

Granary Books is pleased to present the

## GUY BEINING ARCHIVE

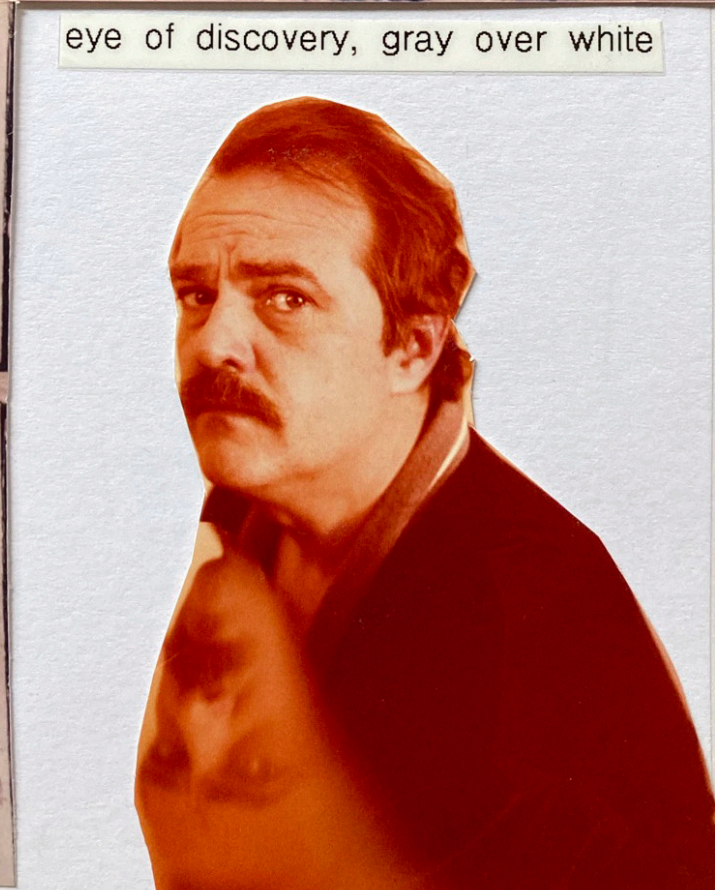
**EXTENT:** 30 boxes, 2 of which are oversize, totaling approx. 36 linear feet.

**DATE:** circa 1970–2021, bulk circa 1980s; 2000–2018.

**CONTENT:** the literary archive of poet, playwright, and visual artist Guy Beining, with autograph, typescript, and collaged drafts of works, correspondence, original artworks and bookworks, and ephemera.

Writing since the 1960s, and creating visual art since the 1970s, Beining's work is situated within the experimental world of verbal/visual/borderblur avant-gardes, including Fluxus, Mail Art, Dada, and concrete poetry. During the heyday of the mimeograph revolution and in the decades since, Beining published in several hundred little magazines, honing a style that began with modernist-influenced fiction, shifted to absurdist plays, transformed into Olson-inflected epic poetry, and finally landed with his most prolific form: verbal/visual collages.

With significant unpublished work, this archive offers substantial possibilities to researchers of visual and experimental poetry, small press publishing, and poetic outsiders in postwar American writing.





## ABOUT THE ARCHIVE

This archive traces the trajectory of Beining's creative work, beginning with folders and portfolios of typescript and autograph drafts from the late 1960s onward, including poetry, plays, and short stories. These more conventional drafts eventually give way to Beining's rich visual poetry, which re-envision his poetic and dramatic works in the form of mixed media collages, made with photographs, acrylic paint, clippings, and other ephemera. The archive contains thousands of these collages, which feature most prominently in his post-2000 work. These works represent the highest portion of unpublished material in his archive.

In Richard Kostelanetz's *Dictionary of the Avant-Gardes* (Taylor & Francis, 2001, second edition), Bob Grumman describes Guy Beining as "a major post-T.S. Eliot/ Charles Olson word- and field-jumbler," whose work is characterized by "an outburst of master-collages that combine texts (his own and found or appropriated), photographs (ranging from porn to high science), and his own inimitable, often figure-based doodles" that recall Pollock, Matisse, Beuys, and Duchamp (p. 84).

In addition to these influences, the development of Beining's work traces a parallel line with the postwar North American small press revolution, from mimeograph to online journals. While his work consistently lives at the margins of poetry—he maintained a day job at a bank until his retirement, and never had an academic affiliation—he is one of the most prolifically published members of the North American small press scene. By his own account, he has published several thousand poems in literary magazines such as *Telephone*, *Talisman*, *The Alchemist*, *6x6*, *Delerium*, *Abraxas*, and many other local and ephemeral zines. His collages have been published in the hundreds by similar publications.

were the wind a blur we would  
 In a know bin a ladder leading  
 to the letter A. The logistics  
 of it is satisfing. The tepee  
 of it envelopes a possibility.  
 hitting the gulf stream

mythology

← JUL 17 2017

In print, Beining has appeared alongside poets as varied as Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, e.e. cummings, Robert Kelly, Edward Sanders, Patti Smith, Ira Cohen, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Michael McClure, Alice Notley, Ray DiPalma, and Eliot Weinberger, though he is most closely associated by publication with visual and concrete poets such as John M. Bennett, B.Z. Niditch, Alan Catlin, Simon Perchik, Jim Leftwich, Andrew Topel, John Grey, Opal L. Nations, and Sheila Murphy. Despite being in touch with other poets of these genres, Beining saw his work following an even more experimental track, and cites influences including Michael Palmer, Paul Blackburn, Paul Celan, and Charles Olson.

