

NARRATIVES OF THE POSSIBLE



Aleta Braun
Open Book

Santa Fe, New Mexico

“*Open Book* was finished in 2004. The poem is *Wage Peace* by Judyth Hill. She wrote it after the destruction of the World Trade Towers in 2001.”

Hard bound book 6 bifolia; mixed media.

(On exhibit but not pictured: *Early 2021 Journal 1* and *Early 2021 Journal 2*)

Artist's Statement

From my current perspective, I am aware of attractions and invitations creating a magnetism that directs my studio work. The ones I have been exploring most recently have roots in earlier works. When I was invited to participate in this artists' book exhibition, the title *Narratives of the Possible* was shared with me. Immediately a book which I completed in 2004 came to mind. It is titled *Open Book*. The narrative within the pages of mixed media work is a poem called *Wage Peace*. Judyth Hill wrote the poem after the destruction of the World Trade Towers, a time when the planet seemed to stand still, much like it does now with the global pandemic. These are times for all of us to explore what is possible.

Then and now, I am being curious and exploring:
texture, mark-making, transparency,
how to create conversation between 2 pages side-by-side...across the gutter of the book,
the circle, the bowl, dots, stitching.

Part of my story is that I am very attracted to paper. On one hand, paper may seem like a fragile substance but one of the things that working with paper has proven to me over the years is its strength and resiliency as well as its ability to hold and carry our stories.

By using different kinds of paper that allow light to pass through, I explore transparency. I am led by curiosity as well as the intimations I feel about the mystery of life rather than the details. Just like in life when there are times of not knowing things, I am asked to feel my way into the future. The story is told page by page with a bit of foretelling through the nature of the paper itself, creating composition and story through layers of transparency. Working with transparent paper is like collaborating with an unseen friend who is creating something for me to respond to.

Making marks on paper; stitching on paper;
creating conversation between the pages of a book;
working with the nature of paper, its fragility, strength, resiliency, and transparency:
these steady studio activities are some of the creative companions accompanying me on the journey into the unknown and imagining what is possible.
Trusting the process.
Having faith.

Biography

Aleta was an art teacher in the Boulder Valley School District before starting the Aleta Sophia Art Workshop in the back room of her house, quickly outgrowing the space, and moving the workshop into the garage. During the 1997 Fall Concentration at Penland School of Crafts, she took a book making class to share this skill with her students. The book form made its way into her own studio practice, maintaining a simple presence as a vehicle for her mark-making and mixed media. She received her BFA in painting from the University of Colorado-Boulder. Aleta has been a reflexologist since 1999 simultaneously learning the fine art of balancing and carving out time to be in the studio, participate in exhibitions, and be awarded residencies.