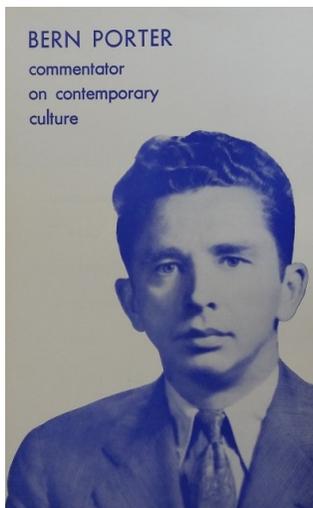


Bern Porter

Art, Books, Photographs, and Editions

STOCK LIST

Periodicals & Ephemera



Bern Porter, Commentator on Contemporary Culture, 1946
Pamphlet, blue illus. on paper, folded sheet printed recto verso
NFS



Exhibition installation view Clay Street Press, Cincinnati, Ohio 2018



The Big A, 1986



Poster board cut-out, signed 22"x17.5"; b&w photograph 10"x8".
Performance documentation, October 9, 1986, Belfast, Maine. Photograph by Richard Norton, Waldo Independent, Belfast, Maine.
\$900

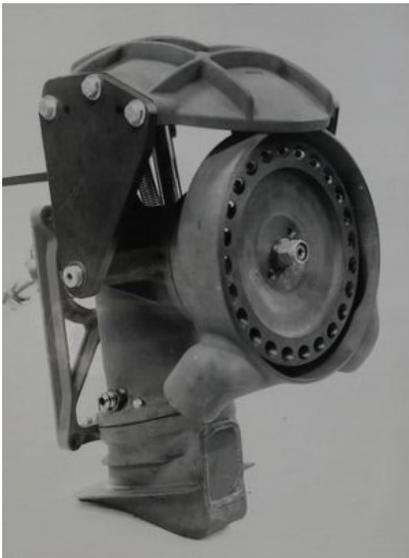
Founds



Bottle Poems, 1991

One-hundred-eight bottles on nine shelves. Mixed media and mirror shelves with metal brackets. Each bottle 4.75"x2"x1.25"; nine shelves 30.5"x4". Glass bottles (4 oz.) filled with cut-out images from lingerie catalogues and/or porno-magazines and debris collected on the streets of Belfast, Maine. Presented on a mirror shelf affixed to wall with metal brackets. All bottles hand filled by the artist. Signed certificate affixed to one self. \$3,000.

Photographs



Granite Butterfly [Machine], 1972

Cropped found black & white photograph, 10"x8" mounted on board, signed \$1,800.

- The *Granite Butterfly* photograph collages were intended to illustrate a 1972 reissue of the poetry book *Granite Butterfly* by Parker Tyler. Porter funded the first printing of the book in 1945, there were plans for a 1972 reissue with his illustrations there is no documentation that it was ever realized.



[a]

untitled, circa 1970 [a]

Cropped found black & white photograph, image 5"x3", signed verso
\$900



[b]

untitled, circa 1970 [b]

Cropped found black & white photograph, image 5"x3", signed verso
\$900

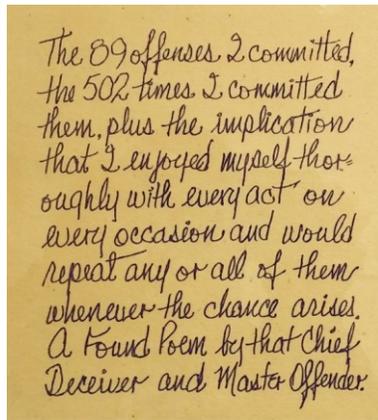


[c]

untitled, circa 1970 [c]

