

# IMMERSION: A CONVERSATION

Tate Shaw with Emily McVarish, Jody Zellen, & Janet Zweig

## INTRODUCTION

A few years ago I was asked to participate in an academic panel about artists' books as a site for interdisciplinary work.<sup>1</sup> At the time I was researching books that had small figures on the page to support a bookwork of my own that utilized little figures as scale models next to "virtual" architectural works made from photographs.<sup>2</sup> My question about these figures was whether they are figurative, as in an artistic motif, or are they an attempt to engage sensation through the "virtual?" In other words, is the use of the image of a figure on the page an attempt to project the reader into the book as a kind of virtual environment, an effort to relocate the reader and immerse them in the space of a book? And if this is a strategy that artists are incorporating within books, then how does this overlap with other forms such as installation or public artworks where the viewer is the "figure" in the space?

From there I became interested in examining how immersion works in a number of different media. I sought a concept I thought might relate to my experience viewing virtual environments, installations, interactive works, and public artwork. Immersion relates to being enveloped by something, to involvement, to the idea of being engaged or absorbed in something—such as reading—and this maintained my interest because it is maybe difficult these days to become immersed in anything—like reading, again—when so many channels of media are competing for our attention.

When reading a book we never have an opportunity to think of the processing of the senses as separate; with books the sense of sight and touch, the context of where they are read, are always simultaneous. So with books there is an overlap of the senses we can simply call sensation, though sensation is by no means simple. In *The Political Life of Sensation* Davide Panagia writes, "I consider sensation to be an experience of unrepresentability in that a sensation occurs without having to rely on a recognizable shape, outline, or identity to determine its value." We can be figuratively immersed in a book and sensation will overrun us and as Panagia says, "All of a sudden, something that didn't have either shape or texture begins to take form."<sup>3</sup>

We find that reading (books of writing) is to go into them, to immerse ourselves in the verbal language. A kind of literalization of this is the book *Sheherazade* by artists Holly Anderson and Janet Zweig (1988). This flipbook is about the power of female storytelling, truths buried in tradition, ritual, and practice. On the versos you have a figure, a woman shedding or putting on clothing, while the major action of the book is multiple stories you enter into with the text growing ever larger, like a page-by-page extreme close-up, revealing more and more depth in the language literally, not figuratively, but the affect is figurative as you are now cloaked in language. The world of the book becomes netting—a garment of words. The combined effect of the woman shedding or adorning clothes, and then the repeated recession into the word netting, is about the passage of time, the passing off of stories, and the questioning of our inability to figure the world outside of language, history, and consciousness. We do this philosophical questioning through our actions, our body movements, our projection of ourselves through body-thinking and the body enfolded, both inside and outside the book.

In his book *Parables for the Virtual*, Brian Massumi writes, "When we read we do not see the individual letters and words. That is what learning to read is all about. Learning to stop seeing the letters so you can see through them. Through the letters we directly experience fleeting visionlike sensations, inklings of sounds, faint brushes of movement. The turning in on itself of the body, its self-referential short-circuiting of outward-projected activity gives free reign to these incipient perceptions. In the experience of reading, conscious thought,

sensation, and all the modalities of perception fold into and out of each other. Attention most twisted."<sup>4</sup>

This experience accesses what Massumi calls the virtual and elsewhere he writes,

"Images of the virtual make the virtual appear not in their content or form, but in fleeting, in their sequencing or sampling. The appearance of the virtual is in the twists and folds of formed content, in the movement from one sample to another. It is in the ins and outs of imaging. This applies whether the image is verbal, as in an example or parable, or whether it is visual or aural. No one kind of image, let alone any one image can render the virtual."<sup>5</sup>

I presented some of these ideas at the aforementioned panel using as examples several artists' books with little figures in the works, what I called the "full body immersion" in the space of a book. I became interested in furthering the discussion and set up a few interviews to stage a conversation. To begin the conversation I emailed three artists Emily McVarish, Jody Zellen, and Janet Zweig—all of whose books I included in the original talk—sending them some segments of my panel notes revised here for this introduction. I interviewed McVarish, Zellen, and Zweig separately and in different formats. While these conversations were separate, I have woven them together here.

