

Reading vs. Scanning: Notes on Re:Print
Duncan Ganley

Author:
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Abstract:
Published in 2018, 'Re:Print' is an experimental artists' book, edited by Véronique Chance and Duncan Ganley, that brings together images and text by twenty contributors whose work addresses the role and language of the reproducible image. This article discusses the challenges of translating artworks and text originally presented in the context of an exhibition and symposium, into a work of print – an artists' book. The range of contributors emphasizes the diverse scope of forms, processes and ideas in the expanded field of Printmaking. Addressing a variety of approaches to integrating and repurposing this visual and textual material for the printed page, the article outlines the theoretical underpinning of the creation of 'Re:Print' and the editorial and design decisions taken to create a hybridized form that is both document and artwork and aims to draw out new agencies of the 'book' in a digital world.

Affiliation:
Cambridge School of Art / Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK.

Contact:
duncan.ganley@aru.ac.uk

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Reading vs. Scanning: Notes on Re:Print

Duncan Ganley

1. Introduction: translating 'RE:PRINT' the exhibition to Re:Print the book

Re:Print is an experimental artists' book, edited by Véronique Chance and Duncan Ganley, published in 2018 by Marmalade Publishers of Visual Theory. The book brings together images and text by twenty contributors whose interdisciplinary art practices question the role and language of the reproducible image in a digital era. Specifically, their work, goes beyond, yet speaks to, the traditional forms of print, while engaging with a broad spectrum of media, forms and technologies. The resulting dialogues inherent in the work of the contributors is reflected in the form of the book – where image, text, page and print are reconsidered, reordered and readdressed. In this article I discuss the process of re-presenting, or perhaps a better word would be 'translating' *Re:Print* from its roots as an academic visual arts exhibition and symposium through to its final physical form as a book - itself a reproduced, and reproducible, object.¹ The article shares some of the insights that emerged from this process about the changing agencies of different media in an era of re-mediation.

1.1 RE:PRINT/RE:Present: the originating event

The origins of the *Re:Print* book lie in an exhibition and symposium titled 'RE:PRINT/RE:Present' that took place in 2015 at Cambridge School of Art / Anglia Ruskin University (Fig.2), curated by Véronique Chance and Mark Graver, that reflected on the current status of Printmaking in a digital era. Areas of focus were cross-platform and intermedial approaches to Printmaking and the impact of digital reproduction and reproducibility across wider contemporary art practices.

¹ Although *Re:Print* exists as both a physical book and an e-book, it remains a fixed entity, unlike other forms of online publication that continuously evolve via ongoing comment.

1.2 Beyond Benjamin

The work presented in the exhibition and symposium proposed to take Walter Benjamin's landmark 1936 essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' as a point of departure, reconsidering the impact of twenty first Century technology on contemporary art.

"...the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility. From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints: to ask for the 'authentic' print makes no sense. But the instant the criterion of authenticity cease to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice – politics."

(Benjamin 1936)

There was an implicit understanding that conditions have changed since the scenario analysed by Benjamin, and this was intended as a prompt to explore - in this case, specifically, the question of what now constitutes a 'print', and how we might define printmaking as a practice. Digital technologies potentially make the whole idea of production and reproduction, conceived in terms of original and print (a print *of*), redundant. Artists find themselves working with multiple iterations of a document or image, often explicitly as an aspect of the work itself. Considering the seemingly endless and multifaceted reproducible permutations that digital technology allows, practitioners reflected on the following questions:

- Technological developments in print media, moving image, sound and performance, have often led to cross-platform dialogue: but how are these relationships re-presented, or re-presentable, when immersed in today's hyper-mediated status of image, sound, and file?
- When almost anyone is capable of uploading, downloading, creating, modifying, copying, sharing and deleting files of every and any digitally convertible medium, how does the current frenzy of data use and re-use challenge our understanding and expectations of image and media reproduction?

- What kind of spaces or places are constructed, performed or revealed in the process?
- What is the impact of the digital on shared conventional vocabularies and notions across different media such as:
 - print;
 - screen;
 - collage;
 - series or sequence;
 - the original;
 - the unique;
 - the multiple;
 - the edition;
 - and finally, the notion of art and of an artifact itself?

