

ARTISTS' BOOKS: news and reviews

NEWS

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago is showing their permanent collection of artists' books from 31 March to 31 May including works from Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre, Ed Ruscha, Brice Marden, Smithson, Oppenheim, Suzanne Lacy, Laurie Anderson, Allan Kaprow, John Baldessari and Douglas Huebler, as well as Lawrence Weiner. Included is a selection of books by Chicago artists as well.

● Ed Ruscha is interviewed at length in an outstanding and important contribution to understanding Ed Ruscha's books and concepts. Although done in 1978, this interview is published for the first time by Henri Man Barendse in *Afterimage* for February.

● *Flue*, the new publication from Franklin Furnace, in its fourth issue includes a "Gossip Column" which produces some printing and publishing information for artists.

● Mimmo Cozzolino's book, *Symbols of Australia*, in hard-cover has won the Design Award in Australia, the first time a self-published work has done so.

● The Swedish Archive of Artist's Books is a treasure-trove of books made by artists and distributed by Wedgepress & Cheese, also known as Leif Eriksson, Leifs vag 11, S-237 00 Bjerred, Sweden. Write for their catalog and order card. The books are nominally priced and range from mail art to graphics.

● Zone, an alternative space in Springfield, Massachusetts, is planning to have an artists' book show in September. All books will be handled and returned to sender, if a stamped envelope is included. More information in the next issue.

Zone is an exhibition space and performance area for Western Massachusetts visual artists.

● Art of the Printed Book, an international conference on fine printing, will be held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha from 8 - 11 April 1981. For more information, write to the University Library, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182.

● Eaton/Shoen Gallery announces an International Artists' Book Show from 14 June through 25 July 1981, where 300 books made by artists will be shown, including one-of-a-kind and multiple edition books from all over the world.

The Eaton/Shoen Gallery is committed to the importance of the book format and regularly exhibits an edited selection of artists' books. Included in this exhibition will be work by Bruce Nauman, Sas Colby, Sol LeWitt, Kevin Parker, Keith Smith, Willyum Rowe, Donald Lipski, Bea Nettles, etc. Eaton/Shoen Gallery is at 500 Paul Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94124.

● *The Page as Alternative Space, 1950-1969*, curated by Barbara Moore and Jon Hendricks of Backworks, is now being exhibited at Franklin Furnace as the third in a series of four shows presenting the history of artists' publishing in

the 20th century. Moore and Hendricks have selected an amazing array of little-known but very important artists' periodicals, including *Semi-Colon* by John Bernard Myers, *Semina* by Wallace Berman, *Spirale* by Diter Rot, *Material* by Daniel Spoerri, many Fluxus publications, all evolving into the boom in the 1960s with Xerox and offset publications, newspapers, and artists' bookworks from the 1960s. A checklist is available, and an essay by the curators appears in the December 1980 issue of *Flue*, the Franklin Furnace newsletter.

● Merzaum's Desire Productions is presenting *Signatures, the artists' book* from 21 March through 2 May at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, in Baltimore, Maryland. Included are one-of-a-kind books as well as multiples from 30 Baltimore artists. The catalog includes an essay by Peter Frank and other pertinent information. \$2.00 from Merzaum's Desire Productions, 3022 Abell Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218.

● The School of the Art Institute of Chicago recently held an International Artists' Book Show. The catalog is almost ready, and it is available for \$1.00 to cover the costs of postage and handling. There are photos, addresses and descriptions for all the work included. In addition, there is a set of color slides of the books available to other schools (the recipient pays the reproduction costs, and the School Library sends the slides). For more information, read the next issue of *Umbrella*, or write Jessie Affelder, School Library, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Columbus Drive and Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60603.

REVIEWS

Luna Bisonte Productions (John M. Bennett, 137 Leland Av., Columbus, OH 43214) has a new list of works, including *Puking Horse*, a series of poems illustrated by Bennett's nervous kind of calligraphy which works. \$5.00

Main Road is a series of works on each page which sets a mood, scene, a feeling. \$2.00

Meat Click is a series of exchanges between Bennett and Robin Crozier where heads and tails of sentences are exchanged by the authors as a chance operation. Hilarious-and poignant. \$2.00

Lost & Found Times, no. 9 is another in a series of participatory journals in which Al Ackerman, C. Mehrl Bennett, Robin Crozier, David B. Greenberger, Dick Higgins, Richard Kostelanetz, Pawel Petasz, Bern Porter, Marilyn B. Rosenberg and Jud Yalkut appear among others. \$10.00 for numbers 1 - 10.