Cropped found black & white photograph, image 5"x3", signed verso
\$900

Prints, Poetry Broadside & Editions



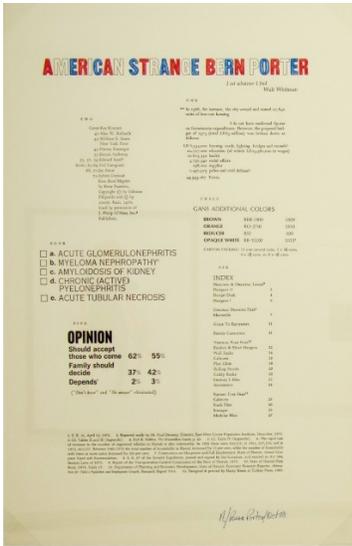
detail

76. Surrender of Bail	1
77. Speeding	6
78. Stop Sign Violation	2
79. Simple Larceny	1
80. Trespass in a Building	1
81. Threatening Communication	1
82. Threatening a Police Officer	2
83. Tampering with a Motor Vehicle	1
84. Taking a Motor Vehicle w/o Owner's Consent	13
85. Uttering a Forged Instrument	14
86. Violation of Probation	17
87. Violation of Parole	2
88. Vandalism	1
89. Vexation	1
Total	502

detail

89 Offenses, 1991

A prepared text by Porter acknowledging and accepting responsibility for the 89 offenses listed on a found rap sheet of an anonymous criminal. Lithograph (black ink) and etching (blue ink) with chine colle (Kitakata paper on white Rives BFK), 41"x15" Signed and numbered edition of 20. Volatile Editions and Mark Patsfall Graphics, Cincinnati, OH
\$350.



American Strange



ME

American Strange, 1992

Poetry broadside, letterpress color print, signed and lettered edition a-z. Turkey Foot Press

19.75"x12.75"

\$350.

ME, 1992

Poetry broadside, letterpress with hand coloring, signed and numbered edition of 37. Turkey Foot Press

19"x12.5"

\$350.



Bern

What Henry Miller Said and Why It Is Important

Bern, 1974

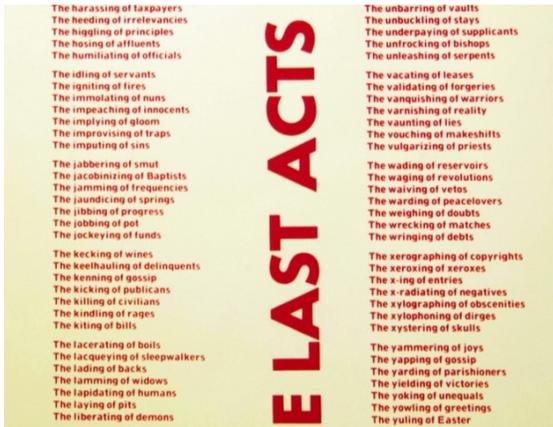
Poetry broadside, offset on gray sheet, 1st prtg, signed, numbered 15. Abyss Publications, 1974. 22"x17.5"

\$50.

What Henry Miller Said and Why It Is Important, 1974

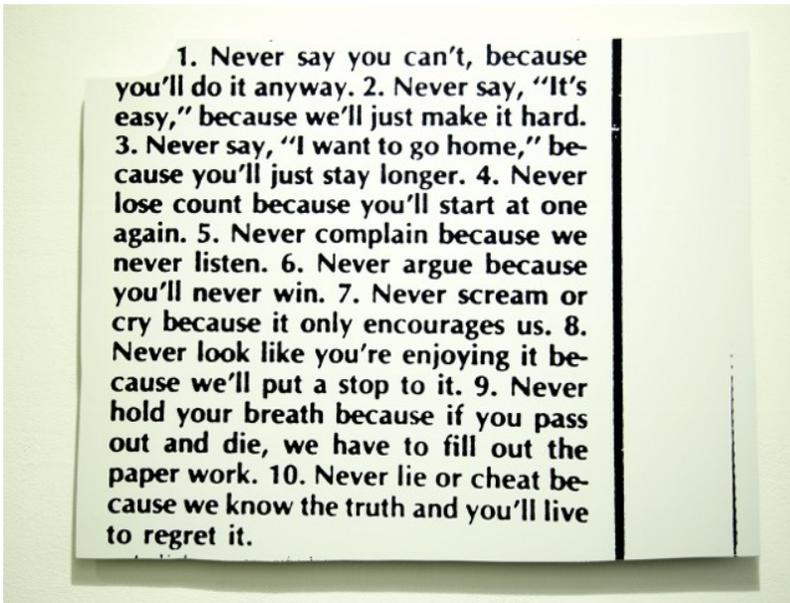
Offset on cream sheet, 1st prtg, signed. Self-published. 22"x17.5"

\$50.



