



STORYTELLING TAKES SHAPE



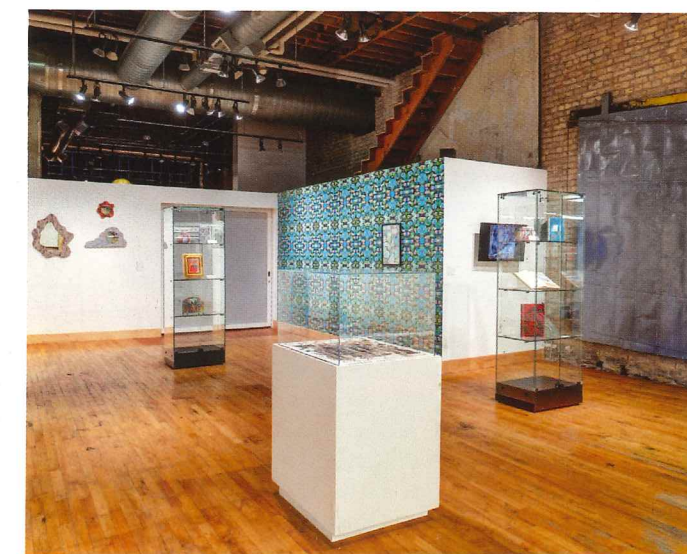
TOP: Pulling prints for Playing with Words event, 2019
mnbookarts.org/playing-with-words-pr
 ABOVE: Ebru paper marbling with Sally Power

Book Arts have evolved over the last few decades as evidenced by the continuing growth of book arts organizations, exhibitions, workshops, and collections. The expansive use of materials, tools, and techniques has broadened the concept of artists' books in dimensionality and presence—from handheld tomes to environmental installations. These four organizations demonstrate the scope of this flourishing field.

MINNESOTA CENTER FOR BOOK ARTS

Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA) was established in 1984 after two years of planning by book artists, enthusiasts, and supporters. Conceived as a space where artists could create and exhibit, it outgrew its original location after 15 years and joined with The Loft Literary Center and Milkweed Editions in 2000 as a founding tenant of Open Book, the first extensive literary and book arts facility in the US. "We believe creative expressions in book arts is open to all people," said Torey Erin, director of exhibitions and artist programs. "MCBA is an inclusive space for people at all levels and backgrounds, from novices to professional artists. Our goal is to generate space for everyone."

MCBA annually serves more than 80,000 students and adults of all ages from across the state, with programs for every skill level, including 13,000 K-12 students. Specialized services are



TOP: Open Book Takeover at MCBA with social advocate and activist Amos Paul Kennedy, Jr., 2017
mnbookarts.org/open-book-takeover-2
 CENTER: Ruthann Godollei, *The Wish Machine*, MCBA Outlook Gallery, 2020
 BOTTOM: Mimic: Modern Marbled Objects, MCBA Main Gallery, 2019 mnbookarts.org/mimic-pr

available with the MCBA Artist Collective Membership which offers 24/7 studio and equipment access, on-site storage, Art-Share sessions with MCBA staff and Artist Collective members, the opportunity to exhibit in the annual Artist Collective exhibition in MCBA's Main Gallery, and a generous consignment split on work accepted for The Shop at MCBA, as well as discounts on workshops.

Access to equipment is a vital part of MCBA's mission. Experienced artists can rent the MCBA's equipment and studio space by the hour. The studios are equipped with many presses including several Vandercook presses, plus guillotine cutters, bindery equipment, paper beaters, and hydraulic presses. MCBA offers Studio Labs, bi-monthly open studio events for letterpress, marbling, and screen printing. "The marbling lab is the most popular," said Erin. "It appeals to a broad group, it is trendy, it is messy, and not always convenient to do at home."

MCBA offers three different fellowships each year. The McKnight fellowship for Minnesota-based mid-career artists comes with an unrestricted stipend of \$25,000, 24/7 studio access, participation in panel discussions, travel expenses for one conference that year, and MCBA membership. The Jerome Residency encourages new work for three early career Minnesota artists. The recipients receive studio access for one year and participate in group critiques with MCBA staff and guests and a culminating exhibition in MCBA's Main Gallery. The MCBA/MCAD Collegiate Fellowship is a six-week summer program for Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) seniors and graduate students to complete projects. It comes with a project stipend and the opportunity to sell work in The Shop at MCBA.

MCBA presents six to seven exhibitions in the Main Gallery each year, with five to six exhibitions in the Outlook Gallery, so named because of its window facing Washington Avenue in downtown Minneapolis. Of the Main Gallery exhibitions, four are related to the artist's programs, and one each for the Jerome early career artist programs, the annual Artist Collective exhibition, the biennial MCBA Prize, and the biennial Minnesota Book Artist Award in partnership with the Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library.

Three exhibitions curated by Erin are generated from proposals or the MCBA task force, and/or traveling exhibitions or partnerships with other curators and organizations. Erin has a background in filmography and, with her team, has created the online galleries. She is assembling one-minute videos for the artists to talk about their work in the exhibitions.

"Going forward, hybrid programming with virtual workshops is in the works," explained Erin. "Virtual workshops are an opportunity to engage a much broader audience. Participation in the 2020 virtual workshops was international. People are hungry for virtual learning, but we will keep the in-person workshops, too." The MCBA website offers tutorials and a series of how-to videos along with information about all the available workshops. mnbookarts.org