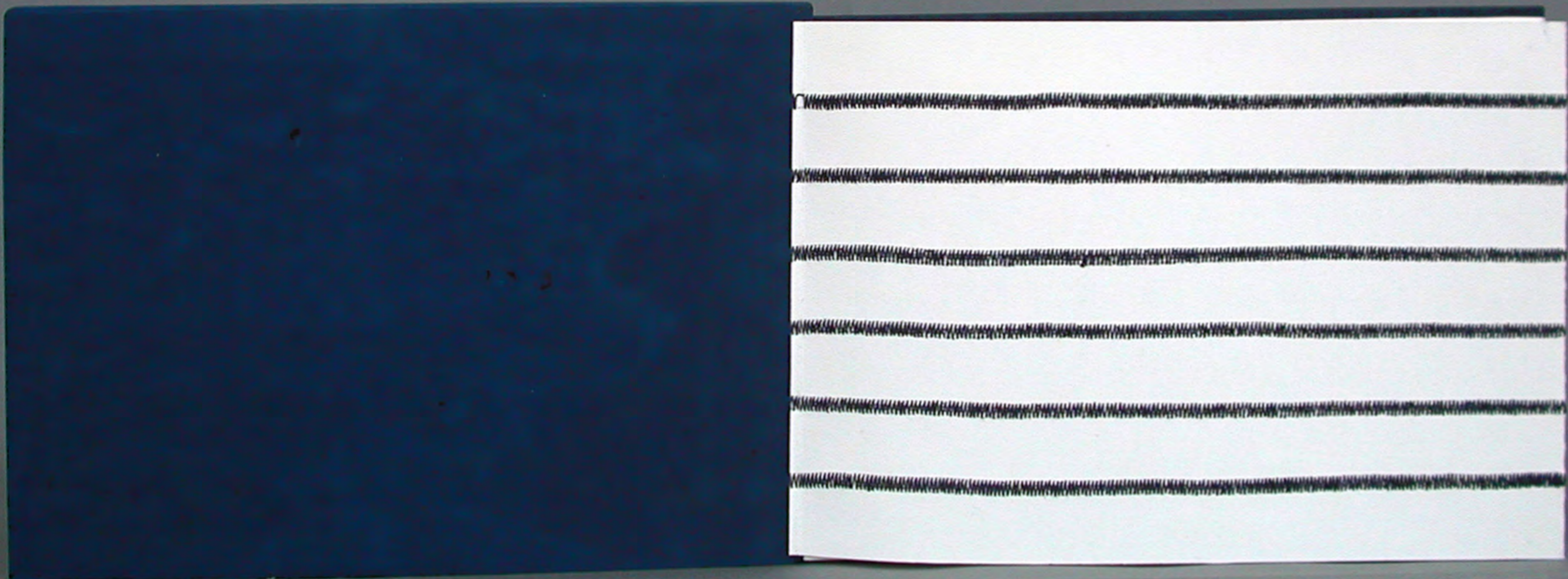


*There Is An Ocean*







the water, into the cupped hands of harmlessness, the ocean an open ever-beating heart. Imagine me, wrapped in gauze, seen



through the lit eyes of cotton, tender as a bird, buoyant as wood, an egg dropped into the ocean. Perfect, even, tiny waves around myself

of all, I want to relate the rockiness, relate the consistency, relate the tiny curled backs of sand, the unripe, unopen, unpronounced seeds of



and. Body, how we are tucked into each other, how we are heated, how burnt. We are protected at our edges and sand moves into water, entering flatly at a diver's angle, pressed along the bottom into its own simple sheet. Body, ocean bed, ocean floor, dark sandy roof of the entire world, dive and do not stop, dive and do not stop.



...dive and do not stop until you are elevated to an airy green, a disclosed reality of nakedness, a lush open pulse breathing out summer, singing island island island.

...a fantastic swell, its will, to be expanded and expandable. I lay within it as someone mythic might lose themselves to the belly of the earth, breathing as it does, confused by a wish for light, a happy abandon. To become co



clouds filled with nothingness, the world unconcerned with the flat-faced nothingness that smiles out at everyone. The streets prepare for ruin and I am the quiet private path to the park. The park is dull and

comfortable with my breath, with holding it, the way I have become comfortable with so many other things. I long to be more and more exactly where I am, the world pouring itself out around me.



little whip, metallic constellation. Where was my head, magnetized, pulled into the ocean, yet permanent as a

d tragic, slipping into the ocean, but I am coming, coming, white open creases in my body, aliveness in my body.

