

FROM THE EDITOR

Well, it has been sometime since the last issue, but as I have explained, it has not been a cool, calm time. In fact, in July, I had another hard disk crash and lost everything! Retrieved enough to mail out the July issue—but that was because of the kindness of friends and their computer. I now have replaced the hard disk, got new software, so for every disaster, there is an upgrade. I am still reconstructing life, but I have been doing that since 1996 when the burglary took place, so bear with me.

As you know, I have been traveling from September through November with a respite in October. It was necessary to delay this issue not only because of the traveling, but also because of all the new books coming out and the loss of my dear friend, Dick Higgins, to whom this issue is dedicated. He has always been there for me, my own umbrella, through thick and thin for 3 decades, and so I hope you can understand. This way, there is more news and much more current information as well.

To top this all off, just before I was to prepare the newsletter for the printer, my own computer printer seemed to have melted away, and so I have replaced the printer with something much more substantial, something that will serve me well, but that put me back two days. So if there are gremlins around, there are also angels, people who have seen me through these problems with grace and generosity. I am so fortunate to have the richness of friendships.

As for the *Anthology*, it will be published in 1999, a year later than anticipated, but it will be better for the delay. I will try to get it out by March, so look for a notice in your mail. For those who have donated so generously to make the *Anthology* possible, your copies will be sent to you upon publication. For any of my readers who wish to reserve a copy of the *Anthology*, \$20.00 will do it before 15 February 1999.

In order to withstand the postal increase, I am asking all subscribers again (especially you individual subscribers) to renew before 1 February. PLEASE RENEW NOW and make your new year begin without any additional mail from Umbrella. It will help the coffers as well, since postage costs.

Frankly, I want to talk to my readers. After 20 years, I am in a position to ask you readers what you want in the Newsletter. Is there something missing that you want to read about? Is there something you want to know about that I am not providing? Let me know, so that Umbrella can reflect your needs as well as mine. I try to cater to you all, but that is difficult. Witness the departure of Seth Friedman from **Factsheet Five**, who literally has burned out along with his publisher. He has walked away from an amazing publication, one which he has nurtured through the boom of zinedom, but he has gone. A new editor and a new publisher are soon to be announced, but right now, burnout is a common disease. He also named **Umbrella** in the Top Ten of zines in his estimation and that of the readers of **Factsheet Five**! Frankly, dear readers, I don't know how long I can handle all the information that is pouring in—from the snail mail, from the e-mail, from the phone, fax and secondary sources, from all over the world. I am inundated by paper, and my resolution for the New Year is to start fresh—with a clean slate—and a clean office. Right now, I feel like Fibber McGee—and I do not like that. A chaotic environment reflects a chaotic mind—and so I am constantly making piles—but as June Wayne tells her friends and colleagues, every project requires a big folder, and there are so many folders to deal with. I cannot keep up with it all, and I would like to juggle my time better, but it is not possible. Any leads would be well received. I'd like to enjoy this venture much more than I do. I know Saturday's child works hard for a living, but this is ridiculous! And it's not even a living.

I wish you all a Happy New Year, full of health and productivity, peace and peace of mind, the ability to handle all that is in store for us, and a little bit of time to synthesize it all. Give yourself time to ease out of the situation and look at it with objective eyes. If not, you may burn out too. A Happy Holiday Season! And be sure to renew.

Cover: Dick Higgins' *Postface*, his first book published by Something Else Press in 1964.

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ON THE ROAD WITH jah

It has been a busy autumn with trips for artist book reasons, for the most part. I shall not give you a point-by-point description, but tell you that September began with a trip to **Oaxaca, Mexico** to attend the opening of **El Arte de Los Libros de Artista**, an exhibition dedicated to the memory of my friend, Ulises Carrión, who opened the first artist bookshop in Europe in 1975. The exhibition was a gathering of bookworks from around the world, thanks to a call by the curator, Martha Hellion. Located in the Instituto de Artes Graficas de Oaxaca, a beguiling and beautiful venue where there is a solid art history library, a workshop for making prints, and an exhibition space. The show had two rooms dedicated to the life, work and art of Carrión, including mail art, bookworks, photographs and performance pieces. The rest of the show was crowded and mostly in vitrines, but will have more ample space at the Public Library of Mexico City come February, when a catalog will also be published.

