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Good morning friends. Can you all hear me? Is the system working? OK guys. I'm sure all of you know Michael Joseph very well. The director of this wonderful symposium. Chances are you don't know me. I'm Brian Becker and I've been at the Rutgers library for many years. But I'm wearing a different hat today as well as welcome here from the university. Everything OK there. I'm also the chair of the Middlesex County Culture and Heritage Commission. And but on behalf of the commission who is our co-sponsor today I would like to just welcome you here and tell you how proud we are of our association with you. As you know we've moved here to Middlesex County from Essex County where they symposium was held for many years. And since we've been a Middlesex County it's allowed us to have this association. And we're hoping it will continue for many years. The director of the Culture and Heritage Commission and the staffers are not quite here yet but we're expecting them any minute and maybe we'll point them out to you later on and so we all owe them a really great debt of gratitude. And I'm looking forward to being with you at least for the morning sessions and learning a lot more about the Book Arts I knew practically nothing about it until I met Michael and he's really brought that whole program here. It's one aspect of our rare book collecting that we did very little. And because it's such an important part of New Jersey publication and the book and history of the book it's really added to our New Jersey collections as well. So again I'm going to look forward to spending the day with you and to greet you formally from the library. I'd like to introduce our Vice President for Information Services in university librarian Krisellen Maloney who will give us some formal greetings from the library. So let's make sure I get this. So on behalf of Rutgers University Libraries I'd like to welcome you to the 22nd Annual New Jersey book arts symposium. So last year I was new and I was able to go around and sample the exact exhibition and I came to quite a few of the presentations and I was just captivated by the

amazing quality beauty beauty importance of what I saw. And this year's program promises to be every bit as interesting with another significant exhibition and even more presentations so we're very proud to host this and appreciate Michael Joseph's tenacity in ensuring that the that records remains part of this initiative. I know it's an incredible amount of work and I could not imagine how all of this happened every single year. So I spent a little time talking with Michael Joseph about the specifics. He said Don't thank me. And he talked to me for a bit and now I know that this is truly a shared effort. And I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge five artists who have been indispensable to the success of the symposium. I don't know if everybody is here. I came up just a few minutes ago so if you're here kind of just put up your hands so that we we all know that you're you're here. So first Karen glad GOP. I know you're here because you made your presence well-known. Just a minute ago the the full roster of artists that we see today and the diversity and richness of program richness of the program are a testament to Karen's commitment and her status in the art world when she invites artists to speak at the symposium. They almost always automatically say yes. She is also I I know now the person that we can thank for the beautiful spring sutures exhibit that we had in Newark. It was a work of renewal and hope and and hopefully it's OK we're going to be using some photographs of it on our annual report for transformations that's titled Transformation. This just perfect. So Amanda Thackery Amanda Thackeray is she here. You had her. Oh she sent up the cases and that's it. And that is exactly what she does the curator who I cannot believe. Does this exhibit on the spot on the day of the symposium that's gutsy and it really exemplifies grace under pressure. So she's not here to hear the thank you but let you know Amanda's done this exhibit since the symposium returned to New Brunswick. And she does it smoothly and with little little or no fanfare. It's a great display of curatorial skill you're all aware of that and and maybe in the tumult of the day we can forget to thank her for that. Asha pop there you are. She's going to do it. She's going to direct this year's group artwork. It's an interactive registry so every year she comes up with a different and unique collaborative performance. They're always interesting and fun. That's I mean I'm assured of that. And I think everybody is looking forward to that

today. But you know maybe during the the busy day we might not have a chance to thank her. Marsha Wilson and where did Marsha go so she was here just a minute ago. Yeah she's been documenting the symposium with drawings and photographs. She's our artist resident. Is she hiding. And very infrequently get to take about and now we know why. Because she'll hide and run from a bow. And then finally due to Ethel join us this afternoon Judith Brodsky she's been providing the summaries and it's so nice to at the end of the day to have someone who can elegantly and intelligently place the artistic presentations of the day into an intellectual context. So it really brings the whole thing together at home. So these are five and just indispensable figures. They're all visionary artists. And without them and Michael we would not have this wonderful new jersey book Art symposium. So with that I hope you have a wonderful day. I'm going to be in and out all day but I'm going to try to see as much of it as I can because it's just amazing. So and thank you for coming. Thank you very much Chris Allen for recognizing the five staunch pillars of the New Jersey book arts symposium. And thanks Ron for that touching introduction. This is Ron's last year by the way. Is retiring after about 100 years at Rutgers University. And if I mean Ron might have been exaggerating by saying if it wasn't for me there wouldn't be a book or some program at Rikers. But I am not exaggerating when I say it without Ron Becker there wouldn't be a special collections at Rutgers University. So thank you all for coming. This is the 22nd. As Chris Allen mentioned New Jersey Bogart symposium. My name is Michael Joseph. I am the founding director of the symposium and I just want to make a couple of notes in the program. Just nuts and bolts things. Before I introduce Karen who is going to introduce Asha. Is that what we're gonna do it on my own or my introducing Aisha. I guess I guess what I'll introduce ash and she'll introduce Karen Jean Stufflebeem whom we know and love was scheduled to be on the program. And if you received an early invitation you'll see that her name is on the invitation and if you came to see Jean I am sorry but Jean has a medical issues and she can be here with us this year. However to take Jean's Place are our good friend Mimi Cher a.k.a. Miriam Cher has offered to step in and talk to you about her brilliant artists books and her travels. So stay tuned for Mimi. If you came because Lesley Dill was on the

program I have to disappoint you again Lesley Dill broke her pelvis. But she is OK but she can't be here today she can be here next year um so um so we still have a very full program. So I'm going to stop yakking and thank you again warmly for coming and I want to introduce now Asha who is going to do our onsite collaborative artistic extravagant performance. I have an introduction here I'm going to if I sound like I'm reading it's because I've trained myself to sound like I'm reading. I've got this memorized but Asha Gon part is a multimedia visual artist who was born in Trinidad and she lives and works in New Jersey. She is a New Jersey black artist. She received her BFA right here at Mason Gross Rutgers University and her MFA from Montclair State University. Asha has shown at institutions such as the Brooklyn Museum of Art the institute to decode Torah Exit Art the noise museum the Queens Museum the Jersey City Museum and the Nathan Cummings Foundation her work was cited as one of New York City's top ten art installations of 2012 by Complex magazine she is an alumnus of Algeria's emerge guy as Wonder Woman program the annual New Jersey book arts symposium. I've heard of that and chat to Sharma North Shore Sharma north and Trinidad Alice yard residences. In addition Aisha is an adjunct professor of sculpture at Montclair State University and an independent curator. So Aisha low. All right. So I'm really excited about this year's project. It is using my toy capsule vending machine. Everyone will be receiving a tiny book a little signature inside of the capsule. Its blank is up to you I have directions in case you don't remember what I'm saying. So I have I have directions for you. And by lunchtime I would love for you to have done something with this book draw right send a note a poem a letter whatever you like and then at random will jumping ahead. Then during lunch I will trade a token for your capsule with the filled book inside and then everyone will be able to get a book at random in commemoration of their time here today so I have the directions for you going to hand this out. I hope it maybe doesn't need anymore your creativity is all that is left waiting for that I'm waiting for. And yeah I'm going to hand that out to you. So I know have a lot of speakers today I will take up no more of your time and I'm going to hand that out and maybe it'll be fast enough that I won't interrupt Karen. All right. All right. I'm really excited about this with you. Yeah I'm

