Artists’ Books
Creative Production and Marketing

Sarah Bodman
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3rd Edition, Sarah Bodman
Impact Press, May 2010
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**Artists’ Books Creative Production and Marketing**

The first edition of this guide (published 2005) was the result of an AHRC supported project which investigated production and marketing issues for book artists. The second edition was rewritten to include new information from 2005 - 2007. This third edition has been updated to include information up to 2010.

Initially we asked established and new artists to tell us about any issues concerning the production, pricing and marketing of their artists’ books. This helped to establish a picture of the situation so we could try to address some of their problems.

Previous reference books to help artists have included: 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), these were 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, this new publication will hopefully 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, nationally and internationally.

In 2006, the publication of *Artists’ Books: A Cataloguers’ Manual* (compiled by Maria White, Patrick Perratt and Liz Lawes for the ARLIS/UK & Ireland Cataloguing and Classification Committee, 2006) also 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 when they are directly responsible for sales.

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 a set of survey forms - distributed at book fairs, through mailing lists 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, multiples and unique books and asked them to share their working practice and experience of book fairs, interaction with purchasers, discuss any problems and offer advice. Since then, they have kindly updated their case studies for this third issue, alongside some new artists’ case studies from Canada, Japan, Australia and Europe.

We also 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 their own collecting. Whilst travelling, we interviewed Max Schumann (Printed Matter), Cathy Chambers and Heather Cleary (Otis College of Art & Design Library) for some in depth accounts of selling, purchasing and collecting artists’ books. Maria White (Tate Britain), Kristen Merola and Tate Shaw (Preacher’s Biscuit Books), Mar Batalla (La Rara), Barrie Tullett and Philippa Wood (The Caseroom Press) also kindly participated for case studies of collectors, dealers and publishers.

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 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. Since then we have participated in more events and fairs, and have included their details in the suggested places to market artists’ books. An updated section of collections, book fairs, places to see, buy and sell artists’ books, reference reading, organisations and websites, should help artists to find out about available opportunities, marketing ideas and supporting networks.

Many thanks to all the artists, collectors, publishers and contributors who have contributed information for all the editions of this reference guide so far, particularly those who have contacted us in response to the first two editions, and those who have contributed extensively with their experiences through the case studies and interviews. Particular thanks are due to Tom Sowden for all his work on the first issue, and at subsequent fairs and events, and to Paul Laidler for photography and assistance at Leeds and London fairs in 2009-2010. We hope you will find this guide helpful in promoting your own artists’ books.

*Sarah Bodman*
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: Who (or where) is your main source for purchasing artists’ books for your collection?

Both institutional and private collectors make a substantial amount of purchases 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 to this question from collectors:

“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, 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, Academic Liaison Librarian, Winchester School of Art, UK

“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:

Institutional 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 collectors 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/library/artistsbooks.shtml).

Meg Duff (now retired) 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 - Tate Britain

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

By email or telephone first, allowing enough time to arrange a visit.

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

By just turning up or sending unsolicited work.

Does your collection have any particular theme or specialist aspect?

Tate Library has a collection over 4,500 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.

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: www.tate.org.uk/research/researchservices/library/artistsbooks.shtm Otherwise I can email artists a copy of our acquisitions policy.

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.

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 Artist’s Book Event, Small Publishers Fair (London), London Art Book Fair

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.

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 online, 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 their catalogue record.

If I could also mention the 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

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Examples of acquisition policies In the USA

“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. For more information read Artists’ Books at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in the Artists’ Book Yearbook 2001-2002, p. 33-39.

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. This research facility is open to the public Wednesday through Friday from 10-12 and 1-4:30 pm. Visitors who wish to use the Libraries and Archives are asked to consult the online catalogue at http://library.brooklynmuseum.org and at http://arcade.nyarc.org/search~S2 and to email library@brooklynmuseum.org citations for material needed for research. To inquire about visiting please e-mail library@brooklynmuseum.org.

Blog also at: http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/community/blogosphere/bloggers/2009/07/10/sufi-inspired-artist-books/

Approaching Collectors

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

_How would you prefer to be approached by an artist wishing to sell their work to you?_

_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, (retired) curator, Tate Britain, UK

(1) “By email or telephone. We can arrange visits or, then meet at an artist’s book fair”
(2) “Unsolicited personal appearance at work, our diaries are too full!”
Linda Newington, curator, Winchester School of Art 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 other business, so they may not be able to buy your work because they have already allocated the financial year's spending. This can vary from April - April for public 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.

[You can read our interview with staff at this collection at: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/canon.htm under the Focus on the USA section]

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 in with the types 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 New Zealand 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. You can view books online at www.theartistsbook.org.za 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, Neil Crawford, Private Collector

Neil Crawford (UK) 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.”

Neil Crawford has also updated his case study with what he calls his grumpy old Neil text concerning books:

EXCUSE ME
Flip book? Was this a project set by a tutor? To enable you to understand the concept of time, space, and physical involvement in the book work?
EXCUSE ME
Why, if this was your chosen response – and all you did was create the impression of a sequence of moving images – didn’t he/she (assuming your response was brilliant!) say that it would be far more appropriate for you to join an animation course?

Unless, of course, your creation showed an aesthetic or emotional progression conventionally unavailable, in any other form, outside the artist’s concept of temporal change. See for example, Emily Artinian’s ‘Darkroom’ – “This flickbook animates a dilating pupil. The idea for a gradual (and manipulatable) transition developed in response to Plato’s allegory of the cave, with its emphasis on two discrete states of sight/knowledge.”

The fact that the creator’s and the purchaser’s response were influenced by concerns regarding existing and diminishing visual perception should be reason enough for my purchase.

EXCUSE ME
You’ve done some drawings/taken some photographs; you want to make an artist’s book. So you put them together in a certain order.

EXCUSE ME
A suite of drawing/photographs, in itself, is not an artist’s book. Far be it for me to say what it is I respond to, but there has to be some over-riding structure which makes a sequential, aesthetic whole, rather than just a portfolio. I know this may be difficult to grasp, but when I see the real thing, my gut knows it.

EXCUSE ME
You’re on an ‘Artist’s Book’ course; you’ve got an idea involving a series of photographs you’ve made. But, hey, artists’ books must have ‘WORDS’… so you think.

EXCUSE ME
The biggest problem I have with student work is that published authors’ sound-bites are crutches upon which previously-created images are supported, or, to be charitable, have provided some influence. Or – even worse – you feel you the need of the ‘gravitas’ of a recognised author/authority to lend weight to your existing creation.

And finally:

EXCUSE ME
OK, we know you’ve got a computer – and, yes, in the right hands, it expands the potential of what an artist can be to the nth degree – but, just because it comes with umpteen fonts, it doesn’t make you a typographer!
PLEASE, think before you automatically plump for Arial or Times for whosoever’s text you’re incorporating.

And…

EXCUSE ME
I am a typographer; so think on – do I really want to add your opus to my collection? – especially if it is set in Times New Roman, italicised or emboldened, unledared?

EXCUSE ME
Old fart that I am, I bought a book artist’s CD before I even had a CD player. Come on, please surprise me as to what an artist’s book can be!

Supplying information to collectors and purchasers

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

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 (overleaf), 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.
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 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 our questions on the issues of cataloguing and archiving:

“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 (retired), Tate Britain, London, UK

“Information sheets are always useful.” Catherine Polley, Academic Liaison Librarian, Winchester School of Art, 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

“Images and a brief description of the work are always necessary.” Doug Beube, private collector/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.”
Will Welburn, private collector, New Zealand

“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

Case study interview with institutional collectors
Cathy Chambers and Heather Cleary, Library Otis College, USA

On the way to the CODEX Foundation Symposium in Berkeley, USA (Feb 2007); 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)

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 approx. 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://www.otis.edu/life_otis/library/collections_online/artists_books.html

SB: These are the same questions that we put up on the website for a year for people to respond to, about the questions and problems that they had. We tried to gauge how many people had answered in a similar way, to see if we could say that’s a right or wrong answer for the question – that 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 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 which 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 we at the end of last year 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 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 whole 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 few 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?

HC- An information sheet.

SB – Do you have an information sheet in place that you ask artists to fill in 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 communications 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.

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.

www.otis.edu/life_otis/library/collections_online/artists_books.html
bookartbookshop, 17 Pitfield Street, London

Printed Matter Inc. 195 10th Avenue, New York. Photo: Tom Sowden
**Approaching bookshops and dealers**

The strategies for this are similar to approaching collections. Do your homework first to see if your work will be within their range of subject matter and price range. Most 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. See the list of places to see, buy and sell artists’ books for some contacts.

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 ISBNs 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.

**Case Study - Tanya Peixoto, bookartbookshop specialist artists’ books store, London**

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 and Kelly Wellman prefer to meet the artists and know about their work as it helps when selling their books to customers. Some examples of books in 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.”

bookartbookshop, 17 Pitfield Street, London

Wednesday to Friday: 1-7 pm, Sat: 12-6 pm

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 the second edition of *Creative Production and Marketing*.

Printed Matter, Inc. is the world’s largest nonprofit 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 nonprofit organisation.
SB - The first, basic question is: if an artist wants to sell their books through Printed Matter, how should they approach you?

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 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 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 take 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.

TS - 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 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.

This was the first year; and we have just scheduled the second New York Art Book Fair, which will be held September 2007, at the same space (548 West 22nd Street), two floors and over 20,000 square feet of artists’ publications. The fair 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 are artist’s book fairs in Manchester, Leeds, the Small Publishers Fair in London, and now ours coming up in Bristol. In the rest of Europe too, there are quite a few in France and Germany, and a new event in Barcelona.

SB - What we did initially for the guide, as well as advising people where to sell books, was to look 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 as an artist you are really passionate about it, you will be the one who publishes it.

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 have developed a new and exciting aspect of our website - a research room, side by side with the sales site. Sales are limited to things that are in stock and available, whereas the ‘research room’ lists everything we have ever carried, with additional bibliographic information. We are commissioning essays about different aspects of artists’ books and online, curated exhibitions, such as artists’ books from Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe. Follow the links from the homepage at: http://printedmatter.org for access.

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

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

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. Any method artists’ use to inform us of their ideas is fine, be it a manuscript or photograph, audio recording, video, etc.

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.

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.

How can artists find out about your preferences?

On the PBB website there is a statement related to each individual project. The statements show the complexity of thought connected to each book and together present our cosmos of interests.

Do you feel it is necessary to meet/work with 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.

*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.

*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.

*Do you sell the books you publish yourself through website/mail order, from your premises, or through a dealer, bookshops etc.?*

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.

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

Any way: telephone, email ... in fact, we are based on an Internet platform, so the best way is to have an email with some pictures and a form that we ask to be filled with a technical description. We are actually grateful to receive proposals, so we don’t think there is a wrong way. Maybe the best way is a phone call, or an email.

We do have particular policies and specialities, but regardless the cost of the book, the kind of edition (large or limited), or any other considerations, we tend to focus on the value of the book as an art medium or space of creation. So an “artist’s book” should be placed within an interesting and more wide artistic career.” Artists are welcome to contact us to find out about our policies. We ask artists to fill a form with very precise technical information about the format, size, materials, techniques, number of copies, etc., a book statement and a CV.

Of course it is always interesting to meet the artists and even the publishers, because they can give the purchaser very valuable information about the creative and the technical processes. But, as any other form of art, it is not always possible. We work with artists, publishers, galleries, workshops, etc. to show stock.

It is very important to us to attend artist’s book fairs, they are one of the platforms we use to explain who we are and how we work. And also to see new publications in other countries or in our own country. Last year we participated in the London Art Book Fair, and in recent months in Estampa, a fair in Madrid, as visitors, and in February we had a stand at Arco the contemporary art fair in Madrid, and at the Art and Design Book Fair in Barcelona this April.

Mar Batalla, La Rara

www.larara.biz

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**Case Study - Online Bookshop/Dealer**

La Rara, Bibliofilia Contemporánea, Barcelona

www.larara.biz / info@larara.biz

We began gathering a representative selection of the most singular books in the field of contemporary art editions in Spain, with a twofold goal of collecting locally and expanding globally. Today our catalogue also contains international publishers and authors. La Rara specialises in artists’ books, illustrated books, special editions, multiples and serial objects, magazines, catalogues and reference publications.
13th International Contemporary Artist’s Book Fair, Friday 12 & Saturday 13 March 2010
The Parkinson Court, University of Leeds, UK. Organised by Chris Taylor and John McDowall. Photo: Paul Laidler

**Is it useful to give your artist’s book an ISBN?**

**What are Legal Deposit Claims?**

Applications for an ISBN (International Standard Book Number) for any English language book, including an editioned artist’s book are via the ISBN Agencies, in Europe, Asia, USA, Australia and New Zealand. ISBNs 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 I would advise that it would be in an edition of a minimum of 50 (100+ is much 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. The standard processing time for an ISBN prefix application in the UK and EIRE is 10 working days from receipt of the application form.

Larger bookstores, institutions, libraries using agency suppliers and retail outlets can order your books via distributors such as Nielsen, who contact you with the order. Bear in mind when selling your work through large distributors that they always ask for hefty discounts, and often take up to 12 weeks to pay your invoices. It may not be worth the return you get for your books, and it is usually simpler to distribute yourself without an ISBN.

If you use Publishing on Demand (P-O-D) you can get a free ISBN at Lulu.com, see the section on P-O-D for more information on this.

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

**A few reasons why ISBNs are not suitable for small editions of artists’ books:**

The cost - The UK publisher’s registration fee plus a block of 10 ISBNs is currently £111.86 (May 2010).

Legal deposit claims - (British Library etc.) you will have to supply on demand, 6 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, (Middlesex University, UK) who uses an ISBN for 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.

Nielsen BookData (part of the Nielsen/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 book fair stand or website.

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

For further information on ISBNs and legal deposit requirements see:

- The UK ISBN Agency - run by Nielsen Book for publishers based in the UK or Republic of Ireland. There are some FAQs and guidelines on the website. www.isbn.nielsenbook.co.uk
- The International ISBN Agency: www.isbn-international.org
- Legal Deposit information at the British Library www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/legaldep/index.html
Closure, Sarah Bodman, book made using P-O-D via blurb.com

Democratic Multiple, Tom Sowden, book made using P-O-D via lulu.com

Is it a game or is it real?, Paul Laidler, book made using P-O-D via blurb.com
Using Publish on Demand (P-O-D) services to produce and market your artists’ books

The rise in publishing on demand availability has been a great help to artists wanting to publish their own books without the outlay of printing and binding.

We use P-O-D to make hard copies of our free PDF download books available to people who want a bound copy; it means we don’t have to pay for printing or shipping costs and they can get a bound copy at cost price. The hard copy version of this book is P-O-D via Lulu.

Using a company such as Blurb or Lulu has allowed many artists to print books and have access to online sales. If you haven’t used P-O-D before, here is a basic idea of how it works.

