

## Artist Book Reviews

*Most of the books in this section are available from Printed Matter, 77 Wooster St., New York, NY 10012 unless otherwise indicated.*

### REFERENCE

**Artists Books: A Critical Survey of the Literature** by Stefan W. Klima (New York, Granary Books, 1998, \$17.95) is the first codified resource of the bibliography on artists books. As a librarian who has delved deeply into the literature on artist books from the outset, Klima guides the reader through the development of terminology, critical writing, art as book, reading the book and the evolution of critical thinking about the "artist book" and that's the way this reviewer uses the terminology. The bibliography is rich, dependent largely on that which has been indexed in various bibliographical tools. For researchers, scholars, students of the genre, critics, artists and just those interested in the growing literature on artist books, we commend Klima for his thorough reading of the writings. This is a must for any contemporary art collection, artist book collection, library, students, librarian, scholar, critic, and you know who you are. Buy it and get into the debate. A must!

**4th ArtistBook International New York 1997 & New Editions Fair 1997** (New York, 1997, \$25.00) documents the participants in the November 1997 fair with illustrations, list of artists, names and addresses includes an insert of 16 pages by Francesco Clemente and two inserts of 8 pages by Joseph Grigley and Siobhan Liddell, two young artists who were invited by Hans-Ulrich Obrist. This is a source book and a documentation of a Fair. More than both. Order from ABI, 46 rue de Sévigné, 75003 Paris, France.

**Forum Book Art for 1997/98** edited by H. Stefan Bartkowiak is a bilingual compendium of fine press, small press and art press resources in Europe and in the United States. The majority of the book is in German, but there is enough English, visuals and names and addresses to make this a necessary resource for all book arts collections. With longer articles in the front, there is a descriptive list of Artists, Authors, Bookbinders, Printers, Papermakers, Typographers and more. The mix makes for a better buying public for this book, but there are articles on artist books in Prague, in Russia, etc. A must! Order from H. Stefan Bartkowiak, D-22301 Hamburg, Kornerstrasse 24, Germany or e-mail: [dencker@kulturbehoerde.hamburg.de](mailto:dencker@kulturbehoerde.hamburg.de) or in the United States, contact Joan Cotter, 526 Bradford Dr., Brandon, MS 39042. e-mail [cotrej@okra.millsaps.edu](mailto:cotrej@okra.millsaps.edu)

### REVIEWS

**Stage** by Michael Zöllner (Koln, Tropen Verlag, 1996, \$7.00) consists of the seating arrangement plans of various theaters in New York City.

**What the Cleaners Found** by Pavel Büchler (Derby, Research Group for Artists Publications, 1995-6, \$25.00) includes 11 little booklets, all of which deal with words.

*The Artist's Signature Faked by Officers* is the artist's name on envelopes for internal correspondence which he says was often the only sign of humanity behind the thoroughly word-processed facade of institution communication.

*A Top-Ten in the Annual Report (in order of appearance)* includes ten 1960s pop songs found, after removing word spaces and punctuation, in the text of an Annual Report for the School of fine Art at Glasgow School of Art.

*Some of those whom I secretly love, some of those whom I openly hate, (and some others who I don't really care about)* including the staff of his art school, and many more like this.

**The Wednesday Club** is a double videotape box containing bookworks made by the whole group of Babsi Bux, Beate Voiges, Carsten Fischer, Matthias Roth, Olaf Hackl, Claudia Richter, Alexander Meszmer, Jurgen O. Olbrich, who have created small booklets which have titles such as *Sound & Vision, Ads and Facts, Sandals & Scandals, Terror & Vandalism, Soaps & Hopes*, which are all made of found magazine pages, cut and appropriated, Xeroxed pages, text pages, and anything the artists so desired. The second box contains a package of Tortillas, a black eye patch, a small square of chocolate, gummies, a small yogurt bar, a little bottle of condiment, a made-up booklet, and a postcard of Karlheinz Bohm who looks a lot like Charles Boyer.