coming around Thank you Usher and I also want to really thank Sarah Stengel who came all the way from Minnesota just to do the workshop. And Catherine Le Claire who was busy silk screening. She's in here now where she's still out there and Catherine Le Claire and it is really great to have two workshops this year. I think we should continue having more than one workshop. Thank you so it's really great to see everybody. And since it's a time of everybody talking about the people and the American people I'm really happy that the book arts people are here today. So let's introduce our first artist and what I'm going to do everybody since we have a lot of people. I'm going to give you a five minute warning. OK and I'm going to be sitting over there I'm telling all the artists and I'll also give you like a one minute warning. OK so I lean I lean was born in New York City and she now lives in Jersey City. She has a B.A. in studio art from SUNY Binghamton and an M.A. in creative art from Hunter College. Besides being an artist she's also a published poet. She works book art printmaking installation photography. She's been awarded lots of artist residencies and she's exhibited in many different places. She received a fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts a grant from the Puffin Foundation and let's see oh there's so much here. Her artists books are in the collections of Wesley Dartmouth Lafayette College Yale Lowell Yale University the New York Public Library the King Street Steven museum in Hungary. She is widely exhibited and I am really happy to get to see your work. You've been here for many symposiums and it's great to finally get to have everyone see it. Thank you. Well I was trying to tilt this down. OK. Can anybody hear me. Is that good. OK let's see where am I. Where can just adjusting myself to this computer can I Hi. Do I have to keep those little things on the side or can I get rid of those help me. Yeah. I'm used to my Mac. This is a little bit different. I want to thank Karen and Michael for inviting me. That was a nice surprise. So then what I wanted to the next one just. With love. OK so right goes forward. OK. So I'll just leave this up for a minute. I think people coming to book through different doors I find there are people who enter who are really interested in the craft aspects how to construct a book all the different techniques and bindings and materials. And then I meet people who come in through text and print letter press like I heard Amos Kennedy speak last week and

Center for Book Arts if you know his wonderful work and he considers himself a printer a letter press printer and then there are people who come in through the Moore through the fine arts door and that was really my entrance to Book Arts. I had been working for many years and photography and collage and I incorporated text into my work back in 2001. I took a workshop with Miriam who's by coincidence here and I said Miriam you created a monster because I realized Book Arts were a really nice fit for a lot of my interests and about a year later I started really working more with altered books and I was teaching in West New York and Hudson County which is full of immigrants. For those of you who know Hudson County. And I asked some of the teachers I worked with who were immigrants if I could photograph them if they had family pictures they could share with me. And then I also used maps and other things and I made a group of altered books about them and their lives. And that's a theme I returned to again and again. So this is part of immigrant story. Jeanette and this is another one. And the identity of the book was part of it. This is the last book was a teenage romance. And this person seemed like a perpetual teenager and this is the Book of the states. So it's open to new jersey and this one is an English language book a grammar book and then about a couple months later I was going to the Vermont studio center to do a printmaking residency and I've been wanting to do a project about the Holocaust for a couple of years. I had visited Antwerp and taken pictures in the Jewish quarter there where there's the diamond industry looks very unchanged. It could be the 1930s you have the people the Orthodox people in their clothes and the houses are pretty much all the same. And I visited a building that was a prison during World War Two in a town called Maclean where all the everybody who is transported to concentration camps passed through this one building and there were tracks right there that could take people off into Poland. So I took pictures there and then about a year later I went to Austria and I went to my house in concentration camp and took photographs. I always work from my own photographs. Unlike the millennials I've been in classes with who surf the Internet for all their images. I always work on my own images. So I thought I would do great big prints and I couldn't make those work and then I had thrown a bunch of books into my car before I left for

Vermont. And I started printing on translucent vellum paper and then nice print making paper and inserting them into books. So this one has a print on vellum over other prints and there's an image from concentration camp and this is another one and the girls are kind of half disappearing you can barely see them which seem kind of appropriate to me. And this shows you and the identity of the books. I didn't want the books to be identifiable anymore I was just using a mixed collection of old hardcover books so I obscured the outside with modeling paste and paint and collage images onto the covers and this one I tore a hole in the cover. So some light comes through and the text is an old Yiddish pre World War Two children's story and I felt the heart of the project was this man in the hat and I used him over and over I did 16 of these books. I felt that it's kind of summed it up the individual who is going to live his life to trying to live his small personal life and being overwhelmed. And then a couple of not too long after that I was involved in something called Jamaica flux which was a project of the Jamaica Center for Arts and learning in Queens New York and there they wanted artists to do projects that would be outside the usual gallery and be out in the community. My proposal was to interview a group of older people in the area. And photograph them visit them in their homes and use text that was from their words and make books about their lives. So they put me in touch with a couple of people that I visited and this is one of them. And this is another view of the same book with all the different occupations this man had. And. Another one. And here he I used an old dictionary and you can read the word the definition of fortunate in it because he was. He said he was fortunate his whole life and he had this really hard life and he was very positive it was really something very beautiful and these were exhibited in a bookstore and on Shoemaker Avenue. And this is the last altered book I'm showing you. This is a Croatian prayer. It's a small prayer book. It's about five inches high. That I came across traveling in eastern Europe. And these are all transfer prints done from a page of the book with a lithograph overlay. I do paper I like paper lithography a lot and the text is just red ink and those are my words about Croatia which is a really grim place. I had I met with a curator who asked me when he saw my Holocaust books if I ever make books from my own books and I said oh that was looks like too

much work. I don't think I'll ever do that. And of course then I did that. So when Obama started to run in 2008 I started thinking about the legacy of slavery which seem like this insidious poison that affected both the people descended from slaves and the people and white privilege and how that's. An essentially corrupting imbalance of power. That was really affecting our society. And it's interesting how a lot of the issues I've been involved in have become more central as time has gone on like immigration issues or like issues of race. Certainly a. Big issue this year in this election. So I started researching slave narratives from the Library of Congress Web site which is a wonderful source of material and this is just an inkjet photo. With added ink. And it's a big according in each pages about 15 by 11 inches. And I have. An important part of the text is sewn on. So I have once a slave. Is sewn and this is all paper lithography. And then the back is a digital photograph. And this is another one of those books. And this has text from the Dred Scott decision. It was exhibited in a college and they had to put up a thing on the wall about what the Dred Scott decision was which I thought was really sad. But she said well they don't all know this. And then there's a little bit of a slave narrative to inserted in their. And this is one more this is a four page double sided accordion. Of. Lithographs with this text and I'm using a lot of times I'll take one photograph and I'll use it different ways to create a book. And I think it was around two thousand nine or ten. There was the call out for book artist to become involved in something called the Alma Tanabe Street project. Probably some of you were involved in that or know people who were an artist. It was a call for artists to create books had to do an edition of three and one step was to go to Iraq. One traveled the world in one sets being housed in Purdue University in Indiana now. So. For that I thought I again I returned to my idea of photographing an individual of using their words. And I asked a Muslim American friend if. If I could. Discuss this with her how does it feel to be a Muslim in America right now. And her quote was I get tired of defending my faith. And I also have that in Arabic in the book and the street scenes were all taken from where they were rebuilding the World Trade Center. So this shows you what it looks like close it's small it's about five inches square. After I finished that I thought. I really want to explore this topic more. So I continued visiting with Muslim

Americans and photographing them and using their words. And this one is in the case outside. I gave it to Amanda for the exhibit and it has I'm a child of this century and it's also in Arabic in the book and the center part turns also. So there are more pages this shows you that. And this is another one. This shows you it's a double sided accordion. So. That's the cover. They're. And that's the other side of it. Trying to keep track of my time. And this one says. I teach them Arabic but they forget. And you can't quite see it but there's a picture of her with her baby. And I started fooling around with different sized pages because I felt like it was sort of an uncontrollable topic so I didn't want it to fit so nicely. Then I was there was a call out for artists to create work about synagogues and I think of these is virtual books. I had had to be two dimensional work. I had an old book that I had gotten from my parents apartment when I cleaned it out of Jewish fairy tales and legends. We had very few books in our home. If you wanted to read you went to the library. But my brother got this is a price. And I was the reader so I read it over and over and I knew all these stories. So I treasured that book. And I wanted it. I've been wanting to do a project about the South Bronx and my childhood there because. Everybody's childhood is lost in a way because the world changes we all change and it's gone. But the Bronx was really gone because the Bronx I grew up in really fell apart. At one point it's kind of coming back but it's still the poorest burrow in the city. So I went around to all these former synagogues of the South Bronx and there was a list of them on the Internet. And a lot of them are churches their community centers their day care centers and I call this series stories end and they're all this is all done in Photoshop. This book doesn't you know these book images you see don't exist physically. And I make sure that in each of the photographs you could read the end of the story. That's the synagogue I went to as a child. And the idea of using book images to make books. Appeal to me. And this past spring I. Mean. This past spring I curated an exhibit at West Bath gallery with my work in couple other artists. And I showed a lot of work from what a series I called homily for the 99 percent. For the past two years I've been doing work about income inequality and I'm referencing Horatio Alger literature in that which I find some people. Have Forgotten who or never knew who ratio Alger was whose 19th century

