

**STUDENT-CURATED EXHIBITION PRESENTS EXPERIMENTAL AND INNOVATIVE
BOOK ART FROM THE 1960S TO THE PRESENT**

Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection

November 7, 2014–February 1, 2015



Chris Perry, *86 Ripples: Droplet*, 2011. Artist's book with gel acetate and wood. Yale University Art Gallery, The Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961, Book Art Collection, curated with Doug Beube. © Chris Perry

November 7, 2014, New Haven, Conn. — Drawn from a major collection given to the Yale University Art Gallery by Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961, *Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection* showcases a selection of experimental and innovative works of book art from the 1960s to the present. This student-curated exhibition considers the transformation of books into sculptural objects from multiple perspectives: the history of books, the relationship between form and content, and the interaction between the viewer and the work. Featuring over 100 works by more than 80 artists, including acclaimed figures such as Olafur Eliasson, Yoko Ono, and Dieter

Roth, the exhibition offers a rare opportunity to discover the world of book art. *Odd Volumes* is on view at the Gallery through February 1, 2015. Simultaneously, Artspace, a nonprofit arts organization in New Haven's 9th Square, presents a companion exhibition, *CT (un) Bound*, featuring additional works from Chasanoff's collection as well as responses by local artists.

Exhibition Overview

Allan Chasanoff began collecting book art in the early 1990s, with the guidance of artist and collection curator Doug Beube. Chasanoff's interest in this area derives from a broader preoccupation with media, and specifically with the book as a form of media that is "under pressure." "The main reason for the book art collection was the loss of power—the singular power—of the book," he says. He became intrigued with artists' varied responses to the book as digital devices became increasingly prevalent, and he began to collect book works that were, in his words, "breaking the spine." The collection features predominantly works by American artists but also includes objects by artists from Australia, England, France, Japan, Spain, Taiwan, and Turkey.

Objects range in size from intimate to monumental and display a wide array of media—including paper, lead, fabric, iron, steel, plastic, wood, and rope. Cheryl Sorg's *Surely All This Is Not without Meaning (Moby Dick)* (2001) is a huge golden whirlpool—11 feet in diameter—of swirling text on yellowed pages. The object includes all of the words of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, cut from



Adele Outteridge, *Vessels*, 2004. Plexiglas with linen thread and binding. Yale University Art Gallery, The Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961, Book Art Collection, curated with Doug Beube. © Adele Outteridge



Donald Lipski, *U-90-45*, 1990. Found English dictionary with metal, aircraft wheels, and bolts. Yale University Art Gallery, Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961, Book Art Collection, curated with Doug Beube © Donald Lipski

two copies of the book and taped together in an outwardly spiraling format. Though the original books are not intact in this object, the story remains, raising questions about the necessity of the book form to convey meaning. Daniel Gantes's *zzzbook* (ca. 2009) is made from padded fabric, like a pillow, and is just big enough to lay one's head on. Adele Outteridge's *Vessels* (2004) includes Plexiglas "pages," linen thread that suggests lines of text, and binding. It opens and closes like a book, but at its full capacity, the circular object is an elegant and moving sculpture.

Some of the book works display a sense of violence, having been burned, cooked, cut, shredded, hung, or covered in concrete. Others are transformed into new but still recognizable forms. In *Axiom* (ca. 1993), for example, Byron D. Clercx constructs an ax from found newspapers and pages from postmodern art-criticism and theory books. Donald Lipski adds metal bolts and aircraft wheels on either side of a found English dictionary to create a mobile book in *U-90-45* (1990).

In some instances, the artist's intentions are fairly overt, as in the case of Lisa Waters's *Great Works of Art and What Makes Them Great* (1988). The work takes its title from a 1925 collection of essays and illustrations by sculptor and art critic Frederick Ruckstull. Waters carved out the pages of Ruckstull's book—an homage to the traditional all-male, all-white Western canon—and set in their place a large golden egg, using a distinctly female symbol to comment on the place of women in the history of art. Other objects, however, are more inscrutable. Most invite a multitude of meanings and rely on the viewer to construct them, much like a good book challenges and stimulates the imagination and ultimately relies on the reader's interpretation.

In an interview with the student curators, Chasanoff revealed that his collecting practices are informed by key questions—in this instance, the question of the book's fading power in society—but that he is less interested in answering the question than in seeing what connections can be made among the objects he collects. Like the generative nature of Chasanoff's collection, *Odd Volumes* is an exhibition that promises to inspire endless conversations.

On View

November 7, 2014–February 1, 2015

Exhibition Catalogue

Odd Volumes showcases a selection of experimental and innovative works of book art from the 1960s to the present, drawn from a major collection given to the Yale University Art Gallery by Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961. An introduction by Gallery director Jock Reynolds considers the book's changing role in society and is followed by several brief essays that explore the transformation of books into sculptural objects from multiple perspectives: the history of book art, the relationship between form and content, and the interaction between the viewer and the work. The lavishly illustrated catalogue offers both full images and details of more than 100 objects and also includes an interview with Chasanoff, who discusses his views on digital technology and the collecting process. In keeping with the innovative spirit of the collection, the unique design of the catalogue makes it a work of interactive book art in its own right.

