

# Open-Type

Mark Booth • Katie Hargrave & Brett Hunter • Lee Marchalonis • Buzz Spector • Chris Walla

An exhibition of contemporary artwork utilizing type  
Indiana State University Art Gallery  
January 14 - February 19, 2016



**Opening reception January 14, 4-6pm**  
**Artist Talks February 18, 5pm**

A visual image is an illusory language to convey specific meaning. Balancing what is communicated clearly and what is left to the imagination of the viewer is one of the primary problems facing any artist. How does one successfully and efficiently impart a message, while still allowing room for interpretations? For decades, artists have been partnering text and visual information to manipulate the possibilities of communication. From literary inspired works by artists like Tom Phillips and Zak Smith, to the minimalist images Carl Andre created using solely punctuation, visual artists have added text and typography to the iconography of visual art.



The work presented in Open Type illustrates this expansion by visualizing the sort of directive mandate that only written and spoken language can convey. While each artist employs type, all strike a different balance between what is said through the written and what is implied by the visual. By referencing a range of typographical dialects from sign painting to fine press printing, the artists of Open Type directly manage our relationship to their work through a rich and nuanced appropriation of a world we take for granted as aesthetic.

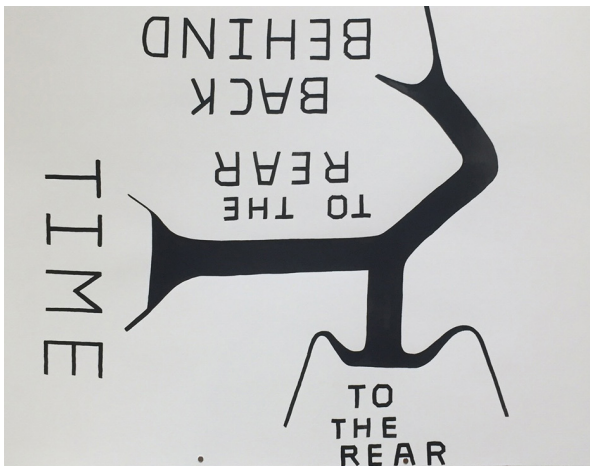


*Artwork by Lee Marchalonis, Buzz Spector, and Chris Walla*

# Mark Booth

Various text based drawings, 2011-2015

*Thanking*, audio with Eric Pold, Pernille Koch, and Simon Will, 2004



**Mark Booth** utilizes poetry, performance, audio, painting, and drawing to shift our perception of words. In his work, words are presented both as signifiers and something concrete onto themselves. Language becomes music in his audio and performance work, while it becomes something physical in his paintings and drawings. In *Thanking*, Booth has edited improvised spoken performances to form a rhythmic and symphonic auditory experience. The overlapping of similar words and phrases spoken by different actors functions similarly to the repetition of language in his drawings. These chunks of text become stackable units, in a sense, which he orders and reorders to interfere with our sense of time, pacing, and meaning. This phenomena is present in both the spoken and drawn language pieces, creating a visual and auditory rhythm which is consistent across media.

## About the Artist

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# Katie Hargrave and Brett Hunter

*Like Riding a Bicycle*, multi-media installation, 2015

In *Like Riding a Bicycle*, **Katie Hargrave** and **Brett Hunter** manipulate the differences in type and handwritten text and read and spoken word to build a web of relationships between each participant. The writing styles, from the neutral sans-serif of the instructional text to the various handwritten messages, create a plurality of unique voices. This effect is amplified by the auditory experience created when one pedals the provided bikes. The audio, a loop of various individuals sharing their own memories of learning a skill, is personal and familiar. That the viewer must pedal the bike to trigger the recording magnifies the sense of intimacy - we are active participants in this relationship. Hargrave and Hunter encourage us then to add our own voices to the project, by calling in to record a story for the audio loop and writing, in our own hand, an addition to the skills wall.

Katie Hargrave and Brett Hunter spent several days in Terre Haute installing this piece. While the project is ongoing and has been displayed in several other venues, each incarnation is unique and site specific. Understanding that the work is enriched through participation, the artists used existing gallery features and architecture to create an inviting and distinct environment for the installation.

**Artist Statement** *Like Riding a Bicycle* is a series of participatory skill shares on bicycles. Taking the axiom about memory and ability, “like riding a bicycle,” the project creates a platform for convivial skill shares, conversations about lifelong learning, and forums for exploring how bicycles and learning function alternately as instruments of freedom and fear in our culture. Our communities are full of resources embodied by the knowledge of locals. By riding together we shift our perspectives, connect through shared activity, create an opportunity to make visible networks of skills, and expand these networks across generations and demographics.

