

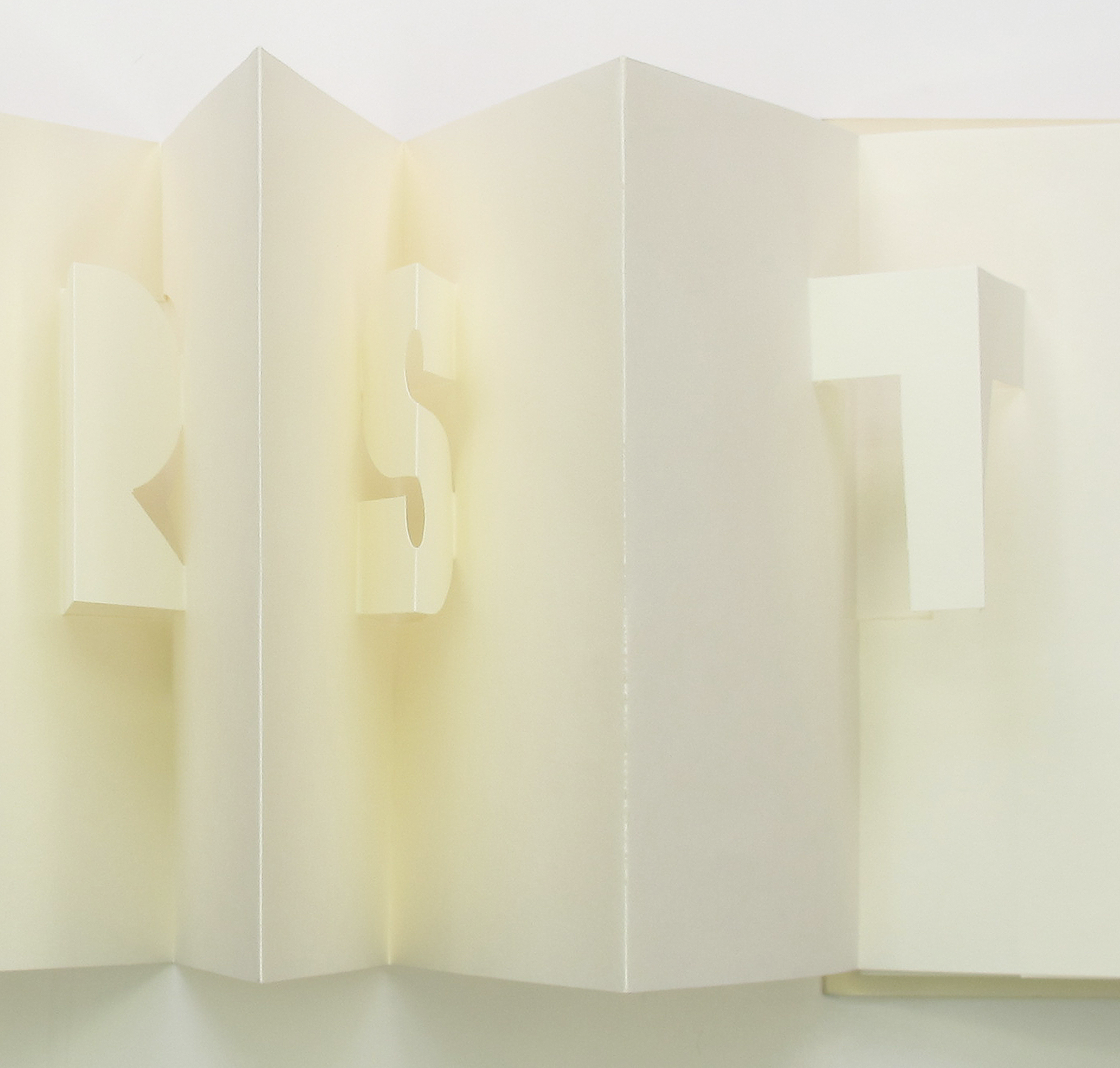
The image shows the spines of several books standing upright. The spines are made of different materials, including wood and leather, and feature various textures, colors, and markings. Some have dark, wavy lines drawn on them, while others have faint text or perforations. The lighting is warm, highlighting the natural grain and textures of the materials.

# TEXTures

---

*an exhibition of texts, textures and structure in artists' books*

Curated by Jack Ginsberg, David Paton & Rosalind Cleaver



# TEXTures

*an exhibition of texts, textures and structure in artists' books*

---

Curated by Jack Ginsberg, David Paton & Rosalind Cleaver

**Archives & Special Collections  
Library and Information Centre  
Doornfontein Campus  
University of Johannesburg**

5 March – 18 April 2014

**[www.theartistsbook.org.za](http://www.theartistsbook.org.za)**

**David Paton Curator 2014**

David Paton is an artist and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Visual Art, University of Johannesburg. In 2000 he completed a Masters degree focusing on the artist's book, titled *South African Artists Books and Book-objects Since 1960*. He has also curated exhibitions, delivered lectures and papers and published in academic journals on the subject of the artist's book and its digital interface.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank and acknowledge the following people for their contributions to making this exhibition possible:

Jack Ginsberg, lender of the artists' books for the exhibition and co-curator: for his continued support of research into the artist's book in South Africa.

Rosalind Cleaver, co-curator: for her tireless work and attention to every detail in making the exhibition possible.

Riette Zaaiman, Manager, Archives & Special Collections, UJ: for her logistical and venue support and encouragement in all aspects of the exhibition.

Maaik Bakker: for designing and producing the catalogue in print and on-line versions.

Dr. Rookaya Bawa, Executive Director, Library and Information Centre, UJ: for her encouragement and initiation of the process which became the exhibition.

Vedant Nanackchand, HoD, Department of Visual Art: for his logistical support of this exhibition and its wider associated research.

Dr. Judy Peter, HoD, Department of Jewellery Design and Manufacture: for the generous loan of display cabinets without which, the exhibition would not have been possible.

Lesley Spiro Cohen, Consultant, Strategy, Planning and Development, WAM, University of the Witwatersrand: for the generous loan of frames for the broadsides.

Theodorah Modise, Co-ordinator, Events, Library and Information Centre, UJ: for coordination of invitations for the opening event.

Siani-Michelle Hall and Alexandre Vosloo, for helping with aspects of the exhibition set-up.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form without the prior permission in writing from the authors and/or artists.

© David Paton, Riette Zaaiman, Jack Ginsberg and all participating artists.

ISBN: 978-0-86970-779-1



## CONTENTS

<b>Foreword</b> - Riette Zaaiman	pg. 2
<b>Introduction</b> - Jack Ginsberg	pg. 4
<b>TEXTures:</b> an exhibition of texts, textures and structure in artists' books - David Paton	pg. 5-22
<b>Catalogue</b>	pg. 24-27

## **FOREWORD**

Riette Zaaiman

Manager: Archives & Special Collections  
Library and Information Centre  
University of Johannesburg

Archives are usually associated with dust, mould and the acrid smell of old books. The new 'Archives and Special Collections' of the UJ Library and Information Centre at the Doornfontein Campus wants to modernise this perception and would like to showcase the treasures found in archival store rooms or in a library consisting of rare books and special collections.

Creativity and innovation are concepts associated with the University of Johannesburg and advancement in general; this is expressed in the current exhibition. Interactive communication between the Archives and its users, or the display of crown jewels of a rare book collection is the culmination of a new way of thinking about archives.



## INTRODUCTION

### Jack Ginsberg

Many of the world's foremost universities around the world pride themselves on their library special collections. Of these, collections of some of the most important artists' books outside of museums such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA) and the V&A in London, are often to be found in university libraries. Unfortunately South African universities are not known for any special collections of international artists' books and, furthermore, there is a corresponding dearth of books made by South African artists collected by our university libraries.

This collaboration between the University of Johannesburg's Archives and Special Collections and the Jack Ginsberg Collections of Artists' Books builds upon the existing relationship between these two partners reflected in the research website [www.theartistsbook.org.za](http://www.theartistsbook.org.za). In addition this exhibition provides a timeous opportunity for a small yet focused selection of artists' books to be seen in a South African university and will, we hope, generate intellectual and artistic debate on the genre, not least of which being the artist's book's complex relationship with both the library and the gallery space. This exhibition should appeal to a wide diversity within the university community.

Perhaps one of the outcomes of this exhibition exploring texts, textures and structure in artists' books will be a renewed motivation for university libraries to consider adding this fascinating form to their special collections.

Jack Ginsberg is Director of the Ampersand Foundation and winner of the 2013 BASA Art Champion Award whose private library of local and international artists' books is unique on the African continent.



## TEXTures: an exhibition of texts, textures and structure in artists' books: David Paton

It is always an honour to be able to interact with the exquisite objects in the *Jack Ginsberg Collections of Artists' Books* and this exhibition allows another privileged opportunity to engage with, choose and exhibit, selected books which fit the criteria for this exhibition.

