

# By Hand and Eye: Dance in the Space of the Artist's Book

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## Abstract

*By Hand and Eye: Dance in the Space of the Artist's Book* is a practice-based research project that explores what potential there might be for dancing, or an expanded notion of dance, to be found and/or created in book form. For instance, how might a book dance, rehearse its contents? What relationships can be found or forged between the body and the artist's book: the movement of the eye, the spacing of thought, temporality and duration, and the choreography of the page?

These propositions have been explored and expanded through a tactile, experiential examination of selected artists' books from the National Art Library (NAL) of the Victoria & Albert Museum, a translation/re-working of existing performances into book form, and the creation of unique artist-made books. The project seeks to embody and enact concepts and questions considered through the research; signalling, suggesting, amplifying, and marking, gestures and rehearsals for movement.

This process has resulted in three outcomes: an exhibition of artist-made books with a performed opening, a recuperation of selected past performances remembered and re-made in book form, and a series of written discussion papers and accompanying video essays based on the artists' book collection at the NAL at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The research draws on experiential understandings of dance and performance processes and strategies, and all elements of the project seek to re-think the properties that constitute a 'state of dance' through the vehicle of a made object — the book. It looks at the artist's book as a form that interrogates rather than a medium for reproduction; a form for independent thought through which to re-examine the conceptual, aesthetic, and cultural aspects of dance and the body.

## Doctor of Philosophy Declaration (by performance / exhibition)

"I, Judith May Walton, declare that the PhD exegesis entitled *By Hand and Eye: Dance in the Space of the Artist's Book* is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This exegesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this exegesis is my own work".

Signature

Date

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## Introduction

*Everything in the world exists in order to end up in a book.*

Stéphane Mallarmé

As a basis for this project the body and the book are proposed as sites for investigation into movement: its perception, action, memory and reproduction. The study crosses three discrete yet related forms and disciplines: writing that remembers and reprises live performance in the form of a book, a visual art exhibition of artist-made books, and a series of written and video essays based on the artists' book collection at the National Art Library (NAL) of the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A). This constellation of elements provides a forum for the discussion around the perception of motion of both the book and the body. It tests the possibilities for the representation of bodies in text or image; how traces of the moving body might remain as residues of its history, and how the book and the body might become sites for enactment.

The juxtaposition of dancing bodies and artists' books – not dance illustrated in the book but 'books that dance' – seeks to upset the familiar and find ways to renew our perception of both art forms. This interrelationship between body and book and the actions/movements produced between them is fundamental to the inquiry. The perception of motion is the process of understanding the speed and direction of things based on visual, vestibular and proprioceptive inputs. Perception, as understood by Henri Bergson, 'measures our possible action upon things, and thereby, inversely, the possible action of things upon us' (Bergson, 1991, p. 56). Books act upon us as much as we activate them.

The activating, moving body, which is the instrument of dance, is the 'centre of action' and as such cannot be a representation. *'My body, an object destined to move other objects, is, then, a center of action; it cannot give birth to a representation'* (ibid., p. 20 italics in the original). Or as Dick Higgins says, 'We can talk about a thing, but we cannot talk a thing. It is always something else' (Higgins, 1966, p. 20). The deliberation of this conundrum is central to this project.

Another dilemma is how to make the temporal permanent – inscribe it in marks or words that change the ephemeral dance event into an enduring object in time. This process entails an act of transcription from one form to another, negotiating the difficulty of writing sensation, and also a mode of translation/interpretation between forms.

One of the tasks of the project is to find ways to describe the particular temporal qualities of the dancing body. While it is always in the 'flux of time' and its appearance fleeting, there is a cumulative effect that builds in the bodies/minds of the dancer and the person who watches a live performance. Although we cannot 'talk a thing', 'things' are remembered through their very presence of being there.

In the re-presenting of past performances the aim is to keep the participation of the audience in the event of reading/looking. My intention is to translate the fluidity and fluctuation of the process and dialogue of making and performing, and to find ways to present it in book form as unfinished, avoiding the closure of a static definition. How then to keep the written dancing on the page – enlivened – and the dancing stilled and transcribed into the written?

Certain propositions and questions have emerged and been investigated through the writing/making of this project. They include: how an art object – a book – provides the reader with the invitation to play, be a form that proposes discontinuity and disruption, an entanglement of contradictions that never-the-less go on, repeat and accumulate; how a book might include 'things' that fall off the body, fluids that spill out of it and make a mess, ends that don't fit anywhere, false starts, digressions, returns, decompositions as well as compositions and yet still remain a book? And what is it about dance and the body that refuses to be inscribed, cannot be incorporated into the institutions of art history and the archive, remains a body, a-live?

The project centres on books that are made by artists. Rather than merely a form for reproduction or representation, artists' books have the ability to interrogate, pose questions and invent answers. They act as vehicles for independent thought providing a tool through which to examine the conceptual, aesthetic, and cultural aspects of movement and the body. As Joanna Drucker asserts they have the potential to be 'an interactive object that acts as a performative space, a dynamic arena of perceptual intersection' (Drucker, 2004, xiv). This proposition concerning the role of an artist's books is tested throughout the project, both in the writing about books and bodies and in the object of the book itself.

There is no intention or pretension to conduct an exhaustive examination of all possible relations between bodies and books, rather the project centres on the tacit, the silent, the unsaid, seeking an understanding of movement in the dance, and motion in the book, through an experiential and intuitive engagement with both forms. At first glance they are an unlikely couple; one a temporal shiver that is always in passing, the other a static object turned in on itself. The impulse to bring them together came from a desire to remake the performance *no hope no reason* (1991) into a book. But what sort of a book might that be?

## Performance-to-book project

This initial question began the investigation into the potential of the artist's book as a form for the translation of this disappeared live performance into a book. How I might create 'an original work of art, rather than a reproduction of a pre-existing work' (Drucker, 2004, p. 2). As Peggy Phelan states 'Performance occurs over a time that will not be repeated. It can be performed again, but this repetition itself marks it as "different." The document of a performance then is only a spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present' (Phelan, 1993, p. 146). Kristine Stiles in *Out of Actions* agrees that the 'temporal moment of the act disappears' but suggests that the objects that were part of that action remain and 'retain the energy of that connection' (Stiles, 1998, p. 234). She coins the term *commissures* to describe this phenomenon. The remains of *no hope no reason* – notes in the journal, drawings, diagrams, publicity flyers, songs, photographs and video documents were retrieved from files and boxes. Some of these residues from the work did act as 'spurs to the memory', in particular the photographs and the black and white dress worn by Shona Innes. Clothing has that strong sense of the departed body, a flatness that signals loss and conjures up memories. However what seemed important was to find ways that the work could rehearse itself, perform its concepts on the space of the page and elucidate a process of making and performing the work – a story of *no hope no reason*. The challenge was to invent ways that you, the reader/ audience, could engage with it kinesthetically, conceptually and emotionally. What resulted from this deliberation was an artist-made book that re-told the stories around the making and performing of the work through the use of text, pop-ups and other moveable structures that invite the reader to perform and enact it.

The notion that artists' books can act as conceptual spaces for performance has been pioneered and developed by Drucker as previously noted. *Fluxus I* edited by George Macunias is an example of a book that is 'the performance as well as containing it' (Drucker, 2004, p.311). (1) This book 'achieves the Fluxus goal of making the audience member a performer through the structure of the piece. One does not "read" this work, but enacts it' (ibid., 2004, p. 311). *no hope no reason* (the artist's book) similarly invites engagement and performance through its use of moveable techniques and was conceived as a unique artwork rather than a form of representation of the original performance.

Another example that has been realized and produced as part of the doctorate is *so much so far*, founded on a group collaborative work of the same name which was devised and performed in 1982. The book is composed of an edited version of the group workshop notes interspersed with photographs taken from the work-in-progress. It is an archive for the residues left from the process of making. No documentation exists of the performance itself. Both these

books have been based on the design and format of the catalogue/program notes made for an earlier project: *dance/text/film*.

The larger project of Performance-to-book is outlined in an index – *Snapshots* – that lists all the performance works made in the twenty-year period between 1982-2002. The concept for this as-yet-to-be-made book is to condense each performance into a single image and a page of text, producing a minimal recto and verso version. The projected future outcome is the re-making of all twenty performances in book form.

Performance-to-book is in large part, a history project. It seeks a re-reading of past performance events and stands as a provisional manual for performance making in the future. While reflective it calls for action and provides inspiration and insight into the processes of creative acts.

### **The Written and Visual Essays**

The essays collected here reflect the search for the possible relations between body and book, dance and writing, action and the word. Michel de Montaigne used the term *essai* to describe his writings because they were attempts at understanding. In a similar vein these papers attempt to find, create, construct a dialogue that discusses the problems of representation of the dancing body, the complex nature of the perception of movement, and the temporality of a body in motion.

Both the written and video essays are based on a tactile, experiential examination of a selection of artists' books from the collection held at the NAL. The aim was to come to the books in a state of readiness to dance in order to find a way of dancing with them. When handling each book object I was aware of the implicit directions contained within its form and content and where possible sought to make the interaction 'afforded' by the object, apparent and substantial. The term 'affordance' is borrowed from James J. Gibson and his 'Theory of Affordances' in which he proposes that 'affordances are seen as action possibilities' (1) that are in this instance latent in the books. Each book provides and suggests a way of handling and responding that is inherent in its form and content.

This sensorial engagement with the materiality of the books called for a heightened awareness of sight and touch, but also in many cases, sound and smell. This state of perceptual alertness that I brought to the books was comparable to a 'state of dance' that I bring to an improvised dance performance. Each situation involves an attention to subtle changes in the environment, an intense listening – internal and external – an involvement in only the present moment, and an openness of response to what is presented.

Through this process of inquiry I became aware of two different approaches that informed the consideration of the books: one from the direct experience of handling the books and the other from the memories of a multitude of past experiences. As Bergson writes 'The recognition of a present object is effected by movements when it proceeds from the object, by representations when it issues from the subject' (ibid., p. 78). These two different forms of recognition were apparent in the research into the artists' books. The first arose from the object of the book, which offered possibilities for movement indicated by its material construction; the other from recollections of the mind 'which seeks in the past, in order to apply to the present, those representations which are best able to enter into the present situation' (ibid., p. 78). The outcomes of this project were influenced and informed by the experiential engagement with the books and my prior knowledge of practice and thinking about dance and movement.

The five essays begin with still *moving* still, an introduction to the perception of movement. The essay focuses on visual perception and the changing knowledge of how we see/perceive the moving image, combined with notions of the blur. It touches on the movement sciences of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that produced a radical re-visioning of the relationship between the still and moving image and led to the beginnings of cinema.

The second essay *in with as by* examines the residual traces that mark the presence of the body in its absence. It discusses how a book might retain the imprint of the movement and energy of the action of its making, and where signs and traces of the body, its living presence, are to be found within its pages, for example Richard Long's *Mud Hand Prints* and *Ein Hauch von Erinnerungen (A Hint of Remembrance)* Claudia Koelgen's breathing book, and *The Word made Flesh*, (1996) by Johanna Drucker. The essay considers the possibilities for a proprioception of the book: its kinaesthetic qualities; printing and the terminology which is shared with the body, for example footnotes, headers, the body of the text, and how these relationships have been formed and continue through the design of type faces and the process of book production.

In the third essay *scores notations spacings* the interest is in how graphic design impacts on the reception of the book is continued and furthered. The essay examines how the layout of a page affects the movement of the reader's eye and the perception and understanding of the information contained on the page. Certain phenomena of perception including the dichotomy of looking and reading and the saccades and fixations of the eye are discussed. The writing draws on selected examples of concrete and visual poetry, choreographic notations, various modes and qualities of writing, and movement scores, in order to discuss the possibilities for inscribing the temporal.

*on and off the page* the fourth essay, discusses moveable books – a genre of books capable of movement through kinetic energy including: pop-ups, Harlequinade, turn-up or lift-the-flap plates, volvelles or revolving disc plates, and folded, cut and string books. These are all books that are designed for movement and invite actions that go beyond the turning of a page. Some speak directly of dance, for example *Tips to dance the Tango*, others move through mechanical means, for example *Sky Never Stops*, while *a Librarian's Garden* has completely fallen off the page, and *Alphabetbuch* transforms kinetic energy into a moving, spiralling line.

*now before later* the fifth and final essay, asks what is the importance of now and where can it be found? This essay enquires into the properties that make NOW so special. It looks at the ways in which the past affects the present and the future, and how duration and the passage of time might be charted and mapped in books and bodies. And finally it considers what our understandings and concepts of aliveness and dying might bring to the act of dancing and how death might be performed in a book.

The five video essays act as companions to the five written essays, illustrating and activating the examples referred to and discussed. They consist predominantly of images taken at the NAL with some additional material that supports or clarifies aspects of the research and allow the viewer to engage with the book as a moveable object. While there is an order in which to read the essays, indicated in the list of contents, it is not set as to whether the text or the video is looked at first. However it is suggested that each pair of visual and written essays are read and watched together before moving on to the next. The contents, references, and further descriptions of the images in the video can be found in the section, Notes for Visual Essays.

## The exhibition

The exhibition consists of artist-made books of bodies in motion, traces of where a body has been, scores for dance, and mappings of the temporal. A number of books mark the presence of the body in its absence. For example **gross** is a sheet of A4 paper that has been crumpled and flattened by hand 144 times. This process has changed its materiality making it thinner, softer, shrinking its size. The constant handling has produced a multitude of folds, creases and fine tears. It is presented on a custom-made light-box which amplifies its fragility.

**imprint** is a record of the energy, force, and direction of the dancing body resulting from a collaboration between Jude Walton and Eva Karczag over a 4-day workshop held in Arnhem, the Netherlands. The marks, folds, creases left on the paper have been generated through dance. The moving bodies as they turn, spin, roll, and jump on the sheets of newsprint, map the energy and direction of the dance. Sections were selected and cut out using a cardboard

template to produce the leaves for the book and two photographs printed on tracing paper indicate the process of its making.

*an officially dead book* was formed through a process of disintegration, accelerated by being buried in the earth, and then through a process of documentation has been re-invented, brought back from the dead. *Officially Dead* by Quentin Reynolds was a found book that I read, photographed, buried, and have now exhumed five times. Each time it was dug up its deterioration and decay was documented by still photography. This process of archaeology and the photographic representation of the diminishing remains of the book, and the actual material fragment, are attempts to find visual metaphors for the dissolution of the body – both book and human. These photographs and the final shard of the book encased in resin have created two new books, each with the same dimensions as the original.

The whole show is encased in red archival solander boxes rescued from the National Art Library. They appeared at the end of a corridor filled with metal filing cabinets and when I asked what was happening with them, given their air of abandonment, I discovered they were being thrown out! I was told I could take as many as I liked and managed to salvage and transport twenty back to Australia.

In the context of the exhibition the boxes reference the museum as an institution that collects, conserves and studies objects. They act both as a framing device, selecting and isolating the object to be focused on, and as a form of protection from time, obsolescence and decay – an act of preservation. They are containers in which ideas and objects may be deposited and displayed and brought into some sort of order and archive. The whole rationale of the museum operates on inclusion and exclusion – what's in and what's out, what's considered worthy of conservation and what's not. This question of what can and can't be boxed, filed easily, stored, what doesn't fit has been a consideration throughout this project and has influenced the design and content of the exhibition.

## Ends

Certain discourses have influenced my understandings of the body in motion including: studies of perception in philosophy, the visual arts, neuroscience and cognitive psychology, the movement sciences of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and their development into the moving image of cinema and video, somatic education techniques, and the development of dance performance from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This project can only touch on these wide and complex areas of thought and practice in an attempt to locate the ideas and ensuing discussion within the world of cultural and scientific knowledge. My response and engagement with these discourses is primarily as an artist and practitioner through an embodied, experiential exploration of ideas.

The project remains unfinished in the sense that it is ongoing and has more actions, objects thoughts to encounter and invent. It has however reached 'a point in time' and attained a form that is ready for viewing. As a small gesture to signal the evolvement over time, the unfinished nature of things, and the fact that it hasn't stopped but continues, I will continue to make books in the gallery space during the period of the exhibition. In addition I have included fragments of text in the endnotes of some of the essays – bits that didn't fit, or that I couldn't find a place for. In some instances they just don't belong, some indicate a future direction, and others a digression too extreme to include.

## Note

1. 'Affordances as action possibilities' – Psychologist James J. Gibson originally introduced the term in his 1977 article *The Theory of Affordances* [1] and explored it more fully in his book *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* [2] in 1979. He defined affordances as all "action possibilities" latent in the environment, objectively measurable and independent of the individual's ability to recognize them, but always in relation to the actor and therefore dependent on their capabilities. For instance, a set of steps which rises four feet high, does not afford the act of climbing if the actor is a crawling infant. Gibson's is the prevalent definition in cognitive psychology. 1. James J. Gibson (1977), 'The Theory of Affordances' in *Perceiving, Acting, and Knowing*, Eds. Robert Shaw and John Bransford, 2. James J. Gibson (1979), *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Notes from Wikipedia (22/12/08).

## Still *Moving* Still

How might we bring an understanding of dance and the body to the book providing a lens through which to perceive/read? How might the book attain a 'state of dance'? (Brakhage, 2008, p. 24). (1) In 'Still *Moving* Still' the paradox between the static and moving image is examined to discover how we perceive movement that continually 'escapes the eye' and how the temporal might be inscribed on the page.

Anything which occupies a space just as its own size, is stationary. But in each moment of its flight an arrow can only occupy a space just its own size. Hence at each moment of its flight the arrow is not moving but stationary. But what is true of the arrow at each moment of a period is true of it throughout the period. Hence during the whole time of its flight the arrow is not moving but stationary. (2)

And so what is movement but a series of stills and how long a period of time does a still need to be still in order for it to be perceived as static, and how short a period of time before it is in flow and imperceptible? Can a still move and if so how? If, as Grosz states, 'Perception is the way living beings deal with matter, utilize the images that are the world itself for their needs and activities' (Grosz, 2004, p. 164) then how might I perceive motion within static images or bodies or things?

The focus for this research is the collection of over 5,000 artists' books held at the National Art Library (NAL) of the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London. (3) Over time I have become increasingly aware of how the process and focus of this research and the ways of looking at books has altered. It has become the watching of the book rather than the dancer '... with the extraordinary, ultra-lucid eyes that transform everything they see into a prey of the abstract mind' (Copeland & Cohen, 1983, p. 59). I am hunting dance therefore it is important to understand that I am looking at the books with the intention of seeing dance; that these personal deliberations draw on my own experiential understandings of dance and knowledge of contemporary choreographic processes and strategies.

*Moving* still *moving* still *moving* still *moving* still even the small inclination of the italic suggests movement – a lean towards overbalance. It is the forward, ongoing nature of things that simulates or suggests movement providing a sense of looking out, towards the next moment. This looking forward to the next is a powerful force of the imagination and can produce dramatic physical responses. Steve Paxton, dancer, movement educator and originator of Contact Improvisation, teaches a movement exercise that asks the dancer to firstly place their

thinking in front of themselves and then to reverse this, placing their thoughts behind them. The change in speed that is produced – faster when in front and slower when behind – is striking and clearly demonstrated to me, the ability of thought to influence physical action, and how the directions of forward, out, and onwards all encourage movement. (4) The 'still' in written and spoken text is determined by the grammar and punctuation of the full stop, comma, and colon, etc., as well as the spacing left between words, which differentiates them from each other. In response to a performance by Yvonne Rainer of *Trio A*, (5) Jean Nuchtern a journalist for the *Soho Weekly News* wrote the following text:

There is no part of this article that is any more important than any other part each word sentence paragraph carries the same weight as any other and its smoothness lies not only in the equal weightedness of each word sentence and paragraph but in the juxtaposition of one paragraph to another which causes the reader to read the article as a whole rather than as segments.

(in Lambert, 1999, p. 96)

The removal of the gaps between the words is a typographical attempt at horizontality, a way of flattening the energy of the syntax and parallels Rainer's desire to 'make no one thing... any more important than any other' (Lambert, 1999, p. 97). It removes the still moments between words placing them in continuous transition.

