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Towards a fugitive press:  
materiality and the  
printed photograph  
in artists' books

Tim Daly

PhD 2016



Towards a fugitive press:  
materiality and the  
printed photograph  
in artists' books

Tim Daly

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements of the Manchester  
Metropolitan University for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy

MIRIAD  
Manchester Metropolitan University

June 2016



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Tim Daly *Speke* (1987)  
Silver-gelatin prints in folio

## A. Abstract

The aim of my research is to demonstrate how a practice of hand made books based on the materiality of the photographic print and photo-reprography, could engage with notions of touch in the digital age. We take for granted that most artists' books are made from paper using lithography and bound in the codex form, yet this technology has served neither producer nor reader well. As Hayles (2002:22) observed:

We are not generally accustomed to thinking about the book as a material metaphor, but in fact it is an artifact whose physical properties and historical usage structure our interactions with it in ways obvious and subtle.

My research examines the discourse surrounding the materiality of the photographic print within artists' publishing and explores book handling as a research method to identify non-codex forms that invite non-sequential reading, physical interaction and touch. The primary purpose of the practice element of my research is to test disruptive making strategies and fugitive materials, in order to make tacit knowledge explicit in the physical forms of prototypes and finished artists' books that operate beyond our horizons of expectations. My practice interconnects the separate fields of documentary photography and curating photography and the vernacular together with visual humour and seeks to restore a connection with the 'thingness' of photography largely absent in the post-digital age.





Tim Daly *Case Histories* (2010)

Inkjet, ephemera, c-type prints. Unique book



Tim Daly *Case Histories* (2010)

Inkjet, ephemera, c-type prints. Unique book

## B. Research question

My study will take the form of a practice-based research enquiry, developing a series of creative artefacts in order to make tacit knowledge more explicit. I will develop a practice that explores the materiality of the printed photograph within the artists' book.

My research will also explore how the physical handling of artefacts, namely photographic prints, artist's books and ephemera, impacts on our touch responses and why the discourse of materiality is becoming significant in the digital age.

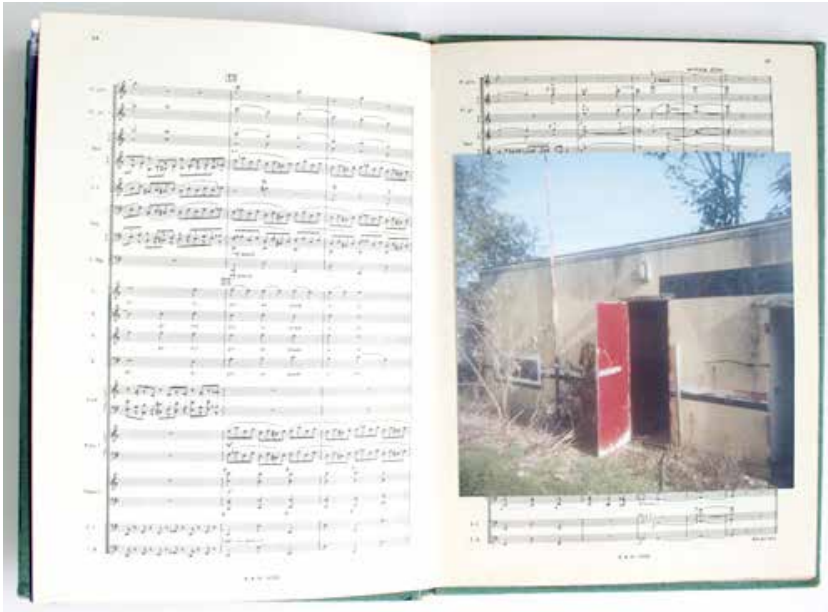
My study engages with several different theoretical fields including photography and its historical relationship with printmaking and reprography; the discourse surrounding the emerging photobook; artists' books; notions of the original and the copy; the reading and reception of books and finally, the photographic print and material culture. An examination of such separate fields is essential to frame my practice which lies on the boundaries of and connects these different discourses. Within such fields are implied norms, traditions and hierarchies which I would like to challenge through my practice. In this light, I intend to frame my research within Bordieu's (1984) theoretical field of cultural production.

During my research, I plan to undertake different activities to generate a broad range of qualitative evidence which will enable me to identify and draw together emerging interconnectivity. This will include: the testing of materials and printing systems; the handling of books; reader response exercises and disseminating my work in progress through exhibition, conference presentation and publication.

### Contribution to knowledge

I aim to research the following two strands as my contribution to knowledge:

- i. Map a field of visual producers who explore the materiality of the printed photograph to invite touch in their work.
- ii. Develop a practice of artists' books employing the printed photograph and materiality to invite touch.



Stephen Gill *Warming Down* (2008)



Stephen Gill *Buried* (2006)

## C. Field

### Introduction

My field is a sub-field of artists' books that is informed by specific characteristics of the photographic print, its reproduction in the book form and materials that invite touch.

### Practice orientation

My professional practice started in 1989, producing long term print-based documentary photography projects for exhibition, such as *The Monopoly Board* (1989), *Escape* (1992) both shown at the Photographers' Gallery, London; *Paper Documents* (1993) at the NGBK, Berlin, and *All Weather Icons* (1995) for Fotofeis 95 and the Watershed Media Centre, Bristol. These early works sat within the colour documentary tradition of that period established by practitioners such as Paul Graham, Paul Reas, Tom Wood and Martin Parr. At that time, independent photography was mostly distributed through the medium of the hand-made photographic print – this was the primary version of the work and it was typically viewable as a print exhibition. Alongside this, if funds were available, a monograph of the work was published retrospectively to help disseminate the work beyond a predominantly local footfall and the short time duration of the print exhibition, such as Martin Parr's *The Last Resort* (1986), shown at the Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool and book of the same name self-published under the Promenade Press imprint. My practice is still rooted in documentation, but now incorporates archive material alongside my own observational photography.

### Definition of field

This space is inhabited by artists and photographers who make artists' books and visual producers known as small press, who publish small edition books that are primary forms of their work. Such practices are varied in size, from individual artist-led practices like Stephen Gill's Nobody Books to collaborative practices such as Eric Van Der Weijde and his 4478zine imprint and KesselsKramer Publishing. Gill's publications are located closest to my practice, exploring the use of the photographic print in the book form in *Warming Down* (2008); the haptic materiality of the book in *Buried* (2006); alternatives to the codex form in *A Series of Disappointments* (2007) and variation within an edition in *Coming Up For Air* (2009). Erik van der Weijde's books also occupy a space near to my practice with his use of the materiality of cheap paper and the reprographic syntax of the photographic



Erik van der Weijde *Die Wolken* (2012)



Erik van der Weijde *Souvenir* (2012)

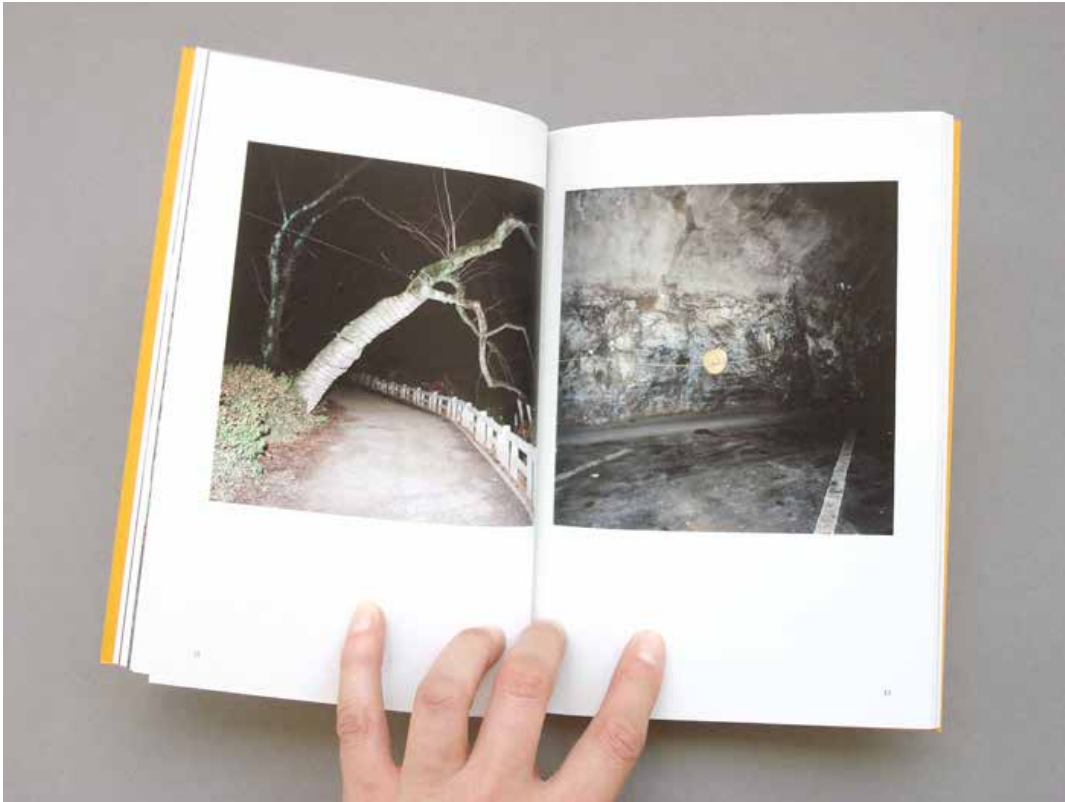


Martin Parr *Benidorm* (2007)

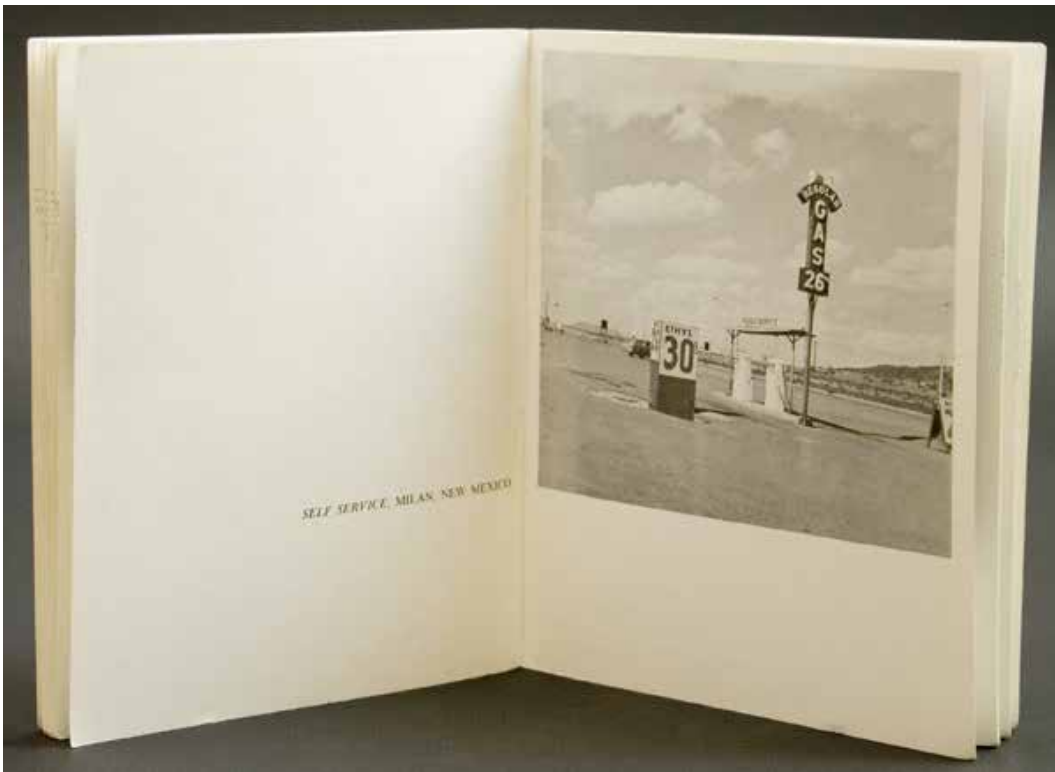
image in *Foto.zine* (2009) and *Die Wolken* (2012) and the photo-memento-like *Souvenir* (2012). The KesselsKramer Publishing collective create serial publications such as *Useful Photography* (2000- present) and *In Almost Every Picture* (2002 – present), both of which explore vernacular photography and its materiality and the syntax of its reproduction.

Intersecting with this field are practitioners such as Martin Parr and Alec Soth, who would describe themselves primarily as photographers and whose work is mainly distributed through the traditional monograph form of the photobook. Yet Parr and Soth have both made important works that also exist outside this photobook space. Parr's series of short-run self-published artist's books such as *Benidorm* (2007) and *Cruise Memories* (2002), both reference the domestic photo album form and use c-type prints to reference vernacular holiday photography. Soth, through his Little Brown Mushroom imprint explored the materiality of newsprint in *The Last Days of W* (2008) and vernacular home inkjet printing in *The Las Vegas Birthday Book* (2010).

A scrutiny of the materiality of printed photographs necessitates an examination of practices that historically exist within separate fields of cultural production such as publishing, printmaking, artist's book production and independent photography, fields that occupy all sides of Bourdieu's (1984) mutually exclusive fields of restricted production and large-scale production. While Bourdieu (1993) identified territorialism, exclusion and hierarchisation within these fields, such boundaries are now blurred between conventional and small press publishing. Gilbert (2015) suggests that contemporary practitioners now engage in publishing as art practice and have renegotiated the traditional publishing frameworks of processes, practices, institutions and discourses. As such, a loose coalition of independent practices, resources and diffusion events have recently emerged, such as small press Café Royal Books, printer-publishers Ditto Press, online distributors such as Self-Publish Be Happy and Tip It In, reading room environments such as Banner Repeater Gallery, critical forums such as X Marks the Bokship, engagement practices such as Tent and events such as Copeland Book Market, The Small Publishers Fair, Offprint and Future Artefacts show. It is within this emerging and plural sub-field, where my practice sits, a practice which blurs the distinction between photography and fine art practice, small press publishing and artists' books and incorporates all roles from content and concept creation, to reprography, assembly and distribution.



Editions FPCF *Tell Mum Everything is Okay* (2012)



Ed Ruscha *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962)

Alongside this space and intersecting with specific works are small press publishers producing photographer's monographs such as Oodee, Editions FPCF, Gareth McConnell's Sorika, Super Labo, Dalpine and The Archive of Modern Conflict. Such practices evidence the exponential rise in the publication of independently authored photography books, or photobooks. Whilst all of these practices explore the potential of photograph on the printed page, only a small number of publications explore the materiality of the photographic print as part of their conceptual underpinning. As such, I view these practices as intersecting with my field only through specific publications.

The materiality of the photographic print is central within my sub-field, so it is essential to unpick a number of historical precedents and practices that continue to impact on our reception. To facilitate this and to support the development of my practice, I have explored historical works, concepts and precedents that underpin my sub-field beyond a narrow date range. This enables me to scrutinize early books containing photographic prints, reprographic processes and significant examples of vernacular photography, which together with my practice, will enable me to re-examine existing practices into a new-sub field.

#### Artists' books and small press self-publishing

For the purposes of this study, I have taken the publication of Ed Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962), as the beginning of a period of artists' book self-publishing for my research scrutiny. The rationale for choosing this book is twofold: firstly to identify an era where the book form explores materiality as part of its intent and secondly, to exclude other forms and variants of photographer's self-publishing that are not primary forms. As Durden (2012: online) observes, the spiralling interest in photographers' publications 'feeds the expanding market for that new bourgeois fetish and collector's item, the photobook.' Whilst the photobook discourse remains peripheral to my research, the existence of a well-established terrain of book publishing and editioned print products and the implied hierarchies found within, continues to impact on our reception and conception of small press publications today. Photographers' printed publications in Western culture in all their different formats, extents and distributions are inextricably linked to precedents which first emerged in the fifteenth century book trade, then later codified in the marketing of artist's prints which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century.





Dyanita Singh *Sent a Letter* (2009)



Robert Frank *Seven Stories* (2009)

The extent of artist's self-publishing from the 1960s onwards has grown exponentially, driven by increasingly accessible online production and distribution tools. As Carrion (1980: 30) suggested 'Books offered the artist the advantage of multiplicity, and this made possible a wider distribution of the work.' Today, the extent of self-publishing amongst visual practitioners is both numerous and widespread. Although most books containing photographers' projects share visual and functional commonalities such as paper and the codex binding, these very similarities hide the widely different strategies employed by their makers, be they individual practitioners pursuing an uncompromised vision, an editorial board, or a collaboration between participants. These underpinning relationships that contribute to many significant aspects of the book's physical and conceptual reception are rarely transparent or made explicit for the reader.

An example of this is Dyanita Singh's *Sent a Letter* (2009), a tactile publication constructed from seven accordion bound fascicles housed in an elaborate calico covered clamshell case. Like Robert Frank's multi-part *Seven Stories* (2009) and *Come Again* (2006) both also published by Steidl, *Sent a Letter* has all the material qualities of a small-run handmade artist's book, but was in fact produced by international publisher Steidl, upscaled into an edition larger than expected for this kind of work. Steidl is a contemporary publisher who have simulated the haptic materiality of a handmade book into larger, more profitable editions, creating an intermodal product which is engagingly different through its design, yet neither priced to be exclusive or be perceived as rare.

#### Graphic design and materiality

A critical analysis of the graphic elements within the work of Sol Lewitt and Ed Ruscha, i.e. covers, spread layout and typography, is largely subsumed within the reductive syntax of Conceptual Art and Minimalism, rather than seen as a conscious, iterative element of book design and production. The choice and synthesis of materials in the production of a book has a significant impact on reader reception. Paper stock, colour and weight all provide their own unique visual and paratextual undercurrents, suggesting to the reader a myriad of external links and references.

As Kepes (1949:101) observed,

A book has weight, size, thickness and tactile qualities, qualities which are handled by the hand, as its optical form is handled by the eye.



Alexei Brodovitch *Ballet* (1945)



Alexei Brodovitch *Ballet* (1945)



Alexei Brodovitch *Portfolio* magazine (1950-52)

Drucker (2004: 161) too suggests the physical, material form of an artists' book should be,

a self-conscious record of its own production - one laden with specific ideas about the ways a book can embody an idea through its material forms

Editorial designer Alexei Brodovitch, whose book *Ballet* (1945) does much to extend the potential of the photographic print in the book form, is highly significant in the history of photography publishing. As Purcell (2002:91) observed,

Where such a strong design aesthetic is put into place, achieving the perfect synthesis of text, typography and photograph – where the spread or indeed the feature is the “whole”, such as practiced by Brodovitch, the single image is subordinated to the overall look... divest[ing] the photograph as a distinctive and individual object.

Brodovitch's experimental approach to synthesis was further extended in his *Portfolio* magazine (1950-52). *Portfolio* developed a unique rhythm and unfolding of content within its three issues, 'transgressing the spine of the magazine, create[ing] a literal connection between the two pages.' (Purcell, 2002:87). While the involvement of a graphic designer in the gestation of a book project is still largely unrecognised, many conceptual artists do much to play down the influence of collaborative design and material selection. Feldmann (2010: 10) distances himself by stating,

I could not let a designer do my book. Specially if it is a very good one. He would not accept, that I want to have pictures not printed straight, empty pages, photocopies as the base for scans and so on.

However, Xavier Barral (2013: 4) designer, collaborator and co-publisher of Martin Parr's book *Life's a Beach* (2012) specifying tipped-in prints on interleaved vellum style pages, forefronts the potential of such design input,

What I believe makes a book is the reaction it provokes when, taken together, the subject, materials (primarily paper and ink), and binding bring sensuality, accuracy and strangeness to the object.



Robert Frank *The Lines of My Hand* (1972)



Kikuji Kawada *The Map* (1965)

Sol Lewitt (in Alberro 1999: 15) too warned against material innovation, stating,

New materials are one of the great afflictions of contemporary art. Some artists confuse new materials with new ideas. There is nothing worse than seeing art that wallows in gaudy baubles. The danger is, I think, in making the physicality of the materials so important that it becomes the idea of the work (another kind of expressionism).

Yet, as Vartanian (2009:19) suggests the choice of materials by a designer/ collaborator 'can bring a heightened level of physicality to the photobook as [an] object.' Designer Kohei Sugiura's contributions to book projects such as Robert Frank's *The Lines of My Hand* (1972), Kikuji Kawada's *The Map* (1965) and Eikoh Hosoe's *Barakei* (1963), 'supplant the idea that the photobook is a reproduction of some original with the idea that the photobook is itself an original' (Vartanian 2009:19). Sugiura's integrated approach, refutes the notion that design is restricted to purely functional typography and layout. Vartanian (2009:19) suggests these works are matchless due to 'the materials used, printing techniques...direct the reader to the materiality of the photograph in reproduction.'

Materiality in Roth, Kiefer and Munari

Working at the same time as conceptual artists were Anselm Kiefer and Dieter Roth, whose work did much to signal the potential in the materiality of the photographic print within the book form. Beckett (2013:32) forefronts the importance of Roth, by suggesting that he endlessly broke rules,

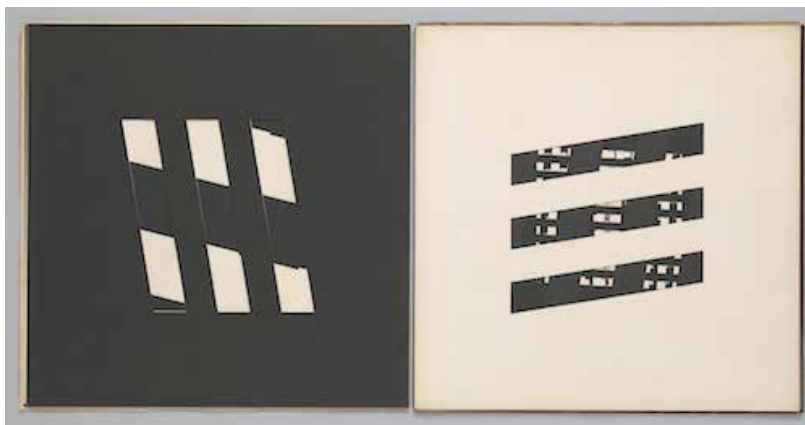
In his influential work *Bok* (Book, 1958) [Dieter Roth] cut holes in the pages and did away with the codex, permitting the reader to organize the pages in any order.

Kiefer's early unique books such as *The Flooding of Heidleburg* (1969) series engaged with notions of materiality albeit in a different manner to Roth, as Biro (in Arasse 2014: 47) suggests,

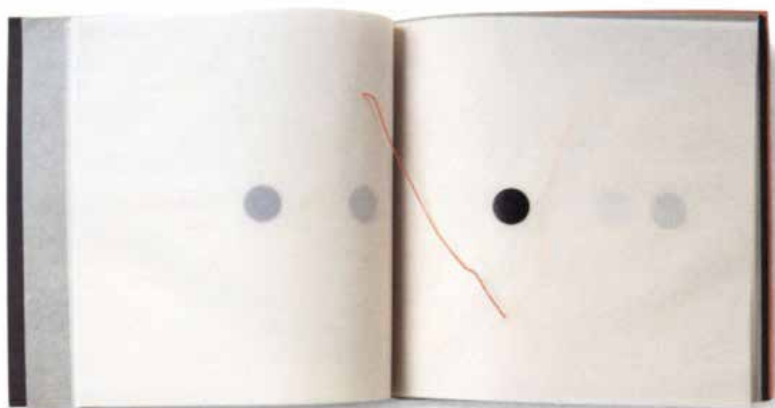
while seeming to invert the traditional characteristics of auratic art, [the books] also seem to 're-negate' the central advances in conceptual art of the 1960s.



Anselm Kiefer *The Flooding of Heidleburg* (1969)



Dieter Roth *Bok* (1958)



Bruno Munari *Libri illeggibili* (1949-1995)

Kiefer's early books, according to Arasse (2014:57) contrasted associations of low-art with the auratic prestige of a unique artwork, yet his later works such as *Brandenburg Sand III* (1977) 'seems to transmit meaning through its physical presence and feel.' With the artist enhancing silver gelatin prints with additional substances such as ink, paint, sand and ferrous oxide, the resulting books appear to have a rich patina, replete with traces of the artist's intervention. These one-off gestures and unrepeatable marks found in Kiefer's unique works are rarely found within small press publications, with Stephen Gill's hand painted transparent slip covers in *Coming up for Air* (2009) an exception. The material presence of the paper support of a photographic print is rarely recognised and this is most significantly observed up Szarkowski (in Myers 2006:3), who stated,

The basic material of photographs is not intrinsically beautiful. It's not like ivory or tapestry or bronze or oil on canvas. You're not supposed to look at the thing, you're supposed to look through it. It's a window.

Yet works by artists and designers such as Bruno Munari's with his *Libri illeggibili* (1949-1995) translated as 'unreadable books', experimented to see if it was possible to tell visual stories using only materials from which a book is made. Munari (in Beckett 2013:47) pointed out that while paper is conventionally used 'to support the text and illustrations', it was possible to employ the innate qualities of the carrier material as a means of communication. Munari also designed for a preschool audience his *Prelibri* series (1980), using wood, paper, cardboard, plastic and fabrics such as felt and fur for the pages and twine, string, metal and plastic for the bindings. As Beckett (2013:47) observed,

Readers experience books not just with their eyes, but with all their senses. Narrative can be tactile and auditory as well as visual. The wooden pages of Munari's book provide an acoustic dimension as the pages are turned.

#### Annotated photographic prints

In most monographs, little is made of the physical properties of a photograph's paper support, yet publications of archive or vintage images often celebrate uniquely aged, touched or marked prints. As Batchen (2004:47) observed, 'handwritten inscriptions suggest the voice of the writer, adding sound to the senses of touch and sight already engaged.' In *Unknown Weegee* (2008), a monograph published by the





Jim Goldberg *Open See* (2009)



Hans Eijkelboom *10 Euro Outfits* (2006)



Hans Eijkelboom *New York by Numbers* (2010)

International Centre of Photography from its 18,000 strong bequest of the crime photographers' press prints, the physical entity of selected images are celebrated in the printed book, drawing attention to the ICP's unique version. While this notion of ownership has an undercurrent of self-promotion, it does however draw attention to the multiple variations of a print that co-exist. Residues of handling are also apparent in the newspaper paste-up artist's pencil traces of marking and squaring up, but there is also evidence of Weegee's own characterful handwriting. The inclusion of handwritten annotation in photographers' books does much to reclaim the photographers' voice which can become submerged under the tradition of invisibility. Boris Mikhailov's *Look at Me / Look at Water* (2004), combines handwritten notation alongside images, developing a highly personalized and existential projection. Jim Goldberg's *Open See* (2009) however, uses the handwritten annotations of his subjects on his prints. Like the handwritten ephemera celebrated in *Found* magazine, Goldberg's image text fusion combines the curious accent of the vernacular hand with their own image to create a voice mostly absent from these publications – that of the subject.

#### Intermateriality

The legacy of conceptual photography and its connection to artist's publishing is pervasive and visible in such contemporary practitioners as Hans Eijkelboom and his constraint based books *10 Euro Outfits* (2006) and *New York by Numbers* (2010). As Parr (2007:online) observed that 'conceptual photography is now widely employed in contemporary photographic culture,' so Eijkelboom's *10 Euro Outfits* chronicles the artist's daily attempts to clothe himself with garments purchased with a ten euro maximum limit. The resulting images have a dry humour and awkwardness about them, which arguably would be difficult to stage had the constraint not been in place. The book mimics the shape, extent and materiality of a free marketing leaflet and is produced with vernacular typography and layout. On holding the book, its weight and cheap paper materiality links it to giveaway promotional print. Eijkelboom has also produced a long term project entitled *Photo Notes* (1992-2007), a meticulously crafted archive of typologies created in the street. As Feil (2007) observes, Eijkelboom starts shooting without a pre-conceived idea, then waits for associations to build in front of him. Eijkelboom (2007) describes the outcome of these constraints succeeding when repeated and combined, with his work distributed both in the book form and as single sheet 4x3 or 4x4 grid inkjet prints of each typology.



KesselsKramer Publishing *In Almost Every Picture* (2002 – present)



Edmund Kuppel *Atlas* (1991)

The conceptual premise of Eijkelboom's *New York by Numbers* (2010) was a challenge to find and photograph every number from 1 to 100 observed on the shirts of New York residents. The constraint impacts on the extent of the book that has 100 printed pages (less page and number 74 which is left blank, as testament to the only number Eijkelboom couldn't find). The materiality of this four colour offset book is enhanced by its cover designed by KesselsKramer, a multidisciplinary design agency established by Eric Kessels, who also operates KesselsKramer Publishing and co-authors serial publications of found vernacular photography such as *Useful Photography* (2000- present) and *In Almost Every Picture* (2002 – present). The cover of *New York by Numbers* is constructed with blue fabric which has its title rendered in darker flocked fabric text. Such material is commonly used to create raised text and designs on t-shirts, and so makes an intermaterial connection to the shirted subject of the constraint.

While Miles (2010: 49-68) describes a cluster of 'conceptual documentary' photographers who are driven with a primary impulse to archive or hoard their collected imagery in the book form, the term has connotations of a self-referential, inward looking practice. Instead, constraints can identify typologies and behaviours which can free up thinking space for engaged readers.

Edmund Kuppel (1947-) is another artist using photography under conceptual constraints to create books such as *Atlas* (1991). In *Atlas*, Kuppel uses the book form to document his performance, introducing the starting, reference point vernacular source material prints at the commencement of the book. His circular images in large format book with blank, black double page spreads interleaved between circular non-centrally placed images on the page. Kuppel's conceptual books evidence a branch of practice where no additional materiality is delivered by the publication: his large format books use the same glossy dust-jacket, stiff boards and coated paper that would be used in a coffee table book.

Feldmann, Schmid and Tabuchi

Hans-Peter Feldmann's *Bilderhefte* (1968-74) or Picture Books series has a different material provenance compared to the graphic, Pop Art inspired books by Ed Ruscha. The Bilder books were constructed by Feldmann using the most economic form available to him at the time: small, staple bound books with workaday grey card covers containing commercial lithography printed images. On the outsides, Feldmann re-uses the same rubber stamps to note three perfunctory lines of text



Hans-Peter Feldmann *Bilderhefte* (1968-74)



Hans-Peter Feldmann *Bilderhefte* (1968-74)

information: a number denoting the quantity of images within, the word Bilder and his surname. Feldmann declined to title, sign or number his work, so the size of each edition is unknown. Materially these works are closer to mail art, where the distribution of the idea and the democracy of access and ownership was a fundamental aspect of the practice. Indeed, Feldmann (in Evers 2011: online) has reflected since that

People only talked about the form of my pictures, never the content. But I was interested in the pictures. The impoverished form just resulted from my living circumstances at the time. I didn't have the money to do it any other way.

Like Kuppel, Feldmann's intention was to provide the opposite to a haptic experience, the books were envisioned as non-objects with an inconsequential materiality. As Lippert (1989: 59) observed,

Feldmann frees his art from any referential position. It determines itself, its ability to be experienced. Found (trivial) materials merge into the artwork; the artwork merges into its own constitution; it becomes a reality, like any other.

Their purpose was to provide a temporal experience – the books contained no contextualizing title or words within, only images - whose inter pictorial relationships triggered reader responses, both giving purpose to the work. Feldmann (in Bengel 2010: online) reflected on this position stating,

I do not want to be recognized by material, but by ideas. But I always try to leave not a feeling for valuable items or objects, but an experience.

Since their release however, Feldmann's books, like Ruscha's, have become ingested into recent photobook discourse, which is still adjusting to the emerging plurality of activity. As Company (2014:3) suggests, the field of photobook publishing now embraces,

openly subjective practices, a widening of legitimate subject matter and a blurring of the distinction between 'original' and 'found' photography.



Eric Tabuchi *Alphabet Truck* (2008)



Joachim Schmid *Other People's Photographs: 96 Books* (2011)



Stephen Shore *American Surfaces* (1999)

Feldmann's encyclopaedic image collecting is referenced by the typologies of Hans Eijkelboom and the ongoing publishing projects of Eric Tabuchi (1959-) and Joachim Schmid (1955-). In Tabuchi's publications such as *Alphabet Truck* (2008), the artist photographed the rear doors of trucks emblazoned with each letter of the alphabet, with the resulting twenty six images produced as single sheet prints stacked in a book-shaped box, creating a deliberate disruption to the anticipated navigation of the codex form. Tabuchi's other typologies made into books include subjects such as abandoned and recycled petrol stations, both paying homage to Ruscha, and other roadside environments and human behaviour. Like Tabuchi, Joachim Schmid also creates typologies but rather than oversee the reprographic process, Schmid chooses to self-publish with a print-on-demand book service, such as Blurb, to both produce and deliver his works to buyers. Accepting the limitations of a service used by enthusiastic amateurs and self-publishers, the materiality of Schmid's publications such as *Other People's Photographs: 96 Books* (2011) is both functional and repetitive, both wholly supportive in the delivery of a conceptual project. However, by adopting the most popular reprographic vehicle of the moment, the print-on-demand press, the pieces display a materiality that links them to vernacular photobooks made for family and commemorative purposes. Like Martin Parr's use of snapshot-format 15x10cm colour photographic prints in his self-published *Benidorm Album* (1997) holiday album, Schmid's adoption of commonplace materials of the day will ensure that any future re-interpretation of his work will undoubtedly reference a material nostalgia that has not yet fully revealed itself.

#### Stephen Shore's print on-demand books

Photographer Stephen Shore's relationship with books dates back to experiencing the serial work of Ruscha and the Bechers in the late 1960's. Shore (in Lange 2002: 48) defines his practice at that stage as 'producing images that were generated by a conceptual framework, but at the same time, allowed for visual articulateness.' For most of his career, Shore has worked on long term projects culminating in exhibition/ book projects such as *Uncommon Places* (1982) and *American Surfaces* (1999). From 2003 to 2008 however, Shore experimented with the possibilities afforded by the emerging digital print-on-demand. Shore (2006:5) later described how his long term work could be punctuated with smaller, shorter pieces made with this new technology. Shore described the experience of reading these longer projects,

[in a ] large photographic book with, say, a hundred pictures is like going on a visual journey. Looking at it, one might be aware of the





Flohmarkt

Stephen Shore *Flohmarkt* (2004)



Stephen Shore *Stephen Shore: The Book of Books* (2012)

sequence, how one image leads to the next.

Yet, using faster, accessible print-on-demand allowed Shore to produce,

a book with only ten images [which] can be understood not only in terms of the sequence, but can be grasped as a whole, all at once, as a single complex work.

In total, Shore created eighty-three print-on-demand books during this period, some made during a single day or visit, such as *Flohmarkt* (2004). For Shore (in Brayshaw 2006: 2), print-on-demand created a shortened form of practice where simple ideas can be explored, especially around sequence.

When the sequence is short, perhaps less than twenty images, it functions as a single, unified work. This can expand the range of photographic possibilities: images can be simply notations, quick observations, visual one-liners.

Shore's extensive experimentation with the short form book is also indicative of his long term interest in vernacular photography and especially postcards. His piece *Greetings from Amarillo: Tall in Texas* (1972) was a commercially printed set of ten scenic postcards, self-funded by the artist and issued anonymously throughout non-art venues. Shore (in Brayshaw 2006: 2) thinks of his print-on-demand books as working with vernacular materials too, stating that,

these are the modern, digital photo album. Even though I spent years working with an 8 x10, still I'm fascinated by the everyday uses of the medium.

Unlike artists such as Joachim Schmid who also uses print-on-demand, Shore carefully controlled the edition of each book, rarely releasing more than twenty copies for each title. Shore's (in Brayshaw 2006: 4) own commentary on this practice clearly marks them out as limited, collectable entities, with a release controlled by his gallery, 'I have many photographic ideas, and the books allow me to put them into play. They are original multiples.' The complete works however, were later released by international publishers Phaidon, in a two-volume set entitled *Stephen Shore: The Book of Books* (2012), containing all eighty three titles, itself printed-on-



Martin Parr *Boring Oregon* (2000)

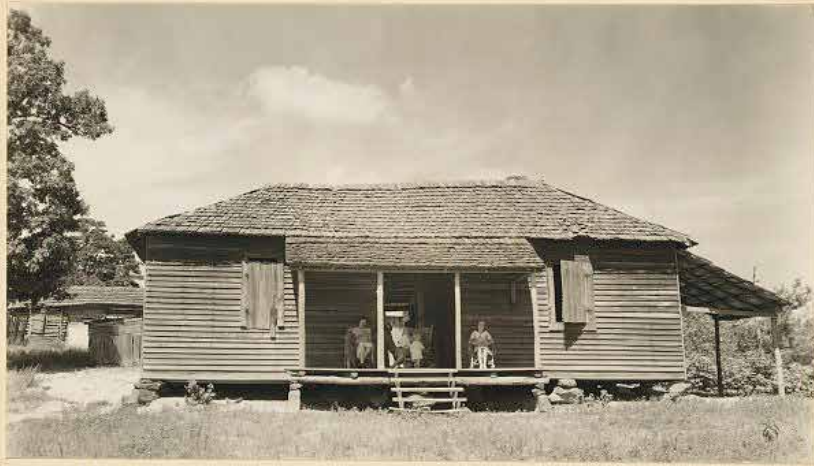


Martin Parr *Cherry Blossom Time in Tokyo* (2001)

demand. Presently this edition is the only physical and virtual instance of the work available. While Schmid has used print-on-demand to make unlimited editions and relinquish the traditional form of editioning, Shore uses it for speed, convenience and the direct link to the digital press rather than using a team of originators, plate-makers, designers and publishers to bring the project to fruition.

#### Joachim Schmid and Martin Parr's artist's books and project books

Both Joachim Schmid and Martin Parr reference the term 'artist's books' within their online catalogue raisonné. Schmid (no date: online) clarifies his position on this matter by describing his *Grey Books* series as 'artist's books, i.e. the books do not "contain" art but they are works of art in themselves, and the works exist only in book form.' Martin Parr uses the term 'artist books' to denote a different category of work than Schmid, to describe separate smaller projects that have emerged as small edition books, although unlike Schmid, some of the images are repurposed from other publishing projects. Parr's range within this category explores the materiality of the photographic print together with recycled mass produced vernacular albums as containers. Parr's series of works which include real c-type photographic prints, rather than lithographic reproductions of prints and include *Home Sweet Home* (1974), *Benidorm Album* (1997), *Boring Oregon* (2000), *Cherry Blossom Time in Tokyo* (2001), *Souvenir de Maroc*, *Stars and Stripes* both (2001) and *Cruise Memories* (2002). With edition sizes from 5 to 30, Parr reuses existing vernacular slip-in type albums bought at the resorts, with the exception of *Cherry Blossom in Tokyo* which has a specially made silk box and Japanese binding. Schmid (no date: online) publishes an additional series called *White Books*, which he describes as featuring 'artworks I have made over the course of my career. They are catalogues of particular projects that have not previously been available as books.' Schmid's second assertion – that his *White Books* operate purely as project documentation, could also be applied to many of Parr's titles including *Small World* (1995) and *Signs of the Times* (1992), both visual monographs which accompanied touring exhibitions, print sale events and widespread distribution as magazine features.



HOUSE, HALE COUNTY

Walker Evans *Photographs of Cotton Sharecropper Families* (1936-37)  
Unique album

#### D. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of my research are founded upon Nelson's (2006:105-116) models of creative practice as 'experiential knowing through doing' and his three key layers of understanding:

Know how – insider knowledge (tacit, embodied, experiential)

Know that – outsider knowledge (cognitive, academic, theoretical)

Know what – explicit knowledge (informed by critical reflection)

Aim – overall strategic goal

My aim is to demonstrate how a practice of hand made book production, based on the materiality of the photographic print and photo-reprography, could engage with notions of touch in the digital age.

Objectives – specific deliverable outcomes

i. To examine the discourse surrounding the materiality of the photographic print within artist's publishing and develop insights which could create an additional theoretical understanding of the terrain.

ii. To explore the potential of book handling as a research method, by using theoretical tools adapted from the fields of material culture and literary theory.

iii. To disseminate my research findings through an exhibition of my practice which makes tacit knowledge explicit in a physical form.



Etablissement Decoux *Le Paysage défait a grand Renfort D'Histoire* (2011)



Etablissement Decoux *Le Paysage défait a grand Renfort D'Histoire* (2011)

## E. Literature Review

My research project links together different discourses as follows: photographers' publishing and artists' books; photography and its relationship with printmaking and reprography; notions of the original, the copy and the dematerialized art object; the reading and reception of books and finally, the photographic print within material culture. Within these fields, I have examined the following works as part of my literature review, which in turn has impacted on my practice development.

### Photographers' publishing and artists' books

Interest in the authored photography book form since the publication of Roth's *The Book of 101 Books: Seminal Photographic Books of the Twentieth Century* (2001) and Parr and Badger's *Photobooks: A History Volumes I, II & III* (2004-14) has been considerable. Quoting Prins (1989:12) to define their position, Parr & Badger announce that

Photobook is an autonomous artform, comparable with a piece of sculpture, a play or a film. The photographs lose their own photographic character as things 'in themselves' and become parts, translated into printing ink, of a dramatic event called a book.

However, while Parr & Badger claim to provide 'a secret history embedded in the well-known chronologies of photography history' (Rice 2001: 3), they instead project a narrative of photography as seen through selected photographers' books. Yet, Thomas Dugan's *Photography Between Covers: Interviews with Photo-Bookmakers* (1979) unearths significant factual details about the germination and design of several photographer's books. Dugan's account includes Larry Clark, detailing his unplanned Tulsa (1971) title and Eikoh Hosoe discussing the conceptual underpinning for his book projects.

More critical and analytical texts that have scrutinised the development of artist's books have been made by commentators such as Johanna Drucker in *The Century of Artist's Books* (1994) and Simon Cutts in *Some forms of Availability: Critical passages on the book and publication* (2007). Both Cutts and Drucker strive to identify what makes artist's books different from other forms of publishing and editioning, whilst embracing the broad landscape of practice within this field.





Makers unknown *Portrait of husband and wife on their wedding day* (1890)  
From Geoffrey Batchen in *Forget me Not* (2004)

As Cutts (2007: 47) suggested,

Artist-led publications attempt to synthesise text, image, material, method of production and context into a unified single work. When this succeeds, the book functions as a primary form.

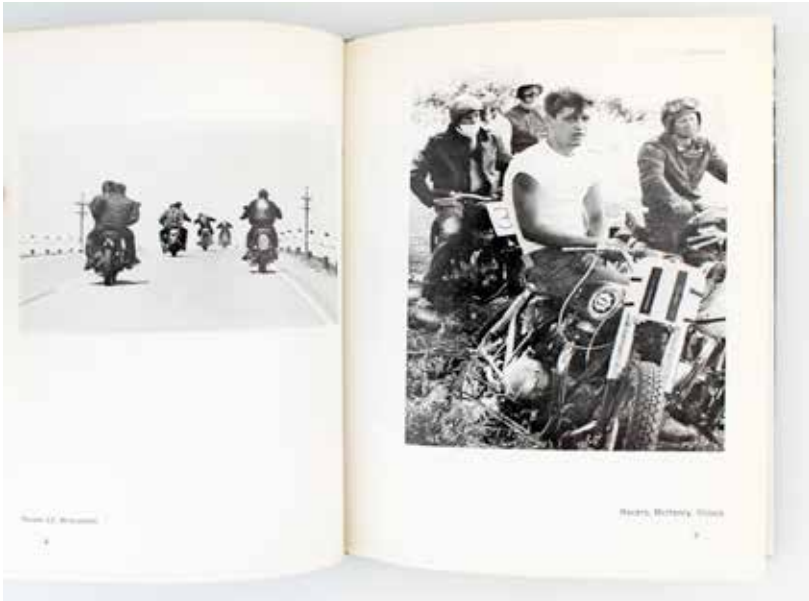
Artists' books are made to be looked at and touched as well as read (Cotter 2004), providing a conceptual space and territory for all political, visual and textual transformations, collaborations and explorations. Defining an artists' book however is just as problematic, as Bodman and Sowden (2012: 3) in *A Manifesto for the Book* conclude,

Artists' books as a term refers only itself, it is the least inclusive term for the subject which does not even stretch to embracing zines, livres de luxe, fine press books or multiples. It is perhaps the end product and not the discipline.

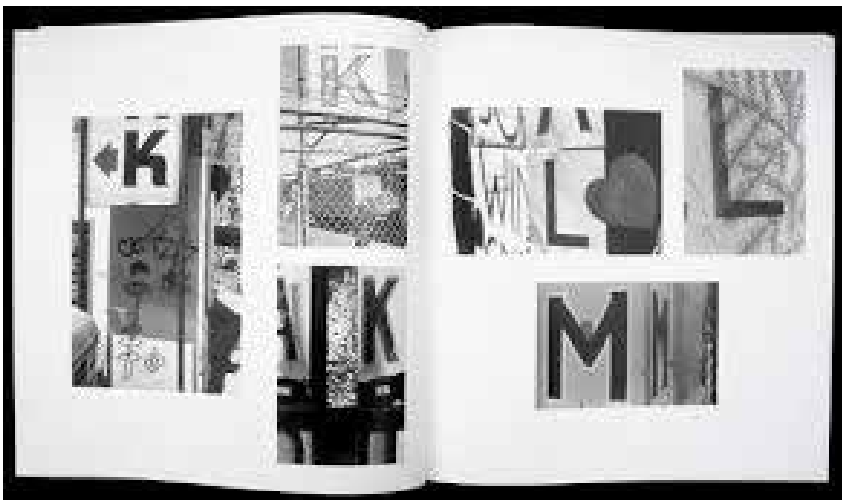
Within the definition of artists' books however, much is made of the democratic validity of the multiple and potential of the book to be mass produced. Elliot (2008:1) observed that,

an artist's book has to be mass-producible, at the least. Its relationship to mass-production is central to its identity. Any work that fetishises the artist's hand veers toward the livre d'artiste, especially if that attributable authorship is central to its visceral gravity.

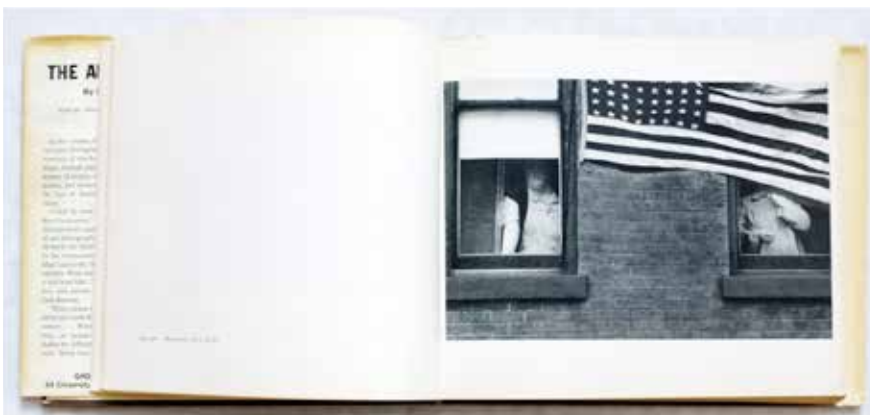
Clive Phillpot (2013:42) concurs too that 'Artists' books therefore, are mass-produced books or booklets, published in numbers limited only by demand, in which the artist documents or realises ideas or artworks.' While the ideology of such opinions can be rooted in Lippard's (1972) notions of the dematerialization of art, this discourse plays a valid counterpoint to more recent theoretical positions by Geoffrey Batchen in *Forget me Not* (2004) and Constance Classen's *The Deepest Sense: A Cultural History of Touch* (2012). Photography's own largely unwritten history as a tactile, memory provoking medium is captured by Batchen (2004:14) who states 'It is as if... the subjects want to draw our attention not only to the image they hold, but also to photography itself as a touchable entity.' Classen (2005: 283) unpicks the problem of touch in the museum, her own position echoing Foucault's



Danny Lyon *The Bikeriders* (1968)



Lee Friedlander *Letters from the People* (1993)



Robert Frank *The Americans* (1957)

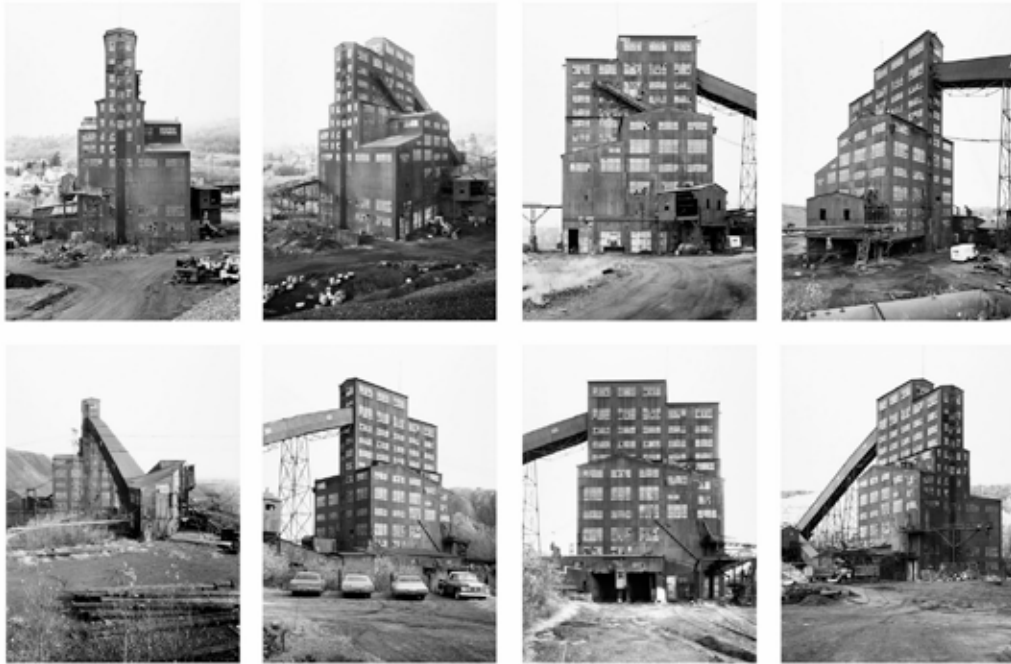
regimes of power, suggesting that,

The sense of detachment produced by viewing museum pieces without actually touching them resembled the detachment caused by being an observer of the passing scene in a modern city.

