

Allison Laytin Dalton

Librografia / Librography, 2020
paper, mixed media
Courtesy of the artist.



Artist's Statement of Work:

The book *Librografia* is a *home library* of collected pieces of Dalton's fragmented creative process, bound and shelved into organization. It is, in this way, like anyone else's home library; a self-portrait, though probably more inscrutable than revealing to anyone besides the librarian herself (we do like to think we can decode a person, or an institution, by skimming their library's spines). It is also a *travel library*, a charm that can be carried outside, set at bedsides, foreign and domestic, to ground the librarian when she wakes up feeling out of place: a Dalton's *Book of Days*.

This book/library perfectly expresses the component of variety, typical of the multiplicity of texts that a library contains, even in the reiteration of a book object. Each book "in" the book/library refers to a different theme just like the subdivision "by topics" of a library.

Everything is framed by Italian marbled paper, exemplary of the creation of the precious handmade book. The artist used all the paper material in her possession and sedimented over time, which perfectly exemplifies the concept of sedimentation over time typical of knowledge. Dalton's current practice originates in a youthful "collecting" and re-binding of bits of fancy end-papers from books she inherited from her father and grandmother. Unmaking and

re-making, patterns and collections, indices and catalogings, are still very much her thing. To piece together this library/book, she pulled from her own Italian marbled paper stacks (too precious and never before cut into!), as well as other handmade surfaces, hoarded book forms, and fragments of her writing. When open, it is two-sided like a library shelf, and exalts its endpages by baring start and stop simultaneously. When closed, each shelved book is enfolded in its origins—of Dalton's first creative obsessions, and of Italian artisanal book construction and collection.

Biography:

Allison Laytin Dalton is an assistant professor at Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles, where she teaches creative project-writing and supports students' writing and research practice in studio art and design classes. Her own work is mostly handmade book-based, and has been bouncing back and forth between fiction and non-. It has lately included an ergodic adventure e-book, a cut-paper stop-motion animation of one of her own short stories, and a paper story quilt/book recounting and depicting the anxiety dreams of a mother/artist/full-time worker through textile patterns. She has a fiction MFA from Columbia University and an undergrad degree in Creative Writing from UC Santa Cruz.

