

Why There Are Pages and Why They Must Turn

ROBERT BRINGHURST

“In cultures possessing fluent scripts, paper, and printing, books have acquired a stable material form. Those quiet, reliable, portable, legible objects are the benchmark incarnation of the book for most of us now, yet we know that, to be real, a book must be more than a physical object. What makes the tangible form of a book rewarding is that it stands for an intangible reality alive in the heart and mind.”

ART : definition five (and other writings)

PETER RUTLEDGE KOCH

“The great collections at the Museum of Modern Art and the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco are filled with what are loosely referred to as “artist’s books” but a great many of the books are more or less ordinary books with art in them. The books of Vollard and Kahnweiler are containers of art. Erase the pages and what remains is an entirely ordinary but blank book. Contemporary art with its more comprehensive and sophisticated approach to physical and formal properties requires the book itself (full and present in all its particularness) to measure up. This change in perspective has matured greatly in the last thirty years.”

each new book

ALAN LONEY

“there is no doubt that fine press books propose a value for their material existence *per se*. This value could be seen as a replacement/rejection of the ‘spiritual’ value of the ‘sacred’ object. This is not merely the slip of my prejudices showing (tho I do not deny it is that) but also the whole undergarment in contrast to the invisible threads by which the ‘sacred’ has bound communities together over against other communities. The chosen book is the chosen community, even in the avant garde. The question remains – how do I value the book without rendering it ‘sacred’ – even if the sacred is read simply as ‘a thing apart’”