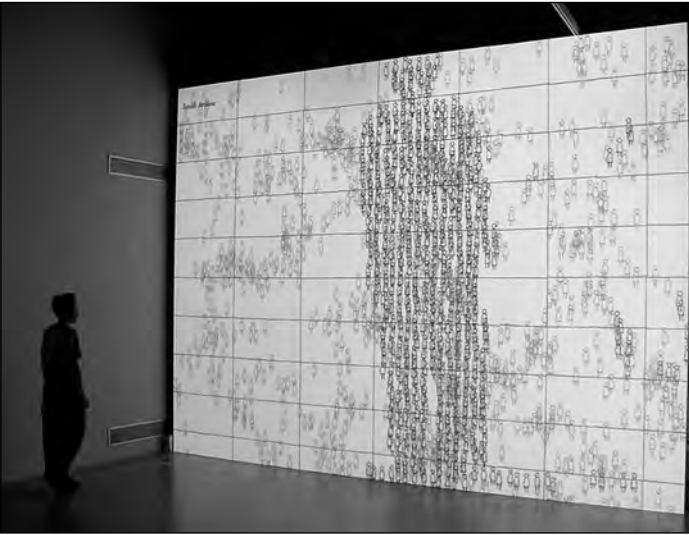
McVarish responded to the original email inquiry at length in writing using examples from her books and extensive thinking about their subjects that I followed up on for one additional exchange. Zellen and I had a recorded phone conversation about her books and installation environments that was subsequently transcribed and excerpted. I wanted Zweig to be part of the conversation because she has collaborated on a couple of works that use little figures and she makes public artworks designed for real people in real places.

As a contributor and editorial advisor to *JAB*, over the past few years I have noted the journal has received several critical writings responding to installations and public works by artists who have made books. These artworks therefore get discussed as "books" and not just interpreted as book-like or what we might call from book-thinking. So this conversation was started in part out of an interest in establishing some ground for more critical inquiry into how artists relate books, installations, public art, and public space. In the discussion that follows there is a kind of continuum linking the book with site-specific public artworks, installations, online/interactive-based projects, and personal digital devices.

Tate Shaw (TS): Janet, do you feel like you have had two distinct areas of your career—one area working in books and then another in sculpture/public art? Are your public works extensions of ideas you were working from when making books? Do you think of any of your sculptural or public works as or like books?

Janet Zweig (JZw): I made artist's books in the early part of my career, through the late 1970s and the 80s. In 1989, I started making installations and sculpture. The first series was made out of books and other things. Then through the 1990s, I made sculpture that generated text, using language-generating programs; this work did not include books. For the past eighteen years, I have been working in the public realm, installing public commissions in cities across the US.

I never thought of the gallery sculpture as books, nor any of the later work. However, my early work making books naturally informed my thinking. And I didn't mind my work being discussed in the context of book arts—much of the work included text in one way or another so there was a connection.



Jody Zeller, "The Unemployed," 2009 / 2011, installation

TS: Janet, what if anything has drawn you to the image of the fully immersed body in your works? For instance, in the documentation of your public art piece in Milwaukee, *Pedestrian Drama*, it is fascinating to see the images on your website of people stopped on the sidewalk to view these little dramatic scenes, almost like the public are viewing themselves immersed in these little scenes unfolding.

JZw: I don't think of my public art works as creating virtual experiences, in the typical sense of virtual, as in virtual reality which creates a simulation of a real space or a simulation of a sensory experience. I think of them as kind of the opposite of virtual, that is, directly experiential, except perhaps for *The Medium* which plays with the mediated image.

I try to give my viewers an experience. That experience could be called immersive in some way. Viewers are having an experience and if they feel immersed in it, that's wonderful, but it's lucky these days to get half of someone's attention for a few minutes, so I can't tell you how immersed they are.

