

taken so long to put this book together?

One answer may lie in Rosler's persistence in fusing politics, power and practice together, pointing to the possibility (or perhaps impossibility) of the artist as public activist or culpable cultural citizen. This insistence makes for an urgent, if astringent, first-aid kit for contemporary, dollar-log-jammed practice.

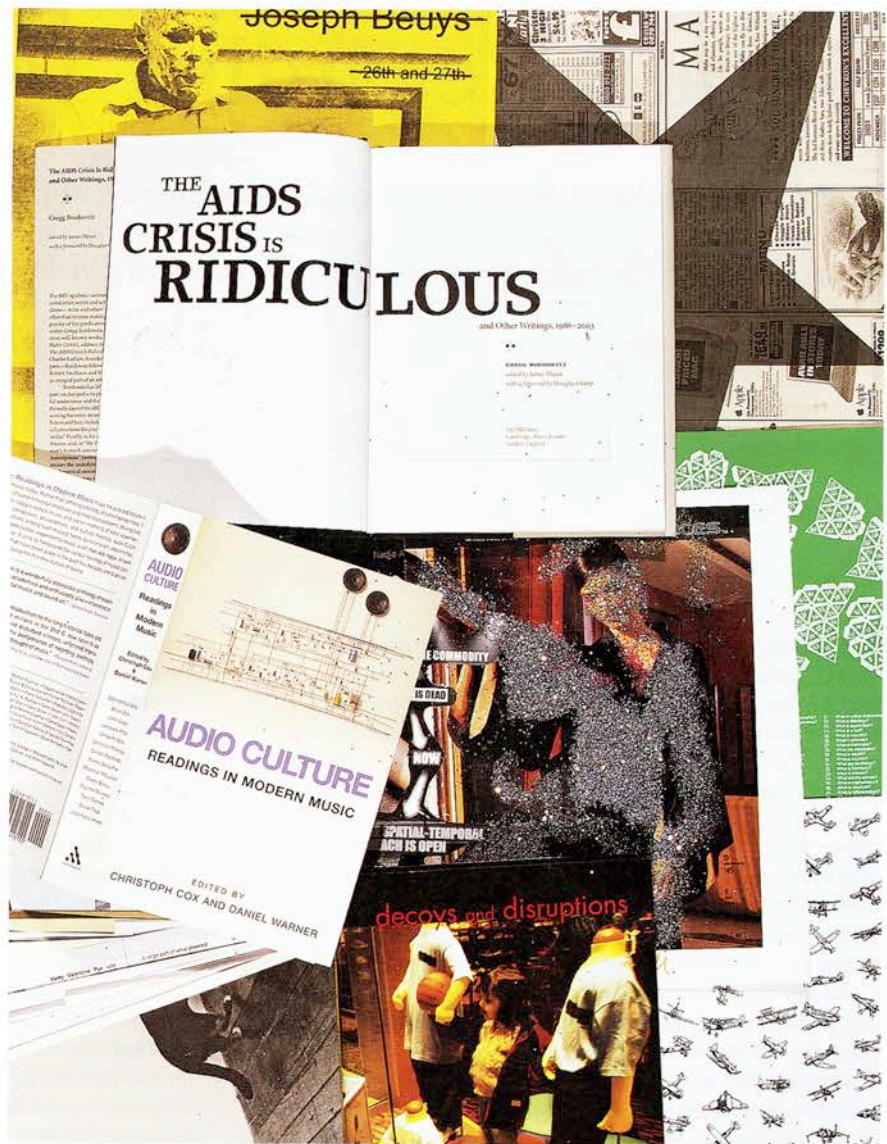
Essays included this book such as 'For an Art against the Mythology of Everyday Life', 'Wars and Metaphors', 'Theses on Defunding' and 'The Figure of the Artist, The Figure of the Woman', don't simply critique an entire battery of traditional systems but rather wreck them by methodologically dismantling cultural production's façade of self-sustainability and showing us instead how it survives in much the same way as any other business. Rosler's own visual practice (photography, video, performance, installation) side-stepped gallery-based structures for many years, and by employing methods of macro and micro distribution such as garage sales, billboards and postcards Rosler indicated that the communication of information is often just as important as the information it is communicating. When one of her students asked about her career and the key to success, she replied, 'My attitude was always that when people said, "You can't do that that way", or "That's not interesting, no one will pay for that", my answer was always, in effect, "Fuck you".'

It is this very chutzpah that has maintained the freshness of Rosler's message to us and which will continue to ensure her an eager audience who may or may not like hearing what she has to say. *Maria Fusco*

**Slimvolume Poster Publication 2004**  
(Slimvolume, London, 2004)

It's hard to know where to place a piece of writing about *Slimvolume*, but as I read it cover to cover, I guess this constitutes a 'book review'. Although it calls itself a 'poster publication', *Slimvolume* can also be seen as an exhibition, an economic model, an art chain letter or a 'do-it-yourself' curating kit. Curator Andrew Hunt began this year's edition (*Slimvolume* has been published annually since 2000) by approaching 15 artists who he felt had a strong collaborative element to their work. Each artist was then asked to invite a guest to contribute to the publication. With Hunt deliberately relinquishing overall curatorial control, the diverse nature of the prints makes for a mix-and-match assortment of ideas and images, based on a complex web of friendships and favours.

As with previous editions, in order to extend this network of collaboration and



delegation, Hunt shared the responsibility for *Slimvolume's* distribution with the artists themselves. Each contributor selected somebody to receive a copy of the publication, and the list of lucky recipients – ranging from tabloid newspaper editors to George Lucas – is printed on the inside cover. Although the work is not for sale, a set of framed prints was also exhibited at the Redux Gallery, London, so as to open up the work to a wider audience.

In its unbound, unframed form *Slimvolume* feels like a compendium of hit-and-miss artistic curiosities. Although ordered alphabetically (the original 15 artists are paired with their guest contributors), readers can reshuffle the pack or extract individual prints as they please. Artists such as John Russell and Greville Worthington use this portfolio format to their advantage. In *Factum I and II* Russell deliberately overloads his collage with glitter to contaminate the entire package (an experience lost in the framed exhibition), while Worthington sandwiches his print

between the others, so as to press a single bamboo leaf – entitled *Phyllostachys Vivax Aureocaulis Huangwenzhu*. Elsewhere, some bend the A3 format to suit their work: Martin Vincent's empty concept charts, for instance, are printed in a six-page booklet, *Graphs 04*.

With 150 editions, each individual copy of *Slimvolume* differs slightly from the next. Milly Thompson exploits the degrading quality of her screen print so that the image of a sobbing artist – titled *Private View* – gradually fades throughout the run. Other contributors use Xerox or digital prints to make up the numbers. For *Rose on Pink* Dustin Ericksen managed to commandeer a margin in the *Financial Times* to mass-produce his compass motif.

Although the publication's distribution process could be seen as a form of private members' club, this latest addition to the *Slimvolume* family tree follows an alternative path to that of the commercial art market – relying on word of mouth and mutual exchange rather than money. *Holly Walsh*