

# LATER HEAVEN



a limited edition artist's book

**by Dana Smith**

San Francisco, California, USA

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# LATER HEAVEN

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edition of 8 +1AP

Dana Smith has created a book that is inspired by the *I Ching*, (易經, yì jīng) sometimes called "Book of Changes," a Chinese book originating about 3000 years ago often used as an oracle. The *I Ching* is the result of a system of 64 hexagrams, where each one defines an archetypal event or universal experience of living. Each hexagram is comprised of two trigrams positioned one above the other. Each trigram is made of three lines where the line is either broken or solid. If one calculates all the possible combinations of the two choices, broken or solid, in groups of three stacked in a vertical pile, the total number of possible combinations is eight. Therefore the fundamental building blocks of the *I Ching* are the eight Ba Gua, or trigrams. They are individually defined as Qian or heaven, Kun or earth, Li or fire, Kan or water, Xun or wind, Zhen or thunder, Dui or lake, and Gen or mountain. Dana's book, *Later Heaven*, contains subjective illustrations of these eight trigrams using photo-collage and poetry derived from translations of the ancient text. The book reflects the way the *I Ching* combines the trigrams into sixty-four hexagrams by combining two trigrams, one stacked on the other, by having two sets of pages bound one above the other using two spines so that the upper set of pages can be turned or read separately from the lower set of pages. Thus the eight trigram's illustrations can be mixed and combined in 64 different ways by the reader. The book is called "Later Heaven", after a name of one of the many possible ways of sequencing the eight Ba Gua.

The book is printed on Moab Moenkopi Unryu Washi Paper paper using Epson pigment based inks. Each book is hand bound by Dana Smith using a variation of a coptic binding with two spines, one at the top and the other at the bottom. The cover is digitally printed on silk moire bookbinding material over boards. The closed book measures 12" by 12". Signed by the artist and blindstamped.

- Photo-montage, poetry, and design by Dana Smith
- Hand bound by Dana with a coptic stitched silk moire-covered hard cover with two spines.
- Digitally printed on Moab Moenkopi Unryu Washi paper with Epson pigment-based inks.
- Housed in a custom box covered with Kozo Rlce paper.
- Signed by the artist and blind stamped.
- Edition of 8 +1AP.



