

FA223: Print Publication

Final Workbook: Artist Books

Initial brainstorm:

- push the limits of how many zines you can put together to create one big book
- a book based around my green text series & green paper
- a continuation of my religion zine & the image thresholding I was doing

I planned on doing one of each of these to create multiple books rather than one impeccable one. However the zine idea was put aside to expand on other elements (book 2 & 3).

Book 1: *SOON YOU'RE GOING TO RETURN TO SOCIETY BUT YESTERDAY TODAY TONIGHT TOMORROW I CAN FOOL MYSELF INTO BELIEVING THERE'S EVER A SCENARIO WHERE YOU STAY*

This book is based around a short series of vignettes I wrote prior to this class. It is a small, hand-sized green book designed to be an intimate one-on-one experience between reader and the speaker of the text. The text interacts with images selected to invoke the ambiance and feeling of the text, as well as to help the reader visualize. It's not short but not too long that the reader gets particularly bored, and follows a narrative sequence from morning to night, this is across untold days, years. It's form invokes a photobook, drawing the reader into the memories of the unnamed speaker of the text.

Artist models:

<https://www.studioairport.nl/>

Emergence Magazine Vol.1 (2019) is a collection of essays, poems, adapted films, and photo essays, designed to function "more as a book rather than a traditional magazine".

I was drawn to this publication due to it's use of white space, images, and blocks of text, as seen in the image on the top right here. None of the elements touch each other though they interact through their positioning on the page relative to each other.

Below the original is a diagram showing where I see the layout lines for this particular work. Between pages there is a variety of placements for where various elements go, however it still sticks basically to this layout. This is something I wanted to and did emulate (though not this specific layout).



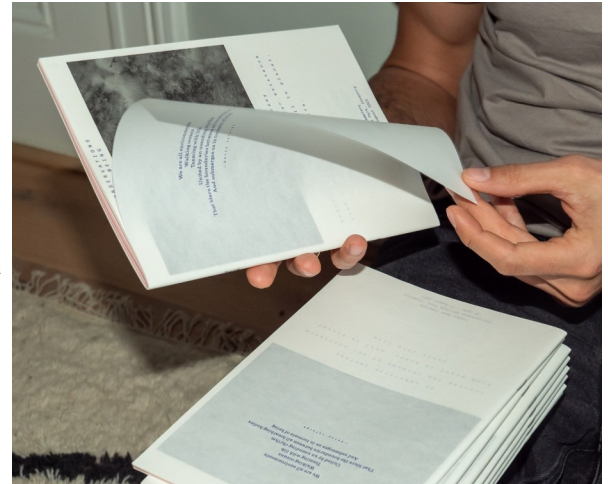
<https://www.studioairport.nl/>

This photo is of an exhibition accompanying booklet for graphic design exhibit *Observations on Being* (over page, top image).

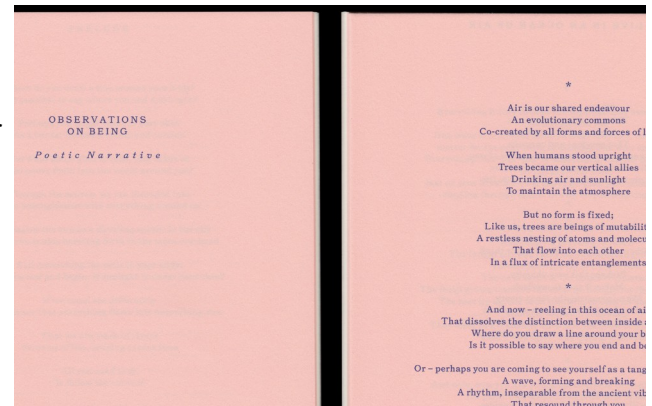
I really enjoyed the combination of papers used for this booklet, especially with the tracing paper being used as the outermost page. This is usually what we would consider a cover page- something that is usually of a weightier stock than the internal pages.

However, it doesn't quite serve the same purpose as a cover page, but rather one of the first pages of a book. It has no title, but a quote from Daisy Lafarge. This is somewhat of a subversion of the expectation of a book, though it's purpose as an exhibition accompanist allows a bit more leeway as to what is expected. The simplicity of it's design is also appealing.

Inside, there is a selection of different page colours, all that work with the same dark indigo/blue text colour seen throughout (see image middle right). This combination is pleasing to the eye and offers something different, and I would argue more human than the usual black-on-white.



Though I noted this, when it came to it in the computer lab I completely forgot to experiment with different text colours that could play with the shade of green/pistachio paper I had. This also applies to images; I planned to but did not experiment with changing the opacity or hue of the images to fit or contrast with the green.



<https://www.leslie-cheng.com/invisible-cities-porto>

This book was a collaborative book within a summer editorial course; composting of type and composition exercises. It was inspired by *Invisible Cities* by Italo Calvino. The collaborators, including Leslie Cheng, who's site this is on were told to produce a layout that was "truly representative of how we each interpreted the text". This meant freedom in stock, size, etc. (see image right).

In a way the form of book 1 is similarly a response to a text I'd already written. It takes the format that photos usually do (3:4 ratio), and with the butter paper dividing the two sections from each other and the covers it emulates a photobook- something made for storing memories. This is a vibe I was trying to achieve in the writing too, a nostalgic longing feeling.



