Collaborations with Parkett : [brochure]
1984 to now
[Deborah Wye, Judith B. Hecker]

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The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition history—from our founding in 1929 to the present—is available online. It includes exhibition catalogues, primary documents, installation views, and an index of participating artists.
"We are aiming to produce a vehicle of direct confrontation with art, providing not only coverage about artists, but original contributions by them."¹ Thus reads the stated goal in the first volume of Parkett, a journal of contemporary art and ideas, in 1984; it has remained the editorial challenge through volume 60, in 2000. This exhibition focuses on those original contributions by artists resulting from Parkett’s project of editions, inserts, and spine designs. During the past eighteen years the editors have collaborated with nearly 150 artists, resulting in an extraordinary array of prints, page art projects, photographs, drawings, paintings, multiples, videos, DVDs, sound pieces, and other inventive formats, all available to subscribers in editions. While most are small in scale and imbued with the fascination that comes with miniaturization, others expand across the space of a billboard or require the walk-around room of a full-size sculpture. They are encompassed here within one gallery, where a concise survey of contemporary art unfolds. A full set of these works was acquired by The Museum of Modern Art in 1998, with new publications added to the collection as they appear. This exhibition provides an opportunity not only to celebrate the remarkably diverse art of our time, but also to highlight the creative forces at work in this innovative publishing venture.

MoMA 1886b

Edition Artists

Thomas Hirschhorn
Damien Hirst
Jenny Holzer
Rebecca Horn
Gary Hume
Ilya Kabakov
Alex Katz
Mike Kelley
Ellsworth Kelly
Karen Kilimnik
Martin Kippenberger
Imi Knoebel
Jeff Koons
Jannis Kounellis
Yayoi Kusama
Wolfgang Laib
Shirle Levine
Sarah Lucas
Brice Marden
Mario Merz
Tracey Moffatt
Mariko Mori
Malcolm Morley
Juan Muñoz
Jean-Luc Mylayne
Bruce Nauman
Cad Noland
Meret Oppenheim
Gabriel Orozco
Tony Oursler
Jorge Pardo
Raymond Pettibon
Elizabeth Peyton
Sigmar Polke
Richard Prince
Markus Raetz
Charles Ray
Jason Rhoades
Gerhard Richter
Pipilotti Rist
Tim Rollins + K.O.S.
Ugo Rondinone
James Rosenquist
Susan Rothenberg
Thomas Ruff
Edward Ruscha
Thomas Schütte
Cindy Sherman
Roman Signer
Andreas Slominski
Beat Streuli
Thomas Struth
Hiroshi Sugimoto
Philip Taaffe
Sam Taylor-Wood
Diana Thater
Wolfgang Tillmans
Rirkrit Tiravanija
Rosemarie Trockel
James Turrell
Luc Tuymans
Kara Walker
Jeff Wall
Andy Warhol
Lawrence Weiner
Franz West
Rachel Whiteread
Sue Williams
Robert Wilson
Christopher Wool

Insert Artists

Doug Aitken
John M Armleder
Silvia Bächli
John Baldessari
Lothar Baumgarten
Thomas Bayrle
Barbara Bloom
Henry Bond
Louise Bourgeois
Rudy Burckhardt
Richard Burton
David Byrne
Ernst Caramelle
Hans Danuser
Tacita Dean
Günther Förg
General Idea
Nan Goldin
Peter Greenaway
Andreas Gursky
Damien Hirst
Candida Höfer
Roni Horn
Toba Khedoori
Barbara Kruger
Liz Larner
Zoe Leonard
and Cheryl Dunye
Sherrie Levine
Glenn Ligon
Robert Mapplethorpe
Tatsuo Miyajima
Rudi Molacek
Sigmar Polke

Spine Artists

Ross Bleckner
Louise Bourgeois
Dave Eggers
Sylvie Fleury
Emma Kunz
Christian Marclay
Markus Raetz
Jean-Jacques Rullier
Sam Samore
Andre Thomkins
Niele Toroni

The listed are participants since 1984. Due to space limitations, not all projects could be included in this exhibition.
THE PARKETT PROJECT

In Zurich in the early 1980s, a group of friends, stimulated by the new level of communication between art communities in Europe and the United States, hoped to contribute to the burgeoning dialogue. Bice Curiger, Jacqueline Burckhardt, Peter Blum, Walter Keller, and soon thereafter, Dieter von Graffenried, decided to create a new periodical that would present articles in both English and German and be "an equal pleasure to read in both languages." Their goal was a journal that would be not academic but artist-driven, necessitating active collaboration. Artists would be chosen to take part in shaping each issue by suggesting authors, conferring on layout, proposing cover ideas, and creating a separate artwork that could be editioned and offered for sale to subscribers. Eventually, additional artists were asked to contribute inserts to the magazine—most often in the form of page art bound into the volume—and designs for the spines. With offices in Zurich and New York, cross-Atlantic communication and the efforts needed for translation made the process slow and thoughtful, something the editors valued.

