



# JUST ONE LOOK

An Exhibition of  
Contemporary Book Arts  
Exploring the theme of Women and Vision

University of Washington Libraries  
Special Collections  
Seattle, Washington

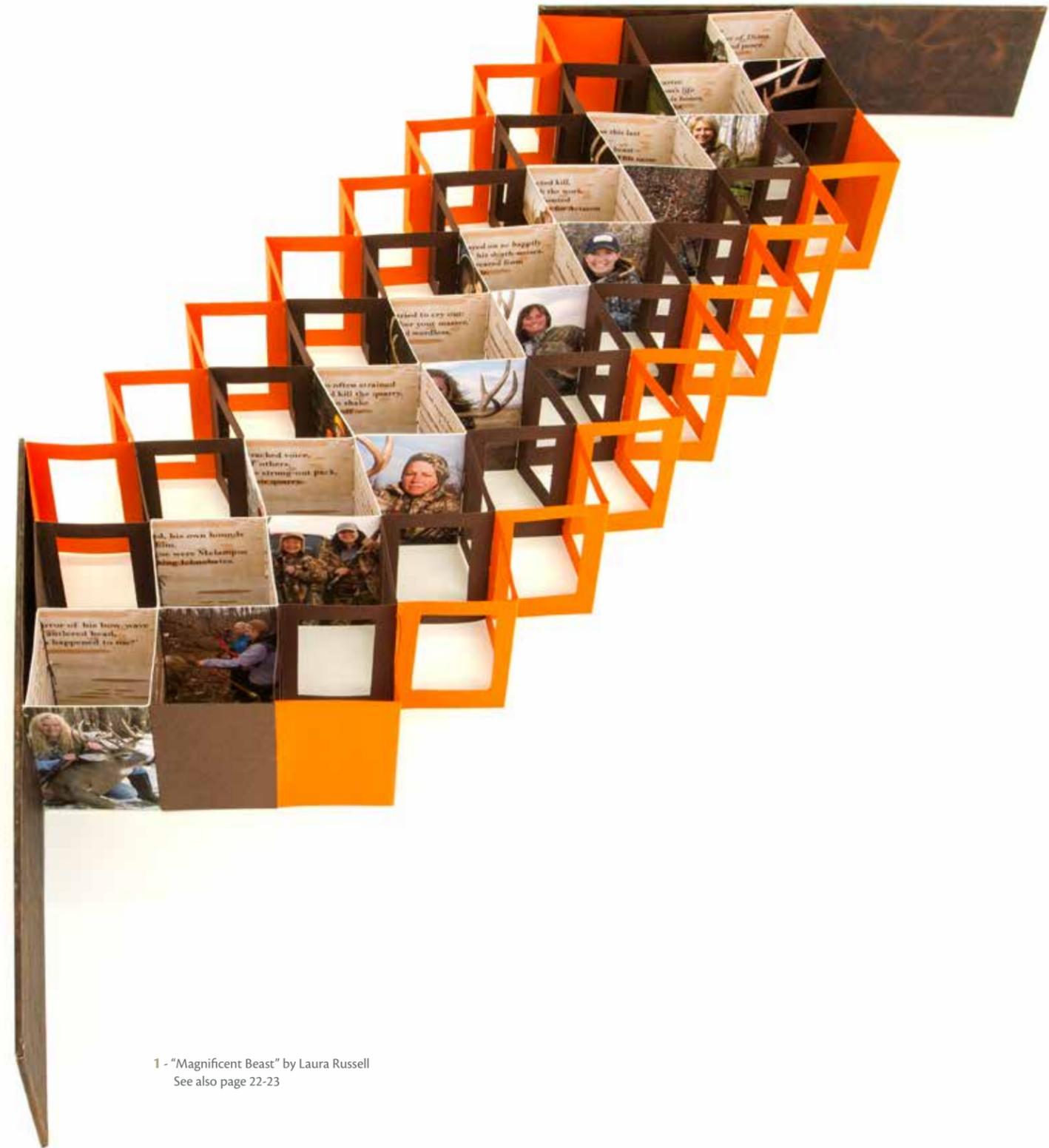
March 31 - July 29, 2016

Wendy Huntington  
Sarah Kate Moore  
Lauren Dudley

Dr. Sarah Kathryn Moore  
as the goddess Athena

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1 - "Magnificent Beast" by Laura Russell  
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Scientists allege that observation can change the results of an experiment. Such is the power of sight. This exhibit, "Just One Look"—which is, incidentally, also the title of a 1960's song made popular by singer-songwriter Doris Troy—investigates the active and passive power of a woman's sight.

"Just One Look" was conceived as a companion piece to "Visions: Feminism and Classics VII," a conference sponsored by the Women's Classical Caucus, a part of the Society for Classical Studies. This year, the conference is sponsored by the University of Washington Classics Department and held on the UW Campus.

The exhibit consists of 32 artists' books, most of which were commissioned for this exhibit. Each book is inspired by a specific text in which a gaze—either active or passive—has the power to change the narrative of a story. The majority of the texts were submitted by University of Washington faculty from various departments in the Humanities. Several texts were stories from oral storytelling or folk tradition and were submitted by friends.

As instigator and co-curator of this exhibit I had several intentions. The first was to create commissions that allowed each artist the freedom to interpret the text and to allow their work to change direction as it progressed, additionally opening a possibility for the artist to try something new. The second was to connect artists with texts submitted by a scholar or storyteller and to encourage conversation

**Lauren Dudley**  
CO-CURATOR "JUST ONE LOOK"

## *The First Look: How It All Began*

MARCH, 2016

between these artists and scholars. My third aim was to highlight the importance of the study of the Humanities and to showcase the ways in which modern book arts can bring these stories to a contemporary audience. Lastly, I was eager to organize a gathering of artists and text contributors so that they could engage in one-on-one, face-to-face conversations about the different ways in which creativity is manifested.

The texts, once gathered and summarized, were sent to local, regional, national and internationally-known book artists who were then invited to participate in the exhibit. Each artist was asked to choose her/his top three choices. Sandra Kroupa, University of Washington Book Arts and Rare Book Curator, and I assigned a text to each artist based on their choices.

Each artist submitted a proposal with our understanding as curators that the final piece could change as the artists worked through their own processes. The artists were given free rein regarding how the text would be interpreted. They could choose to stay very close to the story line, with a literal illustration of the text, or move as far away from it as they wished.

Watching the work evolve and arrive at the University of Washington Special Collections has been a fascinating and rewarding experience. The artists truly delved into the texts, and their many hours of research are evident in each piece. I am grateful to each and every participant in this exhibit, and I look forward to the next part of the project: the conversations between artists and scholars, as we discover together the power of connection, the power of storytelling, and the power of women and vision.

Almost all of the artists in the exhibition already have work in the Collection; only four will be represented for the first time. Three artists, Mare Blocker, Elsi Vassdal Ellis and Kate Leonard, helped me see the potential in the book form in the early 1980s and between them we have 225 books. Seven more artists in this exhibition joined the Collection in the 1990s and eight in the 2000s. In total the artists represented here have 585 artists' books already in the Collection.

With this exhibition's incredibly rich and deep body of work, there are some nice surprises. Lyall Harris, known by me primarily as an extremely talented writer of artists' books, produced the thought-provoking textless decks of cards *Just One Look: Pairing/Passing*. Robin Price, internationally known as one of the premier letterpress printers, submitted *Witnessing a Dire Future: Cassandra, Rachel Carson, and Our Contemporaries*, an amazing sculptural piece. *Bitter Chocolate*, by Julie Chen, wasn't a surprise in the level of complexity or the care of her craft but as research took her into the dark and frightening world of chocolate production, the text is one of her most political. Alexander Holmann decided to experiment with etching, a printmaking technique he had never done; the result is stunning.

Harriet Bart used a painting as her inspiration; Charles Hobson used mirrors in his work for the first time; both Lise Melhorn-Boe and Elsi Vassdal Ellis imagined their books as dramatic theater pieces and BeAnne Hull learned a new

**Sandra Kroupa**  
RARE BOOKS AND BOOKS ARTS CURATOR, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LIBRARIES  
CO-CURATOR "JUST ONE LOOK"

## *Inspiration, Vision & the Artists' Book*

MARCH, 2016

kind of stitching. Mar Goman made her first fabric book. Several artists reported that after months of working on their original concept, they pitched out all their efforts and began over again. A number of artists were introduced to the remarkable world of classical texts for the first time. Robbin Ami Silverberg summed it up precisely: a departure in her usual working practice "was utilizing a text that I would probably have neither considered nor chosen as the basis of one of my artist books. Of which I am grateful."

Each piece on display here is a welcome addition to our Collection and I regret not being able to comment on each one. This exhibition is a result of an immense amount of work both by the artists and the curators. Now, walking through the show, it is clear that every hour we all spent was worth the result.

1 - "Cupid And Psyche" by Mari Eckstein Gower



**Catherine Connors**

CHAIR, UNIVERSITY CLASSICS DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

## *More Than One Look*

MARCH, 2016

As a teacher and scholar of Latin and Greek I share the belief that the humanities are integral to the common good for the way that they teach us to look, think and take action in the world in which we live. I am in the business of handing Classical texts into the care of the next generation and helping their vitality to persist in a changing world. In the classroom I am inspired by students who are willing to look, and look again, at Classical texts and artifacts, and to make something that matters to them about their encounter with the compelling issues and ideas they find there.

In a similar way, it has been inspiring to be part of the process of bringing this exhibition together. Each of these books represents a collaboration that reaches across time and space and moves across institutional boundaries. Each is very beautiful in itself as an object and each offers a vigorous reading of and reaction to the text to which it responds.

These books bring a tremendous vitality to questions of vision, agency, power, and desire. Their representations of women seeing and being seen, of taking action and changing the narrative, in texts and artifacts from across time and culture create new spaces to think about how we decide to take the actions we take, and how we decide to tell the stories we tell, and to imagine new possibilities.

They celebrate the compelling challenges and pleasures of looking again, looking deeply, looking differently, and making something new.

Catherine Connors  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Classics  
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Seattle WA 98195

1 - "Scheherazade. Woman of Persia" by Suzanne Moore

**As a young artist traveling in Italy,** Laura Davidson became intrigued with the numerous arresting images of strong and powerful woman she found. The most striking among them were the representations of Sibyls that she saw on Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling, on the marble floor of the Siena Cathedral, and in works by such masters as Raphael and Guercino. The variety and richness of these Sibyl depictions began the artist's fascination with the subject.

In ancient Greece, the Sibyl was an oracle with the ability to prophesy the future. Often depicted as an older woman, the Sibyl delivered her notoriously ambiguous prophecies spontaneously, via hexameter, in a state of frenzied ecstasy. The number of Sibyls is contentious; earlier sources (such as Plato and Heraclitus) list only one, while later sources occasionally name up to a dozen.

In *Sibyls of the Classical World* Davidson builds upon her captivation with maps and her love of vintage ephemera. Here she ventures into the mysterious world of Sibyls to present a two-part homage to the legendary female prophets.

Davidson learned from Professor Catherine Connors, of the University of Washington, that the Sibyls sat on metal tripods over openings in the earth through which hidden truths flowed. Inspired by this information, and drawing upon the work of Connors and Cindy Clendenon in *Mapping Tartaros: Observation, Inference and Belief in Ancient Greek and Roman Representations of Karst Terrain*, Davidson created a Sibylline map that connects the prophetic Sibyls to specific places. The map, attached to walnut spoons, takes the form of a scroll, referring to one of Michelangelo's famous Sistine Chapel Sibyls, who holds an open scroll in one powerful hand. According to Connors and Clendenon, these places, described in Greek and Roman stories, can be reliably located using The Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World. In constructing her Sibylline map, Davidson drew on the idea that the underworld was imagined as a vast network of interconnected passages that could be plausibly be connected to any hole in the surface of the earth.

**Laura Davidson**  
ARTIST

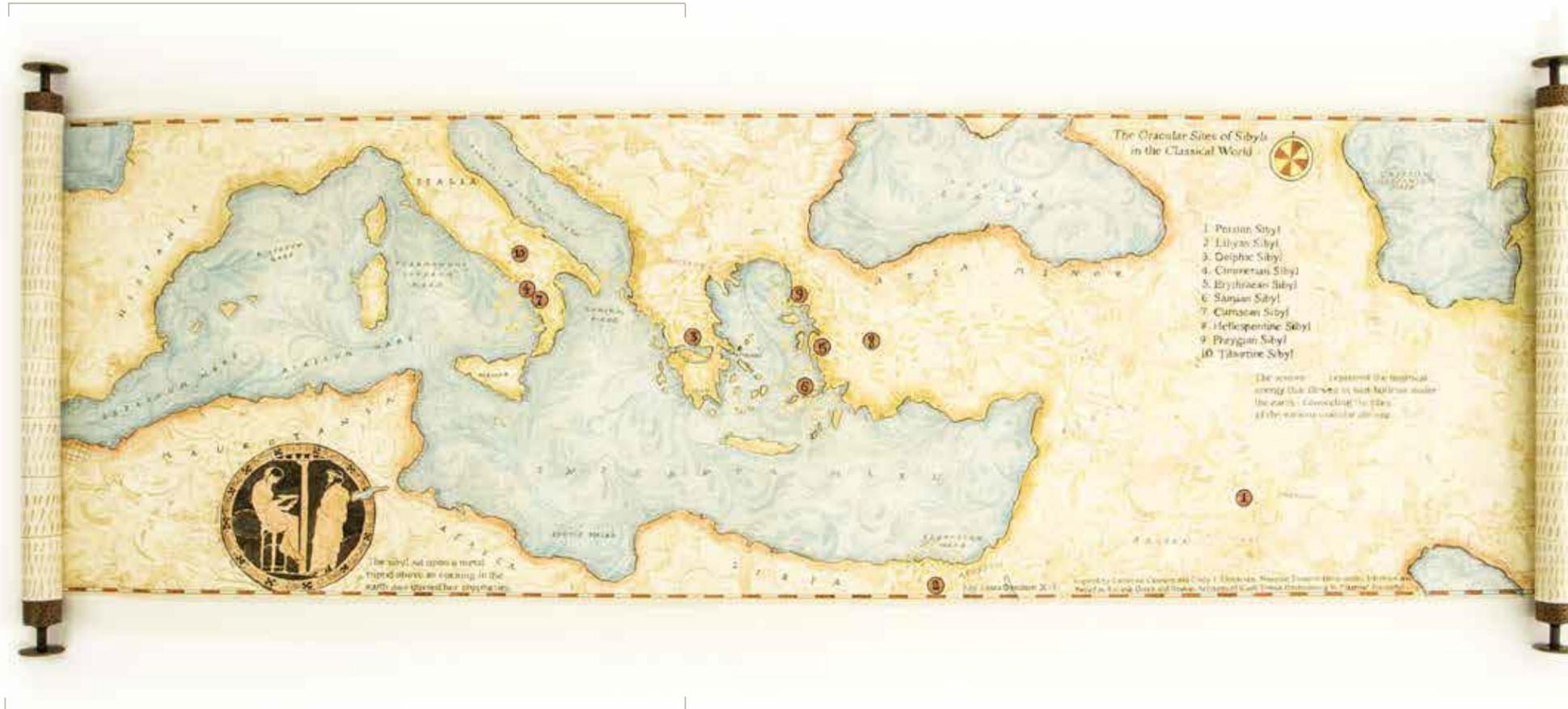
## SIBYLS OF THE CLASSICAL WORLD

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Mapping Tartaros: Observation, Inference and Belief In Ancient Greek and Roman Accounts of Karst Terrain*

INSPIRATION TEXT

Catherine Connors and Cindy Clendenon  
AUTHOR



Because the places that Sibyls were said to prophesy generally had such hollow passages and caves, an ancient person who made a kind of mental map of the world's Sibyls, as Pausanias, the Greek geographer and Varro, the Roman scholar, did, might think of it as a map of holes from which the earth's truths could emerge to the right kind of person.

Davidson renders her map in ink and wash and adds gold leaf embellishment. Classical acanthus leaf motifs, in the style of William Morris, enliven the surface and faux engraving lines function as shadowing around the and masses. Shades of pale blue and creamy yellow lightly delineate a floral pattern that unsacross both land and sea. Swirling arrows round the oracular sites bring to mind the representation of wind currents on a modern weather map, but here function as indicators of the mystical energy that coursed beneath the hearth and connected the sites of the Sibyls.

A delightful companion to the map is Davidson's amalgamation of art history and pop culture: ten cards, based on the classic baseball card model, each depicting the artist's re-interpretation of a Sibyl by an old master. The style changes with each Sibyl, sometimes gently drawn in quick, light strokes, other times more solidly rendered in hard line and cross-hatching. Davidson uses silverpoint, a descendant of the stylus of classical times and a technique that allows for a fine metallic line that lays lightly on the paper.

Overall, Davidson's project nimbly unites the cultures of Classical Greece and Rome with our own contemporary way of life. By emulating antique map-making styles, the artist first places the Sibyls within an appropriately ancient setting. But then, with the baseball cards, the Sibyls are tugged away from their original cultural context and unexpectedly appear—deftly re-interpreted by Davidson's stylus—on the face of a popular sports collectible. In this novel way, the artist has persuasively transported these mythological beings from their home in the ancient world to the living present.

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**While reading** “Doing Archeology as a Feminist” by Professor Alison Wylie, artist Mar Goman became aware of Marija Gimbutas, a Lithuanian/American archeologist and professor at UCLA whose work supposed a matriarchal culture in Neolithic Europe.

Inspired by Gimbutas’s theories, and unaware at first that the archeologist’s work had been largely discredited, Mar Goman set out to pay homage to Gimbutas and these theories. After learning that Gimbutas’s assumptions had been called into question, Goman seems to have suffered only momentary anxiety, deciding to continue by focussing on the enormous social impact on feminist ideology that was effected by Gimbutas’s work. On unbound fabric pages nestled in a hand-crafted container, Goman alternately depicts images of goddess figures and relays the story of Gimbutas’s theories and the impact it had on feminist spirituality and her own search for a goddess-based religion.

In the 1970s, around the same time that Gimbutas was developing her theories on early goddess-centered culture, feminist artists started exploring ways to advance the techniques of “women’s art”—embroidery, quilting, weaving and the like—to a level on par with the male-dominated realms of sculpture and painting. Oftentimes these traditional methods are used ironically or subversively, but here Goman uses fabric, thread, vintage textiles, quilting and collage to tell a candid and heartfelt story of female experience.

Juxtaposing the delicacy of the handkerchiefs and napkins which form the base layers, Goman affixes bold images of prehistoric female figurines found in Gimbutas’s books, including an anatomically specific Sesklo figurine, an example of a highly stylized Cycladic folded arm figure, the Venus of Dolní Vestonice and perhaps the most famous small scale statue of all, the Venus of Willendorf.

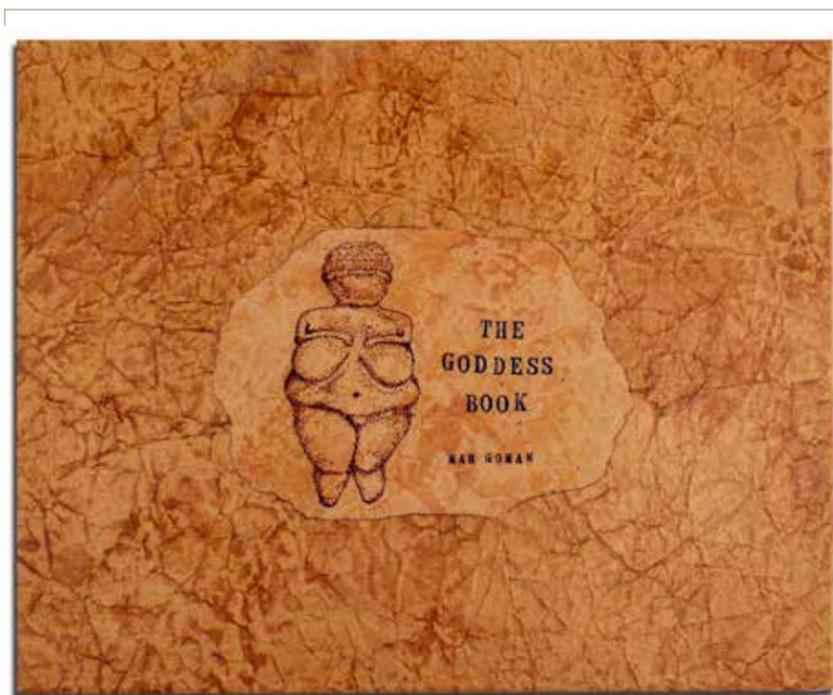
The volumetric forms, shaded and patterned by embroidered stitching, are set upon backdrops of irregular patch-worked scraps of fabric. These deeply-colored surrounds are enlivened by patterns of polka-dots, swirls and letters and, in one case, musical notes.

**Mar Goman**  
ARTIST

**THE GODDESS BOOK:**  
*THE IMPACT OF MARIJA GIMBUTAS ON THE MODERN GODDESS MOVEMENT*  
TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

“Doing Archeology as a Feminist”  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Alison Wylie  
AUTHOR



1



2

10 Book leaves 10 ½" x 10 ½" images • 10 Book leaves 12 ½" x 11" text • Box 12 ¼" x 15 ½"

A meandering line of free-form machine stitchery also energizes the surface, suggesting the patina of an age-crackled object of antiquity. The wandering nature of the over-stitching could also serve as a visual parallel to Goman’s search for transformative meaning as she navigated the new territories of goddess worship and spiritual feminism.

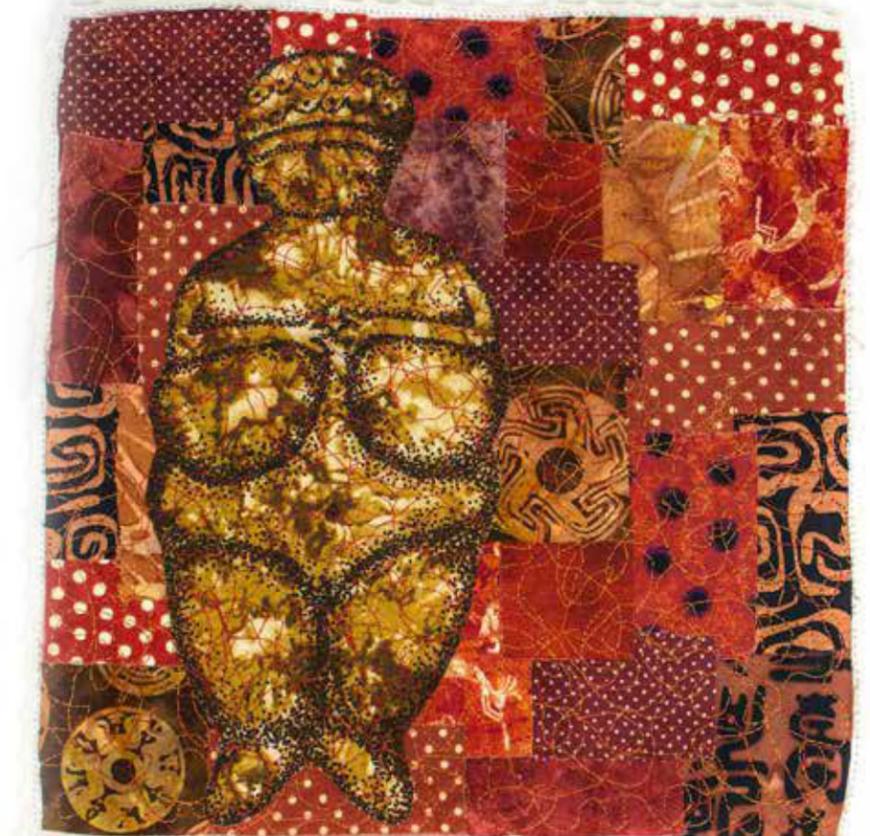
Goman’s use of symbols adds yet another layer to the narrative. On several pages we see spirals, considered by some anthropologists to be a feminine motif, perhaps representing fertility, the life cycle or water. Other archetypal symbols are hand-painted onto smooth rocks, neatly aligned in their own niche in the book’s container. Many feature some form of the chevron, or pubic V, clearly a feminine insignia.

