

Unwin Trust UK-Australian Fellowship 2004

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**Art and Museum Publishing in Australia:  
trends in book and cover design**

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## Acknowledgements

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My fellowship to investigate art and museum publishing in Australia was generously awarded by the Unwin Trust, and I would first like to express my sincere gratitude to all the trustees and judges for granting me such an exceptional opportunity to travel and study abroad for three months. Without the practical help and financial support of the Trust, this report would have been impossible to complete.

I am especially obliged to Unwin Trustees John Taylor, who organised the financial side of my trip in the UK and who has been endlessly encouraging and patient, and Patrick Gallagher who welcomed me to Allen & Unwin in Sydney and introduced me to many of his colleagues and contacts across Australia.

I am very grateful for the full support of my employers at the National Gallery Company in London, and especially to my colleagues in the publishing department who made it possible for me to take time out of the office and welcomed me back three months later.

I would also like to thank my referees, Kate Bell and Dr David Rechter, for their unfailing enthusiasm and encouragement throughout the whole application process and beyond.

Likewise, I am very thankful for all the assistance I received in London prior to leaving for Australia, and especially to Celia Clear, Valerie Horsler, Gillian Malpass, Trevor Naylor, Kate Pocock, Robin Taylor, David Way and Caroline Wetherilt.

In Australia, I am indebted to the many publishers, booksellers, designers and distributors who warmly welcomed and assisted me and who all devoted much time and energy to helping with this report: a full list of everyone I interviewed is included in the Appendix at the end of this report.

A very special thank you to Ruth Williams, Joe and Sylvia Phillips, Lorien Kaye and Alan and Marge Strickland who all helped to make my trip around Australia such a memorable and pleasant experience.

Many thanks also to Jane Ace, Kate Bell, Gail Haslam, Carolyn Lomas and Tom Windross for taking an interest in this report, and for offering to provide feedback and criticism.

And finally, a huge thank you to Gail Haslam for suggesting I apply for the fellowship in the first place, and especially to my family and Mark Russell for support and encouragement before, during and after my fellowship.

## List of abbreviations

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ACP	Australian Centre for Photography	Sydney	Australia
AGNSW	Art Gallery of New South Wales	Sydney	Australia
AGSA	Art Gallery of South Australia	Adelaide	Australia
AGWA	Art Gallery of Western Australia	Perth	Australia
APA	Australian Publishers Association	Sydney	Australia
BL	British Library	London	UK
CAST	Contemporary Art Services Tasmania	Hobart	Tasmania
FACP	Fremantle Art Centre Press	Fremantle	Australia
HHA	Hodder Headline Australia	Sydney	Australia
HHT	Historic Houses Trust	Sydney	Australia
IMA	Institute of Contemporary Art	Brisbane	Australia
MCA	Museum of Contemporary Art	Sydney	Australia
MUP	Melbourne University Press	Melbourne	Australia
NAA	National Archives of Australia	Canberra	Australia
NG	National Gallery	London	UK
NGA	National Gallery of Australia	Canberra	Australia
NGP	National Portrait Gallery	Canberra	Australia
NGV	National Gallery of Victoria	Melbourne	Australia
NLA	National Library of Australia	Canberra	Australia
NMA	National Museum of Australia	Canberra	Australia
QAG	Queensland Art Gallery	Brisbane	Australia
SLV	State Library of Victoria	Melbourne	Australia
UQP	University of Queensland Press	Brisbane	Australia
UWA	University of Western Australia	Perth	Australia
WAM	Western Australia Museum	Perth	Australia
YUP	Yale University Press	London	UK

## Introduction

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Book design is an important consideration for most publishers - especially for those institutions which publish books to record or represent art or design - and publishers hope to make the most of cover design and production quality to generate profit and sustain customer interest in their own brand. But who decides what will be used on cover, and why? And what considerations, if any, must publishers take into account when a cover or a book is designed?

The Unwin Trust invited me to carry out a project to enhance my own understanding of the Australian book trade and to help develop the understanding between Australian and UK markets. Under this remit, I investigated trends in book and cover design at art and museum publishers in Australia: in doing so, I spent three months (from September to December 2004) visiting not only Australian museums, galleries, libraries, trade and art publishers, but also fiction and non-fiction publishers, as well as booksellers, distributors, designers and universities.

During the course of my fellowship, I interviewed a selection of art and museum publishers in the UK, before travelling to Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Broome and Perth to look at the different ways art books in Australia are designed and marketed, and the importance ascribed by both museum and general bookshops to cover design. While I explored trade art and non-art publishing, I was specifically interested in how the publishing divisions of Australian museums and galleries choose cover images for their books: is there a recognised trend in book design and image choice that ties in with the marketing of exhibitions and museum brands as a whole?

It quickly became apparent that the style of a book makes a distinct statement about the publisher and/or the institution such publishers characterise, and that the function of any book may be seen as a celebration of the past and present of a publishing company, of a museum or gallery's collection or represent an institutional responsibility to promote public access to facilities.

In the UK, selling books plays an important part in the financial and critical success of exhibitions or events for museums and galleries. In Australia, art is seen to be marketed much more as a tourist attraction than in the UK.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, a strong demand and competitive English-language import tradition have made possible the sustained development of a healthy and varied illustrated publishing market that co-exists with non-institutional art publishers in Australia.

Yet several of the Australian distributors I consulted argue art publishing is not treated seriously enough, and believe that publishers are failing to encourage new target markets while booksellers are not bold enough to promote illustrated books adequately. However, this research found that just as institutional publishers are often restricted by budget and internal issues, booksellers are in turn faced with few reviews or a lack of general publicity, poor discounts and complicated returns procedures for art or illustrated books.

Museum publishers in Australia and the UK can use publishing programmes as a means of public outreach, promoting the collection and generating financial support. So the role of the exhibition catalogue is to be commercially viable *and* representative of the institution's responsibility to promote itself and the artists it exhibits. Yet such books are not just a record of an exhibition: they can stand alone and sell outside a museum or gallery: the appeal of

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<sup>1</sup> According to the sales and marketing director of a leading multi-national art publisher based in the UK.

each art book is maximised when sold not only in the Gallery bookshops but also when promoted via a trade distributor.

However, while diverse departments and teams usually agree that a book cover is important (and may be inherently linked to sales potential), disagreements within institutions can arise over the relevance, or indeed the necessity of any such sales: ultimately, the control over cover design reveals a deeper conflict between profit-generating companies and scholarly interest within museums. Until museum, gallery or library publishing teams are seen as publishers in their own right, independent decisions concerning cover and/or design are virtually impossible to take without appearing obstructive to other internal departments.

I initially planned to research and explain any differences between the Australian and UK approaches to book design and marketing. But each individual interview revealed a unique approach to the publishing and cover design process which meant there was no obvious basis from which to make an effective comparison. In order to avoid constructing an artificial comparative survey, this report is therefore a thematic analysis of design practice rather than an empirical study, including a summary of the widely differing approaches adopted by art and museum publishers (mainly in Australia, but also in the UK) to issues of, and related to, cover design.

The report is divided into six different elements of the cover and book design process and in particular, a summary of how art and museum publishers deal with the following agendas:

1. **Initial cover and design dialogue:** which will take into account the multifaceted approaches to cover design by museum, gallery, library and trade publishers, and who they consult accordingly
2. **External considerations:** or how to create a product which will adequately reflect the institution whose work it illustrates; or include branding which does not compromise the content, design or format of a publication
3. **Design:** who takes part in the design process, why, at what stage and in what way. How the design process is affected by issues such as technology and copyright
4. **Co-editions and multiple editions:** including an examination of differing approaches to cover design across countries, specific markets or even formats, and how this affects the publisher, distributor, bookshop and customer
5. **Sales strategies:** or how publishers confront the sales and distribution challenges presented by demographics, physical geography or changing design trends, using the marketing potential of the cover, packaging and format of a book
6. **The future of art publishing:** focusing on how e-publishing and changing tastes in art may affect consumer expectations and the ability of publishers to adapt publishing processes accordingly

## 1 Initial cover and design dialogue

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Discussions with Australian and UK publishers revealed that procedure varied as to who is involved in the book and cover design decision-making process, when, and why.

Each of the museum, gallery, library and trade publishers interviewed found that one or more of the following factors impacted on cover and design dialogue:

- Textual content, interior design or comparative illustrations
- Other titles in a series or the general direction of the publishing list
- Exhibition loans
- Creative input from authors, curators, artists, designers or photographers
- Bookfairs and multiple covers from international editions
- Domestic copyright law: the '30 Day Rule' (discussed below)
- Sales and marketing strategy
- Sales and distribution data derived internally, and via trade distributors
- Sister-office involvement

### 1.1 First thoughts

#### *When to start thinking about the cover*

At Wakefield Press, publisher Michael Bollen has found that some covers are intrinsically visual and suggest themselves immediately. Others are not so obvious and may need to be chosen at the end of a project following the finalisation of any interior book design.

Once a book has been commissioned, some publishers consult the author for suggestions as to what might work as a cover illustration. At Yale University Press (YUP) in London,<sup>2</sup> authors are asked to present the manuscript text with a full picture list, and ideas about what to use on the front of the book may be drawn from this. The final decision may occur quite late in the publishing process (up to six months prior to a publication date), but with enough time to present ideas to sales representatives and draw conclusions as to the suitability of the chosen cover design.

#### *The picture list*

Like YUP London, the publishing team at the Historic Houses Trust (HHT) uses the final picture list as a base from which to choose a cover. Once the text design has been approved and is underway, different images are considered for the cover of a publication, and after informal editing decisions, a minimum of three covers will be chosen for final approval.

For other publishers, cover and design issues must be addressed at an earlier stage. Tracy O'Shaughnessy, commissioning editor at Melbourne University Press (MUP), believes that the most critical point of illustrated publishing should be apparent at the commissioning level: forming a clear idea of the desired design, look and feel of a book at the moment of inception can be invaluable.

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<sup>2</sup> Yale University Press has offices in the US and the UK.

### *At the commissioning level*

Tate Publishing in the UK also begins its design process as early as possible. For non-exhibition publications, this takes place even before the content has been commissioned. By contrast, the overall design for exhibition catalogues is dependent on the picture loans included in the exhibition: according to when these loans are secured, a final cover decision could be made anywhere from the start of a project up until six weeks prior to publication.

Similarly, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW) the exhibition programme and publishing department are curatorially rather than commercially driven. According to general manager Anne Flanagan, the promise of a loan based on its potential use as a cover image could therefore be the key ingredient in any decision-making process for the jacket. The typeface used must match the theme of the exhibition or tone of the publication - as well as fit the museum constant - and is just as important as the actual cover image.

Mary Callahan has designed many books for trade publishers in Australia and finds that 'early collaboration with designers...allows for publishers to think differently about how a book might be produced, or indeed marketed'.<sup>3</sup> She is often approached by publishers early on in the publishing process with a manuscript to read and once she has an idea of the text, she can come up with ideas for the cover.

### *Format and style*

At Thames & Hudson Australia,<sup>4</sup> a cover may be determined by a book's place within the general list or a series (if it is a stand-alone title, then any decision about the cover can be more flexible, insofar as it need not conform to an overall format or 'look') or based on ideas from the artist or photographer involved in the project. Such considerations will be important from the very start of the design process: format and style are decided as early as possible, while the cover will be chosen later on, and will often involve a mutual decision between departments.

### *Spontaneity*

Likewise, book covers are considered as early as possible by the publishing division at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney. Publishing manager Julie Donaldson has found that a spontaneous decision about a cover image often leads to a livelier and more immediate result which encourages 'pickupability'. Mary Callahan agrees: she came up with a design solution for Elliot Perlman's novel *Seven Types of Ambiguity* in one day and it went on to win an award for the Best Designed Cover of the Year at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Australian Publishers Association (APA) Book Design Awards in 2003.

### *Curatorial input*

Book designers at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Sydney, are also involved at an early stage of the publishing process and may work on a concept informally with the curator in advance of a briefing session, to discuss treatment, cover design and sample spreads. Exhibition catalogues are considered part of the

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<sup>3</sup> Mary Callahan, *Book Design Practices in the USA and Europe*, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Thames & Hudson's global head office is in London, and there are sister companies based in New York and Paris, and subsidiary companies in Melbourne and Singapore.

overall identity of a show and are included in the initial process of the development and implementation of the museum marketing strategy.

#### *In relation to the text*

Director Dr Jenny Gregory at the University of Western Australia Press (UWA) starts cover discussions only once the text has been fully edited. The designer will start work on the interior text, and then complete the cover with any corrections or amendments to the inside layout concurrently. Veronica Sumegi at the non-illustrated publisher Brandl & Schlesinger, will also read as much text as possible before thinking about an appropriate image or design to use on a cover: she finds the process is often lengthy, and normally finalised only after the internal layout has been completed.

#### *Bookfairs*

International bookfairs can act as a catalyst for the design process. Ideas are often firmed up far in advance of schedule in order to secure international co-editions or foreign rights sales before publication. For aboriginal publisher Magabala Books in Broome, physical and geographical distance from the rest of the publishing community both in Australia and internationally means that bookfairs are even more crucial. When working on adult books, covers are prepared early, in consultation with the author, in order to be ready for the Frankfurt bookfair.

#### *Foreign rights*

When rights are bought for an international title at Hodder Headline Australia (HAA), the Sydney-based editorial and design team will either choose a cover from international editions of that title, or will design their own version. Multiple jackets are also a concern for Thames & Hudson Australia: if a book is published in more than one country, covers can vary according to subject matter and target audience.<sup>5</sup>

Fiona Henderson, head of publishing (Bantam and Doubleday) at Random House Australia, repackages titles bought in from foreign publishers. She notes that the main challenge here is to maintain the 30 Day Rule: once rights are secured for a new publication, it must be published in Australia within 30 days of the first overseas publication date. Although this rule has had a positive influence on the Australian printing industry, with the result that more books are printed domestically to come within the time limits set by the new rule, it has meant that publishers have even less time in which to make cover decisions.

