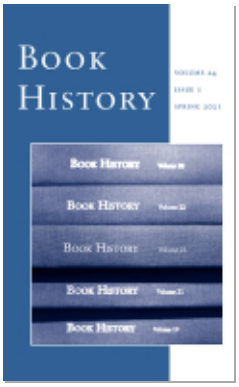
"You Shall Look at This or at Nothing": Gaylord Schanilec and the Value of the Fine Press Book



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"You Shall Look at This or at Nothing": *Gaylord Schanilec and the Value of the Fine Press Book*

Alexa Hazel

American writer, engraver, and printer Gaylord Schanilec's (1955–) *Lac des pleurs*[1] arrives at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room in a nondescript box. The box is placed on a spacious map table in a wood-paneled and carpeted room. The readers seem serious and well-dressed. Foam cushions are set aside, as are paperweights. The librarian adjusts a sophisticated spotlight. The viewer unfolds a first layer of casing to reveal *Lac*'s custom-made, burgundy cloth box. The gray-green Roman typeface of the book's title,[2] drawn, I later learn, by Schanilec's contemporary, the typographer, writer, and printer Russell Maret (1971–), is shadowed by softer gray lines. The spine, in a leathery deep-water blue, features a small pelican. The fabric slides apart to reveal a pale blue interior and the book's smooth cover, a marbled constellation of greens, yellows, and burgundies. The ripple-disturbed front is both surface and depth, solid and ephemeral, and each rock or spot of light calls for the reader's attention. The overall experience is astounding—like opening a box of treasure.

Schanilec, described in some fine-press circles as the "preeminent multichromatic wood engraver,"[3] explores and reproduces—in text and image—what he finds in the natural world: insects, birds, trees, the flora and fauna of the Mississippi River's Lake Pepin, a waterfall, and, most recently, urban flowers. Like "naturalism" in Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*,[4] in *Mayflies of the Driftless Region* (2005), *Sylvæ* (2007), and *Lac* (2015), Schanilec's style is not an attempt to imitate nature, but rather the fruit of "a feeling for the beauty of organic form": a desire "to feel himself into" the "happiness of the organically alive."[5] His voice is diffident and exploratory, and is as subtle as his use of color.

What are his art objects? They elude easy classification. Simultaneously text—poetry, anecdotes, arguments—and image, we can appreciate them as paintings and yet handle them as books. They evoke the British "private

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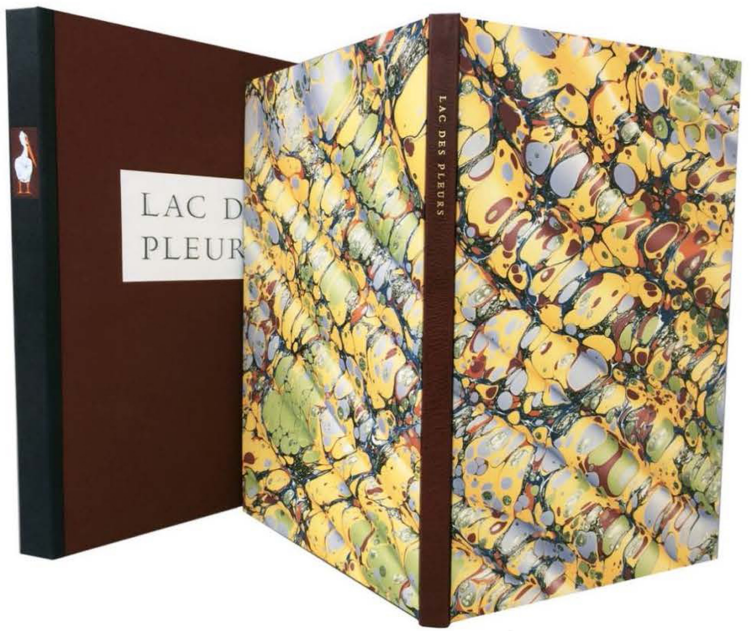

Figure 1. The cover and box of Schanilec's *Lac des pleurs* (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2015). Schanilec printed one hundred copies of *Lac*, originally priced at $5,000, after seven years of research and production.

press" tradition, of which the Daniel Press, T.J. Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker's Doves Press, William Morris's Kelmscott Press, and St John Hornby's Ashendene Press are the most famous exemplars. Both Schanilec and Maret draw on these pioneers for inspiration, share their élan and at least part of their vision, and approach bookmaking with equivalent solemnity. The "private press" movement is nevertheless geographically and historically situated: a nineteenth-century reaction to industrialization. The term would be an anachronism if applied to contemporary work.

Both artists also understand their creative activities with reference to the American press revival of the mid-1970s, when letterpress printing machines—technology that dates to the fifteenth century—became increasingly obsolete, freed from their use value, and thus cheap, and the American "book arts" movement acquired the technical means to flourish.[6] A

chronicler and practitioner of the craft, Johanna Drucker, suggests, perhaps overoptimistically, that the twentieth century was the "century of artists' books."[7] "Artists' books" are works of art, not representations of works of art, and their creators concern themselves, thematically or aesthetically, with the process of the book's production.[8] Yet because "artists' books" encompasses a range of artistic experimentation within and beyond the book's codex structure, from origami to pop-up books, the term suggests too much to serve as an adequate description for Schanilec's objects. If "private press" is an anachronism, "artists' books" is too imprecise.

When I asked Maret to classify the objects that he and Schanilec make, he proposed two terms: "third stream books" or "fine press artist books." "Third stream," coined by composer Gunther Schuller, originally referred to a synthesis of jazz and classical music. Sandra Kirshenbaum, in *Five Fine Printers*,[9] uses the term to define books whose "creative impetus originates and flows not from the artist/illustrator, nor from the author/publishers, but from the printer."[10] As to the fruit of this creative impetus, the term "fine press" introduces more questions than it resolves. Fine press books use handset type and letterpress technology and are produced in limited editions. The term is also evaluative. Drucker describes these books as "carefully produced work." They are "well-made" or made with "close attention."[11] The "Fine Press Book Association" (FPBA) homepage features a characteristic image of a hand selecting and setting metal type from a wooden case. It defines its goal as "promoting the appreciation of beautiful books and printing skills."[12] Wikipedia suggests "fine press" is "printed matter of exceptional intrinsic quality and artistic taste."[13] "Fine" seems to refer to a book's self-evident value.

Whatever else they are, these books are valuable. Schanilec printed one hundred copies of *Lac*, originally priced at $5,000, after seven years of research and production. *Lac*'s visual and haptic richness call for the reader's careful attention. The pages feel substantial as they turn, and when light catches one of its many watermarks, a reader is reminded that the book is precious enough to be vulnerable to theft.

