

MAKING SOCIAL REALITIES WITH BOOKS

A series, of **lectures** and **workshops**, that explores the idea of how **books**—libraries, archives, publishing, and distribution—are used to create distinct social realities, whether it is in small communities, or entire movements within art practices and related activities.

DAVID SENIOR: ACCESS TO TOOLS

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In 1968, Stewart Brand founded the **Whole Earth Catalog**. Brand's goals were to make a variety of tools accessible to newly dispersed counterculture communities, back-to-the-land households, and innovators in the fields of technology, design, and architecture, and to create a community meeting-place in print. The catalogue quickly developed into a wide-ranging reference for new living spaces, sustainable design, and experimental media and community practices. After only a few years of publication it exploded in popularity, becoming a formidable cultural phenomenon. Books, selected and described by

the editorial staff and organized in sections titled Understanding Whole Systems, Shelter and Land Use, Communication, and Community, were the primary resources the Whole Earth Catalog offered.

For a 2011 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, David Senior surveyed these publications that were listed in the Whole Earth Catalog and also, generally summarized the history of the catalogue project over the course of the years 1968-1974. Senior's talk at rum46 will describe some highlights from his research for this exhibition project and also, reflect on the WEC's focus on experimen-

tal ideas in design and technology as well as its importance within an historical lineage of self-publishing/DIY art and design projects. Informed by the writing of Marshall McLuhan, Buckminster Fuller and Norbert Weiner, the Whole Earth Catalog was a new media experiment that pragmatically attempted to provide a new kind of information service for its readership, who in turn participated in and informed the development of the project. This kind of feedback loop between the producers of the publication and their audience will be explored and highlighted through examples from the publication's history.

Organized by:
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