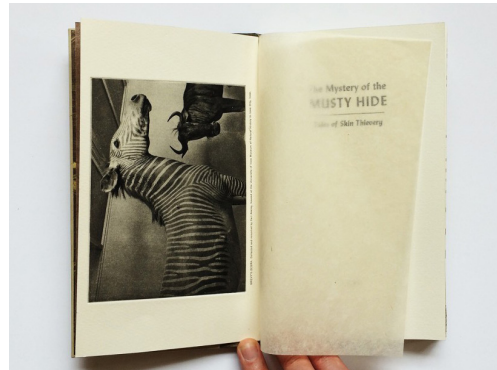
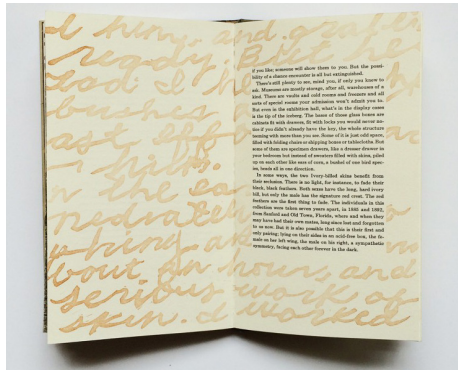


**About the Artists** Katie Hargrave and Brett Hunter started collaborating as professors in 2013. Through a year of team teaching they found many shared sensibilities and interests and in 2014 began planning collaborative projects. *Like Riding a Bicycle* is an ongoing set of projects, hatched while sitting beside the Unisphere at the Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens. Watching people ride around the world in the dry fountain bed and discussing skills that we share with each other. Variations of “Liking Riding a Bicycle” have been exhibited in Nashville, TN; Minneapolis, MN; Hornell, NY; with an additional version (including a bike tour skillshare) upcoming this spring in Chattanooga, TN as a part of the Causeway Challenge.

Katie Hargrave is on the faculty of the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga. Brett Hunter is a Professor of Art at Alfred University.

# Lee Marchalonis

*The Mystery of the Musty Hide*, letterpress printed, handbound book, 2015  
*Carl Akeley and My Stepfather*, paper plate lithograph, 2014



In no other field are the rules of typographical design as steadfastly adhered to than in the world of fine press printing. Refined over centuries, the ratios of margins, the nuances of letter and line spacing, and the hidden intent behind justification have all come together to form a language that all readers are unknowingly fluent in. The conventions, however, are aggressively manipulated by **Lee Marchalonis** in her work *The Mystery of the Musty Hide*. Contrasting a contemporary work of non-fiction by Kendra Greene with a historical text by the famous taxidermist Carl Akeley, Marchalonis uses our ingrained design sensibilities to create a heightened viewing experience. The contemporary text, printed from handset metal type, is elegantly designed, guided by the most conservative of standards. The historical text, however, is printed in red from hand carved linoleum, filling the margins of the otherwise conventional spread. This contrast, between the imprint of the metal type, biting into the paper, and the slowly fading, irregularly printed, unrefined scrawl of the block print precariously resting on top of page, harkens to the violence which underlies the narrative. Fading as we turn the folios, the red ink reflects the passage of time, as eventually the voice from the past diminishes to nothing.

**Artist Statement** Natural History museums have lately been my particular destination, as the habitat dioramas provide a particularly fruitful location for musing about representation, narrative, and artistry. They include fascinating inconsistencies: in order to make them more powerfully 'real' they must first be exceedingly carefully constructed. My recent work looks at data collection, storage, access, and presentation through the lens of the natural history museum.

*The Mystery of the Musty Hide* includes two main texts: the one printed in black ink has been composed specifically for this project, the other is a found text. Alison K. Greene's text contextualizes and describes the theft of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker mount from an exhibition on extinction. I have presented her text in handset metal type, surrounded by another text that has been carved into linoleum and printed. The surrounding text is excerpted from Carl Akeley's autobiography, and describes an elephant hunt and subsequent skinning of the animal in the field.

**About the Artist** Lee Marchalonis has an MFA in Printmaking from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and studied Book Arts at the University of Iowa Center for the Book. She was a 2013-2014 recipient of the Stein Scholarship, a year-long residency awarded by the Center for Book Arts, New York, NY. She has taught at Parsons The New School, Montclair State University, University of Iowa, and the University of Tennessee. Her work can be found in numerous collections, including those at Carnegie Mellon, Lafayette College, and the University of San Diego. Currently she lives in Detroit where she is the Printer-in-Residence at Signal-Return Press, a non-profit community letterpress studio.

