

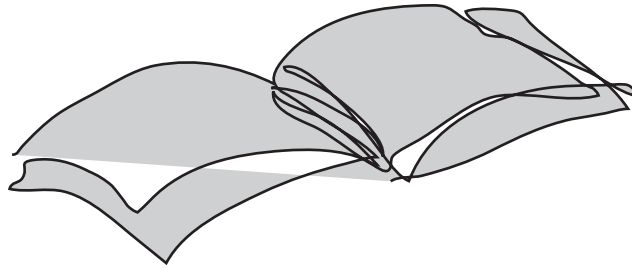
# Wax and the Artist Book

compiled by

Catherine Nash, M.F.A.

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This study evolved out of a personal curiosity...  
I just wondered who “out there” was combining  
beeswax/encaustics within/onto their artist books.  
Special thanks to the artists who answered my nationwide call.  
I’ve learned a lot...and your work is just wonderful!

First presented in lecture format at the  
Third Annual Encaustic Painting Conference held June 5-7th, 2009  
at the Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, MA.

To help foster more connections, I 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

# Jody Alexander Santa Cruz, CA

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



“On these wall pieces I add encaustic as my final step. I plan for the fact that it renders many papers translucent and I can see through to two or three layers below the top. I love the luminosity that encaustic lends to my pieces.”

**Jody Alexander** is an artist, bookbinder, papermaker, librarian and teacher who lives and works in Santa Cruz, California. She makes paper, in the Eastern-style, and uses her papers to bind books with exposed sewing on the spine in a number of historical and modern binding styles. She combines these books with found objects, wooden boxes and drawers, metal, bones, etc. to create sculptural works. Her pieces celebrate collecting, storytelling, and odd characters.

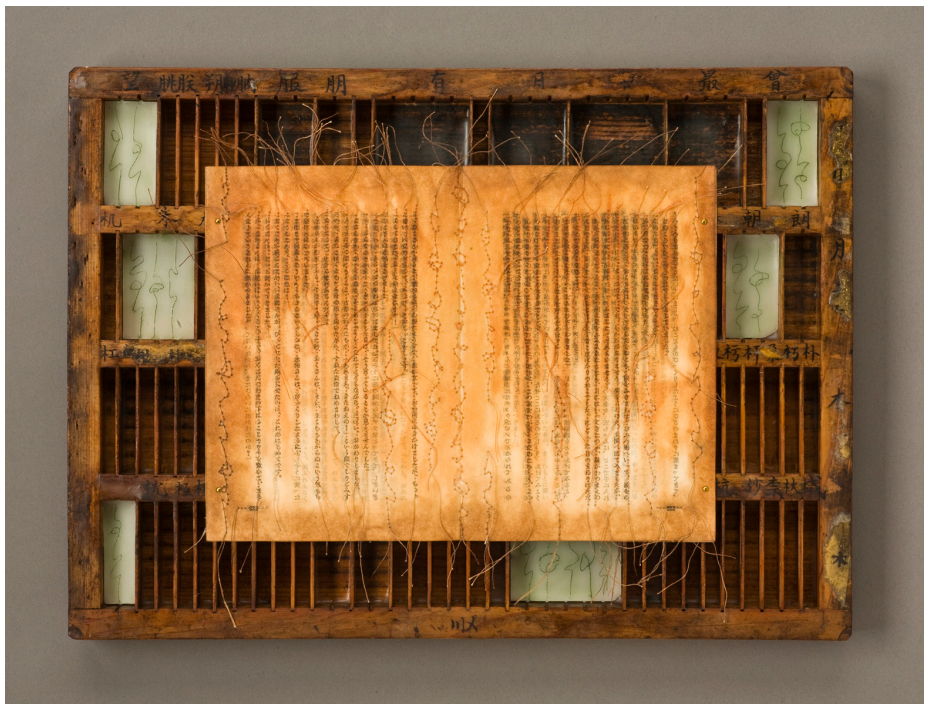
## *Good for One Fare (above)*

“This piece is about finding that one person who is right for you. It is a book that is cut into and it hangs on the wall. A film negative of an old couple has a hole behind it that lets the light (from above) light it up; under the plexi cabachon is a New York City subway token that reads: good for one fare.”

More recently she has been binding books out of mull (a book-binder’s material) that have resulted in the Ghost Book series. She combines her ghost books with digital photo emulsions, and hand and machine stitching to evoke certain feelings: “sometimes it is one of those feelings that you can’t put into words but it makes you take a deep breathe and sigh, feel warm or cool, or maybe wiggle a little.”

