

Pop-up books

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Abstract

Pop-up books are a special category of children's books, which contain different types of paper constructions. The books can be defined in the following way: "Mechanical books should look like ordinary books. Their success is to be measured by the ingenuity with which their bookish format conceals unbookish characteristics."*

The constructions in mechanical books can roughly be divided into three categories:

1. Flat constructions that are activated by pulling a flap
2. Three dimensional constructions that either partially or fully spread out as the book pages are being turned over
3. Sounds and optical illusions which besides paper are made of wood, different types of plastic/rubber, metal and electronic chips depending on when they are produced

The most common problems with pop-up books (id.if they have survived children's hands and handling) are mechanical damages. The consequences of mechanical damages are that the constructions either do not work properly or do not work at all. The reader will therefore not get the full experience of the idea of the book.

I will also divide the mechanical damages into three categories:

1. Damages caused by an excessively rough handling
2. Damages caused by normal wear and tear
3. Damages caused by construction errors

On two posters I will summarise the history of pop-up books and show examples of the three different types of construction and examples of restoration of different constructions.

How to bind and restore pop-up books differ from ordinary books as there have to be room for all the pop-up parts and as there are often hidden mechanical devices. However, that is a chapter by itself which I will not be dealing with here.

*From "The Reinier Collection of Historic and Contemporary Children's Books- Movable Books". Spring 1988- Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, London, p. 1.

Biography

Born in 1963 in Copenhagen. Completed apprenticeship and thereafter worked as copper printer printing etchings for several artists. 1991 Began making my first three dimensional, movable paper constructions. 1992-95 The Royal Danish Academy of Conservation, Graphic Department. Final thesis about pop-up books: "History, Construction and Restoration of Pop-Up Books". 1995-97 Employed as paper restorer at the Conservation Department of the National Museum, Denmark. 1997-98 I started my own workshop for copper printing and with Peter Lautrop, made the "Pop-Up Bogen" shown on an exhibition at Kunstindustrimuseet, the Museum of Design, Copenhagen, July- August 1998. Sold to the Royal National Library and the National Museum of Art, Copenhagen.

Since nov.1998: Working on a free-lance basis with pop-up constructions, paper restoration and copper printing.

Pop-up: Making pop-up constructions with Peter Lautrop for the PKA pension fund's annual report to be printed in 15.000 copies in May 1999. Awarded a grant for San Cataldo, Italy for April 1999 where I will be able to design new pop-up constructions.

Paper restoration: November 1998. Established a paper conservation workshop at Royal Scandinavia, the Copenhagen Porcelain Factory.

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