When the journal appeared in New York, there was immediate talk about the meaning and pronunciation of its title. The editors responded with a page in the second issue entitled "?Parkett?" that would become a hallmark of their thoroughness, poetic imagination, and humor. They explain that this German noun derives from the French word *parquet* and that it is "a term for a whole variety of inlaid wooden floors." They allude to the word's relationship to dance floors, as well as diplomatic statesmanship, and also invoke the theater by noting that it can refer to seats in the audience closest to the stage. Wittily, they even uncovered obscure connections to "the office of the public prosecutor" and "the stock exchange," and note the similarity of the sound of the word *parkett* to the English word *parakeet*, and even to the combination of the words *parking lot* and *luncheonette*. In explicating their title, the editors hinted at the richness, complexity, and pleasure that would unfold in their dialogue with people who speak different languages but share a passion for art and ideas.

Eighteen years later, *Parkett* has enlisted nearly 550 writers in addition to their artist-collaborators, and the magazine is printed in 12,000 copies. Such growth and longevity is a significant accomplishment when one looks back in the mod-
ern period on the relatively short runs for periodicals that base their activities around contributions from artists. Its erratic nature notwithstanding, the tradition is a rich one. In the 1890s—a time when many artists and literary figures shared close bonds with each other and similar thematic concerns vis-à-vis Symbolism—journals such as La Revue Blanche commissioned prints to be bound into their pages or offered portfolios to subscribers. In the twentieth century, such periodicals were generated from a variety of impulses. Some were political and/or satiric, such as L’Assiette au Beurre, The Masses, and The New Masses. In other instances, artists and like-minded editors joined forces as they did during the German Expressionist period and upon the arrival of the Dada, Surrealist, and Cobra movements. In the 1960s the adventurous publication S.M.S. appeared with each issue in the form of a small portfolio containing ephemeral artworks by such artists as Christo, Roy Lichtenstein, On Kawara, and Joseph Kosuth.
Among the most illuminating precedents for the Parkett project, however, is the work of Marcel Duchamp, whose interest in reproduction found expression through designs and inserts for periodicals and the publication of multiples. His *Box in a Valise* intersects tellingly with the Parkett project. In 1941 he issued his first edition of this carrying-case containing a carefully-constructed display box packed with color reproductions and miniature replicas of his past works. The artist characterized this piece as a "portable museum" and sold it over the years in various editions for a total of about 300 copies. In homage to this concept, Parkett's editors look back over the small-scale, editioned artworks created in conjunction with their journal, and characterize them as a kind of *Musée en Appartement*.

In addition to its collaborations with artists, Parkett provides a variety of thematic sections for the ideas and opinions of critics, historians, curators, and other writers interested in contemporary art, but it does not contain exhibition reviews or art-world news items. Several conceptual rubrics under which authors are invited to participate are as follows: "Cumulus" brings together one art professional from the United States and one from a European country to write on any subject of current interest; "Balkon" offers "observations from a certain distance, as if from a balcony rather than the seats up front in the parquet area"; and "Les Infos du Paradis" is described as including "the delicate, the unexpected, the seldom-seen, the theoretical." These various components, along with articles devoted to collaborating artists and the commissioned artworks, create a synergy that is unique to each issue and form a kind of event-between-covers. The periodical becomes a medium or, as the editors have called it, an "instrument."
Conceived during the period in which Neo-Expressionism held center stage in the art world, Parkett collaborated on its first issue with the Italian artist, Enzo Cucchi. For his edition, Cucchi created a rich black aquatint and drypoint that was bound into a separate copy of the journal. This version of the journal was published in an edition of 80 and was available for purchase to subscribers of the regular, trade version of Parkett.

While many artists chose to make editions to be bound into special versions of the journal in this way, others created them as entirely free-standing works. As each issue of the trade version arrives, subscribers can see what the edition consists of through a reproduction and decide whether or not to purchase it.


Parkett’s collaborating artists and the editions they have created represent a variety of artistic generations and directions. Louise Bourgeois, born in 1911, and Vanessa Beecroft, born nearly sixty years later in 1969, for example, fit within these parameters. Artistic strategies representing Neo-Conceptualism and language-based ideas, social and political themes, Pop and consumer-based imagery, performance art, feminist issues, documentary and staged photography, and pure abstraction, are all to be found in these projects.

