

# CENTRAL

# BOOKING

# MAGAZINE

November 2015  
Volume VI  
Issue IV  
\$10

A Guide to the Art of the Book... and Beyond

## Exhibition Catalog

### *Twisted Data*

Stephanie Brody-Lederman

*Look Books and Etceteras*

Lareese Hall

*On beginning: thoughts  
on building an artist's  
book collection*

Sandra March

*Felt Felt*

Valerie Huhn

*Fingerprint book*

Omina Caelestis

Inseparable, that's what those two were. The bond between them was the sort of thing that legends are built upon.

Their teacher Chiron was the first to notice the eerie closeness of the two twins, the secret language they called their own. Commenting aloud, he pointed out the obvious: one child born of the gods, the other solidly rooted to the Earth. It foretold nothing but complications.

And so it was: hellions to some, allies to others, but twins to the end of it all. They had only their own...  
...at heart

en into the fabric.



CENTRAL BOOKING Magazine, in concert with its parent art space CENTRAL BOOKING, aims to mediate the zeitgeist of the book art panorama, as articulated within a broader totality of artistic theory and practice. Addressing the work of both established and emerging artists, CENTRAL BOOKING Magazine champions those who challenge our most deeply seated notions regarding what a book is and where it belongs.

Containing interviews with collectors of artist's books as well as their creators, CENTRAL BOOKING Magazine gives voice to both sides of the fascination with book-as-art-object. This endeavor emerged from desire: to curate concepts, not just objects; to investigate and describe the abiding passions and latest activity of a capaciously-conceived sphere of printmakers, binders, sculptors, painters, photographers, video artists, art lovers, librarians, poets, bibliophiles and bibliophages, anti-quarians and deconstructionists alike. These pages exist as an open invitation to any and all with the desire to view, possess, or generate works which, by their very existence, defy either-or constructs of art vs. literature, effectively interrogating the very essence of "bookness."

In addition to articles, interviews, tutorials, art projects and annotated announcements of artist-book-related events around the country, each issue of the magazine will also function as a catalog of CENTRAL BOOKING Artist's Book Gallery quarterly cross-over exhibitions, multidisciplinary explorations of the intersection of art and science.

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Jennie Hinchcliff, *Omina Caelestis*, 2014, Vade mecum binding housed in a half clamshell box  
Laser print/hand lettered text on Hahnemühle Ingres and Fabriano Elle Erre papers  
5.875 x 2.125 inches

# CENTRAL BOOKING

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## Stephanie Brody- Lederman

by Stephanie Young

CB: I think a lot of people are familiar with your work as a painter. Please tell me how you started making artist book inspired work? Was this something you always did?

SBL: I started making books right after Martha Wilson opened Franklin Furnace. I saw what they were showing there and thought "I can do that. My work is consecutive, narrative based and books are a perfect fit for my work." I showed some of my work to Martha and she said to come back with a body of work... and I did. I had a show at FF and that was the beginning of my bookmaking.

CB: How does your painting inform this work?

SBL: My painting and my books are all of one piece.



*Not Everyone Is Afraid*, 2013, mixed media, 16 x 10 x 9 inches



*Weeping Rose*, 2014, mixed media, 13 x 25 x 4 inches

CB: People have written that your work is about the subconscious. Would you agree?

SBL: I would hope I was conscious when I was doing the work. But seriously, the subconscious always informs the conscious.

CB: There seems to be a lot of domestic symbolism.

SBL: If there is domestic symbolism in my work I am not aware of it, I make art about my environment, both interior and exterior, so at times perhaps there is a domestic strain running through the work.

CB: Please tell me about some of the specific pieces we have at the gallery. (Hotel Perfect Fit and the little house).

SBL: Hotel Perfect Fit is a valentine for an important anniversary of someone I know. It is a variation of the decoration on a wedding cake. As for my little houses, they are always a good way for me to explore feelings within a venue suggesting intimacy.



*Red Talisman, 2013, mixed media, 11 x 20 x 5 inches*

Choose Women” and also edited a project on women’s diaries for the feminist magazine, “Heresies.” My work comes from me. I am a female (and pleased to be one). In that sense my work has a “feminist” slant, whatever that means.

CB: Even though you portray objects in your painting they have an abstract quality. Is this something you think about?

SBL: I do not do academic drawings and my work is not an exercise in Photorealism.



*Fine Line, 2014, mixed media, 8 x 16 x 7 inches*

CB: Do you ever think about feminist or political issues?

SBL: I am sure that Feminism has helped me a great deal. I began showing my art in the 70’s when Feminism was just starting. Although I was limited in what I could do as I was in graduate school and had 2 young children, I participated in The Brooklyn Museum show, “Women

CB: Who are some of the people that inspired you?

SBL: I am inspired by Beckett, Edward Albee, Joseph Bueys, Alice Munro, Elena Ferrante Muriel Rukeyser and Cy Twombly.



*Wolf At The Door, 2006, mixed media, 5 x 8 x 6 inches*



*Country Roads, 2009, mixed media, 5 x 5 x 7 inches*



A  
B  
A  
A



# On beginning: thoughts on building an artist's book collection

by Lareese Hall

This essay has been a struggle of epic proportions of working and re-working over months. The original intention was to simply share our artists' books collection at MIT - giving insight into the thinking behind the books we have collected thus far. But as I dug into the collection and thought more about what it was that I actually wanted to share, there was, as the phrase goes, "no there, there." This makes no sense, of course. Artist's books are, generally, interesting objects, they tend to connect with users in some sensorial way. There is something unique, well made, whimsical, of note, in just about every collection of artist's books.



*Hidden in the stacks*

But as I kept picking up and looking at the custom made archival boxes that house each of our artists' books, I realized that the most interesting thing to me was the story

of how these objects are cared for and protected once we purchase them. It is impossible to find the books without some sort of guide - a catalog, a person, proximity - to lead you to the right book. And one, generally, has to see and interact with artist's books to experience them fully, as it is extremely difficult to capture their unique qualities with an image or a description. So we build boxes for them to keep them protected and safe, findable and organized.



*These artists books sit quietly amidst other rare and special books*

The boxes themselves become works of art. We are fortunate to have a staff who rise to the challenge of every oddly shaped, heavy, odorous, awkward, sharp, and fragile book that appears in front of them. They are carefully assessed, housed, cataloged, and then shelved. Even though I am in conversation with artists and distributors, and I do extensive research on every artist's book I consider, my initial experience with almost every book purchased is mediated by a gray or buff colored box - sometimes with a green spine. Within these containers are various instructions on use ("Lift here first.") or housing ("Tie this string first."). The books leave their makers, find their way into our library, and become a part of the visual language based on physical properties, conditions, and needs. This language is developed book by book.



*The bottom box contains an accordion*

“Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way,” said Tolstoy. All libraries have collections and each library collection is unique in its own way. The uniqueness is reflected, usually, in special and rare book collections that are crafted and built over time. Within these collections, we build systems to avoid any sort of unhappiness - for the user or the library itself. Books are shielded and protected and their handling and use is anticipated and mediated even before they are in the hands of a curious user.

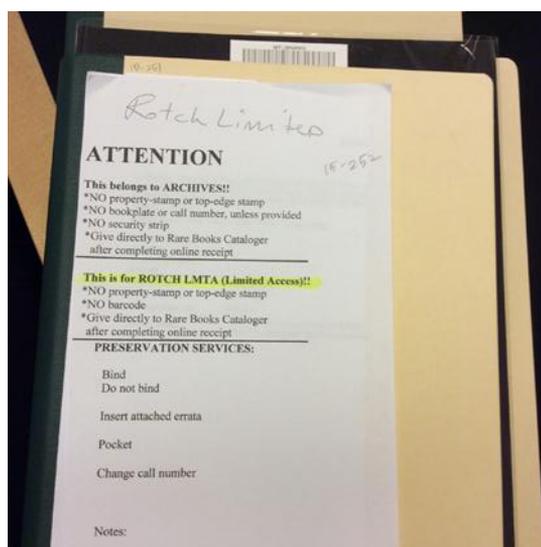
Five disciplinary libraries and an Institute Archive and Special Collections unit make up MIT Libraries. Two of the disciplinary libraries (Lewis Music Library and Rotch Library) have significant rare books and special collections. As one of the librarians who chooses books for the collection in Rotch Library (the library that houses resources and materials that focus on departments, labs, and centers in the School of Architecture and Planning - including the arts), I collect materials in multiple formats related to art and architecture design and history, building technology, and computation related to design. I also collect books for our rare and special collections in Rotch. I am interested in the construction and execution of the artist’s books that we collect and am equally interested in what we do with them (to protect them, to share them, to interact with them) once we have them in our collection.