Goman adds an additional layer to this piece in the form of a handwritten journal that describes the evolution and progress of this work—the impediments she encountered, the doubts and the revelations. It’s an intimate and engaging addendum to her spiritual journey.

- 1 - Top of container featuring goddess statue
- 2 - Rocks decorated with archetypal female symbols
- 3 - Cycladic folded arm figure
- 4 - Venus of Willendorf



3



4

**The 18th-century painting** by the Swiss neoclassical painter Angelica Kauffman (one of the two female founding members of London's Royal Academy of Arts) depicts Zeuxis, a famous ancient Greek artist, in the midst of examining the five greatest beauties of his city in order to paint a portrait of Helen of Troy. In this fictive, idealized portrait, Zeuxis hopes to combine the most beautiful features of each woman. Kauffman shows the painter assessing one model while three others wait their turn. The remaining model, however, steps behind Zeuxis towards an empty canvas and takes up the artist's brush. In essence, Kauffman has depicted what she herself has achieved: usurping the patriarchal convention of the female as nothing more than a recipient of the male gaze. To underscore the correlation, the empty canvas depicted in the painting is signed "Angelica Kauffman pinx," from the Latin, meaning "Angelica Kauffman painted it."

"Reflexions," Harriet Bart's response to Kauffman's painting, is a small-scale installation that, through its objects, conveys a fascinating narrative about Helen of Troy. With an exacting compositional strategy, Bart arranges five found or altered objects and a scroll in a binding box. Each of the objects, like discrete vignettes in an intriguing tale, adds a distinctive dimension to the story. All are ensconced in the handsome robin's-egg-blue box, its shape suggestive of an exaggerated Greek temple with corners like simplified and strongly tapered Doric columns.

On the inside cover of the box is a spare geometric analysis of Kauffman's painting. The picture space is divided into a grid, with diagonals crossing from the corners through the center. Over this framework Bart has painted five gold dots, each representing the placement of the head of one of the Helen models. A sixth unpainted circle represents Zeuxis. Historically, the grid has been used by artists to work out numerical proportions that will, theoretically, lead to aesthetically pleasing compositions. Here, the diagram serves as the first link to the aesthetically perfect Helen. A companion paintbrush completes the reference to Bart's source artwork.

Encased in their own neatly-fashioned and custom-sized niches are three more referential items: a replica of the ancient Greek statue of Venus de Milo as a vintage perfume bottle, a golden apple, and a gold-framed mirror. An accompanying scroll that serves as the colophon is placed in another compartment.

## Harriet Bart

ARTIST

## REFLEXIONS

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

### *Zeuxis Choosing His Model for Helen of Troy*

INSPIRATION TEXT

## Angelica Kauffman

AUTHOR



1

1 - Golden Apple from The Judgment of Paris

2 - Marilyn Miglin "Venus" perfume bottle

3 - Container displaying grid of Kauffman's painting and other contents

Container box 9 1/2" x 9 1/2" 3 3/4" • Text broadside 14" x 7 3/4"

With these, Helen's narrative undergoes some dramatic turns. The golden apple and the Venus perfume bottle—Venus is the Roman version of Aphrodite—alludes to the Judgment of Paris myth, in which the malicious goddess of strife tosses a golden apple inscribed with the words "for the most beautiful" into a wedding ceremony. Three goddesses vie for the honor and Paris of Troy is appointed judge. He chooses Aphrodite after she bribes him with the promise to bestow upon him the lovely Helen. Alas, Helen is already married to the king of Sparta, who is not pleased with the situation and sends his army to retrieve her. Thus begins the decade-long Trojan War.

Like a miniature cabinet of curiosities, every object in "Reflexions" is alive with associations. As the box's objects are removed, the shaped wooden pieces that hold them must be removed as well; the whole experience becomes a puzzle game.

This playful conceit may remind us that Helen remains to this day a puzzle to scholars and neophytes alike. Just when you think that all the parts have been revealed, you turn over the golden apple and there, on the bottom, an eye stares out at you—a prophylactic evil eye ready to ward off any errant malevolent gazes.

Beauty—that peerless trait so completely embodied by Helen—is implicit in each carefully curated object. The mirror, especially (small and unassuming as it is) is a perfect symbol for Helen, whose fabled visage has been reflected down through the ages, flawless and immutable.



3



2

Paintings on Greek vases often tell a story which the viewer can piece together by “reading” the various sections of the vase. “A Women’s Work,” a six panel accordion book by Emma Schulte, unwraps the painting on an imagined Greek vase so that we can see the linear progression of a woman’s day in a single narrative.

Viewed casually, the viewer sees that the women in these scenes are graceful, painted in traditional colors of red vase painting, red on a black background. Each panel is delineated with a familiar-looking Greek geometric design. The women are engaged in typical women’s tasks of cooking, carrying water and boxes, spinning, and weaving.

**Emma Schulte**  
ARTIST

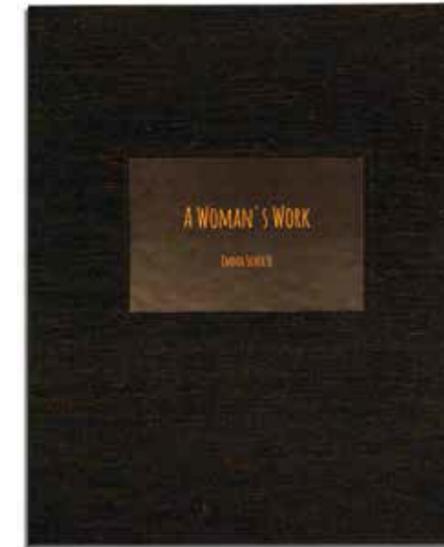
**A WOMAN’S WORK**  
TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

*The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook  
Oeconomicus*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Sian Lewis; Xenophon  
AUTHOR

Using Sian Lewis’ “The Athenian Woman: an iconographic handbook” and Xenophon’s “Oeconomicus,” as her foundation texts, Schulte responds to the ways in which ancient Greek society sexualized and belittled women’s contributions to the household. Xenophon claims that women’s bodies are not fit for work in the outdoors and are only suitable for preserving and protecting the commodities that come into the house.

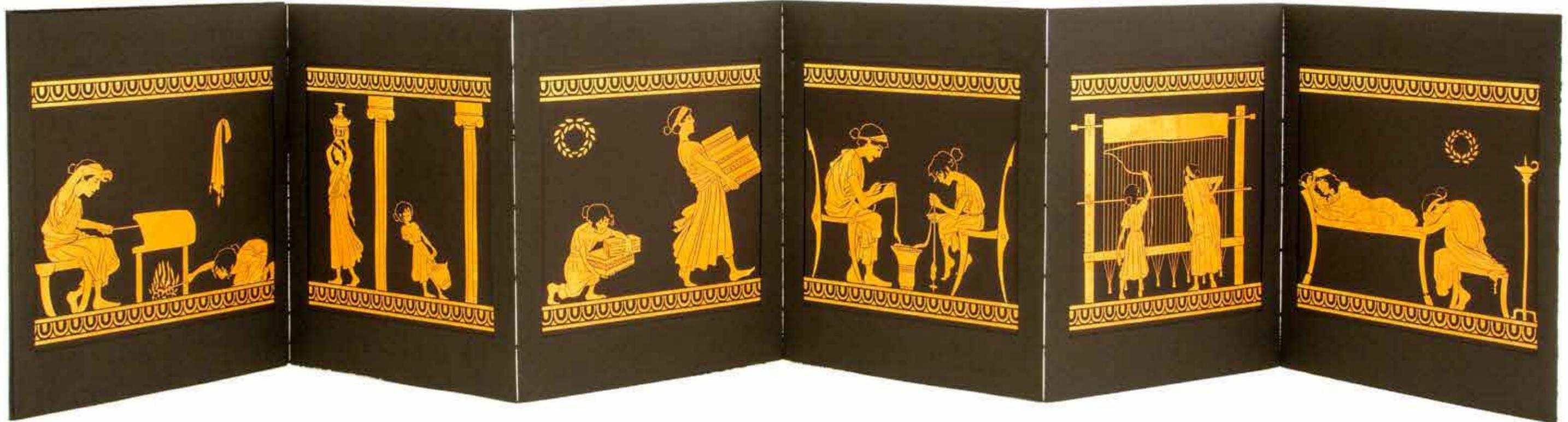
Schulte refutes this fragile body pronouncement and turns our gaze to the physical effort and the mental strain of the highly important and mind-numbing repetitiveness of household work.



The accordion structure of this book, beautifully bound by Katherine Dodsley, supports Schulte’s love of narrative. Each illustration was created by Schulte using PaintTool SAI, a computer drawing program, printed on archival paper, and matted on Somerset black paper. Each panel is sewn to the next using maple sugar colored waxed linen thread. The title and the colophon are inset on the front and back covers, respectively.

During Schulte’s research of vase paintings, she became aware of the misogyny present in ancient Greek culture that resulted in few portrayals of women in a sympathetic light.

2



A closer look reveals not just their graceful bodies but also the heat of the cooking fires, the weight of the water jugs, the bent body position required for spinning wool, the weight of the boxes they are carrying and the endless task of walking back and forth in front of the loom. We see the physical efforts associated with these tasks, efforts that are never depicted in an ancient vase painting. The final panel displays another scene that is also never depicted on an ancient vase: the women are laying down, exhausted after a hard day of providing for the household.

1

1 - Six panel accordion book  
2 - Container

Book closed 14” x 11” • Book open 14” x 66”

She wanted to “fill in the gaps” herself and that she has done, giving the viewer the opportunity to reflect upon just how hard women in ancient Greece, and everywhere throughout time and across cultures, have worked in ways that are not only vital to their communities but also require physical strength and mental determination.

In *Fantomina*, a novella first published in 1725 and subtitled “Love in a Maze,” an unnamed young lady of society disguises herself as a prostitute named Fantomina to attract the attention of the dashing Beau-plaisir. The ruse succeeds, but after taking her virginity Beauplaisir’s affections wane and, to keep his interest, Fantomina chooses to disguise herself again and again — first as the servant girl Celia, then as the respectable Widow Bloomer, and finally as the mysterious Incognita. Her ruse succeeds as she continually recaptures the interest of her love.

Helen Hiebert’s book “Vertices” melds this early 18th-century story of intrigue, romance, sex and power with a modernist aesthetic based on male and female symbol-ogy, enhanced by the use of her handmade paper which includes story-specific water-marks and laminations. Where Fantomina is melodramatic and fanciful, “Vertices” — the title refers to the geometric meaning of the word: the junction of two lines meeting to form an angle — is cool and collected. Where the two books converge is through the dual themes of concealing and revealing.

Hiebert explores the intersection of men and women through the use of simple emblematic shapes: the recognizable universal male and female symbols, an egg and sperm, a key and a keyhole. The artist embraces the meaning behind these motifs with simple elegance. The commonplace symbol for love, a heart, divides and inverts, creating two tears. The sperm overlays the egg, partially obscuring it, but creating a new biomorphic shape. The ingenious structure of the double accordion book allows the viewer to turn the pages from both front and back, thereby creating layered images seen through translucent, vellum-like hand-cut windows. The crackle of the handmade paper both alludes to and adds to the sexual/romantic charge.

As a counterpoint to the delicate interplay of shapes, Hiebert inserts a poem about a modern male/female relationship, set in blocks of text alongside the imagery. The poem, “Vertex,” by Sarah Kathryn Moore, is evocatively alliterative with a robust and punctuated cadence that complements and augments the stately pacing of the imagery. The speaker in “Vertex,” addressing a lover, expresses a longing that emerges from a welter of natural and quotidian imagery and then subsides again, concealed by new rush of metaphors.

**Helen Hiebert**  
ARTIST

**VERTICES: LOVE IN A MAZE**  
TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

*Fantomina: Love in a Maze*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Eliza Haywood  
AUTHOR



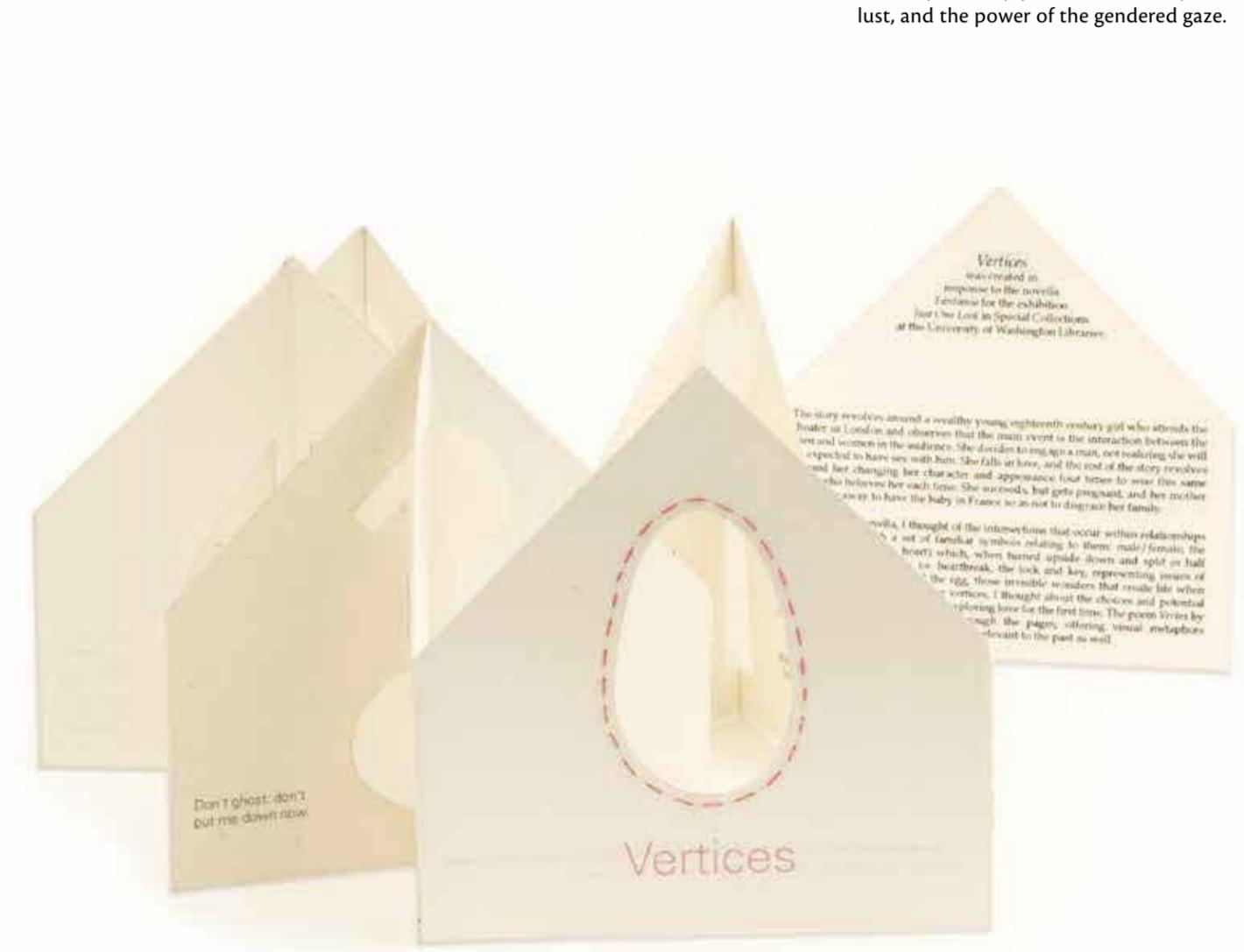
1

Book 6" x 5 1/2" • Book spread 6" x 28" • Heart watermark 12" at widest • Cootie Catcher 6" square

In *Fantomina*, it is the string of disguises that (for a time) shields the amorous lady’s longing from the world’s view. In the end, however, all her disguises and machinations fail her when she becomes pregnant. She is exposed, disgraced and sent by her mother to a convent in France. Hiebert parallels these strategies of concealment and exposure by making her book an object that requires a continual decoding of partially revealed and evolving symbols. She adds a playful yet sober coda to the narrative in the shape of an origami fortune teller which, when opened, reveals the hidden hand-stitched options for the woman: marriage, adoption, miscarriage or abortion.

Though the use of image, text and familiar shapes, Hiebert represents the themes of the novella so that they are accessible to a modern reader, asking us to consider the place and outcome of subterfuge in romance, exploring in complex and surprising ways sexuality, identity, power, domesticity, love, lust, and the power of the gendered gaze.

- 1 - Fortune telling device
- 2 - House-shaped book created from handmade paper



2

In the story of *Daedalion*, found in Book XI of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Ceyx, King of Trachin, tells how his fierce brother has been transformed into a falcon. Daedalion's daughter Chione is possessed of a rare beauty, and (in addition to a thousand mortal suitors) she attracts the attention of the gods Apollo and Mercury. Mercury charms the girl to sleep in order to have sex with her; that same night, Apollo comes to her in the guise of an old woman. Following these encounters, Chione gives birth to twins: the thief and trickster Autolycus, son of Mercury, and the musician Philammon, son of Apollo. However, Chione is unsatisfied with her station and boasts that she surpasses even Diana in beauty. As punishment, Diana shoots Chione in the tongue with an arrow and the girl dies, unable to speak. In grief, her father Daedalion throws himself from the peak of Mount Parnassus. Taking pity on the man, Apollo turns him into a falcon, preventing Daedalion from certain death.

Lauren Dudley takes Ovid's tale and interprets it in embroidery, an art that dates back to antiquity. The six characters — left to right: Apollo, Mercury, Chione, Diana, Daedalion and the falcon — are graphically rendered in chain stitch and portrayed in a presentational manner recalling figural depictions on a classical Greek vase. The characters' stances and facial expressions belie none of the drama of the myth in which they play a role, as if they must keep up their appearances as venerated deities. In this story, there are several instances of a gaze changing the direction of the narrative, most notably the powerful gaze of Diana sighting down her arrow, ready to shoot Chione's blasphemous tongue.

The straightforward figures are offset by the surrounding border where the portentous narrative is told in a complex visual pattern. Here Dudley tells the story in Latin with red stitching in a gold thread grid, employing traditional Redwork and Goldwork, both exacting and time-honored embroidery techniques. However, in Dudley's hands the practice is enlivened by her method of working on unstretched linen, which results in a dynamic and animated but no less intricate stitch.

**Lauren Dudley**  
ARTIST

**DAEDALION**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

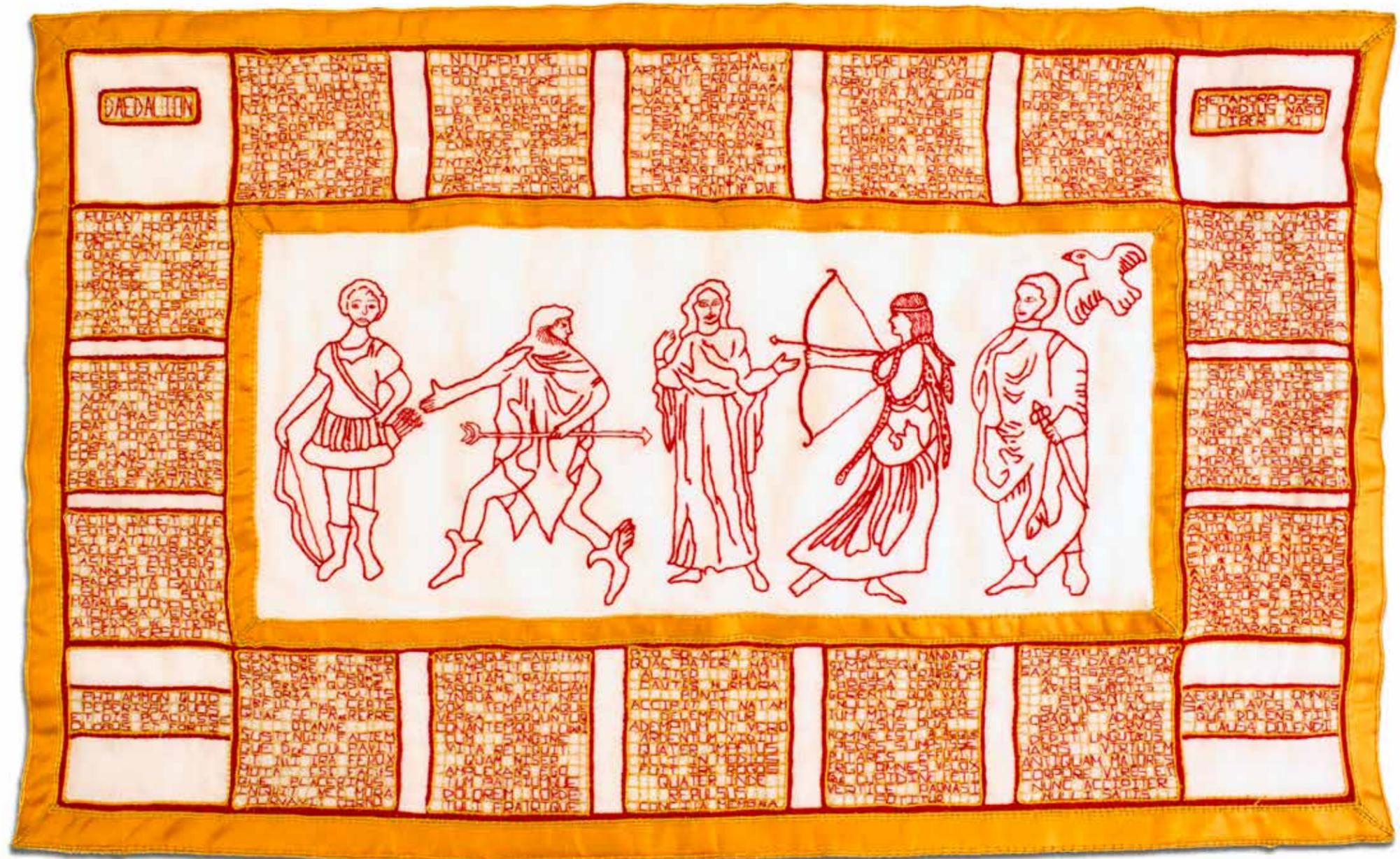
*Daedalion from Metamorphoses*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Ovid  
AUTHOR

Reflecting both the death of Chione and the transformation of her father Daedalion into a falcon, the artist adds a conceptual component to her use of traditional embroidery by attaching "feathers" and a "tongue" composed of hand-painted china silk and bamboo barbecue skewers to an actual arrow. Here Dudley brings a contemporary approach to her art, recounting her own English translation of the tale in computer-printed text.

As in many Greek and Roman myths and stories, a woman's beauty is often a double-edged sword, or, in this version, a deadly arrow.

