

INFINITE ARCHIVE



NYPL




Printed in the United States of America  
in 2018 by Minuteman Press  
New Rochelle, New York

INFINITE  ARCHIVE  
NYPL

Patrick Perry | Sarah Rowe | Rachel Sydlowski

HARRY BELAFONTE LIBRARY  
203 West 115th Street | New York, NY | 10026



## PREFACE

### Infinite Archive

Warmth, nostalgia, and kitsch play an integral role in exploring the creative possibilities of an outdated indexing system. A digital version of this system exists and is used with great success and efficiency, yet it lacks physical agency. This absence of paper, wood, and the accompanying olfactory sensations are transmigrations of the library soul from the analog to digital. Something comforting, familiar and universal is gained with reclaiming the physical presence of the card catalog. The discrete interior space of each drawer, allotted to artists, mixes the familiar and unfamiliar, an uncanny experience of going into the past and finding things not quite as you remember them.

Thirty artists were asked to select anything from the New York Public Library's holdings. The array is vast, from digitized prints to periodicals, novels, poems and children's books. The relationship between the constructed mental image and the physical object that are the product of a singular source is a unique sensation. It's something akin to reading the book and seeing the film, at times harmoniously congruent or jarringly disturbing.

An exploratory spirit is required to access the various outcomes; one must physically pull to reveal what is hidden within each drawer.

In many ways, selecting artists and placing artworks within the cabinet, is the unraveling of indexing. Placing no restrictions on material or content lends itself to a balance of organization and entropy. With the end results nestled into the tight dimensions of each drawer, the artworks are as varied and broad as the collection of the New York Public Library itself.

In closing, the spirit of the project remains humble and direct. Consensus and lack of hierarchy fueled the process from conceptualization to installation. We remain ardent supporters of activating public spaces and presenting the visual arts in places that are both accessible and welcoming. We would like to thank the thirty artists who selflessly agreed to create new artwork for this project: Helen Broady, Jenny Chisnell, Tequila Davis and the entire staff of the 115th Street Library who graciously worked alongside us and hosted the exhibition. Special thanks to Dr. Sharon Jordan for her thoughtful essay that accompanies this catalog and for being a patient teacher and mentor to many of the collaborating artists.

**Infinite Archive**

## FOREWORD

### Sharon Jordan

Books entertain and educate; they challenge and inspire, and they transport. Infinite Archive's intimate and highly personal exhibition does all of this as well by inviting thirty artists to make a work inspired by material in the collection of the New York Public Library. Each artwork fits within one drawer of a de-commissioned card catalogue. Though the exhibition is contained neatly within the wooden cabinet, the result is expansive in its range of materials and the ideas and narratives evoked for contemplation.

Like handling a book, and like thumbing through an old card catalogue, there is a satisfying tactile materiality to the range of media used in the making of these diverse artworks. The appreciation for craft evident throughout is a confirmation of art for art's sake. An etched copper plate with applied gold leaf and plaster thumb exquisitely illustrates *King Midas and the Golden Touch*. There is a modernist geometric abstraction in ceramic, several intricately cut paper works and richly layered collages and mixed media assemblages, including an architectural relief in wood inspired by the

prints of Piranesi. One of the most delightful pieces is the landscape featuring audio of bird songs inspired by a book called *Cahier d'un Retour Au Pays Natal*.

Like a book, each drawer is a self-contained world reflecting the style and personality of its creator. Several works arouse an equal curiosity about the book that served as their source of inspiration as they do about the work of their artist. These include the ethereal abstraction inspired by Jorge Luis Borges' *El Aleph*, the silkscreen and collage reminiscent of a treasured family album inspired by *In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez; and the day-glow creature in its psychedelic galaxy inspired by Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell*.