An assemblage of wonders by a group of artists who meet every Wednesday, I presume. \$35.00

**Reverse Angle** by Andrew R. McKee (San Francisco, 1997, \$14) is "a short story about what happens when the book is closed" is a silk brocade bound bookwork which is computer generated and Xeroxed. A book without words, a stream of consciousness, a free association visual trip.

**A formal comparison between Highway Interchanges & Waterslides** by M. Meredith is a spiral-bound booklet which truly proves its point, while **Infinite and Bound Spaces** represents an installation of swimming boundaries in the Atlantic Ocean. \$12.00

**Princess with a Penis**, a text and a film by Chrystel Egal (Prague, French Institute of Prague, 1997, \$10) is a booklet both in French and English that speaks of the desires (androgynous) of the author.

**Men in the News #32** is another in the series, wherein this one treats of the Lincoln Bedroom in the White House. Published by Baseline in 1997. \$2.00

**Nach Zahlen** by Paul Heimbach is a computer study toward the Magic Quadrant (Cologne, 1997, \$19.50), a magical exploration through the computer using parameters leading to the magic quadrant. A meditation in numbers and in geometric designs.

**Home** by Andrea Blum (Marseille, Editions de l'Observatoire, 1997, \$34) is a collection of domestic furniture realized and not realized by the artist, who actually conceived and designed a Mobile Library especially for l'Observatoire. Included are 27 pieces of furniture, 4 bedrooms, 2 interiors, 8 mobile homes, and 4 variations of a maquette for a mobile home. The captions are in French and English. Beautifully designed and presented.

**Andrea Blum: Domestic Arrangement/Public Affairs** by Jouke Kleerebezem (Hague, Stroom Center for Visual Arts, 1997, \$22.50) discusses the work of Andrea Blum, American artist, in Holland with various projects from 1992, 1995, and 1997, which shows that she is interested not in public art per se, but in the spaces in-between the monuments, in the arrivals and departures. Being a professional mapmaker, Blum maps out the private and the public, idiosyncrasies and pathologies, moods and memories. And they stop being maps, becoming environments and physical experiences, places for action.

The book contains an ongoing conversation between Jouke Kleerebezem and the artist, enhanced with black and white and some color plates. The artist's furniture, public installations and models for mobile homes, public libraries, and other public furniture make this book a special introduction to an American artist in Europe, whose concepts have turned into concrete, utilitarian models. In English and Dutch.

**Field Report 1995** is housed in a printed cardboard box of large dimensions in which there is a collation of pages and objects, a Mail Art exhibition called "Break the Silence!" which was a tribute to Marcel Broodthaers, including a re-enactment of a performance of Broodthaers in Hyde Park, as well as a Soap Box Performance, etc. \$40.00

**Journal of Field Study International: Field Report 1996** is an assembling magazine and a directory of possibilities by David Dellaflora (London, 1996, \$40) where time is understood to be "The Field". Thoughts formulated from data from the Field are termed "Field Study". Activities stemming from Field Study become "Emanations" and group Emanations resulting in events are known as Manifestations. Each page is a contribution by a myriad of artists from all over the world. Each page, according to David Dellaflora, is a "dynamic manifestation of the collective spirit." Meticulously collated, this publication is a pure joy. Invitations to participate are also included.

**Open Mike Nite** by Bradley Lastname is a bargain at 99 cents. Believe it or not, Mr. Lastname is still doing his remarkable copy art, doing collage showing a cow reading Raymond Roussel's *Impressions of Africa* in front of a mike. Believe it or not!

**16 November 1996** by Matthew Haynes (1996, \$15) is a spiral bound story of an encounter between two men, their night together, and the memory to be entered into a diary. The photographs are printed in blue, shadowed, and obscure, but illustrative of that night. A beautiful treatment.

**Manhattan Bus Map** by D. Surek (Essen, Germany, Printed Mayer, 1996, \$30) is a painter's depiction of the Manhattan Bus Routes M1 - M6 show two figures each page expressionistically depicted talking to each other with a small map of the bus route emanating from the mouths of each figure. The maps, almost phallic in shape, emanate like tongues from their mouths, and the whole book is painted by hand by the artist. His "publisher" is definitely a reference to Printed Matter in New York, and perhaps this is the result of a long enough stay in New York City to memorialize the bus system in this aesthetic way.

