

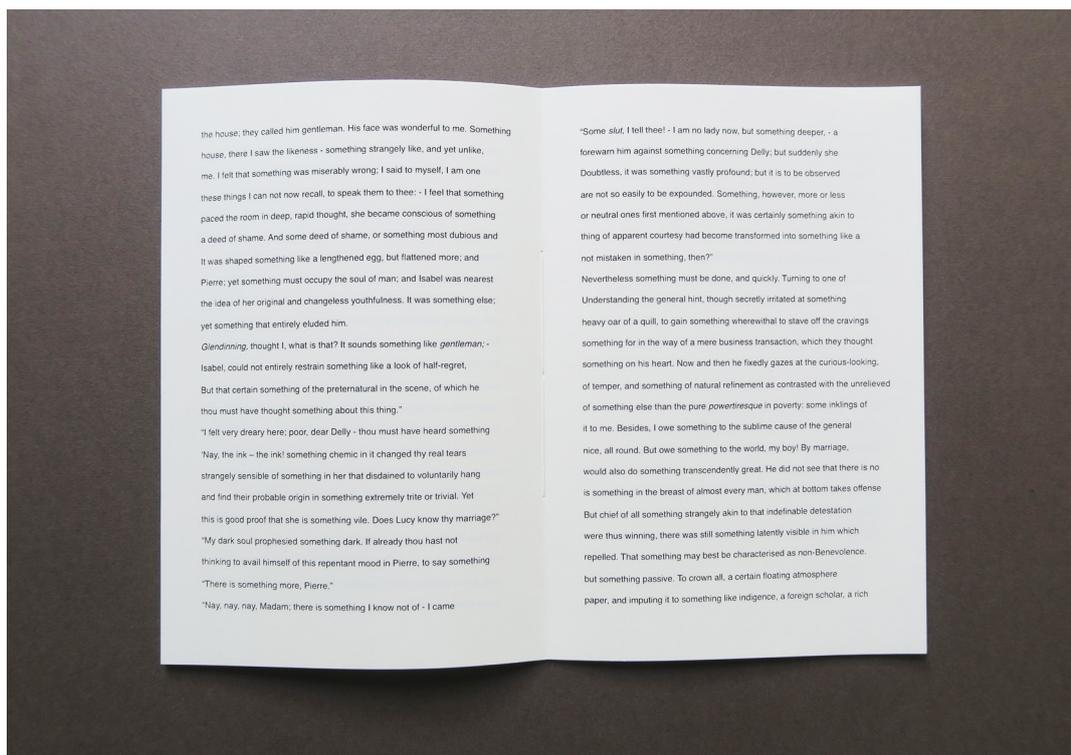
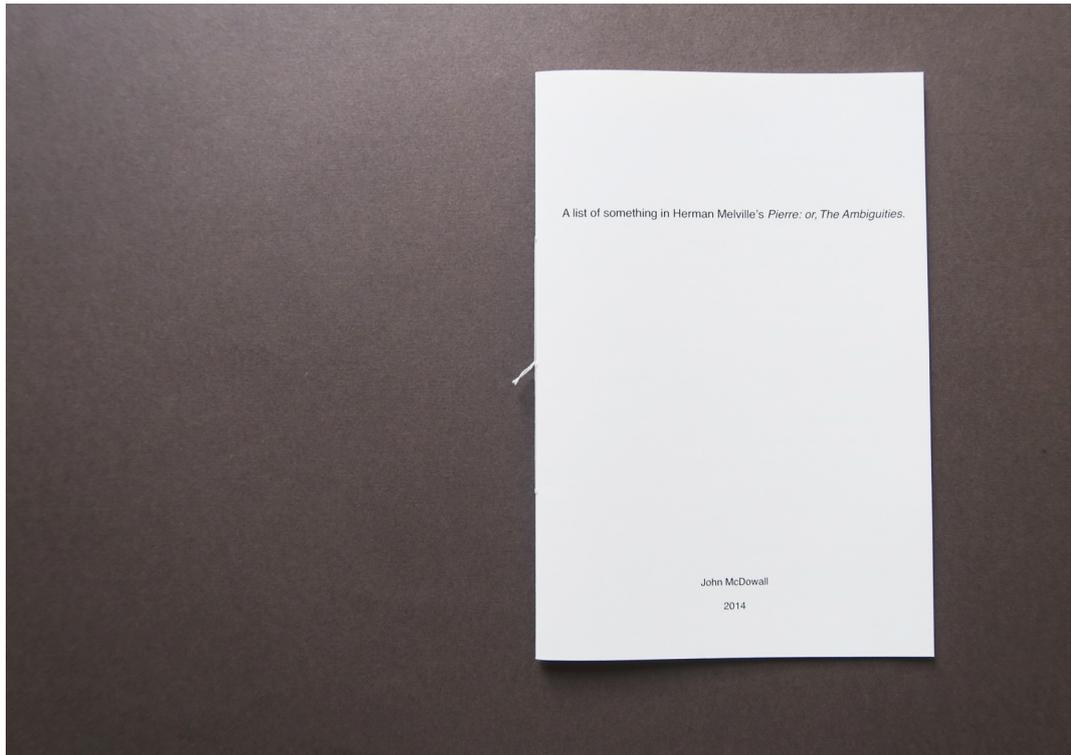
John Charles McDowall

Visual index of art practice 2013 - 2017

A list of something in Herman Melville's 'Pierre: or, The Ambiguities'

The book reflects the ambivalence that is one of the many complex, and prescient themes in Meville's novel. The content is the title's manifestation the inventory of the occurrence of the word, as established in a concordance to *Pierre* in which the full line of the every incidence of each word is given - *something* appears 89 times.

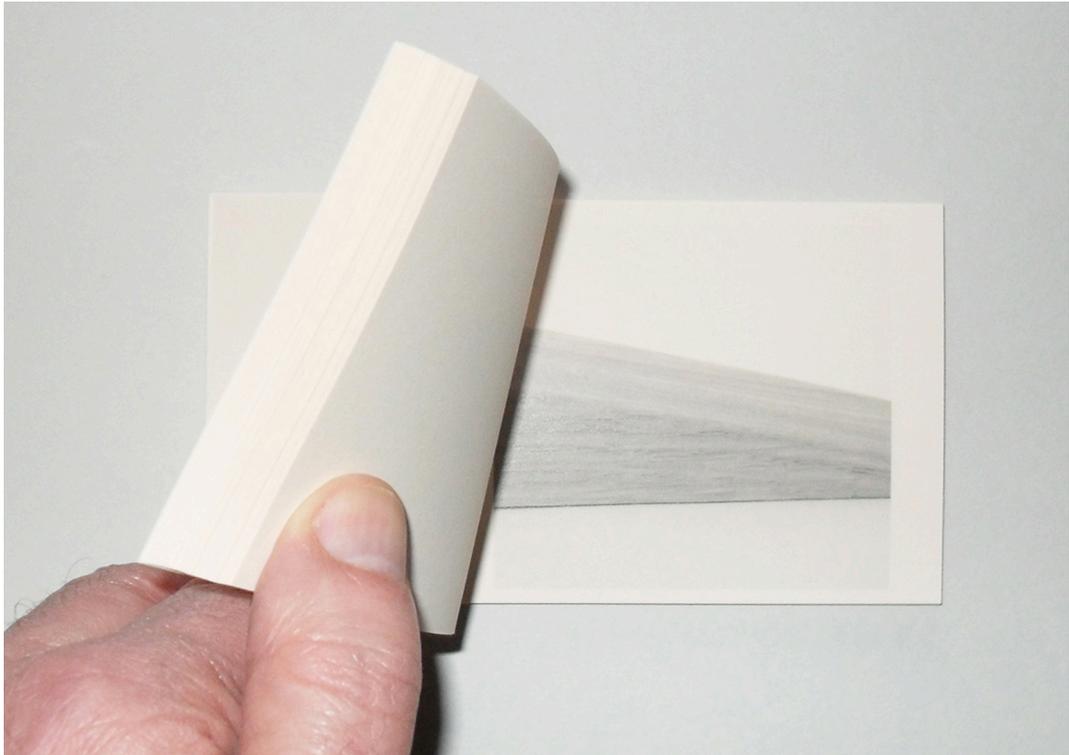
Open edition, sewn pamphlet, 12 pages including covers, 20.9 x 14.0 cm, laser print on Canaletto Liscia 125 gsm paper, 2014.