Since I arrived in March 2014, I have focused my special collection building on contemporary artist’s books published since the 1960s or so. We have a very (very) small

collection - fewer than 100 books - and we are slowly discovering its qualities and building on its strengths. Our collection’s small size is an advantage, in my opinion, because it remains accessible and explorable. This rare opportunity (to shape a collection from its beginning) is a wonderful thing. As I learn more about the institution, continue to develop relationships with students and faculty, and work through a curriculum and collection mapping process, I am taking notes that will become guidelines to articulate a collection philosophy and practice related to artist’s books. The artist’s books I have collected thus far are intentionally (almost aggressively) interdisciplinary, and reflect, support, and challenge our academic community and institutional mission. I do not collect materials for one discipline to the exclusion of everything else. I approach the collection (and concurrent study) of artists’ books with a beginners mind - always open to listening and learning. I visit book fairs, I do research, I read books and articles, I stay abreast of developments and continue to expand my knowledge of the histories of artists’ books.

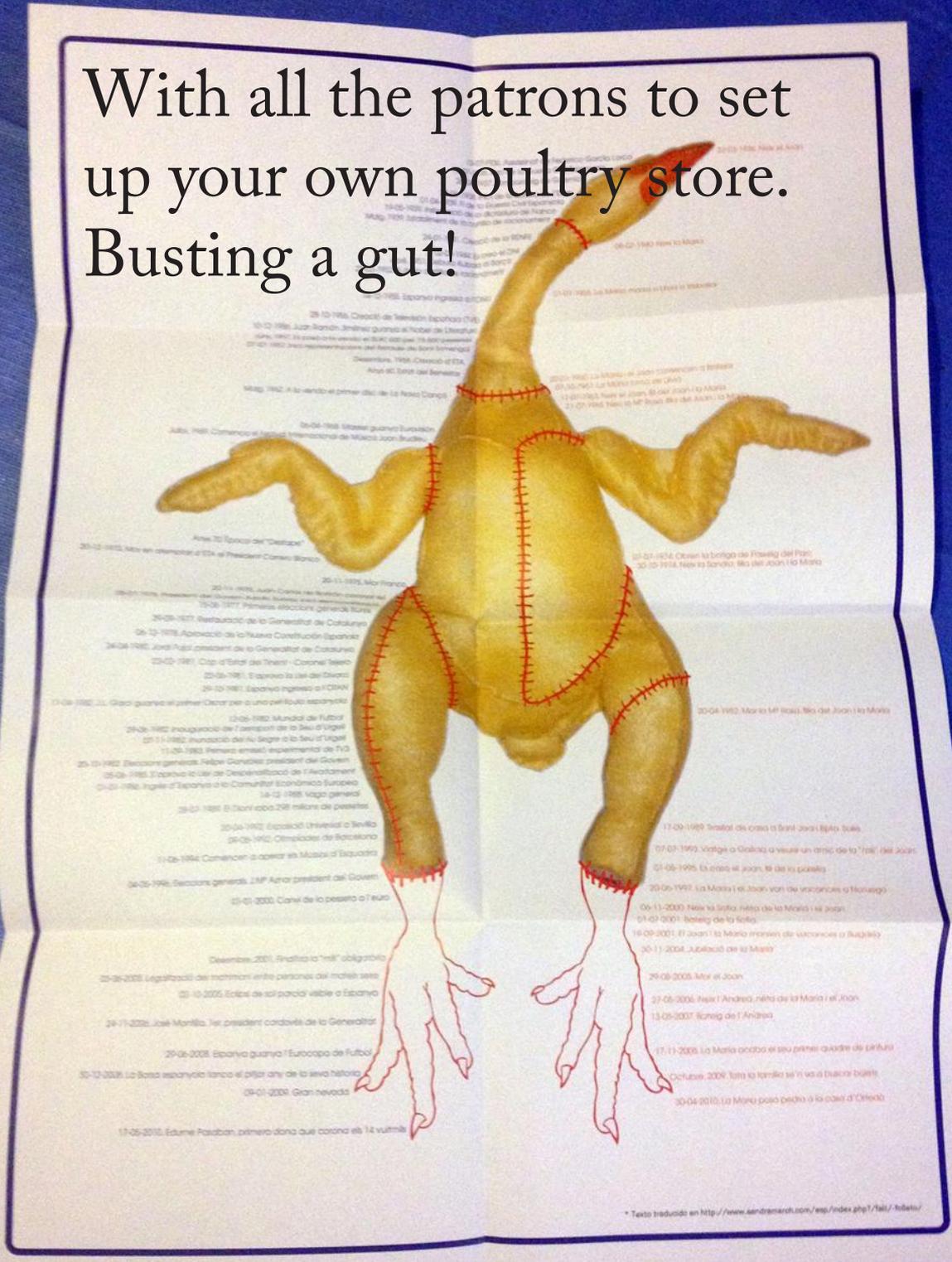
I am currently working on a video project that focuses on the collection and use of artist’s books in academic settings. There is a great deal to learn from the incredible (and much larger) collections at other libraries. I am focusing on what it means to build a collection – in connection with research and curricular needs as well as in a regional context since our students have access to other (fantastic) libraries in the Boston metropolitan area. I chose to use video to take advantage of showing artist’s books in a dynamic format and because it is a quick and easy entry into collections. It is also a way to use stories to build guidelines and craft policies.

My intention is as well to interview and film the talented people who make the boxes we use to house these special objects; documenting the journey from cart to shelf, and on the way to become a part of our happy family.



*These instructions are necessary to make sure a book remains unmarked as it makes its way through our acquisitions process*

With all the patrons to set up your own poultry store. Busting a gut!



\* Texto traducido en <http://www.sandramerch.com/esp/index.php?file=/index/>

# Twisted Data

November 19, 2015 – January 24, 2016

Curator: Maddy Rosenberg

Misinterpretation of scientific findings seems to be a dangerous enough practice, but the prevalence of beliefs in pseudo-sciences can have an even more devastating effect when they “prove” cultural prejudices. We may laugh at phrenology and its simplification of physiognomy, but at one time it was a serious segment of the “science” of criminology. Perhaps more toxic and lasting is eugenics, embraced by those in every place of power specifically in this country and Britain - and used by the Nazis as a basis for their own horrific campaign against those they deemed “unfit.” The dissemination of mis-information laid the groundwork both for a justification for such “cleansing” on a grand scale and for continued wrongheaded discourse and policies in the Western world. It pervaded the laws and the culture – and created myths of immigrants that remain difficult to dispel to this day.

**Noah Fuller** and **John Kuo Wei Tchen** excavate and expose the archives of the once formidable Eugenics Record Office in Cold Spring Harbor, the damage that keeps on damaging. **Patricia Olynyk** sorts through documentation in her own way to make art from the record.

The films of **Todd Herman** manage to find a visual beauty celebrating the victims of atrocities perpetrated upon those deemed to be sub par. **Rosary Solimanto** utilizes her own experiences as the perceived inferior, twisting a position as a guinea pig into one of empowerment through art.

**Brandstifter** searches old German medical texts and literally turns them on their heads, while **Charley Friedman**’s anatomy lesson is based on “unseemly” variations. **Melissa Stern**’s “creatures,” too, inhabit a world avoiding ethnic cleansing in order to exist as **Bram Harris** delves into the limitations of ethnic identification through a specific genetic code.

**Barbara Rosenthal** attempts to find answers in the simplicity of the alternative through historical diagrams. **Jeffrey Allen Price** maps the brain according to the color-coded quadrants of phrenology while the colors that **Geraldine Ondrizek** map are only skin deep. **Sarah Stengle** wryly combines angels of all colors with the detritus of spent bullets and bones, peacefulness only to be found in heaven, it seems.

Through art we attempt to understand the unfathomable: how human beings can categorize, degrade and experiment on each other, under a pseudo-scientific cover in a culturally relative quest for “perfecting” the human race.



Melissa Stern, *The Undesirables - Baby*, 2003, clay, oil paint, rubber, 29 x 8 x 9 inches

# Haunted Files: The Eugenics Record Office

by Co-curators: John Kuo Wei Tchen & Noah Fuller

Associate Curator: Mark Tseng Putterman

“Civilization’s going to pieces!”

So declaims Tom Buchanan from Long Island’s North Shore in 1922. “This idea is that we’re Nordics.... And we’ve produced all the things that go to make civilization—oh, science and art, and all that. Do you see?” This frames the core plotline of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*: can the ostentation of new money “wash” Gatsby’s mysterious, dubious origins? Will old stock WASPs see through him?