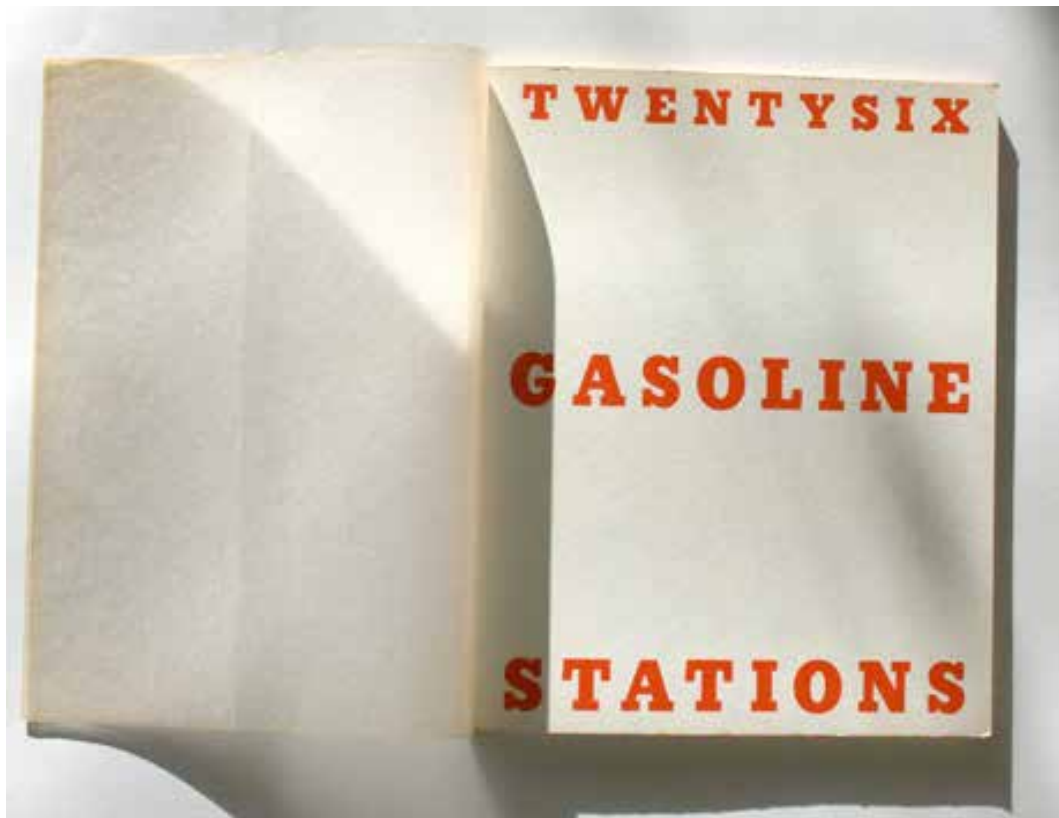
It is these theoretical positions that suggest we treat photography and its reprographic variants as primarily ocular agents, confirming Ivins' (1953:134) position that, 'photography...has become a means to ocular awareness of things that our eyes can never see directly.'

Unlike the artists' book field, photographers' books are at an early stage of classification. Photographers use the book form primarily as a vehicle for disseminating a reprographic version of their work, employing two codex forms established in the nineteenth century: the album, such as Danny Lyon's *The Bikeriders* (1968) and the portfolio such as Lee Friedlander's *Letters from the People* (1993). The book as a vehicle for distributing photography is cost-effective since the continuous advancements made in photo-reprography has enabled non-art collectors to receive the work in their own private homes. Drucker's (2004) projection that the artists' books act as "a mute space for unrealized dreams," could easily be applied to the large numbers of photographer's album-form books, which embody the lone narrative of the photographer but rarely explore thingness, materiality or self-reflexivity.

I assert that we are still at a developmental stage of photographers' publishing and that the critical discourse surrounding photographers' books and artists' books is still largely separate and distinct. However, there are some titles which transgress these critical boundaries, notably Ed Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962) and Robert Frank's *The Americans* (1957). Ruscha's much parodied book has become one of the most celebrated within the artist's book field, but one which is increasingly embraced within the emerging discourse surrounding photographers' publishing. In *The Photo Book: From Talbot to Ruscha and beyond*, Walker (2012:118) describes Ruscha's practice nowadays being repositioned as "photographic conceptualism" and his books setting out the stall for later typology photographers such as the Bernd and Hilla Becher and their books such as *Anonymous Sculpture: A Typology of Technical Buildings* (1970). In *The Open Book: A history of the photographic book from 1878 to the present* (2004), Anderson (in Roth 2004: 31) describes Ruscha as 'prominent among early proponents of the pairing of book and photographs



Bernd and Hilla Becher *Anonymous Sculpture: A Typology of Technical Buildings* (1970)



Ed Ruscha *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962)

[employing] devices subsequently defined as elemental to the genre.’ This re-examining, redrawing and rethreading of conceptual art and photography’s recent past, in many ways illustrates the necessity to examine the critical texts and artifacts on both sides of the divide.

While Robert Frank’s *The Americans* (1957) is physically located within the codex tradition, its intent and anti-linearity places it closer to an artist’s book. As Simon Cutts (1993:13) advocates,

the work is its own continuous accumulative impression, varying and differing not only for each reader, but each time it is read. For this continuous structure to be effective it must be the antithesis of a sequential reading.

Theoretical discourse surrounding artists’ books emerges from many different stakeholders. Both Johanna Drucker and Simon Cutts are artists who make artists’ books and also write critically about their subject; Clive Phillpot, former director of the library at MOMA, writes in *Booktrek* (2013) how the emergence of artists’ books have presented archives with many dilemmas – his knowledge gleaned from the practical day to day problems of collection, classification, access and display.

#### Photography, printmaking and printing

The publication of photographers’ books together with the editioning of prints and folios is also bound up within the history of printing and printmaking. William Ivins’ (1953: 2) *Prints and Visual Communication* identifies the significance of print within a communications landscape,

The various ways of making prints (including photography) are the only methods by which exactly repeatable pictorial statements can be made about anything. The importance of being able to exactly repeat pictorial statements is undoubtedly greater for science, technology and general information than it is for art.

Ivins’ observance of photography as a functional, repeatable device that primarily aids mass literacy hints at later difficulties of embracing photography into art printmaking discourse.



Erik van der Weijde *Souvenir III* (2013)



Dieter Roth *Snow* (1964/69)  
*Felt-tip pen on cut diazotype*

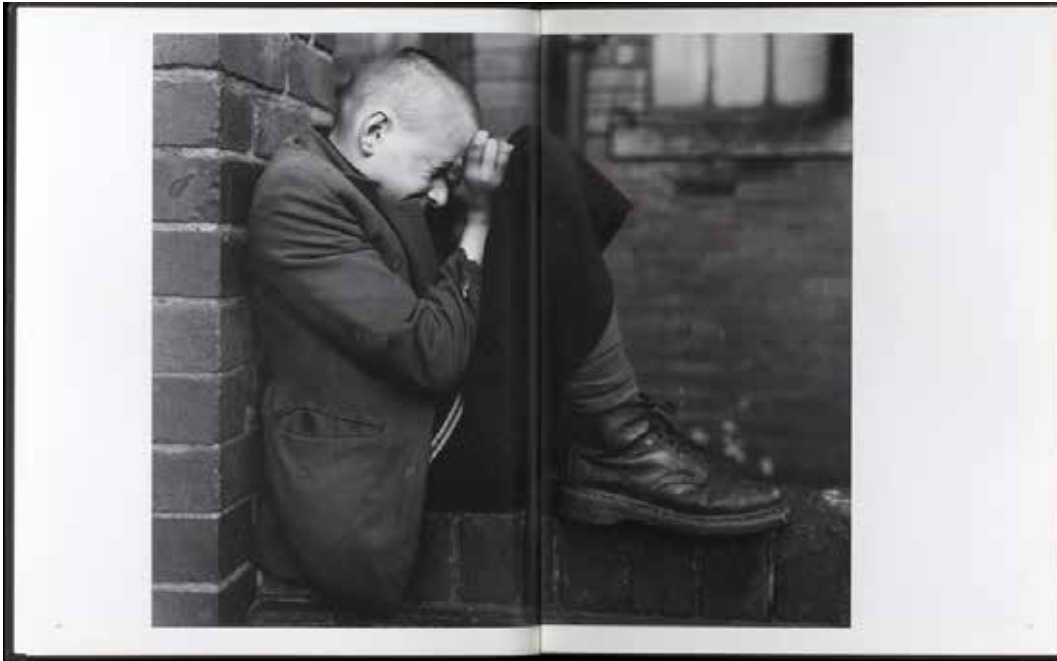
Pat Gilmour's *The Mechanised Image: an historical perspective on 20th century prints* (1978) illustrates photography's marginal status at that time. Examples of light sensitive photographic prints were added as a footnote to Gilmour's comprehensive survey and the reproduction of photographers' works in the book form was entirely absent. This was symptomatic of the prevailing attitudes of the 1970's, where photography lay outside the fine art domain, unless it was used by conceptual artists such as Richard Long and Keith Arnatt or as the means to photo-mechanical reprography in artist's books or prints. Charles Newton's *Photography in Printmaking* (1979:6) picks up on this division and suggests that a hierarchy of acceptability existed in printmaking techniques until the late 1960's, when artists such as Eduardo Paolozzi railed against the traditional view that only traditional studio craft printmaking could be accepted as art. In 1965, the French National Committee on Engraving stipulated that original prints must exclude 'any and all mechanical and photo-mechanical processes.' With such a reluctance to invest equality in processes that were developed from the commercial printing industry, the slow transition to acceptance was prompted by artists such as Rauchenburg and Warhol celebrating the visual qualities of photo-mechanical print, plus the deadpan photo-reprography of Ed Ruscha's artists' books.

For Ivins, the syntax or mediating influence of the individual engraver and his chosen reprographic process before photography, was a barrier to the exactly repeatable pictorial statement. Yet, photo-mechanical reproduction with all its advantages and gains over relief or intaglio methods, is still riven with transformative (change for the worse) elements such as dot screen, paper, ink etc, when compared to the photographic print. Yet many artists such as Dieter Roth, Hans Peter Feldman and Erik van der Weijde explore the nuances of these photo-mechanical reproduction methods in their artist's books and multiples, creating a richly mediated, material result.

#### The original and the copy

The discourse surrounding the notion of the original and the copy is doubly complex, for the photographic print and the book have their own very different back stories. Pearson (1998:81) describes our historical understanding of the term edition "as all the copies of a book printed from one particular setting of type, without distributing it and putting it back together again." Implicit in this notion is the concept of the "ideal copy", which is otherwise defined as the singular, approved version of the work. On reflection however, the ideal copy never really existed due to myriad of variations in printing, materials and editorial amendments enacted





Chris Killip *In Flagante* (1988)



Robert Frank *Work Prints for The Americans* (1956) Assembled 2008

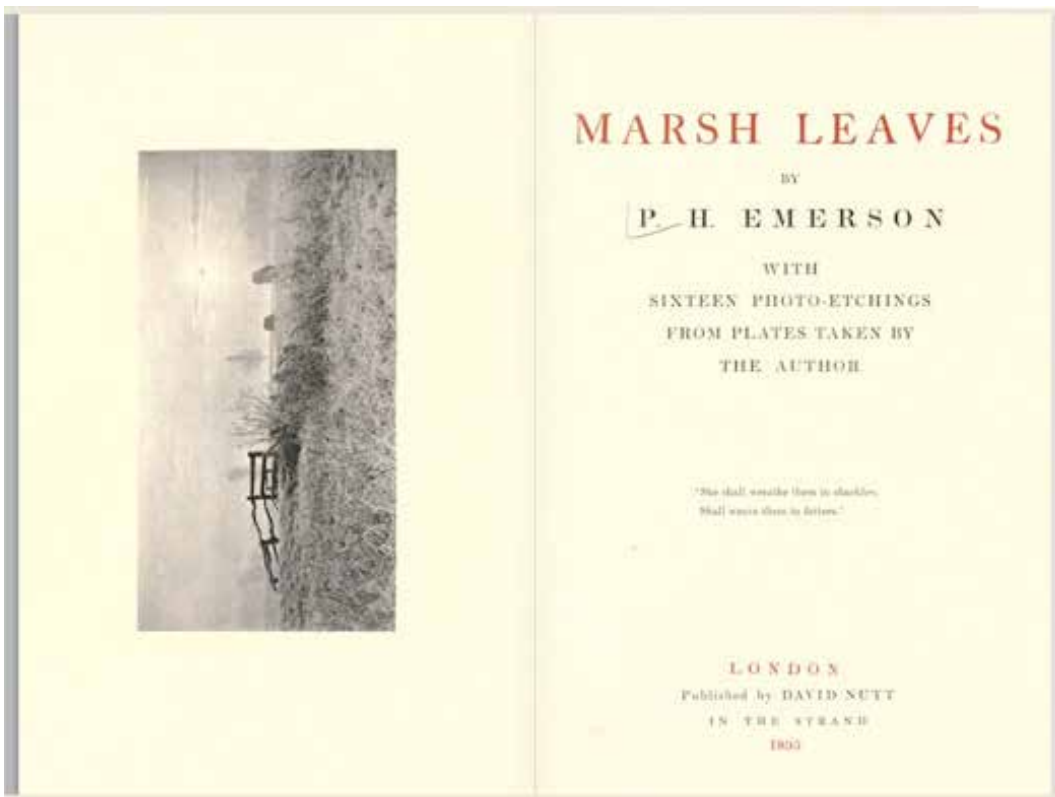
during a print run. As Pearson (1998:85) concludes, “these kinds of differences [should be distinguished] from other kinds of [variations] which were deliberately presented to the buyer as choices.” The concept of the ideal copy still features significantly in photographers’ publishing: the well-documented early gestation of Robert Frank’s *The Americans* (1959) in both French and English versions, then in later editions with changes to the pictorial running order and cover design. Chris Killip’s *In Flagrate* (1988) published by Secker and Warburg, resurfaced one year later in a different version created by French publishers Nathan. Called *Vague a l’ame*, which is translated as Melancholy, it had a different sequence of images, different text and different editorial intervention and title,— the work was not the same.

Newton (1979:15) observes that the concept of the original artist’s print didn’t really emerge until the late 19th century when artists such as Whistler started to realise the potential income from editioning. Manipulating his printing plates within a print run to explore different impression effects, Whistler was ‘denying the basic multiple nature of the print’. Selling his signed or unique prints for double the price of the multiples, Whistler began the now commonplace process of manipulating his own market using scarcity and perceived rarity. Gilmour (1978:20) observed that for editioned prints ‘an artist’s signature was held to confer approval [and] authentication’ of the copy, but Whistler’s signature or butterfly monogram may have triggered another kind of response in the receiver - that of relic fervour which was commonplace in nineteenth century collectors of art and antiquarian rarities. Described by Macauley (1953) as the pleasure of ruins, this was an insatiable desire to own a piece of rarity, regardless of any ethical or moral consequences. In photographic print editions, a similar hierarchy exists which places provenance on the artist’s physical intervention in the print, regardless of any inherent material properties. Atop this sliding scale is the vintage print made by the artist themselves; secondly a contemporary version by the same hand, thirdly a third-party produced print approved and signed by the artist and finally, an estate-editioned print unseen, unsigned and unapproved by the artist (usually made posthumously).

The creation of my practice will explore many of these issues in more detail against the backdrop of Benjamin’s (1927) notions of aura and the reproducibility of art and subsequent critiques of his position. The material presence of the photographic print within the book may disrupt our received ideas about the original and the copy, as well as the concept of the ‘ideal copy’. As Moholy Nagy observed in *The New Vision* (in Gilmour 1978:12),



Stephen Gill *Warming Down* (2008)



P.H. Emerson *Marsh Leaves* (1895)

The collector's naïve desire for the unique can hardly be justified. It hampers the cultural potential of mass consumption...In an industrial age, the distinction between art and non-art between manual craftsmanship and mechanical technology is no longer an absolute one.

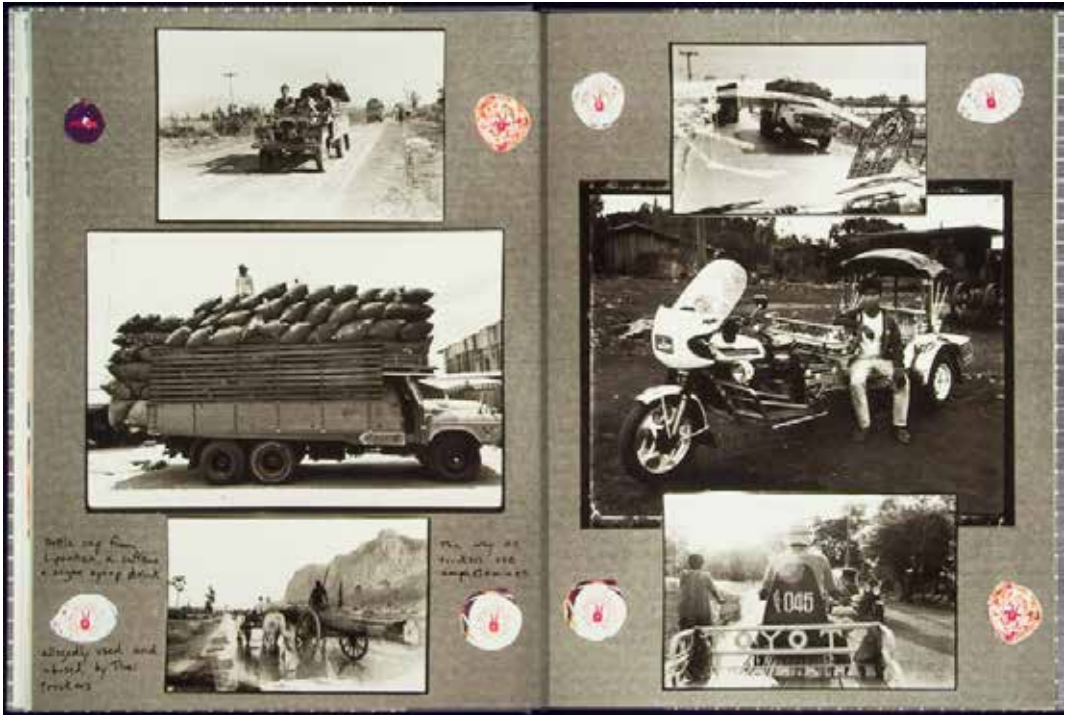
Later, this position was echoed by Lippard (1973: 263) within a post conceptual art, socio political statement as,

Clearly whatever minor revolutions in communication have been achieved, the process of dematerializing the object (easily mailed work, catalogue and magazine pieces, art that can be shown inexpensively and unobtrusively in infinite locations at one time) art and artist in a capitalist society remain luxuries.

Gilmour (1978:8) echoes this sentiment by observing that 'We have retained, against the odds, what Walter Benjamin called a 'fetishistic fundamentally anti-technological notion of art.'" Mitchell (1994) foresaw the impact that digital technologies would have on this issue too, with a differentiation between the autographic and allographic and recalling Goodman's (1968) concepts of the one stage and two stage processes of image making.

The materiality of early books containing photographs

While Barthes' (1984: 93-4) proclamation that "the photograph is a certain but fugitive testimony" reflected on the transience of memory and the medium, it also describes the fundamentally unreliability of the photographic print when used in the book form, as it has a built-in propensity to fade. Whilst there have been illustrated books since writing began on flexible media, the album format book, a variation on the portable codex form, served as an ideal container for the distribution of photographic images. Stephen Gill's use of tipped-in photographic prints in *Warming Down* (2008), is an untypical production, but one that draws upon the tradition of early, photographically-illustrated books. Before the halftone and other matrix printing systems were developed in the 1880's for the reproduction of photo-realistic images on the printed page, photographic prints had to be stuck to, interleaved within or tipped-in to specially prepared albums. Both the carte-de-visite album and luxury subscription-only titles such as Peter Henry Emerson's *Idylls of the Norfolk Broads* (1887) shared similar fixtures and fittings to appeal to a bourgeois audience. In addition to its container-like function, the album presents the sublimi-



Bill Burke *I Want to Take Picture* (1975)



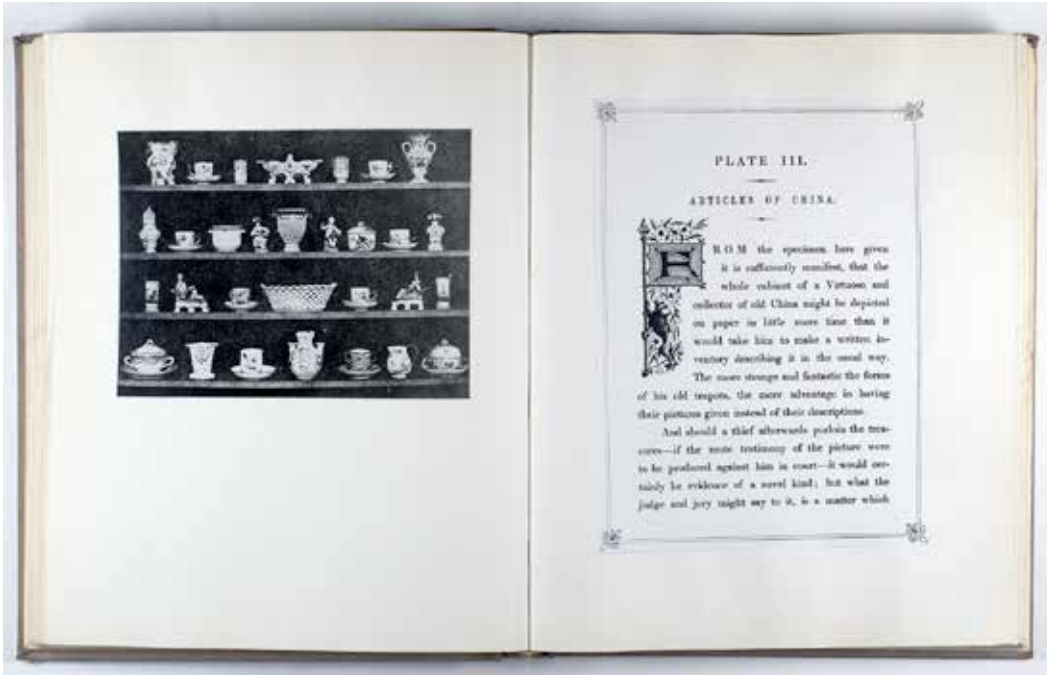
John Thompson *Foochow and the River Min* (1873)

nal promise of touch. As Posever Curtis (2011:7) observed, the album 'felt the touch of both the original maker and its recipient' and 'satisfies a shared human urge to touch and come in close contact with the representation of human experiences.' By contact with the actual photographic prints of the family album or the trophy images of a foreign traveller, the album presents a digested read, a ready-made virtual world for the private consumption of readers. Benjamin (1999: 515) though, had less time for photograph albums, seeing them as the worst kind of bourgeois self-aggrandisement,

leatherbound tomes with repellent metal hasps and those gilt-edged pages as thick as your finger, where foolishly draped or corseted figures were displayed: Uncle Alex and Aunt Riekchen, little Trudi when she was still a baby, Papa in his first term at university...and finally to make our shame complete, we ourselves – as parlor Tyrolean, yodeling, waving our hat before a painted snowscape, or as a smartly turned-out sailor, standing rakishly with our weight on one leg.

Contemporary photographer's monographs that have an anthropological undercurrent such as Bill Burke's *I Want to Take Picture* (1975), can also be described as belonging to this album genus – providing readers with a surrogate experience so they don't have to make the journey themselves. John Thompson's albums such as *Foochow and the River Min* (1873), commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society are now viewed with a post-colonial sensibility, but the outsourcing of our engagement with the real world to the photographer-as-explorer still accounts for the popularity of the album-format book. Whilst few contemporary photographer's monographs share the physical attributes of nineteenth century albums, they are album format in concept and authorial intent.

The use of the photographic print in the mid-Nineteenth century album as an enhancement to publishing projects contributed to an accelerated distribution of knowledge of the world, yet within forty years of the appearance of Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46), other more economic methods of photo-reprography emerged to end the use of light-sensitive materials. Expensive silver chemicals, irregular processing and costly overheads deemed the use of the photographic print within the book as a liability once the halftone process emerged. Early survey albums such as Timothy O'Sullivan's *Photographs showing Landscapes, Geological and other Features, of Portions of the Western Territory of the United States* (1874) contained



Fox Talbot *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46)



Timothy O'Sullivan *Photographs showing Landscapes, Geological and other Features, of Portions of the Western Territory of the United States* (1874)

actual high quality photographic prints, but required an album container as a functional necessity, as Benson (2008: 116) observed, because

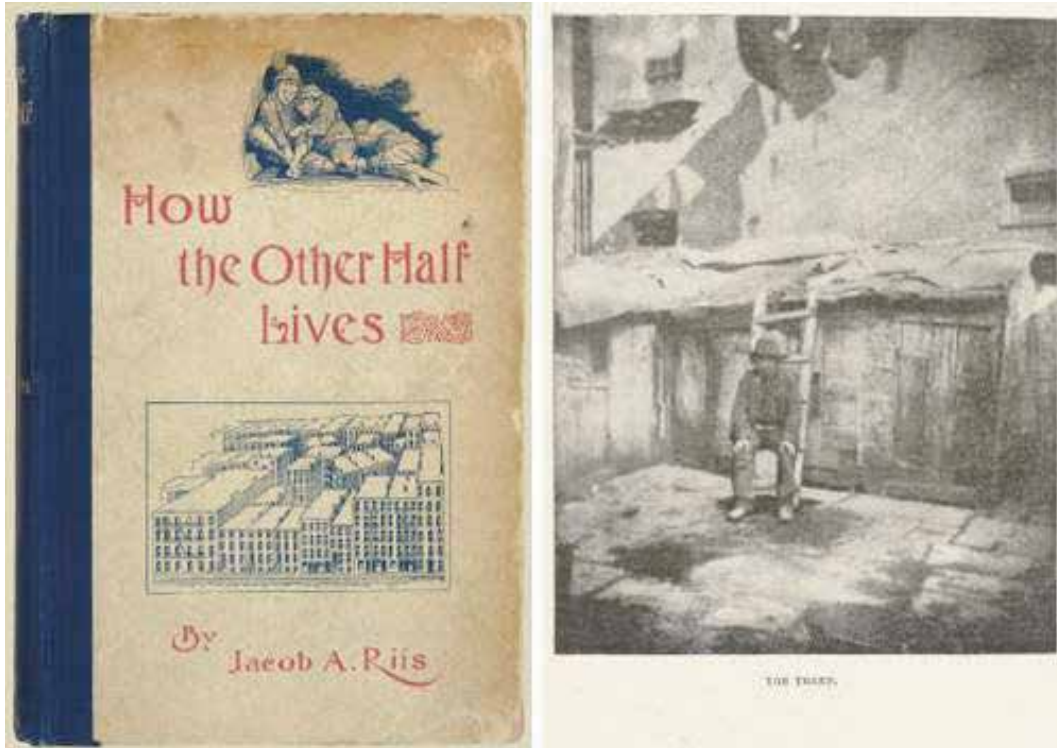
Nothing preserves a photograph as well as being in a dry book that is stored closed, since light is the great destroyer of the photographic image.

As such, books that contained photographs developed an undeserved reputation for poor lightfastness. From the late 1880's, however, technological advancements in reprography enabled books containing photographs to be produced with a range of material manifestations: the mass-market halftone such as Jacob Riis' *How the Other Half Lives* (1890); the vernacular family photo album; and the craft-suffused, luxury photogravure publications like Steiglitz's *Camera Work* (1903-17).

The first significant example of photography within a mass-produced book was in the nineteenth century by journalist Jacob Riis. *How the Other Half Lives* (1890) was a law-changing campaign against slum housing in New York's Lower East Side. Riis' book was printed using the newly devised halftone process and fronted unequivocal facts gleaned from the city's own health and housing census data with thirty un-staged photographs to further evidencing his findings. On publication, it provoked changes to the New York housing laws and his raw, unmediated images were read as equivalents of reality. However, as Riis did not have the pretensions of a pictorialist and was neither an artist (Sante 1997) or humanitarian, the project established the documentary book genre as a hybrid textual form (Allred 2010), combining factual narrative and indexical photographs, which as Stott (1973: 214) observes 'make the reader feel he is first-hand witness to a social condition.'

Campany (2009: 22) denotes that this book and others marked the end of an era in photography 'when the medium began to shake off its fawning imitation of painting to pursue an artistic identity of its own.' However, while mass-publishing projects such as *How the Other Half Lives* forefronted the functional, evidential properties of photography in the book form, it also unwittingly connected the photographic print to uniformity and mechanical production. Cook (1911: 335) recounts Ruskin's earlier suspicion of mechanisation led him to view 'the abominable art of printing is the root of all mischief – it makes people used to have everything of the same shape.' The uniformity of mass printing delivered certainty of message, but at the expense of nuance and variation.





Jacob Riis *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)



Valentine's Real Photographs for your Snap Shot Album series: *No. 12: Ambleside, Grasmere & Rydal* (1925)

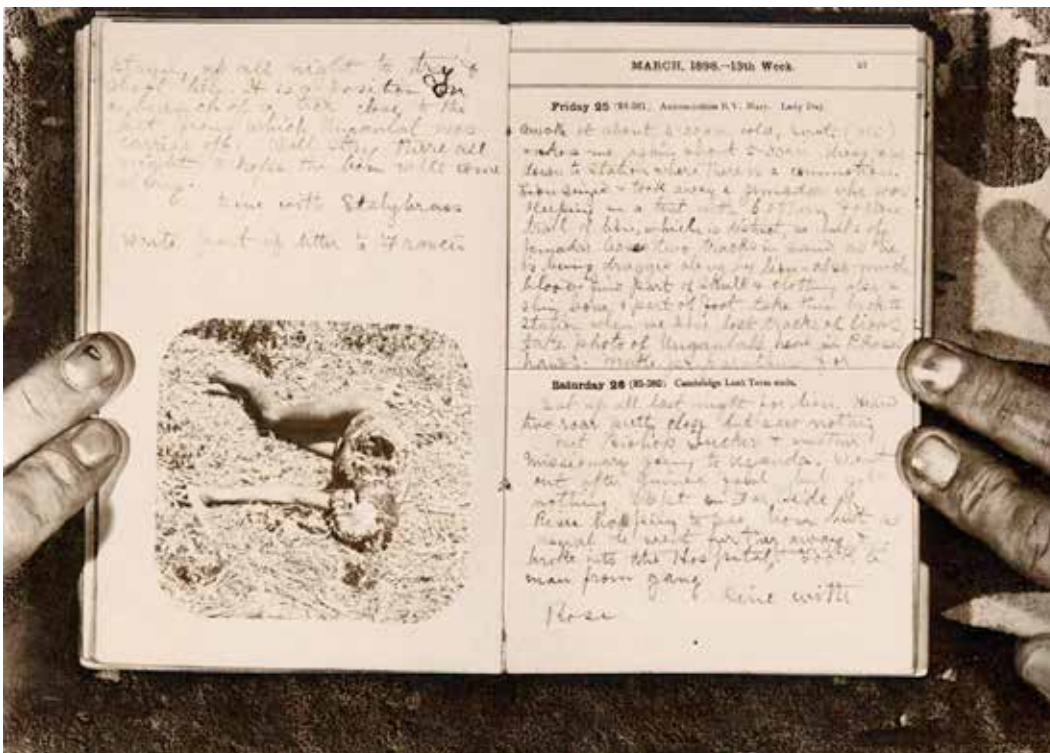
Photography in the 1930's became aware of its own immediate past and its independence from painting. Its emergence as a subject for serious critical inspection drew Walter Benjamin amongst others, to unpick the inherent values in the medium. A year later, Benjamin (1931) published *Little History of Photography*, outlining his seminal concepts of trace and aura and perhaps foreseeing the potency of the documentary image, Benjamin sets in motion the possibility of a connection between, that which is observed and the resultant image. Company (2009: 23) suggests that Benjamin's *Little History of Photography* was in fact a disguised examination of photography in the book form and speculates that

Benjamin thought photography might be entering a third phase, a phase of intelligent documents assembled as small archives in book form that might reward a socially and historically alert audience.

Alongside this shift emerged the advertising and tourist souvenir postcard industries, employing light-sensitive photographic print materials and high quality reprography techniques such as photogravure. From the 1920's onwards European picture postcard manufacturers such as Compagnie des Arts Photomecaniques (CAP) in France and Jury's, Judges and Valentine & Sons in the UK, created early examples of real photograph souvenirs, such as Valentine's Real Photographs for your Snap Shot Album series of scenes. Sold in cartons as thematic sets, such as *No. 12: Ambleside, Grasmere & Rydal*, these small photographic prints were indistinguishable in material and size from other prints that the owner may have created themselves and were intended as a kind of surrogate photography service, designed to be incorporated into existing family photograph albums. Thus the materiality of the photographic print as a tactile, auratic entity became linked with both extremes of high and low culture, yet the material constituents of all these variants were identical. Atop this scale, photographic prints were the primary manifestation of an art photographer's expression: exclusive and with a highly controlled limited distributed, whilst at the bottom, cheap and plentiful vernacular souvenir and domestic photography that became embedded within every family history. While photographs within books were hiding their handcrafted origins, the signs of the makers hand re-emerged in the picture postcard boom. As Matthews (2015) observed, in 1907, Valentine employed 40 artists to re-touch negatives chosen to become picture postcards, which resulted in hybrid indexical/ modified prints.



VU magazine (1928-1940)



Peter Beard *End of the Game* (1965)

In addition to picture postcard publishing, a more sophisticated form of illustration emerged in mass-market books, periodicals and newspapers. The finer grained gravure processes enabled photographic images to be incorporated into large print runs which could be made available to a wide audience both quickly and cheaply. Weekly pictorial magazines such as *VU* (1928-1940) employed photographers using the newly invented small format 35mm camera, were instrumental in developing the photo-essay, its popularity was facilitated by high quality gravure printing, with sepia or blue tinted inks to create a rich print quality that belied its mechanical origins.

The tactile promise of the journal

Most if not all artists' books contain some functional text to contextualise the images. The journal form suggests it has been touched by the maker and instead depicts a more personalised narrative, where inscribed, annotated pages, replete with real prints document the physical interaction of the maker's hand alongside the inner voice of the observer made audible. One of the first instances of this form was Peter Beard's *End of the Game* (1965), a prophetic account of the last days of the imperial razing of African game parks. Beard's book, since republished in several different editions is interesting for its use of archive material from hunting lodge diaries and trophy images. Beard's tactic of placing his own images and observations alongside those relics of a dying era, creates a parallel narrative from the collision of contemporary and archive material. Bill Burke's *Mine Fields* (1995) also chronicles the photographer's thoughts alongside images, this time in a travelogue setting. An increase in journal-form photographers' books evidences a growing interest for works that simulate the touch of the maker's hand, in these examples through handwritten annotation. The recent upsurge in publishing artists' and photographers' notebooks, journals, contact prints and sketchbooks as kinds of material souvenirs from a pre-online world, suggests a re-instatement of the haptic. As Pearce (1995:195) suggests, these kinds of souvenirs,

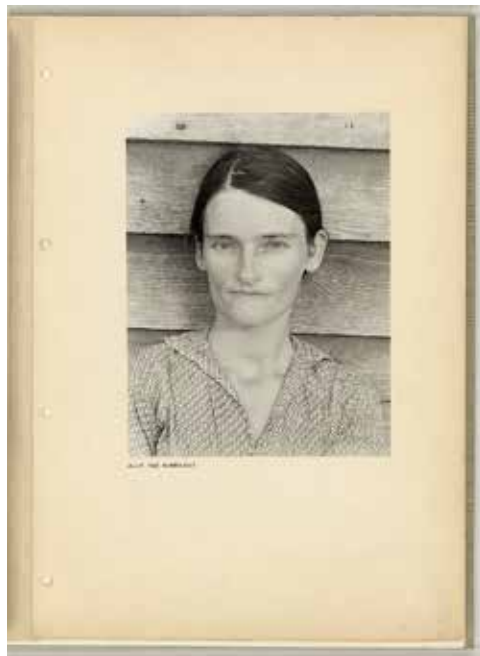
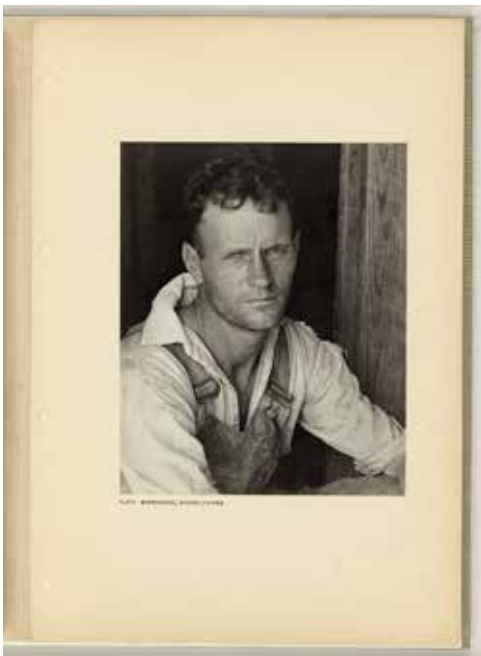
become the vehicles for a nostalgic myth of contact and presence in which a selected view of the persona past is vaunted over the grey and difficult present.

Materiality and Walker Evans

Throughout his extensive career as a photographer and picture editor, materiality was a key subject matter within Walker Evans' practice. As Rosenheim (2000:28) suggests,



Walker Evans *Photographs of Cotton Sharecropper Families* (1936-37)



Walker Evans *Photographs of Cotton Sharecropper Families* (1936-37)

From [translating two poems by] Baudelaire, Evans learned that to be modern one had to be in daily contact with the ephemera of urban life.

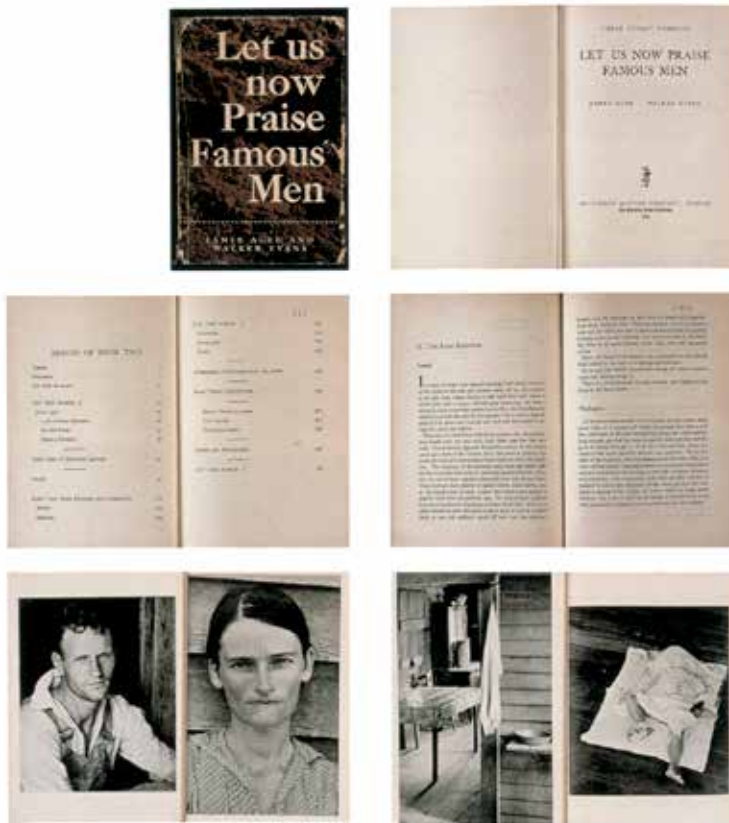
The archives of Evans' work in the Museum of Modern Art and US Library of Congress holds many artefacts produced in support of his formal photographic practice. Evans' two-volume *Photographs of Cotton Sharecropper Families* (1936-37) is a unique album containing real photographic prints pasted onto individual manila pages, with handwritten captions housed in a government-issue four-hole ring binder. As Posever-Curtis (2011) suggests, Evans used the flexibility of this binding system to reposition pages in the synthesis of a running order, yet the critical dialog surrounding this album presents it as a precursor or dummy for Evans' *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941). Little consideration is given to the material properties of the piece, yet Evans' considered use of perfunctory typography, off-white paper, unbordered photographic prints and standard issue ring binder, creates a deliberate anti-craft, functional material statement as a kind of proto-conceptualism that was to resurface later in artists' books by Christian Boltanski and Etablissements Decoux. Whilst Evans interest in materiality may have been eclipsed by his photography, for James Agee Evans' collaborator in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, it was a primary force. As Agee (in Rathbone 1995: 181) described their book project,

If I could do it, I'd do no writing at all here. It would be photographs; the rest would be fragments of cloth, bits of cotton, lumps of earth, records of speech, pieces of wood and iron, phials of odors, plates of food and excrement.

Throughout the late 1930's, Evans, Agee and the filmmaker Jay Leyda had been plotting to create various kinds of alternative 'documentary' projects involving the use of found materials. Rosenheim (2000:213) recounts,

Late in life, Leyda told an interviewer : 'He [Agee], Walker and I were going to collect all kinds of documents: letters and papers that people dropped on the street, the last words of Dutch Schultz, things like that. Nothing ever came of it.'

In addition to this album, the Evans archive also contains his unique Polaroid prints, a collection of road signs, plus various notebooks, lists and project proposals.



Walker Evans and James Agee's *Let us now Praise Famous Men* (1941)



Walker Evans *Polaroid prints* (1966-75)

Alongside Evan's own photographic output lies his work as a picture editor with *Fortune* magazine from 1948-65, where as Company (2014:37) suggests he '[saw] no clear distinctions between found images and his own photographs, nor between mass culture and high art.' Evans' reach and influence as photographer, collector, editor, production director and publisher is an early example of publishing as art practice, predating contemporary practices such as KesselsKramer Publishing and the Archive of Modern Conflict.

The artists' book as a primary form

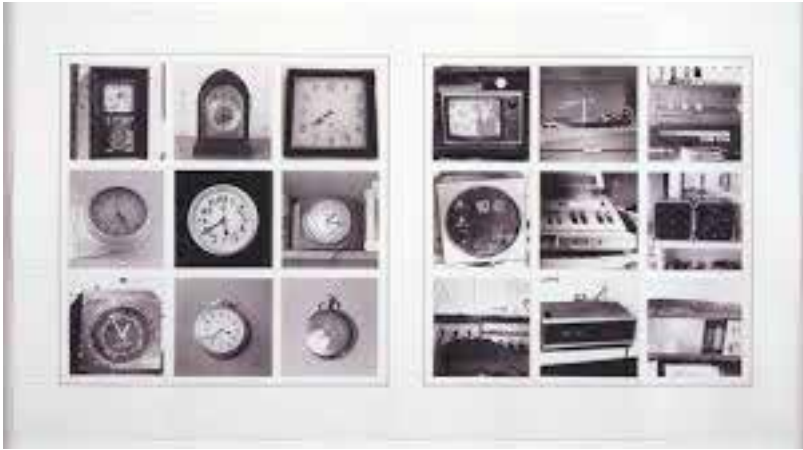
Conceptual strategies for the collection, transformation and re-presentation of images have permeated the work of artists working with photography in the book form since the 1960's. Refuting the traditional authorial voice, such practice has been described as system-generated or more simply 'conceptual', delineating an approach which forefronts a preconceived temporal strategy over an optically and materially aestheticised intent. Brunet (2009: 60) suggests that this shift away from the purely pictorial first emerged with Walker Evans' and James Agee's *Let us now Praise Famous Men* (1941), which heralded 'the new conceptual eminence of the photographer as anti-writer and super-author.' Conceptual strategies employed with varying levels of complexity continued to emerge from the Conceptual Art movement, whose practice was described by Sol Lewitt (1967: 79-83) as,

When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art. This kind of art is not theoretical or illustrative of theories; it is intuitive, it is involved with all types of mental processes and it is purposeless.

What the work or art looks like isn't too important.

The importance of both Lewitt and Ed Ruscha's artists' books in my field is that unlike photographer's monographs, they were conceived as the primary form of the work. Although photography is an eminently reproduceable medium in book, print and electronic formats, no other version of Lewitt's or Ruscha's publications exist. Lewitt who in 1976, together with Lucy Lippard, founded Printed Matter in New York, a shopfront for the sale and promotion of artists' books, authored several books using photography as a visualising tool and many of Lewitt's ideas were echoed by Lippard and John Chandler's (1967) notions in *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966-1972*. Most of Lewitt's photography based

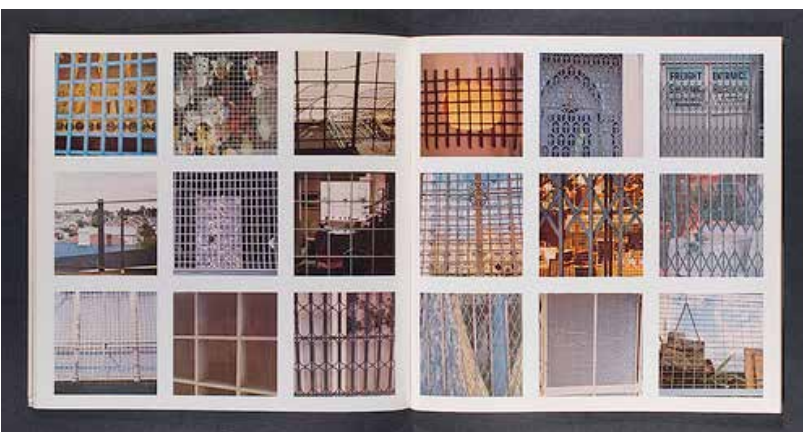




Sol Lewitt *Autobiography* (1980)



Sol Lewitt *Sunset and Sunrise at Praiano* (1980)



Sol Lewitt *Photogrids* (1977)

books employ a grid layout on each page, including *Photogrids* (1977), *Autobiography* (1980) and *Sunset and Sunrise at Praiano* (1980). *Photogrids* and *Autobiography* are constructed typologies of the artist's observed exterior and domestic spaces, and like all of Lewitt's books are presented without a rationalising text. *Sunset and Sunrise at Praiano* and *From Montelucio to Spoleto December 1976* (1984) also adopt the grid but introduce a time-based, sequential element to the work – that of walked journey and the passage of twenty four hours respectively. Lewitt's early work presented in books was influenced by the sequential work of Edward Muybridge (Lippard 1973). Muybridge's planned experiments with motion capture led Lewitt to believe that the conception of the work was of fundamental importance, delivering instructions for the making of the work.