A small (or large) machine

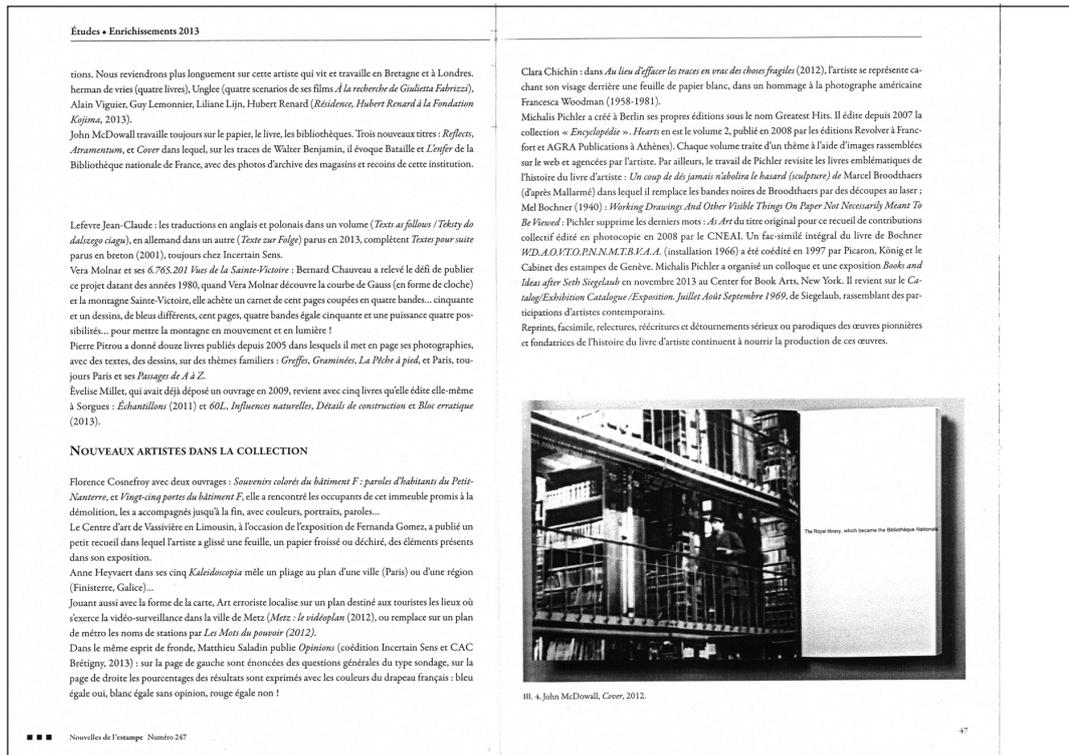
A flip-book of black and white photographs in which the sequence of pages/animation shows the represented diminishment of volume, echoed in the reduction of thickness of the book as the pages are flicked through. The title is taken from William Carlos Williams's introduction to his collection of poems *The Wedge*. The book was made for *Re object*, a project initiated and curated by Sophie Loss.

Open edition, perfect bound, 68 leaves plus cover, 7.3 x 14.7 cm, laser print, 2015.



The book *Cover* was acquired by the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris for the artists' book collection in 2014, the purchase was referenced in an article in the journal *Nouvelles de l'estampe* (247 été 2014). The images, initially concealed, are stills from Alain Resnais's film essay on the library, *Toute la mémoire du monde*; a single line of written text recounts that, during the war, Walter Benjamin's papers were hidden for safe-keeping by his friend Georges Bataille within the Bibliothèque nationale.

(Open edition, stab bound at three points, 16 folded leaves, digital print, 2012)



Chelsea College of Arts Library - *53 books*

6 January - 29 January 2016.

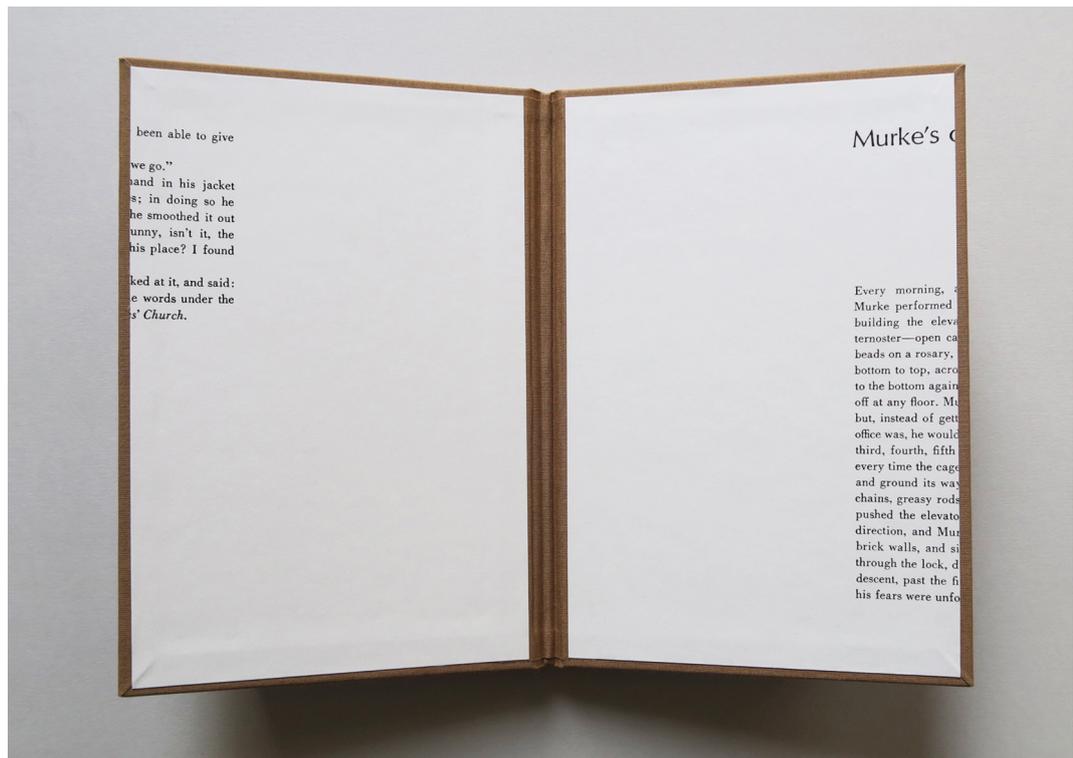
A survey exhibition, selected and arranged by Sophie Loss, composed of book works produced in response to the set themes of the artists' coalition AMBruno's initiatives. I titled the exhibition *53 books*, not because it was comprised of that number of works but in reference to Georges Perec's novel "*53 jours*", I also gave a talk proposing an association between Perec's work and the group's constraint led projects.



