

# Wax and the Artist Book II

curated by

Catherine Nash, M.F.A.

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## *Wax and the Artist Book II*

A continuing study has evolved out of this personal curiosity...

How are contemporary book artists combining  
beeswax/encaustics within/onto their artist books?

This second year of curating  
has pulled together completely new examples:  
the artist books of 17 featured artists from the U.S. and Europe  
exhibit a rich integration of encaustic both technically and conceptually.

First presented in 2009, at the *Third Annual*,  
this completely new compilation of bookworks  
was presented in lecture format at the  
*Fourth Annual Encaustic Painting Conference*  
held June 11-13th, 2010  
at the Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, MA.

Special thanks to all of the artists who answered my international call.

Your work is exciting and inspiring!

Thanks also to Joanne Mattera for enabling this project.

To help foster more connections, I have decided to present  
the artists in the following print quality document  
available as a free downloadable pdf from the article section  
of my website <<http://www.papermakingresources.com>>.  
Each artist is represented by a single page in alphabetical order.

The information is necessarily reduced from the  
original lecture, but I am hoping that you will  
let the artists' own words and art inspire you to explore  
their work further by investigating their website links.

-Catherine Nash

# Jeanne Borofsky Groton, MA, USA

<http://www.dreamingprinter.com>



***Cosmos***  
(right w/ detail)  
encaustic  
collage book  
on wood  
7.5" x 5"



## BIO

Jeanne Borofsky, BFA, MFA, is an internationally recognized artist, with paintings, prints and drawings in numerous museums and private collections. She was born in New Hampshire, and after several moves settled in Groton, Massachusetts.

Jeanne has been a practicing artist for over 40 years. She has produced watercolors, paintings, rubber stamps, traditional, photographic & digital prints. She now works with the computer, as well as collage, sculpture and encaustic. Jeanne also works as a part-time Digital Imaging Specialist and Graphic Designer.



***Collection***  
6.5" x 6.5" x 4" closed  
encaustic assemblage  
book on wood

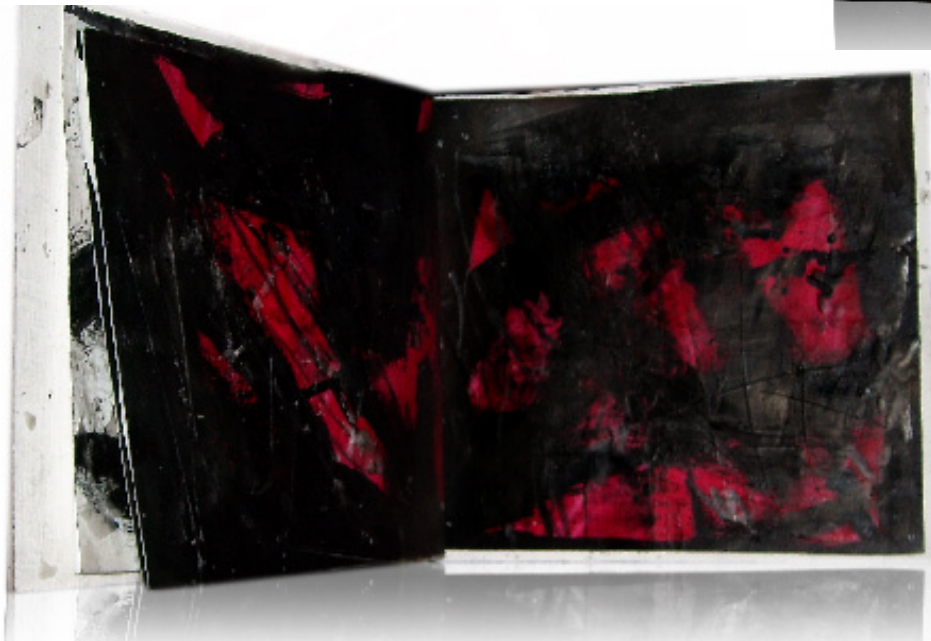
**"My love of words, letters, text, type and books has led me to create artist's books. I'm fascinated with the look and shape of books - all those pages covered in words - the way they can stand on their own. There is usually no actual text in my bookworks - 'so the viewer, aided by symbols and objects, is given to intuitive deciphering' (Joanne Mattera)**

