

MAK

FOR ART + ARCHITECTURE, L.A.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE HAUDENSCHILDGARAGE PRESENTS  
THE LAST BOOK: THIS AIN'T YOUR GRANDSON'S KINDLE**



**The Last Book Performance: Sunday April 26, 4pm – 7pm at the MAK Center,  
The Schindler House, Los Angeles**

(La Jolla, March 11, 2009) It has not always been the case. It is neither their desire nor their destiny. Words and images need not live unrequited like Romeo and Juliet or Werther and Charlotte. Words and images have been, and can once again, become wrapped in an eternal entwine, living an existence that is both ecstatic and banal.

Such is the goal of *The Last Book*, produced by the *haudenschildGarage*, a Spare Parts project, conceptualized and directed by Steve Fagin. Its vainglory is the attempt to resurrect the medieval illuminated manuscript through the invocation of our current alchemy, the new technologies, to conjure a future as the past in reverse. To this end the *haudenschildGarage* has constructed a one of a kind book that includes text, drawings, moving images and sounds. Its construction in the medieval, supersized tradition consists of three illuminated folios each eighteen and a half inches high, thirteen inches wide and three inches deep. *The Last Book* has enlisted the writing skills of Mary Gaitskill, the moving images of Leslie Thornton and YouTube, the drawings of Davina Semo, the music of Greg Landau, and the soulful voice of Shanghai novelist, Mian Mian.

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The *haudenschildGarage* was founded by Director Eloisa Haudenschild in 2003 as a 21st century cultural search engine, pursuant of interesting work wherever it occurs and in whatever form it takes. The *haudenschildGarage* wishes to transcend the 19th century salon and the 20th century alternative art space. It is a home away from home to all seeking to engage in cultural experimentation, place and conversation. It routinely presents symposia, lectures, and film screenings to the public. Whether international projects, dialogs or commissions, the *haudenschildGarage* has a willingness to collaborate with like-minded institutions and artists. The hope is through providing a permissive context for opinion and production, new ideas and visions will have an opportunity to take shape.

The Last Book performance will take place on April 26 from 4pm – 7pm at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture, L.A. at the Schindler House. The *haudenschildGarage* would like to acknowledge the support of Kimberli Meyer, Director of the MAK Center for Art and Architecture, L.A. at the Schindler House.

### More about The Last Book participants

**STEVE FAGIN** - Steve Fagin ([www.stevefagin.net](http://www.stevefagin.net)) is Professor of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego. He has produced a series of feature length videos including *The Amazing Voyage of Gustave Flaubert and Raymond Roussel*, *The Machine That Killed Bad People* and *TropiCola*. These films have been featured prominently at museums, international film festivals, art biennials and have been screened on Bravo International in Latin America, Canal + in Europe and PBS in the United States. His work has had a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, New York and is the subject of a book from Duke University Press, *Talkin' With Your Mouth Full: Conversations with the Videos of Steve Fagin*. The work has been presented at both the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York in many contexts including both of their summary shows of the essential art of the twentieth century. Currently he is working as Creative Consultant for the *haudenschildGarage* and is the Commissioning Editor for the Spare Parts Projects, *haudenschildGarage*.

**MARY GAITSKILL** - Mary Gaitskill is an American author of essays, short stories and novels. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Esquire*, *The Best American Short Stories* (1993 and 2006), and *The O. Henry Prize Stories* (1998). She is the author of *Veronica*, nominated for a 2005 National Book award in the Fiction category. Gaitskill is also the author of *Because They Wanted To*, which was nominated for the PEN/Faulkner Award in 1998. Her story *Secretary* was the basis for the film of the same name. Gaitskill made her book debut in 1988 with the short-story collection *Bad Behavior*. The novel *Two Girls, Fat and Thin* follows the childhood and adult lives of Justine Shade (thin) and Dorothy Never (fat). Justine works through her sadomasochistic issues while Dorothy works through her up-and-down commitment to the philosophy of "Definitism" and its founder "Anna Granite" (thinly-veiled satires of Objectivism and Ayn Rand). Her fiction typically is about female characters dealing with their own inner conflicts, and her matter-of-fact subjects includes many taboo subjects such as prostitution, addiction, and sadomasochism. Gaitskill says that she herself had worked as a stripper and call girl. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, she teaches creative writing at Syracuse University.