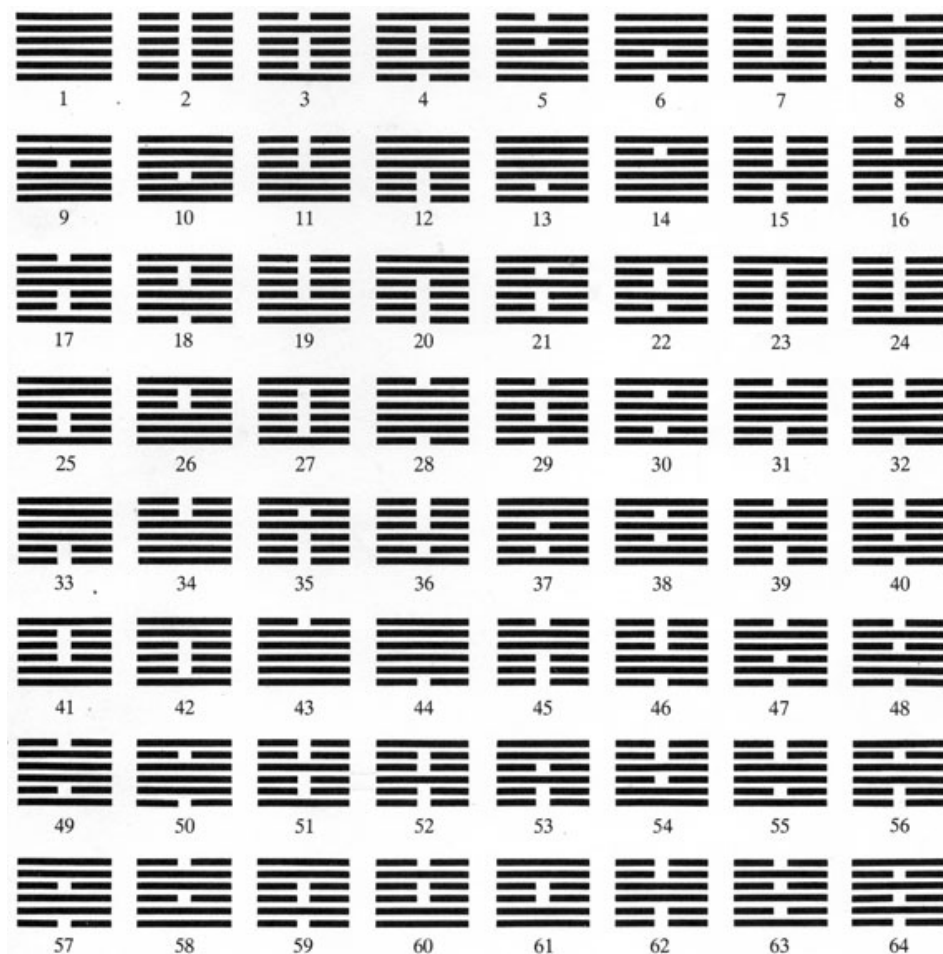


# THE ICHING ORACLE

The *I Ching*, (易經, yì jīng) the so-called "Book of Changes," is a very ancient book of wisdom; its roots go back to mythical times, and it comes to us in its present form from 3000 B.C. According to Richard Wilhelm (who translated it into German and provided an admirable commentary), both of the main branches of Chinese philosophy—Taoism and Confucianism—have their common origin in the *I Ching*. The book is based on the hypothesis of the oneness of man and the surrounding cosmos, and of the complementary pairs of opposites Yang and Yin (i.e. the male and female principles). It consists of 64 "signs" each represented by a drawing made up of six lines. In these signs are contained all the possible combinations of Yang and Yin. The straight lines are looked upon as male, the broken lines as female. Each sign describes changes in the human or cosmic situation, and each prescribes, in a pictorial language, the course of action to be followed at such times. The Chinese consulted this oracle by means that indicated which of the signs was relevant at a given moment. They did so by using 50 small sticks in a rather complicated way that yielded a given number. Today the more usual method of consulting the *I Ching* is to use three coins. Each throw of the three coins yields one line. "Heads," which stands for a male line, count as three; "tails," a broken female line, count as two. The coins are thrown six times, and the numbers that are produced indicate the sign or hexagram (i.e. the set of six lines) to be consulted.

But what significance has such "fortune telling" for our own time? Even those who accept the idea that the *I Ching* is a storehouse of wisdom will find it hard to believe that consultation of the oracle is anything more than an experiment in the occult. It is indeed difficult to grasp that more is involved, for the ordinary person today consciously dismisses all divining techniques as archaic nonsense. Yet they are not nonsense. As Dr. Jung has shown, they are based on what he calls the "principle of synchronicity" (or, more simply, meaningful coincidence). It is based on the assumption of an inner unconscious knowledge that links a physical event with a psychic condition, so that a certain event that appears "accidental" or "coincidental" can in fact be psychically meaningful; and its meaning is often symbolically indicated through dreams that coincide with the event.

From Jolande Jacobi's essay in *Man and His Symbols*, by Carl Jung







# HOW TO CONSULT THE ORACLE

One of the most common methods for consultation of the IChing oracle is done by tossing three coins at once, six times in a row to create the hexagram which will be interpreted by matching the hexagram to the corresponding paragraphs of imagery and advice written in the ancient text.

Using three identical coins with heads and tails, build the hexagram one line at time, from the bottom to the top. Line 1 of the hexagram is at the bottom while line 6 is at the top.

Toss all three coins at once. Add up the numerical value of the three coins based on whether they came up heads or tails. The "head" side will be the Yin side and have a value of 2. The "tail" side will be the Yang side and have a value of 3.

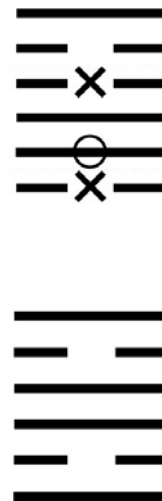
- Three heads equal 9, and that is a moving Yin line, usually represented by the broken line with a little circle in the middle.
- Two tails and one head equals 8, and is stationary Yin line, represented by the broken line.
- Two heads and one tail equals 7, and is a stationary Yang line, represented by the unbroken line.
- Three heads equal 6, and that is a moving Yang line, usually represented by the unbroken line with an X in the middle.

NUMBER	LINE
9	
8	
7	
6	

Place the appropriate line at the bottom of the hexagram, and then continue to throw the coins 5 more times, each time placing the resulting line above the others to form a column of 6 lines, this is your answer from the oracle in the form of a hexagram.

