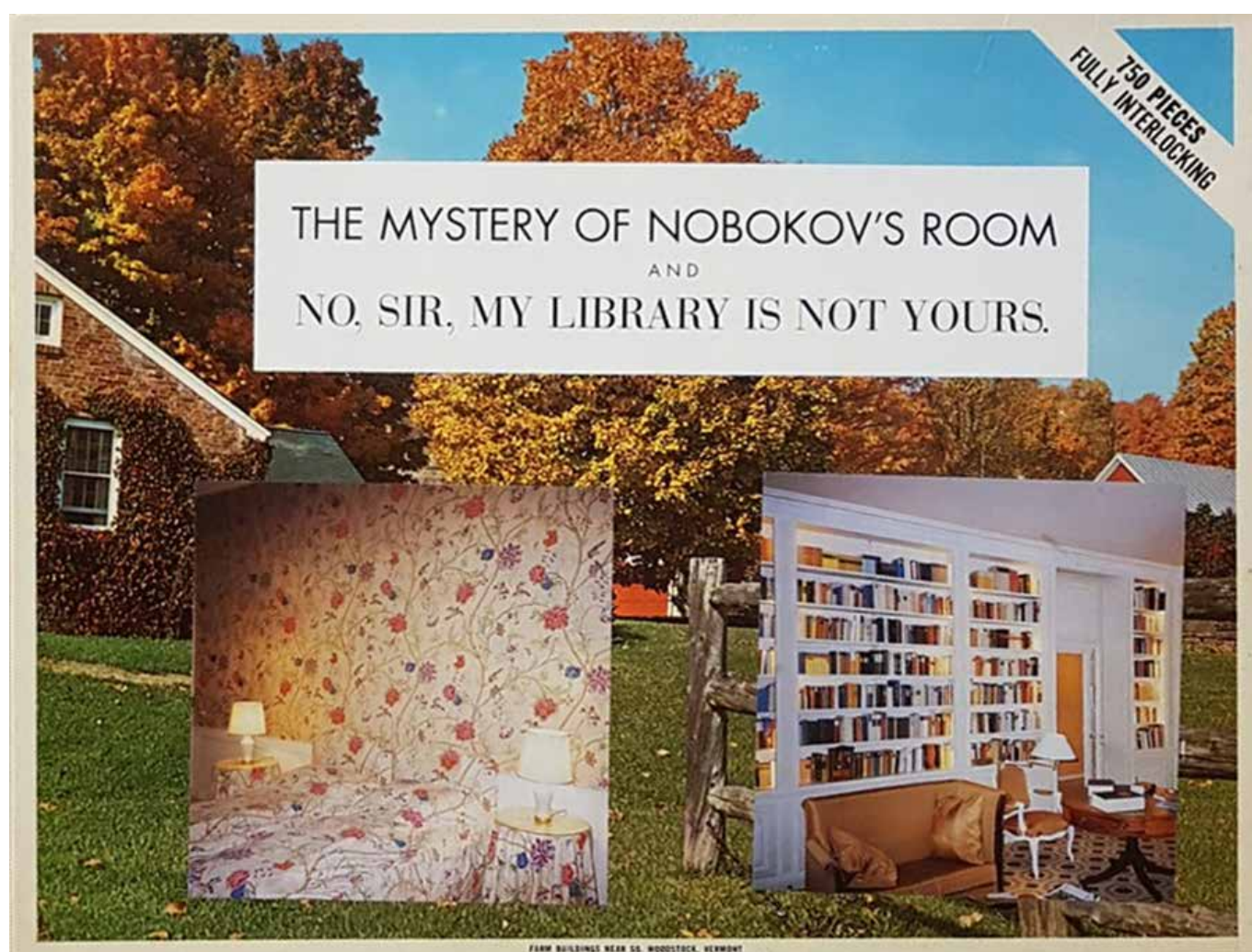

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...

Press release

mfc-michèle didier



Allen Ruppersberg
A Mystery Of Nobokov's Room and No, Sir, My Library Is Not Yours
1999

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...