**I love the way beeswax creates both physical and visual depth and translucency to the work - adding to the mystery and magic I'm trying to convey. Whatever I put into my art, it always includes the joy of creation, the love of art, and the happiness in my ability to create it."**

# Pál Csaba

## Budapest, Hungary

[www.palcsaba.blogspot.com](http://www.palcsaba.blogspot.com)  
[www.palart.carbonmade.com](http://www.palart.carbonmade.com)



### *Inner Mirror*

*(above & above left)*  
 15 x 21 x 3 cm.  
 6 x 8.25 x 1.25 in.  
 Paper, encaustic,  
 mixed media

### Why Wax?

- Plasticity,
  - tenderness,
  - transparency
- Dripped wax refers to the random.

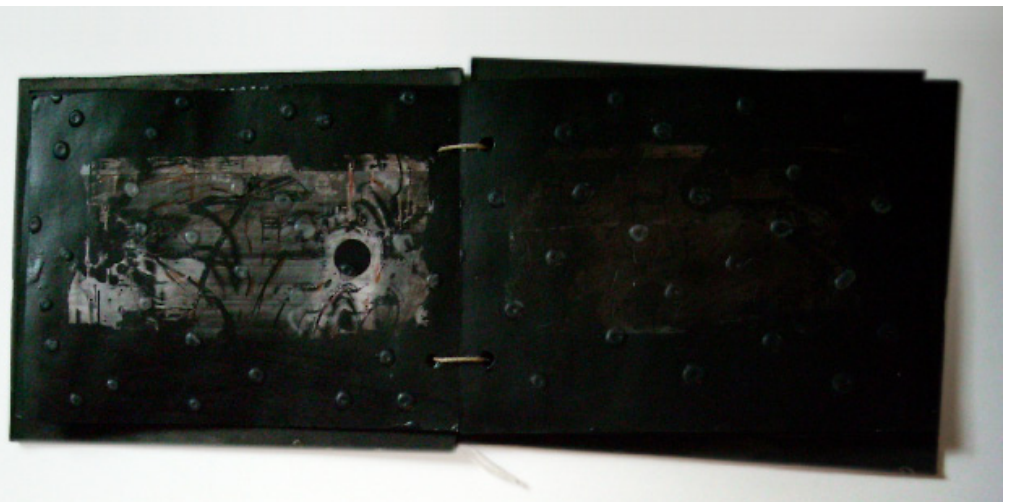
### Artist Statement

Drops  
 Phases  
 Drama, elements of life  
 Recurrence  
 Cycle  
 Fire  
 Candle  
 Expressive  
 Playing surface  
 Scratch  
 Wild passion



### *Life Dressage*

*(above & right)*  
 15 x 18 x 3 cm.  
 6 x 3 x 1.25 in.  
 Paper, encaustic,  
 mixed media



# Ania Gilmore

## Lexington, MA, USA

born in Warsaw, Poland

<<http://aniaartstudio.com/>>



### *Library of Alexandria*

(above and right)  
Altered book, burned pages,  
wax, shellac. One of a kind.  
5 x 7.5"



*Broken Tree* (above)  
Beeswax, book pages, acrylic paint,  
wire. One of a kind. 10 x 12"

### BIO

Born in Warsaw, Poland, *Ania Gilmore* is a designer, painter and a mixed media artist. She works in her studio in Lexington, MA creating one-of-a-kind artist's books, prints, and paints Japanese Sumi-e.

Ania received a BFA with honors from Massachusetts College of Art and Design, also studied printmaking and book arts at Rhode Island School of Design and at the School of The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. She participates in juried shows, solo exhibitions and has received recognition and awards throughout the United States and internationally.

"In my work I explore the book itself, the boundaries between the form and the content. As an emigrant, I am infused with inspiration resident in my roots and history. I am interested in the continuous growing dialogue of identity and multiculturalism that is a main element issue in our society..."

'Broken Tree' was inspired by the words of the Polish poet Agnieszka Osiecka. I was looking for a medium that would let me reveal and hide content at the same time. Melted beeswax seemed to be the best way to achieve the transparency and variety of textures I was looking for... I enjoy the unpredictable dynamic way that wax travels on the surface and the wonderful smell."

# Tracy Longley-Cook Dayton, OH, USA

<http://tracylongleycook.com/>



## *Seedlings* left (from the series *Stages of Growth*)

On right, etched glass in front of Japanese paper.

