Cloth-Bound Reverie

Michael Golec

"Cloth-Bound Reverie" constructs scenes of interaction between subjects (readers, collectors, writers) and books. Privately or publicly collected, books are objects with rich and diverse histories. From art to science to history to literature to romance, books yield an array of topics. But what is the object of the book? What is this bound gathering of paper besides a textual information receptacle?

This essay answers this question by proposing that a subject's interaction (reading, collecting, writing) with a book is an occasion for signification. As such, the book is considered as both artifact and index; its existence signals manifold meanings beyond the text contained within. From its conception, to its design, to its reproduction, the book is a material presence. And yet it causes immaterial experiences such as recollection, inspiration and knowledge, to name but a few. Despite our digital age, the concrete object, the book, will endure precisely because of this dialectic of material and immaterial.

Michael Golec received his M.A. in art history from the University of Illinois, Chicago. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in art history, with an emphasis on theory and interpretation, at Northwestern University. He lives and works in Chicago.

Northwestern University
Evanston, IL 60101
m-golec@nwu.edu

Visible Language 32.1
Golec, 78–92

Visible Language, 1998
Rhode Island School
of Design
Providence, RI 02903

Perhaps my old age and fearfulness deceive me, but I suspect that the human species – the unique species – is about to be extinguished, but the library will endure: illuminated, solitary, infinite, perfectly motionless, equipped with precious volumes, useless, incorruptible, secret.[1]

Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel"

Recently, I moved into a new apartment. This space is at odds with itself. Turning a corner, rolling out of bed, opening the front door, I realize that my apartment is all out of whack. Literally, it is twisted. The building leans so that each wall, the floor, and the ceiling are neither parallel nor perpendicular. There are no level planes. Yet, for all its structural faults, this apartment contains the only item I require for comfortable habitation – built-in bookshelves. In all my years of apartment living I have only just acquired such a prize. Everyday, as I enter through the door, just off to the left, I am confronted by my library. Modest as it is, I look forward to my book collection's presence. Each volume, either resting horizontally and stacked, or vertically in a row and at attention, is always there. If anything, my library is reliable.

Durability is the library's greatest strength. Personal or institutional, the library beckons those who are not only readers, but who desire the tactility of the book. Stacks of books invite perusal, dusty volumes seem to drop easily into the hand, and pages turn without resistance. Taking pleasure in the book's objectness directly results from these features. While searching through my own collection, I came upon Borges's story of the most mysterious of libraries. I pulled *Labyrinths* from a shelf quite by chance. Paging through it, I found "The Library of Babel." Not knowing how to approach such a topic – this cloth-bound reverie – until I sat down and read Borges' marvel: this text set me on my course.

Despite the current market – saturated with text on CD-ROM, and the Internet inundated with web sites that allow a reader to download *The Collected Poems of Emily*

1 Borges, J.L. 1964. The Library of Babel. In *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings.* New York: New Directions, 58.

Dickinson and Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener," to name but two of the literary classics available on-line – I am still drawn to the cloth-bound wonder. Paperback, hardcover, dust-jacket, oversized, undersized, alone and amassed, the book deserves yet another testament, another word of praise. Bearing witness to its extraordinary presence (a task that requires the negotiation of immaterial thought and material casing), this essay endeavors to affirm the book. My cloth-bound reverie rejoices in the concrete and abstract. To consider the book in light of this dichotomy serves only to underline its vigor.

Yet, the book's manifold qualities are difficult to discuss in an objective manner. Its striking ability to engage lies within a personal relation between each volume and its reader and/or collector. Only then is the most dazzling array of attributes brought to light. Qualities abound, thus the book exceeds its supposed status as a mere textual information receptacle: typographic composition, illustration and/or photography, paper and binding add to the book's worth. But these are material qualities. What of the immaterial? What of recollection, inspiration, and companionship? The importance of these traits are equal to the primacy of information. However, a reader should not confuse the book's reverential value with its economic value (the materials add up to a certain expense, while the immaterial adds up to ontology – being as such). To this end the book may be considered as an object inscribed twofold. First, there is the typography, the printing of the text; and second, there is the imprint of meaning. Each page receives the former, and the author imparts the latter (meaning materializing in writing and reading). The second inscription also serves as an index of memory – a book engages what the reader retains, a mnemic-trace – allowing the reader access to past experiences.

