

Not on Your Teacher's Reading List

Sue and Eugene Mercy Jr. Gallery, Loomis Chaffee School

September 17 to October 24, 2026

Curated by Chris Perry

This exhibition of 74 works presents a review of contemporary book art, a genre not familiar to many. The work ranges from the traditional hand-bound book to books made with natural elements, from existing books that have been altered to works that may not even look like books, and from books that work like traditional books to books that stack, hang, unfold, or are fixed in place.

Curator's Statement

And how could they be?

Books made of bark, and leaves, and twigs, and even poison ivy!

Books that aren't sewn together, or even glued...

Books that stack, are held together with brass rings, have acorn caps as covers....

Books that hang on the wall....

Books that fold into small shapes....

Books that unfold to cover a wall or fill a shelf....

Books that hold things within them...

Books that are repurposed, or altered by cutting and folding...

And even books that have pages that turn and images to look at and words to read.

All worthy of being assigned reading, just in different forms, with different ways of imparting information, ideas, experiences, and leaving the reader with new ways of looking at books.

And maybe they *will* be assigned now.

Alicia Bailey
Denver, CO

Physica – Stones

Oak, steel tacks, waxed linen thread, mica, paper, digital ink, stone veneer, leather, glass, amethyst, beryl, chalcedony, jasper, limestone, onyx, topaz



Alicia Bailey

Popillia Japonica

Lucite, magnets, HM case paper, frosted vellum, oil, leaf specimens, Moriki, mica, book board, book cloth



Anita Gangi Balkun
Bloomfield, CT

Fungi Orbs

Paper, mushroom ink, plant-dyed silk textiles and thread, hand-stitching.



Anita Gangi Balkun

Shades of Peace

Handmade paper, mushroom spore prints, plant-dyed textiles, hand-stitching, thread.



Anita Gangi Balkun

Unfurled

Magnolia leaf book



Anita Gangi Balkun

Untitled, 2026 (mini woodpecker photos)

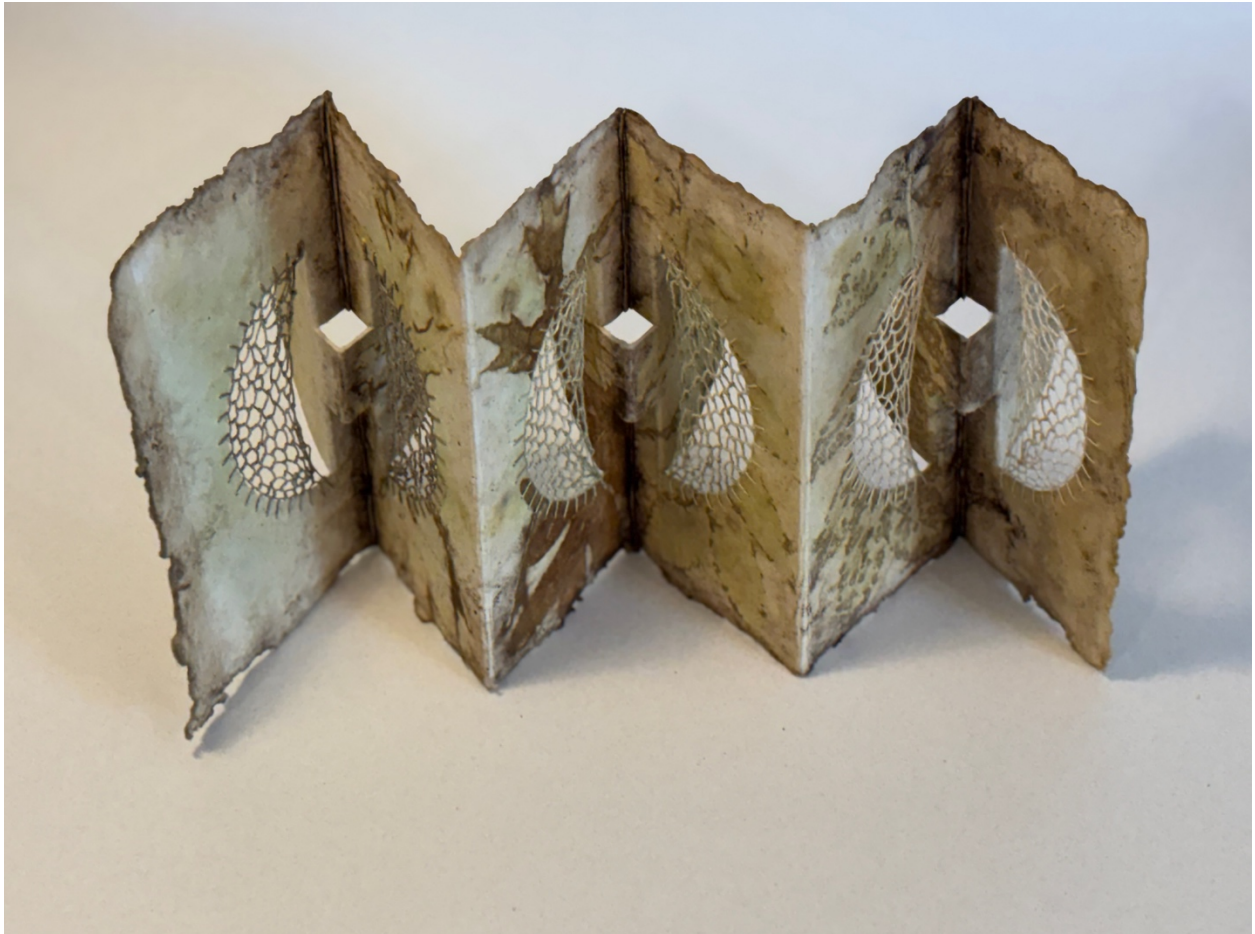
Whip-stitched accordion w/feathers, marbled paper, woodpecker photo cutouts, bark holder.