In addition to his magazine publications, he is the author of more than 6 poetry books and 35 poetry and collage chapbooks since the mid-1970s, and has been anthologized in over 7 different works. He has published with Z Press, Runaway Spoon, Potes and Poets, Leave Books, Elbow Press, Moonlight Publications, Swamp Press, Ghost Dance Press, O!! Zone Press, Red Ozier, and Industrial Sabotage, among many others and his first poetry chapbook was published by Sun & Moon in 1976. He was featured in Bob Grumman and Crag Hill's *Writing to Be Seen: An Anthology of Later 20th Century Visio-Textual Art* (Light & Dust, Runaway Spoon Press, 2001), alongside Karl Kempton, Joel Lipman, Marilyn R. Rosenberg, Harry Polkinhorn, Carol Stetser, and others.

As someone who frequently noted "I do not have a computer" at the top of his letterhead, Beining's relationship with technology—as it appears in his writing—captures a specific moment and temperament in twentieth-century innovation. While he embraced certain techniques, like Xerox, photography, the typewriter, and even an office label-maker to generate text, Beining did not own a computer; thus, he did not compose on the computer nor did he have access to online journals or digital publishing projects. There are several instances of printed-out online poetry journals in the collection, which in the age of digital obsolescence for these little magazines, may be a welcome feature of this archive. In addition, Beining's use of physical copies to rework his writings, instead of "invisible" digital editing, leaves significant





editorial trace in his work on the whole.

Legible both as an artist and a poet, due to the interdisciplinary nature of visual poetry, Beining has also extensively exhibited his works, in spaces such as the Center for Book Arts (NYC) ("Properties of Sin"), Coffman Union Gallery at the University of Minnesota, the Burlington Bookshop (NYC), San Diego State College, Allan Stone Gallery (NYC), the Wares for Art Gallery, the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, Simon's Rock College, Santarella Gallery, Hudson Opera House, and other venues.

## FEATURED IN THE ARCHIVE

- Over **11 linear feet of drafts of Beining's poetic and dramatic works**, including several extended sequences such as "Stoma" and "Felt Tongue" from the early 1970s onward.
- Over **17 linear feet of original and unpublished visual poetry by Beining, primarily in the form of collage sheets and folios**. Over the decades, Beining would "remix" and re-work collages, creating temporally-rich documents that chart the evolution of visual poems and themes. Often, these works create narrative out of other aspects of Beining's life and creative process, and incorporate self-portraits, rejection letters, and other ephemera.
- Typescript, printed typescript, and autograph **correspondence with over 100 small press and literary publications**, regarding Beining's publishing and paintings, as well as artist statements and related documentation. Interestingly, these letters attest to the transition of avant-garde poetry from the realm of hardcopy print publication to the digital world. Beining, who has never owned a computer, often discusses the analog aspect of his work with publishers.
- Over **60 original artist books and bookworks by Beining**, often created spontaneously with mixed media elements, such as label-maker text, acrylic paint, collaged photographs, and clippings.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

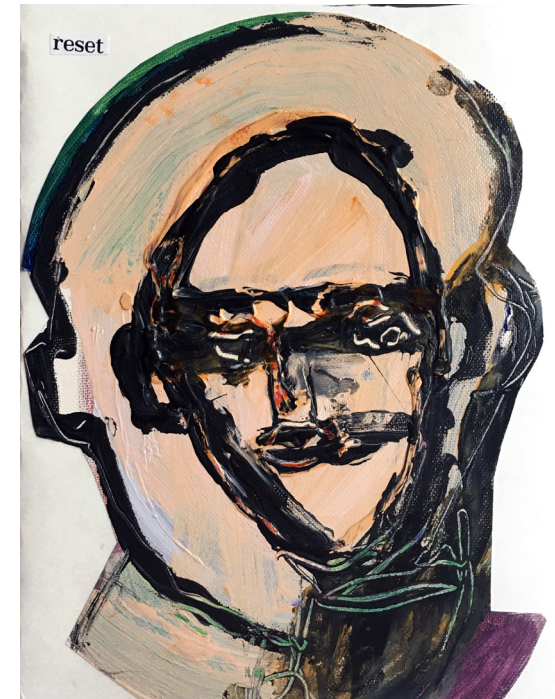
Born in London (Sept. 26, 1938), Guy Beining first moved to New York City with his family in 1940 to escape the war. They settled in Kent, Connecticut, (with brief excursions to California in a broken-down limosine from the 1930s that his father had acquired). His parents opened an antique shop in 1945. In middle school, Beining was diagnosed with vision issues, which he was not able to correct until he joined the Army as an adult. As a thirteen-year-old, Beining had rheumatic fever and was confined to his house for nearly three years; he credits these early experiences as moments where his consciousness began to turn towards the mythic and introspective threads that comprise the idea of the self.

During the 1950s, Beining took correspondence courses via the University of Indiana to obtain high school credits, then entered the University of Florida at Gainesville in 1958. There, he worked with Andrew Lytle, who had been Flannery O'Connor's professor, and was affiliated with the *Sewanee Review*. Though in awe of the Southern fiction scene, after two years, Beining hitch-hiked to New York City, where he stayed in a brownstone owned by a family friend, Russel Lynes, editor of *Harper's Magazine*. After running out of money in New Orleans at the age of 22, Beining joined the Army, and was stationed in Germany.