## **1.2 Input from sales and marketing teams regarding cover and design issues**

#### *Linking cover design with marketing campaigns*

For publishing teams affiliated to museums and galleries, contributions from sales and marketing departments can often determine the final cover design of an exhibition catalogue. Publisher Caroline Wetherilt at the Hayward Gallery in London always tries to link cover designs with marketing campaigns. The publishing team will normally arrange a meeting as soon as possible between the catalogue designer and

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<sup>5</sup> For further discussion about multiple covers, please see section 4 of this report.

the designer working on the marketing material and publicity, in order for them to brainstorm design issues together. The designers then work on their own ideas, and reconvene with the publisher to discuss and decide on a cohesive design approach at a later date. If ideas are incompatible, or if the publisher feels that a certain approach is more suited to marketing but would be detrimental to the sales of the catalogue and vice-versa, they will try to match the products as much as possible: i.e. same image, different typeface.

#### *The committee process*

Other publishers structure their committee processes to allow multiple departments to contribute to questions of cover and design. Thames & Hudson Australia has a publishing committee that is involved in choosing cover images at regular meetings. Sales and marketing teams will also give advice to editorial departments regarding target audience and appropriate covers based on sales and distribution data concerning current and back list sales. Editors will present sample ideas, and the committee then votes on the best option.

At the Tate Gallery in London, curators working on an exhibition-related publication and the marketing and communications teams are all involved in cover decisions, but it is the publishing team that retains the final choice, and that negotiates, if necessary, a compromise with curators. YUP London also draws support and inspiration from its US sister office, which contributes to cover decisions for front list titles. But the company is editorially led, so although sales and marketing input is valued, the editor will always have the final decision regarding format and design.

The HHT publications committee meets four times a year to discuss cover design, present ideas and suggest mark-ups for consideration. Committee members include curators, retail teams, the publishing department and external commercial advisors (for advice about what is already in the market place). The publishing team will then seek approval from the HHT Director, who works closely with the head of marketing and who makes the final decision as to the publication cover.

At the Queensland Art Gallery (QAG), the marketing team is consulted about cover design for museum publications, but has no direct influence on decisions taken. The publishing department may suggest options but does not have the final say. As at HHT, final decisions are taken at the directorial level.

#### *Commercial expertise and corporate considerations*

The marketing team at the MCA uses its commercial expertise to enhance sales of a book both on-site in the museum and elsewhere. Whereas Powerhouse Publishing finds that the focus of the sales and marketing team may vary according to corporate considerations, the museum in question and specific exhibitions, and the team's input differs as a result. In this instance, collaboration and team work are essential to the success of any cover, suggests Australian author and publisher Laura Murray Cree, who also stresses that it is important to define the target audience before embarking upon the design process - while commercial considerations are important, marketing departments do not always understand the cover's role of conveying the content of a book or reflecting the broad nature of an exhibition or a collection.

### *Collaboration and compromise*

To make the most of a collaborative effort between departments, editors at Allen & Unwin in Sydney have a systematic approach to working with the sales and marketing teams regarding cover design. After talking to the publisher, editors will choose a designer and provide a comprehensive brief. Once roughs are developed, they are shown to the sales and marketing team for comment.

Other companies use sales and marketing support alongside input from external bodies. HHA likes to involve the author in cover decisions (and may also consult or confer with the author's agent if necessary).

Most publishers agree that cover and book design is matter of compromise between editorial and sales and marketing departments, but there is a danger that too much input from people who are not experienced enough to articulate ideas beyond their individual preferences can compromise a book's cover or design. HarperCollins Australia believes that it is important to shelter the design process, and to encourage the designer to interpret everyone's ideas alongside his or her own in order to avoid this.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.3 Input from other contributors to cover and design issues**

#### *The committee process again*

At Thames & Hudson Australia, the publisher, managing director, sales and publicity teams and the artist/photographer all form part of a committee-driven decision process from the start of a project regarding cover and design issues. If the publisher has a vision or an idea for a product, this will be presented and as the project evolves, these ideas are reassessed and refined by the committee.

Random House Australia holds a weekly acquisitions meeting where sample covers are presented. As at Thames & Hudson Australia, the managing director, heads of sales, marketing, publicity, rights, production and the business manager are all present at the meeting and contribute to ideas about the cover design of a book.

The sales and marketing team at the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) is also invited to contribute towards book cover decisions by way of a 'product committee meeting' (which includes the business development manager, the managing director and two representatives from the gallery shop). And at AGNSW, the publishing team conducts informal discussions with the marketing department but works more closely with the curators and the merchandise and publications manager, Richard Harling, to determine what will sell. Harling specifies that the books must be aesthetically pleasing in the first instance. Projects are then discussed through a publishing committee (including the gallery director, the merchandise and publications manager, a curatorial representative, the publishing manager and the print-production coordinator) where budgets are finalised, print runs are set, and the distribution methods, covers, titles, content and specification are all discussed. The curators will then present ideas, which, if approved, will be evolved and included in a second presentation. The final stage of the committee process will give conclusive approval to the chosen cover choice.

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<sup>6</sup> For a further discussion of design process, please see section 3 of this report.

A collaborative approach towards cover design is also taken at the National Library of Australia (NLA), involving the publisher, editor, designer, sales and distribution teams and occasionally the author too. In the event of any problematic covers, the interior book design and the cover are separated and approached individually. The National Portrait Gallery (NPG) in Canberra has no formal committee process for deciding a cover or design issues: all dialogue is collaborative between those who know and have a feel for the exhibition in discussion.

#### *Curatorial input*

Tate Publishing chooses a shortlist of titles within the editorial department and will present five or six final images to the curator for discussion. Cover meetings will then follow every six weeks until a decision is made. In order to avoid any interdepartmental misunderstandings, an independent design consultant is employed to attend these meetings and mediate between Tate Gallery's requirement for strong branding for all museum-related products, and the publishing team's need to choose a typeface and an image that works for each title individually, independent of any branding issues.

#### *Distribution*

Powerhouse Publishing always consults the distributor for input before finalising cover decisions (although the distributor has no right of approval, and is normally approached for industry advice only). The distributor is also involved at the University of Queensland Press (UQP), where format and design are decided at a costings meeting held in advance of the drawing up of any contract (which will specify who has final cover approval). This is then presented to the account manager at Penguin Australia for feedback. The author is also consulted.

#### *Problem solving*

At HarperCollins Australia, publishing director Shona Martyn aims to resolve 95 per cent of cover and design decision without any problems. For the remaining titles, the sales and marketing team and the publishing director will negotiate a final decision about what should be on the cover of a book. HarperCollins Australia has recently initiated a new procedure for book design decision-making: previously, the publisher or editor would liaise with the design team and discuss feedback at scheduled meetings, but a cover meeting with fewer people invited has now been created (the senior publishing, sales and marketing staff) where initial ideas are discussed. Once an idea is formed and the sales and marketing teams have contributed, the designer manager is briefed, who in turn discusses the idea with the relevant designer either in-house or contracted on a freelance basis: this ensures that the idea is well worked through.

With the intention of improving the overall calibre of design and losing an institutional look, HarperCollins Australia recruited a design manager in 2004 with strong creative input and administrative skills. The individuality of the front list and the hard sales results are evident already: the company has won numerous design awards and positive feedback from sales representatives and booksellers has been consistent.

The ever-increasing need to generate income in UK museums and galleries has encouraged the development of enterprise divisions, often run in tandem with expanding publishing programmes. Clearly this can boost profit margins, with direct sales possible via carefully targeted shops in museums or external locations, as well as online. But as a consequence, the independence of such publishers is frequently affected, and design issues are on occasion removed from the direct publishing remit in favour of marketing or design teams responsible for creating a consistent museum brand or style.

All publishers will make crucial losses if key titles are not on bookshelves as planned, but the tight production schedules and crucial deadlines adhered to by museum publishers (especially in national venues or touring exhibitions) do not always correspond with internal marketing department plans. So if a subject is unsuitable or if a decision cannot be made in time, an exhibition catalogue may well differ in branding and key image use from other exhibition marketing material.

Australian museum and gallery publishing teams are not yet following the enterprise model common in the UK, where museums and galleries set up trading arms in order to generate profits and thereby support the work of the associated institution. However, institutional branding and the application of key exhibition images is just as relevant to those publishing teams that represent institutions existing primarily as custodians of national and cultural heritage.

Feedback from distributors or booksellers regarding cover design, and the effects of outside funding for specific projects has led to an increased awareness of the importance of publishing titles which present art works in the best possible light, whilst simultaneously appealing to customers inside and outside the gallery.

### **2.1 Museum publishers: when institutional branding and/or an exhibition theme affects cover image decisions**

#### *Internal branding*

The publishing teams at many museums and galleries are reliant on the trade sales of their books in order to reach a retail outlet beyond their own venues, so the image must work for the book outside the museum. Tate Publishing will collaborate with the general marketing of an exhibition if it can, but has noticed that when the design of an exhibition catalogue is not tied to an exhibition poster, there is no difference in sales.

The publishing programme at the National Museum of Australia (NMA) is also trade rather than exhibition driven, so exhibition products do not always correspond to a key internal image, although as many collection-based objects are used as possible to illustrate NMA books. At Powerhouse Publishing, individual exhibition catalogues may differ insofar as the use of logo and overall branding is concerned (but permanent collection handbooks are more likely to have a central branding or theme). At the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA), the publishing programme is directorially driven: book covers are not restricted by exhibition branding, and the publishing team has found that like Tate Publishing, what works for a book doesn't necessarily work on a poster, or vice versa.

The NGA publishing team is not exhibition driven, although it does have a commitment to publish exhibition catalogues and merchandise alongside other

books of interest to the permanent collection. Contemporary Art Services Tasmania (CAST) titles are also project driven and not branded, though exhibition invitations will sometimes match the book cover: in this case, images take precedence on the cover and, as the aim of any project is to privilege the artwork, designers try not to overwhelm any chosen images.

AGWA is another publishing team that includes very little branding on gallery publications although it will be interesting to note if this changes in the future now that they have a new gallery logo. It treats each book project by project to ensure that publications are individual. Similarly, the State Library of Victoria's (SLV) titles do not use exhibition branding exclusively on catalogue covers, unless there is a clear key image.

#### *Covers for the wider market*

In order to make sure that all books are individual, the AGNSW publishing team does not use a set style guide. Each cover is assessed for new opportunities, and if necessary, the jacket image may not ever feature in the exhibition. All cover decisions are based on what is appropriate for the market, and in consideration of other related books published that year, and so exhibition posters may differ from the related book cover insofar as the title or subtitle may vary, or the text may align in different ways across media.

The QAG publishing team often try to find several key images that can be applied across general marketing materials and the exhibition catalogue. Branding remains important although images do not necessarily need to match. For Te Papa publisher, Claire Murdoch, who runs the only museum publishing house in New Zealand, a main consideration for cover design is how publications will stand up against other books in the bookshop: museum book design must therefore serve the market as much as the Te Papa brand or an exhibition look.

#### *Elastic schedules*

At the Institute of Modern Art (IMA), not all publications are accompanied by an exhibition: publications officer Katrina Stubbs helps to provide a service for artists wishing to produce books about their work, as well as promoting any exhibitions held within the institute. The Institute is funded through Arts Queensland and the Australian Council and artists obtain grants from these and other bodies to help cover the cost of publications. Therefore, when a tie-in image is selected for the cover of a book that matches promotional material for the exhibition, it is more likely to be accidental than intended. Unlike most museum or gallery publishers who aim to launch an exhibition catalogue at the start of an exhibition, thereby making the most of potential sales, it is rare for a book to be published at the start of an IMA show. Adhering to such a publishing schedule would lead to a loss of sales for most institutions, as well as a failed opportunity to communicate any information they have regarding the exhibition to visitors. So whereas the IMA's design schedules are elastic and allow for greater experimentation, they might not serve as an ideal model for institutions which rely heavily on revenue generated via exhibition catalogue sales.

### *When book covers affect internal branding*

In some cases, book cover design can influence overall institution branding: when Tate Publishing identified a popular subject for a non-exhibition book about the Romanian artist Brancusi, it was so well liked that the exhibition department at the Tate developed a show specifically related to that theme.<sup>7</sup> The publishing team at HHT also believes that while synchronicity across all exhibition-related products may be desirable, it is better for everyone to work as a team, and for the marketing department to draw inspiration from the book design rather than vice-versa.

### *The benefits of institutional branding*

In contrast, other museum and gallery publishers prefer, or are required by internal institutional departments, to use identical branding across publishing products *and* general museum marketing. It can be argued that when exhibition catalogues are clearly part of an exhibition's graphics, visitors/customers can make an easier visual link between the museum and the retail environment, improving associated merchandise sales.

The publishing team at AGWA tries hard to coordinate exhibition catalogue covers with exhibition marketing, but sometimes deviates from general marketing strategy. The 2004 exhibition *Edge of Desire, Recent Art in India* did not have continuous content and marketing images, and AGWA is currently evaluating whether or not this was successful. YUP London has found that exhibition catalogue covers that match the key image or theme chosen to represent an exhibition does generate additional sales, and while Powerhouse Publishing likes to maintain some individuality in book design (in order to increase the lifespan of titles selling through the trade), it has restricted advertising budgets so finds that using museum branding on merchandise reinforces the appeal of the book *and* the exhibition.

At HHT, the book will always take precedence in design terms. Once an idea is approved for a cover, designers will work on the books *and* any publicity material to ensure that publications are consistent in house style and general appearance. Likewise, the publishing team at MCA agrees that using the same image to promote a book and a related exhibition reinforces branding. The NGA publishing team also tries to keep a brand across all publishing products, working with internal exhibition design and multimedia teams to ensure identical branding.

### *Further considerations*

Although the Fremantle Arts Centre Press (FACP) doesn't print exhibition-related art books, Publisher Ray Coffey does take advertising into consideration when choosing a cover: is the image transferable and will it look good reproduced in black and white on different promotional material?