A defining limitation in the exhibiting of artists' books, however, is overcoming the lack of a necessary temporal-spatial and physical relationship between the reader/viewer and the book-object. This usually means that any exhibition of rare, unique or private objects centers on their security and their resultant auratic distance from the sensorial touch of the reader/viewer. In two previous exhibitions of the artist's book, we have tried to mitigate these limitations: On the *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection* exhibition held at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 1996, book openings were regularly changed, mirrors placed under elevated objects revealed their otherwise hidden covers, workshops were held in order to help demystify the genre and the exhibition was curated in such a way that the visitor moved in a zig-zag path exploring books as if they were the individual pages of an artist's book; the thinking being to place the visitor inside the experience of negotiating the complex structural, material, and conceptual relationships inherent in the form. On the exhibition *Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface* held at the Aardklop Arts Festival, Potchefstroom and at the FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg in 2006, each book exhibited in a vitrine was accompanied by its interactive digital equivalent.

But here, for this exhibition, we were confronted by a need to find suitable display cases from a variety of very limited sources and our search culminated in a small set of materially and aesthetically diverse display cases. This resulted in an extremely limited 'real-estate' provided by the limits of the collective cases' footprint, and so we were confronted by pragmatic questions of what should be included and why and the more perplexing question of what should be excluded, when our starting point was the broad sweep of the thou-

sands of potential and relevant books from the remarkable *Jack Ginsberg Collections of Artists' Books*.

Confronting the limitations of the eleven display cases we managed to find, we decided to highlight only three defining characteristics of bookness: *Texts and textuality* – spaces in which the legible and optical elements of texts are foregrounded or problematized; *Texture* – operationalizing the printed and material surfaces of the page and book-object, and *Structure* – foregrounding one of the more characteristic aspects of artists' books' ability to interrogate the conventions by which books normally efface their identities (Drucker 2007:161). It is our intention to include books which are characteristic of more than one category and we have also included a number of Claire van Vliet's broadsides and two framed prints from Willem Boshoff's *KykAfrikaans* which help drive the exhibition content forward. Also, printed on every label is an image of that book's cover or binding.

### Texts

It seems important, for many reasons, to open the exhibition with a classic of early book art and typographic production, Iliia Zdanevich's (known popularly as Iliiazd) *Lidantiu Faram* (*Lidantiu as a Beacon*) (Fig.1), published by Izdaniya 41° Editions, Paris in 1923. Not only is this remarkable book a masterpiece of the Russian poetic avant-garde, the book, on its first public viewing in South Africa, is bound in its original grey wrappers with a collage by Naoum Granovsky (Naum Granovskiy) on onlaid gold and silver paper, cork and synthetic material. The book is printed using letterpress with the typographic designs by Iliiazd. Audrey Isselbacher (1987:37) states that "Ilyazd's *Lidantiu Faram* is the last and most fully-realised of his five dramatic works. The text is remarkable typography, and the stunning collage cover by Granovskiy marks a moment of synthesis and a culminating point in his formal experiments". Isselbacher (1987:459) continues:

Each page of this book offers itself as a picture, that is, as pure 'graphism', exhibiting a typographical repertory so vast that it defies inventory. Furthermore, so playful is its organization that some of the pages virtually defy reading, breaking as they do with the linear conception of the text and forcing the reader to adopt a circular contemplation, to decipher in a back-and-forth manner more appropriate for viewing a picture. In 'Lidantiu' Iliazd reached a high point in his development of ludic typography as an integral part of the modern page layout; it was a moment of synthesis and a culminating point in his formal experiments.

A seemingly irreverent accompaniment for *Lidantiu* is Graham Rawle's *Woman's World: A Novel* (Atlantic Books, London, 2005) (Fig.2) an artist's book forming part of his *Lost Consonants* series. In this work, Rawle has painstakingly collected words and phrases from 1960s women's magazines in order to tell his heroine Norma's subversive story. Once removed from their context, the words have been reassembled to make the unique novel rich with the flavour and moral tone of the 'donor' material and is as poignant as it is joyful. The book's self-reflexivity is found in the manner in which the cut and assembled text is printed in tonal relief from its paper substrate and, along with an image of scissors, humorously directs attention towards its own constructed reality. Looking at these books in such close proximity might encourage temporal contemplation of how texts have constructed our world.

Another pair of strange bedfellows is *Selected Poems 1961-1991* (The Artists' Press, Johannesburg, 1992) (Fig.3) a collaboration between Patrick Cullinan (poet), Judith Mason (artist), Mark Attwood (printer), Bruce Attwood (cover designer) and Johan Maree (binder) and *Gesammelte Werke* (Collected Works) *Band 7, Bok 3b und Bok 3d* (Edition Hansjörg Mayer, Stuttgart, 1974) (Fig.4) by Dieter Roth (Diter Rot). Roth's 'accumulated books' of found material were gathered, trimmed and bound to a uniform size. *Bok 3b and Bok 3d*, consist of die-cut pages from children's comics and coloring books. Each volume is unique, and represents a novel form of collaboration between artist, printer, the products of pulp

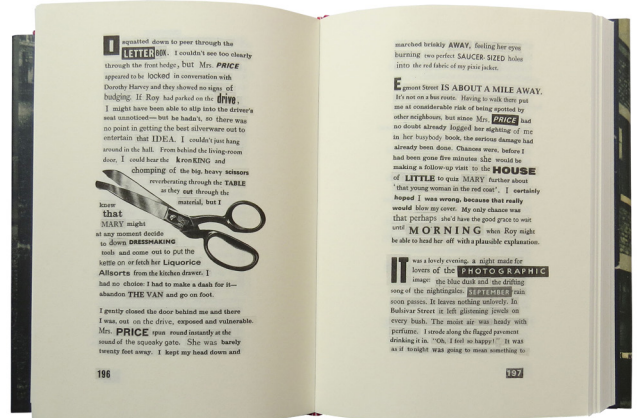


fig. 2



fig. 3

culture and print ephemera. At the other end of the cultural spectrum lies *Selected Poems* representing the best of South African artistic, poetic and craft collaboration, and is one of South Africa's truly classic artists' books.

The artist's book which has perhaps the highest public profile is Tom Phillips's *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel* (Tetrad Press, London, 1970/3) (Fig.5). According to the website devoted to the complex gestation of the various editions both limited as well as trade versions, Phillips

... set himself a task: to find a second-hand book for threepence and alter every page by painting, collage and cut-up techniques to create an entirely new version. He found his threepenny novel in a junkshop on Peckham Rye, South London. This was an 1892 Victorian obscurity titled *A Human Document* by W.H Mallock and he titled his altered book *A Humument*. The first version of all 367 treated pages was published in 1973 since when there have been four revised editions. *A Humument* is now one of the best known and loved of all 20th Century artist's books (sic) and is regarded as a seminal classic of post-modern art.

The volume on display in this exhibition only came into the Ginsberg collection in 2013 after I had been contacted by a colleague Elizabeth James who is the Documentation Manager, National Art Library Word & Image Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Elizabeth facilitated discussions between Jack and Tom and now one of only five items of this new edition proudly resides in South Africa. This new volume occurred at the same time as the recent exhibition *Life's Work* held at MASS MoCA (March 2013 – January 2014), and which represents the most comprehensive exhibition of *A Humument* ever mounted offering a rare opportunity to examine the work in its 47-year entirety. Tom's aim is to have 'treated' every page of the original novel twice. The first version was completed between 1966 and 1973 and makes up the content of the Tetrad edition. The second versions are still being produced, 1973-present. Thus the top row of the MASS MoCA exhibition showed the untreated Victorian book, row two showed the '66-'73 Tetrad version, and the bottom row showed the second version in progress. The



fig. 4

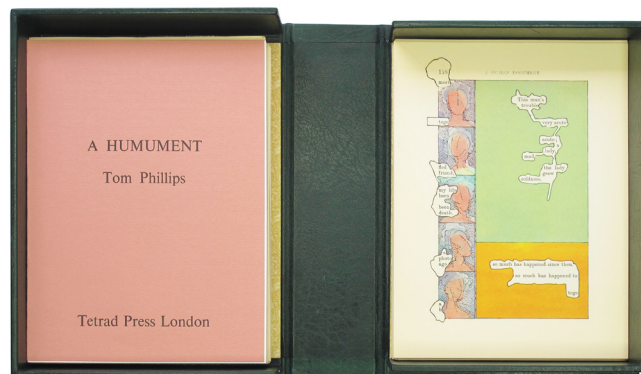


fig. 5

frames have grey placeholder paper where the 2nd version does not yet exist.

