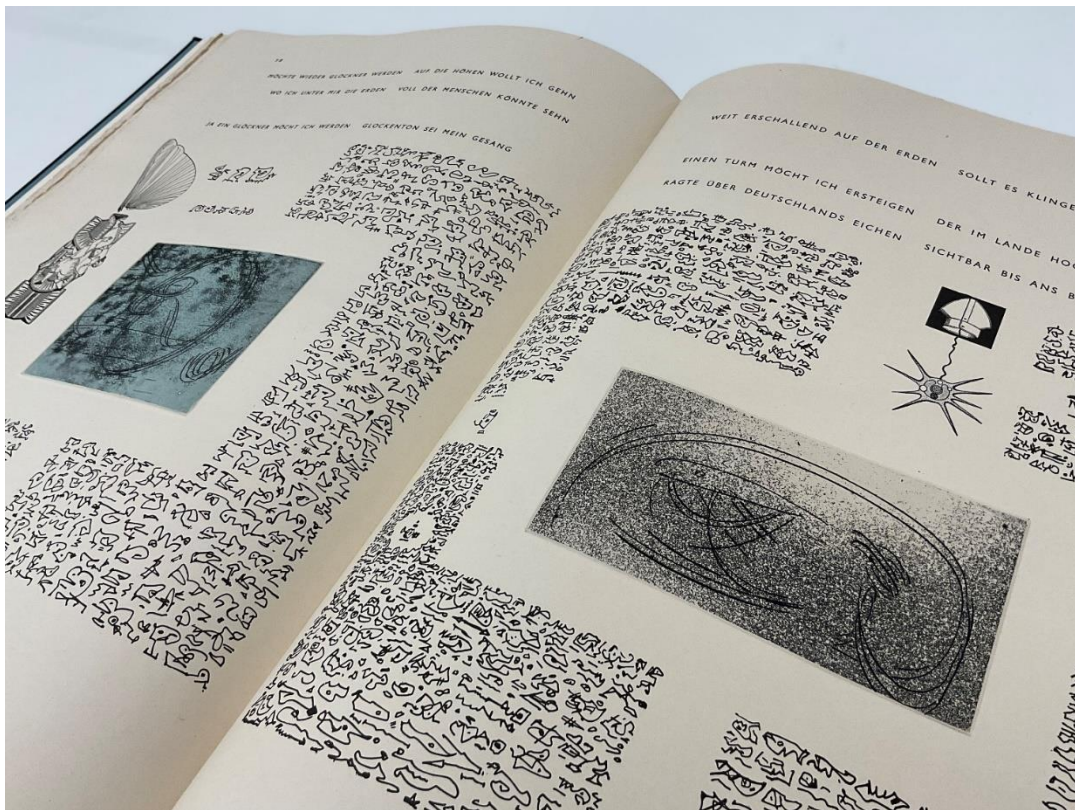


Thoughtforms: The Page as a Liminal Field

24 March – 5 June 2026



**Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts
Wits Art Museum (WAM)**

COVER IMAGE

65 Maximiliana ou L'Exercice Illégal de L'Astronomie

65 Maximiliana or The Illegal Practice of Astronomy

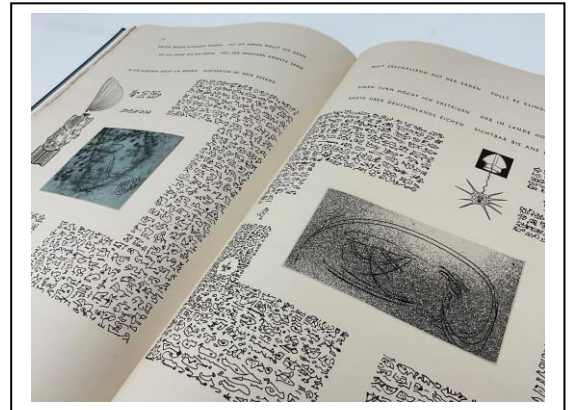
Max Ernst

Iliazd (design by)

Guillaume Tempel (text by)

Iliazd & Le Degré Quarante et Un, Paris. 1964

Edition: One of 75 copies



Thoughtforms: The Page as a Liminal Field

This exhibition of artists' books is an exploration of the 'betwixt and between.' To open a book is to enter a liminal space - a threshold positioned between the spark of an idea and the permanence of the printed mark. While traditional publishing often aims to present 'finished' knowledge, the works in this exhibition reveal the act of thinking as it happens. Here, the page is not merely a surface for recording; it is a field of thinking.

A *thoughtform* is the physical manifestation of an internal cognitive process; it is the moment an idea ceases to be abstract and becomes a mark. Historically, marginalia served as a dialogue between the reader and the text, a way of 'thinking back' to the author. Before the printing press, the page was not considered a sacred, untouchable space, but a site of active conversation. In the era of Incunabula (books printed before 1501), margins were intentionally wide to invite the reader's input. The works explored here reclaim this older tradition, where the reader or artist is an active participant in the book's meaning.

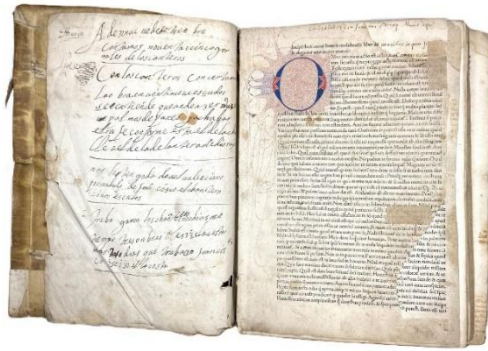
To look at a 1475 copy of Seneca's *Opera Philosophica* is to see a pre-industrial mind at work. Before the clean page took hold, the reader was expected to be a co-author. These pages often bloom with *maniculae* (pointing hands), glosses (explanatory notes), and hand-inked underlining. This was the highlighter of the 15th century, where the act of reading was a physical intervention, a literal thinking back to Seneca across a millennium.