Ordering copies of your books

Once you have uploaded your book - before you order multiple copies - it is a good idea to just order one as a proof copy to check you are happy with how it looks. Quality of images can look very different when printed, tones may be darker, colours can vary, or the font might look too big or small in print rather than on your screen. If you get one copy first you can make any changes before you order multiple copies or put your book for public sale online.

In both Blurb and Lulu, you can choose whether to make your book ‘private’ – which means that it is not for sale on their website, but you can order copies from them to sell yourself.

One example of how the variations work is a small, pulp-fiction size artist’s book I made last year for the welovethebooks exhibition ‘Closure’. I produced a book of the same name, via Blurb (see image opposite). I set the price as follows; for my own private purchase it costs me £3.50 (PB) and 11.95 (HB) a copy, plus shipping. It is also ‘public’, so can be sold online, and I have added preview so people can flip through the whole book.

Online the purchase costs are: £7.50 (PB) and £15.95 (HB), plus shipping. If I sold online, I would make a profit of £4.00 for each copy sold. If I order 10 ‘private’ copies for myself, with economy shipping at £4.12, I also get a 10% discount (also at Lulu) if I order 10 copies, which at £3.50 almost covers the shipping. The total price = £35.62. If I sell them at book fairs at a cheaper price than online £6.95, I would make 3.39 a copy. This is less profit but it means that I do know who has bought it, and I can sign it too. Selling online via P-O-D sites may make a little more money but, as you have no record of who is purchasing your books you don’t get to build any kind of relationships for future sales.

Marketing P-O-D books online

You can make your book available for sale via Blurb or Lulu – although neither site has a category for artists’ books, the nearest is arts / photography. On Lulu you can also choose to sell in the marketplace via Amazon link-ins. Be aware though that you will not make much (or sometimes any) profit if you sell via Amazon link-ins. On Lulu you can make your book public and assign an ISBN to your title to sell your book in online bookstores such as Amazon and in the Lulu Marketplace. (See the previous section on using ISBNs before you decide to do this).

You don’t have to have an ISBN to publish your book, but if you intend to make your book available for sale on Amazon (via Lulu) or a Lulu marketing link you
will need to have the ISBN. If you use an ISBN from Lulu it will include Lulu’s prefix and Lulu will be listed as the publisher. If you assign your own ISBN then your publisher info will be listed. (Lulu ISBNs are free in the Lulu Publishing Wizard). If you offer multiple purchasing options, i.e. hardback or paperback through Lulu’s marketplace links, then each version of the book must have a different ISBN.

**Making Money**

Do bear in mind that linking to Amazon sales might make your book visible to a wider market but will take a massive cut in your profits, so price accordingly. There is a breakdown of the pricing structure for Lulu and Amazon link-ins in the pricing guide, so you will see exactly what you get if you sell in this way.

You can build your own storefront in Lulu, and use it as a place to market your books without the Amazon tie-in. Artists are doing this, especially with links from their own websites. For example, see the US artist Clifton Meador’s page: http://stores.lulu.com/cliftonmeador

You can also have different versions available if you want to give people options, such as a free PDF download version, cheap paperback or pricier hardback.

With Lulu you set the price you want and they add their profit, you can see the breakdown of costs as you go and adjust your prices up or down. If you do choose the Amazon tie-in, you can see how much they will take on sales and set your price accordingly.

Blurb does not take any profit from sales if you make your book public for sale on their website, but it does charge a monthly processing fee of £3.00 (5 USD) when making payments, to a maximum of £12.50 (25 USD), this is only applied when making payments on profits from sales, so if you have no sales in a month, you won’t pay anything. You can use different ways to promote your book, Google search prompts, announcements etc. but no storefront.

**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 that are 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 Bently, John McDowall (Bradford, UK) adds: “even though the books are handprinted and bound in small numbers, I maintain ‘book’ prices - between £15 to £60 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.”

**Further information**

You can also promote your P-O-D books through ABC, the Artists’ Books Cooperative, a network created by and for artists who make print-on-demand artists’ books. “Our aim is to help artists getting their self-published books to the people who are interested in them. We don’t sell books through this site but we make information about selected books available.” The site features several artists, their books and links to their websites: http://abcoop.wordpress.com
Many recent graduates and new book artists are unsure of strategies for pricing their work, so here are a few basics 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 use their own websites to sell their books, with prices displayed for ordering. Visit some to compare work, materials and pricing. Visit artist’s book fairs and look at 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 useful information at www.bookworks.org.uk
Follow the links from Resources to ‘Fact-sheets’ or use this direct link (www.bookworks.org.uk/asp/resources.asp?sub=facts) 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 P-O-D edition to order. The technologies available for home computing/print and online publishing, really do make it easier now for artists to produce their own books.

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 Bently, 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 initial outlay of printing costs. Helga Kos, an artist in The Netherlands made a large, hand printed edition (of 288) of a 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: 1500 Euros, but the material costs and the costs for the CD, the box and the binding were extremely high as well. So the final price was set at a certain reasonable amount. Although some people still find it a large amount usually, they agree that the price is reasonable. And still it will not be enough to pay for all the hours I put into the project. But that is not the most important thing.”

More recently in October 2009, Sam Winston used kickstarter.com to raise money to produce his edition of A Dictionary Story. You can read how he did it online (at www.kickstarter.com/projects/1360225971/a-dictionary-story-art-book), if you want to consider doing something like this yourself, you do need to raise the entire budget through sponsorship pledges or the project is cancelled. There is information on how Kickstarter works at: www.kickstarter.com/help/faq#AllFund

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 very 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 incurs 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 websites 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 6 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 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

“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) $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 having a stand at 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** for suggested venues.

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 £20 - 600+ for a one-day to a 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 founded by artist Noëlle Griffiths: www.artistsbooksonline.com which has been very successful in helping artists who make smaller editions market their work through the website, travelling exhibitions and book fairs. Artistsbooksonline currently has 35 members, with the costs of attending book fairs split between those who exhibit. As a group they manage to attend many national and international fairs, see: www.artistsbooksonline.com/fairs.shtm

Quite a few artists also group 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.

**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 artists’ books online - a London-based website showcasing artists’ books from around the world. It also includes mail art projects, events and publications. Book artists can submit images and information/contact details for their book works for inclusion in the online artists’ book gallery. Contact Gandha Key: gandha07@yahoo.co.uk www.zyarts.com/zybooks

Join Artist Books 3.0 and ask others to contact you to form a group: http://artistbooks.ning.com

Artist Books 3.0 also has a group you can join to discuss Buying & Selling: Book Fairs, Shops & Galleries http://artistbooks.ning.com/group/bookfairs&galleries

If you make zines, you can join We Make Zines: http://wemakezines.ning.com

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 a related journal, or our Book Arts Newsletter (we run a free section for artists to find others working in their area, just email to 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 basic things to prepare to make the most of your stand:

**Publicity material, price lists/order forms** with contact details. These are invaluable for people to take away, particularly for collectors who gather price lists to make orders after they have viewed books on show at the fairs. If you have a website, make sure it is included on all your material.

**Business cards or postcards** with contact details, to
The Third Manchester Artists' Book Fair, Holden Gallery, Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University Saturday 7th November 2009. Photo: Tom Sowden

The Small Publishers Fair, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL Friday 13th and Saturday 14th November 2009. Photo: Paul Laidler
You can get very nice cheap business cards made by companies such as www.moo.com to hand out to contacts made at the fair. Business cards are 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 usually, but not always provided, and if the fair 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.

**Stock sheet** so you know how many copies of your books are available for sale if people want to order them.

Some **bags or envelopes** to put sold items into.

**A small shelving or display system** will help you make full use of a table, or small book stands. Even if you use small cardboard boxes and cover them, it helps add height to your stand, and makes a feature of books on them.

**A sign with your name or press name**, so people can see whose work they are looking at on your table.

**A money box** with change for any sales.

Don’t forget to pack your books!

**The importance of artist’s book fairs for marketing and networking**

“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

Here are some of the replies to the question: **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, 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

“It is very important to meet other 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, South 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 few opportunities to show your work, especially to a receptive audience. I participated in my first artist’s book fair in 2005 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)

(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.
**Artist's Book Fairs List**

The following alphabetical list is of the main fairs that book artists attend. They are the most relevant, and work out to be the least expensive for a stand/table.

Artist’s book fairs usually include related talks & events, and are a great way of meeting other artists as well as selling your books. There are many other kinds of book fairs around the world (including the Frankfurt Book Fair which includes a Book Arts section), for a really up-to-date list of current and future international events, see Clemens-Tobias Lange’s informative calendar at: [www.kuenstlerbuecher.com/mostre.php](http://www.kuenstlerbuecher.com/mostre.php)

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**Délires de Livres - Livres Objets et Livres d'Artistes**

A biennial event in the Chartres area, organised by Chantal Leibenguth of Am’Arts, 8 rue des héraults, 28630 Ver les Chartres, France.

Tel: +33 2 3726 30 66

[www.am-arts.com](http://www.am-arts.com)

**Doverodde Book Arts Festival**

Limfjordscentret, Fjordstræde 1, Doverodde 7760 Hurup Thy, Denmark

Annual festival with stands, talks and events, hosted by the Book Arts Center at Limfjordscentret.

Contact: Liz Hempel-Jørgensen or Karin Nikolaus at booking@limfjordscenter.dk

[www.bookarts-doverodde.dk](http://www.bookarts-doverodde.dk)

**Editions and Artists' Books Fair, New York**


[www.eabfair.com](http://www.eabfair.com)

**Fine Press Book Association fairs**

FPBA organises book fairs around the UK, with stands available for members. If you produce your own books you can join the FPBA. See the website for details: [www.fpba.com](http://www.fpba.com)

**Gallery North Artist's Book Fair**

University of Northumbria, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 8ST, England. A new fair open to all artists working with book arts, small press publishing, comic artists, printmakers and zines. Gallery North invites national and international Artist's Book Makers to the region to sell and promote their work directly to the public.

Contact: theresa.easton@northumbria.ac.uk

**Glasgow International Artists' Bookfair**

Biennial, 2-day event (April) at the Exhibition Hall at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Organised by Helen Shaddock and Harald Turek. [www.giab.org.uk](http://www.giab.org.uk) glasgowartistsbookfair@googlemail.com

**Lancashire Zine + Artist's Book Fair, Preston**

A new fair, organised by Craig Atkinson of Café Royal for images from the 2010 fair, see [www.zinefair.com](http://www.zinefair.com)

Email for info: craig@caferoyal.org

**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

**London Art Book Fair**

Organised by Marcus Campbell and Whitechapel Gallery, takes place at Whitechapel Gallery, London. [www.marcuscampbell.co.uk](http://www.marcuscampbell.co.uk)

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**BABE: Bristol Artist’s Book Event**

Biennial, 2-day book fair and exhibition at Arnolfini, Bristol, next event 2011. Organised by Arnolfini and the Centre for Fine Print Research at UWE, Bristol. For details email: Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk

[www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk](http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk)

**Book Art Square at the Frankfurt Book Fair**

Organised by the association BuchDruckKunst e.V the Frankfurt Book Fair presents a special forum for makers of fine prints, painterly books, artists’ books and book objects. 100 hand presses, publishers, editions, book artists, and museums assemble in Hall 4.1 around Book Art Square under the motto: Book Art under one roof.


**CODEX International Book Fair and Symposium**

The biennial CODEX International Book Fair and Symposium - artists’ books, fine press and fine art editions, takes place February 2011, 2013 and so on, in Berkeley California, USA. Organised by Peter Rutledge Koch at The Codex Foundation, 2205 Fourth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710, USA

[www.codexfoundation.org](http://www.codexfoundation.org)

[Peter@codexfoundation.org](mailto:Peter@codexfoundation.org)

**Como Pedro por mi casa**

An international illustrated book festival organised by Julia Pelletier and Rafael Castañer, both professional illustrators and editors of artists’ books and magazines.

It takes place each year in Barcelona at “La Central del Raval” bookshop at Calle Elisabeth, 6 08001 Barcelona, Spain. [www.festivaldelibrosilustrados.com](http://www.festivaldelibrosilustrados.com)

[www.juliapelleter.com](http://www.juliapelleter.com)

[info@juliapelleter.com](mailto:info@juliapelleter.com)

**Contemporary Creative Books International book fair**

Organised annually (October) by Atelier Vis-a-Vis in Marseille, France. [www.atelier-vis-a-vis.org](http://www.atelier-vis-a-vis.org) Bookaffair@wanadoo.fr
Mainzer Minipressen Messe (Small Press Fair)
Biennial small press and artist’s book fair, originally set up as an alternative to the Frankfurt Book Fair and now known in its own right. Organised and hosted by the Gutenberg Museum. For information and timetables, see www.minipresse.de

Manchester Artist’s Book Fair
Annual one-day fair, organised by the Righton Press at Manchester School of Art, with an opening talk.
Contact: Neil Grant, Righton Press
N.Grant@mmu.ac.uk
www.artdes.mmu.ac.uk/rightonpress

Norddeutsche Handpressenmesse
Hand Press Fair, a biennial artist’s book fair, organised by BuchDruckKunst e.V (www.buchdruckkunst.de) and hosted by the Museum der Arbeit at Wiesendamm 3, 22305 Hamburg, Germany. www.museum-der-arbeit.de

NY Art Book Fair
Annual event organised by Printed Matter, New York. The NY Art Book Fair is free and open to the public. For more information visit www.nyartbookfair.com

Pyramid Atlantic Book Arts Fair & Conference
Biennial event in Silver Spring, MD, USA. For more information see www.pyramidatlanticartcenter.org or email: info@pyramid-atlantic.org

Scottish Poetry Library - By Leaves We Live
julie.johnstone@spl.org.uk / www.spl.org.uk

Seoul International Artist’s Book Fair
COEX Hall, Seoul, Republic of Korea
bookarts@hanmail.net

Small Publishers Fair
RGAP organises the annual Small Publisher’s Fair, London, which takes place in November at the Conway Hall, London. Contact: Martin Rogers
www.rgap.co.uk / info@rgap.co.uk

Sydney Art on Paper Fair (SAPF)
A biennial event that showcases photography, limited edition prints, drawing, painting, sculpture, limited edition art posters, digitally created art, artists’ books - all conceivable art forms using paper.

TIRAGE LIMITE: Rencontres triennales romandes du livre
Co-organised by art&fiction and the University Library of Lausanne. Contact: Christian Pellet, art&fiction, Avenue de France 16, CH-1004 Lausanne, Switzerland. www.artfiction.ch / info@artfiction.ch


For details of more artists’ books conferences and events, see www.philobiblon.com which has lots of information, and the Book_Arts L 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 in the first issue, that artist’s book makers should know how easy/cheap it is to integrate Paypal® into an ordinary website. Make sure you read Paypal’s guidelines before adding this system as they added new charges for transactions in 2010. www.paypal.com

There are also publishing sites such as blurb.com and lulu.com, which can produce and sell your books for you. See the section on P-O-D for more information on this.

Karen Hanmer (www.karenhanmer.com), Evil Twin Publications (www.eviltwinpublications.com), Otto (www.ottobooks.co.uk), Radoslaw Nowakowski (www.liberatorium.com) and Jackie Batey - Damp Flat Books (www.dampflat.com) are good examples of artists’ websites with books for sale.

