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Creative practice

Production processes for artists' books include: Photopolymer relief and intaglio printing, Screenprint/Gocco, Inkjet printing, Ceramics (mostly porcelain with decals, lino embossing, ceramic ink printing). Occasionally - Photocopy, Hand-drawn, Transfers – inkjet and solvent.

ABTREE

With reference to the ABTREE, my work fits under artists' books, in three categories: hand-made, sculptural and digitally printed. I don't think anything needs to be added to, or removed from the diagram.

Technology and Tradition

When I first "discovered" artists' books I wanted to explore the tradition, so I made work using paper and according to the methods I saw in books. My books were initially all inkjet printed using archival inks. I made short editions (between 3-10).

At the moment I am exploring ways of incorporating my skills as a ceramic artist with the making of artists' books. Some of these are sculptural while others are not, but so far, they have been one-offs. It is my intention to use a range of materials and methods for book-making in the future.

If you are using mainly traditional methods, is this an issue of the quality of production?

If by quality, you mean the materiality, then yes. I like to create objects. Texture, weight, haptic concerns are sources of inspiration to me. Conceptually, I am interested in time, process and transience, so digital work is a possibility in the future, particularly in contrast with ceramic work, which is so permanent.

The computer has helped in the production of my work. Almost all of my books have at least a component created on computer. This ranges from photos which are digitally processed, to the entire work being produced on the computer and then inkjet printed on my own wide format printer.

I use methodologies that can be readily established in a home studio. Creating work which is archival is important to me. Initially I did outlay a reasonable amount on my computer, wide format printer etc. specifically for the purpose of producing artists



Like Weather, 2007

books. I also purchased a Gocco printer. I am hoping to limit further expenditure on this type of item now for a while, and just make use of the equipment I have. The inkjet printed works and the ceramic ones have been most successful. But I'm sure this is due to my much greater familiarity with these media.

New technologies have influenced my creative process mostly in terms of digital photo processing. I don't know anything about publishing an artist's book on electronic paper at this time, but I love the texture and "foldability" of traditional media, so I'm not sure it would appeal to me.

I am still in the beginner's class when it comes to both working in book-form, and also utilising media other than ceramics. As my understanding of both these areas increases, I am sure my production methods will change.

Marketing and Distribution

I would say that my main audience is institutional collections and private collectors. I haven't used the Internet to market my work yet.



Resistance, 2008

The Future of the Book

Do you think there is any limit to the definition of an artist's book?

Yes, there needs to be but it isn't based in materiality.

Personally, I think an artist's book needs to have one particular feature of a book – namely pages, or something that operates in the same way as pages. They don't need to be attached (i.e. bound) or in any particular order or even flat, but the aspect of presenting a series of something, related in content somehow and not sold separately is important to me. Beyond that, everything is open to investigation and exploration.



Self (States of Change) 2008

No, I don't have any concerns about the future of the book. People like to collect "things" and people appreciate beautiful and well-made objects. Perhaps they will become more "special" and rarefied, collected by a small but appreciative audience, like other well-crafted items. Books may become more of an art object, and we may move to cheap, downloadable e-books for everyday books, like paperbacks, cooking books etc. In this situation, traditional artisan skills will be ever more in demand.

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>