On a visit to the library, there is always the possibility of the chance discovery of an unknown book that opens us up to something new and wonderful that we didn't know we needed until it was found. The silkscreen *Étoiles* features a whimsical mythological creature that beckons the viewer to further investigate its source from a book called *Celestial Treasury*. The spiraling collage inspired by the poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and the mixed media interior scene referencing the fiction of Vladimir Nabokov are reminders of the pleasures of

revisiting favorite authors again and again. Many of the artworks are testimonials to the importance of literary inspiration among the artists: *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac is conjured up in a densely organized pen and ink drawing; *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde is depicted in a stark and dramatic woodblock print and *Rubyfruit Jungle* by Ruby Brown is humorously condensed in a lush painting featuring a Classical male nude bombarded by grapefruits.

Some artworks echo the systematized organization of information used in card catalogues or in the collection of specimens in a natural history museum or objects in a Baroque cabinet of curiosities, especially the painted fabric insects with one lone figure pinned to their backing in the piece inspired by *Wives and Daughters* by Elizabeth Gaskell; the bountiful flower arrangement in the collage inspired by *Native American Food Plants: An Ethnobotanical Dictionary*; the delicate topographical map made from pages of *The Language of Instinct* by Steven Pinker; and a small white sculpture in two identical parts referencing a book called *The Brain: The Story of You*. Several works take children's books as their inspiration. The interactive puzzle and the plexi-glass maze are playful ways to introduce young visitors to reading

and to art as joyful and satisfying pursuits. This unique exhibition rewards those whose love of books and of art is intertwined with an appreciation for wonder and a joy in discovery.

Sharon Jordan  
Art Department  
Lehman College, CUNY  
March 2018

**ANNA ALFREDSON**

**EROSION 1**

Paper, methyl cellulose

Book: *The Language Instinct*

Author: Steven Pinker



**JOSE MANUEL ARGUELLES**

**HER**

Digital print, mixed media

Book: *Klimt's Women*

Edited by: Tobias G. Natter  
and Gerbert Frodl



**ERICA BAILEY**

*THE CORRIDOR*

Basswood, balsa wood, string

Digital Collection: *Carceri d'invenzione*, 15 prints in *The Charrington set* : a collection of prints by Giovanni Battista Piranesi