The element within this that is doing the most work is the collaboration aspect. To get such variety within one work by oneself would take a lot of time, consideration, and distance from other parts of the project. It would be difficult to come up with so many responses by yourself. Now I did not have the time to be doing all that by myself, and everyone else is busy making their own books, so something of this scale was out of consideration. However, I still wanted to include some variety with my paper types, etc.

The variety immediately draws the viewer's attention and intrigue. This goes one step further, I think, for the difference in texture and experience when handling the butter paper pages at the start middle and the end of the book. This makes the viewer slow down in order to be careful and especially at the start primes them to be considering of the rest of the book.

Most of my experimentation with different paper types was outside of the main text block, and I only experimented with one other page size within that (which I struggled with printing). I used a heavier cardstock for the cover, and lighter but still semi-rigid card for my inside pages. Both of these were the same shade of green. I then also used some brown paper as my end pages, and the butter paper around each section of the book.

Process:

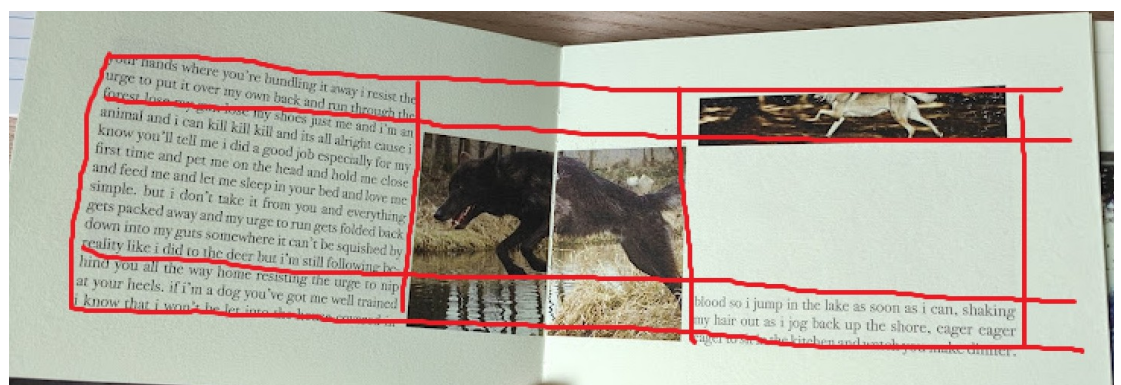
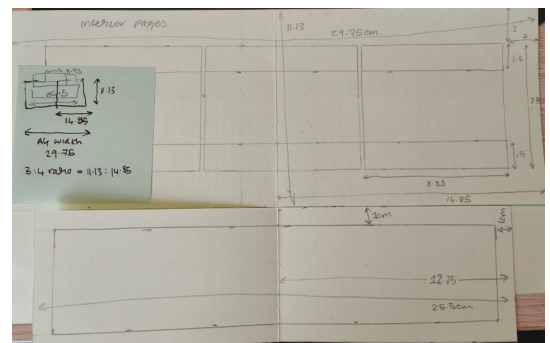
I had written what I called the 'green series' which I wanted to combine together with green paper I had on hand to create my first book.

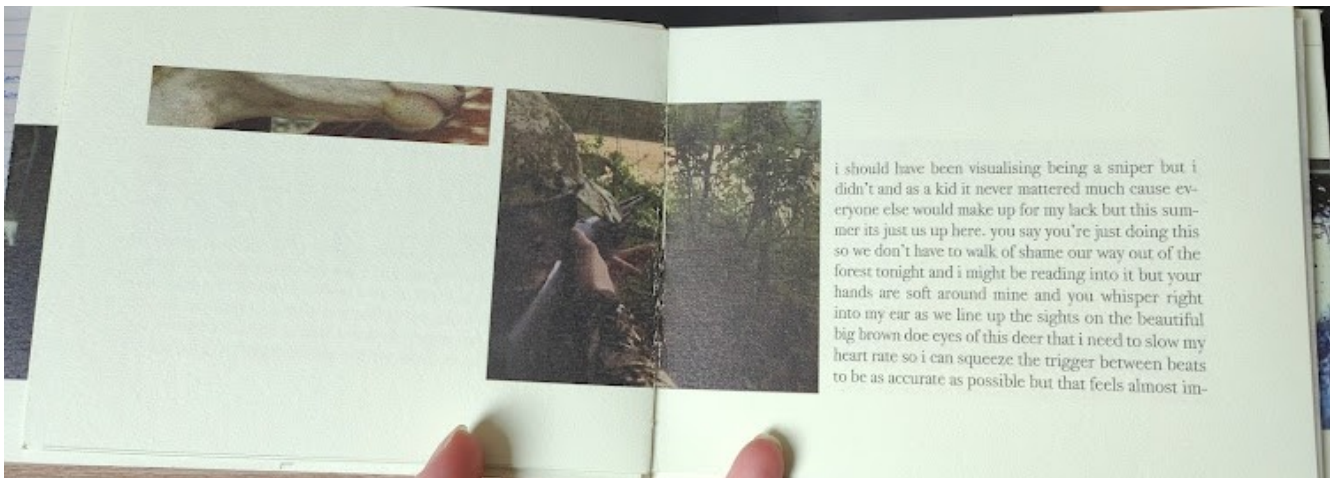
My aim with this book conceptually was to experiment with how I mixed text and photos as opposed to how I'd used them in the previous assignment. To do this I created a grid system (see right) that could give me a variety of layouts while still looking similar. I chose a 3:4 size ratio equal to the width of an A4 page, as I wanted a small/hand sized book, and I enjoy that aspect ratio.

