

THE MEASURE OF BLISS

The Book of Hours and Breaths

Animating the Event

A 24-hour event. A 1,000ml breath. A book measured in both.

A practice-based research from the printing studio.

“Measure, Time, and Number are nothing but modes of thinking, or rather, of imagining.”

Mensura, Tempus, et Numerus, nihil sint praeter cogitandi, seu potius imaginandi, modos.

Spinoza, *Letter 12* (to Lodewijk Meyer, 20 April 1663)

Abstract

At a moment when dominant systems of knowledge production and value accumulation are designed to suppress the body’s awareness of its own material conditions, and its capacity to feel, this project asks: what does devoted practice - open in its orientation, lived in its findings - generate that those systems cannot capture - what conditions does that generation require - and what becomes possible, politically, when those conditions are met?

The Measure of Bliss proposes that the act of making an artist book is a form of living philosophy: that studio, press, reflection, and encounter are simultaneous expressions of a single event. This claim is enacted across four co-original components - a written paper, an artist book (*The Book of Hours and Breaths*, the graphic output), eight Animations of the Print Vigil (the linguistic output), and a studio archive - none preceding the others, none illustrating any other.

At the centre is the Print Vigil: a continuous twenty-four-hour creative event: a single body working presses with inks and matrices, into a codex settling at 15 × 15 × 4.5 cm - a volume of 1,012.5ml, the capacity of a deliberate human inhalation. The lung becomes the measure of the architecture. Here, the project draws on Spinoza’s parallelism to argue that the separation of thinking and making is systemic - a cultural conditioning that diminishes the body’s capacity to know it is being acted upon. Against this, the studio grants material weight to the body that works it. The bliss of the title is a translation choice for Spinoza’s *acquiescentia in se ipso* - the active recognition, after the effort, of the power that drove it. *Beatitudo*¹, blessedness, grounds this; bliss is the word the body reaches for when blessedness

¹ Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part V, Propositions 33-36. *Beatitudo* (blessedness) is Spinoza’s term for the highest condition of human flourishing: the intellectual love of God, understood as the mind’s adequate comprehension of itself and its body under the aspect of eternity. It isn’t a reward for virtue but virtue itself (E5p42). Where *acquiescentia in se ipso* names the body’s active recognition of the power that drove it, *beatitudo* names the ground that recognition stands on.

is too clean. The medieval *Book of Hours* enters as intercessor: a pre-Cartesian technology of embodied attention, summoned as ghost-map to what devotional, resistant making felt like from the inside. The reach toward the medieval manuscript is strategic: one darkness summoned into another. The project performs as a Somatic Chronograph² - a living measure that perceives, performs, and records - a co-composition realised through duration, offered as an option for practice-based philosophical inquiry.



THE BOXED BREATH FORM

"The Boxed Breath" four-part presentation structure mirrors the internal logic of the project - a structured "breath" that a viewer can follow.



INHALE: The Written Paper. Thinking-as-making. The philosophical weave before the press moves.



HOLD: The Artist Book. The Book of Hours and Breaths. Making-as-thinking: Proof in hands.



EXHALE: The Animations of the Print Vigil and the Pressmarks Lexicon. Reflections that emerged in the process of making, the settlement made legible.



REST: Studio Archives. Video, photography, sketches, notes. The duration of the 24-hour Print Vigil held in evidence - the material record of striving.

Each phase is a component of the project and a phase of the Vigil itself. They are not sequential - they are simultaneous, encountered in whatever order the reader arrives. A breath is the body's own immanent measure of its becoming: the smallest complete cycle in which it affects and is affected.

Inhale and *Exhale* are movement; *Hold* and *Rest* are suspension - of different orders. *Hold* is the effort at full expression - the proof-point where striving meets resistance. *Rest* is what substance retains after release. The body lives these phases rather than counting them - measuring duration from inside. This is what is meant by a Somatic Chronograph. The research enacts this structure. It does not describe it. The written paper is one phase of the breath.

² *Chronograph*, from the Greek χρονολόγος (*chronográphos*): *chronos* (time) + *graphein* (to write) - literally, *time-writing*. The first modern chronograph, devised by Louis Moinet in 1816, recorded elapsed duration by inscribing it directly onto a dial with a small pen, the length of the mark indicating the time passed. The term entered horology and survives there as a precision timing instrument. The compound term *Somatic Chronograph*, as used in this research, returns the word to its original sense: time-writing located in the body and registered through the material traces the work leaves behind.

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Hold | Exhale

The Body-Book-Event. Illuminating the Codex: a contemporary reimagining of the Book of Hours and Breaths

The Print Vigil - a continuous twenty-four-hour making event - produced two simultaneous traces. **The Hold:** the artist book - the volume that event generated in pressure, grain, in the specific weight of paper and ink pressed by a particular body through particular hours. **The Exhale:** a co-existing verbal settlement of the same event: Animations and Lexicon. One mode of substance apprehended twice: the press and the page, the body and the mark, the silence and the sequence.

Rest

Presence, ethics, and the politics of settlement

The Body as Centre, The Book as the Argument.

Material Ethics: The Volume of Our Impact.

Towards Somatic Politics.

***Acquiescentia in se ipso:* Archive of Presence.**

Opening: The Note on the Event

The medieval *Book of Hours* - a handmade illuminated manuscript, designed to structure prayer through the body's own rhythm of the day - lived in the periphery of the studio for twenty years before it became research. It arrived as a reference, an attachment: to the ingenuity of the form, to the magic of the object, to the value of the artist's hand made visible in the skin of the page. Not a subject. A presence.

The drift began in libraries. Looking at the devotional books - not reading them, because they no longer hold coherent knowledge for the uninitiated - but allowing the body to give in to the sensory encounter. Their textual meaning inaccessible, their value intensified by that very inaccessibility. What had been image and text to apprehend became something to be felt before it could be named. The static notion of understanding gave way to the lived event of encounter. That shift was already the question - already moving in the body before it had arrived as a concept.

The studio was changing too. Becoming more conscious of its own patterns and problems. What would become research was already re-forming in the practice, alongside the *Book of Hours*, before either had a name.

Spinoza arrived unannounced. Not applied - recognised. The revelation was not intellectual - it was the shock of being seen. And with that recognition and licence, what had lived in the periphery of the studio for twenty years stopped being attachment and became method - the medieval book as ghost-map to what this practice had always been moving toward: the maker's presence not concealed but offered, the body's passage through time not masked but imprinted, the findings not extracted but left to settle in the object, available to whoever arrives next. The first philosophy encountered that didn't ask the practice to justify itself from outside - instead arriving as a logic already beneath it.

At the centre of the project sits a handmade codex - an artist book where every surface carries meaning. Kenya Hara, Japanese graphic practitioner, writes:

"Perhaps it's time we reevaluate what a book is."³

Books, he argues, can no longer compete with screens as information media. Their role has changed. A book now is "senseware": its weight, the pressure of its impression, the binding, the sequence of pages - these are not decoration. They are argument. They are the work itself.⁴

But Hara is still, at root, asking a designer's question: what can the object do? This thesis arrives at the same threshold from the other direction - as philosophical claim enacted through making. It asks first what the body can do and discovers, at the press, in the ink's resistance, in the hours that won't stop accumulating, that the two questions were never separate.

To resolve this claim through digital means would perform the very problem the project names: the pretence that thinking and making are weightless. The artist book refuses that pretence - it carries its value in the hand of the reader.

During the Print Vigil, the discipline of printmaking ceased to be something applied and became something inhabited. The body at full strength and the body tired are different bodies. The press remembers both. This is where Hara's question and the body's question find each other - not in theory, but in the grain of the paper, in what the ink holds. What a book is cannot be separated from what a body has done.

What the Print Vigil imprints - and what this project moves with - is a question that begins in the body before it arrives in language: what does this practice leave behind that no system of capture can reach? What does it cost, and what does it ask for in return? And when those costs and conditions are shared - what opens?

³ Kenya Hara, *Designing Design* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2007), p. 196.

⁴ Kenya Hara, *Designing Design* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2007), p. 152.

This project moves through the conditions that make devoted practice at the press both difficult and necessary - tracing what the practice generates, pull by pull, layer by layer, until what the body discovers in the making is recognised as already belonging to shared ecology.

What emerges from this duration is knowledge this written paper cannot reach alone. This is what Spinoza calls the third-kind knowledge - *Scientia Intuitiva* - the understanding that is present whole when the knower has become adequate to the event they are enacting.⁵ The Vigil does not claim to deliver third-kind knowledge in its strict technical sense - the apprehension of singular essence *sub specie aeternitatis* - but it produces the conditions under which such apprehension becomes thinkable: the progressive reduction of deliberative distance, conducted in the body, through the resistance of the materials. The codex holds this asymptote - a singular modification of substance, pressure, grain, the specific weight of particular hours, available to be encountered again in whoever holds it next. The written parts of the project can describe the approach. But the written argument can only gesture towards what the codex holds, can describe it, can build the architecture around it. These are not the same act. The paper moves progressively: concept by concept, hour by hour, through the pages of the accompanying Animations. The codex holds the event in pressure, grain, in the specific weight of a particular object in a particular pair of hands.

The knowledge this research produces is what philosophy calls intensive.⁶ It cannot be aggregated, averaged, or abstracted without losing what it is. It exists in the encounter - in the specific pulls made during the final hours, in the precise truth of what was available at that hour, that pressure, that body. This is Spinoza's *conatus* at work:⁷ the body's intrinsic tendency to continue expressing what it is under whatever conditions. The body at the press in the final hours is being what it is, through exhaustion. Its capacity to affect and be affected altered, its marks different in kind. This variation across twenty-four hours is a somatic register: the changing affects recorded in ink.

Each of the four components of this project is evidence of a different order. To encounter only this written paper is to encounter argument without proof - a claim the reader cannot meet at the scale of the body. To encounter only the codex is to hold proof without argument - the event carried in pressure and grain, but mute about what it's doing. The Animations name what neither the paper nor the codex can - the affective texture of the duration, the canonical hours' lived weight as the body moved through them. The Pressmarks Lexicon names what the discipline knew before the philosophy arrived - the working vocabulary that was already philosophical. The studio archive holds what the four cannot fix in form: the irreducible material trace of the work, the duration in evidence.

