

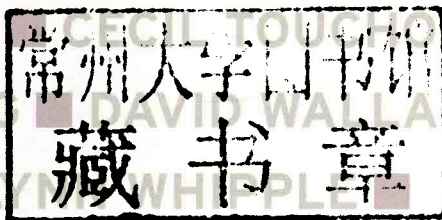
MASTERS

WORKS BY LEADING ARTISTS

COLLAGE



■ STEPHENIE LEVY ■ PETER LEWIS ■
JULIE MADER-MEERSMAN ■ ROBERT MARS
■ MICHAEL MEW ■ NICOLE NATRI ■ DENNIS PARLANTE ■
LYNNE PERRELLA ■ KIM PRINTZ ■ LAUNA ROMOFF
■ MATTHEW ROSE ■ BABY SMITH ■
JAMES MICHAEL STARR ■ BRANDI STRICKLAND
■ JONATHAN TALBOT ■ CECIL TOUCHON ■
MITZI TRACHTENBERG ■ DAVID WALLACE
■ DONNA WATSON ■ LYN WHIFFLE ■



Masters: Collage

Major Works by Leading Artists

Curated by Randel Plowman



An Imprint of Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.
New York

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Stephanie Levy
Botanical Still Life III, 2007

Cecil Touchon
Fusion Series #2540, 2007

Marty Gordon
Finger-Lickin' Good, 2008

BACK COVER
Lynne Perrella
Icon #11, 2008

SPINE
Robert Hunt
V Is for Van Gogh, 2008

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Masters : collage : major works by leading artists / [editor, Terry Taylor].
p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 978-1-60059-108-2 (pbk. with deluxe flaps)

1. Collage. I. Taylor, Terry, 1952- II. Title: Collage.

N6498.C65M37 2010

709.2'2--dc22

2009037365

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Published by Lark Crafts, An Imprint of
Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.
387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Text © 2010, Lark Crafts, An Imprint of Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.
Photography © 2010, Artist/Photographer

Distributed in Canada by Sterling Publishing,
c/o Canadian Manda Group, 165 Dufferin Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6K 3H6

Distributed in the United Kingdom by GMC Distribution Services,
Castle Place, 166 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, England BN7 1XU

Distributed in Australia by Capricorn Link (Australia) Pty Ltd.,
P.O. Box 704, Windsor, NSW 2756 Australia

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ISBN 13: 978-1-60059-108-2

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Introduction	6
------------------------	---

THE MASTERS

David Wallace	8
Mark Lazenby	16
James Michael Starr	24
Launa D. Romoff	32
Clare Murray Adams	40
Dennis Parlante	48
Robert Hunt	56
Lynn Whipple	64
Matthew Rose	72
Cecil Touchon	80
Julie Mader-Meersman	88
Donna Watson	96
Nicole Natri	104
Peter Lewis	112
Nancy Goodman Lawrence	120
Mitzi Trachtenberg	128
Baby Smith	136
Kim Printz	144
Michelle Caplan	152
Marty Gordon	160

Contents

Jonathan Talbot	168
Mary Emma Hawthorne	176
Cristina Clarimón	184
Robert Mars	192
Marilyn Landau	200
David Bircham	208
Lynne Perrella	216
Brandi Strickland	224
Stephanie Dalton Cowan	232
Stephanie Levy	240
Janet Jones	248
Hope Kroll	256
Ariel	264
Cindy Iverson	272
Liz Cohn	280
Joyce Hill	288
Alice Harrison	296
Lynda Frese	304
Mariella Bisson	312
Michael Mew	320
About the Curator	328
Acknowledgments	328
About the Artists	329
Index of Featured Artists	334

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■ MARIELLA BISSON ■ MICHELLE CAPLAN ■
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Photography © 2010, Artist/Photographer

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About the Curator	328
Acknowledgments	328
About the Artists	329
Index of Featured Artists	334

Introduction

THOUGH IT HAPPENED more than twenty years ago, I still vividly remember the challenge and the thrill of making my first collage. As an assignment for design class, we students had to create an assemblage of found objects using the principles of composition we'd studied that semester. The teacher brought in stacks of wallpaper books, assorted magazines, and boxes of ephemera for us to include in our work.

