

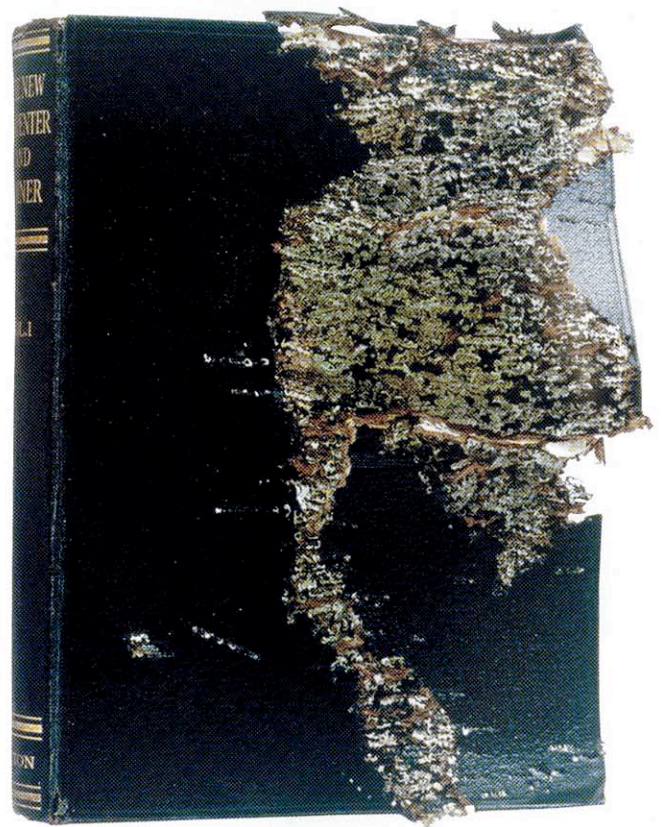
Off the Shelf

FRANCES LEHMAN LOEB ART CENTER

VASSAR COLLEGE

OCTOBER 6–DECEMBER 17, 2006

NEW FORMS IN CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS' BOOKS



JONATHAN CALLAN

LEFT

no. 6 **America in Ireland in Invertebrate Structure.** 2002

RIGHT

no. 2 **South East Asia in the New Carpenter and Joiner.** 2000

In the work of Jonathan Callan, Paul Noble, Brian Belott, and David Hammons found books are used as raw material to invent new objects that have been transformed by the artists' hands and imaginations. London-based artist Jonathan Callan often works with found books, text, maps, and photographs. He manipulates the physical aspects of these objects by reworking the surfaces until the original form is barely recognizable. The artist describes his work as an "investigation into the inherent physicality of a particular material, process, or situation."⁷ The six works by Callan in the exhibition are made from found books that are no longer meant to be read, but can be experienced anew, on a material level. Zurbaran's *Color Plates* is one example in which an art historical textbook is destroyed to create a tactile sculpture and in *The Great Lakes* white silicone gel oozes through the pages of a book obscuring the text and mapping out the shape of each lake. Callan's violent destruction of these books breaks with the notion of the book as a venerated and protected symbol of civilized society in exchange for a new form of personal expression tied less to knowledge than creative force.

⁷ Jonathan Callan, as quoted in "Don't Forget the Dust Bunnies," by Edward Allington in *Interference: Jonathan Callan*, exhibition catalogue, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, England, 2003.