

**Extraction: Art on the Edge of the Abyss**  
**Collection CAE2228**

**Introduction/Abstract**

*EXTRACTION: Art on the Edge of the Abyss* is an ongoing multimedia, multi-venue, cross-border art intervention which seeks to provoke societal change by exposing and interrogating the negative social and environmental consequences of industrialized natural resource extraction.

**Biographical Note: Peter Koch**

Peter Koch is an American master letterpress printer. He was born in 1943 in Missoula, Montana where he grew up, steeped in the lore of the American West and witness to its aftermath of environmental and cultural destruction, which continues to influence his work more than four decades later. His aesthetic was subsequently shaped by apprenticeship to the great San Francisco printer Adrian Wilson as well as close study of the work of Jack Stauffacher and William Everson, and matured through various imprints in studios in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, and Venice.

Koch's printing career began in Missoula, where he founded Black Stone Press in 1974 and operated it with artist Shelley Hoyt-Koch, to whom he was married. The press's first publication, *Montana Gothic* (1974–1977), best described as a cowboy surrealist literary journal. The press relocated to San Francisco in 1978 and closed six years later. Koch subsequently published under press names that reveal his eclectic interests and seriousness of purpose as well as his irreverence: Peter Rutledge Koch, *Typographic Design*; Peter and the Wolf Editions; Editions Koch; *Hormone Derange Editions*; *Last Chance Gulch*; and Peter Koch Printer.

Koch is co-director with his wife, paper conservator Susan Filter, of the Codex Foundation (est. 2005), devoted to preserving and promoting the book as a work of art. The foundation organizes the biennial CODEX International Book Fair and Symposium, which brings artists who work in the form of the book from all over the world to the Bay Area with support from Stanford University Libraries among many other institutions and individuals.

**Scope and Content**

*EXTRACTION: Art on the Edge of the Abyss* is an ongoing multimedia, multi-venue, cross-border art intervention which seeks to provoke societal change by exposing and interrogating the negative social and environmental consequences of industrialized natural resource extraction. A global coalition of artists and creators committed to shining a light on all forms of extractive industry—from mining and drilling to the reckless plundering and exploitation of fresh water, fertile soil, timber, marine life, and innumerable other resources across the globe—the Extraction Project culminated in a constellation of nearly fifty overlapping exhibitions, performances, installations, site-specific work, land art, street art, publications, poetry readings, and cross-media events throughout 2021 and beyond.

The project was conceived by Peter Koch, master fine book printer and founder of The Codex Project and was at first a special project of Codex. It was meant to investigate extractive industry in all of its forms (from mining and drilling to the reckless exploitation of water, soil, trees, marine life, and other natural resources). The project, as a stand-alone organization, will continue to expose and interrogate extraction's negative social and environmental consequences, from the damage done to people, especially indigenous and disenfranchised

communities, to ravaged landscapes and poisoned water to climate change and its many troubling implications.

**This archive is currently in process.**