The question of the nature of this value animates the following paper. I adopt first the institutional approach to axiology, and consider whether the perceived value of a fine press artist book is simply the mystified consequence of commodity fetishism or of an arbitrary game of social prestige. According to this approach, a fine press book is valuable, or desirable, because it is desired. The books' exchange value and the fact of its presence in institutions evince desire and produce desirability. I consider the merits and

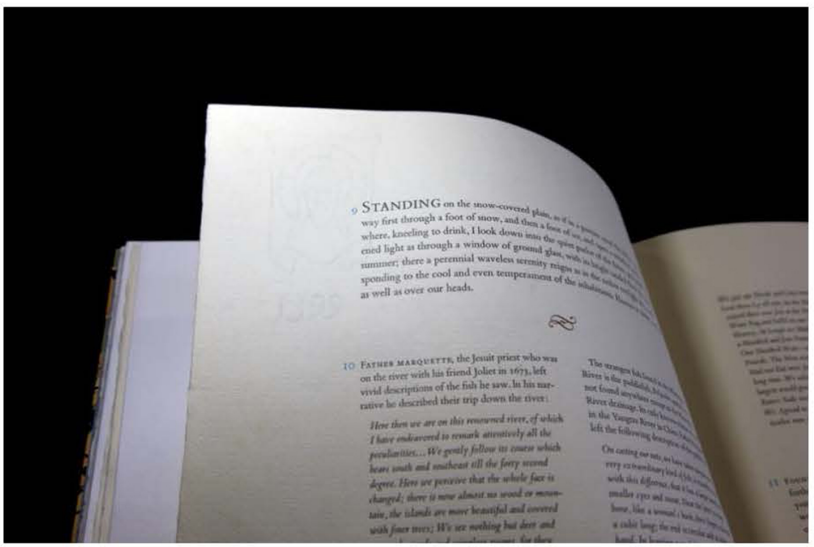

Figure 2. A watermarked page of Schanilec's *Lac*. Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

deficiencies of this interpretation. I then suggest that institutional frames serve as a condition of possibility for a second kind of value, aesthetic value. After borrowing a hedonistic definition of "aesthetic value" from aesthetical empiricists, I examine the nature of the encounter between a viewer and Schanilec's natural histories, and propose that what is valuable in this experience is the practice of reading his books incite. His works persuade their viewers to adopt a reverential posture, and to read and respond in a slow, attentive way. I suggest that this exercise may constitute a pleasure as well as a kind of training with desirable consequences. Institutional frames make possible the goods that coincide with aesthetic appreciation, so that a fine press book's aesthetic value is often also predicated on its institutional worth.

The cost of understanding our "social universes"

It is possible that the perceived value—the "inherent quality and artistic taste"—of fine press artists' books is an illusion produced and maintained

by economic and institutional forces. Aiding and abetting this interpretation is Drucker, in her book's fifth chapter, as she discusses the "auratic" quality of many artists' books. She suggests that they have an "often inexplicable air of power, attraction, or uniqueness," "a charged presence," as if they "bear meaning just in their being."[14] Frederic Jameson, who famously argued that as society grew increasingly art-like, works of art became increasingly indistinguishable from fungible commodities, would suggest that the "charged presence" of artists' books is a product of late capitalism. Within this framework, the source for what Drucker considers the attraction of these art objects is actually their monetary worth, for we live, according to Jameson, within "a society where exchange value has been generalized to the point at which the very memory of use value is effaced."[15] Wealthy individuals acquire these objects and display them in conspicuous acts of consumption. As it sits in the warm light of a reading room in Oxford's Bodleian library, Schanilec's *Sylvæ* could be read as the quintessential fetish commodity. The four- or five-digit price tags of many of these objects remain tucked inside their covers.

There is a historical precedent for a Marxist critique of fine press books. William Morris founded an early revolutionary socialist league in 1884 and the Kelmscott Press, for the printing of costly limited edition illustrated books, in 1891. Drawing on Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, Morris believed, to quote Caroline Ascott, that the "artistic standards of an age" offer an index of its values, and that these values are reciprocally "shaped by the conditions under which artistic labour is undertaken."[16] The revolt by Morris and his collaborators against the Victorian "aesthetic blight" was thus an attempt to offer "portents and promises" of another, utopian socialist political configuration.[17] Maret calls Morris's books "a rare example of a political thinker actually living his ideas."[18] Cold-eyed critics are nonetheless quick to point out a contradiction. William Peterson notes how Kelmscott books, though they "intended to symbolize a protest against the ethos of Victorian industrial capitalism," instead became "example[s] of conspicuous consumption."[19] Works of art, like other commodities, necessarily conform to the logic of the market, and both the production—Morris's middle-class wealth—and consumption of his art objects undercut their purported socialist vision. Within the all-consuming culture industry, any provocation Morris intended is, to use the apt expression of Theodor Adorno, "liquidated."[20]

These familiar critiques could be redirected to the contemporary works of Schanilec. Responses to this critique are, however, equally transferrable. Elizabeth Carolyn Miller acknowledges that Morris's books circulated ac-

cording to market dynamics, but argues that his aestheticism and revolutionary socialism were not in conflict. She elegantly draws on Jameson to support her claim. Miller suggests that Morris created through the Kelmscott Press "a marginalized print Utopia: print forms that situate themselves outside of the historical present and outside the calcified status quo."[21] Morris's aestheticism was a "politicized secession," which allowed the artist to imagine an alternative vision in the same way that "Utopia constructs itself in relation to present-day reality."[22] The removal from the everyday is not a retraction from politics, according to Miller, but rather the creation of a space in which the free play of imagination can work outside of contemporary political logic.

Schanilec and Maret privilege the imagination over instrumental reasoning. "Part of the success of the industrial mindset is that almost every appraisal of worth is connected to industry," Maret notes.[23] He suggests that his books are political insofar as he never takes "the easiest solution," but rather does "whatever makes the most sense for the project." "Buying ridiculously expensive paper, spending two years on a book with sixty copies, or more years, or fewer copies… at root what is required is a complete rejection of commercial thought."[24] The books' sizeable price tags both advertise their commodity-status and symptomatize their refusal of commercial norms.

That Schanilec and Maret's art objects enter the world on paths bent by its forces is inevitable. This fact hardly dissipates the uncompromising spirit with which they were made, for Schanilec and Maret's skills could be employed elsewhere to earn more money. Maret once owned a business for printing wedding invitations—100 of which would sell, incredibly, for $10,000, far more than one of his books. He subsequently abandoned the business as a misuse of his talents. Both artists describe the process of production of their art as a quasi-religious experience.

There are, moreover, important distinctions to be drawn within the world of artistic commodities. With regard to production, Schanilec and Maret's books uniquely advocate for a different and non-market-based understanding of value. The artists find value in producing an object that accords with their vision, rather than with consumer demands. With regard to consumption, the market for these books has increasingly shifted from private collectors to institutions. While libraries and museums also conform to commercial logic, because these institutions are relatively autonomous and often funded by "true believers,"[25] it would be overly simplistic to reduce their acquisitions to the allure of conspicuous consumption. A library

"consumes" fine press books in a different way than private collectors do, and not every expensive fine press book is being kept and curated by large research institutions. There must, then, be other scales of value according to which institutions discriminate.

Reading fine press books as fetish commodities seems to be both justified and misguided—solicited and rejected by the objects themselves. For a more complex institutional approach to the question of the value of the fine press book, I turn to French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002). Another way to read these objects is as concretizations of their particular field. They are valuable to the sociologist of texts because, in examining the fine press book, she might reconstruct a complex network of cultural, social, historical, and material actors that together produce the fetish artwork.

Those working within the tradition of book history conceive of the category of literature as something historically definable, rather than ineffable: materially dependent, not universally meaningful. Pioneering figures like D.F. McKenzie and Jerome McGann analyzed the material conditions that made the "literary" possible. Peter D. McDonald credits Bourdieu with "the most persuasive and theoretically sophisticated version" of a way of reading "literature" for the guardians that define and protect it.[26] Bourdieu, in his seminal essay "The Field of Cultural Production," uses the conceptual tool of the "field" to situate an individual text or artwork within this larger context. Randal Johnson, Bourdieu's editor, calls this model "anti-reductionist." The model is also anti-isolationist. "No cultural product exists by itself, i.e. outside the relations of interdependence which link it to other products," Bourdieu writes.[27]

The central, most compelling and disquieting aspect of Bourdieu's aesthetic theory is its incessant call for de-mystification, a crusade that leads Allen Dunn to call Bourdieu's sociology of art a "rough affair."[28] In *The Rules of Art*, Bourdieu writes:

> The producer of the *value of the work of art* is not the artist but the field of production as a universe of belief which produces the value of the work of art as a *fetish* by producing the belief in the creative power of the artist.[29]

The "creative power of the artist" is an illusion established by the field, or the "game," and internalized by the game's players. So too is the value of the artwork—"or, which amounts to the same thing, of belief in the value of the work"[30]—an illusion. The supposed value of a work of art is located on an arbitrary scale produced by the field. The artwork is used to assign

social distinction, and its "inexplicable air of power" is a consequence of this ability. The love of art is therefore a collective misrecognition: narcissism supported "by a reciprocal vanity that links producers and consumers in an economy of admiration."[31] In the case of fine press books, the aesthete internalizes the belief in the value of the art object and, in acting in the field—purchasing, admiring, or creating fine press books—"gives objective form to the mental structures that were originally internalized as features of the objective world."[32] There does not appear to be an exit from this chicken-egg logic chamber ("the collective adhesion to the game that is both cause and effect of the existence of the game"[33]) except, perhaps, in enlightened sociology.