1 - Embroidered Redwork and Goldwork embroidered panel  
2 - Artist-made china silk feathers and real arrow



Tapestry 21" x 55" • Feathers 6 1/2" x 5 1/2"

In 1950 the village of Necedah, Wisconsin had a population of 862. One of the inhabitants of this three-square-mile hamlet was Mary Ann Van Hoof, a farm wife with at least seven children. In the spring of that year, Van Hoof reported that the Virgin Mary had appeared to her in what she described as a blue mist. The Virgin conferred upon her a mission to convey important messages concerning piety, prayer and patriotism to “the people,” which she did through radio, newspaper and proselytizing to crowds. Van Hoof reported dozens of subsequent sightings over the next 34 years and, after a time, a shrine was erected in Necedah that has drawn hundreds of thousands of visitors to this otherwise unremarkable Midwestern community.

For artist Lou Cabeen, such apparitions have provided a bridge that links her long-time fascination with maps and her interest in “The Divine Feminine,” which proposes the acknowledgment, the honoring, and the valuing of the feminine, placing it on the same plane as the masculine in all aspects of life, from the spiritual to the cultural to the historical and political.

In crisp, graphic compositions Cabeen narrates modern chapters of a spiritual epic—or fable, depending on your point of view—that started nearly 2000 years ago, during the lifetime of The Holy Mother. The artist, while doing research on the concept of the Divine Feminine, was herself surprised to learn that occurrences of Marian apparitions were not, as she assumed, few and far between and located in distant countries. By focusing on sightings that have occurred on this continent in recent decades, Cabeen delivers an intimate and contemporary interpretation of a complicated subject that has long been scrutinized and debated by believers and non-believers alike.

Each of the four, six-panel accordion books in the series pinpoints the locations of contemporary Virgin sightings on digitally printed geological survey maps. One book focuses exclusively on visions of the Virgin of Guadalupe, who first appeared to a Mexican peasant in 1531. The other books address thematically grouped appearances in various locations such as rural areas. On the reverse side of each image is a short passage describing the story of that particular apparition.

**Lou Cabeen**  
ARTIST

**APPARITIONS AMONG US**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Searching for Mary*  
*The Great Apparitions of Mary*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Mark Garvey/Ingo Swann  
AUTHOR



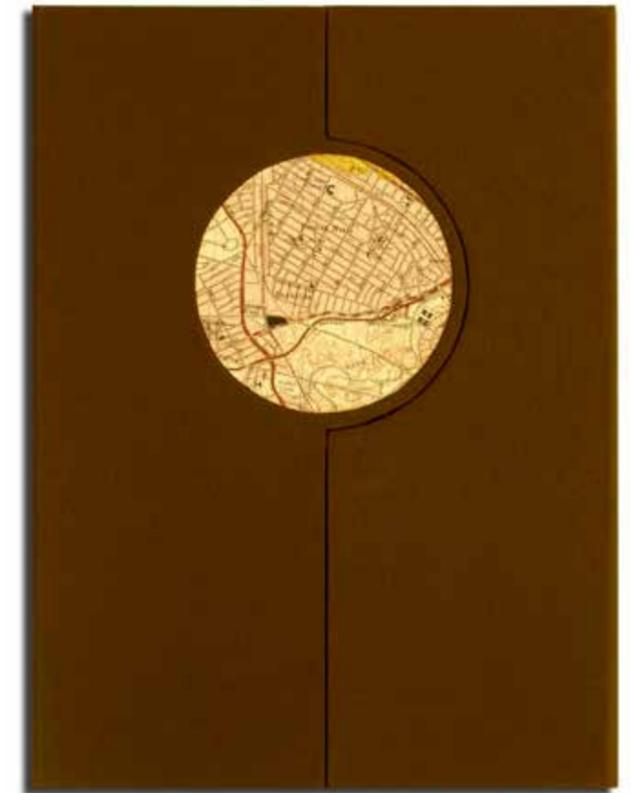
1

Here the maps become much more than straightforward geographical identifiers of the Mary sightings. Setting aside any romantic notions inspired by maps, they are chiefly pragmatic instruments whose sole purpose is to provide information. By overlaying the maps with golden, wheel-like configurations composed of spiraling letters, the artist has elevated their normally prosaic nature. The lacy, shimmering lattice-work centers on each apparition site, lending an ethereality that is perfectly in tune with the supernatural sightings.

According to the artist, the spiral text on three of the four books is derived from Gregorian chants to the Virgin in Latin. The Guadalupe text is copied from the Spanish prayer on an Our Lady of Guadalupe devotional candle. This rich tracery is strictly textual; the compressed positive and negative spaces evoke the calm beauty of illuminated manuscripts.

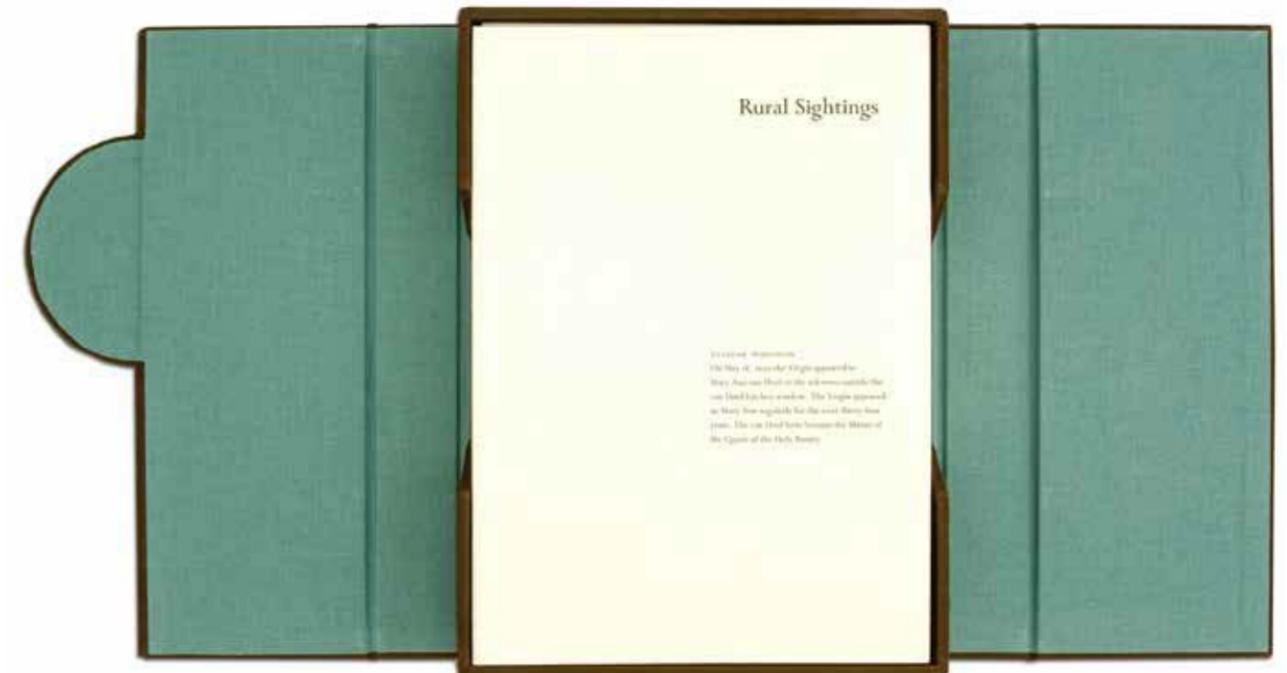
4 books 12" x 9" closed • Open 12" x 45"

No where in these books does Cabeen reveal her personal view of these purported appearances. Are they authentic miraculous events fully worthy of belief? Or are they misconstrued natural phenomena seen through the mind of a person psychologically ripe for such appearances? Or are they, as some have been found to be, mere self-serving scams? Cabeen chooses to interpret these phenomena through the sheer force of her aesthetic decisions, leaving speculations about the actual meanings of these appearances outside the cool splendor of her books.



2

- 1 - One of four accordion books
- 2 - Closed container
- 3 - Open container



A variety of ancient authors including Callimachus, Hesiod, Euripides and Ovid wrote about the story of Diana and Actaeon. Although the plot differs in its details and the characters' motivations vary among the diverse authors, the main plot line remains the same in all versions. One day while hunting Actaeon happens to see the goddess Diana in her bath. The goddess immediately realizes that she has been observed naked by a mortal man. Furious at this outrageous intrusion, she turns Actaeon into a stag. His own hunting dogs, failing to recognize him, chase him and eventually tear him apart.

Laura Russell, a photographer and book artist, has created two books, "Bold Heart," inspired by Ovid's "Diana and Actaeon" and "Magnificent Beast," inspired by "The Homeric Hymn to Artemis" (Artemis being the Greek equivalent of Diana). Russell comes from a deer hunting family in Michigan, and hence found the Diana story especially intriguing. A non-hunter herself, Russell learned that women hunters are the fastest growing demographic in the sport. In her two books she sets out to show women who are active hunters and challenging common assumptions of what and who a hunter is.

Many of the women in Russell's tableaux appear to have been temporarily transported to a hunting milieu, perhaps wrested from another sort of culture. In "Bold Heart," the artist features her fifteen-year-old niece as Diana, and, although decked out in full hunting regalia, she still exhibits the attributes of a modern teenager — fashionable hair style, makeup, and glowing complexion. The incongruity of this image is augmented by the inclusion of a weather-whitened deer skull held gingerly by the antlers by the teen's manicured hands. By depicting this teen and other contemporary young women as hunters and situating them all within a luxurious hunter's landscape, Russell has, with some irony, united ancient culture, modern hunting culture, and teen culture.

The structures of the two books enforce differing viewing experiences. "Magnificent Beast" is a multiple layer accordion book that when opened up becomes a strikingly elongated object containing images of hunters and the hunted within an orange (the protective color of hunters' outfits) and brown geometric configuration.

**Laura Russell**  
ARTIST

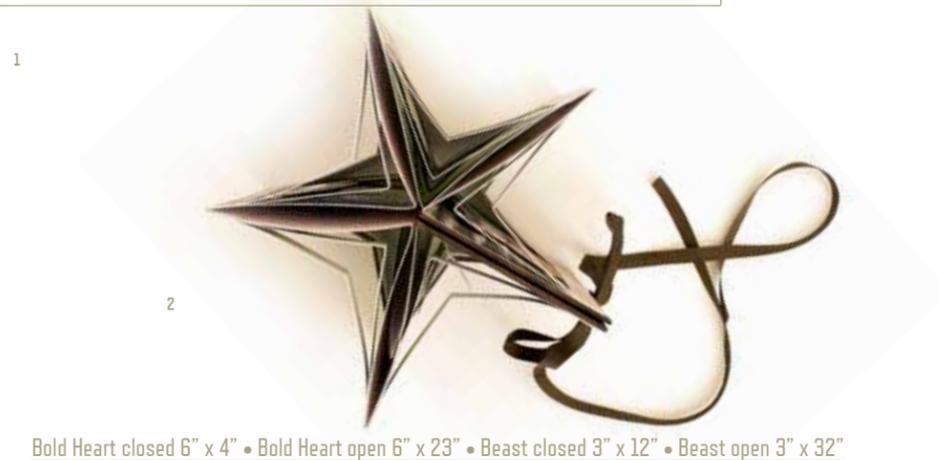
## BOLD HEART MAGNIFICENT BEAST

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Diana and Actaeon from Metamorphoses*  
*The Homeric Hymn to Artemis*

INSPIRATION TEXT

Ovid/Unknown  
AUTHOR



Bold Heart closed 6" x 4" • Bold Heart open 6" x 23" • Beast closed 3" x 12" • Beast open 3" x 32"



3

- 1 - "Bold Heart"
  - 2 - "Bold Heart" tied into a star shape
  - 3 - "Magnificent Beast", cover
- See also page 3

The "windows" of the honeycomb structure (developed by Kevin Steel) offer a series of double-framed views in varying perspectives. We spy the hunters — often posed with their dead prey — obliquely, as we might catch the sight of hunters within an obscuring forest.

The text, from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, is placed in the innermost section of this complex structure, as though the telling of the story in words launches the images.

"Bold Heart" is a carousel book whose five images can be viewed in a stretched out nested accordion form or shown fastened into a star shape.

Each image is bisected by an accordion fold, giving the photographs an element of three-dimensionality. This 3-D effect is enhanced by faux-wood grain paper frames and the cut-out technique used for a number of the figures.

With the book fastened into a star shape, the viewer, working his or her way around the form, necessarily sees the images one at a time, the text fragments from "The Homeric Hymn to Artemis" appearing each in its turn at the base of the frame. Stretched out, the book offers a straight-forward sequence of photographs.

By implication both "Magnificent Beast" and "Bold Heart" compare women's past and present relationship to hunting. It was one thing for a goddess of ancient myth to arm herself and head to the forest, quite another for contemporary woman, throwing aside the traditional feminine limits, to take up the "manly" sport of deer hunting. In ancient Greece, mortal women, restricted as they were to domestic tasks, had no such option. By retelling the ancient story of Diana, Russell illuminates the profound changes that have occurred in women's status in the modern world.

A Latin American oral folktale about Ixcacao, the Mayan goddess of chocolate, was the springboard for Julie Chen's wholly new version of the myth. Titled *Bitter Chocolate*, it features an Ixcacao-like character named Cacao Woman.

In the original narrative, Ixcacao is revered for abundantly providing for the people and showing compassion and wisdom in seeing to their needs. Then it happens that a ruling class of kings and noblemen comes to power. Science and the arts flourish but, sadly, the peasants suffer.

Ixcacao is forced to marry the God of Commerce who turns her cocoa beans into currency. Because of its new monetary value, chocolate is forbidden to the common people. Later, the goddess of chocolate manages to bring joy back to the people. But the plan, though at first successful, backfires; war and disease pervade the land.

Chen augments and varies the legend, adding many nuances to the character of Cacao Woman. She is powerful and yet self-effacing. Although she cherishes the cacao trees in the rainforest, she also worries about their future. Uncertain about the complex and changing relationship between the people and chocolate, Cacao Woman even questions her own culpability in the evolution of that relationship. Chen writes, "If Cacao Woman has one regret it is about not intervening when cacao beans began to be used as a form of currency, for this practice turned each pod into an object of greed. Tribute in the form of sacks of cacao beans was exacted from each weaker civilization by the stronger, from the Maya to the Aztecs to the Spanish, and onward to the unfortunate and unjust global practices of the 21st century."

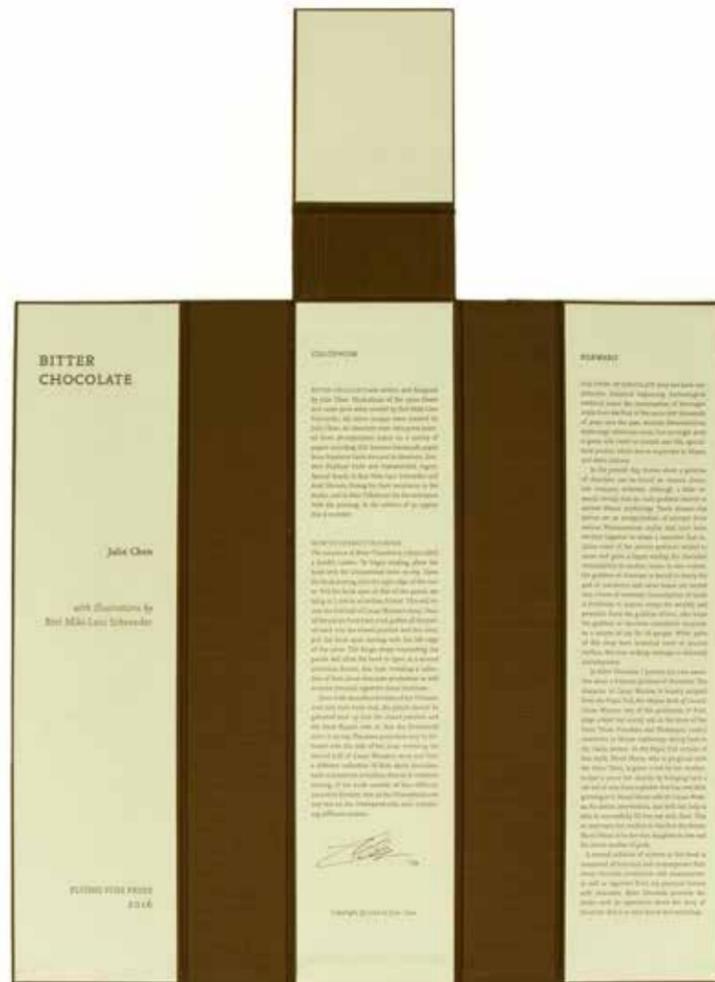
Chen delivers this tale in an elegant and superbly crafted Jacob's Ladder book—a book form named after the folk toy traditionally made from blocks of wood held together by ribbons. If the toy is held at one end or the other, the blocks appear to cascade downward, thanks to the double-acting hinge created by the attached ribbons. The toy, although complex, may look homespun. Not so Chen's book. The technical virtuosity is stunning, even mystifying, especially to those first coming upon such an object. Chen adds the helpful instructional, "How to Operate This Book," which is most welcome.

**Julie Chen**  
ARTIST

**BITTER CHOCOLATE**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Story of Ixcacao - the Mayan Goddess of Chocolate*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Traditional oral story  
AUTHOR



1

Single panel of book 14 3/4" x 3 1/2"

14 panels spread 14 3/4" x 49"



2

The book has four sides, accessed by choosing one of four different ways of opening the book. With one side of the book face-up, it can be opened from the right or the left, each opening revealing two separate views. Then when the book is flipped, it can again be opened from left or right, revealing two additional views.

1 - Box, with instructions, opened

2 - One of four sides of Jacob's Ladder book

In Chen's work, the "ribbons" are wide bands of paper alternately printed with text and images of cacao pods. On two of the sides, the bands are interwoven over a rainforest scene, the disparate parts coming together to create a unified visual effect. Cacao Woman's story is related against background imagery of cacao trees, the quiet drama of the story enhanced by the woodcut-like impact of forceful light and dark patterns. In contrast, the rendering of the pods evokes 19th century botanical drawings, with graphically precise lines giving volume and definition to each variety and form depicted.

In another view, Chen juxtaposes personal anecdotes about her own chocolate consumption with historical facts. Here the text, along with additional cacao pod images, is woven through a modified gore-style map of the world. The citation of the historical beginnings of the commercial candy bar (in England, in 1847) is presented in tandem with Chen's estimate of the amount of chocolate that she will eat while creating this book (at least 19 pounds).

We also learn that in pre-Hispanic times, chocolate was consumed as an unsweetened beverage and that Chen prefers 85% cocoa dark chocolate.

Flipping the book and opening it from the right reveals more of Cacao Woman's story. But then when it is opened from the left, the narrative shifts dramatically—from dark chocolate to the dark side of chocolate.

In straightforward, uninflected prose Chen cites some disturbing—even horrifying—facts: out of every consumer dollar spent on chocolate, the farmer receives only 6.6 cents; small cocoa farmers make an average of \$2.00 per day; children are trafficked to cocoa farms in Africa and required to use machetes and drag 100 pound sacks of beans through the forest. Progress against such abuses is slow. For example, a 2001 protocol to end by 2005 the brutal child labor in the production of cocoa has still not been enacted.

Julie Chen's "Bitter Chocolate" is a quietly spectacular tour de force, mesmerizing in both its structure and in its subtle transition from the heady aroma of chocolate to the foul scent of corporate greed and social injustice.

**The tale of Cupid and Psyche** in the ancient novel *The Golden Ass* is instigated by the great jealousy of Venus at the attention showered on the mortal princess Psyche because of her unparalleled beauty. Venus orders her mischievous son Cupid to sprinkle drops from her fountain of bitterness on Psyche's lips as she sleeps, which will cause her to fall in love with a lowly being. A flustered Cupid accidentally wounds himself with his own arrow and he falls instantly in love with Psyche. According to an oracle, Psyche now will only be allowed to wed a horrific monster who awaits her at the top of a mountain.

There Psyche discovers a beautiful palace where invisible servants take care of her every need. Her husband, who she passionately loves, visits her only under the cloak of darkness. One night, she lights an oil lamp and discovers that her sleeping husband is in fact Cupid. Cupid awakens and flees; the palace vanishes. Psyche, alone and bereft, wanders the countryside in despair.

Psyche appeals to Venus, and the goddess gives her a series of seemingly impossible tasks. As her final task, she must bring an empty box to the underworld so that Venus may borrow a little of the goddess Proserpine's beauty. Recognizing that she is doomed, Psyche prepares to kill herself, but is saved when a mysterious voice tells her how to travel to the underworld without dying. Returning from the underworld, Psyche opens the box and unleashes a coma-inducing Stygian sleep.

Happily, Cupid comes to Psyche's aid, whisking her to Olympus, where Jupiter makes her immortal and the happy lovers are reunited for eternity.

Lavishly illustrated by Mari Eckstein Gower, the tale is lyrically interpreted from Psyche's point of view. Gower's accordion book and accompanying altar piece are dazzling, meticulously-crafted works that blend the aesthetics of Art Nouveau, classical decorative motifs and fanciful fairytale illustration. The artist follows the tradition of depicting Psyche as a butterfly-winged woman; "Psyche" means both "soul" and "butterfly" in Greek. In a parallel to the metamorphosis of a butterfly, Psyche, beset by many challenges, is transformed from a mortal to a goddess.

**Mari Eckstein Gower**  
ARTIST

**CUPID AND PSYCHE**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Golden Ass*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Apuleius  
AUTHOR

The book opens with a cloud of butterflies against a smoky amethyst background and beautifully hand-lettered narration that begins "This is not the hero's saga. This is the maiden's tale." Gower's finely detailed illustrations, replete with overlapping imagery, convey the intricacies of the tale. Incisive line—in colored and metallic inks—combines with delicate hues of acrylic paint to suggest the otherworldliness of a magical fable. In Gower's rendition this Psyche is not empowered by her notable beauty.

Told that she would marry a monster, she wonders "Who was I—a young girl—to hope for a better fate?" Later, on a richly embellished blue and gold expanse awash with stars, Ionic columns, undulating lines, monsters, and swirling creatures she asks, "Who was I—a new wife—to look upon the true face of my husband?"

Gower visually evokes the importance of gaze in Psyche's tale by suffusing her work with symbolic all-seeing eyes, illustrating the many ways that a gaze changes the narrative in this story and suggesting as well the omniscience of the deities who watch over the mortal world.



1

1 - Altarpiece detail

The book tucks into a neatly concealed niche in the center panel of the altarpiece. Arrayed across the seven hinged sections are graceful portraits of the players in this saga while below, glowing butterfly images sit like stained glass windows against a black ground.

Gower's altar functions much the way Renaissance altars sometimes do: they introduce characters and set up aesthetic premises that prepare viewers for the greater narrative fullness that has to come inside.

Book 4 5/8" x 9 1/4" each panel • 16 panel spread 152" • Altar box open 14" x 45"

**Herodotus' *Histories* (c. 450 BCE)** is a foundational literary and historical text providing an account of both Hellenic and neighboring civilizations. It treats in detail the Greco-Persian wars as well as the ascent of the Persian Empire. Not a historical text in the modern sense, many episodes in the *Histories* are highly literary and often invented. In nine books, Herodotus recounts both epic and domestic episodes interweaving myth, history, fiction, and ethnography. Among its many subjects are the Trojan War, religious practices of the Egyptians, the Persians, Assyrians, and Scythians, and the war between Athens and Sparta. Numerous episodes depict the power of female vision as well as the power of women as desired objects—in the *Histories*, women both look and are looked upon.

