

DISPATCH FROM THE EDGE No. 3

The Official Newsletter of

EXTRACTION:
ART ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS



In Memory of Edwin C. Dobb
1950–2019



The Berkeley Pit, Butte, Montana

“Sure. Manifestoizing is an idealist’s game. But sometimes staking out an extreme position is the only way to put a dilemma into proper perspective. Making lived poetry the only power. Let’s not be too quick to dismiss the notion. Why indeed should we accept anything less? And if the ideal can’t be achieved all of the time, or even most of the time, does that make it any less desirable?”

— Edwin C. Dobb

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Cover image: B-15Y Iceberg, Antarctica no.1, soft pastel on paper, 72x72 inches, 2017.
Courtesy of the artist Zaria Forman

THE EDGE

ROBERT BRINGHURST

Reprinted from WORDS on the Edge broadside portfolio

Planets and stars, like glaciers and rivers and forests, are mortal. They live long enough that we all find it easy to take them for granted, but pay them just a bit of the attention they deserve and you will notice that, like you, they do not last forever. The sun, for example, at four and a half billion years of age, has apparently lived about half of its natural span. Four billion more years may sound like a lot, but it is only fifty million human lifetimes. Long before we reach that mark, you can expect the dying sun to swell and swallow all the inner planets, earth included. Not long afterward, the sun will shrink and cool, losing so much weight it can no longer hold the surviving planets in orbit, and losing so much heat and light it cannot fuel a summer's day. By then, however, no one will be troubled by the climate or puzzled by the weather. When there are no planets left in the system, there will be no place for day and night or summer and winter to happen.

Stars and planets cannot go to heaven when they die, because that's where they've been all their lives. So have you, if you live on a planet – this planet, for instance, which moves like the others through heaven. But humans have a knack for turning heaven into hell. They do this just by shifting their perspective, losing track of where and who and what they are. Then they tend to think it's possible – even essential – to saw off all the limbs on which they sit, cut down the trees that give them food and shade and shelter, dig up the earth that bore the trees, suck out its innards, and move on, leaving lifeless tailing ponds and slag heaps in their wake.

That is the edge on which these words are dancing: the edge between heaven and hell. It is an edge that humans forge wherever they go – and an edge that we are expert at turning a blind eye to.

One of the facts about heaven is this: there is more than enough. In this particular corner of heaven, for instance, there is more light and heat, more air and wood and water, fruit and grain and meat and fish, more granite and sandstone and limestone, iron and copper and silver and gold than anyone needs. More – but not an infinite amount. There is also more time than anyone needs – but not, again, an infinite amount. Fewer, in all probability, than another fifty million human lifetimes. Yet we as a species, we as a culture, are working hard to make it fewer still.



B-15Y Iceberg, Antarctica no.1, soft pastel on paper, 72x72 inches, 2017. Courtesy of the artist Zaria Forman

The grass will bear a lot of grazing and the shrubs a lot of browsing. The limb will bear some sawing, and the trees will bear some cutting, the earth will tolerate some digging, and the rivers and oceans and air will bear some gentle poisoning. But one of the salient facts about hell is that people who live there are never content. They not only want more than they have; they want more than there is. So the edge between heaven and hell gets sharper and closer. And those at the edge dance faster and faster.

— Robert Bringhurst, 2019

THE MEGAZINE

A CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

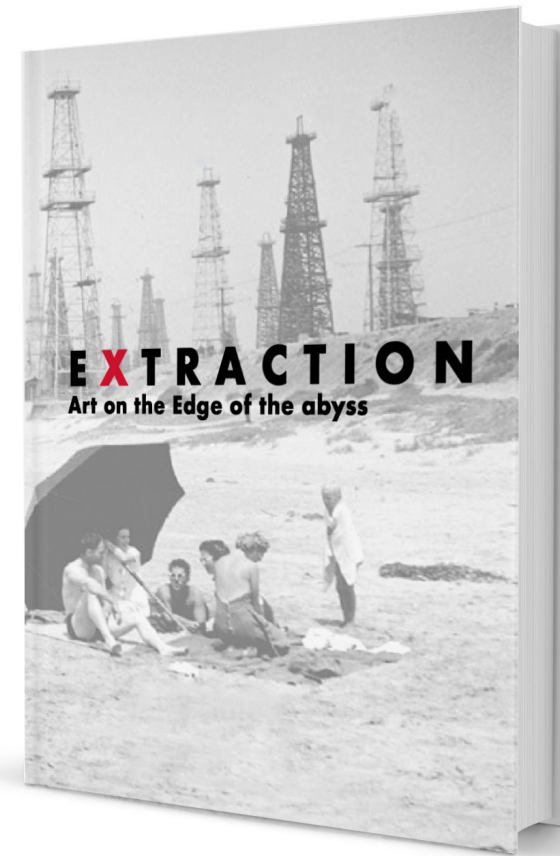
We are currently accepting content submissions for what we are colloquially calling the **Extraction Magazine**, which will feature a map and schedule of events, poetry, critical essays, and, of course, many hundreds of images of art work by **Extraction** artists. Our goal is to distribute **10,000 total copies** of the publication **for free** to all the participating galleries, museums and exhibition spaces, before the beginning of the main **Extraction** programming. Distribution of the Magazine will provide free publicity for our venues, not to mention the hundreds of artists who will be contributing art work to the publication.