Imparting information, the book is unlimited in its scope. This essay on the other hand is of limited means. As such it does not profess to speak of the book, rather it speaks for the book. As it stands alone the book is silent, yet its ability to communicate is well known. The reader

comes to the book with a range of experiences and these intermingle with the book's contents. Once read the book then becomes one of many experiences. Through remembrance of purchases, bookstores and clerks, gifts, libraries and librarians, books that accompanied a reader on trips, and others that have been lost, the book thus has its place in a reader's life.

The book's double imprint and indexical nature suggests that it informs not only through text, but through an auratic signal that is made manifest by the book's objectness. This essay acts as a translation of said aura. The reader of this work will anticipate, as one might allow any translator, a certain breadth – room for supposition and circumspection. My gathering of a number of voices, providing a chorus of praise, reinforces this essay's assertions. Admittedly, "Cloth-Bound Reverie" is only a refrain, an echo of all that precedes my attempt at homage.

2 Freud, S. 1965. *The Interpretation of Dreams.* New York: Avon Books, 205.

3 Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams.*

Glow Book Glow

When speaking of the auratic nature of the book, I refer to its ability to exude a certain dynamic force, its ability to engage and enfold. And if I take aura to mean breath, as in the Greek derivation, then I think of the book as alive, which in some paradoxical sense it is – alive. Organically static and conceptually potent, the book is a very real presence beyond the information it holds. However mute the standard volume might be, it speaks of brilliant ages, history, science and literature, all bound, yet ever freed through reading.

The psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's collection of books is an example of a library's impact on its owner. Through the analysis of his "Dream of the Botanical Monograph," Freud recounted his bibliographic obsession.[2] He wrote of his *"favorite hobby,"* a collection developed from a love of "learning out of monographs."[3] Sitting in his study (Vienna or London), Freud found a multitude of inspiring texts. His interest in ancient art and civilizations, and his collection of books pertaining to this subject in particular,

prompted many of his psychoanalytic theories and discoveries.[4] In Freud's case, as well as others, the book gives off a vibe that, especially when collected under the direction of a private or a public library, is profoundly palpable. One feels it.

How can I qualify this feeling? How can I put it into words? It would seem appropriate to call a witness, to conjure a voice that speaks for the agency of the book. In his essay "Unpacking My Library" the philosopher Walter Benjamin wrote of the collector's confrontation and interaction with his prized possessions as he literally unpacks his collection. The philosopher's evocative portrayal of a man, Benjamin himself sitting amongst the "disorder" of his soon to be erected library, enacts a poignant moment of anticipation. Imagine the collector whose "passion borders on the chaotic."[5] And what a passion it was. Through Benjamin's magical essay the reader is privy to the thrill and desire of acquiring an array of titles such as *Der blaue Reiter*, Lyser's *Linas Marchenbuch*, Balzac's *Peau de chagrin* and a rare copy of *Fragmente aus dem Nachless eines jungen Physikers*.

Why collect books, and for what purpose? It is quite clear from Benjamin's text that his was not simply an activity of gathering information. On this point Benjamin was explicit. He did not store volumes away so that they might be accessed, for practical use, at a later date. On the contrary, there was a great deal in his collection that he did not read. His prizes were not obtained solely for some rational end (although many books were used as reference material). Benjamin considered each volume beguiling, as capable of enveloping the collector in a mist of remembrance. Of this particular quality, Benjamin wrote:

Once you have approached the mountains of cases in order to mine the books from them and bring them to the light of day – or, rather, of night – what memories crowd in upon you.[6]

Benjamin's allusion to the back-breaking rigor of mining suggests that as pleasurable as his experience was, it also entailed a certain amount of pain. Benjamin's flood

4 Botting, W. and Davis, J.K. 1989. Freud's Library and an Appendix of Texts Related to Antiquities. In L. Gamwell and R. Wells, editors. *Sigmund Freud and Art: His Personal Collection of Antiquities*. Binghamton, NY: State University of New York, 184–192. See also Robertson, R. 1994. On the Sources of Moses and Monotheism. In Gilman, S.L., et al., editors. *Reading Freud's Reading*. New York: New York University Press, 266–285.