Ellipsis

The book's genesis came from the reversing of square brackets] [. A vertical slice of the first and last third of Heinrich Böll's story *Murke's Collected Silences* - the elided majority of the words do not form a lacuna in the place between end and beginning, but are notionally somewhere in the space of time outside of the book's cover, as the text leads out, around and back.

Open edition, cloth-covered boards with blind debossing, 23.2 x 15.8 cm, laser printed 'endpapers', 2017.



Escapade

A collaboration with Sophie Loss.

François Rabelais enjoyed words, they romp along together with his larger than life characters, and in this book these words of words veer off the allotted path, to the end of their world of paper, and back.

Open edition, sewn pamphlet, 8 pages, 17.8 x 11.1 cm, laser print on Conqueror High White 120gsm, 2016.



Future Legacies: Collections, Collecting and Artists' Books

The Stanley and Audrey Burton Gallery, University of Leeds, 11 February -10 June 2017.

Selected from The Brotherton Library's Special Collections, the exhibited works explored thematic, visual and other formal relationships between books produced over past centuries and contemporary artists' books, juxtapositions that connected subject areas through format, image and text. Curated by Rhiannon Francis-Lawrence, John McDowall and Chris Taylor.

Presented paper *As and from the library: five artists' books* at the accompanying symposium.



Future Legacies: Collections, Collecting and Artists' Books - works displayed

vitrites 1 and 2

bio auto graphic - Mike Nicholson

Osteographia or the Anatomy of Bones - William Cheselden

vitrites 3 and 4

Blue Books - Mick Welbourn

A book of fruits & flowers - Anonymous

Flowers in a Hotel Room - Vols. 1, 2 and 3 - Sarah Bodman

vitrites 5 and 6

A Walk Round Art - Graham Martin

A Map of Childhood - Graham Martin

Sun and Moon - Carla Moss

Thirtyfour parking lots in Los Angeles - Ed Ruscha

Cosmographia - Peter Apian

vitrites 7 and 8

Home Made Record Sleeves Vol 1: Dead or Alive - Stephen Fowler

Home Made Record Sleeves Vol 2: Depeche Mode - Stephen Fowler

16th century anonymous school notebook

Body for Words - Philip Lee

Rêve d'une petite fille qui voulut entrer au Carmel - Max Ernst

Le Tout Venant - Pierre Alechinsky

vitrites 9 and 10

QAEDA QUALITY QUESTION QUICKLY QUIET - Lenka Clayton and George W Bush

The Blue Bird - Sam Belinfante

WORDS: The house was quiet and the world was calm - Ximena Pérez Grobet

Kakusu - a graphic score - John McDowall

Practica musicae - Franchinus Gaffurius

Hidden

The exhibition was curated by Dr Catherine Ferguson, and brought together bookworks by John McDowall and small paintings by Tim Renshaw. The Wild Pansy Press Project Space, University of Leeds, 4 March - 28 March 2014.

“By juxtaposing two forms of practice that invite the visitor to engage with the work in physically different ways there is the invitation to move between the registers of the visual and the tactile within the gallery space: to view paintings with book in hand and to move between the pages of the book in sight of the painted surface fastened to the wall.” - Catherine Ferguson.

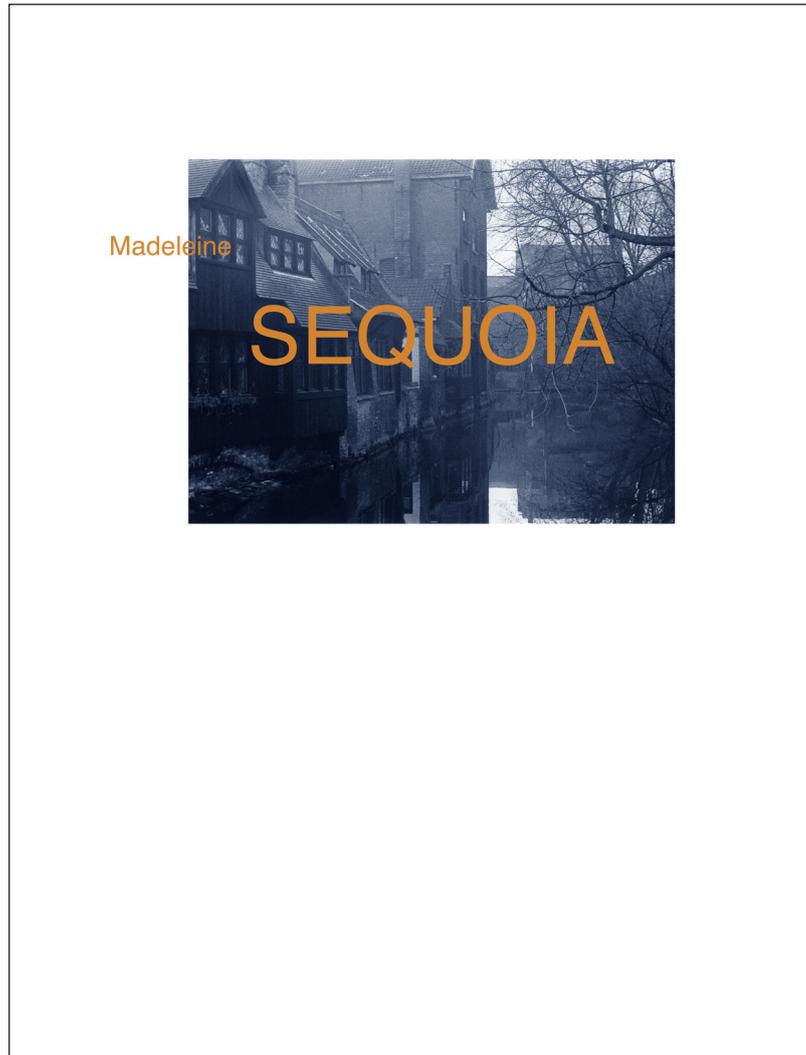


'I'm telling you stories. Trust me.'

Set the brief, and produced a work for the suite of 18 prints project *'I'm telling you stories. Trust me'*, first exhibited at Multiplied, Christie's October 2013.

A case of deception and self-deception - in *Bruges-la-Morte* by the Symbolist writer Georges Rodenbach (the first novel to be illustrated with photographs), unacknowledged source of the book *D'entre les morts* by Boileau-Narcejac and filmed by Alfred Hitchcock as *Vertigo*.

