FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Book Lovers

January 25 – March 9, 2013
Opening Reception: Friday, January 25, 7-9 pm

Preview event (rsvp required) January 25, 6 - 7 pm

Artwork by: Tim Etchells, Tom Gidley, Goldin+Senneby, Jill Magid, Roee Rosen, Lindsay Seers, Alexandre Singh, Julia Weist, plus a collection of 140 artist novels

Curated by: David Maroto and Joanna Zielińska

EFA Project Space
323 West 39th Street, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10018
between 8th and 9th Avenues

Gallery Hours: Wed through Sat, 12-6 pm
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EFA Project Space announces The Book Lovers, a multi-disciplinary exhibition, series of events, and library, all rising out of the phenomenon of artist novels. The Book Lover’s curators embarked on this project in order to create public awareness about the growing trend of artists turning to the fiction novel as their medium.

Through an onsite collection of 140 novels written by artists and an installation of artworks in varied media that each link to select novels by their same artists, the curators of The Book Lovers invite us to think about literature as a tool for creating expanded narratives in the visual arts. They ask, what are new implications for the production process when adopting a purely textual form, moreover a narrative? When thinking about collective writing, fictional artists and
authors, and ghostwriters, what issues are raised concerning authorship and the re-skilling of artistic practice?

_The Book Lovers_ focuses not only on the artists' process of writing, but also on the act of reading as a required action. Visual artists who turn to the format of the novel seek protracted engagement with their audience. An artwork that takes the form of a novel is only complete once it has been read. Such work demands an investment of the viewer's time beyond what is typically expected of art, favoring reflection over fast consumption. The curators propose that these are public works that in book form, may be experienced in daily contexts, on the train, in bed, and so on -- becoming part of a 'lived' reality.

Activating the involvement of the audience/participants, _Headless_, by Swedish artist duo Goldin + Sennelly, is a masterful example of interplay between lived experience and fiction. It is a detective novel published one chapter at a time. With each new chapter release, a public event--such as an interview or performance--takes place. These events are then incorporated into the next chapter. People attending the event become characters, and anything that transpires is free to be woven into the novel's next detective plot. UK-artist Tim Etchells's work _Ways Out_ calls upon the viewer to activate the text. Exploring how to move about and later escape a city, _Ways Out_ is a stack of printed instructions intended for visitors to take away and act out in life. The instructions play with linguistic ambiguities possibly aimed at practical patterns of behavior or existential changes.

Adopting a research-based, sociological approach, artist Jill Magid's _18 Spies_ is a grouping of descriptions on paper that result from the artist's work with the Dutch secret service (AIVD); a commission by the AIVD to "reveal the human face" of the organization. Magid met with 18 agents over three years all who volunteered for interviews while remaining anonymous. These interactions spawned a variety of works including the non-fiction novel, _Becoming Tarden_. Since then, the AIVD confiscated a number of the original descriptions. The work of NYC-based artist Julia Weist involves research and documentation of life in a sociological, even anthropological manner. Her novel _Sexy Librarian_, released in 2008, became the centerpiece of a further exploration of irrelevant intellectual material and unpopular love stories. The _Sexy Librarian_ project addresses notions of failure and rejection while recovering discarded cultural debris that further conflate the artist's life experiences and writing to the extent that they become inextricably intertwined.

Fiction is a ripe space for artists to harness the concept of identity. Starting with the case of Justine Frank, Israeli artist Roee Rosen's alter ego. Frank, a Jewish-Belgian Surrealist artist and writer, was author of the novel _Sweet Sweat_--a blend of feminism, pornography, Judaism, and art--written in French in 1931. Rosen "rediscovered" this obscure artist and published her novel with an accompanying essay and biography. Additionally, she unearthed a whole body of Frank's artwork directly connected to the _Sweet Sweat_ narrative text. UK-based artist Lindsay Seers hides behind the fictional author M. Anthony Penwill. Her work explores the fictional constructs on which memory and identity are built. It also reflects on the nature of images, specifically photography. In her novel _It Has To Be This Way_, the protagonist suffers amnesia, and uses old personal photographs, as one would use Tarot cards, to recover her memory and identity.
Some of these artists create visual work existing as pictorial translations of the concepts expressed in the text. *The Marque of the Third Stripe*, by Alexandre Singh, is both novel and multi-disciplinary project. The novel connects several chapters in a story-within-a-story structure. The corresponding video installation includes a translation into hieroglyphs as each word is read aloud, and repeats this Russian doll-like process by continuously zooming in, all along revealing new patterns within patterns. Tom Gidley’s writing and visual practice inform each other and focus on how the memory operates. Gidley is about to publish his second novel, *Peasouper*, in which there is mention of masks, changing appearances, face swapping, and identity shifting. In conversation with this text, Gidley created a series of ceramic pieces that address the notion of attributing human characteristics to abstract forms.

In addition to those mentioned above, other artists included in the artist novel collection on view are: Carl Andre, Sophie Calle, Keren Cytter, Salvador Dalí, Liam Gillick, Pablo Helguera, Stewart Home, Stephen Kaltenbach, Joseph Kosuth, Yayoi Kusama, Jana Leo, Mai-Thu Perret, Tom McCarthy, Richard Prince, Andy Warhol... among many others.

