

FRAGMENTS FROM  
*THE ALTERNATE ENCYCLOPEDIA*

by  
SUE JOHNSON

MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS

JANUARY 25 - MARCH 3, 2001

*Essays by Andrea Pollan and Dr. Jordana Pomeroy*

## FOREWORD

The organization of such a complex and multifaceted project as *Fragments from The Alternate Encyclopedia* requires the enthusiasm and commitment of a number of individuals. To begin, I would like to thank Sue Johnson for her cooperation and extraordinary attention to detail in every aspect of this exhibition, catalog, website, and portfolio of educational programs. Rarely does an artist commit herself so thoroughly and graciously to the successful execution of every step of a complicated undertaking. For their tireless work and support, I would like to acknowledge Geraldine Brock, Executive Director of McLean Project for the Arts, Roxanne Vaughn and Sandy Treanor, MPA's Administrative Co-Directors. ArtReach Coordinator, Sharon Fishel, deserves special mention for her talented abilities to lead lively tours of this exhibition and design workshops for children of all ages. I am grateful to the Board of Directors of MPA for their continued enthusiasm and commitment to such innovative projects as this one.

For their generous funding support, I would like to thank The St. Mary's College of Maryland Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Christopher M. Johnson, and an anonymous private individual whose donations allowed for the publication of this stimulating catalog. My heartfelt thanks to TRW Systems & Information and McDonald's® Family Restaurants for their visionary corporate support of MPA's ArtReach Program.

For her ability to connect art across the centuries, I am deeply indebted to Dr. Jordana Pomeroy, Associate Curator at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC. She skillfully contextualized the contemporary cultural practices of Sue Johnson with significant historic female predecessors in her fascinating essay on women who played the simultaneous roles of scientist and artist.

Deborah Stalford and Mark Gulezian deserve congratulations for achieving this witty catalog design and its flawless production.

Because *The Alternate Encyclopedia* is an immense ongoing project dating back to 1995, its evolution and growth have been accomplished through the support and generosity in the forms of artist grants and fellowships from many institutions and foundations. My sincere appreciation goes to the following organizations and foundations that have encouraged Sue Johnson by providing her time and space to work and grants to continue creative work on the project: The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, New York; The American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; The Mac Dowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire; The Ragdale Foundation, Lake Forest, Illinois; The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Sweet Briar, Virginia; The Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, Schwandorf, Germany; the Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont; the Women's Studio Workshop, Rosendale, NY; and the Ox-Bow Summer Program of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Saugatuck, MI.

For their ongoing support in the form of Faculty Development Grants and other support services that permitted her to travel, install and document this project, I would especially like to thank St. Mary's College of Maryland, where Sue Johnson is an Associate Professor of Art. Additional thanks go to Helen Frederick of Pyramid Atlantic, Mike Johnson of the Fairfax County Government Department of Archeology, Annie Adjchavanich of ModernMona.com, and Alec Mackaye of The Phillips Collection for the loan of the vitrine cases. Thanks also to Chris Mattia of St. Mary's College of Maryland for developing the interactive web site for the exhibition.

It is a true pleasure to work with an artist of such encyclopedic range, insights, and talents.

—Andrea Pollan

*Exhibitions Director, McLean Project for the Arts*



*Self-Portrait as an artist-naturalist (Loplop's sister), oil on linen, 38 x 50 inches, 2000*

## HIDDEN WORLDS, OTHER VIEWS

by Andrea Pollan

Our recent immersion as a culture into the digital age has placed more information than ever before at our fingertips. Nonetheless we constantly face the dilemma of how to interpret and use that widespread data. What sources can we trust? What is fact? What is fiction? What is useful? We may deceive ourselves into thinking that these new technological information paradigms place us perilously at the edge of a brave new world. However, history reveals that we have operated under similar paradigms before.

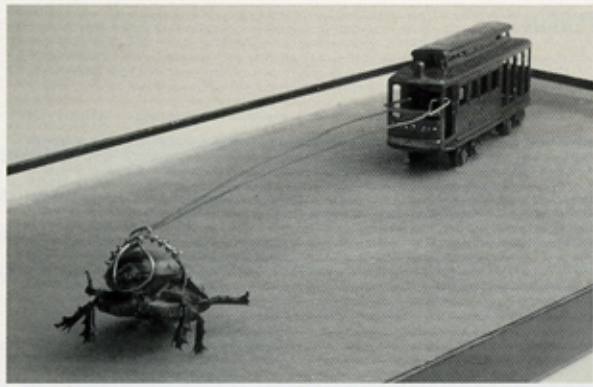
Such is the operating principle of artist Sue Johnson's *The Alternate Encyclopedia*. In 1995 Johnson conceived this conceptual umbrella project that imitates the categorization and presentation of natural history discoveries through botanical and zoological illustrations and 'actual' findings. The array of watercolors, prints, paintings, and objects on view in *Fragments from The Alternate Encyclopedia* prompts the viewer to challenge personal assumptions about the learning of information, particularly as it pertains to nature. *The Alternate Encyclopedia* mimics a private natural history museum filled with discoveries classified and arranged according to an overriding hierarchy of values. But whose values are these, and how were they determined? Johnson reveals the transforming relationships between nature and cultural context depending upon whom is doing the interpreting, representing and presenting.<sup>1</sup> The underlying wit that infiltrates her work invites and seduces us into a world that reveals startling

and humorous combinations of flora and fauna. She sees the project "as a postmodern extension of (Charles Willson) Peale's museum and the vast European collections representing exotic and bizarre plant and animal discoveries."<sup>2</sup>

Upon entering Johnson's fictitious museum space, the viewer encounters the founder's *Self-Portrait as an artist-naturalist (Loplop's sister)*. The painting is not unlike the famous self-portrait by Charles Willson Peale in which he dramatically lifts up a curtain to reveal the secrets and wonders of his museum, and it immediately cues the viewer to alter expectations. Here Johnson has fantasized a surrogate for herself as the sister of Max Ernst's bird character Loplop from his collage novel, *Une Semaine de Bonté*. Using the pictorial traditions of 17th century Dutch and Spanish still life painting, the artist arrays symbolic flora and fauna derived from a variety of