The final deadline for artists and writers to contribute images of art work or written material for inclusion in the Magazine is January 1, 2020. This will ensure that we have a full year to produce and distribute the publication before the ruckus begins in 2021. We recognize that many venues may not have the details of their 2021 calendar year programming finalized by the beginning of 2020, so **the final deadline for exhibition spaces and venues to contribute press releases or other information about their respective Extraction Events or Exhibitions is July 1, 2020.** This will allow our venues the maximum amount of time to sort out the details before the Magazine goes to print.

Please adhere to the following guidelines for content submissions:

FOR IMAGES:

- Images can be **no smaller than 400 dpi**. This will give us some leeway to size up if necessary.
- If you intend for your image to take up a full page, note that the page dimensions will be roughly 9" by 12", oriented vertically. Smaller images and/or images with a landscape orientation will be paired with text and/or other images on the same page.
- Images can be sent via email, as a Google Drive link, through Dropbox, or other file sharing services.
- Send all files to **sam@codexfoundation.org**.
- Please include the following information: Title, Year, Artist Name, Medium.



An early impression of the Magazine's cover design

FOR WRITTEN CONTENT:

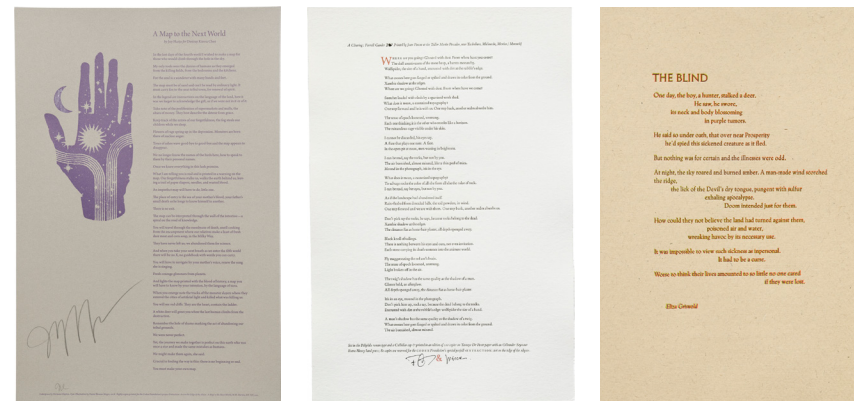
- Please send only plain text or Word Document. We will be handling the formatting. If you have special requests regarding formatting, please include these instructions along with your text. We will do our best to fulfill these requests if we can.
- Please email submissions to me directly at **sam@codexfoundation.org**.
- You are welcome to send multiple submissions, but we cannot promise that every image or writing piece will be published in the Magazine.



PORTFOLIO SALES AND CROWDFUNDING AN UPDATE ON OUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

The success of our fundraising efforts at this stage has been encouraging, but there remains much work to be done. In March, we launched our crowdfunding campaign, which is currently ongoing. As part of the crowdfunding initiative, we chose to offer the first five numbered copies of the limited edition broadside portfolio **WORDS on the Edge** at a reduced price \$2500. We are pleased to report that those five copies quickly sold out, and the crowdfunding campaign has brought in over \$19,000 of much needed funding, to date.

These funds will be put to good use covering the production costs of the **Extraction** Megazine, our ambitious pre-ruckus publication, for which we are now accepting content submissions. Although we plan to distribute 10,000 copies of the Megazine for free to our venues, it should be noted that the only way for individuals to guarantee themselves a copy is with a \$75 donation to the crowdfunding campaign. To the seventy-plus individuals who have already donated to the crowdfunder, we would like to thank you for making our mission possible. To the 839 individuals who have shared the campaign on social media, we would like to thank you for helping us spread the word. We are just shy of halfway to our funding target of \$50,000, so please continue to share the [link](#) with friends, family and acquaintances. No gift is too small.