Being the first time in Mexico except for a day in Tijuana many years ago, I had the great privilege of seeing Mexico City through the eyes of my friend, famed artist, bookmaker, publisher, performance artist and raconteur, Felipe Ehrenberg. As a result, I saw Frida Kahlo's home, the great Plaza in Mexico City, but especially the murals of Orozco, who will remain for me the greatest muralist of all time!

In Oaxaca, a human-scaled beautifully laid out city, I learned so much thanks to the historic museum in an ex-monastery of Santo Domingo that I now understand a great deal more about the Conquest of Mexico, the obliteration of cultures and languages, and of the steadfastness of the people with their roots and ritual trying so hard to be maintained. Clive Phillpot, formerly of the Museum of Modern Art, and Jan Voss of Boekie Woekie came from Europe to join us in a panel discussion the day after the opening in order to discuss the beginnings and progression of the movement of artist books.

In **New York City**, 10 days later I attended the opening of Al Hansen's Venuses at the Emily Harvey Gallery and the opening of the Hansen/Beck exhibition at Thread Waxing Space where I had loaned a work to the show. It was a Fluxfest, since all of Al Hansen's old friends performed a marathon on Friday night 18 September and it was an amazing time had by all. Little did I know that that would be the last time I would see my dear friend, Dick Higgins, but he had urged me to come to New York that month and I made hasty arrangements to do so. I am so happy I did. It

was a kind of closure for me, although the gap is there for the rest of my life. He was very important to me for my own cultural and intellectual growth, a kind of umbrella to protect me from making wrong moves, from moving too hastily, a dear, understanding friend. He is sorely missed. But there were reunions even with Nam June Paik (but for a minute on the street near Emily's gallery), as well as with a myriad of Fluxus artists who made the week so significant. At the end of the week, I had contracted the flu, a virulent bug, which downed me for several days.

Umbrella was being written over the summer and into the fall, and October proved to be a month of writing and working. At the end of October I heard the worst news about my friend Dick Higgins and it took me a few days to recover, e-mailing everyone on the Net that knew him and all of us sharing fond memories. But November was a trip to **Nacogdoches, Texas** (the oldest city in Texas) where Stephen F. Austin State University hosted the Second Biennial Book Arts Symposium, called **Image & Text II**, where I gave a talk on the Jewish women bookshow I had curated, and exhibitions and workshops and discussions covered everything from letterpress to artist books. I came home for ten days, still writing *Umbrella*, and then on to **Chicago and Champaign, Illinois**, where I visited Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts, the offshoot of Artist Book Works and Paper Press, where papermaking, photography, letterpress, typefonts reside on a whole floor on Wabash Street, making this one of the largest and best equipped workshops in the United States, also giving degrees. Then I visited the Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection in the John M. Flaxman Library of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, curated by Dorothee Boehme, and it was a joy to see how beautifully archived the more than 3,000 bookworks are and the database which allows the students, curators, and scholars to use the collection. We then went to the exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art of their own collection of artist books, a small gallery full of Dieter Rot, Dick Higgins, Felipe Ehrenberg, and so many more allowing the public to handle them, and then the big show curated by Clive Phillpot and Cornelia Lauf called **Author/Artist** in which the design elements of bookworks became a predominant theme in an installation that was more a solution to how to do a traveling show than to showcase the bookworks as works of art.

