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**John Cage, Alison Knowles, Merce Cunningham,
Emmett Williams, Gertrude Stein, Claes Oldenburg,
Ruth Krauss, Diter Rot and many others featured in**

The Something Else Press Collection

Designed, edited, and produced by Dick Higgins, the Something Else Press books contained offbeat and avant-garde writing in a neat and tidy, yet quirky and distinctive form. The press began in 1964 following Higgins' break with Fluxus founder George Maciunas and embodied many of the concerns of the then nascent art movement.



Dick Higgins and a friend performing "Snake in the Grass."

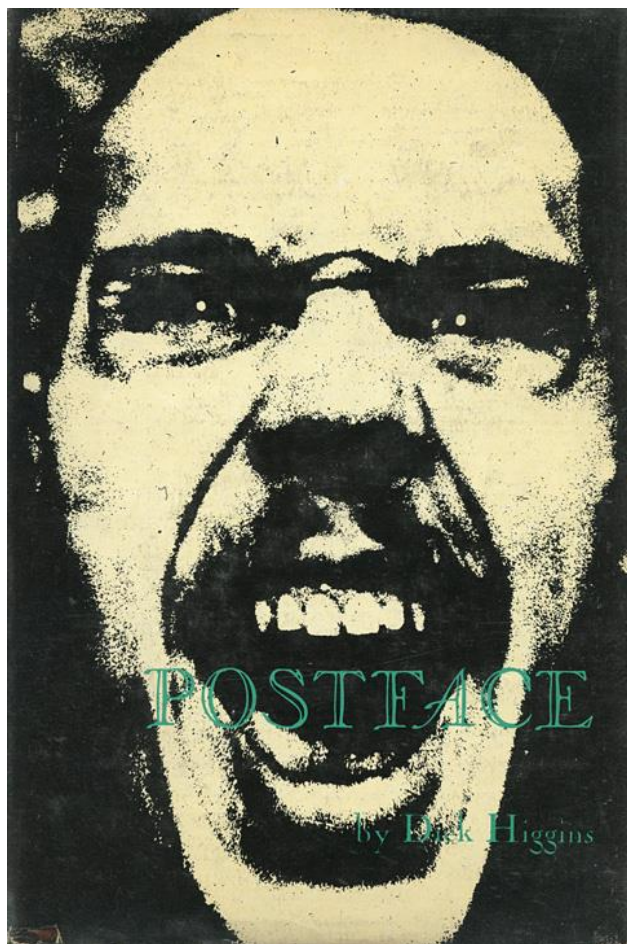
Early titles included *Jefferson's Birthday / Postface*, Higgins' collection of performance scores and art polemics; correspondence art pioneer Ray Johnson's *The Paper Snake*, Al Hansen's *A Primer of Happenings & Time/Space Art*, and Rumanian-born Nouveau Réaliste artist Daniel Spoerri's *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance (Re-Anecdoted Version)*. Higgins' *foew&ombwhnw* (a 1969 collection disguised as a prayer book) contains his important essay, "Intermedia," in which he describes artworks which "fall between media," arguing that the social conditions of the time (early to mid-1960s) no longer allowed for a "compartmentalized approach" to either art or life.

Indeed, the range of works published by Something Else exemplifies a very diverse approach: first American editions of several Gertrude Stein works, including *The Making of Americans*; a reprint of Henry Cowell's *New Musical Resources*; Merce Cunningham's *Changes: Notes on Choreography*; John Cage's anthology of unusual musical scores, *Notations*; Jackson Mac Low's *Stanzas for Iris Lezak*; R. [Richard] Meltzer's *The Aesthetics of Rock*; *One Thousand American Fungi* by Charles McIlvaine and Robert K. Macadam; as well Emmett Williams' seminal *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* among many others.

Artists' books, critical theory, concrete poetry, Fluxus, back-to-the-land hippie culture, amusement — through the use of conventional production and marketing strategies, Dick Higgins was able to place unconventional works into the hands of new and often

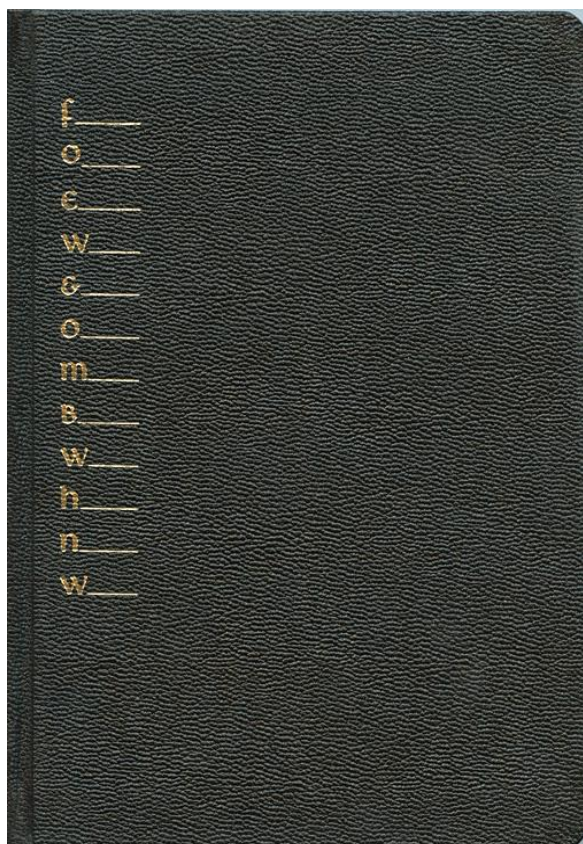
unsuspecting readers. Something Else Press had published more than sixty books and pamphlets, in addition to newsletters, cards, posters, and other ephemera, when it came to an end in 1974. (Steve Clay and Rodney Phillips. *A Secret Location on the Lower East Side*. NYPL and Granary Books, 1998, p. 137.)

Selected Highlights from the Collection



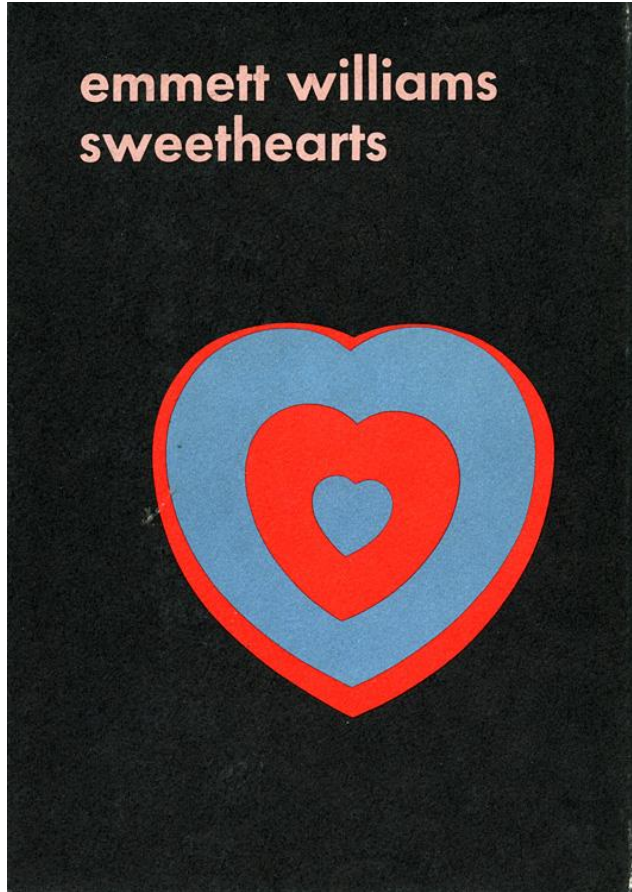
Dick Higgins. *Jefferson's Birthday / Postface*. 1964. Boards with dust jacket printed on both sides. Dos-à-dos bound.

Two books in one, this is the first publication of the press. *Jefferson's Birthday* includes "...all of the things Dick Higgins wrote, composed, or invented between April 13, 1962 and April 13, 1993." *Postface* is a polemical work on the "new art," i.e. the sort of art pursued by Higgins, Alison Knowles, and a wide circle of avant-garde artists comprising the community of Fluxus and Happenings. Higgins said: "I wrote *Postface* to try to help end a line of degeneration that leads directly from Wagner and Strindberg to Koch and Leroi Jones and Stockhausen. It is necessary to have an art which creates a tough, uncompromising, revolutionary mentality capable of expressing, handling, and extending scientifically the great tendencies of our times." (From the dust jacket, probably written by Dick Higgins.)