In a leap forward to 1964, we encounter Max Ernst's 65 *Maximiliana ou L'Exercice Illégal de L'Astronomie*. This collaboration with poet/publisher Iliaszd honours the 19th-century self-taught astronomer Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel, whose discovery of an asteroid was ignored by the scientific elite. Ernst combines intricate etchings of celestial bodies with asemic writing - symbols that resemble elegant handwriting but possess no semantic content. This is a visual performance of 'illegal' astronomy. The pages do not offer verifiable data, but rather a rhythmic language that mimics the swirling patterns of the stars. In *Maximiliana*, the line between scientific diagram and surrealist doodle vanishes, capturing the velocity of a mind reaching for the stars through a purely internal logic.

The exhibition traverses diverse typologies of the thoughtform, moving from the analytical to the obsessive. The traditional architecture of annotations, footnotes, and endnotes is transformed into an *avant-garde* visual language where the page becomes the primary site of inquiry. This field expands into Visual Mapping, where the diagram and the doodle are reimagined as central to artistic logic. Finally, the exhibition investigates Redaction and Cancellation, proving that thinking is as much about what we discard as what we keep.

The exhibition invites you to consider the messy and generative pathways where imagination takes physical form. Ultimately, a thoughtform is the residue of creative navigation - the cross-outs, ink blots, and spatial arrangements that reveal an artist searching for a solution. To view these works is to stand at the boundary where an idea finally finds its body.

1



Opera Philosophica. Epistolae

Philosophical Works, Letters

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Blasius Romerus (edited by)

Bernardinus, (from Colonia) (printed by)

Mathius Moravus, Naples, Italy. 1475

Printed only twenty years after the Gutenberg Bible, this 15th-century edition of Seneca's* Stoic philosophy represents a pivotal moment in the history of the book. In this era, the 'finished' text was merely the beginning of a larger cognitive process. Readers of the 1470s did not treat the page as a sacred, untouchable surface; instead, they viewed the wide margins as a space to record their thoughts.

This book introduces the practice of *marginalia* - the handwritten notes and diagrams added by owners over centuries. These marks are the physical residue of an internal search, turning the act of reading into an active dialogue. Look closely for *maniculae* (small hand-drawn pointing fingers) used to index key ideas. Here, the boundary between Seneca's ancient wisdom and the reader's immediate response dissolves, proving that a book is never truly complete until a mind begins to wander across its borders.

*Lucius Annaeus Seneca the Younger, usually known mononymously as Seneca, was a Stoic philosopher of Ancient Rome, a statesman, dramatist, and satirist, from the post-Augustan age of Latin literature.

2



A Nightmare's Resolution

Robbin Ami Silverberg

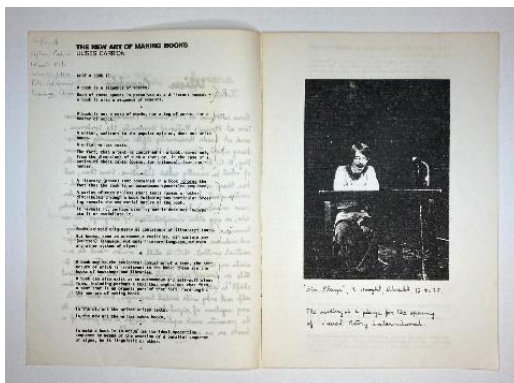
Dobbin Books, Brooklyn, NY. 2007

Edition: #3/10

In this intimate four-book set, the thoughtform functions as a tool for psychological excavation. Silverberg repeatedly attempts to resolve a nightmare involving the death of her father, using the page as a site for both therapy and linguistic refinement. Each subsequent volume contains the edited text of the previous one, layered with fresh handwritten commentary and further revisions.

This process transforms the act of editing into a physical manifestation of grief and acceptance. As the text is scrubbed, rewritten, and layered, the book becomes a palimpsest of a mind trying to find its way out of a trauma. It highlights the recursive nature of thinking, where the residue of a previous thought becomes the foundation for the next. Here, the field of thinking is not just a spatial arrangement, but a temporal one, proving that a thoughtform can be a pathway toward clarity.

3



Contents

Ulises Carrión

Remont Gallery, Warszawa, Poland. 1976

This rare exhibition catalogue, documenting Ulises Carrión's first show at Henryk Gajewski's Galeria Remont, is a primary site of the thoughtform. While it contains an abridged version of the artist's seminal manifesto, "*The New Art of Making Books*," this specific copy is transformed from a static record into a liminal field through Carrión's original hand-written annotations.

The catalogue captures the moment of Carrión's pivot from a Mexican literary *wunderkind* to an *avant-garde* language artist. Carrión treats his own printed text as an invitation for further inquiry. His characteristic bold script and hand annotations act as a modern gloss, indexing his evolving logic and reclaiming the book as a site of physical intervention. By layering new notations over his previous year's manifesto, Carrión presents the page as a field of thinking.