*Soothsaying duckheadtail crocodile, after Merian, gouache and watercolor on paper, 10 x 14 inches, 1996*



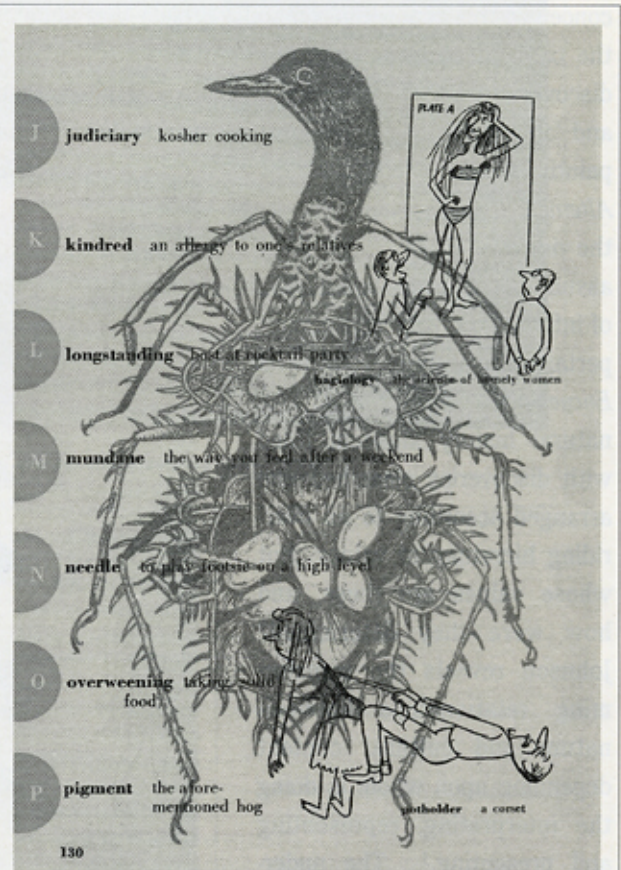
*The Hercules beetle who wanted to be a Clydesdale (re-creation of an experiment intended to test insect strength and endurance), miniature cable car, beetle and copper wire, 1996*

naturalist sources. For example, the source for her pinnated grouse head can be found in Alexander Wilson's *American Ornithology* from 1808-1814. In Johnson's *œuvre*, her bizarre juxtapositions and interest in transformative objects evoke seminal Surrealist works such as Meret Oppenheim's fur teacup and the whimsical constructions of Man Ray. A Surrealist at heart, Johnson merges the worlds of art and science producing an outcome that is both filled with fantasy yet could also prophesy a future landscape in this age of bioengineering.

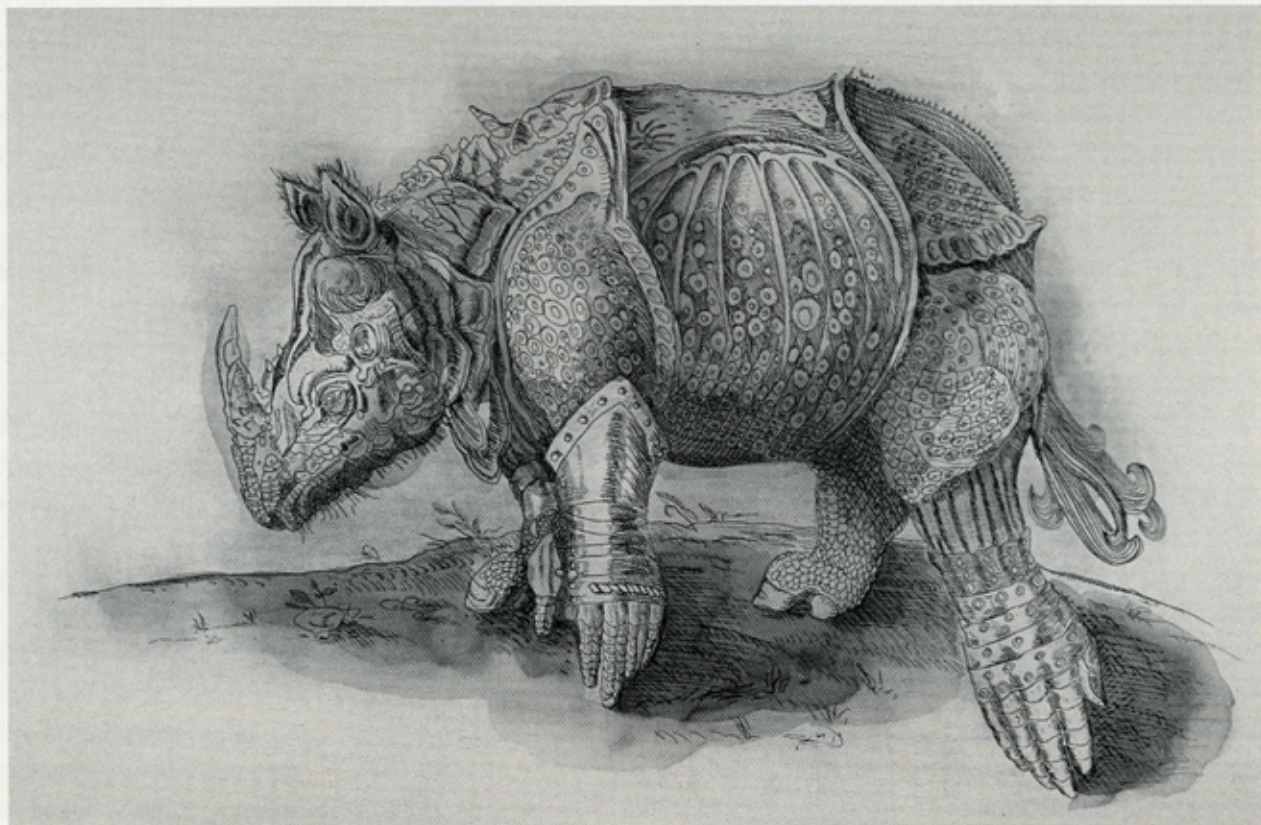
Her installation subversively questions such widely accepted and disseminated sources of authority in convincing yet counterfeit publications and museum displays. In a body of objects and inkjet prints called *Comparative Anatomies*, Johnson displays the print, *Comparative anatomy (shell/nest/food)*. Her selection of curved found objects is arranged analytically along formal principles yet betrays an underlying feminist commentary on the nature of domesticity. Johnson motivates us to look at the subtext of what we see exhibited. Another specimen, *The Hercules beetle who wanted to be a Clydesdale (re-creation of an experiment intended to test insect strength and endurance)* presents such compelling visual evidence of actual documentation that we are caught off guard, suspended between belief and disbelief.

