

# W H Y I LOVE BOOKS



## THE ARTWORKS OF CHARLES HOBSON

*Introduction by* BARRY LOPEZ

SUZANNE ROYCE SILK, *Curator*

## BOLINAS MUSEUM

SEPTEMBER 21 *to* NOVEMBER 17, 2002

Introduction

# THE COMPASS ROSE

Barry Lopez



THE BOOK IS THE CONTAINER FOR THE IDEA but, like the skull, is an idea all its own. It is the suitcase that makes the idea portable, the pyx that allows the divine – Dante’s *Commedia*, Goethe’s *Faust* – to be slipped into a pocket.

The physical book, by its heft or an ill-chosen typeface, may intrude upon the idea. Or by the crackle of its folic pages it might augment the story or symbolize its meaning. By its gilded or worn or hand-tooled look it may arrest us across a room, a bird’s unexpected call from the corner of a table, the first part of an antiphony. You open its pages.

Or it may stand spine-out on a shelf, racked liked so many uniformed messengers, innocuous as sand.

What, though, would we have if the messenger were to speak as profoundly, as singularly to us, as the message it was designed to convey? What if it bore no message beyond itself? What if the hollow skull shone with intelligence? What if the vessel were the wine?

*Why I Love Books: The Artworks of Charles Hobson*  
in exhibition from September 21 to November 17, 2002  
at the Bolinas Museum, 48 Wharf Road, Bolinas, California 94924  
with a companion exhibition from October 1 to October 31, 2002  
at the Grabhorn Institute in the Presidio of San Francisco, California  
and in exhibition at  
Chowan College, Murfreesboro, North Carolina  
April 2 – 30, 2003

Cover and title page: *Dancing with Amelia*, 2000.  
(Front cover.) Pastel and laser cutout, 8.75 x 6.5 inches.

Back cover: *Dancing with Amelia*, 2000.  
(Back cover.) Pastel and laser cutout, 8.75 x 6.5 inches.

All artwork by Charles Hobson unless otherwise noted.

*Why I Love Books*  
© Copyright 2002 Charles Hobson.

Introduction © Copyright 2002 by Barry Holstun Lopez.  
All rights reserved.

The excerpts from the letters *To Louise* on pages 10 and 12 are  
reprinted by permission of the publishers from *Letters of Gustave  
Flaubert, 1830-1857*, Francis Steegmuller, translator, Cambridge, MA:  
Harvard University Press, © Copyright 1980 by Francis Steegmuller.  
The passages, *Louise’s Response* on pages 10 and 12 are from *Flaubert’s  
Parrot* by Julian Barnes, © Copyright 1984 by Julian Barnes, reprinted  
by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Excerpts from the poem  
entitled *Impromptu* on pages 24 and 25 are reprinted by permission  
of the authors, © Copyright 1994 by Kathy Evans and Tom Centolella.



A MAN SITS IN A SILK ROBE in the sunshine, recovering from a blow that has taken other men away but not him. In the light air (it could be a garden in Tangier or Montmartre but this is on a hill above the Golden Gate) he studies a hybrid perpetual rose, Général Jacqueminot, undisturbed by any wind. Its petals are the chalice for a red dense as the aftermath of a liqueur.

THE MAN TURNS HIS FACE into the stream of August light, a torrent against which he must shut his eyes. He does not separate the blood red from the petal, the stillness from the intensity, the blossom from the way it escapes its surround, more alive than any rose in an index of such beasts is permitted to be.

HE IMAGINES in the flower, this container, an exegesis for beauty requiring no word. He envisions a poem scribed on silver foil rolled tight within the petals, like a kind of bullet. And tall red doors that open sidelong into the eighteenth century. And how like insight the sudden jolt of a perfume (which he just now catches) can be. With these inklings his fingers mime the transparent air, anticipating the folds in a sheet of Twin Rocker paper that will suggest the layers of meaning in what appears to be a rose but which on completion could be a baseball, or a ladder to yet another window.

It does not occur to him not to trust the concatenation he imagines, only to follow the line of his translation to its reification. He is without hesitation. He does not need to know the color of anything. It does not come to him that he is forging a path across a meadow, nor that there is any particular direction to go. He will appreciate it from the outside in or the inside out or with the upside down.

In his studio a few moments later (or in the decade to come or yesterday), the hybrid rose a Polaroid pinned to the wall, he will embark on his navigations. He will speak again with Degas, he will wonder about escorting Leonardo to box seats at Pac Bell Park for an afternoon game against the Dodgers. He will read an obscure story, translated from the Croatian, and with watercolors and no line extract from it a plausible, even intensifying, *dramatis personae* the author has never met.

He will offer us a traverse within his familiar theme of navigation – the compass points, the soundings – all of it worked so neatly together that it's hard to tell, anymore, book from idea. Or the art from the craft. They're as alchemical as a sixteenth-century rutter, a *portolano*.

He places the artist's book alongside the writer's book, icons of an identical faith in the ability to speak what cannot be pronounced, to demonstrate what cannot be shown.

In Charles Hobson's inventions, in their palimpsests and acrobatics, their synecdoche and allusion, are the records of our passion. In these compact excursions we can locate the familiar frames of our knowing – history, physics, the metaphysics of the human couple. In his finely tailored observations we rediscover what we mean by our books.



Pages 3, 4 and 5:  
*Rose & Chart*, 1994, pastel / monotype / collage  
on sixteenth-century chart of Gulf of Mexico. 9 x 13.5 inches. (Details).

Barry Lopez is the author of many books of fiction and nonfiction, including *ABOUT THIS LIFE*, *FIELD NOTES*, and *ARCTIC DREAMS*, for which he won the National Book Award.



## WHY I LOVE BOOKS

It all began when my friend Bruce Nelson died. As a tribute to him, several other friends and I organized a small book of his writing and had it printed at a local poetry press. It was my first experience with making a book. It was a revelation.



*Papers*, 1984. Essays by Bruce Nelson. Introduction by Charles Hobson. Designed by Alicen Armstrong. Typeset and printed at the West Coast Print Center, Berkeley, CA. 7.25 x 5 inches. Edition of 300.

I've now worked with the book as an important expressive medium for more than fifteen years. There's an enormous variety of possibilities when one comes to tackle an artistic idea using the book format. Each project is

in some way completely new in its challenges. The materials that come to hand often lead to unsuspected insights into the subject matter. The more the cover and pages and sewing and images link together with the meaning of the book, the more the book is provocative and expressive.

If you conceive of a book as a medium of expression, like sculpture or painting, you'll notice that a book has unique qualities. It has *sequence* and *flow*, it naturally combines *word and image*, and it has *sculptural qualities*.

*Sequence* means one thing comes before another. It affects the narrative impact in dramatic ways. *Flow* offers the opportunity to create a cadence or melody. Is the page full to the brim? Or, is there only a single word on the page? A kind of music arises from such placement. Combining *word and image* heightens the creative effect of either picture or text alone. It's a case of  $1 + 1 = 3$ . Moreover a book's *sculptural qualities* offer surprising opportunities to present and enhance the creative notions inherent in its subject.

I try to engage all of these aspects in bringing an artist's book into being. I hope the overview here of the work I've done offers examples of this and provides a kind of map of how I got from the tragedy of a friend's death to more than twenty books published and more than a decade of teaching about artist's books at the San Francisco Art Institute.

1984

*Papers*



I saw in making Bruce Nelson's book that an ordinary person has within his grasp the capability to accomplish such a feat. The small volume we published of his essays entitled *Papers* had a quiet but forceful design. A motif on the cover invoked the edges of a stack of pages. A single wavy line at the top of the cover was repeated inside on some text pages, ephemeral and powerful, like an EKG of an idea. In *Papers* I saw for the first time the subtleties and refinements that make even such a small venture successful, both aesthetically and emotionally. I found in the process a gift from Bruce – that a book is an expressive medium of great potential.

1985

*A Supper in Montmartre*

At the time of *Papers* my training as a visual artist had included painting with acrylic and oil, watercolor, ceramic sculpture and printmaking, especially etching and monotype. And now I wanted to learn more about books. My friend, the book artist Marie Dern, suggested



Albion Handpress

I look into a seminar class at UC Berkeley taught in the Bancroft Library's rare book room about the history of the handmade book. In that class of five students I helped print a small single signature book entitled *A Supper in Montmartre* on an 1857 Albion hand press.



André Salmon

The text was a memoir by Harriet Lane Levy recounting the legendary dinner party given by Picasso for the artist Henri Rousseau in 1908. Part of the story involved the inebriated and frantic departure of the poet André Salmon, who had been Harriet's dinner partner.

Intoxicated by her conversation and charm, as well as good French wine, he left the table in disarray and raced out of the room. Picasso and the other dinner guests rushed to the window to see the poet running down the street.

On his way out he had chewed off the roses on the stylish turban Harriet had worn to the dinner. The etching of an imagined turban and roses on an antique hat rack became my first illustration for a book.



*Harriet's Turban*, 1985. Etching. 7.25 x 2.75 inches. Edition of 30.

1986  
Monotypes

As I became more sensitive to the relationship of word and image, my work in printmaking began to focus on the monotype, a method I began to frequently use in my artist's books. Bay Area artist Joseph Goldyne introduced me both to the methods of the monotype and to the extensive use Edgar Degas made of the medium.

A monotype is made by painting with etching inks (an equivalent to oil paints) on a flat surface, such as an acrylic sheet or copper plate. A dampened piece of paper is then placed on the plate and run through a press. The process produces a one-of-a-kind print, hence the term *monotype*. A second impression from the plate is

possible but it's much fainter and is commonly referred to as a *ghost*.

