

KoobookArchive
Anna Guillot

11 years ago the KoobookArchive started its activity, an archive-laboratory that is concerned not only simply with collecting, but above all with studying in depth and carrying out research in the field of the multiple and the artist's book. In particular, it had occurred to me that if the contemporary artist's book, beyond its own visual dimension, were to move towards video-sound and performative lines, it could emanate further and new spatial-temporal projections.

Since then, I have invited collaborations from experts in the visual word, voice performers, video and sound artists, architects, photographers, graphic designers, publishers and theorists of languages, also establishing relationships with other research centres, archives, collections and art institutions, naturally opening myself, also as an artist and a teacher, to studies, in-depth studies and exchanges of experiences. These activities have also contributed to making the heritage of works and documents increasingly substantial.

It is thus media experimentation in general and digital intermediality, meant as study and research, that substantiate the dynamism of the KoobookArchive.

The Life of an Artist's Book
Light and Sensitive
Anna Guillot

The exhibition *The Life of an Artist's Book*, simultaneously at the Nana Home Gallery, Vancouver, and at On the Contemporary, Catania, under the aegis of the Capture Photography Festival, comes out of a selection from the KoobookArchive, an archive-laboratory of the artist's book based in Catania. The common thread uniting the 9 selected artists is research. Artists and works are brought together or are distinguished from one another by the use of traditional means such as drawing and painting, but also through experimentation in media with crossovers, most frequently between photography and video. These books are often created through offset printing in limited print-runs and in some cases come together with object elements or technological micro-accessories – they are to be considered as true and proper works.

The title, *The Life of an Artist's Book*, *Light and Sensitive*, recalls the characteristics inherent to the artist's book. Such books are steeped in thematic content and are the product of technical–technological experimentation, uniting theories, ideologies, conceptual or narrative 'worlds' since they are 'indices of thought' containable in a few brief folios, but they also allow, concretely, for a lightness and ease of conveyance of these 'folios–worlds'.

Lightness is mentioned here with reference to specific gravity, because the artist's book is almost always made of paper and small in size, but the reference is also to the medium used because sometimes, as a result of multi- or inter-medial operations, it also includes photography or video, i.e. an image that is 'sensitive' or 'light'.

Thus a tiny book synthesizes the dense world of an artist; it can travel easily, it can be given as a present or on the contrary it can follow the laws of the art market, it can at the same time equally easily be lost or destroyed, preserved well, collected and passed on. The life of an artist's book can be brief or infinite, but as with any work it can contain the world, as existence and life.

Anne Blum, Caroline Duchatelet, Alice Grassi, Anna Guillot, Marzia Migliora, Aleksandra Mir, Julian Opie, Zygmunt Piotrowski, Peter Wüthrich.

Nana Home Gallery, Vancouver BC
On the Contemporary, Catania I
Capture Photography Festival Vancouver
April 26 / May 20 2019



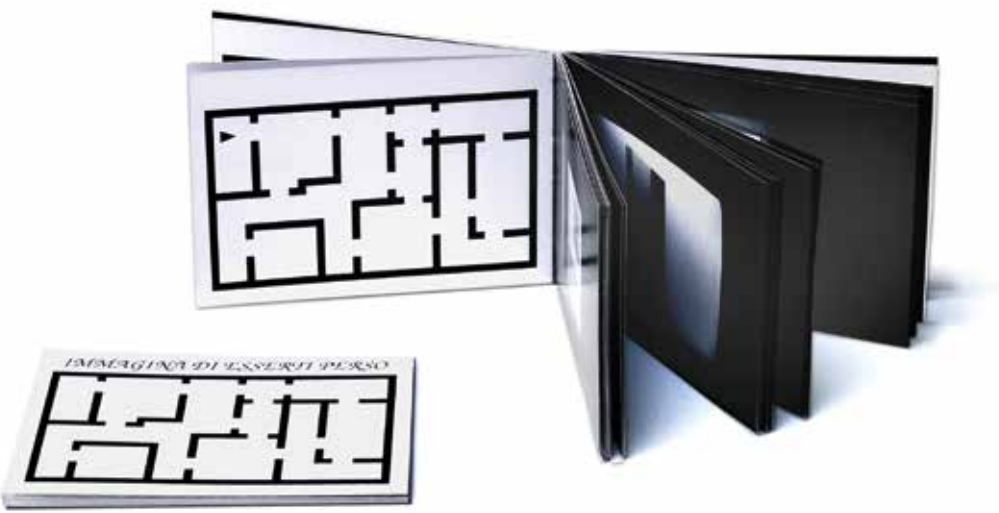
Caroline Duchatelet – Silent Annunciation
(1964, lives and works in Paris and in Marseilles, F).