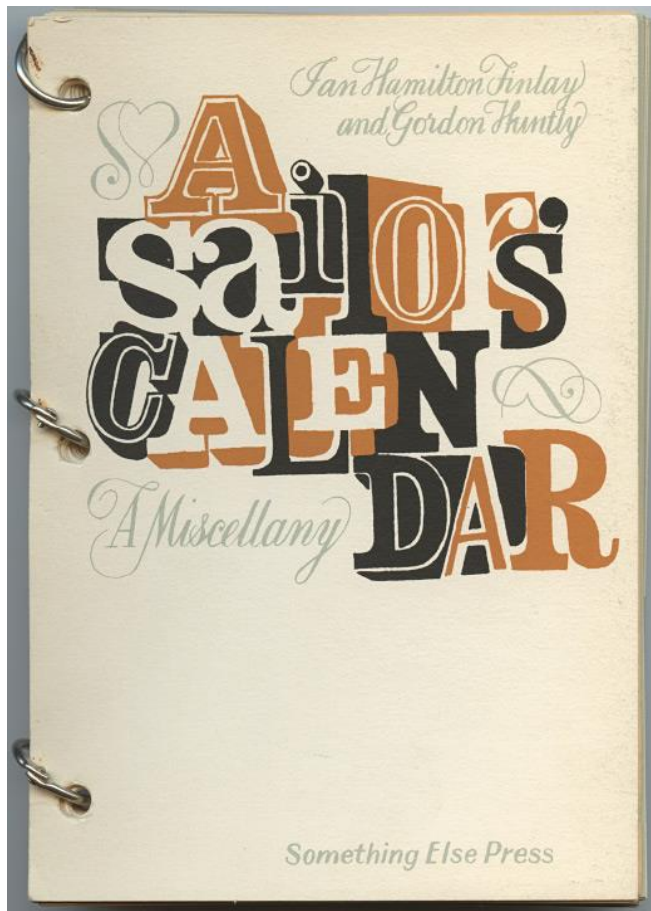
Dick Higgins. *foew&ombwhnw*. Boards. 1969. Designed to look like a prayer book, complete with bound-in cloth place marker.

The title of the book is an acronym for "Freaked Out Electronic Wizards and Other Marvelous Bartenders Who Have No Wings." "The book bristles with stuff: tiny free-verse poems, expository essays on the new arts, Fluxus-type events, permutation poems, proposals for impossible objects and situations, stream-of-consciousness stories, philosophical treatises, drawings, playlets, concrete poems, operas, songs, mathematical games, found graphics, photographs, multiple-choice questionnaires, happenings, verbal concert instructions, graphic notations, etcetera." (Peter Frank. *The Something Else Press*. McPherson & Co., 1983, p. 32.) Essays included in *foew&ombwhnw* were often featured in issues of *The Something Else Newsletter* (see descriptions below).



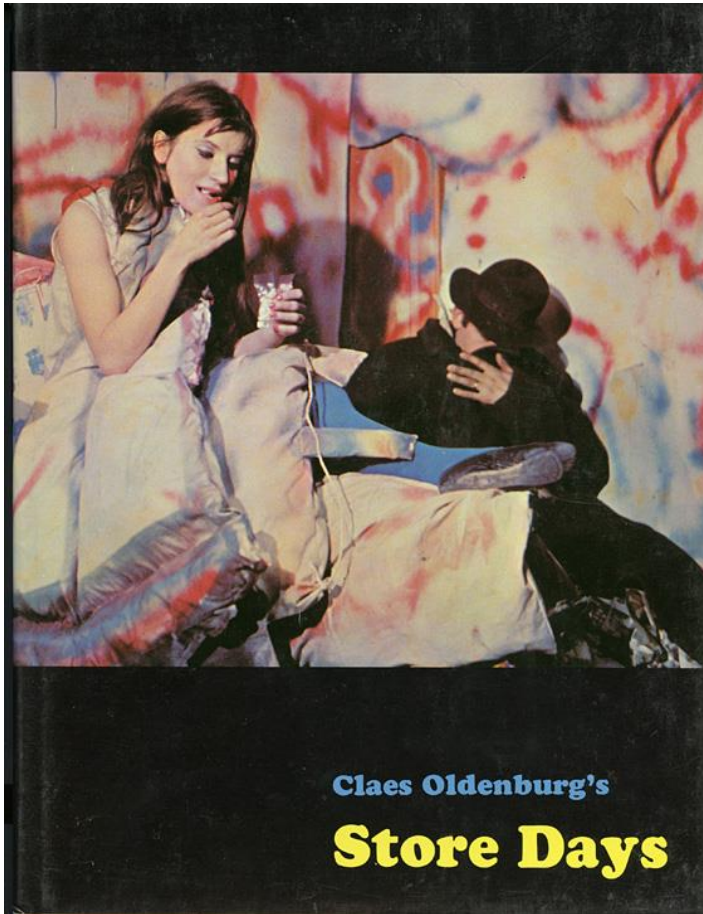
Emmett Williams. *Sweethearts*. 1968. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Front cover illustration "Coeurs Volants" (1936) by Marcel Duchamp.

Richard Hamilton wrote a fine short essay on Williams for the dust jacket where he says "Emmett Williams' *Sweethearts* is a breakthrough. It is to concrete poetry as *Wuthering Heights* is to the English novel; as "Guernica" is to modern art. *Sweethearts* is the first large scale lyric masterpiece among the concrete texts, compelling in its emotional scope, readable, a sweetly heartfelt, jokey, crying laughing, tender expression of love."



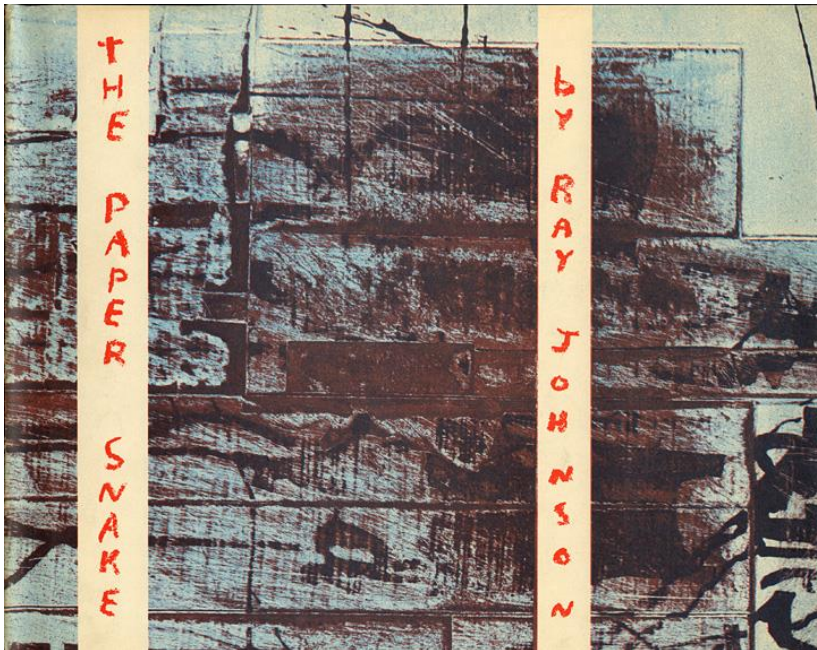
Ian Hamilton Finlay and Gordon Huntly. *A Sailor's Calendar*. 1971. Ring binding.

Peter Frank describes *A Sailor's Calendar* as "a masterpiece of collaboration; Huntly has been one of Finlay's most frequent and successful co-workers. His design enhances the droll wit of Finlay's word-musicals, which lie somewhere between pun, glossolalia, and old fisherman's tales compended into a brief almanac for a Hebridian village." (Peter Frank. *The Something Else Press*. McPherson & Co., 1983, p. 41.)



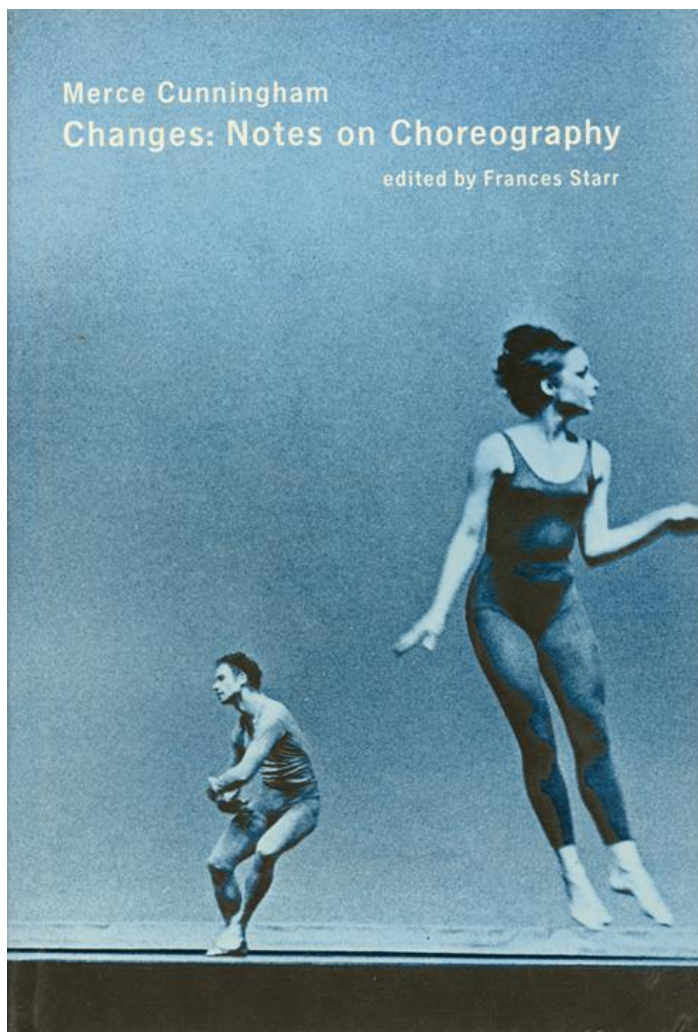
Claes Oldenburg. *Store Days: Documents from The Store (1961) and Ray Gun Theater (1962)*. 1967. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Photographs by Robert McElroy. Attached to the f.f.e. is a small glassine envelope with a business card for "The Store" inside.

