram (who was at the time the editor of POETRY REVIEW) and many more.

Peter, Paul and Pierre. These, the poets whom I could approach now for a new collaboration: the P.O.W. (poetry/oppose/war) series.

A series has to have at least six editions.

A series has to have at least six editions.

To be a proper series, a series should have at least six editions. I don’t really know if anyone has ever said this but it should, if it was going to be inspired by the FUTURA series.

And so this became a re-encounter of an amazing group of poets, still producing great works today: Peter Finch, Opal L. Nations, Pierre Joris and Paul Brown.

To complete the series, the addition of Chris McCabe, prolific poet from Liverpool, who is also the head librarian at the Poetry Library, in London. And finally my own collaboration: (The) Flesh of Gods at P.O.W. number 6.

With six editions, the P.O.W. series came out at the end of 2012. The response was amazing.

Soon more editions followed, now aiming to get to twenty six editions, just like FUTURA.

Going back to the early seventies, Bob Cobbing had given me two copies of his SPEARHEAD book. One was for me, he said. And the other, for the Brazilian poet Augusto de Campos.

It took me forty years to deliver Augusto’s copy. I went to Sao Paulo to see him and give Cobbing’s gift. And on that visit, P.O.W. edition number 7 was born.

In the next editions, some of the best poetry being made today was added. Including also new works by three poets who had been in the FUTURA series: Augusto de Campos, Edward Lucie-Smith and Hansjörg Mayer himself. Chris McCabe co-edited the series 3.

And the poem ENTROPY, by Hansjörg Mayer, is the edition 26 of P.O.W.


A P.O.W. poetry reading fills a cafe round the corner from bookartsbookshop in Hoxton Square, London. An event produced by the bookshop and organized by the artist and poet Sophie Herxheimer.

Poets reading that evening included Mel Gooding, Edward Lucie-Smith, Robert Vas Dias, Victoria Bean, Richard Price, Chrissy Williams, Steven Fowler, Sophie Herxheimer and Chris McCabe. They all read from their P.O.W. editions.

Futura has always been the future.

Antonio Claudio Carvalho
poetry@unit4art.com
Amador Perez, untitled, 1974, 9 x 18 cm, graphite

Amador Perez, untitled, 1980, 9.5 x 17 cm, graphite
Amador Perez was born in 1952 in Rio de Janeiro where he resides and maintains a studio. In the 1960s and 70s he studied at the MAM-Rio (Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro). In 1971 he enrolled at the College of Architecture and Urbanism of Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, transferred in 1974 to the School of Fine Arts, where he graduated in 1976 in Graphic Design. He began his career in 1973 participating in the group show Jovem Arte Contemporânea (Young Contemporary Art) at MAC-USP (Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo). In 1977, he held his first solo show, Vaslav Nijinski (Waslaw Nijinsky), at the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro.

On the eve of two major exhibitions: Quantos Quadros (Maria de Lourdes Mendes de Almeida Art Gallery-Cândido Mendes Cultural Center, Rio de Janeiro, 29th May – 9th August 2014), and Memorabilia (Correios Cultural Center-Rio de Janeiro, 1st October – 7th December 2014), he reflects on the reproductions, publications and drawings that have inspired his own creative journey in drawing, printmaking and artists’ books over the last forty years:

“As a child I had access to the world of art through printed reproductions on postcards, and through publications such as The Art Book for Children. As a teenager I collected the Geniuses of Painting and The World of Museums, facsimile publications sold at newspaper stands. I liked to read about the lives of the artists, but it was the printed images of their works that I was transported by, I would examine these as intensively as I did the originals I found in the museums. I did this with a sharp and passionate regard, trying to understand how the artworks were made in an attempt to satisfy the great curiosity they awakened in my spirit. Then, hidden away in my bedroom, I would take up my drawing board and try to reproduce the works that I admired most. I would copy the reproductions employing graphite pencils, watercolour or oil on canvas – whichever was the process of the original - to become even closer to the original works and to enter into the artists’ creative processes.

At the beginning of the Seventies, I concentrated on using graphite, working from photographic images found in newspapers and magazines. In parallel, by the mid-Seventies I was already experimenting with xerography, manipulating the same type of imagery. Such manipulation included retouching on the originals, in order to optimise the sparse xerographic resources available at the time: to darken, lighten, reduce or enlarge. After reproduction, the images were sequentially organised in the form of booklets.