On left, layered encaustic medium (about 1/2 inch thick) embedded with dirt and empty seedpods. open 17"W x 11"H x 4"D



## *Lateral Growth*

left (from the series *Stages of Growth*)

On right side, etched glass in front of Japanese paper. On left, layered encaustic medium (about 1/4 inch thick) embedded with ocotillo thorns in a spiral pattern that emerge out of the wax base. Back view (below) shows graph image on acetate with a small sliced section of a chambered nautilus shell.

open 17"W x 11"H x 4"D

closed 9"W x 11"H x 4"D

"Personal collections on display in the 15th and 16th centuries (often termed as "Cabinets of Curiosities") became the predecessor of the modern museum. It was through the act of collecting, cataloging and control of various artifacts (some real and some manufactured) that allowed the collector to understand and comprehend the natural world around them.

'Stages of Growth' is a series of handmade wooden boxes with etched glass of botanical drawings, handmade paper from plant fibers, encaustic medium, and found objects. When the box is open, and the contents are lit from the front, the window on the back is illuminated to reveal another set of objects inside (see "back view" corresponding images.) Encaustic medium is used to encase the objects in a permanent placement, maintaining a particular arrangement (often used in historic collecting practices.) The transparent nature of the material also allows light to penetrate and illuminate the objects that would otherwise not be visible."



## BIO

*Tracy Longley-Cook* is an Assistant Professor of photography at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. She completed her M.F.A. from Arizona State University in the spring of 2007, and received her B.F.A. from the University of Washington in 1997. Tracy incorporates traditional and digital methods, as well as experimental processes, into her photography, prints and book works. She has exhibited her work nationally, and has also participated in exhibitions in China and Hungary.

# Julie Shaw Lutts Salem, MA, USA

<<http://www.julieshawlutts.com>>



**Water** left  
Vintage wooden box,  
old test tubes, liquid  
temperature device, pa-  
per, wax, found objects.  
Detail of encaustic  
used on pages  
to form "drips".  
4" x 10.5" x 3" (closed)  
8" x 10.5" x 3" (open)

**1862** above and right  
Mixed media assem-  
blage, wax.  
5"x6.5"x3 (closed)  
10"x6.5"x6 (open)  
"1862 is a book that  
was inspired by finding  
the tintype photograph  
you see at the left. I  
researched and dated  
the clothing to around  
the civil war...My story  
thread is that the women  
are home waiting for  
their men to return."

"I'm so intrigued by people's history, their stories, the layers of time, the memories and emotions that make up our world. Using all kinds of media including encaustic, tintypes, old photographs, handwritten letters, I weave a story of another time and place....By alteration of pre-existing media such as old books, old photographs, maps, vintage diaries, and found objects, I attempt to breathe life into something or someone forgotten by time.

I use wax to cover my one-of-a-kind artist books, giving the work a intriguing feel and patina. Wax imbues the old books, vintage papers and historic photos with more strength and resilience so that they can be handled and "read". Wax encases and protects much of my cut wood work and gives the individual pieces a beautiful quality when held."

## BIO

Working in the Book Arts has allowed *Julie Shaw Lutts* to combine her collage and assemblage work into one-of-a-kind pieces inspired by the book. Lutts challenges the idea of what an artist book is and what elements combined together would create a book. She passionately hunts in flea markets and old bookshops for items of inspiration, like tintypes, old photographs and handwritten letters. Then combining them with other media, including encaustic, she weaves a story of another time and place.



# Hanne Mattheison

## Malling, Denmark

<<http://www.hannematthiesen.dk>>



### *Book of Destiny I*

(left)

Cover in white waxed linen cloth  
5 x 3.5 in.



### *Book of Destiny III*

(above)

Cover in white waxed linen cloth  
7 x 5.5 in.

### BIO

Hanne Mattheisen was born in 1960 in Århus, Denmark. Educated at Aarhus' Academy of Fine Arts and Aarhus College of Education, she is a mixed media artist, teacher and writer. Mattheisen's creative focus is in artist's books, collages, recycling, textile redesign and related subjects. She also works as a freelance writer and workshop instructor and has participated in several international exhibitions and events

Member of the Danish Association of Visual Artists, (ARTROVERT, a Danish experimental artist group), X-piir (a Danish/Icelandic Artist's Book group) and BIAM, (Bank of International Art Money)

### *Book of Destiny II* (below)

Cover in white waxed linen cloth  
8.5 x 6 in.