"Souvenirs from the first masterpiece of Pop Art, The Store (1961–62) selected and arranged by Oldenburg with the assistance of Emmett Williams. Many pages in full color, many many photographs." (Publisher's description found on the rear dust jacket panel of *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*.)



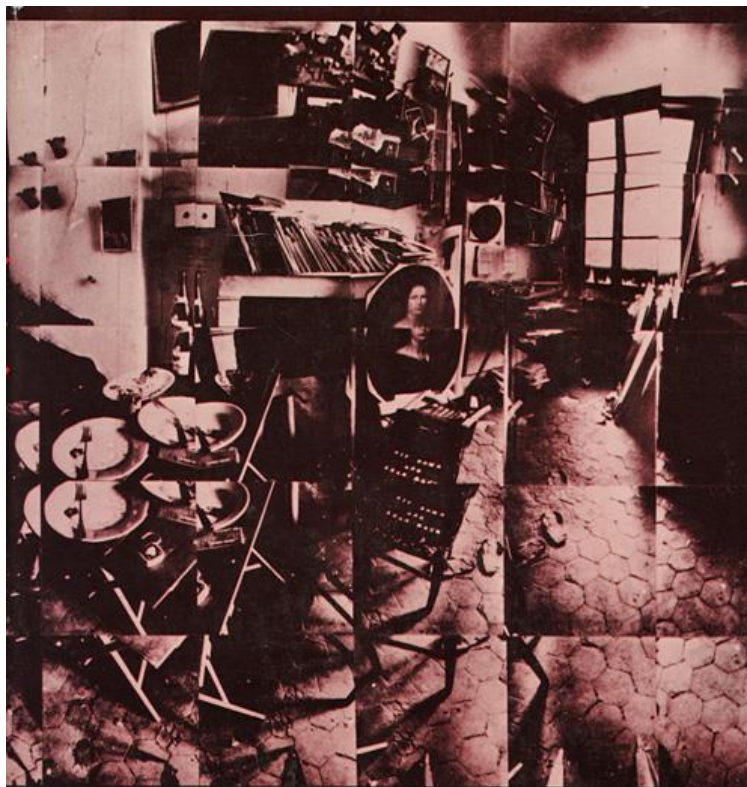
Ray Johnson. *The Paper Snake*. 1965. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

"The first principle of Ray Johnson's art is that anything isolated is beautiful, albeit opaque. The second principle is that meaning awakens in that isolated beautiful thing when it is juxtaposed to something like it (counterparts, like rhymes, for the romantic; counterpoints, like puns, for the ironic)... To Dick Higgins he was written, 'I want to live and die like an egg.' Ray Johnson's art is always *see and say, show and tell*; it is also imaginary, inarticulate, and eggshaped." (From the dust jacket essay by William S. Wilson, M.A., Ph.D.)



Merce Cunningham. *Changes: Notes on Choreography*. 1968. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Edited by Frances Starr.

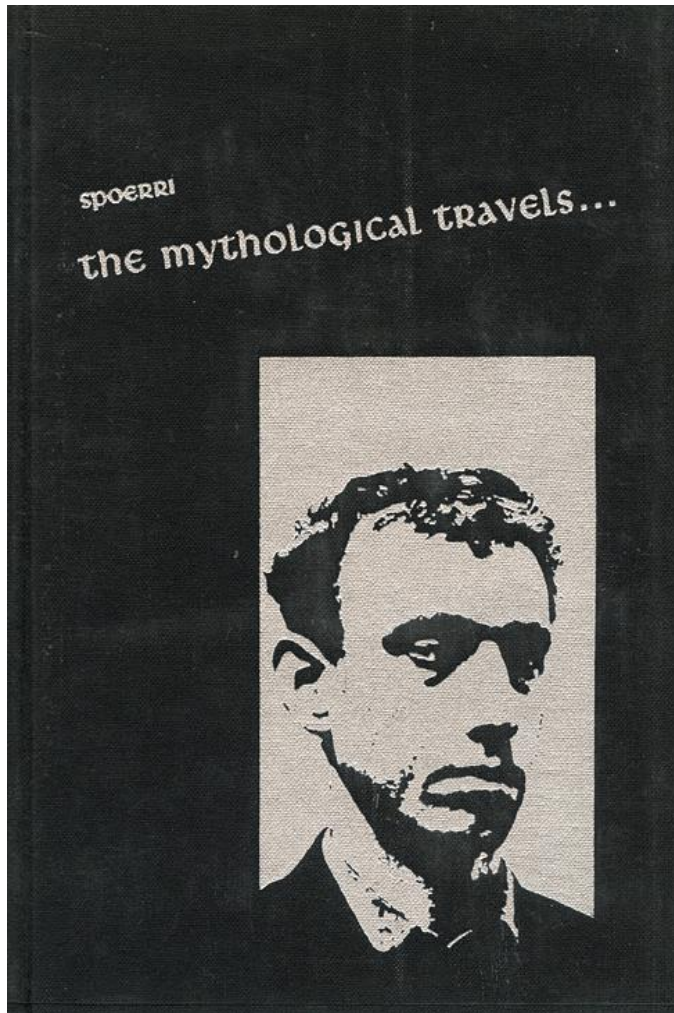
“A dancer (for once, thank god) talking about the dance (and not biography). Pages from the notebooks of Merce Cunningham, edited by Frances Starr, a collage called *Changes: Notes on Choreography*. 176 pages, color, illustrated, 6 1/8 x 9 1/4, \$8.95.” (Ad copy, probably written by Higgins, found in *The Something Else Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 12, February 1970.)



Daniel Spoerri, trans. and ann. by Emmett Williams. *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance (Re-Anecdoted Version)*. 1966. Cloth over boards with dust jacket printed on both sides.

“This book, described in ‘The Village Voice’ by David Bourdon as a fascinating and absolutely delightful nouveau roman, is an accumulation of associations, direct and indirect, from the objects that happened to be on Spoerri’s breakfast table one day.” (Publisher’s description found on the rear dust jacket panel of *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*.) “Done with the help of his [Spoerri’s] very dear friend Robert Filliou and Translated from the French, and further anecdoted at random by their very dear friend Emmett Williams with One Hundred Reflective Illustrations by Topor.”

spoerri's
an anecdoted
topography of chance



Daniel Spoerri, trans. and ann. by Emmett Williams. *The Mythological Travels of a Modern Sir John Mandeville, Being an Account of the Magic, Meatballs, and Other Monkey Business Peculiar to the Sojourn of Daniel Spoerri Upon the Isle of Symi, Together with Divers Speculations Thereon*. 1970. Cloth over boards with stamped silver and acetate dust jacket.

"If this work is simply a journal of objects found and meals consumed on a small Greek Island, then *Gulliver's Travels* is surely just a highly improbable travelogue. Anybody who knows Spoerri knows he can cook up a meal of astounding proportions; anybody who reads this book will know he cooks up quite a story too." (From *Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973-1974*, n.d. Book description by Jan Herman.)

For years there has been both idle chatter and serious discussion of the expansion of the possibilities in fiction of the broadest sort—the art of narrative, of time applied to language. And so, the writer and editor, **Richard Kostelanetz**, has prepared the international anthology you are holding of the **Breakthrough Fictioneers**. Included are visual works, schematic legends, linguistic sequences and even a few almost-traditional yarns, but all of them are in some sense stories. The intention was to be inclusive rather than exclusive, informative rather than hermetic (hence the biographies at the end), to present a rare text by Gertrude Stein side by side with works by the most recent figures and to treat it all as contemporary. We of the **Something Else Press** hope that prose will never again be the same.

Richard Kostelanetz, ed. *Breakthrough Fictioneers: An Anthology*. 1973. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

"For years there has been both idle chatter and serious discussion of the expansion of the possibilities in fiction of the broadest sort—the art of the narrative, of time applied to language. This international anthology includes visual works, schematic legends, linguistic sequences and even a few almost-traditional yarns, but all of them are in some sense stories. We hope this book does for prose what Emmett Williams' *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* did for poetry. The collection is inclusive rather than exclusive, informative rather than hermetic (hence the biographies at the end)." (From *Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973-1974*, n.d. Book description by Jan Herman.)