The process of choosing items for the project excited everyone in the class, and I soon began haunting the school library, looking at every collage book that I could get my hands on. I discovered the art of Kurt Schwitters, Joseph Cornell, Romare Bearden, and Lenore Tawney. Their work taught me that, through the right arrangement of key elements, the best collages present us with fresh ways of looking at the world.

That school assignment was the beginning of my enduring love affair with the wonderfully inclusive medium of collage—a genre of art that embraces just about every conceivable material and creative technique. I'm still intrigued by artists who are making collages in new and inventive ways. The form is more dynamic and diverse now than ever before, as today's artists boldly mix traditional and non-traditional methods and materials. Tried-and-true items like vintage papers, old photographs, and drawings remain the basic building blocks of most collages, but

more modern elements have also come into play, including computer-manipulated images and photo transfers.

Compared to other art forms, collage seems a democratic and unthreatening medium. It requires few tools or supplies, and practically anyone with an appreciation for found objects and a love of composition can do it. And yet the process of creating a collage is not quite as simple as it seems. What makes one collage more successful than another? Why do some pieces resonate with viewers, while others fail to strike a chord? Without a doubt, collagists do more than just glue items onto paper. The best collage artists have strong composition skills, a definite sensibility regarding the use of materials, and an innovative approach to the organization of visual components.

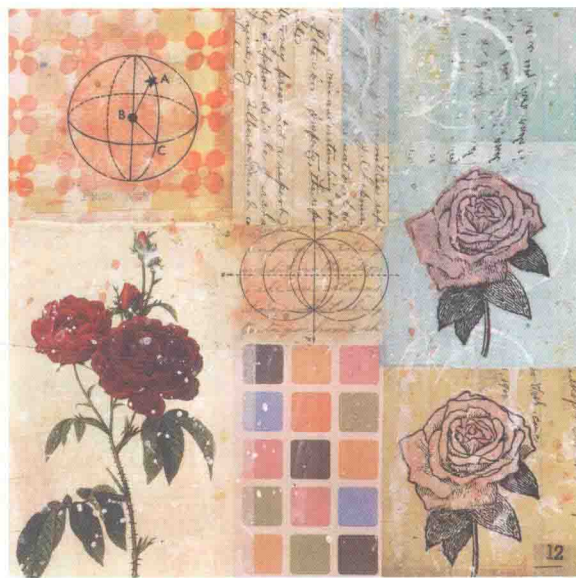
These are the qualities I looked for when selecting artists for this book. From a list of more than two hundred candidates, I chose forty collagists, each of whom has a unique perspective and brings something different to the craft. My goal in putting together a collection of their work was to present a well-rounded overview—a volume reflecting the range of forms, creative practices, and personal visions that characterize the medium today.

As you move from artist to artist, you'll see that the scope of aesthetic viewpoints is incredibly broad. The artists featured here have styles that are markedly individual.

Nicole Natri's striking minimalist pieces stand in delightful contrast to Alice Harrison's ebullient, visually jam-packed collages. Hope Kroll's compositions are precise and intricate, while Michael Mew's mixed-media creations are large and colorful. Heavily textured and lavishly painted, Robert Mars's stark renderings of the American West have a melancholy air, whereas Lynn Whipple's whimsical male and female figures make viewers smile thanks to her use of childlike sketches and clever juxtaposition.

Taken as a group, the artists are wonderfully idiosyncratic. But there are two qualities they all have in common: an innate sense of design and a passion for their materials. Each of these artists has an uncanny gift for visual choreography. They know how much is too much where a collage is concerned. They know when to add something more to the mix, and—perhaps most importantly—they know when a work is finished. These artists are also tireless collectors, hunters of antique books, unusual papers, yellowed photographs, and exotic fabrics. As collagists, they find the search for materials to be a creative undertaking in its own right. It's inspiring and idea-inducing, a phase of the artistic journey that awakens new themes and possibilities for work—a process that's almost as important as the actual act of composition.

