Guide to the Yani Pecanins Artists' Books

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Yani Pecanins artists' books
Date: 1980-2008
Collection Number: MS-M026
Creator: Pecanins, Yani, 1957-
Extent: 6.8 linear feet (12 boxes and 1 oversized folder)
Languages: The collection is in Spanish and English.
Repository: University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.
Irvine, California 92623-9557

Abstract: The collection comprises eighteen artists' books created by Mexican artist Yani Pecanins. Most of the books are unique (i.e., the artist only made one copy) and incorporate found objects, such as washing boards, spools of thread, newspaper, needles, combs, plates, and clothing fragments. Most are three-dimensional constructs rather than book-like in nature.

Access
The collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.

Acquisition Information

Accruals
Additions are expected.

Processing History

Biography
Mexican mixed-media artist Yani Pecanins is best known for her artists' books. Many of her books tell stories about women’s lives and incorporate everyday found objects, such as clothing, needles, threads, and pins. Her books often feature handwritten texts exploring sensation, intimacy, and the inner worlds of herself and others.

Pecanins was born in Mexico in 1957 of immigrant German and Catalan parents. Pecanins began creating artists' books in 1977 when she established Cocina Ediciones to publish books and portfolios for artists. Beginning in 1980 she began to create unique artists' books with found objects. In 1984 she established an art gallery and bookstore, El Archivero, with two other artists, Gabriel Macotela and Armando Saez, which only lasted a few years. Pecanins has exhibited her art throughout Mexico and the United States. In recent years, she has created art objects and installations that transcend the book format.

Collection Scope and Content Summary
The collection comprises eighteen artists' books created by Mexican artist Yani Pecanins. Most of the books are unique (i.e., the artist only made one copy) and incorporate found objects, such as washing boards, spools of thread, newspaper, needles, combs, plates, and clothing fragments. Most are three-dimensional constructs rather than book-like in nature.

Collection Arrangement
This collection is arranged in alphabetical order.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog.

Subjects
Guide to the Yani Pecanins
Artists' Books

Box 2  
*El beso, la muerte 1980*

Scope and Content Note
Seventeen leaves laid loose in portfolio with red tie attached by wax stamps; some leaves have mounted miniature envelopes (with content); some of the illustrations are mounted; some of the illustrations incorporate organic material “Esta carpeta fue impresa en mimeógrafo, a mano, edición limitada de 100 ejemplares. Se terminó de imprimir en octubre de 1980”— Colophon.

Box 2  
*En blanco 1988*

Scope and Content Note
Accordion folded, handmade sheet of beige paper. Includes oval-shaped stamps, pieces of string, embossed silver wax, white paper tags with fingerprints, perforated wax paper, and small attached pieces of white paper. Signed and dated by artist. Stamped with “Cocina Ediciones Mimeográficas.”

Box 9  
*Caminar 2007*

Scope and Content Note
One pair of brown suede high-heeled dress shoes, each with booklet attached. The booklets consist of stab-bound sheets of tracing paper printed in black and off-white ink with images of thread around which the artist’s handwritten text is decoratively arranged. Each booklet also includes a sheet of found, previously used paper. The first booklet (7 leaves) is cut to fit and affixed within the back half of the insole of the left shoe; the second booklet (8 leaves) is cut to fit and affixed to the bottom of the right shoe.

Box 3  
*El Deseo 1993*

Scope and Content Note
Created for a 1992-1993 exhibit in San Francisco, California, the book comprises an ivory silk nightgown on which poetry is written in red ink. The nightgown is enclosed within a box wrapped with crinkled wax paper. Edition of one.

Box 4  
*Donde nadie sabe de mí 2001*

Scope and Content Note
Collage of hand-held mirror, strings, comb, lace, stones, hair pin, folded pieces of tracing paper with drawings and text, and other objects, enclosed in a wood and glass frame.
Box 11  
*Estoy queriendo ser otra 2007*

Scope and Content Note  
Found linens (some embroidered), a small ironing board, and small electric flat iron. The linens contain the artist's handwritten text and transfer prints, and are arranged with pins to the ironing board. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 5  
*La Herida 2004*

Scope and Content Note  
Created as an homage to the artist's grandmother, the book comprises six pieces of antique table linen and cloth with handwritten text, and one translucent paper page with a photograph, all mounted on a washboard. Also includes clothes pins, hair pins, and a stone. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 2  
*Lo que existe en mi 2006*

Scope and Content Note  
Eight pieces of linen and ten spools of thread with handwritten text mounted on an old saw. Also includes multiple buttons, cross-stitched embroidery, and other media. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 3  
*Message in a bottle: A book 2006*

Scope and Content Note  
Small blue bottle containing sand and ceramic fragments with handwritten text. Included in the artist's exhibit, "Una Serie de Cosas" in Mexico City, November 2006.

Box 12  
*Mi Interior 2008*

Scope and Content Note  
Collage work of eight drawn and calligraphic antique fabric pieces, embroidery cloths and handkerchiefs, decorated with tipped-in entwined strings, cut-out prints, paper, rice paper envelopes tipped in with different contents, and sewed strings with buttons; all are bound together with an embodied small hanger as spine. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 12  
*La Mochila 1986*

Scope and Content Note  
Book mounted on vintage toy printing set box. Tipped in the inside of the box top are printed paper and cards bound together with thread, sticker and small pin. Inside of the box is a collage of vintage toys, printed and manuscript paper, a match, a small ex-voto with green thread bow tipped in with sealing-wax, and a toy movable-type printing set. Signed and dated limited edition, one of two.

Box FB-047 : 5  
*Patrones 1994*

Scope and Content Note  
Collage on accordion-folded, handmade paper with photographs, fabric, sewing needle, buttons, string, and stamped wax. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 6, 7  
*El libro de Ulises [Qué es un libro?] 2006?*

Scope and Content Note  
Metal teapot and nine ceramic, glass, and metal plates, all with handwritten text. All ten items are meant to be stacked one on top the other. Included in the exhibit, "Una Serie de Cosas" in Mexico City, November 2006.

Processing/Project Information  
The exhibit card for "Una Serie de Cosas" is included in box 6 to show how the pieces are meant to be stacked. The pieces are numbered on the bottom.
Box 10  
**Sueños 2007**  
Scope and Content Note  
One pair of black leather girls' shoes. The left shoe contains four smooth white stones upon which are written words such as "deseo," "esperanza," "sentir," and "incertidumbre." One of the stones has a thread wrapped around it which is held with a small piece of masking tape. The right shoe has six paper tags attached by string to the shoe strap. On the labels are transfer-printed images of faces girls and young women; one of the images is of Anne Frank. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 8  
**El tendedero 2007**  
Scope and Content Note  
Washboard covered in cloth mounted on box. Box contains pieces of tracing paper in the shape of a doll's dress with writing, pieces of cloth with writing, buttons, pins, and other sewing implements. Signed and dated edition of one.

Box 2  
**Te dirán una cosa 2004**  
Scope and Content Note  
Two pieces of folded linen, one for a cover with a button closure and one comprising four leaves with handwritten text and bound with string. Attached within are needles, a newspaper clipping, pins, buttons, a comb, nail, and other items. Edition of one.

Box 5  
**Todo lo que tengo 2006**  
Scope and Content Note  

Box 1  
**Travesía 2000**  
Scope and Content Note  
Photocopied images, buttons, threads, cellophane bag, photocopied passports, and strings with paper labels, composed in a metal box. Included in an exhibit on exiles in May 2000.