The first chapter of his first novel, *Belie the Day*, was published as an excerpt in a little magazine in 1964, even as Beining struggled to balance his day job working at a bank with his writing. During the latter half of the 1960s, he wrote a significant number of one-act plays, and then from 1972-1974 had over one thousand poems published, riding on the wave of the mimeograph and small press revolution. During the 1970s he also began significant long works, including the "Ruins" poems, the "Concrete Dreams" poems, and the "Sweet Miss Misery" poems.

Working as an auditor at a bank, Beining met his wife, Anna, around 1978. This encounter coincided with his emerging collage practice and the start of one of his long pieces, *Stoma*, as well as his swearing-off of the use of the first-person "I" in his work. Beining has noted that "*Stoma* tries to mend much of [his] pre-1979 material," foreshadowing the process of constant reworking and revision that appears in his archive. By 1979, Beining began to incorporate art more fully into his poetic practice, and he continued to publish and show artworks throughout the 1980s. He notes: "writing is no longer isolated from my painting or collage work. It is beginning to mesh more and more, and experimentation within this process will become a continuous challenge." In 2005-2006, Beining was the winner of the PIP Gertrude Stein Award for Innovative Poetry in English. He currently lives in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

\* quotations are from a typescript draft of Beining's contribution to the *Contemporary Authors Autobiography* series.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE ARCHIVE BY SERIES

The archive has been arranged into series for correspondence, drafts of works, collages/visual poems, and working files/printed ephemera. The collection has been inventoried at box level (at times folder level, where significant), in a spreadsheet. The highlights of each series are described narratively below.

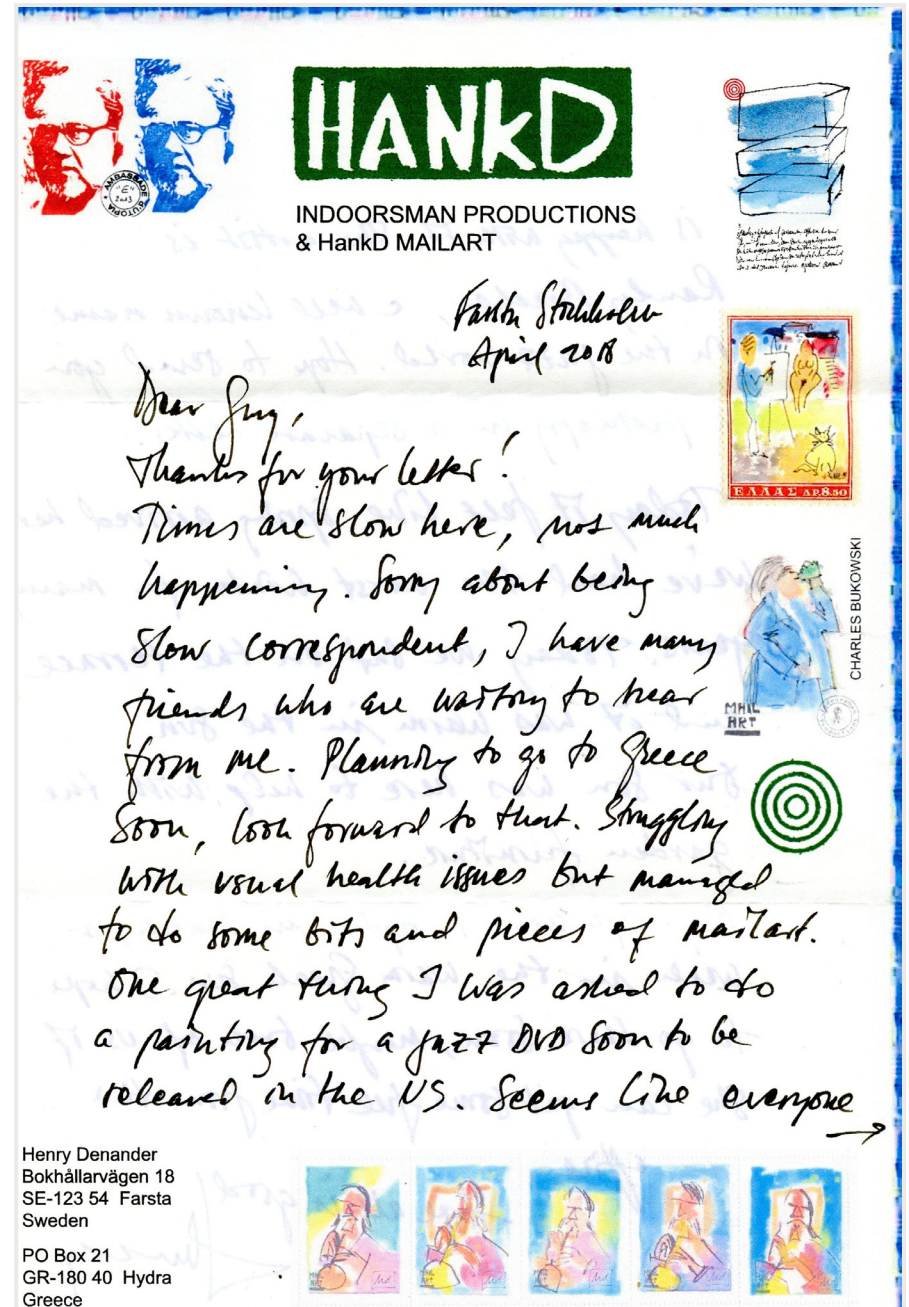
### SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE

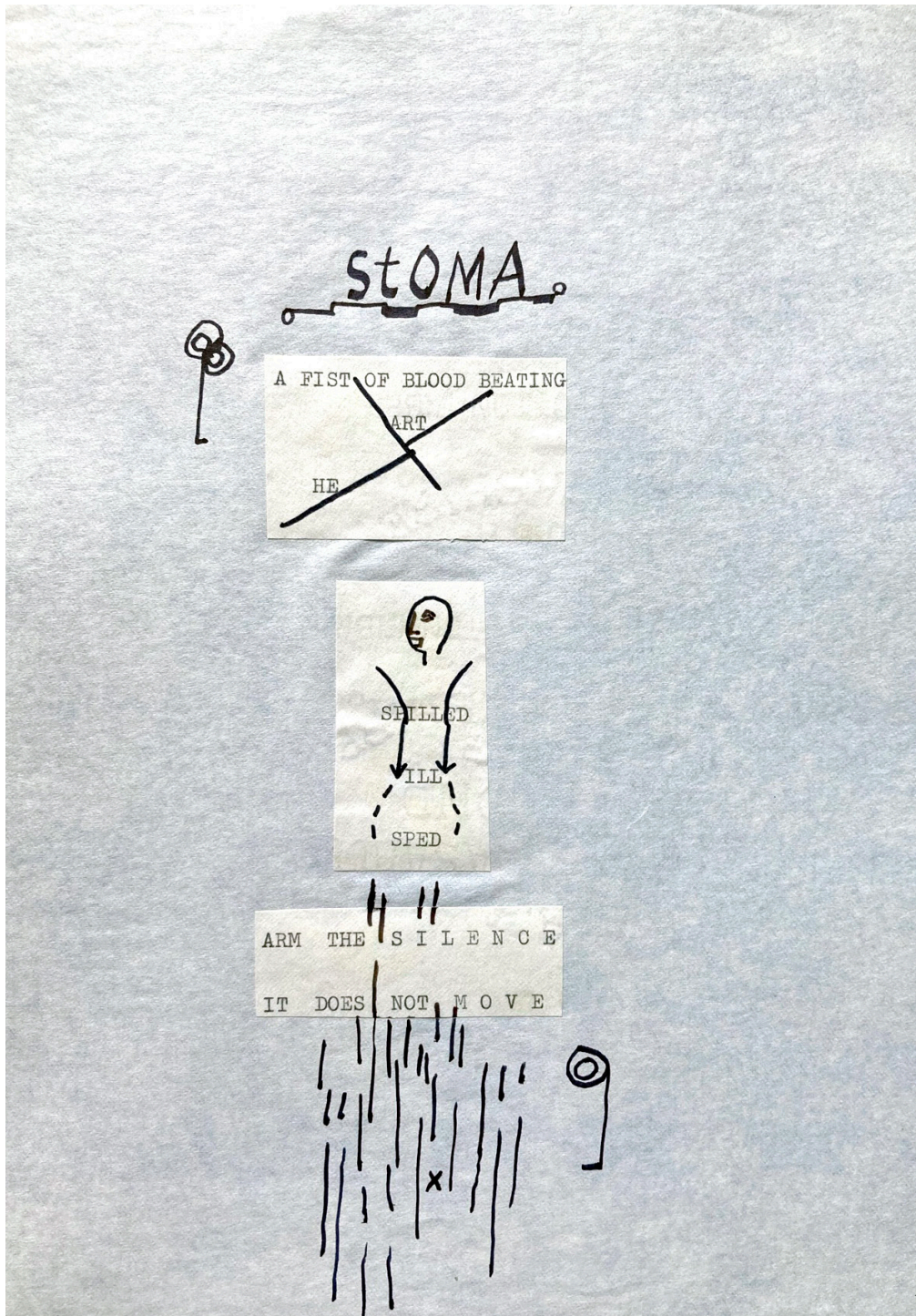
1 box representing the history of Beining's correspondence with small presses, independent publishers, universities, exhibition spaces and galleries, and friends. Most notably, this box contains approx. 10 linear in. of solicitations, both incoming and outgoing, related to Beining's publishing activities from the early 1970s onward.

Correspondents include Tom Hibbard, Hugh Fox, Henry Denander, Michael Palmer, Bob BrueckL, Arnold Skemer, Mark Weiss, John Bennett, Nick Crawford, Charles Trumbull, Peter Gravis, Andrew Topel, Matvei Yankelevich, Shiv Mirabito, and many others, as well as correspondence with the Hudson Opera House, New Directions Publishing, *Bombay Gin*, Black Tie Press, Kamini Press, and other publishing and exhibition venues.

Includes also approx. 12 letters to and from Arthur and Glee (Kit) Knight between Fielding Dawson, Gilbert Sorrentino, Ron Padgett, and Robert Creeley, pertaining to the Knights' anthology series, circa 1972-1981. These poets were all influential to Beining, and he collected these letters after a meeting with the Knights at a bookfair.

Pictured is a letter from Henry Denander, a mail art practitioner and publisher of Kamini Press (who published Beining's *Out of the Woods into the Sun* in 2011), who apologizes for being a "slow correspondent," and notes he is going to Greece to create new works. Included also in the archive are 25 pieces of mail art by Denander, as well as several other instances of mail art and works by friends.