The large margins were to allow the page colour to show through. This was good, however I could have also edited the photos in some way that they also printed green or something, as they clash with the page colour in some places.

Right: my layout planning. Below & over page: two spreads that best demonstrate how the layout worked.

The initial form of this text was a solid block of text, which had to get split over multiple pages. I could have been more selective as to what text went on what page & how that affects the reading experience/absorption of the text, however the block nature of the text fits with the layout system I used.



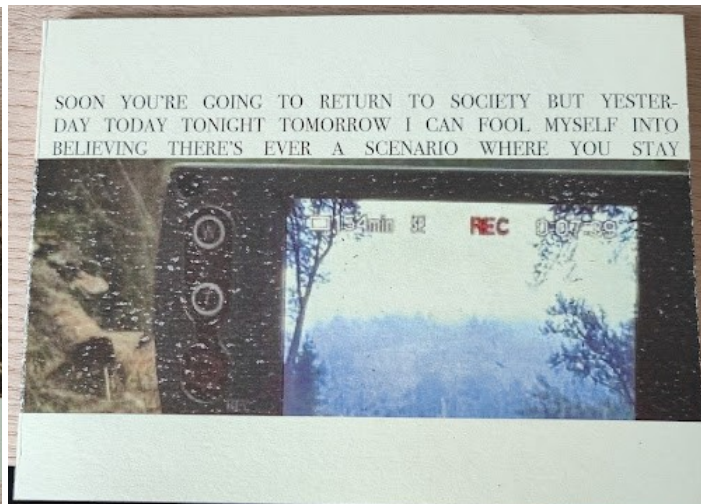


In terms of construction, I aimed to experiment with a new form of construction I hadn't tried before, though my largest struggles lay in printing, though I had a couple of other stumbling blocks.

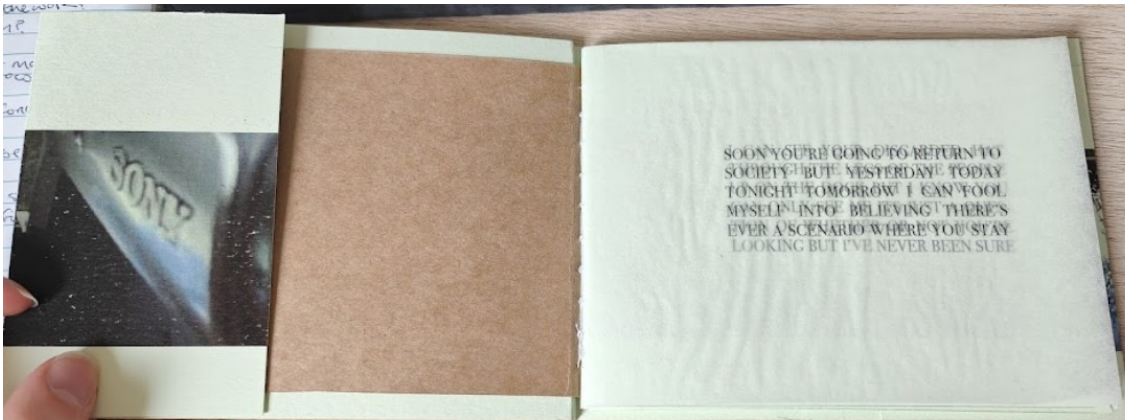
The smaller insert pages gave me trouble, as I wanted to print them on the excess of the main pages (print at the same time), but I figure out how to get it all to print on one page (double sided). I ultimately gave up on this, but it could have been fixed by giving it it's own document to booklet print, however this would have been expensive in terms of paper.

I had great difficulty in printing a cover. The paper was too thick & printer didn't like printing on it. Also, what I wanted was too long to print on one a3 piece. I tried twice (two separate prints) piecing it together: first time i failed to match up the images on the back, second time I didn't make the height of the back piece tall enough, so an extra bit of card had to be taped on.

Below left: back of cover. Below right: front of cover.



Paper problems: The green paper was pastel, and I wanted to include some different types of paper, so I also bought some butter paper, and some thicker brown card. After printing a first test I decided that the 270gsm green paper was way too thick, and the 135gsm green paper that Gordon Harris had would do better. The card-like quality of it was an aim, as I wanted the book to hold its shape well/not flop. When gluing the pages into the cover, the butter paper absorbed a bit of moisture & wrinkled- something to keep in mind in the future.



Furthermore with construction; I wanted to focus on stitched binding, as that interested me previously. For this book, I wanted to have multiple smaller sections that I could bind together into a final book, in order to prevent excessive creep, and to expand on my double-zine idea from last assignment. I saddle-stitched each section, then sewed the sections together. I then stitched this to the spine of the end pages, as I didn't quite trust a glue to do this job (see photos below). End pages were necessary as to not have the stitching seen from the outside. I covered this with the cover page, which had french folds (see photo above).