## *Maxine Love III (right)*

The wood is an old Chinese letterpress tray. The paper is an open page from a Japanese book. I have machine stitched my made up calligraphic writing, called Maxine, on the paper and waxed it. Wax is also in some of the tray openings and Maxine is etched in the wax and filled with oil stick.



# Nancy Azara New York City, NY

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

Nancy Azara is the author of *Spirit Taking Form: Making a Spiritual Practice of Making Art*, published in December 2002 (Red Wheel/ Weisers) and has exhibited her sculpture in New York City, throughout the U.S. and abroad. Her spiritually infused work has been shown in one woman exhibitions at Donahue/ Sosinski Art in New York City and at the Froelick Gallery, Portland, Oregon, the SACI Gallery, Florence, Italy, A.I.R. Gallery in New York City, the Tweed Museum in Duluth, Minnesota, Rudolph E. Lee Gallery in Clemson, N.C., the Gwinnett Fine Arts Center in Duluth, Georgia and many group shows. She has a home in Woodstock, NY.



## *Passages*

front view at left  
back view below

carved and painted  
wood w/ gold leaf and  
encaustic. Side with  
poems and carving.  
15" x 18" x 1" open,  
closes to 1 1/2"



**"I use encaustic in my wood books because it brings a very live, human quality to them. In Passages, there is the energy of my hand in the marks of the wood carving, the cool black and white of the poems printed on handmade paper, the dazzling glow of the gold leaf and the human skin like sensuous presence of the wax/ encaustic . . ."**

# Jeanne Borofsky

## Groton, MA

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

"I think that rather than adding encaustic to my books, I added books to my encaustic. I had been doing some sculptural work in encaustic, and had been adding text and pages from books to my panels, so the step to making the pieces look and feel like books was a natural one."

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.



*The Key*  
Encaustic collage  
book  
10" x 16"  
above left exterior  
left: interior

# Patricia Gagnat Westbury, NY

[http://posterous.com/  
users/4aG8VXMasCHv#activities/page/1](http://posterous.com/users/4aG8VXMasCHv#activities/page/1)  
<patgaig@yahoo.com>

“Wax just happens. The text and the wax and the wondering if something would work all were in the same place at the same time. Ideas come, rough sketches made on scraps as reminders and then it either works or doesn’t. That’s all. Serendipity plays a BIG part.”

## BIO:

“I started making art about 15 years ago after being introduced to printmaking at the local Community College, running the gamut from etching to monotypes. Soon I was making one-of-a-kind artist’s books. An urge to use stitch on my prints led me to obtaining a sewing machine which, in turn, has led to working with fabric. Now, after years of resistance, I have started working with encaustic, collage specifically, combining paper, fibers, stitch and text into various book forms.”



## *Outing Vol. II*

12" x 6"

detail right

Beeswax coated, oil stick stained paper collage cut into different sized rectangles, gently folded, assembled into small pamphlets and sewn into booklets with wire mesh as the covers.