What does become clear in Bourdieu is that describing the material production and consumption of a fine press book does not exhaustively account for its value. In de-mystifying value, sociologists of texts widen the lens, attending to a dense network of social and material forces. A suspicious reader exposes to the FPBA that their "intrinsically" "beautiful" objects are in fact valuable according to the logic of an empirically analyzable field. Belief in artistic value constitutes a slavish internalization of this field's forces.

Books are perceived to be desired and consequently made to be desirable, for example via restricted circulation. Although libraries circulate the texts, this circulation is inevitably limited. A book partially hidden from view becomes a "cult" object, in the Benjaminian sense: nonreproducible, secreted away, inspiring reverence.[34] Institutions maintain the balance between privacy and accessibility necessary for the production of the objects' aura.

The value of a fine press book is produced within an "economy of admiration" that links libraries; dealers; book, box, and paper makers; bookfairs; and private collectors in a game of "collective misrecognition." Libraries like the Bodleian serve as patrons to Schanilec by purchasing his work. Other forms of patronage include the procurement of the artist's archive—Schanilec recently sold his to the University of Minnesota—and accepting to pay in advance a discounted price for copies of a book. This money, along with advance sales from the "deluxe" editions, helps the artist procure expensive material for the project. Prestige is at stake in acquisitions. The Morgan Library in New York has requested for "special" material to be added to deluxe copies of fine press books (and thus, special deluxe fine press books), so as to make their collection stand out in the field. The motivation to acquire a given book comes in part from the need to compete with the collections of other major institutions. Acquiring hand-made books that respond intelligently to the digital age, as Schanilec and Maret's do, is

also crucial for an institution like the Bodleian, which must maintain its relevance as a curator of cultural history.

This "economy of prestige"[35] is materially analyzable through the four fine-press bookfairs sponsored partly by the FPBA. Oxford holds a biannual fair at which prizes like the "Judges' Choice Award" are allocated. *Mayflies* won the award in 2005 and *Lac* in 2015; at this same fair, in 2007, *Sylvæ* won the Gregynog Prize. Distinguished books become valuable acquisitions for the very libraries that partially sponsor the bookfairs, and prizes increase the prestige of the books' makers. As Bourdieu notes, the buyer "contributes to 'making' the value of the author he supports," while the artist is "offered as a guarantee all the symbolic capital the merchant has accumulated."[36] And while art lovers may protest against this kind of cynical analysis, Bourdieu, wants "'people of taste'"[37] to make a "break with idealism and literary hagiography."[38] A de-mystification of what we adore is the cost of understanding our "social universes."[39]

The claim that institutions produce and maintain value removes speculation from artistic evaluation. A fine press book is valuable because of the social, material, and historical forces that create its value. This scientific approach may be applauded for its evenhandedness. In its impartiality, however, it also and necessarily rides roughshod over the particularity of an art object. Adopting the sociological approach, we may discuss the value of a fine press book without looking at the book itself.

Theorists like Dunn, in responding to Bourdieu, puzzle over the counter-intuitive nature of that position. Most would agree that cultural products do not exist in isolation. After acknowledging interdependences, it seems nevertheless possible to also attend to other, overlapping, or related forms of value. According to Dunn, even Bourdieu—who warmly praises Flaubert—acknowledges a kind of worth that is independent of institutions and social networks:

> Maybe there is here, for those who want it, a rather indisputable criterion of value for all artistic production.... the investment in a work which is measurable by the cost in effort, in sacrifices of all kinds and, definitively, in time, and which goes hand in hand with the consequent independence from the forces and constraints exercised outside the field, or, worse, within it.[40]

Bourdieu might allow for work within the field of cultural production to be valuable if 1) it costs time and effort, and 2) it attempts to resist forces of social determination. As Dunn points out, Bourdieu favors time and effort

as criteria because they can be objectively measured, unlike creativity. In order to satisfy his second criterion, however, in addition to working very hard for a very long time, some sort of originality is required. "One does not spontaneously resist the pressures of ethical or logical conformism," Dunn writes.[41] This passage may point to an unexplain ed normative element in Bourdieu's theory. It may also point to another, less ideological space in which to claim that Schanilec's works are valuable.

The investment of effort into an art object does not automatically yield results like *Sylvæ*. As Bourdieu points out, in appreciating the brilliance of their results, we appeal to an internalized scale for assessing merit. Yet, the fact that this scale is socially determined does not necessarily dampen our appreciation. We might acknowledge "the arbitrary nature of rules that govern aesthetic performance"—that coloring in the lines is a socially constructed standard—but maintain awe for the works that demonstrate "aesthetic virtuosity" within those standards.[42] What is more, and to take it a step beyond Dunn, the standards for excellence in the world of fine printing require a great deal of time and effort to meet. They are, according to Bourdieu's own criterion, less arbitrary than he would like to admit.

In an interview, Schanilec spoke often of his tools and the time it has taken to know them. He insisted that "the more you use a tool the more you get to know that tool and the more it gets to know you," and that "these things take a lifetime to learn."[43] Schanilec has been working on one particular block, in which he is attempting to capture, in wood, photography's "bokeh" effect, for over eighteen months. He engraves it every morning. The lines he carves are so fine that, after initially proofing his block, ink remained trapped inside. His new task is to "re-enter the existing lines," in order to clear the ink. "I can almost do it blindfolded," Schanilec says. "The connection between the tip of that tool and my hand has gotten so incredibly sensitive."[44] Bourdieu may find that our admiration before carved lines that swirl together into fingerprints of vague bokeh, and the artist's accompanying meditation on exactitude and the vague and indefinable, to be narcissistic and determined. Bourdieu might also admire those lines as the objectification of four decades of sacrifice made to the honing of a craft.

Some of the appreciation we feel for fine press books may come from a perception of the effort they require to create. Neither Maret nor Schanilec intends to make a "precious, limited object." Rather, insists Maret, who requires physical therapy to cope with printing a major project, "I make fifty books because I could not possibly make more."[45] Each book requires intense collaboration. *Lac*'s colophon tells the reader that its mesmerizing

Figure 3. Schanilec's "bokeh" block, 2019. Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

Figure 4. A detail from the block.

cover was marbled in Wiltshire, England, by Jemma Lewis, who was inspired by a photograph of a wet stone in Lake Pepin. Jill Jevn built the case in which *Mayflies* is held, a case that features eight delicate mayflies with feathered wings suspended in flight. These replicas, created by David Lucca, are fixed onto fishing hooks, alluding to the method by which Schanilec caught the specimens, the enchantment he feels in examining these specimens, and the allure of the book itself. The wood that Schanilec discusses in *Sylvæ* he himself cut, dried, and treated in collaboration with fellow book-artist Ben Verhoeven. Schanilec built a kiln in his wood shop and a two-story solar kiln in his lumber shed in the Wisconsin countryside to complete the project.[46] The reader need not have expert knowledge of the process of creating a fine press book to appreciate these efforts. In blogs, colophons, or the text itself, Schanilec's books call attention to their embedded technical intelligence and international collaboration. This value can only be perceived in engagement with the art object.