Contains a foreword by Pamela Franks, an introduction by Jock Reynolds, and contributions by Andrew Hawkes, Ashley James, Jessica Kempner, Sinclaire Marber, Elizabeth Mattison, Colleen McDermott, and Gabriella Svenningsen

264 pages / 6 1/2 x 9 inches / 228 color illustrations / Distributed by the Yale University Art Gallery / 2014 / Paperback with flaps: \$45

Related Programs

Artist Panel

Saturday, January 31, 2015, 1:00–3:00 pm

“Book Club: A Conversation between Artists”

Followed by a walk with artists down Chapel Street and a closing program at Artspace. Additional programming details forthcoming.

Book Fair

Friday, December 5, 1:30 pm

Books by artists and art-book makers will be on display and for sale. The fair includes books from small independent publishers who focus on art, architecture, photography, and design; rare and limited-edition books and zines printed in short runs and showcasing a range of publishing endeavors; and book works by students from the Graphic Design program at the Yale School of Art.

Conversation

Thursday, November 6, 5:30 pm

“Inside the Collector’s Studio: A Conversation with Allan Chasanoff”

Student curators Jessica Kempner, B.A. 2014, and Sinclaire Marber, MC ’15, lead a conversation with Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961, about book arts and Chasanoff’s history as a collector. Reception to follow.

Exhibition Tours

Friday, November 7, 1:30 and 3:30 pm

Exhibition curators

Gallery Talk

Wednesday, November 19, 12:30 pm

“Exploring Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection”

Looking closely at works from the exhibition *Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection*, student curator Colleen McDermott, SY ’15, discusses interactive elements of the works that may not be noticeable when the objects are displayed in a museum.

Related Exhibition

Opening reception: Friday, November 7, 5:00–8:00 pm

On view at Artspace November 7, 2014–January 31, 2015

CT (un) Bound

Artspace, a nonprofit arts organization in New Haven's 9th Square, presents *CT (un) Bound*, a companion exhibition to the Gallery's *Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection*. The show features additional works from the collector's holdings as well as responses by local artists. At the opening reception, hear from local artists commissioned to make work for the exhibition, as well as Artspace curator Martha Lewis and Sinclair Marber, MC '15, one of the student curators of *Odd Volumes* who also assisted with the show at Artspace. *CT (un) Bound* was made possible thanks to support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Workshop

Friday, January 16, 2015, 12:00–3:00 pm

"Bookmaking Workshop"

Additional programming details forthcoming.

Exhibition Support

Exhibition and publication organized by Andrew Hawkes, M.F.A. candidate; Ashley James, PH.D. candidate; Jessica Kempner, B.A. 2014; Sinclair Marber, MC '15; Elizabeth Mattison, B.A. 2014, M.A. 2014; and Colleen McDermott, SY '15, under the mentorship of Gallery staff. Made possible by the Jane and Gerald Katcher Fund for Education; the John F. Wieland, Jr., B.A. 1988, Fund for Student Exhibitions; and the Nolen-Bradley Family Fund for Education.

Yale University Art Gallery

The Yale University Art Gallery, the oldest college art museum in the United States, was founded in 1832 when the patriot-artist John Trumbull gave more than 100 of his paintings to Yale College. Since then its collections have grown to more than 200,000 objects ranging in date from ancient times to the present.

In addition to its world-renowned collections of American paintings and decorative arts, the Gallery is noted for outstanding collections of Greek and Roman art, including artifacts from the ancient Roman city of Dura-Europos; collections of early Italian paintings; the Société Anonyme Collection of 20th-century European and American art; modern and contemporary art and design; Asian art; African art; art of the ancient Americas; and Indo-Pacific art.

In December 2012, the Gallery completed a comprehensive expansion and renovation project that united its three buildings – the landmark Louis Kahn building (1953), the Old Yale Art Gallery building (1928), and Street Hall (1866) – into a cohesive whole with a rooftop addition by Ennead Architects (2012). The Gallery is both a collecting and an educational institution, and all activities are aimed at providing an invaluable resource and experience for Yale faculty, staff, and students, as well as for the general public.

General Information

The Yale University Art Gallery is located at 1111 Chapel Street, New Haven, Connecticut. Museum hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10 am–5 pm; Thursday until 8 pm (September–June); and Saturday–Sunday, 11 am–5 pm. The Gallery is closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is free and open to the public. For general information, please call 203.432.0600 or visit the website at www.artgallery.yale.edu.

Press Contact

Joellen Adae, Communications Director, 203.432.0611, joellen.adae@yale.edu or yuagpress@yale.edu