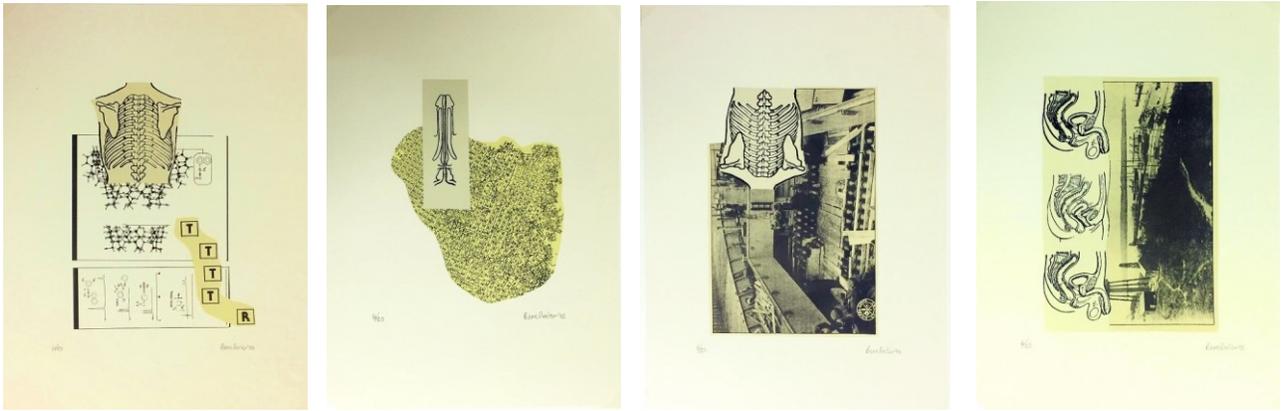
The Last Acts of Saint Fuckyou, 1990

Text work; this multiple is based on the earlier list of pro-active statements negating oppressive societal conventions published in poster format by Abyss Publications in 1975. An alphabetical list of 182 do's for anarchists includes "The abnegating of treaties", "The heeding of irrelevancies", "The pandering of lusts", and "The xerographing of copyrights". Window shade, 36" wide by variable length (up to approximately 52"), screen printed in red ink, shade mounted on a maple panel 5"x40". Signed and numbered edition of 20. Volatile Editions, Cincinnati, OH \$950.