“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 [a good forum for this is http://artistbooks.ning.com/group/thebusinessofbooks]

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, access event calendars, online journals and newsletters (see the useful websites list for some addresses). These also provide useful information on opportunities for exhibiting work.

Showing your work online gives you a presence that allows people from all over the world to view without having to pay postage costs to send out images on CD.

“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 colour and structure that you can’t get from a catalogue.” Sandra Still, curator, Emory University Library, Georgia, USA

You can create a free website for yourself using Google or the .blogspot.com suffix, see: www.blogger.com/start

If you don’t want to set up your own website, join one that does it for you. Zybooks showcases artists’ books from around the world www.zyarts.com/zybooks or you can create your own free homepage on Artist Books 3.0 to upload information, images, videos, and post blogs and news: http://artistbooks.ning.com

You could join a group of artists such as Noelle Griffiths www.artistbooksonline.com established for book artists to exhibit work and share the costs of artist’s book events (see Book Artist Case Study I).

Dealers, artist-publishers and bookshops also have informative websites, look at examples such as bookartbookshop, Book Works, Café Royal, Mark Pawson, Johan Deumens, Printed Matter, Perro Verlag, Preacher’s Biscuit Books, Vamp and Tramp, Boekie Woekie and Art Metropole. Artists who publish reference material on making books also have helpful websites, such as Keith Smith and Carol Barton.

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

**Wikipedia**

Emily Artinian (emilyartinian.com) and Francis Elliott (franciselliott.com) have been updating and editing pages on Wikipedia to create a better base of contextual information and critical commentaries on the subject.

Main entry for Artists’ Books at Wikipedia, Emily Artinian is editing and writing pages on the subject: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artists_books

Francis Elliott has been adding examples of seminal books to Wikipedia, a list of his pages can be seen at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Franciselliott

You can also download free PDFs of:

Francis Elliott’s Possible Strategies For Exploiting Wikipedia For The Dissemination and Profiling of Artists’ Books and Multiples on the Internet at www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/seminar08.htm

Emily Artinian’s presentation (NPOV) Neutral Point of View, looking at how the artist’s book pages on this collaborative encyclopedia have evolved: http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/contrad09/artinian.htm
Digitising artists’ books for library collections

A topic that arose during the initial survey is that many institutional collections would like 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, Academic Liaison Librarian, Winchester School of Art, UK

Some examples of online collections:

Otis has a large visual database at: http://www.otis.edu/life_otis/library/collections_online/artists_books.html

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has a visual database of c.500 of the artists’ books in its collection: http://digidb.library.wisc.edu/ArtistsBks/

Artists’ Books Online is designed to promote critical engagement with artists’ books and to provide access to a digital repository of metadata, scans, and commentary. www.artistsbooksonline.org

The V&A has a selection of online images of books in the collection of the National Art Library: http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/database/index.php

David Paton’s research website on South African Artists’ Books has a visual database at: www.theartistsbook.org.za

Quite a few librarians have said that they would like to make visual databases of books in their collections. Some already ask artists to sign a copyright release form, for example, The Joan Flasch Artist’s Book Collection at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (see the online database at http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm4/index_ifabc.php?CISOROOT=/jfabc). At our school’s Bower Ashton library, artists are asked if they are happy to have their books photographed for the online catalogue when purchases are made.

Digitising for databases is something that library staff could collaborate on and share their ideas, if you have any views 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.

Some useful websites

These websites are listed for the amount of information they have for book artists, from fairs and events to workshops, exhibition opportunities, societies to join, and places to see, sell, buy and study artists’ books. Many book artists also have their own websites which are not listed here due to space restrictions. To find out more about an individual artist, type their name into a search engine such as Google to find relevant sites. Artists’ sites are also useful if you want to work out some price comparisons against your own books, as many artists have works for sale online. This is by no means a complete list, just some ideas of places to start.

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

Artists’ books at Carnegie Mellon, with useful references. www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/md22/art/artistsbooks.html


Johan Deumens’ site for sales of artists’ books with useful links and reference books. www.artistbooks.com

A collaborative artists’ books group. www.artistbooksonline.com


Special Collections at Chelsea College of Art and Design Library. www.arts.ac.uk/library/3449.htm


Boabooks - an independent publishing house based in Geneva, Switzerland. www.boabooks.com

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

Nordic network for bookbinders, graphic designers, artists, calligraphists and paper marblers. www.bokbindarkompetens.se

Paul Johnson’s Book Art Project promoting book arts in education. www.bookart.co.uk

Alicja Slowikowska’s website for numerous artists’ books exhibitions and info in Poland. http://bookart.pl

London-based bookartbookshop, the place to buy and sell artists’ books in the UK. www.bookartbookshop.com

Podcast interviews with book artists and poets of all stripes, hosted by Steve Miller, coordinator of the MFA in the Book Arts Program at The University of Alabama. www.bookarts.ua.edu/podcast/podcasts.html

Our own CFPR website, with information on projects, the free Book Arts Newsletter and publications downloads, links, exhibitions and resources. www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk

The Blue Notebook: Journal for artists’ books http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bnotebk.htm

Booklyn Artists’ Alliance, featuring many artists’ books, exhibitions, artists and Booklyn’s educational programmes. www.booklyn.org


Book Works London - information on current and past artists’ publications, forthcoming projects and mail order. www.bookworks.org.uk

Café Royal artists’ zines & books. www.cafetery.org

CCA Kitakyushu institute for study and research in contemporary art. www.cca-kitakyushu.org

New York Center for Book Arts, established 1974. www.centerforbookarts.org


Dia:Beacon - New York bookstore including artists’ books. www.diabooks.org


Firecatcher Books, an artist-run company, UK. www.firecatcherbooks.co.uk


Fine Press Book Association - membership details and information, plus links. www.fpba.com

Granary Books - information about the writers, artists, and other creative individuals they publish and work with. www.granarybooks.com


Journal of Artists’ Books, established by Brad Freeman http://jab-online.net

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

Clemens Tobias Lange’s amazingly helpful calendar of international book events. www.kuenstlerbuecher.com/mostre.php
Artists’ books, reading room and writing by Radoslaw Nowakowski. www.liberatorium.com

AILA (Italian Association for the Promotion of Artists’ Books and Private Presses) to promote and support in artist’s books and illustrated books by Italian presses. http://www.libreriamarini.it/index.php?id=aila

Mark Cockram / Studio Five, fine contemporary bookbinding, book arts, printing and box art. www.markcockrambooks.co.uk

Mermaid Turbulence, founded in 1993 to publish contemporary works by artists and writers. www.mermaidturbulence.com

Minnesota Center for Book Arts in Minneapolis with an amazing programme of events, workshops and exhibitions. www.mnbookarts.org

Mark Pawson’s website of multiples, artists’ books and lots more. www.mpawson.demon.co.uk

Experimental bindings by Carmencho Arregui and other subjects related to books. www.outofbinding.com

The Permanent Bookshop, Brighton, UK. A not-for-profit collector, promoter and retailer of artist’s books and other printed items. www.permanentbookshop.com

Perro Verlag - Books by Artists publishes visual art chapbooks, manifestos, pamphlets from the lowercase reading room and more. www.perroverlag.com

Book Arts Web - created by Peter D. Verheyen, for artists’ books information, plus links to numerous book arts websites. www.philibiblon.com

The Bonefolder - the open-access e-journal for bookbinding and the book arts. www.philibiblon.com/bonefolder

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

Printed Matter NY - online selection of artists’ books, multiples, reference books and info. www.printedmatter.org

Professione Libro association promotes the arts of the book, through events, courses, workshops and research in bookbinding, fine binding, experimental binding, book and paper repair, paper decoration and the use of textiles in bookbinding. www.professionelibro.it

Steve Daiber’s artists’ books and collaborative projects in Cuba. http://redtrilliumpress.com

Sara Ranchouse Publishing: artists’ books, printed multiples and art-at-large. www.sararanchouse.com

The Society of Bookbinders website - information, events, membership and useful links. www.societyofbookbinders.com

So Multiples journal of multiples and artists’ publications. www.so-multiples.com

The artist’s book collection at Manchester Metropolitan University. www.specialcollections.mmu.ac.uk

Tate Britain’s artists’ books collection. www.tate.org.uk/research/researchservices/library/artistsbooks.shtm

David Paton’s research website for South African Artists’ Books. www.theartistsbook.org.za

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

Vamp and Tramp booksellers dealing in fine press, miniature and artists’ books. www.vampandtramp.com

Visual Studies Workshop, USA programmes, residencies and artists’ books. www.vsw.org

We Make Zines - an online community for zine makers and readers. http://wemakezines.ning.com

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

Bongoût - Berlin-based prints and artists’ books, with gallery and online info founded by Meeloo Gfeller and Anna Hellsjård. www.xn--bongot-0ya.com
Places to see, buy and sell books in the UK & EIRE

Arnolfini - Bookshop
16 Narrow Quay, Bristol, BS1 4QA
www.arnolfini.org.uk/pages/bookshop
bookshop@arnolfini.org.uk

Artwords Bookshop
65a Rivington Street, London EC2A 3QQ
www.artwords.co.uk / shop@artwords.co.uk

Bank Street Arts
32-40 Bank Street, Sheffield S1 2DS
www.bankstreetarts.com / info@bankstreetarts.com

Brahm Gallery, The Brahm Building
9A Alma Road, Headingly. Leeds LS6 2AH
www.brahm.com/gallery
gallery@brahm.com

bookartbookshop
17 Pitfield Street, Hoxton, London, N1 6HB
www.bookartbookshop.com
info@bookartbookshop.com

Café Royal - www.caferoyal.org / craig@caferoyal.org

Cornerhouse
70 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 5NH
www.cornerhouse.org

Edinburgh Printmakers Gallery
23 Union Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LR, Scotland
www.edinburgh-printmakers.co.uk
info@edinburgh-printmakers.co.uk

EMH Arts / Eagle Gallery
159 Farrington Road, London EC1R 3AL
www.emmahilleagle.com / info@emmahilleagle.com

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

Here Gallery
108 Stokes Croft, Bristol, BS1 3RU
www.thingsfromhere.co.uk / shop@thingsfromhere.co.uk

Here and Now
41a Killigrew Street, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 3PW
www.heregallery.co.uk / info@heregallery.co.uk

Hughson Gallery
1 CLEvedon Gardens, Glasgow G12 0PU, Scotland
www.hughsongallery.com / jh@hughsongallery.com

Koenig Books at the Serpentine Gallery
Kensington Gardens, London W2 3XA
www.koenigbooks.co.uk / info@koenigbooks.co.uk

Marcus Campbell Art Books
43 Holland Street, London SE1 9JR
www.marcuscampbell.co.uk
info@marcuscampbell.co.uk

Neo Bookshop Cafe & Gallery
25-31 Market Place, Cockermouth Cumbria
www.neo-bookshop.co.uk / info@neo-bookshop.co.uk

Off-Centre Gallery
13 Cotswold Road, Bristol BS3 4NX
www.peterford.org.uk / offcentre@lineone.net

OWL & LION Gallery
15 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2HS, Scotland
www.owlandliongallery.com
info@owlandliongallery.com

Permanent Bookshop & Gallery
20 Bedford Place, Brighton BN1 2PT
http://permanentbookshop.com
info@permanentgallery.com

Phoenix Brighton
10–14 Waterloo Place, Brighton BN2 9NB
www.phoenixarts.org / info@phoenixbrighton.org

Project Arts Centre - Bookshop
39 East Essex Street Temple Bar, Dublin 2, Ireland
www.projectartscentre.ie/index.php/bookshop

Sims Reed Limited
43A Duke Street, St. James’s, London SW1Y 6DD
www.simsreed.com / tim@simsreed.com

Tate Modern Level 1 Shop
Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 9TG
www.tate.org.uk/modern

The Art Shop & Gallery
No. 8 Cross Street, Abergavenny , Monmouthshire Wales NP7 5EH
www.artshopandgallery.co.uk

The Shop Floor Project
www.theshopfloorproject.com

Whitechapel Gallery Bookshop
77-82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
www.whitechapelgallery.org
Places to see, buy and sell artists’ books around the world

23 Sandy Gallery
623 NE 23rd Ave, Portland, OR 97232, USA
www.23sandy.com / 23sandygallery@gmail.com
Abecedarian Gallery
910 Santa Fe, #101, Denver, CO 80204, USA
www.abecedariangallery.com
Alicia@abecedariangallery.com

Another Room Book Arts (USA)
www.anotherroombooks.com
lucy@anotherroombooks.com

art&fiction
Avenue de France 16, CH-1004 Lausanne, Switzerland
www.artfiction.ch / info@artfiction.ch

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

Barbara Wien & Wilma Lukatsch
Galerie und Buchhandlung für Kunstbücher
Linienstraße 158, D-10115 Berlin / Mitte, Germany
www.barbarawien.de / info@barbarawien.de

Barratt Galleries
326 Uralba Road, Uralba 2478, Australia
www.barrattgalleries.com.au
info@barrattgalleries.com.au

BAS
Mesrutiyet Caddesi No 92A, Beyoglu, Istanbul, Turkey
www.b-a-s.info / info@b-a-s.info

Bookstomring
5 Paris-based book outlets, see: www.bookstomring.com

Centre des Livres d’Artistes
1 place Attane, F-87500 Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche, France
http://cdla.info/en / info@cdla.info

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

Christophe Daviet-Théry - Livres d’artistes et éditions
10 rue Duchefdelaville, 75013 Paris, France
www.daviet-thery.com

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

Galeria AT
ul. Solna 4, 61-735 Poznan, Poland
http://free.art.pl/at/pl/ang/ogalerii.htm
at@free.art.pl

Galerie DRUCK & BUCH
Bachgasse 15, D-72070, Tübingen, Germany
www.druckundbuch.de
druckundbuch@onlinehome.de

gracialouise - www.gracialouise.com
gracialouise@optusnet.com.au

graham galleries + editions
1 Fernberg Road, Milton, Brisbane, Qld. 4064, Australia
www.grahamegalleries.com
info@grahamegalleries.com

Johan Deumens
Donkere Spaarne 32 zw
NL - 2011 JH Haarlem, The Netherlands
www.grahamegalleries.com
info@johandeumens.com

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

La librairie Solstice / Solstices rare books
BP 10519, F-75424 PARIS cedex 09, France
www.librairie-solstices.com
contact@librairie-solstices.com

La libreria
University Cultural Centre, NUS Museum, Level 3
50 Kent Ridge Crescent, 119279, Singapore
http://lalibreria.com.sg
info@lalibreria.com.sg

LA RARA. BIZ editions & artists’ books
Gran de Gràcia 45, Pral 1º. Barcelona 08012, Spain
www.larara.biz / info@larara.biz

Moufflon Bookshop (Nicosia)
1 Sofouli Street, 1096 Lefkosia/Nicosia, Cyprus
www.moufflon.com.cy

Paule Léon Bisson-Millet
Beilstein, Germany
Tel: +49 7130 405963
plbmbooks@t-online.de
Some Institutional and Private Collections

Before contacting any collections, please read the notes on approaching collectors, 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 Canadian library collection additions.