author. He wrote all these pull yourself up by the bootstraps books. He's still getting quoted a lot. It's all about. You know what. If you work hard everybody can do well in life which is a very dubious consent concept since a lot of people work really hard and are really struggling. So I was using all these Horatio Alger images of his books in combination with other things. For collages and then I made this small book that's printed on a recent graph machine which I. Totally find really interesting. I start I took a workshop in that. That a year ago and it's a really interesting thing to play around with in book arts. So it because the inks are really nice and you can do lots of things with color. And this book is in the case outside. But of course you can't see all of it. This is also printed on a risk graph. And I started I recycled my ideas about immigration for this book. When back when I was doing those immigrant books. I was also doing a group of large. Photo collages where I asked different people what they miss about their country what don't you have here that you had where you came from. And they gave me lots of great answers. So I used some of those in this book. So it has things like the women were all beautiful huh. You know I was never alone. And that's that in the case to. And then most recently I think I'm right on time. Yeah. Five minutes of my up. Perfect. I practiced this so that I have enough time. I was at an artist residency in Italy. And my project for that. My proposal was to create books about the lives of the people in this small mountain town and I said I only wanted to talk to older people. And they gave me someone to translate and I was surprised. I thought life would be very different from when they grew up but now I was in a mountaintop town. They were still picking olives from the trees. People didn't go past the fifth grade when they were children. It was I felt like I was in a movie from the 1950s. It was amazing. So I interviewed people and I found a whole trove of old notebooks in a drawer in the Palazzo I was staying in. So I scanned them and I used images of the books. To be part of this and the people in the town really loved that. They really responded to it and they don't always connect. I was told they don't always connect to the ARC projects. But they came to see the work and they said oh I remember we always had those times tables in the back of the book and this one you can see there are maps of Italy and they said oh yes we always had the maps. So and that these

cartoony kind of images are scans from the ACT these actual 1940s and 50s notebooks. And that's the three sisters. I got inspired by the the Black Lives Matter. There was an article last spring in the New York Times. About the number of black men missing from society. And I started doing a lot of work about that and I made a couple of books and this is a very simply constructed is just a big four page double sided accordion on one big sheet of paper and in each of the Circles is a street scene with one man covered in white pencil to show the men missing and then there are bits of the New York Times story that transfer printed around it. And the last thing is a book I've been exploring trying to combine poetry and. Book Arts. I started taking poetry workshops about four years ago. And one of my workshops we created we wrote a poem in response to a photograph. And this is an old photograph from the 1930s from the Library of Congress. And I wrote a poem about it. This is just a simple sixth This is printed on a recent graph machine. 1930s photo of a room in Ohio. Did he hear a knock. Did the man lying in bed turn away revealing a pillow oval of dark hair and bare neck. Did he hear a creek. Pull a scale of big cover up or wake it a flashbulbs pop. Glance startled into a camera single eye am serving a narrow bed. Bottle. Girlie calendar on a wall. Did he push away the sheet. Scratch his chest and sit up to smoke a Manila blond cigar tasting Mostyn leather feeling mystery and the constant engine of his heart. Brett's journey in and out his unmatched ramble path from cellar to attic stairs to hallways and all the rooms between that's all. Thank you thanks Eileen.

Beautiful. I'm actually really pleased to have met two women this summer who actually live right near where I live and I was so surprised and marveled at their project. I'm going to read their bio. It's the creativity caravan which actually are two people. It's Amy tingle and Maya Stein. They're the co-founders of the creativity caravan. They're located in Nutley New Jersey and their mission is to spark engage and nourish creativity in communities everywhere. In addition to leading art and writing workshops for children and adults they've launched several large scale community art projects and an in school program which is devoted to connecting people through artistic engagement and creative actions. They travel the country towing their vintage caravan and writing poetry for strangers on brightly colored typewriters and that's how

I met them they had this amazing life. I think it was the 50s. This beautiful caravan I felt like I was in a boat and which they tow and traveled the country with. During the summer of this summer they are tiny book show which is a mobile museum of miniature books made by artists of all ages from all over the world traveled over 8000 miles and then they share their collection. They facilitate they facilitated this tiny bookmaking workshops and was in over 60 locations throughout the United States. I met them in Montclair New Jersey in front of the library and they had these wonderful. They looked like suitcases that they were all suitcases but they made them into like little complicated shelves and they had these little tiny books and everything was catalogued and I can't wait to see what happened this summer on your travels. So thank you for coming Karen and and thanks for inviting us to be here. We are relatively new to Book Arts but kind of got a fast and furious immersion this summer the spring and summer when we launched the tiny book show one of the reasons that we launched the show is we wanted to kind of transform move something that seemed like a specialized kind of art into the commute into the larger community and to make art accessible to to all ages. As Karen said one of our part of our mission is to create community through art and and and creative action and so leading these book making workshops really was a very natural way of have starting dialogues between people between book artists and amateur artists between adults and kids. So that was a really important piece of our work. The question why why miniature books why why tiny it's because there's a kind of a natural curiosity and joy that happens I think with with anything miniature. I mean we've seen it a lot the little bubbles that have passed out are probably prime examples. Like childlike joy the bubble is it's so exciting. So there's something tiny and so a miniature if you you probably know but if you doubt a miniature book as defined by the miniature Book Society is anything. A book that's smaller than three inches in dimension so that was the point. Those are the parameters of our of the tiny book show. So to sort of land you in our projects we're gonna show you a short video which was our actually our call to artists. This isn't something that my and I had done before. So everything that we did we were learning as we went. So we funded our project to be a Kickstarter which is the fourth time between the

two of us that we've used Kickstarter as a way to fund our projects. But we had to find artists you know the Kickstarter was great too to fund the project and help us be able to travel but who was going to fill our caravan with miniature books. We weren't book artist yet so we needed to fill it. So this was our call for artists to find people who'd be interested. When we put out a call for a tiny book authors in the spring of 2014 before embarking on our typewriter to journey. I don't think either of us expected the tiny pearls of wisdom that would be shared in just six pages each measuring little bigger than one inch. I don't know if we understood the impact. The surprise and delight our tiny library would provide to so many strangers. It turns out people love small things and holding a miniature book in your hands is like holding an exquisite Jewel. So we thought what if you could step inside our vintage caravan and be surrounded by tiny first editions. Next summer we will travel far and wide with a miniature museum of tiny works of art and we'd love for you to get involved. Your tiny book will join our mobile Museum as part of the tiny bookshop and your creativity will influence and inspire the communities we visit. Along the way we want to give people the opportunity to step inside our caravan and be transported by your words your images and your imagination. Read the information below for entry details and join us for the tiny bookshop. So we point that video out into the world in a variety of ways. And we had absolutely no attachment to outcome and I think that's important to say. I think in a lot of the projects that we take on we don't have any attachment to outcome. Of course we wanted to be successful of course we want people to join but we don't have numbers in mind. We don't have any idea of who's going to answer the call. But we received three hundred and twenty five bucks which was far beyond any expectation that we had in our mind. We had one hundred and seventy artists from five countries and the youngest artist was seven. He was a he's a Montclair second grader. He wrote a series of books about super banana and he after he answered our call to be an artist in our show he got his entire class to make miniature books and spread and is still spreading the love of miniature books. So they were book artists professional book artists who are interested. There were artists of all different mediums who were interested in trying something different.

