

AFTERWORD

In the beginning there were no names. It was necessary to point.

—Suzanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*

It is curious how someone like myself, trained to communicate with images and not words, finds himself writing the Afterword for a literary journal. Although I've always been in love with words—I consume them voraciously and delight in crafting them—I would never think to call myself a Writer. But come to think of it, none of the other labels have ever felt very comfortable either. At various times I've been described as a Photographer, or a Painter, and most recently as an Electronic Artist, whatever that means. I am struck by my own, and the world's, incessant urge to name, to pin things down.

There is a dark side to language—it can close down possibilities. But things without names are anxious objects. This anxiety confronted us at every step of this project—from what name to give the publication, to what names to give ourselves. Who are the editors and who are the designers? What is the difference and why does it matter? In the end, I can report with satisfaction that I don't have these answers.

There are those of us who find pleasure and opportunity in moderate degrees of anxiety and confusion. I've come to accept this in myself, even to understand it as an asset in my life as an artist. And I have discovered this to be a fundamental trait in my collaborators on this publication. Each of us, in our own way, has the urge to dismantle the established taxonomy. This is how we found, and recognized, each other. (And I should note that it was my friends in the English Department who came to the School of Art and Design looking for my two partners and me.)

I HOPE THAT WE'VE CREATED SOMETHING THAT RESISTS NAMING, THAT NEITHER OF THOSE WORDS—LITERARY JOURNAL—REALLY PINS DOWN THIS OBJECT. I anticipate that much of what we produce in the future will be hybrids that seek to creatively evade classification.

Just to be sure that our task is utterly daunting, we've decided to up the ante by also creating a

companion web site. And I hope you can see me wince when I write those two particular words—web site—because there's that naming thing again. Let me just say that we also intend to explore how the material world of print can intersect and interact with the virtual networked world. So we will be publishing content on the web that extends what we are able to publish in print. And further, we will be publishing electronic objects that can't, and shouldn't, be translated into print because they explore what literariness might mean in the electronic realm.

I suspect that we'll be able to measure our success by how comfortably our efforts fit into the traditional classifications. IF THE OLD WORDS DON'T FIT, THEN WE'RE PROBABLY ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

—JOSEPH SQUIER