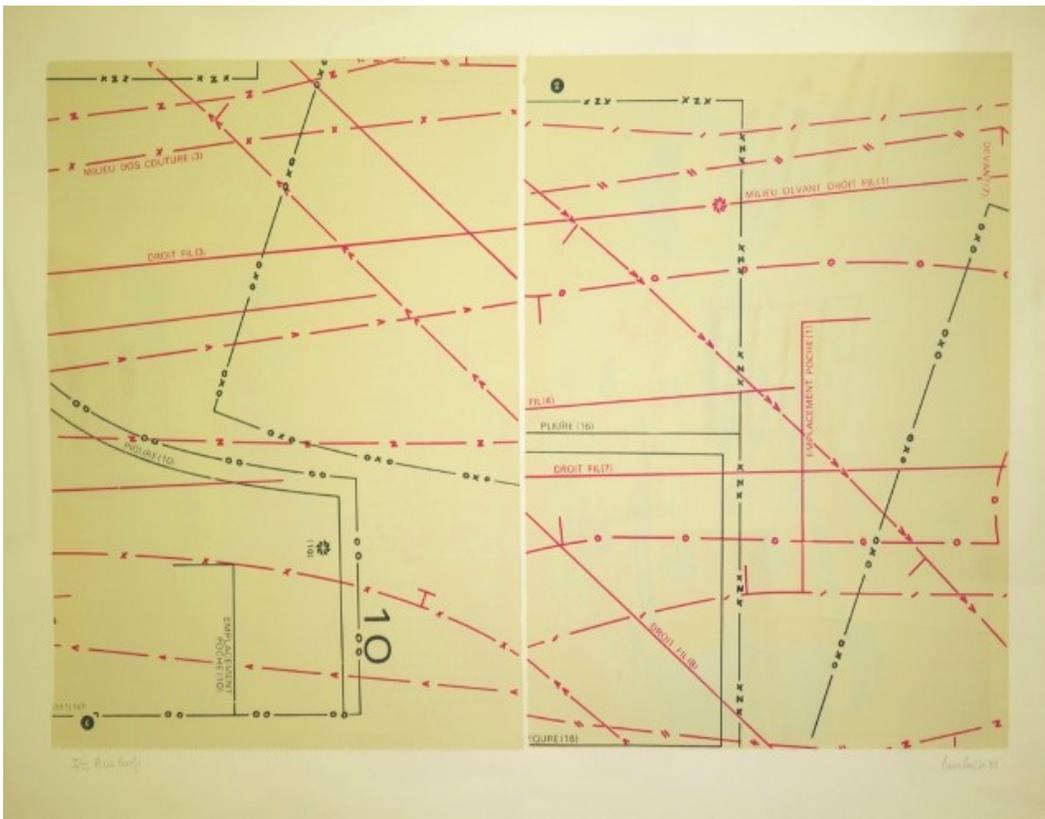
Nevers, 1994

Text work - a list of ten found statements beginning with "never". The list begins with "1. Never say you can't, because you'll do it anyway." and ending with "10. Never lie or cheat because we know the truth and you'll live to regret it." 18.5"x23.25", screen print (black ink) on quarter inch thick white Sintra plastic, shaped, and mounted on aluminum channels so that when hung it floats off the wall approximately a half inch. Signed and numbered edition of 20. Volatile Editions and Mark Patsfall Graphics, Cincinnati, OH \$400.



untitled [anatomy], 1992

A suite of four prints depicting collages of images appropriated from newspapers, science text books, and physicians' anatomy rubber stamps. Each print 15"x11", color photo-lithographs on Daniel Smith Archival paper in a paper folder. Signed, numbered edition of 20. Volatile Editions and Mark Patsfall Graphics, Cincinnati, OH \$400. Set - (individual prints \$100.)



untitled [dress pattern / atomic particles], 1992

Six color screen print on Rives BFK white paper, signed and numbered edition of 20. 30"x40". The print's image is reminiscent of photographs of atomic particles in a bubble chamber, but is in fact imagery from a dress pattern appropriated from a fashion magazine. An excellent example of Porter's use of "found imagery / poetry", as well as a biographic reference to his career as a physicist. Volatile Editions and Mark Patsfall Graphics, Cincinnati, OH \$400.

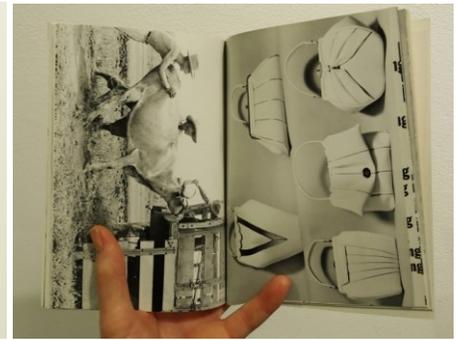
Artist Books, Posters and Exhibition Catalogues



The Manhattan Phone Book



Run On



The Manhattan Phone Book, 1975

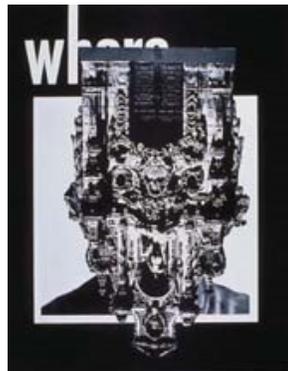
Found poetry. 8.5"x5.5", offset, b&w illus., 340 pp, paper, signed, edition of 250, 1st prtq. Abyss Publications \$100

Run On, 1975

Found poetry; a compilation of found photographs, text, and technical diagrams. 7.5"x5.5", offset, b&w illus., 68 pp, paper, 1st prtq, signed and numbered edition of 250, 1st prtq. Self-published \$50



Wastemaker 1926 - 1961



Where to Go When In NY



Wastemaker 1926 - 1961, 1972

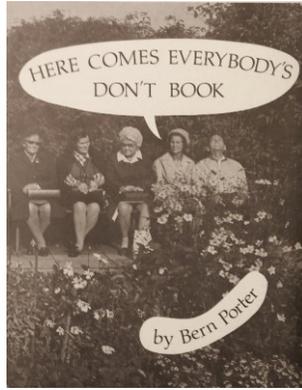
Found poetry. 8.5"x5.5", offset, b&w illus., 310 pp, paper, signed, 1st prtq. Abyss Publications \$100