Our new edition of *A Humument* consists of two volumes in a divided black slipcase, but only one volume is exhibited here: The first box, bound in green leather, contains loose pages 1-180. The Colophon, on a card illustrated with a watercolour painting and contained in the pink folded card of the 1973 (1970) edition states: "This is number four of five copies (plus one hors de commerce made for the artist) of a special presentation of the first version of *A Humument*. It celebrates the fortieth anniversary of the completed publication by the Tetrad Press of the work's first issue in 1973." The bindings are lined with facsimiles of those that ornament two 1896 editions of the novel. Each box also includes the spines of containers within which the Tetrad Press edition was issued. The second box, bound in purple leather (not shown), contains loose pages 181-367, plus a brief history. Both boxes have a watercolour drawing inserted into a window in the front cover which is covered with transparent Mylar.

Grouped together in order to foreground the manner in which textuality may be deployed by artists in book form are five very different approaches. In *Rules of Thumb* (Scripps College Press, 1986) (Fig.6), the first book in a collaborative publishing series,

... students were asked to write down rules of typography that they probably would not find in typography books. These are the rules of thumb, or conventions for readability, which we use without thinking; like there is a space between words. They had to choose a rule or two from the 24 rules they discovered and try to explain why it exists. This text was set conventionally, with an enlarged capital. Then they had to break the rule on the next page by writing text that might require the breaking of the rule for better understanding or for a typographic effect (Scripps online).

The book is printed letterpress on 80 lb. Mohawk Superfine paper with the conventional text set in 16/18pt. body Scripps College Old Style, and the experimental pages set in various typefaces.

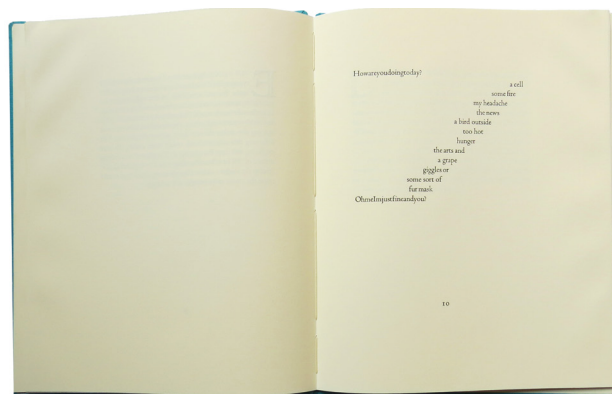


fig. 6

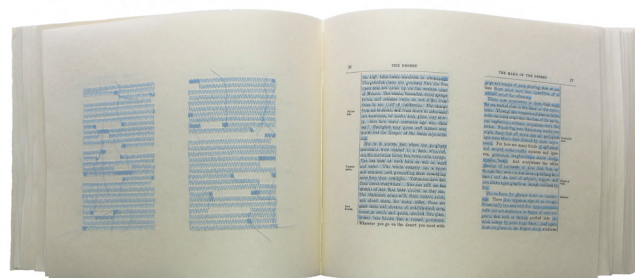


fig. 7

Alongside this book is Jen Bervin's *The Desert* (Granary Books, New York, 2004) (Fig.7). *The Desert* is a poem 'written' by sewing row by row, line by line, across 130 pages of John Van Dyke's, 1901 prose celebration of American wilderness, *The Desert: Further Studies in Natural Appearance*. Fields of pale blue zigzag stitching construct a resultant poem. Of the work, Bervin (online) states:

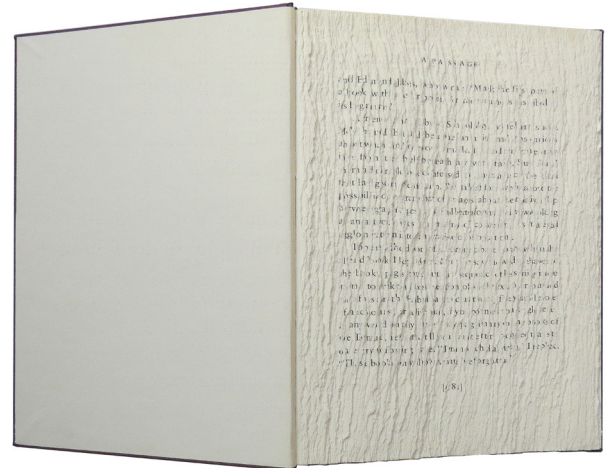
The poem formed its own elemental landscape and shares Van Dyke's poetic attention to visual phenomena. Thinking of the artist James Turrell, for whom the poem was first composed, I found: 'The great get on with the least possible and suggest everything by light.' All drafts of the poem were composed through the process of sewing. The book is experienced both as a poem in which a reader must seek out the words which often hide, and when one turns the page, as a kind of drawing where the acts of poem-making leave their thready record.

Notwithstanding Bervin's cancellation of large sections of Van Dyke's original text, this act is done in order to liberate new visual and textual forms, implying that any text is pregnant with the portent of many others. But if Bervin's is a procreative act, then Buzz Spector's *A Passage* (Granary Books, 1994) (Fig.8) is a provocative one. "A Passage", writes Joe Elliot in *The Journal of Artists' Books* (1995:16)

... presents itself as a representative artifact. The title itself is generic, suggesting that, had this one not been chosen, another passage would've sufficed as well. And its binding and typography, so unobtrusive and anonymous, would make it hard to pick out on a library shelf. Clearly *A Passage* is every book; yet as much as these production values efface themselves, this artifact aggressively confronts us with its disappearance from our culture.

Since 1981, Spector has confronted the cultural significance and history of the book. As a writer, editor, and book designer, he employs the materials of his trade, books and found texts, which he often alters through tearing, and other processes. Spector's intention is not to destroy, but to transform. *A Passage* develops a fully integrated relationship between book form and textual material, with writing, design,

fig. 8



and hand-torn pages. Using the method of 'shortsheeting', Spector has torn each page in a sequence of lessening increments to make a cross section of his text. Each volume in the edition has been altered in this way, leaving a shredded field of typographic characters whose legibility gives further meaning to the poignant personal narrative Spector has written (Granary Books online).

If Spector's tearing of the page is an act of transformation not destruction, then Doug Beube's *Hollow Words* (Self-published, 1996) (Fig.9) is a cancellation, an obliteration of an existing work - *Pierson's Masters and Fellows 1933 - 1938*. Beube's actions remind one of the cancellations which Marcel Broodthaers' *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard: Image* of 1969 wrought upon Stéphane Mallarmé's 1914 *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*. But unlike Broodthaers' careful typographic density and spatial exactitude, Beube (online) describes his act in the following terms:

Overlapping pages of hollowed out letters with frayed edges remain as ghostly shadows of the text's former shape. Since the obliterated words can no longer be read, the book becomes a memory of a memory. What we see in place of the original text is a mysterious, fragmented calligraphy of broken words. Each page is a palindrome and palimpsest, a white veil through which the underlying page is glimpsed. When a page is turned the veil remains. A visual-rather than a linear-read is necessary to understand the meta-language created by this altered syntax of disparate letters and empty spaces.

The final work in this group of five books which explore alternative textualities is J. J. Abrams' *S. Ship of Theseus* (Mulholland Books, New York, 2013) (Fig.10) which, like Beube, relies on a preexisting text as its point of departure. Jeffrey Jacob Abrams is, of course, an accomplished film and television producer, screenwriter, director, actor and composer. Just as his upcoming direction of *Star Wars Episode VII* (2015)- as the first film in a sequel trilogy- must rely on existing material, *S* is an alteration of the book *Ship of Theseus* by V. M. Straka originally published in 1949 by Winged Shoes Press, New York. Abrams' inclusions contain letters, postcards, telegrams, a map scribbled on a napkin, a fake library sticker

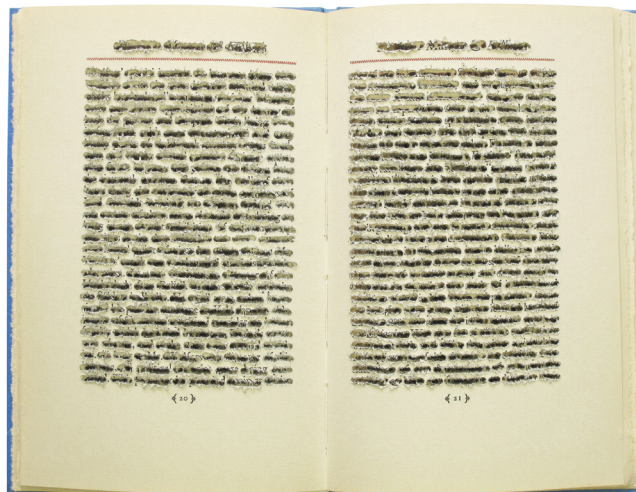


fig.9

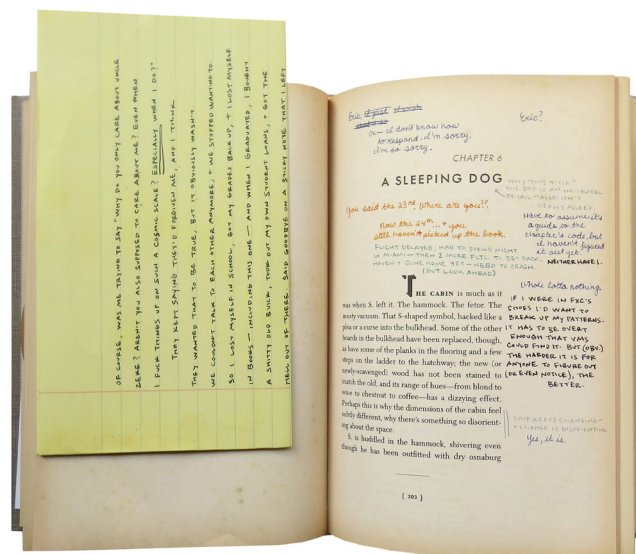


fig.10

along with hand-annotated notes, changes, marginalia and additions on most pages. Doug Dorst is credited with having written the text yet, according to Stuart Kelly (online 2013):

