

CENTRAL BOOKING

March 2013
Volume IV
Issue I
\$10

M A G A Z I N E

A Guide to the Art of the Book... and Beyond

EXHIBITION CATALOG: **TEXT OUT OF CONTEXT**

Donna Ruff

Artist's Project: Whiteout

Stephen Bury

Private Collection

Carolyn Shattuck

Wardrobe Cronicles

Lara Henderson

*Traditional Printmaking
Utilizing Contemporary
Technology*

CENTRAL BOOKING MAGAZINE, in concert with its parent art space CENTRAL BOOKING, aims to mediate the zeitgeist of the book art panorama, as articulated within a broader totality of artistic theory and practice. Addressing the work of both established and emerging artists, CENTRAL BOOKING MAGAZINE champions those who challenge our most deeply seated notions regarding what a book is and where it belongs. Containing interviews with collectors of artist's books as well as their creators, CENTRAL BOOKING MAGAZINE gives voice to both sides of the fascination with book-as-art-object. This endeavor emerged from desire: to curate concepts, not just objects; to investigate and describe the abiding passions and latest activity of a capaciously-conceived sphere of printmakers, binders, sculptors, painters, photographers, video artists, art lovers, librarians, poets, bibliophiles and bibliophages, antiquarians and deconstructionists alike. These pages exist as an open invitation to any and all with the desire to view, possess, or generate works which, by their very existence, defy either-or constructs of art vs. literature, effectively interrogating the very essence of "bookness." In addition to articles, interviews, tutorials, art projects and annotated announcements of artist-book-related events around the country, each issue of the magazine will also function as a catalog of CENTRAL BOOKING Gallery II's quarterly cross-over exhibitions, multidisciplinary explorations of the intersection of art and science.

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CUTTING THROUGH

AN INTERVIEW WITH

DONNA RUFF

CB: Your work is about removal of language and comprehension, but it also seems to be about discovering your own language through simple markmaking to construct complex forms. What influences your connection to language?

DR: Yes, that's a good point. Just before I started grad school my mother died of a brain tumor and she had been unable to speak for almost six months. At first her writing got very small. I was interested in the origins of language and read a lot of theory, the French Feminists, Hegel, Wittgenstein, et al. At that time I wanted to create a language of gesture, and my thesis piece utilized Rorschach blots that I had made by hand, with ink and folding, then transferred to linoleum blocks so I could print them and use as a kind of visual language. I think looking at my mother's scans, plus thinking about language, brought me to mirror imaging, and for a while I used a lot of symmetry in my work. I also think looking at books and beginning to work with them as part of my art practice influenced that idea of duality and symmetry, as well as linking written language with the body.

CB: Is there any relationship in your work to textiles?

DR: There is a relationship to tile work, but I'm not so sure about textiles. Since I think of paper as having a tensile strength in a way it's like a textile- I've often thought of stitching on the paper. I've also done some weaving

with paper, one piece having been done on an actual loom. But I found I didn't have the patience for setting it up and the ability to delay the gratification that comes from weaving, when you can't see what you've got until the very end! I recently went to Spain and all the Moorish architecture, the Alhambra, even the Gaudi works are very interesting to me.

CB: The relationship between the edge of the page and the drawing seem to be important to your works. Your burnt paper pieces resemble artifacts or relics, aided in part by their fractured edges. A similar tactic is employed in the cut newspaper pieces, however the end result is very different. Tell me a bit about how you deal with the edge in both series.

DR: I do think of the burned pieces especially as referencing artifacts- in fact it was an exhibition of Islamic calligraphy that started me thinking about adding gold leaf to my burned pieces. So really the fractured edges allow you to "fill in the blanks" in the same way that the removal of text and image does on the newspaper page. But there is an added element of time passing which is embedded in the content of both the burned pieces and the newspaper pieces. There is an elegiac quality to the work that I think permeates most of what I do. As for the edges, I vary my relationship to them, sometimes I want the edge to literally stop the pattern, and sometimes I let the pattern create its own edge.



Left:
Grrltalk, 2009, laser prints,
altered books, ink, beads 10 x 20
x 6 inches

Right:
Frieze series, Burn and gold leaf
on Lanaquarelle paper, 2011, 28
x 21 inches

LANGUAGE

CB: Is there importance in the specific shapes that you use when you burn or cut? They resemble shapes in decorative windows, maybe stained glass from religious spaces?

DR: The shapes are based on geometry, and there can be a spiritual aspect to them but there are also quite mundane forms that inspire me; for instance, the patterns that you see of irrigated crops when you fly over farms in this part of the country. I've written that I'm inspired by things as common as phone book pages- I think since I was a designer and book illustrator for a long time I am used to seeing how pages are laid out and how this impacts our comprehension of them. The rosette shape and the six pointed star- you see this in Islamic buildings but also in Jewish synagogues. Both religions forbid the use of figurative representation and have their bases in similar narratives, and both revere the book and writing. When I was a kid being sent off to Hebrew school, I remember staring at all the Hebrew letters and wondering what on earth they meant. It's probably another reason I got interested in shapes and comprehension of them.

CB: The shadow of the burnt hole lends more tonality and nuance, almost inverts the negative space, making those holes pop forward, lending them an almost sculptural feel.

DR: Yes, I like my work to skirt the boundary between 2 and 3 dimensional space. I love the materiality of paper and I want the work to be experienced as sculptural. The play of positive/negative space is an important element, because it further confounds the reading of the work- which is the drawing, the mark or the space? Surface played against depth.

CB: You create your work on what is essentially ephemera, printed on paper that is only meant to last a day.



2.12.11, Hand cut newspaper, 2011, 16 x 11 inches

Are you concerned with archivability? Do you treat the newspapers in any special way to help them last longer?

DR: This came up very recently, because my work is in an exhibition at the New Mexico Museum of Art and the curators decided to acquire my work for the museum through a purchase grant from the foundation that organized the exhibit. I make the work as archival as possible, using deacidifying spray and framing it with all archival materials and UV protective glass. They will yellow but probably not for a long time, because if they are kept out of direct sunlight (as all works on paper should be) they will not break down. I think about Picasso's collages, newspaper in Jasper Johns' work, lots of artists who have used newspaper, and it shows the passage of time, but then the newspaper is an historical document, especially the ones I'm using which are really about specific events. So they shouldn't look like they just came off the press. And it's important to me to use the ones that are actually delivered to my house. These days the print versions of newspapers are becoming obsolete- so it's part of my work to save a few for posterity.

Overleaf:
Donna Ruff, *Whiteout*, 2013

BOOK

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papered.

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BOOK

Gertrude Stein

BOOK WAS FINE. IT WAS GOOD. BOOK WAS GOOD. BOOK WAS GOOD. IT WAS A
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Third Time Lucky: The Private Collection of Stephen Bury

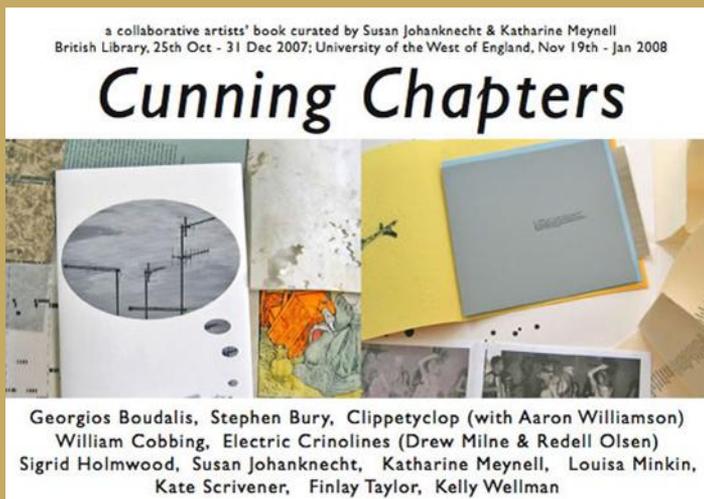
STEPHEN BURY

Having parallel interests as a librarian and a collector can become a quite difficult lifestyle. The borders of a personal collection can become hazy – my own books and multiples once became subsumed in the Chelsea School of Art Library Collection, and later my review copies from *Art Monthly* ended up in the British Library. At one point I had a complete run of Tony White's POPP (Piece of Paper Press), where White commissioned an artist or writer to make a book from one piece of A4 paper – it is amazing how a very restrictive format can generate innovative books – just, for example, by using different colored paper. Perhaps there should be a universal rule that librarians should not collect anything within the collecting scope of their institutions. At least now that I am at The Frick Collection, there is no such conflict; there is only one artist's book in the Frick Art Reference Collection, and that, amusingly, was acquired by mistake – I can see why – Christian Boltanski's *Archive of the Carnegie International, 1896-1991* (1991).