AKI (ArtEz) Library, Enschede, The Netherlands
Artspace Mackay, Queensland, Australia
Athenaeum Music & Arts Library, La Jolla, USA
BAIŁTIC Library and Archive, Gateshead, UK
Bibliograph, Montreal, Canada
Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt
Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, USA
Biblioteca Casanatense, Italy
Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, Canada
Bienes Centre for the Literary Arts, USA
University of Brighton, Artists' Books Collection, UK
British Library, Modern British Collection, UK
Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, USA
Camberwell College of Arts, London, UK
Research Centre for Artists' Publications (ASPC) Bremen
Carnegie Mellon University Hunt Library, USA
Centre des Livres D’Artistes, Saint-Yrieix-La-Perche
Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, UK
Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, Ohio, USA
University of Delaware, USA
Edinburgh College of Art Library, UK
Fine Arts Library, Indiana University Art Museum, USA
F. W. Olin Library, Mills College, Oakland, USA
Glasgow School of Art Library, UK
Gund Library, Cleveland Institute of Art, USA
The Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada
National Library of Canada
University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, USA
Institute of the Arts, Canberra, Australia
Jaffe Collection, Florida Atlantic University, USA
Joan Flasch Artists’ Book Collection, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA
King Saint Stephen Museum, Hungary
The Brotherton Library, Leeds University, UK
Library of Congress, Washington, USA
Manchester Metropolitan University Library, All Saints, Manchester, UK
Middlesex University, UK
Montana State University Library, USA
Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA
Museum van het boek, The Hague, The Netherlands
National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, UK
National University of Australia
National Irish Visual Arts Library, The Hague, The Netherlands
National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, UK
National University of Australia
Neil Crawford Artist's Book Collection, UK
New York Public Library, USA
Newark Public Library, New Jersey, 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
Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Visual and Concrete Poetry, Miami, USA
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
Scottish Poetry Library, Edinburgh
Scuola Internazionale di Grafica, Venice
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, USA
Sloan Art Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. An online collection listing for reference, plus a comprehensive directory of artists' books collections in libraries and other institutions. With links to their web sites and supporting research materials. See the link at:
http://www.lib.unc.edu/subjectguides/artistsbooks/collections.html
Southern Cross University, Lismore, NSW, Australia
State Library of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, USA
Tate Britain, London
The New Art Gallery Walsall, UK
University for the Creative Arts, Farnham, UK
University of the Arts, Philadelphia, USA
UWE Bristol, Bower Ashton Library, Faculty of Creative Arts, UK
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, UK
Women's 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).


Are There Any Limits To What Can Be Called Book Art? Les Bicknell, Essex, 1994

www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/abyb10.htm


Book Arts, Na Rae Kim, Impress, Seoul, 2003


Book and What Next, Galeria At, Poznan, 2000 ISBN 83-911371-7-1


Cooking the Books: Ron King and Circle Press, Andrew Lambirth, Yale Center for British Art/Circle Press, London, 2002

Correspondence des Arts – Polish Artists Books from Lodz, an exhibition at the National Library in Singapore, 2005, ISBN 83-912352-4-6


Looking, Telling, Thinking, Collecting: four directions of the artist’s book from the sixties to the present, Anne Moeglin-Delcroix, Edizioni Corraini, 2004


Polish Book Art, The Danish Museum of Art and Design, Copenhagen, 2005

Printed Matter, Books By Artists, DIA, New York, 1992


Repetivity: Platforms for Publishing, RGAP, Plymouth Arts Centre, 2000


Artist’s Book Journals

**Afterimage** - media arts and cultural criticism, with regular artist’s book features. www.vsw.org/afterimage

**Ampersand** - 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). All issues available at: www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder

**Book Arts Newsletter (BAN)** A free newsletter, see: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/banlists.htm for colour PDF. Email Sarah.Bodman@uwe.ac.uk to go onto the email list for an alert to collect each issue.

**Blue Notebook Journal for Artists’ Books** contemporary writing on all aspects of artists’ books, contributions welcome. www.bookarts.u.ac.uk/bnotebk.htm

**The Happy Hypocrite**
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

**JAB, Journal of Artists' Books**
Critical essays and reviews of artists’ books. www.journalofartistsbooks.org

**Umbrella Online**
Edited by the late Judith A. Hoffberg, USA, the journal has been digitised for access to essays, reviews and more, available at: www.umbrellaeditions.com

Other journals with features or reviews of artists’ books: **Art in America, Art Journal, Art Monthly, Art on Paper, Art Review, Artforum, Artists’ Newsletter, Arts Canada, Crafts, Creative Review, Printmaking Today.**
**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 few years, to established artists who have been making books for over 35 years.

We asked all of the original case study artists from the first edition to update their profiles for this new third edition. We have also added some new case studies, including The Caseroom Press. Comments within the Case Study texts inserted inside square brackets [ ] are the editor’s comments.

Many thanks to all the artists who have taken the time to update their case studies; we know how helpful they have been to other artists from the comments we have received from the first and second issues.

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 new 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.

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. 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.

The website has a diverse range of artists making books with a wide range of materials, structures and approaches. To date:

artistsbooksonline.com has thirty six artists on-line and continues to grow.

artistsbooksonline.com has a stand at most of the UK artist’s book fairs.

artistsbooksonline.com either curate exhibitions or have been invited to take part in exhibitions:


A series of Post - A - Print and Send - A - Poem prints have been made by site artists and are for sale at exhibitions and book fairs.

Noëlle Griffiths
wwwartistsbooksonline.com
In 2007 several things occurred which changed the way I was publishing, what I published and how I published it.

I became involved in movie making and also music making. I started recording music again, and coupled this activity with movie making, creating soundtracks, editing films and producing DVDs, then publishing them - sun moon and stars press films swung into production and has produced 30 DVD films to date. These Visual Publications in the form of DVD movies have opened up whole new area of possibilities.

**New Old Themes**

In my films I often use myself as a figure running through the landscape. The figure moves through animating the landscape providing a focus. Running jumping leaping walking. There are still elements of fun humour and like all good artists’ books - surprises. My ideas always want to be outdoors in nature running to a place you didn’t quite expect to end up in.

The movie camera allows for a different kind of landscape appreciation, via editing, and with inclusion of sound track new forms are possible. I am keen for the films to retain a notebook scrapbook journal feel.

In my film “Flag Man” it was the soundtrack from the Buzzcocks song “Why can’t I touch it” that was decided upon first - the film came through via ideas that came from those words. The music could be seen as an audio narrative - in lieu of acting and drama perhaps.

I have published a number of films on YouTube and as an outlet YouTube and similar sites are an interesting starting point. The work is available for free - thus the return of a kind of cheap multiple. I love seeing my work on a big screen too at festivals and in new situations, there is a lot of potential for these as mobile visual publications - and this makes the making worth while. It’s great to follow a thing through from idea to consumption.

Another recent film ‘Gone in 38 seconds’ was a commissioned documentary film featuring a guy who bought his partner a double-decker bus. I intend to develop my interest in documentary films as a route for uncovering other ideas. In September 2009 I co-organised the 1st Wexford Independent Documentary Film Festival - which took place in the village where I live. I am organising a second festival in Sept 2010. These are indeed exciting times for artists to be publishing in.

**Helpful Advice from the Ministry of Magic**

I have always thought of the artist as a bit of a magician. I made a book called “The Artist Magic Makes” in the 80s. The gist of it was the artist literally could do exactly that - make something out of nothing, and could thus, in the process - become a maker of magic. The artist can perform simple conjuring tricks. The artist for example creates “Newness” all the time, is involved in “Newness”, desires and wishes “Newness” upon his/her thing. The thing just created by it’s very nature, is new and thus bristling, a bowl full of fertile potential.

The artist possesses mysterious gifts, including ultimate confidence and needs no permission to invoke “things” as yet unheard or unseen or visualised to come forth and make themselves known. Things that may never have been in the world that are original and Brand New. Things that require the artist to ferment and worry them through to conclusion. They have often never been
seen until the exact moment of their birth as ideas and creations. The artist presides over these joyful births.

In addition the artist is able to continually produce new offspring, year after year, often in the face of extreme adversity, hardship, disillusionment. Political and social upheaval. The artist is in fact dripping with magic, is bursting at the seams with potency, fertility and creative thrust. In the hands and minds of the creative nothing is impossible. Problems for example become grist for the mill, and rely on the artist’s ability to use the maverick gene to create solutions. To quote the title of another one of my books - “The artist speeds through life recognising things” - then converts them into new previously unseen gems. These gems may be mere stones to some, but to others they shine like rough diamonds - promising excitements and magic elixir when polished.

I think the act is the moment of truth. The act of creation, the coming together of everything in your life up to that moment and the making of the thing. The moment when the anvil produces from seemingly nothingness - a something. Does the artist imitate the great great great creator? Making magic through your creation - is your creation part of the great creators magic mirror? Creation the greatest of all gifts has been given to you, go forth multiply, produce your works (use multiples if necessary!) one of a kinds and uniques are equally good, use song and dance music and light and laughter, take the piss, seek out the bliss and don’t forget to write it all down, take out your cameras, use your bicycle wisely and make as much magic as you can without one single moment of self doubt.

Andi McGarry, Feb 2010
sunmoonandstarspress@hotmail.com
sun moon and stars press books and films
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWl3yfC88

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**Book Artist Case Study III**

**Becky Adams, Wales, UK**

www.beckyadams.co.uk

Becky Adams has been making artists’ books for about 12 years; she graduated from the Camberwell Book Arts MA in 2001. She is currently working towards her first solo show, a collaboration between Ruthin Crafts Centre and Llantarnam Grange in 2010. The exhibition will include books, textiles and artwork of a book-like nature. She sustains her practice via workshops, residencies, commissions and creating artwork that includes textiles as well as 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. She is beginning to establish herself as an Applied Artist and hopes to exhibit at Origin: The London Craft Fair, at Somerset House next year.

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**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 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.

I have begun making books that allude to the broader themes of my art practice in general - exploring the link between my book art and my textile works. I see many connections forming between book text and fabric textile and view this as a creative preoccupation rather than a means to making a living!

Becky exhibits regularly in gallery settings, though this is not confined specifically to her bookworks. She does not tend to show at book fairs, as her books are often labour intensive or only available in small editions.
She has recently forayed into making badges out of recycled beer tops and pulp romance novels, which sell cheaply and very quickly (see example below).

_Bottle top romance badge by Becky Adams_

Becky regularly reads the _Book Arts Newsletter_ and _A-N_ (Artists’ Newsletter journal) for information on book arts opportunities. She also has a website: www.beckyadams.co.uk and is represented by www.artistsbooksonline.com

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

John Bently has been publishing his work under the Liver & Lights Scriptorium and Kind Red Spirit imprints since the mid 80s. He has published over 60 editions, including 42 editions of Liver and Lights since 1984, and three editions in the last 12 months. His work includes unique books, zines, large editions and music. 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 in the UK.

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

John Bently's books on show at Winchester School of Art, which has the complete collection of Liver & Lights.

“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 42 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!”

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

“No the best, its 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:

“...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, steal 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 underselling 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 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 fool 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.”

Liver & Lights No 41. Hot Wad. This book consists of reproductions of 30 hand drawn (£2,000,000) banknotes in a tasty wad, made by attendees to theafterrabbit gig in November 2008.
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.”

Book Artist Case Study V
Emily K. Larned, Red Charming, USA
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www.redcharming.com
www.impractical-labor.org

I’ve been self-publishing for sixteen years. But I am a recent graduate of a programme which has reshaped my publishing practice: 2008, Yale School of Art, MFA Graphic Design.

I have published 45 editions altogether, with additional artists’ books since 2000 under my Red Charming imprint. Although much of what I’m publishing these days is under the auspices of ILSSA, as Local 917 Shop RC. Bridget Elmer and I co-founded ILSSA (Impractical Labor in Service of the Speculative Arts) in 2008. ILSSA is a membership organisation for those who make experimental or conceptual work with obsolete technology. One of our activities is a publication, the ILSSA Quarterly.

For a few years, when I made expensive books, sales were a substantial part of my income. But now my publications are cheap or free. Edition sizes are usually: zines: 100-300, letterpress ephemera: 100-500.

When I made fancier letterpress books: 25-50
Production

I started making zines as a teenager in 1993. About 11 years ago I learned letterpress printing and handbinding, and began incorporating those processes and techniques into my zines. Then, for five or six years I made more expensive, elaborate letterpress and silkscreen books alongside zines and photocopied books. Now I’m making much cheaper publications again, mostly letterpress ephemera (leaflets, posters). I like the slowness and holistic approach of writing something, designing it, hand-setting it, redesigning it, re-setting it, cutting down the paper, printing it, and then gradually sending it out.

I’m interested in self-publishing as a means of - quite literally - making meaning, or giving ideas physical form, and of means of communication. This was always true of my work, but I think for a few years I lost sight of who I wanted my readers to be.

Marketing

I find out about ways to market my work from other artists. I think distribution, not sales, is the major issue with marketing. Personal interaction is great, although not necessarily in the book fair environment, which can easily overwhelm due to its short-lived intensity. I keep on thinking back to zines in the 1990s, and how peer review, letter writing, trading, and mail-order worked most excellently.

From 2000-2009 I was an active member of Booklyn, www.booklyn.org. Booklyn did a fantastic job of representing my work when I was making the sort of work that was intended for university and museum special collections.

There are quite a few intermediaries who do this well for inexpensive books: Printed Matter, Half Letter Press, Reading Frenzy, Quimby’s, St. Mark’s, Little Paper Planes. Projet Mobilivre was wonderful for getting your books read and seen. But then, of course, as is the case with all intermediaries, you lose the personal interaction with your readers. And since this is kind of the point of communicating in the first place, this loss is huge.

I had a really positive meeting-the-reader experience a few weeks ago at an Open Studio event in my building here in Bridgeport. A man just sat down on my couch and picked up a recent leaflet, 39 Kinds of Work, read it in its entirety, got kind of dewy-eyed, and started talking to me about a house he and his wife are building by hand in Arizona. It was so great hearing his story. When he left he bought the leaflet (for $3), even though the significant transaction had already happened. He had already digested it. This sort of thing makes me want there to be more opportunities for people to stumble upon the work outside of an “artist book” context.

In the last 12 months I have attended: Hybrid Book Fair, University of the Arts, Philadelphia PA and Pyramid Atlantic, Silver Spring, MD. I visited the NY Art Book Fair in NYC but didn’t table there.

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

Yes: it makes me hopeful to know that I have readers. It makes me feel that the work I am producing is worthwhile to someone other than myself. I find it encouraging. In thinking of the opportunities that have come my way: some have come from curators and collectors, but I think a majority have come from fellow artists. Again, dialogue is key.