Press release for the exhibition
From March 13 to April 18, 2020
Opening on Thursday, March 12 at 6pm

"It is not the parts that matter, it is their combinations"¹

Born in 1944, Allen Ruppersberg belongs to the first generation of conceptual artists and participated in 1969 to the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form*.

His work often use several references, from pop culture to mass communication or from literature as language. It can appear autobiographic or self-reflexive, but does not use any specific medium, though text and image are prominent. The work proceeds by "collages" and it humorously sets up plots that could be described as "decor", and setting up crossed references, both formal or symbolic.

Ruppersberg's uses a fragmentary method that could in a sense be compared to apophenia, defined as an altered perception of the subject. It is a tendency to perceive connections and meaning between things that are not obviously related. "Perception goes beyond the rationality of the individual"², in a form of thinking close to pareidolia.

The spectator is invited to speculate and to formulate hypotheses, as in the practice of magic and illusionism. The work look to be elucidable and the artist gives us clues but also creates red herring and missing pieces. The work is a game, and the visitor has to figure out of it a internal logic, even if the work includes hazard and randomness that abort any total achievement.

The Mystery of Nabokov... brings together a group of three works by Allen Ruppersberg, which are related to his studio that is both a work and a matrix. It is an archive, an accumulation of books, films, posters, photographs, records, various objects and curiosities that the artist has collected over many years. He has arranged them without any order or pre-established layout, but with the same attention paid to build up his works, covering the walls from floor to ceiling. *The New Five Foot Shelf* is an installation composed of 50 volumes and 44 posters reproducing a 360-degree, 1:1 scale image of his former studio located at 611 Broadway, in New York, which the artist occupied for fifteen years, mapped and recorded in 1998 and definitively left in December 2000.

As the studio has now been destroyed, the work represents the testimony of his studio, which was a kind of "Merzbau": a work that is "autonomous and developmental, a living organism manifest of a complex web of formal and informal association"³.

The 50 volumes presented with the 44 posters, is a facsimile of an anthology published in 1910, Dr. Eliot, a Harvard professor, which was intended to gather together all of the modern and classical literary knowledge that a cultivated American citizen was expected to master. The anthology contained fifty volumes and held on a five foot long shelf, thus its name *The Five Foot Shelf of Books*. A copy of this anthology could be found in Allen Ruppersberg's atelier.

The content of the anthology has been entirely substituted with a text written by Allen Ruppersberg.

The New Five Foot Shelf was subtitled *Memoir/Novel/Index*. The content of the 50 volumes is, as the artist says, "a reorganisation of multiple elements: a collection of notes, letters, quotations, photos, words, ideas, stories, poems. It is, in short, a personal reference library".

Between the first and the last volume, there are five different chapters:

The first chapter: *Honey, I rearranged the collection* contains several hundred proposals from the artist on how to reorganise a collection.

The second chapter: *When In Doubt Go to The Movies* contains the artist's notes and

1. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, Penguin Modern Classics, London, p 176

2. Joachim Soulières, *Les coïncidences*, Dervy, Paris, 2012

3. Elizabeth Burns Gamard, Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau (*the cathedral of erotic misery*), Princeton Architectural Press, 2000, p 21

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...

Press release for the exhibition
From March 13 to April 18, 2020
Opening on Thursday, March 12 at 6pm

describes several of his works including *Remainders* and *Where is AI 1*.

The third chapter: *Once Upon A Time When Books Were Famous (works)* is a long description of people like the illusionist Harry Houdini, and Pierre-François Palloy, an 18th century French businessman who became rich by selling off the Bastille stone by stone during the Revolution.

The fourth chapter: *The Three MarceIs* is a juxtaposition of the biographies of Marcel Proust, Marcel Duchamp and Marcel Broothaers.

The fifth chapter: *The Master of The Familiar (private)* contains the artist's correspondence with his mother, his family history and some literal transcriptions of obituaries.

This text, which unfolds throughout the 48 volumes, can be read at once, sentence by sentence, page by page, volume by volume, horizontally or vertically. It's also a form of concrete poetry created from thousands of pages, shuffled like playing cards, which invites us to establish new rules of the game, new rules for reading. There are four printed signatures of eight pages per volume. The remaining pages are left blank. A selection of obituaries, from Allen Ruppersberg's private collection, is inserted haphazardly throughout the empty space.

