## Art History and Karaoke: SIX HANDS AND A CHEESE SANDWICH

## Michalis Pichler

We cannot precisely say what is not appropriation. Impossible to draw a categorical line. Appropriation is practiced everywhere and all the time, also by people who never have heard the word. As someone said before, no author has his complete meaning alone.

The books on this list have in common that they are somewhat more explicit, sometimes strategic... sometimes indulging in borrowing, stealing, appropriating, inheriting, assimilating... being influenced, inspired, dependent, indebted, haunted, possessed... quoting, rewriting, reworking, refashioning... a re-vision, re-evaluation, variation, version, interpretation, imitation, proximation, supplement, increment, improvisation, prequel... pastiche, paraphrase, parody, forgery, homage, mimicry, travesty, shan-zhai, echo, allusion, intertextuality and karaoke.

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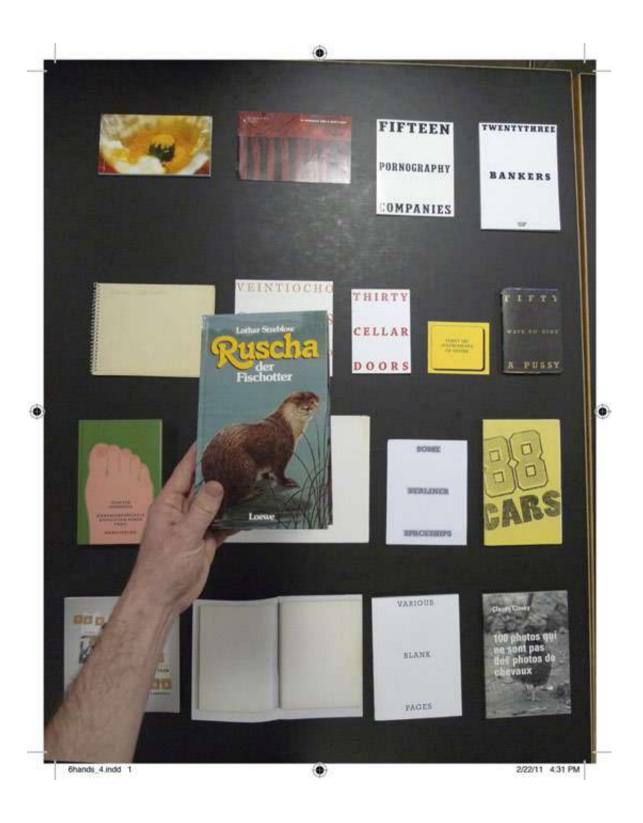
There are a variety of techniques of appropriation employed (often combined) in books today:

- the strategic use of found and pre-used material, be it image, object, sound, text or thought
- the use of an existing layout scheme or corporate identity (see Kippenberger, especially)
- the 1:1-use or paraphrase of a historic book title, using the same or alluding words, syntax or rhythm
- the reenactment of an «old» concept with «new» material
- the reenactment of «old» material with a «new» concept
- if a book paraphrases one explicit historical or contemporary predecessor in title, style and/or content, this technique is what I would call a «greatest hit»

By now the appropriation and paraphrasing of Ed Ruscha constitutes a genre of its own.

TWENTYSIX GASOLINE STATIONS, VARIOUS SMALL FIRES AND MILK, EVERY BUILDING ON THE SUNSET STRIP, SOME LOS ANGELES APARTMENTS, NINE SWIMMING POOLS AND A BROKEN GLASS, THIRTYFOUR PARKING LOTS, A FEW PALM TREES, REAL ESTATE OPPORTUNITIES, DUTCH DETAILS, BABYCAKES WITH WEIGHTS, 5 GIRL FRIENDS sounds so Ruscha.

