

BOOKNESSES:
FRAMING BOOK ARTS THEORISATION, CURATION,
DOCUMENTATION AND PRACTICE WITHIN A
SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

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COMMENTARY

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Abstract

My contribution to book arts scholarship in South Africa covers four aspects of the field: textual, curatorial, documentary and artefactual production. This is rare as most practitioners usually participate in one or two aspects of production only. The diversity of my work, completed over 25 years in the field of South African book arts, contributes the four Areas of Focus which make up the Commentary provided here and presented in the submitted Portfolio of Evidence. I argue that, together, these four Areas of Focus embody the multiplicitous concept of *booknesses* that constitutes a significant and coherent contribution to knowledge in South Africa and internationally.

My commitment to exploring and unpacking concepts of *bookness* can be found at the heart of my published academic writing, specifically in regard to reading book arts practice through a lens provided by Mikhail Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia. This is sustained in my complex curatorial projects and their published catalogues, my online documentation of the local field that includes the maintenance and updating of critical databases of South African artists' books, as well as my own creative production. Together, these four activities contribute critical elements of the concept of *booknesses* that constitutes the creative heart of, and connective tissue between, these four areas of research and production. As a driving concept across these diverse activities, *booknesses*, as it is argued for in this Commentary and presented in the submitted Portfolio of Evidence, makes a clear contribution to new forms of knowledge particularly within South African book arts but also within international contexts.

Keywords

Artists' books, book arts, South Africa, theorisation, curation, documentation, creative practice, Mikhail Bakhtin, dialogism, heteroglossia, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, rhizome, haptic, self-consciousness, reflexivity, bookness, booknesses

Areas of Focus, Submissions, Annexures and Appendices

Area of Focus	Submission #	Submission Title – Type (These appear in the separate Portfolio of Evidence)	Annexure in PoE	Appendix in THIS Commentary
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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALISATION

My work within the field of the book arts over the last 25 years in South Africa

In 1985, I came across South African artist Elizabeth Vels's hand-made, book-shaped object titled [Last Supper Codex](#) on the *Cape Town Triennial* touring exhibition in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. This was my first encounter with a book as an artwork or a book in the hands of the artist. I found this object intriguing as I had not expected to find a book in an art exhibition and for the first time I saw the potential of the book as an art object. The book itself challenged my expectations further in that it did not conform to what I considered the conventions of the genre: it was obviously a book, but one, seemingly, without text. Seven years later, in 1992, I made the decision to research the book as an artwork within a formal context after viewing [Selected Poems 1961-1991](#). This book was a collaboration between the poet Patrick Cullinan, artist Judith Mason, who produced the illuminations and illustrations, Mark Attwood, who hand-printed the book, Bruce Attwood, who made the wooden cover boards and Johan Maree who bound the book. The collaborative nature of the project, its suggestion of a curated exhibition in accessible codex form, and its newness within the South African art world had a great effect on me. Consequently, I decided to undertake the first formal study of the book arts in South Africa. I enrolled for a Masters degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa in 1995, with a proposal titled *South African Artists' Books and Book-objects Since 1960*. The stipulation of the year 1960 represented both the first stirrings of contemporary international book arts practice but also the year of my birth. My study would thus undertake an examination of the field within my lifetime.

After having been introduced to South African collector and philanthropist Jack Ginsberg and his internationally regarded collection of artists' books, I was invited by Steven Sack, then of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, to curate the first exhibition of artists' books held in South Africa. A significant portion of the exhibition came from the Ginsberg Collection to which I added a number of local works that I was discovering and researching at the time. [Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection with some South African Books from Other](#)

[Collections](#) became one of the largest exhibitions of its kind internationally when it opened on 25 August 1996.

Having completed my Masters degree it seemed necessary to begin a curatorial project that would develop both my research as well as bring the relatively unknown field of artists' books in South Africa to a wider audience. Ginsberg introduced me to Peter Denis who ran a website and database development company named Logos Flow. Ginsberg and Dennis had, for a few years, been developing a bespoke database which would facilitate the transfer of Ginsberg's personal and hand-written card catalogue system for each book in his collection into a digital format. This digital database included fields for every conceivable aspect of the bookwork's record, including details of its purchase, costs, insurance, personal communication, item number and location along with more conventional bibliographic entries and information. The benefits of this digitised system include consistency of information across the data fields, rapid update of existing data and error correction. After numerous consultations with Dennis, I purchased the database software that would help me digitise the entries for each artist's book I had documented during my Masters research. What followed was a merging of the Ginsberg bibliography with my own data in such a way that it was accessible, searchable and editable. If this database of South African artists' books could exist online, it seemed necessary to gather every piece of material on the local field I had found or generated and make it available alongside the database. The website was launched to coincide with the opening of my curated exhibition [Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface](#) at the Aardklop Arts Festival, Potchefstroom, South Africa on 25 September 2006. The website, initially titled *South African Artists' Books*, contained the searchable database of South African artists' books and navigable entries for the two exhibitions I had curated (in 1996 and 2006). It also contained clickable links to chapters from my Masters dissertation and a small set of links to pertinent sites of interest.

One of the key features of Ginsberg's collection is a vast bibliography of books, catalogues, tracts, dissertations, journal articles, press cuttings, pamphlets and ephemera on the book arts; what Ginsberg calls 'the archive'. In conjunction with my curated exhibition [TEXTures: an Exhibition of Texts, Textures and Structure in Artists' Books](#) held at the Archives and Special Collections, Library

and Information Centre, University of Johannesburg, 5 March – 18 April 2014, Ginsberg, Dennis and I made the [*The Bibliography of the Jack Ginsberg Collection on Artists' Books*](#) available on the website. Over many years, Ginsberg had studiously digitised this massive bibliographic database of one of the most comprehensive international private collections, and its presence on the website necessitated a change of the website's name to [*Artists' Books in South Africa*](#). This change implied both the presence of the South African field but also, crucially, the presence of international works – both artistic as well as bibliographic – in the collection and the country.

With the advent of my extensive project titled *Booknesses* held at the University of Johannesburg between 21 March and 5 May 2017, one aspect of this project was the curation of an expansive exhibition titled [*Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*](#). Photographic and edited bibliographic material was established for each of the 229 international and 29 South African artists' books I selected for the accompanying catalogue. Despite this number of books — making *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* one of the largest exhibitions of its kind held internationally — the selected books represented less than five percent of the Ginsberg Collection of artists' books. This photographic and bibliographic data, however, has now been placed on the website and will constitute the foundation for future access to all the books in the Ginsberg Collection.¹

On 14 March 2018, *Artists' Books in South Africa* won first place in the category [*Digital Humanities: Best Visualisation or Infographic*](#) at the prestigious National Institute for the Humanities and Social Science (NIHSS) Awards, Johannesburg. The award recognised the scope and depth of the web-based project and, later in the year, the extensive *Booknesses Project Archive* was made available to the public on the website. The project's archive consists of marketing and branding material, documentation of the international academic colloquium,

¹ It has always been our desire to prepare a parallel database of the international artists' books in the Ginsberg Collection alongside that of the local field but considering that only four individuals work on the collections, website and databases, such a task is a long-term one. Opposed to the hundreds of South African books we have documented, photographed and placed on the online database, the close-to 4000 international artists' books were not yet photographed and were not fully digitally edited and ready for public perusal, research, scrutiny and criticism.

along with its keynote speeches and proceedings from 42 contributors and interactive catalogues of the two exhibitions which were opened as part of the project: *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* and [Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books](#). A host of images as well as a video recording of [Jack Ginsberg and William Kentridge in Conversation](#), moderated by Prof. Jane Taylor, which closed off the project, are also included on the website.

After 25 years of research, my work in and on the book arts has been acknowledged as research leading. My research has been published in peer-reviewed journals, my curated exhibitions and their catalogues have had international impact, been peer reviewed and written on. My catalogues are [available](#) in the Tate Library and Archive, the National Art Library, London and in many academic libraries including the University of Oxford, Princeton University, Yale University, Harvard University, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library. My extensive research website www.theartistsbook.org.za has become a rich repository. It includes a searchable database of artefactual production, exhibitions and diverse academic writings on the book arts with particular reference to South Africa and has been acknowledged by reciprocating websites to be one of the most comprehensive sites of its kind globally.

Appendix One is a timeline of my activities within the book arts field from 1985 to the present. Where the particular activity's output is relevant to this Commentary and my Submissions, I have indicated this in colour.

Contextualisation of the research and its Commentary

Unlike academic and creative college programmes in the United States of America and other parts of the world, South Africa offers no formal book arts programme or qualification in any of its academic institution and there are only a hand-full of printers and artists who engage meaningfully and consistently in artist's book production. Concomitantly, there are only five other artist-academics who have written on, theorised, made and exhibited artists' books in

South Africa.² There are no book dealers who stock or sell artists' books. Only recently, have South African artists' books begun to appear in international collections such as the Warren M. Robbins Library, Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art, in Washington DC, USA. As stated above, however, South Africa is home to Ginsberg's internationally acclaimed private collection of artists' books and archive *on* artists' books which became the only widely accessible academic collection in South Africa when the Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts (JGCBA) opened at the University of the Witwatersrand's Art Museum on 26 March 2019. Apart from this, no other academic institution in South Africa collects or exhibits artists' books on a sustained basis.³

It is into this space that I have, over the last 25 years, consistently inserted my research, curatorial projects, catalogues, academic writing, online databases and related documentary material, and my creative work. Within the context of this Commentary, I bring together the distinct activities that constitute my research and argue for a set of methods that help isolate the four distinct Areas of Focus under the remit of the coined term *Booknesses*. By placing selected published articles at the centre of the study, I am able to argue for a sound theoretical underpinning for my thinking as well as my curatorial and creative practices. I am then able to demonstrate how the four Areas of Focus operationalise the concept of *bookness* – argued for as self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and reflexivity. In doing this work, I am also able to identify these concepts as the connective tissue between the four Areas of Focus of my research, embodying both the idea and materiality of *bookness* and thus unify the diverse activities I submit in the Portfolio of Evidence and this Commentary.⁴

² These five artist-academics are Emeritus Professor Keith Dietrich (Stellenbosch University), Prof. Pippa Skotnes (University of Cape Town), Prof. Maureen de Jager (Rhodes University), Prof. Franci Greyling (North-West University) and Dr. Ian Marley (Stellenbosch College). Dietrich, de Jager, Greyling and Marley all presented papers at my 2017 Colloquium *Booknesses: Taking Stock of the Book Arts in South Africa* and three exhibited recent bookwork on the curated exhibition *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*. I commissioned Skotnes to write one of the five essays for the catalogue for the curated exhibition *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* and her book *The Dream* (Axeage Private Press; Cape Town, 1991) was included on this exhibition.

³ The University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria has a modest collection of international artists' books.

⁴ The concept of 'connective tissue' is important to me on a number of levels. Firstly as a strategy of argument, which helps find evidence for coherent and meaningful dialogues between the four discrete Areas of Focus I unpack in this Submission. Secondly, the notion of material corporeality underpins the aims of the study and the materiality of the objects under discussion.

This study's four Areas of Focus, as identified in its title, are problematised as:

- a theoretical underpinning of the artist's book as a field
- the curation of exhibitions of artists' books – access and distance
- the online documentation of artists' books – databases and the acknowledgement of affect, and
- an exemplar of practice.

It is critical to note that the study is conducted within a South African context that, as will be shown, is defined and constrained by regionally specificity in relation to, for instance, similar practices in the United States of America and Great Britain. This Commentary thus shapes and weights the four Areas of Focus differently and does not attempt an exhaustive analysis of each as a trope within the scope of international book arts. Instead, the first Area of Focus: *A theoretical underpinning of the artist's book as a field* sits at the centre of the study and constitutes my most important contribution to new knowledge. Here, I argue that *bookness* lies at the heart of the difference between our conventional reception of books, whether in novel or reference form, on one hand, and on the other, the self-conscious and reflexive methodologies at play in artists' books. By interrogating a book's structure and materiality, its navigability and problematisation of how a book performs its particular operations, the theoretical notion of *bookness* is positioned and given action. Such a view of books is inherently multi-voiced or, as I argue in Bakhtinian⁵ terms, dialogical and shot through with heteroglossia. If such a position is adopted, no aspect of an artist's book's making, curating, documentation or cataloguing can be seen to exist outside of these qualities of a book's *bookness*. This argument helps give visibility to the connective tissue that binds the activities within the four Areas of

Thirdly, the idea underscores the haptic and phenomenological nature of appreciating and experiencing artists' books as art objects. Fourthly, the term implies the importance of the psychomotor and affective domains of touch engaged in the handling and teaching of book arts, especially as a potential future academic output of the study. Fifthly, the metaphor of the Corpus Callosum, suggested by Prof. Catherine Hayes, seems germane here as it consists of four main parts made up of individual nerve tracts that connect left and right cerebral hemispheres, enabling communication between them. Lastly, this 'tough body' of thick commissural fibres, seems a suitable metaphor for a *callosum of art* – presented as the four Areas of Focus in this Submission – as well as the resilience required in bringing them together in both academic and artistic arenas.

⁵ Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, (1895-1975) was a Russian literary theorist and philosopher of language whose wide-ranging ideas significantly influenced Western thinking in cultural history, linguistics, literary theory, and aesthetics. I deploy his concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia in arguing for a theoretical underpinning of the artist's book.

Focus, giving validity to the notion of multiplicitous *booknesses* for which I argue most strongly. Given that artists' books are notoriously difficult to define⁶ and qualify, the neologism is expanded in both the study's title and the diverse scope of the research as the plural *booknesses*, a term I use to demarcate an encompassing field of complexity within and between my submitted research projects. Such an approach, I argue, lends consistency and focus to the diverse aspects of my existing published and creative work, my curatorial projects as well as the extensive online documentation and cataloguing of South African and, more recently, international artists' books in a clear and meaningful manner.

As will be shown, the dearth of meaty critical research on the artist's book opens a palpable gap in the fields of artistic production, academic theorisation, curation and documentation of such objects, particularly in South Africa. The scope of the research presented in this Commentary acknowledges and investigates each of these Areas of Focus deeply, draws connections from within each, and argues for cohesive new knowledge within the broad field of study. This is of relevance to South Africa in which only a small but discernibly growing discipline of book arts education at tertiary-level is evident. Given the maturity of the field of artist's book production the USA in particularly and, to a lesser degree, in the UK (Bodman 2018:9), however, such maturity mitigates against studies such as mine, undertaken across the broad sweep of the field. A mature field is, typically, able to focus upon specific, niche areas of production and research. Thus, the submitted work discussed in this Commentary might also prove relevant and impactful within these countries by explaining how, my published writing, curatorial practice, website and databases, and creative practice, produce new knowledge. I argue that this has been achieved by contributing to the genre's growth, visibility, giving voice to local artists and establishing awareness of the artist's book in South Africa as well as South African book arts in an international context.

⁶ The online forum BookArtsWeb has an extensive page devoted to the problem of definition that can be found at <http://www.philobiblon.com/whatisabook.shtml>.

Research question and aims

This broad context gives rise to the research question: *How can the multiplicitous notion of booknesses form a coherent basis for, and the connective tissue between, four diverse book arts activities?*

This question gives rise to the following aims of my research:

1. To demonstrate the dialogical and heteroglot nature of artists' books that activate their self-conscious and reflexive qualities (their *bookness*). This is achieved through a Bakhtinian lens that forges a theoretical underpinning for the artist's book.
2. To build curatorial practice which explores the dialogical, heteroglot and rhizomic nature of artists' books' *bookness* at its centre.
3. To document a growing body of South African book arts research and practice online and in which an accessible database is able to embody, consistently and correctly, both a book's factual/material data and its affective qualities and content (a bookwork's *bookness*). Such documentation facilitates South African book artists and their work's visibility to a wider local and international field of practice.
4. To explicate my own artistic production as an exemplar of the practice of *bookness*.
5. Together, the outcomes of these four aims might provide a viable platform for *booknesses* studies within new academic opportunities in South Africa in the future.

Epistemological and ontological positioning, methodologies and methods pertinent to the research commentary as a whole, the individual Areas of Focus, and the original published research

It is a given that, at the start of any research project, an epistemological position must be determined so as to contextualises the research and help guide its philosophical framing and methodologies. Establishing an epistemological stance within the context of a PhD by Existing Published and Creative Works, however, reveals moments of difference and tension. These occur between

those stances – adopted at given times over the last ten years – appropriate for the specific type of research undertaken: writing, curating, documenting or making, and the reflexive stage in which the research processes, outputs, impacts and relevance of the four Areas of Focus are written up and contextualised in this Submission. Given the speculative and subjective nature of much of this research, my epistemological position is necessarily interpretivist, in which “multiplicity, context, depth, and local knowledge” (Ramey & Grubb 2009:80) are idiosyncratically framed. Such an epistemological position provides me with the perimeters of knowledge concerning my model of the world of book arts and appropriate methodologies and methods of exploration and explication in knowing this world. This Submission, however, must constitute an ontology of what exists (and what does not exist) in this world, at least from within a South African context. It is here that a tension arises within any constructionist ontological paradigm: between the existence of the research outputs and their demonstrated impacts (via peer review reports and other evidence) on one hand, and the reflexive self which argues for newness within this world of knowledge on the other. I admit that, given the narrow limits of the South Africa book arts world, I become a standard-bearer for not only the term *booknesses*, but also for the possibility that this research might offer the South African academy a new research area moving forward. This is a bold claim, but one that, I believe, enriches the ontological tension between research outputs and the reflexive researcher. Gina Wisker, Margaret Kiley and Rachel Masika (2017) demand evidence of “conceptual threshold crossing” in PhD students’ research which must, where applicable, include their *Vivas*. Such areas of tension in my research constitute what Wisker et al (2016:117-118) term “learning leaps” which “lead to changes in identity (ontology), and perception and construction of knowledge in the subject (epistemology)” on the part of the researcher. It seems productively inextricable that how I go about demonstrating the central criticality of artists’ books’ *bookness* is equally critical and central to the demonstration of *doctoralness* through its very argument. Initially, both seemed elusive concepts, becoming clearer with time. This inextricability represents but one of my personal ‘conceptual threshold crossings’ in first conducting and now writing up this research. Thus, in this reflexive account of the work of selected research moments within the last ten years, I deploy an autoethnographic methodology that facilitates inductive modes of research,

methods of enquiry and subjective positionality. Catherine Hayes and John Fulton (2015:7) state that

autoethnography bridges the gap between theory and practice through the development of a critical discourse and the reflexivity which develops as a natural consequence of it. ... In terms of underpinning ontological and epistemological approaches, it permits a clear acknowledgement of the essence of being a person and being a professional, which is a valuable addition to the student's academic course of study and their own personal progression and transferable skill development as a reflexive practitioner.

What arises from this methodology is a set of personal and reflexive analyses within the four activity areas (writing, curating, documenting and making). An autoethnographic methodology helps me situate the cultural field of local (South African) book arts practice, and my impact on it, in relation to an international context. Autoethnography also facilitates a reflexive explication of my particular selected research methods which I have deployed within these diverse activities over time. In ordering and organising the various elements, methods and accounts that operationalise autoethnography as a methodology in this Submission, I have become aware that phenomenological immersiveness is an embedded methodology which sits at the heart of everything that I have done. This methodology underpins all the work described in the four Areas of Focus. In other words, my lived experience within the South African book arts field is constituted as immersive, both intellectually and physically whether writing, curating, documenting or making. Each activity feeds off the others in a relational and dialogical way. Notwithstanding their discrete and diverse outcomes, none of the activities is fundamentally separate from the others (what I argue for as 'connective tissue'). In these terms, then, I frame my phenomenological methodology as both a philosophical / existentialist undertaking in my various immersive research activities over many years, and as an interpretivist undertaking in contextualising and accounting for the four activities in this Submission. Finally, in making my artist's book, practice-led research or praxis constitutes the dominant methodology which is suffused with iterative cycles of making, reflection and remaking in order to arrive at the final artwork.

Having established broad ontological and epistemological positions and located particular methodologies that underpin the activities that constitute the work described in four Areas of Focus and this Submission, it is necessary for me to briefly account for the deployment of specific methods which help deliver the research outputs.

— It is clear that my existing body of published theoretical work in journals exploits critical literature surveys as its principal mode of enquiry. Particular and important modalities of critique include literary criticism, dialogical studies, semiotic analysis and theories of phenomenological embodiment and immersion as they pertain to the experience of negotiating specific books' imagistic texts and complex material structures as well as language and its discourses more broadly.

— Within contemporary curatorial practice and reception theory, there are particular problems that pertain to the book arts. As most exhibitions of books take place at a distance to the visitor — thus denying the conventional experience of having a book in one's hands — critical issues of reader / viewer access and reception become pertinent when curating exhibitions of artists' books.⁷ Remote or digital access via Quick Response (QR) codes (or other means) is a mode of access that I deploy in my curatorial practice that transcends the limits of the gallery or exhibition space. Another mode of access that underpins my curatorial practice is to create an exhibition that, in its multiplicity, is semiotically equivalent to being inside and within the book reading / viewing experience as a whole. What is meant by this is that each book in an exhibition might represent a 'page' that, when read together, constitute a 'book' (the exhibition) to which the reader / viewer often has no haptic access but rather, conceptual and visual access.

— Exploratory and iterative methods pertain to the making of artists' books where materiality, legibility and narrative / non-narrative sequentiality is of critical importance to the making and reception of the genre. Johanna Drucker (1995:161) eloquently describes artists' books self-conscious interrogation of

⁷ Most items are usually locked away in vitrines or display cabinets to preserve the objects from over-handling and possible damage. In addition, books, when treated as artworks, jump their haptic conventions – as personal hand-held objects – to become art objects displayed under museum conventions of 'do not touch'.

the conventions that, through constant exposure, neutralise or efface a book's identity, stating:

The familiarity of the basic conventions of the book tends to banalize them: the structures by which books present information, ideas, or diversions, become habitual so that they erase, rather than foreground, their identity. One can, in other words, forget about a book even in the course of reading it. ... But when a book calls attention to the conceits and conventions by which it normally effaces its identity, then it performs a theoretical operation ... of *enunciation* (the acts of speaking, representing making a work) rather than allowing a work to be enunciated (spoken as if it were naturally there).

Conjoining the making of an artist's book with knowledge of the manner in which it might *enunciate* itself, i.e. its practical and theoretical topologies, constitutes a legitimate form of praxis or practice-led research. My artist's book *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* (2015) demonstrates the practical outcomes of this praxis, whilst its explication – discussed later in this Submission – details how it enunciates itself in the world as a complex intersection of dialogical, heteroglot and rhizomic utterances which lend the artwork its *haecceity*. But there is more to discuss here. Epistemological difference between what is sensorial and what is perceptual, particularly in relation to the actual handling of artists' books and the meaning people might make of them must be acknowledged. Delineating between what is perceptual and what is sensorial is a key mechanism of distinguishing between different states of mind and the meaning the mind makes of information supplied to it. Despite the fact that it is possible to perceive something without first having had sensorial experience of it, being sensorially aware of something is inherently different from perceiving it. The two are very much interrelated and there is a non-stasis of positionality that aligns with this, that accounts for a capacity for change. What I mean by this is that for each perception of/in the world, there is a representation of a propositional truth about the world. In this sense, knowledge that derives from human perception is experientially valid but not necessarily true. This forms the basis of the delineation between perceived and actual reality. As a framing mechanism, having a sensorial experience of negotiating the complexities of reading *Speaking in Tongues* (2015) develops a

sensory-motor experience that is both valid and objectively true.⁸ I argue this point in the last Area of Focus via Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (2005:474-500) notion of smooth and striated space. Beyond this, lies huge potential for the development of an academic field of book arts scholarship in South Africa that must be based on sensorial, tactile and haptic access to a range of artefacts which represent the field, not merely the academic perception of the field.

— The methods described above are all qualitative in their arc. Where both qualitative and quantitative methods meet is in the online database of South African artists' books. Within this Area of Focus, a rich, yet difficult relationship between the types of information registered in the bibliographic record for each book is established. This represents a battle between two ontologies: on one hand, the factual material object as described and, on the other, the acknowledgement of the affective meaning at play in the work's materiality, structure and content. Methods of data collection and their subjection to content analysis help explore the epistemological differences between these two ontologies. Crossing the subjective barrier by accurately documenting a book's qualitative and affective expression in terms of its content and meaning, not merely its factual data, within the catalogue entry — and thus our ability to accurately know that book's behaviours and relationships in an objective way — lies at the heart of the research in this Area of Focus.

Thus, at the core of my autoethnographic, phenomenological and praxis-based methodologies lies a complex organisational system that is multi-modal and operationalised through mixed methods. This complex organisational system acknowledges both quantitative and qualitative paradigms. It situates philosophical terms (*booknesses*, dialogism, heteroglossia, self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and reflexivity) as participative, interactive and agentic whilst also always fluid, elusive, and open-ended in both concept and practice. In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari's (2005:12) notion of rhizomic mapping as open, connected and susceptible to constant modification is a useful lens

⁸ I am indebted to Catherine Hayes, Professor of Health Professions Pedagogy and Scholarship, University of Sunderland for this epistemological reading of my artist's book in terms of both its perception and, specifically, the sensorial and psychomotor experience of it. My discussions with Prof. Hayes in this area have also highlighted the sensorial and psychomotor implications for education, with particular relevance to any future academic field of the book arts in South Africa.

through which to view the field of South African book arts as well as my own theoretical, curatorial, documentary and creative practices. In these terms then, the protean inter- and intra-relational dialogues between book arts research and practice in local (South African) regional (African) and international contexts is opened up for future, richer exploration and development.

Area of Focus One: A theoretical underpinning of the artist's book as a field

For this section, the following peer-reviewed and published journal articles pertain:

- [Stimulus / Response - Scratching Away at Some Intrinsic and Extrinsic Problems in Theorising the Artist's Book from the far end of a 'Not-So-Dark Continent'](#). *Artist's Book Yearbook 2014-2015*, CFPR, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK, September 2013, Pp. 37-43 (Submission One: Annexure A).
- [Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book](#). *Literator*, November 33(1) 2012, Pp. 1-11 (Submission Two: Annexure B).
- [The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing Unconventional Texts from Kerouac to the Artist's Book](#). *De Arte*, vol 45 issue 81 2010, Pp. 4-22 (Submission Three: Annexure C).

In 2005, Drucker acknowledged that the theorisation of the field of artists' books was particularly underdeveloped internationally, stating:

Because the field of artists' books suffers from being under-theorized, under-historicized, under-studied and under-discussed, it isn't taken very seriously. ... Our critical apparatus is about as sophisticated as that which exists for needlework, decoupage, and other "crafts".

It is in response to Drucker's statement that I wrote the three articles that pertain to this Commentary. The first, *Stimulus / Response* (2013) contextualises the space from which Drucker made these observations. *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts* (2012) then grapples, head-on with the perceived gap which, I argue, my thick theoretical analyses of the conventions of selected artists' books begin to fill. This text is central to my entire endeavour as it provides not only a new theoretical underpinning for the artist's book but also opens a discursive space which underpins all other practices and activities I undertake in my broad research and practice, and unpacked in the four Areas of Focus presented in this Commentary. In this article, I frame a Bakhtinian

reading of the relationship between *novelness* and self-consciousness. From this relationship, I am able to argue for the ways in which self-consciousness operates at the heart of the artist's book, as the work's *bookness*, as a way in which the object operates and is received in the world. As such, self-consciousness and its concomitant reflexivity in artists' books must necessarily become the discursive ground from which I undertake all the activities in each of my other Areas of Focus. I argue that a theoretical understanding of *bookness*, when folded into its multiple (documentary, curatorial and practical) forms and deployed as the concept of multiple *booknesses*, contextualises and helps realise the elements within each Area of Focus, and signifies the connective tissue between each. In *The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer* (2010), I provide an example of the ways in which *bookness* operates in texts which deploy imagistic qualities in novel form, by means of the very dialogical, heteroglot, self-conscious and reflexive qualities for which I argue in my accompanying articles.

This Area of Focus is weighted as significant as it is foundational to the overarching concept of *booknesses* that underpins all my endeavours unpacked in both this Commentary and my Submissions. It also underpins the nature of the connective tissue between the diverse activities I describe. A critical analysis of these texts, their importance to new knowledge and their impact — especially in terms of how they argue for the relationship between images and texts, the optical and imagistic elements of text, and language as a discourse — is more fully discussed in Part Three of this Commentary.

Area of Focus Two: The curation of exhibitions of artists' books – access and distance

For this section, the following peer-reviewed exhibition (Submission Four), published catalogue (Submission Five), chapter essay (Submission Six) and online catalogue (Submission Seven) pertain:

- *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*. Curated exhibition. University of Johannesburg Art Gallery. 25 March – 5 May 2017 (Submission Four: Annexure D).
- *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*. University of Johannesburg Art Gallery. 25 March – 5 May 2017. Exhibition catalogue, Department of Visual Art, Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture, UJ, Johannesburg, South Africa. Compiled, organised and the main essay by David Paton and edited by Robyn Sassen. ISBN 978-0-86970-796-8 (Submission Five: Annexure E).

- An online interactive version of this catalogue is available at:
<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=jgcat&pgsub1=>
- An online interactive page-through of 30 selected books across all themes of the exhibition can be accessed at:
<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=exhibitions&pgsub1=digital>
- Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books From The Jack Ginsberg Collection (2017) Chapter 1 from the publication *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* (Submission Six: Annexure F in submission Five: Annexure E) also available at:
<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=jgcat&pgsub1=chpt1>
- *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*. FADA Gallery. 24 March – 5 May 2017. Online exhibition catalogue, Department of Visual Art, Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture, UJ, Johannesburg, South Africa. Compiled, organised by David Paton and edited by Eugene Hön (Submission Seven: Annexure G). PDF catalogue available at:
http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/booknesses/downloads/booknesses_fada_catalogue.pdf
- Peer review of exhibition by Prof Buzz Spector. Washington University in St. Louis, USA (Appendix Three)
- Peer review of exhibition by Sarah Bodman. University of the West of England, Bristol, UK (Appendix Four)
- Peer review of exhibition by Elizabeth James. National Art Library, V&A Museum, London, UK (Appendix Five)

In the last 22 years I have curated six⁹ exhibitions of artists' books in South Africa. Two have been of moderate scope: *Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface* (2007) consisted of 17 haptic artists' books and six commissioned digital artists' books. *TEXTures: An Exhibition of Text, Textures and Structure in Artists' Books* (2014) consisted of 33 haptic artists' books, 5 broadsides and two prints from the iconic portfolio of concrete / visual poetry, *KYKAFRIKAANS* (1980 / 1981) by South African artist Willem Boshoff. Two exhibitions have been huge in scope and impact. The first, *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection, with some South African Books from Other Collections*, Johannesburg Art Gallery (1996) consisted of 163 international and 62 South African bookworks. At the time, it was purported to be the second largest exhibition of its kind held internationally. The second, and of import for this Commentary, is a pair of exhibitions which ran in conjunction with the *Booknesses Project* at the University of Johannesburg in 2017. The exhibition titled *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* consisted of 229 international and 29 local bookworks and was accompanied by an extensive full-colour catalogue with five essays and an index. Because the books were loaned from a private collection on the understanding that they

⁹ The sixth and latest exhibition titled *Samplings* (2019) runs during the writing of this Commentary and is acknowledged in the Conclusions.

would not be touched, it became necessary to find curatorial strategies for circumventing this limitation. I selected 30 works from the range of curatorial themes which underpinned the exhibition, photographed each page including front and back covers, carefully edited each image for visual registration when moving from one opening to another on a screen and combined each book, with its textual material, into a machine-readable QR coded access program. Any visitor to the exhibition would be able to download free application software (App), [access](#) the selection of books within their theme and 'page' through each book in its entirety. Given that each book's webpage was saved within each visitor's App, on their smartphones or tablets, the books remained accessible to the gallery visitor after they had left the exhibition — like taking a book home from a library. The App gave access to all 30 selected books by accessing a specific QR code printed on each book's label in the vitrines. For visitors without QR code-reading Apps, or without the necessary hardware, eight iPads were available in a special viewing area in the gallery space, with high-speed WiFi access made available for the duration of the exhibition. Post-exhibition, these books' accessibility has been migrated onto my research website and is available for viewing in the form in which it was originally designed and made available for the exhibition.

This extensive exhibition was envisaged to be one of two 'bookends'. The other was its sister exhibition *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books* held at the FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg, and which ran concurrently with the former exhibition. Here, an open call was made to all South African book artists, designers and interested parties to submit up to two works. The criteria for selection were: design and craft excellence, works of recent making (2010 onward) and the book's exploitation or interrogation of *bookness*. Bookworks could be in any conventional, sculptural or digital form, as long as the works were exhibition-ready and were able to be handled. This exhibition attracted well over 100 works from 74 artists / designers and ranged from student work, through experienced book artists such as William Kentridge, to those who had never produced an artist's book before. These two exhibitions, the accompanying international colloquium, set of lectures and workshops, was envisaged to 'take stock' of the book arts in South Africa, something never undertaken before. It was designed to provide visitors with an experience of the diverse range of the field from rare international works of historical and

postmodernist significance, through the complexity of contemporary making, to the exciting range of work produced, unbeknownst to most visitors, by a rich range of South African artists and designers. Given its scope and range, *Booknesses* was the largest curated project of its kind in South Africa. It built upon my 1996 exhibition as well as the *Transgressions and Boundaries of the Page* exhibition, held at three venues around South Africa in 2010.¹⁰

The first chapter in the published catalogue is titled [*Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*](#). This essay (unpacked in Part Three of this Commentary) explores the structural and imagistic themes which emerged from the first and principal book on the exhibition, Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay-Terk's *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* [*Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanne of France*] (1913). Considered to be the first true example of *simultaneisme* or simultaneity in book form this work's *bookness* functioned as a metaphorical and thematic code from which all aspects of the broader exhibition's curatorial structure emanated. *Prose du Transsibérien* pits the poet's art against the visual artist's, self-consciously battling against perceived uneven resources, exploring visual/verbal dynamics and colour in both the typographic blocks and *pochoir* images. Thus, structural elements such as image/text relationships, verticality of the reading/viewing experience and colour, in real and metaphoric forms, became part of the thematic load of curating *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*. The essay explores the affective themes I extracted from the poem: Journeys | Maps & Structures | Landscapes and Places; Fantasy and the Fantastic; War, Death, Fear and Apocalyptic Imagery and Love, Sex and the Body, as guides for the exhibition's curatorial structure. The essay also unpacks how I exploited a reflexive and critical dialogue with Riva Castleman's 1994/5 exhibition *A Century of Artists Books* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

In Part Three of this Commentary I critically apply both Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia and Deleuze and Guattari's (1987 [2005]) notion of the rhizome to my overarching curatorial strategies, and in so doing, forge rich

¹⁰ This exhibition represented the work of 42 artists and designers, under the auspices of North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. It was organised and curated by Ian Marley, Franci Greyling and Louisemarie Combrink as an inter-disciplinary project and exhibition investigating the artist's book as practice-based research.

connections between the exhibitions' design, themes and constitutive parts as dynamic forms of curatorial *bookness*.

Area of Focus Three: The online documentation of artists' books, databases and the acknowledgement of affect

For this section the website <http://www.theartistsbook.org.za> (Submission Eight: Annexure H, Appendix Six-Eight) and specifically the databases found at

- http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view_collod.asp?pg=collod_search&collod_opt=basic and
- <http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=library> (Submissions Nine A&B: Annexure H) pertain.

The following peer-reviewed and published conference paper also pertains:

- ['A Great Idea at the Time': Cataloguing South Africa's Artist's Book Production](#) Proceedings of the 81st IFLA General Conference and Assembly of the IFLA World Library and Information Congress - *Turning the Tables: Documenting Art in a Global Context*. 15-21 August 2015, Cape Town, South Africa (Submission Ten: Annexure I).

Since its launch in 2006, the website has grown into one of the most internationally comprehensive sites devoted to artists' books. Not only does it showcase local production but it also connects this production and related research to the world. During this time, Ginsberg and I have set about the idealistic task of creating a database of every artist's book produced in South Africa. By isolating the South African books in the Ginsberg Collection as well as the books I had come across in my research, we have constructed a bespoke database for these items. One of the most well documented problems facing appropriate mechanisms for the cataloguing for artists' books is grappling with the hybrid nature of the items to be catalogued, each of which claims some territory within the disputed space of the book arts. The published conference paper titled *'A Great Idea at the Time': Cataloguing South Africa's Artist's Book Production* (2015) examines the progress of the database and discusses problems associated with its necessary refinement. Taking Anne Thurmann-Jajes' *Manual for Artists' Publications* (2010) as a point of departure, the paper examines three South African artists' books that represent both the diversity of the field and the complexity of the cataloguing task. In the paper, I discuss this complexity in terms of a tension. On one hand, the perfunctory (given) data for each book: title, author, spine height, number of pages, materials used in its manufacture, etc., is pitted against a need to describe the object's *bookness*, its

self-conscious, reflexive and affective presence, on the other: something foreign to most bibliographic entries in library catalogues. This has necessitated the inclusion of new fields on the database that attempt to deepen the descriptors for the three selected artists' books. This case study helps to describe the South African output more meaningfully and has important implications for the future documentation of every South African artist's book in the Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts (JGCBA) when they are accessioned into the only University collection of its kind in South Africa and, indeed, on the African continent from March 2019. Of significance for its national impact, the site received the South African National Institute for the Humanities and Social Science (NIHSS) award in the category for Digital Humanities, in 2018.

Area of Focus Four: *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* – an exemplar of practice

For this section, the following peer reviewed artist's book pertains:

- *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* (2015). Deluxe edition of six leporello-bound and boxed digitally printed books with video on flash drive bound into the box base (Submission Eleven: Annexure J).
 - The book can be viewed at:
http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view_collod.asp?pg=collod_item&collod_opt=item&ItemID=114
 - The video can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/282800647>
- Peer review of the bookwork by Egidija Čiricaitė artist and curator, London, UK (Appendix Nine).
- Peer review of the bookwork by Dr. Stella Bolaki, School of English, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK (Appendix Ten).
- Peer review of bookwork by Heléne van Aswegen, master bookbinder, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa (Appendix Eleven).

Dialogism, discursive perceptivity and heteroglossia, in tandem with self-conscious and reflexive modes of making, are argued to be central to my study as a whole. If these are the critical grounds upon which I position my Areas of Focus — as well as the characteristics of the connective tissue between the modalities at play in each Area of Focus — then my artistic practice, too, must fit within this contention. In arguing for my work's *bookness*, its *haecceity*, I revisit Deleuze and Guattari's notions of a plane of imminence, of haptic smooth and striated spaces and duration. I do this in order to explicate my practice, not in terms of 'what the book is about', but rather *how* it communicates its content. *Speaking in Tongues* has at its heart, a dialogue between two sets of hands,

each narrating a silent story. At play are dialogues between old and young, the gnarled and the pristine, hands with digits and hands activating the digital. These dialogues, however, do not only operate between the characters but also by means of the reflexivity of the book's structure. Bound open in *leporello* form, the book allows a reader a great deal of agency in the way they might view each narrative. The book's pages can be turned one by one, or opened, accordion-like, to reveal multiple pages, groups of pages or, indeed, the entire book. The younger character's narrative is printed on one side of the expansive page with the older character printed on the other side. I must state that, technically, exact registration printing on both sides of a *leporello* is complicated and, thus, rare. The book's reflexivity allows for multiple readings, each with their own sense of timing and duration. Given the book's small size it suggests that a reader might even be able to 'flip' the book's pages. The lack of a bound spine, however, makes this a difficult, if not impossible, task to achieve successfully. The dialogues are able to operate between moments within each character's narrative, between the characters' narratives, front and back, and, most importantly, at the pace and agency of the viewer, whose hands guide the possible multiple readings of the narratives. Thus, reflexivity in book structure is implicated in both a dialogical (between characters) and heteroglot manner (enunciated between characters, the reader/viewer and the conventions of the medium as a ground for utterance). Each operates through and by means of the book's self-consciousness form and structure: of being aware of itself as implicated in and, indeed, facilitating such readings. Thus, I argue, that in making the book in this way, I have been deeply perceptive of the discursive heritage of such book-objects in the world; their history, forms of affect, as well as their structural and material inferences in driving artistic content forward. In *Speaking in Tongues* these elements are further problematised when encountering the embedded video which is meant to be viewed on a tablet or projected ahead of the physical book on the same intimate scale as the book. This added and more complex set of temporal/spatial dialogues between book, video and viewer is heteroglot in nature as each operates on its/their own terms and at its/their own pace: each being spoken to by a set of other voices, differently paced, one of which is the agentic 'voice' of the viewer. Heléne van Aswegen (2018, Appendix Eleven) states: "I am inclined to situate *Speaking in*

Tongues in an intriguing conceptual space which recognises the niches where new innovations have opened up new possibilities for communication”.

By conjoining theory and practice in a dialogical discourse, I am able to demonstrate that the diverse activities which make up the four Areas of Focus embody, and are connected by, a mutual facilitation of *bookness*. Instead of being discrete activities, this Commentary and my Submissions are considered unified, demonstrable and tangible expressions of *Booknesses*.

PART TWO: Literature and Critical Terms

Literature review: A select literary history of book arts theory and practice

Although it is not within the scope of this Commentary to provide an exhaustive bibliography of the book arts, it is, however, important to plot particular writings which have helped to guide my theoretical and critical readings of the field. There is a myriad of texts on various book art industries including handcraft, industrial processes of production, presses, papermaking and bookbinding. There are texts on collectors and collections, bibliographies and databases, markets and outlets for trade (online bookstores, fairs and other points of sale) as well as discursive writings on book histories, philosophies, illustrated literature and theoretical positioning. What follows acknowledges a select body of writings that have not only been important to the international field and those working within it but, more importantly, have constituted my own foundational knowledge of the book arts. When I first began conducting research into the artist's book in 1995 there was very little literature on the field, however, as is evident from the dates supplied below, a significant body of writing began to be published at the time I began my research. This is significant as the literature and its growth runs parallel with my own academic, curatorial and artistic growth.

Foundational literature

Germano Celant's *Book as Art Work 1960/1972* was published by Nigel Greenwood Inc. London, in 1972. It is often cited as the first book published on the field. This exhibition catalogue attempted to produce "...the first analysis of books as artworks", not books as reproductions but works in and of themselves and in which Celant, preferred the term Bookwork, as coined by Ulises Carrión in the late 1960s (White 2018).

Diane Perry Vanderlip's catalogue for the exhibition *Artists Books* held at the Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, 23 March-20 April 1973 and the University

Art Museum, Berkeley, 16 January - 24 February 1974,¹¹ attempted to "... survey the many different types of books by artists from 1960 to the present (White 2018). The catalogue contains two essays; one by Lynn Lester Hershman titled *Slices of Silence, Parcels of Time: The Book as Portable Sculpture* and one by John Perreault titled *Some Thoughts on Book as Art*.¹² It is also the first instance of the term 'artists books'.¹³ Hereafter,¹⁴ Ulises Carrión's *Second Thoughts* (1980) and Joan Lyons (ed.) *Artists' Books: A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook* (1985) followed. In this latter publication, Dick Higgins's introduction provides critical pointers on issues of theory which I discuss in the next section and in Area of Focus One. In 1991, Timothy A. Eaton edited the catalogue and curated the exhibition *Book as Art* at the Boca Raton Museum of Art. Eaton also moderated the accompanying symposium titled *Books as Art: Their Form and Content in the 20th Century* held on 20 September 1991.

1995 and forward: A critical body of concomitant literature

In 1995, the year I began my postgraduate study of the field, Granary Books published Johanna Drucker's seminal survey and the first monograph on the subject (Klima 1998:8) — *The Century of Artists' Books*. That same year, in the

¹¹ Part of the exhibition went on to the Pratt Graphics Gallery in Brooklyn New York in October 1973 before moving onto Berkeley in 1974.

¹² Both essays explored the effects of technology on culture and books' roles within an impermanent technological space as intimate, personal, portable and democratic. Perreault stressed the relationship which artists' books have with their viewers' experiences as *haptic* and time-based, with the ability to "...break down or, at least, seriously present a front against the prevailing art system (Perreault 1973:15-21; Klima 1998:14). Perreault's notion of the haptic is developed in Area of Focus Four.

¹³ The use, or not, of an apostrophe and, indeed, where it is placed has also taken up an inordinate amount of space and time (Drucker 1995; Klima 1998:8, 10-11; Lorenz 2002:[np]; Philobiblon, amongst others). Sarah Mottalini curated the exhibition *Artists' Books: Where to Put the Apostrophe?* in the Lally Reading Room, Schaffer Library, Union College, Schenectady, NY, between 3 January – 6 August 2015. Mottalini explored the "prodigious confusion" when "delving into the field's scholarly history." Her exhibition embraced the field's confusions and controversies, taking books from the College's Permanent and Special Collections, and private collections. Available <https://muse.union.edu/mandeville/project/mot-juste/> accessed on 14 December 2018.

¹⁴ The exhibition *Possibilities* took place between 25 November – 21 December 1972 at the Gallery of the Otis College of Art, Los Angeles (Klima 1998:19; White 2018). Curated by Joan Hugo, the exhibition included "unusual items ... a diversified collection of books and non-book materials: artists' publications, original examples of unusual printing, limited editions, out-of-print ephemeral materials ... provid[ing] primary source material for research and reference ... the varied possibilities in the documentation of the visual arts" (Hugo cited in Klima 1998:19).

United Kingdom, Scholar Press published Stephen J. Bury's *Artists' Books: the Book as a Work of Art, 1963-1995* where its particular value lay in its comprehensive bibliographic listing of hundreds of key artists' books, an exhibition chronology and an extensive index. Three years later, in 1998, Granary Books added Stefan Klima's *Artists Books a Critical Survey of the Literature* to this pair of publications.¹⁵ Klima (1998:8) mentions that over 300 exhibitions occurred in the three peak periods: 1980-81; 1987-88 and 1991-93 and that 700 texts were published during the periods: 1977-78; 1980-81 and 1991-93. Klima (1998:8) notes that *documenta 6* alone "spawned eighteen reviews in 1977 and six the following year". Also in 1998, Distributed Art Publishers, New York published Cornelia Lauf and Clive Phillpot's (eds.) *Artist/Author: Contemporary Artists' Books*. Lauf and Philpot's international survey of approximately 100 contemporary artists' books from the 1980s and 90s, is conceived and designed as an artist's book by Renée Green. It includes 'fanzines', exhibition catalogues, visual poetry, sketchbooks and illustrated books as well as collaborations between artists and the commercial world, such as found in fashion design catalogues. The book includes in-depth essays tracing the evolution of this artistic medium in the last decades of the 20th century. Green's visual essay *Perplexed* is also included. The following year, 1999, Renée Riese Hubert and Judd D. Hubert, in collaboration with Granary Books, published *The Cutting Edge of Reading Artists' Books*. It serves "quite a different purpose" from the others in that it eschewed the broad scope of the field and its theory (which was Drucker's focus) and was limited to 40 more recently published books so as to closely analyse their "readability" and "book

¹⁵ It is critical to note that only works published in English form part of this survey. This is not meant to diminish the publications printed in French, German and Russian, in particular, but this limitation is pertinent to the available texts which have influenced and informed my own research. Anne Moeglin-Delcroix's 1997 *Esthétique du Livre d'Artiste: 1960-1980: Une Introduction à l'art Contemporain*, Paris, Jean-Michel Place/Bibliothèque nationale de France is, however, a seminal text published amongst those, in English, which appeared during the fertile period 1995-2000, as discussed in the text body. This text emphasises philosophical and theoretical investigations commensurate with the academic nature of the work (similar to Betty Bright's book – discussed later – it was developed from Moeglin-Delcroix's Doctoral thesis) and was reprinted in January 2012. This book continues a tradition of book arts publishing in France that begins with *The Book and the Artist. French Illustrated Book Trends, 1967-1976*, published in 1977 on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition of the same name, organized by the National Library at the Mansart Gallery, 24 June - 11 September 1977. Moeglin-Delcroix also published the exhibition catalogue *Livres d'Artistes Collection Semaphore* in conjunction with la Bibliothèque publique d'information et la Bibliothèque nationale (Centre Georges Pompidou) 12 June - 7 October 1985.

artistry” (Hubert & Hubert 1999:13). In 2000, Granary Books published a collection of essays, edited by Jerome Rothenberg and Steven Clay, titled *A Book of the Book. Some Works & Projections about the Book & Writing*. This catholic set of 64 essays across 537 pages included contributions by artist’s bookmakers and theorists Keith Smith, Marjorie Perloff, Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Tom Phillips, Johanna Drucker, Dieter Roth, Alison Knowles and Simon Cutts. I group these texts together as they constitute a ‘flowering’ of publishing on the field that, rather serendipitously, coincided with the very years in which I began and completed my postgraduate Masters studies.

It took another five years before, in 2005, Granary Books published an important new monograph on the field, Betty Bright’s *No Longer Innocent: Book Art in America 1960-1980*. Whereas Drucker’s work focusses upon particular categories as a “zone of activity...made at the intersection of a number of different disciplines, fields, and ideas” (Drucker 1995:1), Bright’s work differs (from this and the Huberts’) in that her study explores artists’ books from within the context of the people, presses and means of production responsible for their making.

Apart from these seminal books there exist a number of important periodicals and journals. These are perhaps more critical literatures in that they are continuous (often printing two editions per calendar year) and, in this manner, are able to timeously reflect on current work and discourses and, often, the proceedings of book arts conferences, symposia and book fairs. It is also here that my own research begins to be mentioned. The most important journals are: *Print Collector’s Newsletter* (1970-1996; then *On Paper*, 1996-1998 then *Art on Paper*, 1998-2009); *Umbrella* (1978-2008);¹⁶ *Visible Language* (first published in 1967-ongoing); *The Bonefolder* (2004-2012) and the *Journal of Artists’ Books* (JAB) (1994-ongoing). More recently, and reflecting the field within the new millennium, is the series of publications from Impact Press, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK. They comprise *Book Arts Newsletter* (BAN) (2002-

¹⁶ My 1996 exhibition *Artists’ Books from the Ginsberg Collection* is mentioned in Volume 19, Number 2, 1996, p61. Available <http://ulib.iupuidigital.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Umbrella/id/2568/rec/2> accessed 14 December 2018.

ongoing), *Artist's Book Yearbook* (2012/13-ongoing) and *The Blue Notebook: a Journal for Artists' Books* (2006-ongoing).¹⁷

Impact Press also published *A Manifesto for the Book* (2010) by Sarah Bodman and Tom Sowden which explored, through a series of workshops, visits and interviews the complexities which exist between notions of the book, artists' books, artists' publications, the book arts, ephemeral printed materials, e-books and the impact of the internet on all these practices. In order to achieve their aims, Bodman and Sowden (2010:5) tried to "include all the book related activity that artists engage with." Starting with a classification diagram, Artists' Books Tree (ABTREE), they asked a host of international participants¹⁸ to edit the original diagram in order to muster as broad a set of classifications as possible under the encompassing designation Artists' Publications.

Since its launch in 2007, the publications and online symposium proceedings (recorded podcasts) produced by Peter Routledge Koch's Codex Foundation contribute an ongoing collection of texts on the book arts. In 2013, JRP and Ringier & Les Presses du Réel published Clive Philpot's collection of writings titled *Booktrek. Selected Essays on Artists' Books (1972-2010)*. That same year, Arnaud Desjardin published *The Book on Books on Artist Books*, a bibliography of books, pamphlets and catalogues on artists' books that takes stock of a wide variety of artist's book publications since the early 1970s. The book attempts "to draw attention to the kind of documentary trace of distribution, circulation and reception they represent" (Anagram Books 2013).

There are, of course, a multitude of books, journals, essays, academic theses, tracts and other texts on the field of artists' books.¹⁹ I have limited my selection to those that, in my opinion, have been most influential in directing the field in historical, critical and discursive terms and which have been most important for me over the course of my research. Thus, texts in tangential fields, and which

¹⁷ Recently launched journals on the book arts, or which, from time to time, carry content associated with the artist's book include *Openings: Studies in Book Art* (College Book Arts Association, USA, 2012-ongoing) and *Book 2.0* (Intellect, Bristol UK, 2011-ongoing).

¹⁸ My research is included in the publication on pp154-156 as is the pleasing inclusion of voices from outside the USA / UK bloc, including those of Eastern Europe and the Global South.

¹⁹ This huge range can be accessed via a registration application on my website at <http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=library>

have a bearing on my submitted published materials and practices must also be acknowledged. Critical texts that are germane to Area of Focus Three: *The online documentation of artists' books – databases and the acknowledgement of affect* include a pair of important books devoted to the cataloguing of artists' books. The first is the ARLIS/UK & Ireland *Artists' Books a Cataloguers Manual*, Art Library Society 2006, reprinted in 2012, and the second is Anne Thurmann-Jajes 2010 *Manual for Artists' Publications (MAP): Cataloguing Rules, Definitions, and Descriptions* published in Bremen by the Research Centre for Artists' Publications at the Weserburg, Museum of Modern Art.

Since January 1972, *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* has become a critical resource for the documentation of material in art libraries and has often published salient texts on or about artists' books²⁰ as well as on the difficulties which artists' books present both the cataloguer and the library.²¹

²⁰ For example, appearing in more recent issues, are Sarah Carter and Alex O'Keefe's *Revealing Invisible Collections: Implementing the ARLIS/NA Artists' Books Thesaurus to Provide Online Access* (Volume 37, Number 2, Fall 2018); Sara DeWaay's *Using Learning Outcomes to Create Activities for Artists' Books Instruction* (Volume 37, Number 1, Spring 2018); Melanie E. Emerson's *Conversations with the Avant-Garde: The Books of Mikhail Karasik* and Colin Post's *Ensuring the Legacy of Self-Taught and Local Artists: A Collaborative Framework for Preserving Artists' Archives* (both in Volume 36, Number 1, Spring 2017); Sonja Staum-Kuniej's *The Power of the Arts to Speak: The Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here Project at IUPUI*, Alexandra Purcell's *Artists' Books, Digital Exhibitions, and the Copyright Issues that Surround Them* and Eva Athanasiu's *Belonging: Artists' Books and Readers in the Library* (all in Volume 34, Number 2, Fall 2015); Amanda C. R. Clark's *Contemporary Chinese Artists' Books: New Artistic Voices in a Time of Transition*, Michelle Strizever's *Artists' Books DC: Developing Access, Promoting Research, and Facilitating Browsing* and Louise A. Kulp's *Teaching with Artists' Books: An Interdisciplinary Approach for the Liberal Arts* (all in Volume 34, Number 1, Spring 2015). It is clear, from these entries alone, that *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* has become an importance purveyor of research on the artist's book.

²¹ The complex bibliographic relationship which artists' books have with both the gallery / museum (in which their *bookness*, accessibility and handlability is considered a curatorial problem) and the library (in which their status as works of art confounds the cataloguing and storing of these objects) is well documented: Ek Dahl 1999; Rossman 2003; Kulp 2005; Farman 2007; Lilker 2009; Philpot 2013:15. The infamous lack of definition (Higgins 1985:11; Drucker 1995:1-15; Klima 1998:37; Hubert & Hubert 1999:7; Bright 2005:xiii; Moeglin-Delcroix 2005:17 and many more) has encouraged Keith Dietrich (2011:5) to observe that: "Some of the most thought-provoking artists' books are to be found on the margins of definitions where boundaries are stretched to their limits (Bicknell 1996:24-25). It is because of this lack of a fixed identity and definition that artists' books find themselves in the liminal space they occupy". Dietrich (2011:15) argues that "[t]his liminal space can therefore be read as an intersection where ideas and concepts, be they artistic, cultural, political or social, are in constant states of confrontation and intercession" a rich and protean (Hubert & Hubert 1999:7-14) space for artists' books. Deborah Haynes (1995:131) conjoins these notions of the liminal, hybridity, flux and change with notions of answerability, outsidership and unfinalisability that, she argues, "form the basis of Mikhail Bakhtin's early aesthetic essays". These notions help me forge my ideas in my article *Towards a*

Art Libraries Society of North America's *Artists' Books Thesaurus* (ARLIS/NAABT)²² is an ongoing, experimental website that explores a vocabulary for indexing artists' books and their features. The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill's *Artists' Books Critical Index* as well as Drucker's *Artists' Books Online* are also accessible online projects designed to promote critical engagement with artists' books and to provide access to a digital repository of metadata. I return to these texts and expand upon them in Area of Focus Three: *The online documentation of artists' books, databases and the acknowledgement of affect*.

The significant literature informing my submitted writings, and especially those on Bakhtin and Safran Foer, as well as all appropriate literature for published articles in the other Areas of Focus are listed in the specific bibliographies accompanying these texts in the Portfolio of Evidence.

Directives from the literature: A thread that led to writing (Area of Focus One)

Stimulus/Response – Scratching Away at Some Intrinsic and Extrinsic Problems in Theorising the Artist's Book from the Far End of a 'Not-so-Dark Continent' (Paton 2013) was originally developed as a contextualising introduction to, but later dropped from, the article *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book* (Paton 2012). In *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning* I applied the Russian philosopher and literary theorist Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia to the task of proposing a tentative theoretical foundation for the artist's book. My research had taken me in two directions, firstly to Bakhtin's *Discourse in the Novel* as well as Michael Holquist's *Introduction*, both published in the *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (1981) and secondly, to the 22nd edition of the *Journal of Artists' Books*

Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book (2012) submitted as the major text and foundational argument for this research and Commentary. [All references listed in this footnote appear in the list of References of the relevant articles: see Submissions One, Two and Ten].

²² Available <http://allisonjai.com/abt/vocab/index.php>.

(JAB 22) (2007). Together they helped me establish a lineage of a call for a more rigorous theoretical underpinning of the artist's book and which is the focus of *Stimulus/Response* (Paton 2013).

This lineage begins in 1985 when Dick Higgins' (in Lyons 1985:12) asks pertinent questions regarding the field's relationship with a theoretical discourse and who is responsible for this work. He states:

Perhaps the hardest thing to do in connection with the artist's book is to find the right language for discussing it. Most of our criticism in art is based on the concept of a work with separable meanings, content, and style – 'this is what it says' and 'here is how it says what it says.' But the language of normative criticism is not geared towards the discussion of an experience, which is the main focus of most artists' books. Perhaps this is why there is so little good criticism of the genre. ... 'What am I experiencing when I turn these pages?' That is what the critic of the artist's book must ask, and for most critics it is an uncomfortable question. This is a problem that must be addressed.

Klima (1998:9-10) cites this passage early in his book asserting that the broad debates in the field

failed at times to notice what was truly occurring in the workshops,²³ refusing to alter its course. Instead, it reiterated old words and espoused its inchoate rhetoric. Often, those who produced the books themselves were less interested in a debate which sought to defend a position which rarely existed – in many cases believing the words to have little relevance to their activities.

This tension between theory and practice still exists and, 20 years after Higgins' call, was evidenced in Drucker's 2005 article *Critical Issues / Exemplary Works* published in *The Bonefolder* (edition 1:2 2005:3-15). Drucker's (2005:3) rebuke of, and challenge to, the broad book arts community to develop a discrete theoretical voice is clear when she states:

Because the field of artists' books suffers from being under-theorized, under-historicized, under-studied and under-discussed, it isn't taken very seriously. In the realms of fine art or literature elaborate mechanisms exist for sorting and filtering work. But the community in which artists' books are made, bought, sold, collected, hasn't evolved these structures.

²³ Perhaps giving impetus to Bright's research direction and focus in *No Longer Innocent* (2005).

Drucker (2005:3) continues:

I'd even go so far as to say that the conceptual foundation for such operations doesn't yet exist, not really. We don't have a canon of artists, we don't have a critical terminology for book arts aesthetics with a historical perspective, and we don't have a good, specific, descriptive vocabulary on which to form our assessment of book works. These three things are needed, even though each has its own problems and will raise hackles and objections.

In the very next edition of *The Bonefolder* (2:1) the following editorial postscript appears directly after Drucker's article *Beyond Velveeta* (2005:10-11):

Ms. Drucker's original article in Vol.1, No. 2, of this journal unleashed a number of responses, two of which are published in this issue. ... As may be inferred Ms Drucker's article touched a nerve, especially regarding the issue of criticism and distinctions among the types of works and groups producing those works, but also about the need to be able to describe and explain one's work. ... It is the editors' hope that this discussion continues to contribute to the greater understanding of the book arts.

This tension between theory and practice was the guiding theme for the *Action/interaction: Book/arts* conference (A/I) held in June 2007 at Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts, Chicago.²⁴ Conference coordinator Elisabeth Long (JAB 2007:4-6) stated that, among their many aims "... we wanted a conference that focused on the ideas that underlie book artists' work, not the techniques. ... We had also wanted the conference to raise the level of critical discourse within the field ... to support more rigorous critique and analysis". The success or failure of Long's conference aims is the focus of my article *Stimulus/Response* (Paton 2013) [Submission One]. My article *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts* (Paton 1212) [Submission Two] was written as a self-conscious response to the lineage that began with Higgins (1985), was given impetus by Drucker (2005) and the insubstantial findings of the A/I conference (2007). As my articles appeared in 2012-13, it is important for me to interrogate the space of book art theory in the years after 2005. In carefully perusing the extant literature, particularly those appearing in the journals listed below, it seems clear that most journal articles and symposium/conference papers cover topics associated with contexts of

²⁴ The 22nd edition of the *Journal of Artists' Books* (2007) was devoted to the proceedings of the A/I conference.

production rather than theoretical tropes. As mentioned above, these contexts include making (presses and print processes, binding, matters of production and craftsmanship) and collecting (collectors and collections, libraries, databases and issues of access). They also include analyses of thematics (image/text relationships, poetic/literary themes, contextual and polemical subjectivities), analyses of the object-hood of artists' books (historical, critical, formal, visual and aesthetic examinations of current work) and teaching contexts (university/college courses and pedagogical strategies). It is clear, however, that most journal editions do not engage much with the deeper theoretical issues of the field.

My analysis of the journals *The Blue Notebook* (UK); *Artist's Book Yearbook* (UK); *The Bonefolder* (USA) and *The Journal of Artists' Books* [JAB], (USA) reveals a paucity of meaty theoretical material. Appendix Two reflects those editions in which a theoretical objective is, at least in part, a focus of the writer. From the information presented in the Appendix, it is possible to extrapolate that the theorisation of the artist's book is represented by:

- 11/146 articles in *The Blue Notebook*: 8% of all articles
- 4/31 articles in *The Artist's Book Yearbook*: 13% of all articles
- 5/129 articles in *The Bonefolder*: 4% of all articles, and
- 25/187 articles in *The Journal of Artists' Books*: 13% of all articles

and that, as an average of all articles published in these four journals, less than 10% have investigated the theoretical field of the book arts. Clearly there is a palpable gap into which I have inserted my texts, and my published material of 2012-13 is relevant as, importantly, it predates a particularly significant reflection which I briefly reference here.

In JAB35 (2014:15) Thomas Hvid Krommann wrote the following on the occasion of the publication of Anne Mglin-Delcroix's *Esthétique du livre d'artiste* and Clive Phillpot's *Booktrek*:

'Where are the critics? The serious historians? The zones of discourse in which the field can reflect upon its own conceptual values? Ten years after the initial publication of [*The Century of Artists' Books*], we are still struggling to get such activity to emerge' [stated in the preface to the 2004 edition of the book]. Another ten

years have passed since then. Have things changed? Yes and no. ... There is still no counterpart to the critical response that exists within the literary field. ... On the other hand ... since Drucker raised this critique ... the artist's book now has a history, canonical works, canonized artists, collections, fairs, experts, various subsidies, research programmes and so on – as well as an increasing amount of well-informed secondary literature.

I argue that my submitted articles on this very issue are relevant, impactful and present new knowledge within this secondary literature.

Positioning of critical terms for Area of Focus One: A theoretical underpinning of the artist's book as a field

In this section, I undertake a close reading of the concept of *bookness*. I show how it can be framed by Bakhtin's conceptual lenses of dialogism and heteroglossia. In doing this, I argue that these two lenses help operationalise the self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and reflexivity which characterise and define *bookness*.

Notwithstanding the fact that the term *bookness* has been loosely applied within the field for many decades, it is often considered a self-evident concept that enjoys very little critical examination. Philip Smith (1996 online)²⁵ wrote *The Whatness of Bookness, or What is a Book* in response to a letter Peter Verheyen²⁶ wrote to the editor of the Designer Bookbinders Newsletter concerning the term *bookness*. Smith (1996) claims to have:

coined the term 'bookness' in the 1970s (after reading in James Joyce's *Ulysses* of the 'horseness of horses' – the whatness of horses – this led me to coin it as 'the whatness of the book' or 'bookness'), and I have written and spoken about it elsewhere, with various updates of understanding of the issue. Some references to 'bookness' appeared in my article in *DB Review* No.14 1979; in my introduction to the catalogue *Modern British Bookbinding* in 1985; in an essay in *A Bookbinders' Florilegium* produced by John Chalmers (HRHRC Texas, 1988). More recently a note appeared appended to my essay on 'Understanding the Physical Book Arts' in *The Private Library Journal* 6:2, dated Summer 1993; in *Umbrella* magazine shortly after that, and in lectures in the USA and Canada in 1995.

²⁵ Available <http://www.philobiblon.com/bookness.shtml>.

²⁶ Verheyen is the editor of the online Book Arts Listserv, Philobiblon.

Smith (1996) defines a *book* as “the hinged multi-planar vehicle or substrate on which texts, verbal, or tactile (the latter would include braille and other relief or embossed effects, found objects, pop-ups) may be written, drawn, reproduced, printed or assembled”. He goes on to extrapolate that *bookness* constitutes “[t]he qualities which have to do with a book. In its simplest meaning the term covers the packaging of multiple planes held together in fixed or variable sequence by some kind of hinging mechanism, support, or container, associated with a visual/verbal content called a text”. Thus, for Smith (1996), *bookness* “should not strictly speaking include pre-codex carriers of text such as the scroll or the clay tablet, in fact nothing on a single leaf or planar surface such as a TV screen, poster or hand-bill”. Consequently, his (1996) concept of *bookness* is limited to the form and functionality of the codex and he is concerned that the term is

being stretched to include forms which carry a digitalized or electronic text such as a CD, a hard disk or a microchip, or miscellaneous forms such as spirals of paper with continuous text, or pyramids, dodecahedrons and other geometric multiplanar forms (which could also have text inscribed on them).

He would not describe all these things as having the quality of *bookness* or being strictly covered by the definition as, he (1996) argues, “a blank book is still a book, but a blank dodecahedron or unmarked spiral of paper is not a book, it is a dodecahedron etc. A text is a text and not a book, but any other object one likes to imagine may perhaps be its conveyance”. Smith (1996) concludes by stating:

A text can be inscribed on anything but this does not make it a book, or have the quality of bookness, even as a scroll retains its scrollness without any text on it. ... The book is not the text, although it is traditionally associated with it, and these two elements appear often to be mistaken for the same thing.