Q. Have you formulated a pricing structure for your editions?

I don’t have a set formula for pricing, each edition is priced separately. The general philosophy is to sell them for just enough such that they won’t be picked up only to be thrown away: $1-$30.

One recent project of mine, The Stock Project, is pegged to the Dow Jones Industrial: the price changes every Friday according to the market (see image below).

As a letterpress printer, I suppose it is ironic that my most expensive book – Lookbook 54, at $30 – is priced higher because I didn’t print it! Each copy costs me about $14.
to make, because it is a 100-page colour digitally printed book. I calculated the selling price by doubling my actual cost, so that I can sell it through other distributors (such as Printed Matter) and not take a loss.

I have directly approached collections by email, with a follow up phone call, I avoid cold calls at all if possible. When I worked for Booklyn, I would always ask for appointments by email. I have met with collectors in person after setting up an appointment by email, and these are quite often successful; librarians are gracious and have almost always been happy to meet. I make sure I have a contact name before approaching a collection.

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

Erratically - I do send out email announcements from time to time, but not as often as I produce the work. It makes me feel self-conscious. I know a lot of artists feel this way, and that is why so many prefer to work with intermediaries.

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

Ask yourself if your work would be more interesting and effective if it is not part of the art marketplace. If your answer is yes, then figure out how to create an alternate system. Find other artists who share your values and interests and work on building this new model together.

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?

Distribution continues to be the issue for makers of artist books. Booklyn, as an artist alliance, is a fantastic model for artists who want to approach institutions.

For editions intended for the general public, I wonder about the potential for more online stores of artist books. Ample descriptions and images of the books would of course be necessary, as would different types of search functions (visual searches? tags? content keywords?). Such a site would be a LOT of work for, we all know, very little remuneration. But I think such a model has promise. But what would really be helpful in reaching the general public is more in-person, “live” venues for artist books to be stumbled upon, in regular bookstores, library stacks, magazine stands, doctor offices, coffee shops. I would love more discussion about the above: possible distribution models, exchanges, both on and offline.

**Book Artist Case Study VI**

Francis Van Maele, Redfoxpress, Ireland

www.redfoxpress.com

Francis van Maele has been publishing both his own and collaborative works with other artists and writers since 1979; he has published over 200 editions, 25 in the last 12 months. He published in Luxemburg under the Editions Phi imprint and then started Redfoxpress in 2000, based in Ireland. Redfoxpress is his main source of income. Since 2005 Korean book artist Antic-Ham joined as partner.

His practice includes collaborations with poets and artists, to make hand-screenprinted, limited editions of between 20 and 75 copies each. His own artists’ books, including unique books, use a range of techniques: collage, laserprint, screen prints, photographs and found objects. He also produces mail art editions.

C’est mon Dada # 34, Description du ciel, JEAN DELVAUX, 2009

36 collages with planets, stars and the moon, 40 pages

In 2007 he launched a new collection “C’est mon dada” of unlimited small hand made artists’ books of visual poetry and works influenced by Fluxus. So far, he has published works by 34 artists in this collection, from various countries, and succeeded in having standing orders in important collections, libraries and museums.

**Production and Marketing**

As someone who has been producing and selling his own work for 30 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: the Seoul Artist’s Book Fair, the Minipressenmesse in Mainz, the Small Publishers Fair and the Whitechapel Art Book Fair in London, Babe in Bristol, the Leeds artist’s book fair, the Fine Press Fair in Oxford, the New York Art Book Fair and the Frankfurt Book Fair.

As an independent artist and publisher he does much of his marketing at artists’ book fairs, and finds them an increasingly positive experience and a good way of meeting both potential customers, collectors and other artists. Attending these events has given him plenty of opportunities, for example exhibitions in galleries and museums, through contact with 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 (though this is the surest way of selling books), and he has always checked on the collections’ special interests and had a contact name before approaching them. He always keeps customers and collectors up to date with his new publications.

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**Book Artist Case Study VII**

Gray Fraser, Productiongray editions, Canada

www.productiongray.com

studio@productiongray.com

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 c.10 copies. I made some unique pieces as well, but in the past 15 years all of my editions are 101 or 202 copies. Most artists’ bookshops only accept editions of 100 or more. I have published 26 books since then.

**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.

Gray Fraser’s *Artist’s Book Sales Bank* (2008) is a small book of loose pages “bound” within a voicebox bank; in order to read it, one must push a button to release a small folder containing the book, a 2007 sales report for Productiongray Editions. In it, Fraser demystifies the process of selling artist’s books by providing a list of bookshops, discussing the expense of international bookfairs, listing collectors, and dispensing helpful tips for other book artists trying to “bring home the bacon” by selling their work. From Printed matter website.
It’s always difficult for me describe my own work, but here goes. My books are political. My earlier works, up until 1999, explored gender politics, and my more recent books focus on two themes: one is exploring the role of the artist, and the other is the legacy of 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, 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 what an amazingly and dynamically cool art form these books represent, they still don’t seem convinced that they are art.

In the past I have attended Expozine in Montreal, an alternative zine and underground small press fair and The Seoul International Book Art Fair. I participated in one book fair in Paris called PAGE and two book fairs in Montreal. 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’ bookshops, 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 a 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 by sending out PDF files by email announcing my new publications to all the collectors who have purchased my work before.

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!

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.

“When is an Artist’s Book not an Artist’s Book?” Gray Fraser, 2007
An artist’s book made in reaction to the change in definition of an “artist’s book” by staff at the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) to be considered for acquisition.

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

Couples from romance novel covers traced on translucent paper layer together and multiple new combinations emerge. Laser prints on “vellum” paper, pamphlet in case binding covered with velvet finish book cloth, hot stamped title.

“I have been very involved for the past year in curating a juried, travelling exhibition for The Guild of Book Workers [http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/gallery/markingtime/index.html]. I am also on the editorial board of The Bonefolder, [http://www.philibiblon.com/bonefolder/] a peer reviewed book arts journal, and I’m a reviewer for the Guild’s journal. I welcome these opportunities to meet colleagues and study their work, and to provide opportunities for other book artists. These additional activities have definitely cut into my time for making, exhibiting and marketing my work. It has also affected my income. In the long run, making the connections with additional artists and curators, and ensuring that these endeavours continue to provide opportunities for all of us will be worth the effort and temporary disruption.

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 later.

I have made 43 books that are editioned, but since I print them on the computer in my studio, I print a small batch
as I need them – I do not print and assemble the entire edition at once. Most are editions of 20 to 30. Three editions have sold out. As I’m becoming more successful, I’m raising the number in new editions.

Almost all of my work is 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, or 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 what 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 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 first ARLIS (Art Librarians) conference was the most successful of my book fair experiences. It is exactly the right audience – the people who make the purchasing decisions. I did very well both at the conference and in the months following it, and I was able to meet some of librarians I have been corresponding with or who have purchased my work from my dealers. My second ARLIS was not as successful, and I wonder if it was because I was not the “new exhibitor” that year. A colleague who was exhibiting at ARLIS for the first time that year got a lot of attention and sales. I took a year off, and am now considering exhibiting at the 2010 conference in Boston. There is such a high concentration of collections in that area, and I think I may be able to arrange a workshop and a lecture in the area to help cover the costs of travel and my table.”

“I’m represented by Vamp and Tramp/Bill and Vicky Stewart. The people they visit 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.”

“I appreciate the encouragement from conversations with people who purchase, 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 images 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. These treasures inspire me when I make my own work, and encourage me to keep progressing. 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 been sending out a promotional mailing with postcards of new work for seven years. At first this yielded the offer of exhibition opportunities, requests to send workshop proposals, an offer to represent my work, and a few inquiries about the work. In general this has been very helpful in terms of getting known. But these mailings yielded no sales until I began following up with an email two weeks later. The follow up has made a tremendous difference. Now I seldom send materials to collections where I do not have a contact name and email.”

New work: http://www.karenhanmer.com/gallery/

Guild of Book Workers exhibition: www.guildofbookworkers.org/gallery/markingtime/

Book Artist Case Study IX
Heather Hunter, Buckinghamshire, UK
www.hunterbooks.co.uk
www.artistsbooksonline.com

Heather Hunter has been making books for 15 years under the imprint Heather Hunter Books. This is not her main source of income.

Inspired by Lygia Clark’s movable sculptures and Mary Robinson’s poem the snowdrop pushes upwards through the dark cold soil into the light. Then being changed by the wind into different spear shapes before the flower drops its head and opens in the sun. 12 x 16 cm

Hunter’s books are mostly unique book works “of an unusual structure containing a variety of traditional printing techniques as well as digital. Text, image are all of my design. Venturing into altered books where there is a conversation with the original text”.

Production and Marketing

For Hunter, the difficulties of marketing are “finding the right venue, that is; where books can be handled, because my books have unusual or hidden aspects that cannot be experience when viewed behind glass. During the last two years I have developed more sculptural books enclosed in their own acrylic case which has resulted in more interest from galleries”

In the last 12 months, she has shown her work at an artist’s book fair (Pagemakers), and has been exploring showing at mixed shows and galleries [for example Watercolours+Works on Paper Show] she still finds shows are the best places to sell her work. “It is a positive experience to get feedback, and observing people handling the books can sometimes give me new ideas, because books must be a tactile experience as well. It gives me a buzz to see a buyer handle a book in a manner appropriate for my artist’s book as well as to
be absorbed in the content. It motivates me to produce more.” Meeting potential purchasers has resulted in “requests for workshops or commissions, less often exhibitions. If any of these happen they may buy one of my books on a second meeting, or if visited in their own environment where they feel relaxed and comfortable.”

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, mixing fairs and small galleries has proved a good balance. 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.”

Championing artists’ books or book arts wherever you can increases the awareness of this specialist field and offers to exhibit from the galleries follow.

Having a website that she uses as a showcase also helps when approaching galleries or fair promoters. They can look at your work in their own time and respond or not. 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.”

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**Book Artist Case Study X**  
**Helen Douglas, Weproductions, Scotland, UK**  
**www.weproductions.com**

Helen Douglas has been making artists’ books since 1972, and began publishing with Telfer Stokes under the Weproductions imprint in 1974. She has produced over 30 editions to date. This is not her only source of income. Douglas uses the income generated from sales of her books to pay for costs related to the origination of new book works (equipment, materials, field/study trips), their publication (commercial printing and binding) as well as their marketing (Book Fairs).

“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**

Offset litho editions: 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 the extent of stifling an idea. When a book is made and bound - using commercial printers and binders - there is in its handling a suggestion of where its price should fall within our price range of £6 - 25.

Weproductions has a number of pricings in its offset litho printed range: 7, 12, 15, 20 and 25 pounds. A lottery funded book such as *Unravelling the Ripple* (2001), priced at £8 by another publisher, threatened to undermine our own price structure, and it did for a while. *Illiers Combray* (2004 with Zoë Irvine (see images above) - which also received funding for publication - was priced according to our own price structure. £25 was its true and workable sale value: It has sold very well, going into a second edition and has made a profit. With books that are going out of print, the price is raised considerably.
The hand printed editions are a more recent departure. Printed by Douglas on an Epsom ink jet 2400, they are produced in small limited editions. “With little capital investment it has been possible to put new books/booklets out into the world and to respond more quickly – in some instances - to an idea or commission.” Their limited number has enabled a new feel to come into book without the worry of a 1000 books to sell. With offset Litho printed books, space – the areas of unprinted paper - are part of the printing costs, while with ink jet printing the spatial blank areas - with no inks used - do not incur cost. This is a consideration in deciding how a book is to be produced. It is not cost effective to produce large editions, or long sustained narrative by hand. It can take up a lot of time in production and this can stop new works being originated. The pricing of the hand printed editions ranges from £5 to £200.

Bookshops /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. She wonders if there would be a chance for group action, to convince galleries etc. to do this. Galleries have recently become obsessed with their own in house Art publications.

Douglas sells her offset litho productions through the Weproductions website - mailing out books to customers – as well as through independent bookshops. She also sells at exhibitions of artists’ books and at lectures and talks. The offset productions are robust enough to withstand handling, and, if one does get too scuffed/dog eared, it can be discarded because of sizeable print runs. Douglas is 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.”

In the last year, Douglas has shown both her offset litho editions and hand printed books at the following book fairs:
Edinburgh Poetry Library Book Fair
Leeds International Artist Book Fair
Small Publishers Fair, London
The Art Book Fair London
The Art Book Fair New York

Other Book Fairs: Manchester, BABE and Glasgow are also important venues. Douglas finds artist’s book fairs are a major way of exhibiting and 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 my making of books, and has provided many opportunities which may not have arisen otherwise.”

With the offset litho productions and hand printed editions being displayed side by side, a greater breadth of choice has recently been offered and this has increased sales. The offset litho editions sell consistently: a new edition always adds excitement. The hand printed editions sell well at some book fairs, but not others. Those who discover/find these works tend to already have an awareness for the artist’s book and Douglas’ work. As they are more fragile Douglas “keeps an eye and hand on them, till they pass to the another’s careful hands”.

“Influences of people on my 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 is helpful and encouraging. “Two people on the scene sharing the manning of the table is easier than one and more of a force. It also enables the other to browse around and make new contacts.”

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.”
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 have 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. 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.

“I have now developed a range of rather odd, pop-out greetings cards that I have been printing and making myself. I’ve been selling them via the website www.poocards.com and in the bookartbookshop, London. I am now dealing with a company that will print, cut and assemble them and hope to have a new range available within a month.”

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 Subject Leader of MA Book Arts at Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London. A retrospective of the Gefn Press was shown at the Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont and Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, in Autumn 2008, and Gefn Press books were exhibited at the Athenaeum, La Jolla, CA in November 2009.

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 and 2003-4 and 2005-7).

Her project ‘Cunning Chapters’ co-curated with Katharine Meynell, is a series of ‘artists’ chapters thematically linked by ideological concerns of ‘well madeness’, loss and conservation in the production of art work, using a combination of technologies.

**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.
Advice she felt would have helped her when starting out:
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 Artist’s Book Yearbook.

Johanknecht feels that distribution and marketing are ongoing issues for artists’ books; she 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, Japan
www.sohonstudio.net
info@sohonstudio.net

After completing a degree in Publishing at the London College of Printing (now LCC) 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.

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 any 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 - 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 Artist’s book workshops at Sohon Studio 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.

You can also read an interview with Kyoko from July 2009, about artists’ books in Japan (see the Investigating the artist’s book section) at: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/canon.htm

Book Artist Case Study XIV
Lorelei Clark, Australia
lagoongrass@bigpond.com
www.lagoongrasspress.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 art 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 a book in bronze I have an advantage but I know very little about aquatints.

A stickman goes for a walk, 11 x 8 cm, opens to 1000 (Dec 08)
Bubblejet printed on 14 heavy paper pages, machine stitched binding.