TS: Jody, I have not experienced one of your installations in the flesh but I have read several of your books and think of them almost like a kind of virtual art that work through a sort of immersion in their flow using the figure as a kind of ground, which I think is really interesting.

Jody Zellen (JZe): I do think about the idea of walking through the books, and that each book is a journey. I try to lead you from page to page, or from sequence to sequence. The experience of moving through the pages can be thought of as a physical as well as a conceptual and perhaps even an intellectual journey.

With each book, I try to insert a kind of visual game or something that is unique to that specific book. This could be a little flipbook in the corner or a mirror image on the verso, a change in the type of paper, or some kind of interruption. When making a book (or a net art piece), I think of them as private experiences, something one has a one-to-one relationship with. The relationship between private and public is something I have begun to explore. I see my installations as public experiences whereas the books and net art, and now apps are private.

In my installations I aim to create immersive and interactive environments in which a viewer is an active participant. I think of it as inviting them to choreograph their own experience by triggering sensors that can introduce sounds or shadows or animations into the space. Often in an installation I place the projectors on the floor so viewers' bodies interrupt the projections casting shadows onto the walls.

In my installation entitled *The Unemployed* the viewer's body is captured by a web cam and transferred into the projection. This piece



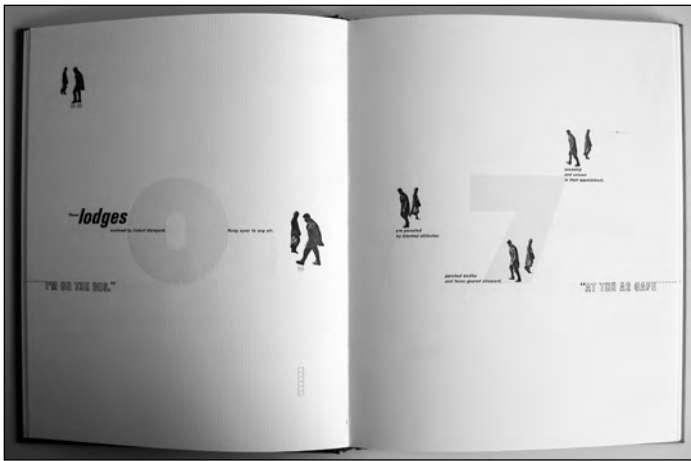
Janet Zweig, *Pedestrian Drama*, 2011, public commission  
five kiosks on existing lamp poles, East Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI  
each kiosk: 2 ft. 10 in. × 2 ft. 10 in. × 1 ft. 9 in.  
aluminum, train flap units, photographic animations, electronics, mechanical parts

is about worldwide unemployment. In it I compare and contrast the number of unemployed in all the countries in the world by transforming the statistics (pure numbers) into animated figures that represent that country's population. The software is instructed to randomly cycle through the countries presenting a range of figures. The number of figures that appear corresponds to the number of unemployed in the particular country as related to the population. When no one is interacting with the work, the figures roam randomly within the confines of the projected rectangle. As soon as someone's body is captured by the web cam, the animated figures move toward and become the shape of that silhouette.

Each time I present the piece I gather the most current unemployment statistics. I have noticed over the years that the fluctuation is minimal. Countries like Iceland or Isle of Man for example, have very few people and not a lot of unemployed therefore they are represented by the fewest figures. Countries including the United States, China, India as well as Spain have a large population and a high number of unemployed, so for them the screen becomes jam packed with the animated figures.

It takes a while for people to understand what's happening and often audiences are slow to engage but after a while I notice they begin to jump and dance in front of the projection. To me, an interactive installation such as this works best when people are caught off guard, when they walk by it and then realize that something moves with their movements. What I want to communicate in this work is not only are there a tremendous amount of people who are unemployed but to offer a concrete visualization of a potential labor force.

