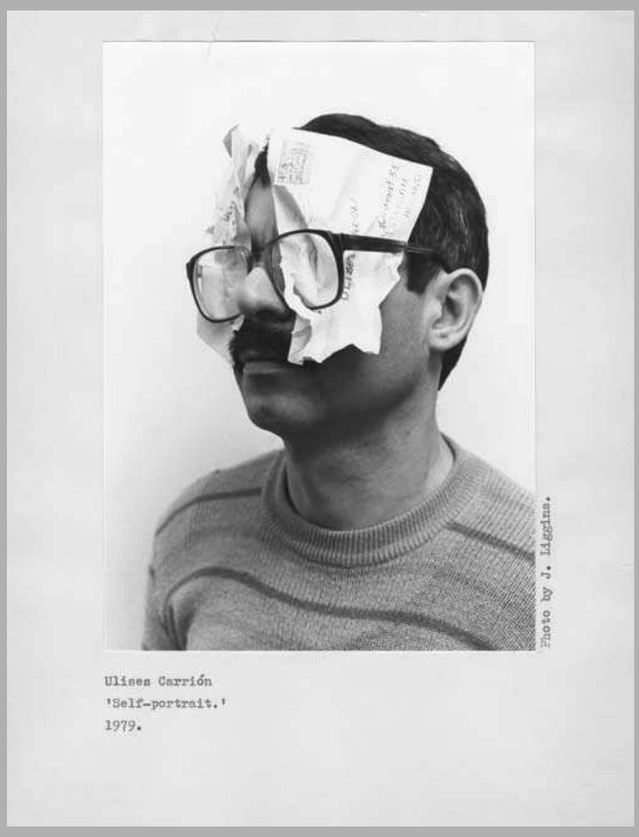
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The Magazine for Graphic Design

Special Report **Fashion** Eley Kishimoto / Maison Martin Margiela / New Fashion Illustration / Featured **David Pearson** / Puffin By Design / Breda Design Festival




Self portrait by
Ulises Carrión,
founder of Other Books
and So, Amsterdam,
photo by J. Liggins, 1979

# Book Show

A new exhibition opening this month at Eastside Projects in Birmingham looks at books through the eyes of artists — books as physical objects, symbols and carriers of meaning. As we consume written and visual content in increasingly different ways, the book becomes an interesting form with changing values. Here, curators JAMES LANGDON and GAVIN WADE present the work of five of the artists included in Book Show.

Eastside Projects is an exhibition space that rejects definitive forms and neutral positions. The gallery has no default state. Each successive exhibition responds to the legacy of the previous exhibitions and to the evolving conditions of the space, drawing on multiple modes and histories of display.

Book Show applies this approach to the form of the book. It is not an exhibition of books, it is an exhibition of artworks, objects and structures that address the physical form of the book and reveal its characteristics as a space for display.

The starting point for the exhibition is Ulises Carrión's provocative text The New Art of Making Books (1975). Carrión was the founder of Other Books and So in Amsterdam, a gallery and bookstore that during its short life (1975—79) became the first major centre for the flourishing international artist-led publishing scene.

Carrión's perspective on the form of the book de-emphasises any inherent union between the material form of the book and its printed content. The book is not a neutral platform, it offers a specific set of display conditions that bookmakers must respond to.

Book Show is at Eastside Projects from 3 July to 4 September 2010. It includes work by Nina Beier and Marie Lund, Ulises Carrión, Daniel Eatock, Martino Gamper, Nina Katchadourian, Kelly Large, Fraser Muggeridge Studio, Radim Peško, Rollo Press, Yann Sérandour, Simon Starling, Werkplaats Typografie and Keith Wilson.

www.eastsideprojects.org

# 01 **Library — 1998**
# Keith Wilson

Library is a monument to storytelling, a piece of found civic minimalism inscribed with a familiar yet otherwise untold history of use – dust and gum and indoor grime and fingerprints. This quiet story is now as concretely present as the hardback stories these casements once contained are absent. No books or shelves, the casements are hollowed out, all surface now, and an alternative narrative is revealed there, written in so much dust.