And thus structural limitation rather than conceptual freedom pervade Smith’s definition of the term. Complex leporello and gatefold structures as well as a multitude of materials from which the book is made are permitted so long as a recognisable classic codex-form is still palpably present.²⁷ The upshot of such a

²⁷ In *Typologising the Artist's Book* Duncan Chappell (Art Libraries Journal 28 no4 12-20 2003) states that Brad Freeman “is dismissive of artists who employ the book as a sculptural element and who fail to fully explore and analyse the codex form”. Chappell is citing Freeman’s ‘Journal

position is that many canonical artists' books might fall foul of this limitation and be dispossessed of their *bookness*²⁸ especially when, as Smith (1996) states: "The book-maker's art should be distinguished from the art-maker's book".

In Drucker's first chapter of *The Century of Artists' Books* titled *The Artist's Book as Idea and Form* she (1995:9) states:

The desire to engage with the elusive character of what constitutes a book is ... to seek critical terms on which to examine a book's bookness, its identity as a set of aesthetic functions, cultural operations, formal conceptions, and metaphysical spaces.

Drucker (1995:14) clearly places conceptual, book-like works, sculptural books, book objects and book-shaped objects (BSOs) "just beyond the zone of artist's [sic] books", explaining that

there is enough to deal with in trying to understand what a book is when it functions as a book, when it provides a reading or viewing experience sequenced into a finite space of text and or images. ... I am convinced that many of these works belong more to the world of sculpture or installation art than to the world of books. They may function as icons of book-ness or book identity, but not provide an experience associated with books themselves.

Drucker's focus on *bookness* seems intrinsically bound up "in exploring the *experience* of the artist's book itself and articulating its potential and existence as an artistic space" (1995:14 my italics). Unlike Smith, however, Drucker (1995:14) is prepared to accept that "[t]he nature of the book as an electronic form — whether in hypertext, CD-Rom, or as an infinite and continually mutating archive of collective memory and space — is already functioning as an extension of the artist's book form". It is therefore important to take note when Drucker (1995:4) states that "artist's [sic] books are almost always at least self-conscious about the structure and meaning of the book as a form". She (1995:21) continues by noting that "an artist's book should be a work by an artist self-conscious about book form" and that it is this particular intersection of artist and book, where self-consciousness resides as an operationalising element of *bookness*.

of Artists' Books Talk', in Alexander, Charles, ed. *Talking the Boundless Book: Art, Language, and the Book Arts*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Center for Book Arts, 1995, p.133-134.

²⁸ Shirley Sharoff's *Great Wall of China* (1991) is an example. Despite the hinged pages and leaves that fold out sequentially, for some, its objecthood seems in danger of eliminating its *bookness*.

In *Embodying Bookness: Reading as Material Act*, (JAB30 2011:7-13) Manuel Pórtela explores not only Drucker's usage of the term as a concept but explores how she operationalises it in her own bookworks, *From A to Z* (1977) and *The Work Made Flesh* (1989). Pórtela (2011:7) states that:

By means of specific formal operations the book becomes a machine for creating awareness of codex codes through a self-referential rhetoric. Their bookness points to the specificity of their material form as books, i.e., the fact that as a signifying space they cannot be reproduced by or translated into other media – and marks the codex as a signifier that repeatedly attempts to position itself as a particular kind of experiential event.

In his analysis of Drucker's *From A to Z*, Pórtela (2011:8) discerns that

texts are forced to acknowledge their limitations in telling themselves through self-reference to typographic availability and scarcity. Self-description and marginal annotations split the narrative into several layers of ironic commentary that constantly downplay the text's own authority.

In his reading of *The Word Made Flesh*, Pórtela (2011:11) observes that, "the incarnation of the word is obtained by self-reference to its typographical layout through a given reading performance. But this embodiment of the word is made to take the flesh of paper as well." And thus, "to read *The Word Made Flesh* is a renewed optical and tactile relation with its self-consciously crafted printness and bookness" (Pórtela 2011:12). He concludes his investigation into embodied *bookness* by stating:

Self-reflexivity in codex works contains useful critical insights about the semantic possibilities opened up by formal interventions at the various levels of a book's materiality. ... A general theory of self-reflexive formal operations in books will provide a more powerful description of writing and reading acts (Pórtela 2011:12).

Thus, Pórtela implies that self-referentiality, self-reflexivity and self-consciousness are shown to be inextricably bound up with a book's *bookness*, at least in the two exemplars examined. In her chapter *Self-Reflexivity in Book Form*, Drucker (1995:161) states that "self-consciousness and self-reflexivity in any art form requires a critical language which describes structures and methods. Such a language is termed 'metacritical' – it is able to articulate critical issues rather than engage with formal or thematic concerns". It seems important

to repeat Drucker's (1995:161) articulation of the critical aspect of this language when she states:

The familiarity of the basic conventions of books tends to banalize them: the structures by which books present information, ideas, or diversions, become habitual so that they erase, rather than foreground, their identity. One can, in other words, forget about a book even in the course of reading it. ... But when a book calls attention to the conceits and conventions by which it normally effaces its identity, then it performs a theoretical operation ... [it] calls attention to its own processes of *enunciation*. ... Self-conscious attention to the means of enunciation often lay bare the devices of literary or visual strategies of illusionism – as when a character in a novel addresses the reader about the fact that he or she *is* a character in a novel.

I pick up the image of 'a character in a novel' in Submission Three (Annexure C in Portfolio of Evidence) and, having defined, positioned and conjoined critical terms in Part Three of this Commentary, I argue for how they are operationalised in relation to Bakhtin's ideas of dialogism and heteroglossia with particular focus on selected artists' books. This work is found in the article *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book* (Submission Two). This Submission is discursively contextualised and positioned by the article *Stimulus/Response – Scratching Away at Some Intrinsic and Extrinsic Problems in Theorising the Artist's Book from the Far End of a 'Not-so-Dark Continent'* (Submission One). My third Submission *The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing Unconventional Texts from Kerouac to the Artist's Book* (2010) completes the submission of journal articles. In the latter article, I argue for how the elements of self-consciousness and reflexivity — which are actioned through Bakhtin's theoretical lenses of dialogism and heteroglossia — constitute qualities of *bookness* found in artists' books and that are unusually but successfully deployed in the commercial publication *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (published in London by Hamish Hamilton and Houghton Mifflin in Boston, Mass. in 2005) by American author Jonathan Safran Foer.

PART THREE: DISCURSIVE ANALYSES.

Area of Focus One: A theoretical underpinning of the artist's book as a field

Submission One: *Stimulus/Response – Scratching Away at Some Intrinsic and Extrinsic Problems in Theorising the Artist's Book from the Far End of a 'Not-so-Dark Continent'* (2013) (Annexure A).

In this article, described above as a contextualising article, I explore the 'lineage of a theoretical gap' that began with Higgins (1985), was given impetus by Drucker (2005) and the insubstantial findings of the A/I conference (2007). It is an important article in that, despite it being published after *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts*, it was written first and was, in fact, the opening section of what was later to be divided into two discrete articles. Apart from establishing the 'lineage of a theoretical gap', *Stimulus/Response* acknowledges two South African articles that also enter into the 'gap': Estelle Liebenberg-Barkhuizen (2009:65-73) forges an argument for the artist's book to be examined from a postmodern perspective. Barkhuizen is well aware of the issues emanating from the A/I conference, referring to a number of the participants' contributions. But Barkhuizen (2009:70) goes on to suggest that:

The elusive theoretical foundation for artists' books is therefore possibly due to the proposed definitions of artists' books as being grounded in concepts of the work of art as autonomous, subscribing to modernist paradigms and viewing the artist's book not as operating in the field of cultural production but as marginalised to the modernist mainstream.

Yet asking for artists' books to be considered as postmodern is exactly what Drucker (1995:8) and Hubert & Hubert (1999:7) declare up front, the latter stating:

Partly because they defy easy classification, bookworks feel quite at home among postmodern artworks. Like other postmodern genres, such as installations, artists' books allow, and even require, versatility in the use of materials; and, by virtue of their built-in complexity, encourage intertextuality as well as multimedia experimentation.

It was by means of artists' books and book-objects, ephemeral published matter and democratic multiples that Fluxus artist Dick Higgins²⁹ revolutionised the relationship between artist, gallery and public in the 1960s. This is hardly an argument for operating outside of 'the field of cultural production' nor as 'marginalised to the modernist mainstream'.

The second piece of writing is Keith Dietrich's 2011 inaugural address at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. In his address, he (2011:14) argues that the artist's book inhabits an "ambiguous space between artwork and book" and within "... this undefined space where boundaries dissolve, the bookwork transcends the threshold from one space to another." Dietrich (2011:14) evokes Victor Turner's (1967:97) concept of liminality and the liminal space as a state "betwixt and between" all the recognised fixed points of structural classification in space-time. For Dietrich (2011:14) it is clear that when examining liminality one is, in effect, dealing with the unstructured, a condition allied to what Turner (1967:98) terms "the unbounded, the infinite, the limitless". Thus, liminality can be read as an intersection where ideas and concepts are in constant states of confrontation and intercession: a rich theoretical space for describing the artist's book. Dietrich (2011:14) then joins the space between these states of confrontation, intercession and cultural hybridity by evoking Homi K. Bhabha's (1994:5) idea of liminality as an "interstitial passage between fixed identifications". For Dietrich (2011:15) the notion of liminality "is important in describing some of the phenomena regarding artists' books ... namely their transdisciplinary, transcultural and hybrid nature". With particular import for a theoretical underpinning of artists' books, and which certainly deserves further exploration, Dietrich (2011:15) calls for a post-colonial as well as poststructuralist reading of the field. He (2011:15) states that this liminal state unlocks a hybrid space, or what Bhabha refers to as a "Third Space of enunciation", positioned betwixt and between the world of books and the conventional world of art. Dietrich (2011:15) adds that, as the artist's book does not quite belong to either of these worlds, this liminal space allows for a freedom of movement and the dynamic exchange of ideas, concepts and methods of working. What is of particular interest to me in this reference to Bhabha's

²⁹ Higgins published through Something Else Press with artists such as Daniel Spoerri, Emmett Williams and John Cage.

(1994:86) notion of the “third space” as interstitial, liminal, unfixed, in flux, dissolved and thus undefined, is the term *enunciation*. This term, which evinces articulation, certainly focuses the theoretical discourse upon justification, evidence and proof and reminds one of Drucker’s (2007:161) reference to artists’ books in which technical and graphic conceits are exploited in order to call attention to the conventions by which, through constant exposure, a book normally neutralises its identity. Drucker (2007:161) describes this as a book’s theoretical operation of enunciation by which attention is called to its own processes and structure. Neither Barkhuizen nor Dietrich, however, unpacks the postmodern or the liminal, interstitial third space, for which they argue. Neither deploys an analytical methodology to demonstrate how the artist’s book operates as a multi-authored postmodern form or as an object of liminality and it is probable that this was not their intention. I have, however, identified a theoretical gap, outlined its lineage, described who has attempted to address this gap and how and positioned my writings within this gap. By writing *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts* (2012) I propose a new theoretical position within book arts theory.

Submission Two: *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin’s Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist’s Book* (2012) (Annexure B).

Having positioned the critical terms self-consciousness and self-reflexivity (or self-referentiality) as central operationalising elements of the notion of *bookness* and contextualised my research within this ‘theoretical gap’ it is time to relate how both these terms are deployed as conceptual and programmatic elements within artists’ books theory. In my article, *Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts*, I argue that Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia, which operates underneath a broad dialogism,³⁰ helps me operationalise the way in which artists’ books enunciate themselves self-consciously and reflexively (Drucker 2007:161). This operation is important in demonstrating how artists’

³⁰ Sue Vice (1997:20) states that “dialogism describes the way languages interact, while heteroglossia describes the languages themselves” whilst Michael Holquist (2002:69) describes heteroglossia as governing the “operation of meaning” in the kind of utterance we call texts, “as it does in any utterance”. This notion is derived from Julia Kristeva’s (1980) spatial conception of language’s poetic operation, which is the horizontal and the vertical status of the word [see Figure 1].

books call attention to themselves and de-neutralise their identities. Drucker's reference to a 'character in a novel' is important connective tissue between this theoretical context and my article's contention that Bakhtin's focus on the novel, allows me to isolate some critical operational elements with which to proceed.

Firstly, Michael Holquist (2002:72) states that "Bakhtin is particularly drawn to the novel, the genre least secure (or *most self-conscious*) about its own status as a genre" (my italics). Secondly, Bakhtin draws attention to "the novel's peculiar ability to open a window in discourse from which the extraordinary variety of social languages can be perceived" (Holquist 2002:72). Thirdly, in relation to Bakhtin's two major protagonists and foci of study, Rabelais and Dostoevsky, Holquist (2002:72–73) states that Rabelais and Dostoevsky are significant for Bakhtin not merely because they write novels, but because they advance the work of *novelness*, and it is *novelness* — not the novel, nor Rabelais, not even Dostoevsky — that is the name of his real hero. From this, I isolate three critical elements of Bakhtin's thought which might underpin the artist's book's theoretical act of enunciation: self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and self-reflexivity (or *bookness*). Heteroglossia, I argue, activates these elements and governs the operation of meaning. Bakhtin (cited in Vice 1997:19) tells us that heteroglossia is a double-voiced discourse, as it serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. Heteroglot differences can produce a variety of effects related to time (past and present), space (geography, nationality) and class, amongst other differences (Vice 1997:21). In *Discourse in the Novel* (1975:291), Bakhtin points out that heteroglossia represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth, all given a bodily form. Bakhtin (1975:292) continues by suggesting that such difference represents "specific points of view on the world" which will "mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically". Bakhtin's positioning of heteroglossia, as multiple languages and "registers" or "sociolect" voices (Vice 1997:18), suggests not only the novel's double-voiced construction of characters and narrators but also the self-conscious awareness of the

construction of a work's content, shot-through with heteroglot utterances of different kinds. These utterances are characterised as: stylisation; comic, ironic or parodic discourse; and the refracting discourses of the narrator and the languages of a character, author and whole "incorporated genres" (Bakhtin 1975:324).

More importantly to my argument, Bakhtin (1975:321) asserts that these incorporated genres include "non-literary forms (menus, advertisements)", and it is here where his heteroglot discursive perceptivity opens itself to the possibility of imagistic and other forms of scripto-visual text for inclusion and analysis. The socio-political context in which Bakhtin theorised the novel's importance supports his argument that, once it enters a text, heteroglossia is automatically "consciously opposed [to] the linguistic centre of the verbal-ideological life of the nation and the epoch" (1975:273). This positioning of texts, as implicated in the political life of societies, can help to contextualise how, when and why the artist's book rose to prominence in the 1960s. During this time they signalled a form which consciously attempted to disrupt, de-centre and oppose the authority of the *livre d'artiste*, the fine-press book, the illustrated works of literature and, in fact, any authoritative monoglossic tome including, in some instances, the artist's catalogue and the institutions controlling these texts. The artist's book even exploits the seemingly private text, some of which Bakhtin (1975:321) identifies as "the confessional, the diary, travel notes, biography, [and] the personal letter", all of which have found themselves meaningful subjects of artists' books. In heteroglot terms, the author, the narrator, characters and the reader, become the artist, subjects, characters, characterisations and the viewer, each aware of the positions and roles the others take up and play. Any textual or scripto-visual utterance in the artist's book, is dialogicalised heteroglossia. Having established these critical terms I then explore dialogism individually and comparatively in the works of Stéphane Mallarmé's *Un Coup de dés Jamais n'abolira le Hasard* [A Throw of the Dice will never Abolish Chance] (1914) and Marcel Broodthaers' reactionary *Un Coup de dés Jamais n'abolira le Hasard: Image* (1969). The latter is then, itself, interrogated within the context of Buzz Spector's reactionary altered catalogue *Marcel Broodthaers* (1988). This dialogism in artists' books: books speaking to each other across time and context — operationalising field, history, temporality and spatiality — is then

contrasted with the heteroglot texts of Ulises Carrión’s *For Fans and Scholars Alike* (1987) and Helen Helen Douglas and Telfer Stokes’ *Real Fiction: An Enquiry into the Bookeresque* (1987). In these artists’ books, I argue, heteroglossia is characterised as books speaking to and within themselves as multi-vocal art objects — operationalising self-consciousness and self-reflexivity. To help visualise this idea, the diagram below [Figure 1] has been developed from Julia Kristeva’s *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) and demonstrates a conceptual map of artists’ books’ broad dialogism which operates across time and context and under which, heteroglossia is able to operationalise the genre’s self-conscious and reflexive qualities. Together, I argue, they constitute a new theoretical underpinning for the book arts.

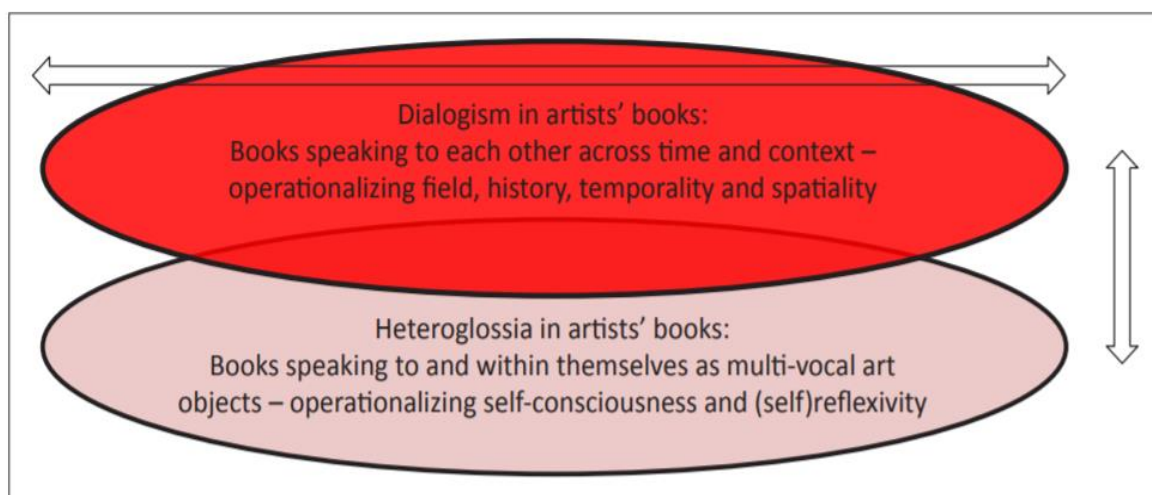


Figure 1. A conceptual map of artists' books' broad dialogism which operates across time and context and under which, heteroglossia is able to operationalise the genre's self-conscious and reflexive qualities. Adapted from Kristeva, J., 1980, *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Submission Three: *The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing Unconventional Texts from Kerouac to the Artist's Book* (2010) (Annexure C).

With Jack Kerouac’s iconic scroll manuscript of *On the Road* (1951) exhibited outside of the US for the first time in 2009, my article draws attention to the imagistic properties of texts in selected contemporary novels and the influence of artists who work within and around the conventions of the book. By forging an argument for the importance of working outside of the accepted conventions of the novel’s structure and form, Kerouac’s inventiveness invites us to find other ways in which the novel may be informed by the interpretive acts of artists who use the form of the book in their work. This article explores the relationship

between Jonathan Safran Foer's novel *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2005) and structural, linguistic and visual conventions found in selected artists' books. Of particular importance are the following: the self-reflexive interventions made by the author to draw attention to the novel's meta-narratives; the seemingly random use of imagery as elliptical illuminations; the manipulation of the typographic conventions of the page for imagistic and affective purposes, and lastly, the use of a flip-book structure at the end of the book, suggesting an alternative conclusion and the reader's collusion in averting history. The novel's unusual structural, linguistic and visual manipulations are analysed through the lens of selected earlier novels that exploited and undermined the literary conventions of their day. I then conjoin these to selected artists' books in which texts behave as images. My analysis shows that an awareness of both a history of the breaking of literary conventions, and of certain artists' books and their structures, might help a reader gain greater insight into Foer's narrative by understanding how he enunciates not what a book is, but what it does and how it does it. I begin the article by examining selected historical examples of the novel that achieve important departures from the conventions of their day: Kerouac's *On the Road*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and James Joyce's 'Penelope' soliloquy from *Ulysses* (1922). In these novels' texts, I find physical forms and literary structures that have strong visual associations, connotations or references. My reading of Foer's 'exploded' novel finds parallels with these scripto-visual associations (both structural and literary) as well as in the artist's book and texts or publications (including concrete poetry) which had a direct influence on the artist's book before its general acceptance as such in the 1960s. These parallels, I argue, aid in a reading and deconstruction of Foer's work. In doing this I also bring attention to a book which opens up a space for richer discursive perceptivity and dialogue between its elements: indeed, the complex relationship between imagery, textuality, language and discourse. This is achieved by exploring new spaces which are created when discrete conventions are unhinged and freed up to be read in new ways. It is my contention that, together, these texts explore *bookness* as a successful theoretical trope, operationalising self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and heteroglossia as new methods of theorising the artist's book.

Area of Focus Two: The curation of artists' books exhibitions – access and distance

Preamble: *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection with some South African Books from Other Collections* (Johannesburg Art Gallery, 1996).

It is well known that books, like many precious or rare objects which are vulnerable to damage or theft when exhibited, are often locked away in cabinets or vitrines when displayed.³¹ Betty Bright (2005:7) states that

the book form has always posed special reception issues in its display. Unlike most art, an artist's book requires touch to unlock its evocative 'otherness'. The restrictions of exhibition in display cases force readers and critics to judge and articulate a book's success based on a single page opening. But a book is much more than pictures and text, much more than any one page. Reading a book involves the tactile, even emotional experience of paging through it. How, then, have the aesthetic complexities of the book form affected its acceptance as an art form? Put another way, what do the problems that the artist's book poses to the art world tell us about the limitations of that very world?

Bright (2005:261) continues by stating that the artist's book "also forces a rethinking of art world conventions of display, in the difficulties of showing books and of writing about looking through them, not just in looking at them. These questions have yet to be resolved". Bright (2005:261) discusses how some exhibitions of the 1970s and 80s attempted to mitigate these difficulties by exacting

a trade-off from the gallery visitor in either restricting access to books on display, or in disregarding the integrity of an installation's design for hands-on access – while the most effective displays were those that incorporated static and active means of display.

Some galleries with access to generous budgets "attempted to solve the conundrum of access as balanced with a need for a work's preservation" (Bright

³¹ This situation continues when artists' books are purchased or accessioned into library 'Special Collections' where they are typically out of both circulation and sight of the library visitor. This will be discussed in greater depth in Area of Focus Three but Sarah Carter and Alex O'Keefe's recent article in *Art Documentation* titled *Revealing Invisible Collections* (2018:159-175) is worthwhile mentioning here.

2005:261) by including videotape elements or alternative pages of the works exhibited.³² Bright (2005:262) suggests that, budgetary concerns aside, an ideal solution would include a reading room where the element of touch, crucial to experiencing any book, would be available for multiples, with video elements for limited-edition work. In our current digital age, a number of possibilities might liberate Bright's static and active means of display.³³

In 1995, at the start of my postgraduate studies, the Johannesburg Art Gallery invited me to curate the first exhibition of artists' books in South Africa. A significant portion of the exhibition came from the Ginsberg Collection with Pamela Spitzmueller's *British Museum Memoir* (1986) introducing the show. To these I added a number of South African books that I had encountered during my research. *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection with some South African Books from Other Collections* opened on 25 August 1996 and consisted of 225 works: 163 international and 62 South African. The focus of the exhibition was on contemporary bookwork with the earliest local works being Walter Battiss' *Male Book I* (1973) and Phil du Plessis' *Hulde Uit 1970* (1970), a subversive addendum to the 12th edition of the journal *Wurm*, which took aim at the literary establishment in South Africa. The earliest international work was Ronald King & Roy Fisher's (Circle Press) *Bluebeard's Castle* (1972) whilst, serendipitously, Ronald King's (Circle Press) *Les Bijoux* (1996) was one of the newest works exhibited, printed during the year of the exhibition along with four local works.³⁴ Being the first exhibition of artists' books in South Africa, it drew a large number of people to the opening. Jack Ginsberg and I hosted numerous 'walk-about' sessions and conducted press interviews. In terms of the number of works shown, at the time, it was purportedly the second largest exhibition of book arts held internationally. A modest, self-generated, catalogue accompanied the exhibition. In my catalogue essay titled: *Some Thoughts on*

³² Curator Catherine Martinez's *Surprise! Surprise!: Pop-up and Movable Books* exhibition of 1988 at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum is an example of integrated videotaped pages of exhibited books (Bright 2005:261-62).

³³ Rena M. Hoisington, in *Some Thoughts on Working with Students to Organize an Exhibition of Artists' Books* (2016) available at <http://www.archivejournal.net/notes/some-thoughts-on-working-with-students-to-organize-an-exhibition-of-artists-books/> discusses a number of strategies including iPads in the exhibition for visitors to use. I discuss my own use of digital media on p63.

³⁴ These were: Mark Attwood and Qgam (Dada) Coexae, Nxabe Eland, Bob (Enni) Coexae, Cgose Ncoxo, Qwa Mangana and Thamae Setshogo (The Artists' Press & the Kura Art Project) *Qauqau*, 1996; Majak Bredell (Southern Cross Press) *Song of the Spinners / Lied van die Spinners*, 1996; Wilma Cruise's *The Artist (Book 3)*, 1996 and Michele Sohn's *codex*, 1996.

Artists' Books in General and the Exhibition in Particular, I make the following statement:

By taking away the intimate and private relationship which a book shares with its reader and by removing the temporal aspect of that relationship – by placing the books under glass – Jack [Ginsberg] and I have attempted to problematise the issue of display and discourse. Being aware that this problem has been confronted by many curators of book exhibitions, we have attempted to incorporate the very nature of these difficulties into the curating of the display. Pages will, from day to day, be turned; photographs of alternative page views or bindings will accompany specific books. Where possible, multiple openings of a book and its binding will be displayed, while demonstrations by artists and curators will afford an opportunity to discuss and demonstrate a book in its entirety. By removing the viewer / reader from the intimacy of handling the books, we hope to encourage inquisitiveness and desire to learn more about the genre. A few artists' books will, however, be made especially for this exhibition with the express purpose of being handled by the public.

These strategies were, however, only practical concerns and hardly embodied the qualities of *bookness*.³⁵ In claiming that 'I have attempted to problematise the issue of display and discourse' the activating characteristics of *bookness*: self-consciousness and reflexivity, must be seen to conceptually underpin the curatorial process. The diagram below [Figure 2] shows the structural layout of the exhibition. In acknowledging that the books are exhibited behind glass and away from a visitor's touch, the way in which the exhibition has been conceived (as a book with preface and chapters) as well as physically (with W and V-shaped structure to be bodily negotiated) became a metaphor for experiencing the process of working one's way through the complexities of a book. In other words, the exhibition is the book, the cabinets are the pages and the books are the scripto-visual elements of/on the page. If a visitor could not handle the individual books, then working their way through the exhibition became the conceptual equivalent of being inside an all-encompassing artist's book.

³⁵ I also made strategic use of book furniture and mirrors to provide alternative views and glimpses of alternative pages, covers or details. These strategies encouraged inspection on the part of the viewer, enticing one to take a closer or second look.

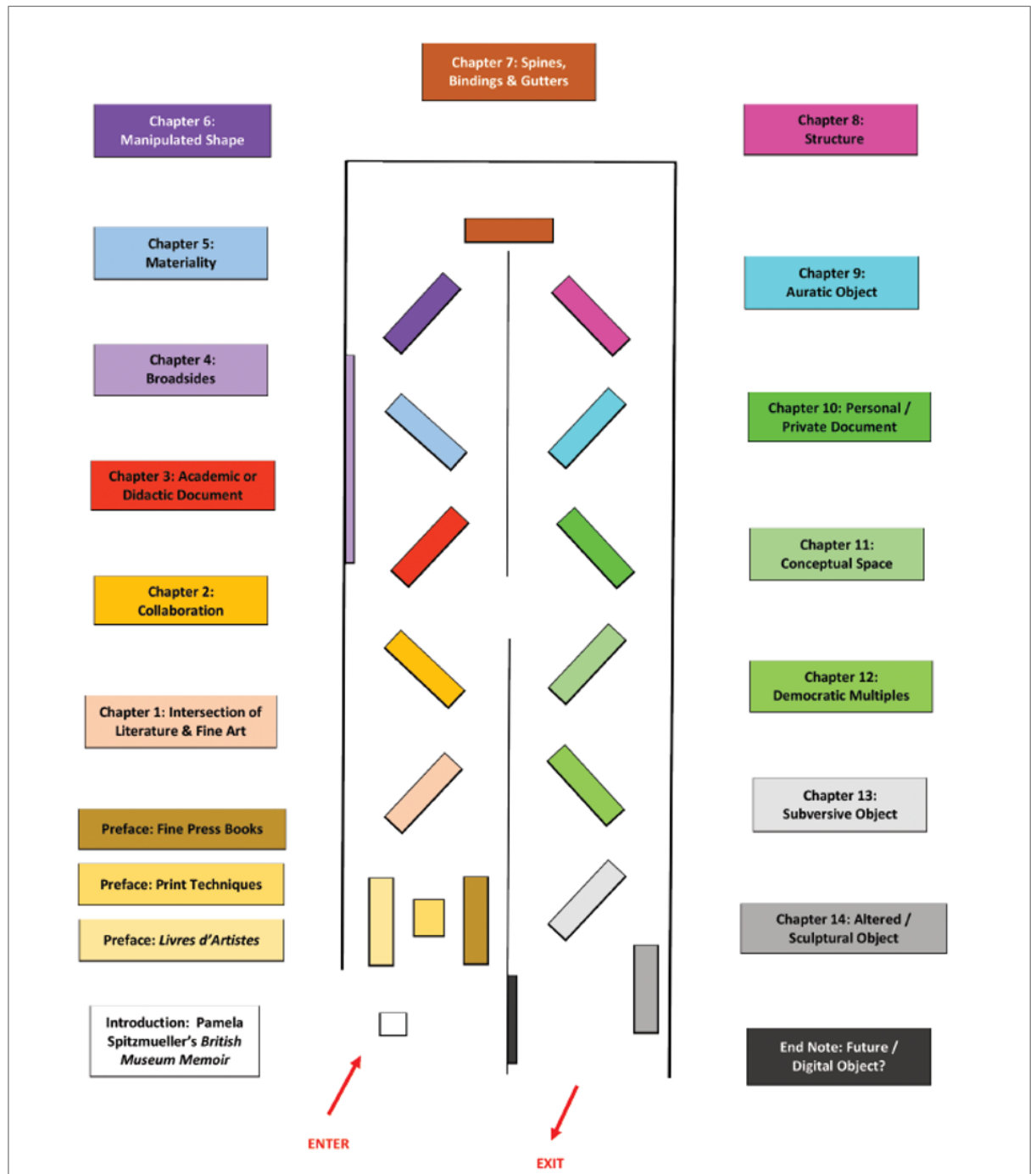


Figure 2. Layout of the 1996 exhibition *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection with some South African Books from Other Collections*. 25 August - 27 October 1996, lower floor, west wing, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Drucker's had recently published *The Century of Artists' Books* (1995) and a number of her chapters helped to guide and focus some of the 'chapters' which constituted the exhibition. When Drucker (1995:161) describes the way in which self-consciousness and reflexivity calls attention to the conceits and conventions by which a book normally effaces its identity, as an act of enunciation, I applied a similar strategy of enunciation to the way in which the exhibition might call attention to its own conceits and conventions. By means of turned pages,

photographs of alternative page views or bindings, multiple openings, demonstrations by artists and curators, specific books made to be handled by the public and careful deployment of book furniture and mirrors, structural enunciation takes place. By exploiting the human body's phenomenological perception whilst moving through the space, conceptual enunciation of the exhibition 'as a book' was achieved. At this point, it seems important to acknowledge that, phenomenologically, an act of *looking* must be considered as physical an act as touching is. If the experience of artists' books is limited to the sense of touch only (Bright 2005:262), we then ignore Luce Irigaray's (1992) consideration of sight as touch through her assertion that space is not empty but filled with the density of air. In Irigaray's terms, vision is based and dependent upon touch, that is, the touch of light on the eye. This is achieved, she argues, without fusing vision and touch and reducing one to the other. Kelly Oliver (2001:68) describes Irigaray's "tactile look as caress" and her close association of looking and listening through the density of air's caress (2001:79). What this implies for curators of artist's book exhibitions is the responsibility of tactile looking when confronted with objects our hands cannot manipulate. This proved important 21 years later when I curated my fourth exhibition.

Submission Four: *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* (Annexure D).

The curatorial strategy for this exhibition was complex,³⁶ multi-layered, and responsive to the experience of curating the 1996, 2006 and 2014 exhibitions [see Appendix One]. As described above, balancing the conundrum of access with a need for preservation (Bright 2005:261) remains a particular problem for a curator of artists' books. In 2017, I required a dialogical and heteroglot set of

³⁶ The exhibition was only one part of the multi-faceted *Booknesses Project*. Over four years in the planning, the project consisted of this exhibition and its expansive catalogue (Submission Five, Annexure E) for which 52 bespoke exhibition cabinets had to be designed and manufactured and a second exhibition of South African artists' books and its online catalogue (Submission Seven, Annexure G) were curated. An extensive educational program, including scholar, student and public 'walk-about' events were held. An international colloquium with 42 papers and two keynote addresses was accompanied by two roundtable events. Workshops and a lecture program supported the colloquium and there were events and studio visits held for the 20 international visitors to the event. The project also required extensive funding and promotion and thus part of my remit included preparing project proposals, funding applications and press releases.

solutions. Given that I needed to explore time periods that were not covered in 1996; anything prior to 1970 or, more obviously, after 1996, I began with Ginsberg's newly acquired copy of Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay-Terk's *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* [*Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanne of France*] (1913). I did this for a number of reasons; it was Ginsberg's latest and, by far, his most important and valuable acquisition, there is no other copy of this work on the African continent, and a number of significant extra elements accompany the work.³⁷ The four flat, unbound and unfolded sheets with *pochoir* illumination by Delaunay, constitute a particularly rare set with her colours preserved in the brightest tones having none of the cracks and folds through the imagery and text which mar nearly all copies of the work. In short, the work is perhaps one of the most important examples of early international artists' books and including it on this exhibition meant that the work would be seen on the African continent for the first time. *Prose du Transsibérien* also seemed a provocative and challenging place from which to begin the curatorial project. It suggested a process by which selected books might engage important heteroglot dialogues with one another. *Prose du Transsibérien* has acquired not only the status of a French cultural icon, but also a certain cult status, exemplified by its appearance on the cover of Riva Castleman's controversially titled exhibition catalogue *A Century of Artists Books* at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York in 1994. It also appeared on the cover of The National Art Library's *Word & Image Art, Books and Design* in 2015. Thus, with *Prose du Transsibérien* as the first book on the exhibition, two important elements of the curatorial process followed. First, I delved into Castleman's catalogue³⁸ to see how many of her chosen books could be found in Johannesburg. Given the depth, scope and importance of the Ginsberg

³⁷ The portfolio contains an unfolded parchment binding, hand-painted in oil by Sonia Delaunay and, in its own right, is preserved in perfect condition in its rare, unfolded format. Accompanying the binding is the original and exceedingly rare prospectus announcement, coloured in *pochoir*, with three original watercolours on vellum by Delaunay and the corrected proofs of the text on two sheets. Original watercolours on vellum, numbered 1-3 are laid down on paper. This portfolio of elements is considered a unique and spectacular copy of this landmark in the history of twentieth century art and poetry. The prospectus is a sublime work of Delaunay's *pochoir* art by itself. The printed justification announces that a total of 150 copies were to be printed; however, it is documented that only 62 copies were actually assembled. This is number 9 of the copies on *japon*. Antoine Coron, Keeper of Rare Books at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, who has been compiling a census of copies of *La Prose du Transsibérien*, knows of no other unfolded and uncut copies on *japon* (Paton in Sassen [ed.] 2017:124). See also Kitty Maryatt's census of copies of *Prose* at <http://laprosepochoir.blogspot.com/p/census.html>.

³⁸ Castleman chose mostly *livres d'artistes*, fine press books and artist-illustrated publications with very few artists' books included, despite the titular focus of the exhibition.

Collection, I found 15 items from Castleman's modernist selection to which I added another four items from the Ginsberg Collections which, in my opinion, Castleman could well have included. What began as a somewhat inquisitive exercise in matching the MoMA exhibition's more historical selection with what exists in Johannesburg, soon exposed the potential to surround and, importantly, contextualise *Prose du Transsibérien* with a body of internationally renowned examples of early modernist book arts.³⁹ This initial selection was colour-coded with **white** labels. Taking the exercise further, I found 26 items from Castleman's postmodern selection to which I added a further three items which, in my opinion, filled appropriate gaps in the MoMA exhibition. These postmodernist books were colour-coded with **grey** labels. The inclusion of these 48 historically important books operationalised artists' books' broad dialogism across time and context (in line with the conceptual map of the genre, see Figure 1). Under this broad historical dialogism, the conceptual map demonstrates heteroglot conversations that operationalise the genre's self-conscious and reflexive qualities. This is especially significant, given that both the Ginsberg Collection's and this exhibition's major focus was contemporary artists' books, and thus, the second curatorial strategy came into play.

In Submission Two above I argued that Bakhtin (cited in Vice 1997:19) tells us that heteroglossia is a double-voiced discourse, as it serves two speakers at the same time and expresses, simultaneously, two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. If this is true for the novel's *novelness*, it is equally true for the artist's book's *bookness*: its themes and content mediated through the refracted (self-conscious) intention of the artist. This second curatorial strategy, discussed below and evident in the selected contemporary books on exhibition, echoes Bakhtin's (1975:292) suggestion that such diversity represents "specific points

³⁹ These examples included Fernand Léger's *La Fin du Monde, Filmée par l'Ange N.-D* [*The End of the World, Filmed by the Angel N.-D.*] published in 1919, Vladimir Mayakovsky and El Lissitzky's *Dlya Golosa* [*For the Voice*] (1923), Iliadz's *Lidantiu Faram* [*Lidantiu as a Beacon*] (1923), George Grosz's *Ecce Homo* (1923), Alexander Calder's *Fables of Aesop* (1931), Max Ernst's *Un Semaine de Bonte* [*A Week of Kindness*] (1934) and Gilbert Seldes's *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes (1934) which is illustrated by Pablo Picasso. To this selection, I added four remarkable publications not found in Castleman's catalogue. Amongst these additions were *Die Nibelungen dem Deutschen Volke Wie Dererzahlt von Franz Keim* (a 1920 reissue of the original 1909 edition) in which Carl Otto Czeschka designed and illustrated Franz Keim's texts and Fortunato Depero's *Depero Futurista 1913-1927* [*Depero the Futurist 1913-1927*] (1927), known popularly as the *Bolt* or *Bolted Book*.

of view on the world” which will “mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically”. Bakhtin’s positioning of heteroglossia, as multiple languages and “registers” or “sociolect” voices (Vice 1997:18), suggests not only the novel’s double-voiced construction of characters and narrators but also the self-conscious awareness of the construction of a work’s content, shot-through with heteroglot utterances of different kinds. These utterances are characterised by, not only, the technical and content differences found in the books’ reflexive and self-conscious utterances, but in the curatorial strategies which enunciate self-consciously and reflexively upon the exhibition’s structural conventions and curatorial conceits. In other words, an exhibition, self-conscious of how its conventions communicate dialogically through heteroglot voices. Such a Bakhtinian lens offers a new way of considering the curation of artists’ books; liberating fresh readings of the genre’s unique qualities and characteristics. As a consequence of this second curatorial strategy, I unpacked *Prose du Transsibérien*’s visual-discursive motifs in order to establish a set of themes within which the selected contemporary artists’ books would be exhibited. Using the English translation of Cendrars’s prose by Timothy Younger,⁴⁰ the following thematic groupings and their colour-code key were isolated:

Visual-verbal Dynamics | Colour - yellow
Journeys | Maps & Structures | Landscapes & Places - green
Fantasy & the Fantastic - purple
War, Death, Fear & Apocalyptic Imagery - blue
Sex, Love & the Body - red

I now briefly discuss these themes, showing how they were derived from *Prose du Transsibérien*’s visual, typographic, textual and poetic qualities and how they enunciated the terms of the exhibition’s reflexivity.

⁴⁰ Translations by Ron Padgett and Donald Wellman were also consulted.

Submission Six: *Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection (2017)*
Chapter One from the publication *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* (Annexure F in Submission Five: Annexure E).

Visual-verbal Dynamics

Drucker (1995:51) states:

That Delaunay and Cendrars could conceive of such a work in 1913 is remarkable. ... No private reading experience had ever assumed such dimensions, and the explosion of the book into pieces of this size is a dramatic conceptual as well as formal achievement.

Delaunay's vivid, pochoir-painted colours support the passages of Cendrars's coloured letterpress text. Cendrars's poem seemingly describes his experience as a young boy on the Trans-Siberian express, which runs from Moscow to the Sea of Japan during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. His companion on the trip is Jeanne, a French prostitute, and while the landscape rushes by, he thinks back, in fragmented recollection, to his childhood in Paris and imagines trips to tropical paradises. Katherine Shingler (2012:6-7) argues that "Cendrars's and Delaunay's setting of poem and painting ... contains an implicit challenge to the reader to direct their attention to both, simultaneously, or look for connections between the two". Simultaneity, according to Shingler (2012:12), means a dialogue between two modes of expression, and a fundamental premise for that dialogue is difference and we should not expect to see a complete collapse of the boundaries between the visual and the verbal. "What is not always remarked upon" states Marjorie Perloff (2008) "is that poem and painting exhibit a very different tonality. ...The colors ... express the *joie de vivre* of fluid motion. But ... the poem's tone and mood are strikingly different from its visual representation". Eric Robertson (1995:892) states that the narrator betrays his uncertainties "regarding his function as a poet in an era which has rendered traditional poetic values obsolete". Cendrars's feelings of inadequacy are repeatedly expressed in the poem and he refers to himself on four occasions as "a bad poet". This self-reflexivity, indexes the concerns of its makers. Wendy Steiner (1982:36) asserts that a text does not make sense as a sequence, but as a finished whole, and thus its perception is analogous to that of painting. In this sense then, Cendrars's text also only makes sense as a finished whole and thus the exhibition explores analogies and dialogues between heteroglot images and

texts as a major thematic thread with many books provoking a dialogical tussle between writing and image-making.

Colour

In *Prose du Transsibérien*, the four coloured inks in a number of different typefaces is a “rough correspondence” (Shingler 2012:13) between verbal imagery and the colour of the painting. Cendrars often “flouts the reader’s expectation for these correspondences by refusing to take up cues in the poem” (Shingler 2012:14-15). For example, the evocation of *Colours that numb you like a gong* (line 260) is not brightly coloured, and the colours we would expect to see accompanying the line *If I were a painter, I’d pour on a lot of red, a lot of yellow on the end of this trip* (l.361) is printed in green with no red or yellow visible in Delaunay’s surrounding colour. Shingler (2012:14) argues that Cendrars’s desire to capture the colours of visual experience expresses “his wish that he could render the subjective, properties of colour in all their immediacy and his regret that coloured words are not sufficient to do this.” Specific artists’ books were selected in response to the theme of colour in their subject matter or content. Of particular interest to me was the dialogue forged between coloured typographic blocks of dystopian content found in Cendrars’s poem [Figure 3] and John Cage’s panoptical view of the world in *Diary: How to Improve the World (You Will Only Make Matters Worse)* (1967, Great Bear Pamphlet) [Figure 4a & b]. Joe Biel and Richard Kraft (Siglio Press 2015) describe the work as follows:

Composed over the course of sixteen years, *Diary* is one of his most prescient and personal works. A repository of observations, anecdotes, proclivities, obsessions, jokes and koan-like stories, *Diary* registers Cage’s assessment of the times in which he lived as well as his often uncanny portents about the world we live in now. With a great sense of play as well as purpose, Cage traverses vast territory, from the domestic minutiae of everyday life to ideas about how to feed the world. ... The variances on the page become almost musical as language takes on a physical and aural presence ... [using] chance operations to render the entire text in various combinations of the red and blue ... as well as ... apply a single set of eighteen fonts to the entire work.



Figure 3 (left). Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars. *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France*. 1913. Editions des Hommes Nouveaux; Paris, France. Edition: #9/36 on japon. Inscription: Signed by the poet 1953.

Figure 4a & b (centre and right). John Cage. *Diary: How to Improve the World (You Will Only Make Matters Worse)*. 1970. A Great Bear Pamphlet. Something Else Press; West Glover, VT, USA. All photography: Mark Stanley Adams

Thus, in terms of the conceptual map [Figure 1] of artists' books' broad dialogism, *Prose* and *Diary* speak to each other across time (1913 and 1970) and context (scripto-visual readings of the contemporary world). Their heteroglossia (visual dialects) are able to reference each other, being self-conscious of their genre's characteristics and reflexive of each other's operational enunciation: their intrinsic and extrinsic *bookness*. As in 1996, my thinking was that the curatorial project of *bookness* as a whole (the exhibition) must also be characterised by the dialogical and heteroglot relationships within and between the units of the exhibition (the individual artists' books). I now spend some time showing how this was achieved.

Journeys, travel and movement (inc. maps, structures, landscapes and places)

Delaunay (cited in Shingler 2012:20) described the *pochoir* painting of *Prose du Transsibérien*, as a "representation of the journey in a style of pure forms" from the domes of Moscow at the start of the poem to the red tower at the poem's end. "In between", states Shingler (2012:20) poem and painting seem to go their separate ways, with Delaunay refusing figuration in favour of abstract

forms intended to evoke the poet's journey in a looser, more suggestive way. In a letter written to the Delaunays (cited in Shingler 2012:11), Cendrars relates the concept of contrast in *Prose du Transsibérien* to travel and to the relationship of self and other, in which “the young poet-narrator sets out on a journey of discovery, not just of new, unknown people and spaces, but of himself, and his identity as a poet”. Shingler (2012:11) refers to this as “the metaphoric journey of Cendrars’s travelling self”. In contrast to the initial west-east direction of the journey described in *Prose*, for Robertson (1995:892), the train journey is also a metaphor of the poet’s difficult search for a new creative medium and uncertainty regarding his function as a poet. This self-conscious reflexivity, seemingly at the heart of Cendrars’s project was also situated at the heart of my curatorial project. Notwithstanding the many books chosen for their exploration of maps, journeys and travel, the complexity of the exhibition was difficult to curate — choosing the books for exhibition, alone, took a year. Yet the metaphors at play in *Prose du Transsibérien* suggested ways in which a visitor to the exhibition might also journey through the exhibition. Deconstructing a complex and multi-layered, scripto-visual artist’s book in order to construct a complex and multi-layered, scripto-visual exhibition required a conceptual journey on my part as its designer and curator in order to reconstruct this as a physical and intellectual journey on the part of the visitor. Just as we might metaphorically travel through the poem’s wildly differentiated temporal-geographic locations and the spaces of Delaunay’s visual forms (as they move vertically from top to bottom), so the visitor is provided with various ways in which to negotiate a huge, complex and tiring exhibition. Like *Prose du Transsibérien*’s coloured *pochoir* imagery and typographic blocks [see Figure 5], the thematic groupings of the exhibition were colour-coded [see Figure 6a & b], allowing visitors to choose one and discover the books gathered under that theme.

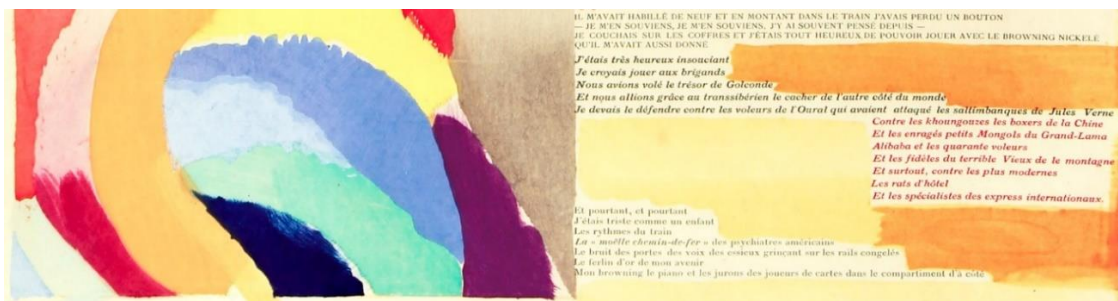


Figure 5. Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars. *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France*. 1913. Detail, bottom of 1st panel. Photography: Mark Stanley Adams

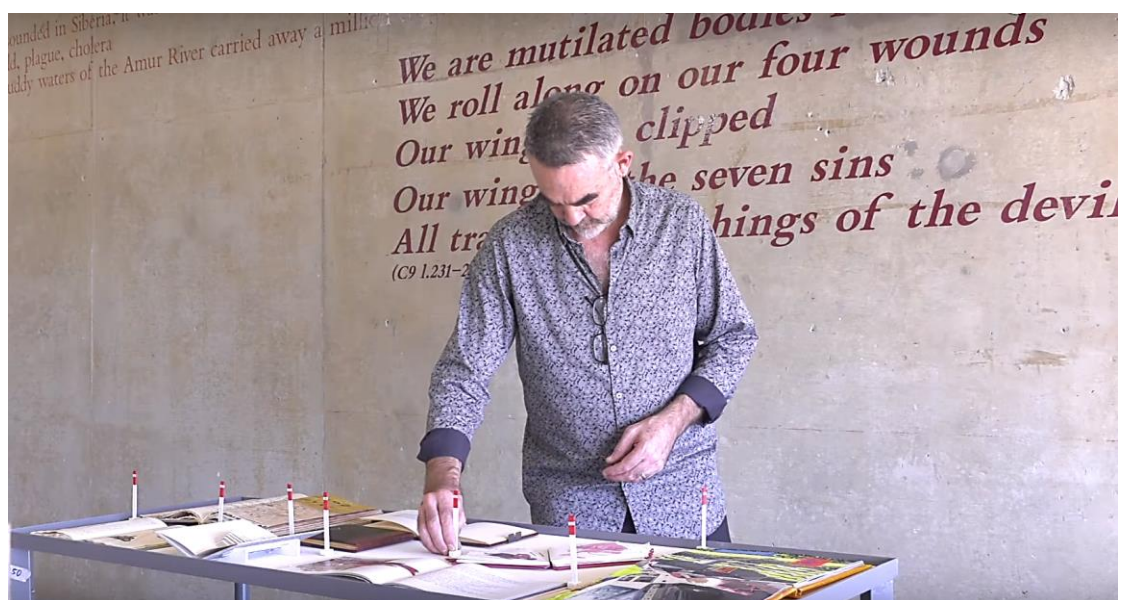


Figure 6a (left). Assistants prepare the thematically colour-coded number system for the exhibition cabinets. Figure 6b (right). Curator David Paton places thematically colour-coded numbers in place for the exhibition. Photography: the author (6a) and Paul Mills (6b)



Figure 7. View of part of the thematically colour-coded reference system (on window) as a key for negotiating the exhibition. Photography: Sinead Fletcher

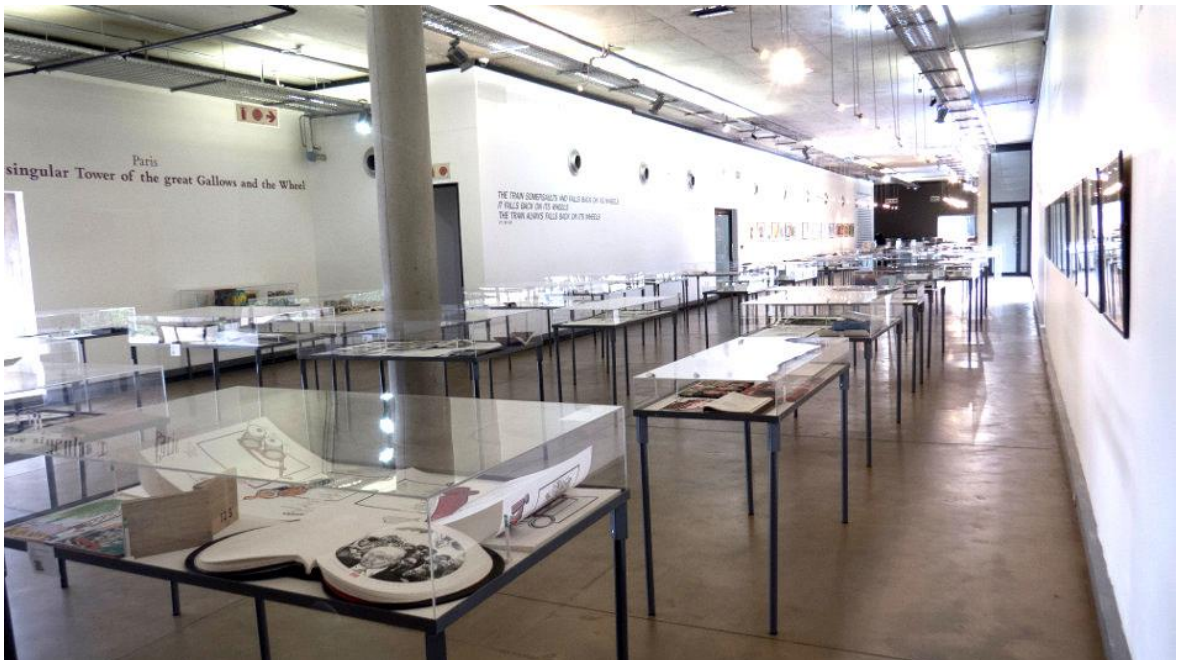


Figure 8. General view of the exhibition layout as a journey, seen here from the end looking back to the start of *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*. 2017. UJ Art Gallery, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa. Photography: the author

Travelling through the exhibition was conceived as an exploded journey through *Prose du Transsibérien's* themes but a viewer could walk through the exhibition in any way they wished. One could either carefully follow the suggested colour coded 'routes' or ignore them completely and meander, like a *flâneur*, through the exhibition. The suggested 'routes', keys and guides were a form of mapping the exhibition which contained many books which, themselves, detailed scripto-

visual journeys, maps, routes, guides and places.⁴¹ *Prose du Transsibérien* itself, contains, top right, a map of its route [Figure 9], but, despite this signifier, Cendrars expects his reader to negotiate the wild shifts in place and time that his poem describes.



Figure 9. Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars. *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France*. 1913. Detail, top right of 1st panel indicating the route of the Trans-Siberian Express from Moscow to Vladivostok. Photography: Mark Stanley Adams

Deleuze and Guattari's (2005:12) notion of mapping, or cartography with "multiple entryways", like the subject of *Prose du Transsibérien*, like many books on the exhibition [see Figure 10]⁴² and, most importantly, like my curatorial

⁴¹ By consulting the colour codes on the gallery window (see Figure 7) or the exhibition catalogue (Submission Five), one will note, on p123, that the Curatorial Key lists groups of books as C6a - Journeys, C6b – Maps and Structures and C6c – Landscapes and Places. A visitor could utilize such information specifically or elliptically in locating examples of books which fell into these curatorial sub-themes. David Ferry's *Britain in Colour with Belligerent Rock Intrusions Mainly in Black and White*, 2006, was numbered 0195 – C6a indicating that it was book 195 in the exhibition and fell under the curatorial key: Contemporary Book (C); Journeys [see p220 in Submission Five]. Robbin Ami Silverberg's *Subterranean Geography*, 2011 (0201 – C6b) indicated a map / structure-based work [see p222 in Submission Five, image shown in text below – Figure 10]. Shirley Sharoff's *The Great Wall*, 1991 (067 – C6c) indicated a work dealing with a specific place [see p156 in Submission Five]. How useful this information proved to a visitor is moot and, like Cendrars's uncertainty and the content of many works where denotative locations and maps proved fictitious, conceptual or useless, this information was only one of many to be 'plugged in or out' of the experience of the exhibition, discussed later in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomic thinking.

⁴² Robbin Ami Silverberg's *Subterranean Geography* (2011) [exhibition no 0201 – C6b, p222 in catalogue Submission Five] is an artist's book which maps a territory in ways which conventional maps cannot do. As part of what the artist calls 'psycho-geography', *Subterranean Geography* uses a cut-away subway map to explore particular feelings and emotions associated with and defined by specific spaces negotiated and travelled through in New York City. Silverberg (2011) unpacks the relationship between symbolic map and emotive connotation stating that:

the book is divided into two parts, each with a text about movement: the first is an ambulatory mapping of my walk to the "L" subway station; the second is a subway trip loaded with emotions and memory. The layered filigree paper of subway lines/bus routes/roadways creates the seemingly fragile pages which contrast with the directness of the text and remind the viewer of the complexity of both described space and of feelings.

strategy “is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real”. I discuss Deleuze and Guattari’s text again, later in this section.



Figure 10. Robbin Ami Silverberg. *Subterranean Geography*, 2011. Dobbin Books; New York. Photography: Mark Stanley Adams

Exhibition poster and vinyl-cut wall texts: War, Death, Fear & Apocalyptic Imagery

In acknowledging that visitors to the exhibition might not be familiar with Cendrars’s prose, nor able to read the French text of *Prose du Transsibérien* in its vitrine at the start of the exhibition, I designed and printed a full-length poster of *Prose* with a parallel panel containing Younge’s English translation [Figure 11a, b & c]. This poster was displayed at the start of the exhibition, adjacent to the work and provided another key by which to negotiate the exhibition.

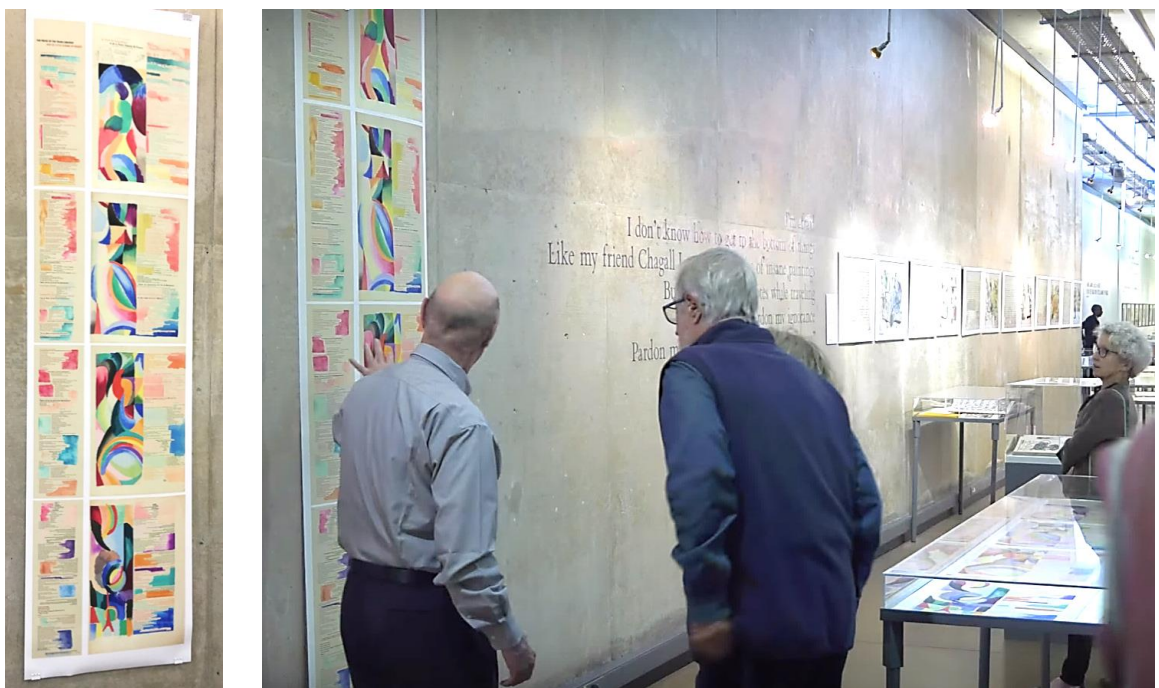


Figure 11a (left) Poster of the Ginsberg *Prose du Transsibérien* with Timothy Younge’s English translation as a parallel text. Poster designed by David Paton and Gina Diandra Rodrigues. Photography: the author (11a & c) Paul Mills (11b)

Figure 11b (right) Jack Ginsberg discussing the poster with guests during the opening of the exhibition.

Silverberg employs cutting into and through the page substrate thus forming a visual dialogue between the information on the front and back pages. If there is a logical cutting associated with specific symbolic data on one side, this logic is only implied on the other by compounding and confusing the reading of its symbolic data.



Figure 11c Detail of poster. Middle section of 2nd panel with parallel English translation and Cendrars's French original.

Cendrars's lines: *A cannon sounded in Siberia, it was war — Hunger, cold, plague, cholera — And the muddy waters of the Amur River carried away a million corpses* (lines 43-45 of Cendrars's text) appear early in *Prose*. Having barely established a coherent sense of place and time Cendrars (who, in September 1915, lost his right arm during the second battle of Champagne and was discharged from the French Foreign Legion) presents the immediacy and the horrors of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 as if a train is hurtling towards the reader:

I saw – I saw the silent trains, the black trains return from the Far East passing like phantoms – And my eye, like a lantern, still follows those trains (l.370-385).

The concept of being tossed by both war and modernity recalls Cendrars's apocalyptic image:

The train somersaults and falls back on its wheels – It falls back on its wheels – The train always falls back on its wheels (l.160-162).

These and other lines, extracted from *Prose du Transsibérien's* provocative texts, were vinyl-cut and placed at strategic locations along the 'route' of the exhibition [Figure 12a, b & c].

A cannon sounded in Siberia, it was war
Hunger, cold, plague, cholera
And the muddy waters of the Amur River carried away a million corpses
(C8 l.43-45)

*We are mutilated bodies floating in space
We roll along on our four wounds
Our wings are clipped
Our wings of the seven sins
All trains are playthings of the devil*
(C9 l.231-235)

I saw the silent trains, the black trains return from the Far East passing like phantoms
And my eye, like a lantern, still follows those trains
I saw

Figure 12a, b & c. Selected vinyl wall texts extracted from Cendrars's prose. *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*. Photography: the author

By extracting selected pertinent thematic moments from Cendrars's text and displaying them on the walls in the vicinity of the books which fell within that theme, the dialogical and heteroglot voices of *Prose du Transsibérien* were able to escape the vitrine and literally surround the viewer as a guiding voice as if Cendrars was narrating a route through the exhibition [see Figure 13].

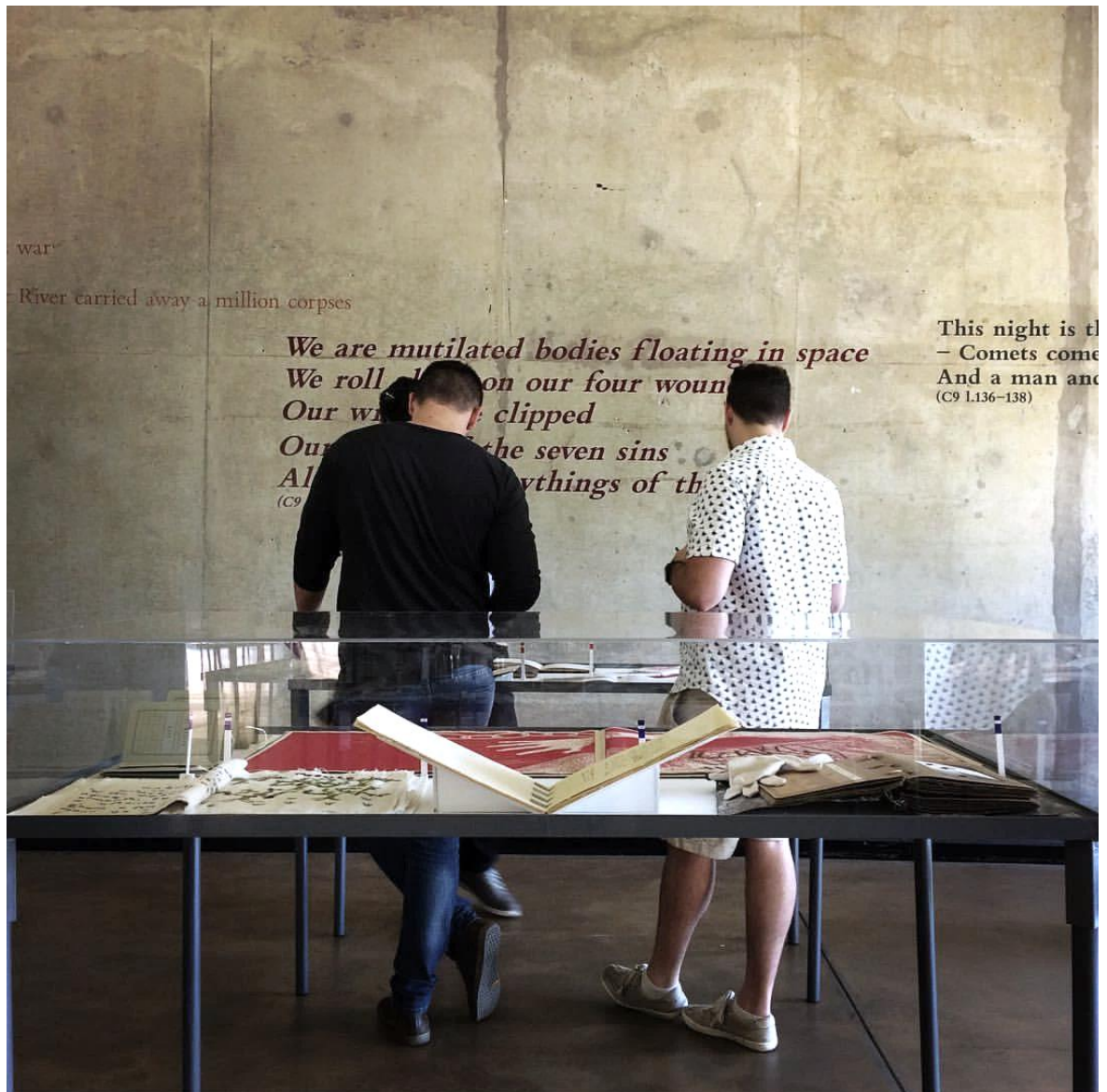


Figure 13. General view of *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* including selected vinyl-cut texts. Photography: Paul Mills

Returning to Bright's (2005:261) references to "static and active means of display" and Hoisington's (2016) recommendation of on-line and digital technologies, in support of the exhibition of artists' books, I briefly discuss how I attempted to resolve the conundrum of distance which books suffer when locked away in cabinets and vitrines. I did this by means of digital and on-line technologies. Eight iPads [Figure 14c & d] were made available in the exhibition space, and visitors could use these or their personal smartphones and tablets to access Quick Response (QR) codes [Figure 14a & b] that facilitated browsing a selection of 30 books from across all the thematic groups, from cover-to-cover and page-by-page. Such digital access provided a haptic surrogate for the experience of paging through the selected books which were still physically

separated from the viewers' direct touch. The exhibition becomes a digital library; loaning out books to take home to read at leisure.

