

UTOPIA/DYSTOPIA

Karen Hanmer
Glenview, IL



“Set of five flip books inspired by the intersection of George Orwell’s *1984* and current events.”

1984NOW

Flip books created with laser and inkjet prints on cardstock, and buckram. 2” h x 5.5” w x 1.25” d (each)

Statement

My work fragments and layers content to mirror the experience of personal and cultural memory. The work often has a playful presentation, taking the form of puzzles, maps, games, or decks of cards. Many include text, often archival, usually first person accounts. The pieces are made to be handled. The intimate scale and the gestures of exploration required to travel through a piece evoke the experience of looking through an album, a diary, or the belongings of a loved one.

1984NOW is a set of five flip books inspired by the intersection of George Orwell’s *1984* and current events.

Star Poems

Triangle book with cloth hinges, pigment inkjet prints. 6.75” h x 5.75” w x .75” d (closed), 17.5” h x 23” w (open)

Statement

At once vast and minimal, sparse and rich, the night sky has always been a canvas upon which people project their myths and dreams. *Star Poems* presents quotes that document response to the night sky across the ages by philosophers, artists, and poets from Plato and Byron to contemporary writers, scientists and astronauts. This text is paired with 17th century mythological images of constellation forms and images of early star gazers on a background of a NASA photograph of the Milky Way. The book can be held in the hand and read page by page like a traditional book, can be removed from its jacket and unfolded flat to reference historical astronomical charts or contemporary NASA composite photos, or can be folded into an infinite variety of sculptural shapes.

Father Louie: Photographs of Thomas Merton

Fine binding (simplified binding) with leather endbands, goatskin dyed various shades of gray, graphite edges. Title stamped in carbon on spine. Photographs by Ralph Eugene Meatyard, Timken Publishers, 1991. 10” h x 10” w x .5” d

Statement

The light to dark progression references the spiritual journey, conversion experience and the upward

orientation of many of the images in this book of black and white photographs of Kentucky writer and monk Thomas Merton by Kentucky photographer Ralph Eugene Meatyard. The horizontal bars represent the structure of monastic life, and their undulation represents both the motion ubiquitous in Meatyard's work and the rolling Kentucky landscape. The seven bars reference the title of Merton's first and best known published work, *The Seven Storey Mountain*.

Biography

Karen Hanmer's artist-made books are physical manifestations of personal essays intertwining history, culture, politics, science and technology. Her studio practice is usually varied, including design bindings, limited edition artists' books, inexpensive multiples, and bookbinding instructional materials. She utilizes both traditional and contemporary book structures, and the work is often playful in content or format.

Hanmer's work is included in collections ranging from The Getty Museum and the Library of Congress to Yale University and Graceland. She is winner of the Jury Prize for Binding in the 2009 Helen Warren DeGolyer American Bookbinding Competition and is one of only nine graduates of the American Academy of Bookbinding's Fine Binding program. Hanmer is an acknowledged leader in the book arts community. In she 2013 was a presenter at the Guild of Book Workers Standards of Excellence Seminar. She has served on the editorial board of *The Bonefolder*, as Exhibitions Chair for the Guild of Book Workers, and as frequent exhibition curator and juror. She offers workshops and private instruction focusing on a solid foundation in basic binding skills.

www.KarenHanmer.com