**Alexander Hollmann**  
ARTIST

***ALGÊDONES OPHTHALMÔN: Painful to the Eyes***  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Histories*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Herodotus  
AUTHOR

The artist chose eight stories and illustrated each with an etching. Bookbinder Katherine Dodsley bound the images and texts as an accordion book in cloth-covered boards, sewn at the spine. The etchings are set centrally on the page in the most straightforward way possible, one image to a page, with the sole graphic device being a gold frame. Hollmann, a scholar in ancient Greek, provides captions in the original Greek. These brief texts—sentences from the *Histories*—appear below each image in another gold-framed rectangle.

By such direct and unelaborated presentation, the artist places the aesthetic emphasis on the etchings. He introduces tactile embellishments as chine-collé a process where in a

thin Japanese paper is adhered to a heavier sheet—and color and textural variations through the choice of papers, but in the end it is the etchings that lend the book its authority as a story-telling vehicle.

Etching has a long and distinguished history as a medium for illustrating stories. Hollmann takes advantage of both the medium's potential for linear clarity and its ability to progressively build up the richest of blacks. In "Astyages' dream of Mandane and the vine," for instance, the body of Mandane is drawn in a crisp, unimpeded line, while the vine that issues from her vulva (one of the bizarre images that Hollmann refers to) multiplies its form as it takes "hold of all Asia," as the text says.

The first print in the series, "Wife of Candaules and Gyges" adheres closely to the dialectic of observed and observing woman. Slightly less bizarre but with a crushing denouement, the story tells of King Candaules' effort to demonstrate to his favorite bodyguard Gyges that his wife is the most beautiful of women by arranging for him to view her undressing in their bedroom. Gyges' reluctant gaze already disrupts the narrative, but the Queen, catching a glimpse of him looking at her, is mortified and arranges a revenge heeded by the words, "One of you must die!" Now the narrative takes another abrupt turn as Gyges—wisely as it turns out—chooses to kill the King rather than take his own life. The Queen's fateful glimpse leads to Gyges proclaiming himself king and taking the Queen as his wife.



8 panel accordion book with inset etchings and text in ancient Greek.

Book page 12" x 10" • 8 panel accordion book. 12" x 100"

Alex Hollmann, in his *Algêdones Ophthalmôn: Painful to the Eyes*, takes up some of the more fanciful, if not fantastic, stories in Herodotus' *Histories*. The chosen episodes transpire in waking life or in dreams and may contain, as Hollmann writes, "striking and sometimes bizarre imagery and actions."

In marked contrast is "Dream of Polycrates Daughter" and its complex of figures. The figure of Zeus is in daring foreshortening, to dramatically illustrate the line, "It seemed to her that her father, suspended in mid-air, was being washed by Zeus and anointed by the sun." Hollmann closely abuts the figures of Zeus and his personification of the sun, the two of them hoarding the air space around the drifting body of Polycrates and pressing his dreaming daughter downward beyond the lower frame.

As in all the etchings, Hollmann adapts his way of working to the nature of his theme. The "Wife of Candaules" story begins in innocence, wavers in hesitation, progresses to a kind of assault, and ends in anger and odd role reversals. To capture this range of rapidly evolving emotions, he uses the full etching arsenal, from open-line drawing of the nude Queen to an almost phantom rendition of Gyges in the slot of light in the doorway to rich blacks of the somber interior. Hollmann, in this print and in the others, has found a way to skillfully apply the various etching techniques so that they work in secret accord with the emotions expressed in the Herodotus tale in hand.

**Adrienne Mayor calls her 2014 book**

*The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World* an Encyclopedia Amazonica, in which she tracks the Amazons through myth, history, art, and archaeology. Notably, Mayor takes an approach in which outside views are deemphasized to make space, insofar as is possible, for the perspectives of the Amazons themselves. While taking into account the enormous body of Greek texts and artifacts depicting Amazons, she privileges archaeological and anthropological sources, including living oral tradition, from ancient Scythia (modern day Eastern Europe and Central Asia). She methodically presents a wealth of available evidence on the origins—both historical and mythical—of the nomadic warrior women who inspired the Greek tales of the Amazons. In considering Amazonian dress, warfare, languages, and social and sexual customs, Mayor attempts to untangle fact from fiction, while admitting that this task is occasionally impossible. Ultimately, she makes the argument that the persistent fascination throughout the ancient world with Eurasian warrior women points to a larger interest in the appropriate societal roles of men and women and in the extraordinary women who transgressed and transcended those roles.

In her book *Girdled*, Jessica Spring explores the societal roles of men and women by focusing on a single item of clothing: the girdle belonging to Queen Hippolyta. Hippolyta was one of the foremost Amazon fighters, and this garment was no ordinary girdle but rather a very special war belt with magical properties that was conferred upon Hippolyta by her father, Mars, the god of war. The girdle is most noteworthy because Herakles (Hercules) was required by Eurystheus to steal it from Hippolyta as part of his twelve labors. The story says that Hippolyta was so impressed with Herakles that she agreed to give him the girdle. This gift-giving did not sit well with Hera, Queen of the Olympian gods, and, as a result Hera, disguised as an Amazon warrior, incited the other warrior women to fight against Herakles and his companions. There are several stories about who killed Hippolyta. In this version, Hippolyta was killed by Herakles. While she lived, the girdle signified Hippolyta's authority as queen of the Amazons and was her prized personal possession. With her murder and the taking of the belt by Herakles, the girdle became war booty to her killer and a memento of her death.

**Jessica Spring**

ARTIST

**GIRDLED**

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World*

INSPIRATION TEXT

**Adrienne Mayor**

AUTHOR



1



Box closed 5" x 12" • Text panel 3" x 29"



2

Spring recreates the girdle using kozo paper and adding processes utilized in making Japanese paper clothing. As a final touch, the girdle is finished with glittered pigment and watercolor washes. The resulting belt has a tough suppleness and feels very much like the leather that it represents.

Each end of the girdle sports a golden clasp; one side displays the head of Hippolyta, while the other is marked with the legend "What then on Heaven Hath Man Bestowed." The clasps are magnetized, which allows them to attach to an extended box, an elegant and cleverly designed construction by Gabby Cooksey. When the viewer pulls the ends of the box in opposite directions, the girdle appears coiled within, suggestive of a living thing.

The girdle can then be removed, read, inspected, and even tried on.

Spring adds another layer of meaning by imparting the belt with an inventive attribute: with a quick twist the magnetized clasps allow the viewer to turn the girdle in a Mobius strip. Elizabeth Grosz's *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* employs the Mobius strip as a metaphor for the ways in which women develop their own modes of understanding their bodies, separate from the visions imposed by men and society. Echoing these ideas, "Girdled" uses the Mobius strip to refer to the intertwining of inside and out, of body and mind, of myth and fact.

The names of the Amazon fighters on both the inside and outside of the girdle are letterpress-printed and set in Copperplate type. Emblazoned over the entire belt, inside and

out, is a quote—presented in lettering artist Suzanne Moore's elegant script—from Queen Penthesilea, Hippolyta's sister, made when she was fighting against the Greeks in the Trojan War. "One common light we see. One air we breathe; nor different food we eat. Not in strength are we inferior to men: the same our eyes, our limbs the same."

Girdled is a sumptuous and tactile piece, in which Spring has created a complex structure, connecting "book" to box and text to artifact. Experiencing this work allows the viewer to be up close and personal with a singular and intimate garment that is associated with one of the most famous of the mythological warrior women.

- 1 - Box with golden clasps
- 2 - Girdle inside open box
- 3 - Hippolyta's girdle

3

**Diane Jacobs' book object n. object v.** deals with the many ways in which women are seen as objects as compared with women who object to being classified. The "objectified" women are represented by the model Greek woman in ancient Greece; the free-spirited "objecting" women are represented by Amazons. The exterior of the book is a finely-crafted, oval-shaped wooden box, its curved surface inscribed with the names of Amazon women. A belt-like leather fastener is undone to swing open the box and reveal two units, each fitted with inscribed glass panels. Partially in view behind these panels—resting on shelves on the left and attached to vertical panels on the right—are artist-made artifacts, painted, embossed and sculpted imagery, and collected ephemera.

The inscription on the left side describes the ancient Greek notion that a woman's beauty was inherently dangerous, that her sexuality must be controlled and she must be contained. These were the attitudes directed toward, for example, Helen of Troy, who is famously gazed upon but who some argue has little agency and whose story is alluded to here; Ruby Blondell's study *Helen of Troy: Beauty, Myth, Devastation* informs this piece in its powerful exploration of female subjectivity and identity. The artifacts on the shelves include representations of eyes, teeth and breasts. The breasts have been carefully crafted from eggshells—a most interesting choice of materials that not only provides perfectly accurately shaped breasts but also connotes the sexual and reproductive functions of breasts. These artifacts, along with others, lie on the horizontal shelves as though the women they represent must accept these stereotypes lying down.

The right side of the book depicts Amazons—women who choose to be self-defined. The inscription on the glass panel on this side contains such phrases as "self-reliant," "warrior women," "belong to no man," and "free to make love on her own terms." These panels, some of which slide out, are vertical, standing upright like the Amazon warriors. On one panel is a text reading, "The fantasy of female perfection turns out to be a male illusion." Other panels include military dog tags and Jacobs' graphically powerful paintings of Amazon warriors.

**Diane Jacobs**  
ARTIST

**object n. object v.**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World*

*Helen of Troy: Beauty, Myth, Devastation*

INSPIRATION TEXT

Adrienne Mayor/Ruby Blondell  
AUTHOR



1

- 1 - Hand-crafted oval wooden box, displaying shelves with artist-made objects
- 2 - Closed box, inscribed with names of Amazons
- 3 - Three of many objects found inside the container

Book panels 2 at 10 1/2" x 5" • Book panels 2 at 10 1/2" x 5 1/4" • Book panels 2 at 10 1/2" x 5 1/2"  
Map 10 1/2" x 10 1/2" • Object sign 5" x 8" • 5 half rounds 5 1/2" x 11 [widest point] • Round Box x 26" across

Jacobs, who often uses hair in her art, weaves the title of her piece *object n. object v.* into two combs using horsehair. Although Jacobs typically uses human hair, which is often her own, in this instance, the human hair did not result in a readable text. In searching for a different material, Jacobs experimented with horsehair, which proved to be a suitable weft and allowed Jacobs to create clear and legible text. Horsehair also operates on a symbolic level, because women in antiquity were often compared to wild horses that had to be tamed.

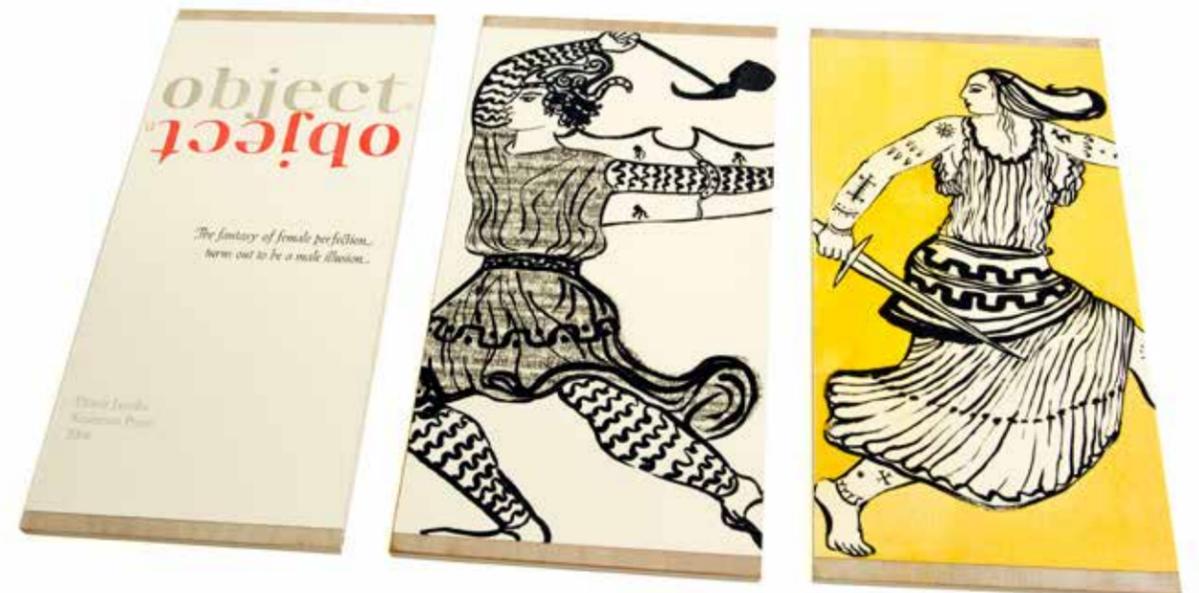
*object n. object v.* invites a comparison of the roles of ancient Greek women and free-thinking Amazons. Sight and touch, intellect and emotion come into play as the viewer reads the text and handles the objects. The comparison of the "ideal woman"—the woman as defined by others—and the woman who defines herself is a theme that began in antiquity and is ongoing today.

Both *Girdled* and *object n. object v.* pay homage to archaeological and anthropological evidence and oral traditions. But each book does this in a very different way: *Girdled* uncovers multiple meanings in a single "archeological" find; *object n. object v.* compares varied roles of women and their points of view from ancient times to the present. Both books are intelligent, thought-provoking and beautifully crafted. When viewed singly, each book provides a rich and complete experience. As a pair, they form a fascinating and complex dialogue on definitions of womanhood.

Inspiration text summarized on page 30



2



3

**Beautiful, adolescent Hermaphroditus**, son of Hermes and Aphrodite, stumbles upon the crystal-clear pool of the nymph Salmacis. Instead of hunting with Diana, Salmacis prefers to loll about her pond and dress her hair. Seeing this desirable youth, she impetuously proposes sex. But shy, inexperienced Hermaphroditus demurs. Ever-persistent, Salmacis hides in the bushes and watches Hermaphroditus disrobe and dive into the water. The sight is too much for her: she jumps in after him, latching tightly onto his body. She then utters a cry to the gods, asking that the two of them shall never be severed. Hearing her prayer, the gods merge their bodies, so that Hermaphroditus has both male and female features.

As with many stories in the *Metamorphoses*, here the desiring gaze proves both momentous and irreversible. Unusual for Ovid (and indeed for texts from antiquity in general), in this case it is the desirous female gaze that is emphasized. Salmacis's vision here has power and agency, and her possessive gaze mirrors her role as the sexually active "partner" in her relationship with the unwilling Hermaphroditus.

For Robbin Ami Silverberg, the power of that gaze formed the core of her interpretation, *Seeing the Unsighted*, subtitled *Synecdoche*. Working with the dual concepts of the gaze as identity and, in the artist's words, "the objectification, dehumanization and eventual annihilation" of the subject of the gaze, the artist approaches the subject obliquely: or so it seems at first glance.

A finely-crafted drop-spine box, unembellished save for four subtle rectangular indentations, opens to display four handmade horsehair brushes, bristles face up, and inscribed with the words "I am," "I was," "Eye" and "Desist." The opposite inside cover repeats the talismanic motif of four blank rectangles, this time encased in a circle upon a ground of blue-veined handmade paper. But the eye naturally returns to the striking brushes, prominent—assertive, even—and mysterious. What is the meaning of these quotidian grooming tools? The most apparent explanation is that they represent Salmacis, who would rather attend to her coiffure than attend to Diana. Or, could they be a visual pun—Hermaphroditus' "brush-off" of the irksome nymph? But Silverberg, through the added text, imbues these prosaic objects with yet more consequential meaning.

**Robbin Ami Silverberg**  
ARTIST

***SEEING THE UNSIGHTED: SYNECDOCHE***  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Salmacis from the Metamorphoses*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Ovid  
AUTHOR



1

Now the brushes act as metaphor for identity ("I am," "I was"), the power of the gaze ("Eye") and the refusal of annihilation ("Desist").

Remove the brushes and yet another four rectangles appear, each containing passages from the translated tale and text from the artist. Silverberg sets up provocative juxtapositions:

...from being to object of perfection to consummation/annihilation:  
...he gleams in that translucent pool,  
a figurine of ivory or white lilies encased in glass.

Seeing the Unsighted Book Closed 13 ¼" x 11 ¾" • Inner box 13 ¼" x 10" • Brushes 2 ½" x 9"



2

Enclosed within the container is Silverberg's more explicit visual presentation. Printed on Silverberg's sumptuous, translucent deckle-edged, artist-made paper are photographic close-ups of eyes and watermarked eyelashes. The eye image crowds the boundaries of the page and the eyelash image radiates outward like the rays of the sun. Silverberg has turned the tables on the viewer, appropriating the gaze with an implacable and daunting stare.

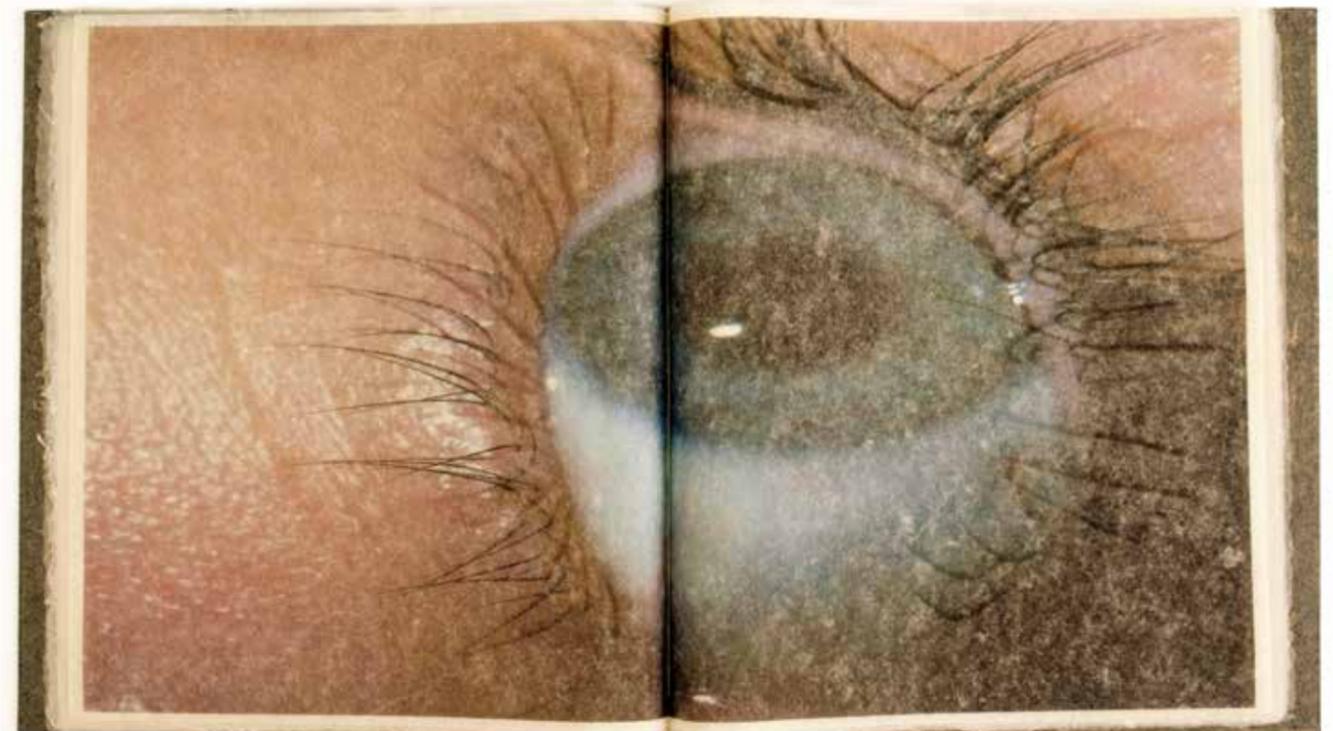
On the back of the book is a quotation from Goethe's "The Sorrows of Young Werther" that deals with the mutability of sight:

*One always imagines oneself seeing. I think we dream solely to prevent ourselves from ceasing to see.*

For Goethe ordinary sight is fragile, always on the brink of extinction. Silverberg, on the

other hand, presents sight in its most active, even aggressive, form—the gaze. Anything but fragile, the gaze can be transformative and it can, according to the artist, annihilate those caught by it.

- 1 - Drop spine box showing text and silver symbol
- 2 - Opened box with brushes
- 3 - Artist-made paper bound into codex; photograph of artist's eye



3

This story comes from the Salish people, a collective name for several predominantly oral tribes, speaking related languages, from the Pacific Northwest and mountain West. For these people storytelling is the prime means of transmitting their history and genealogy, their myths and religious beliefs, even practical advice.

A young girl, in despair at the loss of many of her people, comes to the beach to wash herself in the cleansing water and finds a beautiful sleeping mermaid. Unafraid, she approaches, lays her head on the mermaid's shoulder and closes her eyes. In an instant she finds herself at the bottom of the sea with the mermaid lovingly brushing her sadness from her. The next thing the girl knows, she is back on the shore and the mermaid is welcoming her home, saying, "We are so happy you have returned to your people!" The girl is confused; her sadness came precisely because she had lost her people. But the mermaid tells her that the merpeople are, in fact, the girl's tribe. Humans have always been confused: they believe they live on land, while merpeople believe they live in the water. The truth is that both are inextricably interconnected. "We are of each other," the merwoman says. The girl wakes, as if from a dream, with a terrible sadness. She feels the deep truth that she has chosen to be a human when she has been a merwoman all along. It is she who has left her own people.

Charles Hobson's Mermaid uses mirror images—photographs of reflections of people at the beach at low tide—as a metaphor for the Salish story of a girl caught unaware between identities as a land dweller and a sea being. Hobson's photographs of beachgoers, often shown in truncated images, are displayed in three boxes, within which are horizontally positioned mirrors reflecting the original photographs. By this simple stratagem, the artist visually recreates the interchange between sea and land that is so momentous in the story and, by inference, the shifting identities of the girl who has chosen to be human when, in the surreality of the narrative, she was a merwoman from the start.

**Charles Hobson**  
ARTIST

***Mermaid: An Epic Salish Merwoman Story***  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Salish Merwoman*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

A traditional story related by Paul Cheokten Wagner  
AUTHOR



1

Text & image 3 boxes 6 1/2" x 6 1/2" x 2 3/4"  
Book closed 6" x 6" • Book open 6" x 42" • Box container 9 1/2" x 7" x 7"

Hobson's approach is an ingenious way to introduce the Western problem of perception, that is: can we know the world beyond perceptions? Philosophers wrestle with the question, a question so pervasive that it runs through all our culture, even down to the comics, as when Bill Watterson has Calvin of his "Calvin and Hobbes" strip ask, "Do you ever wonder if the person in the puddle is real and you're just a reflection of him?"

The protagonist of the Salish narrative shares Calvin's doubt about where reality lies. From observing the world, she determines—wrongly, as it turns out—that she is a human. But what she and her people see as tangible reality is a chimera. A surreality exists—a "merworld," as it were—that can't be experienced by trusting in observed reality alone. The woman must be physically swept down into the watery merworld before she understands that she and her people are not only human, but rather double beings who exist in two worlds simultaneously.