SIX HANDS AND A CHEESE SANDWICH, THREE PALM TREES, BETWEEN HOMES IN TORON-





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TO, TWENTYSIX ABANDONED GASOLINE STATIONS, MORE LOS ANGELES APARTMENTS, 73 HOUSES OF SINEMORETZ, NONE OF THE BUILDINGS ON SUNSET STRIP, THIRTYSIX FIRE STATIONS, 29 GAS STATIONS AND 26 VARIETY STORES, FIFTEEN PORNOGRAPHY COMPANIES, SEVEN SUNS, SOME BELSUNCE APARTMENTS, SOME FALLEN UMBRELLAS AND SOMETHING ELSE sounds so After-Ruscha.

Eventually this perception, to relate them all «back to Ruscha», has to do also with the historical attention span of the viewer. It is certainly possible to span a larger arc of tension. We may for example go back into the 18th and 19th century in Japan, when image-based chap-books were published in 3-, even 4-digit-print-runs, most notably under the authorship of Hiroshige and Hokusai:

THE HAUNTED HOUSE OF THE ONE HUNDRED HORRIBLE STORIES, SEVEN FANCIFUL HABITS, SEVEN ASPECTS OF THE ACTOR, FIFTYTHREE STATIONS OF THE TOKAIDO, FOUR SAMURAI FAMILIES, THIRTYSIX VIEWS OF MT FUJI, ONE HUNDRED VIEWS OF MOUNT FUJI, UNUSUAL VIEWS OF FAMOUS BRIDGES IN VARIOUS PROVINCES, ONE HUNDRED POEMS EXPLAINED BY A NURSE sounds like the appropriation and paraphrasing of Hokusai constitutes a genre of its own

Did you know that 12 years before Ed Ruscha published EVERY BUILDING ON THE SUNSET STRIP, a Japanese artist called Yoshikazu Suzuki photographed buildings on Ginza, Tokyo, in almost the same style, and, believe it or not, published it under the title GINZA HACCHO (along with a second volume by Japanese writer and artist Shohachi Kimura) as an accordion foldout book?

Did Ruscha know? Does it matter if he knew? Maybe the belief that an appropriation is always a conscious strategic decision made by an author is just as naive as believing in an «original» author in the first place. Probably the wheel, just as the telephone, too, was invented more than once.

PS: There is a vast number of Printed Matter and other visible things on Paper not necessarily meant to be viewed as after Ruscha (most notably books before R., books conceived by R. himself & books by people who never heard of R.), but as always, half of the work is done by the viewer. Or, as Baldessari put it, you can take paint off a duck, but you cant take a duck out of a painting.

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Anonymous, 26 VEDUTE OFFSET DA KODACHROME (VENEZIA SOUVENIR)

Anonymous, A WALK PAST STANDING SWIMMINGPOOLS

Anonymous, B BAR & GRILL (Menu, Postcard, Calling Card), New York

Anonymous, FIFTY WAYS TO HIDE A PUSSY, 2007

Anonymous, FORTY SIX INSTRUMENTS OF DESIRE, Iowa City, 1991

Anonymous, NIAGARA FALLS Thirty-Six Fine Views, 1892

Anonymous (Edward Ruscha), TWENTYSIX GASOLINE STATIONS, Lulu, 2009, POD

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Burton, Wendy, REAL ESTATE OPPORTUNITIES, For A Small Fee, Inc., 2011, ed. 100

Bush, Stephen, Every Trail Marker For Twelve Miles, Lulu, 2008, POD

Carlson, Corinne, Henderson, Karen, Hlady, Marla, ROAD TEST, Toronto, 2000, ed. 100

Cazorla, Pauline, 67 beds, 21 in north america, 2012, ed. 30

Charlston, Lin, Too Many Trees And a Tesco Bag, London, 2008

Clark, Timothy (ed.), 100 Views of Mount Fuji, London, Weatherhill, 2001

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Coward, Shaun, The buildings of the University of Chester, Blurb, 2011, POD

Cowley, Benjamin, FORTY EIGHT PUB BATHROOMS, Blurb, 2011, POD

Daniel, Bill, DEAD GAS STATIONS, New York, The Holster, 2010, ed. 50

Davidson, Cathy N., 36 VIEWS of MOUNT FUJI (On finding myself in Japan), New York, A Plume Book, 1993