The shared vocabulary of reproductive media, the re-purposing of images and technology, and cross-media approaches in both point to new avenues of exploration in the medium of print and the practice of Printmaking. But the debates and ideas interrogated by the contributors to the 'RE:PRINT/RE:Present' exhibition and symposium were less about the media on a technical level than about the ideas these media performed: concepts of memory, time, document and fiction. These became more salient and more resonant because of and through the interrogation of medium. They became, in effect, a language of the reproducible image, or as Clare Foster puts it, a syntax of re-production (Foster 2021).

I noticed at the time that the exhibition itself didn't *look* like an exhibition about printmaking. Then I asked myself what that observation meant. What should an exhibition about printmaking *look* like, anyway? The use of media and developments in technology has already allowed the medium and practice of printmaking to expand well beyond its traditional boundaries, and to engage with potentially new audiences and practices. It is this change that the contributors to Re:Print are primarily interrogating in their work, reflecting on the historical practice of print via the digital image, audio, video, software and the screen. Far from being the 'poor cousin' of painting or the 'dowdy distant relative' of photography - both common pre-conceptions about the print

medium - printmaking emerges as the crux of the debate about the hybridity of contemporary art practices: simultaneously physical and digital, reproducible and virtual.

2. The artists' works

The dual forum of symposium and exhibition created an opportunity for a diverse range of practitioners to present their work. The selection of contributors for both exhibition and book aimed to highlight this wide scope of form, process and ideas. For example, the multifaceted and diverse approaches to printmaking are the focus of artist **Susana Gómez Larrañaga's** work 'Flying Land' (Fig.3), a large scale screen-based image of a floating, holographic image spinning above a landscape. Based on the repetition and simulation of data, this digital 'self' portrait' – only visible at night – floats in an eerie dystopian landscape, reflecting on the possibility that our future world may only be inhabited by the digital ghosts of ourselves. Part of a wider project that encompasses collage, digital prints and events and interventions, the presentation of Flying Land is itself a document of an actual event, of a projection/intervention at a former RAF site – so a ghost of a shadow.

Jo Love's work addresses themes of temporality, perception and mortality in the large print / drawing work 'Lumograph Mars I'. This is a digitally printed image that has been relentlessly and obsessively covered in a skin of graphite pencil, which almost completely blocks the reading of the landscape image beneath. Small pockets reveal the underlying highly saturated and coloured inkjet surface. These exposed spots punctuate the reading of the graphite surface, creating a complex optically shifting image - more fractured, open and complex than a coherent photographic or printed image can achieve on its own. In the accompanying video work, 'Unbekannt Horizonte II', a sense of landscape is constructed which slowly shifts out of view becoming obscured by optical noise, gradually dissolving into its own pixelated screen. Here, nothing within the image frame is static, highlighting the *temporal* complexity of seeing.

Rob Smith's work similarly explores the screen as a physical site. 'Elsewhere, Mars' (Fig.4) proposes the notion of Mars as the ultimate non-site; a place that only exists through its mediation. The work is an ongoing series that re-presents images from the surface of Mars taken by NASA's Curiosity Rover. These are re-mediated by placing

photographic paper directly onto the screen of the artist's computer. The result is a set of photographic imprints that take the light from the screen to fix these otherwise entirely digital images physically onto paper. The photographic paper's contact with the screen is the point at which light is captured and fixed. Smith's work comments on how much of our relationship to site and location, even on our planet, is now mediated through screens: Sat-nav systems, Google Earth etc. Geo-tagging proliferating images that attach themselves to sites means that we can easily visit almost anywhere without leaving our chairs. This multiplication of images extends to Land Artist Robert Smithson's concepts of 'Site' and 'Non-Site' to challenge our perceptions of site and location (Smithson 1968). Just as Marshall McLuhan coined the term 'Global Village' in his prediction of the development of digital communication (McLuhan 1964), it seems that in the twenty first century, the digital has made everywhere local – even Mars.

