

# **Book Arts in New Jersey:**

**Seven Contemporary Perspectives**

John DePol	John DePol
Iris Nevins	Iris Nevins
Carol Joyce	Carol Joyce
Maria Pisano	Maria Pisano
Barbara Henry	Barbara Henry
Barbara Mauriello	Barbara Mauriello
Alexandra Soteriou	Alexandra Soteriou

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Archibald Alexander Library***

# BOOK ARTS IN NEW JERSEY

## SEVEN CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

### INTRODUCTION

What are the book arts? We have beautifully produced Illustrated books in the traditional codex format. The prints of Barbara Henry and John DePol can be seen in the exhibition. These are books that are often, but not always, costly; carefully printed on specially made papers, with handmade bindings by talented people thoroughly trained in the craft, like Carol Joyce who can execute an exquisite traditional binding as well as an artistic creation in three dimensions that is beyond the book. These books have decorated end papers, such as those designed by John DePol (which, unfortunately will not be visible in the show), or with a marbled paper by Iris Nevins, one of the world's best marblers.

Alexandra Soteriou a book artist who trained as a book conservator moved to works of art beyond the book, and to paper, the material that makes books. And she found herself in India, first to explore the ancient craft of papermaking, then to revive that craft, and to market it in paper objects that people can purchase and enjoy. Finally, her love of the book arts has led her to prepare a book about papermaking in India today that represents the best in commercial book production.

Barbara Mauriello and Maria Pisano were originally trained as artists and gravitated to the book as a medium in which to express their art, for book is icon in our culture - a point to which I shall return. Barbara Mauriello, Maria, Alexandra, and Carol produce works of art that reflect the book in many dimensions; what text and book mean to them. They have helped me form my own idea of the book arts, and thus shaped my own collecting.

As a librarian, I seek and handle information. The book as codex is a most wonderfully designed information medium, and it remains the easiest and most efficient way for us to receive information. Face it, the computer is clunky and time-consuming. The design and the technology of the book fascinates me. I use the book as an information medium. As a specialist in the preservation of books, I write about, and am consulted on, how best to physically preserve books, and often how to preserve their intellectual content.

Excerpt from a talk given at BOOK-ARTS IN NEW JERSEY, a symposium at Rutgers University, Newark, October 13, 1995, by Susan G. Swartzburg



# CHECKLIST

## INTRODUCTORY CASE

1. Alexandra Soteriou. Banana paper with traditional design (1995).
2. Barbara Henry. "Jersey City" Linoleum cut (1993).

## JOHN DEPOL

John DePol made his first drawings as a teenager standing on Tenth Street in Manhattan. He stood in the middle of the street and sketched the Brewery that used to be on the corner. He began his study of printmaking in about 1936, teaching himself etching, and later as a soldier during World War II, studied lithography at the Belfast College of Art. He began to teach himself the art of wood-engraving in 1947, and, since then, he has created over 1,000 blocks and illustrated over a hundred books, a listing of which would provide an index for the private press movement during the last half century. When the Bodleian Library acquired a collection of his work, Michael Turner, wrote an appreciation of John DePol in the *Newsletter* of the American Friends of the Bodleian calling him "one of the most accomplished and prolific American wood-engravers working today." As well as illustrating books for such notable presses as the Allen Press, the Stone House Press, the Yellow Barn Press, Bowne & Co., Stationers, and the Pentagram Press, John DePol continues to render what Turner calls "architectural 'portraits,'" chiaroscuro images of the buildings of lower Manhattan that combine photographic clarity with a brooding, Expressionist aura of power and menace.

## BOOKS

1. Heyen, William, 1940- *With Me Far Away : A Memoir* ; wood engravings by John DePol. Rosalyn, New York : Stone House Press, 1994.
2. Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964. *A Boyhood in Iowa* ; with a foreward [sic] by Will Irwin and wood engravings by John DePol. Council Bluffs : Yellow Barn Press, 1986.
3. Twain, Mark, 1835-1910. *The Quaker City Holy Land Excursion : an Unfinished Play*. 1867 ; with wood engravings by John DePol. Omaha : Buttonmaker Press, 1986.
4. Houseman, A. E. (Alfred Edward), 1859-1936. *A Shropshire Lad* ; wood engravings by John DePol. Coffeyville : Zauberberg Press, 1992.
5. Graves, John, 1920- *Self-portrait, With Birds : Some Semi-Ornithological Recollections* ; wood engravings by John DePol. Dallas, Tex. : Chama Press, 1991.