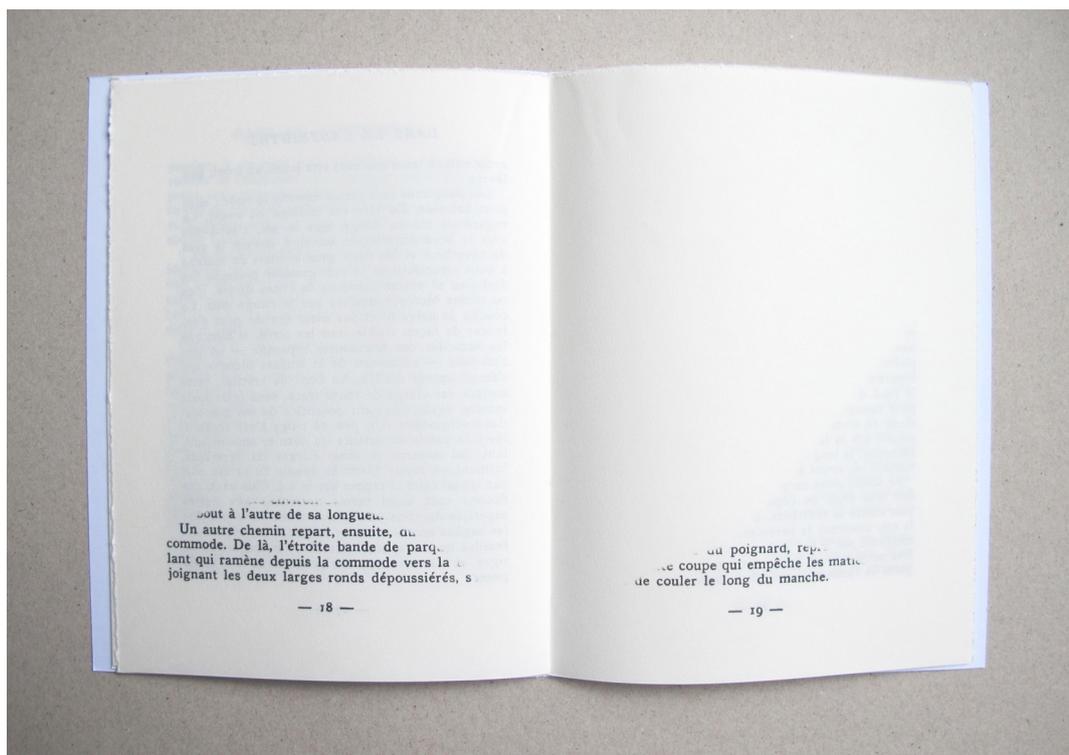
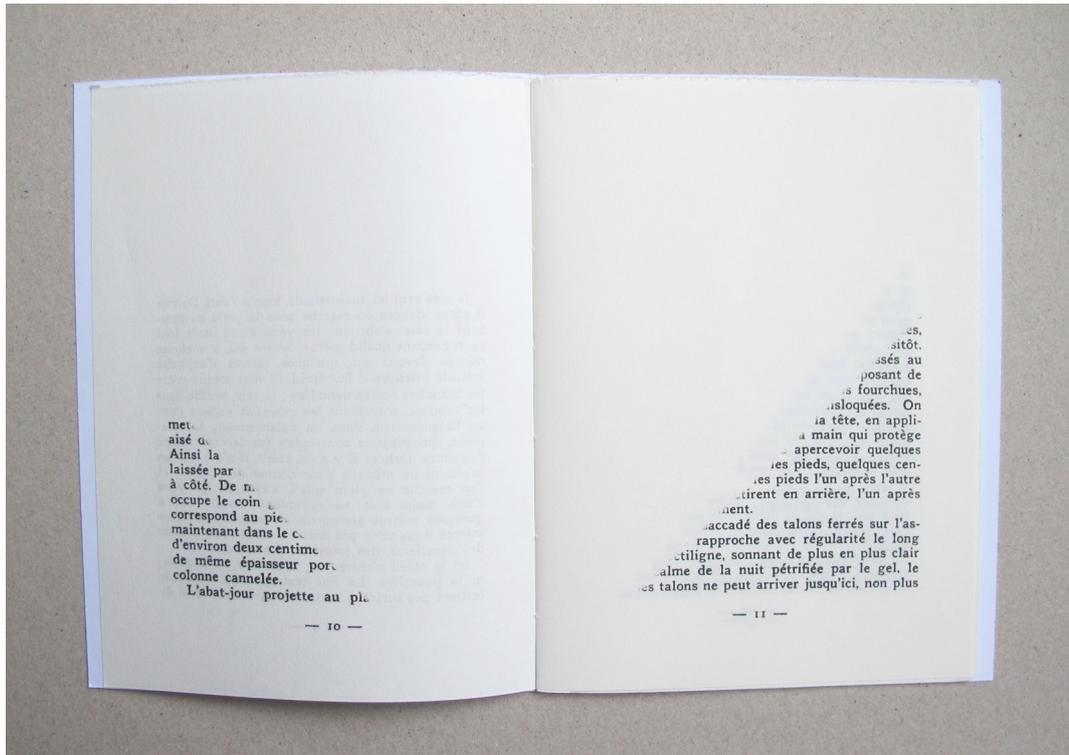
Bruges-la-Morte edition of 25 copies, archival inkjet print, 2013.



In-octavo

Only the fragments of text glimpsed, as if the leaves of the untrimmed first sixteen-page signature of Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel *Dans le labyrinthe* were teased apart, are printed.

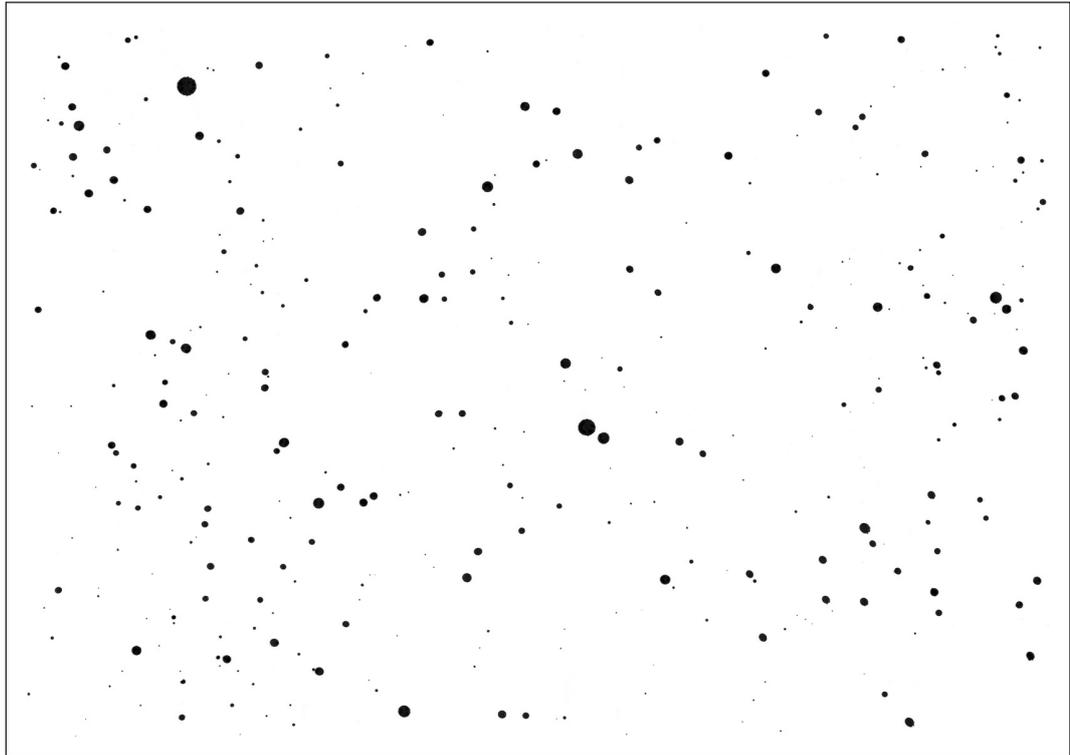
Open edition, sewn 16-page section, 19.2 x 14.3 cm, loose in card cover, inkjet printed on Magnani 100gsm book wove 'velata avorio', with laser printed cover text, 2013.



Ink constellation

Contribution to *The Lost Diagrams*, edited by Helen Clarke and Sharon Kivland and published by Ma Bibliothèque 2017.