## SERIES: DRAFTS OF WORK

9 boxes containing manuscripts for poetry collections, both published and unpublished, by Beining along with documentation for his long poetic works such as "Stoma," "Felt Tongue," and "Vexed View." Many of these typescript or manuscript works appear again in the archive in the form of collage and bookworks. Beining's dramatic works are also represented, as are short stories.

In particular, the drafts of works contain several dozen folders of typescripts that represent Beining's earliest ongoing work, including "Ogden," which he left his banking job for a brief period to pursue in 1974, and works like "Concrete Dreams" that would become the source of later published work and his pursuit of serial poems. Included also are some of his earliest short stories, such as "Waiting for the End" which he composed in Florida, while studying at the University of Florida in Gainesville with Andrew Lytle.

Other significant works are included as drafts in this series, including "Stoma," "Vexed View," "Copy the Water," "Sweet Miss Misery," and other extensive works that Beining references in his entry in the *Contemporary Authors Autobiographical Series*. Often, typescripts are annotated, cut and pasted, photocopied and reworked, or otherwise show evidence of Beining's writing practice.

The bulk of manuscripts were composed in the 1970s and post-2000s, the latter of which includes a visual collaboration with Bob Grumman. Overall, this series represents over a hundred manuscript projects, including "Felt Tongue" (in approx. 15 linear in.), the series "World Halter," haiku-based works, and many smaller titled projects.

Taken together, the manuscripts trace a thorough arc of Beining's relationship with writing, from early short stories such as "Jack Daniels" and "In the Fall of Things," as well as plays such as "Leered and Gusted" that appear as unique bookworks elsewhere in the archive.

## SERIES: COLLAGE & ARTWORKS

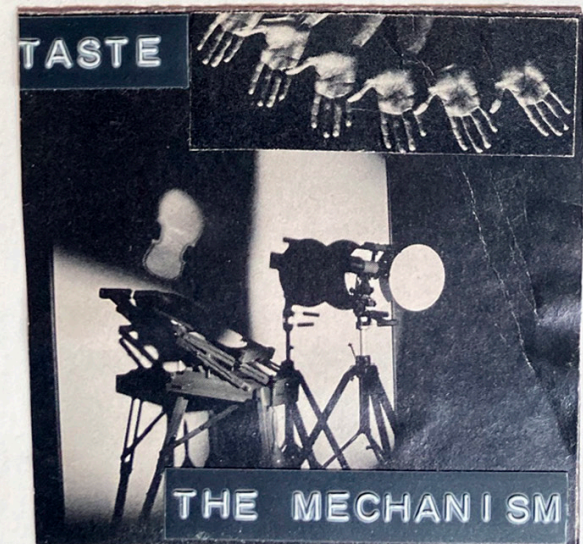
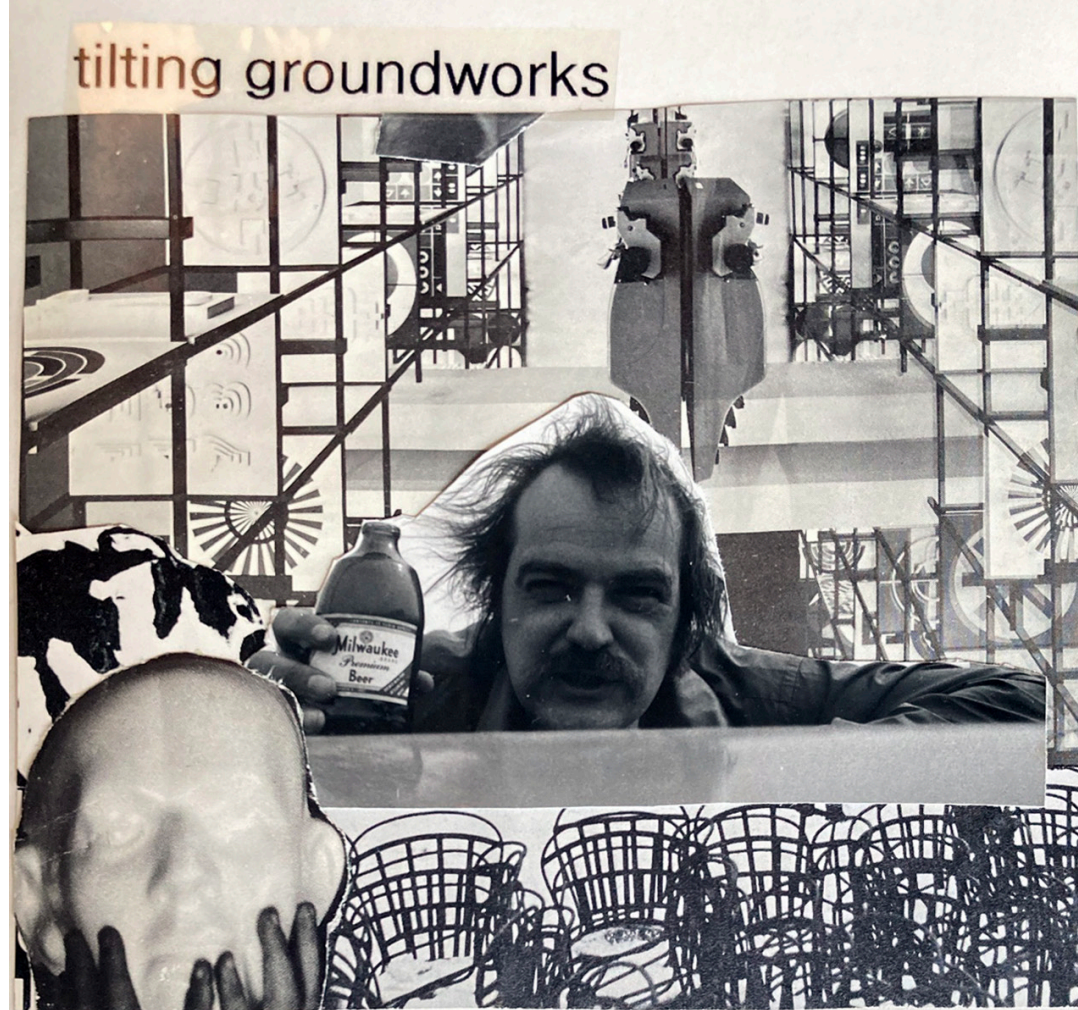
16 boxes (including 2 oversize) containing Beining's original collage works, which incorporate text, photographs, clippings, acrylic paint, pen and ink, label-maker text, Xeroxed images, and other media, often on stiff paper. The bulk of collages appear in two formats: 11 x 8.5 in. collage sheets, often on one side of the paper, and 8.5 x 5 in. collage folios, which are treated on all pages. There are a number of oversize collages as well.