**"My work covers various aspects of artists' books, especially one-of-a-kind altered books, book objects and installations. Most often I try to incorporate second-hand material in my creations: everything from old postcards to bus tickets, press cuttings, extracts from photo albums, vintage fabric, etc.**

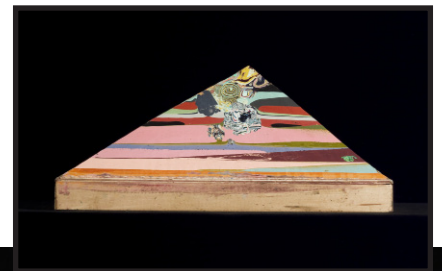
**The scrapped, faded, wry and uneven pieces have invaluable significance in the proper context by simply adding personality and authenticity to my designs. I'm an experienced visual storyteller and my works are usually characterised by simplicity, reflection - and a subtle tactile nerve. I regard art as a matter of communication."**

# Laura Moriarty Rosendale, NY, USA

<http://www.lauramoriarty.com/>

*Fault Block Mountain*  
Encaustic on panel 9 x 12 x 7 in.

Below: installation shot of Moriarty's work  
in the exhibit *Geologic Time*, 2010  
at the Conrad Wilde Gallery in Tucson, AZ



"The process of heating and cooling wax has evolved into a way for me to draw parallels between human and geologic time. Rocks can tell the story of time if you know how to read their bands of strata...

My current work aims to create a textbook of geologic processes - as if each piece were a page from a reference book, illustrating cross-sections of imagined terrains. These paintings are built up thickly around embedded sculptural elements, and then excavated and eroded down to reveal what was buried. Like rockfaces or archaeological sites, their layers reveal the history of their making and can be read like the lines of a story."



## BIO

*Laura Moriarty* is a self-taught artist who began her career as a papermaker and printmaker, and had her first solo exhibition of prints in 1992. She has been exhibiting her work continuously for the past sixteen years, as well as teaching workshops around the country. Moriarty has received many awards and honors, the most recent being her second Pollock-Krasner Grant. Laura joined the staff of *R&F Handmade Paints* in 2005 as Director of Exhibitions and Workshops, a position she still holds.

*Sinkhole*  
Encaustic on panel  
8 x 10 x 7 in.

# Irmari Nacht

## Englewood, NJ, USA

<<http://www.irmari.com>>

*Brides*  
(right)  
beeswax recycled  
book, sliced, cut  
6H x 4W x 8D”



*Love Revisited* (right, with 2 details below)  
beeswax, recycled book that has been  
slivered and distressed. 7H x 10W x 5.5D”

Many of the pages of the book are encapsulated in beeswax, no longer enabling them to be read easily. Information is denied! But the slivered pages of the book which extend beyond the covers contain alternate information, transforming the book into a new entity, as well as becoming an image-based sculpture.



### BIO

Irmari Nacht's sculpture, collages and bookworks have been shown in museums and galleries and are in corporate and public collections. She has exhibited internationally, as well as nationally, and received two New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowships in Sculpture. She recently received a second Puffin Foundation Grant for "Who Am I?", an interactive project where the viewer becomes part of the artwork. Her "SAVED books" series has been shown this year in galleries in MA, NY, and NJ.

Irmari Nacht's recycled books, a series entitled "SAVED", uses books that otherwise might be discarded and transforms them into artworks. Using the book as a metaphor, "Love Revisited" addresses change and transformation, information received and denied, altered reality, as well as the concept of multiple imagery, which highlights the strength and energy of repeated elements. Nacht says that wax provided a "lovely, dull sheen on the folded pages and clumps and drips on the curly slivers....Wax offers a different dimensionality to my recycled book sculptures: in addition to its adhesive properties and tactile surface, it adds a mysterious presence."



# Haley Nagy

## Chicago, IL, USA

<<http://www.haleynagy.com>>



“Although encaustic is very aesthetically pleasing, there are many conceptual implications to the use of wax within an artwork, particularly the book arts. In my case, the ability of wax to both absorb and reflect light mimics the ideas of concealment and revealment in my works. Furthermore, the way that wax absorbs into a paper creates a see-through/stained glass window affect, which in turn creates a more interactive work that needs to be held to the light in order to be fully experience.