Not only do we get a novel, *Ship of Theseus*, purportedly by a 'VM Straka' – about a man shanghaied onto a mysterious boat with a demonic crew – the copy in the reader's hand is heavily annotated by two other readers, Jennifer and Eric, who are attempting to make sense of the text and themselves, as well as the enigmatic figure of Straka himself. Interleaved into it are countless pieces of ephemera.

This complex, self-conscious, reflexive, multi-authored and object-laden text can be classified as ergodic, or what Craig Dworking (2005) might term as containing "paratexts" or "textual prostheses". The ergodic, a term coined by Espen J. Aarseth (1997) is characterised as nontrivial effort being required to allow the reader to traverse a text. Ergodic literature is not medium-specific, nor defined by its medium, but by the way in which the text functions. Thus, both paper-based and electronic texts can be ergodic: "The ergodic work of art is one that in a material sense includes the rules for its own use ..." (Aarseth 1997:179), while a reader must participate actively in the construction of the text he or she is reading. In these terms, we have included two contemporary novels which we believe are both ergodic as well as cross the boundaries between the conventional novel form and the artist's book.

Jonathan Safran Foer broke with the conventions of the novel with *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (Hamish Hamilton, 2005). In this novel, seemingly arbitrary images appear throughout the book while disconcerting red hand-annotations, blank pages, text replaced by numerals and a rapidly collapsing leading and kerning resulting in the collapse of textual legibility become scripto-visual mechanisms for advancing the book's emotive content. Included on this exhibition is his *Tree of Codes* (Visual Editions, The Netherlands, 2010) (Fig.11), perhaps one of the most remarkable departures from the conventions of the novel form and certainly a risk for the publishers. To create the book, Foer took Bruno Schulz's work *The Street of Crocodiles* and literally cut

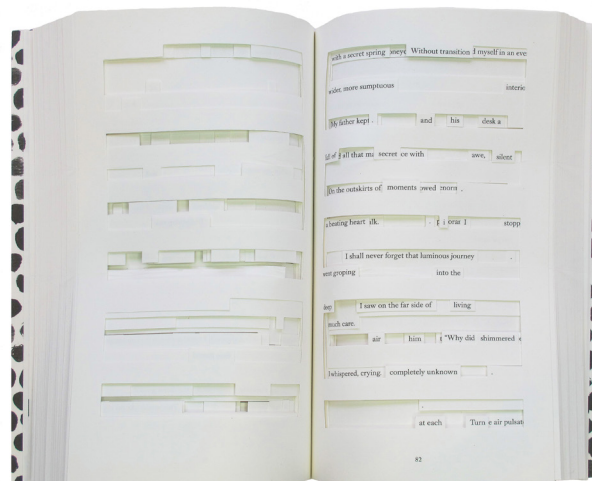


fig. 11

the majority of the words. Visual Editions, describes it as a “sculptural object” while Foer states that, by removing words, he “... carved out a new story” (Heller online). On the dust jacket, artist Olafur Eliasson describes this work as follows:

[A]n extraordinary journey that activates the layers of time and space involved in the handling of a book and its heap of words. Jonathan Safran Foer deftly deploys sculptural means to craft a truly compelling story. In our world of screens, he welds narrative, materiality, and our reading experience into a book that remembers it actually has a body.

Accompanying *Tree of Codes* in a vitrine is Mark Danielewski's *House of Leaves* (Pantheon Book, New York, 2000) (Fig.12). Notwithstanding its serendipitous allusions to nature and the public debate as to whether this is a horror or a love story, *House of Leaves* is an excellent example of ergodic literature in which the reader is engage in a complex time-consuming and certainly ‘non trivial’ act of reading. Some pages contain only a few words or lines of text, arranged in strange ways to mirror the events in the story, often requiring the reader to turn the book on its side or upside down to facilitate reading. Multiple authors narrate various elements of the story while in various editions, colours are used to help isolate disparate themes. The book contains copious addenda while the text digresses into a plethora of footnotes (some of which contain their own footnotes) and which span a number of pages. The interaction between the authorial voices and the optical structures at play in this work are elaborate and disorienting.

In both *Tree of Codes* and *House of Leaves* reading is as much an act of looking. Here, reader-viewers are engaged in a complex hunt for scripto-visual clues in order to construct meaning. In these terms, then, these novels are engaged in their own acts of border-crossing into a space which Johanna Drucker (2007:161) describes as a book's ability to call attention to its own processes of *enunciation*. There is no doubt that, when Laurence Sterne wrote *Tristram Shandy* in 1786, he was anticipating Safran Foer's and Danielewski's provocative works, while such border crossings have helped revolutionise book visuality and communicative power in the fields of graphic and communication design (Hickmann in Samara 2004:122).

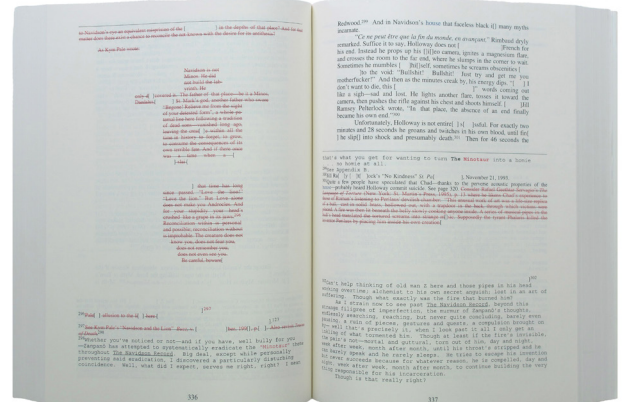


fig. 12



fig. 13



## Texture

Operationalising the printed and material surfaces of the page and book-object presupposes the visual interplay between images and texts, the use of colour and the page surface as a site of meaning rather than as a mere container of information.

*Tag* (Bird Brain Press, Brooklyn, NY, 2005) (Fig.13) is a collaboration between the artist Mark Wagner, photographer Kathryn Gritt and Dylan Graham who provided the lettering. The book is bound using tags cut from clothing and, like *S. Ship of Theseus*, contains a complex mass of media resembling a somewhat manic personal journal, complete with fabric tags to help keep track of its burgeoning content. A separate colophon book contains a plastic see-through envelope containing offcuts and thread from the making of the book as well as several pages which describe the mother-book in detail, as if *Tag* is in need of its own concordance, preventing it from becoming conceptually 'unstitched'.

Accompanying *Tag* is a gem from the Ginsberg Collection's section of Fine Press books: Pablo Neruda's *Las Piedras del Cielo* (*Skyswmes*) (Emanon Press; Easthampton) (Fig.14). It is made with a variety of hand-made papers, encouraging a reading which is tactile rather than machine-made in quality. Its subtle-coloured illuminations include five two-color etchings on Rives BFK and Arches papers which accompany the evocative poems seamlessly. On the page illustrated, the reader discovers a poem by lifting a section of the printed illustration as if the act of digging into the landscape of both illustration and page would reveal poetic jewels.

Book artist Sam Winston exploits the tactile, textured and visual qualities of type on the page via the medium of photographic polymer printing plates. Here, we include a unique letterpress printing plate made by Blinford Graphics for his work *Backwards* (Arc Artist Editions, London, 2013) (Fig.15).