Also concerned with the nature of the mediated image is my (**Duncan Ganley's**) 'Artefacts from an Imagined Documentary (proposed)' that draws out ongoing narratives in the artist's practice to (re)imagine a myth-based history that is yet to be told. Signifying both evidence and its fabrication, the work aims to explore how our desire for a good story distorts and fragments our ability to decode the truth and purpose of the mediated image. Following my earlier film work 'midnight, mid-Atlantic...' - in which a researcher investigates an abandoned film project in Iceland – this body of work is partly framed by the work of the 19th Century photographer and moving image pioneer Eadweard Muybridge. Collectively, it acts as a proposal for a longer-term project that explores the collision of histories of the factual Muybridge, the fictional film director Martin MacAnally and the imagined researcher himself. Using a combination of media, including photography, photo litho prints, video and 3D-printing, these works act as proposed fragments of this impending narrative clash, and allude to a 'history' already recorded and documented, while at the same time point to a mutable state, and to a future history still to be written. This tension creates a space that reveals both mediated image and human experience to be unstable territory, where fact and fiction are endlessly interchangeable, and narratives airbrushed, re-written and reinvented.

Mark Graver's 'Time Slides' (Fig.5) also reflects on human experience, and the tensions between fact and fiction to explore how memory reconstructs and manipulates the experience of events. Re-discovered 35mm photographic family slides taken during the

artist's childhood have been scanned and digitally re-printed onto acetate, then re-presented through a sequence of overlaid images, reconstructing the narratives of family events. On finding these photographic slides the artist was struck by his lack of memory of the events they depicted, although his visible presence in the analogue image told him he was there.

“When Dad died my brother and I found a drawer full of 35mm slides dating from the early 1960's to the early 1980's, family snaps, holidays abroad and our time in Australia as Ten Pound Poms. Although I was there when some of these photographs were taken, and I can see images of myself presented in them, I really don't remember being there” (Graver 2015)

Correspondingly, **Steve Lovett's** screen-printed series 'Some People Who May (Not) be Here' explores the role of the image as history / memory / archive. The images are drawn from collections of photographs and printed ephemera that the artist has been amassing for over 30 years. These anonymously produced and abandoned images record un-knowable lives. The image's creation using largely redundant chemical and printing processes highlight Lovett's interest in pre-digital era 'vernacular' imagery. This strategy examines the selective focus of the archive and reconsiders the nature of printed memory in the digital age.

The archive and recording of an event is re-presented in a contrasting way in **Véronique Chance's** work, 'The M25 in 4,000 Images'. Reconfigured from her earlier 'The Great Orbital Ultra Run', a solitary run that took place over nine consecutive days around the inside of the M25 London Orbital motorway, the journey was originally mapped through a continuous stream of images that were relayed live from a mobile phone, along with GPS coordinates to a web interface and exhibited as a projected moving image artwork. An indication of the fallibility and precariousness of the human body, the image and technology, the work consisted of some 4,000 images that after the event are 'replayed' from a digital archive. This reworked 'M25 in 4,000 images' is a unique digitally-printed artwork of these images from the originally-streamed run, hand-cut and folded to form an unwieldy concertina of connected images. Part bookwork, part sculpture, but neither one nor the other, the work hovers between these two media, and was displayed precariously balanced around the contours of the Ruskin Gallery balcony. Each constitutive image was only visible as a small glimpse of the

landscape it recorded, in contrast to the corresponding screen-based work, in which an animated sequence played through each image on a small screen, with sound a reminder of the original activity.

Monique Jansen explored the relationship between the hand-made and the digital in a series of scanned drawings, 'A Drawing, which makes itself', using scanning and printing as a form of mechanical drawing. Interested in the generative and improvisational nature of drawing, and refuting the assumption that mediated print processes are less artistically direct, Jansen adopts print strategies into drawing to shake the assumption that hand-held is the imperative for drawing. Jansen's 'desktop depot' uses deliberately quotidian, mundane technology: a cheap Epson desktop scanner/printer, a photocopier, fax machine, and carbon paper. She works with scraps of drawings, lines marked on butter paper, folded and unfolded, scanned and re-folded in order to find form. The way she draws with the scanner and printer is quick, responsive and very hands-on: reasserting the haptic and reintegrating it with the digital, thus achieving a direct physical contact with the digital. The series selected for inclusion in 'RE:PRINT/RE:Present' focused on moiré and interference patterns that are constructed through the accumulation, overlapping and folding of these scanned and printed templates. The print processes used all employ direct scanning and printing methods, making facsimiles of the found/drawn material, as opposed to being photographic reproductions.

