Booknesses: Taking Stock of the Book Arts in South Africa

A Colloquium organised by the Department of Visual Art Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA) of the University of Johannesburg (UJ)

FADA: 21-26 March 2017

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS
PROGRAMME

Tuesday 22 March
9:00 – 12:00 Noon - Papermaking Workshop: Session 1
FACILITATOR: NKOSINATHI NDLANDLA - Phumani Paper / FADA
1:00 – 4:00 - Papermaking Workshop: Session 2
FACILITATOR: NKOSINATHI NDLANDLA - Phumani Paper / FADA

Wednesday 22 March
9:00 – 12:00 Noon - Workshop: Paper engineering and paper structures in book format: Session 1
FACILITATOR: STEPHAN ERASMUS - Printmaking Department, FADA
12 – 1:00  - Lunchtime Seminar Series to Students at FADA
GUEST SPEAKER: PROF. BUZZ SPECTOR (USA) - Buzz Spector: The Book under (De)Construction - FADA Auditorium
1:00 – 4:00 - Workshop: Paper engineering and paper structures in book format: Session 2
FACILITATOR: STEPHAN ERASMUS - Printmaking Department, FADA
5:00 – 9:00 - Visit to Artist Proof Studio (APS) Newtown *
Cocktails and demonstrations on the making of William Kentridge’s book Triumphs & Laments
* Bus leaves from outside School of Tourism & Hospitality (adjacent to FADA entrance) at 5:00pm and returns after the event for re-registered delegates only

Thursday 23 March
9:00 – 4:00 - Bookbinding Workshop:*  
FACILITATOR: HELENE VAN ASWEGEN - Printmaking Department, FADA  
* Please note this is a pre-registered and paid-for event
Throughout the day - Artist’s Book Yearbook Drop-in Sessions
Sarah Bodman will be putting together a new edition of the biennial Artist’s Book Yearbook this year (2018-2019 edition publication date Sept 2017). The ABYB surveys international artists’ books practice and publishes information and critical writing on the book arts. Any artist, press or publisher can list up to 3 artists’ books in each edition. Come and collect a form or fill it in on the spot and have your books photographed ready for listing. This is free of charge. DoVA Stall, FADA
5:00 – 9:30 - Closed Event for International delegates
Hosted by PROF BRENDA SCHMAHMANN - SARChI Research Chair - 33 Twickenham Ave. Auckland Park

Friday 24 March
8:00 – 9:00 REGISTRATION / Stands Open
8:00 – 4:00 ACROSS AND BETWEEN. ANONYMOUS - KAI LOSSGOTT AND PARTICIPANTS - FADA ATRIUM
An 8 hour durational and inter-generational group reading performance and installation of collaboratively curated and edited texts and post-consumer books, for public participation
9:00 - 9:05 WELCOME
DEAN OF FADA: PROF. FEDERICO FRESCHI – FADA AUDITORIUM
Saturday 25 March

8:30 – 9:00 REGISTRATION / Stands Open

9:00 – 10:00 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: ROBBIN AMI SILVERBERG (New York, USA) - The Aegean Sea: The Compulsion to Make Artist Books - FADA AUDITORIUM

10:00 – 10:30 REFRESHMENTS / Stands Continue

10:30 – 12:30 Session 3. DISCURSIVE PRACTICE
CHAIR: KIM BERMAN – FADA AUDITORIUM

3A:17 BUZZ SPECTOR (USA) - Hand, eye and mind: Criticality and creativity in the book art studio
3A:18 JANE TAYLOR - Between the covers: the erotics of the double-page spread in the work of William Kentridge
3A:19 ANNETHE THURMAN-JAJES (GER) - The conceptual artist's book
3A:20 DAVID PATON - Simultaneous journeys: Relational themes in curating the exhibition Booknesses: Artists' Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection
3A:21 MARY AUSTIN (USA) - Rolling with the times

12:30 – 1:30 LUNCH - FADA ATRIUM

1:00 – 1:30 LUNCHTIME DEMONSTRATIONS / ACTIVITIES
Bookbinding Structures #2: Helene van Aswegen / Pop-up Structures #2: Stephan Erasmus / Stands Continue

1:30 – 3:30 Session 4A. PRINT, PUBLISH, BIND.
CHAIR: KEITH DIETRICH – FADA 106

4A:22 BRONWYN LAW-VILJOEN AND TERRY KURGAN - Aesthetics and logistics: The making of art books
4A:23 MARK ATTWOOD - Artists' books from The Artists' Press. The printer/publisher. 25 years of producing artists' books at The Artists' Press
4A:24 MALCOLM CHRISTIAN AND MANDY CONIDARIS - Bookends: The fine art book as witness, explored via two books from the Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers
4A:25 MARTIN CIOŁKOSZ - Wood, lead and iron – our adventure with letterpress
4A:26 HELENE VAN ASWEGEN - Deliberate: The Process of making artists' books

Session 4B. DISCURSIVE PRACTICE.
CHAIR: DAVID PATON – FADA 101

4B:27 ELBE COETSEE - Memory & material culture
4B:28 EDIDJA ČIRICAITE (UK) - Metaphors of healing in the ‘Prescriptions’ exhibition of artist’s books (via Skype)
4B:29 IAN MARLEY - Facilitating practice-led research, four fundamental aspects that promote success engagement
4B:30 JOHN ROOME - Unflattening an artist’s book as an example of creative practice-based research
4B:31 JO-ANN CHAN - Visualising the voices of Redan: a process of knowledge triangulation

3:30 – 3:45 REFRESHMENTS / Stands Continue
The experience of reading a physical book is performative in nature. That performance can be the subtle experience of turning the pages while in one’s favorite reading chair or it can be a call to action as in a book that prompts a Fluxus performance. The experience of reading a physical book is performative in nature. That performance can be the subtle experience of turning the pages while in one’s favorite reading chair or it can be a call to action as in a book that prompts a Fluxus performance.

As a form of knowledge, the book is conceptualised as a performative artwork, rather than a ‘conventional’ colloquium paper. As such, the performance/lecture reflects on a past that defies stability, comprehension and closure; that refuses distillation into unassailable truths. In the process, it engages its own instability and fracture. An argument is staged that interrupts itself repeatedly: personal inter-

The Book of Holes

Proposal for The Book of Holes is a performance/lecture that emerged out of a practice-based research encounter with a particular set of documents at the UK National Archives – record WO 32/88061. As the name implies, it is prosaically a presentation proposing some future research, anticipated through the lens of a hypothetical reader’s engagement with an ‘artefact’ and an ‘essay’. But as the performance/lecture progresses, the ostensible correlation between what is proposed and its realisation begins to break down. The ‘artefact’ already exists (it has ‘materialised’), but as a hand-bound artist’s book which invites its own destruction. The ‘essay’ seems all but deferred, an impossible project beset with irresolution and doubt.

I want to disclose itself. In this sense, reading the past is not a passive assimilation of ‘the facts’, but an active and imaginative ‘making of memory’ or ‘making of knowledge.’ As such, the performance/lecture upsets the usual binaries of author/reader, fact/speculation, actuality/proposal. It intimates that our hallowed repositories of historical knowledge – the book, the lecture, the archive – are irreparably riddled with holes, which we re-inscribe each time we write, read, interpret, re-compose.