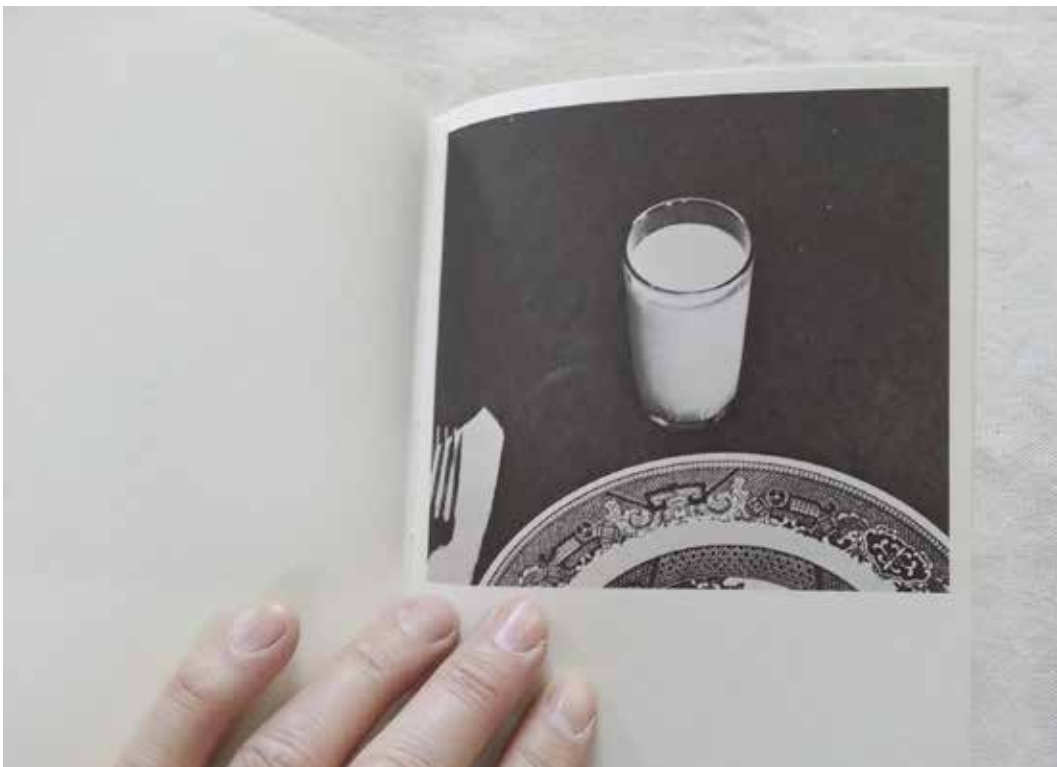
Lewitt's books are constructed within his rigorous self-imposed practice template which cautions against subjective, arbitrary decision-making as well as avoiding materiality and slick craftsmanship (Lewitt 1969). Absent in all of his photographic books is any evidence of virtuoso camera craft, such as shallow depth of field, viewpoint or special lenses which are traditionally used to emphasise some pictorial elements over others. Lewitt's serial work lies closely to Ed Ruscha, but perhaps closest of all in his *Cock Fight Dance* (1980), an extraordinarily unexpected work showing a sequence of two chickens fighting, interrupted by the presence of a cat. Lewitt's artists' books were published under his strict code, which advocated the low cost, high distribution benefits of artists' books; 'Books are the best medium for many artists working today. Art shows come and go but books stay around for years' (in Maffei, 2009). While the acknowledgement of design as a part of the conceptualization process is largely absent from accounts of Lewitt's work, it is significant that both he and Ruscha trained as graphic designers before embarking on their respective careers. Ruscha worked as a layout artist for the Carson-Roberts advertising agency in Los Angeles and Lewitt worked as a graphic designer in the office of architect I.M. Pei. As a result of this formative training, both artists gained a practical understanding of the relationship between text and image, typography and page layout and the reproduction of the image on the printed page.

Lippard's (1973: xiv) own reflections in *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966-1972* provides an insight into both Lewitt's and Ruscha's practice.

Some Conceptualists took a page from Pop (imagery and techniques) and Minimalism (fabrication out of the artist's hands) by assuming an



Sol Lewitt *Cock Fight Dance* (1980)



Ed Ruscha *Various Small Fires and Milk* (1964)

“industrial” approach. Ruscha had said, early on, that his photographic artist’s books were not to “house a collection of art photographs – they are technical data like industrial photography.” He eliminated text so the photos would become “neutral.” There was a cult of “neutrality” in Minimalism, applied not only to the execution of objects but to the ferocious erasure of emotion and conventional notions of beauty.

Categorising Ruscha’s books is still problematic and continues to attract widespread critical evaluation, second only to Robert Frank’s (1958) *The Americans*. Ruscha (in Philpot 1999: 77) described his intent as ‘What I was after was a no-style or non-statement with a no-style.’ Ian Walker (2012) chronicles this later repositioning and recontextualisation of Ruscha’s books, which are variously tagged as conceptual, photographic conceptualism, anti-photography; and even enveloped within the *New Topographics* (1975) exhibition, described as ‘proto-postmodern.’

Locating Ruscha’s early work proves difficult when the artist made practice decisions that contradicted later statements about the work. Coplans (1965: 25) observed that the first edition of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* was numbered 1-400, but that Ruscha later regretted this action stating that he was,

[not] trying to create a precious limited edition book, but a mass-produced product of high order. All my books are identical. They have none of the nuances of the hand-made and crafted limited edition book.

These early examples of artist’s books published with photographic content illustrate the terrain within which practitioners located themselves – prioritizing the temporal over the visual, neutral over narrative, availability over scarcity; accessibility over privilege. The inevitable by product of this thinking was a rejection of the material properties of the book and a celebration of fingerprint-free mechanical reproduction using industrial printing presses rather than atelier print production. On reflection however, deadpan anti-photography is now a recognisable form of narrative distance and the mechanical nuances and materiality of commercial printing has also become desirable as a production style, as seen in works by Joachim Schmid, Hans Eijkelboom and Celine Duval.

A typology of material books

Presently incumbent on the Dewey classification system, books by artists and



Celine Duval *Revue en 4 images* (2011)

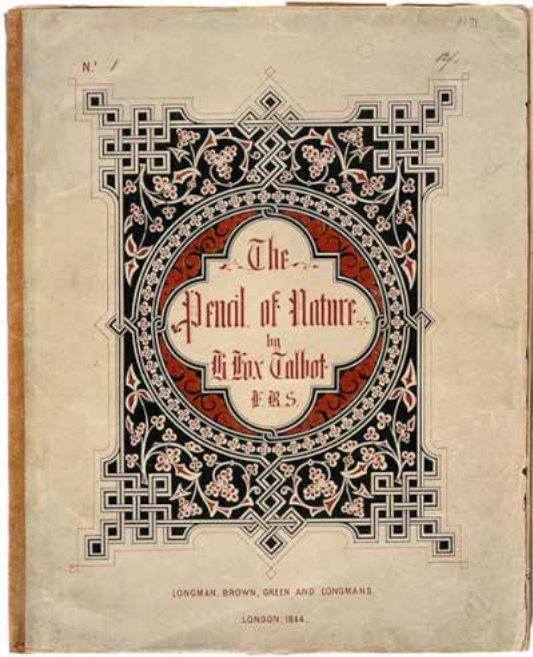
photographers are catalogued within different fields of practice – rather than as subsets of visual art, literature or artists’ publishing. In addition to this, books perceived as rare or valuable are also housed in special collections as limited availability artefacts. Too many different fields of practice exist to prevent a typology based upon genre or subject being devised and recent studies by Bodman & Sowden (2010) and Hampton (2015) attest to this fact. Yet it is possible to identify different book forms into an outline typology. The model I have used for this is drawn from qualitative social research – designed to group together certain attributes and elements into types. The proposal is based on Kluge’s (2000) assertion that the grouping together of similar attributes into types and the differences between those types should be as strong as possible.

#### Top level classification

Two higher-level forms exist: the codex and the non-codex form, the former linked to bound fascicles, the latter linked to the artist’s folio of individual prints. For a second level, I propose five types each containing variations within. These are the album, the portfolio, the art object, the catalogue and the pamphlet.

#### a. The Album

William Henry Fox Talbot (1839) projected that ‘Every man his own printer and publisher’ indicating that his variant of photography was first developed as a means of patenting the mass production of illustrated books, not as a mass medium. In his own printing factory in Swindon, Fox Talbot’s *Pencil of Nature* (1844-46) was reproduced and sold as a part-work on a subscription basis. Inside each fascicle, salted paper prints were stuck onto the verso of the spread and accompanied on the recto by Fox Talbot’s own written musings. While Von Amelnxsen (in Brunet 2009: 40) describes the *Pencil of Nature* as ‘the first meeting of photography and writing’ the material properties of this publication have been much less discussed. Although illustrations had long accompanied printed texts, the arrival of the photographic print in the 1840’s as a carrier of high-resolution information enabled a new kind of publication. In the next two decades that followed *The Pencil of Nature*, as salted paper prints gave way to finer, more detailed light sensitive printed material, indexical photography emerged to document advances in science, anthropology and geographical discoveries across the globe. Early photographers’ books were therefore inextricably linked with surveying, classifying, cataloguing and archiving. Yet, as observed by Armstrong (1998), the history of art largely removed the photograph from its printed and published context, perhaps because of its very



Fox Talbot *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46)



Josef Koudelka's *Gypsies* (1975)

transparency. However the sequential deployment of images in a book delivered a more complex message than any individual, indexical print had managed up to that point. Yet, as Brunet (2009: 46) observed

Most of the hundreds of photographic books, albums and portfolios published in the second half of the nineteenth century [had the purpose of] thematic illustration or encyclopaedic collection and however, did not emulate *The Pencil of Nature's* reflexive insights into photography and photographer.

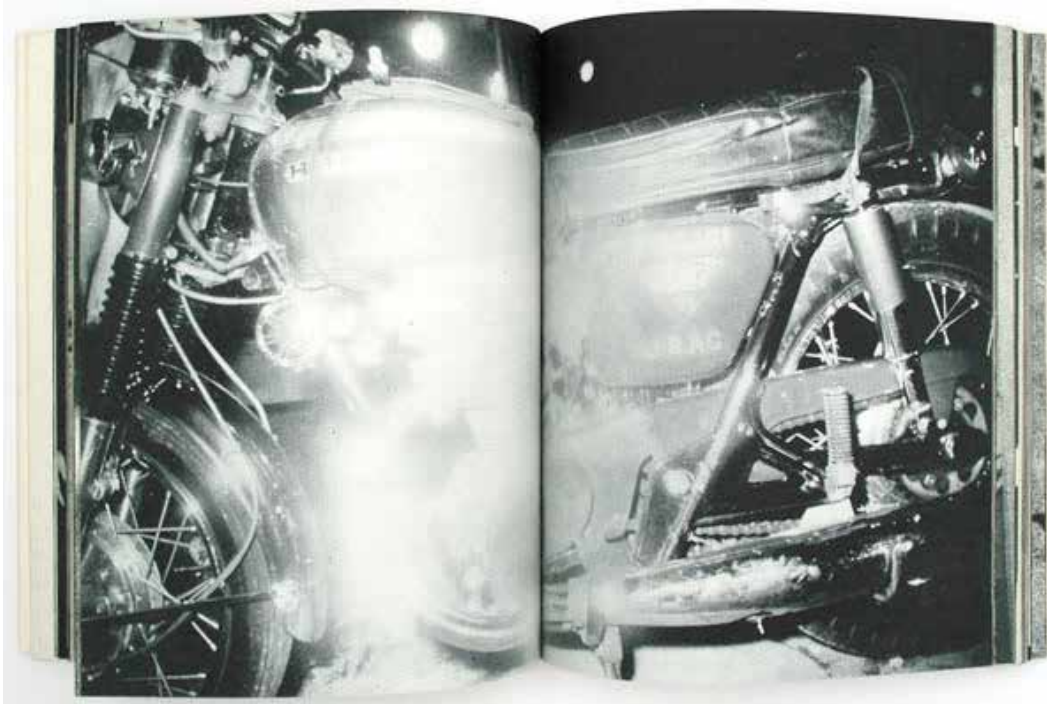
#### b. The Portfolio or folio

The folio and the livre d'artiste are more affordable forms of original art for aspiring bourgeois owners. These forms of promotional book deliver a reproduction of artwork that exists elsewhere in a more auratic and desirable version. Many artists' books however remain rooted in the livre d'artiste tradition, valuing exquisite print quality above all else, proposing themselves as an affordable portfolio for an educated consumer, acting as a surrogate for the finer print. However, monographs such as Josef Koudelka's *Gypsies* (1975), echo Drucker's (2004) notion, that rarely do such titles interrogate the conceptual or material form of the book as part of its intention or thematic interests.

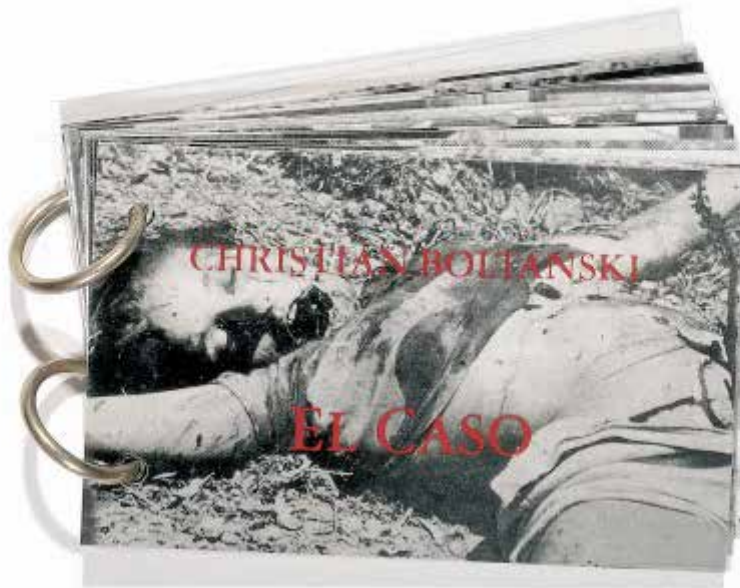
#### c. Art object

Books that present themselves as artists' books however, provide a greater breadth for practice. Artists' books are made to be looked at and touched as well as read (Cotter 2004), providing a conceptual space and territory for all political, visual and textual transformations, collaborations and explorations. Despite Drucker's (2004:363) projection of the artists' book as 'a mute space for unrealized dreams,' many authored photography books, celebrate thingness, self-reflexivity and independence. The notion of the photographic document was also further interrogated within the field of multiple art. The photographic multiples issued by Marcel Broodthaers, Ed Ruscha and Dieter Roth disrupt our received expectation of fine photographic reproduction descended from the heights of Edward Curtis' *The North American Indian* (1907-1930) and Alfred Steiglitz's *Camera Work* (1903-1917), by using commercial offset printing, coarse halftones or colour photocopier. Handling a book requires unwrapping and unfolding providing a haptic rather than pictorial commentary. Alec Soth's multiple *Broken Manual* (2010), Daido Moriyama's *Tokyo* serials and the dual format book/ wallpiece of Stephen Gill's *A Series of Disappoint-*





Daido Moriyama *Shashin Hyoron-sha* (1972)



Christian Boltanski *El Caso* (Parkett 22)(1988)

*ments* (2008), forefront the notion of the book as an object that requires handling. Christian Boltanski's *El Caso (Parkett 22)* (1988) uses a simple drilled wad of small, business card size photographs held together by two split rings. This souvenir-type form creates an unsettling tension with photographic reproductions of grisly murder scenes, echoing Pearce (1995: 248) who projected souvenirs as 'the collected objects themselves are innocent, but they are used to provide a doubtful excitement for their possessors.'

#### d. The Catalogue

This category includes books that propose themselves as a catalogue, inventory or typology. For those practitioners who refute the traditional authorial voice, this form forefronts the conceptual strategy over visual intent. The functional document within the terrain of artist's books extends across many different modes of practice, including performance documentation such as Brian Lane's *Fridjof Nansen's Fog Log* (1978) the playing out of a concept or system such as Sol Lewitt's *Autobiography* (1980) and *Photogrids* (1977); the collection and reframing of found or archive matter, such as Christian Boltanski's *Inventaire* (1973-98). Many practitioners further explore the notion of the actual, invented or reproduced document within in a variety of self-reflexive forms as evidenced in Jake Tilson's *The Terminator Line* (1991) and Simon Cutts' *An English Dictionary of French Place Names* (2004).

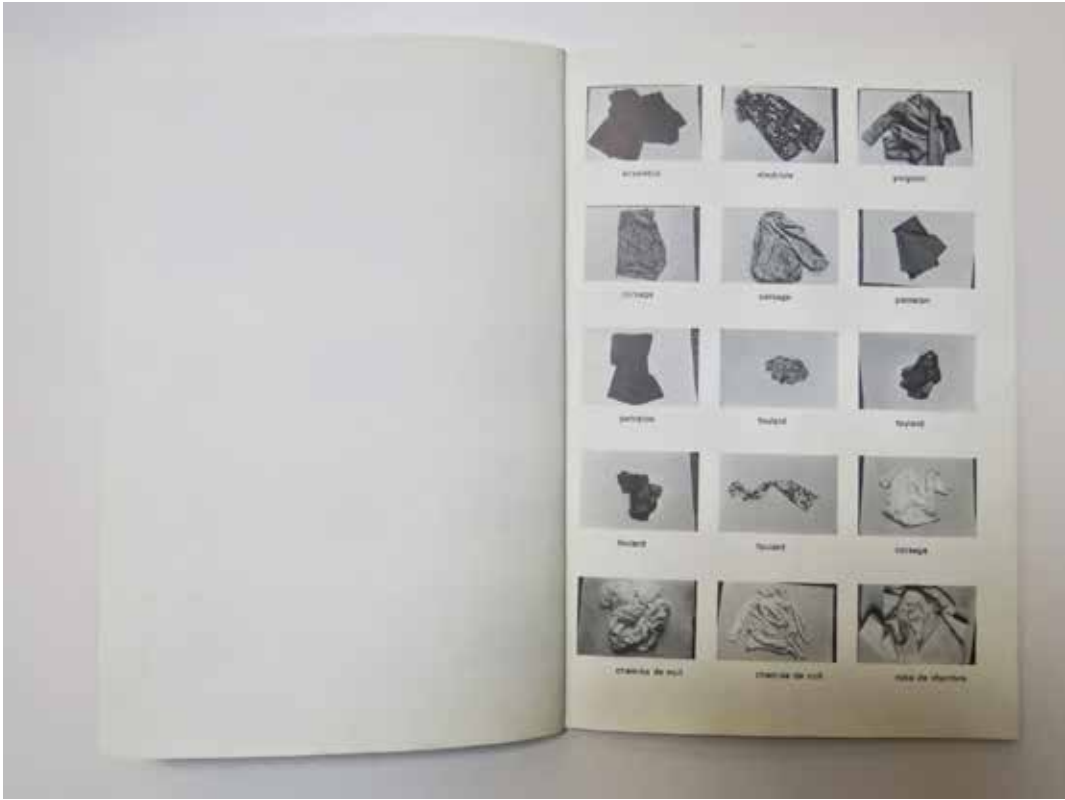
#### e. The Pamphlet

Zines and artists' serial publications forefront the distribution of alternative underground information. Both Klanten's *Behind the Zines: Self-Publishing Culture* (2009) and Aarons and Roth's *In Numbers: Serial Publications by Artists since 1955* (2009) provide an alternative commentary to the classification of photographers' books. Klanten subdivides zines into five sections: gallery, archive, laboratory, kiosk and theatre, standing as metaphors for showcase, collection, experiment, networked serial and storytelling respectively. The anti-materiality of the zine in contemporary practice is a reaction against digital homogeneity and slick production values, celebrating the independence of the small press in an increasingly plural visual culture.

#### The copy and the original

While Drucker (2004: 2) defines an artists' book as,

a book created as an original work of art, rather than a reproduction of



Christian Boltanski from *Inventaire* series (1973-98)

a pre-existing work...it is a book which integrates the formal means of its realization and production with its thematic or aesthetic issues.

This statement identifies the issue of photographers' print-based projects presented as monograph-form photobooks, for the work exists in a more auratic form elsewhere. Despite the reprographic potential of the photographic print, most photography books are constructed using lithography. Placing the reader at a greater distance from the original photographers encounter, this mechanical method of reprography disconnects the reader from what Sontag (1977) describes as a "stencil off the real" to a copy of the stencil off the real. Lithography's subtle halftone screen acts as a barrier, removing the object status of the photograph and the sign of the maker's hand as found in photographic prints and vernacular albums of photography. As access to digital image-making technology in developed societies has increased, the number of images we produce has become unimaginable, creating a dramatic change in our relationship with the photograph as an object. O'Hagan (2014: online) suggests that 'the average person in the West sees more images before lunch than someone living in 1890 would see in their whole life.' Jobey (2009: online) suggests that today, 'the nearest the human hand gets to them is the computer keyboard.' Early photography however, had a very different physical incarnation, as Brunet (2009: 35) observed

Much of the photography that was produced in the nineteenth century ...was created with the earlier model of prints and large books or albums in mind ...were collected in albums that looked like thick books and were kept on bookshelves.

These archived photographic prints and Daguerreotype cases with enclosed locks of hair, handwritten annotations and photo-jewellery were made to be handled, and operate as doubly indexical, offering a heightened experience of the subject. While Durden (1995:119-124) suggests that 'Barthes finds in photography a flat death "resisting revitalization of any kind,"' Batchen (2004:14) projects the opposite, 'It is as if... the subjects want to draw our attention not only to the image they hold, but also to photography itself as a touchable entity.' When a photographic print becomes more than just functional and becomes a trigger to another, past experience as a form of souvenir, as Durand (in Edwards 2004:41) speculates they, 'allow me to believe that what is missing is present all the same, even though I know it is not the case.' In material culture, Pearce (1995:198) also



Unknown maker. *Tie Pins* from Martin Parr *Objects* (2008)

suggested that souvenirs,

can offer tangible contact with a time that is gone, and for whom also the easy portability of objects which can move from place to place with their owners is important. A past can be remembered quite adequately in the contents of a small suitcase.

Benjamin's (in Jennings 1999: 519) struggle with photography's own link to painting and by default, bourgeois obsession with aura, foretold the difference in perception between copy and original and nowhere is this more evident than in the photographer's book.

Every day the need to possess the object in close-up in the form of a picture, or rather a copy, which illustrated papers and newsreels keep in readiness, and the original picture is unmistakable. Uniqueness and duration are as intimately intertwined in the latter as are transience and reproducibility in the former. The peeling away of the object's outer shell, the destruction of the aura, is the signature of a perception whose sense for the sameness of things has grown to the point where even the singular, the unique, is divested of its uniqueness – by means of its reproduction.

The political climate of that time undoubtedly led Benjamin and others into speculation about the neutralizing effects of mass publishing. Buchloh (1984:94) recalls El Lissitzky's projection of the potential for mechanical reproduction centred on his concept of 'conditions of simultaneous collective reception', describing a homogenized response to a uniformly produced object. Buchloh (1984:100) further describes El Lissitzky's desire for the book to be wrestled from the privileged few,

The Book is the most monumental art form today, no longer is it fondled by the delicate hands of the bibliophile, but seized by a hundred thousand hands. We shall be satisfied if we can conceptualize the epic and the lyric developments of our times in our form of the book.

Despite the proliferation of artist's books since the 1960's, there is little consensus concerning their defining characteristics. This is evidenced by Tyson and Turner's (1984) catalogue for the exhibition *British Artist's Books 1970-83*, where the authors



Christian Boltanski from *Sans Souci* (1991)



Christian Boltanski from *Sans Souci* (1991)

employ Strachan's (1976:1) conflation of an artists' book with a livre d'artiste,

The essential feature of a livre d'artiste is that each of the illustrations is an 'original' and not a reproduction, i.e. artist's have themselves executed their designs in one or other of the autographic media, although in many cases they are not the printers of the edition.

For Strachan, the psychological impact of an 'original' rather than the presence of the artist's hand in its reproduction is deemed more worthy. While Shore (in Brayshaw 2006: online) observed that 'photographic reproductions are closer to facsimiles of the original than reproductions of other media,' Mitchell (1994:23-57) observed that,

Where we can distinguish clearly between originals and copies we usually value the originals far more highly--both for their aura as relics of a particular human hand and for their superior status as direct rather than secondary evidence.

Mitchell's observations were influenced by Nelson Goodman's seminal work, *Languages of Art* (1968), which initiated the concepts of autographic and allographic art. The functional differences between autographic and allographic and the success or otherwise of their subsequent reproduction, prompted Kirschenbaum (2008:133) to speculate that,

In Goodman's terms allographic objects, such as written texts, fulfill their ontology in reproduction, while autographic objects such as paintings, betray their ontology in reproduction.

#### Unique books

Unique books are, as their name suggests, are at the top the pyramid of exclusivity: one-off physical iterations of an artist's idea, where no duplicate copy exists. Examples of such works containing photographs are mostly dummy books created as a maquette to explore sequence, layout and extent, but also increasingly include books where few copies of the original edition survive. Examples of unique works are exhibited and collected in public and private archives. Unique pieces are also made by artists who make books within the sculptural book genre, such as Anselm Kiefer. Despite being large scale, heavy sculptural items which are too fragile to





Anselm Kiefer *The Cauterization of the Rural District of Buchen* (1975)



Anselm Kiefer *The Cauterization of the Rural District of Buchen* (1975)

be handled or navigated by the public while on display, they are functional, story containing entities. Kiefer's books, display a unique materiality, described by Arasse (2014:57) as 'objects with a material presence that is significant in its own right.' The contents of these unique books such as *You are a Painter* (1969) and *The Cauterization of the Rural District of Buchen* (1975) were constructed using silver gelatin photographic prints, sometimes annotated by hand to provide a richly tactile object. Yet these are now visible only through documentation photographs provided in separate catalogues. Working in a sculptural domain, Kiefer's works explore the use of photography and its materiality through unique, one-off works. Yet as Bourdin (1973: online) foretold, 'when the book becomes an object, does it not lose its role as a medium, as a means of communication?'

#### Touch and hierarchy in the print and the book

In material culture, Claessen (2012) suggests that our desire to touch an artefact may be linked to Western Christian tradition of accruing benefit by touching a holy object. Such items are seen to possess mystical powers, conferring knowledge, sanctity and personal blessedness, not to say also healing and restorative powers. The transference of such power comes through ownership in the first instance by a social hub, permitting further downloading by permitted visitors through touch. The commodification of relics in Europe during the Middle Ages is testament to what was perceived as the intrinsic power of the artefacts. Such was the clamour for holy things, that the distribution of pieces of a dead saint's body was subject to buying and selling, financial speculation and counterfeiting. Such relics were organised into a hierarchical pyramid of desirability by first source: Jesus Christ/ Apostle/ Saint, with a secondary value linked to the relics actual distance from the individual: body part/ clothing/ item they had touched. A similar value system can be seen in the trading of books and artworks. The value pyramid for an artist's output could be suggested by the scarcity of the source increasing the value, while evidence of the maker's signature, annotation or hand confers an extra auratic charm on the object. Ivins (in Gilmour 1979:21) observed that in the USA,

there was an artistic hierarchy of the graphic media..that (deemed) etching was more artistic than line-engraving, that both were more artistic than wood-engraving, that wood-engraving was more artistic than wood-cutting and that all were more artistic than lithography. Lowest of all and utterly contemptible were photography and any medium that bore the name of some process. The tradition of snob-



Ballet  
ALEXEY SHIROPOVITCH



The Alphabet of Spiritual Emptiness  
ZOSIAK XIAUJ



Beyond Caring  
PAUL GRAMIAN



In Paganie  
CHERIE HILLIP

Jeffrey Ladd/ Errata Editions *Books on Books* series (2009 - present)

bery is still so strong, however, that neither [photography] or [photo-mechanical processes are] ever mentioned in any of the general histories of prints.

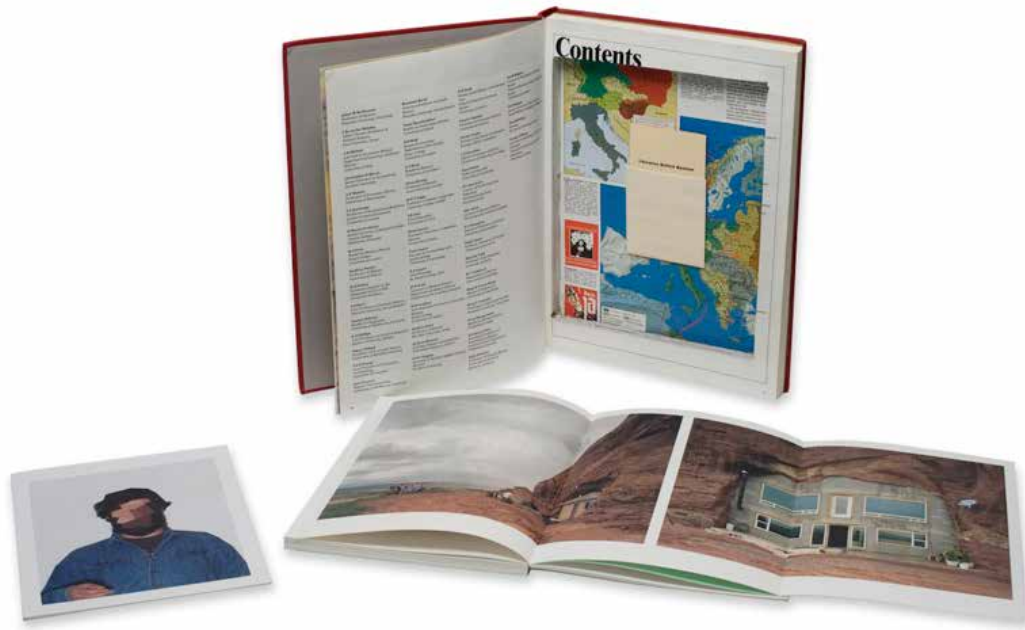
Seen through the lens of Bourdieu's (1984) market of symbolic goods, a further hierarchy exists to describe the book in relation to other copies of the same, and this has developed alongside the commercial trades of artist printmaking and the publishing industry. Badger (2014:online) recounts an anecdote about art dealer Harry Lunn, who did much to develop and maintain the hierarchy of the print in the fine-art photography market.

Harry Lunn, once addressed a symposium back in the seventies. He had two photographs. He said, 'Here I have a print by Robert Frank from the Americans which I retail for \$10,000. Here I have another print by Robert Frank from the Americans, the same picture, which I also retail for \$10,000.' Then he tore one in half and said, 'Now I have this print by Robert Frank from the Americans which I retail for \$30,000.' As Harry always used to say 'We're in the business of creating rarity value.

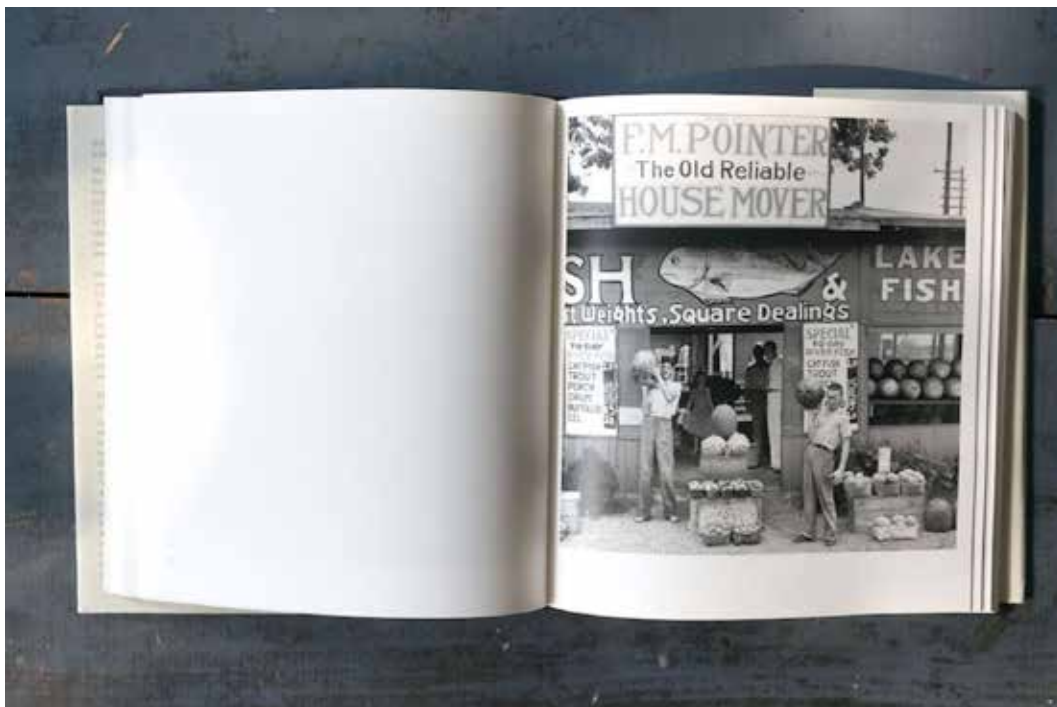
The book as an edition

Pearson (1998:81) describes our historical understanding of the term edition 'as all the copies of a book printed from one particular setting of type.' Implicit in this notion is the concept of the ideal copy, which is otherwise defined as the singular, approved version of the work. On reflection however, the ideal copy never really exists due to a myriad of variations in printing, materials and editorial amendments enacted mid- and post-print run. As Pearson concludes, 'these kinds of differences [should be distinguished] from other kinds of [variations] which were deliberately presented to the buyer as choices.'

Publisher Jeffrey Ladd's Errata Editions series *Books on Books* (2009 – present) also create additional, intertextual editions of many photographer's books such as *In Flagrate* and Atget's *Photographe de Paris*. In Ladd's (no date) words, these works are 'not reprints not facsimiles but comprehensive studies of rare books.' Before the unlockable analogue process of Guttenburg's set type and later lithography, the only way texts could be distributed was through painstaking hand copying. As Weinmayr (2012:online) observed,



Alec Soth *Broken Manual* (2012)



Walker Evans *American Photographs* (1938)

In the beginning of recorded history, books used to be copied by hand and constantly modified through these interpretations. It is the technological advances of the analog printing press that construct our contemporary idea of books as fixed objects, where immutability is a key factor that allows for mass and consistent reproduction. But now, with digital printing technologies, mass production and mutability live hand in hand.

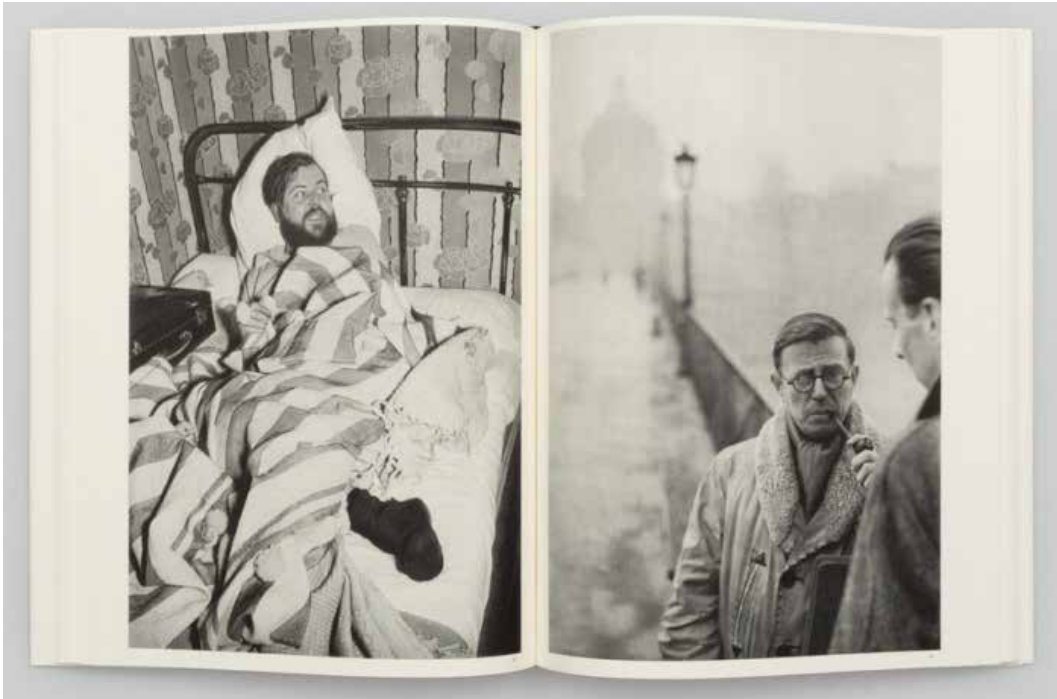
The concept of the contemporary edition therefore must allow room for some flexibility. In Alec Soth's homage to the altered book format, *Broken Manual* (2012) the promotional blog that outlines his work, Little Brown Mushroom (no date: online), describes how the piece fits into such categories,

It is common for artists to follow up the publication of their books with 'Special Editions,' but in the case of *Broken Manual*, this edition is being presented first. Made in an edition of 300, Soth calls this the 'Ideal Edition' of *Broken Manual*. Each copy of the book is housed inside of another, one-of-a-kind book.

When several editions of a book exists, process-nostalgia takes precedence amongst collectors and cognoscenti, which can be illustrated by the much-favoured letterpress halftone editions of Walker Evans' *American Photographs*, released in 1938 and 1962, compared to later lithographic printed versions of 1975, 1988 and 2012. The two early editions are also further distinguished as they were made with the artist's full input and approval. Whilst the numerical value of an edition and limited edition are fluid, but Cutts (2007:62) suggests that an edition with a minimum size of 25, 'avoids the use of more overt hand-made possibilities, [and] puts the production clearly into the realms of an edition.'

#### The livre d'artiste

The livre d'artiste – a more affordable form of original art for aspiring bourgeois owners, was developed by gallerists and publishers Vollard, Kahnweiler, Skira and Tériades amongst others at the end of the nineteenth century. Livres d'artiste were large format books which were produced using the finest papers and materials combined with elaborate printing techniques and finishing. This kind of book delivers a fine reproduction of artwork that exists elsewhere in a more auratic and desirable version, and usually of an emerging artistic talent. Most of these titles were devised by editors with a keen eye on the market rather than by the artist themselves. But



Henri Cartier Bresson *Images a la Sauvette* (1952)



Henri Cartier Bresson *Images a la Sauvette* (1952)

as Drucker (2004:5) observed, 'are productions, rather than visions.' However, the deliberate editorial commissioning of the separate trades in order to produce these books continues to provide an on many many photographers' publications. Fine papers, pigment-rich inks, virtuoso colour separation and precision lithography is still much sought after.

The secondary purpose of a livre-d'artiste was much more functional – that of an enlarged edition portfolio. One of the most lauded of all photographers' books, Henri Cartier Bresson's *Images a la Sauvette* (1952) can be seen as a portfolio or kind of prospectus. Not only issued by Tériade, the same publisher of the *Jazz* livre d'artiste by Henri Matisse (1947), but projected it's artistic intent by using a cover illustration by Matisse himself. The different processes by which these editions were made is also linked to the size of their editions and perhaps fully crystallises the debate about materiality in the book form. Matisse's *Jazz* was produced with bright gouache paints laboriously brushed through pochoirs or stencils and limited to 250 copies, with an additional 100 folios containing text-free, unfolded prints. At the other extreme, Cartier-Bresson's book was run out as an edition of 10,000 on a rotary gravure press. One a small edition with much hand involvement for a well-established artist, the other a larger more-mechanically driven production for an emerging photographer. The material subtext of each book resonates too – for *Jazz* was printed with pigment rich artist's colour on heavy cotton paper, simulating an original artwork; Cartier-Bresson's gravure printed book was like a workaday magazine.

#### The artist's multiple

A different descriptor, that of the multiple or multiple edition is frequently used to confer paratextual detail on the editioned book. The term multiple or artists' multiple emerged during the same politicised shift in critical commentary to the dematerialization of the art object and the use by artists of industrial processes to make work. In essence, the multiple as described by Campbell (1970:4) were,

works which are either actually produced in unlimited quantities or are made using processes which technically are suitable for potentially unlimited runs, however limited the actual editions may be.

The term multiple coincided with the emergence of artist's making repeatable work using methods and materials that sat outside the traditions of printmaking and print





Ed Ruscha selected artists' books



Dieter Roth *Daily Mirror* (1961)

editioning, such as Dieter Roth's *Literature Sausages* (1961-70). The term multiple therefore was used to denote specific availability of the work, but also as Daley (in Campbell 1970:8) suggests an empowering of the artist to self-publish outside the established constraints of the artist-dealer system. Daley observed that,

The complex of middle-men has a pernicious stranglehold on all creative activity in art. Galleries exist to serve a clientele who see art as a source of clever speculation.

Books and photographic prints however sat uneasily within this new term of reference. In the exhibition *New Multiple Art* at London's Whitechapel Gallery in 1970, eight of Ed Ruscha's books were shown, but these were the only artists' books on display in a show of 737 other artworks classified as multiples. In an introductory essay to the catalogue Daley (in Campbell 1970:8) speaks of the high hopes for the democratising multiple form,

Mass production would seem to open up very exciting prospects: the undermining of the cult of uniqueness which has been a result of, and ultimately an aid to, the investor's death grip on art.

This statement foretells the difficulty in categorizing the multiple – as all unlimited work eventually ceases production either as a conscious decision by the maker to stop, or with his or her death. Ruscha's individual book entries in the catalogue state that they were each not limited by an edition size. However, as Walker (2012) observed, Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962) is comprised of 3900 copies: 400 from the first edition of 1962, 500 from 1967 and 3000 from a final third edition in 1969. While Ruscha talks about 'the thrill of 400 exactly identical books stacked in front of you'" (Coplans 1965: 25), the notion of not limited is better described as not limited for the time being. For contemporary artists, the term multiple is still evident, but now enmeshed as part of marketing and distribution strategies. Shore (2006: online) uses the term to describe his print-on-demand books, 'I have many photographic ideas, and the books allow me to put them into play. They are original multiples.'

Gallery editioned folio of prints

Martin Parr's album works also function like a vernacular form of gallery editioned folio. The folio edition or portfolio has been issued by many gallerists, dealers and



Stephen Shore *A Road Trip Journal* (2008)

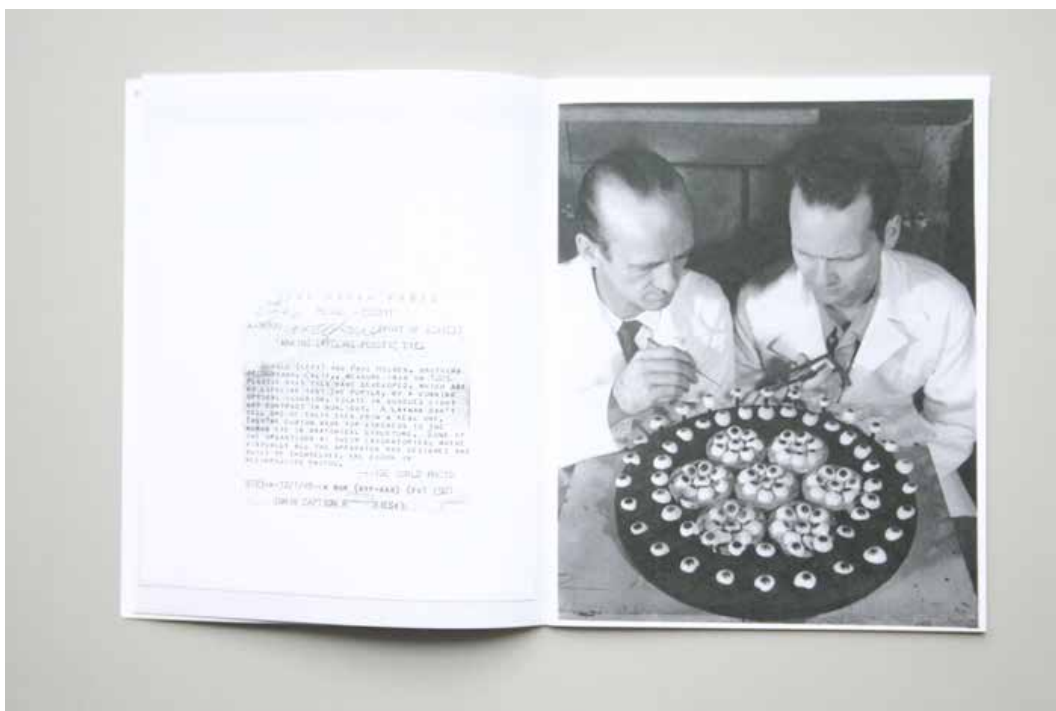
art print publishers since artist printmaking was considered a viable method of sale. An explosion in the popularity of the folio occurred in the late nineteenth century, with French publishers such as Le Vasseur distributing high quality reproductions of prints and paintings using the gravure process. These folios were issued as thematically linked works which represented a defining project or period in an artist's career. Usually presented loose leaf and printed on high quality paper, the prints had a dual form: they could be either handled and navigated separately in a clamshell folio box, or framed and displayed as wall-pieces. This ability to handle an original, limited edition artwork without the confines of the codex form and its fixed sequential limitations, provided recipients with an enhanced, haptic experience. Aimed at connoisseurs, collectors and antiquarians and set at a correspondingly exclusive price, these provided a privileged access to an artist's output. The practice of issuing folio editions continues amongst contemporary practitioners such as William Eggleston and remains a distinct form of output compared to individual prints, artists' books and mass-published monographs. Working with gallerists such as Harry Lunn and Caldecot Chubb in the 1980's, and more recently under his own Eggleston Artistic Trust, Eggleston issued several portfolios including *Troubled Waters* (1980) and *Southern Suite* (1981) in small editions of thirty and twelve respectively. Aimed at international art museums and established collectors, the portfolios contained a small number of original photographic prints, typically 10-15 in total which were printed using an uncommon dye-transfer process.

#### Deluxe editions

Many photographer's publications are also released in the guise of a deluxe edition such as Stephen Shore's *A Road Trip Journal* (2008) without necessarily being accompanied by a cheaper and less auratic version. The concept of the deluxe edition has been present since the birth of movable type in the fifteenth century, when printers offered vellum rather than paper as a more permanent material option. In time, other inducements were made available by printers such as different thicknesses of paper, or larger page versions of the same typesetting which allowed more generous borders, gutters and blank paper space on the spread. Pearson (1998:89) noted this latter kind 'appealed to discerning and affluent book buyers,' yet it is interesting to note how the presence of such spacious blank areas within individual sheets and spreads is linked to exclusivity, affordability and connoisseurship. At the other end of the scale, Haldeman-Julius' series *Little Blue Books* (1923-78), a twentieth century version of the chapbook, aimed empowering the working classes with practical knowledge, were sized at 3.5"x5", printed on thin pulp paper, tightly



Alec Soth *LBM Despatches* (2012-present)



Jocko Wayland *Almost News* (2009)

typeset with small margins, cramped leading, and sold for an initial 5 cents a piece. Special or Luxury editions of books by Alec Soth's *LBM Despatches* (2012-present) and Joy of Giving Something/ Nazraeli Press' *Witness* series (2006-present), include small scale signed photographic prints, which are slipped into the book or housed in a special sleeve. These editions are usually distributed at a higher price to 'standard' editions of the work, thereby controlling the touching an original piece of artist's work to an elite, financially solvent cognoscenti.

#### Vernacular materiality in the book

Networked art and independent publishing established itself under the influence of socialist ideology, emerging technology, alternative distribution and artist collaboration. Zines and artist serial publications forefront the distribution of alternative, underground information. While the focus of networked art, as described by Kusina (2005: online) 'is not the manner of [its] production, but the dynamic way in which [it is] distributed through artists' networks,' many mail art and independently published artists' books delivered a new visual lexicon through the use of cheap manila and pulp papers and craft-free reprographic processes, celebrating touch, intervention and the signs of the makers marks. This exchange establishes a set of reader and creator expectations, with an additional paratextual element of the worked being touched by the artist's hand. There are many contemporary examples of artists adopting the low-fi aesthetic gleaned from the materiality of independent publishing and zine culture, such as Jocko Wayland's *Almost News* (2009), containing selections of obscure photos from Associated Press, produced in a photocopy zine form. While the zine and newspaper forms embody correspondence and communication in a throwaway form, contemporary practitioners are using it for its disruptive material qualities and self-reflexive connotations.

Vernacular materiality can also be seen in work by Preston is my Paris Publications (PPP), the participatory practice of Adam Murray and Robert Parkinson (2009-). Working with a variety of collaborators, including student and community groups, PPP produced a variety of short run cheaply produced publications featuring photography of Preston and the North West, in the zine and newspaper form. Many of the projects were realised quickly by the participants, accepting the limitations of a small budget, back street reprography and poor paper stock not associated with fine print. Murray uses the kind of jobbing litho print service that was responsible for John Darwell's (1984) book *The Big Ditch: The Manchester Ship Canal Seen Through the Camera of John Darwell*, regarded by Dewi Lewis (2015) as an example



PPP publications *We don't mind people on shoulders. Just not under the ceiling fan* (2013)



Donovan Wylie and Timothy Prus *Scrapbook* (2009)

of disastrous reprography. As such, PPP publications such as *We don't mind people on shoulders. Just not under the ceiling fan* (2013) have a vernacular materiality that descends from local history publishers, fanzines, community pamphlets and the photocopy books of Japanese photographers such as Daido Moriyama. Like Moriyama, the transmission of the work cheaply or freely, is more important to PPP than simulating photographic print through reprography. PPP's work exists only in the book form, linking again to Moriyama whose work emerged only through books, magazines and billboard exhibitions. Moriyama (in Vartanian 2009: 118) reflected on this preference as

The photograph comes to life through the printing. My photographs are made complete on the printed page. Making a print exhibition, on the other hand, is something I really don't want to do.

The vernacular photographic print and the book

Photography that does not project itself as art, namely created with a functional or domestic purpose also impacts on the reader reception of a book. The vernacular photographic print exists in many forms and has been scrutinised at length by artists such as Hans Peter Feldmann, as evident in *Album* (2009). Larry Sultan and Mike Mandel's book *Evidence* (1977) is both an early and formative example, re-presenting evidential scientific and military testing as surreal, disruptively resonant photographs. The act of collecting itself projects a transformative process onto vernacular works, as Pearce (1988: 24) suggests,

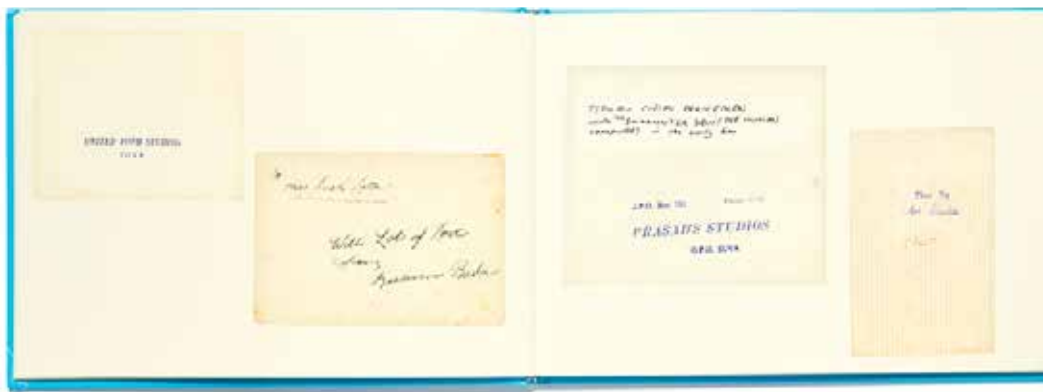
collection objects have passed from the profane – the secular world of mundane, ordinary commodity – to the sacred, taken to be extraordinary, special and capable of generating reverence.

