

## FROM THE EDITOR

Well, it's been quite a few months, packed full of so many natural and man-made phenomena that we never have a chance to catch our breath. But \$100 million donated to Poetry magazine certainly made me jealous—hope they spread the money around to individual poets. They deserve grants, but oh, so much money for one magazine!

This is the last issue of the 25<sup>th</sup> volume, which means we are starting our 25<sup>th</sup> year in 2003. You will be seeing lots of stickers on your mail from me, since that's the way I celebrate with you. No increase in subscriptions, no parties or outright expensive celebrations, just better issues of *Umbrella* with color covers, so if any of you have images that seem worthy of note, send them on a disk for an eventual cover or even back (half) cover. My printer is willing to collaborate with me, so an innovation for our 25<sup>th</sup>! And thank you to those who have subscribed early. Now it's up to the rest of you to RENEW!

There is one celebration that you must read on the next page—it's an auction to help my collection at the UCLA Arts Library get processed, preserved, and disseminated to scholars and the artist book community. Then we can sponsor events, exhibitions, and symposia, and perhaps the largest public collection on the West Coast can finally be used at the UCLA Arts Library. So send in your works of art for auction, if you so feel inclined. It will raise money for a good cause!

By the way, it still seems that it takes so very much time to find the news that's fit to print in *Umbrella*—please don't hesitate to send any or all news about artist books, mail art, or whatever to me. Secondary sources are the majority of my news sources, but I could use direct contact with you, who make the news! When I start writing *Umbrella* which is many weeks before you get it, it seems that there are so few exhibits of artist books, so few mail art notices, but they grow like Topsy, and it just means a great deal of writing for me. And if you don't know, I'm not getting any younger. I do this as if it were a long letter to my friends, but I have hundreds of "friends", I guess. There still is too much news and too much to read, but if I can help you all digest a bit of what passes through my hands, so be it.

Since it really is the end of the year, I want you to know that a subscription to *Umbrella* to a colleague or friend would help a great deal to guarantee another year for *Umbrella*. As I tell you this, I do not foresee another 25 years, and

frankly with the demise of some of the leading magazines in our midst, I feel very fortunate to have endured this quarter of a century. But one of these days, I will indeed just give the news away and go online, even though the libraries want hard copy. It's not so much the cost, it's the immediacy of the news. I could always change once a week or once a month and get you the news that is necessary to move through the artist book community and the contemporary art community with knowledge.

It's movie marathon time for me, since I go to movies a lot, and at the end of the year, the Academy Awards allows us in Laland to see all the news ones for consideration by the Academy. *Frida* is one to see even with its omissions, and don't forget to see Phillip Noyce's *The Quiet American* and his amazing *Rabbit-Proof Fence*. *Pinocchio* will definitely be a must from Christmas Day on!

By the way, the best title for an exhibition this year: *20 million Mexicans can't be wrong!*, curated by art critic, curator and art historian, Cuauhtemoc Medina, soon to be adjunct curator (the first one) for Latin American art for the Tate. Just amazing!

I wish you all the Happiest of New Years, and may we have Peace—so don't sit back and wait for everyone else to do something about it. Join a movement, use your resources and your energies to stop war. It's one way we all can continue to support the arts, be creative, and produce something that is far more than material, but something that moves the soul!

Cover: D. Cammack



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## FROM THE EDITOR - The real one for May 2003!

Well, it's been quite a few months, packed full of so many natural and man-made phenomena that we never had a chance to catch our breath. We were listening to the hot breath of war in the cold winds of winter, and we marched in January, and we marched in February with babies and grandmothers, Afghanis and Iraqis, Asians and Iroquois, because we had to say something. I even participated in Peace on the Beach in Venice, California in February.

Then we had to leave in March to install two versions of the Women of the Book show, first at Purdue University, home of the largest international student body in the U.S., those young men wanting to be engineers, glued to the 80" plasma screen trying to understand what Bush really wanted to do with the rest of the men in the cabinet, while the U.N. and its conferences suggested a different approach.

Then on to New York City and the tone was also on edge, but at least the cultural institutions served up aesthetic delights such as Picasso/Matisse at MOMA/Queens and the Wölfler show at the American Museum of Folk Art, which was amazing! I indulged in all gallery shows in Chelsea, and overdid it some days, but New York City is still a feast. Even went to Brooklyn and saw cutting edge shows in Williamsburg, the new place to see what's new.

On to Boston and to install the show in Newton Center, and then to visit marvelous Museum of Fine Arts and the Gardner Museum which had a stunning Joseph Kosuth installation, thanks to his residency during its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He used the friendship of Whistler, Mrs. Gardner and Bernard Berenson to make neon statements on the exterior of the building and inside exhibitions of the documents and letters that Mrs. Gardner had collected from famous people from all walks of Western civilization. An artist book will come from this quite soon.

Upon returning home, there was the Edible Book High/Low Tea which occurred throughout the world. I was interviewed live on Australian radio and for an article in Pages. And you can see the results at <http://colophon.com/ediblebooks> But there was a war on and news about the burning of the National Library of Iraq and the National Museum's looting sent chills down our spine and we knew that there had been meetings in January to warn the U.S. government of the treasures in Baghdad and read articles in Art in America and the Art Newspaper about what was in Iraq that would be threatened during any conflict. And then we cried quietly and screamed

within when the losses were announced. Whom to blame?

Then we heard about arts councils in states such as New Jersey being eliminated by state governments for lack of funds, and Jeb Bush wanting to eliminate the Florida State Library. We were shocked and awed and what was happening to world culture and domestic culture. Not only were the roots of Western civilization being destroyed, but the very roots of U.S. culture were being attacked.

At the same time, news came of Nexus Press being eliminated from the Contemporary Art Center in Atlanta, and we wrote letters feverishly to ask for legitimate explanations, and we only hope Nexus Press will find a place elsewhere to continue their important work.

We know this issue is late, but as you all know by now, Umbrella is "irregular" and gets to be finished when I have gathered in all the news and reviews. So thank you for bearing with us.

And then we heard from our old friends in Bilbao who told us of the continuation of courses in silkscreen printing, artist book making and handmade paper making at the University in Bilbao. In fact, the cover of our issue this time is blessed with the image of the Bilbao Umbrella done by Ramón Aznar, student of the famed professor Agustin Ardanza, Professor of Serigraphy at the University of Bizkaia in Bilbao. Word comes that there was an exhibition of artist books, handmade paper and bookbinding from 4 - 16 March in Gipuzkoa. The program continues, after major international exhibitions of artist books in 2000 and 2001.

So we take the bitter with the sweet and know there must be an answer to conflict and violence. Perhaps we will find it in artist books.

*Cover: Bilbao Umbrella by Ramón Aznar.*

**Have a Great Summer! This is the original editorial that did not get printed correctly, thanks to me. A blunder! Mea Culpa!**

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