Hobson presents the perplexing ambiguity of the Salish story with a calculated exactitude in both his conception and his craft. The trim three boxes, each displaying a new beachgoer image, are designed to be placed open on a shelf to allow a sequential experience of each doubled image, and a reading of the story as it appears on transparent mylar sheets on the mirrors and on an open three-part spread. The artist has, with a quiet mastery, taken the narrative fractures and the emotional ups and downs of the story and made them conform to an unobtrusive geometric scheme.

- 1 - Container, displaying title with reflected text
- 2 - One of three boxes with reflected image
- 3 - One of three boxes with reflected image



2



3

**Catherine Alice Michaelis' Sola:**

A Mythical Story About a Real Girl is a wholly original narrative that follows a hidden, but urgent autobiographical arc. The artist has taken the themes of the Salish myth of the merwoman and built a story about a girl—Michaelis' younger self presented as a fable—who suffers from profound isolation and only the vaguest memory of her early years. Or, to put it in the mythic language of both Sola's story and that of the girl in "The Salish Merwoman Tale," she was confused about her origins, both as a human and as part of a larger culture.

In the Merwoman story the girl has lost her people; she is confounded, estranged from human society. As for Sola, she retreats into a shell through which even magical-seeming objects and sounds cannot penetrate—a "red rock with a sliver of white quartz through the middle," a fan of dried leaves that "sounded like the wings of a great bald eagle swooping low," even happy families cooking over their hearths—nothing can break through.

The artist writes that she could have just as well titled her book "A True Story About a Mythological Girl." What she means by this is that her story, like that of the Merwoman, holds within it a shifting, volatile reality suffused by perhaps real, perhaps imagined creatures that possess knowledge beyond that of humanity. In the Sola story, a key figure is a winged fairy with a jaguar head. This creature is a precursor to a transformative scene to come. She is a magical "fierce mother" who is—critically—connected to "a long gone culture," which by implication is Sola's own missing past.

The final scene is a vision of sudden, curative self-awareness. Sola sees eyes everywhere looking at her but then realizes that they are her own eyes looking at her looking at herself. She is transformed by self-knowledge, the monsters are dispelled and the shell is shattered. As the shell falls around her, "each fragment gave a wink and flew away." She was freed.

To tell this story, the artist uses one of the basic printmaking techniques: the pressure print. It is an elemental form of relief printing normally executed on a letterpress. Its simplicity lends it a number of advantages over more technically intensive forms of printmaking.

**Catherine Alice Michaelis**

ARTIST

**Sola: A Mythical Story About a Real Girl**

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Salish Merwoman*

INSPIRATION TEXT

A traditional story related by Paul Cheokten Wagner

AUTHOR



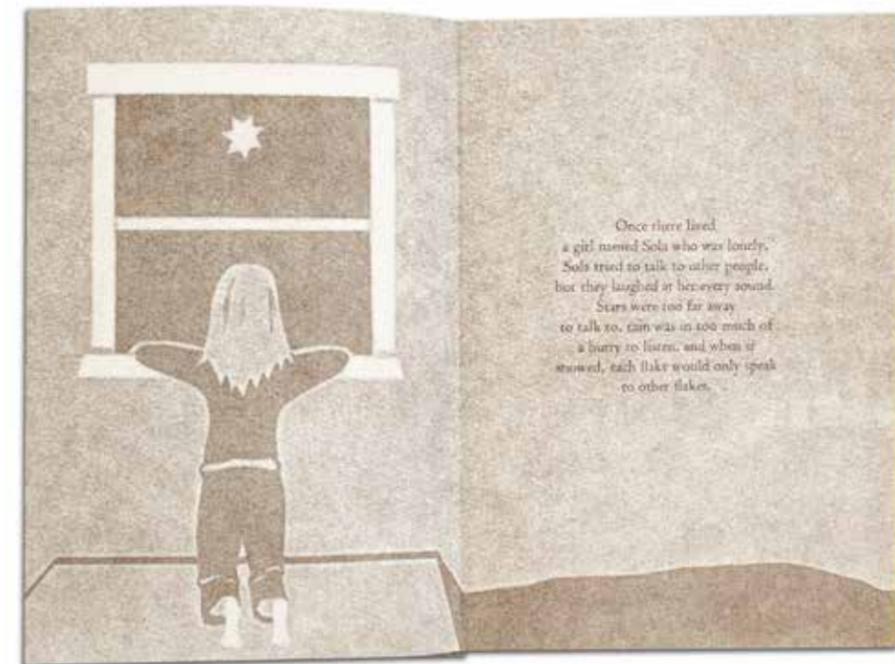
1

- 1 - Sola, gazing heavenward
- 2 - Sola, gazing at a star
- 3 - Winged jaguar fairy

Book closed 7" x 5" • Book spread 7" x 40"

For instance, as with Michaelis' work in Sola, a design can be achieved through nothing more than arrangements of cut paper. This gives the compositions a striking directness. A few crisply-cut, carefully controlled but uncomplicated shapes are enough to render a figure, suggest a plant form or articulate a decorative element. The letterpress text, handset by the artist, punctuates these straightforward illustrations. The entire design has a charming, understated quality that buoys the mythic dimension of the story without losing any of emotional turmoil experienced by this "real girl."

Inspiration text summarized on page 36



2



3

**The story of the Dragon King's daughter** comes to us from the twelfth chapter of the Lotus Sutra (100 BCE-200 CE). An eight-year-old girl lives in her father's under-sea palace. One day, she hears a bodhisattva, a being intent on enlightenment, preaching about enlightenment. The girl offers a jewel to the Buddha and is transformed by him into a man and then into a bodhisattva herself. She is subsequently transported instantaneously to the Spotless World Sphere in the south, where she attains enlightenment under a bodhi tree in less time than did Gautama Buddha, the primary figure in Buddhism. After attaining enlightenment, the dragon girl preaches dharma - the law of the universe - to all beings and is revered by people, bodhisattvas, dragons, and gods.

Hannah Bruckbauer was drawn to this story because of her own practice of Nichiren Buddhism and, equally important, because of her belief in equality and social justice, particularly as they apply to feminism. Her personal beliefs align perfectly with the Buddhist principle that any person can achieve enlightenment. Bruckbauer retells this story using Nichiren Buddhist symbols, beautifully displayed in a spare composition. The balance between positive image and negative space creates a sense of peace and serenity and allows the viewer to focus on the figures.

The artist tells the story of the Dragon King's daughter in an embroidery that uses Nichiren Buddhist symbols beautifully displayed in a spare and elegant composition. A fine balance between the images and negative space surrounding them creates a sense of peace and serenity; qualities further enhanced by a delicate symmetry in figures and symbols. A double running stitch is used both to outline the figures and for the internal detail. The off-white linen background fabric sets off the rich color palette used for the figures while a plain border in green linen picks up the greens that run throughout the interior of the piece.

The heroine of the story, the Dragon King's Daughter herself, occupies in the center of the composition. She is part human, part dragon, possessing a human head, torso, arms and hands that are gracefully combined with wings and a serpent body.

**Hannah Bruckbauer**  
ARTIST

**THE DRAGON KING'S DAUGHTER**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Enlightenment of the Dragon King's Daughter*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Kazuhiko Yoshida, Margaret H. Childs translator  
AUTHOR

Her headdress and the golden circle around her head pronounce her divinity. Her hands embrace a white right-coiled conch, a symbol of the deep, far-reaching and melodious sound of dharma teachings that signifies the sincerity of her faith and proves that she has achieved enlightenment.

The lion at the top of the piece represents courage, belief in one's self, inner strength, and the qualities of the bodhisattva. The lotus has broad symbolic significance, standing for enlightenment and the beauty and dignity of humanity in the face of suffering. It also indicates the principle of the simultaneity of cause and effect, a principle that says that though we are in an imperfect state, we can at any time bring forth the power of Mystic Law from within ourselves.

Other images refer to the Dragon King's daughter's former state before enlightenment. The water/cloud forms under the lotus point out that she lived in a palace at the bottom of the sea. They also symbolize clarity and purity of the body and mind.

The dragon stands for both the Dragon King as well as his daughter's unenlightened form. In Nichiren culture, dragons also symbolize water, compassion and luck. The embroidered text "Nam Myoho Renge Kyo" are the words to the Buddhist chant that means, "I devote myself to the Lotus Sutra."

It is Bruckbauer's frontal and direct presentation of her imagery that lends the piece its singular, forthright power. She has concentrated the story on a single piece of fabric in such a way that it seems both concrete and ephemeral, paralleling the transformation of the Dragon King's daughter from her low and worldly position to a state of enlightenment.



27 3/4" x 24 1/2"

**My soul wants to fly**, by BeAnne Hull, uses the story of the Dragon King's Daughter as a metaphor for the education of girls in Afghanistan. In this book, Hull focuses on the Gohar Khaton School, the largest school for girls in Mazar-i-sharif, Afghanistan.

The artist's late husband, Bob Hull, an award-winning architect, designed the school in conjunction with students from the Architecture Department of the University of Washington. BeAnne Hull was in Mazar-i-sharif for the school's opening.

The Gohar Khaton School is named after the wife of Rumi, the thirteenth century Persian poet. The story of the Dragon King's Daughter served as inspiration to the artist in the hopes that the students will demonstrate the same passion in seeking an education as the Dragon King's daughter did in seeking enlightenment. And indeed, for Afghani girls, education does equal enlightenment; it helps to create a safe place for girls to learn and serves as a pathway to change in their country.

The journey into this book begins when the viewer opens the red clamshell box, constructed by Mare Blocker, which is lined with Bob Hull's drawings on architect's vellum. Hull has stitched over these drawings, using a running stitch, in black, green and blue, the colors of the Afghan flag.

Inside is Hull's eight-page, double-sided accordion book "My soul wants to fly." Each of the images began as a watercolor, lithograph, linoleum block or silk screen print that was then scanned and printed with an ink jet printer on 90 pound heavy Arches cold press watercolor paper. The artist uses Kantha embroidery—a running stitch, patterned embroidery frequently seen in eastern South Asia—both to add pattern and texture to each page and to serve as a binding mechanism.

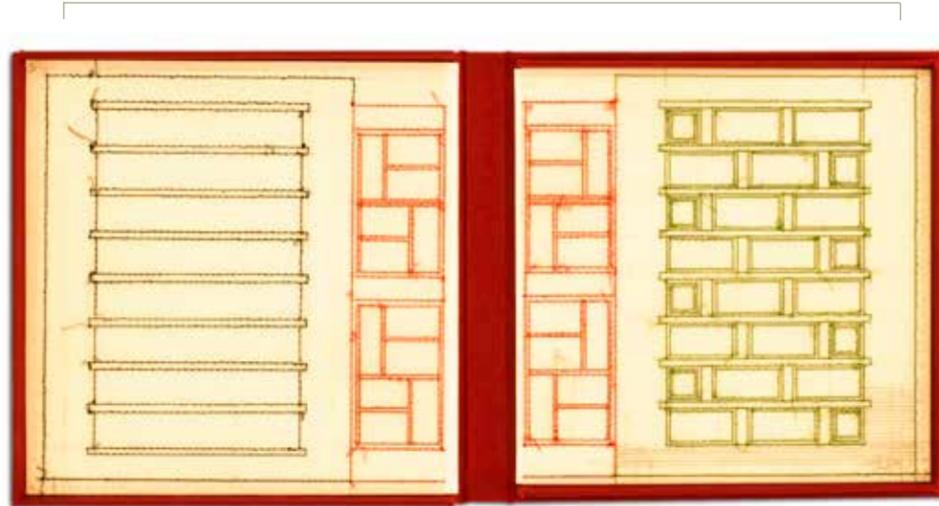
The images on the front of the book's pages include maps, the school buildings, landscapes and portraits of the students. Abstract images of oceans and starry skies add evocative notes. Hull has embellished the back of the pages with Islamic geometric patterns printed on architect's vellum.

**BeAnne Hull**  
ARTIST

**MY SOUL WANTS TO FLY**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*The Enlightenment of the Dragon King's Daughter*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Kazuhiko Yoshida, Margaret H. Childs translator  
AUTHOR



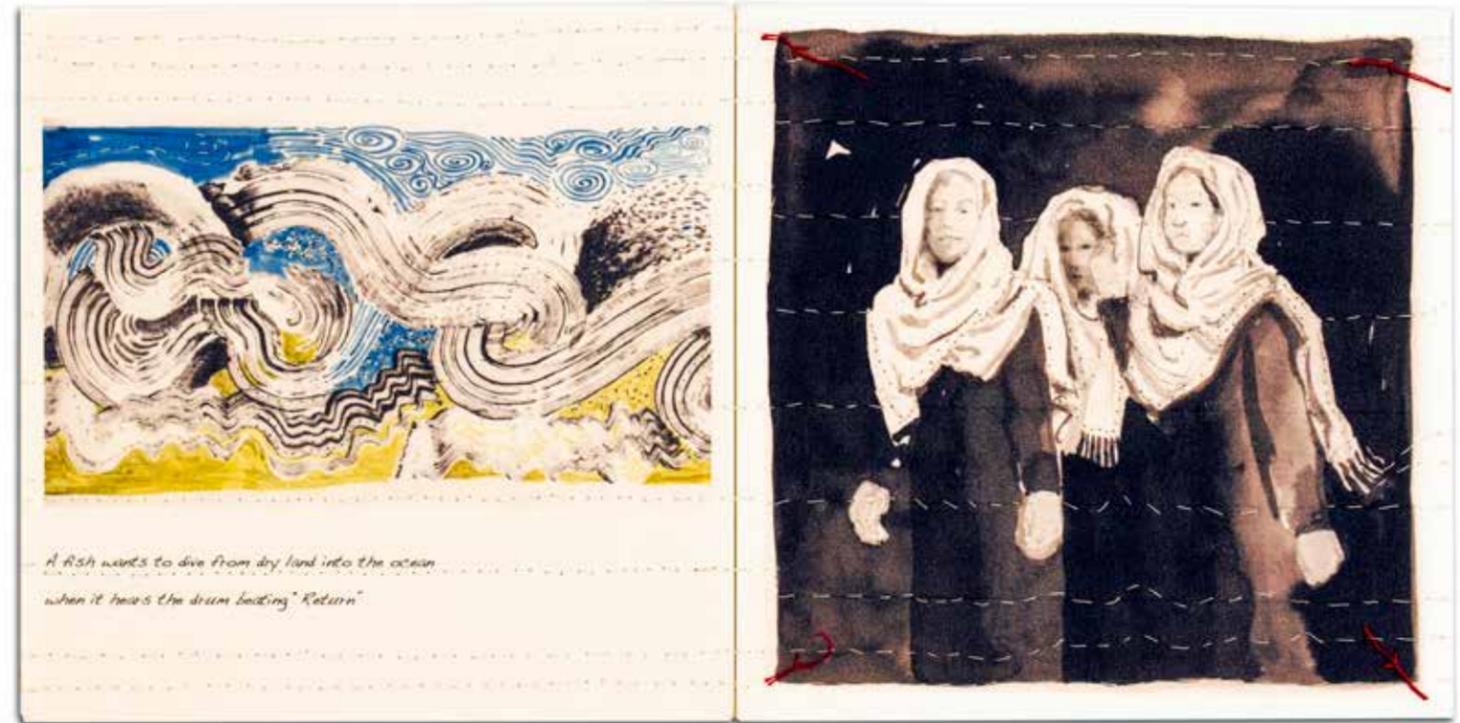
1

A number of the pages feature veils made of silk organza, which Hull has printed with sayings written in Dari, a dialect of the Persian language used in Afghanistan. The printed images show hazily through the obscuring veils and their texts. The simple act of lifting the veil is significant in that it echoes Hull's real life experience of interacting with many of the women she met in Afghanistan, who were often veiled.

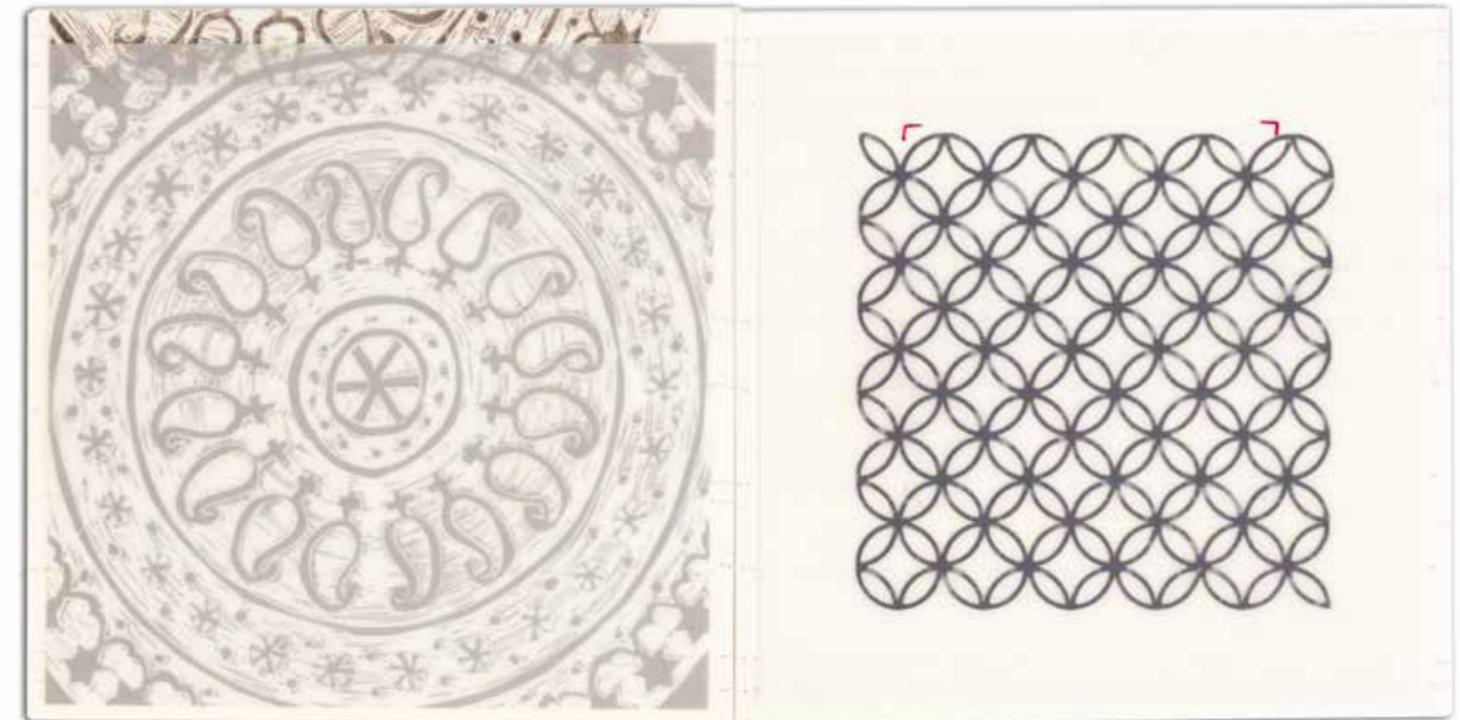
"My soul wants to fly" functions on many levels; it is a journal of Hull's visit to Mazar-i-sharif, as well as a tribute to the girls attending the school. It also importantly serves as a memorial to her late husband, so instrumental in the creation of the school. And finally, the message of the book communicates to the world that enlightenment for women, in the form of education, is alive and well in Afghanistan.

Inspiration text summarized on page 40

Book page 7 1/2" x 7 1/2" • Book open 7 1/2" x 60"



2



3

- 1 - Interior of box; embroidery over architectural drawing
- 2 - Illustrations: the ocean; three Afghan women
- 3 - Veiled images, geometric design

In ancient Greece, the job of priestess was a good one, providing one of the few opportunities for a respectable Greek woman to work outside the home. Many priestesses presided at festival time, allowing them to be seen in public in a prominent role. These priestesses were also able to have family lives and homes.

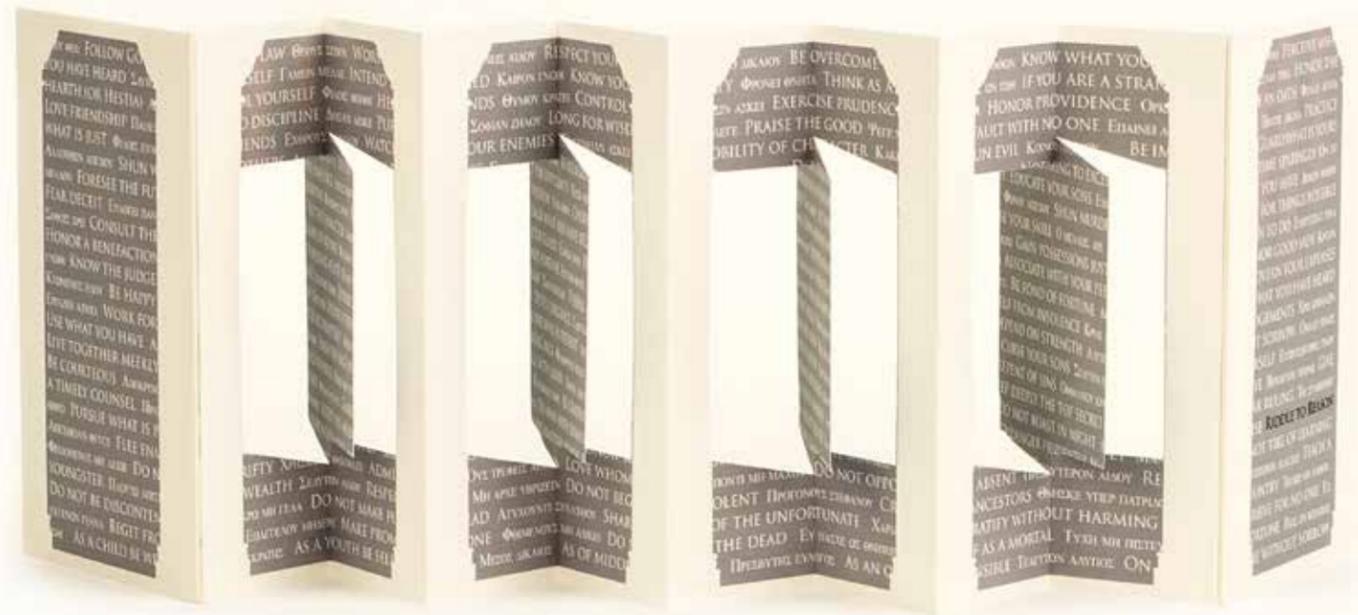
Not so for the Delphic Oracle. Known as the Pythia, this priestess was the most important oracle in all of ancient Greece. Her position as head oracle was a lifetime commitment, requiring that she remain chaste and live within the Temple of Apollo on the Delphic plain. Her work was performed under the auspices of the god Apollo, known for his power to communicate prophecy to both mortals and immortals.

**Kathryn Leonard**  
ARTIST

**RIDDLE TO REASON**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Moralia*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Plutarch, Frank Cole Babbitt, translator  
AUTHOR



1

Delphic pronouncements were given in enigmatic language, thereby compelling supplicants to unravel mysteries and supply their own interpretations. The Greeks believed that ambiguity was the language of prophecy and human fallibility was the cause for the missed meanings and misinterpretations of many Delphic pronouncements.



2

Kate Leonard explores the space between the language of prophecy and the interpretation of the message in her book, *Riddle to Reason*. The inventive structure of her book and the rhythmic flow of her poetry begins with a cryptic, Delphic-like riddle:

I know the number of grains of sand  
and the extent of the sea,  
And the deaf I understand  
and the speechless I hear.

