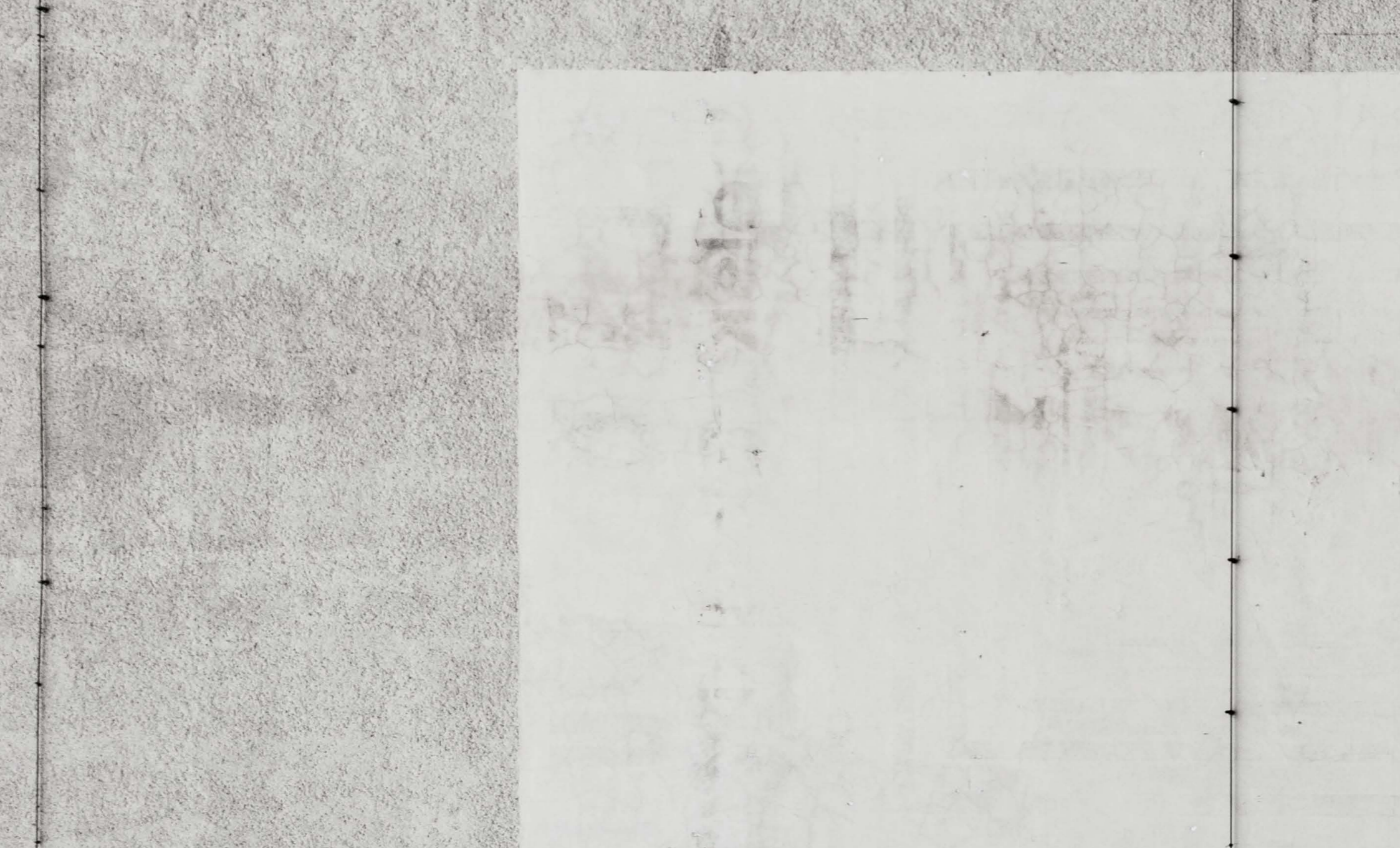


# Creative Research

The Artists' Books of Veronika Schäpers,  
Robbin Ami Silverberg and Julie Chen





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22 September - 15 December, 2022

Jack Ginsberg Centre For Book Arts, Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg



# Veronika Schäpers

Educated in Germany and Switzerland, Veronika Schäpers moved to Tokyo/Japan in 1997, where she started her career as an independent artist. In 2012 she moved to Berlin and lives now in Karlsruhe/Germany. Veronika's work focuses on observing social phenomena, often in foreign cultures. With all the rigor and mastery of traditional book arts skills such as printing, binding, and graphic design, she also has a poet's cadence and a journalist's probing curiosity. By working with writers from the east and west, as well as her exceptional use of refined materials and techniques influenced by her long living in Japan, she produces artwork that stimulates all our senses. Veronika Schäpers has won several prizes, and her work is in many renowned collections worldwide.



# Robbin Ami Silverberg

Robbin Ami Silverberg is the founding director of Dobbin Mill, a hand papermaking studio, and Dobbin Books, in Brooklyn. She has designed, produced, and published more than 25 collaborative artist books, 60 solo editions, 55 unique artist books, and 20 artist book installations. Her artist books are in over 130 public collections and numerous private ones. Silverberg's commitment to all aspects of concept & production is due to her intention to realize a coherent innovative work of art and her love of the creative processes involved. Her work conceptually focuses on interlinearity, mapping, and memory themes, with paper as an activated substrate. Silverberg has both exhibited and taught extensively in both the US and internationally. She is the Professor of 'Art of the Book' and the coordinator of the BOOK minor at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn.





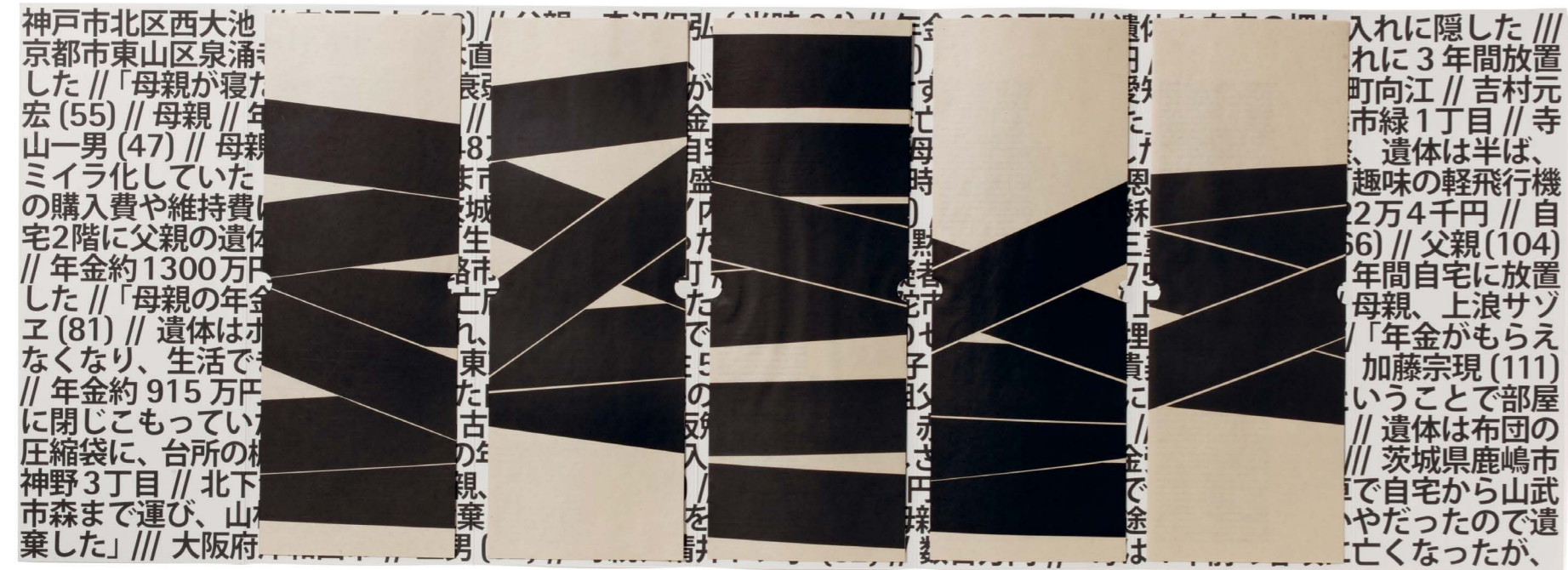
# Julie Chen

Julie Chen is an internationally known book artist who has been publishing limited edition artists' books under the Flying Fish Press imprint for over 30 years. Her books combine text and image with innovative book structures to create reading experiences that engage the reader in interactions that go far beyond the simple turning of a page. Her work can be found in numerous collections worldwide, including the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland, NZ. In 2009 she was a featured artist in the PBS television series *Craft in America*, and in the 2020 documentary film, *The Bookmakers*. She was the Director of the Book Art Program at Mills College in Oakland, California and held the Lovelace Family Chair in Book Art. She is currently a Professor of Art at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

As a collector, over many years I have seen and handled thousands of artists' books and seldom regretted the choices I've made, and those few regrets have always been online. Being able to see and handle an artists' book makes decisions much easier and sometimes I know almost instantaneously whether a book 'works'. One is weighing a multitude of factors to determine whether they coalesce into an interesting, innovative and intelligent work while hoping for perfection. With the three artists in this exhibition, after handling a few of their books when I first began to collect them and considering content, structure and material, I instinctively knew that they were probably unable to make a bad book - and I have not been disappointed over the years. Although variety is also a goal when perfection is unobtainable, these artists have, in my estimation, often succeeded in making the perfect book. In most cases I would have acquired their books even without considering the integration of content into the excellence of the physical object, but in all cases their research is integral to their practice, however esoteric the idea. Having an open mind in collecting artists' books helps! In other aspects of book collecting, the subject is usually the most important consideration, but with artists' books, the subject has only to be interesting and fit; the other visual and haptic aspects predominate. The variety of all aspects of book making on exhibition here could hardly be surpassed.