None substitutes for any other. This is not the deconstruction of an event but its co-original holding through the forms this research found capable of carrying⁸. The knowledge may not be containable in a single form, and the claim of co-originality is its philosophical claim - Spinoza's substance monism respiring at the level of the project's structure, the same event apprehended and balanced through the attributes each element is adequate to.

What this enacts is a different model of evidence: paper, codex, Animations, Lexicon, archive - each an irreducible co-original form of the argument.

These two questions - what is a book, what can a body do - run through this research as a single inquiry. They do not resolve into a definition. They resolve into a set of capacities: what the book, understood as event, turns out to be capable of. Eight of them, unfolded across the Animations of the Print Vigil. Arrived at through pressure and duration, through the hours the body lived and the press recorded.

You are holding the Inbale. The rest is in motion.

⁵ Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part II, Proposition 40, Scholium 2. The third-kind knowledge apprehends things *sub specie aeternitatis* - under the aspect of eternity, the whole arriving at once from within.

⁶ Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*. Intensive knowledge cannot be reduced to data or representation; it persists only in the encounter.

⁷ Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part III, Definition 6. *Conatus*: the striving of each thing to persist in its being. In the context of this research, the body's refusal of weightlessness, its insistence on felt resistance.

⁸ This is what Erin Manning calls research-creation: a processual event in which the doing generates knowledge that only the doing could have reached. See Erin Manning, 'Against Method', in Phillip Vannini (ed.), *Non-Representational Methodologies* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 52-71.



INHALE

Towards Intuition: the architecture of attention, naming the suppressed friction and assembling the tools.

Through the Weightless Threshold

This begins in the now. The digital is not a void. It hums. It generates heat. Its infrastructure occupies land, consumes water, and burns carbon at scales the interfaces we encounter daily are designed never to disclose. The problem is not that the digital is weightless - it is that its weight has been systematically withheld from the senses that would otherwise register it.

This is the condition this research begins from: not absence, but anaesthesia. The digital interface doesn't empty the world of resistance; it suppresses the body's capacity to feel that resistance, routing intensity below the threshold of awareness. What diminishes, and what is structural to this argument, is the body's power to know it is being acted upon.

The body perceives this before it can be argued. Byung-Chul Han, philosopher and theologian, names its social form: *a transparency society* in which everything is visible and nothing is felt, presence rendered as data and stripped of weight.⁹ The affective consequence runs deeper than the social one. What Brian Massumi calls the surplus-value of life - the felt excess that genuine material encounter generates - is suppressed below the body's threshold of awareness before it can be registered as value.¹⁰ The interface accelerates this by smoothing it - closing the gap between effort and outcome until the body can no longer distinguish between what it has chosen and what it has merely accepted.

This is what the body learns to normalise. Hold a device. The thumb aches. The body is stiff. The mind bypasses why this might be. These are not the symptoms of absence - they're the symptoms of low-intensity resistance encountered at high frequency, below the threshold of conscious awareness.

Kim Cascone, writing at the turn of the millennium, identified it in the register of sound: the post-digital moment when the digital's material infrastructure was systematically black-boxed, made transparent to the user so that only the smooth surface of the output remained. Against this concealment, Cascone posed the opposition: an Aesthetics of Failure - the deliberate recovery of what the interface had suppressed, as critique, not consolation. Florian Cramer extended this, describing the post-digital as a critical position taken from within ubiquity itself - a refusal to mistake the frictionless interfaces for the neutral or the natural.¹¹

James Bridle calls it the new dark age:¹² computational systems so dense that even the people who built them cannot see through the weather they have made. The condition Bridle names goes deeper than ignorance - it's the structural impossibility of overview, a density that forecloses the very transparency it was built to deliver. This is the contemporary form of what the opening argument traces: from Han's transparency without weight, through Massumi's suppressed surplus, through Cascone and Cramer's post-digital concealment - a convergence on the same condition. The body is acted upon by systems whose material weight it cannot register.

⁹ Byung-Chul Han, *The Transparency Society*, trans. Erik Butler (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015).

¹⁰ Brian Massumi, *99 Theses on the Revaluation of Value: A Postcapitalist Manifesto* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), theses 1-12.

¹¹ Kim Cascone, 'The Aesthetics of Failure: "Post-Digital" Tendencies in Contemporary Computer Music', *Computer Music Journal*, 24:4 (2000), pp. 12-18; Florian Cramer, 'What is Post-digital?', in D.M. Berry and M. Dieter (eds.), *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 12-26.

¹² James Bridle, *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (London: Verso, 2018).

The axiom of resistance that underlies this research draws on the full weight of this convergence: the digital's friction is not absent. It is bypassed by design. What is suppressed is not the world's resistance but the body's capacity to feel it. This is anaesthesia operating as infrastructure.

The printing press carries its own industrial genealogy and the archive. Gutenberg's machinery democratised text through standardising, multiplying, distributing technology and the studio's practice inherits that history: presses, ink, paper, solvents each carry extraction and manufacturing human chains. What the studio alters is the registration of those relations - returning their weight to the sensing body rather than placing it below the threshold of awareness. The distinction this project draws is between legible consequence and concealed consequence: two material processes, differently open about what they cost.

Yet the studio doesn't oppose the digital; it recovers what the digital conceals. Both are material processes; both involve infrastructure, energy, and physical consequence. What the studio returns to the body is the felt registration of that consequence - the weight that the interface was designed to withhold. The relationship between digital and material in this practice is in mutual constitution: the screen anticipates the press; the press revises what the screen proposed.

Graphic practice has always operated this way - the supposed novelty of the digital only makes visible what was always true of the relationship between concept and matter in print.

Digital and material are modes of the same practice, differently expressed, unequal, working in ratios. It is from this position that this research begins - and it is from within this condition that it reaches for its first tool: the medieval *Book of Hours*, made in an earlier darkness by hands that understood opacity as a condition to be inhabited, rather than solved.

The Intercessor: Re-imagining the Hours

The *Book of Hours* was designed to be held close. Its dimensions fit the hand. Its vellum moved with the heat of the palm that opened it, swelled with the moisture of a breath held near the page. A somatic architecture - an ingenious technology for structuring attention through resistant material form. Created, knowingly or not, for a body that prayed with its fingers as much as its mind.

These small books were the original personal devices, tactile before they were anything else: kissed, gripped, and carried, their rhythms dictated by the rising sun and the tolling of a bell. Through repeated acts of opening and handling - a visually arresting choreography of the day, the season, the year, a lifetime - attunement emerged. Personal, yes - commissioned, created, annotated, held close - and yet structured by communal rhythms of worldly ritual.

This project reaches for this notion as intercessor - in Deleuze's sense,¹³ the figure that breaks a thinker's solitude, provoking something that thinking alone cannot reach. An effective ghost-map to what embodied devotional practice felt like from the inside, made before Descartes insisted on the separation of thought from body hardening into common sense.¹⁴ An intercessor summoned from one dark age into another.

Where Descartes severed thought from body, Spinoza held them as one - two attributes of a single substance, neither preceding the other, neither subordinate to the other. This work chimes with that refusal: the body that thinks and the body that makes are the same body, and the book which carries the mark of that making carries thought in the only form adequate to it.

The artist's optic is openly projective. The medieval manuscripts remain unintelligible to a contemporary reader. What the *Book of Hours* offers is a figure for inspiration, not a recovery - a devotional practice performed as somatic drama, cast back into the studio so the present can be thought through it.

¹³ Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Continuum, 2002), p. 125.

¹⁴ René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641), Sixth Meditation (AT VII, 78). The real distinction between mind and body - *res cogitans* and *res extensa* - formalised a separation the *Book of Hours* had never conceded.

This is the inheritance this research gestures toward. What the vellum did - carrying the salt of the brow, the tremor of the hand, a skin pressed against another skin - paper can do too. The materials are different.

The logic is the same. The book this project produces inherits that logic: a contemporary codex made to carry the body's passage through time in the same register the medieval manuscript carried prayer. How it does so - under what conditions, at what cost, through what duration - is the work of the chapters that follow.

What the medieval form offers first is the depth of what it knew about time - how to make it felt, how to bind it to the body's own rhythms. The *Book* unfolds across the intervals of the Divine Office. This is time made affective, attuned, *lived*: time internalised, experienced, and reconfigured as spiritual rhythm. The canonical hours do not purely divide the day. They inhabit it. And the *Book's* materiality moves with them: morning light strikes gold leaf differently than candlelit dusk. Summer heat warps the pages. Winter stiffens the vellum under the fingers. The *Book* is never the same book twice, because the body holding it is never the same body, and the hour is never the same hour.

The vellum itself makes the argument somatic - sensed, seen and felt. Animal skin - scraped, stretched, and dried under tension - retains what codicologists call hygroscopic memory: it moves with the heat of a hand, swells with the moisture of a breath, curls toward the body that holds it. The manuscript is a reactive biological membrane, still responding. The *Book of Hours* knew this before philosophy named it - a pre-Gutenberg sensorium, handmade, hand-held, hand-illuminated. The *Book* got hold of the body before it could be intellectualised.

What the illuminations carried was already sensed through their affective architecture before it could be read as text: miniatures operated as visual mazes - flat, symbolic, rhythmic - guiding the gaze, embedding the reader into a gyroscopic movement, felt before was named. A corporeal sway toward a meaning that remains elusive.¹⁵

Text, image, and gesture converging with faith, longing, devotion - the seen and unseen overlapping, entangled. The potentiality of meaning glimmered, exceeded its frame. Seduced movement. And orientation.

For the *Book of Hours*, orientation is ethical. To read devotionally - slowly, receptively - is to orient oneself toward a different economy of time, in which attention is cultivated rather than extracted. Each page is a differential field: a turning not just of the paper, but of the Self. A willingness to be reconfigured by the encounter.

This is what the *Book of Hours* held intact, from before thought and body were parcelled into separate orders: that sustained, timed, repeated engagement with a resistant material object which maintained a form of attention that argument alone cannot recover.

The Gyroscopic Hold

The recalibration the *Book of Hours* performed went beyond cognitive. The specific angle of the wrist required to hold it open, the resistance of the vellum, the pause enforced by the density of the image - these acted on the body before any content registered. Spinoza's *affectus* at work before it could be named:¹⁶ the change in the body's power to act that precedes both emotion and cognition.