Working on a clear acrylic surface such as Plexiglas allows a line drawing to be made with an ink pen on the back side of the plate. The line acts as a guide for repeated paintings if one wishes. In this way a monotype can be used to repeat an image a number of times for editioning a book, though each inking produces a unique work. Frequently I add pastel or acrylic paint to the completed monotype. The images below combine the ghost and first impression version of a portrait of Chopin which was used in *Parisian Encounters* (see page 27).



First impression monotype  
without pastel handcoloring.



Ghost impression monotype  
with pastel handcoloring.



Chopin/George Sand 1, 1992  
Pastel/monotype/collage.  
30 x 24 inches.

1988  
*Flaubert & Louise*

Experimenting with the monotype led to my first full scale artist's book created while working as an artist-in-residence at Limestone Press in San Francisco. I had become fascinated with the role of the muse and lover on reading about Flaubert's relationship with Louise Colet in Julian Barnes' 1984 novel, *Flaubert's Parrot*. Further reading, including Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Perpetual Orgy*, Flaubert's own *Madame Bovary*, and his letters to Louise Colet fueled my interest.

Gustave Flaubert met Louise Colet in the summer of 1846 as she posed in the studio of the sculptor James Pradier. Louise, then thirty-six, was eleven years older than Flaubert. She was an established poet in Parisian literary society – and beautiful. He was twenty-four, unknown and unpublished and was living with his mother in Croisset, a riverside suburb of Rouen.

The ambience of the studio with the beautiful model led him, Flaubert later remarked, "to slide down the slope." They spent the next few days and nights together after which he returned to Croisset. He was captivated, he would tell her by "your ringlets dancing on

your white shoulders, your blue dress, your arms, your face, your everything."

The pattern of their physical relationship was soon set. Gustave asserted it was "impossible" for him to live in Paris. Louise constantly struggled to draw him there.

As a consequence the relationship between the two engendered a correspondence which reveals the birth process of Flaubert's great novel. It also reveals a turbulent relationship of great passion and idiosyncrasy.

In formulating the images for the book I adopted the French "language of flowers" as

a theme, a connection inspired by Barnes' *Flaubert's Parrot*. Excerpts from Barnes' novel also provided the text for Louise Colet's voice responding to five of Flaubert's actual letters. (Her original letters to him had been destroyed.)

The text for the book, therefore, comes from a selection of Flaubert's actual words while Louise's are those of a nineteenth century female mediated by Julian Barnes, a twentieth century male. Bear this in mind when you read the following excerpts.

Following pages:  
*The Rose* and *The Last Letter* from *Flaubert & Louise*, 1988.  
Pastel/Monotype. Page spread, 15 x 22 inches. Edition of 18.



Louise Colet (Detail), 1842.  
Painting by Adèle Grasset.



Gustave Flaubert (Detail), 1866.  
Drawing by Eugène Giraud.

*Sunday Morning, 10 o'clock  
Croisset, August 9, 1846*

*To Louise*

*Your apartment resembles one I had in Paris for almost two years at 19 rue de l'Est. When you pass that way, look up at the second floor. From there too there was a view over Paris. On summer nights I used to look up at the stars, and in winter at the luminous mist of the great city floating above the houses. Just as from your windows, I saw gardens, roofs, the surrounding hills. When I walked into your house it seemed to me I was reliving my past, that I had returned to one of those beautiful, sad twilights of 1843, when I would sit at my window for a little air, utterly bored, deathly depressed. If only I had known you then! Why could that not have been? I was free, alone, without family or mistress, for I have never had a mistress. You will think that I am lying. I have never been more scrupulously truthful, and this is the reason why, the grotesque aspects of love have always kept me from indulging in it. At times I have wanted to give pleasure to women, but the idea of the strange spectacle I must be presenting at that moment made me laugh so much that all my desire melted under the fire of irony, which sang a hymn of bitter derision within me. It is only with you that I have not yet laughed at myself. Yes, I often think I hear your dress rustling behind me on my rug; I tremble, and turn around – and it's my curtain rustling in the wind, as though you were entering the room. Adieu, my darling, I have just gone down into the garden and gathered this little rose I send you, I kiss it; put it quickly to your mouth, and then – you know where . . . Adieu! A thousand kisses. I am yours from night to day, from day to night.*

Louise's Response

He used to send me flowers. Special flowers; the convention of an unconventional lover. He sent me a rose once. He gathered it one Sunday morning at Croisset from a hedge in his garden. "I kiss it," he wrote. "Put it quickly to your mouth, and then – you know where . . . Adieu! A thousand kisses. I am yours from night to day, from day to night." Who could resist such sentiments? I kissed the rose, and that night, in bed, I placed it where he desired me to. In the morning, when I awoke, the rose had by the motions of the night been reduced to its fragrant parts. The sheets smelt of Croisset – that place which I did not yet know would be forbidden to me; there was a petal between two of my toes, and a thin scratch down the inside of my right thigh. Gustave, eager and clumsy as he was, had forgotten to smooth the stem of the rose.





## THE LAST LETTER

*To Louise*

*Paris, March 6, 1855*

*Madame, I was told that you took the trouble to come here to see me three times last evening.*

*I was not in. And, fearing lest persistence expose you to humiliation, I am bound by the rules of politeness to warn you that I shall never be in.*

*Yours,  
G. F.*

*Tuesday morning.*

Louise's Response

Why did he humiliate me so? It was not, I believe, as is frequently the case in love, that those qualities which initially charmed him – my vivacity, my freedom, my sense of equality with men – eventually came to irritate him. . . . He feared me because he feared himself. He feared that he might love me completely. It was not simply terror that I might invade his study and his solitude; it was terror that I might invade his heart. He was cruel because he wanted to drive me away; but he wanted to drive me away because he feared that he might love me completely. I will tell you my secret belief: that for Gustave, in a way he only half-apprehended, I represented life, and that his rejection of me was the more violent because it provoked in him the deepest shame. I argued, I fought, but he wanted to believe that happiness was impossible; it gave him some strange consolation.



1990

*Leonardo Knows Baseball*

Inspired by Degas and his use of monotypes I began to wonder what scene, like that of the racetrack, would have attracted Degas' attention if he had lived in the late 20th century? Would it be the baseball park?

Bearing this thought in mind I learned that when Degas was twenty-five he traveled in Italy and looked extensively at figures in Renaissance paintings – the figure in motion. This led me to look at the writing about drawing the human figure by Renaissance artists – and to Leonardo's notebooks.



Edgar Degas, *Racehorses before the Stands*, 1866-72. (Detail)



*Sun/Fielder*, 1989. Soft ground etching, 6.5 x 4.25 inches.

There I found the words: "The first picture was nothing but a simple line drawn around the shadow of a man made by the sun on a wall." This sparked the idea to combine Leonardo's words with images of baseball players. I wanted to show the relationship between the acuity of Leonardo's observations and the timeless lyricism of the human body in action.

The book employs an accordion binding which permits one to see in a glance the entire cycle of a play: The pitch, the hit, the fielding, the run and the call. And conceptually, it makes Leonardo seem very contemporary and baseball seem ageless. *Leonardo Knows Baseball* was first published as a limited edition of twenty copies with soft ground etchings derived from monotype "sketches."

Early in 1990 Chronicle Books of San Francisco decided to publish a "trade edition." What does that mean? In large part it means that photomechanical processes take over the production of the book from hand made processes. Since the preliminary monotype sketches could be easily reproduced photographically they were used in the trade edition instead of the etchings. A trade edition also means that ten thousand copies could be produced to sell for \$14.95 versus twenty copies at \$1,500. There is, of course, a distinct difference in the feel of the trade edition, but it is a completely satisfying rendition of the concept of the original, including the use of the accordion binding.



*Leonardo Knows Baseball*, 1990. Cover, Chronicle Books Trade Ed., 10 x 7 inches.

Following pages from *Leonardo Knows Baseball*, 1990.  
*OUT/Pitcher* #5, 9.25 x 6.75 inches,  
*WIN/Batter* #5, 8.25 x 5.75 inches,  
*YES/Umpire* #1, 7 x 6.75 inches,  
each Pastel/Monotype.



AS REGARDS THE MOVEMENT OF THE ARMS AND LEGS . . . SHOW THE ACTION PROCEEDING BY DEGREES AND TAKING EFFECT OVER THE SETS OF JOINTS; THAT IS, THOSE OF THE FOOT, THE KNEE, THE HIP AND THE NECK.

LEONARDO, 1481





DRAW THE POSES OF PEOPLE  
AND THE PARTS OF THEIR  
BODIES SO AS TO DISPLAY THE  
INTENT OF THEIR MINDS.

LEONARDO, 1483



IF YOU WISH TO DEPICT A BRUTAL  
MAN, MAKE HIM WITH FIERCE  
MOVEMENTS FLINGING OUT HIS  
ARMS.

LEONARDO, 1510

1991

*Variation on the Word SLEEP*

Some years ago a friend gave me a copy of Margaret Atwood's poem invoking the images of sleep and dreams. It remained pinned on my studio wall and was frequently re-read while I struggled to find a visual key to using it in a book. On a trip to Florence, Italy, I wandered into a small shop that made elegant unfinished wooden boxes and bought several.