**A KYGL How-To Guidebook for Urban Objects** by Jason Anderson, Stella Bugbee, Oscar Tuazon, Josh Breitbart, and Damon Rich is a delightful compendium of helpful hints in surviving in New York with the best bakeries analyzed under "Bakery" ending with the 10 Walkman Commandments. There are comments on Job Interviews, the Gap, the New York Times, bicycles, and so much more. You'll laugh, you'll howl, and you'll never be the same after buying this bookwork for \$5.00! Small, but packed with information and all those trivia you never wanted to know, but are glad you have it under your belt or in your head, after reading this tome with tongue in cheek or not.

**Endocrinology** by Mei-mei Berssenbrugge (poetry) and Kiki Smith (art) is another in the remarkable collaborative works by Kelsey St. Press in Berkeley, California which joins women writers and women artists. Here Berssenbrugge explores the immaterial in physical and mental sensations taken back to their material source in the endocrine system. She reveals with language and perception the changes in the body's chemistry.

The match is perfect, since Kiki Smith has been exploring the human body—its interior and exterior organizations of tissue, functions and surface. The collaboration is exquisite in its quiet taste and symbiotic harmony. The pages have a buff textured background like rice paper, with the texts as if quickly pasted down with handwritten labels from time to time. There is a "handmade" look to this elegant book with 21 images, where the two collaborators mesh into a harmonic rhythm. \$17.00 from Kelsey St. Press, P.O. Box 9235, Berkeley, CA 94709. e-mail: kelseyst@sirius.com.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

**Dorigen's Promise**, by Suky Best (Photo-Love Vol. 3) published in Aberdeen, Scotland, Aberdeen Art Gallery, 1997 for Fotofeis, is a wonderful photo-novela which incorporates Scottish lore with contemporary photographic techniques in brilliant color. This marvelous story of a husband and a wife, and another man, make for fascinating reading and viewing. The story of her husband leaving to fight in tournaments, and another man seeking the hand of this lady, and the honor of all parties included make for a touching tale. A must for every collection!

**transgression** by Leah Oates (Chicago, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 1997, \$15) is a brilliantly designed series of dual photographs, backed with a seascape, housed in an envelope which has various texts from writers famous and obscure about the masculinity and feminism. The writers range from Stendhal to Maggie Thatcher, from Germaine Greer to Orson Welles, and so many more. The selection is well taken, the concept of the book profound. A brilliant solution to the presentation of text, images, and the interactivity of the "reader/viewer".

## **WOMEN'S STUDIO WORKSHOP**

*The following bookworks were produced during a residence at the University of Southern Maine by Tana Kellner and Ann Kalmbach, who make up KAKE Art.*

**Presidential Quiz** by KAKE Art (University of Southern Maine, 1997, \$20) is a very vertical bookwork, silkscreen printed and a folded leporello. Match the hairdo to the president and test your knowledge of America's political history. The book is a scream, since the presidents are presented with NO hair, and you have to match the "do" to the bald head. The inspiration was a student's info ruler, which tests your visual memory. 17 1/4" x 4".

**Lexicographer's View** by KAKE Art (University of Southern Maine, 1997, \$20) is a bookwork that questions who decides what we learn? Looking at the 1994 edition of the American Dictionary, the book lists all and illustrates some of the images of people depicted in this dictionary. The selections and pairings represent the lexicographer's view. Just match helix and Ernest Hemingway or stove pipe (hate) and Harriet Beecher Stowe.

**Shoot To Kill** by KAKE Art (University of Southern Maine, 1997, \$50) has a corrugated cover and spiral binding. A very large bookwork, it includes images of targets found at a police firing range, paired with words which record/question/critique the use of guns in our society. Dynamic, signed and numbered edition of 50.

**Pistol/Pistol - Botanical Ballistics** (University of Southern Maine, 1997, \$175) examines the use of ordinary words in both botanical and military context. These definitions are juxtaposed with stories and statistics relating to farming and violence. Images are silkscreen printed, accordion format with additional pages and enclosures sewn in. Bound in wooden covers with leather straps held with bullet casings, this remarkable work of art, in an edition of 100, is as complex a bookwork as one can imagine. The juxtapositions are intensely explosive with small booklets inserted throughout the book.