Then on to Mary Cassatt at the Art Institute, as well as an amazing show on the Art of West Mexico, and then to an amazing photography show at the Museum

of Contemporary Photography called "Photography's Multiple Roles: Art, Document, Mark and Science," with marvelous reminiscences of Eugenia Parry accompanying many of the 170 images by photographers such as Diane Arbus, Robert Frank, Lee Friedlander and many others, all of which belong to the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago. Its catalog is a book with essays by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Denise Miller, Eugenia Parry, Ed Paschke, F. David Peat, Naomi Rosenblum, Franz Schulze and Rod Siemmons, dist. by D.A.P. The rest of the weekend was taken up by an artist book fair at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana and two discussion groups with the participants who came from all over the U.S., Max Schumann from Printed Matter, Buzz Spector, who invited us all there, Tim Porges of Chicago, Joanne Paschall of Nexus Press, Sally Alatalo of Sara Ranchouse Publishing, Katherine Gates of Gates of Heck, Anthony Elms of WhiteWalls, and poet Marc Giordano, artist Jody Zellen, book designer Nan Goggin, computer whiz Joe Squier, and artist Caryl Burtner.

For the first time, the intimacy and scheduling allowed us all to share ideas, bookworks, histories, feelings, and thoughts throughout the weekend. It was good talk, great books, and the attendance at an outstanding bookshow sponsored by the German government, which is called **Artists' Books** (German) covering Fluxus and Happenings through the various presses that have evolved in the 80s and 90s to the present. This the first American showing of an exhibition that has been shown throughout the world from 1994 on with a catalog printed by Hans-jorg Mayer. It is a monumental exhibition curated by René Bloch and Bernd Burock, and deserves a viewing by every institution interested in artist books of any kind and the rental is free! In addition to this monumental show, the Krannert Museum of the University of Illinois has also established an exhibition called, **The Reading Room**, which contains many of the German bookworks exhibited in the vitrines, but this time they can be handled, plus about 150 other bookworks and periodicals available to visitors and students alike throughout the installation of the bookshow. It was bookworks, artist books, and so much more throughout the weekend.

And so if you think there has been a delay in this issue, just remember that I have been traveling, I lost a dear friend, and I have been gathering information to the last day before going to press. I'm staying home until February, so here's to a great New Year, one of hope and health, productivity and reading, friendship and faith in the future.

PEOPLE

Nam June Paik will be awarded the Artist Award for a Distinguished Body of Work at the College Art Association's Annual Conference in Los Angeles in February 1999. The Association recognizes six decades of artistic achievement, reaching from the 1950s through the year 2000, when the Guggenheim Museum will honor him with a major retrospective. He has been cited as the "father of video art", stemming less from his having been the first artist to acquire a video handset and record images than from the intellectual and aesthetic engagement with television and electronic media he has displayed ever since emerging as an experimental musician in Germany in the late 1950s. A tireless exploiter of both the technology and the content of television Paik has deconstructed the entire mass medium according to Zen tenets, rendering it a vast cosmic giggle—neither less sinister nor less aggressive than it really is, but less potent, and more beautiful and human-scaled.

Timothy F. Potts, director of the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, has been named the new director of the Kimbell Art Museum in Forth Worth, Texas after a six-month search. He succeeds Edmund P. Pillsbury who had been the Kimbell's director for 17½ years and had announced his intention to leave in January.

Douglas Gordon, the 32-year-old film and video artist from Glasgow who won the Turner Prize two years ago, is this year's winner of the Hugo Boss Prize, sponsored by the Guggenheim Museum and the men's wear company, to the tune of \$50,000.

Maxwell L. Anderson, director of the Art Gallery of Ontario, has been named the new director of the Whitney Museum of American Art. A native New Yorker, the 42-year-old scholar has been chosen to bring a more scholarly approach to exhibitions and programs.

Eloise O. Spaeth, an art collector and booster of American art in particular, died at the age of 96. She and her husband, Otto, industrialist and vice president of the Whitney Museum of American Art, put together a collection that concentrated on European and American art between the two world wars. She was a basic patron of the Archives of American Art.

Stuart Regen, a prominent L.A. art dealer and son of Barbara Gladstone New York art dealer, died of

lymphoma at the age of 39. He had uncanny taste and brought cutting edge artists to Los Angeles, such as Matthew Barney.

Wallace "Wally" E. Dawes, purveyor, historian and exhibitor of fine papers, died of Lou Gehrig's disease in September at the age of 71. Although he was known in Los Angeles as the owner and operator of the Paper Mill and later the Paper Source, he was renowned throughout the U.S. as a self-made expert in making, preserving, and exhibiting papers of all kinds, especially for artists such as David Hockney and Ed Ruscha, among others.

