mid-Jan., I decide to recreate an early work *Marconi (1978)*, in order to retrace my steps and once again examine one's freedom to contemplate notions of anxiety. *Marconi*, a 2½" thick steel dog sits free of its chain, a chain free to slide the length of a 100' steel cable. Free to go the steel dog remains. What is it, then, that moves along this determined path but the movement of empathy, the viewer's empathy with the unseen bonds of the work's narrative. An empathy of shared ground, an empathy underscored by the viewer's own mobility, a mobility that can reduce the work to a thin slab of steel. It is this idea of shared but separate ground that is comparable to the distinction maintained by the animal world's lack of common language with ourselves.

I set Marconi up first on the Italian terrace, the 280' long 'stage' overlooking the mansion and the whole park. *Marconi* proves once again to be more strongly effective in its imaginative reach than most self-contained pedestal works, my own recent version included. And yet this success is like treading water, Marconi is old work recreated, a way of working that despite its continued attempts to share a common ground is in danger of veering into finer and finer metaphysical nuances. It seems to be getting harder and harder to hold the finely tuned balance between the animal's separate integrity and its receptivity to human projection, a nagging desire to create the figure remains, a figure that can cut through those locked gazes and confront those projections.

Checks and Balances

There is in the notion of apprenticeship, a sense of dependency, a vehicle to slow projection. With two weeks left before returning to Canada in mid-Feb. I rent an industrial forge equipped with power hammers. I also obtain the assistance of a blacksmith, a man of 54, apprenticed when he was 14. One can use the notion of the human figure as a way of describing an ideal, that is the life of the work. I have a forged figure in mind. The hammer we use has the capacity to strike hot steel with a force of some 560lbs of pressure with each blow, with the capability of many blows per minute. Having never forged on this scale before, it is immediately more difficult and dangerous than I presume. Beginning with what was to become the horned skull, I leave no tabs to properly hold the work, some 200lbs of steel plate, under the force of the hammer. Working together the horns are eventually drawn from the 2½" thick plate. It's all awkward, taking three times longer than necessary, and perhaps somewhat futile in its trophied form. Finally I ask the blacksmith to make me, on his own, a giant compass needle. Within the confines of the hammer, within the limits of the bar, he makes a six foot long compass needle and it comes out like a kind of ballet.

Returning to Yorkshire in early June I complete the work that will be installed at the I.C.A. at the end of the month.

Moving Towards Eden;

An installation in the two rooms of the Upper Gallery of the I.C.A.

Between the rails and moving from the interior room towards the daylight, the 2½" thick steel lifesize silhouette of a man, (a knife in one hand), carries a severed human head before him like a lantern. Behind this spectre of duality and spanning the track, rides a wheeled cart. Off to one side an aberrant feature, the heavy bellied silhouette of a thick steel rabbit.

In the other room, in front of the windows, a large guide dog (also a 2½" thick lifesize silhouette) is about to start down the tracks to the interior room. In between the two rooms, a small room off to one side contains a large forged steel compass needle, free to turn on a spindle, it sits next to a skull-shaped slab of steel with forged horns. In the corner is a twisted steel bar cut in two.

Mid-July in the sculpture park, the students from the college have gone home, only a small group of American summer-course students work in the theatre. Visitors to the park increase and early one evening a group of 4 young men, leashes in hand, move down one of the park lanes. On the loose three greyhounds sweep out for rabbits and return, a terrier for badgers remains on a leash. The largest man in a tank-top T-shirt carries a ½" thick steel bar. My thoughts go with them. I want my work to engage the nature of that evening walk with its violence through proxy.

New York artists' books

There is far greater focus, energy and input of resources for artists' books in New York than in this country. Less predictably, there are also buyers, both private and institutional, who are building collections either purely for pleasure or for archival purposes as well. Amongst others Franklin Furnace and the Center for Book Arts do much to help produce and exhibit these works. Printed Matter exists to sell editions, mostly low priced, both from their premises and by mail order, whilst dealers such as Tony Zwicker concentrate on original and limited edition books. Other galleries periodically put on group shows, and there are nearly as many gatherings to mark the arrival of new books as there are private views.

Chicago Books was started in Chicago in 1976 by Conrad Gliber, Jim Snitzer and Gail Rubini. All were artists needing to use a press but unable as individuals to own one. Between them they raised the capital for equipment and then wanted to make it available to others. This has evolved into a busy, efficient workshop in New York where artists are invited to experiment with the aim of producing work which has used the printing process in a unique way. The directors are anxious to use publishing in an 'art' context and mostly invite those who have not already made books.