Although the British Library denuded me of my review copies, because it is a reference library (at least for its British

Above right: Fiona Banner, *The Nam*, 1997, Frith Street Gallery, London, 11 x 8.25 x 2.3 inches

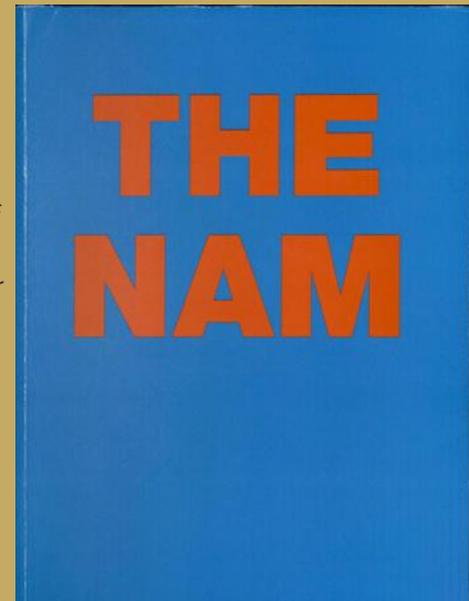
Below: Flyer for *Cunning Chapters*, 2007, a collaborative artists' book curated by Susan Johanknecht and Katharine Meynell



publications) I had to replace some of the artist's books which I needed as teaching materials. At the Royal College of Art and Glasgow School of Art, I often used Michael Snow's *Cover to Cover* (1975) which exploits the recto-verso format of the codex, and Susan Hiller's *Rough Sea* (1976), where the page turn (again between recto-verso) is mirrored in the anonymous postcards of rough English seas, mirroring the breaking wave and undertow/retreat.

Currently, I am in the midst of my third collection of artist's books and multiples. It consists of a smattering of such classics that are important to discussing how artists can exploit the book format and why they choose to make a book as opposed to a painting or sculpture. My collecting emphasis is on the conceptual and, in particular, on those artists who use text as a medium. One of the highlights of my collection is Fiona Banner's *The Nam* (1997), the first book I reviewed for *Art Monthly*. Its 1,000 page, 280,000 word pave, with Banner providing a verbal commentary on the action of six Vietnam War buddy movies shot by shot: *Apocalypse Now*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *The Deer Hunter*, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Hamburger Hill* and *Platoon*. My review copy ended up in the Chelsea collection and I also acquired for them a hardback version, although I must say that I prefer the paperback, which is more in tune with its possibilities of being used as a flipbook. I replaced my "lost" copy in London in the early 2000s, just in time it seems, as it now sells for \$500. There is now a commercial market for artist's books and a collector with a small purse really has to acquire at the point of sale or within two years of publication, although buying what I call "in the now" has its own risks as well.

What I ask of an artist's book is that it tells me something new about the world. One of the most important ways is "defamiliarization." This is a term, or rather in its original "ostranenie,"



invented by the Russian formalist literary theorist, Viktor Shklovsky, who notably wrote in the 1920s about the ways Laurence Sterne made the reader aware of the writer/writing. Fiona Banner uses this technique. Her second book, *All the Worlds Fighter Planes* (2004) was published by her own Vanity Press, itself a wry comment on self-publishing. It consists of crudely cutout newspaper and magazine images of warplanes of varying scale. Its title references the Jane series of fighting ships and planes but this is far from a manual. The titles of the warplanes reference nature (wolf, harrier, hawk etc.) as if to cloak the military-industrial complex as natural. But what is nature, itself a Hobbesian world where life is nasty, brutish and short?



Another Fiona Banner project plays with the International Standard Book Number or ISBN, the unique identifier of each book published. Banner titles her book with an ISBN (Brad Brace had done this in 1983: *ISBN 978 1 907118 48 7*), published in an edition of sixty-five by The Vanity Press. It collates a series of books that Banner submitted to the Legal Deposit Office of the British Library, Boston Spa, where the forms and correspondence are the only evidence of the existence of the books.

In my related collection of artists' multiples, I have a copy of Fiona Banner's *Table Stops* (2000), seven oversized glazed ceramic sculptural punctuation marks in avant garde, optical, courier, klang, slipstream, nuptial and formata typefaces, in a wooden box, published by The Multiple Store, London in an edition of 100. It reminds me of Petr Miturich (1887-1956), the brother-in-law of the zaum poet and maker of artist's books, Velimir Khlebnikov. He made a three-dimensional *Spatial Alphabet* (1915-18) of twelve 5.5 centimeter cubes, permutating sound, shape and colour. There is nothing new, everything is new.

Top to bottom:

Fiona Banner, *Table Stops*, 2000, Multiple Store, London, dimensions variable

Fiona Banner, *All the Worlds Fighter Planes*, 2004, The Vanity Press, 8.6 x 6.3 x 0.8 inches

84	J-22 ORAO	115	MIG-23 FLOGGER
85	TORNADO F-3	116	SU 27 FLANKER
86	TORNADO F-3 (GR1)	118	SU 30 FLANKER
87	DRAKEN 35	119	SPOOKY-103H/U
88	BLACKJACK TU-160	120	CORSAIR II A-7
89	J-8 FINBACK	121	F-14 TOMCAT
90	BRONCO OV-10	122	HUEY COBRA AH-1
91	LYNX	124	MI-6 HOOK
92	F-18 HORNET	125	KA 27 HELIX
94	MERLIN EH 101	126	LYNX 3G 13
95	SEAHAWK S-70B	127	GAZELLE
96	J6 FARMER	128	SUPER SEASPRITE 2H-2G
97	SEA KING WESTLAND WS-61	129	RAFALE
98	JASTREB	130	BLACK HAWK UH-60
100	F-16 FIGHTING FALCON	132	ALOUETTE II
101	HARRIER JUMPJET	133	SUPER ETENDARD
102	SU-27 FLANKER	134	S-65 SEA STALLION
103	HARRIER AV-8B GR.7/9	136	PANTHER AS 565
104	MIRAGE IV-P	137	SUPER FRELON SA 321
106	SU-25 FROGFOOT	138	OSPREY BELL V-22
108	i) HIP MI-8/-17	139	CHINOOK CH-47
	ii) BELL 214	140	SEA KING S-61/SH
	iii) BOKOW B0 105	141	SUPER PUMA
	iv) BELL OH-58D KIOWA	142	A-10 WARTHOG
	v) HAVOC MI-28	144	MIG-23 FLOGGER
109	i) ECUREUIL/FENNEC AS 550/555	145	TU-95 BEAR
	ii) HOKUM-A/-B KA-50/-52	146	CANBERRA
	iii) BELL 212 IROQUOIS	147	B-1B LANCER
	iv) NINJA OH-1	148	AMX
	v) GUARDIAN BELL 412	149	DHRUVS ALH
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112	BELL UH-1	152	HAZE MI-14
113	MIG-15 FAGOT	153	ALOUETTE III
114	MIG-31 FOXHOUND	154	A-10 WARTHOG

DRAGONFLY

BY KELLY BELLE, EXCERPTED FROM

WARDROBE CHRONICLES

BY CAROLYN SHATTUCK

I have always been fascinated by Dragonflies; their beauty, lightness, and freedom. I wanted my life to be similar to a dragonfly but as far as I can remember, I have always taken the harder road . That led me to places in my heart ,I would never have chosen. Drugs and alcohol became my answer to my feelings. That was my path. It robbed me of almost anything valuable for 11 years, yet it seemed like a life sentence.

My parents divorced when I was 12 . They sent me to counseling but I chose taking drugs that I found in my father's home to kill the pain.

I dropped out of school , worked as a waitress until I thought I had found the answer to my problems. I married an abusive husband and had two children. At the age of 20, I knew I needed to leave him. He was violent and physically abusive. I filed for divorce. Soon after I was in a bad car accident that almost took my life. I was in and out of the hospital

for over a year. Unable to support my children, I gave up custody to my ex-husband. I had hit rock bottom.

I believe Grace intervened with a blanket of Hope. My sponsor from Alcoholics Anonymous, Margaret, threw me a lifeline. Because of her guidance and understanding, I learned to listen to my body through body energy work and Reiki. I was slowly healing. I opened a small hair salon and married a person who was also in recovery. We had two children. Ten years later the marriage fell apart. He started drinking and I was suffering. It took all my strength to leave but this time I chose a better path.

I wrote a business plan for a Spa salon and with the financial help from my mother I launched a health center . In the past ten years, my business has grown to include 22 employees. Recently, I have been a student of the Ayuvedic System of Medicine and graduated with high honors after studying for 2 years. I will be able to consult with clients with a degree in Medical Science called the Science of Life. My path has expanded so I can spread my wings like a dragonfly. I can embrace life , feel the lightness and beauty in my surroundings, and have the freedom to help others find their truth as well.

