

**Research Project:** Creating the visual book through the integration of the divergent technologies of photogravure and digital processes.

Funded by a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Research/Creation Grant and Sir Wilfred Grenfell College/Memorial University of Newfoundland

sillis:  
sequential imaging  
laboratory/laboratoire d'imagerie  
séquentiel

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What is the impact of the integration of digital and analogue technologies on image-making and the creation of sequentially based work?

How does media-related decision making influence outcome?

**Presentation topic:** The impact of the interplay of contemporary and historical processes as a catalyst in the generation of content and ideas

Marlene MacCallum

Background context:  
earlier book works that use  
photogravure and other  
hybrid processes



## Domestic Arcana

Hand bound book work with concertina binding and gatefold structure. The twelve images are photogravures and the text is printed in letterpress. Made in 1999.

Domestic Arcana is a series of word and image triptychs using letterpress and photogravure. The hybrid nature of photogravure and its ambiguity of media, lends itself to a metaphoric translation of imagery.



## Townsite House

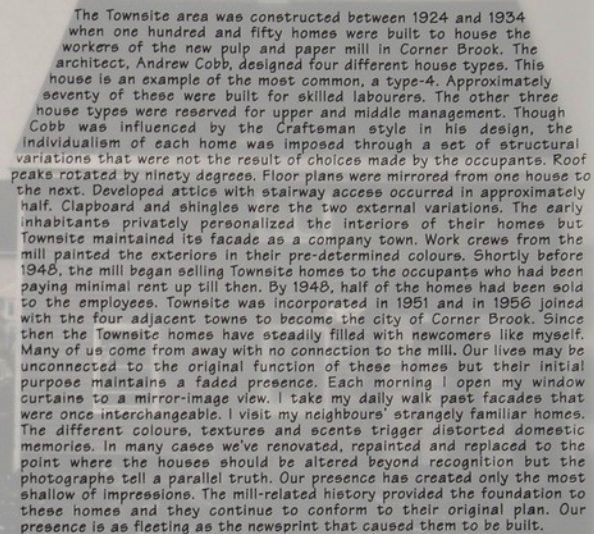
Hand bound book work with embossed leather covers including fourteen photogravure images and three lith film images. The text and house plan image are screenprinted. Made in 2006.

The Townsite House Project consists of a book work and 34 photographs.



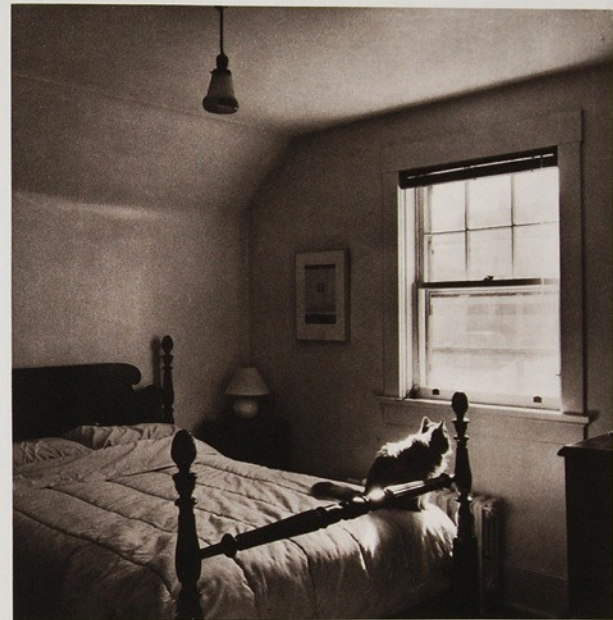
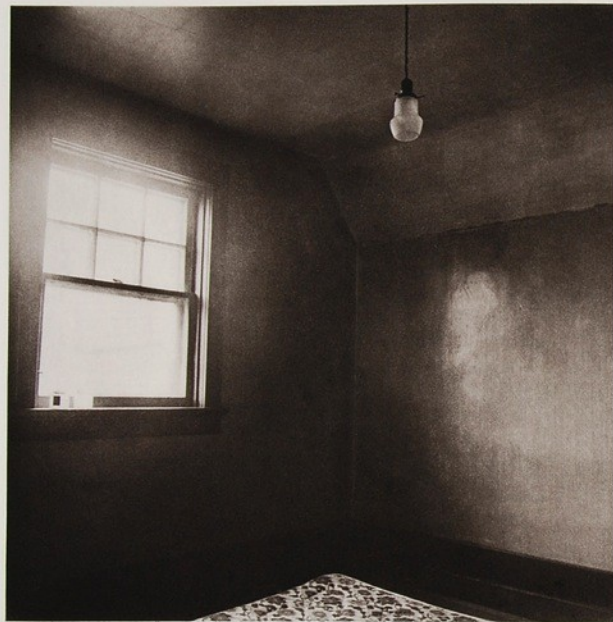
I live in Corner Brook's Townsite area and photographed in five homes, all the same model.





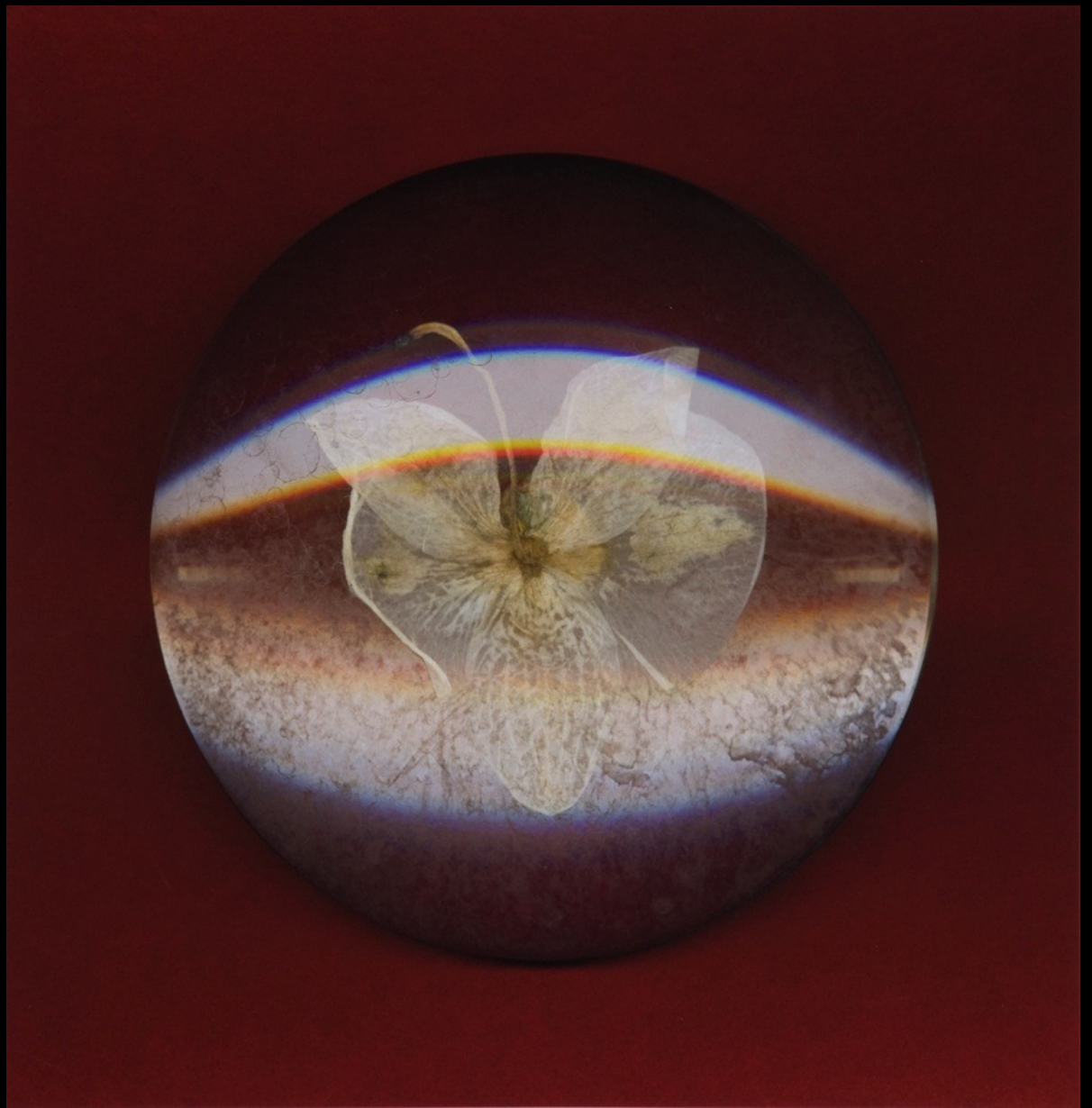
The Townsite area was constructed between 1924 and 1934 when one hundred and fifty homes were built to house the workers of the new pulp and paper mill in Corner Brook. The architect, Andrew Cobb, designed four different house types. This house is an example of the most common, a type-4. Approximately seventy of these were built for skilled labourers. The other three house types were reserved for upper and middle management. Though Cobb was influenced by the Craftsmen style in his design, the individualism of each home was imposed through a set of structural variations that were not the result of choices made by the occupants. Roof peaks rotated by ninety degrees. Floor plans were mirrored from one house to the next. Developed attics with stairway access occurred in approximately half. Clapboard and shingles were the two external variations. The early inhabitants privately personalized the interiors of their homes but Townsite maintained its facade as a company town. Work crews from the mill painted the exteriors in their pre-determined colours. Shortly before 1945, the mill began selling Townsite homes to the occupants who had been paying minimal rent up till then. By 1948, half of the homes had been sold to the employees. Townsite was incorporated in 1951 and in 1956 joined with the four adjacent towns to become the city of Corner Brook. Since then the Townsite homes have steadily filled with newcomers like myself. Many of us come from away with no connection to the mill. Our lives may be unconnected to the original function of these homes but their initial purpose maintains a faded presence. Each morning I open my window curtains to a mirror-image view. I take my daily walk past facades that were once interchangeable. I visit my neighbours' strangely familiar homes. The different colours, textures and scents trigger distorted domestic memories. In many cases we've renovated, repainted and replaced to the point where the houses should be altered beyond recognition but the photographs tell a parallel truth. Our presence has created only the most shallow of impressions. The mill-related history provided the foundation to these homes and they continue to conform to their original plan. Our presence is as fleeting as the newsprint that caused them to be built.