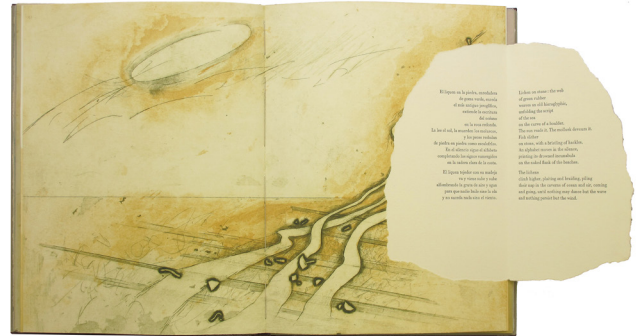


fig. 14



fig. 15

The resulting prints and book (which we are not exhibiting as there are two other Winston books on display) provide the reader with a sense of the tactile and meandering quality of both the form and the content of the titular poem. A fine example of Winston's disintegrating and meandering, visual texts-as-imagery can be seen in *A Dictionary Story* (Arc Artist Editions, London, 2009) (Fig.16) about which, Winston (online) states "I wanted to see what would happen if words took on their own meanings – both inside the narrative and also typographically on the page". The back cover of the book states:

From order to chaos and back to order, Sam Winston's *Dictionary Story* graphically illustrates the balance between a world that's safe but boring and a high risk universe full of creative possibilities. Like people, the alphabetically constrained words yearn to release their individual potential. They want to escape the dictionary's regimentation and come together to tell a story. But when the words break free, so do their letters. They scatter and tumble across the page, reflecting meaning through visual representation. For a time it's wild and exciting but when things look to be getting out of hand the Alphabet arrives to remind everyone of their responsibilities. Order returns... but the world and it's (sic) words will never be quite the same again.

The last book in this group is Carolee Campbell's *The Real World of Manuel Cordova* (The Ninja Press, Sherman Oaks, CA, 1995) (Fig.17). It presents as an accordion-fold, thus the text may be unfolded and read in the hand, stanza by stanza, or opened entirely, revealing all forty-three, fourteen-line stanzas. Fully extended, the book is 4.5m long. The image of a river undulating alongside the poem is printed from photopolymer plates in five colors gradually intermingling one after the other. This is a rich, physically dense object which echoes the story on which it is based: the book about the life of Manuel Cordova Rios (1887-1978), who was kidnapped by a remote Amazonian tribe in 1907, and taught to become a shaman.

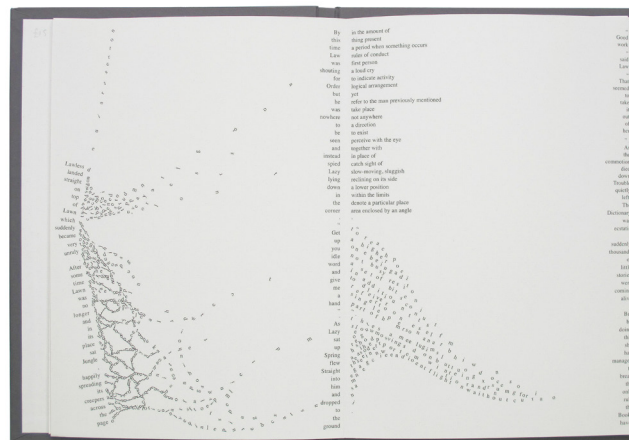


fig. 16



fig. 17

Romano Hänni's *Typo Bilder Buch* (Studio for Design, Basel, 2012) (Fig.18) is printed on paper towels bound between corrugated cardboard covers with a wrap-around cover which is shown separately and is extremely light for its size. In the English supplement which accompanies the book, Hänni states:

Since the invention of script and the printed word, we have lost access to pictorial statements: we have become character devout. Nonetheless, we still read images. Fluent reading is based solely on prejudices. The knowledgeable reader does not perceive together individual characters to form words but perceives word images in their entirety. However, when reading images, signs and symbols, we seem to struggle, even though they also represent a source of information with a simultaneous effect on various levels. Initially, our visual perception looks for symmetry and a human face.... The design and sequence of the pages were intended to develop during the work process. The first printing forms were blue lines and linear frameworks at the bottom of the pages. New ideas developed during the unrolling and tearing off of double pages of paper towel as well as during composition, setup, printing, and removing of the type. The printing workshop represents the available raw materials: Lead characters, synthetics and wood, brass lines and signs, typographic sign and lead symbols. The typo pictures were composed from individual parts and printed on the hand proofing press; some of them were superimposed in several printing cycles. They are intended to mutually influence and merge into each other and to display an inner connection.

Three books represent explorations of, and meditations on, the texture of place and space, achieving these visually in imaginative and highly idiosyncratic ways. Timothy Ely's books are described by Drucker (2007:93-94) as possessing "auratic character" possessing "a sense of charged presence". *Charts 6* (Self-published, 1991) (Fig.19) - which was in fact included in the 'chapter' *Artists' Book as Auratic Objects* on the *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection* exhibition (JAG, 1996) - demonstrates Ely's fascination with invented writing and glyphs evoking suggestions of incantations and esoteric language, charging the viewer with a desire to decipher and decode the elusive content (Drucker 2007:227). Drucker (2007:94) continues by describing Ely's books as spaces, places and worlds in which

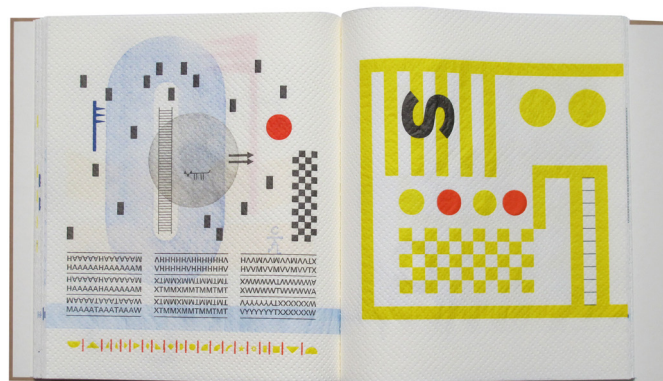


fig. 18



fig. 19

... the book is an artifact of wisdom, recondite and ... precious, available to the initiate rather than the casual or widespread reader. Ely's signature style pages combine motifs of mapping with diagrammatic forms whose suggestions of cosmological information is borne out by tiny indications in glyphic writing.

Ely's esoteric maps dialogue with the constructed ones found in Heidi Neilson's *Atlas Dream Sequence* (The Center for Book Arts, New York, 2011) (Fig.20). By cutting up existing maps, collaging new ones and then scanning and printing them, Neilson constructs an atlas where each page spread is an imagined magnification from the previous spread. *Atlas Dream Sequence* was selected by The MCBA Prize jury for special recognition of merit in 2013. In further dialogue with these two imagined maps and charts are firstly, Linda Johnson's *World Wise* (The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC, 2003) (Fig.21) in which four tiny fold-out booklets, slip into the corners of a circular case. Each booklet is printed on map paper, originally created in the late 1800s, and contains proverbs which offer the wisdom of cultures from around the world. Second is Macy Chadwick's *The Topography of Home* (In Cahoots Press, Oakland, CA, 2009) (Fig.22). Chadwick (online) describes her book as follows:

*The Topography of Home* is the artist's attempted reconciliation of living in the present while longing for her remembered hometown. Letterpress printed maps convey a more emotional than geographical terrain; events and places are recorded and revisited, worried over and examined. Silk tissue apertures punctuate the pages offering the reader glimpses of previous and subsequent images. This sequential aspect of the book literally and metaphorically has the reader both seeing the past through the present and looking forward through history's gauze.

Thirdly, echoing Safran Foer's and Chadwick's cutting away, puncturing and apertures as well as Pablo Neruda's digging into a paper landscape is Julie Fleschman's *No Man's Land* (Self-published, 1992) (Fig.23) the construction of which only allows the book to open to a single double-page spread yet allows glimpses of spaces below the surface. Fleschman's (online) reveals her process thus:



fig. 20



fig. 21

Initially I started working with books when I wanted to conceal a letter and thought about where best to do that. In a book? I felt that whichever book I chose would compel someone to reach for it. I pictured books being hollowed out to smuggle guns & jewels. From there I thought of hidden worlds, the power of words, the mystery of image & text, and of illuminated manuscripts. Certain words have captured my imagination, and you can see their traces in all my work- I'm enthralled with 'in thrall', 'gist' & 'threshold' to name a few. With my books there is one rule I am thus far unwilling to break: I will not 'cut & paste' a word when I'm cutting down to specific ones. If I don't find it, I don't use it. I've felt like an archaeologist with a book as the excavation site- hoping for & expecting a discovery, but not sure what will be found. Sometimes the reward is in the digging.

Fleischman's notion of the book, given its title, as a site of feminist archeology, where both physical and intellectual digging and finding take place brings us to the third defining characteristics of bookness: Structure, foregrounding one of the more protean aspects - to use Renee and Judd Hubert's (1999:7) term - of artists' books' ability to interrogate the conventions by which books normally efface their identities.

## Structure

Naturally each book thus far discussed has exhibited its structure as an integral element of both the design and communicative element of its existence. But because structure is often foregrounded as an element by which bookness is interrogated, we have selected a few items which bring structure to our attention in this exhibition.