Where to Go When In NY, 1985

Found poetry compilation of appropriated texts and images re-contextualized in book format. 11"x8.5", offset, 48 pp, paper with gate-fold and inserted poster (19"x15.5"), 1st prtq, signed, edition of 250, 1st prtq. Self-published \$100



Book of Do's



Here Come Everybody's Don't Book



Sweet End



Book of Do's, 1982

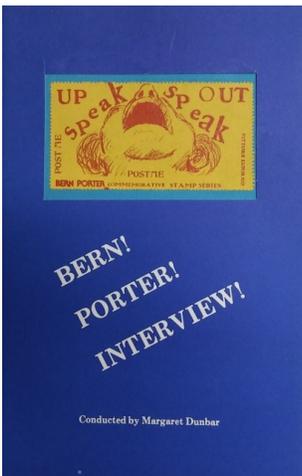
Found poetry compilation of appropriated texts and images, all affirmations, re-contextualized in book format. Edition of 500. 11"x8.5", offset, b&w illus., 400 pp, paper, 1st prtg. The Dog Ear Press \$75

Here Come Everybody's Don't Book, 1984

Found poetry compilation of appropriated texts and images, a meditation on repression, re-contextualized in book format. Edition of 500. 11"x8.5", offset, b&w illus., 400 pp, paper, 1st prtg. The Dog Ear Press, ME \$75

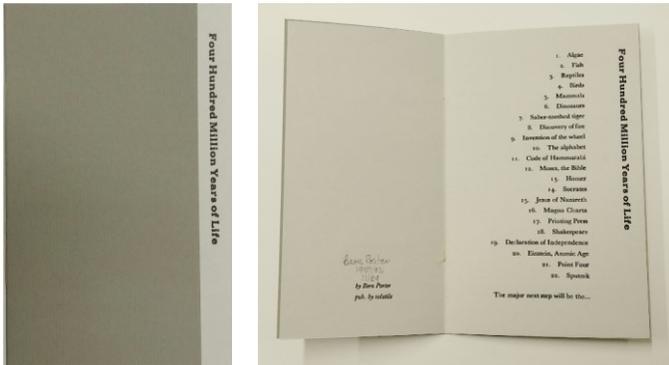
Sweet End, 1989

Found poetry; a compilation of appropriated texts and images relating to death and destruction presented "as is", re-contextualized in book format. 11"x8.5", offset, b&w illus., 400 pp, paper, edition of 125, 1st prtg. The Dog Ear Press, ME Signed Copy \$200



Bern! Porter! Interview!, 1981

An interview, by Margaret Dunbar, with the Physicist turned visual poet and book maker Bern Porter. In addition to being illustrated with photographs of Porter, and reproductions of his work, the volume includes postage like stamps designed by the mail artist Carlo Pittore. 8.5"x5.5", offset, 72 pp, paper with die cut dj, signed, 1st prtg. Dog Ear Press, ME, 1981 \$50



Four Hundred Million Years of Life, 1975/93

Letterpress printed book, paper (gray cover), 6.5"x4.25", signed and numbered edition of twenty-four, 1st prtq. Volatile Editions, Cincinnati, OH
\$75



Found Tools



Found Tools [blind-stamped foil version]

Found Tools, 1993

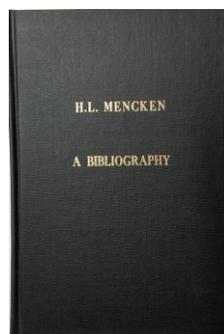
Six letterpress printed cards in glassine envelope, 5"x3", 1st prtq. Published for the *Performing Objects* catalogue, The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH.
\$5

Found Tools, 1993 [foil blind-stamped version]

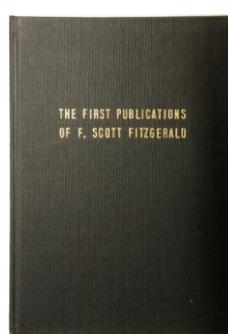
Six letterpress embossed (blind-stamped) foil cards in a plastic zip-lock bag, 5"x3", signed and numbered edition of thirty-three, 1st prtq. A variant of the edition published for the *Performing Objects* catalogue.
\$35



I've Left



H. L. Mencken,,,



The First Publications...