# Julie Johnson Portland, OR

<jljbindery@gmail.com>



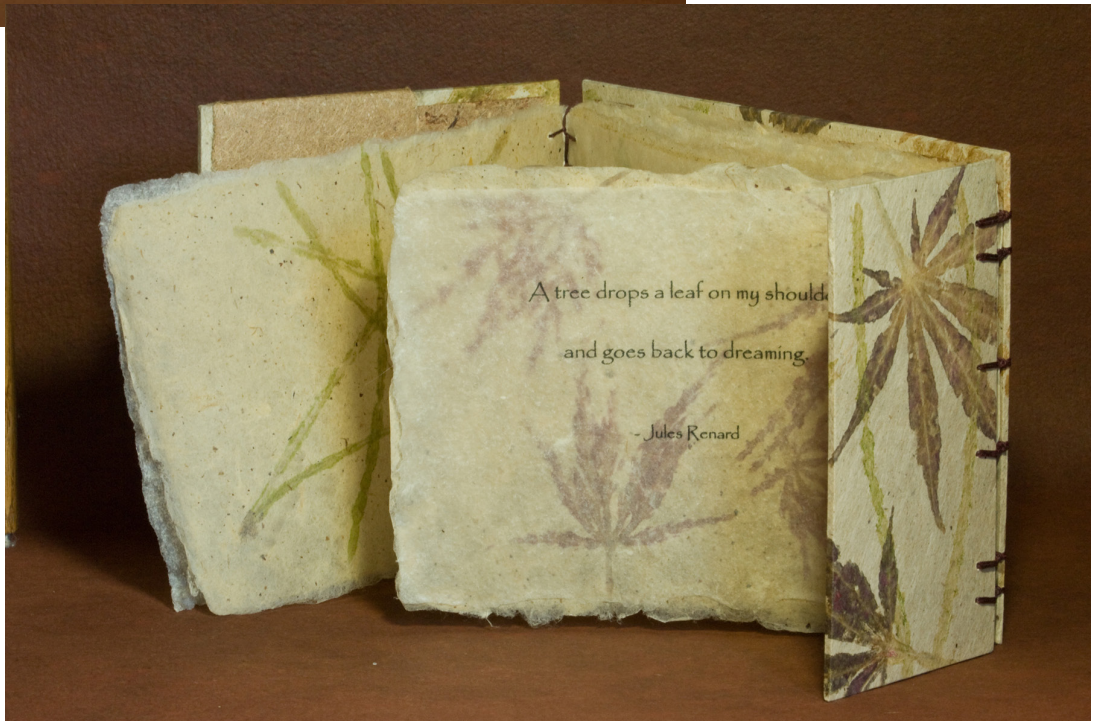
## *Every Leaf a Miracle*

closed left  
open below  
10 book edition. Leaf-related quotes on delicate overbeaten Abaca paired with strong Kozo pages that had leaf pigments pounded (with a hammer) onto them, beeswax

### BIO

"I make limited edition books using handmade paper created either from plants that I've harvested, or from purchased fibers or half-stuff.

My focus is exploring paper, bindings and surface treatments that enhance, complement, and preserve book content. I often collaborate with other artists; they provide content, while I focus on how to best present their work with my paper and bindings. Two of my earliest books were included in *500 Handmade Books*."



**"Beeswax not only helped with paper translucency and preserved the pounded leaf pigments, but it also made the natural colors richer, it gave the paper an added presence, and since every page contains beeswax, the books smell wonderfully."**



# Dorothy Simpson Krause

## Marshfield Hills, MA

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



*Entombed*  
7" x 7"

Lead Box with collage inside and outside coated with encaustic

closed - above  
open - right



### *Many Truths*

below  
4.75" x 10.5" x 5.25"  
Digital print on black paper with encaustic in iron box on wooden stand.



### BIO

**Dorothy Simpson Krause** is Professor Emeritus at Massachusetts College of Art and co-author of Digital Art Studio. She organized "Digital Atelier: A printmaking studio for the 21st century" at the Smithsonian American Art Museum for which she received a Technology in the Arts Award. She has been a Visiting Artist at the American Academy in Rome and in 2007 was von Hess Visiting Artist at the University of the Arts, Philadelphia. She has just completed writing *Book + Art: Handcrafting Artists' Books* for 2009 publication by North Light.

# Liz Mitchell

## Pittstown, NJ

<http://www.lizmitchell.net>

### *History Repeats History*

an installation of panels.

Each panel is 22"X29".

Installed, the project is 10 feet long.

Collaged paper, found books, encaustic wax and wood.

#### BIO

*Liz Mitchell* is a multi-media artist who works from her studio in Pittstown, NJ. She has experimented with a broad range of materials and processes, which include ceramics, fiber arts and printmaking. She is an innovative collage and book artist, educator, and curator.

Liz has exhibited in juried events, invitationals and solo exhibitions throughout the United States and has lectured and provided workshops to major craft, art and educational institutions nationally.

Along with exhibiting widely, her work is in numerous collections both nationally and internationally.



**"My inspiration for the piece is multi-layered: it came from my experience as a young child growing up in the Catholic church. I was captivated by the ritual of the Stations of the Cross. To me, this was like a movable book... In this project, I used beeswax rather than encaustic wax, which further brings me to the nostalgic memories of the smell of the burning church candles.**

**The transparent transfer overlays that I placed on the pages of the encyclopedias include headlines regarding the wars, but also includes headlines about the child sex abuse scandal within the Catholic Church, and the nuclear proliferation of Korea. The title does apply, in that History continues to repeat History as those in power, whether it is governments or organized religion, justify their behaviors and solve problems in the same way over and over again."**

# Catherine Nash Tucson, AZ

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

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

**"Books are structures rife with historical context, a symbol of communication that reaches across time and culture. My works evoke the natural world. Beeswax not only has been used historically as in the Mesopotamian wax tablets from ~800BC, but is a direct link to the earth. Wax and encaustic also impart transparency, adhesive qualities, and strength."**

A long time resident of Tucson, Arizona, artist **Catherine Nash, M.F.A.**, specializes in hand papermaking, sculptural artist books and mixed media drawing/painting. She teaches for the AZ Commission on the Arts, the AZ Sonoran Desert Museum Art Institute and within her own studio, *Desert Paper Book and Wax*. Her love of travel and different cultures has inspired her to live, research and teach art on four continents. Nash's artworks have been shown across the United States, Japan and Europe.