There were teachers who were teaching Book Arts and some high schools some middle schools who were interested in having their their students participate and total amateurs who had never made a book before including my and I. So one interesting statistic about the entrance to the to the book show is that more than half of them are under 18 years old and so that was really wonderful to see this really a broad diversity of books and subject matter and materials. We had metal books we had cloth books we had I mean it was just wood wood and really really interesting. Variety. So the next piece was you know where we going with this. We actually started the tour in spring in March at a library and Birdsville New Jersey and it kind of took off from there. We've got a lot of wonderful reception from libraries to come and to share the collection. Summer reading programs that they're you know at their libraries were needed you know had had room for improvement. And so we got probably about 75 percent of the places that we went were for libraries. We also reached out to community centers bookstores. Art galleries and and it just sort of took off from there and we just developed our route based on who responded first. So our first stop during the summer was Cincinnati and we just did a northern route and went across the country B Chicago and Madison Wisconsin South Dakota Salt Lake City Portland Oregon and we actually really wanted to stop in. I mean we did stop in quite a few small towns. We found that in fact the the smaller towns were where the attendance of you know was actually more significant. This was like a big deal. And so. It was it was really remarkable to get the community to come out in some of these smaller locations. But we also were like in Salt Lake City we had about three hundred people come through the exhibit and learn how to make small books. And that was a really important piece also was to to have a hands on experience where participants could learn some forms of their own. We taught three basic folds. We did a Stratford on accordion. We didn't save strap Stratford on now because that is and really scary. And we did a drag and fold book and a Turkish map fold and a Hungarian map fold. Also we wanted the exhibit to be hands on. That was important. We knew that there were many collections around the country in some of the bigger libraries where they have miniature book collections. Most of them you don't get to touch the books on their

underclass. And for good reason of course. But in our collection we want it was important that people were going to come and be inspired to make their own books so they had to be able to touch them. So the artists all knew that their books would be handled throughout the show. People would be able to pick them up and read them. It was sort of our way of breaking down the walls of a museum. We were calling this the tiny book show we were calling it a museum of miniature books but we were breaking down some of those walls and deepening the avenue for inspiration. So we're going to just show you another short video. It's images from the trip from the summer. And just to give you a sense of really the joy and wonder people had with with this experience. So that sort of became our mantra. Tiny matters because it worked on a number of levels as you know the miniature book. Format. But also because every little. Hurt every person who came mattered. I mean every person who had to experience this and have conversations with everyone else came who came mattered their personal expression mattered the way they interpreted. The. The way they they rose to the challenge of making. Making these books mattered. You really soppy conversations happening with. Participants. Oh you know how did you do that and the little embellishments that people added to the books was was really remarkable to watch. And I think that really answers the question that's probably most important in this room which is why why book cards why book guards were meaningful for this particular project. And. I think that that's really it. I mean anyone could participate. The fact that we had these three pretty simple constructions. That we had taught ourselves how to create they anyone who came to the table whether they were four years old or one hundred years old they could participate. And that was really important the fact that it was hands on that you were making something together with your hands in a society that is incredibly digitized where we constantly see people on their electronic devices and not really communicating with each other. Something where we were all gathering around a table and making with our hands was important opening the conversation like Maya said you know we were all sitting at the table together at every at all 60 locations. There was always a communal table where we sat together. With people of all ages. From all walks of life. It was interesting

too just to play with the idea of. Making mistakes because one of the things that we always encountered on. During our stops was people that you know accidentally. You know. Cut. Too far up or. Didn't fold correctly or. You know. And. So we always talked about the experience that they were having. As this is a process this isn't perfection. This is. This you're you're making a template of an experience that you are going to. Learn from so it's actually really important to. Make that you know to. Have that rip happen. See see how you see where you. Went astray. And so I think it was just. A great experience to show that. The process of creating something with your hands. Allows you to. Learn. In a way that's that's really visceral and sort of more body centered. You can see where you need to know you need to do it differently every time. And. We found especially with. With kids who were struggling maybe in school with reading and writing. Concentration. The miniature book format was a wonderful way of. Focusing them. And. And sort of. Limiting their distractions. Because they only had so much real estate to work with and that was also true with. With professional artists. We met a poet. Gabrielle Galang in. Richmond. Virginia at the Virginia Poetry Festival. Who was really struggling with. Finding new ways of. Placing her poems. In ways the people that really invited interaction. Such. We actually. She had never made a book before but we taught her how to make. A few different folds of books and now she's been. Hurt her whole practice has been transformed. She's been making little miniature books that she's been putting in. Bottles. I think we in jars. Yeah she's she's transformed her haikus and her tank us. Into miniature books and. Distributing that way. Another artist I think Eileen actually spoke to this about just the the. The format of book making sort of liberating other kinds of art. And a photographer in Florida who is a poor. Mostly a self-portrait in each. Portrait just who's been making miniature books filled with her self portraits. And it was in a way she had ever thought of using using her photographs. But. Being a part of our project sort of changed the way she's been working. So I think again it just goes back to that that childlike joy. There's something about that format about the format of a book in general. You know also Eileen talked about going to the library as a kid. I mean so many of us have that experience of that being a place of safety and comfort and where your imagination just. Was

freed. And I think book art. Really speaks to that. In our minds the miniature book form and taking you back to that place of freedom that you had as a child. So because we are learning just as much as we're trying to teach. Amy and Maya. That was beautiful. I loved walking into the caravan. That's a special treat. They parked it on the street in Montclair and there was a hot summer day and there were lots of people going in it. It's tiny it's so beautiful I just love it. And on the theme of the tiny books if anyone didn't get your book in the capsule that's. Gone pots project our interactive book registry there are more. You can ask Asha. And she ushered involved seven students from Montclair State who helped as part of the project. So there we have more people and I'm happy to see that. I think some of them may be coming. So make sure you get in touch with with the creativity caravan everyone. OK so our next artist is Shelly. Shelly Jacobson I'm really happy that Shelly's here she's been here many years at the symposium and it was great to get to see her work now as a as an ex as an artist exhibiting. Shelly was is originally from Buffalo. She attended Carnegie Mellon. And. Rutgers. University. She's been active in the field of ceramics as both both a teacher and an exhibiting artist for more than 35 years. She's been exhibiting from the United States US Korea Japan Greece all over the place and she really finds her voice not only in clay but also in making artist books. She was a visiting artists at the experimental printmaking Institute at Lafayette College in eastern Pennsylvania. Her books have been exhibited throughout the U.S. and in Costa Rica Mexico and England. And let's see some of them are part of the Skillman library special collections at Lafayette College. They're also in the North Public Library. The Ben Shawn Gallery the experimental printmaking Institute. And she too was part of the all mooted Nabi Street project. Her books have traveled. Or become street Angels that's traveled to England and many different cities. And she's also a member of the Princeton artists alliance and her ceramic and. Studio and her rock book press is in Skillman New Jersey. So Shelley nice to finally get to see your work. Okay. I think I got it. Yeah. Thank you Karen and thank you Michael for continual and wonderful symposiums that we get to enjoy every year and I'm very inspired by the other speakers as Karen said I primarily a clay artist for so many years but apparently unknown to me.

I was also heading toward some kind of pages and some kind of books. The thing that drew me most to ceramics although I have a general art education when I left undergraduate school I thought I was going to be a print maker and I was carving wood blocks at my kitchen table and printing them by hand with a spoon. But the more I was teaching art and the longer I taught the more Clay got into my veins and so I set up a ceramic studio. And the thing that I am drawn to about Clay is the malleability of the material the sensitivity to touch. You can see the mark of the maker in it. I hand build all of my work. I don't throw in a wheel. People do spaghetti bowls better than I do for sure. And it's the immediacy of the clay that is so pleasurable to me and in my making. This isn't not in chronological order I sort of group them according to Clay things and book things. In this particular piece this is these are you talk about miniatures. I love small things. These are only about three by three part of the reason that I started working small is when I started working with clay I would put my daughter in for a nap and run down to the studio for three hours. So what was I going to accomplish in three hours. I made small things intimate scale things never working very large until maybe about five or six years ago. So I developed this idea of working only with slabs of clay which I considered sheets of paper because in this particular case I was working with porcelain and my game was how thin Can I make it before it disintegrates. And that question never was answered because you can work extremely thin with porcelain and this piece was in response to a visit by Dan Quayle to New Jersey elementary school when he couldn't spell potato. I don't know if you remember that. And I thought OK Dan if you can't spell maybe you can't count. So this is a counting piece but helping him but not very much because although there are nine tiles here the numbers only go to eight. So what did I do. I repeated a number for him to help him out. And the concept here was to. Push myself to have some kind of action with the clay and interaction with the clay in eight nine different ways. And that sounded like an easy thing to do but it was harder than I thought. And I've always liked text. I've always liked to put text into my work even if I'm drawing the sketchbook. There is text in it. This is text. They're just numbers. And the only thing I had was alphabet soup at the time so I pressed the letters in and removed them and that's

