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Eco Ephemeral: Works By Thomas Ferrella & Artists' Books from Special Collections, UW-Milwaukee Libraries

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ECO EPHEMERAL
WORKS BY THOMAS FERRELLA & ARTISTS' BOOKS
FROM SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UW-MILWAUKEE LIBRARIES

by

Pamela Caserta Hugdahl

A Thesis Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts
in Art History

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

December 2016

ABSTRACT

ECO EPHEMERAL WORKS BY THOMAS FERRELLA & ARTISTS' BOOKS FROM SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UW-MILWAUKEE LIBRARIES

by

Pamela Caserta Hugdahl

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016
Under the Supervision of Professor Jennifer Johung

This thesis essay and accompanying exhibition approach environmental concerns through an art historical perspective by considering works of art by Thomas Ferrella, M.D. and artists' books from Special Collections at UW-Milwaukee Libraries. The exhibition evades conventional boundaries of galleries in order to present artists' books in their intended manner and to display Ferrella's outdoor installations in context with UWM's award-winning sustainability initiatives. The results exemplify how we shape earth and in turn how our actions upon earth impact us, emphasizing human interdependence on fragile ecosystems. Ferrella's artworks and medical expertise in combination with the content in the artists' books and UWM sustainability initiatives argue for a holistic approach to environmentalism that is yet to be embraced by much of the world's human population.

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LIST OF WORKS

Sarah Bryant

Biography 2010 (fig. 7)

Aurora, NY: Big Jump Press

8¾ x 5½ x ¾ in.

Edition 23 of 75

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Julie Chen

Family Tree 2013 (fig. 8)

Berkeley, CA: Flying Fish Press

2¾ x 9 x 9¼ in.

Edition 36 of 50

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Eddee Daniel

Wildlife Sanctuary 2016 (fig. 9)

MagCloud

8 x 8 x ¼ in.

Unlimited copies

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Thomas Ferrella

Endangered Wisconsin 2011 (fig. 6)

oil, acrylic, wood

38 x 38 inches overall

Courtesy Thomas Ferrella

Thomas Ferrella

Imagine from the *Drift* series 2014-2016 (fig. 3)

wood (reclaimed lumber)

36 x 24 inches (approximate dimensions)

Courtesy Thomas Ferrella

Thomas Ferrella

What Shapes Us 2016 (fig. 2)

wood (Sandbar Willow sticks)

10 x 100 feet (approximate dimensions)

Courtesy Thomas Ferrella

Thomas Ferrella

What We Shape 2016 (fig. 5)

(names of endangered and invasive species written on pathways in biodegradable pigments)

dimensions variable

Courtesy Thomas Ferrella

Fred Hagstrom

Forces and Fossils 2011 (fig. 10)

Edited by Dylan Thomas, Ernst Haeckel and Strong Silent Type Press. St. Paul, MN: Strong Silent Type Press

15⁵/₈ x 11¹/₈ x 1 in.

Edition 4 of 20

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Karen Kunc

Air, Water, Oil 2010 (fig. 11)

Avoca, NE: Blue Heron Press

8 x 1¹/₄ x 10¹/₂ in.

Edition 5 of 10

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Denise Levertov

Batterers 1996 (fig. 12)

Edited by Claire Van Vliet, Kathryn Vigasaa Lipke and Janus Press. West Burke, VT: Janus Press

12¹/₈ x 15¹/₄ x 2⁷/₈ in.

Edition of 100

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Regula Russelle

On Hospitality 2014 (fig. 13)

St. Paul, MN: Cedar Fence Press

7¹/₄ x 7¹/₄ x 3³/₄ in.

Edition of 6

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

Jody Williams

Still Sense 2008 (fig. 14)

Minneapolis, MN: Flying Paper Press

2³/₄ x 2³/₄ x 2³/₄ in.

Edition 41 of 75

UW-Milwaukee Libraries Special Collections

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I am especially thankful for the generous financial support for the exhibition received through the Jeffrey R. Hayes Graduate Research Award administered by the Department of Art History and from Jan Serr and John Shannon. These contributions made the exhibition possible and gave me assurance that the project is meaningful.

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Introduction

Artists' books in Special Collections at UW-Milwaukee Libraries and regional artist Thomas Ferrella share a story about a world we shape, that in turn shapes us. It is a story of beauty, growth and rejuvenation, but it is also a story about carelessness, disruption and loss. Through the lens of a self-taught artist and the perpetually avant-garde medium of book arts, this exhibition attempts to turn the page in the way we approach environmentalism; this page is on what shapes us.

ECO Ephemeral temporarily distorts routines at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) by marking the paths we traverse and by transforming the green spaces we cross. One who sets foot on the Kenwood Campus might walk on ephemeral hand painted names of endangered species, highlighting Ferrella's intent to demonstrate how we impact our surroundings. Passing through Ferrella's serpent-like sculptural installation along Downer Avenue prompts one to consider individual influences on the land. One might also appreciate a painting of Wisconsin wildlife before realizing that the seemingly ubiquitous species are all endangered. Students of life will also find their way to Special Collections on the fourth floor of Golda Meir Library to see one of UWM's inspiring green solar rooftops and to browse intricate artists' books that explore environmental considerations from divergent perspectives. The artists' books included are by regional and internationally acclaimed artists Sarah Bryant, Julie Chen, Eddee Daniel, Fred Hagstrom, Karen Kunc, Denise Levertov and Claire Van Vliet, Regula Russelle and Jody Williams.

This exhibition is nontraditional in that all but one of the works are touchable and none are housed in a gallery. Hopefully it succeeds in breaking the limitations of gallery installations of artists' books by inviting viewers to experience the books in their entirety. For a few short

weeks the exhibition will take root on campus, and after that, it will leave lasting traces through its presence online and in Special Collections. This exhibition also aims to acknowledge the ways in which we can and do make a difference right here at the UWM. My hope is that the overall project aids in dialogues about how we shape Earth, and in turn, how our actions shape us. Ferrella's installations, the artists' books in Special Collections and UWM's sustainability initiatives impose an opportunity to "imagine" new ways for sustaining and revitalizing our world.

UWM Sustainability Initiatives

UWM is proud to be named a Green Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. This honor is attributed to schools that demonstrate measurable success in reducing waste, energy use and emissions. UWM is the only UW System institution that is currently recognized with this distinction, but hopefully it serves as a pioneer in the "greening" of campuses across the country.

The initiatives that helped UWM receive such prestigious recognition include rooftop gardens, solar panels, a wind turbine, community gardens, E-waste recycling, bicycle friendliness and stormwater management, to mention but a few.¹ The students also benefit from collaborations between UWM Restaurant Operations, the Food and Garden Club, the Institute for Urban Agriculture and Nutrition, and the Conservation and Environmental Science's permaculture course. These entities come together to provide healthy, organic, local foods to students year round.² The school notes in its application for the award: "since 2008, UWM has reduced its energy use per square foot by 27% (avoiding \$11.9 million in energy costs between

2010 and 2015)” and “Overall, UWM has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions [by] over 20% at the main Kenwood Campus.”³

In addition to interdisciplinary emphasis on environmentalism and sustainability in the arts and humanities, UWM offers nearly two hundred programs that devote specific attention to environmental wellness. Such programs are offered through the School of Architecture’s Institute for Ecological Design, the Institute for Urban Agriculture and Nutrition, the Master of Sustainable Peacebuilding program, the undergraduate degree program in Conservation and Environmental Sciences, Graduate and Doctoral degrees offered at the School of Freshwater Sciences, the Water Technology Certificate, and through programs supported by the Center for Community-Based Learning, Leadership, and Research.⁴

The compact urban campus includes over eleven acres of natural forest in Downer Woods, as well as intentional native prairies and engineered stormwater gardens. The combination of systems now prevents an annual 16.5 million gallons of stormwater from flowing into the Milwaukee street sewers.⁵ The school also adopted a Natural Lawn Care program in 2014, doing away with all synthetically formulated fertilizers and pesticides.⁶ Further, the school switched over to environmentally conscious cleaning solutions, which, according to the school, contribute to better staff morale, better oversight of chemicals, reduced water consumption and a notable reduction in cleaning expenses.⁷

Although the UWM Office of Sustainability has spearheaded many of the green initiatives on campus, Chief Sustainability Officer Kate Nelson highlights the strong institutional support for sustainability. The achievements that have been made at UWM in the past few years came to fruition because people from across the UWM community, including students, faculty,

staff and student organizations, were eager to adopt healthier options for campus and the environment.⁸

Environmentalism in Art

“Eco” is the prefix that represents the word “ecology,” a term that refers broadly to how people interact with their physical and social environments. The term also refers to how organisms interact with their environment. Problematizing the history of “ecology,” Hiroko Shimizu, one of the contributors to the exhibition catalogue *Eco-Art*, maintains, “the term ecology has mixed the layers of traditional views of nature and the scientific objectivity of the West. It is traditionally said in Japan that nature and human beings are recognized not as separate entities but as a state of interrelation.” She goes on to explain that ecology is a perception that existed long before anyone labeled it.⁹ In other words, human actions are part of ecology and we have the capability of influencing everything in our environment, either in a positive, negative or neutral way. It is important to approach this discussion through global perspectives because environmentalism is a global concern and one that requires many voices and interpretations to reach sensible outcomes. For this exhibition however, it is equally relevant to look at how artists in the region respond to environmentalism.