### *A Book with No Words*

Altered book with encaustic & mixed media.

An experiment into what happens to a narrative when the text is removed. Specifically, I covered the words in multiple layers of encaustic paint, much like one would paint over graffiti. However, by shining light through the pages some of the obscured text can be revealed, allowing parts of the story to be rediscovered. 9 x 12 x .5”

“Unlike paintings, whose encaustic textures can only be viewed, encaustic book objects are often made to be read... and therefore touched. Coating the pages of my book, *Album*, adds to the illusion that this object is a photo album. The waxed surface feels like the surface of a photograph and the crinkling of the pages (caused by this same wax) makes the work sound like a vintage ‘adhesive photo album’.



*Album* below, left  
Encaustic, mixed media and  
handmade flax and cotton paper.  
5 x 7 in.



### BIO

*Haley Nagy* is an artist currently living in Chicago, IL where she creates paintings, works on paper, textiles, artist books and prints. Encaustic paint and handmade paper are her mediums of choice. Haley is currently pursuing her MFA in Interdisciplinary Book & Paper Arts from Columbia College Chicago. She is also a founding member of Texas Wax Austin and co-webmaster “emeritus” for this non-profit organization.

# Catherine Nash

## Tucson, AZ, USA

<<http://www.catherinenash.com>>

<<http://www.papermakingresources.blogspot.com>>



### *Reading the Night*

(left and above left)  
encaustic painting in a vintage  
wooden game board  
5.5”h x 18”w x .75” open

### *Sky Within (No. 70)*

(below)  
encaustic painting in a vintage  
mechanics machine parts box  
9”h x 11.5”w x 1”d open

“I am inspired by things that make me wonder. I can spend hours staring into the sky, mesmerized by its expansiveness... pondering on our place in the universe. The fleeting early evening hours and the late night rich darks are particularly cryptic, potent and profound.

My recent ‘Secret Sky’ series of artist books are of such moments, created within closable wooden game board or the like. I am playing with a physical way of bottling up, of translating, of trying to comprehend the unfathomable: a human scale frame juxtaposed against the immensity and mystery of space.”



### BIO

Loving handmade paper, artist books, and molten encaustic, *Catherine Nash* freely mixes media to express her artistic ideas. Nash balances studio work with teaching residencies and has published 4 DVDs on the art of papermaking. A passion for travel and different cultures has inspired her to live, exhibit, research and teach on four continents.

### *Sanctuary* left

Typewritten words on handmade kozo paper,  
encaustic painting in an altered wooden game  
board. Chilean mesquite thorns. 4.5” diam. X 3.5” h



# Melody Overstreet

## Santa Cruz, CA, USA

<<http://meloverstreet.wordpress.com>>



*Flux* above  
paper, rust, linen thread, encaustic medium, 4.5" x 9"

*Contained* left & below  
Altered book, waxed linen thread, rust, paper, encaustic medium 4.5" x 6" x 3.5"



### BIO

*Melody J. Overstreet* is an artist whose unifying medium is the book. She holds a Bachelor in Fine Arts and Psychology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Overstreet has participated in independent and collaborative exhibitions, as well as taught classes in both papermaking and the book arts. She currently resides in Santa Cruz, CA where she reads, unbinds, and reconstitutes books in the daytime.

**"Wax gives a living sensation to the surface of a work, suggesting an underlying pulsation and writhing up of humanity. It is a way of revealing something else about the paper, ink and thread, adding translucency or layers. Given its long history and use in the act of preservation, encaustics also set in motion a dialogue with time. It is a medium that surfaces for me a visceral response, and moves me more into my body."**

*Pathos* (Part II of diptych) left  
Rust, paper, encaustic medium, linen thread, 8.5" x 46"

# Raymond Papka Versailles, KY, USA

<http://www.rpapka.com>

"Encaustic allows me to generate layers of information in artworks, but keep it mysterious....almost dreamy and historical. My themes come from life observations, happenings, and the influence of science. It is not necessary for people to completely understand my art, but merely question what is occurring and be able to grasp a feeling that each piece generates. I believe that the only thing constant is change - a belief thematic in my art."