A gyroscope that doesn't spin is useless. Its stability is an effect of its motion - and its motion depends on the relationship between its spinning mass and the forces acting on it from outside. The *Book of Hours* is gyroscopic in exactly this sense: not illustration but operative diagram - orientation without origin. It maintains orientation not by resisting motion but by moving with it. The *affectus* - the body's shifting capacity to act - is the spinning mass. The material resistance of the book - vellum, weight, image, the enforced pause - is the external force. Orientation is produced in their relation, not in either one alone.

¹⁵ Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 23-45. The pre-individual intensity Massumi describes - affect as a bodily knowing that precedes its linguistic capture - is precisely the knowledge-before-concept at work in the illuminated gesture.

¹⁶ Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 23-45.

Spinoza tells us what a body *is* (even if he doesn't pin it down): a ratio of motion and rest, a singular proportion that defines its capacity to affect and be affected. What he doesn't give us is the temporal grain of how two bodies come into relation without one preceding the other - the becoming of the encounter itself. Process philosophy's (A.N. Whitehead) actual occasions of experience supply the missing movement: each event a momentary concrescence of relations - a composition that brings its own elements into being - beyond the meeting of pre-existing things.¹⁷ The gyroscopic hold is not a property of book or reader but a property of the occasion they constitute together. Manning calls this *immediation*¹⁸: the occasion constitutes its own parties, neither body prior to the encounter that brings both into relation. The hold is already underway before any single body can claim it.

The *Book of Hours* imposes a ratio: the pace of the page-turn, the pause enforced by the image, the silence between one Office and the next. The body brings its own: the weight of the hand at this hour, the breath at this depth, the attention shaped by whatever preceded the opening. To use this object devotionally is to have one's syncopated tempo reconfigured by the object's own. These are rituals of time-sensing - they don't mark time, they tune it. The gyroscopic hold is the body discovering - through the hands, through the wrists, through the slowing breath - that its ratio and the book's ratio are becoming, for the duration of the encounter, the same.

This convergence is the threshold. When the ratios align, something else becomes available - what the book might do. The hold is the condition under which the question of the next chapter opens: *what can a contemporary artist book do?*

"Art is thinking but it is not theory. The world's reality resides in art, and it is inseparable from art's investigative procedure, which seeks to expose how the forces, the different compounds of elements - material and conceptual - interact to produce a certain effect."

Chus Martinez, 'Unexpress the Expressible', *The Complex Answer*¹⁹

What Can an Artist Book Do? The Logic of Co-expression

What can a body do? Spinoza's provocation turns, at the press, into the printer's question: what can an artist book do? And beneath it, can the book recover what the virtual interface conceals?

The answer this work proposes is co-expression.

In his *Ethics*, Spinoza makes a claim easy to miss: mind and body are two attributes of a single substance - irreducibly different modes of apprehending the same underlying reality. They are not causally related; neither precedes the other. What this research draws on is the deeper claim he makes in the Scholium to Proposition 7 of Part II (E2p7s)²⁰: that a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, expressed in two ways. The intention to pull and the pull itself are one event of substance,

¹⁷ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978).

¹⁸ Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016). Manning develops immediation as the condition in which an event constitutes its own parties - neither body prior to the encounter that brings both into relation. The concept is elaborated in conversation with A.N. Whitehead's account of actual occasions: the event isn't the meeting of pre-existing things but the emergence of those things through their relation.

¹⁹ Chus Martinez, 'Unexpress the Expressible', in *The Complex Answer* (London: Sternberg Press, 2023), p. 71.

²⁰ Spinoza, *Ethics*, II, Proposition 7, Scholium (E2p7s): 'a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, expressed in two ways.' Trans. E. Curley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

apprehended twice. It is this identity of the mode - the inseparability of thinking and making - that the press makes legible.

The press proves it where argument alone cannot. Pressure, angle, resistance, viscosity: these are discovered in the doing. The separation of thinking mind from working hand is practically unavailable at the press - the body knows this in the shoulders and the lower back before philosophy can describe it.

Kenya Hara calls the book “senseware”²¹: a medium that acts on the human sense before it delivers information. The artist book this research produces extends that claim. It is senseware and something more: a Somatic Chronograph - a living measure that perceives, performs, and records. The book carries the duration of the body that made it, pressed into the paper layer by layer. The event of making it - the twenty-four-hour Print Vigil - is itself a chronograph, the body’s passage through time held in evidence. This is a singular object, unrepeatable: one body, one night, one set of conditions meeting the resistance of the materials. The knowledge it generates cannot be replicated - and that is its philosophical fulcrum. There is no position outside this encounter from which to observe it neutrally; adequacy requires inhabiting the event, not surveying it. The book is the research. The research is the book.

The structure of this investigation mirrors the event it describes. Boxed Breathing²² - four equal intervals of inhale, hold, exhale, and rest - regulates the autonomic nervous system through the body’s own pull toward stability. The project unfolds across four corresponding phases, co-original, co-existing, co-composed - each present in the others from the beginning. The structure is notational rather than causal: a linear representation of a non-linear event. This is Spinozist *conatus* working at the level of the lung: the body asserting its own working measure.

The structure of the project is its primary philosophical act: four co-original components demonstrating in form what the written argument inclines toward.

Spinoza’s third-kind knowledge - *Scientia Intuitiva* - doesn’t proceed from the outside in, assembling understanding from inference and experience. It apprehends the essence of a thing directly, arriving whole, when the knower has become adequate to the event they are enacting. What the press offers, over twenty-four hours, is the conditions for precisely this: the progressive reduction of deliberative distance, conducted in the body, through the resistance of the materials.

The artist working at the press is the event of mind and body’s co-expression - a single mode of substance, apprehended twice. And that is the work of the press at the Print Vigil.

The next chapters act as a dramaturgy of preparation - four parallel movements that prepare the making. Each a single claim entered from a different angle: site, orchestration, measure, striving. None precedes the others. **The Press** names the site. **The Anatomy** names the orchestration. **The Metric** names the measure. **The Aspiration** names the striving - where the theory arrives at the threshold of making and discovers that the methodology was already waiting in the form.

The Press

The studio is a body in its own right - a centrifuge of mass and resistance that begins to act on whoever enters it before they have touched anything. Pressing, cutting, gluing, folding, inking, drying - the whole accumulated choreography of the craft - is offering itself to the body that enters. The matrices are stacked. The ink is cold. The paper anticipates the day ahead. The presses at the centre of this Vigil work in relief and silkscreen alternating - eight matrices, a limited palette of black, blue, red, and white, syncopated lines as the structural base. Relief carries the irreversible gesture: ink on the raised surface, transferred under the full weight of the press. Silkscreen builds atmosphere over and through it: transparent passes that change what the layers beneath mean. The accumulation works the way the hours

²¹ Kenya Hara, *Designing Design* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2007), p. 155.

²² The Boxed Breath circulates in contemporary tactical-breathing and somatic vocabularies - military, athletic, corporate-wellness. These contexts are not innocent: they tend toward biopolitical capture of breath as instrument of resilience, productivity, and self-regulation under conditions that should be refused rather than endured. The thesis takes the four-phase structure and re-roots it in the durational and devotional registers from which breath-as-attention came.

accumulate - each one modifying everything that came before, the past persisting in the present as colour, as tone, as the ghost of an earlier pressure. The roller, the ink slab, the stacked paper, the chemical smell of the solvent - bodies in their own right, each with its own agenda: the ink thickening, the paper breathing, the press holding the memory of every pull that has passed through it.

The maker enters a room that is already in motion.

Printmaking sits at the intersection of everything the dominant culture claims to want - reproduction, dissemination, image, text, knowledge, archive. Its two main players, paper and ink are the substrate of civilisation; the systems of knowledge production and value depend on them too. Even war depends on them. Everything does. And yet the print discipline is in servitude. Industrialisation crawled over the art form and claimed its function while stripping its philosophical weight, demoting it to reproduction in service of art forms and communication it had itself made possible. This is the curse of William Blake - knowing what the work is, failing in the world's terms, and doing it anyway. The current generation of graphic artists carries that curse forward as inheritance: more aware than ever of the discipline's quiet power, listening to a world the industrial flattening tried to silence. Printmaking is surviving precisely because it holds something those dominant systems cannot capture - a relationship between thought, body, matter, and reproduction that predates and exceeds the industrial. This research enters the discipline at exactly that point of survival. The studio emerges as the site where the question this thesis asks has already been living, in the bodies of the makers who never stopped listening.

What the studio composes - and with it the capacity to affect and be affected - makes it one of the most demanding bodies the artist will meet. It imposes its own ratio before the work begins: the height of the press determines the angle of the shoulders; the weight of the roller determines the strength of the grip; the viscosity of the ink determines the pressure of the hand. The body that enters the studio will be reconfigured - joint by joint, breath by breath - by twenty-four hours of continuous encounter with matter that pushes back. This is immediation at the level of the room: bodies, materials, and conditions already reshaping each other before the first plate is inked. Every image moved from thought to paper has a physical cost.

The weightless digital interface distributes this cost invisibly - from server farms and lithium mines into the bodies that ignore them. The studio returns its registration to the body that generated it. The ink, the solvent, the paper each carry their own extraction histories - present in the studio, sensed rather than suppressed. For now, in silence.

From inside the work that is about to begin, the press appears to wait. The frame still carries the temperature of the night. The plates carry decisions made in a different state of mind. The room is full of evidence - everything spent here before - and the weight of what is to come signals its intensities to the body.

The conditions that animate this space carry their own weight, and they operate in different registers. Some are circumstantial - the able body, the studio, the time. These arrived as conditions. Others are accumulated - twenty-five years of working with print, any print: relief, intaglio, lithography, silkscreen, the specific attunement to matrix and mesh that only practice builds, over years, the curiosity that spelled Spinoza when the body had already found him in the work. These were built, impression beyond impression. Other privileges are protective - the years spent preserving the conditions for this research to be possible at all. That striving has its own cost. None of these registers is equivalent, and none is universally affordable or easy to diagnose.

The studio holds all of this in readiness - the presses, the matrices, the ink, the accumulated choreography of twenty-five years, the conditions that made them available. What it doesn't yet hold is the form that will organise them into a single event. A body in a room full of materials is not yet a vigil - until the press moves.