Active reading: Experiencing the book as action and activity

The experience of reading a physical book is performative in nature. That performance can be the subtle experience of turning pages while in one’s favorite reading chair or it can be a call to action in a book that prompts a Fluxus performance – or as a tool for public reading in Mayakovsky and El Listen’ky For the Voice. It can also be a religious rite of passage or observance, as in reading the Torah from a traditional scroll. Reading the physical book, as opposed to reading online or on other digital devices, can be an experience that allows us to embody the contents of a book in a unique way.

The international field of artists’ books has grown steadily since the 1960s, and exponentially over the last fifteen years in many geographical areas. In her keynote, Sarah will talk about some of the ‘bookinesses’ that connect artists and their audiences. She will show selected examples of contemporary artists’ books from around the world, and discuss some research studies and reference publications that can link and contextualise practice in South Africa with the wider international field in Europe and the USA. Sarah will also talk about some of the opportunities available to book artists in the wider international arena of artists’ books that can be tapped into, and some ideas of how to connect with and build a critical support network of practitioners, educators, curators and collectors.

Session 1. The Artist’s Book and Performativity

CHAIR: David Paton – FADA Auditorium

Sarah Bodman (Bristol, UK) – Communities of practice – building an internationally connected practice in and for the book arts

ABSTRACTS

Sarah Bodman (Bristol, UK) - Communities of practice – building an internationally connected practice in and for the book arts

The international field of artists’ books has grown steadily since the 1960s, and exponentially over the last fifteen years in many geographical areas. In her keynote, Sarah will talk about some of the ‘bookinesses’ that connect artists and their audiences. She will show selected examples of contemporary artists’ books from around the world, and discuss some research studies and reference publications that can link and contextualise practice in South Africa with the wider international field in Europe and the USA.

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This talk uses historic and contemporary examples from a range of continents and cultural influences to explore performa-
tive, physical, material, and interactive reading experiences. I also discuss my own current research and work involving ‘active reading’ including my collaboration with poet, Laura Wetherington. Her breathless prose poem No one wants to play, poor victim no one when there is a gun involved and blue, became the title for the first artist book in this active reading series. It is a book that is meant to be read while walking and it can either be installed on 36’ of modular 3’ shelving in various configurations or it can be shown condensed with a video reading of the work. The presentation also includes similar research, publishing, and exhibitions that we are currently working on at the Black Rock Press, in the Art Department at the University of Nevada Reno. This work includes curating an exhibition titled Expanded Reading: The Book to Come and a new limited edition publication titled Selected Durations with poet David Abel. The exhibition and our publications explore physical, material, active reading in artist books and related publications. The work at the Black Rock Press involves students in mixed media and interdisciplinary publishing and professional practices, and it supports a postgraduate fellowship position in the book and publication arts.

1A:3 Dr. Willem Boshoff
Independent visual and language-based artist and Visiting Senior Professor: Fine Art, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, ZA
boshoff.willem@gmail.com

Willem Boshoff and the margins between book-work and performance
One possible approach to the work of Willem Boshoff might identify the book as a general underlying matrix. Initial interest in text as a visual or “opto-phonetic” element is published in the form of the anthology of concrete poems KykAfrikaans. Work on KykAfrikaans however is carried out in parallel with two other projects. On the one hand Boshoff conducts theoretical research on “visual literary phenomena”, explained in his thesis for the National Diploma in Typography. Secondly Boshoff explores daily tasks and the bookobject as interlinked activities in two diaries: Bengbook and the 370 Day Project. The Gardens of Words as a memory-work and permanent action finally lead up to the Druid as a performed Encyclopedia. This artistic practice close to actionism and an extended artist’s book can be linked to several examples from art in the 1970s within Fluxus, Conceptualism or Viennese Actionism. More precisely, it brings to mind individual artists working in these models between book-work and performance. For example Robert Filliou and Timm Ulrichs. The artist’s book as a common denominator of these movements: for example Rober Filliou and Timm Ulrichs. The artist’s book as a common denominator in artistic practices from the 1970s and as a decisive step towards the aesthetics of contemporary art is analysed by Anne Moeglin-Delcroix. While Boshoff’s approach in the margins between book-work and performance also has predecessors in South African art (Walter Battiss, Wopko Jenema have been mentioned) it furthermore has been taken up by more recent artistic practices. We can refer to Kemang Wa Lehulere where performance work is presented as a rhythm of “scenés” in a play, in parallel with his performances of Fragmented Texts, where the book-object becomes part of the action. Lerato Shadi performs writing outside the book context; this research is coupled to early performances where the book as object is the initial building block. Bettina Malcomess’s projects, performed under the name Anne Historical, are carried by the extended dictionary of the city of Johannesburg, at Net No Place, written in collaboration with Dorothé Kreuzfeld. The aim of this paper is to analyse the interrelatedness between book and action in Boshoff’s oeuvre, and to establish a dialogue with other artists working in a continual back brown and forth between the artist’s book and performance.

1A:5 Jonah Sack
Independent artist, Cape Town, ZA
jonah.sack@gmail.com

Books in space: Absorption and theatricality in artist’s book installations
This paper investigates the use of artist’s books within artistic installations. It aims to demonstrate that there is a tension between the experience of book-viewing and the experience of viewing an exhibition, a tension which goes beyond the logical and technical problems of displaying fragile printed matter. Rather, there is a qualitative difference between two kinds of experiences of space: the space of the book and the space of the exhibition. While the former is private, intimate, and personal, the latter is communal. When the two kinds of spaces are combined in an exhibition or installation, the viewer’s attention is drawn to the moment of transition between these spaces. I argue that this transition lends itself to metaphors of alienation, distraction, absorption and theatricality. These concepts, some of which are derived from Michael Fried, provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between reading and viewing as alternative models of our experience of the world.

In an installation which combines both absorptive and theatrical elements, such as an installation incorporating artist’s books, these models can be combined in complex ways. They can function as more complete analogues of our subjective experience than either element could achieve on its own. These possibilities are discussed with reference to examples drawn from contemporary art and from the author’s own practice.

1A:6 Sue Parn-Grant
Independent interdisciplinary artist, actor, writer and director, Johannesburg, ZA
pamgrant@icon.co.za

Opening the book: Performance in practice
Opening the Book: Performance in Practice – a discourse on how performance plays a pivotal role in daily practice as interdisciplinary artist.

I unpack the characters that have played parts in my artist’s book Pool of Tears and its evolution into the Performative Postcard Activation, War-Pigeon and War-Pigeon Postings. In Pool of Tears, I look at how the performative role of the absence of presence, brings a theatrical discourse into watercolor our stains and tissue narratives. In the film of the book, Pool of Tears, tissue texts, under microscopic views, become leading players, narrators and storytelling vessels. In the performative postcard activation, I talk about the various roles the project demands, and who the players are. In the performative film of the postcard activation, War-Pigeon Posting, I look at the construct of unstructured and raw performance as live performance captured on film, and who its audience becomes; a discourse around the possibilities of physical and technicality in the ‘act of posting’.