TEXT OUT OF CONTEXT

A CENTRAL BOOKING and Marymount Manhattan College Collaboration

March 21 –April 11, 2013

Curators: Maddy Rosenberg and Hallie Cohen

Marymount Manhattan College
Hewitt Gallery

CENTRAL
BOOKING

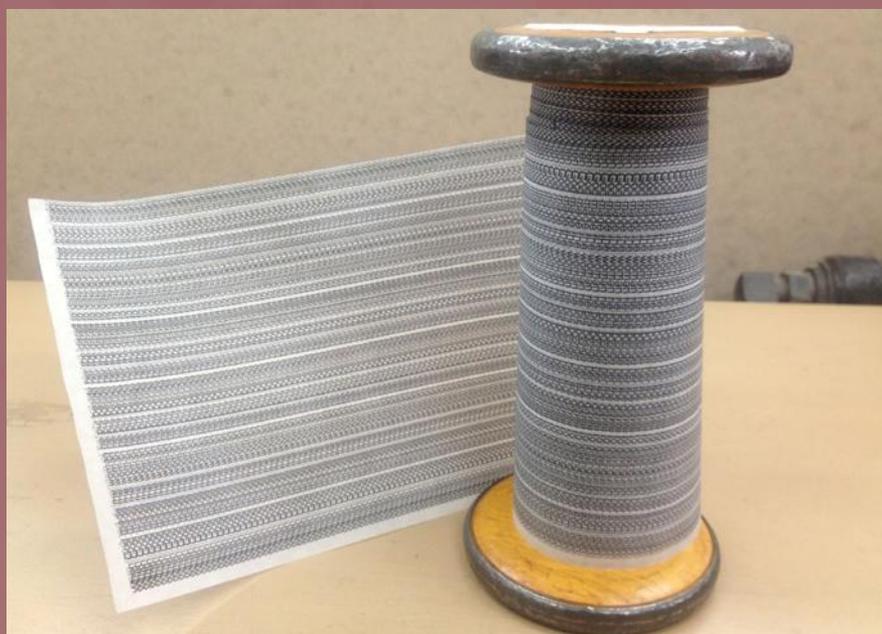


In an age where books are becoming increasingly digitalized and kindleized, contemporary artists are working in meaningful and creative ways to turn the book, as we know it, on its head. The book has gone through metamorphosis from the stone tablet to the finely crafted illuminated manuscript to a mere mass produced carrier of content that has also had the unfortunate effect of devaluing the book as an object. Always up to the challenge, artists have taken the word and restored it to a place within a visual context; in this exhibition books are off the shelf, on the wall, moveable, transformative and surprising again.

Desirée Alvarez layers text with image as they flow in nonlinear transparent wafts of fabric. Rosaire Appel conceals a text as a subtext to the graphic narrative as Anne Gilman redacts her way to an indecipherable text, forcing us into the visual language it accompanies, hand in hand. Pablo Helguera plays with a language of illustration, turning it quite literally on its head while Art Hazelwood

unfolds a seemingly more traditional narrative. James Walsh reveals a video narrative of what could have been as Katherine Jackson actually illuminates the word. The sculptural somersault words of Pamela Moore induce us to search for meaning from all angles. Judith Nilson weaves a pattern of surrogate text with a game in mind. Maddy Rosenberg builds stone by stone a sentence that needs no parsing. The calligraphy of Alan Rosner confounds the western brain, it is English with an Asian spin. Ilse Schreiber-Noll invites us to drink in the words of Paul Celan. The words wind around the spools of Robbin Ami Silverberg, spewing forth; Amanda Thackray squeezes her text into test tube pages, to be discovered with effort.

This exhibit, beckons viewers to expand their definition of books and language. Unconventional inventions and re-inventions are the hallmark of the fourteen artists representing lifetimes of devotion to their craft. They quite literally take the text out of context.



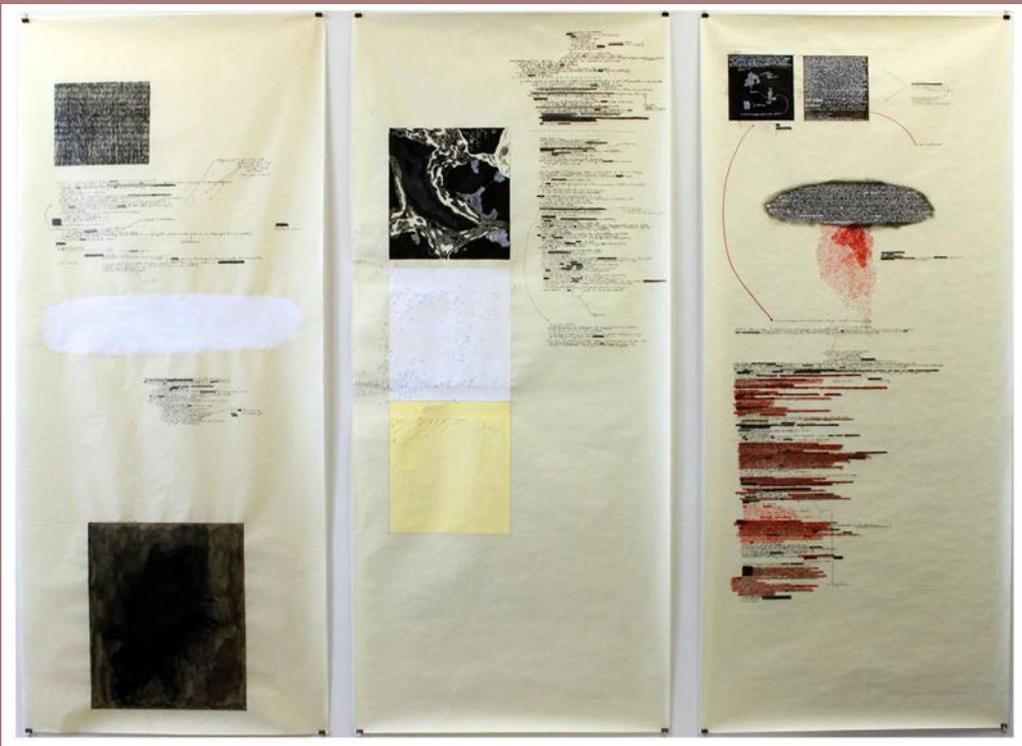
Robbin Ami Silverberg, *Text-ile (Romanian Proverb)*, 2007, archival inkjet on Dobbin Mill paper, vintage bobbin, 7 x 3.5 x 3.5 inches



Desiree Alvarez, *Diary of The Occult Bedroom*, 2012, ink on chiffon, installation, dimensions variable

Art Hazelwood, *Pulcinella in Hades*, 2007, four plate color etching and letterpress book, closed size 13 x 15 inches, fully open size 96 x 15 inches



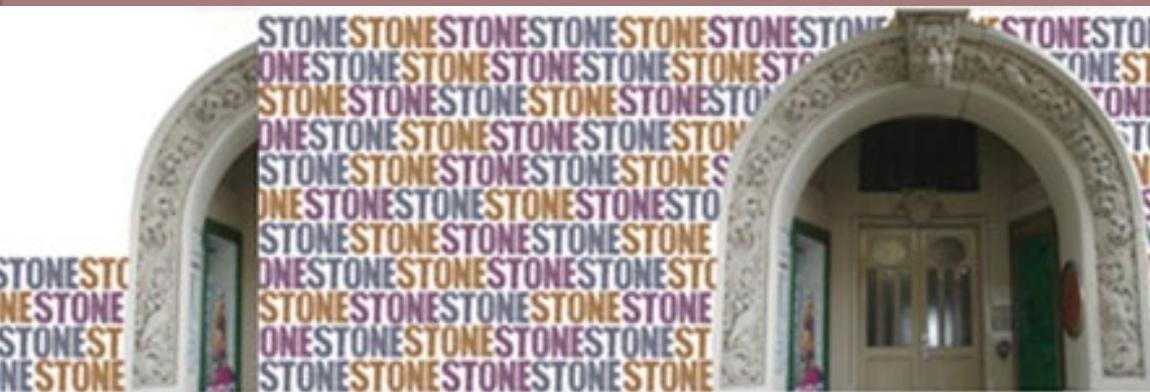


Anne Gilman, *Interference II*, 2010, ink, pencil, paint, with 2 relief prints on 3 scrolls, 88 x 120 inches

Pablo Helguera, *From the reports given here it would seem that the patients are unable to appreciate the content of the communication because their conscious attention is taken up by the form.* collage, unique, 9 x 12 inches,



From the reports given here it would seem that the patients are unable to appreciate the content of the communication because their conscious attention is taken up by the form.



