

Susan Hensel has a list of her bookworks and literary sculptures available from the artist at 6077 Horizon Dr., E. Lansing, MI 48823. [booklady100@home.com](mailto:booklady100@home.com)

## ARTIST BOOK REVIEWS

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

### REFERENCE

**Books and Pages: Polish Avant-garde and Artists' Books in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century** by Piotr Rypson (Warsaw, Center for Contemporary Art, 2000, n.p.) on the occasion of the exhibition *Text, Buch, Kunst* presented at the Frankfurt 2000 Book Fair. And what a joy this book is, filling in a new chapter of Polish artist books, with beautiful illustrations for each book, starting with 1918.

Starting with Poznan and Cracow Formist, Rypson reviews Futurism (Cracow and Warsaw) and through its decline to Constructivism, the magazines *Blok* and *Europa*, the a.r. group, typographical design in the 1930s, post World War II artist books, the Themersons and their Gabberbochus Press, the sixties with Parum and Makowski, the seventies and the conceptual book, the book as score or documentation of a performance, then the "mail art networkers" and their books leading to the 90s and the diversity, the sculptural nature of many artist books in Poland, as well as small presses, and so much more.

There are 127 illustrations, mostly in color, a selective bibliography and index. This book is an important contribution and should be in every contemporary art library.

### General

**Nature Centre** by Jenny Brownrigg (Grizedale, 2000, \$20) is the result of a residency at the natural environment in Cumbria, England and its environs including the Lake District. Using Grizedale's own archives and correspondence, a range of guidebooks dating from the 1800s to the present day, National Park documents, wilderness policies, and education work undertaken at six primary schools as part of the artist's residency, this volume becomes the result of this intensive research in nature centers in the U.K.

Unlike a research report, this is an artist book produced by an artist in a most interesting way, with a color code for each chapter, art as well as verbal exercises to ascertain the best way to organize a nature center, rap sessions with artists, input from children, reading the official reports, etc. It certainly would liven up government reports to have artists

work on them. This is an example of how artists involved in the environment can really make a difference.

**Kenny's Head** by Jacqueline Donachie (Glasgow, Visual Arts Projects, 2000, \$15) is the second part of *The Trees, The Book and the Disc*, a public project for Darmley, Glasgow, taken from the experience of 11 months in Darmley, from April 1998 - March 1999. The town of Darmley has been refurbished and instead of "flats", actual homes and sidewalks have been built, perhaps not better than the flats, but at least new. The Council debates the need for more parking, stricter rules for cars, etc. And yet the Kennishead Flats.

Using typography to illustrate the dilemmas and the improvements of the new Darmley, the author has taken photographs, designed the "texts" and spent four months trying to create a "public artwork" of which this book is but one part.

Darmley had been built as a new Glasgow suburb and had over 5,500 people, but the housing became damp, crime-ridden, and intolerable. Now the population is 2,500 with new housing built over the demolished old, or refurbished to allow public and private funding for the new housing and the new community.

**Ski** by Claude Closky (Ljubljana, Mala Galerija, 2000, \$15) was published along with the artist's exhibition in Ljubljana from 21 April - 21 May. In keeping with the artist's attempt at manipulating signs of the real, we get a full color photograph of the artist skiing to the right and to the left—but at a closer viewing, it is the same photograph reversed for the other direction. This skier in the middle of a jump, glowing against an azure backdrop, is said to have been countered in the gallery with a beautiful girl wearing a clinging t-shirt in Caribbean hues. This kind of poster-like photograph with its action and excitement, beauty and happiness is typical of many tourist posters, and obviously reflects the exhibition in that gallery.

**27 x 20** by Claude Closky (Le Havre, Editions Flux, 2000, \$20) is a series of 100 drawings (full-page) of commonplace items, such as washing machine, a cigarette, the Eiffel Tower, a video camera, an auto seat, folded hands, etc. He is almost playing with messages, without taking sides, except for a series, where he draws one thing, but says he is not drawing something else, so the word does not go necessarily with the thing. Alienation to the objects is interspersed with admiration for the quality of drawing. According to a recent essay, "Closky takes note of the failure of all imitation, the failure necessary to an off-centered writing, wrenched from the discourse."

**Noch Ein Wort zum Happy End** by Martin tom Dieck and Arrache Coeur (Alligator, 1998, \$25) is a beautifully printed concertina housed in a kind of record jacket which includes the image of Buster Keaton who in his silence leads toward a Happy End in beautifully silkscreened prints on both sides of the leporello. Limited edition of 250.