I've Left

Offset printed book, paper, paper, 8.5"x5.75", 47 pp, 1st prtq. Something Else Press, 1971
Condition note: Ware to cover edges.
\$20

H. L. Mencken, A Bibliography, 1965

Offset printed book, cloth - no dust jacket as issued, 8.5"x5.5", 24 pp, SIGNED and DATED "8-28-90". Walton Press Edition, a REPRINT of 1957 edition.
\$50.

The First Publications of F. Scott Fitzgerald. 1965

Offset printed book, cloth - no dust jacket as issued, 9"x6", 8 pp, SIGNED and DATED " '90". Walton Press Edition; a REPRINT of the title.
\$50.



Poster edition by Abyss



Book edition by Xexoxial, front & back covers

The Last Acts of Saint Fuckyou, 1975

Offset printed poster, signed, b&w, 22"x17.5", 1st prtg Abyss Publications, Somerville, ME
\$50

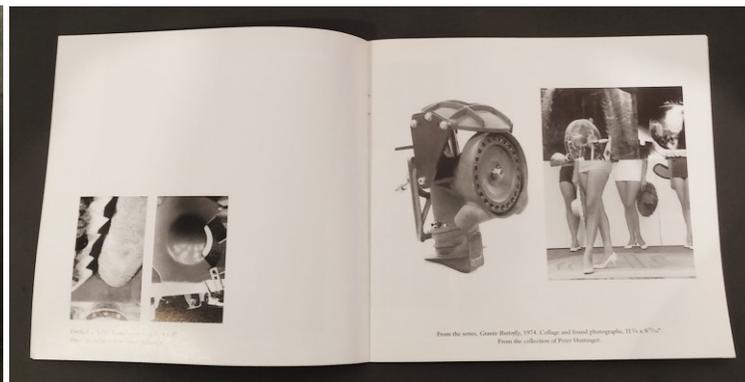
The Last Act of Saint Fuckyou, 1985

Photocopy printed book b&w and color illus., collage illus. by Steve Perkins, open edition printed on demand.
Xexoxial Editions
\$20



SEe(MAN)TIC, 1994

Exhibition catalogue. Amy Hufnagel; curator. An exhibition of found poetry and photography by Porter. Catalogue includes reproductions of works, writings, and page works by the artist. 8"x8.5", offset, b&w illus., 36 pp, paper, 1st prtg. Lightworks
\$20



Bern Porter

1911 - 2004, American

The underground reputation of artist-writer-philosopher-scientist Bern Porter (1911 – 2004) is well established, and his philosophy of dissent is respected, among visual artists and writers. Dick Higgins, the avant-garde writer and publisher/editor of the Something Else Press, was inspired to call Porter the “Charles Ives of American letters”. Recognizing Porter as one of the earliest and most prolific practitioners of Found Poetry, Peter Frank (in his book on Something Else Press) has written: "Porter is to the poem what [Marcel] Duchamp was to the art object, a debunker of handiwork fetishism and exemplary artist-as-intercessor between phenomenon and receptor. He rejects the typical artist's role of semi-divine creator. Porter's eye never tires of seeking accidental, unconventional literature in odd pages of textbooks, far corners of advertisements, the verbiage of greeting cards and repair manuals, ad infinitum."

Porter's career is complex and filled with contradictions. He was born in 1911, in Porter Settlement, Maine. All his life Porter had a love for literature, the visual arts and poetry in particular. As a child he created countless scrapbooks filled with collaged cut-outs of texts and images from newspapers. This process, used in the early scrapbooks, would later be developed into his technique of visual collaged poetry that he refers to as "Founds". As a pioneer author of artists, books, experiments in poetry, typography, and collage Porter published his first artist book in 1941. And since then has authored dozens of books and poetry broadsides as well as created paintings, sculpture, prints, and experimented with photography (included photograms in the late 1940s). He was also an early experimenter with alternative publishing, mail art, and performance poetry.