Davis, Adam & Kate, REAL Book Buying OPPORTUNITIES, New York, Akdavisbooks, 2009

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Eaton, Jeff, A LOT, 2007
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Estrada, Ruy, CANON STREET TEST, Blurb, 2013, POD
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Flichman, Rafael, F1, Paris, 1999
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Giasson, Steve, SOME GASOLINE PRICES, Apple Pie Editions/Lulu, Manchester 2011, POD
Glicksberg, Kate & Orlov Piotr, Christmas in Lone Pine, VSW Press: Rochester NY, 2008
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Habicht, Dejan, ONE GASOLINE STATION, Ljubljana, Zavod P.A.R.A.S.I.T.E., 2010, POD
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Lewis, Jonathan, 9 BUILDERS, Blurb, 2012, POD

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Murphy, Dan, 88 BIKES, Philadelphia, 2010

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Mussman, Toby, 29 Gas Stations and 26 Variety Stores, South Portland (ME), T. Mussman, 2005

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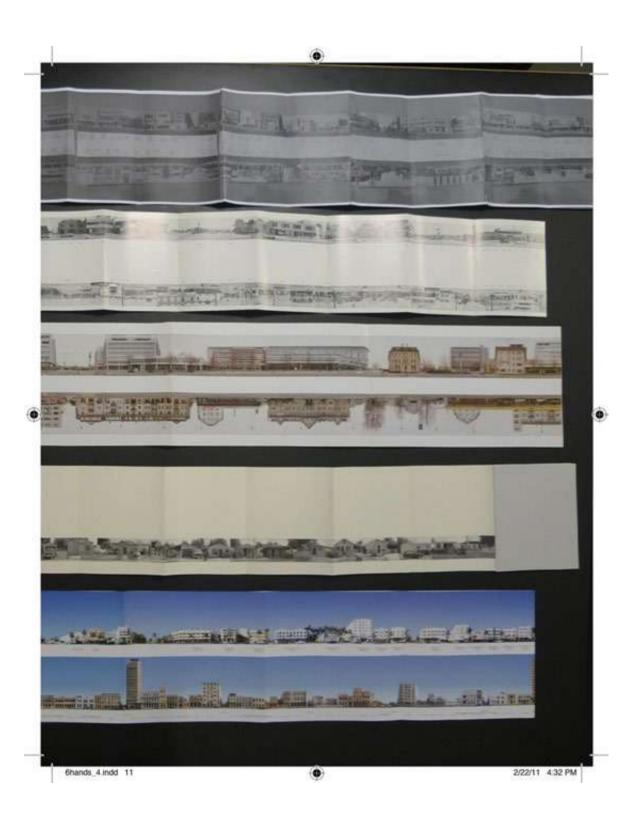
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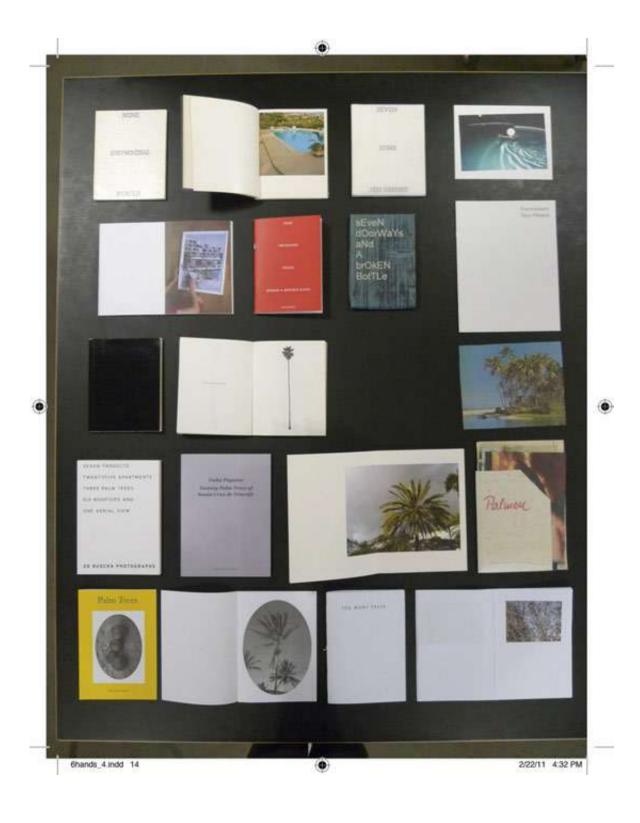


