

Landscape in general, and the high Chihuahuan Desert of west Texas in particular, have played a pivotal role in shaping the way the three of us approach our individual work as artists. Although we work in different media, we share a strong interest in the desert, the land, and the way people interact with their environments. In 1999 we formally explored these connections in a collaborative series of books titled *Beauty.Chaos*. In each book, we presented collections of drawn images, sculptural objects, and texts that were a visual reflection of the many journeys we had taken together the previous year.

The journey through this volume begins with the book's metal jacket sleeve, created by Beverly Penn, which is etched with a topographic map of the landscape we explored and inscriptions of our thoughts during the collaboration. Slipping the book from its metal sleeve, one opens the silk casing to reveal Rachelle Thiewes' small sculpture in metal and slate, suggestive of a cactus thorn, which reflects both the seductive and threatening botanical forms of the desert and the light that sustains them. Lifting an adjacent overleaf, the viewer discovers Susan Davidoff's series of drawings, created in charcoal and natural pigments taken from the desert itself. Through these diverse and unusual materials, *Beauty.Chaos* explores patterns, layers, and the complexities and contradictions of the Chihuahuan Desert.



