



Minnesota Center for Book Arts
At Open Book
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 13, 2009
Contact: Curt Lund
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**MINNESOTA CENTER FOR BOOK ARTS IS FIRST STOP
ON GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS EXHIBITION NATIONAL TOUR**

Minnesota Center for Book Arts and the Guild of Book Workers are proud to present the inaugural installation of *Marking Time*, the Guild's triennial members' exhibition.

WHEN: *Marking Time* will be on display **May 15 – August 15, 2009**.
The **opening reception** will be held **Friday, May 15, 6-9pm**.
A gallery talk by exhibition curator and coordinator Karen Hanmer will begin at 7pm.

WHERE: Minnesota Center for Book Arts, Star Tribune Foundation gallery
in the Open Book building, 1011 Washington Avenue South, First Floor, Minneapolis

GALLERY HOURS: Mondays – Saturdays: 10 am to 5 pm
Tuesdays open late: 10 am to 9 pm
Sundays: 12 noon to 4 pm

Time has long captured the imagination of artists, writers, scientists, philosophers and theologians. Guild of Book Workers members were invited to interpret the theme of “marking time” as broadly or narrowly as they wished. The exhibition was curated and coordinated by Guild of Book Workers exhibition chair Karen Hanmer.

“The curator’s challenge is to find a theme that will inspire potential venues, viewers and exhibitors alike,” Hanmer explained. “For a Guild of Book Workers members’ exhibition, the theme must also be one that inspires both the most traditional fine binder and the most cutting edge book artist.”

114 Guild members submitted 155 works for consideration. Interpretations included, but were certainly not limited to, a specific incident in or period of history, the future, science fiction, time as a scientific or spiritual concept, the measurement of time, current events or the role of time in one's own life. A jury of three accomplished binders and book artists narrowed the field to 47. Each juror was then invited to submit one work, for a total of 50 pieces in the exhibition. Jurors had a very difficult time narrowing the field of submissions to less than a third of the original total, working over the course of several weeks to come to a consensus.

“It is an enormous tribute to the creativity and skill of the Guild’s members, I think, that while choosing the final pieces, we each found ourselves advocating for works which fell well outside our personal orientations to the field,” juror Melissa Jay Craig remarked. “Though the choices were extremely difficult, and a number of excellent works could not be included, we have a strong and varied exhibition.”

“I was struck by how much the quality of the submitted works continues to rise, [and] by the wide variety of techniques and metaphors employed,” fellow juror Peter Verheyen observed. “As a genre the book arts are as vital as ever and getting better every day.”

Works on display will include techniques, disciplines and formats ranging from the ancient to the contemporary; from “work in the codex format [to] complex folded structures, wooden constructions, hand-held toys and sculptural objects,” Hanmer said.

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The touring exhibition makes its inaugural appearance at MCBA, and will subsequently travel to eight additional venues across the country, closing in the spring of 2011. A list of additional venues and dates can be viewed at: <http://cool-palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/exhibit/2009exhibit.shtml>

An accompanying exhibition catalog will be available for sale at The Shop at MCBA, featuring full color photographs and complete descriptions of each work; biographies of the artists; remarks from jurors Jeff Altepeter, Melissa Jay Craig and Peter Verheyen; and essays by Karen Hanmer and Guild president James Reid-Cunningham.

“The membership of the Guild of Book Workers continues to be a vital force in both preserving fine tradition and forwarding innovation in book arts generated by keen minds and skilled hands,” Craig affirmed.

BACKGROUND: Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA)

As the largest and most comprehensive center of its kind in the nation, Minnesota Center for Book Arts celebrates the book as a vibrant contemporary art form that takes many shapes. From the traditional crafts of papermaking, letterpress printing and hand bookbinding to experimental artmaking and self-publishing techniques, MCBA supports the limitless creative evolution of book arts through book arts workshops and programming adults, teens, youth, families and teachers.

Through the MCBA artist cooperative, members receive independent 24-hour access to our studios and a wide range of bookbinding, papermaking and printing equipment; the opportunity to share techniques, ideas, feedback and fellowship with a community of working artists; study, teaching, and mentor opportunities; on-site storage; exhibition opportunities; and consignment opportunities in The Shop at MCBA. Other artist programs at MCBA include residencies, fellowships, year-round exhibition programming, lectures and presentations, film screenings, and studio space and equipment rental. The Shop at MCBA features artwork by over 140 consignment artists along with handmade gift items, letterpressed cards, art supplies and more. MCBA is located in the Open Book building in downtown Minneapolis, along with The Loft Literary Center, Rosalux Gallery and Milkweed Editions. For more information, visit www.mnbookarts.org.

BACKGROUND: Guild of Book Workers (GBW, the Guild)

The Marking Time is the first exhibition held during the second century of the Guild of Book Workers. The Guild was founded in 1906 in New York City. Founding members came from all of the book trades, including illuminating, printing, calligraphy, papermaking, and bookbinding, and well as designers of type, finishing tools, book covers and bookplates. During the first year, membership numbered over 100, and by 1907 the Guild had members from many states and from France, England, and Russia. Now, with ten regional chapters and approximately 1000 members internationally, the Guild encompasses all aspects of the book arts, including bookbinding, calligraphy, paper decoration, and conservation. The Guild mounts major triennial traveling exhibitions featuring juried work by members, both established masters and gifted emerging artists. Jurors are noted traditional binders, book artists, arts educators and library special collections curators.

For more information, visit <http://cool-palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw>.

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