The still photographic image as potential dance requires a shift, a repositioning of the perceptual field of the subject in order to activate it into motion. The photographic images in Ines von Ketelhodt's *Leporello 1* and *Leporello 2* animate me kinaesthetically through the felt, imagined, and remembered experience of movement in my muscles and having perceived that sensation that I recognise as dance, I then invest it back into the photographs. (6) As Nigel Stewart observes,

According to Gibson (1968) we can proactively derive kinaesthetic information from static visual objects such as the photograph, but until that information is itself integrated as the felt trajectory of a moving force we will not grasp the dance image.

(Stewart, 1998, p. 45)

To enable this feedback loop there needs to be a kinaesthetic relationship with the image in order to bring the dance forward, out of the photograph and into the body to experience the physical sensations it produces. 'Each viewer must project knowledge of their own body into that other body they are looking at' (Warr, 1998, p. 119). This process is enhanced by a refined sensitivity to the kinaesthetic and haptic senses giving the ability to sense the body's interiority – the lengthening of a muscle or the rotation of the head of the femur in its socket. It is this

experiential understanding of the body in movement that enables an empathic relationship and openness to the suggestion of movement.

This perception and experience of a state of dance is further heightened and perhaps even triggered by the blurry quality of the photographs. A blurring in the photograph immediately suggests that in the moment of it being taken something moved, either the camera or the subject being photographed. The blur **BLLLLUURRRR** then produces a state of in-between, a not quite here or there. It widens the boundary, edges or margins of the image. The blur evokes a sensation of movement giving the perception of being in transition, between one place, moment in time, and the next. It leaves a visual trace of where the body has been and extends time from one instant to a series of many. This indistinctiveness of the figures produces an appearance of movement recognised by our visual sense and 'read' as motion. The blur, vibration, flutter, trace in the still photograph all signal an effect of movement and a resistance to definition, solidity, making von Ketelhodt's blurred photographs in a way similar to dance which is often described as obscure, difficult to see, or pin down in one place. Dance is in a continuous process of making itself and the impossibility of seeing movement is made visually apparent by the blur.

What other roles can vibration, the blur, tremor, wobble or the twitch play in the perception of movement and the moving image? The eye has to move in order for the still image to appear. 'We know how the eye must permanently dance, imperceptibly, in order for any image to be perceived' (LePecki, 2000, p. 348). On the one hand the tremor-like movements of the eye enable us to perceive stillness, whilst on the other any visible tremor even in a static object or image suggests movement. In this way according to LePecki: 'Against a background of static objects, perception can only be obtained as long as the whole body engages in vibration.' (ibid., p. 350) The tremor/ vibration is needed in some form in order to perceive and the contraction and extension of our muscles that produce movement is mirrored in this fluttering of the senses. Vision needs this shifting back and forth, these oscillations of the eye in order to perceive stillness.

Seeing movement clearly and finding ways to make it visible were major scientific and artistic endeavours during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Two major figures involved in these experiments in the late 1800s, pre-cinema, were Eadweard Muybridge and Etienne-Jules Marey. Both were independently working with chronophotography (7) in order to freeze time, arrest motion, and see what is normally invisible to the naked eye. Marey, a French physiologist, was fascinated by the temporality of movement, and its transition in space and time. Of particular concern was discovering ways of 'rendering the true form of a movement as it is described in space' (in Giedion, 1969, p. 21) and he devised numerous experiments to find ways to grasp, and lay hold

of it. His *Vibrations of an Elastic Rod* (1886) and *Bird in Flight* (1886-87) trace the trajectories of movement showing repeated instances captured on a single photographic plate. It is the repeated marking of these stills with slight shifts in time and position that produces a map of the movement, a trace or trail of where it has been: 'Marey's images ...constitute a visual field in which the viewer shifts back and forth between different levels of organization – between a holistic perception of a single temporal vector and an aggregate apprehension of isolated positions' (Crary, 1999, p. 161-162). It is the still image – as a series of stop motion frames – that enables us to see movement more clearly providing a means to understand motion as past, present and future. Examples of visual traces of the body in motion generated through computer software programmes have been included in the Visual Essays. (8)

At the same time, in America, Muybridge was working with a line of still cameras making numerous strips of still images of people engaged in various sporting and everyday activities. It is the repetition of these images in sequence at a speed of 16 frames per second and the phenomenon of persistence of vision that enables the eye to see the still as motion (Prodger, 2003). 'Film, to all intents and purposes the genre of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, exposes the paradox of movement: the inextricable interweaving of stillness and motion, of body image and the simulation of movement' (Brandstetter & Volkers, 2000, p. 16). As Marina Warner asserts: 'Animation is the very sign of the presence of life' (Mannoni & Warner, 2006, p. 22). Stillness signals death and the sudden transformation from still to moving images produced in the experimental projections of early cinema was shocking for the viewers, I suggest, because it was perceived as 'a coming alive'.

Persistence of vision is a 'fleeting phenomenon that occurs during the course of visual perception when the optical stimulus suddenly disappears (Mannoni & Warner, 2006, p. 194). The image persists as an afterimage allowing an overlap with the following image, thus linking the two together and 'in the case of film footage, 16 sequential images per second are perceived as continuous movement' (ibid., p. 194). The earliest and perhaps the simplest form that demonstrates persistence of vision is the thaumatrope (Greek: thauma = miracle; tropos – turn) or wonder-turner. The twirling of the disc causes the two images, one on either side to optically blend creating a single image. Created in 1827 by John Ayrton Paris, '[t]his was the first device to tune into the "critical fusion frequency" of human perception, the speed at which the brain no longer grasps individual still images but superimposes one on the other' (Prodger, 2003, p. 19).

This illusion has been incorporated into book form as flick-books; these create movement through the flicking of the pages with the thumb or in earlier versions through blowing to turn the pages. Flip or flicker books create motion on the page and Gilbert and George's *Lost Day*

(1996) the action of smoking a cigarette standing by the Thames and *Oh the Grand old Duke of York* (1996) walking down a flight of steps, are two humorous examples. (9) Others, like the series of Flicker books give artists the opportunity to animate short actions for example blowing up a balloon by Roy Grayson or the word LANDSCAPE disintegrating into an image of hills and sky by Chic Taylor, while *Cinder* by Daniel Jubbs bursts into flame and burns. (10) These books all mark a period of time for an activity to occur such as the length of time it takes to walk down a flight of stairs or to blow up a balloon. They can be examined as individual still photographs but what produces movement is the speed at which they follow one another and the amount of difference between each image. It is the size of the gap – of time and variation – that determines the existence and fluidity of movement. Rapid succession takes them into fast-forward while slowness reveals what they truly are: a series of stills.

*Film* by Ernst Jandl whilst not in the form of a flip book deals with animation as a visual poem. 'The poem is a film.' The word FILM is repeatedly printed in a vertical line down the left-hand side of the page, at various times with or without the i or the l. In the accompanying notes it states:

There are two actors i and l. The action starts in line 5 and ends in the 5<sup>th</sup> line from the bottom. i is alone , changes position 3 times, disappears, l appears disappears, i appears disappears, both appear together changing position, like dancing; then i disappears for a long time, which, after stunning l, makes l restless, then immobile, like resignation; when at last i reappears, the dance-like jumping about and out of the picture and back again is resumed for a longer stretch than the first time. This state is final. It is the happy ending of the film (flim, if you like, is the weightier half of the German flimmern, to flicker)'.  
  
(Cobbing & Upton, 1998)

This repetition with small shifts and variations produces movement on the page and the alternating pattern of there – not there – there, by its changing absence and appearance suggests movement from one place to another.

Forms of repetition and reiteration have the potential to emphasise, strengthen, and clarify whatever 'thing' they are applied to. A phrase from *Hover* is repeated and shown in slow motion in the visual essay as an example of repetition. The repeated viewing of a dance again, for the second time, gives it substance, "by comparison with the memory of the first ...music by nature moves in time and can project its rigidity only upon second hearing.' (11) In this instance Richard (Chard) Maxfield is referring to music, yet a similar statement could be made about dance. Yvonne Rainer also noted the difficulty of seeing movement in what could be termed her artist's book *Work 1961-73*: 'Dance is hard to see. It must either be made less fancy, or the fact of that intrinsic difficulty must be emphasized to the point that it becomes almost

impossible to see'. Identifying repetition as a form of 'ordering material, literally making the material easier to see', she proceeds to make *Trio A*, a dance phrase of four and one-half minutes that as she states 'did not repeat itself' (Rainer, 1974, p. 68).

This idea of repetition as a way of making movement easier to perceive brings me back to work mentioned earlier, Ines von Ketelhodt's books *Leporello 1* and *Leporello 2*. Both books have the same images repeated in the same sequence but with different additions of coloured lines/ bars replacing the text. They use the form of the concertina fold to display a repeating series of stills that add to the perception of movement by allowing a phrase of dance to be seen at the same time and if they are unfolded and displayed together a doubling effect is created. They are in effect, dancing a duet. The form of the duet with two performers dancing the same material together at the same time and often in unison creates the double and increases the 'visibility' of the dance by making it more substantial, thicker. Similarly slow motion almost enables us to see still frames and certainly makes the dance more legible. It maintains the fluidity and ongoing nature of movement but allows time for the eye to capture and register the whole.

Rainer's *Trio A*, the early photographic/cinematic experiments, and the artists' books discussed all illustrate or are concerned with the difficulty of seeing movement; how motion is perceived and/or how it might be captured. They explore and experiment with the gap between still images, and the role the still image plays in the construction of movement through space and time. This relationship between the still and movement is reflected in the mechanics of the eye and the process that occurs in the brain of converting still images into motion. Vision is constructed by the brain: 'our eyes only capture static images, still photographs of the world outside. These images travel to the back of the brain where they are incorporated into the sensation of seeing movement' (Greenfield, 2001) (12). We do in fact see in stills and only perceive motion through the processing that occurs in the brain. We literally make dance in our heads and our capacity to do this is informed by past experiences in movement, memories of choreography, and the subtlety and development of our proprioceptive systems. Movement can be suggested by the external image but it is realised in the brain; a book is given a 'state of dance' through my investment in it.

## Notes

All five essays have been generated through the direct experience and handling of the artists' books held in the National Art Library (NAL) of the Victoria & Albert Museum and all the artists' books referred to can be found there at:

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200>

1. In *Realtime* 83 Feb-March 08 p24 Stan Brakhage describes the trees in the opening shot of Maya Deren's *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* (1945) as attaining 'a state of dance'.
2. Aristotle paraphrasing Zeno the Eleatic in 'Unnatural Pebble: Still' (1981) Ian Hamilton Finlay with Richard Grasby in *Unnatural Pebbles: with detached sentences on the pebble* Graeme Murray Gallery, Hatfield: Stellar Press, Special Collections, NAL Pressmark: 801.AH0110  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (12/11/08)
3. The collection at the NAL includes early works such as Mallarme's *Poem: Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* and continues up to the present day.  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (8/9/08)
4. From workshops taken with Steve Paxton in New York 1985, journal notes.
5. Yvonne Rainer, a dancer/choreographer working in the mid-1960's in New York, made a four-and-a-half minute movement series *Trio A* in which 'a great variety of movement shapes occur, but they are of equal weight and are equally emphasised.' Rainer, Y (1974) *Yvonne Rainer Work 1961-73* The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, New York University Press, New York p 67. See also Sally Banes and a small section of *Trio A* performed by Rainer at [www.vdb.org/smackn.acgi?stapedetail?TRIOA](http://www.vdb.org/smackn.acgi?stapedetail?TRIOA) (3/10/08)
6. *Leporello I* Name: Ketelhodt, Ines v., Schumacher, Joachim, Unica T (Group of artists). Offenbach: Unica T, 1989. Collection: Special Collections Pressmark: X910029 NAL notes: 'Leporello I' consists of eighteen black-and-white photographs of a man holding a black staff in front of a light background. The sequence seems to depict movement, an effect enhanced by the concertina form as it is visible from all sides. 'Leporello I' and 'Leporello 2' both make use

of this same sequence of photographs, with the artist in each case creating a different overprint. In 'Leporello 1', Ines von Ketelhodt overprints typography on to the photos. A text excerpt from Joachim Schumacher's 'Leicht 'gen Morgen unterwegs' is sprinkled across the pages, the text dismembered into lines, words or even single letters. The book is concertina printed on both sides, bound in boards covered with grey paper. Produced in a limited edition of 60 signed copies. *Leporello 2* Name: Ketelhodt, Ines v., Malutzki, Peter Lahnstein: FlugBlatt-Presse, 1989. Collection: Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X910030 National Art Library Catalogue: <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (12/11/08)

7. 'Though Valery collected ballet photographs, they were of a special sort, chronophotographies; the plates were exposed in darkness, the dancers carrying lights; and the result was a whirl of white lines, a record of the pattern of aimless poetical acts' Copeland and Cohen (1983) *What is Dance?* Oxford University Press, New York pp. 157,158.
8. *Hover* is a research project I conducted at the biomechanics laboratory of Victoria University between 2001-2006 which produced similar visual mappings of motion through the use of computer software programmes. This series of research experiments undertaken with dancers, explored how the spatial dynamics of dance might be rendered visually. Selected sections of dance from this project are included in the visual essays as examples of current methods of chronophotography.
9. *Lost Day* Name: Gilbert & George, Obrist, Hans-Ulrich, Oktagon Verlag Koln: Oktagon, c1996 Pressmark: 970059 NAL notes: Flip book consisting of 34 photographic images of Gilbert & George in conversation. "The book edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist is published together with '*Oh, the Grand old Duke of York*' in an edition of 900 numbered and signed copies."--Colophon. First published in 1972 as a catalogue of the Kunstmuseum Lucerne. *Oh, the Grand old Duke of York* Name: Gilbert & George, Obrist, Hans-Ulrich, Oktagon Verlag Koln: Oktagon, c1996 NAL Pressmark: 970060 National Art Library Catalogue: <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (12/11/08)
10. Flicker books: Taylor, Chic (1972) Alecto International Ltd. Publisher, Special Collections Pressmark: X930182 and Grayson, Roy (1972) Alecto International Ltd. Publisher, Special Collections Pressmark: X930185 Jubb, Daniel (1993) *Cinder* publisher: Daniel Jubb, Special Collections, Pressmark: X930190 'Artist's book in the form of a flip book that illustrates the process of a book burning.' (NAL notes) National Art Library Catalogue:

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (12/11/08)

11. Young, La Monte, and Maciunas, George (eds.) (1970) *An anthology of chance operations...* H Friedrich, Cologne. Special Collections, NAL Pressmark: X910054  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (12/11/08)
  
12. Greenfield, Susan (2001) 'The Mind's Eye' part of Brain Story BBC video, BBC Worldwide Ltd. Professor Susan Greenfield examines the case of Gisela Leibold who suffered a stroke 'which left her unable to see motion – everything she sees is frozen.'

## in with as by

In his exhibition catalogue essay *The Body & the Book: Looking at the artist's book and the body*, (1) Stephen Bury remarks that he has begun to 'see the body everywhere – even in its absence' (Bury, no page nos., 1996). Bury's sense of proliferation and heightened awareness of the presence of a body that is no longer there, informed my thinking about existing and or possible constructed relations between bodies and books, books and bodies. The following essay explores these doubled relations through the frame of a series of prepositions: in, with, as and by. Inserted between these reverberations of bodies and books are suggestions, proposals towards dance: thoughts on how artist-made books might embody dance and how a body might dance a book.

### in

Is a body present in its absence?

In the search for the body in the book what is often found is evidence of its having existed, the traces, and the remnants of its having been there. And from these marks of absence the reader needs to imaginatively reconstruct the physical actions and movements of the body that produced those remains. Similarly, after and even during a performance of dance, the presence of the dancer is continued in her absence through the descriptions, images, and traces remembered and retained by the viewer/ audience.

In *opus i* (1991) (2) Innes von Ketelhodt shows a body in a state of disappearing, blacked out, drawn over, erased, fading out into white. It is becoming absent. This body in the book is being removed, taken out of the picture, a half seen, barely glimpsed, fleeting body. At times it appears transparent, insubstantial, and ghostly in its thinness. The dancing body too disappears over and over in its continual remaking, leaving only half remembered fleeting images – a curve of the arm, a jump that folds into the floor, the placement of a foot. These actions, movements, spatial arrangements, physical relationships of the dancer(s) are remembered as impressions of a dancing body, a body-in-motion that is always in the process of disappearing leaving only traces of where it once was.

In another sense the impressions of the body can also be left literally in the book as stains, evidence of where a body has been. Books can bear the marks left by their owners' and readers' hands as finger and thumbprints, grease stains from food, the folded corner of the page acting as a bookmark, notations in the margins, and words and phrases underlined and crossed

out. In a pre-empting of these marks Marcel Duchamp responds to Jackie Monnier's concern that the unbleached linen on the cover of the portable museum box might become soiled, by proposing to print 'fake finger marks – in a trompe l'oeil style – on the outside of the box, before it got into the hands of a client'. (3)

This didn't happen, however purpose made marks and indications of the body's actions, can be found as a number of different registrations on the page by other artists. Cris Cheek has used his tongue to lick marks onto the page using concoctions made with crushed beetroot, tea, carrot and cochineal (Cobbing and Upton, 1998, p. 43) while Ed Ruscha's *Edward Ruscha's Stains 1971 to 1975* (1992) (4) consists of pages of block-lettered words 'embodied with grease, coffee, olive oil, meat, and Coca Cola' (Drucker, 2004, p. 355). The formal design of Ruscha's words surprised me. I'd imagined stains as accidents leaving unruly marks rather than this precise block lettering of very contained, ordered words and statements such as BEDCRUMBS, VERY ANGRY PEOPLE, and SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THAT. In their neatness they reveal little of the physical energy required to make them. In stark contrast are the fine spray lines of mud at the edges of Richard Long's *Mud Hand Prints* (1984) (5) that clearly indicate the amount of force applied. The spray, made by the force of the hand upon the page, retains the imprint of the movement, enabling us to imagine the direction, force and energy of the action, all the dynamics involved in making it. This understanding is encoded within the visceral traces making apparent the dexterity and pressure of the hand and we recognise the action through memories of our own experiences of muddy hands pressed against a sheet of paper or splattered on a wall.

'George Bataille argued that the origin of art is the indexical, externalising sign – the hand dipped in the paint pot and imprinted on a cave or nursery wall, materializing the existence of self' (Warr, 1998, p.118). A number of terms relate the hand to the book – a handbook, a manual – both give us information and instructions – they are how-to-do books that we need to keep close-at-hand. (6)

## with

Hands dance, touch, fold, caress, and are one of our main tactile connections with the material world, playing intricate roles in the holding, handling, making, and consumption of books. *Flux Paper Events* (1976) (7) by George Maciunas has been torn, crumpled, punched, and stapled by hand and yet this seemingly violent list of actions has produced a beautiful and carefully constructed book. This relationship with the hand is striking in the rhomboidal form of Kevin Osbourne's *Real Lush* (1981) (8). It is perfect to hold. Cut on the diagonal it is made for the

hand like some early flint tool. There is pleasure in holding it, getting a measure of its weight and size, how it fits in the hand, gaining an awareness of its tactility, its 'objectness' or bookness that is composed by its size, shape, weight, dimensions, materiality, and texture – all elements that are important in the experiencing and reading of a book. These various physical relationships between the reader and the book, how it feels in relationship with the body: to touch, hold, lift, and carry, in part define what a book is. The dimensions are measured against the body and determined by questions such as – is it small enough, light enough to fit into my bag, my hand, or my pocket?

The relation with the book, the distance from the eye, the way of holding it in the hand or resting it on the body, how we sit or stand and the different postures we assume to facilitate reading – resting it in our laps, on our knees, against the arm of a chair, lying on the floor, or curled in a beanbag, all inform how we read. Certain books challenge or extend this physical relationship with the book, for example the extreme length of *Sta* (1993) (9) by Aegide Rings requires the action and involvement of the whole upper torso and arm to turn the page. This gesture complements the photographs of mountains, calling for large actions to match the images of these vast landscapes. Through the turning of the page the reader engages bodily with the text. Mallarmé suggests that 'the oversized pages of the newspaper calls for a different kind of engagement than hand-held texts' (Amar, 2008, p.198) Similarly Alison Knowles's *Big Book* (1967) 'is walked and crawled through', offering a sensory experience and engaging us physically in the act of reading (Higgins, 2002, p. 118). (10) Even a simple naming of a part of the body locates it within your own body, and when Drucker in *The Word made Flesh* (1996) (11) writes of the tongue, and the tongue on the table we imagine the sensation of that action in our own bodies. The large blown-up letter of the 'T' becomes the table for our tongues to rest on. Language is intrinsically, metaphorically connected to the body: we bite our tongues to keep silent, wear our hearts on our sleeve, behave like pains in the neck.

as

At the beginning of the residency at the V&A National Art Library I was referred to by Martin Flynn (Head of Access at the NAL) as the person who'd 'come to turn myself into a book' and at the end of the stay I gave a talk as *the book* and wore a *dust jacket* for protection. I *stood in* for the book and there began a search for books that might *act as* or *stand in* for a body.