Minoru Niizuma, a sculptor and educator who taught at the Brooklyn Museum School and Columbia University, died in September at the age of 67. Working predominantly in stone, especially marble, his designs ranged from the geometric to the organic.

Kurt Forster has been named successor to **Phyllis Lambert**, founder and director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, effective 1 March 1999. Forster was the founding director of the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities (now called the Research Institute).

Robert Rauschenberg, 72, has a new series of photo collage prints at Gemini G.E.L., a print publisher and artists' workshop in West Hollywood, California. In addition, he is collaborating on a new cathedral in Foggia, Italy with architect **Renzo Piano**. This is his first ecumenical commission in more than 50 years.

Robert A.M. Stern, who has designed notable buildings for Berlin, Battery Park City and the Walt Disney Company, has been named the new Dean of the Yale School of Architecture, replacing Fred Koetter. He is also an author, a teacher, a preservationist and a member of the Walt Disney Board of Directors.

Helen Soreff, 72, a painter of Minimalist abstractions, died in Manhattan in September. She exhibited at various galleries including the Phoenix Gallery and subsequently the Bertha Urdang Gallery and Condeso-Lawler Gallery. She was a professor at the Parsons School of Design. She has left her husband, Stephen Soreff and two sons.

Bruno Munari, 90, an architect, artist and leading member of Italy's Futurist movement, truly a Renaissance man, died on 29 September in Milan, Italy. Munari's paintings, sculptures and mobiles are

on display at galleries and museums throughout Europe. They include "Macchine Inutili" (Useless Works) and an album of 27 plates known as "Cantatoria Campari" [Campari Street Singer]. In 1948, he founded the Movimento Arte Concreta, known as the Mac artistic movement. He is also known for countless artist books for adults and children.

Philip Grushkin, a book designer whose work made him the standard-bearer throughout the publishing world, died on 25 September in New Jersey at the age of 77 of heart failure. Over 50 years, Grushkin designed hundreds of books for publishers including Knopf, Random House, Abbeville and Harry N. Abrams, where he worked as art director during the 1960s when the company came to prominence as the leading art book publisher. His life was books, accumulating 10,000 books in his library. He also became a teacher at Cooper Union, then New York University, University of Virginia and Radcliffe College. He did everything in hand-lettering, but in the 1990s, he discovered that no publisher would accept a finished book design except on a computer disk. So in six months he taught himself how to design full books on a computer. If any of you wonder who he was, he designed *History of Art* by H. W. Janson, a *History of Far Eastern Art* by Sherman Lee and *Atlas of Human Anatomy* by Frank H Netter.

Julian Allen, famed for his noir comic strip "Wild Palms" which he did with Bruce Wagner, and illustration of realistic visual essays, died in Baltimore at the age of 55. He also was commissioned in 1994 by the U.S. Postal Service to create a series of stamps featuring blues singers. He was chairman of the illustration Department of the Maryland Institute, College of Art in Baltimore since 1996.

Anne Philbin, executive director of the Drawing Center in SoHo for the past 9 years, has been named director of the UCLA at the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center in Los Angeles, replacing Henry T. Hopkins, who will step down at the end of the year and resume teaching in the university's Department of Art.

Wouter F. Germans, a partner in Hague Art Deliveries, which developed 420 West Broadway, one of the primary gallery buildings during the heyday of the SoHo art scene in New York City, died in August at the age of 60.

Elaine Benson, whose gallery in Bridgehampton, NY was a fixture on the East End summer art scene for more than 3 decades, died in September at the age of 74.

Lila Katzen, a sculptor whose abstract works have been installed from New York City to the U.S. Consulate in Hamburg, Germany, died in September at the age of 72. Her work is in the permanent collections of museums across the country.

National Arts Medalists are visual artist **Agnes Martin** and architect **Frank Gehry**, among others.

Harald Szeemann will be the director of the upcoming Venice Biennale.