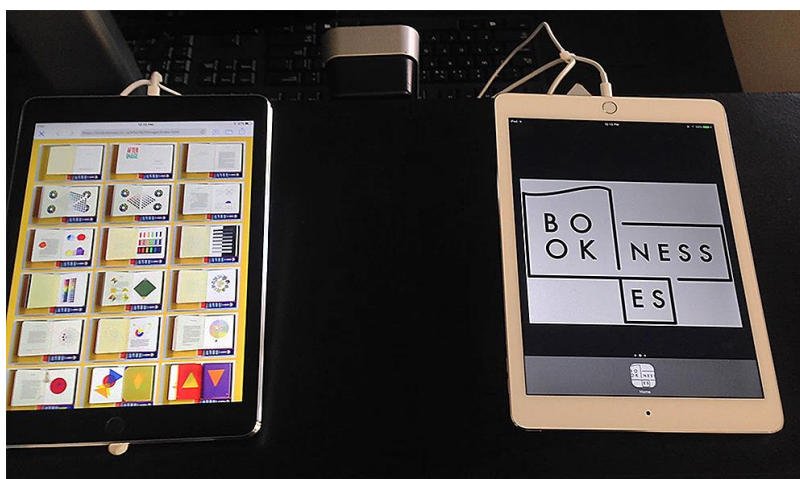
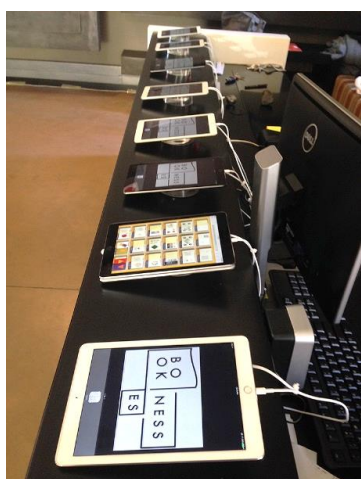
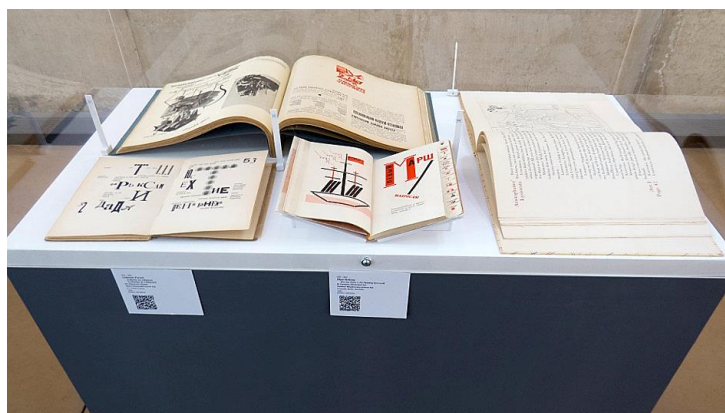
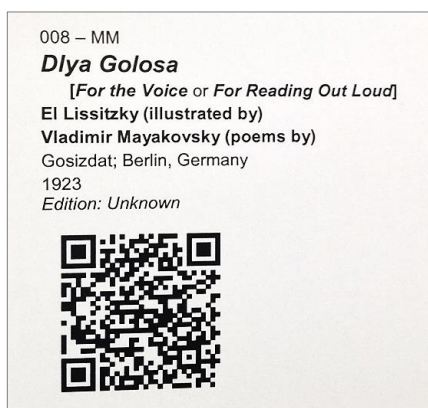


Figure 14a (top left). An example of a QR code label for accessing the digital surrogate of El Lissitzky and Vladimir Mayakovsky's *Dlya Golosa* [For the Voice]. 1923. Access the surrogate [here](#)

Figure 14b (top right). View of a cabinet with the QR code labels associated with, and signalling access to, selected digital surrogates. El Lissitzky and Vladimir Mayakovsky's *Dlya Golosa* [For the Voice] is pictured centre, front.

Figure 14c & d (bottom left and right). Views of the iPads in the exhibition space *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* that provided online access to the 30 selected books. The book illustrated in Figure 14d is Claudia Cohen and Barbara Hodgson's *After Image: Playing with colour in all its dimensions*, 2009 [exhibition no. 0145 – C5b, p194]. Access the surrogate site [here](#). All photography: the author

This strategy of access had never been utilised in a book arts exhibition in South Africa and was, in part, triggered by the experience of a colleague. She complained that the [South African] books exhibited on the exhibition *Artists' Books and Africa* at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, USA in 2016,⁴³ were locked away in cabinets, making them inaccessible to her. She described her experience of the exhibition as “distant,

⁴³ The exhibition *Artists' Books and Africa* can be viewed at <https://africa.si.edu/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/artists-books-and-africa/> and <https://library.si.edu/exhibition/artists-books-and-africa> where my website is referenced.

cold and lifeless”⁴⁴ with single static pages of each book representing, what should have been, a protean and dynamic art form.

Parallels and Peer Reviews (Submission Seven, Annexure G and Appendix 3-5)

The sister exhibition, *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*⁴⁵ attracted 74 artists and designers through an open call, where the majority of the 100 works had to encourage handling and haptic exploration [see Figure 15].



Figure 15. Visitors to the sister exhibition *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*. 2017, FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg who were encouraged to handle and explore most of the 100 books on exhibition.

Photography: Eugene Hön

In curating these two very different exhibitions to be experienced at the same time and within the remit of the larger *Booknesses* project of workshops, lectures, demonstrations and the international colloquium, a rich set of heteroglot dialogues were negotiated. These occurred within and between the curatorial projects, on one hand, and the rich connective tissue operating between the diverse activities of the larger project on the other. If the aim of the *Booknesses*

⁴⁴ From a personal communication with Prof. Karen von Veh, August 2016, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa.

⁴⁵ If the Ginsberg Collection exhibition at the UJ Gallery represented one bookend of the larger *Booknesses* project, *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*, held concurrently at the FADA Gallery represents the other. The call for bookworks was specifically broad and open to anyone whose recent work displayed the following criteria: A high degree of craftsmanship and production values. Exploration and development of the thematics of *Bookness* or unpacks elements of book structure and materiality. Demonstrates discernible and visible content and is not simply a folio of images. May be in conventional or unconventional book form. View the exhibition catalogue at

http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/booknesses/downloads/booknesses_fada_catalogue.pdf

Project and the two exhibitions in particular was to provide a ‘taking stock’ of the book arts in South Africa, experiencing such diversity of book-making and scholarship certainly provided huge scope of possibility for those who attended.

It remains for me to conclude these Submissions by expanding upon Deleuze and Guattari’s theoretical lens that, in many ways, underpins my curatorial thinking, strategies and processes. At the end of my chapter essay (Submission Six) I make the following statement in relation to the concept of transformation which occurs in the curation of the *Booknesses: Artists’ Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* exhibition:

Transformation as a concept is rich, provocative and complex. It implies dialogues with and between past and future states, undermines orthodoxies and the expectations by which conventions are characterised. If Delaunay’s painting takes us on a temporal/spatial journey from the domes of Moscow to the tower of Paris, how we get from one place to another is through the movement of the eye, essentially downward, through a series of perceptual transformations. ... [A] viewer cannot merely accept the marks as colourful filling, a way of getting from top to bottom as the poem must. Instead, one must read these marks as the material matter which facilitates a visual poetic equivalent of the wild shifts in place and time that Cendrars’s poem expects the reader to negotiate. I suggest that this coloured matter is also the visual equivalent of the atemporality and spatial shifts upon which the poem depends. Transformation seems dependent upon motion, movement, shift or rupture, and, as a *rhizomic* concept – which lies at the heart of both *La Prose du Transsibérien*’s heterogeneity, assemblage and simultaneity and the exhibition’s curatorial and thematic design – operates, and is indeed crystallised, as highly symbolic cartographies of the multitudinous elements which make up the diverse elements of the artists’ books on the exhibition (Paton 2017:58).

I deploy Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987 [2005]) concept of the rhizomic as a way of understanding the enunciation of *bookness*. For me, it is another way of understanding the protean associations between, and interconnectedness of, self-consciousness and reflexivity that operationalise the complex relationships at play in dialogised heteroglossia, especially when applied to the exhibition and experience of artists’ books. A visitor to either of the *Booknesses* exhibitions might start and end at any point, repeat, revisit or retrace their paths of investigation in a random and idiosyncratic manner. Deleuze and Guattari’s text *A Thousand Plateaus* ([1987] 2005), itself

is not written in a linear style with the aim to develop an overarching argument. ... In contrast, the purpose is to allow a reader to 'plug-in' at any point and still be able to experiment with its concepts. Therefore, it is written to represent and reflect one of the key concepts explored in the book, that being the rhizome (Pringle & Landi 2017:118).

Richard Pringle and Dillon Landi (2017:118) continue by describing how

Deleuze and Guattari use the concept of the rhizome metaphorically to describe theory or research that does not have a distinct beginning or end and which allows and encourages connections between any of its parts. Rhizomatic thinking, as a counter to hierarchical and binary thinking, correspondingly forges alliances between seemingly disparate ideas, objects and disciplines.

Just as negotiating the density and complexity of *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection's* multi-layered curatorial strategies was a daunting and exhausting exercise for both me as its curator and the visitor, so *A Thousand Plateaus* also proves daunting in its promotion of the rhizome as an apt metaphor for the text's approach to seemingly build a "theory of everything" (Pringle & Landi 2017:118). The rhizome is also an apt metaphor for the connective tissue that operates within and between the planes of dialogism in artists' books — books speaking to each other across time and context; operationalising field, history, temporality and spatiality. It is also an apt metaphor for heteroglossia, characterised as books speaking to and within themselves as multi-vocal art objects; operationalising self-consciousness and self-reflexivity. The multiplicity inherent in Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomic thinking echoes Bakhtin's (1975:292) suggestion that such diversity represents "specific points of view on the world" which will "mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically". What is also important to note is how the idea of the rhizome also helps flatten any hierarchical notion of importance (the international, regional and local are considered equally important) or binaries of quality (centre vs. periphery). The larger *Booknesses* Project demonstrated, to the fullest extent possible, the life of the book arts in South Africa. On a micro level, it was open to all possible constituencies: its colloquium was consciously inclusive and not overly academic. The diversity of visitors — from interested members of the public, through scholars and students to artists and designers — were able to plug in and out of the multitude of activities at will and where they saw greatest benefit.

On the macro-level, of a voice for South Africa's book arts, *Booknesses* could have been plugged into the programme of any major museum around the world and be considered on equal terms. The following peer review statements attest to the impact of the *Booknesses Project*.

Buzz Spector (Washington University in St. Louis, USA. Appendix Three) states:

David Paton's scholarship in the Ginsberg Collection show was impeccable and thorough. The several critical essays in the book add substantially to studies in the book arts and, beyond the genre, to the place of books and reading in broader cultural frameworks. Since the subject collection is also globally comprehensive, the book and archive will continue to be of value to a worldwide community interested in the field.

Sarah Bodman (University of the West of England, Bristol, UK. Appendix Four) states:

*Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection ... was a masterpiece of curatorial practice. Not only did it involve showcasing important international artists' books practice to the visiting public, it also drew on the Ginsberg collection as a significant research resource in South Africa. To use a copy of the seminal artist's book *Prose du Transsibérien* (1913) as a framework from which to interpret and curate an exhibition of over 250 works was deeply ambitious and masterfully presented. I have never seen an exhibition of such depth and integrity to its source and in opening that source up to new conversations, and probably never will again. This would in itself have been enough as a curatorial premise, but it went further. Reflecting not only on the first exhibition of Ginsberg's collection from 1996, it also responded to and developed on from the exhibition curated by Riva Castleman, *A Century of Artists' Books* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1995). This is incredibly significant and a very meaningful piece of research and dissemination. ... To have surveyed the Castleman selection and responded through researching Ginsberg's collection in order to propose another iteration which scoped way beyond the MoMA show (at least double the size, including far more seminal examples of practice) and through the catalogue, examining a far wider investigation of contemporary works in relation to the development of the field over the last 50 years was an incredible achievement. This has brought significant insight and new knowledge to the field internationally, and disseminated this new knowledge through the extensive publication and online archive which allows free access to researchers, librarians, academics, students etc. This will impact upon knowledge throughout the field, and bring artists' books practice in South Africa to worldwide attention.*

Elizabeth James (National Art Library, V&A Museum, London, UK. Appendix Five) states:

David Paton's curatorial approach in the UJ exhibition from the Ginsberg collection was truly original, in its thematic structure derived from the Prose du Transsibérien. This in particular was where we see the creativity of this curatorial project, which certainly sparked new relations and new insights. Paton's encyclopaedic and deeply reflective knowledge of artists' books shone through all the outputs of Booknesses, from the exhibitions to the catalogues to the colloquium participants. His work evidences knowledge and understanding of the story of both artists' books themselves and of their reception, and global acquaintance with current practitioners, commentators, literature and collections.

Area of Focus Three: The online documentation of artists' books, databases and the acknowledgement of affect

(Submission Eight and Submission Nine A: Annexure H) (Appendices: Six – Eight)

Context

2004 was a huge year for what has become known as 'Social Media'. Up until then, only Six Degrees (closed in 2001); Wikipedia (launched in 2001); StumbleUpon (2001); Friendster (2002-2015); LinkedIn (2002/3); MySpace (2003) and Skype (2003) had any online presence, traction or track record (see Appendix Six). 2004 saw the launch of Facebook, Flickr and Gmail. Surprisingly only 15 years old this year (2019) these teenage social media, image hosting and popular free email services might have had little idea of their future impact or ubiquitous use, suggesting that, at the time of their release, a website was still considered the standard for any individual or organisation desiring a stable online presence. It seemed obvious to me at the time that, in order to make a live, editable and updatable database of South African artists' books available to an online audience, a website was the only possible solution.

By 2019, the relationship between websites and social media platforms has changed radically and I will conclude this Area of Focus by speculating on the future relationship between these modalities in order to leverage the value of the information and data hosted on the website. In order to begin, however, I must acknowledge that the discussion undertaken in this Area of Focus includes denotative, quantitative data as a starting point (in Submission Nine A: Annexure H) for the more connotative, interpretative and qualitative material presented and unpacked (in Submission Ten: Annexure I) later in this section.



Figure 16. Screenshot of the Home page of the website Artists' Books in South Africa from 29 June 2019.

A brief history of the websites www.theartistsbook.org and www.theartistsbook.org.za (Submission Eight)

In 2004 Jack Ginsberg introduced me to the Cape Town-based software developer Peter Dennis of Logos Flow. At the time, Dennis was developing a suite of on- and off-line applications, one of which, the off-line resource management database, ResourceMD™ helped keep track of the diverse parts of Ginsberg's multi-faceted collection. The software allowed Ginsberg to compartmentalise and detail the various categories within his collection, for example, artists' books as distinct from books *on* artists' books. ResourceMD™ also offered Ginsberg an opportunity to digitise and rapidly update his original hand-written card-catalogue system into new and consistent data fields. These fields facilitated the inclusion of technical and bibliographic content as well as personal information regarding each entry in the collection. Importantly, ResourceMD™ also offered me the means to extend, update and annotate my own database of South African artists' books, much of which existed outside of the Ginsberg Collection. I had originally collected and documented this material as part of my Masters studies which I completed in 2000. Dennis's software became the connective tissue between Ginsberg's and my sets of data, facilitating additions to both: Ginsberg's via purchases into the Collection and

mine, via exhibitions containing books which I viewed or via direct and email contact with book artists.

Having digital organisation of the databases was extremely important. It provided infinite space for future growth of the Ginsberg Collection of Artists' Books, the archive *on* artists' books and recording of production occurring in South Africa whilst facilitating updating, corrections and additions to the data. It also provided a space for photographic documentation of each book, making the archival aspect of the project richer. The artist's book in South Africa is, however, what Verne Harris (2002:84) terms, a sliver of an archival sliver of local practice, and it is important to note that, in 2004, artists' books had little presence even in the minds of an art-aware public. Thus, any future web presence in which both a local and international audience could access the database of South African artists' books and related materials was significant. Importantly, in academic terms, it seemed that an online space for delivering diverse book arts information and scholarly material would address a palpable gap in both the research and the delivery of important new scholarship into the book arts in South Africa.

As I also held a large body of analogue material from the 1996 Johannesburg Art Gallery exhibition *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection: With Some South African Books from Other Collections*, it seemed opportune to begin the digitisation of this material alongside the databases. Despite its size and scope as a ground-breaking project, this exhibition had not enjoyed much funding and, in lieu of a catalogue, Ginsberg and I had created a modest desktop-published, ring bound document in an edition of 50 for distribution to interested parties.⁴⁶ During 2005, Dennis and I conceived and developed the structure of the website by housing the data I had gathered as individual pages devoted to different aspects of book arts scholarship and directed by the material we had available. In this way, an [interactive catalogue of the 1996 exhibition](#) was developed. The decision to build interactive catalogues on the website seemed critical as it encouraged future visitors to both engage the exhibition's content as

⁴⁶ Although modest, the catalogue made its way into international public and academic libraries, a list of which is available on WorldCat at: https://www.worldcat.org/title/artists-books-in-the-ginsberg-collection-an-exhibition-at-the-johannesburg-art-gallery-from-25th-august-to-27th-october-1996/oclc/231769241&referer=brief_results

well as the medium of its transmission, thus attempting to bridge some of the distance between object and viewer discussed in Area of Focus Two. We now had in place the searchable Database of South African Artists' Books and the interactive catalogue of the 1996 exhibition. To these I added chapters from my Masters dissertation, reformatting them as downloadable PDF files, and three of the most established international websites as clickable links so as to expand the field for any South African visitor to the site: Philobiblon (USA); Artspace Mackay (Australia) and BookArts Web (UK).

In 2006 the organisers of the Aardklop Arts Festival, Potchefstroom, invited me to curate an exhibition of artists' books. This gave Dennis and me an exciting opportunity to develop a second interactive catalogue for the exhibition titled *Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface*.⁴⁷ For this exhibition, I selected 17 South African artists' books from the Ginsberg Collection, one digital work from outside the collection and commissioned five new interactive works from South African artists working in and around the book and digital art. The premise for this exhibition, is stated in the catalogue (Paton 2006):

In taking 'the digital' as a loose basis on which to explore some contemporary artists' concerns with the book, I have attempted, in this exhibition, to open up a place for debate and ponder on what the 'digital' and the book have to offer each other when they meet, blend and collide. ... The belief, however, that the codex embodies fundamental limitations and drawbacks is premised on the book as a supposedly static, fixed and finite form. That these limitations and drawbacks can only be overcome through the interactive features of 'the digital' is a position I wish to contest. ... It is the book in the hands of the artist which upsets claims of limitations and drawbacks and which provides examples of active, interactive and dynamic forms. This reminds us that the idea of a book should be grounded in replacing the identity of what a book is with what it does and that we should "ask how a book does its particular actions rather than what a book is" [Drucker 2003].

Given that this exhibition required both physical and conceptual navigation between the physical and the digital / interactive works on exhibition — which included projections, touch-screen monitors and interactive software — the

⁴⁷ The exhibition was held at North-West University (NWU), Potchefstroom between 25 – 30 September and opened at the FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg (UJ) from 5 – 13 October 2006.

exhibition visitor was invited to engage both haptically and digitally with the works. It thus seemed crucial to extract the interactive elements from the exhibition and reframe them as an interactive catalogue on the website.

Fittingly, the website *South African Artists' Books* was launched to coincide with this exhibition's opening on 25 September 2006 with the URL www.theartistsbook.org.

It consisted of the following sections:

- About
- Database [the much anticipated database of South African artists' books from the Ginsberg Collection as well as my own inventory as an integrated list]
- Exhibitions [as interactive catalogues]
 - *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection With some South African Books from Other Collections* (1996)
 - *Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface* (2006)
- Research [consisting of four chapters and the bibliography from my Masters dissertation *South African Artists' Books and Book-objects Since 1960* (2000)]
 - *A Brief History of Significant Precursors of International Artists' Books*
 - *Towards a History of South African Artists' Books*
 - *Willem Boshoff and the Book*
 - *Towards and Analytical Description of South African Artists' Books*
 - *Dissertation Bibliography*
- Contact
- Links

(See Appendix Seven containing graphic material sourced from the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine that provides comprehensive historical snapshots of the website www.theartistsbook.org between the years 2006-08).

What is clearly discernible from the site screengrabs in Appendix Seven is that the original 2006-08 website reflected the outputs of a set of personal projects. What this signifies is that, apart from my research, very little scholarship, curatorial or written material existed in South Africa with only a small cohort of South African artists producing artists' books.

In 2008 we added new material and data and changed the look and feel of the site. Most significantly, we changed the URL of the site to www.theartistsbook.org.za which helped indicate South Africa (ZA) as its location, enhancing its visibility as a site of book arts scholarship.

In conjunction with the opening of the exhibition *TEXTures: An Exhibition of Texts, Textures and Structure in Artists' Books* held at the Archives and Special Collections, Library and Information Centre, University of Johannesburg, 5 March – 18 April 2014, we launched the second database, *The Bibliography of the Jack Ginsberg Collection on Artists' Books*. This database represents Ginsberg's archive of books, texts, catalogues, tracts, articles and ephemera on the subject of artists' books. Given this database's inclusion of over 3500 entries from across the globe, and in recognition of our desire to eventually make the database of Ginsberg's collection of international artists' books public,⁴⁸ I changed the name of the website to *Artists' Books in South Africa*.

Developing the database of South African artists' books

(see Submission Nine A: Annexure H)

Notwithstanding the huge growth of the site between 2008 and today, its extensive sub sites and depth of its data (as indicated in the material presented in Appendix Seven), the database sits at the heart of the online project and without it I doubt that the website would have been conceived or exist in the form that it does. Whereas Logos Flow's off-line resource management database, ResourceMD™, offers the space for capturing and ingesting bibliographic data, the on-line database program, CollectionOD™, facilitates web access to this material.

⁴⁸ The small proportion of international artists' books which were exhibited on *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* (2017) constituted only 229 of 3000 items. As they were fully documented and photographed for the printed catalogue (Submission Five: Annexure E) they were also able to be included in the [online Booknesses catalogue](#) (Submission Seven: Annexure G). Thus, international artists' books appeared for the first time on the website in 2018.

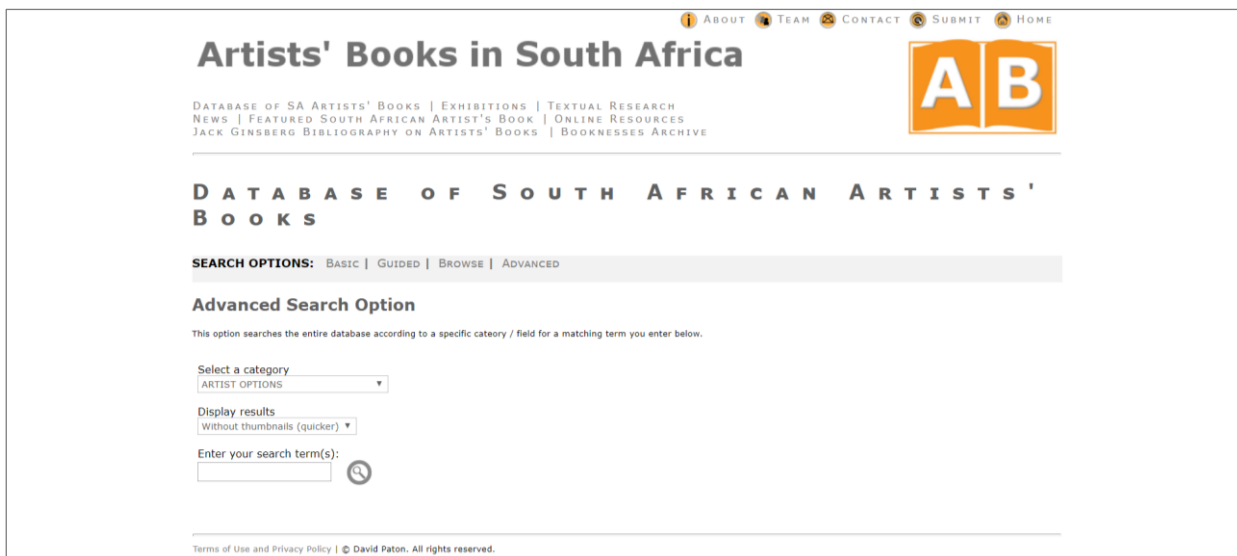


Figure 17. Screenshot of the Database Landing Page of the website Artists' Books in South Africa from 9 March 2019.

As of May 2019, we have 496 producers on the database, a 545% increase since the first count of 91 in 2000 (Paton 2000) and a 344% increase since the first data listings of 144 producers on the website in 2007. Producers include all persons involved with the making of a book and, for example in the case of altered books, would include the name of the original author. In May 2019, 965 items are listed on the online database, an increase of 420% on the initial 230 items listed in 2000 (Paton 2000). See final item in Appendix Seven.

Submission Ten (Annexure I) is a conference paper presented at the 81st IFLA General Conference and Assembly of the IFLA World Library and Information Congress, 15 - 21 August 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa. In the paper, I explore the history and development of the database of South African artists' books as a critical resource not only for South African book artists, but also as a site of scholarship and the promotion of the local field. I also discuss problems associated with its necessary refinement. Taking Anne Thurmann-Jajes's *Manual for Artists' Publications (MAP): Cataloguing Rules, Definitions, and Descriptions* (2010) as a point of departure, the paper presents a literature review and examines three South African artists' books which represent both the diversity of the field and the complexity of the cataloguing task. I examine how the software managing the database facilitates this process of refinement (Paton 2015). Operationally, the database is constructed and accessed in *item-centric mode* where the fields: Item (display) Title; Description; Medium; Measurements; Inscription; Edition; Dates and Keywords, amongst others,

appear. This mode also provides fields for publication details such as Place of publication; Publisher; Prefixes for ISBN, ISSN, Volume, Series, Issue and / or Edition numbers; Number of pages; Exhibition notes and Additional notes that do not appear on the website. In *producer-centric mode*, fields for the Artist and other Producers' names; Biographic data; Nationality; Gender; Exhibitions; Education; Awards as well as Keywords appear, and these fields are accompanied by metadata including assigned and reference numbers, filters and website links. Of critical importance to this Submission – and my research in this area as a whole – is the argument that, in order to demonstrate *bookness*, this denotative information, although intrinsic to the cataloguing process of the book-object (item) and its artist (producer), highlights the difficult-to-account-for gaps in the description of a book's affective qualities. In my conference paper (Submission Ten: Annexure I) I point to critical content descriptions that still need to be identified and included for all books on the database. In identifying such gaps, a set of emotive questions arise: How do the elements of self-consciousness, reflexivity and materiality — often defining aspects of what makes an artist's book — reveal themselves in form and in content generation, and how might this information appear on the website? Grappling with this disjunct sits at the heart of the exploration of *bookness* when documenting artists' books with nuance, depth and granularity.

Thurmann-Jajes' fourteen forms of artists' publications, identified in her *Cataloguing Rules, Definitions, and Descriptions* (2010), were edited and collapsed in order to help write rich descriptions for the specific idiosyncrasies of South African artist's book production. It became clear that our ubiquitous and blunt entry for the field Category Type which read 'South African Artist's Book', no longer sufficed and was in need of nuancing and greater complexity especially given the fact that the site only documents and catalogues South African artists' books. In the conference paper, I argue that any fuller documentation process required refreshed fields of description. These new / revised fields in the software became Category, Type, Subtype and Theme(s). The content entered into these new / revised fields helps leverage not only the most useful and appropriate Definitions and Descriptions which Thurmann-Jajes suggests, but also acknowledges a conflation of her suggested entries for Category Forms such as 'Artists' Magazines' and 'Newspapers' as well as 'Book

Objects' and 'Multiples', and their associated Primary Subforms. For me, this would pull into the gravitational field of the artist's book, Primary Subforms such as 'Object magazine' or 'Newspaper', 'Broadside', and more critically, 'Book-object', as well as 'Book-shaped object' (BSO), 'Book sculpture', 'Object in book form', 'Book installation', 'Book multiple', 'Photo book', 'Typewriter work', 'Artist's postcards' and any related book-based ephemera. In doing this, I have productively conflated the very categories Thurmann-Jajes has worked so hard to differentiate! I have done this in order to describe the subforms of South African artists' books more richly and accurately.

This conference paper has given rise to an extended article titled *The Bookness of a Book: Cataloguing Affect in South African Artists' Books* (2019) submitted for a Special Issue of *Library Trends CFP: Strange Circulations: Affect and the Library* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020). The guest editors are Kate Adler, Metropolitan College of New York and Lisa Sloniowski, York University, Toronto. Here, and in possible future work, I argue that if *bookness* is to be actioned in bibliographic work, the task at hand is one of attentive reading. This can only be achieved through affective labour; by spending "countless hours with the books, turning their pages, learning their tricks, feeling their materials, examining their story lines" (Stover 2005:46-47), labour in which I have been deeply engaged for 25 years. Of help in the development of ideas for this article is Tate Shaw's *Blurred Library Essays on Artists' Books* (2016). Shaw's (2016:159) radical idea is to "remove the catalog's ties to bibliographic items and visually organize a resource for primary visual research".

In terms of other possible future developments for this aspect of my research, I conclude by returning to the relationship between social media and websites. The web development agency Imagine Monkey (2019) makes an astute argument for the integration of both by stating: "In the age of globalization, having an online presence means having a space on the internet that anyone ... can reach. Social media is merely a tool. To put it simply, social media may be the mouth of a business, but the website is the brain". Despite the number of monthly visitors to the website (see figures at end of Appendix Seven) and the presence of 'vents' (online comment submission opportunities), it is clear that communication between visitors and webmaster is minimal. Within the post-

Booknesses period (after 2017), I have found it useful to exploit both Facebook and Instagram as a way of communicating with those who attended the *Booknesses* events. These social media platforms facilitate instant communication and feedback on current book arts events and have also proven useful in pointing 'followers' and others in the digital catchment area of 'shares', back to important information appearing on the website. This relationship between social media platforms and the website might constitute a rich space for future research and the development and promotion of *bookness* through book arts scholarship in South Africa. There is however a caveat. In his article *2018 is the End of Social Media as we Know It*, Michael Spencer (2018) makes a strong case for the demise of social media platforms as they are currently constituted "in favour of niche apps that are peer- or video-centric" such as YouTube and Snapchat. Spencer who signs himself as a Tech Futurist states that, as Millennials and GenZ "'get over' social media as an exercise in pointless digital consumption" they will move to "video-first consumption". Spencer (2018) specifically cites the current malaise of "poisoned politics, misinformation and data harvesting [as] a breach in the social contract with app users." Spencer (2018) adds that "the trust in social media has been broken and Silicon Valley may never again be the same as the enthusiasm for the next waves of technology shifts from California to China". More importantly, states Spencer (2018) "Facebook is mostly a GenX and older Millennial channel, never again to be mainstream with younger generations [and] Instagram is more like a toy for sharing experiences than a gateway for consumers". Having used both Facebook and Instagram accounts in relation to my book arts activities this is an interesting viewpoint. If, as Spencer concludes, "the entire 'social media' business model was not just hijacked [by advertisers] but basically led nowhere for Western consumers ... an advertising fraud ... a digital dead end", then two things arise from this. Firstly, the integrity of an owned / personal website remains intact. Secondly, whatever the vagaries of future social media forms, their communicative power can be utilised only with agile vision as to *who* the future consumers of the book arts in South Africa are and *how* they are communicating.

Peer acknowledgement and the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) 2018 award for the website (Appendix Eight)

The website has garnered much positive reaction since its launch in 2006 and has reciprocal links on a number of international websites devoted to the artist's book.

These include the following:

- *Artist Books 3.0*. <http://artistbooks.ning.com/>
- *Bibliotheca Librorum apud Artificem*, Petersham NSW, Australia. <http://www.bibliotheca.org.au/bibliotheca/links.cfm>
- *Sign of the Owl*. Elisabeth Long, Co-director of the Digital Library Development Center, University of Chicago, IL, USA <http://www.signoftheowl.com/blog/>
- The Independent Publishing Project (IPP), ZA. <http://independentpublishingproject.blogspot.co.za/>
- Oak Knoll Books, USA <https://www.oakknoll.com/pages/books/129905/david-paton-curator/booknesses-artists-books-from-the-jack-ginsberg-collection>
- Philobiblon Book Arts Web, USA <http://www.philobiblon.com/gallery.shtml>
- Smithsonian Libraries. Artists' Books and Africa, USA <https://library.si.edu/exhibition/artists-books-and-africa/jack-ginsberg>
- Visual Arts Network of South Africa (VANSA), ZA <http://artmap.co.za/south+african+artists+books/>
- The Codex Foundation, Berkeley, CA, USA <http://www.codexfoundation.org/archive/codex-2019/2019-symposium>
- Book Arts at the Centre for Fine Print Research, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK. <http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/bookarts-websites/> where Sarah Bodman sates the following: "Paton's website 'http://www.theartistsbook.org.za' is a phenomenal resource through which he examines, documents and assesses artists' books practice in South Africa".

Josh Hockensmith, Art Library Assistant at the Joseph C. Sloane Art Library, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, NC, USA recently wrote the following to me in email correspondence of 28 November 2018: "I've been enjoying our

recently acquired copy of the *Booknesses* catalog and marveling again at the wealth of resources on your Artists' Books in South Africa [web]site".

On 14 March 2018, The National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) awarded *Artists' Books in South Africa* first prize in the Digital Humanities: Best Visualisation or Infographic category. The awards "laud the preeminent creative contributions of academics, curators and artists based at participating South African universities who are working to advance HSS (Dlamini 2018). Vuyo Dlamini (2018) goes on to say that "[t]he impressive collection of books, creative and digital submissions, signals a growing scholarship in dialogue with itself and broader society". Of my award, the Judges, Dr. Thoko Mnisi, Higher Education and Development Unit, UKZN (Chair) Prof. Chaka Chaka, Dept. English Studies, UNISA and Joyce Myeza, UKZN stated (2018): "The project is presented in an excellent manner. ... The website exposes and supports research, practice, production, collecting and documenting of artist [sic] books in South Africa".

Area of Focus Four: *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* – an exemplar of practice (Submission Eleven, Annexure J).

Drawing disparate theoretical ideas together as a context for making

It seems a truism that writing about one's creative production is always far more difficult than producing the work. This is often put down to the fact that an artist's tacit knowledge about what they produce and how they bring an artwork into the world defies intellectual certainty before the processes begins. This notion might support Roland Barthes's (1977:147) argument that "to give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing". Meaning-making and artistic intent have become attenuated and, as Barthes (1977:146) argues, "the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings ... in such a way as never to rest on any one of them". Barthes's ideas seem shot through with Bakhtinian dialogical heteroglossia which argues that "all language, indeed every thought, appears dialogically responsive to things that have been said before and in anticipation of things that will be said in response to these statements" (Paton 2012). As Tina Besley and Michael Peters (2011:95) state: "All language and the ideas which language contains and communicates, is dynamic, relational and is engaged in a process of endless redescription of the world".

My intention in this part of the Commentary is to show how my exemplar of practice, the artist's book *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* (2015)⁴⁹ (Submission Eleven), embodies the concept of *bookness*. I argue that, through its exhibition, reception, critique and acquisition into four collections on four continents, the work provides a unique engagement with the theme that has underpinned all aspects of my work discussed here. It seems

⁴⁹ *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* is an artist's book produced as a deluxe edition of 6 books and one printers proof in 2015. It was printed and hand-bound by Helène van Aswegen at TheBookWorkshop, Stellenbosch, South Africa. The book consists of a double sided open-spine accordion-fold binding with a separate custom-made box in which a flash drive is embedded. Typeset and hand letterpressed in Gill. Printed with EPSON UltraChrome™ inks on Innova Smooth Cotton High White 220gsm. The flash drive contains a video. The reader is encouraged to view the video whilst reading the book so as to reflect upon differences in tempo and duration in each of the two narratives.

important then to not merely reproduce the term *bookness* in this Area of Focus but to unpack it a little more and tie the term into already cited authors' concepts so as to provide a compelling analysis of how *bookness* operates in *Speaking in Tongues*. There is, however, a caveat to this statement. My making relies, to a large extent, on tacit knowledge, unconscious prompts and many conflated conceptual, embodied and aesthetic ideas which, often, refuse to be untangled and conform to academic clarity and rigour. It seems critical to acknowledge that the excitement that an idea or body of ideas provoke when they resonate or give rise to others is generative and at no point in the conceptualisation or making process do I interrogate them to see if they fit together academically or even logically. My artmaking is free of the burden that underpins my writing. What I am stating here is that *bookness*, when explored as an artwork, is an intuitive and embodied process which must make sense to me as an eye-hand-guts-mind relationship not whether it stand up to reasoned intellectual rigour. What follows, however, traces some of the complexity which acts as a ground from which my thinking and making has developed.

The concept of *bookness* has been deployed from within the field of the book arts (Drucker 1995, Smith 1996, Pórtela 2011, Cooper 2014) yet, from outside the field, appropriately eloquent synonyms might be found in the philosophical concept of *quiddity*. This term, derived from the Latin *quidditas*, means *whatness* or 'what it is', defining the literal *essence* of an object. A second term is *hypokeimenon* or 'underlying thing', defining that substance which persists in a thing — its basic essence. A third term, however, seems closer to both my idea of *bookness* as well as the way in which one might ponder on how the body experiences and makes phenomenological sense of something; in this case, my book. This is the concept *haecceity*. Derived from the Latin *haecceitas*, it is defined as the discrete qualities, properties or characteristics of a thing that makes it particular: an object's *thisness*. In the 1967, ethnomethodologist Harold Garfinkel used the term *haecceity* to enhance the inevitably indexical character of any utterance, occurrence or condition. Drawing on phenomenology and the inductive and aesthetic theories of Nelson Goodman, Garfinkel (1967) used the term *haecceities* to indicate the importance of the infinite contingencies in these utterances, occurrences or conditions. It seems inevitable, then, that Gilles Deleuze (2005:266) uses the term to denote

entities that exist on what he calls *the plane of immanence* (or of consistency) stating:

There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules, and particles of all kinds. There are only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages. ... We call this plane, which knows only longitudes and latitudes, speeds and haecceities, the plane of consistency or composition (as opposed to a plan(e) of organization or development).

In *What is Philosophy?* (1994:41) Deleuze calls *the plane of immanence* “the image of thought” constituting “the absolute ground of philosophy, its earth or deterritorialization, the foundation on which it creates its concepts.” *The plane of immanence* presents two sides to us, extension and thought, or rather two powers, the power of being and the power of thinking.⁵⁰ *The plane of immanence* is surrounded by illusions, by thought’s mirages, that rise from the plane itself like vapors from a pond (Deleuze 1994:49).

Pete Wolfendale (2009) describes the indexical nature of this idea stating that “for Deleuze, entities are constituted out of other entities. However, the important point is that they are constituted out of the *interactions* of these entities. These interactions are properly *causal* interactions”.

I am excited by the idea of causal, indexical interactions which point to potential congruence between the idea of Deleuze’s *plane of immanence* as a ground and the ‘ground’, adapted from Kristeva’s *Desire in Language* as depicted in my conceptual map of artists’ books (Figure 1). Like Deleuze, the ‘ground’ from which I create is ineffable and conceived of as a broad dialogue or *interaction* with other similar forms which exist within and speak across time and diverse contexts. From this, the heteroglossia of the artist’s book genre’s self-conscious and reflexive qualities are able to interact. In *Discourse in the Novel*, Bakhtin

⁵⁰ Fredrika Spindler in *Gilles Deleuze: A Philosophy of Immanence* (2010:150) states that “immanence is ... a very complex concept since it works on several levels in [Deleuze’s] thought: immanence, as a measure or an instrument in his reading of other philosophers; immanence as a measure or instrument of evaluating philosophy (immanence as a value); immanence as the internal condition of philosophy itself—indeed, immanence as philosophy, as it were — but thereby, also, immanence as the measure and instrument of the concepts philosophy forges in relation to, but also against, other forms of thinking, with their preference for transcendence”.

(1975:291) states that heteroglossia represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth, all given a bodily form. What I particularly enjoy about this conjunction of Deleuze's plane or ground and Bakhtin's is that, from the former's conceptual space — "to think it in this way as the outside and inside of thought" (Deleuze 1994:59-60) — the latter gives us a 'line of sight' towards a space in (any) time which can accommodate an object (Deleuze's 'problem') such as an artist's book. Within this plane or ground, my artist's book is able to respond, dialogically, to the entire history of the genre and its possible futures whilst, in heteroglot terms, is also able to unpack a form / structure / voice relationship which is multivocal, self-conscious and reflexive in very particular ways and which I unpack in the next section. In Deleuzian terms, my book exists as a result of indexical causality — facilitated through an active and dynamic interaction with the entire multiple and composite (Spindler 2010:151) history of the genre. It seems revealing that, in the *Introduction: Rhizome to A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari (2005:3-4) state the following:

A book has neither object nor subject; it is made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds. To attribute the book to a subject is to overlook this working of matters, and the exteriority of their relations. It is to fabricate a beneficent God to explain geological movements. In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an assemblage. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a multiplicity.

I made *Speaking in Tongues* as a particular object on a personal plane of imminence without any need for transcendent interpretations outside of itself. Fredrika Spindler (2010:154) beautifully explains imminence as an act of willpower, "it is the question of the effort of subtracting from chaos specific, high-intensive composites on the horizon that has no other guarantee but its own strength of resistance against the chaos of infinite speed": a powerful metaphor for the creative act. *Speaking in Tongues* is *that object* which exists within both

a history of such objects, from the most generalised concept of 'the book arts' to the most particular of individual, unique exemplars, and as a set of depicted heteroglot voices.

I also particularly enjoy the fact that Deleuze exhibits a profound appreciation for Henri Bergson's ideas on difference and duration, ideas which have challenged me since my undergraduate years. Elizabeth Grosz (2006:4) conjoins these two concepts thus:

Duration is difference. ... Duration is the 'field' in which difference lives and plays itself out. Duration is that which undoes as well as what makes: to the extent that duration entails an open future, it involves the fracturing and opening up of the past and the present to what is virtual in them, to what in them differs from the actual, to what in them can bring forth the new.

Grosz (2006:6) equates Deleuze's *plane of immanence* with Bergson's *duration*, stating: "Matter is duration at its most dilated, as life, to which matter is commonly opposed, is duration as it is experienced, in its varying degrees or qualities of expansion or contraction". For Bergson, duration, or 'real time' is intuitively experienced from within rather than quantified as measurable, mathematical time, in discrete units, from a distance. In exploiting spatio-temporal continua, *Speaking in Tongues* employs the concept of experiential duration at its heart, formally, structurally and conceptually. This is especially true in terms of the dialogical relationship between the book's haptic materiality and its video's temporality. With particular import for the video element of the work, Felicity Colman (2008:143) states, "it is Bergson's contention for the singularity of a durational point in time and space that may expand or contract that forms the basis for Deleuze's organic methodology for cinematic properties". In *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* Deleuze (1989:262) describes filmic imagery as a taxonomy of "pre-linguistic images and pre-signifying signs" where the visual language of cinema "exceeds that of the written or spoken word: the crystalline time-images where words are unnecessary, and pre-linguistic signifiers open alternatives for engaging the world" (Colman 2008:153). In *Difference and Repetition* (1994:70) Deleuze reminds us that "repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it".

Finally, there are Deleuze and Guattari's (1987 [2005]) ideas on haptic *smooth space* within creative and artistic practices. For them (2005:493), smooth space "is both the object of a close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual or auditory as tactile." Like their idea of the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari define smooth space as nomadic, as traversing through an environment relying on an immersive perception of it, informed by the intimacy of the space, where you can "lose oneself without landmarks" (2005:493). Smooth spaces are linked, in their 'aesthetic model'⁵¹ to concepts of the haptic, closeness,⁵² immediacy and the abstract (Mosely 2012:37). This is in contrast to striated space which is linked to concepts of the optical, distance and the concrete, such as mapping a space between two points. Tim Mosely (2012:39 and 2014:26) states that smooth and striated space is defined by the nature of a body's engagement with a place. The more reliant a person is on their haptic perception of a place the smoother is their experience of that space. Conversely the more reliant a person is on their optical perception, the more striated is their experience of that place. Mosely (2012:39) asks if Deleuze and Guattari's abstraction of the haptic might offer "a means to advance the emerging critical discourse on artists' books?" stating (2016:37) that Deleuze and Guattari "identify our relationships with artifacts (artists [sic] books) — that is, our reception and evaluation of them — as movements between haptic smooth space and optic striated space".⁵³ I like to think of *Speaking in Tongues* as a striated space upon its making — beginning with one cover and proceeding through its narrative until another cover announces both a terminus to this narrative and the start of another. It must, however, also be perceived of as smooth space by a viewer's body upon its reception; a reading where one can 'lose oneself without landmarks'. All these linked elements, then, help explain and position the environment in which *Speaking in Tongues* was made and how it might be received as a work of *bookness*, with both self-evident and hidden qualities of *haecceity* and 'thisness'.

⁵¹ In Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, the aesthetic model (nomad art) is the final part of their final chapter 14, *1440: The Smooth and the Striated*.

⁵² Their idea of closeness and smooth space is derived from art historian Alois Riegl's term 'close vision-haptic space in *Die Sp'dtromische Kunstindustrie* (1927). They are also indebted to Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy; A Contribution to the Psychology of Style* (1963) and Henri Maldiney's *Regard, Parole, Espace* (1973) especially "L'art et le pouvoir du fond," and his discussion of Cezanne (note#26 p573 of *A Thousand Plateaus*, 2005).

⁵³ Mosely's doctoral study (2014) is devoted to artists' books and the haptic. See pp26 and particularly pp76-77 where an "insoluble tension" within the idea of smooth space" is discussed.

Explication of *Speaking in Tongues* as a self-conscious, reflexive and haptic generator of meaning

In order to make headway into its explication, I unpack and examine the work through the lens of the haptic as it is presented in Gary Frost's (2005:3-6) *Reading by Hand: The Haptic Evaluation of Artists' Books*.⁵⁴ I select pertinent statements put forward by Frost as a framework across and through which I weave an explication of my practice.

This topic is the aesthetic consequence of a work of book art in the hands of the reader where tactile qualities and features of mobility are appreciated. ... Such evaluations call up deeply embedded perceptions and sensory skills where the hands prompt the mind and where the reader's understanding can be far removed from the intentions of the artist (Frost 2005:3).

In a recent conversation with Mark Dimunation, Chief of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress, Washington DC (Feb. 2019), I was most taken with his response to my description of one particular underlying motivation of *Speaking in Tongues*. He replied: "Well that's not what I was experiencing when I looked through your book!" This came as no surprise as I had related to him a deep-seated, affective and highly personal reading of a section of one of the book's two sides: where the image of my young son's hands disappear from view under a regime of black pattern. Notwithstanding our divergent readings of the narrative — anything other would impose a limit on that text, furnish it with a final signified and close the writing/meaning as Barthes (1977:147) describes — I was interested in his use of the term 'experiencing'. It mattered not that two people had completely different experiences of the *meaning* of the book, what was important was that both of us experienced the

⁵⁴ Like my Submissions One and Two, Frost is responding to Johanna Drucker's article, Critical Issues/Exemplary Works published in *The Bonefolder* 1(2) of 2005. Frost (2005:3) asks: "Are there any additional approaches that will assist evaluation of artistic works in a book format? I suggest that there is an additional topic that could propagate additional tools. ... This is a haptic [pertaining to the technology of touch] domain where the study of touch as a mode of communication is at work". It was only after I had completed the first draft of this section that I became aware of Mosely's (2014:45) criticism of me having disregarded Frost's 2005 work in my 2009 article *Ideologies and Identities in Digital Artists' Books: Parallels Between Charles Sandison's Carmina Figurata and Willem Boshoff's Kykafrikaans*. Ironically, as Mosely (2014:45) goes on to lament a "lack of critical engagement in artists [sic] book discourse that Drucker identifies" he, in turn, disregards my 2012 and 2013 responses which constitute Submissions One and Two of this study.

book as a *generator* of meaning, and this mode of generation was haptic, where technologies of touch are at work as a mode of communication. The subject matter of the work (two sets of animated hands, one old and one young, printed, respectively, on each side of an extended length of folded paper) as well as the intimate scale of the book (153x110mm), invite haptic investigation. It seemed appropriate to me that a reader's hands would manipulate and control the stories told by the depicted sets of hands across ages and generations of experience. Clearly, the hands are narrating something about time through the indexicality of their respective ages and through the experience of duration and difference in their particular narratives.

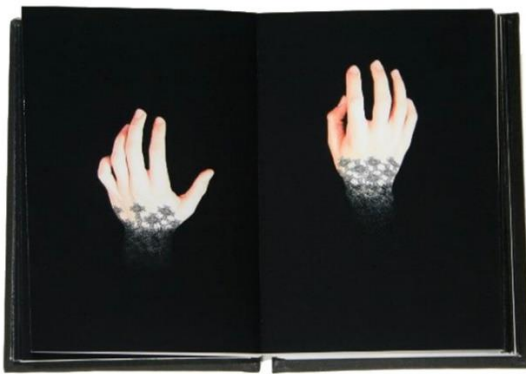


Figure 18 (left) David Paton. *Speaking Digitally* (detail) from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book.

Figure 19 (right) David Paton. *Digitally Speaking* (detail right) from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book.
Photography: the author

What instigates the reader's ergonomic of comprehension and how are haptic features consequential to the evaluation of book art? ... This primary corporeal nature, both as an analogy to human anatomy and as a hand-held object, provides a primary descriptor of the physical book. ... To profile the haptic nature of artists' books perhaps we should first focus on a fundamental shared orientation of the body and book. This first feature is a curious simultaneous

bilateral symmetry and asymmetry; a fantastic attribute that is deeply embedded in both book and body (Frost 2005:3-4).

The book is housed in a box with a magnetised gatefold opening with the title and artist's name blind letterpress printed into the right hand bottom quadrant. The title alerts the reader that the content of the book concerns some form of communication and, beyond the possible spiritual allusions, concerns the body's communicative faculties as subject. This decision to incorporate the gatefold opening is not incidental as, in order to open the box and reveal the book, a reader must employ both hands.

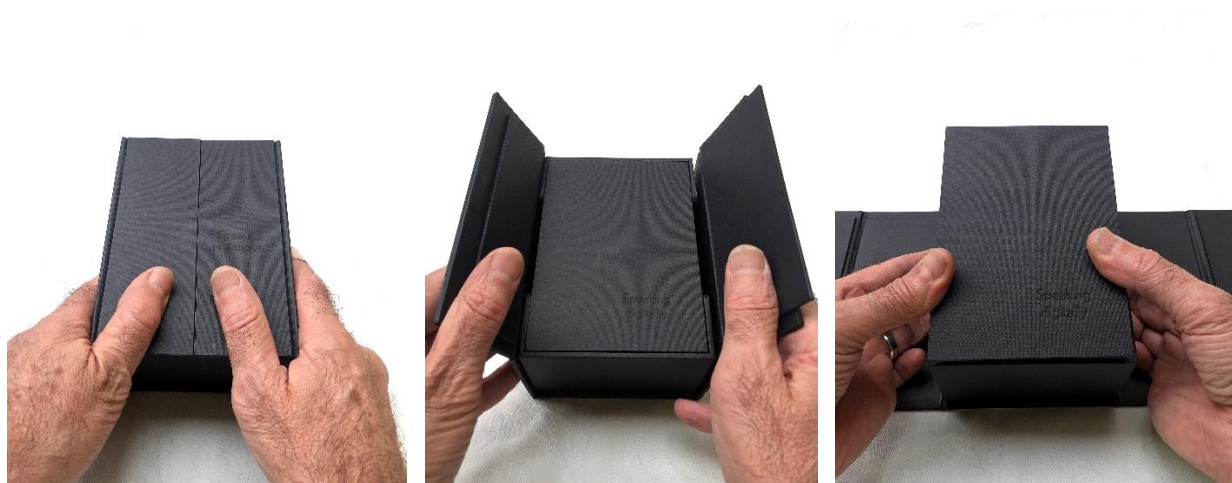


Figure 20a, b & c. David Paton. *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book. Opening the gatefold box and removing the book requires the symmetrical use of both hands. Photography: the author

Our unique right or left handedness is the progenitor our crucial neural asymmetry of the brain. The asymmetry of the symmetrical codex is just as fundamental, but with a special twist. As the leaves change places with each other the right page becomes the left page as the clock of content goes forward. Two hands, each acting alone, hold the book and turn the page. This initially simple circumstance of symmetry/asymmetry of the body and book is opened to endless permutations of artists' books (Frost 2005:4).

This initial mental image of the reader's hands opening the box and carefully extricating the book becomes important when, again, both hands are required to open the book. These hands then reveal the image of two hands, on slightly smaller scale, printed in recto/verso on of the double page openings, slipping across the page gutter. The self-consciousness at play here binds the hands of the reader with the hands of the subject in a reflexive loop of indexical, causal meaning. For the book's subject (two silent stories narrated by two sets of

hands)⁵⁵ to be activated and communicated, the reader's hands, both left and right, must assume agentic power, making 'the right page become the left page as the clock of content goes forward'.



Figure 21 (left) Haptic symmetrical handling of pages of *Speaking Digitally* (detail) from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book.

Figure 22 (right) Haptic asymmetrical turning of pages of *Digitally Speaking* (detail right) from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book. Photography: the author

But how can we provide effective description for a more critical experience of the corporeal book? We can lift it, open it and turn a page. Is it docile or springy on opening, solid or tentative on closing? Is there a live transmission of forces through the structure or is it crippled? (Frost 2005:3).

The structure of the book — double sided, open-spine, accordion-fold binding — facilitates multiple and complex combinations of openings which the reader is invited to explore. Readers are immediately made aware that the structure of the book undermines the conventions of the codex, loosens the book's fixity and allows for the book to seemingly 'come apart'. In reading the book, one does not so much turn the page — although this is entirely possible — as work out just how far the open-ended structure of the book is allowed for by the limits of the reader's body. It is possible to open a single recto/verso spread, open multiple sections of the visual narrative, open out the book in its entirety, or place the book on its base and walk around it to view the dual narratives printed on each

⁵⁵ *Speaking Digitally* is the narrative portrayed by my young son whilst playing an online game on his computer. *Digitally Speaking* is the narrative portrayed by my aged mother whose remarkable hands and digits help choreograph recollection of her youth.

side. Deleuze and Guattari (2005:9) state that “[t]he ideal for a book would be to lay everything out on a plane of exteriority of this kind, on a single page, the same sheet: lived events, historical determinations, concepts, individuals, groups, social formations”. Given its length, and without due care, however, the book will collapse into a mass of confused openings.

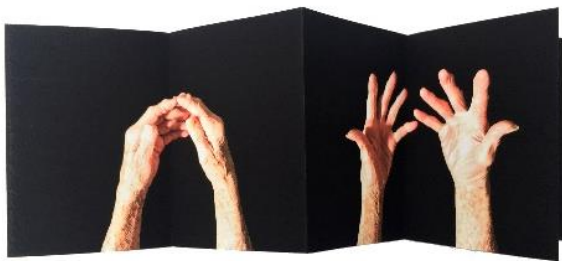


Figure 23a, b and c (above) Leporello foldout of a continuous section of pages of *Digitally Speaking* from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book.

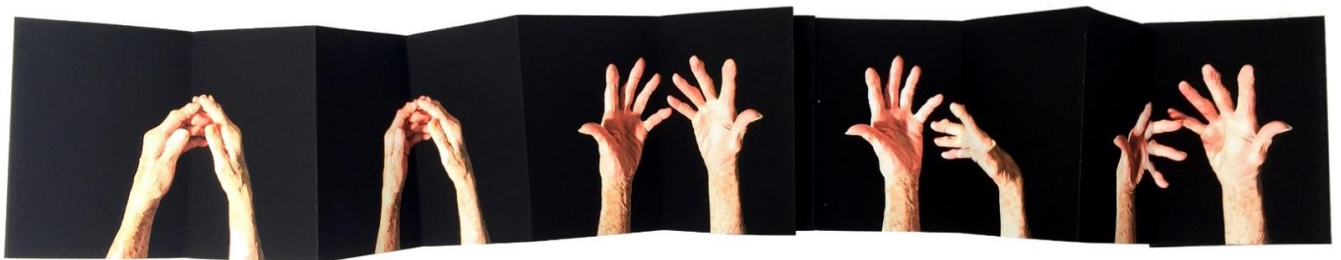


Figure 24. Leporello foldout using part of the section of pages seen in Figure 23c above but also including a different section of *Digitally Speaking* from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book. This flexibility of openings radically expands the given narrative, producing seemingly endless permutations of the storyline. All photography: the author



Figure 25a & b (left & right) Multiple openings with front and back views of the leporello foldout of both *Digitally Speaking* and *Speaking Digitally* from *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book. Photography: the author

It follows that haptic features are consequential for considering the often unconventional and experimental formats of artists' books. The haptic concern also follows from the peculiar essence of the book as hand held art. ... The whole environment of this experience is tactile, manipulative, confined, tricky and surprising. ... Many artists' books have a rag doll mobility that does nothing to inform the curiosity of the hands and most artists' books lack the engineering that provides direct response to the leverages of handling (Frost 2005:3-4).

The intimate size of the book belies its leporello flexibility. A single recto/verso double-page spread measures a mere 200mm in width, but it is possible to

spread the book's 81 pages out in their entirety, which would measure 16,2m in width! This is indeed a *peculiar essence*, as our conventional reading experience does not accommodate such *haecceity*. In a most self-conscious manner, the book invites its reader to engage with its physical and structural qualities as an act of both haptic exploration and meaning making. Frost's (2005:3) description of this experience as "tactile, manipulative, confined, tricky and surprising" is apt, especially as the book contains two separate narratives, one on each side of the page, a strategy only made possible by the structure of the binding and only found in such spatial and temporal proximity (smooth space) in the form of the book. Film comes close to achieving this but ultimately lacks the haptic directives of the reader to achieve such simultaneity. Awareness of this particular aspect of *bookness* makes *Speaking in Tongues* a particularly self-reflexive experience in the hands of the reader.

Each reader wishes the book to act out a bit of personal theater and I suggest that book art is special in this regard (Frost 2005:3).

The intimate size of the book and its filmic sequentiality also suggests that the pages could be flipped. Forcing *Speaking in Tongues* to operate as a flipbook proves impossible with the structure collapsing into a heap of unruly pages. The book seems as if it has a mind of its own and refuses any haptic manipulation which is not caressed by the hand with due care. The filmic sequentiality is, however, a critical part of the book's initially concept, its interior dialogues and structure. I videoed both my son and mother's hands as I 'interviewed' them on various personal topics. From the thousands of still frames I selected short sequences which I transformed into the printed images of the book. The separate video footage was edited into a simultaneous [five-minute sequence](#) in which both narratives were intertwined and where moments of visual similarity and congruence were acknowledged. The video is silent and meant to be projected in equally intimate scale ahead of the book. In this way, the reader is encouraged to view the video whilst reading the book so as to reflect upon differences in tempo and duration in each of the two narratives. Naturally, the video runs at its own tempo and sequence, outside of the directives of the reader who, nonetheless, has complete control over their experience of reading the book. The reader controls the pace and sequence at which the book is read, whether to remove the book from the environs of the video or when and whether to close the book and

end the narrative.⁵⁶ Together, these two elements constitute the project *Speaking in Tongues*.



Figure 26 (left) View of the flash drive embedded within the box base of *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015, artist's book
Figure 27 (right) View of the video playing in conjunction with the artist's book *Speaking in Tongues*. 2015.
All photography: the author

If critically pursued, the consciously hand investigated book could induce a greater appreciation of artists' books (Frost 2005:3).

In *Speaking in Tongues* I have attempted to convey what Drucker (1995:161) terms *enunciation* — by calling attention to the conceits and conventions by which a book normally effaces its identity.⁵⁷ I have also attempted to show how my work engages with many of Frost's haptic considerations. In doing this I show how *Speaking in Tongues* leverages both self-consciousness and reflexivity within its structure and navigability as agents of affective *bookness*.⁵⁸ These strategies help liberate the work's *haecceity*, its discrete qualities, properties or characteristics of its particular *thisness* without me having to explain the tedium of 'what the book is about'. As Deleuze and Guattari's (2005:4) state: "We will never ask what a book means, as signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. We will ask what it functions with".

⁵⁶ This tension between viewing a video and the haptic manipulation of a book along with questions of disembodiment and proximity in these experiences was the subject of my published article titled *Body, Light, Interaction, Sound: A Critical Reading of a Recent Installation of Willem Boshoff's 'Kykafrikaans'* (2008) available at <http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?ItemID=4&tname=tblComponent2&oname=&pg=research&app=&flt=academic>

⁵⁷ Deleuze and Guattari (2005:7) refer to books as "collective assemblages of enunciation".

⁵⁸ Such agency sits at the heart of my online cataloguing project on the database of South African artists' books discussed in Area of Focus Three above.

Exhibitions, collections, use of and peer review of *Speaking in Tongues*

The book has appeared on the following exhibitions and book fairs:

- *Prescriptions: Artists' Books on Wellbeing and Medicine*, University of Kent & The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge, Canterbury, Kent, UK. 21 April - 25 September 2016
- *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*, FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg. 24 March - 5 May 2017
- *Prescriptions: Artists' Books*, Special Collections & Archives, Templeman Library, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. 1 August - 17 November 2017
- Boundless Objects, Toffee Gallery, Darling, South Africa. 4 August - 31 October 2018. <https://thetoffeegallery.co.za/boundless-objects/>
- *CODEX VII Book Fair*, Crainway Pavilion, Berkeley, CA, USA. 2 - 5 March 2019.

The book appears in the following collections:

- Special Collections & Archives, Templeman Library, University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom
- The Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts (JGCBA) Collection, Wits Art Museum (WAM), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Mary Austin Collection, San Francisco Centre for the Book, San Francisco, CA, United States of America
- Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

Media use of the book:

- Collective Investigations: *Intimate and cathartic is the constellation of cancer* <http://www.blog.egidija.com/2016/04/intimate-and-cathartic-is-constellation.html>
- Egidija Čiricaitė. 2018. *In the Space of Time: notes on book space as time metaphor in artists' books from Prescriptions collection*. London: Natrix Natrix Press. Pp13, 107,118-9, 124
- *Boundless Objects*. <https://thetoffeegallery.co.za/boundless-objects/>.

Excerpt from the peer review of the bookwork by Egidija Čiricaite artist and curator, London, UK (Full review in Appendix Nine).

“Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking” is one of my favourite works at Prescriptions exhibition. It is an accomplished artists’ book technically and conceptually, which is a pleasure to look at and to touch/read. It stands out and it captures attention. The book shines with spectacular quality of production and craftsmanship, as well as fluent coherence between thought and presentation.

Excerpt from the peer review of the bookwork by Dr. Stella Bolaki, School of English, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK (Full review in Appendix Ten).

David’s work was chosen for its excellent artistic execution, its moving visual/digital narrative and fit with the exhibition themes that included the body, illness, wellbeing and medicine. My co-curator and I were both impressed by David’s innovative approach to the topics of the aging body, storytelling and the haptic (“a book of hands held in the hands”, as he beautifully puts it in his application).

Excerpt from the peer review of bookwork by Heléne van Aswegen, master bookbinder, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa (Full review in Appendix Eleven).

Paton’s choice to additionally subvert the traditional book format shows that he also challenges the functioning of a traditional codex. A spineless accordion fold resembles the closed book at first inspection, once opened it is revealed that the folds are not bound together and that the actual paper-block consist of one long continuous piece of paper. This subversion contributes to the innovation of new technical solutions to the functioning of the book form. ... I am inclined to situate Speaking in Tongues in an intriguing conceptual space which recognises the niches where new innovations have opened up new possibilities for communication. ... The book form has transcended from a mere container of information into a complex medium where the content determines the form and the form becomes integral to its content and concept.

CONCLUSIONS

I conclude by considering how and in what respect my research has made a significant impact and coherent contribution to knowledge or to the advancement of the discipline of the book arts. In this Commentary, I have attempted to show that the multiplicitous notion of *booknesses* can indeed form a coherent basis for, and the connective tissue between, four diverse book arts activities. In engaging with varied and mixed methodologies in doing this work across the four Areas of Focus, I am confident that I have been able to provide compelling evidence for having met the research aims. In considering these activities within the international field, I confess that it is unusual for an individual to work across all four aspects of theoretical writing, curation, documentation and practice and to have such considered and meaningful contributions to submit in each area. The notion of *bookness*, which underpins each of the Areas of Focus, when considered together as *booknesses*, constitutes a coherent and unified body of research which, I am confident, contributes to new knowledge. I argue that this new knowledge constitutes itself in the local (South Africa) regional (Africa) and international fields as important contributions to book arts scholarship.

In arguing for a theoretical foundation for the artist's book, considered through a Bakhtinian lens as both dialogical and heteroglot, I have made a unique contribution to international book arts scholarship (Submissions One – Three) whilst also heeding the call, made in 2005 by Johanna Drucker for more work to be done in this area. In curating *Booknesses* as one of the largest exhibitions of artists' books internationally, along with its local counterpart, I have succeeded in placing South African artists' books in the company of the world's best exemplars and introduced many local artists to international book arts role-players, markets for distribution and selling, and scholarship.⁵⁹ These exhibitions have also succeeded in bringing attention to the small but vibrant

⁵⁹ Paul Emanuel's *Cathexis* (2003) was sold to de Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Den Haag, Netherlands as a direct result of the exhibition *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* and its curator, Paul van Capelleveen has been instrumental in promoting the book arts in South Africa via his blog [Ligatuur](#) (posts 142-149 & 228). My invitation to be one of [only seven speakers at Codex VII \(Berkeley, CA\) in February 2019](#) was a direct result of the 2017 *Booknesses* project. Codex director Peter Koch wrote about the *Booknesses* project and its catalogue, singling out my essay (Submission Six) in his positive review found in *The Codex Papers* (2018). Also, note Buzz Spector's inclusion of South African book artists in his studio program at the Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri (see Appendix Three below).

local book arts community in South Africa as well as demonstrate how one of the world's finest private collections of artists' books can be showcased for an international audience. My curatorial practice (in Submissions Four – Seven) explores the dialogical, heteroglot and rhizomic nature of artists' books' *bookness* at its centre. In this way, I have been able to bridge the space between theory and practice by constituting the concept of *bookness* as the connective tissue between these two separate concerns. Concerning my curatorial project Sarah Bodman (Appendix Four) states that my

work on the Booknesses projects should not be underestimated in terms of its impact upon the international field. This project was exemplary in its research strategies, presentation and dissemination and has resulted in a hugely important contribution to new knowledge.