Scientists, art historians and artists generally point to the mid-twentieth century as the beginning of the contemporary movement in environmentalism. However, many will also point to earlier catalysts, such as John Muir and Aldo Leopold. Even Thomas Cole is lauded for his nineteenth-century landscape paintings that are as much about Manifest Destiny as they are about preservation. Linda Weintraub and Andrew Brown largely refer to the 1960s and Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring* as the beginning of the environmental movement.¹⁰ Weintraub also

notes events that occurred in the 1960s, which spurred the debate in the West, including smog that was linked to 750 deaths in London, an oil tanker crash off the coast of England in 1967 and an oil spill in 1969 off the coast of Santa Barbara, California.

Recently, Weintraub and Brown have put forth efforts to define which artists created early examples of works that fit within current notions of environmentalism in art. Weintraub is a scholar of eco-art who developed her expertise on the topic through her interest in the avant-garde. Her definition of eco-art relies on the concept of ecocentrism, which is a term that was coined by activists in the 1970s. Weintraub asserts, “Ecocentrism refers to the principle that humans are not more important than other entities on Earth. It is the opposite of anthropocentrism, which interprets reality in terms of human values and experiences.”¹¹ With respect to the early stages of the eco-art movement, Weintraub elaborates:

Although eco art has been hovering in the wings of the art scene for over half a century, two phenomena are converging that might ultimately cast it in a leading role in the current era’s cultural chronicle. First, its mission is becoming ever more crucial, as the Earth’s ability to sustain current and future generations of humans becomes more precarious.... Second, the number of international artists rejuvenating the planet has reached a critical mass.¹²

Sustainability is key to Weintraub’s interpretation of eco-art, whereas others are content to include any art that has something to do with plants, natural phenomena or global position. By her definition, “Four attributes refine the identification of eco art with ecology: topics, interconnection, dynamism, and ecocentrism.”¹³ Through her in-depth analysis of eco-art, Weintraub has staked a claim on the term, confining it to art that deals specifically with environmental sustainability. Although this approach limits the genre of environmentalism in art, it allows us to appreciate eco-art by artists with diverse bodies of work. It also gives artists flexibility where they might otherwise be designated as eco-artists. The works chosen for this

exhibition exemplify this situation by offering multi-layered readings that support ecocentric principles.

Thomas Ferrella and his Greatest Inspiration, Aralina Ferrella

Thomas Ferrella (b. Detroit, 1956) is a self-taught artist whose artistic sensibilities range from sentimental to punchy, utilizing a variety of mediums including photography, painting and sculpture. He has incorporated text into many of his artworks and has collaborated with poets on several projects, which aids in aligning his sculptural work with artists' books. Although the themes in his artistic oeuvre vary widely, he says of his own work, "my inspiration comes from my assessment and love of the natural world."¹⁴

One of the aspects that drew me to Ferrella's work is that even a cursory Internet search reveals he works in many different mediums and on scales both small and large. Ferrella's multi-media sensibilities are not necessarily seen as an asset to some in the art world however. A gallery told him they could no longer represent him because clients were confused by his wide range of skills. To their point, the Internet reveals that he was a doctor, plays in an improvisational soundscape band, and that he is a painter, photographer and sculptor.¹⁵ I fail to see the problem, but apparently Ferrella's varied interests have been a deal-breaker for some. I do understand that initial knee-jerk reaction of realizing that an artist was a doctor though. Upon meeting another Madison-based artist recently, I explained that I was working with Ferrella on this project. He quickly searched his mental Rolodex and said, "Thomas Ferrella? Isn't he that E.R. doctor who went crazy and started making art?" The term "crazy" is relative, but in a way it rings true for many self-taught artists.¹⁶

Ferrella's professional career as an emergency room doctor influences his art in subtle ways, but he is perhaps most influenced by his mother, Aralina Ferrella (b. 1925), and her artistic practice. He is quick to show off her works, from her miniature sculptures made from spent chewing gum to wall-mounted, framed objects made from tar that she peeled off the street in response to the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Ferrella's parents are both first generation Italian-Americans, raised in the rural town of Stonewood, West Virginia. He describes his parents' families as dirt-poor coal mining families in a town filled with Italians. Both of his grandfathers died rather young, one probably from a ruptured appendix and the other in a coal mine accident, leaving the mothers of both his parents widowed and impoverished at the height of the depression. There was hardly a better place to learn about resourcefulness in America than in homes such as these. His mother dropped out of high school to care for her own ailing mother in the brick house her father built. There was no running water and the loo was out back. Ferrella remarks, "When I was growing up, Mom was cooking everything." True to her depression-era formative years, Mrs. Ferrella went to farms and bought food by the bushel. She made her own sausage and pasta and sewed almost all of the children's clothes and Halloween costumes. Ferrella's Polish friends in Detroit were bewildered by capicola, prosciutto and all of the other Italian delicacies at his house.

His father, James Ferrella (b. 1925), served in WWII and soon after went to work at a car factory in Detroit while attending night school for accounting on the GI Bill. Ferrella comments that his father has absolutely no artistic inclinations: "He likes to fix things and read newspapers." Ferrella quips that his father is incredibly personable and is frequently "the life of the party unless you have heard his stories and jokes more than fifty times. He should have been a stand-up comedian." After becoming an accountant he spent a remarkable forty years with the

Sheller-Globe Corporation, making a life for his family that his own father could have hardly dreamed; complete with atomic-motif barkcloth curtains and modern furniture. Shortly after the transformative 1967 riot in Detroit, corporate headquarters moved to Toledo and the Ferrella family followed.

At some point, Ferrella's mom started developing a collection of bones and pieces of found broken glass that she displayed on windowsills all throughout the house and in the garden. Her curio collections grew and she began making ornaments from the leftover pieces of hog intestines used for making sausage. She would inflate the intestines and turn them into knotted designs and hang them in the utility room to dry, resulting in three-dimensional, semi-translucent sculptures. She followed that inclination and in her early sixties she blossomed as an artist. She decided to pursue her newfound passion and secured a studio space in a beautiful old brick convent in downtown Toledo. Surrounded by other artists, "she hit her stride" in Ferrella's words. "Dad would dig up bushes from the yard and she would spray them off, invert them and embellish them with found objects." One must wonder whether her resourcefulness stems back to the depression or if there is something genetic at work. Ferrella is quick to mention his admiration, stating, "I think she's an amazing artist...to take chewed bubble gum, dryer lint, tar from the street and to make it into something eclectic, fun and beautiful." He describes her influence on his work as having given him the flexibility of seeing that anything can be made into art and to not shy away from unfamiliar mediums.

Thomas Ferrella's Way to Art

Ferrella received his bachelor's degree in Zoology from Miami University, Oxford, OH. His interest in art was cursory but from the age of sixteen he always had access to a darkroom.