5 Benjamin, W. 1969. Unpacking My Library. In *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken Books, 66.

6 Benjamin, Unpacking My Library, 66.

of recollection, sparked by each volume, included the various cities he had traveled to in order to purchase a particular book, the events that surrounded each purchase, and the persons who were involved. Certain experiences for Benjamin, joyful or otherwise, were aligned with each book; the tactile nature of which evoked a memorable scene.

Many collectors attest to Benjamin's experience.[7] I for one have much the same sensation when confronting my own modest book collection, each volume of which engages me in the most intimate manner. When idle I allow my eyes to peruse the semi-ordered spines. Each title sparks off thoughts, ideas and introspection. Every book is an offering, a tangible object awaiting my touch. And as I reach out, pulling a title from its snug home, the sediment that is my memory stirs like silt in a clear pond, rising as if called forth by some epiphanic master. Thus the release of these fine particles, which can be likened to an explosion of neurological filament, is the very essence of inspiration. The book is not, however, simply an index of knowledge or information, rather the book is also an index of a personal history. As the book assumes an indexical role it undertakes a signifying mode whereby the reader is effected by the book's auratic force. In this instance, the book signals – telegraphs – a message that awakens his or her memory. The mnemic moment is activated, and a reader recalls the circumstances surrounding each volume's purchase and subsequent reading.

Inspiration is traced to the book's warm embers and the rich terrain of color and bulk of the bookshelf. Like Freud, the reader/collector amasses a number of books to jolt the writer into production.[8] But does accumulating data simply spur the writer on? Writers take notes and read relevant texts. They also evaluate other styles of writing. Plunging into other's works maintains the challenge put forth by one's mentors. Revisiting these essential texts sets the writer's pace; gathering information is one thing, but research and writing is a passion that feeds on the eternal stacks inhabiting this world. Does this

7 When discussing Benjamin, one will recall his influential essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Benjamin's discussion of "aura" should not be confused with my own use of the term. However, one might see a correlation, for Benjamin's and my understanding of the word is predicated on presence (although I put the issue of a singular and unique object aside). See Benjamin, Walter. 1969. The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. In *Illuminations*, 217–251.

8 In this instance, reader, collector, and writer are embodied in a single subject.

information endure? Indeed, what is gained by reading is transferred to another text (whether written or to be written at some later date), which in turn channels into yet another text, and this continues. But reading is not without resistance. Books often fail to yield to the writer. In that case he or she moves on to yet another, and soon books are piled everywhere. The stack continues growing.

A writer amongst his or her books suffers through stagnant periods followed by a mad dash for the pen, typewriter or word processor. For example, Edgar Allen Poe wrote:

9 Poe, Edgar Allen. 1981. *Marginalia*. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia. 2.

During a rainy afternoon, not long ago, being in a mood too listless for continuous study, I sought relief from ennui in dipping here and there, at random among the volumes of my library – no very large one, certainly, but sufficiently miscellaneous; and, I flatter myself, not a little recherche.[9]

Poe required very little to light the fire of encouragement. Allowing himself to plunge into his collection, he invigorated his work in a manner that was unique to each volume's physical proximity. Poe's laissez-faire attitude contributed to his receptive nature. That is, the combination of mood and location ignited revelation.

Revelation is not, however, exclusive to the personal library. The public library is, by all reliable accounts, a rich and varied microculture of librarians, writers and researchers (not to mention the array of personalities corresponding to each title). The approach to any public library's entrance entails more than traversing the threshold of an information storage space. The doorway, in and of itself, suggests an opening to a range of experiences. A greeting from a guard followed by pulling the drawers of the card catalog, or sitting at a computer terminal, then the search through the stacks; but this is just the beginning. A visitor to the library can end up in any number of locations – a hushed room where like minded readers congregate at oak tables. Rare books are waiting in the Special Collections department, and scholars flock to this room to read, to research, to look, to touch. Rustling is

heard as gloved hands reverently page through ancient tomes, sift through illuminated manuscripts and study works conceived over centuries.