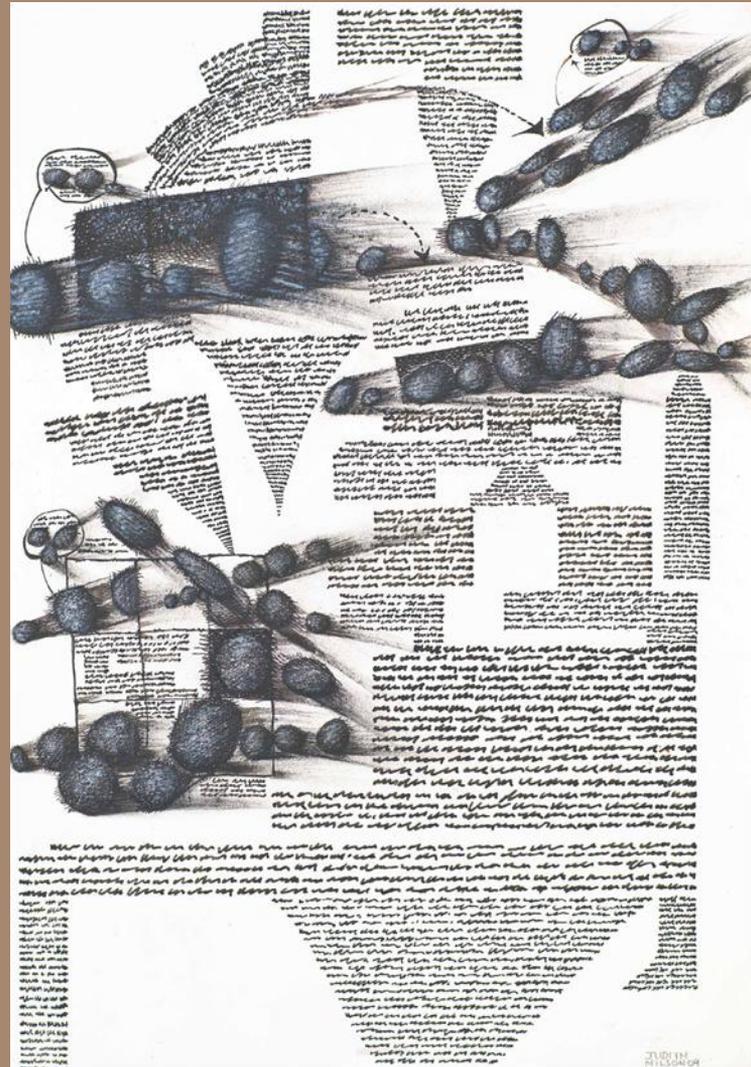
Maddy Rosenberg, *Building*, 2011, digitally printed flip book, 8 x 3.25 x .5 inches

Text Out of Context, Contextualized

FRANCIS LEVY

In the beginning there was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. It could be argued that all texts are archetypically liturgical, carrying with them the baggage of a search for the divine. Certainly the ur texts, the hieroglyphs found on stone walls and markings on caves address the urges both for transcendence and survival. Text Out of Context treats language as a visual aesthetic event. But artists exploring text also have a rendezvous with the unconscious and primitive sources of language. The creation of artworks in which the palette is language is almost archeological to the extent that it recreates the earliest applications and appearances of language before Gutenberg's printing press created the first bible.

Katherine Jackson, *It's Hard to Find Something There Isn't a Lot of*, 2008, RGB LEDs, steel, 11 x 9 x .75 inches



Judith Nilson, *Black White #012*, 2009, Ink, graphite, oil pastel on gessoed paper, 12.25 x 8.25 inches

Language like prehensile movement and tool making is a product of evolution and it is undoubtedly one of evolution's proudest achievements. But language itself is in danger of being turned into data, a mere means to an end. Today, more often than not, language facilitates communication and commerce and simply functions as a transfer agent. The lingua franca of language has more and more been limited to information giving that strips it of its original aspiration, as an expression of man's place in the universe,



Pamela Moore, *Secrets, Lies & Sarcasms 1*, 2013,
Sculpted board letters, 4 x 5 x 3 inches

as an expression of awe. For primitive man language was sacred. Language consecrated the burial grounds; it offered the early prayers that were the keystones of ritualistic behavior. Language had a far more vatic function in an irrational universe before consciousness, and more importantly self-reflexive consciousness became attributes of the human animal. This was the world that Julian Jaynes described in *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*. Incipient languages are all the more powerful since they partake of the aesthetic process of discovery, in which even familiar objects and places have the quality of being seen for the first time.

It is these early processes of language formation and meaning making that *Text Out of Context* addresses. The artist who deals with language qua language partakes of an Orphic process. He descends into the underworld to find his love object, with the admonition that all will be lost if he looks back. Art Hazelwood's *Pulcinella in Hades*, with its vertical format, is as much a symbol of the descent into the unconscious as it is a journey through the underworld. Language is always thought of as a high point

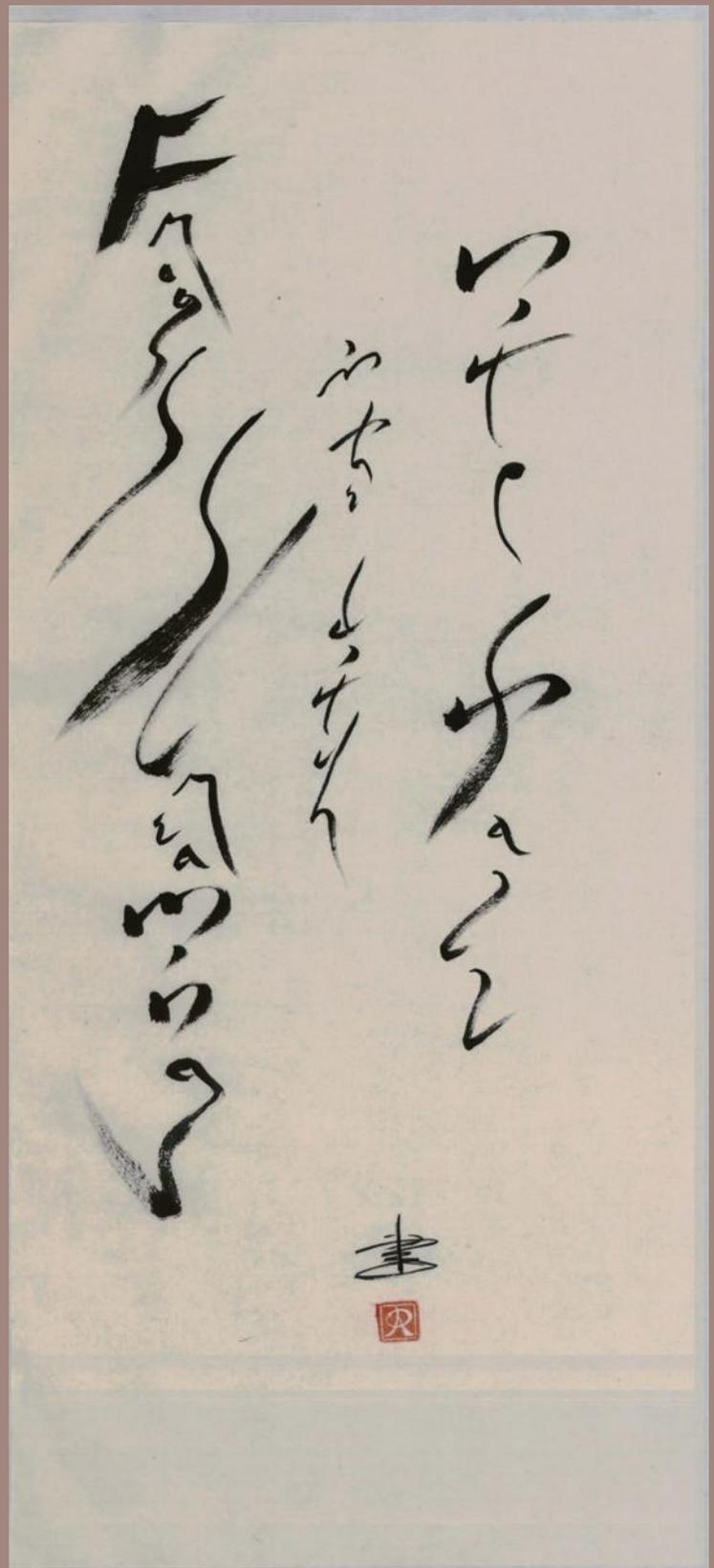


Rosaire Appel, *Moments of Freedom*, 2013, digital prints, a set of six framed prints, 11 x 8.5 inches each (22 x 33.5 inches)

in the food chain of thinking. But we have little knowledge of where language as we know it today will be as the mind increases its development and the prospect of a form of consciousness freed from the body avails itself as a survival mechanism for the human species. It is important to note that language and the greatly vaunted democratization of literacy will only be looked at as way stations in the process of human development. For now, though, any artist working with language as his/her medium is undertaking the equivalent of loganalysis, or the psychoanalysis of the word. By disengaging language from its time-bound constraints, the artist is examining the history of its creation. He or she is, in effect, journeying back to the inception of language itself, since meanings and associations of every written utterance, sign or symbol are now up for grabs. In Ilse Schreiber-Noll's *Schwarze Stille (Black Silence)* and on her three paper mache bowls, *Todesfuge (Deathfuge)*, the artist employs Paul Celan's poetry of the inexpressible. The handwritten German words on tarpaper and roofing material eschew the separation between language and experience.