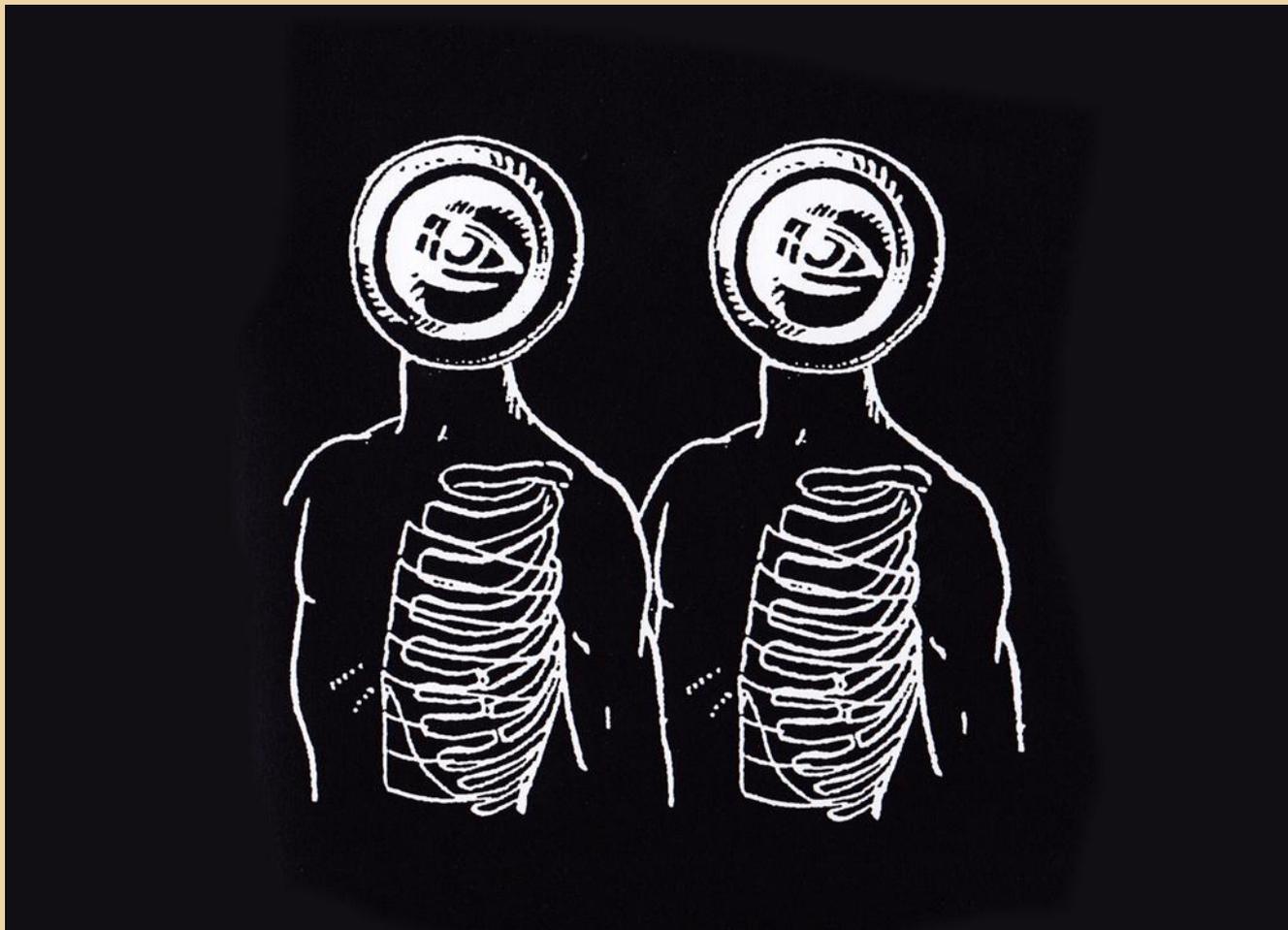
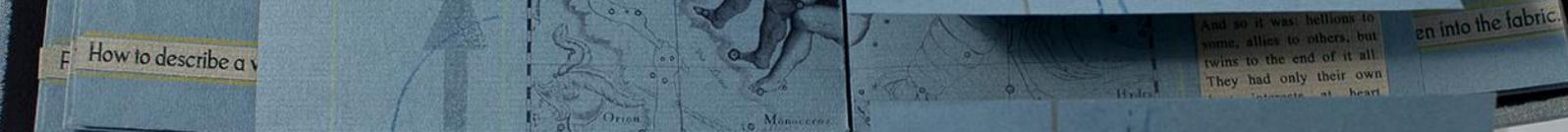
Enter the Eugenics Record Office (ERO), just a stone’s throw from the “white palaces” of Buchanan’s East Egg, where pioneering eugenicists quantified Anglo-American norms through the measurement of “fit” and “unfit” bodies—creating statistics that drove United States immigration restrictions, mass sterilization campaigns, and a regime of standardized testing—policies and worldviews still haunting us today.



Jack Tchen / Noah Fuller, *Photo of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University*



Jack Tchen / Noah Fuller, *Photo of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University*



Brandstifter, *antibody # 41*, 2013, framed offset print, 7.5 x 5.5 inches

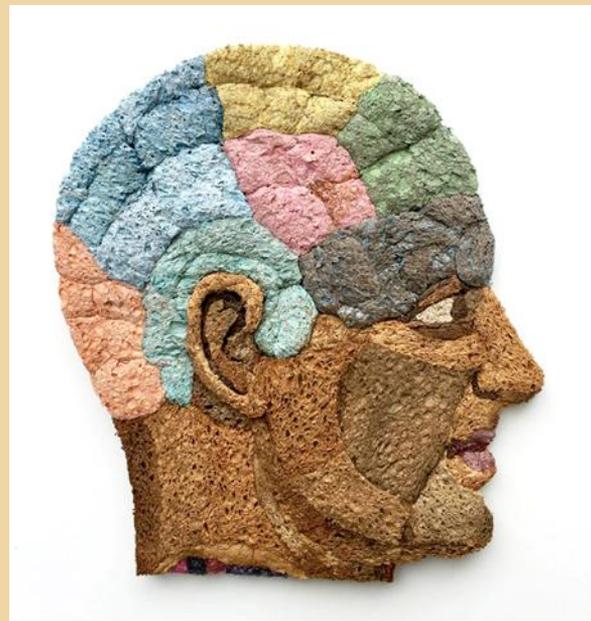
To explore the histories of American scientific racism—from early anti-Asian legislation to eugenics hysteria—we reproduced the space and files of the ERO in the rooms of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University, transplanting it from the Long Island Sound of the 1920s to present-day Lower Manhattan (the one-time epicenter of dysgenic “racial hybrids and ethnic horrors”). Sifting through the files—from field reports on mixed-race “Mongrel Virginians” to interviews with the incarcerated “criminally insane”—visitors were immersed in the chilling, bureaucratic web of research, politics, and propaganda of the American eugenics movement, a crucial moment in the long march towards a modern politics of paranoia.