The book presents the results of an invitation for responses to Walter Benjamin's description (in *A Berlin Chronicle*) of a diagram of his life that he had made, and subsequently lost, one he recalls as being as a labyrinth, graphically symbolising the cross-connections of his acquaintanceships made through varied social situations.



Marque-pages

Shadows collected from a reading Nathalie Sarraute's novel *Vous les entendez?* Cast in and by the open book - the left-hand section shades a series of recto pages, seven shadows are printed producing a faint indexical imprint of light and time, and as the interleaved tissue sheets are turned, the seen-through shadows disappear and then re-appear.

Open edition, singer sewn, 9 pages interleaved with 28gsm Tosa Washi, 18.6 x 12.5 cm, laser print on Zerkall 100gsm white rough, 2017.



More is less is more: artists' books as collection/accumulation

Curated exhibition which presented a selection of artists' books, literary fiction and music - works in which possible meanings may come from the practice of assembling typologies, or from the volume of material accumulation of pages and printed content.

Held at The Tetley, Leeds 7 March - 22 March 2015 as part of the PAGES series of exhibitions and events *Collections and Collaborations* accompanying the 18th Contemporary Artists' Book Fair.



More is less is more: artists' books as collection/accumulation - works displayed

vitrine 1

Another Water - Roni Horn

Water Towers - Bernd and Hilla Becher

All the World's Fighter Planes - Fiona Banner

1.-> *Variante bei Konrad Fischer, 10 Juni 1975* - Hanne Darboven

Information - Hanne Darboven

A Room of One's Own / A Thousand Libraries - Kajsa Dahlberg

Salle de Fêtes = Sala delle Feste - Ettore Spalletti

wit-white - herman de vries

vitrine 2

Floh - Tacita Dean

Kaddish - Christian Boltanski

The Weather - Kenneth Goldsmith

An Invocation - Five Hundred and Thirty Books from Southend Central Library - Mike Nelson

In order of pages - Veronika Spierenburg

Marabout - Claude Closky

Deciphering the Human Chromosome 16: From Fugu to Human - Sarah Jacobs

literature

Def - Craig Dworkin

a: a novel - Andy Warhol

Ketjak (The Age of Huts) - Ron Silliman

The Making of Americans: Being a History of a Family's Progress - Gertrude Stein

music

The Chord Catalogue - Tom Johnson

Opus 17a - Hanne Darboven

Vexations - Erik Satie

Of time and model kits

The School of Music, University of Leeds 18 February - 18 March 2016.

Curated a display of books, works that in diverse ways present aspects of an action, and of a reading, one that has taken place and is now set out in material form to be re-imagined, elaborated and/or performed by the reader/viewer. The accompanying presentation for Scott McLaughlin and students outlined some of the correlations and correspondences between music and artists' books - another, and essentially, time based medium.



Of time and model kits - works displayed

vitrine 1

Grandma's sideboard, the shadow of a 1960's ashtray - Leanne Bell

Recording - Qiongjie Yu

A Herb Garden - Thomas A Clark

Kakusu - a graphic score - John McDowall

Information - Hanne Darboven

NG507251: 23.07.2012 - Luke Allan

DDOUBL - Colin Sackett

Ghost Lines - Jane Grisewood

vitrine 2

Passage - John McDowall

Trieste Zürich Paris - a liminal score - John McDowall

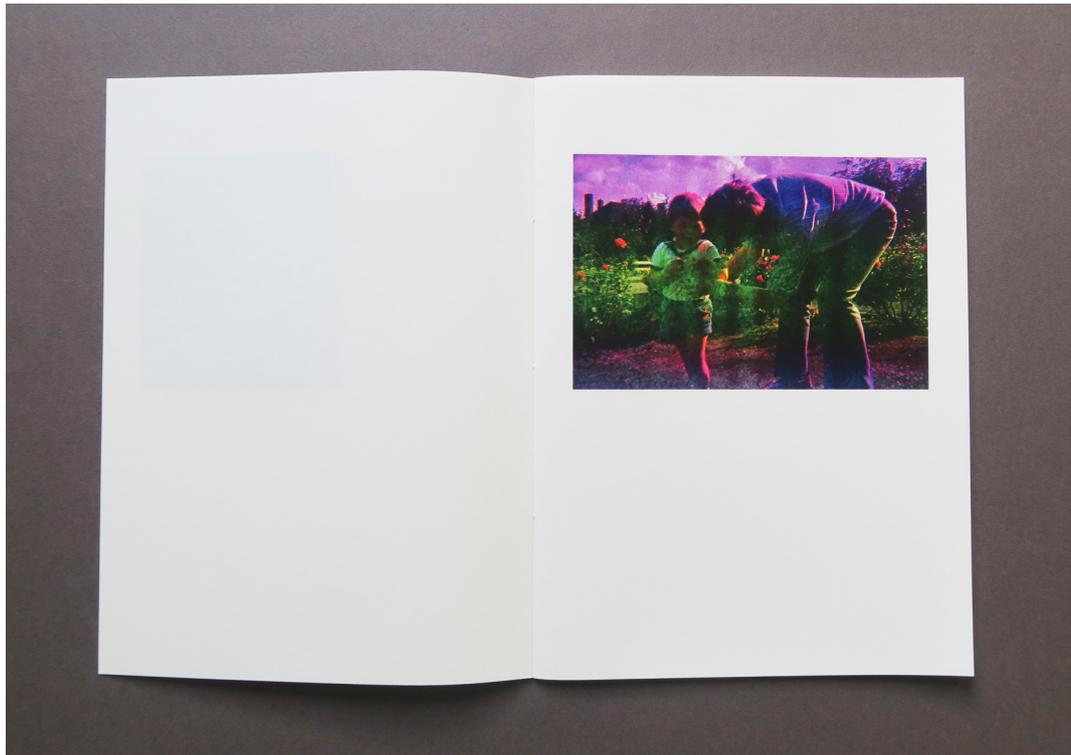
Sappho fragments - John McDowall and Gerhard Stäbler

Story of the time - John McDowall

Of time: fermata

A Kodak Brownie 127 camera bought secondhand had a roll of exposed colour film inside, photographs of an unknown origin held in an indeterminable temporal suspension, forming a twofold pause of the photographed moments stilled and their time in abeyance.

Open edition, sewn pamphlet of 20 pages including cover, 27.8 x 20.1 cm, laser print on Vanguard 135gsm Ivory, 2016.



Pages: Future Present

The exhibition brought together publications, ephemera and photographic documentation from the past 20 years of International Contemporary Artists' Book Fairs and the associated activities and exhibitions programmed around this annual event. Co-curated by John McDowall and Chris Taylor.

Jointly edited and designed all the project's accompanying Artists' Book Fair catalogues with Chris Taylor.

