

Experimental Bookmaking VDE 4600 :: Richard Minsky

SUNY Purchase, Fall 2010

August 29 - September 4

We will be starting our class each week in Computer Lab 1018B. After lunch we will resume in the Letterpress Printshop/Bindery 0010.

We started the first class with a brief survey of what we will be doing this semester. In addition to weekly projects, each student will have a term project. This must be submitted for approval by the fifth class, Monday, October 4.

We discussed metaphor as the key concept in conceiving your book, and ways in which your text, images, structure and materials support the metaphor or create tension by contradicting it.

Color stimulation of the retina affects consciousness and emotion. We looked at a color chart of color meditations on the Chakras, and photos of Prairie Voles, a small midwest rodent that mates monogamously for life at an early age. Oxytocin and Vasopressin are involved in this. Some images cause humans to secrete these substances. Knowledge of visual stimulation of the endocrine system can aid the artist to manipulate the state of being of the viewer.

In the shop we learned about testing the grain direction of paper, folded paper into a 16 page section, and sewed a three-section book on cloth tape with linen thread.



If you missed the first class and the assignment for it, here it is:

Assignment for first class:

Welcome to Experimental Bookmaking VDE 4600.

During the first class we will do brief introductions and discuss the question: What is a Book?

Read through the archived discussion from the Book_Arts-L listserv:
<http://www.philobiblon.com/whatisabook.shtml>

Read the Introduction and look through the exhibition catalog Book Arts in the USA:
<http://www.centerforbookarts.org/exhibits/archive/catalog.asp?showID=81>

If you have time, take a look at the catalog for The First Decade:
<http://www.centerforbookarts.org/exhibits/archive/catalog.asp?showID=80>

and

The Guild of Book Workers 100th Anniversary Exhibition:
<http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/gallery/100anniversary/index.shtml>

The detailed syllabus for this course will be finalized after our first session.

If you have experimental books in progress that you would like to include as part of your coursework, bring them to class.

Required reading for this course will include:

Slate, Barbara. *You Can Do a Graphic Novel*. ISBN 1592579558

Smith, Keith. *Structure of the Visual Book*. ISBN 0974076406

Recommended Reading will include:

Cost, Frank. *The Book as a Child of the Internet*. ISBN 0977098648

Bringhurst, Robert. *The Elements of Typographic Style*. ISBN: 0881792055

Saltz, Ina. *Typography Essentials*. ISBN 1592535232

I have asked the library to order these and reserve them for this class.

Bring your hand tools to every class:

- Bone folder
- Tweezers
- Steel ruler
- Scalpel, x-acto or snap-blade knife
- Apron (or wear clothes that you can get ink and glue on)
- Scissors
- Dividers
- Potter's needle
- Sewing needles (# 1 darning or equivalent)

We will be using InDesign to compose book pages throughout this course.

TLTC is currently setting up a Moodle for this course. I will let you know when that is ready.

Please e-mail me if you have any questions.

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September 5 - September 11

No class Monday, Sept. 6: Labor Day, so this would be a good week to review InDesign, or learn the basics of it if you haven't used it previously.

Adobe has an online tutorial at

http://help.adobe.com/en_US/indesign/cs/using/index.html

See if you can finish the 3-section miniature book that was sewn in the last class. That means make the case (the covers) and case in the book block (attach the cover to the pages).

Assignment:

Be prepared to start creating a book with InDesign during our computer lab

session on Sept. 13. Bring text and image files. Know what your story is.

Read:

You Can Do A Graphic Novel Chapter 1: Your Story and Chapter 6: The Plotline

Your book can be any length, but at least 6 pages.

September 12 - September 18

September 13 we will meet in the computer lab to create a book using InDesign and publish it as a PDF and as a POD (print on demand) book.

In the bindery after lunch we will review the books that were made in the first class. Be sure you have finished your miniature 48 page binding and bring it to class.

We will look at some other book structures, and talk about form and function.

