

For the Readers, 2018

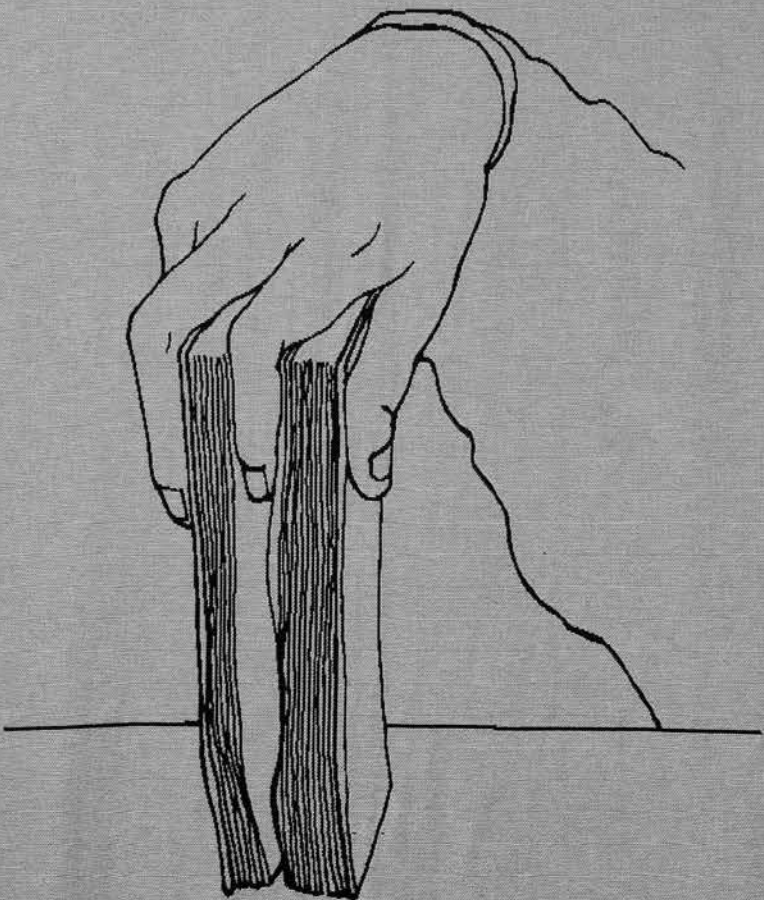
Kathy Slade

For the Readers was commissioned by the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery for the exhibition *Beginning with the Seventies: GLUT*. Lorna Brown, the exhibition's curator, invited me to produce a textile-based multiple in response to the *Rereading Room*, a remake of the Vancouver Women's Bookstore assembled by the artist (and my former student) Alexandra Bischoff. I studied the books that Alexandra had selected to represent the feminist bookstore and produced a series of blankets woven on a computerized Jacquard loom. The blankets were designed to be used by gallery visitors while spending time reading in the installation. It was a dream project that allowed me to revisit, engage with, and build upon several themes that run through my practice, such as the relationship between text and textile, the female hero as a reader, the repetition or reanimation of texts and artwork from the past, and the compilation of lists and archives—for instance book collecting—as a form of knowledge production.

Kathy Slade, *After Agnolo Bronzino, Portrait of a Young Man with a Book*, 2018, cotton, 60 x 74.5 inches

Photograph by Rachel Topham Photography

Collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery. Images courtesy of the artist



Kathy Slade, *For the Readers: Marilyn*, 2018, cotton, 60 x 74.5 inches

Photograph by Rachel Topham Photography
Collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery



She bought a map of Paris, and with the tip of her finger on it she walked about the capital. She went up the boulevards, stopping at every turning, between the lines of the streets, in front of the white squares that represented the houses. At last she would close the lids of her weary eyes, and see in the darkness the gas jets flaring in the wind and the steps of carriages towered with much noise before the peristyles of theatres. She took in *La Corbeille*, a ladies' journal, and the *Sylphe des Salons*. She devoured, without missing a word, all the accounts of first nights, races, and soirées, took an interest in the début of a singer, in the opening of a new shop. She knew the latest fashions, the addresses of the best tailors, the days of the Bois and the opera. In Eugène Sue she studied descriptions of furniture; she read Balzac and George Sand, seeking in them imaginary satisfaction for her own desires. Even at table she had a book by her, and turned over the pages while Charles ate and talked to her. Paris, more vague than the ocean, glimmered before Emma's eyes in a rose-coloured atmosphere, but the many lives that stirred amid this tumult were divided into parts, classed as distinct pictures. Emma perceived only two or three that hid from her all the rest, and in themselves represented all humanity. The world of ambassadors moved over polished floors in drawing rooms lined with mirrors, round oval tables covered with velvet and gold-fringed cloths. There were gowns with trains, deep mysteries, anguish hidden beneath smiles. Then came the society of duchesses; all were pale; all rose at four o'clock in the afternoon; the women, poor angels, wore English point on their petticoats; and the men, unappreciated geniuses under a frivolous outward seeming, rode horses to death at pleasure parties, spent the summer season at Baden, and toward their fortieth year married heiresses.

Kathy Slade, *For the Readers: Emma Bovary or After Gustave Flaubert: She bought a map of Paris...*, 2018, cotton, 60 x 74.5 inches
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