Artists’ Books
Creative Production
and Marketing

Sarah Bodman
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Case Study XLV: Lucy May Schofield, UK
Case Study XLVI: Marshall Weber, USA
Case Study XLVII: Imi Maufe, Norway/UK
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Case Study XLIV: Deb Rindl, UK
Case Study XLV: Miriam Schaer, USA
Case Study XLVI: Chris Taylor, UK
Case Study XLVII: Ian Tyson, France
Case Study XLVIII: Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz, Germany
BABE: Bristol Artist’s Book Event at Arnolfini, Bristol, Saturday 21st April and Sunday 22nd April 2007

Nadine Faye James, typewriter portrait artist at work
BABE: Bristol Artist’s Book Event at Arnolfini, Bristol
www.nadinefayejames.co.uk
Artists' Books
Creative Production and Marketing

The first edition of this guide in 2005, was the result of our AHRC supported project which investigated production and marketing issues for book artists. Since 2005, we have had responses and information from artists and purchasers, and developments have taken place within the field of artists’ books. This second edition has been rewritten to include new information since 2005.

For both editions we asked established and new artists to tell us about any issues concerning producing and marketing their artists’ books. This helped to establish a picture of the current situation so we could try to address some of the problems experienced by book artists.

As there are now many artists making books, the subject has grown in related disciplines in the fine, applied and graphic arts fields. Stefan Szczelkun’s *UK Artists Books: Marketing and Promotion* (Estamp, London, 1993) and Simon Ford’s *Artists’ Books in UK and Eire Libraries* (Estamp, London, 1992) were two useful studies published on marketing and promotion of artists’ books in the UK and Ireland. With the increased amount of study, interest and production of artists’ books over recent years, we hope this new publication will help to identify more opportunities and strategies for book artists to market their work and establish connections with both private collectors and purchasers for institutions. In 2006, the publication of *Artists’ Books: A Cataloguers’ Manual* (compiled by Maria White, Patrick Ferratt and Liz Lawes for the ARLIS/UK & Ireland Cataloguing and Classification Committee, 2006, ISBN 0-9552445-0-1) indicated that the field of artists’ books and their place in institutional collections has grown substantially.

This new guide has been compiled for the book artist - in their role of producer, publisher and distributor of their own artwork; to discuss some of the practical issues arising from this. There is a more direct link between the artist and the buyer in the field of artists’ books than any other art discipline. Many book artists are unsure of the market potential of their work and this is particularly difficult in their situation as they are usually directly responsible for interacting with the purchaser.

We have interviewed artists about producing and distributing their work, and the importance of artist’s book fairs and events for building relationships with purchasers and other artists. Our range of sources included our original survey forms - distributed at book fairs, through our mailing list and via a downloadable link on our website. Respondents and interviewees ranged from established to fledgling artists, curators, collectors (both institutional and private) bookshop and gallery owners, dealers, lecturers and instructors.

For the first issue, we interviewed book artists to present a series of 25 case studies of their experiences in the UK, France, Germany, EIRE, Spain, Denmark and the USA, to be used as reference for newer artists and students wanting to find out more about producing and marketing their artists’ books. We selected a range of artists with 2 - 30+ years experience of making and marketing artists’ books, zines, editions and unique books and asked them to share their working practices and experiences of book fairs, interaction with collections and purchasers, and any problems and advice.

Since then, they have kindly taken the time to update their contributions for this second issue, and we also have added some new artists’ case studies from Canada, Japan, Australia and Europe.

In 2004-8, we asked private and institutional collectors to tell us about the ways in which they would prefer to interact with artists selling their books and any issues arising from collecting artists’ books. Whilst travelling, we have since interviewed Max Schumann of Printed Matter, New York and Cathy Chambers and Heather Cleary, at Otis College of Art & Design Library in Los Angeles; for some in depth accounts of selling, purchasing and collecting artists’ books. Maria White (Tate Britain) Nancy Campbell (Bertram Rota), Kristen Merola and Tate Shaw (Preacher’s Biscuit Books) have also kindly participated in new case studies for collectors, dealers and publishers to add to this new edition.

For the first edition we attended five artist’s book fairs in Europe, the USA and South Korea. At the fairs we talked to artists and purchasers from the following countries: UK, Ireland, France, Korea, Russia, Canada, Germany, Denmark, Norway, New Zealand, The Netherlands, South Africa, Italy, Japan and the USA. The differences in artists’ experiences from these countries provided an extra dimension to the survey, which we hope, makes this publication of interest to a wide field.

The updated lists of collections, book fairs, places to see, buy and sell artists’ books, reference reading and websites, should help artists to find out about available opportunities, marketing ideas and supporting networks. Editorial comments/ additions to texts are in [square brackets].

Many thanks to all the artists, collectors, publishers and contributors who responded to our requests for information for both editions, particularly those who have contacted us in response to the first edition, and those who have contributed extensively with their experiences through the case studies and interviews. We hope you will find this guide helpful in promoting your own artists’ books.

Sarah Bodman
Centre for Fine Print Research
UWE Bristol School of Art, Media and Design
Four generations and Mac the dog enjoy perusing artists’ books. Photo: Tom Sowden.

A cyclist immersed in an artist’s book. Enschede, The Netherlands (with thanks to our model Carly Kok).
Establishing a relationship between the maker and purchaser of artists’ books

Purchasers of artists’ books

As part of the initial survey, we asked collectors to tell us:

6. Who (or where) is your main source for purchasing artists’ books for your collection?

Both institutional and private collectors make a substantial amount of purchasing through artist’s book fairs, dealers, collectives and specialist bookshops. They also deal with artists directly if a proper appointment to visit has been arranged.

Here are some of the responses from some of the collectors to question 6:

“Specific bookstores and private artist’s book dealers, independent artist’s book publishers, artists coming through or mailing in their work [after initial contact was made] or if I have seen the work reviewed (Art on Paper, Art Monthly, Umbrella, etc.), fairs.” Anne Dorothee Boehme, curator, Joan Flasch Artist’s Book Collection, School of the Art Institute, Chicago

“Artist’s book fairs, bookartbookshop and Eagle Gallery.” Neil Crawford, private collector, UK

“London Artist’s Book Fair, from WSA staff and students, and specialist bookshops.” Catherine Polley, curator, Winchester School of Art Library

“From art fairs, private studios and galleries.” Doug Beube, private collector, USA

“From the Internet, Pyramid Atlantic book fair in Washington, D.C., Printed Matter and Center for Book Arts (both in New York City), Oak Knoll book fair (private press).” Michael Brooks, private collector, USA

Examples of acquisition policies in the UK:

Collections often have a set acquisitions policy but these are not always readily available. Even with a set policy, many collections are open to artworks which do not fit into their given criteria. The majority of curators and librarians surveyed, stated that they would consider viewing most types of artists’ books. Many educational library collections will concentrate on purchasing artists’ books which relate to their teaching curriculum.

Tate Library and Archive has an online record of books in the collection, so you can browse and see the type of things they collect, mostly larger editions and more inexpensive books. Tate has a written acquisitions policy and price limits (see: www.tate.org.uk/research/researchservices/researchcentre/default.htm).

Meg Duff responded to the question of how artists can find out about the acquisitions policy: “I usually tell them in an initial phone conversation, and, in response to emails I usually attach a copy as a one-page Word document, whether this is requested or not.”

An example of some of the exclusions from Tate’s policy include: “One of a kind, or very limited edition books; Illustrated books/livres d’artiste; Books containing original prints, particularly if the prints are also available unbound; Objects, which cannot strictly be considered as ‘books’ - though this is not always a straightforward matter; Books over £120 except in special circumstances and usually only following curatorial consultation.” It is always worth finding out about policies before submitting works which may not be suitable.

Case Study I: Maria White, Chief Cataloguer at Tate Library, kindly agreed to answer these questions in May 2007:

1. How would you prefer to be approached by an artist wishing to sell their work to you?

By email or telephone, allowing enough time to arrange a visit.
2. In your opinion, what would be the worst way of approaching you?

By just turning up or sending unsolicited work.

3. Does your collection have any particular theme or specialist aspect?

Tate Library has a collection over 4,300 artists’ books dating from the 1960s onwards. We collect within the following definition: “a book (i.e. normally a number of pages attached to each other in some way) wholly, or primarily conceived by (though not necessarily actually made/printed by) an artist, and usually produced in a cheap, multiple edition for wide dissemination.” We do not collect livres d’artiste, illustrated books or unique books.

3a. How can artists find out about your preferences?

Artists can search the collection through the Library’s catalogue on the Tate website. Information about the Hyman Kreitman Research Centre and access to the catalogue can be found at: http://www.tate.org.uk/research/researchservices/researchcentre/

Otherwise I can email artists a copy of our acquisitions policy.

4. Do you feel it is necessary to meet the artist where possible? If yes, why?

I would prefer to meet the artist to talk about the work. I very rarely buy without seeing the work.

5. Do you purchase from artists at specialist artist’s book fairs? and if so, which fairs have you visited in the last year?

Contemporary International Book Fair (Leeds)
Bristol Artists’ Book Event
Small Publishers Fair (London)
London Artists’ Book Fair

6. Where (or who) is your main source for purchasing artists’ books for your collection?

The artists themselves. I currently mainly buy at the Fairs but I also see artists and booksellers who visit the Library.

7. Do you have any issues arising from cataloguing or archiving artists’ books you have purchased? If so, is there any information from the artist that would make your job easier? (for example, if the artist provided an information sheet for you).

Cataloguing artists’ books can be a challenge. Librarians require title and statement of responsibility (i.e. the artist’s name), name of publisher, date and place of publication. If this information is not on the book then it would be very useful to be supplied separately. I am also always grateful for further information provided by the artist. When purchasing from the artist I often ask them to write a short text describing the book, its ideas and its techniques and materials. I also search the web or the artist’s website for statements. If the artist had a prepared information sheet, that would be good. Information in electronic form is particularly useful as this can be cut and pasted straight into a catalogue record.

If I could also mention a recent ARLIS/UK and Ireland publication that explores issues of cataloguing: Artists’ books: a cataloguers’ manual by Maria White, Patrick Perratt and Liz Lawes. Available from: arlis@courtauld.ac.uk

Maria White, Chief Cataloguer
Tate Library, Tate Britain
Millbank, London SW1P 4RG, UK
email: maria.white@tate.org.uk
www.tate.org.uk

Examples of acquisition policies In the USA:

Joan Flasch Artist’s Book Collection, School of The Art Institute, Chicago. “We collect books and multiples mostly in the $10 - to $200 - range; rarely do we buy an item that is more expensive than that. Any printing technique, any format, any topic, any edition size (although one-of-a-kind items usually don’t fall into this price category). My main guidance is found in our curricular activities and potential user interests. Both change over time. We do not usually buy broadsides or posters, artists’ audio or video works unless they are accompanied by a book work, artists’ stamps and other ephemera, nor do we buy examples of bookbinding, papermaking, etc.” Anne Dorothee Boehme, curator, Joan Flasch Artist’s Book Collection, School of the Art Institute, Chicago

Constance Woo, of Long Island University Library, adds that purchases for their collection “Must be curriculum-related; well-made; interesting as art and book art.”

Case Study II: Deirdre Lawrence

Artists’ Books at Brooklyn Museum

The Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives, with over 300,000 volumes and 1,600 linear feet of archival collections, have been developed as a primary resource to provide resources for the cataloguing, interpretation and exhibition of the Museum’s objects as well as its history.

The research collection also offers information on the broader areas of art and cultural history in general from antiquity to contemporary times. Special collections include approximately 2,000 artists’ books and documentation concerning exhibitions of artists’ books around the world.

The artist’s book collection at the Brooklyn Museum contains mostly multiples with examples of limited editions and unique books. The focus for Brooklyn’s collection is books by artists either:
- working or living in Brooklyn
- exhibited by the Museum or in the permanent collection
- considered to be the masters of the book form
- producing books that relate to the Museum objects collections

In 2000, a selection of artists' books was exhibited at the Museum and a catalogue was produced entitled *Artists' Books* [which is available from the Museum Library for $25]. Artists' books are frequently on view in the Museum Library display cases.

To submit materials to the Library for possible inclusion in the artist's book collection, please send a résumé/CV and exhibition history, digital images or prints of text and images to:

Brooklyn Museum Library
Attn: Artist's Book Collection
200 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11238-6052, USA

The Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives offer non-circulating resources that serve the needs of students, scholars, artists and others. Visitors who wish to use the Libraries and Archives are asked to consult the online catalogue at [http://library.brooklynmuseum.org](http://library.brooklynmuseum.org) and to email library@brooklynmuseum.org for citations for material needed for research. To inquire about visiting please e-mail library@brooklynmuseum.org.

**Approaching Collectors**

As part of the initial survey, we asked both institutional and private collectors:

1. **How would you prefer to be approached by an artist wishing to sell their work to you?**

2. **In your opinion, what would be the worst way of approaching you?**

**Institutional Collections**

There were varying responses to this question; which ranged enough in opinion to say that there is no definitive set of rules for approaching institutional collectors. The main differences are in the preferred means of approach, some curators favour an initial phone call request to set up a meeting (as they know that letters and brochures can get buried under paperwork) but some have said that constant phone interruptions are the last thing they want when they are trying to work. All the curators who responded said that a personal appearance without an appointment is not the way to approach any collection.

If you are not sure about a collection's acquisition policies or interests, look them up on the Internet, then write or email for information on their policies. Many collections have a sheet which they can send to artists before they submit any work for consideration.

Some of the responses from institutional collectors, on how they prefer to be approached (1) and how not to approach them (2):

1. "By phone call, email or letter. If the artist intends to bring the work in personally, there needs to be enough time to set up an appointment." (2) "By turning up, unannounced, with the work. By sending unsolicited work on approval, especially in the case of an artist unknown to me." Meg Duff, curator, Tate Britain Library, UK

What artists marketing their work need to appreciate is that many curators and institutional collectors have plenty of work to do, and cannot be expected to respond to artists immediately, or to drop everything because we want to sell them our books! There are a lot more artists than there are curators.

It is also worthwhile remembering that institutions have a budgetary year the same as any business does, so they may not be able to buy your work because they have already allocated the financial year’s budget. This can vary from April - April for State collections and Autumn - June for educational collections. So don't be disappointed if they don’t have the money to purchase, even if they like your work. Ask when would be a good time to approach them again, or see if they would like you to set a copy aside and get back to them when their next spending budget is available.

"There are times during the year where I simply have spent my budget and can’t buy anything. Or where I am so busy with other projects that I have to put acquisitions on hold for a while. Generally the best time for me is late summer/early fall, since our fiscal year starts in July." Anne Dorothee Boehme, Joan Flasch Artist's Book Collection, School of The Art Institute, Chicago

Overall, it seems that the most polite method of contact would be an initial letter, or email which are both less obtrusive, followed by a call if there has been no response after a few weeks. The more you can find out about a collection before you contact them the better. Make sure that approaches are to the right collection, department and person before you begin; otherwise it is a waste of both your and their time and resources. Many collections have a good Internet presence, with information on their specialisms and contact addresses. It pays to do the background research before you approach an institutional collector; they will be more interested if you know how your books fit into the type of work they collect.
Some reasons for not purchasing, which we publish here with anonymity:

“Unique works that are very expensive, especially when made with materials with obvious preservation concerns.”

“Shoddy construction and materials that will obviously cause problems.”

“Items that need specific housing conditions that are too fragile for our open access policies.”

“Items that make use of toxic materials, that are in the process of decaying, or are extremely oversized might not be considered either.”

“If we already have a sufficient number of items of the same (or similar) concept or technique I might not buy the work, even if in itself it is a very successful example of book art.”

“Our annual budget has been allocated to its limit for the year.”

Private Collectors

Approaching a private collector is obviously a more sensitive issue than approaching a collecting institution. All of the private collector respondents said that the last thing they would want is someone turning up unannounced on their doorstep. Private collectors however, are often very happy to meet the artists at book fairs and events because they like to know about the work and the maker. One thing that private collectors also seem to want, is documentation of the books and further contact with the artist so they can see any career developments. Some examples:

Wilf Welburn, a private collector in Australia has no specific theme to his collection, he enjoys artists’ books and will buy them because he likes them. He appreciates information on the books and the artists by “any way that is not intrusive - mail or email. I would like to be kept informed of new or future work that is being produced without feeling I’m being pressured to buy. The fact is, that living where I do, I’m not likely to be approached in any other way. I find the Artist’s Book Yearbook a useful resource. Apart from that I find out about books from other books, from catalogues, magazines and the Internet. Ideally I would like to browse through artists’ books in the same way that I can browse through mass-produced books in a bookshop.”

Jack M. Ginsberg, is a private collector in South Africa. His collection was exhibited at the Johannesburg Art Gallery from August to October, 1996: Artists’ Books in the Ginsberg Collection, with some South African Books from Other Collections, co-curated by Ginsberg and David M. Paton. He adds: “It is nice to get documentation from an artist after one has purchased their work, e.g. exhibition catalogues of shows they have participated in.”

Case Study III, Private Collector (UK):
Neil Crawford is a private collector of artists’ books, whose main sources of purchasing are artist’s book fairs, bookartbookshop, London and Eagle Gallery, London. He regularly attends artist’s book fairs and exhibitions to purchase work for his collection, which includes: “minimalism, typography, land/environment response and wit/knowing humour.” [See Crawford’s essay on collecting in the 7th Halifax Contemporary Artist’s Book Fair catalogue]. He enjoys meeting the artist wherever possible, and is happy for artists to approach him and talk to him about their work at book fairs and events when he is free. “I buy largely on aesthetic/gut reaction. Therefore, I am delighted to learn anything more about the work itself and of the artist’s aims/intentions. Given that I haunt degree shows and bookart fairs, I’d really appreciate that my interest in a particular artist’s bookwork generated a positive response from the artist when the shows are over. In the past, contact has been made and interest has been expressed only to peter out on the artist’s part after a few emails.”

Supplying information to collectors and purchasers

As part of the initial survey, we asked both private and institutional collectors:

(Question 7) Do you have any issues arising from cataloguing or archiving artists’ books you have purchased? If so, is there any information from the artist that would make your job easier? - for example, if the artist provided an information sheet for you.

The majority of buyers, both institutional and private, would like to receive documentation on the artist’s book they purchase; preferably an information sheet with details of the book’s edition and the artist’s contact details. This is useful for collections to keep a record of the artist as well as helping them archive the work. Making an information sheet also means that curators have your details on file, which can be an opportunity for you; if they plan future exhibitions of work from their collections, they can contact you with the venue, dates, catalogue etc. Ian Tyson made a useful application form for the British Artists’ Books 1983-1993 exhibition, which was reproduced in Stefan Szczelkun’s UK Artists’ Books Marketing and Promotion (1993, p22, appx VIII).

See Figure 1, for a copy of the guide form I use for my own artists’ books information, and that we also ask artists to use when they submit information for our publications. This can be used or adapted as a template for information on editions, to be supplied with a book on purchase.
Figure 1

INFORMATION SHEET

TITLE OF BOOK

ARTIST

AUTHOR (if applicable)

ISBN (if applicable)

PUBLISHER OR IMPRINT NAME

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE BOOK:

DATE AND PLACE OF PUBLICATION

SIZE OF BOOK

NO. OF PAGES

EDITION SIZE

PRODUCTION MEDIA

RETAIL PRICE

YOUR CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS

TEL

FAX

WEBSITE

EMAIL
Many of the collectors we surveyed, commented on the importance of information sheets; some institutions supply their own forms for artists to fill in when selling work to them, e.g. Joan Flasch Collection, School of the Art Institute, Chicago and Long Island University collections, USA. Since the first edition of this guide in 2005, The ARLIS/UK & Ireland Cataloguing and Classification Committee, has published Artists' books: A Cataloguers' Manual (compiled by Maria White, Patrick Perratt and Liz Llewellyn, 2006, ISBN 0-9552445-0-1) which has been very useful for library cataloguers working with artists' books. To help cataloguers, artists should supply information on their books when they are purchased.

Here are some of the responses to the issues of cataloguing and archiving (Question 7):

“As the books go into a library collection, the following information is considered essential for our records (in order of importance): name of artist; title of book; date of publication; place of publication; publisher. If these details don’t appear on the book itself it would be very useful to have them on a separate sheet. Information sheets are generally very desirable; it is good to know about the artist’s intentions, the processes and techniques used, and anything else which may illuminate the work.” Meg Duff, curator, Library and Archive, Tate Britain, London, UK

“Information sheets are always useful.” Catherine Polley, curator, Winchester School of Art Library, UK

“Ideally I’d like an artist’s statement covering each purchase I make. When buying directly from the artist, this can sometimes be made. When buying from dealers/galleries this is not always so easy.” Neil Crawford, private collector, UK

“An information sheet would be so helpful. Preferably one that, hits all the major components of a bibliographic record: author(s)/artist(s); official title; place of publication; publisher; date of publication; materials; subject. This would also be very helpful in that it can take a long time for the materials to be catalogued as they often require original cataloguing. In the meantime, they are represented in the library’s online catalog with a “preliminary record” which our support staff puts together from what they can glean from the book. An information sheet would allow us to create an improved preliminary record and thus improve access to the materials while they are waiting for full cataloging.” Jae Jennifer Rossman, Special Collections Librarian & Curator, Arts of the Book Collection, Arts Library, Yale University, USA

“I would be interested in an information sheet if one were available.” Michael Brooks, private collector, USA

“Slides and a brief description of the work is necessary.” Doug Beube, private collector and artist, USA

“I also like to know about the methods of production used. Of course you can see most of it just by looking at the book. But any additional description about the processes used would be welcome.” Wilf Welburn, private collector, Australia

“I like to have as much detail on the artist and the work as possible. I find difficulty with untitled works (but this happens only seldom). I like to have confirmation of the graphic medium used as this is sometimes difficult to determine. I hate it when an artist does not sign their work!”

Jack M. Ginsberg, private collector, South Africa

Interview with Institutional Collectors - Cathy Chambers and Heather Cleary, Otis College:

On the way to the CODEX Foundation Symposium in Berkeley, USA; Tom Sowden and Sarah Bodman visited The Millard Sheets Library at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, to interview Cathy Chambers, (Catalogue Librarian) and Heather Cleary (Visual Resources Librarian) for this updated edition of Creative Production and Marketing.

The Millard Sheets Library has a collection of 40,000 books, which focus on the areas of art and design, with an emphasis on a diversity of cultural practices, art history, contemporary art and artists.

Among the holdings is a special collection of approximately 3,000 artists’ books, which includes works by artists such as Ed Ruscha, Joseph Beuys, and Vito Acconci.

With assistance from the Getty Electronic Cataloging Initiative and the Getty Grant Program, the Otis Library has catalogued and photographed some representative portions of works in its collection for a visual database of artists’ books.

http://content.otis.edu/collections/artistsbooks.htm

Interview - Thursday 8th February 2007.

SB: These are the same questions that we put up on the website for a year for people to respond to, and the questions and problems that they had are the ones that we tried to answer in the book, and pass the information on...

We tried to gauge how many people had replied in a similar way, to see if we could say - that’s a right or wrong way - this is what artists should or shouldn’t be doing to get the best results. So, shall we begin with Question 1: How would you prefer to be approached by an artist wanting to sell their work to you?

CC - I think it’s easiest to have appointments made, because I am also the cataloguer here, so only a small amount of my time can be spent meeting with artists. Email is great.
SB - We thought we might be able to establish some rules about approaching people; one rule we have found is that nobody should ever turn up without an appointment…

TS - What about someone from abroad, or who lives miles away, who couldn’t make an appointment to come and see you, could they contact you and then arrange to send materials to you?

CC - What people seem to be doing now is creating websites, and directing me to look at material on the website. I would rather that than being sent things that I then have the responsibility to send back.

SB - In your opinion, what would be the worst way for an artist to approach you?

CC - Sometimes being hounded by phone is really annoying, and I don’t have a great deal of time so am annoyed the most by people who constantly call and chase things up.

SB - Roughly how many people would you say approach you in a month?

CC - In a month, very informally, via email, about a dozen or so.

SB - Collection policies - do you have a particular collection policy, for example large editions only, or books that cost under a certain amount?