Such vernacular photographs have also been scrutinized by individuals building special collections, such as the Burns Archive of medical imagery, and the Archive of Modern Conflict. Both archives reproduce their collections in the book and co-publish and collaborate with artists, such as The Burns Archive's *Masterpieces of Medical Photography* (1987), selected by Joel-Peter Witkin, and AMC's ephemera rich media-tion on Northern Ireland's troubles in *Scrapbook* (2009) edited by Donovan Wylie and Timothy Prus. Both publications engage in replaying uncomfortable truths from the past, using vernacular material to trigger complex reader responses, as Pearce (1995: 244) suggests,





KesselsKramer *Bangkok Beauties* (2008)



Mohini Chandra *Album Pacifica* (2001)



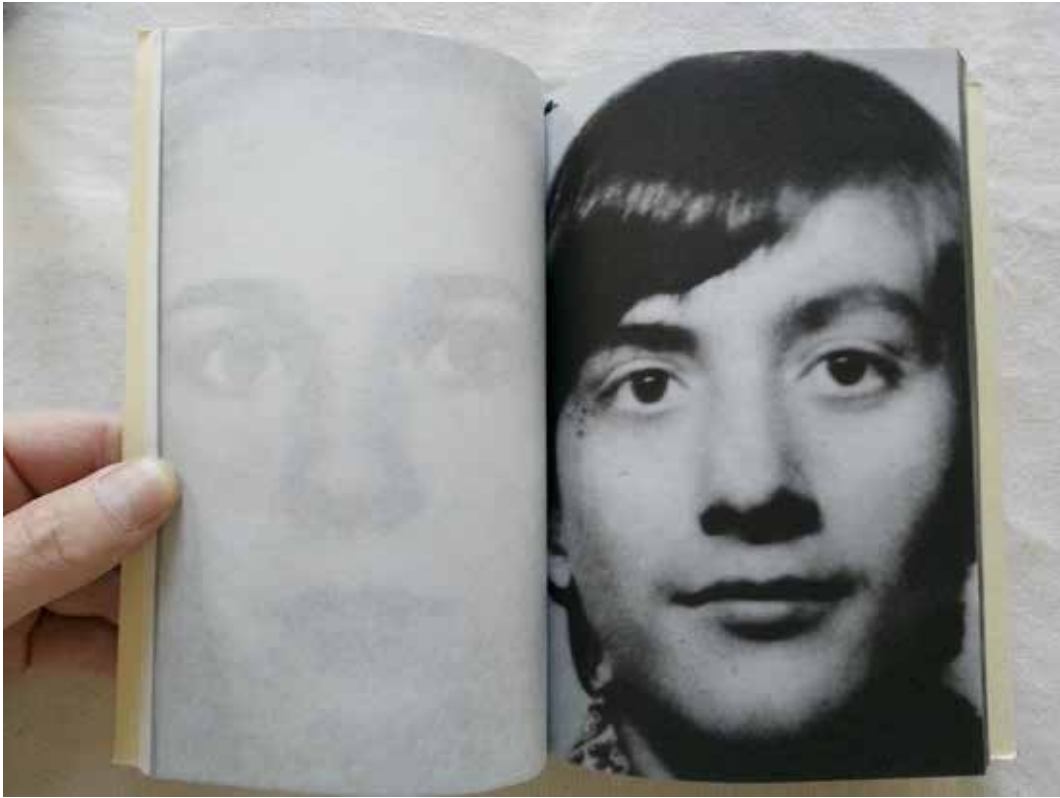
Tom Wood and Mark Durden *Biscuit Tin Archive* (2014)

Origin stories are told of a past which is not repeatable but reportable, in narratives which spiral backwards and inwards into the interior of a life.

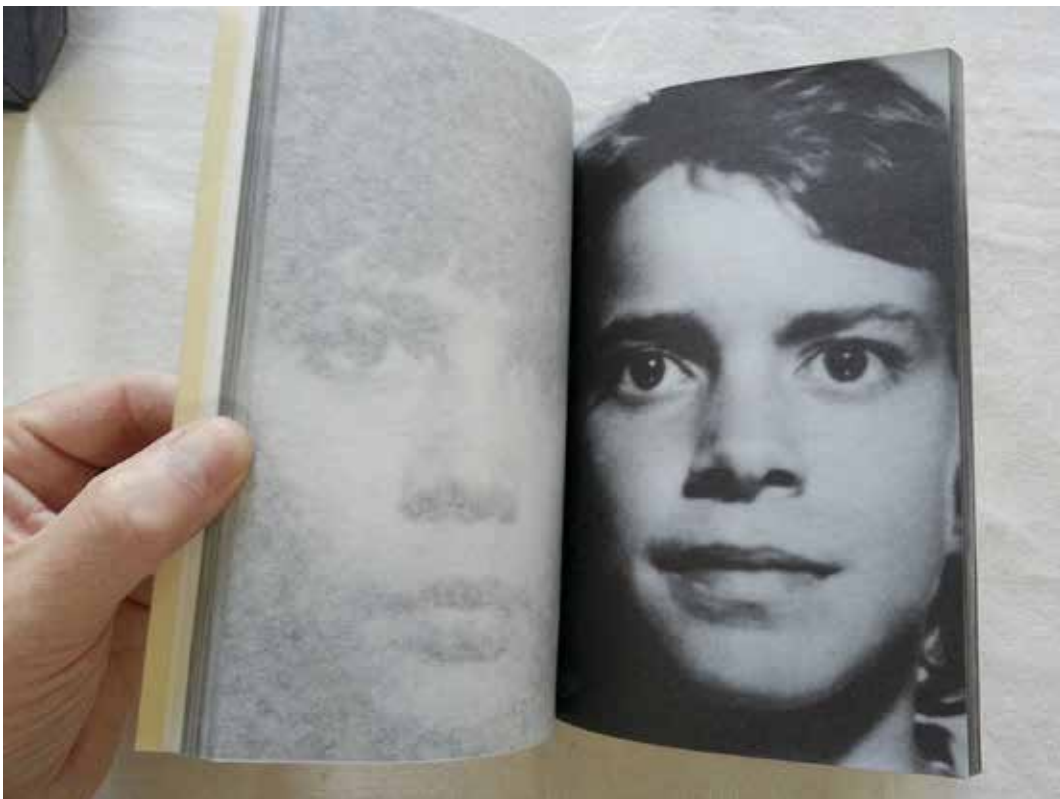
The act of collecting vernacular photography is also central to several critically acclaimed artists and photographers such as Joachim Schmid through his *Other People's Photographs* (2008-2011) series of ninety four print-on-demand books, titles including *Big Fish*, *Faces in Holes* and *Fridge Doors*, each gleaned by downloading digital files from photo-sharing and hosting websites. Schmid also created four books in the *Bilder von der Strasse I-IV* (1982-2012) or *Pictures from the Street*, series chronicling one thousand found vernacular photographic prints, made with deadpan reprography, as Schmid (2015: online) states with 'no artistic intervention'.

Recent interest in pre-digital era vernacular photography according to O'Hagan (2014: online) is 'a reaction to the ongoing tidal wave of digital images posted online.' Such vernacular photographs and photographic prints are celebrated through publication by KesselsKramer Publishing, in serial publications such as *Useful Photography 13* which publisher KesselsKramer (2015: online) describes as a 'magazine that shines the spotlight on overlooked and underwhelming images taken for practical purposes.' KesselsKramer's *Bangkok Beauties* (2008) also explores the paratextual element of the reverse side of the photographic print, the side that's never usually reproduced, but in *Bangkok Beauties*, is printed on the verso of each recto page – allowing us to see both the front and back of the photographic print on either side of the printed page. Scrutiny of the flipside of photographic prints was also the core concept of Mohini Chandra's *Album Pacifica* (2001), which printed the rear side only of the album of her dispersed family, showing the traces and marks of physical interaction and handling.

As Edwards (2005: 13) suggests, 'Like relics, photographs are a bearer of memory... becom[ing] treasured, linking objects to traces of the past.' This indexical, evidential function still present in vernacular imagery has a provenance in photography's early role as document. The reproduction of family photography as a strategy for community engagement occurred alongside photographer Tom Wood's Landscape exhibition at Oriel Mostyn in 2014. *The Biscuit Tin Photo Archive* project scanned, printed and displayed unique family images that were submitted by local participants.



Christian Boltanski from *Monuments* (1986)



Christian Boltanski from *Monuments* (1986)

## F. Methodology

### Practice as research methodology

My research will combine two interconnected elements: developing a practice that explores the materiality of the photographic print and its reprography in the book form, alongside the handling of books made by artists and photographers in my sub-field. The overall aim is to develop a body of research, which demonstrates, as Nelson (2006: 108) advocates, 'theory imbricated within practice.'

To provide a theoretical underpinning to my practice, I will use an established practice as research model constructed out of Schon's (1984) notions of the reflective practitioner, Gray & Pirie's (1995) reflection on practice as a research method and finally Gray & Malins' (2004) methodology of applied experimentation. During my practice trials, I anticipate reflecting on the construction of material and theoretical tests, dummy books and finished pieces, undertaking practice as research activity, described by Scrivener (2002: 12) as 'In the context of making art I would define research as original creation undertaken in order to generate novel apprehension.'

My practice will incorporate both technical research exploring the combinations of materials and processes, responding to handling works made by others and making a positive use of serendipity. As Archer (1995: 11) observed,

There are circumstances where the best or only way to shed light on a proposition, a principle, a material, a process or a function is to attempt to construct something, or to enact something, calculated to explore, embody or test it.

The nature of my practice and the field within which it sits calls for a qualitative research methodology that is constructed from no single theoretical framework. To enrich and inform my practice, I will also explore how the handling of key books can inform my research. Whilst the interpretation, reading and decoding of photographic images can be facilitated by visual semiotics, their iteration within books demands additional theoretical analysis tools from the field of literature and material culture. Adapting Gerard Genette's (1982) structuralist framework, I will explore the paratextual relationships found within artists' books, identifying the links between image, text, materiality and reprography and the world external to the book and how this impacts on our reception of the work. This combination of literary theory and visual

semiotics will explore the functional operation of the artists' book. To unpick the material presence and potential of the book form, I will draw upon the notions of haptic, anti-ocular reception developed by Classen (2012), Edwards (2004), Batchen (2004) and the discourse on souvenirs and collecting developed by Pearce (1995).

#### Handling as research method

The physician Oliver Sacks (in Mitchell 2005: 402) described the physiological nature of seeing when helping to restore sight to a previously blind patient. Sacks observed that 'natural vision itself is a braiding and nesting of the optical and the tactile.' Handling as a method for engaging with art is found within the discourses of material culture and museology, but not within artists' books or small press publishing. Candlin (2010) observed diminishing opportunities to touch art in museums, so knowing by handling is nowadays practiced by only those who are part of art practice networks. The prohibition of knowing touch in museums, art galleries and even displays of artists' books within vitrines, disables a full reception of the work and as such, handling forms an essential focus of my research.

Touch for Herbert Read (1956) provided an enhanced way of understanding sculpture. Read suggested that compared to vision, handling could reveal three additional elements: a sensation of tactile surface qualities; a sensation of volume and thirdly, a synthetic realization of the mass of the object. While the first two are self-explanatory, Read's third suggestion is pertinent to my research as it describes the sensation of handling the object as a whole, like a souvenir, a wallet photograph or a netsuke. In this light, I assert that handling books provides a type of tacit knowledge that is unavailable from viewing alone and will enrich my practice by suggesting materials, forms and strategies that will invite touch.

Sennett (2008) too suggests that we have a material consciousness that extends beyond the purely visual. He suggests that we become interested in the material things we can change and that we notice in three ways: by metamorphosis – the change in the procedure of materials' use; presence – where we acknowledge the leaving of a maker's mark and anthropomorphosis – where we impute human qualities to raw materials. In light of this, Mitchell (2005: 397) suggests there is a conscious, nonvisual understanding when looking at works that embody touch, such as painting, which is 'a handmade object, a trace of manual production..where impasto and the materiality of paint is emphasized', but much less so 'when a smooth surface and clear transparent forms produce the miraculous effect of rendering the painter's

manual activity invisible.'

I assert that a similar absence of traces of manual production in photographic prints suggests an absence of manual intervention when nothing could be further from the truth. Reinstating touch as an essential part of experiencing the photographic print, as practiced when examining portfolios of prints will enable me to test principles and practices from different fields in the development of new work.

Moving beyond the book as object, the terrain of artist publishing is a complex social activity, so it would be unwise to view artist published works in isolation, or separated from the cultural institutions and networks that support them. Underpinning my research in this field will be discourse analysis methodology described as De Beaugrande (2012:129) as,

a discourse is not static, idealized, or totalized unity of words and significances but a dynamic field of interests, engagements, tensions, conflicts and contradictions.

As Foucault (in Rose 2001: 157) suggests, the challenge for the researcher examining established modes is that they,

must be held in suspense. They must not be rejected definitively, of course, but the tranquility with which they are accepted must be disturbed; we must show that they do not come about by themselves, but they are always the result of a construction the rules of which must be known and the justifications of which must be scrutinized.

Many of the assumptions surrounding artist publishing are embedded in the socio-political ideology of western capitalism, where notions are received rather than questioned and many of these are descended from distant practices and prejudices connected to the business of publishing and the art market. Rose (2001: 194) observed that Foucault's analysis of how such power systems established their own discourse, was by his

empirical accounts of particular texts and institutions, often focusing on their details, their casual assumptions, their everyday mundane routines, their taken-for-granted architecture.

Rose (2001:150) also suggests that the benefit of using discourse analysis is that,

it allows us to focus on the production of meanings and things and the first step in this interpretive process is to try to forget all preconceptions you might have about the materials you are working with. Read them and look at them with fresh eyes.

In light of this, my research seeks to re-examine elements of the codex book form that have been existence for over five hundred years. These include but are not limited to text/image combinations, the materiality of the reading surface, the linear narrative of the codex form, the syntax of the reprographic method and the paratextual landscape of packaging, distribution and commentary. Regarding the paratextual, Rose (2001:165) observes the benefits of employing a wide ranging critical scrutiny of discourse analysis as it

involves reading for what is not seen or said. Absences can be as productive as explicit naming; invisibility can have just as powerful effects as visibility.

During the last fifty years of artist publishing, considerable interconnectedness has arisen from the use and re-use of technological media and the use and re-use of book modalities. This in turn has led to a form of reader reception that is largely focused on the immediate, present object in hand rather than a more complex conception of the work and how it sits astride different fields. Rose (2001:191) suggested that we should make space for precedents, co-existing works and other peripheral information, building an awareness of intertextuality into our comprehension, stating that

the meanings of any one discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image, but also on the meanings carried by other images and texts.

Whilst the benefits of employing discourse analysis will be useful in my study, it would be too narrow to use as a single methodology. Tonkiss (in Rose 2001: 160) observed 'it would therefore be inconsistent to contend that the analyst's own discourse was itself wholly objective, factual or generally true.' As Carrion (1975:6) also observed,

In the old art, just as the author's intention is ultimately unfathomable and the sense of his words indefinable, so the understanding of the reader is unquantifiable. In the new art the reading itself proves that the reader understands.

Whilst structuralist theory provides us with much intricate, intertextual interpretation, its major flaw is that it assumes the content alone determines how the reader will react. Picking and unpicking the material components of an artist's book will not provide my research with information on how readers respond to materiality. Holub (1984: 84) acknowledged the role of the reader in this process, as 'The literary work is neither completely text nor completely the subjectivity of the reader, but a combination or merger of the two.'

To address this further, I will explore three key notions within reception theory: Iser's (1978) implied reader and wandering viewpoint and Jauss' (1967) horizon of expectations, to explore reader response through exhibitions and displays of my work and other artist's books.

Collectively, I anticipate the resulting information from these different qualitative methodologies to create what Levi-Strauss (1966) identified as a bricolage, leading Denzin and Lincoln (2003:3) to identify the researcher as a bricoleur who creates

a pieced-together, close-knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation. The solution (bricolage) which is the result of the bricoleur's method is an [emergent] construction.

Semiotic reading and the artist's book

Our encounter with the artist's book form has a greater connection to reading, shaped in turn by our expectations of received literary genres, than any visual art experience. McCaffrey (1992:17) suggests we have two kinds of response to a book:

The physical experience of print as word and ink and the book itself as a physical object [plus] the psychological and psychosemantic experience of operating verbal signs.



Young (in Rothenburg 1999:45) suggests that,

the physical act of reading stimulates both inner speech and sight. Text in books act as a surrogate for oral activity and both acts of notation and reading are essentially performative. Reading is fast becoming separated from its physical origins.

Reading, as Young (in Rothenberg 1994:41) suggests, has become 'a dreary, acquisition of data'. With the prevalence of mass-market titles, where content matters more than form, the book as a physical entity has become a secondary carrier rather than a primary object (Cotter in Rothenberg 1999). Yet the sequential deployment of images in a book delivers a more complex message than any individual, indexical print had managed up to that point. Bal (in Coulter-Smith 2000:15) identifies photographs as 'narrative agents...construct(ing) a story of a cultural past that matters in a cultural present.' While the term narrative is impossible to pin down, reading a sequence of images and text in the book is an unpredictable experience, more similar to the cumulative resonance of a film's montage sequence. Barthes (1978) suggested we interpret text and image (on the same page) separately, only understanding their collaboration after exhausting the study of each structure. Artists' books evidence different collaborations between text and image, sometimes recessive and dominant or complementary partners. In early illuminated manuscripts and books, images served a secondary role elucidating the primary text. In many photo text hybrid forms, the reverse is now true: text loads the image with secondary meaning, operating as Barthes (in Sontag 2000: 204) 'a parasitic message designed to connote the image, to 'quicken... second order signifieds.'

Literary theory and reading the artist's book

I will adapt Gerard Genette's (1987) key concept of the paratext to contribute to my book handling research. First posited by Kristeva (in Kummerling-Meibauer 2014: 440-441) as a structuralist tool, suggesting that,

all texts (literary, musical or visual) are built like a mosaic of intertextual references and one needs an extensive cultural knowledge in order to interpret each one of its nuances,

Genette's later enlargement of the concept defined two fundamental locations for paratextual elements: the peritext, consisting of material components found within

the physical book and epitext, describing supplementary information that exists outside the book e.g. in the social space. Since Genette's theory was published, the exponential rise of virtual media makes an analysis of epitextual elements even more valid. With the equally dramatic rise of short-run self-publishing and distribution, peritextual experimentation has led to a celebration of materiality and a rejection of mass market homogeneity. In *Palimpsests* (1982), Genette developed the notion that many texts evoke other texts in their interpretation, linking to prior works in a hypertextual relationship. Genette's concept of literature in the second degree, essentially how parodies are to be read in conjunction with their sources, can be mapped onto the relationship that exists between the book and the original artwork and also the reprographic practice of transforming images into different forms and variants. Although Genette's concepts of hypertextuality were developed to explore literary forms, he suggested his theoretical tools could also be applied to visual arts, or in his words 'hyperartistic' or 'hyperesthetics.' Since Genette, literary theorists have sought to extend the range of this concept, including Amo (in Kummerling-Meibauer 2014:75) who suggested 'five possible [types of] connections: hypertextuality, architextuality, metatextuality, paratextuality and intertextuality, and Guerrero (in Kummerling-Meibauer 2014:130) who suggested a more interdisciplinary approach, saying

the reader activates all his interpretative ability together with his knowledge, but we do not refer to literary knowledge alone, we also refer to knowledge of other artistic codes such as painting, music and sculpture.

I will also seek to build upon Genette's structural definitions to include inter pictorial discourse which can help to interrogate material elements of the book. Inter pictorial research is less concerned with cataloguing references implied in one artwork to another, but in the reasons that lie behind them. It assumes that imitation, variation, quotation, allusion and parody are part of an artistic strategy, and that, as a result, references to other works of art bear meaning (Kummerling-Meibauer, 2014). It is in this respect that I will employ elements of inter pictorial discourse in the reading and material handling of books. As Beckett (2013: 47) suggested that the wordless, image-free, material based books of Bruno Munari in his *Libro illeggibile* (1949) project were intended to discover if it is possible to 'communicate visually and tacti-ley' using only 'the materials from which a book is made.'



Eric Tabuchi *Alphabet Truck* (2009) on display at CDLA

## G. Practice

### Introduction

My practice is the production of artist's books containing printed photographs that invite touch.

### Description of practice activity

During my research I have engaged in three different types of activity: making practice, handling books, and finally, disseminating my research and practice in progress. Implicit within these activities is experimentation, observation, conversation and self-reflection.

#### 1. Making practice

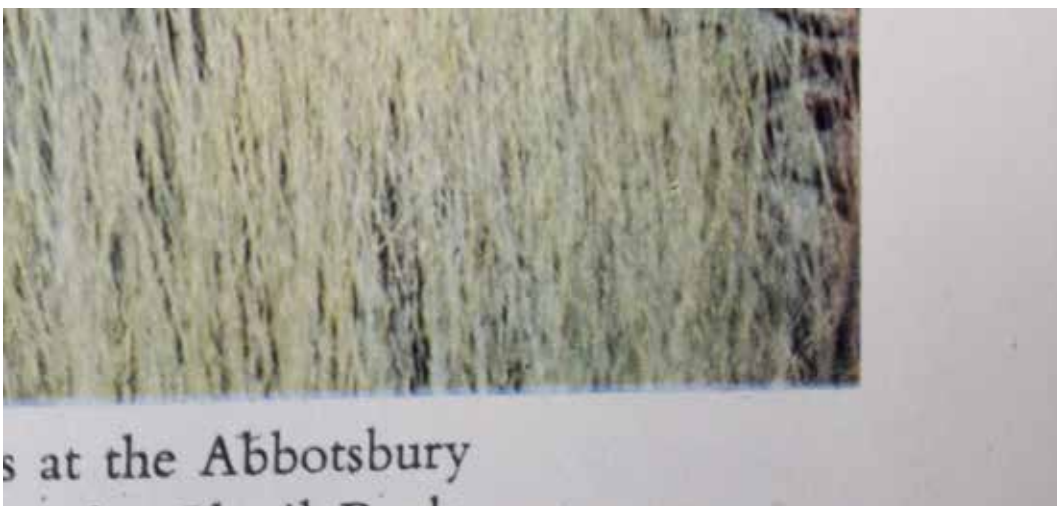
Making work enables me to test the materiality of the printed photograph and its reprography in a variety of book forms. The research work, or practice pieces are divided into three different types: material tests, dummy books and final books. Material tests are made to trial a specific method of reprography, component or book construction or to explore an abstract notion such as 'the ideal copy' or 'the copy and the original.' Dummy books were the next level of practice output, where earlier material tests can be tested in a more focussed state. Dummy books are also made to explore how the physical book form alters the handling and reception of the works. Final books, which draw together previous tests, are much fewer and typically the outcome of a specific documentary project with my own images, working with archive material or a combination of the two. In addition to making practice, I also run digital printing workshops for photographers at The PrintSpace, a leading photography lab in London, which enables me to have first hand experience with a wide range of materials and processes that lay outside conventional self-publishing. In my role as Senior Lecturer in Photography at the University of Chester, I also work with student photographer groups, agenda setting projects that explore the book form and the rematerialisation of archive images.

#### 2. Handling books to inform practice

A thorough reading and reception of a physical book can only be undertaken by handling the object itself, as Hayles (2002:75) suggests, as it provides 'the feedback loop from materiality to mind.' In addition to directly informing my practice, I assert that handling books can also generate an additional way of contextualising works that lies outside existing fields of reference. The rationale for my reflective commen-



Detail of colour printing from *About Britain* (1951)



Detail of misregistration from *About Britain* (1951)

tary on a selection of book handling is to demonstrate how each has impacted on my developing practice. It is through the examination of these titles at close quarters that has provided me with insights and ideas that have fed directly into material tests and practice pieces. My handling activities include field research at the National Art Library and the Print Room at the V&A; the Centre des Livres d'Artistes (CDLA) in St Yrieix-la-Perche, the Special Collections at MMU and the Artists' Book Collection at the University of the West of England and the private reading and handling of books that have emerged through my project. I also engaged with practitioners such as Tom Wood, Ben Freeman from Ditto Press, Craig Atkinson from Café Royal Books, Adam Murray from Preston is my Paris/ Tent, Emmanuelle Waeckerle from bookRoom at UCA and Gunter Karl Bose from the Institut fur Buchkunst in Leipzig, which gave me a deeper insight into their work and practices.

### 3. Disseminating my work

Testing my research with an audience took several forms: the exhibition of my books, book handling events, reader reception event, conference contributions and the publication of preliminary research findings. In my academic role, I also organised two exhibitions of artist's books for pedagogical displays at the University of Chester, and have exhibited my own practice three times, each event feeding back into my understanding of how the work is received.

Practice narrative

#### **1. Book handling: *About Britain* series. October 2009**

Rationale: My research project started by looking at how photographic images were reproduced in the functional book form. My reason for examining the *About Britain* series was sparked by their use of early colour printing which created nuanced photographic illustrations full of registration errors and mistakes. Published in 1951 for the Festival of Britain Office by Collins, the thirteen *About Britain* books were made for the emerging tourism market with colour reprography by Sun Printers Ltd., Watford, who as Greenhill (2005) suggests were pioneers in colour printing using rotary gravure, a high speed intaglio process.

Insight: Nuances found within early photo-reprography create unique variations within a large print run. When different process colours are printed, paper mis-registration or under-inking can occur, resulting in slivers of pure colour revealing



Detail of misregistration from Hamish Fulton's (1974) *Hamish Fulton*

themselves at the edges of the printed image. In my copies of these books which contain misregistered images, they trigger what Boym (2001:9) describes as reflective nostalgia, concerned with

the irrevocability of the past...and not on the recovery of what is perceived to be an absolute truth, but on the mediation on history and passage of time.

These by-products of early colour printing have made me consider that an edition need not be an identical, homogenous set, but one that can carry some element of deliberate variation within it. The unique qualities of early colour gravure provide identifiable, nostalgic reprography.

Conclusion: It is possible to create an edition with deliberate variation within it.

## **2. Practice piece: Misregistered print tests. November 2009**

Rationale: To explore methods of replicating the misregistration of colour printing seen in *About Britain* books, using photographic printing techniques.

Process: Mimicking the four ink passes of a printing press is simple to achieve using a home inkjet printer, switching on one of the image's four CMYK colour channels each time. The same sheet of paper is fed through the printer four times, which made some misregistration visible, but not as much as expected. This suggested an alternative method: to physically move each colour channel in the digital file to create a precise albeit identical misregistration, which could then be printed in a single pass. These misregistered channel files were sent to a photolab to be output as c-type prints.

Insight: The overlapping colours create an unusual end result, which triggers a hypertextual link to both mass book printing, but also to vernacular photo post-cards. This kind of print can be inserted as a tipped-in element to a future project. Books that have been nuanced by imprecise printing include the CDLA's own copy of Hamish Fulton's (1974) *Hamish Fulton*, which contains unplanned moiré and registration slippage, inadvertently forefronting the printing process in the photographic illustrations.



# SYMPHONIE DE PSAUMES

Igor Stravinsky

1

Trumpets 1-4

**Warming Down**

When you put on the brake the intention is to stop quickly but if you lock up the wheel you will skid and have very little control and it may take even longer to stop

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New version copyright 1988 by Bote & Schirmer, Inc., New York, U.S.A.  
Revised version - New version 1988.  
All rights of reproduction in any form reserved.

B. & S. 1919  
Printed in England

Stephen Gill *Warming Down* (2008)

Conclusion: The nuances of photo-mechanical printing have an identifiable visual syntax built upon machine misregistration and human error.

### **3. Book handling: Stephen Gill - *Warming Down*. (2008) Jan 2009**

Rationale: Gill's book alerted me to the potential of using a reprographic method that is linked to photographic rather than lithographic printing. In *Warming Down*, c-type photographic prints were tipped in, rather than photo-mechanical prints which is the usual practice when distributing photographic images in the book form.

Insight: My first practice book project was prompted by handling Stephen Gill's *Warming Down* (2008) an altered book created by his small press Nobody Books. Gill used musical score books as the source, interspersed with real photographic prints, stuck-in plant matter and sun damaged pages. Gill's source books were retrieved as a job lot from a Hackney junk shop and had a previous life as school texts. This fixed quantity determined the size of the edition as 130. The book also opportunistically uses empty space on the already printed pages to introduce new information – via print created in lots of hand-effected processes: using bike tyres, footwear prints and letterpress. The book also contains scribbles by an unknown hand – either the previous schoolchildren or by Gill himself. Pressed flowers and interleaved photographic prints also create a hypertextual link to a vernacular illustrated diary – a private journal with physical souvenirs and keepsakes. As Campany (2003:online) suggests,

At their most similar collecting and photography entail accumulation, a faith in the object, but also an understanding that accumulation, collecting, is a fundamentally transformative process.

While the presence of ephemera and other retrieved material triggers a kind of material response linked to souvenirs, there is also the potential for photographic prints to do the same.

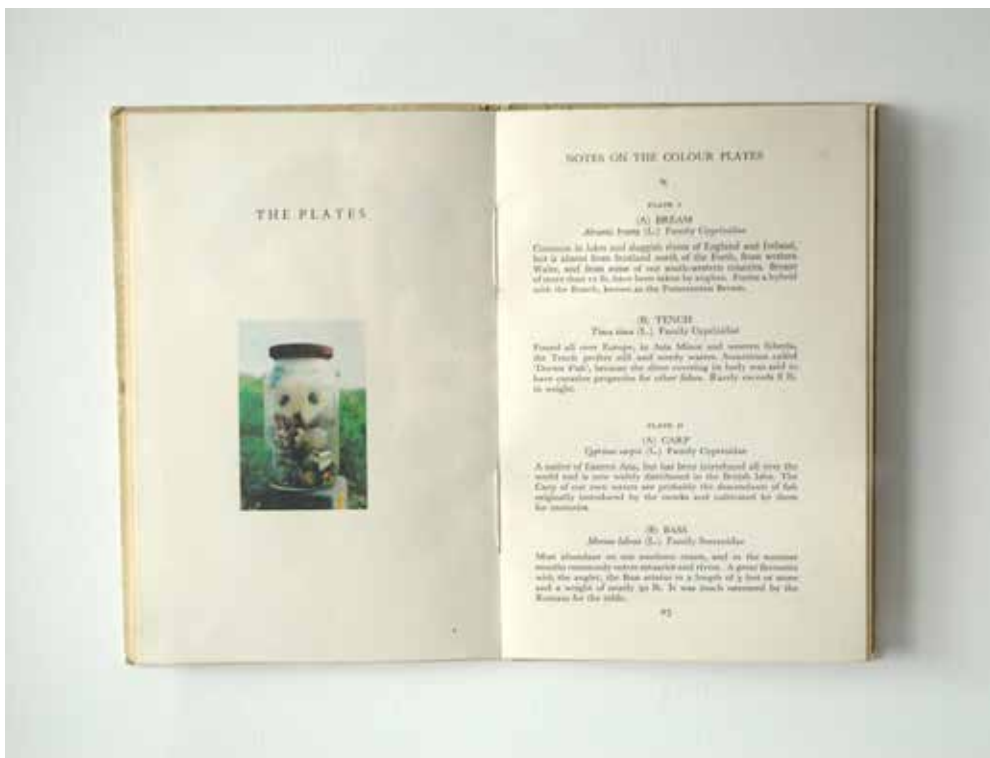
Conclusion: Physical photographic prints within books can create hypertextual allusions to vernacular sources such as journals and diaries.

### **4. Practice piece: *New Pocket Knowledge*. Feb 2009**

*Inkjet on altered King Penguin book. 30x25 cm. Set of six*



Practice piece *New Pocket Knowledge*. Feb 2009



Practice piece *New Pocket Knowledge*. Feb 2009

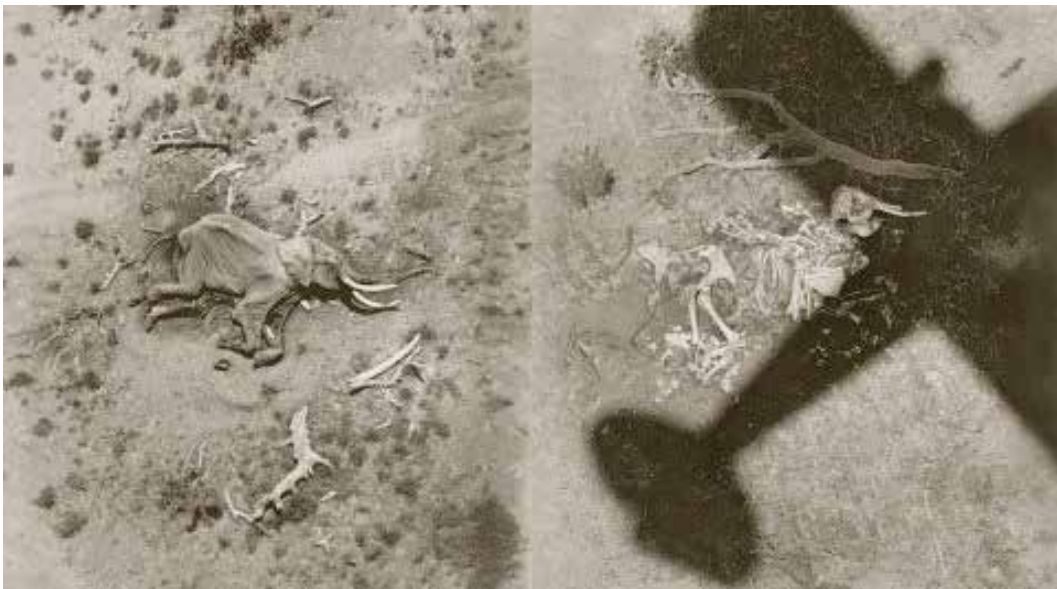
Rationale: Using Stephen Gill's altered book, *Warming Down*, as a starting point, these practice pieces explore the materiality of aged pulp paper books and overprinting with a desktop inkjet printer.

Process: My source books are taken from the Insel-Verlag series, a pre-war German precursor of the King Penguin series. Printed on pulp paper in the 1930's, the books have now acquired a material transformation and patina through exposure to light, repeated handling and foxing which such a book suffers from if stored in poor conditions. Transformed, the books now have an altered state that contains not only their original content, but their individual journey to this date. This patination of the paper provides me with an opportunity to print my images into empty spaces and explore how new and existing elements could cohabit. Individual pages were torn from the original books, printed on then stuck back in. Printing onto cream pulp paper requires a very different approach as the colours of pigment inkjet inks were too subtle to gain a visible presence on the porous, uncoated pulp paper. A more successful response was achieved using a domestic CMYK inkjet printer, by nature producing cruder, more vivid colours. Six pieces were completed, which were then placed in box frames with one permanent spread on display.

Insight: The presence of the image on the pre-printed page allows the transparency of the inkjet ink to seep into its paper support rather than sit on top, seemingly merged with the original content. Combining new and existing content creates a visually interesting end result, as Bergson (1912:320) observed, the past 'might act and will act by inserting itself into a present sensation from which it borrows the vitality.' Home inkjet printing as a reprographic method for artist's books has emerged in recent practitioners such as Alec Soth's Little Brown Mushroom publishing outfit, creating titles such as *Las Vegas Birthday Book* (2010), albeit as tipped-in inkjets. This do-it-yourself inkjet technology has also drawn the mail and networked art inspired artists making zine-like publications such as Paul Edwards' Ouphopo coalition (1995 - present). Inkjet has a vernacular association when used in this context, but a different association when the same technology is used in the production of gallery editions, often described as 'giclee' prints. A less satisfactory outcome of this test was the framing of the final pieces, fixed on one double page spread. While this does permit an optical reading of the work, it effectively turns the book into an object and prevents it from being scrutinised by handling. This unplanned denial of touch does exclude a haptic, material reading of the work.



Practice piece *New Pocket Knowledge*. Feb 2009



Peter Beard *End of the Game* (1965)

As Claessen (2012:137) suggests,

the elimination of touch in the museum can be linked to the growing desire in the mid-nineteenth century to elevate objects to the status of treasures and masterpieces to be encountered by a deferential public, to preserve these in permanent stasis and perhaps most troubling of all, to strip touch of its cognitive and aesthetic value.

An open display of work therefore, needs to be further considered. The use of poor quality pulp paper as a printing surface is emerging as a potential material for use in my books. More commonly used as book text paper in the printing of paperbacks, it has little or no connection with photographic printing and as such, provides a positively disruptive element to the work.

Conclusion: Pulp paper has the potential to be a very significant material for my practice, as it falls outside our usual horizon of expectations.

Conclusion: An optical-only display prevents a haptic engagement with the book.

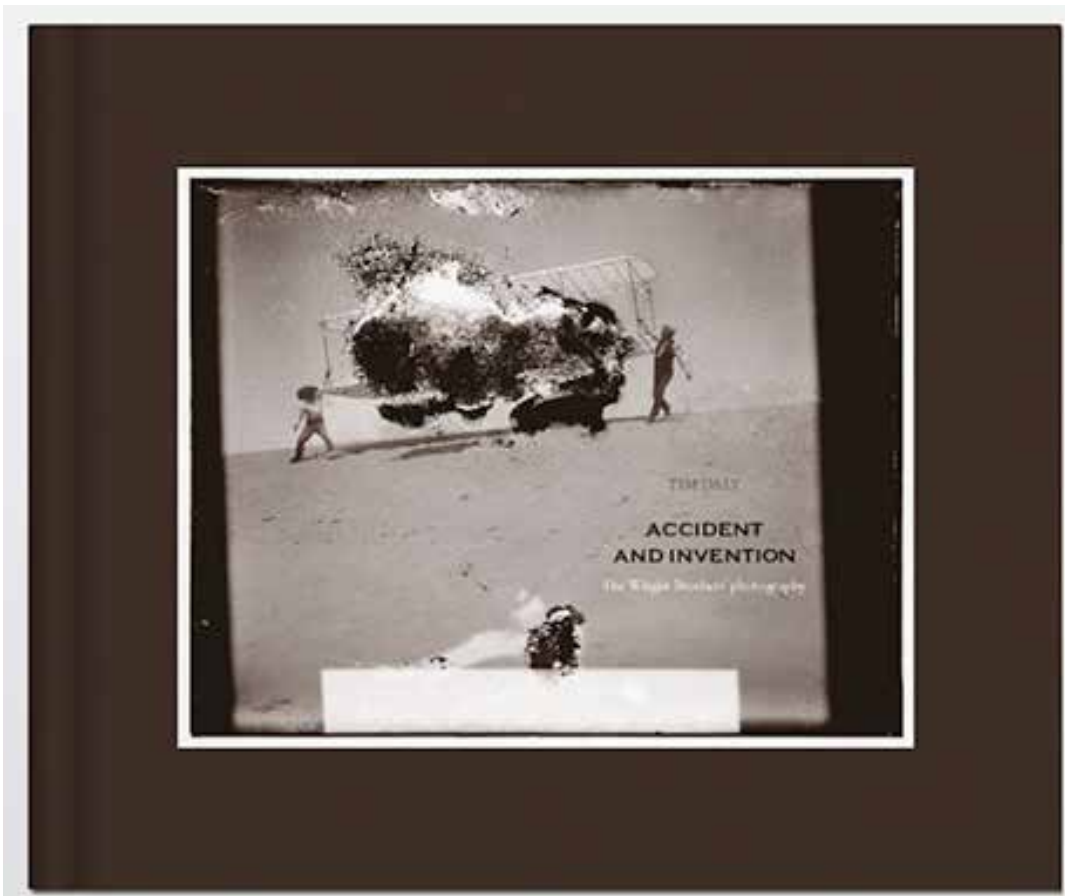
##### **5. Book handling: Peter Beard's *End of the Game* (1965, this edition 2008) and Kiyoshi Suzuki/ Nordelicht *Soul and Soul* (2008)**

Rationale: Facsimile books attempt to re-install the 'thingness' of an object, employing print production techniques to celebrate the aura of a unique book in a mass produced form. Does the facsimile form offer the promise of an enhanced haptic experience or does it illustrate Baudrillard's (1981) postmodern triumph of the visual and the dominance of the simulacrum over what it purports to represent?

Insight: Beard's book, since republished in several different editions is interesting for its use of archive matter from hunting lodge diaries and trophy images. Beard's tactic of placing his own images and observations alongside those relics of a dying era, creates a parallel narrative from the fusion of modern and archive material. Beard mixes his own melancholic images with vernacular 'trophy' photographs and diary entries from previous eras. He mostly employs the same technique for the reproduction of older material, excising and placing on the new clean pages, disembodied from their original album or journal containers. Yet the book offers no material or reprographic disruption to our expectations. More interestingly, Beard occasionally



Kiyoshi Suzuki/ *Nordelicht Soul and Soul* (2008)



Practice piece *Accident and Invention: The Wright Brothers' photography* (2010)

rephotographs archive material showing his own fingers touching the albums and prints. As Stewart (1993:139) writing about salvage crafts suggests, the 'the metaphor of texture, the acute sensation of the object – its perception by hand taking precedence over its perception by eye.' Does the presence of Beard's hands add a layer of simulation to the piece? Beard's hands alert me to the possibility of including my own hands, indicating my own presence examining materials in archives, as an additional way of mediating and ultimately reproducing originals. Are the hands providing a surrogate scrutiny on our behalf?.

Insight: The posthumously published Kiyoshi Suzuki's *Soul and Soul*, unlike Taschen's 2008 version of Beard's *End of the Game*, is not a reprint of an earlier edition, but a facsimile of the photographers own book dummy. Suzuki's book is replete with fingermarks, rules, masking tape and various stains, not only showing the iterative journey taken by the artist in his career, but evidencing his and the dummy's physical journey too. Folded and crumpled in Suzuki's rear trouser pockets, the ruffled appearance of the book suggests that it was well travelled, much like a dog-eared vernacular photo album. Could it be argued that photography's innate reproducibility through digital data, mechanical print and monographs has now elevated the opposite: the unique print, the signs of hand, the vernacular oddity and the modern day naïve? Does our increasing interaction with the virtual world heighten our nostalgia for autographic artefacts? Is it only the materiality of analogue that delivers these 'lost' visual and tactile nuances?

Conclusion: Facsimiles of photographs and ephemera in books aim to re-install the 'thingness,' that is missing in a mechanically printed edition. Is there a hierarchy of facsimile forms ranged across different reprographic methods e.g. the photographic print, litho print. Is it possible to re-enact archive material rather than just simulate it's appearance?

**6. Practice piece: Accident and Invention: The Wright Brothers' photography (2010)** 30pp print-on-demand, softback 25x20cm

Rationale: To explore the reproduction of digital files created from highly textural and patinated negatives, both as prints for display and as an accompanying print-on-demand monograph.

Process: Of the 303 surviving glass plate negatives taken by Orvill and Wilbur Wright





Practice piece *Accident and Invention: The Wright Brothers' photography* (2010)

during the design and field-testing of their experimental aircraft, most have suffered accelerated aging with ripped and torn emulsion, scratches and watermarks. The Wright Brothers' images are in the public domain and freely available from the US Library of Congress as high-resolution digital files, yet no critical or theoretical interpretation of the works' unintended materiality exists. I was drawn to working with these images due to their tactile appearance, my book was made in response to seeing this work and was made at the same time as seeing the exhibition *China through the lens of John Thompson 1868-1872* (2010) on display at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. This showed large scale inkjet prints made from scans taken from Thompson's wet collodion negatives, which were similarly auratic and unavailable to handle as the Wright Brother's work.

Insight: The reproduction of the Wright Brother's work in both print and book form was my first attempt at reworking archive material into a new publication and it highlighted multiple issues. Firstly, does there need to be a link between the material of the original and the re-enactment? Inkjet prints that I made from the Wright Brothers' digital files have no surface texture of their own, but they do evidence the unique texture of the originals. The slickness of the print-on-demand book on the other hand, which I produced using Blurb, 'hid' the tactile elements of the work. For my future practice, this print-on-demand book identify the complexity of choosing materials when making and remaking archive work, whilst being wary of making a facsimile and engaging in a nostalgic exercise. As Nabokov (1990:185) suggests, nostalgics are 'epicures of duration' who take 'sensual delight in the texture of time not measurable by clocks and calendars.'

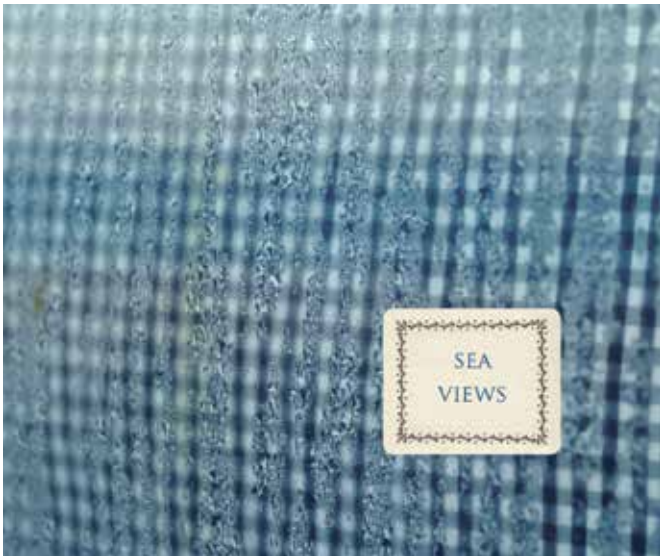
Conclusion: How does the reworking of archive materials avoid nostalgia or fall into facsimile reproduction?

## **7. Book handling: John Gossage (2010) *The Absolute Truth*. Kanagawa: Super Labo.**

Rationale: Print on demand books like the previous practice piece, together with the materiality of the digital press, has an emerging reprographic syntax. Blurb, Lulu and Apple's iBooks are reprographic services primarily aimed at amateur self-publishers, but are also used by artists such as Joachim Schmid and Stephen Shore to distance themselves from the craft of making books. The reprographic qualities of the digital press and the popularity for self-made photobooks is already emerging as a vernacu-



John Gossage *The Absolute Truth* (2010)



Practice piece *Sea Views* (2009)

lar medium. Shore (in Brayshaw 2006: 2) thinks of his print-on-demand books as working with vernacular materials too, stating,

these are the modern, digital photo album. Even though I spent years working with an 8 x10, still I'm fascinated by the everyday uses of the medium.

Insight: John Gossage's print-on-demand book *The Absolute Truth* (2010) evidences numerous visual and material paratexts. It's unclear whether the piece is facsimile of the artist's own personal journal, as both front and rear covers and inner title page are photographs of physical pages – or purely restating it's grounding in material things by showing an unexpected simulation of recycled paper surfaces, deliberate defacement and low contrast digital press reprography. Intentional or not, the visual appearance of the book is anchored in vernacular digital print on demand reprography, a relatively new phenomenon which appears to drain colour and contrast away from the images creating a curiously new nostalgic effect, like a bad print from a home inkjet printer. Across each page but starting and stopping at the edge of each image, is a hand drawn thin black line – simulated by the printing press rather than drawn in ink. The line functions to remind us of the surface of each page and superficially links all images together, albeit on different spreads, in a kind of scrawled daisy chain. The drawn line also makes occasional visual connections with linear elements within the images, such as a crack in the tarmac. Print-on-demand can be used effectively for its craft-free detachment, but, as seen in *The Absolute Truth*, it can also reflect on its own vernacular nature.