The book you are looking at is the largest **Anthology of Concrete Poetry** to appear to date, and the first major one to be published in the United States. **Edited by Emmett Williams**, one of the founders of the movement, and with the over-300 selections translated wherever possible from their original languages and glossed where translation would not be feasible, all supplemented by detailed biographies of the poets, the publishers of **Something Else Press, Inc.**, take great pride in presenting a cross-section of this most active of modern poetry movements and in introducing so many major writers from so many countries between these covers for the first time to the American reading public.

Emmett Williams, ed. *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*. 1967. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

“Concrete Poetry is not one style but a cluster of possibilities, all falling in the Intermedium between semantic poetry, calligraphic and typographic poetry, and sound poetry,” notes Emmett Williams from his concise dust jacket statement. With its commentaries, author biographies, and preface, this fifty-year old anthology is as relevant and useful today as it was when first published.

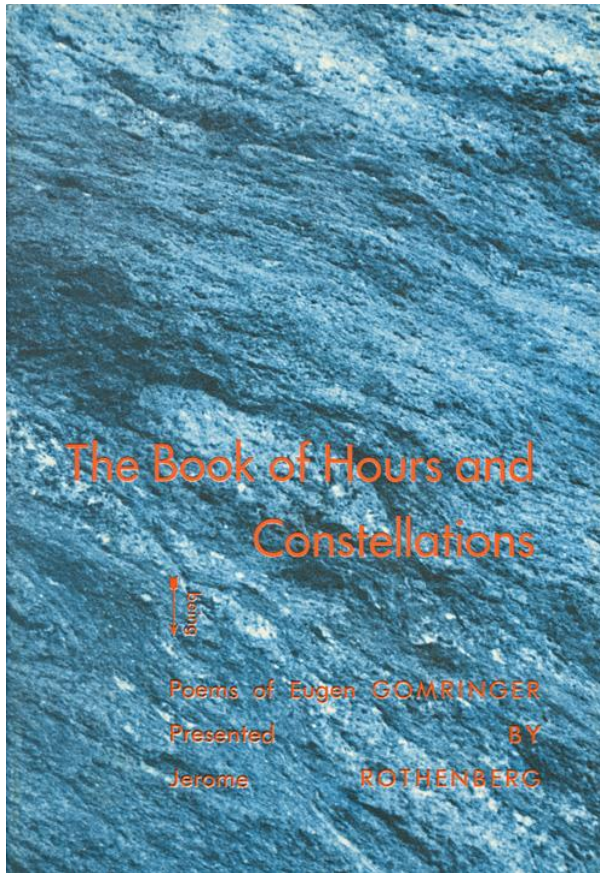


Bern Porter. *I've Left: A Manifesto and a Testament of Science and -ART (SCIART)*. 1971. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

“Bern Porter is, like Charles Ives (whom he resembles in the inventiveness and originality of his work, which is produced in isolation but is thoroughly cosmopolitan), a one-man movement, Science and Art, Sciart.

“When one speaks of Porter, one has to ask which Porter one is speaking of: the atomic physicist, the poet, the surrealist, the first US publisher of Henry Miller and a number of the best poets of his generation, the sculptor, the early practitioner of ‘found poetry,’ the graphic illustrator, etc.”

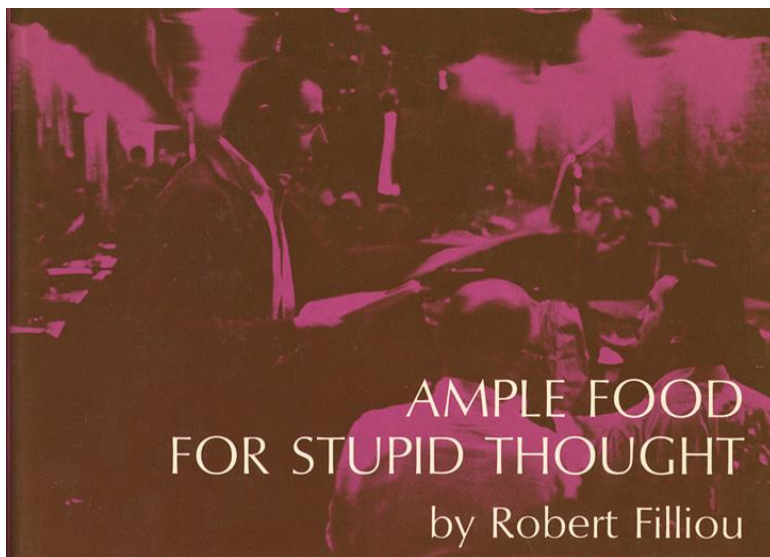
Porter published Dick Higgins’ first book, *What are Legends*, in 1960. In addition to *I've Left*, Something Else published Porter’s *Found Poems*, also included in the collection.



Eugen Gomringer, trans. and ed. by Jerome Rothenberg. *The Book of Hours and Constellations*. 1968. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Photograph on dust by Dick Higgins.

“Eugen Gomringer is best known as a founder of concrete poetry, which is usually equated, indiscriminately, with all visual poetry and therefore expected to be highly visual. But Gomringer concentrates the visual element of his poems in what I have called elsewhere ‘geometrical structures’ of the underlying logic: and the work is therefore not apt to be visually obvious, which is why he has not yet shared in the recent plethora of concrete poetry exhibitions and in its general vogue.

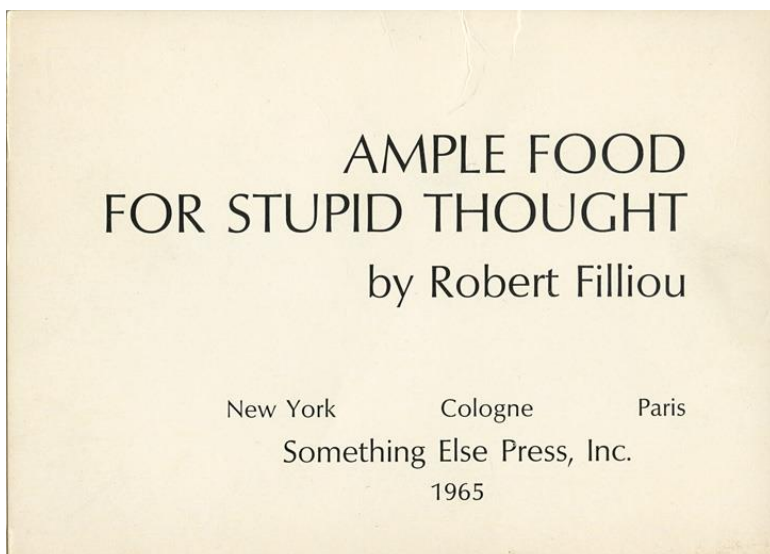
“This book is an attempt to make it clear what he has accomplished, what his work really entails.”
(From the dust jacket essay by Dick Higgins.)



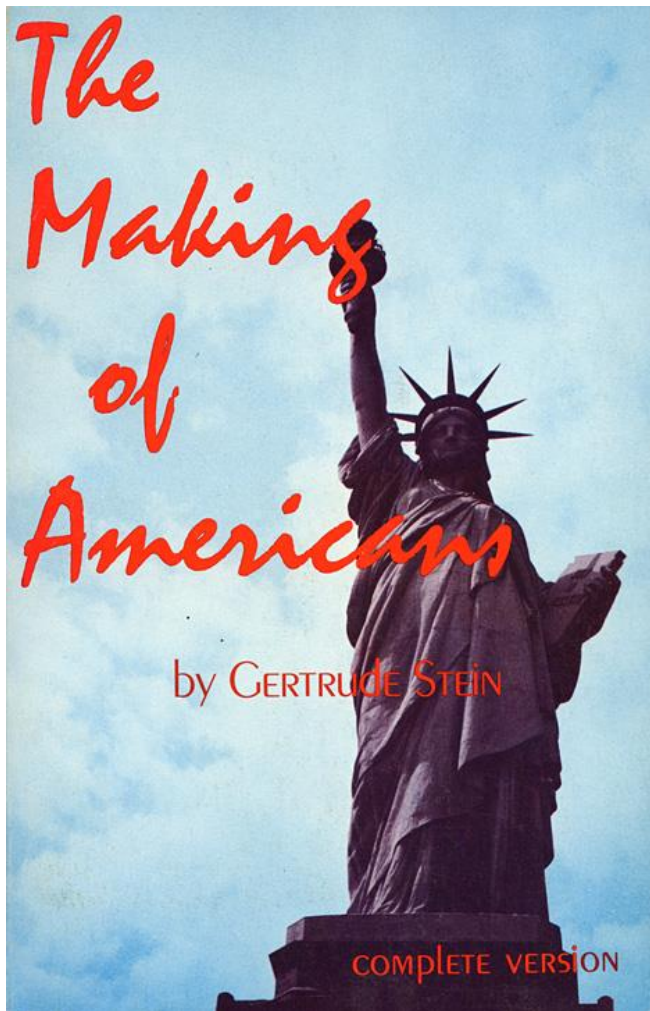
Robert Filliou. *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*. 1965. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

This title was first published in an edition of 500 postcard sets (each set comprises 96 cards) of which 104 sets were issued in a wooden box. Shown here is the title page card.