**Climb** by Nora Lee McGillivray (Rosendale, NY, Women's Studio Workshop, 1997, \$75.00) is a laddered fold book, which ascends as it is read, gradually revealing the conflict and comfort of Ladder. Screenprinted in three colors with water-based inks, Climb has a wraparound cover, featuring a laddered interior title page and points of light and texture. A stainless steel rod, held by a knotted thread, slips through a looped paper cover hinge. This is a completely interactive

bookwork, one which is an adventure both visually and tactilely. In an addition of 100, this remarkable work of art is sure to find homes with many collectors.

*These bookworks can be ordered from Women's Studio Workshop, P.O. Box 489, Rosendale, NY 12472. (914)658-9133.*

**copy** by Leah Singer (Tannersville, NY, 1997, \$5.00) is printed on newsprint, but what a smashing work. All the images are in silhouette in strong colors such as blue, red, or black such as a Buddha, a child tossing a ball upward, a man with hate in profile, and so much more against a negative space. A tribute to the Goss Community Press at the Mountain Eagle in Tannersville, NY and the artist, of course.

**sun, set, strip** by Stefan Eberstadt and Stephan Fritsch (Munich, Konturwerk, 1997, \$5.00) is a booklet full of contract prints of various German spaces, places including a still of Gary Cooper.

**Zine 3: Annual Visual Collection 1996** (Tokyo, Zine Press, 1996, \$28.00) is an oversize collation of contributions by such artists as Yohji Yamamoto, James Turrell, Zoe Leonard, Gregory Crewdson, Tadashi Yajima, Junya Watanabe, Hiroshi Araki, Rankin, Tony Oursler, Arakawa and many more. Wild and woolly, fashion and freedom, photography and painting, and so much more.

Heike Baranowsky: **En Face II** (Berlin, Goldrausch Künstlerinnenprojekt, 1997, \$5.00) documents a woman behind a window, coming into silhouette, leading away from in a huge size sheet on which are printed the sequential photographs with a bit of text in German. This performance project is therefore documented on this "poster/bookwork" and is a stunning and inexpensive way of getting a "catalog" of a work without binding. The whole page folds up into an A4 size, which is a very neat package!

**Picking up Stones on Folly Cove** by Peter Barnett (n.p., n.d., \$20.00) is a textual bookwork that is designed as a problem-solving situation: This meaningless construction is undertaken to learn how to make it better. Unless it is repeated it does not happen at all..."Composed of its complementary, exclusive interpretations it keeps consuming itself while recreating itself backwards." This will be of interest to both bookmakers and conceptual artists. The folding of each sheet inch by inch makes the design of the bookwork a never-ending continuity of text. Housed in a beautiful wove paper envelope, this fascinating work is a solution and a problem all at once.

**Public Space & the Individual** is a collaborative project of the inSITE97 community engagement program, co-sponsored by the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library in La Jolla, California. Each participant was asked to produce a page of text and image for a work to be printed in an edition of 500. The goal was to experience the dynamics of collaboration and to provide a forum for exploring the relation of the individual to public space. This was

coordinated by Genie Shenk, a book artist and teacher. Each group was given a roll of black-and-white film which they used for visual investigations relating to the content of their writing. In four meetings, they learned about paper choice, book and cover design, titles, fonts, and wording. They learned the importance of good visuals, and they finished the pages which were collected and assembled in the order they were to appear in the book. The book is now available for \$20.00 plus \$3.00 postage and handling from the Athenaeum, 1008 Wall St., La Jolla, CA 92037.

**Love**, illustrated and design by Vanni from a story by Lowell A. Siff (New York, George Braziller, 1964, \$20) is a reprint of the original edition done by the current Art Professor at Cooper Union School of Art in New York City. The tale is about a little girl who isn't very pretty and whose parents left her at the age of 9. At the orphanage she is rejected by her peers, she does bad things, she stares at people, and her last resort leads to something very heartbreaking and touching. The vibrantly colored pages have die-cuts, strip-ins, pages with peepholes—all with a variety of shapes and colorful varieties. A wonderful gift for children and adults!