The artist novels collection is also on view at M HKA (Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, Belgium)--December 6, 2012 to April 21, 2013) and has been acquired by the museum into its collection.

Related Events:

**Opening Preview** with a presentation by Roee Rosen on the Jewish Belgian Surrealist artists and pornographer Justine Frank
Friday, January 25, 6 – 7 pm, followed by opening public reception 7-9 pm
RSVP required contact: lauren@efanyc.org

**Goldin+Senneby Documentary Screening**
At Regus Meeting Room, 112 West 34 St, 17th Floor
Friday, February 1, 2013, 3:30pm
Friday, February 15, 2013, 3:30pm

This event is in connection with Goldin+Senneby’s *Headless*. Space for the event is limited. Reservations will be required. Email lauren@efanyc.org to RSVP.

**A Tour of the Complete Works of Henry Darger** collection of the American Folk Art Museum, NY
Thursday, February 7, 2013, 4:00pm

*Space is limited. Email projectspace@efanyc.org for information.

**A Reading Party!**
At EFA Project Space, 323 West 39 St, 2nd Floor
Tuesday, February 12, 2013, 6:30pm

Please join us in uncovering some of the treasures in *The Book Lovers* artist novel collection from MuHKA (Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, Belgium) at EFA Project Space. Michelle Levy hosts an evening of reading, spontaneous interpretation, and plain old fun. Guests will get a quick tour of the show, then will have the opportunity to select a novel to read from the library on view. In addition to the novel you choose, you will have access to the database to gain more background on the artist/author and discover how the novel relates to his/her larger body of work.
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: A Public Talk with Woo Jung Cho
At EFA Project Space, 323 West 39 St, 2nd Floor
Thursday, February 21, 2013, 6:30pm

The Dream of the Audience is an upcoming film (yet to be released) about the life and work of influential artist Theresa Hak Kyung Cha. Director Woo Jung Cho will discuss the film, and will share some advance clips with the audience. This event is organized in conjunction with The Book Lovers exhibition.

Live Reading Performance of “Lincoln Ocean Victor Eddy” with Jill Magid
At EFA Project Space, 323 West 39 St, 2nd Floor
Thursday, February 28, 2013, 6:30pm


Public Reading Performance with Keren Cytter
At EFA Project Space, 323 West 39 St, 2nd Floor
Friday, March 8, 2013, 3 – 10 pm

This public reading performance is based on Keren Cytter’s novel White Diaries. This is a durational performance; the chapters of the novel will be read aloud by actor Nick Chase and actress Candace Thompson. This is a public event and guests may come and go as they wish between the hours of 3pm and 10pm. This event is organized in conjunction with The Book Lovers exhibition and made possible by the generous support of Israel’s Office of Cultural Affairs in New York.

Curators’ Bios:

David Maroto (1976) is a Spanish artist based in The Netherlands. His wide-ranging practice has led him to exhibit his work on psychoanalysis at the Freud Dreams Museum in St Petersburg, whereas his 8-year project to create a board game lead to the inclusion of his Distillation at the Internationale Spieltage in 2006 (Essen, Germany) and other game fairs worldwide. In 2011 he spent a six-month residency in ISCP New York.

His work has been shown internationally in solo and group exhibitions: S.M.A.K. (Ghent), Extra City (Antwerp) Sign exhibition space (Groningen), ECAT (Toledo, Spain), Tina B Festival (Prague), TENT. (Rotterdam), W139 (Amsterdam). In 2012 he took part of 11th Havana Biennial and carried out a solo project in Artium (Museum of Contemporary Art, Vitoria, Spain) called Illusion-Disillusion. Currently, he is enrolled in the MFA program of Dutch Art Institute. His art project in the form of a novel, Illusion, inspired The Book Lovers, a project on artist novels in collaboration with curator Joanna Zielińska.

Joanna Zielińska is an art historian, writer and curator. In 2010, she started a collaboration with the Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor - Cricoteka in Kraków. Zielińska is the former Chief Curator at the Znaki Czasu Centre of Contemporary Art (CoCA) in Toruń, Poland, where she curated the inaugural exhibition and the institution’s program from 2008-2010. From 2003 to 2007, Zielińska worked with the curatorial collective Exgirls. In 2010 - 2011 she was in residence at International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York. Her interests range from syllogomania, collecting and various aspects of escapism.
public. The Project Space presents exhibitions and programs in collaboration with a diverse range of organizations, curators and artists to provide a comprehensive and critical perspective on creative practices. A major aspect of the program’s development is ongoing outreach to the myriad individuals and institutions effectively shaping culture today.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501 (c) (3) public charity. Through its three core programs, EFA Studios, EFA Project Space and the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. www.efany.org

EFA Project Space is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council. Private funding for the program has been received from the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and Foundation for Contemporary Arts.

This exhibition is made possible with the generous support of Israel’s Office of Cultural Affairs, New York; Mondriaan Fund, Amsterdam; Polish Cultural Institute, New York; Spain Culture New York—Consulate General of Spain; member of the network Spain Arts & Culture; Consulate General of Sweden, New York; M HKA Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Antwerpen

Special thanks to David and Marisa Droga for generously lending Jill Magid’s work for the exhibition. And we are pleased to announce a collaboration with Printed Matter Inc., where a selection of artist novels from the exhibition will be available for purchase at their bookstore at 195 10th Avenue, New York, NY 10011.