“This is a collection of useless but interesting questions, printed on postcards. The book slowly gets mailed away. The effects of receiving the postcards depend on the appropriateness of the question to the person receiving it. The person to whom one mails ‘Why is he dying?’ might not be the same person to whom one would send ‘Isn’t it a bit too late to get another girl?’ or ‘What happened in Boston?’ So that one doesn’t lose the questions, we also made an edition as a book. Book edition, \$5.00. Card edition, \$9.00. Refills for card edition (only available to buyers of the card edition), \$5.00.” (Described in *Arts in Fusion/Something Else Press Catalog*), 1966.



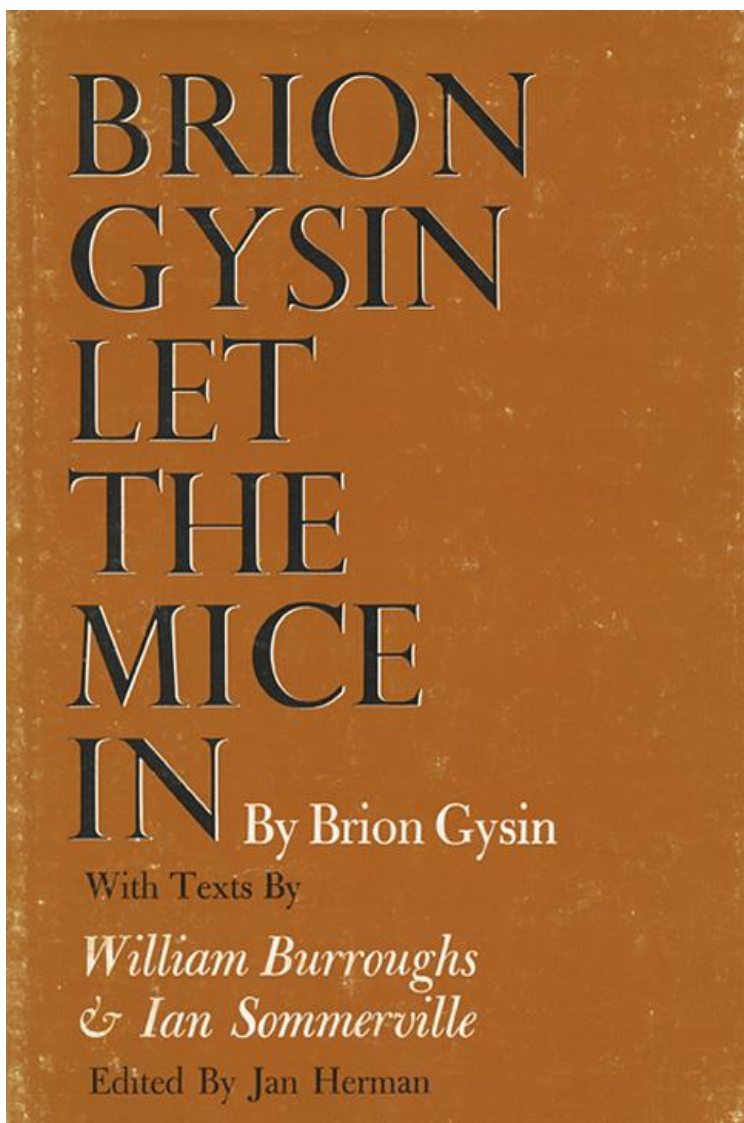
New York Cologne Paris
Something Else Press, Inc.
1965



Gertrude Stein. *The Making of Americans: Being a History of a Family's Progress, 1906–1908*. 1966. Wrappers. Complete Version, facsimile of the 1925 original.

This is the first of five titles by Gertrude Stein published by Something Else including *Geography and Plays*, *Lucy Church Amiably*, *Matisse Picasso and Gertrude Stein*, and *A Book Ending With As a Wife Has a Cow*.

Higgins wrote and printed the essay "Why Do We Publish So Much Gertrude Stein?" in *The Something Else Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 4, Sept. 1972. Following three pages of discussion of the context and reception of Stein's work, Higgins finally answers his question with the words "WHY NOT!?" in read-all-about-it headline type.



Brion Gysin, William Burroughs and Ian Sommerville. *Brion Gysin Let the Mice In*. 1973. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Edited by Jan Herman.

"With texts by William Burroughs and Ian Sommerville, here is the story behind the experimental discoveries which Gysin made as applied to writing, primarily the early 'cut/up' techniques (so successfully employed by Burroughs). It includes a history of The Dream Machine, and the permuted poems."

"Gysin...has injected intoxicating doses of music and magic into the mainstream of modern writing." (Both quotes from *Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973–1974*, n.d.)



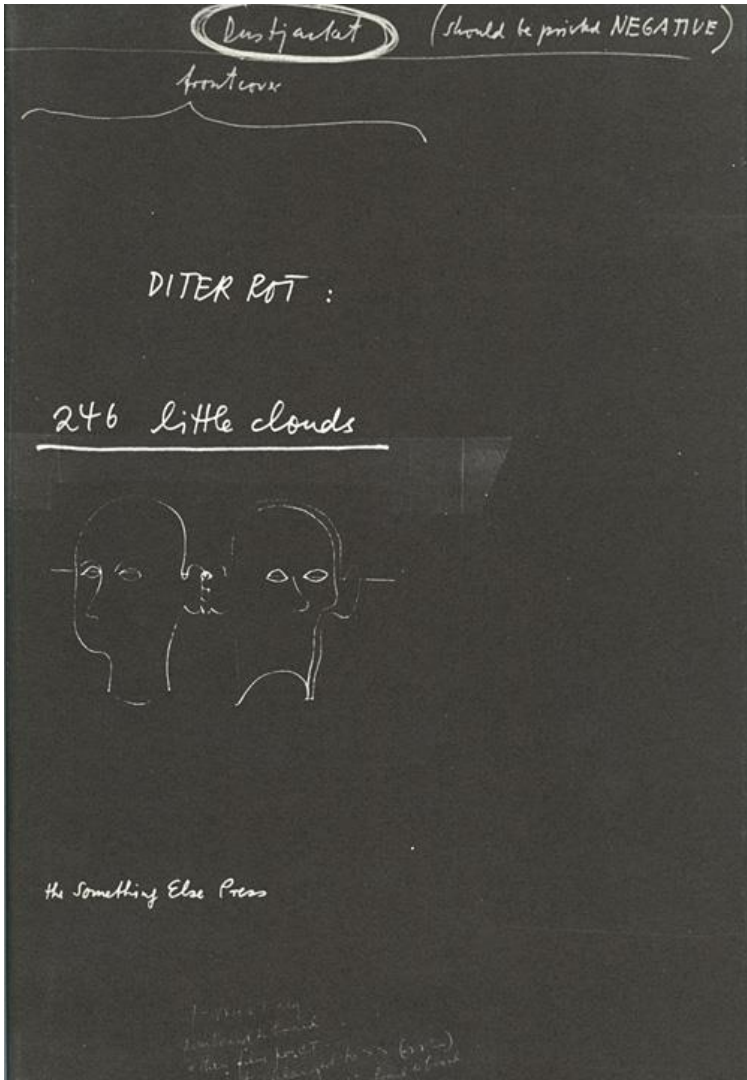
Photo: Fred W. McDarrah

Ring Piece
by
Geoff Hendricks

Geoff Hendricks. *Ring Piece: The Journal of a Twelve Hour Silent Meditation*. 1973. Wrappers. Cover photo by Fred W. McDarrah.