## ***Dark to Light***

15.5"X4.5"X2", detail left

Coptic bound sheets of selfmade paper made of abaca, hemp, flax and black denim. Beeswax dipped covers and encasing. Encaustic monotype with handwritten text on piña paper (made by Asao Shimura). Black stone, bound bundle of oak splintered by a Missouri tornado that hit our cabin and studio, glass marble, old fisherman's knot (washed up on a Maine beach).



# Ray Papka Versailles, KY

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

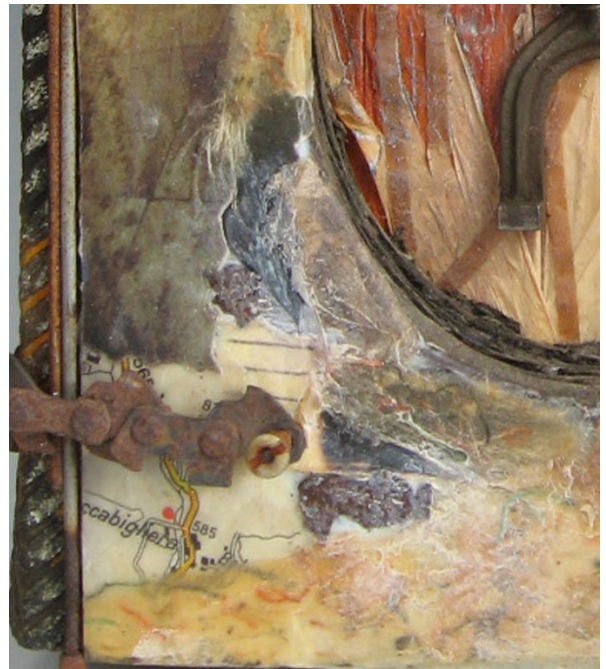


## *African Sunrise*

6.25"Hx 8.75"Wx 2"D

Mixed Media Assemblage (detail below)

An old book, encaustic medium, paper, pigments and found objects that include spokes from an old bicycle, part of an old door lock and an old chain saw blade.



**"I decided in 2006 to learn encaustic painting ...I saw that it could give me the versatility to use images, color, depth, texture etc. providing the books with a sense of mystery and a permanent, durable surface."**

### **Artist Bio -**

Undergraduate studies - University of Wyoming (B.S. Zoology/ Chemistry - 1967).

Graduate studies - Tulane University (Ph.D. Anatomy/Neuroscience- 1971).

Retired (early) Professor of Neuroscience for career switch to art.

Self-taught artist (beginning in 2000); however, I had abundant experience in photography, composition, printing etc. as part of my research; and woodworking as a life-long hobby.

Galleries:

2008 - McKay-Bricker's Black Squirrel Gallery, Kent, OH

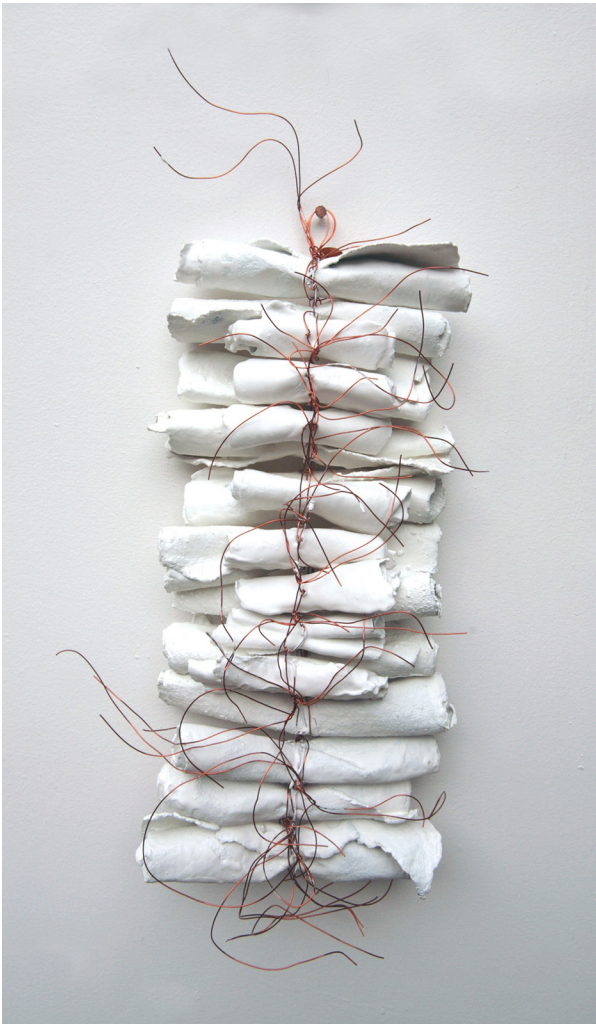
2007 - The Rusty Nail, Twin Lakes, OH

2006 - Damselfly Gallery, Midway, KY

2001 - Off Beat Gallery, Chesterland, OH

# Marsh Scott Laguna Beach, CA

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



Encaustics are one of the newest “old” mediums that Marsh is now using to create textured surfaces and mixed media sculptures.

She writes:

“The secrets and memories of our lives and experiences are kept unseen but displayed to remember. These scrolls and books are made of handmade paper that is sealed with encaustic and wire. Captured are memories, wishes, dreams, and secrets.”



## *Too Large a List*

35” x 9” x 4”

(detail at right)

handmade paper, encaustic,  
wire,  
enameled copper

## **BIO**

**Marsh Scott** began her work in multiple mediums while receiving a BS at Penn State in art education. Her specialization in ceramics, fiber and jewelry was the beginning of her love of surface, texture and process. A Masters in Art at Cal State Long Beach added research in ethnic crafts and their patterns and textures. Architecture classes at the University of California at Irvine became the starting point for her ordered spatial and 2D design organization.

# Alice Simpson New York City, NY

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

"In my struggle to incorporate encaustic technique into my work, I realized that the wax would lend itself beautifully to making book covers.



It worked particularly well with URBAN MOTION because the drawings are bold and simple, and the accordion fold format is a basic one. The covers needed color and texture, and I was pleased with the rich, deep polished surface which the vibrantly colored waxes provided."



## **URBAN MOTION**

cover - left

open - below

12" x 10" x .5" x 60" open

Unique accordion book

Original India ink drawings on

Arches. Encaustic on wood

covers with newspaper wrapped

dowels. Original calligraphy

## **BIO**

Alice Simpson Design, NY/LA: provided CI, packaging, advertising, promotional materials and illustrations: Estee Lauder, NY/Cornell Center for Reproductive Medicine and Infertility, Upjohn, Revlon, Macy's, and Avon, etc.

Art Director: Redken Laboratories, Max Factor, and Helena Rubenstein.

Illustrations: Cosmopolitan, Vogue, Harper's Bazaar and other national magazines.

Simpson taught design and packaging at Fashion Institute of Technology, NY, member of FIT's Advisory Board, School of Visual Arts, NY, and drawing classes at Otis-Parsons, LA. Past President of Women in Design.

"The seven pages each represent an hour's time spent staring into a partially-lit cave. Pages are cast over an original rubber mold, in the artist's handmade paper, using the pulp painting process.

When dried, they are partially painted with heavy encaustic and some acrylic glaze, and accordion bound using dyed linen thread.

The accordion structure is manipulable, thus the book can take on multiple configurations. These follow the flexible visual designs the brain constructs when gazing intently for such a time into rare and engaging spaces."

# Lynn Sures

## Silver Spring, MD

<http://www.lynnsures.com>



*Seven Hours in a Cave*

*detail above*

9"x 8"x 5" closed

opens to 72"x 8"x .5"

Cast cotton paper, abaca pulp paint, encaustic, acrylic.



Maryland artist **Lynn Sures'** recent solo exhibitions include "Frasassi" at Pyramid Atlantic in Maryland and "Body Art" at Fortezza Medicea Girifalco di Cortona, Italy.

Her artist's books appear in *Penland Book of Handmade Books* and *500 Artist Books*.