Bring an idea to class for a different structure and materials to bind or display the pages of the POD book that you are creating in the computer lab. We will be creating a blank dummy of that book in advance of its completion, to make sure that the design will work in the format you have created.

Read:

Structure of the Visual Book up to p. 29.

You Can Do A Graphic Novel Chapter 8: Layout

September 19 - September 25

September 20 we will finish the InDesign project begun last week and export it as a PDF (Adobe Acrobat) file. We will also publish it as a Print On Demand (POD) book.

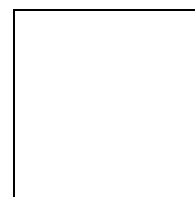
In the afternoon we will finish our dummies for a physical version of it.

Assignment due October 4: Print your InDesign file and bind it into the format you have made as a dummy.

Reading assignment:

Structure of the Visual Book pp. 29 to 49.

You Can Do A Graphic Novel Chapter 7: Writing



September 26 - October 2

September 27 we will have a field trip to New Haven, CT, and will meet at 11:30 am at Yale University's [Robert B. Haas Family Arts Library](#), in the Loria Center for the History of Art, 190 York Street, New Haven, CT.

Transportation will be by car pool, and arrangements will be made during the Sept. 13 class.

We will start with a tour of the exhibition [Material Meets Metaphor: A Half Century of Book Art by Richard Minsky](#). We will break for lunch 12:00 to 1:00 and reconvene in the library's Special Collections Reading Room.

From 1:00 to 3:15 we will be looking at artists' books in their collection, and will be fortunate to have Jae Jennifer Rossman, Assistant Director for Special Collections, with us to speak about the books.

October 3 - October 9

October 4 your InDesign project must be completed and printed by the end of the morning session. This will be a graded project, and late submission will result in a reduction in your score.

In the afternoon we will be binding these pages into the form you created. Make sure when you print that the grain direction of the paper is parallel to the fold. If the structure is to have folds in more than one direction, the grain must run parallel to the sewn or glued edge, if any.

This project should show the best technical quality you are capable of in terms of precision and clean work. This will be a graded project.

This week you also must submit your term project proposal. You will work on this project simultaneously with the other class assignments for the next nine weeks.

Read Structure of the Visual Book pp. 49-118.

The Altered Book assignment is due next week, and the next stage of your term project.

October 10 - October 16

The homework assignment due Monday, October 11 is to make an altered book, such as those we saw in the exhibition and in the Rare Book Reading Room at Yale. That means taking an existing book and making it into something else. It can be anything from rebinding the book in a way that communicates its meaning to painting out part of the text to create a new story. The book you alter should have a title or content that has meaning

for you.

Look at the exhibition catalog: The Altered Page

<http://www.centerforbookarts.org/exhibits/archive/catalog.asp?showID=47>

It describes some of the ways that artists have altered books, and has some illustrations.

This is not a project to be worked on in class. It is a homework assignment to be turned in at the beginning of class, and will be graded.

Be prepared to work on your term project In the computer lab and the book arts studio.

Read You Can Do a Graphic Novel, Chapter 5: Creating Characters.

October 17 - October 23

Midterm grades will be sent to students by e-mail this week. If you have not handed in all the assignments that were due it will be reflected in your grade.

Please do not ask during class what was due. It's all above this week in the Moodle.

Read: You Can Do a Graphic Novel, Chapter 3: The Creative Process
Structure of the Visual Book, Accumulated Fragments: Pages 119 - 153

Assignment: for Monday, October 18

Semester Project Schedule--due at the beginning of class.

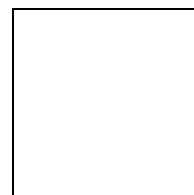
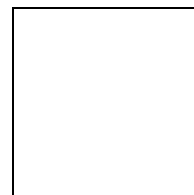
You have six weeks left to complete your project. Itemize for each week what it is that has to be done in order for your project to be completed on time. Deadlines are important. Late submission of your project will result in a decrease in your grade.