#### **TWO BY DIANE WEINTRAUB AND KATHY MILLER**

**Mysterious/Messages** is a marvelous combination of found poetry sources and texts by Dave Hickey's *Air Guitar*, pop-ups, foldouts, and all appropriated images from a myriad of sources. Letterpress is mingled with color laser printing, as well as collage and fold-ups and fold-outs. What a glorious adventure in "reading"! San Diego, 1997, \$20.00

**You Reading Me** by Diane Weintraub and designed by Kathy Miller was written after Weintraub read Buzz Spector's essay in "The Bookmaker's Desire" published by Umbrella Editions. On page 7 in the first paragraph, Spector poses a parenthetical question concerning meaning. Weintraub later sat down and wrote "You/Me" in one sitting. Handset and printed letterpress. San Diego, 1997, \$10.00

*Both these bookworks, small in size, but beautifully designed, are available at Printed Matter.*

#### **TWO BY CAROL STETSER (PADMA PRESS)**

**Purple Heart** (1997) is a series of Xerographic prints on colored stock with purple mulberry endleaves, mauve linen cover-paper, bound with purple ribbon. The 16-page bookwork contains memorabilia returned to a disabled Vietnam veteran thirty years after his military service including photographs, training certificates, a series of telegrams informing the family of his injuries, his care, his movement from Vietnam to Japan and then home, and a medal. The photos and telegrams are moving. Available for \$20 from Padma Press, P.O. Box 20081, Sedona, AZ 86341.

**Perspectives** (1997) is a visually poetic examination of extinct and living languages set in the 17th century perspective studies of Jan Vredeman de Vries. Vredeman's

perspectives summarize and condense the philosophic and artistic world view of the Europeans at the turbulent close of the 16th century. Do these rules of perspective still adequately depict our world at the end of the 20th century?

In this bound portfolio of visual poetry, Stetser shows the layering of time and civilizations—when you enter a room, how all the past remains a part of it. She shows how ancient peoples, writings, symbols are still a part of our culture, if only on a subconscious, archetypal level. Present always includes the past and the future. Since space exploration and settlement in the coming century requires a new perspective, not one envisioned by the artists and architects of the 15th and 16th century Renaissance, Stetser suggests a fresh outlook. Softbound with a black linen cover. \$22.00 postpaid from Padma Press, P.O. Box 20081, Sedona, AZ 86341.

**Prelude** by Peter Downsborough is a new book published by Imschoot, Uitgevers and is available **only** on the Internet at <http://www.imschoot.com>

#### **New from Little Cockroach Press**

Two more pamphlets from Little Cockroach Press, published by Art Metropole in Toronto:

**Shopping Parade: Bilton Road: Stills from the Film** by Stephen Willats includes a series of four-part photographs from a socially-aware activist-artist. (October 1997).

**Alfredo Jaar** is a beautifully printed pamphlet printed on black linen paper with double page photographs in color countered by drawings on the following page as a set-up. (September 1997) Order from Art Metropole, 788 King St. West, Toronto M5V 1N6, Canada.

#### **ZINES**

**Fat "On Fire"** (Issue seen:#3) edited by Josephine Meckseper has such editors as Lucio Pozzi, editorial adviser Dan Graham and contributing artists such as Douglas Blau, Dara Birnbaum, B-Team, Barbara Ess, Peter Fend, Robert Gober, Vik Muniz, Richard Misrach, Elizabeth Peyton, Tony Oursler, among others.

Using the tabloid style of presentation, and including the satirical approach to magazine coverage in the visual arts, there is an interview with Dan Graham, lots of sensational articles by Joe Holyfield. Coverage is from coast to coast, but with tongue in cheek. The mag is a howl, but some of it could be taken seriously, if you don't act upon the suggestions. In living color! \$10.00

**Very**, created by Uscha Pohl, was first issued in August 1997. Created on the theme of Fashion and Art, both in color and black and white, the first issue includes an interview with Annmarie Davy, a portrait of Alex White, contributing editor for W and Italian Vogue and stylist for Prada. It also includes "Very", an exhibition on identity for the majority of its pages, as well as book reviews, a page on "Guns in the Hands of Artists". This exhibition and the launch of this magazine occurred in 1997 autumn at 257 Church St in New York City.