CC - Our general rule of thumb is pieces that are under 300 USD. But we would look at things that were over if they really fit. I informally try to focus on Californian artists, because that’s where our roots have been. But then we also collect alphabet books, because we thought it would be fun, so I look for those. And I really like sculptural things too, which seems to be what our students are interested in looking at. We’ve just started getting more classes up here to look at the books. There is a real interest in typography, as well as binding and sculpture. I think that the things that are really imaginative and innovative appeal to the students, many of whom don’t have a very in-depth understanding of artists’ books.

SB - The collection is a teaching collection, and has to respond to the classes that are going on?

CC - Yes.

SB - Do you feel it’s necessary to meet the artist where possible? And if yes, why?

CC - I haven’t given it much thought. Many of our purchases are through vendors. Vamp and Tramp, or Printed Matter for example, so we get information about the artist through the vendors, and that is useful, but meeting them is not necessary - although it is fun.

HC - As part of our grant for digitising artists’ books; we originally envisioned that we would do research biographies for each of the artists, and put those online. But we ran out of time.

CC - We were pretty ambitious with what we planned to do.

SB - Do you visit book fairs with the intention of purchasing from specialist artists?

CC - I haven’t so far, but I’ve only been buying books for a year.

SB - Would you do that if you had the opportunity?

CC - Right now I’m still in the process of trying to set purchasing policies with our business office, because it’s very hard in an institution to deal with individual artists or sellers, and at the end of last year we ran into some real roadblocks.

HC - They also discourage us from buying and then asking for money.

CC - So I’m trying to smooth the process between our purchasing department, us and the business department. In the future I would like to visit book fairs, but I want to make sure everything is in place, finance wise, before I do.

SB - We asked the question about the book fairs, because part of the survey is to find out what book fairs actually do. We all love going to them because we have a great time meeting people who are doing the same thing, catching up and swapping things. We know about most of the buyers in the UK, but weren’t sure if it works the same way here - if people do turn up at book fairs from institutions to buy things. There seem to be a lot more opportunities over here through professional dealers who will do that job, whereas we don’t really have that so much in Europe, I can only think of Johan Deumens who operates on the same level as the USA dealers.

CC - Particularly for fairs that are local and not difficult to get to, the advantage for me would be that I am able to see the material. Vamp and Tramp is good, but the more I see something, the more likely I am to buy it.

SB - It’s good to see things before you commit to buying. Some people wait for years to buy a book they have been holding out for. In the UK, the most anyone has to travel is a couple of hundred miles, I guess it is a bit further here!

TS - Some fairs you can sell well at, and others you don’t. But you go for the atmosphere, and meeting everyone again.

SB - OK, next question, who or where is the main source of purchasing artists’ books for your collection? You mentioned Vamp and Tramp, are there others?
CC - I look at catalogues online. Most of the books have been seen online.

SB - Do you have any issues with cataloguing or archiving artists’ books you have purchased? If so, is there information you could receive from the artist that would make things easier? For example if they provided an information sheet for you? These are the things that artists don’t always consider. How it was made, who bound it, how many there are in existence, have they signed it...

CC - Yes, the more information about the book the better: type, information, paper, any details. The library community/databases are about making more information available.

HC - We put up images, parts of the catalogue record, and assign terms for bindings and genres, so information from the artist is really useful.

CC - One of the reasons we wanted to create the digital database is so that the bookmaking community can access this information and these images, so artists are not necessarily working on their own, but in an easily accessible community of bookmakers. For example people who want to see books that are printed in Helvetica.

SB - It sounds a great resource for the artist and the educator.

HC - We actually share our database with a few other institutions in the USA, 3 or 5, through the database software we use - MDID - Madison Digital Imaging Database; it has the ability to use remote collections, other people can dial in and use the images for teaching and educational purposes only, not for publication. Archiving - digital images because our stacks are closed, people can’t browse, so if people can look online and see if the image is what they want, it saves on wear and tear.

SB - Is there any aspect of your interaction with artists proposing to sell their work to you that you feel could be improved upon for your or their benefit?

CC - I haven’t had much personal interaction with artists yet, so most individual purchases have been done over the Internet. So can’t really comment.

SB - Are there any other issues regarding artists or collectors that you would like us to address?

CC - I don’t think so.

HC - An information sheet.

SB - Do you have an information sheet in place, one that you make artists fill out when they supply books to you?

HC - No, we don’t for the LAB press either [Otis Laboratory Press, established in 1984 by Sheila de Brettville as part of the Communication Arts Department, has a rich history of small edition book publishing and continues to introduce generations of Otis students to the origins of typography and the notion of the book as a visual communication medium].

SB - We made a sample sheet for artists in the first issue of the marketing guide, to give them an idea of the information required for cataloguing. You could email it to the artist to fill out and send back to you with the book. Then you could also add permission for digitising images...

HC - Our database falls under fair use.

SB - You could include that as a bonus “your images will be digitised for educational purposes.”

HC - We have had people give us books so that they can be included in the database.

CC - Artists could use the database to help sell their work.

HC - We state we will take down images if anyone requests. It is a purely educational teaching resource -

TS - It is a great resource to browse through. I could read the list online - and if I wanted to see an image of the book, I could, it’s a visual medium. There are some good Internet resources in the UK, Tate and the British Library, which utilises page-turning technology.

HC - We might actually do flash objects or movies. That’s another ambitious thing we are thinking for the future, especially for flipbooks, or we might have a video of someone opening the more intricate books.

End of interview.

Many thanks to Cathy Chambers and Heather Cleary for meeting with us and to Linda Dare of Laboratory Press for showing us the studios and some examples of student works made at Otis.

When is an artist's book not an artist's book?

Since 2005, we have received emails and letters from artists and librarians describing some of their experiences, which we have added to this new issue. One issue however has proved to be a bit of a conundrum: the book artist Gray Fraser, has run into problems with the LAC’s new categorisation of his artists’ books. We felt that this was something that needed discussion, as it could cause potential problems for book artists. Fraser has written up his experiences for us and for Judith Hoffberg’s Umbrella Online, to publicise this issue, here is his account of what happened when he tried to sell some of his books to the LAC:
The National Library and Archives of Canada’s exclusionary policies in regards to their definition of artists’ books

Gray Fraser, Productiongray editions, Canada

The Library and Archives Canada is using an outdated and restrictive definition of an artist’s book to justify its policy of accepting non-traditional bookworks into its collection without providing payment to the artist.

I have been producing artists’ books since 1989 under the name Productiongray editions. My work is represented in international collections in Canada, the United States, Asia and Europe. I just submitted 12 artists’ books to the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) to be considered for acquisition. Included in this submission was a trilogy that questions the foreign policies of the Bush administration (“My Car Doesn’t Need A Gas Tank”, 2006; “The Anthrax Kit by Haliburton”, 2006; and “The Mission”, 2001). Each was produced in a limited edition of 101 signed and numbered copies.

“The Mission” and/or “My Car Doesn’t Need A Gas Tank” have been acquired as artists’ books by: The National Gallery of Canada, The National Library of Quebec, Otis College of Art and Design (Los Angeles), Tate Britain (London, UK), University of the West of England (Bristol, UK), Artexte (Montreal), to name a few. They are defined as artists’ books according to the criteria exercised by the acquisitions departments of these collections. Both of these titles are also for sale at the following artists’ books stores, Printed Matter (New York City), Bookartbookshop (London) and Boekie Woekie (Amsterdam).

Legally, all books published in Canada must be deposited into Legal Deposit and the LAC collection, but special editions and artists’ books are presented to a selection committee to be acquired. If the LAC jury does not consider a submitted work to meet its traditional definition of an artist’s book, the Library will not acquire the work for the collection and will legally take the two submitted copies - one for Legal Deposit and one for its collection - without any payment to the artist.

Unfortunately, the selection committee of Library and Archives Canada does not consider two of the books in this trilogy, “My Car Doesn’t Need A Gas Tank” and “The Mission”, to be artists’ books. As a result, they refused to pay any artist’s fee for the publications.

I requested the adjudication notes from the committee and the only response I received was that the two publications in question utilise la reproduction photo-mécanique, and therefore are not classified as artists’ books so LAC will not pay for them. The definition provided by LAC of photo-mécanique is as follows; Process prints are the opposite of manual prints. By definition this means they are not original prints. In process printing, the printing plate is not made by hand but mechanically (by process). Nearly all process prints you will come across involve the use of photography. These are called photomechanical prints. Photomechanical printing, which comes in a wide variety of forms, was designed for commercial mass production. The photomechanical processes reproduce images, for example, reproducing a painting for an art book, a photograph for a magazine or a cartoon for a newspaper.

This definition is very similar to that of off-set printing. However, “My Car Doesn’t Need A Gas Tank” and “The Mission” are not reproduced via off-set printing (they are laser printed). Therefore I think the issue being raised under the guise of printing technique is not that of reproduction method, but rather the binding of these two bookworks since all the other artists’ books I submitted were bought and considered artists’ books for the collection and they were printed using the same laser printer. These two books are both saddle stitched (stapled) on one end, and then covered with a plastic binder that was purchased at an office supply store. Does one have to learn traditional printing and binding techniques and incorporate that craft into the work of art to make an artist’s book?

LAC also informed me that their acquisitions policy restricts full payment to editions of 100 copies or more; for larger editions, they pay half the price for the legal deposit copy, and only half the price for the copy retained for the collection (if the edition is fewer than 100 copies they pay half price for the legal deposit copy and full price for the copy in the collection). This effectively places a lower value on any art works that do not fit into the craft definition of livres d’artiste, which are traditionally produced in small editions of less than 25 copies. I could accept LAC’s policy if the editions in question were not signed and numbered; however, they are signed and numbered, and I do not believe art works should be devalued simply because more than 100 artists’ books were produced in the limited edition. Indeed, my perspective on this subject is supported by Printed Matter in New York City, which distributes my artists’ books.
Printed Matter is a well-established artists' bookstore that has been in existence since the mid-1970s, and their policy concerning artists' books is that they will not take any editions of under 100 copies for distribution.

I know that the definition of an artist's book is a very political and much-debated subject amongst bibliophiles and members of the contemporary art community. The majority of international institutions that collect artists' books have expanded their classification of an artist's book to include artists' zines and small press. These "alternative" publications are produced by artists, sometimes even in signed and numbered editions, and are artists' books; however, this evolving definition is not within the scope of the artist's book as described on the LAC website:

**Artist's book:** A book which itself becomes an object of art. Content, image, and form are considered essential to the object, but text and traditional book structure might not be used. An edition of one is common.

**Livre d'artiste:** Traditionally, a book illustrated with original prints, printed by hand in a small edition on fine paper. In livres d'artiste, the emphasis is placed on the illustration whereas in private press books the quality of the printing is more important than, or as important as, the illustration.

I would argue that a more contemporary and relevant definition of the artist's book is found on the website for Printed Matter and other international collections and libraries, as follows:

> The Library defines an artist's book as a mass-produced book of which the artist has assumed the role of author to document or realize ideas as art.

The growing multi-disciplinarity of artists over the last three decades has led to the development of new approaches. Thus, artists' books contribute to the decompartmentalization of the various forms of artistic expression and borrow from new visual arts practices such as art videos, computer art, mail art and copygraphy, as well as from many individual or "underground" practices. National Library of Quebec.

LAC's policies make me wonder how many other Canadian artists' bookworks the Library and Archives Canada has either rejected, or accepted without payment to the artist because they did not fit into the "traditional" definition of a livre d'artiste. The Library is a national institution that must redefine its policy if it is to reflect a balanced representation of Canadian artists' publications in its collection.

I have resubmitted the two books in question to the selection committee, with the request that the jury provide a detailed explanation of why my works are not artists' books or instead to expand their exclusionary definition of an artist's book to an open inclusive policy that can incorporate non-traditional artists' publications as artists' books in the collection.

The meeting is this September. If you have any comments concerning LAC's acquisitions policy they can be addressed to:
they deal with, so tying yourself to one dealer may mean tying yourself to other dealers, or not to approach the collections at all. Do your homework first; unsolicited books will probably not find their way back to you. Be professional; have information, contact details, display copies and price lists to hand, and make sure you know the type of works they deal with (see the websites list). Contact them and make an appointment to visit or submit work, don’t just turn up and expect them to have time to look at your work and don’t send items in the post unless they have agreed to this; unsolicited books will probably not find their way back to you. Be professional; have information, contact details, display copies and price lists to hand, and make sure you know the amount of books you have available for stock if they want them.

An approach as part of a group through a nominated salesperson or two can be advantageous; between you, you can offer a wider range of works for the bookshop or dealer to select from. Larger bookstores will usually order from large and established book suppliers who will expect a substantial discount on the retail price. They may also only deal with books that have an ISBN (see the section on applying an ISBN to your book for more information on this).

Concentrating on small, specialist suppliers and dealers can be much more rewarding, you will usually only be dealing with one person rather than a large organisation, and small and independent bookshops and dealers have a greater personal interest in the types of books they sell. Always bear in mind that bookshops (like any other business) will expect to be supplied on a set period, sale-or-return basis only, will take around 30-50% of the retail price, can sometimes take months to pay for sales, and will expect a display copy for handling. This is not going to be viable if you only have a small edition of books for sale.

Dealers also usually require some images and information before they consider viewing the work, and may have preferences for more expensive works (if they have to make their living selling artists’ books, they will need to sell works that bring a decent profit). They may also have clauses where they ask you not to sell through other dealers, or not to approach the collections they deal with, so tying yourself to one dealer may not always be beneficial if you also want to market the work yourself. Most artist’s book dealers are in business because they love the books they are selling and have built up good relationships with artists and collectors over a period of time, but ask other artists for any recommendations and don’t leave your books with someone if you are not sure how they operate and how to reach them for any returns or payment.

See the list of places to see, buy and sell artists’ books on Page 33 for some contacts.

Approaching bookshops and dealers

The strategies for this are similar to those for approaching collections. Do your homework first to see if your work will be within their range of subject matter and price range. Many dealers have websites with images and information of the type of works they deal with (see the websites list). Contact them and make an appointment to visit or submit work, don’t just turn up and expect them to have time to look at your work and don’t send items in the post unless they have agreed to this; unsolicited books will probably not find their way back to you. Be professional; have information, contact details, display copies and price lists to hand, and make sure you know the amount of books you have available for stock if they want them.

An approach as part of a group through a nominated salesperson or two can be advantageous; between you, you can offer a wider range of works for the bookshop or dealer to select from. Larger bookstores will usually order from large and established book suppliers who will expect a substantial discount on the retail price. They may also only deal with books that have an ISBN (see the section on applying an ISBN to your book for more information on this).

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See the list of places to see, buy and sell artists’ books on Page 33 for some contacts.

Case Study IV Dealer: Nancy Campbell

Bertram Rota Ltd, London

1. How would you prefer to be approached by an artist wishing to sell their work through you?

Telephone, email or mail as an initial step are all welcome, though these are usually a precursor to a meeting and face-to-face discussion giving the artist to talk about their work and objectives.

2. In your opinion, what would be the worst way of approaching you?

I would always encourage people to visit but as an initial approach it is not a good idea to turn up without an advance appointment as occasionally I am seeing clients or away on business.

3. Do you have any particular policies or specialities? i.e. larger editions only, books which cost under a certain amount etc.

We deal most successfully in editioned work, multiples between 2 and 100, although we also hold larger and unlimited editions and unique works. At present we have books in stock valued at between £5 and £5,000. The company has strong links with the world of Fine Press book collectors and fans of concrete poetry, so text-related works are particularly welcome. However we aim to have a representative selection of work being currently produced.

3a. How can artists find out about your policies?

I always welcome phone calls from artists asking for information or an informal discussion of our policies. Descriptions of the books we have in stock can also be viewed on our website, along with a description of Bertram Rota Ltd’s background.

4. Do you feel it is necessary for purchasers to meet the artist where possible? If yes, why?

I know several individual collectors who gain great satisfaction from interacting with an artist directly, and often this is one of the impulses behind their enjoyment of the product. Institutional libraries are very often interested but may not have the time to process numerous applications, and therefore become interested in
meeting the artist in an official capacity when a certain level of notoriety has been achieved.

Dealers can be a good advocate for the artist’s intentions in such a situation, especially through catalogues or visiting an institution they know well with several tailor-made recommendations. Because the book arts field is still a relatively small community, I think there is a lot of helpful interaction between artists, collectors, dealers, critics, etc., and I hope this will continue, rather than selling becoming the preserve of the dealer only, or even creativity the exclusive domain of the artist!

5. Where(or who) is your main source of stock for artists’ books for your outlet?

People come to us from various sources, including recommendations through international contacts (including the Center for Book Arts New York with which we have a strong relationship). Many artists approach us having been told about us by friends. Recently two brilliant North American book artists, Roni Gross and Lynne Avadenka, have contacted us in this way. I also actively source books directly from the artist, and for this I find the internet and the announcements in the UWE Book Arts Newsletter very useful. I enjoy book fairs, although I find this is more often an opportunity to see artists whose work I am already familiar with, rather than a source of new stock.

6. Do you have any issues arising from stocking or cataloguing artists’ books you sell? If so, is there any information from the artist that would make your job easier? (for example, if the artist provided an information sheet for you).

It is helpful to know paper names, which are often omitted from descriptions, and archival qualities of paper and ink. The former is not essential, though useful for cataloguing, but the latter is very important, especially for institutional collectors. Unless a colophon is provided within the book listing construction details, an information sheet is helpful. As we do a lot of international trade not many customers handle our books, so the copies left in our shop remain in new condition. However some artists have offered display copies of fragile or other works which has been useful. It’s not an issue I have a fixed opinion on, but it is a question worth considering if offering books to a dealer.

Nancy Campbell
Bertram Rota Ltd, Covent Garden, London
www.bertramrota.co.uk
bertramrota@compuserve.com

Case Study V: Tanya Peixoto, bookartbookshop specialist artists’ books store

Tanya Peixoto (former publishing editor of the Artist’s Book Yearbook and Magpie Press) established bookartbookshop in 2001. It carries a comprehensive range of artists’ publications and has regular exhibitions, launches and events promoting artists’ books.

bookartbookshop has a policy of stocking artists’ publications from editions of 100+, exceptions are made to offer a good cross-section of current production in the field.

Approaching bookartbookshop: artists and publishers are provided with a printed sheet detailing policies, on request, and can contact bookartbookshop to make an appointment to visit the bookshop with their work.

Artists and publishers are advised not to send unsolicited books to the store as “the post is unreliable and books go in a pile waiting to be looked at and/or sent back which is expensive.”

Tanya Peixoto prefers to meet the artist as it helps when selling their books to customers. Some examples of sources for stock are: Atlas Press, Andrew Lanyon, Les Coleman, Weproductions, Morning Star, Mermaid Turbulence and Nazraeli Press.

“I want publishers who have a body of work and titles to sell, I don’t want to take an individual title from an artist who only makes one book – as it is too much administration work for one book. I would like new and up-to-the-minute books brought to bookartbookshop; exciting new work by artists who are committed to producing many books.”

Tanya Peixoto
bookartbookshop, Pitfield Street, London
www.bookartbookshop.com
Interview: Max Schumann, Associate Director
Printed Matter, New York

On the way to the CODEX Foundation Symposium in Berkeley, USA; Tom Sowden and Sarah Bodman visited Printed Matter, New York, to interview Max Schumann, Associate Director, for this updated edition of *Creative Production and Marketing*.

Printed Matter, Inc. is the world's largest non-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of publications made by artists. Founded as a for-profit alternative arts space in 1976 by artists and artworkers, Printed Matter reincorporated in 1978 to become an independent non-profit organisation. Recognised for years as an essential voice in the increasingly diversified art world conversations and debates, Printed Matter is dedicated to the examination and interrogation of the changing role of artists’ publications in the landscape of contemporary art.


SB - for bookshops, the first, basic question we would ask is; if an artist wanted to sell their books through Printed Matter, how would you want to be approached by them?

MS - Really simple - the way we like artists to approach us is by reading the submission guidelines carefully, and following the instructions before approaching us, because unfortunately, though it would be great to meet with artists one-on-one, we do not have the time (with 100 submissions a month, and a review panel of 4 people). That’s why we have the submissions structure in place. Our focus is on artists’ books and related experimental publications by artists that are done in larger editions, as opposed to one-of-a-kind, or very limited edition artists’ books. A fair number of submissions disqualify themselves by not being artists’ books or related publications by artists. Probably 80% of our submissions are books, the rest are a combination of audio, video, computer publications, as well as some multiples, prints and posters (which actually are not part of our general submission policy).

Our open submission policy, through which anyone is able to submit material, is really for the books, audio, video and computer publications only. The other sorts of publications that only make up a small part of our inventory are usually brought in on a selective basis, and usually in conjunction either with book projects we are carrying, or other parts of our programming - for example, exhibitions or other artists’ projects.

Common types of submissions which are disqualified are monographs, literature and poetry, commercial art magazines, literary journals, traditional exhibition catalogues… we do try to be flexible with our idea of what constitutes an artist’s book is, i.e. we might consider some exhibition catalogues that are project oriented, where the catalogue could really be considered to comprise, or be an element, or an extension of the artist’s work. Normally we wouldn’t consider critical anthologies, but if the writings are by artists - those publications could be considered as artists’ books.

SB - That is a huge amount of submissions you get, you have to have your submissions policy in place like this, or you would never get anything else done.

MS -Yes, and we ask that artists just submit the books - we do not require support materials, like résumés or explanations, but people are welcome to include them if they want to, for example for books in a foreign language, or work that is based on a project or a process that is really integral to the idea or concept of the book.

TS - do you get people to fill out a submission form?

MS - We have a submission form online [see: http://printedmatter.org/about/submissions.cfm] and here at the store, but it’s the information that’s needed - not the form. Basically we need contact information, the edition size and the suggested retail price.

SB - It’s editions over 100 isn’t it?

MS - Yes, the requirement of editions done in 100 is because our focus is on publications done in larger editions. There obviously are a lot of exemplary artists’ publications that are done in very limited editions, but those really fall outside of Printed Matter’s mission. Though we do carry a range of things going up to thousands of dollars in price - the bulk of our inventory is inexpensively priced, and meant to be broadly distributed. However, for artists who are self-publishing, doing everything out of their own pocket, the option of producing 100 books can be economically prohibitive. So we also will consider publications that are done in open editions, where if you can’t afford to make the full 100 all at once, don’t let that stop you from submitting your work for consideration - just designate open edition and be ready to keep producing more.

SB - What would be the absolutely worst way to approach you?
MS - Coming in to the store and demanding to see the manager with a box full of your books. We have a review panel of four people, because we want to bring different sensibilities to our selection process. We want to be inclusive and represent as broad a range of publications as possible, but we simply can't take everything. So the different perspectives that the panel brings is a valuable component of keeping our inventory diverse.

Also, if works are submitted they have to come with the return postage ready, unaccepted books that come without this, and they do, are donated to a local educational institution (School of Visual Arts Library).

SB - That's a very nice idea. That's the same answer we've been getting from everyone - not to just turn up. Do you have a price limit on the books you stock?

MS - The pricing of things does affect our decision making, for example if something is a really good project, but is the same in terms of format and materials and labour as another book that is equally good but five times cheaper, it's hard to justify taking that in. But if it's much better, or strikes us more, we might take a limited quantity. As we are a non-profit organisation, we base our strikes us more, we might take a limited quantity. But if it's much better, or equally good but five times cheaper, it's hard to justify taking that in. But if it's much better, or strikes us more, we might take a limited quantity. As we are a non-profit organisation, we base our decisions not on projections of whether something will sell, but on whether it's well executed and interesting and experimental and adds something to the inventory.

SB - Also, you don’t want something in that will disrupt the natural order of prices of other things?

MS - Yes, but there also is a fair amount of variation. Still we try to have good and consistent business practices. You have to remember that we are much more than a book store: we have a full range of programmes, exhibitions, launches, events, etc. (and we’ve restarted a publishing programme). The running and maintenance of the store, the mail order business, the stock (over 10,000 titles from over 5000 suppliers - many who are individual artists) and these additional takes a lot of resources. There are books in our store that sell only once every year or every two years, but we feel they are really interesting books. We carry books from freebies, or that cost 50 cents, up to out of print editions for thousands of dollars, but the majority of our stock is within a $15 - $65 range.

