Metaphor Taking Shape: Poetry, Art, and the Book and
The Publisher’s Roundtable: Book Artists in Dialogue

Companion exhibitions on view at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and the Arts of the Book Collection at Sterling Memorial Library, January-March 2008

Curators: Nancy Kuhl (nancy.kuhl@yale.edu) and Jae Rossman (jae.rossman@yale.edu)

The exhibitions Metaphor Taking Shape: Poetry, Art, and the Book and The Publisher’s Roundtable: Book Artists in Dialogue consider the ways poetry and book arts interact, their intersections and connections, their shared context and their potentially conflicting functions. Though many poets and book artists uphold the book as an almost sacred cultural object, their approaches and their interpretations of the term and concept “book” may differ vastly. The books in Metaphor Taking Shape and The Publisher’s Roundtable demonstrate some of the variety of ways poets, artists, and publishers have explored the book, its intimacy, portability, and physicality, and the ways they have asserted its position as a multifaceted historical and contemporary method of communication, as well as its signification as an evolving cultural object. The works in the exhibitions consider, too, the book’s history and potential as a verbal and visual work of art, the possibilities the format represents for uniting poetry and the visual arts. Both exhibitions explore questions of textuality, verbal and visual metaphor making, tensions between language and image, and the physicality of texts and books.

In part, Metaphor Taking Shape: Poetry, Art, and the Book is arranged chronologically, showing some of the many ways poetry and art have been united in books since the turn of the last century. The exhibition also draws attention to important themes that have influenced poets, book artist, and publishers over time. The Publisher’s Roundtable: Book Artists in Dialogue features the work of six contemporary small presses that have worked variously with poetry and the visual arts, combing the two art forms in both traditional and innovative ways. The exhibition includes mission statements from each press, describing their goals, challenges, and accomplishments.

Both exhibitions highlight poetry and artists’ books from the Yale Collection of American Literature and the Arts of the Book Collection and draw from the Modern Books and Manuscripts Collection at Beinecke Library and the Yale University Art Gallery, showing the depth and richness of Yale University’s collections in this area. Including both celebrated works by influential publishers, artists, and writers and less well known examples made by individuals and groups that have not yet been well studied, the exhibitions do not attempt to represent a comprehensive view of poetry, art, and the book. Instead, the companion exhibitions present and celebrate the variety and vitality, the traditions and trends, the history and the potential futures of the vast and growing body of work uniting art and poetry in book works.

Jae Jennifer Rossman & Nancy Kuhl
Approximate Checklist for the Exhibitions

TIMELINE

The Early Decades: 1890 to 1910


William Morris, proof pages for *Earthly Paradise* Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, [189?].


Robert Browning, *So Here Then is the Last Ride*, East Aurora, NY: Roycrofters, 1900. *Arts of the Book Collection*


1910-1919


Софии Георгиевне Мельниковой: фантастический кабачек, Тифлис 1917 1918 1919. Тифлис, 1919.


Илиазд. Остров Пасхи. Тифлис: [s.n.], 1919.

Bentsiyen Raskin, drawings and design by El Lissitzky, [The Hen Who Wanted a Comb], Petersburg, 1919.


Djuna Barnes, *Book of Repulsive Women*, NY: Bruno Chapbooks, 1915. (See also the 1940s reprint).

Tristan Tzara, wood engravings by Jean Arp, *Ving-cinq Poèmes*, Zurich: Collection Dada, [1918].


1920-1929


Georg Heym, woodcuts by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Umbra Vitae*, München: Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1924.


Илиазд. Лидантю фарам. [Paris]: Издания Париж 41°, 1923.
Iliazd, *Lidantiu as a Beacon*, 1923.

Владимир Маяковский. Эл Лисицкий. Дліа голоса. Берлин: Р.С.Ф.С.Р. Государственное Издательство, 1923.
Vladimir Mayakovsky, *For the Voice*, 1923.

Алексей Крученых. Зудутные зудеса. [Moscow : s.n., 1922]

**1930-1939**


*A Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode and his Meiny*, San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1931. *Arts of the Book Collection*


1940–1949


1950–1959

Robert Creeley, drawings by Dan Rice, *All that is Lovely in Men*, Asheville: J. Williams, 1955.


**1960-1969**


George Salter, with illustrations by Fritz Kredel, *Am Wegesrand: Bluïen, Blatter, frisch und welk, Wurzeln, Rinden und Lebewesen, die er diessseits und jenseits des Atlantischen Ozeans fand, sind hier*, Frankfurt am Main: Der Goldene Brunnen, 1961. *Arts of the Book Collection*


1970-1979


Imamu Amiri Baraka, photographs by Fundi, *In Our Terribleness (Some Elements and Meaning in Black Style)*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970.


1980-1989


**1990-1999**


*Conjuros y Ebriedades: Cantos de Mujeres Mayas*, San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico: Taller Leñateros, 1997. *Arts of the Book Collection*


**2000-2007**


Dorothy Mallory Jones, artwork by Philip Mallory Jones, *Lissen Here!*, Atlanta: Philip Mallory Jones, 2006. *Arts of the Book Collection*


Brad Freeman, photographs by Brad Freeman and Anne George, *Once Removed*, Minneapolis: Brad Freeman, 2003. *Arts of the Book Collection*


**MOVEMENTS, FIGURES, THEMES**

**Johanna Drucker**


**C.D. Wright and Deborah Luster**


**John Yau**


**Buzz Spector**


**Ann Lauterbach**


**Granary Books**


**The World is Round by Gertrude Stein**


William R. Scott Publisher’s Catalog, [1939]. *Williams R. Scott Papers*

**Jess and Robert Duncan**


**Ron Padgett and Bertrand Dorny**


**Metaphor Taking Shape**


*Cold Drill*, Boise: Boise State University, Department of English, 1994. *Arts of the Book Collection*


Poemobiles


Visual Poetry and Verbal Art


Mary Ellen Solt and John Dearstyn, *Flowers in Concrete*, Bloomington: Fine Arts Department, Indiana University, 1966.

Interpreting William Carlos Williams

William Carlos Williams, Barbara Henry, Anna Pinto, and Barbara Mauriello, *WCW’s Accordion: Six Early Poems*, Jersey City: [Harsimus Press], 2006.


The Mimeograph Revolution


The ELM Press


Robinson Jeffers and William Everson


FRAMED WORKS


THE PUBLISHERS’ ROUNDTABLE

Coracle Press

Les Coleman, *For It not to be Worth the Paper It Is Printed on it has to be Printed*, Ballybeg: Coracle Press, [2003].

Erica Van Horn, *Italian Lessons*, [Docking, Norfolk: Coracle, 1989-1999]. *Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*


Cuneiform Press


Robert Creeley, “Place to be,” [Buffalo, N.Y: Cuneiform Press, 2004]. *Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*


In Cahoots Press


Ninja Press


Sutton Hoo


Donald Revell, *Timor Mortis*, [La Crosse]: Sutton Hoo Press, [2001]. *Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*


Charles Wright, *North American Bear*; woodcuts by Gary Young, [La Crosse]: Sutton Hoo Press, c1999. *Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*

Ugly Duckling Presse

Joel Dailey, *Ready or Not*, [Brooklyn]: Ugly Duckling Presse, [2006?]. *Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*