He toyed with the idea of becoming a photographer, partly influenced by his dad's 8-millimeter projector that was always running at home and his love of the outdoors. He was also attracted to the abstract and he loved how photography could fool the eye and mind. While he was applying to medical school he simultaneously submitted applications for several fine arts programs in photography, but a conventional profession was strongly encouraged and seemed to make sense for him. Ferrella recounts the circumstances, "I had a friend who lived 'on the other side of the tracks' in Toledo whose dad was a doctor and I was attracted to their lifestyle. Yet, I also remember my brother being pre-med and being frustrated until he decided he was going to be an artist." Ferrella went on to describe the hell that broke loose at home as his brother, Andre, was at odds with his parents' expectations. Andre stayed the course and went on to be an artist. Ferrella recollects, "I was somewhat torn between the two disciplines. I happened to be good at math and science, with a strong attraction to human anatomy."

Ultimately, Ferrella was accepted to medical school. He relays that he chose that path out of ego more than anything else. In his words, he "became a physician for all of the wrong reasons" and not out of altruism or a desire to help others. Despite his success in medical school, he felt out of sorts and contemplated dropping out or switching his focus to wilderness or high altitude medicine research. It wasn't until his last rotation in medical school that he found a practice that suited his personality – emergency medicine. He pursued this new passion and graduated from the Medical College of Ohio (now University of Toledo) in 1983 and went on to receive his board certification in Emergency Medicine in 1988.

Meanwhile, Andre pursued his MFA in Madison. After a trip to Europe (where you could get real coffee and pastries) Ferrella visited his brother and instantly liked Madison. "State Street, Miles Davis, the lakes, coffee shops, this is cool, right?" Santa Cruz and Santa Fe were

also on his short list, but he ended up moving to Madison before setting out to find a job. He started out as a freelance emergency room doctor with a company that sent him all over Wisconsin. In 1990 he became a founding partner at Meriter Hospital in Madison where he carried out his respectable thirty-year career as an emergency medicine physician.

In 2013 Ferrella retired, although he emphasizes that quality of life was always more important to him and his family, following a work to live lifestyle rather than a live to work edict. About fifteen years ago he started exploring his creative inklings again. “Honestly, I think I had a stroke because now all I can think of is being creative... I want to paint, I want to carve wood.” Now it is as if he is he is putting himself through the rigors of a fine arts program, emphasizing artistic exploration, assertively applying for shows and grants, building connections and “paying his tuition.”

Ferrella is certainly making his way into the art scene but he feels he is often discounted because he doesn’t have the connections or a degree in the arts. To say he doesn’t have connections isn’t exactly accurate though. Landscape painter Jonathan Wilde, the son of acclaimed Madison artist, John Wilde, is a friend of Ferrella’s. Wilde is Ferrella’s go-to guy for all things about painting, bringing him questions such as, “can you mix stand oil with turpentine, spray or brush varnish, put thin paint over thick paint or paint on such-and-such a substrate?”

Ferrella’s painting style is similar to cataloging. He paints what he sees as accurately as possible in the most vivid, yet realistic, colors. When asked how he learned to paint he responded, “That just came out of nowhere... This excites me because nobody taught me to do this. I know this is not high art, but I’m a bit like a kid in a candy store. It’s super exciting to eat the really good candy.” I reminded him of a Picasso quote and he immediately bristled that he

didn't want to be compared to Picasso. I pressed on, "a quote about unlearning everything from art school."¹⁷ Ferrella agreed:

The best art comes from kids, up until right around third or fourth grade. They are just streaming directly. The reason I know this is because I spent a lot of time with my kids, and between third and fifth grade the teachers start teaching art rules and then they get intimidated and realize they aren't following the rules. They beat the creativity out them. Everybody has this creative spirit. It just gets buried. Maybe that's why I'm like a kid in a candy store, because I'm tapping into that creative spirit once again.

Ferrella first started painting while laid up with a broken hip that he sustained after being run off the road while biking. His mother traveled from Toledo to help him recover and she set up a painting space for him. Now, painting is reserved for his downtime, when he doesn't have other pressing projects. He paints from his photographs, things he remembers and things he recalls from landscapes. At the moment, it is what he loves most of all his artistic mediums. He explains, "I'm attracted to painting because it's meditative. You really get lost in the image you are creating and you are only limited by your skill and your imagination. Everything is possible on a little two-dimensional square... I will put in a fourteen-hour day and not blink an eye."

In all of his mediums, Ferrella tends to work in series. He enjoys taking a visual cue, developing an idea and figuring out how to engineer it. For his current project on race, called *I World*, he has photographed over sixty people behind frosted glass. Describing his process, he comments, "I know those portraits of people blending together are beautiful... so, how do I use that? Problem solving is fun and frustrating, but to see it come to fruition is really exciting." From that specific series he created a large pentagonal wood frame and inserted five prints of these portraits. He attached the frame structure to a bicycle wheel hub and hung it from a tree. It spins in the wind and because of this motion and the blurred images, the skin tones of all the people blend together, hence emphasizing our sameness (fig. 1). He remarks that he is fortunate

to have a friend in Enrique Rueda of Madison, whom he sees as a kindred soul. Ferrella bounces many of his ideas off of Rueda who is a musician, video engineer, designer and a master woodworker. Although his friends are his foremost source for advice on his projects, Ferrella jokes that he also attends YouTube University. He uses Google, accesses other resources around town and talks to people he considers art-friendly to figure out how to approach projects:

I'm in awe of a lot of artists, but I also feel like they are just people who are passionate and happen to push boundaries. I have this same underlying passion. I don't get intimidated by doing something new. I just figure, somebody else can weld, why can't I weld, paint, glue, sew paper...? If I can't, I just work to develop those skills.

Ferrella as a Maker of Eco-art

Ferrella makes eco-art as a reflection on the state of affairs in the environment, and how (to put it mildly) messed up everything is with environmental and climate change receiving little notice. He is profoundly concerned about losing species and natural occurrences, many of which we may never know existed. He is perturbed by the overwhelming attitude that nature is a resource for humans to manipulate and control, a perspective that he asserts has resulted in a lack of clean water and clean air, the rise in cancer rates, autism, new viruses crossing over into humans, and the introduction of invasive species that affect animals, plants and entire ecosystems. Through *ECO Ephemeral*, he hopes to put a personal touch to those losses that will resonate with viewers.

One example of direct human influence that he cites is the blight resulting from ballast water in ocean-going ships that carried zebra mussels into the Great Lakes. Another is the use of honeysuckle as an ornamental garden plant, only for it to spread and invade forests and choke the indigenous woodland ecosystem. Lyme disease also illustrates human influence turning on itself. Ferrella vehemently condemns the mismanagement of the deer population in Wisconsin, which

has allowed unprecedented population growth with few extant natural predators. This system provides deer ticks with an endless blood supply, which keeps the debilitating disease at epidemic proportions in this state. Nonetheless, deer are allowed to propagate at high levels because of the money generated during hunting season.

There is no question that we have sacrificed the health and wellbeing of humans because of policies that do not go far enough to preserve naturally occurring eco-systems. Ferrella notes the huge elevation in the rate of asthma related to air quality, the rise of ozone, the recent Volkswagen debacle, and the use of synthetic products that give off fumes in homes and workplaces. He further comments on the rise of breast cancer, hypertension, obesity, Zika, Ebola, SARS, HIV, and syphilis as byproducts of tampering with the environment. Ferrella acknowledges that his eco-art is influenced in part by his medical career. “You can’t understand these statistics and not believe they are related to our environment.” He also remarks on the hundreds of above ground nuclear bomb tests that were conducted in Nevada and Utah. All of the fallout that blew east over America’s breadbasket coincidentally fell on the film set of *The Conqueror* (1956), starring John Wayne. The director, Dick Powell died of cancer just seven years after the film came out and forty-five other cast and crewmembers died of cancer over the next two decades. Ferrella points out that there are many diseases that seemingly came out of nowhere during the twentieth century, such as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome. He believes these unpleasant trends are based on how we are treating our environment, food system, animals, and ourselves, and yet collectively we still uphold an attitude of conquering the environment at all costs. He asks, “are we in some perverted way just feeding the health industrial complex?”

The four series that Ferrella presents in this exhibition engage with various UWM sustainability initiatives and larger biological rights issues that potentially affect the world over.