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 techs 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 net which can be really inspiring. Seeing other peoples work is very important to the learning process and I was fortunate to get permission to handle both the collection at the Queensland State Library and the university 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 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 book maker plugging away in
my shed at home. There is some conjecture that centreng
artists’ books production around universities will effect
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 conteseted 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 art work before
and after university can mainly be attributed to being
less informed and integrated in an arts community. I
can’t really separate what I do as research versus making
and I think this may be because both experiences are
autotelic. I also know that there are a lot of vibrant
book art communities out there centred on galleries and
events like Artspace Mackay’s Artist’s Book Forum and
Noosa Regional Gallery’s Books Exhibition. These have
lots of books skill workshops available. Having attended
these classes, I can say they are filled with techniques,
enthusiasm, ideas - and great people!

Often 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 read a collaborative paper recently about
Multiliteracies by the New London Group in which they
proposed a 4-part learning model to develop a self-
sustaining and engaged practice. This is my
understanding of what their proposal includes:
A Situated Practice, one that is firmly rooted in your own
experience and utilises discourses from your own life
and relationships. This is about finding out how and
where you fit into the world. Overt Instruction from peers
and masters in your field brings a systematic, analytic,
and conscious understanding of these experiences and
discourses and how you use these to generate meaning.
This is about learning how and what you articulate and
it involves a certain amount of self-understanding as
someone who understands their own art-making process
will be better enabled to transmit, inform or in fact
learn. Critical Framing is standing back from what you
are creating and interpreting it critically in its social and
cultural context, then creatively extending and applying
it.

A Transformed Practice, in very real terms is the main point,
it is embedded in your own goals and values and you
engage in it for your own real purposes. You find ways to
communicate, then you unplug your reality and plug it
into someone else’s, so new meanings can be transferred
and created across the gap between yourself and others.
Art is first and foremost a dialogue between artists and
their communities and this involves the juxtaposition and
integration (not without tension) of different discourses,
social identities and interests.

A lot of really interesting research is going on in the
fields of cognitive and behavioural science, neuroscience,
neuropsychology and education. And it’s particularly
relevant at the moment because there’s been some
talk about whether what is going on in the books we
are making is being reflected in the critical dialogue.
Andrew Eason reckons that we book makers should be
talking about our interdisciplinary jaunts, what we are
doing in our books and what the books are doing. We
should be describing the points of our practice we value
if we want others to value them. We need to break out
and enter into the “mainstream of aesthetic discourse”
(quoting Clifton Meador) by identifying and inhabiting
the zone where artists’ books are joining to other things.
I know where this is. I live there. Let me tell you about it.

I rigged the game from the start… 38 x 11 cm, opens to 100 (Jul 08)
Bubblejet printed images and stamped text on 8 tissue paper petals,
with card and plastic leaves.

The idea of liminal spaces, thresholds and border zones
has gained a lot of currency recently in the arts,
particularly regarding gender, sexuality, migration,
ethnicity and nationality. However I think this is more
indicative of a general pattern, it’s the result of over
400 years of Cartesian thinking in dualisms finally
being questioned and overturned. It’s an idea we should
be letting permeate every aspect of contemporary
life because the beauty of it is that like any sort of
combining it results in a third entity. And this third
entity doesn’t entirely reflect it’s forebears but opens up
new possibilities for meaning, relationships and other
interactions.

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I trace this line of thought back to Lacan, and there’s also a bit of Freud’s Unheimlich. As Raafat Ishak said it’s not always easy to work out where your ideas are coming from but the work remains as evidence and traces of the influences of the world around us. The art object is a reminder of a certain thought or a certain attempt at collaborating ideas and objects from indistinguishable sources. Making a book is a way for thoughts and ideas I have to take a physical form. Without this method of working the ideas would remain abstract. I find when an idea takes physical form it grows in new ways, evolving to become easier to communicate and forming a whole web of related ideas embedded in the page. Ideas are easier to communicate if they have a visual form, but presenting ideas is only the beginning. I have a specific vision for my books, a role I want them to play. They must get out there and talk to people, be handled touched and read, form part of everyday discourses.

I’m uncertain why the idea of creating things for use is so alien to artists; surely the use of an artwork is visual communication? And books do the same thing as paintings or sculptures but in a different way right? So really for me, institutional collection and exhibition is important, but not the main goal. Sure I want to produce something beautiful, but I also want to produce something that has a conversation with people. Books slow down the act of perception, allowing us to grasp better how, why and what we’re seeing. Our books exist in a world of often unresolved conflict and violence, of shifting boundaries and definitions of what it means to be Human in the 21st Century.

All kinds of people are thinking about these things, trying to map a way forward, create a world for future human beings to inhabit and I want to be part of it. Any work that is engaging with contemporary life is political and implicated in the development of unique and multifaceted meta-languages, which is happening at breakneck speed through electrical cables the world over. However paraphrasing Jess Laccetti, the ubiquitousness and use of digital technologies (mobile phones, SNS, mp3 players etc.) does not guarantee abilities for critical engagement with this technology or transliteracy.

Transliteracy comes into play perhaps like Ong’s “technologies,” it is not merely an “exterior aid but also [an] interior transformation of consciousness...” Which gives us something more to think about: Are we creating new kinds of narratives that enable new kinds of literacy, are our books indeed creators of social futures or dedicated to preserving antiquities?

I have made 29 editions of artists’ books so far, and have 9 more on the go! I make work under my own name as well as my imprint.

Production

My work is largely driven by ideas. These ideas are quite diverse but I could probably connect them broadly by the ways we give meaning to our lives which often involve the quotidian, domestic, landscape, experience, and the passage of time. I use materials and techniques that will most effectively allow the idea to communicate, as they form part of the layering of the work. These are usually quite meditative and that element of repetition, reproduction and seriality is also a large part of my working practice.

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.

I see cultural production as a way to articulate our connections to life and a gesture towards expressing the paradoxical, iconic, contradictory, transitional and cyclic as how we think and feel about things is not fixed. The whole reason I make art is to simply increase the possibility that I might, even for a moment, interrupt a persons’ life by slipping in and making them think or feel something. (I think I may have got that from Song Dong, a Chinese performance artist from QAG’s APT whose work had a huge impact on me as an undergrad.)

Marketing

Through my participation in Art on a Sunday at the local Bangalow Markets over the last 4 years I’ve encountered a lot of interest in my work. It’s real front line stuff, I’m 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 they’ve been around Australia, Europe and America, my first series is almost sold out; they are light weight, easily posted or tucked in the suitcase and perfect for gifts or souvenirs. In marketing terms these are the features of your work.

I also sell 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 increase, 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.

Artists’ Books fairs and exhibitions are easier, because your audience is more informed, or at the very least surrounded! But seriously, while they can be expensive to participate, I’ve had great experiences with fairs and exhibitions both meeting other makers and selling books. I’ve sold a good number of books to institutional collections; they all have their own policies and procedures which you should research before approaching them. It’s even better if they approach you first of course! I’ve developed my own big picture and using this publication on Creative Production and Marketing this has developed into a huge world take over bid!

With the explosion of new things like blogging and microblogging and its applications as research, communication and marketing tools you need constantly look at new ways of working. It’s important to fully explore the potential of these new technologies rather than just recreate what you already know. Sure, start with something familiar you can grasp, then add things like openness, time, space, a spirit of adventure and good expectations, (as your expectations rise so do your results) and in the words of Dr Seuss: “Oh, the places you’ll go!”

As Bob Stein notes in his if:book blog [www.futureofthebook.org/blog/]: The difference between books, blogs, twittering etc. lies in the length – oddly long-form writing is the result of book manufacturing and economics. But to think e-books will be the equivalent of books is to overlook the length factor. So e-books readers are better for collating and archiving essay length articles, and are easier to read then laptops, especially on planes and trains.

Another reason downloading e-books onto your e-reader from a kiosk won’t replace actual books is provided by vinyl records. Records are fetishised objects, while CDs are shiny detritus disks. People argue that sound quality, sleeves and liner notes is what has guaranteed their enduring appeal. I reckon it’s a sensual thing. You can see a record when it’s being played, the patina of the old plastic, you know how it works and can even participate in it’s working by guiding the needle onto the grooves with your finger. There are also memories associated; as a little girl Mom let me put records on all by myself. And of course this is exactly how books work, in marketing terms these are the benefits. This is something you really need to know when developing a marketing plan. You want to know how to make books less disposable and restore their status of belonging; it’s to do with the tactility which opposes the slickness of manufacture (CDs versus vinyl). And in particular you want to know what makes your books appealing.

According to Bob Stein what we want, are higher standards across the board, better books; movies; comics and pop songs. This worthier goal is achieved by developing a stronger, richer, more vibrant culture all around. He’s right, and you too can participate!

Any advice that would have helped:

I’ve been in private practice for 5 years now and a lot of the problems are the same as running any small business: Probably the hardest thing I find is getting the balance right. Writing grants, exhibition applications, proposals, websites, marketing, planning, sales, tax; all this can really eat into your book research and making time.

But they’re things you have to really keep on top of, and you get better at all of it with practice.

You need to find out what is going on in your books. Call them whatever you like, experimental, unconventional, unusual it matters little what we call them, as they will be considered eccentric, odd and also (hopefully) transgressive to the vast majority of the population. Let me give you an example: I was in a local pub for Trivia night and the inevitable question came up “what do you do for a living?” There was the usual answers people have heard of; nurse, helicopter pilot, journalist, mom, teacher, in human resources, worked at a dating agency, then it was my turn: “I’m an artist, I make books. “Surprisingly the interest didn’t stop with the usual blank looks; “how do you make books?”

You have 15 seconds, good luck!
I was first exposed to book arts fifteen years ago and have been hooked ever since. I have published 20 editions since then and 16 one-of-a-kind artist books. After selling my own books successfully I decided to pursue my long-time dream of owning an art gallery. In 2007 I opened 23 Sandy Gallery in Portland, Oregon. My initial goal was to be a photography gallery but to also hold two artist’s book shows per year. Then an amazing thing happened and the book arts shows turned out to be my most popular shows both in terms of the number of visitors and gallery sales. Now, after three years of being in business I would say I am primarily a book arts gallery first that shows photography and other mediums secondarily.

**Q. Is this your main source of income?**

The gallery is currently my main source of income at this time. My own artist books still sell well but the gallery is more than a full time job so my own artist’s book production has fallen off. I’m to the point now where I am happy to make one new edition per year - where I used to make four or five new titles per year.

**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 several years, almost all of my books have been photographic artist’s books. I take photos of our urban environments 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 100 copies.

**Marketing**

Russell has found that her experience selling her own artist books over the years really came in handy when she opened the art gallery. Russell has two main difficulties selling artist books in the gallery: “first, convincing people that the book arts are really ‘art’, and second, explaining what the heck is an artist book. The job of explaining and educating potential customers is very important. At least when we sell a painting, people know what do with it - they hang it on a wall. The general public is still not sure that books are art yet. We still have to grow a base of collectors in the world of artist books, which takes a lot of educating and evangelising.”

Russell regularly shows the work of gallery artists at artist book fairs: “Book Fairs are one of the most important venues for selling artist books. Pyramid Atlantic near Washington, DC puts on a very well regarded book fair and symposium held every two years. The hottest fair in the states right now is the CODEX Book Fair in San Francisco. Also, every other year, so far there have been two CODEX events that have been extremely successful. In my opinion, CODEX seemed to have excellent attendance by librarians and collectors.”

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 the work I am presenting, whether it is my own work or gallery artists. I love just standing back and watching people interact with the work. How do people approach a book? How do they move through the pages? What do they like and not like? It is fascinating to watch.

Advice about how to price artist books is the question I am asked most often as a gallery owner. Pricing is a vital part of successful marketing and an area that gets very little attention, perhaps because pricing is such a difficult concept for any artist. I recommend that artists price their books by looking at the work of other artists who make books of a similar style, structure and size and then adjust their price up or down depending on qualifications. If an emerging book artist makes a similar book to someone who has been selling and showing their work for 20 years, of course the emerging artist’s price will need to be lower.
On approaching collections:

Visiting in person is really the only way to sell to libraries and museum collections. It is very difficult to sell artists’ books without the buyer/librarian/curator having the opportunity to examine the book in person. This is a tough market to break into and may be better left to dealers. Many collections these days prefer not to meet with individual artists. They prefer to meet only with dealers to save time. You have to respect these wishes and research collections well before contacting them. Most libraries have collection statements and contact information on their web sites. Research well to find out if the libraries collect the type of books you make before approaching them. It would be a waste of your time to approach a library that only collects fine press books when you make pop-up books.

Here at 23 Sandy Gallery we are working hard to forge new selling avenues. Our website has complete selection of the books we carry in inventory and we do make sales directly from the website. We also send printed catalogues to our library collectors each time we do a juried exhibition. We also send out periodic email newsletters to collections as well. The gallery is working hard to increase our marketing efforts to libraries in the next couple of years as well as finding new ways to build private collectors who come into the gallery. Educating and evangelising about the book arts is the top priority job here at 23 Sandy.

Book Artist Case Study XVI
Philippa Wood and Barrie Tullett
The Caseroom Press, UK
www.the-caseco.uk
info@the-case.co.uk

The Caseroom Press began its life in Edinburgh around 1995. It developed its current identity and achievements around five years ago in Lincoln, when it became a collaboration - with two external editors in Edinburgh and two artist’s book makers in Lincoln. We formally became an imprint with the ISBN Agency in 2005.

We have published a number of books and magazines between us - 12 copies of The Case and around twenty editioned books - of up to 750 copies - and five one-offs as part of Philippa’s MA study.

The Caseroom Press is (not exactly by choice) a non-profit making enterprise. We make books because ‘we have to’, not because they are financially viable or even likely to cover their own costs. They are simply ideas and collaborations that we want to work on in the same way a Fine Artist might make paintings or an Illustrator drawings…

We have worked on a variety of projects, from the one-off ‘artists book’ where the maker is involved in every part of the process, from deciding on the theme, generating the text content, creating the visual and tactile elements and right through to the format and production… we also work in a more ‘traditional’ sense as designers, where the various parts of the process are collaborations with editors, translators, illustrators, writers and printers.

One of our biggest advantages, is also our biggest problem. The Caseroom Press is not a business, it is not the main focus of our time - both Philippa and Barrie teach and work as freelance designers. This means that although we are not relying on the Press to support itself, neither do we really have the time to focus on its marketing potential.
We have placed our books in a number of galleries and bookshops, we attend Artist’s Book Fairs, which we find very positive and we also submit works to magazines for review (if possible) and submit work to relevant ‘call for entries’. For example Philippa’s book *Done* was recently awarded best in show at the ‘Closure’ exhibition by ‘We Love Your Books’.

The artist’s books fairs have been an extremely rewarding experience, we have had the pleasure of our books reaching an immediate and wider audience, books have been purchased for collections (for example *FlatPack | PlaskaPaczka* was selected for Tate Library), we have made contact with ‘virtual contacts’ who have taken the time to come and meet us face to face and we have picked up opportunities to place work in venues both nationally and internationally. As lecturers, it has been extremely rewarding to have peer esteem and peer reviews for our own work, as opposed to the achievements of our students.

Even as freelance designers, the client is always more important than you are – The Caseroom Press has been a huge opportunity to put our own work and our own creativity first for a change.