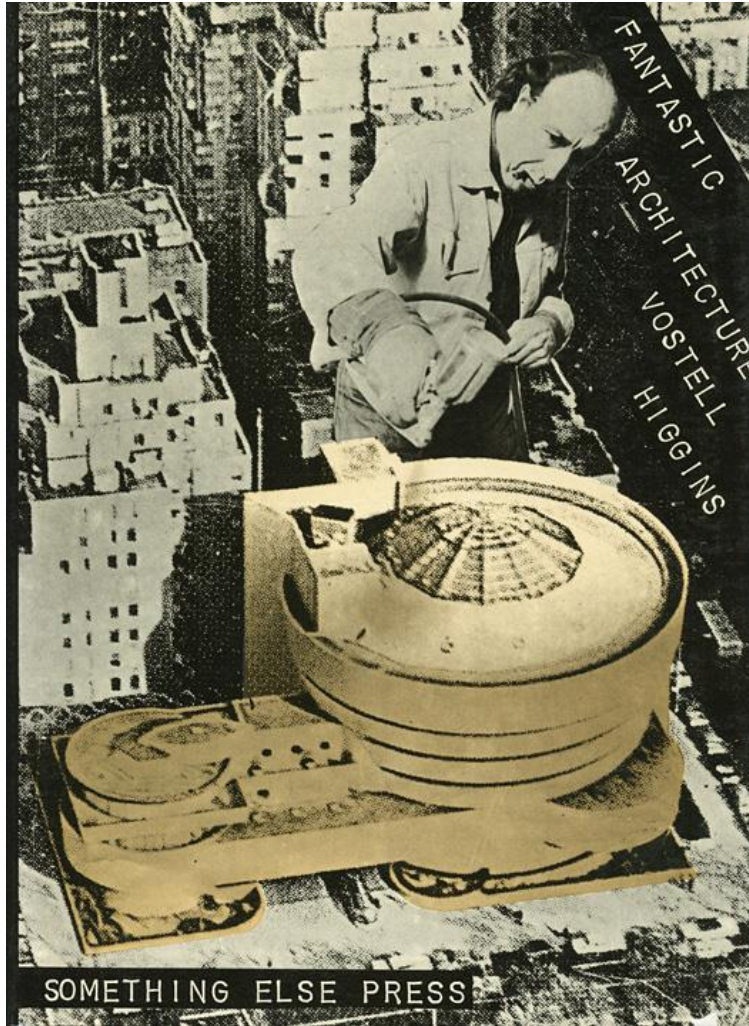
Ring Piece documents Hendricks' twelve-hour performance at the 8th Annual Avant Garde Festival, November 19, 1971. The performance directly relates to Hendricks' "Flux Divorce" from Bici Forbes, June 24, 1971.

"Geoff Hendricks is a cloudsmith, specializing in cumulus and altocumulus formations on a northlight background. This has been transferred, for aesthetic purposes, not only to canvas but also to shirts, clotheslines, packages, stairs, windows, porches, VW busses, and all kinds of other appropriate surfaces." (From back cover copy written by Dick Higgins.)



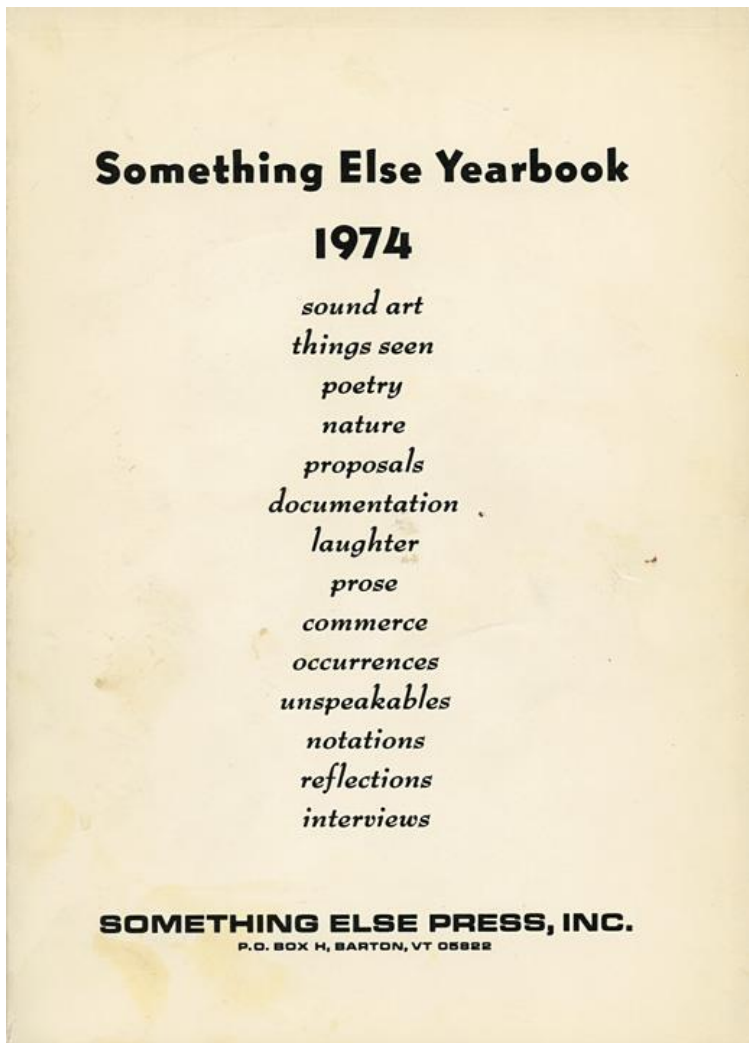
Diter Rot. *246 Little Clouds*. 1968. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Introduction by Emmett Williams.

"A very grey book from a grey December voyage on a tramp steamer where the not-so-grey Icelandic poet/designer drew many grey conclusions and produced this, his first and not-at-all grey text in English. With an introduction by Emmett Williams, an explanatory appendix, and almost 200 drawings by the author." (From ad in *The Something Else Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 9, Dec. 1968.)



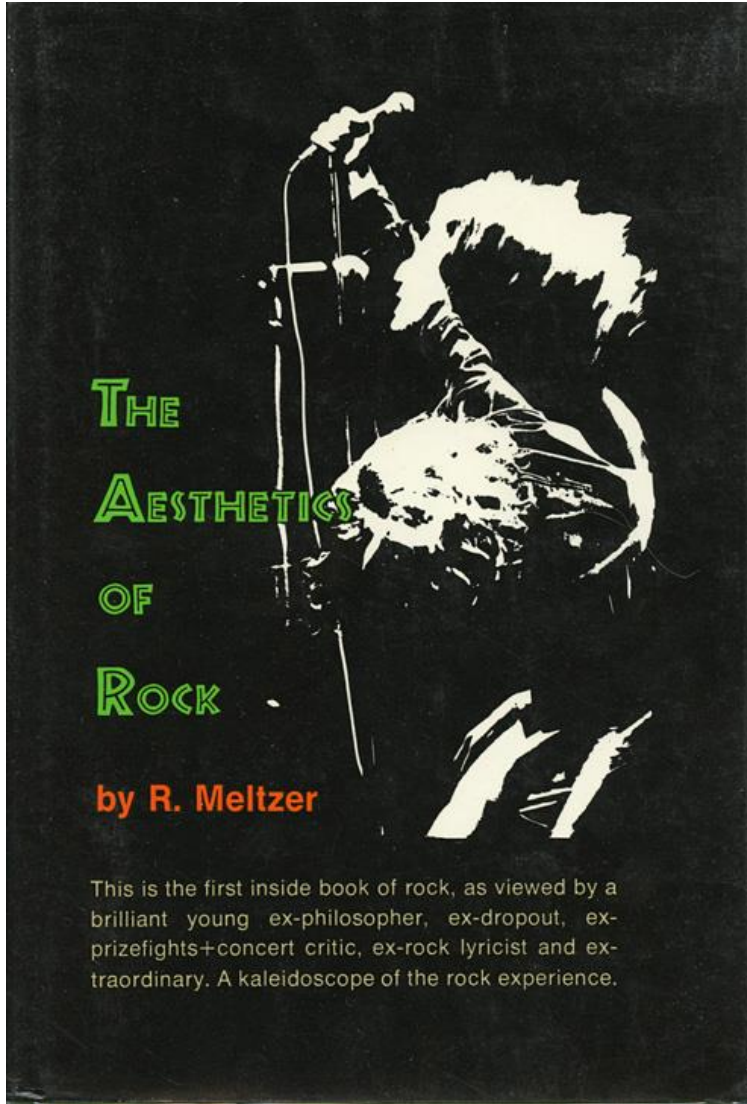
Wolf Vostell and Dick Higgins, eds. *Fantastic Architecture*. [1970]. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

“This documentation of ideas and concepts of a new polymorphous reality is offered as evidence of the new methods and processes that were introduced by Fluxus, Happenings and Pop. A demand for new patterns of behavior — new unconsumed environments. The accent in all the works in this book lies on change — i.e. expansion of physical surroundings, sensibilities, media, through disturbance of the familiar. Action is architecture! Everything is architecture!” (An excerpt from the prefatory text by Wolf Vostell.)



Jan Herman, ed. *Something Else Yearbook 1974*. Wrappers. 1974. Design by Nelleke Rosenthal. Rubberstamped with Carolee Schneeman’s address on half title page.