The amplification of the cracks in material is the starting point for **Emily Godden's** project 'Handle with Care', which uses the painting collection at Thomas Gainsborough's House, Sudbury as source data to be processed, re-contextualized and listened to through what she calls *sound prints*. Using a graphics tablet, Godden made line drawings of the craquelure patterns that form over time on an oil painting's surface. Specifically, the drawings focus on the parts of the paintings that depict hands. These digital drawings are then exported as bitmap prints to be imported into bespoke software. Through a process of plotting the pixels from the bitmap files, the software uses a means of pixel feedback to construct grids from the pixels to plot out waveforms, which are then outputted as sound files. This processing of data within the project allows a mediation to occur through data use and re-use which challenges typical expectations of image and media reproduction. Godden has applied a haptic, material approach to the textures felt in the sound as being representative of the spaces it was extracted from.

The hand is also a focus for one of the exhibited works by **Jo Stockham**. An image from a 1941 advert in *Crown Colonies* magazine which lauded the magical properties of plastic, was scanned as a starting point for the screen-print 'Every which way ('speak modernity)'. The image seems to capture the slippery nature of circulating capital and the invisibility of the processes of contemporary manufacturing. In another work, Stockham reclaimed her own damaged print to create 'Never Home (almost home reclaimed)', a scanned, digitally enlarged and printed analogue photograph that had its damage touched-in by hand, with a fine paintbrush, the cracks in its material surface becoming amplified as a result. Her work explores how print and scanning can bind together images from different times, enacting a kind of time travel with the ways in which the technologies we use can capture discarded or outmoded images and recirculate them.

3. 'The book' as artistic practice

In 2015, rather than the exhibition and symposium being an end point, it felt that the conversation was just beginning. So Véronique Chance and I began to consider ways that the ideas raised during the event could be taken forward. It seemed logical that some kind of record of the events be created, but as editors, we came to the conclusion that creating a catalogue of the content of the exhibition and symposium in the traditional sense would be counter-productive. The issues and debates that arose through the work of the contributors were pointing towards new ways of thinking in regard to printmaking, to lens-based and other reproducible images, their forms, and dissemination. We began to consider how we could embed the issues the contributors were discussing in their work into the form and structure of a new output. What does one call a reproducible object that contains images and text *about* the reproducible? What kind of space should it inhabit? Physical or virtual?

The form envisaged was that of the artists' book – or, more specifically, an *edited* artists' book. The artists' book is an art form with roots going back to the illuminated manuscripts of the middle ages. From the work of William Blake and William Morris in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, to the book works of artists such as Ed Ruscha and Dieter Roth in the twentieth century, the reproducible media of printmaking has been key in the development – and dissemination - of the artists' book. Artists' books are

not simply books with reproductions of an artist's work, but artworks in themselves, that use the structure of the book form – portability, replicability, sequence and seriality, the relationship of text with visuality – to push creative boundaries and find new audiences. The form of the *edited* book – traditionally, a compendium of texts in one volume – also has long been associated with the dissemination of knowledge in the academic field. Could we speak somehow to both in the form of Re:Print? We wanted to explore the territory between what could be considered an art object and a document: a hybrid that could articulate issues around the idea of the reproducible *in the form of* (a) print.

As we state in the introduction to the book, 'Printmaking's origins as a medium of communication and the dissemination of information, through historical developments in type and printed book publishing and distribution, place it at the forefront of the rise of modern and contemporary mass media production. As observed by Marshall McLuhan: "Printing, a *ditto device*, confirmed and extended the new visual stress. It provided the first uniformly repeatable "commodity", the first assembly line – mass production. It created the portable book"' (Chance and Ganley 2018).