The Innocence Project is a famous advocacy program for unjustly convicted criminals, but innocence is really the name of this project since language has been unjustly exploited by the politics of necessity. Making books, which are artworks, is the first step on returning language to its pristine almost plastic beauty. We must remember that language developed out of expression and emotion. What were the sounds that Leaky's *Homo habilis* uttered in the Olduvai Gorge and how do they relate to words as we know them today? All art is about innocence to the extent that it is an attempt to retrieve a world that has not been encapsulated by preconception; but those artists who make artworks out of books, out of language itself, avail themselves of the opportunity to examine the beauty of language in a way that is out of the ken of the average reader.

Katherine Jackson's ink on paper drawings are formed from Chinese ideograms. They appear to cascade across the surface with the power and



Alan Rosner, (A) *turtle sailing (along) On a log Head up*, 2013, Sumi on Rice Paper, 27 x 12 inches



Ilse Schreiber-Noll, *Schwarze Stille I (Black Silence I)*, 2012, mixed media and book on canvas, Book; wire bound with text by Paul Celan written by hand on roof tiles, 22 x 28 x 1.5 inches

grace of a primeval landscape. Artists making art out of language are true advocates for visual literacy since they are doing for words what mimesis did for nature. Though we might also say that all books suggest the ultimate artwork, which is the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita and a hundred other examples of texts that express the most ancient longings of a creature torn between its mind and body, between its animal and thinking nature. In Desirée Alvarez's *Surrender*, woodcut letters on chiffon takes on almost spiritual significance. Opening like a lotus, is it asking us to surrender the ego? In Maddy Rosenberg's digitally printed flipbook, *Building*, the word STONE, successively repeated, becomes the building block of a wall. An ecclesiastical architecture is constructed out of language.

In this exhibit artists have not only taken up the challenge of the past and of the great libraries in Ninevah, Alexandria and Pergamum but have also

restored the word to a consecrated place within a visual context. We read of horrendous stampedes in which hundreds of people are crushed in riots even at sacred sites. Modernity can be like a juggernaut that extinguishes fragile objects, which are the vessels of a delicate beauty. Bookstores are dying and optimists about the future of literature refer to transmigration when they discuss the fate of ancient and beloved tomes, which will be no more. Fahrenheit 451 prophesied the death of the book as a result of totalitarianism, but technology has accomplished what ideology failed to achieve. And if books are dying, will the written word be next? Or as a counterpoint, are the artworks in the current exhibition harbingers of a counter-reformation, in which the book as a work of art rises like the Phoenix from the ashes of a culture of illiteracy?

Amanda Thackray, *Five Fiber Specimens*, 2012, cut and sewn letterpress on paper in vintage glass vials with hand-printed labels, dimensions variable



Bachianas Textianas

PABLO HELGUERA

(A text-out-of-context fugue using the guidance of Johann Sebastian Bach)¹

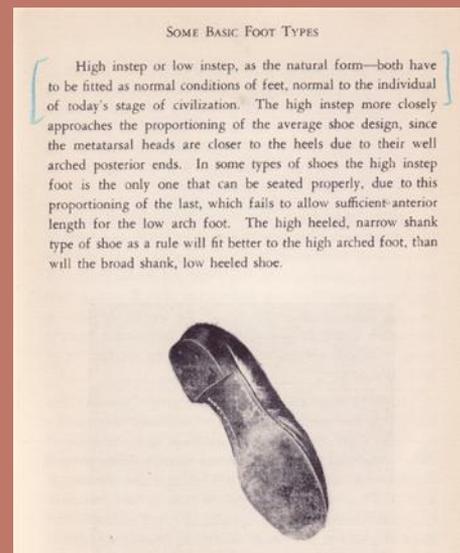
Whenever we extricate a phrase from its original context, there is always a range of detachment from its native text. This range can go from complete uprootedness (when the phrase has completely lost any semblance of being connected to another place) to full internal logic and autonomy (when one reads the phrase and can easily deduce its origins, mainly because the information that it conveys clearly tells its derivation or because it has the resonance of a famous quote, such as the line “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”)

The art of decontextualization relies on the balancing act of not completely extricating a phrase from its original context (otherwise the thrill of extricating it is lost and becomes a pointless exercise) without respecting too much its autonomy (otherwise the work functions less as appropriation and is more like unimaginative plagiarism). It is in that subtle manipulation of the text without completely defacing its original form where decontextualization finds its richness.

A useful example of how this works is found in late Baroque compositions, and especially in what became its highest expression — the work of Johann Sebastian Bach. During Bach’s time, the notion of innovation was very different from the traditional modernist notion: to innovate was not necessarily to create a new form, but rather to construct imaginative ways for recombining those forms. Translating that structure into image and text is a good way to achieve this end.

“episode”—a passage that serves as a transition from one statement of the subject and countersubjects into the following one, usually taking and developing a detail from the subject, but not always.

The following variation is based on using images and texts, chosen randomly from a number of discarded/obsolete books sitting on my table (I am an avid collector of obsolete books) to replace the musical composition. To make it more interesting, I introduced phrases from other books to make the episode sections.



Subject:
Everyday Classics, First Reader, (Baker and Thorndike, the McMillan Company, 1922)

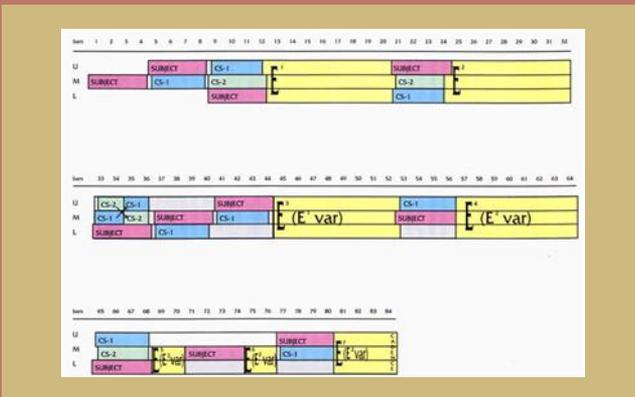
Countersubject 1:
Perceiving: A Psychological Study (Roderick M. Chisholm, Cornell University Press, 1957)

Countersubject 2:
Shoes and Feet: A Textbook for Students and Practitioners: A Practical Consideration of Fifty Affections of the Foot found in Chiropodical Practice: Their Relationship to Shoes, and Their Elemental Treatment, by Frank J. Carleton, D.S.C. Temple University, 1940.

Episodic material:

A Handbook on Piping. By Carl L. Svensen, M.E. New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1922

American Red Cross: Life Saving and Water Safety. With 143 Illustrations underwater pictures made at Silver Springs, Florida. Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York, 1937



The F major fugue of the second book of The Well-Tempered Clavier has the following compositional structure: In the diagram one can see that there are three “voices” —or channels, if you may, that intertwine amongst each other as the piece progresses. As in most fugues, there is a subject (a principal melodic line) that is complemented by two countersubjects (which function as a response of that initial melodic line). The fugue is basically a series of variations where the subject and countersubjects migrate from one voice to another, and at different points give way to what is called an

matter, and reports standard methods of many different companies. No standard is recommended, as the requirements are not the same in different cities. The following matter is abstracted from the above report.

"The tendency is for gas companies to discontinue the use of lead outlet connections, especially above the 10-light size, and to discontinue the use of lead inlet connections for all sizes, and to use all-iron connections and suitable swing joints, and, in addition, a solid or a split tie-in between the inlet and the outlet piping

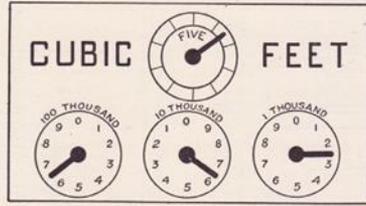


Fig. 278. Gas Meter Dial.

in order to relieve the meter screws and column seams of all avoidable strain."