SB - Do you feel it's necessary to meet the artist or not, when dealing with their books?

MS- We don’t have the time to do studio visits. We end up having relationships with artists who are suppliers, long-term. They emerge after working with people for a while.

SB - You have books from Europe and Japan etc. What percentage of your stock would you say was from outside of the USA?

MS - About 65% from the USA, 35% from outside. It seems like there are more artist's book publishing outfits in Europe than in the US.

TS - You had your first Printed Matter fair last year, and invited some UK publishers to participate; Mark Pawson, Weproductions, they really enjoyed it, how did it all go?

MS - Yes, the first annual New York Art Book Fair, and we were really happy with how it turned out. There is an amazing diversity and range of types of publications, from independent small presses and super DIY, cut & staple photocopy, to major commercial publishers and distributors, as well as a range of antiquarian dealers who carried amazing out of print and rare artists publications.

SB - Are you going to continue with this every year?

MS - This was the first year; and we have just scheduled the second New York Art Book Fair, which will be held September 28th - 30th, 2007, at the same space (848 West 22nd Street), two floors and over 20,000 square feet of artists’ publications. The opening night preview (Thursday September 27) will also be a benefit for Printed Matter. The fair proper is free and open to the public.

SB - We have our first in April, and if it goes well, I think it will be every two years, there are so many now we cannot keep up with them all!

MS - It is hard economically for small independent organisations to have one every year...

SB - Five years ago it was only the London Artist’s Book Fair at the ICA, now there is the one Tom organises at Manchester, Leeds, Small Publishers Fair in London, and now Bristol all have artist's book fairs.

MS - Wow, so many!

SB - In the rest of Europe too, there are quite a few in France and Germany, and the new event in, Barcelona. It's amazing that there are so many.

TS - Yours is by invitation?

MS - Yes, we are open to be solicited to be invited, but it is invitation only.

SB - What we did for this guide, as well as advising people where to sell books, we looked at how to develop relationships with the people who buy books. We have interviewed lots of people who collect books institutionally and privately, to find out what really are the best ways for artists to go about selling their books. We have had some really nice messages from librarians saying they’re going to advise artists to read the guide. How do you work with collectors, do you have a good relationship with buyers?
MS - we work closely with many libraries, and offer a free consulting service in helping them begin or develop their collections. For example the New York Public Library and the MOMA library review most of the new books that we receive, to consider for their massive collections. But we also work with a range of other institutions and collections, making recommendations based on their existing collections, interests, budgets, etc.

SB - That's an amazing resource for MOMA to have at their disposal. Are there any issues you have for stocking and categorising artists' books?

MS - Our system has developed over thirty years, so it runs well. Our new cataloguing system is 7 years old, we send out bibliographic forms to artists, they are welcome to submit written descriptions of their books, or we can write them ourselves. Stocking, storing and displaying is always an issue. So super delicate or over-sized projects may not be able to be displayed.

TS - Is there any aspect of your interaction with artists selling their work through you that you feel could work better for you - anything they could do to make your life easier?

MS - Printed Matter is back to being artist run, so we have no professional/career administrators. With people new to artists’ books, sometimes there is an expectation that they’re going to make money at it (which can happen, and its great when it does); but most of the time when they factor in all their time and materials and mark it up for profit, the book ends up being so expensive that it simply won’t sell no matter how nice/interesting the project is - then they get discouraged and give it up. I truly sympathise with the problem of how an artist is able to financially realise a book project. However, Printed Matter’s mission and function is to service the books that have already been published, so we are not a good resource for guiding or informing people on how to go about publishing them.

SB - If you - as an artist - are really passionate about getting it done, you will be the one who gets your book published.

TS - This is what we hope we’re doing with the guide, helping people who have not produced books, or have made it and just don’t know what to do with it next, to lead them in the right direction.

MS - We should put this on our general sheet - it’s useful information for artist’s book producers.

TS - Thank you Max for your time, can we end the interview with any news or advice, for artists?

MS - We are developing a new and exciting aspect of our website - creating a research room, side by side with the sales site, sales will be limited to things that are in stock and available, whereas the ‘research room’ will list everything we have ever carried, with additional bibliographic information. We also will be commissioning essays about different aspects of artists’ books and online, curated exhibitions. Forthcoming we will have artists’ books from Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe. The research room will also have curated lists, interviews and search themes for books, such as mapping and topography, art and social justice, conceptual comics. This will be launched by June 2007*.

End of Interview.

Many thanks to Max Schumann for spending time with us for this interview.

*The Printed Matter Research Room is now online. Follow the links from the homepage at: http://printedmatter.org for access to Printed Matter’s vast database of artists’ publications. The Research Room also features critical essays on the history of artists’ books, as well as curated lists of books built around themes, both accessible by links on the page

Printed Matter Inc.
195 10th Avenue
New York, NY 10011, USA
http://printedmatter.org

Case Study VI Artist Publisher:
Preacher's Biscuit Books, Rochester NY, USA
www.preachersbiscuitbooks.com

Preacher's Biscuit Books was formed in Rochester, New York, USA, in 2004 by Kris Merola and Tate Shaw. The publishers collaborate with visual, sound, and language artists to make publications reliant on the material book as a metaphor to create meaning in their work.

A “preacher’s biscuit” is a lumpy, irregular shaped biscuit made by collecting together the dough leftover from cutting out typical, round-shaped biscuits. Merola and Shaw see the artists’ books they publish in very much same way—as made up of the pieces from many other kinds of books and sequential forms, such as literary memoir, short fiction, music, and film. Preacher’s Biscuit Books choose, by and large, to publish those who have not previously made artists’ books in the hope that

The Bid Feeder by Abigail Hendrickson
Published by Preacher’s Biscuit Books, 2006

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the expansive book medium will persist in the work of these and future conceptual artists.

Q: How would you prefer to be approached by an artist wishing to publish their work?

Preacher’s Biscuit Books is a publisher of conceptual artists’ works. We at PBB like to understand artists’ ideas facilitating an appropriate book form, and allowing for a more collaborative process. The submissions page on our website states: any method you use to inform us of your ideas is fine, be it a manuscript or photograph, audio recording, video, etc (www.preachersbiscuitbooks.com/Submit.html).

Q: In your opinion, what would be the worst way of approaching you?

Each book we publish (between 3 and 4 per year) begins as a conversation between artist and publisher. A completed book dummy that is to be simply reproduced would be the worst way to approach us.

Q: Do you publish books on any particular theme or specialist aspect?

We at PBB are interdisciplinary artists and thinkers and do not seek out works of one particular theme. But the ideas that interest us come from contemporary mass media culture. For instance, our titles have included works that comment upon the internet environment, the translation of sound into pictures, found imagery and work from information archives.

Q: How can artists find out about your preferences?

On the PBB website there is a page of links related to each individual project. The links show the complexity of thought connected to each book as well as present our cosmos of interests.

5. Do you feel it is necessary to meet the artist where possible? If yes, why?

Publications by Preacher’s Biscuit Books are the outgrowth of ongoing conversations about ideas and depend on our interpersonal relationships with each artist. It is ultimately our goal to support people that excite us.

6. Do you visit artists at specialist artist’s book fairs?

PBB does not look for our publications to come out of specialist gatherings. Instead, we endeavor to publish those who have not previously made artists’ books. We do this in the hope that interdisciplinary artists will bring non-book ideas to the medium. It is also our goal that artists we publish learn how books may be employed for their future projects.

Q: Is there any aspect of your interaction with artists publishing their work that you would like to improve upon?

Our publications happen one at a time, offering us the opportunity to tailor our interactions to artists’ individual needs. Each project creates its own unique learning process.

8. Do you sell the books you publish yourself through website/mail order, from your premises, or though a dealer, bookshops etc.? Do you find this a rewarding experience?

Each of our titles is launched with a reading event and party, not unlike a gallery reception. We sell our books at reading events, through our website, by mail order, as well as at artist’s book fairs and conferences. While sales allow us to make more books (which is obviously of value to us) it is more rewarding when we receive comments from those who have read our publications. This often happens at a point in time that is far removed from the point of sale.

Preacher’s Biscuit Books
PO BOX 10564
Rochester, New York 14610, USA

www.preachersbiscuitbooks.com
tate@preachersbiscuitbooks.com
kris@preachersbiscuitbooks.com
Is it useful to give your artist's book an ISBN and what happens with Legal Deposit Claims?


ISBN's are useful only for commercial artist's book sales of larger editions. They enable you to be identified as the publisher and distributor for potential orders.

Applying an ISBN to your artist's book is only worth it if you intend to distribute it through commercial bookshops and galleries, and we would advise that it would be in an edition of a minimum of 50 (100+ is more appropriate).

You can purchase ISBNs as a publisher (you will need to give yourself an imprint name) in blocks of 10 or more. Each ISBN is a 13-digit code, which identifies: the publisher, type of book, title and check digit.

In January 2007, the ISBN changed from a 10 to 13-digit formula. If you have old ISBNs you have previously purchased as 10 digits, which you have not yet used, you can convert them free of charge to 13 digits at the following website address: address: www.isbn-international.org/converter

Larger bookstores, insitutions, libraries using agency suppliers and retail outlets can order your books via distributors who contact you with the order.

Bear in mind though when selling your work through large distributors; they always ask for hefty discounts, and can often take up to 8 weeks to pay your invoices. It may not be worth the return you get for your books, sometimes it is simpler to distribute yourself without an ISBN.

A few reasons why ISBNs are not suitable for smaller editions:

The costs - The UK publisher's registration fee plus a block of 10 ISBN's is currently £98.70 (July 2007)

Legal deposit claims - (British Library etc.) you will have to supply on demand, 8 copies of your edition - unpaid to legal deposit libraries in the UK and Ireland.

If you are distributing a small edition yourself or selling mainly at book fairs, you don't need to be identified by a large distribution company.

Some advice from Danny Flynn, (Research Associate, Middlesex University, UK) who uses an ISBN for any of his editions of 100+: “Filling in the required information form to assign an ISBN triggers a request from The British Library for a legal deposit copy, followed by a further 5 copies requested for Oxford, Cambridge, Scotland, Dublin and Wales (in accordance with the provision of section 15 of the copyright act 1911). This is a legal requirement if you are making your book available for sale in this country.

I understand a lot of artists don’t want to give away six copies of their publications and therefore lose out on listings etc, as a result.

Neilsen BookData (part of the ISBN Agency group) supply Waterstone's with book lists and you have to be on this list to supply Waterstone’s. I have always updated my details with them. As a result I’ve continued to sell one particular booklet via mail order from various bookshops directly.

I also send samples of each of my artists’ books to Artbibliographies Modern to list and review. I don’t know if that has sold any though.”

Many artists, especially students, have fallen into the trap of allocating an ISBN to a small edition and losing copies by legal deposit this way. An ISBN is really only useful for large editions which you do not want to sell from your own place or website.

With the Internet access available now, and the fact that librarians and collectors use it to buy artists' books, you would be better off investing money in your own mail order website facility than ISBNs.

For further reading and information on ISBNs and legal deposit requirements see:

The UK and Ireland ISBN Agency
www.nbdrs.com/isbn_agency.htm

The International ISBN Agency
www.isbn-international.org/index.html

USA ISBN Agency
www.isbn.org/standards/home/index.asp

ISBN Agency Australia


ISBN frequently asked questions for new publishers
www.nbdrs.com/isbn_faqnew.htm

Legal Deposit information and guidelines at the British Library
www.bl.uk/about/policies/legaldeposit.html

Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003
Pricing your work

This is the inevitable ‘how long is a piece of string?’ question. There are so many variable factors involved in working out a price for artists’ books. The main cost difference is between those who factor their time into the total cost and those who don’t. Many artists feel that including the cost of preparation time would price the work out of all proportion. Is it more important to make a decent profit or get your work out? Setting your price will depend upon how you feel about this.

Some of the artists we surveyed and interviewed make unique books, and the prices of these obviously differ from larger editions. These are produced as stand-alone pieces, or as part of a larger installation. Pricing of unique books has not arisen as an issue, artists are confident in pricing items they consider as one-offs and therefore comparable to the price of a painting or sculpture.

With distribution of ideas in mind, many artists are keen to keep their editioned book prices around the same as ‘standard’ book prices. For example Weproductions and John Bentley. John McDowall (Bradford, UK) adds: “even though the books are handprinted and bound in small numbers, I maintain ‘book’ prices between - £15 to £80 and do not change the price once it is set.”

John Dilnot (Brighton, UK) has been making editions of artists’ books and prints for over 20 years, which are his main source of income. His editions are usually around 500, and he sells them as cheaply as possible as he wants the public to buy them, as well as collectors. Danny Flynn’s books are made in editions of 100+(with unique works made usually as non-selling pieces to accompany a performance or event). “As I sell the books quite cheaply, they do deplete in stock quickly and I think that the work wouldn’t enjoy so much exposure if I sold an edition of say, only ten or twenty copies. I like the idea of people buying the books for themselves because that’s exactly what I do. I buy books. Of course if the work is bought by a collection giving it the opportunity to be viewed by the public this is very good.”

Many recent graduates and new book artists are unsure of strategies for pricing their work, so here are a few basic things to consider when trying to work out a price:

Overall, the factors to cost in the equation are:

- Materials + cost of time spent physically producing the edition per hour (divided by no. of books in the edition) plus a retail mark up. If you sell through bookshops, dealers and galleries, they will take up to c.40-50% of the retail price.

Try to set a price that stays the same wherever the book is. Many collectors express frustration at the varying prices of the same artist’s book in different places or outlets, particularly in different countries.

Use the Internet to help work it out; many artists have their own websites to sell their books, with prices for ordering by mail. Visit some to compare work, materials and pricing. Visit book fairs and see other artists’ work and prices.

99% of us pay for the costs of producing our own artists’ books, as publishing grants are few and far between. Book Works, the largest publisher of artists’ books in the UK, has a whole Fact-sheets section on its website, with lots of really useful information at www.bookworks.org.uk.

Follow the links from Resources to Fact-sheets for downloadable advice on publishing, funding, marketing and distributing your books. Some organisations run residencies or publication programmes where you can apply to go and make your book in situ, and some arts councils do have small publishing grants, but competition for these is high.

However, this isn’t really the point, it is your artwork; if you want to make it - you will have to find a way to do it! If you can’t afford a large offset edition, make a small, digital print, photocopy or Internet download print to order. The technologies available for home computing/print and online publishing, can make it easy for artists to print their own books. Some Internet sites such as Lulu (www.lulu.com), allow you to upload and publish your work, which can then be ordered through the Internet, there are no upfront costs, they take their commission from your online sales.

To help with the costs of publishing larger editions of work, some artists offer a pre-publication price, which means cash up front to put towards editioning. “I have a pre-publication subscription scheme, where I offer subscribers about 50% discount on the eventual (shop) selling price. Depending on the type of book and its size, this differs from edition to edition.” (John Bentley, artist, UK).

We also do a pre-publication, payment price offer, for orders of our own publications when we publish new issues of the Artist’s Book Yearbook and The Blue Notebook, to help us pay for the printing costs.

Helga Kos, an artist in The Netherlands made a large, hand printed edition (288) of her book Ode to the Colossal Sun. “I worked out a final price for my book in close consultation with my gallery and an artist’s book dealer. We formulated a subscription price in the very beginning of the making of the book. Subscribers would get a hefty discount on the price if they were willing to complete payment beforehand. The discount became smaller over time, as the book neared completion. (The making of the book took 5 years, so the discount was 50% at first, the second year 40% then 30% and so on). The price of the book is rather high: 1800 Euros, but the material costs and the costs for the CD, the box and the binding was extremely high as well. So the final price was set at a certain reasonable amount. Although some
To help with some examples of pricing, we asked artists the following question: Have you formulated your own pricing structure for your editions? Would you be willing to write down how you work out your selling price?

Some artists were willing to share the methods they use for calculating the price of their work; I will start with my own. I cost at: cost of materials, plus actual making time (costing total time would be unrealistic) then, enough to cover a couple getting lost or ruined (in an edition of 20, say you will lose 2 or 3 from display, accidents in public places etc.) that gives me a basic price. I then add 40% to cover commission from any sales. As commission varies - galleries take up to 60%, bookshops 40% but a direct order to me from a collector is no commission, I keep things simple by setting a single price wherever the book is, as I don’t want someone to buy it and then see it cheaper somewhere else.

Here are some of the artists’ responses to pricing their own work:

“Most of my (unique) books are priced under $100 as that is what most people will spend for a small unique book. I have come to this realisation after many years of book fairs - when I reduce the prices the books sell fast!” Elena Mary Siff, USA

“When I have finished an edition, I think about what it would realistically sell for. When I am being very efficient, I also keep a log of the number of hours I have spent on the creation of the edition, and the cost of the materials. Inevitably, the price I think it would realistically sell for means I would be paying myself about £2 an hour! I also have to allow that one or two of the edition will have to be used as display copies and I won’t be able to sell them, so that also knocks off what I can make from a whole edition. Ideally the formula would be: My hours @ say, £10 per hour + Cost of materials + A bit for running expenses, add these together, then divide by: The number of units in the edition. That gives me the price per unit but as mentioned above, if you have made 20 you should probably only divide by 17 because you will have some wastage. But I think it’s very rare when I can really charge the cost of labour and materials.” Deb Rindl, UK

“Because the editions I make are small and contain original prints in the main, I tend to have to set my prices at the higher end of the market. It is always a balancing act for me to try to cover costs and earn enough for the artistic content but still remain at a competitive price. My artists’ books do not earn as much as they should if one takes into account the number of images included.

If I sold them as single prints I would earn a lot more from them, but I am committed to the artist’s book as a form and will continue to pursue this area while subsidising it through the sale of single images through other channels.” Jane Hyslop, UK

“I price my books by looking at the web sites of other book artists who are at similar career stages as myself to see what they charge for similar books. Then I compare that price to other books that I’ve made to see if that price is in line with the complexity and style of work.” Laura Russell, USA

“My price is worked out by six main factors, and used for all my work, unique or small editions.

(1) Cost of materials (2) labour (including conceptual/design/intellectual/research time spent, and cost breakdown of collaborators or contractors) (3) Value of intellectual or aesthetic property (i.e. a new innovative form or idea is worth money) (4) Relationship of the work to your former works (is this a breakout piece, the start or end of a body of work, an aberration?) (5) Comparison to the current market price and future price trajectory of similar works by (and this is important) artists with similar career standing. This sort-of takes into account how much you think someone will actually pay for the work and the minimum you want to sell it at. (6) Personal curatorial decisions regarding how fabulous you think the work is professionally or culturally, how attached to it you are personally, and pure intuition.” Marshall Weber, USA

“When I first started making I was selling my books very, very cheaply. I was even asked by one press why I didn’t put up my prices, but I was just starting out, and I wanted to sell. I asked what I thought the market would give me in terms of price. As I went on, and made more books, went to a few fairs and saw every one else’s work and prices, combined with a reduced amount of available time to make and do, my prices gradually increased. My prices reflect quite simply:

A. How long or hard the book would be to reproduce
B. How happy I am with the book
C. How popular the book turns out to be
D. Any developmental potential along the way
E. How soon I get sick of reproducing the book

The best way to price a tricky bit of work is to ask yourself: ‘How much am I prepared to let this go for?’ Call that your bottom-line, go no lower than that for a tricky price. For easy obvious pricing it’s heading into the less than £30 marker, depending on who’s doing the selling what the commission is etc. Try and keep it around that, after about £30 people tend to think a bit before a purchase.” Andi McGarry, Ireland

“I have found there are several price points in the book arts market and this works for individuals as well as institutions (all my prices are in USD)
www.codexfoundation.org

The Mainzer Minipressen Messe (Small Press Fair) is a specialist small press and artist’s book fair, originally set up as an alternative to the Frankfurt Book Fair. It takes place bi-annually and is organised and hosted by the Gutenberg Museum. For information and timetables, see www.minipresse.de
$100 and under: there is a group of people that will buy in this price range and I think $40 is a great price point if you can make something that can sell for this.

$300 and under: Individuals and institutions will buy in this range, but not so quickly.

$1000+: anything over this price, many institutions will have to present to a committee. Many can purchase items for collections under this amount without requiring special permission."

Miriam Schaer, USA

The Role of the Artist’s Book Fair

We asked book artists about their experiences of specialist fairs; not only as a means of selling their work, but as a valuable opportunity to meet other artists to exchange ideas and information. Artist’s book fairs constitute the main source, or a significant percentage of income for most of the book artists we surveyed. They also act as a means of focus in preparing works for a deadline.

See the list of Artist’s Book Fairs on page 29.

Artists’ main problems with attending book fairs as individuals are overwhelmingly: the expense, and the lack of time to view work and meet artists on other stands. The cost of a stand at a book fair can range from £50-500+ for a one - four day event, and this outlay, compounded with travel and accommodation costs can make it unviable for an individual artist. If you are there alone, it is difficult to meet others whilst looking after your stand. These issues can be overcome if artists join up and work together, for example the UK-based book artists group www.artistsbooksonline.com founded by artist Noëlle Griffiths.

Quite a few artists have grouped together with others (in 2s or larger groups) who make similar work, so you could try to find other like-minded artists and mobilise yourselves into a collective or group. The benefits are the obvious support of working in numbers and sharing the costs of exhibiting at book fairs. If you can group together and give yourselves a press, collective or imprint name, you can then work as a recognised group to approach galleries or collections and exhibit under one name at a book fair with a nominated contact name and address for any catalogues/publicity. Running a stand at a book fair as part of a group will give you a chance to look around at other exhibitors’ stands and talk to other artists.

“Marketing is important but having attended several book fairs I think that there are differences between books which sell well, those that excite some interest but don’t sell, and those that people neither pick up nor purchase. Quality has something to do with it but the more one attends events and discusses these matters the more experience one gains.” Rosie Gilligan, artist, UK

So, how do you find other artists to make a group?

Visit book fairs and talk to other artists whose work you are interested in.

Visit Zybooks online: Zybooks artists’ books online is a London-based website showcasing artists’ books from around the world. They also include mail art projects, events and publications. Book artists are invited to submit up to 3 book works for inclusion in the online artists’ books gallery, for free, for a period of one year. Website: www.zyarts.com/zybooks Contact: Gandhi Key gandhakey@googlemail.com

Read listings in journals and newsletters.

Join a discussion list (see philobiblon.com for the Book Arts-L list) and ask others to contact you to form a group.

Place a listing in one of the journals, or our Book Arts Newsletter (we run a free “lonely book hearts” section for artists to find others working in their area, just email us and add a listing: Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk).

Join a group such as www.artistsbooksonline.com to share book fairs and exhibiting costs.

Basic preparation for an artist’s book fair:

Once you have booked your stand and have made your books, there are some things to prepare:

Publicity material, price lists/order forms with contact details. These are invaluable for people to take away, particularly for those collectors who gather price lists to make orders after they have viewed books on show at the fairs.

Business cards or postcards with contact details, to hand out to visitors. This is important, as follow-up contacts can be rewarding: “an agency saw my work at a fair, took my card and emailed me saying they wanted to sell my work for me.” Hannah Lobley, artist, UK.

Table covers - these are not always provided, and if it is more than one day, you need something to cover the books on the table overnight.

Invoice book, sales book, visitors book to build up a mailing list, information sheets etc.

A shelving or small display system to make full use of a table, or small book stands.

