

Book Presence
in a Digital Age

*Edited by Kiene Brillenburg Wurth,
Kári Driscoll, and Jessica Pressman*

**LEEDS
ARTS RESEARCH
CENTRE**



**LEARN TO READ
DIFFERENTLY**

**PROFESSOR SIMON
MORRIS**

OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:
Learn to Read Differently

Output Type:
C - Chapter in book

Book title:
Book Presence in the Digital Age

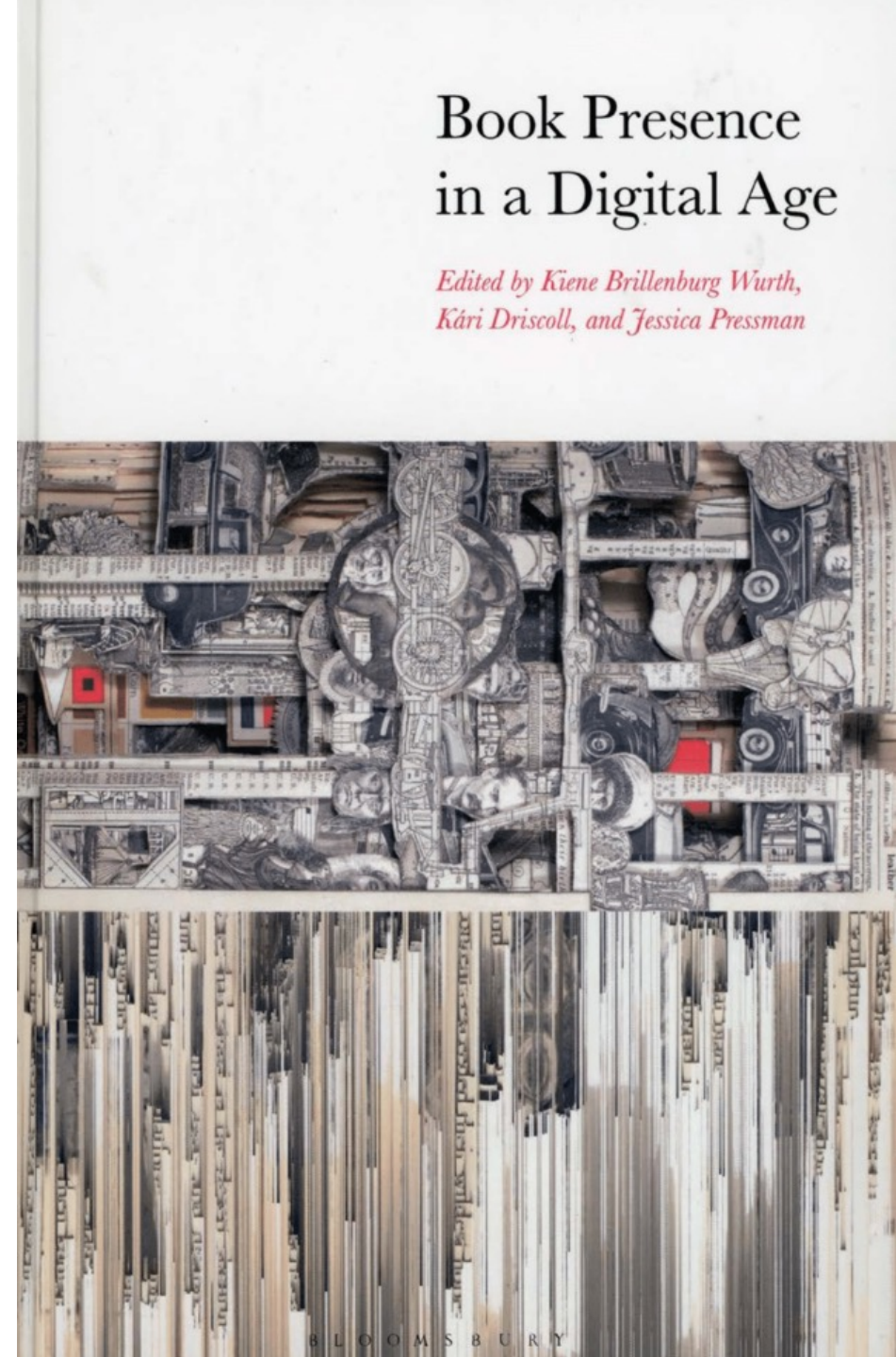
Publisher:
Bloomsbury Publishing

ISBN:
978-1-5013-2118-4

Year of publication:
2018

Month of Publication:
June

Research Groups:
Experimental Publishing



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

Professor Simon Morris was invited to be part of an international research group entitled 'Back to the Book', led by Professor Kiene Brillenburg from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. The research question investigated the complex relationship of materiality to virtuality, and of the analog to the digital in books. Morris was flown out to present at a three-day conference in the Netherlands and then invited to write a chapter for the anthology: *Book Presence in a Digital Age*, Edited by Kári Driscoll, Jessica Pressman and Kiene Brillenburg Wurth. The research investigation brought together leading scholars, artists, and publishers in the field and offers a variety of mutually enhancing perspectives on the past, present and future of the book as a medium. Morris contributed a thirty-one page fully illustrated (21 images) book chapter, 'Learn to Read Differently', pp. 163-194. The book was shared and disseminated through Bloomsbury Publishing Inc., New York. "Book Presence in a Digital Age is that rare volume that reads as both the culmination and anticipation of a field. It reflexively brings together some of the most compelling critics and artists thinking about 'the book' as medium and cultural artifact – and the individual conversations, explorations, and interventions that result would have alone made for a worthy volume. But the cumulative effect is much more than this, for collectively they articulate the questions that will inform scholarship and artistic practice for some years to come." – Rita Raley, Associate Professor of English, University of California.



Contrary to the apocalyptic pronouncements of paper media's imminent demise in the digital age, there has been a veritable surge of creative reimaginings of books as bearers of the literary. From typographic experiments (Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*, Steven Hall's *The Raw Shark Texts*) to accordion books (Anne Carson's *Nox*), from cut ups (Jonathan Safran Foer's *Tree of Codes*) to collages (Graham Rawle's *Woman's World*), from erasures (Mary Ruefle's *A Little White Shadow*) to mixups (Simon Morris's *The Interpretations of Dreams*), print literature has gone through anything but a slow, inevitable death. In fact, it has re-invented itself materially.