Caroline Duchatelet's specific interests are silence, light, landscape and, in particular, the dawn, a subject on which Duchatelet has created a series of films.

The *Ieporella* (concertina book) *Une promenade interrompue*, (Editions La fabrique sensible, 2008) consists of bright pastel drawings and comes from a statement made by the artist. It refers to the Vallée de Saint-Pons and derives from a project for the Cistercian Abbey of Saint-Pons that began in 2007. The two photographs, on the other hand, are frames from the video of the 25 March dawn over the fresco by Beato Angelico, *L'Angelo dell'Annunciazione*. The video comes out of a project by the artist with the writer Yannick Haenel and with Neville Rowley, an art historian. "We went to see Fra' Angelico's fresco on the morning of 25 March, the day of the Annunciation," Haenel recounts. "We waited for the dawn, the arrival of the light. We saw the first ray of sun touch the angel, then the Virgin. We witnessed what Fra' Angelico had envisaged: the consummation of the mystery of the Annunciation through the light of the painting."



Aleksandra Mir
The Space Age, 2013
Poster book
23.4x15.6 cm
Offset Printed
Softcover
Sternberg Press
Berlin, D
Courtesy Kbk Archive



Julian Opie – Games and counter games
(London GB, 1958; lives and works in London).

Julian Opie is an exponent of the New British Sculpture and studied design and art at Goldsmith College of Art. His cartoon- and Pop-influenced style is characterized by formal simplification and the use of flat crosshatching delimited by thick contour lines. Opie's production is dedicated prevalently to painting and sculpture and has at its centre the immediacy of drawing for a repertoire that includes landscapes, drawings and above all stylized human figures in movement or animated. He develops experimentations that have involved contemporary media, ranging from painting to digital images, from sculpture to animations with LED lights, from videos to lenticular prints.

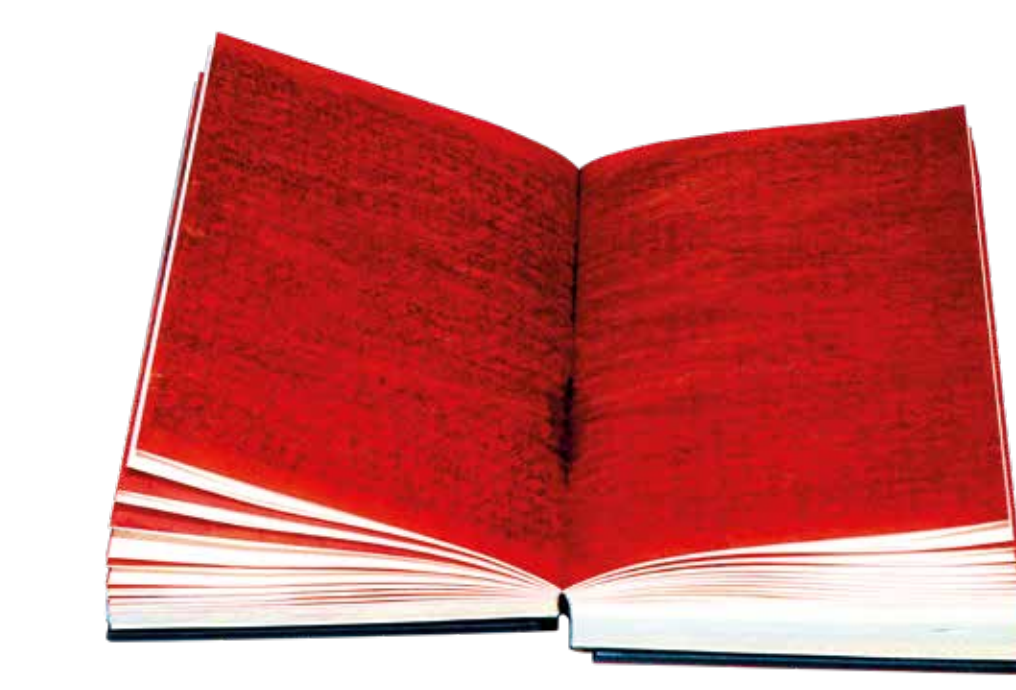
Imagine a person, imagine it's raining, imagine you are lost, reduce the lines to minimum terms, create a mix between Pop and Minimal Art and that's it, here is the book, *Imagine That You Are Lost* (Carte d'Arte, 1994). Nothing more than the plan of an interior, arrows on the floor in each room (some thirty rooms, corridors, corners, etc.), images taken from the video of a model corresponding to the plan, one walks in an anonymous, walkable environment. Games and counter games.