4



Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close

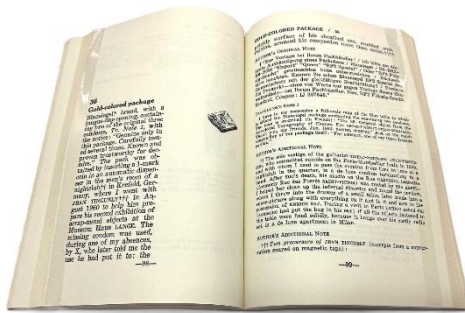
Jonathan Safran Foer

Houghton Mifflin Co, Boston, MA & New York. 2005

Following a young boy's search through New York City for a lock that matches a mysterious key, this novel abandons traditional prose to capture the sensory overload of trauma. The book is an active repository for grief, filled with colour photographs, red inked corrections, and typography that physically compresses as the characters' anxiety peaks.

Foer uses the physical space of the page to map the messy pathways of mourning. In one sequence, the words become so crowded they overlap into illegible black blocks; in another, a series of photographs creates a flipbook of a falling body moving backward, 'rising' toward safety. It is a profound example of how a narrative can manifest as a spatial arrangement, using the physical mark to find a way forward when language fails.

5



An Anecdoted Topography of Chance

Daniel Spoerri

Robert Filliou (assistant)

Emmett Williams (translation)

Roland Topor (illustrations)

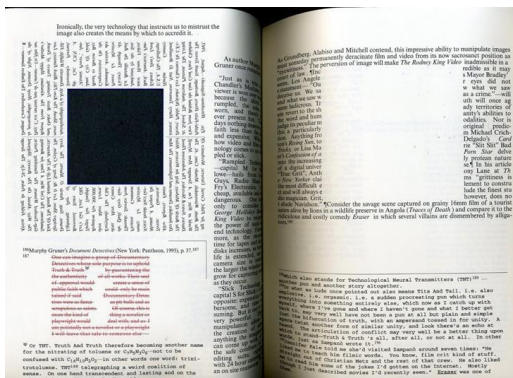
Something Else Press, Inc, New York, Cologne, Paris.

1966

What began as a simple map of eighty objects resting on a table in Daniel Spoerri's hotel room evolved into one of the most complex "thoughtforms" of the 20th century. Spoerri, assisted by Robert Filliou and translated/expanded by Emmett Williams, treats the mundane—a wine cork, a crumb, a safety pin—as an archaeological site. Each object is assigned a number and an 'anecdote', turning the physical layout of a messy desk into a sprawling, non-linear autobiography.

The genius of the *Topography* lies in its recursive *marginalia*. As the book was translated and re-edited, his friends added their own footnotes to his footnotes, creating a dense, conversational thicket of text that threatens to overwhelm the original map. It is the ultimate 'liminal field', where the boundary between a physical object and a fleeting memory is completely erased. Like the Seneca *incunabula*, the *Topography* proves that a single point on a page can contain an infinite universe of human connection.

6



House of Leaves

A Novel

Mark Z. Danielewski

Zampanò

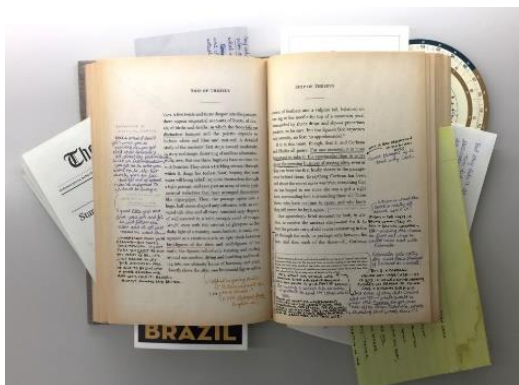
Johnny Truant (introduction and commentaries)

Pantheon Books, New York.2000

This trade publication is a haunting story of a young family moving into a house that is impossibly larger on the outside than on the inside. In its 'maximalist' narrative, the physical design of the book mirrors the shifting geometry of the house. The text is an intermingling of competing voices: a primary story buried under layers of academic footnotes, which are in turn interrupted by frantic, handwritten commentaries in the margins.

The layout functions as a literal maze. Text is printed upside down, sideways, and in claustrophobic boxes, forcing the reader to physically rotate the volume to follow a mind unravelling. It represents an obsessive typology of mark-making, where the margin doesn't just comment on the text - it invades and deforms it. By turning the act of reading into a navigational challenge, Danielewski proves that the page can be a site of psychological struggle and multi-layered entrapment.

7



S.

Ship of Theseus

J. J. Abrams

Doug Dorst

V. M. Straka (pseudonym)

Paul Kepple & Ralph Geroni (design)

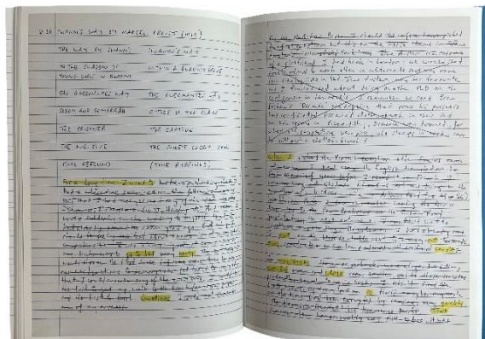
Mulholland Books, Little Brown and Company,

New York. 2013

S. can be seen to represent the obsessive presence of the reader. This project is a modern reclamation of the medieval *marginalia* tradition. When you hold this book, you hold a weathered, fictional 1949 novel titled *The Ship of Theseus*, which has been transformed into a site of intense, layered dialogue.