De-mystification is useful when applied to commercial texts, in which subtle acts of framing are often invisible; it is less incisive for a text that is so clearly framed and curated. "The familiarity of the basic conventions of books tends to banalize them," writes Drucker; "the structures by which books present information, ideas, or diversions, become habitual so that they erase, rather than foreground, their identity."[47] A poem in an anthol-

Figure 5. "Cottonwood," in Sylvæ (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2008), the deluxe edition of which includes block specimens of each tree. Photograph by Benjamin Verhoeven, courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

ogy often seems to the reader as something stable: fixed, legible and easily consumed. Fine press books, however, willfully resist this extractivist model of reading. As Maret notes, "you cannot access the content of one of our books without being in front of the actual book."[48] The acts of institutional curation typically hidden in commercial texts are brought to the surface. Fine press books call attention to their own bookishness. It is as if the objects are intentionally mystified.

A skeptical reader may focus on the ways that institutional frames—including market price, bookfair prizes, and the ritual of the reading room—produce a fine press book's value. That value is so produced is undeniable. These institutional frames, however, also ensure a sense of singularity essential to the experience of the object. Libraries produce and guard the value of these texts; only in being so guarded can these texts then act on their viewer, disrupting the unconscious ways in which she typically reads, and train her to see in a different way. Institutional frames serve as condition of possibility for an exercise in seeing, reading, and knowing, or what this paper's second part considers constitutive of "aesthetic value."

More vital and singular

In the Introduction to *The Nature of Aesthetic Value*, Hugo A. Meynell admits that "[a]esthetics is notorious, even among branches of philosophy, for the number of intractable problems which it presents."[49] The ontology of an artwork, the basis for aesthetic judgments, the nature of aesthetic form, representation, and expression, and the word "art" itself (evaluative? descriptive? expressive? a speech-act?) remain, discouragingly, contested. Aestheticians still wrestle with Plato's infamous objection: what value, aesthetic or otherwise, would artistic representations possess that the originals do not?[50]

Fortunately, there is a generally accepted "party line" on the question of aesthetic value. Dominic Lopes describes it as the "hedonic theory." "An aesthetic value is a property of an item that stands in constitutive relation to finally valuable experiences of subjects who correctly understand the item."[51] Though a complete explication of this definition is beyond the remit of this discussion, two points ought to be emphasized here: first, the party line primarily locates aesthetic value in "experiences," not in properties, like beauty. Robert Stecker calls this position "aesthetical empiricism."[52] Second, the definition is not circular, or at least not problematically circular. Proponents of the hedonic theory find "valuable experiences" to be definable in a way that "aesthetically valuable" is not. What constitutes a "valuable experience"? Meynell describes it as "an extension and clarification of consciousness," and later, a kind of satisfaction "gained from exercise and enlargement of the capacities constitutive of human consciousness," including experience ("sensations, feelings, moods"), understanding, judgment, and decision.[53] An artwork affords its viewer a valuable experience. The value of this experience involves the exercise of important cognitive faculties.

An analysis of aesthetic value, according to the hedonic theory, focuses on the encounter between a viewer and an object to be viewed, and examines the kind of training this encounter offers.[54] Cultural critics like Jameson and Bourdieu read the aura of the fine press book as either the allure of the commodity fetish or as an arbitrary but socially determined effect of the field. This attraction may also be interpreted as an invitation: a call to enter into a space in which the object of art readjusts the way that we see. Aesthetic objects, like Latourian speed bumps or Jane Bennett's "vibrant matter,"[55] can behave as distinct actors. Contact with these actors can produce change.

The sincerity of Schanilec's three natural histories makes their invitation easy to accept. In my discussion of the inadequacies of a de-mystificatory critique, I note how these books superficially advertise the various ways

in which they have been framed and curated. This contributes to a sense that Schanilec's books are honest: authentic and clearly authored. Unlike many postmodernist texts, stylized by pastiche and irony and preoccupied by the endless deferral of meaning, his books are like the self-objectifying work of which humanists after Ludwig Feuerbach dream, as when Marx, in 1844, anticipates a time when production is humanized and "our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature."[56] Schanilec's works read as extensions of himself.

In interacting with *Mayflies*, *Sylvæ*, or *Lac*, a viewer encounters an author determined to capture life on paper. The books assemble historical and anecdotal text, classificatory systems, and images to build an accurate description of natural objects. Schanilec understands this project's futility. He delights, nonetheless, in the effort it requires. In producing *Mayflies*, Schanilec engraved the insects as he saw them under the lens of his microscope. The wood engravings are accompanied by identifications from an entomologist, whose personality leaks into the "scientific text." The book is Nabokovian in its sensibility, slow in its savoring of color and texture, clever and precise. In *Sylvæ*, Schanilec and his apprentice selected fifty specimens from the trees growing on his Wisconsin property and printed them directly from the wood. Various texts accompany the wood engravings and woodcuts, including personal stories and histories from local archives, as well as descriptions of each tree and the process of printing from it. One specimen of White Oak serves as its cover.[57] Wood is the subject of the book, its case, and its printing blocks.[58] In *Lac*, the artist "attempted the impossible—to capture the river on paper."[59] Schanilec traces a twenty-two mile stretch of the Mississippi in words and image, compiling excerpts from journals of European explorers and juxtaposing this text with his exquisite reproductions of the region's flora and fauna.

The project of these histories is to know and name his local surroundings, every feature of which, Schanilec discovers, is singular and requires his utmost attention. While working on *Mayflies*, Schanilec first realized that "no two pairs of wings are identical," and that, in fact, each *wing* is unique. He subsequently finds this singularity "in every pattern" that he attempts to reproduce from a natural model. "It's that diverse," he marvels. With regard to one of the six outstanding multi-chromatic prints in *Lac*, Schanilec notes, "When I was working on the Redhorse and from the Redhorse on, I was making individual portraits of each individual scale." And because the scales are multi-chromatic, Schanilec engraved "each one of those scales three or four times." Schanilec tells of a sense for the "oceanic" when he

engraves a scale's "portrait." It is both an intuition for the abundance of the world and awe in knowing that we are immersed in this abundance. This appreciation has encouraged Schanilec to develop into a sensitive listener. Referencing *Sylvæ*, he asserts, "the materials themselves became part of the composition. Whatever they had to say, I had to listen to."[60] Schanilec appreciates that the singularity and abundance of the natural world combine to make its description very difficult.

Schanilec employs image, text, and classificatory systems in order to "fix" or "capture" these natural objects: to know the world as precisely as he can. As first explored in *Sylvæ*, Schanilec uses the technique of nature printing to create impressions directly from the objects. He recently illustrated a children's book, *My Mighty Journey*, in which he printed from plants, stone, and the carcass of a dogfish. Though viewers will often comment that his prints seem "abstract," Schanilec insists, rather, that they are "as true a representation of that surface as you can get.... [E]ven a photograph is once removed."[61] Taxonomy offers another way to capture the natural world. Before the "diagnosis" of each mayfly specimen, its "key characteristics" and attendant wood engraving, Schanilec offers five different classifications: the insect's order in the book, the specimen number, its Latin name, its colloquial name in English, and the date that the artist captured it. This classificatory excess is further exaggerated in *Sylvæ*. Each tree is listed with: its specimen number ("023"), colloquial name ("Plum"), Latin name ("*Prunus Americana*"), date of felling ("May 10, 2006"), year of germination ("1990"), diameter ("three inches"), the tenants at the time of seedling ("Brenda & Gaylord Schanilec"), and the date of printing ("May 4–12, 2007"). *Sylvæ*'s deluxe edition includes block specimens of each tree. On the map inside *Lac*, Schanilec lists the various names of local natural features. Lac des pleurs is known also as Pool Four, Lake Pepin, and "Minday Tanka," or "'Great Lake.'"[62] Isabelle Creek also goes by Clear Water Creek and Rocher Rouge River. The ninetieth fish from Lake Pepin reproduced in one of the book's appendices is called *Lepomis cyanellus*, Rafinesque, Green Sunfish, Blue-Spotted Sunfish, and Red-Eye.[63] These lists, taxonomies, illustrations, anecdotes, and specimen samples, as well as the process of printing directly from the objects, are strategies to carefully reproduce what the engraver sees.

