

Jo Cook & Perro Verlag Books by
Artists: The Unreadable Sacred

NOV 14, 2023 - FEB 10, 2024

SFU GALLERY

Exhibition Text

Is finding a larger and larger audience for one's work so important? Couldn't small, local editions contribute to change as much as larger print runs? [...] I think local small presses can work with whatever size community they find themselves in to invent ways of doing / making things that call into question just that: "the difference between reality and our perception of reality."

— Jo Cook¹

The late Jo Cook extended her own artistic practice of printmaking, collage, painting and paper-based works into an array of artist book publishing centered on the premise of collaboration and reciprocity. Her dedicated contributions to the camaraderie of artist-led publishing included curating and organizing artist book exhibitions across numerous literary and visual arts community-driven spaces on the West Coast, including The Regional Assembly of Text, Lucky's Comics, Ministry of Casual Living, and others.

Together with artist Wesley Mulvin, Perro Verlag Books by Artists supported the publication of generative exchanges in editorial, typographic, and artistic experimentation. Through an artistic practice and letter press studio established on Mayne Island, and often using Cook's variable pseudonyms—Bucky Fleur, Florentine Perro, and Frances Zorn—Perro Verlag produced and distributed many artists' works and series, including *The Hell Passport Project* (2006-2008), *Collected Works of Frances Zorn* (2014), *Optophonetic Poetics Initiative and Documents of Psychic Amateurs* (DoPA) projects (2010).

Cook described Perro Verlag (perro translates to "dog" in Spanish and verlag to "publishing house" in German) as a press "that recognizes the importance of unstable thoughts and impractical, possibly visionary intentions," which emphasized the ulterior

possibilities of print found within the conversant spaces of marginalia, annotation, citation, and multiplicitous authorial, editorial, and serial print monikers.

The Unreadable Sacred pairs selected prints, paintings, and paper works by Jo Cook along with Perro Verlag Books by Artists held in the Simon Fraser University Special Collections and Rare Books.

In partnership with W.A.C. Bennett Library Special Collections and Rare Books, SFU Burnaby

Curated by Kristy Trinier with research assistance from Wesley Mulvin and Kasper Feyrer

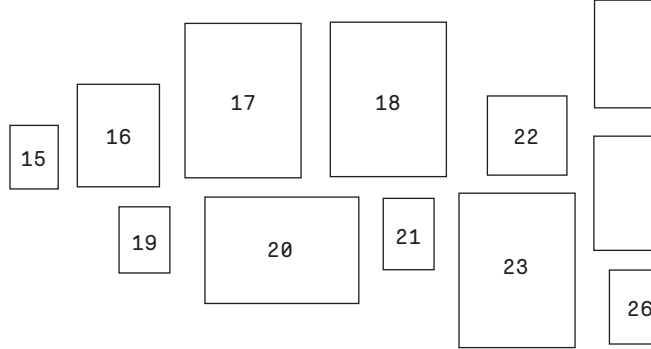
¹ *The Capilano Review* 3.28, Winter 2016.

List of Works

1. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Abstractions in red and white)*, n.d.
Collage and gouache, mixed media on black paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin
2. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Abstractions in red, white, blue and yellow)*, n.d.
Collage and gouache, mixed media on black paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin
3. Perro Verlag Books by Artists, *The Hell Passport Project*, n.d.
19 chapbooks, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin
4. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Gill of good red wine...)*, n.d.
Collage and ink, mixed media on paper, framed, Courtesy of Kasper Feyrer and Wesley Mulvin
5. Jo Cook, *The Greatest Bodies of the World*, n.d.
Five original publication pages with unbound cover, ink and gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin
6. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Collage on unbound book pages of Télémaque/Telemachus, Book II, a discourse on epic poetry)*, n.d.
Four double-fold publication pages from Les Aventures De Télémaque, Fils D'ulyse, Vol. 2, ink & gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin
7. Ed Varney, *The Book of Nada (Mayne Island: Perro Verlag)*, 2011
Illustrations by Jo Cook, edition 239 of 250
Courtesy of W.A.C. Bennett Library Special Collection and Rare Books at SFU Burnaby
8. Perro Verlag Books by Artists, *The Hell Passport Project*, n.d.
24 chapbooks with box covered with handmade paper
Courtesy of W.A.C. Bennett Library Special Collection and Rare Books at SFU Burnaby
9. Derek Beaulieu, *Quartet for 6 voices*, n.d.
Perro Verlag Books by Artists, edition of 50, signed
Courtesy of W.A.C. Bennett Library Special Collection and Rare Books at SFU Burnaby
10. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Spider with vases)*, 1998
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