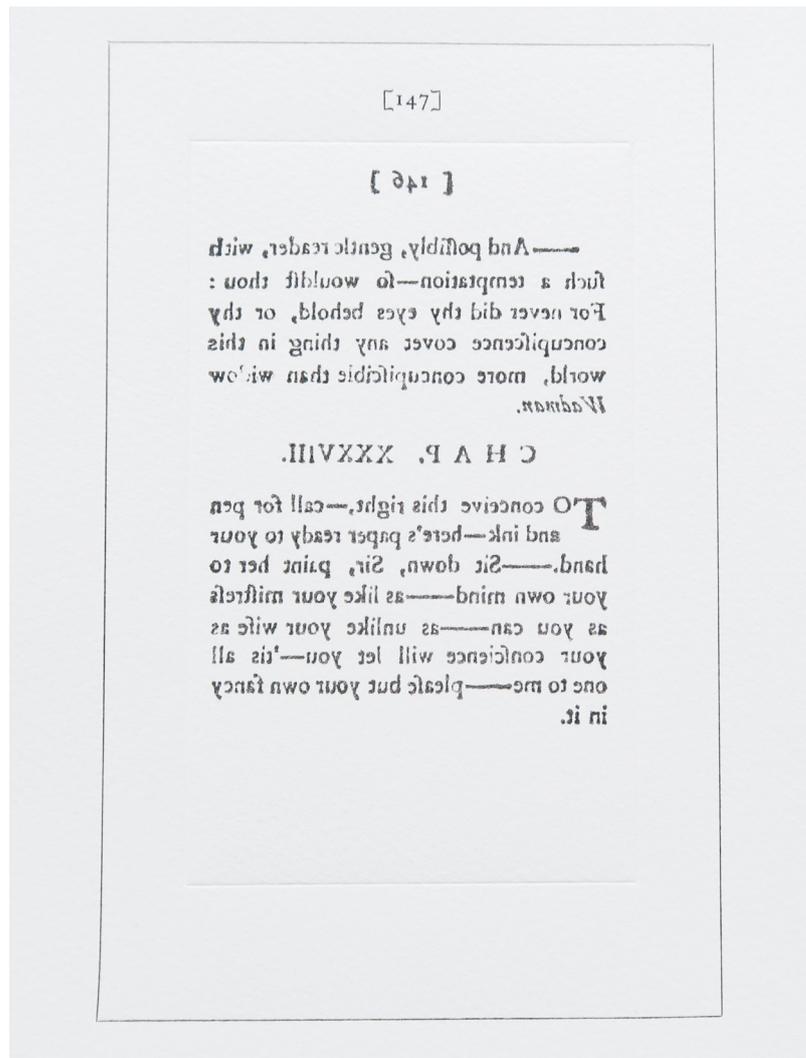
Commissioned wall text, and photograph by Julie Johnstone.



Paint her to Your Own Mind

A contribution to the project inviting responses to/interpretations of the blank page in *Tristram Shandy*, curated by Patrick Wildgust and The Laurence Sterne Trust. The new pages were exhibited at Shandy Hall 9 July - 30 September 2016 and &Model Gallery, Leeds 27 October - 12 November 2016.

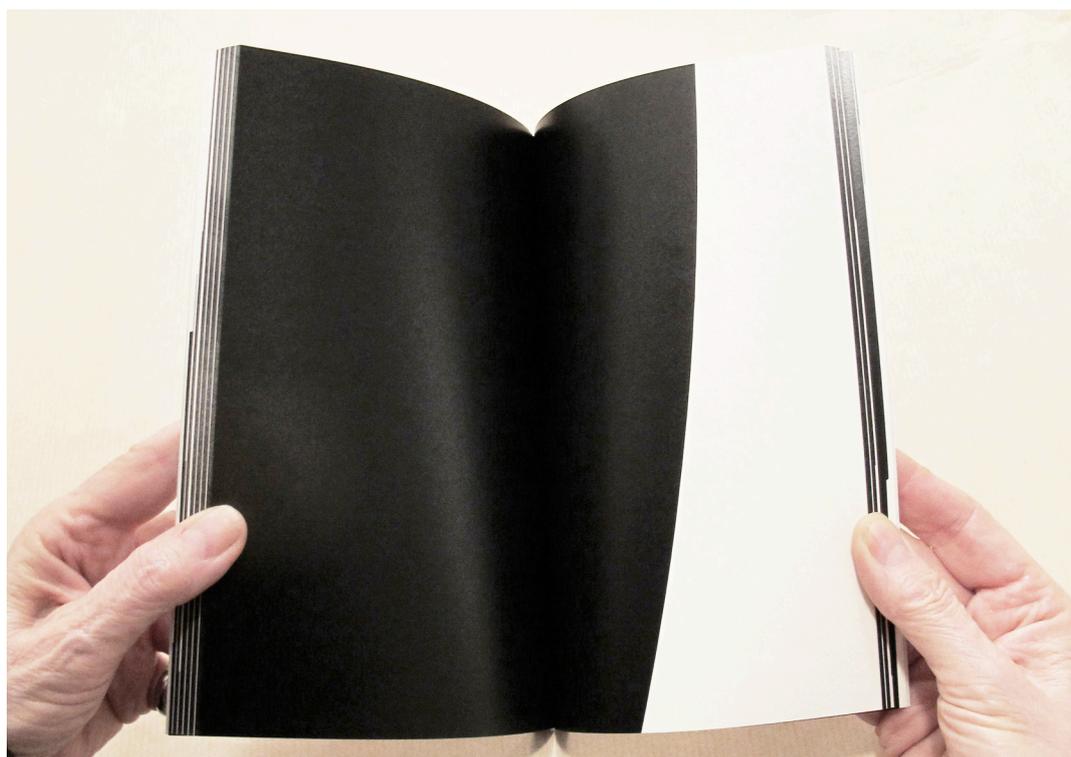
Making page 147 a reflection of its opposite page, though it may also be a mirror to the narrative's envisioned but not described subject, and more generally to Sterne's meta-textual play. The text/ink has been materially transferred, using solvent, from a printed copy of page 146.



Permit yourself to drift ...

Exhibition at the Centre d'Arts Santa Monica, Barcelona 21 April - 3 July 2016, curated by Moritz Küng. The display comprised of a book work in dialogue with an installation piece by each of 14 artists, including Cerith Wyn Evans, Dora Garcia and Stanley Brouwn.

Wall painting *Atramentum Field* 2016 and (*Atramentum* 2012. A materiality of language is made manifest by notionally pooling the ink of the printed text of Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, the words are reproduced as a solid black circle and laid out as a new book).



Reading as art. Turning the pages of Victorian psychology.

Senate House Library, University of London 15 October 2013. Convened by Sharon Kivland and Mura Ghosh.

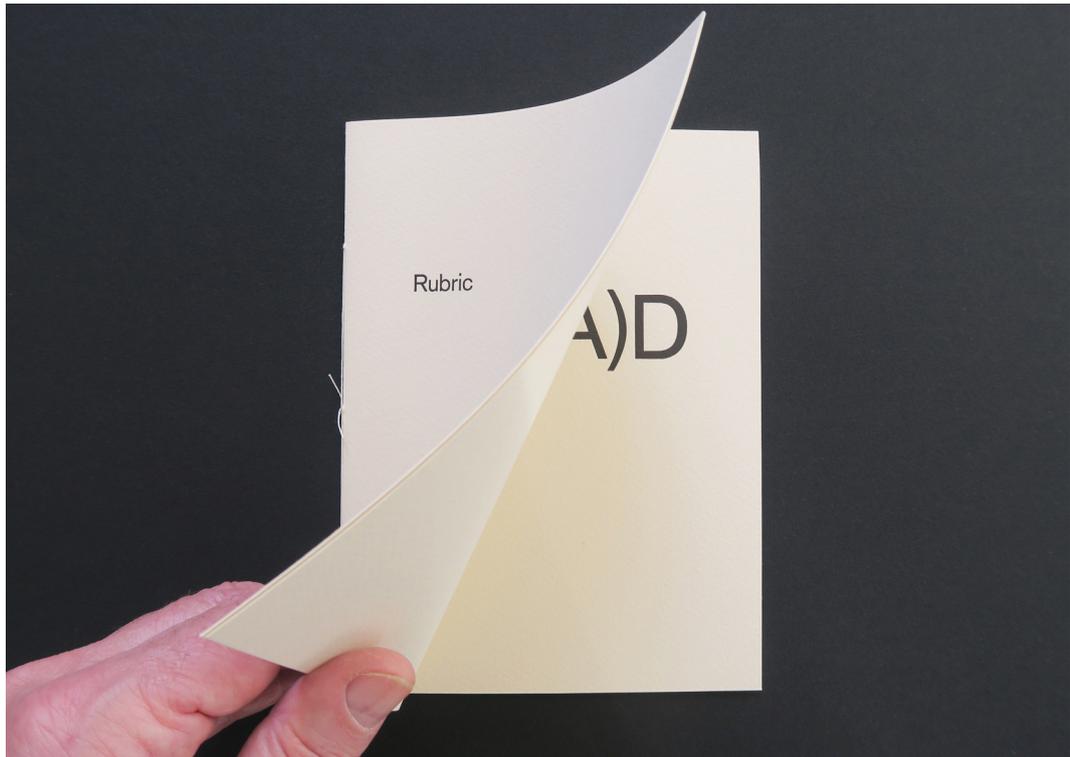
La Maison Usher. For my contribution, leaves of paper each printed with one of a selection of 18 single words first used or coined by Edgar Allan Poe in his prose and poetry were distributed throughout the venue. On the reverse, one of three stills from Jean Epstein's 1928 silent film *La Chute de la maison Usher*, a line of text at the base stated the source of the words and image, and invited visitors to take one of these words/gifts.