In 1976, furthering my xerographic research, I made Vaslav Nijinski, about the renowned Russian dancer and choreographer for my undergraduate project at the School of Fine Arts of UFRJ. Exploring photographs of the ballet dancer with the help of a copying machine, I created collages with photocopies, cutting and intervening on them by drawing and reconstituting the images. The same year I photographed them and produced a series of slides for projection, staging the images to create a theatrical version of the project. This was presented at the School of Visual Arts of Parque Lage, concluding the cycle of “spectacle-conferences” conceived and organised by the scenographer Hélio Eichbauer, Professor of the School's Multidisciplinary Workshop. In 1977, I held my first solo exhibition in the Experimental Space at the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro, showing the complete series of Vaslav Nijinski and a new version of the performance. Still devoted to Nijinsky, in 1982 I created the series Nijinski: imagens (Nijinsky: images), formed by ten graphite drawings elaborated from a rigorous selection of the dancer's photographs, with the goal of publishing a book so that I could make the images accessible to the public. The book was published in 1983, with an essay by Júlio Castaño Guimarães, and reprinted in 1985 - both
Amador Perez, untitled, series *Images and Spaces*, upon Stubbs, 1987
9.5 x 12.5 cm, graphite

Amador Perez, *Carioca*, series *Is and One*, 1989
10.5 x 9 cm, graphite and colour pencil
editions are sold out. The drawings were edited once again in 1988 in the form of posters, and thus the images were able to enjoy an even broader dissemination.

Amador Perez, untitled, series Muse, upon Ingres, 1985
16 x 8 cm, graphite and colour pencil

My relationship with reproductions of artworks took a significant step forward with the series Gioventù (youth), formed of 63 graphite and colour pencil drawings produced between 1995 and 1998 based on a reproduction of an original work belonging to the MNBA (National Museum of Fine Arts) in Rio de Janeiro. My first visit to the MNBA was a striking experience because I became immediately and forever captivated by Gioventù, the luminous image of a girl painted by Eliseu Visconti (1898). In 1999, I published the book Coleção do Artista (Artist’s Collection), an anthology of drawings produced between 1973 and 1998, with essays by Frederico Morais and Fernando Cocchiara. I finished the book including the first drawings of the Gioventù series, as they were still being developed.

In drawing, I always aim to accomplish technically accurate pieces, I feel this is essential in order to meet my desire to materialise the spirits of an imagination stirred by the power of images that are reproduced in all kinds of publications. In graphite drawings, the colours of the original work are rarely evoked, but I employ coloured pencils when I want to relate the painter’s palette to the four basic colours of offset printing: cyan, magenta, yellow and black. In 2001, at the Solar Grandjean de Montigny, PUC-Rio (Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro), I exhibited the collection Print Cabinet, formed by works in which traditional printing techniques - such as metal engraving and screenprint, were combined with photographic procedures and digital technology. The exhibition also included the drawings that inspired the prints, and the postcards that inspired the drawings. These works demanded a diverse range printing resources originating from quite different and distant eras, that - if well articulated, served not only as a form of reproduction, but also as a means of producing new images.

This whole experience of unveiling the mystery of image reproduction and the search for ways to produce the engravings of the Print Cabinet collection inevitably brought me into contact with more recent digital technologies. Two fundamental people in this process were Agustinho Coradello, a skilful printer, and Lula Perez, my brother; a designer, and great encourager and solver of the challenges I face regarding computer graphics.

In 2003, I held an exhibition at the Cândido Portinari Gallery-UEERJ (State University of Rio de Janeiro) entitled The Art of Printing. Along with engravings done previously and drawings and postcards related to them, I exhibited my first toner prints. ‘Graphy toner’ is a term coined by Lula Perez to bring attention to the value of the presence of the actual toner. The substance, made of plastic matter in a laser’s impression, fixes on paper or other substrates, colours and shapes of images previously processed through digital resources. Laser impression, also known as xerography (which means dry printing), was invented in the mid-20th Century, is still being developed and has played a key role in the revolution of digital reproduction in the graphic industry.