Book 2: *JUST KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU*

This book is an unconventional read disguised in traditional hardcover book form. It has a black fabric cover and red internal pages. The book really requires a sit-down session to read & fully reflect on the concepts brought up, however it can also function as something that can be easily flipped through to look at.

It's spin on the traditional can also be seen reflected in it's content's concepts. The narrative sequence of found image and text guides the reader into seeing the links between pain & pleasure, queerness & suffering and sex & religion. It also links everything through relation to the Church/Catholicism; the doubt it brings; god as a lover, a lover as god; the holiness of love. This is done with a subtle throughline on St Sebastian, known for being the unofficial patron saint of queer people.

Artist models:

<https://www.behance.net/gallery/108953573/Design-PhotographyArtist-of-Theater-Cinema-zines>

This image shows layouts for a zine detailing the Design and Photography major of the HSE Art and Design School, created by Victoria Makeeva.

This was the main inspiration and starting point for this book. It reminded me of my 'night' themed work from earlier in the semester where I had used image thresholding (black & white), as the artist here uses greyscale and white space effectively. From this point I also thought of my religious themed work- something I wanted to continue with this half of the semester. Combining these together would create a goth-ish look that I thought could be pretty interesting. The red paper was the edgiest I thought, and works well with black.

It was a stepping off point also in terms of inspiring my compiling different media (images, scripture, essays, etc.), as well as using my own handwriting. However, I did make the choice to not do full page spreads, though I did not experiment with this. My justification was that I wanted the red pages to be a feature however looking back, more experimentation could have improved my decision making process.



<https://www.behance.net/gallery/58361713/Zine-Magazine-Issue-19>

This is a spread in Zine Magazine Issue 19 Ugly Pretty, designed/uploaded by Jac Chung.

I looked at this artist model before deciding on coloured paper & image thresholding, so I was still looking at how people combined image, colour, and blank space. This work provided an interesting take on these elements, using them in unconventional ways. Most of the page space is blank, with all information (image, text) being confined to the top. I enjoyed the concept of this being a sort of rule (though the rest of the work doesn't follow it so much) in a similar way to my grid system in book 1.

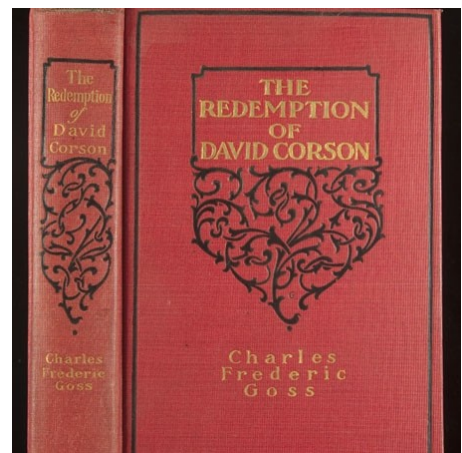


Eventually I put this idea into practice in keeping my photos and text to a certain size and placement in book 2, though not as rigorously as in book 1.

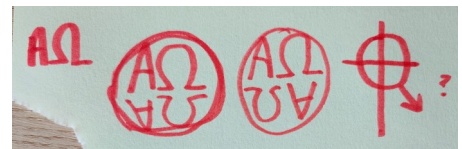
<https://www.rit.edu/carycollection/fields-gold>

(Image of this artist model is the last one on previous page). The source for the photo is an article on *American Decorated Trade Bindings and Their Designers, 1890–1915*. This is a cover designed by Frederic W. Goudy, a guy who I think would have enjoyed artist books, as the article briefly describes his interest in private press publications and “craft and typographic art”. Perhaps more of a designer than artist but close enough.

There is a collection of book covers at the end of the site, of which this is on the simpler side. Had there been more time perhaps I would have also looked into painting/embossing a proper full cover illustration on fabric.



In my effort to practice binding in all of these books, I wanted to try out a classic fabric hardcover book. When initially planning, I was also contemplating embossing a title or relevant religious symbol/design similarly to what is seen on the model (potential ideas: bottom right image). However I briefly looked into the process and decided to be practical about time and money and not do that. The blank cover to my book lends it a certain amount of mystery/difference from the expected I think, which I feel is fitting.



I was originally going to make the whole book red (including cover) except the text/image inside when looking at this image. I changed this because I didn't have any red fabric that would work, as well as the fact that I find that the black cover, stitching, and printing brings it all together more.

Process/outcomes

I carried over the elements of coloured paper, layout (though more informal), and binding/construction from book 1, as well as themes and techniques from assignment 1.

My first order of business was experimenting with whether or not the black and white images would work with coloured paper well enough. I checked to see if it just prints black & no white onto my red paper. This was successful, so I committed to it.

Ordering the pages into a narrative that made sense was important to me with this book. I printed my images and text out A5 size in order to write on them. After this step I shuffled them into piles based on theme, and found pages that wove each theme into each other. I came away with a number of pages that allowed for four equal sections.

I did not end up annotating pages, as I ended up enjoying the clean look they had (see image right), though I did use handwriting throughout (see below). This also gives the core argument of the work more legitimacy, as I think excessive annotations would have made it feel like the ravings of a crazy person.

The amount of handwriting I included was the right amount for this book. They also mostly serve the function of crediting sources, as I didn't want to copy the format of a traditional book in this regard (though I did contemplate it briefly).