Popular culture merges with feminist issues, for instance, when artists Mariko Mori and Sylvie Fleury bring together elements of performance art, installation, and video in their startling “products.” Mori created Star Doll, her version of the ubiquitous Barbie, and Fleury duplicated a stylish shoe from the fashion line of a hot designer with Her Mistress’ Toy. Both objects provoke a certain delight: there is the possibility of playing with Mori’s little self-portrait figure as a child would, posing and dressing her; and one can try on Fleury’s rubberized stiletto platform mule, or throw it to the dog and hear it squeak. Social and political issues infuse the work of Kara Walker, whose black and white linoleum cut Boo-Hoo falls within the long tradition of incisive prints that express social injustice. Her silhouetted figure takes on an abstract and decorative shape that provokes a kind of tension when joined to her narrative of racism and exploitation. With a uniquely Californian sensibility, Ed Ruscha gives his own slant to conceptual and language-based art. In his lithograph Hell 1/2 Way Heaven, Ruscha takes the format of the book into consideration—invoking the reader
not only in the act of unfolding his edition, which is bound into the volume, but also in deciding the orientation from which to view it.

**THE BOOK AS MEDIUM**

Ruscha’s edition draws attention to the book as a creative medium. Throughout the twentieth century and into the present, there has been a proliferation of deluxe books in a tradition developed chiefly in France and known as the *livre de peintre*. Picasso, Matisse, and Miró, among many others, have linked their etchings, lithographs, woodcuts, and screenprints to literary texts with masterful results. During the 1960s an alternative phenomenon called “artists books” gained momentum; this format took advantage of the less costly technique of offset lithography for small, illustrated volumes in large editions. During this idealistic period the affordable artists books were meant to be available to a very broad audience, and the page became an alternative exhibition venue.

The structure of *Parkett* combines elements from both these book traditions, as well as from the exhibition catalogue, and becomes a variant genre. Artists provide many of its distinctive attributes. Their suggestions for covers include images for the front and back as well as the inside flaps. Charles Ray’s cover of supermodel Tatjana Patitz is integral to the work he created for his separate edition. Executed as a standard fashion shoot, it includes credits for art direction, makeup, and hair. In contrast, his edition consists of a series of nine snapshots of that same model taken at home, where she appears not with professionally-designed makeup and hairdo, but in everyday outfits, sitting around the house, and doing everyday tasks.

Artists’ interactions with the book-like quality of *Parkett* exist in many guises. Several have referenced the structure and proportions of the journal’s pages. Alighiero e Boetti did this with his portrait of twins, which simulates a double-page spread and...
incorporates a fold and a compositional element drawn down the center where the gutter of the magazine would be. Similarly, Günther Förg responded to the page proportions with his two sculptural editions, both of which include components to be installed side by side on the wall. Others who have incorporated the book framework include Georg Baselitz, who chose the traditional frontispiece as the location for a jewel-like drypoint, and Brice Marden and Robert Wilson, each of whom conceived foldout panels connected to prints bound into the magazine.

Some artists have devised separate books for their editions. Martin Kippenberger created eighty small, unique volumes, each with pages showing the same snapshot or found image from his personal archive. Raymond Pettibon fashioned an accordion construction that proposes a reading from left to right. Sigmar Polke subverted the act of reading with fifty unique books that look exactly like issues of *Parkett* but consist of pages rejected during the journal’s printing process due to over-printing or other errors.

*Parkett*’s insert series has given page art a regular platform. Over fifty artists have participated thus far. A few have chosen to reproduce works as posters to be folded and tucked into the journal, but most have put together sequences of up to twenty pages to be bound inside. Cindy Sherman, whose photographs in series are shown together on gallery walls, generated a very different kind of anticipation, suspense, and drama with her sequence of images for *Parkett*. Damien Hirst, who has produced ambitious pop-up books among his many other mediums, provided a chilling insert on the subject of cigarette smoking.

By *Parkett*’s fifteenth issue, the editors realized that the spines of a yearly set offered yet another opportunity for artistic collaboration. A composition now completes itself at the end of every year as issues arrive in the mail, are read, and then placed in sequence on the bookshelf. Christian Marclay took the opportunity to put an image of each of the four Beatles on separate spines, and Niele Toroni arranged diamond shapes to make a playing card. Ross Bleckner’s abstract composition can be read as a reference to the bones of a human spine.
ART AND DISSEMINATION

Publishing in the art field is an adventurous but risky activity that has produced a wide array of artworks available in editions. Numerous examples by the most significant artists of the modern period came into being through the instigation of such historic publishers as Ambroise Vollard, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, Aimé Maeght, Tatyana Grosman, and others. Many of these are in the Museum's collection, and now the editions commissioned by Parkett are included alongside them. Sometimes referred to as “democratic” mediums, printmaking and book formats have provided artists with distinctive forms of expression while also enlarging the community of those who have the opportunity to experience these works up close by owning them. The inventive artworks published by Parkett, available to a relatively broad audience, carry on this rich tradition and demonstrate its potential for new and fertile developments.