**Book Artist Case Study XVII**

**Lucy May Schofield, Manchester, UK**

[www.lucymayschofield.co.uk](http://www.lucymayschofield.co.uk)

I graduated from the London College of Printing’s BA Print Media (Book Arts and Crafts) degree course in 2002 and have been making and selling artists’ books since then.

I have published over 20 editions since 2000, with four new editions made in the last 24 months alongside some one-off pieces. My larger editions are produced in print runs of up to 1000, and are stocked nationally and internationally in shops and galleries, with my more limited editions shown at artist’s book fairs and exhibitions. Selling books and running book-making workshops are my main sources of income.

In 2005, I produced a second print run of seven editions of 1000 miniature books based on the themes of unrequited love and romance. The works stem from my first edition of books; 100 books in 100 days; 100 unique works made over a 100-day period, in 2002. My more recent work has explored themes such as lost love, liberation, salvaged letters, solitude, proverbs, dementia, and diaries made in editions of up to one hundred and sold at book fairs, craft fairs, exhibitions as well as privately. I also work to commission for clients regularly and produce bespoke work for stockists and clients. In recent years I have created installations to showcase my work within shop windows. I have been invited to work with established collections and museums to create new publications including the V&A Museum of Childhood and The Wellcome Trust.

**Production and Marketing**

The most difficult aspect of marketing work for me has been publicising new works and finding the opportunity.
to send out the information to the relevant people. I regularly attend artist’s book fairs and in the past have marketed my books at both trade fairs and craft fairs in the UK and aboard including Pulse at Earls Court, Origin at Somerset House as well as some International book fairs. I show at the appropriate exhibitions for the type of work I’m marketing. These shows have been used to launch larger editions of books attracting international retailers and gallery shops.

I find at book fairs that I can have personal interaction and contact with the public. It is by far the best way to sell my work; no one can talk about your work 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 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 know enough about the production, themes or field of artists’ books.

Meeting the people who buy the work has influenced me. 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 provided me with stories, memories, poems, experiences and recipes in the past. When exhibiting I have been offered interesting opportunities including: exhibitions at the Bluecoat, RBSA, V&A and the Crafts Council, and commissions with the Wellcome Trust, all a result of meeting and talking to organisers or curators at events.

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 producing new work. 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 sometimes price work in relation to the theme or emotional time spent on the piece. 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 collectors will discover the work. I do send out private view invitations for my own exhibitions to both private and institutional collectors and have had further opportunities and sales as a result of this.

**The Bibliotherapy Artist’s Book Library Tour**

“In June 2009 I created the Bibliotherapy Artist’s Book Library (BABL), cementing the belief that the interaction of reading books and engaging with art have huge mental health benefits. I have a modest collection of artists’ books, which I have used for the past 8 years to inspire other people to write, illustrate and make their own books through lecturing and teaching workshops. Where this has been hugely satisfying for the past 5 years, I want these books to exist elsewhere. I want them to be discovered by strangers, live outside of the institutions they are often housed, be able to breathe - no white gloves, no glass cabinets.

Just a library of artists’ books, four wheels and the open road. Someone somewhere can read something that makes their heart lighter and a tiny difference is made to their day.”

Lucy got her wish for transport granted! In March 2010, when she purchased ‘Delores’ (above), a Citroen HY Van, 1971 French ex Fire Engine. Lucy is currently restoring and converting the van to house her collection of artists’ books as well as over 50 submissions for BABL’s 2010 tour.

Lucy May Schofield is also focusing on the northwest as part of her pilot of this travelling project. BABL premiered at the ‘Art Car boot fair’ during the Manchester International Festival, and toured to Hastings for the Coastal Currents festival, at the North West Frontier Arts for Health Conference, and was performed at the Manchester Artist’s Book Fair last November. In 2010, BABL is due to begin touring to the coastal route of the UK, taking artists’ publications to a new far-reaching audience.

Venues will be confirmed and published on the blog: http://bibliotherapyartistsbooklibrary.blogspot.com
To see where BABL has had outings so far go to: www.lucymayschofield.blogspot.com
Book Artist Case Study XVIII
Marshall Weber, Booklyn, New York, USA
www.booklyn.org

Marshall Weber has been making artists’ books for 30 years and has published 66 editions and unique books, 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 book works are primarily unique, and sometimes small editions from 2 to 50. They are “multi- and interdisciplinary, often using handwriting, (organic materials and spices that are vehicles for scents and odorous), painting, collage, photography, the books are often part of, or related to installations and site-specific performance works using literature and various forms of experimental calligraphy. Subject matters tends to focus on political, ecological and linguistic topics and integration of all three.” Weber is also “the directing curator and artists’ representative of Booklyn and is one of the few 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.” Eight years of Bush and overt commercialisation of youth and alternative culture has limited the occurrence of challenging content in much of the art and publishing world. But perhaps this will improve with the radicalisation of the ecological movement and the escalation of war in Afghanistan.

Weber attended four book fairs/events in 2009: Codex Foundation Conference, Berkeley, Frankfurt Bookfair, Germany, Hybrid Book Conference, Philadelphia, and the New York Art Book Fair, NYC. 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.” That said intermittently new clients come your way and it is a great way to greet an enthusiastic, popular (non-buying) audience. The New York Art Book Fair, NYC was by far the most exciting fair, Frankfurt seems almost over, most of the collectors are aging bibliophiles, and I would be afraid that they might die in my booth if they actually came in, which they don’t. While Frankfurt is good for trade people, especially young graphic hipsters, it doesn’t serve Booklyn any more and we won’t present at the Frankfurt Bookfair from now on.

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. I feel like the Hybrid conference really addressed this issue head on. I also noticed that my invitations to make academic presentations has been rising so perhaps there is more demand for presenters outside of the academic in order to expand the perspective.

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.

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 the section on pricing for Weber’s pricing structure method]

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, 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?

Two years later, and there have been substantial improvements in the field, due to the rising population of younger artists. There is still a great divide between artworld artists’ books and fine press world artists’ books, the circuits seem further and further apart as exemplified by the different cultures seen at the Codex Book Fair and the New York Book Art (AKA the Printed Matter) Bookfair. I actually think that the Printed Matter gang is more generous and diverse; if the Codex clan continues to ignore this part of the field they do so at their peril. The fine press people have fewer resources than the artworld people, and those are diminishing (bibliophile collectors are literally dying out and young librarians are cancelling standing orders with fine presses, it’s the end of a colonial era tradition…).

“Here’s my annual diversity rant, in the age of Obama where are all the people of colour and the queers (big advances for the queers especially with the popularity of zine culture in the libraries) 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 academic Artist’s Book exhibits survey shows? It’s time for exhibits that address tough subjects. Mainstream institutions are having far more interesting shows than the academic survey shows. The Morgan’s Blake show [1], the Walker’s amazing artist book exhibit [2], the Rubin Museum’s show of Jung’s Red Book [3], the exemplary and courageous exhibition programme of the Center for Book Arts in New York City, all point to a rising institutional and public interest in creative books.

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 a year later and after a global recession things have gotten 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 hand painted, collaged and digitally printed books by younger artist more associated with studio and gallery practice than a press name or publishing imprint.

Its 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 when she was a landscape architect exchange student at Louisiana State University, USA and discovered a book art elective run by Leslie Koptcho. In 2004 she graduated from UWE with an MA in Multi-disciplinary Printmaking. Maufe makes book editions, both for her own project-based works and as part of funded artists’ residencies. Books are not her main source of income.

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 and documentation into how you can translate that experience onto paper to the reader/viewer.”

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.”

In 2008/09 Maufe has shown her work individually at two artist’s book fairs (BABE, Bristol and GI, Glasgow) as well as being represented by UWE, Winchester School of Art collection and Hordaland kunstsender, Bergen at fairs in the UK and Norway. The majority of her book sales are through 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.

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 one of 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.

Maufe is also interested in the development of curated book art exhibitions that are brought together by a theme, such as Sitting Room and Inkubator. She has had her bookworks exhibited in several exhibitions during 2008/09. These include Place, Identity and Memory, Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries and touring: Ø, Limfjordsenter, Denmark; Sitting Room, touring and Inkubator II, Durham. In addition to this Maufe curated a book art exhibition for Galleri VOX, Bergen, Norway called Å REISE, with the theme of “Travel”, which included examples of her own work, works from her collection, works loaned from the Artists’ Books Partnership, exhibition Programme (ABPP), UWE, and examples of work made by Norwegian artists after attending workshops run by Maufe.

“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”.

From October 2007 to October 2008 Maufe completed a new series of books during a year-long residency for Visual Arts in Rural Communities based at Highgreen, Northumberland. Eight editions were created along with other works for a final exhibition entitled ‘Raffle Tickets and Midges’, and were housed in suitably designed boxes, (see images above and below) one that travelled in the local mobile library - available for loan - and the other travelled in the back of a bike trailer which Maufe toured to various venues from Highgreen to Newcastle.
The bookworks from ‘Raffle Tickets and Midges’ were selected for the Northern Print Biennale 2009, Newcastle and shown along side prints in various forms, a welcome addition to exhibiting in exhibitions purely for bookarts.

‘Raffle Tickets and Midges’ books were also shown as an Academic Poster Paper and portfolio presentation at the IMPACT Printmaking Conference in Bristol, Sept 2009.

Maufe also takes part in projects that have book themes such as UWE, Bristol’s Regenerator altered books project, and often incorporates book art and book skills into projects and residencies that involve schools and other members of the public.

Maufe currently lives and works in Bergen, Norway and in addition to working on various art projects, runs book making workshops from her studio.

*Book Artist Case Study XX*

*Mette-Sofie D. Ambeck, Hovsor, Denmark*

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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 nine editions since then. She has also produced two book-installations and several unique books since. She publishes under her own name and since 2006 also Robo-Girl Productions. 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 six book fairs:

- 12th & 13th International Contemporary Artist’s Book Fair, Leeds
- Bristol Artists Book Event 2009 (BABE), Arnolfini, Bristol
- Doverodde: Book Arts Festival 2009, Denmark
- London Art Book Fair Whitechapel, London
- 4th Manchester Artist’s Book Fair, Holden Gallery, Manchester
She has had her work published in three international publications:
‘abc Design’ issue no.29: ‘Papercraft’ by Mariana Di A Guimarães, Brazil (Sep./Oct./Nov. 2009).
‘Spark. Inspirational Graphic Design’ editor Claire Dalqué, Maomao publications, Spain (May 2009).
Publisher: Page One Publishing, Singapore.

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. She has also had her work featured in books, magazines and online. In September 2006 there was a longer interview by the late Judith Hoffberg with Mette Ambeck for the American-based Umbrella Online magazine, Volume 29, No. 3, Sep 2006 [which you can read at: http://umbrellaleditions.com/issue.php?page=44&issue=4].

Ambeck wrote an essay; ‘Paper Vikings, Virtually - Scandinavian Artists’ Books’ for the ‘Artist’s Book Yearbook 2006-2007’. More recently in 2008 she finished her 2nd Master degree in Digital Design and Communication and, in 2009 was awarded a grant to develop her book works from The Danish Arts Foundation.

In 2009 she also set up a social networking site for Nordic Book Arts (www.nordicbookarts.ning.com) in collaboration with Doverodde Book Arts Centre, Denmark, hosts of the annual Doverodde Book Arts Festival (www.bookarts-doverodde.dk).
“I have been creating/marketing work since 1981 but for many years bookarts were only a small part of my output. I have published over 30 editions under my own imprint Two Wood Press. My work is mostly, but not exclusively letterpress and relief printed small editions. I try to make work with a strong narrative content. I like evidence of hand making.”

Andrew Morrison received a Visual Artist Award from Shetland Arts in 2009 to purchase equipment to develop his work into printmaking. A show of his prints was exhibited at Weisdale Mill from September – October 2009 during the Shetland Open Art Exhibition.

Andrew also exhibited ‘Toolbox’ at Haslemere Museum in November 2009, where he had been working as Artist-in-Residence for eighteen months as part of the ‘Creative Communities’ project. The Haslemere project documented the rich tradition of craft workers and independent traders through prints made in response to their collections of tools. Andrew held regular workshops in the town to develop the project and ‘Toolbox’ included contributions from local residents and schoolchildren.

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 made.

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, book artists 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 artist’s book fairs as part of the artistsbooksonline.com artists’ collective: Small Publishers Fair, London; BABE: Bristol Artist’s Book Event, Arnolfini; The Third Manchester Artists’ Book Fair; Scottish Poetry Library, Edinburgh; International Contemporary Artists’ Book Fair, Leeds (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 - 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?

The Rugmaker, Andrew Morrison, from the ‘Toolbox’ series, 2009
Make the work that you want to make and try and sell it on your own terms - it's easy to find yourself making work in response to others' ideas for exhibitions, shops, competitions and commissions and lose 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? Yes (I still like to send physical imagery - harder to delete) Phone? Yes Email? Yes In Person? No

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.

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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 always featured Nicholson’s alter-ego, Ron, but in recent years the artist himself has appeared in the newer ‘bio auto graphic’ sequence of issues. There have been over twenty editions to date.

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, Glasgow, London, Leeds and Bristol in the last 24 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. He 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 artist’s books events, institutions and people have continued. Since writing 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.

Through a typically ‘artist’s books’ chance meeting, the Ensixteen agenda expanded across the Atlantic again (after his ‘you nighted states’ trilogy of 2005-6), as Nicholson collaborated with Martin Antonetti, Curator of the Mortimer Rare Books Collection at Smith College, Massachusetts. The project, funded by the University for the Creative Arts, resulted in new narrative pieces released through the usual outlets, as well as lectures and exhibitions. His most recent book is bio auto graphic: ‘Day/Night – Night/Day’, published in January 2010.

Ral Veroni has been making artists’ books since 1985, he publishes mostly under his own name and although in the last 5 years some publishing houses have been reprinting his limited artists’ books in larger editions. He has produced 23 books in total, with two made in the last 12 months. His books and the books by his father Raoul Veroni* are one of his main sources of income.

I have made large editions (Nothing for Destiny, 2009), small (Sophie, 1998) and unique books works (Interim, 1997). The edition scale depends on the nature of the project. Related to this are the method of printing (lithography, screenprint, monotype, inkjet, laser or offset) and the cost of the materials (fine papers, plastic sleeves, ink).

Marketing

Distribution is a difficult aspect of marketing for his larger editions. He has not personally been to any artists’ book fairs in the last 5 years, although his books have been taken there by agents. He finds that personal interaction is a good way 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 has not approached any collections personally but some bookshops and workshops that represent his work have done so successfully.

I price the books in relation with cost per hour of production in addition to cost of materials. The conceptual subject of a particular book might work to put a price more affordable (as when I made a book about money). With the last copies of a title I gradually raise the price in relation to the availability.
He markets his own work: “through street, second-hand book, market stalls and some specialised bookshops. 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.” Also in the USA through a specialist artist’s book dealer.

It might take ten years but at the end I usually sell out my editions. I doubt that this even 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%.