Anita Gangi Balkun

Untitled, 2026 (pop-out book w/ gold leaf)

Eco-printed pop-out, plant-dyed threads (weaving



Anita Gangi Balkun

Tree Flags

Eco-printed flag book, plant-ink endpapers, rust printed book cloth covers



Marilyn Bennett
Santa Fe, NM

Bubbles
Recycled plastic



Kim Burkholder

Stay Home

Gel printed paper, newspaper articles/headlines about COVID, acrylic paint



Kim Burkholder

Regeneration: Making Beauty from Waste

Repurposed file folders, variety of paper scraps and old book pages



Kim Burkholder

Trees

Repurposed discarded library book, paper scraps, watercolor



Sally Chapman
Lowell, MA

(Church/Cannon)s

Kozo paper, encaustic wax, caning, Canson paper



Sally Chapman

Seedling

Accordion with pages painted using mushroom inks (plant-based inks). Mushroom-dyed textiles on the cover and closure.



Sally Chapman

Daisies

Cyanotype on Strathmore Bristol



Deborah Phillips Chodoff
Kingston, NY

Markham's Mushrooms

Unique artist book (folio) with 5 collages on raw mulberry fiber paper



Deborah Phillips Chodoff

The Dead of Winter: The Hudson

This artist book incorporates watercolors of the frozen river as viewed from the train. Before the snow, car tires scraped and shattered a white sheet of plastic in the parking lot. The snowbank melted and scattered the shards like ice floes on the Hudson. Wind buffeted a net tangled with dead leaves; this became the binding of the book.



Deborah Phillips Chodoff

The Dead of Winter: Upstanding, Twiggy Stuff

The form of this book was inspired by the curls of bark that nested naturally into an "S". An ink drawing from many years ago on yellowing newsprint (now on the backs of the pages) was inspired by the poem Spring and All by William Carlos Williams, hence the title "Upstanding, Twiggy Stuff," a phrase from the poem.



Deborah Phillips Chodoff

Stackbook: Earth

This artist book is one of four works exploring the elements: earth, air, fire, and water. The elements are powerful; these books explore their extremes and our relative impotence in the face of them. This stackbook explores earth. Even Superman succumbs to mud slides.



Deborah Phillips Chodoff

Stackbook: Fire

This stackbook explores fire. The photographs date from the 1990's as well as from more recent wildfires (see citations below), marking the increasing intensification of fires, and the implications of global warming.



Karen Cipolla
Ridgefield, CT

My Book Runneth Over
Birch bark, found objects



Karen Cipolla

*Saturday night,
Bedeviled by fright,
I turned on the light
To read the last chapter*
Birch bark, found objects



Adele Crawford
Oakland, CA

Prayer

Found Bible, tags, dye, glitter.



Adele Crawford

Spinning Lexicon II

1930's dictionary, wire



Robyn Ellenbogen
Croton Falls, NY

Holding and Being Held
Bark with bamboo



Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord
Newburyport, MA

Spirit Book #41: Still Motion

Book of handmade paper from Bhutan, kyosei paper from Japan, amate paper from Mexico, pinpricked holes, beads of horn and glass, and thread in a cradle of weeping mulberry branches on a base of binder's board and paper



Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord

Littoral Journey: Spirit Book #87

Resho paper from Bhutan, O'Malley crackle paper from the US, metal rings, and thread in a cradle of driftwood gathered on Plum Island on a base of binder's board and paper.



Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord

Nesting Lullaby: Spirit Book #88

Book of Lokta paper from Nepal, cannabis paper from Ukraine, banana fiber paper from Brazil, myrrh beads, and thread on a cradle of wood on a base of binder's board and paper.



Meia Geddes
Brighton, MA

Little Acorn Book of Dreams #2
Acorn, thread, watercolor



Meia Geddes

Little Acorn Book of Dreams #3

Acorn, thread, watercolor



Meia Geddes

Little Acorn Book of Dreams #4

Acorn, thread, watercolor



Meia Geddes

Little Acorn Book of Dreams #5

Acorn, thread, watercolor



Meia Geddes

Little Acorn Book of Dreams #6

Acorn, thread, watercolor



Shiela Hale
Katonah, NY

Spill/Pool I & II

Various teas on paper; gesso on canvas covers



Shiela Hale

Dear Life

Pressed flowers and leaves on Stonehenge paper, butterfly binding.



