THE BOOK MADE ART

A Selection of Contemporary Artists’ Books

The University of Chicago Library
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by
Jeffrey Abt

The University of Chicago Library
1986
The Book Made Art grew out of a visit to the studio of Tony Zwicker, a leading dealer for contemporary artists' books. I was not only impressed by the vitality and originality of the works I saw there, but also by their many associations with the history of the book. The appeal of exhibiting these works within the context of the University of Chicago Library's collections broadly representative of the history of the book was irresistible and shortly thereafter a loan exhibition was proposed to Tony. Since then Tony has given much of her time and considerable knowledge to the project even as she has had to overcome a great personal tragedy. The Library of the University of Chicago is indebted to her for making this exhibition possible.

To this I add my appreciation to Robert Rosenthal, Curator of Special Collections, for his support throughout and for his thoughtful comments on the essay which follows; to April Oswald, Exhibitions Coordinator, for assisting with both this publication and the exhibition; and to Joseph Denov for his sensitive photographs of the books reproduced herein.

The catalogue design is by Buzz Spector, an artist of the book himself, who has made of this publication an artistic statement worthy of the subject it hopes to illuminate.
Stéphane Mallarmé. Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard.
(opening 9)
The book is an object of such general familiarity that it should require no definition. Yet, on first viewing contemporary artists' books, there arises a pressing, almost compelling need to reconsider the meaning of the word "book." To the editors of Liber Librorum (1973), an extensive history of the physical presentation of books, the term encompasses cuneiform tablets, accordion-folded and fan-shaped manuscripts from Asia, engraved cylinders, and scrolls of various materials as well as the more familiar book or codex formats.¹ From this panoply of historical precedents the Oxford English Dictionary abstracts:

A treatise written on any material (skin, parchment, papyrus, paper, cotton, silk, palm leaves, bark, tablets of wood, ivory, slate, metal, etc.), put together in any portable form, e.g. that of a long roll, or of separate leaves, hinged, strung, stitched or pasted together.

But, since either the form of the book or its subject may be mainly or exclusively the object of attention, this passes on either side into . . . The material article so made up, without regard to the nature of its contents, even though its pages are occupied otherwise than with writing or printing, or are entirely blank. . . .²

The contemporary artist's book is all of these and more, for it represents an evolution of the book's use from a vehicle for text and its illustration to an artistically integrated, sometimes sculptural object. Though superficially the artist's book may bear little resemblance to the common codex, it nonetheless continues many of the earlier uses and forms of the book. It is not the purpose of this exhibit, however, to question or reshape the definition of "book." The Book Made Art is, through a modest selection of some of the most original and daring creations produced within the past ten years in North America,
England, and on the Continent, an attempt to examine the book as a medium for artistic expression in our time.

The everyday book is very much under attack here as artists, rather than succumb to its accepted form, test its physical limits against their artistic demands. Then, too, several of the works in this exhibition, at turns humorously and seriously, question the book in its role as a symbol of our culture. The artist’s book also rebels against the traditional division of labor in book production. It represents artists’ efforts to participate in and control all aspects of a book’s conceptualization, content, and production.

Some have erroneously regarded the artist’s book as a continuation or logical outcome of the livre d’artiste—so named because the latter, originating in France about a century ago, found its earliest and most distinctive expression there. But the livre d’artiste, exemplified in books such as those illustrated by Bonnard, Picasso, and Miro, is almost always the outcome of a collaborative effort. The artist is usually asked to decorate someone else’s text, leaving the overall typographical design and printing to a third party. Additionally, many livres d’artistes will then be further enhanced with the decorative techniques of fine binders. By this point the interests of at least five separate parties—author, artist, publisher, printer, and bookbinder—will have determined the book’s completed appearance rather than a single artistic vision. The creative method of the livre d’artiste has resulted in a genre of surprising uniformity despite the dramatically different styles of the prominent artists who contributed to its development. Although highly varied and seemingly defying grouping as a genre, artist’s books, which first emerged in the 1950s, are related by virtue of their subjugation to one creative personality. It is this artistic dominance of one individual as author, artist, publisher, printer, and bookbinder which gives the artist’s book much of its special potency. With the artist’s intimate knowledge of all aspects of a book’s creation has come an extraordinary variety of experiments, one effect of which has been a broadening of the
categories of objects we accept as "books."