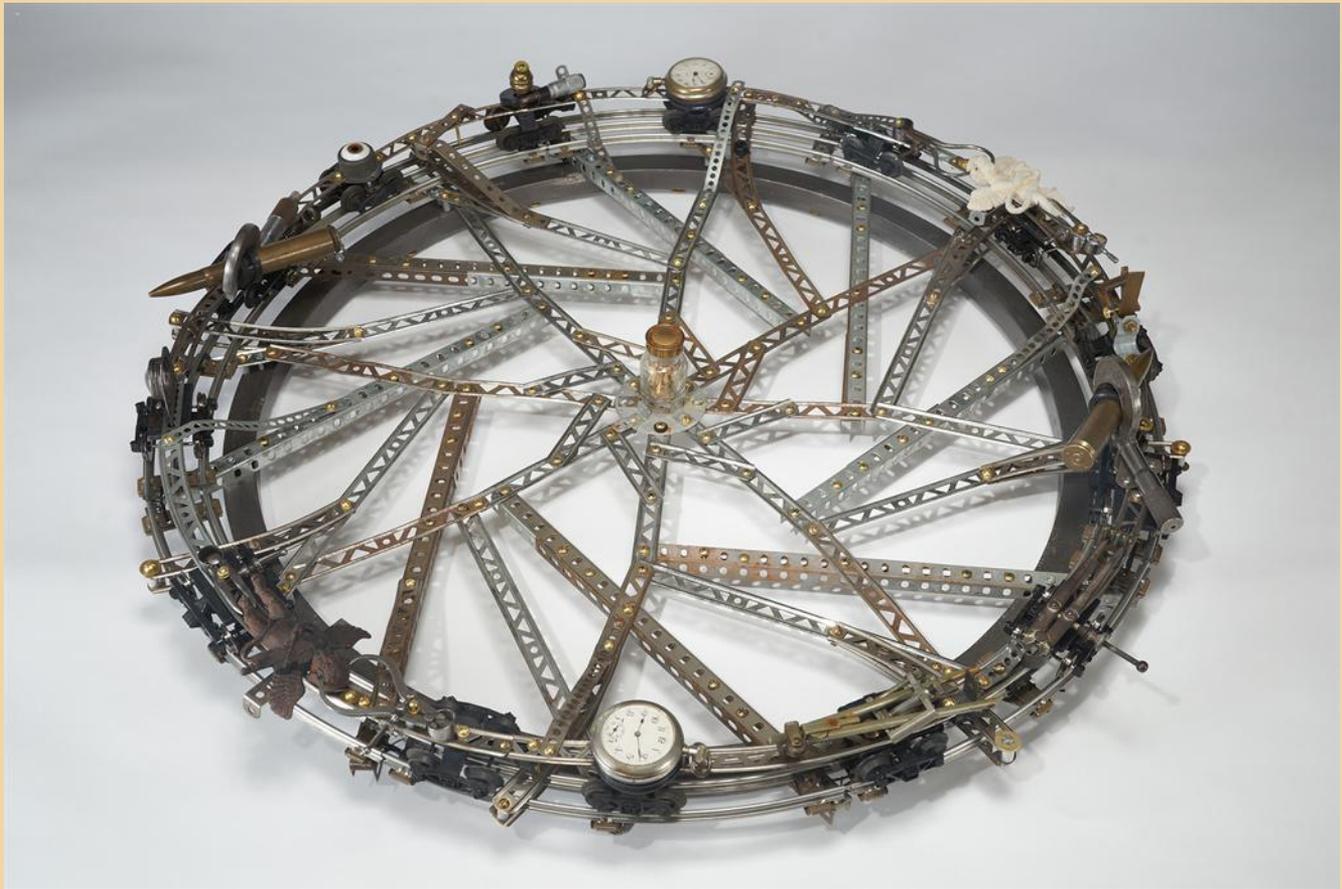
Barbara Rosenthal, *Leah Gluck: Victim of the Twins Experiments*, 1986, VIDEO DVD, re-mastered from VHS 29 mins.

Haunted Files brings the closeted “relics” of eugenics out of the archives, confronting us with the legacy that continues to trouble national conversations about race, immigration, intelligence, norms, and belonging. As will become evident, our contemporary sensibilities are still swayed by the logic of visceral difference and disgust entrenched in Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes’ 1923 *Buck v. Bell* ruling in favor of forced sterilization: “Three generations of imbeciles are enough.”

[www.hauntedfiles.org](http://www.hauntedfiles.org).



Jeffrey Allen Price, *Dirty Mind (Phrenology)*, 2015, used sponges, 12 x 12 x 3/4 inches



Sarah Stengle, *Reliquary for a Dead Dove*, 2015, Skeleton of a dove with mixed media, 28 x 6 x 28 inches

# History of the Eugenics Record Office

It was an old Victorian-style mansion nestled in Long Island's Cold Spring Harbor: the first floor fitted with office furnishings and a fireproof vault for its archives, ERO superintendent Harry Laughlin and his wife taking residence on the second floor.

These were the humble origins of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) as it opened in 1910, armed with an endowment from railroad magnate widow Mary Harriman and a vision for a "better bred" America. Under Harvard morphologist-turned-eugenicist Charles B. Davenport, the ERO set out to "point the way to produce the superman and the superstate" through quantifiable eugenics research.



Bram Harris, *1 OF 5 SUBLIMINAL IMAGES TRENDING NOW*, 2015, oil & acrylic paint, oil paint markers, Versatex screen ink, 30 x 38 inches VHS 29 mins.



Charley Friedman, *Gross Anatomy/Anatomia Completa(06)*, Ink, Paper, MDF(cover) 88 x 14 inches (opened)



Geraldine Ondrizek, *Shades of White*, 2015, Accordion book made with silk, natural dyes, white board, 5 x7 x 3 inches

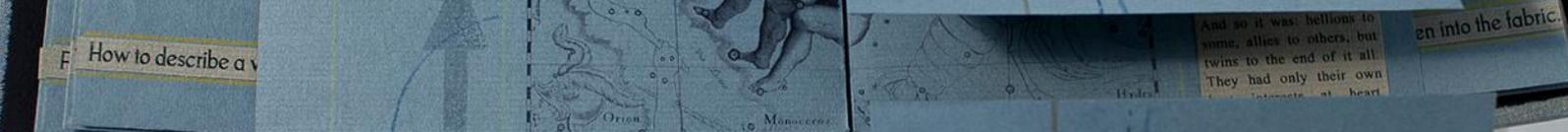


Melissa Stern, *Raccoon Eyes*, 2013, Clay, paint, glass eyes, 13 x 5 x 2.5 inches

The collection of “objective” data was key. Davenport’s intricate numbering system for cataloguing files on supposedly heritable human traits—from eye color to sex perversion to musical ability—became the backbone of the ERO’s massive record collecting. Harry Laughlin prepared self-administering eugenic surveys that were distributed en masse, then collected, reviewed, and filed. Field workers—mostly young women—were led through the ERO’s

summer training course, then sent to hospitals, prisons, mental institutions, and impoverished rural communities throughout the Northeast collecting family genealogies of the socially “unfit.” For twenty years, the ERO was at the center of American and international eugenics. Their work lent scientific support to devastating eugenics policies—from the nativist 1924 Immigration Restriction Act (for which Congress brought Laughlin to testify as an “expert witness”) to the eugenic sterilization laws adopted by 30 states that drew from Laughlin’s own “model sterilization law.”

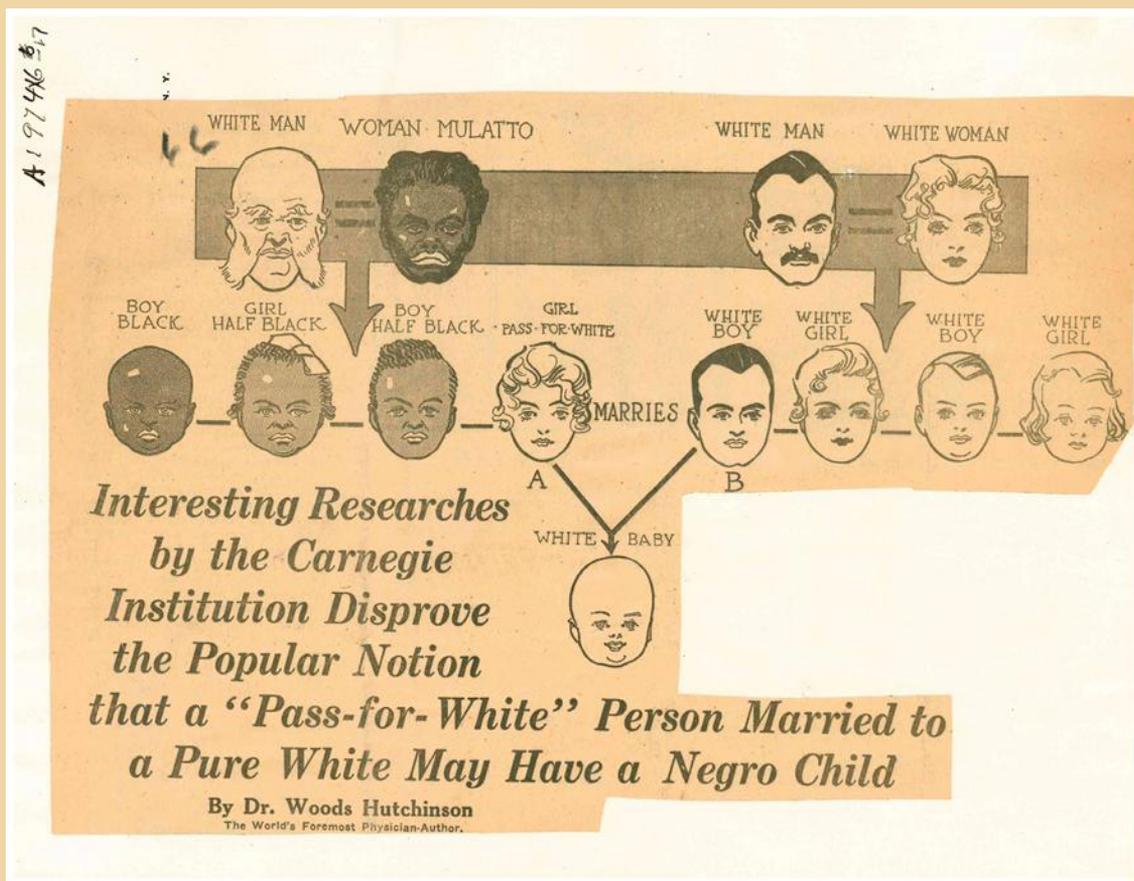
Over the years, the ERO’s ties with Fascist scientists became increasingly unpalatable, and their scientific credentials scrutinized. In 1935, the Carnegie Institute (who had taken up sponsorship from Mary Harriman) ordered an external scientific review of the office, and found its records practically useless for scientific purposes. The Eugenics Record Office shut its doors in 1939, spelling the end for hardline eugenics in respectable American discourse. But Davenport, Laughlin, and their cohorts successfully changed the conversation on race, ability, and everything in between. Their eugenic worldview, simultaneously disowned and redeployed today, remains.



