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ALLEN RUPPERSBERG: SOURCEBOOK

by KATY DIAMOND HAMER



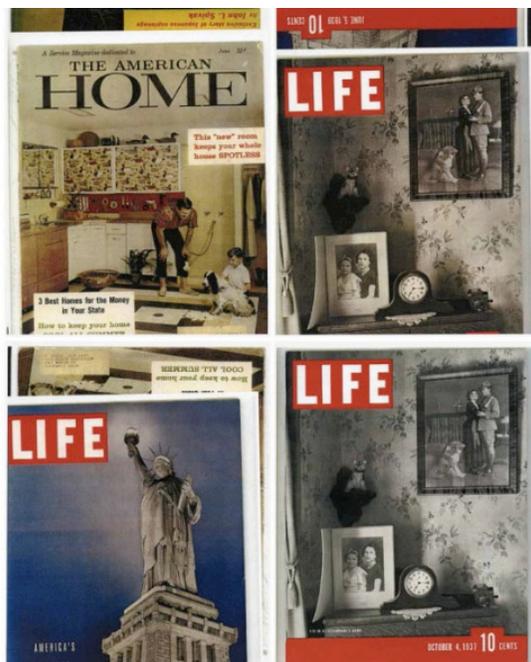
Interior Spread “The Singing Posters” (2003), Allen Ruppersberg Sourcebook, 2014. Courtesy of the artist

Published by the Independent Curators International (ICI) in New York, 2014, Allen Ruppersberg Sourcebook: Reanimating the 20th century, is part of a series of books which document the materials an artist uses for his or her inspiration or artistic process. Most artists are collectors. Fodder for the artistic practice can be discovered anywhere. In a grocery list, a small stone, a magazine cover, and even a piece of

trash can all lend themselves to the creation of something else. The Sourcebook edited by and featuring the artistic ephemera of Allen Ruppersberg (b.1944), has well documented materials from the artist's archive and includes texts that he found inspirational. Early on in the 281 page book, page 43 to be specific, we come across the artist's report card from October, 1961. The subject is *Life* for which Ruppersberg received a C+ from The Cooper School of Art. This gem of information functions as a foreshadowing for the other 238 pages, which breakdown specific art projects and presents an organized inside peek into how the artist works, along with essays and short descriptive texts written by Ruppersberg and Constance Lewallen, describing the project and how the collected materials played an active role. As an example by Lewallen on *Lectures + Film Screenings* (1994);

Ruppersberg was among the fifty-five international artists that curator Dan Cameron invited to participate in his exhibit Cocido y Crudo for the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid. The title of the exhibition refers to the famous 1964 text The Raw and the Cooked by Belgian anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, in which he analyzes the relationship between advanced and primitive societies in terms of their culinary practice. Cameron inverted the titled of Lévi-Strauss' book, indicating his critique of the ethnocentrism implicit in its thesis, and chose artists who offered contemporary perspectives on cultural identity.

This text is an introduction to eight pages of material; televisions screens, black and white, nondescript interiors, one titled "A Audio Visual Room of an indeterminate past (closed)", 1994. Another page contains a dissected television, its parts laid out on a table, covering the surface but organized in a way where not one piece touches another, a poster for Roman Polanski's film *Repulsion*, hangs on the back wall. Each photograph functions as a didactic puzzle piece, information we are given and can use, attempting to assemble an artwork through the filter and origins of the artist's mind.



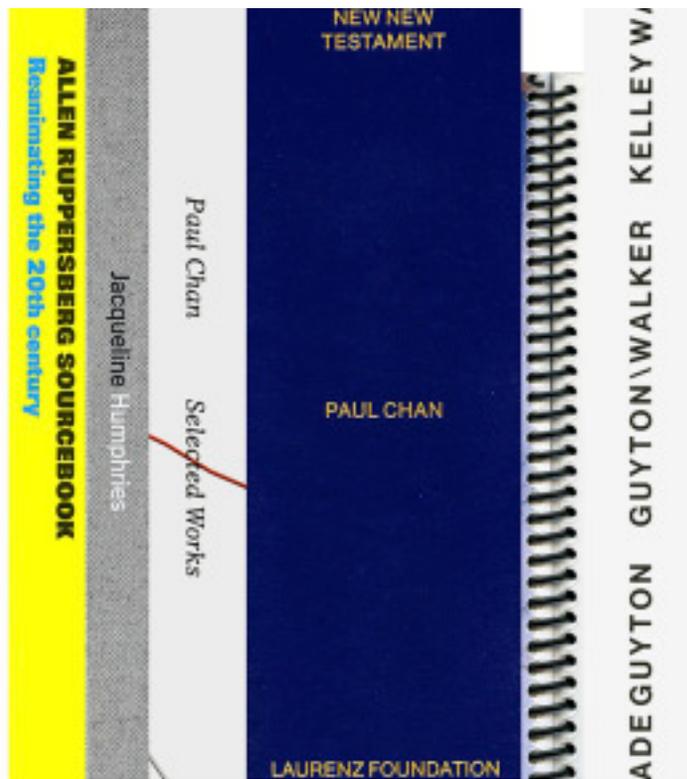
THE COOPER SCHOOL of ART
GRADE REPORT
RUPPERSBERG, A.

Name.....
Course..... ART
Month..... 10/9/61 19.....

SUBJECT	GRADE
LIFE	C+
MONTHLY AVERAGE	

Interior Spread, Allen Ruppersberg Sourcebook, 2014. Courtesy of the artist

The Singing Posters (2003), shown in the image at the top of this text, is a series of graphic posters with Allen Ginsberg's iconic poem "Howl" written phonetically based on a 1959 recording of the poet reading (performing) the piece. The lines of the poem were carried and broken by the author's breath and in this work, Ruppertsberg placed certain lines on separate posters, following the format of sound, inhaling and exhaling. The next few pages, document the installation of the posters as well as the transcription and "respelling" of the poem using the American Heritage dictionary. Before arriving at the graphically designed, brightly colored posters, the artist made collages, scribbled notes and experimented with how text and images existed in the context of a rectangular page. His work not only captures a specific time, but also attempts to turn it into something new by way of consumption and regurgitation. If information is gathered, reassembled and fed back to us, does that mean it actually happened? When is documentation truth? The answer is simple, when art begins perception is debatable.



Book Launch, Greene Naftali, 2014

Also corresponding with the release of Allen Ruppertsberg Sourcebook: Reanimating the 20th century, an exhibition is being held at [Greene Naftali Gallery](#) celebrating newly released books by artists represented by the gallery including Ruppertsberg, Rachel Harrison, Guyton\Walker, Paul Chan and Jacqueline Humphries on view until August 8th, at 508 West 26th Street.

More soon!

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