These works often remix or reappropriate works that appear in typescript form elsewhere in the archive, such as "Vexed View," and works that may be further modified in artists' books. At times, the collages themselves show signs of revision; Beining nearly always signs these works and dates them, and will mark revision by updating the date. Often, photographs of his artwork will appear in the collages; these are also dated, adding another temporal layer to these works.

Images will reappear across collages, such as particular women or paintings, though many are distinctive works. This distinctiveness, achieved through layout, color, and design, is striking on its own, given that we estimate over 5,500 collages are present in the archive, most postdating the early 2000s. Dating of these collages shows that he engaged in this practice on a nearly-daily basis, with some days producing multiple collage works.

Notably, rejection letters and self-portraits feature into the otherwise abstract and minimalist fields of the collages, which bring together the experimental bent of Beining's approach to myth-making and the concrete details of his life as a poet.

In addition to these themes, at times the collages contain nude or otherwise pornographic images; in an undated artist statement titled "distant view of the NUDE," Beining notes, "when I deal with the nude it is usually part of a larger context... [their use] is as much a reflection on society as they are on the subject of the nude."

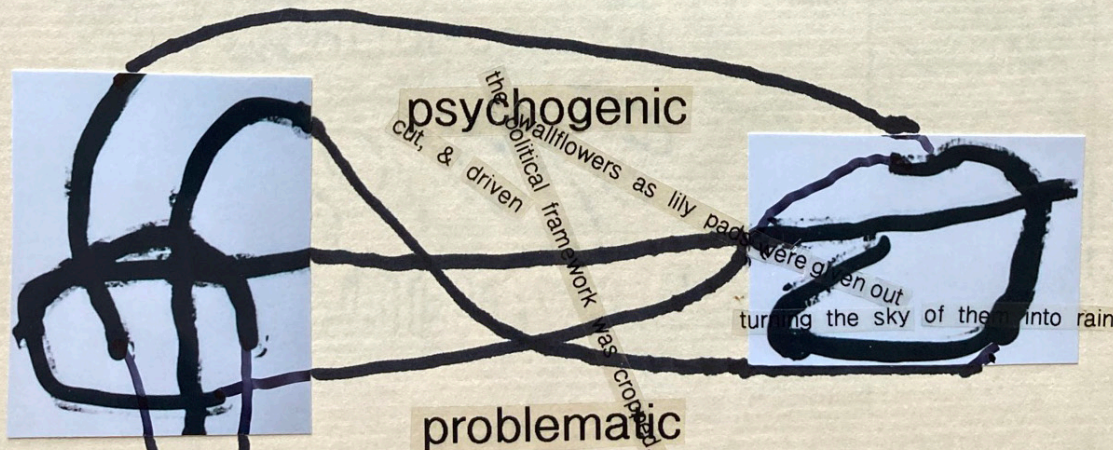




This series also includes original artworks, often acrylic paintings or line drawings, that may have been conceived separately, or may have become grist for his collages.

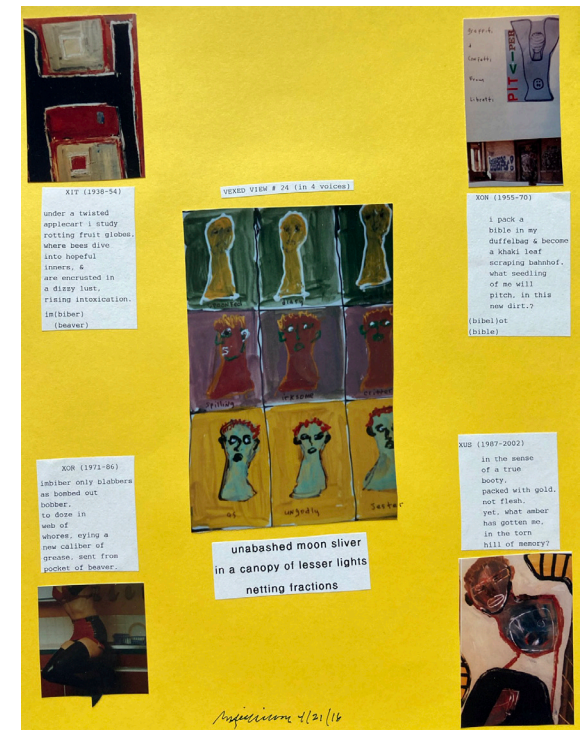
These collages, which represent the pinnacle of Beining's verbal-visual practice, began in 1978 when he met his wife Anna and felt an optimism flood into his personal and creative life. By his account, the collages began with photographs, and eventually began to utilize a combination of thickly-applied acrylic paint straight from the tube, combined with label-maker text (a style that is evident with the Granary Books publication, *no bow for the western canon*, 2021).