Johnson draws upon the rich and varied traditions of medieval bestiaries, illuminated Renaissance manu-

scripts, herbarium pages, natural history plates published in historic encyclopedias, and scientific guides for popular use. In particular, she is influenced by the illustrations of a number of important artist-naturalists including Maria Sibylla Merian, Mark Catesby, Albrecht Dürer, Titian Ramsey Peale, John James Audubon, and Alexander Wilson. Many of these individuals were explorers who, fueled by cultural appetites for discoveries of exotica, developed new conventions for depicting nature. A major influence in Johnson's work is Maria Sibylla Merian, a naturalist artist working in the 17th century who defied all patriarchal expectations of her role in society. Through careful observation, she chose to portray the metamorphosis of insects from birth through maturity. She often placed the specimen in its



*Printer's Proofs (Evolutionary Paths), Page 130 overprinted with duckheadbeetle, Intaglio print on found material, 7 1/2 x 5 inches, 1996-2000*



*Reversed Rhinoceros with gauntlets, after A.D., intaglio print with chine collé and ink wash, 12 x 16 inches, 1996*

natural habitat, or "domestic environment," creating a new gender-based convention at a time when naturalists were focusing on other issues germane to the species. In her watercolor, *Soothsaying duckheadtail crocodile, after Merian*, Johnson quotes the naturalist stylistically and alludes to some of the astounding novel aspects of species she must have encountered in her wilderness travels.

It is interesting to note that not all naturalist illustrators observed nature directly from life. Some, like Audubon and Wilson, who observed live specimens in the field, also hunted and killed their subjects for the purposes of later study. In other cases, some merely copied (and thereby altered) other predecessors' renditions or worked from distorted preserved specimens of subjects they had never observed in life. As a result, the scientific visual evidence of nature was constantly rein-

terpreted and altered throughout history. Johnson asserts that the visual form of information outlasts the textual form of outdated information.<sup>3</sup> These images, however, continue to appear in historic books and prints thereby blurring the boundaries between truth and myth.

Johnson's work is as much about art and its history as the study of natural history and documentation. Her earlier oil paintings depict individual specimens blown up large. Convinced that this medium carried too much weight about the history of painting and the loaded nature of paint, Johnson opted to use the traditionally scientific media of watercolor, drawing and printmaking to render a mimetic documentary accuracy. Early works from *The Alternate Encyclopedia* purposefully focus on media from the pre-photographic era and stylistically exploit the seductive power of realism to construct credibility. More recent works, such as *Printer's Proofs*:

*Evolutionary Paths* and *New Images for the Stereoscope*, mimic 19th and 20th century photomechanical reproduction which has been so widely used to disseminate pictorial records of natural history and science. Johnson even imitates printers' misregistrations to exploit the mass-production they suggest.

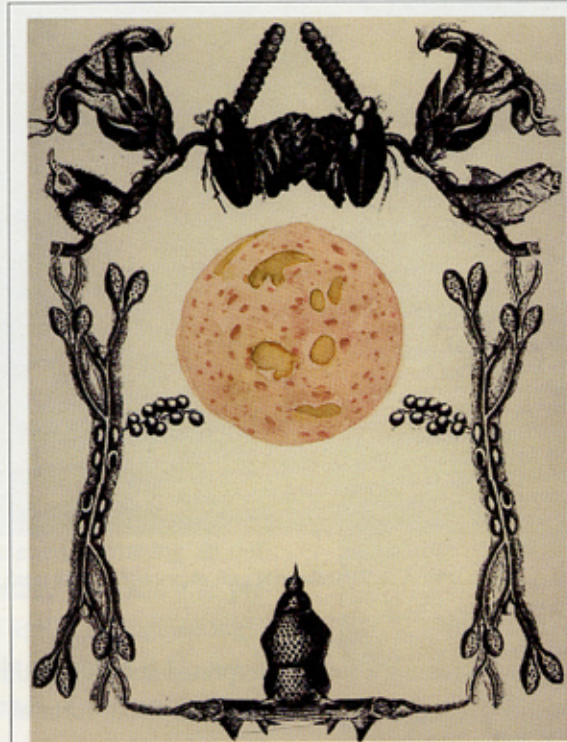
A touchstone image for the artist is Albrecht Dürer's woodcut of a rhinoceros. Her reinterpretation, *Reversed Rhinoceros with gauntlets, after A.D.* refers to how that particular image entered the world. In 1516 a ship of Pope Leo X, carrying the exotic cargo of a rhinoceros bound for the papal zoo, sank off the coast of Italy. The only remains were a sailor's rough sketches and handwritten notes that discussed the aggressive nature of the animal and its armor-plated skin. The pope commissioned Dürer to depict a creature he had never seen before. Dürer's remarkable woodcut was somewhat inaccurate but inspired many copies of varying quality by subsequent generations of artists. Johnson acknowledges that tradition of spreading faulty visual information in her own whimsically embellished version.

This rhinoceros image laid the foundation for the artist's conception of a world filled with hybridized and mutated flora and fauna. Johnson drolly pictures a genetic landscape complete with self-sustaining animals that grow their own food on their bodies. In *Accidents in Food Engineering*, she lampoons our consumerist culture's obsession with convenience by depicting genetically altered fauna that are ready-made meals for humans, such as *Mrs. Paul's fishstickfish with lemon garnish tail*.