One of the most complex, sustained, unique and impactful contributions I have made to book arts scholarship is the online documentation of the South African field. Since 2006, it has been acknowledged as one of the most comprehensive websites on artists' books internationally (Submission Eight). At present, it also contains two sets of databases⁶⁰ one of which (Submission Nine A) has necessitated, within its essentially quantitative datasets, the inclusion of a larger, ongoing, qualitative project which describes the affective content of each entry by attempting to reflect its *bookness*. Such online documentation provides South African book artists and academics with a platform which facilitates their and their works' visibility to a wider local, regional and international field of practice and theory. My writing on the need for qualitative nuance and affect within the quantitative data entries (Submission Ten) presents important current work.⁶¹

I argue that my own artistic production is a unique and provocative exemplar of the practice of *bookness*. I have unpacked the work within the context of Deleuze's smooth and striated spaces as well as the concept of the haptic as it pertains to the artist's book in general and my own work in particular (Submission Eleven). Here again, the concepts of *haecceity* and *bookness* constitutes the

⁶⁰ A third, extensive database of all international artists' books in the Jack Ginsberg Collection, is being formatted for inclusion on the site. The launch of this is set for early 2020.

⁶¹ This textual research will be published in a special edition of the journal *Library Trends*, *Strange Circulations: Affect and the Library*, Winter, 2020.

heart of the bookwork as well as the rich connective tissue existing between theory and practice.

Finally, the outcomes of the four research aims, when considered together as the expansive concept of *booknesses*, might provide an impactful platform for a new field of formal academic study in South Africa. This might come into being at the intersection between the Wits Art Museum (WAM), the Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts (JGCBA) and the Wits School of the Arts (WSoA) in the near future. Concerning opportunities which might spin off from my research and creative outputs, Elizabeth James states the following (Appendix Five):

I consider David Paton one of the foremost exponents of artists' books in the world and also one of the most generous with wide horizons. I am sure if he is enabled to extend his work further through ... funding, it will benefit the whole field.

My most recently exhibition, *Samplings*,⁶² is a two-part exhibition which I have curated in celebration of the opening of the [JGCBA](#) whose existence in its new academic home, ushers in an era of exciting opportunity at the university.



Figure 28 (left) View of *Samplings* - South African artists' books. WAM, Johannesburg. 26 March-6 July 2019. Photography: Paul Emmanuel

Figure 29 (right) Jack addresses guests at a special viewing of *Samplings* - international books, JGCBA, WAM on 27 March 2019. Photography: Kudos Kudu, Wits Alumni Relations.

⁶² The two exhibitions which constituted *Samplings* were held at the Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg and ran from 26 February – 6 July 2019. The 'lower' exhibition contained 134 South African artists' books whilst the 'upper' exhibition showed over 100 international works across a range of categories of collecting. These exhibitions were curated in conjunction with the launch of the Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts, WAM, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg on 26 March 2019. Images of the two exhibition spaces can be viewed in the round at <https://theta360.com/s/sOeyhZv8LPmQWo5ZLFP6u1iFs> and <https://theta360.com/s/fczE5hyCVC6cAZf2UttB4mjB2> (or, copy and paste these links into browser).

Amongst many possible future opportunities for book arts scholarship in South Africa, coupled with prospects that the impacts of this research suggest, are the following:

- The extensive body of artists' books in the JGCBA highlights tangible gaps that must be addressed in terms of the representation of local (South African) and regional (African) artists, print shops and publishers as well as those from the Global South. Bringing such additional material into the collection is enormously important to the representation of these diverse voices, and supports the larger decolonisation agenda and curriculum currently central to South African academic institutions. This implies greater communication and cooperation with francophone and Arabic-speaking countries of the continent.
- In terms of the scholarly impact of this research, there is the possibility of creating an entirely new academic discipline in the South African academy devoted to the book arts and its associated curatorial studies.
- In collaboration with the JGCBA collection's extensive archive of books, catalogues, theses, articles and many other forms of information *on* the diverse field of the book arts, opportunities must be leveraged to encourage the growth of scholarship at the university through postgraduate programs and postdoctoral fellowships.
- The collection will continue to attract visiting academics and research fellows, papers at conferences and other appropriate forms of academic and public dissemination of book arts scholarship.
- These opportunities have the potential to promote inter-, intra- and cross-discipline courses for undergraduate students in the broad cognate areas of language and discourse, literary studies, teacher education, journalism and publication studies, graphic, communication and multi-media design and production, and visual art.
- The vast range of physical book forms, printed (and other) modes of image making, structures and bindings found in the JGCBA promotes the presentation of courses and workshops which explore the psycho-motor domain associated with the haptic, the tactile and craftsmanship.
- Finally, by exploring new forms of curatorial practice, which tackle the well-documented limitations of exhibiting unique, rare, valuable or vulnerable objects and materials such as artists' books, great potential exists for the integration of new media and digital technologies into new forms of curatorial practice, especially in the context of the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR).

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APPENDICES

Appendix One: A timeline of my activities within the book arts field from 1985 to the present.

Where the particular activity's output is relevant to this Commentary as a formal Submission, I have indicated this in colour.

Year	Academic Study	Curated Exhibition	Exhibition Catalogue	Peer-reviewed Journal Articles, ZA	Peer-reviewed Conference Proceedings	Public Lecture	Other Peer – reviewed Textual Output	Research Website Updates	Artistic Practice and Other
1985									Viewed my first artist's book in ZA, Lis Vels' <i>Last Supper Codex</i>
1992									Launch of <i>Selected Poems 1961-1991</i> in ZA
1996	Begins Masters study. Dissertation title: <i>South African Artists' Books and Book-Objects Since 1960</i> . Wits University, JHB, ZA	Designed and curated: <i>Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection, with some South African Books from Other Collections</i> . JAG, ZA	Published catalogue <i>Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection, with some South African Books from Other Collections</i> . With 2 essays. https://www.worldcat.org/number:38468532						
1999									Ampersand Fellowship to New York. Printed and published the artist's book: <i>Re: a Negotiated Truth</i> . Lower Eastside Print shop, NY, USA
2001	Graduates MAFA, Wits University, JHB, ZA								
2004								Meets Peter Dennis. Begins info-gathering and planning of the website <i>South African Artists' Books</i>	
2006		Designed, commissioned and curated: <i>Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface</i> . Potchefstroom & JHB, ZA	Published catalogue <i>Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface</i> . 2 essays. Worldcat no: 1017418425					Launch of the website <i>South African Artists' Books</i>	
2007				<i>The Sound of a Book: Sound as Generator of Narrative in The Reception of Selected New Media Objects As Books</i> . <i>Image & Text</i> , Number 13. Pp. 66-79. ISSN 1020 1497	<i>Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface</i> . <i>World Library and Information Congress: 73rd IFLA General Conference And Council</i> , 19-23, Durban, ZA				

Year	Academic Study	Curated Exhibition	Exhibition Catalogue	Peer-reviewed Journal Articles, ZA	Peer-reviewed Conference Proceedings	Public Lecture	Other Peer – reviewed Textual Output	Research Website Updates	Artistic Practice and Other
2008	PhD enquiry. CFPR, UWE, Bristol, UK.			Body, Light, Interaction, Sound: A Critical Reading of a Recent Installation of Willem Boshoff's 'Kykafrikaans'. <i>Image & Text</i> , Number 14. Pp. 114-131. ISSN 1020 1497				The website is the focus of an Interview with me for A Manifesto of the Book by Sarah Bodman, CFPR UWE, Bristol, UK Website URL changes	
2009					Ideologies and Identities in Digital Artists' Books: Parallels Between Charles Sandison's <i>Carmina Figurata</i> and Willem Boshoff's <i>Kykafrikaans</i>. <i>Imaging Ourselves: Visual Identities In Representation</i> . Pp. 72-89. ISBN 978-0-620-45946-4, VIAD University of Johannesburg, ZA The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing Unconventional Texts from Kerouac to the Artist's Book. <i>The 25th Annual Conference of the South African Visual Arts Historians (SAVAH)</i> , University of Pretoria 9-11 July, ZA	Towards an Understanding of What a South African Artist's Book may be. <i>Transgressions and Boundaries of the Page</i> , North West University, Potchefstroom 4 March.	The Book Arts as a Community of Practice: Some Thoughts on the Research Project A Manifesto of the Book, What Will be the Canon for the Artist's Book in the 21st Century? An article published in <i>On Making: Integrating Approaches to Practice-led Research in Art and Design</i> . Pp. 209-221. ISBN 978-0-620-49738-1, VIAD, University of Johannesburg ZA		Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking. Artist's book, digital printing and video
2010				The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing Unconventional Texts from Kerouac to the Artist's Book. <i>De Arte</i> , Vol.45 issue 81. Pp. 4-22. ISSN 0004-3389					Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking. <i>Transgressions and Boundaries of the Page.</i> Woordfees Archive Room in JS Gericke Library, University of Stellenbosch 1st - 6th March; The Gallery of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, 15th April - 13th May; the FADA Gallery, FADA University of Johannesburg, 12 th -30th July. And at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Fourth International Biennale for the Artist's Book 22 April-22 May Alexandria, Egypt

Year	Academic Study	Curated Exhibition	Exhibition Catalogue	Peer-reviewed Journal Articles, ZA	Peer-reviewed Conference Proceedings	Public Lecture	Other Peer – reviewed Textual Output	Research Website Updates	Artistic Practice and Other
2011	Visits <i>National Art Library</i> , V&A Museum, London, UK to research selected artists' books for article.								
2012				Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book. <i>Literator</i> , November 33(1). Pp. 1-11. ISSN: 0258-2279 (print) ISSN: 2219-8237 (online)	Artists' Books and an Aversion to Theory: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book. The 28th Annual Conference of the South African Association of Visual Art Historians (SAVAH): <i>Visual Dialogues: South Africa in conversation</i> , 4-7 July, UNISA, ZA				
2013							Stimulus / Response - Scratching Away at Some Intrinsic and Extrinsic Problems in Theorising the Artist's Book from the far end of a 'Not-So-Dark Continent'. <i>Artist's Book Yearbook 2014-2015</i> , CFPR, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK, September, Pp. 37-43. ISBN 978-1-906501-07-5.		
2014		Designed and curated TEXTures: an Exhibition of Texts, Textures and Structure in Artists' Books. Archives and Special Collections, Library and Information Centre, University of Johannesburg, ZA	Published catalogue: TEXTures: an exhibition of texts, textures and structure in artists' books. 5th March to 18th April. Worldcat no: 913429821				Drawing on the book: Book Arts, Bookness and Bloodletting. <i>Research as Practice</i> , Vol.1, FADA, UJ, ZA	Introduction of The Bibliography of the Jack Ginsberg Collection on Artists' Books and name change of site to: Artists' Books in South Africa. International peer review conducted on the site and its new Bibliography conducted by: - Sarah Bodman Senior Research Fellow for Artists' Books Centre for Fine Print Research University of the West of England Bristol, UK - Elizabeth James Senior Librarian National Art Library Collections Word & Image Department	

								Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK - Deirdre Lawrence Principal Librarian Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York City, USA and - Monica Oppen Director Bibliotheca Librorum apud Artificem Sydney, Australia	
2015		Begin detailed planning work for Booknesses exhibitions and colloquium			'A Great Idea at the Time': Cataloguing South Africa's Artist's Book Production. Proceedings of the 81st IFLA General Conference and Assembly of the IFLA World Library and Information Congress - <i>Turning the Tables: Documenting Art in a Global Context.</i> 15-21 August, Cape Town, ZA			The exhibition Artists' Books and Africa opens on September 16 at the Smithsonian's Warren M. Robbins Library at the National Museum of African Art. The exhibition's website links to mine in an interview with Jack Ginsberg	Deluxe Edition of Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking. 6 bound and boxed works, housing a flash drive with video. With Helène van Aswegen, Stellenbosch, ZA
2016		Prescriptions: Artists' Books on Wellbeing and Medicine , University of Kent, UK. My work Speaking in Tongues appears on Pp72-3 of the exhibition catalogue	Matisse and the Book Arts. <i>Henri Matisse Rhythms and Meaning.</i> Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa. 13 July - 17 September. pp 117-127. ISBN 978-0-620-68813-0				Mind & Matter: Some South African Book-Artist's Experiences With 'Other' Materials. <i>The New Book-binder Designer Bookbinders</i> No 36, Pp 57-62. London, UK		Speaking in Tongues is exhibited on: Prescriptions Artists' Books on Wellbeing and Medicine , University of Kent & The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge, 21 April to 25 September, Canterbury, Kent, UK
2017		Conceptualised, designed, fundraised and curated Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection. 25 March – 5 May, UJ Art Gallery, JHB, ZA and Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books. 24 March – 5 May. FADA Gallery, UJ, JHB, ZA	Published catalogue: Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection. Dept. Visual Art, FADA, UJ Art Gallery, UJ, JHB, ZA ISBN978-0-86970-796-8. Worldcat no: 1021346544 Online catalogue: Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books. Department of Visual Art, FADA Gallery, UJ, JHB, ZA Available Special 21 st anniversary edition of the catalogue Artists' Books in the Jack Ginsberg Collection with some South African Books from Other Collections presented with 2017 Booknesses catalogue		Simultaneous Journeys: Relational Thematics in Curating the Exhibition Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection. Paper read at the colloquium Booknesses: Taking Stock of the Book Arts in South Africa. 25 March, FADA Auditorium, UJ, JHB, ZA	Booknesses: Taking Stock of the Book Arts in South Africa. Paper presentation at the Center for Book Arts, New York, USA. 10 May. Available Booknesses: A Project in 12 Parts. Paper presentation to Rhodes University Departments of Fine Art and Journalism colloquium and workshops. Grahamstown ZA	Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books From The Jack Ginsberg Collection (2017) Chapter 1 from the publication Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection published on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name, organised and curated by David Paton, Department of Visual Art, University of Johannesburg South Africa, 25 March - 5 May. ISBN: 978-0-86970-796-8	Submission of the website to the <i>National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences</i> 2018 awards Draft Booknesses Archive uploaded to the site	Chair of the organising committee for the Booknesses Project & set of events: workshops, colloquium, exhibitions, visits, conversation, guest lectures and walk-about program Prescriptions artists' books. Special Collections & Archives, Templeman Library, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. 1 August-17 November, following Speaking in Tongues accession into the SC&A

Year	Academic Study	Curated Exhibition	Exhibition Catalogue	Peer-reviewed Journal Articles, ZA	Peer-reviewed Conference Proceedings	Public Lecture	Other Peer – reviewed Textual Output	Research Website Updates	Artistic Practice and Other
2018	Registers for and begins PhD in Existing Published or Creative Research, University of Sunderland, UK			Acceptance of article: for forthcoming issue: Strange Circulations: Affect and the Library in <i>Library Trends</i>	'The Shortcoming of this Project is...': Reimagining the Role of the Artist's Book in South Africa. Paper presented at the South African Visual Art Historians (SAVAH) Conference, 4-6 July, Stellenbosch, ZA	Books, artists' books and Booknesses: Musings on 25 years in the book arts. Two, 1-hour lectures given to the Decorative Art Society (DARTS) Lecture Series, 15 October, Military Museum, JHB, ZA.		Artists' Books in South Africa wins Digital Humanities: Best Visualisation or Infographic category at the <i>National Institute for the Humanities and Social Science (NIHSS) Awards</i> , 14 March, Market Theatre, JHB, ZA Final Booknesses Archive with interactive catalogues of international Artists' books shown on Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection goes live on the website	Building of the Jack Ginsberg Centre for the Book Arts (JGCBA) begins at Wits Art Museum (WAM), Wits University, JHB, ZA Submission of the curated Bookness Project as well as Speaking in Tongues to the UJ Committee for the <i>Recognition of Creative Outputs</i> . 5 international and 2 local peer reviews are submitted in support of the application
2019	Visits to: - Stanford University Special Collections and Archives. - Logan Collection, Legion of Honour, San Francisco - The Internet Archive, San Francisco Completion and Viva Voce of PhD, University of Sunderland, UK	Co-Curation of two exhibitions titled Samplings launching the JGCBA . 26 March – end July, WAM, Wits University, JHB, ZA			Presented the paper <i>Artists' Books in South Africa: Cataloguing the Output of a Nation. Archives in Motion conference</i> hosted by Dr. Anne Thurmann-Jajjes. Centre for Artists' Publications Weserburg Museum für Moderne Kunst Bremen, Germany	The Jack Ginsberg Collection of Artists' Books: Highlights from 25 years of working with the collection in South Africa. Guest speaker at <i>Codex VII Symposium</i> . 4 February, Berkeley Club, Berkeley, CA, USA	Tribute to biggest collection of artists' books in the southern hemisphere. The Conversation https://theconversation.com/tribute-to-biggest-collection-of-artists-books-in-the-southern-hemisphere-115385		Opening of the Jack Ginsberg Centre for the Book Arts (JGCBA) at Wits Art Museum (WAM), Wits University, JHB, ZA Speaking in Tongues purchased by Mary Austin (San Francisco Centre for the Book) and The Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven, Netherlands
2020	Graduates with PhD in Existing Published or Creative Works, University of Sunderland, UK			Expected publication of article for Strange Circulations: Affect and the Library in <i>Library Trends</i>			3 essays for Codex / Stanford University Book Arts Project: Materialia Lumina 2020. Edited by Paul van Capelleveen, Head, Nationale Bibliotheek, Den Haag		

Appendix Two: A list of all theory-focussed journal articles from selected journals during the period in which they have been active

The Blue Notebook: 11 of 146 articles from 26 publications from Volume 1 Number 1 October 2006 – Volume 14 No 1, Autumn – Winter 2019			
Vol and no	Total articles	Author	Title and article description
Volume 14 No 1, Autumn – Winter 2019	1/5	Ella Morrison's	The article <i>Hand to page: touch, performance, and the artist's book</i> presents a new phenomenological method of analysing the inherent complexities of the artist's book. Using the work of Czech-born Australian artist Petr Herel (1943-) as case study, it argues the necessity of embracing the experience of the encounter. To do so, it proposes a new interdisciplinary methodology that combines tactile interpretation and the use of first-person with reference to performance theory, Surrealism and philosophy to analyse the book as art object. Applying this methodology to the analysis of Herel's book <i>I, I am a Blind Man: Three Poems</i> (1999) clearly demonstrates the possibility for an interpretation of the artist's book that is necessarily scholarly, subjective and experiential. Rather than limiting analysis, examining the experience of the encounter generates room for critical engagement with the previously ineffable, affective qualities of the artist's book. By proposing a contemporary and experimental approach to the analysis of the artist's book that combines touch and use of the first-person, this methodology has larger implications for other tactile and experiential objects that sit uncomfortably within the canon.
Volume 13 Number 1 Autumn – Winter 2018	1/5	Monica Carroll	All of the three sets of artist pages in this issue have relationships with the symposium and my research. Writer Monica Carroll fills the gap left by Lisa Samuels by sharing four pages from her own doctoral thesis. An exploration of the philosophy of Phenomenology, each assessor's version of Monica's thesis was an individual work, not a reproduced copy of her research. They are unique manuscripts, with hand-stitching through the pages and exercises for the assessors (which sometimes meant responding to instructions to interact with pages by cutting, drawing and other interactions). After assessment, each copy was reluctantly returned, to form a deeply material collection of her research outcomes. Monica is now an artist's book researcher, having made the connection that she is, to the core, an artist's book maker.
Volume 12 No 2, Spring – Summer 2018	1/6	Tim Daly	<i>Book handling as a research method:</i> How do we conceptualise touch? Unlike most visual art, touch is a fundamental aspect of interacting with artists' books and it is not until you have a physical interaction with the artefact that you can fully make sense of it. Despite this, there is no obvious syntax for us to report our experiences of handling an artists' publication. During my recent practice as research doctoral study, it soon became apparent that there was no clear framework to describe my experience of handling books, yet this was a fundamental part of my research. Without handling a book, entire swathes of intertextual nuances could be missed – the deliberate material choices of the artist and the reader's own rich experiential past never get the chance to make meaning.
Volume 12 No 1, Autumn – Winter 2017	1/4	Jim Butler	<i>Opening Times: Carrión's The New Art of Making Books as Creative Stimulus.</i> [The author] of Anglia Ruskin University, UK considers different ideas of time and space within the book form. These are examined in relation to other artists' books and considered in relation to creative stimuli for some of his own bookworks. Butler is particularly interested in how theoretical ideas and texts can be used as creative stimuli. One text he frequently returns to is Ulises Carrión's 1975 essay, <i>The New Art of Making Books</i> .
Volume 11 No 1, Autumn – Winter 2016	1/5	Emma Bolland	' <i>Category Error / Category Terror</i> ' questions the validity of attempting to define the category of 'artist's book' through materiality and form, proposing instead, that the artist's book is not an object (whether analogue or digital), but a dialogic – trialogic – relationship between artist/writer, object/text, and holder/reader, that results in highly subjective and individuated desire-based categorisation. Drawing on ideas of aura as external construct, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and frame analysis, the article reframes the artist's book as a mutable experience.
Volume 10 No 2, Spring – Summer 2016	1/5	Na'ama Zussman	[The author] considers the artist's book as authentic space evolving from an abstract entity into a concrete one; a place. The article delineates the degrees of that rhizomatic passage through two of British artist Sam

			Winston's works, and reflects on similar structures which could be read as possible precursors for the artist's book as a 'Place'.
Volume 9 No 2, April 2014	1/5	Anna Cooper	In <i>The Edge of the Book</i> , [the author] offers elements that help determine 'bookness', as a means of considering digital 'book' forms and keeping an open dialogue regarding these forms in relation to book arts practice.
Volume 8 No 1, October 2013	1/5	Dr. Nola Farman	<i>I Appropriate, Therefore I Am</i> . [The author] looks at the artist's book and its quixotic relationship to the established order and major genres. Its role is to détourne ideas, configurations and postures with persistent resonance. When considered as a form of renewal, appropriation draws art practice into a non-linear logic that resonates in its circularity across a number of planes of activity.
Volume 6 No 2, April 2012	2/5	Tim Mosely	[The author] seeks to contribute to the emerging critical discourse on artists' books by locating the "haptic" within the making and reading of books by artists. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their seminal text <i>A Thousand Plateaus</i> bind the haptic to "smooth space" within creative practices. Their theoretical framework and critical terminology of the haptic warrants an application to artist's book practices.
		A Williams	[The author] proposes an argument for Artists' Publishing as a theoretical vehicle to move toward a terminology/taxonomy reconciling artists' books practices with new media developments and shifting attitudes to the 'Book' in the digital age.
Volume 4 No 1, October 2009	1/7	Sarah Clark	<i>Using Heidegger's ideas on the nature of time and relating them to Keith Smith's Book 91</i> , investigating the book as a form of living art/live experience.

Artist's Book Yearbook: 4 of 31 articles from 3 publications 2014-2015; 2016-2017; 2018-2019			
Vol and no	Total articles	Author	Title and article description
2018-2019	1/8	Egidija Čiricaite	[The author] considers <i>In the Space of Time</i> – the metaphor of book space as "time" in artists' books from the Prescriptions collection held at the University of Kent Special Collections and Archives, UK.
2016-2017	1/10	Tim Mosely	<i>The material folio</i> looks at the material in relation to haptics in artists' books.
2014-2015	2/13	David Paton	<i>Stimulus/response – scratching away at some intrinsic and extrinsic problems in theorising the artist's book from the far end of a 'not-so-dark continent'</i> .
		David Jury	<i>Book Art Object 2: making a book about books.</i>

The Bonefolder: 5 of 129 articles from 14 publications Volume 1 Number 1, Fall 2004 – Volume 8 2012.			
Vol and no	Total articles	Author	Title and article description
Volume 6 No 2, Spring 2010	1/9	Susan Viguers	<i>Point of View in the Artist's Book</i> . My ideas about narrative are influenced most significantly by Mieke Bal's seminal writings, most centrally her <i>Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative</i> .
Volume 2 No 1, Fall 2005	3/11	Gary Frost	<i>Reading by Hand: The haptic evaluation of artists' books</i> . Johanna Drucker's article, "Critical Issues/Exemplary Works", <i>The Bonefolder</i> , 1:2, 2005, has provided a great environment for evaluation of artists' books. She has suggested models of critical review in related fields of literature and art, mapped the taxonomy of types of artists' books and used carefully chosen terms.
		Johnny Carrera	<i>Diagramming the Book Arts</i> . I was recently a panellist at what I thought was a greatly thought-provoking ABC: Artist's Book Conference held at Wellesley College. During the ensuing wildcard discussion, frustration over the dearth of scholarship on Artist's [sic] Books also came to the surface. The talk by Johanna Drucker that appeared in the Spring 2005 <i>Bonefolder</i> is a great start to conceptualizing the field for more intelligent discussion.
		Johanna Drucker	<i>Beyond Velveeta</i> . Asking for critical study in the field of artists' books is akin to calling for a capacity to distinguish between Velveeta and real

			cheese. If you can't tell the difference between a yellow-pseudo-cheese-food substance and a gorgonzola, cheddar, or fresh mozzarella, then you can likely be happy in the amateurish mind set of everybody-loves-everything that eschews "critical" thought as if it were a form of S&M or final Judgment.
Volume 1 No 2, Spring 2005	1/7	Johanna Drucker	<i>Critical Issues / Exemplary Works</i> . Because the field of artists' books suffers from being under-theorized, under-historicized, under-studied and under-discussed, it isn't taken very seriously. In the realms of fine art or literature elaborate mechanisms exist for sorting and filtering work. But the community in which artists' books are made, bought, sold, collected, hasn't evolved these structures. Our critical apparatus is about as sophisticated as that which exists for needlework, decoupage, and other "crafts".

The Journal of Artists' Books: 25 of 187 articles from 27 publications including only Volume 21 Spring 2007 – Volume 46 Fall 2019. (Volume 1.1, 1994 – Volume 20 Fall 2003 excluded. No volumes published in 2004–2006.			
Vol and no	Total articles	Author	Title and article description
JAB44 Fall 2018	1/3	Claire Gauzente	About the Intellectual Reproducibility of an Artists' Book: Methodological Considerations and Generative Properties
JAB43 Spring 2018	1/4	Monica Carroll and Adam Dickerson	<i>The Knowing of Artists' Books</i> explores the episteme as a way of describing the artist book and they urge the development of a mode of description for artist books. As they wrote in their essay, "We do, ..., urge that the development of ...a mode of description [for artists' books to be] ...an exciting and valuable project, for it has great potential for enriching our ways of talking about and conceptualising artists' books".
JAB42 Fall 2017	1/5	Uta Schneider & Ulrike Stoltz	<i>Betwixt & Between</i> , Essay from presentations at <i>Artist Book Brisbane Event (ABBE) 2017</i> , Queensland College of Art.
JAB39 Spring 2016	1/13	Tom Mosely	<i>The Haptic and the Emerging Critical Discourse on Artists' Books</i> .
JAB36 Fall 2014	1/15	Johanna Drucker	<i>A Book's Work Spaces</i> .
JAB35 Spring 2014	2/4	Philip Cabau	<i>Wire Dancers</i> . To write about the artist's book implies somehow accepting the game of delirious categorization, almost reminiscent of the absurd taxonomy of the Emperor's Animals described by J. L. Borges, permeating many of the titles being published on the subject. Even in the cases where classification follows irreproachable criteria, [Clive Philpot's proposal in <i>Artist/Author – Contemporary Artists' Books</i> 1998:38-50] the suspicion remains that the denomination 'artist's book' might belong to an illusory category. The fact is that its unity is always the result of a negotiation between three problematics that never coincide: the author's dimension ... the recipient's ... and the book's dimension This is the tripod that supports the concept; but it never produces a correct image, a total juxtaposition.
		Thomas Hvid Kromann	<i>Booktrekking through the golden age of artists' books – and beyond</i> . "Where are the critics? The serious historians? The zones of discourse in which the field can reflect upon its own conceptual values? Ten years after the initial publication of [The Century of Artists' Books], we are still struggling to get such activity to emerge"(p15) [in 2004 preface to the book]. Another ten years have passed since then. Have things changed? Yes and no. ...There is still no counterpart to the critical response that exists within the literary field ... On the other hand ... since Drucker raised this critique ... the artist's book now has a history, canonical works, canonized artists, collections, fairs, experts, various subsidies, research programmes and so on – as well as an increasing amount of well-informed secondary literature. NB Relates to <i>JAB22</i> 2007 Esmon & D'Amico <i>Why you don't need to make paper to read a book</i> p19 – AB are without a canon, a critical terminology, or, "a good specific, descriptive vocabulary on which to form our assessment of book works" <i>Critical Issues/ exemplary works – The Bonefolder</i> vol1 no2 2005:3.
JAB33 Spring 2013	1/15	Gretchen E Henderson	<i>This is Not a book: Melting a the various levels of a book's materiality cross bounds</i> – a short version of keynote address given at Five Colleges symposium Non-visible and Intangible: Artists Books respond to E-books Hampshire College 8 Nov 2012. Use of QR Codes to "expand the book".

JAB30 Fall 2011	1/7	Manuel Pórtela	<i>Embodying Bookness: Reading as Material Act.</i> Self-reflexivity in codex works contains useful critical insights about semantic possibilities opened up by formal interventions at various levels of a book's materiality. ...A general theory of self-reflexive formal operations in books will provide a more powerful description of writing and reading acts.
JAB29 2011	1/5	Daisy Turrer	A study on the paratextual space in artists' books. Self-reflexivity in <i>Tutaméia</i> . Blanchot states that "it carries an unsustainable nature, a coincidental space of opposites"; e.g. 4 prefaces, 2 tables of contents.
JAB26 Fall 2009	1/10	Emily McVarish	Henri Lefebvre Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and everyday life applied to her work <i>The Square</i> 2010. Polyrhythmical "Rhythmanalysis seeks to grasp a moving but determinate complexity" (Lefebvre date:12). What better description of a book that not only produces meaning through sequence, but also takes advantage of its graphically divisible, structurable, governable spaces to orchestrate this meaning?
JAB23	1/4	Jae Rossman	<i>Reading Outside the Lines: Paratextual Analysis and Artists' Books.</i> Gerard Genette's theory of Paratext 1 st published in French in 1987 and in English in 1997. "Words do not have inherent meaning, but only have meaning in context, inside the structural system of which they are a part".
JAB22 Fall 2007	13/16		JAB22 documents the Action/Interaction: Book/Arts conference which was held at Columbia College Chicago in June 2007 and provided a forum for artists and practitioners to discuss how they think about book art. The issue includes an overview of the conference by one of the organizers, responses to the conference by participants, summaries by discussion session leaders, and transcriptions of keynote speeches.
		Brad Freeman	<i>Notes on the Way to the Glue Factory.</i>
		Elisabeth Long	<i>Conference Overview.</i>
		Matthew Brown	<i>Book Arts and the Desire for Theory.</i>
		Richard Minsky	<i>Comments.</i>
		Barbara Maloutas	<i>In Response.</i>
		Mary Tasillo	<i>Shaping a New Critical Discourse for the Field.</i>
		Judith Hoffberg	<i>Exhibiting Artists' Books: Problems and Solutions.</i>
		Andrew Eason	<i>Beyond Artifacts: Book Arts as Practice.</i>
		Jen Blair	<i>Book Arts & Mainstream Publication.</i>
		Jonathan Lill	<i>Crossing Boundaries: New Conceptions for the Book.</i>
		Phoebe Esmon & Amanda D'Amico	<i>Why you don't need to know how to make paper to read a book: Looking at Artists' Books Online.</i>
		Tango Book Katie Murken, Lindsey Mears & Katie Baldwin	<i>Contemporary Art & the Book.</i>
		Johanna Drucker	<i>Artists' Books Online.</i>

**Appendix Three: Peer review of exhibition by Prof Buzz Spector.
Washington University in St. Louis, USA.**

PEER REVIEW OF CREATIVE SUBMISSION

Name of applicant: David Paton Department: Visual Art

Title of project: *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*
Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books

1. Indicate if you know the applicant personally and if you have collaborated on any project or initiative.

I first met David Paton last March, when I traveled to Johannesburg to participate in the *Booknesses* colloquium that accompanied the pair of exhibitions that David Paton curated. We have not collaborated on any projects but he has demonstrated astute scholarship and critical aptitude in his writing about my art. I previously corresponded with Paton in 2012 when he wrote about bookworks of mine in a critical essay, "Towards a theoretical underpinning of the book arts: applying Bakhtin's dialogism and heteroglossia to selected examples of the artist's book," in *Literator* 33(1). Here's a link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/lit.v33i1.353> Paton again wrote about my work in a 2014 catalogue essay for "TEXTures: an exhibition of texts, textures and structure in artists' books," at the Archives & Special Collections Library and Information Center, University of Johannesburg.

2. Did the submission under consideration have a clear set of objectives, and were these realised?

I was very impressed with the quality and scope of *Booknesses* in all of its manifestations. Jack Ginsberg's standing in South African arts is well-known internationally, and the installation of bookworks from his collection made some of the most important examples in the history of the field available to South Africans there and, through the exhibit's excellent and well-produced book-length catalogue, to scholars, artists, and lovers of the book arts internationally. There was significant international participation in the colloquium as well, with a diversity of viewpoints, interpretations, and demonstrations available to colloquium participants. The comprehensive record of the exhibitions, workshops, and colloquium proceedings is accessible through the website, <http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/default.asp?pg=home>

From the beginning, *Booknesses* was described as a gathering of the book arts community in South Africa, sharing knowledge, skills and artifacts among each other and with international artists, critics, historians of the field, and curators. I believe my experience of the events was typical: I returned to my university with hundreds of documentary images, print texts, artworks, and new connections with artists and designers in South Africa and around the world. Among consequences of the travel for me was conversation with Anne Thurmann-Jajes, director of the Research Centre for Artists' Publications in Weserburg, Germany, who subsequently included work of mine in the exhibition, "Artists' Books for Everything," at the Research Centre. My encounters with a range of South African book artists resulted in my recommendations that the Special Collections Library at Washington University begin acquiring

contemporary artists' books from South Africa. The first major acquisition was Maureen De Jager's deluxe publication (bound by Helene Van Aswegen), *WO 32/8061 [The Book of Holes]*, which will be opened for public viewing in a special exhibition here in the fall. The Special Collections Library has also acquired the catalogue, *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* and numerous editioned artists' books by South African artists and designers.

3. Assess the extent to which to which the submission contributes new knowledge, insight and/or understanding of a topic or disciplinary area, and the extent to which it conveys a sense of the author having up-to-date knowledge of the field/disciplinary area in which he/she is working.

David Paton's scholarship in the Ginsberg collection show was impeccable and thorough. The several critical essays in the book add substantially to studies in the book arts and, beyond the genre, to the place of books and readings in broader cultural frameworks. Since the subject collection is also globally comprehensive, the book and archive will continue to be of value to a worldwide community interested in the field. The other *Booknesses* exhibit, of books and book objects by South African artists, was visually and conceptually expansive, and it my only disappointment that there were not resources available to produce another publication documenting the profusion of works on display. By documenting all the included works in *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*, I have since been able to correspond with several South African artists including, notably, Willem Boshoff, Stephan Erasmus, Kai Losgott, Siya Masaku, and Ilka Van Schalkwyk, sharing information, images, and critical commentary.

4. Using the tables supplied to you, indicate the scope (i.e. size) of the project.

According to the standards provided in Creative Research Appendix E, *Booknesses*, in its entirety, satisfies all criteria at the highest (five) unit level: Art Production, Curatorial Work, and Exhibition Catalogue Essay/Contribution.

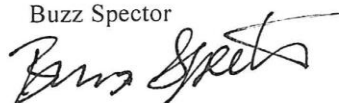
5. (Optional) If there are any further comments you feel are important, please include them here.

I will be teaching an art practice sculpture studio in the fall, "The Book as Object and Artifact," that will include numerous images, critical texts, and visits to Washington University's Olin Library Special Collections to examine copies of books by Zander Blom, Willem Boshoff, Wim Botha, Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, Maureen De Jager, and Ilka Van Schalkwyk. This studio will be the impetus for future critical writing of mine about artists' books, and I will be including assessments of some of these artists in my discussion.

NAME OF PEER REVIEWER:

Buzz Spector

SIGNATURE OF PEER REVIEWER:



DATE:

10 May 2018

Appendix Four: Peer review of exhibition by Sarah Bodman. University of the West of England, Bristol, UK.

**FACULTY OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE
PEER REVIEW OF CREATIVE SUBMISSION**

Name of applicant: David Paton Department: Visual Art

Title of project: **Two exhibition projects: Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection & Booknesses: South African Artists' Books**

1. Indicate if you know the applicant personally and if you have collaborated on any project or initiative.

I have known of David's work for many years as a professional colleague in the field of artists' books, and was invited to speak at the Booknesses colloquium in 2017, where I saw first hand both of the exhibitions that are being submitted for peer review.

David participated with an interview for our AHRC funded RESEARCH project in the UK, *What will be the canon for the artist's book in the 21st Century?* (2008-2010). For this project we did an extended case study interview on South African artists' books with David which was a significant contribution to sharing knowledge internationally. David subsequently investigated the applications of our project when he published his article on *THE BOOK ARTS AS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: SOME THOUGHTS ON THE RESEARCH PROJECT A MANIFESTO FOR THE BOOK, WHAT WILL BE THE CANON FOR THE ARTIST'S BOOK IN THE 21ST CENTURY?* (2009).

2. Did the submission under consideration have a clear set of objectives, and were these realised?

Yes, absolutely. The objectives were to promote awareness of artists' books in South Africa and further afield. To realise the connections between the international field of practice in artists' books, and to show the audience in South Africa that these are important artefacts. To also link the current contemporary practice of artists in South Africa with the wider international field through the two exhibitions, and the accompanying colloquium. The project's aim was to extend practice in South Africa, link it to international discussion and dissemination and to push the field in South Africa in terms of debate and understanding of artists' books. I witnessed all of this achieved during my visit and was incredibly impressed with the intelligence and depth of curation and ambition for the overall project. Visiting scholars, artists, curators and the public as well as students all participated in meaningful dialogue, workshops, viewing the exhibitions and left enthused and informed.

3. Assess the extent to which to which the submission contributes new knowledge, insight and/or understanding of a topic or disciplinary area, and the extent to which it conveys a sense of the author having up-to-date knowledge of the field/disciplinary area in which he/she is working.

Both of these exhibitions were incredibly important and timely. David has an astute knowledge of his field, and is connected internationally within it, from his articles and research website, and his extensive expertise in the theory of artists' books in both history and contemporary practice.

First of all, with the **Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection**, this was a masterpiece of curatorial practice. Not only did it involve showcasing important international artists' books practice to the visiting public, it also drew on the Ginsberg collection as a significant research resource in South Africa. To use a copy of the seminal artist's book *Prose du Transsiberien* (1913) as a framework from which to interpret and curate an exhibition of over 250 works was deeply ambitious and masterfully presented. I have never seen an exhibition of such depth and integrity to its source and in opening that source up to new conversations, and probably never will again. This would in itself have been enough as a curatorial premise, but it went further. Reflecting not only on the first exhibition of Ginsberg's collection from 1996, it also responded to and developed on from the exhibition curated by Riva Castleman, *A Century of Artists' Books* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1995). This is incredibly significant and a very meaningful piece of research and dissemination. The Castleman exhibition was seen as 'the' exhibition of its time, and caused some controversy in what was selected and what was not (for example, the artist and critic Johanna Drucker responded with a selection of 'The Century of Artists' Books'). To have surveyed the Castleman selection and responded through researching Ginsberg's collection in order to propose another iteration which scoped way beyond the MoMA show (at least double the size, including far more seminal examples of practice) and through the catalogue, examining a far wider investigation of contemporary works in relation to the development of the field over the last 50 years was an incredible achievement. This has brought significant insight and new knowledge to the field internationally, and disseminated this new knowledge through the extensive publication and online archive which allows free access to researchers, librarians, academics, students etc. This will impact upon knowledge throughout the field, and bring artists' books practice in South Africa to worldwide attention. David has already been invited to present a keynote at CODEX in the USA which is testament to the quality of research undertaken and which will inform a new field of historians and fine press publishers.

The accompanying **Booknesses: South African Artists' Books** exhibition was both inclusive and important. It surveyed and presented a fine selection of contemporary works by South African artists to an international audience of visitors and colloquium attendees. Presenting it as a sister exhibition to the Ginsberg collection exhibition allowed a greater presence and linked it firmly with the history of and continued practice of international artists. Rather than books by South African artists being simply subsumed into the wider display they were proudly showcase in their own right, giving space for reflection, consideration and (often) handling. This was exactly the right thing to do in presenting them to the public as fine examples of important contributions to contemporary discourse on the artist's book as a work of art in South Africa and further afield. It showed a strong tradition firmly rooted in South Africa as a place where these artefacts are created and debated. I learned a great deal more about practice in South Africa from this exhibition, as I am sure did many other visitors. 3

4. Using the tables supplied to you, indicate the scope (i.e. size) of the project (1 limited – 5 complex).

The scope of the project is a 5.

- The exhibition can be demonstrated to have involved the curator in a substantial number of lectures, colloquia or other engagements of a scholarly nature.

- The curator has borrowed a substantial number of works included in the exhibition from a wide variety of collections.

The Booknesses exhibitions project more than meets these criteria.

5. (Optional) If there are any further comments you feel are important, please include them here.

David Paton has a significant track record in scholarly research into the field of artists' books. As a professional peer I have a huge amount of respect for the work he is doing in the field, which is of great benefit to the fine arts field in South Africa and which feeds into national and international understanding and appreciation of artists' books. His work on the Booknesses projects should not be underestimated in terms of its impact upon the international field. This project was exemplary in its research strategies, presentation and dissemination and has resulted in a hugely important contribution to new knowledge.

NAME OF PEER REVIEWER: SARAH BODMAN

Sarah Bodman

SIGNATURE OF PEER REVIEWER:

DATE: 3RD APRIL 2018

Appendix Five: Peer review of exhibition by Elizabeth James. National Art Library, V&A Museum, London, UK.

PEER REVIEW OF CREATIVE SUBMISSION

Name of applicant: David Paton

Department: Visual Art

Title of project: Booknesses

1. *Indicate if you know the applicant personally and if you have collaborated on any project or initiative.*

I know David Paton personally, through mutual involvement in the field of artists' books. We have not collaborated on any projects, but I attended the Booknesses Colloquium in 2017 and presented a paper. He has previously been an invited speaker at IFLA World Congress (Cape Town, 2015), in a session on artists' books organised by the Art Libraries Section, of which I am a committee member.

2. *Did the submission under consideration have a clear set of objectives, and were these realised?*

The exhibitions and associated programme had clear objectives, as set out in David Paton's application. I can confirm that these came across clearly, both prior to and during the events. Every one appears to me to have been realised. The 'high-level' aims were achieved with resounding success: those concerning creating and strengthening national/international networks, and establishing Johannesburg, and South Africa, as sites of world importance in book arts.

3. *Assess the extent to which to which the submission contributes new knowledge, insight and/or understanding of a topic or disciplinary area, and the extent to which it conveys a sense of the author having up-to-date knowledge of the field/disciplinary area in which he/she is working.*

The group of exhibitions and events that constituted Booknesses contributed new knowledge, insight and understanding in several different ways.

I believe that it introduced to new audiences in South Africa a substantial and mature history of an international artistic field which is likely to be of particular interest and relevance to a nation where art has been a beacon of contest, witness and assertion, that is, where it has been fueled by urgent ideas and discourse; because artists' books by their nature function in a discursive, conceptual field as well as a sensory material field.

The FADA Gallery exhibition (and the history of championing national work that lay behind it) demonstrated newly to the international audience that artists' books can be among South Africa's most distinguished artistic outputs; that William Kentridge and Willem Boshoff will have worthy successors in this respect.

David Paton's curatorial approach in the UJ exhibition from the Ginsburg collection was truly original, in its thematic structure derived from the *Prose du Transsibérien*. This in particular was where we see the creativity of this curatorial project, which certainly sparked new relations and new insights.

Paton's encyclopaedic and deeply reflective knowledge of artists' books shone through all the outputs of Booknesses, from the exhibitions to the catalogues to the colloquium

participants. His work evidences knowledge and understanding of the history of both artists' books themselves and of their reception, and a global acquaintance with current practitioners, commentators, literature and collections.

4. *Using the tables supplied to you, indicate the scope (i.e. size) of the project.*

I refer to the tables in Stage 2 of Creative Research Appendix E.

The scale and scope of the project is at the level of 5 Units in my opinion, taking together the size of the two main exhibitions, the catalogues, the substantial international colloquium and the workshop programme.

The curator has been involved in numerous scholarly engagements (although his application emphasizes the collaborative nature of the enterprise) – most immediately, he directed the international colloquium, edited the historical exhibition catalogue and wrote its central essay, which is a real contribution to critical discourse on artists' books.

The museum-grade historical exhibition was fully sourced from one collection, but it could not have been otherwise: not only are other sources unavailable in Africa, but better examples, or a wider choice, are uncommon anywhere. This did not obviate the need for enterprising curation: the Ginsberg collection is so comprehensive that expertise and selectivity had to be exercised in making a show that would be both coherent, definitive even, and yet also stimulating and genuinely original in approach.

Also very substantial, the FADA exhibition, of contemporary South African work, was I believe borrowed from many sources, especially from the artists themselves, for some of whom I imagine the invitation to participate amounted to a commission; so that the curation certainly did call new work into being and has helped to grow and shape the field.

The exhibitions did not tour, but mitigating this I suggest is the applicant's commitment to outreach and access online: the Booknesses website is a real resource trove.

5. *(Optional) If there are any further comments you feel are important, please include them here.*

I consider David Paton one of the foremost exponents of artists' books in the world, and also one of the most generous, with wide horizons. I am sure if he is enabled to extend his work further through this funding, it will benefit the whole field.

NAME OF PEER REVIEWER:

Elizabeth James, Senior Librarian, National Art Library Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

SIGNATURE OF PEER REVIEWER:



DATE:

4 May 2018

Appendix Six: List of Social Media platforms and their launch dates in relation to the development and launch of the website *South African Artists' Books*

Social Media Name	Launch Date
Bolt.com	1996
Six Degrees	1997 - 2001
AOL Instant Messenger	1997
Open Diary	1998
Yahoo! Messenger	1999
MSN Messenger	1999
Wikipedia	2001
StumbleUpon	2001
Friendster	2002 - 2015
LinkedIn	2002/3
MySpace	2003
Baidu Tieba (Ch)	2003
Skype	2003
Taringa! (Aug)	January 2004
Facebook	4 February 2004
Flickr	10 February 2004
GMail	1 April 2004
Hi5	27 June 2004
Tagged	October 2004
South African Artists' Books planning begins	Sept 2004
You Tube	14 February 2005
Bebo	2005
Reddit	2005
Qzone (Tencent Ch)	2005
Twitter	15 July 2006
South African Artists' Books launched	25 September 2006
Badoo	November 2006
Tumblr	2007
Hootsuite	2008
Netlog	2009
WhatsApp	2009
QQ (Tencent Ch)	2009
Sina Weibo (Ch)	2009
Instagram	2010
Pinterest	2010
Path	2010
Viber	2010
Snapchat	2011/12
Google Plus	2011
Facebook Messenger	2011
WeChat (Tencent Ch)	2011
Line (Jn)	2011
Tinder	2012
Telegram	2013
Google Hangout	2013 - 2019
Vine	2013
Swarm	2014
Apple Pay	2015
Discord	2015
Periscope	2015
Meerkat	2015
Minds	2015
Mastodon	2016
TikTok (Douyin Ch)	(2016) 2018

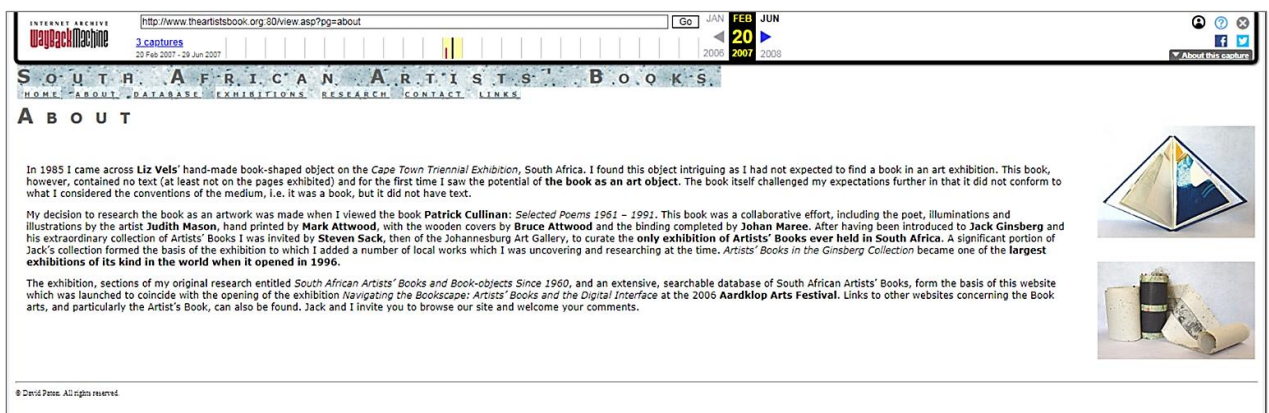
Appendix Seven: Graphic material and analytics sourced from the Internet Archive's *Wayback Machine* that provides comprehensive historical snapshots of the websites www.theartistsbook.org (2006-08) and www.theartistsbook.org.za (2008 – present) as well as from <http://www.awstats.org>, AWStats official web site that keeps track of visits to our website since September 2013.

[All imagery and data courtesy *The Internet Archive Wayback Machine* accessed 14 January 2019.]

The website's 2007 Home Page appeared as:



Screengrabs of the 2007 site's specific pages appeared as follows:



INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
http://www.theartistsbook.org/30/view.asp?pg=objects
Go JAN FEB JUN
2006 20 2007 2008
3 captures
20 Feb 2007 - 29 Jun 2007

SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS
HOME ABOUT DATABASE EXHIBITIONS RESEARCH CONTACT LINKS

DATABASE

You can access Artist and Book information in various ways:
[SEARCH TIPS](#)

Browsing

This option browses through the **images** of the books. You can click an image for full details.
Browsing through images: Ideal if you would like to get an impression but not useful if you are looking for a specific artist, book, etc.

[CLICK HERE](#) to browse through the images.

This option browses through the **artists and books**. You can click a book title for full details.
Browsing through artists and books: ideal if you do not know the artists / books represented but not useful if you are looking for a specific artist, book, etc.

[CLICK HERE](#) to browse through the artists and books.

Find

Find details of artists and books via name, title, etc.
Ideal if you are looking for a specific artist, etc.

Select a category
Artist name

Enter your search term(s):

INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
http://www.theartistsbook.org/30/view.asp?pg=exhibitions
Go JAN FEB JUN
2006 20 2007 2008
3 captures
20 Feb 2007 - 29 Jun 2007

SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS
HOME ABOUT DATABASE EXHIBITIONS RESEARCH CONTACT LINKS

EXHIBITIONS

Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface

A digital catalogue of the exhibition held at the Aardklop Arts Festival, September 2006 and the University of Johannesburg FADA Gallery, October 2006.

Curated by **David M. Paton**

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the exhibition

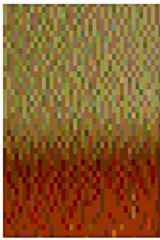
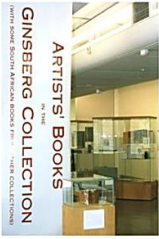
View this exhibition's details on the [Aardklop website](#)

Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection, with some South African Books from Other Collections

An exhibition at the Johannesburg Art Gallery from 25th August to 27th October, 1996.

Curated by **Jack M. Ginsberg and David M. Paton**

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the exhibition

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INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
http://www.theartistsbook.org/30/view.asp?pg=research
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2006 20 2007 2008
3 captures
20 Feb 2007 - 29 Jun 2007

SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS
HOME ABOUT DATABASE EXHIBITIONS RESEARCH CONTACT LINKS

RESEARCH

SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS AND BOOK-OBJECTS SINCE 1960

David Murray Paton
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Fine Art.
Johannesburg 2000

ABSTRACT

My research attempts to account for the presence of the Artist's Book in South Africa since 1960.

I will analyse significant precursors of Artists' Books in both the international and local fields in order to map a history of these objects. This history helps me locate self-consciousness and self-reflexivity as crucial elements of Artists' Books.

Notwithstanding an inherent difficulty in finding a satisfactory definition for these objects I will attempt to describe book artists' 'zones of activity' and their intersections. This helps me construct an analysis of the structural and material characteristics of Artists' Books.

I will give special attention to selected works of Willem Boshoff in which structural and material elements are foregrounded. I will also explore the relationship between reading and viewing in the selected examples.


These elements form the basis for the examination of my own work.

Finally I have prepared an inventory of all Artists' Books I have come into contact with during the course of my research.

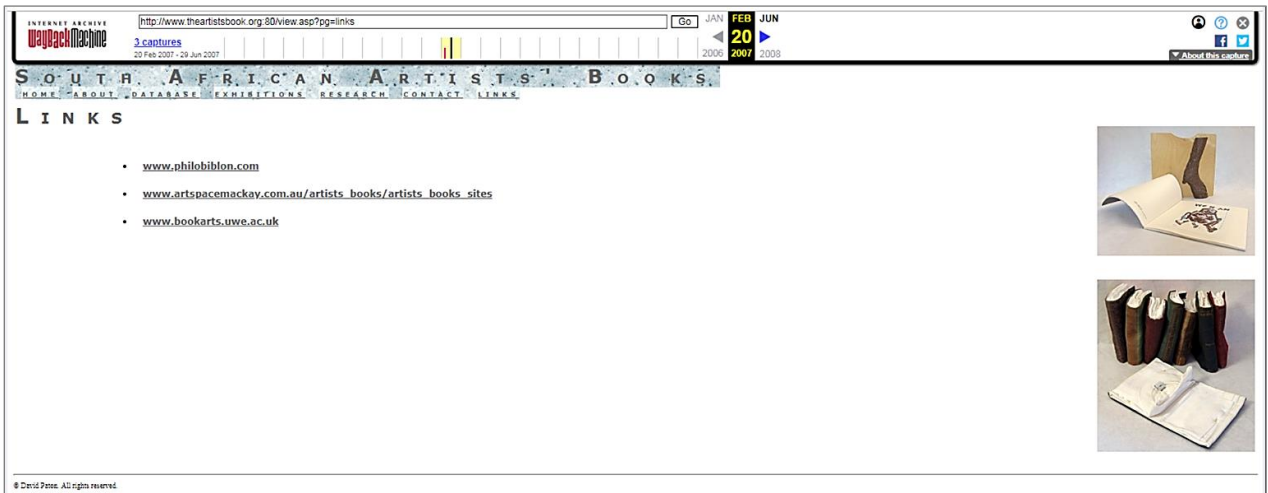
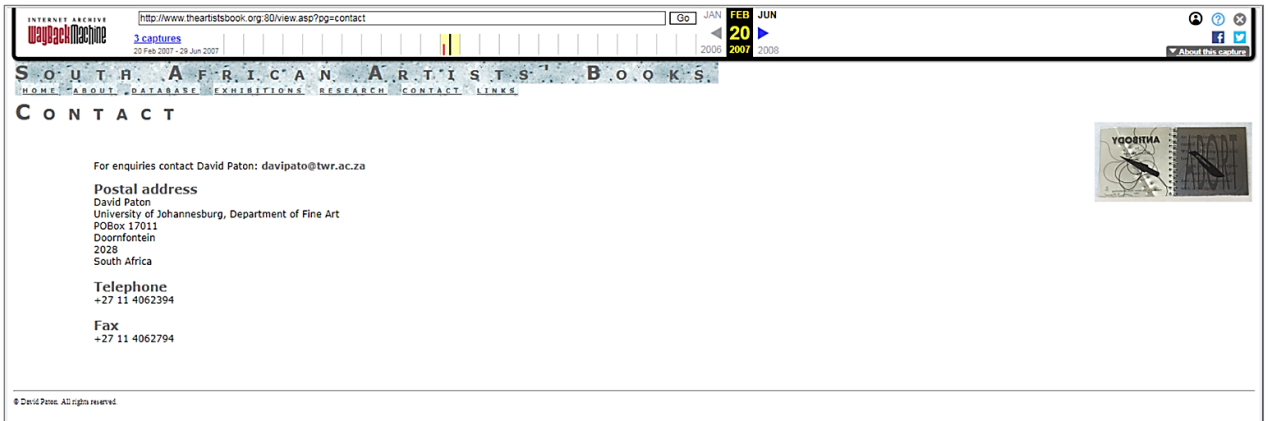
Dissertation downloads

- **Introduction and Chapter One**
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SIGNIFICANT PRECURSORS OF INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS' BOOKS
(format: PDF, size: 697kb)
- **Chapter Two**
TOWARDS A HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS
(format: PDF, size: 708kb)
- **Chapter Three**
WILLEM BOSHOFF AND THE BOOK
(format: PDF, size: 1, 097kb)
- **Chapter Four and Endnote**
TOWARDS AN ANALYTICAL DESCRIPTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS
(format: PDF, size: 1, 262kb)
- **Bibliography**
(format: PDF, size: 52kb)

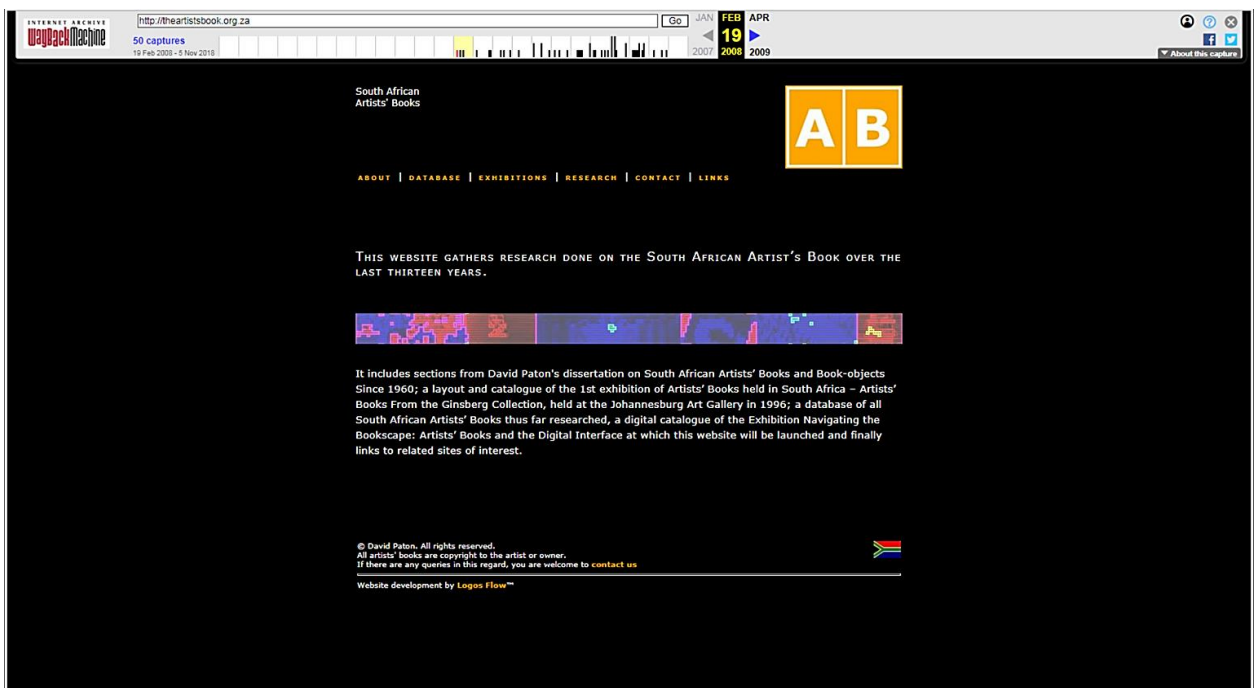
The above documents are available in PDF format.
If you do not have Acrobat Reader, click [here](#).



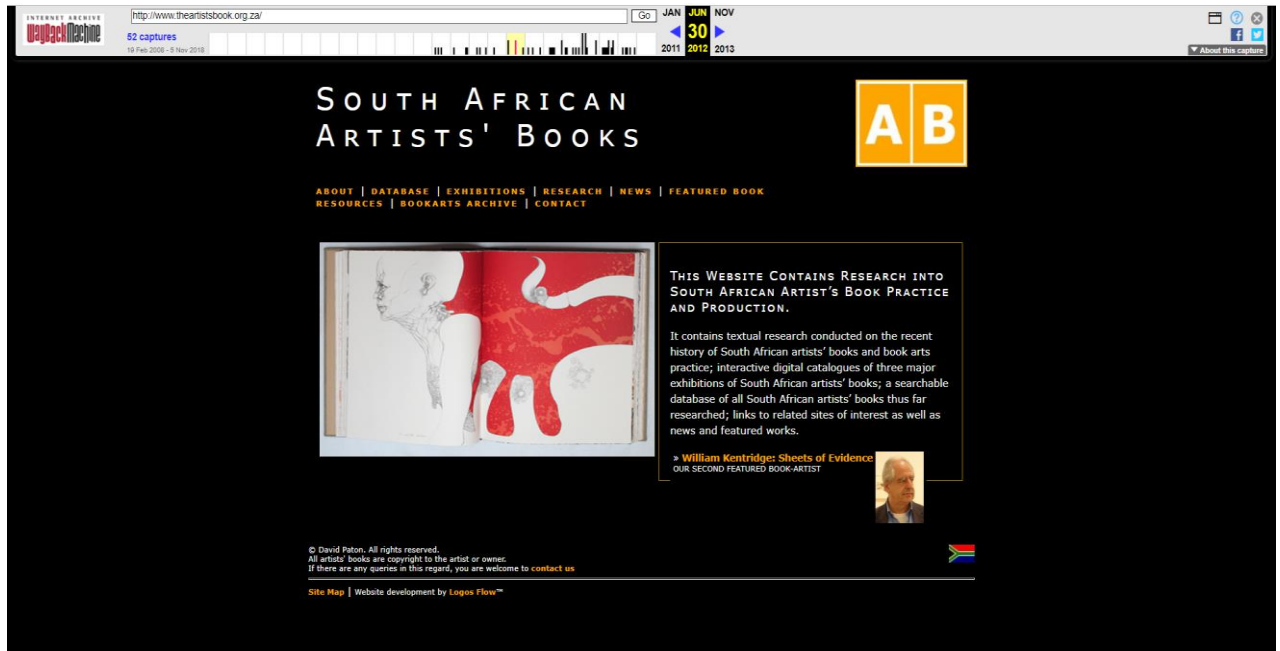
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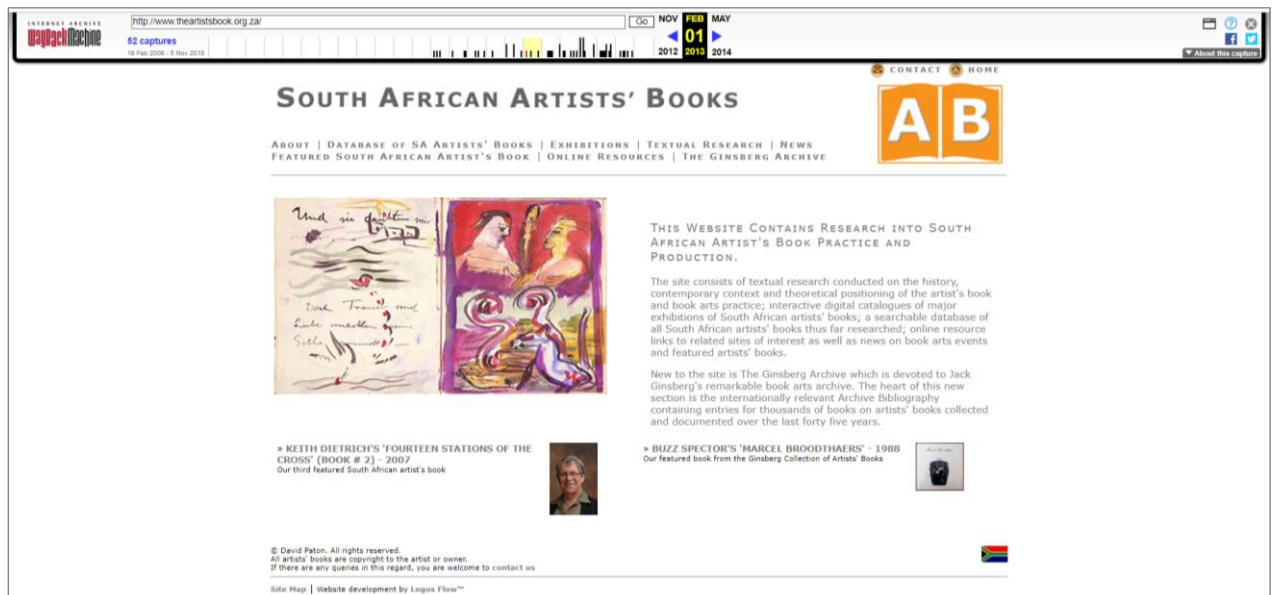
Below is a screengrab of the home page as it appeared on 19 Feb 2008 under the new URL:



Below is a screengrab of the home page as it appeared on 30 June 2012:



Below is a screengrab of the home page as it appeared on 1 Feb 2013:



Below is a screengrab of the home page as it appeared on 3 Sept 2018. Note name change:

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website 'Artists' Books in South Africa'. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'ABOUT', 'TEAM', 'CONTACT', 'SUBMIT', and 'HOME'. The main title is 'Artists' Books in South Africa', followed by a logo with the letters 'A' and 'B' in orange squares. Below the title, there is a list of links: 'DATABASE OF SA ARTISTS' BOOKS | EXHIBITIONS | TEXTUAL RESEARCH', 'NEWS | FEATURED SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST'S BOOK | ONLINE RESOURCES', 'JACK GINSBERG BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ARTISTS' BOOKS | BOOKNESSES ARCHIVE'. The page is divided into two main columns. The left column contains two images: the top one shows an open book with a red cover and a white page, and the bottom one shows a man in a blue shirt standing in a library, looking at a book on a table. The right column contains text: 'THIS WEBSITE EXPLORES RESEARCH, PRACTICE, PRODUCTION, COLLECTING AND DOCUMENTING OF ARTISTS' BOOKS IN SOUTH AFRICA.' followed by a paragraph about the site's content and a paragraph about the 'Booknesses Archive'. At the bottom, there are three news items: '5th ANKARA ARTIST BOOK AWARD: THE PAINTED WORD', 'BOOK ARTS NEWSLETTER, No. 119', and 'YOUNG BUCKS BOOKBINDING WORKSHOPS AND MATERIALS'. The page also features a 'Wayback Machine' logo in the top left corner and a 'Go to the Booknesses Archive' link in the middle left.


INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
32 captures
10 May 2008 - 3 Sep 2018

http://theartistsbook.org.za/default.asp?pg=home
Go
MAY SEP OCT
2017 03 2018 2019

ABOUT TEAM CONTACT SUBMIT HOME

Artists' Books in South Africa

DATABASE OF SA ARTISTS' BOOKS | EXHIBITIONS | TEXTUAL RESEARCH
NEWS | FEATURED SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST'S BOOK | ONLINE RESOURCES
JACK GINSBERG BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ARTISTS' BOOKS | BOOKNESSES ARCHIVE



Go to the Booknesses Archive

THIS WEBSITE EXPLORES RESEARCH, PRACTICE, PRODUCTION, COLLECTING AND DOCUMENTING OF ARTISTS' BOOKS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The site accounts for the presence and nature of the artist's book in South Africa. It consists of textual research conducted on the history, contemporary context and theoretical positioning of the artist's book; interactive digital catalogues of major exhibitions of artists' books held in South Africa; a searchable database of all South African artists' books thus far researched; links to online resources and related sites of interest; news on book arts events as well as featured artists' books.

At the centre of much of our exploration are *The Jack Ginsberg Artists' Books Collections* which consist of *The Collection of South African Artists' Books*, *The Collection of International Artists' Books*, and *The Collection on Artists' Books*. You can also find the *Bibliography of The Jack Ginsberg Collection on Artists' Books*, which is an index to thousands of printed items (books, scholarly texts, catalogues, pamphlets, tracts etc.) on artists' books, collected by Jack Ginsberg over the last forty-five years. This bibliography will be of great interest to collectors, librarians and scholars of the artist's book.

New to the site is the archive of the Booknesses set of projects which took place at the University of Johannesburg in March and April 2017. This rich resource comprises new exhibitions, textual outputs and photographic documentation of this complex project.

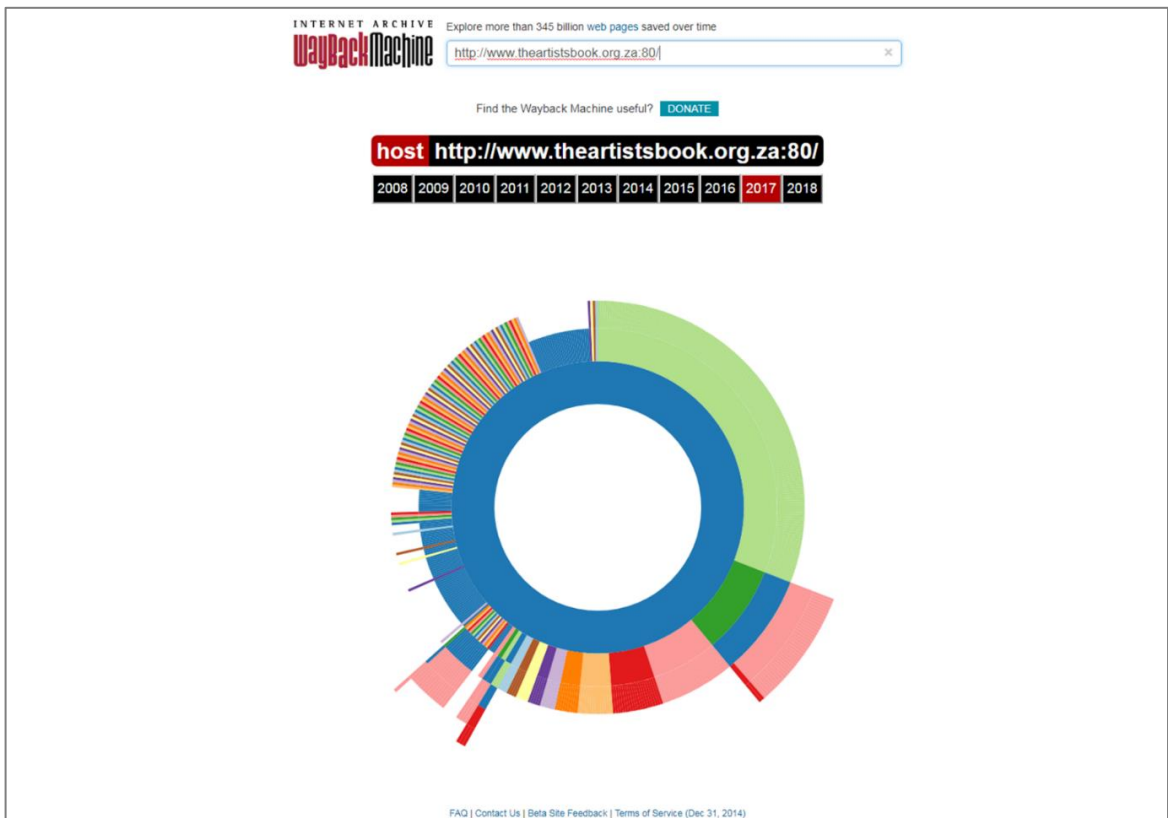
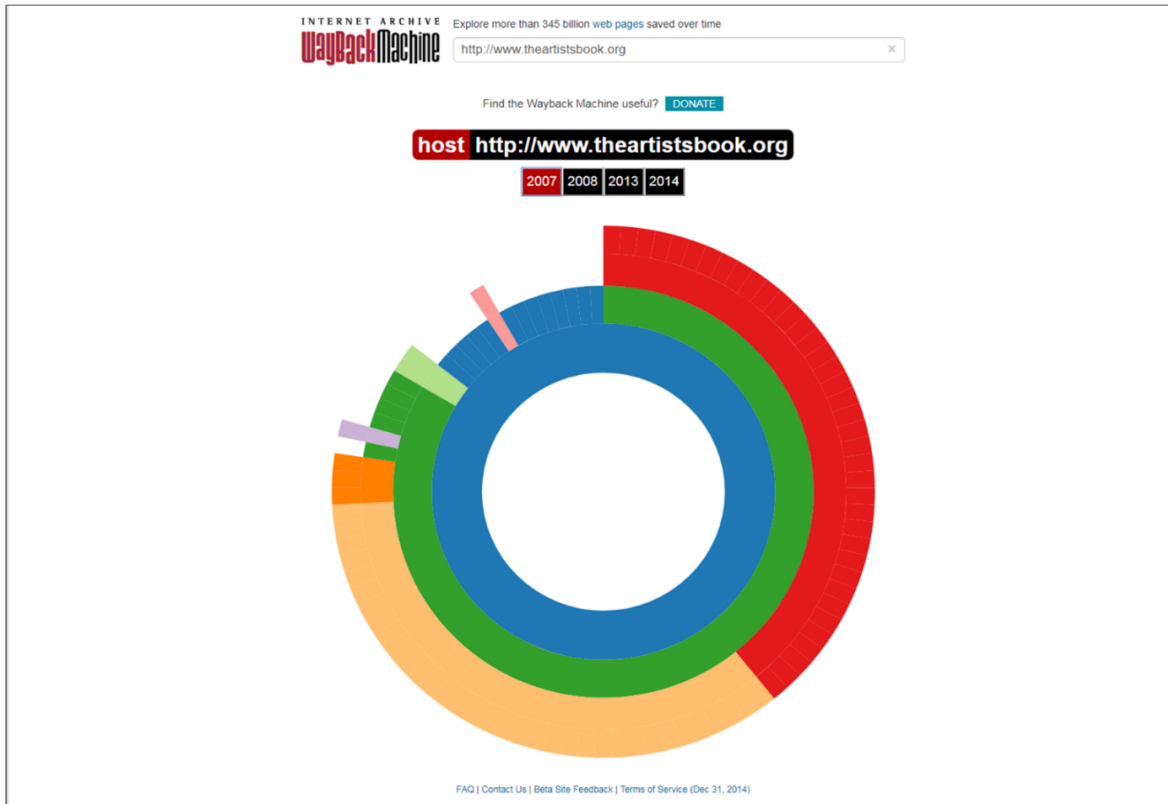
» 5th ANKARA ARTIST BOOK AWARD: THE PAINTED WORD
Entries open till 1 September 2018

» BOOK ARTS NEWSLETTER, No. 119
The latest Book Arts Newsletter No 119 July - August 2018 is now ready for download

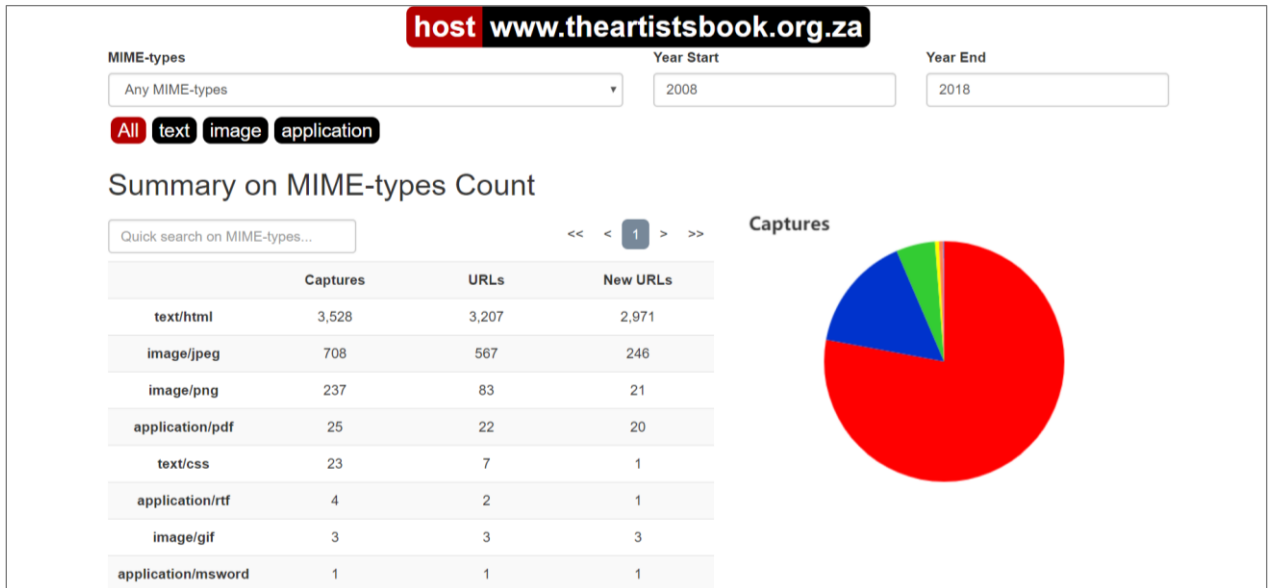
» YOUNG BUCKS BOOKBINDING WORKSHOPS AND MATERIALS
Take a look at what Victoria Wigzell, Madeline Dymond & Lehlogonolo Modise are doing in the bookbinding and associated materials and equipment space



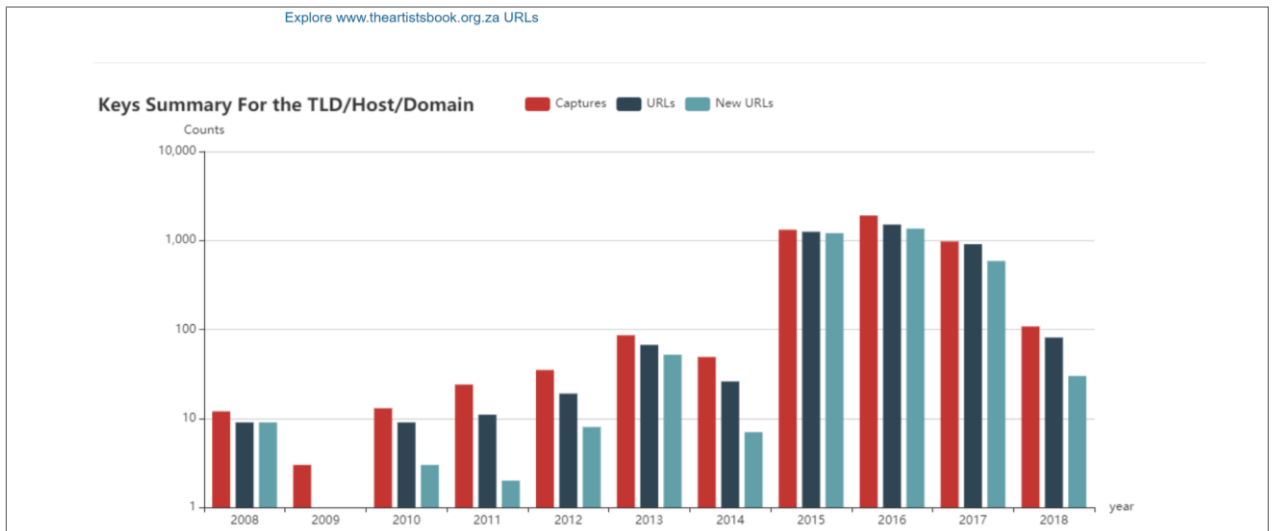
Below are two comparative screengrabs of the complete sitemap for www.theartistsbook.org as it appeared in 2007 (top) and www.theartistsbook.org.za as it appeared in 2017 (bottom). This comparison demonstrates great development, nuancing and granularity through the additional of data over time.



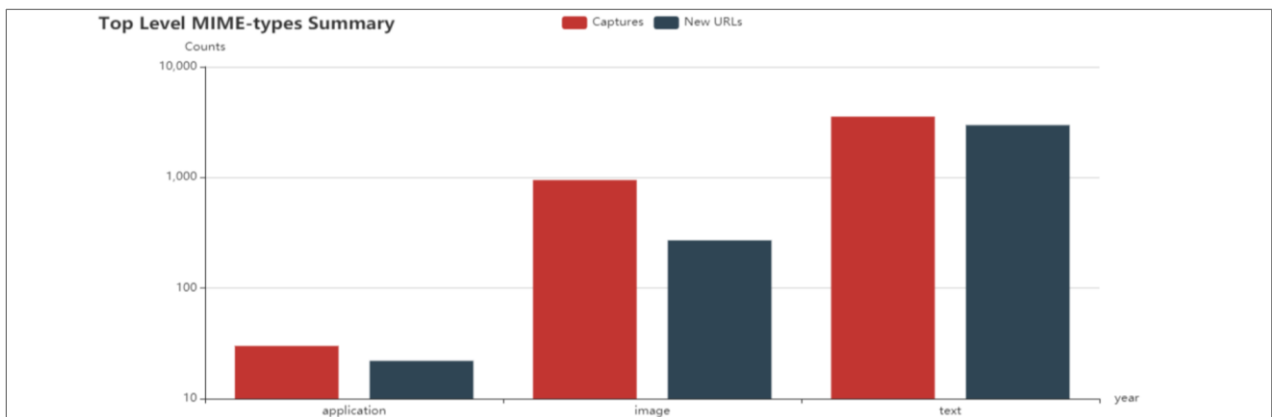
Below is a summary of Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) types (2008-18)



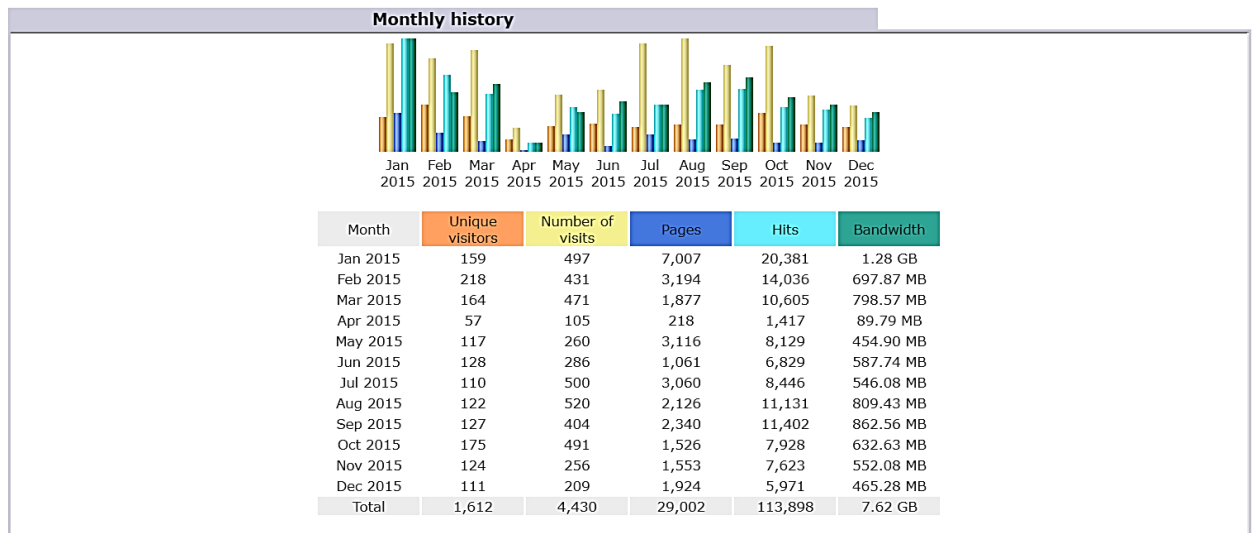
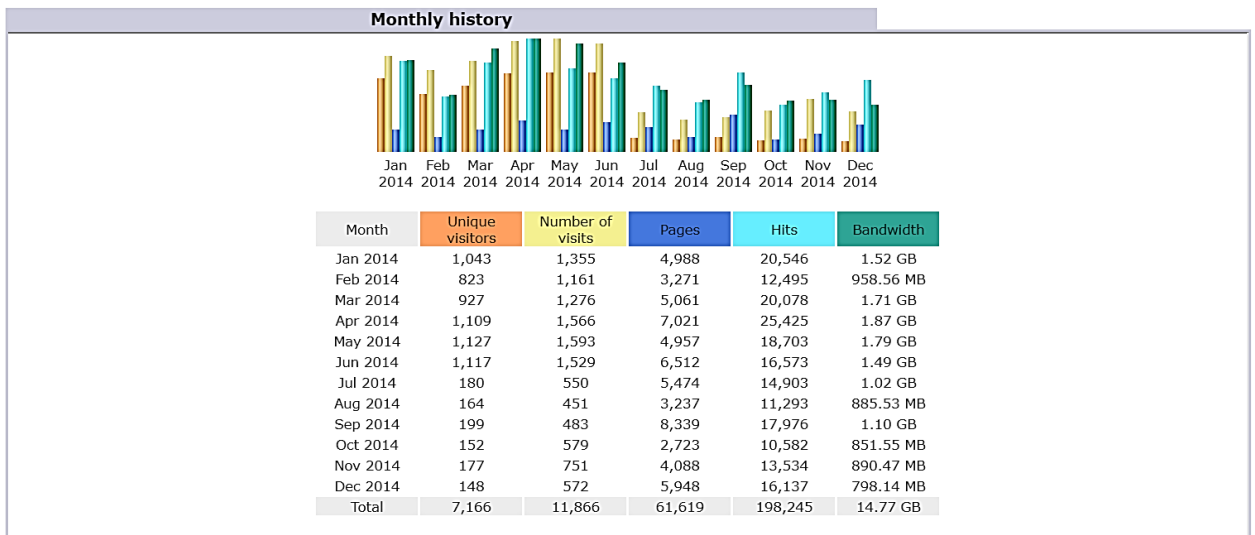
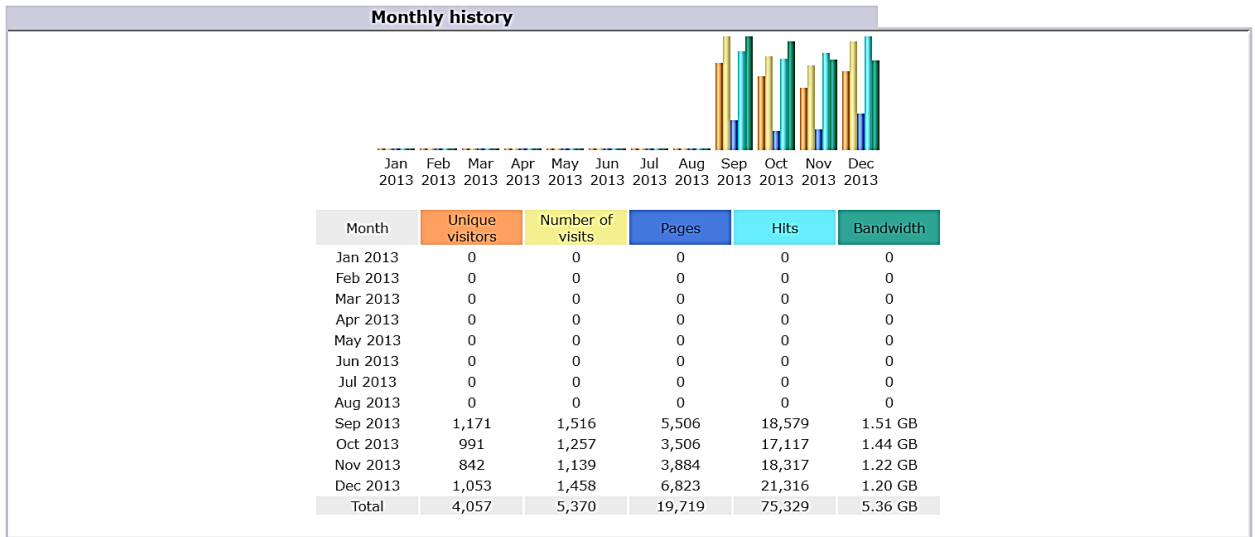
Below is the Key Summary for the TLD/Host/Domain captures and new URLs (2008-18)



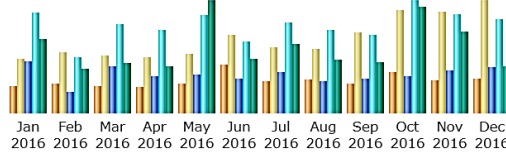
Below is the Top Level MINE-type Summary (2008-18)



Below is a history of monthly visits to the website supplied by AWStats since Sept 2013

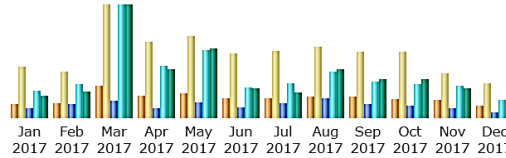


Monthly history



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2016	118	240	5,715	11,202	579.43 MB
Feb 2016	132	267	2,249	6,234	346.51 MB
Mar 2016	120	257	5,165	9,970	393.00 MB
Apr 2016	113	247	4,149	9,167	364.86 MB
May 2016	128	262	4,241	10,903	870.47 MB
Jun 2016	215	348	3,794	7,998	420.16 MB
Jul 2016	144	293	4,517	10,055	534.68 MB
Aug 2016	149	288	3,500	9,197	409.99 MB
Sep 2016	133	355	3,797	8,604	389.50 MB
Oct 2016	179	456	4,104	12,474	822.43 MB
Nov 2016	149	451	4,730	11,074	636.50 MB
Dec 2016	151	499	5,036	10,488	359.21 MB
Total	1,731	3,963	50,997	117,366	5.98 GB

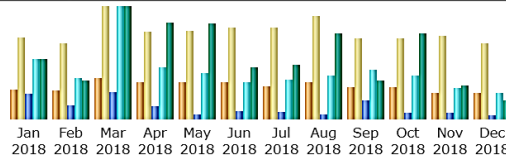
Monthly history



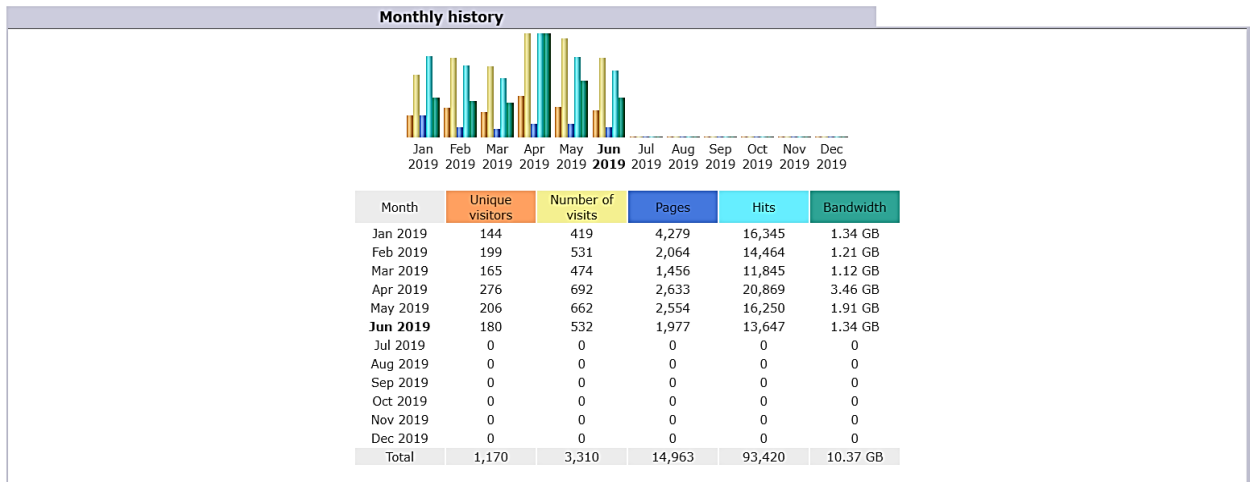
Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2017	134	509	4,242	11,754	803.65 MB
Feb 2017	144	461	5,416	14,042	906.51 MB
Mar 2017	324	1,128	7,452	48,210	3.95 GB
Apr 2017	219	758	3,904	22,322	1.67 GB
May 2017	249	819	6,550	28,967	2.43 GB
Jun 2017	196	642	4,484	13,312	1.02 GB
Jul 2017	189	671	5,940	14,841	942.56 MB
Aug 2017	203	709	8,219	19,811	1.67 GB
Sep 2017	211	661	5,476	15,374	1.35 GB
Oct 2017	183	657	5,052	14,406	1.33 GB
Nov 2017	176	440	3,905	13,464	1.03 GB
Dec 2017	121	342	2,448	7,681	716.55 MB
Total	2,349	7,797	63,088	224,184	17.75 GB

Ringed group = period of *Booknesses* project.
 Square group = highest unique visitors

Monthly history



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2018	160	452	9,412	22,679	2.01 GB
Feb 2018	156	416	4,920	14,846	1.25 GB
Mar 2018	223	622	10,167	41,672	3.73 GB
Apr 2018	204	490	4,743	19,397	3.21 GB
May 2018	201	486	1,835	16,963	3.17 GB
Jun 2018	204	510	3,199	13,446	1.70 GB
Jul 2018	185	511	2,777	14,591	1.81 GB
Aug 2018	205	571	1,725	16,107	2.86 GB
Sep 2018	178	449	6,796	18,368	1.27 GB
Oct 2018	176	449	1,961	15,832	2.82 GB
Nov 2018	144	462	1,937	11,279	1.08 GB
Dec 2018	143	415	1,332	9,392	625.74 MB
Total	2,179	5,833	50,804	214,572	25.54 GB



Summary of visits (September 2013 – June 2019 – 70 months):

Unique Visitors	Number of visits	Number of Pages Viewed
20 264	42 569	270 192
Ave. Monthly Unique Visitors	Ave. Monthly Number of Visits	Ave. Monthly # of Pages Viewed
289	608	3860

Summary of the database growth for producers and items (2000 – May 2019):

	2000	2007	2019
Producers	91	144	496
% increase		63%	545%
Items	230	398	965
% increase		58%	420%

Appendix Eight: 2018 Peer review and NIHSS Award to the website Artists' Books in South Africa



The trophy presented in the Digital Humanities section of the NIHSS awards 2018. Photography: the author

The Winners of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards: Book, Creative Collection and Digital Contribution 2018 reflect the relevance and vibrancy of South Africa's HSS community

Vuyo Dlamini

The third Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards: Book, Creative Collection and Digital Contribution 2018, hosted by the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS), were held at the iconic John Kani Market Theatre on 15 March 2018.

The awards land the preeminent creative contributions of academics, curators and artists based at participating South African universities, who are working to advance HSS. The call for submissions opened in October 2017 and covered works completed between January and December 2018. Submissions comprised 30 non-fiction books, nine fiction books, 10 creative collections and seven digital contributions, and represented 22 publishers. Over 30 esteemed academics were selected as judges and reviewers, led by the Chairpersons, Dr Thoko Mntsi (digital humanities), Prof Jyoti Mistry (creative collection), Prof Fumila Dingo Gqola (books-fiction), and Prof Hlonipha Mokoena (books-non-fiction). According to Professor Sarah Mosoeta, NIHSS CEO, "The HSS Awards were born of a strategic intent to build a robust post-apartheid higher education system shaped by an equally spirited HSS, while promoting, recognising and celebrating members of the HSS community who are creating post-apartheid and post-colonial forms of scholarship, creative and digital humanities productions. They honour outstanding, innovative and socially responsive scholarship as well as digital contributions."

The impressive collection of books, creative and digital submissions, signals a growing HSS scholarship in dialogue with itself and broader society. Submissions explore, boldly challenge as well as address pertinent societal issues. For many who might still be asking that dreaded question - 'What is the value of the humanities and social sciences?' In light of this year's collection, I am pleased that this has been rendered an obsolete question," says Mosoeta.

The 2018 collection responds innovatively to the call for 'Africanising curriculum' through the use of transdisciplinary research in various fields and genres. What is particularly appealing is the strong methodology and collaborative approach evident in most submissions. She adds that "several contributions through the dynamics of friendship, gender and environment that cut across disciplines such as history, sociology, politics, development studies, macroeconomics, inequality studies, hunger and poverty studies, education, land reform, and ethics and morality." Mosoeta is excited that "new post-apartheid archives are growing, and being documented in new ways. The use of biography and photography provides a powerful encounter between the author and the reader: the humanities academy and society. The disciplines capture the memories of landscape and histories of rural and marginalised communities, challenges of unemployment, alcohol abuse, violence, xenophobia, inequality, racism and exploitation. The collection compels us to reconsider and reimagine the

boundaries between private experiences and public outcomes. A focus on indigenous knowledge and Africa-specific issues provides a unique scholarship by South Africans for us and the global academy.

The use of puppetry as art practice and medium offers a different form of scholarship that transcends the written word. Language, culture and contested histories. The link between the university and community is encouraged through various forums to engage, teach, and learn from communities.

While English remains the dominant language in the collection, SeTswana, isiXhosa and Afrikaans are included. "It is pleasing that the HSS narrative is taking seriously its role of shaping and redefining the South African and the broader continental African agenda. Although more effort is needed to support and promote such work to build a convincing body of Afrikaans languages," adds Mosoeta.

This 2018 collection brings together young and longstanding voices, new and revisited narratives, engages with Sol Plaatje and Darwin, and explores the political consciousness and history of Dikgang Moseneké, the book on Thabo Mbeki, Kopano Matlha's Period Pain, Jolyn Phillips' Gansbaai stories and the late Vytjie Klaase's photographs of her Namaqua home. Our 'Hanging on a Wire' award was received by editors, Rick Rohde and Sionna O'Connell in honour of the late Sapha Khumalo who gives 'voices to the voiceless in her depiction of her life in pictures. Klaase's images stood out for their intense and idiosyncratic representation of life in a materially

Mosoeta concludes that "the 2018 HSS Awards signal a growing, dynamic and bold HSS community in and for South Africa and the world that we should all be proud of. As the NIHSS, we remain committed to advancing the transformation of our HSS communities, universities and society."

Awards recipients expressed gratitude for the honour
Accepting the award, for Sol Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa*, Professor Bhekizizwe Peterson shared that "Plaatje's pioneering book amuse out of an early African National Congress campaign to protest against the discriminatory 1913 Natives Land Act." He lamented that "the book tells the bigger story of the assault on black rights and opportunities in the newly consolidated Union of South Africa - and the resistance to it. And should not just be simplified as a plea to the British, however that it was much more than that."

Sol Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa* comes at a time when South Africa's is engaging with this land and seeking to address the 1913 colonial injustice. Peterson went on to thank the institute "for the great work it had committed to and was doing in supporting and growing the voice of the humanities." *Hanging on a Wire* is the short story collection edited by Rick Rohde and Sionna O'Connell in honour of the late Sapha Khumalo who gives 'voices to the voiceless in her depiction of her life in pictures. Klaase's images stood out for their intense and idiosyncratic representation of life in a materially



Non-Fiction Monograph winner Dikgang Moseneké with Prof Hlonipha Mokoena, judge chairperson for Book Non-Fiction

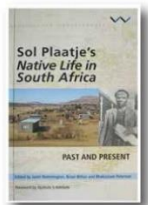
improvised community, and for their frank exploration of Klaase's own relationship to her environment." The Modjaji Books publisher, who received the Best Non-Fiction: Single-Author Award for *Tjeng Tjang Tjerries and Other Stories* on behalf of Jolyn Phillips was grateful and proud for taking the leap of faith to forge ahead and publish the short stories renditions despite having less value in terms of commercial viability. Winner of Creative Collections' *Kafka's Ape* creator Phala shared his appreciation of standing "on the shoulders of the HSS giants." He explains that "the Humanities, as a discipline, hold the key to the

critical questions of our identity as humans, more so for us South Africans in this day in age." Through this play he "talks to the issues of transformation and how we begin to do that by reimagining ourselves as a different people not bound by the limitations of our past, that which through the years of colonisation and apartheid has kept us in the worst emotional bondage which has resulted in us having internalised and learned so well the dysfunctional behaviour such as the language of violence, among many other forms of 'bondage and oppression'." Receiving her Best Visual Art Award for her work *When the moon waxes red*, Sharlene Khan thanked the many influential

people in her life, "my mother for her generosity, my father for giving me his voice; my sisters for being inspirations and support networks... and the amazing women that I've met and not met." She expressed her gratitude to all the women she has met and worked with, for "the soil which I was planted to be able to do this work... the idea of being 'the inside-outsider and outside-insider; working with my own community, dealing with them with a sense of love, responsibility and criticality and not even trying to be objective." Khan was particularly pleased that a worthy working class Indian community's story is shared and celebrated, a book that is

not about Ghandi or the Gupatas. Retired deputy chief Justice Dikgang Moseneké was the winner of the Book Non-Fiction Best Monograph for his book *My Own Liberator*. In a touching tribute to his late mother, Mrs Karabo Moseneke, he dedicated "this special award to my recently passed mother as she sits at the heart of my story, our story and our search for freedom and our humanity. She is quite warm, still even in her grave". He expressed his deep gratitude to the judges who saw if fit to confer on him this prestigious recognition. Moseneké also dedicated the award to all the good people of South Africa and concluded that "Moseneké a boloke sechaba sa beso".

AND THE WINNERS ARE...



Non Fiction
Non-Fiction Edited Volume
Sol Plaatje's Native Life in South Africa: Past and Present, by Brian Willan, Janet Remington and Bhekizizwe Peterson (Wits University Press)

This collection of essays focuses on Sol Plaatje's *Native Life* through a multidisciplinary approach capturing the memories of the past to access and find relevant pieces of the puzzle. This is done in a manner which gives the original text a contemporary feel thereby touching on very critical current themes such as identity, discrimination, media censorship, gender just to mention a few. The essays are well presented and present a balanced critique of the original text. The book comprises of photographs, maps, copies of old newspapers, poems in different languages. This is innovation at its best. This collection couldn't have come at the right

time and touching on issues of student protests, decolonisation of the curriculum, the radical economic transformation, to mention a few. - Judging panel comment

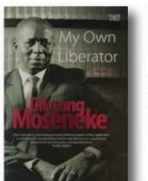


Non Fiction
Non-Fiction Edited Volume
Hanging on a Wire, by Rick Rohde and Sionna O'Connell (Fourthwall Books)

"The visual language of the photographs presented in this book is a powerful account of what it means to be young, rural and poor in South Africa. The photographs cover a range of social interactions from weddings, 21st birthday parties to funerals. But, more importantly the photographer captures people as they wish to be captured by the camera - irreverent, jubilant, mourning and wrapped up in the bustle of popular and global cultures." - Judging panel comment

Digital Humanities
Best DH Visualization or Infographic
Artists' Books in South Africa, by David Paton, Jack Ginsberg

"The project is presented in an excellent manner, a searchable database of all South African artists' books thus far researched; links to online resources and related sites of interest; news on book arts events as well as featured artists' books. The archive engages and supports research, practice, production, collecting and documenting of artist books in South Africa." - Judging panel comment



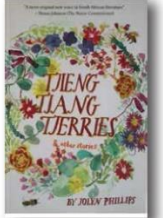
Non Fiction
Non-Fiction Monograph
My Own Liberator, by Dikgang Moseneké (Pan Macmillan South Africa)

"Dikgang Moseneké's book contributes to the diversification of the history of South Africa's complex liberation struggle. His memoirs go a great deal in filling a critical gap by telling the story of the PAC particularly on the question of negotiations. His memoir advances a new angle on existing knowledge." - Judging panel comment



Creative Collections
Best Visual Art
When the moon waxes red, by Sharlene Khan

"Sharlene Khan's work is located within her personal historical narrative and yet speaks to issues we are well acquainted with which transcend culture, tradition and form part of our contemporary discourse on reflections on lives affected through a Colonial/Apartheid and post-apartheid lens." - Judging panel comment



Fiction
Best Fiction Single Author
Tjeng Tjang Tjerries and Other Stories, by Jolyn Phillips (Modjaji Books)

"The book's quality and style of writing is of high standard. Its content is South African, Tjeng Tjang Tjerries and Other Stories... is a long awaited body of knowledge about the lives of the very ordinary, the poor and marginalised. It is a strikingly original work of narrative fiction, based on the minutiae of life. The texture of the writing is finely woven and covers a wide range of emotional modalities from the tragic to the comical." - Judging panel comment



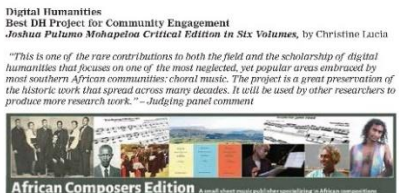
Creative Collections
Best Musical Composition
Kafka's Ape, by Toty Miyambo, Phala Phala

"When I heard that Toty Miyambo, a young actor was presenting this 1917 classic, I was scared for him, but when he entered the stage, my fears dissipated. He was commanding, convincing and I was absorbed and captivated. He was an ape. I knew then that transforming into a human being, which he is, will come naturally and importantly, his physical build allows it and he used it to the fullest. He can swing and leap and gibber like an Ape. Today we live in a South Africa society where identity matters. What it is means to be black, coloured and white. What do we need as people, what do we desire. Why do we judge each other based on skin colour. Miyambo as the Ape brings this questions to the fore with fearless performance that is not supported by ape costumes but rather by the inner emotional strength and the understanding of the role." - Judging panel comment



Creative Collections
Best Musical Composition
Noem My Skollie, by Kyle Shepherd

This body of work's music score was evocative, subtle (quiet), conscious of what it was written for; exciting to listen to even out of the context of the film. The work is refreshing and honest in its rendering. It offers a taste and reflection of South Africa and in particular township life with its rawness and sharp survival of street life. - Judging panel comment



Digital Humanities
Best DH Project for Community Engagement
Joshua Pulumo Mohapelon Critical Edition in Six Volumes, by Christine Lucia

"This is one of the rare contributions to both the field and the scholarship of digital humanities that focuses on one of the most neglected, yet popular areas embraced by most southern African communities: choral music. The project is a great preservation of the historic work that spread across many decades. It will be used by other researchers to produce more research work." - Judging panel comment

SHORTLISTED ENTRIES

- Artists' books in South Africa by Paton, David; Ginsberg, Jack
- Between Sisters by Lepere, Refiloe
- Cricket and Conquest by Odendaal, Andre; Roddy, Krish; Merrett, Christopher; Winch, Jonty (HSRC Press the Best Red Imprint)
- Darwin's Hunch: Science, Race, and the Search for Human Origins by Kuljian, Christa (Jacana Media)
- Digital Fashion as Praxis: Transformative Collaboration in a DH Context by Madhoo, Nirma; Shuttleworth, Jessica
- Hanging on a Wire by Rohde, Rick; O'Connell, Sionna (Fourthwall Books)
- Inside out in South African Corrections Interests by Parry, Bianca; Katide, Gali; Fourie, Eduard; Terre Blanche, Martin
- Joshua Pulumo Mohapelon Critical Edition in Six Volumes by Lucia, Christine
- Kafka's Ape by Miyambo, Bonani; Phala, Phala
- My Own Liberator by Moseneké, Dikgang (Pan Macmillan South Africa)
- Noem My Skollie by Shepherd, Kyle
- Period Pain by Matlwa, Kopano (Jacana Media)
- Seaweed Sky by Godsell, Sarah (Poetree Publications)
- Sol Plaatje's Native Life in South Africa: Past and Present by Willan, Brian; Remington, Janet; Peterson, Bhekizizwe (Wits University Press)
- The Fires Beneath by Morrow, Sean (Penguin Random House)
- Tjeng Tjang Tjerries and other stories by Phillips, Jolyn (Modjaji Books)
- When the moon waxes Red by Khan, Sharlene



Photos from the award ceremony, Market Theatre, Johannesburg, 14 March 2018. Photography: top image courtesy of NIHSS website <https://www.nihss.ac.za/>, bottom image: Faheemah Paton-Mayet.

Appendix Nine: Peer review of the bookwork *Speaking in Tongues* by Egidija Čiricaitė artist and curator, London, UK.

**FACULTY OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE
PEER REVIEW OF CREATIVE SUBMISSION**

Name of applicant: David Paton Department: Visual Art

Title of project: Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking

1. Indicate if you know the applicant personally and if you have collaborated on any project or initiative.

I was a co-curator of Prescriptions exhibition (which included David's work) at the Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, Canterbury, UK. I was responsible for selecting his work for the exhibition. I have also communicated with David on numerous occasions via Skype in regards to my presentation at Booknesses symposium.

2. Did the submission under consideration have a clear set of objectives, and were these realised?

Yes, especially successful is achievement of the goal to create a bookwork which seamlessly moves between digital and physical formats. The book is not only sound conceptually, it is equally exquisite in its production quality.

3. Assess the extent to which the submission contributes new knowledge, insight and/or understanding of a topic or disciplinary area, and the extent to which it conveys a sense of the author having up-to-date knowledge of the field/disciplinary area in which he/she is working.

Hybridisation and interlacing of techniques and production methods is what makes this work particularly attractive in post-digital context of art making. The book smoothly blends traditional craft of bookmaking (and box-making) with contemporary skills of digital video production into a unique artwork, which is both current and thought-provoking, showing off David's extensive understanding not only of book's (and artists' books') history and conceptual background, but also contemporary trends and tendencies of future development in art and the field of artists' books, particular.

The book explores the ideas of narrative time, passage of time, ageing, which are beautifully abstracted into a book form, though a thoughtful manipulation of double-sided quality of concertina format; a seemingly endless stream of images reminiscent of a film reel; sensitive handling of mirror movements of two professionally photographed sets of hands. However, David does not stop his ideas at crafting the physical object: he extends and develops the vision beyond it, into the digital realm. Delivering content between book-form and digital videoform (both flawlessly executed) is what I find most refreshing an addition to the discourse of contemporary artists' books.

David's work considers the peripheries of artists' books medium, where the physical object merges with the digital narrative. Using old themes of time, ageing and communication, David elevates his artwork into a very contemporary discussion on what constitutes an artist's book and on traditional craftsmanship in modern art mediums.

In addition, due to the hybrid nature of the book, David's work can be integrated easily into any fine art exhibition. Such potential is highly beneficial for publicising artists' books and developing better understanding of their place within fine arts.

4. Using the tables supplied to you, indicate the scope (i.e. size) of the project.

"Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking" falls into category Nr 1 as "Single work or series included in a group exhibition or produced on commission". However, *Prescriptions* exhibition was housed in a museum (Beaney House of Art and Knowledge) and David's book was subsequently acquired by Templeman Library (at University of Kent) for its permanent collection. His work has been selected for a subsequent exhibition at Templeman Library. It will also be used as an example in Routledge Handbook of the Medical Humanities (2019).

5. (Optional) If there are any further comments you feel are important, please include them here.

"Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking" is one of my favourite works at Prescriptions exhibition. It is an accomplished artist's book technically and conceptually, which is a pleasure to look at and to touch/read. It stands out and it captures attention. The book shines with spectacular quality of production and craftsmanship, as well as fluent coherence between thought and presentation.

NAME OF PEER REVIEWER: Egidija Čiricaitė

SIGNATURE OF PEER REVIEWER:



DATE: 22/04/18

Appendix Ten: Peer review of the bookwork *Speaking in Tongues* by Dr. Stella Bolaki, School of English, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK.

**FACULTY OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE
PEER REVIEW OF CREATIVE SUBMISSION**

Name of applicant: David Paton Department: Visual Art

Title of project: *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking*

1. Indicate if you know the applicant personally and if you have collaborated on any project or initiative.

I know David Paton through his participation in two group exhibitions I co-curated in Canterbury, UK: Prescriptions, Artists' Books on Wellbeing and Medicine (Beaney Art Museum, 21 April-25 September 2016); and Prescriptions, Artists' Books (Templeman Library, University of Kent, 1 August-17 November 2017). David's book *Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking* was selected to feature in both exhibitions that were part of a Wellcome Trust-funded international and interdisciplinary research project on the arts and medical humanities. I also encouraged the Special Collections and Archives team at the University of Kent to purchase David's work for inclusion in its collection of artists' books.

2. Did the submission under consideration have a clear set of objectives, and were these realised?

Yes, the submission had a very clear set of objectives, which are outlined in David's application. In terms of the Prescriptions exhibition, we received submissions from 200 artists proposing almost 250 works and ended up selecting 88 books (by 79 artists from 14 countries). David's work was chosen for its excellent artistic execution, its moving visual/digital narrative and fit with the exhibition themes that included the body, illness, wellbeing and medicine. My co-curator and I were both impressed by David's innovative approach to the topics of the aging body, storytelling and the haptic ("a book of hands held in the hands", as he beautifully puts it in his application).

The work was shown for the first time in the Prescriptions exhibition. It was also included in an exhibition catalogue I co-edited with Egidija Ciricaite, *Prescriptions: artists' books on wellbeing and medicine* (Natrix Natrix Press, 2017) and mentioned in the essays that are part of this volume. These include academic contributions as well as contributions by curators, medical educators and workshop leaders. Copies of the exhibition catalogue have been donated to various libraries, charities, museums and arts in health organisations to maximize the public impact of this project. See also 3 below.

3. Assess the extent to which to which the submission contributes new knowledge, insight and/or understanding of a topic or disciplinary area, and the extent to which it conveys a sense of the author having up-to-date knowledge of the field/disciplinary area in which he/she is working.

I don't have the necessary expertise to assess David's work in terms of its technical features even though his submission makes a convincing case that the work involved substantive technical and formal innovations. His work certainly has conceptual depth and clear contemporary relevance not just for the field of book arts but for interdisciplinary audiences like the literary/cultural studies and medical humanities communities that I represent, as my research project demonstrated. *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally | Digitally Speaking* opens up conventional ideas of the book and narrative more broadly in that it allows the book's front and back to be viewed simultaneously. The dialogue between the

material/tactile and the digital, staged by the work, is fascinating. So is the theme of difference between youth and old age, which the book represents metaphorically and materially through temporal and spatial gaps. David's work offers important insights into the passing of time not only through its theme and structure but also experientially, through the different ways (and paces) readers/viewers can interact with it. The work was part of a group exhibition (Prescriptions) that was open to the public. It was visited by 71,898 people and received positive reviews nationally and internationally (see the project's website, <https://research.kent.ac.uk/artistsbooks/>).

The exhibition and project secured funding not only from the Wellcome Trust, a major funder of research and activities connected to the medical humanities, but also a public engagement research fund by the University of Kent and funds from the University of New England in Portland, Maine. In addition, there were special tours of the exhibition and practical workshops for patients and health professionals that were sponsored by Cancer Macmillan, Kent Medical Humanities Network and the Wellcome Collection. David's work was part of the material handled by workshop participants. Participants then made their own books, using the exhibition and the material available for handling as their inspiration.

Feedback provided by the Beane Art Museum included the following comments about the exhibition: "thought-provoking, fascinating exhibition"; moving and compelling; "extraordinary insights into artists' struggles with illness"; "I found the exhibition so inspiring I wanted to go away and make my own artists' books". The workshops received an average of 9 (using a scale from 1-10) on the question of what their impact has been on participants' "experience and/or practice". One art therapist from Australia wrote in her feedback form that "participation in the workshop was one of the best professional development experiences she has encountered over a long professional career".

Following the above activities, in 2017-18 I used David's work in my teaching at the University of Kent (for a postgraduate course called Medical Humanities: An Introduction). I have also given a few research seminars/talks on the artists' books that were part of Prescriptions to various medical humanities/academic audiences in the UK and abroad (for example, at Bristol and Queen Mary research seminar series) and at a conference on "The Politics of Space and the Humanities" in Thessaloniki (Greece).

4. Using the tables supplied to you, indicate the scope (i.e. size) of the project.

David's work – as a single work – technically falls into the last category in the table (1. a single work included in a group exhibition). However, this needs to be qualified by the fact that the group exhibition it was part of involved substantive thematic research and led to an academic symposium on artists' books and the medical humanities and workshops that were open to professionals (medical community) and the wider public. It also generated textual documentation (an online and a published exhibition catalogue) that show its relevance for specialized and interdisciplinary audiences. The symposium was very well attended and demonstrated the potential of the artist's book medium, a yet unexplored art form in health professional education: its communicative power and metaphorical richness, as well as the intervention it can make to current debates on illness narratives. Moreover, David's book has been purchased by high profile reputable galleries and university special collections for display, use in teaching, scholarship and other workshop-type events/collaborations (the most recent, in the case of David's work, has been a collaborative workshop with the prestigious Wellcome Library, London on the theme of health, life narrative, wellbeing and artists' books that took place in October 2017). The Prescriptions exhibition will be further discussed at a new symposium on the healing arts and medicine that will take place in the US in September 2018 and is co-organised by the University of Kent and the Maine Women Writers Collection (University of New England).

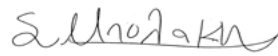
5. (Optional) If there are any further comments you feel are important, please include them here.

No other comments other than to say that I have been very grateful to David for submitting his book for the Prescriptions exhibition. We were delighted to show it to UK audiences, make it part of our other scholarly activities. It's also going to be a very important work to share with UK and international scholars/researchers and students, now that a copy is owned by Special Collections at the University of Kent.

NAME OF PEER REVIEWER:

Dr Stella Bolaki
Senior Lecturer
School of English,
University of Kent
UK

SIGNATURE OF PEER REVIEWER:



DATE: 15 April 2018

Appendix Eleven: Peer review of bookwork *Speaking in Tongues* by Heléne van Aswegen, master bookbinder, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

**FACULTY OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE
PEER REVIEW OF CREATIVE SUBMISSION**

Name of applicant : David Paton

Department : Visual Art

Title of project : *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally/Digitally Speaking.*

1. Indicate if you know the applicant personally and if you have collaborated on any project or initiative.

I met David Paton in 2010 when I commenced my research on artists' books for my postgraduate studies in Mphil Illustration (Stellenbosch University). Since graduation I have collaborated professionally with various artists to produce limited edition artists' books. Paton approached me in 2015 to make a deluxe edition of his book, *Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally/Digitally Speaking* (2009). Additionally, in 2017, I participated in the *Booknesses* colloquium that Paton co-ordinated at the University of Johannesburg. At this event I presented a paper, hosted a bookbinding workshop and exhibited artists' books (which I produced in collaboration with various South African artists). For the project under consideration I was tasked to complete Paton's brief in my capacity as professional artist's book binder. In this capacity I typically help resolve artists' conceptual ideas and visual (et al) content in book form. My role lies in facilitating the process of realising abstract concepts into actual material form. In other words, finding a suitable solution for the content, sourcing the appropriate materials (usually of archival standards unless specified otherwise), and then finally producing the work by hand. The books are therefore produced in very limited editions. Paton briefed me to help resolve the final stages of the production of this bookwork and the following answers will be based on my direct experience throughout this process.

2. Did the submission under consideration have a clear set of objectives, and were these realised?

This book's first edition was originally produced by another bookbinder. The objective was therefore to refine the bookwork and reconsider technical aspects that relate to the conceptual framework of its content. Admittedly it is always a challenge to improve and/or rework an existing work. From start to finish the process of making artists' books is both physical and cognitive. Generally speaking the production of such an artist's book is a constant cycle of deliberation (thinking all possibilities through, considering and discussing their conceptual underpinnings), decision-making (choosing the right materials, receiving the go ahead from the artist or deciding on the technical route of production), execution (which requires a meditative state of concentration and making), and assessment (standing back to see if the step is executed well, determining if the right decision has been made, and seeing if our ideas have translated well into the physical form). Taking all of this into account my response would, in summation, be: Yes, there was a clear set of objectives that were fully realised.

Herewith follow some of the specific objectives:

i. The structure of the book and all of its technical repercussions:

The objective was to produce an accordion fold¹ book that has no spine.² When completely open, the accordion would span almost 9 meters and, once folded, measures to only 152mm high x 110mm wide. Compressing such a long piece of paper into such a small format necessitates careful construction. No custom made page of such extreme length can practicably be printed back to front on one single piece of paper. To overcome this technical limitation it was required to design the book in such a way that the papers could be joined to make a seemingly seamless continuous piece of paper.

From a book binder's point of view it is essential to produce books that behave well structurally by staying flat when open. In the case of an open-spine accordion fold, if joined and/or folded crudely it could lead to a book that is constantly inclined to keel over, similar to the effects of a slinky toy. We managed to achieve this objective in the final book as, for a concertina fold of immense length, it 'behaves well' as a book staying open when paged through.

ii. The layout of the book:

The initial book was printed single sided, in other words, all the images appeared on only one of two sides of an accordion folded strip of paper. Considering the fact that there are two visual narratives running,³ it was decided to rather produce its new format with back to front printing. Each one of the dual narratives is reproduced on a respective side of all the pages throughout the book.

The result of this decision impacted the final reading experience of the book. As part of the introduction to this project, Paton stressed the temporal differences of the media (book and video) as a key conceptual framework to the work as a whole. This is evident in the realtime presentation of the sequence of events in the video, which contrasts with the book that is a static representation of a sequence of events activated by the reader/viewer.

With the book now printed double sided it enhances this experience by enabling the reader/viewer to access any part of the narrative from any side of the book. The advantage of this kind of binding is that the book can be opened completely, revealing all of its contents. In this way one can argue that the book is more directly accessible than the video that cannot present its contents all at once (and requires digital technological hardware to access). Furthermore, should the reader/viewer decide to page through the book in a linear fashion (following the traditional nature of a typical codex⁴ - from front to back), a shift will occur. Due to the nature of a double sided, open-spine accordion book, the book can be read in a circular fashion, once the reader/viewer reaches the end of one chapter the next chapter follows. It is therefore a cyclical narrative, to be read in a continuous loop.

iii. Refining the aesthetic qualities of the book:

Considering the predominantly black images presented in both the book form as well as the video format, it was decided that the book's aesthetic finishes should also be rendered in black. This includes the covers of the book and the container which houses it. As a final touch (and improvement on the previous edition) we decided to also tint the edges of the book black that resulted in the

closed book presenting itself as a solid black object. I interpret this as a visual connection to an unlit/black movie theatre.

iv. The design of the container

It is my belief that the form, function and concept should be considered during the design and production of artists' books. In my mind this would include the construction of the container. The objective was that the book and a USB flash drive (storing the digital video file) needed to be housed in the container. Thematically, the idea of two's and double meanings is quite prevalent throughout this project. The content of Paton's book speaks of two visual narratives consisting of two pairs of hands presented in two different formats. Naturally it was felt that the container should echo this. The container was finally resolved as a customised adaptation of the traditional solander box.⁵ Formally, the box has two doors that should be opened simultaneously to access the book containing the two narratives. The two flaps are held together with a strong magnet to retain its contents. Once opened, the book is lifted from its black case designed to fit its exact proportions, discretely revealing the USB flash drive embedded in the base of the case. The presence of two doors/flaps instead of one, was a good formal solution to echo the theme of duality found throughout in the content.

3. Assess the extent to which the submission contributes new knowledge, insight and/or understanding of a topic or disciplinary area, and the extent to which it conveys a sense of the author having up-to-date knowledge of the field/disciplinary area in which he/she is working.

Firstly it should be acknowledged that the field, book arts, is relatively young and not that well known, especially within the South African context. Paton is an academic pioneer in the field of book arts, contributing on multiple levels. The production of this bookwork is only one of these contributions. He has illustrated a deep understanding of the field through cataloging the largest collection of artists' books in South Africa,⁶ co-curating more than one bookwork exhibition and co-ordinating a colloquium in the attempts to present and take measure of the activities of book arts within South Africa and abroad. By producing an artist's book of high merit, Paton is contributing greatly to an emergent artistic genre.

Paton's bookwork expressed many of my own observations/concerns on producing artworks that are based on the book form as an artistic medium. As artists, it is arguably one of our roles to reflect on contemporary life and question its normative assumptions. Paton's investigation into communication and media is expressed in this tandem artwork consisting of both a book and video component. He considers the book as a container of information and assesses its position in our digital age. In the book, the normative representation of language is subverted by occupying the pages with an alternative mode of communication to textual language. Instead, Paton presents images of hands, performing gestural movements inspired by day-to-day verbal and digital communication. His bookwork plays on various levels of sign, language, code and the digital, by integrating and contrasting old and new media. I see this as a means of being self-critical of our times, reflecting on the growing contemporary tendency to consume information via a digital screen based format.

In some cases, the book might be succeeded by the use of the screen (be it a video or computer screen), but it is my belief that the book will continue to play a central role in our daily practice. As mentioned above, in the case of *Speaking in Tongues*, the author demonstrates that the book (as predecessor of the moving image) can ask of its reader a completely different approach to accessing its contents.

It is to be kept in mind that this is not only a mere dichotomy of two different media forms. Paton's choice to additionally subvert the traditional book format shows that he also challenges the functioning of a traditional codex. A spineless accordion fold resembles the closed book at first inspection, once opened it is revealed that the folds are not bound together and that the actual paper-block consist of one long continuous piece of paper. This subversion contributes to the innovation of new technical solutions to the functioning of the book form.

From a practical point of view this book's production is one that cannot be reproduced at an industrial level without compromising either the format, layout or length of the book. This particular format of the bookwork goes against almost all practical production standards in the book production industry. Traditional binders in the industry would not necessarily want to take on artist's projects, as it does not conform to a centuries old refined production standards. This phenomenon is especially common in the field of book arts, which often attempts to push the boundaries and possibilities of how a book could potentially function.

As an artist's book maker the role I take within the bookmaking industry stands in stark contrast to a typical commercial bindery. Although there are some overlaps in equipment and skills, many principles are turned on their heads when the practice is done by hand and, more importantly, done as an art practice. In our present moment of technological flux and contradiction, I am inclined to situate *Speaking in Tongues* in an intriguing conceptual space which recognises the niches where new innovations have opened up new possibilities for communication. Its formal qualities further pose the question of where these innovations also fall short to the ancient technology of the book form, and all its communicative implications.

The artist's book is a hybridized multi-disciplinary medium for artists to express a sequential based visual artwork. In the hands of artists, the book form has transcended from a mere container of information into a complex medium where the content determines the form and the form becomes integral to its content and concept. Formally, Paton's work is a nuanced reflection of what a good artist's book should be. In my opinion, a well considered artist's book has a holistic balance between the form, the content and the concept, which is evident throughout *Speaking in Tongues*.

4. Using the tables supplied to you, indicate the scope (i.e. size) of the project.

The scope of the project complies to unit 1 in art production. Paton produced a bookwork consisting of an edition size of six books. This bookwork consists of a series of photographs printed digitally with an inkjet printer to archival standards. The book is accompanied with a video file (saved on a USB flash drive) and is housed in a custom made container. In exhibition format, the book and video are displayed together, creating a dialogue between the two formats. The work

has been on display at several group shows each accompanied by a catalogue of the exhibition.

1. Also known as a leporello or concertina book.
2. This allows the reader/viewer to access the pages more freely than a case bound book. An open-spine binding has two separate covers, one attached to the front page and the other attached to the back page of the accordion fold. This lacks the structural support present in a book with a structured spine (i.e. closed spine also known as case binding or hollow back)
3. The chapter Digitally Speaking, depicts the gestural communication of an elderly lady; and Speaking Digitally shows the rigid, more precise movement of a boy performing a gestural act of moving a mouse and typing on a keyboard.
4. The term codex refers to book structures that resembles the typical book, i.e. pages folded and sewn together at the folds to create facing pages, typically read in a linear fashion from the front to back.
5. Solander boxes are the favoured storage mechanism for precious books.
6. The Jack Ginsberg private collection is based in Johannesburg and contains both local and international artists' books.

NAME OF PEER REVIEWER :

Heléne van Aswegen

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H van Aswegen', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the letters.

SIGNATURE OF PEER REVIEWER :

DATE :

30 April 2018

PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

A portfolio of evidence submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the University of Sunderland
for the degree PhD by Existing Published or Creative Work

August 2019

Portfolio of Evidence

Areas of Focus, Submissions, Annexures and Appendices

Area of Focus	Submission #	Submission Title – Type	Annexure In THIS PoE	Appendix in Commentary
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	5	<i>Booknesses: Jack Ginsberg Collection</i> – Printed catalogue	E	
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	7	<i>Booknesses: South African Artists' Books</i> – Web catalogue	G	
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	9B	Database of books on artists' books – Website		
	10	<i>A Great Idea at the Time</i> – Published conference paper	I	
Four: Making	11	<i>Speaking in Tongues</i> – Artist's book / artefact	J	9-11

Area of Focus One: Writing

A theoretical underpinning of the artist's book as a field

Submission One: Annexure A

Peer-reviewed and published article

[Stimulus / Response - Scratching Away at Some Intrinsic and Extrinsic Problems in Theorising the Artist's Book from the far end of a 'Not-So-Dark Continent'](#) (click for online access)

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2014-2015

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The 2003-2005 issue is out of print but you can download a free PDF version from our website at:
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Stimulus/response – scratching away at some intrinsic and extrinsic problems in theorising the artist’s book from the far end of a ‘not-so-dark continent’

David Paton

This piece of writing was originally developed as a contextualising introduction to, but later dropped from, a recent article in which I applied the Russian philosopher and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin’s notions of *dialogism* and *heteroglossia* to the task of proposing a tentative theoretical foundation for the artist’s book.¹ It seems appropriate to share here as, if nothing else, it shows that there is life in the theoretical body of the artist’s book-maker on the southern tip of the African continent. My research for that article took me in two directions: Firstly to Bakhtin’s *Discourse in the novel* as well as Michael Holquist’s *Introduction*, both published in the *The dialogic imagination: four essays* (1981) and secondly, to the 22nd edition of the *Journal of artists’ books* (2007) which helped me establish some sort of lineage of a call for a more rigorous theoretical underpinning of the artist’s book.

Bakhtin’s ideas intrigue me on many levels, not least of which is his comprehensive unpacking of the novel as a form, and in his writings I often find myself able to substitute the words ‘artist’s book’ for ‘novel’ and find a seductive correlation between the two forms. When Bakhtin, in Holquist’s introduction (1981:xxix) draws our attention to “... the difficulty in defining the novel as a genre and the reason the question of its history is so fraught” I take notice and continue to find correlations in further descriptions of the novel form such as: “The novel by contrast seeks to shape its form to languages; it has a completely different relationship to languages from other genres since it constantly experiments with new shapes in order to display the variety and immediacy of speech diversity” (Holquist, 1981:xxix). Further provocative and potentially correlative descriptions of the genre occur: “... a consciously structured hybrid” (1981:xxix), “fundamentally anticanonical” (1981:xxx), always insisting on a “... dialogue between what a given system will admit ... and those texts which are otherwise excluded from such a definition” (1981:xxx) as well as that the novel “... has as its skeleton yet another model for a history of discourse ... supreme self-consciousness” (1981:xxxiii).

These, amongst many other potentially potent correlations between the novel and the artist’s book

helped me forge a three-fold argument in my article: Firstly, Holquist (2002:72) states that “Bakhtin is particularly drawn to the novel, the genre least secure (or most self-conscious) about its own status as a genre” (my italics). Secondly, he (2002:72) draws attention to “...the novel’s peculiar ability to open a window in discourse from which the extraordinary variety of social languages can be perceived”. Thirdly, in relation to Bakhtin’s two major protagonists and foci of study, Rabelais and Dostoevsky, Holquist (2002:72-73) states: “Rabelais and Dostoevsky are significant for Bakhtin not merely because they write novels, but because they advance the work of novelness, and it is novelness – not the novel, nor Rabelais, not even Dostoevsky – that is the name of his real hero”. From this I was able to isolate three critical elements of Bakhtin’s thought, in my article, which might underpin the artist’s book’s act of theoretical enunciation: self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and [self]-reflexivity (or bookness).

However, what concerns me here is my second direction of enquiry which plots a trajectory of various calls for a more rigorous theoretical underpinning of the artist’s book, and to which South African book artists and theorists seem to have responded. The 22nd edition of the *Journal of artists’ books* (2007) was devoted to the proceedings of the *Action/interaction: Book/arts conference (A/I)*, held in June 2007² at Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts, Chicago. Conference co-ordinator Elisabeth Long, (2007:4-6) stated that, among their many aims “... we wanted a conference that focused on the ideas that underlie book artists’ work, not the techniques. ... We had also wanted the conference to raise the level of critical discourse within the field ... to support more rigorous critique and analysis”.

Conference speaker Matthew Brown (2007:6-9) provided a fascinating view of the problems the field of artists’ books encounter when confronting, what the conference termed, ‘theory’ both within the aims of the conference itself (the field’s intrinsic problems) as well as within its own international discourse (the field’s extrinsic problems). These problems are of interest to me in this article and I begin, not surprisingly, with the conference’s intrinsic problems in establishing, what Brown (2007:6) titled, *Book arts and the desire for theory*. He (2007:7) attempted to establish some nodes of criticality, “and explicit rhetoric”, gleaned from the presentations and writings of luminaries in the field (whether they spoke at the conference or not) in order to satiate his “desire”. Brown (2007:7-8) believed:

1. that each of Johanna Drucker's chapters in her seminal book *The century of artists' books* (2007)38 "supplies individual propositions about kinds of book art, concepts that serve theoretically",
2. that Richard Minsky's conceptual categories by which to assess book arts can most usefully be deployed. These being
 - a. "object" (the materials and craft used to create the bookwork),
 - b. "image" (the presentation and appearance of the bookwork), and
 - c. "metaphor" (Minsky's rather personal and contrarily defined term for the set of associations created by the combination of object and image),
3. that Buzz Spector's "erotic associations of the book" and a book's "fetishism" are concepts where "[t]he unique book object – and arguably books generally – find their meanings" (Brown, 2007:7),
4. that the *Tango Book Arts* collective's³ identification of the elements of "time", "structure", "interactivity" and "visual language" as principles of "bookishness" were important as these elements, the collective argued, operate (in all or part) in selected examples of artists' books ranging from Marcel Broodthaers to William Kentridge (Murken et al, 2007:22-24).