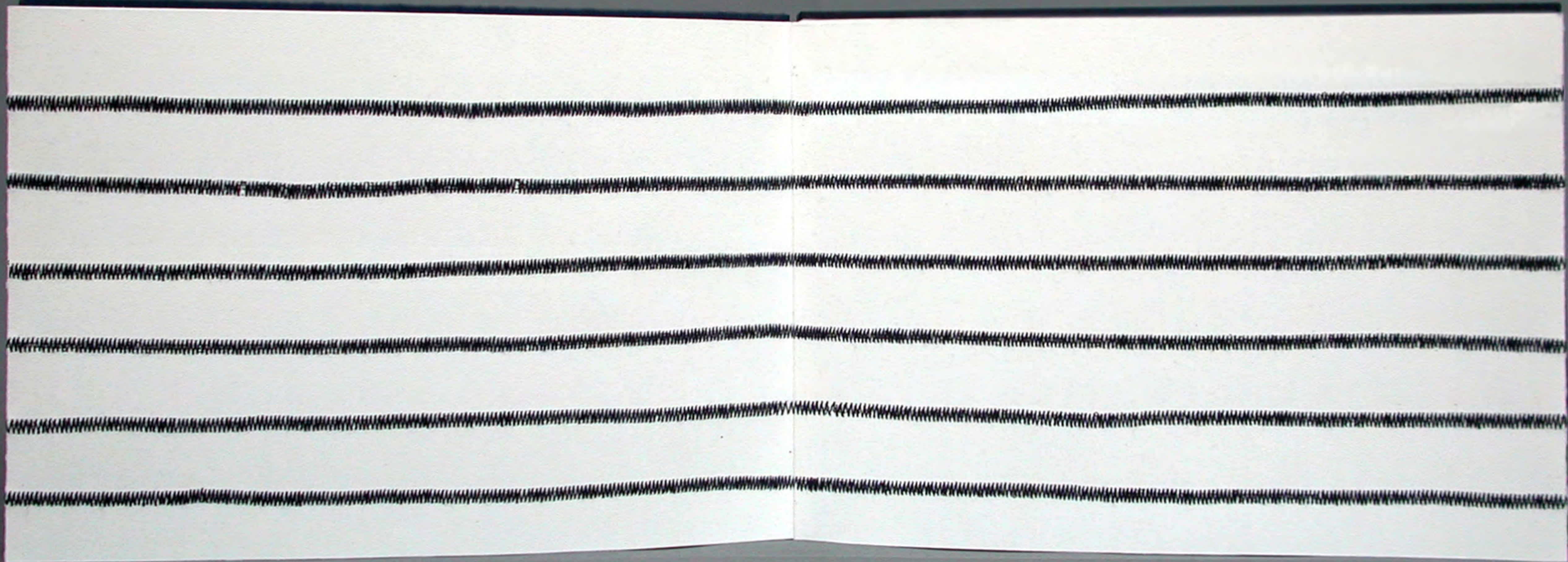


green tomato coming to the surface. I notice my feet, swear to God my hidden feet are there, but am unproven until I back out. Children dance in water, joking and unhurt. Flying fish of history, never to be caught, and my feet return, win the body's lottery. Boomerang of life, beat like a heart when I hold you.




all my own. Moment of wild skin, unending acceptance, my little faiths, my little holinesses, bring me away from here, and they do, they do, they do.









"There is an ocean in my body  
I cannot contain"

— Timothy Liu —

*There Is An Ocean*, written by Joshua Saul Beckman, was designed and printed by the author at the Women's Studio Workshop, Rosendale, New York, during an artist's residency in January of 1997, funded in part by the New York State Council on the Arts and The O.P. and W.E. Edwards Foundation. The type is Minion and the paper is Lana Bright White. The stitching of each book in the edition is unique, covering and uncovering different passages of the text. The artist wishes to thank Jennifer Moxley, Glen Baldrige, all of the women at the Women's Studio, and the Edward Albee Foundation for their valuable support. The above quote is from the book *Burnt Offerings*, Copper Canyon Press, 1995.

*Joshua Saul Beckman*

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