Johnson presents this implausible biology as historic fact, often imitating the flat frontal or cross-sectioned views of zoological illustration.

*Specimen Collections* contain images of birds, beetles, and sausages inspired by a recent residency in Bavaria. Blending hybridized, fictional and actual images, Johnson fastidiously paints these gouache images in the middle of

an elaborate intaglio border. She alludes to traditional feminine practices of pressing flowers into herbal books or sketching from nature. Here she amusingly focuses on the German sausage, the *Wurst*, and ennobles its status to an iconic cultural specimen. In so doing, she shifts our awareness to the fact that all naturalist-explorers operated under their own cultural biases. Johnson found her curiosity piqued by the variety of abstract formal properties found in sausage cold-cuts, such as *Specimen Collections (cross-section of champignon wurst)*. These edible cross-sections inspire thoughts of micro and macro worlds.



*Specimen Collections (cross-section of champignon wurst), intaglio print with unique gouache and watercolor painting, 12 x 9 inches, 1999*

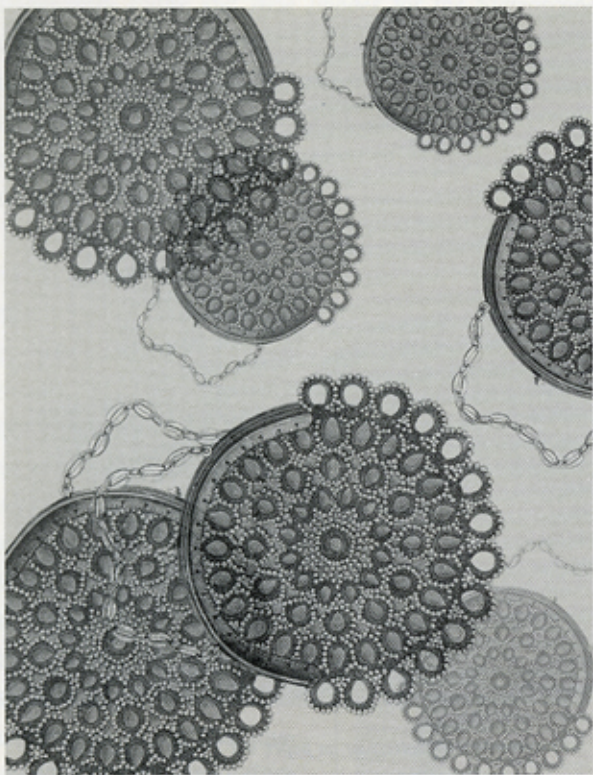
The fictional protagonist in Johnson's recent body of work, *Hidden Structures of the Universe*, leaves behind plates of surprising micro-details embedded in our macro-world. Inspired by the celebrated image of Robert Hooke's flea published in the *Micrographia* (1665) and Ernst Haeckel's *Kunstformen der Natur (Art Forms in Nature)* (1899-1904), Johnson employs digital means to document the groundbreaking discoveries of an anonymous female scientist. This latest chapter emphasizes Johnson's feminist critique of issues of representation, particularly in the practice of scientific inquiry. Pursuing



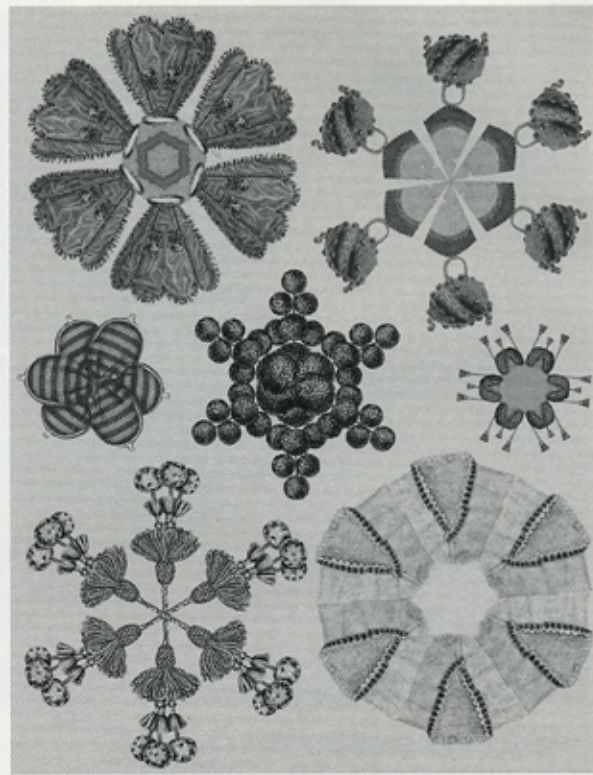
Accidents in food engineering (Mrs. Paul's fishstickfish with lemon garnish tail), gouache and watercolor on paper, 9 x 14 3/4 inches, 1997



Comparative Anatomy (shell/nest/food), digital inkjet print on Rives BFK paper, 8 x 10 inches, 2000



*Hidden Structures of the Universe, Beaded bag diatoms,  
digital inkjet print on Rives BFK paper, 10 x 8 inches, 2000*



*Hidden Structures of the Universe, Comparative study of snowflakes,  
digital inkjet print on Rives BFK paper, 10 x 8 inches, 2000*

a postmodern line of investigation, she dismantles our ideas of fixed realities. By inventing a world filled with genetic possibilities and discoveries of curiosities yet to be made, Johnson dares us to question accepted truths and look rather at whom is making those truths. Just as we have learned that we cannot really trust our senses, Johnson points out that established meanings are entirely mutable depending upon the context.

By blurring the real with the fantastic, she creates a magical world that demands a suspension of disbelief, yet she also draws a clever parallel to contemporary practices in art, science, and the entertainment industry. The 90's gave us a pageant of hybrids, clones, strange life forms, aliens, cyborgs, surrogates, and mutated and fragmented bodies. Seeing through Johnson's clever eyes, we have to wonder how close we have come to nature imitating art.