Every margin becomes a field of thinking, crowded with handwritten notes in different coloured inks, the primary evidence of two readers, Jen and Eric, passing the book back and forth to solve a mystery. The original text is almost swallowed by their collaborative inquiry. Stuffed with physical ephemera like napkins, maps, and postcards, the book forces the reader to move from passive observer to detective. This work proves that the thoughtform is not always a single spark; it can be a dense accumulation of traces.

8



The Nabokov Paper

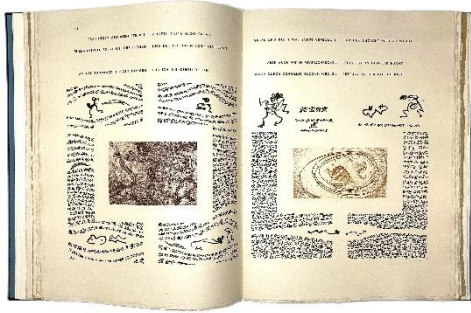
Kate Briggs

Lucrezia Russo

Information as Material, London. 2013

Thinking is rarely a closed loop; often, it is a baton passed from one mind to the next. This project began with the novelist Vladimir Nabokov, who famously composed his books on index cards. Nabokov used these cards and hand-drawn diagrams to map out the complex internal structures of literature for his students, such as the floor plan of the house in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*.

In *The Nabokov Paper*, Kate Briggs invited sixty artists and writers to respond to these pedagogical thought-puzzles. The resulting book is a record of thinking back to both Nabokov and the literature that he taught. It treats the lecture note and the diagram not as instructions, but as generative sparks for new marks. Here, the thoughtform is recursive: it shows how the scaffolding of one person's logic can become the foundation for sixty others to grow their own ideas. It is a visual testament to the fact that the page is a site of active, ongoing conversation.



65 Maximiliana ou L'Exercice Illégal de L'Astronomie

65 Maximiliana or The Illegal Practice of Astronomy

Max Ernst

Iliazd (design)

Guillaume Tempel (text)

Iliazd & Le Degré Quarante et Un, Paris. 1964

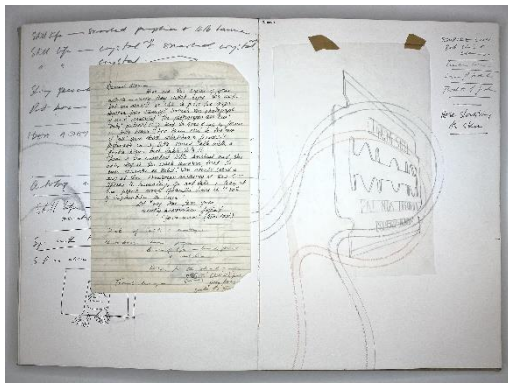
Edition: One of 75 copies

65 *Maximiliana ou L'Exercice Illégal de L'Astronomie* is widely considered one of the most important artist's books of the 20th century, specifically for its integrated design, where typography, etching, and layout are inseparable. It marks a transition from the book as a container of information, to the book as 'spatial architecture' of the mind.

Created in collaboration with the visionary publisher Iliazd, the work is a tribute to Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel, a forgotten 19th-century astronomer whose discoveries were dismissed by the scientific elite. Ernst reimagines Tempel's 'illegal' astronomy not through verifiable data, but through a breathtaking display of asemic writing - symbols that mimic the elegance of handwriting but possess no actual meaning.

In this masterpiece, the line between a scientific diagram and a surrealist doodle entirely vanishes. The pages become a liminal field where the celestial etchings and Ernst's secret script capture the sheer velocity of an idea. This is the thoughtform at its most liberated: a mark of a mind reaching for the stars using a logic that is entirely internal. By moving away from readable language toward a rhythmic, visual performance, *Maximiliana* proved that the page could be a site for 'thinking the unreachable'. It remains a seminal example of how a book can manifest the physical residue of a purely visionary cognitive process.

10



Judith Mason's Dante Bestiary Sketchbook

Including comments on 'Selected Poems' by Patrick Cullinan

Judith Mason

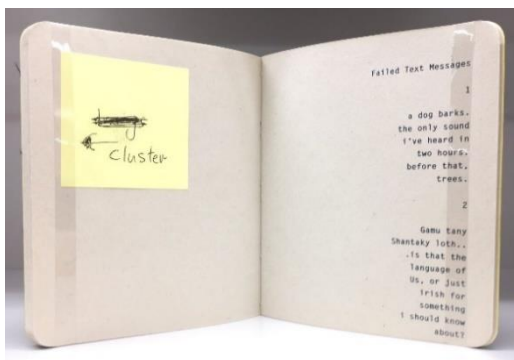
Artists Book, 1990

Edition: Unique

This unique volume offers a rare glimpse into the liminal state of a work in progress. Rather than a traditional blank sketchbook, this is a collection of bound test prints - early iterations of the *Bestiary* images that Mason used as a substrate for further thinking. Across these pages, the artist has layered handwritten planning notes, urgent questions, and newspaper clippings, effectively 'reading' her own work as she created it.

These working proofs demonstrate that the page is not merely a destination for a finished image, but a site of active dialogue. The clippings and *marginalia* anchor Dante's 14th-century vision to the artist's immediate, contemporary reality. By displaying these test prints alongside the final edition, we see the thoughtform as a process of accumulation, a series of adjustments, interruptions, and layers that eventually settle into the clarity of the finished book.