With our intentions established, we approached a small publisher of Artists' books, Gordon Shrigley at Marmalade Publishers of Visual Theory, to develop this project, together with designer, Christian Küsters of CHK Design. But the question remained as to how would we translate the work of twenty contributors – work in a broad array of image media and text – into a coherent whole, whilst addressing the issues and questions core to the Re:Print project in the hybridized form we envisaged. The process unfolded in a way not unlike the creation of the artworks within the pages of Re:Print – or as the work that we editors make as artists ourselves. For myself, as an artist who works in the medium of photography and the moving image, the notion of ordering, re-ordering, splicing and re-contextualizing material, with points of re-evaluation and re-appraisal, was familiar. But having another person, the designer, doing the hands-on design work and who would inevitably, and understandably, have their own creative vision, as well as the voice of the publisher, was new territory. How could the individual ideas that four people have in their heads about this project and its potentials be tackled, let alone resolved? This process, conducted over the course of about a year, was discursive, detailed, occasionally robust and perhaps surprisingly, creative. Rather than concerns over competing individual visions of the book, and whether these would be

diluted in some way, it was the negotiated approach to overall design that shaped our collective thought and facilitated the embedding of the contributors ideas in Re:Print into the form of the book itself.

3.1 The role of text

Some of the contributors had given papers at the symposium, others had shown artwork in the exhibition, and some had done both. We wanted to reflect the cross-fertilization between image and text in the book to question the established traditional role of the text being there to *'explain'* the image and/or the image being there to *'illustrate'* the text. We wanted the two to be read - or perhaps a better word would be *'scanned'* - as equal, and equally discursive.

Jo Stockham's keynote text from the symposium was developed into the essay 'Image Capture: an exercise in self-thinging' for Re:Print, where the artist reflects on her experience of being self-scanned. The fragmentary and glitched results from this experience become points of departure to a wide-ranging discussion on the body and digital technology, as well as selfie culture and the role of the hand of the artist in the digital age. The accompanying images of screengrabs of the resulting scans are not, as one might expect, the shiny, high definition end results but the rather workaday fragments of process that speak to the philosophical questions posed in the text (Fig.7). Kelcy Davenport's text 'Feeling the benefits: a report' has no images, but for a single orange circle with the single word 'wanting' at it's centre. The artist used words identified in the Beveridge report from 1942 – the report that laid the foundations for the modern welfare state in Britain – as a way to re-address negative attitudes towards welfare claimants by the current UK government (2010-2019). In a direct use of technology as an expanded form of print, these graphic statements were circulated through the internet and social media to be used as banners and signs at public protests by anyone. Davenport's work translates art practice into another realm, or as Walter Benjamin states, "another practice – politics" (Benjamin 1936). A touchstone for us in the development of Re:Print was the 1967 book 'The Medium is the Massage' by media theorist Marshall McLuhan and graphic designer Quentin Fiore. The book juxtaposes text (reading) and image (scanning) on its pages to explore McLuhan's thesis on the effect of mainstream media on our senses and the implications for society. The

fragmented and non-linear scheme of the book treats all its elements, whether visual or textual, as both an ongoing interplay with each other, but also with the reader's interaction with the book itself – the double page with images of truncated thumbs on opposing pages, for example. Some pages have text, some none. The speed we would normally associate with 'reading' is disrupted – sometimes sped up, sometimes slowed down, interrupted by images, with images also interrupted by text. The overall experience of the book from the perspective of our twenty first century eyes is strange yet familiar, accustomed as we are to this mixing in the form of the web page or interactive screen. McLuhan's prescience, in this as in other aspects of his work, was disconcerting.

For Re:Print, the overprinting of text on images – and vice versa – was experimented with in a variety of iterations during the book's development phase. The most striking of these experiments survives on pages six and seven of Re:Print (Fig.8), where all the text of the entire introduction is overprinted multiple times to create an *unreadable* image. This idea of a kind of 'palimpsest' – originally a term for the re-use of vellum in the medieval period where manuscripts were erased and new text written on top, with traces of prior writing remaining embedded - is also reflected at other points in the book, where, due to the light weight of the paper chosen, traces of text bleed through the page onto the image – or space - on the next. Where does text end and image begin? When does the text engage with and transcend its own status as image?