**Bumperstickers Observed** by Allan Jones and Jeff Koons by the 404 John Armleder Class of the Braunschweig School of Art (New York, American Fine Arts, 2000, \$4.00) is just that—a list of bumperstickers collected by the two artists in 1983 between Lewisburg, Pennsylvania and New York City in August 1983.

**Metropolitan** by Donald Smith (London, d. press, 2000, \$3.00) juxtaposes in brilliant color a photograph of a man and a building on the opposite page. All the buildings seem to be in England, on corners, and with rounded facades, oftentimes being quite narrow buildings. It is a conceit, but perfectly matched building with male personality.

#### **TWO FROM JACK PIERSON**

These two books are printed as newspaper-like catalogs of exhibitions at two different galleries:

**Collier County** by Jack Pierson documents the Sheriffs Office in Collier County with an investigation of the death of Thomas M. Pierson, who had \$63.00 in U.S. currency and \$20 in an address book. Included are line drawings of people, words such as FATE, NIGHT, STRONG etc. Nothing is resolved, except that this was part of an exhibition at Anton Kern Gallery in April - June 2000. \$6.00

**Untitled Youth** is the result of an exhibition at Thaddaeus Ropac Galerie in 2000. Printed on newsprint, the photographs are of male sculptures probably in a garden or park, photographs of youths, a classical vase, a bridge over a treelined river and stairs. \$6.00

**Timesmith** by Ross Martin (Portland, ME, Kairos Press, 2000, unpriced) is another in a remarkable series of appropriated imagery making collages unimaginable. The only color in the book is the front cover, which shows gears, stones, a clock dial and other mechanical accoutrements. The book is divided into three parts: Devices, Emblems, and Cabinets. Each page, in the Devices section, has the parts of which the artist uses them in large collages, each described with a "loaded" description which is not necessarily what the reader understands as the item he/she is looking at, for it is the "timesmith" who has the function of remixing the words,

the pictures and the way in which they are related. So the power is to the artist, who mixes and matches, and creates

The Emblems Section harks back to a 400 year old format called the "emblem book," very popular in Baroque-era Europe, while the third part, "Cabinets" is the envisioned cabinets of time or memorials, as indicated in everything as mundane as bookshelves to timesmith desktop toolkit cabinet, mingling the old with the new lingo. This book has extensive notes, for the artist never denies his appropriated sources and has selective bibliography on each phase of the book. A remarkable *tour de force*, one which will give the reader endless possibilities for the imagination.

To order, write to Ross Martin, P.O. Box 10355, Portland, ME 04104. This is a gem

**Baghave** by Tal r/ (Copenhagen, Pars Electronic, 1999, \$20) is a rhapsodic book of drawings and reactions to a natural environment which is portrayed in photographs at the beginning and the end of the book. Some of the drawings are nightmarish, some are elegant doodles, others are scenes of deep immersion into natural phenomena on site. If you are not on Mars you certainly seem invaded by otherworldly figures. Bad dreams lead to good drawings, I guess.

**Une Âme en Tourment (A Soul in Torment)** by Glen Baxter (Chatou, France, Maison Levanneur, 1999, \$20) is a wonderful, humorous, sometimes satirical take on Baxter's own output over the years—a guide to Baxterism with Anxiety attacks to Zebra abuse and everything in-between. The book is so beautifully printed that you know the artist was taking advantage of the National Center of Prints and of Art at Chatou, which obviously produces the best catalogs and books due to its mission of being a National Center. This is a kind of visual bibliography, interspersed with biography, a tribute to the cunning mind and the facile hand of the artist, known throughout the world as a remarkable book maker. From wine labels, postcards, booklets, etchings, posters, screenprints, lithographs, illustrations, advertising, calendars, tableware, hotels, T-shirts, and much more. What a wonderful book!

**Murano**, poem by Mark Doty, glass from the J. Paul Getty Museum, combines Doty's poem on human mortality with the mystery of artistic creation as illustrated by details from 16 pieces of Murano glass. The glass pieces are identified at the end of the book. Published by the Getty Trust, 2000, \$14.95.

**From A to Z** by Carol Stetser is a wonderful accordion-fold bookwork which states that Steiner has indicated that "The Entire Universe is Expressed when the whole alphabet is

read from beginning to end." And each letter (2 to a page) is made of various collage imagery and it is joyful. Enclosed in paper boards with a ribbon closing. For copies, send to Carol Stetser, P.O. Box 20081, Sedona, AZ 863411.