Shiela Hale

Seed Pods

One of two volumes from Archive, a 25-year ongoing project. Seedpods in altered book.



Shiela Hale

Milkweed/Burn

One of two volumes from Archive, a 25-year ongoing project. Milkweed in altered book.



Deanna Joy Hallmark
Santa Fe, NM

Letters and Other Dubious Documents
Mixed media assemblage box



Deanna Joy Hallmark

The Brandy Ocean

Mixed media assemblage box



Deanna Joy Hallmark

English-German Dictionary
Mixed media assemblage box



Deanna Joy Hallmark

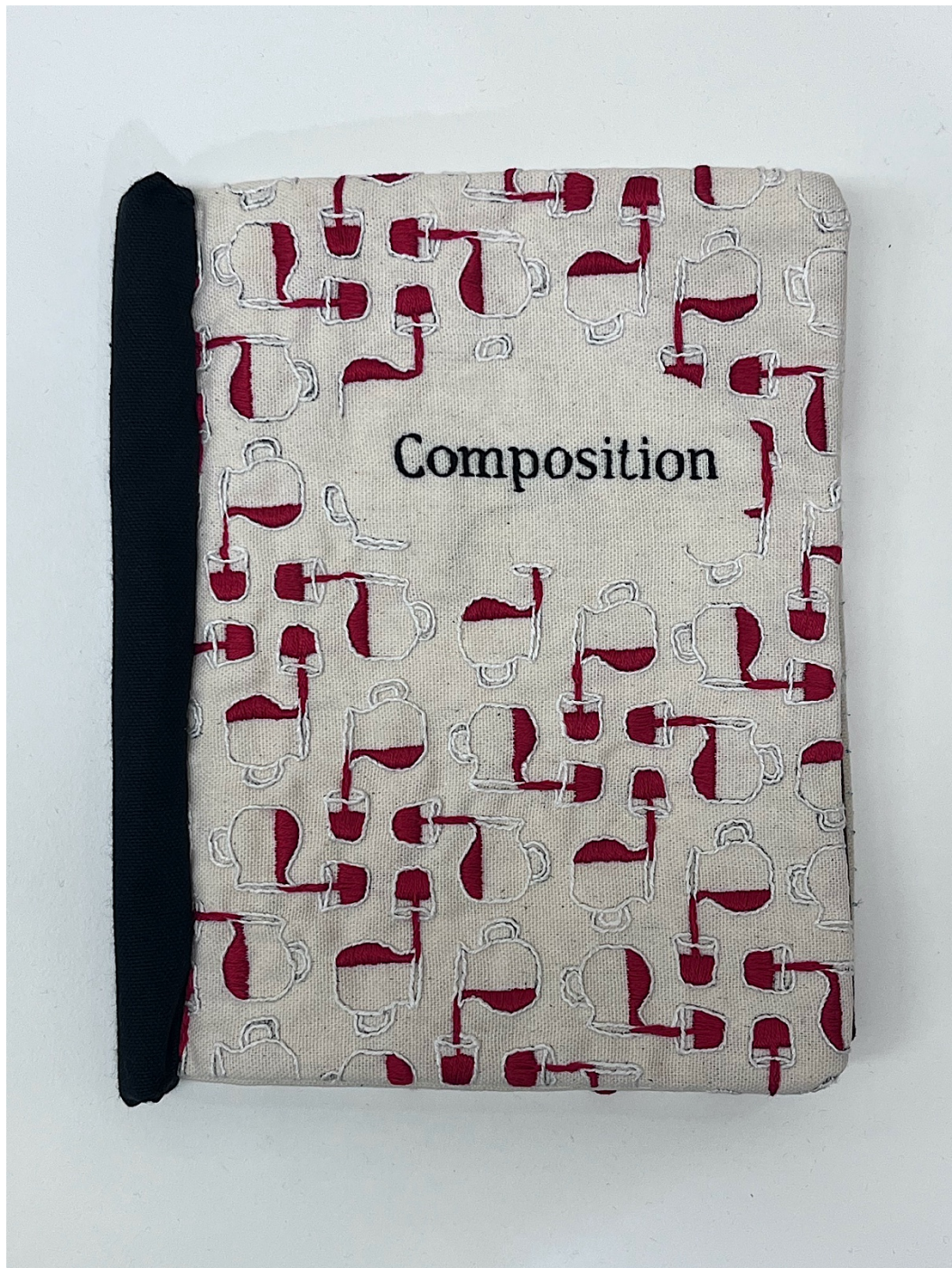
Memories of Japan

Mixed media, altered book



Candace Hicks
Nacogdoches, TX

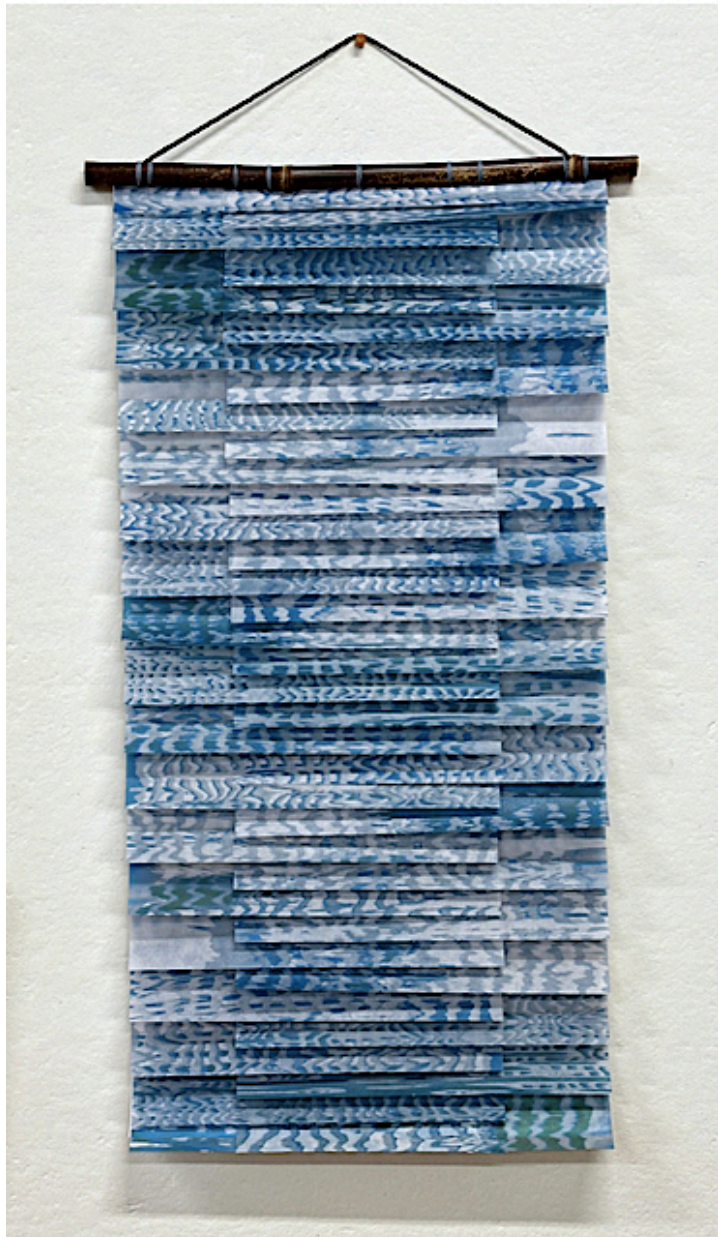
Common Threads Volume 141
Embroidery on canvas



Barbara Hocker
Hartford, CT

Light and Shadow IV

Archival pigment prints, mulberry paper, encaustic medium, bamboo, waxed linen thread, leather cord



Barbara Hocker

Whirlwind Waterfall

Archival pigment prints, mulberry paper, encaustic medium, bamboo, waxed linen thread



Judith Hoffman
Portland, OR

Fern Book

Cover: etched and hammered copper, heat patina. Pages: watercolor paper, acrylics, Prisma colors, collage, ballpoint pen, matchbox pinhole camera photos.



Judith Hoffman

7 Extinction Events

Cover: copper, etched in ferric chloride, plastic dinosaur. Pages: Arches watercolor paper, collage, acrylics