This piece sets out to provide the visual equivalence of the uncanny experience of being in homes that are the same yet not the same as mine.



By using photogravure, the images function simultaneously as a document, or a photographic record and a constructed memory, the printed artifact. This creates the dynamic of disjunction that is key to this piece.

Recent work done in conjunction with our current research project: Creating the visual book through integration of the divergent technologies of photogravure and digital processes.



## **Stacked Lenses**

Digital variation

In my new work, I maintain my fascination with the dynamic of perceived opposing forces. The strong technological focus of our research led me to consider the tools of historical and contemporary technology as my image source. This image was generated by scanning two lenses, balanced on top of each other.



## **Stacked Lenses**

Screenprint variation

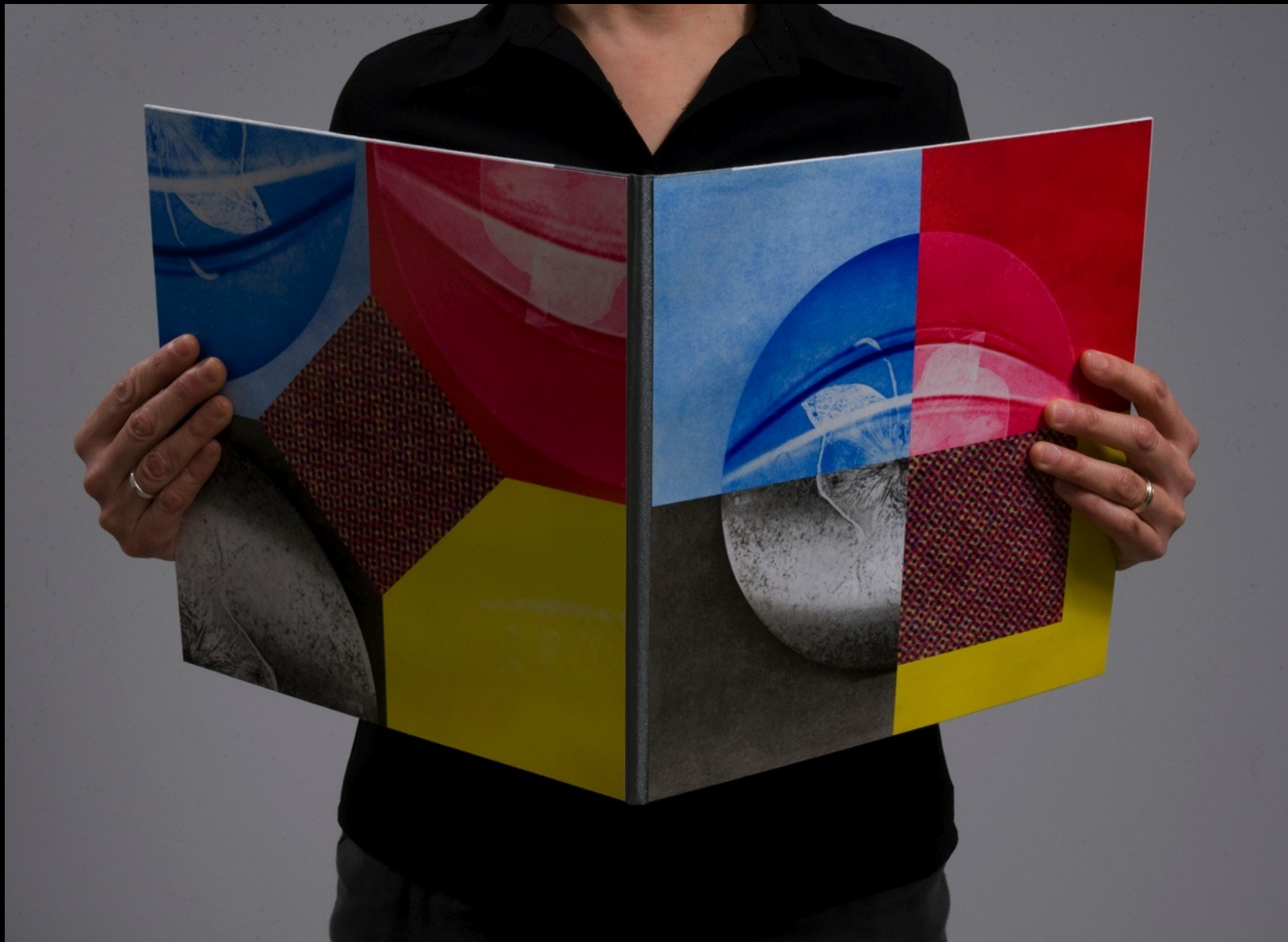
In order to investigate how media-related decision-making influences outcome, I used the same image source to make three prints. Each provides a distinct translation, confirming that the image is not external to its form of presentation, but rather the media is instrumental in creating the meaning of the piece.



## Stacked Lenses

Photogravure variation

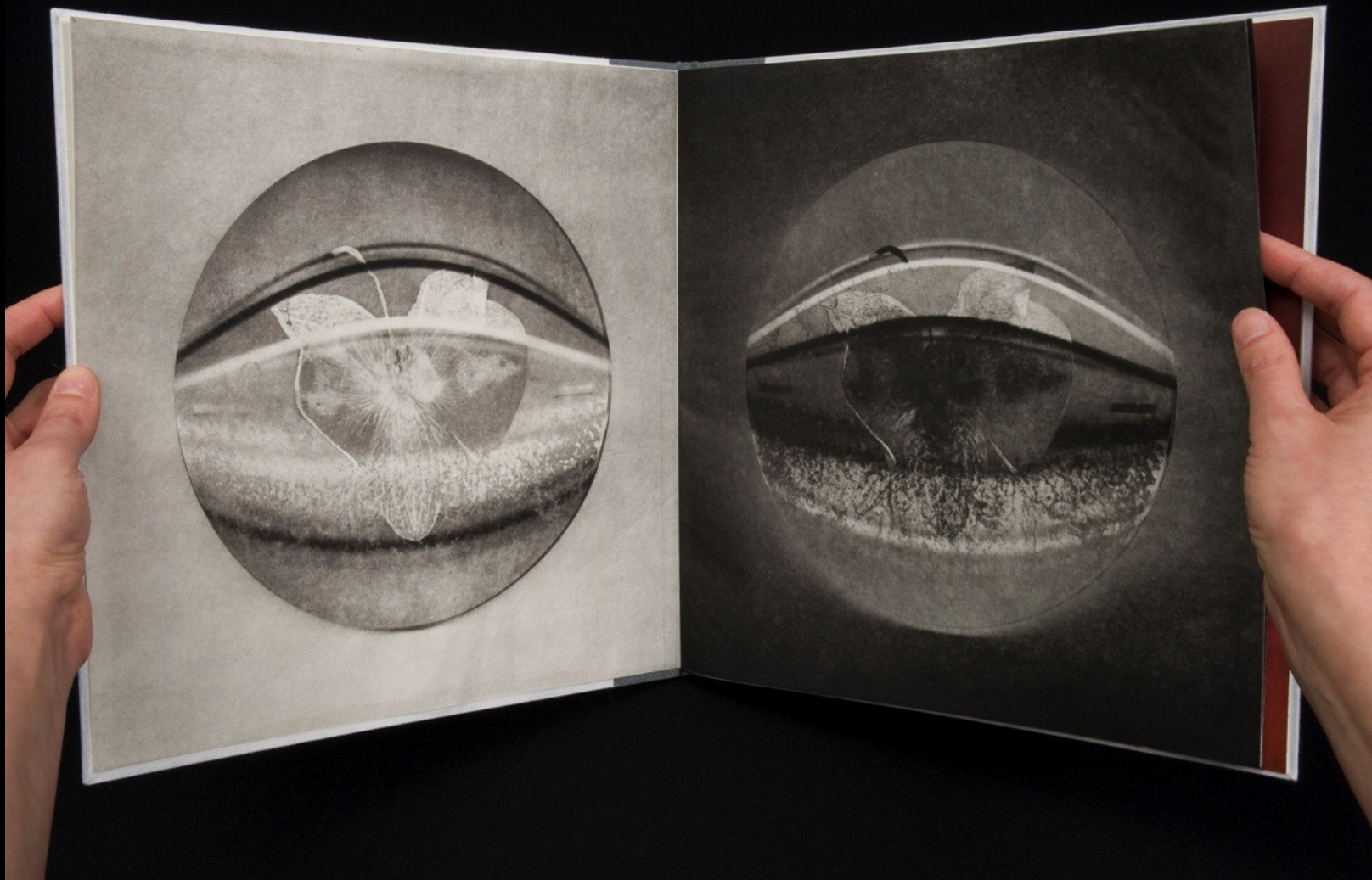
Colour separation photogravure creates an amalgam of a historical photographic process and current digital technology, maintaining the specific qualities of ink on paper process while taking advantage of digital capabilities. We are using digital processes to generate the four-colour separations. We then output these files onto transparent inkjet media, instead of the traditional wet darkroom and lith film process.