**Games Oligopolists Play** by Rob Kovitz (Winnipeg, Treyf Books, 2000, rev. & expanded, \$15 US, \$20 Can, paper) uses hockey imagery to illustrate the text.

Oligopoly means "A market with only a few sellers who can greatly influence market factors." so there are photos of Ronald Reagan and Brian Mulroney, and throughout there are diagrams and strategies of "play" as if Oligopolists play the "game" as do hockey players—a description of the way two teams carry out negotiations, fix production rates, divide a market, and work out a joint pricing policy. Avoiding risk, kicking the puck, then there are penalties for five different reasons, the necessity to cheat and all include pointed commentary from such expert analysts as Jean Chrétien discussing trusts and cartels. Even the Gospel according to Matthew is cited.

Handsomely designed and printed, this book consists of verbatim quotes and numerous full-page photos from economic textbooks, game theory, and various books and newspaper articles on hockey, all combined in a subjectively objective kind of way to make for sharp and funny political and social satire for beginning and advanced fans alike. A Slap shot at the State of the Canadian Nation! Order from Treyf Books, 5-193 Furby St., Winnipeg, MB Canada R3C 2A6.

**25 Fluxus Stories** by Harry Ruhé (Amsterdam, Tuja Books, 2000, \$10 paper) is an homage to Francesco Conz, a collector and publisher of Fluxus, Wiener Aktionismus and concrete and visual poetry, whose friendship with Ruhé over the past 25 years elicited this collection of 25 stories of Fluxus people, a multiple edition of a limited edition book published by Conz last year.

With an exhibition in Verona from Ruhé's extensive collection of signboards, clothing, photos, letters and notes, comes these 25 stories of people such as Eric Andersen, George Brecht, Philip Corner, Ken Friedman, Al Hansen, George Maciunas, Charlotte Moorman, Dieter Roth, among others. Includes 25 illustrations. (There is a wholesale price to bookstores as well). For more information, contact Printed Matter for retail copies, or Idea Books in Amsterdam.

**The Pain Journal** By Bob Flanagan (Los Angeles, Smart Art Press/Semiotexte, dist. by MIT Press, 2000, \$11.95 paper) is the diary of a writer and artist from Los Angeles, Bob Flanagan, who created performances with Sheree Rose that shocked and inspired audiences. He combined text,

video, and live performance to create a highly personal but universal exploration of childhood, sex, illness, and mortality. This book, his last finished work, is an extraordinary chronicle of the final year of his life before his death from cystic fibrosis at the age of 43.

This is no ordinary diary, nor is by an ordinary artist-writer. It is of a man who is dying, but one who cherishes life in a quirky, idiosyncratic way. Bob Flanagan and I knew each other; I only wish I had known him better for he was a good spirit in this world of negative thinking. His creativity, his consciousness of the world around him, and his place in that world—he knew it all.

**They Called Her Styrene** by Ed Ruscha (New York, Phaidon, 2000, \$29.95 hardcover) contains 500 color illustrations in a thick, flexible bookwork. The 575 "word" works which are the insignia of this Los Angeles-based artist reflect a consistent pattern of creativity from his early works in the 1960s to the present-day. The source of most of this visual language is the commercial world, the world of music, and visual world around him which allows him to make "word" prints, drawings, and paintings that exhibit an interplay between bold letters and atmospheric backgrounds. Ruscha arranged these images, which read like a novel without a plot, a series of words that make a narrative.

Beautifully designed by Sam Blok, this book reflects the steady direction of the artist, who says: "Sometimes found words are the most pure because they have nothing to do with you. I take things as I find them. A lot of these things come from the noise of everyday life." A wonderful way to own many works by Ruscha!

### THREE FROM BARBARA ROSENTHAL

**Names/Lives** (New York, 2000, \$6.00 paper) has a trompe l'oeil Yellow Pages cover, and tells how the artist one day in 1991 noticed a glazier's truck pass by bearing the name "Glasser and Sons"; sometimes later she found a news article about conjoined twins named "Binder," and a project was born! When she came across a name bearing a life-picture that struck her, she scribbled it in the back of her journal or notepad and periodically typed them over a ten-year period, always wondering how much influence the name had on the particular individual. The individual's "fate", so far as it is known, is printed with the name. In addition, the book carries another name list called The A-L-L-A-N Project, for A.D. Coleman, the photographic critic. He often reflected on the least common of his name's spellings, so while keeping her Names/Lives project going, she also collected A-l-l-a-n names and compiled them along with their bearer's occupation or life circumstance. Both sections of the book make highly amusing reading.