The Anatomy

The *Book of Hours* lends a vocabulary. The Print Vigil learns to speak it through the hands, in the doing. A single artist enters the studio and works for twenty-four continuous hours - one full turning of the earth, mirroring the temporal architecture the canonical hours were built to inhabit. What the Vigil demands is devotion in its medieval sense - the act of being given over to a task. What drives it through

the hours is striving - the pull each thing makes to persist as itself, applicable equally to ink, paper, lung. Spinoza's *conatus*: the intrinsic tendency of every configuration of matter to continue expressing what it manifests. The ink strives. The paper strives. The body at the press strives. The word earns its place here because it refuses to distinguish between them. Neither devotion nor striving implies virtue. Relief and silkscreen presses alternate through the night. Eight matrices carry the visual architecture: six variations on parallel horizontal lines, printed in black, blue, and red, overlapping each other into a syncopated ground; two silhouettes of a human form, positive and negative - in the logic of *notan*²³ - appearing against that ground and disappearing back into it. As the pages turn, the lines drag the movement forward; the human silhouette flashes intermittently through the noise. Each pass modifies everything that came before. The twenty-four hours become a single structure - the canonical hours made operational at the scale of a body. Within this duration, the *conatus* of the artist and the *conatus* of the material are synthesised, layer by layer, into a singular graphic form. The methodology was already waiting in the form. The press doesn't illustrate concepts. It generates them.

What the *Vigil* aims for requires a form adequate to carry it - and the codex turns out to be that form. Not by analogy but by material necessity. The bound constraint gives the duration somewhere to settle: twenty-four hours held in a spine. Each page-turn is a small irreversible act, the next concealed by the present one until the body has moved through - the same irreversible sequence the printing enacted, each layer arriving on top of what came before. The two hands required - one holding, one turning - occupy the reader's body in the same way the press occupied the maker's, the body's necessary participation in time-measured encounter. And the closed book at rest - *Compline*, the settling - is the form remembering its own duration before the next opening. Other paper-based forms approach this - certain devotional scrolls, folded broadsides, accordion books - but the codex is the form in which all these properties are simultaneously present and structurally inseparable. The codex is the form in which the *Print Vigil* could fully settle.

The medieval *Book of Hours* offers the pathway into this inheritance: the quire structure to divide duration into clusters of effort and rest; the timed sequence of the canonical hours to calibrate attention to the rhythm of the celestial volume; the material weight to impose a specific conformation on whoever holds it. These are the working organs of an attentional technology - an architecture to record and reconfigure the body's passage through time. The *Print Vigil* enters this inheritance to find something new inside something old, and to carry it forward.

Spinoza's *Letter 12* distinguishes the bounded from the quantifiable. He gives the example of the space between two non-concentric circles: a finite, determinate region whose inequalities exceed every number, however large, and whose excess doesn't arise from any multitude of parts. The artist book is such a region. Twenty-four hours, a determinate edition, a particular body, this press - bounded. What passed through these bounds was not the sum of pulls, pages, or hours. It was the *conatus* expressed against gravity and resistance, the body's persistence, the affective charge that gathered attention into the press-point. None of this is captured by the millilitre. The measure points; it doesn't contain.

The anatomy of this event is two-fold. First, the making: twenty-four hours in which the studio, the body, and the materials compose the object together. Second, the reading: every subsequent encounter with the codex reactivates the event, a new body entering the ratio the maker's body left in the paper. The matrices carry this two-fold logic visually: the six line-variations are the duration, the two silhouettes are the body, each revealed through the other.

The breath sustains the body through the effort. The philosophy directs the intent of the labour. The book captures the traces of both. The anatomy doesn't end when the press stops. It continues to breathe like the two-fold lung.

²³ *Notan* is a compositional principle of dark-light balance, concerning the interaction between positive and negative space. The term entered Western art education through Ernest Fenollosa and Arthur Wesley Dow's *Composition* (1899), and is most fully developed for studio practice in Dorr Bothwell and Marlys Mayfield, *Notan: The Dark-Light Principle of Design* (New York: Dover, 1991; first published 1968). The two-silhouette matrices in the *Print Vigil* operate within this logic: figure and ground as co-expressions of a single visual event.

The Metric: 1,000ml of Air

Devotion does not hurry. The book we are making is slow, deliberate, wanted - it weighs down the reader to move at the speed of 1,000ml of air with every page-turn. The artist's breath at the press and the reader's breath at the page are not the same effort - but they share a measure. They meet on the page, giving the book its sustenance.

This is a secular pivot, moving from the liturgical clock to the biological rhythms: from praying the hours to breathing the hours. The anatomy of this book-body is roughly 1,000ml - the volume of a single, deep human inhalation, a volume that is also a book. By ensuring the physical displacement of the book - its thickness, its weight, the literal space its paper occupies - matches this corporeal capacity, the object ceases to be a vessel for information.

The lung becomes the measure of its architecture - and the architecture, like the lung itself, unfolds and gathers in the same rhythm.

The correspondence is neither accidental, nor is it literal: the artist book does not contain the breath - it performs the act of Cartesian measurement against the thing that measurement cannot reach, and that gap is both the paradox and the argument. The physical codex measures $15 \times 15 \times 4.5$ centimetres - a volume of 1,012.5ml, the capacity of a deep inhalation. The calibration was found through a logic of trying and imagination - a calibrated chance rather than prior design: page count, paper weight, binding, and dimensions adjusted across the making until the object occupied the same space as the breath.

The choice of 1,000ml is a deliberate constraint. It is neither a calm tidal breath - approximately 500ml volume - nor the body at maximum exertion - vital capacity of 4,000–6,000ml. It names a third register: the deliberate breath, taken with intention - the quality of attention the Print Vigil requires.

The first deep and deliberate breath drawn out of the cold air - the 1,000ml taken rather than reflex - belongs to every body capable of drawing it. The press is one site. The breath is the universal ground.

The 1,000ml of breath carries philosophical weight. In "The Age of the Breath," Luce Irigaray argues that breath is the primary condition of subjectivity and relation - the elemental act through which we are always already in connection with the world and with each other, prior to any cognitive or linguistic mediation.²⁴ Western thought has systematically overlooked this: treating the mind as a weightless spectator, it neglects that to think is first to breathe. By filling out the book's volume to this specific lungful of air, the codex declines that forgetting. It returns the act of thinking to the body that breathes it - and the act of reading to the body that holds the book.

Spinoza's Letter 12 - the epigraph that opened this research - exists at the level of the object it helped to shape. The 1,000ml is itself a *modus imaginandi*: a bounded figure through which the intellect approaches what no figure can contain. The metric's philosophical integrity lies in accepting its own limits - a number working at the edge of what counting means.

The Aspiration

The twenty-four-hour cycle was intuited before it was decided. The body already knew the unit: one complete circadian cycle, the zone of maximum agitation between two long rests. The anatomy was discovered in the aspiration - the form arrived before the argument, and the decision arrived on the Hour.

The choice of relief and silkscreen combined was necessity and privilege at once. Relief demands the practiced body - the one that already knows, without deciding, the weight of the roller and the resistance of the matrix at this temperature, this hour. Silkscreen demands a different knowledge: the angle of the squeegee, the specific pressure that pushes ink through mesh without flooding it. Neither can be shortened. Both were built across years of practice before this night. The Vigil could only have been this Vigil through this process. The occasion was what this moment had been building toward.

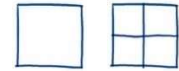
²⁴ Luce Irigaray, "The Age of the Breath", in Luce Irigaray (ed.), *Key Writings* (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 165-170.

This is the aspiration in both senses the word carries: the breath drawn in, and the striving toward what is not yet. But striving is not purpose - Spinoza is precise about this. Nature doesn't act toward an end. What replaces purpose is *conatus*: the body's own persistence, which carries direction without requiring a destination. The Print Vigil has no goal imposed from outside. Its purpose emerges in the doing: image and word discover each other at the press, equal in weight, simultaneous in arrival. The codex and the Animations were thought together and made together - the codex carrying the event in pressure and grain, substance apprehended as mark; the Animations unfolding the same event through the canonical hours into language, substance apprehended as sequence. One event. Two modes. The Somatic Chronograph - the body moving through time - recording both. Beneath them, the Pressmarks Lexicon: the working vocabulary of the discipline, each term already carrying the philosophical weight the press always knew it held.

The print is the graphic witness to this endurance test - physical testimony of what the body spent, at what hour, against what resistance. Evidence that cannot be abstracted without being destroyed. Proof.

What gathers here - printmaking, the codex form, the twenty-four hours, the medieval inheritance - is not a collection of choices justified separately. Each is a survivor. Each carries something the industrial flattening tried to demote, suppress, or forget. The discipline that made modernity possible and was then demoted by it. The form that insisted on sequence when sequence was being abolished. The duration that refused to be cut into productive units. The medieval lineage that knew embodied attention before Descartes permitted its forgetting. The thesis chooses these not as separate examples but as a single inheritance - what survives through industrial capture by carrying its own working pace. The connection is intuited before it is argued.

The breath is held. Everything gathered in the Inhale - the *Book of Hours*, the 1,000ml metric, the thickening ink, the cold press - sits in the lungs at pressure. The materials are already moving, already pressing back. The press is waiting. What follows is twenty-four hours of what it costs - and what it gives - to keep going.



HOLD | EXHALE

The Body-Book-Event.

Illuminating the Codex: a contemporary reimagining of the Book of Hours and Breaths.

“A mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, expressed in two ways.”

Spinoza, *Ethics* II, Proposition 7, Scholium

The press is cold. The studio at midnight holds a particular kind of silence - not peaceful, not hostile, simply indifferent to the body that has just entered it. The ink is thick. The hands are not ready. Nothing about this hour recommends itself for making. The Vigil starts anyway. A breath holds. The press imposes its own rhythm on the body that works it; the hours will stretch and compress according to fatigue and attention rather than the timepiece on the wall. At midnight, both times are running. The body is living in neither yet.

This event was prepared for the way a body prepares for an endurance run - accumulating the conditions under which readiness is both exciting and threatening to the half-hearted creativity. The studio in spring is not the studio in winter. Winter is hostile to artists in ways that gallery booklets rarely acknowledge: fingers that stiffen, ink that thickens before it transfers, the specific stubbornness of stiff paper under a cold hand. Waiting for the light to return - logistics of necessity as much as anything else. The angle of spring light through the studio window changes what the surfaces reveal, what the layers show, what the body can see well enough to judge. When the warmth returned, something else shifted too: the making had become more important than the object made, and what the body could discover by continuing the act long enough for discovery to become possible more important than comfort. Planning shifted from designing a book to understanding how to run a marathon - when to rest, how to pace the pulls, what to eat, how to manage the hours between three and five in the morning when the body's resources reach their lowest ebb. Fatigue and failure were baseline conditions of the architecture. Expected. Agreed. The constraints that structure this Vigil are the form the freedom approved.