I saw no immediate connection to the Atwood poem, but when I returned home I began experimenting with



Shop Window, Florence, Italy, 1990.

them and sensed the box might hold the solution to the poem's puzzle. I painted one black and felt that it invoked the darkness of sleep. I then made an image of a rower on an accordion page that would fold into the box.

Unexpected connections with the monotype arose. The red shirt reflected in the water became a flame connecting to the lines of the poem, "[I would like] to row you back carefully, a flame in two cupped hands . . ."



*Variation on the Word SLEEP* (Detail), 1991.  
Pastel/monotype. 6.25 x 12 inches (image).

The stairlike shape of the accordion seen from above relates to the line "I would like to follow you up the long stairway again . . ." And the folds of the accordion seemed to me to catch the sense of folding into and out of sleep.

Initially Margaret Atwood's agent refused permission to use the poem saying Ms. Atwood never allowed her poems to be "illustrated." Discouraged I sent her the prototype and begged. The response came back, mercifully: "Okay. If you send us two copies."



*Variation on the Word SLEEP*, 1991.  
Poem by Margaret Atwood. Pastel/monotype on accordion in lacquered box.  
Edition of 20. 7 x 5.25 x 2.25 inches.

1991

*Degas Dancing*

My fascination with Degas grew, fueled by his compelling work using the monotype medium. The history of his face, recorded in photographs and self-portraits led me to construct an anecdotal biography. I made a series of portrait monotypes of Degas showing the transitions as he aged. I wanted to convey the rich visual life he led and used overprints of graphic fragments of his drawings on my monotypes.



*Young Degas, AP I, from Degas Dancing, 1991.*  
Pastel/monotype. 14 x 8.5 inches (image).

*from the journal of Edmond de Goncourt*

“Spent yesterday in the studio of a bizarre painter, Degas by name. After many efforts and attempts, false starts in all directions, he has become enamored of the modern, and within the modern, his choice has fallen upon laundresses and ballet girls.

The painter shows us his pictures, occasionally illustrating his commentary by the imitation of a choreographic gesture, by mimicking – to use the expression of the girls themselves – one of their *arabesques*. And it is really very entertaining to see him, on his toes, his arms curved, mingling the aesthetics of the ballet master with those of the painter, invoking Velasquez’s tender mud and Mantegna’s silhouettes. An original fellow, this Degas, sickly, neurotic, near-sighted to the point of losing his vision altogether; but thereby eminently sensitive to the repercussion of things, responsive to their character.”

In homage to Degas’ existence in the studio I adopted an accordion that worked as an easel. His portraits were set against anecdotes about his life using his own words and those of others to illuminate how he saw himself and how he was seen by his contemporaries.



*Degas Dancing, 1991.*  
Easel Accordion.  
Edition of 10.  
15.5 x 11.75 x 1 inches.



*Degas's Dance, #10, from Degas Dancing, 1991.*  
Pastel/monotype. 14 x 8.75 inches (image).

*from “Degas and his Model”*  
*by Alice Michel*

“The sitting continued in silence until Pauline, tired of performing gymnastics on one leg, asked for a rest.

As she moved around the stove, she tried to remember the tune of the minuet. Not succeeding, she said:

‘Monsieur Degas, would you mind teaching me that very pretty tune you were singing just now?’

‘Of course not, my dear girl. I’ll sing it for you.’

He stood in front of Pauline and as he sang the tune of the minuet he bowed to her; laughing, she did the same, amused at the comical spectacle they presented: she, quite naked, wearing only a pair of sandals on her feet, and he, an old white-haired man wearing his long sculptor’s smock. Degas seemed blissfully happy. When the minuet was over, he seized the model by both hands and twirled her round as he began to sing an old French song.”



1991  
*The Napoleon  
 Series*



*Napoleon Series No. 1, 1991.*  
 (Detail), Pastel, monotype, collage.

As an artist-in-residence at Smith Anderson Editions in Palo Alto, California, I completed a series of eighteen related pieces using collage and hand colored monotypes which suggested a book-like narrative on a single page.

I had become absorbed with a Jeanette Winterson novel, *The Passion*, a story set in Napoleonic times. There are two main characters: a young soldier who is Napoleon's waiter, and a beautiful young woman from Venice who cross-dresses, loses a wager at cards and is sold into prostitution to Napoleon's troops as they march to Russia. There the heroine meets the waiter and escapes with him to Venice where he kills her protagonist.

I see the waiter as a disguised Napoleon. The young woman is a disguised Josephine. The themes of the

novel as I see them are power and chance. In a series of torn monotypes I used images of boots (from scenes of Napoleon on the battlefield) to represent power and collaged cards (with portraits of Napoleon and Josephine) to represent chance.

The final common element in these pieces is the use of torn edges and enlarged handwriting of Napoleon and Josephine. The layers of torn writing cools the direct impact of the scene and somehow joins the disparate pieces to make all the bits coherent, much like history seems to order the chaos of real events.

The handwriting in many of the pieces comes from the letter of late 1795 that Napoleon wrote to Josephine at seven in the morning after their first night together as lovers:



*Napoleon Series No. 1, 1991.*  
 (Detail) Pastel, monotype, collage.



*Napoleon Series No. 11, 1991. Pastel, monotype, collage. 22 x 30.25 inches.*

*I awaken full of you. Between your portrait and the memory of our intoxicating night, my senses have had no respite. Sweet and incomparable Josephine, what is this bizarre effect you have upon my heart? What if you were to be angry? What if I were to see you sad or troubled? Then my soul would be shattered by distress. Then your lover could find no peace, no rest. But I find none, either when I succumb to the profound emotion that over-*

*whelms me, when I draw up from your lips, from your heart, a flame that consumes me. Ah, it was last night that I realized that your portrait is not you and that . . .*

*You will be leaving the city at noon. But I shall see you in three hours. Until then, MIO DOLCE AMOR, I send you a thousand kisses – but send me none in return, for they set my blood on fire.*

1994

*Impromptu*

Kay Bradner, a friend who is an artist and master printer, and I began working with two poets, Kathy Evans and Tom Centolella during a collaborative residency at the Headlands Art Center. The poets composed a long poem using catch phrases such as “This was the year that . . .” or “I thank my lucky stars for . . .” to initiate their individual writing on a long collaborative poem. They

each wrote independently on rolls of butcher paper as it unrolled into the eaves of an attic studio, shouting out the catch phrases. The separate texts were then interlaced together on ordinary sized pages, sometimes one voice at the top of the page, the other at the bottom and vice versa. The male and female voices and sensibilities remained distinct but fit together in a fascinating way.

If only I could sit for many minutes without distraction.  
If only I could receive transmissions from the past concerning the future.  
If only you would admit to me what I’ve suspected all along.  
If only someone devised a technique to fine-tune the human spirit.  
If only we could be the sacred without having to talk about it.  
If only people realized “the world” refers to themselves.  
If only I would admit to you what I’ve suspected all along.

This was the year mother went invisible.

This was the year  
the Polaroid broke.  
This was the year all the candles  
blew me out,  
the year oil became indispensable,  
and I became inducted, indivertible, and individuated,  
the year I refused to wear blue blazers  
and took up company with taxi drivers, veterinarians,  
mallards, medicine men, and scaups.



*Shoes for Impromptu, 1994.*  
Pastel, monotype, 11.5 x 10 inches.

Kay and I collaborated to create images for the text. We agreed upon six visual motifs from the poem such as “a pair of men’s shoes,” or “a shirt on a chair” and a standard size of image. We then worked apart from each other to create monotypes to the agreed upon size. Then we met and collaged scraps of sheet music from a



Kay Bradner, *Shirt for Impromptu*,  
1991. Pastel/monotype,  
9.25 x 10.75 inches.

Chopin impromptu over the images to relate this extemporaneous musical form with the way the poems were written. The poem and the images were reproduced in a small book without the name of the artist or the poet being assigned to an image or passage of poetry. One has to guess which of us did the images or wrote the words.

If only I could be myself.  
If only I could be you, and you me.  
If only the past were a sobering afterthought.  
If only we were beyond hope and preferred it that way.  
If only we could live the questions.  
If only we were the architects of the day.  
If only nobody were famous, ever.  
If only there were some way to revolutionize without coercion.  
If only suffering were real to those protected from suffering.  
If only the four elements were those to which we best corresponded.

This was the year I lost things:

First, the car keys,  
then the car,  
my manuscript, my waistline, my patience,  
the gold ring on my left hand,  
the gas cap,  
the muffler,  
The Big Dipper,  
the way,  
the very way.



*Shirt for Impromptu, 1994.*  
Pastel, monotype, 11.5 x 10 inches.



1994

*Balzac's Coffee Pot*

I came upon Balzac's story the *Unknown Masterpiece* written in 1832 which anticipated Jackson Pollock and abstract expressionism. The artist and printmaker Larry Thomas and I began a collaborative project around the story. While working on that project I discovered a small piece of writing by Balzac about the importance of

coffee to his creative process. Finding a photograph of Balzac's actual coffee pot I completed a series of monotypes of it and made an accordion book using a greatly enlarged sentence of his handwriting. It flowed like ink across the page, and captured the image he had used to describe the salubrious impact of coffee on his writing.

*Balzac's Coffee Pot*, 1994. Pastel/monotype. Accordion book. 7.25 x 10 x .5 inches. Edition of 5.