Your Semester Project will count for 50% of your grade. Other projects will count for 25%, and class participation will count for 25%.

October 24 - October 30

October 25 we will look at three books with alternative structures:

Minsky in London uses laminated sheets of Mohawk Superfine cover stock printed letterpress with mounted photo prints, yet opens flat due to its Folded N-Guard structure with primary and secondary sewing stations;



Kaleidoscope by Marilyn Rosenberg uses reflective mylar pages and a book within a book format, including horizontal and vertical accordions.

Karrussell by Hedi Kyle is a circular sculptural bookwork with handmade paper, collage, and string, mounted on a slit tube.

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Assignment: Be prepared to begin the next class project, which will combine text (set in type), with at least three images and no more than 30 images, in a format that is neither codex nor accordion.

The theme of this book is Sabotage. That can be the title, or you can create a different title, as long as the content of the book involves a saboteur. The saboteur can be the protagonist or antagonist, can be individual or collective, internal or external.

This project is due at the beginning of the Nov. 8 class, at which time we will have a critique. Your book will be evaluated on several criteria:

Choice and use of font

Relationship of images to each other and to the type

Structure of the book and its relevance to the content

Choice of materials

Use of color

Effectiveness of communication

Interpretation of the theme

Craftsmanship

Read: Structure of the Visual Book: Picture Relationships, pp. 211-221

Refer to: Bringhurst and Saltz when contemplating your typography

October 31 - November 6

November 1 we will continue working on Sabotage.

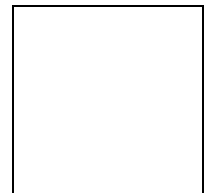
Assignment: Bring in all the books you have done so far. We will begin photographing them for submission to the exhibition curators and possible catalog use.

Reading Assignment:

Structure of the Visual Book: Structure and Composition, pp. 323-353

Johanna Drucker, "Critical Issues / Exemplary Works," [*The Bonefolder: an e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist*, vol. 1, no. 2 \(Spring 2005\)](#).

Garv Frost. "Reading by Hand: the haptic evaluation of artists' books." *The*



November 7 - November 13

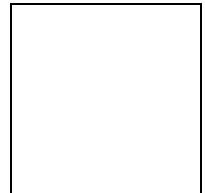
November 8: The Sabotage project is due today at the start of class. Today we will critique the books using the methods we discussed last week.

Bring your altered book, your miniature book and your InDesign book to class. We will be photographing them today for the exhibition catalog.

Remaining class time can be used for your semester project.

Assignment for next week: Sculptural Bookwork. This is a homework assignment, not to be done in class.

Read: Structure of the Visual Book: Conceptual Books, pp. 381-392 and One-Picture and No-Picture Books, pp. 393-402



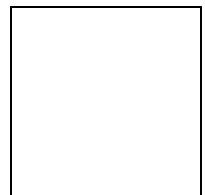
November 14 - November 20

November 15 your Sculptural Bookwork is due at the beginning of class. We will critique the work.

Today we will have a review of the considerations that go into the content and form of a book. The next project is a typographic or calligraphic book. It can be in any format, on any theme, but can only use type and/or calligraphy--no other images. You can use color for the backgrounds and type, or black and white.

The project is due at the beginning of class, November 29.

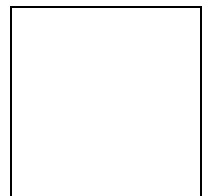
Read: Structure of the Visual Book: Movement, pp. 241-293



November 21 - November 27

November 22 we will work on the Semester Project and the Typographic Book.

Read: Structure of the Visual Book: Syntactical Pages, pp. 295-311.

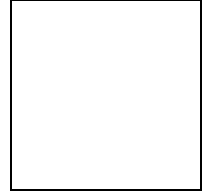


November 28 - December 4

November 29: Semester Project is due at the beginning of class. Critique.
Typographic Book is due. Critique.

