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The Print Booked

March 14-18, 2012
Reception: Friday, March 16, 6 to 10 pm

NOCCA (New Orleans Center for Creative Arts) Galleries

Ken Kirschman Artspace www.nocca.com

NOCCA Riverfront, 2800 Chartres St.

New Orleans, Louisiana 70117

Gallery hours: 9 am-1 pm, Monday-Friday, 12-4 pm, Saturday/Sunday

New Orleans, LA: CENTRAL BOOKING takes to the road with *The Print Booked* at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, an exhibition with the SGCInternational printmaking conference, *Navigating Currents*. For it, curator Maddy Rosenberg selected 20 CENTRAL BOOKING artists who combine a variety of both traditional and inventive printmaking techniques with their interpretations of the book.

Book art is a natural territory for a printmaker to explore, it begins with the printed word or image on a sheet of paper. Yet why remain with the paper as support? Why remain within the confines of a flat surface? Artist's books offer an exciting area of experimentation that is finally coming into its own, a place where the printmaker is very much navigating the currents, pushing beyond the traditional. The artist's book is a work of art in itself, where the book as we know it is totally rethought. Why a codex? Why bound at all? Of course, a book is an intimate object to be picked up from a shelf and enjoyed but also torn apart; enlarged; hung on a wall, ceiling; standing on the floor; as a part of a larger whole, a bevy of books. Cut, sewn, welded, printed, etched, wound. To be torn apart page by page, transformed as it is put together again. To be pondered from a distance, to be surrounded by it, to follow it with the eye, to sit quietly and caress its pages. We think of the book as hand held but, it, too, yearns to break through such limitations - and these artists do their best to comply.

The printed, embroidered, stuffed sculptural books of **Miriam Schaer** combine to create tableaux that push the form. The juxtaposition of bold imagery with the delicacy of the transparent fabric **Desirée Alvarez** prints and draws on, is hung into configurations that seem to defy gravity. **April Vollmer**, known for her multi-colored layered hanga woodblock prints, they often reference the more disturbing part of nature in a lovingly way. **Cynthia Back**'s multi-color etchings coalesce in her variations on the accordion book as **Karen Kunc**'s painterly printmaking dances across the wall, allowing **Tammy Wofsey**'s woodcut sagas to unwind step by step in her boxed accordion books.

The sly witty underpinnings of **Heidi Neilson**'s tightly conceived books offer us a pinch of conceptualism while **Rosaire Appel** "documents" things that are not, thereby placing the solemnity of most conceptual art on its head as they both amply demonstrate that the cerebral can be playful and visual as well. Hailing from a Fluxus tradition, German artist **Brandstifter** embarks on his latest collaboration with xrays at their foundation. Though **Amanda Thackray** is adept at traditional letterpress, she finds herself enjoying the challenges of the book as sculptural installation in a variation of a message in a bottle.

Art Hazelwood brings his narrative tales to life with silkscreen that often goes beyond one layer and level, as the wonderfully quirky imagery of **Thorsten Dennerline** inhabits his masterfully printed etching and lithography artist's books. The dreams of **Eunkang Koh** manifest themselves in a fantasy played out on the paper surfaces of her three-dimensional artist's books; **Margaret Craig** invents a world of her own through fluid biomorphic forms with a flexible etching printmaking process, as well, of her own making. The original conceit of **Jay Bolotin** - an animated woodcut motion picture with an operatic text, six years in the making- is only Part 1 of an anticipated trilogy.

Kumi Korf's delicate minimal prints translate into books that belie her architectural background, though **Maddy Rosenberg** uses architectural memories past and present and, from the flat, transforms them into multi-planar environments. The "page" for **Suzanne Reese Horvitz** can be glass, paper or metal as she prints and paints on any surface; sequence can be hidden behind spreading steel or transparently mysterious through layers of glass. **Anne Gilman's** multi panels reveal the text as image integrated with words in subdued drawn, printed and collaged color as **Sabra Booth's** silkscreen text across relief cut-outs fly across the wall. She also has the capacity to highlight an environmental tragedy with a light hand through animation.

This is an exhibition that has one re-examining the book as more than a mere container of information, but as an inspiration for the artistic imagination, rethinking the printed page. It is at the very core of CENTRAL BOOKING's mission.

CENTRAL BOOKING Magazine begins its third year of publication with a Special Issue in conjunction with *The Print Booked*, in which artists and writers come together to explore the symbiotic relationship between printmaking and the artist's book www.magcloud.com/browse/issue/344741. The exhibition catalog insert for the *Print Booked* includes an essay by David Jones, who places the NOCCA exhibition in the larger historical context of printmaking. His reflections on the contemporary status of the book and print forms in this technological age resonates in the work of Miriam Schaer—who writes about the evolution of her own process, including her recent forays into digital printing and print on demand. Art Hazelwood also comments on the intersections of past and present in his own work, divulging the literary and historical elements that have inspired him along the way. All is rounded off by an incisive essay from the editor, Nina Pelaez, who muses on the influences of printing technology on the book - and where it may lead us.

CENTRAL BOOKING is a unique international art space conceived by artist/curator **Maddy Rosenberg** that is dedicated to the entire expanse and scope of "the book" as art, exhibiting both established and emerging artists. **CENTRAL BOOKING** is designed into two distinct but integrated spaces: **Gallery I** displays book art and prints, while **Gallery II** specializes in art and science thematic exhibitions that incorporate book art among a broad variety of media.

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