A sign with your name or press name.
The importance of artist’s book fairs for marketing and networking

Below are some of the replies to the question we asked: **How important do you think the role of the artist’s book fair or specialist event is, and do these events impact on your creative output?**

“Very important as a wider ‘reading’ public becomes aware of artists’ books through these fairs, thus creating a larger community talking about artists’ books in relation to other modes of creative production in a physical space where many different types of books (and people!) can be seen.” Paul Bettinson, artist and founder of the Nordic Centre for Artists’ Books, Norway

“You always get good ideas by seeing the work of others. You get a sort of dynamism and energy that builds on itself. That’s what was good in D.C. [Pyramid Atlantic artist’s book fair] - to meet so many book artists and learn about their work.” Rick Black, artist, USA

“It is our most positive form of promotion.”
Imi Maufe, artist, Norway/UK

“It is very important to meet artists and exchange information.” Greta Matteucci, artist, Italy

“It is important because I can share my ideas, see and listen to how people feel about my work.” Young-Ju Choi, artist, Republic of Korea

“The artist’s book fair is a unique event where people especially come to see artists’ books, an item that hardly fits into any other category. At art fairs or regular book fairs people don’t take the time to investigate any artists’ books. Artists’ books require energy from the viewer. Artists’ books need a special way and a special place of presentation. Artists’ books fairs and events can stimulate one’s creative output because one sees a lot of other books and printing or binding possibilities that can be inspirational for new projects.” Helga Kos, artist, The Netherlands

“Artist’s book fairs are of great value to the student experience and they do have an impact on creative output. The chance to meet other practitioners, particularly students, and to see the range of work on display is very stimulating for them.” Jane Hyslop, artist and lecturer at Edinburgh College of Art, UK

“I have done three artist’s book fairs and one show in a bookstore this year as a test to see how these fairs did. I sold a few books, never quite enough to cover the hotel, travel and event costs. So, they definitely are not money makers for me. However, I think they have played an important role in getting my work and myself out there and building up my reputation as a book artist. It’s the exposure that has really been the best benefit of the events so far. However as far as the effect on my creative output goes, it has not been good. I find myself making cheaper and simpler books to make money instead of making the books that my heart desires. I’m struggling a bit with fulfilling my vision or meeting the customer’s demands.” Laura Russell, artist, USA

“I think they are very important not only for the interaction with customers but also the interaction between artists - unfortunately the time for artists to get to know each other is generally very limited.” Sue Scott, artist, USA

“Extremely important given there are very few opportunities to show your work, especially to a receptive audience. I have participated in my first artist’s book fair recently and the experience was excellent. Prior to that I was showing my work at design fairs - I also make handmade photo albums and the visitors to these fairs didn’t quite understand the artists’ books.” Paula Steere, artist, UK

In addition, here are some comments from the events’ organisers themselves, we asked:

**(1) What is the most positive aspect of organising an artist’s book fair?**

**(2) And the least positive aspect?**

Some of the responses we received:

(1)”Our fair has been running for 10 years now, we have no specific criteria that needs to be met
for showing work; we've never needed to exclude work, participants know what the event represents. It is important that makers meet each other and their audience and that the work is introduced to a new public. Also it is very important for students for support and encouragement both from the audience and other makers. John McDowall, Contemporary International Artist's Book Fair, Leeds, UK

(1) “Networking among Canadian artists; artists meeting the public/customers; the audience is always amazed at the quality and diversity of the work; artists do sell though definitely the low price end sells better that the top. The CBBAG Book Arts Fair is very enthusiastically received and that’s really enjoyable.” Shelagh Smith, Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild (CBBAG Book Arts Fair)

(2) “CBBAG has a real problem with covering the costs. We don’t advertise nearly enough (it is essential to advertise both with display ads and posters in order to get an audience). We try to keep the table fee very low so that it isn’t prohibitive for book artists, with the result that we only cover the room rental and refreshments for participants. We have to get other support in order to cover publicity and that is very difficult.” Shelagh Smith, Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild (CBBAG Book Arts Fair)

(1) “Browsing, buying and reading books are in the main solitary activities, so to bring together communities of book artists and makers together with readers and collectors is very exciting. BABE opened up social spaces for audiences and artists, bringing them face to face for conversation, criticism, comparison and comradeship.”

(2) “Not being able to please everyone - even though we try very hard!” Julian Warren and Peter Begen, co-organisers of BABE, Bristol Artist’s Book Event at Arnolfini.

Artist’s Book Fairs List

The following artist’s book fairs are the main events that book artists attend, as they are the most relevant, and work out to be the least expensive for a stand/table. Artist’s book fairs usually include a talk or events programme, and are a great way of meeting other artists as well as selling your books. There are many other book fairs around the world, for a list of worldwide book fairs (including a Book Arts section), see Clemens-Tobias Lange’s informative calendar at: www.kuenstlerbuecher.de/messen.php

Leeds Contemporary International Artist’s Book Fair
Annual artist’s book fair at Leeds University (usually early March) organised by John McDowall and Chris Taylor. For info email: c.a.taylor@leeds.ac.uk

BABEL: Bristol Artist’s Book Event
Bi-annual book fair and exhibition at Arnolfini, Bristol. Organised by Arnolfini and the Centre for Fine Print Research at UWE, Bristol. For details email Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk or julian.warren@arnolfini.org.uk

London Artist’s Book Fair (LAB) at the Institute for Contemporary Art (ICA) London. Annual, well-established artist’s book fair (Nov) organised by Marcus Campbell Art Books. www.marcuscampbell.co.uk lab@marcuscampbell.co.uk

Manchester Artist’s Book Fair
Organised by the Righton Press at Manchester Metropolitan University www.artdes.mmu.ac.uk/rightonpress/ Contact Tom Sowden: t.sowden@mmu.ac.uk

The Small Publishers’ Fair organised by Martin Rogers, takes place at the Conway Hall in London, each October. See www.rgap.co.uk for details

Fine Press Book Association fairs. FPBA organise book fairs around the UK, with stands available for members. Join via the website: www.fpba.com


Grahame Galleries organises the Artists’ Books and Multiples Fair in Australia, of which 4 have been staged since 1994. Overseas participants can submit works without attending. www.grahamegalleries.com Contact the organiser Noreen Grahame. Email: editions@thehub.com

Seoul International Artist’s Book Fair

LAB London Artist's Book Fair
ICA Galleries, London, November 2006. Photo: Paul Laidler
**Contemporary Creative Books**
International book fair organised annually (Oct) by Atelier Vis-a-Vis in Marseille, France.
www.atelier-vis-a-vis.org
Email: Bookaffair@wanadoo.fr

**Centre des Livres d'artistes, Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche**, France. www.centredeslivresartists.info/
Artist's Book centre, which also organises an artist's book fair, contact Didier Mathieu for further details. Email: d.mathieu@cdla.info

**Artist's Book Festival**, Barcelona, Spain, usually each May. Organised by Rafael Castaner and Julia Pelletier. Email: info@juliapelletier.com

**Tirage Limité - Association pour les Recontres Romandes du Livre d'Artiste**, Switzerland
Annual artist's book fair (September) for details contact the organiser: Silvio Corsini
email: silvio.corsini@bcu.unil.ch
http://tirage-limite.hautetfort.com/

**Mainzer Minipressen Messe** (Small Press Fair) is a specialist small press and artist's book fair, originally set up as an alternative to the Frankfurt Book Fair and now renown in its own right. It takes place bi-annually and is organised and hosted by the Gutenberg Museum. For information and timetables see: www.minipresse.de

**New York Art Book Fair**
Printed Matter's artist's book fair in NYC.
www.nyartbookfair.com

**Pyramid Atlantic**
organise a bi-annual artist's book fair, next one is November 2008. www.bookartsfair.org

**Editions and Artists' Books Fair**, New York
Annual event, see: www.eabfair.com

The **Sydney Art on Paper Fair** (SAPF).
www.sydneyartonpaperfair.com.au
Email: info@sydneyartonpaperfair.com.au

**Conferences and events** around book arts take place regularly in Europe, USA and Australia. ARLIS - the Art Librarians' Society, has member groups around the world which hold conferences and fairs, see www.arlis.org.uk for Britain and Ireland, www.arlisma.org for North America, www.arlis.org.au for Australia and New Zealand. Germany has the The Association of Art and Museum Libraries (www.akmb.de).

For details of more artists' books conferences and events, see www.philobiblon.com which has lots of information, and the Book Arts I discussion list, which people often announce events on, and is free to join.

**Utilising the Internet**
Many curators and collectors use the Internet for viewing and purchasing books by artists. Having your work in a viewable space is useful for marketing. Many publishers, individuals and groups of artists have their own websites, with contact details, images of books and mail order purchase.

Stefan Szczelkun (www.stefan-szczelkun.org.uk) pointed out for the last issue, that artist's book makers would be interested in how easy/cheap it is to integrate Paypal® into an ordinary website.
This has caught on, with many artists using Paypal® for website sales. There are also publishing sites such as lulu.com, which can produce and sell your books for you.

Booklyn (www.booklyn.org) Evil Twin Publications (www.eviltwinpublications.com) and Café Royal (www.caferoyal.org) are good examples of artists’ websites selling books. Jackie Batey of Damp Flat Books has built a brilliant website full of information on her books and how they are made (www.dampflat.com).

“One issue which I think is important, is to be part of a network, possibly on the Internet, of people who can share ideas about what sells and what doesn’t.” Rosie Gilligan, artist, UK

Via the Internet you can access information on collections, join discussion lists and see the work of other artists. You can also read essays and excerpts by writers such as Judith Hoffberg at colophon.com, access event calendars, online journals and newsletters (see the useful websites list on page 31 for some addresses). These also provide useful information on opportunities for exhibiting work.

Showing your work online not only gives you a presence, it allows people from all over the world to view it without your having to pay the postage costs to send images on CD or slides.

“At Emory, we don't have any special funds for artists' books, though we do collect them when we can. It's often a collaborative effort. If a book artist contacts either Kim Collins or myself, we try to meet with them together and usually include the Head of Special Collections. Catalogues and brochures are extremely important because they can be a constant reminder on my desk. I also think artists' websites are invaluable because they can give a sense of color and structure that you can't get from a catalogue.” Sandra Still, curator, Emory University Library, Georgia, USA

If you don't have the means to set up your own website, join one that does it for you. Zybooks artists books online is a London-based website showcasing artists' books from around the world. It also includes mail art projects, events and publications. Book artists can submit up to three book works for inclusion in the online artists'
books gallery free of charge, for a period of one year (www.zyarts.com/zybooks contact Gandha Key: gandha07@yahoo.co.uk)

Philobiblon website hosts the Book_Arts L discussion list (www.philobiblon.com) a free service where members can post information and questions or discuss aspects of book arts with others online. The site - maintained by Peter D. Verheyen - also has information and links to numerous book arts websites.

Set up or join a group of artists such as www.artistsbooksonline.com established by Noëlle Griffiths for book artists to exhibit work and share the costs of artist’s book events. See Book Artist Case Study I on page 39.

Dealers, publishers and bookshops also have informative websites: Granary Books, bookartbookshop, Coracle, Book Works, Johan Deumens, Printed Matter and Walther König. Many artists who also publish reference material on making artists’ books have helpful websites, such as Keith Smith, Carol Barton and Angela Lorenz.

An Internet tip from Kelly Wellman(bookartbookshop) who has found that Worldcat is a great way of tracking down which collections her artists’ books are in. Her books are often sold through shops or dealers who do not always keep her up to date with information on where her books end up. Using Worldcat, you can track down books in libraries by person, title or subject. Try it yourself at: www.worldcat.org

**Website use of images of artists’ books / digitising library collections**

Another topic that arose during the initial survey is that many institutional collections would like to be able to photograph artists’ books in their collection to:

Make searchable library databases

Use for teaching aids and presentations

Use for promotional material when exhibiting the works from their collections

“We would like to be able to get the artists to incorporate some sort of statement when selling to libraries, that the work can be photographed to put on the collection website, and promotional material etc.” Catherine Polley, curator, Winchester School of Art, Library, UK

Otis has a great visual database at: http://content.otis.edu/collections/artistsbooks.htm

and the V&A has a selection of online images and information at: www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/artists_books/index.html

Quite a few librarians have said that they would like to make visual databases of books in their collections. Some will be asking artists to sign a copyright release form in the future, some already do, for example, The Joan Flasch Artist’s Book Collection, John M. Flaxman Library (at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago) asks artists to fill in a reproduction release form for non-commercial educational use with each purchase, which works well.

This could be something which library staff can collaborate on and share their ideas or practice, if you have any ideas on this, perhaps you could let us know so we can put some information together for library staff who need to ask artists for permission to use images.

If more artists agree to this, it will help to promote artists’ books within education and allow more people to see the range of works being produced and collected by institutions.

**Some useful websites**

These websites are listed for information sections and useful information for book artists, from fairs and events to workshops, exhibition opportunities, societies to join, and places to see, sell, buy and study artists’ books., this is by no means a complete list, just some ideas of places to start. Many established book artists also have their own websites which are not listed here due to space restrictions. To find more information on an individual artist, type their name into a search engine (e.g. google) to find relevant sites. Artists’ sites are also useful for price comparisons as many of them have works for sale online.

**www.alteredbookartists.com** the International Society of Altered Book Artists.


**www.artistsbooksonline.com** collaborative artists’ group.


**www.barbarawien.de** Berlin based book arts bookshop and gallery.


**www.boekiewoekie.com** online catalogue of artists’ books from the artist run gallery and bookstore Boekie Woekie, Amsterdam.

**www.bookart.co.uk** Paul Johnson’s Book Art Project promoting book arts in education.
**www.bookartbookshop.com** the London based bookartbookshop for artists' books.

**www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk** our own website with links, information, publications, exhibitions, projects and downloadable Book Arts Newsletter.

**www.bookhad.ac.uk** search engine for book arts study and research in selected institutions and collections in the UK, with useful links.

**www.booklyn.org** Booklyn Artists Alliance, features their published artists’ books, courses and workshop programmes.

**www.bookstorming.com** Paris based artists’ books for sale by many international artists.

**www.bookworks.org.uk** Book Works website, lots of useful information on current and past artists’ publications, forthcoming projects and mail order. Great section of links and downloadable guides for artists.


**www.caferoyal.org** artists’ zines, books, works, illustrations and more.

**www.cbbag.ca** Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild.


**www.centerforbookarts.org** New York Center for Book Arts, exhibitions, archives and courses.

**www.circlepress.com** formed in 1967, since that time, Circle Press has produced artists’ editions of both classic and contemporary texts, posters and books.

**www.codexfoundation.org** The Codex Foundation, organisers of the biennial CODEX Symposium & Book Fairs, California, USA.

**www.colophon.com** Fine Press books, plus links to a number of related websites.

**www.coracle.ie** artists’ books by Simon Cutts, Erica van Horn and other artists/writers.

**www.firecatcherbooks.co.uk** a company created to promote Book Arts in the UK.

**www.florencecloewy.com** artists’ books archive and bookstore.

**www.forumbookart.com** Heinz Stefan Bartkowski’s *Forum Book Art*, now solely Internet based, with an online database for artists’ books.

**www.fpba.com** Fine Press Book Association membership, information, plus some useful links.

**www.flying-pig.co.uk** paper animation kit website. See the menu links for free download designs, or go to www.flying-pig.co.uk/pages/freedownloads.html

**www.granarybooks.com/catalog.html** full catalogue of their artists’ publications.

**http://jab-online.net** Online site for the *Journal of Artists' Books*, established by Brad Freeman.

**www.keithsmithbooks.com** Keith Smith’s Books, all artist’s book and reference titles, information and mail order.

**www.kuenstlerbuecher.com** information about artists’ books fairs, editions and dealers.

**www.library.yale.edu** Yale University library’s collection of artists’ books.

**www.lili.org/icb** Idaho Center for the Book, plus related publications.

**www.mermaidturbulence.com** Founded in 1993 to publish contemporary works by artists and writers.

**www.mnbookarts.org** Minnesota Center for the Book aims to advance the book as a vital contemporary art form, preserving the traditional crafts of bookmaking and engaging people in learning and production.
www.ncfab.org established in 2005, the Nordic Centre For Artists’ Books (NCFAB) facilitates production, commissioning and exhibitions of artists’ books within Nordic countries.

http://nomediakings.org/category/doityourself/ This site has many tips on DIY publishing and distribution from Jim Munroe. Follow the links for articles on publishing, distribution and promotion.


www.onestarpress.com Paris based website of artists’ books and artists’ multiples.

www.permanentbookshop.com Gallery and bookshop in Brighton, for artist-made books, zines, art periodicals, events etc.

www.philobiblon.com site for artists’ books information, plus links to numerous book arts websites.

www.popularkinetics.com Carol Barton’s kinetic book works and pop-ups with useful information, links and mail order.

www.preachersbiscuitbooks.com artists’ publications from an independent publisher.

www.printedmatter.org the major artists’ bookstore in New York has an online selection of artists’ books, multiples and reference books.

www.publishandbedamned.org Publish and Be Damned demonstrates individual approaches to making & distributing artists, writers and musicians through magazine fairs, a touring archive & special events.

www.sfcb.org the San Francisco Center for the Book, book arts information and exhibitions.

www.silverwattlepress.com Silverwattle Press - papermaking, printmaking and artists’ books by Tim Mosely and associated Codex Events.

www.societyofbookbinders.com for society information, events, membership and links.

www.specialcollections.mmu.ac.uk for the link to the artist's book collection at MMU.

www.tate.org.uk/research/researchservices/researchcentre/default.htm Tate Britain’s online catalogue of artists’ books

www.theartistsbook.org A fantastic website by David Paton in Johannesburg; to gather research done on South African Artists’ Books.

www.traceisnotaplace.com an artist-led, not-for-profit initiative based in Weymouth, UK, to promote projects and events that combine new visual work, writing and sound.

www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/artists_books/index.html The National Art Library at the V&A Museum’s online facility for artists’ books, with information on the collection, a visual database and interviews with book artists.


www.weproductions.com Weproductions’ website with artists’ books and useful links.

www.wsworkshop.org Womens’ Studio Workshop information and online artists’ books archive.

www.zyarts.com/zybooks UK based exhibition and information website, featuring artist’s book gallery, news, events and links.

Places to buy and sell artists’ books in the UK

This is a list of the main UK venues and outlets, see the website list for other contacts.

Arnolfini Bookshop
16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA
www.arnolfini.org.uk/about/bookshop.php

Artwords Bookshop
65a Rivington Street, London EC2A 3QQ
Tel: 020 7729 2000
www.artwords.co.uk

Bertram Rota Ltd
31 Long Acre (First Floor)
Covent Garden, London WC2E 9LT
Tel: 0207 836 0723
www.bertramrota.co.uk

Bookartbookshop
17 Pittfield Street, Hoxton, London, N1 6HB
Tel: 020 7608 1333
www.bookartbookshop.com

EMH Arts / Eagle Gallery
159 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3AL
Tel: 020 7833 2674
www.emmahilleagle.com

Firecatcher Books
The Last Drop Village
Bromley Cross, Bolton, BL7 9PZ
Tel. 01204 597 511
www.firecatcherbooks.co.uk

Here Shop & Gallery
108 Stokes Croft, Bristol
http://sparror.cubecinema.com/here/mainmenu.html

Marcus Campbell Art Books
43 Holland Street, London SE1 9JR
Tel 020 7261 0111
www.marcuscampbell.co.uk
Some places to buy and sell artists’ books around the world

Another Room Book Arts Bookstore
Rhythmix Cultural Works, 2513 Blanding Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501
www.rhythmix.org/anotherroom.html

Art Metropole
788 King Street West, Toronto M5V 1N6, Canada
www.artmetropole.com

Barbara Wien Galerie und Buchhandlung für Kunstbücher
Linienstrasse 158 im Hof, D10115, Berlin, Germany
www.barbarawein.de

Barratt Galleries
5 Bugden Avenue, Alstonville 2477, Australia
www.barrattgalleries.com.au

Bookstorming
Paris based books and artists’ books at more than one outlet, see: www.bookstorming.com

Boekie Woekie
Berentstraat 18, 1016 GH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www.boekIEWoekie.com

Booklyn
37 Greenpoint Avenue, 4th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11222, New York, USA
www.booklyn.org

Brighton Press and the Art Around Books Gallery
San Diego, USA.
www.ebrightonarts.com

Center for Book Arts, 28 West 27th Street,
NY 10001, New York, USA
www.centerforbookarts.org

Centre des Livres d’Artistes
17 Rue Jules Ferry
87500 Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche, France
www.centredeslivresdartistes.info

DIA Center for the Arts
New York, USA
www.dia.org

Florence Loewy - Books by Artists
9/11 rue de Thorigny, Paris 75003, France
www.florenceloewy.com

Grahame Galleries + Editions
Centre for the Artist’s Book, 1 Fernberg Road,
Milton 4064, Brisbane, Australia
www.grahamegalleries.com

Johan Deumens
Dr N. G. Piersonstraat 1
NL 2104 VG, Heemstede, The Netherlands
www.artistsbooks.com

Joshua Heller Rare Books Inc.
PO Box 39114, Washington DC 20016-9114, USA
www.joshuahellerrarebooks.com

La Libreria
64A Queen Street Bugis Village, 188543, Singapore
www.lalibreria.com.sg

THE SHOP @ Minnesota Centre for Book Arts, USA
www.mnbookarts.org/theshop/theshop.html

Moufflon Bookshop
P.O. Box 22375, Nicosia 1821, Cyprus
www.moufflon.com.cy/

Oak Knoll Books / Oak Knoll Press
310 Delaware Street, New Castle, DE 19720, USA
www.oakknoll.com

Printed Matter Inc
195 10th Avenue, New York, NY 10011, USA
www.printedmatter.org

Pyramid Atlantic
8230 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring
Maryland, 20910, USA
www.pyramidatlantic.org

San Francisco Center for the Book
300 De Haro Street, San Francisco 94103, USA
www.sfcb.org

Vamp & Tramp
www.vampandtramp.com

Walther König Buchhandlung
Ehrenstrasse 4, D 50672, Köln, Germany
www.buechermarkt.net

Visual Studies Workshop, Bookshop
31 Prince Street, Rochester, NY 14607, USA
www.vsw.org/press/index.html
Some Institutional and Private Collections

Before contacting collections, please read the notes on approaching them, not all of the collections listed here buy artists’ books from any artist; some hold collections of staff and student work, specific artists or visiting artists only, or only buy a particular type of book, many also have limited budgets, so investigate first!

As space here is limited, please use the Internet to find postal addresses. Many collections and contacts are also published in the Artist’s Book Yearbook.

Many art colleges also have small artist’s book collections in their libraries. Thanks to Gray Fraser in Montreal for the new Canadian library collection additions.

AKI (ArtEz) Library, Enschede, The Netherlands
Artspace Mackay, Queensland, Australia
BALTIC Library and Archive, Gateshead
Bibliograph, Montreal, Canada
Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute
Biblioteca Casanatense, Italy
Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, Canada
Bienes Centre for the Literary Arts, Fort Lauderdale, USA
University of Brighton, Artists’ Books Collection
British Library, Modern British Collection
Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, USA
Camberwell College of Arts, London
Research Centre for Artists’ Publications (ASPC) Bremen
Carnegie Mellon University Hunt Library, Pittsburgh, USA
Centre des Livres D’Artistes, Saint-Yrieix-La-Perche, France
CAB Visual Research Centre, Dundee
Chelsea College of Art and Design, London
University of Delaware, USA
F.W. Olin Library, Mills College, Oakland, USA
Glasgow School of Art Library
Gund Library, Cleveland Institute of Art, USA
The Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada
National Library of Canada
University of Gloucestershire
Heinz Stefan Bartkowiak’s, Forum Book Art, Germany
Idaho Center for the Book, Boise, Idaho, USA
University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections Dept, USA
Institute of the Arts, Canberra, Australia
Jaffe Collection, Florida Atlantic University
Joan Flasch Artists’ Book Collection, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA
King Saint Stephen Museum, Hungary
The Brotherton Library Special Collections, Leeds University
Library of Congress, Washington, USA
London College of Communication
Sir Kenneth Green Library, Manchester Metropolitan University
Middlesex University, Art & Design Learning Resources
Montana State University Library, USA
Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA
Museum van het boek, The Hague, The Netherlands
National University of Australia
NCAD Library, Dublin, Ireland
Norwich School of Art and Design Library
Neil Crawford Artist’s Book Collection
Newark Public Library, New Jersey, USA
New York Public Library, USA
Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, USA
Reed College Library, Oregon, USA
Reinhard Gruener: Artist’s Book Collection, Germany
Rhode Island School of Art and Design, USA
Rikhardinkatu Library, Helsinki, Finland
Royal College of Art Library, Artists’ Book Collection
Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Visual and Concrete Poetry, Miami, USA
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
Scuola Internazionale di Grafica, Venice
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, USA
Southern Cross University, Lismore, NSW, Australia
State Library of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, USA
Tate Britain, London
University of the Arts, Philadelphia, USA
University of Westminster, Harrow Learning Resources Centre
UWE Bristol, Bower Ashton Library, Faculty of Creative Arts
Book Art Collection, James Branch Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University, USA
Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York, USA
Wellesley College Library, Wellesley, USA
Winchester School of Art Library, University of Southampton
Womens Studio Workshop, Rosendale, USA
Word and Image Dept (NAL) V&A Museum, London
Yale Center for British Art, USA

Further Reading

This list is by no means comprehensive; the publications here offer information on making, exhibiting, listing, marketing and researching artists’ books.