1. Laura Katzman, *Sue Johnson's Alternate Encyclopedia*, brochure for solo exhibition at the Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA. October 18 – December 23, 1996.
2. Sue Johnson, interview with Alexander Lynn, unpublished, 1997.
3. *Ibid.*

*Andrea Pollan is an independent curator and the Exhibitions Director of McLean Project for the Arts in Virginia.*

## THE SCIENCE OF NATURE AND THE NATURE OF SCIENCE

by Dr. Jordana Pomeroy

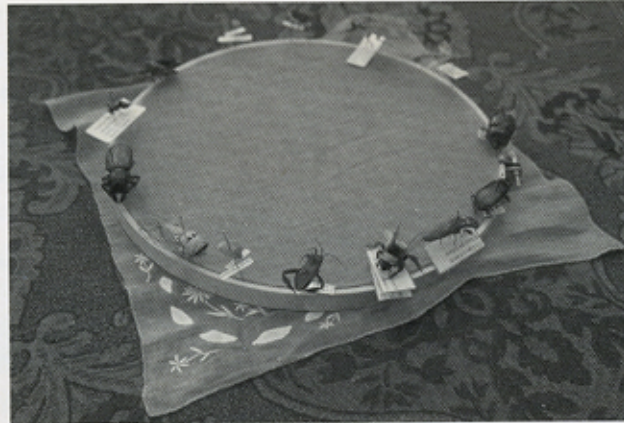
In her *Trésor de la Cité des Dames* written in 1405, the poet and historiographer, Christine de Pisan, implored her readers "to rest assured...that many great and noteworthy sciences and arts have been discovered through the understanding and subtlety of women."<sup>1</sup> Radical for the early fifteenth century, the concept that by dint of their sex women are closer to nature, maintained a powerful currency through the nineteenth century. By the Victorian era, the categories of "women" and "nature" were understood as oppositions to those of "men" and "mind."<sup>2</sup> If women have historically stood on the sidelines with regard to natural history (and not always willingly so), their contributions to discovering what Sue Johnson calls the "hidden structures of the universe" have had a tremendous impact on the development of science as a formal academic discipline. With her "Fragments" from *The Alternate Encyclopedia* and *Hidden Structures of the Universe*, Johnson has set about the task of not only using a familiar visual vocabulary to create a new visual world but also of mimicking the process through which a revisionist history is constructed.

In her prologue to the *Hidden Structures of the Universe*, Johnson lays bare the barriers women have encountered to having their accomplishments sanctioned, recognized, and added to the annals of history. For *Hidden Structures of the Universe*, Johnson posits a nineteenth-century woman author and illustrator whose identity is cloaked in mystery. A possible student of the Swiss-American naturalist Louis Agassiz (1807-1873),

this fictitious scientific illustrator's engravings display the influence of work by Anna Atkins (1799-1871), a British collector of seaweed. Atkins produced the first publication on natural history using photographic illustration. Although Atkins's father was a librarian and keeper at the British Museum of Natural History, Atkins herself lacked a solid background in scientific methodology. Atkins artfully presented photograms of her seaweeds in her publication of 1843, *British Algae*, but neglected to note the locations where she collected the specimens, thus rendering her investigations useless to the professional scientific community.<sup>3</sup> Unlike Atkins, Johnson's fictitious illustrator seems to have been educated in scientific methodology as she was "promptly dismissed" from her mentor's laboratory

after presenting her discoveries to him. Without the support of her mentor, she fell into oblivion, as did the bulk of her research. All that remains is a corpus of images that, as her handwritten notes indicate, illustrates her research into the underlying structure of the universe. Rendered moot by the absence of published text, these prints (like Atkins's mesmerizing cyanotypes) hint at a world revealed that we no longer possess the language to interpret.

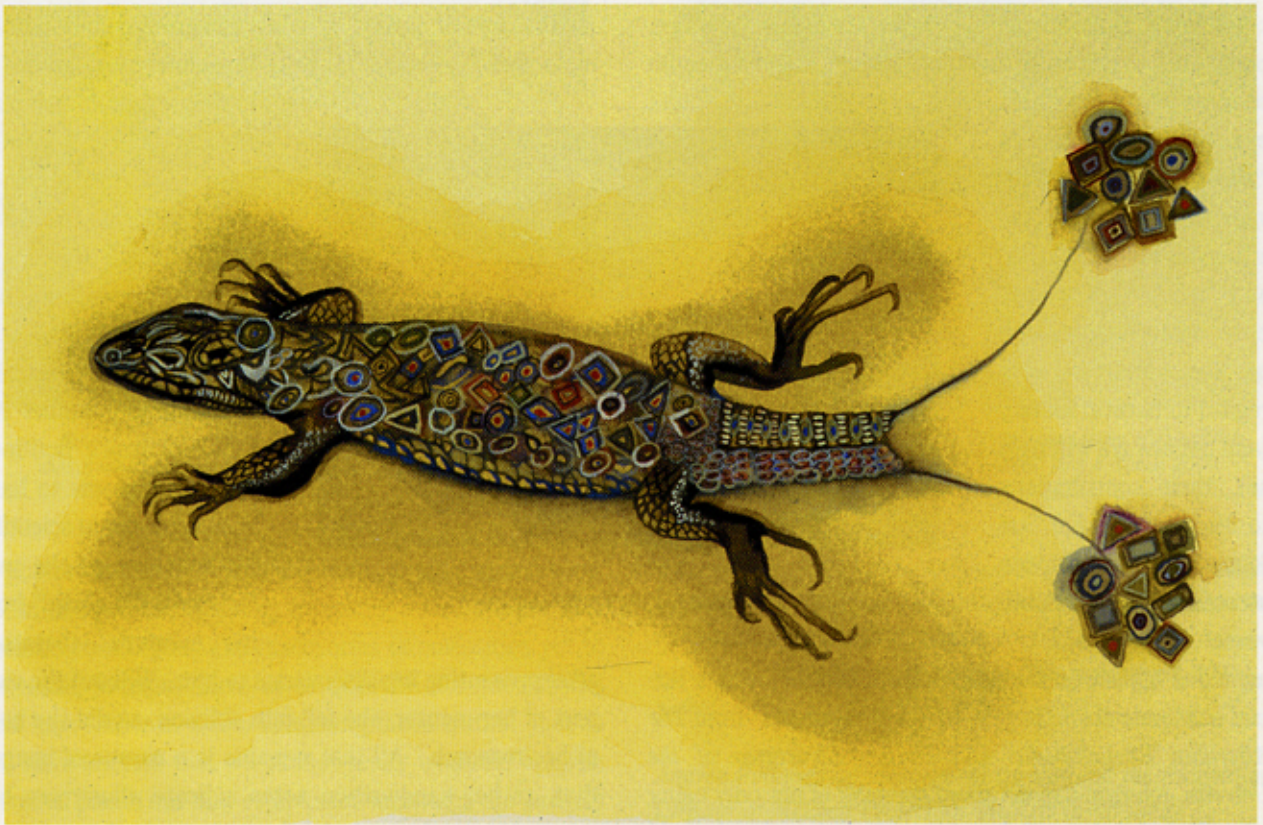
This anonymous woman scientist's fall from grace functions as an underlying theme of *Hidden Structures of the Universe*. Like Icarus who was cast back down to earth for his hubris in trying to fly to the sun, the creator of *Hidden Structures of the Universe* was exiled from the laboratory. Her sin lay in her discovery that the