Chicago Books publishes an average of between three to five books a year. They now receive funding from the NEA and from the New York State Committee for the Arts. The cost of each project is split three ways; the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and NYSCA grants go towards the cost of equipment and technical assistance; this amount is matched by Chicago Books which has an income from printing on a commercial basis; the artist pays for all raw materials. The latter is usually between $500 and 1500 depending on the complexity of colour separation etc. The artist then receives all but 150 copies of his/her book. These 150 go out on exhibition or to institutions and other subscribers. A subscription of $40 covers six books and all prints and posters produced during the period it takes to bring out the six. Subscribers join ahead of time, before the books are made, they include MOMA, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Met. as well as individuals.

The front window of Chicago Books' premises is made available for invited artists to use in any way they choose. Again grants seem available for this. Others are invited to come to make a poster at no cost to themselves.

Close to Chicago Books is **Franklin Furnace** where one can see a variety of books at one time which use all kinds of materials, shapes and forms and involve various degrees of spectator participation. One I particularly liked was Konrad Balder Schauffellen's *The Hairpins From Under My Bed*. It is a large book with clear, plastic pages on which are printed lifesize black hairpins. It has the depth and chaos of an under-the-bed collection, and each page has its own pattern with the pins acting like hieroglyphic characters. As the pages are transparent the pattern builds up through the book which holds a genuine black pin embedded on the final page, and posits the intriguing question 'Which one was first?'.

The **Center for Book Arts** on Bleeker Street was formed in 1974 by Richard Minsky. It runs classes, workshops and lectures on traditional and contemporary book arts and helps produce books with artists using its fully-equipped bindery and print shop. Its funding is mainly from the NEA and NYSCA although it once had money from a private foundation. Con. Edison is one of the corporations which now contributes, and the Center makes some money from its classes. Until recently it held ten monthly small shows and four major shows a year some of which went on tour.

He is a man dogged by mishap – a latter-day Harry Langdon. His decision to become a full-time artist came after he was hit by a lorry. This was not only because it jolted his awareness of the fragility of life, but because the insurance payments made it possible.

Despite all this he is actually quite successful. Whole exhibitions have been digs at museums and the gallery world. He made a practice of stealing door wedges from museums and galleries for an early exhibition entitled 'Twenty Four Small-Scale Art Thefts'. The New York Art Recovery Unit sent an agent down immediately. After investigations the detective offered to arrest Colp if he wanted the publicity.

Colp made his first flip book after watching the smoke stacks of the Con. Edison company from his studio at PS1 in Queens. He reproduced the shapes and sequence of the smoke with a series of tiny photographs bound together in a book.

The flip books also comment on art conventions and language. 'Ten Small Paintings' turns out to be a series of photographs of ten toenails being varnished.

Stephanie Brody Lederman also employs sparse wording to hit her target. Her stories work by ellipsis and she sees them as a pattern of jumps which the reader must put together. They are less comments on the art world than wry observations of social mores. She uses rubber stamps, ready made objects and ready made clichés. The style is deadpan and she is able to probe painful subjects without becoming sentimental. Much of the work is concerned with the ideals of romantic love and society ladies whose smart self-images mask loneliness, inhibition and sometimes writhing passion. Her humour is cynical; 'Watch out for court(ly) love. It's too short'.

A few characters reappear, sometimes developed from overheard conversations, such as 'the man in the closet' whom she is beginning to include. Several of the characters have merged into 'the ordinary man' and 'the ordinary woman', and it is the intensity of the everyday which interests her. Lederman has a disguising simplicity. She writes of a character who perceives herself as 'a woman of a certain age' and one book, concerned with the tension endured by a society lady in getting her make-up correct, is written on tiny powder puffs so that the pages are minute tablets. Her edition books, such as the 'Heart Times' series are skeletal stories told using rubber stamps and a child's printed handwriting, which tends to mask the sophistication of their thinking. There is much wordplay. The one-off books, using mixed media, are equally spartan and the inner and outer cover may form the entire volume. A contributor to 'Artifacts at the end of a Decade', she is represented by the Kathryn Markel gallery where she has a show in October.