Look out for catalogues from artist’s book fairs such as Leeds and Manchester, and for publishers catalogues such as Book Works (London) Vamp and Tramp (USA) and Printed Matter (New York).

Artist’s Book Yearbook, bi-annual publication:
Artists' Book Yearbook 1994-5, ISBN 0 9523880 0 6
Artists' Book Yearbook 2001-2, ISBN 0 9538076 7 4
Artists' Book Yearbook 2003-2005, ISBN 095360769 0 (out of print, you can download a free PDF copy at: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bookpub.htm)
(editor Sarah Bodman) Impact Press, Bristol. From: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bookpub.htm
Artists' books: A Cataloguers' Manual, compiled by Maria White, Patrick Perratt and Liz Lawes for the ARLIS/UK & Ireland Cataloguing and Classification Committee, 2006, ISBN10: 0-9552445-0-1, ISBN 13: 978-0-9552445-0-6. A manual designed for anyone involved in the cataloguing of artists' books. As many cataloguers may not be very familiar with the genre, the manual is preceded by an introductory section giving a brief history of artists' books, a discussion of the problems associated with defining the term itself and an outline of specific problems the cataloguer may face. The manual itself takes the cataloguer through each applicable rule from AACR2, offering guidance on interpretation and, where necessary, expanding on the rules. Appendices include full examples in MARC21, some with photographs, a bibliography and a list of websites that the cataloguer may find useful. The manual is in an easy to use spiral bound A5 format. Price: £35 for ARLIS/UK & Ireland members; £45 for non-members. To order email: arlis@courtauld.ac.uk
Artists' Books Revisited, Art Metropole, Toronto, Canada and Seccion, Vienna, Austria, 2005 ISBN 0 920956 7 6 9
Bartkowiak, Heinz Stefan Bartkowiaks Forum Book Art, Germany (annual publication until 2006) now online at www.forumbookart.com with their new international online database for contemporary book art, b-art1.
Barton, Carol The Pocket Paper Engineer, 2005 ISBN 0 9827752 0 7
Bicknell, Les Are There Any Limits To What Can Be Called Book Art? Essex, 1994
Courtney, Cathy Private Views and Other Containers Estamp, London, 1992 ISBN 1 871831 09 1

The Artist Publisher: A Survey

coracle Press, London, 1986

The Book as Art: Twenty Years of Artists’ Books from the National Museum of Women in the Arts

Princeton Architectural Press, 2006


Jones/Turner/Tyson

*Contemporary Artists’ Books: Parts 1 & 2,* published as a supplement in *Artists’ Newsletter,* April 1989

Turner, Sylvie (editor)

*Facing The Page: British Artists’ Books*


Lauf, Cornelia and Phillpot, Clive

*Artist/Author: Contemporary Artists’ Books (DAP)* 1998, ISBN 1881616940

Wye, Deborah and Weitman, Wendy


*Artist's Book Journals:*

*Afterimage* - media arts and cultural criticism, with regular artist’s book features.

www.vsw.org/afterimage

*Amperandsand,* bi-monthly publication from the Pacific Center for the Book Arts, USA.

www.pcba.info/etc.htm

*Artists’ Books Reviews* quarterly journal, USA.

www.artistsbooksreviews.com

*The Bonefolder* peer reviewed e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist (FREE). Issues at:

www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder/

*Book Arts Newsletter (BAN)* ISSN 1754-9078 Print ISSN 1754-9086 Online (FREE) see:

www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/banlists.htm for online colour PDF version. Email your name and address to Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk to receive the b&w photocopy version in the post.

*Blue Notebook Journal for Artists’ Books* contemporary writing on all aspects of artists’ books, contributions welcome.

www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bnotebk.htm

*The Happy Hypocrite: Linguistic Hardcore* A new bi-annual forum for critical and creative artists’ writings, with a special emphasis on content that is experimental in nature and form.

www.bookworks.org.uk


http://jab-online.net/blog/

*Umbrella Online* editor Judith A. Hoffberg, USA News, essays, reviews and more, subscribe at:

www.umbrellaeditions.com

Book Artist Case Studies

These have been included to offer a variety of perspectives from new to well-established book artists, including artists who publish their own and other artists’ work.

Each of these case studies gives some background information on how long the artist has been producing work, the type/s of books they make, and how they market their work.

The studies range from those who have graduated in the last 4 years, to established artists who have been making books for over 35 years.

We asked all of the original case study artists from the 2005 edition to update their profiles for this new edition.

We have also added some new case studies: Noëlle Griffiths of artistsbooksonline, UK; Gray Fraser of Productiongray editions in Canada; Kyoko Tachibana of Sohon Studio in Japan and Lorelei Kampe in Australia.

Comments within the Case Study texts inserted inside [ ] are the editor’s comments.

Many thanks to all the artists who have taken the time to complete these case studies; we know how helpful they have been to other artists from the comments we have received from the first issue.

These are the questions we asked:

How long have you been creating and marketing your own work?

Approximately how many editions have you published: to date? In the last 12 months?

Do you have your own imprint?

Is this your main source of income?

Please give a brief description of your artwork to date.

What do you feel the most difficult aspect of marketing your work has been?

Which artist’s book fairs have you attended in the last 12 months?

Do you find that book fairs and personal interaction with potential purchasers are the best way to sell your work?

Do you find this a positive experience or do you prefer to sell through an intermediary?

Do you feel that meeting the people who purchase your work influences your creative production in any way?

Has meeting potential purchasers or collectors given you any opportunities you may not have had otherwise, such as exhibitions etc.?

Is there any advice you feel would have really helped you when you first started out?

How do you find out about ways to market your work?

Are your books mainly: large editions, small editions, unique book works?

Have you formulated your own pricing structure for your editions?

Is it the same for each edition or do you price them differently?

Have you directly approached collections to sell your own work by: Letter? Phone? Email? In Person?

Was your contact successful?

If not, do you know why it was not successful?

Did you know much about the first collection you sold to before you approached them i.e. any specialist interests?

Did you have a contact name?

Do you keep collectors up to date with information on your new publications?

Are there any other aspects of marketing your own work that you would like to improve or know more about, or are there any opportunities you think should be more available?

Are there any other issues that you would like to address?
Making books is a wonderfully satisfying and compulsive activity. The idea evolves, it filters into consciousness and over time it begins to take shape in the mind. Then comes the lovely moment of playing with bits of paper to see which format suits it best visually and emotionally. For me a book is a distillation of an experience often with an element of recording something that will never exist or happen again. I started making one-off books in 1988, and started Hafod Press in 2003 making limited editions of digitally printed books.

As an artist involved primarily with painting, I make maybe one or two books a year. I realised that strength exists in numbers. I can exhibit books and paintings together in galleries, but to take books to artist's book fairs, and especially the larger more expensive fairs, it makes sense to share the costs and travelling expenses. To get artists' books noticed on the web, a website with a number of artists is more likely to get visited than an individual artist's site.

In 2005 I started artistsbooksonline.com.

As an artist I particularly want artists' books that retain a sense of the maker. By inviting artists who make one-off or limited editions of books (maximum fifty) the books are less likely to appear mass-produced and more likely to reflect the care, thought and love with which the artists created them. And two years on, with twenty artists online, the project has fulfilled my expectations. The website has a diverse range of artists making books with a wide range of materials, structures and approaches.

To date at artistabooksonline.com:
- The site has twenty artists on-line and continues to grow.
- The artistsbooksonline.com stand has attended six UK artist's book fairs.
- We exhibited in Unfolding ~ artists' books, paintings and prints with four book artists from Italy and India at The Art Shop and Gallery, Abergavenny in June 2007.
- A collaborative book by site artists is planned for 2008.
- A series of uneditioned prints relating to our books is planned for LAB'07.
- A touring exhibition "For the Love of Making Books" curated by Wrexham Arts Centre opens on 1 September 2007 and tours five venues until July 2008.

As the originator of artistsbooksonline.com I do not have definite ideas about how the site should develop, I am open to suggestions from the site artists. It can be anything we wish it to be, but realistically we are all busy people who make time to make art.

I have very much enjoyed meeting some of the artists and look forward to more artists from Britain and overseas joining the website.

In future we will continue to attend book fairs and exhibit together as well as initiating collaborative projects. We also need to make sure that collectors know about us.

I hope this is just the beginning…
Noëlle Griffiths, Gwynedd, Wales

Andi McGarry has been making artists' books for 20 years, and has published approx 170 editions over this period, with 27 books produced in the last 12 months. His imprint is Sun Moon and Stars Press and his works are “unique unlimited editions” handmade and handpainted within the edition. His bookmaking activity balances itself up in terms of “paying for itself with a bit left, so it is self-sustaining.”

“True to my original mission brief, my press explores organic ideas. My artwork is labour intensive and mainly handproduced. The books I make combine words and images and have gone through several developmental flowerings to reach the current favourite recipe/formula, for making and doing.”
Production and Marketing

In the last 12 months, McGarry has attended the following artist's book fairs:
London Artist's Book Fair (LAB)
BABE, Bristol

The most difficult aspect of marketing his work (at book fairs): "If you have ever been hitchhiking, imagine the same thing only you are behind a table full of your own books, and all the punters are driving past. Literally standing behind your work at a book fair is the most difficult thing unless you have a few mates with you."

He feels that Artist's Book fairs are undoubtedly good places to make sales, "you also get to meet potential collectors, and you may be offered commissions and other equally interesting propositions. Also, artists' books organisers will see your stuff and you might be invited to send or show etc.

On selling himself, or through an intermediary: "The Jekyll and Hyde of it all is, you are there with the first hand know-how if anyone has a question, but it is a long haul. I find the opportunities in any one year you can foreseeably get to handle are limited, so you have to plan a campaign really carefully to have any success."

"If you sell at a fair, you don't pay the commission, though you do pay table money. If you plan to do a fair, my advice is do it with a mate or two, then you can go have a look around, have a chat, share the experience, and split the cost of the table money. The fair is by-and-large fairly positive and can even force you to get into gear if you are awaiting the muse. Sending books to an intermediary frees up your valuable time to make and do instead of trekking round the earth like an encyclopaedia salesman."

Meeting the people who purchase his work has sometimes influenced his creative production "especially, if they commission you to make a book about a specific thing, for example - skeletons, which once happened to me, then the answer is yes. Skeletons would not on my general list of things I would be making; yet I found my mouth saying "Yes, sure I can do skeletons! How many do you want?"

Other collectors keep up with your stuff, and this is always really nice, because they know you and what you are up to, and they get enthusiastic. I'm thinking of a particular teacher/collector when I write this who even offered to lend any rare works back if I ever need to do a retrospective or anything."

Meeting potential purchasers and collectors has given him some opportunities: "Normally now, when I go to do a fair or some such gig I will be hopeful that a few such possibilities that might also turn up. There could be a chance of a show; such as recently I was offered a show after the (LAB) London artist's book fair. It's the icing on the cake if you get a few sales too. Also, I am always looking out for people to network with for various book projects, like the Wexford Artist's Book show (which he co-organised). So don't forget, meeting people is good, very good, especially if you work in a lonely garret, sure sometimes you need to get out... see what the rest of the world is up to, borrow a few ideas!"

"For marketing, being a creative type always helps, you must be creative in everything including your marketing, look for new outlets but tap into the ones everyone else is using too!

I am always up for new things, my marketing up until now has been done as organically as my book making. I will try out all the big collections again soon with my latest new things, especially if I think they are a particularly good batch. Recently I tried a new bookfair in Korea, and enjoyed myself hugely, got inspired and broke even."

"I have approached loads of collections and had as much success as failure, so if you can take the Thanks but not today's you can handle the yes please's too."

I used to sell through Nigel Greenwood Bookshop, Maggie Smith rang me up one day and told me the Tate had been in and bought my works. I was gobsmacked (Geordie for delighted). Since then I have kept them up to speed and The Tate would have a very good selection of my work now.

"Network whenever possible, and remember Caesar's advice, "united we stand." Try and find some friendly book reviewers like Stephanie Brown who will give you a line or two in their magazines etc. Keep diaries and sketch books."
**Book Artist Case Study III**  
**Becky Adams, Penarth, Wales**

Becky Adams has been making artists’ books for about 10 years, she graduated from the Camberwell Book Arts MA in 2001.

She is currently working in Wales. Making books is not her main source of income, which is through other artworks including textiles. She also runs workshops with books.

Her work comprises of collected ephemera, memories, fragments of text and diary extracts. Most of her artists’ books are one-offs but she has also made small editions and plans to make more editions of work in the future.

**Production and Marketing**

“Roughly speaking the price depends on whether the book is a one-off or edition, whether hand-finished or a computer print out. My last edition *Analecta* had a retail price of £55, as the cost of material was c. £600 for the edition of 40. My books are priced differently depending on materials and edition size. I try to ask a ‘fair price’ by researching other artists’ books on the Internet, and in relation to my other artwork.”

She has contacted one collection by letter, and has had success after selling to them at her degree show. Adams has not attended any artists’ books fairs in the last year but does exhibit whenever she can, and regularly participated in the Wexford artist’s book exhibition.

Locating and targeting an audience are the things she finds most difficult, but she reads the *Book Arts Newsletter* and *A-N (Artists’ Newsletter)* journal for information on book arts opportunities. She has also contacted bookartbookshop with a view to marketing her Editioned work in the future.

**Book Artist Case Study IV**  
**John Bently**  
**Liver & Lights Scriptorium, London**  
**www.liverandlights.co.uk**

John Bently has been publishing his work under the Liver & Lights Scriptorium and Kind Red Spirit imprints since the early 80s. He has published c.60 editions, including 37 editions of *Liver and Lights* since 1984, and five editions in the last 12 months. His work includes unique books, zines and large editions. He was one of the founding editors - with Stephanie Brown, Tanya Peixoto and Stefan Szczelkun - in 1994, of the *Artist’s Book Yearbook*. This arose from their collective passion to offer book artists an opportunity to read critical essays, gain an overview of artist’s book production and most importantly to encourage greater discussion and awareness of book arts, particularly in the UK.

Liver & Lights counts for about half of his income and he has been self-employed since 1990.

“I make books. I design them, illustrate them, construct them, perform them, exhibit them, market them. They are not instant one-idea novelties, I hope they leak out their true value over time. Of the 37 volumes of the *Liver & Lights* series, each book has been different in size, scale and shape, from the last, depending on the ideas inside. I began life as a poet who found himself at art school, the two media eventually informing and blending until ‘the book’ became my primary medium.”

**Production and Marketing**

The most difficult aspect of marketing his work is: “Finding enough people who weren’t scared to spend some time with the work. In many ways, modern humans expect instant gratification and I think I make things with a very high expectation of serious study. I think patience in building up an audience has been an important lesson for me. Every performance or exhibition might bring one or two people who understand and want to own a book. So I do lots of these!”

In the last 12 months he has attended two artist’s book fairs: LAB, London Artist’s Book Fair and BABE, Bristol.

Q. Do you find that book fairs and personal interaction with potential purchasers are the best way to sell your work?

“Not the best, it’s just one way of many… I think the quick browsing at fairs doesn’t really do me any favours. I tend to sell to people who come to
the work over a longer period. I don’t think I make
work that is easy to ‘get’ in a short look. I think
fairs lead to things in the future and I believe
you've got to do them over many years (to be a
regular presence) to gain benefit. I really enjoy
the interaction, though… I love talking about
myself! It worries me that fairs tend to push
people towards deliberately making work that
will sell at the expense of more challenging stuff.
Actually… I think selling is a bit overrated as a
drug… I know it’s a buzz to have a pocket full of
cash you've earned through your own labours, but
not as good as knowing when you've really made
something special. It's the actual 'showing the
world' bit that's the important thing."

On selling his own work, or through an
intermediary: “I like to do both… galleries and
shops and stuff are ok…but I think they push
you as an artist to make work that is for a
market and for sale, so really I prefer to be totally
independent. I have had both good and bad
experiences from intermediaries. The curse of
sale-or-return being the main one for a publisher.
Some of the biggest, most obvious outlets for book
art can be the worst (they shall remain nameless)
although I must say the bookartbookshop [Pitfield,
Street, London] is an exemplary model of good
practice and I wish there were more in the world.”

On opportunities arising from meeting
potential purchasers or collectors: “Yes…
many… all the time… one thing leads to the
next… got to be out there and not sit at home
pining about that lucky break you never had…
I’m a believer in you've got to make it happen.
Get out of bed and believe in what you do with
as much passion as you put in to making it.
It all comes down to belief in the end.”

On Marketing: “Don’t be afraid to try anything.
Take methods from unrelated areas… like… how
do small theatre companies market themselves?
how do bands?… how do the big publishers do
it… take from them all and use what works. Don’t
forget… when I started there was no internet…
nobody owned a computer… so things have
changed drastically since then. Try everything,
stead methods from unrelated areas etc. why not
go on a business course? if you really are
interested, it's no good turning your nose up
at commerce… there are lots of possibilities.
Book House in Wandsworth does good 'intro to
publishing' courses. Middlesex University does a
degree in publishing…”

“I believe passionately that BOOKS ARE BOOKS.
Multiples should be affordable. Surely the idea
of a multiple edition is to distribute as widely
as possible. I know a lot of artists say I’m under-
selling myself but the whole process of making
books is for me a way of disseminating ideas over
time, therefore I sell them for an average price of
similar books in high street shops, or cheaper.
Don’t be tempted into thinking that because you
are an ‘artist' your books should cost more than
any others, this tends to alienate people.
On the other hand, and I don’t think this is a
contradiction; I sell the one-offs (which in my case
tends to be original work from which the multiples
derive) for as much as I can get. I tend to think of
a number and double it. My attitude is…
I made this. I love this. If you want it you’ve got to
seriously compensate me for its’ loss. Sometimes
it works. Any haggling over prices and I tell
people to fuck off. I am not rich yet.”

Bently has approached collections by most means
over the years, his contacts were sometimes
successful “sometimes not. Some years ago I
was pissed off by rejection, now I think… more
foul you… you’ll come back sooner or later and
the price will be extortionate. The first few public
collections approached me, actually. Some very
big ones in America rejected my work because
they said it wasn’t ‘Artists’ Books’, so I had to find
out what that was for a few years. I still don’t know.
I worked for an antiquarian bookseller for twelve
years, and through this I knew the names of most
of the librarians/curators in the big collections.”

He always keeps collectors up to date with
information on his new publications and runs
a pre-print subscription for larger editions.

Q. Are there any other aspects of marketing your
own work that you would like to improve or know
more about, or are there any opportunities you
think should be more available?

“I don’t think this is an easy question. I think my
strategy is very personal to me and I think that’s
what every artist needs to develop… don’t be
impatient, try things out and don’t be shy. Don’t
(big mistake) think that only ‘arty’ people will buy
your books. Books are books. Everybody has
books. I think the word ‘artists’, for most ordinary
people, in front of the word ‘book’ is a bit of a
marketing no-no personally. If you don’t believe
me… try it (particularly if you approach
distributors).”

“I was involved some years ago with a
groundbreaking publication called The Small
Press Yearbook, which dealt extensively with all
these issues… if you can find a copy somewhere,
it might be very enlightening. It covered
marketing for all small presses, not just artists,
but we all learnt from each other. In a way, the
artist’s book fairs and the Artist’s Book Yearbook
grew out of this.”

Liver and Lights No. 36, 3 Songs and a Camper Van John Bently
Kathy Round, Alterabbit, Alan Outram and others, 2006
Emily Larned is currently working toward her MFA (2008) in Graphic Design at Yale School of Art. She received a BA in 2000 from Wesleyan University, with High Honors in Studio Art (Printmaking & Typography). She has been making artists’ books as her primary activity since graduation; but began publishing zines when she was 16 in 1993. She has published 30 zines since then, with six additional artists’ books since 2000 under her Red Charming imprint. Her editions are usually between 25 - 55 copies for letterpress, hand-printed artists’ books; 300 copies for zines. Larned keeps the prices of her zines low as she would rather people be able to afford them than make a profit. In addition to making her own work, she also takes on commissioned letterpress projects “wedding invitations, music packaging, and the like”.

Production

“Since I was a child, I have been obsessed with books. Always a voracious reader and writer, I began self-publishing zines when I was sixteen years old. What first appealed to me about zines was not only the union of art, design and writing, but also the democratic nature of the book form. The book, unlike other art forms, is instantly accessible to anyone who is literate.”

“I pursued bookmaking at Wesleyan and on my own through coursework, a bookbinding internship, a letterpress apprenticeship, and historical and theoretical research. The more time I devoted to books, the more their role in our society began to interest me in another way. Books are manufactured objects that have been the primary receptacles of human knowledge for the past 2,000 years. The status of the book as both product of culture and producer of culture makes it a particularly poignant form in which to explore the idea that knowledge itself is produced, not an a priori fact. Excited by this concept, I began to make artists’ books that were inquiries into history and science: how we know what we know. It was this interest that propelled projects such as the Seeing Trilogy, Syntax Machine, and Galois Fields, and that continues to drive my work today. These titles are letterpress printed and hand bound; this interest in historical processes emphasises my engagement with the history of the book.”

When my books are not directly epistemological, they focus on acute observation and assist the reader in seeing an environment in a new way. The photographic books Thrift Store and Walking Middletown achieve this objective by creating experiences analogous to their subject matter. Walking Middletown organises photographs of an Anytown USA into a structure that parallels the exploration of such a place. Thrift Store partners pictures of thrift store objects with an essay about thrift stores and, as an object, resembles an old photo album one would encounter in a thrift store. A keen curiosity, a love affair with ideas, and an emphasis on the union of content, form, and process underlies all my work.”

Marketing

“In terms of book fairs this past year, on behalf of Booklyn I attended Pyramid Atlantic in Silver Spring, MD. Via Booklyn, my work has also been represented at the Seoul International Artist’s Book Fair, Codex in San Francisco, the Chicago Book Arts Conference, and the Frankfurt Book Fair.”

“Sales at fairs depends upon the fair, and varies widely. However, personal interaction with librarians & curators while travelling to different institutions for Booklyn has proven to be the most helpful. Other Booklyn agents are very successful at selling my books when I am not present, but I do feel librarians have a total picture of my work when I am there.”

Thrift Store: the Past + Future Secret Lives of Things
Emily Larned, 2003. Photo: Derek Dudek.

“I would encourage other young artists to band together into informal artist alliances, along the lines of the Booklyn model. The best way to sell work is to get it physically in front of curators and librarians, and it makes the most financial sense to share the expenses of doing so (travel costs, etc.) with fellow artists who possess the same needs and goals.”
Approaching collections by sending in a catalogue with letter yielded no sales but following up with an email did. “This is my preferred method to contact a person in order to set up an actual in-person appointment. I also send out email announcements about new editions, and normally receive a few orders by this method.”

Larned keeps collections up to date with her work by sending out email announcements with jpeg images, and maintains her own page on the Booklyn website (www.booklyn.org) She hopes to have www.redcharming.com up and running by the end of this summer 2007.

Book Artist Case Study VI
Francis Van Maele, Redfoxpress
Achill Island, County Mayo, Ireland
www.redfoxpress.com

Francis van Maele has been publishing both his own and collaborative works with other artists since 1979; he has published 150 editions, 25 in the last 12 months. He published in Luxembourg under the Editions Phi imprint and then started the Redfoxpress in 2000, based in Ireland. Redfoxpress is his main source of income.