Perhaps the most visible installation is *What Shapes Us* (fig. 2). This is a site-specific installation located along Downer Avenue, in a clearing near Edgewood Avenue.

The installation consists of thin dried Sandbar Willow sticks that pierce the ground in close configurations, forming curves, waves and passageways. This installation is meant to inspire people to think about wind, water and time, and how these factors shape our environment and us. Like mandalas or totems, Ferrella feels that “the use of organic forms unites the viewer with the natural world on a subconscious level.” Pushing this inquiry further, consider what we also shape, how we use our resources and how we could use resources that are more practical or appropriate given issues of sustainability.

The Sandbar Willow used in this installation is a native species that was harvested from southeastern Wisconsin. Although it is indigenous to Wisconsin and is useful in many ways, it can be invasive if it is not properly controlled by grazing fauna, wildfires or through human management. It is used for erosion control but at the same time it can quickly choke streams and interrupt trout pathways and other ecosystems. Native Americans traditionally used it for a wide range of domestic purposes including the construction of homes, sweat lodges and hunting. When freshly cut, the willow sticks are pliable and it is especially satisfying to peel the bark that exudes a subtle refreshing aroma. The moist bark is used in weaving strong basketry and also has medicinal properties. Sandbar Willow is currently a popular material for privacy screens and fences and it is well suited for such commercial products because of its ability to grow rapidly.¹⁸

At the close of the exhibition, the willow will be removed, leaving small holes that aerate the soil in conjunction with UWM’s natural lawn care practices. UWM Facility Services implements the Natural Lawn Care program through composting, overseeding and aeration without the use of synthetic fertilizer or pesticides.¹⁹ Ultimately, the grass is more resilient, but

more importantly, the program benefits the health of people, pets, insects and microorganisms. It also reduces the nitrates that flow into the Lake Michigan watershed.

In the context of twentieth-century land art, there are some parallels to Ferrella's willow installations. His ideologies are perhaps most akin to Andy Goldsworthy's, but one could go as far as to draw out similarities between his work and Michael Heizer's. Of the artists associated with the Land Art movement, Andrew Brown states:

they were leading the charge of a new avant-garde that would alter radically the way artists viewed and engaged with natural objects and processes. These pioneers showed not only that art could be placed within the environment and be made from it, but also that the art could change that environment forever.²⁰

Unlike many of the artists associated with the Land Art movement, Ferrella has not made an indelible site-specific installation to date, and perhaps never will given his strong considerations towards Manifest Destiny-type attitudes.

Nestled in what is commonly referred to as the "Spiral Garden" between Klotsche Center and the Heating Plant, Ferrella situated a sign that reads, "imagine" (fig. 3). This sign comes from Ferrella's larger installation series called *Drift*. Each diminutive, reclaimed lumber sign in the series is engraved with a different single word that can be associated with the location where it is posted. Vondra Engraving, Inc. appreciates the project so much that they engrave the signs gratis.

Ferrella often incorporates text into his art, and has collaborated with poets on several projects, making this work a circuit between his works installed around the campus and the environmentally charged artists' books in Special Collections. The guerrilla-like placement of these signs is intended to be very informal, often disregarding land ownership or ordinances. At UWM the placement of the sign was vetted, but only one is included in the exhibition, so as to keep with Ferrella's intentions for the series of solitary units that are far-flung.

Imagine is especially appropriate for the garden spearheaded by Professor James Wasley in the School of Architecture and Urban Planning, designed in collaboration with landscape architect Gerard Rewolinski and then students Joel Springsteen, Michael Kautzer and Andrew Manto.²¹ Made possible in part by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, the garden was constructed in 2009 to reconnect a small river that had been interrupted by city life. The more prominent feature of the gardens includes two massive cement cisterns that were constructed in 2013, which hold a total of 12,360 gallons of rainwater that is slowly released into the ground after heavy rainfall (fig. 4).²² One who sees the sign in the Spiral Garden might “imagine” what ecological architecture can accomplish if implemented more widely.

For a brief time, the installation receiving the most foot traffic is *What We Shape* (fig. 5). These highly ephemeral, organically pigmented names of endangered and invasive species, which are written on walkways around campus, disappear with wind and rain. However, it is the foot traffic over the names of the species that evoke the most poignant message of what we shape and what shapes us. Endangered species, such as Ornate Box Turtle, appear in dark brown while invasive species, including Earthworm and Japanese Honeysuckle, are inked in deep red.

The foundation for Ferrella’s three outdoor installations is his painting entitled *Endangered Wisconsin* (fig. 6), displayed in the Daniel M. Soref Learning Commons at Golda Meir Library during this exhibition. This painting is a series of seventeen small, individual oil paintings on wood panels. The puzzle-like arrangement is coincidentally reminiscent of two of the artists’ books, Julie Chen’s *Family Tree* and Jody Williams’ *Still Sense*. The species depicted are: Hine’s Emerald Dragonfly, Midwest Pleistocene Vertigo (snail), Northern Blue Butterfly, Slender Madtom (catfish), Wallace’s Deepwater Mayfly, Western Ribbonsnake, Giant Carrion Beetle, Giant Pinedrops (plant in the blueberry family), Ornate Box Turtle, Piping Plover, Phlox

Moth, American Marten, Blanchard's Cricket Frog, Butterfly Mussel, Eastern Prairie White-fringed Orchid, Fire Pink (wildflower) and the Snowy Egret.

With this painting, Ferrella's aim is to implement art in order to educate people about the species that are endangered by current environmental land practices. The individual paintings are simple yet realistic, cataloging the species beautifully in order to show us what we are going to potentially lose. What I find especially moving about this painting is that it has made me realize I personally have no idea if or when I encounter endangered species. Could the last Phlox Moth flutter in the light at my door?

A Common Thread Between Book Arts and Environmentalism

Johanna Drucker considers a strain of artists' books as "democratic multiple." Artists' books can address any topic, can be crafted inexpensively or use the finest quality materials, and can reach a broad audience through mass distribution, in libraries and through exhibitions.²³ Drucker asserts that book arts developed into an expressive artform in the middle of the twentieth century, largely for the sake of social change, along with the "emergence of various avant-garde movements."²⁴ She elaborates, "Following the mid-century, artists began to make books a primary or major aspect of their activity, without linking the content or form of the book to an already established agenda."²⁵

The development of artists' books coincides with the formalization of the environmental movement and in some ways it seems the two are linked. Betty Bright points out that *The Whole Earth Catalog*, a seminal journal centered on environmentalism, included references to bookmaking and printing in its first edition in 1968 and also in a subsequent edition.²⁶ Bright immediately acknowledges in her book, *No Longer Innocent: Book Art in America 1960-1980*,

that scholars “still lack a generally accepted and workable definition of artists’ books.”²⁷ This is also the case for art that can be associated with environmentalism.²⁸ She additionally notes, “Book workers as a rule show affinities with the avant-garde movements of their time.”²⁹ As the eco-art movement is relatively new and is steeped in activism, it is no surprise that book arts have embraced this activist driven genre. These two seemingly disparate practices evolved concurrently to promote issues to various audiences, from grassroots movements to collectors of fine arts.³⁰ Unfortunately, book arts and the environment also share in common the concern of endangerment. While some of the artists’ books in Special Collections address issues of endangered species, monocultures and altered landscapes, the art of book making is also threatened in some places.³¹

In 1992 Bright curated *Completing the Circle: Artists’ Books on the Environment* at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts. Bright reports that the show was criticized by book enthusiast Abe Lerner who took issue with sculptural book works. She empathizes, “These books are not pretty, and they do not follow the rules of typography or binding or, for that matter, reading itself.”³² Twenty-four years later, Bright’s curatorial exploration of artists’ books on the environment deserves a second approach, not only because there is much work to be done in service to the environment, but also because many artists’ books surrounding the topic have been made since 1992. If nothing else, the books included here are actually quite “pretty.”

With the progression of book making in the twentieth century, Bright comments, “Books were no longer viewed as repositories of finite meaning, but rather as permeable membranes whose information could yield multiple interpretations, even as they effortlessly crossed geographical (and political) boundaries.”³³ She condoles, “The restriction of exhibition in display cases force readers and critics to judge and articulate a book’s success based on a single page

opening. Reading a book involves the tactile, even emotional experience of paging through it.”³⁴ For this and other practical reasons, the artists’ books in *ECO Ephemeral* are available for viewing and handling in Special Collections throughout the duration of the exhibition.