Installations need physical spaces. I have become increasingly aware of the fact that many people have iPhones and that I can make artworks for these devices. Artworks that people can carry with them everywhere



Emily McVarish, *The Square*, 2009, letterpress  
sixty-four pages, 10 9/16 in. × 8 3/8 in., edition of 45



they go. I made small artist's books because I wanted to make objects that people could put in their pockets; something that was intimate and personal. Now I am creating iPhone apps with the same purpose in mind. Thus far, I have created four apps that are available (for free) for the iPad and iPhone. My first entitled "Spine Sonnet" is an automatic fourteen line poems from art, theory and architecture book titles. My second entitled "Urban Rhythms" is a work that functions as metaphor for how people navigate in and through urban space. It is a creative interpretation of the paths people travel when they wander through a city. It features the same animated figures as the installation *The Unemployed* and presents them in eight different interactive sketches.

I have become increasingly interested in the relationship between the intimate and private viewing experience of an app in contrast to the public experience of interacting with an installation.

TS: Emily, what has drawn you to the image of the small figure or what I call "full body immersion," in your books?

Emily McVarish (EM): Once the text block is removed and the two-page spread is treated as an open field, the quality of negative space—no longer serving as a frame (margin)—is called into play. Ungridded, the space between images and text in particular poses a question: Is the space shared or divided by these juxtaposed modes? An image block is like a TV set in a living room: there is no continuity, no congruity between the spaces within and around its frame. Cut an object or a figure out of a reproduced photograph, and the space around it becomes semi-abstract. Disrupted, the illusion of depth surrounds the cut-out as a phantom quality. But somewhere at the edge of this absence, page-space flattens, becoming the same as the graphic space of inscription. Insofar as we read letterforms into the charged space of the missing photograph, they seem to exist in depth; insofar as the cut-out image joins the space of writing, it becomes a glyph. I have always been drawn to the possibilities of this dynamic spatial ambiguity.

As for the human figure's frequent appearance in my work, it must have several sources. A favored indicator of scale, the body invites an orienting identification, a self-projection into the space to which it is proportioned. A stand-in for the reader, then, its size determines the implied dimensions of the space around it. The greater the contrast in size between the figure and the page, the more the latter approaches the status of a world in relation to a subject whose experience it fields. As a sign of the phenomenological, the figure turns the area around it into a palpable space of potential movement. Here, too, text is affected. The scaling and activating implications of the figure rub off in the perception of nearby type, drawing text into their spatial drama. Movement and temporality, which may be indicated by the repetition and variation of a figure, can

score not only paginated sequence but even a single spread. (*The Square* in particular exploits these possibilities.)

Not unlike the extension implied by the lack of margin (the bleed) in my books, the cut-out figure injects invisible yet felt properties into the space around it and, in some ways, acts as a point of entry or representation for the reader's projection into the space of the book. In these ways, yes, I would say that my uses of the figure relate to immersion and forms of virtuality. But my work always looks for ways to condition a vacillation between awareness of the existence of the book as an object and of the signs on its pages on the one hand, and the loss of this awareness in the readings they prompt on the other. If learning to read, as Brian Massumi notes, is "learning to stop seeing the letters," then reading is constantly interrupted in my work. Typographic convention plays a critical role in the self-effacement of text and the resulting transparency that Massumi describes as characterizing the "direct experience" of the virtual. In eschewing conventions of layout, my books impel their reader to more self-conscious and constructive reading acts.

This pursuit of an aesthetic that brings indices of books' virtual modes to the fore—calling them out in typo-textual schemes that heighten a sense of the movements and moments of reading and in images that allegorize the mechanisms of identification on which such moments are premised—coincides in my work with an interest in related themes outside the book. *Flicker*, *The Square*, and *A Thousand Several* all consider ways in which the sharedness of contemporary public space has been complicated by the use of personal technologies that divide their users between a physical occupation of space and a virtual experience of telepresence. Even as the design and production of these books have called attention to the concrete space of the page as the here-and-now in which a text is activated by reading, so these texts themselves have commented on the material conditions and social dynamics of the street as a site of multiplied virtual spaces.