FUGUE

M:
But the lion said: "I don't believe it."

U:
But the lion said: "I don't believe it."

M:
And for such a person the secondary quality word may come to have a more precise meaning than it has for the rest of us.

U:
And for such a person,

L:
High instep or low instep, as the natural form — both have to be fitted as normal conditions of feet, normal to the individual of today's stage of civilization.

U:
"I don't believe it."

(E1)
M:
This is quite a different picture from that of the "whole life passing in review" conception generally held.

L:
No standard is recommended, as the requirements are not the same in different cities.

U:
This is quite a different standard from a life passing in review.

U:
But the lion said,

M:
normal to the individual of today's stage of civilization,

L:
than for the rest of us.

(E2)

M:
This is quite a whole life passing in review,
L:
as the requirements in different cities
U:
of today's stage of civilization,

U:
High instep or low instep,
M:
coming to have a more precise meaning,
U:
For such a person,
M:
has to be fitted,
L:
The lion said.
M:
Don't believe
L:
a secondary quality word,

M:
For the rest of us,
U:
Don't believe.

(E3 [E1 variation])

M:
This is quite a standard picture
L:
As it is quite different from the same cities
U:
Generally held in passing
L:
Not the same in conception,
M:
Of the whole life.

U:
And such a person
M:
Doesn't believe in what lions say.

(E4 [E2 variation])

M:
This is quite a requirement
U:
Of a whole civilization
L:
In different passing stages,

U:
And the secondary quality
M:
High step or low instep, as the natural form,
L:
Don't believe it.

(E5 [E2 var.])

M:
Quite
U:
A whole
L:
Passing stage.

M:
The lion said "I don't believe it."
(E6 [E2 var.])

M:
A whole
U:
Quite passing
L:
stage.

U:
Don't believe it
M:
For the rest of us.

(E7 [E2 var.])

M:
Quite a whole
U:
Passing
M:
Different
L:
Belief
U:
In high or low instep
M:
Civilizing, a precise meaning
L:
For the rest of us.

1 This new text continues an ongoing project entitled "The Well-Tempered Exposition," a project initiated in 2011 that has the objective to translate all of JS Bach's pieces from The Well-Tempered Clavier into text compositions.

Some Thoughts on Text and Image

JAMES WALSH

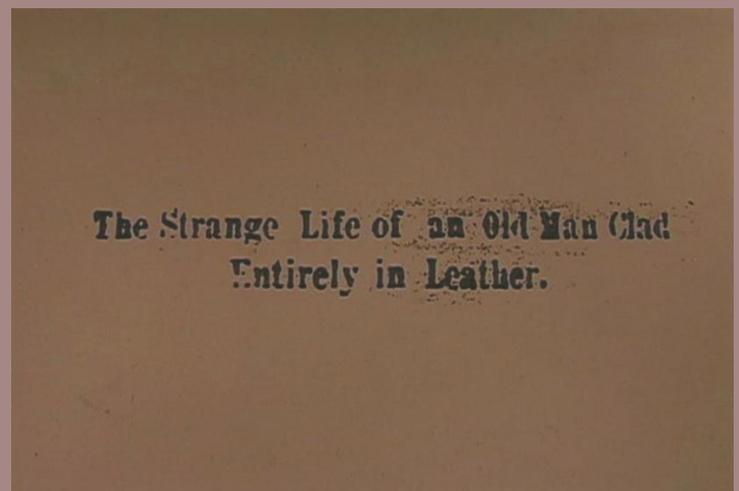
As part of a project on plants that grow in both the arctic and New York City, I have been spending a lot of time with seventeenth- and eighteenth-century books on botany, particularly herbals, which describe the medicinal uses of plants and floras growing in a particular area. I read for information on certain plants but I am also responding to these texts aesthetically, as images and objects. They are readable but everything about them is unfamiliar, from the vocabulary and syntax to the unusual typefaces, to the alternately elegant and awkward layout of the pages. These oddities and imperfections call me out of a pure reading experience by reminding me, first of all, that they were made a long time ago and, secondly, that they are physical objects with each page set in lead type, inked, and pressed into paper.

What I am describing is a shift from reading to looking, or more precisely, from reading to looking-while-reading and reading-while-looking. There is a certain mental work that these old herbals and floras require of me, a distance I have to cover to recognize them; a necessary translation I must make; a resistance that must be met; a call to pay attention and look and think and associate. This is the attitude of meeting a work of visual art rather than the attitude of simply reading, which strives to be transparent in which the visual elements communicate to the reader and then drop away.

It is never quite this simple, of course – I do not just look at a flora I also read it, and I do not purely read any contemporary text, I also respond to its type, layout and such. But these are the north and south pole of a territory, and my various experiences with text occur in the space between them, closer to one pole or the other.

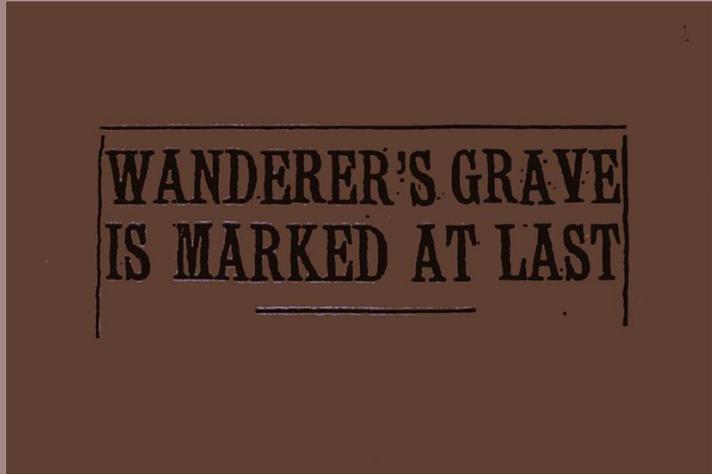
The legibility of any text, or my desire and habit of extracting its meaning and making it transparent, is very strong and persistent. Therefore in my work with text, I am always pushing in the opposite direction, toward the purely visual, so that I can keep or create that unsettled balance of meaning and image that I like, that gives me a thrill of pleasure.

By way of example, in my artist's book and video *The Strange Life of an Old Man Clad Entirely in Leather*, I had a story to tell about the Leatherman. He was an actual historical figure who, in the late nineteenth century, dressed all in leather, slept in caves, rarely spoke, relied on others for food, and walked a 360 mile circuit through Connecticut and New York, covering about ten miles every day, rain or shine, returning to the same spot exactly forty days later. As this summary suggests, I wanted my text to convey a lot of factual information and thus to have a high degree of transparency, though the biographical facts of his life are obscure, confused, contradictory and anything but clear. Many people are reported to have said that he did not speak at all, others that he only spoke French, and perhaps a little German. To convey the factual nature and ultimate unknowability of his story, I composed a narrative out of newspaper reports during and shortly after his life. As these reports accumulate, they both fill out a portrait of him while simultaneously blurring that portrait into one that is dimly perceived and receding. I used images of the original newspaper accounts as, with their various types, layouts and quirks of printing alongside several generations of photocopying, they visually convey the blend of factuality and obscurity that is at the heart of the Leatherman's story.