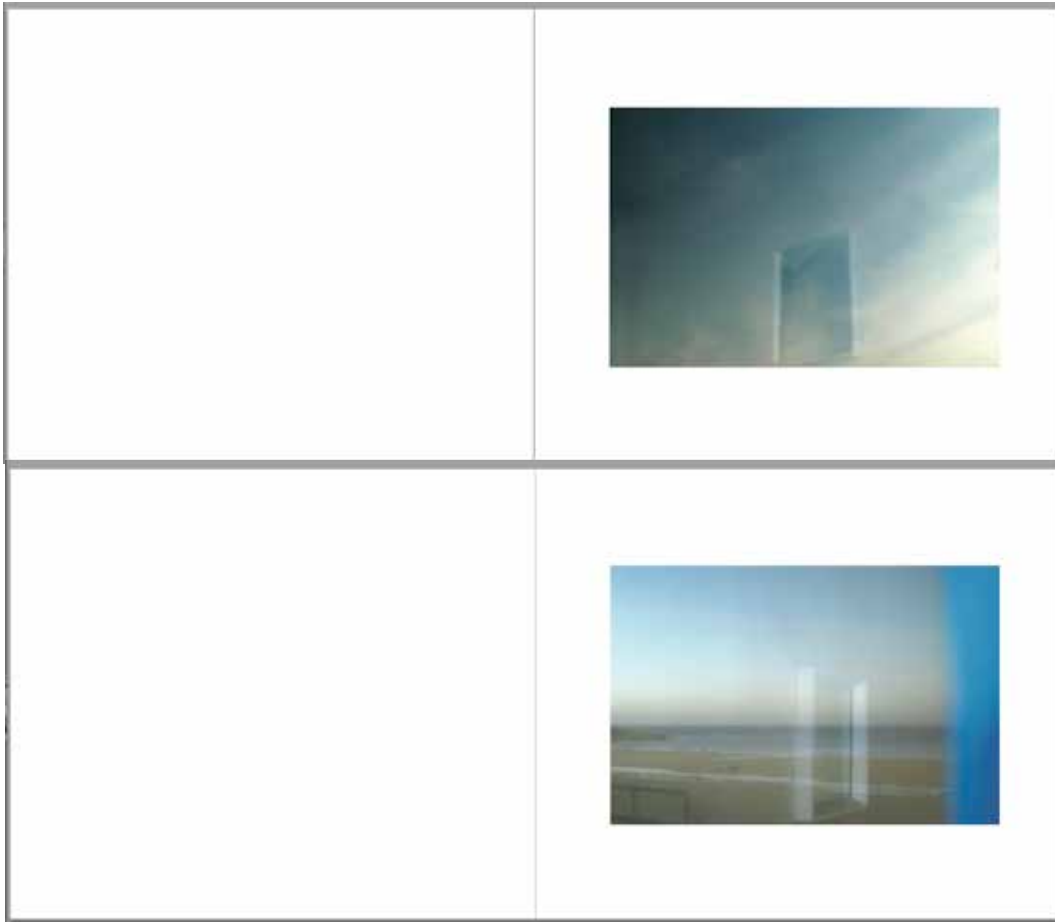
Conclusion: The reading of a book and the associations the reader makes are influenced by it's material constituents, which create intertextual (or intermaterial) links with other books and objects.

### **8. Practice Piece: Sea Views (2009)**

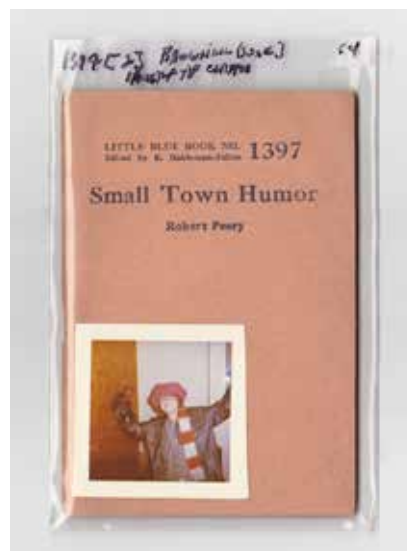
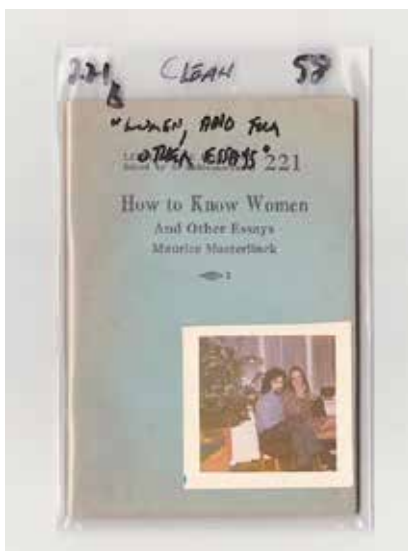
*Twenty pages, 20x30cm, print-on-demand. Unique book*

Rationale: This was a material test to explore the neutral craft-free materiality of a print-on-demand book as a book container for a conceptual project.

Process: The concept for the book was to document a sequence of windows of seaside chalets, each of which had a nuanced variation of the same sea view. Using



Practice piece *Sea Views* (2009)



Practice piece *Little Blue Books* (2010)

layout software and print-on-demand, the short-form work was made quickly.

Insight: On reflection, the codex form and print on demand reprography made a functional engagement with the concept, but contributed very little to a material engagement with the subject. The work suggests that narrative distance – the tactic the photographer adopts as mediator between the subject and reader, is not just limited to text and image content, but to materiality too. Strategies of narrative distance, described as embedded in Larry Clark's *Tulsa* (1971) and Bruce Davidson's *Brooklyn Gang* (1998), or as detached in Walker Evans' *Fortune* spread entitled *Along the Right of Way* (1950), evidence the physical distance the photographer keeps from the action and the transformative strategies in gathering and reordering a sequence. However, the choice of materials in the production of a book does contribute an additional intertextual element to the work. Whilst we may be conditioned to focus initially on a semiotic decoding of a book, Mitchell (1994:16) suggested, that our 'visual experience or visual literacy might not be fully explicable on the model of textuality.' How does the haptic transmission of material elements interact with our engagement of the work? While the codex form successfully orders and sequence a visual typological study, it is less flexible for exploring unconventional materials and print technologies that invite touch.

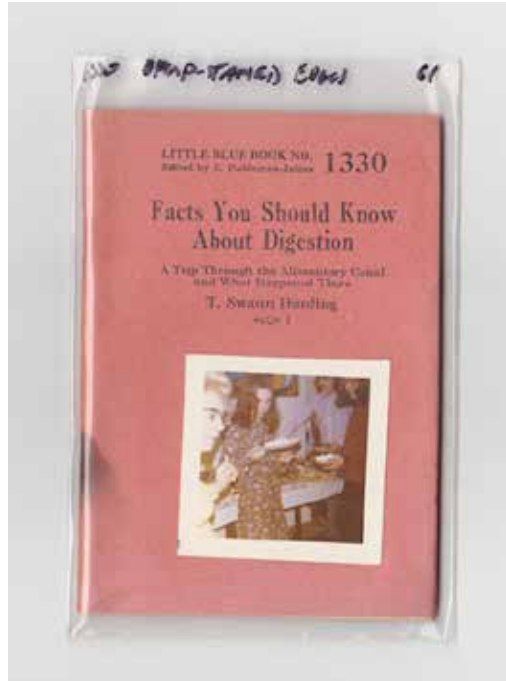
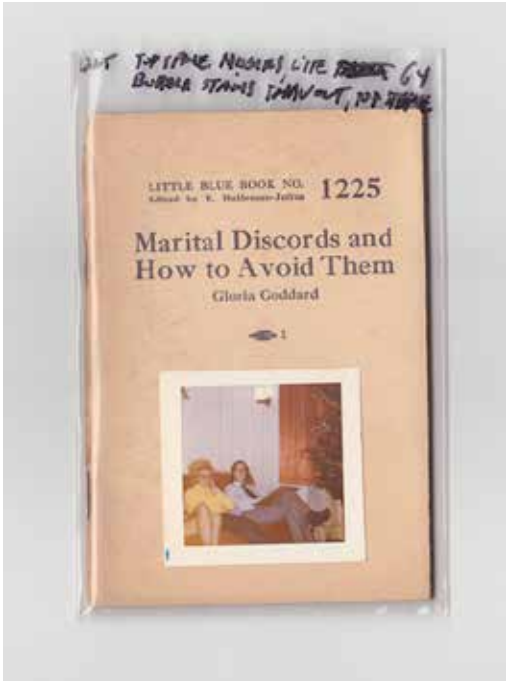
Conclusion: The material constituents of a book create their own hypertextual references separate from text & image, but the codex has limited scope for including multiple material constituents.

### **9. Practice piece: Little Blue Books (2010)**

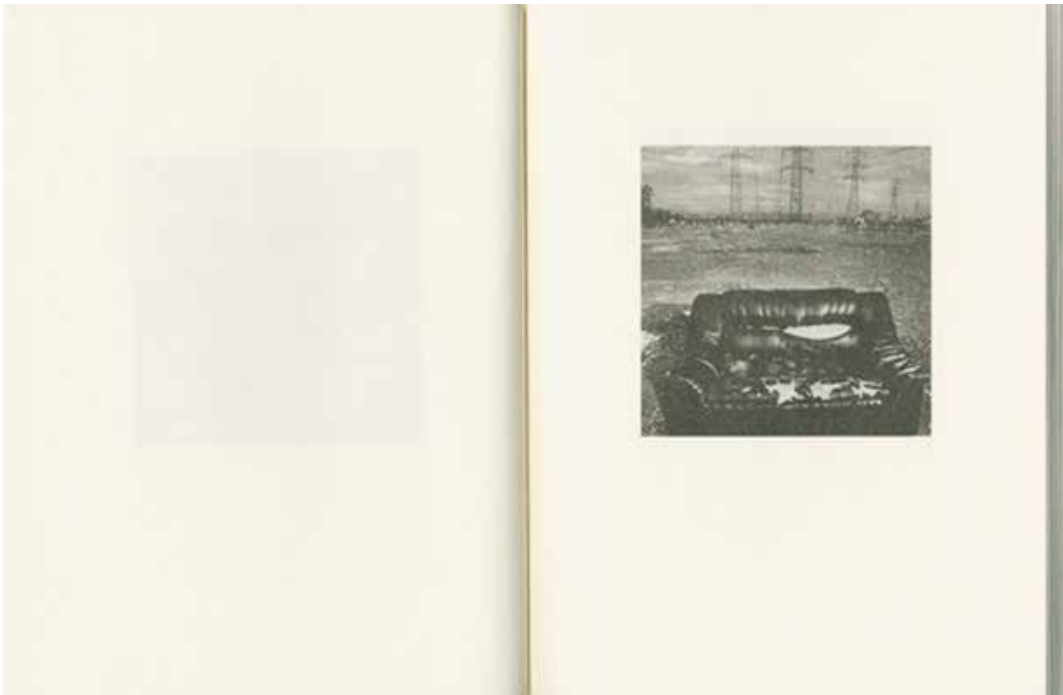
*Four family photographs and four original books inserted into polythene sleeves with hand written annotation.*

Rationale: This piece explores the re-use of vernacular photographs combined with ready-made mass-produced *Little Blue Books*.

Process: In this piece, I'm exploring the temporary arrangement of original archive material rather than a reproduction of it in a printed edition. These pieces make simple text/ image association on vernacular photographs and books with suggestive titles. The sleeves which the books were supplied in create a readymade container for my archive photographic prints and also include the handwritten notes of collector Scott Kamins, from whom the books were purchased. As an unintended



Practice piece *Little Blue Books* (2010)



Graciela Iturbide *Mexico Roma* (2011)

consequence of making this piece, the act of containing the book and print in a sleeve necessitated the reader to handle the work in a more dextrous, but unknowing way. The process of withdrawing the book from the sleeve and handling the print created a response that would be unavailable from a codex form book and has made me consider how unfamiliar and unexpected interaction impacts on the reading of the work.

Insight: The arrangement of actual rather than reproduced matter, its overlay with textual and autographic contributions from others, suggests a richer experience than provided by optical senses alone. Latour (in Harris 2003, 164-165) echoes the potential for such a rich mixture of material constituents, suggesting that they provide,

a challenging palimpsest of inscriptions, transactions, translations, and recruitments collaboratively combine to fabricate novel entities, hybrids or chimera born of the intermixture of nature and culture, society and matter.

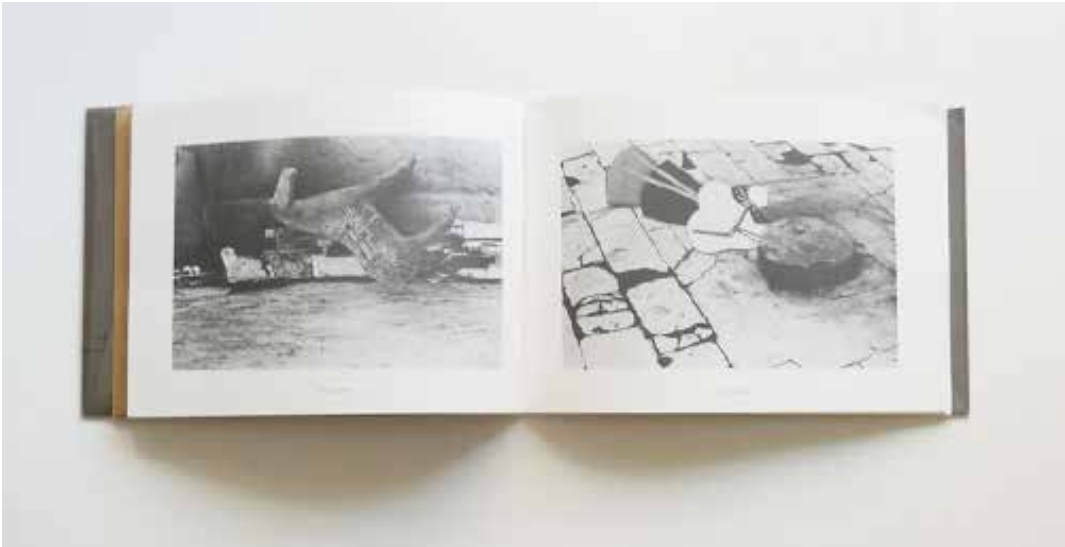
Conclusion: Readymade matter when added into a book project provides a direct hypertextual references to their origins, in addition to the voice of the focaliser/mediator. Requiring the reader to touch and navigate the work in an unexpected manner can also extend engagement.

**10. Book handling: Graciela Iturbide (2011) *Mexico Roma*, Mari Mahr (1989) *Isolated Incidents*.**

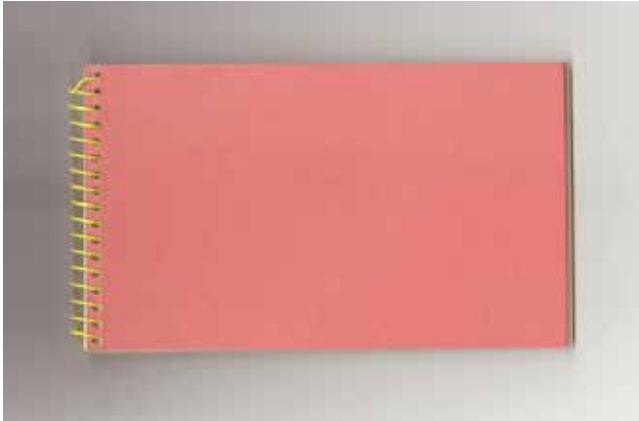
Insight: Both of these monographs were made using uncoated paper stock and lithography, an uncommon reprographic combination in books which usually seek to mimic the photographic print. In *Mexico Roma*, an unplanned reproduction of Iturbide's printed imagery occurs through faults in the low budget printing process, leading to a small edition of books which were effectively salvaged from a spoiled print run. Iturbide handwrites both front and rear cover gummed labels in ink, which are slightly raised in profile, adding an autographic and intermaterial link to the personal journal form. *Mexico Roma's* printed images lack the usual invisibility of ink and paper, instead they reveal the impact of sticky ink in contact with verso during the print finishing process.

Conclusion: When not wholly used to create an optical illusion on the page, the





Mari Mahr *Isolated Incidents* (1989)



Practice piece *Greenpoint Notebook* (2010)

material presence of both ink and paper can be forefronted to enhance the thingness of a book.

*Isolated Incidents* demonstrates an astute material awareness in the choice of an uncoated paper stock which closely mimics Mahr's original photographic printing paper. Never realising full black, instead simulating the original photographic prints, the book provides an unexpected visual and tactile experience through the use of recycled paper and a palette of muted grey, brown and black card covers.

Conclusion: An astute combination of ink and paper, the bare material essentials of litho reproduction, can create convincing simulations of some types of original photographic print.

### **11. Practice piece: Greenpoint Notebook (2010)**

*31pp inkjet on found notebook 9x14cm. Yellow spiral-bound pulp paper with an orange card cover.*

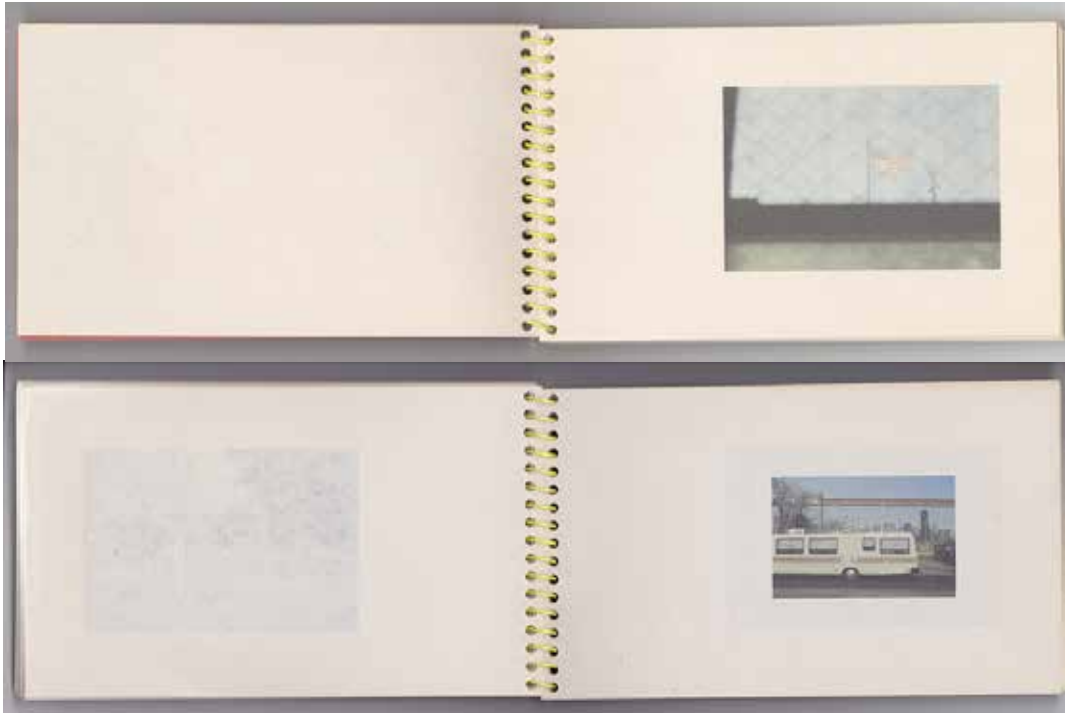
Rationale: This material test explored small scale pulp paper as a potential vehicle. The pocket-sized notebook was sourced during a 4-hr walk through the Greenpoint area of New York. The notebook was an ideal container to relay the sequencing of the drift – a spiral binding allowed me to unravel each pulp paper page, print on it, then rebind it in a near-identical state. A basic inkjet printer was used to reproduce one small image on each page.

Insight: The aged pulp paper created a visible carrier that contributed to the sensory experience of handling. While the materiality of the paper and inkjet holds promise for future work, the fixed sequencing determined by the ring binding sets the reader off in exactly the same journey each time, like a codex-form book, which is not what I aim to achieve. As Cotter (in Drucker 2004: xiv) suggests,

books in the codex form subjugate 'thingness' as their function is to deliver data and as mass market items, books as physical constructions are secondary rather than primary objects.

Conclusion: The codex, even when combined with experimental materials and reprography, is an unchallenging format and leading reader reception into familiarity.

Conclusion: The size of the printed page/ book/ object determines how we physi-



Practice piece *Greenpoint Notebook* (2010)



Dyanita Singh *Sent a Letter* (2009)

cally interact with the work. This pocket-sized piece creates intertextual associations with wallet photographs and personal keepsakes.

## **12. Book handling: Dyanita Singh's *Sent a Letter* (2009) and Stephen Gill's *A Series of Disappointments* (2008)**

Rationale: Dyanita Singh's *Sent a Letter* (2009) is a set of accordion fold books which can be unfolded on a table allowing the entire content to be viewed simultaneously and as a whole.

Insight: These books alerted me to the limitations of the codex form, where only a small proportion of content can be viewed at any one time, while most of the rest remains obscured by the current spread. Accordion fold books make the paper support an integral part of its appearance. As McCaffery (1998:19) observed

The page ceases to be a neutral surface of support and becomes instead a spatially interacting region; it is granted thereby a metaphorical extension.

Accordion fold books require careful handling and have the potential to be received as a hybrid book art object. While Carrion (1975: 1) observed,

A book is a sequence of spaces. Each of these spaces is perceived at a different moment - a book is also a sequence of moments,

The accordion fold has the potential for both individual page spaces and the book as a linear whole to be experienced.

Conclusion: The accordion format creates a dual-purpose book art object, while also raising attention of an otherwise invisible paper support.

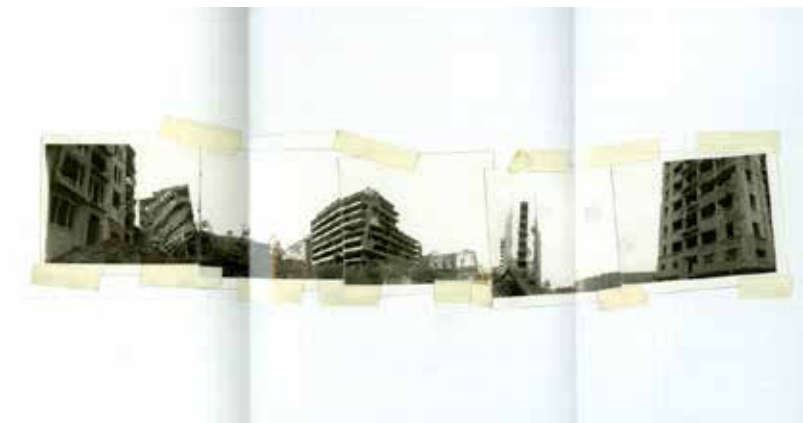
## **13. Practice Piece: Unbound Isle of Wight (2009-2015)**

*Five 28x120cm unfolded concertina sections. Inkjet on pulp paper*

Rationale: This material test was a response to Stephen Gill's *A Series of Disappointments* (2007), made as a dual purpose book/ wall piece with punched page corners allowing the work to be hung as well as read in a more conventional manner.



Practice Piece *Unbound Isle of Wight* (2009-2015)



Robert Frank *Come Again* (2006)

Process: The work was explored as a material prototype, after five strips were inkjet printed on pulp paper, they were pinned up to dry before folding.

Insight: As a consequence of the strips hanging to dry, the pulp paper appeared to be slowly light sensitive and darkened after exposure to light. Although the piece was never actually made into a dual purpose book/ wall piece, it triggered the notion of using fugitive materials for the first time – both chemicals and papers that would change over time and with handling. The piece was dismantled in 2015, to reveal six years of light exposure, looking very different to its initial form. On reconsidering Lewitt's (1967:2) declaration,

Once given physical reality by the artist the work is open to the perception of all, including the artist. The work of art can be perceived only after it is completed.

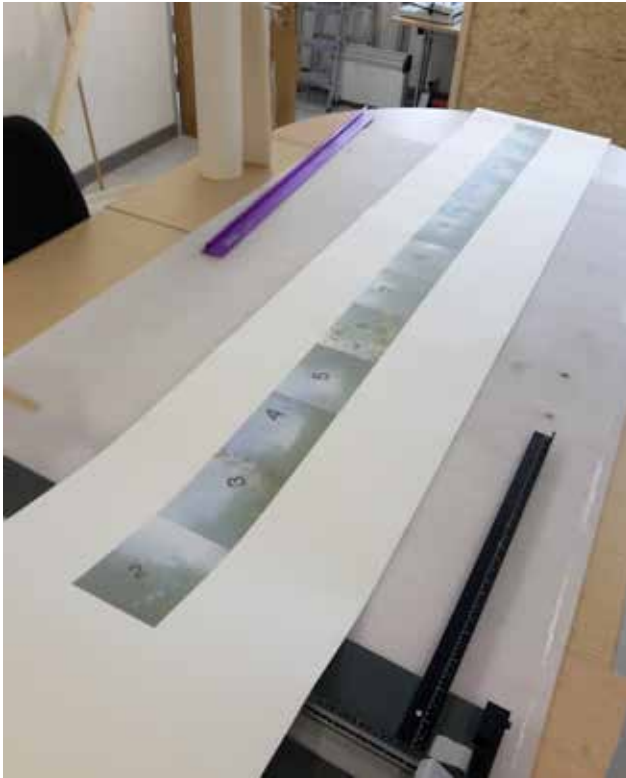
the notion of if and when a work is completed provides an interesting background concept to transient work. If the work is in a state of permanent flux, it echoes Batchen's (2004:97) idea that hybrid photographs could be 'not fixed and autonomous but as dynamic and collective, [in] a continual process of becoming.'

Conclusion: Fugitive materials can create works that are transient and emerging rather than fixed and completed. Pulp paper is highly fugitive and darkens within a couple of days exposure to window light.

#### **14. Book handling: Robert Frank *Come Again* (2006)**

Rationale: Frank's book *Come Again*, published by Steidl, show the artist's project in a raw state – as a journal, but it is unclear whether it proposes itself as a facsimile of an unseen book dummy or as a publication that uses the materiality of the photographic print and sketchbook as a design feature.

Insight: Frank's book mixes production and reprographic techniques taken from both corporate print and artists' book fields. On handling, the book is housed in an open sided slipcase, which reveals an uncovered long stitch bound spine exposing the mechanism by which the book's fascicles are held in place. Inside the book, each of Frank's images, which are reproductions of black and white darkroom prints, are covered with a thick glossy transparent spot varnish of a type usually used in cor-



Practice Piece *Hardy Exotics: Polytunnel C* (2015) prior to folding and varnishing



Practice Piece *Hardy Exotics: Polytunnel C* (2015) during varnishing

porate brochure or luxury edition printing to enhance the dynamic range of print and the surface properties of paper. In commercial printing, varnish constitutes an extra cost due to its use of a fifth printing plate, and provides a luxury version of the printed page, projecting it above the commonplace CMYK. All of Parr and Badger's *The Photobook: A History I, II and III* (2004-2013) use a similar spot varnish to enhance the reproduction of their chosen books, to create a heightened optical sensation on the page. Photographer Danny Lyon (2012:8) also speaks of creating sensual books with thoughtful reprography,

Deep Sea Diver, a book so beautiful, so tactile – that looks so real that you try to pry [prise] the prints off the page. For some of my books I have liked my own maquettes, often made with copying machines and tape, [which are] better than the finished books.

These high production values Steidl and many other publishers contribute to a book project recalls Ivins' debunking of connoisseurship in the world of print. Gilmour (1978:14) observes that Ivins, was in many ways right to note disapprovingly that when a man asked whether you thought something was a good etching, he referred to the technique rather than the idea... 'an inversion of intent and importances that has fooled a great many innocent people.' Does the reprographic virtuosity of Frank's *Come Again* eclipse the photographic content? Or do they elevate the work into a luxury title.

Conclusion: A handmade darkroom print is an auratic object, touched by the maker's hand. High-cost, high dynamic range reprographic methods adapted from luxury editioning and corporate publishing, create hypertextual references to rarity, exclusivity and aura. UV Varnish has the potential to enhance the reproduction of an image and also to stabilize the fading of otherwise fugitive materials.

### **15. Practice Pieces: Hardy Exotics: Polytunnels A, B and C (2009-2015)**

*12pp accordion fold inkjet on pulp paper, buckram over boards. 30x20cm.*

Rationale: These three pieces were further attempts at using desktop inkjet print with poor quality pulp paper stock, which has emerged as a potential material practice strand. The nearest I could find to pulp paperback material with a similar surface texture and colour was a cheap wallpaper lining paper from a local DIY shop. I'd recently handled some of Hans Peter Feldmann's *Bilder* (1970-) books, which are





Practice Piece *Hardy Exotics: Polytunnel C* (2015) drying after varnishing

unexpected in their use of poor materials.

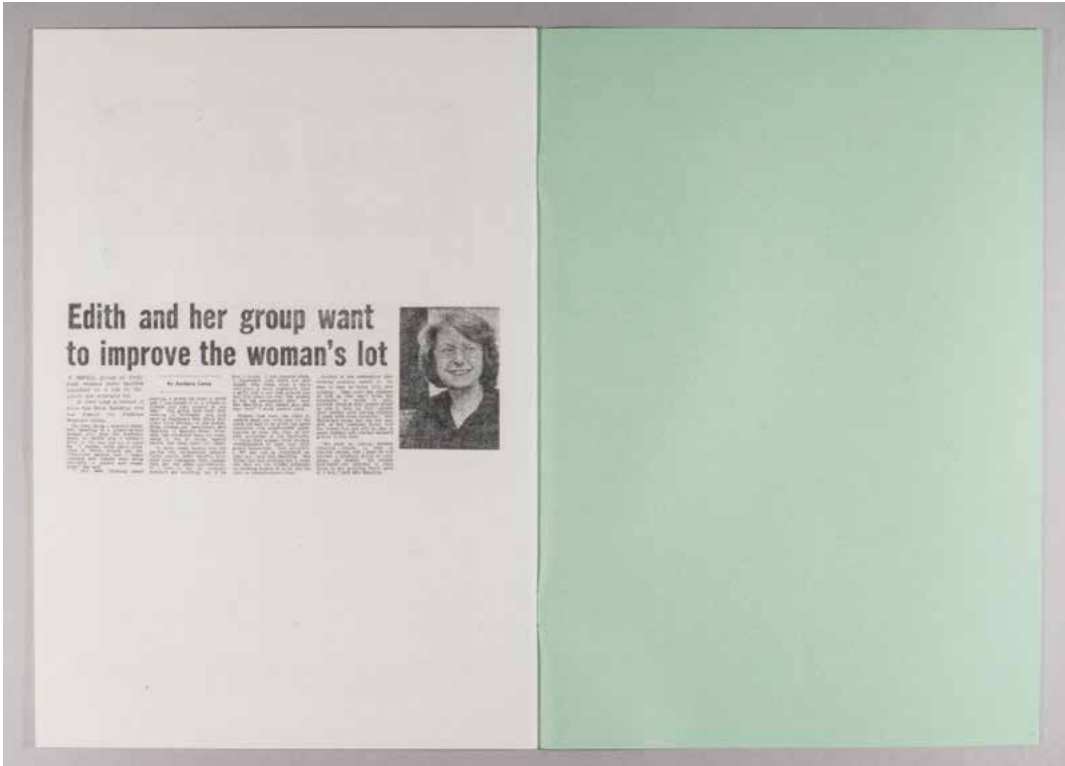
Insight: The first polytunnel book was created as a material test as described, but also to explore the accordion fold format as an alternative to the stitched codex-form. To print on lining paper required extensive testing and editing of the source image files, mostly to counterbalance poor contrast resulting from early prints. The first piece was printed in sections and held in a simple cover. The second and third pieces were printed on a continuous roll, creating a 4m long single print. This was folded and varnished by hand over the printed image area. The addition of a UV varnish over the image does much to raise the dynamic range of the paper & ink and will suspend the fading of this area while the outer paper margins darken with exposure to light. An unforeseen consequence of the varnishing process is the addition of transparent but visible brushmarks to the surface of the print – creating a non-mechanical mark on the paper, which has real potential. I also used a paper folder to score the large print into regular, foldable panels but became alerted by the possibility of deliberately misregistering the fold. This would create a disconnect between the planned page and the start/ stop of the fold. Only when the accordion is unfolded would the images be visible in their entirety.

Conclusion: Poor materials and desktop reprography can also provoke hypertextual link to low-fi DIY networked and mail art.

Conclusion: The fold can be used as a deliberately disruptive element in the work – it can define the edge of the page when the accordion is open, then do it differently when closed.

**16. Book handling: Copier-printed works: Adam Murray & Robert Parkinsons *Edith's Scrap Book* (2013); Stephen McCoy's *Skelmersdale 1984* (2014) for Craig Atkinson/ Café Royal Books.**

Insight: Do-it-yourself reprography using photocopier technology requires only elementary production knowledge and unlike lithography or photographic printing, there is no requirement to engage in complex digital pre-production, colour separation or chemical manipulation. The potential of copier printing was noted by McLuhan (1967:123) who projected that 'Xerography – every man's brain picker – heralds the times of instant publishing. Anyone can now become both author and publisher.' Yet it is only in the post-digital era that the low-fi quality of the photo-



Adam Murray & Robert Parkinson *Edith's Scrap Book* (2013)



Stephen McCoy *Skelmersdale 1984* (2014) for Craig Atkinson/ Café Royal Books.

copy has been exploited by practitioners. Back in the 1970's however, photographers such as Daido Moriyama in *Another Country in New York* (1974), used the copier precisely for its transformative qualities. Moriyama (in Vartanian 2009:29) later reflected on this process saying

the quality still wasn't very good: the tone was inconsistent, and parts of the image would get lost. But that degradation was the interesting thing about it.

This coarse degradation of the original image by the copier, did much to separate such works from the simulacra of the Western fine press tradition. As Vartanian (2009:19) observed about Moriyama's work, that 'The materials used, [the] printing techniques...direct the reader to the materiality of the photograph in reproduction.' The physical incarnations of these material collaborations were always downplayed, but many were super sensory works: documents of participation, intervention and touch. Interest in the potential for copier technology even extended to manuals advocating the creative misuse of materials and the modding of technology, as evidenced by Bruno Munari's (1977:4) *Original Xerographies*. In this title, Munari suggests that a mechanical copier can be manipulated to produce 'not common copies, but originals.' The adoption of easily available reprography and its subsequent deconstruction by artists, designers and photographers originally emerged in the network and mail art field, who as Saper (2001) suggests were located within a different aesthetic based on chance, risk and democratization of authorship. Two small press practices that operate with collaborative element today are Adam Murray and Robert Parkinson's Preston is My Paris publications (PPP) and Craig Atkinson's Café Royal Books. PPP's *Edith's Scrapbook*, which deploys the stencil-based RISO printing process to show the press clippings collected by a habitual protestor and Stephen McCoy's *Skelmersdale 1984*, Café Royal Books, reproduced using a laser copier, both re-enact archive material by using materially disruptive methods, but neither works are facsimiles. Pat McCarthy's copier printed zine, *Cheese Bike* (2010 – present), also engages with low-fi materiality, but is haptically enhanced with taped-in c-type photographic prints and badges.

Conclusion: Copier based reprography has a low-fi materiality that is unable to mimic photographic originals. However, it has its own material and reprographic syntax which draws attention to photography's own history of reproduction.



Practice Piece *Dummy Book* (2010)



Practice Piece *Dummy Book* (2010)

## **17. Practice Piece: Dummy Book (2010)**

*Material test, 20pp laser on copier paper with colour laser inserts*

Rationale: This piece explores the opposite problem of reproducing unique works: that of materialising images that are endlessly available as digital files on the Internet by using photocopier processes. The work explores the material reproduction of two retrieved sources: text from a pocket book *Ventriloquism Self-Taught* (Little Blue Books, 1936) and retrieved vernacular images of ventriloquist dummies for sale on eBay.

Insight: The laser copier makes very clean, sharp prints and works best on coated paper, but the dry toner doesn't adhere properly to uncoated material which creates a significant limitation for future work. Laser printed books made by Red Fox Press such as Antic-Ham's typology *Books Book* (2007) and Francis Van Maele's journal facsimile *1 Day in Venice* (2007), make a great effort to disguise their laser origins either by minimising the extent of white space on the page, or by the addition of printed pseudo-ephemera inserts. The shininess of the laser print together with smooth paper stock, creates a slickness which doesn't add to the rough-edged material origins of the work. Whilst laser offers a fast and convenient way to make works, these two titles suggest a visual rather than a haptic engagement for the reader and at that, one which celebrates the postmodern destruction of reality and Mirzoeff's (1998:3) notion that 'seeing is a great deal more than believing these days.' Classifying works such as these two Red Fox Press titles is problematic as they engage with both an optical and pseudo-material aesthetic, operating almost as a small-press parody of an artist's book. My own Dummy Book provided solutions for future works, namely the use of inserts produced with the laser copier.

Conclusion: Reproducing virtual or digital images that have no innate materiality, poses both a challenge and an opportunity to use processes and forms connected with temporary and throwaway print.

## **18. Book Handling: The newsprint works of Alec Soth and Erik van der Weijde**

Insight: Publications made with newsprint also play upon the intermateriality of ephemera and ephemeral publications such as Alec Soth's tabloid *Last Days of W* (2008) and Guy Gormley's *Vigil* (2012), matching the flat black copier toner with his night time drift and Erik van der Weijde's zine *Die Wolken* (2012) [Clouds], which



Alec Soth tabloid *Last Days of W* (2008)



Erik van der Weijde *Foto.zine Hand Guns* issue (2012)

uses a Pop Art style large dot screen and his *Foto.zine* serial publication (2009) including *Hand Guns*, *the Pink Issue* and *Accidents*, all offset litho on newsprint.

Conclusion: The use of newsprint provides a hypertextual link to ephemeral publications and illustrates the syntax of photography's own reproduction.

### **19. Practice Piece: Newsprint document (2010) material test**

*8pp laser printed newsprint, tabloid format*

Rationale: This piece explores newsprint as a material for the reproduction of photographic images.

Insight: In the digital age, newsprint is fast becoming a material of the past, but it has become a popular material used by small press publishers. As Pearce (1995:248) suggested that.

our approach to objects of the past is voyeuristic. Enjoyment is a kind of appropriation, and appropriation is violation: what is seen is possessed. We are left with a kind of pornography of the past.

Stephen Gill's *The Hackney Rag* (2009) uses the tabloid format and super absorbant newsprint paper material, resulting in dead flat reproduction, which creates a paratextual link with throwaway print. Kessels Kramer's *Useful Photography 004* (2004), uses newsprint to reframe found propaganda posters of Palestinian suicide bombers and Intifada fighters, describes itself as a 'docartzine'. Whilst newsprint can be a cheap and accessible way to distribute an idea, (Soth's *Last Day's of W* was made as an edition of 10,000), the tabloid format is too loaded with unwanted paratextual associations for my practice. Yet newsprint is a fugitive material that can has the potential to be incorporated into future projects, using bleached paper that fades quickly on exposure to light. Seeing Fiona Banner's *Summer* and *September* (both 2009) alerted me to the potential of using poor-quality bleached paper for it's fugitive potential, where sunlight may darken the material gradually over time. My practice piece uses newsprint through a giant laser printer, creating a sooty form of print that rubs off when handling. While this coarse laser quality has potential, an unbound format of the tabloid offers more scope for future experimentation. Re-ordering each section and seeing unexpected collisions occurring at the spine, makes me consider re-binding as a potential tool for disrupting the normative codex sequencing.





Practice piece Newsprint document (2010) material test



Practice piece Newsprint document (2010) material test

Conclusion: The reproduction of photographs on newsprint has its own low-dynamic range and own visual syntax. Newsprint is light sensitive and can darken over a short period of time. Unbound fascicles have the potential to be re-ordered into a hybrid loose-leaf/ codex form.

## **20. Book Handling: Jake Tilson *The Terminator Line* (1991).**

Rationale: Tilson describes this book as a pre-computer work based upon an earlier all-photographic print collage incarnation. The piece is unique for it looks and handles as a mass-produced hardback book, but its interior content looks like an artists' book with hand-printing and hand-assembly details. Tilson creates and inserts fake ephemera on several pages to create a tactile handling experience, where the reader is presented with clues or diversions to the main narrative.

Insight: The physical delivery of textual matter within the book form can be made more engaging by the use of inserts, slips and other material which require the reader to suspend their horizon of expectation (Iser, 1970). Tilson is unusually active across the three traditional disciplines of graphic design, fine art and photography and as such, employs complex strategies in his works. *The Terminator Line* echoes Vartanian's (2009:19) observation about Kawada's *The Map* (1965),

demand[ing] of the reader extra time and effort. Thus the reader becomes not only acutely aware of the function of flipping through a photobook but also an active agent in how the book and its photography reveal themselves.

Conclusion: Inserts and loose-leaf materials within a codex form, disrupt the reader's horizon of expectations by forefronting touch and navigation. Inserts and loose-leaf elements can also contain intertextual links to documents, evidence and ephemera.

## **21. Practice Piece: Case Histories (2010)**

*50pp, inkjet on cotton paper, c-type prints, paper ephemera inserts, handmade marbled endpapers, buckram over board cover. 30x30. Unique book*

Rationale: This piece collated a long-term project recording the interior spaces and artifacts of an abandoned large scale hospital facility. In addition to my own location photography, I've collected numerous pieces of ephemera and other materials during the project. Company's (2003: online) description of Walker Evans' propensity to collect, as well as photograph, illustrates this element of my practice:



Jake Tilson *The Terminator Line* (1991)



Practice piece *Case Histories* (2010)

Evans was asked about the relation between his habits as a collector and his photography. "It's almost the same thing" he replied. At times what he collected and what he photographed were exactly the same thing: small, common, vernacular items. Shop signs. Street furniture. Trash. Occasionally, he took a photograph of an object and then literally took the object with him.

Process: The codex form was envisaged as a container for existing photographic prints, rather than new direct prints from digital files. The existing prints were printed from negatives and each evidenced their object-status in the book with the inclusion of the print's white border in the scanning process. This was intended to signify the image of the print as a unique object rather than an ideal copy on the page. In addition to the prints, several retrieved elements from the hospital were either scanned and presented alongside, or physically stitched/glued as real things. Some c-type contact prints were sewn into the book also.

Insight: In this piece, I explore some simple functions of the book form: the use of mixed page sizes and their impact on unfolding content, plus the combination of real artefacts and the re-presentation of vintage photographic prints. As DeSilvey (2007) speculates, the physical re-use of artefacts in a display enables a more contingent, creative response to the act of documentation, as the inventorial nature of photography can strip subjects/objects from the texture and site specificity of their place. DeSilvey's project, archiving the artefacts of an abandoned homestead in Montana, unearthed the flaws of classification and separating out material from its context. Through the re-circulation and rearrangement of artefacts with each other, outside anticipated modes of representation (and permitting site visitors to do the same), a much richer, more open-ended visitor experience was created. Material artefacts which remain outside our received notion of precious – those which are categorised as paper ephemera – are by their very nature the stuff used to facilitate communication, documents of organisation, information and messaging. Parr (2008:10) also comments on the lure of materiality,

I am also attracted to objects which are ephemeral. Many of these objects are bound up with the glories of a certain time and place. When these glories fade, the object takes on a certain resonance.

Artist Susan Hiller (in Einzig 1996:28) also confers value upon material artifacts,



Practice piece *Case Histories* (2010)



Practice piece *Case Histories* (2010)

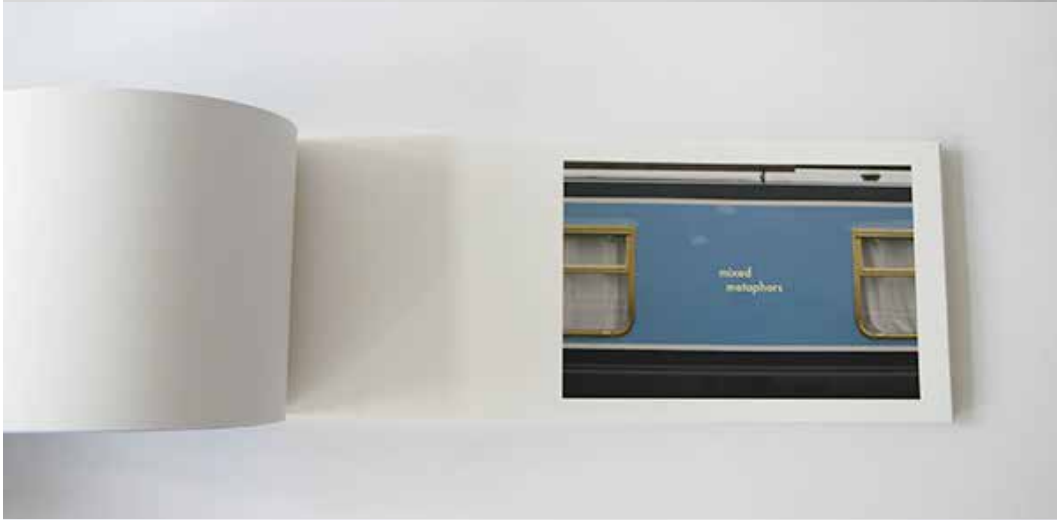
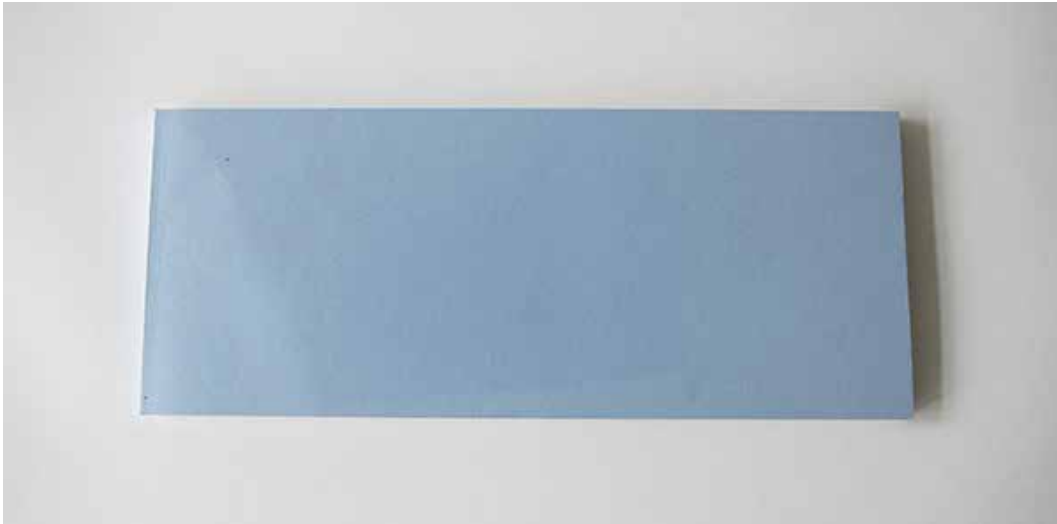
stating that 'I deal with fragments of everyday life, and I'm suggesting that a fragmentary view is all we've got.' When handled, the book's form calls for a different way of reading – and to navigate quickly is not possible. As Scott (2014: 130) suggests 'The interaction between the book as a material object and its readers brings the book to life, just as the materiality of the book interacts with its narrative.' Like Edensor (2005: 315) who described abandoned factories that were in state of rich material decline, as 'viscerally and sensually exciting an engagement with matter, providing affordances...' could a book too become a portable ruined space, replaying Goethe's (in Lind: 1974: 48) private, haptic sensation of caressing flesh, to 'see with a feeling eye, feel with a seeing hand.'

Conclusion: The recirculation of material artefacts within the book form provides an additional kind of documentation, providing a haptic engagement with the work recalling souvenirs, the museum and private collecting.

## **22. Book Handling: Inkjet books**

Insight: New York based publisher Vela Noche who editioned Dale Schreiner's book *Thereafter* (2011) and Lauren Henkin's *Still Standing, Standing Still* (2012) create books using pigment inks, cotton inkjet papers, letterpress and fine bindings, typically in editions of 20-30. The materiality of such luxury inkjet books have a direct link to a photographers' gallery-editioned prints, using the same printing systems but with the added potential of touch. Vela Noche often employ a team of collaborators with craft-based skills in traditional bookbinding, artist's printmaking and letterpress printing. The presence of these elements provides an intertextual link to the *livre d'artiste* or fine press tradition, materially rich territory for further exploration but with reduced connotations of rarity, prestige and bourgeois fixtures and fittings. However, handling these materially suggestive works does prompt the notion of how the reader's prior experience contributes to the reception of the work. As Harold Evans (1979: 2) speculated, 'the reader imposes upon the photographers' work a matrix of memory, appetite, prejudice and sophistication.'

Conclusion: The high-tec inkjet printing of books has its own visual syntax and hypertextual links to the gallery and fine art editioning.



Practice piece *Mixed Metaphors* (2011)

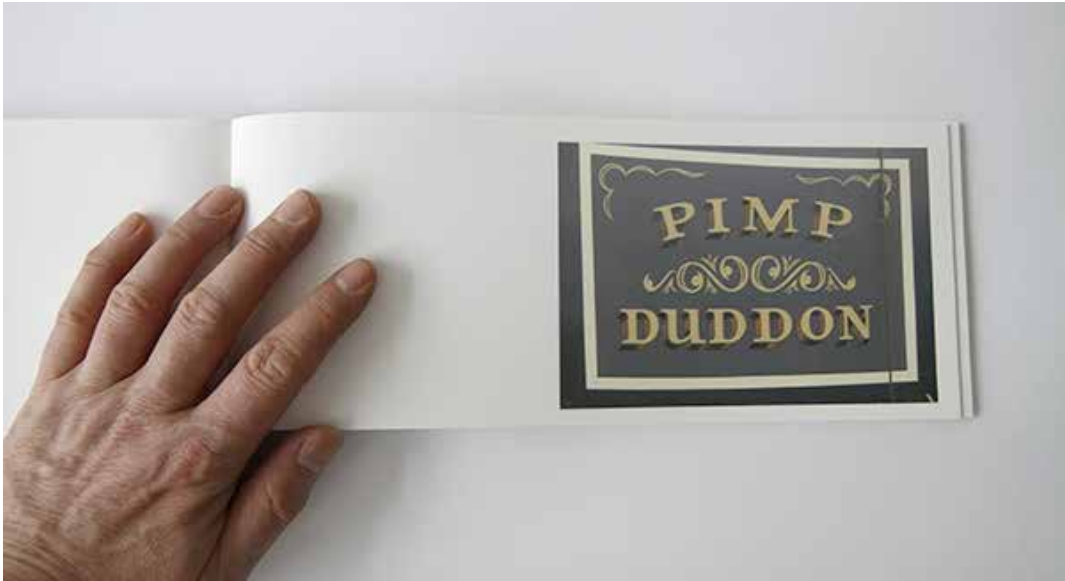
**23. Practice Piece: Mixed Metaphors, (2011) material test and dummy book**  
*30pp, inkjet on cotton paper, perfect binding, softback 15x30cm. Unique book*

Rationale: Unlike earlier works, this piece was planned as a book from the outset, with the concept for the form and treatment of the subject evolving as the shoot progressed. Like Badger's (2013:online) description of Jem Southam's working processes, who

is thinking about sequencing as he makes each picture...and where it might be placed in a book. He compares the whole business of sequencing to building a brick structure from the inside. You don't really see what you've got, or whether it will stand up, until you complete it.