Alec Finlay coined the term 'the proprioception of the book'. Proprioception is the sensitivity to changes in bodily position, experienced through a synthesis of our kinaesthetic sense by which bodily position, weight, muscle tension, and movement are perceived, combined with an

understanding of our orientation in space that is also informed by the cochlea of the inner ear, our sense of time and rhythm, and the visceral feedback from internal organs. (12) In the moment of dancing there is an intensification and a heightened receptivity of the proprioceptive systems of not just any body, but this particular anatomy, its connections, habits, frailties, soreness, tightness, tiredness, a complex interconnected mass of detailed information that is the known sensations of the interior of the body. This internal tacit knowledge possessed by the body and that is indivisible from it, is knowledge that can be retained or kept in no other way, not in language, spoken or written, or visually in images. It is of the body, located in its synapses, soft tissue, membranes, fluids, sinews, muscles, bones, cells, nerves, and skin – all that makes up its physical intelligence and movement memory. The body, seen as a holding place for information, acts as a repository for movement, a storage place where it can be held until it is needed, whereupon it is performed – made present. This temporal archive for dance can be seen as a sort of living codex.

Could a book have its own kinaesthetic sense, knowledge of its own navigation in space and time? Julie Chen's *You are here* (1992) (13) attempts this through a map that charts 'the twists and turns of the human heart'. The book shows how to navigate 'the rough terrain of solitude' in order to 'know where you are and how you came to be here'. The case that holds the folded book/map has a tiny compass and plumb line with a magnet to help you on your journey, and around the edge of the map are instructions for actions, perhaps reminders of what to do as you travel: OPEN YOUR EYES, LAUGH OUT LOUD, SING A TUNE, HOLD MY HAND. It provides a personal, internal chart of psychological and haptic topographies.

The kinaesthetic of the book could also be seen as its weight, size, and the tactility of the cover with embossed letters, and raised titles and images, all these textures that engage our haptic kinaesthetic senses when we handle it. *Herd* (1993) (14) by Andrew Norris is covered in very realistic black and white fake fur, a sort of book-as-cow. Inside are drawings of a herd of cows all looking out at you, the viewer. They are gathering round as they do when you stand by their fence and they all edge their way forwards, hot breath from wet noses, curious as to what might be about to happen. As we look at them so they return our gaze and as we touch the cover of the book so it touches us back. As Maldiney states 'In touching things, we touch ourselves to them, as it were; we are simultaneously touching and touched' (in Derrida, 2005, p. 245). This movement between the action of touching and the reception of touch is evident in Ulrich Wagner's embossed book *Ulrich Wagner* (1989) (15). A self-portrait composed of various patterns of embossed grids, forming a type of abstract Braille, it invites touching and suggests it can only be read, known through tactile contact. In contrast the abrasiveness of the sandpaper cover of *Memoires* (1959) by Debord and Jorn would 'deliberately abrade and damage any neighbouring books on a shelf, and perhaps also the hands of the reader' (16). We touch with

our skin, our largest organ and a porous membrane that separates the body from the world, providing a protective cover, a partial attempt to stop the leaks, contain the fluids flowing out of and into bodies. Nevertheless fluids leak and are expelled from this container the body, through coughing, spluttering, pissing, shitting, spitting, bleeding, vomiting, weeping, and sneezing.

*Ott's Sneeze* (2002) (16) is a remake of 'Record of a Sneeze' (1894) (17), which was an attempt to record the violent action of a sneeze. 'The world's first motion picture camera was tested on January 7, 1894 in Thomas Edison's film studio. W.K.I. Dickson was the inventor of the Kinetograph, his laboratory assistant, Frederic P. Ott, was its first subject. The camera rolled. Ott sneezed. The forty-five frames of *Record of a Sneeze* were registered two days later at the Library of Congress, becoming the first motion picture to be copyrighted in the United States of America.' (Introduction) In fact it didn't work and nothing was recorded on the footage. This new book by Neale White is a reconstruction that took place at Oxford Lasers factory in Abingdon Science Park. The experiment was conducted in their 'clean rooms' and after numerous attempts to sneeze, they managed to record 'every event in the single plane of the merged laser beam for the instant it took the sneeze droplets to pass through them' (no page numbers).

*Emissions Book* (1992) (18) by Katharine Meynell with images and design with Susan Johanknect, is also a record of interior bodily fluids and substances. It is composed of a collection of remains connected with the body: a negative photograph of a tap pouring water into a glass, an unidentified specimen of yellow paste in a plastic envelop, negative photographs of plastic bags holding what appears to be milk, slivers of kidney or liver, wisps of hair, drawings of capillaries in red and a final image of a toilet bowl with a barely decipherable photograph of a woman reaching forwards. All these fragments construct a broken schemata for the narrative of a body. The text printed in red ends with 'The fear of flow and the flow of hate and fear of becoming unspeakable and unspoken, the fear of fear, the worst fear. The absorption of all that is outside within, self contained and containing.' All these images suggest internal parts of the body: blood, urine, faeces, and hair – parts that retain the 'value of a body part even when they are separated from the body. There is still something of the subject bound up with them – which is why they are objects of disgust, loathing, and repulsion as well as envy and desire' (Grosz, 1994, p. 81).

Rather than a lived body is there a lived book? Can a book breathe – have a living presence? Claudia Kolgen's *Ein Hauch von Erinnerungen (A Hint of Remembrance)* (1987) (19) breathes through a small aperture in the dark grey cover as you open and close it, forcing air in and out of the white rubber bellows, lungs. I remember dancing, working with the breath rhythm – a shorter in and a longer out with a pause between, watching the action of my diaphragm. I am

dancing, attending to breath, breathing, watching the filling and emptying of my lungs. I place my hands on the ribcage at the front, back and sides and feel them inflating and deflating and *watch* the movement of my diaphragm. As I open the book the connection of book to body – body to book is immediate – it (they) breathe(s) – and through the action of opening and closing and the sound of air that action produces, it inhales and exhales as if alive. The act of breathing brings the outside in and its reverse, the inside out. 'Physiologically, respiration stands at the very threshold of the ecstatic and visceral, the voluntary and the involuntary...inside and outside, self and other are relativised, porous, each time one takes a breath' (Char Davies in Leder, 1990, p. 178).

by

Language and writing are fundamentally connected to the body. (20) The scribes who wrote or copied the first books often 'recorded their feelings about the world in marginalia' remarking on 'the cold of the scriptorium numbing their fingers or the oppressive heat in summer' (Bury, 1996). The body is present both in the handwriting and the description of feeling experienced by the scribes and notated as a sensory trace at the edges. The invention of printing however, gradually removed the hand from the production of the book and while anatomical terms were preserved in the nomenclature – body, spine, headers, tympanum, (21) footnotes and so on – the typesetting of the text and its printing on the page removed it from the physical, bodily contact of the scribe. (22) Bury claims it is this loss of the tactile from the making of the book that artists' in the 20<sup>th</sup> century sought to regain and reinsert into artists' books. (23)

What is lost by the removal of the hand from the text? In her book *Helene Cixous: The Writing Notebooks*, Susan Sellers notes, 'Cixous writes by hand. This is a decision that stems partly from her belief that writing is a corporeal act, involving the memories and knowledge of the writer's body, and partly from her recognition of the fragile and intuitive nature of the writer's quest for truth' (Sellers, 2004, X Introduction). Writing by hand claims the space of the page defining where I come from and who I am. It situates me – it is by my hand – no other, no one else writes in quite this way. As Drucker asserts 'Writing bears the visible traces of somatic individuation' (Drucker, 1998, p.62). Writing is embodied and demonstrates the physical, the pressure applied by the hand, the slant of the letters, their uniformity, and size and placement on the page. It has been defined, refined by hours of copying cursive script into purpose made books with the concentration needed to keep the height of the letters uniform, rounded and within the boundaries of the lines. And perhaps in refusal of this strict regime my handwriting is constantly changing in size and slant and legibility. Cixous also speaks of the physical difference within her own writing.

HC: All this is handwritten, and I can't get round that, because I recognise different levels of... rightness, for instance, of the work, or of refining, etc., according to the physical aspect of my own handwriting, and I need that. It makes for different voices, because all those notes speak in different voices, and I recognize them by sight from the look they have, from my own handwriting, because it's all different, all the time.

(Sellers, 2004, p.118)

These 'scribblings' are in cheap A4 notepads, on napkins, scraps of paper, even post-it stickers as well as various bound notebooks. Although not artist's books as such, Cixous's notebooks serve as the primary research in the development of her writing (Sellers, 2004, Introduction X, XI).

Words also have a physical history. 'What is peculiar to words is the absence of the things of which they speak' (Ranciere, 2008, p.209). The facility of imagination and remembering generates an extraordinary complex fabric of language that emanates from the body, but exists apart from it. Words replace absence. What then might be the performative possibilities of writing itself, writing as dance or dancing as writing? How could writing be considered 'as a state of disappearing, rather than an act of preservation' (Phelan, 1993, p.148)? In a literal sense certain writing is already disappearing, being eaten through by 'iron gall' ink. 'Open an old book and disconnected letters can fall into your lap, the paper a lace doily with a mass of sentence-shaped holes' (Jones, 2002, p.39) and metaphorically writing can also disappear.

In an interview between Michel Foucault and Helene Cixous on Marguerite Duras, Foucault begins by describing the impression Duras's books have or leave on him.

Whenever I've read her books or seen her films, they've always left – always leave – a very strong impression on me. However long it's been since I've read her, the presence of Marguerite Duras's work remains very intense – and yet, now that I come to talk about her I feel as if it's all gone. It's a kind of naked force that one just slides off, that slips through the fingers.

(Foucault in Sellers, 2008, 157)

Foucault goes on to talk about a presence that 'runs away' and Cixous adds to this saying 'she won't be grasped'. This absence, disappearance of the body is fundamental to dance and as Gilpin states in *Lifelessness in movement, or how do the dead move? Tracing displacement and disappearance for movement performance*, absence can be celebrated and viewed as

...a powerful source of compositional and hermeneutical information. It is precisely the unstable and unfixable nature of bodies in performance which demands attention at this point in the development of bodily discourses – indeed, we must begin not only to

let the body go, but also to revel in its absence, and in the traces engendered by its passage from presence to absence.

(Gilpin, 1996, p. 106)

Can stillness speak louder than movement? Does absence speak louder than presence? The sense of a book is made by a temporal linking of words, and sentences, through the process of printing, by what is left out, the gaps between words, indents, and paragraphs. These spaces give the text its rhythm, and sense of temporal flow. In 'letterpress printing, every space is constructed by a physical object, a blank piece of metal or wood with no raised image' (Lupton, 2004, p. 67). It is absence created by presence. Perhaps this is close to dance – an absence created by a presence: ephemeral forms, blanks creating a silence, pauses in the sentence, both needed in order for the other to exist – words and blanks, bodies and void, absence and presence. Not as binary opposites, but interdependent duets that are reliant on each other, porous, and in constant negotiation across shifting ground: breathing in and out, touching and being touched, here one minute and gone the next.

'You have remained in the state of having left. And I have made a film out of your absence.'

Marguerite Duras

## Notes

1. *The body & the book: looking at the artist's book and the body*, Bury, Stephen, Publisher: London: Flaxman, c1996. Description: [8] p.; 15 x 21 cm. Notes: Published on the occasion of an exhibition at the Old Operating Theatre and Herb Garret, London, December 1996 -January 1997. An anonymous donation; in a conservation envelope. General Collection NAL Pressmark: NL97.0118  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

2. *opus i*, (1991) Ines von Ketelhodt, Publisher: Oberursel : Unica T Werkstatt, 1991. Description: 30] p.: ill. 30 x 29 cm. Notes: Artist's book consisting of 15 black and white blurred photographs of performance by Mirta Domacinovic in artists' studio, some overdrawn in black. Text from: Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften / G.W.F. Hegel ; herausgegeben von G.J.P.J. Bolland. Leiden : A.H. Folder-style binding; pages attached to cover by 3 screws through punched holes. Black boards; additional overdrawn photograph pasted to front cover with title printed in black. Collections: Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X920180 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
  
3. *The Portable Museums of Marcel Duchamp: de ou par MARCEL DUCHAMP on RROSE SELAVY* (1996) p. 24. Exhibition curated by Ronny and Jessy Van de Velde; with an introduction by Francis M. Naumann, Entwistle Gallery, L&R Entwistle and Co Ltd., London. (Duchamp, 1996, p. 24)
  
4. *Edward Ruscha: Stains 1971 to 1975 /* essay by Peter Schjeldahl, (1992) Edward Ruscha, Publisher: New York: Robert Miller Gallery, 1992. Description: [88] p. : ill. (chiefly col.), 1 port. ; 28 cm. Notes: "This publication accompanies an exhibition of stain paintings by Edward Ruscha from the years 1971 to 1975 at the Robert Miller Gallery, New York City, May 5 to June 6, 1992." Special Collections NAL Pressmark: NC.93.0244 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
  
5. *Mud Hand Prints*, Richard Long, Publisher, London: Coracle Press, 1984. Description: [4] leaves: all ill. ; 34 cm. Notes: "An edition of one hundred copies hand printed in May 1984 at Coracle Press, 233-235 Camberwell New Road, London SE5"--Colophon. Artist's book. Letterpress with ill. consisting of two impressions of the palms of the artist's right and left hands, imprinted in mud. Casebound by Adrian Pasotti in green cloth, with title blocked in black. "Richard Long has made handprints on the walls of galleries and museums for temporary exhibitions. More permanent impressions of the artist's hands are contained in this book. The artist arrived in the premises of the Coracle Press with a bucket of mud from the river Avon; having made prints of his hands in each of the 100 books, already bound, he threw the remaining mud down the stairwell walls, where the artists who have worked with the Press have all left evidence of their work"--From *Manet to Hockney: modern artists' illustrated books /* edited by Carol Hogben & Rowan Watson. - [London]: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1985. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X930249 [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)

6. Manual: a) Of or relating to the hands b) Done by, used by, or operated with the hands. c) Employing human rather than mechanical energy. 2. Of, relating to, or resembling a small reference book. Manual alphabet – An alphabet used for communication by hearing-impaired people in which finger positions represent the letters. Handbook: a precise manual or reference book providing specific information or instruction about a subject or place.
7. *Flux paper events*, Maciunas, George, Galerie und Edition Hundertmark (Cologne, Germany) Publisher: Berlin: Edition Hundertmark, c1976. Description: [11] leaves : ill. ; 21 cm. Series: Heftder Edition Hundertmark; 3 Notes: Artist's book consisting solely of non-textual intervention with the paper. Alterations include: hole punches, top left-hand corner cut, creased leaf, a folded leaf, 3 torn leaves, 3 leaves stapled together, 2 leaves glued together, and 1 leaf perforated. Collection: Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X930056 [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)
8. *Real Lush*, Kevin Osbourne Publisher: [Arlington, Va.: K. Osborn, 1981] (Glen Echo, Md.: Writer's Center Offset Works) Description: ca. 640 p. : all ill. (some col.); 10 x 14 cm. Notes: Artist's book incorporating a montage of recycled magazine ads, photos and graphics - printed offset. Features an unusual angle binding, intended both to help flip open the book, but also to hide a good percentage of the book in the spine. The book paraphrases the experience of growing up in a close-knit, vocal, voluminous family. (information from an interview with the artist in "Umbrella", Vol. 6, no. 2 (March 1983), pp. 34-38. For a review of 'Real lush' see "Artforum", May 1982 and "Small Press", Sept./Oct. 1984 (copies in Artists' Books Ref.)). Limited ed. of 305 copies. Each leaf measures 10 x 14 cm. but the book is bound at a slant to form a rhomboidal solid. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: 95 GG 30 [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)
9. *Sta*, Aegide Rings Publisher: [Amsterdam: The artist], 1993. Description: [15] p.: ill. ; 9 x 51 cm. Notes: 'The book originates in Iceland during a trip across the island. The printed images are a selection of the panoramas I made there. My decision to use panoramas was a response to the emptiness and breadth of the landscape. ... In compiling the book I chose a sequence of images which suggest the construction of the country itself. Beside the panoramas is the place name, panorama number and the date which is very important as part of the documentation. The text in the book was written much later ... the text is written as one line, in capitals and without punctuation; like a stream of consciousness. The book is constructed using alternately text-image-text-image and so on. When you try to follow the text the images are constantly interrupting; as you concentrate on the images the text is lost.'--Information sheet by the artist. Printing technique: text: press for lead typeset, Firenze 24 pts; images: heliogravure/photogravure panoramas built from four elements; Paper: specially made Hahnemüller etching paper; the cover of the book is solid ebony with a double-edged hinge of the same material. Limited

edition of 25 copies. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X930103  
[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)

10. 'Alison Knowles's *Big Book* (1966-9) a one-off book or rather installation, a book which could be lived or acted in. The eight large pages, 244cm high, were on castors with a steel spine and an astro-turf tunnel between the pages: it contained a bed, table, chair and hotplate' (Bury, 1995, p.18).
11. *The Word made Flesh*, (1996) Johanna Drucker, Publisher: New York: Granary Books, c1996. Description: [26] leaves ; 28 x 33 cm. Notes: Bound by Jill Jevne. Bound in paper boards; hand-printed dust-jacket. Edition of 500 copies. "This is a facsimile reprint of copy #50 of the original letterpress edition"--Colophon. "The Druckwerk edition was produced in winter 1988-89 at the Bow and Arrow Press"--Colophon. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X980169  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
12. A dancer spends large amounts of time refining these internal monitoring systems and strengthening their capacity, delicacy, sensitivity in order to be *in their body* and move through space. Being *in your body* is a term used by dancers to convey a state of heightened physical awareness.
13. *You are here*, (1992) Julie Chen Berkeley: Flying Fish Press, 1992. Description: 27 p. : col. ill. 10 cm. Notes: Artist's book based on the allegorical idea of life as a journey. Three leaves fold out into the image of a map surrounding the book. Sewn with green thread into boards bound in blue woven silk, decorative stitching on spine. Textured gold-coloured end-papers. Paper label with 3-dimensional metal star affixed. In box bound in blue silk, fastened with a brass clasp and with a plum braided silk carrying strap; incorporating a blue-tinted perspex panel with a compass let in to the centre, below which the title design includes found objects: a hand holding a pendulum and dice. "Letterpress printed on Fabriano Roma" -- Box. Limited edition of 100 copies, signed by the artist. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X930232  
[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)
14. *Herd*, Andrew Norris, Publisher: London: The Artist, [1993] Notes: Stylised images of cows painted in black on a strip of paper, concertina-folded and pasted to form single pages; pasted between light boards bound in black and white imitation fur fabric. In black box, with lid similarly bound. Edition of 20 copies signed by the artist. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X930233  
[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)

15. *Ulrich Wagner*, Ulrich Wagner Publisher: [Aachen]: Ottenhausen Verlag, 1989. Description: [20] p.: ill.: 17 cm. Notes: Artist's book consisting of 12 folded sheets of blue paper bearing shapes printed in black. The author's name is stamped on the t.p. and the publisher's name is stamped on the colophon. Bound in black cloth covered boards. No text. In slip-case. Colophon is signed by author and is inscribed: 1989/l. Collection: Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X900182 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
16. Exhibition note taken from the display cabinet at the NAL, 2009. *Mémoires* was the result of a collaboration between the artists Guy Debord and Asger Jorn, founding members of the radical art movement called Situationist International that emerged in Paris in the late 1950s. The movement proposed the idea that society had become a 'Spectacle', in which empty commodity consumption masqueraded as significant and enriching experience. Its members advocated taking action through the creation of spontaneous 'situations', where humans would interact meaningfully together as people, not mediated by commodities. The interior of this book consists of cut-and-paste reproductions of images and texts from a wide variety of sources. These are combined with vibrantly coloured ink dripping across pages detailing possible strategies to avoid passive consumption. However, it is for its exterior that the book is particularly renowned. It has a sandpaper cover. This would deliberately abrade and damage any neighbouring books on a shelf, and perhaps also the hands of the reader. Thus, *Mémoires* is a visual and physical representation of the violently disruptive ideas expressed within. Exhibition notes 2009. Collection: Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X920223 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
17. *Ott's Sneeze*, Neal White, London: Book Works, 2002. Description: [105] p.: ill. ; 21 cm. New writing series, Subjects: Record of a sneeze (Motion picture) 1894, NAL Pressmark: 602 AE 0319 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
18. *Emissions Book*, Katharine Meynell and Susan Johanknecht Publisher: London: Gefn Press, c1992. Description: [14] p. : ill. (some col.) ; 23 cm. Notes: Cover title; authors from colophon. Title on colophon: Emissions book. "This collaboration is part of Book Works: a woman's perspective." - Colophon. Artist's book consisting of transparent pages holding various pockets containing unidentifiable liquid, and colour transparencies. Saddle sewn by hand with three lengths of string tied up on the spine and left uncut. Contained in a semi-opaque hand-made envelope. Special

[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)

19. *Ein Hauch von Erinnerungen (A Hint of Remembrance)*, (1987) Claudia Koelgen Publisher: Amsterdam: ZET, 1987. Description: 32 cm. Notes: Work consists of a plastic bellows bag between two boards. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: 95QQ140  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=&search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
20. See information on Ancient Graphic Writing in Stewart, Nigel (1998) 'Re-Languaging the Body Phenomenological Description and the Dance Image'' in *Performance Research On Place* Volume 3 No 2, London: Routledge.
21. From the Latin – of or relating to the eardrum, and in printing a type of padding of paper or cloth, placed over the platen of a press to regulate the pressure on the sheet being printed.
22. 'The first type faces were directly modeled on the forms of calligraphy' (Lupton, 2004, p.13). Early examples are Guttenberg's Bible modelled on the black handwriting known as "blackletter", 'lettera antica, a classical mode of handwriting' and italic letters which were based on a more casual style of handwriting from Italy (Lupton, 2004, p. 15).
23. *The Printed Book* ([http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/british\\_galls/video/printed\\_book/broadband](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/british_galls/video/printed_book/broadband)) (29/7/10) video of early printing process.