There are also publishers who can work with, or independently from, institutional branding - at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), cover images chosen for exhibition catalogues are sometimes dictated by an overall theme, or can be the individual choices of a curator or donor. They do not always have to match other

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<sup>7</sup> The exhibition *Constantin Brancusi: The Essence of Things* ran from 29<sup>th</sup> January until 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2004 at the Tate Modern in London, and later travelled to New York where it was shown at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum between 10<sup>th</sup> June and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2004.

forms of publicity, but must be attractive and indicative of content. Western Australian Museum (WAM) publications manager, Ann Ousey, adds that additional cover concerns are prioritised over and above exhibition or museum branding. Indigenous Australian images or artefacts will be closely evaluated and vetted before being reproduced anywhere within the museum or on related book covers to ensure they are not culturally insensitive. So potential cover or general marketing images are therefore scrutinised carefully.

## **2.2 When feedback, collaboration or input from sales representatives or booksellers regarding the packaging, cover, format and design of a book impacts on publishing decisions**

In her 2003 report on Publisher-Bookseller Cooperation in the UK Book Industry, Unwin Fellow Lorien Kaye highlighted the need for constructive and collaborative partnerships between publishers and bookshops. Research into Australian publisher and bookseller interaction in 2004 suggests that there is still a common feeling of 'tension and frustration between retailer and supplier' which transcends continents. Constructive feedback and criticism of book design and cover image choice from the retail perspective in any country should allow publishers to develop and refine titles and sales opportunities.<sup>8</sup> Yet the research conducted for this report indicates that the extent to which Australian publishers, bookshops and distributors in the illustrated art book market gather information and process external feedback varies enormously.

### *Booksellers*

The sales manager at Text Publishing has worked hard to cultivate a strong relationship with booksellers and will approach them to canvas opinion if necessary. But while Mark Rubbo at Readings bookstores in Melbourne and Clive Tilsley at Fullers Bookshop in Hobart are both occasionally consulted by publishers for advice about covers prior to publication (they note that smaller publishers tend to seek feedback more than larger companies), they agree that it would be to everyone's advantage if this occurred more regularly, especially for local book designers.

UQP have an on-campus shop at the University of Queensland, and will seek guidance about the look and feel of their books from these and other trusted booksellers. On occasion, the NLA will also approach booksellers for advice on mock-up covers prior to publication. Otherwise, feedback post-publication is also sought and although often anecdotal, is considered invaluable to the publishing team. The publishing team at AGSA does not normally seek advice from retail staff (although negative feedback regarding barcodes did lead to their removal from the back to the inside back cover of certain publications).

The publishing team at AGNSW rely on feedback from Richard Harling (manager for merchandise and publications) regarding the commercial viability of any project. Likewise, retail manager Peter Barnes organises the distribution of HHT books in the trade and acts as a conduit for anecdotal feedback regarding HHT publications from distributor, New Holland. Barnes adds that customer feedback is occasionally available, but is mainly concerned with exhibitions rather than any related merchandise.

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<sup>8</sup> Booksellers Association CEO Tim Godfray, quoted in Lorien Kaye's, *Publisher-Bookseller Cooperation in the UK Book Industry*, 2003.

Both the National Gallery and Tate Gallery publishing teams benefit from having on-site retail staff to provide feedback at monthly meetings. Tate Publishing also relies on feedback from its sales representatives as well as any reactions provoked at the Frankfurt bookfair. The MCA also uses on-site museum bookshop staff to advise on issues of cover design and format issues.

### *Sales representatives*

Penguin Australia receives monthly field reports from its sales representatives, who provide constructive feedback following publication. This is taken into account for any future publications or reprints. During the pre-publication process buyers may be consulted, but any changes they suggest are only followed through if more than one person is of the same opinion.

HarperCollins Australia collects reliable feedback from sales representatives about how a book should look. But it only seeks minimum input from other sources, finding it easier to resolve design issues with the smallest possible number of people (and with experts only). This avoids inadvertently allowing personal taste to be manifested over sound sales advice.

Magabala Books is dependent on good relationships with sales representatives, especially because of its geographical distance from the major towns and cities in Australia, but finds that much of the feedback received is either contradictory in design terms or related to supplied sales kits rather than the publications themselves.

In order to avoid this unhelpful scenario, independent book and magazine publisher, Hardie Grant, prefers not to consult sales representatives (or booksellers) for feedback, finding them too removed from a project. Chief executive officer Sandy Grant works instead in small teams to ensure a maximum creative output and, for illustrated or art projects, the designers and editorial teams must lead rather than follow aesthetic fashion.

As Lorien Kaye highlighted, discussion between UK booksellers and publishers is often strained. When it does take place, communication is most frequently in response to issues of packaging and cover design. Consultation between booksellers and publishers seems to be most useful for non-fiction titles, when sales representatives and booksellers from 'behind the tills' actually get to contribute to dialogue about general trends rather than specific titles.<sup>9</sup>

### *Distributors*

Acting as both distributor and publisher, Thames & Hudson Australia recognises the need to facilitate communication channels between its editorial, design and sales teams. Potential book design issues are discussed at two sales conferences a year and presented to sales representatives, allowing them to then more adequately and knowledgeably supply stock to booksellers. These conferences are not used as a decision-making process in any design sense: for ideas or feedback about this and other cover images, the Australian office may contact specialist bookshops for advice (although it has that found in the past that this does not always produce a favourable result). It may also look at previous sales figures. By knowing a subject, monitoring

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<sup>9</sup> Lorien Kaye, *Publisher-Bookseller Cooperation in the UK Book Industry*, 2003.

the press and looking closely at what any competitors are producing, Thames & Hudson Australia can determine a more realistic idea of what might sell and why.

YUP London also operates as a distributor and publisher. It uses weekly and seasonal sales reports from sales representatives to gain retrospective feedback (occasionally direct from booksellers) about individual titles regarding content, and if relevant, jacket and design. Otherwise, biannual sales conferences held both in the UK and the US provide a forum for discussion and comment between editors, sales and marketing and design teams.

Michael Rakusin, managing director of Australian distributor Tower Books, is approached by approximately 20 per cent of the Australian publishers he represents for advice about covers before a publication goes to press. He would prefer to get more involved if at all possible. Once a book is published, he is rarely asked for feedback, although the monthly sales analysis he forwards to publishers provides a summary of what has sold well, giving an indication of the financial success or failure of a title (although there is no factual basis for ascribing this to design issues alone).

The NMA consults its commercial distributor Bookwise prior to publication regarding the projected page length, price point, target market and concept of each publication, but prefers to seek advice about the design of the book from on-site retail staff in the museum shop. For the NPG however, the on-site shop is run by an outside organisation and no feedback is available to the publishing team. Instead, manager for marketing and development Suzie Campbell seeks trade advice from distributor Thames & Hudson Australia. Group managing director at Bookwise, Patricia Genat, adds that although she is often approached by the museum publishing teams she acts for regarding design (but rarely concerning content), tight schedules often mean there is little time for consultation.

#### *The disadvantages of feedback*

Feedback can be generated from curators, authors and artists, often without being sought. While this allows publishers to pick and choose the criticism or comment they feel is relevant, it highlights just how difficult it is to please everyone concerned in the creation of an individual publication, let alone a series. HHA previously consulted bookshops in an informal manner, but found that feedback was conflicting. Although Allen & Unwin do not arrange formal feedback meetings set up they seek informal advice within the office, or if the cover of a particularly special or unusual book is in question, the sales manager may be consulted accordingly.

### **2.3 When a publication is funded or sponsored by an outside organisation: the implications for cover and book design**

At the National Gallery in London, and also at the AGNSW, external sponsorship and corporate backing is an accepted means of funding the substantial cost of hosting exhibitions and creating related products, such as exhibition catalogues. Financial support is likely to come through the development department, although it can also be generated by the publishing team separately, and is generally applied to a project or exhibition as a whole, rather than a publication alone. Depending on the donation, sponsors may be offered an array of opportunities, such as a foreword in the exhibition catalogue, the inclusion of their logo somewhere in the book (and on

occasion, on the cover of a publication), private dinners held in the gallery and private views of the exhibition.

### *Acknowledging sponsors*

Acknowledging external logos on or inside publications allows readers to recognise when a book is a co-publication, associated with a museum or is the product of funding from a corporate or government body. By recognising financial input or support, future sponsorship may be easier to acquire. Sydney-based book designers Alex Miles and Stephen Goddard believe that discreet solutions for incorporating logos onto covers and spines can be achieved without compromising good book design.

Any corporate publications at NMA must be branded as such and include a separate logo. MCA publications will also acknowledge sponsors inside the book, but would never allow this to affect the cover. Likewise, Te Papa publishing will not allow a corporate logo onto the cover of any of their books, but will work collaboratively with outside bodies concerning design elsewhere in - or on - a publication.

Program officers David Edgar and Gail Cork at Arts Tasmania have recently worked with co-publisher Thames & Hudson Australia to produce two books as part of a new government policy to recognise Tasmanian artists. Arts Tasmania funded both publications and asked for (a modestly sized version of) their logo to be included in the books. Similarly, the HHT publishing team often adds a co-publisher's logo on the spine of a book, and allow contributing organisations to have a say in what the cover will look like. YUP London will use relevant logos or credit lines on spines or title pages when working with a museum or gallery. But for all other titles, Yale prefers to remain autonomous in design and cover terms.

### *The benefits of co-publishing*

Working with outside organisations can be a rewarding opportunity: Powerhouse Publishing has worked on co-publishing deals with a trade publisher and held positive two-way discussions regarding cover and design. Generally, it seems that co-publishers are happy to work with any museum-led design because it is usually generated by designers who are familiar with the museum style and are more able to produce a relevant end result. Sandy Grant, CEO of Hardie Grant has also published books funded by outside organisations and found it a liberating experience in design terms (once the financial restrictions are removed from the decision process, pressure on the designer and the publisher regarding market satisfaction is relieved). FACP publisher Ray Coffey has previously worked with ABC books to produce television and radio tie-ins and found that adding company logos and brands in this case was an advantageous selling point.

Pandanus Books also finds that working with an outside funding body is possible. Very occasionally, Ian Templeman (head of publishing), works with the Director of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University, who will commission and pay for a readers report: the Director therefore gets to choose exactly what the cover will look like.

*The disadvantages of co-publishing*

Magabala books also receives sponsorship from outside bodies, and runs a travelling editor project which is currently funded by the Commonwealth Government.<sup>10</sup> While this has not lead to specifications regarding cover design, the related bureaucratic and administrative issues do represent a significant drawback.

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<sup>10</sup> Magabala Books was awarded \$71,500 through the Federal Government's Regional Assistance Programme (RAP) to fund a travelling editor. The travelling editor project aims to develop and publish manuscripts by Aboriginal authors in remote communities across the Kimberley.

In much the same way as the Publishers Association in the UK runs the yearly British Book Design and Production Awards, the APA has run design awards for 53 years, establishing a forum through which Australian book designers are actively recognised for their work within the industry. Successfully designed books must be deemed 'well-resolved' by the judges, or in other words:

*'A well-resolved book design means the designer has drawn on their acute understanding of what the publisher hopes to present to the consumer. They must demonstrate a real sensitivity to the content of the book. Then as a professional, the designer must assess and rationalise their time and energy against a publisher's budget constraints. Finally, they must delve deep into their artistic and creative reserve to translate all these demands with flair.'*<sup>11</sup>

Art, museum and trade publishers were all asked about the issues that would most affect their ability to create books that fulfil the above criteria and these are discussed below:

- Using in-house or freelance designers
- Maintaining an interest in the source of a designer's inspiration
- Applying contemporary technology and software to the design process
- Copyright law
- Recognised positive and negative elements of book design

### 3.1 In-house and freelance designers

#### *Centralised design and consistency*

For larger companies, centralised design studios allow for consistent design, branding and production values to be applied across publishing lists, whilst keeping costs down. Thames & Hudson Australia use design resources based in its global head office in London, or contract out work to a pool of tried and trusted local designers. Likewise, YUP London rely on in-house design skills and aim to create a happy marriage between appearance and content (a successful design for YUP is one where the reader does not notice that there is a 'design' or a 'style').

The MCA employs two in-house designers and will outsource if necessary (although they stress that this is an exception rather than the rule), as do the publishing team at the NGV. The AGNSW has three contract designers working in-house and a print production studio coordinator. While the HHT publishing team employs seven in-house designers, only recruiting freelance designers if they have an excess of projects pending.

There are four print designers, one web designer and one web officer at the QAG, who work across leaflets, posters, books and any audio visual interactive publications produced for the gallery. The NGA operates on the same basis, with three full-time and one part-time in-house designer who work on all products: merchandise, books and marketing.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Australian Publishers Association 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Book Design Awards, 2003.*

### *A mixture of in-house and freelance designers*

Other publishers prefer to use a mixture of in-house and freelance designers, finding that prescriptive designs are avoided and fresh approaches from outside the institution or company are automatically incorporated into design. Powerhouse Publishing uses in-house designers for 20 per cent of publications and contracts work out to freelance designers for the remaining titles. Allen & Unwin has three in-house designers working across books and marketing, and will also employ freelancers when necessary.

Depending on what type of book it is publishing, the NLA uses either in-house design teams - if it is dealing with complex art and needs expertise or special knowledge of the collection - or contract freelance designers for a more cost effective approach to straightforward projects.

HarperCollins Australia also relies on a mix of in-house and external designers, but has an in-house design manager to oversee all projects and maintain a cohesive identity across the list, whilst at the same time also encouraging individuality.

### *Exclusively freelance*

HHA has no in-house designers and prefers to use approximately six contract designers with whom it maintains a strong working relationship. The main aim is to have strong commercial covers. Random House Australia also contracts out all book design projects and has established favourites with whom they prefer to work.

For smaller or institutional publishing departments, full-time designers can be expensive. UQP uses a pool of eight to ten freelance designers and outsource all text design, while the National Gallery London and Tate Publishing teams also rely mainly on freelance designers.

## **3.2 Design inspiration**

### *Fitting into a series*

Thames & Hudson Australia allows designers to be creative within the corporate design or relevant series parameters. For a recent book about contemporary Australian artist Ricky Swallow,<sup>12</sup> a format and look had been first established for the *New Art Series* and the designer was then invited to work within the series' guidelines. The designer was thus able to create an individual look for this book, yet at the same time retain a collective identity for other titles in the series.