*Moecha Viennensis  
 famosa.  
 Francisca Seycora, 19 J.  
 † in nosocomio generali  
 Meningitis*

1006.059  
*Moecha Viennensis, famosa, Francisca Seycora, 19 J.  
 † in nosocomio generali, Meningitis.  
 a celebrated Viennese prostitute,  
 Francisca Seycora, 19 years of age.  
 Died in the General Hospital of Meningitis.  
 Moecha Viennensis  
 famosa  
 Francisca Seycora, 19 J.  
 † in nosocomio generali  
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 Dr. Jos. Hyrtle Collection.  
 1946. Catalogue  
 Vol. 1. P. 17

Patricia Olynyk, *Seycora*, 2015, Digital C-print, 11.25 x 28 inches



Jack Tchen / Noah Fuller, *Why the Baby Cannot Be Darker than the Sum of the Blackness of Its Father and Mother* - Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society

# I Cannot Speak Without Shaking and Other Films

by Todd Herman

*I Cannot Speak Without Shaking*, re-works several propaganda films that were made to advance arguments against people with disabilities during World War II. Through the lens of intimate journal entries written by a disabled woman, herself a survivor of significant medical trauma, the film is a personal view of the legacy of eugenics and of its contemporary ideological artifacts. The work deals with themes of the body, of transience, and of sexual and representational taboos, making no claims of journalistic inquiry.

*I cannot speak without shaking  
having been told*

*and taught of your inhumanity*

*still references human*

*see*

*monsterfication*

*taking a soul and casting its role*

*to be beast*

*that is the bequeathment of the able-bodied*

*to your ignoble children*

*goblins who scare you*

*hunchbacks who chase you*

*gnarled hands who steal from you*

*droolers who stain you*

*we are your children who smile pink cheeked*

*we are your grandmothers teaching the way of life to death*

*we are your brothers*

*your sisters*

*waiting at the bus stop*

*waiting 'til the first of the month*

*laughing in church*

*crying*

*with heads raised each day*

*waiting*



*Cabinet*, 2007, Black and White, Stereo, 16 minutes

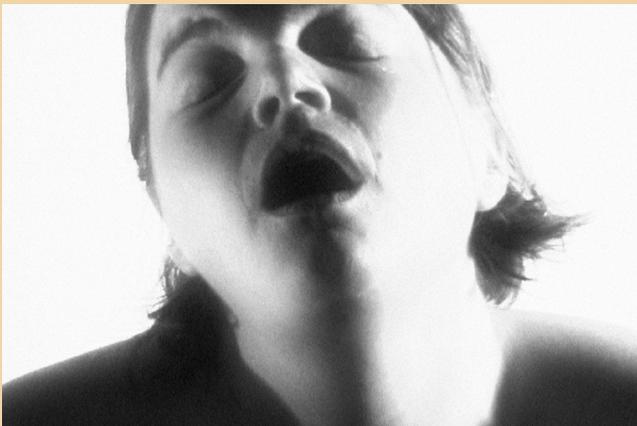
Part of my decision to make *I Cannot Speak Without Shaking* was my interest in researching aspects of my cultural and familial history. I was drawn by how Judaism and genocide has overlapped with the history of disability and genocide, particularly around the “Aktion T4” program, which developed from the Nazi’s policy of “racial hygiene” resulting in the extermination of hundreds of thousands of disabled persons. Most of the images comprising *I Cannot Speak Without Shaking* are excerpts of films from this period, exhumed from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Film and Video Archive in Washington D.C. The text is written by my dear friend and colleague Patricia Berne, the director of *Sins Invalid*, a performance project focusing on disability justice and sexuality that centers on artists of color, artists with disabilities, queer and gender-variant artists.

Berne and I have worked on several films together, including *Other People's Stories*, which looks at the narrator's own sexual masochism relative to a news story about a disabled woman who was beaten, raped and eventually murdered. In both *Other People's Stories* and *I Cannot Speak Without Shaking* the texts were excerpted from Berne's personal journal entries about her disability, her own sexuality, and abuse.



*I Cannot Speak Without Shaking*, 2007, Black and White, Stereo, 5 minutes

Subtle ideational shifts can occur as we experience images over time and in varying contexts. In my film *When I Stop Looking* (a portrait of thirty persons with significant craniofacial conditions), the occasional appearances of a very typical looking face or hand are actually the images that eventually feel more jarring and out of place, in effect normalizing the other portraits in the work.



*Other People's Stories*, 2011, Black and White, Stereo, 8 minutes

My films often look at how visual myths are perpetuated about persons with non-normative bodies and non-conforming identities. At one point, *When I Stop Looking*

references an obscure film made for the Nazi eugenics campaigns consisting of several portraits of psychiatric patients. In the original, an anonymous German filmmaker gives a subversive kick to the artifice of the Nazi propaganda machine by simply adjusting a bottom-light situated somewhere off-screen while the camera is still rolling. The effect creates heavy shadows moving artificially across a woman's face, in my view unfixing all efforts to falsely represent her as a "menace" and a "worthy candidate" for extermination. For me, I saw a person emerge from behind a mask, a personally compelling moment in the film.

I have no expectations that viewers will catch all of the references I might include in a film. I find if viewers are puzzled or experience a sense of open-endedness in a work, it creates more room for imaginative engagement with it as well as an opportunity for their own interpretations; a simple and vivid affirmation of existence comes forward, before anything else.



*Other People's Stories*, 2013, Color, Stereo, 15 minutes

My work invites viewers to examine their roles as complicit onlookers, often backing them into an encounter with the sources of their own discomfort or empathy. Complicity is frequently expressed in the form of sentimentality (both adulation and pity are forms of this), or in a total denial of emotion. Either negates interiority to a person who we view as different from us, which becomes an objectification of another human being. My films are constructed with this in mind, as they question our habits of looking and of story telling. For me, this translates into a cinema that looks at how images enforce or undermine – rather than simply reflect – history, dominant values, identity, and authorship.

# Cybernetic Organism

by Rosary Solimanto

The historical social injustice of disability identity creates traumatic experiences from the institutionalized biomedical infrastructure. Art on this subject has been long over due, a disabled minority group can find empowerment with a response through visual language to these prejudicial misconceptions. For me, objectification, and outdated ideas of “purification” and “perfection” of the human body will continue to prevail, unless there is an art that explores the dominant oppressive characterizations associated with socio political cultural discourse on disability identity.



*Alive*, 2015, video

A disabled person may desire to undergo treatment to become “normal” through biomedicine. In this process they are exposed, examined, and purified from what is seen as a grotesque genetic abnormality with a treatment that can only be characterized as tortuous. The piece *Rise of the Cyborg* is an autobiographical representation of my time in a clinical trial for a stem cell transplant to treat multiple sclerosis. In this work, I re-created an autologous stem cell process in which medical infrastructure and biomedical engineering gives birth to the cyborg. The process began with high doses of chemotherapy to destroy red and white blood cells, bringing the corporeal body near death.



*Grotesque Biomedical Treatment*, 2014, video

For *Rise of the Cyborg*, the gallery becomes the hospital or institution and the audience the spectators or guests entering my hospital room. Doctors, nurses and hospital personnel frequent the patient room, transforming the room and body into a Frankenstein-like, biotechnological, biomedical, grotesquely macabre spectacle. The kinetic table is composed of fabricated steel tubing to simulate a torturous appearing medical apparatus and the material used for the bedding is from acrylic glass to signify biotechnology. The hair I shaved off is to signify a chemotherapy patient status, torturous treatment, and grotesque abnormality.