WORDS on the Edge features poetry by 2019 Pulitzer Prize winners Eliza Griswold and Forrest Gander, as well as 2019 U.S. Poet Laureate, Joy Harjo. From left to right: "A Map to the Next World," by Joy Harjo (Norman Clayton, printer); "A Clearing," by Forrest Gander (Juan Pascoe, printer); and "The Blind," by Eliza Griswold (Russel Maret, printer)

Including the five that were purchased through the crowdfunder, we have sold a total of twenty-two of the fifty available copies of **WORDS on the Edge** as of July, 2019. The limited edition broadside portfolio features poetry and lyrical prose by notable writers, addressing themes of nature and its callous destruction by the extractive industrial forces ubiquitous to modern life, while questioning our own role and complicity in its destruction as individuals participating in society. **WORDS** features poems by two of this year's Pulitzer Prize winners, as well as the first Native American U.S. Poet Laureate, Joy Harjo. To purchase a copy, please visit the CODEX Foundation's [website](#).

NEW RECRUITS

We continue to recruit more and more artists, writers, performers, curators and venues to our ranks everyday, as word of the project spreads through outreach and by word of mouth. Still, if the project is to have the level of impact we envision, it is imperative for us to continue growing. We ask all of our participating artists, creators and institutions to continue raising awareness about our mission by reaching out to those within your social networks who might be interested in joining us as allies or contributors. **Introducing some of our new recruits:**



Elena Dorfman. *Empire Falling 21*, 2012. 48" by 107"

ELENA DORFMAN

Elena Dorfman's photographs and video installations have been exhibited in both the U.S. and worldwide at venues including the Fondazione Prada, the Triennale di Milano, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Empire Falling is artist Elena Dorfman's 2013 series of photographs, conceptual landscape images exploring the abandoned and active rock quarries of the Midwest, in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. Using images made over the course of several years and numerous locations, the work presents a contemporary view of an ancient – though evolving – landscape.

"These seemingly ordinary sites, whose aggregate is mined until the earth has nothing left to give, have been a constant source of wonder to me," Dorfman writes. "What began as a sociological exploration of the

communities that gather at quarries to jump from rocky precipices into water, evolved into a study of these massive pits, often overlooked and unseen. Using an archeological approach, I manipulate and reconstruct the landscape, reassembling and layering the pictures just as the oldest rock begins at the bottom and works its way up to the surface."

As globalization and consolidation continue unchecked, these astonishing landscapes are transfigured – with landfills, golf courses, and exclusive housing communities – wherein the quarry water element has, ironically, been incorporated into the development as a scenic or recreational point of focus. The images from *Empire Falling* present the quotidian rock landscape in an unexpected way, such that the viewers' perception is challenged not only by the imagery itself, but also by their own personal subjective relationships to industry and the evolving earth.



Environmental sustainability is the cornerstone of Zea Mays Printmaking's philosophy.

ZEA MAYS PRINTMAKING

Established in 2000, Zea Mays Printmaking is a professional printmaking studio located in Western Massachusetts offering studio access, workshops, residencies, internships, artist mentorships and contract printing services to an international community of artists. Creating art with health consciousness and environmental sustainability is the core of Zea Mays Printmaking's mission. As an international leader in safer printmaking practices, we research exciting new techniques and products and put them into the service of making aesthetically engaging art. 100+ member artists work in intaglio, relief, serigraphy, photopolymer, monotype, collagraph, and mixed media printmaking.

While ZMP is continually researching ways to improve, the fact is that printmakers work with materials that are stolen from the earth, e.g., copper plates, pigments, water, and more. Additionally, ZMP artists

have a deep-rooted connection with the natural world as subject matter. Our involvement in **Extraction: Art on the Edge of the Abyss** investigates extraction—its forms and its consequences, including its effect on art making and human life. What will this look like at ZMP? Starting with an **Unlikely Materials Exchange for Artists**, we will repurpose, plunder, rescue, recycle, trade, and appropriate materials to inspire our community of artists who will create work for local and distant *Green to the Extreme* exhibitions. A full-throated response to the challenge of **Extraction** will include workshops, community engagement and a critical examination of the materials we use to make art.