**SARAH BOUCHARD**

*I'LL BE YOUR MIRROR*

Mirrored mylar, wood, and  
white gloves

Book: *I See / You Mean*

Author: Lucy R. Lippard

**LOUISE BRAVERMAN**

*ERASED*

Drawing on three dimensional card-board

Periodical: *The New Yorker*,  
*The Yellow House*

Author: Sarah M. Broom



**TEGAN M. BROZYNA**

*DOMESTIC DIPLOMACY*

Painted fabric, pins

Book: *Wives and Daughters*

Author: Elizabeth Gaskell

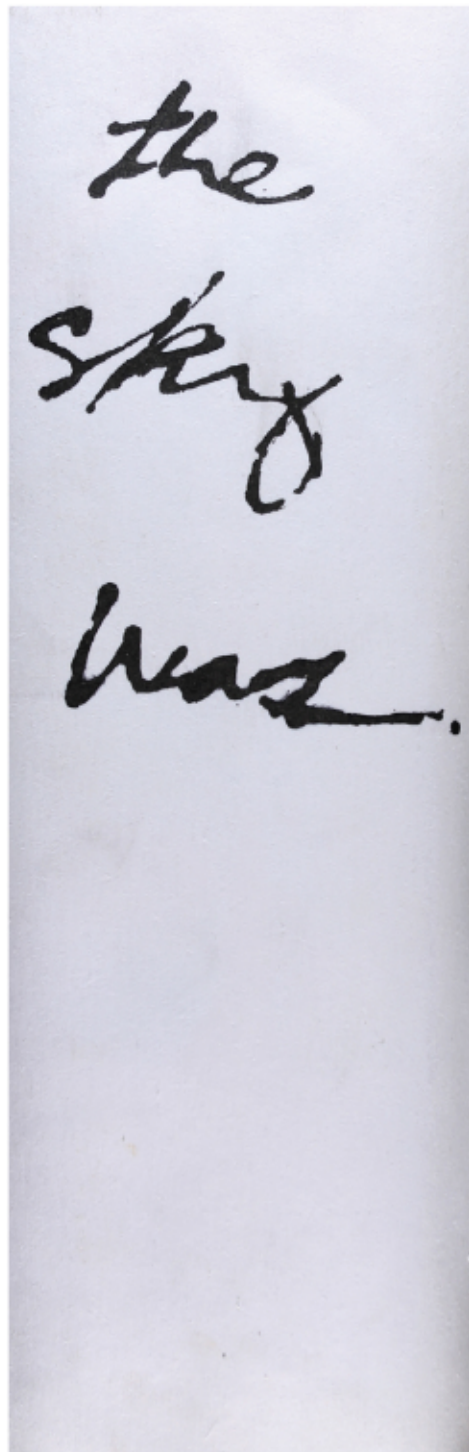
**HEATHER CHONTOS**

**THE SKY WAS**

Vellum, gouache, acrylic, ink, pastel

Book: *E.E. Cummings: Complete Poems 1904-1962*

Author: E.E. Cummings and George James Firmage



**SUSANNE CLAUSSEN**

**TWO HEMISPHERES**

Fossil, calcium carbonate, plaster

Book: *The Brain: The Story of You*

Author: David Eagleman





**CAROL COLLICUTT**

**CONTAGION**

Wooden box, glass, mylar, antique glasses, retina scan, black gesso

Book: *Blindness*

Author: Jose Saramago



**LIONEL CRUET**

**AT THE END OF DAYBREAK**

Digital image, sand, sound

Book: *Cahier d'un Retour Au Pays Natal*

Author: Aimé Césaire

**VANEZZA CRUZ**

*MARIPOSA DI MI MEMORIA*

Screen print and collage on paper

Book: *In the Time of Butterflies*

Author: Julia Alvarez



**PETER HAMLIN**

*SYNTHETIC REVELATIONS*

Acrylic on arches paper,  
mixed media

Book: *The Doors of Perception &  
Heaven and Hell*

Author: Aldous Huxley



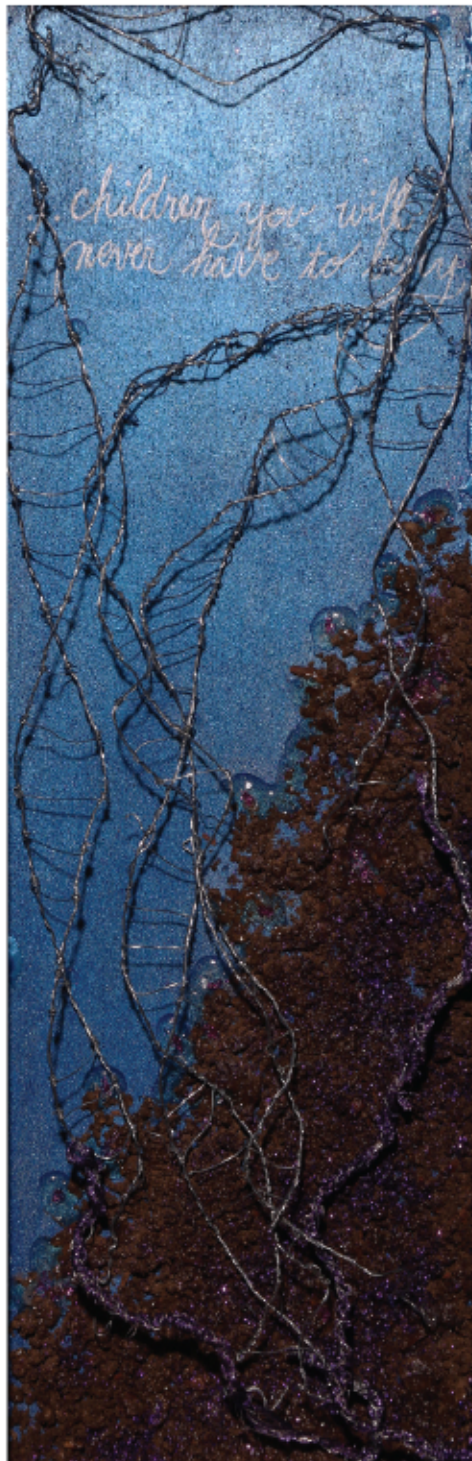
**CARRIE HAWKS**

*A TEMPTING PROMISE*

Wire, dirt, acrylic paint, wood,  
embroidery thread, ink

Book: *Wild Seed*

Author: Octavia Butler



**SAMANTHA HOLMES**

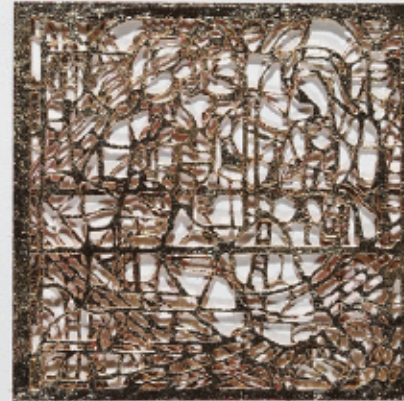
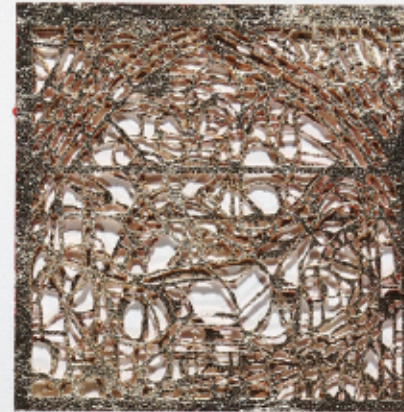
*OPEN WINDOWS VI*

Gold leaf on paper

Book: *The Stained Glass of Saint-*

*Père de Chartres*

Author: Meredith Parsons







**RICK BLEIER**

**ON THE ROAD**

Pen and ink

Book: *On the Road*

Author: Jack Kerouac

**KEN AUGUSHI**

**FINDING HIS OWN COLOR**

Plexiglass, metal screws,  
acrylic paint, metal sphere