In 2009, I presented Reading Cabinet at 90 Gallery Contemporary Art, Rio de Janeiro. The collection Reading Cabinet was striking and significant for me because, for the first time, I was breaking the limits of craftsmanship through the resources of graphic computation and vice-versa, I was integrating the two. I presented new works through interventions in books about art including pages depicting Turner’s Sun Setting over a Lake (c.1840) and the painting Christina’s World by American artist Andrew Wyeth (1948). Drawing, painting, masking, collage, scraping, peeling, reflecting, colour inversion, positive-negative relationships, toning, juxtaposing, filtering and fusion were employed, in a total synthesis of the resources I have acquired and developed throughout my career.

This has reaffirmed my interest in, and the exploration of the issues proposed by drawing as language and reflection. I now wish to elaborate on concepts, to investigate relationships between technical mediums in a coherent and stimulating manner, to create a dialogue with the world and the history of art and to expand the possibilities of a poetic language. I have never limited my work to a single type of technique, but hope that the diversity of media I employ can both express the coherence of my ideas and transcend them. Since I began with my first drawings from and in books, up to the present day engraving and ‘graphy toner’, I seek to reveal the white light of paper’s non-coloured areas. I propose a speculative and interactive trio of play between the images I create, the makers of the original artworks and the spectator’s imagination.
Amador Perez, untitled, series 1, 2, 2011, 60 x 70 cm, various techniques on fine art print paper

Amador Perez, untitled, series Reading Cabinet, upon Caspar David Friedrich, 2007, 29.5 x 42 cm, laser print on paper
Amador Perez, untitled, series *Reading Cabinet*, upon Carel Fabritius and Fantin-Latour, 2007
33.5 x 54.5 cm, various techniques on laser print paper

Amador Perez, untitled, 1983, 11 x 15 cm, graphite
Amador Perez, untitled, series Gioventù, upon Visconti, 1996, 18 x 13 cm, graphite
Artwork reproductions, which enticed me for both their material and immaterial aspects are presented alongside all the elements found in their graphic layers. This included postcards and book pages, texts about the works and their creators, captions, page numbers, production or time marks, encasings, etc. The exact place of the plates from where the images were taken are also noted. All of the artworks created for the exhibition were one-offs; even the works developed without any handmade interventions after the printing process, or those generated with digital matrixes, are not multiples. They were conceived as unique works in order to preserve the aura of exclusivity held by the original artworks in the books that inspired me as a child, and which still holds true for me today.

In the exhibition *Quantos Quadros* I present 20 works, variations from the image of a single graphite drawing I did in 1981, which now belongs to a private collection, where I combine laser printing techniques, ‘graphy toner’ drawing, printmaking and painting, discussing the relationship between the uniqueness of original work and the multiplicity of reproduction. At the exhibition *Memorabilia*, besides presenting recent works where I combine printed images on canvas (a selection of my drawings of the 1980s) and objects, and showing in retrospect the series *Gioventù* (1995/98, 63 graphite and colour pencil drawings), I also show two new artists’ books in collaboration with the master bookbinder Cristina Viana (http://www.palmarium.com.br). These are being shown alongside evidence of the complete development process of the project, from drawings, to printing and binding each edition. The books *Vaslav Nijinski: SOU* and *Nijinski: imagens* are both based on Nijinsky who continues to be an on-going source of inspiration to me.

The text in this essay has been edited and developed from an original essay for the exhibition *Reading Cabinet*, 90 Gallery Contemporary Art, Rio de Janeiro, 2009. English version: Renato Rezende; Revision: Amador Perez.

*Quantos Quadros* was held at Maria de Lourdes Mendes de Almeida Art Gallery - Cândido Mendes Cultural Center, Rio de Janeiro, 29th May - 9th August 2014. The exhibition catalogue, links to the artist’s work, texts and more information can be found at: http://quantosquadros.amadorperez.com

*Memorabilia* is at the Correios Cultural Center-Rio de Janeiro, 1st October – 7th December 2014. www.amadorperez.com

---

Amador Perez has held solo shows at Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo art galleries, and participated in art fairs in Brazil, Germany and Japan. The development of his career during the 1990s includes his participation in the 21st São Paulo Biennial, solo shows at renowned cultural institutions in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and at the Scuola Internazionale di Grafica, in Venice. He has also participated in group shows in Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, France, England and China.