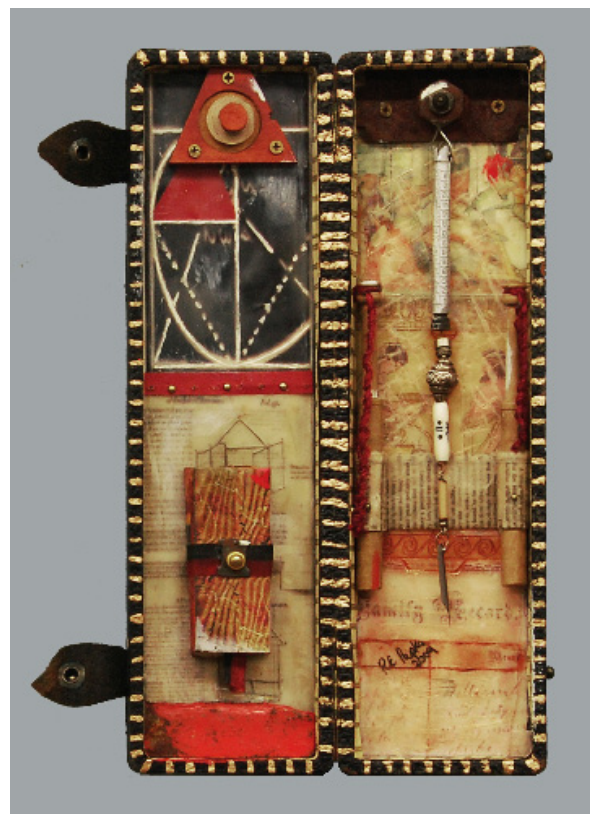


*Box of Books Series - #6* above  
Mixed Media Assemblage, 10"H x 7.25"W x 1.5"D

*Box of Books Series - #2* right  
Mixed Media Assemblage, 11.25"H x 6.5"W x 1"D

*Box of Books Series - #4* below  
Mixed Media Assemblage, 10.75"H x 9"W x 2.5"D

Below: An old book with encaustic painting has been opened and mounted in a vintage metal box. Also within the box are pigment, paper, images in encaustic medium, and embellishments of wood pieces and metal.



## BIO

Since early childhood I've been fascinated with books and unusual objects. Books allow my mind to wander, and dusty, aged books tweak my sense of history. I am attracted to found objects that may have an interesting history, but may have no importance to others.

Education: University of Wyoming (B.S. Zoology/Chemistry) and Tulane University (Ph.D. Anatomy/Neuroscience).  
Retired Professor of Neuroscience.



# Pamela Paulsrud

## Wilmette, IL, USA

<http://www.pamelapaulsrud.com>



*The Complete Enchanter* left & below  
Altered book, encaustic, mixed media  
6.5" x 6" x 1.75"



### BIO

*Pamela Paulsrud's* handmade paper, artists books and calligraphy are exhibited internationally. She freelances in the lettering arts and teaches workshops. Pamela received her MFA from Columbia College Chicago in Interdisciplinary Arts concentrating in Book and Paper. Her love of the land, the earth, and its resonance inspires and informs both her work and her life. Her work has been published in many magazines, books, and journals including 500 Handmade Books; Calligraphy and Handmade Paper; Making Memory Books by Hand; Explor-  
atopia.

"Dreams, like palimpsests are glimpses—fragments of information containing stories and history—a plethora of information once clearly known and now disguised with the intrusion of the waking world.

I have chosen the book in sculptural form to explore these narratives of both the internal and external landscape. The book has been the vehicle of language across the ages. It is visual. It is spatial and its physical nature is fundamental to its meaning....

Why wax? Simply put—the visual, tactical experience of wax is a delight to the senses."



*Drift Velocity* left  
Altered book, encaustic,  
mixed media  
9" x 6" x 1"



*Elaborate Scheme* above  
Altered book, encaustic,  
mixed media  
9" x 4" x 3"



# Josie Rodriguez

## San Diego, CA, USA

<<http://www.josierodriguez.com>>



**"The form my art takes often reflects love of words, color, textures and memory. Ideas come to me from many places and are often born through the written word of my own poetry, visual appreciation of nature and the materials that surround my world."**

**Writer's Block** left  
Styrofoam blocks covered with Japanese paper, collage, encaustic medium with photo transfer. Words describe the many reasons we as writers sometimes give for not writing!