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**Haunted House** (New York, 2000, \$6 paper) is an excerpt from Rosenthal's unpublished novel, *Wish for Amnesia*. This fictional segment takes a manic-depressive mother and her teenage daughter for a harrowing drive through the stormy countryside of Princeton, NJ, one fall afternoon. Magic and reality hover between the lines.

**Introduction to the Clues to Myself, Sensations, Homo Futurus Trilogy** by Barbara Rosenthal (New York, 2000, \$6 paper) is the fourth edition of an introduction by the author to the 3-volume trilogy previously published by Visual Studies Workshop Press, providing the reader some insight into the author's ideas about the public and private, and her personal rationale, philosophy, psychology and methods concerning the production of art. Each book is discussed and somewhat analyzed in terms of their relationship to each other, and their methodology. Order from Printed Matter.

**Ephemeral Beings** by David G. Moore (Syracuse, NY, Jupiter Press, 2000, \$14.95 paper) is an exquisitely printed book of photographs which evokes a kind of edginess, an insecurity, a spiritual search for being. The photographs are surreal at times, or even ephemeral. Section I is entitled "Ephemeral Beings." Some involve makeshift cremation, others show armless boys, the presence of spirits, the faint existence of a "being" which is shrouded, or headless, whose limbs are wrapped. The second series is called "Objects of Ridicule" which involves naive heads made of primitive drawing skills with some heads pierced, or split, or isolated, masked or weeping. The fragile beings who cannot quite make it in this world are herein represented. The third series is "A Dark Eros" in which the female body is revealed, hidden, bound, veiled, or ephemeral again. Emphasis here is on eroticism, strangeness, and sensuality.

The Forward is by Gary Hesse. These photographs are evocative and provocative. That is a good start for any viewer to dig deeper under the surface of these beautiful photographs, which also have an edge. Order from Jupiter Press, 110 Clarke St., Syracuse, NY 13210..

**Timeless Bodies** by Peter Liashkov is a beautiful softbound oversize bookwork of human beings, frontally presented and decontextualized, seemingly like the Greek and Roman statues, of spiritual permanence, but with all the idiosyncracies and eccentric aspects of the individuals in question.

Liashkov who has been painting and drawing nudes for well over 25 years seems to revel in the differences rather than the similarities of these individuals. He concentrates on the differences, on their hobbies or sport, but he finds in these specifics a universal spirituality, a human respect for the ideal in the real.

Whether the man has a boxing glove on, or the older man seems at peace, there is much to see in the expression: in the youth, a desire to claim that joy of being young; in the older man, an accumulation of a great deal of experience, some sad, some happy.

After working in glass, and then in paint, he now assembles, interprets and reveals in his portraits. He now uses chiaroscuro to deepen the space, to enrich the texture, all of which make the bodies more accessible, but less personal as characters. These "Timeless Bodies" show the skill and the joy of the artist, Peter Liashkov. Essay by Stephen Nowlin. (Los Angeles, Manzanita Street Press, 2000). Available from the artist for \$35.00 plus tax and shipping (\$40). There is a limited edition of 60 hardback for \$140 (including tax and shipping). Order from Peter Liashkov, Manzanita Street Press, 1052 Manzanita St., Los Angeles, CA 90029. E-mail: [pliashkov@mac.com](mailto:pliashkov@mac.com)

**In Situ** by Jas W Felter is a volume devoted to brilliant images captured with a digital camera. The artist traveled to France, Mexico, Portugal, Russia, Spain, and the USA during 1998 and 1999, searching for discarded packs which once contained varieties of cigarettes: American Camels, British Players, French Gauloises, Spanish Ducados, Mexican Boots, Russian Pierre Cardins. The intention for this collection of cigarette packs (discarded) was to create *The Smoking Room – A Memorial to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, a portable room with its interior walls, ceiling and floor covered with patterned designs made from a collection of 12,473 empty cigarette packs, assorted gold and silver cigarette pack foil and cigarette ash collected by Jas between 1 January 1994 and 1 January 2000.