Alongside *No Man's Land* we encounter volume 2 of 5 volumes in the series *The Mechanical Word* and titled *Wrecking Ball* (to be) [blue] by Karen Bleitz (designer and producer), Richard Price (poetic texts) and Sean Matthews & Andy Armstrong (engineering and manufacture) (Circle Press, London; Redline CNC & Plan File Printers, 2005) (Fig.24). Bleitz (online) states:



fig. 22

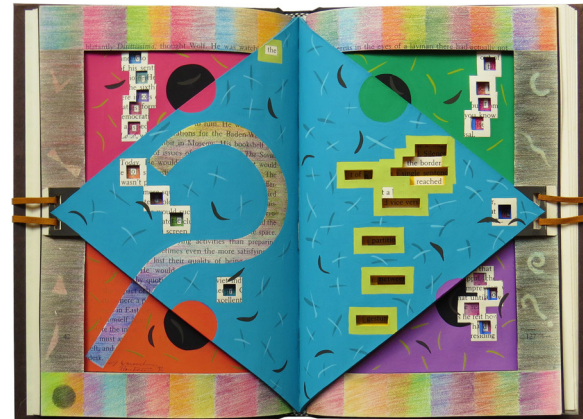


fig. 23



fig. 24

The idea of constructing a form of 'mechanical' language began as an exploration of the idea that 'language pervades thought - with different languages causing their speakers to construe reality in different ways.' (Stephen Pinker, 1994). The first half of each volume contains a poem which illustrates how the machine acts as a part of speech. In the second half, the 'machine' is put to use in the context of a more complex 'mechanical sentence'. By turning the crank, the reader activates the second poem and is forced to address the changes created on the page. I wanted to use machines to look at the dynamic relationships - people and power relationships - that grammatical rules quietly and sometimes noisily suggest.

For Bleitz, an interactive mechanical structure facilitates the reading and transmission of poetic language. But for Julie Chen and Gerard Charrière carefully constructed and bound paper accordion-fold structures are necessary in the delivering of their content. Chen's *Radio Silence* (Flying Fish Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995) (Fig.25) is composed of five layers of paper sewn at the fore edge. The front-most layer is a band of text, a poem about maintaining metaphoric 'radio silence' to avoid detection while trying to escape a relationship. Subsequent layers include embossed and printed paper plus aeronautical charts- all in varied and complementary shapes- against a black background page. The accordion fold structure, as we have found in Campbell's *The Real World of Manuel Cordova* facilitates single or multiple openings, while able to be displayed flat, upright in arabesque or in a circle shape. Charrière's *L' Afrique d'Aujourd'hui (The Africa of Tomorrow)* (Self-published, 1991) (Fig.26) is a much shorter accordion-fold book revealing, in repeat-printed images, lines, arrows and the titular text, a pessimistic view of the future of animal life on the continent. The book's black crystalline covers reveal bone fragments or fossils, indicating that, despite the length of geological time, the actions of mankind might wipe out the natural world in an extremely short space of time.

A particular grouping of books demonstrates particular structures which help to drive their various contents forward. Stephan Erasmus's *Bidmat (Prayer Mat)* (Self-published, Johannesburg, 2010) (Fig.27) is presented in scroll form.



fig. 25

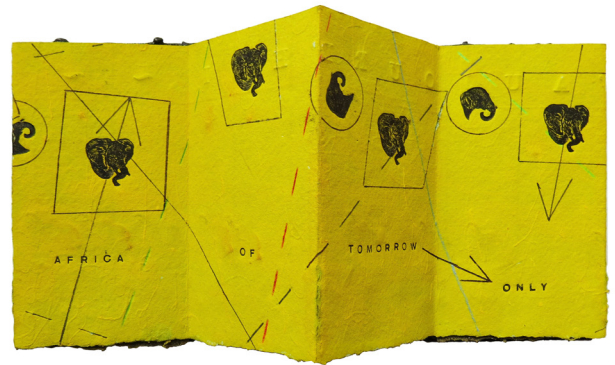


fig. 26



fig. 27

Erasmus's fastidious and obsessive approach to his work is evident here, where every Bible verse in the Old Testament containing the word 'land' has been collected and printed. The verses of text have been cut into strips and woven into the form of a scroll with cotton thread. Every woven section contains five lines of text. This scroll formed part of an exhibition *Hartland (Hart Land)* in which the artist considered the complex relationship between physical and spiritual (God-given) land in religious, political and personal terms.

Words, and the alphabet in particular, are given humorous attention in three selected books. In Ronald King's *Alphabet Concertina* (Circle Press, Guilford, 1983) (Fig.28) the accordion-fold structure facilitates the pop-up letters of the alphabet from each double-page opening. This exquisitely and deceptively simple white paper structure is by one of the world's foremost book artists. Displayed next to this work is *A to Z* (Unique, handmade, Philadelphia, 1990) (Fig.29) by the equally renowned book artist Hedi Kyle. In this book, Kyle uses a form that has become known as the Flag Book structure, perhaps the single most influential structure in the world of contemporary bookmaking. Here, this method of construction, employing tipped on image and letter fragments on alternating sides of a concertina structure, has been adopted by artists worldwide for the creation of unique and multiple bookworks. Finally, we have included one of the most commercially well-known trade books which explores the alphabet in pop-up and interactive structures. This is Marion Bataille's *ABC3D* (Roaring Brook Press, New York, 2008) (Fig.30). The Washington Post describes it as "Easily the most innovative alphabet book of the year, if not the decade... Beyond clever" while its advertising blurb included this entry:

Prepare to be amazed. From the lenticular cover that changes with the angle of your hands all the way to the Z, *ABC3D* is as much a work of art as it is a pop-up book. Each of the 26 three-dimensional letters move and change before your eyes. C turns into D with a snap. M stands at attention. X becomes Y with a flick of the wrist. And then there's U...Boldly conceived and brilliantly executed with a striking black, red, and white palette, this is a book that readers and art lovers of all ages will treasure for years to come.



fig. 28



fig. 29

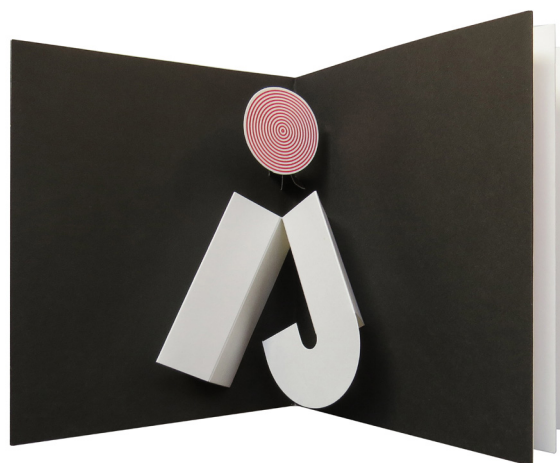


fig. 30

## Broadsides and Prints

Why broadsides? Why not? Martin Luther used them to share his theses, Jefferson used them to declare American independence and the governor of Missouri used them to hunt down Jesse James. And those are just the obvious ones. Broadsides have a centuries old history. These leaves of paper, printed on a single side and communicating new ideas, discoveries, or must-haves, have been produced since the mid-15th century and remained a popular form of communication until the 19th century. In the beginning broadsides were primarily visual, designed to spread a message to a largely illiterate population. As times changed and the level of education expanded, broadsides relied on typography to create impact. In the mid-15th century, printed sheets depicting the passion were primarily visual, closer to today's comic books, depicting a story with woodcuts. Dürer's broadside of a rhinoceros, from a sight unseen and looking as frightening as the 16th century imagination could conjure, is heavy on the visuals but balanced with a block of text explaining the new curiosity discovered in India. Broadsides presented to newspaper and journal subscribers as a New Year's greeting begun in the 18th century and popular for generations, featured poetry and typographic borders. These 'carrier addresses' were penned by well-known writers; others were written by the newspaper carriers but all were created for collection and display.

(From: 30th Anniversary Exhibition, 2005. Center for Book Arts, New York.)

Claire van Vliet's Janus Press, Vermont, is famed not only for its fine-press and artists' books, but for its collaboration with poets and authors using the form of the Broadside, which, in postmodern terms, is perhaps definable as a book with one page. On exhibition are five of von Vliet's collaborative broadsides which feature the poet / authors Margaret Kaufman (Fig.31), William Heyen (Fig.32), Raymond Carver (Fig.33), Tess Gallagher (Fig.34) and Johanna Prins with artist Peter Schumann (Fig.35).