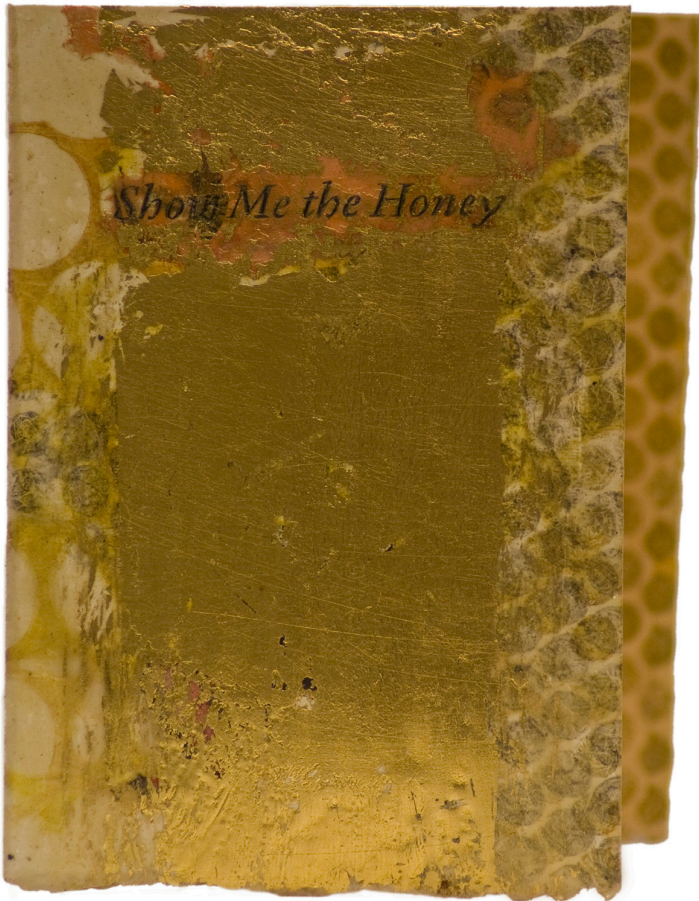
Her work is in the collections of the US Department of State, Library of Congress, Yale University, and American Museum of Papermaking.

In 2006, she was an "American Artist Abroad" in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In 2005 Lynn created a large-scale pulp painting for "Paper Now-2005" in Kyoto, Japan.

# Mary L. Taylor Marshfield Hills, MA

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

“...wax adds so much to the surface and helps tie together the imagery. PLUS pigments and leaf (silver, gold, copper) will stick to the wax. So in short I use the wax as a finishing element in collaging the surfaces of the pages. To minimize the sticky quality of the wax, after it is fused and hardened, I rub the wax it with a no polish shoe shine buffer.”  
In the case of *Show Me the Honey*, I had to include wax since it’s about bees...it was not only an artistic decision but also a way to inform the piece by including a bee product plus it’s the way I hold the gold leaf onto the pages.”

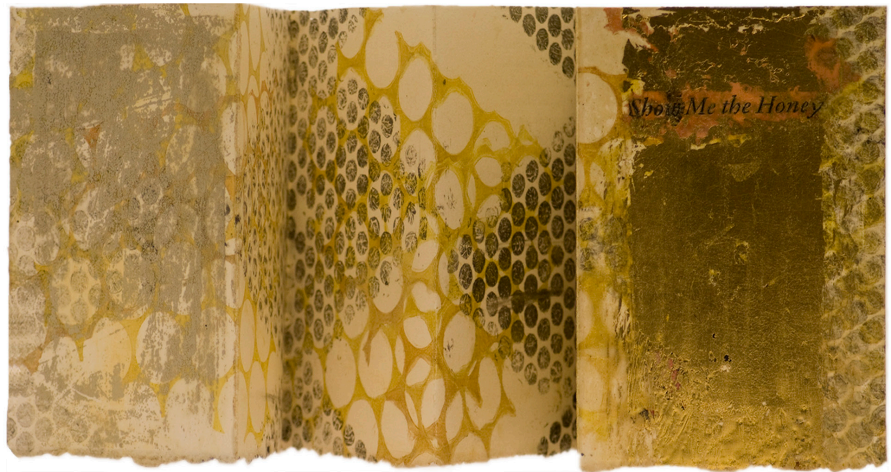


## *Show Me the Honey*

6 page accordion fold book made from Arches watercolor paper. Gelatin printed back, digitally printed interior pages with encaustic, gold leaf, polyester film, transfer and metallic pigments.