Progressing through the poem's several stanzas, Leonard leads us from riddle to reason:

We ask, we seek.  
The oracle meets us at the precipice  
between our hopes and fears.  
She speaks, but we must apprehend.

The closing line, "Defend the head, and the head will defend the body," returns the reader to prophecy, precipitating the human propensity for misinterpretation.

The architectural structure of Leonard's book, developed by Hedi Kyle, suggests the Temple of Apollo. The pivoting panel accordion design allows views from an interior aspect—the Pythia's perspective—and the exterior, that of a supplicant. Here, on the implied temple columns, Leonard has inscribed in both Greek and English the 147 Delphic Maxims. Within the interplay of the interior and exterior planes, the artist again deftly illustrates her title: the maxims, such as "Know thyself" and "Exercise prudence" are unequivocal principles of wisdom and moral values—the title's "Reason," as a counterpoint to the "Riddle" of the Delphic Oracle.

Each of the six panels of the interior view features a stanza of Leonard's poem set against aerial photographs of clouds and landscapes, evoking of the Delphic plain. Leonard's gorgeous clouds, at once dramatic and ephemeral, could serve as a visual surrogate for the Oracle herself—powerful, unknowable and mysterious. The exterior suggests the Temple columns, inscribed with the 147 Delphic Maxims. The text and photographic imagery were designed in CS5 and inkjet printed on Strathmore 500 series paper, with museum board covers.

The elegant simplicity of *Riddle to Reason* belies the way that it fashions a sophisticated and complex space. Within this created space, Leonard not only invites the viewer to contemplate ancient oracular pronouncements but also to consider the human desire, evident even today, to "connect the dots," and, often with only scant information, find clarity in ambiguity.

1 - Exterior of the Temple at Delphi with inscribed maxims  
2 - Interior of the Temple at Delphi looking out on the plain

Book Closed 8" x 4 ½" • Book open 8" x 23 ½"

**The well-known story of the 1001 Nights** relates tales collected from folklore and the literature of Persia, India, and the Middle East, all set within the “frame” story of King Shahryar and the clever storyteller Scheherazade.

After his wife is unfaithful, the king loses all faith in women, and from then on marries a new virgin each night, only to have her executed in the morning. As the supply of virgins dwindles, Scheherazade, daughter of Shahryar’s vizier, volunteers to wed the king and, on their wedding night, begins a story that continues through the night, a story so compelling that the king postpones her execution to hear the rest of the tale. The next night Scheherazade begins another cliff-hanger, equally spellbinding, and continues this tactic for 1001 nights, after which a thoroughly enthralled Shahryar pardons her and renounces his bloody vow. Scheherazade thus saves her own life and the lives of countless other women.

Suzanne Moore writes that a major stimulus for her artist’s book, *Scheherazade Women of Persia: The Most Beautiful Woman in the World*, was Rimsky-Korsakov’s famous symphonic poem “Scheherazade.” In a parallel to the composer, who depended on music alone to produce a broad sensation of an Oriental fantasy, Moore employs a lush and varied visual language most often based on Islamic design to build a veiled sense of an exotic setting appropriate for the Scheherazade story. In Moore’s words, she creates “the feeling of enclosures that unfold in layers, suggesting curtains, latticework, and walls that sequestered the inhabitants of the rooms...” In short, her *Scheherazade*, like Rimsky-Korsakov’s piece, is an abstract construction.

Thus it is that the presence of this most entrancing of women is only suggested implicitly. For instance, Scheherazade’s name appears twice in the pages of the book: once in the interlocking cursive letters that is a kind of golden Scheherazade monogram; and again secreted within the arcs and color splotches of a Kandinsky-like calligraphy.

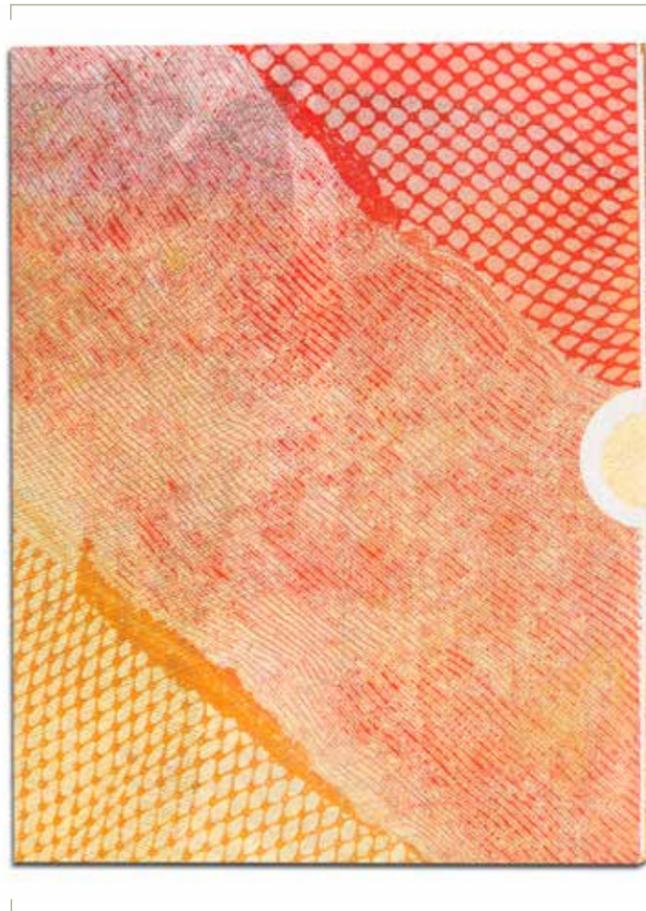
**Suzanne Moore**  
ARTIST

*Scheherazade Women of Persia:  
The Most Beautiful Women in the World*

TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

*Tales of the Arabian Nights*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

A traditional story  
AUTHOR



1

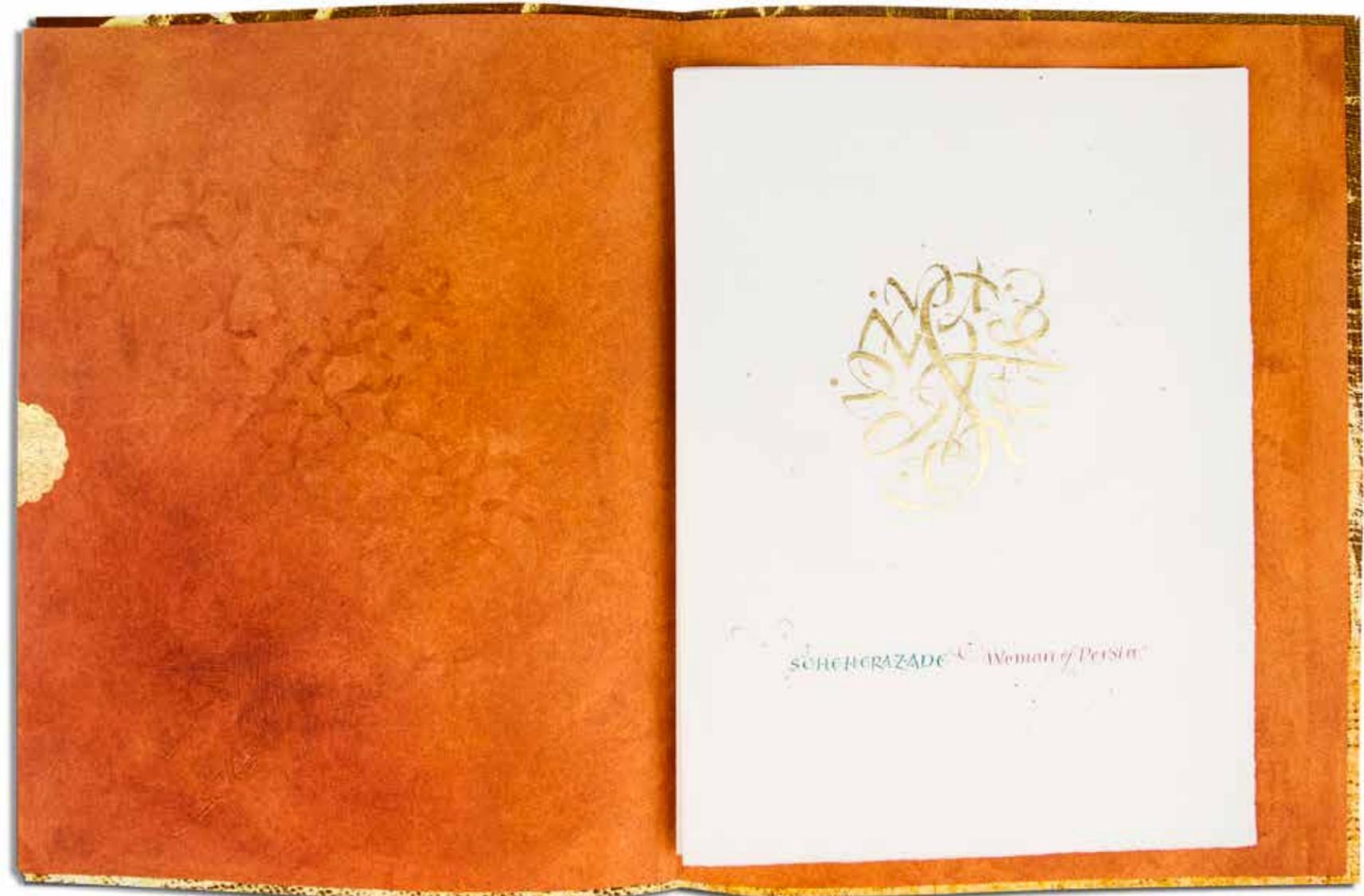
Book cover 15" x 11 1/2" • Page size 13" x 9 1/2"  
Fold out closed 14 3/4" x 11" • Fold out open 14 3/4" X 44"

Moore relies on the suggestive powers of color, texture and pattern to generate the opulent and sensuous atmosphere of Scheherazade’s world. Each page offers a fresh aesthetic proposition. Some are decorated with motifs borrowed from the interlocking Arabesque bands of a Persian carpet or from the intricate lattice-like patterns of a Moroccan tile, while others offer gorgeous color fields textured and variegated by subtle color shifts that produce a kind of minimalist, all-over color radiance. Or, more lyrically, Moore will flood the entire page with luminescent, unbounded color. In these techniques, she approaches the color field paintings of the 1970s.

Moore splendidly varies these color/pattern ideas from page to page by using monoprint; debossed designs on vintage paper, foil tooling and cork portfolio liners darkly stained in transitions of cool and warm hues. These liners set a somber tone that effectively frame the dazzling celebration of Islamic pattern and color to come.

Moore has masterfully assimilated and reworked the visual splendor of Islamic art by a fusion of modern and old materials and techniques. Like Scheherazade, she has woven a narrative so entrancing that one is propelled forward to the final page.

1 - Cover  
2 - Title page with “Scheherazade” in gold leaf lettering



2

In this very short excerpt from Aristotle's "On Dreams," the fourth century philosopher tells his readers that when a menstruating woman looks into a "very clean mirror" the mirror "becomes bloody-dark, like a cloud." He goes on to note that the stain may be easily wiped off an old mirror, but if the mirror is new, it is less easy to clean. This is because "vision [...] is not only affected by the air, but indeed it also affects and does something to it." In fact, this selection is subtitled "An illustration of how the eye affects what it sees." In this passage, the menstruating women's gaze is nonetheless incredibly powerful—having itself been affected by the woman's menstruation, this gaze in turn affects objects in the physical world.

Aristotle's antiquated treatise was the springboard for Robbin Ami Silverberg's visual and textual commentary on identity from a feminist perspective. The artist's book, "Mirror Mirror, or, The Tainted Tain" is captivating, marvelously ambiguous and dense with reference.

Starting with the alliterative title ("tain" is the tin foil on the back of mirrors), Silverberg draws parallels to the themes of reflection, obfuscation, equivalencies and perception. The book consists of nine unbound, layered and folded pages ensconced in a pocket within a finely crafted container. The cover, created with Silverberg's own pulp paper, resembles a network of dark red blood vessels, and hints at what is within. On the interior pages, the artist presents a series of self-portraits along with her own text and quotations from Aristotle, Franz Kafka and the French novelist Georges Perec.

Mirrors are clearly the central motif, but in this case, the smartphone camera also functions as a looking glass. Silverberg uses both to set up a reverberating visual exchange: the viewer looks at the image of the artist; Silverberg returns the viewer's gaze by looking in a mirror while taking a selfie, essentially looking at herself being looked at. This two-way encounter with herself, mediated by technology, is both reflexive and self-reflective. Overlaid with varying degrees of murkiness—some are almost obliterated by paper that has been painted blood-stain red—Silverberg's self-portraits proclaim the shifting and fungible nature of the 'self' and challenge the viewer's gaze by reclaiming her own image.

**Robbin Ami Silverberg**

ARTIST

## Mirror Mirror (or, The Tainted Tain)

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Excerpt on Menstruation from "On Dreams"*

INSPIRATION TEXT

Aristotle

AUTHOR



1

Mirror Mirror closed 13 ½" x 5 ½"

In one spread, a quote from Aristotle includes the phrase "...the eye (in seeing) is affected (by the object seen), so also it produces a certain effect upon it." Silverberg couples this with a shadowy self-portrait, the reflective glare of a flash partially obscuring her face. Underneath the image is a rectangle of silver foil, itself reflecting an obfuscated image—the viewer's own. Another self-portrait is adjacent; here the artist can be seen in her studio, leaning into the frame and gazing intently out at the viewer. The smartphone looms large, as if to underscore the conflation of subject and

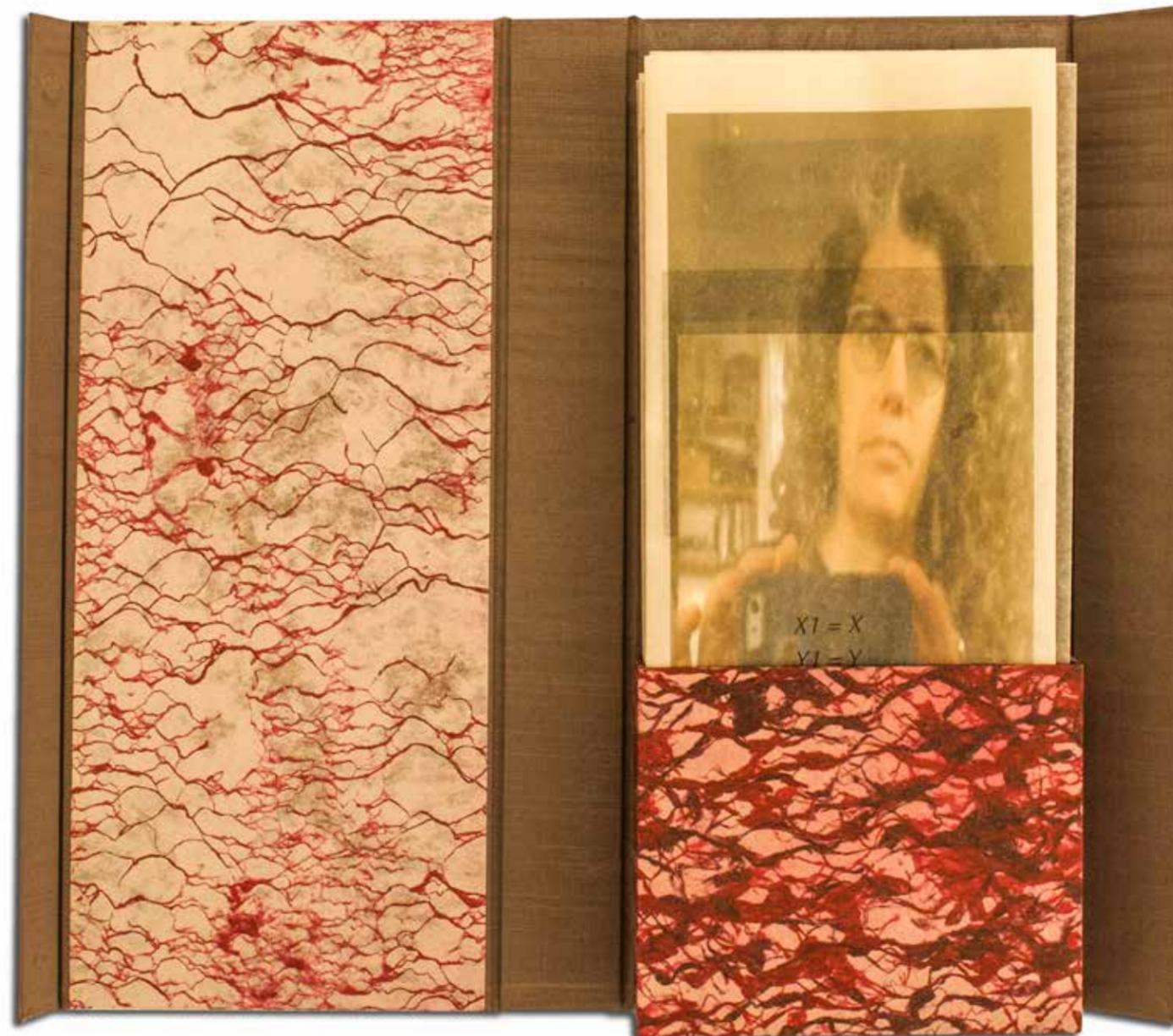
object. With the spread still partially folded, this image is overlaid with the text "Each work is the mirror of another." Opened, the text, somewhat veiled by the semi-opaque paper, can be read in reverse image, as if one were viewing it in a mirror.

Silverberg's stake on self-identity is provocative. By various formal means—a kind of photographic chiaroscuro and sfumato, the layering of translucent papers, the addition of "disruptions" such as the "flashbulb" glare—she clouds the self-portraits, even as her gaze is direct and

unequivocal. It is in this push and pull that the image and the identity is both immediate and distanced. In Silverberg's hands, the self is never quite revealed, but is rather lost in a shadowy realm or diffused by mirror-like reflections.

1 - Closed book; cover of artist made paper embedded with red paper pulp

2 - Opened book, displaying first of seven folds; selfie of the artist



2

**Christa Wolf's radical retelling** of the story of Medea puts the titular character's vision and visions at the heart of the story. Firmly denying the vicious murders usually ascribed to her in variants of the Greek myth, Medea here relates her own story, unapologetically claiming the full extent of her magical and feminine power. In the Corinth of Medea, inequalities of race, gender, and class speak to our own time. So, too, do the ways in which the ruling elites of both Corinth and Medea's native Colchis commit unspeakable acts in the name of order and do their best to forget inconvenient and embarrassing elements of their own histories. Throughout, Medea refuses to engage in the power games of court, secure in her own innate authority even as she is framed, reviled, abandoned and finally exiled from everything familiar.

Elsi Vassdal Ellis re-imagines Wolf's novel in a highly refined visual creation featuring stately figures in harmonic poses. These figures are based closely on Greek attic pottery, and Vassdal Ellis retains the restraint and concision of the originals, as well as the seductive orange and black color scheme. Her Medea is emphatically calm and cool — surprisingly so, given the violence of the theme. This impressive formal reserve alone signals that this is a redeemed Medea, one who has shed her reputed role as a fierce sorceress. In addition to Wolf's novel, Vassdal Ellis used as a source text *Medea*, translated by Ruby Blondell, in *Women On the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides*.

The work has two distinct components: the beautifully articulated attic figures — actors in a play, as Vassdal Ellis conceives them; and texts of monologues bisected by drawn, fold-out portraits of the "speaking" character. The figures are strategically displayed in rows on gate-fold "stages." The boldly drawn monologue characters are accessed by numbered pull-out panels that become three-dimensional when activated by thumb pulls. The ensemble is neatly fitted into an impeccably designed box covered in black Asahi mohair book cloth.

The full range of the narrative is revealed through an engaging interplay of texts and images, a process that is enacted by the reader/viewer as she joins a particular character with a corresponding "scene" on one of the stages.

**Elsi Vassdal Ellis**  
ARTIST

**MEDEA**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Medea*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Christa Wolf  
AUTHOR



1

- 1 - Monologue panel
- 2 - Three individual character portraits and monologue panel
- 3 - Opened container with character portraits and panels tucked inside

Accordions 7 1/2" x 22 1/2" • Portraits 7 1/2" x 4" • Folders 7 1/2" x 4"



2

Each monologue panel is coded with a different Greek border design that matches up to a border running along the bottom of each gate-fold stage.

This participatory element leads inevitably to some ambiguity as the story moves from text to image and back again. Vassdal Ellis prepares us for this eventuality with the very first character, Koryphasios, "... the spokesperson for the Greek chorus, whose monologue is a kind of instructional manual with disclaimers.

"Some players will introduce themselves here in this opening act and then be gone," says Koryphasios, "...others will occupy every scene... Prepare yourself. Great liberties may have been taken in the adaptation of the characters and their stories. In the blink of an eye the nuances of truth may be lost..."

Out of this will come a reclaimed Medea, beset by palace intrigue and political machinations, innocent of her reputed crimes but powerless to prove it.

Vassdal Ellis' inventive structure and skillful execution of this book allows the viewer not only to be a witness to Medea's transformation, but to participate in it.



3

**The story of Urvashi and Pururavas** appears in many ancient Sanskrit texts, including the Rig Veda, the Mahabhrata and, “How Urvashi Was Won,” a five act play by the classical Sanskrit author Kalidasa. Like many ancient stories, the details vary slightly from text to text. The story begins when Urvashi, an immortal apsaras, or heavenly nymph, is abducted by a demon while returning to her home in the company of other apsaras. Upon being rescued by the human hero king Pururavas—during which Urvashi feels the first touch of a mortal—the two fall in love. Both are sure of their own feelings, but neither believes that their love is reciprocated, so they pine for each other from afar. During a dance performance, Urvashi calls out the name of Pururavas rather than the god Vishnu and is, as a result, cursed by her teacher, the sage Bharat: she will marry the one she loves and give birth to his son, but will have to choose between the two, because if husband and son ever see each other, she will be spirited back to heaven and forced to abandon them both.

Undeterred, Urvashi and Pururavas marry. They live together for sixteen years, during which time Urvashi secretly gives birth to their son, hiding him from Pururavas in the care of a sage hermit and his wife. Eventually, however, the sage brings the son to Pururavas, and Urvashi is, as the curse threatened, transported back to heaven.

Mare Blocker creates something of a miniature theater-in-the-round in her carousel book, entitled “getting what you want turns everything around,” a line taken from an English translation of Kalidasa’s version of “How Urvashi Was Won.” A carousel book is comprised of a set of overlapping concertina, or “zig-zag,” folds from which sections may be, as happens here, cut out to create the illusion of three-dimensional scenes. There are six scenes in all: Pururavas, Urvashi, Kurtikaya’s Grove, Reuniting Ruby, Ayus, and Departure. The book literally unfolds to tell this story through the use of paper cutouts and Blocker’s beautiful and expressive henna-colored ink drawings, the color of which recalls the designs and motifs used by Indian women to decorate their hands and bodies for their weddings and other festive occasions.

The characters in this drama are able to “see” each other, and yet they remain separated. As the carousel is opened, the narrative literally unfolds scene by scene, the cutouts creating a stage-like dimension as events move along.