### *Spheres of Influence*

below  
6 spheres covered with mulberry paper strips, printed with names of those who have had an influence on me throughout my life. Sculptural book sits in two antique drawers.



### *Eskimo Legend*

below  
Antique wooden box, twisted coffee filters dipped in encaustic medium, edged with gold pigment. Small pamphlet stitch book attached to side of box. A quote from an Eskimo legend sits on top and sides of box, "Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy."



**"Why wax as a book artist? Wax used with paper allows the paper to be moulded and formed. It also made for easy transfers of text and added translucency."**

### BIO

**Josie Rodriguez** was born and raised in San Diego, California, graduating with a B.A., San Diego State University; M.A. from University of San Diego. Her professional work as a teacher and hospital counselor introduced her to the concept of art as a healing force. Rodriguez says that she has experienced the healing power of art for herself and the students she teaches. Her art has been exhibited throughout California and the Midwest.

# Laura Wait

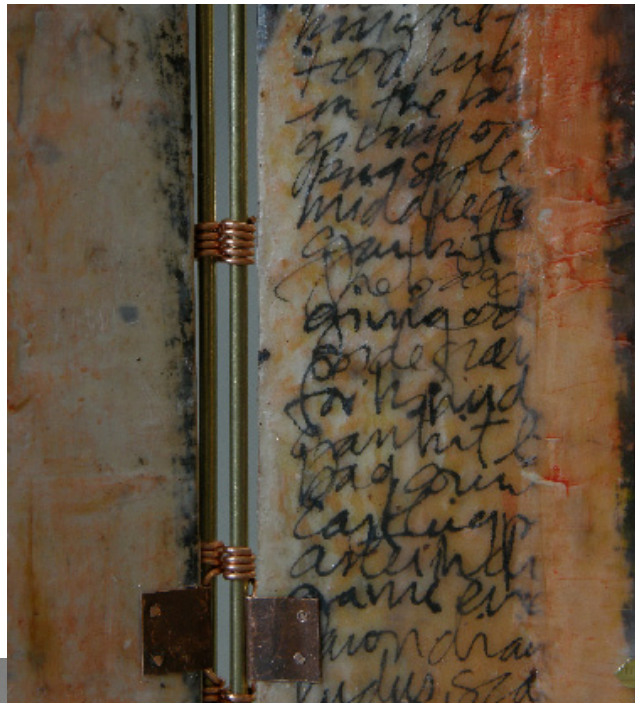
## Steamboat Springs, CO, USA

<http://www.laurawait.com>



### *Feuding*

cover above, pages with detail below  
Artist's book. Encaustic on panels,  
layers of chiri paper with sumi writing.  
Copper and brass hardware.  
15" x 7 3/4" x 7/8".



### BIO

*Laura Wait* lives in Steamboat Springs, Colorado and makes paintings, unique books, and prints. She holds a degree in Art History from Barnard College, Columbia University, NY 1975 as well as certificates in Printmaking and Bookbinding from Croydon College of Art, England, awarded in 1976 and 1981. She exhibits her art widely, and her artist's books are in many collections, including the Library of Congress. She teaches art workshops to book artists throughout the country.



"Words as image are a central part of my imagery... leading to my current obsession with letterforms and wall writing. I use encaustic to create mysterious obscured surfaces with layers of ink writing on Japanese paper saturated with color, scraped to reveal an inner texture, or scratched with lines to make new imaginary figures or handwriting. My goal is to create dense, ancient, fresco like surfaces. I am currently working on a body of work inspired by the game of chess, including words of war, checkerboards, and chessmen."

# Beata Wehr

## Tucson, AZ, USA

born in Warsaw, Poland

<<http://www.beatawehr.com>>



### *Book 94, Letter from a desert*

Tissue paper, beeswax, found objects, linen thread  
21x21cm,  
8.25x8.25"

#### **BIO**

*Beata Wehr* was born in Warsaw, Poland, and came to the United States in 1985. She lives in Tucson, Arizona traveling back to Europe every year. She graduated from Warsaw University in Poland with M.A. degree in art history and from University of Arizona with M.F.A. in painting and combined media. She creates one-of-a-kind mixed media books, prints limited editions of books and paints, examining in her work the ideas of home, place, time, transience and multicultural experiences. Her books were shown in North America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia and are included in over 30 public collections in the US and abroad.