Jack Ginsberg





Veronika Schäpers  
 Heiko Michael Hartmann: **Im Hochhaus**  
**(In the High-Rise)**

Tokyo, 2011

Letterpress print from polymer plates and barrier tape on bicchu-ganpi paper. 5 gatefold sheets in a wrapped cover made from GA file, with silkscreened cases of pension fraud in Japan in 2010 & 2011. Case made of silkscreen-printed GA file. Banderole made from gecko tape, with silkscreened title. First edition of the German text.

15 x 37 cm (closed), 103 x 37 cm (open).  
 Edition of 36 copies using Arabic numerals and 4 copies using Roman numerals.



The idea for this book is based on a radio report of July 29, 2010, about finding a mummified corps in Tokyo's Adachi ward. It was the body of Sogen Kato, who was said to be the oldest Tokyoite alive. In order to prepare a celebration for the "Day of the aged "in mid-September, public officers of the Tokyo authorities tried to visit him and finally discovered the mummy in his bed on the ground floor of his house.

Three days later, the authorities found out that the oldest woman alive, Fusa Furuya, had disappeared as well. A systematic search began, and 400 cases of pension fraud were uncovered until the end of the year, which led to great disconcertment in Japan.

For this book, I looked into 30 cases in 2010 and 2011 where relatives had hidden their parents, aunts, or uncles in their house to receive their pension. In many cases, the corpse was in the delinquent's house.

The death of their parents showed them how dependent they are and unable to care for their own income and their lives in general. The long list of these cases illustrates the tragedy, but at the same time also some comedy because the explanations and excuses are often exactly the same.

Heiko Michael Hartmann, a German author with whom I spoke about these cases of pension fraud, wrote a short story about this topic. Taking the perspective of an officer told to examine these cases, Hartmann describes how this officer visits the house of an unemployed cultural scientist and finds the corps of her mummified mother.

Somehow relieved, the daughter starts to talk about her life, becoming more and more dependent on her mother, and finally sees no other way out but to hide the corps.

I have printed Hartmann's story on four single pages of thin Ganpi paper, alluding to newspaper typography. These papers are folded into sheets with black stripes of barrier tape printed on their backside. A fifth page contains the translation of the documented cases as well as the imprint. All five wrapped papers are placed next to each other in a big cardboard cover.

On this cardboard, I have printed all 30 cases of pension fraud, always in the same order: name and age of the delinquent, name and age of the dead, total amount of wrongly received pension, place where the corpse was found, and finally, a quotation of the excuses.

The wrapped cover is placed into a stronger cardboard, on which I have printed two roughly pixelated photographs. These pictures show the house in which Sogen Kato was found in 2010 and where his family is still living today.



I started making books in Japan, where I lived for many years and sharpened my sense of observation. I get easily attracted by seemingly banal topics, often connected to everyday life, which turn into complex and complicated themes the more I work on them. This could be described as cultural research and helped me understand a foreign culture, giving me the freedom to observe from a different perspective.

The cultural research is also closely connected to a research on materiality. The book is a sensual medium, motivating me to include all kinds of materials that attract the senses in a subtle and supportive way that can be haptic, visual, and olfactory. In other words, it seems almost impossible to make a convincing piece of book art without the use of well chosen materials, leading to technical and stylistic variety.

- Veronika Schäpers



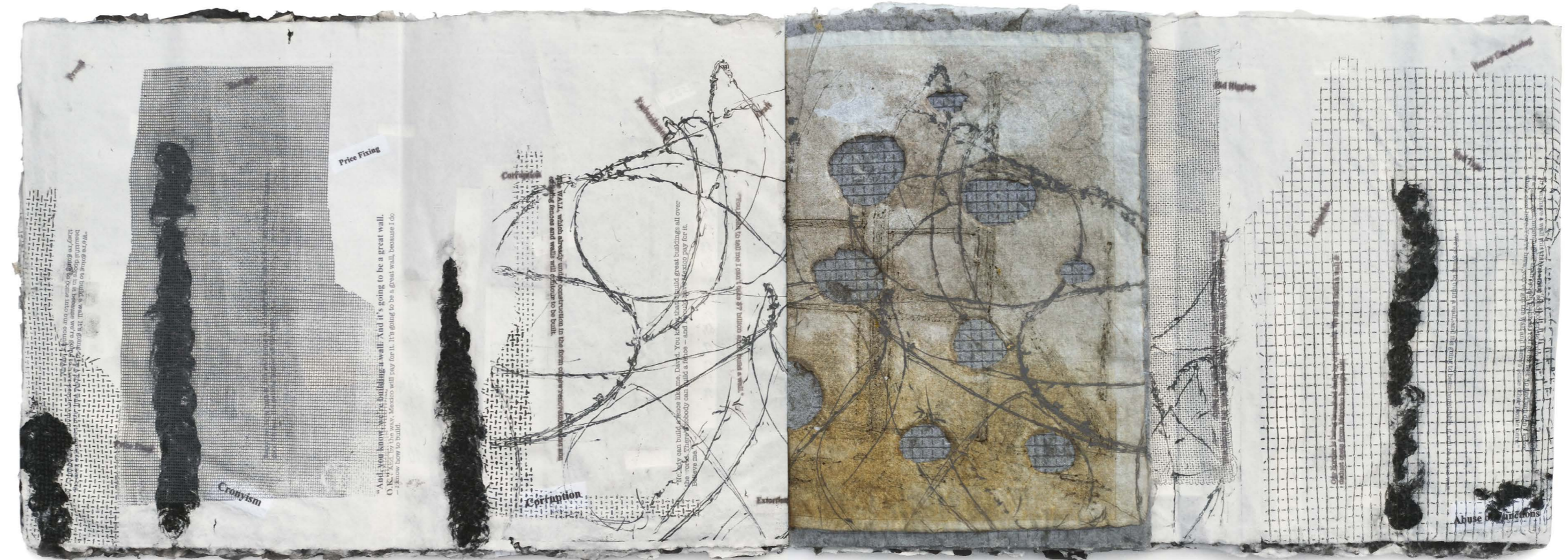


Walls is an exhortation of the shortcomings of our respective governments (USA & South Africa). Its title refers to 'Kakotopia,' a state with the worst possible conditions existing in government and society.

We combined our artistic styles via printmaking, papermaking, collage, and drawing while reinterpreting present-day visual landscapes of fences, walls, and barriers (from Robben Island, Palestine, and the US).

The resulting collaboration is a double pamphlet French-door structure that allows for numerous permutations and presentations, which enhance our non-linear exploration of these corrupt states. Printed on or embedded into the handmade paper are definitions of the meaning of 'wall,' lists of government expenditures, quotes by Trump, texts about corruption, and our statement.

The metal slipcase has spots, drips, and the word 'Walls' etched like graffiti into its surface, a reference to the urban commentary on the vertical planes of our cities.



Robbin Ami Silverberg  
**Walls of Kakotopia**  
 In collaboration with Kim Berman

Brooklyn & Johannesburg, 2019

African Street Press & Dobbin Books  
 Drypoint & monoprinting, collage & drawing on cotton rag & translucent abaca Dobbin Mill papers with inclusions & pulp-painting / Printed handmade paper folder in an etched aluminum slipcase.

40 pages / 14.5 x 11 x 1.2 inches when closed, opening to a width of 38.75 inches.  
 Varied edition of 8 copies.





Material research is an essential part of my art process, with paper as my preferred material for over forty years. As I touch and move through books, in other words, when I read, I want a multisensory experience, enhancing its content and ideas and engaging me in the choreography of the read. *I make my statement by how the ideas become physical again.*

The creative process, which from our cultural perspective contains at its core the individual statement, is transformed by the inclusion and disruption of another's vision. This fascination has brought much of my work into the arena of both cultural research & collaborative discourse. As a complex container of information, the artist book asserts its sensibility on the artist as an ideal collaborative artform and a potent vehicle for ideas.

