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Creative Practice

Methods of Production: For my own artists' books:
Inkjet, Laser printed, Print-on-demand, Altered books, Hand-drawn/Letraset, mixed media, felt.

Students produce their books using: Inkjet, Laser printed, Print-on-demand, Screen based/Internet, Linocut, Screenprint, Etching, Lithography, Altered books, Sculptural books, Photocopy, Hand-drawn/Letraset, 3D, sewing.

For collecting - Artists' Books mostly & Artisan:
Inkjet, Laser printed, Print-on-demand, Screen based/Internet, Linocut, Letterpress, Screenprint, Etching, Woodcut, Lithography, Altered books, Sculptural books, Photocopy, Hand-drawn/Letraset, sewn, textile, 3D/pop-up



Composition: *A Book about Books*, Melanie Bush, 2008

ABTREE

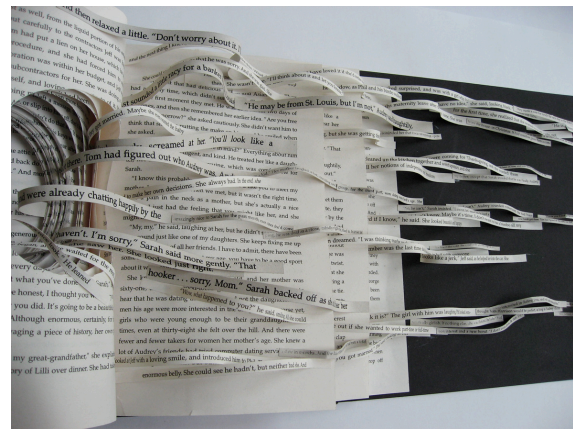
With reference to the ABTREE, my work sits under artist's books. I would also add sewn/textile, 3D/pop-up, mixed-media to the overall diagram.

I haven't collected ephemeral and digital (as defined on ABTREE) - because I want to focus on the physical form.

Technology and Tradition

I use a variety of production methods in response to themes, it's mostly about my creative background and what production I have access to. I started making artists' books using the computer - but combined with hand made techniques. I prefer a mixed approach, I just worry about archival quality of ink jet, but sometimes I exploit that too. As I am self-funded I try to keep costs low, I use a lot of recycled materials.

The use of computers for the students make production more accessible/possible but this is a main production tool for them anyway (graphic designers) so in fact the Book Arts brief is one of the most experimental briefs.



Student work: Alex Alexandrou 2009, for 'we love your books' Closure exhibition

Marketing and Distribution

I buy and sell the majority of my artists' books at Artists' Books Fairs, selling mostly to institutional and private collectors. I have used the Internet to sell my work via my own website and Print-on-demand websites.

Teaching, History and Theory

Under the Integrated Graphics (year1) Illustration Projects (year1) Illustration Elective (Year2) modules, the students are encouraged to contextualise their practice in relation to book arts/artists' books through reading the following books:

Printed Matter / general editor: Roger Walton. - Hamburg: Gingko Press, 1999.

Russian Avant-garde books 1917-34 / Susan Compton. - London: The British Library, 1992.

A Humument: a Treated Victorian Novel Tom Phillips, London: Thames and Hudson, 1980.

Picasso as a Book Artist / Abraham Horodisch / [translation by I. Grafe] London: Faber, 1962.

A Century of Artists' Books / Riva Castleman. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1994.

Surrealism and the Book Renée Riese Hubert, Berkeley; LA; Oxford: University of California Press, 1988.

Artists' Books: the book as a work of art, 1963-1995 / Stephen Bury. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995.

French Livres d'Artiste in Oxford University collections: Martin, Eunice. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1996.

For the voice 1893-1930 / Mayakovsky, El Lissitzky. London: British Library, 2000.

Movable Books: an illustrated history: pages & pictures of folding London: New English Library, 1979.

Indie Publishing: How to Design & Produce Your Own Book / ed Ellen Lupton, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008

Students are asked to look at the work of the following artists:

Andrew Norris, Susan Kea Grant, Geneviève Seillé, Hedi Kyle, Angela Lorenz, Sergei A. Yakunin, Susan Johanknecht, Picasso, Ed Ruscha, Jonathan Callan, Dieter Roth, Sol Lewitt, Jacqueline Rush Lee

They are also directed to these websites:

<http://www.weloveyourbooks.com>
<http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk>
<http://www.wotadot.com>
<http://www.myspace.com/luckydipcollective>
<http://www.reassemble.co.uk>
<http://www.carabarer.com>
<http://www.alteredbookartists.com/gallery>
<http://www.bettypepper.co.uk/page2.htm>
<http://www.philobiblon.com>
<http://www.centerforbookarts.org>
http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html
<http://www.jaketilson.com/publishing/books.htm>
<http://www.shift.de/scripts/publications/index.php>
<http://www.sandysykes.co.uk/BUTTONS.html>
<http://www.thebookproject.com>
<http://www.artstar.clara.net/traceybush.htm>
<http://www.andreweason.com>
<http://www.paperscissorsstone.info>
<http://colophon.com/toc.html>
<http://www.bibliopath.org/index.php>
<http://www.the-case.co.uk>
<http://www.artistsbooksonline.com/index.shtm>



A Long Walk in Wintertime, Melanie Bush, 2009

The Future of the Book

Yes there is a limit to the definition of an artist's book, there has to be, even though it is so broad. I consider it to be an artefact, which has reference to, or challenges the book, but also has some aspect of narrative.

As long as book artists look to bookbinders I think traditional skills will continue. I think it would be better if more bookbinders looked to artist's books - I know Janine Pope has tried to encourage this in the Society of Bookbinders.

This case study forms part of the Centre for Fine Print Research's AHRC funded project 2008 - 2010: *What will be the canon for the artist's book in the 21st Century (In an arena that now includes both digital and traditionally produced artists' books, what will constitute the concepts of artists' publishing in the future?)* <http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/canon.htm>