Discussing the books by creator, in alphabetical order, serendipitously happens to arrange the books in a sort of narrative. It is especially fitting to start off by focusing on Sarah Bryant’s *Biography* (2010, fig. 7). Bryant’s book is letterpress printed from polymer plates on Zerkall Book paper, is drum-leaf bound in hard cover and is enclosed in a clamshell box. Bryant was influenced by her colleague Jessica Peterson to include exactly twenty colors, a situation that Bryant adoringly begrudges.³⁵ There is a strong emphasis on the graphic design which Bryant accomplished using InDesign for the layout. She then transferred the digital files to polymer plates, which are a photosensitive plastic material that hardens when exposed to light. Such plates are typically used for relief printing but in this case they also offered Bryant a practical way to transfer the digital files to a traditional printing process. Made on a Vandercook press, *Biography* combines relief printing and pressure printing.³⁶

Bryant worked on *Biography* while she was a fellow at Wells College. The project began with visual studies of the periodic table as an offshoot of topics she addresses in her earlier books. She wanted to make a new work that was clever but was also a somewhat “arbitrary crazy book.”³⁷ The title refers tangentially to Bryant herself, but more broadly to the makeup of human physiology and ecology. Although the book is not reliable for significant scientific data, she made a concerted effort to convey accurate information by consulting Professor Christopher Bailey, Chair of Biological and Chemical Sciences at Wells College. As she explored the periodic table in printmaking she determined that she needed to focus on a specific topic with respect to chemistry “because the periodic table is so much – it is everything.”³⁸ As the human

body had been a subject of interest in her previous projects, she built on this idea and considered the elements in the human body and how humans relate to their environments. One of the fascinating correlations that she presents in her book is that pesticides and fertilizers contain some of the same elements. Contradicting logic, we use chemicals that kill in order to grow food. She outlines similar relationships between medicine and weapons.³⁹ The book includes nine diagrams designed by Bryant:

1. *You are what you are made of*
2. *You are part of something larger than yourself*
3. *You are what you stand on* [refers to the crust of the earth]
4. *You are what you make* [refers to weapons, medicines, tools, etc.]
5. *You are what you make (part 2)*
6. *You are what is similar to you* [is a list of animals]
7. *You are where you came from* [notes the proportion of elements in sea water]
8. *You are*
9. *You are*

Julie Chen's *Family Tree* (2013, fig. 8) is a hybrid *livre de luxe* (sculptural bookwork) contained in a cloth covered solander box.⁴⁰ The work is comprised of a block puzzle. Each block includes four digitally printed sides and two laser-engraved sides that form six predetermined arrangements and allow for infinite groupings. Bright equates the structure of some artists' books to children's books: "The presence of nostalgia suggests an unrecoverable past, a sense of loss that might arise with a reader's encounter of such a format from childhood."⁴¹ Chen's work demonstrates this situation perfectly in tandem with concern for the environment. The blocks show the following texts when the six puzzles are matched and turned congruently:

walking through my neighborhood I notice the shadows of trees branching on the sidewalk under my feet. and in the instant that I register what I am seeing I am also not seeing. subconsciously naming the source unaware that I have stopped looking.

CONNECTIONS EMERGING AFTER DORMANCY
IDENTITY REINVENTED THROUGH INTERPRETATION
EVENTS RECLAIMED RECTIFYING ASSUMPTIONS
FAMILY LINKED BEYOND BLOOD

thinking about my personal history I consider the connections linking me within a web of abstractions. over my lifetime I have accumulated many selves, inadvertently creating an unidentifiable person within a framework of familiarity.

PATTERNS HIDDEN BENEATH THE NARRATIVE
GENERATIONS FORGOTTEN DUE TO NEGLECT
OPPORTUNITIES LOST MASKING THE TRUTH
HISTORY REDACTED BY INDIFFERENCE

CONNECTEDNESS EXPLAINED THROUGH CONTACT

CONNECTEDNESS EXPLAINED THROUGH TIME

Eddee Daniel, based in Milwaukee, recently published *Wildlife Sanctuary* (2016, fig. 9) using an online, print on demand service. This newer form of book art cannot be dismissed for its commercial production because it has roots that spread back to early production of books that were used to circulate messages widely at a nominal cost, including chapbooks, Fluxus publications and zines. Even Edward Ruscha's acclaimed books employ this method. Despite the careful design that Ruscha dedicated to his book layouts, Drucker notes that the use of standard printing techniques is a distinguishing feature of his books, as in *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1963).⁴²

Wildlife Sanctuary presents ironic imagery of a preserve at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. The seventy-four acre sanctuary is a space for education in restoration and management of native flora and fauna. Daniel's photography displays the odd intersection between urban life and revitalization of natural habitats. Although it is much greater in scale, it shares distinct similarities with Downer Woods at the UWM Kenwood Campus where a fence effectively locks in the natural growth in order to protect it from human activity. The images

coincide with Daniel's attraction "to contradictory realities in a world increasingly compromised or redeemed by our own actions."⁴³

Fred Hagstrom is well represented in Special Collections, thus it was difficult to choose just one work of his to feature in this exhibition. *Paradise Lost*, which addresses the atrocities of nuclear testing on Bikini Atoll in the 1940s and 1950s, seemed like an obvious choice, particularly in conjunction with Ferrella's remarks about nuclear testing west of America's breadbasket. However, *Paradise Lost* can be explored in the digital exhibit *Another Place*.⁴⁴ An alternate work by Hagstrom that is equally appropriate in the context of *ECO Ephemeral* is *Forces and Fossils* (2011, fig. 10). This book is screen-printed using illustrations from German naturalist Ernst Haeckel's book *Radiolaria* (1862) and includes the complete text of Dylan Thomas's poem *The Force that through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower* (1939). The large and heavy book is drum leaf bound with a screen-printed piece of slate inset on the front of the hardcover.

The radiolarian images represent fossils of minute protozoa found throughout the ocean floor. Thomas's poem can be interpreted in many ways, but it can be inferred that it is about human naiveté against Mother Nature. This poem, included below, presents uncanny parallels to the themes explored in Bryant's book, *Biography*.

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees is my destroyer. And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose my youth is bent by the same wintry fever. The force that drives the water through the rocks drives my red blood; that dries the mouthing streams turns mine to wax. And I am dumb to mouth unto my veins how at the mountain spring the same mouth sucks. The hand that whirls the water in the pool stirs the quicksand; that ropes the blowing wind hauls my shroud sail. And I am dumb to tell the hanging man how of my clay is made the hangman's lime. The lips of time leech to the fountain head; love drips and gathers, but the fallen blood shall calm her sores. And I am dumb to tell a weather's wind how time has ticked a heaven round the stars. And I am dumb to tell the lover's tomb how at my sheet goes the same crooked worm.

Karen Kunc's *Air, Water, Oil* (2010, fig. 11) is a pamphlet stitched book with a black handmade-paper cover that has deckled edges. Although it is a simply constructed book it has some carefully crafted surprises. There are two leaves that are tri-folded and the final spread is forty-one inches wide. The pages also have an unusual waxy appearance. Kunc explains, "The prints were treated with acrylic washes, that pooled and stiffened the papers to make them carry the sense of liquid 'stuff.'"⁴⁵ Ovals are repeated throughout the book, reminiscent of ships or oil tankers, and a grey haze covers the pages, simulating smoggy air. Black drips and smears recall imagery of random oil spills. Kunc searches her memory. "I can't remember exactly what was happening at the time I made this work, but I often address natural and man-made disasters, the daily science stories and discoveries, the ecological and economically entwined issues that color our everyday decisions. I am not didactic in approach, but my visual vocabulary implies and suggests."⁴⁶ In her formal statement about the book she acknowledges the duality that often comes between art and environmentalism: "The content mirrors the human dilemma of the use of natural resources, as the color reduction woodcut process destroys once living matter – in the creation of something meaningful."⁴⁷

The earliest work included in the exhibition is Denise Levertov's *Batterers* (1996, fig. 12), which was truly a collaborative effort with Claire Van Vliet, Katie MacGregor, Bernie Vinzani, Kathryn Lipke Vigasaa, Jack Sumberg, Judi Conant and Mary Richardson. *Batterers* is visually commanding and conceptually stunning. A large clamshell slipcase is covered repeatedly with the title in bold sans serif type of varying sizes, as if to pound the title into the viewer's psyche. Inside the slipcase is a wooden shadowbox with overlapping accordion folds pigmented in scarlet red. Within three sections, a poem by Levertov is revealed:

A MAN SITS BY THE BED OF A WOMAN HE HAS BEATEN, DRESSES HER WOUNDS, GINGERLY DABS AT BRUISES, HER BLOOD POOLS ABOUT HER, DARKENS.

