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Books by Keith A. Smith

"There are artists for whom structural issues take priority — Keith Smith's philosophy of making a book, for instance, relies on resolving structural considerations first so that the physical organization of the book becomes, for him, a substantive and critical area of activity."—Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (2004 ed.), p. 122.



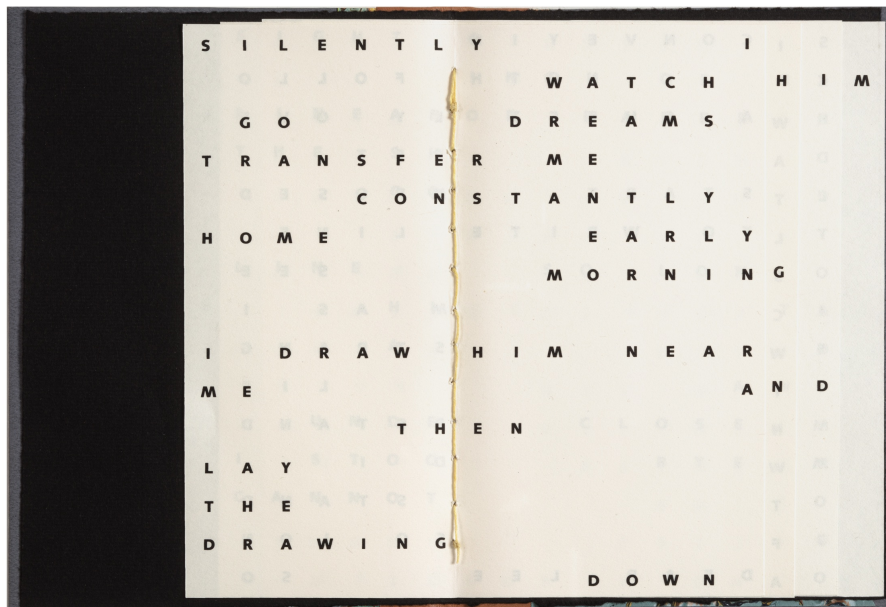
1. SMITH, Keith A. [From first leaf]: *Book 102*. 41 hand-cut leaves (incl. upper cover). Small 4to (130 x 147 mm.), orig. printed covers, "long stitch through slotted wrapper cover" sewing. [Rochester, NY]: Feb. 1984. \$650.00

A scarce example of one of Smith's "no-picture books," printed in an edition of 100

copies, bound and signed by Smith. Here the core of the book is a continuous circle and graduated circular hole through the entire work. The hole in each leaf was formed by a blade attached to a compass. This book was part of Smith's effort to create affordable hand-bound works in larger editions, "which could be purchased by anyone, even by students — especially by students." Up to this point, most of Smith's books were unique or made in very small editions.

As new.

• Smith, *200 Books* (2000), pp. 174-75—"A paper jig was set up to indicate where the point of the compass would be placed on each page. The center of the hole starts beyond the fore-edge of the front cover and proceeds towards the spine-edge with each additional cut. The final circular cut is close to the center on the back cover."



2. SMITH, Keith A. *Out of Sight, Book Number 107*. Eight leaves, each leaf larger by 1/2" from the previous. 8vo (197 x 144 mm.), orig. leather-backed boards, stitching on spine, title printed on upper cover. [From colophon]: Rochester: Visual Studies Workshop, 1985.

\$950.00

A scarce visual and interactive poem by the celebrated book artist Keith A. Smith (b. 1938), bound by the artist and printed offset in a numbered edition of 200. This is a beguiling and intricate composition with overlapping text on each leaf, requiring repeated manipulation of the book and the pages.