- Robbin Ami Silverberg





Julie Chen  
**Wayfinding**

Berkeley, 2019

Letterpress printed using pressure printing and photopolymer plates on handmade abaca paper from the Morgan Paper Conservatory and Hahnemuhle Bugra paper.

9 x 16 x 4.5 inches when closed,  
opening to a full width of 41 inches.  
Edition of 50 copies.

Wayfinding examines the relationship between physical and mental learning through the context of navigation through time and space. The piece focuses the reader's experience on the physicality of the book as object with the inclusion of three-dimensional cast paper panels and pages that rattle when turned, all housed in a series of shallow boxes that are hinged together in layers. The inclusion of a three-dimensional alphabet abstracted from diagrams of flag semaphore addresses the activities of signaling, translation and gesture, highlighting how information is taken in by all the senses and not just through the eyes.





Research is a central component of my art practice. Content for my artist's books combines material and structural research on the craft of bookmaking with cultural and personal research that informs my development of text and image. My work engages the viewer through an immersive experience of the book as art object: I consider the artist's book as a self-performative art form which gives meaning to the reader's experience through integrated interactions with creative writing, visual design, deliberate use of materials and innovative sculptural forms such as pages that move in unexpected ways.

The impetus to do research stems from a deep curiosity about the world around me and a desire to find meaning in everyday experiences. I find the artist's book to be the perfect medium to meld various streams of research into a unified whole.

- Julie Chen



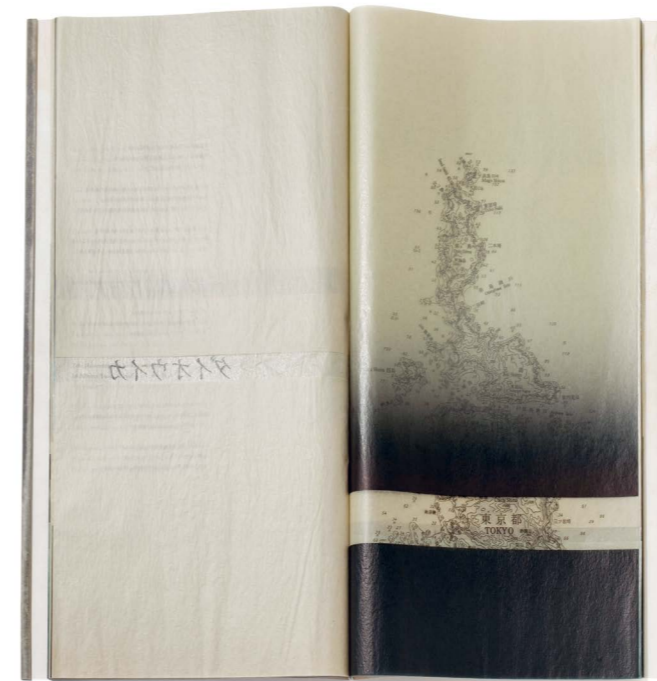


Veronika Schäpers  
Durs Grünbein: **26°57,3'N, 142°16,8'E**

Tokyo, 2007

Letterpress print in German and Japanese using polymer plates. Printed on 50-year-old toshaban-genshi paper. Illustrated with nautical charts and scientific data on the Architeuthis, provided by Tsunemi Kubodera from the National Museum of Science, Tokyo. Flexible cover made of clear vellum, embossed in black. Box made of semi-transparent acrylic.

46 pages. 24 cm x 45.3 cm.  
Edition of 36 copies using Arabic numerals and 8 copies using Roman numerals.



26°57,3'N, 142°16,8'E - At this location in the northwestern Pacific, the Japanese marine biologist Tsunemi Kubodera took pictures of a living giant squid for the first time in its natural environment. When Kubodera published the images he had taken in September 2004, in the Proceedings of the Royal Society one year later, this was not only a scientific sensation, but he got worldwide attention in the mass media as well.

Inspired by a note in the newspaper, Durs Grünbein wrote a poem titled "Architeuthis" about this discovery and mailed it to me. Fascinated by his seven-verse text, this project about deep-sea fish emerged.

In autumn 2006, I visited Tsunemi Kubodera in his laboratory in the National Museum of Science in Tokyo. I decided to use the data and formulas received from him together with some nautical charts as illustrations for the book. When we met, Kubodera also showed me pictures and short films of squids he recorded in depths between 600 and 1.000 meters. In these images, the unpracticed spectator only sees dim silhouettes of the squids but, at the same time, starts to sense the diversity of life in such darkness. This gave me the idea to use the interaction of transparent and opaque pages for this book.

In search of an appropriate paper, I got a larger amount of old Toshaban-Genshi, a very thin Ganpi paper used to make stencils for mimeographs. This

paper was exactly what I was looking for. On the one hand, very thin and transparent; on the other hand, so firm that once printed with a dark color, it turned to be opaque. It also attracts through a fine and rustling tone.

Each page of the book consists of a double-spread paper, folded in the front and printed completely. The pages are cut horizontally, pulled apart a little bit, and thus make visible the inserted single sheets. On these sheets, I printed the data Kubodera surveyed, as well as the nautical charts that are often only partially visible. The pages with their stripes remind the reader of horizons and depth contours and, at the same time, give a glimpse of the normally invisible variety of the deep-sea world as if lighted up with a torch.

The tranquil and colored pages are interrupted by six pale double-page spreads, printed with the three poems in German on the left and their Japanese translation on the right side.

The book is stitched with thin straps of vellum to a flexible cover of clear vellum. The first page contains the title, and the last page with the imprint is visible through the clear material. By its natural warping and organic character, the vellum sets a harmonic antipole to the technical image of the inner pages. The book is kept in a compact box made of 8 mm acrylic glass in the style of a preparation. By this, it seems to be cast in, and the heavy box forms a beautiful contrast to the lightweight and fragile book.



Abriss, a nonlinear combination of installation, performance, and artist book, is a result of my ambulatory mapping of New York City. Since 2009, I have created hundreds of postings I've placed in specific locations around the city to engage the viewer in a discourse on the psycho-geography of place and memory. Abriss is a sequence of these flyers. I call this practice Anamnesis, which means the opposite of forgetting, or as Socrates determined: What one perceives to be learning is the recovery of what one has forgotten.

Each copy in the varied edition contains the exact text and images in the same sequence. Still, they differ in materials: each page contains paper detritus that I collected on an earlier walk and then incorporated into the paper I made at Dobbin Mill, either as inclusions or actual pulp.

Abriss, therefore, is the residue or evidence of the act of my ambulatory mapping cum colportage. Since the grangerized pages vary between copies in terms of found material, it made sense that the language was variable, English, German & French. Abriss is, in essence, a psycho-geographical mapping in terms of place, memory, time & language.

The title comes from Abriss-(kante), German for the tear-off edge or ticket stub.



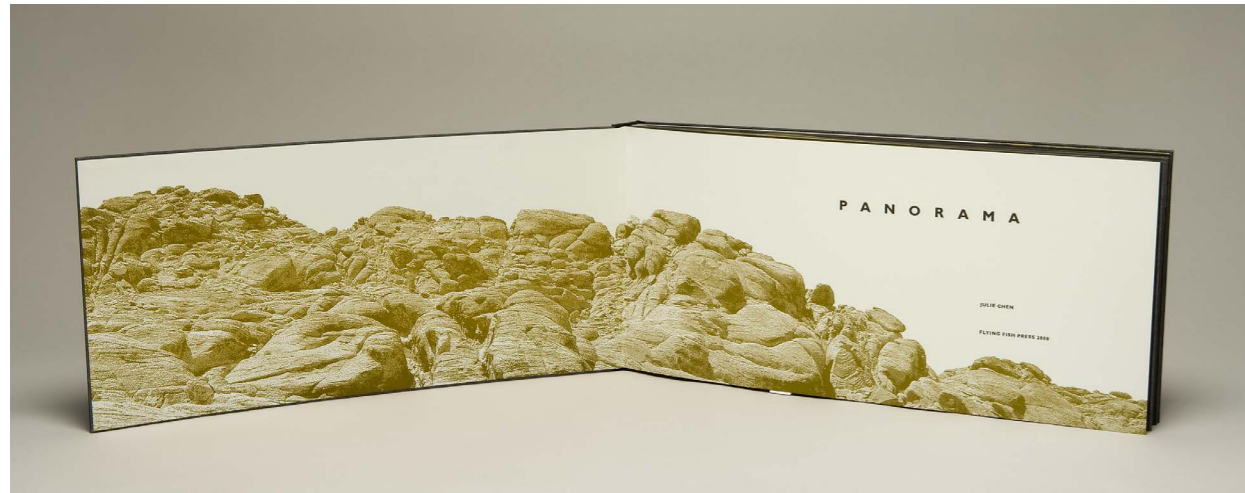
Robbin Ami Silverberg  
**Abriss**

Brooklyn, 2012/13

Archival inkjet printing & collage on handmade cotton & abaca Dobbin Mill papers with inclusions & pulped detritus from New York City streets. French translation by Carole Naggari; German translation by Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek.