Schanilec delicately meditates on how man-made systems that ought to be fixing an object, when brought together, create the sense that this object is unfixable. Phrases that mark places on *Lac*'s map, like "A dead drum drifts," are simultaneously specific and vague. Maiden Rock is also Cap a

Figure 6. "Brown Drake," in *Mayflies* (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2005). Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

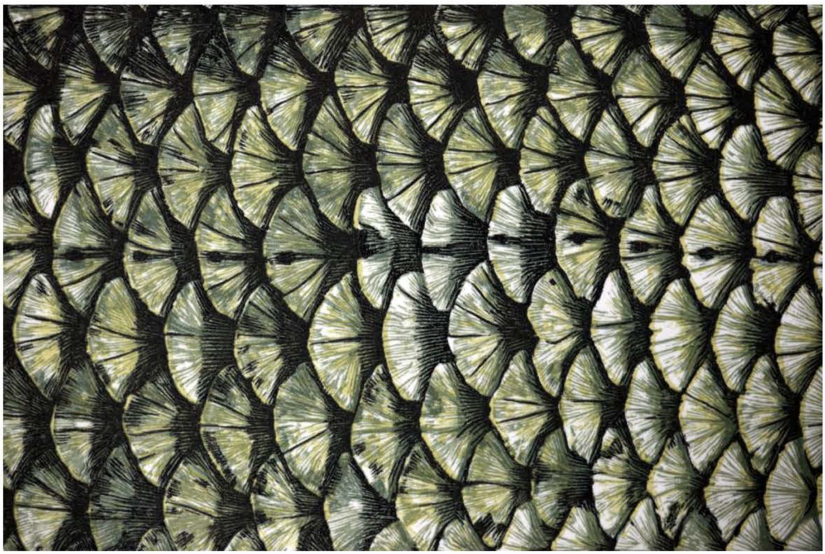

Figure 7. A close-up of the Redhorse scales. In *Lac des pleurs*, (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2015). Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

la Fille, Maiden's Head, and Lover's Leap, and there was once, according to an unreliable European explorer, a scalping just underneath the precipice. Names and descriptions that should stabilize knowledge actually unsettle it, and Schanilec emphasizes the artificiality of these epistemic systems in subtle ways. The scale of *Lac*'s map ("one inch: .96 miles") is repeated in a visual chain that serves as the map's border. Schanilec points to the care and cohesion of cartography, as well as its artificiality. In printing birch, in *Sylvæ*, Schanilec describes how the young specimen was "pushed aside," sawed, cut and carved, and, because "birch wood deteriorates much faster than the bark," the "spongy areas of decay" were removed. They added "makeready" to the cylinder "to give more impression," then "Bondo was used to support the ring of bark separating from the wood."[64] In foregrounding the process of printing from and thus reproducing birch, Schanilec reminds us that there is an element of artificiality to the tree's stable description. Representations of the world are neither easy nor secure. In describing how, in *My Mighty Journey*, he made prints from plants like sage, Schanilec acknowledged that the specimens withered throughout the printing process. He accepted this

Figure 8. An endgrain print of birch from *Sylvæ* (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2008). Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

disintegration, even welcomed it, as the book was thematically concerned with degradation over time. What Adorno might consider acts of epistemic violence[65] are involved in capturing life on paper.

Problems of knowing and representing the world, discussed since antiquity, lie just beneath the surface of Schanilec's natural histories. Like Henri Bergson, who in *Creative Evolution* insists that the intellect cannot conceive of life's "pure mobility,"[66] Schanilec wonders how to capture a changeful world with clumsy tools. Time does not "bite"[67] into solid wood or wood type or words. At the beginning of *Mayflies*, Schanilec gestures toward the "poetic language" of Dr. Garry, "a gifted entomologist," and hopes that the "love of the subject" that the artist and scientist share "shines through" his fine press book.[68] The taxonomy of one mayfly changed during the course of the project. In response, Dr. Garry notes, "taxonomy is an extremely dynamic discipline."[69] Schanilec enjoys reflecting on the paradoxical dynamism of classification: how scientific knowledge is "evolving." In an echo of Bergson, the wood engraver wanted to contemplate the "fluid" nature of existence in his books.[70]

Bergson encourages us to leave epistemology aside and "just live." Schanilec finds the project of grasping the world, despite or because of the vexed division between knowing subject and unknowable object, a life-affirming task. He delights in its excess and mutability, and respects and sympathizes with the scientists who try to carefully pin this mutability down. How can an engraver, what Ruskin calls a "Delineator," an artist that attempts to cut "into a solid substance for the sake of making [his] ideas as permanent as possible,"[71] regain life's "pure mobility"? Fixing and preserving "ephemera" in text and wood[72] produces a kind of alchemy in the "preserved" object, and Schanilec is curious about the nature of this Keatsian transformation. Bergson may abandon, or rather perform the abandonment of, the descriptive task. Schanilec thinks that it is not only worthwhile to try, but also that the pursuit of this description is fundamentally joyful.

We catch a glimmer of natural abundance, hear the "roar which lies on the other side of silence,"[73] on the edges, borders, and margins of Schanilec's natural histories. Objects creep outside of their systems. The end grain print of birch takes on planetary proportions. Lewis's marbled cover evokes constellations as well as microscopic algae. The wings of the Brown Drake look like the tributaries of a river, a mussel recalls both lungs and geological formations, and the long grain woodcut of Ironwood represents a shoreline. These shifts in scale contribute to the books' overall argument: that the world is always more vital and singular than we are able to articulate. De-

Figure 9. "Unionidae downstream," from *Lac des pleurs*. Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

spite, or rather because of this singularity, its attentive study is essential. The expression of this epistemic humility happens between the books' incredibly precise lines. In Schanilec's words, "maybe the kind of work that I do helps to breathe a little bit of joy, and uncertainty, about the world into the world of science."[74]

In *Mayflies, Sylvæ*, and *Lac* a viewer encounters an artist who slowly appreciates, and tries to capture, the natural world. She also encounters the result of this effort: a fine press book made with commensurate attention. *Lac*'s map of Lake Pepin required over five hundred hours just to carve into wood. Unfolded to cover half of a library table, the map is printed on "handmade Moriki kozo paper" and may be the "largest multiple-color wood engraving ever printed."[75] *Sylvæ*'s appendices include a printing log, Kiln Log, a list of the book's characters, and a glossary of terms. *Lac*'s appendices include a Bibliographical Key, a list of "Poems: Report from Pool Four," excerpts from *Notes on the Fish Fauna of Lake Pepin*, by George Wagner (1908), reproductions from Thaddeus Surber's 1920 *Fishes and Fish-Like Vertebrates of Minnesota*, and a list of "specimens collected from Lake Pepin in the course of this investigation." Schanilec calls his printing of box elder "an exercise in subtlety."[76] Even the inclusion of an "errata" slip