The fact that these principles of bookishness are also applicable to contemporary art making, especially when digital technologies are included in that making, resulted in the collective (Murken et al, 2007:24) ending their contribution at the conference with a series of questions. These questions unfortunately negated any certainty in the appropriateness and applicability of the four elements, especially when they move "out of the book arts field" (Murken et al, 2007:24) and into the world of contemporary art making – a concern shared by Marshall Weber (in Brown, 2007:8). This questioning by the collective and in the eliciting of the audience's opinions, resulted in a 'turning inward' towards the contributions of the conference delegates, most of whom were artists. This met the organisers' aim; what Long, (2007:4) describes as

... something that seemed less commonly available, the opportunity to explore with fellow artists the essence of the activity itself, the thoughts and attitudes that go into making ourselves artists ... we knew we wanted to engage the audience in this exploration, wanted to hear as many points of view as possible.

However, the inclusion of the experiences and ideas of artists inevitably took the discourse away from theory and pointed it, predictably, back towards

practice. Brown (2007:8) wrestled with this contradiction, believing that a strong response against bland relativism (i.e. that which is, against that which is not, an artist's book) would be that "the book arts bring with them potentialities specific to the book format, and their virtue is their distinction from other media". Realising that this position did not adequately address the theoretical underpinnings of the book arts, he (2007:8) continued:

Again, for me, this distinction is in the book's bequeathing to us a literally graspable form and in its bequeathing to us a form anchored in semantic and syntactic meaning. The tactile and the verbal coordinate with the visual, the sculptural, and the temporal to make the book expressive as a medium.

Yet Brown could not escape the lure of practice when he (2007:8) summed up the conference's major discussions (many emanating from the points already mentioned above) as "practice and theory are co-emergent. That's it. That's the point" which echoed Mary Tasillo's (2007:12) argument that "... powerfully different critical insights come from those with creative expertise and those with a creative ignorance, if you will. Criticism suffers when either perspective is missing".

But this did not seem quite enough, as Jonathan Lill's (2007:18) opening statement at the conference, on the perplexing physical nature of artists' books, acknowledged:

I tried to give voice to my dissatisfactions with artists' books, a sense I have that artists' books have not achieved the same expansiveness of expression seen in other modes of artistic production. I fear that artists' books may have in-built limitations and that their marginalization in our culture may not be due to extrinsic factors as much as intrinsic ones.

These intrinsic limitations are "scale" and "intimacy" which "... prevent them from commanding attention and imposing themselves on our attention" as well as limitations in a reliance on letterpress and offset printing, where a "... greater focus on unique books [could] provide a more immediate aesthetic experience more akin to that of painting and sculpture" (Lill, 2007:18).⁴ And thus, the conference struggled to find a space of theory for artists' books betwixt and between this 'kinship' and their "distinction from other media" and where "practice and theory are co-emergent" (Brown, 2007:8). A close reading of the conference proceedings and reports-back in the *Journal of artists' books* (2007) exposes a

cautiously optimistic resignation that comes with not having quite achieved one's goals, or, more critically, having had one's focus shifted.

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Long (2007:6), revealingly states:

Having the amazing array of examples of book art that were available in the exhibit, coupled with a concentration of artists expressing their own ideas about what it is they do is certainly a first step in building the infrastructure within the field to support more rigorous critique and analysis and for that alone I consider the conference a success.

This conference differentiated itself from the other two in terms of its focus upon more rigorous theoretical underpinnings for the artist's book. "Did we achieve our goals?" Long (2007:6) continues "Only in part, though I believe that the conference provided seeds for the type of ongoing discussion that we were searching for". It must have been disappointing to acknowledge that, after all its inclusive deliberations, the A/I conference constituted, by 2007, only a 'first step', only 'seeds'.

The purpose behind my analysis of A/I's outcomes is partly based upon Brown's (2007:7) observation that "[t]here is an immanent and explicit rhetoric of the book present ... in the book arts community, not least in the continually stimulating thought of Drucker – most recently in *The Bonefolder* debate of 2005". Drucker's article, titled *Critical issues / exemplary works*⁵ had, in many ways, provided an impetus and direction for the A/I conference (and was referred to directly by Phoebe Esmon and Amanda D'Amico (2007:19) in their session which focussed on the online presence of the artist's book). Drucker's (2005:3) rebuke of, and challenge to, the broad book arts community to develop a discreet theoretical voice (the explicit problem) is plain:

Because the field of artists' books suffers from being under-theorized, under-historicized, under-studied and under-discussed, it isn't taken very seriously. In the realms of fine art or literature elaborate mechanisms exist for sorting and filtering work. But the community in which artists' books are made, bought, sold, collected, hasn't evolved these structures. Our critical apparatus is about as sophisticated as that which exists for needlework, decoupage, and other "crafts".

Drucker (2005:3) continues:

I'd even go so far as to say that the conceptual foundation for such operations doesn't yet exist, not

really. We don't have a canon of artists, we don't have a critical terminology for book arts aesthetics with a historical perspective, and we don't have a good, specific, descriptive vocabulary on which

to form our assessment of book works. These three things are needed, even though each has its own problems and will raise hackles and objections.

The hackles and objections experienced at the A/I conference two years later bare testimony to Drucker's shrewd knowledge of the limitations of both the field and its participants. If there is a clear implication here, it is Drucker's (2005:3) exasperation in feeling that she 'might have to do it all' when she states:

The canon will emerge, and I don't mind helping lay the groundwork. But it won't emerge just because things are made and collected. It will come into being by critical consensus and debate. By writing *The Century of Artists' Books* I did some of that work. More remains to be done. ... This call for a community to participate in creating a critical language for artists [sic] books from a historical/aesthetic perspective and from a descriptive approach to books-as-such is part of my own impulse to force myself to make explicit many of the criteria implicit in the way I think about books.

When Long (2007:6) stated "[w]e had also wanted the conference to raise the level of critical discourse within the field, though I'm not sure we knew exactly what we thought that would look like", it was clear that Drucker's challenge was going to be difficult to meet and that, at this particular conference, the participation of artists would necessarily point the desire for theory back towards practice, a familiar territory from which Drucker has perhaps hoped to push away. Drucker's challenge, of course, responded to a much earlier call for critical theoretical work to be done. As far back as 1985, Dick Higgins (in Lyons, 1985:12) in his preface to the first comprehensive text on the artist's book, asks pertinent questions regarding the field's relationship with a theoretical discourse (the field's explicit problem) and who is responsible for this work when he states:

Perhaps the hardest thing to do in connection with the artist's book is to find the right language for discussing it. Most of our criticism in art is based on the concept of a work with separable meanings, content, and style – "this is what it says" and "here is how it says what it says." But the language of normative criticism is not geared towards the

discussion of an experience, which is the main focus of most artists' books. Perhaps this is why there is so little good criticism of the genre. ... "What am I experiencing when I turn these pages?" That is what the critic of the

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artist's book must ask, and for most critics it is an uncomfortable question. This is a problem that must be addressed.

With Higgins' pertinent words feeding, through Drucker to the *A/I* conference aims, Long's 'first step' and 'seeds' indexes the theoretical distance travelled since 1985 and the urgency of the task and length of the road ahead in establishing an appropriate theoretical underpinning for the field.

A year after the publication of *A/I*'s conference proceedings and reports Sarah Bodman and Tom Sowden⁶ took up the challenge. Between March 2008 and February 2010 they explored the question of what will constitute the contexts of *artists' publishing* in the future, given a field that now includes both digital and traditional artists' books. From 2008, seminars, discussion groups, forums, practical and written projects and commissions, interviews and workshops were held in order to open critical debate with an international community of artists, educators, researchers, students, presses, publishers, librarians, curators, dealers, collectors and others involved in the field. As a result Bodman's and Sowden's *A manifesto for the book* (2010) - derived from the research project, titled *What will be the canon for the artist's book in the 21st century* (2008-2010) - proves to be perhaps the most comprehensive positioning statement regarding contemporary international book arts practice and which successfully acknowledges digital technologies, with both their advantages and disadvantages, as central to the field and its discourses.⁷

Notwithstanding the importance of the research and the printed publication – not least of all for its global reach and the giving of voice to artists from eastern Europe and the global south – the broad sweep of the project, its self-conscious open-endedness and its asking of questions within inclusive and diverse contexts succeeds, like *A/I*, to place the theoretical underpinning of the artist's book firmly within practice.⁸ How the most recent major book arts conferences, the *College book art association conference* (San Francisco, January 2012), titled *Time, sequence & technology: Book art in the 21st century*⁹ and the *Codex international book arts fair 2013* (Richmond, CA) have extended the research

completed by the UK artist/academics in order to move beyond the 'first steps' and 'seeds' of the *A/I* conference, remains to be seen. It is revealing that neither conference has published formal conference proceedings and I have found it almost impossible to extract readable papers and articles from the former conference's participants, despite some of the abstracts promising to take our debate on the extrinsic problem of artists' books further. What seems clear, is a need for an articulate voice which, perhaps for the first time, points clearly towards theory from within the given of practice.

It is instructive that two recent pieces of academic writing in South Africa have, albeit in brief terms, focussed some attention on a theoretical underpinning of artists' books. Firstly, Estelle Liebenberg-Barkhuizen (2009:65-73) forges an argument for the artist's book to be examined from a postmodern perspective. Barkhuizen is well aware of the issues emanating from the *A/I* conference, referring to a number of the participants' contributions. But, although the artist's book rose to prominence in the 1960s in response to postmodern pressures (amongst other concerns; authorial vs. receiver voices; changing views on aesthetic hierarchies; the circumvention of gallery, publishing and conventional art-economic powerbases as well as the rise to prominence of a new set of inter-medial writings) it might seem self-evident that the genre has been historically and critically positioned as a postmodern phenomenon,¹⁰ albeit with a substantial precursive history. Despite Barkhuizen's (2009:69) claim that "Drucker's discussion of artists' books reflects, whether intentionally or not, and without using the word, an essentially postmodern perspective", Drucker (2007:8) in fact states that

[i]t would be hard to find an art movement in the 20th century which does not have some component of the artist's book attached to it. ... A path could be traced which would include Expressionism, Surrealism in Western and Eastern Europe ... and Postmodernism to the present mainstream artworld concern with multiculturalism and identity politics.

Yet, despite this, Barkhuizen (2009:70) goes on to suggest that

[t]he elusive theoretical foundation for artists' books is therefore possibly due to the proposed definitions of artists' books as being grounded in concepts of the work of art as autonomous, subscribing to modernist paradigms and viewing the artist's book not as operating in the field of cultural production but as marginalised to the modernist mainstream.

Barkhuizen (2009:71) argues that in "... an 'expanded' field of cultural production" the book functions "as an electronic file; as conceptual art; as photography" and, as a result, can lose "its identity,

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escape the narrow conventional definition of 'book' to become something else, such as video, digital book, engineering, architecture, performance. The book in itself can be considered to be the arena where the postmodern occurs and is acted out." The danger, however, of reading the artist's book into 'an expanded field' (as Bodman and Sowden have found) is that it runs the risk of losing its essential bookness, becoming, merely, a video, a piece of engineering or architecture or a performance.

The second piece of writing is Keith Dietrich's (2011) inaugural address at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. In his address, he (2011:14) argues that the artist's book inhabits an "ambiguous space between artwork and book" and within "... this undefined space where boundaries dissolve, the bookwork transcends the threshold from one space to another." Dietrich (2011:14) evokes Victor Turner's (1967:97) concept of liminality and the liminal space as a state "betwixt and between" all the recognised fixed points of structural classification in space-time. For Dietrich (2011:14) it is clear that when examining liminality one is, in effect, dealing with the *unstructured*, a condition allied to what Turner (1967:98) terms "the unbounded, the infinite, the limitless". Thus liminality can be read as an intersection where ideas and concepts are in constant states of confrontation and intercession: a rich theoretical space for describing the artist's book. Dietrich (2011:14) then joins the space between these states of confrontation and intercession and cultural hybridity by evoking Homi Bhabha's (1994:5) idea of liminality as an "interstitial passage between fixed identifications". For Dietrich (2011:15) the notion of liminality "is important in describing some of the phenomena regarding artists' books ... namely their transdisciplinary, transcultural and hybrid nature".

With particular import for a theoretical underpinning of artists' books, and which certainly deserves further exploration, Dietrich (2011:15) calls for a post-colonial as well as poststructuralist reading of the field:

This liminal state unlocks a hybrid space, or what Bhabha refers to as a 'Third Space of enunciation'. ... Positioned betwixt and between the world of books and the conventional world of art, the artist's

book does not quite belong to either of these worlds and, despite this lack of stability, this liminal space allows for a freedom of movement and the dynamic exchanges of ideas, concepts and methods of working.

What is of particular interest to me in this reference to Bhabha's (1994:86) notion of the "third space" as interstitial, liminal, unfixed, in flux, dissolved and thus undefined, is the term *enunciation*. This term, which evinces articulation, certainly focuses the theoretical discourse upon justification, evidence and proof and reminds one of Drucker's (2007:161) reference to artists' books in which technical and graphic conceits are exploited in order to call attention to the conventions by which, through constant exposure, a book normally neutralises its identity. Drucker (2007:161) describes this as a book's *theoretical operation of enunciation*¹¹ by which attention is called to its own processes and structure.

Neither Barkhuizen nor Dietrich, however, unpacks the postmodern or the liminal, interstitial third space, for which they argue. Neither deploys an analytical methodology to demonstrate how the artist's book operates as a multi-authored postmodern form or as an object of liminality and it is probable that this was not their intention. But as a result of my deliberations on Bakhtin and the novel, written up in the article elsewhere, I have attempted to build on the impetus provided by these two pieces of research. In my article, my exploration of specific examples of artists' books¹² and particularly their relationships and dialogues which each other, is focussed through a lens provided by Bakhtin's writings on *dialogism* and *heteroglossia*. These critical terms, which demonstrate the dialogic, multivocal and heteroglot voices between works in history and within themselves as cultural utterances, are shown to be appropriate and useful frames for the analysis of particular qualities which enunciate artists' books presence in the world, and which I argue are: self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and reflexivity. I apply Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia to the task of proposing a tentative theoretical foundation for the artist's book, as a dynamic visual language, which is relational and engaged in a process of endless redescriptions of the world (Besley & Peters 2011:95). What this research has also suggested is that further investigation of Bakhtin's ideas and particularly his writings on the *carnavalesque* (in which transgressive forms are given public and visible voice) might also prove to be an appropriate critical frame for theorising the artist's book.

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Notes

1. *Literator*, November 2012 33(1).

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2. Brad Freeman notes that *A/I* was one of three well-attended and significant conference/fairs within an 8 month period in 2006/7, proving that the field of artists' books is vital and growing. The *A/I* conference was structured to encourage as much participation and reflection as possible. The people in the audience became an active voice rather than the passive recipient of information from the 'experts', distinguishing it from the two other conferences - the *Pyramid Atlantic book arts fair & conference* which took place in Silver Spring, Maryland in November 2006 and the inaugural *Codex international book fair*, February 2007 in Berkeley, California.

3. The collective consists of artist-educators, Katie Murken, Lindsey Mears and Katie Baldwin, originally all from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

4. An idea already established by Drucker but which also includes a marketing aspect as books tend to sell in a different, generally lower price bracket than paintings or sculpture.

5. This was originally presented at the *Pyramid Atlantic book arts fair & conference*, November 2004.

6. Both are from the Centre for Fine Print Research, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK.

7. Bodman's and Sowden's concept of a canon is not the same as Drucker's, who understands the term to imply a body of recognised and acknowledged master practitioners and their masterworks. B & S's term is more open-ended, comprising recognition and acknowledgement of practice and what Higgins terms 'discussion of experiences'.

8. Elsewhere I have discussed, what I consider to be two critical aspects of Bodman's and Sowden's research project: that the use of digital technologies potentially liberates book artists from questions of similarity or fidelity to a sequential, physical or originary experience of the codex, and secondly, the notion of 'future proofing' digital data.

9. As a major figure and theoretician in the contemporary fine art and book art fields, Buzz Spector has been invited to give the keynote address with the banquet speech being given by Dr. Brewster Kahle, a computer engineer, internet entrepreneur, activist, and digital librarian.

10. Of importance here is the inclusion of Drucker's artist's book *The Word Made Flesh* (1989) on the seminal exhibition *Postmodernism: Style and subversion, 1970 – 1990* (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, September 2011 – January 2012). It is included as typical of both artists' books and the reworking of the relationship between publishing, typography and visual art in what Glenn Adamson and Jane Pavitt term the "pre-digital" age. Further, Renée Riese Hubert's and Judd D. Hubert's *The Cutting edge of reading: Artists' books* (1999) is, specifically written from within a postmodern perspective of the field.

11. Acts of speaking, representing or making a work rather than allowing a work to be spoken for.

12. Stéphane Mallarmé's and Marcel Broodthaers' *Un coup de dés* publications, Buzz Spector's reductive *Marcel Broodthaers*, Ulises Carrión's *For fans and scholars alike* and Helen Douglas' and Telfer Stokes' *Real fiction* provided the foci for the article. *Towards a theoretical underpinning of the book arts: Applying Bakhtin's dialogism and heteroglossia to selected examples of the artist's book*.

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Submission Two: Annexure B

Peer-reviewed and published article

[Towards a Theoretical Underpinning of the Book Arts: Applying Bakhtin's Dialogism and Heteroglossia to Selected Examples of the Artist's Book](#) (click for online access)

Literator, November 33(1) 2012, Pp. 1-11

Towards a theoretical underpinning of the book arts: Applying Bakhtin's dialogism and heteroglossia to selected examples of the artist's book

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Note:

This article was written as part of, and functions within the scope of a larger research project entitled Transgressions and boundaries of the page: A transdisciplinary exploration of a practice-based research project by means of the artist's book conducted by the subject groups Graphic Design, Creative Writing and Art History at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University, South Africa.

Project web page: www.bookboek.co.za

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Recent research projects and conferences devoted to the book arts have responded to Johanna Drucker's 2005 call that a more rigorous theoretical underpinning of the field of book art production needs to be established urgently. Yet these projects and conferences, resultant from the participation of artists and other practitioners in the field, not surprisingly, have biased their discussions on the book arts towards practice and away from theory. In establishing that a need still exists for an appropriate lens through which the artist's book might be more rigorously and theoretically examined, this article explored the following publications: Stéphane Mallarmé and Marcel Broodthaers's *Un coup de dés*, Buzz Spector's reductive *Marcel Broodthaers*, Ulises Carrión's *For fans and scholars alike* and Helen Douglas and Telfer Stokes's *Real fiction*. These specific examples, and particularly their relationships and dialogues which each other, were examined through a lens provided by the Russian philosopher and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's writings on dialogism and heteroglossia. These critical terms, which demonstrate the dialogic, multivocal and heteroglot voices between works in history and within themselves, as cultural utterances, were shown to be appropriate and useful frames for the analysis of particular qualities which enunciate the presence of artists' books in the world: self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and reflexivity. I therefore, applied Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia to the task of proposing a theoretical foundation for the artist's book, as a dynamic visual language, which is relational and engaged in a process of endless redescriptions of the world.

Ondersoek na 'n teoretiese onderskraging van boekkuns: Die toepassing van Bakhtin se dialogisme en heteroglossia op geselekteerde voorbeelde van kunstenaarsboeke. Onlangse navorsingsprojekte en konferensies oor boekkuns het gereageer op Johanna Drucker se oproep in 2005 dat noodsaaklike navorsingswerk gedoen moet word om 'n deegliker teoretiese basis vir die terrein van boekkunsproduksie te vestig. Die deelname van kunstenaars en ander praktisyns van boekkuns veroorsaak dat gesprekke en besprekings noodwendig en voorspelbaar neig na die praktyk en weg van die teorie. In die lig van die behoefte aan die bepaling van 'n toepaslike visie waarvolgens die kunsboek meer eksplisiet, ook teoreties, ondersoek kan word, ondersoek hierdie artikel Stéphane Mallarmé en Marcel Broodthaers se *Un coup de dés* publikasies, Buzz Spector se simplifiserende *Marcel Broodthaers*, Ulises Carrion se *For fans and scholars alike*, en Helen Douglas en Telfer Stokes se *Real fiction*. Hierdie spesifieke voorbeelde, en hulle onderlinge verbande en dialoog met mekaar, word ondersoek vanuit die perspektief van die Russiese filosoof en literêre teoretikus Mikhail Bakhtin se werk oor dialogisme en heteroglossia ('ander-tongigheid'). Hierdie begrippe demonstreer die dialogiese, multivokale en veeltongige wisselwerking tussen en binne historiese werke as kultuuruitings. Deur die analise toon ek aan dat hierdie begrippe toepaslike en funksionele raamwerke uitmaak vir die analise van spesifieke aspekte wat die teenwoordigheid van kunstenaarsboeke aankondig in die wêreld: selfbewustheid en omvattende diskoers wat wederkerend toepaslik is. Ek stel voor dat Bakhtin se idees oor dialogisme en heteroglossie gebruik word as die teoretiese begronding van die kunstenaarsboek as 'n dinamiese visuele taal wat in 'n netwerk van ander tekste staan en deel is van die proses van die eindelose herbeskrywing van die wêreld.

Introduction

In this article I respond to Johanna Drucker's (2005:3) rebuke that the critical apparatus for artists' books is about as sophisticated as that which exists for needlework, decoupage, and other 'crafts', and that its theoretical foundation doesn't yet exist. Drucker's challenge responded to Dick Higgins's much earlier call for critical theoretical work to be undertaken when he stated that '... the language of normative criticism is not geared towards the discussion of an experience,

which is the main focus of most artists' books' (Higgins in Lyons 1985:12). Recent book arts conferences⁶³ and research projects⁶⁴ continue to place any theoretical debate on the artist's book firmly within practice. Clearly, what is needed is an articulate voice, from within the given practice, which points decisively towards theory. As the purpose of the 2007 *Action/Interaction: Book/Arts Conference* (A/I) was to focus attention upon theoretical underpinnings of the broad field of the book arts, to raise the level of critical discourse and to support a more rigorous critique and analysis of artists' books, it is revealing that conference co-ordinator Elisabeth Long (2007:6) stated: 'Did we achieve our goals? Only in part, though I believe that the conference provided seeds for the type of ongoing discussion that we were searching for'.

With the need for an articulate voice in mind, it is instructive that a recent piece of academic writing in South Africa focuses some attention on this gap in the theoretical underpinning of artists' books. Keith Dietrich (2011:1–16), in his inaugural address at Stellenbosch University, argues that the artist's book inhabits an 'ambiguous space between artwork and book' and within '... this undefined space where boundaries dissolve, the bookwork transcends the threshold from one space to another' (Dietrich 2011:14). Dietrich evokes Victor Turner's (1967:97) concept of liminality and the liminal space, as a state 'betwixt and between' all the recognised fixed points in space-time of structural classification. For Dietrich (2011:14) it is clear that when examining liminality one is, in effect, dealing with the *unstructured*, a condition allied to what Turner terms 'the unbounded, the infinite, the limitless' (Turner 1967:98). Thus, liminality can be read as an intersection where ideas and concepts are in constant states of confrontation and intercession, a rich theoretical space for describing the artist's book. Dietrich (2011:14) then joins the space between these states of confrontation and intercession and cultural hybridity by evoking Homi Bhabha's (1994:5) idea of liminality as an 'interstitial passage between fixed identifications'. For Dietrich the notion of liminality 'is important in describing some of the phenomena regarding artists' books ... namely their transdisciplinary, transcultural and hybrid nature' (Dietrich 2011). Dietrich continues:

This liminal state unlocks a hybrid space, or what Bhabha refers to as a 'Third Space of enunciation'. ... Positioned betwixt and between the world of books and the conventional world of art, the artist's book does not quite belong to either of these worlds and, despite this lack of stability, this liminal space allows for a freedom of movement and the dynamic exchanges of ideas, concepts and methods of working. (p. 15)

What is of particular interest to me in this reference to Bhabha's (1994:86) notion of the Third Space as interstitial, liminal, unfixed and, thus, undefined, is its resonance with Bakhtin's notion of his own ideas and work occupying '... spheres that are liminal' operating '...

on the borders of ... disciplines, at their junctures and points of intersection' (Bakhtin quoted in Holquist 2002:14). Bhabha's concept of a space of *enunciation*, that focuses theoretical discourse upon articulation, invokes Drucker's (2007:161) reference to the exploitation of technical and graphic conceits inherent in artists' books. These conceits call attention to the conventions by which, through constant exposure, a book normally neutralises its identity. Drucker (2007:161) describes this as a book's *theoretical operation of enunciation* by which attention is called to its own processes and structure; which are acts through which a bookwork demonstrates its own making, and speaks for or represents itself rather than allowing itself to be spoken for or justified by external agencies.

For the purposes of attempting to construct a tentative theoretical foundation for the artist's book as a liminal form I argue, here, through an investigation of selected examples, that dialogism and heteroglossia can be used to enunciate the theoretical operations of artist's books, which are their:

- self-consciousness
- discursive perceptivity
- self-reflexivity (or bookness).

Dialogism and the artist's book

The term *dialogism*⁶⁵ has its origin in the literary theoretical works of the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1950). In his writings,⁶⁶ Bakhtin's dialogism implies the maintaining of a continual dialogue with other works of literature and other authors, which are multiple communications between words, phrases, works and bodies of work with their literary past.⁶⁷ For Bakhtin, all language, indeed every thought, appears dialogically responsive to things that have been said before and in anticipation of things that will be said in response to these statements. All language and the ideas which language contains and communicates, is dynamic, relational and is engaged in a process of endless redescription of the world (Besley & Peters 2011:95). This complex and intertextual dialogue, reminiscent of Bhabha's Third Space, is made clear in Bakhtin's view of his own work which:

... must be called philosophical ... it is not a linguistic, philological, literary or any other particular kind of analysis. ... On the other hand, a positive feature of our study is this: [*it moves*] in spheres that are liminal, i.e., on the borders of all the aforementioned disciplines, at their junctures and points of intersection. (Bakhtin cited in Holquist 2002:14)

In these terms, dialogism implies a polyvocality in which various registers and languages interact and respond to each other. Yet this view of Bakhtin's work also underscores dialogism's resistance to 'being confined to any exclusively 'literary' application. Indeed, the fixity of

⁶³ Examples of recent conferences are: the *Pyramid Atlantic Book Arts Fair & Conference*, Silver Spring, Maryland, November 2006, the *Codex International Book Fair*, Berkeley, February 2007 and the *Action/Interaction: Book/Arts Conference (A/I)*, Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts, Chicago, June 2007. The most recent conference, the College Book Arts Association's (CBAA) *Time, Sequence & Technology: Book Art in the 21st Century*, took place in San Francisco in January 2012.

⁶⁴ A year after the publication of A/I's conference proceedings, Sarah Bodman and Tom Sowden of the Centre for Fine Print Research (CFPR), University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol, took up the challenge. In consultation with an international community of artists, educators, researchers, students, presses, publishers, librarians, curators, dealers, collectors and others who were involved in the research project titled *What will be the canon for the artist's book in the 21st century?* (2010) Bodman and Sowden's *A manifesto for the book* (2010) is perhaps the most comprehensive

programmatic statement regarding contemporary international book arts practice to date.

⁶⁵ Michael Holquist (2002:15) notes that the term *dialogism* is used by scholars as a means of '... categorizing the different ways he meditated on dialogue' but was 'never used by Bakhtin himself'. (see Holquist 2002).

⁶⁶ Examples of his work include: *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics* (1984), *Rabelais and his world* (1984) and the essays published in English as *The dialogical imagination* (1981). Note that these dates all refer to the first English translations. The original Russian transcripts date to 1919 (*Art and answerability*).

⁶⁷ Dialogism opposes monologic works of literature – military orders, instructions, rules and even epic poetry, in which any orientation of the work towards a past or a future context, or history or voice is minimised, which prompts, rather, obedience, acquiescence or no interactivity at all.

boundaries between ‘literary’ and ‘extra-literary’ discourse is precisely what it questions’ (Holquist 2002:107), and consequently opens up a space for dialogism’s application to the analysis of scripto-visual texts of which the artist’s book is an appropriate example. In fact, Bakhtin’s words might act as a foundation for Drucker’s study of the artist’s book in which she describes her survey’s scope as ‘a zone of activity ... made at the intersection of a number of different disciplines, fields, and ideas’ (Drucker 2007:1).

Stéphane Mallarmé and Marcel Broodthaers

I begin by locating dialogism in relation to Marcel Broodthaers’s response to the French Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé’s 1914 publication⁶⁸ *Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard* (*A throw of the dice will never abolish chance*).

Mallarmé’s typography and material presentation suggests the movement of a listing ship and spreads across two pages ‘creating not only a more spacious configuration but also a more challenging experience of reading’ whilst ‘certain phrases ... are abruptly and wittily cut by the boundaries of the page’ (Arnar 2011:206), causing a reader to move between recto and verso pages whilst having to read across the gutter. Its unorthodox layout makes references to electrical and magnetic energies which function, metaphorically, as ‘an invisible force uniting the dispersed fragments of text’ (Arnar 2011:218). Page-turning ignites a ‘spark’ which, Mallarmé believed, connected the reader and the work (Arnar 2011:221). By exploiting the textual, visual, and temporal elements of the book, Mallarmé explicitly expressed his desire to protect the unique visual character of his text. Regarding this, the poem was a visual composition in its own right without the proposed illustrations of his friend Odilon Redon (Arnar 2011:204). *Un coup de dés* brought together two forms of the book: The avant-garde book (as precursor of the artist’s book) ‘whose revolutionary and emancipatory goals gestured outward, and the *livre d’artiste*, whose concessions to rarity and originality gestured inward’ (Arnar 2011:238).

If this gesturing dialogically ‘refracts’ (to use Bakhtin’s term), it is for the purpose of operationalising the fact that each element of a work has a history of usage to which it responds, whilst also anticipating future responses.⁶⁹ Broodthaers’s version, titled *Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard: Image* (1969), is a dialogical refraction of Mallarmé’s poem in its intention and physical production. Broodthaers’s exploitation of varying translucencies of substrate expands and complicates Mallarmé’s original concept of reading back and forth across the gutter, but without any interference in the act of reading. These conceptual and technical decisions reinforce the

dialogical relationship between Mallarmé and Broodthaers, in that the optical qualities present in the post *Cosmopolis* versions of Mallarmé’s typographic layout can be exploited in the sequential and material possibilities of the artist’s book. Broodthaers’s work is a careful and particular response to Mallarmé’s edition,⁷⁰ and to objects more generally, as signs of negation. Drucker (2007) describes the work as follows:

a conceptual transformation of [*the*] earlier piece, skilfully citing and restating its premises in a manner which dialogues across historical time and cultural assumptions. ... Where each line of the poem should lie on the page a dark black line, simple, geometric, stark is placed in its stead. This is a physical equivalent, a moral inequivalent, a recapitulation and obliteration. (p. 115)

The Broodthaers version is not a witty play on the formal, typographic conventions so important to Mallarmé, and Drucker (2007) reminds us that even as:

it elevates the structure of the work to a concept worthy of study in its own right ... Broodthaers offers a conceptual analysis of Mallarmé’s poem across the distance of nearly a century. (pp. 115–116)

Birgit Pelzer (1987:157–181), however, argues for an even deeper dialogical analysis of the two works than Drucker’s elevation of structure and conceptual analysis. In this work, argues Pelzer, Broodthaers states that the subject ‘figures poorly in its meaning’ and, ‘that it is caught up ... in the network of social relations that play out the symbolic representation with which the subject is charged’ (Broodthaers cited in Pelzer 1987:159). Broodthaers’s intention then is to ‘restrict the notion of the subject’ by interrogating the ‘loss of the real’ stating that, ‘to be represented, a thing must be lost’ (Broodthaers cited in Pelzer 1987:158).

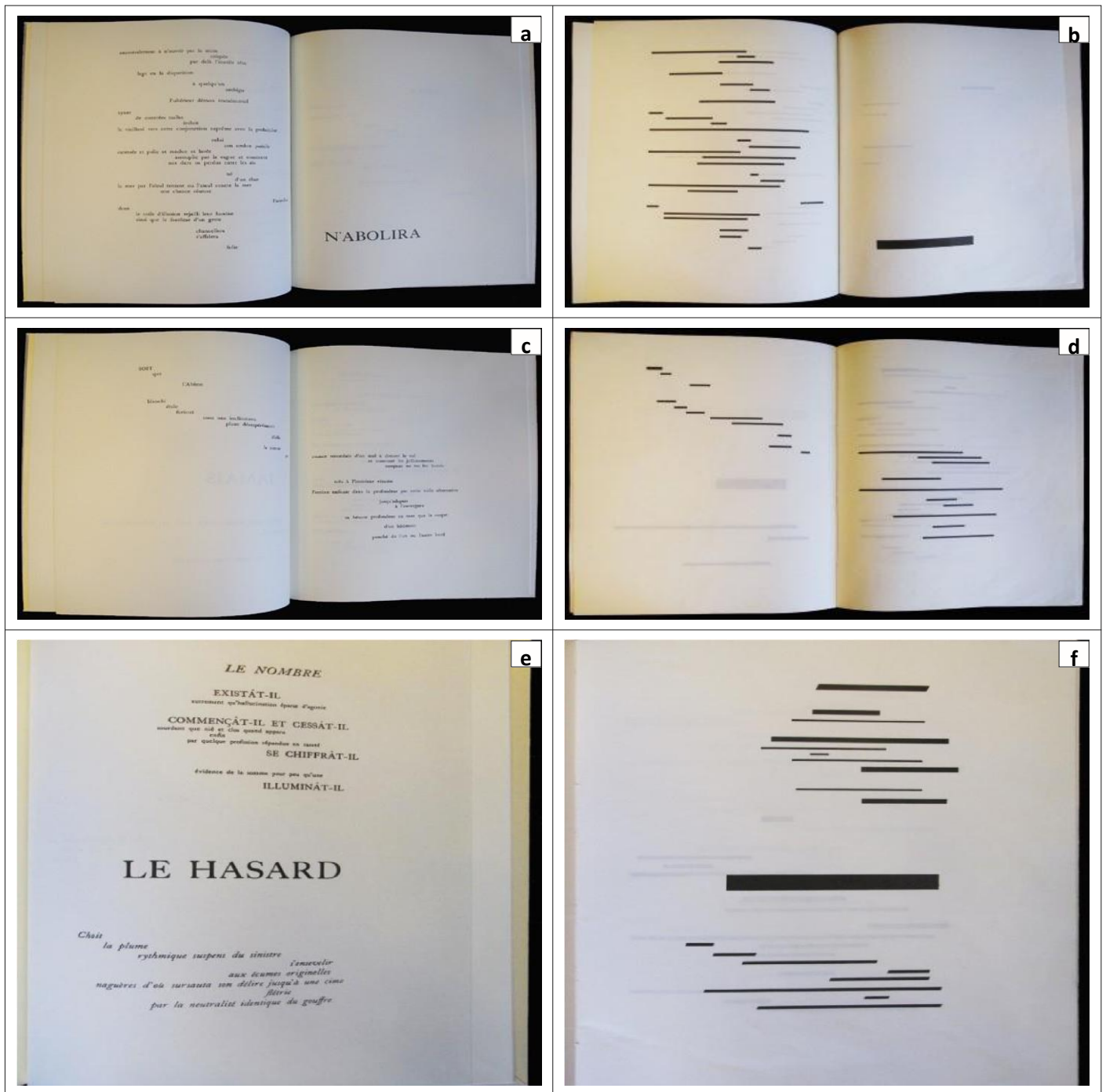
In dialogical terms, Broodthaers’s oeuvre would be particularly receptive to the assertion that ‘the very capacity to have consciousness is based on *otherness*’ (Holquist 2002:18). Broodthaers’s dark black, geometric, inequivalent and obliterating linear metaphor, halts any metonymic drift away from the thing which is signalled as lost, evoking Mallarmé’s own use of ‘magnetic’ typography as a ‘way of averting the falling off ... [*through*] recourse to some absolute power, such as Metaphor’ (Mallarmé cited in Pelzer 1987:181).

Broodthaers’s typographic obliteration of Mallarmé’s work implies what Bakhtin terms *intentional hybridisation*. Broodthaers’s obliteration is one linguistic consciousness which explicitly represents another consciousness (Mallarmé’s) with each belonging to a different system of language (Evans 2011:63).

⁶⁸ Anna Sigrídur Arnar (2011:343) provides the following information on this work: Mallarmé’s poem was first published in the journal *Cosmopolis* in May 1897. From extant proofs corrected by him, this version represents only a partial fulfillment of his ideas for the poem. In publications completed after his death, the 1914 edition published by the *Nouvelle revue Française* disregards several particular specifications Mallarmé made before his death, amongst these, the specific Didot font to be used. The 1980 edition *Paris: Change errant/ d’atelier* responds carefully to Mallarmé’s notes and corrected extant proofs in which a few textual changes and adjustments in capitalisation are made. *Gallimard’s* 2003 version, based on the 1914 publication, is what I use in this article and its illustrations. Françoise Morel’s 2007 edition, published by *La table ronde* include facsimile reproductions of Mallarmé’s corrected proofs and the *Cosmopolis* version. Finally, the 2007 *Ypsilon* published edition uses Didot type face and includes reproductions of Redon’s lithographs (c1900) intended for the poem by Ambrose Vollard, but which were never published.

⁶⁹ In dialogical terms, Mallarmé’s version could anticipate Broodthaers’s version through the manner in which the original textual layout broke with the typographic conventions of its day. This influenced the visual typographies of later Futurist, Dada and Constructivist artists who, themselves, influenced postmodern typography as well as that of Broodthaers. It is here that the dialogical power of Mallarmé’s work comes to the fore.

⁷⁰ Broodthaers’s 1969 edition consists of ten unbound copies printed on twelve aluminium sheets along with ninety copies printed on translucent paper, with two sheets of white card cut to the size of the book, to enable the reader to isolate individual pages, and three hundred copies on normal paper which also allowed the ink impressions in *versō follō* (on the turned page) to be visible.



Source: Mallarmé, S., [1914] 2003, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*, Gallimard, L'imprimerie Floch, Paris/Mayenne. Broodthaers, M., 1969, 'Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard: Image', Galerie Wide White Space and Köln: Galerie Michael Werner, Antwerp. (Artist's book)
 Collection: National Art Library, V & A Museum, London
 Photography: David Paton
 Images reproduced courtesy of the National Art Library, V & A Museum, London and © DACS 2012

Figure 1: (a) Page 6 (verso and recto) of Stéphane Mallarmé's 1914 version of *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* which ends: 'Engagements from which the veil of illusion splashes back their hauntedness how the phantom of a gesture will pitch will fall madness WILL ABOLISH'; (b) Page 6 (verso and recto) of Marcel Broodthaers' 1969 *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*: Image in which a careful obliteration of Mallarmé's positional and typographic density is undertaken; (c) Page 4 of Stéphane Mallarmé's 1914 version of *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*. The text (illustrated here, verso) begins with: 'BE IT that the Abyss blanched unbound furious under an incline'. The page spread is completed with: 'its yawning depth as great as the hull of a vessel listed to one or the other side' on the recto; (d) Page 4 (verso and recto) of Marcel Broodthaers' 1969 *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*: Image in which a careful obliteration of Mallarmé's positional and typographic density is undertaken; (e) Page 10 (recto) of Stéphane Mallarmé's 1914 version of *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*. The partial text illustrated here, demonstrates the need to read across the gutter to complete it. '(IT WAS) THE NUMBER (born of stars) WERE IT TO EXIST other than as a scattered hallucination of dying ...'; (f) Page 10 (recto) of Marcel Broodthaers' 1969 *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*: Image in which a careful obliteration of Mallarmé's positional and typographic density is undertaken.

Broodthaers's belongs to image and Mallarmé's belongs to text, and are, hence, 'a polyphony of battling and internally divided voices' as 'we would see them through each other's eyes' (Evans 2011:66). Broodthaers's reading of Mallarmé's text, in visual terms, as an image, exploits the artist's book as the most appropriate form in which to acknowledge the visual⁷¹ impact Mallarmé demanded of his text, as a 'divine and intricate organism required by literature' (Drucker 2007:36). Broodthaers succeeds in enunciating the conventions by which, through constant exposure, a book normally neutralises its identity (Drucker 2007:161).

A dialogical framework 'is itself not a systematic philosophy' and 'refuses to be systematic' (Holquist 2002:16) and, thus, constructs a space of polyvocality, and of simultaneity, within which artists' books may speak to one another and within which a productive theoretical position might be taken up. This simultaneity ('both' and 'and') (Holquist 2002:41) is a more useful position, and prevents reliance upon readings of categorisation such as similarity ('either' and 'or') in and between works which display purely formal, subject or broadly conceptual congruence or shared features. As Nelson Goodman (1972:437) has demonstrated, everything is similar to everything else in at least one respect, which leads to similarity being recognised as an 'insidious pretender' and 'an imposter'.

Dialogical simultaneity helps to find moments of intertextuality in which the artist self-consciously refers to the field of work they inhabit and the field refers back to the artist, which is what Bakhtin refers to as 'answerability'. An example of this is to recognise how the concepts, with which Broodthaers's *Un coup de dés: Image grapple*, might resonate with other artists who use Broodthaers's theoretical operation of *enunciation* as a starting point for their own work. This eliminates notions of formal or subject similarity in favour of a theoretically deeper analysis of intention and attention to the self-consciousness or reflexivity which provides artists' books with their peculiar and particular status. Clearly, Mallarmé's work is as reframed by Broodthaers's 'other' as Broodthaers's is by Mallarmé's.

Buzz Spector

If Broodthaers is acutely aware of the implications of cancellation and absence in his reference to Mallarmé, he would not be surprised to find examples of artists' books which pursue this trajectory and which may, themselves, include Broodthaers's work in their remit as a self-conscious act of dialogism. Renée and Judd Hubert (1999:87–89) read Buzz Spector's bookwork in just this way, accounting for his strategy of 'shortsheeting' existing texts.⁷² By carefully tearing down each page vertically, Spector removes most of the readable text and by progressively shifting the place of each tear, he increases the size of each successive partially surviving page. The result, when viewed either from the top or the bottom, when closed, is a set of narrow, triangularly tapering books which

only seem 'normal' when the spines are viewed on a bookshelf. In *Marcel Broodthaers* (1988), Spector uses the titular artist's exhibition catalogue as 'the sacrificial book' (Hubert & Hubert 1999:88). The reconstructive and reductive elements of a catalogue are exploited by Spector's strategy, providing '... an additional means of deconstruction, for it dismantles fundamental aspects of the book for the sake of imposing an even more orderly design' (Hubert & Hubert 1999:88). They continue by drawing attention to the manner in which the straight black lines of horizontal text, in the catalogue, give way to vertical opticality just as the many pages give way to a single sloping page made of pieces, where reading shifts to looking. Hubert and Hubert (1999:88–89) are aware of Spector's dialogical relationship with Broodthaers, the field of artists' books and a broader art and literary terrain they occupy when they state:

As Spector also produces texts, critical as well as meditative, we can classify him as a writer, in which capacity he deliberately makes himself vulnerable to his own artistic practice. (p. 89) They continue:

The triumphant struggle with the word that Mallarmé had undertaken and that Broodthaers had visibly and editorially displaced, surfaces once again in the torn pages of the catalog. In a way, Spector has denied the word and image content of the catalog, and his negation may have produced an effect in keeping with that of the poem. (p. 89)

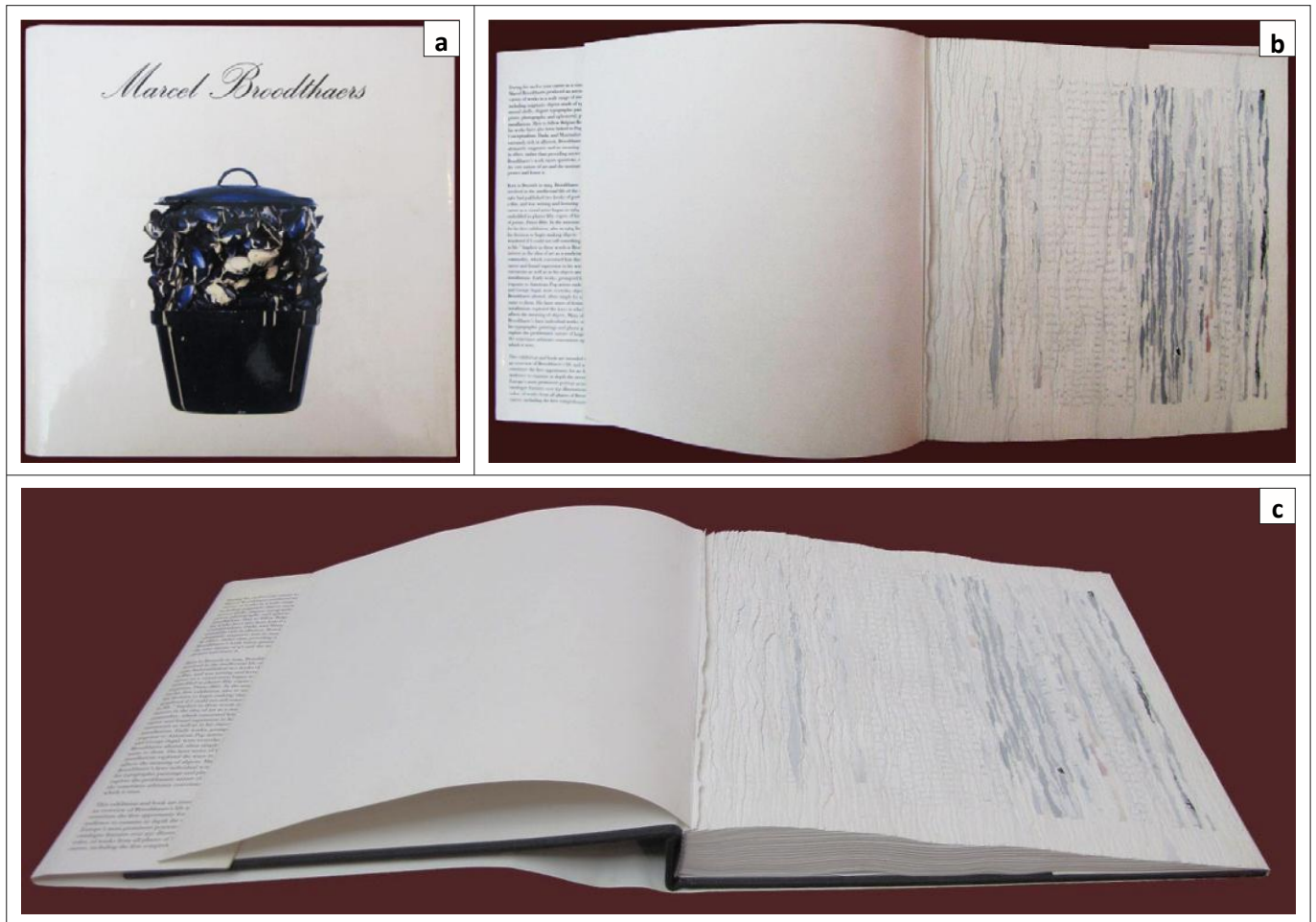
In dialogical terms, it becomes possible to pursue a theoretical reading of works which exploit the slippery terrain of image and text relationships, and appreciate them as part of an historically rich, polyvocal and simultaneous dialogue rather than in the more denuded terms of similarity in and of media, subject, style and craft practices. It is then possible to continue to find dialogues with artists' books which also reference or underscore alteration of existing texts, of which Tom Philips' *A Humament* (1966–1974) is perhaps the most well-known.

Hubert and Hubert (1999:71–95) explore particular artists' books as spaces of textual alteration, reassembly, juxtaposition, fragmentation, cancellation and mutilation, where each work is dialogically implicated with some extant, pre-existing text. This is undertaken whilst forging links to other works which specifically impact upon existing texts, in order to construct a primarily visual or optical experience which replaces or obliterates the act of reading. This focus has the potential to refract all analogous works in both the history of art and literature to which it might respond or anticipate a response.⁷³ Bakhtin's grappling with a neo-Kantian notion of 'things-in-themselves' also helps keep at bay the elevation of singular examples of artists' books for scrutiny, analysis and reification, forcing them to become answerable to the dialogical world of context, communication and community. In this way, dialogism opposes the dialectical 'either' and 'or' with 'both' and 'and' (Holquist 2002:41).

⁷¹ Arnar (2011:218–222) cites Mallarmé's use of visual and affective terms to describe the import he expected of his texts, which are *active, performative, oceanlike, musical, thunder, ecstatic, glittering, sparking, electric and flickering*.

⁷² Use of existing texts include *The picture of Dorian Gray* (1989) and *Kafka* (1988) and, less frequently, the use of a volume of blank pages in *Silence* (1991) and *Malevich* (1989). (see Hubert & Hubert 1999:87–89).

⁷³ From here, the links and bridges are multiple: towards image and text discourses and semiotic analysis including the writings of W.J.T. Mitchell (1986) and Wendy Steiner (1982), or towards temporality in the artist's book. In these one might encounter the writings of book-arts theorist Anne Moeglin-Delcroix (1997) or even the recently resurrected ideas of Henri Bergson (1999).



Source: Spector, B., 1988, 'Marcel Broodthaers. Alteration of Broodthaers' catalogue' (Artist's book) Collection: Jack Ginsberg, Johannesburg
 Photography: David Paton
 Images reproduced courtesy of Buzz Spector, St. Louis, Missouri

Figure 2: (a) The cover of Spector's 1988 'Marcel Broodthaers exhibition catalogue' hides the interventions and alterations within; (b) The struggle with the word that Mallarmé had undertaken and that Broodthaers had displaced, surfaces in the torn pages of the catalogue. In this way, Spector denies the word and image content of the catalogue, producing an effect in keeping with Mallarmé's poem; (c) A view of Spector's strategy of shortsheeting in which the straight black lines of horizontal text give way to vertical opticality, where the many pages give way to a single sloping page and where reading shifts to looking.

If dialogism implies, also, an *extra*-literary language (Holquist 2002:107) which is non-systematic and liminal, bordering on multiple disciplines (Bakhtin cited in Holquist 2002:14) then I see it as an appropriate tool for the theoretical operation of enunciating artists' books in the world as well as in relation to each other. If the enunciation of artists' books can be considered, in Bakhtinian terms, as an 'utterance', then as Holquist (2002) states:

... texts, like other kinds of utterance, depend not only on the activity of the author, but also on the place they hold in the social and historical forces at work when the text is produced and when it was consumed. (pp. 60–61)

Of even greater importance to the manner in which action 'completes' the experience of the artist's book (and with particular relevance to Mallarmé) is Bakhtin's idea of the 'utterance as active and performed' (Holquist 2002:59). Dialogism, I argue, enunciates both the existence of the field of artists' books as well as its

relationship with its own historiography, operating in temporal and spatial terms, between works separated in time.

Heteroglossia and the artist's book

Bakhtin's notion of *heteroglossia*,⁷⁴ which operates underneath a broad dialogism, might help to operationalize the way in which artists' books enunciate themselves self-consciously and reflexively (Drucker 2007:161). This operation is important in demonstrating *how* artists' books call attention to themselves and de-neutralise their identities.

Sue Vice (1997:20) states that 'dialogism describes the way languages interact, while heteroglossia describes the languages themselves' whilst Holquist (2002:69) describes heteroglossia as governing the 'operation of meaning' in the kind of utterance we call texts, 'as it does in any utterance'.

⁷⁴ In Bakhtinian terms, heteroglossia takes two general forms. Firstly, it takes the form of social languages within a single national language and, secondly, of different national languages within the same culture. Within the novel form, heteroglossia appears, firstly, as the dialogues of characters, secondly, as various forms of speech

genre (language of a profession or class) and, thirdly, as a culture's various dialects and languages. Vice states that the manner in which these three interact in a text is dialogic.

This is derived from Julia Kristeva's (1980) spatial conception of language's poetic operation, which is the horizontal and the vertical status of the word.

Holquist (2002) continues:

All utterances are heteroglot in that they are shaped by forces whose particularity and variety are practically beyond systematization. The idea of heteroglossia comes as close as possible to conceptualizing a locus where the great centripetal and centrifugal forces that shape discourse can meaningfully come together. (p. 70)

I have briefly and tentatively discussed centripetal and centrifugal heteroglossia before in relation to the imagistic texts of Jonathan Safran Foer and Willem Boshoff (Paton 2010:17–18), but here, there seems a need to forge a more coherent argument for the sake of a theoretical underpinning of the artist's book. Drucker's (2007:161) metacritical language of enunciation, in which the self-consciousness and self-reflexivity of the artists' books' are operationalised, seem heteroglossic in utterance. Thus, I must move cautiously here as a simple superimposition of Bakhtinian ideas onto a genre which was not part of his consciousness could be counterproductive. Bakhtin's focus on the novel, may help us isolate some critical operational elements of simultaneity with which to proceed. Firstly, Holquist (2002:72) states that 'Bakhtin is particularly drawn to the novel, the genre least secure (or *most self-conscious*) about its own status as a genre' (my italics). Secondly, he draws attention to '... the novel's peculiar ability to open a window in discourse from which the extraordinary variety of social languages can be perceived' (Holquist 2002:72). Thirdly, in relation to Bakhtin's two major protagonists and foci of study, Rabelais and Dostoevsky, Holquist (2002) states:

Rabelais and Dostoevsky are significant for Bakhtin not merely because they write novels, but because they advance the work of novelness, and it is novelness – not the novel, nor Rabelais, not even Dostoevsky – that is the name of his real hero. (pp. 72–73)

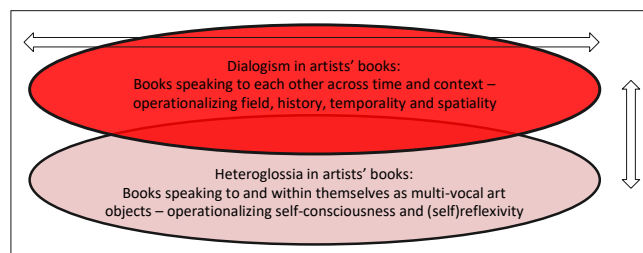
From this I can isolate three critical elements of Bakhtin's thought which might underpin the artist's book's theoretical act of enunciation: self-consciousness, discursive perceptivity and self-reflexivity (or bookness). Heteroglossia, I argue, activates these elements and governs the operation of meaning.

Bakhtin (cited in Vice 1997) tells us that heteroglossia is the following:

a double-voiced discourse, as it serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. (p. 19)

Heteroglot differences can produce a variety of effects related to time (past and present), space (geography, nationality) and class, amongst other differences (Vice 1997:21). As Bakhtin (1975) in *Discourse in the novel (DN)*⁷⁵ points out, heteroglossia:

represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth, all given a bodily form. (p. 291)



Source: Adapted from Kristeva, J., 1980, *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*, Columbia University Press, New York.

FIGURE 3: A conceptual map of artists' books' broad dialogism which operates across time and context and under which, heteroglossia is able to operationalise the genre's self-conscious and reflexive qualities.

Bakhtin (1975:292) continues by suggesting that such difference represents 'specific points of view on the world' which will 'mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically'. Bakhtin's positioning of heteroglossia, as multiple languages and 'registers' or 'sociolect' voices (Vice 1997:18), suggests not only the novel's double-voiced construction of characters and narrators but also the self-conscious awareness of the construction of a work's content, shot-through with heteroglot utterances of different kinds, which are:

- stylisation
- comic, ironic or parodic discourse
- the refracting discourses of the narrator and the languages of a character, author and whole 'incorporated genres' (1975:324).

More importantly to my argument, Bakhtin (1975:321) asserts that these incorporated genres include 'non-literary forms (menus, advertisements)', and it is here where his heteroglossic discursive perceptivity opens itself to the possibility of imagistic and other forms of scripto-visual text for inclusion and analysis.

The socio-political context in which Bakhtin theorised the novel's importance supports his argument that, once it enters a text, heteroglossia is automatically 'consciously opposed' to 'the linguistic centre of the verbal-ideological life of the nation and the epoch' (1975:273). This positioning of texts, as implicated in the political life of societies, can help to contextualise how, when and why the artist's book rose to prominence in the 1960s, signalling a form which consciously attempted to disrupt, de-centre and oppose the authority of the *livre d'artiste*, the fine-press book, the illustrated works of literature and, in fact, any authoritative monoglossic tome including, in some instances, the artist's catalogue. The artist's book even exploits the seemingly private text, some of which Bakhtin (1975:321) identifies as 'the confessional, the diary, travel notes, biography, [and] the personal letter', any of which have found themselves meaningful subjects of artists' books. In heteroglossic terms, the author, the narrator, (other) characters and the reader, become the artist, subjects, characters, characterisations and the viewer, each aware of the positions and roles the others take up and play. Any textual or scripto-visual utterance in the artist's book, then, is dialogilised heteroglossia.

⁷⁵ This work was first written between 1934 and 1938, published in Russian in 1975 and translated and published in English in 1981.

It is clear how Broodthaers's *Un coup de dés: Image* enters into a self-conscious and reflexive dialogue with Mallarmé's original by opening a discursive window on a particular variety of social, formal or artistic utterance. Broodthaers's cancellation of Mallarmé's poem reveals a dialogue on multiple levels. These are:

- the relation and refraction of author to, or by, author
- the 'authoritative act' which refers the reader or viewer back to the original and, thus, makes the original stronger by means of this reference-in-cancellation
- the meta-language of an image (black lines of various widths, heights and densities) as a text of cancellation
- the manner in which an image of the textual layout and spacing of the double page-openings is a referent to the subversion of literary and visual conventions of the page (Drucker 2007:163, 168).

This heteroglossia of authorial voice (or its absence), image as text, text as referent and reflexive self-consciousness of the form, seems a powerful reminder that just as *novelness* is the 'real hero' to Bakhtin's writer, so interrogating *bookness* is to the artist. Anything less, Wayne Booth (1982) describes (in Morson 1986), is to deny Bakhtin's:

insistence on the supreme value, in art as in life, of resisting monologue ... whatever counters the temptation to treat human beings as 'objects'. ... People are essentially, irreducibly 'subjects', voices rich beyond anyone's uses ... (p. 152)

Ulises Carrión

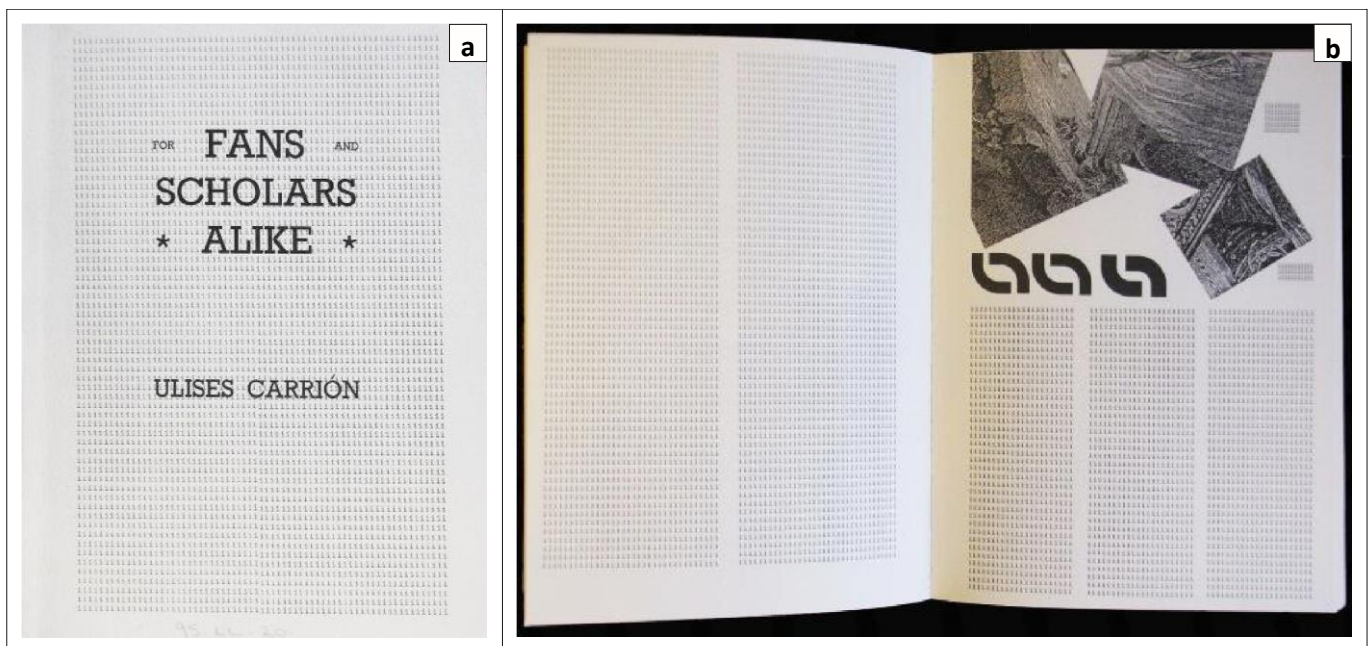
I now cojoin two selected examples of artists' books with heteroglossia as a frame for explaining how selfconsciousness and

self-reflexivity operate. For the purposes of forging a heteroglossic reading in my selected examples, I have chosen works which utilise or exploit scripto-visual texts, specifically from outside a myriad of possible examples from Duchamp to Fluxus and concrete poetry which, it may be argued, utilise book forms outside the concerns of the artist's book. It is for this reason that I look, firstly, at Ulises Carrión's *For fans and scholars alike* (1987), which distinguishes itself from the work of concrete poets that:

are only sometimes book works, far more frequently, single poems produced over a few pages or as a single sheet (Drucker 2007:195n1) and in which he attends to the book as a whole. (p. 164)

The layout of each page is composed in the visual language of the magazine or book divided into column blocks, which frame spaces for illustrations and create space for headings. The page is an image of literary conventions in which the gutter, marginalia, indices, running heads and footers 'are so codified that they can be quoted without any verbal content, as shapes and forms on the page and function as a selfconscious investigation' (Drucker 2007:163). This codified language, however, is double-voiced: Carrión composes his text blocks entirely of the letter 'i' with 'headlines' made up of bracket-like shapes and with the 'illustrations' containing graphic marks 'taking up space as if they comprised a readable image' (Drucker 2007:164). The grey cover boards contain the same 'i' imagery; an undifferentiated space whether external or internal and in which the voice of the book's narrative is the same as the one which announces the book on the cover. The title, too, points us towards the double-voicedness of Carrión's project. Drucker (2007) states:

The book displays a self-conscious level of organization as a structural feature of the work. ... But the book is neither nonsense (silly gibberish) nor without sense (meaningless) instead it represents structure as meaning. (p. 164)



Source: Carrión, U., 1987, *For fans and scholars alike*, Visual Studies Workshop Press, Rochester. (Artist's book)
 Collection: National Art Library, V & A Museum, London
 Photography: David Paton
 Images reproduced courtesy of Martha Hellion, Mexico

FIGURE 4: (a) The cover of Ulises Carrión's 1987 *For fans and scholars alike*; (b) An interior spread in which a self-conscious level of organisation represents structure as meaning.

Carrión's character, 'i', serves to represent the physical space which it self-consciously occupies whilst, at the same time, the conventions of the occupied space articulate the space as the 'i' of the narrative. For Carrión, as author, however, this double-voiced self-consciousness is predicated upon a reflexive, small 'i'. Holquist (2002) referencing Jacobson suggests the following, that:

'I' is a 'shifter' because it moves the center of discourse from one speaking subject to another: its emptiness is the no man's land in which subjects can exchange the lease they hold on all of language by virtue of saying 'I.' ... 'I' is the invisible ground of all other indices in language, the benchmark to which all its spatial operations are referred, and the Greenwich mean by which all its time distinctions are calibrated. 'I' marks the point between 'now' and 'then,' as well as between 'here' and 'there'. (p. 23)

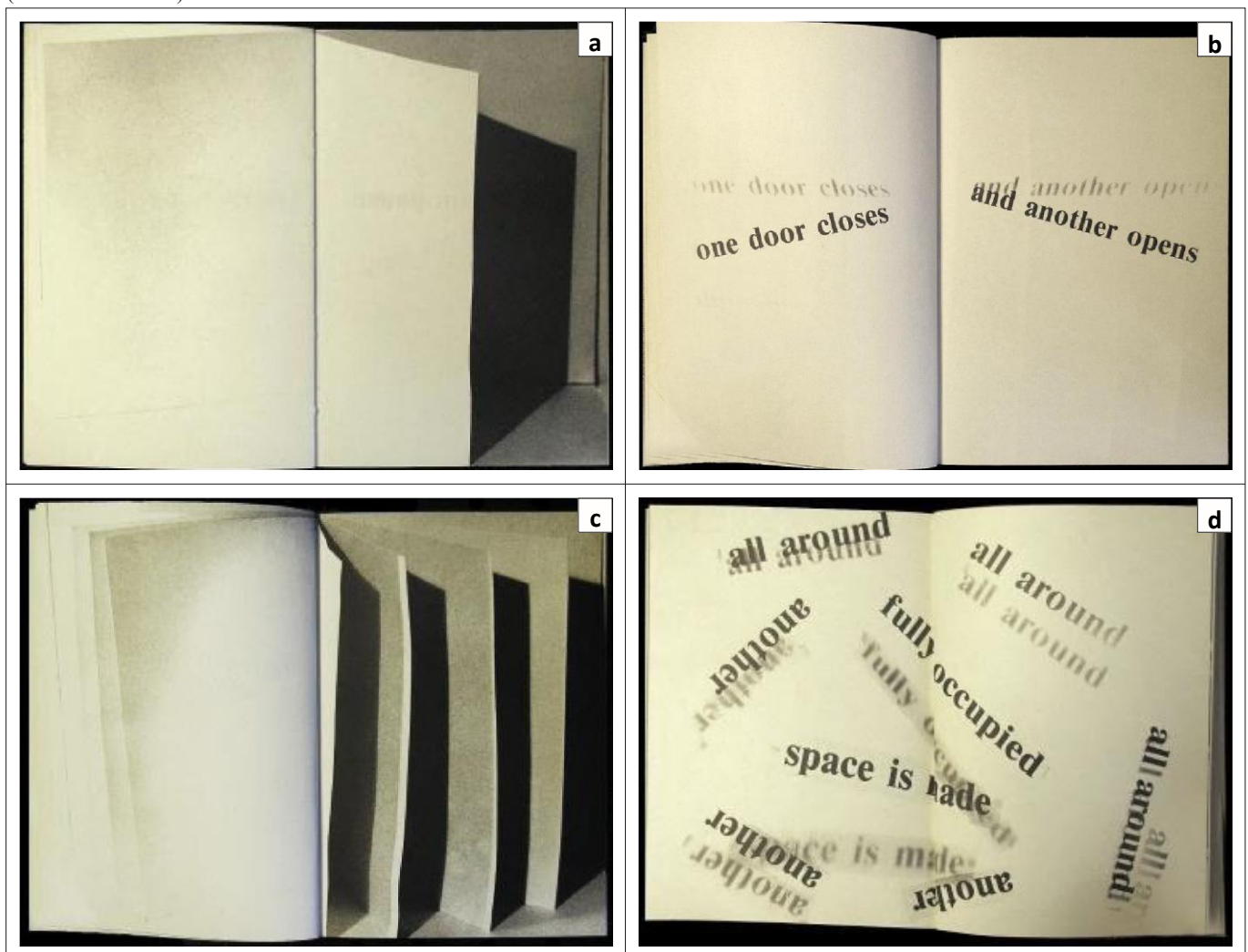
Carrión's small 'i' is a self-consciously articulated, depersonalised, heteroglossic voice and, as such, an example of Jacobson's referential shifter in which the 'now' and 'here' of the space of the page as well as the reiterated and reinforced visual analogue (Drucker 2007:164) of the book's whole are articulated. Carrión

(1980:25) states: 'Bookworks are books that are conceived as an expressive unity, that is to say, where the meaning is the sum of all the material and formal elements'. Hubert and Hubert (1999:7), in reference to the notorious absence of definitiveness in the field of artists' books, seem to suggest that the heteroglossia, evident in Carrión's *For fans and scholars alike*, acts as a unifying utterance on what constitutes meaningfulness in an utterly open-ended field.