The second work in the exhibition is a jigsaw puzzle, made by Ruppersberg in 1999. Its title is written in two parts, like the two parts of a story, and with two different fonts, *A Mystery Of Nobokov's Room and No, Sir, My Library Is Not Yours...* On the box's lid, each of the titles seems to refer to one of the two images below, as a guide for the "player" to reproduce each side of this puzzle.

The first image is the reproduction of a room, of which only the bed is visible, with its bedding matching the wallpaper. The second image reproduces a library. However the experience of the player is disrupted or complicated by the artist, who established a protocol during the production of the work:

The artist bought puzzle boxes of different sizes on a flea market. On each of these boxes lids, he adds a title and two images. He made a double-sided jigsaw puzzle, using shapes that are not the most common with a variation increasing the difficulty of the game. The artist placed each puzzle in a different box and randomly removed some pieces from each boxes...

Finally the exhibition presents *Chapter VI*.

In 2007, Allen Ruppersberg was invited by Moritz Kung to present his ideal book collection as part of a curatorial programme entitled *Curating the Library* at DeSingel in Antwerp. In 2009, he created a new visual inventory in the form of a limited edition entitled *Chapter VI*, consisting of a book and a unique poster for each copy. Each page of the book becomes a poster, randomly associated with one of the titles in the index, typed with learning cubes ABC Woodblock Playskool...

The book concluded with the complete text of Franz Kafka's *The Burrow*. It is a story by Franz Kafka written in Berlin at the end of 1923, six months before the writer's death. This unfinished text deals with the desperate attempt of a narrator who is half animal and half human to build himself a perfect home that would keep him safe from his invisible enemies.

"I've set up my burrow, and the result seems to be a success. From the outside, you can only see a big hole, but in reality it leads nowhere, you just have to take a few steps and you come up against some good hard rock. I don't want to brag that I knowingly devised this ploy, it's just the remnant of one of my many aborted construction attempts, but it finally seemed advantageous to me not to fill this hole."⁴

4. Franz Kafka, *The Burrow*, 1923

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...



Allen Ruppersberg

*The Mystery Of Nobokov's Room and No, Sir,
My Library Is Not Yours.*

1999

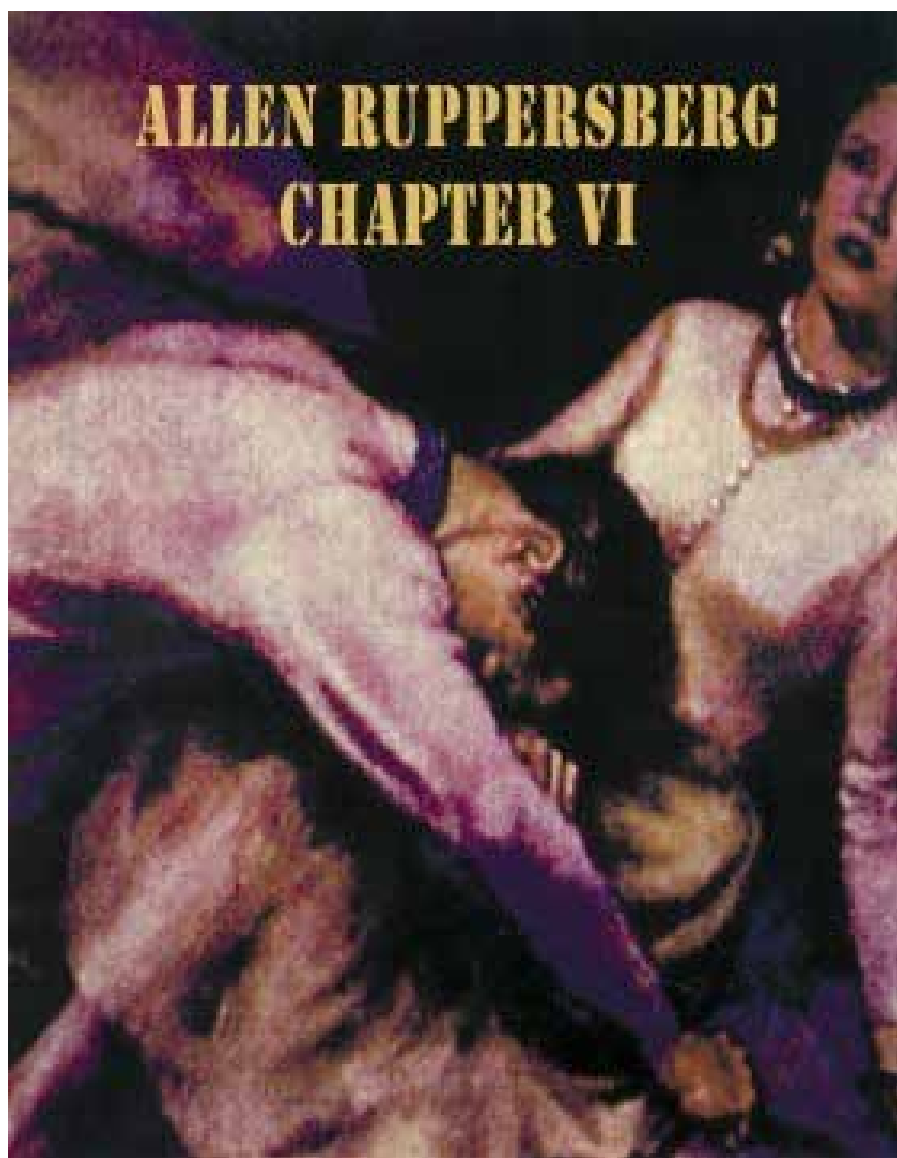
Handcut wood double-sided puzzle in a cardboard box. Dimensions variable.