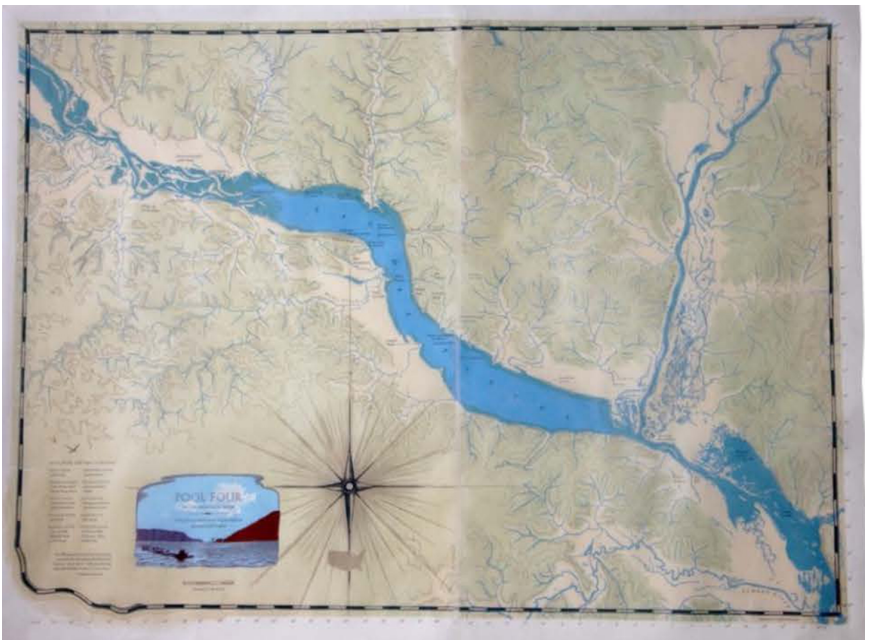

Figure 10. The map of Lake Pepin inside Schanilec's *Lac*, perhaps the "largest multiple-color wood engraving ever printed." The map's scale also serves as its border. Photography by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

in each of the books, in acknowledging the object's imperfections, expresses that each detail has been curated, then carefully reviewed. In the level of detail included as well as the virtuosity of their execution, these fine press books lure us into a close kind of reading. The printer then reminds us that his precision is never good enough.

The posture in which the author looked at the world was repeated in the process of making his book. This care is then mimicked by the book's close reader. In *Lac* a notice-slip asks its handler to "please open and close the map, and gatefolds, with care to avoid dog-eared corners."[77] Schanilec, in discussing subtleties that he built into the text, asked me if I had detected a colored key in the back of *Mayflies*, one which indicated that the text printed in soft green was "fisherman language."[78] In overt and covert ways, the author appeals sincerely to his reader to pay attention. In attending to the aura of these art-books, looking closely and appreciating what is distinctive and non-reproducible about them, a viewer is reading the book as Schanilec wants it to be read, imitating the reverential way he read the natural world, and duplicating, moreover, the care with which the books were made.

The aesthetic encounter with Schanilec's natural histories is not only an exercise in close looking. It is also an invitation to offer an account of what we see. The viewer responds, as Schanilec responds, by attempting to describe the seemingly ungraspable, singular aesthetic object. Sharon Marcus, Heather Love, and Stephen Best recently underscored the difficulty of building this kind of careful description. In their attempt to defend description as a valid mode of critical response, they catalog its protean forms (lists, taxonomies) and denotations ("representation, drawing, report, portrayal, and account"). The three authors "see and want to encourage the essential generosity" of description, which "attends not only to its object but also to the collective, uncertain, and ongoing activity of trying to get a handle on the world."[79] Rather than simply "ideological, impossible, and uncritical," the authors argue that description—"granular, slow, compressed, attentive, appreciative"—allows us "to see more attentively, more fully, *and* more selectively," to be taken outside of ourselves and connect with others.[80] It involves the work that Rita Felski attributes to Latour's Actor-Network Theory: to wonder "at the intricate ecologies and diverse microorganisms that lie hidden among thick blades of grass," and "to slow down at each step."[81] Description is the most apt form of response to Schanilec's natural histories, which are themselves the result of a sincere attempt to "get a handle on the world."

The cognitive faculties exercised in the encounter with Schanilec's fine press books involve reading and responding. Like their author, we read carefully, then describe. Why, according to the hedonic theory, would we consider this exercise within the aesthetic encounter to be a valuable experience? Or, to again evoke Plato's objection to representational art (an imitation of an imitation), what value would the contemplation of a fine press book of mayflies possess that the contemplation of mayflies themselves does not? Theorists, in response, point to the various kinds of goods that coincide with aesthetic appreciation.

Elaine Scarry, for example, suggests that encountering a beautiful thing destabilizes a viewer's position as center of her universe. Scarry describes the "radical decentering" that these aesthetic encounters can produce:

> [T]he ground rotates beneath us several inches, so that when we land, we find we are standing in a different relation to the world than we were a moment before.... It is not that we cease to stand at the center of the world, for we never stood there. It is that we cease to stand even at the center of our own world. We willingly cede our ground to the thing that stands before us.[82]

It is a rare power of the beautiful, says Scarry, to make the viewer feel both intense pleasure and that one's identity is beside the point. It is maybe not sufficient to say, as Heidegger does, that "in the vicinity of the work" we are "suddenly somewhere else than we usually tend to be."[83] Our very identity, rather, is sidelined, and we enjoy it. Marcus, Best, and Love write of "ecstatic dispossession" within an aesthetic experience.[84] Goldman finds representation in art valuable because "it helps to create imaginary worlds in which we lose our ordinary selves."[85] The rare books library retains my identification card when I examine fine press books. The confiscation of ID is an apt metaphor. Reading the books, one feels as if a privilege has been granted. This privilege requires, or rather depends upon, the relinquishing of the normal rhythms and cares of subjective experience.

Many argue, responding to Plato's objection, that the decentering postures that we adopt when encountering art translates out of the aesthetic experience. A fine press book can bring "our visual attention to the sensuous qualities of objects that we normally overlook or merely scan in our ordinary practical pursuits."[86] According to Nelson Goodman, the "primary function of art is to retrain our vision in the way to see the world."[87] Examining a book of mayflies is valuable because the book draws our attention to actual mayflies, perhaps for the first time. If a tree's heartwood inspired such artistic representation, we might reason, it merits greater attention. What else in the world do our eyes skate over?

Pleasure in the aesthetic experience may overlap with other forms of value. In Yuriko Saito's *Everyday Aesthetics*, the author tries to establish what she calls "the power of the aesthetic."[88] The attitude "underlying" attention to aesthetics, from everyday objects to our environment, "helps nurture a humble and respectful stance." According to Saito, we "meet the object on its own terms and appreciate what it has to offer," which can develop "an attitude of open-mindedness." Aesthetic appreciation "helps us cultivate this moral capacity of recognizing and understanding the other's reality through sympathetic imagination."[89] Saito, like Scarry, conceives of the aesthetic experience as an encounter. Saito emphasizes that this encounter is with an "Other," and the way in which we respond to the aesthetic other is of consequence for how we interact with our fellow humans.

Saiko's discussion involves everyday objects, not simply beautiful things. She suggests that, in attending to the distinctions of even the most common sensual experiences, we exercise a good muscle. Careful reading itself, regardless of the beauty of the object before us, is a desirable practice. Scarry, too, uses words like "training," "preparation," and "cultivation"

to describe the potential for attentiveness in the aesthetic encounter to have normative significance. Attending to an object in the aesthetic space may be good because it prepares us for interactions with higher stakes. It is desirable to let ourselves accept the invitation of the aura of an art-object, so as to make it easier to adopt this receptive attitude when encountering other kinds of difference.