Not only are guidelines established in advance important, the content too is relevant to the final design and in many cases dictates the final look and feel of a publication. The publishing department at English Heritage maintains certain families of books based on house styles and will stick with these when designing publications. But at YUP London, it is the editors who work with the author and the text. They also, alongside junior editors (who learn production and design skills on the job) lay out the books. Using models of books that have in the past been successful, editors are constricted by the economics of the project (and other factors, such as text length), but aim to relate the text to the interior images as far as possible. The paramount concern here is not the look of the page spread, but the actual text itself.

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<sup>12</sup> *Ricky Swallow: Field Recordings* by Justin Paton (Series editor Ashley Crawford), 2005.

### *The content as inspiration*

Similarly to YUP London, HHT designers look to the substance of the text for inspiration, as well as to the period from which any illustrations or content are drawn. HHT will also conduct independent research on appropriate typefaces to use in conjunction with images. This stimulates a creative design, which also reflects the internal structure of the book.

When drafting the cover of *Gould's Book of Fish*<sup>13</sup>, designer Mary Callahan started working on the design even before the author had finished writing the text: Richard Flanagan had a clear vision about what 'look' he wanted for the book. Although the publisher normally acts as mediator between author and designer, in this particular case both were left to work on the cover design alone.

Callahan's design for *Gould's Book of Fish* won the Best Designed Book of the Year at The Australian Publishers Association (APA) 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Book Design Awards in 2001. She summarises her involvement in the design of this book as follows:

*'A good design aims to build some kind of path between the written word and the reader's imagination. It's a tricky notion when you're dealing with the visual - by nature it implies style which in turn implies a particular reading - not just of the text, but of the design. So how far should a designer go when taking into account that they are responsible for the visual representation of another artist's words?'*

*Working with Richard Flanagan on Gould's Book of Fish made me ponder these issues. Richard and I sat down before the book was even written. This was unusual. Richard's inspiration for the writing of the book came from his sighting of William Beulow Gould's watercolours. This was an omen for what was to come - namely, a collaboration, where design ideas stimulated possibilities for the author's writing, and in turn, the author's ideas fed into a vision for the design. Conceptually, design was an important aspect of this book, and that made my role particularly interesting.'*<sup>14</sup>

At HarperCollins Australia, cover and book design is derived from a strong brief initiated at the start of a project to ensure the creation of an original cover. For fiction, they have found, like Brandl & Schlesinger, that using the content and reading the text of the book is the best way come up with a new and relevant cover. HarperCollins Australia designers are encouraged to make their own images and/or use interesting production values such as unusual paper stock to create an individual and alluring end product. Being able to afford large print runs, HarperCollins Australia can command special features such as printed endpapers, embossed covers, improved paper stock or square binding with this in mind.

### *Inspiration from other books*

Awareness of similar books on the market, and looking for ideas regarding presentation and production techniques from other publishing sources are also

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<sup>13</sup> *Gould's Book of Fish* is the story of a convict artist who writes his journal with whatever materials he can find, including cuttlefish ink, excrement and his own blood. Callahan's interior design mirrors this concept by using four-colour text. Each chapter starts with a reproduction from the original *Book of Fish* that inspired the novel, the font mimics old letterpress type and marbled endpapers echo the feel of an old book. The cover includes several of the internal reproductions to create what the APA judges described as 'an object of elegance and beauty'.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Callahan, 'Chapter and Verse', *The Age*, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002.

relevant. At Tate Publishing, a design consultant will present a selection of potential ideas to the curator, the artist and the editor. The consultant will also bring examples of other books or projects along as evidence of inspirational resources. When briefing a designer at the NGA, the publishing team will ask the author or curator working on a project to bring a sample of one book they love, and one they hate along with them to act as examples of what they do and do not want in advance. At the AGNSW, senior designer Annaliese Cairis is asked to draw stimulation from other books, to use the art work involved as a starting point for inspiration and to incorporate any suggestions from the curators into her final designs.

Book designers Alex Miles and Stephen Goddard look to designers in Australia and abroad for inspiration, as well as to other books and works, and if a project is specifically related to a certain artist, the artwork in question too. Mary Callahan spent time studying book design practice in Europe and America, and found that visiting art and design institutions and attending art classes formed an important part of her creative stimulation.<sup>15</sup>

### *The sophisticated market*

Veronica Sumegi at Brandl & Schlesinger also finds that art itself is an important part of the design process, and likes to promote contemporary Australian art on her book covers. Powerhouse Publishing book designers look to contemporary culture for inspiration, especially when derived from fashion, street culture and magazines. The market for a more stylish approach to traditional art books has defined Thames & Hudson's new *StyleCity* guides: 'People are very much exposed these days to ideas about design, through magazines and so on, it is a much more sophisticated market than it was before,' explains Thames & Hudson editorial director, Jamie Camplin, who developed the international best-selling *Hip Hotels* series.<sup>16</sup>

### *The importance of the art work*

AGSA publications manager Antonietta Itropico has one strict principle when designing exhibition catalogues: the art is the most important feature and she has an obligation as the caretaker of the art to show it in the best possible light. Her books therefore, often have a simple and uncluttered design, the text is clear and clean and little contemporary stylistic treatment is applied.

At the MCA, cover design is often innovative. A recent publication entitled *Unpacked II* was intended to accompany a group show and so no single artist could be used on the cover in preference over another. The designer went down to the archive to look at the works in question and was inspired by the wooden crates used to store the art. The design for the book was driven by this concept and utilises wooden packing material and crate-style typeface on the cover.

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<sup>15</sup> Mary Callahan, *Book Design Practices in the USA and Europe*, 1998.

<sup>16</sup> — 'Design for Living', *The Bookseller*, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

### 3.3 The effects and implications of developing technology on the design process and cover/format choice of books

#### *Obvious advantages*

Advances in technology have brought few drawbacks in design terms for Thames & Hudson Australia. Working with contract designers in Australia and the head office design department in London would be an expensive and lengthy exercise without the aid of contemporary software. Comments and corrections can be quickly and easily assimilated from opposite sides of the world, courier costs are significantly reduced and accuracy can be maintained. In this case, technology adds value, reduces cost and enhances the production of each publication.

Thames & Hudson Australia's managing director, Peter Shaw, notes that by adding a website, CD-ROM or other electronic component to an art book, a better product is created for the consumer. Tracy O'Shaughnessy at MUP also finds that improvements to technology have meant adapting to many changes in working practice, but that designers are now able to create more innovative and lateral designs as a result. However, it should be pointed out here that several publishers expressed concern that designers can become too entranced with technology: sophisticated design software may result in unqualified designers failing to exercise restraint and ending up with a 'busy' design or an inappropriate style.

#### *A few drawbacks*

With changes to publishing software and design programmes, in-house designers and editors are expected to do much more, and must learn how to manage multiple tasks simultaneously. Designers at the QAG find they have more ancillary jobs to do and less time to spend on actual design. YUP London agrees: while the transmission of data has been made easier and quicker, the development of technology and design software in particular has meant an increased work load for editors (who are now expected to do a lot more than 'just edit'). The cost of technical mistakes made by editors (or more specifically, as a result of delayed schedules or of editors not knowing how to fix specific IT problems) combined with a decrease in the use of experts with professional book production skills, especially typesetters, could be detrimental to the overall quality of books produced.<sup>17</sup>

#### *Colour management*

Although the NGA publishing team believes that changing technology has improved publishers' knowledge of colour management, not everyone agrees. AGNSW designer Annaliese Cairis suggests that the issue of colour reproduction is a specific way in which developing technology has affected the quality of illustration publishing. Colour matching outside images (from other institutions) is impossible without pre-approved hard copy proofs sent with the digital file, or the possibility of checking images on-site. HHT publications officer Margaret McAllister agrees, explaining that every time she signs off a digital proof, she has no idea exactly what will be produced and returned in colour terms (although she notes that the use of a good reproduction house can improve the consistency of reproduction across publications).

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<sup>17</sup> According to an editor at an international art publisher, based in the UK.

NLA director of publications, Dr Paul Hetherington, believes that digitalisation of images is good for reproducing monotone images but as an editor at YUP London explained, the old-fashioned method of matching transparencies to works of art is currently the only way to ensure accurate colour reproduction. Until technology improves, digital reproductions will mean a downgrading in the quality of illustrated art books, as few publishers can afford to send production staff around the world to colour-check works of art at multiple institutions.

NMA publishing production coordinator, Denis French, insists that skills must match technology in order to avoid the mismanagement of projects. If a company does not have an in-house designer, employing proficient and experienced production staff is essential. Moreover, editors must have a good and up-to-date understanding of print techniques, and adequate publishing-specific IT backup should be readily accessible to support the whole team.

#### *Software issues*

Other drawbacks to evolving technology include software issues. Powerhouse Publishing explains that it will need to make a definitive decision about whether to use publishing software QuarkXPress or Adobe InDesign now that printing firms increasingly specify that only InDesign files will be accepted. Other Australian designers and in-house design departments have already made the change to InDesign.

The cost associated with making such software changes is considerable. As data programmes become obsolete, deciding how to archive back list titles is a growing concern among publishers and printers alike. Moreover, without the requisite in-house IT skills, considerable time, effort and cost are involved in organising computer repairs or updates for smaller publishers. Although technology speeds up the exchange of data between city-based firms nationally and internationally, Magabala Books has encountered difficulties in operating from the remote location of Broome. When PDFs are unclear or unusable, a CD must be sent or received instead, and this can take up to five days by post to reach their remote destination.

### **3.4 The impact of picture rights issues on cover image decisions**

#### *The effects of rising picture fees*

Discussions about issues of copyright and picture rights provoked a consistently fervent response from publishers both in the Australia and UK. Most recognise the importance of protecting an artist's work, but equally expressed concern that rising reproduction fees and growing interference from copyright lenders is affecting the quality and independence of art publishing.

Some publishers are worried that monographs may become vanity publications or merely by-products of blockbuster exhibitions, via institutions who can afford to waive reproduction fees of images they already own. Ordinary or smaller publishers are unable to pay the copyright fees for the images that are essential for high quality art books. As a result, many artists represented by inflexible copyright agencies will not be included in any such publications, or comparative illustrations from outside lenders will be dropped.

Copyright costs can make a significant difference to already slight profit margins for illustrated books. While covers agreed upon under a general contract and used for marketing purposes are normally affordable to larger publishers, special features organised from a PR perspective are sometimes prohibitively costly, even for such companies.

### *Copyright agencies*

Publishers are obliged to pay close attention to the copyright agencies operating in the Australian and international markets and, until recently, such agencies in the UK were the main point of contact for illustrated publishing. Now publishers are finding that they pay more to museums and galleries for image reproduction than to the artists via agencies. Museums and galleries in the UK are now acting to protect their images and to make the most of a significant revenue potential through copyright enforcement. But academic presses that ask authors to pay for picture reproduction fees in order to keep costs down believe that in the long-term, this will severely restrict illustrated publishing and may result in sparsely illustrated art books.

### *When the copyright holder specifies how an image should be used*

When the NGA acquires a work of art, a non-exclusive contract is signed between the gallery and the artist (or artist's agency), granting reproduction rights for research and marketing purposes to the NGA. However, when an image is to be used commercially, the copyright holder must be approached and asked to grant additional rights. As discussed in section 2.4 above, copyright holders may also object to the specific way in which an image is used or cropped. Tate Publishing was obliged to rethink the design of a book in its *Modern Artists* series when a copyright holder objected to the use of a black line on the cover in conjunction with the background image.

While copyright issues limit what can be done with a specific image both inside and on the cover of any publication. Copyright payments can sometimes be avoided for institutions publishing titles based almost exclusively on their own collections. The aim of the publishing team at the National Archives of Australia (NAA) is to promote access to the collection, so where possible it will use NAA images for which they own the copyright.

### *Thinking laterally*

Many Australian publishers confirmed that excess cost of pictures would prevent the use of certain images. However, they remain conscious of copyright costs and have become skilled at finding cost effective alternatives to images with associated fees if necessary.

Although the issue of cost wouldn't prevent the HHT from publishing a book, it might make the publishing team think twice about creating large comparative books or exhibition catalogues (although the HHT is able to share copyright costs with the internal exhibitions team, allowing more budget flexibility for such illustrations). Likewise for the MCA, copyright issues are less prohibitive: most of the artists exhibited or featured are still alive, but will usually waive reproduction fees of their works in return for gratis copies of the book.

### *Cultural issues*

Te Papa publisher Claire Murdoch has found that the rights of indigenous New Zealanders and their cultural *taonga* (treasures or artefacts) are a major consideration in the area of copyright clearance. Te Papa publishing would be more likely to have to change cover images because permission was not granted for cultural reasons, than because of the cost implications of image reproduction.

In March 2004, the Resale Royalty Bill was introduced in Australia.<sup>18</sup> The Australian artists' copyright agency, Viscopy, became responsible for collecting and administering royalties through direct sales on behalf of artists, and also through the reproduction of artists' work. Yet while Viscopy can be seen to be protecting the rights of indigenous artists, it and other similar copyright agencies charge substantial and sometimes restrictive fees.

### *Australian art*

Powerhouse Publishing has noticed an increase in copyright costs. Brandl & Schlesinger's Veronica Sumegi also notes that Viscopy's fees have risen recently to the extent that they are now prohibitive to publishers with smaller budgets. Some artists can be approached individually but as more sign up to larger agencies, it becomes harder to negotiate separate deals. So although Brandl & Schlesinger would prefer to use their book covers to promote Australian artists and photographers, it is increasingly forced to find art work that is out of copyright, or use non-Australian artists instead.

Hopefully this situation will lead to competition in the market and more moderately priced copyright fees. Otherwise, the result may be that 'Australian art' as a comprehensive and inclusive movement incorporating artists from all social and ethnic backgrounds will become uneconomical to publish.

## **3.5 Aspects of cover design that enhance sales and/or the impact of a book**

Preferences change constantly, especially in design terms, and so books can date quickly on the shelf. Demographics also differ, so that content and presentation are issues that concern various generations in different ways. The older book-buyer may not rate the look of a publication so much as the text it contains, while younger design-conscious consumers drive a market that promotes the publisher as a content provider.