Peter Wüthrich
Angeli di Cimiano, 2005
24.5x18.5 cm
Offset Printed
Assab One
Milan, I
Courtesy Kbk Archive

Peter Wüthrich – Culture mission
(Bern CH, 1962; lives and works in Bern).

Peter Wüthrich has elected to use the book as his principal expressive instrument. *The Angels of the World*, an itinerant and ongoing project by Peter Wüthrich, has involved international metropolises over the arc of almost 20 years, conveying their peculiarities and their most disparate features, setting it up as a singular way of redeeming the idea of "non-place". The space–place of Wüthrich's photographic set, which translates itself in the images of his books and in some cases in videos, is often an urban one. In Milan, in the multi-ethnic neighbourhood of Cimiano, Wüthrich invited passers-by to become angels through the books, transforming the bearer of the book into a vehicle of knowledge and imagination. Thanks to the simple device of an open book worn like a pair of wings on their shoulders, the youngsters of Cimiano became messengers, guides, winged protectors. The book thus converts itself into a metaphor and becomes a vehicle of communication and a symbolic and real instrument. For Cimiano the photographs and the book that comes out of them speak of diversity and integration with a light and smiling language and in certain respects they recall the images of any large metropolitan periphery. Peter Wüthrich's mission, always the same but different in new cities with new actors and identities, can be considered as an apposite response to Baumanian thought.



Anne Blum – Being born and being reborn
(A Swiss artist of whom little is known, a former restorer at the Kunstmuseum in Bern, CH). Symbols such as butterflies and motifs associated with concepts of metamorphosis, rebirth, resurrection and the sphere of feeling are the references that Anne Blum translates into painting.