Box: 18.25 x 19.25 x 1.5 inches.  
Book: 34 pages / 18.5 x 17.25 x 0.75 inches when closed, opening to 38 x 35.5 inches.  
Varied edition of 10.





Julie Chen  
**Panorama**

Berkeley, 2008

Letterpress printed using pressure printing wood blocks and photopolymer plates.

Box size: 10.25 x 20.625 x 2 inches.

Book size: 9.5 x 20.25 x 1.25 inches opening to a full width of 60 inches.

Edition of 100 copies.

Panorama explores the issue of climate change from an artist's perspective, simultaneously expressing hope and helplessness in the face of this growing crisis. Opening to a full width of five feet, Panorama engulfs the reader/viewer in an experience both moving and surprising with large format pop-ups and interactive folded sections that interlace personal thought with facts indicating a more universal reality. Layered imagery captures the poignant beauty of our rapidly changing landscape.





Julie Chen  
**The Accretion of Identity**

Berkeley, 2022

Letterpress printed using pressure printing and photopolymer plates on handmade abaca paper from the Morgan Conservatory, and a variety of Japanese papers. The book structure is a Chinese thread book (zhen xian bao). It contains four levels of folded boxes housed in a box with a magnetic closure.

5.375 x 9.625 x 1.625 inches when closed, opening to a full width of 24.5 inches. Edition of 30 copies.

The Accretion of Identity explores various ways in which individual identity is developed. We might assume that identity is largely self-determined, but many factors, some easily discernible and others hidden from view, go into the process of defining who we are. The persona we embrace as our own is not solely made up of conscious choices but is instead a constant process of adaptation to our surroundings. For people of color there is an added layer of external expectations and assumptions that must be confronted. Family, community, and everyday interactions with strangers all influence our continually evolving sense of self in both overt and subtle ways.

I took my own identity for granted as a somewhat finished process until the pandemic changed almost everything about everyday life. In this new environment, could I continue to be the exact same person that I was before? Pandemic times forced me to consider my sense of self with fresh eyes and to notice how tightly the past and the present are inextricably intertwined.





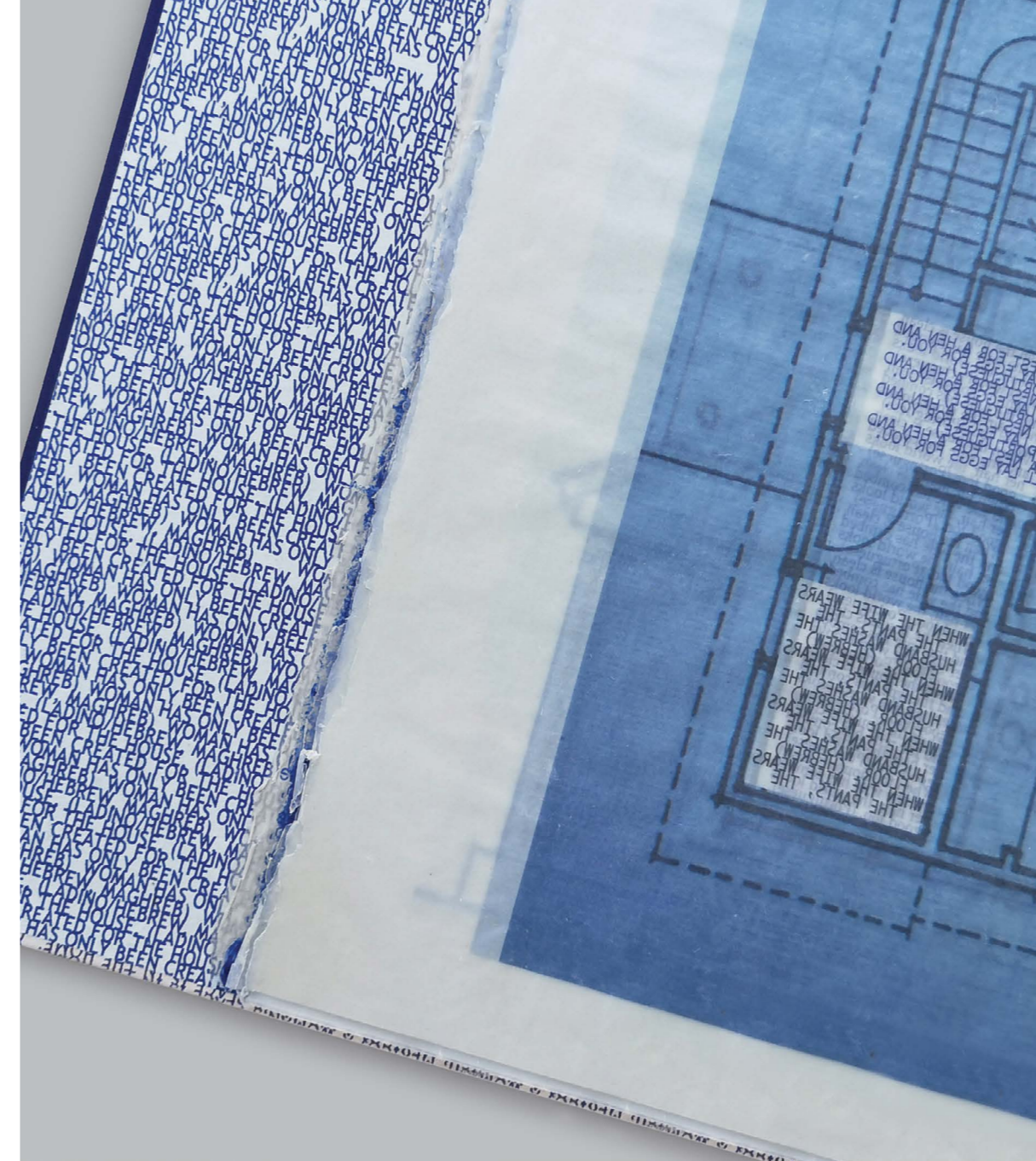
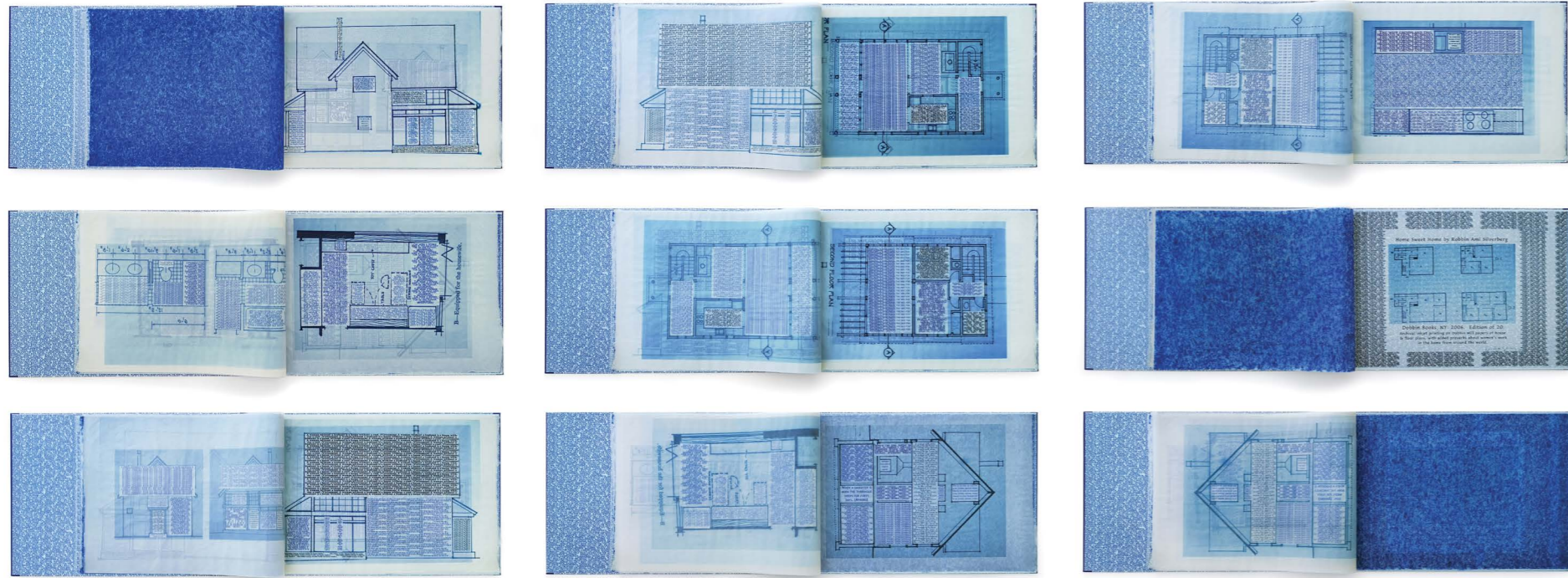
Robbin Ami Silverberg  
**Home Sweet Home**

Brooklyn, 2006

Archival inkjet printing on translucent abaca Dobbin Mill papers.