file under non-fiction

object and idea co-exist in space

they are not the same,
but may occupy the same space

the object is not the object of study

there is nothing to study without the object

the relationship between object and idea is non-hierarchical

objects are different (ontologically and epistemologically)

they are fabrications which require that you believe in them

file under fiction

(Keith Wilson, 2010)

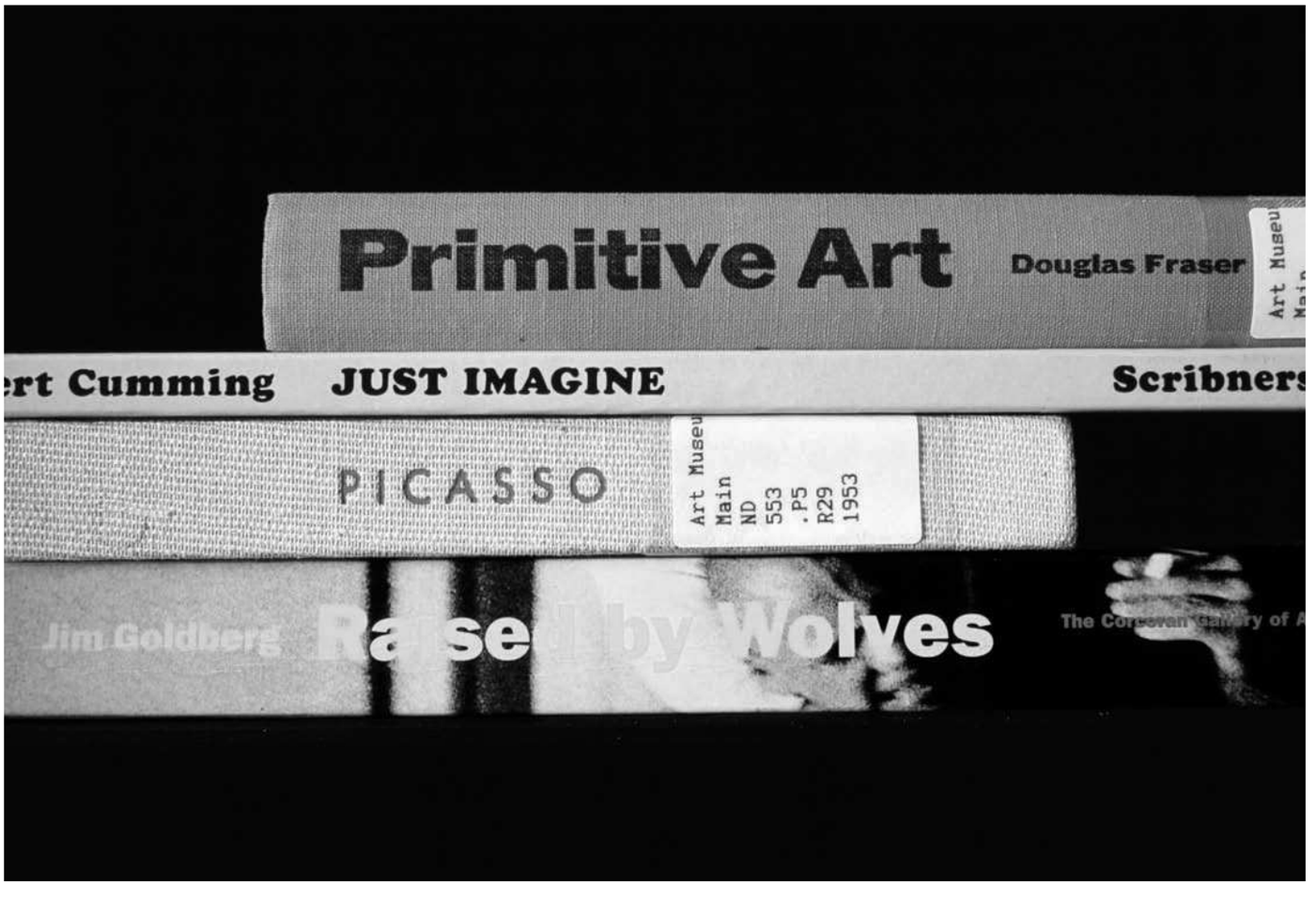


02 **Primitive Art from The Akron Stacks — 2001**
## Nina Katchadourian

The Sorted Books project began in 1993 and is ongoing. The project has taken place in many different places over the years, ranging from private homes to specialised public book collections. The process is the same in every case: sorting through a collection of books, pulling out particular titles and eventually grouping the books into clusters so that the titles can be read in sequence, from top to bottom. The final results are shown either as photographs of the book clusters or as the actual stacks themselves, shown on the shelves of the library they were drawn from. Taken as a whole, the clusters from each sorting aim to examine that particular library's focus, idiosyncrasies and inconsistencies – a cross section of that library's holdings. At present, the Sorted Books project comprises more than 130 book clusters.

The image shown is from a book sorting I did by invitation at the Akron Art Museum in 2001 based on the holdings of the museum's own research library. Its book collection had extensive materials and catalogues from various contemporary art exhibitions, as well as many large-format, hardback monographs. There was a special section on the business and fundraising side of museum administration. The books from the library did not circulate to the general public, and the library itself was so separate from the main exhibition areas that most visitors had no idea there was a library there at all. When the sorting project was complete, thirteen book clusters were brought to the gift shop located behind the front desk and integrated into the displays.

Courtesy of the artist, Sara Meltzer gallery and Catharine Clark gallery.