My process for putting together the pages was somewhat convoluted:

- amass photos and screenshots of things in a folder. Have a separate document for song lyrics
- put all photos and screenshots through this website <https://pinetools.com/threshold-image> and save them in a separate folder
- put every photo on it's own A5 InDesign page, as well as song lyrics (copy & paste from doc)
- print pages & cut them down to size
- briefly annotate/give credit to original painters/writers
- organise into order seen in book
- divide into 4 sections & separate with sticky notes
- scan pages of each section & send to email
- snipping tool each page out of the PDF so they are Jpeg images all in one folder. Number them A1 through D12 so pages stay in order
- run all pages through <https://pinetools.com/threshold-image> again, saving each with their given number, in a different folder (see last image on pg8).
- create 4 identical InDesign documents (with twice as many pages as needed, to accommodate for blank pages when booklet printing).
- place images into InDesign documents in order.
- print final pages using bypass tray with red paper.

Could improve on:

Printing from InDesign: I could not break the Ctrl-P habit instead of click-navigating to the 'Print Booklet' button. This resulted in a lot of wasted paper and money (both in buying more paper, and printing more things).

Binding & spine height: I did not look up any case binding tutorials at this point and just kind of blanket stitched all sections together at once. This resulted in poor tension, and you could see the binding when between sections (see right), and sections also slip down slightly if you are holding the book up vertically.

I made the cover before I had finished printing my last section of pages and so guessed as to how much room I'd need. It is too much space, causing the front cover to not quite sit parallel, but at an angle to the back cover when held flat.



Book 3: *ONE THOUSAND YEARS WITH YOU*

This book is designed to be a companion to *just know that i love you*. It conveys similar themes around religion, however in this book the idea of sin in relation to queerness is explored further through the metaphor of a couple stuck in my version of purgatory; a place where they've been put to be away from others, but also somewhere they can be themselves. It also asks the question of whether heaven would be worth giving up a key part of yourself, or is heaven our experiences with each other? It's blue pages and white cover emulate the wintry scene that this purgatory is described as. This also contrasts with the black and red of *just know that i love you*. The style of pages is consistent across both books, again implying a link.

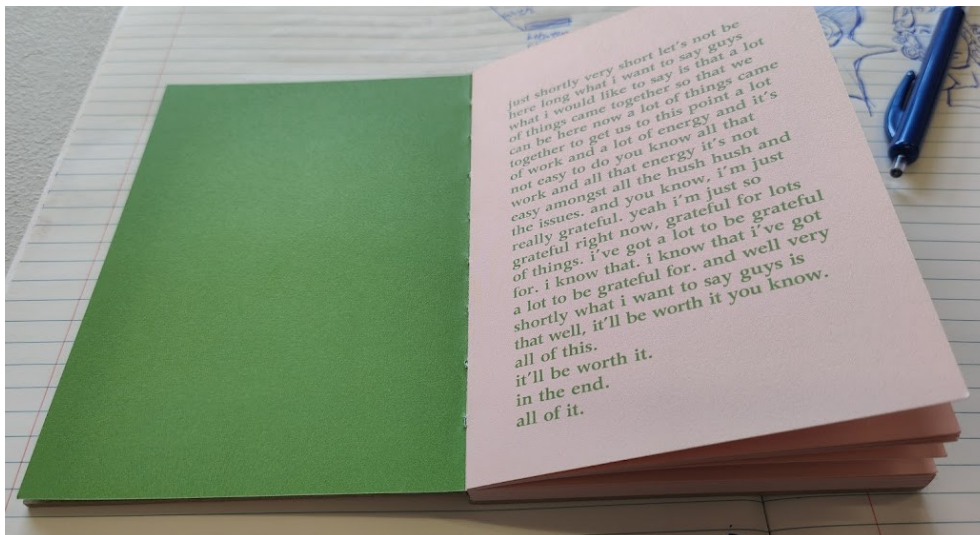
As an accompanying book I was therefore going to be doing much the same thing, and so I did not look for further artist models except for *Still Looking Good* (see below).

<https://www.gloria-books.com/books/still-looking-good-by-alice-and-oliver-connew>

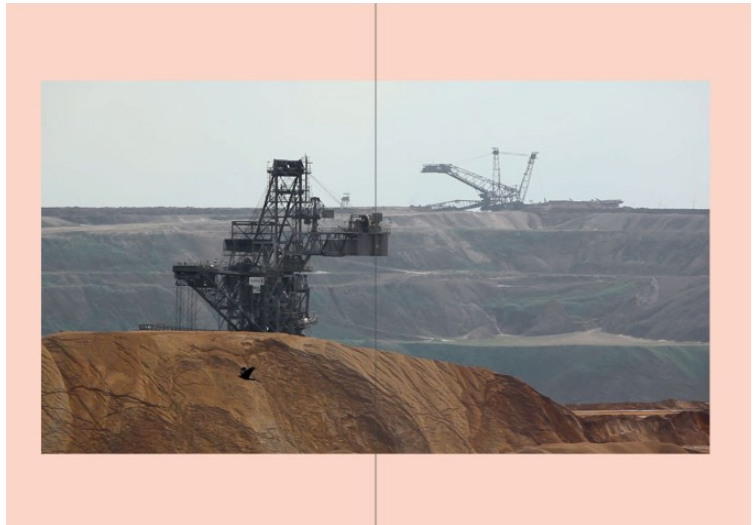
Still Looking Good is one part of a three part collaboration between siblings Oliver and Alice Connew. The other parts were a performative piece titled *Things That Move Me* by Oliver, and a "reimagining [of] the concepts as short film" helped by Alice. The book is a different form for the film (from what I understand).