Session 2A. DESIGNING AND MAKING. CHAIR: Prof. MAUREEN DE JAGER – FADA 105

2A:7 Prof Isabel Hofmeyr & Bronwen Findlay
Isabel Hofmeyr is Professor of African Literature, University of the Witwatersrand and Global Distinguished Professor, New York University (NYU). New York, USA
Isabel.Hofmeyr@wits.ac.za
Bronwen Findlay is an artist and lecturer in the Visual Art Department of the University of Johannesburg and at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, ZA
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A book historian and an artist join forces: Book as artistic instrument
Book history as an academic discipline has long explored the book as object - as gift, as interior decoration, as way of nego-
tiating social relationships, as talismanic object, as embodiment of imperial (and anti-imperial) power, as religious fetishes and so on. Book artists have long used books as ‘raw material’, repurposing and remoulding them to create works of art. Yet, what about the book itself as artistic instrument? How might the book be used as an implement to make works of art, rather than just being raw material?

This paper explores a project that evolved between a practicing artist, Bronwen Findlay and a practicing academic book his-
torian, Isabel Hofmeyr. Findlay runs an art class which Hofmeyr joined. Together they began extending their shared interest in books as objects to explore how they might be used as instruments. The first stage involved using books as paint brushes. The second involved wetting and reshaping the book in order to use it as a printing implement. This paper describes the evolution of the collaboration, outlines and describes the various techniques that emerged and then contemplates on what these might tell us about our understanding of books, book history and booknesses.

2A:8 Cheryl Penn
Independent artist, Durban, ZA
cheryl.penn@yahoo.com

An Encyclopedia of Everything
An Encyclopedia of Everything is a collection of small artists’ books. (As when closed) currently numbering 528. The collection represents the work of 75 international book artists and/or Mail Art artists and about 12 South African artists. Encyclopaedias in general are tomes of articles and subjects on any and every topic of accumulated, verifiable knowledge. As indicated by the use of this title, this set of books represents byte-sized pieces of different types of knowledge, although
much of the unverifiable type. They demonstrate ways in which dissimilar artists think, how they decode information and the manner in which they present this information through their personal artistic sieves. Most of the books are unique, although they may have been produced in editions. Most of the artists have a collaborative set-up, either in groups or on a more casual level. Collaborations come in the form of writing, limited edition collaborations, permitted collaborations and personal investigations such as The Bhubezi Mythology to which artists have been invited to contribute. Covers for my books in particular come from The Authentic Masacre of the Innocent Image series. An Encyclopedia of Everything represents a manageable way in which to execute personal and diverse mediums of artistic expression, and interest in, well, everything. Having said that, their book-power lies in their collective expression, rather than a communication by one.

2A.9 Fabian Saptowu #11
Lecturer, Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, ZA
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Artistic texts

The focus of this paper is artistic practices that cite books as their source-inspiration, but would not traditionally be included in a list of artists' books or book arts. The primary reason being their 'bookishness' is often overshadowed by their aesthetic qualities that do not conform to the traditional materiality associated with the artist's book. These works would not have been generated without the literary textual references. The artist to whom I refer in this text are Pierre Fouche, Benjamian Stanwick and myself, Fabian Saptowu.1

The element that links all three is the rematerialisation of text, often in ways that render the original content inaccessible. The artwork draws the reader's attention to the visual possibilities of text, without reverting to a sequence of characters that can be 'read' or a narrative that can be understood in the traditional sense. All three artists present a cautious engagement with the nature of language and the reader's assumptions about its presumed ease of access. In Fouche's work the text is encoded into the stitches of a textile, in Stanwick's a biblical text becomes progressively illegible and in my own production the transcription and erasure of the text shifts the materiality of Derrida's publication.

Joanna Dionysius links this kind of slippage between the "telling and the told” to the "literal presentation of information on the plane of discourse and the production of a story through a process of enunciation” (Drucker, 2008:2). In viewing these works we witness the artist's translation of the original content as well as a fragment of the originary textual referent. In a text dedicated to drafting a theoretical underpinning for artists' books David Paton argues that the “self-consciousness,” “discursive perceptivity” and the “self-reflexivity” of the utterance should be gauged in relation to the theoretical underpinning of the notion of the book (2012:2). Both theorists provide entry points into the discussion of an expanded definition of the artist's book.

The paper explores the value of engaging artistic practices through these frameworks to provide the opportunity to link them with the discourse surrounding the nature of the book and to create a platform for engaging artworks operating in this expanded definition of artist's books.

1These artists are situated within the context of other South African artists that have strong ties to the notion of the artist's book. These relevant artists are Colin Richards, Willem Bushoff and Winn Botha.

2A:10 Christine Dixie
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Binding, intertextuality and materiality in The Binding

The artist's book, The Binding (2014), developed out of a collaboration with book binder Helene van Auezen and is published by Fourwalls Books. The artist’s book evolved out of an installation, The Binding (2010) which is comprised of three separate but interrelated components – prints (etching and embossing), sculptures and embroidered veils. Each of these three different components manifest in the artist's book in ways that both iterate and recontextualise the original images and conceptual concerns.

In particular the element of touch, specific to the engagement with the book as an object, guided many of the conceptual decisions concerning materiality. The sacrificial lamb, for example, a key metaphor in the work, materialises in the book through the use of hide and fur.

The Binding was contextualised by two key texts, the story of the apodah, or the binding of Isaac, in Chapters 22 and 23 of the book of Genesis, and the story from Chapter Seven of Sigmund Freud's 'The Interpretation of Dreams' in which he retells the dream of the burning child. Deborah Seddon notes, “... one of the most startling effects of The Binding is Dixie's achievement of the visual equivalent of a narrative reality. This intertextuality might be said to operate in Dixie's exhibition as an extended metaphor for patriarchal paternity itself; in which the evidence of kinship is not always readily apparent and thus must be produced” (Seddon 2015:2).

Using Deborah Seddon's essay as a reference point, this paper elaborates on several of the written texts referenced in The
In 2013 I realised Separ(n)ation, a solo exhibition which ran from 24th October to 17th November at Goethe-on-Main, Johannesburg. It encompassed a relational ensemble of seven new works reflecting the concerns of my ongoing long term project of Undoing Architecture. This particular exhibition reflects on the ostensible inoffensiveness of the steel palisade fence. Considering this well-known readymade and ever-present South African built-environment feature, I interrogate the myriad ways in which palisades are both formally and informally ‘woven’ into the fabric of the city. More specifically, I documented and re-framed ways in which the palisade fence is used, in and around Johannesburg, as a material device for delineation and (re)territorialisation. Across this still very disjointed city, I traced visual and spatial aspects of both banal and more curious fence constructions; built expressions that stem from the defensive and separation-driven repetition of the palisade unit. The palisade, a typological derivative of the suburban ‘white picket fence’, lends itself to Johannesburg’s and – by extension – South Africa’s continued (post-apartheid) preoccupation with territorialisation.