Attentive reception of an art object "can upend rather than reinforce ideology," claim Marcus, Love, and Best. Recalling the shifts in Schanilec's work, and quoting Joanna Stalnaker, the authors suggest, "attending to details… can make available imaginative shifts in perspective and scale that might produce a 'dramatic decentering of the human perspective.'"[90] Schanilec's reading of the natural world does disturb his centrality as an agent within it. He appreciates the painstaking effort of description and also gestures toward description's anthropocentric limits. We might consider this reading admirable as representing a humility antithetical to an imperial, often industrial, mind-set. We might then apply this same admiration to our own reading practices. Responding to aesthetic objects receptively is compatible with acknowledging that we are not entirely masters of this ship. This realization may be desirable for a society faced with an impending climate disaster, and one with predominately market-based systems of value. The world—this book in our reading of it, or this mayfly in the author's classification of it—is not entirely in our grasp. It is a kind of humility that subverts anthropocentricism without indulging in epistemic defeatism.

Marcus, Love, and Best claim, moreover, that art objects deserve our respect. They conceive of description as "honoring the object described."[91] It is unclear why the three authors think honoring an object is a good thing to do, though perhaps it relates to our obligations to the artist who made the object, and the work, time and sacrifice he invested. Or we ought to honor an art object because the object itself is vital. The ability for a beautiful thing to prompt copies of itself leads Scarry to discuss the "almost aliveness," or "semi-sentience" of beautiful things. Their "abrasive handling… seems unthinkable."[92] In the aesthetic encounter life flows in both directions. Scarry draws attention to the reciprocal relationship between the beautiful semi-sentient object and its beholder. The object receives life from its viewer, and the viewer's perceptual capacities are quickened. Describing this mutual "life-granting pact," Scarry notes that beautiful things serve as "wake-up calls to perception," "recommit[ting] us to a rigorous standard of perceptual care."[93] Taking a knife to a fine press book's pages is unthinkable. Even the critical scalpels of this paper's first part may threaten the object's semi-

sentient agency. In the mutual, life-affirming aesthetic encounter, Schanilec's books awaken our perceptual capacities. Perhaps we have an obligation to describe carefully, to show respect for, these objects that endow us with greater life.

In his lectures on wood and metal engraving, Ruskin attributes the "excellence" of a woodcut to the artist's ability to seize upon a thing's "essential points": to emphasize certain of an object's features even while faithfully reproducing it.[94] In reflecting on the methodology of *Mayflies,* Schanilec muses, "the physical reality of the insects is deflected—filtered and reshaped by my personal knowledge." In choosing to engrave from memory rather than from digital image, "something wonderful happened… the images acquired a sense of pattern, a rhythm, a confluence of nature and human perception."[95] The engraver reproduces something familiar and simultaneously transforms what he sees; the engravings show us an object and change the way that we perceive it. "In a fine woodcut," insists Ruskin, "the master says to you, 'You *shall* look at this or at nothing.'"[96] Within the encounter with Schanilec's natural histories, positive transformations are predicated on attentive looking.

Responding to their invitation might induce a pleasurable feeling of "ecstatic dispossession." Once outside of the aesthetic encounter, we may be encouraged to attend more closely to our everyday perceptual experiences. We may practice close looking in situations of greater importance, such as when we are faced with human difference. The habit of carefully attending to a singular object made with extreme care may be one we would want to cultivate and encourage. Perhaps our duties extend not only to the artist, but to the quasi-alive object itself.

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Fine press books may be understood as extended meditations on the surprising freedom of the codex structure; as challenges to formal literary conventions; as experiments with the theatricality for which this form allows; as nostalgic reactions to a changing media landscape; or, alternatively, as indications of what Matthew Rubery calls the "renewed awareness of established technologies at the moment when their roles have been called into question."[97] At least one antiquarian considers the acquisition of these expensive books as a misuse of institutional resources, since money that ought to be spent on material with greater historical content is siphoned off in the

competition to collect attractive books.[98] Maret, in response, emphasizes that his and Schanilec's works belong to bibliographic history. "We're experiencing," he insists, "the greatest flowering of fine press artist books since the 1890s." He asked me to "imagine if we had documents, or greater documentation, about the relationship between calligraphers, type-designers, and printers during the first fifty years of printing." While they are not "at the forefront of the cultural zeitgeist like printers during the 1450s," contemporary fine press printers are still significant actors in "this great transition" from print to digital media. Maret believes there to be academic value in the acquisition of these costly books. And yet, he wonders, "Whether libraries are wasting a lot of money or making a shrewd purchase, who knows?"[99]

These are indeed valuable acquisitions and their worth is only appreciating. In purchasing fine press books, libraries maintain a material trace of the evolution of the book. These books endow institutions with social capital in an economy of prestige, and institutions, in turn, offer the framing conditions necessary for singular aesthetic encounters. Thus framed, Schanilec's fine press books offer a significant intervention in ongoing critical debates about how we read, and to what end. A suspicious reading of these books seems to be solicited by the objects themselves: the social scaffolding of the aesthetic experience of the fine press book is not simply superficial, but conspicuously disclosed. What the theories of Scarry, Saiko, and Marcus, Best, and Love, and the fine press books of Schanilec nevertheless recommend is a different posture, or attitude, of reading. Maret says his books are "purposefully designed to dramatically slow people down."[100] They defy market-based systems of value and are immensely valuable in the marketplace. Institutional frames produce their worth, and serve as a condition of possibility of aesthetic value. Questions of circulation, exchange-value, and prestige have never felt so obviously applicable, and yet so beside the point.

One of Schanilec's most lucrative prints, which he sold before *Lac*'s completion in order to finance the book, is of three pelicans, poised on the banks of Lake Pepin, preparing for flight. The facing page offers a description of the brief encounter: "soon," Schanilec notes, "they were a thin white scratch on the shadows of the far shore." The tip of one of the birds' wings and its beak slip just beyond the colored panel. The gesture repeats in several of the book's prints. The fin of a white bass, and the mouth of the redhorse and tip of its tail, stretch out of their frames. The detail is an acknowledgement, representation, and celebration of the artist's own limitations: that some of the world's vitality cannot be contained within the engraver's block; that it's difficult, or rather futile, to carve water into wood. Schanilec's greatest achievement is to convince his reader that it's nonetheless rousing to try.

Figure 11. "Pelecanus erythrorhynchos," one of six multi-chromatic wood engravings from Schanilec's *Lac des pleurs*, (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2015). Photograph by and courtesy of Gaylord Schanilec.

Notes

1. Gaylord Schanilec et al., *Lac des pleurs: Report from Lake Pepin* (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2015).

2. Schanilec used two Monotype typefaces for *Lac des pleurs*: Bembo and Poliphilus. During the project, Maret reminded Schanilec that both were based on letters used by the same printer, Aldus Manutius. Poliphilus, specifically, was based on Francesco Colonna's fifteenth-century *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Maret photographed the Poliphilus type for Schanilec and drew *Lac*'s title lettering. Schanilec originally printed the type with a bright blue shadow, but with a suggestion from Maret, changed it to a softer gray. RM to AH 3 June 2019, personal interview.

3. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.

4. Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy*, trans. by Michael Bullock (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, Ivan R. Dee, 1997).

5. Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy*, 28.

6. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview. Maret cites two books that ushered in this revival: Plato's *Phaedrus* by Jack Stauffacher (San Francisco: the Greenwood Press, 1976), and *Granite & Cypress,* printed by William Everson (Santa Cruz: Lime Kiln Press, 1975).

7. Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (New York: Granary Books, 1995).