"Most of my work relates to my experience as a European living in the U.S. I came here 24 years ago from Warsaw. Since my connection to Poland is very strong, culturally and emotionally I am in between the two worlds.

With their intimate format, I have found artist's books to be especially useful in talking about the issues of identity, immigration, and dislocation. My books are usually bilingual, or semi-bilingual and I often mix images with writing, pieces of newspapers, found objects and other elements reflecting the everyday life in Tucson as well as my links to Poland."



### *Book 91, Certain difficulties with reading a text 2*

with inside detail  
Polish and American newspapers, gesso, black ink, wax  
19x14.5 cm, 7.25x6"



# Heidi Zednik

## Asheville, NC, USA

born in Austria

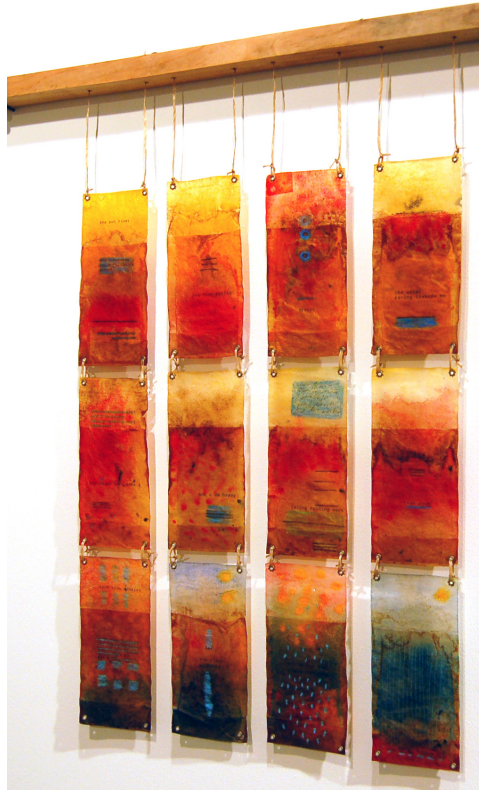
<<http://www.heidizednik.com>>

### BIO

*Heidi Zednik* is an Austrian/American visual artist and poet. Zednik's interest in applying poetic practice to visual work allows for the reduction of a fully formed idea into a small glimpse surrounded by rich visuals. Of her proclivity for mixing mediums, she says "Mixed media is my stream of consciousness. Collage, sewn lines, and embroidered points, encaustic – the goal is to make a visual idea clear." Heidi currently lives in Asheville, NC. She is affiliated with Abecedarian Gallery, Denver, CO as a gallery artist.

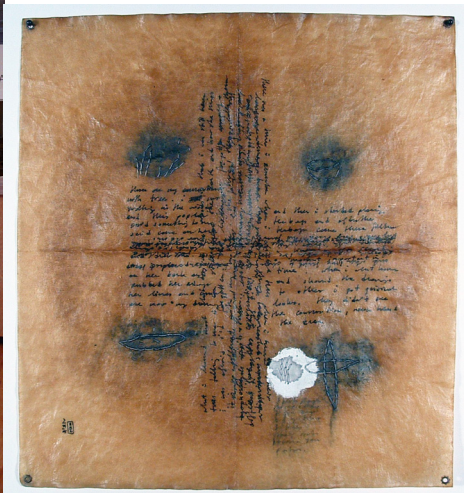
### *whalebone poems*

below w/ detail center bottom  
chemex coffee filters, encaustic,  
thread, ink, carved oak, waxed sinew  
varying lengths 5'-9'. installation  
view; individual filters ~ 12.5"x 11.5"



### *nothing more than east*

above, w. detail to left  
colored pencil, watercolor, typed  
text on teabags, encaustic, wood,  
waxed sinew, hawthorns  
individual tea bags  
are ~5.75"x 2.75"



"My work ranges from painting to drawing, from poetry to installation and collaboration. I write my own texts, and read the tea bag and coffee filter pieces as books of poems. Recently, I have become more interested in the spontaneous process behind each piece – how to hold the essence of thought, line or color at its moment of creation. The resulting pieces initially appear minimal or fragile, yet in time reveal the strength of a poetic practice."