**Mare Blocker**  
ARTIST

*getting what you want turns everything around*

TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

*How Urvashi Was Won*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Kalidasa  
AUTHOR



1

1 - Interior of box with hand painted henna-colored design  
2 - Fourth opened fold of six-fold carousel book

Book closed 7 ¼" x 5 ½" • Open 7 ¼" x 29"

The cutouts also give the impression that the characters in the drama can observe one another and yet maintain their separate realms. On facing pages and on the lining of the box are circle-and-grid patterns, hand-drawn in the same henna-colored ink.

As is her practice, Blocker adds many autobiographical details. For instance, the depictions of Urvashi and Pururavas are portraits based on Blocker and her husband. Kurtikaya’s Grove, where Pururavas must search for Urvashi, (who at this point in the story has been turned into a vine) shares many features with the artist’s Idaho property.

Blocker often walks at night and observes intriguing shadow-plays on window shades and curtains. Some of these happenstance scenes, translated through her cutout technique, become part of the book’s story. By placing her own and her husband’s images and her individual experiences at the center of her art, Blocker draws together the personal and the mythological and places herself—and the reader—at the heart of an ancient love story. The tensions of new love, forced separation, the painful longing of loss, and the joy of reunification—all of these common experiences are subsumed by the grand dimensions of the myth. Blocker gathers all the story’s elements and ushers them into her personal experience, lending a fresh intimacy to the legend’s universal themes.



“The Dead Feminists” is the name of a series of broadsides created through the collaboration of Jessica Spring and Chandler O’Leary. Begun in 2008, the series features quotes by historical feminists that relate to current political and social issues.

The term “broadsides” refers to a large sheet of paper with a printed message on the front side that, historically, contained political statements or opinions or served as advertisements or public announcements. Originating sometime in the 16th century and flourishing well into the 19th century, broadsides aimed to immediately catch the eye with bold, if sometimes rough-hewn graphics. Nailed up in the village square or handed out to passersby, they were precursors to the modern poster and flyer, meant to be viewed and thrown away.

Contemporary letterpress printers have embraced the broadside for its immediacy and fresh aesthetic potential. While retaining the striking graphic character of the original broadside, modern printers have transformed what was a mass-produced throw-away into a finely executed and thoughtfully conceived work.

For the twenty-third broadside in the “Dead Feminist” series, Spring and O’Leary have chosen a work by Sappho, who in antiquity was regarded as perhaps the most quintessentially lyric poet. It is a testament to the profound beauty and craft of her verse that she is still considered so today.

The title “Age Before Beauty” refers to the myth of Eos, goddess of the Dawn, and Tithonus, her mortal lover. Eos, fearing the loss of her lover, asked Zeus to make Tithonus immortal. Zeus complied with her request, but because Tithonus was human, Zeus was not able to keep him from aging. Thus, Tithonus lived forever, continually aging and finally ending as a shriveled cicada, wishing for death.

The broadside shows a vivid O’Leary rendering of a Greek amphora. Inscribed along the upper portion of the vessel is the legend “To grow old is to be Human.” This quote is taken from Josephine Balmer’s translation of the Köln Sappho fragment.

Chandler O’Leary & Jessica Spring  
ARTISTS

AGE BEFORE BEAUTY  
TITLE OF ARTISTS’ BOOK

Sappho 58  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Josephine Balmer, translator  
AUTHOR

On the amphora, a young Sappho, portrayed as Aphrodite, goddess of sexual passion, is depicted in the flower of feminine sexual maturity, her elaborately styled black hair festooned with jewels and Aphrodite’s fabled mirror hanging from her waistband. Playing the lyre, she strides suggestively, hips thrust forward. Opposite her is aged Athena, goddess of wisdom and craft. She sits, stooped over, still playing a lyre, with her hair a snow-white mass with her totem owl perched atop the chair, looking out at the viewer. A register depicting a row of deer, another nod to Balmer’s translation, graces the bottom of the vessel, while below an almost jaunty cursive lettering spells out Sappho’s name.

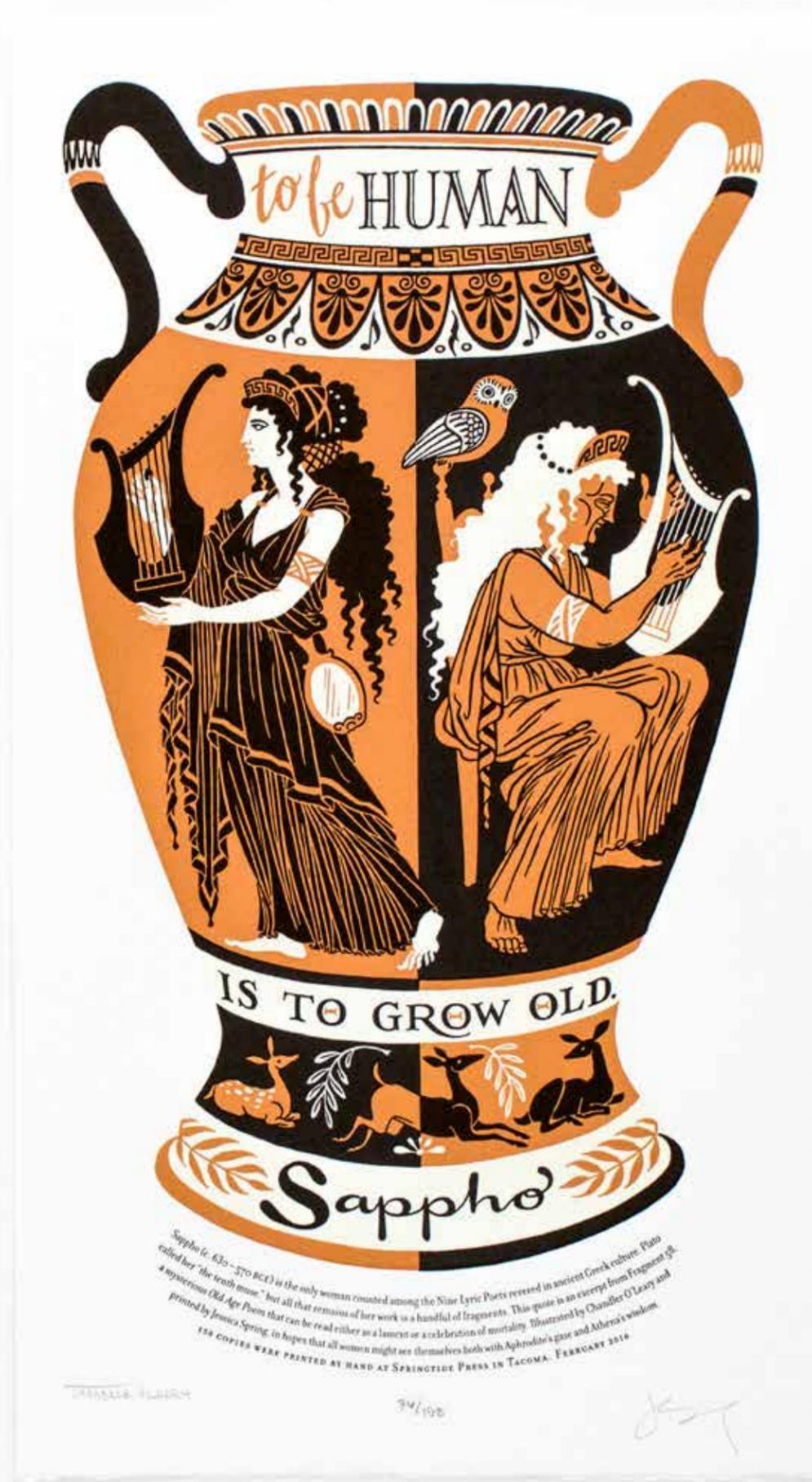
The registration of the image required special techniques and many plates to properly join the delicate details. In the end, Spring produced a seamless print with the incisive black and red figures meticulously aligned.

Age Before Beauty speaks to the human condition of aging and mortality, as does Sappho’s poem. In a parallel to the way that the historical broadside drew attention to political issues of the times, O’Leary and Spring’s broadside generates an awareness of the current politics addressing women’s aging.

By including an image of an old Athena in marked contrast to the youthful Aphrodite, O’Leary and Spring suggest that age should indeed be considered before beauty. Age holds within it wisdom gained through years of living; beauty, meanwhile, little by little withers away.

1 - Broadside showing Greek Amphora featuring Sappho and Athena; text from Sappho 58

Broadside 18" x 9 7/8"



*Sappho (c. 630–570 BCE) is the only woman credited among the Nine Lyric Poets revered in ancient Greek culture. Plato called her “the tenth muse,” but all that remains of her work is a handful of fragments. This quote is an excerpt from Fragment 58, a mysterious (Old Age Poem) that can be read either as a lament or a celebration of mortality. Illustrated by Chandler O’Leary and printed by Jessica Spring, in hopes that all women might see themselves both with Aphrodite’s gaze and Athena’s wisdom. 150 COPIES WERE PRINTED BY HAND AT SPRINGTIDE PRESS IN TACOMA, FEBRUARY 2016.*

In most versions of this story, Cassandra, the daughter of Hecuba of Troy and King Priam, is given the gift of prophecy by an enamored Apollo. Upon spurning his love, however, the gift turns to a curse: Cassandra's dire warnings, while true, will never be believed. Christa Wolf, who is well-known for her retellings of Greek myth that torque the stories to present-day concerns, interprets the tale of Cassandra as that of a woman in a gendered bind – in her version, Cassandra must keep silent about her foreknowledge of the fall of Troy because she is forbidden to speak of it by her father, whom she deeply loves. In fact, a major focus of the novel is on the relationships of Cassandra with the men and women in her family. Ultimately, in Wolf's retelling, Cassandra the mad, doomed seeress of myth becomes Cassandra the silenced woman, unique in her own experience but united with all women who have been disbelieved and forbidden from speaking truth.

Robin Price makes a connection between the silenced Cassandra and Rachel Carson, whose 1962 book "Silent Spring" warned of the perils of pesticides and impending environmental disaster. After the book was published Carson was called radical, disloyal, hysterical, unscientific and accused of being a communist. In Price's spectacular work "Predicting a Dire Future: Cassandra, Rachel Carson and our Contemporaries," the artist makes a further connection, linking the two women "prophets" to the current environmental movement and the widespread tendency toward denial regarding impending eco-disasters.

The foundation of Price's environmentally rooted narrative is a brilliantly conceived, artist-made agave plant, the 28 realistic leaves made with Arches 88 paper, painted and then dipped into beeswax. The entire structure is held together by dyed and beeswaxed linen cord, and knotted to keep the leaves upright and secure them to the base. The cord is then unraveled at both ends and spread out to resemble wandering roots as well as the plant tissue at the heart of the agave that will eventually flower.

Inscribed on each leaf are excerpts from Christa Wolf's novel, quotes from — and about — Rachel Carson's writings and commentaries from authors such as Alan AtKisson, Jane Goodall and Adrienne Rich on topics as diverse as radioactive waste, climate change and animal agriculture. The quotations are inscribed by the artist's hand, making each testimony both intimate and palpable.

**Robin Price**

ARTIST

## *Witnessing a Dire Future: Cassandra, Rachel Carson, and our Contemporaries*

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Cassandra*

INSPIRATION TEXT

Christa Wolf



1

1 - Artist-made agave plant; leaves inscribed with text

2 - Agave plant, displaying linen cord "plant tissue"

Book as object 15" x 20" • Each leaf 14 1/4" x 7"

This quote, from Rachel Carson, sets a somber tone: "The most alarming of all man's assaults upon the environment is the contamination of air, earth, rivers, and sea with dangerous and even lethal materials. This pollution is for the most part irrecoverable... as Albert Schweitzer has said 'Man can hardly even recognize the devil of his own creation.'" From Alan AtKisson comes this trenchant message: "We have no idea what phase in the evolution of conscious organization comes after sustainability. But it would certainly be nice to give our descendants a chance to find out."

Price's work is a cautionary tale, freighted with dire socio-political and environmental consequences. But beneath the gloom runs a strain of optimism in the fact that the artist has chosen to frame her message around the agave plant. In nature, the agave is known for its dramatic, robust shape, spike-tipped leaves and its many medicinal properties. Most notably, the agave is able to survive drought and poor soil conditions — it survives and thrives where other plants can't.

In Mexico it is known as the "Tree of Life and Abundance." The agave, then, is an auspicious metaphor, one that signals a determined hope for the future of humanity and the planet.



2

**The story of Orpheus, found in** Books X and XI of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, relates the tale of the Thracian bard and his wife, Eurydice, who dies of snakebite on their wedding day. Wracked with grief, Orpheus descends into the underworld and implores Hades and Persephone to return his wife to him. Entranced by his music, the rulers of the underworld call Eurydice forward to follow Orpheus back to the world of the living. But, as gods are wont to do, they set one hard and fast condition: as Orpheus leads Eurydice out of the darkness and into the light, he must not look back at her. Alas, at the very threshold of the upper world, Orpheus becomes desperate to see that Eurydice is following and looks back, only to catch a fleeting glimpse of her as she slips back into the underworld forever.

Like a cinematic fade to white, the Eurydice image in Fred Hagstrom's work progressively grows paler with each turn of the page. It is a visual dissolution that directly parallels Eurydice's falling away from Orpheus's unwise gaze. What remains at the close is a white page—slightly agitated by wisps of what might be representations of smoke—upon which is set a passage from Ovid's story.

Hagstrom makes an important revision in the Orpheus and Eurydice story: Eurydice is not the passive character that she is often presented to be. As the cropped portrait so powerfully demonstrates, here is an image of a strong-willed woman. Her gaze is firm, her mouth is set, the chiaroscuro lending her head a sense of gravity and weight. Orpheus's gaze is the cause of Eurydice's undoing, no doubt, but in Hagstrom's interpretation it is Eurydice's gaze that provides the prime focus of the narrative. It is a confident and disarmingly intimate image. Even as it slips away from view, her eyes lock inexorably with our own. She engages the viewer straight-on. If she has vulnerabilities, she is keeping them under wraps.

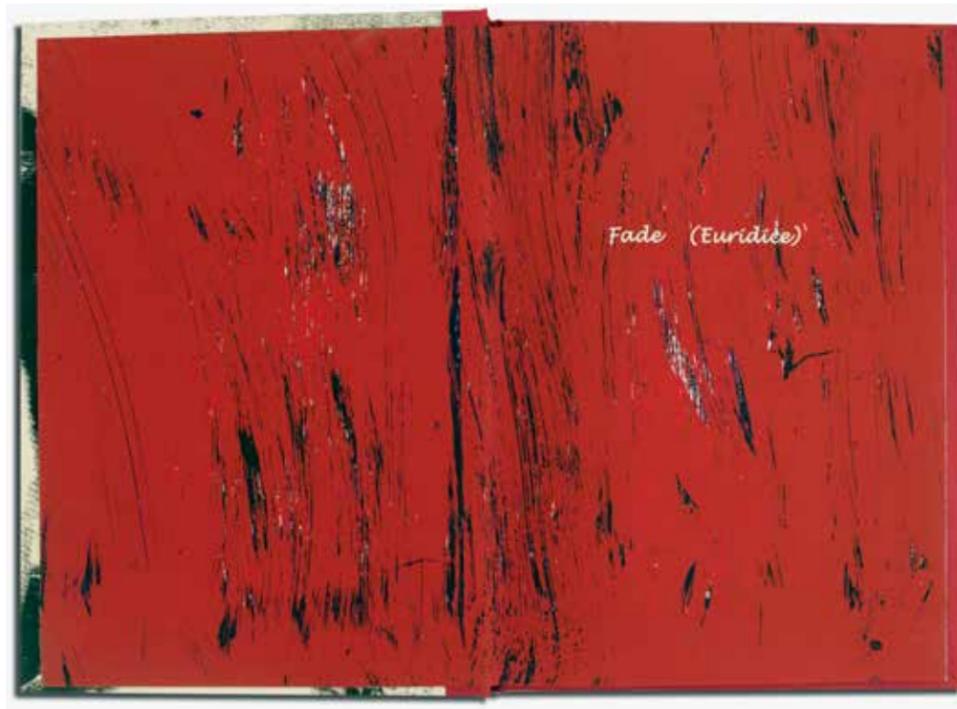
In the myth, Orpheus, undone by the fatal power of his own gaze, tries in vain to return to the underworld. He finally abjures women altogether. Ultimately, he is torn apart by a band of female followers of Bacchus enraged that he has forsworn the company of women. His severed head floats down the Hebrus, and, in a musical post-mortem, it still sings. In the underworld, where dangerous gazes have no effect, Orpheus is reunited with his beloved in the afterlife, free to look on her at will.

**Fred Hagstrom**  
ARTIST

**FADE**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Orpheus and Euridyce: Metamorphoses*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Ovid  
AUTHOR



1

- 1 - Codex, opened
- 2 - Eurydice, strongly present
- 3 - Eurydice, fading

Book closed 14 3/4" x 10 3/8" • Book open 14 3/4" x 20 1/2" • Prints 14 1/4" x 19 7/7"



2



3

“An Ethiopian Story” by Heliodorus, one of the five complete novels that survive from ancient Greece, begins in the middle of the narrative. Like the opening scene of a film, the story begins with a long shot of a beach: a ship drifts in the water, bodies are strewn about, and a beautiful young girl tends to a wounded man. We have no idea what has just happened. The novel takes many twists and turns as it relates the story of Charakleia, the girl on the beach, daughter of the King and Queen of Ethiopia. She is born white because her mother, at the moment of her conception, gazes on a painting of white Andromeda. As the Queen is Ethiopian and black, she is terrified that she’ll be accused of adultery, so she sends her baby away. The story of Charakleia’s journey and eventual reunion with her parents is the backbone of the novel. A convoluted journey ensues, replete with pirates, highwaymen, disguise and deception. Like many ancient novels, it is easy to interpret this story as a superficial romance, yet the novel raises questions about race and gender that we continue to debate today.

If “An Ethiopian Story” can be compared to a cinematic epic, then Lise Melhorn-Boe’s *Look, don’t touch*, has matched its sensational and byzantine plot with dash and drama. The novel, with its subterfuge, romance and intrigue and its capacious cast of characters—Greeks, Persians, Egyptians and so-called Ethiopians (actually, as the author learned, Kushites)—inspired Melhorn-Boe to create a pop-up version of the tale using photocopies of actual artwork gleaned from those ancient civilizations combined with original drawings and paintings.

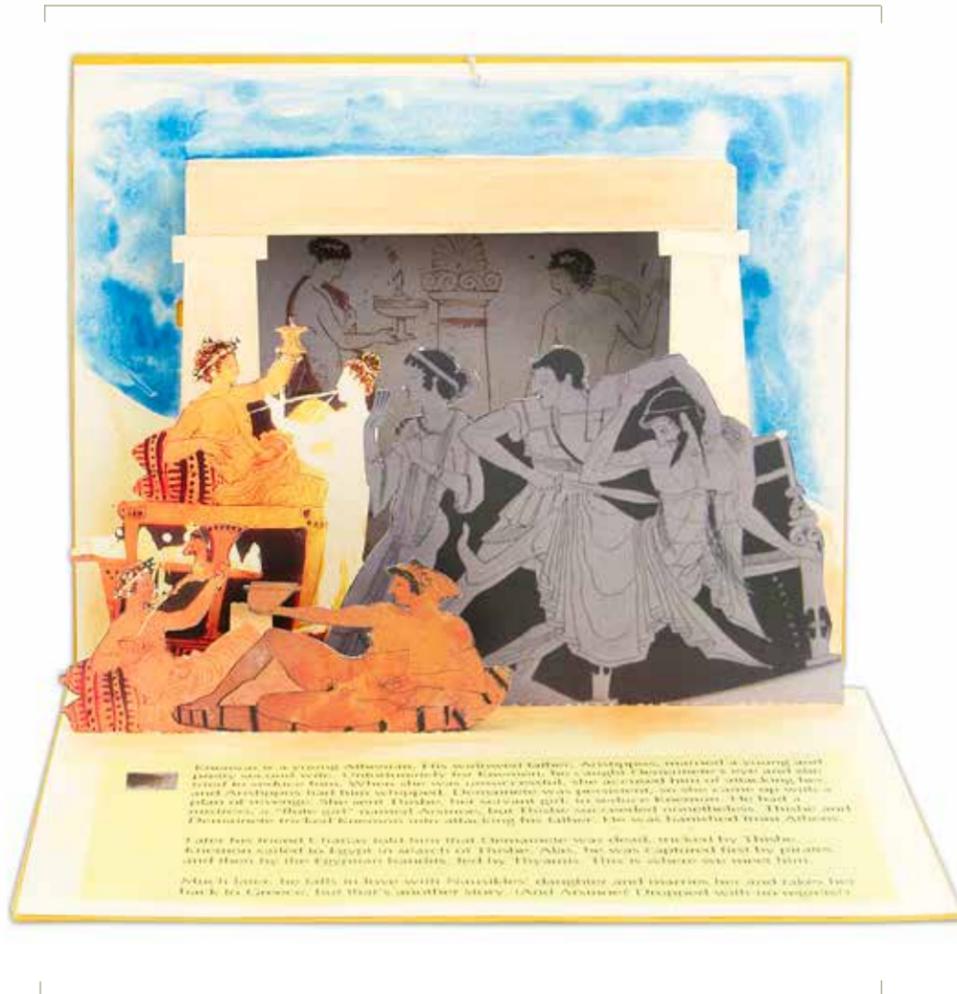
With ingenious paper engineering, Melhorn-Boe captures the multi-layered narrative in an assemblage of overlapping images. On thirteen visually captivating pop-up scenes, each separately housed in a handmade paper folder, the artist delivers a veritable ensemble of cultural and artistic diversity. Melhorn-Boe deconstructs and reassembles Heliodorus’ timeline, thus providing the modern reader a clear path through this novel.

**Lise Melhorn-Boe**  
ARTIST

**LOOK, DON’T TOUCH**  
TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

*Aethiopica, an Ethiopian Romance*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Heliodorus  
AUTHOR



1

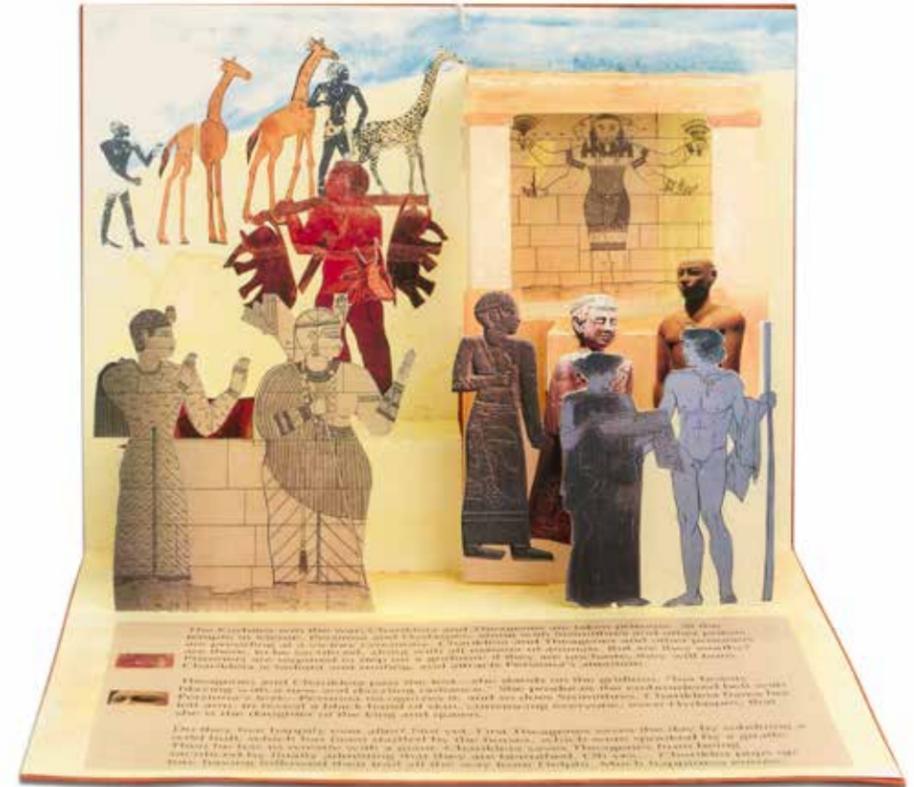
Book closed 14 panels 8 ¼" x 10 ¾" • These are single fold pop-ups

The deft combination of figures and objects sets up a shallow spatial progression that intensifies the relationship of one individual figure to another. Melhorn-Boe accompanies each scene with an insouciant interpretation of the labyrinthine tale and, like a rogue member of a Greek chorus, parenthetically adds wry commentary such as, “I think we know where this is going.”