11



Notional

Field Notes

Katie Holton (book artist)

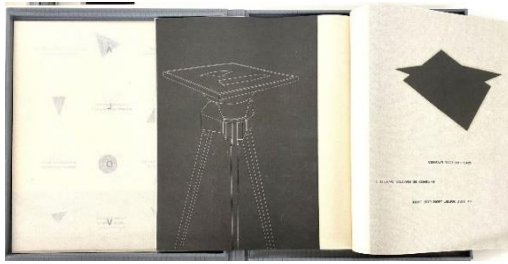
Coracle, Tipperary, Ireland. 1999

Edition: #211/300

This work captures the raw, unedited exhilaration of imagining for its own sake. Printed in blue ink on thick grey paper and punctuated by yellow Post-it notes, the book mimics the fluid state of a personal sketchbook. It is a dense collection of diagrams, musings, and impossible schemes that prioritise the act of dreaming over the production of a finished result.

Holton's notes recall the childhood pleasure of mapping out imaginary territories, treating the page as a limitless horizon rather than a confined space. By including temporary-feeling elements like adhesive notes, she emphasises that the creative process is often transient and evolving. Here, the residue of an internal search is presented as a sprawling fantasy, a map of a mind allowed to wander without a fixed destination.

12



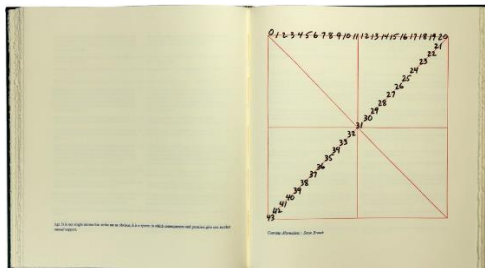
Le Miroir Volatil

François Righi
Robert Marteau (text by)
The artist, Ivoy-le-Pré, France.
Edition: #51/66

In this meticulously crafted work, François Righi acts as a translator of historical mystery. The book transcribes the enigmatic stone emblems found on the ceiling of the Hôtel Lallemand oratory, a site long associated with alchemical symbolism. Using a mirror to capture and flatten these architectural details, Righi transforms the three-dimensional ceiling into a series of spectral, relief-printed etchings.

Accompanying the visual symbols are twenty-eight original mottos by French poet and novelist Robert Marteau, which provide a poetic counterpoint to the cryptic imagery. The inclusion of a drypoint on Rhodoïd (a type of transparent plastic) adds a layer of physical depth and volatility to the viewing experience, as the reader looks through one surface to another.

13



On Certainty

Über Gewissheit
Ludwig Wittgenstein (author)
Arthur C. Danto (introduction by)
Mel Bochner (prints by)
Denis Paul (translated by)
G. E. M. Anscombe (edited and translated by)
G. H. von Wright (edited with a preface by)
Arion Press, San Francisco, CA. 1991
Edition: #158/326

In this bilingual edition of Ludwig Wittgenstein's final reflections, the thoughtform shifts from the linguistic to the mathematical. Accompanying the text is a series of Mel Bochner's minimalist 'Wittgenstein drawings' - a striking synthesis of art and calculation. These diagrams are not mere illustrations; they are a visual extension of the philosopher's inquiry into the nature of doubt and knowledge.

Composed of grids, numbers, and precise directional marks, Bochner's prints echo Wittgenstein's attempt to map the boundaries of human understanding. The page functions as a laboratory where philosophy and geometry converge. By placing these mathematical abstractions alongside the text, the book becomes a literal field of thinking, demonstrating that even the most complex internal cognitive processes require a visual 'scaffolding' to be understood.

14



Diary: How to Improve the World (You Will Only Make Matters Worse)

John Cage

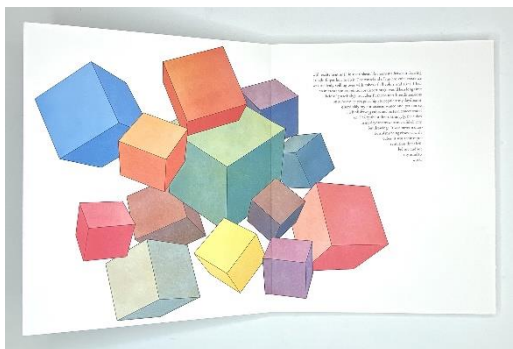
Richard Kraft and Joel Biel (edited by)

Siglio, Los Angeles, CA. 2015

In this sixteen-year repository of observations, anecdotes, and 'koan-like' stories, John Cage applies his signature chance operations to the architecture of the written word. Using his IBM Selectric typewriter, Cage allowed random determination to dictate everything from word count and typeface to colour and the rhythmic patterns of indentation. The result is a text that functions as a physical and aural performance on the page.

Originally published in fragments, this Siglio edition preserves the unusual visual variances that turn Cage's domestic minutiae and global critiques into a musical score. Language here is stripped of its traditional hierarchy; a joke carries the same visual weight as a radical political idea. It embodies the thoughtform as a living process, a diary where the act of thinking is not a linear path, but a shimmering, unpredictable field of sound and silence.