Judith Hoffman

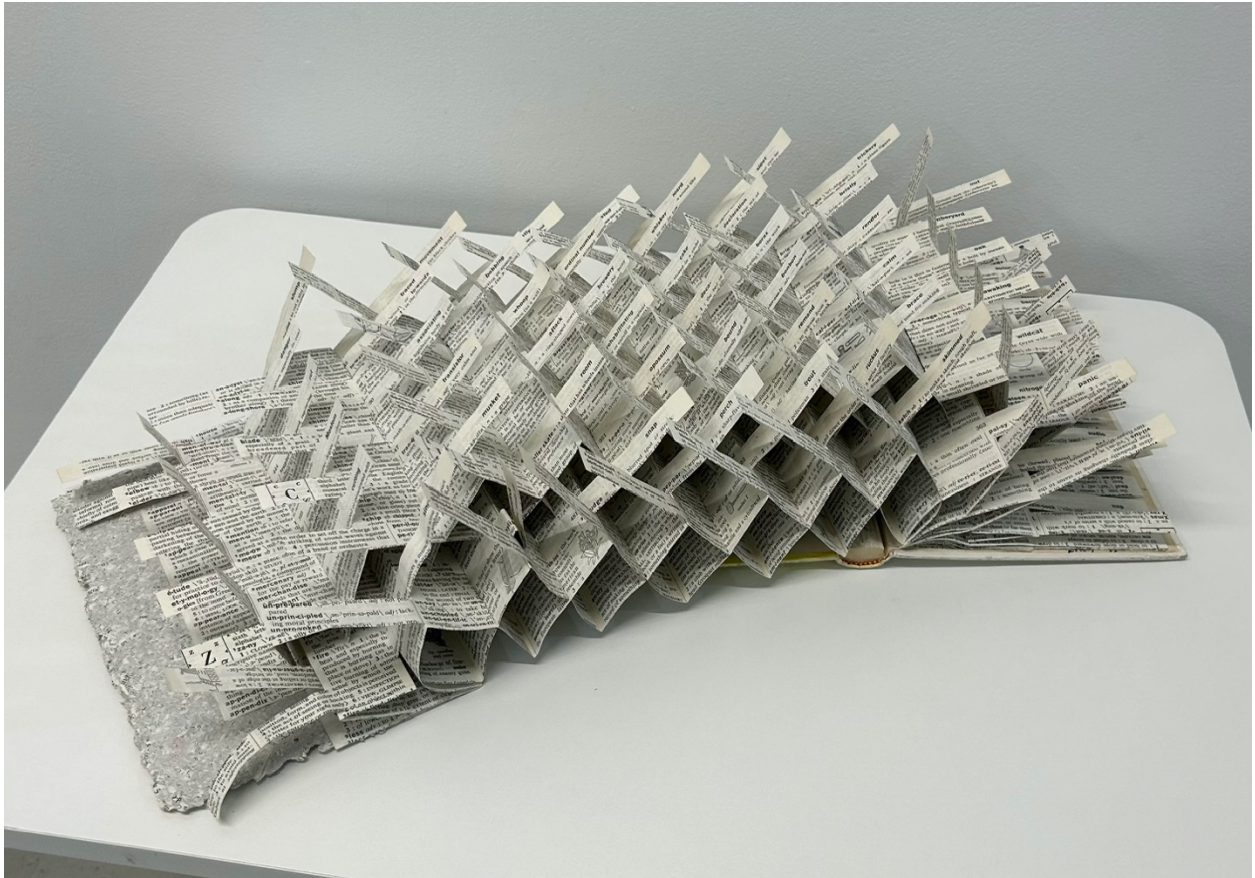
Oniero

Cover: copper, etched in ferric chloride, plastic dinosaur. Pages: Arches watercolor paper, collage, acrylics