Coffee glides into one's stomach and sets all of one's mental processes in motion. One's ideas advance in columns like battalions of the Grande Armée. Memories come up at the double bearing the standards which will lead the troops into battle. The light cavalry deploys at the gallop. The artillery of logic thunders along with its supply wagons and shells. Brilliant notions join in the combat as sharpshooters. The characters don their costumes, the paper is covered with ink, the battle has started, and ends with an outpouring of black fluid like a real battlefield enveloped in swaths of black smoke from the expended gunpowder. Were it not for coffee one could not write, which is to say one could not live.

*Honoré de Balzac*

1994

*Parisian Encounters*

For several years I had been doing large portrait monotypes inspired by couples where the partners supported one another in their creative and intellectual achievements. Ultimately I completed eight couples: Napoleon & Josephine, George Sand & Chopin, Flaubert & Louise Colet, Degas & Cassatt, Rodin & Camille Claudel, Pierre & Marie Currie, Man Ray & Lee Miller, and Henry

Miller & Anais Nin. When it occurred to me that the couples had all met in Paris, the work evolved into a trade edition with Chronicle Books. While initially designed as an accordion book, an alternative design was chosen which uses a spine on each side of the book and allows it to be opened from the center. This has the serendipitous quality of being known as a "French door."



*Parisian Encounters*, 1994. Chronicle Books Trade Edition. French door binding. 6 x 11 x .5 inches.



1883

At age forty-three Auguste Rodin had only just begun to receive recognition for his talent when his friend, the sculptor Boucher, asked him to take on two young women students. Rodin had been immersed for three years in his first large-scale commission, a set of monumental bronze doors, the *Gates of Hell*, based on Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Rodin visited the young women's studio at 117 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs and the nineteen-year-old Camille Claudel became his first female pupil. Within the year she also became his mistress and a chief collaborator on the *Gates of Hell*, posing herself for some of the figures and modeling the hands and feet of several of the large compositions. Their romance infused Rodin's work with a new voluptuousness and lyricism. Their relationship lasted nearly fifteen years. Rodin said of Claudel: "I showed her where to find gold, but the gold she found was her own."



RODIN/Claudel 2, from *Parisian Encounters*, 1993.  
Pastel/monotype/collage. 22 1/2 x 18 inches.

The portraits were made by collaging together one-half of a first impression and one-half of a ghost impression of the same monotype. The contrast in image between soft and strong symbolizes the strong and soft sides one presents to a partner in a relationship.

1883

With her fresh natural beauty, auburn hair, and green eyes, Camille Claudel's intuitive ability as a sculptor struck Rodin like a hammer. She soon achieved a professional status higher than any other of Rodin's assistants, and his active studio gave her a setting that allowed her talent to blossom. She began modeling her own versions of Rodin's well-known sculpture, as well as developing themes of her own such as *L'Age Mûr*, which depicted a kneeling woman imploring a standing male to come to her against the pleas of an older woman. Claudel's theme found its way into Rodin's own work and referred obliquely to one reason for the couple's ultimate break-up – the resentment of Rodin's common-law wife. Even as the affair ended, Rodin described Claudel as "this woman of genius whom I love so much for the sake of her art."



CLAUDEL/Rodin 1, from *Parisian Encounters*, 1993.  
Pastel/monotype/collage. 22 1/2 x 18 inches.

The handwriting I printed over each portrait was designed to convey the idea that language acts both as a window and a veil in our communication. The torn edges are a reminder that these were not always easy relationships.

1995

*Longitude & Surrealism*

During a visit to the Houghton Library at Harvard University I found an exhibit of small books from eighteenth century England. The books were proposals to the Longitude Board seeking the Longitude Prize which would be worth approximately \$13 million in today's value. The Prize had been established to encourage finding a solution to the puzzle of how to calculate longitude at sea and the small books contained zany as well as serious proposals.

The Prize had been formulated as Parliament's response to the tragic shipwreck in 1707 of four British naval ships that had gone off course in a fog on their way home to England from Gibraltar.



Cornelia Claes van Wieringen, *Wreck of the Amsterdam*, 1599 (Detail).



I imagined a connection between the English search for longitude in the eighteenth century and the explorations of the Surrealists of the early twentieth century. The English, were looking to find a missing coordinant – longitude to go with latitude (which they already knew how to calculate.) The Surrealists were also looking for a missing coordinant. They were exploring the unconscious as a counterpoint to the conscious mind in order to help humankind navigate in an increasingly complex world, one which had just suffered the horrors of World War I.



Man Ray, *Montage of Surrealist Portraits*, 1934.

From this quixotic juxtaposition of longitude and Surrealism came four separate books and a series of canvas-based wall pieces.

*Clouds & Dreams* (from *Longitude & Surrealism*)

In order to portray the connection between 18th century Englishmen and the Surrealists I pursued the notion that each Surrealist had a trait or way of thinking in common with an 18th century Englishman. Guided by this idea I made a series of imaginary portraits of the Englishmen based on the faces of the Surrealists pictured in Man Ray's 1934 photomontage. I chose André Breton, the spokesman and commander of the Surrealists, as the stand-in for Sir Cloudisley Shovell, the inflexible Admiral whose loss of the fleet off the Scilly Isles in 1707 launched the Longitude Prize.



André Breton as Admiral Sir Cloudisley Shovell, 1995. Mixed Media. 3.75 x 3 in.

Salvador Dali was a natural choice to align with Sir Kenhelm Digby, an "alchemist", who thought one could solve the longitude puzzle by using wounded dogs and telepathic goats. Man Ray's tenacious exploration of the use of the camera in ways "outside the box" made him a perfect candidate to represent John Harrison, the clockmaker who ultimately won the Longitude Prize.



Man Ray as John Harrison, 1995. Mixed Media. 3 x 2.5 inches.

In constructing a book built around the portraits, I used clouds and dreams as a unifying motif. Clouds were the landscape of the sailor. Dreams were the landscape of the Surrealists. I made a series of folding panels containing clouds on one side and the portraits and stories on the opposite side. These panels could be stacked and viewed from all angles.



*Clouds & Dreams*, 1995. Mixed media laser prints. 10 x 8 x 2 inches. Edition of 3.

*Breton's Dream (from Longitude & Surrealism)*

André Breton, the poet and manifesto writer, launched the Surrealist movement. The shipwreck of four English warships under the command of Admiral Sir Cloudisley Shovell in 1707 launched the Longitude Prize. I used silvered mylar sheets as the pages on a model ship structure and fabricated a subtitle: "Admiral Sir Cloudisley Shovell as Andre Breton Encountering a Nightmare and Embracing Poetry and Disaster at Sea."

from *Breton's Dream*

*Admiral Sir Cloudisley Shovell* was peering into the fog from the deck of his flagship of a squadron of English warships. The fleet was about to enter the English channel, or so its commander thought. He was, unfortunately, badly advised. His navigator had miscalculated their longitude. Soon Admiral Shovell and his ships reached – not the mouth of the channel – but Scilly Rocks, some two hundred miles to the west. The wooden hulls broke like egg shells on the rocks – a tragedy which launched the Longitude Prize.



*Breton's Dream*, 1995. Pastel/monotype, clear and silvered mylar text pages mounted on model ship. 16 x 12 x 5 inches. Edition of 4.

*André Breton* lifted the word surrealism from the program notes written by Apollinaire for a Diaghilev ballet in 1917. "We use it to describe a certain psychic automatism that comes very close to dream." One night he found himself captivated by randomly written and curious sentences which seemed to have no rational meaning. Breton felt he had discovered something that could be used as material for poetic construction. He felt the process (which he labeled automatic writing) resembled pure thought, unfettered by outside aesthetic and moral preconceptions.

*Magritte's Buckets (from Longitude & Surrealism)*

Isaac Hawkins suggested measuring high and low tides to locate one's longitude. Magritte juxtaposed images (and sometimes words) having curious affinities. Measuring tides with buckets was suggested to me by a photograph I found of Magritte's studio with two buckets on the floor. I made a book using the bucket idea as a motif and simulated two buckets with a scroll as the text page. Each bucket contained a monotype based on Magritte's clouds.

from *Magritte's Buckets*

*Isaac Hawkins* thought the tides might offer a way to find longitude. "Keep track of high and low tides," he said. "Measure when they occur." He asserted that from a book of tables he made up a sailor could tell where his ship was. The approach proved more poetic than useful since high tides happen only twice a day and changes in atmospheric pressure make the readings too unpredictable to be valuable.



*Magritte's Buckets*, 1995. Pastel/monotypes, fabricated board buckets, scroll text. 4 x 4 x 2 1/2 inches. Edition of 10.

*Rene Magritte's* paintings critiqued reality and language. "This is not a pipe" appeared as a caption below a painting of a pipe. He came upon a practice he used to release poetic secrets he called "elective affinities." Instead of juxtaposing unrelated objects to provoke poetic ideas, he found he could create equally mysterious encounters by, for example, painting a giant egg in a bird cage (instead of an unrelated object such as a fish). It is rumored he found the measuring of high tides with a bucket as poetic and elusive as capturing rain or clouds, as he often did in his paintings.



*Man Ray's Kiss (from Longitude & Surrealism)*

John Harrison, a clock maker, ultimately won the Longitude Prize by building a reliable marine chronometer. Like Man Ray, he used a mechanical instrument, the clock, to do things beyond its conceived purpose. Man Ray did the same with the camera producing images in ways never conceived before. Responding to this commonality I built accordion pages into a metronome. (Man Ray had used a metronome in one of his sculptures.) I attached a small monotype of lips to the counting wand. In the case of both Harrison and Man Ray, light (or inspiration) gave “a kiss to time.”