32 pages / 12 x 18 x 0.5 inches.

1st edition of 20, 2nd edition of 20: 11 x 17 x 0.5 inches, 2007, with machine made vellum papers.



I designed an architectural album of an imaginary middle-class suburban house, filling its plans and layout with sayings about women in the home. I printed the book to look like an architect's presentation, using what looks like the almost obsolete technique of Diazo printing (blueprinting), but in fact, it is archival inkjet, printed on paper I made to look like an architect's vellum.

Over the years of reading and research, I found and collected countless proverbs from around the world that encapsulated those cultures' perspectives on the role of women and their labors. What astounded me was that they were profoundly misogynistic, regardless of their culture of origin. In the making of Home Sweet Home, I acknowledge this, funny as it is painful.





In his text "Triumph of a Pants Seller," the Berlin-based author Heiko Michael Hartmann conveys the precarious situation of a customer forced by the salesperson to buy a pair of trousers. He not only gets advice but is pushed so much that he feels like the opponent in a boxing match. His aim is no longer to buy the trousers but to escape from the scene.

The text consists of twenty lines, each of which can stand alone but also can be read together with the previous or following line and then get a different meaning. Some words are even doubled, which makes the reader feel like jumping around. The way of reading underlines the contents of the text: the similarity of buying pants and being attacked in a boxing match.

The format of the book is a square, according to a boxing ring. The text is set in a square as well to mark the area where the boxers are moving. The book consists of 20 pages of clear foil, with one line of text and two boxers' silhouettes on each page. The boxers are printed as red shadows and only

become visible when the pages are turned. When the pages lie one above the other, the boxers fuse into a colored mass, visualizing the movements.

The single foils are stitched onto transparent gum cords that, for their part, give tension to the flexible plastic cover and symbolize the strings of a boxing ring. The bent cover is designed in a way that it pushes the spine of the book upwards in order to make the book easy to open.

To emphasize the transparency of the book, the title and colophon are printed on an inflatable plastic cushion that serves as the case for the book.

By being lightweight, the cushion corresponds with the glue-free binding of the book and by its shape, it corresponds to the profile of a sand sack.

Cushion and book are wrapped in white paper felt, the same material we receive as wrapping in a store when we buy really expensive clothes.



Veronika Schäpers  
Heiko Michael Hartmann:  
**Triumph eines Hosenverkäufers (Victory of a Trouser Salesman)**

Tokyo, 2001 (first edition) and Tokyo, 2002 (second edition)

Inkjet print on clear polythene foil. Cover made of clear polycarbonate. Pages stitched on rubber cords that also bend the cover. Inflatable plastic cushion with stamped title in red and colophon in black. White fleece bag and white cotton gloves.

20 pages. 23.5 x 21 cm.  
First edition: 10 copies using Arabic numerals and 3 copies using Roman numerals. Second edition: 15 copies using Arabic numerals and 3 copies using Roman numerals.



Veronika Schäpers

**Das müssen Sie mir erst einmal beweisen  
(First you have to prove it to me)**

Karlsruhe, 2021

Letterpress print from polymer plates on Enduro Ice paper. 24 original b/w and color photograms laminated on Colorplan cardboard. Hinged slipcase in two colors, pasted with Efallin paper and embossed title made by Buchbinderei Mergemeier in Düsseldorf.

12 envelopes, each 25 x 34 cm.

Edition: 38 copies using Arabic numerals and 6 copies using Roman numerals.



In the spring of 2020, as the coronavirus spread first in China, then in Italy, and finally across the entire globe, touching off a worldwide pandemic, more and more conspiracy theories also sprang up about the origin and spread of the virus. Social media and news networks played a major role; the established audiovisual and print media were vilified as “fake news” and replaced by “alternative” sources.

At the start of the pandemic, a wide range of sometimes highly unusual methods were suggested as COVID-19 protection and treatment - often based on dubious scientific evidence or removed from their scientific context, making them incomprehensible. This was not a regional phenomenon; rather, it spread throughout the entire world along with the virus.

In March 2020, I began systematically collecting different prevention measures and purported cures for COVID-19. I discovered a connection between the dissemination of conspiracy theories and the quantity of recommended protective measures. I chose 24 objects from my collection, which I captured as black-and-white or color photograms. The object is placed directly on or very close to a sheet of light-sensitive photo paper. It is then exposed using one or more light sources, developed, and fixed.

In particular, the aspect of a physically grounded alienation caused by the refraction of light, depending on the materiality of the object depicted, along with the color inversion inspired me to use the photogram method since it lends the objects a surreal aura.

The 24 original photograms are displayed opposite two texts. One is an original short story by H.M. Hartmann written specifically for this edition, a psychological profile of a conspiracy theorist, a look into the mind of a person without a firm grip on reality, driven by fear and emotions. The other text excerpts Titus Oates' publication on the Popish Plot of 1679.

Titus Oates, an English priest, was the main informant in the “Popish Plot” which he invented in 1678. In April 1679, to shore up his theory and emphasize his credibility, Oates published the text: A true narrative of the horrid plot and conspiracy of the popish party against the life of His Sacred Majesty, the government and the Protestant religion....”

Two photograms are laminated on each piece of cardboard and placed inside an envelope made of transparent paper, along with a title, a citation about their effect and application, and the citation source. The envelopes are printed continuously with excerpts from the short story by H.M. Hartmann and Oates' Popish Plot.

All twelve envelopes are stored in a hinged slipcase, a construction consisting of two interlocking slipcases that open to a 90-degree angle so the sheets can be removed.

This somewhat labyrinthine form not only corresponds to the folding of the individual layers but also mirrors the thoughts of a conspiracy theorist, erratic and resistant to logical arguments.







Robbin Ami Silverberg  
**Brush**

Brooklyn, 1995

Text sewn in human hair & copper wire on cotton rag Dobbin Mill papers with pulp painting. Two books sewn on leather cords rest in separate drawers, and an embedded human hair accordion joining the two boxes.

5 x 7.25 x 1.5 inches when closed, opening to a width of 17 inches / Book: 28 pages each & 4.25 x 2.25 inches.  
Varied edition of 3.

In the mid-nineties, I felt the need to present words in a new book structure, as I was struggling with how to make words and language master feelings.

I sensed that offering the reader a multi-sensorial reading experience might bridge this gap, and I chose to explore words through the sense of touch. The choreography of the read requires the removal of the wrap-case, pulling out the drawers, and removing the books, and only then can they be read.

Two matchbox-like containers attach by a paper accordion with protruding human hair, much like a brush. This accordion can expand or contract to move the boxes closer or further apart. The two tiny books inside have leather cord bindings and waxed linen thread sewing with texts sewn to their pages with human hair and copper wires.

The books contain a sentence with words that resonate in their similarities but vary in meaning and intention, like the brush accordion's expansion and compression. Surfaces also carry meaning: The Egyptian goddess Nut arching over the wrap case is pulp-painted on its front; the containers & drawers within are covered in papers pulp-painted to appear like flecks of dried blood.





Julie Chen  
**Chrysalis**

Berkeley, 2014

Letterpress printed using pressure printing and photopolymer plates on paper from Cave Paper and La Papeterie Saint-Armand; laser cut elements.

Box: 6.75 x 11.75 x 6.625 inches.  
Book object: 7 x 11 x 7 inches, opening to 11.5 x 18 inches.  
Edition of 50 copies.



Chrysalis is an interpretation of the complex and transformative nature of the process of grief. The piece consists of a sculptural book object housed in a box. The book object is held together by a series of magnets and can be opened by the viewer until all the panels lie in a flat plane, revealing an inner book with circular pages that can be held in the hand and read.

The unfamiliar experience of opening a sculptural form, which itself contains visual and written content, to reveal a hidden book within is meant to evoke the disorienting experience of grief in which the familiar is suddenly rendered strange by a radical change of circumstances.



My Affidavit describes a day in the life of an artist, divided into seven spans of time, each a text that I got officially notarized by different officers in and around New York City.

It is both a performance and artist book: while requesting their services, the exchanges with notaries frequently segued into complicated discussions, which revolved around what is a signature, identity, and the signifiers of identity.

These engagements, which took place over many weeks, are described in the Compendium.

It documents these exchanges, highlighting the book's theme: the meaning of identity and its signifiers - specifically the signature.

It becomes a kind of meta-information, which is fascinating when the research or response component becomes an integral part of the larger work. This booklet lies in a compartment at the bottom of a box designed to look like office filing storage.

Hungarian writer István Örkény's story of the same name, was the fillip for this small edition.