Dorsey Hogg
Burlington, VT

Pick Your Words Wisely
Discarded children's dictionary



Dorsey Hogg

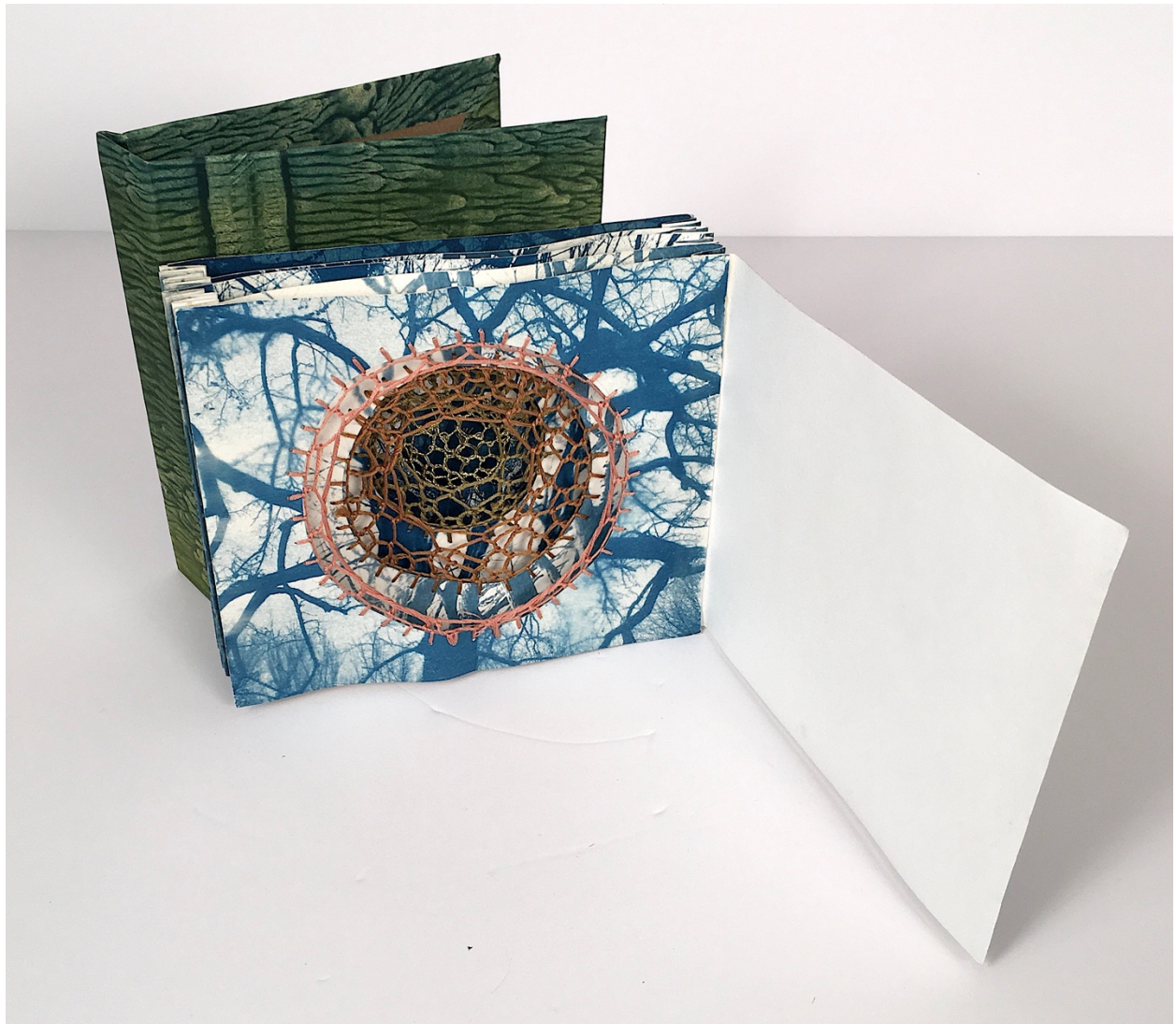
Touching Other People's Stories

Discarded Nora Roberts novel



Tonya Lemos
Conway, MA

Sacred Elm Grove
Central Park NYC cyanotype tunnel book



Tonya Lemos

Heartwood

Photopolymer printed embellished tunnel book, inspired by Mary Olivers poem



Tonya Lemos

Field of Buttercups

Eco-printed spider binding artbook



Tonya Lemos

TideFold: Explosion

Book made with papers from seaweed and other debris found on the shoreline



Geri Michelli
Rio Rancho, NM

Shellfish Fan Book

Hand-cut shapes bound in accordion style fan



Geri Michelli

We Need Bees

Collage book with various papers and hand stitching



Nicole Pietrantonì
Girona, Spain

Forastera I

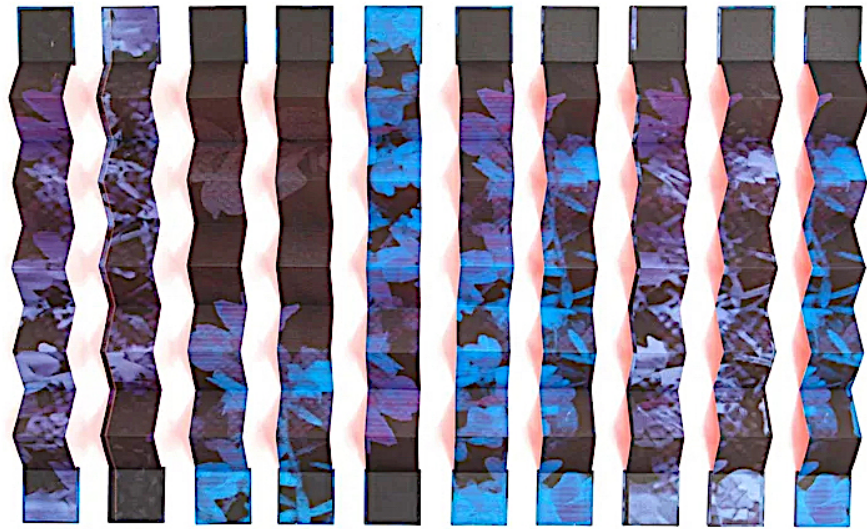
Inkjet on bamboo paper, acrylic paint, magnets, hand-bound into 10 accordion books



Nicole Pietrantonì

Noctiluca Infinita

Inkjet on bamboo paper, acrylic paint, magnets, hand-bound into 10 accordion books