Production and Marketing

As someone who has been producing and selling his own work for over 28 years, Van Maele has plenty of experience in marketing his publications. His output covers a variety of styles and collaborations (which he feels can sometimes be difficult as some interest one type of collector, others interest another, he also publishes in different languages: French, German and English). He attends many artist's book and publishers' fairs around the world, aided by his ability to converse in French, German and English. In the last 12 months he has attended: Seoul Artist's Book Fair, the Minipressemesse in Mainz, the Small Publishers Fair and LAB 08 in London, Manchester Artist's Book Fair, Leeds Artist's Book fair and BABE in Bristol.

As an independent artist and publisher he does much of his marketing at artist's book fairs, and finds them a positive experience and a good way of meeting both potential customers and other artists. Attending these events has given him plenty of opportunities, for example exhibitions at museums, through contact with other artists and curators.

He also sells directly to collections, having built up his contacts over the years. His initial contacts have been by letter or email, rarely in person, and he has always checked on the collections’ special interests and had a contact name before approaching them. He always keeps collectors up to date with his new publications.

Redfoxpress
Dugort, Achill Island, County Mayo, Ireland
www.redfoxpress.com
info@redfoxpress.com or phi@phi.lu

Book Artist Case Study VII
Gray Fraser
Productiongray editions, Montreal, Canada

I have been making artists' books since 1989. My first book was part of an installation entitled “The Last Supper”, a decadent rendition of the Last Supper of Christ. After that experience I condensed my installation ideas into book works. Artists' books permit me to work with a narrative structure in a more intimate space than the gallery; in a sense the book becomes the gallery.

At the beginning of my career I was making small editions of around 10 copies. I made some unique pieces as well, but in the past 15 years all of my editions are 101 copies or 202 copies. Most artists' bookshops only accept editions of 100 or more. I have published 22 books since then, and another 4 in the last 12 months.

Production: All of my work is created digitally and I print in my studio on a colour laser printer. I have sent a few books to commercial printers but I do the folding and assembly in my studio.

Q: Is this your main source of income?

Unfortunately I can’t live on the income from sales of my artists' books - that would be a dream come true. I’m a freelance graphic designer. Working
freelance gives me the opportunity to build up some cash and then take time off to create my own stuff.

Q: Please give a brief description of your artwork to date:

It’s always difficult for me describe my own work, but here goes. My books are political. My earlier works, up until 1999, explore gender politics, and my most recent books focus on two new (to me) themes: one is exploring the role of the artist, and the other is the destructive foreign polices of the Bush administration.

The binding of my books and the content have to have some sort of dialogue. The text or images must be enhanced by the choices of binding, textiles (including paper), found objects and/or containers that hold the books. All these elements combine to make the presentation of the completed work.

Marketing

There are many difficult aspects to the marketing of art in general. But specifically with artists’ books, the most difficult task is trying to convince people that artists’ books are art. I’m not sure about other countries, like the UK for example, but in Montreal when people ask me what I do, I have to explain what an artist’s book is... “No. It’s not a book about an artist!” Even after I explain to them what an amazingly and dynamically cool art form these books represent, they still don’t seem convinced that they are art.

In the last 12 months, I have attended Expozine in Montreal, an alternative zine and underground small press fair and The Seoul 2007 International Book Art Fair. I participated in one book fair in Paris called PAGE and two book fairs in Montreal (unfortunately the Montreal artist’s book fair is no longer happening). I found these experiences interesting, especially being surrounded by people who are making artists’ books and by people who know what artists’ books are. But in general the artist’s book fairs I’ve been to are too crafty for my work. Many stands have nicely bound blank books and pretty objects. And hearing the majority of artists describing their work, their focus is on the fancy papers and binding and very rarely about the content of their books.

I don’t think it’s necessary to have personal face-to-face interaction with potential purchasers. Most of my books are sold out of artists’ book shops, such as Printed Matter in New York City, or by emailing collections and directing them to check out my website: www.productiongray.com these two approaches work well in the USA.

I prefer selling through an intermediary because I’m not much of a salesman. I find it difficult to sell anything, especially my own work. I know there are many demands on artists - to be salesmen, grant writers and social butterflies (not missing an opening) - but for me, one of the most gratifying aspects of making artists’ books is dropping my work in a mailbox and knowing that the receiver will discover my work on their own.

Q: Do you feel that meeting the people who purchase your work influences your creative production in any way?

When I meet with other artists we encourage each other to produce, but I don’t get that from the people who purchase my work. I consider sales a secondary element - I see it as a bonus, but I don’t think about an audience or purchasers when I’m making art.

Selling to institutions has given me many opportunities for exhibitions and giving lectures on my artists’ books. I have participated in many group shows with the National Library of Quebec and have been invited to lecture at universities due to my work being in collections.

Q: Is there any advice you feel would have really helped you when you first started out?

I have never had any negative experiences in making art except false expectations with the finished product. Many great professors advised me that self-discipline is the key to making art. If you’re not producing, then you’re not an artist.

Sales, exhibitions and notoriety are bonuses that may come or may not. To me, they are secondary to producing art.

Q: How do you find out about ways to market your work?

I was the director of a gallery for 8 years and I found talking to other artists was a great connection for marketing my own work. The Internet is my main source of contacts right now. It’s an amazing tool for marketing your work. I met Sarah through the UWE website by googling...
“artists’ books”, and that’s how I got the opportunity to do this case study.

Q: Have you formulated your own pricing structure for your editions?

I have a rough idea of pricing my work. I take into account the price for the materials and the time it takes me to assemble the work. It is important to me to make my books accessible to anyone, rich or poor. So most of my prices vary between $10 - $30 US. Fortunately (or unfortunately depending how you look at it) I’m not living off of sales, so that permits me to keep my prices in a very affordable range. Most bookshops take 50% of sales and the shipping is on me, so the profit range is very small. But if my books are over priced then the average Joe and other artists can’t afford them, and it’s important to me that my work be accessible to everyone. I price my work higher for juried institutions because they don’t pay for exhibiting the work in galleries or international travelling shows.

Q: Have you directly approached collections to sell your own work?

My first sale to a collection was the National Library of Quebec. I found out about their collection through artists who had previously sold them work. In the case of my first sale to a juried collection I didn’t have a contact name, I found out the deadline and sent them work, consequently after selling many books I did become friends with people in charge of the collections.

For juried collections, such as national libraries, I find the submission deadlines, download the forms to fill out and send them the work by mail. For university collections I go to their websites and send a general email asking for the name and email address of the person in charge of purchasing. I then email that person directly with a link to my website. Both of these approaches work equally well. I find that contacting purchasers by telephone is very unsuccessful, most of the time they are too busy to speak in depth on the phone, and by mailing, a catalogue for example, it costs a lot and most of the time it’s just disregarded in a pile of mail on their desk. I haven’t approached many collections outside the US, I’m hoping for some helpful hints from other artists.

I keep collectors up to date with information on new books. I send out PDF files by email announcing my new publications to all the collectors who have purchased me work.

Q: Are there any other aspects of marketing your own work that you would like to improve or know more about, or are there any opportunities you think should be more available?

I know this doesn’t directly address the question of improved marketing but have to mention it. I am very impressed with the amount of research put into the Artist’s Book Yearbook. I have never come across such an in depth publication on artists’ books. It’s very informative and has encouraged me to get off my butt and send emails to international collections. If you don’t have a copy of the ABYB you should get one!

Q: Are there any other issues that you would like to see addressed?

I would like to see more grants available to artists working with books. Most mainstream grants don’t have categories for artists’ books and it’s difficult especially for emerging artists to meet the criteria of the granting bodies. For example many granting institutions want a certain number of solo shows and it’s not easy for a person making artists’ books to have a solo show. Especially if their work is small, it would take a number of years to complete enough books to fill a gallery.

I have just run into a major problem with The National Library of Canada. They have redefined their definition of an artist’s book. I sent two of my ARTISTS’ BOOKS and the jury did not recognise them as ARTISTS’ BOOKS so they added them to the collection without any payment.

Small press is in jeopardy! Please see the article in this publication including the juries comments and my ongoing process with The National Library and Archives Canada [See page 15].

Gray Fraser

www.productiongray.com
studio@productiongray.com

Book Artist Case Study VIII
Karen Hanmer, Illinois, USA
www.karenhanmer.com

Karen Hanmer has made four editions in the last twelve months, she publishes under her own name, and making books is not her main source of income.

Production

“I’ve been making artists’ books since 1997, but my at first my efforts were focused on trying to exhibit rather than trying to sell them. Also on trying to get known as an artist where I live (Chicago), rather than as in the book arts community at large. I’ve been much more successful with the latter.

I have 36 books that are editioned, but since I print them on the computer in my studio, I print more as I need them - I do not do the entire edition at once. Most are editions of 20 or 25, and I’ve only printed a couple of some of the books.
My artists’ books are mostly in editions of 25, inkjet printed with pigment inks, imagery derived from cultural or personal memory, usually the structure or the content, sometimes both, is playful. Usually but not always, the work includes photographs. There’s usually writing that is a first hand account of some kind - something I’ve written about a memory, interviews, historical texts.

I also do some installation work, and I try to make an artist’s book to go along with the installation so there is something existing out in the world with that content, when the installation is not on display.”

Marketing

“The most difficult aspect of marketing work has been trying to figure kind of materials to have, how to ensure they will reach the correct person, and how to follow up. And how to do a really effective job at this and still get new art made.


“I found that a lot of the visitors at Pyramid Atlantic were beginning book artists or their instructors, who wanted to find out how the exhibitors did what they did so they could go home and replicate it. I have met some book arts librarians who have made immediately purchases following the fair, or even a few years later. Some were already familiar with my work from exhibitions, an article I wrote, or my annual mailing. I was asked by several people to send a workshop proposal to their institution.”

The ARLIS (Art Librarians) conference was the most successful. It is exactly the right audience who purchases artists’ books. I did very well both at the conference and in the months following it, and I was able to meet some of the librarians I have been corresponding with or have purchased my work from my dealers, in person.

“I’m represented by Vamp and Tramp/Bill Stewart. The people he visits will definitely purchase books (though not necessarily mine). But I will not be able to tell them the story behind the work, and I suspect that that connection to the work will facilitate the purchase decision.”

“The encouragement of the meeting people who purchase my work keeps me going in general, but I would hate to think it would lead me to make more work of a certain theme or using a certain structure that no longer interested me because people might buy it. Opportunities for exhibitions lectures and to teach workshops have arisen from meeting people. People have also asked me to send them slides to use in their lectures.”

Hanmer finds out ways for marketing her work through “The book arts list serve, [see: www.philobiblon.com to join the discussion list] talking to book artist friends and looking at other book artists’ resumes. I wish I had understood when I was starting out that book art will not sell from the same exhibition venues where artists of other mediums show, and that selling work to collections requires different promotional materials than soliciting exhibition opportunities.”

Hanmer prices her work by the cost of materials, making, and adds a little extra for documenting the work, promoting and exhibiting it. If she attends more book fairs in the future she will also try to factor in money towards travel etc.

I have done only a handful of in person visits. These meetings have not always led to sales, but are usually enjoyable, and I always ask the librarian to see some of their favourites for their collection. I’ve seen some very beautiful and unusual pieces, especially some early science and travel books.

If the collection is not local, it is very expensive and time consuming, and I don’t think I’d ever recoup the costs of a pure sales trip. If I’m teaching somewhere out of town, I may arrange a visit, but if I’m on a family vacation, I’d really rather not bring books along and do business.

“I have sent promotional mailings and have then had the offer of exhibition opportunities, requests
to send workshop proposals, an offer to represent my work, and a few inquiries about the work, and in general this has been very helpful in terms of getting known. The mailing yielded no until I began following with an email two weeks later. The follow-up has made a tremendous difference. But I have not done follow-up phone calls when I have sent materials cold. I don’t send to many collections anymore if I do not have a contact name and email.

A few friends and I have pooled our mailing lists and are doing internet research to fill in the blanks. Everyone’s work is so rich and unique, we do not need to feel that we are competing with each other. I have been sending out a promotional mailing every summer for five years.”

The advice that would have helped when Hunter first started out would have been: “To know that I would need all the paperwork prepared, invoices, information about self and books etc. ready for that sale. But also to know that I must not get disappointed if purchasers and collectors do not buy the first time they see a book, sometimes it happens that they come back 2-3 years later and ask for THAT book.”

Hunter has found ways to market her work by experience: “marketing at craft shows was a disaster, small cost but not right. I now visit Book Fairs and galleries first, finding out if they are the correct venue for my books. Rationalising my marketing budget and finding out that over one year, the one showing at the London Artist’s Book Fair was better value than small galleries several times a year. Because my books are one-of-a-kind, my output is not vast, so targeting one or two fairs works for me. Having marketed through giving talks and workshops about artists’ books locally I now have a local clientele so participating in Open Studio events where you are on hand to discuss your work and buyers can handle the books in a comfortable environment e.g. armchairs! is proving fruitful.”

Her pricing costs are the same for each unique book and include: costs of materials, design and manufacture time. She will adjust prices to be reasonable. “By having a range of books, small simple structures up to intricate experimental construction, it spreads the price and the profit.”

Hunter has not approached any collections herself, but has sold directly to collections through book fairs and subsequently keeps them up to date with her new work.

“At the end of the day we are trying to sell items to the public like any other salesperson. Always assume that every person who approaches you is a buyer. It is no good having a wonderful marketing strategy worked out if you are unapproachable and believe that as an artist you have some special rights.”
Book Artist Case Study X
Helen Douglas, Weproductions, Scotland, UK
www.weproductions.com

Helen Douglas has been making artists' books since 1972, publishing with Telfer Stokes under the Weproductions imprint. She has produced over 26 editions to date. This is not her main source of income. Douglas also uses income generated from sales of her books to pay for new publications.

“Weproductions publications are characterised by unlimited, paperback format and offset printing. The publications demonstrate an exploration of the book form and structure, visual conjunctions, sequence and narrative.”

Production

“Producing work (as Weproductions) we have always tried to make books that sell at a reasonable price. Production costs are a definite consideration in the making of work, but not to stifle an idea. When a book is made and bound, there is in its handling a suggestion of where its price should fall within our price range of £9-25.

Weproductions has a number of pricings, 7, 12, 15, 20 and 25 pounds. A book such as Unravelling the Ripple (2001) priced by another publisher threatened to undermine our own price structure, and it did for a while. However, things have calmed down now and the book sits within our own prices as a subsidised production. With Illiers Combray (2004, with Zoë Irvine) which also received funding for publication, we priced it according to our own price structure. We believed that priced at £25 this is its true and workable sale value. With books that are going out of print, we raise the price considerably.”

Marketing

Douglas feels that the most difficult aspect of marketing her work is that of establishing outlets in museum and gallery bookshops, which she feels could be the perfect venues. She believes there should be a cultural commitment for gallery and museums bookshops to display and develop the market for artists’ books with the public.

Douglas wonders if there would be a chance for group action, to convince galleries etc. to do this.

Over 2004-2005, Douglas exhibited her books at the following six fairs:

BALTIC, Newcastle
Dean Clough, Halifax [now Leeds]
Pays-Paysage, Saint Yrieix la Perche, France
Seoul International Artist's Book Fair, Republic of Korea
Small Publishers Fair, London
LAB, ICA, London

Douglas finds artist's book fairs a great way to sell her work, providing the fairs are well-advertised and in a good venue; well-attended fairs are a positive experience. “Meeting a purchaser can give a great sense of affirmation in relation to our making of books, and has provided many opportunities which may not have arisen otherwise.”

Douglas is also happy to sell through an intermediary as long as they are genuinely keen on the work. “Over the years it has become evident when there is an enthused bookshop operator or seller, sales go up dramatically.”

“Influences of people on production is only through watching carefully how the viewer handles, reads, looks at our books, which can be very instructive. Taking stock of one’s own brimming confidence or apprehension as a viewer looks can also alert one to areas of confidence or uncertainty in one’s work which need to be addressed. This can be creative.”

Talking to other book artists and joining with others helps to encourage each other: “two people on the scene for contacts and outlets is easier than one and more of a force.”

Marketing books to collections has been successful, Douglas has always made sure she has a contact name and knows if they have an interest in artists' books before approaching them. She also keeps collectors up to date with new publications information.

Her advice to those just starting out would be: “begin, it is only by beginning in books that you begin to understand what the issues are.”
**Book Artist Case Study XI**  
Magnus Irvin, *The Daily Twit*, London, UK  
www.dailytwit.com  
dailytwit@pig.abelgratis.com

Magnus Irvin has been publishing editions, including the *Daily Twit* newspaper since 1978. He is also a filmmaker, printmaker, sculptor, writer and scenic artist; publishing books is not his main source of income.

**Production**

Irvin's books range from editions of 7 - 106, the *Daily Twit* is usually published in editions of 500 - 600 copies.

**Marketing**

"The *Daily Twit* is priced to allow me to give away up to 30% of the papers and still make a small profit. My books are priced on a 50% profit basis."

Irvin has approached collections himself, which has been mostly successful; he keeps collectors up to date with his publications on "a small basis" and has attended two book fairs in the last 12 months (LAB 06, London and BABE 07, Bristol). He often finds out about ways to market his work by word of mouth, and through meeting people at book fairs and events. He would like to be involved in more readings and performances at book fairs. Irvin feels that the advice that would have helped him when he started out would be to take a more professional approach to archiving work.

**Book Artist Case Study XII**  
Susan Johanknecht, Gefn Press, London, UK

Susan Johanknecht has been creating and marketing her own work since 1977. She has published over 30 editions, 2 in the last 12 months. Johanknecht has her own imprint Gefn Press, and is also Course Leader of the Book Arts MA Degree at Camberwell College of Arts, London.

Johanknecht uses the book format as "a primary site for poetic and collaborative practice". In the 1980s and early 1990s, Johanknecht utilised many direct printmaking techniques to make her work. In the mid-1990s she used digital techniques and often incorporated CD ROMs into her book works. Recent projects focus on the relationship between writing process and the physical, material book. Johanknecht often works with other artists and writers and has been involved in large collaborative projects (1997-2000, 2003-4 and 2005-7).

**Production and Marketing**

Johanknecht finds the most difficult aspect of marketing her work is finding the time to follow up contacts made at book fairs and events. Book fairs are a good way to market work, make contacts and be offered opportunities that may not arise otherwise. Johanknecht feels that having to explain your work to people at such events is useful and that these events can be especially positive experiences if you are selling a wide range of work, not just your own. Selling through an intermediary though is less time-consuming.

Over the last year Johanknecht has attended: LAB at the ICA in November, the Small Publishers’ Fair at the Conway Hall, London in October and BABE, Bristol in April.

Advice she felt would have helped her when starting out, is:  
"Do not be daunted by the prospect of approaching libraries and bookshops directly."
“Consider setting up distribution collaborations with your peers.”

Her pricing structure is “a balance of making sure costs are covered and ‘what does this look like it would sell for?’”

Johanknecht has directly approached collections and bookshops by letter and email, sometimes in person. She knew about the specialisms of the collections and had a contact name before she approached them. Johanknecht also keeps collectors up to date with information on new publications. Unsuccessful contacts were with some bookshops, which were unwilling to take on unusual formats or deal with small publishers. She also finds out about opportunities to market her work through word of mouth and the ABYB.

Johanknecht feels that distribution and marketing are ongoing issues for artists’ books, and suggests some ideas to overcome the difficulties of marketing artists’ publications:

“An artist’s book equivalent of Cornerhouse or SPD would be wonderful - without any restrictions that the artist or author should not be the publisher. An ‘institution’ that could unify the struggle to get space (and respect) in bookshops and also approach a wider range of libraries. This ‘institution’ could provide expertise and professionalism in marketing, that artists for the most part, are unable to muster as well as produce their work.”

**Book Artist Case Study XIII**

**Kyoko Tachibana, Sapporo, Japan**

www.sohonstudio.net

info@sohonstudio.net

After completing a degree in Publishing at the London College of Printing in 2002, I pursued a part-time MA course in Book Arts at Camberwell College of Art. That was when I started to make my own work. This is not my main source of income. But it leads to it. I am a part-time lecturer, and I do some translations.

I’ve made 7 editions, and most of them I made when I was on the Book Arts course. In the last 12 months I’ve only made one. I’m in the process of re-editing these books so that I can show them to some people.

I am interested in the act of making books itself and how these activities relate to people as makers and viewers. When I make my own work, a lot of the times it’s about perception, expression, and the process of making books that one might possibly go through. My priorities are now to encourage and engage people to make books. My partner and I have set up a name for our activities Sohon Studio.

**Marketing**

I have never marketed my works as such, but I do talk to people showing my books and other people’s works. It depends on how many editions you’re trying to sell, but I think it’s important to keep your works accessible and also to convince people, which is not always easy.

I think it’s good have a stable ground where people can get information (i.e. website), show your works and talk to people who might be interested or might be able to give an advice (galleries, bookshops, publishers, graphic designers, institutions, as well as people in other fields).

Personal interaction is the best way to get your ideas across, but I wouldn’t think it’s necessarily the only way. It is definitely a positive experience especially when you’ve just started making your own books because you can always see some form of people’s reaction (or no reaction) to your works. But I think it’s important to keep your options open and also have your books somewhere else because book fairs are usually held just for a few days.

**Q: Do you feel that meeting the people who purchase your work influences your creative production in any way?**

Yes. Sometimes you get a great response from someone, and that’s just good enough to encourage yourself even further. It’s always good to see how people respond to your books or even if they don’t respond at all. If the books were not perceived as I’d imagined, then I could try in other ways.

**Q: Has meeting potential purchasers or collectors given you any opportunities you may not have had otherwise, such as exhibitions etc.?**

Yes, I think you start to see familiar faces here and there after you’ve gone a couple of times, and connections build up gradually. This could always lead to potential opportunities at some point in the future.

**Pricing**

I always make open editions except the ones I no longer want to produce. Usually I make them in
an edition of from 20 to 30, and when they run out I make extra editions. I’ve never made one-of-a-kind works.

I always make decisions on the format according to the content. I always try to keep the price as low as possible. If it’s something that can’t be produced often because of technical problems, I have to put the price up, but not much. I would also compare with the prices of commercial books as well, but my prices are usually based on the cost of materials.

I am considering approaching public institutions such as universities in Japan, but I haven’t quite found out how I could do this as they have different systems from the ones in the UK. I would like to see more book distributing internationally.

**Book Artist Case Study XIV**

Lorelei Kampe
Lagoon Grass, NSW, Australia
lagoongrass@bigpond.com

I started making books when I was in school but I’d never heard of *Artists’ Books* (with capital letters) until an undergraduate in a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Southern Cross in Lismore, where I graduated in 2003. I first started exhibiting my books in 2002. I was a bit of a dark horse - I made books in the sculpture studio. The only stipulation my lecturer put on me was that he couldn’t mark reading the book as a performance, only the book itself as final outcome of the project. This wasn’t a problem as when I presented my work at the end of each semester I would make sure all the other students handled and ‘read’ the books as I was talking about them. Being in the sculpture studio meant that if I ever have to execute an artist’s book in bronze I have an advantage but I know very little about aquatints.

In terms of the theoretical underpinnings of my work I did the same theory classes as every one else and I found a lot of information in the library on databases and in journals about artists’ books. I also went to the technical staff in the print studio a few times about different things and they were really happy to help. There’s also heaps of stuff on the Internet which can be really inspiring. Seeing other people’s work is very important to the learning process and I was fortunate to get permission to go through the university’s collection in the Manning Clark Room which has some amazing books. Of course there’s probably heaps more now with the annual acquisitive book prize. This is a great incentive; the students can see books from all over the country, and the world and enter some of their own.

Probably the main problem with not coming through the print studio is that (in Australia and America at least) all the artist’s book goings on are attached to print studios. However indications are that this is changing. Which is great because at times I can feel a bit like the loner artist's book maker plugging away in my shed at home which Sasha Grishin described as being a relic of the past.