Held in the thinking of Spinoza, a closed system does not restrict; it produces. His Ethics is itself axioms, definitions, propositions - a closed structure within which the freedom it describes becomes thinkable. The 24 hours and the 1,000ml operate the same way: parameters within which the body discovers what it can do, and what it cannot, and that the difference between those two things is the most honest knowledge the Vigil will generate.

The Print Vigil is a closed experimental parameter. Its twenty-four hours are a systematic constraint designed to progressively reduce the degrees of freedom available to the body-press system. As fatigue accumulates, tactical choice narrows. The marks made in the final hours carry the system's own ratios with increasing fidelity. What is recorded is the epistemic consequence of endurance: the body's progressive adequation to its own striving, legible in the grain.

Across those twenty-four hours, the body takes somewhere in the range of twenty thousand breaths. The precise number is unknowable - it varies with the effort, the hour, the moment of stillness between pulls - and that unknowability is exactly the data.

The body did not count. It breathed. The Vigil was held in that continuity.

And then the declaration of the breath. Not once - thousands of times. Every pull at the press is a held breath let go: the roller's weight committed, the ink transferred, the hand lifting to see what the pressure left behind. Each release depositing its trace. The early pulls are careful, deliberate, the body still governing the press. By the middle hours the rhythm has shifted - the press governs the body, the pulls come at intervals the materials dictate, and each exhale carries less decision and more continuation. By

the final hours, the boundary between the maker's breath and the press's rhythm has dissolved. The marks the body cannot stop making. What is recorded is constraint: the body's tactical repertoire progressively reducing with each breath; and with it - each mark closer to the intrinsic ratio of the system than to the artist's intentions. This is where the Exhale lives - an accumulating dissolution of the distance between effort and act, until the two become indistinguishable. Each pull is a micro-vigil: gather, hold, release, settle. Twenty-four hours of micro-vigils, each one pressing its specific fatigue and its specific attention into the paper. What the codex carries dissolved the sum of these releases into their sediment - layer over layer, hour over hour, the body's changing capacity written into the grain.

The Hold and the Exhale are one event, apprehended from two sides. The Hold is the body suspended at maximum pressure - breath held, weight applied, the roller at the point of transfer where neither forward nor back is yet determined. The Exhale is the mark made, the ink displaced, the release that was always already inside the holding.

What happens to the body at that threshold? Everything folds and converges. The accumulated CO₂ of the held breath, the elastic recoil of the lung, the pressure differential that has been building since the last exhale - all of it propels the organism to act. Stillness is biologically unsustainable. This is vitality's most basic claim: the body persists because it must, because persistence is what a body is. The planet takes twenty-four hours to rotate. The body takes roughly four seconds to complete one breath. Both are measures of the same substance, at different scales - and the Vigil inhabits both scales simultaneously, the cosmic and the pulmonary, the full turning of the earth held in the span of a single conscious breath.

The print studio makes this possible. An artist craves solitude but not loneliness - and the distinction is philosophical before it is personal. The studio is where sensing with a body happens: a field of intensities that doesn't require another human presence to be real. The press holds the memory of every previous session. The plates carry their own history of pressure and acid. The ink has not forgotten the last run. To work alone among these bodies is to be differently related - recalibrating, in Spinoza's sense, the operative balance. The studio is enabler and ultimate constraint simultaneously: it offers the conditions for adequacy and imposes the limits within which that adequacy must be discovered. The Vigil could only have been this Vigil, in this studio, at this press, in this light.

Co-expression, at the press, stops being a philosophical claim and becomes a physical fact. The screen anticipated what the press revised. The handmade carried what the digital had proposed. Each one modifying the other in real time, the way the hours modify each other: each pass arriving on top of what has already been spent, the first hour still present at hour twenty-two, visible through everything that followed. The divide between thinking and making dissolves because it was never real.

Within the Print Vigil's structure, the eight canonical hours divide across the Boxed Breath in a specific sequence. The Inhale carries Vigil and Lauds - the opening of the lung, the first shock of material contact. The Hold carries Prime, Terce, and Sext: the body attunes to the press, enters rhythmic entrainment with time, and works against the accumulating weight of the hours. The Exhale carries None and Vespers - the boundaries dissolve, the breath diffuses into the paper's fibres, the mark is less decision than continuation. Rest is Compline alone: the maker, the breath, and the codex resolved into a single mode of becoming.

What this produces is knowledge with a paradox at its centre. The codex carries no words. This is refusal to subordinate somatic knowledge to its linguistic translation. The Animations carry thought manifesting - the same event unfolded through the canonical hours, pressed into devotional form. Each Animation moves through four stages: Antiphon, Threshold, Opus and Colophon - and the language shifts with the hours. The early Animations are architecturally precise, the syntax controlled; by Vespers the prose has loosened, the sentences lengthening as the body's grip on formal structure softens. The settlement of each Animation is where labour and theory fuse - where the making deposits what it discovered into language, not as translation but as its own mode of apprehension. Neither codex nor Animation privileges the other. The event invigilates both. Word and image are translators of the striving - in its joy and in its failures, in the pulls that landed and the pulls that blocked the mesh - and what they translate cannot be fully captured by either, only approached from two sides simultaneously.

Beneath them both, the Pressmarks Lexicon holds the discipline's own vocabulary: *registration, impression, proof, pull* - terms that have always carried philosophical weight the press knew before philosophy arrived

to claim it. *Registration* is alignment, but also the act of being recorded. *Impression* is the mark of pressure, but also the trace left on the one who receives it. *Proof* is the test print, but also evidence - the same double meaning the Aspiration closed on. The Lexicon is not a glossary. It is the discipline thinking in its own language, each term a site where practice and philosophy were never separated.

The paper is the map. The codex is the territory. To encounter only this written argument is to encounter the map without standing in the land. The artist book, the eight Animations of the Print Vigil and the Lexicon - together they constitute one breath. What Spinoza calls *acquiescentia in se ipso* - the contentment that arises when the body has become adequate to its own striving - settles in the aftermath: the mind's recognition of the power that drove the endurance. The Rest follows, the bliss and the revelations of the feat.



REST

Presence, ethics, and the politics of settlement.

“Before anything else, the first thing that the power imposes is a rhythm (to everything: a rhythm of life, of time, of thought, of speech).”

Roland Barthes, *How to Live Together*, trans. Kate Briggs (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 35

The Body as Centre, The *Book* as the Argument

Deleuze, reading Spinoza, defines a body as anything possessing the power to affect and be affected.²⁵ A body of sounds. A social body. A collectivity. By this definition, the artist book is unambiguously a body. It affects the reader’s posture and breathing before a word is processed; it is affected by handling, by humidity, by the specific weight of whoever’s grip opens it. And if the maker’s body is one site of *conatus* among the many that converged in the Print Vigil - the press’s striving, the ink’s, the paper’s, the studio’s, the breath’s - then the book is the residue of that confluence in material form: another body, carrying the network’s power to affect and be affected into every subsequent encounter.

There is no origin to recover. There is a configuration that held for twenty-four hours and pressed itself into paper.

What the eight canonical hours touched on - slowly, cumulatively, through fatigue and the resistance of materials - is not easily recoverable in any other form. It lives in the object: in the grain of the paper, in the pressure differential between pulls made at full strength and pulls made after the sun set, in the variations that record the unsteady rhythms of a body that kept going anyway. The practiced body of the artist and the worn-out frame of the press. The literal recorded depth of that work is built in time, layer by layer, each pass arriving on top of what the body had already spent. The relief matrix plates, the silkscreen mesh, the paper, the body, the hour emerge as a sum-total of many moving modes - in Spinoza’s sense, singular expressions of one substance - each one changed by what the others bring to the specific pressure of this pass, this layer, this hour. The syncopated base is always there beneath every subsequent layer: hour one still visible beneath hour twenty-two, sunk into the sheet of paper made by somebody else somewhere miles away. A reader willing to look into the surface rather than across it will find the hours still there, one beneath another, the body’s passage through time, held in the depth of this accumulation.

This book is the argument here, precisely because it couldn’t have existed apart from the making that produced it. This inseparability - the book and the event, and the bodies that created it, bound in one substance - is *acquiescentia in se ipso*. It is the measure of bliss.

What is produced is possible to name, even if it cannot be fully argued. The press and the body work each other. Each one’s capacity to act is shaped at every moment by the resistance the other gives back. By hour fourteen, the artist-body knew this in a way it couldn’t have known at hour one - the knowledge arrived through duration, not instruction. What shifted was the direction of the discipline: it stopped being something the practitioner applied and became something that thought through them. And the

²⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), pp. 127–128. Deleuze’s ethological definition: ‘You will define an animal, or a human being, not by its form, its organs, and its functions, and not as a subject either; you will define it by the affects of which it is capable.’ The extension to non-organic bodies - a body of sounds, a social body, a collectivity - is what licenses the claim that the artist book is itself a body in the Spinozan sense.

print is always right in its own way - the precise truth of what was available at that hour, that pressure, that body. Not a repetition. Striving.

And yet, the codex carries no text. That decision arrived through the making. The process of deliberating the conceptual and communicating in language was affecting the body in ways that clarified what the book needed to be: wordless, preserving the silence the Vigil was going to generate.

The artist book carries what the Print Vigil settled into it in a different register entirely. Lines, colours, textures, rhythms, syncopation. The codex is the tune. The Animations, co-composed alongside, are the poetry. Together they make a song - held whole, available only in the encounter, the way music makes itself available: arriving before it can be parsed, understood before it can be named. This is what Spinoza means by the third-kind knowledge: received complete, through the body, when the knower has become adequate to what they are holding. Not perfect. Striving.

This written paper, then, is the map - the second-kind knowledge that can describe the territory but cannot stand in it. The tension is constitutive: the paper gestures toward what only the codex holds. To encounter this argument without the object is to hear the song described. The thinking in the act holds that distance open rather than pretending to resolve it. And when the book leaves the studio this tension carries on - each reader who lifts it brings their own body to the encounter - their own pulse, their own breath, their own time.

The Print Vigil does not end with the final pull. It continues in every subsequent encounter with the book, the writing, the archive - as an ongoing affective transmission: the reader's body being acted upon by something the maker's body left unresolved in the paper.