A second issue in November 1997 included a profile of Filmmaker Atom Egoyan, an article on cult magazines as modern collectibles, Architect Isabelle Devin in Sarajevo and her plans for making environments for children; an article on Marie-Helen de Taillac and her jewelry designs, etc. The magazine, *Very*, now announces its quarterly publication. Order from Printed Matter. \$6.00

**Ohio, Zeitschrift für Photographie**, in this third issue is an exhibition without walls of photographic art, such as portraits of the French painter and theoretician, Claude Cahun (1894 - 1954), portraits of Jill Sander by Craig McDean, and many more black and white and some color photographs. The magazine is an Art Project in the form of a magazine. Available from Printed Matter or by subscription from Ohio, Sippichernstr. 17, D-40476 Dusseldorf, Germany. \$7.00

**Irregulomadaire 4** (Winter 1996/97) has as its theme "Baggage" or "Baggages" in French, and it includes drawings and photos of luggage, as well as a portfolio of cities, the desert, beach scenes, from Paris, San Pedro, California, Venice, California, Barcelona, Coney Island, Ras el-Barr (Egypt), New York, Los Angeles, San Fernando Valley, Mojave Desert and Las Vegas. A long story is the pivot for all of this in the middle of the journal. Available for \$30.00 from Printed Matter.

**mute: critical/information/services** out of London began in November 1994 with the theme "Can Art survive the 20th century?" Now that discourse is passé and right now after discussing the role of art after the California Ideology, after a hard look at the European Ideology, the editors feel now it is time to make contact with those of the Far East, South America, Africa, et al. There are stories on Jennicam, the phenomenal website of Jennifer Ringley who installed a camera in her dorm room and linked it to the web. Her abdication of privacy has become the point of interest, although she is known to perform choreographed strip shows for the Internet. There is a book review by Faith Wilding on *Feminism and Technoscience* by Donna Haraway (New York, London, Routledge, 1997). There is also a review on the biennial Video Positive created by the Foundation for Art & Creative Technology in England. The whole magazine is in a design mode that leads to illiteracy at times, then also "cool" over textualized pages, but do look at it. It's worth your time for the information it transmits.

## VIDEO JOURNAL

Engaged in its video issue out of England includes over 80 minutes of short films, interviews and features with cutting edge independent filmmakers and clips about issues that involve making the films, financing the films and distributing the films. Guest Editor is Philip Ilson representing a journal from The Halloween Society, and a wonderful intro to very talented filmmakers. \$18.00

## REPRINTS

**More than Meat Joy: Performance Works and Selected Writings** by Carolee Schneeman (Kingston, New York, Documentext/McPherson & Co., 1997, \$35.00) is back in print being a classic documentary book by a pioneering performance artist who is articulate and writes like a dream including manifestos, letters, descriptions, scripts, notes, contemporary documents and wonderful photographs on almost every page. Festschrift contributions are included by Jerome Rothenberg, John Cage, Eleanor Antin, Lucy R. Lippard, Heathcote Williams, Robert Kelly, Rochelle Owens, Nam June Paik and others. Schneemann certainly paved the way for Karen Finley, Cindy Sherman, Marina Abramovic, Janine Antoni, and Matthew Barney. Get this book! Order from Documentext, P.O. Box 1126, Kingston, NY 12402. (800)613-8219. See the whole catalog on

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

## granary books

568 Broadway #403 New York City 10012

Email: [sclay@interport.net](mailto:sclay@interport.net)

now available

### Artists Books:

#### A Critical Survey of the Literature

by Stefan W. Klima

"An invaluable resource for anyone wishing to explore the development of critical debates on artists books." Johanna Drucker

The first and only published guide to writings on artists books. It contains five lucid essays and a carefully researched, thorough bibliography.

\$17.95 + \$3 shipping ISBN 1-887123-18-0

forthcoming:

#### A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Adventures in Writing 1960-1980

by Steve Clay and Rodney Phillips.