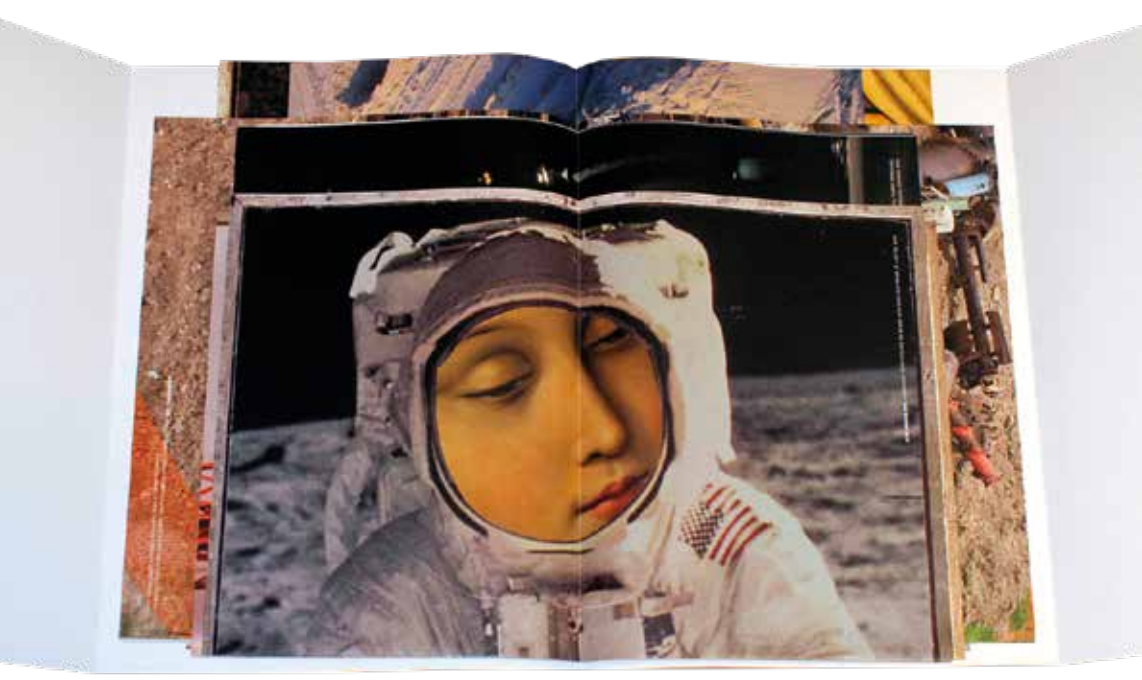
The metaphor of sublimation is instead the intrinsic content of *Amore in-fin-ito – Sublimer* created with the graphic contribution of Stephen England (Zurich Interpublishers, 2005), woven by Blum through a tightknit texture that gradually loses its graphic connotation to assume a calligraphic one and then a pictorial one until it dissolves; half of the book is red in colour and the other is blue, and is positioned alternately with printed texts. The dual reading of the book allows for association of the nature of the texts both with soliloquy and with amorous dialogue.

Caroline Duchatelet
Brèves, 2012
21.5x16.5x1.5 cm
Editions P
Marseille, F
Courtesy Kbk Archive

25 Mars, 2013
Video, frame
Firenze, Institut Français
Venezia, San Marco Museum
Paris, Chapelle du calvaire de Saint Roch
Courtesy the artist

Anna Guillot – Touching with your eyes
(Pisa; lives and works in Catania, I).

A transversal figure, an artist involved in linguistic intermedia and synesthetic fields: between the 1980s and the 2000s she has worked with some Italian protagonists and verbo-visual research groups. As an artist-researcher and teacher, her preferred fields of investigation are the varying meanings of the book. Her interest in linguistic crossover and in particular technological research applied to the book-object has since 2007 converged into the KoobookArchive project. A constant theme in the photographic research of Anna Guillot is identity, beginning with the single entity of one's own name, passing to the Selbst and extended to places, that is to say run through with psychological–ludic connotations, but also proxemic–anthropological connotations. *Know thyself* (Edizioni KoobookArchive, 2019) consists of a *Ieporella* (concertina book) equipped with a microscopic optical instrument: the eyes of people of mixed age and sex are presented through a sequence of photographic images and constitute the abyss into which one looks by placing one's own (eye) to a counting glass. All this is enclosed within an austere packaging. This involves looking at oneself in close-up to the point of having full perception of one's Self, accepting the invitation put forward by the Ancient Greek religious maxim, *gnōthi sautōn*.



Aleksandra Mir – The first woman on the moon
(Lubin PL, 1967; lives and works in London).