This book showcases the work of some of the most exceptional collage artists working today, but by no



▲ **How to Draw a Rose** | 2007

11 x 11 inches (27.9 x 27.9 cm)

Collage on paper

Photo by artist

means should it be taken as a comprehensive survey of the medium. It represents a small fraction of the enormous talent that has made collage such a vibrant mode of expression, and I hope it awakens in readers a fresh appreciation for the form. Curating this beautiful and provocative collection was a privilege and a learning experience—a thrilling process of discovery. It's my sincere wish that you'll be as moved as I was by what you see on the following pages.

—Randel Plowman
Curator

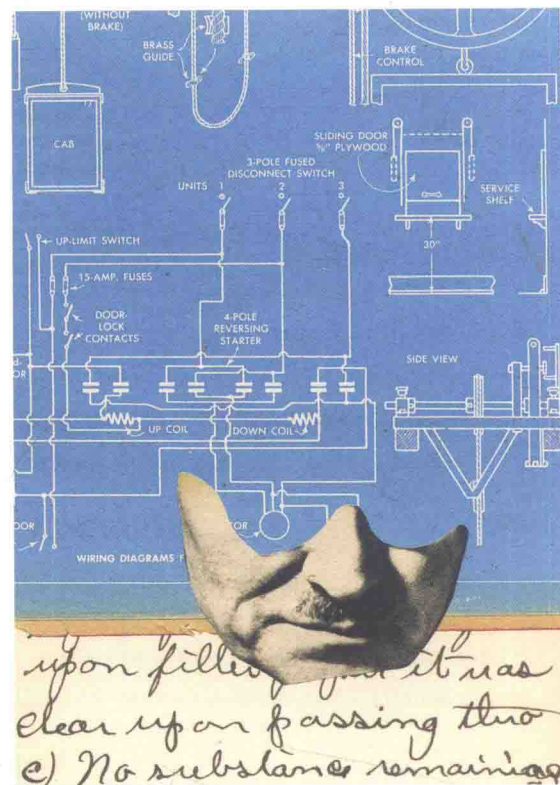


WALLACE

David Wallace

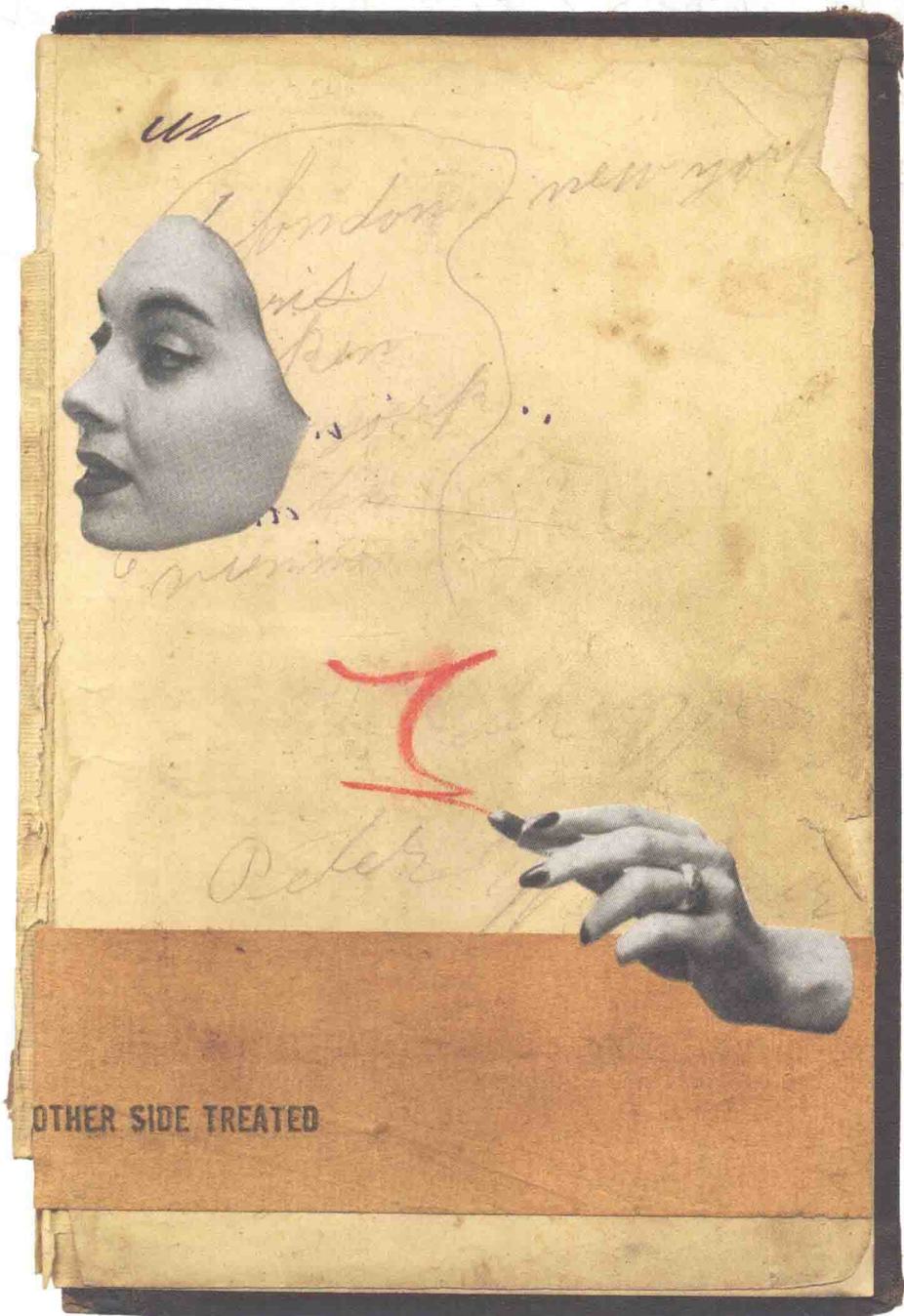
POTENT BLENDS OF IMAGE AND TEXT, the collages made by Pennsylvania artist David Wallace are studies in concentrated emotion. Wallace's work features disembodied physical fragments—fingers, mouths, and mask-like faces—and with these pieces he evokes larger-than-life sentiments. There are male figures whose expressions radiate tension and angst, and aloof, impeccably groomed women, who emit a cool sense of control. All seem caged, caught within the confines of the collage.

Wallace's compositions contain a small number of visual components, but he uses them to their fullest potential. He's an expert at drawing out the drama inherent in a few key items. Many of his pairings of unrelated elements seem beautifully organic, as when a woman's head looks as though it's emerging naturally from a penciled scribble. Other fusions—a man's face, red-eyed and open-mouthed, popping out from the fold in a piece of flowered paper—conflict, with results that are startling but no less successful. Wallace favors timeworn ephemera like weathered scraps of correspondence and bits of old ads. Through his gift for composition he uses these antique materials to make work that feels innovative and new.



