

The Art of Publishing
An Exhibition of MACK Books

All books published by a certain publisher could be seen as links in a single chain, or segments in a serpentine progression of books, or fragments in a single book.

Roberto Calasso

This exhibition, presented by Perimeter Books at the Centre for Contemporary Photography in Melbourne, traces the publishing history of MACK, the London-based art book publisher. Originally established in 2004 under the imprint steidMACK, MACK was founded in 2010 as an independent publishing house and is considered to be one of the world's leading producers of contemporary and historical photography books. Highlighting the areas of interest and long-term relationships with artists that have resulted in some of the defining artist books of the twenty-first century, the show brings together books and special editions – many of which are rare and previously unseen in Australia – alongside original prints and explorations into digital publishing and the complete backlist of MACK.

MACK's work with artists and photographers such as Bertien van Manen, Paul Graham, Thomas Demand, Adam Broomberg + Oliver Chanarin, Collier Schorr, Torbjørn Rødland, Roe Ethridge, Tacita Dean and Alec Soth spans the complete history of the publishing imprint and the resulting artist books define that history. However, MACK has also become well known for:

- the republication of lost classics, including *Ravens* by Masahisa Fukase, and *Kodachrome* by Luigi Ghirri
- books which compile the writings of visual artists concerned with the critical discourses surrounding photography, including William E. Jones, Joan Fontcuberta, Luigi Ghirri, Allan Sekula and Victor Burgin
- supporting and promoting unknown artists, in particular through the First Book Award¹
<http://www.firstbookaward.com/>

MACK publications are renowned for their tactile materiality, conceptual rigour and for a focus on the book as a work of art – the book form as a primary destination for the author's ideas. While MACK is at the forefront of the boom in photobook publishing – the books having won a vast array of international awards and prizes – they are notable for an absence of the design excesses common in the sector. Each book is designed in the studio in London in collaboration with the author and with the belief that content should not be dominated by design.

¹ In 2018, The Museum of Modern Art (New York) will include two winners of the First Book Award – Sofia Borges and Joanna Piotrowska – as well MACK author Sam Contis in its long-standing, genre-defining survey exhibition 'New Photography'

EXHIBITION

The exhibition includes more than 200 books, editions and related objects. The books are, in most cases, presented as physical objects to be held, handled and read. A complete listing of the CCP exhibition contents is available on request. The following are details of a small selection of the installation accompanied by supporting images in the press pack [\[https://goo.gl/b41Wt\]](https://goo.gl/b41Wt) –

- **Adam Broomberg + Oliver Chanarin, *Holy Bible* [MACK, 2013]**
A facsimile edition of the King James interlaid with images from a photographic archive focused on images of war - a treatise on Divine Violence.
- **Paul Graham, *a shimmer of possibility* [steidlMack, 2011]**
Regarded as one of the defining photography books of the 21st century. Comprises 12 individual books, each volume a photographic short story of everyday life in today's America. Inspired by Chekhov's short stories.
- **Benrido Portfolio [MACK, 2016]**
A collaboration with the Benrido atelier in Kyoto. Includes 10 photographic collotype prints, each on a distinct Japanese Washi paper, and one by each of Thomas Demand, Roe Ethridge, Guido Guidi, Takashi Homma, Mayumi Hosokura, Ron Jude, Joanna Piotrowska, Grégoire Pujade-Lauraine, Alec Soth and Carly Steinbrunn.
- **Alec Soth, *Gathered Leaves* [MACK, 2015]**
Refusing the history of traditional catalogues this clamshell box includes twenty-nine large format postcards – a mobile version of the show – with mini facsimile versions of 4 of Soth's most famous books.
- **Collier Schorr, *Jens F.* [steidlMack, 2005]**
A remake of Andrew Wyeth's *The Helga Pictures* in an exploration of representation, sexuality and identity.
- **John Warwicker, *The Floating World* [steidlMack, 2009]**
A newly commissioned wall piece by Melbourne resident Warwicker, the famous Tomato designer, typographer and academic.

EVENTS

- Exhibition Opening: Friday 5th January 2018, 6pm–8pm (TBC)

Related Events:

- **Melbourne:** A lecture and gallery tour by Michael Mack titled A Serpentine Progression: Saturday 6th January (times/ticketing TBC)
- **Melbourne:** Portfolio reviews with Michael Mack and Dan Rule, director of Perimeter Sunday 7th January (times/ticketing TBC)
- **Sydney:** A conversation between with Dan Rule and Michael Mack at Kinokuniya bookshop: Tuesday 9th January (times/details TBC)

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Notes to Editors

- Michael Mack (b. 1965, Zimbabwe) studied and then practiced law until his mid-twenties before escaping to work in a photography gallery in London and to return to studying. He wrote two books in the mid-1990s which established his reputation and led to him working with the renowned German printer Gerhard Steidl. Over the course of 15 years they built an unrivalled publishing list. In 2004 steidlMACK began publishing Mack's personal selection of books. In 2010 he left Steidl to establish MACK, which has quickly grown to be one of the world's leading publishers of art, photography and critical text books. In 2011, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Arts by the University of Plymouth for his contribution to art publishing. In 2017 he was awarded the Royal Photographic Society Award for Photographic Publishing.
<http://mackbooks.co.uk/>
- Perimeter Books is a specialised bookstore and platform for various art publishing endeavours in Melbourne, Australia. Perimeter stocks a curated selection of local and international small press, art, photography, architecture and design publications, and exhibits publishers and contemporary artists with an interest in the printed form. Perimeter launched its in-house publishing imprint Perimeter Editions in August 2012 and has since published more than 30 books with contemporary artists and photographers from Australia, North America, Europe and Asia. It launched Perimeter Distribution in April 2013, via which it represents some of the leading independent publishers in the world. Perimeter has a photography-focused outpost at the Centre for Contemporary Photography (CCP) and a curated library at Hotel Hotel in Canberra.
<http://perimeterbooks.com/>
- Center for Contemporary Photography is Australia's premier venue for the exhibition of contemporary photo-based arts, providing a context for the enjoyment, education, understanding and appraisal of contemporary practice. Established in 1986 by the photographic community as a not-for-profit exhibition and resource centre, CCP has played a pivotal role in the support of photo-based arts and public engagement with photography.
<http://www.ccp.org.au/>