I started doing honours part-time in 2006. My project is to create a series of collaborative artists’ books about migration. My supervisor is a printmaker and now I seem to inhabit some strange in-between space, I’m no longer affiliated with the sculpture studio and not a printmaker either. When I applied for a place in my under-grad course I was told that these categories were just arbitrary and art-making is no longer medium specific. Unfortunately this ideal is at odds with things like administration and occupational health and safety so this bright new day has yet to come.

There is some conjecture that centring artists’ books production around universities will affect what is produced and of course it probably will, but it remains to be seen whether this is a negative or positive thing. It is also contested that the making of art and arts research in a university context are different. Perhaps this is so, but part of this is probably related to art courses moving into universities sometime in the last three decades and feeling the need to validate research in the artistic field against the long history of scientific research especially in the race for funding.

In my opinion the difference between my artwork before and after university can mainly be attributed to being less informed and integrated in an arts community. Now I can’t really separate what I do as research versus making and since reading Csikszentmihalyis’ *Research in Education*, I think both experiences are related to his theory of ‘flow’ and what we are doing in art-based research is creating entirely new but equally valid research models.

I also know that there are a lot of vibrant book art communities out there centred around galleries and events like Artpace Mackay’s *Artist’s Book Forum* and Noosa Regional Gallery’s *Books Exhibition*. These have lots of book-based skills workshops available. Having attended these classes, I can say they are filled with techniques, enthusiasm, ideas - and great people!

Obviously the divide between these classes and university teaching is between teaching the ‘how and why’ of things transmitted by imitation and teaching the cultural role of art and critical thinking about what we do in a larger context. I’m sure we don’t need a university degree to work that out, and perhaps some people who have one may have missed it. That being said, this issue is more about personal goals, motivations and ideals than where or how you learn about making art. Also a certain amount of self-understanding, someone who understands their own art-making process will be better enabled to transmit, inform or in fact learn. As to how to facilitate this self-understanding, well, I think determination and a passion for artists’ books is likely to lead us all a long way.
I have made 15 editions of artists' books so far, but now have 10 on the go, with only two finished! I have just been making under my own name as it's free to register but when I am more established I will probably use an imprint. I also work part-time on our farm, we have a variety of things, stonefruit and citrus orchards, citrus nursery, about 50 cows, and also we're putting in pecans. So that is our main source of income, although I do get a lot of time to work on books because of the seasonal and cyclic nature of farm work as opposed to Mon-Fri, 9-5.

**Production**

For the pages of my books I mainly use a bubblejet printer, collage techniques, woodcuts, drawings, rubber stamps or some creative photocopying or combinations of these. I use found printed matter, paper I've made or bought or even unusual materials like soap on facecloths. I'm really interested in the structures of books folding, sewing, layering windows, how 3D they can become.

The subjects of my books are diverse but I could probably connect them with Marshall Weber's description of Booklyn's *Found in Translation* exhibition which “examines our struggle to transform human experience, perception, and thought into acts and materials of communication”. So in essence my books are about how we give meaning to our lives, and of course everybody does this differently and through a great variety of ways. So the potential here is limitless, but my works often involve the quotidian, domestic, landscape, experience, mortality and the passage of time. The last of which is one of the great advantages of working in the book form because it so effectively manipulates time.

**Marketing**

Well, at first the hard way, I did courses and read a lot of publications on marketing and also marketing artwork. Unfortunately I found it difficult to apply all the marketing information to my books. Questions like: ‘What was I selling? Who was my audience?’ Were difficult to answer and people with no experience in the area couldn’t help either. I didn’t know about collections or collectors and approached galleries not interested in this sort of work. I did have success though with the Caloundra Regional Gallery, I have an exhibition there this October 2007 with a friend from universtiy.

There isn’t the sort of book infrastructure yet in Australia that there is in the US and Europe, although getting on the book list-serve was an excellent resource. So I’ve had to develop my own big picture and using this publication *Creative Production and Marketing* this has developed into a huge world take-over bid! I have encountered a lot of interest in the work and I have met a lot of people who say it is perfect for gallery shops. I have applied to a lot of gallery shops and similar outlets but I can’t seem to get them to take the work even on trial. In 2004 I put my teabag books in the *memento* competition which is funded by Queensland Tourism and they told me they would be better off at an artist’s book exhibition. And yet I have sold many books as souvenirs since. I guess ignorance mainly is the most difficult part, people are too set in their ways to try something new or even see things differently, so the first step is to realise that if you want to try new markets you have to educate them first!

I’m hoping to attend my first artist’s book fair in Brisbane this year. I have attended *Art on a Sunday* at Bangalow markets since October 2005. I am the only one there selling artists’ books and most of the people I meet have never heard of them, although the proportion of those who have is getting larger. Most of the market goers are holiday makers. My tea-bag books are particularly popular because they are light weight and easily posted or tucked in the suitcase, perfect for gifts or souvenirs. I have sold teabags for people to send or take all around Australia, Europe and America.

I also sell a few books to high school art teachers as examples to show students. There are also a few art collectors out there who are game enough to invest in something a little different and people looking for unusual gifts to buy their loved ones. I find as time goes on and I get better at talking about the work the number of sales are increasing, so yes, personal interaction is very important. As is touching, as a general rule people who don’t touch won’t buy! And a lot of people won’t touch unless you tell them they can.

I find this an extremely positive experience, while everyone likes to get money from selling things, the feedback you get from this sort of interaction is essential. Both for your own motivation and interest and also because as an artist I am part of the community that forms my audience and my work should reflect this.

**Pricing**

I do a mixture of unique works and smaller editions of 4-100. There are a number of things I take into account when pricing a work:
1. cost in time and money - if I intend to produce a larger edition, this may offset a book that was expensive or time consuming to put together.

2. how ‘I could go home and do one just like it myself’ it is.

3. how important it is in my development

That said I’m still not sure if I’m pricing my work right.

Any advice that would have helped

So many things, but perhaps I wasn’t listening or looking in the right places. You need to constantly educate people about the work, if you can get it down to a one-liner it’s less painful for everyone “Artists’ books are just works of art realised in book form.” Then show them examples and let them come to their own conclusions.

Book Artist Case Study XV
Laura Russell, Simply Books Ltd
Portland, Oregon, USA

Laura’s new art gallery, 23Sandy is at www.23Sandy.com
Laura’s artists’ books and events schedule: www.laurarussell.net
Find out about book arts events in the Pacific Northwest by joining the NWBookArtsList at: www.groups.yahoo.com/group/NWBookArtsList

“I was first exposed to the book arts in 1996 and have been hooked ever since. I have published 14 editions since I started and 16 one-of-a-kind artist books, with four new, editioned books in the last year. I call myself Simply Books, Ltd. However, I may need to change that at some point. It seems that there is a new U.S. bookstore chain that has stolen my name! Since I found this out I have been trying to promote my own name instead of the press name. I’m thinking that if I try to create a brand of “myself” it might be easier for people to remember.”

Q. Is this your main source of income?
“No. Unfortunately I don’t quite make enough money to support myself yet. I make just enough to support my habit! My supplies, travel and business expenses are covered, just not much profit. I am lucky to have a husband who is supportive both financially and artistically.”

Production

“I have explored many forms of book arts since I started. I’ve done painted books, collage books and even fine bindings. Most prevalent have been books using my own photography. This has been especially fun since I’ve been taking photos since I was about 13 years old. For the last two or three years, almost all of my books have been photographic artists’ books. I take photos of language in the environment and use them in my artists’ books - things like graffiti, brick wall ghost signs, neon signs and any other kind of lettering in the landscape. I started out making mostly unique books, but for the last two years or so almost all of my books have been editions of 5 to 200 copies.”

Marketing

Russell has two main difficulties with marketing: “first, convincing people that the book arts are really ‘art’, and second, explaining what the heck an artist’s book is. I’ve often tried to sell to more traditional art venues, such as art galleries, which makes the job of explaining and educating very important. At least when you sell a painting, people know what do with it!”

In 2005 Russell exhibited her work at the following book fairs: “In 2004, I had tables at Book Fest in New York, the Seattle Antiquarian and Artist’s Book Fair and at Pyramid Atlantic. I also did two small, fair-type events at bookstores this year. I do make sales at these fairs, but it’s usually not enough to go home with a tidy profit. But fairs are the best way to get exposure for my work. I’ve made many, many contacts at these events to the point where I now consider fairs to be not a money-making event, but a networking event. At this early stage of my career the networking and exposure is more important than money.”

“I find selling at book fairs a very positive experience. If nothing else I love listening to the viewers’ comments about how much they love my work. And I love just standing back and watching their reactions to my work. I view this as validation that my work is good and that is important. It’s hard to get that validation when you work alone. I tend to get a little too isolated in my studio and it is nice to get out and be praised. That networking and validation would be harder
to come by if I sold only through an intermediary. I like meeting the customer and chatting about my work. In addition, I do sell through intermediaries.”

“Meeting the people who purchase my works sustains my desire to keep going down the path I am on. However, I do find myself making simpler, less expensive books because they sell faster at fairs than the more complex and expensive books. It feels a bit like I am giving in to my customers in that way. If I like making complex expensive books, then that’s what I should do. But it’s hard to always do your own thing when you want to make some money!”

“Advice about how to price my work would have been helpful when I first started out. That is such a vital part of successful marketing and an area that gets very little attention, perhaps because it is so difficult! For marketing advice I mainly asked other book artists what they do. When I first started out, I paid close attention to marketing-related banter on list serves and I also looked at other artists’ websites. Their CVs and artist statements gave me lots of ideas about marketing.”

On approaching collections
Russell has initiated contacts by letter and phone. “My in-person contacts have been the most successful of all. I try to visit collections whenever I travel and for some reason I get much better sales when they can see and touch my work. Letter contacts have been okay, but I find that I have to follow up each mailing with a phone call. Even if the collection knows me and collects my work they still need a nudge to make the sale.”

“The first collection I ever approached was the Museum of Modern Art in New York. I was in New York to visit family and made the rounds to several collections during that trip. MOMA was my first target and my first sale and it was just sheer luck. I knew nothing about their collection or interests, which was very embarrassing. I just kept phoning the special collections department until I got a live person and not an answering machine. It took me about two weeks of calling almost every day to finally get through. Luckily the person who finally answered was a curator for the collection and I was able to set up an appointment with her right then. Now I always find out what a collection is interested in before I approach them at all.”

“I send out postcards or prospectuses about new books and on occasions I send out a “newsletter” to tell my collectors what’s new. I would like to learn how to connect with more private collectors outside of the book fair environment. And, I wish there were more opportunities to show books in art galleries or other fine art situations. The book arts need more exposure in the traditional art world. Given that the special collections market is limited, we’ve got to expand our base of potential customers by getting out into new and untried venues, and reaching new people and turning them on to book arts.”


Book Artist Case Study XVI
Wendy Lockwood, Dewsbury, UK

Wendy Lockwood graduated in 2004, and has been making artists’ books for 5 years. She uses her own PC, with programmes such as Illustrator” and Photoshop” and an ink jet printer to print out her own publications. Lockwood also makes sculptural, altered books from paperback novels.

Production and Marketing

Lockwood attended one artist’s book fair in 2005, at Dean Clough Galleries, Halifax. She has also sent out promotional material on her books, which has resulted in the offer of an exhibition. Her main sources of ideas for marketing her work have been through the Artist’s Book Yearbook and the BALTIC exhibition catalogue. Lockwood studied marketing and business modules as part of her degree in fine art, but feels that students have to know how to promote themselves. She has tried to formulate a pricing structure for her books, which are mostly unique, but having broken down her
costs and then added an estimate for personal
time at 10.00 an hour, the prices became far too
high. She has since thought that that this system of
including her time resulted in unrealistic prices.

Lockwood has not approached any collections
yet but has received some contact as a result of
showing her work. She participated in the UWE
Regenerator altered book project this May, 2007
see: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/regen/wlock1.htm
for images of her book.

Production and Marketing

The most difficult aspect of marketing work for
me has been publicising new works when they are
ready for launching, and finding the opportunity
to send out the information to the relevant people.

From May 2005 - May 2007 I have attended the
following book fairs as part of the Cat's Me-Ow
Press, or the Righton Press:
Small Publishers Fair, Oct 2005
LÀB at the ICA, Nov 2005
Halifax Artist's Book Fair, March 2006
1st Manchester Artist's Book Fair, September 2006
LÀB, Nov 2006
Leeds Contemporary Artist's Book Fair, March 07
BABE: Bristol Artist's Book Event, April 2007

I have also marketed my books at trade fairs and
craft fairs in London, including Pulse at Earls Court
and Origin at Somerset House. These shows have
been used to launch larger editions of books
attracting international retailers and gallery
shops.

I find that book fairs and personal interaction
and contact with potential purchasers is definitely
the best way to sell my work; no-one can talk
about your work and engage with people better
than you. I feel that the experience increases my
confidence and helps me to understand more
about what I'm doing.

I would rather sell my work myself because I know
it's is a great opportunity to be able to talk about
the work to collectors and buyers without relying
on someone else in a shop or gallery, who may not
do the work justice.

Meeting the people who buy the work has
influenced me in some ways. I take on board
comments and observations made about pieces,
and have gauged an insight into the types of
work people respond to and the language used.
I find the first hand feedback very valuable and
a constant exchange is provided. People have
exchanged stories, memories, poems,
experiences and recipes in the past.

Meeting potential purchasers and collectors at
book fairs and events has given me some good
opportunities including: exhibitions at the
Bluecoat, Liverpool, RBSA, Birmingham, V&A and
the Crafts Council Gallery shop in London. These
were all the result of meeting and talking to the
organisers or curators at events and exhibitions
I have taken part in.
I am always looking out for ways to market my work. I have a great network of friends and colleagues who are other artists and makers. I get valuable feedback and advice from them regarding selling work. I always appreciate that people I meet could be potential buyers, or help to spread the word about what I do.

My basic pricing structures always take into account the market I am aiming at, and the price of the editions in relation to the edition size. Each edition is priced according to the cost of the materials, printing method, production time, and methods used. I also take into account the target audience and the outlets where the work will be stocked.

Initially I contacted as many collections as possible to gauge the interest in the type of work I make. I don’t tend to keep collections up to date about my work through the post as I attend many book fairs where I hope the work will be discovered. I do send private view invitations for my own exhibitions to both private and institutional collectors and have had sales as a result of this.

T: +44 (0) 7775 762230  
E: lucymayschofield@hotmail.com  
W: lucymayschofield.co.uk

| Book Artist Case Study XVIII | Marshall Weber, Booklyn, New York, USA | www.booklyn.org | www.home.earthlink.net/~organicexpressionism |

Marshall Weber has been making artists’ books for 30 years and has published 46 editions, with 10 produced in the last 12 months. He publishes under his own name and with Organik an artists collaborative group formed with Christopher Wilde and Kurt Allerslev, this is his main source of income.

His works are half unique, half small editions “Multi - and interdisciplinary, often involving handmade, unique or small editioned book forms with handwriting, painting, collage, photography or installation and site specific performance work using literature. Both practices focus on political, ecological and linguistic subject matter and often integrate the three.”

Weber is also the directing curator and artists representative of Booklyn and is one of the experts in the field of recent contemporary handmade and printed artists’ books internationally.

Marketing

Weber’s main difficulties with marketing are that “Collections do not collect comprehensively or consistently; internalised self-censorship can limit the collecting of radical, political or sexual subject matter.”

He has attended four book fairs/events in the last 12 months: Frankfurt Bookfair, Pyramid Atlantic, and the Codex Foundation Conference. He does not make the majority of his sales through book fairs “Sometimes it can be positive but noise, the distractions of other vendors and competing events make it a poor situation for serious sales. The academic standards of the conference circuit need to seriously be raised, there is an urgent need for attention to work of the 21st Century and the inviting of younger artists and writers into the conference circuit. This is especially crucial in the USA.”

He feels that meeting the people who purchase his work can sometimes influence his production as he enjoys discussing the work with potential purchasers. “Yes, I expect engaging intellectual and aesthetic dialogue from collectors and curators, my artmaking is a social thing - astute, sincere and informed criticism will always be taken to heart by me, especially from collectors and curators I trust. This may not always directly affect my work but it can influence it, especially when I agree with the critique or observation. Of course I ignore a lot of inane comments as well....”

His advice on finding ways of marketing is “research, networking and socialising. Internet
expertise and subtle interrogation skills are necessary, always ask for referrals.” [See page 25 for how Weber works out his price structures]

Weber has approached collections by many means and his contacts are usually successful. He always makes sure he knows about the collection and has a contact name before approaching them, but has had some unsuccessful experiences when: “they did not personally want the work, they could not afford the work, the work was not appropriate for their collection, they had had a bad day that day, they were pissed at me for dissembling them in the past, someone else sold them the work before I got there, I was too pushy, I was not pushy enough, their Saturn was rising in their retrograde moon house, somebody told them I was a creep, the work fell apart in their hands, there was a fire in the library- (this really happened!”).

Q. Are there any other aspects of marketing your own work that you would like to improve upon or know more about. Are there any opportunities you think should be more available, or any issues you would like to address as part of this survey?

“Yes. I wish people would tell their collectors and subscribers that there are about four thousand new book artists who are doing really interesting and vital work that has nothing to do with reprinting the Bible and dead peoples’ poetry in fine press editions.”

“And sorry to be very eighties and all but where are all the people of colour and the queers and the South Americans and Africans and Middle Eastern and Asian book artists in the field? Which is not to say there is no diversity in the field there are some completely brilliant examples of diversity but its not enough, the level of diversity does not reflect the culture and certainly doesn’t reflect the population (at least in the USA)! I notice that recently this is improving as collections become more attentive to global cultures and multi-lingual concerns.

Why are 90% of the librarians I meet white and why are 75% women until you get to the real high positions when 90% are men?

Why do 90% of the conferences have the same speakers - taking about the same tired subjects?

Why is there no international Artists Book Organisation?

Where are the poets!!???

Why are 90% of Artist’s Book exhibits survey shows?”

“Okay now its time for the private collectors and museums to step up and support 21st Century artists’ books. Now that most Modernist artist publications have been to the auction block and back about a hundred times, isn’t it about time that private collectors supported new work by living artists? Take a lesson from the contemporary artworld you hesitant bibliophiles; get in now or pay dearly later.”

“So it’s two years later [since the first issue of this publication] and things have got a tad better, many libraries are now asking me to present or consult on how to modernise their Art, Special Collections and Rare Book collecting policies. In general I am seeing a quick move away from institutional collecting of traditional and conventional fine letter press books and a vigorous focus on collecting handpainted, collaged and digitally printed books by younger artist more associated with studio and gallery practice than a press name or publishing imprint.”

“It’s as if the fine press Soviet Union of Standing Order Presspublics has finally fragmented into new republics of Epsonstan, Hybridstan, Digistan, Popstan, Photostan, Collagistan, MultiMediaistan, Antiwaristan, Sexanddrugand rockandrollistan and many others.”

Book Artist Case Study XIX
Imi Maufe, Norway/England
www.axisweb.org/artist/imimaufe

Imi Maufe has been making books since 1998, she graduated from UWE with an MA in Printmaking in 2004. Since then she has been making editions, both by herself and as part of funded artists’ residencies in the UK. Books are not her main source of income. She has made 12 editions, with none produced since 2005 as she has been teaching and exhibiting.

Production

“I make artists’ books often as a way to convey my experience of specific journeys or incidents to the outside world, most of my artists’ books are an exploration into how you can translate that experience onto paper to the reader.”

Marketing

Pricing structures: “my loose structure is to think of an edition of say 30 books at £30 each is a total of £900 for a body of work. This sounds reasonable until you think of a print, at say 30 prints at around £100 each would be £3000. I think artists’ books are generally undervalued, for the amount of time that goes into producing them, compared to a print.” As her editions start to sell out, she will increase the price of the few remaining copies.

Maufe has shown her work at four+ artist’s book fairs in the last 12 months as part of a group and has show them at a design fair in Bergen, Norway.
The majority of her sales are through these fairs, which she feels are a very positive experience “often you don’t get to see artists face-to-face, or peoples’ responses to your work” which book fairs provide an opportunity for.

Book arts is something she fell into by chance, and she sees it as another medium to work with. She benefited from “a fantastic 3 month elective in Book Arts at Louisiana State University, USA, run by Lesley Koptcho” which inspired her to make work in the book format.

Maufe prefers to sell her own work at book fairs rather than through a dealer as she enjoys buying from other artists at these events as it feels more personal, and would like to think that works both ways. She feels strongly that artist’s book fairs are the most positive from of promotion for the book arts, that they provide a good means of telling the public about the world of book art.

“My book works are often exhibited in group exhibitions specifically for Book arts, such as Inkubator, Edinburgh Printmakers Gallery, curated by David Faithfull 2007; Sitting Room, Manchester Crafts Centre curated by Tom Sowden and Lucy May Schofield and 50 Concertinas, at Winchester School of Art Library.

These exhibitions provide a really good way of getting your work seen by a greater ordinance without having to be constantly making big bodies of work. This lets me have work in exhibitions whilst continuing with other art projects that allow me to live as an artist such as residencies and commissions.

I also take part in projects that have book themes such as UWE’s Regenerator altered books project [www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/regen/maufe1.htm] and often incorporate book art and book skills into projects and residencies that involve schools and other members of the public.”

Maufe now has her book works represented by Bertram Rota, Covent Garden, London.

Book Artist Case Study XX
Mette-Sofie D. Ambeck
Herlev/Hovsor, Denmark
www.ambeck.mdd.dk
msambeck@hotmail.com

Mette Ambeck has been producing her own editions since 2000, when she graduated from an MA in Communication Design, with her main body of work being artists’ books. She has made eight editions since then, two being in the past year. She has also produced two book-installations and several unique books since. She publishes under her own name and since 2006 also Robo-Girl Production. This is not her main source of income.

Her books are mainly small editions and unique book works. “I experiment with formats, from traditional binding to more sculptural approaches, using hand-cut illustrations and typography.”

Production and Marketing

Ambeck would like to know more about the “how, who and where” of marketing her books. In the last 12 months she has shown her work at the following five book fairs:

BABE: Bristol Artists Book Event, Arnolfini, 2007
10th International Contemporary Artist’s Book Fair, Leeds
London Artist’s Book Fair (LAB 06), ICA, London
1st Manchester Artist’s Book Fair, Holden Gallery, Manchester

Ambeck has also partaken in six different group exhibitions in Finland, Australia and the UK.

Ambeck finds book fairs and personal interaction with potential purchasers enjoyable, although she is not sure if it is the best way to sell her work: “but it is a nice way, and I also think it is important
for some people to see and speak to the artist. I do find the personal interaction a positive experience and valuable too, though at times it can be exhausting' [when you are exhibiting alone on your own stand].

Q: Do you feel that meeting the people who purchase your work influences your creative production in any way?

“Yes and no. By facing people and observing them and what they buy, my work does get directed towards what sells, but I also keep making pieces I just feel I have to make. Also if people give me valid criticism, I do take it into consideration.”

Helpful advice when she first started out would have been “knowing more about how and who to market the work to, and that you have to make contact with the collections yourself.” She has since found out more ways to market her work through networking and experience.

Her pricing structure is mainly based on the cost of materials (her work is very intricately made) and she feels it would be unrealistic to cost the whole time spent making each piece. “I estimate what I think people may be willing to pay for them, based on what I have seen others price their books at, and what I think is a reasonable price. I then take it to a book fair and test it. If it is sells really well, I put the price up next time, until I don’t feel comfortable putting it any higher.”

“To be honest I find it very difficult and at times frustrating. Because it is a book and not a painting, it is hard to set a price that even roughly equates to the amount of work that goes into it. Books over £100, I find, take forever to sell. I make a cheaper range of books too, ranging at about £20 - 40, just to be sure to sell something - even though I know it is generally too cheap; it is just no fun to be at fair and not sell anything.”

Ambeck has sold her work to collections through contacts passed on to her. “Having found out that I need to make contact with collections and collectors, I intend to do that more in the future and generally try and be more active about marketing myself.”

Since the first survey in 2005 her work has gone into at least 10 more public collections both internationally (USA, Australia and Norway) and in the UK.