ASTONISHED, HE FINDS HE'S BEGUN TO CHERISH HER. HE IS TERRIFIED. WHY HAD HE NEVER SEEN, BEFORE, WHAT SHE WAS? WHAT IF SHE STOPS BREATHING?

EARTH, CAN WE NOT LOVE YOU UNLESS WE BELIEVE THE END IS NEAR? BELIEVE IN YOUR LIFE UNLESS WE THINK YOU ARE DYING?

Claire Van Vliet wrote a letter that accompanies the book in which she mentions that Levertov wrote the poem with the second and third verses being interchangeable. This layout allows the reader to choose equitably. The obverse of the shadowbox could easily be overlooked, as is so much of the scarring of the earth, however it is intended to double as the cover and as a framed work. It is an early version of one of Lipke Vigesaa's "Earthskins" made of pressed clay-paper, which forms a muddy, rock-like landscape with deep wounds.

Batterers was created when ecofeminism was peaking in the scholarly realm during the mid-1990s. In 1997 Karen Warren wrote in the introduction of her book *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature* that "ecological feminism is the position that there are important connections between how one treats women, people of color, and the underclass on one hand and how one treats the nonhuman natural environment on the other."⁴⁸ Levertov approached this issue assertively in 1996. A full twenty years later, the term "ecofeminism" is wildly radicalized by political conservatism and it is not clear that any gains have been made in mitigating human rights abuses, animal abuse or abuses against the environment.

As ecofeminism hasn't penetrated mainstream thinking, environmentalists have gradually adopted the approach of "kill 'em with kindness." Regula Russelle's *On Hospitality* (2014, fig. 13) demonstrates this point perfectly. Within a sturdy square box Russelle includes four objects

in individual origami boxes. A small accordion-fold book spreads out over thirty-three inches and three handmade paper sculptures in the form of vessels nestle like eggs. The title and delicate contents of the box evoke a sense of responsibility upon the viewer. To hold one of the paper vessels is like being given an egg to carry like a baby. Each vessel contains a word or a series of words composed by Russelle, and a quote by Lao Tzu is presented as a prelude to the text in the book:

Doors and windows are cut from walls to form a house;
but it is on the empty space within, that its use depends.

Lao Tzu

gate, hail approach with open arms bid welcome receive & usher in, cultivate, ear hear, heart hearth, compose & form, assemble, mend, consolation, dwelling, abide, ORCHARDS, CHOIR, LIBRARIES, tending over time, ask: what does it mean to host a pilgrim soul?⁴⁹

Jody Williams' *Still Sense* (2008, fig. 14) is reminiscent of Marcel Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise* (Box in a Suitcase, 1936-41). With respect to *Boîte-en-valise* Bright notes, "A strength of its boxed format is that it allows access to its contents and also embodies the circularity inherent in artistic process, rather than submitting to a book's linear structure."⁵⁰ Williams takes this non-hierarchical structure a step further by enclosing three sets of six puzzle pieces within narrow cavities along the edges of the case. The book is constructed from bookbinder's board covered in Momi paper, and Sakamoto paper lines the interior. Inside the color coded shell-like pages there are beads and three corked glass vials that are filled with specimens from the Minnesota terrain, representing flowers, trees and grasses.

The puzzle-like cards are illustrated using intaglio and are color coded on one side to correspond with their home in the case. Williams thoughtfully intertwines multiple concepts in threes: "three boxes, three themes (*Details, Essence, Substance*), three elements (text, image,

specimen), three botanical types, three sets of loose cards, three colors, three dimensions.”⁵¹ The enclosed text follows:

Details (white)

drifting in place
low down
drawn in
small senses of
isolated intensity
dismissing
before and after
enchanted by this
fragile balance
of fleeting
brilliance

Essence (blue)

reaching out
suspended beyond
a complex plain
becoming something else
almost the sky
waves of questions
consuming
illusions of profundity
only this
still sense
prevails

Substance (brown)

gathering strength
rising
singular points
of reference
divide and connect
earth and sky
imposing order
repeating patterns
retain and record
past and present
grand presences
enduring

All of the puzzle pieces fit together to read:

here, before, something, nowhere, never
now, that, wherever, always, nothing
soon, the other, somewhere, after, everything, everywhere

When the pieces are flipped congruently the three sets of cards show the following text:

(white)	intimate, distinct ephemeral, elegance precision, radiance
(brown)	survival, enduring solid, spreading structure, intent
(blue)	subtle, transcending dimension, complete whisper, mystery

Of Lasting Importance

The artists represented herein beautifully highlight a myriad of reasons to move forward with sustainable environmental practices. Ferrella approaches environmentalism in his art judiciously while preparing us to think carefully about how our actions upon the environment can cause unintended consequences to our own health and livelihood. He urges consideration of “what we shape” and “what shapes us” in order to reveal that, for the most part, we as a species are the engineers of our existence. This is troubling in the face of climate change, drastic weather events and epidemic diseases, but it is also reassuring to know that if we have such a significant influence on Earth’s various systems, then we must be able to repair and reverse some of the damage.

Ferrella’s installations and the artists’ books, taken into consideration with UWM sustainability initiatives, offer an opportunity to “imagine” infrastructure that can transform the

way we interact with the environment, for the better. They signal that a holistic approach, which implements the arts and sciences, is key to addressing pressing global concerns, such as protecting our fresh water sources. If we are passive to infrastructure, architecture and art that does not move us towards a more ecologically conscious way of life within our constructs of Manifest Destiny then we will find everything on our planet, including plants, animals, entire ecosystems and even human life, to be ephemeral. As we move forward we must accept that we are inherently connected to the health of Earth and we must work on this puzzle collaboratively in order to deliver the delights of a healthy and ecologically diverse planet to future generations.