Of his works, they are the most interdisciplinary and perhaps challenging: at once exhibitions, serial works, visual works, and poems. In particular, Beining's use of a label-maker in visual poems such as "Prelude" represent a new phase of his poetics, a use of technology to accommodate the poet's deteriorating vision.



myxnamy

← JUN 1 4 2017



# PLOUGHSHARES

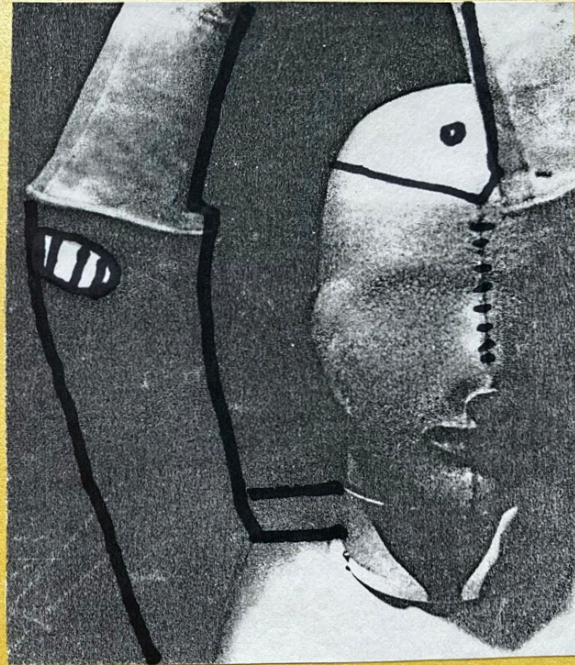
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Mail your manuscript in a page-size manila envelope with your full name and address written on the outside (at least an inch down from the top, to account for USPS barcodes).

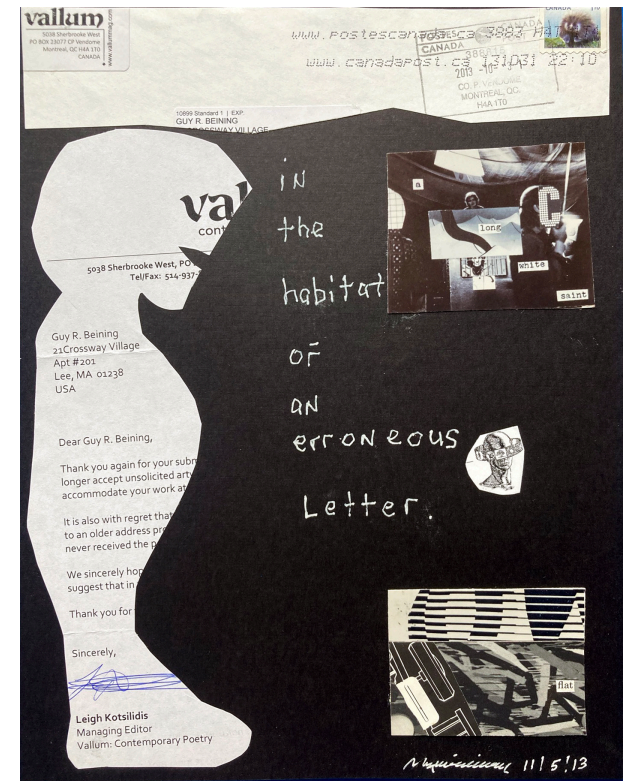
Identify the genre of your manuscript on the outside of the envelope. You must include your email address in your cover letter.