Robbin Ami Silverberg  
**Affidavit**

Brooklyn, 2009

Archival inkjet printing, notary stamps,  
signatures, white acrylic paint & typewriting  
on cotton & abaca Dobbin Mill papers.

Box: 13 x 9.75 x 0.75 inches.  
Book: 24 pages / 12.5 x 9.5 inches.  
Pamphlet: 26 pages / 5.5 x 8.5 inches.  
Edition of 10.





Julie Chen  
**Bon Bon Mots**

Berkeley, 1998

Letterpress printed from photopolymer plates. Book structures are:  
 Turkish map fold, magic wallet, flag book, rotating ring, and puzzle box.

Box: 10 x 7 x 1.75 inches.  
 Edition of 100 copies.



Bon Bon Mots investigates the ways in which form can influence experience. As a lifelong candy lover, I was intrigued by the idea of creating a set of books that referenced a candy box. I know from personal experience that I will eat every piece of candy in a box, even the ones I don't like. The visual and written narratives in this set of books have outward appearances suggesting fun and whimsy but present content that is surprisingly sad. The irresistibility of the format encourages the reader to stay engaged until the last book is read.





Veronika Schäpers  
Cees Nootboom: **Fuji**

Karlsruhe, 2016

Hand-printed color gradations from linoleum onto Mitsumata paper, letterpress print using polymer plates in German and Dutch on bicchu-ganpi paper. NT-Pairu cover with silkscreened title. Japanese box made of empress tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*) wood with silkscreened title. Five kitchen sponges in the shape of Mount Fuji.

38 pages. 47.5 x 12.5 cm.  
Edition of 36 copies using Arabic numerals.



Cees Nootboom, a great admirer of Japan, has written extensively about the country and its culture since his first visit in 1973 – beautiful travelogues and short stories.

In 2016, the Dutch author allowed me to use three of his poems, including “Fuji.” My initial reaction was a mild disappointment – the topic seemed too superficial to me, almost trivial. After all, the 3,776-meter-tall mountain with its nearly perfect symmetrical cone is the best-known symbol of Japan, immortalized in thousands of paintings and a national treasure.

At the same time, though, I liked Nootboom’s poem and his restrained way of expressing his deep admiration, which is further emphasized by the soft sound of the Dutch language.

Since I planned a trip to Japan soon after that, I started with a quick survey of Japanese friends in Tokyo. I was amazed by the uniformly positive, almost enthusiastic responses: At the same time, I began to look for the mountain in everyday Tokyo life. From the day I arrived, I found so many Fujis represented on socks, cups, senbei crackers, and umbrellas that I soon

stopped photographing them. The mountain’s constant presence in everyday life had to be a part of my project. I chose a Fuji-shaped dish sponge that was not just aesthetically pleasing but is also advertised for its practical features.

Thinking about how valuable objects are often stored, I had a box made of paulownia wood that could fit five of the sponges. The sponges are covered by the book with the poem – a long landscape format with 36 color gradations in shades of blue. These monotypes are inspired by Hokusai’s famous woodcut series “36

Views of Mount Fuji,” in which he – just like Nootboom in his poem – depicts the volcano from different perspectives and in different seasons.

I used the complete series of 36 views as a model, printing the typical color gradations individually along the top edge of the image on each page, in the original size on hand-moulded mitsumata paper. I didn’t want to produce a copy in the style of a Japanese woodcut; rather, I wanted the viewer to make an association with the old prints, trusting that the characteristic gradations combined with the title “Fuji” on the

transparent cover would evoke the image of Hokusai’s 36 views. Under no circumstances would an image of the mountain appear in the book.

The final page features the poem, printed on thin ganpi paper. The individual verses are rotated 90 degrees, with the last word of each line emphasized in a bolder font. As a result, each verse is reminiscent of a small image of a mountain with a snowcap, just as Fuji is depicted on so many everyday objects – usually blue, sometimes red, but always with a white peak.



# Veronika Schäpers

**Das müssen Sie mir erst einmal beweisen (First you have to prove it to me)**  
 Karlsruhe, 2021  
 12 envelopes, each 25 x 34 cm  
 Edition of 38 copies

Henry David Thoreau  
**Solitude**  
 Karlsruhe / Tokyo, 2021  
 27 x 22 cm  
 Edition of 50 copies

Jon Fosse  
**Ein mørklagd båt (A Darkened Boat)**  
 Karlsruhe / Münster, 2019  
 26 x 26 cm  
 Edition of 33 copies

**Pjöngjang, Nordkorea im Mai 2004 / Pjöngjang, Nordkorea im September 2018**  
 Karlsruhe, 2019  
 38 x 26 cm  
 Edition of 20 sets

Yoko Tawada  
**Jin-shin Jiko**  
 多和田葉子: じんしんじこ  
 Karlsruhe, 2018  
 16 x 46 cm  
 Edition of 38 copies

Durs Grünbein  
**Weiße Verben**  
 Karlsruhe, 2017  
 16 x 40.5 cm  
 Edition of 40 copies using Arabic

Peter Handke  
**Die japanische Hitparade vom 25. Mai 1968**  
 Karlsruhe / Berlin, 2016  
 16.8 x 16.8 cm  
 Edition of 35 copies  
 Stephan Reich

**Aokigahara**  
 Karlsruhe, 2016  
 32 x 45 cm  
 Two editions of 15 copies

Cees Nootboom  
**Fuji**  
 Karlsruhe, 2016  
 47.5 x 12.5 cm  
 Edition of 36 copies

Hans Magnus Enzensberger  
**System**  
 Berlin / Münster, 2013  
 35 x 44 cm  
 Edition of 21 copies using Arabic numerals

Choukitsu Kurumatani  
**Musashimaru**  
 車谷長吉: 武蔵丸  
 Tokyo / Berlin, 2013  
 23 x 43.8 cm  
 Edition of 35 copies

**Image: None, Text: None(!)**  
 Berlin, 2013  
 21 x 29 cm  
 Edition of 4 unique copies

**March 29, 1912**  
 Berlin, 2012  
 24 pages. 50 x 12cm  
 Edition of 6 unique copies

Heiko Michael Hartmann  
**Bamberg. Vom Ende der Zeit**  
 Tokyo, 2012  
 10.5 x 32.5 cm  
 Edition of 100 copies

Durs Grünbein  
**Bleiben**  
 Tokyo, 2011  
 1 sheet, about 68 x 52 cm  
 Edition of 28 copies  
 Durs Grünbein  
**Bleiben**  
 Düsseldorf, 2011  
 14.5 x 41 cm  
 Edition of 30 copies

Yoko Tawada  
**Okonomiyaki**  
 多和田葉子: おこのみやき  
 Tokyo, 2010  
 21 x 20 cm (G) or 20 x 20 cm (J)  
 Edition of 32 copies

Ryunosuke Akutagawa  
**Die Nase**  
 芥川龍之介: 鼻  
 Tokyo, 2009  
 34.5 cm x 48 cm  
 Edition of 40 copies

Heiko Michael Hartmann  
**Ich - wann? Wo?**  
 Tokyo, 2007  
 13 x 21 cm (closed), 13 x 146 cm (open)  
 Edition of 29 copies

Durs Grünbein  
**26°57,3'N, 142°16,8'E**  
 Tokyo, 2007  
 24 cm x 45.3 cm  
 Edition of 36 copies

Kerstin Hensel  
**Erbe**  
 Tokyo, 2006  
 Tablecloth: 97 x 97 cm  
 Handbag: 22 x 30 cm  
 Edition of 15 copies

Kerstin Hensel  
**Erbe**  
 Tokyo, 2006  
 Tablecloth: 91 x 91 cm  
 Linen: 60 x 80 cm  
 Size of the wrapped object: 27.5 x 25.5 cm  
 Edition of 15 copies

Yoshinori Shimizu  
**Sichere Anleitung zum Bestehen jeder Universitätsaufnahmeprüfung im Fach Japanisch**  
 清水義範: 国語入試問題必勝法  
 Tokyo, 2003  
 34 cm x 49 cm  
 Edition of 40 copies

Yoshinori Shimizu  
**Jack and Betty Forever**  
 清水義範: 永遠のジャック & ベティ  
 Tokyo, 2005  
 6.5 x 19 cm  
 Edition of 50 copies in German & Japanese, 50 copies in English & Japanese

Robert Gernhardt  
**Ach**  
 Tokyo, 2003  
 32.5 cm x 32.0 cm  
 Edition of 25 copies

Heiko Michael Hartmann  
**Do**  
 Tokyo, 2005  
 52 x 17.5 cm  
 Edition of 35 copies

**Pjöngjang, Nordkorea im Mai 2004**  
 Tokyo, 2004  
 24 pages. 38 x 26 cm  
 Edition of 6 unique copies

Durs Grünbein  
**Lob des Taifuns**  
 ドゥルルス・グリユンバイン: 颱風讃  
 Tokyo, 2004  
 8.6 cm x 36 cm (closed), 258 cm x 36 cm (open)  
 Edition of 35 copies