*The Square* and *A Thousand Several* each rely on cut-out images of the body to stage experiences of these phenomena. A note I made elsewhere about *The Square* highlights one instance of this usage: "In the language of the cell phone calls [which figures prominently in the book], the phrases 'I'm just' and 'I just' recur with the frequency of real-time locational rendering. Like these phrases, the clipped video stills reproduced in *The Square* report trivial differences of position. In both cases, motion may be implied, but the greater effect is one of invalidation: for all its up-to-the-minute currency, no one pose or place holds meaning."

If, in *The Square*, cell phones are the unseen but supposed origin of text strains whose logic is choreographed by recurring figures, in *A Thousand Several*, phones figure as the crux of bodily attitudes in most of the people pictured. Here, a greater formal range characterizes the use of the cut-out person. From tiny to page-dominating in scale, from outlined



Jody Zellen, *The Blackest Spot*, installation, 2008

to solid, from flat to tonally rendered, and from single- to process-colored, the book establishes a variety of graphic poles to code oppositions and continua of presence and removal, of sensory detail and abstraction. The book can then combine these codes in different ways (tiny but halftoned, large but merely outlined, etc.) in order to suggest paradoxes of proximate absence, remote connection, etc. In the second section of the book, large figures are composed in visual dialogue with tiny ones, who sometimes perch—on shoulders or palms—as attributes of their interlocutor.

TS: Janet, there is a connection for me between the performance space of your book *Heinz and Judy*, and your flipbook with Holly Anderson, *Sheherazade* that connects to *Pedestrian Drama*, your flip-sign animation plays made in collaboration with performing artists for a public piece in Milwaukee—also to a certain extent the performance frieze of *Carrying On* for MTA Arts for Transit in the NYC subway. Did you think of the book as an open field or a space for time-based performances to take place? And now that you work more with public space, does book space ever factor in? For instance, do you use scale models or photo simulations projecting little people into the public spaces you are designing?

JZw: *Pedestrian Drama* is a public work for the City of Milwaukee. It consists of five kiosks on lamp poles along East Wisconsin Avenue, each with three flap units, like the type made for trains. We filmed Milwaukee actors and dancers in little street dramas. The flap units display them when triggered by movement by pedestrians passing by. Of course, the flap unit animations are just like flip books and connect nicely to my past book work with flip books. Using figures is one device I've used occasionally. They fit into my work in the sense that they are used episodically, and create an intimate experience for one viewer at a time, a narrative that can be moved through. If you think of the book, *Sheherazade*, the primary action of the book is textual, and the small moving figure in the verso corner, taking off her dress only to find the same dress underneath repeatedly, is a tangential echo to the theme of the piece: things within things. I did use small figures in two of my public works, but the majority of my work uses other formal strategies. The flap units in the public work, *Pedestrian Drama*, will be replaced twice, and the next rounds may likely not have figures on them, but other types of imagery.

And yes, I always put images of people in my proposals for public work. They give a good reference to scale and are a convention of architecture and public art proposals.

TS: Jody, your books are oftentimes packed full of people and the crowds are kind of teeming. Where did the interest in crowds and representing a



Jody Zellen, *The Blackest Spot*, artist's book, 2002  
forty pages, 4 1/5 in. × 4 1/5, edition of 500

lot of people at once come into play in your work?

JZe: The crowd images come from both printed and online media. At first I collected photographs of crowds at rallies, demonstrations as well as images of conflict I saw in the printed newspaper. I continue to peruse the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* every day, clipping and saving pictures that depict images of crowds, violence, architecture and silhouettes or shadows. These images have been used in a multitude of projects including the net art pieces *Without A Trace*, and *Crowds and Power*. *Crowds and Power* began as a forty page artist's book that interspersed fragments of the crowd images I collected with a quote from Elias Canetti's book *Crowds and Power*. At that time printing the book proved to be too expensive so I reconfigured it into a net art project. I cut the images and the text from the book into fragments that launched as pop up windows from a single page eventually covering the screen. I wanted to explore the idea of the screen as a sculptural space creating depth through a bombardment of pop up windows.