The artist's book is very much a product of the artistic currents of our time. The stylistic and technical restraints which artists began to doubt at the turn of the century have today fallen away completely. This has left the contemporary artist free to utilize a variety of non-traditional media in an ever-widening search for artistic freedom and deeper personal expression which has come to characterize the art of the twentieth century. The book has not been overlooked by contemporary artists and perhaps it is an especially ready medium for their explorations. One could argue that the book as a means for innovations in the transmission of knowledge has come to an end. Certainly the experiments and excitement in this area have passed to the world of personal electronics and computers. Alternatively one might daringly assert that we are witnessing the next major step in the evolution of the book: the obliteration of the confining regimentations of text, illustration, and internal linear progression. Already the artist's book has begun to do away with the more conservative features of the codex format.

The desire to unify the several aspects of a book's making in one individual originated in the hunger of modern artists for greater control over content and the form of its expression. The French Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé was alluding to this desire when he wrote "que tout, au monde, existe pour aboutir à un livre (all the world exists to reside in a book)." It should come as no surprise that Mallarmé (1842-1898) was the first modern author to draw upon the visually expressible possibilities of text — through the use of exacting typographical specifications — as part of the creation of Un coup de dés (A Throw of the Dice, 1897). Mallarmé was seeking nothing less than a literary, visual, and euphonic whole of perfect unity — a pure expression of his thought and emotion. In addition to his poetry, it is Mallarmé's essays elevating the book to a major art form which have placed him in an influential position among book artists today. However, many book artists look past Mallarmé to
A DIVINE IMAGE
Cruelty has a Human Heart
And Jealousy a Human Face
Terror, the Human Form Divine
And Secrecy, the Human Dress:
The Human Dress is forged Iron
The Human Form, a fiery Forge
The Human Face, a Furnace steald
The Human Heart, its hungry Gorge.
the English poet and painter William Blake (1757-1827) as their earliest and most representative antecedent. This is not only because of the extraordinary richness and variety of his nearly two dozen mystical books, but because Blake was the author, artist, and printer for each. Blake’s popularity among book artists can also be ascribed to his uncompromising standards:

I have heard many People say, “Give me the Ideas. It is no matter what Words you put them into.” & others say, “Give me the Design, it is no matter for the Execution.” These People know Enough of Artifice, but Nothing of Art. Ideas cannot be Given but in their minutely Appropriate Words, nor Can a Design be made without its minutely Appropriate Execution.\(^4\)

Another attraction of Blake for the contemporary book artist is Blake’s reputation as an outcast from the popular literary and artistic circles of his day. Blake’s self-publishing efforts have been attributed to his unpopularity. Whatever the circumstances which moved Blake to his solitary position, it has made him a hero to the modern artist who feels isolated from his public by dealers, critics, and curators. An initial impetus for the artist’s book almost four decades ago was a desire to bypass the art establishment in order to reach the public directly. Artists looked toward an idealistic program by which they could reproduce their work inexpensively, in large quantities, and then distribute their work at a very low cost or free-of-charge to cultivate a following independent of the art establishment. This emphasis on low cost, quantity, and distribution placed the artist’s book in a direct line with the factors which contributed to the invention of printing itself more than five hundred years ago. The artist’s book has, however, evolved in recent years from large, low-budget runs to limited editions and to unique works. Often the latter, visibly handcrafted books bring to mind the tradition of illuminated manuscripts which predates printing by possibly one thousand years.
The artist's book frequently reflects upon these long and continuous traditions of book making which came before. It is revealing to consider the artist's book in the context of a large research library such as the University of Chicago's which inevitably gathers to itself a myriad number of forms the book has assumed over the centuries. Beyond the physical continuity the artist's book maintains with its past, one is struck by the persistence of a certain fundamental urge to express and transmit knowledge through the special form of the book. For most of the artists exhibited here, the book has become a medium of expression as it has been for hundreds of years. If they differ from previous makers of books it is because they have succeeded in exploiting the expressive potential of the book's form in ways never before imagined.