7.25 x 5 closed

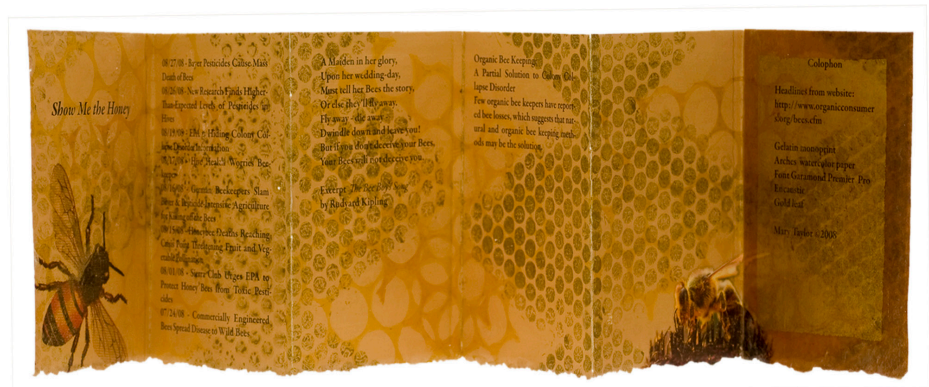
7.25 x 30 open



## BIO

“For over a decade (daily immersion) I have been working with artist Dorothy Simpson Krause as her studio manager. Together we have developed processes and created powerful art works. In workshops I teach artists to use contemporary and traditional art materials.

In addition to exhibiting in several art shows annually, I have been an artist in residence at the Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk, CT, my work was filmed for HG/TV’s That’s Clever program and in 2008 my Beyond the Digital Print dvd was released.”







**"Symbolism, mythology, and abstract geometry are the main intellectual content of my abstract paintings, prints and books...**

**Encaustics are currently my favorite media for painting as they allow many changes, layering, transparency and textures. I layer the panels with written and drawn images, directly, and on paper within the encaustic medium, sometime obscuring, and sometime enhancing. My goal is to create dense, ancient, fresco like surfaces."**

**Laura Wait's** unique books incorporate, writing, painting and printmaking techniques, especially monoprinting, collographs and woodcuts. Her experience as a bookbinder and conservator for 20 years is the basis for her excellent bookbinding technique in the English tradition, including leather fine bindings, and medieval style modern wood binding.

Wait 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 artists books are in many private and public collections, including the Library of Congress. She teaches book art workshops throughout the country.

## Laura Wait Steamboat Springs, CO

<http://www.laurawait.com>

*Rook Book* (details below)

Paper with ink and encaustic, over paste painting.

Copper attachments hang on brass rails.

6 1/2 x 36", 5 thick.