After the website launched I was determined to produce the book because it was an integral part of the project. In the book I used two paper types, overlaying the printed images with vellum pages containing Canetti's text. Lastly I had the opportunity to turn the content into an interactive installation entitled *The Blackest Spot*. *The Blackest Spot* was an immersive environment surrounding the viewer with animated projections and surround sound. I wanted to make the viewer feel like they were inside the book bombarded by imagery. In this installation there were four animations that were projected on two of the gallery walls. A fifth projection changed when viewers stepped on triggers embedded in the floor. Each of twelve triggers changed a different element. Some added to the animation while others introduced a new sound into the space. The sounds included marching, clapping and cheering as well as parts of famous speeches throughout history, including Martin Luther King Jr.'s, "I Have a Dream." I wanted the viewer to experience the sensation of being the speaker and a member of the crowd. Another important aspect of the installation was the constant interruption. As viewers passed by floor-based projectors their shadows became part of the animation. These silhouettes interacted with the images on the screen creating another layer



Janet Zweig, *Prairie Logic*, 2012, Public commission, in collaboration with el dorado architects. Rooftop, downtown Kansas City, MO. 1/2 acre × 13 ft, prairie grass, boxcar wheels and track, aluminum, steel, gravel, performances. photos by Dan Videtich



of depth and adding to the immersive experience.

TS: Janet, how do you do your research for a public work? Are your research strategies specific to the places and/or the work you're commissioned to create?

JZw: The research for my public works comes out of visiting a place and talking with people. In the case of *Prairie Logic*, I collaborated with a local Kansas City architecture firm, el dorado, inc., so I had easy access to Kansas City ideas. Trains of boxcars pass right by the architects' office every day, so we saw them all the time and the prairie speaks to Kansas City history. Placing a boxcar in a prairie on a green roof downtown made odd sense to us—prairie logic. The important element for me of this work is the fact that the door opens in the boxcar and it becomes a proscenium stage for performances. I'm excited by this aspect, because in the past, I've made mechanical pieces, and they require a lot of maintenance. Performance makes a piece dynamic in a different way.

TS: Emily, I'm interested in what you said before about the vacillation between "awareness of the existence of the book as an object and of the signs on its pages on the one hand," and what I would call a kind of immersion, "the loss of this awareness in the readings they prompt on the other." In reading your books, particularly *The Square* and *A Thousand Several* I found myself projecting into the field but also watching—almost attempting to follow the figures. You mentioned before "the phrases 'I'm just' and 'I just'" picked up from cell phone conversations that accompany the figures. I sense a kind of tension between being immersed and being watched in your work. It isn't quite surveillance, more like a simultaneity—i.e. I, the reader, am fractured because I'm simultaneously trying to get immersed but getting disrupted by "watching" the little figures and entering their worlds momentarily. Could you comment on that simultaneity, if you see this as relevant?

And could you also talk about image capture and devices—cameras, film, projectors, film stills, now PDAs—all of which play a role in your books *Flicker*, *The Square*, *A Thousand Several* and going back to *Was Here* and *These Buildings are Falling*.

EM: The recurrence of elements associated with image capture in my work translates a preoccupation with stillness as a deeply desired impossibility. I think this theme may be related to the tension you highlight between immersion in the act of reading and the disruption of that state by the impulse to track the tiny figures that cross my books' pages. That is, behind the desire for stillness I suspect there lies a longing for transcendence—of the limits not just of temporal contingency but of point of view and control. The book, as a form that suggests completeness unto itself, holds this attraction for me—it poses as a world that can be