the day

poetry lost



← JUL 1 5 2015



shutting off arsenal lights

political object

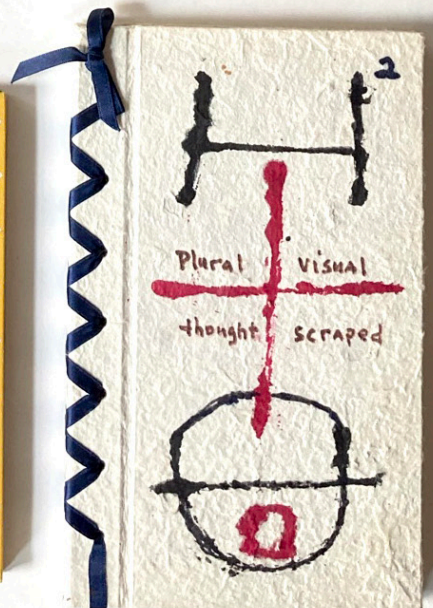
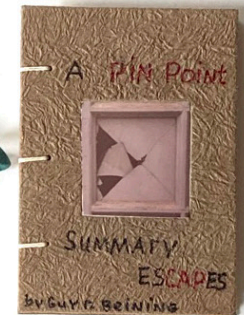
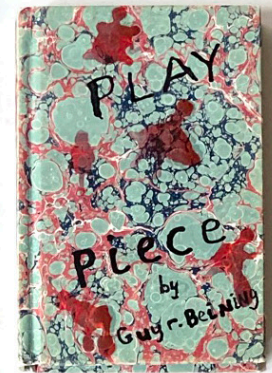
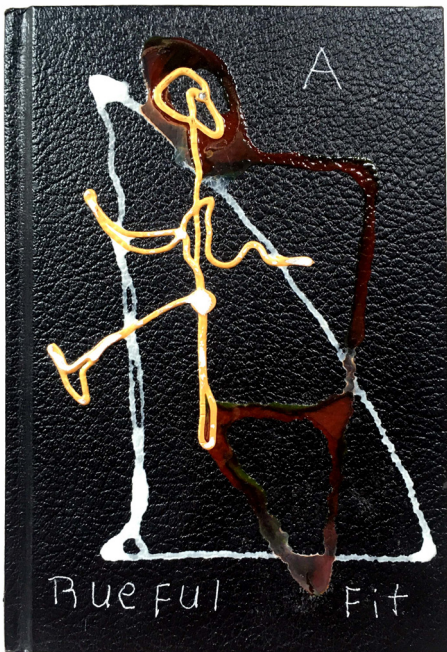
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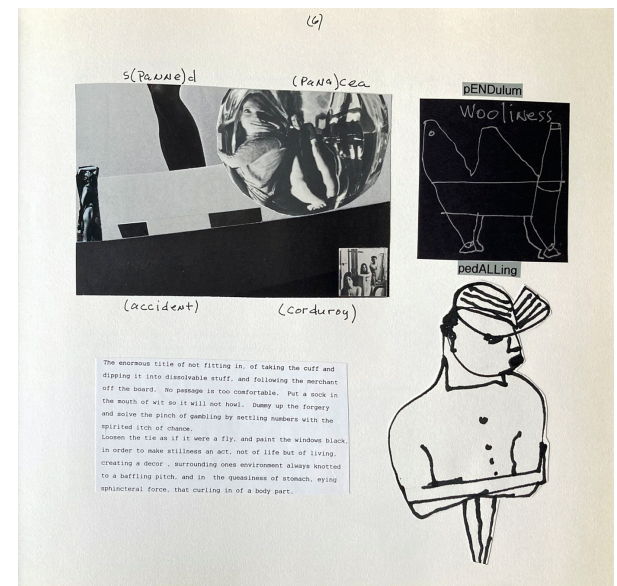
## SERIES: BOOKWORKS

3 boxes containing approximately 60 original artist books made by Beining, many featuring verbal/visual renderings of his poetic sequences such as "Leered & Gusted," "A Rueful Fit," "Word Stoppage," and others.

Beining describes his bookmaking process as "spontaneous," and notes that these are not fair copies of previously-written work, but rather their own form of creative expression. In a phone interview with Granary Books, he recounts going into supply stores to find unique-looking premade books, and then populating them with drawings, writings, and other verbal/visual elements. Often, the books would be completed quickly, in the span of days or weeks. At times, the titles of books match the titles of serial poem projects, but there is not necessarily a clear line of influence between these modes of composition.

Beining's bookworks were exhibited at the Center for Book Arts in New York City.



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ANNOUNCES

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- Bayfront Park** (from 20th St. to 25th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 25th St. to 30th St.)
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- Bayfront Park** (from 35th St. to 40th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 40th St. to 45th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 45th St. to 50th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 50th St. to 55th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 55th St. to 60th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 60th St. to 65th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 65th St. to 70th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 70th St. to 75th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 75th St. to 80th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 80th St. to 85th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 85th St. to 90th St.)
- Bayfront Park** (from 90th St. to 95th St.)
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4. Variation Without A Theme  
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6. Variation Without A Theme  
7. Variation Without A Theme  
8. Variation Without A Theme  
9. Variation Without A Theme  
10. Variation Without A Theme  
100% RADIUS  
SILHOUETTE

This series also contains several pieces of mail art, including a folder of such works by Henry Denander and others.



Beining's work remains experimental, and by his own accounts is difficult to categorize or quantify. In the *Contemporary Authors Autobiography* series, he notes: "my literary pulse is not an easy one to take, and it is getting more entangled as I go along" (vol. 30, p. 63). In this series, reviews, articles, and clippings shed further light on the reception of his works as they were published. In some cases, the results are wry; at San Diego State College, *The Brawley News* published an 1984 article that described "an art exhibit by a mysterious Eastern artist" (Beining) as "too demanding," inciting vigorous conversations among students about whether art should be "pretty" or thought-provoking.

In the undated autograph note pictured, "Text can be visual," Beining writes:

"A visual piece can be as much a puzzle from a formula as a group of words can be dictated with a formula base

Since and before letters were first visual, tho I work in [blades] of words that = one visual piece

2. I work with in a broad pool of creation, + there are no lessons as to how I will service within this source"

Text can be visual  
a visual piece can be as much a puzzle from a formula as a group of words can be dictated with a formula base  
in my <sup>in sense + before</sup> ~~typographic~~ <sup>the</sup> letters were first visual, ~~therefore~~ <sup>therefore</sup> tho I work in blades of words that = one visual piece  
2. I work within a broad pool of creation, + there are no lessons as to how I will service within this ~~boundary~~ creative source



reset the words  
& retool each fractured  
letter, & stamp wood  
into blackness as  
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