Marcel Beyer  
**Funky Sabbath**  
 Tokyo, 2004  
 150 x 30 cm  
 Edition of 25 copies

Marcel Beyer  
**Funky Sabbath**  
 Tokyo, 2004  
 100 x 15 cm each  
 Edition of 15 copies

Yoshinori Shimizu  
**Sichere Anleitung zum Bestehen jeder Universitätsaufnahmeprüfung im Fach Japanisch**  
 清水義範: 国語入試問題必勝法  
 Tokyo, 2003  
 34 cm x 49 cm  
 Edition of 40 copies

Sabine Hassinger  
**Durchblicke**  
 Tokyo, 1999  
 7 x 29 cm  
 Edition of 20 copies

Oskar Pastior  
**Come into Frower**  
 Tokyo, 1998  
 11 x 16 cm  
 Edition of 35 copies

Heiko Michael Hartmann  
**Triumph eines Hosenvverkäufers**  
 Tokyo, 2001 & 2002  
 23.5 x 21 cm  
 First edition: 10 copies  
 Second edition: 15 copies

**Wurmzauber**  
 Tokyo, 2002  
 13 x 33.5 cm  
 Edition of 25 copies

**32 Superior Beauties of Buddha's Person**  
 Tokyo, 2001  
 37 x 58 cm  
 Edition of 8 copies

Johannes Bobrowski  
**Blühender Kirschbaum**  
 Tokyo, 2000  
 24 x 5 cm (closed), 24 x 94 cm (open)  
 Edition of 20 copies

Helmut Heißenbüttel  
**Von Liebeskunst**  
 Tokyo, 2000  
 35 x 18 cm  
 Edition of 20 copies

Sabine Hassinger  
**Durchblicke**  
 Tokyo, 1999  
 7 x 29 cm  
 Edition of 20 copies

Oskar Pastior  
**Come into Frower**  
 Tokyo, 1998  
 11 x 16 cm  
 Edition of 35 copies

# Robbin Ami Silverberg

**Am I Here**  
 1985, 2020  
 7 x 9.5 x 0.5 inches  
 Varied edition of 5 copies

**Walls of Kakotopia**  
 2019  
 In collaboration with Kim Berman  
 African Street Press, JHB & Dobbin Books, NY  
 14.5 x 11 x 1.2 inches (closed)  
 14.5 x 38.75 (open)  
 Varied edition of 8 copies

**BOOK**  
 2014-19  
 2.5 x 9 x 2.5 inches  
 Open Edition  
 Texts by Mark Twain & online dictionaries

**Reading Hotspots in New York City**  
 2017  
 13.25 x 9.5 x.1.5 inches (box)  
 Books: 4 x 8 inches / 8 x 4.25 inches  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**GuestBook - The House was Quiet**  
 2016, 2017  
 15.25 x 12.5 x 2 inches (box)  
 Varied edition of 15 copies  
 Participants: Kim Berman (JHB), Richard Flavin & Ryoko Haranguchi (Tokyo), Renate Habinger (Obersndorf), Erika Hibbert (Atlanta), Robin Price (Middletown), Francois Righi (Berry), Veronika Schaebers (Karlsruhe), Robbin Ami Silverberg (NYC), Kathe Wenzel (Berlin), Carola Willbrand (Koln)

**Abriss**  
 2013  
 18.25 x 19.25 x.1.5 inches (box)  
 38 x 35.5 inches (open)  
 Varied edition of 10 copies  
 German, English, & French

**Am I Here**  
 1985, 2020  
 7 x 9.5 x 0.5 inches  
 Varied edition of 5 copies

**Kakistocracy**  
 2017  
 In collaboration with Kim Berman  
 African Street Press, JHB & Dobbin Books, NY  
 14 x 19 x 0.25 inches (enclosure)  
 13.25 x 35.5 inches (open)  
 Varied edition of 7 copies

**Salt Lake Travel**  
 2015  
 8.5 x 8.5 x 1 inches (box)  
 Edition of 10 copies, 5 books each.  
 Participants: Clifton Meador, Daniel Mellis, April Sheridan, Robbin Ami Silverberg, Karen Zimmerman, Phil Zimmerman  
 Group publication

**Smell of Winter**  
 2014  
 Perfume by MCMC Fragrances  
 14.2 x 13.5 x.1 inches  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**Safer Code**  
 2014  
 9 x 5.5 x 1 inches  
 Unique (altered book)

**The ABC of Love (in Knots)**  
 2013, 2014  
 6.5 x 13.5 inches  
 Varied edition of 5 copies

**A Week of Jewels**  
 2008  
 14 x 12.4 x 1 inches  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**A Nightmare's Resolution**  
 2007  
 4.5 x 2.5 x 1 inches (box set)  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**Between Echo and Silence**  
 2013  
 13.5 x 12.5 inches  
 Unique

**Subterranean Geography**  
 2011  
 5 x 9 x 1.25 inches  
 Varied edition of 5 copies

**Self Scrutiny**  
 2011  
 4.25 x 6 x.3.25 inches (box)  
 Edition of 20 copies  
 Set of 49 cards  
 Altered text by István Örkény

**Affidavit**  
 2009  
 13 x 9.75 x 0.75 inches (box)  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**Rondo**  
 2009  
 Varied edition of 10 copies  
 17.5 x 12.5 x 0.75 inches (box)  
 16.5 x 35.5 inches (open)  
 Altered text by Istvan Orkeny

**A Week of Jewels**  
 2008  
 14 x 12.4 x 1 inches  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**A Week of Jewels**  
 2008  
 7 x 6.5 inches  
 Unique

**A Nightmare's Resolution**  
 2007  
 4.5 x 2.5 x 1 inches (box set)  
 Varied edition of 10 copies

**Home Sweet Home**  
 2006  
 12 x 18 x.0.5 inches  
 1st Edition of 20 copies

**Just 30 Words**  
 2005  
 12.5 x 9.25 x.1 inches  
 Edition of 30 copies  
 Printed at The Artists' Press, SA

**Book of Seconds: Memory Loss**  
 2005  
 13.75 x 12 x 1 inches  
 Series of 15 copies

**Clew**  
 2004  
 8.75 x 13.5 x .75 inches  
 Edition of 14 copies  
 Printed at The Artists' Press, SA

**Thoughts in the Form of a Letter**  
 2003  
 13.5 x 9.5 x.1.5 inches  
 Edition of 5 copies

**Biography of A.**  
 2002  
 2.75 x 2.75 inches  
 Edition of 10 copies

**Uhanga Dihangara**  
 2001  
 Artist Proof Studio: JHB & Dobbin Books: NY  
 10 x 18.5 x.6.75 inches (box)  
 Edition of 30 copies  
 Participants: Kim Berman, Andrés Böröcz, Paul Emmanuel, Terence Fenn, Robert Hodgins, Osiah Maskoameng, Nhlanhla Mbatha, Paul Molete, Simon Mthimjhulu, Usha Prajapat, John Roome, Mmakgabo Sebidi, Durant Sihlali, Robbin Ami Silverberg, Diane Victor, Nhlanhla Xaba

**Duster 2**  
 2001  
 30 x 2 x 2 inches (tube)  
 Edition of 47 copies

**GuestBook 1988**  
 1999  
 11.75 x 13.5 x 10.5 inches (box)  
 Varied edition of 15 copies  
 Participants: Katrin Dieckmann (Berlin), Christine Dixie (Grahamstown), Agnés Eperjési (Budapest), Leora Farber (JHB), Sophia Gruber (Vienna), Arimichi Iwasawa (Kyoto), Linda Sihali (Soweto), Robbin Ami Silverberg (NYC), János Sugár (Budapest), Döce Varadi (Budapest), Diane Victor (Pretoria)

**Brush**  
 1995  
 5 x 7.25 x 1.5 inches (closed)  
 Varied edition of 3 copies

**Stations**  
 1995  
 2 x 3.5 x 2 inches  
 Unique

**They Stand Separated**  
 1994, 1998  
 Collaboration with Andrés Böröcz & Endre Kukorelly (poet)  
 7" x 22" x 1"  
 Edition of 4 copies

**Emandulo Re-Creation**  
 1997  
 Artist Proof Studio: JHB & Dobbin Books: NY  
 12.5 x 17.25 x.1.5 inches (closed)  
 Edition of 30 copies  
 Participants: Pepe Abela, Deborah Bell, Kim Berman, Andrés Böröcz, Keith Dietrich, Gordon Gabashane, Carol Hofmeyr, Basil Jones, William Kentridge, David Koloane, Atta Kwami, Frank Ledimo, Simon Mthimkhulu, Sam Nthlengethwa, John Roome, Ruth Sack, Mmakgabo Sebidi, Robbin Ami Silverberg, Simon Stone, Grace Tshikhuve, Diane Victor, Nhlanhla Xaba

