

Codex Event 8

Currently on exhibition at Manly Library until 31st August 2012

An Australian and British collaboration of pulp-printing, installation and artists' books with Sarah Bodman, Paul Laidler, Tim Mosely, Monica Oppen and Tom Sowden 2011-2012.

We started our initial collaboration (in February 2011) with an email invitation from Tim Mosely in Australia, founder and organiser of all the Codex Events to date. Tim invites artists to join him and collaborate as a group on a specific theme for each Codex Event he hosts; the one thing that ties all Tim's Codex Events together is the method of production – pulp printing, in which Tim is a specialist with many years of experience in papermaking and printing with paper pulp.

Our initial brief was to look at smooth and striated space in relation to the urban jungle. The striated was to be the instructional signs we assimilate and obey each day as we pass through any city, "don't walk, walk, do not enter, exit, stay behind the line, go back" etc. The smooth was to remove the control, and think of space in the way that the Inuit see their surroundings on an even, unbroken white horizon of snow, or the way that nomads travel without constraint in the desert landscape. For Codex Event 8, to smooth was to bring the jungle into the urban.

Tim originally started the Codex Events as a means to promote artists' books in Australia

Tim had saved the last of the black pulp for more papermaking. Tim sifted through the debris from the scraped off walls and carefully added it to the pulp. We managed to get 20 sheets of paper made from the mixture, which we then pressed again.

The sheets dried overnight and were peeled off and shared out, 4 sheets per artist to make into our individual books. The only stipulation was that each book should be A5 in size when finished, but we could do whatever we liked to the sheets of paper. The resulting five artists' books produced for Codex Event 8: An Australian / British collaboration of pulp-printing are as follows:

Sarah Bodman: ***Do Not Enter***

As our theme was the urban jungle, moving between smooth and striated space as defined by Deleuze and Guattari, the book started with found text from Brisbane's environs. Re-using and re-reading words from the installation, and adding some noted in Bristol, the book is a screenprinted text piece of dystopian malfunction in a 21st Century environment of controlled movements, surveillance and observation. Screen print on paper, hand sewn and bound in black bookcloth, with tooled title by Rachel James at Bristol Bound Bookbinding. Taped with 'caution - attention' yellow tape. March 2012.

Paul Laidler: ***Record, 2012***

The Codex 8 Event that took place at the POP Gallery Melbourne Australia in October 2011 was the inspiration for *Record, 2012*. In this instance the bookwork refers to the artist's response to the conventions of the gallery space and the audience's expectations when viewing artwork in this context. The resulting images in the book present the sequential making process that took place during the event - essentially revealing the gradual concealment of black paper pulp within the walls of the gallery space. Scanned paper, POD printed via blurb.com March 2012.

Tim Mosely: ***The Burden of Privilege and Privileging Burden***

It's difficult to describe having a "white" exterior and a "brown" interior. The derogatory terms coconut, banana, apple, Oreo all describe a body of ethnic origin but being ostracised for having a "white" interior. I'm accepted as white, I look white, I'm abused for looking white, I'm included for looking white, I'm passed over for looking white, I'm not considered a threat because I look white, I'm despised for looking white, I'm privileged for looking white. Don't get me wrong I'm not complaining. It's just that I'm a pale brown and dark red on the inside, and all my childhood friends are brown on the outside - so they get treated differently. Screenprint on painted hand-made paper, Lettraset text, hand bound with white paint covers, March 2012.

Monica Oppen: ***A speck of dust***

We place a lot of importance on the achievements of human endeavour, and there is no doubt that many of these inventions and undertakings etc. are truly brilliant. But when we step back, often only when we are forced to step back; we grasp that our place in the events of the planet are perhaps very small and in the long run insignificant. Life generates itself around us with such ease that we take it for granted. We are completely dependent on this abundance of life and to be humbled by this is important. B/W photos stitched onto handmade paper, laser printed images on tracing paper hand painting onto muslin with hand printed text. Black paper cover. Hand stitched. March 2012.

Tom Sowden: ***Smooth My (striated) Urban Bitch***

In Bristol you don't stroke a dog, you smooth it. You also slide down sliders and have lush ideawls, but that's for another book. When thinking about smooth and striated in the urban environment I was constantly drawn to the vicious (striated) urban dog and the idea of 'smoothing' one. Unfortunately with a fear of dogs there would be no chance of that happening in real life, so their appearance in this book is only noted by their absence.

Laser cut and laser etched tunnel book, hand sewn and bound in black suedette, with blind embossed title by Rachel James at Bristol Bound Bookbinding. March 2012.

The books had their first UK outing at UWE, Bristol in March 2012, as part of a show of new work from CFPR, and are now on their way back to Australia for a tour of venues commencing May 2012, where we hope they will stimulate more discussion of the urban jungle.