The reimagining works in different formats (in this case book form) interests me, however I was on a mission with this last book both conceptually and in construction. However this is an idea for the future, as I do also have an interest in video art.

This artist model would have been interesting to look at if I had made the decision to do double page spreads, as a lot of the images on their website showcase this. However, there are other pages with more relevance to my single page spreads (see image below). Different coloured end pages have been used here- ones that are the same colour as the text on the facing page. I use this technique in my own book- white end pages next to blue interior pages.

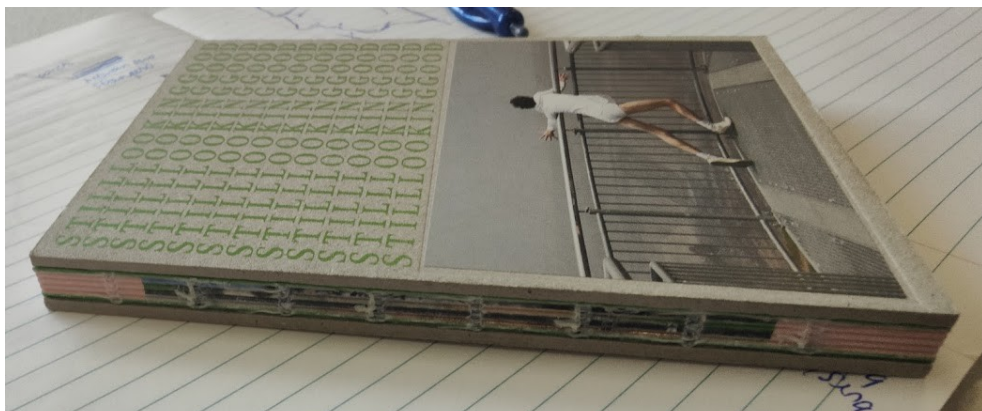


They also utilize coloured paper (I'm assuming that the pink is not printed), but also print their images in colour. Their use of coloured paper gives a sense of cohesion to the book where a lot of the images would otherwise seem disjointed. This relates to my own work, where the colour of the paper relates to the themes of the books (a passionate red with book 2, and wintery blue purgatory for book 3).



However, I think their success with the colour on colour is thanks to the nature of the paper being almost a mid-tone, something that comes across as background noise without being shaped. Here it does a good job at being a background. Their success with this is also probably thanks to high quality printing, where white is printed in rather than assuming that the paper is going to be white & leaving areas blank (I think this is what happened to my cover for book 1, alongside the paper weight being too heavy).

My main interest in this artist model was how they did the spine, using coptic stitch binding and gluing the spine into one thing for extra durability.



After attempting the same (bad) binding method I used for book 2 (first image below), I used this binding method with my own work, and gluing on the cover pages (second image below) as seen here, rather than binding them in with the rest of the text block (as in the tutorial I watched <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ue52htX3j0k&t=230s>). This came out very well for me, and allows the book to lay completely flat. However, I did skip with gluing the spine as I liked it how it was.



While my binding is relatively clean, when I was binding it I was planning on doing a fabric hardcover, as with book 2. This did end up successful, so I used some white card, similarly to *Still Looking Good*, and glued it to my attached end pages.

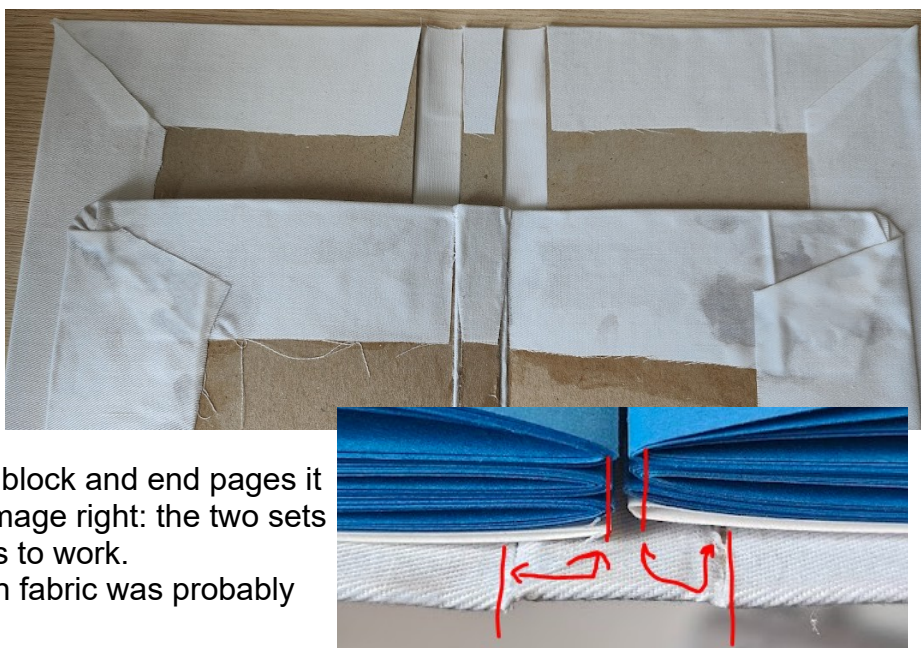


The process of making book 3 was relatively straightforward, however there was one main problem- getting a cover to be both functional and looking good.