Exhibition Map





11. Jo Cook, *Untitled*
(*Geometric abstractions in yellow*), n.d.

Gouache on black and white photograph, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

12. Jo Cook, *Untitled*
(*Geometric abstractions in blue*), n.d.

Gouache on black and white photograph, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

13. Jo Cook, *Untitled*
(*Geometric abstractions in red*), n.d.

N.d., gouache on black and white photograph, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

14. Jo Cook, *Untitled*
(*Abstractions in blue and yellow*), n.d.

Gouache on paper, reproduced

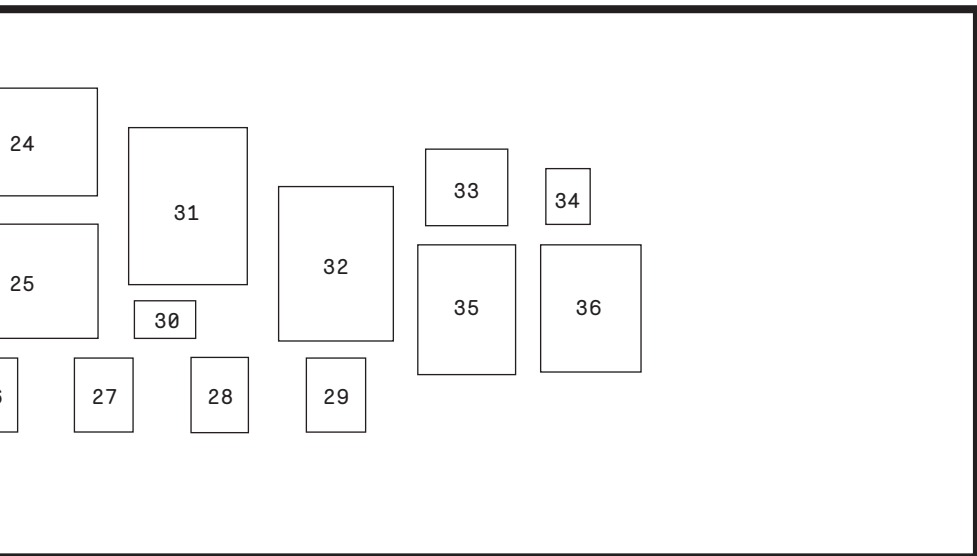
as graphic print, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

15. Jo Cook, *Untitled* (*Shadows with geometric figure*), n.d.
Photograph with collage, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

16. Jo Cook, *Untitled* (*Otter or Lizard Person*), n.d.
Oil on canvas, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

17. Jo Cook, *Untitled* (*Three Fish*), n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

18. Jo Cook, *Untitled* (*Pulsing moon visions with son Brad*), n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin



19. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Blue Serpent Woman)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

20. Jo Cook, *Untitled (The serpent, the cord between)*, n.d.
Charcoal on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

21. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Brad portrait)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

22. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Wesley reclining)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

23. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Fan red and black)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, monoprint, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

24. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Venus with moon)*, n.d.
Charcoal on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

25. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Watercolour nude in garden w Wesley and labyrinth)*, 1989-1991
Gouache on paper with collaged woodcut, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

26. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Figure within lab equipment)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

27. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Fluids with lab equipment)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

List of Works

28. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Lab equipment with black and red dots)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

29. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Egg person with lab equipment and fluids)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

30. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Multi-breasted Fig. 3L)*, n.d.
Ink on rice paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

31. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Woman holding laboratory vessel with couple entwined)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

32. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Snout-faces w labware and letter cloud)*, n.d.
Watercolour with collage, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

33. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Eye with red border)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

34. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Egg Person)*, n.d.
Gouache on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

35. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Siobhan portrait in red)*, n.d.
Black ink on red paper, monoprint, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

36. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Siobhan portrait in yellow)*, n.d.
Black ink on yellow paper, monoprint, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

37. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Beekeeping study)*, n.d.
Ink on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

38. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Bay Leaf)*, n.d.
Watercolour on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

39. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Maple from Mayne Island - cut down, Study 1)*, n.d.
Watercolour on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

40. Jo Cook, *Untitled (Maple from Mayne Island - cut down, Study 2)*, n.d.
Watercolour on paper, Courtesy of Wesley Mulvin

Biography

Jo Cook (1946-2021) was an artist publisher based in Mayne Island, BC, preceded by years of practice in Vancouver with the Vancouver Women's Book Store and other community publishing projects. After attending Printed Matter in New York in 1978, Cook amassed a vast collection of zines, comix, artists books, posters, and flyers. In 2004 she curated *(self)Publish or Perish* for Open Space in Victoria, *Cyclops Dreams* (with Owen Plummer) for Access Gallery, and *Tales from the Cyclops Library* for Third Space Gallery in St John. She organized exhibitions at Lucky's Comics and the lowercase reading room in Vancouver. Cook participated in artist residencies in Tabor, Czech Republic; Tallinn, Estonia; and at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. She was the Artists' Books Research Resident (ABRRR) at Emily Carr University of Art + Design in 2016.

In 2005, Wesley Mulvin and Jo Cook founded Perro Verlag Books by Artists. Perro Verlag has published over 125 titles including comics, zines, poetry chapbooks, pamphlets, broadsides, and works of short fiction by artists and authors including Derya Akay, derek beaulieu, Brandy Fedoruk, Kasper Feyrer, Ted Hiebert, Doug Jarvis, Demi London, Petra Poldlahová, Sally Rees, Jackson Two Bears, and James Whitman.

Events

Closing Reception, Reading and Tour with Kathy Slade:

Jo Cook & Perro Verlag Books by Artists

SAT FEB 10 / 2 - 4PM

SFU Gallery

Join artist Kathy Slade and SFU Galleries Curator Kristy Trinier for a reading and exhibition tour of Jo Cook & Perro Verlag Books by Artists: The Unreadable Sacred.

Kathy Slade is an artist, writer, curator, editor, and publisher. She works across mediums and has produced textile works, prints, sculpture, film, video, performance, music projects, and publications. She was the founding editor of Emily Carr University Press; founder of READ Books at Libby Leshgold Gallery; and is co-founding director of Publication Studio Vancouver. Slade is an alumna of Simon Fraser University and the European Graduate School. She is Assistant Professor at SFU's School for the Contemporary Arts. Slade received the VIVA Award in 2009.

Bibliography

Florian Cramer and Janneke Wesseling, *Making Matters: A Vocabulary for Collective Arts* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Valiz Books), 2022

Simon Cutts, *The Small Press Model*, (Axminster, UK: Uniformbooks), 2023

Dani D'Emilia, Vanessa Andreotti and GTDF Collective, *Co-Sensing with Radical Tenderness* (Publication Studio Sao Paulo), 2020

Sarah De Bondt and Fraser Muggeridge eds., *The Form of the Book* (Occasional Papers), 2015

Perro Verlag Books by Artists, *The Hell Passport Project* (Mayne Island, BC: Perro Verlag Books by Artists), 2006-2008

Yulia Popova ed., *How Many Female Type Designers Do You Know?* (Eindhoven, The Netherlands: Onomatopee Projects), 2021

Kyle Schlesinger ed., *A Poetics of The Press: Interviews with Poets, Printers, & Publishers* (New York, NY: Ugly Duckling Presse), 2021

Oscar Tuazon, *The Social Life of the Book #1* (Paris, France: Paraguay Press), 2011-2015

Rob Van Leijssen, *Copy, tweak, paste: methods of appropriation in re-enacted artists' books* (les presses du réel), 2020

Situated in Vancouver and Burnaby, SFU Galleries occupies the unceded territories of x̣ṃəθkwəỵəm, Skwxwú7mesh, Səḷíḷwətał, and ḳʷiḳʷəχəm Nations. Acknowledging that the activities of SFU Galleries unfold on colonized Indigenous territories is both a recognition that settler colonialism is an ongoing structure and a commitment to support the capacity of art to unsettle these conditions.

SFU Galleries is generously supported by Simon Fraser University, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the British Columbia Arts Council, along with numerous foundations, community partners, donors, and volunteers. We are especially grateful for the visionary support of the Marianne and Edward Gibson Trust.



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