

Just another day at the beach – Because Nothing Ends by Amanda Friedman



<https://vimeo.com/83446038> (<https://vimeo.com/83446038>)

Because Nothing Ends

by Amanda Friedman

2013

3 x 5.3 inches, 180 pages + color cover

Edition of 500

Published by Peradam – [Available for purchase \(http://www.peradam.info/publications.html\)](http://www.peradam.info/publications.html)

Because Nothing Ends is a double-sided, two shot flipbook taken at Rockaway Beach in June 2013. Inside the pages of the book one of Friedman's paintings flies into the sky, and dies at sea.

Blonde Art Books: The two action sequences in your publication *Because Nothing Ends* are very performative and physical. It makes sense that their outcome is a flipbook that relies on the reader quickly turning pages and experiencing movement. Have you worked with moving images or video before?

Amanda Friedman: Several years ago I made a number of stop-motion animation videos. I'd take pictures of colored pencils in the Navy Yard and other familiar outside locations. Between shots I would pull the pencils in and out of the ground so they would seem to disappear and reappear. At the time I was drawing a ton and those videos were another way I worked out these drawings. There is a similar connection between *Because Nothing Ends* and my current painting practice.



([https://blondeartbooks.com/2014/01/06/just-another-day-at-the-beach-because-nothing-ends-by-amanda-friedman/screen-shot-](https://blondeartbooks.com/2014/01/06/just-another-day-at-the-beach-because-nothing-ends-by-amanda-friedman/screen-shot-2013-12-30-at-9-55-30-pm/)

[2013-12-30-at-9-55-30-pm/](https://blondeartbooks.com/2014/01/06/just-another-day-at-the-beach-because-nothing-ends-by-amanda-friedman/screen-shot-2013-12-30-at-9-55-30-pm/))



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Around that time, my friend Elizabeth Hirsch and I created several stop-motion animations, making playful sets in our apartment. These took on a more narrative format. In one piece we wove objects (a pretzel, a rolled up newspaper etc.) through a string grid. The setup was akin to the letter racks painted by trompe l'oeil painters such as [John Peto](http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/old-time-letter-rack-33782) (<http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/old-time-letter-rack-33782>), (1854-1907).

About a year ago I had a studio neighbor snap pics of me with her iPhone dancing around the building with one of my large irregularly shaped double-sided paintings. I was trying to juxtapose the painting and the active content of my gesticulating body, and it was frustrating! The impulse to insert movement came from wanting to confront head-on the live physical performance inherent in my painting process. To construct these paintings I move them from the floor, to the wall, back-and-forth, again and again. Painting is a clumsy, corporeal event to me. I want to be transparent about this, and make this ecstatic alive quality apparent within the painting itself, which means I somehow need to show time. I think of these images as a way to capture me dancing with myself. They are rather slapstick, and surreal, and pointed me toward the flipbook format.

In May, I set up a scenario where a friend and I carried one of these paintings about eight blocks, from my studio to [Jackie Klempay's apartment gallery](http://spareroomprojects.tumblr.com) (<http://spareroomprojects.tumblr.com>). I thought this video footage would become part of the flipbook but the action appears more like a parade – comic, celebratory, official, and functional. I felt that the content of the flipbook needed to be more direct, or self-enclosed.



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[content/uploads/2014/01/picture-3.png](https://blondeartbooks.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/picture-3.png))

BABS: Have you worked on a publication before?

AF: Although I have contributed to zines with friends and my book club ([Art Book Club](http://artbookclub.wordpress.com) (<http://artbookclub.wordpress.com>)), this project has been unique. *Because Nothing Ends* is very much a work in itself and the first of its kind for me.

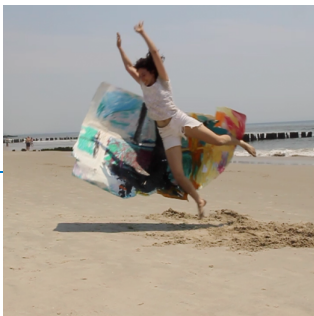
BABS: How did you start working on the project with Peradam?

AF: I met Elizabeth Jaeger (who runs [Peradam](http://peradam.info/) (<http://peradam.info/>) with Sam Cate-Gumpert) about three years ago while working at Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery. They had recently started the press and I proposed a book depicting a sequence of images showing one of my paintings fly. I'd thought the book might be made up of edited video stills of me throwing or dancing with one of my paintings at different sites. But through discussion and trying out imagery we arrived at the flipbook format, where there was only room for one motion per side. One of the things I appreciate most about working with Peradam was the shared understanding that this publication was to combine content and form.

BABS: Can you describe the day? What did you do to prepare for it?