As the accompanying book to book 2, I wanted book 3 to take the same form, though with some differences; in colour and form (the rounded corners mainly).

Attempt 1 (image right, bottom cover)

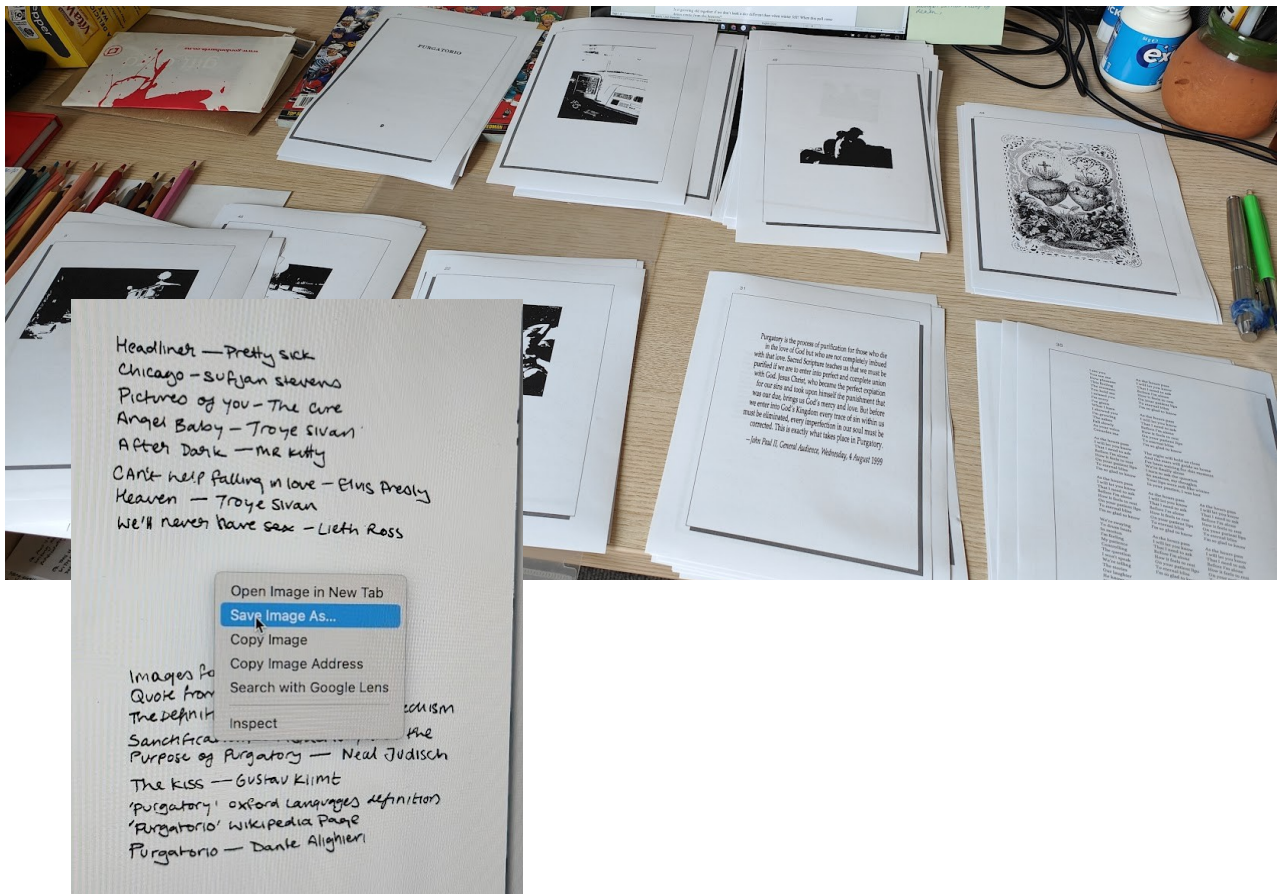
- All purpose adhesive UHU (solvent glue) kept showing through in thicker spots
- forgot to include bending room in the spine and upon testing with text block and end pages it would not open flat or much at all. Image right: the two sets of lines would need to line up for this to work.
- attempted rounded corners, though fabric was probably too thick for this



Attempt 2 (image previous page, top cover. Three further images below.)
 - Multi-purpose adhesive UHU (solvent free glue)- used a different glue to see if the spots showing through were because of the solvent, however it still showed though less
 - kept it simple with 90° corners to minimize the amount of potential mistakes
 - attempted dry brushing paint over marks, which just drew the eye to the marks. (see small photo right).



I used the same convoluted method of creating and ordering pages as described for book 2 above. First image below: piles with differing themes about to be ordered into one big pile. There were more pages for this book than book 2 necessitating 2 extra sections, final one only being half size. Bottom-most image: saving images after scanning and putting through thresholding website.