NEW ON THE EXTRACTION WEBSITE

FORUM PAGE

There have been some persistent technical issues involving the password protected entry to the Extraction Discussion Forum. To resolve this issue, we've decided to make the forum page public. If you continue to have issues accessing it, please send an email to sam@codexfoundation.org. The forum's url is:

<https://www.extractionart.org/forum>

DOCUMENTATION PAGE

We have added some instructions for those who need further information about best practices for documenting work. Please follow these guidelines for photographing artwork to be archived:

<https://www.extractionart.org/documentation>

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

If you have not already been added to the Extraction email list, there is now a way to add yourself simply by typing your email in the box toward the bottom of the page on our website's contact page:

<https://www.extractionart.org/contact>

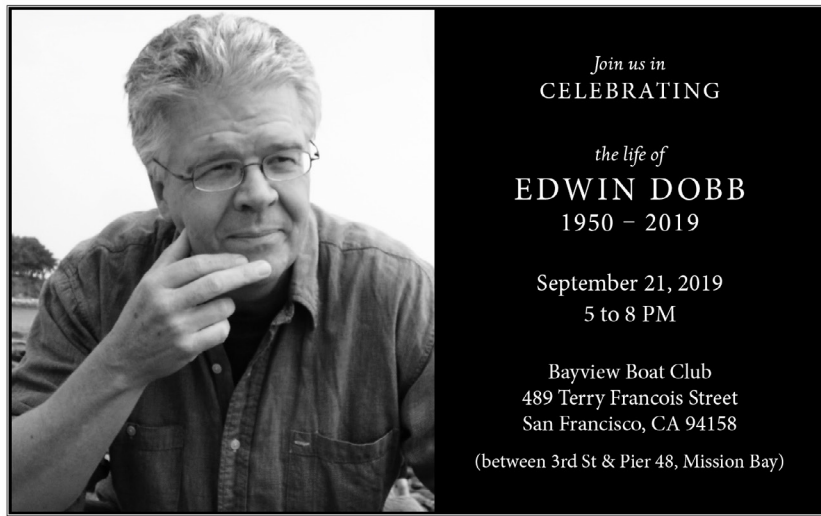


Photo credit: Suzanne Dobb

REMEMBERING ED

For those who have not yet heard the news, this past summer we lost our dear friend and co-conspirator Edwin Dobb. Ed was the heart and soul of the **Extraction** Project and he can never be truly replaced.

His careful correspondence was instrumental in expanding the boundaries of the project to encompass the many hundreds of artists and creators, from all walks of life, who make up our ranks today. The diversity of our project, whether defined in thematic, ethnic, or geographical terms, is largely due to Ed's vision of inclusivity, not to mention his unshakeable outreach efforts.

Ed grew up in Butte, Montana, and for him the Berkeley Pit was and always has been the “symbolic nucleus” of Extraction. A beloved partner, father and grandfather, he was also a gifted writer and journalist whose work appeared in Harper's Weekly and National Geographic Magazine, among many others. Though not a visual artist himself, Ed recognized better than anyone the deep reservoir of untapped power for social change which lies dormant within the lexicon of aesthetic expression.

Ed was also endowed with those exceptional qualities of realism and idealism which rarely exist together within the same individual, and which, in confluence, react with one another to create the conditions for real

change. Like the wise and seasoned among us, he saw the unvarnished world as it was. At the same time, he saw – with the earnest conviction of a younger man – the world as it might be tomorrow, if we could just gather the strength to change course. We can honor the memory of Edwin Dobb by making his vision a reality. Together, we can create a future where our planet is treated with the care and respect it deserves.

This ruckus is for you, Ed.

UPCOMING MEMORIALS

- Friends and family are invited to celebrate Ed's life at the Bayview Boat Club in San Francisco. Saturday, September 21, from 5 to 8 pm.
- The UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism will be celebrating the life of Edwin Dobb, much loved mentor, teacher and friend to two generations of Berkeley Journalism students. Saturday, October 12 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm North Gate Hall, UC Berkeley. Please RSVP [here](#).
- For our Montana friends, there will also be a hometown memorial in Butte. Celebrating a life well lived. As Ed would want, casual dress please. Saturday, October 19, 2019. 2:00 pm. Knights of Columbus Hall, Butte, Montana.

RAGE ON.

Editor-in-Chief: Peter Rutledge Koch

Editors: Samuel Pelts, Susan Filter

Design and layout by Samuel Pelts

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