Acquaintances by Joel A. Slayton is a photographic exploration of six individuals associated with and including the author. It is haunting, mysterious and obsessive in the sense that a specific obsession of each individual personality manifests itself in the outward appearance and actions of the characters represented. For instance, the author is obsessed with his acquaintances' obsessions. So that each personality is a chapter in the book, a visual-verbal chapter.

There are photographs, written documents, abstracts from interviews/notes, graphics and various artifacts that surround

the mystique of each individual. It is a psycho-sociological exploration in visual format. 68 pages, softbound (500 signed copies) \$7.00 (published by Visible Language Workshop)

Three Green Soup by Randy Klauzer is an ecological, people-oriented celebration, a statement of faith in people and what they can do together—all in comic-book format.

Published by Redwing Publishing, P.O. Box 55181, Omaha, NE 68155 (\$2.00 plus 25 cents postage and handling from the artist).

Text by John Miller appears to be a philosophical-psychological script for a film or videotape, contextually profound, with overlays of meaning. A little book with much meaning, excerpting Karl Marx, Walter Benjamin, Levi-Strauss, and David Antin, among others. \$4.00

Advanced Memories, the first of a new "periodical" by Mark Melnicove of the Dog Ear Press in Halls Cover, Maine is concrete poetry, a verbal-visual little book that tries to save the earth from the "oil" barons by insinuation and implication. Three issues for \$3.00. Order from the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance, Box 143, So. Harpswell, ME 04079.

Copertina d'Artista is a remarkable book where each artist could design a magazine cover—and has done so very successfully. Most of the artists are Italian, some more well-known than others, such as Altamira, Baj, Battaglia, Boetti, Cavellini, Ciam, Cioni Carpi, De Filippi, Gambino, Gilardi, Mesciu-lam, Nannucci, Romualdi, Trotta, and Vigo, among many others. The concept is mindblowing. With this "fixed point of view" as Mirella Bandini explains, graphically designed, entwined with advertising to create mass communication, the whole thing gets lost, but in the hands of an artist, there is a creative process using new print technology. The methods are quite diverse, but the product is a very exciting solution to an interesting problem—all different, all vibrant. The volume, spiral bound, is a product of Panda's Edition, Via Schina 4, 10143 Turin, Italy.

Comfort and Cleanliness by Don Corman is hilarious as "A Guide to the Hospitality Industry." While using excerpts from hotel brochures and a manual for hotel maids, Corman, who comes from Halifax, Canada, took pictures in hotels in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. The photographs are both color and black and white and juxtaposed with such texts that the photos become a comedy in themselves. Your memory tract will surely relate to the text and to the situation and each person will come away with a smile, a laugh, an understanding of "comfort and cleanliness" as offered by hotels anywhere. \$6.00 from Artworks.

Family Business by Vaughan Rachel tells the story of how Vaughan sent a letter around to many friends asking them for \$2.00 and explaining why she did this, interlacing the whole saga with the history of her marriage, her life with Allan Kaprow, and then the dissolution of the marriage. A very moving way of telling a life story by using the very documents (some quite personal, but mostly legal ones)

which create a bonding and then break that bond. Documents, personal writings and included in 200 pages of this 8½ x 11 inch book. \$25.00 (plus \$2.00 postage and handling) from Vaughan Rachel, 4920 Echo St., no. 14, Los Angeles, CA 90042.

Three-Letter Worlds is a linguistic exercise in the form of a very short story using all the words that consist of two letters in the English language. Done by Dave Enblon of Vancouver, it is \$4.00 from the author, 313 Alexander, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

Umbrella '80, edited by Harry William Saffren, is a glorious array of works of art by Philadelphia artists, including the editor, who inserted a 3-D pop-up of an umbrella scene. This is a must for all who enjoy the variety and diversity of printed art produced today, with many Philadelphia artists producing pages for this volume which costs \$6.50 from Printed Matter or from HS Press, 5538 Morris, Philadelphia, PA 19144.

Strange Faeces no. 20 is a collection of writers' and artists' works plus translations, edited by Opal and Ellen Nations. Included are works by Ken Brown, Dennis Hlynsky, Lisa Crafts, Opal Nations, translations from the French by Ellen Nations, Alain Jouffroy, Max Ernst, J. J. Grandville, among others...the variety of contributions ranges from comic strip animation to Russian poetry. \$3.50 from The Strange Faeces Press, 174 Thorndike St. no. 4, Cambridge, MA 02141.