Ellen Schiffman
Weston, CT

Fall
Eco-print concertina



Ellen Schiffman

Wild Garden Blue

Cyanotype concertina in presentation box



Ellen Schiffman

Through a Forest Wilderness

Japanese stab binding, eco prints in presentation box



Ellen Schiffman

Borrowed Earth

Concertina, eco prints



Ellen Schiffman

The Hidden Side of a Leaf

Concertina, eco prints



Erin K Schmidt
Rochester Hills, MI

Leaves of Three, Let It Be

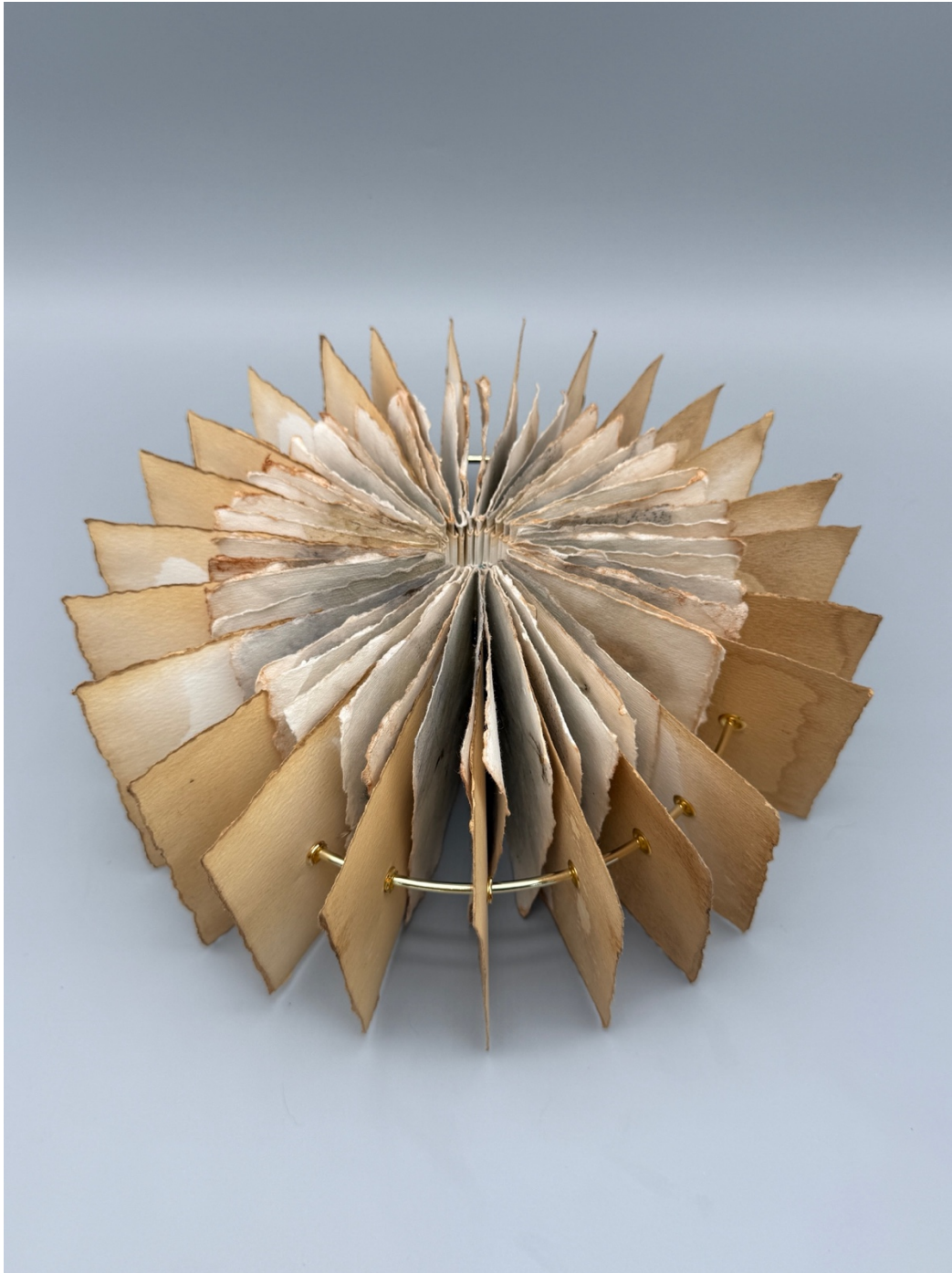
Handmade paper made from poison ivy, cotton, and Kozo paper,poison ivy stems



Erin K Schmidt

Poison Ring

Poison ivy dye, watercolor paper, cotton rag paper, gold foil, glass beads, brass ring



Erin K Schmidt

As the Crow Flies

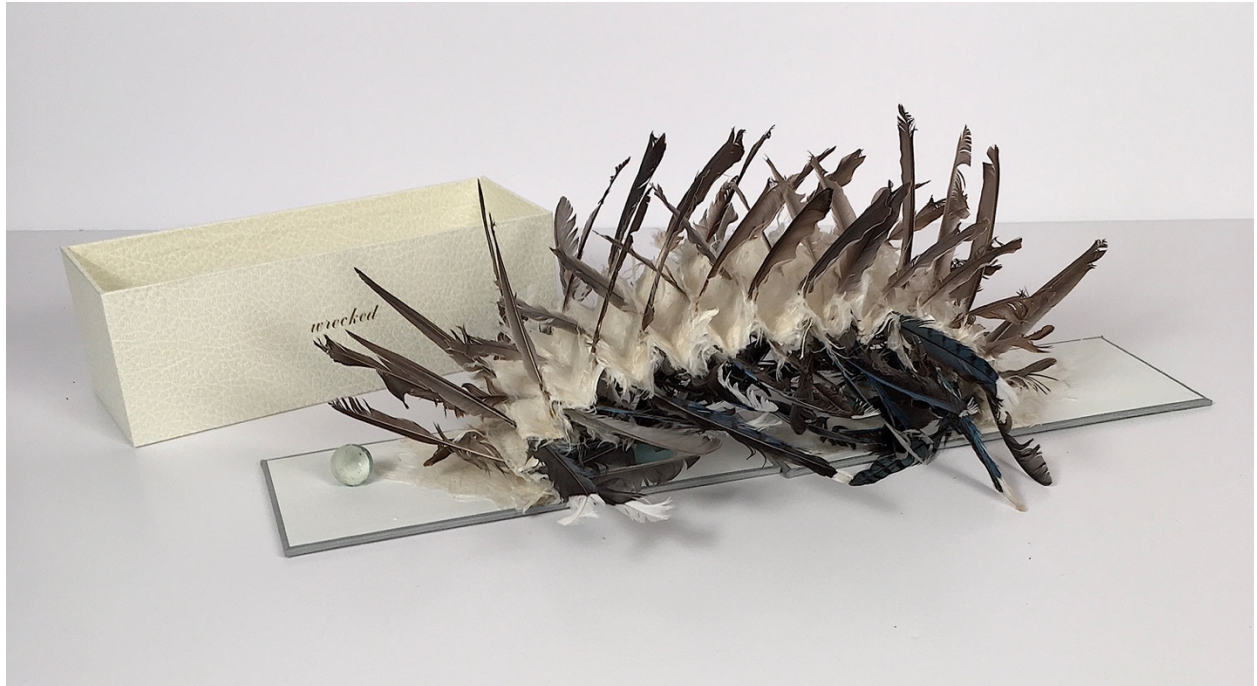
Robin nest, fledgling feathers, vellum, decorative paper, ink, graphite. (The feathers used in this book were collected from a dead robin fledgling after a crow attacked the nest.)