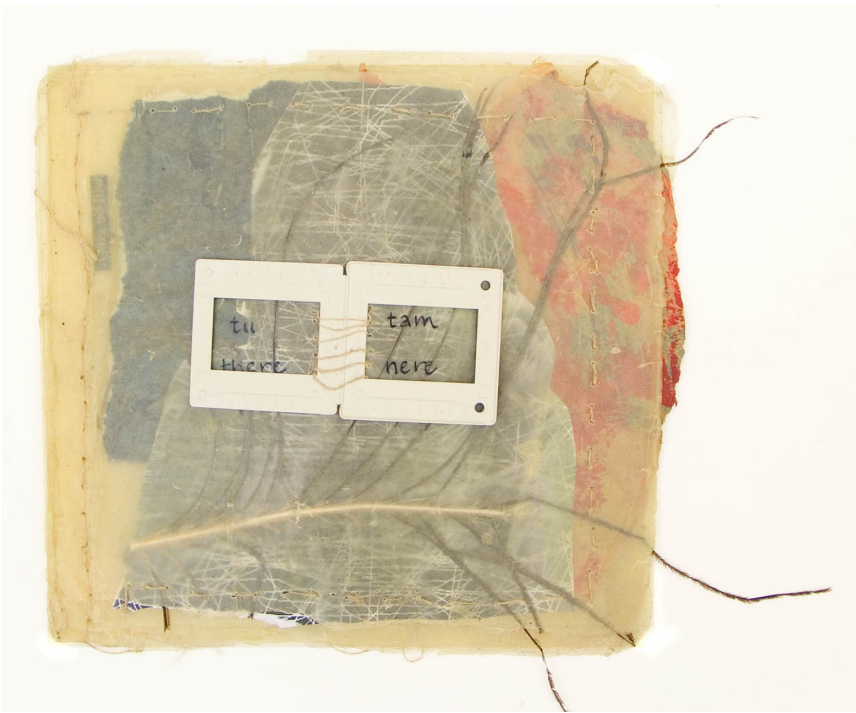


# Beata Wehr

## Tucson, AZ

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

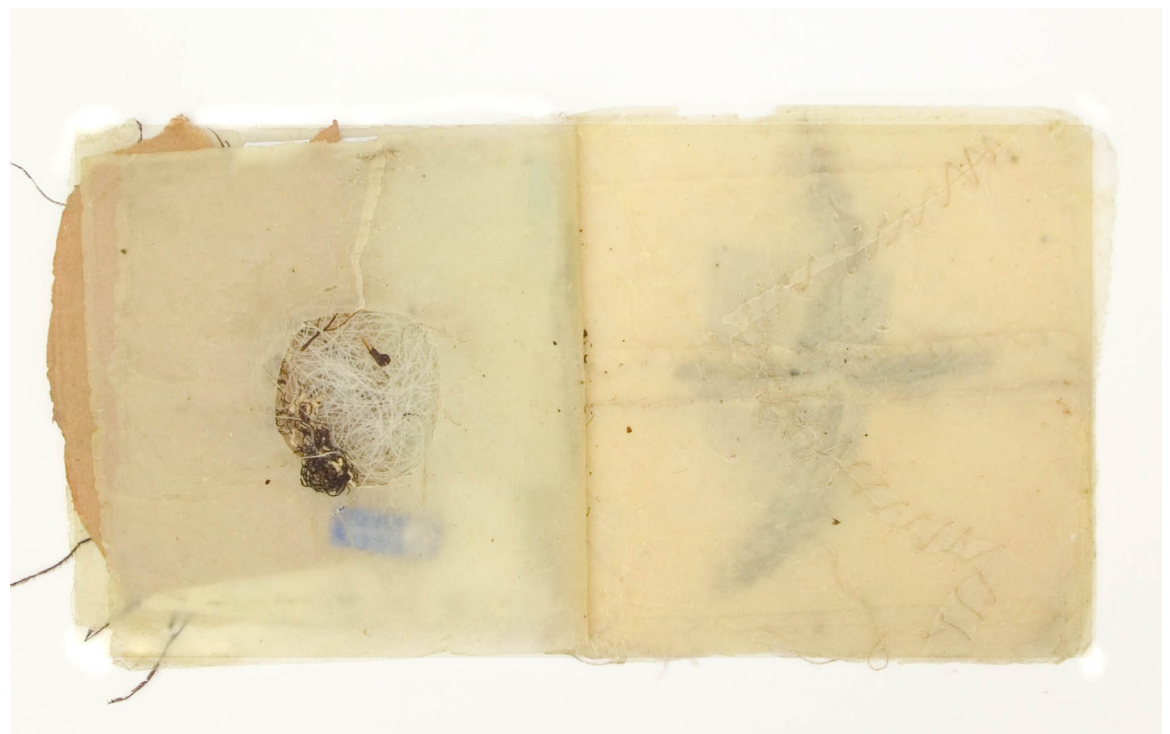
"I am using wax in my books because of its ability to make paper transparent and because of its fragility, which relates to content. I am also attracted to the physical properties of wax (like smell) and the process of working with it, by dipping paper or other object in it."



**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 are included in over 30 public collections in the US and abroad.

***Here. There.***  
closed, above  
open, right  
20x20x2 cm,  
9x9x1"  
mixed media  
beeswax



# Daniella Woolf

## Santa Cruz, CA

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



*Rust Book*, left  
*B&W Book*, below  
paper, wax and fabric  
each is 4.5"x7"x1"



"These two books were made during a Mark Making Workshop with Dorothy Caldwell in September 2008, at her studio in Canada. For five days, five quilters and I made marks on paper and fabric with wax, India ink, soot, graphite and thread. I was completely blissed out for the entire workshop, and took more than 1000 photos! I made so many "pages" that it was impossible for me to choose what to use. I asked Dorothy if she would put the books in sequence, so Dorothy became my "editor". The signatures and the spine are sewn and woven with waxed irish linen.

Daniella Woolf holds an M.A. in Design from UCLA, and a B.A. in Art from Cal State University Northridge. She is a 2007 recipient of the Gail Rich Award for excellence in the Arts, and a 2008 recipient of the Rydell Visual Arts Fellowship. Over her career she has worked in a variety of media, including jewelry and metal-smithing, fiber and textiles, collage, installation and most recently encaustic. Her current work is about identity, privacy and memory. She teaches workshops for R and F Paints, and WaxWorks. She curates an online exhibit, and gives presentations about Encaustic with a Textile Sensibility. She is an active member of the International Encaustic Artists, the Surface Design Association and the IAPMA. She writes a BLOG entitled Encausticopolis under the name Dotty Stripes.