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

I usually work and wait for things to happen at their own pace. It’s not something I would advise as a method, it’s just my way. I did not expect to make a living with my books. I tried to base my income from teaching or other kind of artwork jobs. Thus I had a free space to make my books without the interference of the ups and downs of a small market. It took some years to receive a kind of regular flow of income from them but that wasn’t my goal. I see artists’ books as a channel to communicate: independent, mobile, 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.

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

Sometimes a remark or an observation about the artwork triggers in me some new ideas to explore. This doesn’t happen very often.

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

It is happening now with two collectors. It didn’t happen to me before.

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

Well, yes, but I started in Argentina, in the late 80’s. The term ‘artists’ books’ was not familiar then. The channels for exhibiting were scarce and the market weak.

At the time it would have helped me to have an idea about pricing my work in relation to the materials and time it took to realise the book.

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

As a channel for exhibiting and selling artists’ books bookshops have the potential to reach the wider audience. Local bookshops could have a small vitrine in their premises to exhibit local artist’s book makers. These could bestow more personality to a bookshop and help the artists greatly. Most chain bookshops don’t like the extra work that involved an object that is not standard or not have a barcode. Pity.

*My father Raoul Veroni (1913-1992) worked in the genre of bibliophile books for more than 40 years, from the mid 30s until the 80s. He was a talented printmaker, typographer, typesetter and designer. In the 40s, as a recently graduated student from the fine art school Ernesto de la Carcova he started to work in the print shop of Francisco Colombo where he learned his skills in typesetting and printing. Colombo was one amazing publishing house in Buenos Aires dedicated exclusively to fine print editions in poetry and literature. From 1943 my father started his poetry collections of plaquettes and books made in collaboration with well known poets and translators. In 1960 he started his own print workshop to make bibliophile books using a German Phoenix press, an etching press and a lithographic press. In 1980 he started to develop Alzheimer’s (an illness possibly related to the use of lead type). He died in 1992. From that year onwards I travelled and lived in different places. I came back to Argentina in 2006 where I started, with my wife, to catalogue my father’s work. With amazement we discovered that he designed, printed and illustrated around 80 different titles on his own, plus made a great amount of illustrations for other publishing houses. I started to send my father’s books to the same dealer who represents my books, with great success. University libraries in the US have shown a lot of interest in his editions.

Artists and Bibliophiles: Books by father and son, Raoul and Ral Veroni was shown at the 33rd International Book Fair, 2007, La Rural, Buenos Aires, Argentina. An online archive of the books in the exhibition can be viewed at http://www.AetB.com.ar
Deb Rindl has been making editions for 15 years and has published approx 30 since starting, although none 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.”

In the last few years Rindl has regularly shown her work at the Leeds Contemporary Artist’s Book Fair. 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. 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.”

“I 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.”

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 even more small artist’s book fairs around the country, like Leeds or Oxford [biennial 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 Art Book Fair, to encourage people to book a stand.”

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**Book Artist Case Study XXV**

Miriam Schaer, New York, USA
http://miriamschaer.com

I took my first book class whilst in art school in 1977 (Philadelphia College of Art, now University of the Arts). 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 is the most difficult aspect of marketing your work?

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.

I did some book fairs: Pyramid Atlantic in 2007 and in 2009; The Hybrid Book in Philadelphia in 2008. At Pyramid I covered my expenses. At Hybrid sales were very slow at the fair, but I made a big sale afterwards through a contact made there. Some private direct sales. I may have to pass on ARLIS in 2010 due to my current teaching schedule, but those commitments should let up after June 2010.

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 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 all methods. “in 2007, 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. But 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.

Although I have been included on many other websites, I finally made my own website, using wordpress (blogging software) using the theme (template) WPfolios, which was created to be used by artists, for websites. The best part is I can update, and manage it on my own. I still need to re-work some aspects of it, but that was a huge accomplishment.

I am continuing to make both unique and editioned books in 2009-10. Last year, I did my first print on demand book using Lulu.com and its been a great new way to make books, and create books that can reach a larger audience because of the lower price. I am very excited about this, and plan on making more books this way.

I have also joined a number of social networking sites: Facebook, Artist Books 3.0, a ning site started by Robert Heather. Although time consuming, it has been a very interesting way of connecting with a larger community, as well as sharing information about my work, and other topics of interest, book and other wise. With Google analytics, which I have on the website, I can see what sites people are coming from. There is always a direct rise in hits on the site after I have posted on Facebook or Twitter.

I have been teaching on a university level a good deal, and feel fortunate to have these jobs in the current economy. I have made some sales, not breaking any records, but steady. I am still working with Vamp and Tramp, and still looking for European and UK representation. Have made some inroads into other US outlets. I find the catalogue still to be a useful tool in showing people my work. In 2007, I made my first significant sale from this, to an institution who saw and acquired the work from the catalogue only.

One area I have been exploring is writing, and I have had several essays and reviews published - in The Bonefolder, and other publications, as well as an exhibition catalogue for Beyond Words, curated by Ed Hutchins and Carolyn Chadwick this past year.

I have several exhibition proposals out, as well as grants, and continue to be included in a number of exhibitions - some are book oriented but a few have not been, which is also exciting.
**Book Artist Case Study XXVI**  
**Chris Taylor, Wild Pansy Press, Leeds, UK**  
www.wildpansypress.com  
www.leeds.ac.uk/fine_art/people/staff/ct.html

Chris Taylor has been making artists’ books, mostly in small to medium editions, for 20 years, with three new publications in the last 12 months. He is co-editor of the Wild Pansy Press with Simon Lewandowski publishing artists’ books and catalogues collaboratively with individual artists, galleries and institutions as well as developing artist-led projects. Chris is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Leeds where he is Director of the MA in Fine Art and a PhD supervisor.

Together with artist John McDowall he has been coordinator of Contempory Artists’ Books & Related Events since 2001 organising the International Contemporary Artist’s Book Fair held annually at the University of Leeds, curating exhibitions such as Special Collections (2007) and From Book to Book (2008) and facilitating public workshops and artists’ commissions.

He finds ways to market his work through venues such as the bookartbookshop, London, and on-line through the Wild Pansy Press web site. Placing work in major collections has been through book fairs or by visiting curators/buyers in person resulting more often than not with a positive outcome.

For production costs, a number of the publications have had ACE funding and/or gallery funded and sometimes given away, exchanged or sold on eBay in line with the publication/exhibition concept. Pricing must take into account any funding, time, materials and gallery commission which may be completely different for each publication.

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**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 Marseille. 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.”

Tyson produced new books over 2008-9 which featured in On the Fractured Stage of the Book, Jan - Feb 2009 at Eagle Gallery, London (www.emmahilleagle.com). Over 2009, he also did a small tour to the Klingspor, Herzog August, and Meermanno-Westriannium, to sell his books. “They were more interested in the expensive traditional ‘livre d’artiste’ (whatever that is) titles like “Ghost” and “Homage to Goya” but were also intrigued by “Tenebrae” (a book commissioned for Leeds University, for the ‘Special Collections’ exhibition at the University Gallery Leeds in 2007, as part of the ‘pages’ project supported by the Arts Council of England) because the image was cut paper. There was no prejudice against digital, or screenprinted texts or images though.”

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The most difficult aspect of his work is the marketing of his work. In the last 12 months he has shown his work at the Leeds Artist’s Book Fair and the London Art Book Fair and finds this personal interaction with an audience the best ways to sell his work, although he would prefer to sell through an intermediary.
Book Artist Case Study XXVIII

<usus>

Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz, Germany
www.boatbook.de

Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz have been making artists’ books for 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 recently, 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 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 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 e-mail 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

Leseboot/Segelbuch reading boat / sailing book
Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz <usus>, 2002
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 works by usus, Uta Schneider and Ulrike Stoltz, was shown at the Klingspor Museum, Offenbach am Main, Germany, August 2007. For more information see www.klingspor-museum.de

A bilingual catalogue (German/English) is still available, for more info email: usus@boatbook.de

usus are exhibiting in the Graphic Design Biennale Germany - China 2010 in Alten Schlachthof, Offenbach am Main, in May, (organised by the Deutsch-Chinesischer Kulturaustausch für Kunst und Design e.V. Düsseldorf and Graphic Design Committee of China Artists Association, GDC China. This was shown in China, Nov-Dec 2009 at the State Cultural Centre, Xi’an.

Ulrike Stoltz and Friends is a recent project at Galerie auf Zeit – Räume für Kunst in Braunschweig, Germany, where artists turned an empty store into a gallery space for a 10-year retrospective exhibition.

You can also read an interview with Ulrike Stoltz, conducted by Sarah Bodman and Tom Sowden for their AHRC project: What will be the canon for the artist’s book in the 21st Century? This is a free download at: www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/canon.htm

Book Artist Case Study XXIV
Nancy Campbell, UK
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http://nancycampbelle.blogspot.com

I printed my first book in 2000 while doing an apprenticeship in letterpress printing at Barbarian Press in British Columbia. That book, An Edifying Essay on Slugs, was well reviewed in Parenthesis (the FPBA journal); as a result I had a flurry of sales and gained the support of enthusiastic collectors for my future work.

I have published six editions to date (two in the last 12 months), in addition to concurrent writing projects with other publishers. I also worked on many books for other publishers during the years when I was a studio assistant in the USA. I was lucky to be able to do this: I learnt a lot from these projects, which otherwise I would have had to discover by trial and error on my own.

My primary practice is as a poet, and so my visual work is usually text-based. My books come about as an extension of writing - the presentation and form of the book provide extra layers of expression. At first I produced letterpress editions of essays and poems illustrated with wood engravings; subsequently I used more experimental binding structures and this led into investigations of alternative ways of providing images alongside text, including light installations. I have recently moved into film and have been experimenting with non-conventional printmaking techniques. Book arts provides an unchartered space in which to challenge the way I think about the nature of text and language.

My editions tend to be limited to around 50-70 copies, although there were only eleven copies of the latest work, After Light, as it was very expensive to produce. I am currently working on a Lulu publication, which will be my first unlimited edition. This is exciting, as I like multiples, and generally feel rather bereft when an edition sells out. I’d rather sell more books at a lower price. Previously, the size of my editions was limited by the constraints of letterpress, but as I learn more about digital publishing I have more control over the edition size.

When I began making books it was as a fine press printer, working under the imprint ‘Burlesque Press’ – but the press name seemed increasingly both a pose and a prison. ‘Burlesque Press’ carried too many associations with traditional publishing. This had been intentional, as the whole endeavour was a parody of the model publisher, from the regal press device right down to Deirdre, the conceptual secretary. I moved away from pastiche once I found my own style.
Burlesque Press gradually dissolved and my subsequent works have had more fluid points of origin and authorship, and more diverse styles. My two latest projects have been collaborations with very different artists and if they had come out under a press name, it might not have made clear the extent of others’ input. I also produce work under a pseudonym, just to confuse matters.

This may be a disadvantage in terms of selling to collectors, many of whom like books that form part of a predictable series, or build their collections around works that share a common theme, whether that be the publisher or subject matter.

Q. Is this your main source of income?

No. I used to support myself by working for the London antiquarian book dealer Bertram Rota, managing a department of fine press and artists’ books. I loved dealing with different books, artists and collectors, but ultimately I had to leave in order to focus on my own work.

I find it hard to apply the standards I had when selling other’s work to selling my own, so most of my books are under-priced. I couldn’t exist on sales revenues alone, and wouldn’t wish to pitch my work at the price necessary for that. I do believe strongly that artists should be able to gather an income from sales, and that pricing should accurately reflect the work involved, but hypocritically I don’t put this into practice myself. Perhaps this is because of my situation: making books is part of a broader practice that is largely focussed on writing and performance. So I support myself with earnings from freelance journalism, editing and other publications, together with (occasional) grant funding.

Q. Have you formulated a pricing structure for your editions?

Each edition is priced independently. The price is normally much lower than the cost of production, but I try to recoup as much as is reasonable. I would like the price to reflect the effort and materials involved more accurately.

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

The main problem is time. There is so much work involved in marketing, from making preliminary enquiries and sourcing contacts to preparing catalogues and other ephemera – let alone book fairs and visits to collectors. It’s a tricky balance, and these days I tend to prefer to stick my head in the sand and get on with making things.

Q. Which artist’s book fairs have you attended in the last year?

I visited Manchester, which I think has a really good vibe, and the Whitechapel Fair. I always go to the Oxford Fine Press Fair to catch up with American printers who I’ve worked with in the past: I like to see their new work. I exhibited at antiquarian book fairs in my capacity as a dealer, and I find it much easier to enthuse about others’ work than my own, so I’ve never taken a table in my own right. Since most of my previous publications have sold out, I don’t even have enough titles to populate a stand!

I am much more actively involved in poetry performances, and a lot of my opportunities for selling work come at gigs. I’ll often have copies of my current book available for the audience to look at after the reading. However, it has to be said, many people who are used to poetry books expect cheap, stapled pamphlets and most of my books are seen as rather weird or too expensive.

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

I think people are much more likely to buy work if they have some personal connection with the maker. I know a few private collectors who subscribe to a notion of patronage – while they may like the product,
their purchase may be part of a more general desire to support the arts through an individual.

I have sold through other dealers in the past and it can be a very positive move. In London, Collinge and Clarke were very supportive of my early work and made some good sales. Personally I find it a relief to have someone else make the overtures on my behalf.

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

Don't write long love letters to librarians.

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

I use general websites to find out about exhibition opportunities (I am more inclined to invest time in an exhibition than a book fair) and the Artist's Book Yearbook is a good resource for special collections, worth following up with visits or further research into the collection.

But I find most of the most successful contacts come about quite serendipitously, through friends, or even during discussions on Facebook!

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

Contacts were sometimes successful but if not, was due to budget limitations/personal taste.

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

The first collections that bought my work got in touch with me out of the blue. In some cases, I hadn’t even been aware that the institution had an interest in artists' books. When I first set out to actively sell a book, I was careful to research the institution – not only whether they were interested in contemporary fine printing, but also their budget year and general acquisition policy.

All libraries have a collecting policy and a tight budget and it’s unfair to bother people with goods that don’t fit their brief.

Q. Did you have a contact name?

Yes, I wouldn’t send a letter into the void. If you don’t know the person to contact, though it may seem like going round in circles, contact them to find out.

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

Yes – I email book launch and publication information, and sometimes I’ll let people know if I am doing a significant reading. Some artists manage to do more regular, formal mailings, which I think is a great idea, but I haven’t done it myself. I have a blog, where I post information about projects in progress, so people can follow that if they choose.

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 think the Internet offers artists many ways of marketing their work, and I certainly haven’t explored it as much as I might do. But it seems there are so many forums to take part in, and groups, like ning etc. Also, since I can’t justify the environmental cost of travelling to book fairs and conventions, I think the web opens up great opportunities of getting work known internationally.

In my time as a dealer I learnt a lot, so I don’t feel I need more experience at marketing work. Instead of chasing sales, I am more interested in raising my profile through exhibitions, residencies and other projects, in the hope that these activities will lead to others, making future opportunities possible.