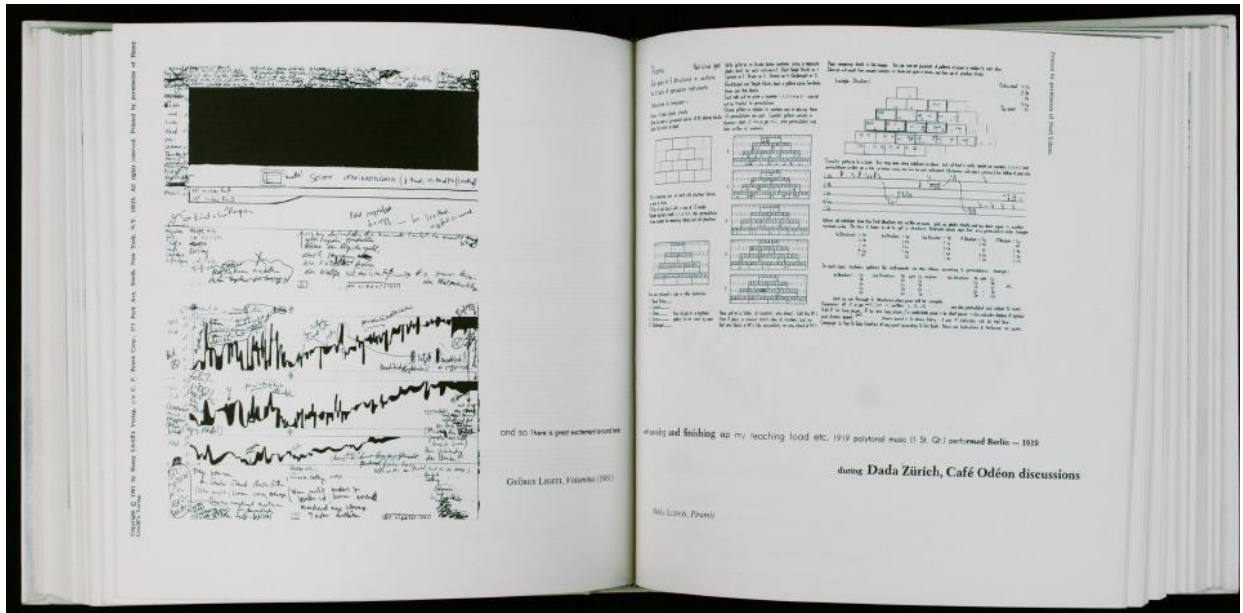
“After all, it does get boring to see the same old writers and artists appearing together in book after book. So we refused to be anthologists in this one. Most anthologies are artificial reprints anyway, pure literary hocus-pocus, unless they’ve exhaustively mapped out a new terrain. We like to think of this Yearbook as more in the spirit of a workbook, something to record a year’s worth from lots of people.” (From back cover copy by Jan Herman.)



R. [Richard] Meltzer. *The Aesthetics of Rock*. 1970. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Cover photo by Ken Greenberg.

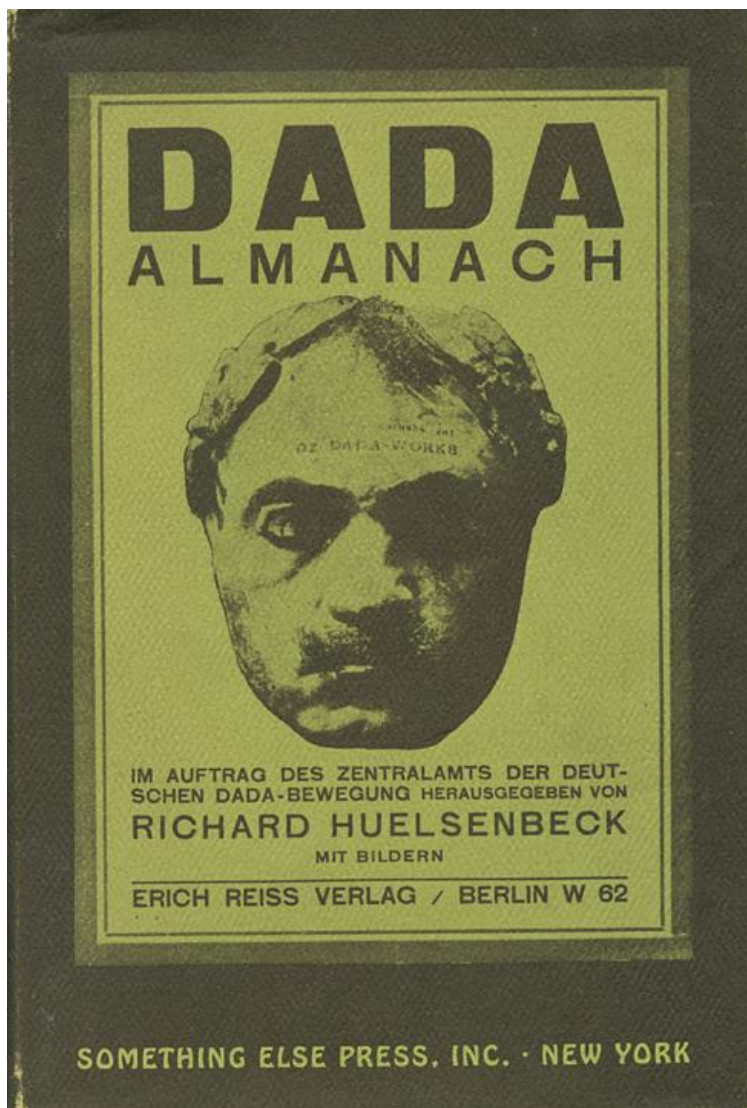
The Aesthetics of Rock "...is the summation, *summa cum laude*, of 'mere' (one of Meltzer's key words) philosophical inquiry as applied to rock 'n' roll. It is a masterpiece of the academic language of category and definition; applied to the antithesis of that language, rock. It is *not* explanation. It is phenomenological. It is *n*-dimensional: rock as the only complete expression of body and soul and mind of our time — — — — rock slipping through the guises of art and non-art and anti-art — — rock as the contemporary free and endlessly self-creating thing, resisting all attempts to identify it, plagiarizing itself and innovating with equal un-selfconsciousness." (From dust jacket copy probably written by Dick Higgins.)

This is the first inside book of rock, as viewed by a brilliant young ex-philosopher, ex-dropout, ex-prizefights+concert critic, ex-rock lyricist and extraordinary. A kaleidoscope of the rock experience.



John Cage. *Notations*. 1969. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

"A cross-section of the varieties of musical experience of our times, with nearly 300 reproductions of manuscripts, and with a mosaic text collaged from the words of the composers themselves. The result is a poem and a portrait, not of individuals but of a state of being, of one art among others." (Publisher's description found on the rear dust jacket panel of *New Musical Resources*.)

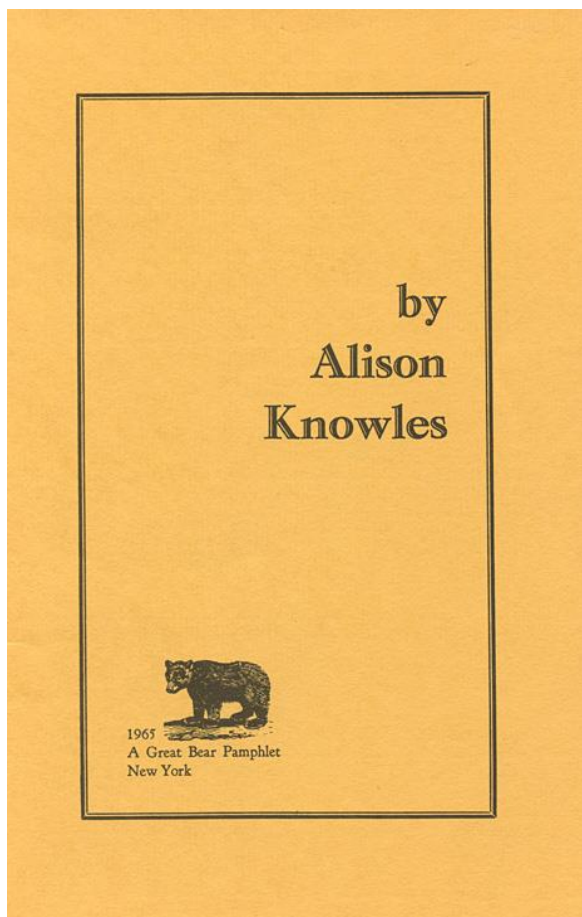


Richard Huelsenbeck, ed. *Dada Almanach*. 1966. Cloth over boards with dust jacket. Facsimile of the 1920 edition. The contents of the book were written or translated into German, with some pieces in French and one in Italian. The first of many reprints issued by Something Else Press, *Dada Almanach* was published on the fiftieth anniversary of Dada.