It is not necessary, if one cares for such an experience, to visit that space of arcane activities. Any public library's shelves offer the smell of musty paper and book-cloth, an array of colored vertical spines, and the chance encounter with an unexpected text. One such moment of discovery, for me, was meeting with the English typographer Eric Gill's *An Essay on Typography.*[10] This delightfully modest book encases Gill's lamentation of the twentieth-century's abnormalities and his pronounced desire for humanity and humility in craft production. The text is letter-pressed onto a greenish-off-white "laid" paper. Deckled edges and ample margins contribute to what Paul Rand explained as the book's import. Rand wrote, "Eric Gill's admirable little book... is important less for its erudition about the theory and practice of typography than for moral support it gives to artists...."[11] This little book rested quietly, first on a shelf, and then in my hand. It exuded a warmth and encouragement beyond the words Gill had written. By *An Essay*'s example, I too might produce this thing that is beautiful, this object "which pleases being seen."[12]

With all that the private and public collection has to offer, I must ask: Why would a reader care to be far from Benjamin's warm dusty crates, or from Borges' "incorruptible" and "secret" space? I find it inconceivable a reader can live without books, that he or she finds a digital substitute satisfying. But I am prejudiced and admit that I do not want to know what such an existence would entail.

10 Gill, Eric. 1931. *An Essay on Typography.* London: Sheed & Ward.

11 Rand, Paul. 1993. *Design, Form, and Chaos.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 191.

12 Gill, *Essay on Typography,* 11.

Beautiful Books

In his later years Borges became blind. How ironic and cruel, a man, whose whole life was books, propelled into darkness. Yet, he did not cease to write, nor did he vacate his position as director of the Argentinian National Library. Borges relied on his tactile instinct ("The blind," said Descartes, "see with their hands"), touching those illumi-

nating packages thereby keeping them and himself alive – alive in books. Borges literally never let go of the object of his desire.

By abandoning the book as an object, a reader loses far more than an inconvenient pile of paper, he or she forfeits a thing of beauty. How is it that a reader might know what is beautiful? Quite simply through reading, he or she interacts with books and decides what qualities satisfy this activity. Because beauty is not a quality of the object per se, but is located in the mind that considers the object, the beautiful book then contains no discernible flaws in production and presentation. It is beautiful because the reader judges the object so. And certainly beauty is the goal of many a printer and designer; that is to engage the reader and collector with the resplendent object. By establishing the Kelmscott Press, the nineteenth-century writer/printer/designer William Morris made this his mission. He wrote, "I began printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty...."[13] Indeed, for Morris the defilement of such an object was due to ignorance. Those who could not appreciate the care and craft that went into book design and printing lacked vision. Yes, a book can be less-than-beautiful and still retain the author's eloquence (because an author's idea, narrative and style is not altered), yet Morris only meant to enhance, or at least not distract from, this quality. In his essay "The Ideal Book," Morris wrote:

In fact a book, printed or written, has a tendency to be a beautiful object, and that we of this age should generally produce ugly books, shows, I fear something like malice prepense – a determination to put our eyes in our pockets whenever we can.[14]

Morris lamented the disregard of his era – the industrial revolution – for aesthetic excellence. The book arts since medieval illuminated manuscripts – although considered a minor art form – promoted Morris' particular fascination.

From the fifteenth-century *Nuremburg Chronicle* to my first edition of e.e. cummings' 95, elegance is found in

13 Morris, W. 1993. A Note By William Morris on His Aims in Founding the Kelmscott Press. In C. Wilmer, editor. *News From Nowhere and Other Writings*. London: Penguin Books, 387.

14 Morris, W. 1982. The Ideal Book. *In The Ideal Book: Essays and Lectures on the Arts of the Book*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 67.

materiality. All that is book production – page size, type style and size, leading, margins, paper – contributes to a book's aesthetic character. As Morris lovingly described:

> [A] *big folio lies quiet and majestic on the table, waiting kindly till you please to come to it, with its leaves flat and peaceful, giving you no trouble of body, so that your mind is free to enjoy the literature which its beauty enshrines.*[15]

Morris' text evokes the sensual quality of his work – his love. Consider a crisp off-white page pressed with black type; it is inscribed, impregnated. Sheets of paper are filled with words; they pour into folios until the book is complete. From the mind to the pen to the press to the page. The paper's porous surface welcomes literature, history, science, et cetera. However described, from its birth (its *reproduction*), the book is touched by the incessant pressure of the printing press and all that precedes it. And then some.