As a component of the exhibition I made an artist’s book (in a signed and numbered edition of 100). This paper concerns itself with the spatial potency folded into and released through these pages, conceptually driven by my continued inquiring desire to undo architecture. Just as the exhibition serves as a means for the artistic interrogation of Johannesburg’s ubiquitous accretions of steel in the service of defence, so the book serves as a vehicle of interpretation of ferrous barriers. Its role is not the simple documentation of the exhibition. It operates through a collision-driven layering of notions and artistic representations of territorial provocations; it embodies the simultaneous explication and complication of the trajectory of a scholarly and artistic thinking-making-writing process which resulted in the seven relational artefacts mentioned above. The book reveals, in a different way to the exhibition, the uncanny tension exemplified by the concept of Separ(n)ation. From front-to-middle, it engages the etymology of ‘separation’; from back-to-middle it grapples with the even more challenging concept of ‘nation’. In the centre of the slim volume the two terms collide and entangle themselves in one another, resulting in the neologism, Separ(n)ation, expressing a sub-textual critique of the generally lazily used trope of Desmond Tutu’s ‘nation’. In the centre of the slim volume the two terms collide and entangle themselves in one another, resulting in the neologism, Separ(n)ation, expressing a sub-textual critique of the generally lazily used trope of Desmond Tutu’s ‘Rainbow Nation’. In conclusion, through the typological register of the fence, the book produces the productive paradox of a number of South Africa’s disturbingly comfortable binaries, such as: location/dislocation, belonging/not belonging, safety/danger, us/them, security/insecurity, and inside/outside.

Be Careful in the Working Radius

Drawing from the world of construction sites and ruined landscapes, my limited edition hand-made pop-up book (2013) serves as a distillation of numerous foreshadowed built environment through constructions, installations and various forms of documentation. With an emphasis on the dynamics of shifting scale, between ‘real’ world landscapes and the imaginative potential of each double page spread. My presentation unpacks the logics of conceptual thinking rendered through paper engineering.

A Maker of Things

In the talk I explore my situation as a uniquely positioned practitioner with in the genre of the book arts. The talk explores the following three points: My exposure to the book arts as a student. This section lists as examples various interactions with other artists and artworks that guided my interest in making books. The journey of exploration in learning how to make books without any formal structure as guidance. In this section I describe my own particular journey in teaching myself several of the skills that I have developed as well as some of the people that helped me hone my skill. I use images as well as actual books that I have made to explore some of these experiences.
The professional background I bring to this kind of art practice starts with the book as object and artifact, but the work of the studio encourages explorations of the book as a starting point for more expansive exercises of bookishness, libraries, librarianship, shelving, archives, archiving, objects to be read, words to be seen, site-specificity, models, modeling, pages, paging, seriatim, and other ways of applying spatial resonance to objects, whether found old or new, or made for nominative (as distinct from narrative) reading. I conclude thusly: “Merely stacking or carving old books is not required.” The matters of reflection, judgment, and contextualization I endorse may not come into play during the time frame of the studio, but can provide a basis for a subsequently more expansive creative practice of the students. I discuss, with examples, the process, practice, and experiments of this studio. 

Between the covers: the erotics of the double-page spread in the work of William Kentridge 

The paper considers the complex dialectics of original/copy; verso/recto; subject/object in Kentridge’s visual field.

The conceptual artist’s book. Its artistic characteristics and global network – from South Africa to Europe and vice versa

The conceptual artist’s book, which can be defined as a multiplied and published artwork in the form of a book, has established itself as a new art form worldwide since the 1970s. I would like to introduce this form of artistic work in the book medium as illustrated by the artists’ books of William Kentridge and Peggy Bush. Within this context, I discuss the characteristics of artists’ books in the sense of the democratization of art and art as information, as well as their worldwide networking strategies. Whereas the South African artist William Kentridge has meanwhile produced artist’s books worldwide, the German artist Peggy Bush concerns herself in her artists’ books Desire in Representation – Traveling through the Musée Royale and Oh my Kaluli with the history of Central Africa.

In the second part of my talk, I relate these aspects to the academic teaching and research pursued at the Centre for Artists’ Publications at the University of the Western Cape,ZA.

Simultaneous journeys: Relational thematics in curating the exhibition Booknesses: Artists’ Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection

This paper contextualizes the themes and choices undertaken in curating the exhibition Booknesses: Artists’ Books from the Jack Ginsberg Collection. The exhibition takes its impetus from Ginsberg’s rare copy of Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay-Terk’s Prise du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France [Prasse du Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanne of France] (1913). Considered by many to be the first true example of simultaneism, or ‘simultaneity’ in book form (Kelley 2013). Prasse du Transsibérien, has acquired not only the status of a French cultural icon, but also a certain cult status exemplified by its appearance on the cover of Riva Castleman’s controversially titled exhibition catalogue A Century of Artists Books (1994) at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and, more recently, on the cover of The National Art Library’s Word & Image. Art, Books and Design (2015). Prasse du Transsibérien proved a valuable base from which to begin the curatorial project suggesting the selection of books with which it might conduct a set of productive dialogues.

Using Katherine Shingler’s (2012) speculations on the key question of what precisely a livre simultané might be, and how visual-oral relationships in Prasse du Transsibérien may be articulated, this paper unpacks the dialogical relationship between Prasse du Transsibérien and selected books chosen for the exhibition. By unpacking the intertextual and intertextualities at play in Prasse du Transsibérien, i.e. the interplay between Cendrars’s textual imagery and Delaunay’s Pochoir images I am able to position this interplay as a guide for curating thematically significant relationships between this work and specifically selected books on the exhibition.

In this paper, these relationships are briefly analysed in relation to five themes: Colour; Journey and Movement; Maps and Mapping; War and Apocalyptic Imagery and Reading and Viewing.
meaning and an engagement with the socius. In addition, the logistics of production (where to print the book, how to ship the book, where to hold the launch, how to distribute) cannot be left out of the equation, since these aspects of bookmaking engage us on the level of the political and ethical. No aspect of the making of the book functions outside of these two contexts (making and logistics). For us, bookmaking is research—it gives us insight into the relationship between design, technique, labour and logistics on the one hand and the ethics of aesthetic-literary production on the other.

4A:23 Mark Attwood
Director of the Artists’ Press, White River, Mpumalanga, ZA
mark@artistspress.co.za

Artists’ books from The Artists’ Press: The printer/publisher. 15 years of producing artists’ books at The Artists’ Press

I present a talk and slide presentation on the artists’ books we have produced at The Artists’ Press. I talk about the 15 or so books we have published over the past 15 years. Books included are the 3 GIF books, Qauqau and The Ultimate Safari as well as smaller publications we have done with Belinda Bignaut, Flip Hastings, Judith Mason, Robert Hodgens, Robin Silverberg and William Kenridge. All of the books we have published are artists’ books produced in collaboration with artists and are signed and numbered in small editions. I talk about the books from the point of view of printer/publisher: the work and processes that went into the making of them, the difficulties involved in book projects, collaborative aspects, successes and failures!

4A:24 Malcolm Christian & Mandy Conidaris:
Malcolm Christian is Director of the Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers and the Caversham Press, KwaZulu-Natal, ZA
malcolm@caversham.org.za
Mandy Conidaris is an independent visual arts professional, Johannesburg, ZA
mandy.conidaris@gmail.com

Bookends: The fine art book as witness, explored via two book projects from The Caversham Press

This paper is intended as an underpinning for the artists’ book Song from the Earth, a project comprising a series of poems written by Mxolisi Nyezwa with prints by Vusi Zwane and Simphiwe Cebekhulu, existing as a portfolio of three separate books (exhibiting proposal to follow). This book is exhibited here at the Bookness Colloquium.

In the early 2000s, Malcolm Christian, the founder and director of The Caversham Press, began to establish The Caversham Centre for Artists and Writers (CCAW). This step was guided by his love of books and bookmaking, prints and printmaking, and his fascination with the integration of word and image.