AF: In the months leading up to the day at the beach I had come up with this move and others by dancing in my apartment to YouTube videos of Yvonne Rainer's Trio A and Loie Fuller (1862-1928), an early pioneer of modern dance, and other [experimental dance films](http://www.ubu.com/film/dance-with-camera.html) (<http://www.ubu.com/film/dance-with-camera.html>). Also, over the summer I had been making it a habit to dance around the studio for a few minutes during each painting session, and go to [Gaga](http://gagapeople.com/english/) (<http://gagapeople.com/english/>) classes at Mark Morris.

I also participated in the body-voice workshop with [Meredith Monk](http://www.meredithmonk.org/) (<http://www.meredithmonk.org/>)'s House Foundation, where the body was often referred to as a mark. All of this movement work and thinking fed into the making of the flipbook. The day we went to Rockaway Beach to take the footage, I was nervous. I am not a performer and it was the first time I had met Tony Lowe who was doing the filming. He and Elizabeth picked me up outside of my studio around 8 am. I'd woken up early that morning and practiced moving with one of my paintings on the studio rooftop. I wanted to feel the wind on the painting. I remember there was a guy sleeping in a bathtub up there! The dance motion I repeated started by me draping the painting over myself like a turtle's shell, then jumping up and flipping the work out and over my body – flinging it into the air to catch the wind – I was trying to make it completely unfold in the air.



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[2013-07-15-at-1-23-29-am/](https://blondeartbooks.com/2014/01/06/just-another-day-at-the-beach-because-nothing-ends-by-amanda-friedman/screen-shot-2013-07-15-at-1-23-29-am/))



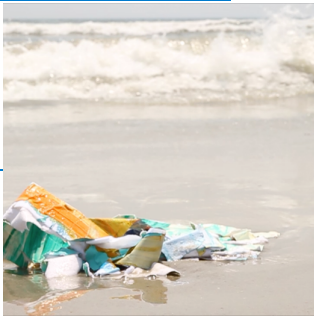
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[2013-12-31-at-7-08-19-pm/\)](#)



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[2013-07-15-at-1-14-56-am/\)](#)



[\(https://blondeartbooks.com/2014/01/06/just-another-day-at-the-beach-because-nothing-ends-by-amanda-friedman/picture-1/\)](https://blondeartbooks.com/2014/01/06/just-another-day-at-the-beach-because-nothing-ends-by-amanda-friedman/picture-1/)

When we got to the Rockaways, the parallel between tossing a painting into the ocean and Hurricane Sandy surfaced. I have worked at two galleries that were affected by the flooding. It is too much to concretely link this publication with climate change and my consciousness of Sandy's impact, but it would be ignoring the obvious not to mention it.

Back to the beach – we took the two paintings I'd brought from my studio, water, towels, and camera to the sand. It was a relatively clear morning and not too crowded. Without over stressing the one-time nature of location shooting, and the destructiveness of the planned action, we started filming. In total we made fifteen short videos, most less than a minute long. I got a little violent with the sand and we received some weary looks from sunbathers, but overall the session went smoothly and was invigorating. We got Jerk Chicken at a place on Bedford afterward.

BABS: What, if any expectations did you have for your day at the beach and or general goals for the content of the book?

AF: My priorities for the book (and the footage we took that day) were to highlight the negative space around one of my paintings, to lighten up, and to make one of my paintings fly and disappear into the landscape. I chose the grandiose seaside setting partly for its Romantic place in art history and its uncontrollable public quality. And I picked a video sequence that included my body to show the slippage between myself and my work. I am after a self-awareness that comes through and in the making of my paintings.

I also wanted the flipbook format to feature the experiential, physical quality of that day. Flipping through a double-sided book perpetuates an understanding of circular time, and slows down viewing, encouraging the reader's consciousness of their physical encounter with an object. I would like to challenge mainstream capitalist culture's chant that "faster is better." Picking the antiquated and childlike format of a flipbook was a somewhat political decision to me. It relates to Muybridge's motion studies, which I admire, and my earlier stop-motion experiments. Overall my hope is that the book embodies a bit of my fascination on accepting loss, disappearing, and death.

BABS: Bookmaking is intrinsically a collaborative process, can you say something about collaboration in your own practice.

AF: Over the past few years I have embraced collaboration as a hands-on way to learn new things and force myself to open up. Working in my studio can get lonely, I've found it energizing, grounding, and fun to figure out ways to work with people.