why they're sort of fuzzy and soft. But I'd like the scale of the letters so I don't know if it helped Dan but I know this was a wall piece which I exhibited someplace. But what I realized as I went through this PowerPoint presentation is I realized that I had an aesthetic that I was developing in clay that really became a part of me. And I do believe that it continues in my books. Some of them this particular tile configuration these are only three by three. I love squares I love to work in the square. I think it was from undergraduate school in our design class we were told very difficult to work with you should be very careful with squares and that's all I needed to hear. And stayed with me and of course I loved squares. The interesting thing to me about this particular series is that I was visiting. We were. We go to Israel every year. And this particular year many many years ago is visiting my Potter friend and she was working with this paleo Hebrew alphabet. And I just thought it was magnificent. So I came home and I began finding the alphabet and exploring it and using it in my work. And along with the alphabet I had was very fortunate to take a ceramic workshop with Mitch Lyons who did printmaking on clay so I was etching in a sort of I Love printmaking so I'm moving back into print making it is very satisfactory to me to do this because of the immediacy of it. I guess I'm impatient. I want things to be finished but this was all worked wet and it was all done in a couple of hours. I made actually in this case I made a large slab and I cut them into smaller pieces but they all fit together because it was one big graphic and I feel that I when I started my bookmarks with BPI Mary and Miller have to think Marianne because she was my first book art teacher and the skills that I learned to BPI were through Marion's generosity and her encouragement and her teasing. And this book which I brought with me today message inside was the first book that I actually made and I consider this a transition between my clay and my beginning of my books. This is a book. I'm not quite as expansive I don't think as I was listening to people talk. I think I sort of stick close to myself in terms of concepts and inspiration. And this is a book about just kind of it's a sad story but with a happy ending my daughter was in the hospital and as a parent you feel terribly helpless that you want to help and you can't. And every day that I visited her in the hospital there was something else wrong with her. I was beside myself. What was I going to

do. So being an artist luckily I went to the studio and I began making these small tiles again. They're only about they're about three inches three by three. And I did these drawings of all the things that she told me was wrong with her and all the scary things that she was thinking about. And I just had this stack of them in my studio and when I was talking about how to what content to put in a book I thought about this stack of ceramics but if I ate P.I. we needed an addition of three and I couldn't remake the tiles there one of a kind. So this was my first introduction into Photoshop and getting things scanned but I repeated the way they looked. In Clay with the torn edges of the paper the image was I drew into the clay. Excuse me I drew into the clay and then I hand painted that with ceramic colors and fired them. They were machine stitched on the paper and on the back of each paper each drawing tile was something cut out from all the cards that she got. And one of the flowers their plants had message inside a little envelope you should look inside the envelope. That's how I got the title for the book. So I considered this a nice like an interesting transition and because I had scanned the imagery I could make a multiple of the book still thinking about Clay and Curly encouraged me to make a clay book for his collection. This book has a sleeve on it but I don't have a picture of it. So you can see that there are. Four pages it opens up like this and it opens up one two three four so there are four of these little white squares again the text is in the middle of the book and each one of the paper opens up and it reveals this ceramic tile. Each of the four tiles that are in the book have a different relief on them and a different glaze coloration. It's about my morning walk and I don't know why I thought it was two circles but it sounded better than for the writing I guess. But that's why I have circles now if I have these clay tiles in the book you can't close the book on the clay. This is porcelain because you'll break. So I took all of the tiles that I made for an addition additions and I went to New York to do DNA the paper mill and I had them cast papers to protect the tiles I like. I thought that was a real artist. When I did it this is my attempt at a book using clay is the page. It doesn't speak very much as I'm looking at it doesn't speak very much about what Clay can be but I just use it as a matrix. With the with the paleo Hebrew the name of the book and it actually says it on the cover which is on the right because

Hebrew books to right to left things to go right to left. So it does say bird goddess and I was reading and studying about these myths about bird about goddesses and the bird God is just grab me for some reason and I just decided to do this book so to close up it has an illuminated letter. These ceramic pieces and the other objects here are things that I had made in my studio. And by this time I did have some more skills so I scanned it into the computer and I did all the computer the photoshop things myself that it's an app is a dairy and it doesn't say anything so I don't think I'm skilled in writing paleo Hebrew a wearable book maybe Mike one of the questions that I had as I was working with books is what what is a book and in this particular case. Again there's references to the Middle East I am the. We have friends in Israel and there was a war. The second Lebanese war and I was beside myself because I wanted to protect them. But what could I do. Millions. Thousands of miles away. So I decided to make a protective vest a panoply and what do they use for protection in the Middle East. But amulets so I researched a little bit because the triangle the triangles the four triangle eyes and the triangle that was some street art that I had photographed when I was in Israel is the ones that the two up on top of the shoulders and just coincidentally the two on the bottom of the vest. Their inscriptions inside of bowls and these bowls are placed in the four corners of a house so that the House would have good luck and so forth. So I I I I obviously I liked it. It was the clay bowl that these are in the text. I hand wrote this is only one of a kind. The text I just hand wrote stream of consciousness about how I was feeling at the time. That's in the red squares and it is machine stitched on the matrix here and on the right hand shoulder. I made this book with each page talks about what the amulet does what it's supposed to protect. So there is an explanation of front and back which the amulet and I wasn't finished with the idea of a wearable book. I was as in Princeton artist alliance we were invited to a show called We the artist Ai and we were invited to the Princeton University Museum's collection to pick something and respond to it. So I found this wonderful little pre Columbian figure called in for a tour and he had on this lovely feather cape and I began thinking about what does it mean to be an orator. So an orator goes around and he speaks. And I thought. But he does more than that he

has his words with him all the time. And if I weren't or tour I would probably want to wear my words outside of me so that wherever I went people could ask me questions and I could tell them things. So this is the reason for this particular vest and this one has more volume. You can see it on the right side where it looks like it's at an angle. I made a triangular insert for it to hang you supported from so that got some more volume to it. And again these are hand so machine stitched onto this matrix with only using the paleo Hebrew. And I also like Linear B in case you've ever looked at Linear B. That's more of an accounting alphabet but the graphic of the letters is what I'm very drawn to and what are. Where did these come from. This is some printing that I did on clay with the writing and then I scanned it into the computer and use them to make the printout a sheet and cut them to fit. You're probably wondering or maybe not. What are these little squares that they're so regular and even. Well in panoply The other thing is conversation. Tea and Sympathy sort of thing. So I began collecting my tea bags and I pressed them and I slipped them and I emptied the tea and then I used them as these sleeves or a little pages for the The Matrix and again you know Tea Bag is only about three by three. So I must love the size of this game moving toward my first book actually that I made at API while I was there. This was called Ha ha ha. And the reason it's called Ha ha ha. Because these are story that I had done these drawings in my sketchbook looking again for content so I found this sketchbook with these drawings and they were drawings of things that I was. Stories about my childhood some things that I weren't that I did that I wasn't proud of but I thought they belonged in the book anyway because I'm not such a good kid really. So um and that's what this book shows. So I had to be out there simple concertina the text was like this this is open for you this way. So the text I put on I don't think I used an old typewriter but I use that kind of text and these just tell the story of what's going on in this image but I also had if you see on the under the hand in both of those pages there's a text and it just says Um start back. Go stop. Cross stuff out. End. And I don't know if that's. I don't know what it is but I had that I do that to explain or maybe that's the text on the page. I have no idea I don't try to edit myself out so that was my first book. This one is called Breathe. No title on the page. I sort of illuminate things that I can't