CCAW also evolved in part from a series of international residencies hosted at The Caversham Press, starting with The Hourglass Project in 1999. Women artists arrived at the Press in groups of four, staying for three weeks, over a period of 8 weeks. There was a crossover of two departing and two arriving every three weeks, which led to a request from the participants to create a way of recognising that each artist would only experience a fragment of the group. The initial intention was to create a book of self-portraits; and then the artists motivated to draw each other so that ultimately, the book represented a portrait of friendships established during the residency.

Over the years of CCAW’s existence, bookmaking became an integral part of the residency programs, including books made by children during outreach workshops facilitated by Gabisile Nkosi. The last international CCAW residency to date was Songs from the Earth, a series of poems written by Mxolisi Nyezwa, and these were influenced by the story of Gabisile’s tragic death.

Moving forward, as opportunities for international residencies began to close down, so smaller focused local residencies developed at Caversham. For three years, Vusi Zwane became the Caversham artist-in-residence, and he in turn trained Simphiwe Cebekhulu as a printmaker/artist. Towards the end of Vusi’s residency, Malcolm conceived the idea of combining Mxolisi’s words with Vusi’s and Simphiwe’s printed imagery. This resulted in a portfolio of three artists’ books titled Songs from the Earth, and is the most recent book project to come out of Caversham.

Using these two projects as ‘bookends’, this paper explores certain aspects of the Caversham philosophy around the making of artists’ books, with special reference to the way that the CCAW residency books stand as witness to life experiences and creative processes.

4A:25 Martin Ciolkosz
Founder of imPRESSed Craft Bindery and Letterpress Studio, Johannesburg, ZA
martin@impressed.co.za

Wood, lead and iron – our adventure with letterpress

Few years ago life called for change. Escape from 9-5 rat race routine. Time to spend with our children. To work with books, objects that we have been hoarding for years: books that sparked the idea that turned into imPRESSed. The journey was, and still is exciting. Collecting turned into binding, repairing and eventually printing. Books, how difficult could it be. After all, if William Morris could do it, so can we. Except William was a perfectionist, upset to be living in a mechanised world that turned a blind eye on century-old crafts and techniques. We, on the other hand, live in times where digital perfection is easier. Even-present automation makes us believe that we can, while in fact, we cannot. We can only push buttons, or do we? The realisation that we become a mere component in a digital world was the catalyst for action.

We started to search for mentors and machines. Johann Maree, Mark Sandham and others, unknown to them, have made a distinctive imprint on how to do things: honouring centuries-old methods, using vintage tools and equipment and paying attention to the finest details.

The search for knowledge and implements took us on many journeys around the country, learning new skills and techniques each day, saving tools and machines one at a time. While knowledge requires time and space, it’s a fact that there is only a little space, in one’s mind or on the shelves, heavy cast iron monsters from the industrial revolution need substantially more. As our collection grows, so did the need for dedicated space where we could display our treasures and share our knowledge and passion with others. The perseverance paid off! We created a one-of-a-kind studio to channel creative energy onto paper. We might, after all, only be the custodians of archaic crafts and apparatus, but in the studio, we’re imPRESSed.

4A:26 Helène van Aswegen
Master bookbinder, Department of Visual Arts, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, ZA
thebookworkshop@gmail.com

To deliberate: The process of making artists’ books

I share my experiences as a maker of contemporary artists’ books in South Africa over the last six years by placing a strong emphasis on the practicabilities of producing professional standard archival artists’ books. As an artist’s book maker the role I take within the bookmaking industry is stark contrast to a typical commercial bindery. Although there are some overlaps in equipment and skills, many principles are turned on their heads when the practice is done by hand (and as an art practice). Some would be, the emphasis on quality over quantity, time management and the unique collaborative process of conceptual development of abstract ideas with other artists.

I introduce this process by describing the required environment for undertaking the task. This includes a brief overview of the studio space and its facilities. Secondly I present a terse exposition of the materials involved in book-making. Sourcing and making one’s own archival materials is outlined (taking into consideration the often unusual nature of artists’ books), alongside some insights on printing and mark-making on the pages (production of content).

The above mentioned serve to contextualise the second half of my presentation, wherein I present some of the challenges we have encountered in the search for knowledge and implements. It could be. After all, if William Morris could do it, so can we. Except William was a perfectionist, upset to be living in a mechanised world that turned a blind eye on century-old crafts and techniques. We, on the other hand, live in times where digital perfection is easier. Even-present automation makes us believe that we can, while in fact, we cannot. We can only push buttons, or do we? The realisation that we become a mere component in a digital world was the catalyst for action.

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4B:27 Dr Elbi Coetsee
Founding Director of Mogalakwena Craft Art Development Foundation (MCADF), Bochum, Limpopo, ZA
elbe@mogalakwena.com

Memory & material culture

“In Africa, when an old person dies, it is as if a library has burned down.”

Amadou Hampate Bâ (Malian philosopher)
During 1994 Elbé Coetsee established the Mogalakwena Craft Art Development Foundation with the aim to provide skills training and employment opportunities. The Craft Art Village is within walking distance of the neighbouring villages under the authority of traditional chief Khi in the Blouberg district of the Limpopo Province. Working with Northern Sotho speaking women over a long period of time, exposed Coetsee to their way of life. During 2003 a cultural research project was initiated to document the mainly oral cultural of local Bapedi, Hananwa, Batsiokiwa, and Babirwa (Northern Sotho) people living in the Blouberg area. The main aim of the project is towards nation building and creating a archive for future generations. With the introduction of electricity and cell phone reception to this remote area in 2006, it became obvious that many facets of Northern Sotho culture; daily routines, habits, customs and rituals are fast changing. The strong inter-play between the two value systems, modern urban and traditional rural values does not only provide a culturally rich environment, but also clearly expose former traditions. It is furthermore a clue to the imminent amalgamation of the traditional, mainly oral, with western culture. For example, an elderly man driving a donkey cart while talking on a cellphone.

This research project includes; the collection, documentation, categorisation, contextualisation, preservation and dissemination of contemporary Northern Sotho oral culture in the Bloubberg area. Coetsee poses questions and a discussion is initiated. As a result of not sharing a mutual language as well as low levels of functional literacy, participants draw images on clothes. Images depict aspects of life in the villages. The drawings are then hand-embroidered and these hand embroidered pictures are painstakingly recorded in writing by two/three of the craft artists with basic Sepedi literacy skills and thereafter interpreted into visual design as it was painstakingly translated into English by three women with an understanding of English and also embroidered. These hand-embroidered ethnographic art panels and texts are categorized according to themes: Business, Trade & Transport; Education; Environment; Nature; Farming & Hunting; Governance; Health & Healing; Religion; Sport; Leisure; Traditional Dance; Song & Entertainment; Traditional Skills and Crafts; Village/Rural Life; Food & Recipes; Special projects; Bio of craft artists.

A selection of panels is hand-bound to compile artist books, e.g Book on Governance, Book on Healing, a collection of Recipe Books as well as First Aid books, Book on Trade & Industry, etc.