Limited edition of 50 different copies, signed and numbered.

Each puzzle is unique. Each box is stamped, signed and numbered et contains a card *Major error*.
Production Catherine Pavlovic et Adon Peres.

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...



Allen Ruppersberg
Chapter VI

2009

Book of 112 pages, 27.9 x 21.6 cm

Each poster is unique, 91.8 x 73.8 cm

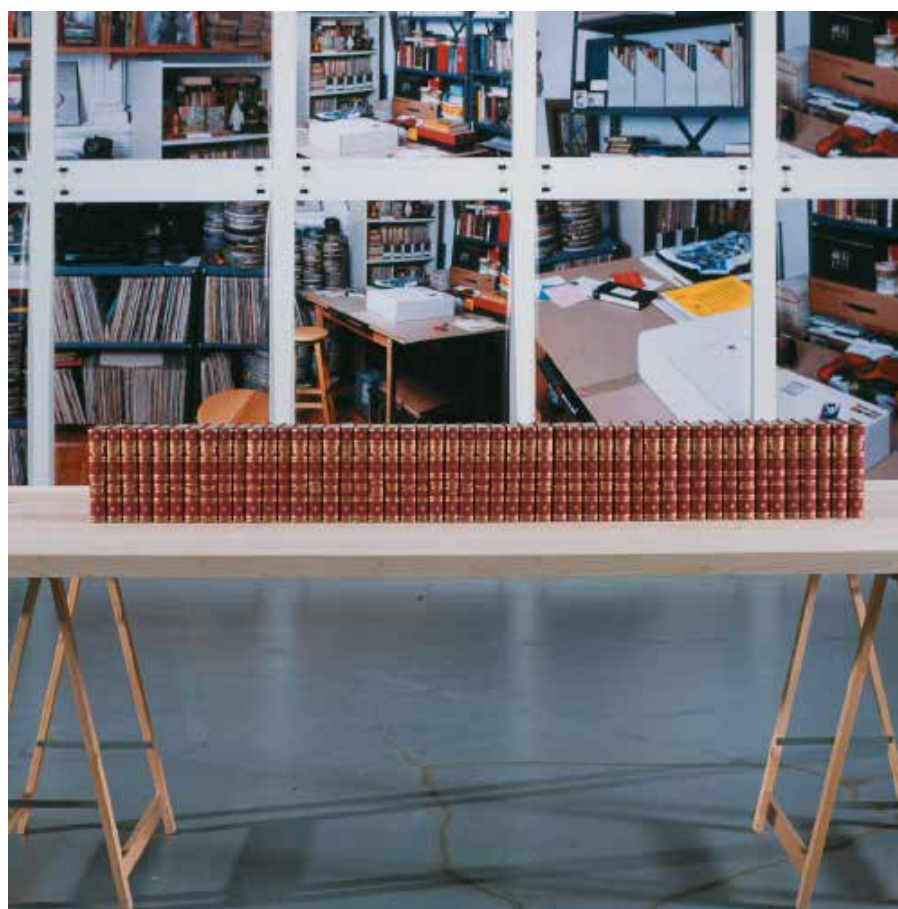
Limited edition to 128 sets + 12 A.P.