## Quadrifid

A two-section hand bound experimental book work. The interior images are printed in photogravure. The covers, title and colophon pages are digital prints. Made in 2009.

The digital technologies are used early on in the creation of the images.



## Quadrifid

And then the analogue methods re-assert themselves.

The first section is an accordion structure of the four colour-separation plates, each printed in black.

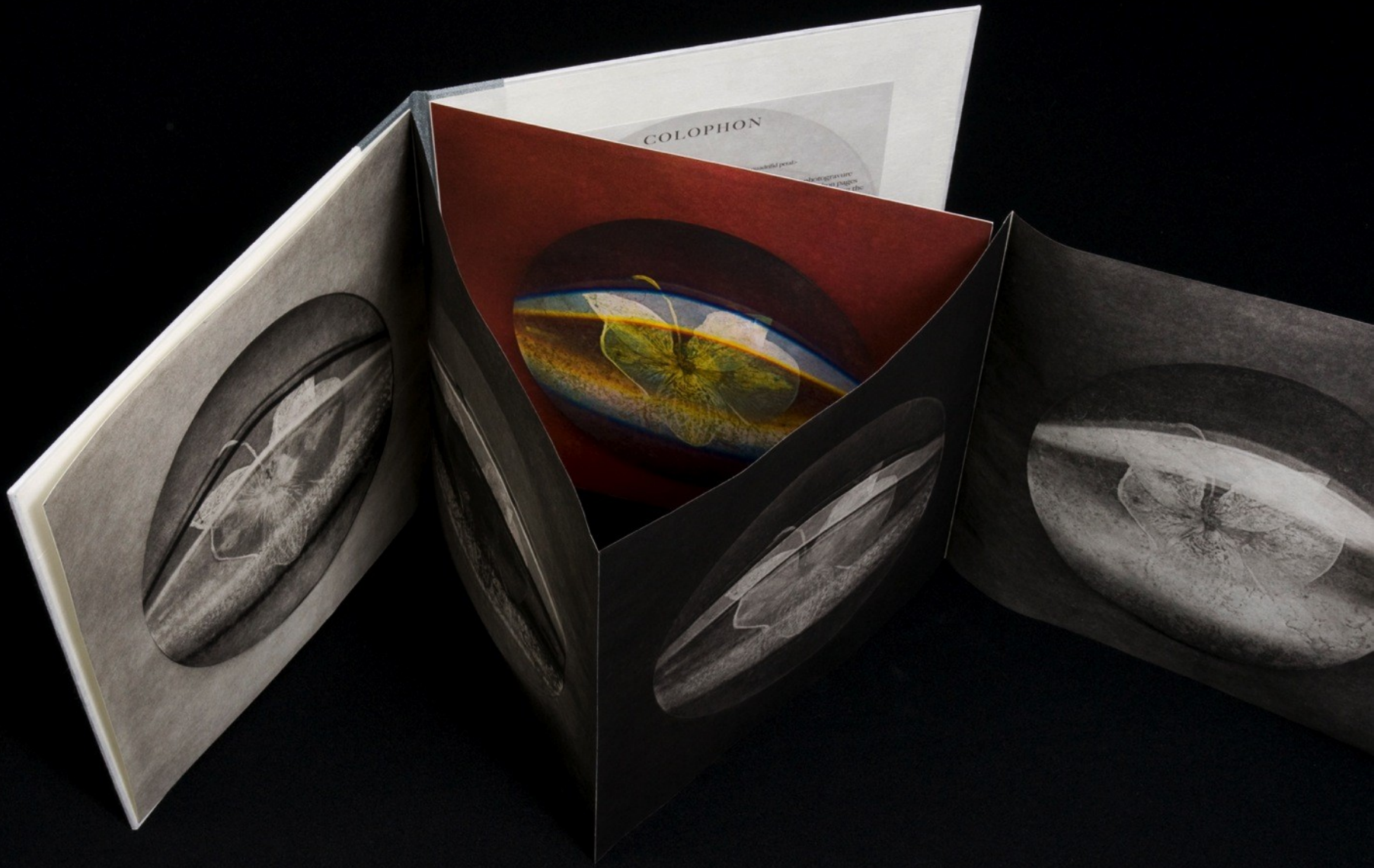




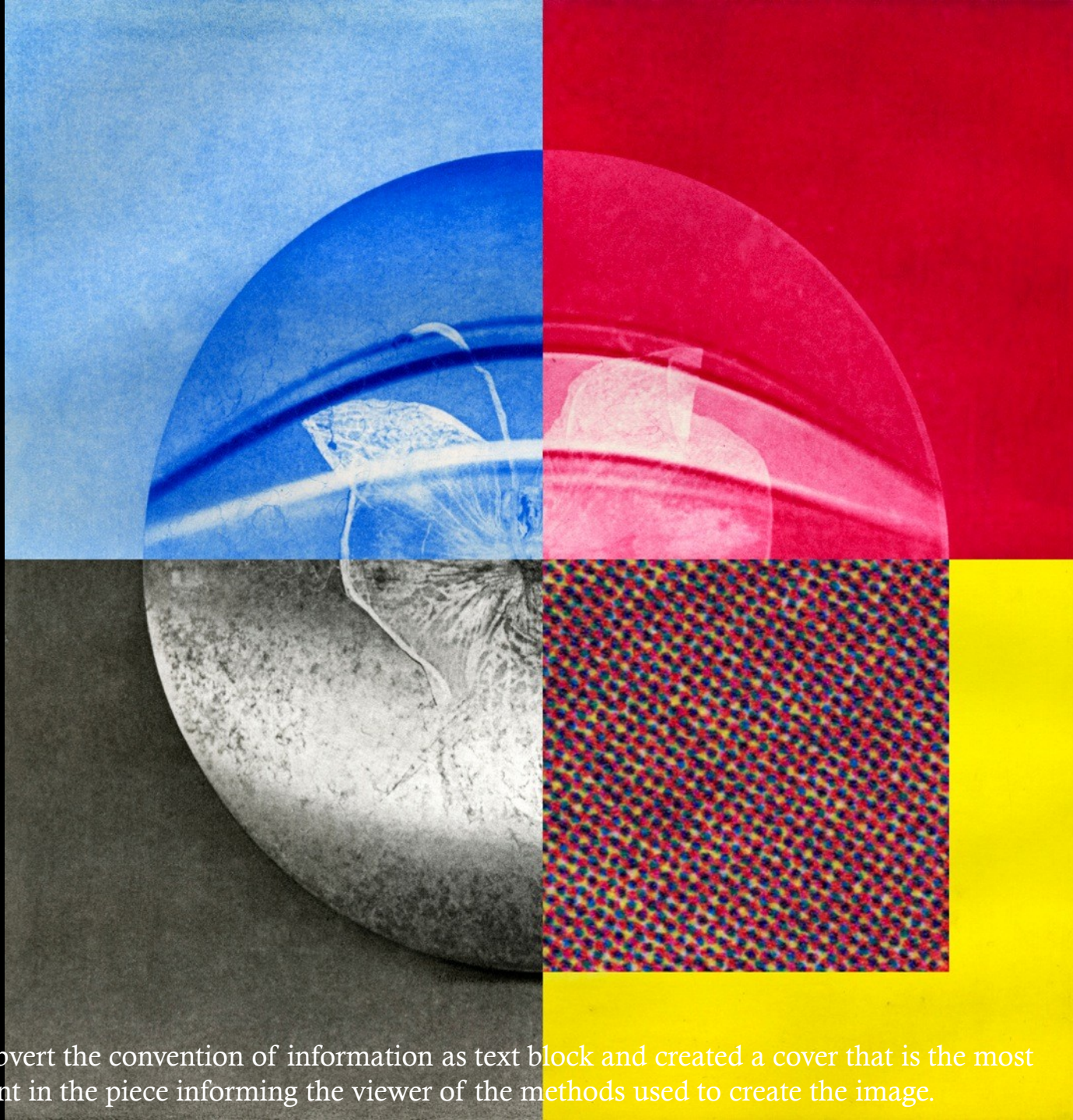
## Quadrifid

This book work is an exploration of the four-colour separation plates.