4B:28 Egidija Čiricaite
Artist, publisher, curator and founding member of Collective Investigations, a platform for experimental publishing, printing, book history and culture, London, UK
mail@egindia.com

Metaphors of healing in Prescription exhibition of artists’ books [via Skype]

In June 2016, The Economist published an article on the dangers of misleading metaphors being employed in public discourse. The metaphor of ‘stress’ for mental or emotional strain or tension has gained a clearer understanding of mental health since it was coined in the 1930s. Borrowed from physics, it suggests that people can withstand adverse or demanding circumstances up to a certain point, after which they will break. Yet it is wrong.” It is now generally accepted, that metaphors are not only a figure of speech, but they are central to the way we speak and understand our thoughts, helping us to conceptualise the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar. While they play a ubiquitous role in communication, they are inevitably present in non-discursive forms of artistic expression, grounding the artist’s choice of vehicles which may translate his private experience into a form accessible for public.

The talk surveys a selection of works from Prescription exhibition on the subjects of healing (and not healing) considering the metaphors employed and the visual, structural, verbal outcomes that they have encouraged. The presentation follows cognitive metaphor theory (developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson) and examines basic conceptual metaphors as well novel metaphors created by the artists and based on their knowledge and values, allowing to arrange their experience in a meaningful artistic way.

4B:29 Dr. Ian Marley [with Jo-Ann Chan]
Academic Head, Stellenbosch Academy of Design and Photography, Stellenbosch, ZA
ian@stellenboschacademy.co.za

Facilitating practice-led research. Four fundamental aspects that promote successful research engagement

This paper explores four fundamental, interrelated and complementary aspects which students should engage with in order to understand and conduct practice-led research within the creative disciplines. These aspects are unpacking the notion of knowledge, identifying an appropriate research paradigm, using a research model that will allow the creative project to develop and understanding the required outcomes and assessment criteria.

Firstly, is the need to unpack knowledge and come to terms with a definition that encapsulates both its tacit and explicit dimensions which are critical to practice-led research in the creative disciplines. Additionally, students need to be made aware of how to access knowledge, where these different knowledge modalities are likely to occur and how to record them. Secondly, and related to the definition of knowledge is it important to identify and understand a contextualising research paradigm, which will allow for this holistic conceptualisation of knowledge and consequently accommodate multiple knowledge modalities. In this context the participatory paradigm is deemed appropriate as it advocates a comprehensive epistemology that accommodates experiential and practical knowing.

Thirdly, an appropriate research model needs to be identified which gives structure to the creative production process while at the same time allowing for the changeable and serendipitous nature of practice-led research. The final aspect to student success is being aware of the required outcomes and assessment criteria. This is tantamount to beginning with the end in mind. The aspects mentioned above are clarified by means of an artist’s book titled Written in Bone, created by Jo-Ann Chan, then, a four-year illustration student at North-West University.

4B:30 Dr. John Roome
Research Fellow at DURban University of Technology (DUT), Durban, ZA
djurhoome@gmail.com

Unflattening: An artist’s book as an example of creative practice-based research

This paper interrogates the notion that creative outputs such as artists’ books can perform a dual function. By referring to Nick Sousanis’ graphic novel as well as ideas from my own research and selected authors on practice-based research, I aim to:

- Examine how creative research differs from traditional forms of research
- Present arguments for the acceptance of artistic works as research outputs
- Present selected methods and frameworks for conducting creative research

Sousanis was awarded a PhD from Columbia State University USA for his graphic novel Unflattening (2015). He was not required to submit an accompanying thesis. The graphic novel is his thesis. Unflattening is a reaction against narrow and rigid thinking that Sousanis calls “flattened”. He draws inspiration from the novella Flattion by Edwin Abbot. Sousanis makes the point that the visual medium is a powerful tool for cognition and communication, and when it is combined with verbal communication it becomes even more powerful. Unflattening emphasizes the role of imagination in breaking down rigid thought barriers and established or limiting ways of seeing and being in the world.

Academic researcher Henk Borgdorff claims “Art practice qualifies as research if its purpose is to expand our knowledge and understanding by conducting an original investigation in and through art objects and creative processes” (Borgdorff, 2011). The Conflict of the Faculties: Unflattening is an example of an artist’s book as research and documentation. My own doctoral research explored the process of using basic computer software to make drawings and animations. I considered how this impacted on my creative process in general, and more specifically on the production of works in non-digital media. To contextualise this investigation I interrogated a number of practice-based methodologies and frameworks that led to the development of my own research framework.

4B:31 Jo-Ann Chan
Lecturer, Graphic Design, School of Communication Studies, North-West University (NWU), Potchefstroom, ZA
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Visualising the voices of Redan: a process of knowledge triangulation

This paper presents a project completed as part of a practical Masters in Graphic Design with particular focus on the role of knowledge triangulation in the process of making. This practice-led research project is an exploration of the narrative of identity of the Redan rock engraving site through an experimental application of forensic anthropology to this disappearing landscape. The outcome of the process of exploration and experimentation is captured in a five part artist’s book. Through this artist’s book, this project aims to allow audiences a glimpse into its aesthetic narrative by capturing the identity of this landscape as it is and may never be seen again.

The creative production process through which this identity is captured entails a complex conversation between three bodies of knowledge, namely thematic focus, visual language and content. Narrative identity directs the study as the thematic focus of the project. Forensic anthropology is appropriated as a processual guide and visual language in the design process. The history of the Redan rock engraving site fulfils the role of content and populates the exploratory process. As content, this site also brings with it the principles of rock art research. This triangulation of knowledge requires an ongoing interaction between the three anchor points. While these three components have significant parallels that make the conceptual direction of this project possible, there are also contrasting aspects that cannot be avoided. This triangulation represents the navigation of the challenges and options that emerge through the creative process.
TinboeKtoe toe app: Remediation of an artist's book to an application

Artists' books as a zone of activity and interface of different traditions – including literature, visual arts and graphic design – relate to several discourses and are increasingly relevant in the debate about the analogue and the digital. Artists' books require the reader-participant's concrete handling, experience and interpretation of the work. Yet, artists' books are largely inaccessible to readers/participants. During exhibitions, readers are often prevented from handling the books; and artist's books that are part of collections, remain accessible to distinguished individuals only. The unique, concrete and multifaceted nature of artists' books makes it difficult to convert them into alternative formats and to make them available in alternative ways. More recent developments of the haptic screen and computer tablets and the associated development of applications (apps) and distribution channels such as the App-Store and Google Play offer new possibilities for the remediation and distribution of artists' books. This paper discusses the remediation of a concrete artist's book into a digital application. The speculative representation (Tioeira, 2015) involved the cooperation between the writer/artist, a programmer (Wildrich Faurie) and graphic designer(s). TinboeKtoe toe is the story of the Middelste Meisiekind (Middle Girl) who goes on a journey with her magic cart and writes to friends during her trip. Real correspondents actively participated in the establishment of the concrete work – which consists of a collection of postcards, letters and stamps – as well as in the establishment of the overall story world. The underlying question of the practice-based research project is: How can TinboeKtoe toe be mediated from an artist's book into an application, whilst maintaining the integrity of the original work? The paper pays attention to the contextualisation, creative challenges, cooperation context, problem solving and interface design of the artist's book app.