No Substance | 2006 ▶

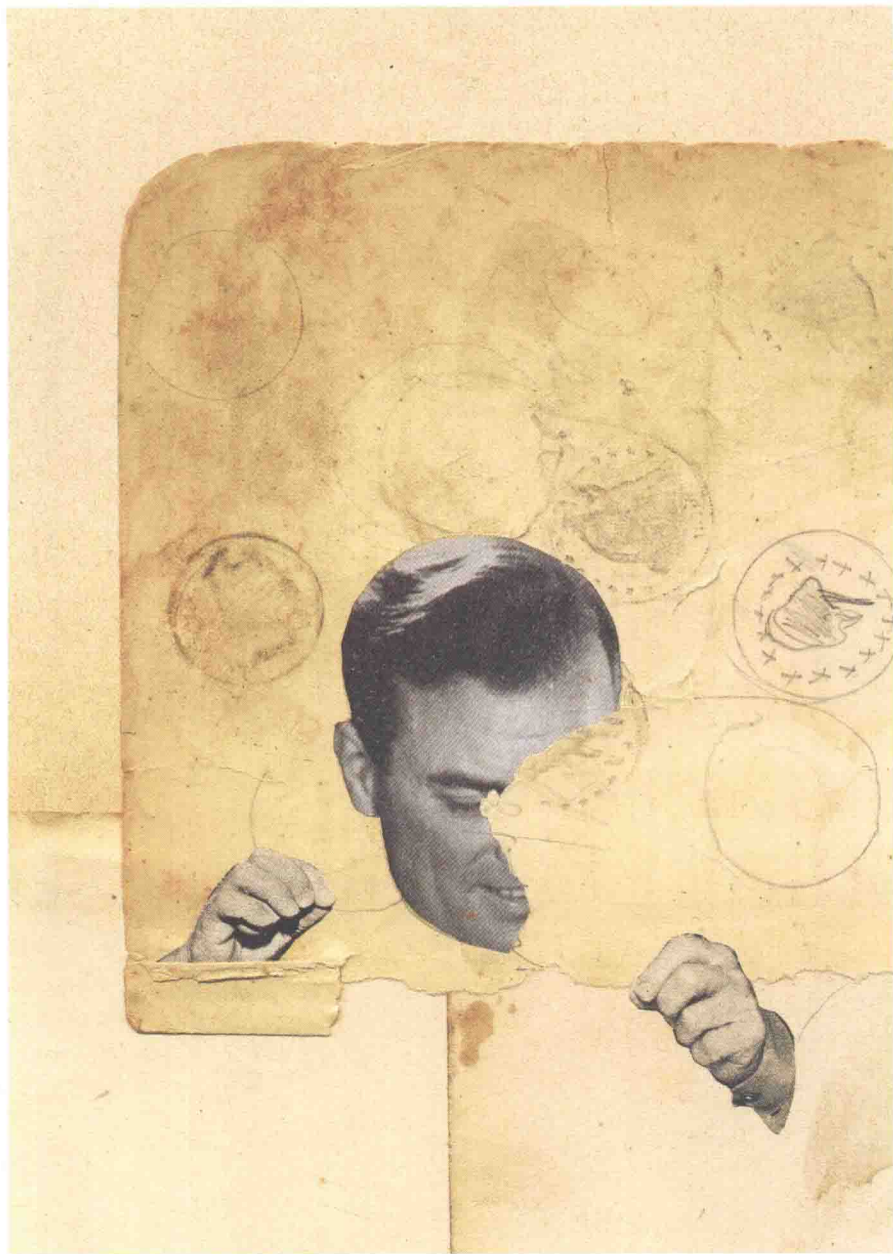
22 x 7 x 4½ inches
(55.9 x 17.8 x 11.4 cm)
Porcelain
Photo by James Prinz



Treated | 2007 ▶

7½ x 5 inches
(19.1 x 12.7 cm)

Vintage papers,
book cover; glued
Photo by artistz

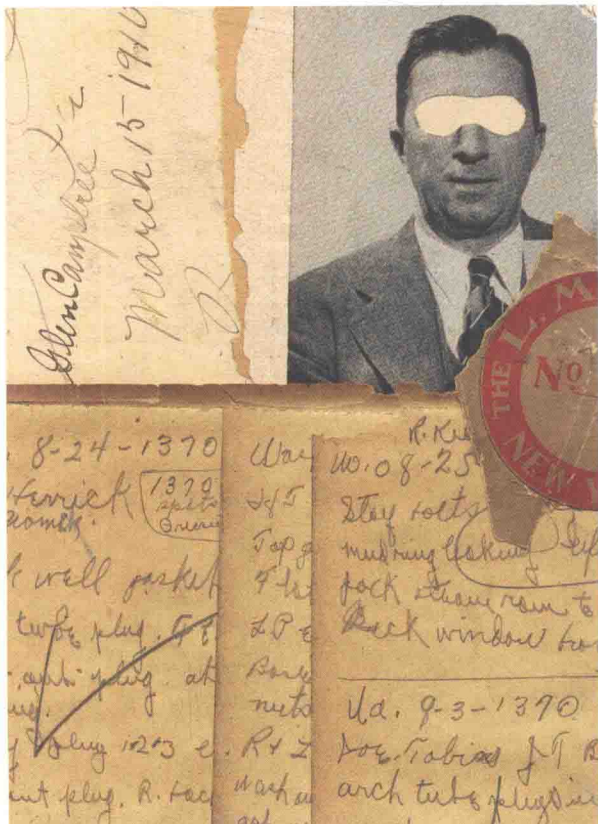


◀ **Spelled and Defined** | 2006

6½ x 5 inches (16.5 x 12.7 cm)