On 31 October 2008 artist Kelly Large began requesting the least popular books whose abstracts contain the word *artist* from the British Library collection. Low usage items are categorised with a YK shelf mark and held in an ancillary storage space in Boston Spa, Yorkshire. They are driven down to temporary storage in the high usage St. Pancras library site, on request. These low usage, YK category publications have been used, on mass, as material for the production of new work.

• It took the artist 1,398 days from joining the library to complete the production of work.

• Her favoured study desk at the British Library measures 76.5 x 116 cm.

• The volume of her studio is 26.6 $m^3$.

• There are over 150,000,000 items in the British Library collection.

• There are 761 LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* identified by the artist between 1973 (when the library first came into operation), and October 2009 (the completion of the research).

• Each of the 761 LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACT CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* has been individually measured and weighed.

• 1 of the 761 LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* has been mislaid.

• 11 of the 761 LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* were on constant loan during the weighing and measuring period.

• There were 7 years when no LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* were logged on the catalogue.

• A reader is limited to 10 collection item requests per day.

• It takes 3 days from the request date for a LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOK to travel from the ancillary British Library storage space in Boston Spa, Yorkshire to the primary storage space in the British Library's St. Pancras building, London.

• There are 201.82 miles between the British Library's Boston Spa and St. Pancras sites.

• There are 7.09 miles between the artist's studio and the British Library's St. Pancras site.

• The total volume of the LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* is 0.4 $m^3$.

• The surface area of the LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* is 7 x 4.7 m.

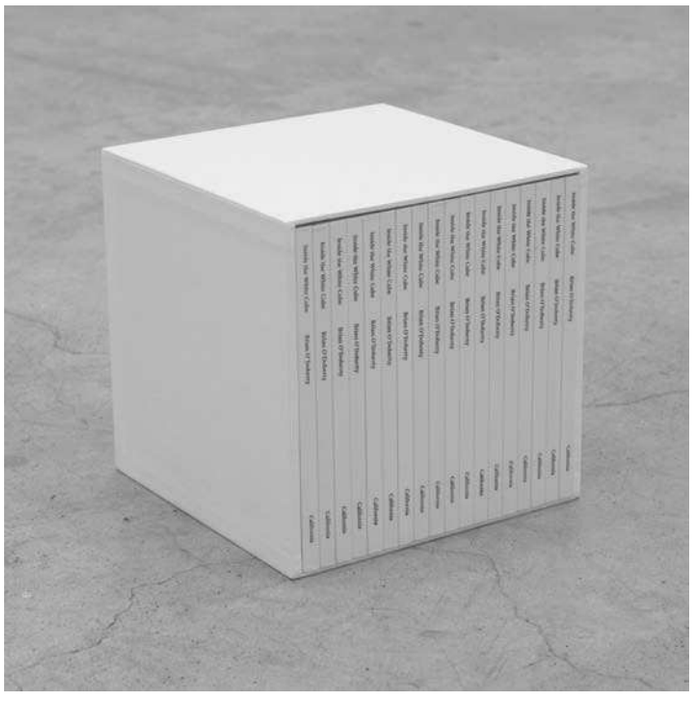
• The total weight of the LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* is 329 kg. This is approximately the equivalent to the weight of 4 adults.