SA:33 Terence Fenn
Lecturer in the Department of Multimedia, FADA, University of Johannesburg, ZA
tfenn@uj.ac.za

Bookness as activity
In this paper, I describe a recent informal research project undertaken with 3rd-year interaction design student that sought to analyse and reflect on books and the acts of engaging with text through an Activity Theory lens. The purpose of the study was to ascertain to what extent millennials engage with books and reciprocally, what are the ways. More recent developments of the haptic screen and computer tablets and the associated development of applications (apps) and distribution channels such as the App-Store and Google Play offer new possibilities for the remediation and distribution of artists' books. This paper discusses the remediation of a concrete artist's book into a digital application. The speculative representation (Tioeira, 2015) involved the cooperation between the writer/artist, a programmer (Wildrich Faurie) and graphic designer(s). TinboeKtoe toe is the story of the Middelste Meisiekind (Middle Girl) who goes on a journey with her magic cart and writes to friends during her trip. Real correspondents actively participated in the establishment of the concrete work – which consists of a collection of postcards, letters and stamps – as well as in the establishment of the overall story world. The underlying question of the practice-based research project is: How can TinboeKtoe toe be mediated from an artist's book into an application, whilst maintaining the integrity of the original work? The paper pays attention to the contextualisation, creative challenges, cooperation context, problem solving and interface design of the artist's book app.

SA:34 Nimri Ziegler
Lecturer, Department of Fine Art, Durban University of Technology, Durban, ZA
durbanmziegler@gmail.com

A quite uncommon library
My love affair with books started with their sacredness in my father’s library, my nose being at first astounded at their curious fragrance, fingers and ears sensitive to papers touched and turned, and eyes to objects being honoured through careful placement.
In 1997 I curated the exhibition A very different library of art books in the City Gallery of Stuttgart which drew an unexpectedly high number of viewers and is until today dear to my heart. This paper details why this exhibition was so exceptional and hence successful.
The very same year I came to South Africa for the first time to curate an exhibition in the Durban Art Gallery as part of a cultural exchange programme between the Kunsten Feder Boden-Württemberg, the art society of the region, and several art organizations in Durban.
Very little did I know back then, that I would stay in Durban for good. The love affair for books extended to a love affair for making paper. John Roome, now my husband, became my mentor and teacher. I created handmade paper from cotton, as traditionally practiced in Europe, but soon experimented with indigenous fibres, detailed in this paper. Having a background as a silk screen printer, although no longer practicing, I produced a series of mono-prints on my hand-made paper. But unlike most book artists, I did not produce an art book where the pages are stacked on top of each other and bound, but instead sewed them together into a ‘carpet’ titled Raging.
Through this work a new ‘book artist’ was born. Raging is a work in progress, where pages are changed or added, layered or altered.

SA:35 Gordon Froud
Senior Lecturer. Dept. of Visual Art, University of Johannesburg, ZA
gordon@uj.ac.za

The altered book: Not a scrap-book ing exercise
In this presentation, I aim to highlight successful examples of existing books that have been altered by artist's interventions as a means to creating new knowledge and a new language for art making. I show local and international examples in order to demonstrate how creative intervention on a book art level is substantially different to a scrap booking exercise. I include discussion on my own artists’ books as part of the presentation.

SB:36 Mary Minicka
Head: Preservation, Western Cape Archives and Records Service, Cape Town, ZA
Mary.Minicka@westerncape.gov.za

Archival remnants: human presence and agency amongst the records of an archive
As a point of departure, if we take that artist’s books display a much more interactive intervention with the page and the book-structure – as the materials, fabrication and composition are there to be manipulated to the artist’s specific intent, or are accepting of a more explorative and whimsical outcome. What then of the actual historical archives? What can they offer us in terms of an understanding of the creative impulses and routines of manufacture involved in the making and shaping of a historical record? What kind of dialogue is possible with the past in this way?
Without negating the appalling history of this country that many of these records document; nor, the necessary debate currently being played out in the public realm with regard to the place of historical collections with their origins that appalling history; nor, the acknowledged problematic nature of the archive, as a construction in the exercise and maintenance of power. Maybe – somehow – there is the possibility of a dialogue with this evidence that can inform our idea of creation, agency and transformation of records from space carriers of ‘factual’ information, to a more fleshed-out understanding of the human presence and agency present in the composition of these records?
Archival records are more than just the textual or written information that is contained in them. Their material aspects also bear witness to their act of creation, a lifespan of use and interaction with the archive. Documents undergo active transformation, even before being bound into volumes or gathered into tied bundles destined for archival storage. The transformation leaves behind more palpable traces of the human hands that shaped these records.
As a conservator I am naturally interested in this kind of a dialogue, as many of these remnants serve as sign-posts that guide conservation treatment and repair decisions, as they bear witness to earlier forms and iterations of a document, as well as of earlier forms of harm and alteration. I am of a mind to think that those creatively engaged with the page and the binding as medium of expression could also possibly be interested to see what an archive could reveal.
I share with you some of what I have found in the Archives of the Western Cape. In no way am I sure of an entirely successful outcome in this exercise. It may well be that this is no more than a very useful exercise in ordering and marshalling some thoughts and experiences I have had in working with the records at the Archives. I hope it will be more, or at the very least, that it may just be the start of something that will progress and grow.
The presentation features illustrated examples of archival remnants, including “letter-locking” and folding, to the slashed cancellation of a document and shredding of pages – the deliberate, as well as the incidental and accidental.

SB:37 Riette Zaaiman
Manager: Archives and Special Collections, UJ Library, University of Johannesburg, ZA
riettez@uj.ac.za

Special collections and rare books - the same family?
Terminology like “special collections” and “rare books” have quite a variety of definitions and interpretations which can cause total confusion of the picture that comes to mind when these phrases are used. Collecting rare books in an academic library is one of the most challenging tasks. How much control does the librarian actually have and what kind of criteria is relevant for purposes of appraisal? Is it beneficial or restrictive to have a defined and regulated framework for collection management of rare books and special collections? How does a librarian at an academic institution do justice to the most beautiful works of art in a rare book collection? The answers to all these questions summarises the issues around the collecting of rare books in an academic library.
The Jack Ginsberg Book Arts Centre at Wits Art Museum

This paper outlines the evolution of the Jack Ginsberg Book Arts Centre to be established at Wits Art Museum and examines the context out of which the Centre arises; the relationship with WAM and the institutional structure at the university within both are located. The creation of the centre is discussed within the framework of university art museum formulations generally and WAM’s identity more specifically. This context of collections and research archives (such as the WVP Burton Photographic Archive, the Neil Goedhals Archive and the Battiss Archive) already in WAM’s holdings are briefly outlined and their role in the core academic project explored. The existing archives, though individually named and acknowledged through attribution, are physically integrated into the museum’s storerooms.

The Book Arts Centre however is conceived differently – although physically located within the museum’s envelope, a dedicated area has been allocated to accommodate the Centre that will also house the museum’s small reference library, new offices, and a separate research and display area. The footprint of the museum is being expanded accordingly.

The history of WAM itself and the philanthropic environment which enabled its creation provide a background to the extraordinary gift by Jack Ginsberg of the book arts collection. Different components make up the collection: the artist’s books themselves, an extensive collection of monographs on South African artists and, perhaps most uniquely, books on the history of the artist’s book, including the earliest original material. The collection has already been the subject of significant scholarship, and much work has already been undertaken to make the collection accessible worldwide through the extensive website. I discuss how access to the physical objects themselves, up until now only possible through visiting Ginsberg’s private home, will now be facilitated at WAM and the potential this has to encourage its ongoing study, research and appreciation.