### *The emotional, intellectual and aesthetic pull of a cover*

Penguin Australia's publishing director Robert Sessions suggests that publishers have a maximum of six seconds in which to attract a customer, so the emotional and intellectual pull of the cover must work in tandem. However, it may be argued that the subject matter of a book can sometimes be more critical to the success of a publication than its cover, especially where the illustrated art book is concerned. Some publishers believe that customers buy art books for the sake of having them, or

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<sup>18</sup> This was an act to amend the Copyright Act (Commonwealth) 1968 by the establishment of a scheme for the collection of royalties on behalf of visual artists whose work is resold through an art market intermediary. For further details, please see Andrew Dudley, 'Fair Rewards for Aboriginal artists?', *The Art Newspaper*, No. 149, July-August, 2004.

as a souvenir from a trip to a blockbuster exhibition, and will rarely pick them up from the coffee table to read in depth.

### *The importance of the cover in the market for illustrated books*

The title of Martin Gayford's article recommending the best illustrated art books for Christmas 2004 ('Art Books do furnish a room') seems to confirm that art books are taken less seriously than other fiction and non-fiction titles by the trade.<sup>19</sup> All this suggests that in order to reach beyond the specialised art-related book market, the cover or design of an illustrated book must be employed to good effect.

### *What makes a good cover?*

For museum and gallery publishers, visitor numbers and 'blockbuster' status rather than aesthetic considerations are more likely to determine the sales success of a book. A high conversion rate of visitor numbers to exhibition catalogue sales is one indication that a cover was successful. But it is hard to discern one single element which positively enhances sales. A book may win design awards, or look good on the shelf, but might not sell as many copies as another publication deemed to be attractive by the publisher.

Michael Bisits, national operations manager at Thames & Hudson Australia finds that it is 'rare to see a dud cover' on an art book in the Australian market: Thames & Hudson's recent Ricky Swallow title has a clear, uncluttered design, which resulted in a successful pick-me-up cover. YUP London reiterates the importance of an uncluttered design with a dramatic single figure or still life in order to draw attention to a book. The recent Vélazquez monograph (*Vélazquez: The Technique of Genius* by Jonathan Brown, 2003) was displayed face out in various New York bookstores, presumably thanks to a striking cover.

### *Books as objects*

Books can often be objects in themselves: beautiful and appealing in their own right, or, as a leading Australian distributor explains, 'anything that creates a fantasy lifestyle world'. Several Australian distributors mentioned that they enjoy selling creative and striking contemporary art or design books from international publishers such as Phaidon: they reported positive feedback from sales representatives and booksellers regarding the innovative book packaging and design of Phaidon's titles such as *Fresh Cream: Contemporary Art in Culture* which came nestled in a plastic inflatable pillow.

### *Strong visual appeal*

Bookwise sales representative Nancy Northrop needs to showcase over 300 titles every month for booksellers around Sydney, so a book must have a strong visual appeal above all else because each title gets so little presentation time. Snowbooks managing director Emma Cahill kept this aspect of the sales process in mind when she recently published Virginia Woolf's long lost *The London Scene*, which has been

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<sup>19</sup> Martin Gayford, 'Art books do furnish a room', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

strongly praised for its design.<sup>20</sup> For other publishers, a cover can be successful almost by accident. English Heritage head of publishing, Val Horsler, explained how the cover of their recently released book *Restoration* (a television tie-in to the BBC2 series) was difficult to agree on. When a cover was chosen, it was very different from the previous book (which was published by Hodder Headline, and had a completely distinct design) and was very striking. It is firmly believed to have helped boost sales.

Few would admit judging books by their covers, but a beautiful design may invite a reviewer to look more closely at the content, and perhaps more importantly, a customer to pick up one title over another in a bookshop. Malcolm Knox, literary editor at the Sydney Morning Herald, noted a few examples of striking covers that emulate an older or more traditional style of book cover and are gaining attention as a result: the Australian editions of Carlos Ruíz Zafón's *Shadow of the Wind* and Chloe Hooper's *A Child's Book of True Crime*.

### *Vintage and 'retro' design*

Also reminiscent of the trend to recreate book covers from the past is CAST's recent exhibition catalogue, *The Library*, which is a small publication designed by Tracey Allen to evoke a vintage Penguin paperback. It won a design award for the Best Designed Catalogue or Book at the APA 52<sup>nd</sup> Book Design Awards in 2003 and was described as 'a delightful and exquisite work of love...which charmed and disarmed the judges.'<sup>21</sup>

### *Branding and packaging*

Some publishers have opted to create a uniform look or brand in order to attract attention and enhance sales. Persephone Books in the UK is a mainly mail order publishing company that reprints forgotten or neglected titles. Rather than individual covers, titles have classic silver grey and cream covers and matching jackets. The defining features of each book are the endpapers and matching bookmark reproduced from fabric, wallpaper or illustrations taken from the time the book was originally printed.

In Australia, UQP has also developed an innovative format and brand that marks out their books from other publications in terms of size and style. Designer Jenny Grigg won two design awards at the APA 50<sup>th</sup> Book Design Awards in 2001 (Best Designed Cover of the Year and Young Designer of the Year) for her 'outstanding design and re-packaging of Peter Carey's back list. Ostensibly for a younger audience but with broad market appeal.'<sup>22</sup> Likewise, Penguin Books recently released the new *Great Ideas* series in the UK and Australia, earning the following praise from Alice Rawthorne, director of the Design Museum in London:

*'Each title...is designed in the typographic style typical of its time...and is a welcome revival of the 1930s and 1940s Penguin tradition of publishing well-designed and well-written books at affordable prices.'*<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> 'The London Scene is a beautifully illustrated, gift-book-sized hardback.' Stephanie Merritt, *The Observer*, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2004; 'The London Scene is...beautifully illustrated and produced.' Andrew Taylor, Winner of the Ellis Peters Historical Dagger.

<sup>21</sup> *The Australian Publishers Association 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Book Design Awards 2003*.

<sup>22</sup> *The Australian Publishers Association 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Book Design Awards 2001*.

<sup>23</sup> Alice Rawthorne et al., 'The triumphs and turkeys of 2004', *The Guardian*, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

### *Superior print and production features*

Although the National Gallery shops in London achieved a two-fold increase in book sales between 2001 and 2003, book-buyer Stephen Lennon has noticed a downward trend in sales over the same period: 'There has been a noticeable drop... People who buy art books want quality.'<sup>24</sup> In the USA, Penguin Group is experimenting with a new paperback format intended to appeal to readers who are price-conscious but who want a better quality product and are prepared to pay a slight premium for a 'step up from the traditional pulp-worthy spin-the-rack mass market product.'<sup>25</sup> These books will have a larger trim size and higher quality paper stock with wider margins and more space separating lines of text.

Australian museum publishers such as the MCA are also responding to the market desire for well-produced art books designed to be objects in their own right. *Unpacked II* sold very well and was highly commended for the Best Designed Catalogue or Book at the APA 52<sup>nd</sup> Book Design Awards in 2003. The publishing team were able to secure sponsorship in order to help cover the printing and production costs of this unusual and obviously tactile book: the type on the cover was hand-stencilled, and the cover itself was made from balsa wood. Likewise, Jenny Grigg's design for the hardback edition of Peter Carey's *My life as a Fake* included bright pink end papers and a corrugated jacket, which was interesting to the touch.<sup>26</sup>

The resilience of manufacturing materials for a cover is just as important as tactile qualities. UQP has had favourable feedback regarding the recent adoption of the small A+ format (as high as an A and wider than a B) it is publishing across the fiction list in paperback. The size suits bookshops and sits on the shelves well, and the covers, with generous flaps, keep their shape and don't buckle in excess heat or humidity.

HHT designers also consider the durability of a cover when publishing books for the trade: plain black and white or pale covers are easily damaged on the shelf, and especially shiny or glossy books are easily scratched.

### *Further considerations*

There are other design features are also deemed to enhance sales positively, aside from the cover design. HarperCollins has recently launched a scheme to add more information about the author and the book at the back of each publication, attracting readers who are part of a book club. The P.S. section at the back of books includes author interviews, additional insights and features, and further reading suggestions. Mark Rubbo at Readings Bookshop maintains that customers on the whole prefer paperback editions, but the recent trend towards printing small hardback books is becoming more popular. He notes that books such as Lynne Truss's *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* seem like good value to the customer.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Penguin Australia prefers using full bleed to boxed images.

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<sup>24</sup> Fiona Fraser, 'Seen the art, bought the book', *The Bookseller*, 14<sup>th</sup> August 2003.

<sup>25</sup> Karen Holt, 'Penguin Goes Upscale with New Paper Format', *www.thebookstandard.com*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, Powerhouse Publishing also finds that including pink on book covers can encourage sales, and has also noted that using images of shoes is popular, or like YUP, a face looking out at the viewer.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Bollen at Wakefield Press has also noted the recent popularity of the hardback and has published more books in this format accordingly.

Finally, at UWA Press, book covers must pass the 'ten pace test' before they are given the go-ahead for publication: the cover should be clear, readable and stand out from ten paces away.

### 3.6 Aspects of cover design that detract from sales and/or the impact of a book

YUP London always tries to marry an intellectually appropriate jacket to each publication, but finds that despite market research and feedback from sales representatives, this does not always achieve predicted sales in the marketplace. It is certainly easier to judge the determining factors of a book's popularity, or lack thereof, in retrospect. Following a disappointing design for the jacket of one particular title (which managed nevertheless to achieve expected sales), Thames & Hudson Australia notes that it may avoid using white type on a pale background in the future.

#### *Typeface and text on the cover*

Indeed, most publishers consulted both in the UK and Australia had strong opinions about typefaces and their occasional misuse on covers. Readers must be able to easily discern the text on the cover: the title and author of the book should be readable; text should be clear and relevant to the content; text should contrast well with the cover image and should not include poorly used spot gloss.

In the 1970s, Graham Greene persuaded Penguin to republish his novels without cover illustrations, but disappointing sales meant that he was forced to admit that his name alone was not enough to sell his books.<sup>28</sup> The publishing team at the AGNSW has also found that using pure type and no image on a cover has been unsuccessful, and HHT designer Bruce Smythe agrees that a cover should include text and image but no overwhelming or unbalancing features (such as a large logo or details of every contributor). However, Stuart Jeffries takes a comic look at the current publishing penchant for lengthy titles (for example, Leanda de Lisle's *Sun Rising: Blood Greed and Intrigue - How the King of Scots won the Throne of England in 1603*, HarperCollins, 2005), and wonders whether '...there will come a point in 2009 when titles won't fit on covers.'<sup>29</sup>

#### *The importance of the spine*

Inside the book, the layout, and especially the gutter must be large enough to make the text easily readable, while Peter Barnes at HHT noted that for a book to have stature on the shelves, a book's external features must include a suitably wide spine to contain the publication's title and author name etc so that it can be displayed back, sideways and face out. Without easily readable details on the book's exterior, sales will be lost on the shop floor. Retail manager Peter Beiers at the QAG reiterates the importance of a spine and adds that landscape or unusually small or big formats are harder to shelve, display and hence sell.

Mark Rubbo at Readings bookstores also mentions that customers like horizontal text to be used on the spine as it easier to find what they are looking for. Other bookshop and distributor concerns include failure to include an ISBN barcode on the cover or inside cover of a book, and dust jackets that are easily damaged, hard to replace and the cause of unnecessary returns and loss of sales.

<sup>28</sup> — 'Books with Looks', *The Guardian Weekend*, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

<sup>29</sup> Stuart Jeffries, 'Shelf life', *The Guardian*, 29<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

### *Unforeseen complications*

The Papa publishing finds that it is hard to prove one element over another when analysing the success or failure of a cover. But publisher Claire Murdoch has one example of where identifying the problem was possible:

*'Sales of our very popular art diary dropped after we put an image of an old, crafted wooden woman's head on it. Previously it had been a more refined, conservative cover featuring a nice landscape or similar. Although we has selected the head initially as being more fresh and appealing, our sales team later reported that it was too 'scary for booksellers and their customers.'*

Eye catching designs are clearly worthwhile, but publishers should also be aware of being too clever. Phaidon's recent publication *Spoon* is a landscape format book with a formed steel undulating cover that not only scratches easily, but was difficult to display well in normal bookshops. The Australian distributor received returns as a result and if consulted in the future, would recommend that publishers avoid this example.<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, Phaidon's publication of Bernard Edmaier's *Earthsong* was published in Australia with five differently coloured covers (each using the same ISBN) so that customers could choose the most appealing option. But while the books are beautiful and have proved an innovative marketing tool, the choice of covers appeared to confuse some customers, bookshop owners and sales representatives, and a few Australian bookstores found that ordering it and dealing with customer queries was time consuming. However, it must be noted that despite this, the book was well reviewed and received and all of the booksellers I interviewed found that it had sold well.

### **3.7 Projected plans to change cover, design or format**

Following questions about which aspects of cover design enhance or detract from the sales success of a publication, I wondered what plans, if any, publishers had to adapt and refine publishing processes that have proved unsatisfactory or incorporate ideas or trends that have been demonstrably more successful.

#### *Standardised formats and series*

The MCA publishing team standardised different formats for their books a few years ago to ensure consistency across all exhibitions and to provide a guideline for curators planning forthcoming titles. They now have a stock template design and extent plan for leaflets, brochures and catalogues.

The HHT publishing team is currently trying to standardise the feel, look, format and style of exhibition catalogues and guidebooks in order to help sales representatives sell a broad range of titles in line with a more refined publishing programme. Powerhouse Publishing is looking to create series of books which will remain innovative, but maintain an overall 'look'.

Black Inc. would like to establish a series of formats. All anthologies are to be B+ format, non-fiction will be C format and their quarterly essay will be slightly bigger than A5. The intention is to keep to these formats consistently: feedback from their

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<sup>30</sup> It should be noted here that this book is also available in a paperback edition.

distributor suggests that bookshops appreciate series. The NLA will produce more monograph-based photographic books, is reprinting some of these in a paperback format and will look to produce more books for the trade in the standard A5 format. NLA publishing manager Dr Paul Hetherington aims to extend the series of small books covering non-exhibition topics that the library publishes, and will develop the Australian Lives series into digestible biographies.