Bruce Bacon and Lois Polansky have both been included in shows at the Markel Gallery. Bacon's work abounds with references to Magritte; clouds are an obsession as can be seen in his 'Cloud Specimens' – little pieces of cotton wool as butterflies might be. He began his present series of Sculptural Books in 1980 at the suggestion of Norman Colp. So far there have been twenty five variations all of which were cast from the same volume of 'Great Books of the World' which Bacon found in the garbage outside a bookstore on 18th Street. They rejoice in paradox and explore what Bacon describes as 'the natural conflict between reading and seeing; the left and right side of the brain.' The books look as if their pages might turn, but in fact they are solid. Each carries a ponderously absurd title to introduce the viewer to a visual pun. Bacon's work will be part of the French touring show of American Artists' Books which will arrive at the Beaubourg in 1984.

Lois Polansky discovered in book making an escape from being a print maker, the process of which had begun to bore her. The child of affluent but interfering parents, she had always kept secret diaries. Her frustration with the etching process and with her own past merged when she set about to destroy the image in her work.

Using plates made from an old family album, she had a lovely time immersing her family in nitric acid to effect 'the changing of the relatives' until they were barely recognisable. The books show the faces at successive stages of the destruction of the plate – she has given the respectable images a new posterity. The images have the boldness of woodcuts. Rather as a Victorian album provides a drawn or indented window for its subjects, so Polansky houses her relatives in an environment within her books. The cover is metallic giving the books a quality of a funeral cask or a cell.

When Markel remarked 'I can't sell these dead relatives' Polansky began to think of 'O.T.C.' (Over The Couch) subjects. Fortunately her treatment of flowers hasn't led to anything O.T.C. It led her back to the fibres used in papermaking. She began to produce very thick paper cast in a latex mould into which pressed flowers were incorporated. The book and image thus became the same entity. Her diaries had begun to be about her work processes and now she began to write them directly into the books themselves. She often uses scribble writing, partly a reflection on her former habit of secrecy in diary-keeping, she still regards books as a form of flashing – and partly so that the form should have ascendancy over the meaning. She invented her own pictorial alphabet. The ancient method of writing on palm leaves fixed together at a single point directed her to make brisé style fan books. The common fibres used in paper and cloth making have produced books which when seen together take the form of garments. A window which she did for Franklin Furnace consisted of eight accordion books which together make the shape of the sarong worn by Bali women. Anxious to avoid her books being treated like precious objects Polansky will sometimes add a scribbled text if a piece begins to look too beautiful.

In contrast Santa Fé artist Paula Hocks views books as objects which must be touched with care. She has gone so far as to make wrappers for hers made out of fabric 'to keep them comfortable inside'. A concern of her work is to create archival books to be handled, read and worked carefully. She wants to produce 'luxury scrapbooks' and to this end uses xerox on rich good quality paper and fine bindings.

Several of the books are summations of a single personality based on documentary evidence from newspapers and magazines. The Tate purchased her *A Life in the Day of Toyah Wilcox*. She hoped that Harold Prince would be interested in her *Evita*. He wasn't. But then she made it without seeing his musical, basing it on the record and the score. The book is wrapped in teal blue velvet – 'a sad colour in a minor tone' – which is fastened by a metal brooch 'Eva's tortured heart'. The image of this found object recurs again inside the book, which includes collage, xerox, photographs and text sometimes against a Pollock background. Hocks was fascinated by what she sees as the discrepancy between the splendour of the music and the limitations of Eva's personality.

The University of Alberta has recently purchased 'Ariadne's Thread and the Language of the Minotaur' which is a much more interesting book. Hocks describes it as a 'women's liberation retelling of the story of Ariadne'. Sometimes the text is her own, but often it is second hand like the xerox images, taking quotes from writers such as Beckett. Some of the images wrap around a page; often line drawings extend from the xerox images. She identifies the classical and the sentimental as the recurrent forces in her books, and is presently researching the Barcelona architecture of Antoni Gaudi for a new work due this autumn.

Paula Hocks is represented by **Tony Zwicker** whose apartment at 15 Gramercy Park, NYC 10003 is full of fascinating books, including those by her fellow-Swiss Warja Lavater who was over in New York this summer making a poster with Chicago Books. Tony Zwicker welcomes visitors by appointment (212 982 7441). Details of their subscription system can be obtained from Chicago Books, 144 Franklin St, NY 10013, and the Center for Book Arts is at 15 Bleeker Street, NY 10012. Norman Colp's work and many others can be obtained by the illustrated mail order catalogue from Printed Matter, 7 Lispenard Street, NY 10013. Brody Lederman's work is handled by Kathryn Markel Gallery, 50 W 57th St, and Polansky's by The Alexander F. Milliken Gallery 98 Prince Street NYC.

Cathy Courtney