## *Scores Notations Spacings*

*Scores Notations Spacings* explores the possible inscriptions of dance on the blank sheet of the page, the perceptual mechanics and movements of the reader/writer, and how movement might be generated through the layout and typographical arrangement of letters, words, marks, and images.

Before the word there is the letter. Barthes remarked that the letter is innocent and it is only when individual letters are put next to each other that the trouble starts: 'For the letter, if it is alone, is innocent: the Fall begins when we *align* letters to make them into words' (Barthes, 1985, p. 119 italics in original). Letters jump, turn, bounce, slip and slide on the page as you shake Claudia Koelgen's *Letterbuch I* (1987) (1). The individual cut up letters in the plastic covers have, over time, become matted together – a jumbled mass of non-sense – a confetti of letters wedged into the corners. As you continue to shake they continue to rearrange themselves, maintaining their innocence, completely resilient to sense.

# Writing dancing – a

**How can letters and words 'dance' upon the page** producing as Drucker asserts, 'a graphic arrangement that literally danced before the eyes' (Drucker, 1994, p.191)? In this instance Drucker is referring to Zdanovich, later and better known as Illiazd, describing his poster: *Soirée du Coeur a Barbe*, (Paris 1923) (2) and the use of 'what is technically termed paragonnage: the assortment of various sizes of type within a single word' (ibid., p. 189). It's this manipulation of the size of the letters 'even distorting (them) out of any habitual vertical or horizontal alignment' and their refusal to stay within the designated lines which endows them with movement (ibid., p.191). The letters appear to dance because they are scattered across the page in an unregimented and unrestrained style: all shapes, sizes and fonts arranged together in a visually flowing pattern. It is this attention to the visual, and the relationship between the letters and their spatial organisation that produces the sensation of dance.

Drucker's own artist-made-book *The Word made Flesh* (1996) (3) is a series of successive tableaux each page depicting a scene. It was conceived by Drucker as a way to sort out how 'the typographic treatment works to "perform" that particular text' (Drucker, 1998, p. 103). She

describes the text as 'grounded in its own vocabulary of tongue and gristle, meat and flesh and bone – raw, crude, wiggling, spasming in a nice neat letterpress order' (ibid., p.107). It is composed of three different sizes of type that delineate the stage of the page into fore, middle, and background. The large black letter forms carry the broken narrative – the title of the book – while smaller ones provide a commentary of secondary characters, and both are surrounded and observed by a static grid-like crowd of red capitals. This distribution of type on the page appears to reference, as does this essay, the typographical format of Stéphane Mallarmé's *Poème: Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (*A Dice Throw At Any Time Never Will Abolish Chance*) (4) in which he uses three different type faces and letter size to indicate three related themes set within large blank spaces. Considered a seminal work in the development of visual poetry and the composition of letters and words on the page, it 'asks specific questions about how the appearance of a poem affects its reading' (Davidson, 2004, p. 99) As Mallarmé argues:

Why – couldn't a considerable burst of greatness of thought or emotion, carried in a sentence with large typeface, gradually placed with one line per page, maintain the reader's suspense throughout the entire book by appealing to his or her power of enthusiasm: around this [burst], smaller groups of secondary importance, explicating or deriving from the primary phase, a scattering of flourishes.

(Mallarmé in Amar, 2008, p.197)

'The result is what Mallarmé describes as "a simultaneous vision of the Page", organized around the principal sentence that runs through the text in large upper-case letters as a reminder that every statement is provisional' (Blackmore, 2006, 2008, p.p. xxvi, xxvii).

## falling across the

Another historical reference contained within *The Word made Flesh* is that of the text-as-image form of *carmina figurata*, (5) in which the text produces an image by its design on the page. The shaped poem dates back to Greek manuscripts of the third and fourth centuries: 'Simias of Rhodes (ca 300 BC) wrote three shaped epigrams... By varying the length of the horizontal lines, Simias formed an axe, a pair of wings, and an egg' (Kostelantz, 1979, p. 23). This capacity to both be looked at as an object and read as a text sets up a dichotomy between seeing and reading, and as Peter Schjeldahl in his essay 'Filthy Beautiful' for Ed Rusha's *Stains* (6), states 'No one can read and look simultaneously'.

This dual identity of image and language makes the text 'both an object and an act, a sign and a basis for signification, a thing in itself and something coming into being, a production and a process, an inscription and the activity of inscribing' (Drucker, 1998, p.57). the design of the words on the page produces a shifting perception, a play in motion of switching back-and-forth between seeing the image and reading the text. (7)

A well-known example from the early twentieth century is Apollinaire's *Il pleur* in *Calligrammes* (1930) (8) where the text is designed as shafts of rain falling down the page: the design produces/evokes the movement of the fall.

Mallarmé had a somewhat idealized vision of dance seeing it as 'a poem unburdened of scribal accessories' (in Louppe, 1994, p.10) believing or perhaps hoping that 'dance would lead to the abolition of the Letter, opening up the supreme space of the poem, wherein nothing but a pure whiteness without content is inscribed.' (Drucker, 1994, 2004, p.?)

Perhaps in response to this call for 'whiteness without content' Marcel Broodthaers in *Image: Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hazard* (1969) (9) creates a facsimile of Mallarmé's *Poème: Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hazard* in which he blacks out the lines of text, effectively removing the sense of the words and heightening the spatial arrangement of the lines on the page.

## the white space of

Mallarmé's text is already 'radically spatial by the irregularity and dispersal of its lines on every page, sometimes even running across the gutter of the book, to transform the verses into something like an image' (Krauss, 2000, p. 50). Broodthaers by '...rendering the lines of verse unintelligible, thereby transforms the pages into a set of images' that leaves us purely with the patterns of lines on the white page (ibid., p. 50). What is removed is the content and meaning of the words so that the black rectangular shapes reveal the spacing of Mallarmé's thought. In his treatise *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, Alain Badiou applies a similar concept to dance, seeing it as a form of thinking in space – that 'dance symbolises the very spacing of thought' (Badiou, 2005, p.63). The dancing figure connects and defines the volume of a space by her invisible trajectories and crossings which can be compared to Broodthaers's black very visible lines that fade to grey as they bleed through the thin white paper becoming ghosts themselves as you turn the page.

In dancing I coincidentally sketch a transitional, ephemeral architecture with my body as it criss-crosses through space connecting floor, corner, stair and wall. 'The turn and twist of the body

engaging a long and then a short perspective, an up-and-down movement, an open-and-closed, or dark-and-light rhythm of geometries – these are the core of the spatial score of architecture' (Holl, 2000, p. 26). It is an architecture and a dance that forgets itself and yet in the moment of its making it is pensive – thoughtful.

It is at this moment that dance holds the most promise, when it embodies thought. When it is there – thought-full. This is sort of what the black lines of Broodthaers do, because we know that underneath them are the words of the poem – they are full of thought but obscured, blanked out by the black lines of the leading. We can't see them, but we know that the words and thoughts are there. Something about them being covered, rendered invisible yet visible, makes the connection between the thought trajectories of the dancer in space and Broodthaers' black lines on the page. By blanking something out the intensity of the desire to see is increased. There is a tension created because we know that there are words underneath and that the black lines are 'standing in for something that is there' (Hollands, 2004 p.27).

Meaning is invisible, but the invisible is not the contradictory of the visible: the visible itself has an invisible inner framework (*membrure*), and the in-visible is the secret counterpart of the visible, it appears only within it, it is the *Nichturprasentierbar* which is presented to me as such within the world – one cannot see it there and every effort to *see it there* makes it disappear, but it is *in the line* of the visible, it is its virtual focus, it is inscribed within it (in filigree).

(Merleau-Ponty in LePecki, 2000, p. 352)

## the page leaving

The black page in Lawrence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman* stands in for the memory of poor Yorick. Written in the mid 1700s the layout was revolutionary: one sentence for a chapter, a black page as a headstone for the memory of poor Yorick, and a blank white page where you are invited to write your own description of the widow Wadman. But I digress...

**The eyes also move inscribing their own dance** as they scan and traverse the page.

Eye movements during reading were first described by the French ophthalmologist Louis Émile Javal in the late 19th century. He reported that eyes do not move continuously along a line of text, but make short rapid movement (saccades) intermingled with short stops (fixations) It is while the eye is fixated that new information is brought into the processing system. (10)

Typography not only manipulates the dance of the letters, but also organises the movement of the eyes. The size of the letters and their placement all influence the movement of the eye, and have the potential to upset the conventional left-to-right tracking motion and open possibilities for alternate routes.

A shift in type size within and throughout a word indicates only an intensity. Size can open up the chronology of a poetic event. Given no perceptible determinant sequence of arrangement, the reader of a visual poem, instead of being forced into a conventional sequence of left-to-right, top-to-bottom across a page, may select his own entrance to the page, scanning the notation of one size of characters, going on to another as his sense dictates.

(Essary, 1979, p. 96)

## behind the marks and

The dance of the eye across the page, a choreography of sorts, is directed by the layout and typography; for example poems that move in a boustrophedon fashion – moving as the ox ploughs left-to-right then turning back right-to-left. A visual poem with a strong connection to dance is *Sixty-Two Mesostics re Merce Cunningham* (11) by John Cage. The texts that form the basis for this work are taken from *Changes: Notes on Choreography* by Merce Cunningham and thirty-two other books from Cunningham's library. Each mesostic spells either Merce or Cunningham and as you try to pick out the individual letters that make the name from the different sizes of fonts, your eyes do literally dance across the page. The eyes need to move. The painter Manet also knew instinctively that the eye is not a fixed organ – 'that the eye can never exercise a *blinding grip*' (Crary, 1999, p. 126 italics in the original).

Mallarmé was adamant in his efforts to mix up different fonts and sizes of letterforms to score the page according to its visual properties and upset the habit of Western left-to-right reading.

Let us have no more of those successive, incessant, back and forth motions of our eyes, tracking from one line to the next and beginning all over again – otherwise we will miss that ecstasy in which we have become immortal for a brief hour, free of all reality, and raise our obsessions to the level of creation.

(Mallarmé in Drucker, 1994, p. 56)

These typographical ideas of Mallarmé appear to have been influenced by the appearance and design of the newspaper page. The size of the print, the number of columns across a page and the size of the paper itself all influence the choices made by the newspaper reader in terms of the selection of what they read and in which order. Mallarmé himself muses that 'the structure [of the newspaper page] elicits intuitive and bodily responses from the reader' (Amar, 2008, p. 193) and goes on to suggest that the manipulation of the visual characteristics of typeface, 'could encourage a range of responses from the reader' (ibid, p. 195). The format of the page of the newspaper allows the reader to choose the order in which to read different items 'moving backwards, forwards, and sideways, across the surface of the page selecting what to consume and in what order' (ibid., pp. 193,194).

This movement of the eye is controlled not only by the positive form of the letters and type but also by 'the negative gaps between and around them' (Lupton, 2004, p. 67). These blank spaces surrounding the text serve to manipulate the speed and flow of the reading process.

The words and phrases in uppercase, headlines, slogans, and odd cryptic phrases all contribute to the dislocation of the page, creating a fragmented discourse that invites the reader to engage imaginatively with the text through a process of 'shuffling between the page as a whole and its parts' (ibid., p. 197).

## gestures of the body

Readers linger, skim, reread, omit sections of the paper, selecting, ordering, linking portions to construct their own narratives that redefine the mobility of reading and the movement of the eye across the surface of the page. The format of the newspaper activates the role of the reader calling for different forms and rhythms of reading and looking. Two well-known examples that liberate words from the page and call for different ways of looking and constructing the page are Marinetti's *Zang Tumb Tumb* (1914) (12) and Tristan Tzara's instructions on how to make a Dada poem:

Take a newspaper.

Take some scissors.

Choose from this paper an article of the length you want to make your poem.

Cut out the article.

Next carefully cut out each of the words that makes up this article and put them all in a bag.

Shake gently.

Next take out each cutting one after the other.

Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.

The poem will resemble you.

(Tzara in Bury, 1996, p. 17)

# in an

## Looking at the body of the writer and reader

Reading and writing are acts of private thinking, usually silent, and predominately still. The body is forgotten, only animated by 'subconscious gestures, grumblings, tics, stretchings, rustlings, unexpected noises', which in de Certeau's mind, produce 'a wild orchestration of the body' (de Certeau, 1988, p.175).

Reading has different rhythms: 'we do not read everything with the same intensity of reading; a rhythm is established, casual, unconcerned with the *integrity of the text*' (Barthes, 1975, pp.10, 11, italics in original). We skim or skip certain passages to quicken the chase, and as Barthes asserts 'it is the very rhythm of what is read and what is not read that creates the pleasure of the great narratives: has anyone ever read Proust, Balzac, War and Peace, word for word' (ibid., pp.10, 11, italics in original)?

Not only has the hand been removed from the activity of making books, but the body and its voice have also been excavated. Reading today is a silent affair, the text no longer spoken aloud by the reader, unless to a child. 'This withdrawal of the body, which is the condition of its autonomy, is a distancing of the text. It is the reader's *habeas corpus*' (de Certeau, 1988, p.176).

What differences are there between writing and reading?

Writing accumulates, stocks up, resists time by the establishment of a place and multiplies its production through the expansionism of reproduction. Reading takes no measures against the erosion of time (one forgets oneself *and* also forgets), it does not keep what it acquires, or it

does so poorly, and each of the places through which it passes is a repetition of the last paradise... Indeed, reading has no place. (ibid., p. 174)

Similarly does dancing too have no place? Is the urge to write dancing, notate it, a drive or impulse to gain a place for dance – ‘a scriptural history’ (Louppe, 1994, p.17)? To find a way by which movement can remain in memory, inscribing itself ‘in the world’ (ibid., p.17). Is this a form of protection against loss, in a similar way that Badiou describes the act of nomenclature?

## accumulation of

There is an intuitive system of naming inherent within the process of making dance. As each phrase or section of the choreography is formed you give it a name. Badiou proposes that ‘the only way of fixing an event is to give it a name, to inscribe it within the “there is” as a supernumerary name’ (Badiou, 2005, p. 61). This intimate, private naming system often known only to the dancers and choreographer, acts as shorthand when speaking about or rehearsing the material. For example, one word – ‘contradiction’ – from the production *no hope no reason*, calls up a complex body of movement, connected thoughts, images, configurations and placements in space, and in relationship to other dancers. This act of nomenclature against loss is common practice amongst dancers and choreographers and is an attempt to detain the movement that has already disappeared. Writing and dancing occupy both space and time, and language, in part, acts as a guard against both spatial disappearance and temporal loss of the event.

**The marks, drawings, scribbles, doodles of the choreographer** are the visual and visceral traces of the lived body confined to the miniature space of the page. The journal or workbook of the dancer and or choreographer acts as a repository for ideas, scores for dances that could be recuperated, and also indications and thoughts on the process of dance composition. These gestures of the hand and arm in the marking of the page announce and or recuperate the dancing body. ‘The artist’s book, and by extension the pagework, becomes a medium for exploring boundaries and relationships of text, surface and visual image as both conceptual and as concrete, material space’ (Allsopp, 2004, p. 2).

The graphic configurations of *Autistext: poetry before I learned to read* (1987) by Scott Helmes (13) consists of letters stamped and scribbled on and over, and joined together seemingly for their visual properties rather than any meaning. They have similar qualities to the drawings, sketches, floor-plans, diagrams, made by some choreographers in their attempts to notate the

moving body in space, to record visually its energy, dynamics, and trajectories. In particular Helmes's work is similar to certain drawings by Trisha Brown, et al, from *Traces of Dance*, a collection of personal and private sketches by choreographers, edited by Laurence Louppe. Perhaps it is the shared connection of a pre or non-verbal state and the attempt to capture something that you know exists but don't have a form to represent it in, which gives this striking affinity and resemblance. Both are scribbles towards the energy of a gesture, attempts to manifest thoughts that are before speech, words, and language. They are meaning-laden and yet appear as provisional signals that stand in for the main event. In *Autistext* it's just possible to unpick the letters from the layered palimpsest of the page and try to organise them into meaningful relationships, yet it is largely futile. They are from a time that is before sense. What both the poems and the dance notations have in common is the attempt to write the spatial/unspoken onto the page, to visually portray movement or sound in the main part without the use of words. 'Regardless of the way it is used (project or memorization), the essential thing is to see this surface as the limit of the scriptural, the tracing of what the letter does not say, but where another text shows through, another reading of living substance' (Louppe, 1994, p. 16).

## visual and visceral

In his book *Labanotation: the Archie Gemmil goal* (2002) (14) Alec Finlay, a Scottish poet and small press publisher of Morning Star Publications, explores a system of dance notation invented and developed by Rudolf Laban. Finlay's project consists of a number of elements: the scores of the Laban notation of the goal, the interpretation of these scores by a student from the Laban Centre and a professional dancer, and a series of dance workshops with children. Kathi, the student, describes her understanding of Laban's system in a letter to Alec '... notation itself is an organization of symbols for body parts put together into movement and phrases, like letters into words and words into sentences.' While the idea of the notation system as a sort of language is alluded to by Kathi, the main purpose of the book seems to be the finding of another way to document and record the Archie Gemmil goal. The book is a strange mixture of elements: photographs of the workshops held for the children who obviously took great delight in learning how to execute the goal, the translation and notation of the action into a written score which includes the changing location of the ball, and the interpretation of this score by a professional dancer and a Laban dance student.

**How might a body bleed into the body of the book?** Writing and the musicality that results from its very layout can be seen as temporal scores both of and for the physical – a way that language and how it's composed on the page might not only be a score for dance, but a score that dances.