*Young Girl's Bug Collection, circa 1880, embroidery frame and labeled specimens, 10 x 10 inches, 1996*

mysteries of the universe are encoded in traditional symbols of women's culture (such as corsets, fans, and furs). Although women have historically functioned as collectors, observers, and illustrators, men have performed the intellectual synthesis, resulting in histories that reveal a masculine bias. Johnson's assemblage entitled *Young Girl's Bug Collection* (circa 1880), a component of *The Alternate Encyclopedia*, epitomizes this gendered disparity.

Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717) was one of the first women to combine successfully the world of embroidery with that of entomology. During her lifetime, Merian received accolades from the scientific community for her research into insect life. Born in Frankfurt, Germany to a family of leading artists and engravers, Merian began her career as a painter of still lifes. Merian's stepfather, Jacob Marrel, was a well-established still-life



Audubon's lizard with Abstract Expressionist tail (after Lee Krasner), gouache and watercolor on paper, 9 x 14 inches, 1997

A grouping of insects on an embroidery hoop, the *Young Girl's Bug Collection*, corporealizes the accomplishments of well-bred girls (they will excel in needlework) as well as their past-times (collecting insects). That they should aim to differentiate and categorize the insect species, for example, would take them into a realm generally reserved for boys.

painter who studied under Georg Flegel and Jan Davidz. de Heem. Her *Neues Blumen Buch*, a three volume work comprised of hand-painted detailed engravings of garden flowers, provided designs for embroidery patterns and possibly for painting on parchment and fabrics.

From her first major enterprise, Merian easily made the leap to observing silkworms. *Der Raupen wunderbare*

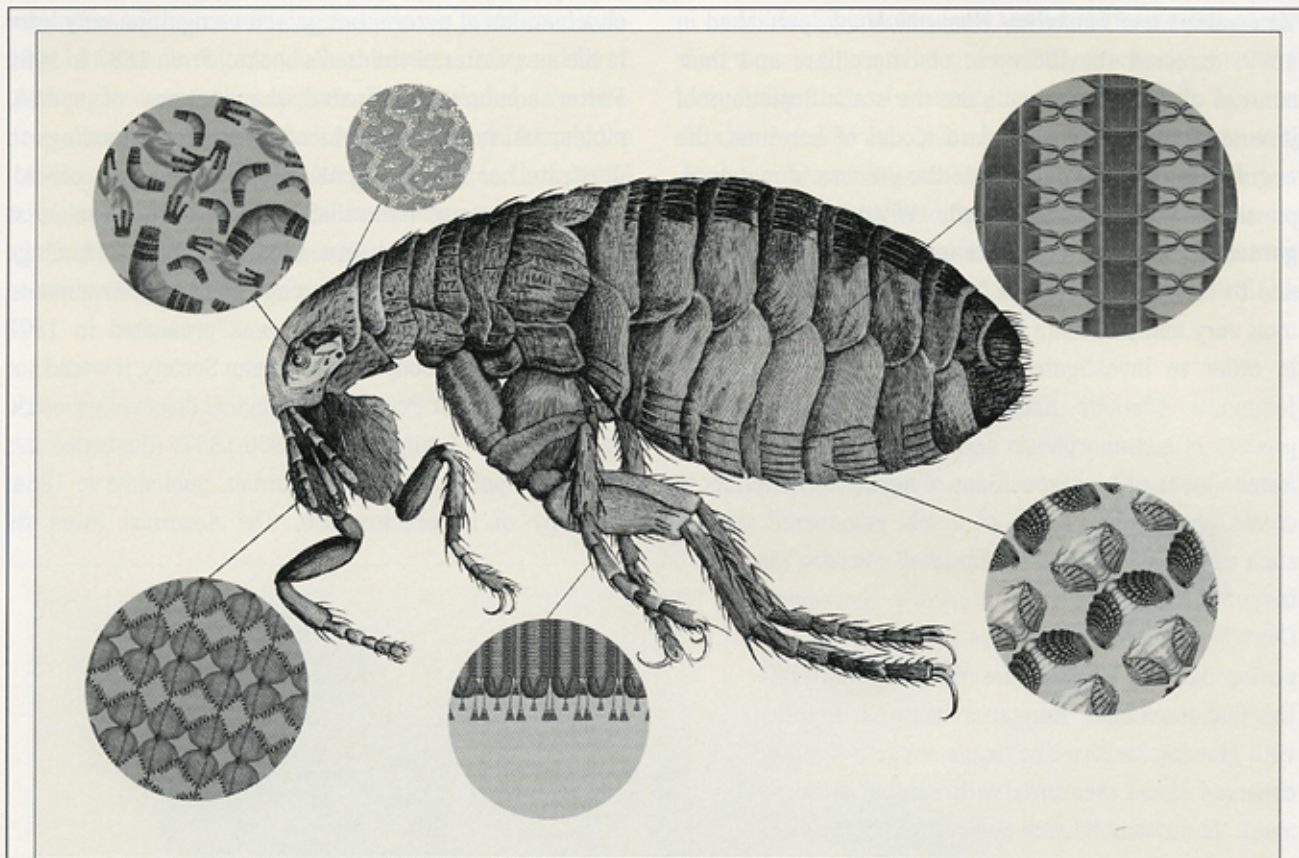
*Verwandelun und sonderbare Blumennahrung*, published in 1679, explored the life cycle of caterpillars and their sources of nourishment. Unlike the static depictions of insects that were the standard model of her time, the engravings by Merian illustrate the process of metamorphosis from chrysalis to butterfly. Writing about her own garden as the place where she went "to view the flowers and to look for caterpillars," she related that she "then took very many of them home, together with the leaves, in order to investigate what would come of them."<sup>4</sup> Johnson's *Alternate Encyclopedia* also addresses the process of metamorphosis and the transmutation of life forms. Johnson's juxtapositions of unrelated materials to create convincing images of newly engineered species such as the *Soothsaying duckheadtail crocodile* (an invented descendant of Merian's *Surinamese Crocodile*) may initially strike the viewer as posterous. Yet Merian's descriptions of caterpillars that resembled "Hungarian bears" and of flies with glowing lantern-like heads suggest that she observed these creatures with similar astonishment. In melding natural and cultural objects and presenting them as previously uncatalogued species with uncertain origins, Johnson employs the language of surrealism to simulate Merian's systematic scientific inquiries into the world of insects.