8. Drucker, *Century*, 14.

9. Sandra Kirshenbaum, in *Five Fine Printers* (Davis: Library Associates, University Library, University of California, Davis, 1979).

10. Quoted in Maret's talk, "Making Third Stream Books in the Post-Digital Age," available at https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/making-third-stream-books-post-digital-age-0 (accessed June 17, 2019).

11. Drucker, *Century*, 5–6.

12. "The Fine Press Book Association" (online), available at https://www.fba.com (accessed June 17, 2019).

13. Wikipedia, "Fine Press" (online), available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fine_press (accessed June 17, 2019).

14. Drucker, *Century*, 93.

15. Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 18.

16. Caroline Arscott, *William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones: Interlacings* (London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2008), 83.

17. Arscott, *William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones*, 17, 7.

18. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.

19. William Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 275; quoted in Elizabeth Carolyn Miller, "William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism," *Modernism/modernity* 15, no. 3 (2008): 491.

20. Theodor W. Adorno and J.M. Bernstein, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991), 76.

21. Miller, "William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism," 479.

22. Miller, "William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism," 478.

23. RM to AH 3 June 2019, personal interview.

24. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.

25. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview. Maret sold more books during the 2008 recession, a fact which he uses to support the claim that libraries are relatively financially independent, or at least buffered against market-trends.

26. Peter D. McDonald, "Ideas of the Book and Histories of Literature: After Theory?" *PMLA* 121, no. 1 (2006): 217–19.

27. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. by Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), 11, 32–33.

28. Allen Dunn, "Who Needs a Sociology of the Aesthetic? Freedom and Value in Pierre Bourdieu's Rules of Art," *boundary 2*, 25, no. 1, (1998): 87.

29. Pierre Bourdieu and Susan Emanuel, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 229.

30. Bourdieu, *Field of Cultural Production*, 37.

31. Dunn, "Sociology of the Aesthetic," 95.

32. Dunn, "Sociology of the Aesthetic," 91.

33. Bourdieu, *Rules of Art*, 167.

34. Walter Benjamin and J.A. Underwood, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (London: Penguin, 2008).

35. James F. English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).

36. English, *Economy of Prestige*, 168.

37. Bourdieu, *Field of Cultural Production*, 234.

38. Bourdieu, *Rules of Art,* xvi.

39. Bourdieu, *Rules of Art*, xviii.

40. Bourdieu, *Rules of Art,* 85; quoted in Dunn, "Sociology of the Aesthetic," 100.

41. Dunn, "Sociology of the Aesthetic," 100.

42. Dunn, "Sociology of the Aesthetic," 99.

43. GS to AH 29 May 2019, personal interview.

44. GS to AH 29 May 2019, personal interview.

45. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.

46. GS to AH 30 May 2019, personal interview.

47. Drucker, *Century*, 161.

48. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.

49. Hugo A. Meynell, *The Nature of Aesthetic Value* (London: Macmillan, 1986), 1.

50. See Alan H. Goldman, *Aesthetic Value* (Boulder, Colorado; Oxford: Westview, 1995), 72–80.

51. Dominic Lopes, *Being for Beauty: Aesthetic Agency and Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 9.

52. Robert Stecker, *Intersections of Value: Art, Nature, and the Everyday* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 20.

53. Meynell, *Nature of Aesthetic Value*, 2, 26.

54. Theorists outside of the analytical tradition also conceive of artworks as things to be encountered, or contact zones: spaces filled with discord and potential energy. Bill Ashcroft, in "Towards a Postcolonial Aesthetic," describes the aesthetic experience as a "moment of contact… when the horizons of different worlds inform each other," or "a form of engagement, of act and response opening a space for continual transformation." In *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 51, no. 4 (2015): 410–21). John Frow discusses how value is not inherent in physical texts, but rather an effect of "operations" by "readers or viewers or users," and that in the aesthetic encounter, interpretative frameworks and "literary regimes" are "modified, however slightly, in each act of interpretation and valuation." In *The Practice of Value: Essays on Literature in Cultural Studies* (Crawley, Western Australia: UWAP Scholarly, 2013), viii, x.

55. For his discussion of speed bumps, see Bruno Latour's *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999); see also Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

56. Karl Marx, *Karl Marx: A Reader*, ed. by Jon Elster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 34.

57. Gaylord Schanilec and Ben Verhoeven, *Sylvæ: Fifty Specimens Printed Directly from the Wood with Historical Anecdotes & Observations* (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2008), 132.

58. Schanilec, *Sylvæ*, xi.

59. Schanilec, *Lac*, 9.

60. GS to AH 30 May 2019, personal interview.

61. GS to AH 30 May 2019, personal interview.

62. Schanilec, *Lac*.

63. Schanilec, *Lac*, 63.

64. Schanilec, *Sylvæ*, 60.

65. See Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, "The Concept of Enlightenment," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 14: "The mind, conquering superstition, is to rule over disenchanted nature. Knowledge, which is power, knows no limits…. What human beings seek to learn from nature is how to use it to dominate wholly both it and human beings."

66. Henri Bergson and Arthur Mitchell, *Creative Evolution* (London: Macmillan, 1911), 165, 163.

67. Bergson and Mitchell, *Creative Evolution*, 8.

68. Gaylord Schanilec and Clarke Garry, *Mayflies of the Driftless Region* special ed. (Stockholm, Wisconsin: Midnight Paper Sales, 2005), ix.

69. GS to AH 29 May 2019, personal interview.

70. GS to AH 29 May 2019, personal interview.

71. John Ruskin, *Ariadne Florentina: Six Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving* (New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1880), 25.

72. The genus names of his mayflies include *Ephemera* and *Emphemerella*.

73. George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (Minneapolis: First Avenue Classics, 2017), 167.

74. GS to AH 31 May 2019, personal interview.

75. Michael Hoinski, "Grain by Wood Grain, A Moveable Feast," *The New York Times* (online), February 4, 2015, available at https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/08/arts/design/artists-find-an-audience-for-painstaking-letterpress-printing.html (accessed June 17, 2019).

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77. Schanilec, *Lac*.

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79. Sharon Marcus, Heather Love, and Stephen Best, "Building a Better Description," *Representations* 135, no. 1 (2016): 4.

80. Marcus, Love, and Best, "Building," 6, 14.

81. Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 158.

82. Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 112.

83. Martin Heidegger and Albert Hofstadter, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry, Language, Thought* (London: Harper & Row, 2001), 35.

84. Marcus, Love, and Best, "Building," 14.

85. Goldman, *Aesthetic Value*, 80.

86. Goldman, *Aesthetic Value*, 74.

87. Quoted in Goldman, *Aesthetic Value*, 74. Original citation from Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968).

88. Yuriko Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 6.

89. Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics*, 6, 117, 131.

90. Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics*, 12.

91. Marcus, Love, and Best, "Building," 13, 14.

92. Scarry, *On Beauty*, 69.

93. Scarry, *On Beauty*, 69, 81.

94. Ruskin, *Ariadne Florentina*, 79.

95. Schanilec, *Mayflies*, ix.

96. Ruskin, *Ariadne Florentina*, 79.

97. Matthew Rubery, "The Book after Edison," *Book History* 16 (2013): 217. To describe this "pattern" established by media historians, Rubery cites David Thorburn and Henry Jenkins, eds., *Rethinking Media Change: The Aesthetics of Transition* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).

98. Schanilec's agent, antiquarian Rob Rulon-Miller to AH 30 May 2019, personal interview. Rulon-Miller has nonetheless a deep appreciation for the work that Schanilec and Maret do. The fact that he now deals in fine press books as well as antiquarian material suggests that the industry has changed significantly over the last few decades; the market for fine press books has expanded, just as the form itself has flowered.

99. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.

100. RM to AH 2 June 2019, personal interview.