The different typefaces in *Un Coup de dés* 'construct an acoustic presentation of simultaneous events running in intervals through the multi-layered text' (Blackmore, 2006, 2008, p.p. xxvi, xxvii). This musicality of the poem becomes more apparent when read aloud. The temporality of the layout with its jumps, gaps, silences and differences in letter size and typeface is highlighted when uttered orally. Mallarmé himself remarked on this musicality: 'Let me add that, for anyone who would read it aloud, a musical score results from this stripped-down form of thought (with retreats, prolongations, flights) or from its very layout' (in Blackmore, 2006,2008, p.xxvi).

## signs indecipherable

This idea of the body-in-the-text is elaborated upon by Cixous, 'So for each text, another body. But in each the same vibration: the something in me that marks all my books is a reminder that my flesh signs the book, it is rhythm. Medium my body, rhythmic my writing.' (Cixous, 1991, p.53) The 'something in me' produces these rhythms of the writing – the shape of the sentence, its pauses, stops, length, drive, syntax; choices that are all grounded in the body.

And what of 'writing aloud' defined by Barthes as the 'grain of the voice' and 'the art of guiding one's body' an art that searches for 'the pulsional incidents, the language lined with flesh, a text where we can hear the grain of the throat, the patina of consonants, the voluptuousness of vowels, a whole carnal stereophony: the articulation of the body, of the tongue, not that of meaning, of language' (Barthes, 1975, pp. 66, 67). Barthes here is talking about the musicality of the text, its physical grain, and I can't help but see 'the art of guiding one's body' as a form of dance.

Loris Essary proposes that how we form and shape language – the construction of grammar – is founded on the ebb and flow of physical energy, the internal pulse of a particular body that has been shaped and informed by a myriad of physical, spatial practices. 'Language is as much an aspect of our physical self as it is our minds. The "imprinting" by which we internalize a grammar and the necessary rules of transformation assume a neurochemical or neurophysical basis...' (Essary,1979, p. 95). Writing and the construction of language then might be seen as

choreographic scores that embody an interior dynamics of movement that is inscribed on the page.

Life becomes text starting out from my body. I am already text. History, love, violence, time, work, desire inscribe it in my body, I go where the "fundamental language" is spoken, the body language into which all the tongues of things, acts, and beings translate themselves, in my own breast, the whole of reality worked upon in my flesh, intercepted by my nerves, by my senses, by the labour of all my cells, projected, analysed, recomposed into a book.

(Cixous, 1991, p. 52)

# yet purposive.

## Notes

1. Claudia Koelgen, 'Letterbuch I', Germany: Claudia Koelgen, 1987. This work is quite literally a book of letters; five sealed transparent plastic sleeves contain loose letter shapes floating within their confines. These are interleaved with sheets of graph paper which help to chart and fix the positions of the letters on the page. With a gentle shake of the book, they rearrange themselves, along with their attendant commas, semi-colons and full stops. In this way the abstract language or text of the book is constantly changing. Special Collections, NAL Pressmark: X890154 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> NAL (29/7/10)
2. Iliazd was friends with Tzara, Picasso, Braque, Duchamp, Giacometti, Ernst, Mayakovsky, and Robert and Sonia Delaunay in Paris. He organized a soiree of poetry and music and with the zaoum poem *L'île de Paques* there was a dance by Lisica Codréano (1923).
3. Johanna Drucker, *The Word made flesh*, Publisher, New York: Granary Books, 1996. In this facsimile edition of the Druckwerk original letterpress edition (1989) of 'The Word made flesh' Johanna Drucker works in the tradition of the poet-typographer to explore the visual materiality

of the text. A single large-scale black letterform dominates each page, the individual letterforms combining on successive leaves to spell out the title of the book. Surrounding each large black letter are smaller black letters in a variety of sizes, patterns and typefaces which can be read, haltingly, as explorations of the nature of language. A simple linear reading of these texts however is impeded by the complex layout of the words and phrases, compounded by the use of individual letters now forming part of one word, now part of another. The backdrop of each page is formed by a grid-like field of small red capitals which, as the dust-jacket explains, 'invokes a reference to the *carmina figurata* of the Renaissance - works in which a sacred image was picked out in red letters against a field of black type so that a holy figure could be seen and meditated on in the process of reading'. Here the process is reversed encouraging the reader to meditate on the process of reading itself. NAL Pressmark: X980169  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

4. Stéphane Mallarmé, (1842-1898) a French symbolist poet of the late 1800's. *Poème: un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* / par Stéphane Mallarmé, Paris?: Gallimard, (2003), c1914. (Mayenne: Imprimerie Floch) [32] p. ; 33 cm. Facsimile of the first edition of 1914. NAL Pressmark: 804.AG.0018  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
5. Form equals content. *Carminum figuratum. One body one text.* (Drucker *Figuring the Word: Essays on Books, Writing, and Visual Poetics* p.107)
6. *Edward Ruscha: Stains 1971 to 1975* / essay by Peter Schjeldahl, (1992) Edward Ruscha, Publisher: New York: Robert Miller Gallery, 1992. Description: [88] p. : ill. (chiefly col.), 1 port. ; 28 cm. Notes: "This publication accompanies an exhibition of stain paintings by Edward Ruscha from the years 1971 to 1975 at the Robert Miller Gallery, New York City, May 5 to June 6, 1992." NAL Pressmark: NC.93.0244  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)
7. For further information on the dichotomy of looking and reading see also Smithson, "Press Release: Language to be Looked at and/or Things to be Read," in *The Writings of Robert Smithson* and 'A Heap of Language' (1966) in *AfterImage, Drawing Through Process* (1999) and *Looking at Seeing and Reading* by Ian Burn.
8. *Calligrammes* by Apollinaire; lithos De Chirico. Publisher: [Paris]: Librairie Gallimard, 1930. Notes: Lithographs designed on stone by Giorgio de Chirico and printed by Desjobert; letterpress

printing by Maurice Darantier. Limited ed. of 6 copies numbered I-6 and 2 copies not for sale marked I, II on paper by J. Whatman; 6 copies numbered 7-12 and 4 copies not for sale marked III-VI on Japan paper; 88 copies numbered 13-100 and 25 copies not for sale marked VII-XXXI on China paper. Local Notes: Library's copy is no. 50 and is signed in pencil G. de Chirico. NAL Pressmark: 95.RR.44

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

9. *Image: un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* / par Marcel Broodthaers. Publisher: Antwerpen : Galerie Wide White Space; Köln : Galerie Michael Werner, 1969. Notes: "Le modèle de cette image approximative est l'édition originale du poème 'Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard' de Stéphane Mallarmé, publié en 1914 par la librairie Gallimard"--Colophon. The poem by Mallarmé is printed in typographically compressed format as "Préface," leaves [2-3]. The "image" comprising the remainder of the book consists of printer's leading of the same dimensions as the types in the original edition of the poem. Two blank leaves, not counted in collation, precede and follow "Préface." Issued in white paper covers, printed in black and red. Cited in: Galerie Michael Werner. Marcel Broodthaers, 8. NAL Pressmark: Special Collections 804.AA.0115

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

10. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eye\\_movement\\_in\\_reading](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eye_movement_in_reading) (accessed 14/6/10) – "the word appears to have been coined in the 1880s by French ophthalmologist Émile Javal, who used a mirror on one side of a page to observe eye movement in silent reading, and found that it involves a succession of discontinuous individual movements." Javal, É 'Essai sur la physiologie de la lecture', in *Annales d'oculistique* 80, pp. 61–73, 1878)

11. 'Sixty-two mesostics re Merce Cunningham: for voice unaccompanied using microphone' by John Cage Contains no musical notation. "The texts are I Ching determined syllable and word mixes from *Changes: notes on choreography* by Merce Cunningham and from his library. They have been instant-letterset using a gamut of about seven hundred and thirty different typefaces or sizes. These type face and size differences may be used to suggest an improvised vocal line... not following any conventional rule." NAL notes NAL Pressmark: General Collection 609.AH.0016

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

*Zang tumb tumb*: Adrianopoli, ottobre 1912: parole in libertà / par F.T. Marinetti, futurista Publisher: [Milano : Edizioni futuriste di "Poesia"?], [1914?] Notes: Cover title. 'Le diverse parti di questo libro (in italiano e in francese) furono declamate dal Poeta Marinetti' - p. [ii]. 'Marinetti's 'parole in liberta' style - as exemplified here - was, along with Apollinaire's 'L'Antitradizione Futurista', the main inspiration for the style of 'Blast'. The title appears to be a transliteration of the form of onomatopoeia employed by Marinetti during his performances.' - R.A. Gekoski (Bookseller) Catalogue 15, p. 64. NAL Pressmark: SP.91.0004

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=&search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

12. Scott Helmes, 'Autistext: poetry before I learned to read', Minneapolis: Granary Books, 1987. Helmes experiments with concrete poetry, a form of writing in which the way letters and words are arranged on the page becomes as important as their linguistic meaning. He plays with letters using them as visual units which are arranged on the page to build up black and white abstract images. The poems in 'Autistext: poetry before I learned to read' cannot be read in the conventional sense, but can be understood as 'visual poems', so the placing of the text on the pages creates a series of abstract images which still convey meaning. Some of Helmes' poems have been created using letters made with rubber stamps and arranged around the page into shapes and patterns. These letters have often been over stamped several times until they become obliterated and unrecognisable. Towards the end of the book, these rubber-stamped poems are smudged and smeared as if the stamps have been dragged across the page whilst empty space is filled with cross-hatching to create richly textured forms. The obscured text is sending a message that can never be read (hence the book's subtitle), but one that can still be received. NAL Pressmark: X891085

[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (29/7/10)

13. *Labanotation: the Archie Gemmill goal*, Alec Finlay; photographs by Robin Gillanders. Publisher: Edinburgh: Pocketbooks: Morning Star Publications: Polygon; St Andrews; Scottish Touring Exhibition Consortium : Glasgow: Tramway; Gateshead: BALTIC; London: Sadler's Wells, 2002. Notes: Features studio, workshop and stage performances of the goal photographed by Robin Gillanders, and an Aeolus audio CD by Zoë Irvine. Design concept by Lucy Richards with Alec Finlay. NAL Pressmark: 801.AC.0072

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=&search&ts=1288230216200> (29/7/10)

## *on and off the page*

*I use the pages as the carrier of my transitions. Everything is in movement.*

Keith Smith

Augustine is stuck and moving out of this static state takes effort. It is far easier to maintain momentum and continue moving when once in motion, than to start from standstill. In *Augustine and Inertia* (1985) (1) Natalie d'Arbeloff tells the story of Augustine through child-like cartoon drawings and balloon texts. Augustine does nothing and can't understand why until she meets and struggles with the mysterious force of inertia and discovers the tendency of things to go downhill. Her solution to this dilemma is the realisation that 'All I have to do is to create a movement... with enough kick to go uphill and downhill indefinitely'. And so she does.

Dimensional or moveable books have the most direct and simple relation with the body and movement. They all need to be activated by the force of kinetic energy that is 'created by opening a page, pulling a tab, or turning a wheel' (Carter and Diaz, 1999, Introduction). Carter and Diaz are paper engineers whose book *The Elements of Pop-Up* describes and demonstrates various 'types of parallel folds, angle folds, wheels, and pull tabs' (ibid., back cover) – all the paper techniques that enable moveable books to extend beyond the simple turning of the page. Until we animate moveable books they remain inert. The earliest moveable books illustrated the text through techniques such as lift-up-the-flap plates and volvelles or revolving disc plates and included topics such as perpetual calendars, chronological tables and astronomical charts. Heidi Rombouts in *Timeless paper*, a publication of the Holland Paper Biennale, states that 'One of the oldest preserved books with moving illustration is 'Sphera', written by Johannes de Sacro-Bosco in 1233. This book about astrology contains moveable parts, which can be used by the reader to study the universe and its different constellations by means of layered discs' (Rombouts, 2002, p. 161).

The primary role for moveable books from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century was educational, acting as an aid in making the knowledge of science and technology more accessible for scholars through visualization of the concepts addressed. During this time 'the medical profession made use of this format, illustrating many anatomical books with layers and flaps showing the human body' (Carter and Diaz, 1999, Inside cover). A recent publication that reintroduces this form is *The Human Body* by Jonathan Miller and David Pelham. As Nancy Williams remarks in *Paperwork*, 'What might have been a dull biology book was made fun by the inclusion of a number of pop-up and moveable illustrations, which very graphically illustrate the workings of the human body' (Williams, 1993, p. 105).

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, as books became more available and affordable, the content altered in order to entertain and engage a wider audience, and the kinds of moveable images increased. It was at this time that the children's toy-book trade became established and has continued up to the present day. A popular technique that produces movement on the page and that children still find endlessly fascinating is the moiré effect. This is an optical effect that 'occurs when similar patterns are superimposed upon one another with a slight misalignment' (Mannoni, Nekes, Warner, 2006, p. 186). I was unable to find a book in the NAL collection that used a moiré effect, however an example by a contemporary artist is *Objekt mit Drehbewegung* (Moebius Band) (1999) by Ludwig Wilding (Mannoni, Nekes, Warner, 2006 p. 186).

Book artists have taken these paper engineering skills and techniques of pop-ups, vouelles, lift-the-flap, moiré effects and so on, that are used in moveable books, and employed them to create contemporary, unique artist-made-books that invite the reader to handle and activate them.

Sjoerd Hofstra, originally a sculptor, has utilized these paper techniques to create highly complex and sophisticated moveable books. *Elements of Geometry by Euclid* (1994) (2) based on the first printed edition of Euclid's early treatise on geometry published in Venice in 1482, is exquisite. What is so beautiful is the smoothness of the action of the pop-ups as they transform from the flat of the page into 3D objects, and how the speed at which you turn the page alters the speed of the dance of the pyramid, or circles or boxes. The text too supports this fine sense of form, asking questions similar to those a dancer might ask of his/her own body: 'Where is your balancing point? Where is your centre of weight? What happens if you bend forward? Step from the wall and try to pick up the box.' Johanna Drucker in *The Century of Artists' Books* describes another moveable book by Hofstra – *They Pair off Hurriedly* – as 'tightly engineered geometric constructions', which 'materialize with a seamless skill which speaks of a merciless and mechanically flawless technology' (Drucker, 2004, p.106). The skill that produces such ease of action can be likened to the dancer's technique, both taking years to acquire and both concealed. All that is visible is the perfect form coming into being and then disappearing back into its still, potential state. Another pop-up book by Hofstra, *5 empty bookcases*, (1990) (3) consists of five pop-up bookcases made from 'pages of a mathematical text-book, a novel, an atlas, a sheet of music and a dictionary' (NAL notes). The book combines form and image, not in order to tell a story, but to turn the shelves themselves into the books. The shelf is the story.



Two other paper techniques that are often combined are the cut and fold. Early folded plates and books include folded or metamorphosis plates, the Harlequinade, and turn-up or lift-the-flap plates. The folded plate consists of 'one picture printed and folded in such a way that gives two illustrations, one when folded and another when unfolded' (Rombouts, 2002, p. 163). The Harlequinade and turn-up or lift-the-flap plates also give different combinations of images according to how they are folded. A popular form in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, they play with making images visible and then concealing them, through a process of folding and overlapping. In recent times the technique has fallen out of use and as Nancy Williams remarks in *Paperwork*, 'cutting and folding are not often considered as part of the designer's repertoire, but they can be used very effectively' (Williams, 1993, p. 63).

Paper is the fundamental form for the transcription of ideas, and through the use of cutting and folding 'a two dimensional sheet of paper can be dramatically transformed' (ibid., p.63). Anna Wolf has employed these simple techniques in *Alphabetbuch* (1990) (4) to create a wonderfully complex folded book of letters of the alphabet that can be played like an accordion, the letters falling and twisting from one hand to the other. The way that Wolf has folded the paper creates a tension in the book that acts like a spring, producing a kind of domino effect. As the book is handled the movement causes one part to bring the next, then the next, and so on, into play. This transference of energy through the book, part by part, gives the sense that it is moving by itself, of its own accord, making it seem alive.

This action and a corresponding response is also present in Scott McCarney's *Triangle, Circle, Square*, (1985) (5) a string and cut book composed of cut out forms of the geometric shapes of the title. The book continues the idea of the transference of energy and movement from one page to another and perhaps references earlier cut book forms. For example the circle has similarities to a type of 'beehive paper animation, popular in the early 1800's, that concealed their image until lifted' (Mannoni, Nekes, Warner, 2006, pp. 84, 85). Each geometric form in McCarney's book has a black and white photograph of nature: ivy, moss, ferns, or grasses, placed underneath the cut card. On the photographs are shadows, as if cast by the cut out forms, the final image being purely the shadow that would be made by the pattern of the cut out.

The combination of string, photography and shadow to create an illusion, is delicately considered in Keith Smith's *Book 91* (1982) (6). Smith, a well-known book artist, has made a number of works that deal with string, cast light and shadows. In *Book 91* there are punched holes with string threaded through them. 'As each page is lifted... dark holes throw circular spots of light across the facing page and the close environment of the book' (notes in book). Smith goes on to say 'the composition of each page is compounded and altered by the addition

of and the movement of the shadow forms across the page' (notes in book). The shadow has the potential to alter the perception of the book to the extent that Alice Maude-Roxby gives detailed instructions for the displaying of her 'Log book' (1990). (7) In *Log book* tiny fir tree forms have been cut out of the pages of a found German-Italian grammar book and then folded into place to create a miniature forest on the surface of the book. 'The book should be kept horizontal or tilted to a maximum of about 30 degrees, not hung on a wall. The box is purely a framing device and I have exhibited the book outside of it [and] in a larger museum case which allows the book to be better lit, i.e. from behind so that the trees cast shadows'. (NAL Notes: artist's statement)

The art of light and shadow and the tricks it plays on the eye of the observer, has evolved with the invention of optic devices in the late 1800s and early 1900s. These devices create a world of illusion and magic that casts doubt on the reliability of our perception. Many of these inventions relate to cinematographic history: projections by magic lanterns, phantasmagorias, camera obscura, peep shows and so on. Some, such as anamorphic images, play with distortion and optical illusion on the page, unsettling our understanding of perspective and other physical phenomena. Anamorphosis appears on the page as a distended, smeared image that 'only reassembles itself as a coherent image when viewed from a particular extreme angle, or in a convex or trapezoid mirror (Warner, 2006, p. 18).

Another early format that allows for manipulation of perspective is the myriorama, a picture sequence in which the panoramic image is cut into sections that can be endlessly reconfigured to give a changing landscape and topography. A contemporary artist's book that works with perspective is Carol Barton's *Tunnel Map* (1988) (8). A circular map of the world, it is comprised of separate pieces of card that can be displayed along a wooden base, each circle slotting into a groove in the wood. Once constructed the viewer can peer through a small peephole cut in the end card to look into an altered perspective of the world.

*Harmonica* (198?) (9) by Paulien Ring operates with string. Each page opening is connected by an intricate web of strings reminiscent of a box kite in structure. The book is a concertina and can be opened and viewed from both directions – front and back – one way red the other white. The string restricts the book from opening fully and brings the next page over as you open it.

A book that moves by mechanical means is *sky never stops; poemkon* (1965) (10) by Liliane Lijn. This kinetic poem machine is a cork cone with the words 'sky never stops' in blue written around it. The cone sits on a motorised turntable that causes it to turn and the words to spin, endlessly revolving like a ballet dancer on a musical box.

*Librarian's Garden* (1999) (11) by Jack Milroy has literally fallen off the page. Milroy has taken a copy of *Cacti and Succulents* by Rudolf Subík and Jirina Kaplická, and has proceeded to cut out all of the illustrations, liberating them from the page and creating a garden that is outside the confines of the book. Both *sky never stops* and *Librarian's Garden* extend our understanding of what a book might be, and demonstrate how movement, the revolving cone and the fall out of the cover, is an integral part of their conceptual and physical design.

'Moving books have something magical, theatrical and spellbinding about them' (Rombouts, p. 161) engaging the reader by involving them in the activation of the scene or event of the book. They are early interactive mechanisms that provide information and involvement through action, enchanting us by the movement of a figure or form on the page. The simple action of pulling the tab or turning a page, and the response it produces, captivates us. Pop-ups and moveable books are seductive in their simplicity and yet even when we understand the mechanism that makes the figure stand up we are still beguiled by it, and 'the pleasure in being deceived keeps pace with the pleasure in knowing how the deception works' (Warner, 2006, p. 22). The content of the book is brought into existence during the act of experiencing the book. Through a connectedness with the body and the fundamental delight of seeing ideas, and images visualized and enacted, the moveable book is endlessly satisfying. 'The element of surprise when a two-dimensional object is transformed into three dimensions generates and maintains interest because of the viewer's interaction with it' (Williams, p. 97). Perhaps it is because it is in our hands, and we control its movement.