The studio was the origin. The codex is the carrier. Every reader is a new node in an event that began long before the press moved and the object continued. Each one is a body that potentially sees itself being seen: the maker in the paper, the reader in their own durational state, each meeting the other through the bounded form. Striving to persist.

The Vigil was solitary - one body, one studio, one turning of the earth, under conditions that were specific and partial. The book it produced is not. The gap that opens between them is political: the Vigil required a studio, twenty-five years, a body free enough to spend twenty-four hours at the press. The book requires only hands - this threshold is physical. No studio. No accumulated years. No free time of a specific kind. The somatic relay - the rhythm in the paper, the weight in the hands - is available to whoever gets to hold the object.

Material Ethics: The Volume of Our Impact

One deep breath displaces 1,000ml of air. One pull of the press displaces one page-worth of paper and ink. To claim that the book is a somatic object - heavy, physical, demanding, shaped to the specific gravity of a lungful of air - is already to claim its weight and its value. The press costs. The paper costs. The ink costs. The 1,000ml of breath is also 1,000ml of accountability.

Spinoza extends *conatus* beyond the human. Every configuration of matter strives to persist in its own being. The paper holds its form against the press. The ink maintains its viscosity against the heat and the pressure. If the materials are participants - if the work emerges through their entanglement with the body rather than being imposed upon them - then the maker's responsibility extends to what those participants bear. The volume of our impact - one breath, one page, one body - is also the volume of the claim we make on the striving of everything else in the room.

Deleuze, reading Spinoza, replaces moral law with ethology - the study of what a body can do, what affects it is capable of, what encounters compose or decompose it.²⁶ The ethical question is not whether this act is right or wrong but what it does to the bodies involved - including the bodies of the materials. This is the ethics the studio enacts. Pressure is *conatus* made legible: the felt registration of what the making costs, distributed across every body in the room. To work at the press is to know, in the shoulders and the wrists, exactly what was displaced to produce this page. The digital interface is the most successful instrument of concealment of that registration by far. The matter is there - server farms cooled with water, rare earths mined elsewhere, electricity drawn through a grid - but the interface is designed to keep the body of the user from feeling the cost. The human body is asked to act as if it were weightless. The studio press does the opposite: it trains the body back into the felt fact of its own striving.

The reckoning is approximate because the body that spent it was not counting. Hundreds of pulls. Thousands of breaths. A tub of ink. Hours of standing at the press. Litres of water to wash the screens and rollers. Electricity to heat the room through the night. Paper used - enough to fill the volume of a single deep breath. These are the quiet heavy costs the artist book carries in its weight and volume. They were not the maker's alone.

The twenty-four hours was a long act. The conditions that make it possible every time are not easily given - they were worked toward. Access, time, the studio at midnight: each one accumulated, each one a prior act of preparation. What looks like the ease of privilege from the outside is, from the inside, a lot of accumulated work. But let's be clear here - the conditions under which that work became possible are not equally available. *Conatus* is universal; access to its adequate expression is not.

The book has a dwelling that jars, at first, with its handmade ethics. Its 3D-printed housing - a Voronoi case, scaled and shaped to the codex it surrounds - is a digitally fabricated object protecting a hand-pressed one. On contact, the tension becomes legible. The chapter that opened this thesis established the claim: digital and material are modes of the same practice, differently expressed. The Voronoi case proves it. The 3D printing carried its own cost - filament, energy, heat, time, failed prints discarded - and that cost is legible in the object, not concealed by an interface. Voronoi is the geometry of individuation-through-relation: each cell is what it is because of its neighbours, its boundaries emerging from proximity to what is around it. When the book is drawn out, the case becomes a lantern: the housing has two states, its own sensitive balance. Cover for the book at rest, light for the room when the book is gone from it. Body enclosing body, body casting shadow - the chain of co-expression doesn't stop at the edge of the pages. Paradoxes don't cease to exist on the edge of awareness.

This is why the title insists on what it does: *The Book of Hours and Breaths*. The hours are conceptual - the canonical architecture, the frame the mind can count, the structure borrowed from the medieval and made operational. The breaths are somatic - the body's real expenditure, uncountable, variable, felt. The hours give the Vigil its form. The breaths give it its cost. The title holds both because the ethics of this making lies in the tension between structure and the living body that moved through it - between what can be measured and what can only be spent.

²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, Spinoza: Practical Philosophy, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), p. 123.

Towards Somatic Politics

The dominant inheritance of Conceptual Art runs like this: the idea comes first. The material is there to realise it. The artist's body is the vehicle, not the site. Making is secondary - a translation from concept to object. This is Cartesian logic operating as aesthetic value. And it is so embedded in how contemporary art talks about itself that it rarely needs to be stated.

What this project argues is that the division itself is flawed. It may well be that, in adequate practice, as in Spinoza's parallelism, there is no prior term. The concept does not precede the making. The body does not override the mind. They are - and always were - the same thing, differently expressed.

The minor gesture, as Erin Manning has it, doesn't shout against the system but subtly re-orientates the field of what is possible.²⁷ The condition Irigaray identifies in "The Age of the Breath" sharpens the consequence.²⁸ The fiction of the weightless mind - the sovereign rational subject who thinks without breathing, who designs without sweating, who produces without staining their hands - distributes the material costs of thought onto other bodies, in other places. To breathe the hours - to insist that the scale of the work be measured in lungfuls of air, in muscle-hours, in the specific ache of physical labour - is to see and sense what the political fiction had covered: that thought never was without body, never was without cost.

The Spinozan arc of this research moves in alignment with the body from the identity of the mode - thought and extension as parallel expressions of the same substance - through *conatus*, through the joy of adequate action, to *acquiescentia in se ipso*: the body's recognition of itself as a finite mode of the infinite. *Acquiescentia* is what *conatus* looks like when it understands itself. To intuit one's effort as part of a larger ecology is to intuit the conditions of shared life.

The Ethology of Affects is Spinoza's term for the study of what bodies can do in relation to each other. What did the Print Vigil find, when it applied this question? It found that the press imposes its own recalibration on the body that uses it. That the paper resists the hand that works it. That the ink negotiates with the heat and the pressure of the room. That none of these are passive. That the maker's *conatus* is shaped at every moment by the *conatus* of the materials around it. And that when a reader subsequently lifts the codex, their body enters the same network of relations. If every body's striving is shaped by the conditions created by what surrounds it, then politics is the organisation of those conditions. The question is what kind of conditions we are willing to practice.

Barthes spent his 1977 Collège de France lectures *How to Live Together* in pursuit of a condition he couldn't quite hold without it slipping into either solitude or submission: *idiorrhthmy*²⁹ - each body sustaining its own rhythm in proximity to others sustaining theirs. He found the figure in monastic practice the way this project found the *Book of Hours*: as ghost-map - a form that had already worked the problem out, summoned because the present needed to think through it again. The question *idiorrhthmy* asks is political before it is devotional: what does it take to remain in relation without having your rhythm replaced?

The four-part formula he arrives at names what the Somatic Chronograph practises and what dominance conceals. *Power*, first. Barthes's definition is precise: power is the ability of one entity to impose its rhythm on another. The bell rings; the monk rises before deciding to. The algorithm prompts; the driver accepts before feeling the substitution. What is being operated on is the body's internal sense of *when*. In the Print Vigil the institutional clock is bracketed: twenty-four hours in which the body's own cadence - its pace through exhaustion, its biological need to rest - is what determines the mark made on the paper.

Rhythm, next. Barthes recovers the Greek *rhuthmos* - the fluid manner in which a thing flows, individual, unrepeatable - from its Platonic capture as fixed, metered, manageable *rhythmos*. The Somatic

²⁷ Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016). Manning's minor gesture names the barely perceptible inflection that doesn't confront existing structures but subtly reconfigures the field of what becomes possible. It is political not by declaration but by accumulation.

²⁸ Irigaray, 'The Age of the Breath', *Key Writings*, pp. 165-170.

²⁹ Roland Barthes, *How to Live Together: Novelistic Simulations of Some Everyday Spaces*, trans. Kate Briggs (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013). Power as the imposition of rhythm: p. 35; *idiorrhthmy* in opposition to power: p. 42. Barthes's recovery of *rhuthmos* draws on Émile Benveniste, 'The Notion of "Rhythm" in its Linguistic Expression' (1951), in *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971), pp. 281-288.

Chronograph records *rhuthmos* without converting it to metric. Hour seven's marks differ from hour nineteen's. That difference is the content.

Distance, then: a genuine community requires interindividual space, not absorption. In printmaking this calibration is technical before it is ethical - the precise gap between matrix and paper at which full, faithful transfer occurs. Too close, the mark floods. Too far, it fails. The book between maker and reader operates the same logic: close enough to transmit, far enough apart to remain singular.

Schema, finally - the settled form that retains the history of the gestures that formed it, without still being in motion. The studio archive is the schema of the Print Vigil: a rhythm held in the register none of the other components can reach. Barthes needed the schema but couldn't give it material form. He avoided the word *measure* - *mesure* in his context carried the weight of the Rule, the institutional clock - and reached for *schema* instead. The avoidance was honest. But it left *idiorrhhythmy* without an instrument.

Spinoza's Letter 12 supplies what Barthes could not. Where Barthes's *mesure* carried the weight of imposed tempo - the bell, the Rule, the institutional clock - Spinoza's *Mensura* names something structurally different: a bounded region whose internal inequalities exceed every count, a determinate limit that does not meter what is inside it but holds it open and inexhaustible.

The Somatic Chronograph is that region made material: twenty-four hours, a codex of 1,000 ml, the specific configuration of one body's fatigue at hour eighteen - bounded, determinate, and incapable of being averaged. *The Measure of Bliss* project takes the word back through the instrument the practice built: the measure is what the body leaves in the paper when it has been adequate to its own striving, held now in the reader's hands as proof.

The gyroscope returns here, at the scale of shared ecology beyond personal attunement. Its orientation now is outward. What extends at this scale goes beyond the artist book: the studio's mark, the maker's residue in the paper, the reader's breath at the moment of opening, the press's memory of every previous session, the intentions and the consequences, co-composition in relation. The political commons is the field every body is already inside, made legible when continued material work meets another body open to receive it.