15



Interstices & Intersections or, an Autodidact Comprehends a Cube

Thirteen Euclidean Propositions

Russell Maret

Sir Thomas Little Heath (translation)

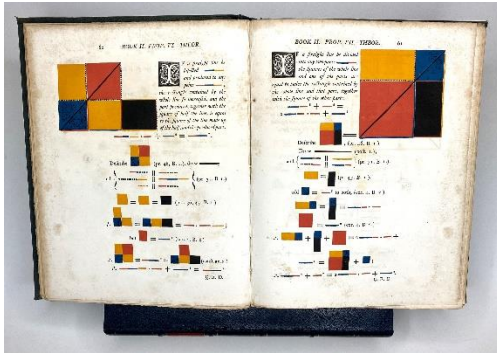
Artists Book, New York. 2014

Edition: #21/75

In this modern dialogue with Euclid, Russell Maret explores the 'interstices', the gaps and spaces, within classical geometry. Drawing on the 1908 translations by Sir Thomas Little Heath, Maret uses the book format to deconstruct thirteen Euclidean propositions, treating the cube not as a static shape, but as a site of intellectual struggle and discovery.

Maret's work is a thoughtform in the truest sense; it captures the process of an autodidact wrestling with complex spatial concepts. Through masterful letterpress printing and abstract compositions, he moves beyond Byrne's clarity into a more philosophical territory. The book becomes an architectural space where the reader navigates the intersections of line, light, and logic, proving that even the most ancient mathematical truths can be reimagined as a contemporary physical experience.

16



The First Six Books of The Elements of Euclid
In which coloured diagrams and symbols are used instead of letters for the greater ease of learners

Oliver Byrne
 Robert Peel (ex libris)
 William Pickering, London. 1847

Before the digital age, Oliver Byrne revolutionised the field of thinking by replacing traditional algebraic letters with vibrant primary colours and geometric symbols. This 1847 edition (once owned by UK Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel) was designed for the greater ease of learners, transforming abstract Greek proofs into a sensory experience.

Byrne's layout treats the page as a functional apparatus. By stripping away the denseness of text, he allows the eye to map the logic of a triangle or a circle instantaneously. It is one of the most celebrated examples of information design in the history of the book, proving that colour is not merely decorative but a language of its own, capable of making the invisible structures of geometry visible and intuitive.

17



Autobiographies
Autobiography #4. Homemade Maps. 180mm.

Scott McCarney
 Artists Book, 1999
 Edition: #7/10

In this volume, the thoughtform is a collective construction. To generate the visual landscape of the book, McCarney approached strangers on the street and asked them for directions, inviting them to draw their mental maps of the city. These hand-drawn traces – idiosyncratic and hurried - form the primary layer of the work.

By using accordion binding, McCarney fragments these individual directions, allowing the different paths to physically intersect and overlap as the reader unfolds the pages. The map of the self is thus revealed to be a map of encounters. Here, the field of thinking is a shared urban space, where one person's shortcut becomes another's creative detour.

18



Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper not Necessarily Meant to be Viewed as Art

New York 1966

Mel Bochner

Christophe Cherix (introduction)

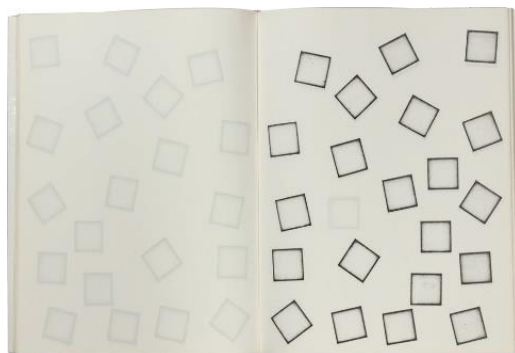
Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln, Germany. 1997 (originally 1966)

Edition: One of 450 copies

In 1966, Mel Bochner staged what is often cited as the first conceptual art exhibition by focusing entirely on the 'paper trail' of the mind. He collected working papers - blueprints, diagrams, and even fabricators' invoices - from peers like Sol LeWitt and Donald Judd for the 1966 exhibition. He then photocopied these disparate documents and placed them into four identical black loose-leaf binders. By presenting these mundane, technical sheets as the art, Bochner stripped away the aura of the finished masterpiece to reveal the raw, instructional data that precedes it.

This work emphasises the indexical nature of thinking, where the book becomes a site of pure intellectual labour rather than a gallery of finished objects. These are the 'visual ghosts' of the creative process—the messy, functional, and often boring spatial arrangements required to find a solution. In Bochner's binders, the thoughtform is liberated from the burden of being art; instead, it is presented as the essential, unvarnished residue of a mind at work.

19



Xerox Book

Carl Andre; Robert Barry; Douglas Huebler; Joseph Kosuth; Sol LeWitt; Robert Morris; Lawrence Weiner. Seth Siegelau (published by)

John W. Wendler (published by)

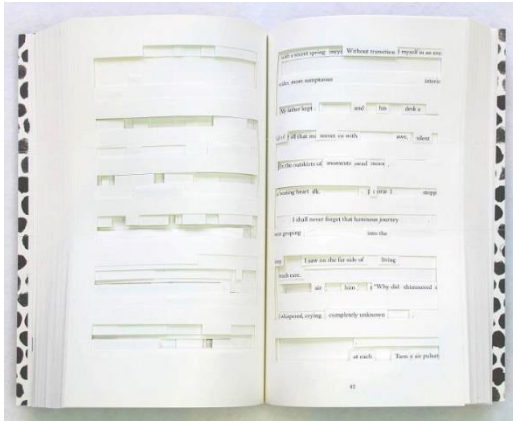
Siegelau/Wendler, New York, NY. December 1968

Edition: One of 1000 copies

The *Xerox Book* shifts the thoughtform from the unique, hand-inked mark to the realm of mass reproduction. Publisher Seth Siegelau invited seven artists to create projects specifically for the Xerox machine. Each artist was allocated 25 pages, turning the book into a portable, standardised field of thinking.