Certificate is numbered and signed by the artist
Produced and published by mfc-michèle didier
in 2009

©2009 Allen Ruppersberg et mfc-michèle didier

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...



Allen Ruppersberg
The New Five Foot Shelf

50 volumes of 232 pages, 20 x 13.50 cm each

44 posters, 147 x 90 cm each

Dimensions variable

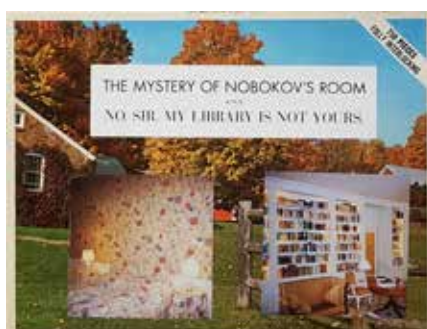
Limited edition of 10 copies and 2 artist's proofs

Certificate is numbered and signed by the artist
Produced and published by Editions Micheline
Szwajcer & Michèle Didier in 2001

©2001 Allen Ruppersberg and Editions
Micheline Szwajcer & Michèle Didier

Allen Ruppersberg

The Mystery of Nabokov...



Allen Ruppersberg

Selected exhibition

Solo exhibitions

2018

Allen Ruppersberg : Intellectual Property 1968-2018, Walker Art Museum, Minneapolis

2017

The Novel That Writes Itself, Greene Naftali, New York

Oh, What a Time, PARQUE Galeria, Mexico City

Past Present Future, Marc Selwyn, Los Angeles

Poster Objects, Galeries Lafayette, Angoulême

2016

GET SET FOR ACTION, Air de Paris, Paris

Allen Ruppersberg, Plug in Institute of Contemporary Art, Winnipeg

2015

What is a Stamp ?, Jumex Foundation of Contemporary Art, Mexico City, Mexico

The singing Posters : Poetry Sound Collage Sculpture Book, Skirball Culture Center, Los Angeles

2014

Allen Ruppersberg, Jürgen Becker Galerie, Hamburg

The Novel That Writes Itself, mfc- michèle didier, Paris

For Collectors Only (everyone is a collector), greengrassi, Londres

No Time Left to Start Again and Again, Wiels, Bruxelles

Drawing and Writing, Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Los Angeles

2013

The Birth and Death of Rock n' Roll, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago

The Umbrella Corner 6/6, curated by Moritz Kung, ProjecteSD, Barcelona

2012

No Time left to start Again/ The B and D of R'n' R, The Art institute of Chicago, Chicago (cat.)
Old/New-New/Old, Galerie Micheline Swajcer, Anvers

2011

Big Trouble, Art Unlimited, Basel, Switzerland

Dan Graham/Allen Ruppersberg, Galerie Micheline Swajcer, Anvers

2010

No Time Left To Start Again / 2, Air de Paris, Paris

Allen Ruppersberg: No Time Left to Start Again, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles,

Greene Naftali, New York

2009

You and me or the art of give and take, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica (cat.)

2008

Camden Arts Centre, London

Allen Ruppersberg: Selected Works, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles

2007

Alterations, Galerie Micheline Swajcer, Anvers

Allen Ruppersberg - the singing posters, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley

Mixed Media 1968, 1971, 1974, 1975, 2006, Air de Paris, Paris

Poetry and Rearrangement, Galerie Martin Janda, Vienne

2005

One of Many - Origins and Variants, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf ; Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee ; Centro

Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville ; Institut d'Art Contemporain, Villeurbanne (cat.)