The bliss found in blisters ripples on. It is a demonstration - conducted in the studio, over twenty-four hours, at the scale of the breath - of what genuine material presence enables: the capacity to affect and be affected, to be changed by the encounter with resistant matter, to have one's power to act transformed by the encounter with something that pushes back. The capacity for deliberate breath is shared. What is distributed unequally is access to the conditions under which that capacity can be exercised: the time, the space, the material resistance worth engaging with, the freedom from labour so exhausting it reduces breath to the involuntary minimum. A somatic politics names what the intensive capacity those breaths share has always been - irreducible, inalienable, already held in common. Sustained attention does not impose itself onto politics. It discloses that we are already inside it. The question the somatic politics of this research goes beyond is who gets to make work under these conditions - whose making gets to be called research, whose endurance gets to be called method, whose body gets to be heard as argument.

Every piece of paper is political. From where it originated to where it lands. The political fiction that thought is weightless is sustained by a particular fact: that thought-as-language can be paraphrased, summarised, abstracted, and transmitted in registers that bypass the body entirely. The artist book made sidesteps this broadcast. It carries what the Vigil generated through the only channel that cannot be paraphrased - the body's own register, met by another body across the bound form. A reader who lacks the studio, the time, the twenty-five years, who could not have made the Vigil, can still meet, in their hands, at the scale of the body, the residue of what the Vigil generated - and find their own striving occasioned by it. The book carries the parallelism across the asymmetry it cannot dissolve. The reader who wasn't at the Vigil holds what it pressed into the paper - weight, texture, the specific accumulation of those hours - and receives it before it can be parsed. Not as substitute. As somatic relay.

What the Vigil revealed - and this is a revelation, the making-visible of what was always there - is that the surplus the encounter generates cannot be captured by any quantitative metric.³⁰ Every ink-stain, every tremor in the wrist at hour eighteen, every layer that lands exactly where the body was - records of the surplus, not errors in the data.³¹ Massumi calls this the surplus-value of life: the qualitative excess generated in the moment of an event. The 1,000ml of breath refuses the logic of quantitative capture. It registers the quality of the work. It holds the ratio open.

A Somatic Chronograph is a body that writes its own duration. It is a way of doing that comes with a way of knowing - the discipline and the instrument as one thing, legible to others through the material traces the work leaves behind. This is the discipline that makes the bliss in blisters contagious. The capacity is shared. The Chronograph is what makes the transmission felt, apprehended, made known. The artist book, the archive, the logic of the words hold it.

A method imposed onto practice from the outside is somatically suffocating. What *The Measure of Bliss* enacts is practice as the site where emergent knowledge becomes possible - the artist book, the Animations, the studio archive, the written argument each doing something the others cannot. This research has measured one breath of that distance. The rest is in motion.

Acquiescentia in se ipso: Archive of Presence

Spinoza's *acquiescentia in se ipso* is a specific kind of joy - the active recognition, after the effort, of the power that drove it.³² This is joy recognised before it can be argued. The artist book holds this. The stains in the paper are what happened: the body's passage through time, held in the fibre, still moving in some way that is difficult to account for. To open the book is to set that effort going again - to be continued, in a different pair of hands, in a different light, at a different hour.

The joy in the wake of the Print Vigil was private and shared at once - two registers of the same ascent, the way a canonical hour is always communal even when prayed alone. The relational was always there as the score the Vigil was playing inside. The striving refracts onwards - into the object, into every subsequent encounter with it, into this writing, once the residue of the physical labour settled.

What the Print Vigil left in the object has not finished moving. It waits the way rooms wait to be filled again - holding the quality of what happened in them, carrying a readiness available to whoever arrives next. What is captured in the inked and pressed paper was never solitary: it was always being-with the materials, being-with the hours, being-with every body that subsequently meets this artist's work. The book is what carries this relation forward - Hara's senseware continuing with the life it enters, with the breaths it draws, perpetual because it is never the same encounter twice. And yet, the hands that made it and the hands that open it are pressing on the same surface of the book-body.

The relation is not symmetrical. The conditions that made this book were not universally available; the encounter with it can be. That asymmetry is the book's political honesty - it doesn't pretend the bliss was free.

What is left behind is the knowledge of what solitude actually is. Loneliness is *tristitia*: the power of acting turned inward, diminished, the body's intensities with nowhere to go but back against itself. Solitude is something else entirely - recognised now, after the hours, rather than chosen before them. The studio is never empty. The press holds the memory of every previous session; the plate carries its own history of pressure and acid; the ink has not forgotten the last run. These are affective bodies, and the body working

³⁰ The argument that singular events operate on a shared field of potential is developed in Brian Massumi, *Ontopower: War, Powers, and the State of Perception* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), pp. 1-25. The extension into a politics of value is in *99 Theses on the Revaluation of Value*.

³¹ Brian Massumi, *99 Theses on the Revaluation of Value: A Postcapitalist Manifesto* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), pp. 1-17 (Introduction) and theses 1-12.

³² Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part III, Definition of the Affects. *Acquiescentia in se ipso*: the joy that arises from the body's increased capacity to act, the self-affectation of a body recognising its own power to persist and affect others.

alone among them is differently related - in a field of intensities that do not require another human presence to be real.

The body that comes back to the press after Rest has been changed by what it spent. Solitude was the condition under which it discovered adequately what it had become - but the adequate self-knowledge is never private. To know what this body can do is already to know what it takes and what it brings to the next encounter, the next relation, the next shared breath.

The studio waits. The press, cold now, holds the ratio of the body that worked it - available to whoever arrives next. The book is in the world. The archives hold what the night left behind. What can be said now has been said. The findings live in the Animations and the codex together - eight canonical hours pressed into eight statements, held in a wordless book that carries what the statements name. Neither contains the event alone. Together they are one breath. The question returns to where it began: in the body, before language.

The findings persist, then, as ongoing striving - settling in the object, moving forward in every subsequent encounter with it.

The breath measures the world. The world measures the breath. And the breath - the breath does not stop.

This is what rest means, inside the body: striving, composed, collected. The lungs at their fullest pause. The chest at its widest holds. Then the body - because it must, because it's built to do nothing else - begins again.

The rest is the brief pause before the lung fills again. A new Inhale is already underway. What was made in the studio keeps making. The Somatic Chronograph - this body of work's own measure of its duration - is what this project leaves in the hands of whoever finds it useful. Not a method to be applied but a discipline to be inhabited. The codex in other hands. And somewhere - in the weight of the book, in the resistance of the page, in the specific gravity of a lungful of air built into its dimensions - the next body arrives.

Lifts. Opens. And begins.

The body is yours.

THE BOOK IS COMMUNAL

THE BOOK IS MATERIAL

THE BOOK IS ATTUNEMENT

THE BOOK IS ARCHIVAL

THE BOOK IS PERSISTENT

THE BOOK IS TACTILE REVELATION

THE BOOK IS CO-EXTENSIVE

THE BOOK IS INTUITIVE

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³³ The Animations of the Print Vigil - companion to this paper, structured through the canonical hours - unfold under these titles. Each one carries four movements: Antiphon, Threshold, Opus, Colophon. The Colophon is where labour and theory fuse.

Afterword: The Settlement as Potential

Outside the breath.

The Vigil ended. The press went cold. The studio, which had been a single breathing organism for twenty-four hours, became a room again.

What the labour changed is difficult to name precisely. It didn't change what I think about time or the body or the relationship between making and meaning - the thesis says all of that well enough. What it changed is more intimate and harder to account for. The pace of things. The way I now notice the weight of an object before I notice its surface. The specific quality of attention that arrives when the hands are occupied and the mind has stopped performing. I didn't know I had forgotten this until the press revealed it - and what it revealed had a name I only found afterward: the knowledge that the press and the body are in a relationship of co-striving. That the print is always right in its own way. That twenty-four hours is the right unit because that is how long it takes for the discipline to stop being applied and start being lived.

That return is not private. One printer, one studio, one night - but the question it opens belongs to everyone.

Something else needs to be said here, honestly.

The studio is a shelter. It is also a boat on volatile water - and the water has been rising. The conditions that made this Vigil possible: the press, the room, the twenty-five years of accumulated practice and hard-won equipment, the specific silence of a space held against the constant pressure of a life that would otherwise consume it - these are not guaranteed to continue. The likelihood is that this studio, in its current form, may not survive the completion of this thesis. External pressures, economic and spatial, are already at work.

This is offered as evidence.

The choice to spend twenty-four hours in the studio - fully, without reservation, pressing everything the practice had accumulated into a single continuous event - may well have been, in part, an act of complete inhabitation before a probable loss. The body knew what the mind was managing. The urgency in the work is real. The senses were sharpened by what was coming.

And yet: this is precisely what the research kept finding. The knowledge the Vigil produced belongs already to the body, to the objects made to travel, to the grain of a codex that will outlast the room it came from. The press made something that the press cannot hold onto. That is the whole argument, lived.

Something about the writing of this paper has been a continuous determination the thesis itself doesn't name explicitly, and probably should.

English is grammatically Cartesian. Subject-verb-object presumes an agent acting on a patient - every default sentence smuggles the sovereign subject back in before the writer has decided what they think. Spinoza wrote in Latin and could lean on a case system that distributed agency across the sentence. Whitehead invented neologisms - *conrescence*, *prehension*, *actual occasion* - and was called unreadable for it; the difficulty was the cost of refusing the grammar. Barad's *intra-action*³⁴ exists precisely because *interaction*

³⁴ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). Barad's *intra-action* replaces interaction in order to refuse the assumption that the parties to an encounter exist independently prior to it. Where interaction presupposes pre-formed entities that meet from outside, *intra-action* names a relation in which the terms emerge through and as the encounter itself - which is precisely the claim this research makes about the maker, the press, and the materials that compose the Print Vigil.

presupposes pre-existing things that meet from outside each other, when the whole point is that those things emerge in the encounter.

What this means in practice is that every page of this paper has been a small struggle against the language itself. The discipline has been to catch the verbs of sovereign causation as they arrive - *produce, make, create, design, ensure, realise, invent* - and ask whether *emerged, arrived, settled, found, converged, discovered* would be truer to the event being described. Not always. Sometimes the body did make the choice; sometimes the artist did design the constraint. But often - more often than the default grammar wants to admit - the verb that fits is the one that distributes agency rather than concentrates it. The Print Vigil did not produce a codex. The codex settled out of a confluence of strivings, of which the maker's body was one site among several. The grammar resists this. The discipline is to catch the resistance and decide each time whether to write through it or let it stand.