Starting from this idea of media plurality, *Book Presence in a Digital Age* explores the resilience of print literatures, book art, and zines in the late age of print from a contemporary perspective, while incorporating longer-term views on media archeology and media change. Even as it focuses on the materiality of books and literary writing in the present, *Book Presence* also takes into consideration earlier 20th-century "moments" of media transition, developing the concepts of presence and materiality as analytical tools to perform literary criticism in a digital age. Bringing together leading scholars, artists, and publishers, *Book Presence in a Digital Age* offers a variety of perspectives on the past, present, and future of the book as medium, the complex relationship of materiality to virtuality, and of the analog to the digital.

Book Blurb



Book Presence in a Digital Age is that rare volume that reads as both the culmination and anticipation of a field. It reflexively brings together some of the most compelling critics and artists thinking about 'the book' as medium and cultural artifact –and the individual conversations, explorations, and interventions that result would have alone made for a worthy volume. But the cumulative effect is much more than this, for collectively they articulate the questions that will inform scholarship and artistic practice for some years to come.”

Rita Raley, Associate Professor of English, University of California



“Operating in the force field between literary theory, comparative media studies, and new materialism, *Book Presence in a Digital Age* brims over with fresh, insightful, and nuanced explorations of the shifting contours of bookishness in the information age. By means of richly variegated points of entry, it demonstrates how print artifacts, far from hovering at the margins of the digital media ecology, have emerged as one of the defining laboratories for the elaboration of contemporary cultural forms.”

Jeffrey Schnapp, Faculty Director of metaLAB ,HarvardUniversity

Keywords:

Reading as art

Conceptual writing

Art

Links:

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/book-presence-in-a-digital-age-9781501321207/>

<http://www.informationasmaterial.org>

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