Vintage papers; glued

Photo by artist



▲ The New You | 2005

6½ x 5 inches (16.5 x 12.7 cm)

Vintage papers; glued

Photo by artist

“ I collect vintage photographs, water-damaged books, and old magazines. I love the way age can alter these materials, and I highlight their imperfections in my work. ”

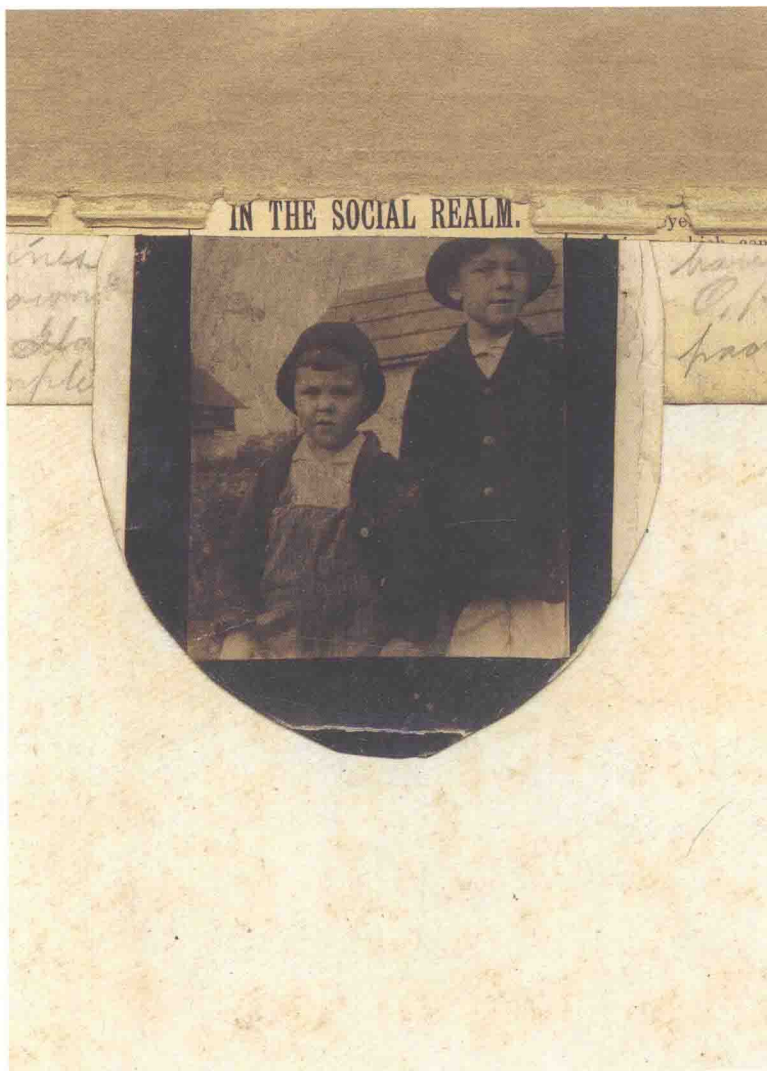


Paid | 1991 ►

6½ x 5 inches
(16.5 x 12.7 cm)