Movement is essential, and as Tony Sweeney, the then Director of the Australian Centre for the Moving Image says 'the allure of the moving image seems to be profoundly deep seated' (Mannoni, Nekes, Warner, 2006, p. 6). Equally strong is our desire to capture movement, inscribe it, delay its disappearance, represent it in other forms and give it an afterlife.

## Notes

1. Natalie d'Arbeloff, 'Augustine and inertia', London: NdA Press, 1985. 16 p.: ill. ;13 cm. Series: The Augustine adventures; Small packages; no. 4. Artist's book, printed by photocopier. Library's copy is signed and dated by the artist; in a conservation envelope. NAL Pressmark: X910108 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (6/9/10)

2. Sjoerd Hofstra, 'Elements of geometry by Euclid', Amsterdam: ZET, 1994. Height 31 cm x width 30 cm. Based on the first printed edition of Euclid's early treatise on geometry entitled 'Preclarissimus liber elementorum Euclidis perspicacissimi in artem geometrie', published in Venice in 1482, Hofstra's work transforms Euclid's original text pages by softening and blurring the text until it becomes a backdrop of geometric patterns from which 3-dimensional geometric shapes spring forth in the form of pop-ups. Later openings are accompanied by printed marginalia which itself disintegrates into partial word and letter forms on successive leaves. NAL Pressmark: X950040 (front and back covers) [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (6/9/10)
  
3. Sjoerd Hofstra, '5 empty bookcases', Amsterdam; New York: ZET, 1990. Height 41 cm x width 30 cm. The opening quotation from Kierkegaard about a bookseller climbing a ladder to get a book for a client sets the scene for this artist's book as successive page openings reveal a series of five pop-up constructions representing bookcases. Hofstra's familiar use of intricate paper constructions in the form of pop-ups are here created from pages of a mathematical text-book, a novel, an atlas, a sheet of music and a dictionary respectively, the materials used representing elements of the world of knowledge and effectively engendering the atmosphere of a dusty bookshop. NAL pressmark: X920309 (front cover) [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (6/9/10)
  
4. Anna Wolf, 'Alphabetbuch', San Francisco: The artist, 1990. 1 folded sheet: ill. ; 12 cm. Artist's book in which the letters of the alphabet are printed letterpress on marbled leporello-folded Sumi Nagashi paper. Concertina folded structure is mounted between boards covered in black handmade paper. NAL Pressmark: X910116 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (6/9/10)
  
5. Scott McCarney, 'Triangle, circle, square', Rochester, NY: The artist?, 1985. [18] p. : ill. ; 23 x 26 cm. Bound in double leaves in the traditional oriental format with smaller double leaves of photographs inserted. Photographs of foliage have been inserted between sheets of white card which have been cut into concentric circles, squares, and triangles. A piece of string has been threaded through each page so that when the leaf is turned the taut string pulls open the card overlaying the photograph. NAL Pressmark: X890223 [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (6/9/10)
  
6. Keith Smith 'Book 91' Published by Space Heater Multiples New York, USA, 1982 Height 26 cm x width 37 cm. Book artist and teacher Keith Smith is well known for his innovative book

structures. His works include many so-called 'no-picture books' including a few string books of which 'Book 91' is an example. The leaves are punched with holes and strung together with linen cords in a structure that is reminiscent of a musical instrument. The book is concerned with the effect of cast light and shadow and should be viewed with a single light source at a 45 degree angle to the left of the book, three feet distant. As the pages are turned, shadows are formed and move across the page. The reader plays an essential part in the book's creation in the sense that the cast light and shadows are not part of the physical book itself, only coming into existence during the act of experiencing the book, that is, as the pages are turned. NAL copy is no. 11 in an edition of 50 copies, signed by the artist. NAL Pressmark: X901035 [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (6/9/10)

7. Alice Maude-Roxby, 'Log book', London: Alice Maude-Roxby, 1990. Height 11 cm; in box 18 x 23 x 5 cm This work by Alice Maude-Roxby was included in an exhibition entitled 'Art in boxes' held at England & Co. gallery in 1991. 'Log book' comprises a manipulated copy of a found German-Italian grammar book, encased in a glass fronted box frame. Tiny cuts and folds of the book's pages have been made to create the illusion of miniature fir trees growing out of the text. The artist was interested in making collapsible art and the cut out images can be pushed back into the page and the book shut and shelved. The accompanying artist's statement indicates how the work should be displayed, 'The book should be kept horizontal or tilted to a maximum of about 30 degrees, not hung on a wall. The box is purely a framing device and I have exhibited the book outside of it [and] in a larger museum case which allows the book to be better lit, i.e. from behind so that the trees cast shadows'. NAL Pressmark: X912001 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (6/9/10)
8. Carol June Barton, 'Tunnel map', [S.I.]: the artist, c1988 [Rosendale, N.Y.]: Women's Studio Workshop. [9] leaves: all ill. ; 20 cm. in diam. Artist's book: a tunnel book format of a circular map of the world. At one end there is a peephole when extended the tunnel reveals illustrations of different terrains. Edition of 150 signed and numbered copies. NAL Pressmark: X891061 [http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/index.html) (6/9/10)
9. Paulien Rings, 'Harmonica', Netherlands?, The artist?, [198-?][12], [10] p; 20 cm. Artist's book, reversible, consisting of a single red/white sheet of card, folded concertina-style between red cloth-covered boards. The folds (& boards) are perforated with small squares (one or two per fold) whose corners are linked together with lengths of thread, white for the red folds/pages and red thread for the white folds/pages. The squares cut out of the pages are threaded onto these interconnecting filaments through small holes in each of their corners. There is no printed or written text, title etc. NAL Pressmark: X890244

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (6/9/10)

10. Liliane Lijn, 'Sky never stops: poemkon', with text by Leonard D. Marshall, the artist, London, England, 1965 Height 41 cm x width 24 cm x depth 24 cm Accompanying turntable shelved separately. Kinetic poem machine comprising a white painted, flat topped cork cone with Letraset word poems in blue. The cone is mounted on a motorised turntable. The pattern of repeated words appear to pulsate as the cone revolves clockwise. The poem machine operates at 50 cycles herz, 220 volts.

Sculptor, writer, artist and performer Liliane Lijn began to produce poem machines in 1962. These works use text that is rotated at speed on a cylindrical or conical structure. Her sources of inspiration for this project were her reading of Buddhist texts and the Tibetan prayer wheel, works by William S. Burroughs and the cut-up technique. 'Sky never stops' was made in 1965 and is one of this series. The words, which are made from letraset, are affixed to a cone that revolves on a turntable. As they revolve the words become blurred and according to Lijn are 'sublimated and become pure energy'. During the 1970s Lijn developed this theme further with her koan sculptures which use the same conical structure as 'Sky never stops' but which use colours rather than words. She also produced large scale sculptures such as the White Koan which can be seen today on campus at the University of Warwick. NAL pressmark: X940266 Turntable: 38041701007627. For a moving image of *Sky never stops* see website below:

[http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints\\_books/features/artists\\_books/database/object.php?action=go&id=86&id2=0&hits=&page=&pages=&object\\_type=&country=&start\\_year=1965&end\\_year=2004&object=sky%20never%20stops&artist=&maker=](http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/prints_books/features/artists_books/database/object.php?action=go&id=86&id2=0&hits=&page=&pages=&object_type=&country=&start_year=1965&end_year=2004&object=sky%20never%20stops&artist=&maker=) (6/9/10)

11. Jack Milroy, 'Librarian's garden', UK, The artist, 1999, 1 book object: col. ill. ; 26 x 38 x 38 cm. A copy of *Cacti and Succulents* by Rudolf Subík and Jirina Kaplická, has been cut by the artist so that the illustrations spill out from the half-open volume. NAL Pressmark: 805.AA.0001

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (6/9/10)

*now, before, later*

*Hold to me then in the now, through which all future plunges to the past.*

James Joyce

## **NOW – is now**

Where is now? The measuring of time is a purely human invention that organises and structures our lives enabling us to know where we are in space and how far we have travelled. A dancer has a very different and particular experiential understanding of space through time and its reverse, time through space. Dancers know the amount of time it takes to cross from one side of the studio to the other, the distance needed to perform a phrase of movement, the length of the pause between one movement and the next, and the time it takes to fall, roll, and turn. 'Space and time are only relations between our lived bodies and things that happen. Their experiential measure is duration' (Holl, 2000, p. 200). With practice and experience an extremely accurate bodily sense of duration and spatial proportions – perception in space and time – can be acquired. Not through counting or other measuring devices such as clocks, metronomes and so on, but rather through an embodied, physical understanding of time and space: a felt, intuitive sense of duration, proportion, length, breadth, width and distance, and rhythm, beat, tempo that is 'stored in the muscular and tactile senses' (Pallasmaa, 2005, p. 60).

This notion of time in its immediacy and duration is also expressed and shaped through language. It weighs heavily on our hands, runs out, waits for no man, and passes in the blink of an eye. The terms/divisions of past, present and future shape how we think and write about time. The tense of a sentence 'relates the time of an action, event, or condition in the language to the time of utterance' (Newman, Clayton, and Hirsch, 2002, pp. 1,2). Language is a tool that locates, will locate, and has located the time of occurrence. Contemporary writers are often concerned with finding ways of challenging and reinventing how they write about time so that it more closely relates to current scientific knowledge.

Physicists do, indeed, think of all time as equally existent – making up an extended 'timescape'. To be sure, the concepts of past, present, and future are convenient linguistic devices in the realm of human affairs, but they have no absolute physical significance. Einstein himself expressed it bluntly in a letter to a friend. "The distinction between past, present and future," he

wrote, “is only an illusion, even if a stubborn one.” This often strikes non-physicists as crazy. How can the past and future exist alongside the present?

(Davies, 2002, pp. 28, 29)

In *How to Build a Time Machine* Paul Davies examines the idea of all time existing equally and proposes the concept of a ‘timescape’, a geographical map of time where past, present, and future exist simultaneously (Davies, 2002, pp. 28, 29). The connection between time and space and the development of a machine, a clock, to mark time accurately in order to explore space – in particular to navigate the oceans – has been well documented. John Harrison built a clock to take onboard a boat in order to be able to determine longitude and distance travelled, establishing the idea that ‘time was motion’ (Davies, 1995, p. 30). The idea of time as a map, a state of where rather than when, is explored in Natalie d’Arbeloff’s *Augustine and Time* (1987) (1). In it the connection between space, time and movement appears playfully reversed through a series of cartoon-like drawings on the tyranny of time passing and having been wasted. In order to stop time Augustine has the epiphany of translating it into space and so creates a 7-room EWEK, a yesterday EWEK, and 12 villages to make a YERE, producing a time-free zone. By locating time in a fixed space, she creates a way of halting its progress, its duration, and therefore stops it being wasted. By standing still time stops running out and what is found at that ‘still point of the turning world’?

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;

Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,

But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,

Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,

Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,

There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

(Eliot, 1974, p. 191)

What Eliot perceives about dance and describes in these paradoxical lines is I think, the state of being in the moment, now. (2) The place of ‘there’ is the present – a miniscule still point that is neither past nor future yet contains all times within it. It recognises dance as a form that can only be in that moment; that exists in time but is not determined by it. Eliot ends the stanza with ‘And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time’. In a sense this none-time is now because as soon as we become aware of NOW it is over and has become then. What is it about now that is so special? Even Einstein towards the end of his life conceded that there is ‘something essential about the now’ (Davies, 1995, p. 77). There is a thirst for immediacy, a

desire for first-hand experience, and a craving for being here – wherever 'here' might be. As Jean-Luc Nancy asserts: 'The body is precision: it is here, nowhere else' (Nancy, 2008, p. 157).

The state of being in the 'now' is an important one for dance. Paul Virilio in *Traces of Dance* talks of 'the time of presence' that 'there is no before, during or after in the living present'. Understanding this state of being present, doing something as if for the first time, or as Trisha Brown a New York choreographer/ dancer says 'being in the innocence of the first act' (in Louppe, 1994, p. 9) is a vital part of what it is to perform, to be a-live in the space.

I sensed that George Brecht and Stefan Wewerka were 'in the moment' when they cut-up, stamped and glued Richard Hamilton's *Five Tires* one drunken evening to make *Letters and Jazz* (3). In its finished form the book tells little of its improvisation. We only know of its spontaneous nature through the statement in the introduction. This was, in a similar way to dance, a temporal event, a 'one-off' occurrence that is unrepeatable and can't be performed again. Improvisation, the now of the present, is an important time sense in the act of dancing, but what is it to improvise – be spontaneous in dance? Paxton's well known statement 'if I'm improvising I'm not remembering and if I'm remembering I'm not improvising' poses the difficulty, indeed impossibility of being both reflective and in the now. The acts of reflection on and repetition of dance are problematic. In the pause for reflection the immediacy and flow of dancing is stopped. As Bruner writes 'Temporal succession cannot be experienced as such because the very observation of time fixes our attention and interrupts the flow of experience, leading to periods of reflexivity when the mind becomes *conscious of itself*' (Bruner, 1986 p. 42). If the mind becomes 'conscious of itself' then you are no longer able to be in the NOW. Immersed in a book or in dance we lose all track of time and if we do stop to check our watches that state of psychological absorption and physical immersion is broken.

This is an inherent temporal ambivalence and paradox that de Man demonstrates in language with Baudelaire's use of figures such as 'representation du present' and 'memoire du present': how can you 'combine a repetitive with an instantaneous pattern' (de Man in Newman, Clayton, and Hirsch 2002, p. 158)? In their examination of re-reading the present, Newman, Clayton, and Hirsch propose various ways time can be expanded in writing in order to complicate the present. 'In the act of reading and re-reading, the present becomes thick, layered not only in its contingency and its implicit relation to other presents, but also in its paradoxical resistance to history' (ibid., p. 5). Through these processes of re-reading what is revealed is 'what could not be seen and what could not be said in previous presents, inflecting the instantaneity of the present with ambivalence, complexity, repression, and re-vision' (ibid., p. 5). How might dance be given the opportunity to be re-read, opened to different perspectives, complexities, differences within the same instant?

I remember thinking that dance was at a disadvantage in relation to sculpture in that the spectator could spend as much time as he required to examine a sculpture, walk around it, and so forth – but a dance movement – because it happened in time – vanished as soon as it was executed. So in a solo called “The Bells” I repeated the same seven movements for eight minutes...in a sense allowing the spectator to walk around it.

(Yvonne Rainer in Copeland, Cohen 1983 p. 107)

Rainer’s attempt to expand time, while recognizing the problem of dance’s transience, provides only a partial solution.

Peggy Phelan has written extensively on the impossibility of repeating the time of performance. ‘Performance occurs over a time that will not be repeated. It can be performed again, but this repetition itself marks it as “different”’ (Phelan, 1993, p. 146). 2 [*i.e. Zwei*] Books by Dieter Roth (4) allows for endless different repetitions and improvisation. The box of loose cards, each cut with a different grid pattern, presents almost infinite possibilities for different configurations. Reading it is a spontaneous performance of placing one over the top of another, and another, and so on. It is in the moment of its experience – while it is being read – enacted – that the book is there, in perhaps much the same way that ‘the dance will be a dance only when it is danced’ (Stewart, 1998, p. 42). Sitting on the shelf books take up space as objects, but as soon as they are taken down and opened they begin to take up time, while as ‘dance, the body itself only exists in a form of time’ (William Forsythe in Brandstetter & Volckers, 2000, p. 16) and as such is rendered ever present.

NOW also is not static, it has its own dance, moving from place to place and shifting in time. This dancing, mobile concept of NOW is not new. Charles Lamb wrote in 1817 ‘Your “now” is not my “now” and again, your “then” is not my “then”; but my “now” may be your “then”, and vice versa’ (Lamb in Davies, 1995, p. 67). Since Einstein’s theory of relativity we can no longer talk ‘of *the* time – only my time and your time, depending on how we are moving’ (Davies, 1995, pp. 32,33). We are returned to the fact that where NOW is depends on movement.

## **BEFORE – as it was**

The past is that which no longer acts, and although it lives a shadowy and fleeting existence, it still is, it is real. The past remains accessible in the form of recollections, either as motor mechanisms in the form of habit-memory, or more correctly, in the form of image-memories of memory proper, which are the most direct and disinvested forms of access to the past. These

memories are the condition of perception in the same way that the past, for Bergson, is a condition of the present.

(Grosz, 2004, pp. 175,176)

What went before determines what comes later. Concepts and actions that have happened in the past affect and relate to behaviour and concerns of the present. We may have to give up the past in order to inhabit the present. As Andre Breton asks, 'what must I have ceased to be in order to be who I am' (Breton, 1960, 11)? But our memories are the only form for that past and are fleeting at best. 'The fact is our memories are distressingly fallible; we remember things that never happened, and forget completely things that did happen' (Bliss, p. 7).

'Memories shift and mutate, in response to internal conflicts and connections of the remembering individual. Memory in this respect is something we are and something we do' (Kitzmann et al, 2005, no page numbers). We remember the past in the constantly changing present in which neither time nor dance can be easily grasped, both being slippery, difficult to pin down. The dancing body exists in a continuum over time, in an ongoing, relentless process of change.

*An Officially Dead Book* is an artist's book that was formed through a process of disintegration, accelerated by being buried in the earth, and then through the process of documentation has been re-invented, brought back from the dead. It attempts to chart the relentless process of change in a continuum over time. *Officially Dead* by Quentin Reynolds was a found book that I read, photographed, buried, and have now exhumed five times. Each time it was dug up its deterioration and decay was documented by still photography. This process of archeology and the photographic representation of the diminishing remains of the book, and the actual material fragment, are attempts to find visual metaphors for the dissolution of the body – both book and human. These photographs and the final shard of the book encased in resin have created two new books, each with the same dimensions as the original. This process charts the book's decay, its duration in time, eventual disappearance and return/rebirth. It is a visual form for the passage of time, a physical recording of the effects that time and exposure to the natural world produce. Measuring nearly four meters in length, *An Officially Dead Book* takes time to absorb/read and it shows time as a continuum folded into a series of NOWS/THENS. The concertina structure allows different photographs to be folded and positioned next to one another, giving longer or shorter gaps between moments, truncating or extending the length of its demise. It could be described as a dance of decay – a movement incrementally towards death, a book rehearsing its dying.

Another artist's book that has been changed through external forces is *Time: the weekly news magazine* (5) (1992) by Yohei Nishimura which was produced by firing a single issue of 'Time'

magazine, (vol. 137, no. 13) at extreme temperatures in a kiln. The magazine is frozen in time by this process and resembles a delicate pile of filo pastry or a shrunken plaster cast. It is in its fragility incredibly beautiful. It remains in existence in a transformed state, purely an object that can no longer be entered or read – as a record of a frozen 'now'. It provides a visual sense of the potential for disintegration into dust and yet remains at a point just before its total collapse, held at a certain moment in time. The camera has stopped its motion in time but as soon as NOW is captured it becomes THEN. And although William Talbot, 'the inventor of the first practical photographic process in Britain' (Prodger, 2003, p. 34) concluded that 'the subject of every photograph is time itself, the recording of 'ephemerality, transience and flux' still escaped photographers (ibid., 2003, p. 59).

*Book in a jar* (6) (1984) by Colin Hall is, or rather was, a unique book object, the contents of which were decomposing in their airtight jar. Composed of rice, Hall's cut-up German sketchbook, and a bottle of milk, the book was a living object. A conservator's nightmare, this 'book' finally had to be removed and decommissioned due to noxious out-gassing and a small ceremony was conducted by the NAL staff to mark its ending.

These three books all deal with notions of duration, decay, the possibility of a living book and how time affects concepts of past, present and future. They are models towards a refiguring of time: attempts to slice an instant and reveal its complexity, present it as an unfolding, multiplying series of NOWS, question its ability to both be a book and alive, but with an indeterminate ending. These books ask what are the times of the book?