3.2 Reproducibility

Whether text, image or even the page itself, the visual language of the reproduced - the mis-print, the off-print, the crease, the crop and the re-print - echoes throughout the book. Images are deliberately misaligned, degraded, rotated and faded - or in some spreads, faded to the point of almost not being there at all.

The introduction, exploring the values entangled with the reproducible image, references artist and writer Hito Steyerl's collection of essays, 'The Wretched of the Screen'. Key is her essay 'In Defense of the Poor Image', in which she traces the 'economy of poor images', the ways in which the contemporary image system of image production establishes a hierarchy of images based on 'promises of quality' and its

monopolization. Although most of examples in this essay are related to cinema and film, we saw that it was possible to link Steyerl's ideas to the production and dissemination of the image in contemporary photography and print practices too: 'Within these contexts, the seductive and 'hyper-visible' nature of high resolution images and the ways in which these are valorized economically, stand out from low resolution images, which confirm amateur production and the possible failure of technology. As Steyerl writes: "...a high quality image looks more brilliant and impressive, more mimetic and magic, more scary and seductive than a poor one....The rich image established its own set of hierarchies, with new technologies offering more and more possibilities to creatively downgrade it." Conversely, the poor image is: "...a copy in motion, its quality is bad, its resolution substandard, as it accelerates, it deteriorates. It is a ghost of an image, a preview, a thumbnail, an errant idea, an itinerant image, distributed for free, squeezed through slow digital connections, compressed, reproduced, ripped, remixed, as well as copied, pasted into other channels of distribution...". (Chance & Ganley 2018)

The visual scheme of Re:Print resonates with these concerns, with the material supplied by the contributors scanned, digitized and manipulated, the media becoming further media, attention directed to the agencies and ubiquity of (re)mediatisation. Steyerl's idea of the poor image can be usefully read, to some extent, as one move towards a re-appraisal of Benjamin's argument.

Contemporary art theorists such as Cristina Baldacci have also sought to characterize the reworking of approaches to visual reproduction in a digital age: for Baldacci, circulation and reenactment are also important metaphors (Baldacci 2020). These ways of seeing are a feature of several of the works in Re:Print, for example in the iteration of (and in) Véronique Chance's two M25 pieces, and Emily Godden's 'sonification' of Gainsborough's paintings. What these new approaches have in common is a decentering of the idea of the, or an, original: and self-conscious reference to the act of reproduction itself to express that point.

3.3 The visibility of 'the page'

The experience of looking through the pages of Re:Print is a little like sorting through a stack of prints, or a folder of images on a screen. The designer had the idea of re-

photographing the contributors' images and text and presenting *these* as the reproductions in the book. Originally, the intention was for all pages – including text pages - to be re-photographed in this way. Many of the images in Re:Print are presented in this re-photographed form. The result is images that are cropped, de-focused, almost slipping off the page or indeed seemingly on the cusp of accidentally finding themselves on a page that was not intended for them, much like Steyerl's 'itinerant images'. This process of visual translation of the artworks in Re:Print allowed for a critical re-appraisal of the work itself through its reproduction. Monique Jansen's 'A drawing, which makes itself', a series of scanned drawings, seem to return to their original delicate, tactile state, as if we are handling the works themselves as we turn the pages (Fig.9).

Nick Devison's 'Still: Return (Atlas)' and 'Still: Return (Mercury)' (Fig.10), depicting image sequences of rocket launches, is re-presented as if evidence under analysis in a post-disaster enquiry. Do the multiple reproductions and enlargements of the images reveal clues as to the reasons behind the rocket's apparent destruction or does it just reveal the half-tone screen of which the image is composed? Meg Rahaim's series 'God's Eyes', appropriated from image phenomena in Google Streetview, is not re-presented but de-presented on the pages of Re:Print, to the point of pixel-level abstraction (Fig.11).

The 'errant typo', whether intended or not, can itself be revealing. The title of Marshall McLuhan's book 'The Medium is the Message', as cited earlier, is itself the result of a reputed typographical error². The title of the book was intended to be 'The Medium is the *Message*' – as was the title of a chapter in McLuhan's seminal book 'Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man', published three years earlier in 1964. However, on receiving the proofs for the new publication that included the typo, McLuhan thought the typesetter's mistake to be pertinent and decided to keep it. Whether this is an accurate account, or not, of one aspect of the book's genesis, it nonetheless underlines McLuhan's assertion that in the end 'all media work us over completely' (McLuhan 1967).