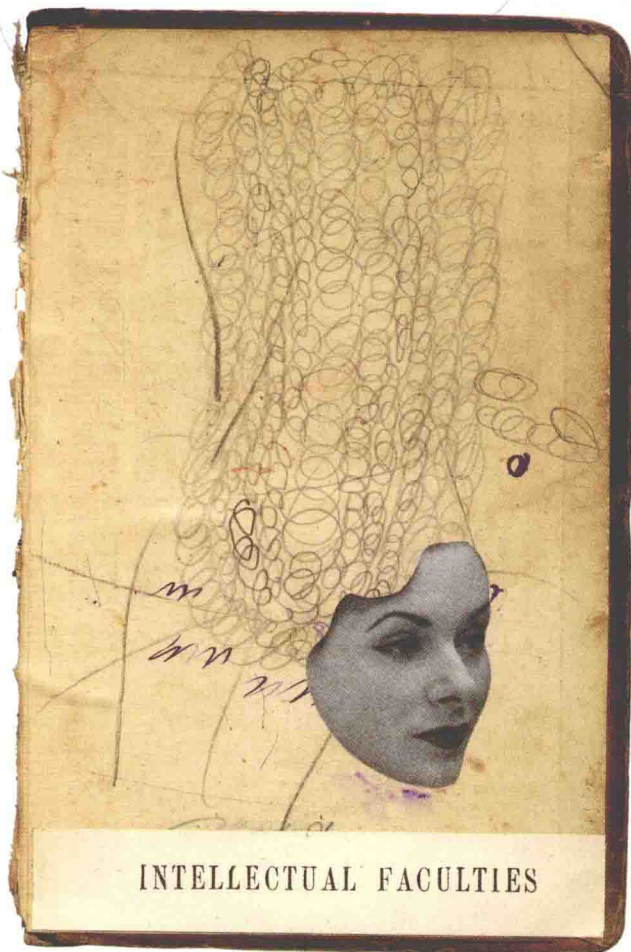
Vintage papers; glued

Photo by artist

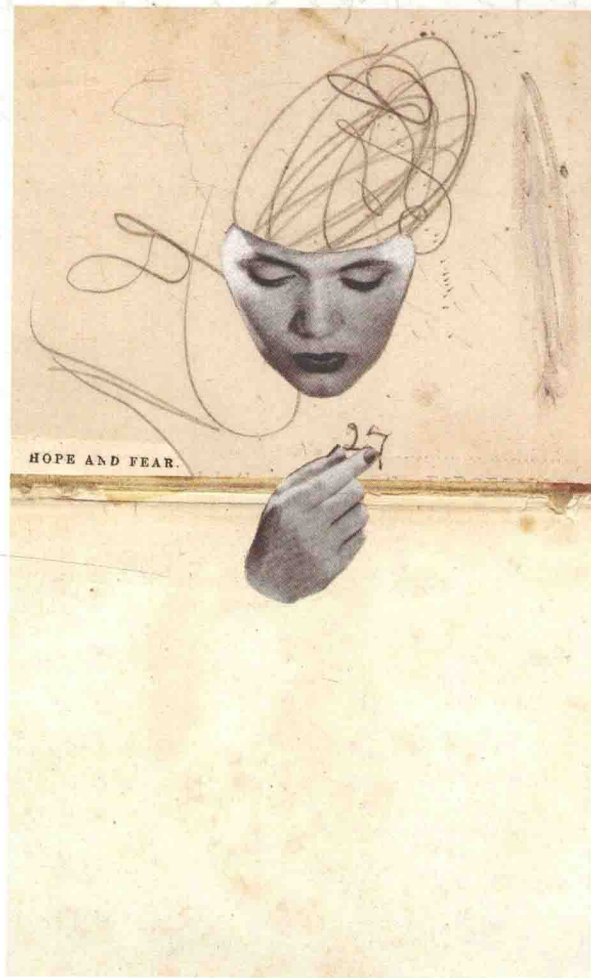


“ When I work on a collage, I move images around until something resonates. Some pieces just feel right together. Juxtapositions can create completely new meanings. ”

◀ The Social Realm | 2006
6½ x 5 inches (16.5 x 12.7 cm)
Vintage papers, photograph; glued
Photo by artist



INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES



▲ Hope and Fear | 2007
8 x 5 inches (20.3 x 12.7 cm)
Vintage papers; glued
Photo by artist

◀ Intellectual Faculties | 2007
7½ x 5 inches (19.1 x 12.7 cm)
Vintage papers, book cover; glued
Photo by artist