I am speaking of a kind of skin – a kind of epidermal surface – tattooed with words, with language. The reader caresses, as did Borges, the book's surface. As it is marked so it marks. That is to say, a book is a compilation of impressions, textual and typographic. A volume held, by its front and back cover, opened and exposed, the contents of which pass before (material) and into (immaterial) the reader. It is as if the eyes devour each word, phrase, sentence, and paragraph. These morsels – characters (both typographic and literary), scenes, theories, polemics, manifestoes, et cetera – are held within the reader. As the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty proclaimed, "He is obliged to admit that objects before him pass into him…"[16] The book in its full-blown form (im)presses, and its presence and then absence has a residual effect. Language and the enjoyment of reading linger. The very *object* of the volume – the book – gathers more than dust.

Terms such as *impregnation, reproduction, mark* and (*im*)*press* are more than metaphors. They allude to a number of dual activities. Yes, the book is literally *impregnated* with ink, which is a result of mechanical *reproduction,* and

15 Morris, The Ideal Book, 73.

16 Merleau-Ponty, M. 1964. Eye and Mind. In *The Primacy of Perception: And Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, and Philosophy of Art, History and Politics.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press. 166.

as such it is *mark*ed by an *impression* via the printing press. Impregnated with meaning, which is reproduced in a reader's memory, the book marks and impresses – it transfers and transforms. Every book touches its reader (the book's double imprint and indexical nature) leaving a trace that can then be followed back to the library. Each of these terms allude to a body that sends messages (text), while receiving its share of contact (annotation, inscription, dedication, et cetera).

Reading in the Margins

A residue of sorts can be found in many books in nearly as many libraries. Indelible markings stain the book's surface. Each page receives a series of remarks that are generally referred to as *marginalia* – anything written in the margins, on the flyleaves and endpapers. This manner of annotation is a running commentary, an intervention of sorts, where writing can be bold and original. As far as my collection is concerned, one can find numerous volumes bearing traces of intellectual progression. Open any of my books and there are my penciled-in thoughts. Each note is an inscription, a scratch on the paper's surface – not drawing blood so much as inspiration. Searching through my books, paging through each volume, I am reminded of this critical activity. I can locate each instance of interaction. Here I delved into a text, and there I was amused. This I share with the greatest of writers, Melville and Poe to name but a few. Morris would cringe at marginalia's joyous defacement. Nonetheless, I believe he could be swayed into comprehending this activity, for Morris' notion of the submissive folio beckons my lead to violation.

Indeed, marginalia is my own kind of private and illicit writing whereby I speak – unencumbered and not the least bit self-consciously – to myself and to the author. Once purchased and contained within a collection, the book – *my* book – is for one. In other words – and you will excuse this hackneyed allusion – it is monogamous. I do not lend my books.

Imparting its secrets, the book entices me to offer mine. Each transmission/inscription is held tight within the binding's embrace. No other person is privy to my musings, my comments, my underlinings and my questions. This is where my engagement with the text is most intense.[17] Imagine reading without such a map. After all, a reader must find his or her way back to noteworthy passages, troublesome arguments and useful insights. Like Melville, who "read with a pencil in his hand," I too make marks, inscribe circles, draw arrows, write comments.[18] This is literary intervention, an unraveling of underlying meaning; this is how I get to the writing that is under the writing. My pencil scrapes away the primary sediment, exposing the depth of an author's argument or narrative.

Some literary historians occupy themselves with others' markings. The historian's research remarks on, for instance, Melville's marginalia. He or she searches through the writer's library, transcribing and then publishing, or *re*-marking, every notation. If lucky, the historian locates a real gem of a (re)mark: for example, Melville correcting a printer's error in his copy of *Mosses from an Old Manse* by drawing a line through the word "friend" and writing "serpent" above.[19]

Marginalia provides idiosyncratic commentary, what Poe referred to as "the picturesqueness of… numerous pencil-scratches."[20] Annotation transfers the very personal to the book, which willingly receives these notes. "Pencil-scratches" personalize a library, and marginalia marks each book as the sole property of "me." Therefore, if I possess the book, it must also lay claim to me (as it is marked, so it marks). An interdependence such as this testifies to the auratic agency of the book. As I have stated throughout this essay, it is as if the book, both beautiful and informative, invites notational violation. As it receives any number of markings, the book does so only by way of invitation. The volume must convey some import to its reader, thereby engaging in reciprocating impressions.