Helen Douglas and Telfer Stokes

The second example of heteroglossia in an artist's book is provided by Helen Douglas' and Telfer Stokes' *Real fiction: An enquiry into the bookeresque* (1987). Again, the title signals something of potential significance for my concerns. Hubert and Hubert (1999) state:

The authors/artists have contrived a book abounding in thresholds and antithesis. This begins immediately with the oxymoronic title, where the word 'real,' functioning as an



Source: Douglas, H. & Stokes, T. 1987, *Real fiction: An enquiry into the bookeresque*, Visual Studies Workshop Press, Rochester
 Collection: National Art Library, V & A Museum, London
 Photography: David Paton
 Images reproduced courtesy of Helen Douglas, Deuchar Mill, Yarrow

FIGURE 5: (a) An interior spread in which the illusory shadow of an illusory page is 'cast' on the actual page; (b) An interior spread in which the illusory shadow of an illusory floating text is 'cast' on the actual page; (c) An interior spread in which the illusory shadows of illusory pages are 'cast' on the actual page evoking an architectural structure; (d) An interior spread in which illusory shadows of illusory scattered texts are 'cast' on the actual page.

adjective, makes the fictive element even more fictional. The term 'fiction' etymologically derives from 'fingere,' the action of fashioning an object and implies creativity, in this instance the architectural. Photographs show us buildings and rooms at various stages of completion and demolition. Taken self-referentially, the title may designate the making of the book: real fashioning as opposed to figments of the imagination. (p. 37)

Douglas and Stokes' notion of 'the bookeresque' invites further comparison with the theoretically loaded concept of bookness and, like Carrión, exploits and undermines conventional scripto-visual placements as well as the literal flatness associated with the printed page. Stokes (cited in Hubert & Hubert 1999:33) defines a word and image relationship as 'antagonistic sympathy ... whereby the verbal and the visual exchange some of their characteristics'. In this example Jacobson's referential shifter marks multiple points between 'here' and 'there' as well as between 'now' and 'then'. But in this instance, the shifter is no longer 'I' but the works titular paradox and its implication for the complex interplay between texts as images and of images as texts of interior versus exterior force. Verbal rivalry characterises the text, with spatial rivalry dominating the imagery. 'More perhaps than in any other artist's book,' state Hubert and Hubert (1999), concerning the magnet metaphor that reminds us of Mallarmé's textual-poetic desire:

raw material, either visual or textual, does everything in its power to participate in the fabrication of a book, as though a magnet had drawn everything unto itself. (pp. 39)

Drucker (2007) describes the heteroglossic terms of the work's texts of representation as:

The 'real' is both the literal reality of the book and the reality external to the book which can only be represented as a fiction (incomplete, contrived, un-'true' because it is a representation – 'real' because it is an actual book). (p. 192–193)

Multiple voices, often in the contrived guises of 'something else' abound in the book, which Drucker (2007) describes as follows:

In the first opening, the shadow of a page on the left hints at the shadow of a structure on the right which quotes the book form as an element of architectural space. The opening reads as book, page, wall, room. The next opening reads 'there are two sides to every opening' and the type appears to float above the page casting its shadow as if on a page curled downward far more radically than the page on which the words are printed. Thus in two openings we have already encountered several levels of reference to the book as a space of representation and illusion, of appearances and realities, literal surfaces and their imitation as

delusions. (p. 193)

Visual elements of opening pages and doors (both of which require opening), walls and bricks rub shoulders with photographs of these elements, and are the most representational and believable visual elements of the fiction. But even they become merely material through cutting, cropping, folding and other forms of physical manipulation. Devices of framing and of being framed, speaking and being echoed, represent the manner in which a book comes to 'contain' the things that it does (Drucker 2007:195) and whereby self-referentiality and

reflexivity are uttered in a polyglot, double-voiced and dialogic manner. And in this way (Drucker 2007):

the meaning of the book as a boundary, a point of delimitation and demarcation on the one hand, and the meaning of the book as a space, infinitely imaginable and expandable on the other hand, are explored as two aspects of the paradoxical nature of the book [*of its very bookness and of its extreme self-consciousness.*] (p. 195)

Exactly who and indeed where are the authors' voices in this 'builder's rubble' of self-referentiality and reflexivity? Hubert and Hubert (1999:33) describe the book as having generated itself. It seems as if the book shakes off its relationship with its author's voice, and articulates a voice of its own. The black letters, after all, cast their own shadows as if they are concrete things, perhaps more concrete than the raw 'building materials' which function to fabricate the book. And if not concrete, then to echo as if calling across the temporal-spatiality of the book, which is what Kristeva (1980) terms a Bakhtinian *intertextuality* and Bakhtin (cited in Pechey 1989:41) terms *translinguistics*, which is the notion of a boundary transgressed. If heteroglossia is differentiated speech, then *Real fiction* speaks with the parodic and ironic tongues to which Bakhtin (1975:324) might have referred as, 'another's speech in another's language'. It remains, for another time, however, to see how the artist's book might embody Bakhtin's idea of the carnivalesque.

Conclusion

In this article I have attempted to respond to a perceived gap in the theoretical underpinning of the artist's book. I have shown that, despite a number of research projects and conferences in which a desire for theory has been articulated, Johanna Drucker's call for more critical work to be undertaken continues to require much effort. My response draws together specific examples of artists' books: Marcel Broodthaers's *Un coup de dés: Image*, which responds to Stéphane Mallarmé's original work, Buzz Spector's *Marcel Broodthaers*, Ulises Carrión's *For fans and scholars alike* and Helen Douglas' and Telfer Stokes' *Real fiction*, and exposes these works to the critical and framing lenses of Bakhtin's writings on dialogism and heteroglossia. I do this in order to shed light on how artists' books enunciate themselves as particularly self-conscious and self-reflexive objects which open up a space of discursive perceptivity. I will, thus, conclude tentatively that Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia do provide a theoretical foundation for the artist's book as a dynamic visual language, which is relational and engaged in a process of endless redescriptions of the world.

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Competing interests

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Submission Three: Annexure C

Peer Reviewed and published article

[The Imagistic Text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing Unconventional Texts from Kerouac to the Artist's Book](#) (click for online access)

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Research

The imagistic text in Jonathan Safran Foer: Tracing unconventional texts from Kerouac to the artist's book

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Abstract

With Jack Kerouac's iconic scroll manuscript of *On the road*¹ exhibited outside of the US for the first time in 2009, attention may once again be brought to bear on the imagistic properties of texts in certain contemporary novels and the influence of artists who work within and around the conventions of the book. By forging an argument for the importance of working outside of the accepted conventions of the novel's structure and form, Kerouac's inventiveness invites us to find other ways in which the novel may be informed by the interpretive acts of artists who use the form of the book in their work. This article explores the relationship between Jonathan Safran Foer's novel *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005) and structural, linguistic and visual conventions found in selected artists' books.² Of particular concern are: the self-reflexive interventions made by the author to draw attention to the novel's meta-narratives; the seemingly random use of imagery as elliptical illuminations; the manipulation of the typographic conventions of the page for imagistic and affective purposes; and, lastly, the use of a flip-book structure at the end of the book, suggesting an alternative conclusion and the reader's collusion in averting history. The novel's unusual structural, linguistic and visual manipulations are analysed through the lens of selected earlier novels which exploited and undermined the literary conventions of their day, as well as selected artists' books in which texts behave as images. In this analysis, the article attempts to show that an awareness of both a history of the breaking of literary conventions, and of certain artists' books and their structures, might help a reader gain greater insight into Foer's narrative by understanding how he enunciates not what a book *is*, but what it *does* and *how* it does it.

Introduction

In this article I undertake a focused visual reading of Jonathan Safran Foer's novel *Extremely loud and incredibly close*, in which I explore some of his departures from what might be termed 'the conventions of the

novel form'. This exploration is supported by an initial examination of selected historical examples of the novel which achieve important departures from the conventions of their day. In these novels, I find physical forms and literary structures which have strong visual associations, connotations or references. My reading of Foer's 'exploded' novel finds parallels with these visual associations (both structural and literary) as well as in the artist's book and texts or publications (including concrete poetry) which had a direct influence on the artist's book before its general acceptance as such in the 1960s. These parallels, I argue, aid in a reading and deconstruction of Foer's work. In doing this I also bring to your attention a book which, at least for me, explodes the conventions of the novel and opens up a space for a richer dialogue between its elements. This is achieved by exploring new spaces which are created when discreet conventions are unhinged; freed up to be read in new ways.

A visual rethinking of literary conventions

Michel Foucault (1970:9) describes a terrain in which Foer's image/text relationships may jostle in such a manner as to suggest something 'new':

The relation of language to painting is an infinite relation. It is not that words are imperfect or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. And it is in vain that we attempt to show, by the use of images, metaphors, or similes, what we are saying; the space where they achieve their splendor is not that deployed by our eyes but that defined by the sequential elements of syntax. And the proper name, in this context, is merely an artifice: it gives us a finger to point with, in other words, to pass surreptitiously from the space where one speaks to the space where one looks; in other words, to fold one over the other as if they were equivalents.

I argue, however, that it is exactly within the space which is 'deployed by our eyes' that Foer is able to suggest something new: new in terms of the conventions of the contemporary

novel, yet something much older in relation to concrete or visual poetry and the artist's book

A direction for this article was suggested by the exhibition of Jack Kerouac's scroll manuscript of *On the road*, (1a) for the first time outside of the US, at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, in early 2009. The scroll, which broke with literary, visual and structural³ conventions of the novel, was typed on a number of reels of 12ft-long paper, taped together to form a 127ft-long continuous typescript scroll⁴ (1b) so that Kerouac did not have to stop, fuelled (apparently) only by coffee. The scroll manuscript formed the centerpiece of an



exhibition which marked the 50th anniversary of the release of the book in the United Kingdom (UK).

The Guardian's Mark Brown (2008:[sp]) informs us that Kerouac typewrote the scroll in only three weeks, and quotes the exhibition's curator Dick Ellis (2008:[sp]) stating:

This is an iconic manuscript. It is a record of the huge effort Kerouac put into composing it. It was 20 days of typing 6,500 words a day, flat out,⁵ in spontaneous composition. He wanted to record things with the most possible accuracy using the spontaneous technique. His typewriter became a compositional instrument ... Kerouac said he wrote fast because the road was fast ... Of course, in the published novel, there are paragraph breaks but in the scroll, there are none. Kerouac did not have the time.

Ellis is not accurate in his reading of 'time' in Kerouac's scroll: Kerouac certainly edited the scroll as he went. Howard Cunnell (2008:1–2) debunks the mythology surrounding both man and scroll, stating that, in a letter of 22 May 1951 to his friend, travelling companion



1a (top) and 1b (bottom) Jack Kerouac, *Continuous typescript scroll of the seminal Beat Generation novel, On the road* (1951). Photograph: David Sillitoe, 3 December 2008. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2008.

and one of the story's major protagonists, Neil Cassidy (Dean Moriarty in the published version), informing him of the completion of the scroll manuscript which he wrote between 2 and 22 April 1951, Kerouac explained that 'of course since Apr. 22 I've been typing and revising. Thirty days on that.'

But it is the scroll's form and its single paragraph structure which broke both formal presentation and literary stylistic conventions, to which I must turn.

The scroll form of the manuscript is more than a mere pasting of paper to facilitate rapid continuity in narrating a story. If this were so, then many authors would have produced such objects. James Campbell (2001:106) refers to Kerouac's communication with Cassidy of 22 May 1951, in which Kerouac stated that he '[w]ent fast because road is fast' as something more critically spatial. Campbell (2001:106–107) sees the scroll as a 'spatial rendition' of the road as story, a rendition in which the object and form of the scroll facilitated the telling: 'He employed space as a form as well as a subject: spread out along the floor, the single strip of paper rolled on like a road.' This use of the scroll as an appropriate container of the story and as a means of evoking the physical and emotional aspects of a narrative – of and through time – is something taken up by artist bookmakers in search of a content-structure relationship which the codex form seems to limit.⁶ Jed Birmingham (2007:[sp]) describes the relationships between object, space and art within the scroll when exhibited:

It is a remarkable object. On one level it stands out in its tangibility, its physicality, its size and expanse, but at the same time it is so fragile, delicate and ephemeral. It threatens to crumble and blow away under your inquiring eyes. As the exhibit makes clear, the scroll as an object immediately bring [sic] to mind the concept of the road, the path, the journey that lies at the heart of *On the Road*. For me, this merging of form and content in the physical object coupled with the physical act of creating it (not just the typing but the act of taping together the paper as well) makes the manuscript a work of art on par with any major work of the 20th Century. The scroll is in some sense ahead of its time, predicting the artists' book, conceptual art and performance art boom of the 1960s and beyond.

Critical references to Kerouac's scroll narrative seem to be littered with spatial, pictorial and visual allusions, to which I later refer, such as *sprawl*, *sketching*, *mosaic*, *horizon*. With an unconventional physical structure facilitating the kind of narrative Kerouac wanted to tell, literary theorist Joshua Kupetz (2008:86) discusses Kerouac's literary style, stating:

Kerouac abandoned the conventional techniques he had used when writing *The Town and the City* so that he might be 'free as Joyce' when composing *On the Road*. ... Ultimately, his concept of form in the scroll manuscript loosely anticipates the tenets of structuralism, the first new theoretical school of the 1960s to decenter New Criticism. Kerouac writes that he was 'not interested in The Novel' and that he wanted to be 'free to wander from the laws of the novel as laid down by [Jane] Austens & [Henry] Fieldings.'

Kupetz (2008:86) states that, for Kerouac, 'the novel is an articulation of recognizable conventions, "laws", that will not help him tell the story that he wants to tell'. A combination of poetic and prosaic elements made his most radical transformations of narrative possible as 'a novel like poetry ... a narrative poem, an epos in mosaic'⁷ so as to 'bust out from the European narrative into Mood Chapters of an American poetic "sprawl"' (2008:87).

Cunnell (2008:34) writes how Kerouac described his technique to Allen Ginsberg as 'sketching', which would allow him to change 'the conventional narrative survey ... to the big multi-dimensional conscious and subconscious character invocation' necessary to convey his characters and their stories. Cunnell (2008:25) describes how Kerouac dramatically collapses the distinction between writer and narrated 'I' in a headlong, intimate, discursive and wild manner, with improvised notations including dots and dashes to break sentences so that they 'pile upon themselves like waves'. This 'collapse' flags an important theme for this article: the relationship, or break, between authorial and character voices which, like concrete and visual poetry, expands the narrative into a spatial dimension, atypical of conventional prose. In so consciously disrupting our understanding of what it is that we are reading, writes Cunnell (2008:25), Kerouac claims that *On the road* marks a complete departure from not only his previous work, *The town and the city* (1950), but in fact from

previous American literature. Kupetz (2008:91) elaborates. In that Kerouac's method may be seen as 'contingent' his readers

find themselves ... stranded if they approach his mountain of unbroken text anticipating that it will offer an inherent meaning, if their expectations and interpretative strategies are based upon linearity and predetermined by novelistic convention.

Just as the linearity of Route 6 seduces Kerouac into believing that it represents the wonderful prospect of a direct passage to his destination, but which he soon realises will 'lead him only to death', Kupetz (2008:91) states that the reader must allow the 'sprawling prose' to turn, reverse and set back upon itself in 'a series of deflections' and by accepting 'that the shifting horizon of signification is part of the experience of meaning, the reader can proceed and be "headed there at last"'. Kupetz (2008:91) continues:

As a series of deflections, Kerouac's prose narratives anticipate reader-oriented theories that establish the reader, not the text, as the site of meaning. However, contemporary theory cannot prove that meaning definitely occurs inside the reader, either, so a text's meaning is often considered an effect of the interaction between text and reader. Instead of functioning as works with meanings trapped inside hermetically sealed structures, Kerouac's narratives involve the reader in the process of discovering meaning by encountering unfamiliar structures.

To the American public, the scroll-form was an unfamiliar structure; Kerouac's continuous 'sprawl' was a second unfamiliar structure, while the published version⁸ – even as a sanitised, vastly edited, hybrid form of his deflective, sketched, epic poetic prose – was a third form of unfamiliar structure.

Yet for a European audience, such structures are not unfamiliar, and apart from numerous and well-known examples of scrolls in museums, universities and libraries in the UK and Europe, even early forms of the novel undermined conventional narrative structure. Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760), one of the first novels in English, interrogated the novel form and in doing so, introduced an element of self-consciousness into both the

narrative as well as the form of the book's conceits and conventions (Drucker 1995:162). In *Tristram Shandy*, the author digresses from the story in order to speak directly to the reader; introduces blank, black and marbled pages as illuminations to, and of, the text; introduces dashes, stars, linear diagrammes and gaps to highlight and extend aspects of the text. In the early 20th century, both Guillaume Apollinaire and Stéphane Mallarmé unhinged the semiotic differences between texts and images and ushered in forms of visual and concrete poetry in which these differences began to collapse. Although Mallarmé's *Un coup de dès* (1914) proved to be an unrealisable form of what he called 'The Book as a spiritual instrument', what it does achieve, is to 'believe the conventional layout of the book with its "eternally unbearable columns" and manifests a constellation of text' (Drucker 1995:36).⁹ For Mallarmé,

a book had the capacity to use its form to 'establish some nameless system of relationships' through which its strength could be realized. This could not happen without attention, a self-conscious act by which the text becomes integral with its placement, movement, symphonic orchestration through the space of the book. (Drucker 1995:36)

Johanna Drucker (1995:233) draws our attention to concrete poetry's difference from the 'random, chaotic, and all-over quality to the language and the look of the page' of the early avant-garde experiments of Raoul Hausmann and Tristan Tzara. In contrast, concrete poetry tends to be reductive in a desire to literally concretise meaning and

... embed its verbal complexity in a material, visual form from which it cannot be separated. In this way, Concrete poets take the concept of materiality of language further than earlier experiments, trying to forge inseparable bonds of meaning and presentation through visual form. (Drucker 1995:233)

With concrete poetry as one literary influence, perhaps of equal importance as a foundation for Kerouac are Virginia Woolf's literary developments. In *To the lighthouse* (1927), in which formulae and conventions are denied in order to 'write with an entirely different approach' (Flint 1984:xi), Robert Humphrey (1968:12–13) states that Woolf

wanted to formulate the possibilities and processes of inner realization of truth – a truth she reckoned to be irrepensible; hence only on a level of the mind that is not expressed could she find this process of realization functioning ... she believed the important thing for the artist to express is his private vision of reality, of what life, subjectively, is. She thought that the search for reality is not a matter of dramatic external action ... thus the search ... is a psychic activity. ... And it is, above all, the reason that she chose the stream-of-consciousness medium for her most mature presentation of this theme.

Kate Flint (1984:xi) puts this idea across in succinctly structural terms and quotes from Woolf's journal:

Instead of putting her efforts into organizing a carefully constructed plot, she preferred to manipulate words and sentences, to juxtapose different ways of seeing a scene, in order to show the way in which 'an ordinary mind on an ordinary day' receives, and indeed itself organizes, 'a myriad impressions'.

For Woolf, shifting perspectives, like Kerouac's 'shifting horizons', are not only used as a means of switching between characters, but also to show how the mind can operate on several levels simultaneously: what a character thinks and what a character is doing. A window, presenting a vista (the outside), at one moment for Mrs. Ramsay, becomes a limiting frame (the inside) in a later paragraph. Simultaneity, of 'inner' and 'outer' perception, was typical in Woolf's work from 1920 onward, where she 'was explicitly thinking of a new type of fiction: one based on the author's "own feeling and not on convention"' (Flint 1984:x). So 'character', for Woolf, is not a fixed, static quality and is 'dependent on varied angles of perception' (Flint 1984:xxvi), an idea concomitant with contemporaneous work in the visual arts,¹⁰ what Walton Litz (1961:57) describes as Woolf's 'tendency towards "Imagist" structure'. But what this imagistic and unfixed quality of, and within, characters also achieves is a sense of separation, and thus independence from the author's own voice, expressed as a multivalent set of independent lives, experiences and voices, something akin to what Mikhail Bakhtin refers to as *heteroglossia*, a contestation between

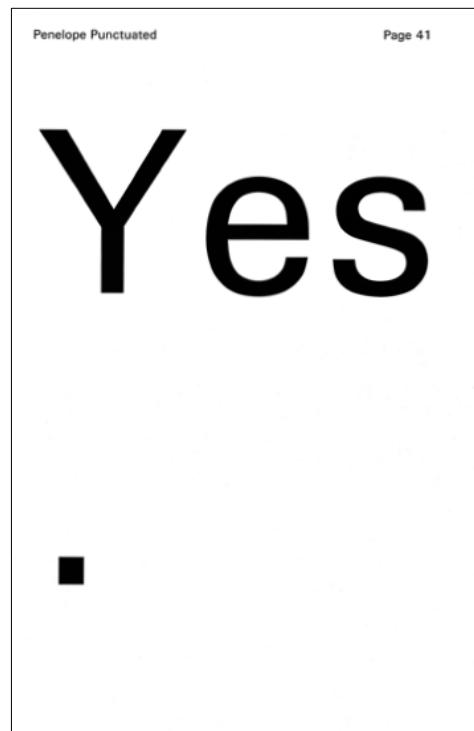
voices *within* a language. This contestation is part of a broader *polyglossia* which 'frees consciousness from the tyranny of its own language and its own myths of language' (Bakhtin in Lye 208:7). What results, in *To the lighthouse*, is an illusiveness of character, and thus also of the certainty of meaning of any 'thing'.¹¹ Flint states (1984:xxvi) that 'even a multiplicity of perspectives cannot lead to a final definition and pinning down of Mrs. Ramsay's character', as Lily points out: 'Fifty pairs of eyes were not enough to get round that one woman.' Of critical importance to later writers, and particularly to Foer, as I will show, is that this remark 'leads one towards considering that all characters, in and out of fiction, may be similarly elusive ... Woolf does not pretend to know, to give an answer ... she never adopts a fixed, all-knowing ... viewpoint' (Flint 1984:xxvi). Thus the question is asked, if Woolf's presentation tells us more about her characters, since they are shown from both the outside and the inside, than we can ever hope to know about ourselves or others, then any understanding of the communication of others is utterly dependent on '... point of view, and on the shifting perspectives provided by people meeting and interrelating within society' (Flint 1984:xxvii).

Like 'character', Woolf's lighthouse, 'in its many manifestations throughout the novel perpetually reminds us that nothing is "simply one thing", the bearer of one meaning' (Flint 1984:xl). At times (and as we shall later see, in another structure too) its physical properties crumble, reminding us that the individual experience of living is a precarious affair and that English society as a whole is not as apparently safe and secure as it was before the First World War (Flint 1984:xli) – a theme to which I turn later. Woolf's development, along with James Joyce, of writing as a *stream of consciousness*, helped establish this (simultaneity and the fluidity of meaning) as a pre-postmodern form, later to be taken up by, amongst other post-modernists, Jacques Derrida in the parallel narratives of his book *Glas* (1974).¹²

In defending what Carl Solomon, editor at A.A. Wyn publishers, termed 'an incoherent mess', Kerouac wrote that Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) was considered difficult reading and is now hailed as a classic which 'everybody understands' (Kupetz 2008:84). Notwithstanding Kerouac's faith in everybody's



2 Jack Ginsberg, Page 21 of *Penelope punctuated*. A project in progress (1998). Photograph: David Paton, 2009. Reproduced courtesy of Jack Ginsberg.



3 Jack Ginsberg, Page 41 of *Penelope punctuated*. A project in progress (1998). Photograph: David Paton, 2009. Reproduced courtesy of Jack Ginsberg.

ability to 'understand' *Ulysses*, his earlier stated desire to be 'free as Joyce' points towards knowledge of Joyce's imagistic style in *Ulysses*. It is clear that the critical references to Kerouac's scroll narrative as spatial, pictorial and visual (*sprawl*, *sketching*, *mosaic*, *horizon*) owe themselves to what Litz (1961:56) terms Joyce's abandonment of 'consecutive narration in favour of a "pictorial" or spatial method ... the painter's sensibility'. Litz (1961:57) continues by describing the entire work of *Ulysses* standing before one as a vast image, in which the reader recreates in his mind an approximation of the total design. 'The "Imagist" nature of *Ulysses*,' as Litz (1961:58) calls it, 'could be deduced from Joyce's method of composition ... the total design of *Ulysses* was before Joyce during most of his work on the novel, and he could turn to first one, then another part of his "mosaic", elaborating upon a basic pattern' and where each word is transformed into a miniature image, a multiple unit capable of sounding a number of themes simultaneously (Litz 1961:59).

South African artist's book collector and maker, Jack Ginsberg, has devoted some attention to Joyce's work.¹³ In its most 'imagistic' form, the last chapter of *Ulysses* contains Molly Bloom's direct interior monologue,¹⁴ often called *Penelope* owing to its parallels with Homer's *Odyssey*.¹⁵ One of the reasons why the work is considered 'difficult' is *Penelope's* notoriety (apart from its explicit eroticism) for having no punctuation as an aspect of the stream of consciousness used to communicate Molly Bloom's thoughts as she lies in bed daydreaming. Ginsberg (1998:5) considers it 'Joyce's great achievement that he managed to convey a plausible version of the workings of a semi- or sub-conscious state of mind' and that here and with his last work, *Finnegans wake* (1939), Ginsberg continues, 'one might indeed say that the development of the novel ended with Joyce'.¹⁶ In a similar way to Kerouac's need for the continuous text block of the scroll to visually symbolise the experiences on the 'fast road', Joyce's use of stream of consciousness in *Penelope* allows Molly Bloom's thoughts to flow in a way

which punctuation would inhibit. Jefferson Hunter (2002:100) describes this: 'She circles widely, moving with complete freedom through space and time' a freedom which here, as in the rest of *Ulysses*, seems to rid the work 'of signs of its author. ... The effect of this great accomplishment is to make the reader feel he is in direct contact with the life represented in the book ... that is to present life as it actually is, without prejudice or direct evaluations'¹⁷ (Humphrey 1968:15). This observation seems to aptly describe Kerouac's aim in the scroll manuscript of *On the road*.

In Ginsberg's artist's book he explores the last part of the monologue, a singular block of unpunctuated text, as a space for typographic play, exploiting the text block's pitch from 1, through 5.5, where the full extract fits onto one page and which, Ginsberg notes (1998:9) is 'a particularly beautiful typographic example owing to its lack of punctuation' (2). Ginsberg's final page, to a pitch size of 262, allows for only the last word: 'yes'. The final full stop is Joyce's! (3). Hereafter Ginsberg punctuates *Penelope* in a humorous attempt to challenge the proof-reader's art; guide a first-time reader and see to what extent such an exercise might make the text more easily comprehensible. Finally, Ginsberg also realises a long-held ambition 'to construct an artist's book, largely typographic in nature, which explores text as image' (1998:3) as much as it might offend the grammar-check functions of Microsoft Word, whose 'prescriptive demands' – from a literary viewpoint, states Ginsberg (1998:3) – seem 'arbitrary – and often just wrong!'

In summing up this part of the article, I have noted that, in the examples which broke with their literary and novelist conventions, either distinctly spatial and imagistic elements arise, or a need for the simultaneity of the verbal and the visual seems to result. Having established the importance of 'the visual' as an element of these novels, and with the aid of a theoretical underpinning provided by the artist's book in the next part, I undertake a visual analytical reading of Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005).

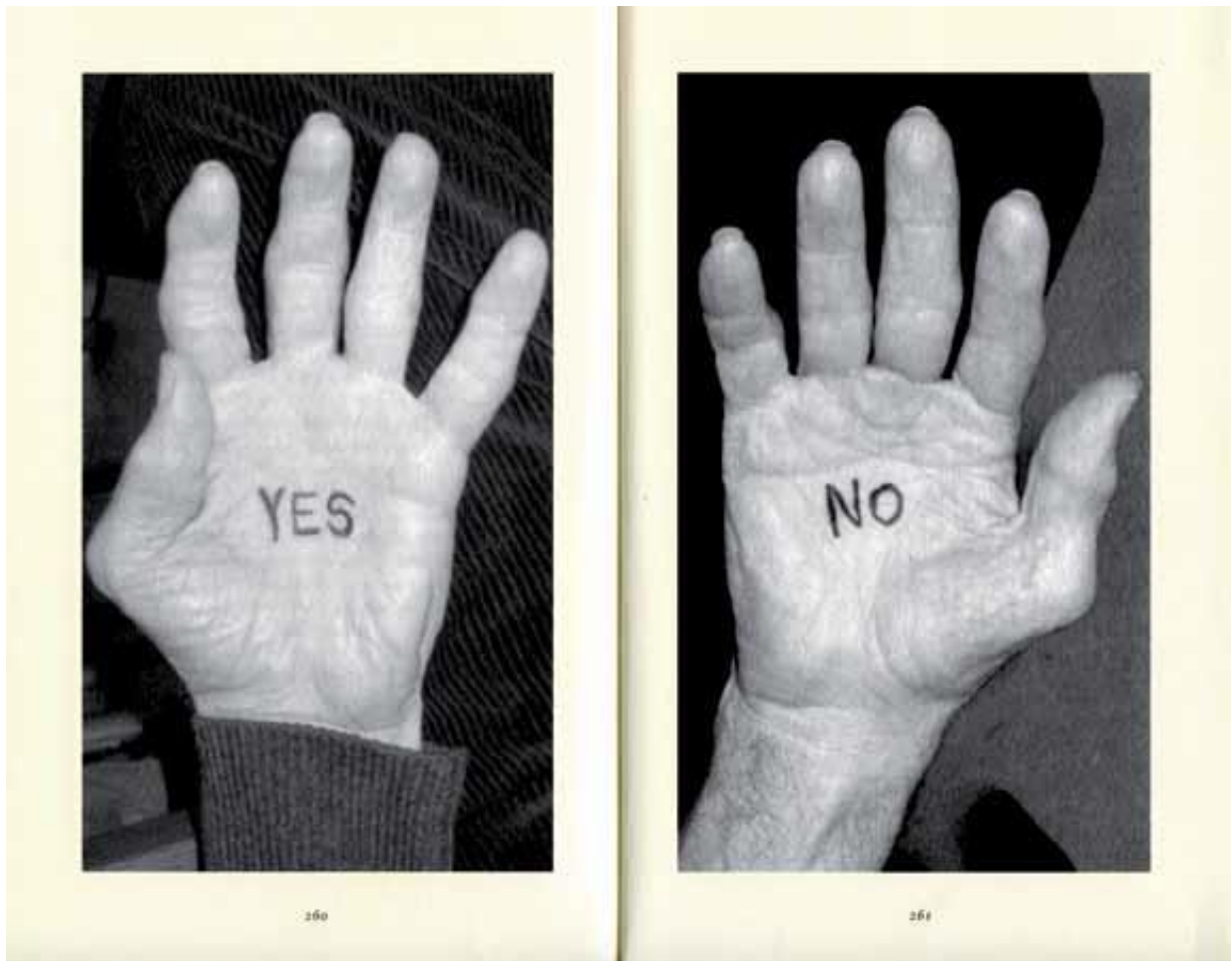
Visually reading Foer

Foer's second novel is a conceptual and visual tour de force. Briefly stated, it weaves the stories of three related protagonists who have

experienced such traumatic loss that they are barely able to function in conventional society.¹⁸ Firstly, grandfather, Thomas Schell, who survived the allied fire-bombings of Dresden in 1945 but lost both Anna, his love, and his unborn child and later loses the son (also a Thomas Shell) in the 9/11 World Trade Centre attacks, who, it is implied, he had never met. Secondly, his grandson, Oskar Schell, whose beloved father is the one lost in the 9/11 attacks, and thirdly Grandma who experienced and survived both the Dresden bombings and 9/11. Like Woolf, Joyce and Kerouac, Foer weaves a series of non-linear narratives across time and history, constructing a montage of spoken, thought and written communication from, about and to the protagonists and other characters. Just as we have found in *To the lighthouse*, *Ulysses* and *On the road*, these narratives speak of both the externally experienced world of the here-and-now, and of internalised memory and thought. It is beholden upon the reader to understand and separate these texts as well as by which protagonist they are uttered and to whom these thoughts or words are directed. The reader begins to believe that she/he might be privileged to hold a bird's-eye-view of the entire 'mosaic', with the various protagonists and characters understanding, only partially, what the reader knows. But these certainties are removed when characters reveal what they have known and done without the reader's or other protagonists' knowledge.

In this book, the act of writing is self-reflexive and, as such, releases many of its unusual pictorial and visual elements. What is also clear is that, in 2005, Foer presents his work as an object which attempts to undermine the authority of contemporary forms of communication: real-time reportage 'from the field' by CNN, SKY News or Al Jazeera; montages of digital imagery seen in New York's Times Square; media flattened to 'sameness' no matter whether what is shown is commercial desire or spectacles of terror.

For Catherine Morley (2008:310) Foer '... recognises the need to adapt literary realism to describe and present a new world order in which, thanks to the omnipresence of the media, the boundaries between what is real and what is unreal are no longer clear'. Morley (2008:310) continues: '... language seems redundant in the face of terror and the televisual spectacle. Words alone cannot



4 Jonathan Safran Foer, Pages 260–261 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Photographs: Debra Melzer, 2005. Reproduced courtesy of Debra Melzer.

unfurl the knot of grief nor can they adequately compete with images of mass destruction.’ What is clear, then, is that Foer’s protagonists, whether elderly immigrants to America and caught in the events of the past, or a nineyear-old child afraid of ‘things’ – battle a contemporary media-rich world which cannot provide answers to their experiences of trauma. Foer constructs his protagonist’s experiences in quaint, obsessively haptic forms, as: lists; data card indexes; dated envelopes which fill drawers; written letters which fill suitcases; a tattooed ‘yes’ and ‘no’ on the palms of the hands,¹⁹ (4) day books (diaries) which fill rooms and whose texts creep out onto the walls when the diaries prove too limited to hold such grief; Oskar’s ‘Stuff That Happened to Me’, his journal which contains Googled material, printed and stuck into it; something he can hold, like a comforter. Tactile and haptic materiality helps the protagonists hold things together: for Oskar it is a mysterious key he has found in his father’s closet, the accompanying

lock for which he searches²⁰ takes him on a journey towards some form of peace. For Foer, it provides an opportunity to expand the novel’s conventions through imagery: where pictures become illuminations of Oskar’s stream of consciousness or clues in his search or hints as to his state of mind; where objects described in the story take on a resonating iconicity by also being depicted; where texts slip their conventional moorings and, as Foucault describes, pass ‘surreptitiously from the space where one speaks to the space where one looks’.

In this way, Foer confronts, what Morley (2008:309) describes as ‘... the thorny issue of the difficulty and the failure of language and words in the face of the visual, the loss of words in the event of great trauma’.

The book begins with three images: a closeup of a keyhole in an ornamental doorknob (5); birds in flight and an out-of-focus building – we learn later that these are probably photos taken by Oskar and pasted into ‘Stuff That Happened

to Me'. But these images are the first three pages we encounter on opening the cover, not the conventional blank and title pages, these only come later. And thus we are forewarned that we are entering something other than the conventional novel: only much later do we understand that the 'something' we are entering might be Oskar's journal or perhaps his memory. The photos' arbitrariness, their specific lack of quality and the fact that they bleed to the page edge hint at their reflexive status as things in and of themselves, self-conscious about being what and where they are. These are the very qualities Drucker (1995:161–162) draws attention to in describing the artist's book. She states:

The familiarity of the basic conventions of books tend to banalize them: the structures by which books present information, ideas, or diversions, become habitual so that they erase, rather than foreground, their identity. One can ... forget about a book even in the course

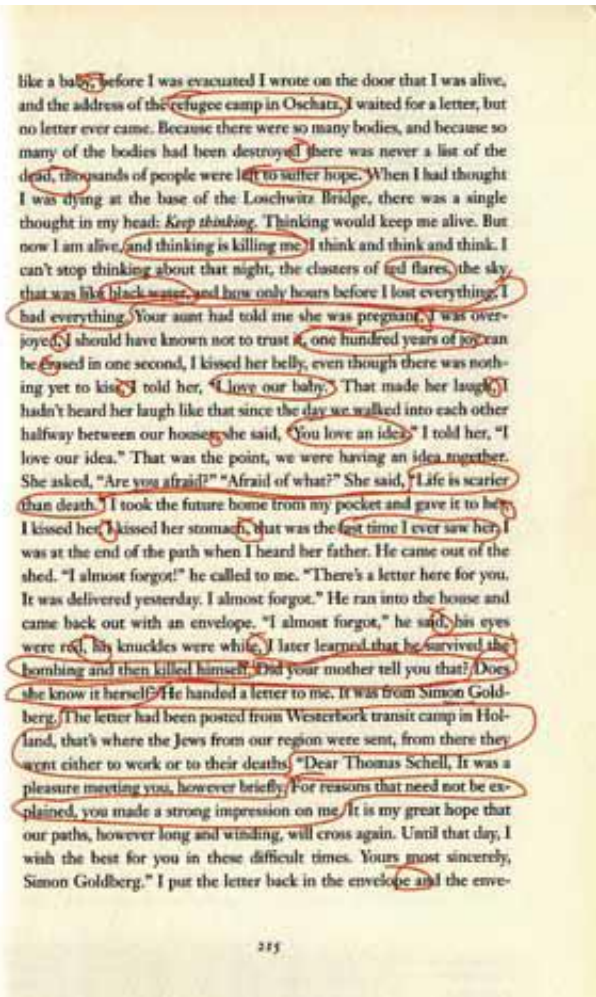
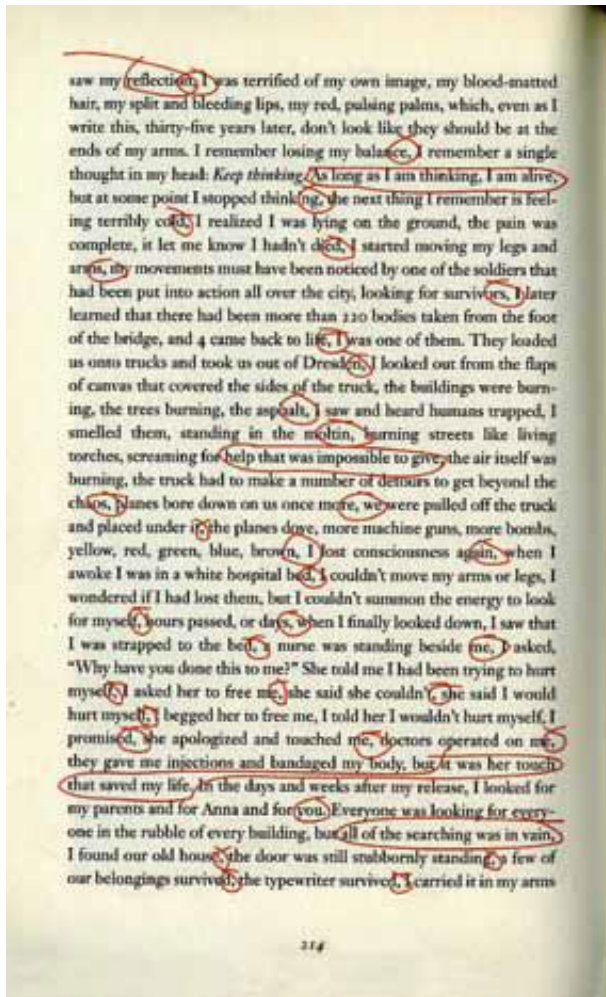


5 Jonathan Safran Foer, Page i of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Photograph: Debra Melzer, 2005. Reproduced courtesy of Debra Melzer.

of reading it. ... But when a book calls attention to the conceits and conventions by which it normally effaces its identity, then it performs a theoretical operation ... calls attention to its own processes of enunciation. ... Self-conscious attention to the means of enunciation often lay bare the devices of literary or visual strategies of illusionism.

Drucker (2003:[sp]) describes artists' books as "phenomenal" books, which mark the shift from books as artefacts, documents, vehicles for delivery of content, and instead demonstrate the living, dynamic nature of work as produced by interpretive acts' and reminds us that the idea of an artist's or 'phenomenal' book should be grounded in replacing the identity of what a book *is* with what it *does* and *how* it does it. Drucker understands the artist's book as something which interrogates the very conventions of bookness, exploiting tropes of self-consciousness and self-reflexivity in terms of the structural, literary, literal, narrative and material conventions of the page and book format. In these terms, book artists exploit technical and graphic conceits in order to call attention to the conventions by which, through constant exposure, a book normally neutralises or effaces its identity.

With this in mind, Drucker (1995:10) is able to help us 'read' Foer's opening pages as they extend the parameters of what a book *does* as a verbal field in a manner which also extends the possibilities of the way in which a book can function as a text. Thus all images (whether clearly or seemingly vaguely linked) become illuminations and extensions of the text: I pursue the first image, the doorknob – through whose keyhole we are able to conceptually peer into the novel/journal/mind, and towards the desperate search Oskar undertakes, over a period of eight months, to find the one lock, of 162 million possible locks in New York, Oskar calculates (p. 41), which fits the key. The doorknob/key image appears again in various forms, yet only on p. 303 do we first glimpse the key to which Oskar is attempting to find the lock and which clearly fits none of the locks thus far shown and which ultimately leads to a dead end. By not looking for the lock anymore, Oskar is prevented from staying close to his father for a little longer. Other forms of self-reflexive and self-conscious image structures include business cards which, later, become the object through which Oskar finds his identity and selfhood (p. 286);²¹ X-out



6 Jonathan Safran Foer, Pages 214–215 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin Group UK.

(p. 75) and struck-through texts (pp. 171 and 178) – strongly reminiscent of Kerouac's scroll edits: indexes of states and changes of mind for both Grandfather and Oskar; red pen notations (pp. 10, 208–216) (6) of spelling, grammar and factual or perceived errors which index the act of correcting and which provide a graphic link between Oskar's father, who marked errors in the *New York Times* in this fashion: and which suggest that he must indeed have had some contact with his father (Oskar's grandfather) as one of the 'unsent' letters is marked in this manner. It seems that Oskar has this letter in his journal, presumably taken when Grandfather finally places a score of unsent letters in his son's grave as an act of redemption. These red 'clues' hint not only at relationships which Foer keeps from the reader, but mark an act of hunting which the various protagonists undertake in an attempt to quell the grief in their respective losses.

The reader, in the absence of a logical straight-line narrative, must hunt, like Oskar

and Kerouac, 'to turn, reverse and set back in a series of deflections and accept that the shifting horizon of signification is part of the experience of meaning', so as to be 'headed there at last'. For Foer, the process of writing is a self-reflexive act in the exploration of meaning. Thus, a relationship between reader and writer develops through the novel. But as we have found in *To the lighthouse* and *Ulysses*, here, the writer is not necessarily Foer but a collection of authors and authored fragments which the reader must deconstruct and reconstitute as 'the narrative'; something akin to the referencing and appropriation of the imagery of others by many postmodern visual artists. All Foer's protagonists write to some other protagonist or character, and in Oskar's act of collecting, we are able to glimpse Foer's underlying message: writing as an attempt at healing. Oskar, we note, begins writing letters only after his father's death.

But if this is what Drucker's 'phenomenal book' might hint at, Foer is not done. When

Grandma types her 'My Life' of many hundreds of pages and asks Grandfather to read them, blank pages are all he sees (pp. 121–123) (7). The typewriter was one of the few possessions he has managed to save from the destruction of Dresden – the means of preserving his memories – but from which he has pulled the ribbon as 'an act of revenge against the typewriter and myself'. He states, 'unwinding the negative it held – the future homes I had created for Anna, the letters I wrote without response – as if they would protect me from my actual life' (p. 124). Grandma, who always described her eyesight as 'crummy' (p. 124), is seemingly exposed as 'blind' – not only physically, but also emotionally. This exposure occurs at the very moment we realise that Grandfather had left her and their unborn child (Oskar's father Thomas) in New York and returned to Dresden, unable to speak²² and unable to confront his loss. It is from Dresden where he writes to his son for 40 years but is unable to send the letters.

Like Woolf's lighthouse, Foer's image of writing, in its many manifestations, also perpetually reminds us that nothing is 'simply one thing, the bearer of one meaning'. Writing, too, reminds us that the individual experience of living is a precarious affair and that society as a whole is still not as safe and secure as it thought it was before the so-called War on Terror.

If Grandma's 'My Life' was reduced to 'two thousand white pages' (p. 124), at least in her husband's eyes (as what are we to make of the letters Oscar has seemingly received from her and which he seemingly keeps in 'Stuff That Happened to Me', Grandma had simply been hitting the space bar in place of typing the story of her life). Foer produces a masterstroke in rendering Grandfather's obsessive writings as a counterpoint to Grandma's blank pages. As he has been unable to speak for more than the 40 years between leaving and returning to New York, Thomas has written everything down: simple questions to strangers, rendered by Foer as a single line on the page (8) as an index of Thomas's daily form of communication; the mountain of letters written and never sent to and finally buried in the grave of his son; and the final letter he writes to his son on the rapidly diminishing pages of his daybook.

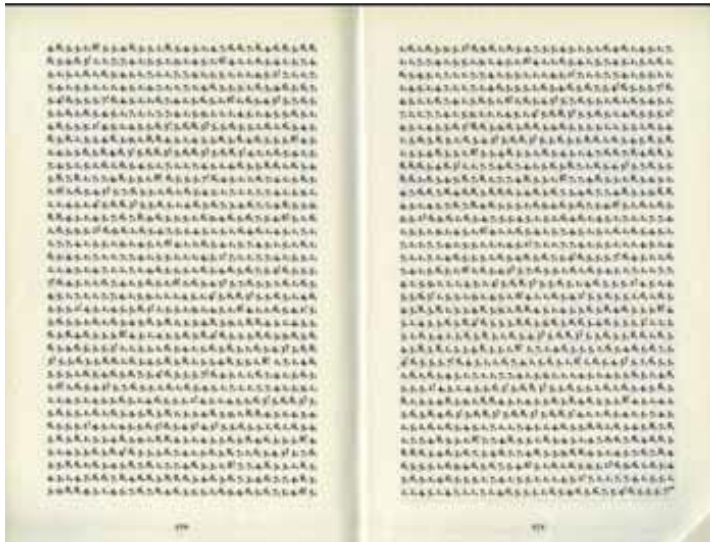
In a chapter without paragraph breaks, and in one block of text – with the spirits of Joyce, Woolf and Kerouac seemingly looking over his shoulder – Foer produces perhaps the most visually, emotionally charged piece of human communication in contemporary fiction. Thomas Schell's stream of consciousness pulls together the book's themes, characters and their impossible hopes. He begins: 'To my child' and describes the reason for returning, the purpose of his visit, by writing to the man



7 (left) Jonathan Safran Foer, Pages 122–123 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin Group UK.

8 (right) Jonathan Safran Foer, Page 21 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin Group UK.





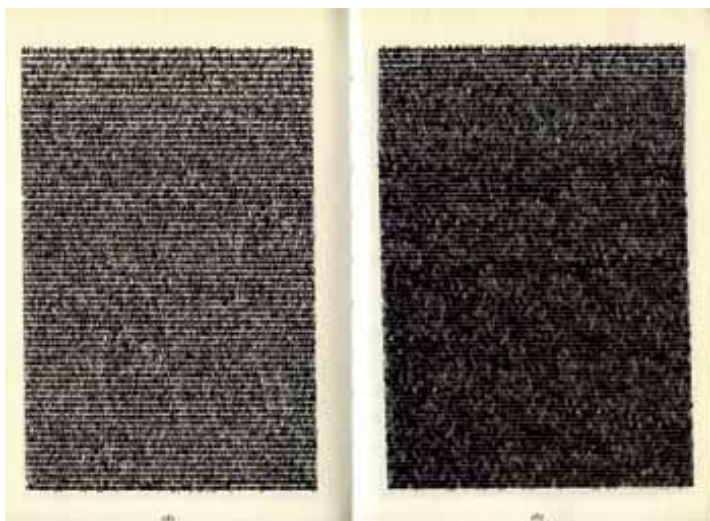
9 (left) Jonathan Safran Foer, Pages 270–271 of *Extremely loud and Incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin Group UK.

10 (right) Jonathan Safran Foer, Page 281 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin Group UK.



who takes his passport: 'To ~~mean~~ try to live' (p. 268);²³ phones Grandma's number and taps his message to her in pages of numerals, (9) an image which recalls the numeric works of Hanne Darboven and artist's bookmaker Richard Kostelanetz, and then pours out his heart to his dead son. Given the rapidly filling daybook: 'I'm running out of room' he writes (p. 280), Foer literally pulls the text together (p. 281) (10) in Thomas's breathtaking

attempt to tell, explain and write everything (11 & 12). The overtyped text blocks (pp. 282–284) become a typographic index of futile labour, his utter failure and the incomprehensibility of attempting, too late, to explain 'everything' to a dead son and an alienated wife. Grandma's blank white pages and Thomas's black overtyped ones have achieved the same futile result.



11 (left) Jonathan Safran Foer, Pages 282–283 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin UK.

12 (right) Jonathan Safran Foer, Page 284 of *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Hamish Hamilton. Reproduced courtesy of Penguin Group UK.



While I suspect that Joyce, Woolf and Kerouac might smile in Foer's direction and that even Drucker might accept that this unhinging of semiotic difference between image and text may approach and acknowledge the field of the 'phenomenal' or artist's book, Foer's structural, linguistic and visual disruptions of the conventions of the novel have proven controversial for contemporary literary review and criticism, with some denouncing him as faddish.²⁴ In order to argue for this not being the case, there are other elements to which I turn in order to forge a deeper relationship between Foer's novel and the space already created by Kerouac's 'transgressive journey' in search of elusive authenticity (Mouratides 2008:80). Both a thematic and stylistic comparison deserves our attention. Penny Vlagopoulos' (2008:53) description of *On the road* as arising from the particular conditions of the era in which it was written as a '... kind of blueprint for translating the upheavals and aftershocks of its historical moment into vital, perennial concerns', parallels Foer. In her reading of Kerouac's themes, Vlagopoulos describes a literary and cultural space with which Foer seems to readily engage. When Kerouac writes (in the scroll manuscript) that if men 'stop the machine and come home – and get on their knees – and ask for forgiveness – and the women bless them – peace will suddenly descend on the earth with a great silence like the inherent silence of the Apocalypse', he

anchors the relationship between America and the rest of the world on a collective redressing of wrongs, represented ... through a critique of gender roles. He suggests that borders, both within and between nations, have the potential to erode if we begin to untangle our human histories of oppression, negligence, and shame through a prism of love and empathy. (Vlagopoulos 2008:62)

Foer, I argue, takes up this theme in Thomas's desperate imagistic attempt to find belated forgiveness and in which Kerouac's 'silent Apocalypse' has multiple connotations: Thomas's Aphasia; 9/11 as an apocalyptic event; the stunned silence of its aftermath; the double spread (pp. 282–283) of overtyped text blocks as symbolic, disintegrating buildings. But for Foer, Kerouac's hope is inverted through the de-anchored relationship between Thomas and the rest of his family as an image of, and metaphor for, the de-anchored

'relationship between America and the rest of the world'. Vlagopoulos (2008:54, 63) in drawing our attention to the post-World War II period in which Kerouac was writing (as one in which artists and intellectuals were required to prove their loyalty to the US, by renouncing Communism and 'deviance' so as to defend their way of life) seems to prefigure a similar period for Foer, one in which the theme of writing – as an attempt at healing – might begin to answer Kerouac's question of 'why do men go on living'. Vlagopoulos (2008:63), quoting Ann Douglas, forges the possibility of an even more direct relationship between the authors when she reminds us that

[in] the age that invented the idea of classified information, Kerouac's effort was to declassify the secrets of the human body and soul. Kerouac was always interested in honesty, especially to himself, at whatever cost, and often this meant offering a picture of possibility rather than providing a direct guide.

For Foer, Thomas and Grandma's imagined stories can only be 'pictures of possibility' in the 'declassification of the secrets of the human body and soul' and it might thus seem more than serendipitous that in both *On the road* and *Extremely loud*, the major protagonists, Neal Cassidy and Thomas Schell, both lose their ability to speak. Kerouac himself sought the figure of Cassidy as a surrogate who might facilitate his

search to reconnect with those he had lost – brother, father, wife, household – a way of staving off the ephemerality that brought about this sense of abandonment and ultimate elusiveness, and a way of transcending the guilt and burden of existing in their wake. (Vlagopoulos 2008:71)

Kerouac could be describing Oscar or Thomas or Grandma or a number of other characters Foer invokes. Yet alongside these thematic links which, I suggest, are germane in placing Vlagopoulos's reading of Kerouac in relation to Foer, is another crucial parallel – one of literary form as a visual phenomenon.

Vlagopoulos (2008:64–65) states that, for Kerouac, the processes of reading and writing emerge as crucial artistic practices in which he 'seemed to approach words from outside of their expected meanings, as if they were found objects to be appropriated and made new'. She (2008:66) continues:

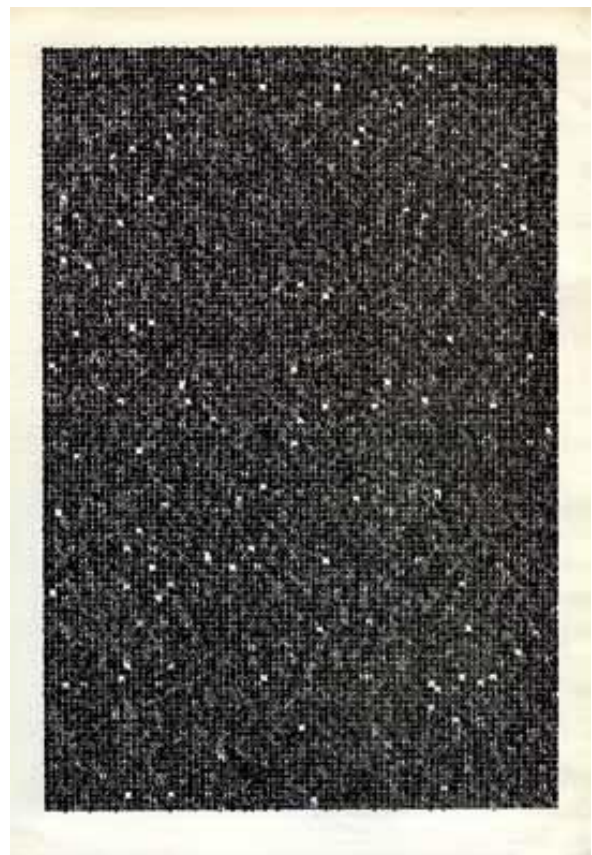
Following a dash from one point to the next without stopping to construct an architecture of expected logic in a sentence more closely mimics the feeling of actually being on the road ... as does sideslipping through descriptions without clear subordinate clauses ... Kerouac seemed to be grasping to know America in a way that would encode a hidden editing process, a way that would recuperate the losses and failures inherent in the very structures of our language.

'A weariness with all the forms, all the conventions of the world' goaded Kerouac to recuperate these losses and failures by abandoning paragraph breaks, colons, semicolons and commas for dashes, ellipses and run-on sentences: as he wrote in his journal, 'it's not the words that count, but the rush of what is said'. This 'rush' is given affective and visual status by Foer in his use of overtyped and blank pages, as well as other texts-as-images which locate meaning not in the prose, not in the 'very structures of our language', but in grasping and recuperation as a 'picture of possibility'. What Foer seems to be achieving here is an extreme example of what Bakhtin terms 'monologic' language, and in which the centripetal forces of the system of language and the individual who speaks it are so pushed to a central point that they collapse the very leading and kerning which maintain the integrity of the text block and thus, by implication, the system and the individual. Here, I argue, centripetal forces provoke a powerful visual index of monologic language in which a particular voice is seemingly the only one to be heard or heeded at a particular moment. Within the book's broader polyglossia in which the complexity and multiplicity of voices, 'languages' and narrators are given scope, these visual manifestations of monologic, centripetal structure explore the limits of the conventions of novelistic language when accepted as dialogical and heteroglossic.

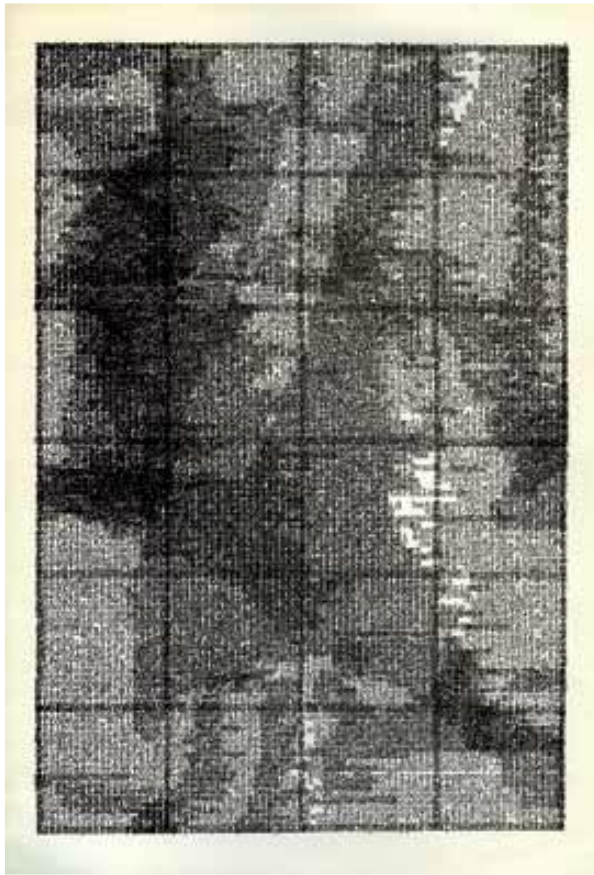
The prose artist, says Bakhtin (in Klages 2001:8–9) 'elevates the social heteroglossia surrounding objects into an image that has finished contours, an image completely shot through with dialogized overtones [and because] discourse lives on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context' – between the languages of the speaker/writer and the languages of the listener/reader – 'the fiction writer is always directing his/her writing towards the possible

responses of readers, and is always finding more things to say, more ways to say it, so that readers can understand the message(s)'. Foer's overprinted, single sentence and blank pages, as extreme examples of centripetal, monologic language, perform a role as indexes of futile labour and the futility of his protagonists' desperate attempts to communicate. This is something which a reader can begin to understand in visual terms. Foer seems to indicate that the single story, the singular, authoritative voice (monologic language) cannot succeed in narrating meaning. Instead, Bakhtin's notion of the *parodic* – the deliberate displacement and subversion of the ideological constraints of the system of language – gives scope to Foer's heteroglossia as a contestation between voices within a language of attempted communication.

Morley (2008:309) seems to conclude this idea when she states that '[t]his combination of the visual with the written, for Foer, is a deliberate and positive method of articulating grief and trauma ... [b]y combining the visual and the written, Foer succeeds in offering an altered form of realism for the post-9/11 cultural landscape.'



13 Willem Boshoff, *Verskanste Openbaring* (detail) from *Kykafrikaans* (1980). Uitgewery Panevis. Photograph: David Paton, 2007. Reproduced courtesy of Willem Boshoff.



14 Willem Boshoff, *Verdwaalkaart* from *Kycafrikaans* (1980). Uitgewery Panevis. Photograph: David Paton, 2007. Reproduced courtesy of Willem Boshoff.

I have seen nothing like this in the contemporary novel, but it is 'incredibly close' to those other icons to the futility of human communication: Willem Boshoff's *Verskanste Openbaring* (Entrenched Revelation) (13) and *Verdwaalkaart* (A Map to Get Lost By) (14) typed some 30 years ago as part of *Kycafrikaans* (1976–1980) – published as an artist's book in 1980 – and now in *The Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry*, Miami, Florida.²⁵ Of these works, Boshoff (in Siebrits 2007:40) states:

Simplistically one could say that in *Kycafrikaans* the typewriter is posited as an instrument for processing text, in much the same manner as a brush or pencil functions in painting or drawing. ... However, on closer inspection these eccentric poems are at odds with writing and interpretation. At times they take issue with literary prejudices such as the conventional requirements of coherence and economy of writing. They frequently subvert orthodoxy and instead venerate

triviality or ambiguity in the guise of being meticulously and assiduously composed.

What messages we are to understand in Boshoff's visually centripetal and monologic poems are not those of futile labour, but rather an acknowledgement of a ploy, on Boshoff's part, to subvert and thus prevent communication and meaning from reaching his reader intact. In Boshoff's terms, obfuscation of the text is not an index of an obsessive yet failed attempt on the part of another's voice to communicate 'the secrets of their body and soul'. In describing how *Verskanste Openbaring* operates, Ivan Vadišlavić (2005:26), states that '[t]he reader trying to retrieve meaning from its layered chaos is compelled to relive the moment of its disappearance' and continues by engaging directly with this duality between authorial voice and the voice of 'another':

In his commentaries, Boshoff makes much of the idea of 'disqualifying the text'. Who is in a position to *disqualify* a text? An authority, one could even say a higher authority. This would be simple enough to imagine if the authority in question were dealing with someone else's text, but Boshoff is talking about texts he himself has created, has authorized. In other words, he means to authorize the text and then disqualify it. We can see this double process (exemplified in *Verskanste Openbaring*) at work especially in those poems that most closely resemble images, where the final effect is visual rather than verbal. (Vadišlavić 2005:26)

Vadišlavić's (2005:26) summing up of Boshoff's ploy of disqualification seems aptly applicable to Foer's facilitation of Thomas's and Grandma's textual self-disqualification when he states: '[T]he more word approximates image, the more the text becomes texture. This "disqualification" is thus part of a general lobbying on behalf of the image in the face of the word.'

Yet for all Foer's typographic and structural manipulations, he is still not finished with his reader. Just as the book opens with illuminating imagery even before the title page is given its due, the final pages forge another relationship with the artist's book. In an attempt to control or at least delay both historical fact and the seeming omnipotence of the deluge of information and imagery in a post-postmodern world, something which this book seems so



15a–e (left to right) Jonathan Safran Foer, Selected end pages from *Extremely loud and incredibly close* (2005). Photograph: Lyle Owerko, 2001. Reproduced courtesy of Lyle Owerko.

dedicated to achieve, Foer acknowledges that the quaintness of turning a paper page, instead of downloading or uploading its digital equivalent has, in fact, become critical. One of the conventions of the artist's book is to interrogate the act of reading and page turning through the structure known as the 'flip book'.²⁶ Foer describes Oskar tearing out from his journal and rearranging the Googled images of the World Trade Centre's unidentified 'falling man' (pp. 325–326). In an act of artist's bookmanship and haptic reassertion of control over the ready-availability, ubiquity and glut of decontextualised digital imagery, and in which the reader is so intimately and physically implicated, Oskar flips the falling man (could this be his father?) back, toward his son, toward *his* father and to safety (15 a–e).

Conclusion

In rephrasing Kupetz's (2008:91) argument, that instead of functioning as works with meanings trapped inside hermetically sealed structures, Foer's narratives, too, involve the reader in a process of discovering meaning by encountering unfamiliar structures. It has not been my aim to show Foer's direct literary influences or that he might have been aware of specific artists' books and their structures. Rather, I have attempted to show that an awareness of both a history of the breaking of literary conventions, and of artists' books and their structures, might help a reader gain greater insight into Foer's content. In order to contextualise Foer I have argued that, in Kerouac's iconic scroll manuscript, *On the road*, a relationship between the contemporary novel and the influence of artists who work within and around the conventions of the book might

be fruitful. By working outside of the accepted conventions of the novel's structure and form, Kerouac invites his reader to find ways in which the novel may be informed by imagistic, visual and spatial concerns.

I have traced what I consider to be imagistic, visual and spatial qualities in the work of Sterne, Woolf and Joyce, so that a visual reading of Safran Foer's novel *Extremely loud and incredibly close* might be considered from within historical precedent which, itself, may inform and be informed by structural, linguistic and visual conventions found in selected artists' books. I have also applied Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia to Foer's image/text relations in order to argue for an imagistic way in which Foer might convey his message. Of particular focus in this section of the article are: Foer's self-reflexive interventions which draw attention to the novel's meta-narratives; the seemingly random use of imagery as elliptical illuminations; the manipulation of the typographic conventions of the page for imagistic and affective purposes; and lastly, the use of a flip-book structure at the end of the book, suggesting an alternative conclusion and the reader's collusion in averting history. In this analysis, I have attempted to show that an awareness of both a history of the breaking of literary conventions, and of artists' books and their structures, might help a reader gain greater insight into Foer's narrative by understanding how he enunciates not what a book *is*, but what it *does* and *how* it does it.

Notes

1 Between 2 and 22 April 1951, Jack Kerouac wrote a full-length novel on a long strip of paper, constructed from taped-together sheets, without

paragraph breaks and which, when rolled out, resembles a road. This was the original scroll manuscript of *On the road*. From 22 April, another 30 days were spent on editing the manuscript.

2 Although describing and discussing the diverse nature of *artists' books* as a field is outside the scope of this article, here, I contextualise an artist's book as a book whose formal, structural and aesthetic conceits have been interrogated and manipulated by the artists in order to draw attention to the object's bookness; how it operates and how it communicates its content rather than functioning as 'a vehicle for reproduction' (Drucker 1995:9). Of particular focus in this article is the exploitation of texts and typographic conventions for their visual and imagistic qualities.

3 The conventional manuscript structure, which can be bound into a convenient codex form, is replaced with the scroll structure in the original work.

4 In *This is the Beat Generation* (2001:134–135), James Campbell enumerates the contradictory sources of information regarding both the scroll's length and particularly the material upon which it was typed. 120ft seems to be the consensus, but Allen Ginsberg stated it was 'many hundreds of feet' and Beat historian Steven Watson estimated it at 120 yards. The material ranged from 'teletype roll' (Ann Charters and Allen Ginsberg); Japanese drawing paper (Gerald Nicosia); oilskin art paper (Tom Clark); shelf-paper (John Celedon Homes); tracing paper (Kerouac) and 'a block-long piece of drawing paper' (Kerouac).