Book: *A Color of His Own*

Author: Leo Lionni





**RANDY REGIER**  
*A CAR FOR RALPH*  
Acrylic on wood

Book: *Runaway Ralph*  
Author: Beverly Cleary

**ANDREA CUKIER**  
*ALGO DEL IMMORTAL*  
Mixed media

Book: *El Aleph*  
Author: Jorge Luis Borges



**AYA KAKEDA**

*PEOPLE SAY NOTHING IS  
IMPOSSIBLE BUT I DO NOTHING  
EVERYDAY*

Ceramic

Book: *Winnie the Pooh*

Author: A.A. Milne



**ROHIN KHEMANI**

*OUR SONG*

Paper, thread, wood, brass

Book: *My Song: A Memoir*  
Author: Harry Belafonte with  
Michael Shnayerson

**STEPHANIE A. LINDQUIST**  
NANNYBERRY YELLOW MARSH  
MARIGOLD MILKWEED CRANBER-  
RY GREATER BURDOCK ASPARA-  
GUS GROUNDNUT (FIRST NATION  
HAUDENOSAUNEE)  
Digital print

Book: *Native American Food Plants:  
An Ethnobotanical Dictionary*  
Author: Daniel E. Moerman



**STEPHANIE MULVIHILL**  
*IMPULSE*  
Vellum, graphite

Book: *Man's Search for Meaning*  
Author: Viktor E. Frankl





**MAJA PADROV**

*A GOOD MAN IS HARD TO FIND*

Ceramic

Book: *The Complete Stories*

Author: Flannery O'Connor



My precious, precious Marygold," cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas, what had he done? How fatal was the gift that the stranger bestowed. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow color, with yellow teardrop congealing on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible within her father's encircling arms.

Oh, terrible misfortune! The victim of his insatiable desire for wealth, little Marygold was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of eyes, grief, and pity, hardened into her face. It was the pitiest and most woeful sight that ever a mortal saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there, even the beloved little dimple continued in her golden chin. But the more she looked like her former self, the greater was the father's sorrow at beholding her. He had an impression which was all that was left of his daughter.