The Singing Posters Parts II & III, Jürgen Becker Gallery, Karin Guenther Galerie, Hamburg, Germany

2004

The New Five Foot Shelf, De Hallen, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem

2003

The Singing Posters, Studio Guenzani, Milan

The Singing Posters, Gorney Bravin + Lee, New York

2002

Galerie Micheline Swajcer, Antwerp

The New Five Foot Shelf, Galerie Erna Hecey, Luxembourg

Drawings, Christine Burgin, New York

2001

The New Five Foot Shelf, Galerie Micheline Swajcer, Antwerp

Honey, I rearranged the collection, Margo Levin Gallery, Los Angeles

2000

ArtPace, San Antonio, TX

Christine Burgin Gallery, New York

1999

Studio Guenzani, Milan

FRAC Limousin, Limoges (cat.)

Château de Lavigny, Lavigny

Green Grassi, London

1998

Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles

1997

Portikus, Frankfurt

1996

Allen Ruppersberg: Proofs, FRAC Nord Pas-de-Calais, Dunkerque (brochure)

Where is AI, Magasin, Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble (cat.)

Larry Johnson / Allen Ruppersberg, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles; Jay Gorney Modern Art, New York

1994

Studio Guenzani, Milan

Galerie Gabrielle Maubrie, Paris

Galerie de Expeditie, Amsterdam

Raum für Aktueller Kunst, Vienna

Looking Backward 2000 - 1887, Paintings, Sculpture, Drawings, Jay Gorney Modern Art, New York

Allen Ruppersberg

Selected exhibition

1993

How to Remember A Better Tomorrow?, Linda Cathcart Gallery, Los Angeles

What is Literature?, Jay Gorney Modern Art, New York

1992

Personal Art II, 1974, 1985, 1992, FRAC Limousin, Limoges

Galerie de Expeditie, Amsterdam

The Difference Between Analytic and Poetic Language, Galerie Paul Andriessse, Amsterdam

Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Köln

Personal Art, Christine Burgin Gallery, New York

1991

Stichting De Appel, Amsterdam (cat.)

The Myth of Metaphor, Galerie Gabrielle Maubrie, Paris

1990

James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles

Julian Preto Gallery, New York

Cristine Burgin Gallery, New York

1987

Hanes Center Art Gallery, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

1986

Cash / Newhouse Gallery, New York

1985

Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

The Secret of Live and Death, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York

James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles

The secret of Life and Death, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (cat.)

1983

James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles

1982

Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, New York, NY

Some Marvellous Things, André Breton, Ponce

de Léon and the Foundation of Youth, The Clocktower, New York

Some Marvellous Thing, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources Inc., New York

The Texas Gallery, Houston

Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

1979

Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles

1978

Miscellaneous Men, Art & Project, Amsterdam

The Texas Gallery, Houston

University of Southern California Library, Los Angeles

1977

The Picture of Dorian Gray, Fort Worth Art Museum, Fort Worth

Projects: Allen Ruppersberg, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

1976

The Texas Gallery, Houston

The End of Part I, Claire Copley, Inc. Los Angeles

1974

Kabinett für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremerhaven

Claire Copley, Inc., Los Angeles

MTL and Art and Project, Antwerp

1973

Information Gallery, University California at Irvine, Irvine

Walden, Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, France

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (cat.)

Galerie Françoise Lambert, Milan

Situation Gallery, London

1972

Pomona College Art Gallery, Montgomery, Claremont (cat.)