By utilising the photocopier, the artists stripped away the traditional aura of the masterpiece. It frames the book as a purely intellectual laboratory, proving that a thoughtform can be just as potent in a high-contrast photocopy as it is in a centuries-old manuscript. Ironically however, when it came to editioning the book, xeroxing at the time proved too expensive and it was printed on offset machines instead.

20



Tree of Codes

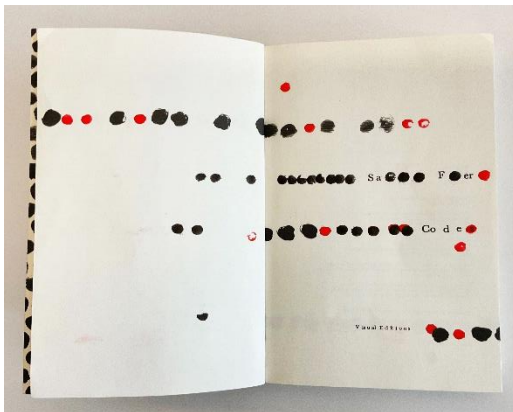
Jonathan Safran Foer

Bruno Schulz (original author)

Visual Editions, London. 2011

Tree of Codes is a radical experiment in 'die-cut' literature. To create this work, Jonathan Safran Foer took an English translation of Bruno Schulz's *The Street of Crocodiles* and literally carved into its pages. By cutting away the majority of Schulz's original text, Foer unearths a new, haunting story hidden within the source material. This process transforms the book into a fragile, three-dimensional sculpture where the reader looks through layers of paper to see the words beneath.

21



Tree of Codes [Safer Code]

Robbin Ami Silverberg

Jonathan Safran Foer (parody of)

Bruno Schulz (original author)

Visual Editions, London. 2011

In Silverberg's intervention, the thoughtform evolves through a secondary layer of excavation. Silverberg takes Foer's already-carved edition and performs her own subtractive critique, treating his finished sculpture as raw material for a new internal search. By cutting further into the die-cut architecture, she transforms the book into a site of perpetual discovery where the act of discarding becomes a creative force.

22



Against the Blind

Robbin Ami Silverberg

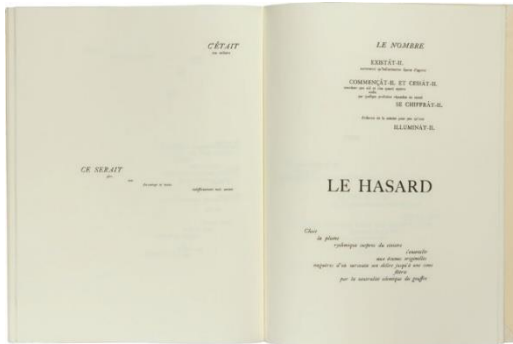
Dobbin Books, New York. 2015

Edition: #2/3

Against the Blind is a material sequel to Silverberg's *Safer Code*, where the tactile fragments layered into the handmade paper are the very words Silverberg excavated and discarded from Foer's book.

Here, the field of thinking shifts from the void to the residue. By embedding these severed linguistic shards into a new body, Silverberg transforms the trash of one work into the foundation of a new one. The work functions as a palimpsest, proving that a thoughtform is never truly lost; it simply changes state. To view these pages is to see the 'betwixt and between' of two artistic minds, where the remnants of one search become the essential material for the next.

23



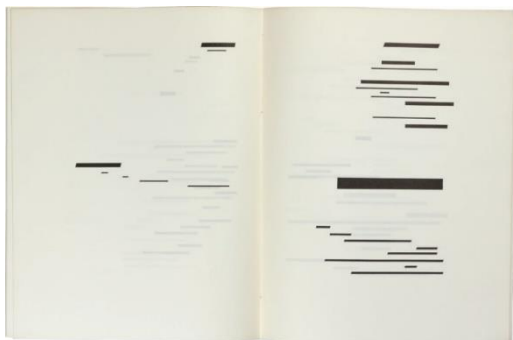
Un Coup de Dés Jamais N'abolira le Hasard
A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance
POÈME

Stéphane Mallarmé
 NRF, Paris, France. 2006 (originally 1897/1914)

In 1897, Stéphane Mallarmé changed the way we look at books forever. Before this poem, words were expected to march across the page in tidy, predictable rows. Mallarmé broke that tradition, scattering his text across the white paper like a constellation of stars.

In this work, the blank parts of the page are just as important as the ink. Mallarmé called this the 'orchestration of silence'. By using different font sizes and wide gaps, he tried to capture the way a thought feels as it forms in the mind - sometimes loud and bold, sometimes small and drifting. Instead of just reading a story, we are navigating a field of thinking. It is the moment an abstract idea finally finds a physical body, proving that where a word sits on the page changes what it means.

24



Un Coup de Dés Jamais N'abolira le Hasard
A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance
 Marcel Broodthaers

Stéphane Mallarmé (original author)
 Galerie Wide White Space and Galerie Michael Werner, Antwerpen, Holland and Köln. 1969

In 1969, the artist Marcel Broodthaers took Mallarmé's famous poem and did something shocking: he covered all the words with solid black bars. While this might look like an act of crossing out or censorship, it was actually a tribute to the shape of the poem.