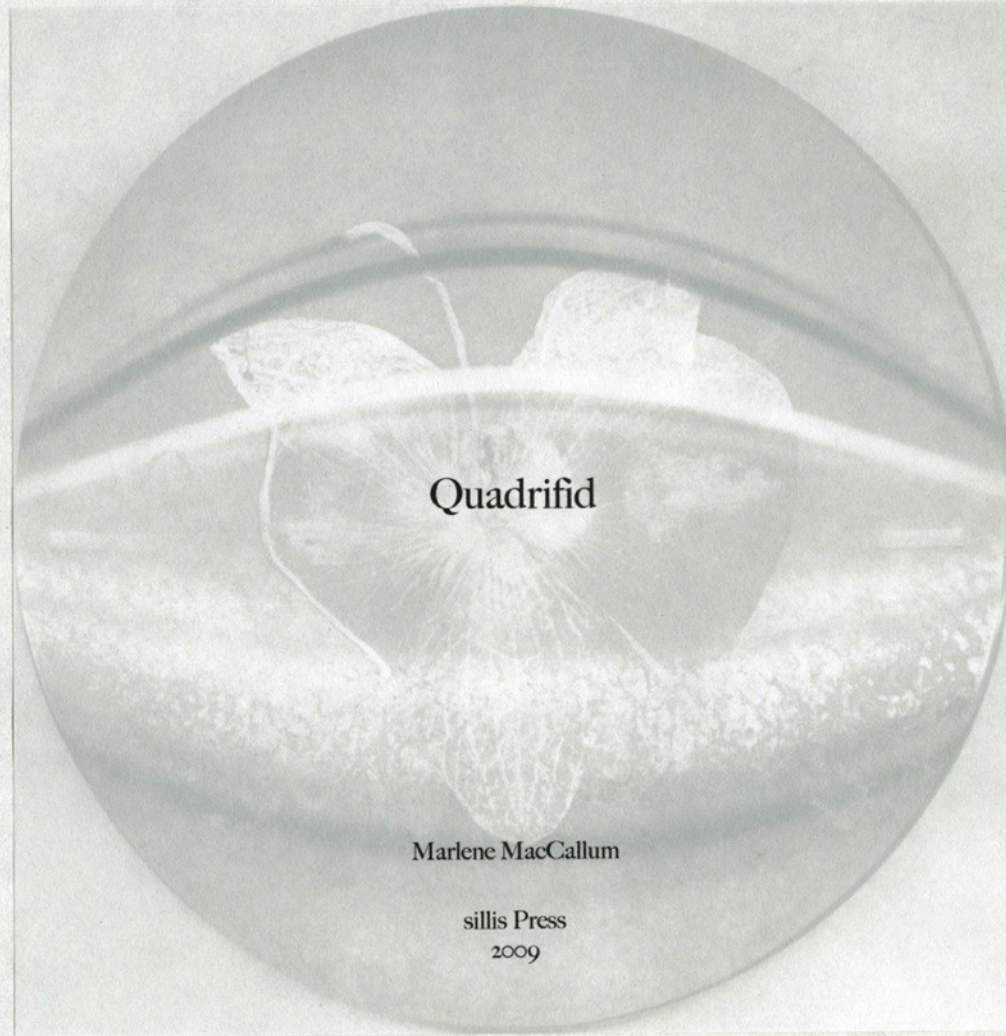
The second section is a folio structure with the four-colour photogravure.



The potential of the process lies not in the creation of a seamless colour reproduction but in the printing permutations that can deviate from the preconceived use of a colour-separation method.



I wanted to subvert the convention of information as text block and created a cover that is the most didactic element in the piece informing the viewer of the methods used to create the image.

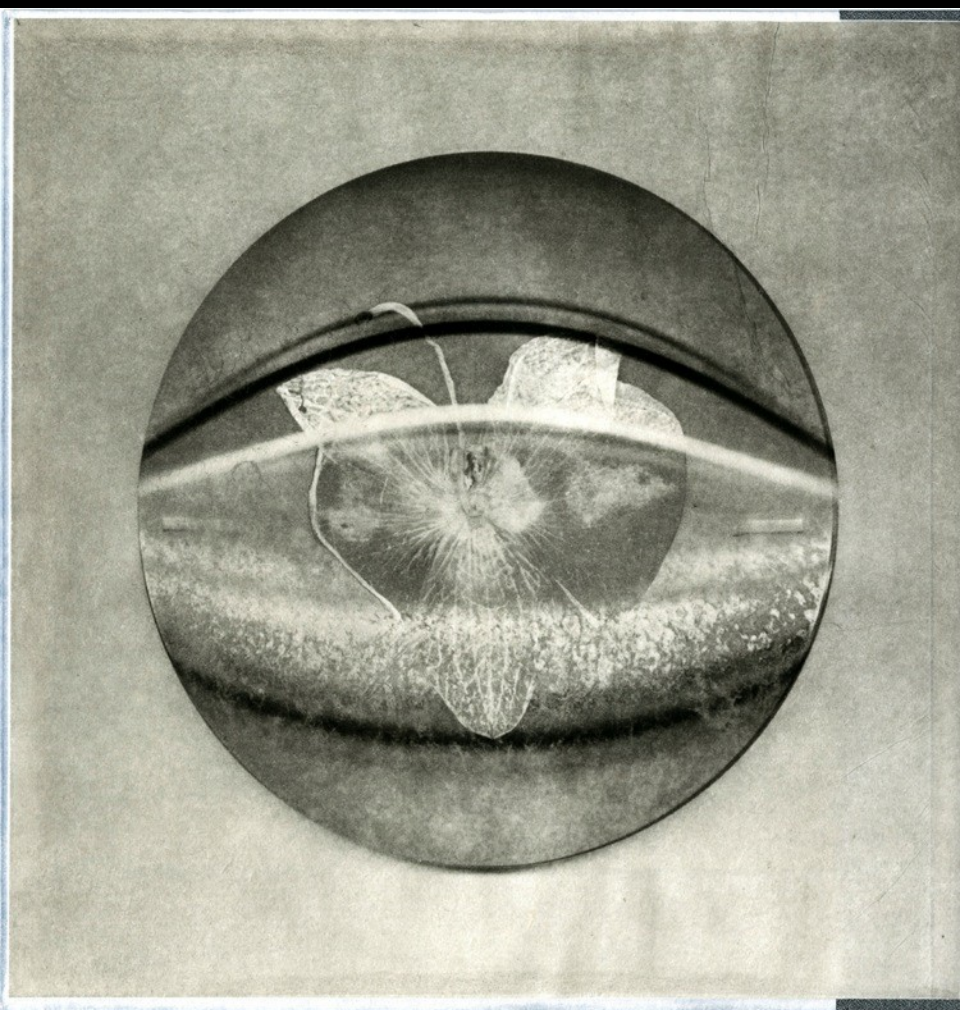


Quadrifid

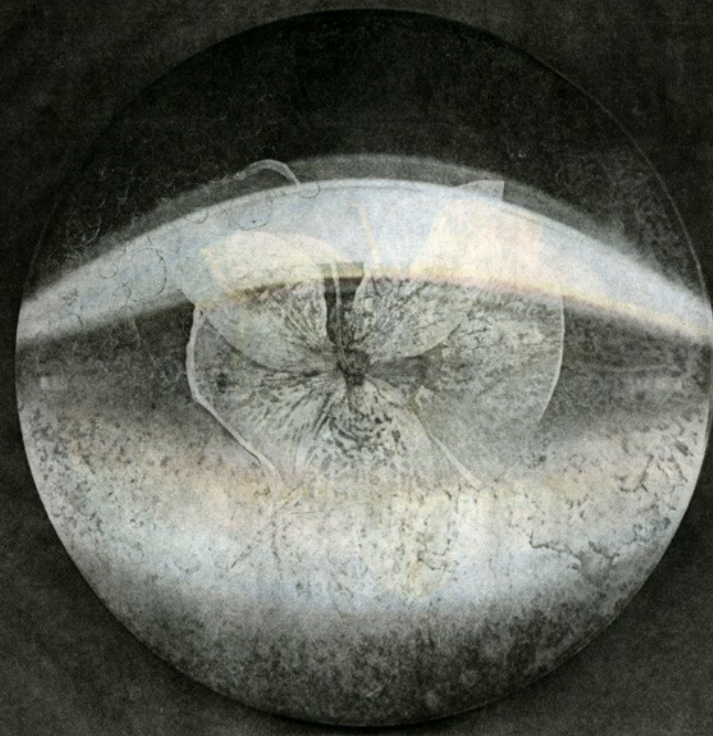
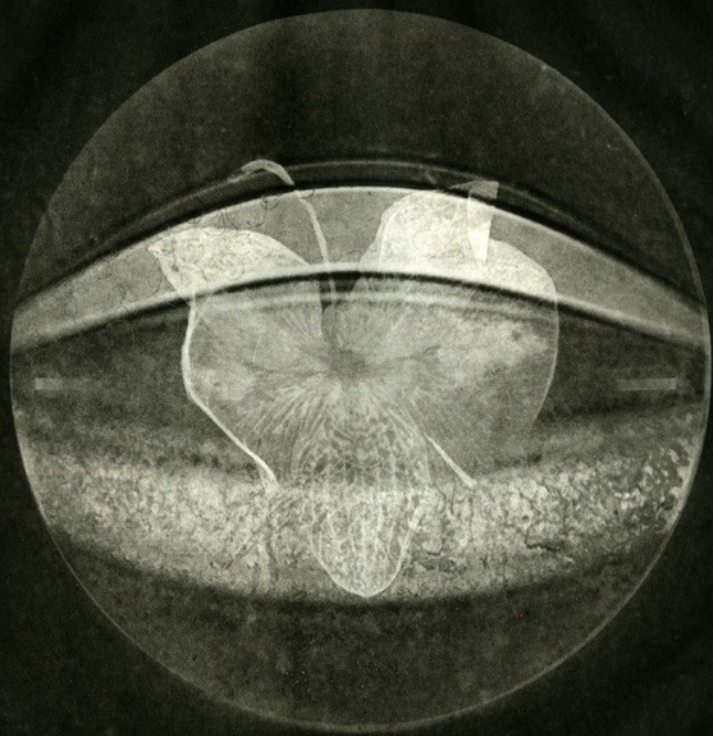
Marlene MacCallum