Process: The project explored the naming and renaming of barges and canal boats, mixing a documentary mode together with my imagined, digitally altered images. Like cars, inland waterway vessels are registered numerically, through a national scheme managed by The Canal and River Trust, yet the naming of these boats is a private matter for the individual owners. Often altered when a change of ownership or relationship occurs, the idea behind the book was to record a collection of these names, but also to intervene with my own imagined, altered names using word constraints inspired by the Oulipo group (Workshop for Literary Potential). Led by Raymond Queneau (in Motte1986:2) who proposed a 'search for new forms and structures that may be used by writers in any way they see fit,' Oulipo works were often humorous and unexpected. Houlihan (2015) suggests that Ed Ruscha mirrored the French Oulipo in his early books, using the constraint of a highway in *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962) and a road in *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966). The potential of exploring constraints adopted from the literary field enabled me to apply an additional layer of mediation to the subject and explore how this could be revealed in the piece. Tom Phillips' *A Humument* (1966-1980) and Raymond Queneau's *One Hundred Million Poems* (1961) are constraint-based works, reworking an existing book and allowing the reader to rework the material respectively. Recently, Jonathan Safran Foer's die-cut *Tree of Codes* (2010) brought the constraint-based altered book genre to a large-scale edition by innovative small publisher Visual Editions. Whilst Phillips' book was made in the codex tradition and mediated by the artist on behalf of the reader, Queneau and Safran Foer's movable and die-cut pages enabled the reader to create their own unique reception of the material.





Practice piece *Mixed Metaphors* (2011)



Practice piece *Slow Fires* (2011)

Insight: The codex form mixed observed and invented together without any prior textual warning. Starting with observed and slowly introducing invented, many readers of the book either failed to notice the altered images, or declined to ask any questions to clarify their understanding. On reflection, the codex form was not suitable for revealing the concept and the piece dwelled too much on the materiality of finely printed inkjets on archival cotton paper. The piece will be remade using a different set of materials and in a different form.

Conclusion: High-tec inkjet printing and cotton papers can provide unwanted inter-material references to luxury books.

#### **24: Practice Piece: Slow Fires (2011) material test**

*6 inkjet prints encased in resin, 20x40cm. Exhibited in Alvanley Cliff forest, Cheshire. June-July 2011*

Rationale: Slow fires is paper conservation term used to describe the gradual deterioration of a book due to environmental exposure and this piece was made to explore the fugitive potential of inkjet prints encased in clear cast-resin which were displayed outdoors.

Process: This work was triggered by three interconnecting occurrences: viewing James Innes Smith's (2002) novelty book *Bad Hair*; revisiting a Guardian Weekend feature that I had made documenting the faded printed hairstyle portraits seen in hairdressing salons and re-examining images from my own archive of photo memorials found in pet cemeteries in Silvermere Pet Haven, Surrey. Each of these things showed photographic prints deteriorated by environmental factors. Over time, these images develop a unique patina and become like objects trapped in amber. Martin Parr's book *Objects* (2008), shows a similar collection of photo-objects exhibited as *Parrworld* (2008-9), collected souvenirs and mementoes, made physical by their three dimensional appropriation of familiar forms such as trays, watches and badges. Made in quantity, they are the opposite of the personal photo-keepsakes of the nineteenth century such as Daguerreotype cases with enclosed locks of hair, hand annotated prints or photo-jewellery. Unlike straightforward photographs, these early forms operate as doubly indexical, offering a heightened experience of the subject. As Batchen (2004:15) suggested

The challenge, then, is to make photography the visual equivalent of



Practice piece *Slow Fires* (2011)



Tim Daly *Silvermere Haven pet cemetery* (1991)



Paul Fusco *RFK Funeral Train* (1999)

smell and taste, something you can feel as well as see.

Insight: In this piece, I used images of re-photographed barber shop posters which had also faded by the sun to the characteristic cyan colour (the most lightfast of the CMYK printing inks). During their month-long outdoor display in Alvanley Cliff Forest, my intention was to set them off on a journey – where the fugitive nature of the materials enable the work to exist in a continual state of change. On reflection, the month-long exposure was insufficient to effect any visual change to the pieces, but the physical instability of the images suggests potential for further exploration. The reorganisation and recontextualising of such archive pieces is fraught with problems associated with cultural collection. Hubert and Mauss (in Pearce:1995: 24) observed that

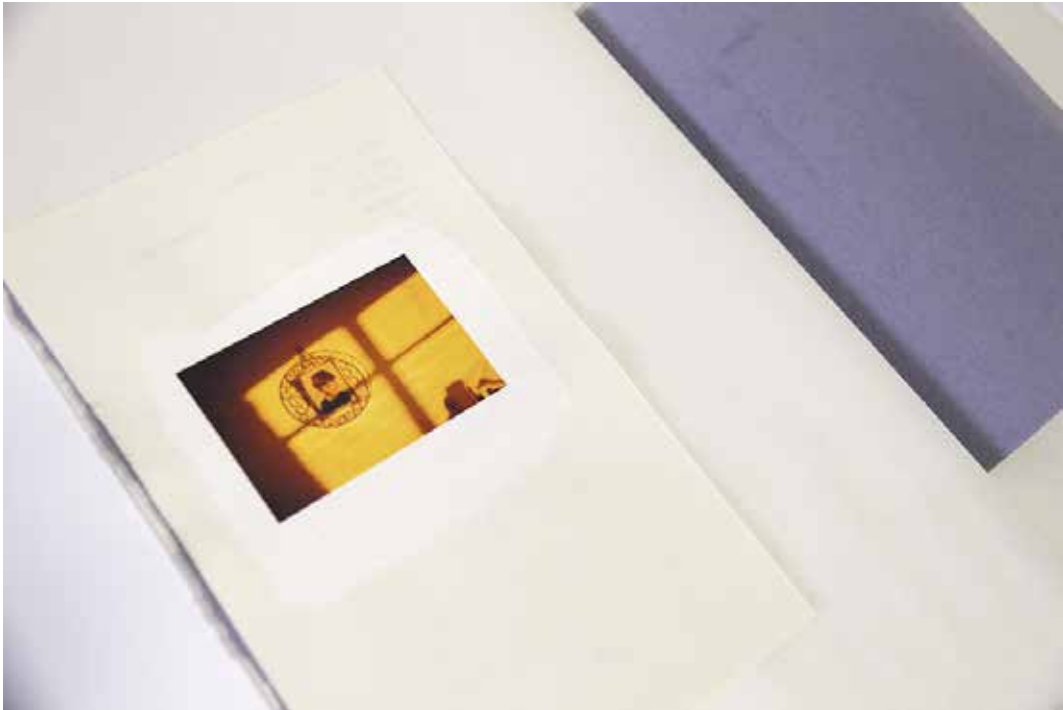
the central paradox of all collected pieces [is that] they are wrenched out of their own true contexts and become dead to their living time and space in order that they may be given an immortality within the collection.

Conclusion: Fugitive materials have potential. What if the reproduction of images with fugitive materials in the book form created a starting point rather than an ending?

## **25. Book handling: Paul Fusco: *RFK Funeral Train* (1999 Xerox print-on-demand version)**

Insight: Paul Fusco's seminal book, *RFK Funeral Train* (1999), was first published through a collaboration between design group Cartlidge/Levine, The Photographers' Gallery, London, Magnum Photos and Xerox. The project, was originally shot on 1960's colour transparency film: coarse grained with dense black shadow areas. The collaborating publishing team made the decision to use an emerging print-on-demand copier, crude by today's standards but one with a sooty toner that perfectly matched the character of the original transparencies. The book has been re-edited three times using more conventional lithography, but neither suggest, transport or reflect back on photography's own innate materiality like the print-on-demand version does.

Conclusion: Early print-on-demand has its own identifiable visual syntax and is also



Practice piece *Len's Light* (2011)



Practice piece *Len's Light* (2011)

effective in the reproduction of photographic transparencies.

## **26. Practice Piece: Len's Light (2011)**

*Inkjet on vintage book pages, plant matter, 'photogenic drawings' on pulp paper and fugitive sugar paper. 40x30 cm. Unique book*

Rationale: This piece was made to trial different ways of reproducing retrieved plant material alongside my own images, by exposing fugitive sugar paper to prolonged periods of daylight.

Process: My father was a lifelong amateur gardener and letterpress printer. My book fuses together photographs I'd taken at his home printed onto sheets from his books which I now own. This test uses pages of different size, weight and colour and remains unbound. Larger pages were made from simple pulp paper and sugar papers, both of which were exposed to sunlight for three months. On some sheets, a simple plant sample was sandwiched between glass and paper – which in turn created a stencil-like imprint as the paper changed colour in the light. On the smaller sheets – pages torn from the amateur gardening books – I've prepared a ground to allow the printing of a colour inkjet image. I've also included some of the original plant material in makeshift sleeves too.

Insight: While there have been works that have explored the impact of sunlight on paper such as Fiona Banner's *Summer* and *September* (both 2009) and Heather Weston's artist book *Read (past tense)* (2000) which uses thermal sensitive coatings on paper to reveal hidden, additional text and also a temporary imprint of the reader's fingers during handling, this work has suggested the possibility of making a durational piece, where the fugitive nature of the material will alter under the influence of light over a prolonged period of time.

Conclusion: Cheap, fugitive materials such as sugar paper have the potential for controlled fading when exposed to prolonged bright light.

## **27. Book handling: Martin D'Orgeval *Touched by Fire* (2011)**

Insight: Aftermath documentation, or late photography described by Company (2003), is photography's own version of ruin lust. It revels in, as West (2004:14) observes, 'elegiac redundancy..... stand[ing] for loss and aestheticised melancholy.'



Practice piece *Len's Light* (2011)



Martin D'Orgeval *Touched by Fire* (2011)

and is as Edwards (2006:60) purports, 'the salvage tool par excellence.' D'Orgeval's book picks through the remains of Deyrolle, the Parisian taxidermist whose shop and collection went up in flames. Yet, the codex form is an unsuccessful container for conveying the transient potential of ruin, loss and scattered matter. Such a closed curatorial case, it presents immutable evidence and prescribed classifications, echoing what Edwards (2004:55) describes as 'a single closure of meaning through its spatial organisation and presentation.' Like the artefacts from Mark Dion's *Tate Thames Dig*, which were scrubbed, polished then ordered into formal cabinets of curiosities, D'Orgeval's images and the codex form container through which the work is accessed, symbolically frames content as cultural plunder. The codex monograph made with a documentary intent, similarly shares the framing of this established normative ordering.

Conclusion: Codex monographs perpetuate the normative ordering processes employed in museum vitrines.

## **28. Book handling: William Henry Fox Talbot (1841) *The Pencil of Nature* and Peter Henry Emerson (1893) *On English Lagoons***

Insight: Rare titles such as William Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1841) and Peter Henry Emerson's *On English Lagoons* (1893), whilst also visible in facsimile forms, can be experienced for real at the National Art Library at the V&A. In handling *The Pencil of Nature*, I discovered many things that were not apparent from remote viewing: the ongoing deterioration of the salted paper prints; their unexpected insertion onto the verso and finally, the numerous blank pages which are never visible in any electronic form, which create an important punctuation to reading.

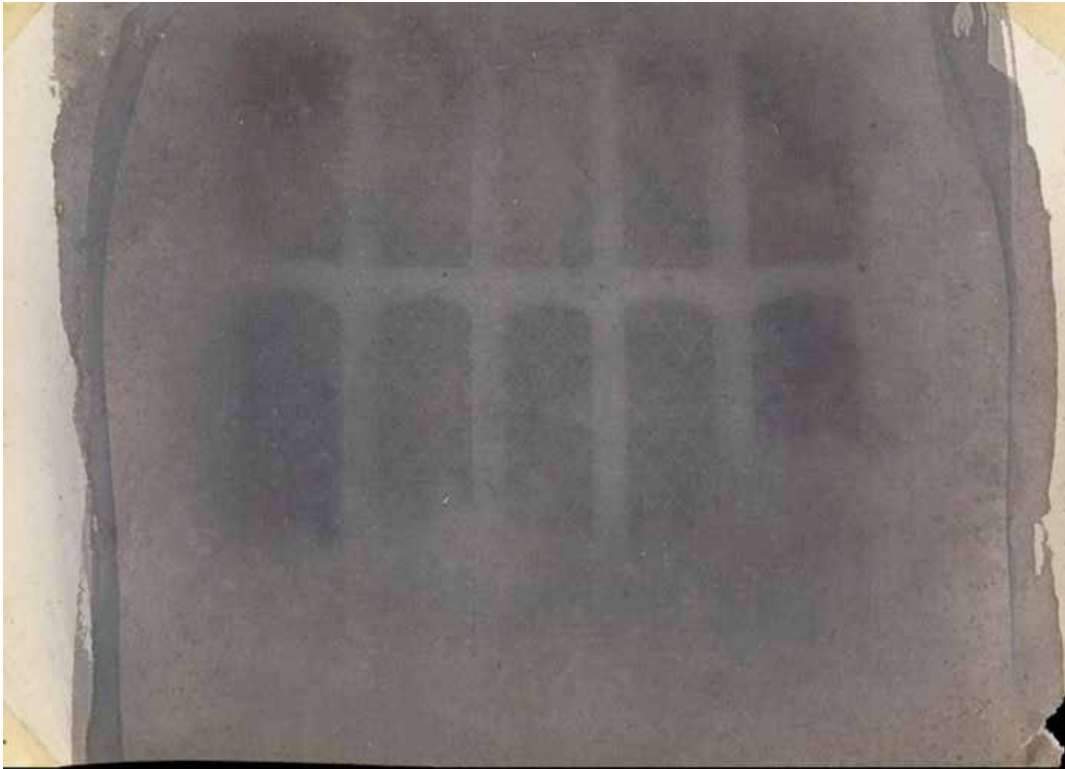
Conclusion: Handling is an essential method for understanding the material features of a book and their hypertextual references.

## **29. Practice Piece: Returning Burton's Plunder (2011)**

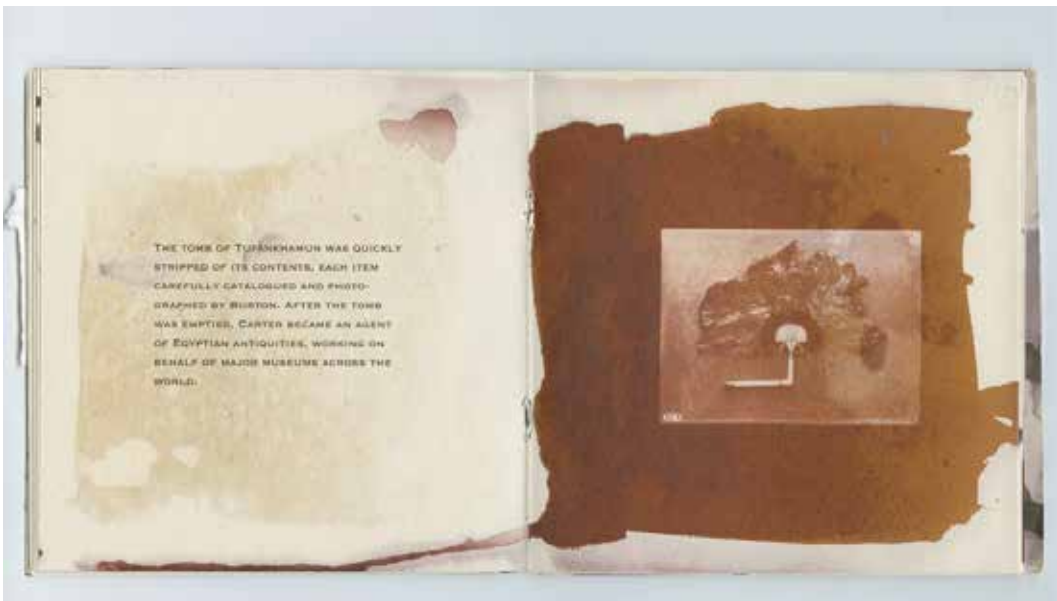
*24pp silver nitrate/ salt prints and inkjet on pulp paper, buckram cover with paper seal. Staple bound 140x140. 3 copies.*

Rationale: This more complex piece provided the opportunity to test chemical photographic printing, the introduction of a time-based element and the re-use of archive content not originally planned for publication.





Fox Talbot *Oriel window, Lacock Abbey* (1835)



Practice piece *Returning Burton's Plunder* (2011)

Process: The book was produced in an edition of three – each one sealed on completion with a bellyband. At the time I was exploring the archive of Fox Talbot's letters, charting the development of his photographic process and handling *The Pencil of Nature* at the National Art Library. I'd also explored the online archive of Harry Burton's photographs and notes of Howard Carter, charting the discovery of Tutankhamun tomb, held at the Griffith Institute. Burton was the official photographer and his images capture the sequence of discovery, but also the imperialist plunder and removal of artefacts from the tomb. The concept was to reproduce several of his images using Fox Talbot's salt print process, but leave them unfixed. From the time the seal was broken and the book opened, the images would fade a little more, until they eventually fade to black. This inbuilt destruction – prompted by the very act of reading – creates an absurd dilemma for the viewer. Do they continue to look at the unstable images on the page or do they keep the book closed. A third option would be to tear the images out of the book and make permanent with chemical fixers. Alongside the images are edited excerpts from Carter's matter-of-fact diary, mixed in with my commentary. This projection in some ways was intended to be a clumsy metaphor for cultural plunder and the removal of tomb goods.

Insight: On reflection, there were many unplanned but favourable outcomes to this experiment. Firstly, the combination of pulp paper and salt printing solution created a very fluid, impregnated appearance, which changed continuously. Secondly the difficulty of making an even coating left it's own mark making document on the pages, creating lots of non-uniformity in the edition. Although the text commentary was unnecessarily narrative, the potential for using light sensitive coatings is very promising.

After Returning Burton's Plunder was displayed open in a glass cabinet for a fortnight, one double page spread faded as planned, so the book has one less original image. This spread has now turned a rich, rusty orange, the recto page is now patinated by silver salts. Around the copper shape is a larger purple shadow, showing the chemicals from the next page seeping through the paper intermediary. Visually this is very engaging and much better than I expected. The book now has a different content than before, presenting its own degeneration as another paratextual element to the existing narrative. I'm now compelled to use silver salts to handwrite text that emerges from invisibility, revealing a hidden message some time after the book was first explored by the reader.



Practice piece *Returning Burton's Plunder* (2011)

Conclusion: An adapted version of Fox Talbot's salt printing process creates desirable non-uniformity with additional fugitive property. The act of reading hastens the deterioration of the print.

### **30. Book Handling: non-codex book forms**

Rationale: Most photographer's monographs, such as Ken Grant's *The Close Season* (2004) are made in the codex form, sealed containers that prevent the addition of future content, perpetuating the role of the artist/author as expert mediator and the book as a static snapshot in time.

Insight: The fixed codex form protects the original authored content and sequencing plan, whereas a removable system, loose leaf or a portfolio-type container such as Lorenz and Piacentini's *Artificial Hills: 12 Real Photographs* (1998) or Germaine Krull *Metal* (1927), permit reassembly via their multiple material constituents to create an enhanced handling experience. A loose-leaf arrangement of pages housed in a book cover, slipcase or box such as Huber & Janka's *Ohio Photomagazine #14* (2006) allows the viewer to navigate in a non-linear manner, revealing and re-ordering each page and with permission to spread the pages out over a larger surface area. This kind of format invites collaboration, addition and customisation. Increased handling over time too will deliver inevitable traces of use, as each book in the edition will become its own unique copy. Neither codex or non-codex forms deliver the same empirical message to all readers, as Lewitt (1967:3) suggested,

Once it is out of his hands the artist has no control over the way a viewer will perceive the work. Different people will understand the same thing in a different way.

Iser (in Dove 1997: 54) suggested that we should,

[derive] meaning as a result of an interaction between text and reader, as 'an effect to be experienced' not an 'object to be defined.'

A linear sequencing of images is an inescapable function of the codex form. As Badger (2012:3) suggests, 'Most photographers take small work prints and spread them on the floor or on a table and begin shuffling them together in groups.' Many photographers' project books using a 'journey' metaphor to underpin the running



Germaine Krull *Metal* (1927)



Practice piece *Neglected Dedications* (2012)

order, such as Tom Wood's *Bus Odyssey* (2001) simulating the walkthrough of a gallery space, or re-enacting the order of encounter such as Wilkinson and McCann's *Driving Blind* (2004). Authored books also deliver an additional non-verbal dialogue through the pairing of synchronous images on a spread, such as Robert Adams' *Listening to the River* (1994) or break up longer sequences of images by forming 'chunks' to aid the flow of information as seen in Paul Trevor's *Like You've Never Been Away* (2011). Spread pairing conventions, such as shape echoing or symmetry across the double page spread effect an additional paratextual element to the work, creating a kind of visual conundrum or game within the context of the overall piece. As in archiving, the risk of 'colonizing' through collection and classification is incapable.

Conclusion: Loose-leaf books or folios allow readers to engage with the material in a more speculative and non-linear manner.

### **31. Practice Piece: Neglected Dedications (2012)**

*Inkjet on vintage paperback pages (12), altered cover. 28x15 cm. Unique book*

Rationale: This was constructed from dedication pages detached from paperbacks left by previous visitors to a Cornish holiday home. The aim was to try and print onto pre-printed paper and to create a non-codex piece.

Process: Each page was first pressed and prepared with an inkjet ground before photographs of the same location were printed on, making the sheets fragile and brittle to the touch. The outer cover was recycled and adapted from an abandoned book, housing each printed page lying loose rather than bound, with a ripped edge documenting their detachment from their source.

Insight: As Stewart (1993:37) observed,

the metaphors of the book are metaphors of containment, of exteriority and interiority, of surface and depth, of covering and exposure, of taking apart and putting together.

The act of reworking a set of books creates a curious ambiguity, which is also furthered by the introduction of an image in a vacant space on the page. Rather than play a simple text/image association game, the images document the uniquely run-



Practice piece *Neglected Dedications* (2012)



Practice piece *Fort Perch Rock* (2012)

down character of the holiday town but also play off the suggestive text and faded paper material. Unlike most books where the paper page disappears as an invisible carrier of words and image, each sheet documents its own transience, evidencing its exposure to light and handling by others. As Edensor (2005:20) observes, such premature waste in a flux of unfinished disposal has a rich potential for reinterpretation, 'offering enigmatic traces that invite us to fill in the blanks.' The sheets present a tactile experience, combining real artefact rather than facsimile, challenging our expectations of throwaway pulp paper, as it transforms into a seemingly precious, albeit threadbare material. When handled, the book's unbound form calls for a different way of reading – and to navigate quickly is not possible.

Conclusions: Unbound books which use overprinting on artefacts create multiple indexical pieces.

### **32. Practice Piece: Fort Perch Rock (2011)**

*C-type print (3), wallpaper on board cover. 80x30 cm. Unique book*

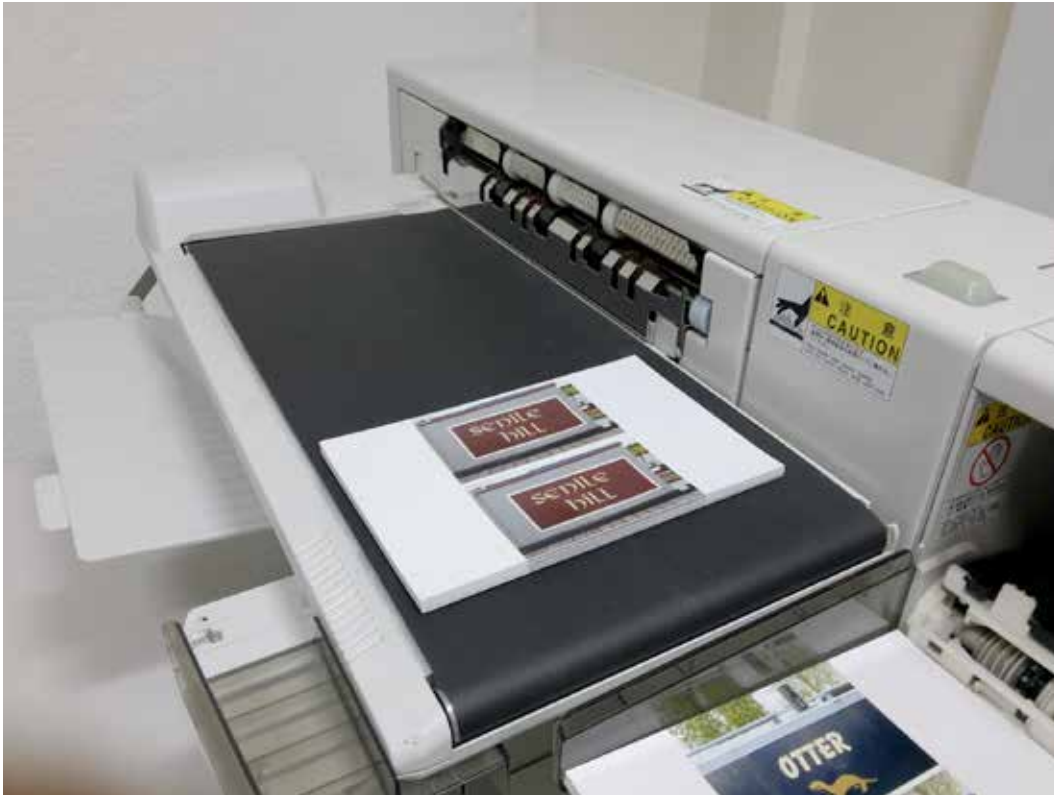
Rationale: This material test uses silver-based photographic paper as a printing method for the first time in my practice. In this piece, there is no surrogacy present – the prints do not exist elsewhere in a more exotic form – they are here as finished, final photographic prints.

Insight: Housed within a large folder covered with wallpaper retrieved from the same location, each of the three loose sheets contain five separate images, and must be carefully handled and deposited in the inner leaf of the folder to reveal the next sheet. Unlike most photobooks created in the codex form, where the revealing of a new page obscures the previous, the physical structure and navigation of this piece permits up to ten images to viewed simultaneously. As Hayles (2002:23) suggests,

to change the physical form of the artifact is not merely to change the act of reading but profoundly to transform the metaphoric network structuring the relation of word to world.

Like most of the material tests, this piece suggested further ideas, most notably the possibility of including text on the same sheet of paper – printed purely by the action of the laser diode, rather than an overprint, in any colour. It's not really pos-





C-type minilab as printing press, showing the production of practice piece 51.



Practice piece *The Guns of Fort Perch Rock* (2013)

sible to print text on photographic paper with any measure of sensitivity, but digital c-type printing, stands out as a uniquely, all-encompassing process. My next trial will test text within the borders of the printed images. The size of each photographic print also impacted on my reception, for prints that extend in size beyond 8"x6" require a two-handed handling to stop the surface bowing uncontrollably. Does this extended print size trigger a different kind of response as well as providing a more immersive optical experience?

Conclusion: Silver based photographic prints have their own visual syntax and provide a hypertextual link to notions of the photographic original rather than its reproduction. The size of these prints can impact on our handling too.

### **33. Book Handling: William Eggleston's portfolio *Southern Suite* (1981) at the V&A Print Room**

Insight: The Victoria and Albert Museum has one of the twelve William Eggleston *Southern Suite* folios and my experience of handling this proved to be very significant part of my research. Touching the individual prints, feeling the weight of the paper support, scrutinising at close quarters the saturated dyes and the visible mis-registration of the matrix process and the uncommon distribution of colours, triggered a very different kind of response to seeing Eggleston's work in the book form or in the gallery print. Whilst used to handling colour photographic prints through my own practice and vernacular family snapshots, the sensation of interacting with the Eggleston folio created a different and an unexpectedly physical experience, seeing at first hand details and subtleties that are less obvious in any reproduced or mediated form of the work. Confirming Claessen's (2012:141) suggestion that 'an important advantage of touch lay in its presumed ability to access interior truths of which sight was unaware', the physicality of such a folio case impacts on our reception too – many are constructed from heavy board covered in buckram or more luxurious textiles, together with debossed text or hand-tooled lettering, presenting themselves as hand made receptacles rather than mass produced packaging. Their primary functional purpose is of a protective nature, preventing unnecessary exposure to harmful light, atmospheric pollutants and physical damage. Such folios with a hinged clamshell design also provide a readymade desktop reading container, with left and right hand compartments for the placement and juxtaposition of separate prints. Both of these shallow walled boxes are usually lined with fine papers simultaneously protecting the prints and also deliberately preventing visual interference by



Practice piece *The Guns of Fort Perch Rock* (2013)

nearby objects or surfaces underneath. These simple constructional devices fundamentally alter the way in which we view and handle the work, perhaps triggering associations with the history of jewellery cases, the velvet-lined clamshell box of a Daguerreotype, or even a board-game with its foldout cardboard playing surface making visual the otherwise abstract rules of gameplay.

Conclusion: Handling prints in a folio box creates a different kind of haptic experience to reading a book. High quality prints also provide an enhanced optical experience too, which is in excess of our usual expectations from a book. The two-lid structure of a clamshell case also establishes its own rules for engaging with content.

#### **34. Practice Piece: The Guns of Fort Perch Rock (2013)**

*Thirty images and seven text panels on 6 x C-type prints, enclosed within linen folder. 14.5x43.5cm. Edition of 30*

Rationale: This was a revised version of the work started in 2011, re-using many of the positive outcomes and introducing some new text elements.

Process: The main change was in the redesign of the container/ folder used to house the photographic prints. In this final version, three panels were used to help stabilise the prints better when the unit was closed, but also to provide three surfaces rather than two to place and position the prints on during reading. This now enables fifteen images to be viewed simultaneously. Text was introduced in this version too – using research material that I'd gathered from the National Maritime Museum in Liverpool; other local history sources and from direct conversation with the owners of the fort. What emerged from the research was a thin thread of absurdity running through its distant and recent past, with an unexpected link to the firing of the fort's guns. The text panels were devised to relay this information in as neutral a way as possible and chunked up to permit reading in any order. The placement of the text on the paper support was problematic – too close to an image created an unwanted symbiotic relationship. It became important therefore to deliberately desynchronise text and image to provoke a less prescriptive narrative. By setting the type in columns underneath each image also generated an unwanted link, but the alternative strategy of a grid-free layout would have disrupted the ordered nature of the piece. The final label was printed by a letterpress collaborator – the same as used in *Nothing, not even a Bite*. The fort has a rich visual history, featuring in



*The Guns of Fort Perch Rock* (2013) on display at *In Place of Architecture*.  
Bonnington Gallery, Nottingham, 2015.

Martin Parr's *Last Resort* (1984), Tom Wood's *Looking for Love* (1989) and Ken Grant's *The Close Season* (2002) and it has also been the subject of many picture postcards over the last one hundred years. To add to the work, I've sourced thirty different used postcards showing the fort, repatriating cards from as far afield as Germany, Belgium and France, each with its own unique author, named recipient and message. Acting as a souvenir, like Stewart (1993:135) suggests,

the souvenir distinguishes experiences. We do not need or desire souvenirs of events that are repeatable. We need and desire souvenirs of events that are reportable, events whose materiality has escaped us.

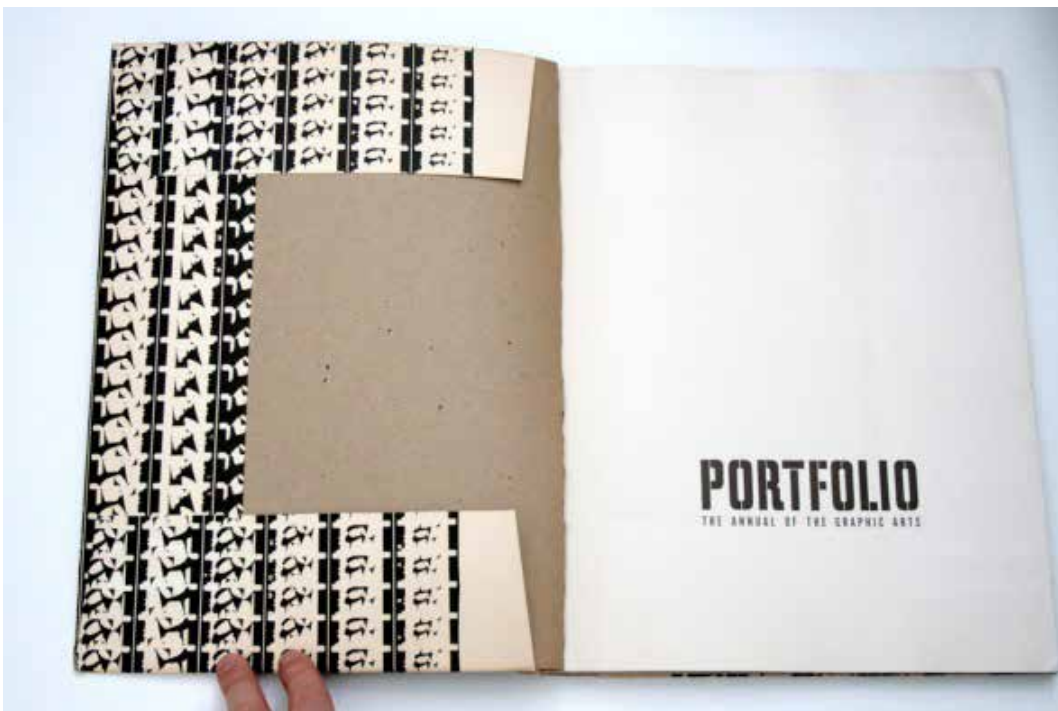
Each book in the edition will have a different postcard inserted into the inner flap to add an extra paratextual element to the piece. The notion of retrieving scattered material from a wide range of sources, then recirculating it in the edition links to the idea of using real, tangible artefacts in the work.

Insight: Representation of local history using words within the image triggers an unease at my own role as mediator. Bal (1985:118) suggests an alternative to the notion of the author in the delivery and projection of a narrative – that of the focalizer. This term defines the relationship between 'the vision, the agent that sees and that which is seen'. In written works of fiction, focalization can be embedded in a character or used via an external narrator. In a visual work focalization may be baked into the very fabric of the piece already, visible in the lines, shapes and other compositional elements selected by the maker. Operating as both photographer and self-publisher allows the potential for multiple focalizers in the work, delivering different interpretations of the subject and conveying different experiences. The potential of a relational aesthetic delivered by multiple contributors, the layered narrative exuded by text and image (and the interpretation projected back onto the piece by the viewer), the semiotic transmission by retrieved objects/ artefacts plus the sensory duality of Mitchell's (1986) unmediated mimesis – perceptible to the eye and mediated mimesis – suggestive to the mind – contributes to an multi sensory, open-ended bookwork. Indeed, if we could further reconsider the material presence of the photographic print and gathered ephemera in the way Mitchell (2005:81) suggests we view pictures, seeing them instead as,

animated beings, quasi-agents, mock persons.. who function as 'go-betweens' ....to be seen as complex individuals occupying multiple subject



Alexei Brodovitch *Portfolio* magazine (1950-2)



Alexei Brodovitch *Portfolio* magazine (1950-2)

positions and identities...this final step change could allow us to treat each component of the book, including the viewer, as an active, living participant in the reframing and re-ordering of the work.

Conclusion: Text within a photographic print establishes a different reading experience. The use of a three panel folio container creates an opportunity for the reader to interrogate the material in a personalised manner.

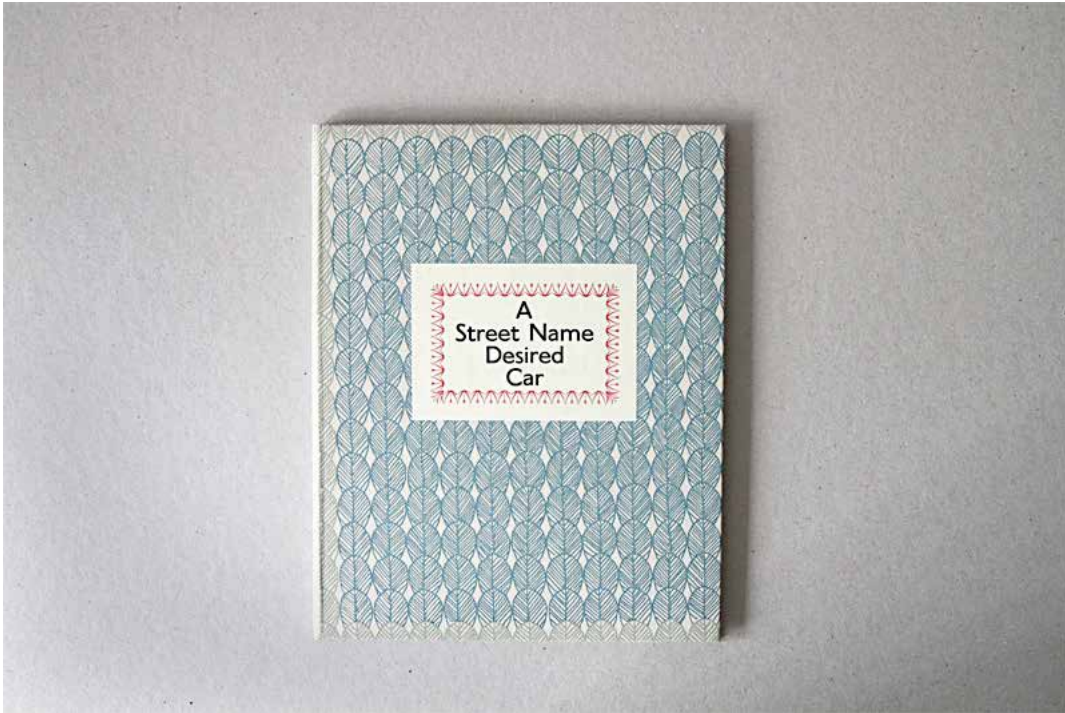
### **35. Book handling: Alexei Brodovitch's *Portfolio* (1950-2) magazine**

Rationale: The inclusion of real artefacts within a publication rather than reproductions of such, establishes a different set of conditions through which the reader has to navigate and form intertextual associations.

Insight: Brodovitch's keen eye for layout was based on a fearless exploitation of the rhythmic potential of image, text and gestural drawing, echoing El Lizzitsky's notion of the kinetics of succeeding pages. In *Portfolio*, his own celebrated annual of all the best visual material produced with collaborating editor Frank Zachary, Brodovitch employed a number of strategies to set this publication apart. By choosing a stapled binding, hidden beneath a wrap-around dust jacket, *Portfolio* was not restricted to the limitations of a standard folded sectional and glue binding publication has. Inside Issue 2, to illustrate a feature on an artisan manufacturer of French marbled paper, Brodovitch inserted an original piece of marbled paper as a document, rather than a reproduction. The same issue also contains reproduced thin strips of film negatives, a visually unusual layout of material that is rarely seen on the printed page. When combined into the overall cover design of the magazine and its wraparound cover, the tiny fragments of film frames printed on the inner flaps poke out into view and contribute to the viewers experience of reading each double page spread. The inner flaps become a kind of extra framing device for the content, adding a visual paratext to the reading. Throughout the publication, Brodovitch provides even more than the exquisitely gravure printed content for the reader, experimenting with heavy weight and textural papers to hold artist's drawings, inserted letters and ephemera and an actual pair of 3D spectacles to use to view the 3D printed spreads. For Brodovitch, the experience of handling *Portfolio* was uppermost: his designs provided enhanced tactile, visual and conceptual challenges for the reader.

Conclusion: The inclusion of real artefacts rather than their reproductions in a publication, creates a hypertextual link to their origins. The inner sides of a book cover,





Practice piece *A Street Name Desired Car* (2012)



Practice piece *A Street Name Desired Car* (2012)

especially their outer edges can act as a framing device for inner content.

### **36. Practice Piece: A Street Name Desired Car (2012)**

*Eleven unmounted C-type prints enclosed within a vintage wallpaper folder, letterpress label. 19.5x24.5cm. Edition of 10*

Rationale: This project reused images taken from my own archive of plotland developments. The idea was to further explore the use of c-type photographic prints as the sole vehicle for reproduction, this time as single prints that need to be handled by the reader.

Process: Jaywick Sands, Essex is a unique estate on the north side of the Thames Estuary lying a small distance from Canvey Island. Like many other coastal developments in Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk, Jaywick became established through the plotland movement. The idea for the piece was triggered by a wordplay on the Tennessee Williams play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, prompted by the Oulipo experiments of reordering and reassembling existing texts, as all of the roads within Jaywick are named after cars. I also decided to use empty white space within the individual photographic prints to suggest the appearance of a page support, as would be expected in the book form. During the construction of the work, the print edges became an issue that required careful consideration, this resulted in rounded rather than right-angled corners, as I felt that this would provide an additional paratextual element, linking the prints to vernacular photolab prints and also providing an unexpected curve that might be explored by the reader's fingertips. These rounded edges were created with a hand punch after receiving the prints back from the lab. Rounded corners would not show the signs of repeated handling that standard right angle corners would do.

Insight: Providing a set of individual prints instead of a sequence of pages in a codex or accordion fold, created a more open ended reading experience. Once the cover is opened flat, a single stack of prints sit on the recto waiting to be handled. Observing readers, they explored the contents by placing a print onto the verso, rebuilding the stack one print at a time. This results in each printed image being viewed in two different locations and being viewed as part of two different spreads. Watching different readers interact with the book was interesting too – as few chose to return the prints to the starting point, meaning the next reader encountered the piece in a different order. This kind of reading/ handling experience links with the examination



Practice piece *A Street Name Desired Car* (2012)



Practice piece *Nothing, not even a bite* (2012)

of prints in a portfolio, more than flipping pages in a codex-form book. As such, the very act of interrogating the material sets up a challenge outside the readers' horizon of expectations.

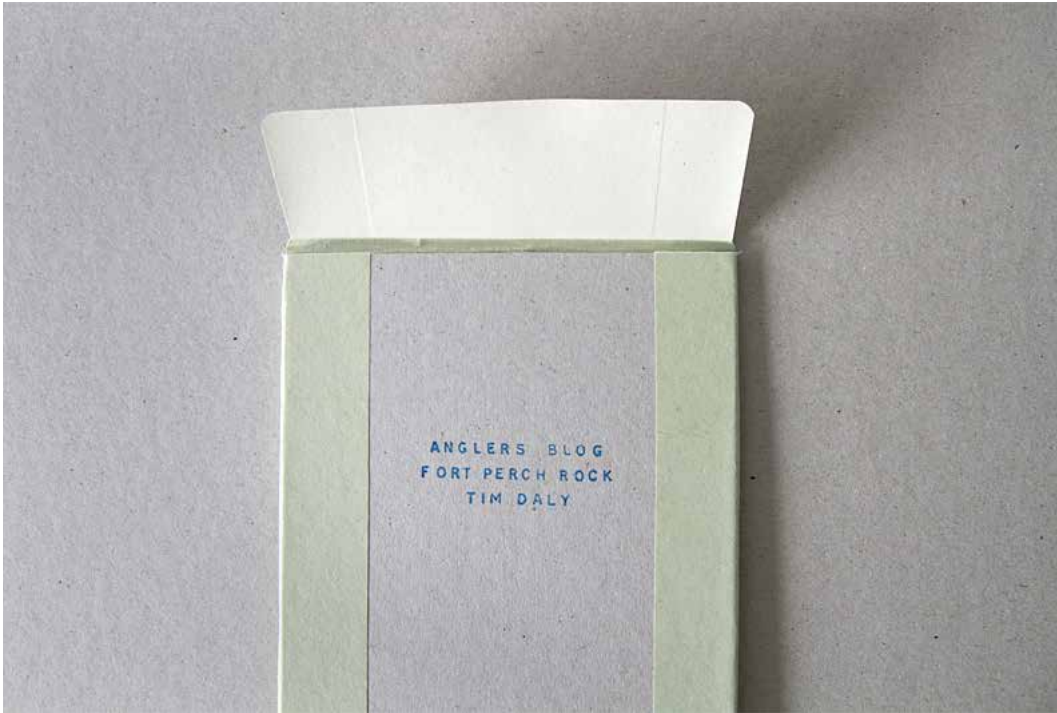
Conclusion: Reader reception of a loose-leaf work held within a folio-type container can be influenced by print size, shape and also the reading support.

### **37. Practice Piece: Nothing, not even a bite (2012)**

*Angler's blog, Fort Perch Rock, New Brighton Fifty-four loose C-type prints within a laminated sugar paper envelope, letterpress label. 13.5x29cm*

Rationale: This piece was made after the chance discovery of an angler's blog, creating a dilemma in knowing how best to reproduce this extensive collection of online vernacular material. This was an ideal opportunity to explore the notion of loose-leaf, folio-style books, but I felt that the large volume of material required a new solution.

Process: The blog was extensive and seemingly unmoderated. Within it however were some unusual images most notably, examples of unique fish-based selfies. In addition, were tersely typed advice, emitted from mostly male contributors who were not comfortable expressing themselves in the written word. Epigrammatic, surreal and often poignant, these brief textual reflections made the blog highly personalised and less self-conscious than other social media forums. A grid of images were printed as small c-type prints, with a white panel and two rounded corners introduced to suggest to the reader, a recommended way of handling. This white tab functions like the bottom edge of a Polaroid print, by encouraging readers to take hold in a specific place. While the individual text entries were presented unedited, the choice of type and layout proved to be an issue. With all fonts suggesting a kind of spoken accent, my task was to avoid aestheticising the words through typography. So, text was printed as white on a neutral grey block and these were printed as the same size, shape and finish as the images. The idea of using an envelope was to reflect the idea of "posting" on the blog, and a way of having a simple container which could both store and release the material in a different way to a codex-form book. So, I constructed a long thin envelope by laminating light green sugar paper, as I was still exploring how fugitive (and therefore useful) this material could be. Looking at packages of souvenir photo prints at this time, the plain, perfunctory envelope container allows the contents to be scattered or tipped out.



Practice piece *Nothing, not even a bite* (2012)



Practice piece *Nothing, not even a bite* (2012)

Insight: The concept for the piece relies on the printed contents being shaken out of the envelope, thereby falling on the table in a scattered, unordered way. This enables the reader to access the information differently each time and allows them to make connections between different elements of the material. The title for the book was taken from the most poignant of entries on the blog, a phrase that seemed to sum up the existential despair expressed by winter anglers fishing the hard-won waters of the mouth of the River Mersey. The label was created by a craft letterpress collaborator one of three labels for three books created at the same time. At this point I was still exploring the idea of using my family members, many of whom have and continue to work in the printing industry, to collaborate on my works. In retrospect, the collaborator didn't have enough linkage with the subject for it to be meaningful for the reader, but I am still interested in developing collaborations for future projects. Once complete, the piece was exhibited at CCRAM, University of Chester (2012) and in the Chester Literary Festival the following year. On both occasions, it was revealing to watch readers encounter the piece and it became necessary to provide instructions on what to do in the first instance. Many readers were compelled to create grids from the separate prints, organising and arranging as they saw fit. Although the piece was exhibited on its own reading table with chair, some were reluctant to sit down and take time to view the material, perhaps feeling self-conscious amongst other visitors. In retrospect the physical scattering of content did draw attention to the irrelevance of codex-bound sequencing, perhaps echoing Higgins (1982: online) observation that,

The book is, then, the container of provocation. We open it and are provoked to match our horizons with those implied by the text.

Conclusion: The process of opening a loose-leaf work held within a folio-type container can be designed to reveal random, unordered content to the reader.

### **38. Practice Piece: Municipal Retouching (2013)**

Rationale: de Silvey's (2012) notion of palliative curation, i.e. the positive management of decline and recirculation of matter rather than preservation at all costs, has a very interesting link with my practice, especially the idea of recirculating actual archive material within the book form. Municipal Retouching chronicles the active retouching that exists in the residential back streets of Florence, Italy.



