

TITLE: FOUR EMERGENT FORMS: VISUAL IMPROVISATION

MCBA PRIZE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION PDF

Susan Sgorbati
Thorsten Dennerline

2013-2019

1 Title Page/Statement

- Letterpress on handmade paper
- Text copy below describes project that was the result of close collaboration and dialogue.

These four volumes represent an exchange between choreographer Susan Sgorbati and book artist Thorsten Dennerline, using Sgorbati's concept of "Emergent Forms" as their point of departure. "Emergent Forms" grew out of Sgorbati's study of the spontaneous composition of form in complex systems. Elements of order and interaction create recognizable patterns in these systems, but they remain dynamic, engendering differentiations that influence and modify the form. This phenomenon – the creation of order from a rich array of self-organizing interactions – is found not only in dance and music; indeed, it is present throughout the natural world.

This project consists of four emergent forms (Pattern, Memory, Landscape, and Dream), each represented by a "volume", a unique print/object. The texture, color and gesture of each form on paper emerged through the process of collaborative dialogue, reminiscent of a shared choreography. Each volume is not only a documentation of this dialogue, but also an interactive visualization of these emergent forms.

FOUR EMERGENT FORMS

VISUAL IMPROVISATION

SUSAN SGORBATI
THORSTEN DENNERLINE

These four volumes represent an exchange between choreographer Susan Sgorbati and book artist Thorsten Dennerline, using Sgorbati's concept of "Emergent Forms" as their point of departure. "Emergent Forms" grew out of Sgorbati's study of the spontaneous composition of form in complex systems. Elements of order and interaction create recognizable patterns in these systems, but they remain dynamic, engendering differentiations that influence and modify the form. This phenomenon – the creation of order from a rich array of self-organizing interactions – is found not only in dance and music; indeed, it is present throughout the natural world.

This project consists of four emergent forms (Pattern, Memory, Landscape, and Dream), each represented by a "volume", a unique print/object. The texture, color and gesture of each form on paper emerged through the process of collaborative dialogue, reminiscent of a shared choreography. Each volume is not only a documentation of this dialogue, but also an interactive visualization of these emergent forms.

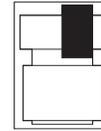
THE BIRD PRESS 2017

Notes On The Forms

Letterpress on handmade paper

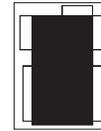
Back of title page has more information about the four objects

NOTES ON THE FORMS



PATTERN

The emergent form Pattern reveals a progression from individual elements, to groups in space and then to their ensemble interactions. These interactions create a form that is larger than the sum of its parts. New structures emerge and dissolve over time. As a flipbook, viewers can observe movement at whatever speed they choose. Evolving shapes in three colors move and interact on the pages. As the book progresses, the images split and divide into more complex interacting elements, then they expand and finally magnify, fractal-like.



MEMORY

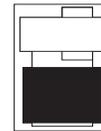
Memory is action based on observations and experiences of the relationships between time, space, and gesture. The emergent form Memory reconstructs past experience into present imagery and action. This integration of past actions into present actions draws on repetition, nonlinear sequencing, and attention to the emergence of patterns. This process of the selection of past patterns of experience and observation, and how they shift, is continual.

This piece is presented in a book-like format, but once unfolded, the viewer can re-fold it into a sculptural object reminiscent of architecture. The assembled book, seen from above, is a spiraling shape. Viewed from the side, more spirals become visible, and then shift and disappear as the book is rotated. Directions for assembly are printed on the inside of the object, but there may be multiple ways to interact with it.



LANDSCAPE

Landscape is an emergent form that draws attention to the organization of visual imagery, such as foreground and background, texture, shape, and gesture. In this book, the landscape is represented, first, by a horizon line. Inside, a shape or object occupies the landscape; it is printed, with slight variations, on five translucent pages and in offset positions to suggest atmospheric perspective (or space). However, this modulating shape can also be interpreted as movement into or out of the space. When the book is opened, a movement is initiated—an extended arm gesture as the horizon is pulled and expanded.



DREAM

In the altered time and space of our dreams, we construct visions of importance using specific details from our memory that amplify and transform sensory experience. Dream is an emergent form that reveals these visions as seemingly incongruent images that then create patterns and variation.

The book begins with a distinct shape; the translucency of the paper allows several versions of the shape to be viewed simultaneously, while the physical action of turning the pages changes the overall image and creates motion within the otherwise static picture space. As a result, new forms and movements emerge from the original brush drawings.

3 Colophon Information

COLOPHON

Pattern

Letterpress on Mohawk Superfine paper
Printing: Arthur Larson at Horton Tank Graphics
Trimming: Daniel Keleher at Wild Carrot Letterpress

Memory

Woodcut and letterpress on Saint Armand handmade paper
Printing: Thorsten Dennerline, assisted by Michael Smoot,
and letterpress by Arthur Larson at Horton Tank Graphics

Landscape

Stone lithography on Usuyou Gampi Natural paper
and Kozo Thick paper
Printing: Thorsten Dennerline, assisted by Duncan Bullen

Dream

Polymer letterpress on Usuyou Gampi White paper
and letterpress on Shikoku Surface Gampi White paper
Printing: Thorsten Dennerline

Box

CNC Fabrication: Michael Stradley
Binding: Mark Tomlinson

Thank You

Amie Jo McClellan

Edition

This is /30.

4 Video Documentation of Dance Work

In the summer 2019, dancers Emily Climer and Marie Lynn Haas were asked to interact with the books. They had previously worked with Susan Sgorbati on the forms. The video was produced for a solo exhibition in Copenhagen that summer at Galleri Tom Christoffersen.