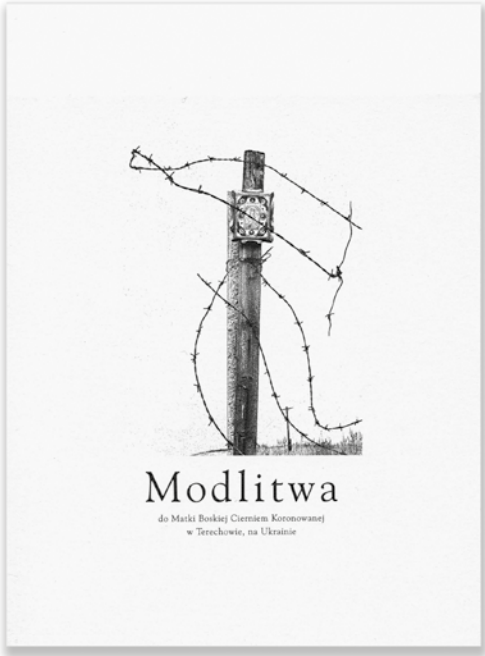
Almost all of Aleksandra Mir's work involves friends, acquaintances and passers-by in playful subversions of social norms. The artist has sparked caustic criticism of mass tourism in works such as *Life is Sweet in Sweden* (1995), has supported and promoted female bands in *New York Feminism* (1996) and has documented the reactions of women to the recordings of the whistling launched towards female passers-by in the main square of Copenhagen in *Pick Up (Oh Baby)* (1996). Her best-known work, *First Woman on the Moon*, sets up a female moon-landing on a Dutch beach (1999). Mir's projects propose a personal interpretation of cultural myths and of popular-culture historical events, combining religious iconography with images from NASA and the symbols of space voyages. Her work reflects on such events that cover half a millennium of human research, for the most part dominated by men, transforming them or deconstructing them in a most personal imaginary world. The portfolio *The Space Age* includes seven folded posters and a text by Martin Herbert. The publication coincides with the exhibition at the M–Museum Leuven (B), which covers fourteen years of Mir's career (1999-2013).



Zygmunt Piotrowski
Modlitwa, 2000
the cover with one page folded
15x12.5 cm
limited edition of 300 pieces
self-published

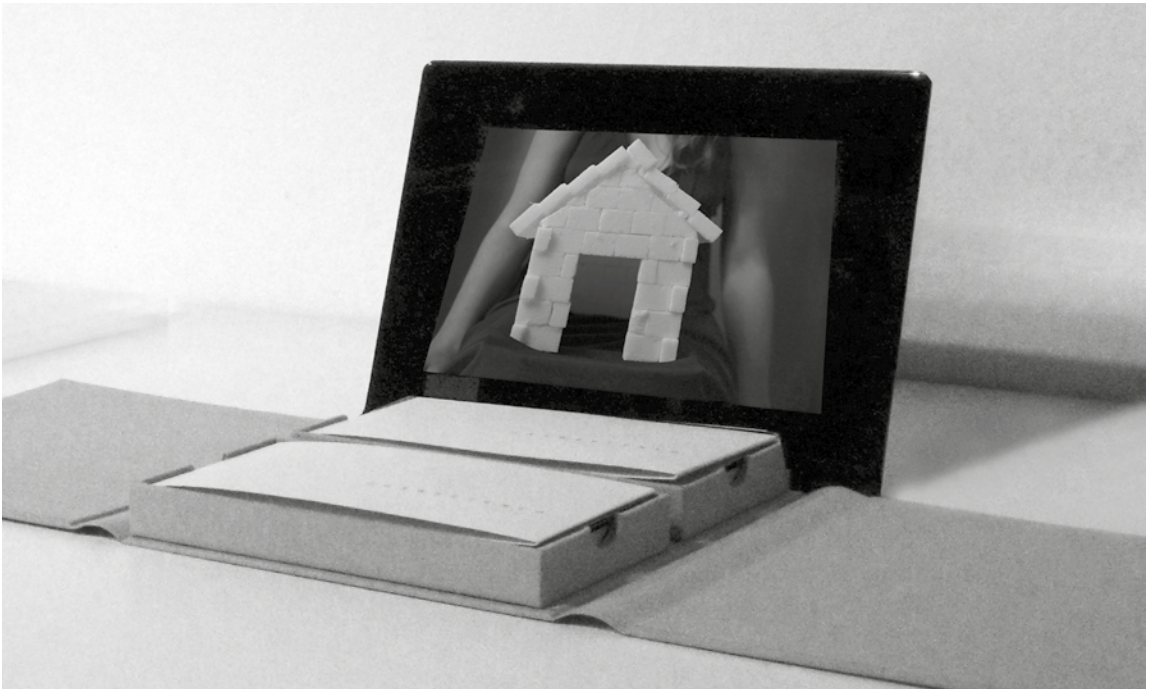
The body sublime, 2014
20x13 cm
Offset Printed
Groundwork / Fine Art
Warsaw, PL