First read the primary hexagram. Ignore the differences between the stationary and moving lines to obtain your main hexagram. Here it is possible to use *Later Heaven* to help interpret and envision the hexagram - look at the bottom three lines of the hexagram (the lower trigram) and match them to the corresponding lines printed on the upper right corner of pages in the lower half of the book. Then do the same with the upper three lines of the hexagram (upper trigram) and match them to the lines printed on the lower right pages of the upper half of the book. You will see that your hexagram is formed when the upper and lower pages of the book are matched to the upper and lower trigrams of the hexagram.

If you have moving lines, obtain the secondary hexagram. If there are moving lines in your coin toss, convert each moving line to its opposite. Hence a moving Yang line becomes a Yin line while a moving Yin line becomes a Yang line. The resulting hexagram is your secondary hexagram and represents the ending situation while the primary hexagram would represent the current situation. Repeat the process described above and, use *Later Heaven* to interpret your hexagram.





# TECH: DIGITAL AND HANDMADE

**The digital revolution** – Around 1992 digital tools began to be available and I realized that my art, my collage and photography would be revolutionized by these tools. I was very well situated to realize the power of digital photography and Adobe Photoshop by my deep exploration of cut-and-paste collage, as seen in the handmade book, *32 Big Pictures*, a series of collages about Barbie. I was highly attuned to the way images are affected by collage techniques such as juxtaposition and re-contextualization. Photoshop also radically expanded the possibilities for photo-collage, for example, the ability to achieve a seamless merging of multiple images, and it provided a technique for depicting a transparency effect where multiple images appear to be superimposed.

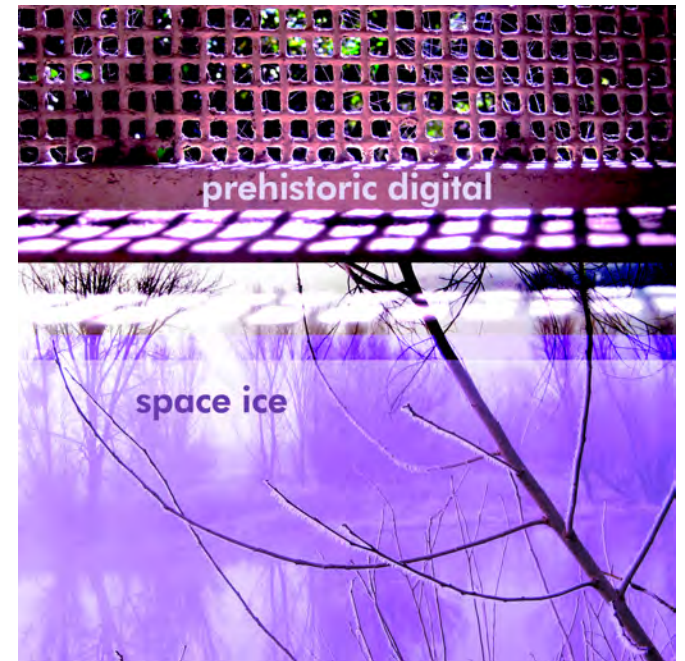
**Adobe Photoshop: collage as documentation** – when Photoshop became available to artists and photographers the "truth" of photography was called into question because of Photoshop's profound power to alter the image that was "seen" by the camera. But I have embraced a deeper truth that is depicted by creating a deliberate statement that is carefully constructed using photos that are "doctored" to convey information that may not be photograph-able, but is nevertheless accurate and truthful in its revelation.

**Digital cameras** – among the most liberating qualities of digital photography is the ease of shooting many, many photos for later editing. I began to approach shooting photos as more of a process of data collection, with the idea that the final image, composition, color, detail, content, would be created later in Photoshop. For the *Mission Miracle Mile* projects I gathered thousands of photos and videos, sometimes shooting almost randomly, using a few different Canon Powershot cameras which are inconspicuous enough to allow for an intimate yet unobtrusive presence in public places.

**Inkjet Printers** – Back in 1980 I was thrilled to gain access to a black and white Xerox machine to create a small magazine, but that frame of reference is now ancient history. When I started working with inkjet printing in about 2000, the IRIS printer was expensive and only accessible through a few studios in the Bay area. Less than ten years later I purchased my own large format 44 inch wide Epson 9880 inkjet printer for around \$3000. The images that inkjet printers create are vivid, photo-real, and highly detailed. A huge array of papers with a coating that is receptive to the ink is available. I tend to use a 100% rag paper coated on two sides for my artists books.