## PRINTS

1. *West Side Market Demolition*; wood-engraving by John DePol
2. *West Side Manhattan*; wood-engraving by John DePol

## ALEXANDRA SOTERIOU

Alexandra Soteriou has been making paper for 19 years. Originally apprenticing with the paper-maker, Douglass Howell, after finishing her academic studies in Anthropology she continued to work at the *Center for Book Arts*, in New York, and studied binding with Deborah Evetts, Conservator at the Pierpont-Morgan Library. She has written extensively about paper, recently publishing a limited edition book on India's paper history, which includes antique and modern tipped-in samples, and she has exhibited her lush and gravity-defying paper creations in galleries throughout the world.

During the last nine years, Alexandra Soteriou has worked with Indian paper makers. Through an *Indo-American Fellowship Grant* she traced the lost early history and traditions of papermaking within Islamic, Silk Road and Chinese traditions and interviewed many Asian and Near Eastern paper makers. Alexandra Soteriou organized her company, *World Paper*, to import decorative handmades for art, packaging, stationery and printing.

## ARTISTS BOOKS

1. *Memoirs of Babur* (1992)  
Stainless steel, handmade paper and paint; inspired by the Mughal invader, Babur's, diary of conquest, illustrated with flames and fire
2. *Oral Tradition* (1992)  
Hindus relied upon an oral tradition until the 1500's. Those asked to preserve the collective memory often resorted to a drug, *Goutukola*, to strengthen their ability to remember. *Oral Tradition* playfully attempts to represent the unrepresentable, the unwritten book.
3. *Indian Manuscript* (1992)  
Abstract of emotional response to colorful miniatures decorating Indian manuscripts.

## MARIA PISANO

Maria G. Pisano received a BA from Hunter College, an M.F.A. from Brooklyn College and an M.F.A. in Printmaking and Book Arts, from the University of the Arts, in Philadelphia. Since 1983, she has been making one-of-a-kind artist's books, most recently focused on the operations of memory. About her own work, the artist eloquently writes: " Working with artists' books, I orchestrate a theme incorporating visual and structural elements that respond, resonate and work harmoniously within the context of the book. I create environments linking form and meaning, past and present, memories and dreams, and the polarities that fuse, enact and display our multiple selves."

Her work, which combines a solid grounding in traditional print-making techniques with a lyrical sensibility attuned to post modern dialogues about The Book, is widely collected and has appeared in numerous group and one-woman shows in galleries and museums.

## ARTISTS' BOOKS

1. *Theater of Operations*, 1991. One of a kind.  
Each section is designed as a letter -- W -- A -- R --. Each letter is made up of 8 pages cut into successive additive shapes to form the entire design, to give the gestalt of that letter.
2. *Modus Vivendi* (Memory Press) 1995.  
Treated photographs with poem. Written, designed, printed and bound by the artist. The photographs were taken in Italy by the artist, subsequently scanned and manipulated on a Quadr 660AV. The images were made into polymer plates and letter press printed on Rives BFK. The cover was pulled on an etching press with paste paper decorated interior. The type for the poem is Palatia. The book format is concentric, each page turning inward, continuously upon the next page. Bound with paste paper strips along the length of the pages. (Edition of 20.)
3. *Entangled* (Memory Press) 1994.  
Printed on Graphyka Parchment, gray cover, in offset. Accordion folded pages in a case binding:  
(Copy #3/150)

## PRINT

1. *Persona Non Grata* (1994)  
Callograph with non silver text;  
Written and printed by the artist.