² This is cited by Dr. Eric McLuhan, on the website of the Estate of Corinne & Marshall McLuhan

3.4 Order as hierarchy

Similar to Steyerl's hierarchy of rich and poor images, the inevitable hierarchy of contributions in an edited book, in the traditional sense, was a point of discussion during its creation. As the book was approaching a final form, at one meeting we were discussing the size, placement, font, treatment etc. of the names of each contributor at the beginning of each section on their work. Was the typeface too large or too significant? We were considering various options when the suggestion was made from our publisher, rather radically, that maybe we should not have any names at all. If we wanted to reveal connections, common codes and concerns, then why put all the contributors in 'silos'? Are we simply conforming to the archetype of the academic book? It seemed radical – would it work? How would the contributors feel? Would the book be too opaque - un-navigable? With some critical distance, I wonder now what we were afraid of. True, we kept a contents page so individual contributors work could be located and identified - a sop to the academy perhaps - but the decision to excise the names from the individual sections of the book reinforced the objective to explore new territory as to how a hybrid book such as *Re:Print* could function visually and textually, as well as speaking to the cross-disciplinary and multifaceted network of media and approaches debated within its pages. The points and departures touched on by the contributors, as we say in the book, are embodied, explored and questioned by the book's form and structure. Hierarchies of order and sequence are embedded yet disrupted. Text and image are delineated yet merged. 'What is documentation and what is artwork? Issues of scale, time and media are re-contextualized, re-evaluated and sometimes ignored, creating new dialogues and relationships.' (Chance and Ganley, 2018).

In fact there is an analogy to be made here, perhaps, between the book and digital technologies themselves. Just as digital networks and processes use the building blocks of data-sets to re-interpret and re-analyze, in order to reveal, predict and re-appraise, the form of the *edited* artists' book enables content to be unpacked in a collaborative arena and allow the possible capabilities of the ideas expressed in the contributions to network and play out in a self-reflexive form.

4. Conclusion: reconsidering points of origin

Our approach to the book as an artwork was perhaps best articulated by the idea of post-production, a term originally used in relation to the editing process in film-production, but which is increasingly used today to define contemporary approaches to image-production, reuse and re-production. As we put it in the introduction: 'If developments in digital technology have completely removed the necessity for an indexical link to an 'original' image, what does it mean to 'construct' an image without a point of origin? If the production of an image or film takes place predominantly within a process of editing or post-production, suggests Steyerl, 'production transforms into an aftereffect'. In this sense, the prefix 'post' in the term 'post-production' (i.e. what used to happen *after* the initial production or shooting of a photograph or film) also becomes redundant. Steyerl goes further to point out the temporal shift 'inherent in the term "post-production,"' with the prefix 'post' – denoting an historical state in the past - to be replaced with the term 're', which 'points to repetition or response' as a more appropriate prefix for our times. She continues: "We are not *after* production. Rather we are in a state in which production is endlessly recycled, repeated, copied and multiplied, but also potentially displaced, humbled and renewed. Production is not only transformed but fundamentally displaced to locations that used to form its outside: to mobile devices, scattered screens, sweatshops and catwalks, nurseries, virtual reality, offshore production lines. It is endlessly edited and recombined" (Chance and Ganley 2018). This is why there is a need to go beyond - often unconscious assumption - that the relationship between text and image is one of illustration, a kind of enhancement to description and/or explanation. The making of the Re:Print book reminded us of the importance of instead seeing text and image working in dialogue with each other. To some extent the term 'artists' book' aims to do this work. It was within this context that we approached the 're' of re:print: and, too, the writing of this journal article, yet another instance of 're'. In so doing it points to the relevance of its chosen category as an Open Forum article, the appellation a small step towards self-reflection about the power of contexts - of which medium is one - to variously frame, reframe and authorize; and the invitation, in this case, to open discussion.

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