**Emperor's Clothes**  
 1997  
 9" x 5.5" 1.5"  
 Series of 2 copies

**tattoo**  
 1996  
 4 x 4 x 4 inches  
 Series of 3 copies

**Brush**  
 1995  
 5 x 7.25 x 1.5 inches (closed)  
 Varied edition of 3 copies

**Stations**  
 1995  
 2 x 3.5 x 2 inches  
 Unique

**Tapestry Lunchbox**  
 1994  
 Collaboration with Martin Kubaczek & Christiane Wustinger  
 12 x 8 x 3 inches  
 Tapestry: 11.5 x 8 inches (7 panels)  
 Unique

**The Smell of Winter**  
 1992  
 3.5 x 10.5 inches  
 Unique



# Julie Chen

## **The Accretion of Identity**

2022  
5.375 x 9.625 x 1.625 inches  
(closed), opening to a width of  
24.5 inches  
Edition of 30 copies

## **Book of Hours**

2021  
Text & image by Julie Chen  
& Keri Miki-Lani Schroeder  
8.5 x 11 x 1.875 inches  
88 copies

## **Wayfinding**

2011  
9 x 16 x 4.5 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 41 inches  
50 copies

## **Bitter Chocolate**

2016  
Text by Julie Chen, images by Julie  
Chen & Keri Miki-Lani Schroeder  
3.5 x 14.75 x 1.875 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 25.75 inches  
50 copies

## **Chrysalis**

2014  
6.75 x 11.75 x 6.625 inches (box)  
7 x 11 x 7 inches (book object)  
50 copies

## **Family Tree**

2013  
9.25 x 8.875 x 2.5 inches (box size)  
50 copies

## **Memento**

2012  
5.75 x 6.75 x 2.875 inches (box)  
1.625 x 2.125 x 0.375 inches  
(book)  
50 copies

## **Glimpse**

2011  
Text & image by Julie Chen &  
Barbara Tetenbaum  
8.125 x 11.75 x 1.125 inches  
100 copies

## **How Books Work**

2011  
Text & image by Julie Chen &  
Clifton Meador  
4 x 6 x 0.125 inches (closed)  
Open edition

## **A Guide to Higher Learning**

2009  
11 x 11 x 3.125 inches (closed),  
opening to 31 x 31 inches  
100 copies

## **Panorama**

2008  
9.5 x 20.25 x 1.25 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 60 inches  
100 copies

## **View**

2006  
6.375 x 13.625 x 4.5 inches (box)  
100 copies

## **Full Circle**

2006  
15.5 x 15.5 x 3 inches  
100 copies

## **True to Life**

2004  
9.5 x 14.75 x 1 inches  
100 copies

## **Personal Paradigms: A Game of Human Experience**

2003  
15.5 x 11.25 x 4.75 inches (box)  
100 copies

## **The Veil**

2002  
8.5 x 13 x 1 inches (box)  
100 copies

## **Ode to a Grand Staircase**

2001  
Text by Erik Satie  
Book design & images by Julie  
Chen & Barbara Tetenbaum  
5.75 x 7.75 x 0.5 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 37 inches  
100 copies

## **(In)versions**

2000  
Images by Julie Chen & David  
Turner  
10 x 8.5 x 0.625 inches (closed),  
opening to a depth of 20 inches  
30 copies

## **World Without End**

1999  
4.25 x 10 x 0.5 inches  
25 copies

## **Bon Bon Mots**

1998  
10 x 7 x 1.75 inches (box)  
100 copies

## **Leavings**

1997  
4.25 x 6.5 x 1 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 51 inches  
100 copies

## **Life Time**

1996  
2.75 inches in diameter, opening to  
a full depth of 7 inches  
100 copies

## **Space-Time Geometry**

1996  
Text & book design by Julie Chen,  
drawings by David Turner  
5 x 11 x 6.5 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 30 inches  
10 copies

## **Radio Silence**

1995  
3.5 x 5 x 1.875 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 84 inches  
75 copies

## **River of Stars**

1994  
3 x 3 x 0.75 inches(closed),  
opening to a width of 24 inches  
100 copies

## **You Are Here**

1992  
4 x 4 x 0.625 inches (closed),  
opening to 11.5 x 15.75 inches  
100 copies

## **Listening**

1992  
4.25 x 3.75 x 2.125 inches (closed),  
opening to a width of 30 inches  
75 copies

## **Domestic Science:**

### **Pop-up Icons & Idioms**

1990  
Text & image by Nance O'Banion,  
book design by Julie Chen  
6 x 12 x 1 inches (closed), opening  
to a width of 84 inches  
150 Copies



Photography:

Blaffert & Wamhof, Eberle & Eisfeld (Schäpers),  
Dorka Hübner (Silverberg), Sibila Savage (Chen)

Catalog Design:

Noa Rabinovich Lalo

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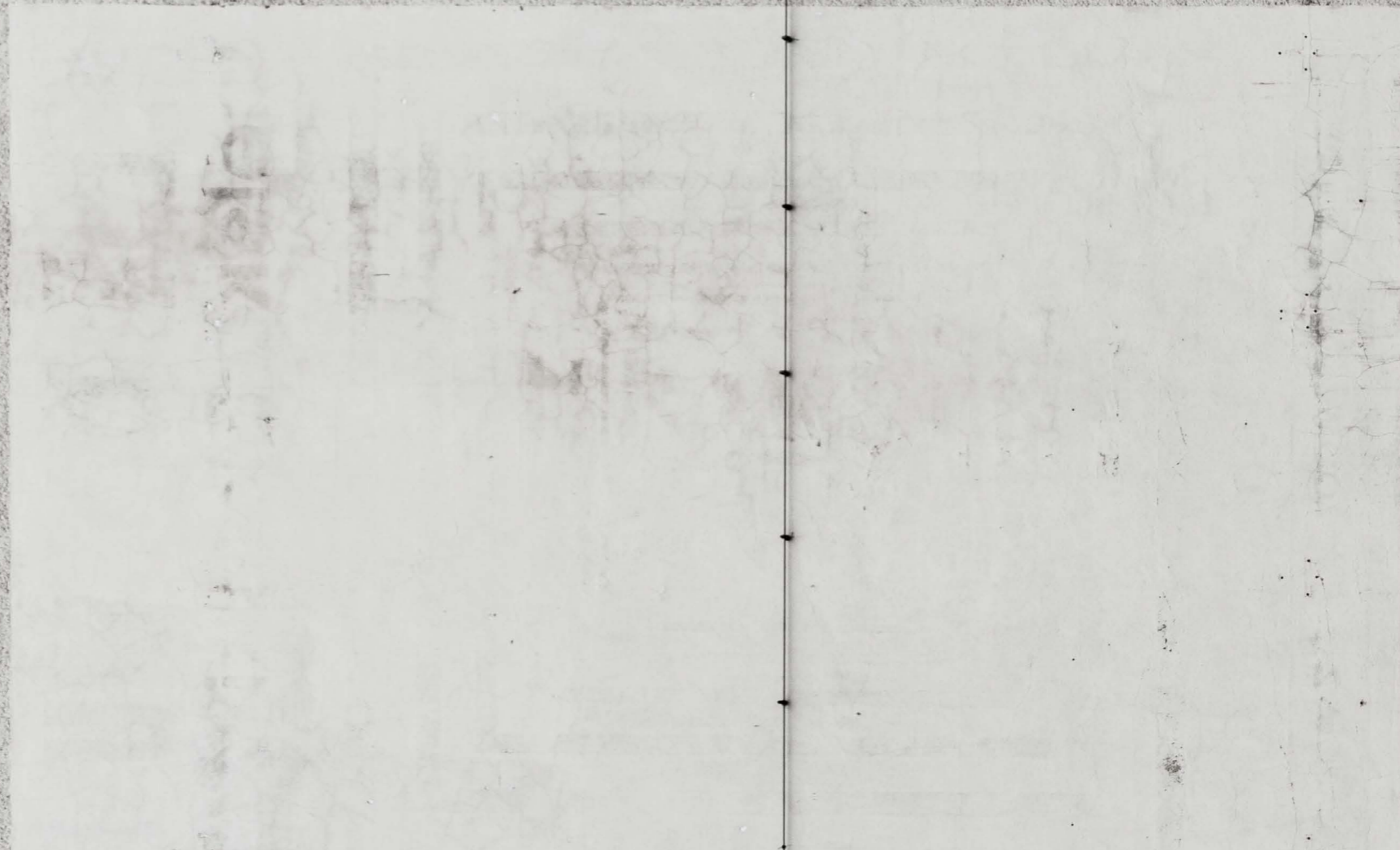


# Creative Research

The Artists' Books of Veronika Schäpers,  
Robbin Ami Silverberg and Julie Chen







Photography:  
Blaffert & Wamhof, Eberle & Eisfeld (Schäpers),  
Dorka Hübner (Silverberg), Sibila Savage (Chen)

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