FIGURES

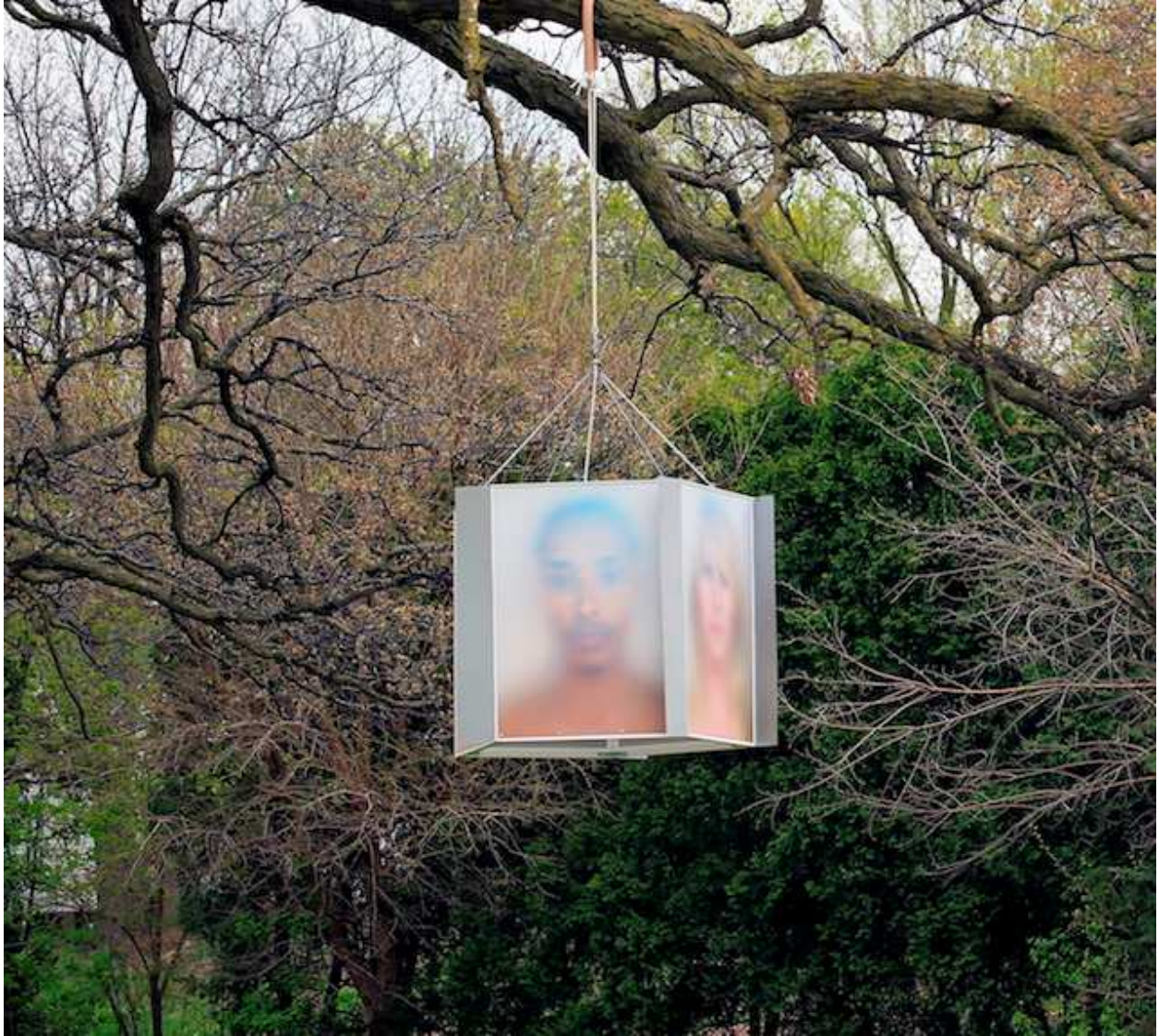


Figure 1. Thomas Ferrella, *I World*, Madison, 2016



Figure 2. Thomas Ferrella, *What Shapes Us*, UW-Milwaukee, 2016



Figure 3. Thomas Ferrella, *Imagine* from the *Drift* series, 2014-2016



Figure 4. Cistern in the “Spiral Garden,” UW-Milwaukee, 2013



Figure 5. Thomas Ferrella, Selections from *What We Shape*, UW-Milwaukee, 2016



Figure 6. Thomas Ferrella, *Endangered Wisconsin*, 2011



Figure 7. Sarah Bryant, *Biography*, 2010

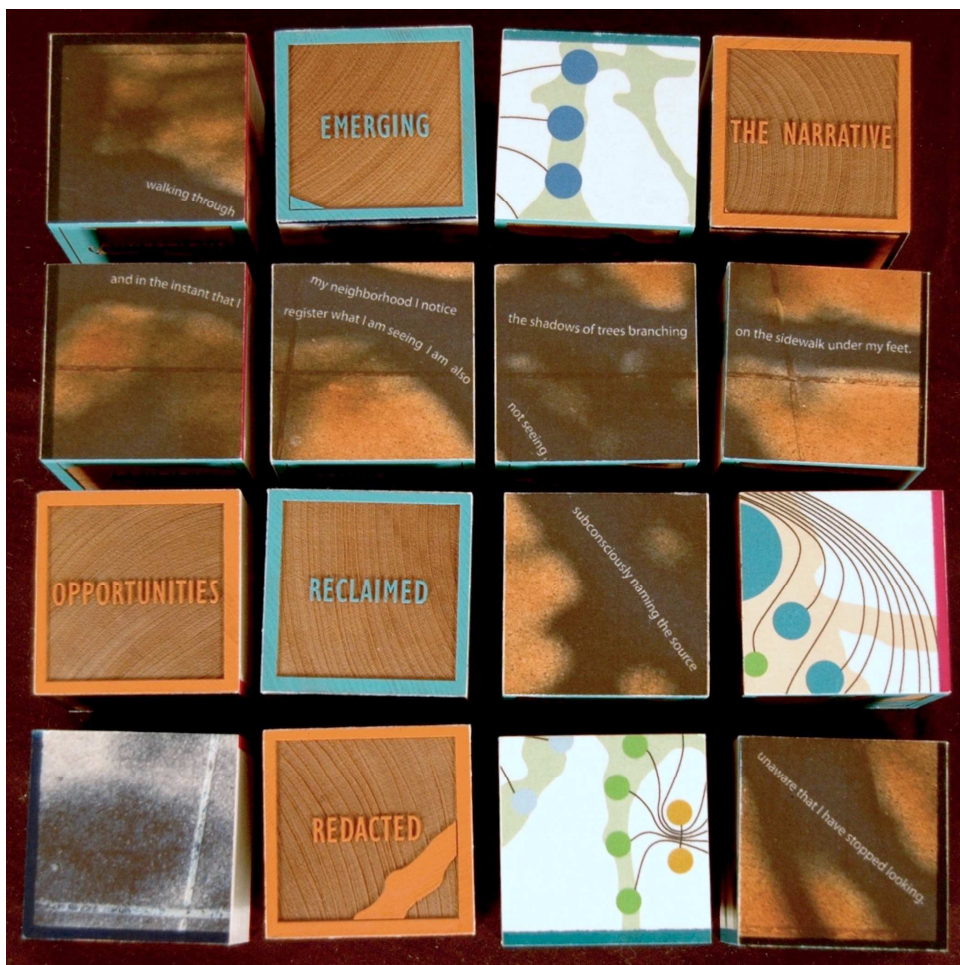


Figure 8. Julie Chen, *Family Tree*, 2013

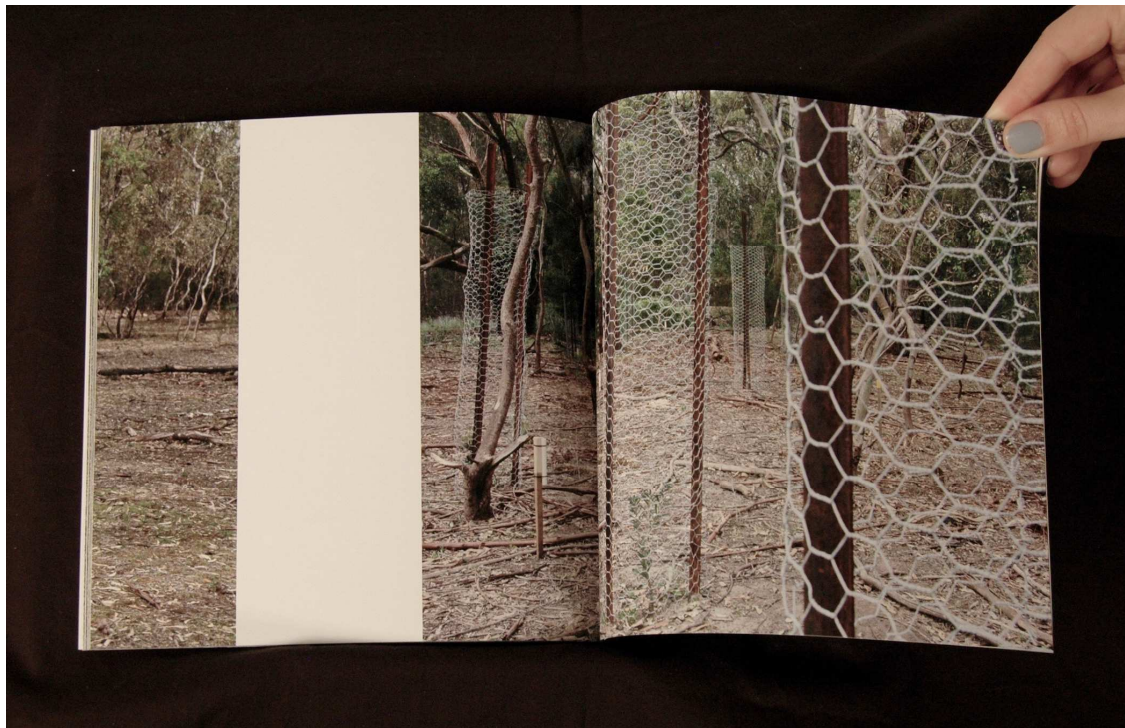


Figure 9. Eddee Daniel, *Wildlife Sanctuary*, 2016



Figure 10. Fred Hagstrom, *Forces and Fossils*, 2011

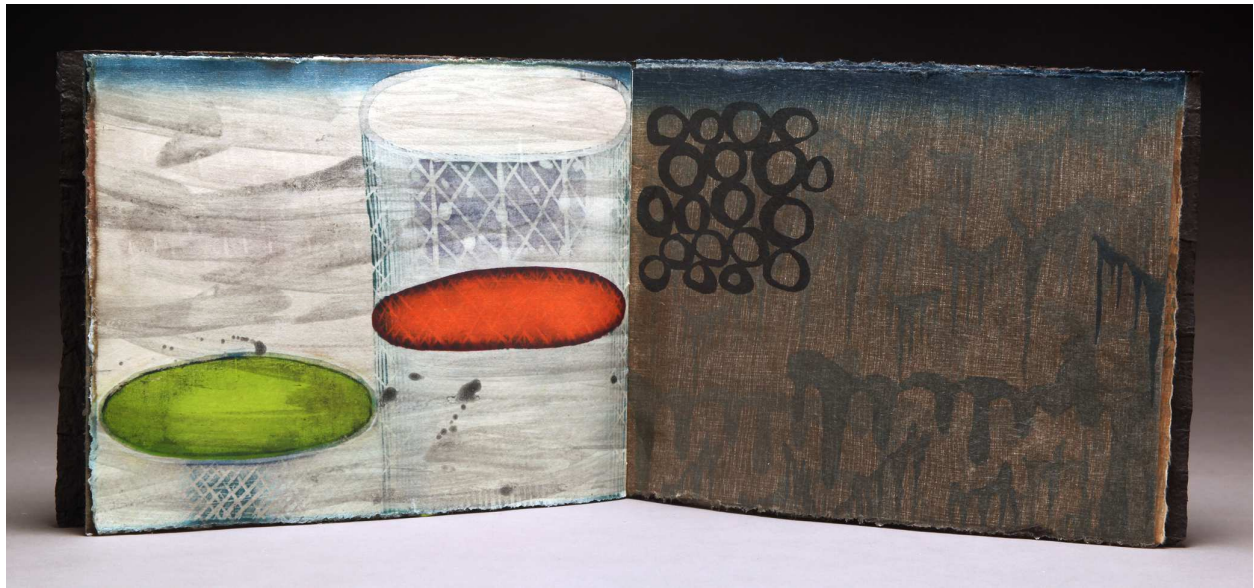


Figure 11. Karen Kunc, *Air, Water, Oil*, 2010



Figure 12. Denise Levertov, *Batterers*, 1996



Figure 13. Regula Russelle, *On Hospitality*, 2014



Figure 14. Jody Williams, *Still Sense*, 2008

NOTES

¹ Kate Nelson and Mark A. Mone, Wisconsin Post-Secondary Institution Application, *U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools*, December 2015. 9. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/green-ribbon-schools/2016-schools/wi-postsecondary-university-wisconsin-milwaukee.pdf>; “In 2015, UW-Milwaukee students invested in a five year student membership plan for the City of Milwaukee’s Bublr Bikeshare program and in 2013 UWM was recognized as a Bike Friendly Campus by the League of American Bicyclists.” Nelson and Mone, “Green Ribbon School Application,” 9.

² Nelson and Mone, “Green Ribbon Schools Application,” 10-11.

³ *Ibid.*, 8, 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 9, 13.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁹ Hiroko Shimizu, “Future Compass, Ikeda Water – Flowable to Amplify,” in *Eco-art*, John K. Grande et al. (Helsinki: Pori Art Museum, 2011), 76.

¹⁰ Andrew Brown, *Art & Ecology Now*, (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2014), 11; Linda Weintraub, *To Life!: Eco Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 19-20.

¹¹ Weintraub, *To Life!*, 7.

¹² *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁴ Ferrella’s comments and biographical information were conveyed directly through multiple meetings and e-mails exchanged in 2015 and 2016. Most of his biographical information was relayed during a conversation on April 30th, 2016.

¹⁵ Not all of Ferrella’s art is environmentally based. He is currently engaged in a series on race called *I World*. One of his longest running series is the *Wisconsin Roadside Memorials* project in which he has been photo-documenting roadside memorials for the past fifteen years. <http://www.wisconsinroadsidememorials.com>.

¹⁶ There are many artists who loosely fit this stereotype. Eugene Von Bruenchenhein is one example.

¹⁷ Pablo Picasso is widely credited with saying, “It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child.”

¹⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Plant Fact Sheet, Sandbar Willow, February 5, 2002, accessed June 22, 2016, https://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs_saex.pdf.