*Man Ray's Kiss*, 1995.  
Pastel/monotype,  
handwritten text and  
accordion on  
metronome.  
Edition of 4.  
9 x 5 x 5 inches.



from *Man Ray's Dream*

*John Harrison* won the prize when he was nearly seventy. He built a clock, a critical tool in calculating longitude, that had to allow for changes in barometric pressure and temperature, the incessant and often extreme rocking of a ship, high humidity, corrosive salt air and the variation of the earth's gravity at different latitudes . The clock he made was practically friction free, required no lubrication or cleaning and was made with metals that wouldn't rust. He had worked on the clock nearly his entire adult life.

*Man Ray*, an American from Philadelphia, was a painter who began to work as a photographer in 1915. He took the camera, a perfect machine for the reproduction of reality, and made it function instead as an instrument of poetic investigation for surreal purposes. The camera became an extension of his own hand and eye. Within the box of his camera Man Ray captured his least-premeditated and unconscious expressions.

*Wall Shelf Paintings (from Longitude & Surrealism)*

Supplementing the book works created around the theme of Longitude & Surrealism I made a series of canvas based wall pieces for an exhibition at the Dorothy Weiss Gallery in 1995. Each piece had a shelf which incorporated an object and a text about or by one of the Surrealists.



*Breton's Dream (Shears)*. 1995. Pastel & acrylic on paper mounted on canvas, with shelf and shears.  
25 x 16 x 4 inches.

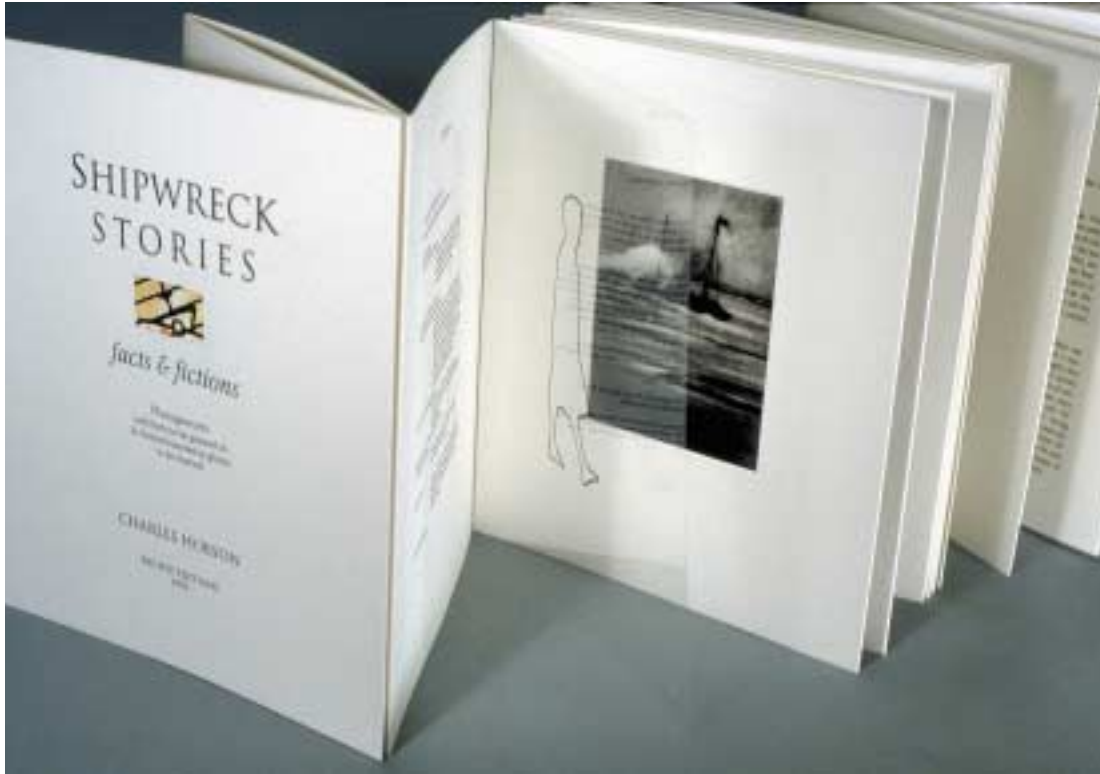


*Magritte's Curtain*. 1995. Pastel & acrylic on paper mounted on canvas, with shelf and wooden boat. 25 x 16 x 4 inches.  
Text on the shelf reads: *THE SKY IS A FORM OF CURTAIN BECAUSE IT HIDES SOMETHING FROM US. WE ARE SURROUNDED BY CURTAINS. – René Magritte*

1996

*Shipwreck Stories*

I became fascinated with the story of an 1865 steamship passenger who wrote his last will and testament as the ship sank in a fierce storm. He left \$5,000 in gold to another man's wife and wrote her a letter, all in pencil, so that his pages would survive the watery grave he soon found.



*Shipwreck Stories*, 1996. Accordion book with photogravures, handcolored charts and drawings on mylar. 10.5 x 8.75 x 1 inches. Edition of 28. (Detailed views on opposite page.)

View above shows image of the steamship *Brother Jonathan* with a drawing on a transparent sheet which reflects the book's text.



*Shipwreck Stories* is constructed around the idea of a reader assembling a collage in the mind. For each of six shipwrecks the reader is given a historical chart, a factual summary, a piece of fictional writing, a drawing (reproduced as a photogravure), and a traced outline on transparent film of a figure from a 19th century photograph of shipwreck bystanders. The viewer assembles these pieces of evidence in his or her mind, collecting and sorting fact and fiction as he or she considers appropriate. In my mind, the outline figure stands for the voice that brings forward the story of the life and death struggle that takes place at the scene of a shipwreck.

FACTS

Mile Rock, March 8, 1882

On a late winter afternoon in 1882, the *George Louis*, a small two masted schooner headed out the Golden Gate. Built in San Francisco nearly twenty years earlier, the schooner and her captain and crew of three were bound for Timber Cove on the northern California coast. An odd current caught the ship as the wind shifted and within minutes the schooner ran upon the rocks inside Mile Rock. As darkness fell John Low, the lighthouse keeper at Point Lobos, discovered the wreck and sent his young son racing to the Golden Gate Park Life Saving Station six miles away for help.

The captain and two crew members were able to climb the rocks to safety but the cook was badly injured and lay at the bottom of the cliff certain to die in the pounding surf and rising tide. The lighthouse keeper's son, returning with the life saving crew, volunteered to be lowered over the bluff to the water's edge, 280 feet below. There he tied the rope around the cook who was pulled to safety. During the night the *George Louis* was pounded so furiously by the surf that the next day not a sign of the schooner remained.

FICTION

Sick & Thrilled

Well I tell you I was sick – and thrilled, at the same time. Sick and thrilled to hear he'd gone down that cliff. Just a boy, he is, just a boy! And those men – I can't believe John even suggested it! But they tied him to that rope and put him over. Nearly 300 feet down and it was getting dark. He's only 13, you know. And then they left him at the bottom in that raging surf and dark cold. Imagine what must have been going through his mind! It took them half an hour to get that cook up from the bottom – merciful heaven, it's a miracle that poor fellow survived – and all the time my boy is down there in that black. Well I was sick but, as I say, thrilled too, to hear what he'd done. And all he said was "Ah, Ma, I'm okay. It weren't nothin'."



1997

*Lighthouse Legends*



*Parting Shot*, 1997.  
Pastel/monotype, cut-out  
laser print on found book.  
Unique.  
8.25 x 12 inches.

My continued fascination with navigation led to a series of one-of-a-kind altered books, each with a cut-out page in the shape of the character in a story about survival or tragedy at a lighthouse. Each of the one-of-a-kind books has a monotype with pastel, a color laser print, text from a 19th century lighthouse keeper's log and a hand a painted cover.



*Stroke of Heaven*, 1997.  
Pastel/monotype, cut-out  
laser print on found book.  
Unique.  
8.5 x 11.75 inches.

from *Lighthouse Legends*

THE ROAR

There is hardly a more desolate and remote place than Matinicus Rock, a treeless island racked by wind and fog twenty-five miles off the Maine coast. Samuel Burgess, the keeper of the light in 1856, had taken advantage of a break in the weather to make a trip to the mainland for supplies and medicine for his sick wife. He left Abbie, his seventeen year old daughter, in charge of the station. In addition to caring for her mother and her three younger sisters, Abbie had to trim the wicks and light the fourteen lanterns that illuminated the beacon.

A storm of immense severity struck while the father was ashore and prevented his return to the

lighthouse. As huge seas tore into the island, Abbie moved her ailing mother and younger sisters to the granite tower, along with a small

flock of scrawny chickens. Their house and other buildings were soon demolished and water washed at the base of the tower. Days turned into weeks and then a month as the furious storm pounded the coast. The father was sick with worry, his hopes kept alive only by the reports of a few inbound ships claiming they'd seen the light.

Finally the storm abated, and Burgess reached the lighthouse to find everyone safe but the chickens. Abbie wrote in her diary: "The sea is never still . . . its roar shuts out every other sound, even our voices."



*The Roar*, 1997.  
Pastel/monotype, cut-out laser print on found book.  
Unique. 8.5 x 6.25 inches (image).