Notes

Works in the Exhibition

The books exhibited are unique works and are loaned courtesy of Tony Zwicker except where otherwise indicated. All dimensions are given closed, height preceding width followed by depth.

ALESSANDRO ALGARDI
Italian

*L'Immagine della scrittura* [maquette]
1983
Paint and graphite pencil over paper; codex binding in calf; 12 leaves.
Signed.
20 3/16” x 14 1/4” x 3/4”

CHRISTIAN APPEL
German

*Incontro di Dante con Beatrice.*
Amsterdam: Da Costa Editions, 1983.
Multiple: One of twenty
Black-and-white and color photographs, hand-colored and mounted on binders’ boards; accordion-fold binding; 7 panels. Signed.
10 7/16” x 5 3/16” x 11/16”

ROBERTA ALLEN
American

*The Traveling Woman, Book IV*
1985
Paint and ink over paper; codex binding with string loops and painted boards; 6 leaves. Signed.
8 15/16” x 6 5/8” x 5/8”
BALTAZAR/MICHEL BUTOR
French

Zodiaque des Nuages
1984
Multiple: One of two
Watercolor, ink, and pastel over paper;
in codex gathering but not sewn; with
rigid publishers’ cloth cover and slip-
case; 18 leaves with paper wrapper.
Script in author’s hand. Signed by artist
and author. With autograph postcard,
decorated with collage, Butor to Balt-
azar, 10.19.85.
11 5/16” x 7 9/16” x 1 3/8”

DOUGLAS BEUBE
Canadian

Ashes: The Effect of Fire on Paper
1980
Cloth, fabric edging and cords, mar-
bled and found papers, and specimen
bottles; mounted on found and hinged
compartment trays. Signed.
16 11/16” x 11 5/8” x 2 5/16”
Collection of the Artist

Graphite pencil, watercolor, colored
marking pens, stamping, colored pen-
cil, found and layered papers, photographs, miscellaneous materials, small
objects, and ephemera; codex binding
in printed fabric-wrapped boards; 33
leaves. Unsigned.
5 13/16” x 10 5/8” x 1 9/16”
Collection of the Artist
MERYL BRATER
American

Black Pool White Pillow #2
1984
Graphite, graphite pencil, colored pencil, and printing ink over paper with ribbon ties; combination codex and accordion bindings; four principal panels. Signed.
23 7/8” x 16 11/16” x 1 5/8”

LORI CHRISTMASTREE
American

You Have to Break the Glass to Get Out
1984
Graphite pencil, colored ink, watercolor, found materials, and glass shards over layered papers; unbound in double-lidded box with ribbon ties; 9 leaves. Signed.
25 1/4” x 19 1/8” x 2 3/16”

JOHN ERIC BROADDUS
American

Meridian Passage
1979
Paint and ink over paper; codex binding in painted boards; 9 leaves. Unsigned.
22 7/16” x 22 3/8” x 7/8”

ELSIE CRAWFORD
American

Willow Waterway
1985
Colored ink over wood veneer-backed paper scroll mounted on wood dowel with leather tie; with hollowed-out tree stump case. Unsigned.
6 1/2” x 4 5/8” x 4”