Beauty revelation
19.5x12.5 cm
Offset Printed
Groundwork / Autor's Limited Edition
Warsaw, PL
Courtesy Kbk Archive



Anne Blum
Amore in fin-ito
Sublimer, 2000-02
13x10x2 cm
Offset Printed
Zurich Interpublishers
Zurich, CH
Courtesy Kbk Archive

Alice Grassi
Unsweeened, 2009
Photo-artbook
Colors photographs on metal paper
344"; Video color HD.
Hardcover box cloth binding
25x21x2 cm
KoobookArchiveLab
Catania, I
Courtesy Kbk Archive



Alice Grassi – Home Sweet Home
(Lives and works in Vancouver, BC).

Alice Grassi is a multimedia artist who's been working in collaboration with other artists and collectives. She is interested in an interactive and participatory approach that seldom involves communities tied to the territory and often adopts outdoor installations as well. The main topics of her previous works are mostly focused on the relationship between human and territory seen as emotional places. In this instance, she experiments with a home gallery where she invited four artists to think about the imaginary of inhabit. "*Unsweeened* is a part of *Home sweet Home*, a multimedia project about the inhabit. As parts of the skin and flesh, provided with beating organs, the houses represent the sphere of thinking as a sort of psychological portraits. The architecture interacts with the environment. The relationship between the objects and the surrounding Nature creates continuous games of correspondences, across a continuous flow of actions-reactions. The House-portraits reflect an inner place in which the path traced represent a geography of emotions."



Anna Guillot
Know thyself, 2019
15x25x2 cm
Laser Print
KoobookArchiveLab
Catania, I



Marzia Migliora
Ink on paper, 2008
20x19x2.3 cm
Offset Printed
Hopefulmonster
Fondazione Merz
Turin, I

Marzia Migliora – The journey
(Alessandria 1972; lives and works in Turin, I).

Marzia Migliora's work comes out of attention for the individual and his or her quotidian and develops themes such as identity, contradictions and desire, passing through the present to the past and putting places and narrations in juxtaposition. It is articulated through a vast range of languages – photography, video, sound, performance, installation and drawing.

The book *Ink on paper* (Edizioni Fondazione Merz, 2008) collects 138 drawings created between 2006 and 2008. An essential chromatic choice and the use of a rapid technique determine the path that accompanies the reader in a journey by images. The sequence of water-coloured drawings traces a narrative thread that is not supported by text, which is composed without imposing a precise reading. The book is organized in six projects interrupted by white pauses. The figures move from the woods to the high seas, from domestic interiors to spaces in which an undefined contour sees the protagonists float in the white of the paper that takes form, becoming the physical space of a place.

Zygmunt Piotrowski – Sublime beauty
(1947; lives and works in Warsaw, PL)

Zygmunt Piotrowski since the 1980s has introduced a new idea of collaboration, defined as "Aufmerksamkeitsschule", in the field of European performance, establishing the basis of the Black Market International movement of which he is co-founder. From the 1990s onward, he has worked outside of the institutional framework of the art market under the name of Noah Warsaw. Since 1998 he has promoted "Groundwork/Fine Art", an area of research that takes him towards oriental sources, within which he explores visions of invisible spaces and extrasensorial perceptions, developing his dream of beauty through an inflexible discipline. Zygmunt-Noah studies the breathing, the control of body and face that he knows how to manage excellently. In the books *The body sublime* and *Beauty revelation* of 2014, he does this through drawing and with notes in Hebrew, his beloved language. But he also investigates breathing under threat, possible poisoning, as in *Modlitwa, preghiera alla Vergine incoronata di spine* [*Modlitwa, prayer to the Virgin crowned with thorns*], of 2000, taken from *Project Stalker*, begun in 1989, wherein he presents his own vision of the Chernobyl disaster in tune with Andriej Tarkowski.

Book of The Artist's Life

conceived by Anna Guillot
selection by KoobookArchive

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