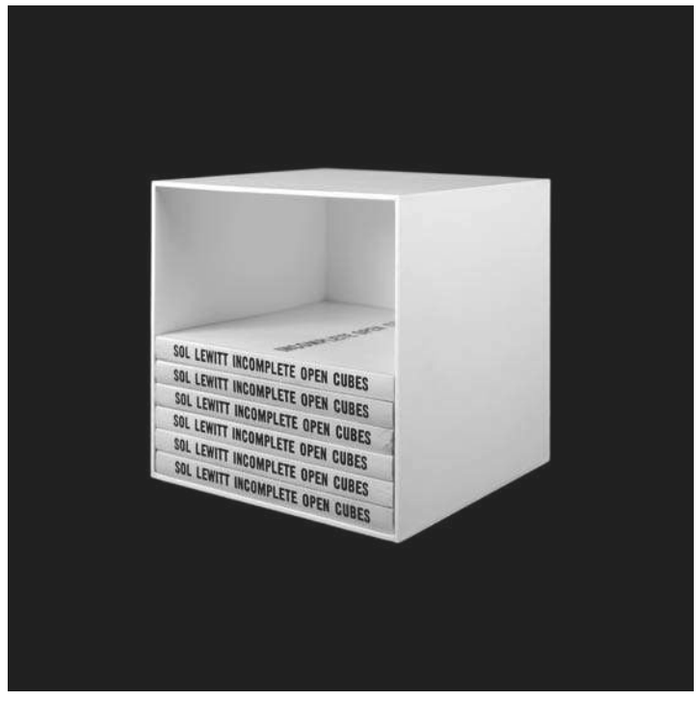
• Packed together the LOW USAGE YK CATEGORY BOOKS WHOSE ABSTRACTS CONTAIN THE WORD *ARTIST* measure 74.4 x 74.4 x 74.4 cm.

# 04 Library Amnesty — 2010
# Werkplaats Typographie

**Wanted:** All missing, lost, found, overdue, borrowed, stolen, hijacked publications from the Werkplaats Typografie library. Items should be sent to Eastside Projects, 86 Heath Mill Lane, Birmingham, B9 4AR, UK between 3 July and 4 September 2010. Read or Alive.

05 **Inside the White Cube (expanded edition), 2008 and Incomplete Open Cubes, 2010**
# Yann Sérandour






Eighteen copies of
Inside the White Cube
by Brian O'Doherty inserted
in a cubic slipcase.

This box can contain up to twelve copies of Sol LeWitt's book Incomplete Open Cubes. The owner of the box is invited to complete this work by adding any copies of the book that he has been able to collect.

JAMES LANGDON: The two works you are presenting in Book Show treat books both as physical objects and representations of certain iconic ideas of display. You often make direct use of significant books rather than just refer to them.

YANN SÉRANDOUR: Given my primary interest in the act of reading and gathering books together into collections, I can't only refer to them, I have to make use of them. This is also a way to give them a new value by including them in a new display context. Reframing a book is a way to change its meaning.

JL: There also seems to be an element of humour in the works. Both works are on one level very simple puns – jokes at the expense of what might now be considered dogmatic or rigid ideas of how art should be displayed, both in books and in exhibitions.

YS: Indeed, let's say they are quite stupid puns. I used the titles of these books to reflect their physical properties onto themselves. Inside the White Cube is a major text about the display of art. I liked the idea that the cardboard cube contains the story of its own deconstruction. Making a paradoxical object is a way to make us think about it.

JL: You don't mean to undermine the ideologies in the books you appropriate, but to re-engage with them.

YS: Incomplete Open Cubes was my answer to the question of the legacy of Sol LeWitt's work in the context of a retrospective of his artist's books. The experience of the void, of the nothingness and of the missing is fascinating. The act of collecting is just a way to deal with those ideas.

"Conceptual Artists are mystics rather than rationalists."
– Sol LeWitt