France I
1983
Found printed codex [popular geography] altered with paint, ink, colored pencil, glitter, and cutting; with painted slip case and painted cloth outer wrapper; 104 leaves. Signed.
12 1/8” x 9 1/16” x 1 11/16”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIMOTHY C. ELY</td>
<td>American</td>
<td><em>Field Points 3</em></td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Ink and watercolor over pigment, foil-stamped, and embossed paper; in codex binding with painted boards with collage elements, and pigment and foil stamping; in drop-spine book box with buckram covering; 26 leaves. Signed. 16 3/4” x 11 5/16” x 1 1/2”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JANE FREEMAN</td>
<td>American</td>
<td><em>The Book of Sisters</em></td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Watercolor and color marking-pen ink over collage elements including packaging ephemera, postcards, clippings from magazines and books, and photographs; in codex binding with cloth-covered boards and fore-edge ties; 23 leaves. Unsigned. 5 9/16” x 8 7/8” x 1 9/16”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAROL FORGET</td>
<td>American</td>
<td><em>The Diplomat’s Handbook</em></td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>White cloth gloves stuffed with miniature flags of various nations, sewn end to end. Signed on display instructions. 8 1/4” x 4 1/4” x 3 9/16”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>VHF Salvation</em></td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Found printed codex [poetry] altered with watercolor, color marking pen, and collage elements including string, postage stamps, and clippings from magazines and books; in codex binding in publishers’ cloth altered with paint; 12 leaves. Signed. 8 13/16” x 5 3/8” x 9/16”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hartmann. Krankengeschichten. 1979 (closed)

Hartmann. Krankengeschichten. 1979 (open)
| **WERNER HARTMANN**  
Swiss  

*Krankengeschichten*  
1979  
White pencil over slate; assembled in cloth sleeves in codex format in cloth wrapper with ties; 10 slates. Signed.  
11 5/16” x 7 7/8” x 2 1/4” |
| **KAY HINES**  
American  

*The Endless Filmscript [drehbuch]*  
1978  
Found objects and motion-picture film altered with ink and mounted as a Möbius strip. Signed.  
29 1/2” x 8” x 13 5/8” |
| **RIC HAYNES**  
American  

*Early Fish*  
1984  
Paint, ink, and rubber stamping over layered papers in combination with decorative and marbled papers; in accordion-fold binding with rubber-stamping and marbled-paper decorated slip case; 8 panels. Signed.  
9 5/16” x 20 1/4” x 4 1/2” |
| **PAULA HOCKS**  
American  

*No Caryatids*  
1982  
Multiple: One of two  
Black-and-white and color photocopy reproductions of collages; in codex binding with publishers’ cloth with inner and outer cloth wrappers; 115 leaves. Unsigned.  
9 1/16” x 10 11/16” x 1 9/16” |
DAVID HORTON
American

_In Celebration of the Discovery of The Abandoned Star Factory_
1982
Multiple: One of thirty
Paper maché and electric motor in commercial salesman’s samples case; with cloth pouch containing: David Horton. _In Celebration of the Discovery of The Abandoned Star Factory_. Atlanta, Georgia: Nexus Press, 1982

[halftone illustrations and text printed lithographically with serigraphed designs over paper, paper and string collages, and silver print (photograph); in codex binding in publishers’ cloth; 12 leaves].
Construction: unsigned.
11 15/16” x 15 1/8” x 5 11/16”
Codex: signed.
9 15/16” x 8 11/16” x 1”

JANA KLUGE
German

[Untitled]
1984
4 9/16” x 5 7/8” x 1 11/16”

MICHAEL KOSTIUK
American

_Airplane Shadow Book_
1981/82
Found codex, plastic airplane model, wood, and photolitho-offset reproduction altered with paint. Signed.
7 7/16” x 16 1/16” x 16 1/16”
Lazaron. *Terror*. 1985 (closed with carrying bag)

Lazaron. *Terror*. 1985 (open)
WARJA LAVATER  
Swiss

*Jeu*
1980
Multiple: One of twenty-two
Cast paper, some color-dyed; in codex gathering but not sewn; in drop-spine book box with publishers' cloth covering; 10 leaves. Signed.
18 1/2" x 11 11/16" x 1 7/16"

HELMUT LÖHR  
German

*Blablabla*
1985
Found codex wrapped in layered and rubber stamped colored tissue papers.
Signed.
11 5/16" x 7 13/16" x 3 1/4"

