Artist in the Library

The Library of John Baldessari: a case study on the role of the library in the inspiration and production of the artist
As a personal Librarian & Archivist to an Artist

What I do…

- Mostly the Archivist, but also the Librarian
  - Documenting art and sometimes artist books

- Applying order to the book collection
  - Library of Congress cataloging for browse-ability

- Advocacy within the studio
  - Resources for JB & as an important collection
What kind of sources?

- **Primary sources in the archive**
  - Photographs, clippings, writings

- **Secondary sources in the library**
  - Books on art and artists
    - Exhibition catalogs - 30%
    - Artist Monographs - 30%

- **Books on other topics**
  - Literary theory - 15%
  - Visual studies - 10%
  - Literature and Poetry – 15%
How sources are used?

- Text
- Image
Sources of Inspiration and Production

“The library is no different than the museum – they both offer information to the eye and the mind and thus serve as inspiration for work”
– Johanna Drucker, Artist, Author and Professor of Bibliography and Information Studies, UCLA

 Images in books as a surrogate for art

 Books as art

 Images of books in art
Livre d'artiste: an Artist who makes books
In Conclusion: 
Serving the needs of the Artist

- Library resources serve artists as sources of inspiration for their artistic practice, textually and visually

- Specifically, exhibition catalogs, artist monographs and art magazines are invaluable resources for artists

- Become aware of the local artists and their work in order to learn how the library can serve their creative needs

- Food for thought: Artists’ relationship to sources is different than that of scholars