



The Team

DEGUY|DORNY DORNY|DEGUY

**Deguy|Dorny Dorny|Deguy is a reflection on poetic stimulation
and collaboration in the realm of space and materiality of words.**

Michel Deguy is a poet and essayist residing in Paris. He teaches philosophy at Paris-Vincennes, directs the Collège de Philosophie, and is editor-in-chief of *Po&sie*. His collections include *Actes*, *Où dire*, *Tombeau de Du Bellay*, *Poèmes de la Presqu'île*, *Donnant, donnant*. A selection of his writings, translated by Clayton Eshleman, has been published by the University of California Press under the title: *Given, Giving*. He has made frequent lecture tours in the United States.

Bertrand Dorny, sculptor, graphic artist and book artist lives in Paris. He has collaborated with such major poets as Michel Deguy, Bertrand Noël, Ron Padgett and William Jay Smith. He has created over sixty books, highly experimental in form, of which he is simultaneously the artist and the publisher. He has had close to one hundred shows. His works can be seen in many major museums and rare book collections in Europe and North America.

Visible Language, 25: 2/3

Michel Deguy, 193–197

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And strange flowers on shelves

Charles Baudelaire

We rhyme, by the final vowel Y. A poor rhyme?

No, because the two surnames, bisyllabic,

also begin with the same consonant: DxxxY.

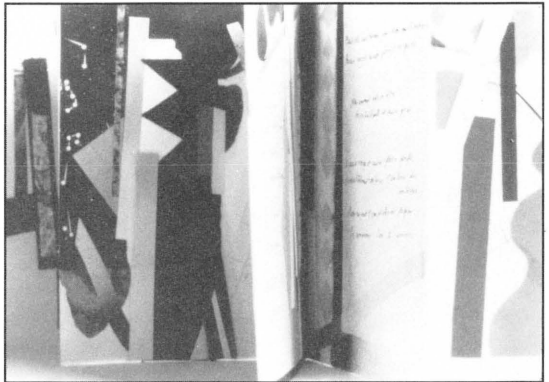
Of the two, it is Bertrand who takes the initiative. He began the series of things that we do together and which are inserted on the shelves among those that Guillevic or Butor, Tardieu or Noël, or other poet friends give him to shape after he has given them things to make speak. Given giving.

He makes the suggestion by arranging strange phylacteries, oblong or transversal like ribbons of rain, that wait for the graphic legends by which the writer, call him poet, will cause the polychrome, motley, luminous rectangles of Dorny to communicate, compose, articulate, become "pages."

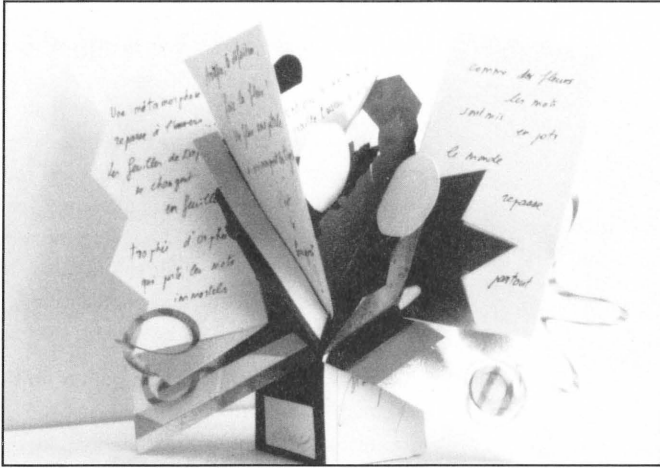
We began with a sort of book—is it a book?—*Paris, Frimaire*,¹ back in 1989; such was the title of the poem; another time it was paper flowers or foldable, foliated pyramids or tattooed posters; then a sort of book—is it a book?—of "Indian" postcards; then a "coffee table book" for Dutrou (*At Rush Hours*), and now a horizontal black notebook that waits for me on the table like a supine Manhattan skyscraper . . .