sillis Press  
2009

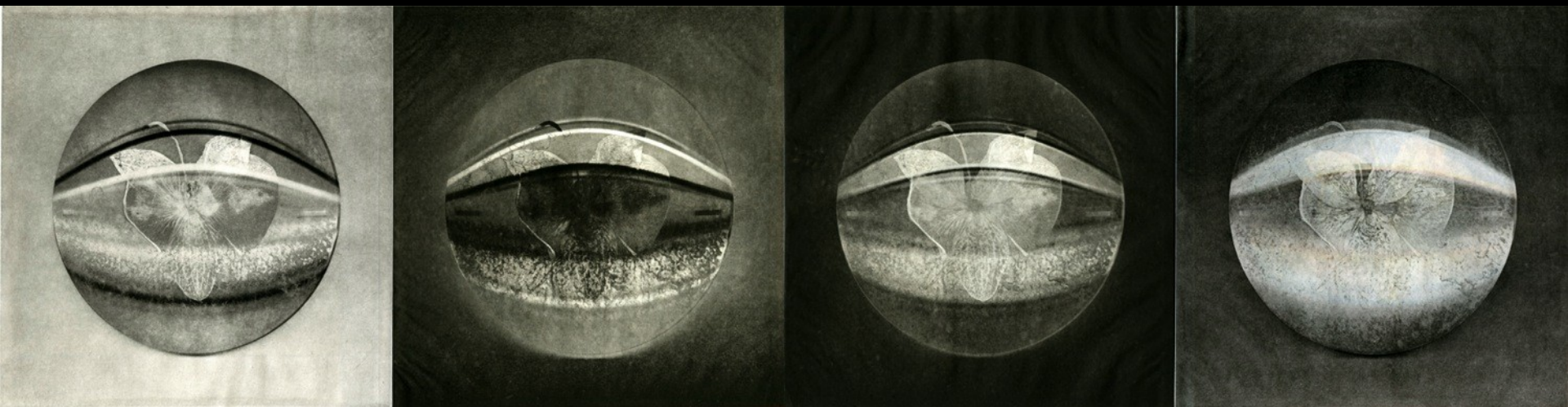
Quadrifid means “divided or deeply cleft into four parts”.



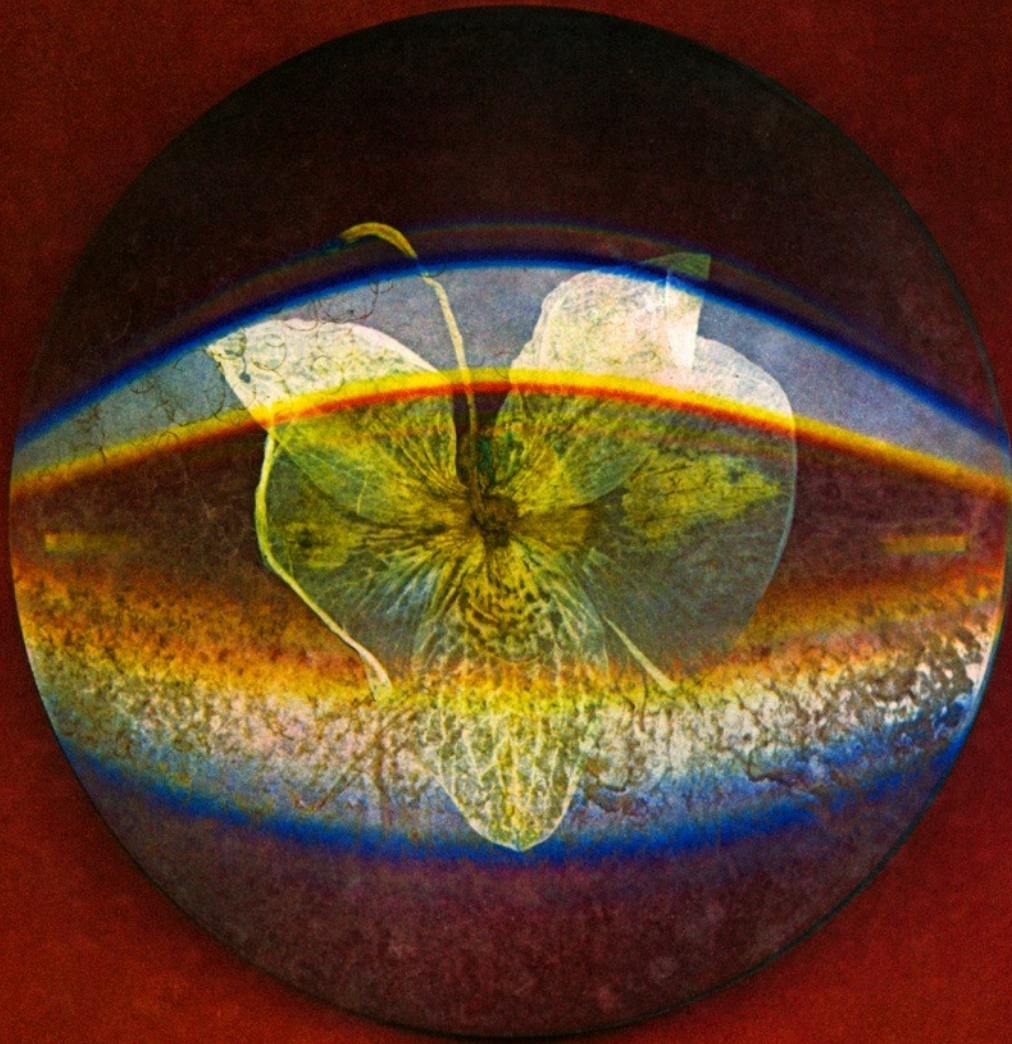
The cyan and yellow plates are printed in black.



The magenta and black plates complete this spread.



When the accordion section is expanded, it reveals the landscape created by the sequence.



In this image, the colour logic is internal to the object and the process. Because I was engaged in a steep learning curve there were many failed attempts along the way. An issue that arose was the role of work ethic and time investment. I struggled with the preconception that newer technologies are faster or more economic and historical methods are inherently more labour-intensive.



# COLOPHON

Quadrifid: divided or deeply cleft into four parts <a quadrifid petal>

Quadrifid is an experimental book work created by printing four-colour photogravure plates in both colour and black white. The cover images and the title and colophon pages are digital prints. This piece was made in conjunction with the research project: Creating the visual book through the intersection of the technologies of photogravure and digital processes.

Quadrifid was made in 2009 in Corner Brook, NL with the generous support of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada's Research/Creation Grant and Sir Wilfred Grenfell College/Memorial University of Newfoundland. Thanks to Pierre LeBlanc, David Morrish for their research contributions and thanks to Andrena Morrish for the lenses.

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sillis Press

2009

sillis (sequential imaging laboratory/laboratoire d'imagerie séquentiel)

Press is the collaborative research imprint of  
Commission Gedeon Commission, DeadCat Press,  
and Persnickety Press

My conclusion would be to refute that perspective as I have also been engaged in the learning curve of controlling digital printing, which has taken an equivalent investment of time and resources. In addition, a large part of the significance of this research is the process and therefore the labour must be valued.



The back cover of this work uses the same components as the front, but reorganizes them to create a new image, echoing the operation of the internal sections.



## **In Camera: Lens**

A hand bound experimental book work.  
Made in 2009.

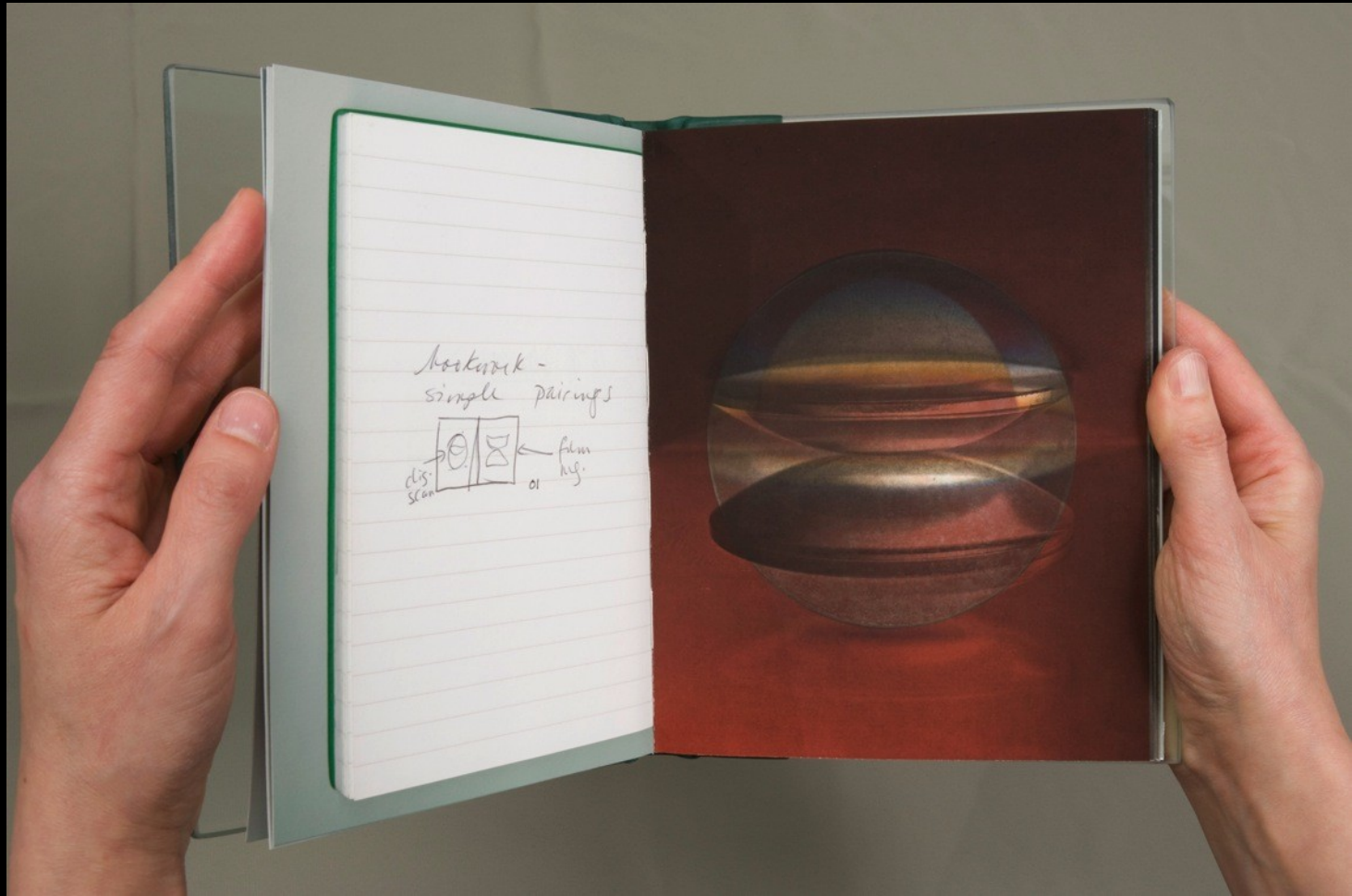
The final work that I will show you is the first of a four-volume work entitled In Camera. This series uses disassembled and defunct camera components as its image source.