Rubric

The placing of the 'a', indefinite article and first letter of alphabet, in parenthesis simultaneously highlights and displaces it. There is a shifting ambiguity of assimilation between the signifier of colour and reflexively that of the act of reading in the present and, a homonym, in the past. The book's size and paper tone and texture matches that of *La Queste du Saint Graal*, translated from 13th century manuscripts by Albert Pauphilet and published in Paris in 1923.

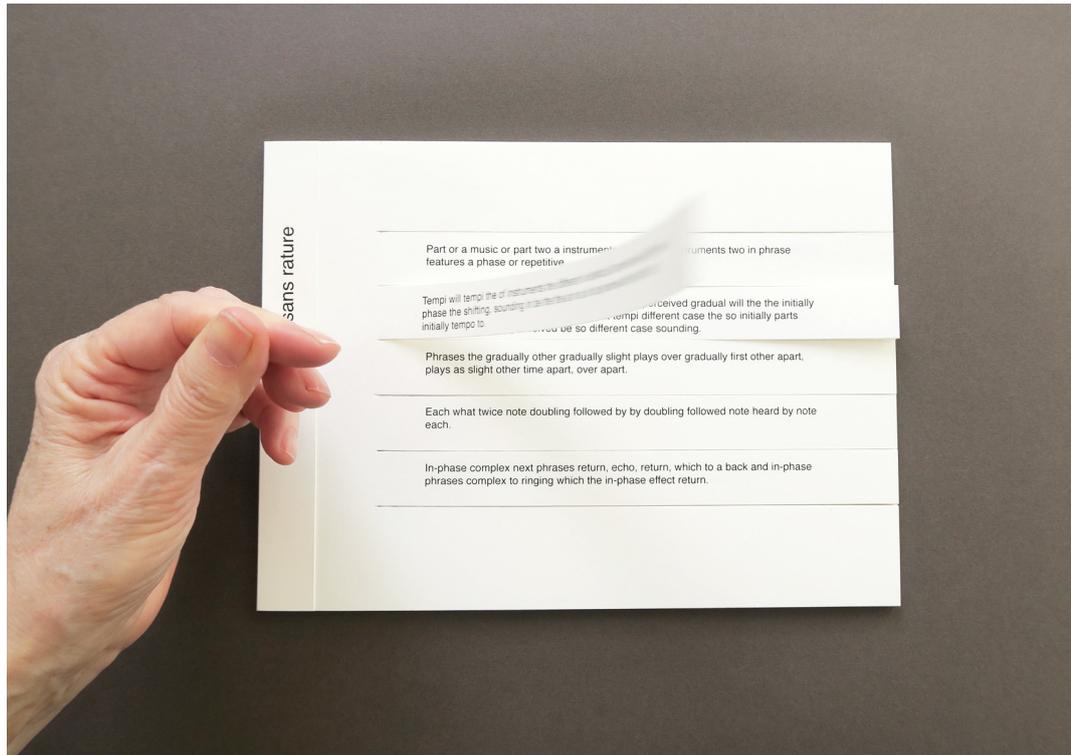
Open edition, sewn pamphlet, 8 pages including cover, 19.1 x 14.2 cm, letterpress on 250gsm Somerset Velvet Buff 2015.



Sans rature

A source text of a description of the process of gradual phase shifting in music has been cut-up using an engine to generate random permutations of the constituent words - sixteen separate settlements of these have been composed. The form of the work is a book with one version of the text per recto page and with each of its five sentences on a cut strip, physically enabling further, and near infinite, re-combinations. Made in response to the *Lorem Ipsum* project, initiated by Louise Atkinson.

Open edition, 16 cut leaves, stab binding, 17.1 x 23.2 cm, laser print 2015.



Stills

Set the brief, and produced a work for the project *Stills* (first shown at the London Art Book Fair, Whitechapel Gallery September 2014), to produce an editioned print in response to the notion of an instant of a film stilled - participants' prints may be based on production/publicity photos or a captured frame, or perhaps a memory of a film seen or of an imagined one.

Presented related paper *A suite of prints and the reification of cinematic and of subjective time* at the 'International Conference Cinema - Art, Technology, Communication' at Avanca, Portugal 22 - 26 July 2015, published in *Avanca/Cinema 2015*.



Stills - Eclipse field

A frame from Michelangelo Antonioni's film *L'Eclisse* (*The Eclipse*) - the contrast in the shot of very dark shade and of lightness of the figure of Monica Vitti and of the sunlit street disappears into paper. The image is defined and made visible solely by means of the shadows cast by the relief of the intaglio impression revealed, as in the film's projection, by light.

Edition of 24, blind-embossed from a laser-cut acrylic plate 2014.



Stills - works

54:44-54:47 (screenprint) - Marco Cali

25th (drypoint and embossing) - Claire Deniau

After Tarkovsky (C-type colour photograph) - Kathryn Faulkner

All About Eve? All About My Mother (C-type colour photograph) - Judy Goldhill

The dark and the Light (silver gelatin print) - Jane Grisewood

5A (The Temporary Object of My Affection) (fibre-based silver gelatin print) - Lydia Julien

Last Year: The garden and frozen figures with their shadows (inkjet print) - Sharon Kivland

Factum no.24 (inkjet print and embossing) - Sophie Loss

Eclipse field (blind embossing) - John McDowall

Re-Momentum copperplate (etching and aquatint) - Valerie Mary

The Night Man (silver gelatin print) - Steve Perfect

Blackboards (linocut) - Anne Rook

The Card Index as Writing Machine

Curated the exhibition of artists' books and related works of literature and sound that either have their genesis in the fragmentary, or comprise of discrete items such as notes, images and excerpts. With reference to writers who have used the manifold possibilities of the gathering, arrangement, selection and rearrangement of index cards as writing procedure.

Held at The Tetley, Leeds 7 March - 23 March 2014 as part of the PAGES series of exhibitions *Archives and office, stationery and document* mounted in conjunction with the 17th Contemporary Artists' Book Fair.