### LATER – shall be

'The present is that which acts and lives, that which functions to anticipate an immediate future in action. The present is a form of impending action, a way of acting with a view to what is next' (Grosz, 2004, pp. 175,176). The future is a condition of the past and present. It is set-up by what happened in the past and determines what happens in the now. '...we may speak of the body as an ever advancing boundary between the future and the past, as a pointed end, which our past is continually driving forward into our future' (Bergson, 1991, p. 78). All decisions and actions have implications for outcomes; nothing is in isolation, fixed, or without consequence. 'We have in fact only two certainties in this world – that we are not everything and that we will die' (Bataille, 1988, xxxii).

Live performance is always inherently a statement about life and death. Or perhaps predominantly a reinforcement of aliveness – I was there, I gave witness, I was alive then, I am alive now with the ever-present risk of failure or death in the background. This provisional

quality of dance is hinted at in *13 potential poems: the incomplete works* by Leslie Bicknell and Derek Humphries. (7) The cover/box is constructed from thin slats of wood, old packing cases held together by torn tickets and stamped paper in a haphazard and impromptu way. Inside are the poems – ‘journey’ lists possible outcomes, states – hope, arrival, diversion, and disappointment, along with a drawing of a three-masted boat and a red cross and arrows. It has been assembled quickly – in the moment – with what came to hand.

The shared moment of now is a time that we communicate in and it is this shared, common moment that empowers live performance. You had to have been there to understand, get it. By being in the same time you share a common language. ‘The only ones who do not share a common language [Jacobi], are the living and the dead’ (Marias, 2006, p. 332). In dance there is no death, no dust, it dissolves before our eyes and constantly reinvents itself, it disappears and in so doing opens up a loss but this is not death. No, dance never dies it just continues in a different body, a different ‘there’.

‘...not a sound only the old breath and the leaves turning and then suddenly this dust whole place suddenly full of dust when you opened your eyes from floor to ceiling nothing only dust and not a sound what was it said come and gone was it something like that come and gone come and gone in no time gone in no time’ —‘That Time’ 1964, Samuel Beckett

### without end

Notions of timelessness and the existence of a never-ending present abound in sacred texts and dance: ‘timeless not in the sense of endless duration, but in the sense of completeness, requiring neither a before nor an after’ (Sankara in Davies, 1995, p. 26).

Or the time sense of the Australian Aborigines that according to the anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner cannot be fixed: the Dreaming in Time – it was, and is, everywhen’ (Davies, 1995, p. 26).

Later in *Burnt Coker* Eliot goes on to say ‘And the end and the beginning were always there Before the beginning and after the end. And all is always now’ (Eliot, 1974, p. 194).

## Notes

1. *Augustine and time I* [by Natalie d'Arbeloff] Publisher: London: NdA Press, 1987. Series: The Augustine adventures; no. 8. Small packages; no. 8. NAL notes: Artist's book, printed by photocopier. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X910112 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=&search&ts=1288230216200> (7/10/10)
2. Lepecki in 'Still: On the Vibratile Microscopy of Dance' uses the same stanza but discusses it from a different viewpoint.
3. *Letters and jazz: for Richard Hamilton, Lester Young, Charlie 'Yardbird' Parker* [by George Brecht, Stefan Wewerka], Published by Edition Hundertmark, Cologne, Germany, 1983 NAL notes: This spontaneous book work is the result of drawings made collaboratively by George Brecht and Stefan Wewerka. The two artists appear to have had an enjoyable evening: drinking wine, talking about letters and Chinese, listening to jazz artists Lester Young, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker and others whilst experimenting with creating letter formations inspired by the music and Richard Hamilton's arttrubberprint 'Five tires'. As the artists say in the introduction to the book, "'Five tires" was cut up, stamped, glued.' The results of their evening's work despite being unplanned do bring together several themes in a most dynamic way as well as recording the process of developing an idea. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X890294 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=&search&ts=1288230216200> (7/10/10)
4. *2 [i.e. Zwei] Books : Rekonstruktion zweier Varianten (A und B) des Mappenwerkes von 1958-1961 = 2 books : reconstruction of 2 variants (A and B) of the portfolios published 1958-1961* by Dieter Roth. Publisher: Stuttgart: Hansjörg Mayer, 1976. Description: 1 case (2 portfolios): all col. ill. ; 24 cm. Cut-out illus. (some col.) National Art Library Crypt Store, General Collection 313.N.28 <http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=&search&ts=1288230216200> (7/10/10)
5. *Time: the weekly newsmagazine* [by Yohei Nishimura] Published by Yohei Nishimura, Tokyo, Japan, 1992 NAL notes: This work is a further example in a series of bookworks

produced by Yohei Nishimura which are the result of the artist's experiments of firing objects in a kiln. In this case the artist has fired a single issue of 'Time' magazine, (vol. 137, no. 13) at extreme temperature. The original work is shrunk, the wrappers are a mixture of white and creamy yellow and the pages are fused together. Nishimura is interested in the subtle differences in colour produced by this process. 'Books when fired remain in existence and above all remain incredibly beautiful' (artist's statement).  
Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X930113  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (7/10/10)

6. *Book in a jar* [by Colin Hall] Published by Colin Hall England, 1984 NAL notes: 'Book in a jar' is a unique book object consisting of a sealed 'Kilner dual purpose jar' containing a mixture of sour milk, fermenting rice and a book of sketches drawn by Hall during a visit to Germany. The jar's label has been signed by Hall and is dated April 9th 1984. Hall noticed the jar containing a small quantity of rice on his kitchen shelf one day and decided to place his German sketchbook inside it, cutting it up to make it fit. He then poured in a bottle of milk and sealed the jar. These curious contents are slowly decomposing in their airtight container, the glass becoming murkier, the grains of rice resembling maggots. Gradually, this bookwork is undergoing a total physical change and turning into something new. It is one in a series of works in jars that Hall produced during the same period that focussed on the concept of containment and imprisonment. Special Collections NAL Pressmark: X900248.  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (7/10/10)

7. *13 potential poems: the incomplete works* by Leslie Bicknell and Derek Humphries [London?]: Oblivion Boys Press, 1986. Description: 14 v. in 1 : ill. ; 28 cm. Notes: Artist's book. Limited ed. of thirteen numbered copies signed by the artists. 'Consists of 13 12 page booklets plus colophon booklet. Each consisting of photocopied collage cover, tissue paper insert with hand-carved rubberstamp illustrations, and hand-set letterpress poems whose form relates to content. Each booklet on a different paper suited to the subject matter ... All within a box of handmade paper and rubber stamped packing case ...' - Catalogue of the Press. '13 potential poems are a testimony to chance : the chance encounter of two working class boys made potentially good ... packaged to contain the growing farce of a nascent idea ; sometimes ripe, sometimes bruised but always unmistakably alive.' - colophon. Special Collections Pressmark: X890199  
<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (7/10/10)

## Exhibition

### *by hand and eye: dance in the space of the artist's book*

Sutton Gallery Project Space 2010

#### *Dancing the book* (2010) [unique book]

Residues from *Dancing the book: a detourment*, a performed paper given at the National Art Library (NAL) of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (2007).

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 100 × 350 × 300 mm

CONTENTS Grey French dustcoat, Au Molinel, size 5; book of NAL requisition forms from 2007 research residency Japanese stab bound 210 × 150 mm, Favini paper, linen thread; hand written notes for the talk on NAL requisition forms bound with a paper clip 210 × 150 mm.

Bound by Jason Workman

#### *no hope no reason* (2004-2010) [unique book]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 125 × 300 × 250 mm

CONTENTS Loose-leaf book with hard cover slipcase 12 × 214 × 210 mm tied with white cotton bias tape. Includes a series of pop-ups, vovelles and pull pages that activate images from the performance work.

#### *Corps(e) de ballet* (2010) [unique book]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 100 × 300 × 225 mm

CONTENTS Rebound original found book Soviet Ballet (1943) by Iris Morley, bookbinding cloth, book board 180 × 250 mm. Hand-cut image of Act 4 from SWAN LAKE, p xviii, xix.

Rebound by Jason Workman

#### *HEADINGS & FOOTINGS* (2009/2010) [edition of 310]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 120 × 255 × 195 mm

CONTENTS 20 Laser colour printed books 148 × 210 mm, stapled, performer: Renee Whitehouse, produced by Spiros Panigirakis for Clubsproject

**Gross** (2010) [unique book]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 85 × 265 × 310 mm

CONTENTS Electric light box, sheet of A4 paper that has been crumpled and flattened 144 times, 189 × 263 mm Box constructed by Jeph Neale.

*Gross* is a sheet of A4 paper that has been crumpled and flattened by hand 144 times. This process has changed its materiality making it thinner, softer, shrinking its size. The constant handling has produced a multitude of folds, creases and fine tears. It is presented on a custom-made light-box which amplifies its fragility.

***An Officially Dead Book*** (2005-2010) [edition of 2]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 90 × 228 × 290 mm

CONTENTS concertina folded book 17 × 137 × 220 mm, and slipcase 23 × 143 × 226 mm covered in Mingeishi Paper, and cast polyester resin book 20 × 148 × 220 mm embedded with final fragment of decayed book.

*an officially dead book* was formed through a process of disintegration, accelerated by being buried in the earth, and then through a process of documentation has been re-invented, brought back from the dead. *Officially Dead* by Quentin Reynolds was a found book that I read, photographed, buried, and have now exhumed five times. Each time it was dug up its deterioration and decay was documented by still photography. This process of archeology and the photographic representation of the diminishing remains of the book, and the actual material fragment, are attempts to find visual metaphors for the dissolution of the body – both book and human. These photographs and the final shard of the book encased in resin have created two new books, each with the same dimensions as the original.

Book and slipcase constructed by Jason Workman. Resin book cast by Jeph Neale

***A little hair reading hood and a little hair book*** (1998/2010) [unique books]

Circular concertina book 105 × 465 mm signed and dated by the artist and Jean-Paul Rosette (hairstylist), cardboard bonnet covered in human hair (artist's) 220 × 230 × 215 mm, cream ribbon and Somerset Velvet Grey paper molting mats.

***a pair of quires*** (2009) [edition of 2]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 100 × 440 × 340 mm

CONTENTS two stacks of 25 sheets of A4 paper. A title page and 24 sheets titled crumpled and flattened and numbered. Each sheet has been hand crumpled and flattened 1-24 times: title sheet 210 × 297, sheet 24 190 × 264 (approx.)

A duet between two stacks of A4 paper that charts the changes resulting from being crumpled and flattened between 1-24 times.

***Imprint*** (2009/2010) [unique book]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 100 x 440 x 340 mm

CONTENTS Japanese stab bound book 300 x 290 mm, Mingeishi Paper, book board, linen thread, title page hand-stamped. *imprint* is the result of a collaboration between Jude Walton and Eva Karczag from a 4-day workshop in Arnhem, the Netherlands (2009). The marks, folds, creases left on the paper have been generated through dance. The moving bodies as they turn, spin, roll, and jump on the sheets of newsprint, map the energy and direction of the dance. Sections were selected and cut out using a cardboard template to produce the book. Two photographs printed on tracing paper indicate the process of its making.

Bound by Jason Workman

***A Book of Shadows*** (2010) [unique book] (work-in-progress to be developed over the duration of the exhibition) cardboard, measurements various. Black cutout cardboard figures illuminated by torchlight to give shadows on a folded, white cardboard book.

***Stamped*** (2010) [unique book]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 100 x 440 x 340 mm

CONTENTS A3 cardboard cover containing black and white hand stamped drawings, black metal spiral binding 425 x 295 mm

*stamped* is hand-printed using large rubber letter forms. Each image captures the energy of the word used – a turn, a jump, a roll – through the action of the figure. The image is given a sense of movement through the blur created by the fading marks of the ink on the stamp.

***Thick & Hairy*** (2008/2010) [unique book]

SOLANDER BOX SIZE 30 x 474 x 474 mm

CONTENTS six white cotton men's handkerchiefs, 445 x 445 mm, hand embroidered in red French silk thread. The first handkerchief has the title of the work *Thick and Hairy* and the remaining five each have a word describing a bodily fluid associated with the nose: phlegm, mucus, blood, catarrh, and snot.

Custom made solander box by Jason Workman

## Afterword

Dancers are at one and the same time paper, pen, and graphic, the space that their bodies use being the place where, eventually, the sign is inscribed, which is none other than a figure of the body yet again.

(Gil, 1998, p. 169)

The Sunday, after the exhibition *By Hand and Eye* opened, I ended up in emergency at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital with a red, inflamed right eye. After a lengthy wait, during which these notes were conceived and partially composed, I was diagnosed with epi scleritis in my right eye. On the way home the dilation of my pupils blurred the passing world. The (eye)rony did not escape me.

*By Hand and Eye: Dance in the Space of the Artist's Book* could be described as a series of interconnecting duets running across the space and time of the project, forming a network of associations and references between the various elements of written essay, visual essay, and artist-made books. This collection of concepts, objects, moving images, fall in and out of sequence, here and there stressing a similar idea, amplifying and illuminating it before turning to move off on another trajectory. The form of the project has evolved and been guided by somatic, temporal, internal understandings that draw on notions of choreography, improvisation and intuitive response. Its very structure might then be seen as a choreographic score that embodies the dynamics of movement, and invites the viewer/reader to dance with it.

'Process is the beginning but the beginning always steps backwards so that rather than simply beginning, the beginning is a search for the beginning' (Donald Judd in Pawson, 2010, p. 18). We return to the beginning in order to move forward, our past informing our present and indicating our future. But where did it all begin? There are numerous moments that could be offered as beginnings for the research. The chance meeting with Andrew Russell at the door of the National Art Library and the ensuing animated conversation about artists' books over a cup of tea, or the finding of a pop-up version of Hergé's *Tin Tin goes to the Moon* at a market stall, or reading Derrida's writing *On Touching – Jean-Luc Nancy*, or reading any or all of Roland Barthes. There is no one particular moment but rather these things accrue, build up over time, and make or construct sense through their conjoined meanings. It is in the placement, the way of bringing these things together, that meaning, and sense is constructed.

This is true for the constellation of elements that are the residue, or at least the residue presented, from seven years of investigation into how a book might dance. The written and visual essays have been conceived as a duet. They are in conversation with each other,

interdependent yet able to exist separately. It is a partnering that is not dominated by either form, and allows a freedom and independence, that provides the viewer with different understandings and different perspectives on the appearance, function, performance, and relationship, of the books. Equivalence does not mean having to be exactly the same. Some events, and actions require difference in order to work. As Sarah Jackson in *Tips to dance the tango* points out, 'Rescued from South America – the tango, properly danced, - perfect time – perfect balance, rests entirely on the male partner. All that is demanded of *her* is intelligent anticipation'. (1)

'Intelligent anticipation' is perhaps a perfect state in which to view this project, to engage with it, and a perfect state to be in, when you leave it.

What reverberations happen between things? I pick up a sheet of A4 paper that has been crumpled and flattened 144 times (*Gross*). I am reminded through touch and memory, of the actions of the hand, my hand, which produced this. I reread Nancy in Derrida 'The touching cannot be the same as the touched even when the touching touches itself' (Derrida, 2005, p. 246). I touch my arm and play with the difference between touching and being touched, a shift in my sensory perception, and consider how the paper has touched me, and become aware of the structural changes I have wrought upon it through my continual actions. The process of making *Gross* was that of a duet with the paper – a durational act spread intermittently over three days. It involved a repetitive, meditative crumpling in the hand and then a flattening, smoothing out on the table, with a methodical and measured counting as I paced the studio. Things 'indicate our body to us' (Sartre in Vidler, p. 81). It is through our handling and negotiation of things that we know the world and indeed our own body as a thing within it. The things, artefacts that I have made for the exhibition, demonstrate my actions and thinking in the world. I held *Gross* up to the light from the window to better see the rips and tears in its crumpled topography.

Throughout the research I've been aware that I was making 'a raid on the inarticulate, with shabby equipment' (Eliot, 1974, p. 203). Despite all of the tools at my disposal, all my efforts and attempts to represent the body in motion are doomed to failure. Nevertheless we press on.

It is true that one cannot think the body because we still don't know what the body is, or what it is capable of doing, what its limits or its capacities are. More than that, we don't know what a body is because a body is always in excess of our knowing it, and provides the ongoing possibility of thinking or otherwise knowing it. It is always in excess of any representation, and indeed, of all representations.

(Grosz, 2001, p. 28)

And yet I watch Eadweard Muybridge's girl throwing the scarf over her shoulders over and over again. I almost never tire of seeing this animation that I made from his series of still frames. It entrances me, this simple activated action that stutters into life. As she moves I see who she is. I know so much more about her in movement than I do from the still image. Her gait, the way she turns her head, even though brief, gives insight into her nature – what sort of person she is. In this simple everyday action is manifested a wealth of knowledge. I understand it through a 'host of tacit, visceral, and unselfconsciously seductive ways' (Gitelman, 1999, p. 149). Gitelman here is referring to how we learn to relate to various technologies; the Net, the cinema, and auditory systems, and how we accommodate them to our 'practices of seeing, hearing, speaking, and writing' (ibid., p. 3). This understanding accumulates imperceptibly.

The written essays build from one to the next and in some cases the same book is discussed across two essays, for example, *The Word Made Flesh* by Johanna Drucker is examined both in *in as with by* and *scores notations spacings*. Certain observations are reiterated from slightly varying positions and standpoints. The order of the essays is determined, like nearly everything in our lives, by personal preference, and an intuitive, internal logic. This repetition from different perspectives produces a layering of thoughts, one on top of the other, increasing the sense of plurality in the writing.

There is no doubt that I now know a great deal more about artists' books, and their historical and conceptual underpinnings. I am stocked up and have fallen into an angle of repose from which point I am able to reflect on what has transpired.

During the time spent sitting my exhibition *by hand and eye*, I became aware that *An Officially Dead Book* not only maps an archeology of time and the passing of the temporal life of the book, but also addresses the futility of war and the inevitable abuse of power over those held captive. The found book *Officially Dead* written by Quentin Reynolds tells the story of Commander C.D. Smith during the Second World War. The photographic representation of the diminishing remains of the book, and the actual material fragment encased in resin, are attempts to find visual metaphors for the dissolution of the body – both book and human. The repeated burying of the book could also be seen as a metaphor for the burial of the dead in wartime. We repeat the same actions over, and over again, it is always going to be the war to end all wars...

Dance like life, has a certain frailty. Something that was solid one moment has shifted the next. Mostly we cling to our habits, daily rituals, and routines. But sometimes, for no apparent reason, things that we have come to depend on are no longer there. Like the missed step we are jolted

out of our seemingly secure footing. The slip, stutter, stumble are shocking in that moment of being out of control of our bodies. These moments can be powerful in that they open out possibilities, taking us away from the security of the well trodden.

Books radiate imagination. Marked and creased, buckled by the heat of the sun, fluted by damp, they gather associations and furnish our intimate lives... The corpus of culture and its corpse books carry our dreams and bear the deadweight of convention.

(Finlay, 2001, p. 13)

The design and installation of the exhibition, *By Hand and Eye* was predicated on relations between form and content, concepts and materiality, and the movement of the viewer through the space (circulation). The initial idea was to create a hybrid space, between library and workshop that had the appearance of being propositional and provisional. A continuous shelf that circumnavigated the gallery space guided the viewer and was used to display the books, with a table and chairs placed in the centre for close reading. The final decision to use cardboard for the shelf matched the work in its materiality and sense of improvisation.

The artists' books, both those seen in the collection at the NAL and the ones I made for the exhibition, work upon the imagination, stretching and expanding it hopefully beyond the well trodden and accepted. Over the course of this research these books have elicited many different responses from delight to intrigue, to repulsion, and confusion. My hope is that in a quiet unprepossessing way the project claims attention and space for the imagination, and reminds us of its capacity to withstand adversity and bring a sense of wonder into our lives. The project has drawn together two of my enduring loves, dance and literature, and it has been a rich and enriching union that has given pleasure and sustenance and has confirmed Valery's belief that 'To recite poetry is to enter into a verbal dance' (Valery in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p. 63).

