

2nd Contemporary Artists' Book Fair

The Dean Clough Galleries, Halifax

24 April 1999

This, the **2nd Contemporary Artists Book Fair** to be held in The Dean Clough Galleries, Halifax continues to establish a strong and hopefully permanent interest in book arts in the region that spans the whole range of conceptual, creative and theoretical aspects of the genre. The Fair has taken on a greater international importance with Atelier Vis-à-Vis, Editions Petropolis and L'Observatoire attending from France, Mermaid Turbulence from Ireland and Plaatsmaken of Holland.

This year's Fair includes lectures by two of the UK's leading exponents in book arts. Helen Douglas of Weproductions has produced numerous collaborative and non-collaborative publications since the early 70's that explore the relationship between narrative and book form and she continues to utilise the book as a vehicle for her own self-expression. Simon Grennan, from the international artist team 'Grennan & Sperandio', produces collaborative books with Chicago-based Christopher Sperandio that may involve other leading artists such as Cindy Sherman, local communities such as in Bradford during the City's centenary, or the recent international sculpture event,

artranspennine98. Grennan & Sperandio have developed a world market for their publications through a mass-distribution network that is in contrast to limited-edition, small press publishing.

1999 is an extremely important year for book arts, firstly with Morning Star Publications involved in the coordination of the new Centre for Artists Books in the Visual Research Centre, Dundee Contemporary Arts, which will open in May - the first centre devoted to Artists Books in the UK. The London Print Studio (née Workshop) will be relocating to purpose built premises with Déirdre Kelly (Hardware Gallery) developing the role of Artists Books within its exhibition and education programme. The Centre for Fine Print Research at UWE is currently organising a major exhibition, *Books by Artists: British Artists Books 1989-1999*. Jonathan Ward of Making Space, Bristol, will see the fruition of his long-term project, *2000 Books for the Millennium*, involving twenty European imprints and a world touring exhibition.

All of these initiatives are major developments for a genre that has struggled to gain exposure and recognition in the world of visual art.

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Edited and produced by Chris Taylor at the Wild Pansy Press, University of
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