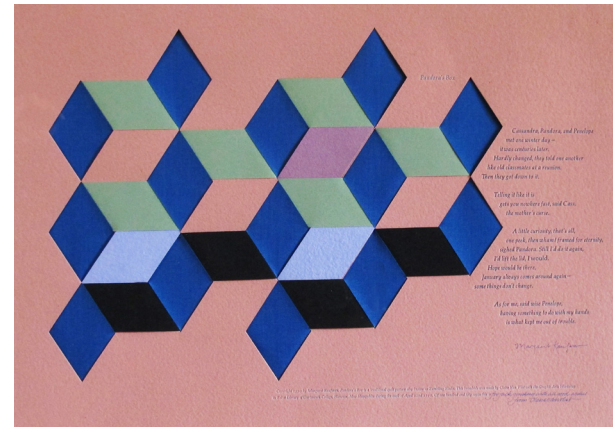


fig. 31

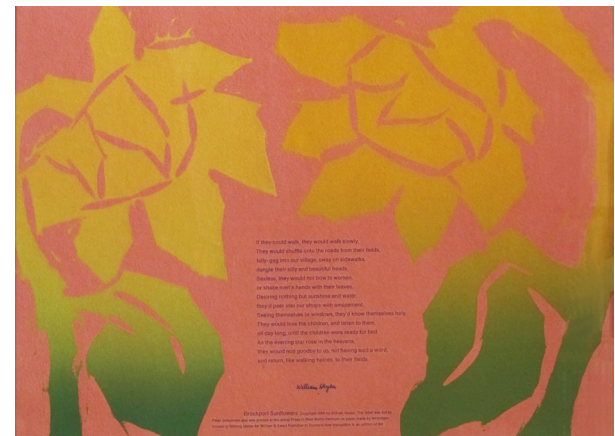


fig. 32





fig. 33

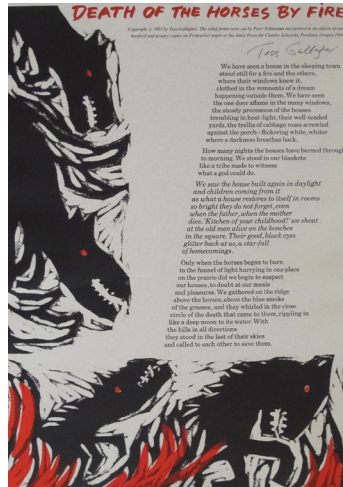


fig. 34

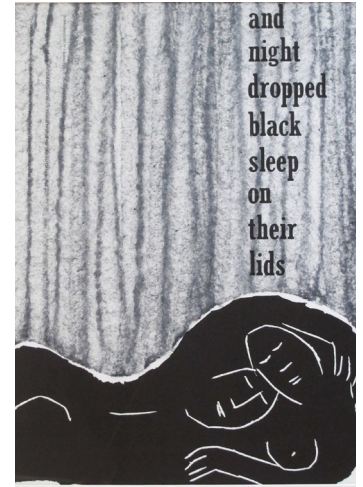


fig. 35

Finally, in honour of one of South Africa's finest examples of concrete and visual poetry we have included the silkscreen prints *Verdwaalkard* (Fig.36) and *Min of Meer* (Fig.37) from Boshoff's original print edition of *KykAfrikaans* (1981). Marilyn Martin (online) describes Boshoff as "a champion of the original, with a particular passion for languages under siege" and concerning *KykAfrikaans* she states:

A concrete or visual poem resembles a painting in that it is 'in your face' - concerned not only with its literary content, but primarily with its visual or perceivable form. Boshoff's 'poems' have been made with an ancient typewriter, in the same manner that a brush functions in painting. Today *KykAfrikaans*, has gained almost mythical status and occupies a respected place in the history of art and literature, both in SA and internationally.

As the original *KykAfrikaans* manuscript forms part of the *Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry* in Miami, Florida, our decision to include these two prints is an attempt to get as close as possible to the original two-dimensional instantiations of the original work.

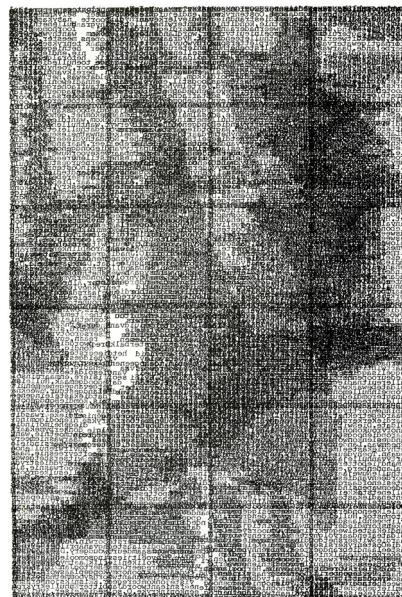


fig. 36

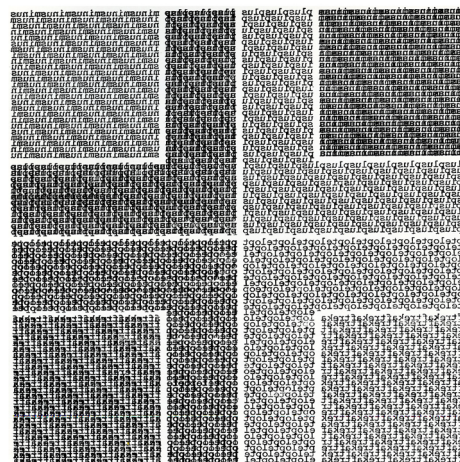


fig. 37

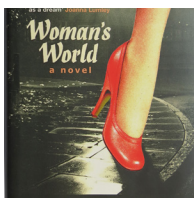
## REFERENCE LIST

- Aarseth, E. J. 1997. *Cybertext—Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bervin, J. *The Desert*. Available at <http://www.jenbervin.com/html/desert.html> accessed 23 February 2014.
- Beube, D. *Reunification: The Grand Design*. Available at [http://dougbeube.com/artwork/2154751\\_Reunification\\_The\\_Grand\\_Design.html](http://dougbeube.com/artwork/2154751_Reunification_The_Grand_Design.html) accessed 23 February 2014.
- Chadwick, M. *The Topography of Home, 2009* Available at <http://www.macychadwick.com/artistsbooks/topographyofhome.html> accessed 25 February 2014.
- Drucker, J. 2007. *The Century of Artists' Books*. New York: Granary Books.
- Dworkin, C. Textual Protheses. *Comparative Literature*. Winter 2005  
Volume 57, Number 1 pp1-24.
- Elliot, J. Back to Basics: 3 Primers from Granary Books. *The Journal of Artists' Books*. Vol 3. Spring 1995 pp16-19.
- Fleschman, J. Available at <http://jwaranchfleschman.com/section/252280.html> accessed 25 February 2014.
- Granary Books. *A Passage by Buzz Spector*. Available at [http://www.granarybooks.com/product\\_view/137/](http://www.granarybooks.com/product_view/137/) accessed 23 February 2014.
- Heller, S. *Jonathan Safran Foer's Book as Art Object*. Available at <http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/?module=BlogMain&action=Click&region=Header&pg-type=Blogs&version=Blog%20Post&contentCollection=Arts> accessed 25 February 2014.
- Hickmann, F. 2004. *Book Design. Texts and Covers* in Samara, T (ed) *Typography Workbook*. Beverly: Rockport Pp122-135.
- Hubert, R. R. & Hubert, J. D. 1999. *The Cutting Edge of Reading: Artists' Books*. New York: Granary Books.
- Isselbacher, A. 1987. *Iliad and the Illustrated Book*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- Kelly, S. *JJ Abrams: from Lost to Ship of Theseus*. *The Guardian*, Sunday 27 October 2013.
- Martin, M. *New Boschoff work on show at SANG* Available at [http://www.artthrob.co.za/03nov/listings\\_cape.html#sang3](http://www.artthrob.co.za/03nov/listings_cape.html#sang3) accessed 25 February 2014.
- Phillips, T. *A Humument*. Available at <http://humument.com/> accessed 23 February 2014.
- Scripps College Press. *Rules of Thumb*. Available at <http://www.scrippscollege.edu/campus/press/rules-of-thumb.php> accessed 23 February 2014.