1997

*Fresnel's Tower*

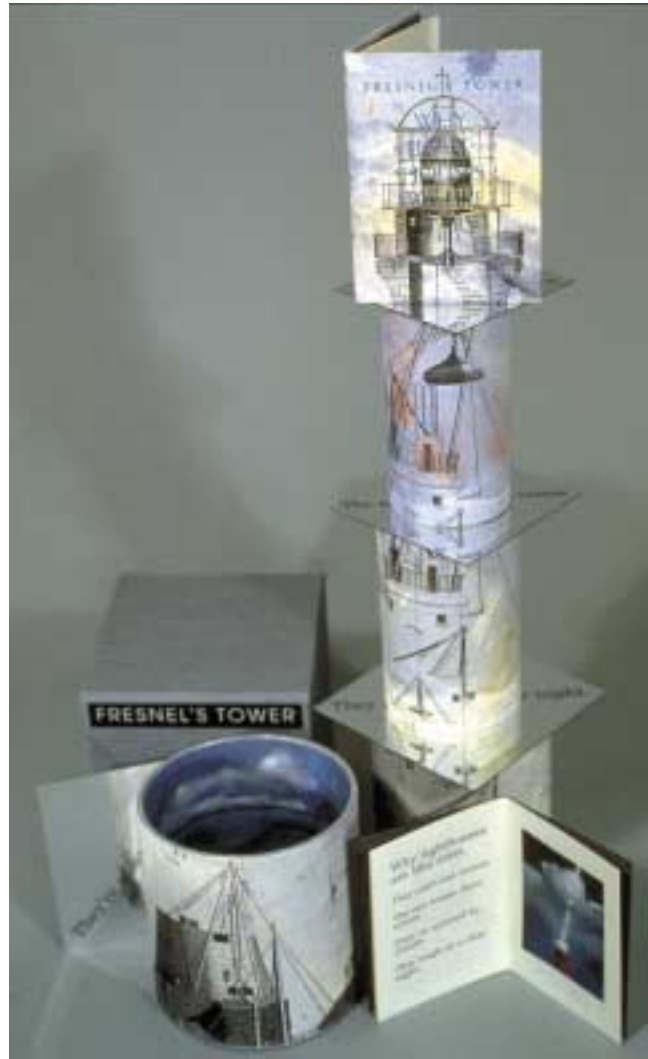
The subject of the lighthouse inspired me to make a small edition based on Augustin Fresnel's optical invention in the 1830s. His lighthouse lens revolutionized sea trade by increasing the power of all existing lighthouse lamps. Prisms in the lens tightly focused the light.



*Augustin Fresnel,  
Anonymous engraving.*

*Fresnel's Tower* is built around the phrase/question: "Why lighthouses are like stars." Fresnel used pieces of cardboard with punched-out center holes filled with hardened honey as a primitive lens to test his

calculations. It's likely he was learning disabled, but good in math. He had been sent to the middle of France as a civil engineer where he did his experiments in optics. The book structure is a series of nested cylinders with mirrored text cards which allows the reader to build a replica of a lighthouse.



*Fresnel's Tower*, 1997. Sculptural book with photogravure, stacking cylinders with hand colored diagrams and laser prints. 5.25 x 5.5 x 6 inches. Edition of 38.

1998

*Andromeda Imagined*

My continued interest in navigation led me to the fact that six constellations tightly clustered around the North Star have names derived from the Andromeda myth of the 4th century BC. I experimented with the idea of a page pierced with star shapes inspired by the design of the stars Galileo drew in his notebook when he first looked through the telescope. The book has a concertina design which allows the flashlight to shine the shape of each constellation onto the adjacent page, fitting the stars over contemporary depictions of the characters in



the myth. By chance, the concertina design creates a six pointed star at the center of the book when it's folded back on itself.



Photo credit: Doug Sandberg

*Andromeda Imagined*, 1998. Concertina with monoprints, IRIS Prints and hand punched star shapes. 11 x 10.5 x 1.25 inches. Edition of 30. (Alternate view above right.)

1999

*Human Touch*

I received a commission for a garden pathway design at the new Palo Alto Medical Center. In working on the project I combined my drawings based on the work of Giovanni Batista Tiepolo, an eighteenth century Venetian artist, and the healing quotations collected by my wife, Sandra. Artisans at a workshop in Portland, Oregon carved the images and words into granite slabs which were placed in garden pathways at the Center. A book version evolved which contained the text printed on transparent pages over reproductions of my drawings of hands. The words and images were also translated into a small folded book for a Xerox PARC artist residency at the San Jose Tech Museum.

Images from *Human Touch*, 1999.  
Ink drawings photocopied on hand painted BFK Rives. Stab binding.  
5.5 x 7.5 x .5 inches. Edition of 40.



MAKE OF  
YOURSELF  
A LIGHT.

BUDDHA



TO EVERY THING  
THERE IS A SEASON,  
AND A TIME TO EVERY  
PURPOSE UNDER HEAVEN.

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

1999

*Writing on the Body*

Eight years of life drawing on Wednesday evenings produced hundreds of studies. I came to recognize that my constant study of the work and writing of Edgar Degas had infiltrated my own approach to drawing. A selection of the drawings were made into photogravure etching plates by Kay Bradner. Degas' handwriting was superimposed over the image on each plate. Kay and I printed the etchings together, and I hand colored



them with pastels. Jack Stauffacher printed the text letterpress using a typographic layout that dances up and down the page.

The typeface used is 12 point Méridien, a type designed to recall the signage of Paris in the late 19th century, the age of Degas. An actual writing pen with the title printed on it was attached to the spine of each book as a spine label.

“All art is  
artifice and  
needs to be  
perpetrated  
with the  
cunning of a  
crime.”

*Degas in conversation*



Degas quoted at every turn  
the maxims of his hero,  
Ingres:

“Drawing is not outside  
but inside the line.”

“One should pursue  
the contour like a fly  
crosses the page.”

“Muscles are my  
friends whose names  
I have forgotten.”

*Paul Valéry in  
Degas Dance Drawing*



Images from *Writing on the Body*, 1999.  
Words by and about Edgar Degas with eight hand-colored photogravures.  
Accordion binding. 11.5 x 7.75 x .75 inches. Edition of 45. (Cover shown above.)

2000  
*Dancing with Amelia*



I chanced to encounter a letter that Amelia Earhart wrote on her wedding morning to her soon-to-be-husband expressing reservations and conditions to their marriage. She made him promise that if they didn't find happiness in a year that he would give her her freedom. The surprising nature of that letter haunted me. Research into the life of Amelia Earhart and her husband George Palmer Putnam turned up characteristics of frivolity and self-assuredness.



Front View

The popular notions about Amelia and George were framed by the airplane – but what was behind the airplane? I concluded that Amelia and George were, in a metaphorical sense, dance partners. I wrote imaginary answers to the question “What did he do each year to keep her married to him?”



Back View

I then made monotypes of couples dancing and cut them out in airplane shapes. They were accorded together in a way that allows the reader to see the full dance only from the back side of the accordion.



2001

*Anotaciones*



*Anotaciones* is a one-paragraph fictional story by Barry Lopez about Cuba – with sixteen perfectly crafted fictional footnotes. The story and its footnotes reveal details about the disposition and prejudices of the fictional Rubén Mendoza Vega, an aging Latin American scholar residing in South Florida.

Work on *Anotaciones* began in 1997 when Barry Lopez suggested the story to me for a limited edition book because, as he said, it held “so many interesting design problems.” Over the next four years as an idea would occur to me I would work through its possibilities, often talking with Barry.

The idea of a puzzle finally took hold because each of us, as readers, are being asked to assemble a picture of an old man through several irregularly shaped pieces of information. Pursuit of the idea was facilitated by a residency through Xerox PARC (the artists-in-residence program at its Palo Alto research center) where I was pro-

vided with access to a laser cutter with which to experiment in making puzzles.

The puzzle, when assembled, shows an image of a stack of cigar boxes on one side and the text of the footnotes on the other. Assembling the puzzle orders the footnotes so they can be read in sequence with the main text. Working at the studio set up by Xerox PARC on the floor of the San Jose TECH Museum, I was able to test out the book with the audience which appeared each day. As a result of watching people handle the prototype I added a folded sheet which shows the layout of the puzzle and footnotes for quick reference.

The paragraph that is the main text appears in an accordion book and is accompanied by a bibliography of thirty-nine reference works – all fictional. The book and



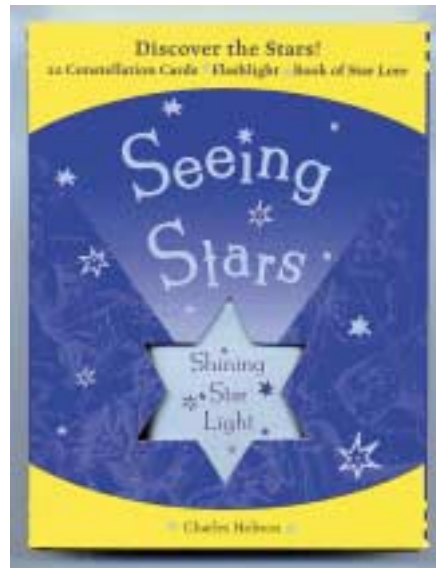
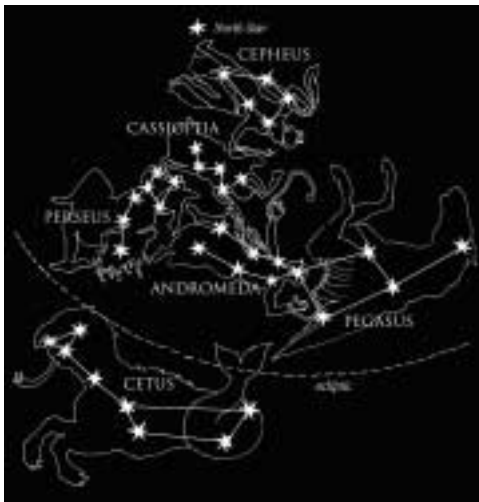
the pieces of puzzles are kept in an actual cigar box which has been modified with collage and enclosed in a corrugated board chemise.