EDNA LAZARON  
American

*Terror*
1985
Multiple: One of four
Black-and-white and color photocopies of collages over paper and transparent polyester, altered with ink, paint, and color photographs; in codex binding with foil over heavy paper front board altered with paint and string, and colored plastic back board, with electrical coil cord, string, and field clasp tie; in matte plastic draw-string bag; 6 leaves. Unsigned.
9" x 12 1/4" x 1 7/8"

RICHARD LONG  
British

*Mud Hand Prints.*
Multiple: One of one hundred
Dried mud over paper; 6 leaves.
Unsigned.
13 1/2" x 11/58" x 5/8"
Masullo. *Pandora*. 1985 (closed)

Masullo. *Pandora*. 1985 (open)
ANDREW MASULLO
American

*Pandora*
1985
Twenty tablets wrapped in letterpress- and photolitho-offset-printed papers; in hinged box with glass-covered compartments containing dried flowers, a photograph, and found papers; box covered with found and painted papers. Unsigned.
2 5/16" x 6 5/8" x 4 5/8"

BRENDA MILLER
American

*The Aleph*
1985
Pastel over stencil pattern-cut decorative paper; in codex binding with leather over boards and gold foil title stamping by Gérard Charrière; 31 leaves. Signed.
16 13/16" x 15 1/16" x 1 5/8"

SCOTT MCCARNEY
American

*Home Sweet Home*
1985
Multiple: One of four
Paper in accordion-fold binding with decorative and marbled paper-covered boards; with paper-covered slip case. Signed.
11 5/8" x 9 1/2" x 1 3/4"

KEVIN OSBORN
American

*Victor Rev*
1983
Multiple: One of one hundred
Color offset lithography over decorative die-cut papers with glass marbles; in fan-shape binding (hinged near base); with brushed aluminum outer covers and cloth ribbon tie with aluminum clasp; 140 leaves. Unsigned.
19 3/16" x 2 1/16" x 1 7/8"
Polansky. *Anatomical Digressions*. 1985 (binding, front and back)

Polansky. *Anatomical Digressions*. 1985 (open)
NICHOLAS PHILLIPS  
British  

_Egyptian Hours_  
1980  
Multiple: One of ninety  
Color intaglio over paper altered with cutting, watercolors, thread, and graphite pencil; unbound in paper-backed leather folding case; 8 panels. Signed.  
6 7/16” x 6 7/16” x 1 3/4”  

_Tales of the Floating World_  
1983  
Multiple: One of forty-five  
Color intaglio over paper; unbound with two protective boards in publishers’ cloth and paper-covered telescoping box; 9 leaves. Signed.  
10 1/4” x 10 3/16” x 1 1/16”  

LOIS POLANSKY  
American  

_Anatomical Digressions_  
1985  
Gold ink, graphite pencil, charcoal, printing ink, watercolor, paint, and dry transfer and self-adhesive lettering over cast and machine-made papers; in accordion-fold binding; 12 panels. Signed.  
15 3/8” x 11 1/2” x 3 3/4”  

AMINAH BRENDA LYNN ROBINSON  
American  

_Sapeloe Hog Hammock Community_  
1984  
Cloths, buttons, and embroidery yarns; in accordion-fold binding; 3 panels. Signed.  
24” x 16 5/8” x 2 3/4”  
Loan courtesy of  
Kathryn Markel Gallery,  
New York City, New York
Robinson. Sapelo Hog Hammock Community. 1984 (closed)
BRUCE SCHNABEL
American

Companions in Spirit
1985
Sequins, wire, thread, and cloth over synthetic mesh in silk-wrapped mats; in accordion-fold binding with silk over shallow bas-relief covers; with drop-shine book box in silk-wrapped, embossed, and shallow bas-relief outer covers; 6 panels. Unsigned.
19 1/8” x 15 3/4” x 2 3/8”

ANDREAS SENSER
Swiss

I remember Italy
1985
Paint, graphite pencil, and ink over layered papers, found illustrations and text, photographs, and clear polyester; in accordion-fold binding; 11 panels. Unsigned.
13 3/16” x 10 3/16” x 15/16”