18 The poet Susan Howe writes of Melville's intellectual prosthesis – his pencil. See Howe, Susan. 1993. *The Nonconformist's Memorial.* New York: New Directions, 89.

19 Howe, *The Nonconformist's Memorial*, 8. Howe embarked on a series of extensive explorations of American literature and marginalia. See also Howe, S. 1993. *The Birth-mark: Unsettling the Wilderness in American History.* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

20 Poe, *Marginalia*, 3.

A Constellation of Signs

A personal collection of books reflects an individual and his or her interests – it is all that is strange and enticing. As an autobiographical construction, a monument of sorts, the personal library is a treasure trove of curious allusion; it is a constellation of signs triggering inquiry and speculation. As such, a reader is subject to a call that invites such scrutiny. For example, upon entering an acquaintance's apartment I immediately embark upon a search: spying chairs, a sofa, a dining-room table, a television – possibly a computer – until finally my eye locates the prize: a bookshelf. Here I divine qualities of this person's character. He has collected a number of artifacts (paintings, photos, amulets and the like), but my interest lies in the ordered spines that signify identity. Imagine, there sitting on one shelf is a row of books, all are bound in the same olive green leather. They are aligned so that the lettering on each spine creates a horizontal gold band that extends across the entire series. Moving closer, I am able to make out the title of each book. They are, in total, the collected works of Goethe. I reach to pull a single volume from its nest, but I am distracted. Over there, two shelves up and to the left, my eye rests on a complete set of the works of Brecht. Below these are several volumes on the Bauhaus, and more on Mies van der Rohe. Certainly not every person is interested in this question of signified identity – in divining a unsuspecting party's interests. And really, it seems pretentious to judge a person by the holdings of his library. Yet, for all of my behavior's presumption, it is a start.

Principally, a reader purchases books varying in significance and signification. Gathered on the shelves of a personal library are books that have been read, books that will be read, and books that will never be read. Texts that were accessed resonate throughout a reader's life, they are stored away in memory and are brought to the fore when necessary. Titles that remain unread, but are slated to be delved into, take on quite another meaning. These

books entice, beckoning a reader to slip them from the shelf and dip into their assets. Finally, there are those volumes that will never disclose their wonders, they remind us of the inconceivable amount of information there is to behold. Thus a reader is forced to grapple with the fact that he or she cannot know it all, let alone read it all.

Each of the above instances describes a relation between a physical object residing in the external world and an internal concept or memory. The advantage of the private bookshelf's topology, by its very nature, is a presentation of its holdings at a glance. A book collection is a kind of archive of memories. Available at a moment's notice, a reader surveys his or her past (and at times, his or her future) by "mining" present possessions.

Conclusion

Is the library, as Borges wrote, "illuminated, solitary, infinite, perfectly motionless, equipped with precious volumes, useless, incorruptible, [and] secret [?]" Indeed, some libraries are "illuminated, solitary," and hold a number of "precious volumes." I hope this essay demonstrates that books – single or collected, private or public – are less than precious (no matter how beautiful), and as such are prone to corruption. Yet, this situation is far from degenerate. The corruptible library is a vital thing: it shrinks and expands, suffers and inspires, gives and takes, and exudes an undeniable force on the collector, researcher, reader and writer. Does this enumeration prove that the library is not what Borges proclaimed? No. The library is all that Borges believed, while it is also the opposite. Books have their uses, however useless those uses may be.

As a collection, the library may be thought of as a dual system held by a single organism. In conclusion, I propose that the library (and each book contained within) is an organ for recollection and production. In terms of the former quality, the library organ functions as a storage unit, completely accessible for knowledge, information and personal history (the public library should not be

excluded when considering books as an index of experience). The latter quality, no less complex, provokes a reader to action. A collection available for research and citation sets one to the task of writing. Thus the library organ of production contributes to its own growth, and the possibility of its infinite nature.

Do I consider my own collection as a library organ of recollection and production? Yes, and each time I step through the door leading into my apartment, I see out of the corner of my eye that durable constellation that is born of my own predilections. Maintaining my library organ is a full-time pursuit. Even when abstaining from its cultivation, I am held by its manifest qualities.