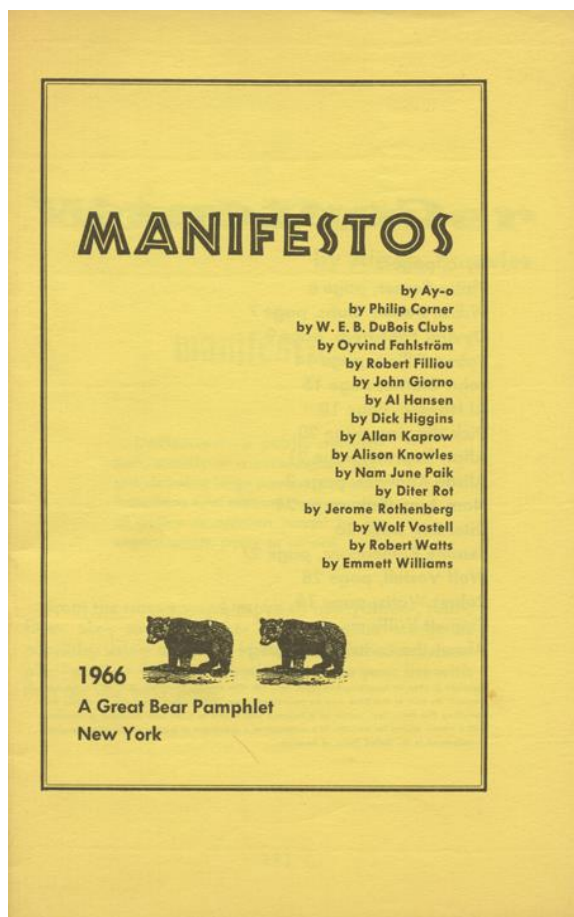
"Dada is like the weather. Everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it. Even worse, in fact, because while two people might well agree on what a thunderstorm is, they could probably not agree on what dada is. The main reason for this is obvious. The more that is written about dada the more far-fetched one must become in order to be original, and the more obfuscated scholarship in the field in its turn, becomes, until we reach the present situation, where literally nobody knows what he has been talking about all these years...the *Dada Almanach* is, then, the statement of the various dada positions on the basis of which our present misconceptions must be reformed. The dada attitude, it will be seen herein, is profoundly contemporary. Without understanding it, it is simply not possible to evaluate accurately a great deal of the art and philosophy which is most current today." (From the dust jacket description by Dick Higgins.)



If You Can't Do It Twice You Haven't Really Done It. [1974]. Pin-back button. 1 5/8 inches in diameter. (Listed, with a date in *The Fluxus Reader* edited by Ken Friedman with documentary research by Owen Smith.)



Alison Knowles. *By Alison Knowles*. 1965. Stapled wrappers. Great Bear Pamphlet, no. 1.



Ay-o, Philip Corner, W.E.B. DuBois Clubs, Oyvind Fahlström, Robert Filliou, John Giorno, Al Hansen, Dick Higgins, Allan Kaprow, Alison Knowles, Nam June Paik, Diter Rot, Jerome Rothenberg, Wolf Vostell, Robert Watts, and Emmett Williams. *Manifestos*. 1966. Stapled wrappers. Great Bear Pamphlet, no. 8.

Two of the twenty Great Bear Pamphlets produced by the press between 1965–1967. Full set included in the collection.



[Dick Higgins, ed.]. *The Something Else Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 1. Feb. 1966. Single sheet



[Dick Higgins, ed.]. *The Something Else Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 3. Apr. 1966. Single sheet folded once to

folded once to make 4 pages. This issue prints "Intermedia" by Dick Higgins.

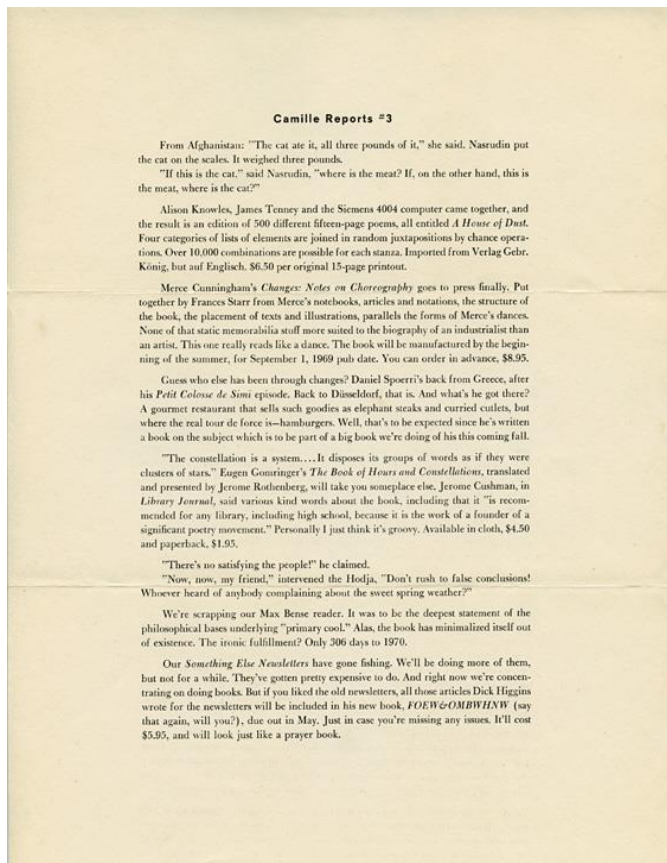
make 4 pages. This issue prints "Intending" by Dick Higgins.

Two issues of *The Something Else Newsletter* edited and written by Dick Higgins. The press issued 22 or 23 issues between 1970–1983.

Vol. 1, nos. 1–12. Feb. 1966–Feb. 1970.

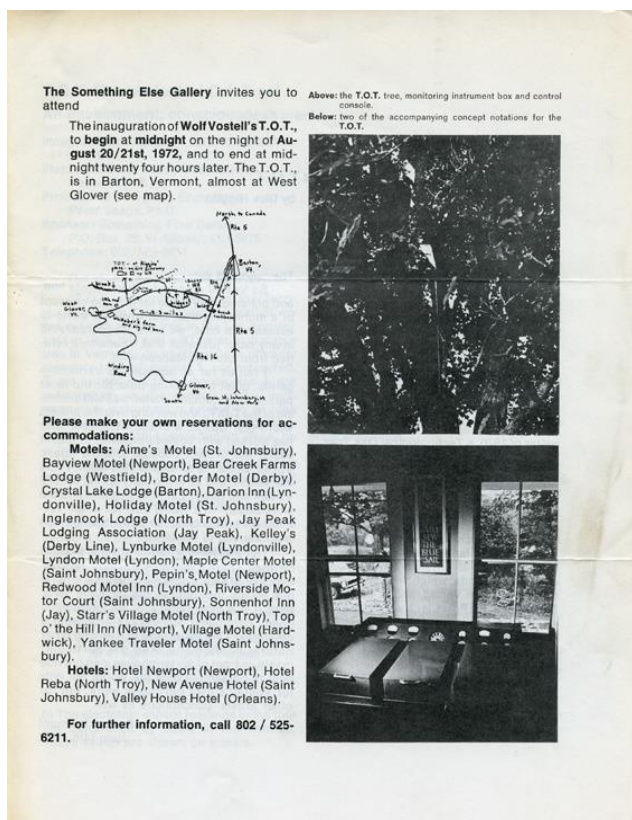
Vol. 2, nos. 1–8. Apr. 1971–Feb. 1983.

Vol. 3, nos. 2–3. Oct. 1983–Nov. 1983. (Unsure if Vol. 3, no. 1 was issued.)



Camille Reports #3. Single sheet printed on one side. [Something Else Press], [1969 or early 1970].

This is one of three *Camille's Reports* issued by the press (Camille Gordon being one of Dick's pseudonyms). In addition to the *Newsletter*, *Camille's Reports* provided another venue for Dick to stay in touch with friends of the press.



Dick Higgins. Wolf Vostell's T.O.T. 1972. Single sheet folded once to make four pages. Printed as a mailer. Announcement for Wolf Vostell's T.O.T. (Technological Oak Tree) August 20–21, 1972 in Barton Vermont.

Contents of the Something Else Press Collection

(which is offered as a *collection* rather than as individual items)

Listed in three sections: Books, Great Bear Pamphlets, and Other Publications

Books

Dick Higgins. *Jefferson's Birthday / Postface*. 1964. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

Ray Johnson. *The Paper Snake*. 1965. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

Al Hansen. *A Primer of Happenings & Time Space Art*. 1965. Cloth over boards, lacks dust jacket.

Alison Knowles, Tomas Schmidt, Benjamin Patterson, and Philip Corner. *The Four Suits*. 1965. Cloth over boards with acetate jacket.

Robert Filliou. *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*. 1965. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

We also include the very rare postcard edition lacking two of the 96 cards (supplied in photocopy). There were 500 loose postcard sets of which 104 were issued in a wooden box. Our set is not in the wooden case, however, it is housed in an archival box.

Daniel Spoerri. *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance*. 1966. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

Richard Huelsenbeck, ed. *Dada Almanach*. 1966. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

Gertrude Stein. *The Making of Americans*. 1966. Wrappers.

William Brisbane Dick. *Dick's 100 Amusements*. 1967. Wrappers.

Marshall McLuhan. *Verbi-Voco-Visual Explorations*. 1967. Wrappers.

Emmett Williams, ed. *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*. 1967. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

Emmett Williams. *Sweethearts*. 1968. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

George Brecht and Robert Filliou. *Games at the Cedilla, or the Cedilla Takes Off*. 1967. Cloth over boards, lacks dust jacket.

Claes Oldenburg. *Store Days*. 1968. Cloth over boards with dust jacket.

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