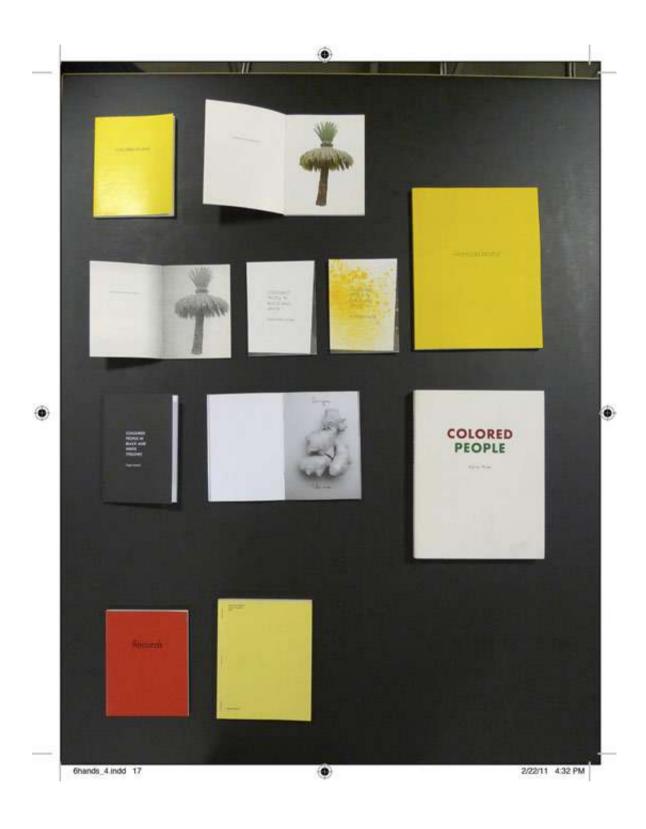


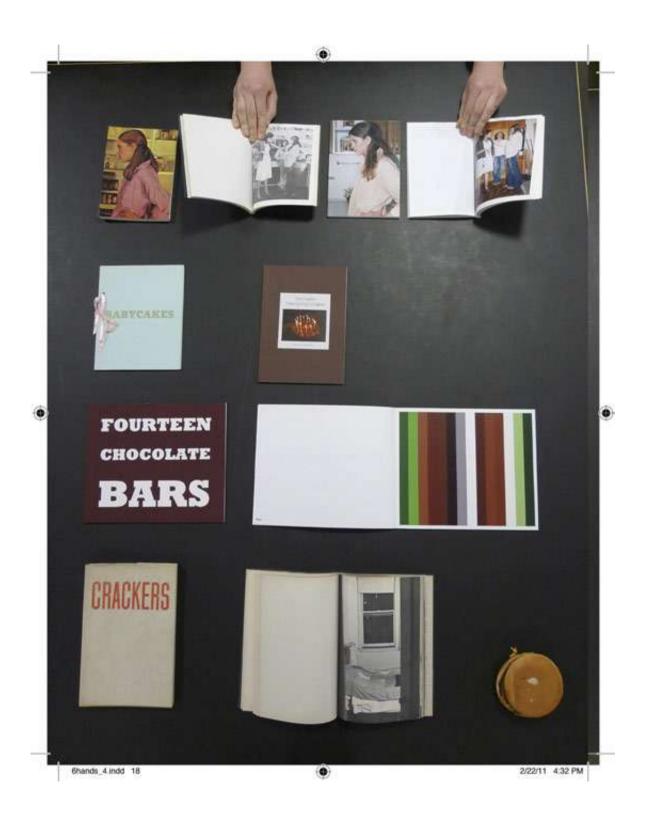


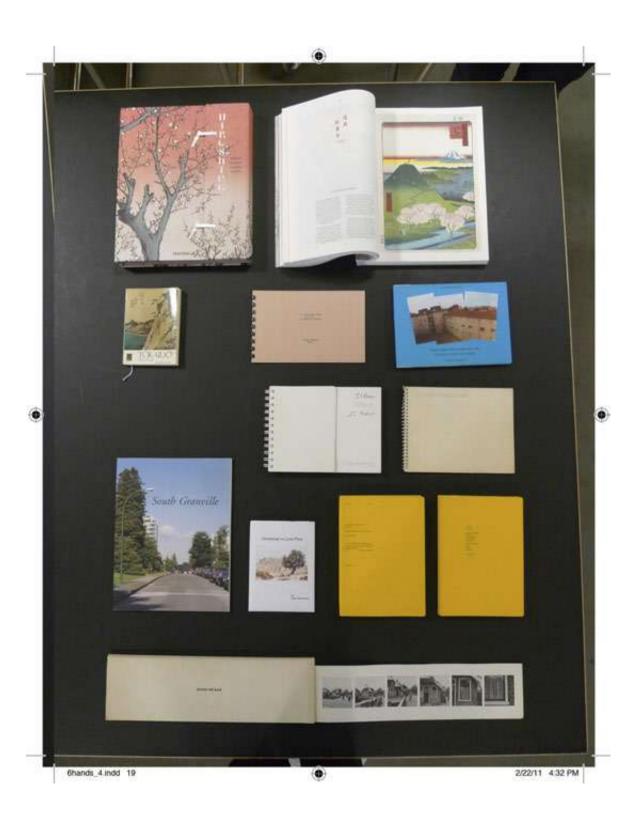














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Pichler, Michalis, SECHSUNDZWANZIG AUTOBAHN FLAGGEN, Revolver, 2006, ed. 600 (50 with white cover)

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Piper, Adrian, COLORED PEOPLE, London, Book Works, 1991, ed. 1000

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Putrock, Joe, TWENTYSIX GASOLINE CANS, New York, Small Batch Editions, 2012, ed. 300

Rafman, Jon, SIXTEEN GOOGLE STREET VIEWS, Lenexa (KS), Golden Age, 2009, ed. 100

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Ruwedel, Mark, ONE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED TWELVE PALMS, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, 2010, ed. 500

Sachs, Tom, NUTSY'S ROAD TEST, New York, Allied Cultural Prosthetics, 2001

Saint-Loubert Bié , Jérôme, Sunset Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, 1999

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Seifert, Frank, PASSION - Le Mont St Michel, Blurb, 2010, POD

Sérandour, Yann, Fire Station No. 8, Fire Station No. 20, Fire Station No. 48, (3 Postcards), Montreal, 2007

Sérandour, Yann, THIRTYSIX FIRE STATIONS, Rennes, 2004, ed. 600

Shaffer, Travis, ELEVEN MEGA CHURCHES, Lexington, KY, 2010, ed. 1000

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Schmidt, Andreas, NINE LIVE SWIMMING POOLS, 2011, ed. 100

Sowden, Thomas, FIFTYTWO SHOPPING TROLLEYS IN PARKING LOTS, Bristol, 2004/2010 ed. 15/100

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Sowden, Thomas, Some of The Buildings on The Sunset Strip, Los Angeles, 2008, ed. 30

Starks, Gary, A Different View out of a Similar Window, Toronto, 1996

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Starks, Gary, Three Palm Trees, Toronto, 1996

Steele-Perkins, Chris, FUJI, New York, Umbrage Editions, 2002

Stevens, EF, Covers, 2009

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