¹⁹ Nelson and Mone, “Green Ribbon Schools Application,” 9.

²⁰ Brown, *Art & Ecology Now*, 12.

²¹ James Wasley, “UWM as a Zero-Discharge Zone: Built Work 2006-2013,” 2013, 32.

²² *Ibid.*, 44.

²³ Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books*, (New York: Granary Books, 1995), 69.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 71.

²⁶ Betty Bright, *No Longer Innocent: Book Art in America 1960-1980*, (New York: Granary Books, 2005), 97.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, xiii.

²⁸ The term “eco-art” is particularly contested. Definitions contradicting Weintraub’s usage have been suggested by Christoph Brunner, Roberto Nigro and Gerald Raunig who reflect on Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, translation by Ian Pinder and Paul Sutton, (London: Continuum, 2008) 35-36. Christoph Brunner, Roberto Nigro and Gerald Raunig, “Post-Media Activism, Social Ecology and Eco-Art.” *Third Text*, January, Vol. 27, Issue 1 (2013): 10, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09528822.2013.752200>.

²⁹ Bright, *No Longer Innocent*, xiii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

³¹ As an example, in 2015 my alma mater, Mills College, proposed plans to close its respected Book Arts program. Sarah Burke, “An Identity Crisis at Mills College,” *Eastbay Express*, November 4, 2015, accessed May 29, 2016, <http://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/an-identity-crisis-at-mills-college/Content?oid=4563237>. Further, artists’ books are underrepresented in museum exhibitions.

- ³² Bright, *No Longer Innocent*, 1-2.
- ³³ Ibid., 193.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 7.
- ³⁵ Sarah Bryant, "The Evolution of an Artist's Book by Sarah Bryant," The Susan Garretson Swartzburg Lecture Spring 2011 lecture at Wells College, 2011, accessed June 1, 2016, <http://video.syr.edu/Video.aspx?vid=Tlzp3UMBD0045MptqQ5DuA>.
- ³⁶ A deluxe version in an edition of ten copies includes all of the prints that were made simultaneously with the book.
- ³⁷ Bryant, "The Evolution of an Artist's Book by Sarah Bryant."
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Kathryn Markel, "Hey, Wanna Buy an Artists' Book?" "The State of the Book Arts," *Craft International* (October-November-December 1984): 27, cited in Bright, *No Longer Innocent*, 178.
- ⁴¹ Bright, *No Longer Innocent*, 94.
- ⁴² Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books*, 77.
- ⁴³ Eddee Daniel, Artist Statement, received via e-mail from artist on June 4, 2016.
- ⁴⁴ <http://liblamp.uwm.edu/omeka/SPC2/exhibits/show/anotherplace>.
- ⁴⁵ Email response from Karen Kunc, June 13, 2016.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Karen Kunc, Artist's Statement for *Air, Water, Oil*, received via e-mail from artist on June 13, 2016.
- ⁴⁸ Karen Warren and Nisvan Erkal, *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature*, (Indiana University Press, 1997), 3.
- ⁴⁹ Complete text in *On Hospitality*.
- ⁵⁰ Bright, *No Longer Innocent*, 42.
- ⁵¹ Jody Williams, Artist Statement on *Still Sense*, received via e-mail from artist on June 2, 2016.

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