After several high doses of chemotherapy (during the stem cell transplant), I regained the ability to walk. *Alive* is an outdoor video performance filmed on the boardwalk of Rondout Creek located in Kingston, New York. I awoke on the third day of high dose methotrexate to find my limbs could move again. I got up from the bed, grabbed the biopharmaceuticals on the intravenous pole and skipped along the stem cell transplant floor. I rejoiced at the new found freedom from the corporeal impairments that imprisoned my body in a bed, even though I was still disabled and under the influence of the bio-power biomedical infrastructure and regime. This piece was to shed light from the perspective of the injured when incarcerated by the corporeal body and biomedical treatments limited daily functioning.

Waking is a video performance encompassing how disability affects not only the afflicted, but the caregiver as well. It was inspired by memoirs recording the help I found with the alleviation of spasticity from an autoimmune disease, by being carried and or moved. Incarcerated by the corporeal body, biomedical treatments also limited daily functioning. Movements were derived solely from interactions with caregivers, an endless loop of contemporary dance between the role of the caretaker and the impaired. The performers (mother and child) reflect the truth and unconditional nature of the roles portrayed.

invisible and embarrassing impairment encountered daily. The impetus for this piece was to shed light on the perspective of the injured. It is not public knowledge as to who performs medical practices such as this; the anonymous portrayal creates objectivity because in the eyes of the medical community a patient is only a diagnosis. The vagina was the only thing of importance since it was the area of impairment that had to be prodded, exploited and examined. Sheets of brushed polish metal were placed together on the floor to simulate a medicalized area to sit. A light hung below the face of the performer to hide identity and to create a bright light effect on the area of importance to simulate a doctor's office, lighting up the area of examination. The performer sat down on the steel, legs were then spread widely to permit an area to plunge the catheter into and collect the urine from the bladder. When the bladder was done evacuating its contents, the catheter was pulled out of the urethra and left behind as the tortuous medical apparatus.



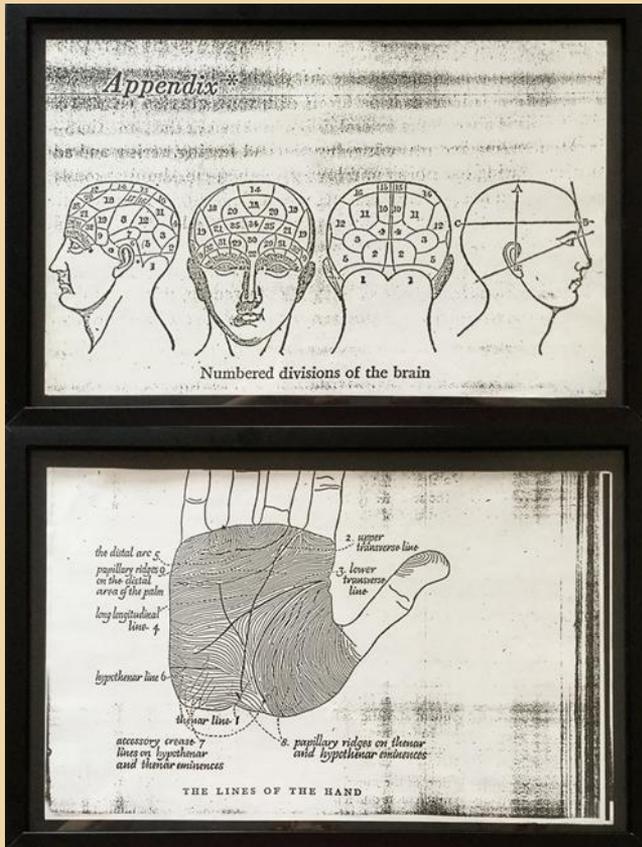
*Rise of the Cyborg*, 2015, steel, iron, acrylic glass, patient gown, hair, 56 x 40 x 72 inches

The last video, *Grotesque Biomedical Treatment*, is a performance regarding the grotesque daily ritual of self-catheterization. This piece explicitly exposes an



*Waking*, 2014, video

With the additional influence of social media spreading a hegemonic idea of perfection, having to bear the label of a clinical diagnosis makes the individual into an outlier. Until changes occur in the broader culture, these ideas of "the ideal" human body will continue to endure; society will not look upon anomalies with the admiration and beauty they deserve, as an inclusion in the broad spectrum of humanity. Disease, treatment and impairment will continue to be taboo even though disability remains a constant present. Advent of biotechnological attempts to normalize abnormalities has only brought with it the rise of cybernetic organisms.



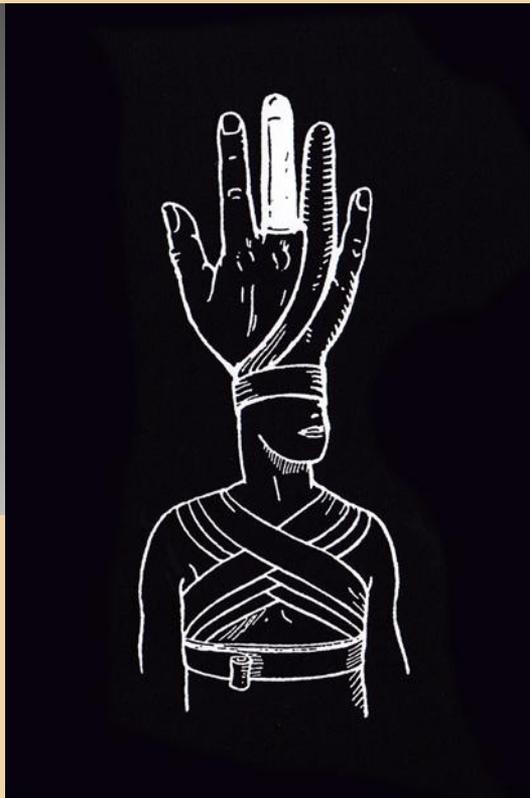
Barbara Rosenthal, *Evidence of Personality: Phrenology Segments / Palmistry Segments*, 1993, Electrostatic Print Diptych, 14.25 x 26.5 inches



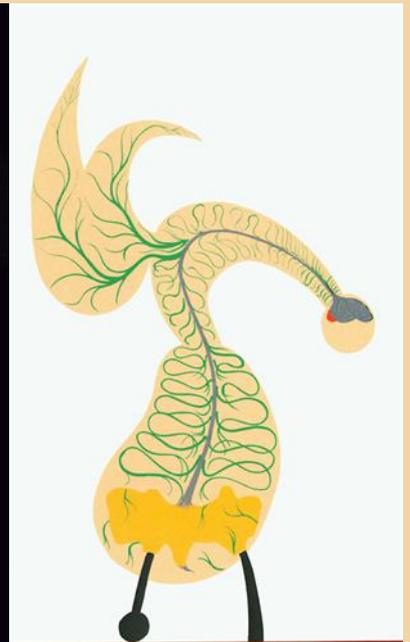
Bram Harris, *Japanese Genetic Code*, 2015, Oil & Acrylic paint, 25 x 31 inches



Melissa Stern, *In Flux*, 2013, Clay, glaze, paint, nails, wax, encaustic, ink, 9 x 5 x 3 inches



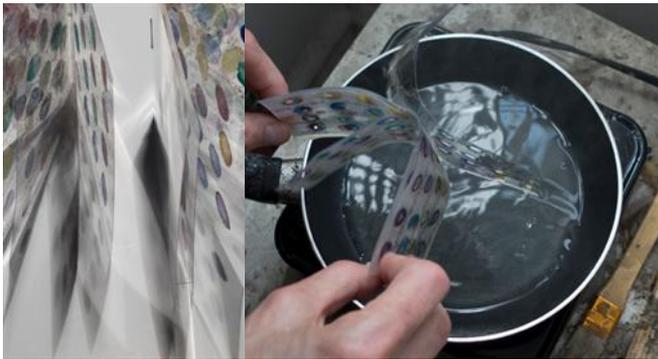
Brandstifter, *antibody # 27*, 2013, framed offset print, 4 x 6 inches



Charley Friedman, *Gross Anatomy/Anatomia Completa*, 2006, silkscreen printed artist's book, edition of 70, 11 x 14 inches

# Fingerprint Book

By Valerie Huhn



My fingerprint work all began with journals. Pages and pages of fingerprints fill these books, each print labeled with its date of imprint. During those early years, I thought of making my own journals to fingerprint, but I did not take the book-making plunge until I worked with a small book for the Art+=Start book archives. I then began making my own small-scale books—emulating the book size assigned to me by Art+=Start.

I created my books from four sheets of 4 x 6 inch tracing paper—forming a 4 x 3 inch quire. After printing and dating the books, I dipped them in wax and then placed them on a lightbox. I responded especially to the luminous quality of the piece.