## **In Camera: Lens**

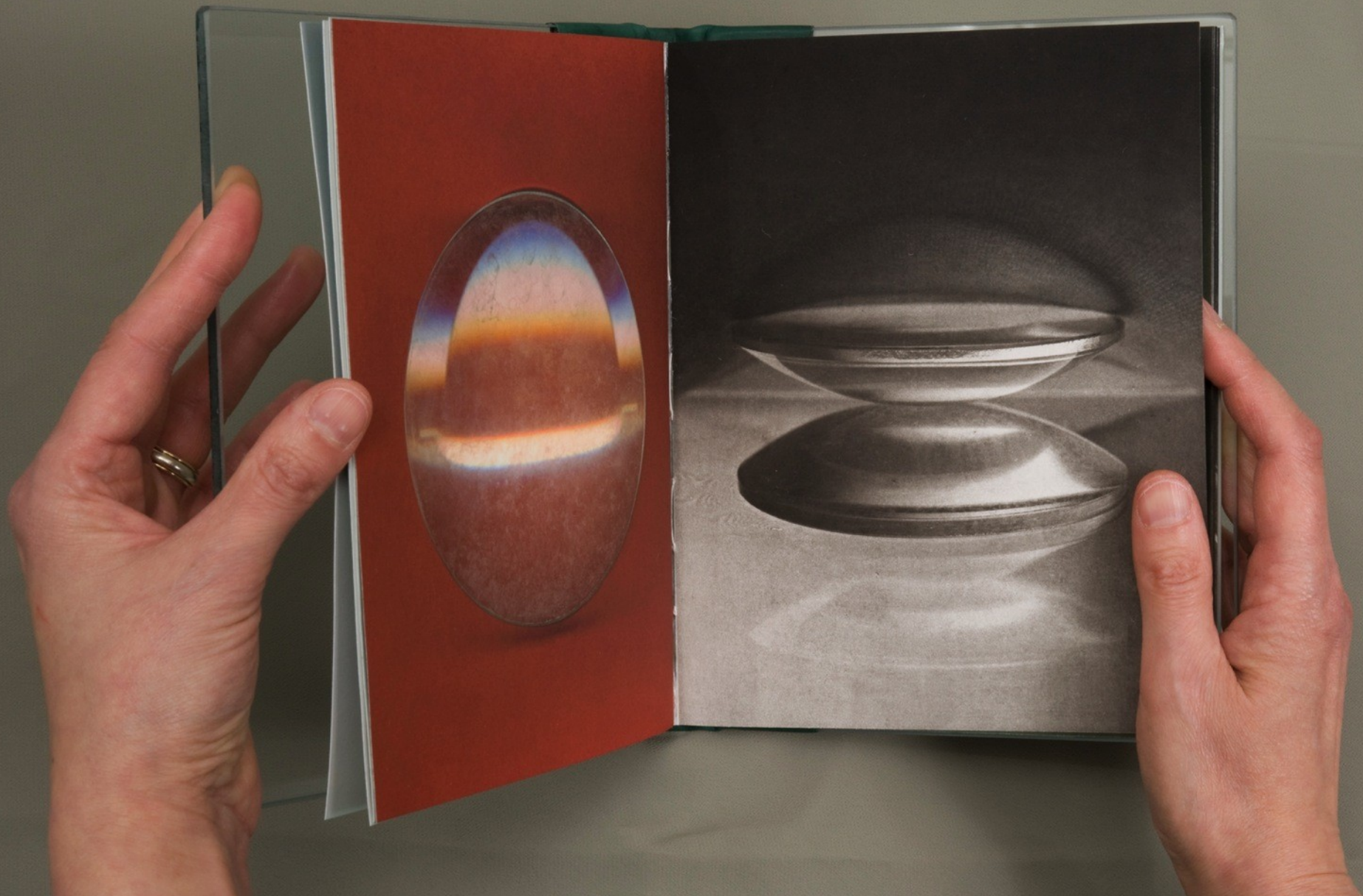
The covers are glass with leather quarter-binding.

Our research has given me the context to create experimental works that are made with multiple producing methods but not limited by material or edition constraints.



## In Camera: Lens

Digital images and photogravure plates are printed on two-sided Entrada and then bound into a codex structure.



Digital and analogue photogravure technologies are juxtaposed and layered in this work.

In Camera

Volume I  
Lens

Marlene MacCallum

sillis Press  
2009

Consistent throughout all my work is my interest in the perceptual process. My focus now is the phenomenology of seeing and the role of the old and new camera in visual interpretation.

May 12. 08  
lens scans

01 - 2 sec (not a good)  
black paper - CUSA on  
pressure  
auto focus - .8  
scanned at 120V dpi  
(maybe too high).

What would happen  
if I put a piece  
of film on  
scanner over a trans-  
parent object?  
Try with lith film

Light Spectrum!!!

11.81 proof  
16 x 12.547  
40.64 x 30

computer definition of  
technology

The application of scientific  
knowledge for practical  
purposes, esp. in industry;  
advances in computer technology, recycling  
technologies.

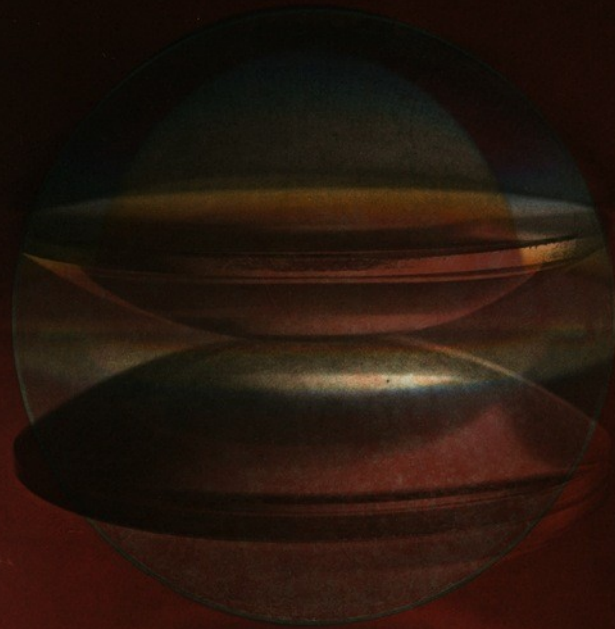
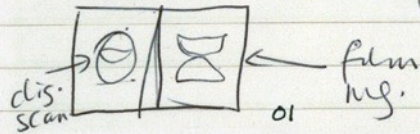
• machinery and equipment  
developed from such scientific  
knowledge