figure out. When I first started out with with book cards but this was in response to a poem I met I was at a poetry reading at the University Princeton University and this woman was reading and I didn't know her really. And she's one of the poems that she started that she was reading said and I stepped off the curb in Buffalo New York and I almost passed out because nobody's from Buffalo but me. I have yet to meet anybody from Buffalo. You're from Buffalo. Oh right I forgot. Okay. Oh I'm so embarrassed. You're from Buffalo. Look at this. It's the book garters. Yeah well. Yes. Notice I am not in Buffalo now. Neither are we. So I went up to her afterward and just strangely enough my father was her dentist. So we began talking. How does that happen. But she gave me one of her books and she published poet in Israel. Very delightful woman. And I read this book. This poem excuse me called ethics of the fathers. I didn't have anything to do with ethics of the fathers but what really spoke to me in that poem was the pacing of the words and the pacing of the phrasing I felt like it was I was breathing inhaling and exhaling with the words in the phrasing and I wanted to capture that somehow in this book. This. These pages are open when they're when they're trying. The outside triangles are close. They overlap on each other so you have to go like this. You're going and then thinking that it felt like you were breathing in the paper that I used was only card stock. So it's very light. In the middle opens like this. I took all the photographs. And I use Photoshop to help me print them. Feeling quite comfortable with it but. Still can't give up playing inside. This book sits on a very shallow box. There's a chrysalis a clay chrysalis and. It's ready to take a breath hopefully. To. Spread its. This book. Is. Called Thorn and you can see that it's got that ancient text on Hebrew again. I wanted to get the sense for the viewer right away that this was something had something to do with something old. So the idea I wrote the poem. And if it's not an old issue that happens to people but it was a thorn. It was sharp and poking. And. Etched inside of me. And this is what I was trying to convey in this. In this book. So this is getting closer but I want you to see very close up. Talk about obsessiveness. On each of those smaller pages. I took a stylus and I poked into the letters that were printed on the parchment paper. And then on the back over. The whole back. Sheet and over. The. Text. I took the stylus. Etched. Into. The paper.

Into the parchment because it was so important for me. To get that tactile quality about this. This loss. This. Etched. Thing. Inside of me. And then. That harkens back to clay because plays. This is. The book that I did for almost Tanabe. And. My. Mom. This was a very interesting project for me because. I'd never responded to anything outside of me like that necessarily except the panoply. But. That was more personal. And I wanted to try to try to do this. So I committed myself. And I got an idea right away. I was going to you I was just going to write and write and write and write and then so and so forth. And it was such a dumb idea. And it really didn't work. And it took me six months to come to this. Which for me being as I said do before a little impatient with the clay and the immediacy the clay. And I'm sure that for the book artist this is sort of a normal kind of thing that it takes a long time to these for these to develop. So this is street angels. One of the things that I. Put on myself here was that there would be no gluing. The only thing that's glued is the seam of the concertina. Everything else is hands so. Because. I just thought that if it. Came back to sort of the beginning of books and sewing and. Nothing machine done. And the way this book came together for me is. These are. The prints. These are Lino cuts that were hand dropped. And. I was inspired by a book. An exhibit that I saw called demons and angels. This was in Israel. And. I found a small little book. Done by. Cobblestone in Morocco in 1926 and they were ink drawings and they were magnificent with a lot of writings all full. The page was there wasn't a like an empty space in it. And I was very inspired by those images and I simplified them and created my own but used his basic idea. About. I think these are arms and then the wings so it looks like they have two sets of wings. So these were my angels that was going to protect. Though the ideas might. My thought was. I was thinking of Crystal not. In the bird books. That it's true you can burn a book but you can't burn the ideas. Because we have them. And. The idea that. I had this. Image of. The street. I saw I think I saw an image of the street with the books all over the place and. I wanted to gather them up. And then. I. Could protect them underneath the angels. So the idea that we could protect them have those. And. That was. A very it was a good thing for me to do the project. This book. Was. Inspired by a class of course that I took. From Alan Gilbert to this year. At

Princeton Resource Center about. The Alice in Wonderland. One hundred and fifty. Anniversary of Alice in Wonderland and read. Lewis Carroll's book with the original illustrations. I didn't know there was going to be a final project. But Ellen insisted that we had a final project and I thought oh good. What am I going to do. I fiddled around and I fooled around and. Went to the doctor's office with that means waiting waiting waiting I took my sketchbook with me and I started just drawing some of the. What I remembered from the story so I didn't exactly follow the story exactly but there's a lot of the. Things that. Were. Just impressed in me from. The various books we saw from the various movies we looked at and so forth. So. This is a very familiar form. This is a miniature book. Did I know we were going to have a miniature book people here today. The book is one and a half I wanted to have so the pages are three inches. And it's double sided so that the images are on the. Side that you see there and then there on the back. And then there's text on both sides. So the book is sort of like the puzzles in the story and sort of like the caterpillar. It was really a lot of fun for me to do. I scaled the images to the paper. And then I can color them all in with colored pencil and I wrote the text. All by myself. And I also colored the pages. I couldn't figure out how to do it. I couldn't figure out how to put the text in and the color in the picture. Paper. So for me it's easier just to just. Just do it by hand. There's the queen I loved her. I made her with. Blueberry stained. And teeth because I got to. Eat them all. Eight times. And this is just some of the text. I didn't have a plan for the text. I just began thinking. And writing. And it just followed sort of got its own rhythm to it. Like. Way too much tea. Not enough tea. No time for tea at all. And it just sort of went along like that too many doors. No men no doors. Big doors small doors no doors at all. And it was just a lot of fun to put together. So I think Ellen for that. And. This is the. Most recent book. Called maintenance. I like to think I'm poking fun at myself. A little bit here which I. Kind of like to do. And. It's uh. I. Went to. The point with the cardiologist comes back and she tells me that I've got some bundles and branches and axes and tilts and I obviously wasn't paying attention because I went away thinking that my card is tilted and. You know you're we're artists our imaginations go crazy. And. Then I didn't think about it very much because. You can't. Dwell on stuff like that.

She didn't say it was dying or anything. So in the middle of the night I wake up maybe a month or so later and I wrote this poem. Had to write the phone down. And I had taken a wonderful poetry workshop with Miriam Miller and I gingerly brought it one day for her to look at. And we went over it and she helped me edit and. Moved words in the phrasing and all the good things that she does. And with her support. And as she's sort of going through this she's saying you know you have a book here. And I thought. OK really. I had thought about it because I was so focused on. Maybe I'm just so single minded I don't know that there's the poem. OK. That's that. But it turned out that um. I was really happy to do this because. I'd been working on some printmaking for several years many years actually at the print center in Bridgeport. And. I. Took the step of getting my own little press at home and I wanted to. Have. Actual prints in my books. That was one of the reasons I got the press. So this is like this big leap for me that I finally. Did it. I integrated all these. This these are y'know cuts. The paper is Mulberry mulberry bush paper. Handmade. And as you open it up it crinkles and it makes a little noise. And I knew that the interesting thing about this book is I knew that it had to have four pages like this. For chambers of the heart. Because it's about the heart. And then. You open and close it. And. I said well the poem basically goes. I had to prepare my heart. So I didn't hesitate. I just ran it through my sewing machine. But I did a lousy job and it was a mess in the end anyway. So. That's. Basically. The story. And. That's the. That book is the last book I did. This is just the dummy. In. My head. I'm. Planning to edition this. This question is for Eileen. What's a risk graph. It's kind of a screen printing machine. They've gotten really popular in the Zen world. Depending on where you are you might be able to find a place where they have one that you can work on. It's it's really neat because I was using one they opened up a lab at school of visual arts and they had really new ones that you can work directly from a computer so you can play with images in PhotoShop. And it prints and the inks. It's a Japanese machine and the inks are beautiful they're translucent they come in gorgeous colors and they're really neat. It's a lot like a digital printer. It's like it looks like a big copy machine. Yeah. Yeah. She asked me about the risk graph. Yeah. It's not the little some people mix them up with those little Goku. It's not like that. They're the