Erin K Schmidt

Wrecked

Blue jay feathers, robin feathers, robin eggs, Rives BFK, lokta paper. (The feathers used in this book were molted and were collected from the ground over a period of seven years. The eggs were found on the ground already broken. No birds were hurt for the making of this book.)



Erin K Schmidt

Untouchable Moment

Eco printed poison ivy leaves on Rives BFK, silk organza, poison ivy vine, brass embellishments



Catherine Cross Tsintzos
Greensboro, NC

Fallen Leaves

A grouping of hand built and carved ceramic leaves with natural plant dye stains. The leaves hold handmade paper pages embellished with botanical contact prints bound with a Coptic Stitch binding.



Catherine Cross Tsintzos

Nature Bound

Low fire earthenware, cold finish using natural plant pigments, Stabilo, silk organza, tea bag paper, wax, handmade paper, botanical contact prints of leaves gathered in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Pompey 's Knob Wax liner, Coptic Kettle binding 6 x 20 inches (fully opened)



Catherine Cross Tsintzos

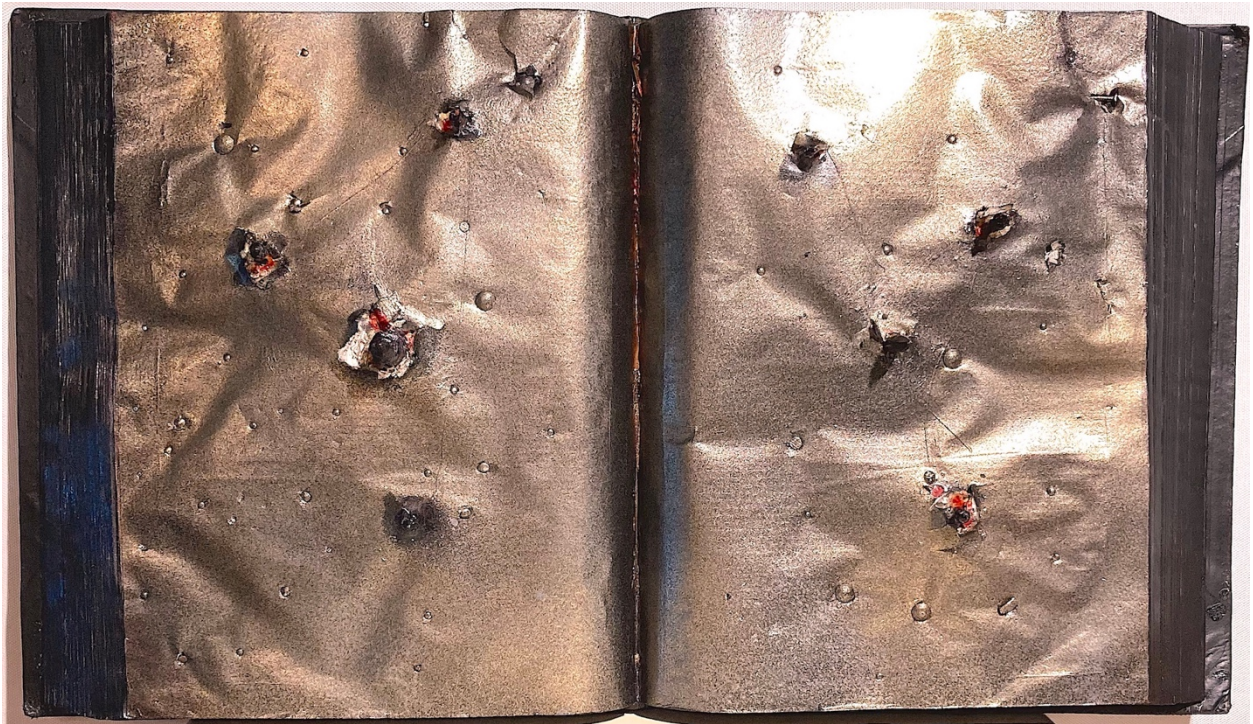
Wild Acres

Handmade paper with botanical contact prints of fall leaves, watercolor pigment, natural dyes, vintage Capitol silk thread sewn cover embellishment bound with the Japanese Stab Binding stitch.



John Frederick Walker
Kent, CT

Angry Book
Mixed media, altered book



John Frederick Walker

Stolen Page

Mixed media, altered book



John Frederick Walker

Lost Chapters

Mixed media, altered book