## CAROL JOYCE

Carol Joyce received an M.A. in Art History at Brown University, after having earned a B.A. in Art History at Douglass College, Rutgers University. Having trained as a bookbinder at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Di Firenze, in Florence, Italy, she later apprenticed with Carolyn Horton & Associates, of New York, in book and paper restoration, rebinding, conservation enclosures, boxes and portfolios. As a bookbinder, she has collaborated with numerous prominent figures in the arts, including the poet, W.D. Snodgrass, the book artist, Debra Weir and the photographer, Robert Mahon.

Carol Joyce's impeccable craftsmanship is finely complemented by a whimsical and poetic attentiveness to nature, from which she draws inspiration for her binding decorations and her ceramic designs.

## BINDINGS

1. Anthony Burgess. *Will and Testament*. Verona, Italy: The Plain Wrapper Press, 1977. Copy #8.  
Bound in full cowhide leather, wooden box.
2. Robert Mahon. *Between the Lions*. Stockton, N.J.: Carol Joyce, 1986. Piano hinge album in full leather oasis goatskin with gold tooling and a cloth box. [box not shown]  
(Copy #2)
3. Robert Bringhurst. *The Lyell Island Variations*. Illustrations by John Goodyear, calligraphy by Diane B. Amarotico. Cover designed by Carol Joyce in full leather oasis goatskin with vellum inlays, goatskin onlays, gold and blind tooling, detachable leather fish with cloth box. [box not shown]
4. W.D. Snodgrass. *These Trees Stand*. Photographs by Robert Mahon. New York : Carol Joyce, 1981. Cover designed by Carol Joyce in oasis goatskin with calf onlays, gold and blind tooling.
5. One ceramic rabbit (raku fired) by Carol Joyce.

## BARBARA HENRY

Barbara Henry earned an M.F.A. in painting from the American University in Washington, D.C., and studied typography at the University of Iowa. Barbara Henry's extraordinary command of late nineteenth century typographic design is manifest in the many books and broadsides she has produced at Bowne & Co., Stationers, at the South street Seaport, where she has been resident for twelve years, and holds the title of Curator and Master Printer. The linoleum cuts contained in her own publications, printed letterpress under several imprints, including the Broken Letter Press, the Upside Down "A", and the Harsimus Press (in Hoboken, New Jersey), reveal a wholly twentieth century sensibility in which self-conscious primitivism collaborates with a sophisticated knowledge of design.

## BOOKS

1. J. Matthew Schley. *Another Story*. Jersey City, NJ : [B. Henry], 1993.  
Written and illustrated by J. Matthew Schley;  
(Edition of 17 copies).
2. Mrs. Boltin. *A Rustic Tea : Being a Compilation of Traditional Recipes for Afternoon Delectation* / by Mrs. Boltin of the Hudson River Valley. [New York City] : Presented in the Artistic Style by Bowne & Co., Stationers, 1994.
3. Poe, Edgar Allan. *The Pit and the Pendulum* ; with wood engravings by John DePol. [New York City] : South Street Seaport Museum, 1991.



## IRIS NEVINS

Iris Nevins has been marbling paper for 17 1/2 years. As one of a small number of people who simultaneously "rediscovered" marbling in the 1970's, she is self-taught. Although versatile in all of the nuances of contemporary style, her express interest in marbling is in "recreating and preserving old patterns," with a special focus on the work of the first half of the nineteenth century leading up to the Industrial Revolution, or from 1800 to about 1860. She is also the author of numerous handbooks and manuals on marbling in which she shares the methods for reproducing historical patterns she has developed through experimentation. While she doesn't consider herself a marbling historian, Iris Nevins' singular efforts to keep historical marbling alive have made it possible for a generation of paper historians to better understand and record what without her might have become a lost art.