OPENING: BOOKNESSES: ARTISTS BOOKS FROM THE JACK GINSBERG COLLECTION
OPENING SPEAKER: SARAH BODMAN (Bristol, UK)
UJ ART GALLERY – KINGSWAY CAMPUS, KINGSWAY AVE, AUCKLAND PARK

Session 6. DIVERSITY OF THE FIELD: COLLECTING, CURATING, ARCHIVING MAKING & THEORISING.
CHAIR: BUZZ SPECTOR (USA) – FADA AUDITORIUM

Engaging the Archive

Engaging the Archive was a solo-exhibition that broadly examined the function and value of the concept of the book within the archive and the context of the contemporary moment. The exhibition was presented at three Cape Town Libraries during 2015-2016; the University of Cape Town Chancellor Oppenheimer Library, The Cape Town Central Library and The Bellville Public Library. Due to developments in hardware and software the printed word has become a fragmented and open-ended artifact. Various key signifiers of meaning in relation to the materiality of the book have been drawn into question in the late 20th-century and the exhibition subseqently germinated and flourished. The main insight of the exhibition is that the book has certainly been the way in which definitions, concepts and theories of artists’ books and curating an artist book exhibition, has been dramatically extended and extended, becoming, in what Carolyn Hamilton and Pip Skotnes (2014) conceive of as ‘curature’, a creative act in itself.

6A:39 Peter Dennis
Founding Director of Logos Flow Database, Software and Website Solutions, Cape Town, ZA
info@lflow.co.za

Digitising and documenting the Jack Ginsberg and David Paton book arts projects

Since 2004, over 12 years, Jack Ginsberg and David Paton have been developing large collections and archives of artists’ books. The digitisation of the documentation and management has specific requirements: it is not just a book that is recorded – more an artwork. So the task has been to develop, in close liaison with Jack and David, comprehensive database systems to accommodate the requirements of artists’ books.

The presentation provides an overview of the Jack Ginsberg and David Paton book projects, the approach and database systems put in place, and making the artist’s book information available to a wider audience.

6A:38 Julia Charlton
Senior Curator: Wits Art Museum (WAM), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, ZA
Julia.Charlton@wits.ac.za

The Jack Ginsberg Book Arts Centre at Wits Art Museum

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6A:40 Elizabeth James
Senior Librarian, National Art Library Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK
e.james@vam.ac.uk

Collecting artists’ books in the National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum

This paper offers a history of and rationale for collecting artists’ books in one institution, the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England. It is offered as a case study, intended to contribute to conversations among fellow librarians and curators concerned to develop coherent collecting policies, and also to aid dialogue with makers and publishers, whose artistic aims may take little account of institutional priorities, and are sometimes even antithetical to them, in material or theoretical respects.

The National Art Library (NAL) is Britain’s foremost research and reference library on design and art history, open to everyone. Its origins lie with the first School of Design set up by the British Government in the 1830s. Today the Library is part of the world-leading Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), which showcases historic and contemporary art and design. The Library’s primary function is to provide information to researchers, but it also curates the V&A’s collections of examples of the art and design of the Book. This is the context in which, since the late 19th century, artists’ books have been acquired by the NAL.

In this library, ‘artists’ books’ constitute a broad church, including arts-and-crafts private press publications; deluxe modern artists’ books (or livres d’artistes) with original prints; great names such as Picasso and Man Ray; political manifestos and conceptual books intended for cheap or free distribution; unique ‘book objects’ from the late 20th-century book art boom; and photo books of all kinds. Thus they comprise one of the largest collections in Britain. This collecting history is amplified and illustrated, and concluded by addressing some of the issues faced by the NAL today, not least the continuing requirement to align the collecting of artists’ books to corporate strategic objectives, and demonstrate their relevance to the creative and knowledge economy.

6A:41 Wilhelm van Rensburg
Independent visual art curator and Art Specialist, Strauss & Co. Johannesburg, ZA
wilhelm@straussart.co.za

Exhibition making and artist’s book curating: A case of ‘both/and instead of either instead of neither’

to quote Hans Ulrich Obrist

Exhibition making and curating practices have undergone dramatic changes in recent times. These practices nowadays not only include conservation, interpretation and display of objects in museum collections, but also staging a truly creative enterprise. The curator’s ‘monologue’ has been interrupted by a polyphonic clamoring of multiple voices, all in conversation with one another. The curator is no longer a mere ‘taste maker’ or a ‘chooser of objects’, but a ‘builder of a pedestrian bridges’ (Felix Feneon) creating connections between art and a whole range of publics, as well as between art and other fields. Moreover, the curator is a veritable ‘junction maker’ (JG Ballard). This paper reflects on the curatorial practice of mounting an exhibition of artists’ books at Art on Paper (AoP), a commercial gallery, in 2014, and the curatorial practices and insights that stemmed from that experience. Exhibitions usually offer art (and by implication, artists’ books) in its strictest form, with an audience, and so do they place art and artists’ books within explicit or implicit narratives and discursive frameworks. This paper considers the multiple geneses of the AoP exhibition that impacted on the manner in which the curating of the artists’ books for that exhibition subsequently germinated and flourished. The main insight of the exhibition is that the book has certainly been the way in which definitions, concepts and theories of artists’ books and curating an artist book exhibition, has been dramatically extended and extended, becoming, in what Carolyn Hamilton and Pip Skotnes (2014) conceive of as “curature”, a creative art in itself.

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Art on Paper
Papermaking in Ghana: Art, craft and environmental conservation

In 1969, the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG) brought fourteen Pulp-Mulberry plants (Broussonetia Papyrifera) into the country from Asia, and planted them in a forest preserve with the intention of evaluating the potential for paper production. This plan was never implemented, and the Pulp-Mulberry became a serious non-indigenous invasive plant.

Initially supported by a Fulbright Senior Research Grant, I, along with faculty from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science, Technology (KNUST), artists, educators, and horticulturalists, developed a hand papermaking initiative using the Pulp-Mulberry. Over time, the project has developed a portfolio of strong and beautiful handmade papers appropriate for professional artistic applications.

To date the Kumasi papermaking initiative, while still itinerant, regularly produces editions of high-quality paper for special projects. Most recently Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama and I collaborated on an edition of works curated into the current Hand Papermaking Journal annual portfolio. In addition to book arts activities, the project actively researches other design applications and is currently partnering with local iron craftsman on a collection of functional, designed objects combining wrought iron and paper that makes use of this paper’s strength and translucency. I share the development of this community project and its current initiatives which contribute to local and international collaborative artistic endeavors which are committed to sustainable conservation practices and work toward fiscal stability.

The reading game. Provocations in artists’ books

In many artists’ books a normal linear reading is out of the question. Some artists and publishers of artists’ books have complicated the layout of the pages by including translations in bilingual or even multilingual editions. What happens if the text is not simply in one language, but in two or more parallel texts and translations? Examples from the works of three artists/printers - Jean Vodaine, François Da Ros, and Johannes Strugalla – show some possibilities that are compared to solutions offered by other artists (Ines von Ketelhodt and Burgi Kühnemann).