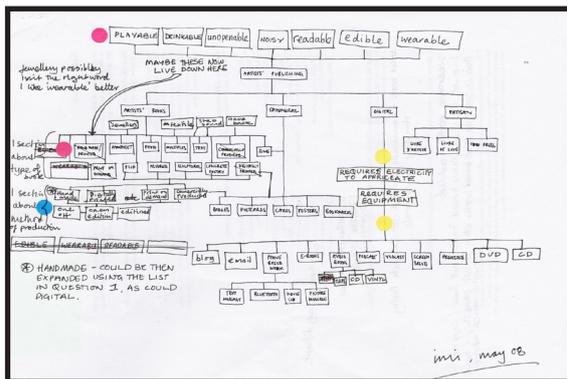


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### Creative Practice

Methods of Production for artists' books include: letterpress, screenprint, altered books, photocopy, jewellery techniques, stitch and enamelling.



### ABTREE

With reference to the ABTREE, my work sits in Artist's Book: - handmade/printed to concrete poetry and sculptural.

I have had fun making changes but it's a bit messy! I would add wearable (like jewellery, but that isn't the right word so 'wearable' is better [Maufe has made book-based jewellery/wearable books using old typewriter keys and letters]), playable, drinkable, noisy, readable, edible, unopenable books to the handmade section of the diagram. I could question the phone based 'books' but then I suppose this is similar to e-books etc. and that is not something I have thought much about so cannot say if it should or shouldn't be a book.

### Technology and Tradition

Over time my production methods have changed very little – I still make most of my books using traditional (don't know if you like this word) methods and steer away from the computer as much as possible even though the way I make books is time consuming it is not in front of a screen.

I love the quality of screen and letterpress printing, but I also love the hands-on approach to making. Screenprinting is fantastic as it is easy to print multiples.

Until now (2008) I hadn't used a computer to make a book but I could see that I have a potential book at that lends itself to being digitally printed to get a photo-quality finish. No, technology hasn't influenced my creative process, other than confuse me with possibilities. Maybe I stick with what I know works for me.

I have now made two books that used digital printing processes. It drove me mad! Too much was out of my hands. The printers didn't print it correctly the first time, my computer skills lack the joined up thinking that get me to the end result happily. The outcome was good in the end, but didn't have the same quality as my usual hand printed books. Digital printing was useful, in this case for the reproduction of photo image work.

I haven't thought of publishing a book on electronic paper - What is electronic paper? It is not that I don't trust electric things – but if you don't have electricity you won't have your book. If something is printed you can always 'read' it.

I would like to be more productive in making books but that is more about time and facilities. I would like to see the quality of my books advance maybe still using the methods I use but improving upon them.



Imi Maufe: Raffle tickets and Midge's library box (2007 - 2008)

### Marketing and Distribution

I sell the majority of my artists' books through artist's book fairs and exhibitions. I haven't used the Internet to sell my work. I never think about a target audience, I generally make artists' books as a response to a project or experience, documenting other work. Pricing artists' books is always a tricky one for me.

If I price them as I would a 'print', then they are too expensive for the general audience. If I price them low, I feel like you are under-valuing myself. Books are not for me, an economic part of my practice therefore, I don't concentrate on marketing and distribution.

I think it will be hard for any bookshops or galleries to adapt to selling purely digital media. Everyone expects everything for free if it's via the Internet and can be downloaded. How can you collect digital media anyway?

### **The Future of the Book**

I think there are possibly several definitions of artists' books that cover the variety of books made. In some cases where the book form is less obvious I would say that text needs to be present but where the book form/structure is more evident, text isn't a prerequisite to calling a book a book.

I think I am quite open minded to what a book is, it could range from a piece of clothing/jewellery, to a book that looks like a book, all depending on the context and justification that it is a book.

I think books have become more and more known as an artform since I first started working with them but maybe with this popularity of making that doesn't equal the quality of work that is produced. I think letterpress printing is one of the skills most likely to be lost when the last generation of letterpress printers dies. There will then only be a small handful of people to continue this fantastic way of printing text.

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>