Practice piece *Municipal Retouching* (2013)



Practice piece *Municipal Retouching* (2013)

Process: This idea drew its source concept from Ruskin's essay *Mornings in Florence* (1875-77), where the author bemoaned the destruction of old buildings and the retouching of historic paintings, as 'miserable repainting'. Likening himself to a kind of cultural emergency service, Ruskin strove 'in a fierce and steady struggle to save all I can every day, as a fireman from a smouldering ruin, history or aspect.' While the traditional ochre painted external plasterwork is typical of the region, Florentine public sensibility seeks to restore, repair and retouch flat walls, often external to the very cultural artefacts they seek to protect. The duty of the Florentine retouchers lead them to cover large swathes of plaster with new paint yet rarely with sufficient opacity to remove traces of the original surface. To maintain civic standards, domestic and public walls are retouched on a regular basis, creating unintentionally exquisite patches of painted plaster, displaying complex layering of colour in abstract forms, overlaying new against aged, sharing complex formal associations, unintentionally albeit, to the paintings of Sean Scully, Per Kirkeby and Peter Kinley.

Insight: The documentation of these passages of vernacular painterliness, combined with their combination into triptychs on c-type photographic paper was the primary motivation of the piece. The original images were captured on a cameraphone which had the advantage of a large, flat display screen which made cropping, composition and reframing more purposeful and less accidental as the display allows you to see a flat representation of the image before you commit to capture. The images were then grouped together into threes, using details at their edges to create visual links on a printed photographic page. Nine individual pages were made, which were contained in a neutral, folded linen cover. There is no fixed order to looking at the images and the presence of three flat flaps enables to reader to lay out three prints of three images, to see a simultaneous grouping of nine together. As each viewer interacts with the prints/pages the repacking/ viewing order changes, so the material is encountered differently each time. The format, shape and size of the individual prints required a two handed interaction from the reader, the same kind of manual handling required of a precious print or artefact in a portfolio case.

Conclusion: Silver-based photographic paper made into loose-leaf prints held within a folio-type container provides the highest dynamic range for photographic reproduction. And makes a hypertextual link with the folio format.





Practice piece *Municipal Retouching* (2013)



Sasha Litvintseva *Island of Baikal* (2012) detail

### **39. Book handling: RISO printed books of Sasha Litvintseva's *Island of Baikal* (2012) and Stuart Griffith's *Pig's Disco* (2013)**

Insight: Ditto Press is part publisher, distributor and artisan printing service, offering an alternative to traditional and digital litho printing who are partly responsible for the emergence of RISO print as a reprographic vehicle. RISO is a cheap, colour reprographic technology invented in the early 1990's, which has since largely been replaced by colour laser copiers in the business sector. Based on soya ink and a stencil process, the RISO effectively produces a silkscreen-like result without the time-consuming preparation and printing. Despite being marginalised by efficient and more accurate digital copiers, the RISO has now been adopted by the creative community for its cost-effectiveness, the use of a non-CMYK colour space, unconventional spot colours and the coarse half-tone screening which looks like workaday print from the 1960's. While photographers have traditionally instructed print technicians to operate the press, the simplicity of the RISO effectively allows the author to engage directly with the materials and reprography of print. Commenting on working with photographers on book projects, Barral (2013:6) recounts,

Photographers and artists rarely perform the offset printing of their own work because the process is disconnected from any DIY digital or dark-room printing and requires a great deal of experience, knowledge and skill to operate the press and to translate digital files, prints or film into workable separations for the different printing plates of the press.

The RISO press is used effectively by Ditto as printers, publishers and distributors of such titles as Lawrence Hamburger's *Frozen Chicken Train Wreck* (2013), a collection of South African newspaper publicity posters; as printers of Sasha Litvintseva's *Island of Baikal* (2012) and printer/ publisher of Stuart Griffith's *Pig's Disco* (2013). The unconventional RISO print quality provides an additional paratextual element to photographer's books by forefronting half-tone screening and colour separation as part of the creative process rather than making it invisible and subservient to the image. Sasha Litvintseva's *Island of Baikal*, a JG Ballard-esque book, mixes captioned photographs with misregistered printing, deliberate moire and a coarse halftone dot, all the more typical of mass produced print in a limited edition of 100. This mixing of photography with vernacular printing creates a book object that celebrates the opposite kind of traditional reprography associated with these photographer's books which seek to mimic the real photographic print.



Practice piece *Coney Island* (2014)

Conclusion: The low-tech visual syntax of the RISO press is emerging as a potential method of reprography.

#### **40. Practice Piece: Coney Island (2014)**

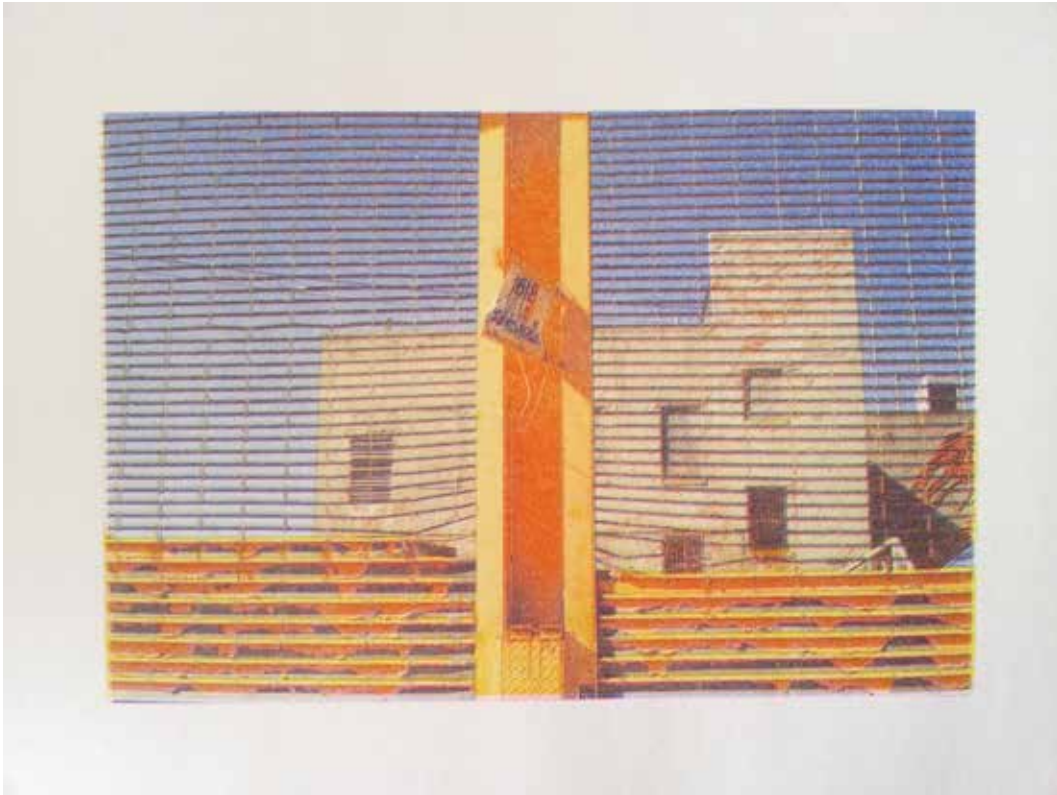
*Sixteen unmounted RISO/ colour laser hybrid prints enclosed within grey boards bound with calico ties. 46x33cm. Edition of 5.*

Rationale: Coney Island is a material prototype created to explore the potential of RISO printing as a reprographic vehicle for my practice and the notion of using a folio container to explore sequencing and reader interaction.

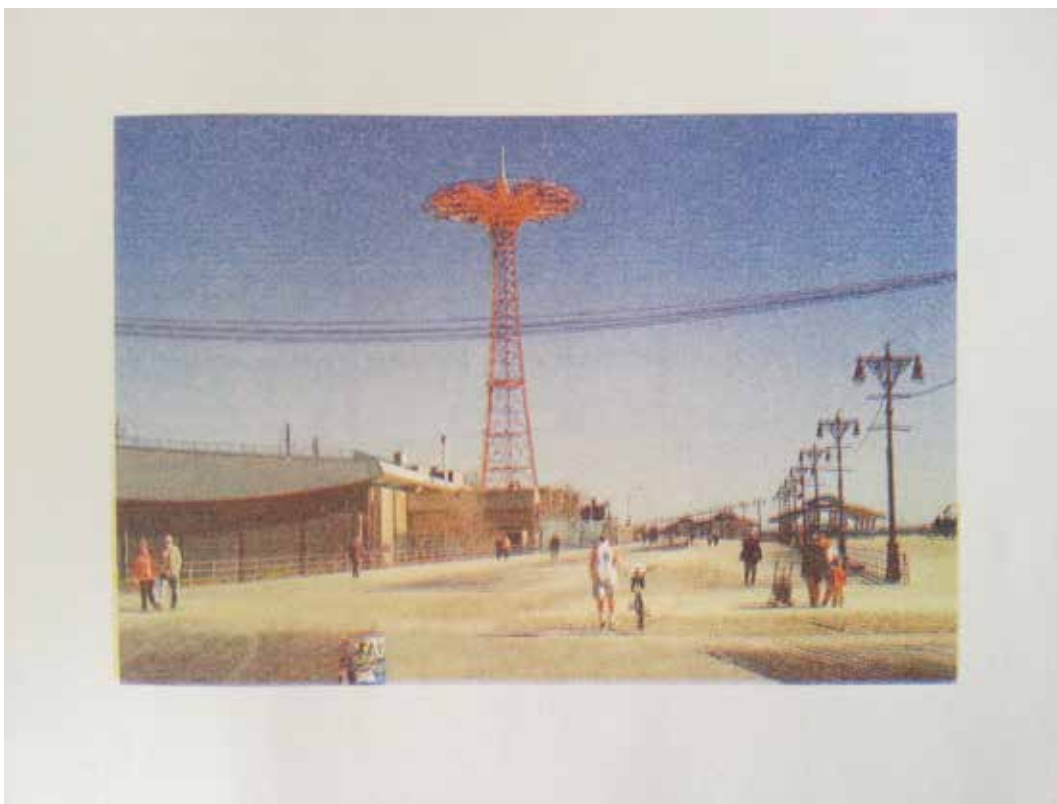
Process: Each image had to be colour separated beforehand, working with the limitation of red, blue, black and yellow rather than the typical cyan, magenta, yellow and black. Making the separations is a very different experience to printing photographs and forces you into making an additional intervention, the creation of four greyscale prints per image, one for each of the RISO colours. The dot screen was introduced at this stage too. For this project, our yellow RISO drum was broken, so the yellow pass was made on a colour laser copier first. These were then overprinted on the RISO, each with red, blue then finally black. In operation, as each colour was progressively laid on, it was impossible to tell how the print would look until the final black pass. As the RISO had to make a new stencil each time a new colour was printed, there was plenty of scope for deliberate misregistration. Unlike precision lithography, older RISO presses have some inconsistency when drawing the paper across the drum, but this can be controlled by an alignment tool which can shift the impression left, right, higher or lower to suit.

Insight: In retrospect, controlled deliberate misregistration created unique prints each time rather than indistinguishable, exactly repeatable copies. Using a red rather than the more invisible magenta resulted in very bright reds in the final prints, as artificial looking as the colour in typical picture postcards as featured in Martin Parr's *Boring Postcards* (2002) and the *John Hinde Butlin's Postcards* (2005) also authored by Parr. The combination of this colour substitution with misregistration and the grey, newsprint-like paper, creates a nostalgic background undertone and transports the reader to their previous experiences in handling vernacular printed matter.

Insight: The nature of reprography in book production is based on using CMYK inks to mimic photographic imagery. As Harvey (2013:4) confirms,



Practice piece *Coney Island* (2014)



Practice piece *Coney Island* (2014)

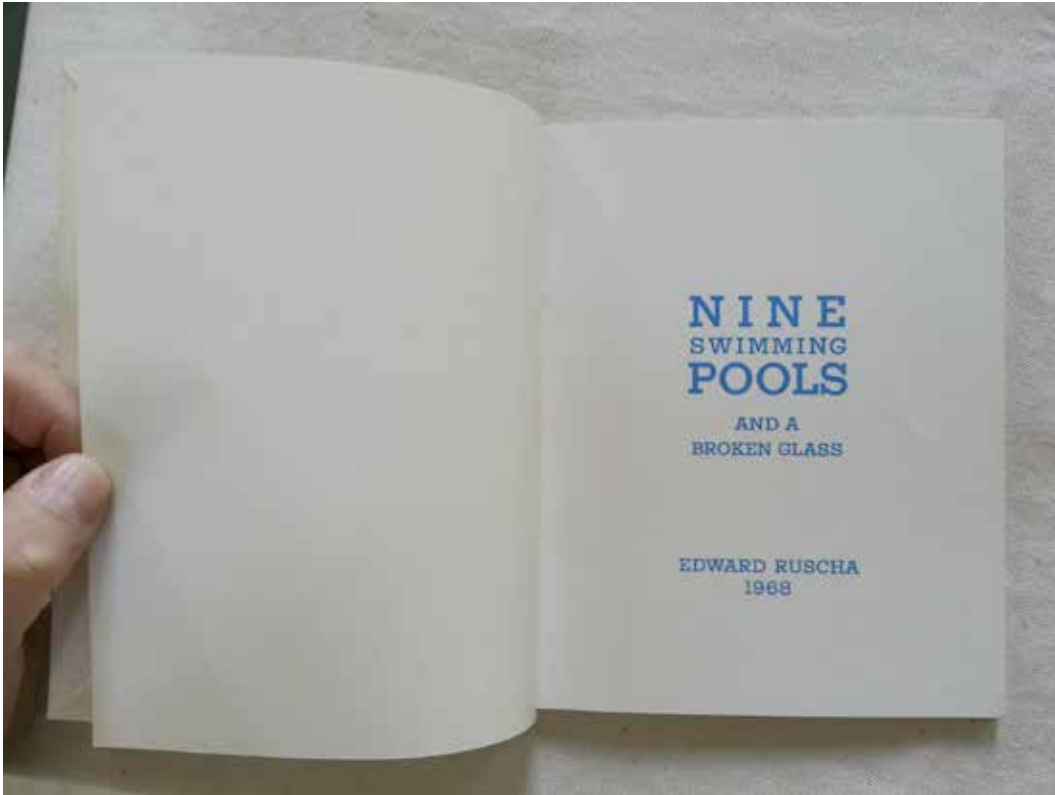
For photography, printing in CMYK is like translating language. The two languages might not always share the same words, but a good translation can express the sense of the original words. The decisions that are made on press about that translation are never made by one person, but are a collective effort made with a group.

However, with RISO printing, the mimicry of a photographic print by CMYK is not achievable. Instead, the process permits the creation of another kind of original iteration of the work which has its own visual syntax. This additional versioning of an existing work is also evidenced in Gareth McConell's Sorika imprint's reworking of Tom Wood's book, *Looking for Love* (2015), also planned and printed using the RISO by Ditto Press.

Conclusion: Deliberate misregistration and the non-CMYK colour space used by the RISO is effective in mimicking early colour photo-reproduction of postcards and early photo-reprography.

**41. Book handling: Ruscha, E (1968) *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass*. 18x14cm 64p. Four colour offset. Three editions totalling 4,400 copies**

Insight: On first inspection, Ruscha's book has a monochrome cover which belies the colour photographs within – these are the first examples of colour photography that Ruscha employed in his books, at a time when colour photography was still seen as a vernacular medium. The cover simply states *Nine Swimming Pools* and is wrapped in a glassine jacket. Yet a further qualifying statement is included on the title page – that of “and a broken glass” which provides an unexpected paratextual element to the work. The colour images are sparse, there are only ten colour plates within the book and forty pages are left deliberately blank. There are no captions and there is only one double page spread. The rhythm and pace of the content is unpredictable. Ruscha (in Engberg 1999:96) has claimed that that the rationale for including the blank pages ‘was the cheapest way to have the colour printed’ and the extra thickness ‘gave body to the book.’ The chalky blue pastel colour of the pools is echoed by the choice of solid cyan ink for the title page and the final image of the broken glass is set too against a blue background, possibly a tabletop. The narrow gutter around each image and the deeper border beneath are typical of Ruscha's image placement on the page, a stylistic device that lessens the visual impact of the underlying paper material and its surface. What we are presented with is an uncropped



Ed Ruscha *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass* (1968)



Ed Ruscha *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass* (1968)

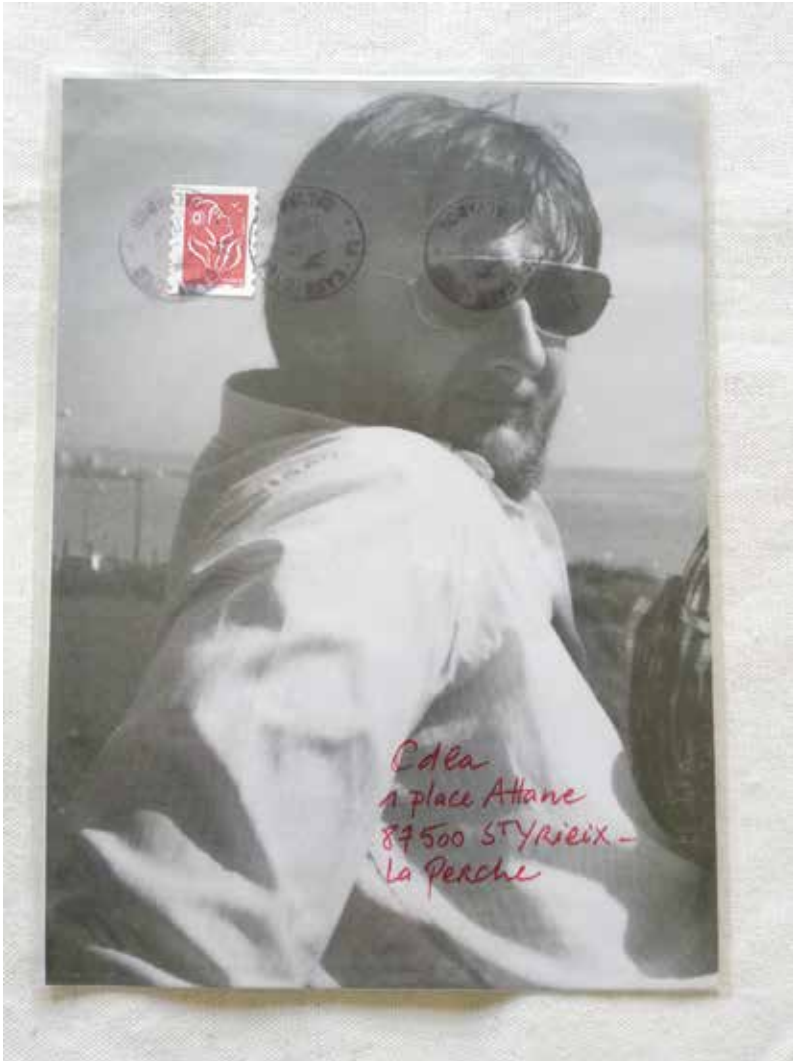
image as big as it can be reproduced on the chosen paper, but without evoking connotations of the luxury of a generous border of an editioned print. A similar ratio of white border to page and image size can be seen in Walker Evans' *American Photographs* (1939), which uses a blank verso page together with an image on the recto. Conversely, the narrow border is contemporary with typical mini-lab vernacular colour print processing of the day – perhaps a decision to forefront the anti-photography element of his practice.

Conclusion: The colour reproduction of photographs in books has multiple visual syntaxes which can be linked to vernacular photography and the timeline of photoreproduction.

#### **42. Book handling: Documentation Celine Duval: found photographs and book objects**

Insight: Celine Duval (1963-) works with found photographs and makes unique books and multiples that play with the juxtaposition of images on the printed page, challenge the navigation of the codex form and engage with the potential of networked distribution. Duval's major work to date, *Revue en 4 images* (2001-06) is a simple proposition. Four found monochrome images are printed on a single A3 sheet. The sheet is folded then packaged into a transparent envelope, ready to dispatch to buyers/ subscribers through surface mail. In total, there are sixty *Revues* to collect. Like mail and networked art, the work becomes unique by being marked by the process of addressing, franking and personalization. The experience of subscribing to the work creates a relationship outside the usual book buyer's expectations and Duval frequently adds handwritten messages to the packages and the placement of postage stamps, franking and address text adds an unexpected paratextual layer to the piece. Although the material is retrieved photo-trouve – the seemingly anonymous images become edited and arranged into highly idiosyncratic collections. Like Hans Peter Feldmann's *Album* (2008), Duval's assemblings perhaps reflect even more on the nature of the printed photograph. In *Tous ne Deviendront pas Artiste* (2002) [*Not all become artists*], Duval creates unique pairings on each double page spread. In some, the pairing echoes a common visual element, in others images seem to condone, explain or undermine the other twin. Duval creates relationships that go beyond the perfunctory colour and geometric connections favoured in many modernist photographer's books, such as Robert Adam's *Listening to the River* (1994). Duval's pairings require a different kind of reading, one where we speculate





Celine Duval Revue en 4 images (2011)



Dennis Wheatley crime dossier novels (1936-38)

rather than recognize, where we come to new conclusions rather than be rewarded for scholarly analysis. Like Feldmann, with whom Duval collaborated in a publication called *Cahier d'Images – album de famille* (2001), Duval isn't a photographer in the traditional sense, but one who employs photographic images in their work. In the collection of the CDLA, no.55 *Sunglasses* from *Revue en 4 images* (2001-06) is retained in its polythene postage sleeve. Like traditional subscription partwork publications, Duval also supplies a die-cut box to act as an archive container of the fascicles, itself designed as a parody of a book with photographed cut edges. Whilst Duval's works do not forefront the materiality of the photographic print, they do draw upon the aesthetic of the mundane, workaday photo-reprography found in brochures and promotional material.

Conclusion: The distribution of and packaging of a book can also create hypertextual links to other material entities.

#### **43. Book handling: Dennis Wheatley/ J.G. Links crime dossier novels *Who Killed Robert Prentice, Murder off Miami, Mallinsay Massacre and Herewith the Clues* (1936-38)**

Insight: In the 1930's, successful crime writer Dennis Wheatley collaborated with JG Links, to publish four facsimile crime dossiers. Narrated by Wheatley's protagonists through typed letters, police notes, staged crime scene photographs and, most interestingly of all, fake artefacts, the dossiers invited their audience to engage in a kind of visual puzzle, through discovery, assimilation and reassembly. 'Evidence' from the various crimes were presented in the dossiers as human hair, blood stained fabric samples, a cyanonide tablet and other clues, encapsulated in glassine bags or stapled to the pages. The importance of these publications lies in the potential for the dossier format to act as a container for recirculated documentary matter and, excluding the cryptic/ detective angle, the opportunity to present a loosely threaded narrative that engages the reader in a journey of speculation and discovery. Hampton (2015: 106) describes the dossier novels as 'conceptual in their basis,' and received by contemporary readers who 'appraise this display of many different linguistic codes and their relationships.' The crime dossiers used different size pages, weights and colours, facsimile handwriting and typescript which are simply bound by three drilled holes and a tied, figure of eight ribbon. Each book demands a different kind of scrutiny from the reader, they are presented with a challenge to solve by way of examining various visual, textual and material clues along the way.



Dennis Wheatley crime dossier novels (1936-38) insert details



Dennis Wheatley crime dossier novels (1936-38) insert and fake evidence details

While these works sit astride both the movable book and board games traditions (Wheatley and Links went on to develop board games such as *Invasion* (1938), *Blockade* (1939) and the later *Alibi* (1953)) the contingent dossier format went largely unused until artists such as Christian Boltanski made works that explored archive matter. The dossier, a kind of generic folder/ receptacle used to store important papers for future examination also has a link to the storage boxes and folders held within many of our libraries and archives, but in this instance the materiality of the dossiers allowed readers to think that they were handling the very artefacts implied in the narrative. Crime-linked artist's publications in the pseudo-dossier form such as Valerio Spada's *Gomorrah Girl* (2011) which chronicles a teenage death by interweaving his own post event photographs with police forensic documents from the case, as two books interwoven. A more complex presentation is Christian Patterson's *Redheaded Peckerwood* (2012), described by Durden (2012:online) 'as modelled to a certain extent on crime dossiers devised by Dennis Wheatley and J.G. Links, yet [having] no mystery to solve.' Patterson himself reports (in Jones 2013:26), that he

wanted the work to act as a more complex, enigmatic visual crime dossier — a mixed collection of cryptic clues, random facts and fictions that the viewer had to deal with on their own.

Conclusion: The dossier is a much underused format and had the potential to house loose-leaf prints, inserts and ephemera and permit the addition of future content.

#### **44. Book handling: Long Grove archives at the Surrey History Centre**

Insight: In 2014, I discovered that an archive of books and photographic prints from Long Grove hospital, the same location of my practice project (21) Case Histories, that I'd shot in 1995, had been established during the intervening years. The collection had been built up by archivist Julian Pooley who had visited the site between 1994-97, retrieving artefacts such as medical registers that were otherwise destined for disposal. The archive contained some material that I'd already photographed in-situ back in 1995 and also new material that I'd never seen before. Due to the statutory 100 year embargo on medical records, I was only able to view materials from 1907-1914. In addition to handling the artefacts, I made photographs of the material, taking the decision to also photograph my hand in the act of touching the pages, prints and books. The visit to the archive was a profound experience as I had the chance to re-encounter materials that I assumed were destroyed and to extend



The Long Grove archives at the Surrey History Centre (2014)



The Long Grove archives at the Surrey History Centre (2014)

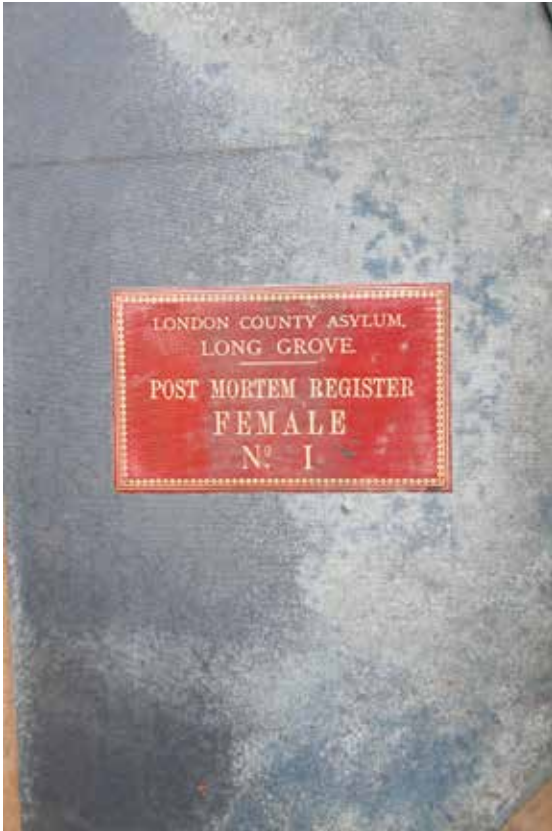
my understanding of the story by seeing new material artefacts. The visit triggered a recollection about the material properties of the record books in the hospital – the copperplate script, ruled ledgers, laid paper textures, hand tooled leather covers, patinated by a hundred years existence but also from more recent damage caused by abandonment and vandalism. The hospital also had its own print shop, using spirit duplicators and stencil (RISO) copiers to manage the extensive clerical functions associated with the recording of patient admission and medical observation. I intend to incorporate some of this newly discovered material in a revised practice piece, which this time will create an editioned work rather than a one-off unique book.

Conclusion: The photography of archive materials for later reproduction made as 'point of view' images create hypertextual associations of surrogate touch. Packets, folders and boxes as used in archive storage are ideal containers for my multiple content works.

#### **45. Practice Piece: Long Grove (2015)**

*C-type prints, colour laser prints, paper ephemera, altered book sections, enclosed within grey boards bound with calico ties. 46x33cm. Edition of 25.*

Rationale: It became apparent that if I photographed details from the archive books, they could be adapted and interwoven into a second version of the work. End papers, edge details, alphabet tabulations, letters and ledger entries each with their own distinctive handwriting could extend my documentary photographs from an aestheticised study of remains, to being an actual distributed archive in itself. Seeing the new material at SHC, alongside handling and reading the Wheatley/Links dossiers enabled me to visualise a new practice piece which brings together many of the separate strands of my research practice. In addition to the archive material, I've also rephotographed the hospital site which has since been redeveloped into an exclusive residential estate, retaining many of the original buildings and landscape features from before. I've also sourced recent images of the interiors of these conversions from the Land Registry – these are domestic scenes taken from estate agents brochures, some of which have recognisable elements when compared to my original photographs taken in 1995. The combination of all these different sources, original and recent photographic prints made by me and also found within the SHC archive, ephemera, ledger excerpts, material change through ageing and vandal damage, all combine to create a richly textural end piece.



The Long Grove archives at the Surrey History Centre (2014)



The Long Grove archives at the Surrey History Centre (2014)

During the research for this final piece, I've encountered John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* (1939), which contains a short passage containing many symmetries to the Long Grove story, so I'm going to insert this as an excised ready-made into my book. *Grapes of Wrath* will add a politicised, hypertextual layer to the story, that of forced transportation.

The challenge in making this work is to avoid the elegaic, recontextualising of a complex topic. These concerns are mirrored by Susan Hiller, who when describing the challenges in making the piece, *From the Freud Museum* (in Shanks 2004: 80) she states,

I've worked by collecting objects, orchestrating relationships, and inventing fluid taxonomies, while not excluding myself from them. My starting points were artless, worthless artefacts and materials, rubbish, discards, fragments, trivia and reproductions which seemed to carry an aura of memory and to hint at meaning something, something that made me want to work with them and on them.

While Kelly (2010:67) suggests that Hiller's work 'resist[s] the totalising, colonising pretensions of a second order discourse of explanation and contextualization,' an alternative viewpoint could see Hiller's use of bespoke archival boxes set within an epic vitrine was in itself a kind of fixed, formatted codex. I've incorporated the dossier format and loose leaf prints in this work to create an unbound box/archive of loose material rather than a fixed codex form with inserts.

Conclusion: The combination of multiple loose-leaf content drawn from observed and archive sources can create new work which itself can function as a distributed rather than public archive.

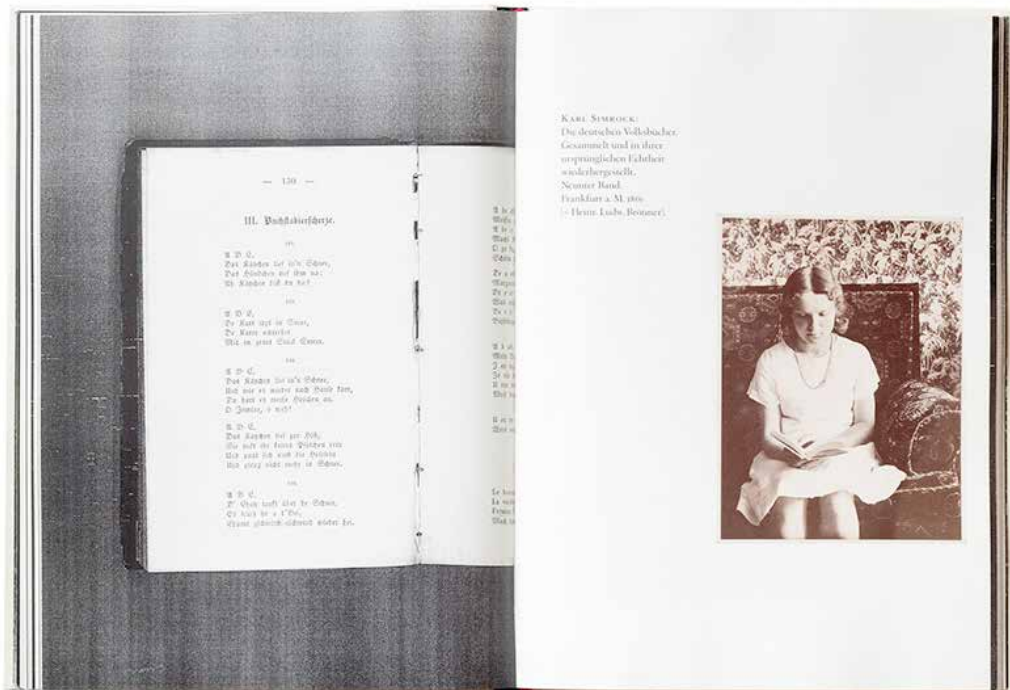
#### **46. Book handling: Gunter Bose books**

Insight: Collections of previously unseen archive material form the basis of many contemporary photographers' books, setting the author in a curatorial/ information retrieval role. Such examples have been created by Gunter Bose, a collector of German vernacular photography, a virtuoso typographer and Professor at the Institut für Buchkunst in Leipzig. Bose has created three titles which gather together previously unseen vernacular photography: *Photomaton* (2011) a collection of photobooth self-portraits, *Big Zep* (2013) anonymous images of the Zeppelins and





Gunter Bose *Photomaton* (2011)



Gunter Bose *Lesen* (2005)

perhaps the most interesting of all *Lesen* (2005), which is a collection of found books and images of people reading. Unlike Andre Kertesz' *On Reading* (1971), an album of observational photographs of bibliophiles, Bose presents more complex material that requires a different kind of visual scrutiny. In *Lesen*, Bose adopts a number of constraints: each double page spread contains a found vernacular image of a reader placed opposite a photocopied book page. Each spread presents a text & image challenge, one that ultimately suggests connections to the reader that are greater than the sum of the individual parts. Some of these connections give of themselves easily, such as the image of a schoolboy opposite an engraving of a classroom scene, but other spreads are much more cryptic and ambiguous. Unlike the limited reprographic scrutiny of police forensic photocopy records in Spada's *Gomorra Girl* (2010), Bose takes this opportunity to explore the nuances of replicating low quality originals with high quality processes and *Lesen* delivers four colour litho reproductions of poor black and white photocopies. The result is unexpected – Bose's elaborate transposition of a perfunctory copier page into shimmering four colour monochrome adds to the experience of handling the book. The content is bookended by similar reproductions of four black electrostatic spreads made on the photocopier, rich with noise and with the promise of dirtying your fingers with excess transfer toner. Bose's typographic and reprographic investment is visible in all of his books, provides a underpinning paratextual element to the imagery – the book object uses it's materials to create an enhanced sensory experience and one that awakens the reader to the potential of reprography, albeit without the use of light-sensitive photographic processes.

Conclusion: Hi-tech reprography of poor material originals can create an unexpected haptic experience. Reprography can re-enact rather reproduce or simulate original works.

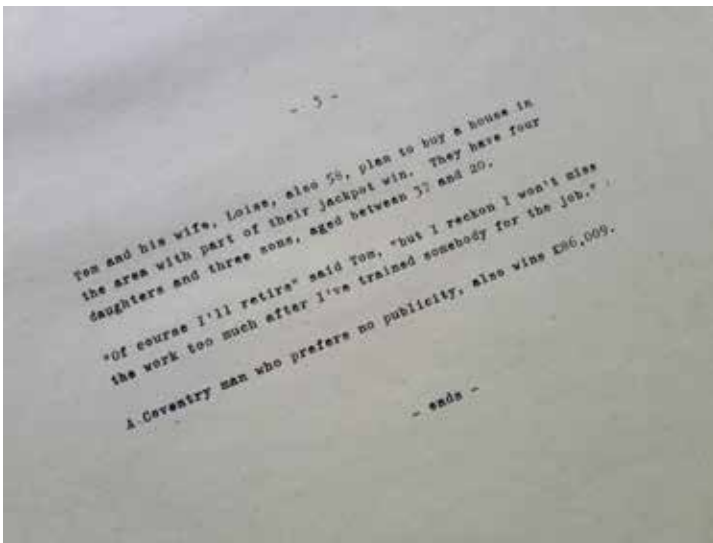
#### **47. Practice Piece: Desires No Publicity (2015)**

Rationale: This piece was made after gaining permission from the National Football Museum to view their archive of Littlewoods Pools material. Aiming to view ephemera from the Spot the Ball campaign, I instead came across an envelope of press photographs and documents of winners who had requested anonymity.

Process: The tactile nature of the vintage press photographs, silver gelatin prints on thick baryta paper support, recalled the complex time-consuming process of publicity and photography in the 1970's. I've reshot and reprinted these images, each of



Practice piece *Desires No Publicity* (2015)



Practice piece *Desires No Publicity* (2015)



Practice piece *Time zone pets* (2015)

which employed a different tactic for anonymising the subject, as thick, materially significant prints housed in a manila folder, together with photocopies taken from press releases of the time. On the reverse of the original prints was the identity of the winners, so I've used ink made from silver nitrate solution to write names on the reverse of the new prints, invisible at first, but like my practice piece 29, emerging with exposure to light.

Insight: Rematerializing original documents and prints creates a question: at which point does the reproduction of an auratic, isolated, unobtainable image cease to be a facsimile, by implication a lesser value copy, but become an individually rematerialised object in its own right?

Conclusion: Fugitive silver nitrate as a writing fluid when combined with loose-leaf prints held within a folio-type container can create content that emerges slowly as the book is handled.

#### **48. Practice Piece: Time zone pets (2015)**

Insight: This work re-uses a collection of promotional images taken of clocks in the form of pet portraits, many of which are unintentionally humorous due to the placement of the dial against the face of the animal. Circular in shape, the images recalled badges and other photo based souvenirs that Parr (in Lane 2008: online) suggests, are 'the items that are left behind after momentous and not so momentous events. They are the shadows of human foible.' Remaking these images into something other than their digital original forms, required them to be materialized for the first time i.e. given a physical presence when none such existed in the first place. I've made the circular shapes into printed stickers and developed a kind of conceptual game for the reader to engage with.

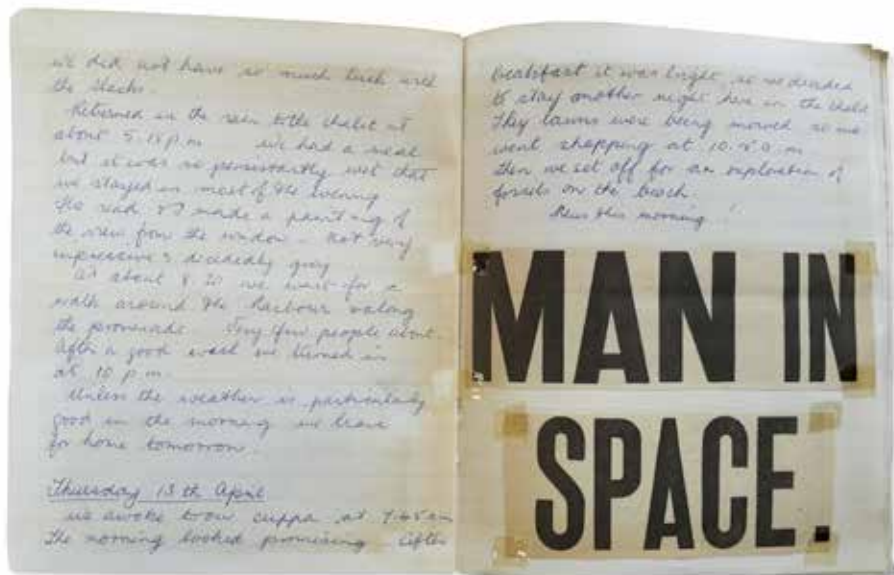
Conclusion: Content can be designed as a kind of visual puzzle or game for the reader to engage with and solve.

#### **49. Practice Piece: Mirror for Sale (2015)**

Insight: This work gathers photographs from eBay sellers have taken of their mirrors for sale. Shooting items for sale with portable cameraphones has resulted in many novel strategies for photographing a mirror without getting yourself in the picture. In this work I've used digital c-type prints which have been made in a cameraphone size and shape, to make explicit the link between the shooting device and resulting



Practice piece *Mirror for Sale* (2015)



The Illustrated diaries of Eileen Burke at The Canal and River Trust.

image. Made with rounded corners, the prints need to be scrutinised at close quarters to spot the presence of the near-invisible photographer. It is only when they are handled close-up and as part of a sustained sequence, that the reader becomes fully engaged in the concept.

Conclusion: The shape of silver-based photographic prints can allude to their origins and also introduce a haptic, tactile element to the work.

### **50. Book handling: The Illustrated diaries of Eileen Burke at The Canal and River Trust.**

Insight: From 1960 to 1979, schoolteacher Eileen Burke created twenty-three illustrated travel diaries with her friend Flo Boyde. Apart from their social history value, the twenty diaries are a unique example of leisure activity as documented by a keen amateur photographer and artist. The diaries are a kind of vernacular prequel to Stephen Shore's *Road Trip Journal* (2008) and are full of photographs and travel ephemera mixed with an Ian Breakwell-style deadpan narrative. Eileen's diaries are richly textured containing a curious mixture of observational watercolours and souvenirs, linked together by her highly characteristic writing. The hardback diaries were made in a scrapbook style, using thick sticky Sellotape to anchor collected ephemera and towpath finds.

Conclusion: Vernacular journals constructed from multiple material constituents provide a rich handling experience for the reader.

### **51. Practice Piece: Mixed metaphors final version (2015)**

The final form of this book was made after a period of reflection on piece 23. During the interim, I discovered an archive register of inland waterway boat names, through Douglas Maas' spotter's guide to *Inland Waterways Boat Listing* (1997) and an updated database from The Canal & River Trust. Once in possession of some 34,000 boat names registered on the UK waterways and together with ideas gleaned from viewing the Eileen Burke diaries, it became clear that my work could be revised and improved. The final form of the piece is a shallow rectangular box with several elements: trays of c-type prints, a specially made print-on-demand spotter's guide to boat names from the register, per letter and finally, a litho-printed postcard made of the 'Little Wanker' boat name, which readers may choose to keep or send to a friend. As such, the edition is restricted to 27, one for each of the 26 letters of the alphabet, plus one for numerical/ others.



Conclusion: Multiple forms of reprography within a single work can create hypertextual associations of the photographic print and the history of its varied reprographic syntaxes.





Handling event at the Chester Literary Festival 2013

### Interaction, display and presentation

In my research I have gathered feedback through dissemination events. Four events were staged where I could gather feedback about my own practice pieces. (See Appendix for details of dissemination events C, D, F and H).

In Event D, a reading/ handling event at a literary festival, guests reported that they were compelled by the invitation to handle the work. For this event each book was placed on a shelf, lecturn or table for reader scrutiny. Each book was left closed and beside lay instructions asking readers to return the book to its closed or unpacked form before moving on. In all there were eight pieces of work available for handling. As readers entered the room, a supplementary sheet of text was provided, giving short background details about each book. The space provided a quiet environment and allowed visitors to rotate around the pieces quietly, each taking time to examine the individual books. Each visitor stayed for at least 30 minutes and spent much longer examining the book object than a print alone. Visitors were compliant and followed instructions. All visitors took time to speak to me after they had examined the work – feeding back how they had felt, how the books revealed its subject to them. One visitor talked at length about handling the real ephemera presented in *Case Histories*, about how the actual objects compelled her to continue. One visitor talked about handling impregnated paper. Three visitors talked about *Returning Burton's Plunder* and how they were engaged by the dilemma.



Reading tables within *In Place of Architecture*, Bonington Gallery 2015



Artist Photographer as Publisher. CASC Gallery, University of Chester 2015



Walker Evans *Fortune* magazine spreads  
Artist Photographer as Publisher. CASC Gallery, University of Chester 2015

Event H was a small exhibition of books made by a wide range of different practitioners that I curated to support an undergraduate project. It centred on book production styles and deliberately contrasted works available for handling and other works that were displayed in vitrines. The zine-style publications of Café Royal Books and Preston is My Paris were available to handle, while Fortune magazine spreads by Walker Evans and books by Jake Tilson were only available to view in vitrines. My students engaged more with works that they could interrogate by hand, this encouraged them to make work in a similar vein, while the less available works in the vitrines were much less discussed and reflected upon.



Jake Tilson artists' books and *Atlas* magazine



*Cafe Royal Books* display of works for handling



## H. Further research

In addition to my research interest in the materiality of the printed photograph, the further areas of documentary photography, the vernacular landscape, curating photography as practice and humour, have impacted on my practice. In the following chapter, I will explain how these additional elements have contributed to my research and how they provide a structural foundation for my future work.

### Documentation, documentary photography and the book form

Documentary photography is intrinsically linked with observational gathering and was perceived by Barthes (1978:18) as 'a mechanical analogue of reality', and has historically been viewed as a second-tier practice. Kazin (in Allred 2010:9) projected that writers of documentary prose and photobooks accrue a 'vast granary of facts' constituting 'only a sub-literature', and who are unable to fuse isolated observations into a coherent form. This prejudice descends from the 1850's, when the reproduction of works of art was considered a primary use for the newly invented medium of photography (Font-Reaulx, 2006). Adolphe Braun's photographic reproductions of paintings in the Louvre as prints, proposed themselves as substitutes for the real things and were one of photography's earliest forays into photomechanical mass-production. However, where the tipped-in photographic prints within Thompson & Smith's *Street Life in London* (1877) and Annan's *The Old Closets and Streets of Glasgow* (1878) project themselves as indexical documents, the actuality faced by the downtrodden subjects was very different. Published at the end of the album format era in the pictorial, populist style, but just before the halftone revolution facilitated the reproduction of photographs in mass circulation titles, these two titles illustrate the beginning of photography's gradual uncoupling from its functional, evidential origins. Whilst early perceptions of photographic documentation saw it as representational of reality, we now understand it to be a plausible fiction of the real by both maker and reader recipient. As Henry (2003: 2) observed, 'the documentary photographer is always a participant witness and active fabricator of meaning, a producer of discourse.' Employing a conscious element of fabrication within a documentary approach is central to my practice, affording me the opportunity to engage readers in speculation, questioning and suspension of belief.

### Walker Evans

As David Levi-Strauss (in Roth 2001:98-99) observes in Walker Evans work '[his pictures] were thought to represent the thing itself, seemingly without intervention.

Yet they are documentary inventions of the highest order.' While Evans' and Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) is lauded as the definitive document of the Great Depression, the book is not without its own unintentional prejudice. Journalist Gay Talese (2010) observes that the book largely ignores the poor white sharecropper's subjugation of black farm co-workers, creating an invisible underclass in conditions little better than their descendants endured on slave plantations a hundred years earlier. Talese (2006:126) also recounts how Evans' images of 'freckled faced, somber, tight lipped' white sharecroppers were read in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* as symbols of 'enduring strength, stoicism and indifference to suffering.' Yet, while reporting in Selma, Alabama in 1965, Talese describes how the same austere facial expressions on white lynch mobs and opponents of Martin Luther King who 'could have been the sons and grandsons of the old sharecroppers Walker Evans photographed'. Such an astute observation illustrates the tenuous link between documentation and equivalence, and fictional versus indexical representation that documentary photography books present, underpinning the limitations of the evidential form of the mode.

Such authored photography books effectively become instruments of institutional order, preservation and classification. In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, Riggins (1994) detects an unresolved conflict between the authors' desire to present a neutral document of tenant farmer life within an inescapable language of radical subjectivity. When reading the book, we experience second hand the reproduction of material culture in the vitrine of the printed page, stripped away from its original context and framed through Agee's and Evans' aestheticised viewfinders. Yet in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, there is a further tension evident between the academic taxonomy of ethnographic observation and interpretive, artistic documentation. Agee's textual 'lists', designed to punctuate his stream of self-consciousness with a more inventorial tone, are also archive containers in themselves – imposing an external order, re-arranging the cultural setting and banishing ambiguity. This notion of the text/image book as a curated archive has for me, suggested potential future practice outcomes where the authorial intent of a privileged mediator is instead supplanted by that of a facilitator.

In Jeff Allred's *American Modernism and Documentary Depression* (2010:4), it is Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1937 New Deal proclamations that describe how documentary photography became aligned with the cultural dominant, how it became 'the inheritor..of the long-standing Western linkage of vision with knowledge and

mastery.' As the political and news medium of choice, documentary photography struck a problematic dialog between fiction and reality. After the deluge of popular picture-led publications of the 1930's, Company (2006) suggests that documentary photography in print, where no single image stands above the sequence, slipped into a popular literary structure that it hasn't yet emerged from. Suffering from the temptations of a commercial return, Dorothea Lange and Erskine Caldwell's *You Have Seen their Faces* (1937) is the high-water mark of editorial intervention presented as factual documentary. While Lange immortalised depression-era tenant farmers with a newly acquired heroic modernist style (developed on assignment in Russia), Caldwell simply fabricated captions, falsely ventriloquising the depicted and his preface clearly delineates his intended obfuscation,

The legends under the pictures are intended to express the authors' own conceptions of the sentiments of the individuals portrayed; they do not pretend to reproduce the actual sentiments of these persons.

As Allred (2010:6) proposed, modernist documentary photobooks,

do not naturalize the social status-quo they index in word and image. Rather, they engage in a speculative practice of aesthetic construction...., one that recruits readers in a shared project of thinking through plausible pasts, presents and futures.

Many documentary books combine seemingly unmediated images together with polemical text and sit within a well-established genre. It is this tradition that is ripe for reworking and disrupting.

Authored documentary photographers' books

The deliberate silencing of the photographer's author's voice in the attempt to increase perceptions of objectivity, is in itself an editorial intervention. A good example of the problem faced in transforming observational material into a publication, can be found in the Exit Photography group's collaborative book *Survival Programmes* (1982). The book blends the work of three photographers: Paul Trevor, Chris Steel-Perkins and Nicholas Battye side by side – yet without acknowledging the creator of individual images. Sublimating the voice of the collaborators, *Survival Programmes* also transcribes the oral recollections of participants, with some editorial burnishing, yet fully acknowledges the limitations of documentary photography in defin-



ing complex social issues. A combination of image and text, the group had hoped, would reveal the complexity of their subjects and provide a more open-ended experience for the reader. However, by denouncing the authorship of each image and stripping each oral interview of dialect in transcription, the book becomes an unintended parody of an earlier juxtaposition of vernacular language with photo-essay style images title created Roy DeCarava and Langston Hughes' entitled *Sweet Flypaper of Life* (1955).