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**MIAN MIAN** - One of the most important writers from China's new generation, Mian Mian has lived up to her reputation as China's best bad girl novelist. She drew wide attention from the literati starting at the age of 17 when she became the first Chinese writer to ever describe a drug related life. Her characteristic flavor of "cruel youth" and her serious attitude towards self-reflection quickly attracted a large following of young readers. Her novels have been translated into 15 different languages and published worldwide. *Candy*, Mian Mian's magnum opus, an underground best seller, is regarded as the most remarkable adolescent literature in China. In April 2000, the government officially banned her book and subsequently the rest of her books. However by this time, hundreds of thousands of pirated copies had already been circulated. Mian Mian's literature had exerted tremendous influence on the Chinese X and Y generations. She has become a cultural icon for a generation of Chinese youth who value the authenticity and honesty of her portrayal of the future of the new Shanghai. In 2009 she published her new novel, *Panda Sex*, in China and France, soon to be published in English.

**GREG LANDAU** - Greg Landau is an award-winning music/video producer, educator and music historian. He produced three Grammy nominated CD's and among the over 30 CDs, film sound tracks and videos. He has worked with renowned artists including: Patato Valdes, Buena Vista Social Club's Juan de Marcos Gonzalez, Susan Baca, Bobi Cespedes, Dr. Loco, Pete Seeger, Omar Sosa, John Santos, Pancho Quinto, Quetzal, Los Mocosos, Maldita Vecindad and David Byrne's record label Luaka Bop, Vanguard Records, Six Degrees and many others. His production credits include work for PBS, Disney, Sony, Warner Bros., CNN, Lucas Film, Six Degrees Records, McDonald's and StarMedia. As Executive Producer at Starmedia, he has produced videos with Christina Aguilera, Carlos Santana, Los Lobos, Sub-Comandante Marcos and many others. Over the last two decades, Greg has worked extensively with Oscar winning filmmaker Haskell Wexler and with his father, Saul Landau making documentary films in Latin America. In addition, he also continues his professional work producing music and videos while pursuing research about the role of music in contemporary societies. Greg currently teaches at the University of California at Santa Cruz and San Francisco City College.

**LESLIE THORNTON** - Leslie Thornton has long been considered a pioneer of contemporary media aesthetics, working at the borders and limits of cinema, video and digital media. Such seminal works as her ongoing series *Peggy and Fred in Hell* (1985- ) operate in the interstices between various media-forms, often using simultaneous, interacting projections of film and video to address both the architectural spaces of media, and the imaginary spaces of the spectator's involvement. Thornton uses the process of production as an explorative process, a collective endeavor positioning the viewer as an active reader, not a consumer. Thornton's career to date has been a unique and unusual one. She was one of the first artists to bridge the boundaries between cinema and video, to explore their complicities and resistances, and to embrace their differences as positive attributes. Thornton's complex articulations are both edifying innovations in media form and content and tacit deconstructions of the principles, presumptions and promises of technically reproducible artworks. *The Great Invisible*, is currently in progress, and has intermittently occupied Thornton for ten years. Thornton's other works include *Minutiae* (1979), *noexitkiddo* (1981), *Jennifer, Where Are You?* (1983), and *Adynata* (1984).

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**DAVINA SEMO** - Davina Semo is a writer, filmmaker, and mixed-media artist. Her work explores the disappointments and desires of young women, their friends, and the changing and scary world they live in. She completed an MFA in Visual Arts from the University of California, San Diego and she holds a BA in Visual Arts and Creative Writing from Brown University. She has exhibited in New York (NY), Providence (RI), San Diego (CA), Los Angeles (CA), Wilmington (DE) and Tijuana (Mexico).

The MAK Center is located at the Schindler House, 835 N. Kings Road in West Hollywood. Parking is available at the public structure at the northeast corner of Kings Road and Santa Monica Blvd. Admission to this event is free, rsvp required. For further information, contact [www.haudenschildgarage.com](http://www.haudenschildgarage.com) or email Monica Jovanovich, Managing Director of the *haudenschildGarage*, [monica@haudenschildgarage.com](mailto:monica@haudenschildgarage.com).

Original Schindler House Photograph by Gerald Zugmann, courtesy of the MAK Center, LA.

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