5 In relation to the number of words the scroll contains, Campbell continues: 'According to Watson, the scroll contained 186,000 words. Nicosia knocked a digit off of that, and called it 86,000 words, whereas Kerouac himself, obsessive when it came to computing his output, reckoned 125,000 words, an average of 6,000 per day and 15,000 on the final day.'

6 It is important to note that, despite a long history of scrolls and scroll-forms from Europe, the Middle East and Asia, and which are of cultural and religious importance, the focus on the scroll form in this article is limited to Kerouac's association of the act of continuous typing with the experience of the road as his subject: a conflation of act and idea, facilitated by the form of the scroll.

7 Walton Litz (1961:58) refers to James Joyce's design of *Ulysses* as a 'mosaic'.

8 Kerouac had to wait six years, until 5 September 1957, for final publication.

9 A 'constellation' which would help to liberate typography in the bookwork of, amongst many other early modernists, Ilia Zdanevich (Iliazd),

Vladimir Mayakovsky and Filippo Marinetti, as well as some Dada and Surrealist publications, and might, indeed, foreshadow Kerouac. Concrete poetry differs from other early 20th century experiments with the visual appearance of language in both its form and aesthetic principles. The Futurists and Dada artists exploited a variety of typefaces and formats in an attempt to liberate poetic language from the constraints of literary convention such as linearity and the even grey-toned page, while the concrete poets sought a unity between visual and verbal aspects of a work (Drucker 1995:233).

10 Cézanne's work, for example *Table, Napkin, And Fruit (Un Coin De Table)* of 1895–1900 and later, in examples of Picasso's 'Analytical Cubism' such as *Portrait Of Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler* of 1910, an exploration of simultaneity of viewpoint, was considered a particularly 'truthful' mode of representation. Duchamp, the Dadaists and Synthetic Cubists exploited collage and multiplicity. These visual developments were to mature in the Surrealists' diverse modes of perception, including a visual exploitation of literary forms advocated by, amongst others, André Breton, Louis Aragon and Philippe Soupault. Such forms included stream of consciousness, so-called 'automatic writing' and 'exquisite corps' poetry. A fine example of the visual manifestation of literary and diverse sources is Max Ernst's book *Une semaine de bonté* (A week of kindness) which was published in 1934.

11 It may be argued that this occurs in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) too. Sue Vice, citing Makiko Minow-Pinkney (in Vice 1997:95) states: 'The text presents itself as a homogeneous unity in the conventional narrative guise of third-person past tense, but is in fact radically heterogeneous. Subjects of sentences are continually shifting. ... Whenever we try to pinpoint the locus of the subject, we get lost in a discursive mist.'

12 In *Glas* (1974), Derrida follows a parallel structure, suggested by Jean Genet, in which the text is written in two sometimes intermingling columns: the left column is about Hegel while the right column is about Genet.

13 Ginsberg's *Penelope punctuated: A project in progress* (1998) is an artist's book in which typographic and literary aims are explored. Ginsberg divides the book into four parts: the first is a contextualisation of his project, taking Joyce's last 'chapter' of *Ulysses*, an unpunctuated single paragraph often called *Penelope* as his subject; the second provides the text of Joyce's *Penelope* to read; the third part explores the unpunctuated *Penelope* as a field of typographic play in which the increasing pitch size of *Univers* text is in inverse relation to

the number of words which can be fitted onto a single page (p. 21 contains the full text of *Penelope* in 5.5 pitch, while the last page, p. 41 contains one word at a pitch of 262). The fourth part offers a humorous and speculative attempt at punctuating *Penelope*.

14 Ginsberg terms *Penelope* a 'soliloquy'. I will use Humphrey's (1968:27) term 'direct interior monologue'.

15 Penelope was the wife of Odysseus (Ulysses) who waited 20 years for her husband's return from the Trojan War.

16 Cordell Yee (1997:19) quotes Colin MacCabe's assertion that 'Joyce's texts grant primacy to the material of language over the fugitive meanings attached to it' and that '*Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* are concerned not with representing experience through language but with experiencing language through the destruction of representation'.

17 Humphrey (1968:27) terms 'the last fortyfive pages of James Joyce's *Ulysses*' (he does not call it *Penelope*) an example of 'direct interior monologue' by asking: 'What role does the author play in the passage? As it is represented, he plays none. The author has disappeared entirely: it is in the first person; the tense is willy-nilly, past, imperfect, present, or conditional as Molly's mind dictates; and there are no commentaries, no stage directions from the author.'

18 See Uyterschout and Versluys (2008) *Melancholy and mourning in Jonathan Safran Foer's 'Extremely loud and incredibly close'* in which the three protagonists' behaviours and coping strategies are analysed in terms of LaCapara's theories of 'acting out' (melancholia) and 'working through' (mourning).

19 Morley (2008:309) draws further attention to the haptic nature of the form, by reminding one that it is only through the visual and tactile art of sculpture that Thomas can express his loss and desire and that the 'YES' and 'NO' come into direct contact with the clay in the forming of an image of his lost lover.

20 Oskar's father often provided him with clues for 'reconnaissance expeditions', games in which Thomas would send his son out on 'quests' or treasure hunts. Oskar believes that the key might be such a clue from his father, but is really only an attempt to keep his father's memory alive.

21 Oskar's business card (p. 99) lists him as: inventor, jewelry designer, jewelry fabricator, amateur entomologist, Francophile, vegan, origamist, pacifist, percussionist, amateur astronomer, computer consultant, amateur archeologist and collector. On p. 286, however, he (and we) discovers a card with the simple entry 'Oskar Schell: Son'.

22 Uyterschout and Versluys (2008:222) state that '[i]n a very literal sense, Thomas Schell is unable to share his traumatic experiences with others because he suffers from aphasia – the loss of speech. It is not unreasonable to assume that he has unconsciously inflicted this condition on himself. His inability or refusal to speak testifies to an unwillingness to cope with his traumatic past.'

23 An echo of Kerouac's '*adolescent question, Why do men go on living?*'

24 W.R. Greer states: 'Jonathan Safran Foer's novel is not a perfect one. In addition to the oddities in Oskar's grandfather's chapters, the book is full of photos and drawings, all things that Oskar collected in his attempt to understand his world. Among these is a photo of a body falling from one of the towers, one which Oskar enlarges to see if maybe it was his dad. While these are all supposed to be reflective of Oskar's mind, they don't really add anything to the novel.'

25 Foer's exploding of the typographic, literary and visual conventions of the contemporary novel may, however, prove helpful in positioning and coping with more demanding examples of visual and typographic complexity found in novels such as Mark Danielewski's *House of leaves* (Anchor, 2000). In formal terms, the only South African book which, as a totality, approaches the textual and visual complexity of Foer's work, and of which I am aware, is Andre Brink's *Orgie* (Malherbe, 1965). In this work, Brink exploits and undermines various typographical and literary conventions such as, like Stern, the use of blank and black pages. *Orgie*, of which Boshoff was aware, predates Boshoff's manipulations in *Kyafrikaans*, and was a catalyst for the early forms of the artist's book in South Africa. (See my 2000:32–56.)

26 Of interest is a recent projection, in June 2009, of William Kentridge's latest flip book into the public domain from the window of the Goodman Gallery, overlooking Jan Smuts Avenue, Johannesburg. The conventionally private activity of book reading was turned into a public performance through a looped animation of flipping pages.

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Area of Focus Two: Curating

The curation of exhibitions of artists' books – access and distance

Submission Four: Annexure D

Curated exhibition and its associated materials

Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection. Curated exhibition. University of Johannesburg Art Gallery. 25 March – 5 May 2017

Please find all pertinent material for this submission at the following websites:

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses> (The *Booknesses* Project)

and

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=exhibitions> (Pertinent exhibitions and catalogue material)

Peer Reviews of the exhibition within the larger *Booknesses Project* can be found in the Appendices in the Commentary:

Peer review of exhibition by Prof Buzz Spector. Washington University in St. Louis, USA (Appendix Three)

Peer review of exhibition by Sarah Bodman. University of the West of England, Bristol, UK (Appendix Four)

Peer review of exhibition by Elizabeth James. National Art Library, V&A Museum, London, UK (Appendix Five)



This website is a definitive record of the diverse events which made up the *Booknesses* Project, hosted by the Department of Visual Art (DoVA), Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), South Africa, from 21 - 26 March 2017.

The project comprised workshops in

- papermaking, facilitated by Phumani Paper (UJ) and Mary Hark (University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA)
- paper engineering, facilitated by Stephan Erasmus (book artist, Johannesburg)
- bookbinding, facilitated by Heléne van Aswegen (Stellenbosch University) and
- *Book arts in the classroom*, facilitated by Wilhelm van Rensburg (UJ)

A lecture series presented by

- Buzz Spector (Washington University in St. Louis, USA) titled *Buzz Spector: The Book under (De)Construction* and
- Susan Gosin, (Dieu Donn  Paper, New York, USA) and Eliza Kentridge (Poet, UK) who presented Kentridge's new book *Selected Signs*

A Colloquium, *Booknesses: Taking stock of the book arts in South Africa* with keynote addresses given by

- Sarah Bodman (UWE, Bristol, UK) titled: *Communities of practice - building an internationally connected practice in and for the book arts* and
- Robbin Ami Silverberg (Dobbin Mill and Books, New York, USA) titled: *The Aegean Sea: The compulsion to make books*

with papers presented by 42 local and international speakers and two roundtable events titled

- *South African practitioners and studios working across disciplines* and
- *South African book arts as a democratic force*

Booknesses also held three exhibitions

- *Booknesses: Investigating the Body. Emandulo, Chris Diedericks* and Charles Hobson which opened on 23 March at the gallery of the SARChI Research Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture, UJ
- *Booknesses: Contemporary South African artists' books*, opened on 24 March by Robbin Ami Silverberg at the FADA Gallery, UJ and
- *Booknesses: Artists' books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*, opened on 25 March by Sarah Bodman at the UJ Art Gallery with an extensive public, scholar and student walkabout/ education program.

A closing event, *Jack Ginsberg and William Kentridge in Conversation*, was moderated by Prof. Jane Taylor on 26 March at the UJ Theatre.

EXHIBITIONS AND CATALOGUES

Booknesses: Artists' books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection

Interactive catalogue

Click on image to activate interactive catalogue



Designed by Nika Campher

Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection - click here to download (format: PDF - large file over 250mb)

On the opening of Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection at UJ Art Gallery, Johannesburg by Sarah Bodman - click here to download (format: PDF)

Booknesses: Contemporary South African artists' books

Interactive catalogue

Click on image to activate interactive catalogue



Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books - click here to download (format: PDF - large file over 150mb)

Special 21st anniversary edition of the original 1996 exhibition catalogue Artists' books in the Ginsberg collection.



Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection: catalogue download - click here (format: PDF)

Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection - digital books



CLICK HERE

Submission Five: Annexure E

Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection. University of Johannesburg Art Gallery. 25 March – 5 May 2017. Exhibition catalogue, Department of Visual Art, Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture, UJ, Johannesburg, South Africa. Compiled, organised and the main essay by David Paton and edited by Robyn Sassen. ISBN 978-0-86970-796-8

Exhibition catalogue

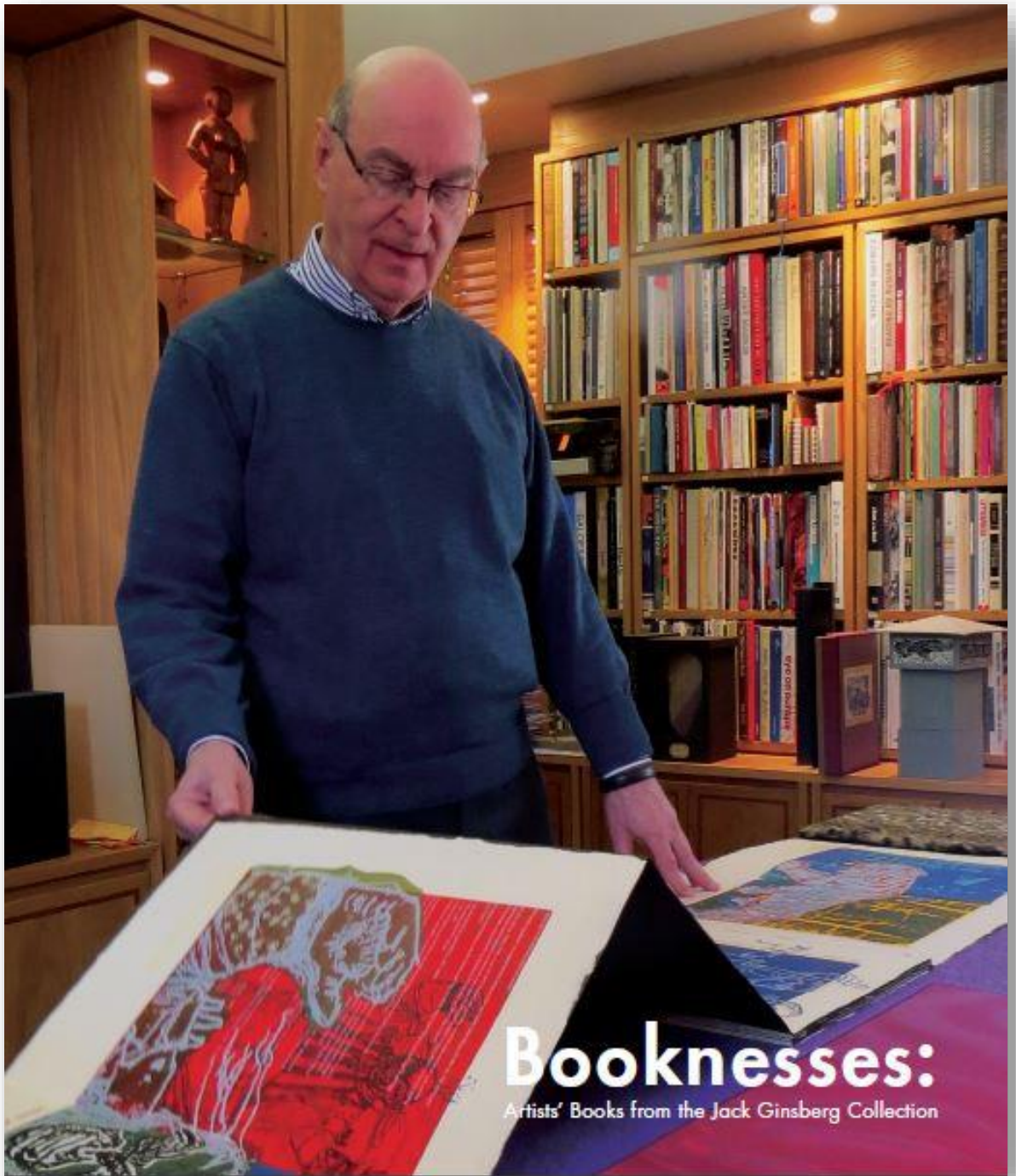
Please find a hard copy of the exhibition catalogue

An online interactive catalogue is available at:

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=jgcat&pgsub1=>

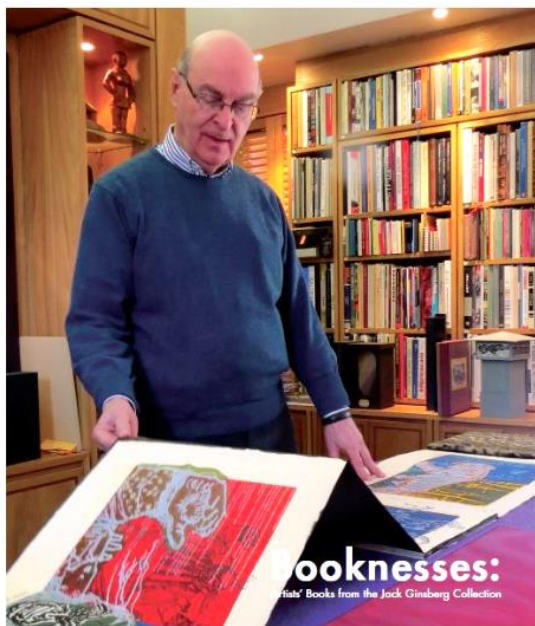
An online interactive page-through of 30 selected books across all themes of the exhibition can be accessed at:

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=exhibitions&pgsub1=digital>



Booknesses:

Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection



"The exhibition *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* formed part of the larger *Booknesses* enterprise. The exhibition, consisting of 229 international and 29 local artists' books and an extensive catalogue, was one of the largest and most ambitious exhibitions of its kind globally. Curated by David Paton, with the assistance of Rosalind Cleaver and Jack Ginsberg, the exhibition was opened on 25 March 2017 by Sarah Bodman, Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Fine Print Research (CFPR), University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol, UK. This exhibition celebrates the 21st anniversary of the first exhibition of artists' books in South Africa, held at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 1996.

Starting from Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars's ground-breaking 1913 exemplar of simultaneity in book form, *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France*, the exhibition is curated around a number of themes suggested by this work. These are Visual-verbal Dynamics & Colour; Journeys, Maps and Structures & Landscapes & Places; Fantasy & the Fantastic; War, Death, Fear & Apocalyptic Imagery; and Sex, Love & the Body. Supporting *Prose*, we chose a number of canonical book-works which Riva Castleman showed on the 1994/5 Exhibition titled *A Century of Artists' Books* held at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, and which are held in the Ginsberg Collection here in Johannesburg."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD
FEDERICO FRESCHI

INTRODUCTION
ROBYN SASSEN

CHAPTER 1
SIMULTANEOUS JOURNEYS: THEMATICS IN THE CURATING OF
*BOOKNESSES: ARTISTS' BOOKS FROM THE JACK GINSBERG
COLLECTION* – DAVID PATON

CHAPTER 2
BETWEEN THE FOLDS: THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN IMAGES AND
TEXTS WITH REFERENCE TO SELECTED ARTISTS' BOOKS – KEITH
DIETRICH

CHAPTER 3
AXEAGE PRIVATE PRESS AND THE BOOK IN A CAVE – PIPPA
SKOTNES

CHAPTER 4
A NEW YORKER'S PARALLAX VIEW – ROBBIN AMI SILVERBERG

CHAPTER 5
A CONVERSATION WITH JACK GINSBERG – KIM BERMAN WITH
CONTRIBUTIONS BY ROSALIND CLEAVER AND DAVID PATON

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION
(LISTED ALPHABETICALLY BY THE ARTISTS)

REFERENCES

PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

Curated by David Paton
University of Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection - digital books

- *Prose du Transsiberien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* - Sonia Delaunay (illustrator), Blaise Cendrars (poem)

Theme MM / NMM: Modernist books and/or artists appearing on Riva Castelman's 1994/5 MoMA exhibition *A Century of Artists Books* and our additions

- *Lidantiu Faram [Lidantiu as a Beacon (Le-Dantyu as a Beacon)]* - Ilya Zdanevich (Iliadz), Naum Granovskii (cover)
- *La Fin du Monde filmee par l'Ange N.-D.* - Fernand Leger (illustrator), Blaise Cendrars (text)
- *Un Coup de Des Jamais Nabolira le Hasard: Poeme* - Stephane Mallarme
- *Paris de Nuit* - Brassai (photography), Paul Morand (text)
- *Dlya Golosa [For the Voice or For Reading Out Loud]* - El Lissitzky (illustrator), Vladimir Mayakovsky (poems)
- *Die Nibelungen Dem Deutschen Volke Wiedererzahlt von Franz Keim* - Carl Otto Czeschka (designer and illustrator), Franz Keim (text)
- *Une Semaine de Bonte ou Les Sept Elements Capitaux (Roman)* - Max Ernst
- *Depero Futurista 1913-1927* - Fortunato Depero & Fedele Azari

MPM & NMPM: Postmodern books and artists who appeared on the MoMA exhibition and our additions

- *Fizzles (Foirades)* - Jasper Johns (etchings), Samuel Beckett (author)
- *Un Coup de Des Jamais Nabolira le Hasard: Image* - Marcel Broodthaers (book artist), Stephane Mallarme (based upon)
- *The Departure of the Argonaut* - Francesco Clemente (illustrator), Alberto Savinio (text)

C5 A & B: Visual-verbal Dynamics | Color

- *Doc / Undoc Documentado / Undocumented. Ars Shamanica Performatica* - Felicia Rice (book artist), Guillermo Gomez-Pena (text)
- *Innerland* - Timothy C. Ely
- *After Image Playing with Colour in all its Dimensions* - Claudia Cohen & Barbara Hodgson

C6 A, B, C: Journeys | Maps & Structures | Landscapes & Places

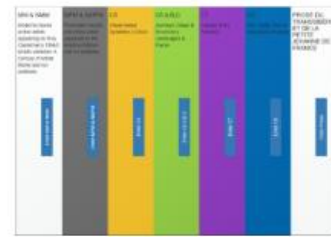
- *Ockers* - Mike Hudson (book artist), Jadwiga Jarvis (printed)
- *Britain in Colour with Belligerent Rock Intrusions mainly in Black and White* - David Ferry (book artist), R. M. Lockley (original author)
- *Portage* - William Kentridge
- *Cathexis* - Paul Emmanuel
- *Frantichams Los Angeles Palm Trees* - Franticham, Francis van Maele & Antic-Ham
- *26 57,3' N, 142 16,8' E [The Squid Book]* - Veronika Schapers, Durs Grunbein (poems by), Yuji Nawata (translator)
- *Raising Water* - Sjoerd Hofstra & Karen O'Hearn
- *The Mappist* - Charles Hobson (images), Barry Holstun Lopez (text)
- *Cold Sweat The Graphic Works* - Chris Diedericks
- *Curiosity* - Lyndi Sales

C7: Fantasy & the Fantastic

- *Cent Mille Petits Points* - Mauro Bellei
- *Temp Worker* - Fred Rinne

C8: War, Death, Fear & Apocalyptic Imagery

- *The Ultimate Safari* - Nadine Gordimer (author), Aletah Masuku (illustrator), Alsetah Manthosi (illustrator), Dorah Ngomane (illustrator), Mark Attwood (printer)
- *Another George Book - A User's Guide* - Joan Iversen Goswell
- *Board of Honour* - Mikhail Karasik



Website:

www.theartistsbook.org.za/booknesses/digital_books



iPads made available in the exhibition space facilitate browsing the selected books, page-by-page online.



This mode of accessing selected books helps overcome the conventional lack of access to books locked away in glass cases.



This An example of a QR code which provides an alternative mode of accessing the selected books via visitors' smart phones and tablets.

Submission Six: Annexure F

Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books From The Jack Ginsberg Collection (2017) Chapter 1 from the publication *Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*

Peer-reviewed and published catalogue chapter

This chapter can be found on pages 18 – 61 in Submission Five: Annexure E

An online version of the Chapter is available at:

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=jgcat&pgsub1=chpt1>

Chapter 1

David Paton

Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection

The year 2017 marks the 21st anniversary of the first exhibition of artists' books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection ever held in South Africa.¹ At the time, it was purportedly the second largest exhibition of artists' books to have been held in the world. In 2015, Ginsberg was one of the featured collectors on New York's Center for Book Arts's *Behind the Personal Library: Collectors Creating the Canon*. This exhibition and symposium considered the influence of private collectors on critical dialogue in the field of the book arts.² Of the 13 invited collectors, Ginsberg was one of only three non-Americans. Given the extraordinary scope and depth of the collection not only in African but also, now, in global terms, it seemed timeous and fitting to hold another exhibition.

As a place to start the curatorial process for this exhibition, I consulted Jack's rare copy of Blaise Cendrars³ and Sonia Delaunay-Terk's *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* [*Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanne of France*] (1913). Considered by many to be the first true example of *simultaneisme*, or 'simultaneity' in book form (Kelley 2013), *Prose du Transsibérien*, like most of the books in the Ginsberg Collection,⁴ is unique on the African continent and is shown to the public on this exhibition for the first time.

Prose du Transsibérien has acquired not only the status of a French cultural icon, but also a certain cult status exemplified by its appearance on the cover of Riva Castleman's controversially titled exhibition catalogue *A Century of Artists Books* in 1994 at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Manhattan⁵ and, more recently, on the cover of The National Art Library's *Word & Image Art, Books and Design* (2015). *Prose du Transsibérien* seemed a provocative and challenging place from which to begin the curatorial project and suggest a process of selecting the books with which it might conduct a set of fascinating dialogues.

Thus *Prose du Transsibérien* itself prompted a decision to make it the first book on this current exhibition [Fig. 1/Catalogue image 001] in turn, proposing two important elements of the curatorial process which might follow. The first was to unpack the work's visual and thematic elements in order to establish a set of curatorial themes in which the selected contemporary artists' books in the collection would be exhibited. This is discussed in greater depth later.

The second was to go back to Castleman's catalogue in which, mostly, *livres d'artistes*,⁶ fine press|

First page of catalogue essay *Simultaneous Journeys: Thematics in the Curating of Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection*.

In *Booknesses; Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection* (2017)
Submission Five: Annexure E

Submission Seven: Annexure G

Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books. FADA Gallery. 24 March – 5 May 2017. Exhibition catalogue, Department of Visual Art, Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture, UJ, Johannesburg, South Africa. Compiled, organised by David Paton and edited by Eugene Hön

Online exhibition catalogue

The PDF version of the catalogue is available at:

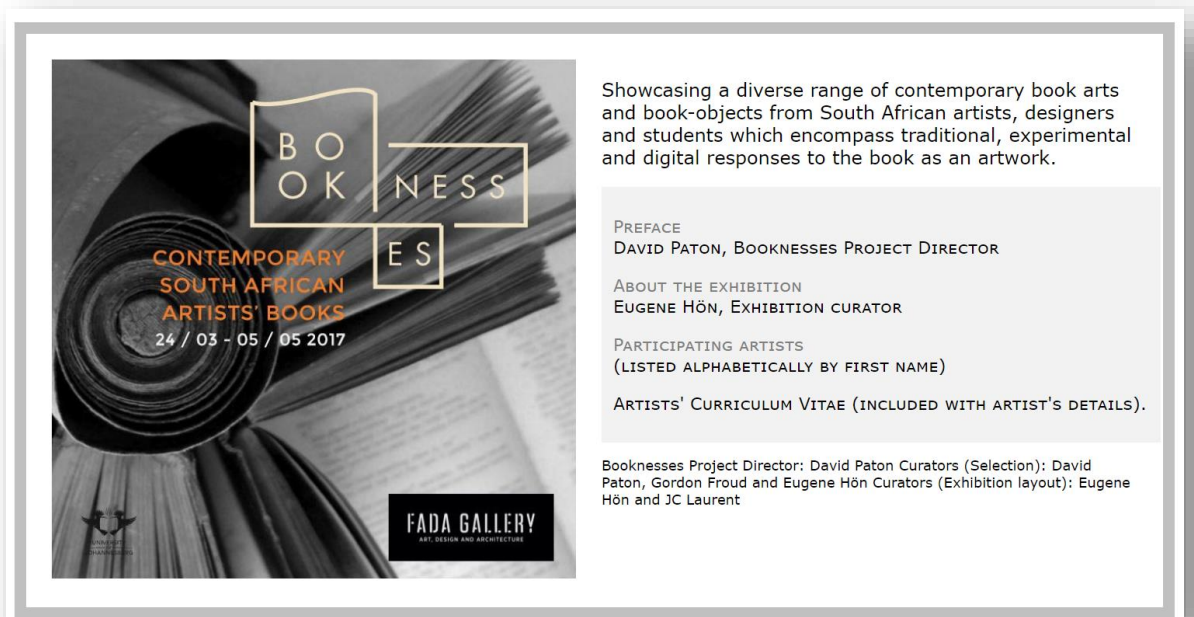
http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/booknesses/downloads/booknesses_fada_catalogue.pdf

The interactive online version of the catalogue is available at:

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=booknesses&pgsub=exhibitions&pgsub1=fada>



Cover of the PDF catalogue, *Booknesses: Contemporary South African Artists' Books*. FADA Gallery 24 March – 5 May 2017.



Screengrab of the interactive online catalogue

Area of Focus Three: Documenting

The online documentation of artists' books – databases and the acknowledgement of affect

Submission Eight: Annexure H

Research website

The website can be accessed at: <http://www.theartistsbook.org.za>

Please also see Appendix Six, Seven and Eight in the Commentary

National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences Award (2018)
(Appendix Eight)

Artists' Books in South Africa



DATABASE OF SA ARTISTS' BOOKS | EXHIBITIONS | TEXTUAL RESEARCH
NEWS | FEATURED SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST'S BOOK | ONLINE RESOURCES
JACK GINSBERG BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ARTISTS' BOOKS | BOOKNESSES ARCHIVE



THIS WEBSITE EXPLORES RESEARCH, PRACTICE, PRODUCTION, COLLECTING AND DOCUMENTING OF ARTISTS' BOOKS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The site accounts for the presence and nature of the artist's book in South Africa. It consists of textual research conducted on the history, contemporary context and theoretical positioning of the artist's book; interactive digital catalogues of major exhibitions of artists' books held in South Africa; a searchable database of all South African artists' books thus far researched; links to online resources and related sites of interest; news on book arts events as well as featured artists' books.

At the centre of much of our exploration are *The Jack Ginsberg Artists' Books Collections* which consist of *The Collection of South African Artists' Books*, *The Collection of International Artists' Books*, and *The Collection on Artists' Books*. You can also find the *Bibliography of The Jack Ginsberg Collection on Artists' Books*, which is an index to thousands of printed items (books, scholarly texts, catalogues, pamphlets, tracts etc.) on artists' books, collected by Jack Ginsberg over the last forty-five years. This bibliography will be of great interest to collectors, librarians and scholars of the artist's book.

New to the site is the archive of the Booknesses set of projects which took place at the University of Johannesburg in March and April 2017. This rich resource comprises new exhibitions, textual outputs and photographic documentation of this complex project.



Go to the Booknesses Archive

» BOOK ARTS NEWSLETTER No. 125
The latest Book Arts Newsletter No 125 mid-April - June 2019 is now ready for download



» THE OPENING OF THE JACK GINSBERG CENTRE FOR BOOK ARTS (JGCB)A
The opening event takes place on Tuesday 26 March 2019



» ARTISTS' BOOKS IN SOUTH AFRICA WINS IN THE CATEGORY 'DIGITAL HUMANITIES' AT THE 2018 NIHSS AWARDS
This website was adjudged the overall winner in the category 'Digital Humanities: Best Visualisation or Infographic'



Artists' Books in South Africa



DATABASE OF SA ARTISTS' BOOKS | EXHIBITIONS | TEXTUAL RESEARCH
NEWS | FEATURED SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST'S BOOK | ONLINE RESOURCES
JACK GINSBERG BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ARTISTS' BOOKS | BOOKKNESSES ARCHIVE



ARTISTS' BOOKS IN SOUTH AFRICA WINS IN THE CATEGORY 'DIGITAL HUMANITIES' AT THE 2018 NIHSS AWARDS

Artists' Books in South Africa is thrilled to announce that our website has won the *Digital Humanities: Best Visualisation or Infographic* category at this year's prestigious National Institute for the Humanities and Social Science (NIHSS) Awards - held on Thursday 14 March at the Market Theatre, Johannesburg.

The Judges,
Dr. Thoko Mnisi, Higher Education and Development Unit, UKZN (Chair)
Prof. Chaka Chaka, Dept. English Studies, UNISA and
Joyce Myeza, UKZN stated: *'The project is presented in an excellent manner, a searchable database of all South African artists' books thus far researched; links to online resources and related sites of interest; news on book arts events as well as featured artists' books. The website exposes and supports research, practice, production, collecting and documenting of artist books in South Africa.'*



» [NIHSS website](#)

Download

- » 2018 NIHSS article: HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AWARDS: Book, Creative Collection and Digital Contribution see a substantial growth in entries
- » The Winners of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards: Book, Creative Collection and Digital Contribution 2018 reflect the relevance and vibrancy of South Africa's HSS community



Photo: NIHSS



Photo: NIHSS



Photo: NIHSS



Photo: NIHSS



Photo: NIHSS



Photo: NIHSS



David Paton in conversation with retired Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke at the NIHSS Awards



Photo: NIHSS

Comments

Submissions Nine A&B: Annexure H

Online interactive databases

Submission 9A: *Database of South African Artists' Books* is available at:

http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view_collod.asp?pg=collod_search&collod_opt=basic

Submission 9B: Database of the Jack Ginsberg Archive of books on Artists' Books is available at:

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=library>

NB: Please note that a login *Username* and *Password* is required to access this database. For access please use the following:

Username: Assessment

Password: Sunderland

Artists' Books in South Africa



DATABASE OF SA ARTISTS' BOOKS | EXHIBITIONS | TEXTUAL RESEARCH
NEWS | FEATURED SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST'S BOOK | ONLINE RESOURCES
JACK GINSBERG BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ARTISTS' BOOKS | BOOKNESSES ARCHIVE

DATABASE OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS' BOOKS

SEARCH OPTIONS: [BASIC](#) | [GUIDED](#) | [BROWSE](#) | [ADVANCED](#)

Guided Search Option

OPTIONS: [LOOK UP ARTIST](#) | [LOOK UP ARTWORKS](#) | [COMPLETE LIST](#)

Look up ARTIST

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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Artists' Books in South Africa



DATABASE OF SA ARTISTS' BOOKS | EXHIBITIONS | TEXTUAL RESEARCH
NEWS | FEATURED SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST'S BOOK | ONLINE RESOURCES
JACK GINSBERG BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ARTISTS' BOOKS | BOOKNESSES ARCHIVE

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE JACK GINSBERG COLLECTION ON ARTISTS' BOOKS


[HOME](#) | [LOGIN](#)

This Bibliography concerns the world-wide literature on the field of the Artist's Book and does not include Artists' Books themselves.

Please logon using your **Username** and **Password**. If you do not yet have a Username and Password, click on **Register** and follow the prompts. Applications for registration will be responded to within 24 hours.

Username:

Password:

 You will need to register to access the archive - [Click here](#)

Submission Ten: Annexure I

Peer-reviewed, presented and published conference paper:

['A Great Idea at the Time': Cataloguing South Africa's Artist's Book Production](#)

(click for online access)

Proceedings of the 81st IFLA General Conference and Assembly of the IFLA World Library and Information Congress - *Turning the Tables: Documenting Art in a Global Context*. 15-21 August 2015, Cape Town, South Africa

‘A Great Idea at the Time’: Cataloguing South Africa’s Artist’s Book Production

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Abstract:

*Since 2006, Jack Ginsberg, the internationally renowned private collector of artists’ books and I have set about creating a database of every artist’s book produced in South Africa. By isolating the South African books in the Ginsberg Collection as well as the books I had come across in my research, we began to construct not only a bespoke database but also a wild bibliographic dream. It was hoped that this dream would gain such momentum within the South African book arts community that awareness of its existence as an index of a fledgling activity might promote the making of more objects which would then surpass the database’s ability to keep up with production. One of the most well documented problems facing appropriate mechanisms for the cataloguing for artists’ books is grappling with the hybrid nature of the items to be catalogued, each of which claims some territory within the disputed space of the book arts. This paper examines the progress of our database and discusses problems associated with its necessary refinement. Taking Anne Thurmann-Jajes’ *Manual for Artists’ Publications* (2010) as a point of departure, the paper examines three South African artists’ books which represent both the diversity of the field and the complexity of the cataloguing task. The paper suggests a local set of descriptors of types of artists’ books that help to describe the South African output more meaningfully.*

Keywords: Ginsberg Collection, South African artists’ books, online database, catalogue

For all their undeniable visual appeal, artists’ books can be a trial to the cataloger.

Elizabeth Lilker. Review of *Artists’ Books: a Cataloguer’s Manual* (2009:47).

As part of my Masters degree titled *South African Artists Books and Book-objects Since 1960*, completed in 2000, I included an inventory that documented each book and book-object I had found during my research. By identifying all the South African books in Jack Ginsberg’s renowned Johannesburg-based private collection of artists’ books (Fig.1), as well as the books I had come across during my postgraduate studies, our research associate Rosalind Cleaver and I set about creating a wild bibliographic dream. The dream took the form of an accurate database

cataloguing the bibliographic data of every artist's book produced in the country, and we believed this to be a viable project at the time. It was facilitated by Cape Town-based Peter Dennis of Logos Flow, whose suite of on- and off-line database software kept track of the multi-faceted Ginsberg Collections which include artists' books, and over 3000 books, tracts, catalogues, dissertations and journal articles on the Book Arts.

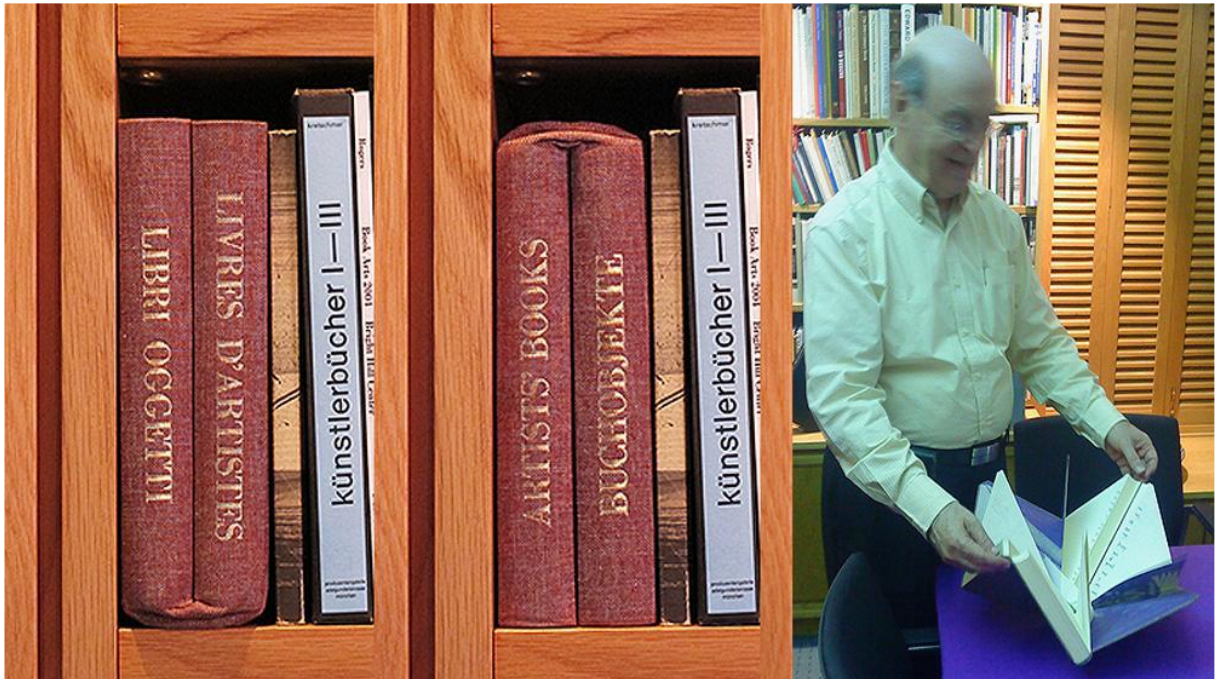


Fig.1. View of Jack Ginsberg in his library of artists' books. Johannesburg, 2014. Photograph: David Paton.

Logos Flow's off-line Resource Management Database allows Ginsberg to compartmentalise the various categories within his collections, for example, artists' books as distinct from books on artists' books. In the early part of our collaboration, the Resource Management Database also offered me the means to extend and annotate my rudimentary post-Masters database of books which lay outside of the Ginsberg Collection. Thus this software became the connective tissue between these two separate databases.

In 2006, Ginsberg, Cleaver, Dennis and I took the decision to make available a searchable on-line database of South African artists' books for the first time on the website www.theartistsbook.org.za. Given where we find ourselves today, we can no longer presumptuously hope to represent 'the output of a nation'; rather our project now reflects the growing diversity of artist's book production in South Africa.

It is one thing for Ginsberg to document his private collection in the manner which best suits him and quite another to make this information public and thus open to scrutiny and criticism. Such scrutiny involves the general public who wants logical, easy access to information of interest; researchers who require credible, accurate and meaningful returns on their search terms; and bibliophiles who require data to adhere to at least the basic rules and requirements of current cataloguing codes such as *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2nd Edition* (AACR2), *Machine-Readable Cataloging standards* (MARC 21) and *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH) approved lists. Whilst none of the four protagonists in this story are librarians or have

formal training in Library Sciences, Ginsberg (2013:iii) has long been interested in the rather esoteric field of bibliography and enjoys the vicarious reading of bibliographies and bibliographical theory. For many years he kept a simple card index of his collection but has converted to Logos Flow's electronic database making searches much easier and the publication of bibliographies such as his feasible.

Coming at artists' books' complexity, multi-modal and multiplicitous forms from a bibliographic perspective is Anne Thurmann-Jajes' *Manual for Artists' Publications (MAP): Cataloguing Rules, Definitions, and Descriptions* (2010). This book is in Ginsberg's collection and its content formed part of our earlier debates on how we might nuance the sub-categories of artists' books on our database. This book and our debates led to the writing of this paper. Her point of departure is to provide cataloguing criteria for fourteen forms of artists' published output including records, audio cassettes and CDs, films and videos, photographic editions, graphic work, multiples as well as ephemera. Thurmann-Jajes separates 'artists' books' from distinct other categories such as 'artists' magazines and newspapers', 'edition objects' and 'multiples'. Of interest to our project is the manner in which she lists discrete *Primary Subform* for artists' books (which she defines as "characteristic as original artists' books" (p52)), *Secondary Subforms* (which she defines as "facultatively associated with artists' books based upon their content-related references" (p52)), and *Genres* (defined as "the thematic areas in which the artist's book as a medium is conceptually involved" (p52) and thus an almost limitless list). For the purposes of our cataloguing project, the Collection On-line Database organises and manages data in item-centric and producer-centric modes that interact with and cross-reference each other. In item-centric mode the fields: Item (display) Title; Description; Medium; Measurements; Inscription; Edition; Dates and Keywords, amongst others, appear. It is within this mode that our latest and most important work has been done.

In producer-centric mode fields for the Artist and other Producers' Names; Biographic data; Nationality; Gender; Exhibitions; Education; Awards as well as Keywords appear and these fields are accompanied by metadata including assigned and reference numbers, filters and website links.

Contemporary debates in the field of the book arts regarding what does and what does not constitute an artist's book as well as the complexities and stresses associated with their appropriate cataloguing in public collections have elicited many and varied responses. As far back as 1991, Timothy Shipe (1991:24) stated that:

The thing to remember in considering artists' books is that AACR2 is a standard for *bibliographic* description. When a library catalogs an artist's book, the work is being described in its aspect as a bibliographic entity, not as an art object. ... The art-object aspect of the artist's book is provided for in subject cataloging. ... This is perfectly adequate for artists' books which do not play with the traditional format of the book. It may or may not be adequate for the sort of artist's book that experiments in a radical way with our expectations of the book format or with our very definition of a book. The question is: should the description of a work in a library catalog be as complete as a museum description?

In *Artists' Books and Beyond: The Library of the Museum of Modern Art as a Curatorial and Research Resource* Janis Ekdahl (1999:247) describes the need for expanding the reference to artists' books. She states that:

At MoMA the basic bibliographic record is amplified, when appropriate, with descriptions of physical characteristics and subject matter. ... Also awareness of the collection is enhanced through exhibitions ... The Library also has a small display area where artists' books are regularly featured.

Ekdahl's reference to an 'amplified' database which is enhanced by exhibitions and displays forges a potent argument for a tripartite relationship between library, living database and gallery (whether real or virtual) in order to cope with artists' books' often delinquent nature.

Andrea Chemero, Caroline Seigel and Terrie Wilson's (2000:23) survey on collecting, cataloguing and preserving artists' books in US libraries also emphasises promotion, book exhibitions and displays as well as the importance of "expanded descriptions" in the cataloguing process.

In her revealingly titled article *Artists' Books: Managing the Unmanageable*, Nola Farman (2007:324) states that

the librarian must show some skills that could be associated with forensic science! Within the library's organizational scheme, that is usually constructed for the written word, it is difficult to identify and systematically organise visual play and especially that which skips between word, image and material.

What is evident is that artists' books not only concern departments of Visual Art but also graduate courses in Library Sciences. In her PhD thesis completed in the School of Library & Information Studies, University of Alabama in 2013, Amanda Roth Clarke (2013:153) states: "Foundational to the cataloging of artists' books however, may be simply an empathy for the genre", an idea which has implications for my South African exemplars later in this paper. Clarke mentions Louise Kulp's *Artists' Books in Libraries: A Review of the Literature* (2005) in which Kulp (2005:7) describes Stanford cataloger Kay Teel's article *Challenges to Cataloging Artists' Books*, as "a refreshing antidote to the anxious, technical, and procedurally heavy approach that many authors take to the topic". Teel (in Kulp 2005:7) continues with her now famous encouragement to "[u]se the cataloging tools you have and use them freely, exploiting the fullest flexibility of the MARC record. ... In short, 'stop agonizing!'". Kulp (2005:7) also describes Carnegie Mellon book collection custodian Maureen Dawley's citing of "*binding* (e.g., codex, concertina, spiral, stab, etc.) as the most searched-for artists' book descriptor. Thus, the factor that poses the biggest challenge to catalogers, description, is also the most crucial for access". Annie Herlocker's 2012 (in Myers & Myers 2014:62) survey of academic libraries with artists' book collections indicates that students are most likely to request artists' books by searching for specific binding types, subjects and materials, "making the structure of the book at least as important as the subject matter and intellectual content".

In her Masters dissertation *Categorizing the Unique: Analyzing Artists' Books for a Framework of Description* (2005), Michelle Stover (2005:19) found that artists' books "... wide ranging differences in form, method, and subject made it almost impossible to unify categories of description" and that "... it is not the catalogers [sic] place to ascribe meaning" (2005:25). Even "enhanced cataloguing" (2005:42) proved unhelpful, a realisation echoed in Ann and William Myers' article *Opening Artists' Books to the User* (2014) where their cataloguing project, completed in line with MARC and AACR2 criteria, required an even fuller record in which "intellectual content" (2014:62) and "artist's intention" (2014:65) were recorded in extensive prose notes. Myers & Meyers state (2014:65) however, that "even the more complete record stumbles on the fact that the work covers so many topics, often in a cursory or even free associational way, that it is difficult to represent what the book is 'about'". Stover's solution was the creation of a separate database facilitating complex searching from multiple access points in support of the curriculum and/or mission of the institution served at a local level and, if possible, should include images as they clarify the physical embodiment of the work (2005:45). Stover (2005:46-47) concludes her study with an important observation that in order to understand, accommodate, describe and catalogue a group of objects as unique and idiosyncratic as an artist's book collection "one must spend countless hours with the books, turning their pages, learning their tricks, feeling their materials, examining their story lines", thus describing how a cataloguer acquires what Clarke (2013:153) terms "an empathy for the genre".

It is clear that any online cataloguing project needs to be logical, navigable and useful in terms of its responsiveness to search terms as well as in its level of descriptiveness of items that are returned in general searches. In relation to the particular space of our private-public project, however, we are able to work a little outside of the conventions and rules to which a public or academic library would need to adhere. It is also clear from the above references that something richer, more affectively in tune with the book-as-artwork, is needed in the record. Thurmann-Jajes' fourteen *Forms* identified in her *Cataloguing Rules, Definitions, and Descriptions* (2010), although useful in terms of large and complex organisational structures do not help our project's specific focus upon the idiosyncrasies of South African artist's book production. It has also become clear, that our ubiquitous and blunt entry for the field *Category Type* which read 'South African Artist's Book', no longer sufficed and was in need of nuancing and greater complexity especially given the fact that the site specifically documents and catalogues South African artists' books, what Shipe (1991:23) enviously describes as "... a library that collects nothing but artists' books". The task at hand is to populate our newly created fields; *Category*, *Type*, *Subtype* and *Theme(s)* for each item so as to leverage not only the most useful and appropriate *Definitions, and Descriptions* which Thurmann-Jajes suggests, but also acknowledge that this implies conflating the suggested entries for *Category Forms* such as 'Artists' Magazines' and 'Newspapers' as well as 'Book Objects' and 'Multiples', and their associated *Primary Subforms*. For us, this would pull into the gravitational field of the artist's book, *Primary Subforms* such as 'Object magazine' or 'Newspaper', 'Broadside', and more critically, 'Book-object', as well as 'Book-shaped-object' (BSO), 'Book sculpture', 'Object in book form', 'Book installation', 'Book multiple', 'Photo book', 'Typewriter work', 'Artist's postcards' and any related book-based ephemera. Thus we have conflated the very categories Thurmann-Jajes has worked so hard to differentiate!

One of the more advantageous elements of contemporary online databases and catalogues is the presence of imagery. Such imagistic presence evokes Ekdahl's (1999:247) and Chemero's et.al, (2000:23) references to an 'amplified' database which is enhanced by the exhibition of exemplars as well as Stover's (2005:16) recommendation for such inclusion within a parallel database. The availability and presence of digital images are described in Georgia Harper's (in Shincavich 2004:11) "rules of thumb" of fair use as: without any commercial value; used for academic and research purposes; in low resolution (72ppi) not for printing; with limited on-screen enlargement capability; with the reproduced elements being a small proportion of the totality of the work thus having little effect on the market of the original work. Our website states the following on its home page: "All artists' books are copyright to the artist or owner. If there are any queries in this regard, you are welcome to contact us". Images have thus become a mini exhibition of the work, amplifying its catalogue entry under physical description, subject matter, genre and content. This is evident in the local exemplars discussed below.

I now briefly discuss three very different South African exemplars. The purpose of this is to glimpse, firstly, diversity within the local field, secondly, speculate upon our new fields; *Category, Type, Subtype* and *Theme(s)* with which these books might be associated, fields which have been strategically modified, added to and renamed in response to the research and writing of this paper. Thirdly, suggest an appropriate place for the storing of collections of such items – especially the future home of the Ginsberg Collections. In this regard it is important to state that, unlike the ubiquitous collections of artists' books associated with American universities, no single South African university as yet contains a meaningful body of artists' books in its Special Collections. I argue then that a library specifically attached to an art gallery, in other words the library of the art gallery of a university is the most appropriate place for the future housing of these artists' books in a South African context.

Exemplar one (Fig.2)

Antibody (1993)

Belinda Blignaut

Johanna Drucker (2003:sp) states that artists' books "... mark the shift from the conception of books as artifacts, or documents as vehicles for delivery of content, and instead demonstrate the living, dynamic nature of works as produced by interpretive acts". Earlier, Drucker (1995:161) describes how artists' books exploit the structural, technical and graphic conceits that call attention to the conventions by which, through constant exposure, a book normally neutralises its identity.

Blignaut's codex is an excellent example of these characteristics of the artist's book: the interrogation of bookness in such a way that self-consciousness and reflexivity are typical interpretive acts. What I mean by this is that a book is 'aware of itself' as a work of art by reflexively pointing toward its content through the agency of its own structural elements, materiality and navigability. In this exemplar, the small, square, spiral-bound book begins to communicate its content metaphorically through its cover's materiality. The cover boards are pieces of thin aluminium plate with the front cover cut and sutured from the bottom up. The

bleak transparency of the texts and images bleeds between the pages suggesting the depth of the wound whilst the book's temporal aspect indexes the period of time over which damage is done. Very few books manage to integrate the cover board with the internal pages as successfully as Blignaut has done, by means of the signification of aluminium and acetate as skin and tissue.

If the self-conscious interrogation of the material from which a book is made is often characteristic of artists' books, then all other physical determinants are equally subject to such interrogation. The shape and physical structure of books are obvious aspects that artists can manipulate in pursuit of meaning. However if a characteristic of the artist's book is the manner in which bookness is interrogated as more than a mere container of information delivery, then this very self-consciousness and reflexivity needs to be brought into the descriptive field on the database. Finding an appropriate place in the record helps to capture the spirit of the artist's intent and the book's content over and above the cool, detached and perfunctory list of necessary bibliographic facts: an inclusion of connoted *with* denotative information, the affective along with the factual. We have responded to Janges, Shipe, Meyers & Meyers and Stover by including a field in which such affective and reflexive content can be reflected, making our record for *Antibody* more nuanced, complex and complete than ever before.

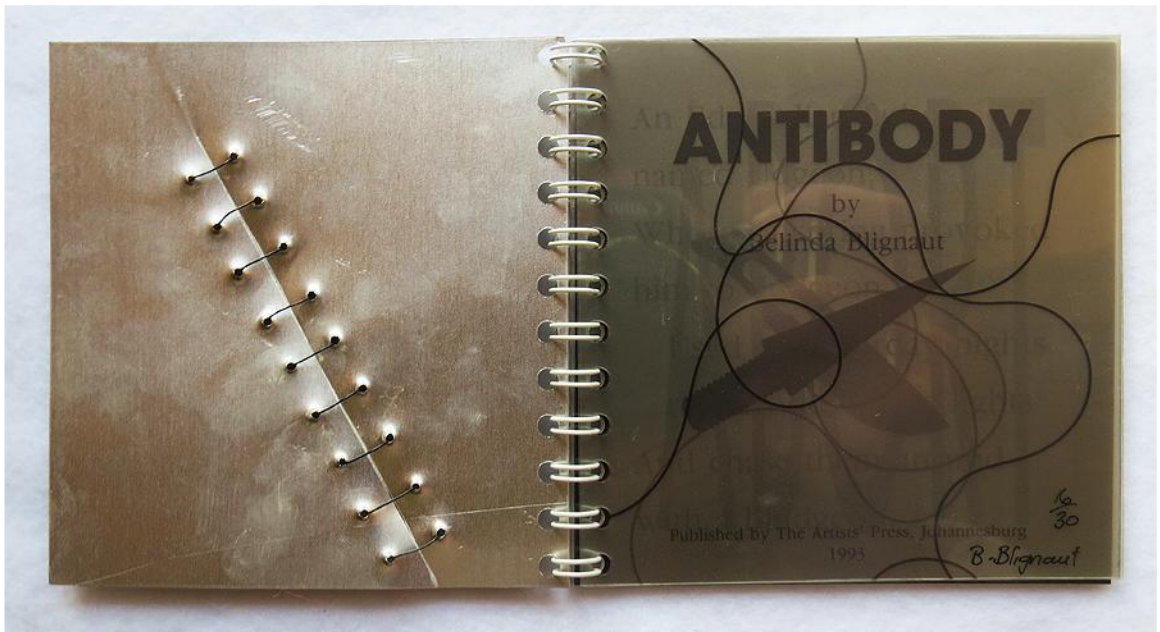


Fig.2. Belinda Blignaut. *Antibody*. 1993. 100mm (h). Photographic acetate positives, aluminium and nylon. Edition: #16/30. Photograph: David Paton.

Exemplar two (Fig.3)

Fire Walker William Kentridge. Gerard Marx. (2011)

William Kentridge - (title & artist) **Gerard Marx** - (title & artist) **Oliver Barstow** - (edited and designed by) **Bronwyn Law-Viljoen** - (edited with an introduction by)

The project is devoted to an ordinary South African woman who arrives on the streets of Johannesburg carrying a burning brazier on her head, ready to cook her day's ration of corn-on-the-cob which she sells to passers-by. The book is part of a larger project that includes a public sculpture in downtown Johannesburg.

Our entry reflects the presence of a book in a half-slipcase in red, annotated with eight *Articles* which index the interviews, textual and photographic essays found in the book. Our entry also notes the presence of a print by Marx titled *Foot Map* and another by Kentridge titled *Goldmann's South African Mining and Finance*, numbered, as is the edition as a whole, 27/40. Our entry also acknowledges the steel cutout of the Fire Walker inserted into the cover. However, even if we were

to include an entry in the *Genre* field such as Thurmann-Jajes suggests, a field we have titled *Theme(s)*, what entry might appropriately capture the essence of Marx's and Kentridge's words: "urban and rural mores colliding in the wildly textured and richly flavoured economic melting pot of the city" or "a twentieth-century Johannesburg archetype that is fast fading from the picture"? Kentridge and Marx's project is not a book *about* the idiosyncratic Fire Walker; it is a multimodal, multidimensional monument to a uniquely African custom that is encountered on the streets of Johannesburg. Some images, which accompany the bibliographic entry, show the above texts in contextual relation to the book, its slipcase as well as the producers' wider project reflected in the 'Associated Articles' section. The text is also fully recorded in the *Reference Note* field. This provides an example of what Ekdahl (1999:247) might refer to as an "amplified" bibliographic record. Our catalogue entry and denotative fields of images and texts attempt to reflect the project's affective content. Without these diverse signifiers the essential quality of the 'art project' slips its moorings and the perfunctory entry for the 'book' remains.

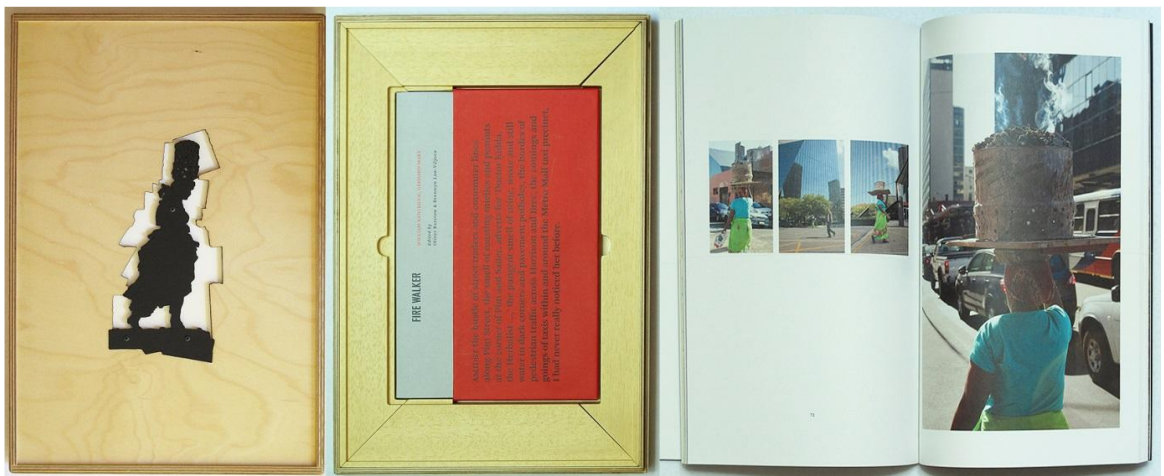


Fig.3. William Kentridge & Gerard Marx. *Fire Walker*. 2011. 452 x 357mm (box). Relief print, lithograph, collage, metal inlay in wood. Edition: #27/40. Photograph: David Paton.

Exemplar three (Fig.4) *Bidmat [Prayer Mat]* (2010) **Stephan Erasmus**

Erasmus's fastidious approach to his making practice is evident in this work. Every Bible verse in the Old Testament containing the word 'land' has been collected and printed in consideration of the complex relationship between physical and 'God-given' land in peculiarly South African, religious, political and personal terms. The verses of text have been cut into strips and woven into the form of a scroll with cotton thread. Every woven section contains five lines of text. Its self-

conscious and reflexive characteristics, so critical to the larger project which is the artist's book, references the origins of legal and religious texts and the book itself. The scroll's source is the Bible, itself originally constructed from a body of other, independent scrolls, thus here, the scroll becomes a self-conscious meditation on the history of its own form. Furthermore, the scroll problematises the notion of a book predicated upon the aura of the codex's navigability and structural integrity as well as its conventions of legibility in the reading/viewing of text/image relationships. Not only must the bibliographic entry find a way of acknowledging the affective elements so critical to the very heart of artists' books existential meanings we have also attempted to describe the manner in which this affect is delivered, i.e. through the documentation of key characteristics of such works' bookness: self-consciousness and reflexivity. Finally, *Bidmat* is an extremely fragile document requiring a box in order to protect it as well as facilitate its physical position and location on a library shelf.

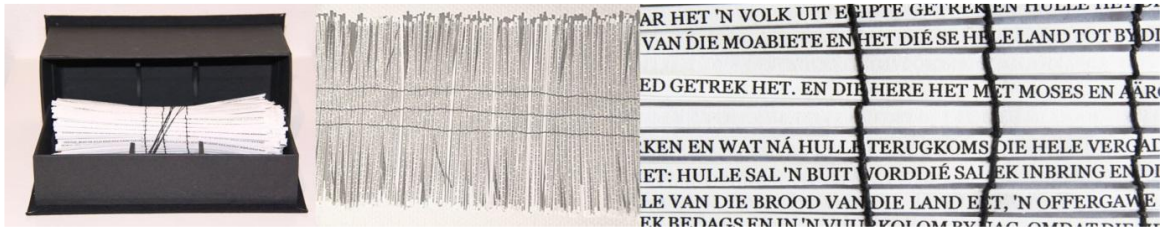


Fig.4. Stephan Erasmus. *Bidmat* [Prayer Mat]. 2010. 272mm. Fabriano paper, digital print and cotton thread. Edition: #1/5. Photograph: David Paton.

Conclusion

Our wild bibliographic dream has proven to be both hugely successful whilst at the same time an utter failure. If a meaningful catalogue of South African artists' books is to be matured then the affective qualities of the field and their self-conscious and reflexive elements too require documentation so as not to let the 'art' slip its moorings and float away from the denotative, perfunctory information for a 'book'. Artists' books are not merely carriers of information in convenient form. If, as Drucker (1995:161) states, the artist's book must demonstrate its intrinsic "bookness"; be conscious of and/or challenge its own book identity; be politically charged and/or socially critical; be artistically avant-garde; and represent the artist, it seems critical for all our bibliographies to help reflect the very qualities which differentiate these objects from mere books.

The writing of this paper and its associated research into similar concerns by others has prompted a response. In particular we have begun to leverage Thurmann-Jajes' (2010) *Primary and Secondary Subforms and Genres* in new and revised fields in the bibliographic record of the database in order to define, categorise and describe South African artists' books more fully. During the latter stages of writing this paper, Dennis and I reformed the following fields on the website so as to amplify the data:

In *Category* we list one of the following:

- South African Artist's Book
- South African Digital Artist's Book
- South African Artist's Zine (including magazines, and newspapers)
- South African Book Object
- South African Book-shaped Object

- South African Broadside
- Any other basic category where it arises

In *Type* we are now able to isolate bindings and structures such as:

- Codex
- Scroll
- Leporello
- Pop-up
- Pop-down
- Tunnel Book
- Folio
- Set of cards, etc.

In *Sub-type* we have responded to Thurmann-Jajes' description of the artist's role in the publication, narrativised as, for example:

- Artist as sole producer
- Artist as concept and item producer with one other (typesetter)
- Artists and multiple producers
- Artist as illustrator, etc.

Most importantly, in our new field *Theme(s)* we respond to Thurmann-Jajes' *Genres*, Meyers & Meyers', Stover's and others' calls for an 'expanded field' in which we are able to include narratives describing characteristics of artists' books as reflexive, self-conscious, structural and materially interpretive acts which help liberate their content, for example:

- Self-conscious and reflexive forms delivering socio-familial commentary on violence (as describes *Antibody*)
- Complex combination of texts and images in socio-economic commentary associated with inner-city Johannesburg (as describes *Firewalker*)
- Reflexive historical book form via repurposed biblical texts for personal socio-political & religious contemplation & commentary (as describes *Bidmat*).

These four fields have been explicitly completed for the three exemplars presented in this paper. The task of completing this empathetically as Clarke (2013:153) suggests, by spending "countless hours with the books, turning their pages, learning their tricks, feeling their materials, examining their story lines" as Stover (2005:46-47) describes, still lies ahead.

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Area of Focus Four: Making

***Speaking in Tongues: Speaking Digitally / Digitally Speaking* – an exemplar of practice**

Submission Eleven: Annexure J

Creative / artefactual output in the form of an artist's book

Please find a copy of the submission as part of the portfolio

The book can be viewed at:

http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view_collod.asp?pg=collod_item&collod_opt=item&ItemID=114

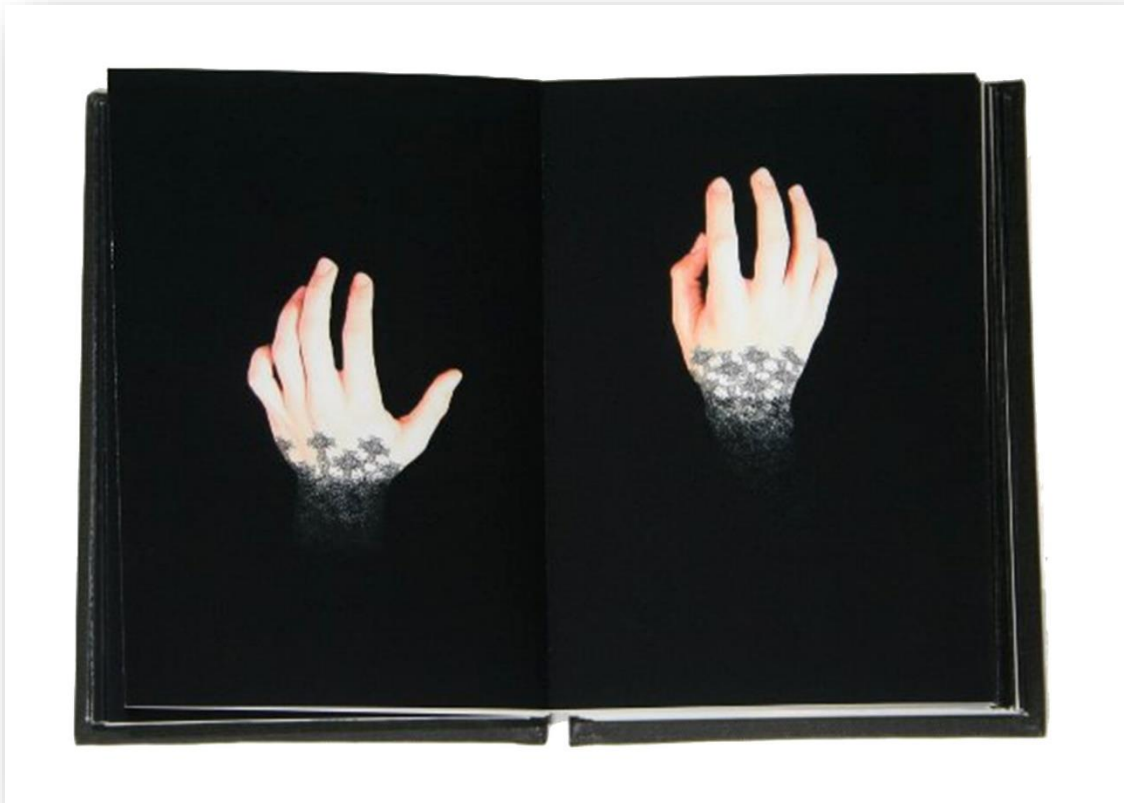
The video can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/282800647>

Peer Reviews of *Speaking in Tongues* can be found in the Appendices in the Commentary:

Peer review of the bookwork by Egidija Čiricaitė artist and curator, London, UK (Appendix Nine)

Peer review of the bookwork by Dr. Stella Bolaki, School of English, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK (Appendix Ten)

Peer review of bookwork by Heléne van Aswegen, master bookbinder, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa (Appendix Eleven).



END