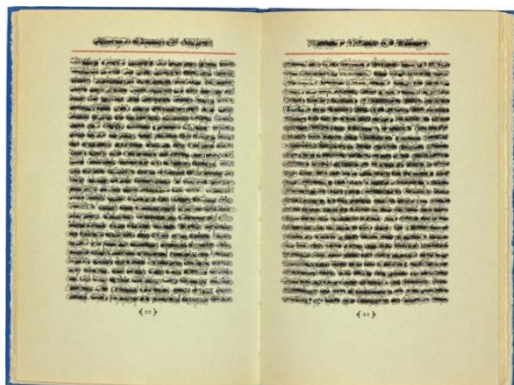
By hiding the text, Broodthaers forces us to look at the 'skeleton' of the thought. The black bars match the exact size and position of Mallarmé's original words, turning the poem into a purely visual image. On the title page, Broodthaers even replaced the word 'Poem' with the word 'Image'. This work shows us that thinking is a physical process. Even without being able to read the words, we can feel the rhythm and energy of the original idea.



Un Coup de Dés Jamais N'abolira le Hasard
A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance
 Michalis Pichler
 Stéphane Mallarmé (original author)
 Greatest Hits, Berlin, Germany. 2014
 Edition: #2/10

Michalis Pichler takes the evolution of Mallarmé's poem into the modern age. Using a laser cutter, he carefully cut out every single word from the 1914 edition of Mallarmé's poem. What remains is a book of beautiful, empty windows.

As you turn these pages, shadows move through the cut-outs, creating a ghostly version of the original text. The thoughtform here is made entirely of air and light. This work feels like an archaeological site where the words have vanished, leaving only the traces of where they once sat. By turning the poem into something sculptural, Pichler shows us that a book is not just a place to store information, it is a three-dimensional space where we can see the silence.

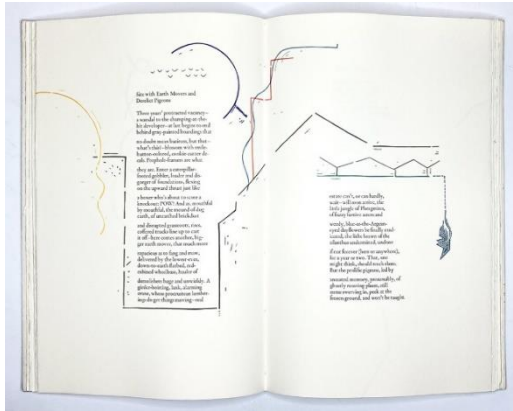


Hollow Words
 Douglas Beube
 Artist's Book, New York. 1995

In *Hollow Words*, the book is treated as a site of physical excavation. Douglas Beube, known for his collaged and carved book works, approaches the codex as a block of organic material to be hollowed out. By removing the interior of the pages, he transforms a traditional vehicle for information into a literal void, a vessel that holds nothing but the memory of the text it once contained.

The work challenges the reader's expectation of the book as a source of finished knowledge. Instead, the page becomes a frame for silence. This act of subtraction mirrors the internal process of forgetting or the 'redaction' of thought. By stripping away the language, Beube highlights the sculptural beauty of the book's skeleton, proving that the most profound thoughtforms are often found in the spaces where the words have been meticulously removed.

27



Manhattan

An Elegy

Amy Clampitt (poet)

Kim Merker (printer)

Margaret Sunday (artist)

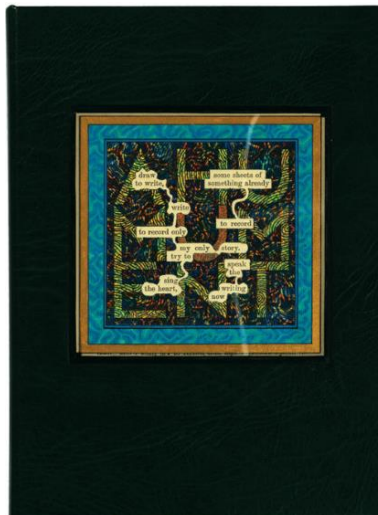
University of Iowa Center for the Book, Iowa City, IO. 1990

Edition: #42/130

In this collaboration, the city is rendered through a rhythmic cartography of energy rather than literal snapshots. Margaret Sunday's primary-coloured woodcuts evoke Manhattan's frenetic linear logic, using angles and curves to mirror the velocity of a subway map or a crowded sidewalk. These abstractions do not merely illustrate the text; they suggest the vibration of the locations described in Amy Clampitt's poetry.

Each woodcut corresponds to a specific building, street, or transit point, prompting the viewer to ask: *Where are we in the city?* While Clampitt's verse establishes a sense of place, both image and text reach toward something more atmospheric. The reader is invited to navigate the book as a *flâneur*, wandering through a city of the mind where the boundary between a physical landmark and a fleeting sensory impression completely dissolves.

28



A Humument (Tetrad Edition)

A Treated Victorian Novel

Tom Phillips

Tetrad Press, London. 1970

Edition: #4/5

In 1966, Tom Phillips began a life-altering challenge: 'treating' an 1892 Victorian romance, *A Human Document* by William Hurrell Mallock, purchased for under threepence. Through creative subtraction, he transformed it into *A Humument*. By isolating specific words and obscuring the rest with gouache, ink, and collage, Phillips unearthed a hidden, secondary soul within the original text.

A distinct thoughtform in this work is 'rivering' - winding paths of white space that physically connect isolated words to form surreal sentences. These paths act as the literal architecture of a wandering mind. Because Phillips reworked these 367 pages over five decades, the book became a palimpsest, an evolving record of thinking that was never truly finished. Evolving through six major editions, *A Humument* is a site of continual discovery, proving that thinking is not just about what we record, but how we navigate and transform the layers of what already exists.