## Note

1. Sarah Jackson, *Tips to dance the tango*, statement on inside cover, italics mine. Publisher: Halifax, NS: The artist, 1987. Consists of two sheets folded concertina-style, each separately glued to the paper cover. Lettering is printed in silver; text is printed on the flyleaf; the cover is embossed with a blind stamp stating the artist's name. NAL Pressmark: X890187

<http://catalogue.nal.vam.ac.uk/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=1288229281C2B.1748&profile=nal&menu=search&ts=1288230216200> (22/11/10)

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## Visual Essays: Notes (images in order of appearance)

### Still Moving Still

Jean Nuchtern in Lambert, C. (1999). *Moving Still: Mediating Yvonne Rainer's Trio A*. *OCTOBER 89, Summer*, p. 96.

*Leporello 1* Name: Ketelhodt, Ines v., Schumacher, Joachim, Unica T (Group of artists). Offenbach: Unica T, 1989. NAL Pressmark: X910029

*Leporello 2* Name: Ketelhodt, Ines v., Malutzki, Peter Lahnstein: FlugBlatt-Press, 1989. NAL Pressmark: X910030

Photograph of the author during a performed talk (2007) *Dancing the book: a detournment* for staff at the National Art Library of the Victoria & Albert Museum London - photographer Jennifer Farmer

Examples of visual traces of the moving body generated through a motion capture system that produces a graphic representation of the motion of the body. Produced during a research project conducted at the Biomechanics Laboratory, City Campus, Victoria University, (2001-06) with dancers Colin Sneesby and Danni von der Borch.

Etienne-Jules Marey's *Vibrations of an Elastic Rod* (1886) p. 248 and *Walking* (1883) p. 174 in Prodger, P. (2003), *Time Stands Still: Muybridge and the Instantaneous Photography Movement*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Further examples of visual traces of the moving body generated through working on a force platform that registers the amount of pressure exerted by the moving body, the centre of gravity of the body, and its movement in space. Produced during a research project conducted at the Biomechanics Laboratory, City Campus, Victoria University, (2001-06) with dancers Colin Sneesby and Danni von der Borch.

Eadweard Muybridge's *Woman walking throwing scarf over shoulders*, animated photographs from *The Human Figure in Motion* (1955) NY: Dover Publications, (Plate 100).

Animated thaumatrope images from Mannoni, L., Nekes, W., & Warner, M. (2006). *Eyes, Lies and Illusions*, Melbourne: Australian Centre for the Moving Image, p. 131.

*Lost Day* Name: Gilbert & George, Obrist, Hans-Ulrich, Oktagon Verlag Koln: Oktagon, c1996 NAL Pressmark: 970059.

*Oh, the Grand old Duke of York* Name: Gilbert & George, Obrist, Hans-Ulrich, Oktagon Verlag Koln: Oktagon, c1996 NAL Pressmark: 970060.

Flicker books: Taylor, Chic (1972) Alecto International Ltd. Publisher, NAL Pressmark: X930182 and Grayson, Roy (1972) Alecto International Ltd. Publisher, NAL Pressmark: X930185.

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'Artist's book in the form of a flip book that illustrates the process of a book burning' NAL notes

Animation based on *Film* by Ernst Jandl in Cobbing, B., & Upton, L. (Eds.). (1998) in *Word Score Utterance Choreography in Verbal and Visual Poetry*, London: Writers Forum.

Extract from *Hover* performed by Colin Sneesby at Arena Theatre rehearsal space (2001).

Combined images from *Leporello 1* and *Leporello 2*

### *in with as by*

*opus i*, (1991) Ines von Ketelhodt – a series of black and white photographic images that have been drawn over, scribbled on, blacked out. NAL Pressmark: X920180

cris cheek has used his tongue to lick marks onto the page using concoctions made with crushed beetroot, tea, carrot and cochineal (Cobbing and Upton, 1998, p. 43).

*Edward Ruscha: Stains 1971 to 1975* / essay by Peter Schjeldahl, (1992) Edward Ruscha, selected images: WALKS TALKS FLIES SWINGS AND CRAWLS, (1973) egg yolk and cilantro on canvas 60 x 54 inches; VERY ANGRY PEOPLE, (1973) cherry stain on waterfall rayon 20 x 24 inches; BEDCRUMBS, (1975) blackberry juice on moire 18 x 48 inches; SCRATCHES ON THE FILM, (1974) shellac on satin 36 x 40 inches; and EVIL. (1973) blood on satin 20 x 24 inches. 'No one can read and look simultaneously. The two activities are as mutually exclusive as kneeling and jumping. The brain must configure consciousness differently for each. It can do so with such lightning quickness as to induce a sense of simultaneity, but the sense is an illusion.' (no page numbers) NAL Pressmark: NC.93.0244

*Mud Hand Prints* (1984) Richard Long – still photographs of details from the book and a series of images from another larger work of Long's, involving the application of mud by hand – *Riverlines* is a wall work for the Norman Foster designed Hearst Tower in New York. Using a mix of mud from the Hudson and Avon rivers Long daubes the mud directly onto the wall creating a dynamic, visceral trace of the dexterity and pressure of the hand. NAL Pressmark: X930249

*Flux paper events* (1976) Maciunas, George. Artist's book consisting solely of non-textual intervention with the paper. Alterations include: hole punches, top left-hand corner cut, creased leaf, a folded leaf, 3 torn leaves, 3 leaves stapled together, 2 leaves glued together, and 1 leaf perforated. Pressmark: X930056

*Real Lush*, (1981) Kevin Osbourne Photographic images showing the rhomboidal shape of the book and its content NAL notes: Artist's book incorporating a montage of recycled magazine ads, photos and graphics - printed offset. NAL Pressmark: 95 GG 30

*Sta* (1993) Aegide Rings – video excerpt of turning the page of the book. 'The book is constructed using alternately text-image-text-image and so on. When you try to follow the text the images are constantly interrupting; as you concentrate on the images the text is lost.'--Information sheet by the artist. NAL notes. NAL Pressmark: X930103

*The Word made Flesh*, (1996) Johanna Drucker – the cover and a series of five pages showing the accumulation of different type size and placement used to resemble a carmina figurate. NAL Pressmark: X980169

*You are here*, (1992) Julie Chen NAL Notes: Artist's book based on the allegorical idea of life as a journey. NAL Pressmark: X930232

*Herd*, (1993) Andrew Norris, video and stills indicating the tactile quality of the book. NAL notes: Stylised images of cows painted in black on a strip of paper, concertina-folded and pasted to form single pages; pasted between light boards bound in black and white imitation fur fabric. In black box, with lid similarly bound. Edition of 20 copies signed by the artist. NAL Pressmark: X930233

*Ulrich Wagner*, (1989) Ulrich Wagner video and stills of pages in the book NAL notes: Artist's book consisting of 12 folded sheets of blue paper bearing shapes printed in black. The author's name is stamped on the t.p. and the publisher's name is stamped on the colophon. Bound in black cloth covered boards. No text. In slip-case. NAL Pressmark: X900182

*Memoires* (1959) Debord, Guy, Jorn, Asger, L'Internationale situationniste; New York, N.Y. NAL notes: In plain wrappers with a dust jacket formed from a sheet of sandpaper. Collaborative artist's book composed of prefabricated images, text, and colour lithography. *Mémoires* is all fragments: hundreds of snippets of text from travel literature, poems, histories, novels, tracts on political economy, film scripts, newspapers, magazines, sociological treatises, plus whole or partial photographs, cartoons, comic strips, maps, building plans, advertisements, old etchings and woodcuts, all overlaid by colored lines, patterns, and splotches painted by Asger Jorn [...] In the combinations of its found, scavenged, or stolen materials, *Mémoires* affirms that everything needed to say whatever one might want to say is already present, accessible to anyone; the book defines a project, and tells a story. NAL Pressmark: X920223

*Ott's Sneeze* (2002) Neal White – cover of the book and images of the reconstruction of Ott's Sneeze. 'Neale White and I came to reconstruct Ott's sneeze via a project on sterile environments; so-called *clean rooms* in which computer chips are manufactured or tissue culture grown. Ironically, we found ourselves inside such a room in our attempt to reproduce *Record of a Sneeze*.' (Afterword) NAL Pressmark: 602 AE 0319

*Emissions Book* (1992) Katharine Meynell and Susan Johanknecht, cover and images from the book. Artist's book consisting of transparent pages holding various pockets containing unidentifiable liquid, and colour transparencies. NAL notes Pressmark: X930145

*Ein Hauch von Erinnerungen (A Hint of Remembrance)* (1987) Claudia Koelgen – video of the opening and closing of the book with sound of the air/breath that action creates. NAL Pressmark: 95QQ140

Sellers, Susan (ed and trans) (2004) *Helene Cixous: The Writing Notebooks*, London: Continuum. Three photographs showing examples of handwriting taken from the book:

'To say there is a book, here is a book	Her body which (always) very early on gave me	sparks, we are ten twelve and we –
I feel a book objectively it's madness	Prudish horror, - was her toes	
It's to	There is something about her toes, especially	– But my mother is no longer a mum. She has passed the barrier of time
– Here's the book. Here's the book that I Will not write. This is where it begins	The big one, and about her feet – which paints her soul – Psychic feet. Dense.	And she doesn't go backwards – ' (48 – page 91)
Here is the book that I will never	Like her hair –'	
Write, I thought,' (1 – page 3)	(14 – page 29)	
'The cat's crisis		
—		
<u>Stand up straight.</u> Halt dich grade	'our desires our fears all is substitution	
Uprightness in the family	But we are not the author of the substitution	
—		
How I have lied I have	—	
—	I fear for the life of him	
Body without body. Not a kiss. Not a touch.	who will not be killed.	
Before the fall: she does not know that she	When we rub against one another	
Is naked.	my brother and I the two children	
A nakedness so unsexual that the part of	we were erupting like	

## Scores Notations Spacings

Claudia Koelgen's *Letterbuch I* (1987) image of the cover and a series of details of letters in plastic sheets  
NAL Pressmark: X890154

*Soirée du Coeur a Barbe*, (Paris 1923) – image of the poster for the soirée organized by Illiazd

*The Word made Flesh* (1996) cover and five images illustrating the use of different sized letters and the placement of text on the page. NAL Pressmark: X980169

Apollinaire's 'Il pleur' and three other examples, 'Coeur Couronne et Miroir', 'La Mandoline L'Oeillet et le Bambou', and 'Et je fume' from *Calligrammes* by Apollinaire; lithos De Chirico. Publisher: [Paris]: Librairie Gallimard, (1930). Pressmark: 95.RR.44

Combined alternating images of pages from: *Image: un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (1969) par Marcel Broodthaers Pressmark: 804.AA.0115 and *Poème: un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (2003 Facsimile of the first edition of 1914) par Stéphane Mallarmé. NAL Pressmark: 804.AG.0018. This sequence shows the direct relationship between the two books and indicates the blacking out of the text by Broodthaers.

Still photograph of the black page in Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman* that stands in for poor Yorick, taken from the Everyman's Library edition 1946, page 25, London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

*Sixty-Two Mesostics re Merce Cunningham* by John Cage, a selection of seven mesostics photographed from the book. NAL Pressmark: 609.AH.0016

F. T. Marinetti, (1919) *Les mots en liberté futuristes* – cover and two images taken from fold-out pages of the book and *Zang Tumb Tumb*, (1912) cover, back and front, and inside double page. NAL Pressmark: SP.91.0004

*Autistext: poetry before I learned to read* by Scott Helmes a series of stills from the book. NAL notes: Helmes experiments with concrete poetry, a form of writing in which the way letters and words are arranged on the page becomes as important as their linguistic meaning. He plays with letters using them as visual units which are arranged on the page to build up black and white abstract images. NAL Pressmark: X891085

*Traces of Dance* by Laurence Louppe, the following selected images:

Anon, Manuscript of the Low Dances of Tarragona, XVth. Century – (Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona)

Trisha Brown, *Untitled*, pencil on paper, 43 x 32.5, 1980

Trisha Brown, *Locus*, pencil on paper, 1976

John Weaver, *Orchesography*, in 4' 1706 – (Bibliothèque de l'Opéra)

Raoul-Auger Feuillet, *Chorégraphie*, Table of coupés, 1700 – (Bibliothèque de l'Opéra)

Lucinda Childs, *Melody Excerpt*, pencil on paper, 81 × 106.5, 1977 – (ph. James Dee).

Rudolf von Laban, Table of signs for *Chorégraphie*, 1926 – Laban Center Archives)

Rudolf von Laban, Sketches of the "Scales" – (Laban Center Archives)

Rudolf von Laban, Table of signs for *Chorégraphie*, 1926, (Archives du Laban Centre)

*Labanotation: the Archie Gemmil goal* Alec Finlay, cover and photographic images of trained dancer performing the Archie Gemmel goal, children participating in the workshops and two Laban notation sheets one showing the placement of the ball. NAL Pressmark: 801.AC.0072

### *on and off the page*

Natalie d'Arbeloff, 'Augustine and inertia', London: NdA Press, 1985. Series: *The Augustine adventures; Small packages; no. 4*. NAL Pressmark: X910108

'Sphaera' Joannis de Sacro Bosco: two images taken from *Timeless paper* (p. 162) that demonstrate the use of vovelles or revolving discs.

Sjoerd Hofstra, 'Elements of geometry by Euclid', Amsterdam: ZET, 1994. Based on the first printed edition of Euclid's early treatise on geometry entitled 'Preclarissimus liber elementorum Euclidis perspicacissimi in artem geometrie', published in Venice in 1482, Hofstra's work transforms Euclid's original text pages by softening and blurring the text until it becomes a backdrop of geometric patterns from which 3-dimensional geometric shapes spring forth in the form of pop-ups. Later openings are accompanied by printed marginalia which itself disintegrates into partial word and letter forms on successive leaves. NAL notes Pressmark: X950040

Sjoerd Hofstra, '5 empty bookcases', Amsterdam; New York: ZET, 1990. Hofstra's familiar use of intricate paper constructions in the form of pop-ups are here created from pages of a mathematical textbook, a novel, an atlas, a sheet of music and a dictionary respectively, the materials used representing elements of the world of knowledge and effectively engendering the atmosphere of a dusty bookshop. NAL notes Pressmark: X920309

Anna Wolf, 'Alphabetbuch', San Francisco: The artist, 1990. Artist's book in which the letters of the alphabet are printed letterpress on marbled leporello-folded Sumi Nagashi paper. Concertina folded structure is mounted between boards covered in black handmade paper. NAL notes Pressmark: X910116

Scott McCamey, 'Triangle, circle, square', Rochester, NY: The artist?, 1985. Bound in double leaves in the traditional oriental format with smaller double leaves of photographs inserted. Photographs of foliage have been inserted between sheets of white card which have been cut into concentric circles, squares, and triangles. A piece of string has been threaded through each page so that when the leaf is turned the taut string pulls open the card overlaying the photograph. NAL notes Pressmark: X890223

'*This pretty mansion*', Duchess of Gloucester, beehive paper animation, watercolour and ink on paper, England, 1846 from Mannoni, L. Nekes, W. Warner, M. (2006) *Eyes, Lies and Illusions*, Melbourne: Australian Centre for the Moving Image, pp. 84, 85.

Keith Smith 'Book 91' Published by Space Heater Multiples New York, USA, 1982 Height 26 cm x width 37 cm. Book artist and teacher Keith Smith is well known for his innovative book structures. His works include many so-called 'no-picture books' including a few string books of which 'Book 91' is an example. NAL notes Pressmark: X901035

Alice Maude-Roxby, 'Log book', London: Alice Maude-Roxby, 1990. This work by Alice Maude-Roxby was included in an exhibition entitled 'Art in boxes' held at England & Co. gallery in 1991. 'Log book' comprises a manipulated copy of a found German-Italian grammar book, encased in a glass fronted box frame. Tiny cuts and folds of the book's pages have been made to create the illusion of miniature fir trees growing out of the text. The artist was interested in making collapsible art and the cut out images can be pushed back into the page and the book shut and shelved. NAL notes Pressmark: X912001

Images of anamorphosis from Mannoni, L. Nekes, W. Warner, M. (2006) *Eyes, Lies and Illusions*, Melbourne: Australian Centre for the Moving Image, pp. 86, 87. a) *Three types of anamorphosis with illustration above of a cone anamorphosis*, in Savérien: *Dictionnaire Universel de Mathématique et Physique*. Paris, 1753 b) *Optical construction of a cylinder anamorphosis*, in: Mario Bettini, *Apiaria Universae Philosophiae Mathematicae*, Bologna, 1642.

Carol June Barton, 'Tunnel map', the artist, 1988 [Rosendale, N.Y.]: Women's Studio Workshop. Artist's book: a tunnel book format of a circular map of the world. At one end there is a peephole when extended the tunnel reveals illustrations of different terrains. NAL notes Pressmark: X891061

Paulien Rings, 'Harmonica', Netherlands?, The artist?, [198-?] Artist's book, reversible, consisting of a single red/white sheet of card, folded concertina-style between red cloth-covered boards. The folds (& boards) are perforated with small squares (one or two per fold) whose corners are linked together with lengths of thread, white for the red folds/pages and red thread for the white folds/pages. The squares cut out of the pages are threaded onto these interconnecting filaments through small holes in each of their corners. NAL notes Pressmark: X890244

Liliane Lijn, 'Sky never stops: poemkon', with text by Leonard D. Marshall, the artist, London, England, 1965. Accompanying turntable shelved separately. Kinetic poem machine comprising a white painted, flat topped cork cone with Letraset word poems in blue. The cone is mounted on a motorised turntable. The pattern of repeated words appear to pulsate as the cone revolves clockwise. The poem machine operates at 50 cycles herz, 220 volts. NAL notes Pressmark: X940266 Turntable: 38041701007627

Jack Milroy, 'Librarian's garden', UK, The artist, 1999. A copy of *Cacti and Succulents* by Rudolf Subík and Jirina Kaplická, that has been cut by the artist so that the illustrations spill out from the half-open volume. NAL notes Pressmark: 805.AA.0001

### *now before later*

Natalie d'Arbeloff's *Augustine and Time* (1987) Series: The Augustine adventures; no. 8. Small packages; no. 8, cover and three still images from the book. NAL Pressmark: X910112

George Brecht and Stefan Wewerka, *Letters and Jazz*. This spontaneous book work is the result of drawings made collaboratively by George Brecht and Stefan Wewerka. The two artists appear to have had an enjoyable evening: drinking wine, talking about letters and Chinese, listening to jazz artists Lester Young, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker and others whilst experimenting with creating letter formations inspired by the music and Richard Hamilton's artrubberprint 'Five tires'. NAL notes Pressmark: X890294

*2 [i.e. Zwei] Books*, Cut book by Dieter Rot as an example of improvisation. Video of looking at the book. NAL General Collection 313.N.28

*An Officially Dead Book* by Jude Walton (2010) selected still images showing the decay of the book.

*Time: the weekly news magazine* (1992) by Yohei Nishimura NAL notes: This work is a further example in a series of bookworks produced by Yohei Nishimura which are the result of the artist's experiments of firing objects in a kiln. In this case the artist has fired a single issue of 'Time' magazine, (vol. 137, no. 13) at extreme temperature. The original work is shrunk, the wrappers are a mixture of white and creamy yellow and the pages are fused together. NAL Pressmark: X930113

*A jar / a jar* (1984) by Colin Hall NAL notes: A unique book object, comprising a sealed jar ('Kilner' make?) containing brown lentils, shards of glass from a broken jar, a pill bottle, a circular badge, torn fragments of card, a Sanyo mini-cassette container and other miscellaneous small objects. Publisher: [S.I. : The artist?, 1985. Description 1 jar: glass ; 12 cm. high x 10 cm. in diameter. As the organic components are slowly decomposing, this item may require conservation. NAL Pressmark: X900247.

*13 potential poems: the incomplete works* by Leslie Bicknell and Derek Humphries, the cover/box and a still image of one of the poems. 'Consists of 13 12 page booklets plus colophon booklet. Each consisting of photocopied collage cover, tissue paper insert with hand-carved rubberstamp illustrations, and hand-set letterpress poems whose form relates to content. Each booklet on a different paper suited to the subject matter ... All within a box of handmade paper and rubber stamped packing case.' Library's copy is no. 4. NAL Pressmark: X890199