SUSAN SHARE
American

The Bell Show
1982
Game board and game board pieces, black-and-white and color photocopies of packing ephemera, found illustrations, and text, altered with watercolor, paint, and rubber stamping; mounted on painted publishers’ cloth-wrapped panels; in end-to-end gate-fold binding with brass snap-buttons on buckram band closure; 4 panels. Signed.
14 7/8” x 14 5/8” x 1 9/16”

KAREN SHAW
American

Petit Larousse
1980
Found materials including twelve miniature blank books, pins, metal title plate, glass-lidded box, cotton, and small labels altered with dry-transfer lettering. Signed.
12 3/16” x 16 1/4” x 2 1/2”
ANNE HICKS SIBERELL
American

Wotan
1984
Colored and cast plasters imbedded with found objects including photographic slide mount altered with paint, packaging labels, and ruler fragment; with wood box and cover and elastic band closure containing ink on vellum manuscript poem. Unsigned.
8” x 5 15/16” x 1 3/8”

BERTY SKUBER
Italian

A Different Game
1977
Ink, graphite pencil, and watercolor over paper in combination with black-and-white photocopies, black-and-white photographs, color photographs, and postage stamp; unbound in publishers’ cloth drop-shine book box; 16 leaves. Signed.
9 1/16” x 6 3/4” x 15/16”

KEITH A. SMITH
American

Multiple: One of fifty
Die-cut and embossed paper with string; in quarter publishers’ cloth and paper-sides binding; 24 leaves.
Signed.
10 3/16” x 14 3/8” x 1 1/8”

BUZZ SPECTOR
American

Altered Lewitt
1985
Multiple: One of five
17 11/16” x 8 7/8” x 7/8”
Loan courtesy of Roy Boyd Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
On a moment’s notice,
flute in hand,

Die Valkyrie. Even
with quizzed adjustly
Brunhilde均可 the
blond cheeks, at the
innuendo.

With swift side copy
she guiltily, yearned
every from young,
carriage, 2

crew during Wotan’s
fiasco. 2 crew
may not have the courage
to be so close. I miss
my father.
YOKO TERAUCHI
Japanese

_Terra_
1984
Multiple: One of ten
Powdered pigment and paper; in codex binding with cloth ribbon fore-edge ties; 24 leaves. Unsigned. 14 5/8” x 10 15/16” x 5/8”

ERICA VAN HORN
American

_La Ville aux Dames (“second state”)_
1983
Paint over paper; in accordion-fold binding with portfolio-style cover in publishers’ cloth with cloth ribbon ties on three sides; 12 leaves. Signed. 12 1/4” x 17 15/16” x 11/16”

CORNELIA VOGEL
Swiss

_6 Livres_
1982
Each book containing a number of collage elements including ink, graphite pencil, paint, and watercolor over paper with string, intaglio prints, color photographic transparencies, and cloth mesh; in accordion-fold bindings with similarly prepared paper covers; 6 leaves each. All signed. With painted compartment box. Unsigned. 3 1/2” x 3 11/16” x 4 15/16”

MELANIE WYGONIK
American

_Lost Playground_
1985
Colored pencil, graphite pencil, ink, and paint over layered and sewn papers in combination with collage elements including fabrics, fabric edgings; embroideries, embroidery threads, buttons, sequins, and charms; in codex binding; 7 leaves. Signed. 22 1/4” x 15 3/16” x 1 3/8”
PAUL ZELEVANSKY  
American

*The Case for the Burial of Ancestors, Book I*  
1979-81  
2 15/16" x 15 3/8" x 13 1/2"

ZUSH  
Spanish

*Portrait of New York City*  
1976-82  
Found blank codex, with fore-edge leather ties, altered with ink, graphite pencil, and watercolor and the addition of found objects including photographs, string, metal scraps, fabric, vegetable matter, map fragment, and postcard. 23 leaves. Signed.  
12 15/16" x 10 3/16" x 1 5/16"
[cathaphon text]

This book was designed

by Buzz Spector. It was

printed by the University

of Chicago Printing Depart-

ment.

Buzz: Do this okay?

3.6.1966

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