**Scissors, paste, and other bookbinding tools** – The digitally printed papers become a tangible, object when I fold, and trim and sew them into a binding, in other words, when I apply the ancient technology of the book to the somewhat ephemeral technology of the digital print I create a manipulatable thing - a book. This is a way of anchoring the idea in real space and in time so that the ideas find solid ground and value. The tools that I use with my hands are conduits for creative ideas of a different nature than the digitally inspired ideas, but they play well together, and I often find myself painting, or pasting papers onto the pages of my handmade books.

**Textual elements** – *Later Heaven* is a study in the interplay of text and image so that the interpretation of either one is substantially transformed when seen together on the page. The use of text and image together fires different areas of the brain simultaneously thus exciting unusual connections and ideas.





## INFLUENCES AND INSPIRATION

Like most technological developments in the arts, the new pixel-based digital imaging technology has a particular look and feel that is different from images created with previous tools. Many photographers and designers and artists were not pleased with the new look and strove to replicate the look of work made before their use of the digital tools. On the other hand I loved the look of digital cameras, and images manipulated by computer applications. I did not make any attempt to disguise my tools. However, my digital imagery had other frames of reference that were retained even after digital entered my studio including painting, traditional photography and especially street photography, cinema, graphic design and others.

Trained as a painter, as well as a photographer, my first inspiration is color, composition, and light in an impressionist sense. My visual experience is primarily retinal, with conceptual issues of content taking a close second. Images are painted onto a digital canvas using Photoshop and a sensitive digitizing tablet instead of a mouse or trackball interface. The process of sampling, or collecting digital material (images) is like harvesting a cornucopia of data - color, texture, shadows, details, etc. What follows is to interpret the source material as a picture that is beautiful and interesting, and perhaps suggests a narrative content or social commentary. Because the images are photographic in nature they imply a direct relationship with our world in reality, but it is the formal composition that draws the eye and allows the viewer to form an internal, personal narrative from the photographic information depicted.

Even though I see my books as stories I often attempt to present the story with a non-textual strategy, in other words to present a narrative visual experience that is not mediated by text. But in the case of *Later Heaven* there is a textual strategy at play. The poetic phrases, as well as the images and color themes are derived from Dana's ongoing research of the extensive scholarly interpretations of the *I Ching*.





# Dana Smith

[www.danadanadana.com](http://www.danadanadana.com)

## EDUCATION

Pacific Northwest College of Art - BFA in Photography/Painting, 1982

• San Francisco Art Institute - MFA in Painting, 1991

## BIOGRAPHY

Born in Staten Island, New York in 1959, grew up in Denver, Colorado.

Moved to San Francisco in 1982. Currently lives and maintains a studio in San Francisco, California.

Dana Smith studied painting and photography during her education in the arts. Subsequently she has developed two separate bodies of work that reflect those two paths of study. The paintings she has created are primarily representational works depicting portraits or landscapes. Meanwhile, the work that Dana Smith does in the photographic realm is usually incorporated into a book format. Development of narrative with series of images and sometimes the inclusion of text and collage techniques is central to the ideas that Dana is pursuing with her limited edition, handmade books. In 2004 Dana Smith founded a fine arts digital press for the purpose of creating limited edition artwork. The project is called Dana Dana Dana and can be seen in its entirety on-line at [www.danadanadana.com](http://www.danadanadana.com). Very small edition, hand-made books and digital prints have been the focus with an interest in working collaboratively with other artists. The books and print editions are represented by Booklyn Artists Collective, Brooklyn, New York, and have traveled to fairs and exhibitions world wide, and are housed in libraries and private collections internationally.

## SELECTED COLLECTIONS

- Palace of the Legion of Honor, The Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, California
- Library of Congress, Washington DC
- The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England
- Stanford University, Palo Alto, California
- Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California
- Harvard University Art Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- New York Public Library, New York, New York
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Florida Atlantic University, The Arthur and Mata Jaffe Center for Book Arts
- Cornell University, Ithaca, New York
- The Athenæum Music & Arts Library, La Jolla, California
- The Boston Athenæum
- Paul Hertzmann Collection, San Francisco, California
- Kunstbibliothek, Berlin, Germany
- Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
- University of Connecticut Library Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
- Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley
- Dartmouth College
- Ampersand - Jack Ginsberg, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
- Bavarian State Library, Munich
- Book and Writing Museum of the German National Library, Leipzig
- Lyrik-Kabinett Library, Munich