For the book launch I wanted to make an experiential event that would conjure up nature and temporality. The weekend before Halloween we organized a campfire at White Columns in the West Village. [Lizzie Wright \(http://www.lizziewright.net\)](http://www.lizziewright.net) made a fire sculpture with wood and dry ice, and we sat around it on blue tarps. Nicholas Weist read an alchemistic excerpt from Alejandro Jodorowsky's *Psychomagic: The Transformative Power of Shamanic Psychotherapy*. [Heather Guertin \(http://heatherguertin.com\)](http://heatherguertin.com) told scary jokes and read from her novel-in-progress *Not Yet Titled, Cambodia*. [Kayla Guthrie \(http://www.kaylaguthrie.com\)](http://www.kaylaguthrie.com) sang a powerful set. [Laura Hunt \(http://huntlaura.blogspot.com\)](http://huntlaura.blogspot.com) read an internal monologue. Then we screened the painting parade video mentioned and [Jesse Hlebo \(http://www.jessehlebo.com\)](http://www.jessehlebo.com)'s video of a burning computer titled, *The Responsibility of Freedom*. Securing the tarps around the fire a wood bench artwork by [Michael Welsh \(http://michaelwelshstudio.com\)](http://michaelwelshstudio.com) was installed along with several of [Alyssa Gorelick \(http://alyssagorelick.com/home.html\)](http://alyssagorelick.com/home.html)'s wrapped sticks and a rope coil piece. We also anchored the circle with a ring of three sculptures made of salvaged polystyrene, cement, and synthetic stone by [Rachel Higgins \(http://www.rachelhiggins.com\)](http://www.rachelhiggins.com). It was a mystical evening.

Available exclusively for Amanda's interview with Blonde Art Books below are videos which are outtakes from the shoot taken that day on the beach.



Amanda Friedman - Because Nothing Ends Outtake

Blonde Art Books



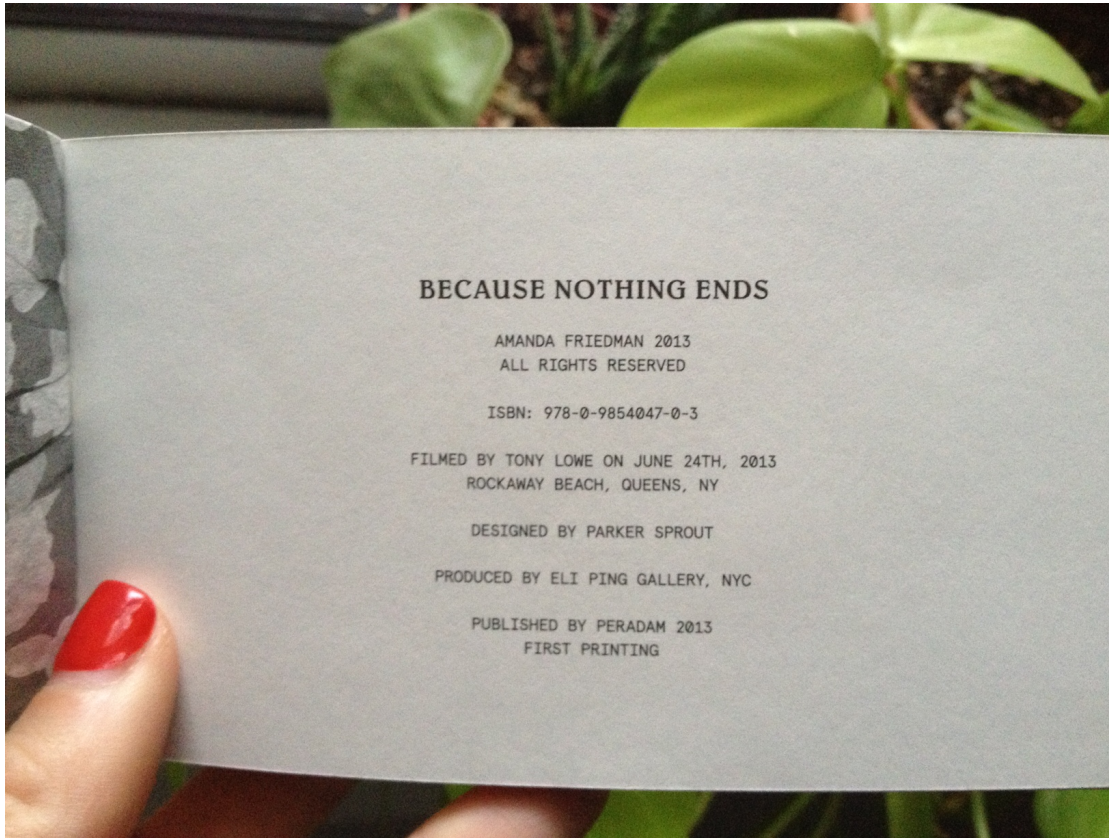
Because Nothing Ends by Amanda Friedman - Video outtake 02

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Because Nothing Ends by Amanda Friedman - Video outtake 03

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