The 14 different images are definitely a commentary on the 20<sup>th</sup> century detritus that society leaves in using the goods of the earth, yet the images are in glowing color and are brilliantly composed. So the fateful smoking addiction may lead to nostalgic remembrances of that morning cigarette, the walks on cobblestones in an ancient city, the romantic duo on an outdoor tryst, and so much more. Published in a limited edition of 25 by Five/Cinq Unlimited, West Vancouver, BC, Canada and the Jas Cyberspace Museum ([www.faximum.com/jas](http://www.faximum.com/jas)). Available from Five/Cinq Unlimited, 2707 Rosebery Ave., West Vancouver, BC, Canada. (\$250.00 US)

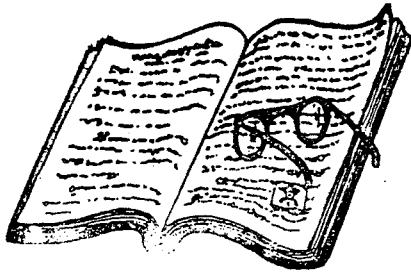
## HOW-TO BOOKS FOR BOOKMAKERS

**Crafting with Handmade Paper: Great Projects to Make with Beautiful Papers** by Gail Hercher (Gloucester, MA, Rockport Publishers, 2000 \$22.00)

is a sumptuously produced manual for artists who appreciate buying or making handmade paper to create baskets,

screens, mobiles, boxes, lanterns, shades, bowls, jewelry and even sandals, with how-to instructions, diagrams as well as how to choose and use handmade papers, tools, techniques and materials. In addition, the author provides an overview on the world of handmade paper, who is making it, and how to get it with a resource section. \$22.00 from your local paper store or from [www.rockport.com](http://www.rockport.com)

**Making Memory Boxes: Box Projects to Make, Give, and Keep** by Barbara Mauriello (Gloucester, MA, Rockport Publishers, 2000, \$22.00) is a stunning how-to to capture keepsakes, free of intimidation and ready to be transported from the workshop table to the kitchen table. This book is geared toward collectors and crafters to make boxes to hold postcards, letters, jewelry, photos, and more with tips and tricks to ensure accurate measuring, cutting, and gluing. Bookbinders take note. Available again from your local book supplies store or from [www.rockport.com](http://www.rockport.com)



## ArtPEOPLE

**Robert Irwin**, conceptual artist, has been designing the Pace Wildenstein gallery to open in Chelsea in mid-March at 534 West 25<sup>th</sup> St. Irwin, whom Pace has represented since 1966, is the design consultant to the Dia Center for the Arts's new branch in Beacon, New York.

**Biala** whose real name, Janice Brustlein, spanned two art capitals and several generations, died on 24 September at her home in Paris at the age of 97. She was known for cryptic, lusciously painted interiors, street scenes that hovered between abstraction and representation, still lifes, and landscapes. Her many friends were Cartier-Bresson, Shirley Jaffe, Ford Madox Ford with whom she lived in Paris until his death in 1939, as well as Jack and Wally Tworckov, Harold & May Rosenberg, Willem and Elaine de Kooning, Saul Steinberg and Hedda Sterne and Rudy Burckhardt.

**Hideo Sasaki**, an internationally renowned landscape architect who was as admired for his teaching and critical abilities as for his multidisciplinary approach to design, died at the age of 80 in California. He is known for his Greenacre Park on 51<sup>st</sup> Street in Manhattan, but also as a great professor at Harvard University, a member of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, as well as the recipient of many medals and honors by his peers.

**James Elliott**, an innovative museum director and curator and an amateur filmmaker, died in California at the age of 76. From the Walker Art Center to the Los Angeles Museum of Art to the Wadsworth Atheneum, creating the Matrix series, to the University Art Museum in Berkeley, where he served until he retired in 1988, Elliott nurtured the careers of David Ross, Mark Rosenthal, Lawrence Rinder, Constance Lewallen, and Michael Auping, among others.

**Sidney R. Yates**, a congressman from Chicago for nearly half a century who battled for government support for the arts, died in October at the age of 91.

**Paul Warwick Thompson**, director of the Design Museum in London, has been named the new director for the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York city, a division of the Smithsonian Institution.

**Marjetica Potrc**, a 47-year-old Slovene known for her architectural installations, is the winner of this year's Hugo Boss Prize. While relatively unknown in this country, she is widely recognized in Europe. The \$50,000 prize is