Spanner NYC is a beautifully designed and produced periodical created by Terry Slotkin and Dick Miller, with contributions by the editors as well as Cindy Sherman, Jenny Holzer and Peter Nadin, Alex Kayser, Walter Robinson, Rhys Chatham, etc. There are biographies of each contributor at the end. Visually exciting production, each volume being considered as a separate book. For more information, write to Aloes Books, P.O. Box 5 Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013. Found at Artworks and Printed Matter.

Bardor Publications in New York publishes *Nice* magazine, each issue being a participatory event using the word "nice" in some way. They also publish *The Book of Values*, a conglomeration of old advertising intermingled with diaristic chapters, each page signifying a different kind of value in our society. *It's Only Money* is a hilarious modern guide of day-to-day living the correct way, a fun 8½ x 11 voyage. All can be purchased from Bardor Publications, 194 Bleecker St. no. 3D, New York, NY 10012.

Correspondance des Armees de la Republique is a large-size hand-printed (rubber-stamped) book that traces the secret intercepted messages between countries. The fictitious countries and personages are displayed by the same rubber stamps, but the texts change. A mystical, fictitious but nearly real portrayal of a dream-like series of events. From Stempelplaat, St. Luciensteeg 25, Amsterdam.

World of Art Comics no. 1 by John Fawcett is a limited edition "work of art" of 52 pages, packed full of a complete graphic story with games and cut-outs, each copy signed and

numbered. Some characters are Donald Duck and Moose Mouse, but other perversions of other comic characters abound, producing a hilarious, delightful and finely wrought bookwork. \$5.00 plus 75 cents postage and handling from John S. Fawcett, RR2, 720 Middle Tpk., Storrs, CT 06268.

Swap is an artist's book, the result of a collaboration among participants at a workshop held at the Virginia Commonwealth University as part of the program, "In Celebration of Book Art" which included lectures and exhibitions. The book is a result of an exchange of visual and verbal materials among participants, including faculty, students, professional artists. Receiving visual information from the person who followed and verbal information from the person who preceded, there was an element of random chance manipulation. The book, printed in color offset, although small, opens to a variety of visual and verbal experiences, and the random chance seems to have been an aesthetic experience on each page. *Swap* is \$3.00, if there are any copies left of this very limited edition, from Janet Dalberto, Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 23284.

ARTISTS' RECORDS

The Flag And... is a new sound performance by Augusto Concato, Milanese artist, who executed the record while his head was in a pot, as he uttered echoing sounds. Beautifully packaged in a tri-fold jacket which not only relates a dream sequence, but also shows the artist as he performs the piece. The artist meets the flag every morning, and the flag transfers into all possible roles, even into God. With the help of an electric fan, the flag can revive and live after death, even "entering the museum." This is a most effective performance on this 33 rpm 7-inch record, and the jacket serves as a book. Distributed exclusively by Umbrella Associates, the album is available at Artworks and throughout the country at many artists' bookshops. \$5.00 from Umbrella Associates (plus postage and handling).

Marc Z is a record album (33 rpm) from Temperature Music/Space Heater Records, a production of Marc and Michael Zimmermann, with *Don't Give Up* and *Three Words* set in a clear vinyl record, which is a page in a "book" opening as a grid on which there are set two eyes, with brows, and the pupils of the eyes are the holes through which the record plays. New Wave offset, new wave music—plus a sweet ballad too. Just don't watch the eye as it turns on the spindle, for it can hypnotize you! New wave envelope as well. Write to TM/SHR, 457 W. 47th St., New York, NY 10036.

MOST OF THE BOOKS REVIEWED HERE ARE AVAILABLE AT ARTWORKS. Since Artworks is moving to a new location in the spring, all orders can be sent to Umbrella, P.O. Box 773-C, Pasadena, CA 91104 until the shop is relocated. Thank you so much for your patience and your assistance in this regard.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- NEA: Visual Arts - Photographers
Fellowship Deadline: 1 April
- NEA: Visual Arts: Art Critics
Fellowship Deadline: 1 May
- NEA: Work experience
Internship Deadline: 26 May
- Beyond Survival: New
Artspace II, Contemporary
Arts Center, New Orleans 8-11 April
- American Association of
Museums, Annual Conference
Indianapolis, Indiana 7 - 11 June
- Chicago International Art
Exposition 15-20 May
- International Exhibition,
Cologne: Contemporary
Art Since 1939 30 May - 16 August
- Art 12 '81, Basle Art Fair 17-22 June



ARTISTS PUBLICATION IN PRINT 1981

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Catalog Design:
Printing:
Editor:

Margaret Falk
News-Type, Glendale
Judith A. Hoffberg

\$1.00 U.S.
\$1.50 Foreign