Because of her innovations in entomological illustration, Merian established an identity for herself as both an artist and a naturalist. Although her reputation as a scientist waned in the nineteenth century, Merian's identity never disappeared. Women have largely struggled to have their discoveries acknowledged and, only recently, have there been efforts to uncover their identities as scientists and scientific illustrators. The fortuitous find of scattered notes and unpublished plates leading us to the author of *Hidden Structures*, typifies the process by which women's work has been recovered and reinstated into history. Beatrix Potter (1866-1942) too, from an early age, studied and assiduously illustrated her

observations of nature, but gained recognition only later in life as a writer of children's books. From 1887 to 1901 Potter conducted intensive examinations of spores, molds, and fungi and produced hundreds of drawings to illustrate her investigations. Because she was considered an "amateur" naturalist, and not a trained scientist (a purview ordinarily reserved for men), Potter's findings were ignored. Although her paper "On the Germination of the Spores of *Agaricineae*" was presented in 1897 before the august body of the Linnean Society, it would not be until 1967 that Potter's mycological discoveries would be published. Emily Gosse (1806-1857) illustrated her husband's publication *The Aquarium*, published in 1854. A study of underwater life, *The Aquarium* owed its



Rearranged Audubon (*Chuck-will's-widow with treesnake*), gouache and watercolor on paper, 15 3/4 x 11 3/4 inches, 1997



*Hidden Structures of the Universe, A re-examination of Robert Hooke's original type specimen of a flea using a more powerful microscope. Hooke's drawing of a flea appeared in his Micrographia in 1665. Digital inkjet print on Rives BFK paper, 14 x 20 inches, 2000*

popularity to Gosse's compelling illustrations that she never signed and for which she received no recognition until recently. Elizabeth Gould (1804-1841) similarly worked for her husband illustrating his seven-volume compendium *Birds of Australia*. John Gould signed all the plates "J & E. Gould del et lith" [drew and lithographed] ambiguously melding his wife's identity with his own.<sup>5</sup>

The theme of obscuration of identities underlies Johnson's different series of prints. An author's name is missing as is the nomenclature for species of birds, fish, and animals. How can one mistake a bird for another thing and what does one call a mosaic-skinned lizard with a split tail? Certainly scientific artist-illustrators such as Atkins, Merian, and Potter confronted similar questions over the course of their research and presented solutions that were not always believed or well received.

In her work Johnson not only pays homage to the visual remnants that that past scientific exploration has produced, but raises questions about the evolutionary and gendered nature of science.

1. Quoted in *Women and Natural History* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 1996), 3.
2. Barbara Gates, *Kindred Nature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 3.
3. Gates, *Kindred Nature*, 73.
4. Kurt Wettengl, ed. *Maria Sibylla Merian 1647-1717: Artist and Naturalist* (Frankfurt am Main: Historisches Museum Frankfurt am Main and Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1998), 59.
5. Gates, *Kindred Nature*, 74.

*Dr. Jordana Pomeroy is Associate Curator, National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.*

## SUE JOHNSON: CURRICULUM VITAE

### **BORN**

1957 San Francisco, California

### **EDUCATION**

1981 M.F.A. Painting, Columbia University, New York, NY

1979 B.F.A. Studio Arts, *magna cum laude*, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

1975-76 Randolph-Macon Woman's College

### **SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

2001 McLean Project for the Arts, McLean, VA

2000 Hollins University, Roanoke, VA  
Jan Cicero Gallery, Project Room, Chicago, IL  
Munson Williams Proctor Institute, Utica, NY

1999 Bucknell Art Gallery, Bucknell University,  
Project Room, Lewisburg, PA

1998 Maryland Art Place, Project Room, Baltimore,  
MD

The Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts,  
Wilmington, DE

1997 School 33 Art Center, Baltimore, MD  
Boyden Gallery, St. Mary's College of Maryland,  
St. Mary's City, MD

1996 Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth  
University, Richmond, VA

1995 The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Sweet  
Briar, VA  
Artists Space at Dance Theater Workshop, New  
York, NY

1994 Nancy Drysdale Gallery, Washington, D.C.

1993 RCCA: The Art Center, The Rensselaer County  
Council for the Arts, Troy, NY

1985 Patrick King Contemporary Art, Indianapolis, IN  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI  
431 Gallery, Indianapolis, IN

1984 Columbus Cultural Art Center, Columbus, OH  
Contemporary Art Workshop, Chicago, IL  
Artlink Contemporary Artspace, Fort Wayne, IN

