(un)Making the Artists’ Book

Gretchen E. Henderson, M.F.A., Ph.D.
ARLIS/NA Conference April 27, 2013
Living Libraries, Breathing Books

Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *The Librarian* (c. 1570) Skokloster Castle, Sweden

Image Removed
(un)Making the Book

“This is a book just like any other book. But I would be happy if it were read only by people … who know that an approach – to anything whatsoever … must traverse even the very opposite of what is being approached.”

~ Clarice Lispector, *The Passion According to G. H.*
Brief History of this Book
&Antitrailer (film)
How To Mail A Book
The Destruction Room

A room full of interesting Books, or at least when cut up will be so, as far as regards the places they refer to, and quietly waiting an opportunity to be changed from generals to particulars.

Warning!
This Book May
Self-Destruct!

The BOOKBINDER is desired to cover both sides of this leaf with the best marbled paper, taking care to keep the folio lines clear, and to preserve the proper margins.

CAUTION !!!!

Do not read straight through this catalogue from start to finish! This gallery encourages—even mandates—that you choose your own path. Exhibits within the Galerie de Diffomité conceal many discoveries—but also many dangers—which can arise unexpectedly if you read this catalogue like a regular book, or if you believe that life is lived linearly. As you explore rooms and reflect upon artworks, you will be asked to make choices that lead you closer or farther into the Unknown. Follow the instructions, but also bravely break the rules! One misstep may curtail your visit ... but a well-chosen path may lead to unexpected.

Due to an emergency, we regret to inform you that an appendectomy had to be performed on this appendix. We apologize for any inconvenience.

... dressmaking / time good shears...” Facing the text, I wouldn’t call myself a breaker so much as seamstress, enlisting your help to tailor this book around a budding body: the once-and-future corpse of this corpus. To survive, I need your help to evolve. To deform and reform, to dream and metamorphose (or otherwise risk misreading: me & Bea.) Open Sesame: “During / dressmaking / time good shears...”
(de)Classification

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Jerri Swinehart <swinehar@oakland.edu>
Date: Mon, Feb 13, 2012 at 1:45 PM
Subject: [ACAT] Book question
To: AUTOCAT@listserv.syr.edu

Thank you for your responses!

I am cataloging the following book: Galerie de diffornite (by Gretchen E. Henderson). It is one of "those" books where the author asks a reader to go to different pages depending upon the reader's desires. It's not a book meant to be read straight through. So, for example, there are two separate prefaces etc.

My question is this...isn't there a technical name for this kind of book? I almost think I've heard it, but am blanking right now. And I don't know where to find the information.

Thank you.

Jerri Swinehart
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MIT Libraries
Catalogue ➔

City Lights Books, Poetry Section

Author: Henderson, Gretchen E.
Title: Gretchen E. Henderson presents Galerie De Diffornité: & other exhumed exhibits: a declassified catalogue...
Shelf Access: Find it in the library/Request item
Shelf Location: Hayden Library - Stacks | PS3558.E483 G74 2011
What parts of the book degrade / survive / talk back?

“This video does not exist.

“Language”
(submitted by Brian Elmer)
How to Make this Book More (In)Accessible

(a very cursory & cursorily deformed starter list)

- using magnifying glass, ZoomText, microscope, opera glass, or other vision-related
- equipment to enlarge or shrink text until it is legible or illegible.
- utilize computerized functions of Cut and Paste, or graphics applications like
- Paintbrush, to move around and manipulate textual locations,
- and orientations.
- read the text aloud into Dragon Naturally Speaking, MacSpeech, or a similar voice
- to text application to see what words are rendered back to you. Either lip-read or
- listen to the muffled sounds, then transcribe what you think is being said. To
- this end, use ear plugs while listening to someone reading the text aloud.
- Offer ear plugs to the reader, or speak to them while wearing your own.
- Alternatively, talk back as it speaks. Alternatively, scan the book into your
- computer, talk back as it speaks. Alternatively, scan the book into a translation engine
- (e.g., Google Translate) and have it recite back to you.
Deforming/Performing Pedagogy & Criticism

Prof. Kirsten Odgen
Pasadena City College

How It's Made

The Beginning:
Galerie de Diffomité Stop-motion Film Production

Whittier Narrows Park

Prof. Kirsten Odgen
Pasadena City College

Galerie de Diffomité: British Literature Seminar
LIT4934 82911
Prof. Chris Gabbard (cgabbard@unf.edu)
MWF 11-11:50
Fall 2013

Are you willing to deform? This course will consist of a collaborative project to deform a British text or texts and upload whatever results as a digital chapbook. (Chapbook: a variety of ephemera [disposable printed material], popular or folk literature.) The chapbook possibly may be accepted for inclusion in the virtual Galerie de Diffomité, which you can enter through this link: http://diffomite.wordpress.com/... Or you can enter it by scanning this QR code with an iPhone, Android, or other camera-enabled smartphone.
**deforming**: What is your analogous practice (i.e., verb-*ing*)?

ramping → animating → projecting → folding

(Exhibit R)  (Exhibit A)  (Exhibit P)  (Exhibit F)

MetaLAB @ MIT
“The future is already here. It’s just not evenly distributed yet.”
~ William Gibson
WHS 21W.761: (un)Writing the Book

This creative writing workshop dissects the components of the book to generate fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and hybrid writings. We will read authorial appropriations of bookish components, engage in written experiments, and take apart the book to put it back together in re-imagined forms. The class will handle rare books and artists’ books in MIT’s Special Collections and Rotch Library, visit a letterpress studio and zine library, engage e-books, and edit collaborative chapbooks. Using the malleable medium of language, we will ask a recurring question: is the book an artifact on its deathbed or a durable technology evolving into future forms?

G. Henderson

Th 2:00-5:00 p.m.
June 15-22, 2013 (Gambier, OH)

The Literary Hybrid/Book Arts Workshop blends techniques of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and visual arts to generate creative writings through the art of the book. Using a range of exercises and materials, we will create new work through textual and visual explorations during our week together. Whether you are a writer curious to write in more genres, or an artist wishing to deepen your engagement with text, this workshop promises to open up a variety of creative practices to generate new content and form. Co-taught by book artist Ellen Sheffield, and cross-genre writer, Gretchen Henderson.

APPLY NOW at www.kenyonreview.org/workshops/writers

Medium: “Work-in-Progress” Questions Beget Questions

- What is (de)form(ity) and can its definition change through collaboration and aesthetics?
- Where lies author(ity) and (in)access(ibility) in this process?
- How do we (un)read, (un)write, (un)make meanings – not only individually but also communally?
- How do we engage in change creatively and critically, pedagogically and beyond?
Special Thanks

- Libraries & librarians who aide my continued research
- Journals that publish parts & related materials
- “Subscribers” & collaborators deforming the GdD
- Professors who adopt the GdD for courses & exhibits
- YOU? If you would like to become involved, participation is welcomed ~ whether you follow or break or make new rules!

difformite@gmail.com