Bring to class the following projects:

1. Physical Book made in the POD/PDF/Book project
2. Altered Book
3. Sabotage Book
4. Sculptural Bookwork
5. Typographic Book
6. Semester Project



We will be curating an exhibition of the work done during the class, and will discuss the criteria of selection from the perspective of critical theory. We will photograph the selected works, and discuss how to photograph book art, including choice of setup, angle of the shot, and lighting. We will produce a catalog of the exhibition as a PDF, a POD, and a physical edition.

We will print invitations to the exhibition.

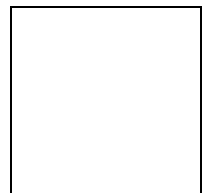
Read: Structure of the Visual Book: Display, pp. 155-210

December 5 - December 11

December 6: We will finish the exhibition catalog and prepare it for publication. The physical edition will be large enough that everyone who completed the course will get a copy, as well as the Learning Asst. and the teacher. We will discuss whether to expand the edition to have copies for other faculty, or to have copies otherwise available.

Assignment: Have your Artist Statement for each work that is in the exhibition ready to print in the morning session.

Last Monday the class juried the exhibition and selected the works that will be shown. Two students were absent and did not present their final and type projects. If you were absent, or for any other reason did not have your projects in class, please send photos of those projects this week, no later than FRIDAY, to the class drop box so everyone can see them. I will poll the class by e-mail on the remaining projects. You need to know which of your works will be in the exhibition because you will be presenting your catalog pages Monday morning for critique and proofreading.



Monday afternoon the class made all the decisions about the exhibition catalog, poster, and invitation. Here is what was decided:

EXHIBITION TITLE

Hommage à Leslie Nielsen
une exposition des livres expérimentaux

Exhibition Dates: Dec. 13, 2010 to Feb. 14, 2011

Opening Reception: Monday, December 13, 2010, 3:30 p.m. to 4:20 p.m

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

SARAH: Icann

G: The Letterform in the Self Image

JAIME: Flying Forts, Prey, and Fingernails

REBECCA: Exposed and Some Sad Story to Tell

SKYLAR: Skateboarding Magazine and X

KI: Robot Brains

LIZZ: Sabotage, Waiting Game, Streamers of Consciousness, and Beginning to Learn About Thinking

MOSA: Sabotage

NICOLE: Sisters, Understanding Autism, The Butterfly, and Skittles

CATALOG SPECIFICATIONS

Size: 5.5" x 8.5" vertical, with 1/8" trim head, tail and foreedge.

Trim size=5.375" x 8.25" [5 3/8 x 8 1/4]

Page Count: 24 pp

Title Page

Table of Contents

Introduction and Acknowledgments

A Two-Page Spread for each student

Possibly endpapers

The cover will be a separate piece with the title foil stamped

I am thinking that it might be interesting to do something like cut a window in the cover and have a photo of Nielsen on the first page of the book showing through the window, perhaps having that as title page. Other ideas welcome.

POSTER SPECIFICATIONS

Size: 11x17

A print 24 x 36 or so will be made for the library entrance.

INVITATION

Each student may design an invitation. You can choose to send your own design or someone else's.

Size: Optional. A bookmark was suggested, a postcard (4x6) a folding card, a booklet

REFRESHMENTS FOR RECEPTION

Airplane snacks: little bags of pretzels, nuts, whatever & canned soda.

- All designs for INVITATION, POSTER and CATALOG SPREAD are due **TODAY MONDAY, DECEMBER 6**
- Monday morning Dec. 6, after we look at everyone's graphics, we will go to the library and start installing the works.
- **BRING ALL YOUR SELECTED WORK TO CLASS MONDAY MORNING**
- If you have work that was not yet seen by the class or critiqued, **BRING IT MONDAY MORNING**
- The December 13 class and reception are in lieu of a final examination. Attendance and participation are mandatory.

December 12 - December 18

December 13 is the final class. We will finish printing and binding the physical copies of the exhibition catalog and critique it.

The exhibition begins today. We will finish installing it at 11:00 a.m. and have a reception at 3:30 p.m.