Peter Weibel has been named director of the ZKM/Center for Art & Technology in Karlsruhe, Germany, succeeding founding director Heinrich Klotz.

Okwui Enwezor, a Nigerian critic and independent curator who lives in New York, is the new artistic director of the next Documenta exhibition in Kassel, Germany. *Documenta XI* scheduled to open in June 2002 will have an interdisciplinary approach.

Todd Walker, photographer, printmaker and creator of artists' books for more than 60 years, died in September in Tucson, Arizona 12 days before his 81st birthday. A eulogy to Todd Walker has been written by William S. Johnson in the November/December issue of *Afterimage*.

Harry H. Lunn Jr. died in Paris in August at the age of 65. Lunn opened a photography gallery specializing in original prints in Washington, DC in 1967, later dealing privately and forwarding the cause of Diane Arbus and Robert Mapplethorpe.

Nancy Van Norman Baer, the curator of theater and dance at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, died recently at the age of 55 of cancer. She was known for exhibitions that vividly evoked not only dance history, but also "Theater in Revolution: Russian Avant-Garde Stage Design, 1913-1935" in 1991-92, which traveled to the IBM Gallery in Manhattan, the Armand Hammer Museum in Los Angeles and the McNay in San Antonio, as well as exhibitions on the Swedish Ballet of the 1920s and the Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1909-1929. Her special interest in the Russian avant-garde went beyond the

performing arts, for she saw the interplay between dance and the other arts as well.

Harry Weese, 83, designer of the Metro System in Washington, the renovation of Adler & Sullivan's Auditorium Theater in Chicago, the restoration of the Field Museum in that city as well as the Union Station in Washington, the architect of the Time & Life Building in Chicago, the Metropolitan Corrections Center, the Arena State theater in Washington, DC and so much more, died in November.

Thelma Golden and **Elisabeth Sussman**, top curators at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, resigned in early November. Golden, 10 years on the job, was to have curated the next Biennial, while Sussman had been working on a major exhibition on photographer Diane Arbus, the other on Minimalist artist Eva Hesse. Lots of other jobs will be eliminated at the Whitney—just watch out for the new director Maxwell L. Anderson!

Francisco Sainz, a member of the Abstract Expressionist circle in New York City and East Hampton, NY, died in October at the age of 75. Born in Spain, Paco as he was called, fought in the Spanish Civil War and was briefly imprisoned. He became friendly in New York, where he emigrated, with Willem de Kooning, Lester Johnson and Alfred Leslie. His style of painting centered on figures, showing a relationship to the work of Alex Katz and William Copley. He organized and acted in plays, played the harmonica, recited his poems, officiated at weddings and made an excellent paella, sometimes for as many as 200 people, in a bathtub on the beach.

Gene Moore, a window dresser who created miracles with shoes and had a way with diamonds so that the Fifth Avenue pedestrians did double takes for more than 50 years, died in November at the age of 88, best known for turning Tiffany's five little windows into works of art. Besides his window work, Moore designed costumes and sets for the Paul Taylor dance company as well as creating a rage for tiny white Christmas tree lights with a series of seasonal displays for the plaza of the Seagram Building in New York City.

Helen Posner, former Curator at the MIT List Visual Arts Center and Chief Curator at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, has been named the International Center of Photography's Director of Exhibitions. **Edward Earle** joins ICP as the new ICP

Curator of Digital Media, doing exhibits and educational programs, as well as inviting artists to do web-based art projects for the ICP website.

Ruby, an elephant celebrated at the Phoenix Zoo for her pachyderm paintings, had to be put to death during a risky surgery in November to remove a dead, 200-pound fetus. Veterinarians found that Ruby's uterine

wall had ruptured during pregnancy and caused a deadly infection. Ruby became a media star a decade ago when her keepers noticed she liked to hold a stick in her trunk and doodle in the sand. They gave her a paintbrush, and her abstract canvas creations raised about \$500,000 for the zoo. Komar & Melamid have been studying animals who paint, and visited and observed Ruby this past year.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
May it be full of good books & good reading