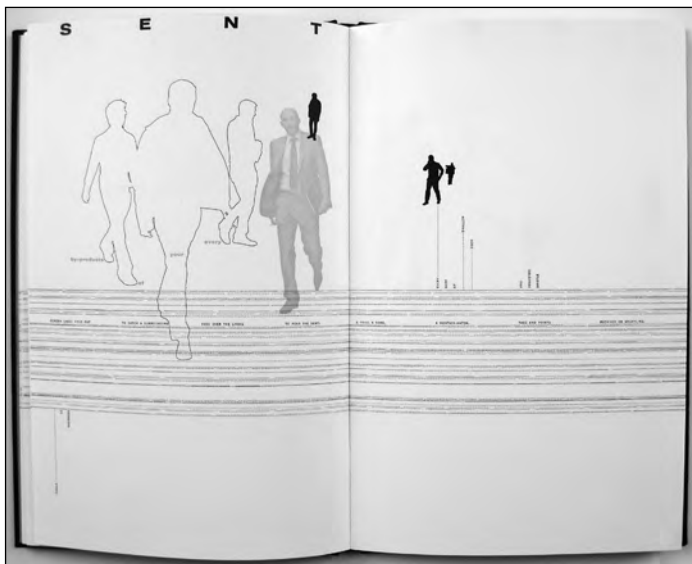
held in a reader's hands. The very notion of the book as an object implies this relation to a subject that transcends it. The immersion that reading entails, on the other hand, makes one subject to a text's moment, a book's internal contexts. There is pleasure in this condition, no doubt, but in order to experience it one must forgo the thrill of being able to see how the whole determines the meaning or effect of its parts. In *A Thousand Several* or *The Square*, these parts might be graphic, typographic, or photographic. Their treatment and arrangement establish the situations in which a reader finds himself. Then again, insofar as the "reading" of this composition requires an understanding of the system that underlies it, stepping out to note the rules is unavoidable.

At the same time, my work has focused on the false posture of this desire for a beyond and the faulty premise that images frame—of capture as a way to transcend, to grasp. "[I]mages change what they reach (and claim to reproduce) into things, and presence into simulacra, the present, the this," writes Henri Lefebvre. Yet in shorthand he notes, "Nothing inert in the world, no things: very diverse rhythms, slow or lively (in relation to us)." <sup>6</sup> Lefebvre's depiction of a co-presence of subject and object, of the simultaneity that relates their differently paced becomings, posits a truth I may spend the rest of my life comprehending. Meanwhile, my books ply their wants back and forth, in a muddle between motion and plurality on the one hand and fixity and singularity on the other. Not only can time not be stopped, my books repeat, it can't be unified. The multiplication of figures on their pages trips the wish for a world-to-be-held by implying movement and dispersing attention. Yet these multiplied and varied figures are images, each of which extracts a moment, an attitude . . . you see what I mean by "muddle."

You say the figures disrupt your immersion. According to my scheme, this disruption should trigger an externalization, an awareness of the book as object. Yet you also say that your reading is interrupted by "entering [the figures'] worlds momentarily." Perhaps it is the fact they multiply points of entry rather than sustaining paths that makes the cut-out figures problematic to the would-be immersed reader.

As for the scale of these figures, it contradicts the proposed impossibility of transcendence by suggesting a vast field under the reader's gaze, if not a bird's eye view. What's more, at best, these figures can seem microcosmic, as if holding more detail than may be perceived by the naked eye.

When I was in elementary school, we watched "film strips" on various educational topics. They must have given me the idea for my first dioramas, which employed strips of images that could be pulled across a space selectively framed by a viewfinder. In college, I worked as an usher at a cinematheque in Berkeley (the best work-study job ever). Regulars at the Pacific Film Archive were an eccentric bunch. Sitting in my usher's seat beside the aisle, I wondered at the intensity of their evident need to



Emily McVarish, *A Thousand Several*, 2010, letterpress sixty-four pages, 11 1/4 in. × 7 1/4 in., edition of 45

be absorbed by a medium, to disappear in the darkness and identify with a projection. Well, I have become such a cinephile myself—someone who can't quite fit her habit behind the contours of a critical or knowledgeable interest. I love losing myself in the moving image. But the appeal of the film strip—of film as something that can be handled, whose movement (temporality) can be paced according to one's readiness and whim—remains. My interest in books is intimately related to this appeal.