## CATALOGUE



1. *Lidantiu Faram* (*Lidantiu as a Beacon*)  
Iliia Zdanevich (Iliazd) - typographer  
Naum Granovskii - collage  
Editions 41°, Paris, 1923  
Edition: #219/530  
Original uncut pages



2. *Woman's World: A Novel*  
Graham Rawle  
Atlantic Books, London, 2005



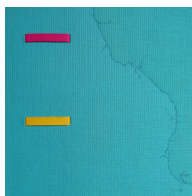
3. *Selected Poems 1961-1991*  
Patrick Cullinan - poet  
Stephen Watson - editor & introduction  
Judith Mason - illustrator  
Mark Attwood - printer  
Bruce Attwood - cover designer  
Johan Maree - binder  
The Artists' Press, Johannesburg, 1992  
Edition: #5/40



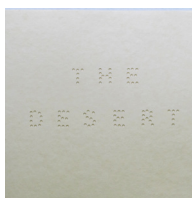
4. *Gesammelte Werke (Collected Works)*  
*Band 7: Bok 3b und Bok 3d*  
Dieter Roth (Diter Rot) (Karl-Dieterich)  
Edition Hansjörg Mayer, Stuttgart Germany &  
London & Reykjavik, 1974  
Edition: Bok 3b und Bok 3d is the 'comics  
and holes' number



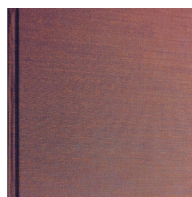
5. *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel*  
Tom Phillips  
Bookworks, London, 2013  
Edition: #4/5



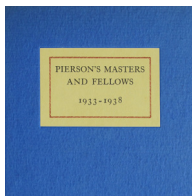
6. *Rules of Thumb*  
Various artists  
Scripps College Press, Claremont CA,  
1986  
Edition: #49/50



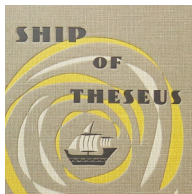
7. *The Desert: Further Studies in  
Natural Appearances*  
Jen Bervin - artist  
John C. Van Dyke - author  
Granary Books, New York, n.d.



8. *A Passage*  
Buzz Spector  
Granary Books, New York, 1994  
Edition: Letter 'E' of 48 copies



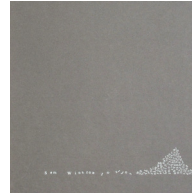
9. *Hollow Words*  
Doug Beube  
Self-published, New York, 1996  
Unique



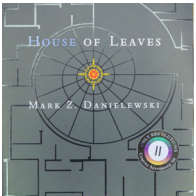
10. *S. Ship of Theseus*  
J. J. Abrams  
Doug Dorst - text  
Paul Kepple, Ralph Gerona - designers  
Mulholland Books, Little Brown and Company,  
New York, 2013  
An altered book *Ship of Theseus* by V. M. Straka  
originally published in 1949 by Winged Shoes  
Press, New York



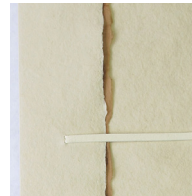
11. *The Tree of Codes*  
Jonathan Safran Foer  
Houghton Mifflin Co; Boston, MA & New York;  
2005  
To create the book, Foer took Bruno Schulz's  
book *The Street of Crocodiles* and cut out the  
majority of the words



16. *A Dictionary Story*  
Sam Winston - artist  
David Pearson - designer  
David Holyday - printer  
Arc Artist Editions, London, 2009  
Accordion-fold with the final page  
pasted onto the back cover



12. *House of Leaves: A Novel*  
Mark Z. Danielewski  
Zampanò  
Pantheon Books, New York, 2000  
The Remastered Full-Colour Edition. 2nd  
Edition



17. *The Real World of Manuel Cordova*  
W. S. Merwin – original author  
Carolee Campbell - artist  
The Ninja Press, Sherman Oaks, CA, 1995  
Edition: #77/160 copies in a final edition of  
178 copies



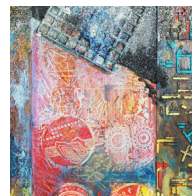
13. *Tag*  
Mark Wagner  
Kathryn Gritt - photographer  
Dylan Graham - lettering  
Bird Brain Press, Brooklyn NY, 2005  
Unique



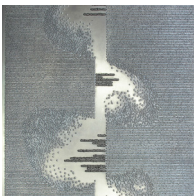
18. *Typo Bilder Buch*  
Romano Hänni - artist  
Jessica Schmid - translator  
Basel, 2012  
Edition: #37/65



14. *Las Piedras del Cielo (Skystones)*  
Pablo Neruda  
Ben Belitt translation  
Emanon Press, Easthampton MA, 1981  
Unique



19. *Charts 6*  
Timothy C. Ely  
Self-published, 1991  
Unique



15. *Backwords*  
Sam Winston - artist  
Andrea Evangelista - designer  
Haein Song - bookbinder  
Arc Artist Editions, London, 2013  
Edition: #1/7  
Exhibited: Polymer printing plate



20. *Atlas Dream Sequence*  
Heidi Neilson  
The Center for Book Arts, New York, 2011  
Edition: #8/25



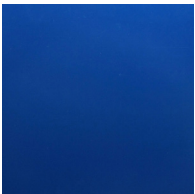
21. *World Wise*  
Linda K. Johnson  
The National Museum of Women in the Arts,  
Washington DC, 2003  
Edition: #48/125



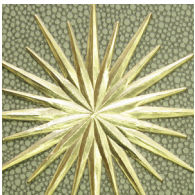
22. *The Topography of Home*  
Macy Chadwick  
In Cahoots Press, Oakland CA, 2009  
Edition: #38/50



23. *No Man's Land*  
Julie W. Fleischman  
Self-published, Texas, 1992  
Unique



24. *The Mechanical Word: Volume 2: Wrecking Ball (to be)*  
Karen Bleitz - poet  
Richard Price - poet  
Circle Press, London, 2005  
Kinetic circles engineered by Sean Matthews &  
Andy Armstrong at Redline CNC. Printed at Plan  
File Systems.  
Edition: #15/15



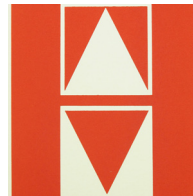
25. *Radio Silence*  
Julie Chen  
Flying Fish Press, Berkeley CA, 1995  
Unique  
Accordion-fold



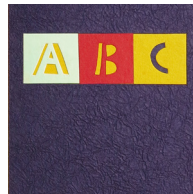
26. *L' Afrique d'Aujourd'hui (The Africa of Tomorrow)*  
Gérard Charrière - bookbinder  
New York, 1991  
Unique  
Accordion-fold



27. *Bidmat (Prayer Mat)*  
Stephan. M. Erasmus  
Self-published, Johannesburg, 2010  
Edition: #1/5  
Scroll



28. *Alphabeta Concertina*  
Ronald King  
Circle Press, Guildford Surrey, 1983  
Accordion, pop-up



29. *A to Z*  
Hedi Kyle  
Self-published, Philadelphia PA, 1990  
Edition: #18/65  
Four colour offset, flag construction



30. *ABC3D*  
Marion Bataille  
Roaring Brook Press, New York, 2008



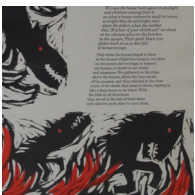
31. *Pandora's Box*  
Claire Van Vliet - artist  
Margaret Kaufman - text  
Janus Press, Vermont, 1991  
Broadside  
Edition: #1/150



32. *Brockport Sunflowers*  
Claire Van Vliet - printmaker  
William Heyen - text  
Peter Schumann - artist  
Janus Press, West Burke VT, 1986  
Broadside  
Edition: #1/160



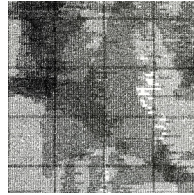
33. *For Tess*  
Claire Van Vliet - artist  
Raymond Carver - text  
Bernie Vinzani - papermaker  
Janus Press; West Burke, VT; 1984  
Broadside  
Edition: #78/125



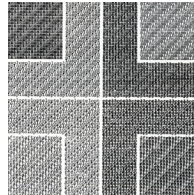
34. *Death of the Horses by Fire*  
Claire Van Vliet - artist  
Tess Gallagher - text  
Peter Schumann - illustrations  
Janus Press; Vermont; 1984  
Broadside  
Edition: #1/170  
Relief prints and letterpress



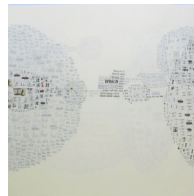
35. *Sappho*  
Claire Van Vliet - artist  
Peter Schumann - illustrator  
Johanna Prins - translator  
Catherine Hall - papermaker  
Janus Press, Vermont, 1991  
Broadside  
Edition: #1/100  
Pulp painting and letterpress



36. *Verdwaalkard (KykAfrikaans)*  
Willem Boshoff  
1981  
Edition: 2#10  
Silkscreen



37. *Min of Meer (KykAfrikaans)*  
Willem Boshoff  
1981  
Edition: 6#10  
Silkscreen



38. *Orphan*  
Sam Winston  
Arc Artist Editions, London, 2011  
Edition: #10/24  
Japanese stab binding



39. *18 Faces*  
Susan Allix  
London, 1993  
Edition: #20/22



40. *A Bale of Straw*  
William Drendel  
Chicago IL, 1987  
Unique  
Coptic sewing







THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS

THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS  
THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS

THE WOODS OF THE MOUNTAINS

the same foliage