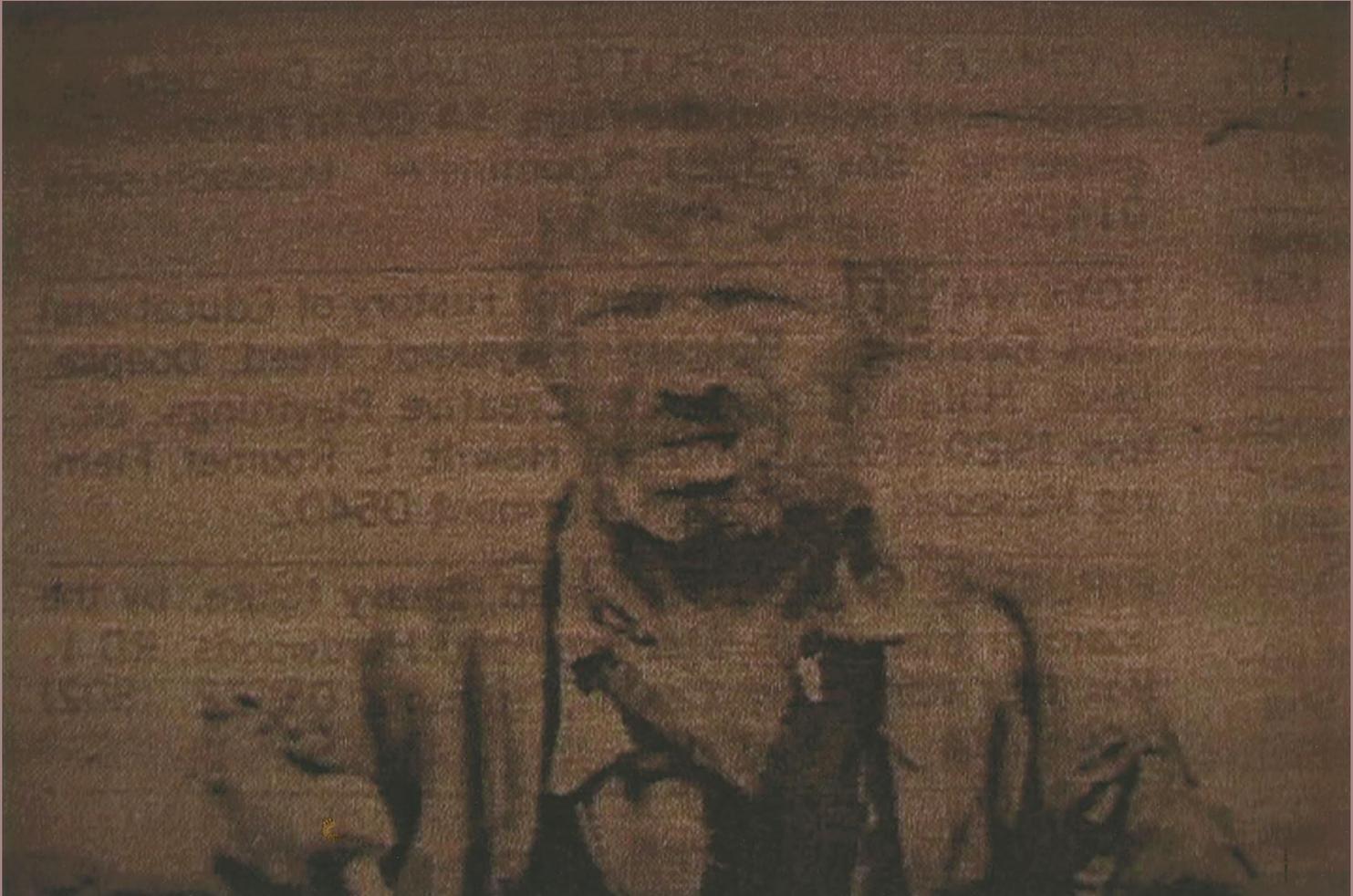


Intercut with the newspaper accounts are photographs of the Leatherman. The texts and images are given a rough equivalency, both being looked at, read for their meaning, deciphered somewhat and appreciated or taken in with some pleasure and edification, I hope, but not fully known or understood. In a similar way, we can look at the Leatherman himself as a hybrid of text and image, as a text-as-image and image-as-text. By being visually present but not speaking, he became an image on which people could project their own story about who he was, their own text of his life and its relation to their own.

I am the artist who created this work but I am also one of those witnesses projecting onto the Leatherman. I knew about him growing up because he had, a hundred years earlier, passed through my town in northern Westchester County, and my mother was interested in him. I associated him with Johnny Appleseed, who she also liked, both of them walking from place to place in their odd attire. Later I thought of him more as a meditative walker, close to nature and choosing it over human company, like a more rustic Thoreau. My research stripped away these projections, did away with these romantic figures, and left me with very little



to rely on. After this disillusion, the making of the work was a process of re-illusion, of resurrecting the rumors, reports, images and projections that swirled around the Leatherman, letting them play out the story of his life and death. Though I did not think about it in these terms while I was working, I did allow the Leatherman to exist as text-as-image and image-as-text, which was all he ever was for the people who witnessed him.



Traditional Printing

LARA HENDERSON

The AS220 Printshop, located in downtown Providence, Rhode Island, is a public-access printmaking studio offering intaglio etching, traditional stone lithography, letterpress, silkscreen, and offset facilities. The shop is equipped with a variety of printing equipment including a Vandercook SP4 Letterpress and a Takach intaglio etching press, with a 4.5 x 9.5 foot press bed, donated by the Rhode Island School of Design. Committed to supporting local creativity, the Printshop offers professional tools and facilities supporting the full breadth of printmaking techniques. Affordable workshops provide a vibrant learning community accessible to artists, craftspeople, and hobbyists alike.

Special workshops, commercial offset jobs, show poster runs, and fine art editions are just some examples of the wide range of work being produced in the Printshop. Additionally, students from AS220 Youth, a free arts education program for young people, with a special focus on those in the care and custody of the state, pursue printmaking at the Printshop as part of their visual arts curriculum. Complementing the Printshop are the two



Printshop member inking up wood blocks for printing

additional AS220 Industries: the AS220 Labs and AS220 Media Arts. The Labs and Media Arts are structured much like the Printshop, providing access to affordable studio space, tools, and training opportunities. AS220 Media Arts offers high-powered computers loaded with full suites of digital editing software, as well as a copy stand, manual and digital cameras, matting and framing tools, and the only public access community darkroom in Rhode Island. AS220 Labs supports tech-minded artists and makers of all ages. Part of a growing worldwide movement, the Labs provide democratic access to technology through open source hardware and software. Our resources include computer-controlled machinery such as a laser cutter, a 3-D printer, and a ShopBot CNC Router capable of cutting 4 x 8 foot stock.

In May of 2012, we decided to break down the walls separating the three AS220 Industries and build a communal office for the program leaders. This change instantly transformed the use of the space. Previously, members working on the other side of a wall from one another never met. Now, they can walk from one space to the next freely. The resulting interactions have led to collaborative classes exposing students to multiple Industries resources.

Below left: Epilog Laser Cutter at the AS220 Labs, with a 12" x 24" cutting bed, cutting wood relief blocks and registration jig



Utilizing Contemporary Technology at AS220

One example of cross-Industries collaboration is our Laser Cut Relief Printing class, developed by Industries Coordinator Beth Brandon and Industries Keymember Elliot Clapp. This class teaches students how to digitize artwork, laser cut it into wood blocks, and print it using traditional relief printing processes. Participants bring a drawing or photograph to the first class, and then can utilize Media Arts' resources to scan their images and use Adobe Illustrator to turn it into vector art that the laser cutter can interpret.

Further preparing, with Corel Draw, is done at the Labs, using a computer dedicated to the laser cutter. Once the files have been prepared for the cutter, speed and power adjustments are made to accommodate the material. Eighth-inch plywood is typically used for the class, although wood, masonite, and acrylic up to 0.25 inch thick will work on most laser cutters. Each block, roughly 4 x 5 inches, takes about 5 to 10 minutes to carve, significantly less time than hand-cutting. Pre-designed jigs were cut on the laser cutter, one for registration and another for inking. The printing block nests perfectly inside the registration block, which includes guides for paper placement. This allows students to register multiple colors and center an image on the paper.



Completed 2-color wood block print, using a registration system cut on the laser cutter

Photo credits: Elliot Clapp

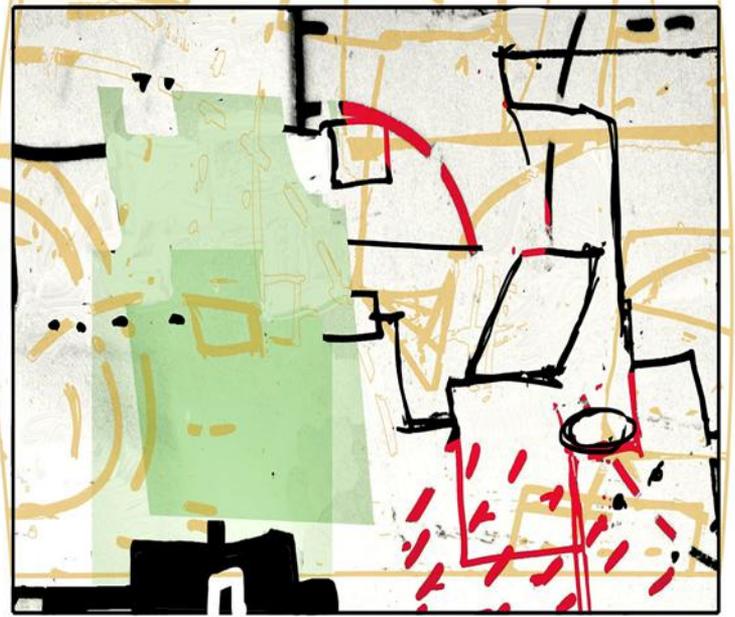
Entrance of the AS220 Labs and Printshop, Providence RI