Deborah Wye, Chief Curator
Department of Prints
and Illustrated Books

Endnotes

1. Quotations are from editorial statements in various issues of Parkett and from conversations with the editors in Zurich, summer 2000.
2. Peter Blum eventually left to concentrate on activities in New York; Walter Keller left to found the Scalo publishing imprint. Karen Marta, Louise Neri, and now Cay Sophie Rabinowitz (assisted by Ali Subotnick) have served as New York editors. Editing and production in Zurich is coordinated by Susan Schmidt. Editions are handled by Beatrice Fassler in Zurich and Subotnick in New York.


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Each volume of the journal *Parkett* produces its own synergy, based on the sum of its visual and written components. Most striking is the thoughtful selection of artists whose commissioned projects for each volume reveal connections between works that might otherwise seem unrelated. For volume 42 (December 1994), the editors selected Lawrence Weiner and Rachel Whiteread to make editioned artworks, Nan Goldin to create a page insert, and Christian Marclay to design a spine that would eventually encompass four volumes.

"I will be a tattoo on Rachel Whiteread's structures," ** teased Weiner when invited to collaborate with *Parkett*. Both Weiner (American, b. 1942) and Whiteread (British, b. 1963) work in public modes, giving outward expression to everyday objects, places, and utterances that are often ignored. A central figure in first-generation Conceptual art, Weiner relies on words to conjure up meaning and visual experience. His edition *Unter den Linden/Under Lime Trees* invites viewers to stamp a sheet of paper and take it with them. The stamp's text is linked to the picture mounted on the box that houses the work: a photograph of the artist and his family strolling along Berlin's best-known boulevard, Unter den Linden, which runs eastward for nearly a mile from the Brandenburg Gate. The boulevard encapsulates Germany's complex past, symbolizing different things during different epochs—from the pinnacle of Berlin's cultural life before the war, to a symbol of Nazi power, a segregated east and west, and reunification. By inviting the endless reproduction of this phrase, Weiner's allusion extends beyond his personal travels to the myriad lives and actions played out along this historic promenade.

Similarly, Whiteread's work triggers the viewer to consider the personal histories and social interactions associated with everyday objects and places. In a twist on conventional sculpture-making, the artist uses mainly plaster or rubber to cast the empty spaces that inhabit and surround objects. Her edition *Switch* depicts the space around a light switch that Whiteread salvaged...
while working on her monumental outdoor project *House*, a scaled cast of the interior of an abandoned row house in London.

In contrast to Weiner’s and Whiteread’s oblique references to history and memory, photographer Nan Goldin (American, b. 1953) takes a documentary approach, depicting intensely private moments in the lives of her friends. Linking the narrative structure of the book format used by *Parkett* to her own visual storytelling, Goldin sized her images to suit the journal’s design. The insert consists of twelve photographs taken around the world between 1983 and 1994, and focuses on nude female subjects. Apart from a photograph of naked baby girls at a birthday party, this mélange of images, presented without chronological progression, depicts intimate and vulnerable scenes of women—relaxing in the bath, standing in the shower, hovering at the edge of a lake, lying in bed, and dressing before a performance. These are moments when the world is normally shut out, and their placement within the specifically public format of a journal jolts the viewer.

While Goldin records private moments, Christian Marclay (American, b. 1955) appropriates an image from the mass media. For *Parkett*, Marclay—whose work mingles music and sound-production with popular culture and fine art—designed a spine that links volumes 42 through 45. Each spine carries an image of one of the Beatles; when placed together, the entire band emerges. The brightly printed reproduction is based on a promotional picture the artist culled from a photo archive in New York, and relates to other works that highlight the artist’s fascination with the Beatles’ iconic popularity and, more generally, with the impact of music on our daily lives. Moreover, by linking multiple volumes of *Parkett*, Marclay’s spine project encourages us to consider the individual volumes together, and also to make connections between them.

Judith B. Hecker, Assistant Curator
Department of Prints and Illustrated Books

*Quoted in Bice Curiger, “Editorial,” Parkett 42.*