And perhaps my books' tiny figures echo the miniatures that populate a celluloid frame. Certainly I have been inordinately excited by the knowledge that a still film's units hold more information than I can see. Why else would I keep the found footage and coiled film strips that I own but can't project? They allow me to hold in my hands more than proportion allows.

When a proof of a reproduced photograph comes particularly well off the press, I am sometimes tempted to get out my loupe. Predictably (yet I have done this more than once), once magnified, the image falls apart among the dots of a halftone screen. Take away the loupe, and the image seems to hold together in a fullness that enfolds more than meets the eye. Back and forth. You see the nature of my pleasure in these matters.

#### ENDNOTES

1. "Virtual Environment/Physical Artifact" The Artists' Book as a Site for Interdisciplinary Work Panel, 98th Annual Conference, College Art Association, Chicago, IL, 2010.
2. Shaw, Tate. *Folder*. Rochester: Preacher's Biscuit Books, 2010.
3. Panagia, Davide. *The Political Life of Sensation*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.
4. Massumi, Brian. *Parables for the Virtual*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002.
5. Ibid.
6. Lefebvre, Henri. *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time, and Everyday Life*. Translated by Stuart Elden and Gerald Moore. London and New York: Continuum, 2004.

Tate Shaw is Director of the Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York ([www.vsw.org](http://www.vsw.org)), a nonprofit organization supporting photography and books with an accredited MFA program in Visual Studies. Shaw routinely organizes exhibitions and lectures on books, including the bi-annual Photo-Bookworks Symposium at VSW. He is copublisher of Preacher's Biscuit Books ([www.preachersbiscuitbooks.com](http://www.preachersbiscuitbooks.com)) and his own work is held in many private and public collections of artist's books internationally.

Jody Zellen is a Los Angeles based artist who works in many media simultaneously making interactive installations, mobile apps, net art, animations, drawings, paintings, photographs, public art, and artists' books. She employs media-generated representations as raw material for aesthetic and social investigations. Her interactive installations include *The Unemployed* at Disseny Hub Museum in Barcelona in 2011 and *The Blackest Spot* at Fringe Exhibitions in Los Angeles in 2008. Most recently she has been making mobile apps. *Urban Rhythms*, *Spine Sonnet*, *Art Swipe* and *4 Square* are her four apps. They are available for free in the Apple App Store. For more information visit [www.jodyzellen.com](http://www.jodyzellen.com).

Janet Zweig is an artist who lives in Brooklyn, NY, working primarily in the public realm. Her most recently installed public works include a performance space in a prairie on a Kansas City downtown green roof, a series of kinetic works in downtown Milwaukee, a sentence-generating sculpture for an engineering school in Orlando, and a memorial in the lawn of Mellon Park in Pittsburgh. Other public works include a 1200' frieze at the Prince Street subway station in New York, and a system-wide interactive project for eleven Light Rail train stations in Minneapolis, incorporating the work of over a hundred Minnesotans. Her sculpture and books have been exhibited widely in such places as the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Exit Art, PS1 Museum, the Walker Art Center, and Cooper Union. She teaches at the Rhode Island School of Design and at Brown University.

Emily McVarish is a writer, designer, and book artist who lives and works in San Francisco. Her work has been published by Granary Books and is held by major museums and libraries, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's artist's book collection, Harvard University's Printing and Graphic Arts Collection, and the British Library's American Collections. Emily is also Associate Professor of Graphic Design at California College of the Arts, where she teaches typography, writing, and design history. In collaboration with Johanna Drucker, she co-authored *Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide* published by Prentice Hall. Her writing has been featured in *Visible Language* and *Design and Culture*.