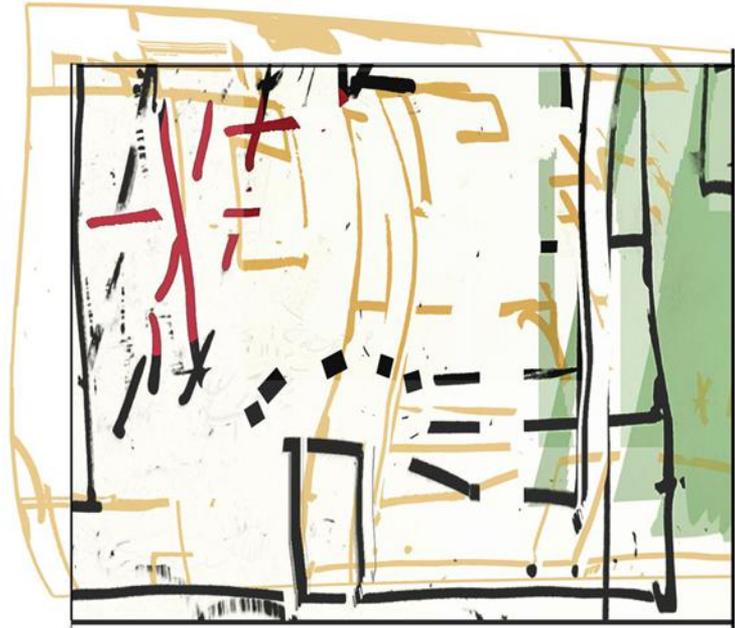


With completed blocks in hand, students head to the Printshop to print with their blocks on the intaglio press. The inking jig keeps the roller parallel to the block and prevents inking in lower areas, which is helpful when blocks have a lot of open, non-printing area.

Beth Brandon, the instructor of the class, avoided relief printing in her own work for years. Her style employs fine lines and repeating patterns, and trying to carve designs into wood never yielded satisfying results. Silkscreen and letterpress were more obvious solutions, but the texture of wood block printing was always appealing. By using the resources available to her in the AS220 Industries, she is now able to cut blocks and print her imagery. When traditional printmaking techniques are combined with modern technology, artists are able to expand into new media.

"it went without saying"

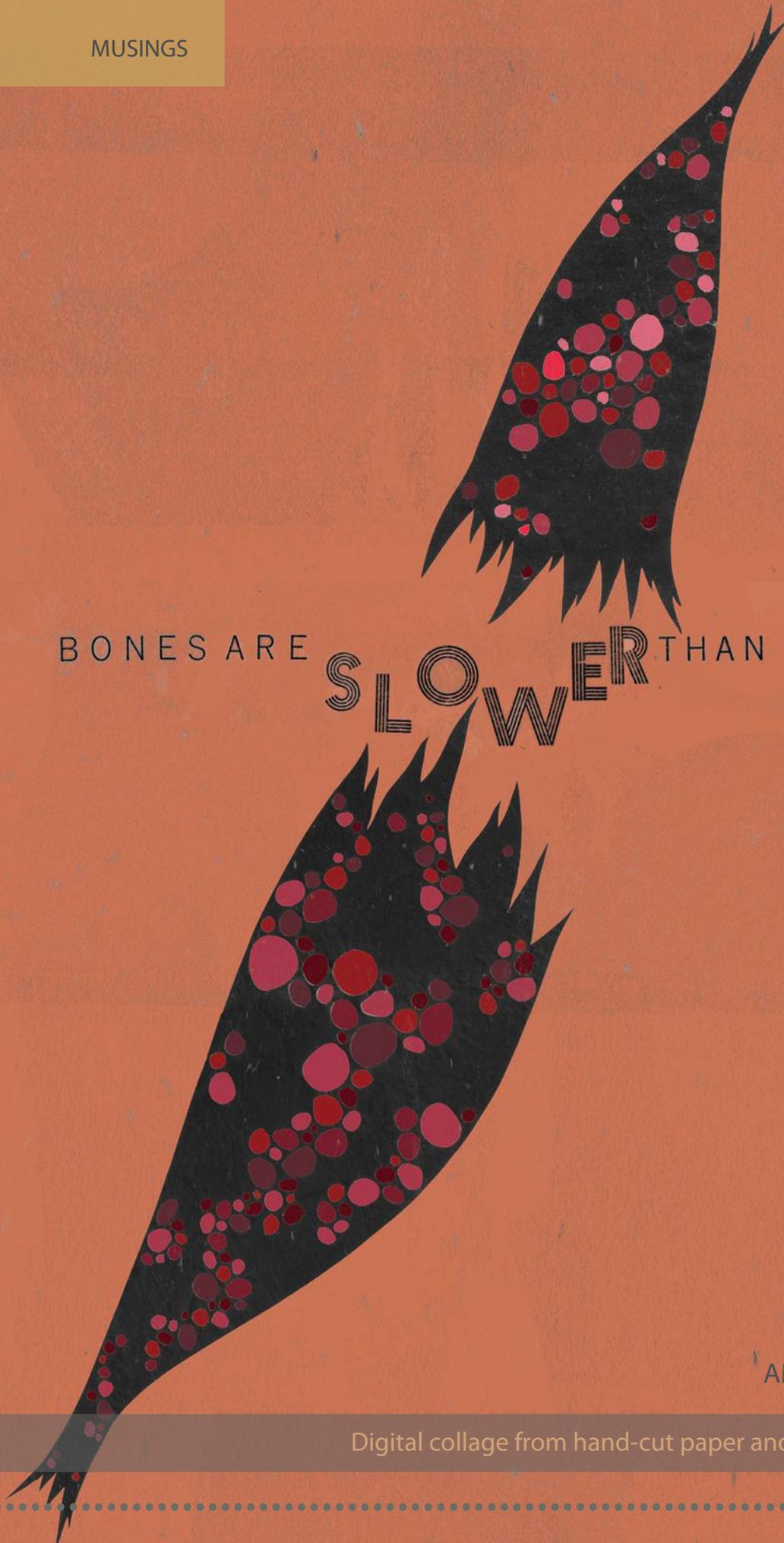




BONES ARE SLOWER THAN MUSCLE

AMANDA THACKRAY

Digital collage from hand-cut paper and hand-set type, 2013



JAMES WALSH

was born in Brooklyn, NY, studied literature at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY and Oxford University, England, and currently lives and works in Brooklyn. He has been making visual work in a variety of media since 1986, and has shown throughout the United States and Europe. He is the author of three books - Foundations (1997), Solvitur ambulando (2003), and There was Something in the Weather (2012) - and numerous unique and limited-edition artist's books.

PABLO HELGUERA

Originally from Mexico City, Pablo Helguera is an artist in Brooklyn working in subjects around pedagogy, fiction, and history. He has published many books, including Theatrum Anatomicum (and other performance lectures) (2009) and Art Scenes (the Social Scripts of the Art World) (2012). He is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Creative Capital grant, and in 2011 received the first International Prize of Participatory Art in Bologna, Italy.

CAROLYN SHATTUCK

lived in Okinawa, Japan for three years where she became influenced by the history and beauty of Japanese prints. She studied painting at Bard College. Shattuck believes her work is the freedom to extrapolate ideas and motifs from many sources in order that they can cross-pollinate and exist as a whole. She says "I hope to celebrate life in all its complexities while acknowledging the shadow on my left shoulder."

DONNA RUFF

currently lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico and has exhibited in solo and group shows in the US, Europe and Asia. Her work was recently acquired by the New Mexico Museum of Art and is featured in Book Art: Iconic Sculptures and Installations Made from Books, published by Gestalten.

STEPHEN BURY

is Librarian of The Frick. Formerly he was Librarian of Chelsea School of Art and Head of European and American Collections at the British Library. He chaired the boards of Bookworks and Matt's Gallery, London. Publications include: 'Artists' Books' (1995), 'Artists' Multiples' (2001) and 'Breaking the Rules' (2007).

LARA HENDERSON

is a book artist based in Providence, Rhode Island. Lara attended the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth for her BFA in Graphic Design/Letterform. In 2010, she completed her MFA at the University of the Arts in Book Arts/Printmaking, with a focus on book structures and offset lithography. After graduate school, she relocated to Providence, RI where she is currently employed as the AS220 Printshop Manager and continues to teach book arts.

ROSARIE APPEL

studied poetry writing/ versification at the New School and painting and drawing at the New York Studio School. She writes that "issues of language, both visual and verbal, are and have been the foundation of my practice."

FRANCIS LEVY

has had stories, humor, criticism, essays and poetry published in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The New Republic, The Village Voice, The East Hampton Star, Evergreen Review, Contemporary Psychoanalysis and American Imago amongst others. He is the author of the novels Erotomania: A Romance and Seven Days in Rio. He blogs at TheScreamingPope.com