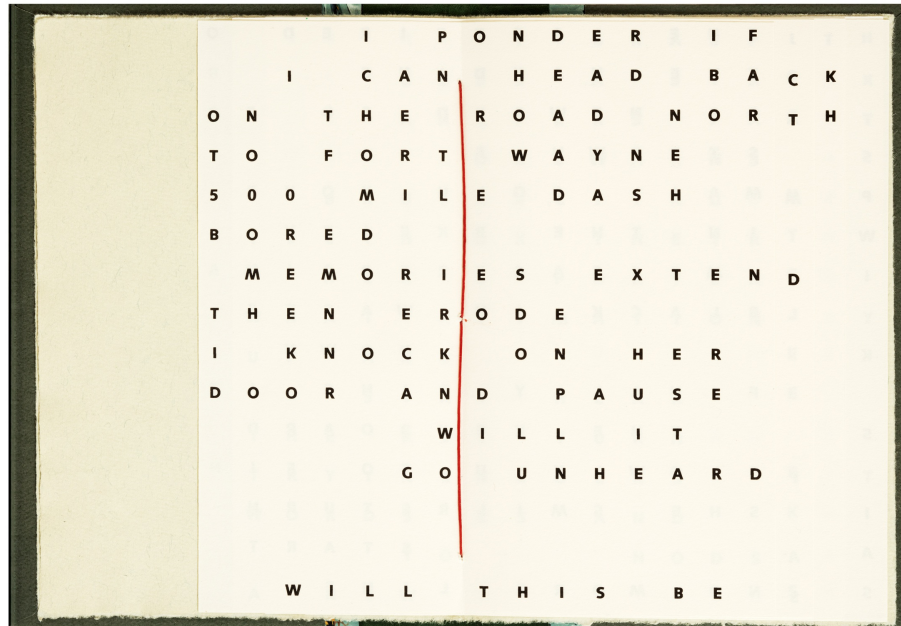
Smith explains the structure and creation of this book (as well as for Book 108) in his autobiography: "All the letters on the far right which exist in layered form protruding from all the remaining pages must form words when the book is opened to that folio. When that page is turned, the remaining letters form other words as the poem proceeds. This juggling act continues as each page is turned requiring the new writing on each page to make use of the letters in sight from all the remaining pages. The final page is the only one which is not dependent upon all the other pages..."

"I love these two books because they are my best examples of writing that is conceived as a *book experience*. If the text of the poem were recited on the radio, the listener would hear

the text, but that is only part of the book. I am always searching for ways to speak aside from the pictures and/or text..."

In pristine condition. The full text of this poem is reproduced in Smith's *200 Books*.

♣ Smith, *200 Books* (2000), pp. 186-89. See also J. Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (2004 ed.), pp. 131-33.



3. SMITH, Keith A. [From upper cover]: *Back and Forth, Book Number 108*. Eight leaves, each leaf larger by 1/2" from the previous. 8vo (202 x 148 mm.), orig. leather-backed boards, stitching on spine, title printed on upper cover. [From colophon]: Rochester: Visual Studies Workshop, 1985. \$950.00

An uncommon visual and interactive poem by the celebrated book artist Keith A. Smith (b. 1938), bound by the artist and printed offset in a numbered edition of 200, signed by the artist on the colophon page. As with *Book 107*, the intricate structure of overlapping text on each leaf requires repeated manipulation of the book and the pages.

Smith writes in his auto-bibliography *200 Books* (2000), "[The] text is a poem written for my dying mother. I completed the poem and placed a unique binding on it in time for one of my final drives back and forth to visit her in the hospital, 500 miles from Rochester to Fort Wayne. It was a joy to see her beam that a book had been written just for her."

In fine condition, Smith's works are now very rare on the market.

♣ Smith, *200 Books* (2000), pp. 190-91, reproduces the text of the poem.

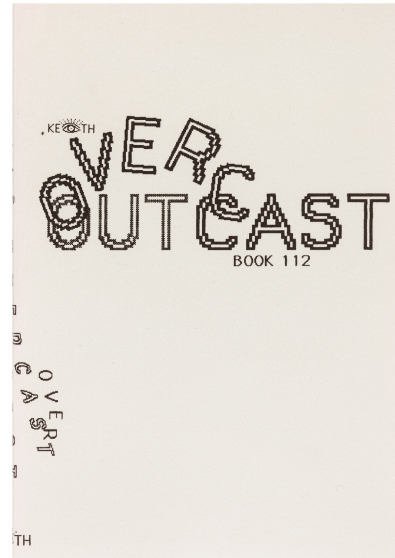
4. SMITH, Keith A. *Overcast/Outcast, Book 112*. Many black & white illus. 112 unnumbered pages. 8vo (211 x 145 mm.), printed wrappers. Rochester: Visual Studies Workshop, 1986. \$450.00

An uncommon collection of visual poems by the American book artist Keith A. Smith (b. 1938); this is an early photo-digital book, created using Thunderscan. Printed offset in an edition of 500 copies on Mohawk Vellum 70 lb. There was also a leather-bound edition of 25 copies. The present example is signed by the artist on the title-page.

"In *Overcast/Outcast* Smith takes [it] a step farther. While [Book 115] is almost entirely graphic — a flat pattern on the page — *Outcast* develops dimensionality with its verbal materials. The thematic concerns of the book — homosexual identity in contemporary culture — is well served by the sleight-of-hand complexities of representation and dissimulation."—J. Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (2004 ed.), p. 248.