Marketstreet Program, Venice

1971

Art Project, Amsterdam

Pasadena Art Museum, Pasadena

Public collections

Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-On-Hudson, NY

Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Paris, France

Cleveland Art Museum, Cleveland, OH

Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO

FNAC, Puteaux, France

Foundation de Appel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

FRAC Centre, Orléans, France

FRAC Limousin, Limoges, France

FRAC Nord Pas-de-Calais, Dunkerque, France

FRAC Poitou-Charentes, Angoulême, France

FRAC Rhône-Alpes, Lyon, France

Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, University of California, Los Angeles, CA

Institut d'Art Contemporain de Villeurbanne, France

La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, CA

Lannan Foundation, Santa Fe, NM

Los Angeles Coutry Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA

Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI

Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA

Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom

The City of Utrecht, The Netherlands

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

mfc-michèle didier

mfc-michèle didier is an independent publisher established in 1987 in Brussels, who produces and publishes original works by contemporary artists, creating an extensive series of works, such as artist's books, prints, installations, multiples, etc.

Since 2011, mfc-michèle didier gallery, located 66 rue Notre-Dame de Nazareth in Paris, gives the chance to present the publisher's productions and is a place of reflection on the artistic discipline of the artist's book. At the same time, it gives the opportunity to show the importance of ephemera and published, multiplied works in contemporary art.

Artists

AALLIICCEELLEESS...

SAÂDANE AFIF

DENNIS ADAMS

CARL ANDRE

FIONA BANNER

ROBERT BARRY

BERNARD BAZILE

SAMUEL BIANCHINI

BLESS

MEL BOCHNER

AA BRONSON

STANLEY BROUWN

PHILIPPE CAZAL

LUDOVIC CHEMARIN©

CLAUDE CLOSKY

HANNAH COLLINS

DAVID CUNNINGHAM

CHARLES DE MEAUX

BRACO DIMITRIJEVIC

PETER DOWNSBROUGH

JEAN-BAPTISTE FARKAS

YONA FRIEDMAN

JAZON FRINGS

PAUL-ARMAND GETTE

LIAM GILICK

CARI GONZALEZ-CASANOVA

JOSEPH GRIGELY

THE GUERRILLA GIRLS

CARSTEN HÖLLER

PIERRE HUYGHE

IKHÉA@SERVICES - GLITCH

ON KAWARA

MATT KEEGAN

JUTTA KOETHER

LEIGH LEDARE

ALBAN LE HENRY

CHRISTIAN MARCLAY

LAURENT MARISSAL

ALLAN MCCOLLUM

MATHIEU MERCIER

ANNETTE MESSENGER

GUSTAV METZGER

JOHN MILLER

JONATHAN MONK

ROBERT MORRIS

ANTONI MUNTADAS

MAURIZIO NANNUCCI

PHILIPPE PARRENO

RAYMOND PETTIBON

MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO

HUBERT RENARD

ALLEN RUPPERSBERG

CLAUDE RUTAUULT

RAY SANDER

JOE SCANLAN

KLAUS SCHERÜBEL

CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN

JIM SHAW

JOSH SMITH

ROMARIC TISSERAND

UNTEL

LAWRENCE WEINER

ELSA WERTH

MARTHA WILSON

CHRISTOPHER WOOL

mfc-michèle didier - Paris

66 rue Notre-Dame de Nazareth

75003 Paris, France

phone: +33 (0)1 71 27 34 41

www.micheledidier.com

open Tuesday to Saturday from 12h00 to 19h00

subway: Strasbourg Saint-Denis, Arts et Métiers,

République and Temple

Simon Poulain

simon@micheledidier.com

info@micheledidier.com

mfc-michèle didier - Brussels

19 rue de la Senne

1000 Bruxelles, Belgique

tel/fax: +32 (0)2 374 75 98

www.micheledidier.com

open Monday to Friday from 9h00 to 17h30, on

appointment only

Benedetta Grazioli

benedetta@micheledidier.com

info@micheledidier.com

Currents and upcoming exhibitions

Allen Ruppersberg - *Mystery of Nabokov...*

Opening on March 12

Exhibition from March 13 to April 18, 2020

Hubert Renard - *Catalogue raisonné*

Opening on April 23

Exhibition from April 24 to May 30, 2020

Art Basel 2020

From June 18 to June 21, 2020

mfc-michèle didier

66 rue Notre-Dame de Nazareth, 75003 Paris, France

T + 33 (0)1 71 27 34 41 - P + 33 (0)6 09 94 13 46

info@micheledidier.com - www.micheledidier.com