costs. I think the ones that are visual are as I said they were like ten thousand dollars a machine. It's like a big reminds me of an old mimeograph machine. Really. How do you respond. Ah I ah I s so grass roots. Thank you. You're welcome. Yeah I did it like old like industrial. You know kind of like commercial things. In the end do we're going to ask a question. Oh OK. I thought I thought you did. Well you know what. What did you say your name to the person who's asking the question. Hi. Thanks everybody. It's fun talk. I had a question about the I love the caravan and the. The tiny tiny books. Oh my name's Eileen Farr. How did you like fund that. Like how do you fund something like that. It just sounds fabulous but such a huge undertaking. So we funded part of the tour via Kickstarter and. We've done some other Kickstarter project funded projects and we didn't want to raise all the funds that way just we feel like you're tapping into the same group of people again. But we knew that we could also ask the venues that were hosting us to pay us. So part of our travel was funded via the Kickstarter monies and then the rest and the libraries or the galleries paid us. We kept our fee really low so that it was affordable. But. That was the way it. Was sort of our first experience. Really getting paid for our work in a pretty measurable way. I mean it was you know it took a lot kind of a leap of faith that. That we that that people would want us to come and. But that's why we sort of kept the fee the facilitation fee pretty low. I think it was two under fifty dollars for each host organization. So you know over over the period of time it sort of added up the stops themselves were about three to four hours so each. Host I think got their money's worth in terms of the workshop piece. It's usually a rolling workshop actually. So anyone who come in and just kind of either be there for the whole time or just learn something really briefly so. But we really wanted to make the experience free for participants. So that's why we we charged our hosts for our visits. Did you sleep in the caravan too. We did. We camped. That's the beauty of this caravan. So it's a 1965 covered wagon trailer. It's about 16 feet. And we actually when we bought it the. The kitchen had been removed. So we put in a dresser and that was sort of a. And there's the tabletop Booth seating area. So that became kind of a display space but everything was really. You know you could just change it up really quickly. So when people

came in we had about six or seven people in the caravan and at a time that could look at the at the. Suitcases. I wish we'd actually had a couple of images of the suitcases. They're really great. They were found suitcases. A friend of ours found them on the side of the road and they were. They had a monogram. And we have a friend who still have the Newark Airport tags from the original owner of peoples express. Do you remember that airline. They're the people's express tags. So we had a friend who is a. Make. He makes furniture and he retrofitted these suitcases so we took everything out and kind of put in. He did stadium seating stadium display and he did a caboodle and then he had other shelves but yeah we just. It was really easy to tuck them away at night and then. You know and then it became the caravan became our home away from home. I looked out those little cases they always remind me of tool boxes where you open them up and all these little containers come out in those containers have the books. Hi I'm Miriam SHEIR So I also have questions for Amy and Maya. But everyone's It was exciting to see people's work. And I've known about some of your work to see new work. So that was really great on all four presenters. You've clearly collaborated before. Could you talk a little bit about your previous collaborations and how it might be interesting in terms of knowing how that led. I was curious how you came to books and what your backgrounds were before you did this project. I have another question. Sure. So I am more of the visual arts person have more of a visual arts background although I started in publishing so I started working at Simon and Schuster in the children's book division in the beginning of my career on the editorial side. So I really came from an editing perspective not really a book you know artist or or author perspective but I was intrigued by the work that I got to see over the years of that job and started teaching art to girls mostly actually only because I was interested in that age when you know a girl begins to be told that it's just a hobby and not a career and and how that could translate and what I could do from from my end to sort of say art can be really instructive your entire life and it doesn't just have to be a hobby. And then. I've. I've been a writer for a long time mostly poet. And also kind of a. Journalism editing background too. But I did study creative writing in college and Amy I met about six years ago I was actually. Touring the country doing

another project which was I was leading writing workshops around the country. I did a two month circumnavigation and New Jersey was halfway. In my trip and we actually met over over poetry over my writing. I keep up. I've been keeping I have a writing practice I write a 10 line poem every Tuesday and I've been doing it since 2005. So. However many Tuesdays that is. And Amy became one of my readers which is how we met. So we collaborated mentions previously in that first video a project that we did which was in 2014. Called the tandem poetry tour. And we wrote a tandem bike from. From Boulder Colorado to Beloit Wisconsin. It was a 30 day bike trip. We had a friend who drove our car and towed the caravan. So we we camped there too but that was actually a collaboration with The Little Free Library Organization that's headquartered in Madison Wisconsin. We partnered with them to build and distribute 30 Little Free Libraries to small communities across. The Midwest tour. We really wanted to reach. Small towns that we didn't have libraries. These are wonderful if you haven't seen them and probably have at this point but they're their book Community Book exchanges that are open 24 hours a day there. You take a book you leave a book there's no library card. So we you know literacy and books have been very much a part of our work. I think for a few years. Yeah I think that's really helpful to know. Yeah. And I think you know the writing and creating and finding a way of finding ways for especially. People that don't consider themselves artists or writers to approach. A format. And adapt a form that that really works for them. I mean it's not always that you're going to write a poem but you might write a word and you might illustrate that word over six pages. And that's a very satisfying thing to have. I mean to be able to have a tangible object that you've. Created. When you if you're you know an eight year old kid or even if you're a 75 year old kid. It's. Good to be able to do that. Oh. Actually. My brother Mimi asked my question so thank you. Debra Winger I just had a question about your route and you said you had 60 stops. So I was wondering. How many miles you cover or do you have any maps. Yeah. Is the map still no one to date. Yeah. The map is still on our Web site so you can see the exact route but it was close to ten thousand miles including the spring stop. So we started on the East Coast going up and down the East Coast as far north as. Brattleboro Vermont and

Richmond Virginia was the southern most in the spring and then we left New Jersey in July and traveled the entire way across the country. So. Portland Oregon down the coast of California and then turned and headed back across through the desert and we were actually asked so about three weeks into our call for artists from the video that you saw we were contacted by the miniature book society. We didn't even know they existed. They asked us if we would be the keynote speakers at their annual conference in Texas in August. And so we quickly learned who they were and accepted that invitation and it was great. So that was sort of. You know. That was really before we had started planning our route. So it became Well we have to get to Texas by August and then where can we go from there. And it actually was easy because our artists we reached out to our artists first. So we said this is what we're thinking about doing we have to be in August by the state but if we can get to your town or city we would love to you know come there and if you can help us find a host. So that made it you know convenient to sort of start picking points. Custer South Dakota was one of those spots one of our artists from Custer. You know and so we could begin to pinpoint our out that way. I just want to say I think this was a project as most of the work that we do it's like we learn as we go. We don't always know. What it's going to look like. We have this sort of idea like a picture in our minds this this is what we wanted to feel like. And so we try to execute. That vision or that feeling. And. I think. So it's it started sort of small we were really just gonna do we you know maybe a week here it or you know a few days here and there but I think the more we sort of. You know every time a book came in to our mailbox we thought well we have to share this book and then we have to share this and this and this. And so it just kind of grew as we went along. The call for artists was about three months. And we still kept getting books into February we had a few late comers say you know what April can we so can we so come on you know can our book still come. So. And even now we're getting books and because we're still traveling with the collection we have events still in the area. So it's kind of it's been continuing to. It's been continuing which is which is great. So it's nice to share these books. More and more. Thank you. Hi. Miriam sure again. All right. So I hate to open this can of worms but I can't let it go unmentioned. You had said that

you had sold some work for people so I'm curious are you acting as agents are you taking a percentage. How did you obviously work in a very organic way which I completely approve of and respond to but I'm curious as to how that happened and is this something you see doing as you move forward. Yeah. So we acted. I wouldn't say agents we sort of ended up acting as curators. So when it when the idea became you know solidified that it was a museum we were curating the collection although in terms of curation we didn't say no to anyone. We didn't you know we didn't turn down books. So we were. Really. Yeah I guess it's curators. But that's I mean that's true. We did. And so now it's true I applaud that. Yeah. So at least read that as a criticism. This is a good thing. So we gave the option when people submitted their work to price their work. And we took a percentage but they got most of it. So yeah in that way we were agents about a third of the books that we got were. From artists that did not want to sell their work. So the remaining from the remaining collection we sold about half. So and it was interesting because along the way I for example the miniature book society convention. There was a book artists from Washington Jill Tim who is just exhausted from traveling her on her own with her books. GJELTEN Yeah. And so she said Well would you like to sell my books for me. You know like something about the collective having the variety of books together in one place. It was a really attractive. Offer for artists I think to be among to be among a collection. So we have sort of become agents I guess in that way which is fine because I think what's really wonderful is that it's hard to sell art. I mean it's just it's hard to find people that would that that specifically want a specific thing. It's hard to do the legwork of traveling and finding you know venues and things like that. So this something about the way that these books are you know the size of them it's that they're very portable that's super easy to go anywhere with these with these books. So I. OK there's another annoying question. What are the price points. I'm just curious. The lowest price was five dollars and the highest price was 450. I think that's really that's really interesting. Yeah. And I would say art world 450 is still pretty accessible. Exactly yeah. And so we I mean we did. There are places that we went to like the miniature book society where. Collectors were there they were interested in buying addition to books