1983 Zollar Gallery, The Pennsylvania State  
University, University Park, PA

1982 Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

### **GROUP EXHIBITIONS (Selected)**

2000 *ArtScape 2000*, Decker Gallery, Maryland  
Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD  
*Meat Products*, Trans Hudson Gallery, New York, NY

1999 *Botanica: Contemporary Art and the World of  
Plants* curated by Peter Spooner, Tweed Museum  
of Art, University of Minnesota, Duluth, MN  
travels through 2001 to University Galleries,  
Illinois State University, Normal, IL, Carleton  
College, Northfield, MN, Alexandria Museum of  
Art, Alexandria, LA, Tarble Arts Center, Eastern  
Illinois University, Charleston, IL, Chicago  
Cultural Center, Chicago, IL, University Gallery,  
University of Delaware, Newark, DE

1998 *Prime Focus* curated by Greg Bowen, University  
Galleries, Illinois State University, Normal, IL  
*Curio Cabinet of Hybrid Possibilities* curated by  
Andrea Pollan, Rockville Arts Place, Rockville, MD  
*Food Matters* curated by Saul Ostrow and Stuart  
Horodner, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA  
and travels to ES Vandam, New York, NY

1997 *Frankensteinian* curated by Stuart Horodner,  
Caren Golden Gallery, New York, NY  
*The Sense of Touch* curated by April Vollmer,  
Ceres Gallery, New York, NY

*Bradley National Print and Drawing Exhibition*  
curated by Barry Blinderman, Bradley  
University, Peoria, IL

1996 *Frankenstein* (in Normal) curated by Stuart  
Horodner, University Galleries, Illinois State  
University, Normal, IL

*Inner Landscapes* curated by Karen Wilkin,  
Gallery One, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

1995 *Environs* curated by Sarah Tanguy, St. Mary's  
College of Maryland, Boyden Gallery, St. Mary's  
City, MD

1994 Nancy Drysdale Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
*The Press: A Print Workshop*, Horodner-Romley  
Gallery, New York, NY

1993 *Charcoal Drawings: Cotton, Johnson and Sheehan*,  
Jill Newhouse Gallery, New York, NY

*A Moment Becomes Eternity: Flowers as Image*  
curated by Michael Walls, Bergen Museum of  
Art and Science, Paramus, NJ,  
*The Return of the Cadavre Exquis*, The Drawing  
Center, New York, NY

- 1992 *Songs of Retribution* curated by Nancy Spero, Richard Anderson, New York, NY  
*Nature Fabrilis* curated by Deven Golden, Steibel Modern, New York, NY  
*Mssr. B's Curio Shop* curated by Saul Ostrow, Thread Waxing Space, New York, NY  
*Morphologic* curated by Holly Block, Art in General, New York, NY  
*Beyond Nature: Paintings by Beverly Fishman, Sue Johnson and Drew Lowenstein*, Marymount Manhattan College, MMC Gallery, New York, NY  
*Pain-ting* curated by Steven Salzman, Proctor Art Center, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY  
1991 *Entr'acte*, Michael Walls Gallery, New York, NY  
*Triangle Artists' Workshop 1991 Exhibition*, Bennington College, Usdan Gallery, Bennington, VT  
*Still-Alive: Contemporary Still-life Painting* curated by Barbara Morris, Rockford College, Rockford College Art Gallery, Rockford, IL  
1990 *Vital Signs: Artists Respond to the Environment* curated by April Vollmer, Henry Street Settlement, New York, NY  
1989 *Works on Paper* curated by Charlotta Kotik, Long Island University, Salena Gallery, Brooklyn, NY  
*Small Scale*, Parsons School of Design, New York, NY  
*Boundaries: A Tradition of Drawing at Herron School of Art*, Herron School of Art, Indianapolis, IN  
1987 *Nu Nature Again* curated by Bill Arning, White Columns, New York, NY  
Soho Center for Visual Artists, New York, NY  
1986 *24 x 24*, Ruth Siegel Gallery, New York, NY  
*Painted Surfaces* curated by Thomas Lollar, Albany Institute of History and Art, Rice Gallery, Albany, NY  
*Materials as Media* curated by Virginia Roeder and Barbara Blades, Evanston Art Center, Evanston, IL  
1985 *Peter Plagens, Laurie Fendrick, Sue Johnson and Fred Burton*, Jan Cicero Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*70th Annual Indiana Artists Exhibition*, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN  
*Paint 1985* curated by Jerrold Maddox, Central Michigan University, Mt Pleasant, MI  
1984 *Illinois Artists' Show*, Artemisia, Chicago, IL  
*Invitational*, Patrick King Contemporary Art, Indianapolis, IN  
1983 *Invitational*, Contemporary Art Workshop, Chicago, IL

**RESIDENCY FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS**

- 2000 American Antiquarian Society, Sigety Family Foundation Residency Fellowship  
1999 The Mac Dowell Colony, Ray Gottlieb Fellowship  
Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus  
The Ragdale Foundation  
Vermont Studio Center  
1998 Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant  
William Carr Olendorf Residency Award, Ox-Bow-School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
1997 Women's Studio Workshop  
1995 Maryland State Arts Council, Individual Artist Award in Visual Arts: 2D  
Virginia Center for the Creative Arts  
1994 NEA Regional Fellowship in Painting /Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation  
St. Mary's College of Maryland, Faculty Development Grants 1994, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 00  
1991 The Mac Dowell Colony, Sally and Milton Avery Fellowship Award  
1990 Virginia Center for the Creative Arts  
1989 The Mac Dowell Colony  
1988 Millay Colony for the Arts  
1987 Hambidge Center for the Arts and Sciences  
1984 New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowship  
1979 Augusta G. Hazard Fellowship in Painting  
Hiram Gee Fellowship in Painting

**SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

- Bristol-Myers/Squibb  
The Prudential Life Insurance Company  
Bucknell University Art Collection  
St. Mary's College of Maryland Teaching Collection  
Exxon Chemical Company  
Francis J. Greenburger Foundation  
U.S. Embassy, Papua New Guinea

Design: Deborah Stalford

Photography: p.4: *Self Portrait* by David Emerick, 2000

p.6: *Hercules beetle* by David Emerick, 2000

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