The Card Index as Writing Machine - works displayed

vitrine

Partition pour un jardin zen en hommage à John Cage - Pierre Courtaud and Simone Stoll

Qui -dans l'ordre -au rouge du soir- des mots - Roger Lewinter

Coverment - Janna Ullrich

Thirty-five New Pages - Lev Rubinstein

Free Words - Sal Randolph

Livres d'Artistes - Anne Mœglin-Delcroix

Tout ce que je peux être - Claude Closky

Unfinished Dissertation - Boris Mikhailov

White Noise - Rachel Smith

Événements 09 - Anne-Marie Chaton

In Sara, Mencken, Christ, and Beethoven - text by John Barton Wolgamot

literature

Collected Novellas - Arno Schmidt

This Is Not A Novel - David Markson

Vanishing Point - David Markson

Here I am - Lev Rubinstein

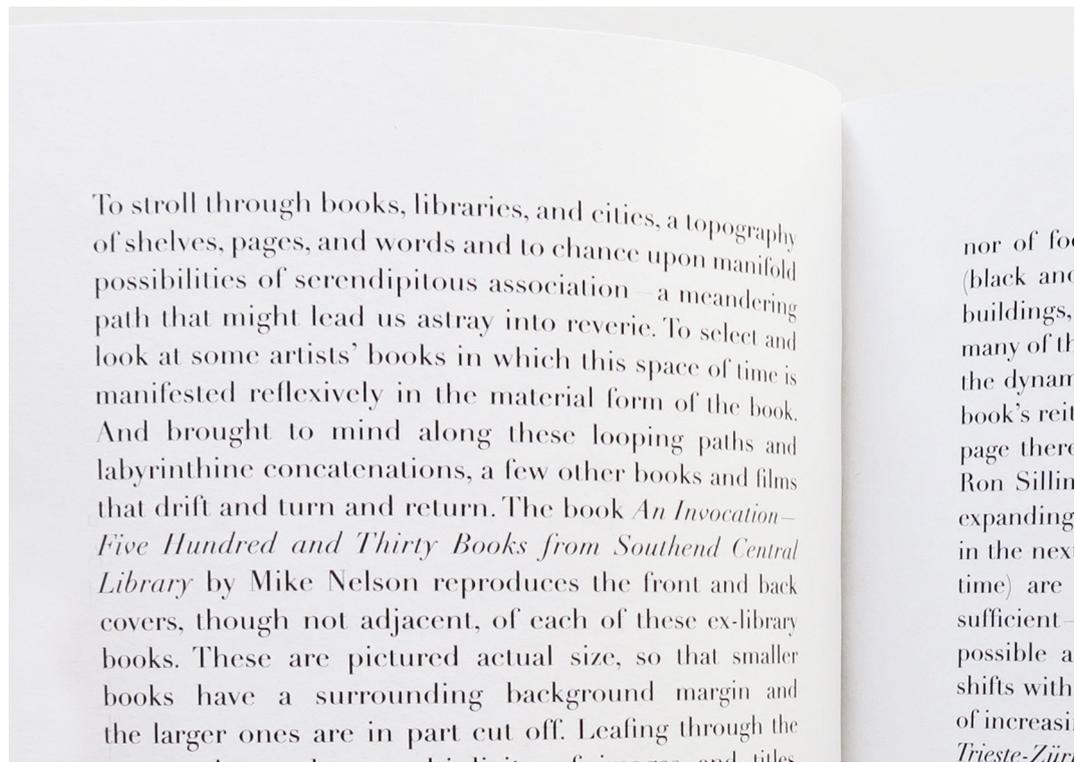
music

In Sara, Mencken, Christ, and Beethoven - Robert Ashley and Paul de Marinis

'Things flow about so here' as Alice said.

In the context of the theme of walking and dreaming the city, produced a written text of looping concatenations of succinct allusions to books and films, each of which in turn and at some point coil in on themselves. Invited contribution to *The Dreamers*, edited by Sharon Kivland and published by Ma Bibliothèque 2017.

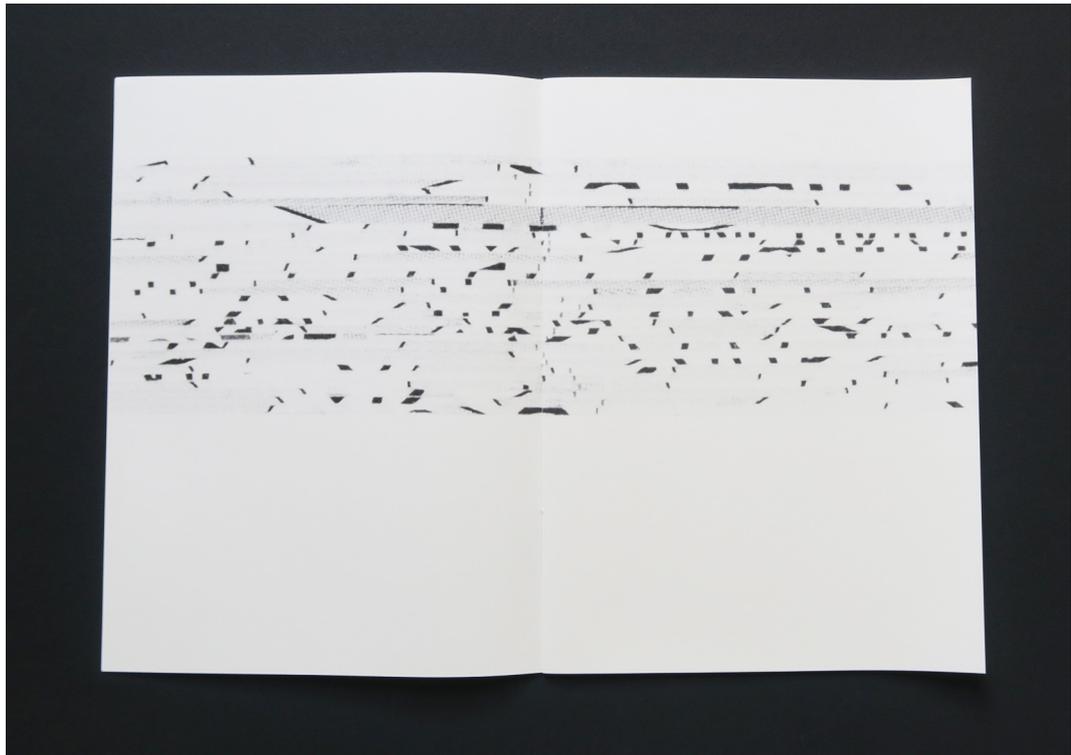
A related presentation given to students participating in the Writing Art module at Sheffield Hallam University.



Trieste Zürich Paris - a liminal score

An open graphic score, this visual notation reproduces the complex of fragments of lines and tones visible on a very narrow band of each page as the book of a city street map is bent back slightly. City, book, streets, pages and edges - lines of print and lines of random strolling and reading from map to score to (re)performance. The three cities are the one's in which James Joyce wrote *Ulysses*, a novel of walking/sounding another city.

Open edition, sewn pamphlet of 20 pages including cover, 27.8 x 20.1 cm, laser print on Vanguard 135gsm Ivory 2013.



Words

Set the brief, *words*, for the artists' coalition AMBruno's project for new book works. That this would be a consideration of any aspect of the materiality of written language and of its relation to the space of the page and the space of the book.

The set of 16 books was launched at the 19th Contemporary Artists' Book Fair in Leeds, March 2016, displayed at Tate Britain 5 May - 10 June 2017 (curated by Katie Blackford) and presented at the New York Art Book Fair, MoMA PS1 16-18 September 2016.