Deguy, *Cartes Indiennes*.



Deguy/Dorny, *Paris Frimaire*.

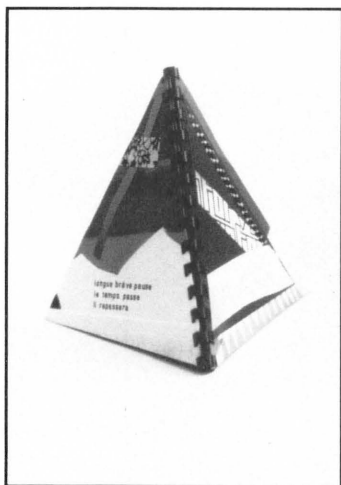


Deguy/Dorny, Me Metamorphose.

We are neighbors across the street from each other on Boulevard Saint-Germain. I go up to his studio; the floor is littered with scraps, debris of collage; it does not smell of turpentine, nor acrylic; Dorny's art is not painting. His material is paper, thin or heavy, or wood; of wrecks—driftwood rounded and angled by the sea—he makes ship's colors. Friends of cities, indefatigably curious like a Constantin Guys of the Grands Boulevards who visits shops, offices, collecting cards, maps, bags, advertisements and innumerable media, he gathers and piles up, he accumulates, he replaces, unmakes and remakes, by cutting out and superimposing. He departs from usage, and deflects from their functional or fated trajectory these calling cards with which the age invites and advertises itself, to delight in and to play with its hieroglyphic inventiveness. He makes bas-reliefs of paper with all these leftovers (reliefs) from the feast of our consummation of messages, signs and signals. He mints coins of cardboard with his mark, brilliant, stimulating, glossy; every day the printers varnish his opening.

He reinvents filigree, honeycomb, quadrature; he makes visible the pulp of paper, the compaction, the compression—the page.

These strange concretions—at once abstract, if you will, because (with)drawn from their semiologic circuit, stripped of their value in signifying usage; and concrete,



Deguy/Dorny, Le Metronome.

because resulting from an increasing concentration and an elaboration—prescribe inscriptions to the poets invited to treat them like good omens. A whole way of doing, that does without words, that sets out and takes measures to submit itself to reading, interpretation, incrustations of meaning, phrases or messages that will complement and complete it. There is a silent blanched space that desires the word. In the circle of arts, neighbors who hold hands each desires what the other can do, and thus, they cooperate; affinity of plastic and poetic, association of mute and paralytic.

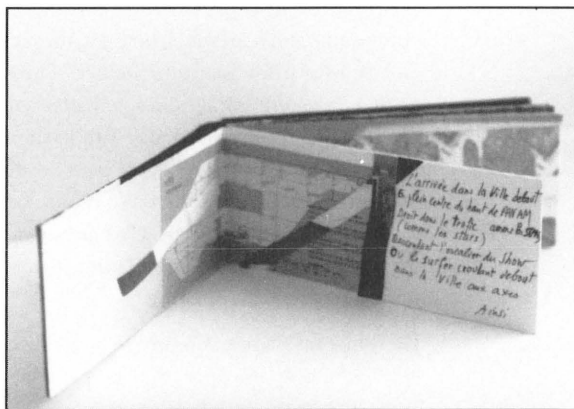
It is necessary to complete, to put on finishing touches, to construct with the imperfect. And this is not a compromise! “Work in progress”: hence the enigmatic character of every formulation, however accomplished.

The project waits for its frame and sometimes its slipcase. Illegal depository of manufactures and meanings, the finished object escapes from the law of the book that must go to the Bibliothèque Nationale. It adheres to that of the hybrid work, at play, in process, by our prerogative.

Translated by Susan Rogers

ENDNOTE

¹Third month of the Republican calendar, beginning November 21, 22 or 23.



Deguy/Dorny, Made in Manhattan.