• The branch of knowledge dealing  
with engineering or applied sciences

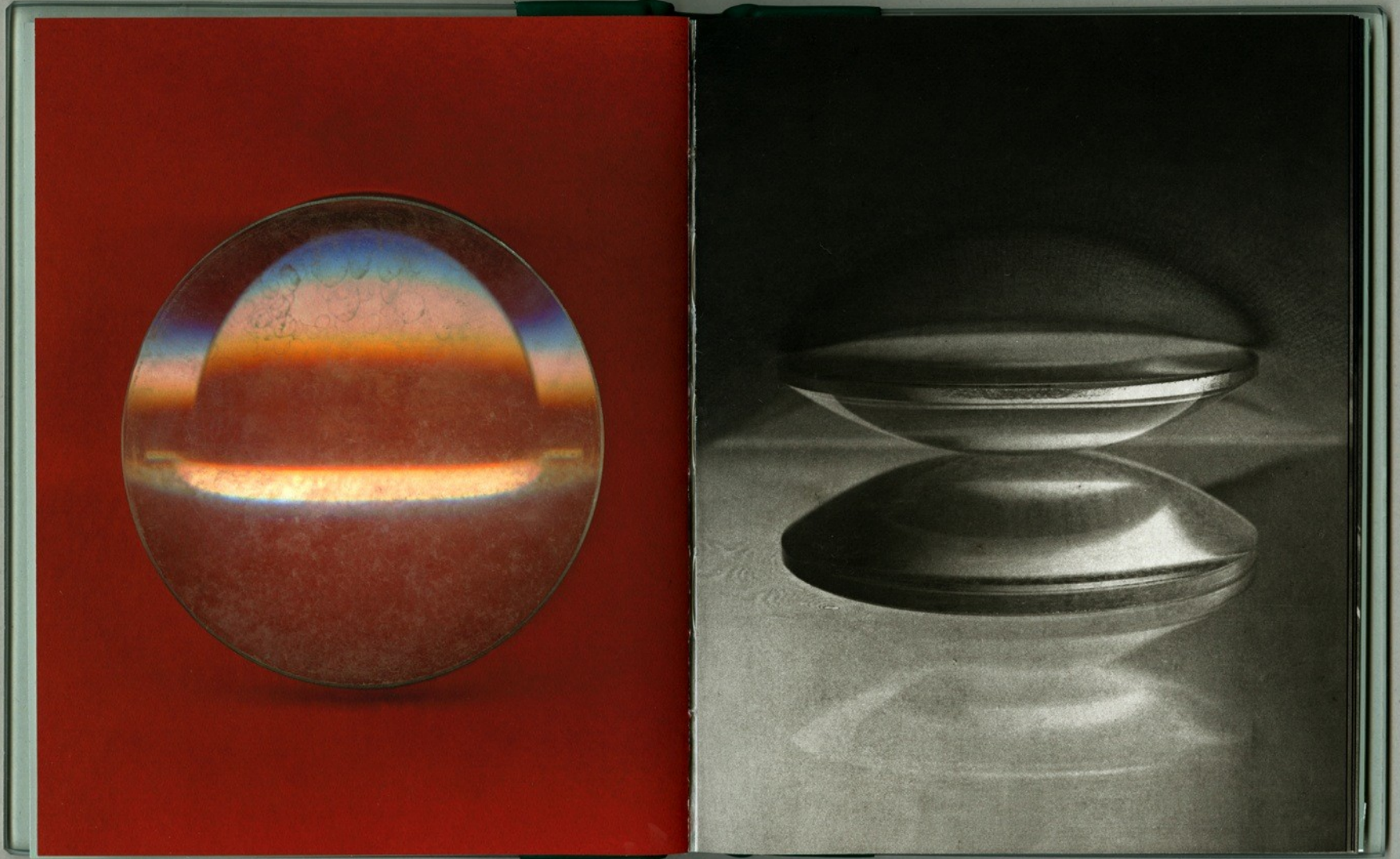
origin early 17<sup>th</sup> cent.: from Greek  
technologia 'systematic  
treatment', from  
tekhnē 'art, craft' + logia



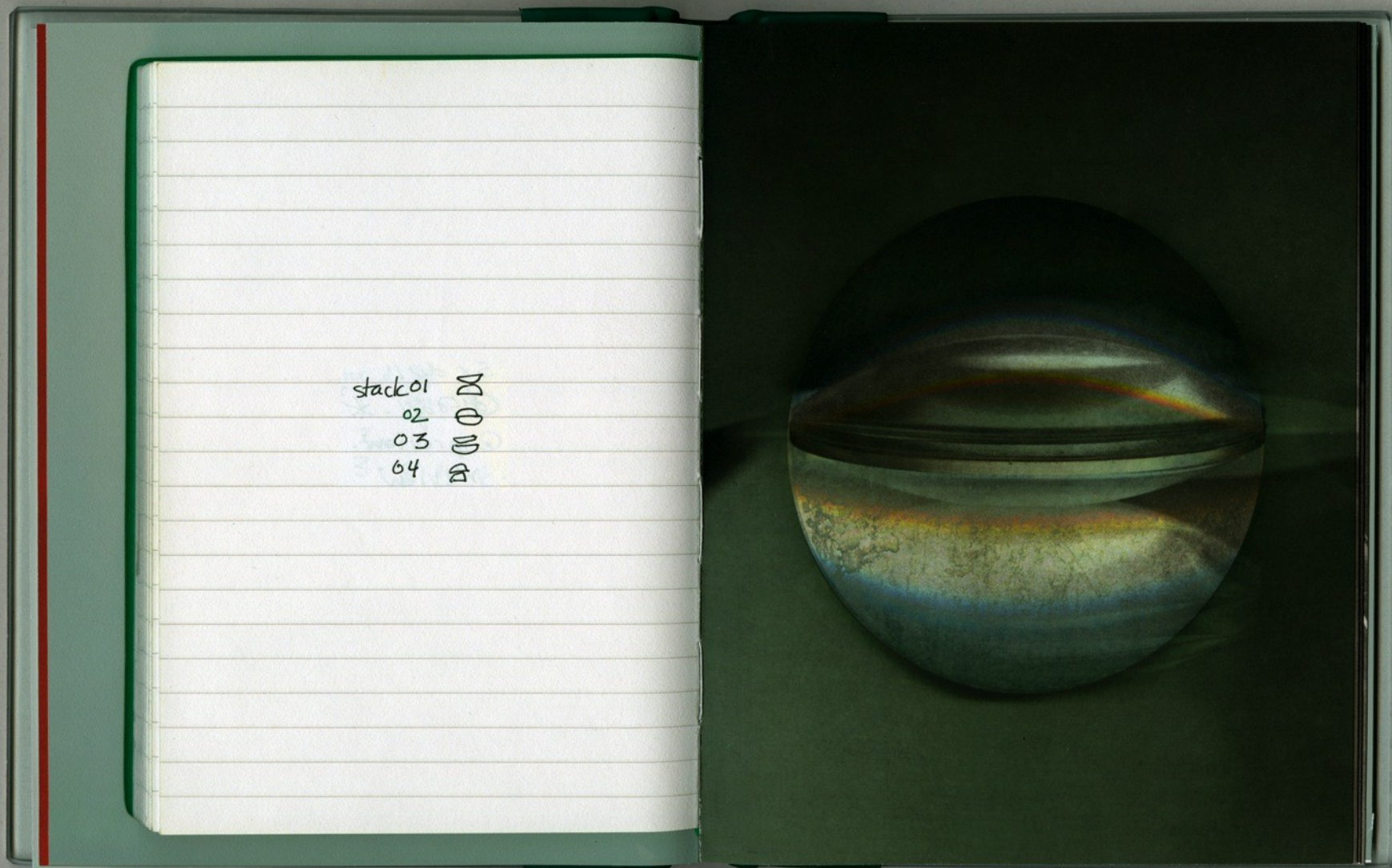
bookwork -  
single pairings



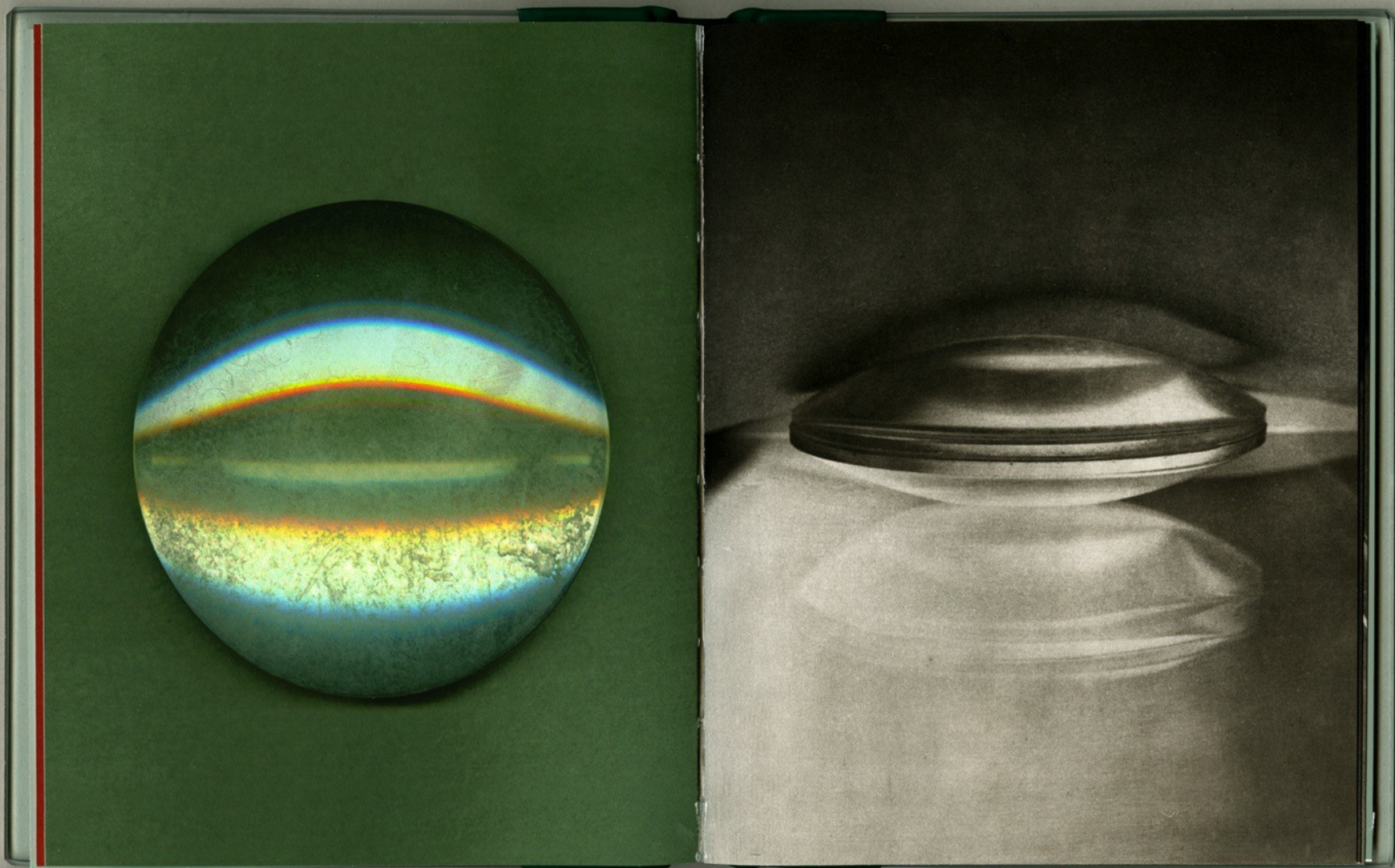
The components of defunct optical instruments are represented through two simultaneous points of view: the machine (the flatbed scanner) and the eye (the side-on view of the camera). Through these means, the architecture of the camera is loosely represented.