More recently, in 2012, he participated in the exhibition *From the Margin to the Edge: Brazilian Art and Design in the 21st Century* at Somerset House in London. His works figure in the collections of renowned cultural institutions in Brazil and abroad, such as the UECLAA - University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, and in private collections, such as Harlan Blake (New York) and Richard Hedreen (Seattle). In 1983 he published the book *Nijinski: imagens* (Nijinsky: images) and in 1999, *Colecção do Artista* (Artist’s Collection). His activities in education have included serving as a professor at ESDI-UERJ (Superior School of Industrial Design - State University of Rio de Janeiro) and at PUC-Rio (Pontifical Catholic University - Rio de Janeiro), Department of Arts and Design.
**ARTWORK CONTRIBUTORS**

**Craig Atkinson** (page 50). I take photographs of things that show aspects of change; social, architectural and geographic, for example. This picture is of Robin Hood Gardens, soon to be demolished. It’s a classic example of Brutalist post-war social housing and architecture.

I set Café Royal Books up in 2005 as a way of disseminating my work alongside the gallery system. The main focus of CRB today is a series of titles published weekly that also document change, mainly but not exclusively in the UK. I collaborate with artists, museums and galleries - working with, and filling gaps in their archives.

Café Royal Books  
http://caferoyalbooks.com

Craig Atkinson  
www.craigatkinson.co.uk

**Molly Lemon** (cover, badge and sticker design). I am a Fine Art student at Winchester School of Art, UK, working with collage, mail-art and print. My practice explores and questions the human need to collect things and how this continues to change over time.

I have a 3,000 strong postcard collection which provides inspiration for much of the imagery and narratives used in my work.

http://www.coroflot.com/mollylemon  
lollymelon@hotmail.co.uk

**Emily McVarish** (page 4). This is an enlarged detail of a letterpress work in progress called *Lessons of Darkness*. The syllabic and typographic schemes are derived from François Couperin’s musical setting of the Lamentations. The text recasts this baroque contemplative genre as an attempt to face what devicelessness or an absence of interactivity might reveal.

My most recent artists’ books are *A Thousand Several* and *Quickstead*, both published by Granary Books:  
www.granarybooks.com

**Pineapple Falls** (page 48). We are Paul Hearn and Maddy Pethick based in Plymouth, UK. We collaborate to make and share books, broadcasts, multiples, collage, and objects. Collecting and collating found material comprising of image text, packaging and papery sundries, we bring this stuff together as books and packets.
REFEREES' BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Anne Béchard-Léauté is a Lecturer at the University of Saint-Etienne, France, where she teaches design and translation for the Department of English and the Visual Arts Department. She co-heads the MPhil in Artists’ Books and Art Book Publishing (Master 2 Professionnel Edition d’art / Livre d’artiste) with Dr Valentine Oncins. It is the first course of its kind in France.

In 1999 Anne 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 languages and design, including editorial design. She has translated a number of design and art history books, mainly for Phaidon and Thames & Hudson. She is currently writing a book on Georgia Russell’s book sculptures.

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 ere (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. Maria is a Chancellor’s Fellow at Edinburgh College of Art and was Director of Art Writing at Goldsmiths, University of London. Recent book works include With A Bao A Qu Reading When Attitudes Become Form (Los Angeles/Vancouver: New Documents, 2013). 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 Comité 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 last academic research project was on non-linear reading in books. Publication: “Kreuz & Quer / Hin & Her. Zappen bzw. nicht-lineares Lesen im Buch. Ein Kaleidoskop. Offenbach am Main und Braunschweig 2011.”

Her latest artist’s book (as practice-based research) with the title “Wer A sagt…” is a letterpress printing experiment: The book consists of all letters of the alphabet, one printed on top of the other, each page having one more letter. Thus, the last page has 25 print runs on the recto and 26 print runs on the verso. The printing ink has no pigments (i.e. varnish) thus creating a delicately growing transparency.

Co-founder and member of Unica T (”a fictitious person making real books”) for 15 years, until the group split in 2001. She has continued in artistic collaboration for almost 30 years with Uta Schneider as <usus>. www.boatbook.de / u.stoltz@boatbook.de
Spot checks for Trojan Horse plots checks Spot plots Horse Trojan for for Trojan checks Horse Spot plots Trojan plots for Spot checks Horse Horse plots checks for Trojan Spot plots Spot Trojan for checks Horse Spot Horse Trojan checks plots for checks Trojan Spot Horse for plots for plots checks Trojan Horse Spot Trojan checks for plots Spot Horse Horse for plots Spot checks Trojan plots Trojan for Spot checks Horse