## PAPERS AND BOOKS

- 1-4. Four samples of marbled paper in traditional patterns, including copy of Partridge eye-pattern favored by George Washington.
5. Iris Nevins. Silk scarf (1995).
6. Iris Nevins. *Traditional Marbling*. Sussex, N.J. : I. Nevins, c1988.
7. James Bartram Nicholson, 1820-1901. *Manual of the Art of Bookbinding* Sussex, N.J. : Iris Nevins, c1986.
- 8-10. Marbled flowers. (1990-1995)

## BARBARA MAURIELLO

Barbara Mauriello earned an M.A. in Studio Art from New York University, and shortly thereafter apprenticed herself in bookbinding at the Center for Book Arts. Since the early 1980's, she has been very active as a lecturer and instructor, holding positions at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, the Newark Museum, the Penland School of Crafts, the University of the Arts and the State University of New York, at Purchase, among many educational institutions throughout the East Coast. Her contributions to education have kept pace with her career as an artist, although falling short of matching its extraordinary geographical range: Since 1990, Barbara Mauriello has exhibited her bindings and original books in Anchorage, Alaska, Ames, Indiana and throughout Africa (not to mention New York and of course, New Jersey).

Barbara Mauriello's work presents the viewer with a subtle parody of traditional bookbinding styles, conflating Medieval and Victorian aesthetics in collage techniques that forge associations with Max Ernst and Cindy Sherman.

### ARTISTS' BOOKS

1. *Women of the Bible : From Abigail to the Queen of Sheba* (1985)  
Fragments of eighteenth century illustrated book; silk case with pewter clasp; linen-covered clamshell box [box not shown]
2. *Jeweled Binding* (1992)  
Leather over wood; silk embroidery; twenty-three karat gold; glass buttons; padded silk-lined drop-spine case; linen-covered clamshell box. [box not shown]
3. *Icones Plantarum : A Book of Imaginary Botany* (1992)  
Gouache painting and gold stamping; limp vellum binding; linen-covered clamshell box. [box not shown]
4. *12 Egyptian Chairs* (1995)  
Gouache painting with gold tooling and collage; letterpress printing; concertina binding in clamshell box [see *Gallery '50* for box]
5. *Album & Box* (1993)  
Concertina binding in drop spine box; original woodcut set in on front board; plexiglass panel on box lid; assorted buttons and bone closures.

## GROUP

1. Barbara Mauriello. *Postcard Box* (1993)  
Old postcard; buttons; Japanese fabric and papers.
2. Carol Joyce. *Change* (1992)  
Unique copy. Piano hinge album in Mylar and plexiglass.
3. Maria Pisano. *O-Livre-Twist: In a Special Adapted Version*  
One of a kind, shreds of text pasted together into two wafers, with title roughly cut out of newsprint; with butterfly nut holding title strip and shorn b o o k spine.
4. Alexandra Soteriou. *The Book as Art*.  
Collaboration of three artists, papermaker, printer, and bookbinder/designer (AS)  
One of a kind.
5. John DePol. "The Bullfrogs Trump."  
Colored Wood engraving.
6. John DePol. "Bowne & Co., Stationers. Barbara Henry, Curator.  
Colored Wood engraving.
7. Iris Nevins. [Marbled papers underlying engravings]

## SINGLE ITEM CASES

### MARIA PISANO

- A. *Memory Map* (1994)  
Artist's installation  
"It was important that I recreate a moment that links time and events: a bridge between the child and the adult. In the book, the layering, transparencies, compartments, all speak of how memory is acquired, retained and retrieved. There is no particular order--recollecting and reminiscing what we deem most important."

### CAROL JOYCE

- B. George Taylor. *Spirit Mound*. New Brunswick, N.J. : Taylor, 1991.  
Box in full cloth designed by Joyce for ceramic objects.  
(Copy #2/12).

### BARBARA HENRY

- C. Barbara Henry. *The Gardener*. Jersey City, N.J. : Broken Letter Press, 1982.  
(Copy #4/25).  
Written, illustrated and printed by the artist.

### PRICES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

CHECKLIST AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES BY MICHAEL JOSEPH IN COLLABORATION WITH ARTISTS  
EXHIBITION CO-CURATED BY MICHAEL JOSEPH AND SUSAN G. SWARTZBURG, DESIGNED BY RUTH J. SIMMONS WITH HELP  
FROM MARIA PISANO.