The colour image shows you the scanner's translation of two stacked lenses and is a digital inkjet print while the black and white image is a medium format film camera translation of the same situation, printed in photogravure.



On the recto page, the digital and photogravure prints are layered together. The verso page diagrams the four different ways to stack the two lenses.



The historical tool, the film camera, and the contemporary tool, the digital scanner became my forum for experimentation and I was surprised by the resulting images.

3. f22 @ 1sec  
grayscale. 50 dpi. 4"sq.

4. f22 @ 1/2 sec

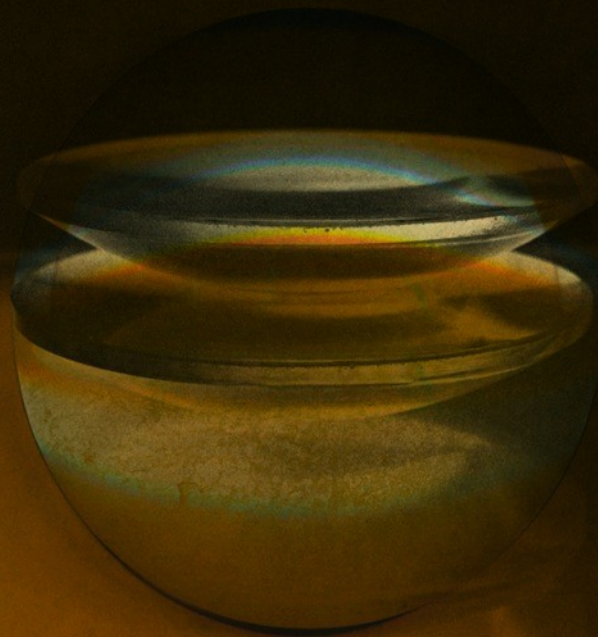
su lens\_text  
01-02-03 4 sec

9. 1/60

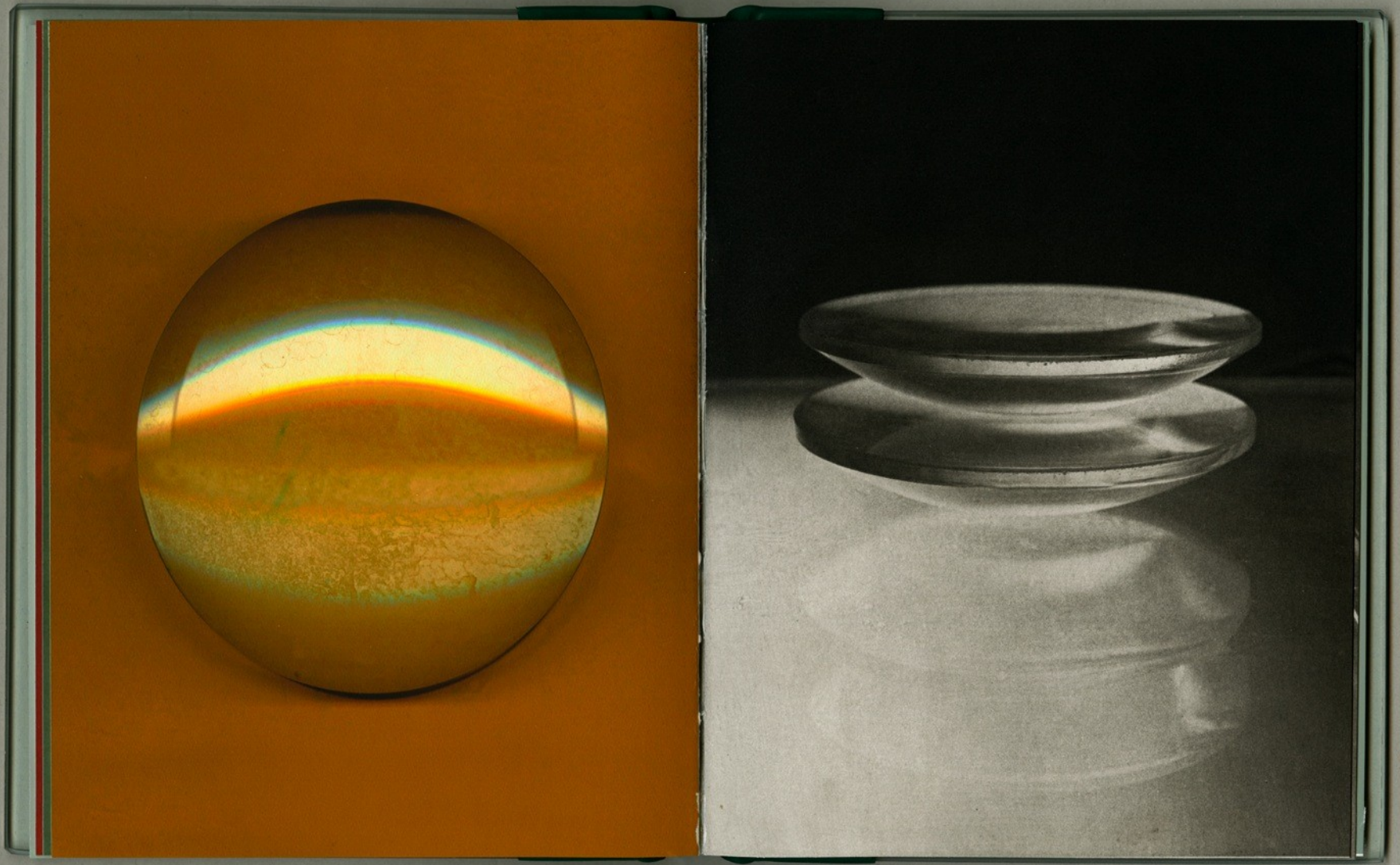
10- ☹ f22 @ 2 sec.

11- ☹ "

12- redid. (



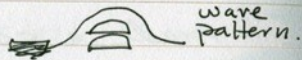
The technological focus of this research project provided the space where the poetic and practical converged and were the catalyst for the creation of work.



We have become inured to the camera eye and mistake it for the only version of the truth. The contrast between these two translations reminds us of the role of mechanical devices in our interpretation of the world.

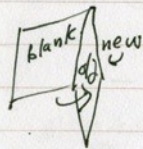
cont'd

scanning.  
focus @ 0.0.



didn't keep - too busy.

gray paper - focus @ -0.4





“Instead of treating “technology” per se as the locus of historical agency, the soft determinists locate it in a far more various and complex social, economic, political and cultural matrix.”



June 2. 08 - making  
film negs of lens set-ups  
Hasselblad w/ 2 enlarging  
lens

400 ASA

1 + 2 - ruined frames  
(miss used cable).

3 - f22 @ bulb -  
scanner at 1200 dpi.  
(4 min.)

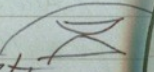
room lights off - some  
daylight coming in from  
behind.

4 - same but scanner  
at 600 dpi.

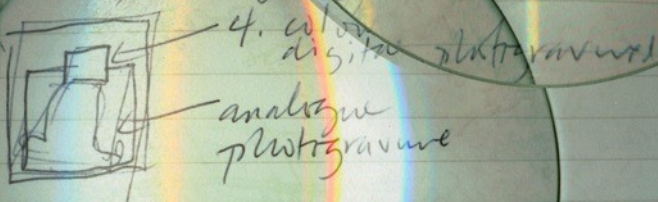
5 - changed set up so that  
white foam core  
above - 1200 dpi  
f22 - bulb

note: roll 1 over-exposed

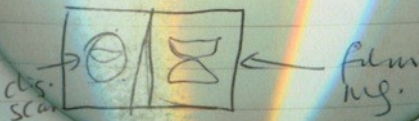
Roll 2  
1st frame - nothing

2-  f25. bulb -  
@ 1200 dpi.  
set camera at infinity  
& then moved till image  
in focus.

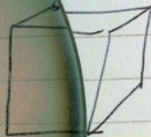
Thinking about book work  
& print potential



bookwork -  
single pairings



camera construction -  
componente film  
chamber.



- shutter.



aperture



lens.



The book work offers a receptive format to the issues being explored. In “The Century of Artists’ Books”, Johanna Drucker describes how the artists’ book operates “at the intersection of a number of different disciplines, fields, and ideas – rather than at their limits.”

## Colophon

In Camera: Lens  
is volume one in a four-  
part series of experimental  
book works that represents the  
architecture of a virtual camera. It is  
printed using photogravure and digital  
output and presents the intersection of  
digital & analogue imagemaking methods.

In Camera: Lens was made in 2009 in Corner Brook,  
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## Web site addresses

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