# Buzz Spector

*About the Author 3*, collaged dust jacket elements on handmade paper, 2014

*Praise for The Calligrapher*, collaged dust jacket elements on handmade paper, 2014

*we think of ourselves as having high moral standards.*, collaged dust jacket elements on handmade paper, 2014

*not even / a tailor can alter.*, collaged dust jacket elements on handmade paper, 2015

**Buzz Spector's** *About the Author*, *Praise for the Calligrapher*, *we think of ourselves as having high moral standards.*, and *not even / a tailor can alter.* are created from collaged dust jackets on handmade paper. Of his work, Spector has said, "I tear things up... and stack things up... On occasion I cut printed papers up and paste some pieces back down." This basic description of his process belies the sensitivity to materials and the precision of language which mark Spector's work, but it is telling of something more significant: the elegance of an allusive concept articulated simply and exactly.

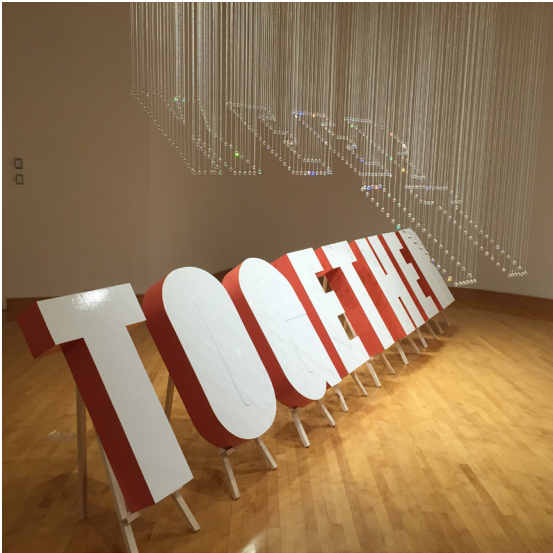
In this series, Spector uses an obvious trick, isolating a particular repeated element to create visual poems. The dust jacket, an ephemeral wrapper created not by the book's author, becomes metonymy for the object we actually spend time with, the book itself. Through the act of removing certain repetitive phrases, Spector illuminates how the casual use of language slips between the absurd and the poetic.

**About the Artist** A native of Chicago, Buzz Spector currently serves as Professor of Art at Washington University in St. Louis. Previously, he has been on the faculty of Cornell University in Ithaca, NY and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Spector is an internationally known artist and critic who uses sculpture, works on paper, book arts, printmaking, and installation to explore themes of perception, memory, and collective history. Spector's work has been shown in numerous galleries and museums including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Mattress Factory Museum in Pittsburgh. He is the author of two books, *Buzzwords* (2012) and *The Book Maker's Desire* (1994). Spector is the recipient of numerous awards and grants, including three fellowships from the National Foundation for the Arts (1991, 1985, and 1982) and the College Art Association's Distinguished Teacher Award in 2013.



# Chris Walla

*Mantra #2*, mixed media installation, 2015



*Mantra #2* by **Chris Walla** richly layers pop culture and design references to create a dense and moving work. The form of “Together” harkens the iconic Hollywood sign, permanent and timeless. Balanced on stands that look as though they were intended for funerary wreaths, the letters feel both static and precarious. The accompanying “Keep It” floats above, as ephemeral and delicate as a message written in lights on a stage. Through titling, the artist tells us that this phrase strives to be repeated, internally, to impart calm. The reality, however, is far more complicated. Despite the allure of the bright colors, clean lines, and light-catching sparkles, the design, materials, and precarious installation subvert any message of hope. The mantra is necessary because everything is in danger of falling apart.

## About the Artist

Walla is an artist and educator living in northern Minnesota. Originally from Los Angeles, Walla received an MFA in sculpture from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and is a Professor of Art at Minnesota State University Moorhead. He is the recipient of several awards and grants, including a McKnight Fellowship, and his artwork has been shown nationally.

## About the Installation

Each piece in any exhibition poses unique installation challenges. *Mantra #2* was originally built to be exhibited in a two-story atrium of a museum in Minnesota. UAG staff worked with the artist to conceive an altered installation system which accounted for our lower ceilings. Packing and transporting this piece was also a challenge: it was shipped by the artist from Minnesota with each letter individually crated and every single crystal bead in its own protective packaging. One of the most difficult installations undertaken by the gallery, it required a good deal of coordination between the artist and staff.