If the thesis argues that the separation of thinking and making is systemic - a conditioning of the senses below the threshold of awareness - then the language in which the thesis argues this carries the same conditioning at the grammatical level. To pretend otherwise would be to make the thesis incoherent at the level of its own utterance. A reader who notices a Cartesian residue in this paper has noticed something real, and the writer cannot promise it's fully gone. What the writer can offer is that the catching has been a practice across every paragraph. The grammar reverts. The discipline catches what it can. Some residue remains - and that residue is part of the evidence too. This is the written paper's drift in registration: the honest, marked record of the effort to think with its own medium.

These are doors this research did not open. The codex makes them available to whoever arrives next with different questions in their hands.

What this project opens - somatic politics anchored in the studio, in durational material practice, in the press as philosophical instrument - is a conversation not yet held in this register. The project claims the opening, with the codex in other hands as the first invitation to enter it.

The Vigil produced a book. The book produces encounters. The encounters produce - something. This research cannot say what, because it hasn't happened yet. What it can say is that the Exhale is still happening. The ink is dry. The event continues.

In September 2026, while the 61st International Art Exhibition - *In Minor Keys* - unfolds through Venice, *The Measure of Bliss* will be there, at work: held, taught, and made real through the Scuola Internazionale di Grafica. The research will move from the singular studio into a living teaching space: the press will continue its labour, the body continue to spend itself on the materials, and in dialogue with other bodies learning what devotion to ink and paper actually costs and what it can generate.

This shift from solo vigil to shared studio discloses what was already there - that the weight the book carries isn't private. The ink, the paper, the energy that powered those twenty-four hours travelled from extraction sites and factories. Moving the codex across an ocean adds its own cost. Venice itself, sinking beneath rising water, makes this all visible: the material reality that gets erased by systems pretending everything is weightless and somewhere else. To teach the work at the Scuola is to say: presence - real, costly, felt in the body before it reaches the mind - isn't a luxury. It's what becomes possible when we stop pretending to think without breathing, to make without sweating, to move things without consequence.

The book arrives never finished but open: what happens when bodies gather around the press in a city that is disappearing? What does genuine presence mean when the ground is literally giving way?

Utility: Material Logic.

The thesis was written alongside the making. This text is written after - the objects built and settled, the Vigil long over. What follows now is recognition: one material looking back at the others, finding language for what the making already knew. The body that worked the press was material too - striving, spending, settling alongside the ink and the paper and the hours. Matter pressed meaning out ahead of language - arrived first, settled first, knew first. Naming the materials in sequence is a concession to how writing moves, not how making does. The book doesn't work that way. Neither does the body that made it. Nor does the figure who moves through it - the Human Character, pressed into the page, accumulated across layers, carried forward by the same logic as the ink and the paper and the hours. All of them materials.

Human Character

A figure that moves through the pages of this book. It drifts in and out of the printed noise - appearing clearly for a moment, then dissolving back into the syncopated ground of the lines, surfacing again further on. In typography, a character is a unit of form: repeatable, pressable, held in relation to what surrounds it. This figure is a character too - pressed into the page, legible in context, carrying no meaning outside the plane of the page.

The concept found its way into the work by thinking through the characters that inhabit the illuminated manuscripts - a set amount of them, prescribed, most carrying the narrative through. All but one, Adam - the static one, the one to whom it was all done. In Hebrew, Adam or Adamah means red clay, the mouldable substance before the story. Before this figure is male or female, named or fallen, it is matter. That is the only fact about it that holds. The theological Adam was always defined by his use - tended to, tasked, fallen when he failed the brief. *Adamah* precedes all of that - clay before the assignment, matter before the purpose.

Utility is a strange word to carry into this - until you read what Deleuze, reading Spinoza, does with it: not function, not purpose, but what a thing does in relation to what surrounds it, how it increases or diminishes the power of another body to act.³⁵ *Adamah* is that. Clay before the assignment, matter before the story - the one thing about Adam that holds before the theology arrives and puts him to work. The gift and the problem are the same: to be matter that affects and is affected, that persists in the pressing. The work was done in that sense of utility:³⁶ the figure stands apart together with the book's materials - woven into every choice and layer. As a character steadies its course through use, through the resistance of the material it presses against, so does the book carry that resistance in its form. The politics of the object discloses itself in what it asks the body to do.

³⁵Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics* (1677), Part IV. Spinoza defines utility (*utilitas*) not as instrumental function but as whatever genuinely serves the increase of a body's power to act and persist in its own being - what he calls *conatus*. The formulation in terms of affecting and being affected draws on Deleuze's ethological reading of Spinoza: see Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), pp. 123–130.

³⁶Chus Martínez, writing on artistic dramaturgy, proposes that the role of materials in a work is performative - each substance given its own score, its own conditions of appearance, its own relationship to time and the body. Chus Martínez, 'Rewriting the Constitution', *Trebuchet Magazine* (2025).

Composition

The book has no partitions. The images flow without division from first page to last - the two *adamah* silhouettes (“positive and negative”) and the six line variations weaving through each other across the whole sequence. The only count held inside the work is structural and almost invisible: eight folios, stitched together by Coptic binding, the book’s material nod to the eight canonical hours - held in the structure, not announced in the pages. The spine stays exposed, the sewing visible, nothing hidden about how the book is held together. It lies fully flat when open.³⁷

This is the score. Each layer arrives on top of what came before, modifying it - a continuous surface that connects rather than divides, structure generated by the pressure of one thing against another. The book is folded, accumulated, syncopated.

Papers

Three papers carry the print. Western cotton rag³⁸, machine-made to tolerances of consistency. Japanese mulberry paper³⁹ - gentle and translucent, with a different way of holding what is pressed into it. Where the Western paper receives the ink with a certain resistance, the kozo absorbs it into its own body. Both accumulate the duration of the Vigil in their fibres: compressed in some passages, saturated in others, warped by the moisture of the later hours.

The third paper is a cherished junk: handmade in the studio from the cotton offcuts of the project itself. The trimmed edges of the Somerset rag processed back into substrate, the archive unit is made of it - the Vigil consuming itself and returning as the surface of its own record.

Colours

The palette is eight: four primaries and four greys, here as the measure of how the eye computes colour through light. The four primaries signifying different relationships between light and the body that looks. Black is the shadow, the absence of light, and almost every black in this project is organic: algae ink, carbon case, leather binding. Living or once-living things carry the dark. Ultramarine is emerging and fading light - the threshold colour, the blue of the hour between darkness and day, which is why it has always carried devotional weight. White is two things: titanium white as opaque highlighter, an active mark applied to the surface; and the white of the paper as background, the ground that was always there. Red is active light - vermilion, the colour that acts directly on the eye and demands response. Vermilion and ultramarine are old inks, forged under extreme heat, arriving with centuries of pressure and devotion in their chemistry. Titanium white and algae black are new - one industrial, one biological. The four greys mix both. The palette performing the Vigil’s own metabolism.

Thermo Layer

Certain pages carry a screen-printed thermochromic layer on top of the colour beneath. It reads as black on the surface - the reader doesn’t know it’s there. On contact with the warmth of a hand it erases itself, revealing the colour underneath. The first time, it is a surprise. After that, the body looks for it - testing the surface, watching for the response, learning the book’s behaviour through touch. Presence erases. The eye creates the encounter at a distance. The hand dissolves it. The book is “read” by being seen. It is unmade by being held.

³⁷Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). What matters here is the structural logic of inflection - interiority generated by the surface folding on itself rather than by partition.

³⁸ From Somerset mill. The cotton paper offcuts, kindly given by the John Purcell Paper, London.

³⁹ Bib Tengujo is an ultra-thin, machine-made Japanese washi paper known as one of the strongest and thinnest papers in the world, made from 100% mulberry fibres.

The Case: Pleura

The book's covers are black. The case is black carbon, 3D printed by Multi Jet Fusion - powdered material fused by heat and a detailing agent, built layer by layer from dust and glue into a Voronoi-patterned structure: simultaneously strong, light, and porous. Black as the absence of light. The exterior that withholds. The colourful pages inside are held within a membrane that shows nothing from outside, made with technology that is both new and opaque to us.

The Voronoi geometry is the structural logic of natural systems under pressure: bone, foam, the cells of a leaf. The pattern matter arrives at when it needs to distribute load across a surface while minimising material. The 3D printing process mirrors the overprint logic of the book itself - additive, accumulative, built layer by layer from what was not yet form, the very new way to give fragile material logic its body.

Black covers, black case - the no-light exterior holding the light interior. Or when the book is removed from its case – place the light source inside to create a lantern. This is a pleura⁴⁰ logic: mobile and held without being gripped. The case protects and breathes around it.

Coda: The Mono-Book

All art is the same art. The divisions - painting, sculpture, book, print - describe distribution systems, not experiences.

In printmaking there is a method called “monoprint”: a single unique impression, made with the tools whose everyday logic is of repetition, but monoprint is made once, unrepeatable. The monoprint is printmaking being honest about what printing always is. Ink once – print once.

This codex is a mono-book. One. Made with the common, rational, scalable tools and methods - folio, binding, sequence, the turn of the page etc. But it exists as one character, one figure, one measure of one artist devoted to her material language.

⁴⁰ Pleura: the double-layered membrane enclosing each lung. The two layers - parietal and visceral - are separated by a thin film of fluid that allows the lung to expand and contract against the chest wall without friction. The pleura doesn't restrict the lung; it holds it in the condition required for breathing. Used here for the case that holds the book in precisely this sense: not gripping, not decorating, but maintaining the conditions under which the interior can move.

Materials in order of appearance

Each of the four boxes measures 15 × 15 × 4.5cms.

The Thesis

Gmund paper 200gms, GF Smith.

Book-cloth: cotton buckram.

The Book of Hours and Breaths

3D printed carbon case, Multi Jet Fusion. Leather cover. Cotton buckram. Wax.

Bib Tengujo 8gms, Somerset St. Cuthbert's Mill cotton rag 250mgs. Acrylic-base inks: algae black (Living Ink Technologies USA), titanium white, vermillion, ultramarine (Jackson's Art), thermochromic ink (SFXC).

The Animations and Lexicon

Cotton buckram. Gmund 400 gms paper. Bib Tengujo 8gms. Inks - Algae black (Living Ink Technologies USA) and thermochromic black (SFXC).

The Archive

Handmade paper box. Tissue and paper offcuts. Bib Tengujo 8gms. Carbon Black Ink. Konjac Gum paste.

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