

DAWSON WEBER
POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK* – VERSION CONCRETE
Pages 56-7

(Letterpressed envelope containing: photocopy, inkjet print, and blueprint)

A new kind of mentality must emerge: a mentality of contribution and relation. There must be a group of people who find hard people extremely fascinating. This is one of the considerations. Then the bearer of tensions feels rewarded. Explicitly. But this kind of consideration implies just as much a renovation of quality with a dominant class. The problem lies in opening paths for this, in not wasting time, in acting in a state of necessity while outside everything seems to be calm; and it does not seem to be justified, when in fact this action is doubly justified by the fact that it does not seem to be.

–Jannis Kounellis

The introduction to the Peter Pauper Press edition of Poor Richard's Almanack* outlines from the start that these short remarks are not necessarily by Benjamin Franklin himself, but instead, according to Franklin, "were the 'Wisdom of many Ages and Nations.'" Having approached the Almanack with the assumption that Franklin had a slightly different authorial role, this realization suggested certain problems of authorship that seemed worthy of investigation—one that places emphasis on compiling and reorganizing rather than conventional originality.

The VERSION CONCRETE version of Poor Richard's Almanack uses extracted bits of original statements as linguistic and visual material to yield both a new concrete poem and a blueprint drawing lacking in language. Much like the original verses were poetic guides for living and making life better, my re-presentation of Poor Richard's Almanack is one intended to present both language and image as separate entities, married by a common source, that through the act of translation carry forth the essence of these original clichés. In the current climate such re-presentations seem now the most necessary.

* Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanack (Mount Vernon, NY: Peter Pauper Press, n.d.).
Gloria Moure, Kounellis (Barcelona: Ediciones Poligrafa, S. A., 1990), 229.
Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanack (Mount Vernon, NY: Peter Pauper Press, n.d.), 6.