Thames & Hudson Australia treats each book or series individually in order to experiment flexibly with style and format. It was with a view to creating a series including contemporary Australian artists with strong design principles, and with a clear view of the market in which the product would sell, that the *New Art Series* was conceived.

Although English Heritage has previously tended to fit titles into specific series - each with a specific format - the publishing department will in the future use whatever format is right for a particular title, whether it falls within one of the established series formats or not. The publishing team at the NPG will continue to treat each exhibition catalogue individually and avoid being formulaic in presentation. The gallery is planning a new building, and manager for marketing and development, Suzie Campbell, intends to celebrate this with a new series of publications, guidebooks and educational materials and is considering using a stronger element of branding across such future publications.

#### *Schedules and the marketplace*

YUP London has no plans at present to alter the way in which it designs books, whereas Tate Publishing would like to publish exhibition catalogues earlier and to a tighter schedule as well as refine the decision making process. HHA will continue to be adaptable and open-minded about cover design by constantly watching what is happening in the marketplace in terms of colour, style and the visual literacy of the target audience.

#### *Design and designers*

HarperCollins Australia aims to continue the hard work it has invested in improving production and design experimentation and would like to develop more working relationships with designers.

Creating competitively priced books with an individual style is paramount at UQP: general manager Greg Bain intends to continue to explore design and format possibilities and take advantage of improved print technology, paper stock and the potential finish of each publication in order that design should pay tribute to content.

#### *Distribution channels*

For the publishing team at the QAG however, design concerns change constantly, and it aims to increase distribution channels in order to showcase publication products, rather than alter the way in which the design process currently operates. For the publishing arm of the NMA, developing e-commerce capabilities and initiating

print-on-demand facilities for conference papers is one way it hopes to increase interest in museum publications.<sup>31</sup>

The NGA publishing team is interested in producing more commercial titles and book series that will sell well both in the gallery and via the trade. Project manager for content and display at AGWA, Corine Van Hall, would also like to increase the number of future publications produced in order to document changes to the permanent collection.

#### *Price expectations and premium publications*

Thames & Hudson UK sales and marketing director, Trevor Naylor, believes that customers entertain low price expectations in relation to illustrated art books, which could be a barrier to sustainable art publishing in the future. But for the first time in 60 years, Penguin Australia recently launched a new imprint, Lantern, which publishes premium illustrated lifestyle and cookery books.<sup>32</sup> Penguin Australia is prepared to invest in beautifully crafted books, following market research which suggested that customers would pay for quality.

It seems therefore that for smaller publishers budget restrictions affect the scope of any potential change to procedure but do not prevent change altogether. Arts Tasmania is committed to promoting Tasmanian artists by publishing one book per year indefinitely and IMA publications designer Katrina Stubbs hopes to secure more funding in the future in order to allow the Institute to publish one book a year of its own. The IMA specialises in self-publishing for artists and individuals and must normally treat each project individually to cater to the tastes of the artist or body in question.

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<sup>31</sup> For further discussion of print-on-demand, please see section 6 of this report.

<sup>32</sup> Jason Steger, 'A very Passionate Text Life', *The Age*, 7<sup>th</sup> August 2004.

Readers who have visited bookshops abroad will have probably noticed the variety of design styles that are apparent between countries. I began my research wondering if there existed any recognised formula that dictated the way in which a book's cover should look in Australia, as opposed to the UK. But it became apparent that rather than focusing on the intricacies of such differences alone, looking at other elements of multiple cover design provides a more interesting insight into how and why art and museum publishers choose book covers and how this differs from trade publishing:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of multiple book covers, for publishers, distributors, bookshops and customers?
- Can separate covers be used to draw in new markets or appeal to certain target audiences?
- Is format more important than design?

### 4.1 Differences in covers between countries

#### *International examples*

YUP has offices in the US and the UK, and finds that tastes in cover design differ between these countries and tend to be more pronounced in non-art related publications. YUP has noticed that in relation to its foreign co-editions for art and illustrated books within Europe, the Germanic countries are generally happy with UK originated design, whereas the French and Italians prefer to change the image to better suit their own markets.

Indeed, author Michel Faber's book *Under the Skin* has been published worldwide with varying covers, reflecting the broad nature of aesthetic taste between countries. Faber highlights a few of the more obvious cover distinctions:

*'Canongate's (UK) reissue conveys the spooky unease of the night-time scene; the Czech jacket sidesteps the problem of illustration entirely with a rectangle of pure red; the (Russian) cover is so utterly at odds with European notions of good taste that it's among my favourites.'*<sup>33</sup>

#### *The Australian market*

Much of the Thames & Hudson list is designed and created in the UK head office, but if the publication originates in Australia and is specifically aimed at the Australian market, the design process starts there. Laura Murray Cree's *Australian Painting Now* was published in Australia in 2000 by Craftsman House<sup>34</sup> and had a different cover from the UK distributed title. When the Australian print run sold out, it was deemed more economical to buy in the alternate UK version for resale, rather than reprint the Australian cover alone.

Some Australian publishers use the same covers on foreign titles bought in. Powerhouse Publishing have only done two co-publications offshore so far, but used the same cover in both cases. However, it is usually more expensive to buy design rights as well as the publishing rights. So, while some publishers may use parts or

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<sup>33</sup> Michel Faber, 'The Geography of a book jacket - Under the Skin', *Zembla Magazine*, Summer 2004.

<sup>34</sup> Craftsman House was an art publisher which was bought by Thames & Hudson Australia in 2001.

ideas derived from the original design - Random House Australia's edition of Sarah Macdonald's *Holy Cow! An Indian Adventure* uses elements of the UK and US publications, but has an individual cover designed for an Australian audience<sup>35</sup> - others prefer to design their own jackets to better suit the domestic market or fit in with other titles or series. Non-illustrated publisher, Text Publishing, regularly buys titles from overseas and will add new or different covers for the Australian market.

#### *Art and museum publication covers*

Museum publishing schedules are usually based on the exhibition programme of the institution they are based in. Creating co-publications with non-museum publishers can therefore be difficult to negotiate and nerve-racking to publish for both parties. Producing exhibition catalogues in particular becomes a project management issue in addition to an editorial feat. Multiple authors, curators, editors and picture researchers must be managed in order to keep to tight institutional schedules and coordinate with any other internal departments involved (Exhibitions, Development, Events and so on). So to manage in addition to this, any necessary coordination with outside publishers (especially if text needs to be translated) can be time consuming, stressful and expensive. Moreover, with limited resources in the museum sector, publishing teams are often small, under resourced and over stretched, compounding any existing problems with workload and deadlines.

When museums organise multiple venue exhibitions across various countries, joint publications can be arranged a long time in advance of an exhibition opening date. This facilitates schedules and allows distributors a healthy lead time. The National Gallery in London's exhibition catalogue *El Greco* was published in October 2003 in time for the American stage of the exhibition (the London show did not open until February 2004). YUP London sales and marketing director, Kate Pocock explained that 'this was ideal for the trade, as it gave us a really good advance run at sales and enabled us to achieve an excellent take-up across the board.'<sup>36</sup>

Covers are often identical across countries: the *El Greco* exhibition catalogue cover was the same in London as in New York (only the institution name differed on the spine). Museums and galleries organising touring exhibitions normally take turns to publish catalogues and the institutional tour agreements will include the buy-in deals for the other museums or galleries involved. Sometimes costs such as picture fees are shared, while on other occasions, a flat fee including all related costs (shipping, picture fees, printing etc) will be charged.

#### **4.2 When a book has more than one cover<sup>37</sup>**

As discussed in section 3.6, bookshops sometimes find that multiple covers of a book with the same ISBN can involve time-consuming administrative tasks. On the other hand, as a marketing tool, a second jacket can prove eye-catching. Susanna Clarke's novel, *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*, has two designs: both are black and cream and remain distinct but recognisable with inverse details for each cover.

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<sup>35</sup> It should be noted here that the cover of *Holy Cow! An Indian Adventure* was commended in the category for Best Designed Non-Fiction Book at the APA 51<sup>st</sup> Book Design Awards in 2002.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Clifford, 'National Treasures', *The Bookseller*, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

<sup>37</sup> For further discussion of when a publication can have more than one jacket, please see section 5.2 of this report.

### *Hardback and paperback editions*

Hardback and soft cover editions of a single title represent the most obvious example of using multiple covers and are very common in trade publishing. The British Library publishes hardback and paperback editions of its books simultaneously. Some museum publishers will print both formats for a blockbuster exhibition, but release the hardback through the trade, followed by the paperback at a later date. In order to distinguish between hardback and paperback editions, separate ISBNs are assigned, thus avoiding any confusion at point of sale.

### *Innovative approaches to multiple covers*

In Australia, the MCA published a book about two separate artists by printing half of the books' text upside down: the book had two covers and could be flipped easily on the shelf by booksellers. The NPG prints a second magazine alongside its booklist that is aimed at corporate sponsors, donors and friends of the gallery, and is also sold through the trade. The magazine also works as a crossover tool between the general audience and new target markets and is used as a room brochure for smaller exhibitions - during the *Australians in Hollywood* show in 2003 at the NPG in Canberra, the magazine sold as an exhibition guide with one cover, and was produced with another image on the front cover for Friends of the gallery.

### *Covers for specific markets*

For trade publishers, it is now possible to produce separate covers for specific market sectors. Titles with the potential to sell over 80,000 copies published at HarperCollins Australia can be produced with separate covers for trade and independent bookshops. HarperCollins Australia also notes that its recent publication of Janette Turner Hospital's *Due Preparations for the Plague* (2004) had an edgy thriller-style jacket as a hardback, whereas the paperback was redesigned to appeal to new readers and sold more than is normally expected in a second format.

In contrast, Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* was produced with separate covers for conventional literary readers and mass-market booksellers such as Kmart, Target, newsagents and airport retailers. First published by UQP in October 2000 as a \$50 collector's edition hardback and a \$30 C format trade paperback, the hardback sold out within three weeks and the paperback was reprinted in December and January 2001. In May 2001, UQP went on to publish a small, A format paperback (and subsequent reprints) and when Carey won the Booker Prize in 2001, UQP reprinted that edition a further three times before introducing a new sized edition of the paperback, the A+ format. As discussed earlier, they also repackaged Carey's back list titles in this new square edition. Another hardback edition with different binding and printing on the dust jacket was then issued, so that by 2002, Australian customers were 'confronted by an unusual sight: three current editions of an Australian novel. And that is not counting either the hardback first edition or the original paperback, which are no longer readily available.'<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Jason Steger, 'Carey creating a true publishing history of his own', *The Age*, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2002.

Demographics and retail price can significantly affect the book trade in Australia: a small population, large landmass and physical distance from Europe and the USA leads to expensive overseas freight rates plus additional high internal shipping costs which are often prohibitive to smaller publishers. Nevertheless, there remains a healthy local publishing trade, with eclectic imports encouraging a competitive market, with many English language titles to choose from.

Yet publishers should not presume there is a ready made market for any title. While the book cover is a selling tool, representing a marriage of aesthetic and commercial decisions, front and back list sales can be affected by any one or more of the following factors quite apart from the look of a book:

- The national and international market place
- Repackaging, rebranding and redesigning titles
- Tourism (especially for museum and gallery publishers)
- Film tie-ins
- Awards and prizes
- New books released by bestselling authors with sellable back lists

### 5.1 When cover or design restricts ongoing sales through the back list

#### *The marketplace*

Though in 2002, back list sales of Victoria & Albert publications exceeded those of the front list by 30 per cent,<sup>39</sup> this is an unusual situation. Tower Books in Australia finds that back list sales of the titles it distributes are weak, but it is hard to ascribe poor sales figures to cover design alone. Michael Bisits at Thames & Hudson Australia believes the marketplace kills a book before the jacket or cover does, while at Fullers Bookshop in Hobart, Clive Tilsley confirms that few titles are around long enough to date or affect sales.

#### *Rejacketing*

If first publication sales of a trade book do not match expectations, HarperCollins Australia looks for ways to relaunch and certain books may be re-released after 18 months with a new jacket if sales are disappointing as appropriate. Similarly, ongoing publications will be redesigned where the publisher feels there is still potential and it has recently repackaged its dictionary and thesaurus packages in order to revive the books and invigorate sales accordingly.

YUP London and Penguin Australia have also found that a new jacket can boost sales: Penguin Australia regularly looks at back list titles to evaluate whether a jacket is still working. Penguin Australia will focus especially on the back lists of best-selling authors (for example, Tim Winton) and will consider changing covers for all back list titles when any new books by such authors are published.

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<sup>39</sup> Peter Clifford, 'National Treasures', *The Bookseller*, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

### *Selling through stock*

For museum publishers, rebranding or redesigning a back list would be expensive and confusing for those consumers who already recognise a style associated with the institution. So the publishing team at the MCA aims to print and sell through most stock during the related exhibition in order to avoid the inevitable dating of a book and associated costs of reprinting with a new design or warehousing remaining stock.

Museums and galleries can use predicted visitor numbers - usually drawn up by internal departments - as a base from which to calculate an exhibition title print run. Feedback and advice from distributors, retail staff and sales figures for similar titles published previously will also play a role. But the repercussions of events such as the terrorist attacks of 2001 can significantly affect international tourism models and make visitor, and hence sales, forecasts less reliable. Institutional publishing teams therefore need to remain conscious of any fluctuations to tourism patterns as far as possible. When retail staff at the National Gallery's shops in London mentioned that an increased number of visitors were requesting books in Russian, the publishing team were able to respond and translate their mini-guide to the collection, *Masterpieces*, accordingly in 2004. Subsequent sales have proved this was worthwhile.

The NPG aims to print three years' worth of stock for any exhibition publication. So far, there have been no back list issues regarding stock, because many of their titles are distributed in the trade, are not time-specific, and have a life outside the gallery and subsequent to any exhibition.