Ambeck has also had her work featured in books, magazines and online. In September 2006 there was a longer interview with Mette Ambeck in the American based Umbrella Online magazine and she wrote the article; Paper Vikings, Virtually - Scandinavian Artists' Books for the Artist's Book Yearbook 2006-2007.

Book Artist Case Study XXI
Andrew Morrison, Gloucester, UK
andrew-morrison@tiscali.co.uk

“I have been creating/marketing work since 1981 but for many years bookarts were only a small part of my output. I have published 30 editions in total, under my own imprint Two Wood Press, with 3 made in the last 12 months.”

Q: Is this your main source of income?

No but it is integral to what I do - All my work is Art and Design related: I wouldn’t be asked to print for others, design, lecture, exhibit, run workshops etc. if it wasn’t for the books/prints.

Q: Please give a brief description of your artwork to date: Mostly, but not exclusively letterpress and relief printed small editions. I try to make work with strong narrative content. I like evidence of hand making.

Marketing

Q: What do you feel the most difficult aspect of marketing your work has been?

Finding an audience for work that is neither fine printing nor zine; there seems to be an established market for both but the ground in between is less well defined and peoples’ expectation of the cost of work varies enormously.

I find out about ways to market my work mainly through other printmakers, bookartists and printers. “I have found a genuine generosity amongst others working in the field, where people are willing to share contacts and potential markets.” Morrison has attended the following artist’s book fairs in the last 12 months: LâB, ICA, Manchester, Leeds University, (also some printers’ fairs such as the Woodstock Wayzgoose).

Q: Do you find that book fairs and personal interaction with potential purchasers are the best way to sell your work?

Personal interaction definitely - people are more likely to buy if they know something of the book’s history and making process. Book fairs are good for selling relatively inexpensive books. Generally people are curious, sometimes persuadable.

Q: Do you feel that meeting the people who purchase your work influences your creative production in any way?

Not in terms of ideas but perhaps, sometimes, in terms of size of edition, size of work and production methods- I make smaller works than I otherwise would because I like to have ‘affordable’ books on stands/exhibitions alongside the ‘collectors’ books.
Q: Has meeting potential purchasers or collectors given you any opportunities you may not have had otherwise, such as exhibitions etc.?

Yes, exhibitions, further fairs, stocking of work in bookshops and print work.

Q: Is there any advice you feel would have really helped you when you first started out?

Make the work that you want to make and try and sell it on your own terms - its easy to find yourself making work in response to others’ ideas for exhibitions, shops, competitions and commissions and loose sight of your real reason for making work. (This is very abstract advice and I wouldn’t have listened).

Q: Have you formulated your own pricing structure for your editions?

Production time, size and nominal value of materials/processes used are still the major guidelines. I value my hand-printed books over my digitally printed books and the prices reflect this, I price smaller editions more highly than longer runs but I am increasingly aware that these are traditional printmaking considerations and not necessarily major factors for the buying public.

Q: Have you directly approached collections to sell your own work by Letter? Phone? Email? In Person?

Yes (I still like to send physical imagery - harder to delete) Yes Yes No

Q: Was your contact successful?

In some cases a direct approach has been successful. Unsuccessful attempts were due to not knowing about the nature of the collections, the type of works they purchase and their specialist leanings. I knew the collections I approached had an interest in hand printing, and had a contact name. Anyone who has bought from me previously is notified when a new edition is published.

Q: Are there any other aspects of marketing your own work that you would like to improve or know more about, or are there any opportunities you think should be more available?

I would appreciate access to more information on the types of work, with images, and names of artists in collections before approaching them.

Book Artist Case Study XXII
Mike Nicholson, Ensixteen editions
London, UK

Mr. Nicholson is a London-based, Westmorland-born artist and writer.

After his 1985 graduation from St. Martin’s School of Art, as an illustrator, he has enjoyed a varied creative career including film and television work as a storyboard artist and a parallel profile as a visiting tutor at a variety of FE and HE courses around the UK. He has been a Senior Lecturer with the Graphics BA (Hons) course at the University College for the Creative Arts, Epsom, since 2004. Meanwhile, his one-man imprint Ensixteen Editions has released image and text editions that use ‘comic strip’ narrative conventions, amongst others, in their hybrid mix of pop-culture references, social comment, bad gags, word-play and free-association. Editions have always featured Nicholson’s alter-ego, Ron, but more recently the artist himself has appeared in the newer bio auto graphic sequence of issues. There have been over twenty editions to date, four in the last year.

Production and Marketing

Since the London Artist’s Book Fair in 2000, Nicholson and partner Mette Ambeck have built profiles for themselves and their work, though certainly with no initial strategy.

Having created work for distant audiences (magazine readerships for instance) the immediacy of meeting and greeting potential buyers at fairs was, and remains, a refreshing change for Nicholson.

The creative process itself still takes place alongside Nicholson’s other career(s), indeed follows the pattern of any of his other creative activity, beginning in sketchbooks and developing from notes and scraps of text into pictures. For the editions he produces for this fresh endeavour, added considerations such as narrative pacing and page-to-page composition are layered in, as ideas tighten up and final sketches take shape in pencil. As the artwork is inked up, the final details of dialogue or descriptive text are also finalised.

His means of production for Ensixteen material remains for the moment low-tech and simple, both out of economic practicality and aesthetic inclination. Basic reprographic printing is done locally, after hand-drawn artwork is reduced from A3 originals to A4, and editions are open, more copies being made as necessary.

However, while the means of production have remained roughly constant, the possibilities for marketing the subsequent material have not. Though editions still sell regularly through the original outlet of the fairs (Nicholson and Ambeck have exhibited at Manchester, London, Leeds and Bristol in the last 12 months), complex and interesting new channels have opened.
After the fairs there are now regular follow-on approaches to buy additional copies, and, as well as growing sales to significant institutional collections (MMU, Tate, V&A, Winchester School of Art and Smith College, Massachusetts).

Most recently, representatives from specialist outlets have placed orders for multiple issues (including La Libreria in Singapore) and publicity through the Book Arts Newsletter has also led to purchases by private collectors in the UK, USA, Far East and elsewhere, and further invitations to exhibit. More specifically commercial outlets (the ‘Travelling Man’ chain of graphic novel outlets included) are also now showing interest. (Nicholson would also like to note that since 2000 the inclusion of graphic illustrative work in the artist’s book arena has certainly become much more commonplace, and multiple zines a regular feature, alongside more traditionally fine arts - related material - older snobberies are fading.)

There has been a beneficial connectivity at work as the years of involvement with artists’ books events, institutions and people have continued. Since the invitation to write an article for The Artist's Book Yearbook 2005-2007, Nicholson has sought out further writing opportunities which have added to his academic research profile as well as his appreciation of the field as a whole. He delivered a lecture on his varied practice and philosophy, "I Walk The Line" at the invitation of Herefordshire College of Art and Design, in March '07.

Through a typically ‘artists’ books’ chance meeting, the Ensixteen agenda is soon to expand across the Atlantic again (after his you nighted states trilogy of 2005-6), as Nicholson collaborates with Martin Antonetti, Curator of the Mortimer Rare Books Collection at Smith College, Massachusetts. The project, funded by the University for the Creative Arts, will result in new narrative pieces released through the usual outlets, as well as lectures and exhibitions, beginning with The Unfinished Line at UWE in October '07.

Book Artist Case Study XXIII
Ral Veroni, Argentina
www.indeprintent.com

Ral Veroni has been making artists’ books since 1985, he publishes under his own name and has produced 19 books in total, with two made in the last 12 months. This is not his main source of income.

He produces both small and larger editions “I usually combine in my work a social engagement approach with poetics, a political and personal critique and some sense of humour to lighten the burden of drama. The artist’s book works in some cases, as an extension or part of public art projects.”

Production and Marketing
Distribution is the most difficult aspect of marketing his work; he would really like to find a reliable distributor for his larger editions. He has not been to any artist’s book fairs in the last year but has shown at 3 or 4 through agents. He finds that book fairs and personal interaction are the best ways to sell his work but “I find that friendly intermediaries are better for selling my work than myself.” He is happy to sell his work himself or through a dealer.

He markets his own work “In Argentina: through street, second-hand book, market stalls and some specialised bookshops.” In Spain: “I also find that small bookshops are better than galleries. Some local booksellers are easy to talk with. If I find affinity and goodwill I leave my work with them.” In Britain: “specialist bookshops and galleries.”

“Having said this I find that the word ‘market’ is a bit misleading: I do not expect to make a living with my books. I see them as my channel to communicate. Independent, movable, adaptable. They do not depend on venues, cultural tendencies or indifferent art officials. They are an alternative to the lack of spaces, funding or workshops. A good option for nomadic tendencies.”

“It might take ten years but at the end I usually sell out my editions. I think this probably covers the whole cost of the edition, although I don’t evaluate it like an accountant. Some publishers suggest putting the RRP at 6 times the production cost of a book. If there is a distributor involved, they take between 50 and 60% of the RRP. If you deal directly with some specialist bookshops, they tend to take between 40 and 50%. Small bookshops (not necessarily specialising in artists’ books) are more sympathetic and they tend to charge 30% (more commonly in Spain).”

He has not approached any collections personally but some bookshops and workshops that have his work, have done this successfully.
Veroni has recently curated a travelling show of works Artists and Bibliophiles: Books by father and son, Raoul and Ral Veroni which was launched at the 33rd International Book Fair, 16 April - 7 May, La Rural, Buenos Aires, Argentina and will tour Europe and the USA. You can view the exhibition online at http://www.AetB.com.ar

Book Artist Case Study XXIV
Deb Rindl, Talk Sense Press, London, UK

Deb Rindl has been making editions for 11 years and has published approx 20 since starting, with one in the last 12 months. Rindl publishes under her own imprint of Talk Sense Press. This is not her main source of income.

“I make small editions (usually around 20 in an edition, or anything between 5 and 100 - once 950) of ‘sculptural’ bookworks. Sometimes they contain text but not always. Over the last few years they have been printed mostly by computer, but when possible I prefer to print letterpress. I also use some collage, monoprints and various other media.”

Production and Marketing

“The hardest thing is to market and make work at the same time! It’s incredibly time-consuming and I could easily spend all my spare time marketing and never make any work. You really need a marketing person so you can get on with the work yourself.”

In the last 12 months Rindl has shown her work at Leeds Artist’s Book Fair and BABE, Bristol. She finds that book fairs and personal interaction are the best ways to sell her work. “When I was first starting out I used to apply for exhibitions all the time and although I had a good response and ended up showing work all over the country and also the USA, Japan and Europe, I hardly ever sell anything at exhibitions. The personal interaction is what creates the sales, even if not at that precise moment. The exception is one dealer in the USA to whom I send work from time to time and he seems to be able to sell it quite well. I do enjoy talking to people about my work although sometimes it can feel like overload. I suppose in an ideal world it would be wonderful just to leave it to someone else.”

Meeting the people who purchase her work has not influenced her creative production. “Sometimes people say, “It would be nice if you did x” and I do make a mental note; but then I tend to go ahead and do what I was going to do anyway.” Meeting purchasers or collectors has given her some opportunities “I think it has paved the way to various bits of work e.g. teaching workshops, and yes, probably a few exhibitions.”

Q. Is there any advice you feel would have really helped you when you first started out?

“Don’t think I would have wasted my time applying for any and all exhibitions - as time went on I became more picky about what I would apply for and got to the stage where I only applied for exhibitions which specifically referred to wanting work with e.g. text, or a particular size, or whatever. I applied for loads of exhibitions where clearly in retrospect they were looking for painting or installation art etc. and it was just a waste of my time.”

Rindl finds ways to market her work mostly word of mouth. “But in the past I’ve used Artists’ Newsletter’s opportunities pages which can be brilliant.”

Rindl has approached collections herself, usually with success, although “sometimes it has been made clear that they do not collect my sort of work and they are looking for e.g. fine press bookbinding/whatever”, she always has a contact name. “The first collection I sold to was the Museum of the Book in The Netherlands, whose contact details were given to me by my tutor at college. I didn’t know a lot about them apart from the fact that they collected artists’ books.”

To keep collectors up to date with her work “I usually use my Christmas card as a good opportunity to send out an up to date brochure. If I was making more work I would do this more than once a year but as my production is currently slow there is no need.”

“Of course I would like to sell more but at the moment am not in a position to put in the time and effort required. It would be good if there were more small artist’s book fairs around the country, like Leeds or Oxford (bi-annual Fine Press Book
Fair] to reach the people who are in other areas. They could be fairly cheap, like Leeds, rather than a big investment, like the London Artist's Book Fair, to encourage people to book a stand."

Book Artist Case Study XXV
Miriam Schaer, New York, USA
http://miriamschaer.NeoImages.net

Miriam Schaer makes unique books, she has completed around “5 of various 'densities' - from very simple to very complex” in the last 12 months.

“I took my first book class whilst in art school (Philadelphia College of Art, now University of the Arts) in 1977. There was no book arts programme there at the time, as there is now. I moved to NYC in 1978, found the Center for Book Arts in 1980, and began taking classes.

“I make one of a kind, sculptural books from clothing, and am beginning to make installations, to place these pieces in context. I have also started making small editions, from the books that I make as part of the larger sculpture, to extend the audience for that work.”

“Last year I had my best year in terms of sales, nearly one-fifth of my income came from sales of the editioned books as well as unique pieces. The rest comes from teaching, lecturing and some design work. I am hoping to shift the balance in the next few years to derive more income from the sale of my art.”

Marketing

“Marketing is another matter, although I have been steadily exhibiting since 1990 and by doing that I have built an audience for my work. I have also been fortunate to have had several articles written about my work in the past five years and that has been great. All sales until the past two years’ have been through friends and personal contacts. I did my first artist’s book fair in 2002 (Pyramid Atlantic), sharing a table with a large group of artists.”

Q: What do you feel the most difficult aspect of marketing your work has been?

“Actually selling. Making appointments, and selling the work. I have been very fortunate to have work included in many exhibitions and received press which is also very important to marketing and building an audience.”

Schaer has attended three artist’s book fairs and events in the last 12 months: “Bookfest, ARLIS, and the Pyramid Atlantic Artist's Book Fair. I also did a general craft fair this Christmas and it was a disaster - too many education people who didn’t understand the work, also it was in a very conservative part of New York; Wall Street, the financial area. It was an interesting opportunity that cost me dearly in terms of time, but not so much in terms of money (the tables were subsidised and very inexpensive).”

“In the book fairs, I have so far, covered my expenses and then some, but it's also a way to generate publicity and meet people who are interested in artists’ books in general and my work in particular.”

“I don’t see selling myself or through a dealer as an either/or situation. I have the kind of personality where I think it is fun (for short periods of time) so it's not a problem. I like meeting people, showing my work and talking about my work. But I am also working with a dealer who is really travelling a lot and taking the work around to a lot of places I wouldn’t be able to get to, and, so far has been excellent. He is very honourable and I can’t be everywhere. I also want and need more time in the studio to actually work! I think you have to have multiple outlets for the work, and I would like to find a couple of other dealers in other countries and in other parts of the USA.”

“I don’t feel that meeting the people who purchase my work influences my creative production, if it did, I would stop making unique pieces, but they are still what I like best. It’s been interesting though, and perhaps through my own experiences with printmaking and print exchanges, that I’ve pushed myself to expand my work to include editions. I have realised that doing editioned work and unique work is not mutually exclusive and can work in hand in hand to get my ‘vision’ out there.”
“Everything you do to get out makes a difference and creates opportunities. At first they are not readily apparent, they can become clear, but sometimes not. But yes, things happen if you put yourself out there. I think the thing that is most important is to stay true to your vision and then figure out where it fits in, I cannot make work with a specific market in mind. I have to make work that makes sense for me.”

“It’s been a long process - but I am just starting to figure out ways to market my work. There are private collectors, but also there are university and institutional collections. I have had great feedback and advice from other artist friends in the field (not that I have always listened to them).”

Schaer has approached collections by any methods: “Last year, after doing the ARLIS fair (Art Librarians of North America), I made a catalogue of my work, and sent it to everyone who has been interested in my work. Not every contact is successful but, of the catalogue which I made in June (and reprinted in the fall) two of the small editions (selling for $100 and under) are now completely sold out, I sold one of the larger editioned pieces (selling for $700) and two of the unique pieces, which both sold for $1000 and over. They sold both from me directly, and through the dealer.”

“I think it takes a long time to generate sales, especially of higher end items, and like everything, it is based on relationships, which take time to develop. For example, I showed my work to a University with a very specific collection focus, at the request of the collections librarian who was interested in my work, in the fall of 2003. He saw me at an artist’s book fair in spring 2004 and that reminded him he wanted to acquire a book before he went on sabbatical. He did.”

“I need to be better about this - doing research and making cold calls - it terrifies me. I have to date, approached institutions where I have a contact, and often they have replied and are interested in my work. It is one of my goals to do more researching of institutions and make more calls and sales appointments.”

I have an email list I send out for info on all publications. I will make sales sheets for the new editioned books and send them out to institutions that have expressed an interest. One funny thing I have found is that, especially for unique pieces, making a box to house the work, makes it much easier for institutions, universities, etc. to acquire these sort of quirky unique one of a kind books.”

“I am coming to think the best way to sell books is to get them into peoples’ hands in-person. I have had responses to mail, and the catalogue - and I think these are very important. But you have to follow up and go see people, both at art fairs and by appointments.”

Since 2005, I have continued to do sales and book fairs, in addition to exhibitions and teaching. Selling is still difficult, and I think the next hurdle for me will be to make more individual appointments to libraries to meet and show the work. I reprinted my catalogue this spring and was pleased to realise nearly 20 percent of the books in the 2005 version were sold. The past year at Pyramid, I more than covered my expenses, at ARLIS, I did not- but there was a lot of interest from many libraries, who may purchase something in the future.

I am still continuing to make unique books and installation, as well as editioned books. However, one of my very complicated editioned books is nearly sold out (one available copy from a very small edition of 6) It was not an inexpensive book, and it has encouraged me to begin two more complicated editioned books this coming year, to complement the other work.

I am also continuing to work with Bill and Vicky Stewart (Vamp and Tramp) and that continues to be a wonderful experience. I know that they go to many places and my work is seen by librarians I would not have the ability to connect with. I would like to look into finding other artist’s book dealers, especially in the UK and Europe.

Book Artist Case Study XXVI
Chris Taylor, Wild Pansy Press, Leeds, UK
www.leeds.ac.uk/fine_art/people/staff/ct.html

Chris Taylor has been making artists’ books, mostly in small to medium editions, for 14 years, with four editions published in the last 12 months. He has his own imprint Wild Pansy Press, and also makes collaborative artists’ books and catalogues with artists, galleries and institutions. He also lectures in Fine Art at the University of Leeds and is co-organiser (with John McDowall) of the annual artist’s book fair, formerly at Dean Clough, Halifax and now at the University of Leeds.

Chris Taylor and John McDowall co-curated the exhibition Special Collections this March (2007)
Book Artist Case Study XXVII
Ian Tyson, ed.it
St Roman de Malegarde, France

Ian Tyson has been making and marketing artists’ books for 37 years. He has produced over 100 editions, with 3 made in the last 12 months. He publishes under his own imprint ed.it (since 1995) and previously as Tetrad Press. He collaborates with writers and other artists, including Julia Farrer under the Partworks imprint. His books are “geometric constructivism with a hint of romantic minimalism.”

For Tyson, the most difficult aspect of marketing is “finding enough people willing to buy.” He has attended two artist’s book fairs in France in the last 12 months: Pays Pasage in St Yrieix-la-Perche and Atelier Vis-à-vis in Mâurs, and Leeds in the UK. He prefers to sell through an intermediary, as they are more objective about the work, but also enjoys meeting potential purchasers.

He finds out marketing strategies from other artists. He has sold work to collections through contacting them, but not in person. He does keep them up to date with new works. He feels: “it would help if there were more serious artist’s book dealers willing to show and disseminate information about books.”

Ian Tyson’s books were exhibited at Art Around Books Gallery, Brighton Press in San Diego, California, this March-April. “The gallery hosted A Continuous Reason an impressive selection of Ian Tyson’s books and prints, the elegant formalism of Tyson’s settings for contemporary poetry lending a palpably spiritual air to the gallery. Tyson also figured prominently in a concurrent exhibition of poet Jerome Rothenberg’s publications, many of them from Tetrad Press, nearby at the University of California, San Diego, in the Geisel Library.

More on Brighton Press and the Art Around Books Gallery at: www.ebrightonarts.com” (from report by Steve Woodall in BAN No. 34)


Book Artist Case Study XXVIII
›usus‹ Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz
Offenbach am Main, Germany
www.boatbook.de

Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz have been making artists’ books for over 20 years, collaborating under the imprint Unica T from 1986-2001, and as ›usus‹ since 2001. Their work consists of “bookworks, small editions and one-offs, all printing techniques available to us (mainly letterpress and digital) plus drawings, installations (and music: Ulrike Stoltz).” They each have additional careers in this field.

Production and Marketing

The most difficult aspect of marketing is “Time! (the lack of!) and the necessity of having to do the marketing: there are less and less dealers.”

They have not personally attended any artist’s book fairs in the last 12 months due to other work commitments but their books have been represented by galleries attending fairs. In the past, they have attended: Mainzer Minipressen Messe; LAB; Pays Pasage, France; Editionale Köln; Marché de la Poésie, Paris, France; International Frankfurt Book Fair; International Leipzig Book Fair. They also showed books at BABE, Bristol.
They find book fairs and personal interaction the best way to sell their work. "Selling through an intermediary is good (because someone else is speaking for you) - but it is also difficult (the dealer shows books by other artists as well). And some of the collectors/customers like to be in contact with the artist (which can be exhausting as well as satisfying)."

Q. Has meeting potential purchasers or collectors given you any opportunities you may not have had otherwise?

"Yes; the careers we have made in the book world (Uta Schneider: managing director of Stiftung Buchkunst; Ulrike Stoltz: professor for typography) would not have been possible without our independent artwork. But these opportunities never came directly: it was more due to the phenomenon of getting known; and also because we did not make any compromises in our artwork."

On any advice that would have helped when they first started out: "Well, 20 years ago making artists' books, or starting to make them, was like an expedition into an unknown territory! We went to the International Frankfurt Book Fair with the idea that someone would publish our books - and had to learn that we would have to be our own publishers. That's where we learned most (from customers and collectors as well as from colleagues)."

Pricing their work is "always very intuitive ... when something sells fast, this could indicate that it is too "cheap", but on the other hand: reducing the price of a work does not mean it will sell any easier. It also depends on the country where you want to sell.

Also we don't think that a book should be more expensive just because it is letterpress printed! We strongly think that the price for a book should have something to do with the contents (being new and original, like any good art!) - and not with the technique of printing."

They approach collections by letter, phone or email to make a date, then visit, which is usually successful. "They don’t necessarily buy everything we show, but most of the time they buy something. The reason for not buying seems to be influenced by the personal taste of the curator/librarian or by the general direction of the collection (which we do not always know before the meeting)."

They would like to keep collectors up to date with information on new publications “but that kind of work is another full time job, which we don’t always find the time to do on top of everything else. We think we have a good approach in general and lots of ideas of what else we could do - the main problem is time, time, time ... marketing is a professional job that requires special skills and a special attitude - both different from those you have to have as an artist.”

"We would like to know whether it is actually possible to make a living just from artists' books. We doubt it. Most people we know make books PLUS something else: like other art work, printing for other people, graphic design, teaching, taxi driving, etc. or they have another type of income, like renting a house/apartment they own to someone else; or living from their husband’s or wife’s income, or having inherited enough money from their parents... so it would be interesting to know."

Translation: Dem Möglichkeitssinn Fläche, Raum und Stimme geben / Lending surface, space and voice to the sense of possibility, a major exhibition of new works by <usus>, Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz, was shown at the Klingspor Museum, Offenbach am Main, Germany, August 2007. A bilingual catalogue (German/English) is available, for more info email: usus@boatbook.de For more information see: www.klingspor-museum.de

Contemporary book art featuring the work of members of the German artist group 13+, which includes <usus>, (presented by the San Francisco Public Library’s Book Arts and Special Collections Center, and the Goethe-Institute) is on show at San Francisco Public Library, USA until 14th October 2007.