In 2012, I attempted to incorporate these fingerprinted wax books into a larger work in progress, titled *Fingerprint Bureau*. This piece (shown Spring 2015 in the *Scenes of the Crime* exhibition at CENTRAL BOOKING) consists of a five-drawer dresser, each drawer featuring a different type of fingerprint art and each lit from within—two drawers as lightboxes, two lit from above (but within the dresser) and one lit by an LCD TV screen displaying a repeating video of my fingerprinting process. Originally, the wax-dipped fingerprint books were meant to be in a lightbox drawer. I soon discovered, however, that the heat within the Bureau caused the wax books to soften and lose their shape. I went back and forth about how to display the books—whether to allow them to metamorphose into a slightly new form over the duration of *Fingerprint Bureau's* first showing (at Montclair Art Museum) or to maintain a more fixed presentation. I opted for the latter approach, but then had to alter the materials to suit the environment. I wanted something transparent or translucent to work with the light and cast shadows of the fingerprints onto the base of the drawer that contained them. I re-ordered the *Fingerprint Bureau* drawers, so the books now had to fit in a shallow (five-inch) drawer.

I had worked with acetate in the past and liked the quality and detail of the fingerprints on the material. More durable and less subject to collapse than tracing paper, acetate became my book material of choice for this work. In addition, I decided that a sheet size of 3 x 6 inch provided greater stability than the 4 x 6 inch format I had used for the tracing-paper books. Thus the new acetate books became quires 3 x 3 inch square. I also resurrected an earlier idea I had of punching holes in fingerprints to see how little information could be retained in such an eviscerated print, turning my interest to the punched-out page rather than the punch-outs. I loved the shadows they cast along with the suggestion of “fitting a square peg in a round hole.”

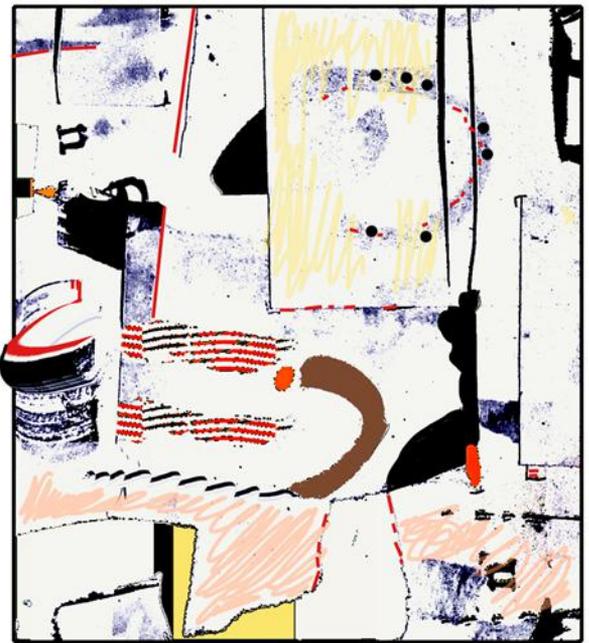
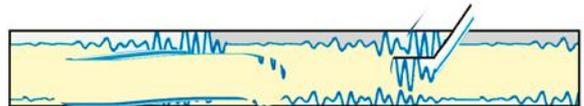
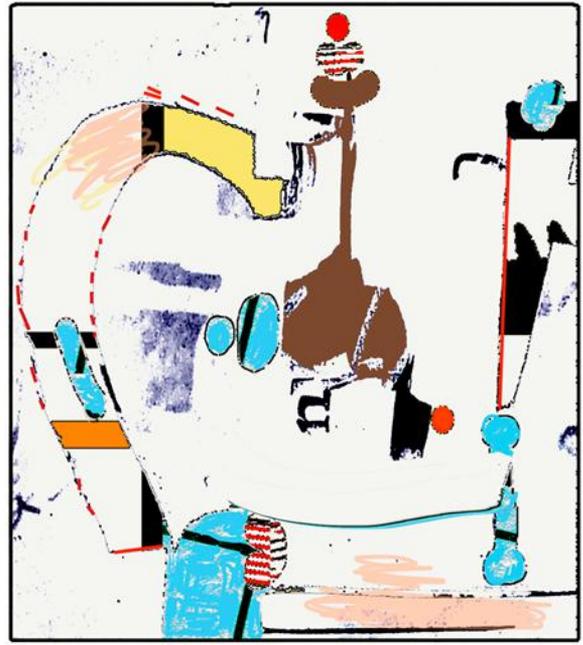
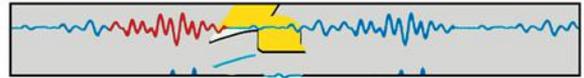
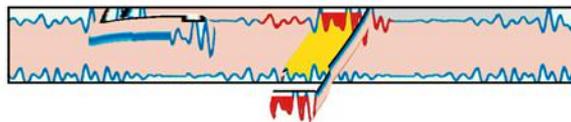
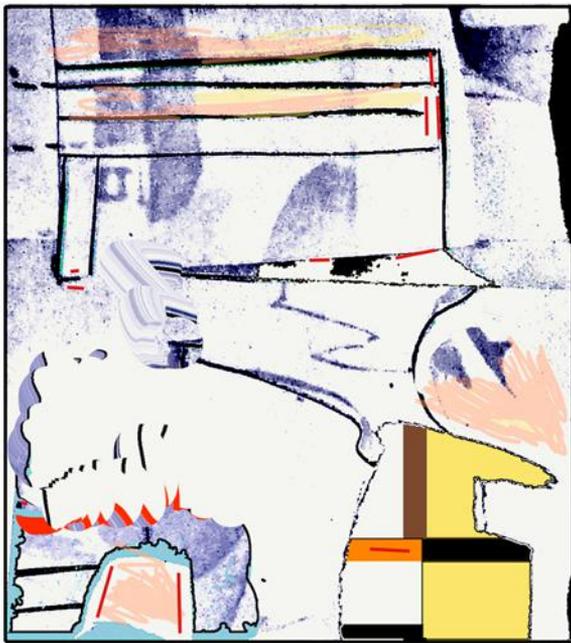
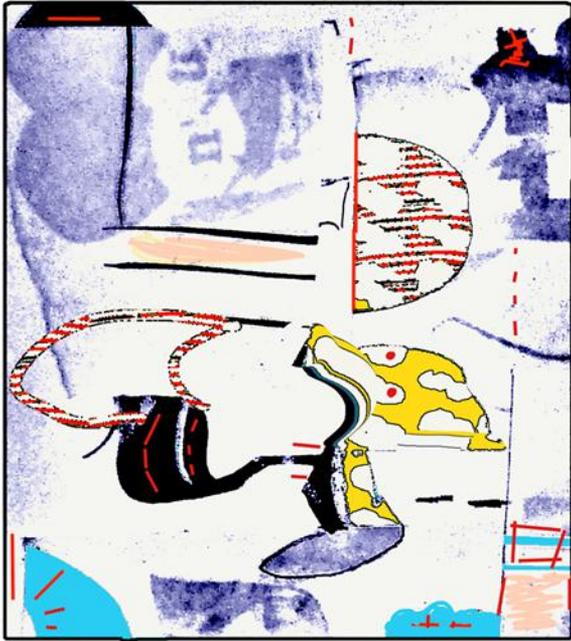
These punch-outs provided material for another bureau drawer—threaded on pins, four at a time. The books I structured in groups of four sheets, with a single staple holding them together. These pages are the layers of skin that hold the marks—16 fingerprints, arranged in a 4 x 4 grid.

Thirty books into the project, I decided to try and reference the older tracing-paper books by dipping the acetate ones in wax. I was attracted to the fact that I could manipulate them and that they became more translucent than transparent. I liked their individualized shapes and the shadows they cast in the drawer, but I felt that a bureau drawer was not the best way to display them. Therefore I wound up I using the transparent acetate books in the drawer after all. I had made several batches, so I could experiment with them at every creative step. I was interested in seeing the books as translucent shapes pierced, pocked, and marked. Each book was now a self-contained structure in a more sculptural sense.