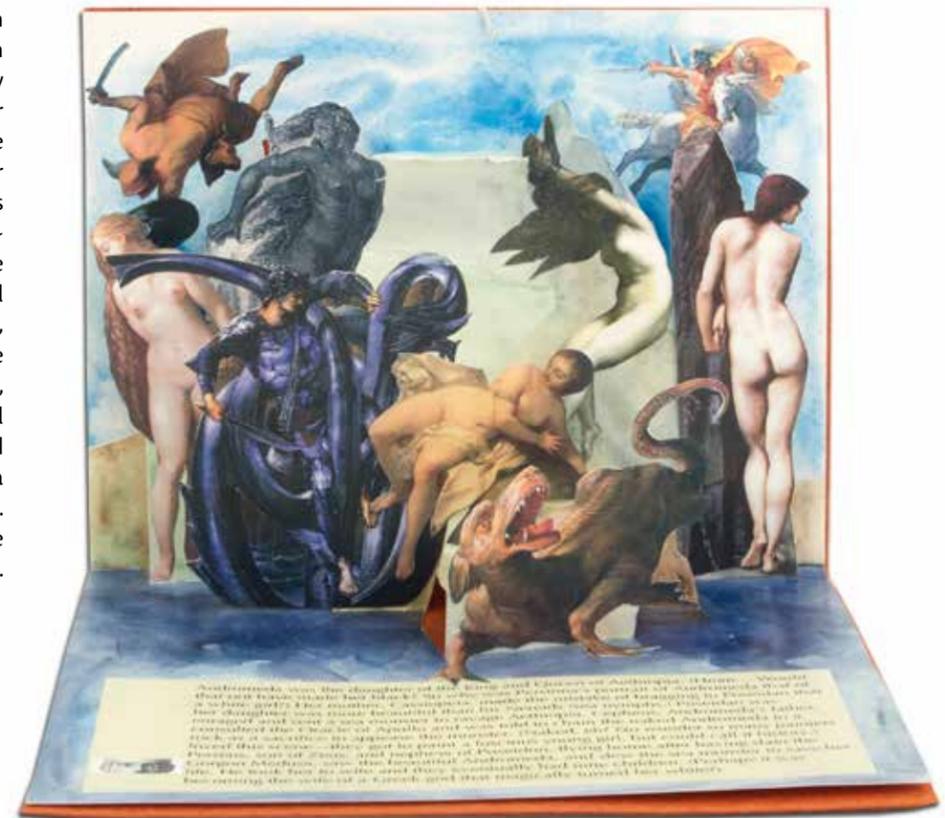
On one page, Melhorn-Boe relates the story of an Athenian man, Knemon, who, although he already has a mistress, is unwittingly seduced by Thisbe, a slave. Later Thisbe convinces him to attack his own father. The striking tableau coupled with this story shows two recumbent Greek figures in the foreground. All the action is anchored by a Greek temple stripped to its bare geometric understructure. Capping the scene as it does, the temple makes it seem that, once the page is turned, all the characters will be folded away within the structure.

This particular story represents an additional plot complication in the form of an embedded novella in the first book of “An Ethiopian Story.” This tale within a tale may only add to the initial confusion of the reader trying to follow the circuitous path of the larger narrative. Ultimately it becomes clear that the novella connects to and mirrors the main body of the novel. Like the novella contained and intertwined within the novel, Thisbe’s life as a slave is contained and intertwined with that of the heroine, Charakleia. Although oppressed, and at one point captured and imprisoned by pirates, Thisbe is not without agency. She acts and plots on her own, and her role in the novel is significant. A letter written by Thisbe on a wax tablet is found at the scene of her death. It reveals major plot points that allow the narrative to move forward to its conclusion.

- 1 - Knemon’s story
- 2 - Charakleia and Theagenes as prisoners
- 3 - Andromeda’s story



2



3

**Carletta Carrington Wilson's** *that name i have shorn* takes an intimate look at the embedded story of Thisbe and explores the ways in which the life of a slave is compelled, both in fiction and reality, to serve the narrative of the free citizenry.

Symbolically rich and visually compelling, the work, which includes a poem by the artist, is an assemblage of found objects, beads, gold leaf, decorative braid and lace. The book is covered with encaustic, referencing the wax tablet on which Thisbe writes the letter that is found after her death. Like that letter, Wilson's work discloses and enlightens, imparting information not previously brought to light.

The artist's use of elaborate ornamentation suggests an archivist's collection of significant artifacts. Dense and textural, the book gives the impression that it is encrusted with antiquity. Paradoxically, it projects a fragile beauty but also asserts an unassailable strength. It is a rare kind of embellishment that both beguiles the senses and conveys an underlying darkness and threat. It serves well as a metaphor for Thisbe's checkered story as well as for the ongoing story of slavery.

The poem, *that name i have shorn*, is, like the symbols and images of the book, embedded within an elaborately bedecked border and separated into three sections by two closely decorated horizontal bands. Punctuation-free and hand-written in free italic characters, the poem presents an onslaught of words of condemnation of the slaveholder, that "night's henchman salting my flesh with halved words / tongue afire of lies," and vows of vengeance.

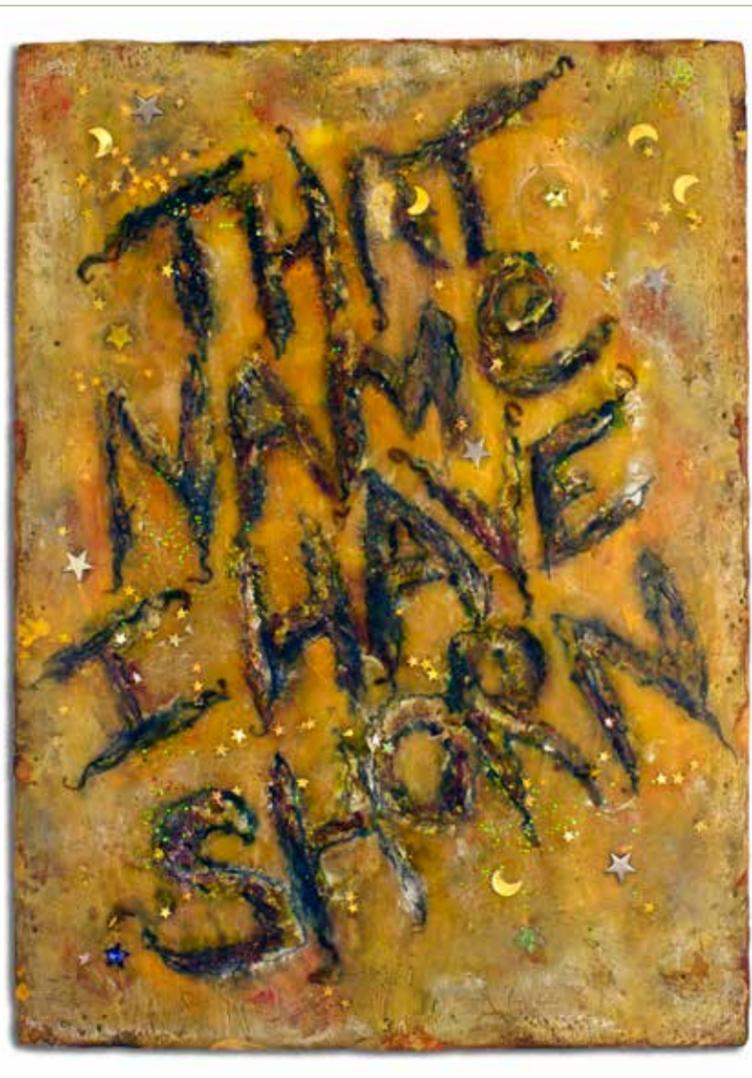
The voice of the poem is angry and intrepid. It is a voice that endures and, as the poem rushes on, plots revenge. But then, a final action—a redemption, real or imagined, for this world of pain and humiliation. It is a brutal justice equal to—even surpassing—the brutality of the master. In the last line there is this possibility: "a maid may take up her archer's bow aim for the guttural gut / knowing how far/ down/deep that arrow must reach."

**Carletta Carrington Wilson**  
ARTIST

*that name I have shorn*  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*Aethiopica, an Ethiopian Romance*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Heliodorus  
AUTHOR



1

Book closed 14 3/4" x 10 3/4" x 2 3/4" • Book open 14 3/4" x 21 1/2" x 2 3/4"

- 1 - Cover
- 2 - Back cover
- 3 - Opened book, displaying hand-written poem and portrait of Thisbe



2



3

Then, in the lower right corner of the opened book, is a depiction of the face of a young black woman. Is it she who is the perpetuator of that well-aimed arrow. Her eyes look intently past the viewer, perhaps toward her hated target. Clearly, this woman is neither abased, nor servile—her head is raised and her gaze is strong. This Thisbe is, in the words of the poem, "sacrificed upon treacherous altars," but she remains powerful, still self-possessed. Strong and enduring, she plays a pivotal role in a complex and often harrowing narrative.

Taken together, *Look, don't touch* and *that name that i have shorn* gives us a visual sense of the complex imagery, theme and meaning that existed in ancient novels.

Inspiration text summarized on page 60

These short stories, from Danzys Senna's collection *You Are Free*, explore the intersections of race, gender, and vision. In both stories, the central female characters struggle with seeing things clearly—their selves, their relationships, and their children—and with being clearly seen in their completeness and complexity.

Lyall Harris, who grew up in Lynchburg, VA, was living in Italy when she read *You Are Free*. The Italian town in which she and her family lived had had a large influx of immigrants—political refugees, mostly from Africa—with whom the artist engaged. Her interest and curiosity about the impact of the immigrant situation and both the unpredictable and quotidian aspects of immigrants' lives led her to delve into the subject.

Characteristic of Senna's short fiction is the technique of setting up expectations regarding thematic issues—especially race, marriage, friendship, and motherhood—only to undermine the audience's assumptions about these topics, causing us to question our own ingrained prejudices and expectations. The effect of this technique is to draw the reader's attention to our own perspectives in an explicit way; we become aware of the "lenses" through which we view relationships, people, and social issues, rather than letting those lenses unthinkingly color our perceptions.

Harris explores the themes of first impressions, assumptions, perceptions and misperceptions in *Just One Look: Pairing/Passing*, which consists of two card games, each utilizing 30 cards. The cards in the game *Pairing* display simple black and white images, many of which are universal or standardized symbols: a man, a woman, a baby, a heart, the circle with a slash "prohibited" sign; others include recognizable hallmarks such as a peace symbol, a dollar sign, a star of David, a cross. Still others are simplified representations of a picket fence, a noose, a gun, an American flag.

The purpose of the game is for players to create image pairs and compare results. But what makes a pair? In fact, what does the artist mean by the very word "pair"? In this provocative amalgam of participatory and conceptual art, it is the viewer/player who creates the content.

**Lyall Harris**  
ARTIST

**JUST ONE LOOK: PAIRING/PASSING**  
TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

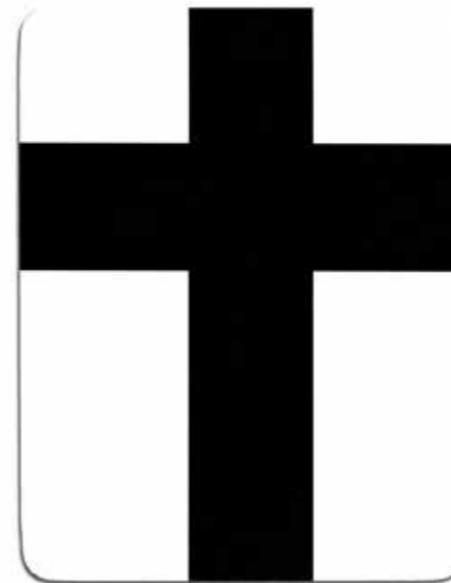
*You Are Free*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Danzy Senna  
AUTHOR



1

Cards 4 1/2" x 3 1/2"



A participant will observe that some images are white against a black background; others are black on a white field. (The writer Zora Neale Hurston famously said "I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background.") If one were to pair the card depicting a white man and a black woman with the card portraying the black baby, what are the cultural, ideological, emotional and social context considerations of this match-up? Questions such as these are the pivot upon which conceptual art rests, namely, to encourage the viewer to ask questions and seek a means of understanding and interpreting the work.



2

1 - "Passing" deck of cards  
2 - Various cards from "Pairing" deck



In the second game, *Passing*, the cards display different skin tones. Harris asks the viewers/players to create a "passing" stack, or stacks, and consider whether each card that is turned over can "pass". The participants can designate what the stacks represent: African American, Latino, Asian and so on. As the game is played out, the central idea of racial identity—or at least, the visual markers of such—is being questioned. Perhaps Harris is suggesting that first impressions or assumptions about race are superficial ... only skin deep.

Both games deliver the participant into challenging, and somewhat discomfiting, territory.

**The evil eye, that most ancient and intrepid of superstitions, is an embodiment of human malevolence given the magical power to cause harm at a distance by a mere glance directed toward its intended target. It has often been—and still is, in those cultures that perpetuate this belief—associated with women, children and fertility. The oral story known as “The Baby and the Stone” has the Prophet Muhammad illustrating the existence of this malignant phenomenon to a new mother who has asked if the evil eye is real. Go to the marketplace, the Prophet says, and take with you a stone wrapped in a blanket, pretending that it is your baby. She follows Muhammad’s instructions, and while there she meets a friend who has been unable to conceive. They speak briefly and, though nothing seems amiss, the woman returns to her home, only to find that the stone has cracked in half by a mighty unknown force. The woman takes the Prophet’s point that the evil eye is indeed a potent reality.**

MalPina Chan became fascinated with the idea of the evil eye and the ways in which this belief has manifested itself across many varied cultures for thousands of years. As well, many cultures and religions believe in the use of protective amulets, such as the Turkish blue glass eye-shaped bead, which “reflect” malicious intent back onto the person who has cast the evil eye.

During her research on the Evil Eye, Chan also noted the long-held association of the color green with envy. “O! Beware my lord of jealousy; it is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on,” says Iago to his master in Shakespeare’s “Othello.”

Chan, well-versed in the varied techniques of book art, illustration art and multimedia, has concentrated here on a single object that encapsulates the notion of the Evil Eye and its association with jealousy. “The Evil Eye: Envy and Jealousy,” as she titles this compact work of art, is a representation of a book realized through a resin casting of an actual volume. Beneath the incised title and embedded within the decorative tooling is a three-dimensional replica of a human eye, the Evil Eye (or is it perhaps a protective amulet?) staring steadily outward, set within the luminous translucency of “envy-green” resin. Chan chose this transparent material to represent the timelessness of this ancient belief that is present even today.

**MalPina Chan**  
ARTIST

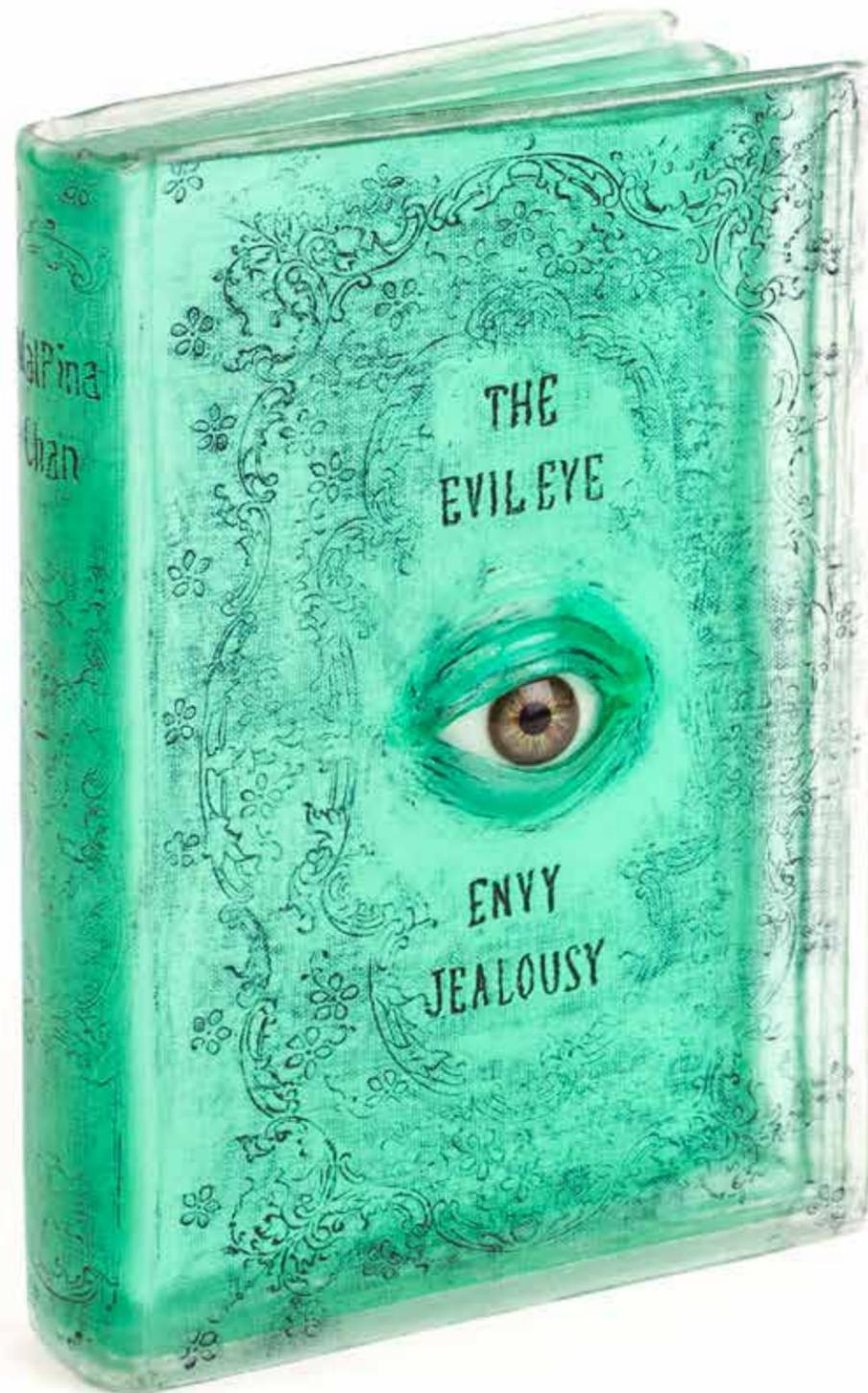
***EVIL EYE: ENVY AND JEALOUSY***  
TITLE OF ARTIST’S BOOK

*The Baby and the Stone*  
INSPIRATION TEXT



1

6 ½" x 4 3/8" x 1 3/4" [thickness at fore edge]



2

The book is small, about the size of an early printed quarto or modern paperback, and, if one could access it from its glass bell jar, it would fit comfortably in one hand. Its modest size, the glass enclosure, and the wooden platform upon which it stands, highlight its preciousness as an object. In the artist’s astute presentation, it appears very much like an ancient museum piece in need of separation from the world to protect it from human touch and the moldering of time. But, in the symbology of the Evil Eye, it might just as well be thought of as an object to be contained, trapped, encased, so that its injurious gaze can do no more damage to the world than the most innocent of art works.

1 - “The Evil Eye” under protective bell jar  
2 - Front cover and spine

In this short article for Salon.com, Tracy Clark-Flory draws attention to a recent call by ultra-conservative cleric Sheikh Muhammad al-Hababan, as reported by the BBC, for Muslim women to cover not only their hair and skin with a niqab but also one eye. Al-Hababan suggests that leaving both eyes uncovered encourages women to wear seductive eye makeup. Clark-Flory proposes that, in fact, the more a woman's body is covered, the greater the "erotic charge" of anything not covered. Her tone indicates the absurdity of al-Hababan's suggestion, imagining a "new pickup line": "Was that a seductive wink or are you just blinking?"

Inspired by Clark-Flory's article and the theme of the power of a woman's gaze as the central focus of the "Just One Look" exhibit, fabric artist and costume designer Tamara Somerfield created "Tapestry: See the Other Side." In this piece, eight pairs of eyes and one single eye look out at the viewer, each portraying a different emotion and a distinct way of seeing the world.

The eyes shimmer, like the sheen of an oil painting that has been finished with layers of varnish, providing a depth and brilliance rarely seen in textile art. Somerfield's unique process began with an original watercolor painting that she then scanned. Using an ink-jet printer, the artist printed the images of the eyes on silk organza from which the weft had been removed. The eyes are comprised of six layers of warp-only silk organza, set onto a stiff backing and covered by loosely woven linen overlaid on washed silk shantung. Each set of eyes is framed with an appliquéd ribbon.

Originally part of an antique Aubusson carpet, the eponymous "tapestry" was given to Somerfield in its tattered and mended condition. Faded, patched, and with loose threads dangling, the tapestry is at once vibrant and timeworn and serves as a metaphor for the events of a lifetime. As well, the tapestry roots this work in the traditionally female realm of domestic arts. Indeed, as a unified whole, the tapestry and the eyes may prompt the viewer to consider the complexities of women's lives—especially in the Muslim world—and the paradoxes of the visible and the invisible, the submissive and the resistant, and the oppression of being gazed upon and the empowerment of the returned gaze.

**Tamara Somerfield**  
ARTIST

## Tapestry: See the Other Side

TITLE OF ARTIST'S BOOK

*One Eyed Modesty*  
INSPIRATION TEXT

Tracy Clark-Flory  
AUTHOR



1

An original poem by Somerfield reinforces the metaphor of a tapestry for the events of a lifetime. The text is printed on silk and appliquéd to the linen-silk background fabric. Through the poem, the reader understands that the eyes not only look outward to the "other" but inward on one's own experience. The power of the inward gaze is as essential as the gaze directed outward.

40" x 32" x 3/4"

Each of the eyes in "Tapestry" speaks to the power of eyes in expressing emotion. Engaging with the eyes, the viewer is met with courage, seduction, modesty, outrage, love, sadness and joy. Each viewer must answer Clark-Flory's question for her or himself: "Was that a seductive wink or are you just blinking?"

1 - Detail of eyes  
2 - Entire "Tapestry"



2

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Sponsor, Instigator and Co-curator "Just One Look"  
Seattle Washington

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JUST ONE LOOK



BRADYART