specifically. But yeah they were all very I mean they you know was all over the place. I would say the bulk were in the. 35 to 70 dollar range or so. Yeah and some several books from the collection ended up in some larger collections. So there's a book like. The curator from the lily library purchased a book and you V.A. purchased four of the books for collections. Yeah. And everybody they got the books at the end of the show. Yeah. And yes that's actually at that point we wanted the collection to stay together so until the end of this show. So that was actually quite a lot of work for us when we returned home. All the books were then shipped to their owners. So we had to keep track of all the buyers and the dresses. And then so the collection stayed together so everyone who viewed the collection throughout the summer saw the entire collection. Hi. I'm gonna change the topic and ask Shelly Jacobson a question. My name is Sarah Stengel. And what a what I was interested to see was that you responded to health crisis in your family with art and absurdity. And like the idea of pulling out a sewing machine and stitching your heart without hesitation is so wonderful and so absurd and I actually feel like absurdity is my religion like I take it very seriously and I just wonder like what. Role you. Think. Absurdity in the haha absurdity. Because you know it's very beautiful work and it looks it doesn't look absurd at all. But then when you when I said so I would just wonder if you have anything to say about the role of absurdity. And in healing and in your work. That's that's terrific. I I not I'm not sure that I think about it as absurdity more more about self-effacing. And then I want to poke fun at myself but I also feel that. I didn't hide those stories about me poking that little girl with a burr. It's in the book. And at the end of each one of the stories that I had in my sketchbook I had ha ha ha because as an adult you look back you said Come on it's ridiculous. But yet it was important. In terms of my heart. I mean. It was it was absurd that I began thinking that medically you know it's impossible that two things to happen. But no my brain was working overtime and I wrote this poem and. I thought sure the only what else would I do I'd have to run it through my sewing machine to fix it. And and that's I think also. Because I woke up in the middle of the night and I wasn't editing anything and I didn't I just put the words down and when I read it in the morning and I actually still could read it. I said I thought oh that's

really funny. It's awful you know. But surgeons so. And I thought I'll do it I'll do the job for him. You know I just saw myself. So. It's it's a release. Actually when you I think when you can recognize things and. Put it out there. Yeah. Hi Judy Tobi. Shelly were you saying paleo Hebrew. Yes paleo diet paleo. It's that the name that they gave to that early Semitic writing. It's Iron Age or something it's really ancient and it's very easy to find this if you go to Google it. Early Semitic or paleo Hebrew. They have these charts with. Contemporary Hebrew on the top and then how the letters match up. So you can actually write stuff and a friend of mine if you can believe this just sent me a font for my computer. For this typeface and I was thrilled because. In a sense it's great but I really like to write it better because it's more it's just more human. But that's how much it's been recognized. Debra where again. Just another question to the caravan. You did mention that it's a huge percentage of your artists were under the age of 18. Just wondering how that worked out did have to do with how you reached out did you use a lot of social media or. Just how did that happen. We did use a lot of social media. I think though it probably was teachers who found who found us who were book artists you know working in schools and suggested to their class. Classes that they become part of the one class in particular or honors art students at a high school in New Jersey. And their teacher is a book artist. And they do a book Arts Unit but it wasn't in time for the projects so she encouraged them to do it on their own. And I think 20 of them went home and made books for our show on their own time and they were stunning. I mean they're probably some of the most stunning in the collection. They were really incredible. So. Karen also mentioned typewriters and. One of the things that Amy and I do is we write pop up pop up poetry. We bring our typewriters to a public venue. And it's called Tandem poetry and. Somebody gives a sword and we write up two poems on the spot for them and I say this because in relation to this project being visible on the street somewhere and being able to have conversations about our work. In a sort of indirect way by doing something else I mean we met a lot of. We met a lot of people through that activity and then they became curious you know what else do you do. And we say oh what we're actually doing this project with miniature books. So it was finding a way and I mean you know it's like we're

not I mean we do use social media but we also really believe in the power of. Live experience. And it's not always you know you cannot you can't be everywhere at once. So we just sort of hope we sort of count on people I think to be our. Connectors. You know we do something live and. People experience that we we offered quite a few miniature book workshops locally where we were where we were. And it just it travels and it's. I mean what was kind of neat at the end of the trip is. Getting notes from people that said you know are you still on that. Are you still on tour would you would you would you still come in. While we can't we're actually the trip is over but it's for people that we're we're not there for them to sort of feel like they missed out. It's actually a really good thing because it helps us with. Our next. You know the next incarnation. I'm Alan Gilbert. I think there were three extraordinary. Presentations. I wanted to ask is it Aileen or Eileen. Eileen. First of all I love the social consciousness reflected in your work. But I wondered if you could talk a little bit more about the idea of using. Book images to make books. Well. I. When I wanted to work about income inequality. I really started thinking about all the myths of Horatio Alger. That were still permeating our society. So I bought a couple of old books that you know online you can buy everything you know. And I photographed them and incorporated them and then I found I could just find stuff online. There's a Horatio Alger society. So I was able to download images from that. And. Most of the texture you know open you know you can find them. And I just felt referencing that material. Gave me a way to get a handle on a very difficult and complicated topic. So. I don't know if that really answered your question. Thank you. I would like to give us a few have a few words. And Michael you're going to introduce the afternoon lunch thing right. Just before that though when I spoke to you earlier to acknowledge our donors they weren't here at the time and our co-sponsors so I would like Bethany Richards and Mike Moran to please wave or stand up for the Middlesex County cultural and heritage commission. Again we really thank the commission for their support and co sponsorship and we really couldn't we couldn't do this to the extent that we did without your help. Thanks Ron. And before hand this over to Michael. This is the famous email an address list we really count on this every year because that's how we get back in touch with

you. Things keep changing. So please sign it. I will be insistent all day long. Okay. But everybody like to join me in applauding our wonderful speakers for this morning. The room was quite cold. Is that Is it okay now is it warm enough. The lights are very bright. I realize that it might be a little bit hurtful for your eyes but the reason we have the intensity so high is so that the digital capture can be crisp. So it's a compromise with posterity. It's art immortality. We're gonna have it an hour for lunch two hours two hours for lunch and the lunch is waiting. But before you go out I just want to. Sort of. Throw the beams ahead a bit let you know what we're expecting after an hour we have traditionally an informal luncheon seminar. And we started this last year it was really successful. So we're excited to continue to do it. We have artists who write and read from their work. We have two writers very different writers today. Mary Ann Miller a poet and printer is gonna read some of her poems. And Lois Morrison. Lois an artist writer of. You who. Who who is who does it hurt every thought of herself as a writer but just as an artist who writes. And did you think of yourself as an absurdist yes you think she does think of yourself as an absurdist. This afternoon we're gonna hear Ali. And Heidi and Robin. So we're looking forward to you guys just after the seminars and we're going to have something we call the open mike. So if you're doing. Exhibitions or you're you're making a new book or if you've got something in the pipeline regarding artist works artist books that you want to announce and chat about is your time to stand up and. Hold for us. This morning when Kris Allen was celebrating that the pillars of the new brand. New Jersey artist and the community. She mentioned Karen and Asha. And she also mentioned Judy Brodsky who who now is here who had who was just out at the moment and Amanda Thackeray who is also out now is here. And Marsha Wilson. Who is here as well but because of an e-mail glitch. She left out someone totally crucial to the group. And I want to name her as well and then ask you again once more and then you can go to lunch you're free to go lunch to stand up and pluck those wonderful artists. And also Anna Pinto. If not for who we would not have these fabulous unique artists works. So now lunch is served.