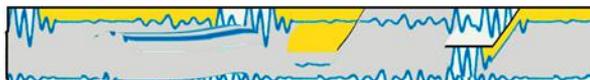
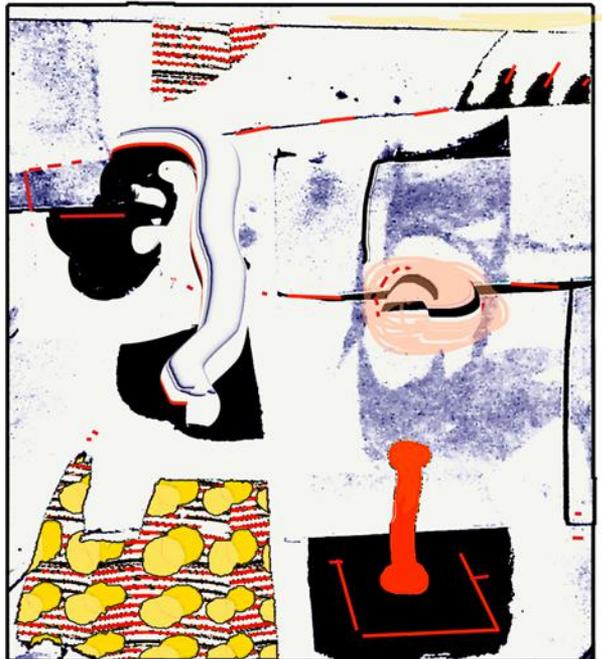
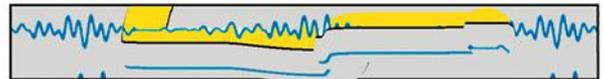
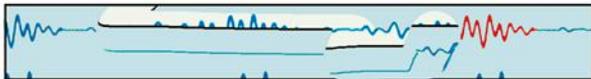
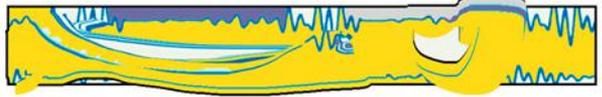
To make the books, I melt Shabbos candle wax in a frying pan on an electric hot plate and dip one to two pages at a time into the wax. This allows me to bend and alter each one through the heat of the wax. Applying wax and heat in this way to the flexible surface of the acetate makes each book more obviously unique. I discovered that varying the temperature of the wax creates stark differences in the book shapes. Lower temperatures yield a coating of wax on a relatively unchanged book shape; higher temperatures are capable of nearly obliterating the book's original structure.

Every step of my process in making these pieces deals with questioning the permanence of identity. I want my books to contain fleeting marks of recognition. Punching the hole through the print reduces the information and the skeletal structure of the book is then melted as a whole. Ultimately, it becomes a question as to how much can you extract from a print until it becomes unrecognizable.

radio active



by Rosaire Appel



# Perfunctory and Poetic: A Brief Musing on Book Dedications

by Nina Pelaez

Leafing through the first few pages of any book you will, more likely than not, find the dedication page: mostly blank, with a few spare lines of text. “For my parents” it may say, or might simply include a first name, most likely someone unknown to the reader—a friend, a spouse, a lover, a patron, a place, someone or something beloved to the author. Unlike paintings, or musical scores, or films, all of which seldom list the names of those personally connected to the work’s creator, books have maintained this practice since antiquity.

Dedications began as a way for authors to foster relationships with important people. Early on, authors often strategically paid tribute to wealthy and important subjects, even entire cities, in the hopes of encouraging monetary support. Both Horace and Virgil, for example, dedicated works to their wealthy patron Maecenas. For others, dedications strengthened social ties, as was the case for Jane Austen, who dedicated *Emma* to the Prince Regent after one of his circle strongly suggested that she do so.

Over the centuries, however, this practice evolved, the epithets becoming increasingly personal. These references to the author’s life situate the work within history, contextualizing it with the names of those who shared the author’s circles, literary or otherwise. Beside me here, I take note that Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* is dedicated to V. Sackville-West, a friend and brief lover of Woolf’s; Nabokov’s *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* both simply read “for Véra.” Djuna Barnes’ *Nightwood* lists Peggy Guggenheim, whose manor Barnes stayed at while writing the book, and John Ferrar Holms, Guggenheim’s lover and a fellow guest of the manor during the time Barnes stayed.

Although I imagine such pages are often overlooked by readers, I have always been fascinated by this rather curious practice. Despite the insistence on the “death of the author,” these brief biographies, perfunctory yet poetic, make it impossible not to begin imagining a very real life for the person who penned the pages before you. Each reference, each name following the “For” opens up a narrative of its very own, forging mysterious, even coded stories of relationships and recognition.



# Contributors

## ROSAIRE APPEL

Rosaire Appel is an ex-writer, digital artist exploring the between of reading/looking/listening. She makes books (commercially printed, handmade and recycled) and limited edition prints- with forays into actual ink and paper. Using a combination of abstract comics and asemic writing, she develops sequences that remain open to interpretation, thus keeping the relationship between the viewer and the work active rather than passive.

## STEPHANIE BRODY-LEDERMAN

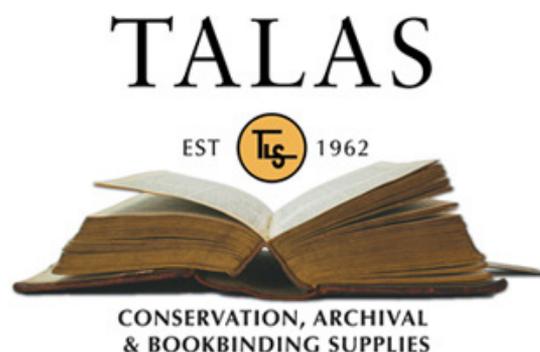
Stephanie Brody-Lederman is an artist whose work suggests a simple story hovering beneath the surface of the canvas. Among the grants and awards she has received are: NYFA, LMCC, Artists Space, Percent for Art- SOS Grant, Hassam and Speicher Award, The National Academy of Art Purchase Award, NYFA/NEA LINE Grant, Ariana Foundation for the Arts Grant, E.D Foundation Grant, and Percent for Art Grant.

## LAREESE HALL

Lareese Hall is the Architecture + Art Librarian at MIT. She has been an academic librarian for over six years. She is also a visual artist and fiction writer. Hall is currently working on a video series about artists' books and a radio show about research. She holds a BA from Oberlin College, an MFA from Goddard College, and an MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh. She spent two years as an architecture graduate student at the University of Virginia, where she spent all of her time in the library.

## TODD HERMAN

Todd Herman's films look to a rare beauty, making no claims to journalistic inquiry. He has presented his work at such venues as the International Film Festival Rotterdam, San Francisco International Film Festival, Southbank Centre, Anthology Film Archives, San Francisco Cinematheque, and Pacific Film Archives. He currently lives and works in San Francisco, California.  
[www.todd-herman.com](http://www.todd-herman.com)



## JENNIE HINCHCLIFF

As a "near-native" of San Francisco, Jennie Hinchcliff has been creating artists books since 2001. Her work is collected by a variety of institutions and private collectors. She has shown work at the San Francisco Center for the Book, Pyramid Atlantic, the New York Art Book Fair and the Tokyo Art Book Fair. Her work often deals with themes of personal identity and elusive memory.

## VALERIE HUHN

Valerie Huhn works in a variety of mediums. She received her BFA and MFA from San Francisco Art Institute. She has held several fellowships and has shown her art both nationally and internationally. Her work is in private collections. Huhn currently lives in Manhattan and her studio is in Brick, NJ.

## SANDRA MARCH

Sandra March is an interdisciplinary artist and has been working on installation projects since 2005. She has a Master's degree in Fine Arts and Philosophy (University of Barcelona). Among other awards, she won the IV Grant Art Creation (2010) and the Experimental Poetry Prize (2013). March has been at art residencies in Washington (2015) and Salamanca (2014). Her work is in collections in Washington, Barcelona, and Miami.

## NINA PELAEZ

Nina Pelaez is a writer and museum educator interested in multidisciplinary engagement and social practice. She is the 2014-2015 Kress Museum Interpretation Fellow at the High Museum of Art. A Brooklyn native, she received her M.A. in Art History from Williams College in 2014 and her B.A. from Swarthmore College in 2011.

## ROSARY SOLIMANTO

Rosary Solimanto is best known for her mixed media conceptual based work exploring the objectification she has faced battling multiple sclerosis. She encourages discourse on disability identity as empowerment to the inflicted. Solimanto has exhibited in the United States and Spain. Awards include Parnassus Award in Fine Arts, Adirondack, New York; Kulakoff Award, Albany, New York; and the Sojourner Truth Fellowship, New Paltz, New York.

## JOHN KUO WEI TCHEN & NOAH FULLER

Jack (John Kuo Wei) Tchen is a facilitator, teacher, historian, curator, re-organizer, and dumpster diver. Professor Tchen is the founding director of the Asian/Pacific/American (A/P/A) Studies Program and Institute at New York University and part of the original founding faculty of the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, NYU. He is author of *New York before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776-1882* and *Gentle's Photographs of San Francisco's Old Chinatown, 1895-1905*.

Noah Fuller is a curator, artist, and educator working in Brooklyn and an inaugural member of NYU's Art, Education & Community Practice Master's program. He co-curated *Haunted Files: The Eugenics Record Office* and is the lead curator of the current exhibition *In the Shadow of the Highway: Robert Moses' Expressway and the Battle for Downtown*.