It had been a foolish thing to say, whenever he felt particularly fond of his child, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. And now the phrase had become literally true. And now, at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart, that loved her, exceeded in value all the

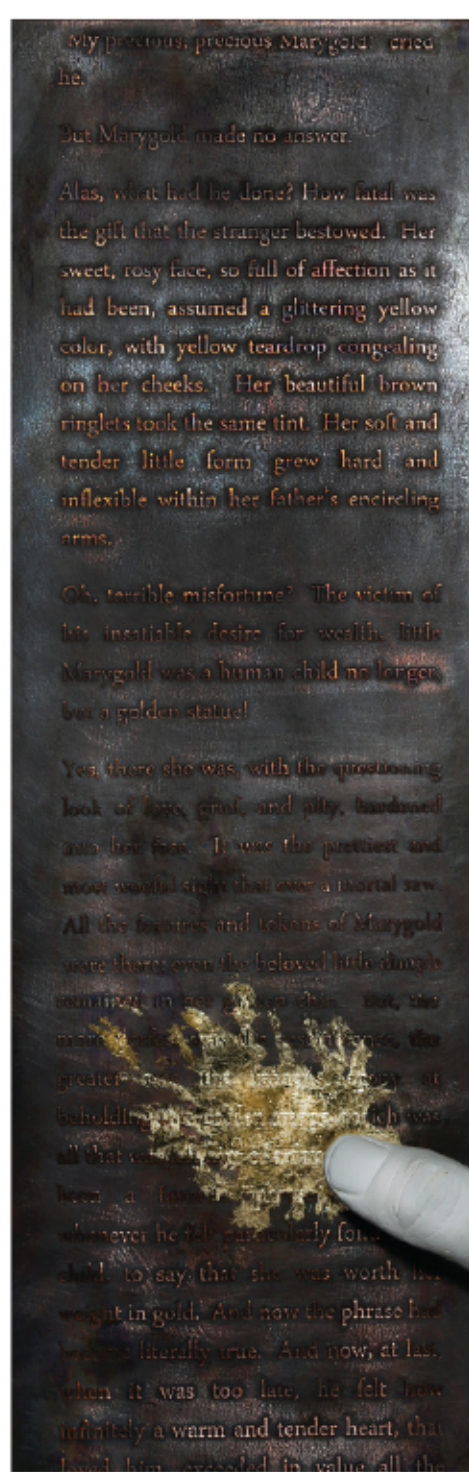
**PATRICK PERRY**

*THE GOLDEN TOUCH*

Copper, plaster, gold leaf

Book: *The Tale of King Midas and the Golden Touch*

Author: Nathaniel Hawthorne



**HENRY PORTILLO**

*FACE OF A SATYR,  
FACE OF MY SOUL*

Woodblock print

Book: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Author: Oscar Wilde



**MARY PRESTON**

*BLOOD IS THICKER THAN WATER*

Cut steel, glass, oxidized silver

Book: *Referred Pain*

Author: Lynn Sharon Schwartz



**SARAH ROWE**

*ÉTOILES*

Silkscreen, Paper, Thread

Book: *Celestial Treasury*

Author: Marc Lachièze-Rey and  
Jean-Pierre Luminet



**SHELLEY STEFAN**

*GRAPEFRUIT*

Acrylic paint and  
water soluble  
pencil

Book: *Rubyfruit Jungle*

Author: Rita Mae Brown

**RACHEL SYDLOWSKI**

*ESCAPE PLAN*

Paper, porcelain, plaster,  
acrylic paint, balsa wood

Book: *Glory*

Author: Vladimir Nabokov



**NATALIE COLLETTE WOOD**

*A DANCE IN THE DARK*

Mixed media

Book: *The Complete Poetical Works  
of Edgar Allan Poe*

Author: Edgar Allan Poe



WIVES & DAUGHTERS

ON THE ROAD  
KEROUAC

PS 3521 .E735

OSCAR WILDE

The Picture of Dorian Gray

In the Time of the Butterflies

YA FIC ALVAREZ

NABOKOV

PG 3476 N3 P513

McGraw-Hill

THE COMPLETE STORIES

PS 3565 .C57 A17 1971 C.4

COLLECTED WORKS OF

Edgar Allan Poe

POEMS

Mabbott

PS 2600

HARRY BELAFONTE



MY SONG

HA



B Belafonte