#### Curating photography as publishing practice

Many photographers and artists have extended their own practice by curating the work of others, shedding new light on largely hidden or little known works. One of the first practitioners to do this was Berenice Abbott, who with Walter Benjamin, elevated the status of Eugene Atget's work after the posthumous discovery of his archive. As Abbott states (in Williams 1996: 207) 'I have yet to see a fine photograph which is not a good document'. Resulting from this trove was the book *Atget Photographe de Paris* (1930), published at the same time as the young Walker Evans first appeared as photographer and cultural commentator. Evans (1931:126) observed presciently in his review of Atget's book that,

Certain men of the past century have been renoticed..It is possible to read into his photographs so many things that he may never have formulated it himself.

Evans' own awareness of the potential of re-examination suggests already his keen awareness of the potential that archive material holds for future recipients. As a photographer known for repurposing his own material into different books and magazine features and as a picture editor working with other photographers such as Robert Frank, Evans developed a parallel curatorial strand of practice alongside his own photographic work. Evans was later drawn to elevate the vernacular picture postcard through a feature for Fortune magazine, called *When "Downtown" was a Beautiful Mess* (1962). The four-page spread reproduced used cards on the printed page as culturally significant vernacular ephemera, each one replete with handwritten annotation. Evans' example signifies a new kind of purpose for published photography: as a proto-conceptual art form.

Whilst the role of a guest editor is common practice in mass publishing, the emergence of artists and photographers evidencing a curatorial practice in a publishing

context, especially in the selection of work from an unseen archive, is a more recent phenomenon. Sultan and Mandel's book *Evidence* (1977) is a foremost example of this field, where the artists recontextualise scientific and evidential imagery found within NASA and government agency archives. The book not only unlocks largely unseen images for a wider public, but signposts the vernacular visual syntax of the scientific photographer as a disruptive model of representation. Mandel's own recent publication *Good 70s* (2016) is a facsimile publication in the form of a print box containing elements of his own unpublished archive from the same era. Michael Lesy's *Wisconsin Death Trip* (1973) is also a significant publication that re-examines vernacular family images in the redrawing of American social history. Whilst not presented as an artist's book, the title does however, signal the potency of curated collections of nineteenth century photography in the book form.

Two private collections of historic photographic prints which were largely gathered for non-artistic reasons are the Burns Archive and the Archive of Modern Conflict. Whilst it could be argued that for both archives, publishing is one of many strategies for enhancing their cultural and economic value, both have published curated titles that challenge our perceptions of the past. In 1987, The Burns Archive published *Masterpieces of Medical Photography*, selected by photographer Joel Peter Witkin whose own work explored similar themes of disfigurement, mutilation and birth abnormalities. Later and more significant are the publications of the Archive of Modern Conflict, known as AMC Books. Collaborating and co-publishing with artists such as Stephen Gill and Antony Cairns, and at the same time producing their own serial publication, the *AMC2 Journal* and books outlining their own collection, the Archive has become a collaborative practice space for curators, artists, writers and publishers. Two titles in particular explore the material properties of the photograph, both edited by Ed Jones and Timothy Prus, *The Corinthians* (2009) and *AMC2 Journal Issue 5, Notes Home: Postcards from the English Coast* (2013). As Shanks and Szabo (2013:13) projected, the changing nature of archives 'involve processes of recollection, regeneration, reworking, remixing in sophisticated visualizations and customized interactive and participatory experiences.' In the post-digital era, artists and photographers have established their own publishing imprints such as Broomberg and Chanarin's *Chopped Liver Press*, Gareth McConnell's *Sorika* and Alec Soth's *Little Brown Mushroom* – all independent project spaces curating their own work and the work of others.

### The vernacular landscape

The use of the vernacular landscape by photographers as a visual theme to evidence social difference and change, can be traced from Eugene Atget, through Walker Evans, Stephen Shore, Joel Sternfeld, William Eggleston, William Christenberry and Martin Parr. All of these practitioners observe, collect and transform visual materials from urban life and the unnoticed, into what Haworth-Booth (1986: 2) described as 'an iconography of the disregarded.' In addition to exploring the visual, many of these practitioners extended their interest by collecting objects and ephemera on their travels. Evans appropriated a large number of metal street signs that featured in his imagery and Shore scrapbooked printed ephemera to supplement his journals. His interest in the vernacular postcard and print-on demand photo albums is also mirrored by Martin Parr's artists' books and curated collections of postcards and photo-mementoes. William Christenberry's interest in Walker Evans' churches of Hale County, Alabama, as featured in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, extended to his own three-dimensional small-scale models of the buildings and subsequent photographs of the same. The emergence of photography as a research tool within cultural geography; the re-examination of the role of museums and public collections in determining cultural history and the emergence of independent artist publishing have all enabled otherwise hidden archives and lesser known authors to pitch their works into the public domain.

### The currency of vernacular artefacts

Interest in the vernacular landscape and the artefacts found within it, provide artists and cultural organisations with raw, unmediated materials that are readymade to collect and contextualize. A good example of this is found within the 9/11 artefacts retrieved by the Smithsonian Institute: a home-made scrapbook by amateur artist Michelle Guyton. The item is placed within a prominent position within the Bearing Witness to History website and the Smithsonian uses the vernacular scrapbook, whose author self-identifies as a Christian patriot to prescribe a nationalistic response, placing alongside many other artefacts chosen for their unspoken, allegorical purpose. Shanks (2004:63) purports however, that the vernacular matter collected and catalogued by the Smithsonian is 'future-oriented', not solely concerned with stabilising the past, but proactively managing evidence to influence our cultural understanding in the present. While this example demonstrates the potency of outsider artwork and its cultural importance, it also illustrates how curated collections of vernacular matter framed within a mass-observation context, can unlock the hidden social habits and behaviours of ordinary people. It is this 'stuff' that has

provided additional elements in my practice and will continue to contribute to future works.

#### Curated vernacular in artists' publishing

KesselsKramer Publishing has been at the forefront of decontextualising and representing vernacular source materials since 1995. A collective of artists, designers and photographers including founder Erik Kessels, Hans van der Meer and Julian Germain, KK have created serial works including *Useful Photography* (2000-present) and *In Almost Every Picture* (2001-present) and a number of single themed books. Using found vernacular material gathered online or discovered in flea markets, *Useful Photography* continues to identify unacknowledged genres of amateur practice in a disruptive and surprisingly humorous manner. From the collected imagery of auction web sites (Issue 2) to a survey of the amateur acting found within the opening scenes of pornographic shoots (Issue 8), the collective has broadened the reception of the vernacular into significant, culturally rich material, with humour used a device to engage the reader in a shared journey of surprise and discovery.

A similar collective was established by Hans Peter Feldmann, Uschi Huber, Jorg Paul Janka and Stefan Schneider in the mid 1990s, creating seventeen editions of the *Ohio* serial publication to date. Many are word-free collections of found, vernacular photographic material in the magazine or DVD form, containing additional ephemera inserts which as Brittain (2004) observed, provide a 'symbolic correspondence' to the main content of the work. Roth (2009: 296) observed that the photographic content of *Ohio*, 'however banal or seemingly self-evident, became as slippery as language, balanced between sense and nonsense.' In issue 16, which was specially devoted to a model railway club, a video piece shot in a mass-observation manner shows the members dismantling their models after a fifty-year residency.

#### Humour

*Ohio* exhibits a detached form of humour, which forms an important aspect of my practice too, running through many of the artist's books that I have made during my research. This form of humour is rooted in the diaries of Ian Breakwell, the photographic works of Keith Arnatt and David Shrigley and the vernacular-themed publications of Kessels Kramer and the deadpan photography of Ed Ruscha. Amidst the intellectual underpinning of Conceptual Art, Ruscha emerged as an outsider. Walker (2012:115) illustrates the suspicion that Ruscha provoked at that time through his stance as a no-style artist.

Described by Victor Burgin as,

He wasn't anyone that one should take seriously. Because basically he seemed to be some sort of Californian stand-up comedian.

Ruscha's employment of humour as a device for distancing himself from the mainstream can be traced through Keith Arnatt and Bruce McClean, reaching its denouement in the work of Mike Kelley, described by Rugoff (in Dezeuze 2014: 34-35) as 'pathetic art mak[ing] failure its medium by presenting flawed and shabby constructions.' This knowing self-cynicism using the visual language of the unskilled, delineated a territory of practice where 'the possibility of a solid political and platform is sabotaged in advance.'

As practitioners, Arnatt, Breakwell, Shrigley and Ruscha exist on the perimeter of the interconnecting fields of photography, conceptual art, humour and artist publishing, which is a strategy that I have adopted in my own practice. A selection of Keith Arnatt's work reveals the artist's own fallibility, from the deadly serious and deadpan conceptual sequence entitled *Self-Burial* (1969), to the self-deprecating proto-selfies of *Accidental Self-Portraits* (1990), to the poignant collection of hostile post-it notes created by his recently deceased wife, *Notes from Jo* (1991-1994). Arnatt's project *A.O.N.B.* (1982-84) (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) adopts the detached, formal language of Raymond Moore to reveal an unexpectedly drab and dreary interpretation the protected landscapes of England and Wales. Such deadpan enjoyment in the mundane, resurfaces again in Martin Parr's anthology of collected ephemera *Boring Postcards* (1999). Cartoonist David Shrigley too has explored the humorous potential of ephemera in his less-known photographic works (1992-2004). Arranging fake notices, posters and signage in public situations, Shrigley constructs his own evidence of an unsettlingly humorous world, yet this reveals more about his own imaginative epiphanies in a humdrum environment than the social habits of ordinary people. All of these works share common ground with *Found* magazine (2001- present), a serial publication of curated ephemera and abandoned photographs, not designed as an art publication but for the mass enjoyment of the curious.

A different form of humour is found in artist Ian Breakwell's *Diary* (1964-1985), which draws its source material from observed isolated incidents which the artist recreates in a mass-observation style montage. Breakwell's unique skill lay in his acutely observed details, as sharply described as a deadpan photograph, revealing

unexpected collisions of people, places and things, as he walked by or frequently watched from a passing train window. Breakwell's vignettes legitimize the mundane and the ordinary as a fertile ground for observation, and as the Surrealist scholar Paul Hammond (1983) suggests, his works celebrated 'the epiphany of momentary alignment and juxtaposition.'



## I. Contribution to knowledge

My research has developed a practice exploring the visual syntaxes of the printed photograph within works that invite non-sequential reading, physical interaction and touch.

My conclusions have emerged from discourse analysis, practice as research and applied experimentation as methodological tools. This has occurred through text research, handling books and archive matter and the making and dissemination of my own practice. Over the course of my research, I have reflected on fifty-one instances of practice and handling and insights have enabled me to evidence my contributions to knowledge. A summary of these insights areas follows:

- a. Reprographic systems for the printing of photographs have identifiable visual syntaxes linked to a wide range of precedents and usages in both high and low culture.
- b. Materials used for the printing of photographs for a book can trigger both optic and haptic intertextual associations with a wide range of objects from both high and low culture.
- c. Normative strategies and devices such as the codex and facsimile printing used in the transformation of photographic originals for a visual book, perpetuate notions of the implied reader, the prestructuring of potential meaning and set the reader as passive recipient.
- d. Disruptive strategies and devices such as the non-codex and original printing used in the transformation of photographic originals for a visual book, invite touch and speculation and set the reader as an active participant in the work.
- e. Works that successfully engage with insights a, b and d, can be identified as an additional sub-field of artists' books, regardless of their current classification by genre or form.

An index of conclusions statements that I have made from my practice is included on page 213.



## Contribution to knowledge

As a result of my inquiry, I would like to evidence two contributions to knowledge as follows:

### A. The identification of an additional sub-field of artists' books

In my research, I have identified an additional sub-field of artists' books that explore the materiality of the printed photograph as part of their thematic interests and conceptual intent. We take for granted that most artists' books are made from paper, printed using lithography and bound in the codex form, yet this terminology has served neither producer or reader well. As Hayles (2002:22) observes,

We are not generally accustomed to thinking about the book as a material metaphor, but in fact it is an artifact whose physical properties and historical usage structure our interactions with it in ways obvious and subtle.

My rationale is based on a perceived gap in discourses that defines these practices. Although the artists' book field encompasses many modes, categorisation and classification is still problematic (Bodman and Sowden, 2010). My assertion of an additional sub-field, which I will describe as the fugitive book, is based on a narrower selection of works that I have identified in my Field section, works that explore the printed photograph, materiality and touch. The fugitive book sub-field is drawn from the larger artists' book field where works are usually attributed to and therefore defined by genre, form, or process. Examples that belong to the fugitive book sub-field are works such as Erik van der Weijde's *Souvenir* series (2012), works that create intertextual connections with mass produced souvenirs through materiality, choice of reprography and disruptive non-codex forms; Stephen Gill's *Warming Down* (2008), an altered book, using photographic prints, ephemera and multiple indexical matter; all of Martin Parr's self-published short-run works such as *Cruise Memories* (2002); and Celine Duval's *Revue en 4 images* (2001-6) and *sans titre, livret reproduisant 31 cartes postales* (2001).

### B. The development of an additional strand of practice within the artists' book field

My finished practice pieces *Long Grove*, *Mixed Metaphors*, *The Guns of Fort Perch Rock*, *Municipal Retouching*, *Nothing, not even a bite* and *A Street Name Desired Car*, illustrate the synthesis of my research aims and objectives, evidencing Nelson's

(2006:108) 'theory imbricated within practice.'

In *Long Grove*, I've worked with a wide range of content, including my original photographs and artefacts from the 1990's; recent photographs of the site and artefacts at Surrey History Centre, plus other printed materials related to the subject that I have collected during the intervening years. For each tranche of content, I've used specific materials and reprographic processes to create intertextual links with hand made photographic prints, documents and ephemera to enable readers to identify separate sources and authorship in a way that disrupts expectations of the facsimile and the real. The work acts a distributed and portable archive in itself, containing multiple indexical materials from multiple originators, triggering a non-linear reception experience, beyond Jauss' (1967) projected 'horizon of expectations.' While it would be difficult to predict how each reader receives the piece, the open ended nature of the work aims to counter Mitchell's (1994:50) suggestion that 'the act of publication is an act of closure.'

## J. Conclusion

Whilst no single combination of processes has emerged in my practice, I have developed a working vocabulary descended from exhibition prints, vernacular photographs, souvenirs, printed documents and paper ephemera. My understanding of the potential of paper as an active material in artists' books has, over the course of my research, developed from a dormant, unnoticed carrier to a fugitive and tactile material that triggers engagement. My practice uses paper materials that are inherently fugitive – including slowly light sensitive pulp papers and chemical photographic papers, two polar opposites are rarely used in artists' books. Low-grade papers are primarily used for short-lived products like newspapers and paperback books. High quality photographic paper are used for printing artists works, where longevity and permanence is essential. I have used low-grade pulp papers as both printable surfaces and as structural elements in constructing boxes, folders and folios and it is a material that can make intertextual connections to souvenirs, packaging and archive containers. Hayles (2002:33) reinforces the importance of materiality within the book, observing that it,

emerges from interactions between physical properties and a work's artistic strategies. For this reason materiality cannot be specified in advance, as if it pre-existed the specificity of the work. An emergent property, materiality depends on how the work mobilizes its resources as a physical artefact as well as on the user's interactions with the work and the interpretive strategies she develops – strategies that include physical manipulations as well as conceptual frameworks.

Binding and presentation systems have a significant role too: the fixed codex form forefronts the book as a functional carrier of information, yet works made in accordion or loose leaf bindings, prompt the reader to navigate a series of separate objects as well as the outer cover/ container. When both paper and image appear as a single entity this is perceived by the reader as an image object with a haptic and visual presence.

Rather than be seen as a mechanical process through which photographic prints can be copied and distributed in quantity, reprography i.e. the process by which an image is translated to the printed page, can also be used as a significant creative strategy. Emerging from my research is the suitability of inkjet and c-type as primary

working systems, plus the potential of print on demand, copiers and fugitive papers to contribute in a more supporting manner. The photographic mini-lab, used to make c-type prints, has emerged as a viable form of printing press that can be operated by visual producers, to produce multiple, high dynamic range prints that are indistinguishable from auratic, exhibition quality display prints.

Disseminating my work throughout my project has enabled me to gain valuable feedback on reader reception, material tests and prototypes. I have made several conclusions as a result of these events that would have been impossible to reach in isolation. Publishing and presenting my interim findings has given me valuable peer feedback that my research aims and objectives are viable and worthy of continuation. Peer feedback has enabled me to also engage directly with practitioners who are in my sub-field. My practice has developed from producing static, wall-based exhibition pieces (practice piece 2) to dynamic book objects for handling (practice pieces 9 onwards) in a reading room environment (dissemination outputs C & D).

#### Bourdieu and artists' publishing the post-digital era

Whilst Bourdieu provides a structural philosophy that supports my discourse analysis of previously disconnected fields of photography, fine art, artists' books and publishing, together with historical hierarchies implicit within printmaking, the book trade and high and low culture, the field of cultural production as an all encompassing paradigm falls short in today's post-digital era. As Gilbert (2015:online) observes:

What does it mean to publish today? In the face of a continuously changing media landscape, institutional upheavals and discursive shifts in the legal, artistic and political fields, concepts of ownership, authorship, work, accessibility and publicity are being renegotiated. The field of publishing not only stands at the intersection of these developments but is actively introducing new ruptures.

Bourdieu's fields of cultural production, their agents and intermediaries are now subsumed into a decentralized landscape. In the post-digital era, the interconnections between previously perceived opposites are core to the debate. While Higgins (1964) was an early identifier in the potential of sector-transgressing intermedia and Becker (1982) of the collective, interactionist nature of artistic production, neither foresaw the paradigm shift of the post-digital era where interdisciplinary practice thrives within a patchwork of plural theoretical standpoints.

In the field of artist publishing, the redrawing of historical boundaries further undermines Bourdieu's stance. Fajfer's (1999) and his concept of *liberature*, where the material form of the book and its contents constitute the work as a coherent whole, seeks as Bodman (2010: 2) observed, to reposition works by authors such as Joyce and Mallarmé, as publishing as arts practice. Thurston (2013:422) also echoes the emerging interdisciplinary relationship between creative writing, visual art and publishing, describing the remit of the artists' book publishing imprint *Information as Material*, to explore the 'horizon of the publishable.' As Gilbert (2015:online) suggests, nowadays, "Artistic activity can hardly be differentiated from publishing activity. Not uncommonly, publishing itself is considered to be an artistic project, included in the conception of the work of art or even declared the work of art."

My research has adapted ideas from a wide range of discourses including notions of the haptic and touch in Claessen (2012); of handling photographs in Edwards (2004); multiple indexical photo objects in Batchen (2004); touching artworks in Read (1956); traces of manual production in Mitchell (2005); absence of manual production in Benjamin (1931) and anthropomorphosis in Sennett (2008). The potential of reprographic strategies to trigger associations with 'things' resulted from exploring discourses on reworking archive materials in Edensor (2005), de Silvey (2012) and Candlin (2010); souvenirs and collecting by Pearce (1995); hierarchies and behaviours in the reception of print as identified by Ivins (1953) and the control of symbolic goods identified by Bourdieu (1984). Alongside my sub-field is an emerging discourse of publishing as arts practice by Company (2009 & 2014), Hayles (2002) and Vartanian (2009). Underpinning my sub-field are notions of the book as a primary form as found in Carrion (1978), Drucker (2004), Cutts (2007), Lippard (1967) and Lewitt (1967).

At the beginning of my research I made a detailed scrutiny of each element of the artists' book to help devise a practice strategy. However, such theoretical tools for undertaking this were unavailable from visual discourse alone. Employing structuralist notions adapted from literary theory such as Kristeva (1967) and Genette (1987) and the inter pictorial in Guerrero (2005), Beckett (2012) and Kummerling-Meibauer (2014) provided a near-forensic method of examining the book form that was unavailable from critical art discourse and semiotics. Linking these different frameworks and providing the 'glue' to bind them together has been reader reception

discourse, as described by Jauss (1967) and Iser (1970). Reception theory provides space for the notion of a publication as a fugitive, transient object, whose material state could be influenced by the reader as well as the author.

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January 2016



## K. Index of practice conclusions

From numbered practice and book handling narratives:

1. It is possible to create an edition with deliberate variation within it.
2. The nuances of photo-mechanical printing have an identifiable visual syntax built upon machine misregistration and human error.
3. Physical photographic prints within books can create hypertextual allusions to vernacular sources such as journals and diaries.
4. An optical-only display prevents a haptic engagement with the book.
5. Facsimiles of photographs and ephemera in books aim to re-install 'thingness.' Is there a hierarchy of facsimile forms that is ranged across different reprographic methods e.g. the photographic print, litho print etc
6. Where does nostalgia fit into facsimile and reproduction?
7. Print-on-demand is emerging as the vernacular reprographic style of self-publishing
8. The material constituents of a book create their own hypertextual references separate from text & image.
9. Readymade or original matter when added into a book project provides a direct hypertextual references to their origins, in addition to the received voice of the focaliser/ mediator.
10. An astute combination of ink and paper, the bare material essentials of litho reproduction, can create convincing simulations of some types of original photographic print.
11. The codex, even when combined with experimental materials and reprography, is an unchallenging format and fixes reader reception into familiarity.
12. Fugitive materials can create works that are transient and emerging rather than fixed and completed.
13. The accordion format creates a dual-purpose book/ object, while also raising the visibility of the otherwise invisible paper support.
14. A handmade darkroom print is an auratic object, touched by the makers hand. High-cost, high dynamic range reprographic methods adapted from luxury editioning and corporate publishing, create hypertextual references to rarity, exclusivity and aura.
15. Poor materials and desktop reprography can also do the same, but with a different hypertextual link to low-fi diy network and mail art.



The fold can be used as a deliberately disruptive element in the work – it can redefine the edge of the page when the accordion is open, then differently when it is closed.

16. Copier based reprography has a low-fi materiality that is unable to mimic photographic originals. However, it has it's own material and reprographic syntax which is much underused.
17. Reproducing virtual or digital images that have no innate materiality, poses both a challenge and an opportunity to use processes connected with temporary and throwaway print.
18. The use of newsprint provides a hypertextual link to ephemeral publications.
19. The reproduction of photographs on newsprint has it's own low-dynamic range visual syntax.
20. Inserts and loose leaf materials within a codex form, disrupt the reader's horizon of expectations by forefronting touch and navigation.  
Inserts and loose-leaf elements can also contain intertextual links to documents, evidence and ephemera.
21. The recirculation of material artefacts within the book form provides an additional kind of documentation, providing a haptic engagement with the work recalling souvenirs, the museum and private collecting.
22. The high-tec inkjet printing of books has its own visual syntax and hypertextual links to the gallery and fine art editioning.
23. High-tec inkjet printing on cotton papers can provide innappropriate inter material references.
24. Fugitive materials have potential. What if the reproduction of images with fugitive materials in the book form created a starting point rather than an ending?
25. Early print-on-demand had its own visual syntax which was effective in the reproduction of photographic transparencies.
26. Poor, fugitive materials such as sugar paper have the potential for controlled fading when exposed to prolonged bright light.
27. Codex monographs perpetuate the normative ordering employed in museum vitrines.
28. Handling is an essential method for understanding the material features of a book and its hypertextual references.
29. An adapted version of Fox Talbot's salt printing process creates desirable non-uniformity with additional fugitive property. The act of reading hastens the deterioration of the print.

30. Loose-leaf books or folios allow readers to engage with the material in a more speculative and non-linear manner.
31. Unbound works which use overprinting on artefacts create multiple indexical pieces.
32. Silver based photographic prints have their own visual syntax and provide a hypertextual link to the photographic original rather than its reproduction. The size of these prints can impact on our handling too.
33. Handling prints in a folio box creates a different kind of haptic experience to reading a book. High quality prints also provide an enhanced optical experience too, which is in excess of our usual expectations from a book. The two-lid structure of a clamshell case also establishes it's own rules for engaging with content.
34. Text within a photographic print establishes a different reading experience. The use of a three panel folio container creates an opportunity for the reader to interrogate the material in a personalized manner.
35. The inclusion of real artefacts rather than their reproductions in a publication, creates a hypertextual link to their origins. The inner sides of a book cover, especially their outer edges can act as a framing device for inner content.
36. Reader reception of a loose-leaf work held within a folio-type container can be influenced by print size and shape and also by a reading support.
37. The process of opening a loose-leaf work held within a folio-type container can be designed to reveal random, unordered content to the reader.
38. Silver-based photographic paper made into loose-leaf prints held within a folio-type container provides the highest dynamic range for photographic reproduction. And makes a hypertextual link with the folio format.
39. The low-tech visual syntax of the RISO press is emerging as a potential method of reprography for photographic projects.
40. Deliberate misregistration and the non-CMYK colourspace used by the RISO is effective in mimicking early colour photo-reproduction of postcards and early photo-reprography.
41. The colour reproduction of photographs in books has multiple visual syntaxes which can be linked to vernacular photography and the timeline of photo-reprography.
42. The container and packaging of a book can also create hypertextual links to other material entities.

43. The dossier is a much underused format and had the potential to house loose-leaf prints, inserts and ephemera and permit the addition of future content.
44. The photography of archive materials for later reproduction made as 'point of view' images create hypertextual associations of surrogate touch.
45. The combination of multiple loose-leaf content drawn from observed and archive sources can create new work which itself can have been a distributed rather than public archive.
46. Hi-tech reprography of poor material originals can create an unexpected haptic experience.
47. Fugitive silver nitrate as a writing fluid when combined with loose-leaf prints held within a folio-type container can create content that becomes visible slowly as the book is handled.
48. Content can be designed as a kind of visual puzzle or game for the reader to engage with and solve.
49. The shape of silver-based photographic prints can allude to their origins and also introduce a haptic, tactile element to the work.
50. Vernacular journals constructed from multiple material constituents provide a rich handling experience for the reader.
51. Multiple forms of reprography within a single work can create hypertextual associations of the photographic print and the history of its varied reprographic syntaxes.

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## N. Research outputs

Since beginning my research, I have published, exhibited and disseminated my interim findings in both peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed outputs as follows:

### Chapters in edited books

A. Daly, T. (2012) *Reinstating Touch in the Documentary Photobook*, in *Photography and the Artist's Book*. Ed. Wilkie.T, Carson, J and Miller, R (2012). Museums Etc. pp 272-295. ISBN 978-1-907697-50-0. Full text pg.239

### Peer reviewed conference contributions

B. Daly, T (2011) *Reinstating Touch in the Photobook*, in Wilkie.T, Carson, J and Miller, R (2011) *Photography and the Artist's Book* symposium. Manchester Metropolitan University.

C. Daly, T. (2015) *The Book as a Ruined Space* in *In Place of Architecture* (including artists Peter Ainsworth, Michele Allen, Emily Andersen, Peter Bobby, Charlotte Fox, Fergus Heron, Esther Johnson, Andy Lock, Fiona Maclaren, Guy Moreton, Martin Newth, Emily Richardson). My works included: *Neglected Dedications* (2012), *The Guns of Fort Perch Rock* and *A Road Name Desired Car* (both 2011) and an audio exposition. Bonington Gallery, Nottingham Trent University. Autumn 2015

Audio exposition online [http://www.timdaly.com/timdaly\\_audio\\_interview.mp3](http://www.timdaly.com/timdaly_audio_interview.mp3)

### Abstract - The Book as a Ruined Space

The ruined spaces of our recent past leave us with premature waste in a flux of unfinished disposal offering enigmatic traces that invite us to fill in the blanks. (Edensor 2005). Many photographer's books are elegaic records of such derelict spaces, yet few break free from Western codex-form publishing protocols. With rigid sequencing, determined narrative and a tendency to over-classify, many publications of this type celebrate the inevitability of decline rather than re-imagine a more contingent future. Non-codex and hybrid book forms however, are untypical, yet provide a looser, free-form narrative and for the reader, this kind of book can be as much of a ruined space as the very site it's aiming to depict. Exploring hybrid book forms, the materiality of print, promoting haptic engagement with the reader and the interplay between original matter and the simulated, some publications promote a more contingent response to documentation. Through the re-circulation and rearrangement of artefacts outside our anticipated modes of reception, a much richer, more open-

ended reader experience can be created.

My work was chosen for this recent show at Nottingham Trent University's Bonington Gallery through an open submission and the work was chosen for its anti-codex form. The three works were presented on a reading table alongside print on demand photobooks from the other exhibitors.

#### Solo exhibitions

D. Daly, T. (2013) *Known, Unknown: An exhibition of books by Tim Daly*. The Magistrates Court, Chester Town Hall. Part of *The Chester Literature Festival*. Autumn 2013.

#### Group exhibitions

E. Daly, T. (2010) *Slow Fires in In the Woods Today* (2010) Alvanley Cliff Forest, Frodsham, Cheshire.

For further details see practice reflection 24.

F. Daly, T. (2011) *Nothing, not even a bite; The Guns of Fort Perch Rock and A Road Name Desired Car* in *Untitled* (2011) CASC Gallery. University of Chester. 2011.

#### Curated exhibitions

G. Daly, T. (2010) *Accident and Invention: The Photography of the Wright Brothers*. Kingsway Buildings. University of Chester. Autumn 2010.

H. Daly, T. (2015) *Artist Photographer as Publisher*. CASC Gallery. University of Chester. Autumn 2015.

#### Workshop-led dissemination

I. Daly, T (2010) *Creating digital photobooks*. Workshop as part of *Fotobook Festival 2010*. Kassel, Germany

O. Appendix - published research

The following text is a chapter reproduced from

Daly, T. (2012) *Reinstating Touch in the Documentary Photobook*, in *Photography and the Artist's Book*. Ed. Wilkie, T, Carson, J and Miller, R (2012). Museums Etc. pp 272-295. ISBN 978-1-907697-50-0.



# **Reinstating Touch in the Documentary Photobook**

TIM DALY

*University of Chester*

Interest in the authored documentary photography book form has increased exponentially since the publication of Andrew Roth's *The Book of 101 Books: Seminal Photographic Books of the Twentieth Century* (2001) and Martin Parr and Gerry Badger's *The Photobook: A History* (2004). Assisted by the emerging technology of on-demand printing and web-based distribution networks, as offered by Blurb.com and others, photographers can now self-publish for a hundredth of the costs incurred ten years ago. While the interaction between image, text and design on the printed page projects a scenario for the reader unavailable from the photograph alone, many documentary photobooks are variations on three book forms already established by the end of the 19th century: the album, the portfolio and the catalogue. Less common are those exploring the self-reflexive nature of the book, together with the unique materiality of the photographic print, such as Stephen Gill's *Warming Down* (2008) and fewer still use the medium's innate material qualities of light sensitivity and transience together with its unique sensory properties where a reading of the work is dependent on physical handling and material interaction.

Documentary photography, forever linked with

observational gathering and perceived by Roland Barthes as “a mechanical analogue of reality” (2000 [1956]: 197), has often been viewed as a second-tier practice, trapped between indexical and fictional representation. Jacob Riis’ *How the Other Half Lives* (1890) established the early documentary book genre as a hybrid textual form combining factual narrative and indexical photographs albeit in a closed narrative loop, which as William Stott observes, “make the reader feel he is first-hand witness to a social condition” (1973: 214). Yet, as Jeff Allred proposes, later modernist documentary photobooks were more open ended. They “do not naturalize the social status-quo they index in word and image. Rather, they engage in a speculative practice of aesthetic construction... one that recruits readers in a shared project of thinking through plausible pasts, presents and futures.” (2010: 7) Riis’ book foregrounded facts gleaned from the city’s own health and housing census data with thirty unstaged, awkward photographs further evidencing his findings. Riis had neither the skills nor pretensions of a pictorialist and his raw, unmediated images were read as equivalents of reality. While Riis’ book heralded the dawn

of the mass-produced photobook, through the commercial possibilities offered by the new halftone printing process developed a few years earlier, it signalled the beginning of the end for the silver-based photographic print as a method of photomechanical reproduction in the book form. *How the Other Half Lives* paved the way for many documentary photography books of the 1930s. The potency of the form was tempting and, in later works, Riis repurposed his material into sentimental memoirs, endlessly cannibalising and recycling his own material to reach a wider audience.

Our encounter with the photobook form has a greater connection with our experience of reading and our expectations of received literary genres than any other visual art experience. Steven McCaffrey suggests we have two kinds of response to a book: “The physical experience of print as word and ink and the book itself as a physical object [plus] the psychological and psychosemantic experience of operating verbal signs.” (2000 [1992]: 17) Karl Young suggests that the physical act of reading stimulates both inner speech and sight (2000 [1984]: 25). Text in books act as a surrogate for oral activity and both acts of notation and

reading are essentially performative. For many, reading is fast becoming separated from its physical origins and has become a perfunctory acquisition of data. With the prevalence of mass-market titles, where content matters more than form, the book as a physical entity has become a secondary carrier rather than a primary object.

Yet the history of photography itself is inextricably linked to the revolution brought about by mass-printing and, according to William Henry Fox Talbot, was first developed as a means of patenting the mass production of photographically illustrated books, not as a vernacular mass-market medium. Richard Benson, the master print technician responsible for the platemaking for many celebrated photographic books, has speculated that “photography was invented because the printing presses of the world needed more data than the hand could provide” (2008: 230), so as a by-product of the commercial halftone process in the late 1870s, the photobook demanded a very different kind of reading. As observed by Carol Armstrong, “the history of art largely removed the photograph from its printed and published context” (1998: 25) perhaps because of its very transparency. Yet the sequential

deployment of images in a book delivered a more complex message than any individual, indexical print had managed up to that point.

Suffering from similar temptations of a commercial return, Margaret Bourke-White and Erskine Caldwell's *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937) is the high-water mark of editorial intervention presented as factual documentary. While Bourke-White immortalised depression-era tenant farmers with a newly-acquired heroic modernist style (developed on assignment in Russia), Caldwell simply fabricated captions, falsely ventriloquising the depicted. Caldwell's preface clearly delineates his intended obfuscation:

*The legends under the pictures are intended to express the authors' own conceptions of the sentiments of the individuals portrayed; they do not pretend to reproduce the actual sentiments of these persons. (Caldwell, 1937)*

The book form was used by post-war photographers as a way of legitimising their practice as art and to differentiate this form of photography from their commercial assignment work. Robert Frank, William Klein and Richard Avedon, together with

designer Alexei Brodovitch, all asserted their status as artists by using the photobook form and symbolised their passage to professional recognition, without the expectation of financial reward. The link between photography and literature, however, is all-pervasive. Clement Greenberg infamously situated the work of Edward Weston within a modernist tradition, where the descriptive properties of his photographs place him “closer today to literature than the graphic arts” (1988 [1946]: 63). From pictorialism onwards, photographers’ single iconic images borrowed readily from established literary traditions using metaphor, connotation and symbolism. Longer sequences of images planned as photobooks, described by Gerry Badger as “extended essays and literary novels” (2004: 8), also employ a uniquely visual form of storytelling. Walker Evans’ *American Photographs* (1938) and Robert Adams’ *Listening to the River* (1994) both display a form of visual syntax in the sequencing of the images or their juxtaposition within the double-page spread. Yet this framing of content originates not from a literary tradition but from the complementary and rhythmic hanging of fine prints on a gallery wall to facilitate our physical

meandering through its three-dimensional space. Indeed, the sequencing plan of many photobooks is developed by physically walking past proof prints laid out in a studio setting, re-ordering their running, rehearsing the reader's experience and refining their, as yet unmade, journey.

Robert Frank's *The Americans* (1958) proposed an alternative visual syntax: a syncopated, gestural and stream-of-consciousness form, influenced by jazz, abstract expressionism and beat-generation literature. Suffocated by the constraints of commercial assignments, Frank instead bid for public sector funds to support his project, which was envisaged as a book from the outset, unlike many other photobooks of the preceding years, which were developed from repurposed content. Frank rejected the dominant photo-essay format, as used in *Picture Post* and *Life* magazines, which demanded a linear narrative with beginning, middle and ending, reacting to Roy Stryker's notion that the writing of a story and the narrative should precede the shoot (1986 [1946]: 201-202). Frank deliberately left out more successful self-standing images in favour of weaker, gestural images in order to punctuate his sections and sequences with implied rhythms. Responses to



Frank's unconventional sequencing were mixed at the time; as John Szarkowski later recalled, "There was something almost offhand, a little kind of syncopated carelessness, a kind of foot-dragging rhythm to it." (2011 [1992]: 52) Caroline Blinder suggests that Frank's literary photography in *The Americans* "creates space for memory, to facilitate a form of storytelling [and] no matter how hard the photographer tries not to have a message, narratives and agendas occur." (2005: 117)

While Robert Frank's *The Americans* is physically located within the codex tradition, its intent and anti-linearity places it closer to an artist's book. As Simon Cutts advocates, "the [artist's book] is its own continuous accumulative impression, varying and differing not only for each reader, but each time it is read. For this continuous structure to be effective it must be the antithesis of a sequential reading." (2007: 172) Many documentary photography books, however, remain rooted in the *livre d'artiste* tradition – a more affordable form for aspiring art owners, developed by Skira and Tériades amongst others at the start of the twentieth century. This form of promotional book delivers a reproduction of artwork that exists elsewhere in a more auratic and desirable version.

The most lauded of all documentary photography books, Henri Cartier Bresson's *Images a la Sauvette* (1952) was not only issued by Tériades, (the publisher of *Jazz*, the 1947 *livre d'artiste* by Henri Matisse), but projected its very artistic intent by using a cover illustration by Matisse himself. Championed by 20th century photographers and publishers, books such as Josef Koudelka's *Gypsies* (1975), echo the idea suggested by Johanna Drucker that rarely do such titles interrogate the conceptual or material form of the book as part of its intention or thematic interests. (2004: 161)

The terrain of artist's books, however provides greater breadth for practice. As Simon Cutts advocated, "Artist-led publications attempt to synthesise text, image, material, method of production and context into a unified single work. When this succeeds, the book functions as a primary form." (2007: 47) Artist's books are made to be looked at and touched as well as read, providing a conceptual space and territory for all political, visual and textual transformations, collaborations and explorations. (Cotter 2004) Despite Drucker's depressing projection of the artist's book as "a mute space for unrealizable dreams" (2004: 363) many authored photography books celebrate

thing-ness, self-reflexivity and independence.

The document within the terrain of artist's books extends across many different modes of practice, including performance documentation such as Ed Ruscha's *Royal Road Test* (1967) and Brian Lane's *Fog Log* (1978); the playing out of a concept or system such as Sol Lewitt's *Autobiography* (1980) and *Photogrids* (1977); or the collection and reframing of found or archive matter, such as Christian Boltanski's *Inventaire* (1973-98) series. The reproduced archive document is now most evident in the form of the facsimile book, which has taken a foothold in publishers' photography lists. With its not-for-publication origin, the facsimile promises an auratic, but ultimately voyeuristic experience. Facsimiles now include diaries, family albums, dummy books, sketchbooks, notebooks, contact prints, lost boxes, all manner of containers (including Mexican suitcases) and original out-of-print photobooks. The facsimile of Hans Peter Feldmann's *Album* (2008), is no more than a photographic ephemera version of Owen Jones' *The Grammar of Ornament*. Unindexed and without text, it presents Feldmann's panoramic visual interests side-by-side, yet the form does nothing to illuminate Feldmann's idiosyncratic

approach. Facsimiles allow us to be privy to the artist's raw thinking materials – they serve as a study-notes equivalent, coaching a richer interpretation from the original work.

The use of handwritten annotation in documentary photography books does much to reclaim the photographers' voice, which is traditionally submerged in the silent practice of photography. Bill Burke's *I Want to Take Picture* (1987) and Boris Mikhailov's *Look at Me I Look at Water* (2004) both combine handwritten notation alongside their images, projecting a highly personalized and existential interpretation. Jim Goldberg's *Open See* (2009), however, uses the handwritten annotations of the people he photographs on his prints. Like the handwritten ephemera celebrated in *Found*<sup>1</sup> magazine, Goldberg's image/text fusion combines the curious accent of the vernacular hand with their own image to create a voice mostly absent from these publications – that of the documented. As Batchen observed, "Even when prosaic in content, handwritten inscriptions suggest the voice of the writer, adding sound to the senses of touch and sight already engaged." (2004: 47)

The posthumously-published facsimile of

Kiyoshi Suzuki's *Soul and Soul* (2008) is a photobook that celebrates not the original book through the reprint process, but the photographer's own book dummy. What we have is an intriguing volume, richly marked and handled, perhaps in itself an additional document to the photographer's struggle to get published. The notion of the photographic document was further interrogated within the field of multiple art, networked art and independent publishing, under the influence of socialist ideology, emerging technology, alternative distribution and artist collaboration. The photographic multiples issued by Marcel Broodthaers, Ed Ruscha and Dieter Roth disrupt our received expectation of fine photographic reproduction descended from the dizzy heights of Edward Curtis' *North American Indians* (1907-30) and Alfred Stieglitz's *Camera Works* (1902-17) by using basic single colour offset, coarse halftones or colour photocopier. While the focus of networked art, as described by Jeanne Marie Kusina "is not the manner of [its] production, but the dynamic way in which [it is] distributed through artists' networks" (2005: 1), many independently published serials and zines delivered a new visual lexicon developed by the use of cheap and craft-free

reprographic processes, celebrating touch, intervention and the sign of the maker's hand.

Despite the infinite reprographic potential of the photographic print, all but a few documentary photography books are constructed using lithography. By duplicating an already reprographic-capable medium, this method of distributing content disconnects the reader from the photographer's primary output. What Sontag described as "stenciled off the real" (1977: 154) becomes a copy of the stencil off the real. Lithography facilitates the distribution of the idea, but strips the photograph of its object status and wipes away the fingerprints of the creator, as found in annotated photographic prints and vernacular photo albums. As Verna Posever Curtis observes "[the photo album] felt the touch of both the original maker and its recipient" and "satisfies a shared human urge to touch and come in close contact with the representation of human experiences." (2011: 7) Alec Soth's *Las Vegas Birthday Book* (2008), printed with low-tech inkjet, alludes to more tactile, real-print experience.

Few artists use the material potential of the book to explore documentation, with Ed Ruscha's *Stains* (1969) being an exception. What *Stains*

changes is the notion of the printed page as an empty signifier. Instead of being static, neutral and invisible, Ruscha's paper sheets are carriers of both object and image. Stephen Gill's *Buried* (2006) perhaps comes closest, compiling reproductions of his buried prints, with each book from the edition dipped in mud taken from the burial scene.

As access to image-making technology in developed societies has increased, the number of images we produce has become unimaginable, creating a dramatic change in our relationship with the photograph as object. Liz Jobey (2009) suggests that today, "images are manufactured, manipulated, recorded, broadcast, screened and stored. The nearest the human hand gets to them is the computer keyboard." Early photography, however, had a very different physical incarnation, and as Geoffrey Batchen observes, "It is as if... the subjects want to draw our attention not only to the image they hold, but also to photography itself as a touchable entity." (2004: 14) Daguerreotype cases with enclosed locks of hair, handwritten annotations, photo-jewellery operate as doubly indexical and heightened experiences of the subject. As Régis Durand speculates, they "allow me to believe that what is missing

is present all the same, even though I know it is not the case.” (2004 [1995]: 75-76)

I propose an alternative authored photography book: a super-sensory work, a document of participation, intervention and touch. Echoing Batchen's words, these books can describe their documentary subjects “not as fixed and autonomous but as dynamic and collective, as a continual process of becoming.” (2004: 97)

#### Becoming the book

My practice uses photography to document site/place/activity. However, the gathering of such images is fraught with the pitfalls of picturing elegiac redundancy and setting fluid, transient scenarios in a fixed, dead-end interpretation which stabilises and commodifies memory. In my practice, no single iconic image is sought; instead many smaller and disparate images are made on site, which then accrue a more complex narrative when viewed together as a sequence, or as an unfolding series of prints.

To fully explore the complexity of each subject, archive material developed by others is also included. In addition, discarded matter such as paper ephemera or textiles can be included,



especially if it has the potential for becoming part of the book's contents, superstructure or packaging. By placing multiple indexical matter side-by-side, it is anticipated that the book will extend a linear representation of a site, by promoting a more complex end-user experience through a richer sensory interaction.

NOTES

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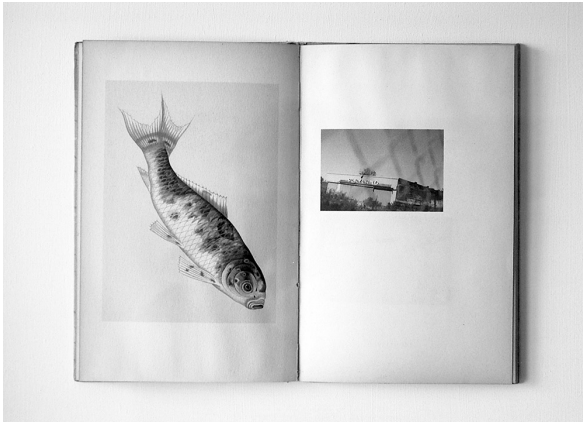
- 1 See [www.foundmagazine.com](http://www.foundmagazine.com)



*Returning Burton's Plunder. Tim Daly (2010)*

*24pp silver nitrate/salt prints and inkjet on pulp paper, buckram cover with paper seal. Staple bound 140 x 140.*

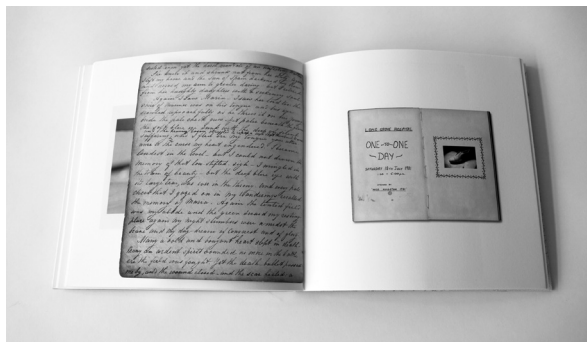
*Harry Burton was the official photographer of the Tutankhamun tomb capturing the sequence of discovery, but also the imperial plunder and removal of artefacts from the tomb. The book idea was to narrate this episode with salted paper prints left unfixed on the page. From the time the seal is broken and the book opened, the images fade a little more, until they eventually fade to black. This inbuilt destruction – prompted by the very act of reading – creates an absurd dilemma for the viewer. Do they continue to look at the unstable images on the page or do they keep the book closed?*



*New Pocket Knowledge. Tim Daly (2009)*

*Inkjet on altered King Penguin book. 300 x 205. Set of six.*

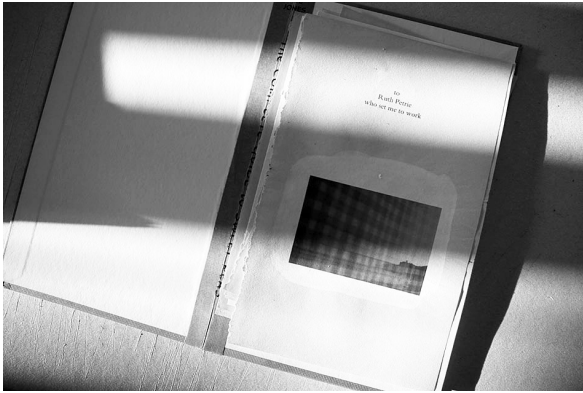
*Six unstitched King Penguin books altered with a single inkjet print placed in a vacant space on a double page spread. Each intervention makes an opportunistic connection with the book's original topic.*



**Case Histories. Tim Daly (2010)**

*50pp inkjet on cotton paper, with inserted ephemera and photographic prints.  
Buckram cover. Sewn 230 x 230.*

*This piece collated a long-term project recording the interior spaces and artefacts of an abandoned large-scale hospital facility. The book was envisaged as a container for photographic prints; in addition several items of ephemera retrieved from the location were physically stitched in.*



*Neglected Dedications. Tim Daly (2011)*

*Inkjet on vintage paperback pages (12), altered cover. 28 x 15.*

*Neglected Dedications is a speculative piece, constructed from the dedication pages torn from paperbacks left by previous visitors to a Cornish holiday home. Each page was first pressed and prepared with a ground before photographs of the same location were printed on, making the sheets fragile and brittle to the touch. The outer cover was recycled and adapted from another abandoned book. Each printed page is enclosed within a green cloth outer cover, lying loose rather than bound, with a ripped edge documenting each separate removal. Detached from the context of their original book, the dedication pages have a curious ambiguity, which is also furthered by the introduction of an image in a vacant space on the page. Rather than play a simple text/image association game, the images document the uniquely run-down character of the holiday town but also play off the suggestive text and faded paper material. Unlike most books where the paper page disappears as an invisible carrier of words and image, each sheet documents its own transience, evidencing its exposure to light and handling by others. The sheets present a tactile experience, combining real artefact rather than facsimile, challenging our expectations of throwaway pulp paper, as it morphs into a seemingly precious, albeit threadbare, material. When handled, the book's unbound form calls for a different way of reading – and to navigate quickly is not possible.*

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