As new.

♣ Smith, *200 Books* (2003 ed.), pp. 196-97.



5. SMITH, Keith A. *Overcast/Outcast, Book 112*. Many black & white illus. 112 unnumbered pages. 8vo (211 x 145 mm.), leather-backed boards, inlaid gilt title on spine. Rochester: Visual Studies Workshop, 1986. \$1500.00

One of 25 leather-bound copies created by the artist; this is an uncommon collection of visual poems by the American book artist Keith A. Smith (b. 1938). An early example of a

photo-digital book, produced by Smith with Thunderscan. The title is delicately stamped in gilt around the spine, starting from the head. These leather-bound copies were printed on Curtis Rag 75 lb. paper. The present copy is signed and numbered by the artist above the colophon.

"In *Overcast/Outcast* Smith takes [it] a step farther. While [Book 115] is almost entirely graphic — a flat pattern on the page — *Outcast* develops dimensionality with its verbal materials. The thematic concerns of the book — homosexual identity in contemporary culture — is well served by the sleight-of-hand complexities of representation and dissimulation."—J. Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (2004 ed.), p. 248.

As new. Examples of design bindings executed by Smith are extremely rare on the market.

♣ Smith, *200 Books* (2003 ed.), pp. 196-97.

6. SMITH, Keith A. [From upper cover]: *Swimmer*, 114th Book. Offset printed black & white illus. throughout. Leporello (160 x 115 mm. closed, extends to 2.5 meters), stiff paper boards printed pictorial label on upper board. Rochester: Visual Studies Workshop, 1986. \$1250.00

One of Smith's works in leporello format, based on the pen and ink drawings from his unique *Book 73* (1978-79), complemented with a poem by the artist; printed offset in an edition of 300. This work is dedicated to the photographer Philip Lange.



In his auto-bibliography, *200 Books*, Smith (b. 1938) explains the origin of this piece, "I have always been afraid of water. I never took showers, only baths. Even then I filled the tub with only one to two inches of water and dampened my wash cloth to spot bathe. When I was 44, Philip Lange said he would teach me how to swim. He told me to start by taking baths with the tub half filled with water and to dip my head under. Then I was ready to go to the pool with him. He had taught many to swim, including babies. When we got to the pool the first time he said to me, 'If you start to drown I will not save you; you might pull me under.' This did nothing to increase my confidence in him, but he did teach me to swim and even to dive into the water. I still hate water, but can take showers. I have not gone swimming again since this book was made..."

"It was important that the figures not be limited to the page size, but could be two or more pages wide. The final figure takes five pages. Yet the book is to be seen also in the manner of a codex, page by page, so the drawing on a single page or a two-page spread must be attractive."

A scarce artist's book, in pristine condition. Signed by the artist on the upper cover.

♣ K. Smith, *200 Books* (2000), pp. 198-200. See also J. Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (2004 ed.), p. 140.

7. SMITH, Keith A. [From upper cover]: *Snow Job*, Book 115. Offset-printed black & white illus. throughout. Leporello format (162 x 112 mm. closed, fully extends to 2.5 meters), stiff paper boards, printed pictorial label on upper board. Rochester: Visual Studies Workshop, 1986. \$1250.00

One of Smith's works in leporello format, featuring a poem by the artist; printed offset in an edition of 300 and signed by the artist on the title-page. This work is dedicated to the book artist Philip Zimmerman.



In his auto-bibliography *200 Books*, Smith (b. 1938) explains the origin of this piece, "I was not speaking of snow, but the snow job of governments spouting the safety of nuclear power plants. I was driven by the Three Mile Island incident. The poem was written in January 1986, shortly before the Chernobyl melt down. Books 114 and 115 went to press on March 26th, the day of the Challenger disaster." The text of the poem is reproduced in *200 Books*.

In excellent condition; Smith's books are now very scarce on the market. Signed by the artist.

• K. Smith, *200 Books* (2000), p. 200—"For printing economy, Books 114 and 115 were printed on two sheets of paper, cut into three equal horizontal pieces and then glued into strips. The two sheets were printed on only one side. The first book required four strips and the second only two. To fill out Book 115, a strip of black Fabriano paper was added at each end to make the books the same width when fully extended. I also like the extent of black considering the subject matter." See also J. Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (2004 ed.), pp. 247-48.

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