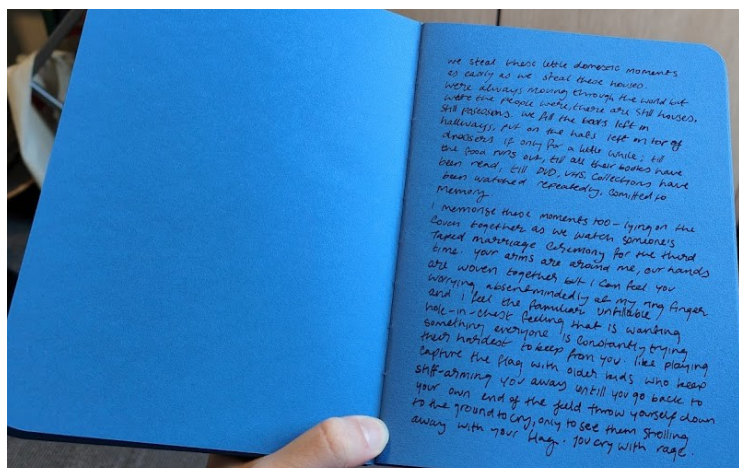


Outcome:

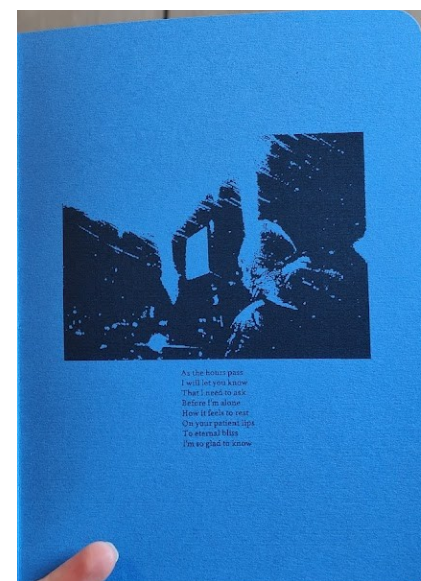
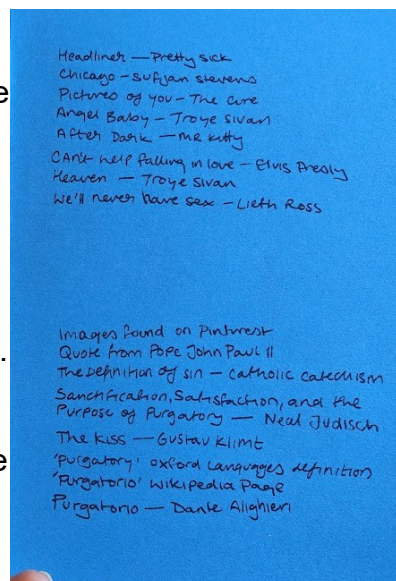
Despite the cover not working out as planned, this book is still successful in what it set out to be: something to go with and contrast with the red book 2. The blue & white are opposite the red & black of book 2. Where book 2's corners are sharp, these are round. Where book 2 looks somewhat traditional, this is more non-traditional.



The handwritten narrative sections (see image right) give a more personal touch. Chose normal capitalization this time, again, more personal than having everything capitalized. I polled my flatmates as to what each type made them feel, and that was the outcome. I wanted to do something similar to book 1 in terms of including my own writing, but also in a way that fits with the way the book (and book 2) are laid out.



When including song lyrics I decided to print them rather than to write them, as the handwriting in this book is from the perspective of a character. This also allowed me to distort the font in InDesign. Distortion was one of the key reasons I chose to continue with the image thresholding- it reduces a picture into one layer of information (to my eye), which in a way makes it more and less true at the same time. This I feel allows me a greater layer of vulnerability between me and the book as nothing in it is exactly quite what was originally on the pages I scanned.



Differing from book 2, I decided to include a bibliography in this work (bottom left image). This was because I found having the handwritten notes at the bottom of each page in book 2 was clunky and drew attention away from what I wanted the reader to focus on- the content. This change allows the viewer to get the proper experience while still also being able to access the

original texts should they so wish to. However I probably could have made it clearer that the handwritten text is my own original work.

I think this book is perhaps a little difficult to follow the narrative of. It's nature makes you want to just flip through it but I find you need to read all parts to comprehend it as it is otherwise a bit disjointed. The narrative is around a couple who have been left in purgatory all alone, and it is alluded to that this is because they are gay & that doesn't fly in heaven. One of the pair ponders this, and we later learn they are searching for a way out. It is also alluded to that they find this, but whether they do or not is really up to personal interpretation.

I did test on a spare bit of white cardboard whether or not it would take easily to being embossed or some equivalent. It was thicker & more resistant than the cardboard I used for every other hard cover. Leaving it blank, it can match better with book 2.

Lastly, I vastly improved my InDesign printing since book 2- no errors & no wasted paper. Yay!

Final presentation (image below).

I decided to present just books 2 and 3 as they work well together, and are finished to a standard that I can approve of. Had book 1 had a better printed cover and related a little better thematically to the others, it would also be out there, but it does not.

I chose to present them open as I wanted to showcase their colour, as well as the style of content, as they are open to handwritten pages that best exemplify the themes of each of them. This, I feel, would entice audiences to interact with and read the books moreso than their blank covers would.