### *Avoiding a dated design*

Museum publishers in the UK are faced with similar dilemmas and Tate Publishing will try to use a classical design across all titles, deliberately to minimise the dating of individual titles is minimised. Tate Publishing's Barbara Hepworth pictorial autobiography, for example, evokes the 1970s, but this fits the subject matter very well, matches current consumer demands for 'retro' products; it continues to sell so remains unchanged.

## **5.2 When books are re-covered or re-jacketed**

### *Reprinting, redesigning and rejacketing*

Several museum publishers consulted explained that the costs associated with changing a cover design would restrict them from making any alterations unless absolutely necessary. However, when Tate Publishing sells an entire print run, changes can be made to the cover or the exterior design if necessary, and the publishing team at the AGNSW will also take cover changes into consideration when reprinting: their Brett Whitely publication was recently republished with a different cover and is selling better than before.

Further to the success of *Unpacked II* at the MCA (see sections 3.2 and 3.5 above for further discussion of this publication), the publishing team is considering reprinting *Unpacked I* with a similar wooden cover in order to form a clearly recognisable series.

### *Film tie-ins and literary prizes*

Hardie Grant does not normally redesign covers or jackets unless a film of the title is released as paperbacks are hard to physically rejacket.<sup>40</sup> If an illustrated book isn't selling, it may be old fashioned and not suitable for recovering anyway. Random House Australia will also recover titles to tie in with movies: *Catch Me if You Can* and *The Notebook* are the most obvious recent examples here. Pandanus Books recently sold the film rights to Colin McPhedran's novel, *White Butterflies*: if the film goes ahead, a wrap-around jacket for existing stock will be produced rather than more costly strip and bind procedures or a newly designed reprint.

UQP and FACP also capitalise on publicity generated by authors and will reprint or recover books accordingly. When Kate Grenville won the Orange Prize in 2001 with her novel *The Idea of Perfection*, UQP rejacketed her back list in the new A+ format. Similarly, when Kim Scott's novel *Benang* joint-won the Miles Franklin award in 2000, FACP decided to change the cover. Although when this didn't sell as well as the previous edition, they reprinted a second time with a variation of the original cover theme.

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<sup>40</sup> While it is easier to strip and bind larger art-related titles than paperbacks printed on less resilient paper, the cost is prohibitive and most of the illustrated publishers interviewed would rather pay for strip and bind and then make a loss on sales of newly bound stock.

## 6 The future of art publishing

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Is e-publishing relevant to art and museum publishers? Can technology allow digital images to be adequately reproduced? As software and access devices change constantly and publishers struggle to archive data, is e-publishing a cost-effective alternative to traditional paper-based products?

The book is not obsolete, but paper is perishable and new markets are emerging in line with technological advances. Art and museum publishers in Australia and the UK are on the brink of transforming traditional publishing practice forever, and are showing every sign of embracing electronic progress in order to satisfy continuing consumer demand for illustrated text.

Moreover, continually changing tastes in art, and the interest generated by global blockbuster exhibitions are affecting sales of books and forcing publishers, booksellers and distributors to respond to constantly changing consumer demand at a local level. Far from being threatened, current publishing practice is vibrant and forward-thinking and seems certain to guarantee a secure future for illustrated publishers as a result.

### 6.1 The implications of e-publishing<sup>41</sup> on art, museum or trade publishing

In her 2003 report on publishing in American art museums, Susan F. Rossen looked at how publishers in the US are considering alternative ways of publishing illustrated scholarly texts without compromising high standards of scholarship and reproduction. Most of the publishers she consulted about the issue of e-publishing believed that books still constituted a valid format that would have an appeal and a market for years to come. Attitudes towards e-publishing were 'generational' with younger staff eager to create online publications, and older generations more reticent.<sup>42</sup>

For Australian art and museum publishers, however, the extent to which e-publishing has been adopted does not appear to be dictated by generational concerns. Publishing houses are most interested in resolving issues such as the implications e-publishing has for staff training, long-term funding, image reproduction quality, copyright, implementation costs and the long-term appeal of the traditional book.

#### *A commercial or a technological issue?*

While many of the Australian publishers interviewed believe that it is currently hard to make a profit from e-publishing, and that any future success of this medium will be a commercial rather than a technological issue, most have already embraced the concept and practice of e-publishing. Rather than looking to replace the book entirely, many of these publishers plan to use e-publishing to enhance current hard-copy publishing lists.

At the National Gallery in London, the publishing team is committed to e-publishing - as long as it generates profit to support the gallery in doing so. Text and image-based resources can already be adapted to make publishing products available, but

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<sup>41</sup> I have used the term e-publishing to define any form or means of electronically reproducing text and/or images which is not a traditional paper-based book.

<sup>42</sup> Susan F. Rossen, *Scholarly Publishing in American art Museums Now and Later*, 2003.

sponsors or co-publishers may be approached to help cover the cost of creating and covering expensive resources for digital distribution.<sup>43</sup>

### *E-components*

Thames & Hudson Australia has no current plans to embark on e-publishing projects, but explains should they decide to do so, concerns regarding reproduction quality and copyright terms would require immediate attention - new contracts for authors, artists and photographers would need to be drawn up, with royalty payments being altered accordingly. However, international Thames & Hudson publications accompanied by a DVD component are generally perceived to be successful and offer added value that especially appeals to the educational sector.

The publishing team at the AGNSW maintains that paper-based publishing is alive and healthy in Australia, and agrees that e-publishing has a role to play which will add to rather than detract from the traditional concept of the book. As at Thames & Hudson, DVD or CD-ROM components related to publications, can feed into themes and exhibition product ranges to increase accessibility to gallery collections and information. They can also help to promote a book and increase sales of hard-copy publications: e-products are a valuable teaching or resource tool and if professionally produced, can widen access to the normal 'coffee table' perception of the illustrated book or exhibition catalogue.

### *E-publishing as an academic resource*

Although three e-publications are already available from the Powerhouse website for free download (including conference papers, a lace exhibition PDF which was launched because of restricted budgets and schedules, and a series of aboriginal photos which could not be commercialised), Powerhouse Publishing believes that as the demand for access to online resources increases, libraries and academic institutions will lead the digital revolution.

MUP has already employed an e-publisher to ensure that academic information and publications can be easily accessed and sold remotely, and at the NLA (which aims to encourage public access, promote cultural heritage, preserve culture and contribute to the public dynamic in Australia), travelling exhibitions are also published online with free access available to the public. Dr Paul Hetherington does not envisage a completely book-free future, reemphasising instead the commonly-held belief that it will be mutually enhancing to have both hardcopy and online access to resources available in tandem.

### *A cost-effective solution*

By looking at the different ways in which books are published (according to their target market, the benefactor or the proposed budget) e-publishing can offer a more cost-effective publishing solution than traditional paper-based book products. The AGNSW publishing team considered producing a book on Chinese calligraphy and found the cheapest option was to publish a CD-ROM instead of a book. Likewise, at English Heritage the publishing team would like to actively use electronic components to develop their list and help control costs (especially in the area of not-for-profit

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<sup>43</sup> Tom Windross, *E-Publishing at the National Gallery Company*, 2005.

publications) and believes this will enhance their conventional publishing programme and a means to attract new markets.

The potential to deliver a wider range of titles at a lower cost appeals to all publishers. The MCA publishes its annual report via the museum website and saves money by only printing 50 copies, whereas the British Library publishing team is excited about the prospect of being able to produce a bespoke product which might not work as an exhibition or a book alone, but could in theory act as a virtual online exhibition accompanied by an e-book and printable by the customer.

#### *Print-on-demand*

However, NGV publications manager Philip Jago believes that print-on-demand facilities work for text-based publishing only. Denis French at the NMA agrees, suggesting that in order to increase access to a wide range of publications, the future of e-publishing must involve the development of high quality and low cost print-on-demand service.

NAA publications manager Angela McAdam is currently looking at print-on-demand as an option for specific titles such as research guides to the archive collection. Half of the NAA's saleable publications are already available for free download as e-books from the NAA website, but McAdam is keen to point out that print-on-demand is currently more relevant for smaller publishers (who would like to keep a wide range of titles in print but cannot afford warehouse and printing costs) than for high quality illustrated titles.

#### *Online access*

The NGA publishing team is of the same opinion and although does not yet use the internet for commercial publishing, is currently converting a collection of catalogues that is almost sold out, for online-only access. NGA policy documents and research material is held, as at MUP, for two years before being automatically uploaded onto the gallery website, as part of a government strategy to facilitate the sharing of information over the web. In November 2003, the NGA formally launched a publishing policy whereby they use a dedicated editor for web-based materials in recognition of the increasingly prohibitive cost of hardcopy publishing, while UWA Press already sells text online and uploads chapters of books onto its website to allow readers a taste of what's available in hard-copy: they have found that this enhances interest in their list, and consequently, sales of their books.

#### *New technology*

Illustrated and non-illustrated publishers need to remaining forward thinking and find new ways to look at content, and publish accordingly. For art and museum publishers, the development of new technologies such as e-paper,<sup>44</sup> non-reflective computer screens and other display devices for reading e-books, should mean that access to text and imaged-based content will increasingly appeal to educational and

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<sup>44</sup> Electronic paper is a display material which can store an image, is viewed in reflective light, has a wide-angle viewing, and is flexible and relatively inexpensive. Unlike conventional paper, it is electrically writeable and erasable, and could be used thousands of times. Electronic paper could be used as a traditional display and bound like a book, and when appropriate, electronics could be stored in the spine and updated at will to display different content.

leisure markets, thereby encouraging new target audiences, additional associated sales and an increased interest in arts and artistic collections.

Michael Bollen of Wakefield Press believes that newspapers and the television may have more of an issue adapting to the development of e-publishing than publishers themselves. Once copyright issues for online publications have been resolved, improved print-on-demand facilities are developed and a means to publish illustrated art books adequately has been secured, e-publishing may be able to enrich and thrive alongside traditional hard-copy publishing.

## **6.2 The implications for illustrated publishing of changing tastes in art**

### *Changing tastes*

At Thames & Hudson Australia, the artist Rembrandt was a popular subject for art books in the 1970s and 1980s but is now more difficult to sell, whereas books about Impressionist art and artists remain popular internationally, and in Australia, have been recently boosted by the blockbuster NGV exhibition, *The Impressionists: Masterpieces from the Musée d'Orsay* (which ran from 17<sup>th</sup> June until 26<sup>th</sup> September 2004). Surrealist art and books about twentieth-century artists are also popular, but tastes change constantly, and national sales and marketing manager John Dennithorne explains that Australian bookstores would be unlikely to carry a wide range of monographs or art-related illustrated books unless they were specialist art bookshops.

### *Art in Australia*

While it can be argued that the Australian book-buying market is more interested in Old Master European painting precisely because this art cannot be as easily accessed via Australian museums or galleries, it is also apparent in Australia that contemporary and twentieth-century art, and especially indigenous art is more relevant to national collections and cultural heritage, and therefore a more popular and sales-rich topic for art publications. The marketplace is fickle however and often museum driven. As long as the blockbuster exhibitions continue to draw crowds and international media attention, the market for illustrated publications is safe.

### *Contemporary versus Old Master art*

For the Australian distributor Tower Books, contemporary artists are harder to sell: general bookstores will only take a small number of illustrated art books (they sell few copies and are expensive) by well-known artists. By contrast in the UK, YUP London has found that whereas the strongest selling titles a decade ago focused on the Italian Renaissance painters and artists working in France during the nineteenth century, a significant cut back in sales of Old Master art books in favour of contemporary or twentieth-century subject matter has recently arisen.

### *Bookstores*

Readings bookstore in Melbourne was opened in 1969 and now has four branches around the city, making it the largest independent bookshop in Australia. Co-owner Mark Rubbo explained that the market for art books is not easy to cater for. Few illustrated titles become bestsellers or have significant discounts available to

bookshops, making them expensive for customers and booksellers alike. Moreover, the introduction of GST (General Sales Tax, or VAT in the UK) on books in Australia in 2000 took away the margin from book sales that booksellers were relying on for profit, explains NGV publications manager Philip Jago. A widely-spread domestic population and the distribution costs servicing such distant bookshops incurs, means that there is currently even less profit to be made in illustrated publishing in Australia.

UK Thames & Hudson sales and marketing director, Trevor Naylor, found that:

*'One of the biggest hurdles for sales of art books in recent years has been the reduced willingness of general booksellers to stock more expensive titles throughout the year.'*<sup>45</sup>

This situation is prevalent in Australia too: small discounts and complicated returns policies hinder the process of actually selling illustrated books: by only offering firm sale quantities, publishers and/or distributors are offering little incentive for smaller independent bookshops to stock their titles.

QAG retail manager Peter Beiers organises the art section of the gallery bookstore so that the main gondola of mainly face-out modern art books will draw customers in to the back of the shop where the Old Master monographs are kept. He constantly tries to find new ways in which to encourage sales of non-contemporary art and finds that museum publishing adds to, rather than constrains sales in this area. Beiers finds that limited editions sell particularly well, and as at Fuller's bookshop in Tasmania, sales of all types of books about Leonardo da Vinci have increased as a result of the latest interest in Dan Brown's global bestseller *The Da Vinci Code*.

#### *International interest in the visual arts*

There are timeless images that will always appeal and/or speak universally to the viewer, suggests author and publisher, Laura Murray Cree. But for the moment and in the foreseeable future in Australia, Murray Cree and many other Australian publishers consider contemporary art to be the driving force behind illustrated publishing. The boundaries between visual arts (design, fashion, art, architecture and photography) are merging, thanks to design and branding ideas evident in widely distributed media (especially magazines), and international interest generated in the visual arts.

Peter Shaw at Thames & Hudson Australia agrees and notes that the market for illustrated books is becoming more specialised and driven by the status, profile and fashion of artists and photographers. The market for selling art books in Australia is small, so publishers need to think quickly and laterally in order to compete with domestic and international English-language illustrated publishers, most of which are distributed in Australia.