In the 1930s Porter went on to earn degrees in physics at Colby College and Brown University. Then later in the decade he worked in New York City as a physicist for the Acheson Celloids Corporation. It is during this time Porter happened on the Manhattan storefront gallery that housed the infant collection of the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum. There he was exposed to the works of Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, and Pablo Picasso, in addition to Peggy Guggenheim's salons. About this period in Porter's life Judd Tully (In his essay for Porter's retrospective at the Franklin Furnace) wrote: " ...Porter imbibed the wild currents of Peggy Guggenheim's salons and 'just sat there dumbfounded', under the mesmerizing lights of Joseph Cornell, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, and Anais Nin, A few years later, Joseph Cornell would publish Porter's 'American Beauty' in Charles Henri Ford's "View Magazine" - a showcase for Avant-garde art."

As a physicist Porter worked on early developmental research for the television, the atomic bomb, and later worked on the Saturn moon rocket project. By 1943 Porter was working for the United States government's Manhattan Project as part of the team of scientists developing the atomic bomb. As an insider working on the development of the Atomic Bomb he was shuttled around the country under a cloak of secrecy by the United States government. However, Porter's interest in the visual arts and Literature, as well as liberal politics, did not wane. And it was during this period that he published Henry Miller's anti-war novel "Murder the Murderer". It was activities, and associations, such as this that would eventually cost Porter his security clearance with the United States government and essentially end his career as a working Physicist.

Following World War II gripped by his participation in the development of the atomic bomb, Porter spent time in Japan (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) working with doctors and scientists developing burn ointments and artificial limbs. Then in the late 1940s operated the Contemporary Gallery in Sausalito, CA. During this time Porter published literary works by many contemporary writers. His publishing endeavors include "Circle" (a literary journal), works by Kenneth Patchen, Robert Duncan, Dick Higgins, and Henry Miller.

In the late 1960s Porter returned to Maine where he ran, unsuccessfully, for governor. Later he started the institute for Advanced Thinking - a "think tank" for dropouts. It is also during this period that Porter intensely focused on his theory of "Sciart", a hybrid of science and art with a strong emphasis on social and cultural politics that began writing about in the 1940s. In 1963 his Sciart manifesto "I've Left" was published by Marathon Press and then republished in 1971 by Dick Higgin's Something Else Press. Out of his home in Belfast,

Maine, Porter he was prolific creator of extraordinary artist books of "Founds". He is also an important contributor, and 'networker', in the underground culture of mail art, visual poetry, and zines. Porter has corresponded and collaborated with mail artists as diverse as Ray Johnson, The Cracker Jack Kid (Chuck Welsh), Mielke And, Elizabeth Was, Carlo Pittore, and Shozo Shinamoto. And in the early 1990s his mail art archive was acquired by the John Paul Getty Center, Research Center and Archive of American art.

Works by Bern Porter are represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, NYC; Franklin Furnace Archive, NYC; John Paul Getty Center Artists Book Collection and Archive, CA; Brown University Libraries, Providence, RI; Special Collections, University of California Libraries at Los Angeles, CA; Elliston Poetry Room, University of Cincinnati. OH; Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Visual and Concrete Poetry, Miami, FL; Robert J. Shifter Archive, Dayton, OH; Conz Archive, Verona, Italy; Collection of Avant Writing, Ohio State University Libraries, OH; and numerous other public and private collections. In 1979 Porter was given a retrospective exhibition at the Franklin Furnace, NYC, which traveled to three other cities in the United States, in 1993 he was included in the exhibition *Performing Objects* at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH, and in 1994 *Lightworks*, Syracuse, NY, mounted a survey of his photographic works titled 'SEe(MAN)TIC'; in 2010 the Museum of Modern Art presented *Lost and Found: The Work of Bern Porter from the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art Library*; and in 2017 Clay Street Press exhibited works from 1941 - 1993 in the exhibition *Bern Porter, Commentator on Contemporary Culture*.

Bern Porter's work is represented by his literary executor, Mark Melnicove, who was his long-time publisher and poetry performance partner. If you are interested in the rights to Porter's work, please contact Mark Melnicove at: mmelnicove@gmail.com, or 216 Cedar Grove Road, Dresden, ME 04342.

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Printings are noted only if they are first or second editions. If there is no edition reference the item is a later printing or edition information could not be determined. All information is believed correct but not guaranteed. All items are in good antiquarian condition unless noted otherwise. Additional or higher resolution photographs are available upon request.

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