*Anotaciones*, 2001.  
Fiction by Barry Lopez.  
Collage on cigar box, laser  
cut puzzle pieces,  
accordion book.  
10.5 x 7 x 2 inches (varies).  
Edition of 30.  
(Puzzle piece and detail  
view shown opposite.)

2001  
*Seeing Stars*

As a child I remembered being taught about the constellation of Cassiopeia by my father. Cassiopeia's connection to the Andromeda myth sparked my interest in



*Seeing Stars*, 2001. The Andromeda myth presented with ten die-cut cards, flashlight and book.  
6.75 x 5 x 1 inches. Chronicle Books Trade Edition.  
(Diagram from book shown to left.  
Cards shown opposite.)

a children's book version of *Andromeda Imagined*. The constellations had been named by the Greeks after celebrities (royalty). My preliminary design (later abandoned) for the children's book featured today's celebrities (sports figures) and led to the title, *Seeing Stars*.

A card format was devised as easier to use than having the holes pierced in



the book pages as was the case in *Andromeda Imagined*. The final streamlined design dropped the use of the sports figures, but the final version retained Galileo's star shape and the lesson that the original Greek view of the universe resulted in their constellation diagrams being drawn "backwards."

Preliminary study for *Seeing Stars*, 2001. Pastel monotype,  
15 x 11 inches.



The card on the right portrays the shape of the constellation as if looking back at the earth from outer space. The Greek astronomers of the 4th century, BC, imagined that the earth was at the center of the universe and that the constellations were on circular frames rotating around our planet. When they diagrammed the constellations they drew them as if looking from deep space. In other words, in their drawings the constellations looked reversed from the way we actually see them from earth. This tradition lasted through the Renaissance and was followed in the engraving shown here made for the star atlas of Johannes Helvelius, 1690.

AFTERTHOUGHT

One of my pleasures in life is the interest people seem to have in the eccentric projects I find to work on. “How do you get your ideas?” they ask. “Whatever made you think of that?”

Thirty years ago when I was still firmly embedded in another life of law and commerce I awoke one night with an intense dream. In the dream I walked along a street and went through a door into a beautiful, small white room. On the wall were fascinating visual objects which in my dream I called “object boxes.” I moved excitedly from object to object, pausing to catch the magic I saw in each piece. As I realized I was in an art gallery a man came walking toward me. He said; “How beautiful your work is.” And in the dream I lied. I said: “Thank you.” I lied by taking credit for work that could not possibly be mine.

The dream was so strong and seemed so real that I have remembered it over the years and have used its power to move me forward in my work, hoping to emulate the feeling I found in my dream that night. While I can’t say I’ve completely expunged the lie I told, I can say that the work of the last sixteen years assembled in the Bolinas Museum makes me grateful to the giver of

dreams for sending me one that opened my imagination to the possibilities of following my own peculiar passionate interests.

I am indebted to Annie Dillard for articulating in her book *The Writing Life* an explanation about how the course of my work as an artist has unfolded. And, for the last decade, I’ve handed this quote out to students in my artist’s book class as the critical instruction on how to look at their life as an artist.

. . . . .

“Because it is up to you. There is something you find interesting, for a reason hard to explain. It is hard to explain because you have never read it on any page; there you begin. You were made and set here to give voice to this, your own astonishment. ‘The most demanding part of living a lifetime as an artist is the strict discipline of forcing oneself to work steadfastly along the nerve of one’s own most intimate sensitivity.’ Anne Truitt, the sculptor, said this. Thoreau said it another way: know your own bone. ‘Pursue, keep up with, circle round and round your life . . . . Know your own bone: gnaw at it, bury it, unearthing it, and gnaw at it still’ .”

Annie Dillard  
from *The Writing Life*, 1989



Study for *Amelia's Last Words*, 2002.  
Pastel and folded paper,  
3.75x 3.25 inches.

CHRONOLOGY

1943	Born, Bridgeton, New Jersey		Rembrandt Award, North American Print Exhibition of Boston Printmakers, Bakalar Gallery, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA
1988	BFA, San Francisco Art Institute	1996	Award of Merit, Sixty Square Inches/Small Print Exhibition, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
1968	LLB, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA	1995	Award of Merit, Book Design, Rounce & Coffin Club, Los Angeles , CA
1965	BA, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA		Merit Award, Biennial Print & Drawing Exhibition, Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA
	<i>Selected One-Person Exhibitions</i>	1994	Reames Award, Pacific Prints 1994, Pacific Arts League, Palo Alto, CA
2003	Chowan College, Murfreesboro, NC	1993	Affiliate Artist, Headlands Center for the Arts, Marin County, CA
2002	Bolinas Museum, Bolinas, CA	1991	Award of Distinction, Seventh Annual Juried National Exhibition, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
	Grabhorn Institute, San Francisco, CA		Acquisition Award, Hawaii Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Hilo National Drawing Exhibition, Hilo, HA
1998	Museum of Art & History, Santa Cruz, CA		Award of Merit, Kansas 16th National Small Painting, Drawing and Print Exhibition, Hays State University, Hays, KS
	Craven Gallery, West Tisbury, MA	1990	Moses Lasky Monotype Award, Pacific Prints 1990, Pacific Arts League, Palo Alto, CA
	Columbia Art Center, Dallas, TX		Award of Merit, Sixty Square Inches/Small Print Exhibition, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
	ARTWORKS, Santa Monica, CA		Commission, 1990 Benefactor Print, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA
1997	Dorothy Weiss Gallery, San Francisco, CA	1989	Jerome Fellowship, KALA Institute, Berkeley, CA
	Concourse Gallery, Bank of America World Headquarters, San Francisco, CA		Artist in Residence Fellowship, Djerassi Foundation, Woodside , CA
	Bolinas Museum, Bolinas, CA		David Ruttenberg Art Foundation Grant, Pastels '89 Exhibition, Midwest Pastel Society, Chicago, IL
1996	California Historical Society, San Francisco, CA		Award of Distinction, Fifth Annual Juried National Exhibition, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
1995	Dorothy Weiss Gallery, San Francisco, CA		
1993	San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA		<i>Teaching/Publishing</i>
1992	Roy Boyd Gallery, Chicago, IL	1990 – present	San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA
	Olga Dollar Gallery, San Francisco, CA		Adjunct Faculty, Print Making /Artists' Books
1991	Concourse Gallery, Bank of America World Headquarters, San Francisco, CA	2001	<i>Seeing Stars</i> , Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA
1989	Allport Gallery, San Francisco, CA	1994	<i>Parisian Encounters</i> , Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA
	Braunstein/Quay Gallery, San Francisco, CA	1991	<i>Leonardo Knows Baseball</i> , Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA
1988	Limestone Press, San Francisco, CA		
1987	San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Rental Gallery, San Francisco, CA		
1976	Memorial Building Gallery, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA		
	<i>Selected Awards/Commissions/Fellowships</i>		
2000	Artist-in-Residence, Xerox PARC, Palo Alto, CA & The Tech Museum of Innovation, San Jose, CA		
1999	Garden Pathway Design, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA		
1997	Purchase Award, 14th National Exhibition, LA Printmaking Society, Loyola Marymont Laband Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA		



Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2001
- The Structure of Collections, University of the Arts

Philadelphia, PA

Current Holdings: Bay Area Drawing,

Palo Alto Art Center, Palo Alto, CA

Book UNbound, Agnes Scott College, The Dalton Gallery,

McCain Library, Bradley Observatory, Decatur, GA

Once Upon A Time: Artists Examine Fairy Tales, Legends & Myths,

The Wustum Museum of Fine Arts, Racine, WI
- 2000
- Diamonds & Rust, George Krevsky Gallery, San Francisco, CA

Nature Books, Gallery Route One, Point Reyes, CA
- 1999
- The Art of Reading: Books and Non-Books,

Institute of Contemporary Art, Maine College of Art,

Portland, ME

The Art of Collaborative Printmaking: Smith Andersen Editions,

de Saisset Museum, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA

Artist's Books/The Boston Printmakers, University of Vermont

and Boston Public Library, Boston, MA

Out West, New York Center for the Book, New York, NY
- 1998
- Art Making Book Making Art,

San Francisco Center for the Book, San Francisco, CA

Columbia Biennial Exhibition of Book & Paper,

Columbia College, Chicago, IL

Livres d'Artistes, Château de Coupjac,

Coupiac, France

Booked, Art Academy of Cincinnati, OH
- 1997
- Recent Acquisitions of the Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts,

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

International Miniature Print Exhibition,

Connecticut Graphic Arts Center, Norwalk , CN
- 1996
- Sites of Surrealist Collaboration

The Getty Center, Santa Monica, CA

The Book As Art

Bliss Center for the Arts, Steamboat Springs, CO

Science Imagined, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA

Paper in Particular, Columbia College, Columbia, MO

Sixty Square Inches: National Small Print Exhibition,

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
- 1995
- Biennial Print & Drawing Exhibition,

Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA
- 1994
- Diversity & Vision of the Printed Image

Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA

Selected Bibliography

- Cathy Byrd, “Book Unbound,” *Journal of Artist’s Books*,

Atlanta, GA, Spring 2001
- Stephen Hogbin, *Appearance and Reality*,

Cambium Press, Bethel, CT, 2000
- Mike Daniel, “A Tradition of Untraditional Art,”

*The Dallas Morning News*, March 13, 1998, Dallas, TX
- Judith Christensen, “Charles Hobson,”

*ARTSCENE*, March 1998, Santa Monica, CA
- Jim Letizell, “Creative Approaches of the Monotype,”

*About Art*, Sacramento, CA, February 1996
- Marilyn Mole, “Manifestations of the Monotype,”

*Davis Enterprise*, January 18, 1996
- Adela Roatcap, “Charles Hobson’s Book Performance,”

*The Book Club of California Quarterly*, Fall 1995
- Catherine Maclay, “Mixed Doubles,”

*San Jose Mercury News*, April 9, 1993
- Laura J. Tuchman, “Museums Strut Their Stuff”

*San Jose Mercury News*, April 30, 1993
- Ann Hunter Greene, “Season Openings,”

*Where/Chicago*, September 1992
- Mary Hull Webster, “Between Thee & Me,”

*ARTWEEK*, June 18, 1992

Selected Collections

- Columbia University, New York, NY
- DiRosa Art Preserve, Napa, CA
- Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, CA
- Getty Center for Art & Humanities, Santa Monica, CA
- Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- Library of Congress, Washington, DC
- Mills College, Oakland, CA
- National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
- New York Public Library, New York , NY
- Stanford University Green Library, Palo Alto, CA
- State of Hawaii Cultural Foundation, Hilo, HA
- Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA
- UCLA Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, Los Angeles, CA
- UC Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA
- Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA
- Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY
- Yale University, New Haven, CT

WORKS BY CHARLES HOBSON

Listed Chronologically

*Papers*, 1984  
Essays by Bruce Nelson. Introduction by Charles Hobson. Designed by Alicen Armstrong. Typeset and printed at the West Coast Print Center. 7 1/4 x 5 inches. Edition of 300.

*A Supper in Montmartre*, 1985  
Memoir by Harriet Lane Levy. Frontispiece etching by Charles Hobson. Bancroft Library Press. 10 1/4 x 11 x 1/4 inches. Edition of 30.

*Flaubert & Louise: Letters and Impressions*, 1988  
A portfolio of five monotypes by Charles Hobson accompanying the exchange of letters between Gustave Flaubert and Louise Colet in the 1840s. Co-published by Limestone Press and Pacific Editions. 15 x 12 x 3/4 inches. Edition of 18.

*Leonardo Knows Baseball*, 1990  
Accordion book juxtaposing excerpts from Leonardo Da Vinci’s notebooks on how to draw the human figure with soft ground etchings of baseball figures. 10 x 8 x 1/2 inches. Edition of 20.  
*Trade Edition published by Chronicle Books, 1991.*

*Variation on the Word SLEEP*, 1991  
Poem by Margaret Atwood. Pastel/monotype on accordion fold in lacquered box. 7 x 5 1/4 x 2 1/4 inches. Edition of 20.

*Degas Dancing: Lessons & Fragments*, 1991  
A fragmentary biography of Edgar Degas with five portrait monotypes by Charles Hobson accompanied by writing of Degas and others marking key passages in his life. Easel Accordion. 15 1/2 x 11 3/4 x 1 inches. Edition of 10.

*Impromptu*, 1994  
Poem by Kathy Evans and Tom Centolello. Monotype images by Charles Hobson and Kay Bradner reproduced as photographs. 7 1/2 x 5 3/4 inches. Prototype and offset edition of 100 copies.

*Balzac’s Coffee Pot*, 1994  
Honoré de Balzac’s comment on the importance of coffee, together with handwritten sentence and a pastel/monotype of Balzac’s coffee pot. Accordion format. 8 x 8 x 1/2 inches. Edition of 5.

*Parisian Encounters*, 1994  
French door format book with monotype/pastel portraits of eight famous couples who met in Paris, with maps and eccentric biographies. 6 x 11 inches. Chronicle Books trade edition.

*Clouds & Dreams* from *Longitude & Surrealism*, 1995  
Stacking accordion book in black linen case with laser print reproductions of cloud images and portraits of Surrealists. 10 x 8 x 2 1/2 inches. Edition of 3.

*Breton’s Dream* from *Longitude & Surrealism*, 1995  
Pastel/monotype with text on mylar mounted on model ship with text describing relationship between André Breton and Admiral Sir Clowdishley Shovell. 16 x 12 x 5 inches. Edition of 4.

*Magritte’s Buckets* from *Longitude & Surrealism*, 1995  
Two pastel monotypes mounted in buckets made from board, copper, wire, brass tubing and bamboo, with text describing relationship between Isaac Hawkins and René Magritte. 4 x 4 x 2 1/2 inches. Edition of 10.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In revisiting the work shown here I've been struck by the importance to me of friends and family that have encouraged and supported with their insights the personal vision I've attempted to express. Some of them, like Marie Dern, Joseph Goldyne, Kay Bradner and Larry Thomas, I've mentioned in the text. Many of my works have been enhanced by the elegant and meticulous edition bindings of John DeMerritt. I'm especially honored that Barry Lopez has written so warmly about my work in the introduction.

I am so grateful to the Bolinas Museum for organizing this exhibition, especially Dolores Richards, its Director, and Susanne Silk who has curated this exhibition with wonderful sensitivity and with a response to the work that has brightened my spirits many times. Alice Shaw has been of enormous help in the preparation of images and assembling information about the work. Mary Daniel Hobson is a born editor and proofreader whose careful reading and re-reading has improved my essay immeasurably. It has been a great comfort and pleasure to work with Kathleen Burch on the design and production of this catalogue. I am indebted to her for her wisdom and fine eye.

There are so many others deserving to be named that it is impossible to list them all. I will have to make do with one-on-one personal thank-yous. With one exception – without the constant support, encouragement and love that comes from Sandra Hobson, none of this would have happened.

Charles Hobson

FOR SANDRA

For whom I once wrote,  
“I am just a poet, singing out my song . . .”  
And you didn't laugh.

This catalogue was published in an edition of 2000.  
100 include an original editioned artwork signed by the artist,  
bound by John DeMerritt.  
  
Designed by Charles Hobson & Kathleen Burch.  
  
Printed and bound in British Columbia  
by Hemlock Printers, Ltd.  
  
For more information about the artist and his artwork,  
please visit [www.charleshobson.com](http://www.charleshobson.com)

*Man Ray's Kiss* from *Longitude & Surrealism*, 1995  
Pastel/monotype and handwritten text on hand painted BFK Rives with metronome and text describing relationship between John Harrison and Man Ray  
9 x 5 x 5 inches. Edition of 4.

*Shipwreck Stories*, 1996  
Accordion book with seven photogravures, hand-colored charts, and drawings on mylar. 10 1/4 x 8 3/4 x 1 inches. Edition of 28.

*Parting Shot* from *Lighthouse Legends*, 1997  
Pastel/monotype and laser print cut-out mounted on found book. 8 1/4 x 12 inches. Unique.

*Stroke of Heaven* from *Lighthouse Legends*, 1997  
Pastel/monotype and laser print cut-out mounted on found book. 8 1/2 x 11 3/4 inches. Unique.

*The Roar* from *Lighthouse Legends*, 1997  
Pastel/monotype and laser print cut-out mounted on found book. 8 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches. Unique.

*Fresnel's Tower*, 1997  
Sculptural book with photogravure, stacking cylinders with hand-colored diagrams and laser prints. Fabric covered box. 5 1/4 x 5 1/2 x 6 inches.  
Edition of 38.

*Andromeda Imagined*, 1998  
Concertina with six monoprints over star atlas drawings of 1690, six IRIS prints from mixed media drawings and six hand punched constellations.  
11 x 10 1/2 x 1 1/4 inches. Edition of 30.

*Human Touch*, 1999  
Quotes from diverse sources with ink drawings photocopied onto hand-painted BFK Rives. Stab binding. 5 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 3/8 inches. Edition of 40.

*Writing on the Body*, 1999  
Writings by Edgar Degas. Modified accordion book with eight hand-colored photogravure etchings in slipcase with letterpress by Jack Stauffacher.  
11 1/2 x 7 3/4 x 3/4 inches. 18 pages. Edition of 45.

*Dancing with Amelia*, 2000  
Fictional writing, and airplane cutouts with monotypes of dancers as IRIS prints in accordion with laser cut cover in cloth covered chemise. 8 3/4 x 6 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches.  
Edition of 38.

*Anotaciones*, 2001  
Text by Barry Lopez with laser cut puzzle pieces. Collage on cigar box and accordion book with foldout puzzle key. 10 1/2 x 7 x 2 (varies) Edition of 30.

*Seeing Stars*, 2001  
Adaptation of *Andromeda Imagined* as book for children with 10 die-cut cards, flashlight and book.  
6 3/4 x 5 x 1 inches. Chronicle Books trade edition.



*Fresnel's Tower*, 1997. Work in progress view.



CHARLES HOBSON is an artist and teacher who has worked with images and words for nearly twenty years. Usually following literary or historical themes, his books have covered topics as diverse as famous couples who met in Paris (*Parisian Encounters*) and shipwrecks along the California coast (*Shipwreck Stories*). He has taught at the San Francisco Art Institute since 1990 and his work is in the collections of the New York Public Library, the Whitney Museum, the National Gallery, and the Getty Center, among others.