The text, visuals and design of contemporary art publications can often be more design driven and less constrained than publications about artists or art movements which are already associated with a specific style (for example, Renaissance art). But the MCA publishing team does not think that interest in contemporary art will replace an acceptance of older art in Australia. There is still room in the market for both to coexist. Alasdair Foster, director of the Australian Centre for Photography (ACP) agrees that contemporary art grows out of and looks back to traditional art constantly,

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<sup>45</sup> Trevor Naylor, 'Art at the heart of publishing', *The Bookseller*, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

while at English Heritage publishing, historic images are used to complement more recent ones in illustrated publications.

While Caroline Wetherilt at the Hayward Gallery, London suggests that there will be an increasing interest in contemporary art and that current contemporary artists will become the art standards of the future, she also believes that the market for Old Masters and historical works will survive, especially if these subjects are treated in fresh and contemporary ways. Wetherilt notes that catalogues and books on established artists have always been some of the most successful publications for the Hayward Gallery.

### *Changing markets*

Mary Dalmau runs the Australian bookstore Readers Feast in Melbourne and believes that the market for illustrated books in Australia is changing. Ten years ago a typical customer was middle-aged, art-savvy and from a middle to upper income bracket. Increased access to art and information via museums, galleries and the internet means that today's customer profile is more diverse and made up from wide-ranging ages and social/economic backgrounds. Nevertheless, Dalmau insists on placing design books adjacent to art titles so that the young and old can see a link between genres.

### *A clear view of the customer base*

Rather than bookshops failing to respond to the competitive market, Dalmau claims that publishers and distributors spend too much money on creating lavish sales catalogues and too little on press and publicity: if they made more of an effort to create working relationships with bookshops, they might better understand their target markets.

Many of the independent bookshops I visited across Australia produce their own sales leaflets or newsletters to this end. Fullers Bookshops in Tasmania have a mailing list of 6500 and with the aim of promoting the book and literature to all customers, maintains a strong programme of local and international speakers, hosts reading groups and promotes forthcoming publications of all varieties.

Michael Webster agrees that successful illustrated publishers must have a clear view of their customer base and give equal measure to sales and marketing issues as to content and cover design. Unlike a good novel, readers are unlikely to give word of mouth recommendations about art books to friends, so the book must be appealing in itself and have the backing of other forms of publicity to ensure readers pick them up from the shelves unprompted. Blatant advertising doesn't seem to appeal to customers, but if more reviews were devoted to illustrated books in national newspapers and magazines, and refined branding was applied, sales may become more significant.

For art and museum publishers, Claire Murdoch at Te Papa publishing agrees. Collectibility, boutique book publishing and art tourism are closely linked. The success of future art-related publishing should therefore be more concerned about evaluating target markets and encouraging a greater interest in art in general, than deciding whether to focus on pre-twentieth century or contemporary art exclusively.

## Conclusion

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When writing this conclusion, I happened to read a newspaper article about Penguin book cover design that included details of the Victoria & Albert Museum's forthcoming exhibition entitled 70 years of Penguin Design (which will showcase 'some of the world's boldest, most innovative design').<sup>46</sup> Bold and innovative cover design, however, does not occur by accident.

Approaches to book design are varied and complex, often involving factors and processes that can compromise what might otherwise be a simple exercise. From budgetary concerns to picture rights, a designer's inspiration to an exhibition's picture loan list and from a publisher's communication skills to the physical accessibility of a market...designing and creating a cover is never straightforward.

Many of the publishers I consulted believe that the power to brief, determine and choose the final cover and design of a publication should not be restricted to one single party. The publisher has financial leverage, but valuable input can also come from parties as diverse as the author, editor, designer, sales and marketing teams, distributor and bookseller, not to mention the agent, and possibly even institutional directors, curators and consumers.

As I hope this report illustrates, it is not always possible (or advisable) to cater to the individual tastes of every person or department involved in the publication of a book. **Initial cover and design dialogue** presents obvious challenges. However, if it is possible for departments to communicate and cooperate, appropriate advice can be sought and given at every stage of publication. Commercial expertise, an awareness of target audience and/or potential competitors and a workable schedule are generally considered to be just as important as aesthetic appreciation and professional design. It would seem to follow that the person responsible for cover design needs to balance an awareness of these factors and input from other departments where appropriate on the one hand, and a refusal to allow this input to unduly influence decisions on the other.

Tate Publishing Sales and Rights Director, James Atlee believes that 'a sustainable programme of successful events is needed if sales of art books are to keep growing'.<sup>47</sup> Yet in order to achieve this, museum and gallery publishers must incorporate **external considerations** such as institutional branding issues (if they are affiliated in any way to a larger museum or gallery), feedback from booksellers, sales representatives and distributors and potential input from any corporate sponsor, co-publisher or other external body involved in publication. In an ideal world, these factors would affect content and design positively, but as institutions evolve to incorporate profit-generating enterprises, the final say over the content, design or format of a publication may be removed from the direct responsibility of the publishing team.

Industry-recognised **design** awards reflect original and forward-thinking design both in Australia and the UK. Whereas copyright restrictions and software costs present obvious obstacles, publishers remain optimistic and in many cases have reacted laterally to maintain high standards of book design. However, Lorien Kaye called for greater cooperation between booksellers and publishers in 2003 Unwin report, and it remains the case that a greater understanding of what helps or hinders a book's cover design might be achievable if communications channels between publishers, distributors and booksellers are kept open.

**Co-editions and multiple editions** of titles published in different countries demonstrate that domestic markets have clear ideas of what will and won't appeal to customers on the cover of

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<sup>46</sup> — 'Books with Looks', *The Guardian Weekend*, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

<sup>47</sup> Fiona Fraser, 'Seen the art, bought the book', *The Bookseller*, 14<sup>th</sup> August 2003.

a book. While this is more visibly pronounced in trade fiction and non-fiction book and cover design, art and museum publishers often work with several institutions to create exhibition catalogues which will appeal to a global market. Moreover, using the cover as a marketing tool can be effective when complemented with publicity generated by literary awards, prizes or film tie-ins. Publishers are also using **sales strategies** such as multiple covers to promote and capitalise on innovative design (with positive *and* negative effects) and draw attention to their books via mass market booksellers or independent bookstores.

Publishers with larger budgets may take advantage of innovative marketing strategies as well as distribution, sales and discounts with chain stores and other bookshops. But if smaller publishers are financially constrained, they can more easily develop relationships with local independent bookstores, encourage a more inventive and creative design, and quite possibly have less to deal with in terms of input from a number of departments regarding content and design. But as booksellers are keen to point out, illustrated publishers should work hard to seek new markets and satisfy continuing changes in the demand for art books.

In terms of advancing technology and the **future of art publishing**, the illustrated book appears to be on the threshold of a new era and publishers who expand their design horizons, maintain adequate training and in-house IT support and who exploit technological developments should be able to publish books that customers actually want to use and keep. Rather than an alternative to the book as we know it today, e-books - once they are made financially viable for small and large, art and non-illustrated and academic and trade publishers alike - may facilitate changing tastes in art and complement traditional hard-copy publications.

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## Appendix: Interviews in the UK and Australia (in chronological order by interviewee)

Name	Title	Publisher/Company	Country
Trevor Naylor	Sales & Marketing Manager	Thames & Hudson	UK
Emma Cahill	Managing Director	Snowbooks	UK
Gillian Malpass	Managing Editor	Yale University Press	UK
Robin Taylor	Publishing Manager	English Heritage	UK
Celia Clear	Chief Executive	Tate Enterprises	UK
Valerie Horsler	Publisher	English Heritage	UK
David Way	Head of Publishing	British Library	UK
Caroline Wetherilt	Publisher	Hayward Gallery	UK
Lisa Bateman	Media & Communications Coordinator	Sydney Opera House	Australia
Nancy Northrop	Sales Representative	Bookwise	Australia
Hari Ho	Designer	Freelance Art Production	Australia
Laura Murray Cree	Publications Manager	Sherman Galleries	Australia
Richard Smart	Publisher	Choice Books	Australia
Annaliese Cairis	Senior Designer	Art Gallery of NSW	Australia
Mark Boxhall	In-house Designer	Art Gallery of NSW	Australia
Anne Flanagan	General Manager	Art Gallery of NSW	Australia
Lucy Pickworth	Print Production Manager	Art Gallery of NSW	Australia
Richard Harling	Merchandising Manager	Art Gallery of NSW	Australia
Margaret McAllister	Publications Officer	Historic Houses Trust	Australia
Bruce Smythe	Senior Designer	Historic Houses Trust	Australia
Vani Sripathy	Publication Officer	Historic Houses Trust	Australia
Peter Barnes	Retail Manager	Historic Houses Trust	Australia
Malcolm Knox	Literary Editor	Sydney Morning Herald	Australia
Russell Storer	Curator	Museum of Contemporary Art	Australia
Colin Rowan	Designer	Powerhouse Museum	Australia
Julie Donaldson	Director	Powerhouse Museum	Australia
Victoria Sumegi	Publisher	Brandl & Schlesinger	Australia
András Berkes	Publisher/Designer	Brandl & Schlesinger	Australia
Michael Rakusin	Director	Tower Books	Australia
Stephen Goddard	Designer	Miles Goddard Project	Australia
Alex Miles	Designer	Miles Goddard Project	Australia
Mike Donohue	Former Head of Design	Museum of Contemporary Art	Australia
Christopher Snelling	Head of Marketing & Communications	Museum of Contemporary Art	Australia
Alasdair Foster	Director	Australian Centre for Photography	Australia
Janice Fewin	Member Liaison Manager	Australian Publishers Association	Australia
Rebecca Kaiser	Editorial Manager	Allen & Unwin	Australia
Patrick Gallagher	Publishing Director	Allen & Unwin	Australia
Paul Donovan	Sales & Marketing Director	Allen & Unwin	Australia
Lisa Highton	Publishing Director	Hodder Headline	Australia
Lou Klepac	Art Publisher	Beagles Press	Australia
Jenny Grigg	Designer	HarperCollins	Australia
Shona Martyn	Publishing Director	HarperCollins	Australia
Fiona Henderson	Head of Publishing	Random House	Australia
Ian Were	Senior Editor	Queensland Art Gallery	Australia
Judy Gunning	Head of Information & Publishing	Queensland Art Gallery	Australia
Peter Beiers	Bookshop Manager	Queensland Art Gallery	Australia
Elliott Murray	Head of Design	Queensland Art Gallery	Australia
Katrina Stubbs	Publications Designer	Institute of Modern Art	Australia
Greg Bain	General Manager	University of Queensland Press	Australia
Madonna Duffy	Managing Editor	University of Queensland Press	Australia
Eve Sullivan	Editor	National Gallery of Australia	Australia
Paige Amor	Editor	National Gallery of Australia	Australia
Kirsty Morrison	Publications Manager	National Gallery of Australia	Australia
Ruth Patterson	Assistant Director of Marketing & Merchandising	National Gallery of Australia	Australia
Dr Paul Hetherington	Publications Director	National Library of Australia	Australia
Karen Leary	Director of Content & Services	National Museum of Australia	Australia
Denis French	Production Coordinator	National Museum of Australia	Australia
Ian Templeman	Director	Pandanus Books	Australia
Duncan Beard	Production coordinator	Pandanus Books	Australia
Justine Moloney	Editor	Pandanus Books	Australia
Suzie Campbell	Marketing Manager	National Portrait Gallery	Australia
Pamela Clelland Gray	Education & Public Programs Manager	National Portrait Gallery	Australia
Angela McAdam	Publications Manager	National Archives	Australia
Lorien Kaye	Unwin fellow & Lecturer	n/a	Australia
Andrew Hiskens	Manager, Public Programs	State Library of Victoria	Australia
Mark Rubbo	Bookshop co-owner & Manager	Readings	Australia
John Dennithorne	National Sales & Marketing Manager	Thames & Hudson	Australia
Michael Bisits	National Operations Manager	Thames & Hudson	Australia

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publisher/Company</b>	<b>Country</b>
Philip Jago	Publications Manager	National Gallery of Victoria	Australia
Sophy Williams	Publishing Manager	Black Inc.	Australia
Sandy Grant	CEO	Hardie Grant	Australia
Mary Dalmau	Manager	Reader's Feast	Australia
Michael Webster	Lecturer at RMIT (Graduate Diploma of Editing and Publishing) & Principal of Nielsen BookScan Australia	RMIT & Nielsen BookScan Australia	Australia
Robert Sessions	Publishing Director	Penguin	Australia
Mary Callahan	Freelance Cover Designer	n/a	Australia
Melanie Ostell	Senior Editor	Text Publishing	Australia
Margaret Thompson	General Manager	Text Publishing	Australia
Tracy O'Shaughnessy	Managing Editor	Melbourne University Press	Australia
Jason Steger	Literary editor	The Age	Australia
Andrew Wilkins	Publisher - APBS	Thorpe-Bowker	Australia
Tim Coronel	Assistant Editor - APBS	Thorpe-Bowker	Australia
David Elgar	Program Officer	Arts Tasmania	Australia
Gail Cork	Program Officer	Arts Tasmania	Australia
Clive Tillsley	Manager	Fullers Bookshop	Australia
David Hansen	Director	Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery	Australia
Michael Edwards	Director	CAST	Australia
Tracy Allen	Tutor & Lecturer	Tasmanian School of Art (University of Tasmania)	Australia
Alan Cruikshank	Director	Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia	Australia
Michael Bollen	Publisher	Wakefield Press	Australia
Patricia Genat	Group Managing Director	Bookwise	Australia
Andrew Easton	Marketing Director	Bookwise	Australia
Antonieta Itropico	Publications Manager	Art Gallery of South Australia	Australia
Suzie Haslehurst	General Manager	Magabala Books	Australia
Ray Coffey	Publisher	Fremantle Arts Centre Press	Australia
Jenny Gregory	Director	University of Western Australia Press	Australia
Doug George	Public Programmes Manager	State Library of Western Australia	Australia
Ann Ousey	Publications Manager	Western Australia Museum	Australia
Claire Murdoch	Managing editor	Te Papa Press	New Zealand
Corine Van Hall	Project Manager, Content & Display	Art Gallery of Western Australia	Australia