

«LES AVENTURIÈRES - Femmes à travers le monde «THE ADVENTURERS - Women around the world

How the project began :

The project was born within the feminist association FEMMES NOMADES, of which I have been a founding member. Since 2017 and through the research and writing work by one of the founders of the Collective, Maria Antonia Pingitore, the association has collected an important library of texts written by traveling women. Between 2017 and 2018, FEMMES NOMADES presented several theatrical readings to raise awareness of these women, with the support of TriArtis Publishing House, ARTA-Association de Recherche des Traditions de l'Acteur, and the Marguerite Durand Library. Once the reading series was over, the idea of turning this research work into a book project came about. The intention was to work on a series, somewhere between a fanzine and an experimental book, with each number dedicated to one of these women traveler. The idea was to work on each number of this series following a different graphic design and visual representation, starting from the reference imagery of the historical context of each travel. The series would feature a selection of these women travelers (14 different ones), starting with the first issue dedicated to the first woman in history to journey around the world - Ida Pfeiffer - and ending with a contemporary woman traveler, following a chronological progression.

What we proposed in Can Serrat :

We decided to dedicate the first edition of this series to Ida Pfeiffer. Ida was an extraordinary figure of the 19th century and an honorary member of the Institut de Géographie de Paris. Married to a respectable man, she became a mother and homemaker as soon as she reached adulthood, when, in the face of family disbelief, she left at the age of 47.

She will tour the world twice.

At Can Serrat, Maria Antonia Pingitore held her residency in January 2020, working on the writing part of the book, reading and researching on Ida Pfeiffer's original texts.

Carlotta Origoni was supposed to go into residency shortly after, to work on a graphic "translation" of the project, collecting the texts and then working on the book's editorial concept and image creation.

The pandemic upset the plans a bit, and Carlotta held her residency in May 2022.



What happened in the residency:

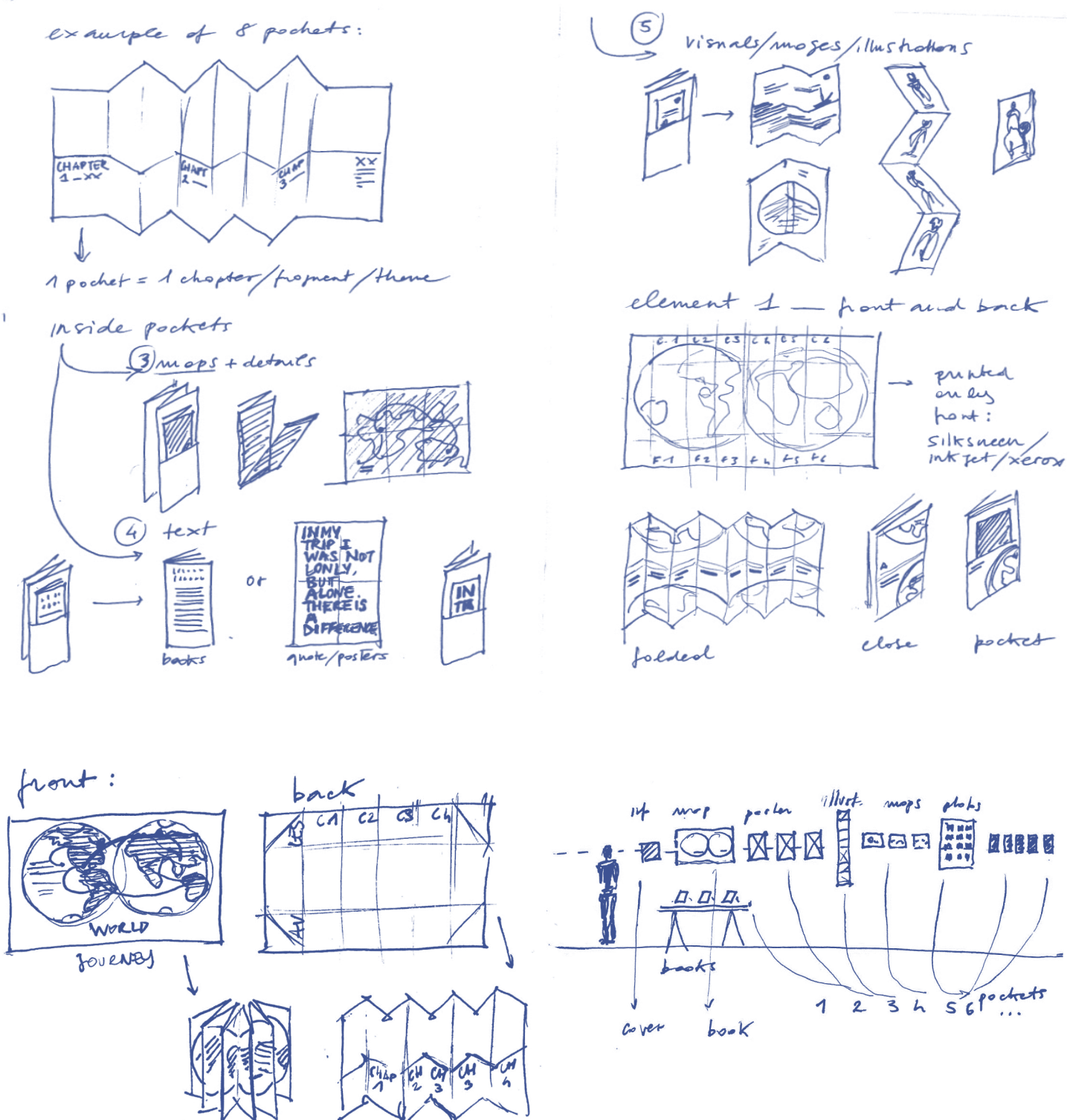
Step 1 / book conception

Upon arrival at the residency I was caught up in a quite intense rush of creation. Within a few days I worked on the editorial conception of what this book was going to be.

I am an art book and analog printing enthusiast, and I was happy and determined to work partly by hand on this first edition, thanks to Can Serrat's print shop.

In this first part of the residency, the idea of an accordion book created by folding a large format, with two pockets for each double page, took shape.

This structure allowed us a great flexibility and diversity not only for this first edition, but also for the series to come. This book-object seemed to have a very organic aspect with the content of the story we were telling: a kind of "toolbox," to be opened and "explored" rather than flipped through and looked at. Each element can be displayed and presented in the most diverse forms, like a kind of "suitcase" for a nomadic exhibition.



Step 2/ and now what?

After this initial moment followed a somewhat delicate one. In terms of visual creation, it was not easy to decide what the book would contain. I immediately felt a refusal to present this story simply by illustrating it. Moreover, at the time of Ida's journeys, travel publications were many and very well curated, filled with illustrated documents (from maps to drawings) that would be intimidating for anyone.

Consequently, the second part of the residency followed a different set of attempts: on the one hand, I concentrated on researching original documents (typographical material, period illustrations, maps) browsing through various online historical archives. On the other hand, I began to experiment with different printmaking techniques related to the 19th century (specifically a long series of unsuccessful attempts at cyanotype, and a series of better results with the gum-print technique, a kind of very cheap lithography) to find out what these printing techniques might have "revealed" in terms of visual atmosphere. I have worked starting from historical documents (maps, traveler's portraits, antique illustrations) with the intention of using analog printing process not as a medium of "realistic" reproduction, but as a tool for a graphic transformation. In the meantime, the question of whether and what "new" images I would create continued to persist. I felt a block that I had not anticipated at the idea of illustrating part of this story myself, and both Maria Antonia Pingitore and I felt the need to go beyond a simple "book dedicated to." It was also an intense time of exchange and inspiration with the other residents of Can Serrat - artists, writers, poets - without whom what came next would not have happened.

Step 3/ the book-game

More or less at this moment we had the idea of rethinking the edition as a sort of book-game. Intrigued by books for teenagers, I began to think about mixing two kind of games: on the one hand the narrative of the "enigma game" (reconstructing an unknown story, guessing a subject, etc.) and on the other hand that of the relationship game (tarot cards, cards, all the games that are used to have an exchange and question oneself). Only at this point I begin to feel the freedom to work on a new image creation. Learning on a part of the texts that Maria Antonia Pingitore had titled "little dictionary" - which contained the key words that act as ingredients for the story of Ida Pfeiffer - we decided to dedicate a card to each of these words, as if it were a tarot. It was no longer a matter of working on an illustration - realistic or not - about the woman or her journey, but of creating a visual and symbolic system through which the reader would be able to learn about the character and at the same time discover what the story of this adventure would trigger in himself. Each edition of the series would then be accompanied by a small deck of tarot cards, drawn from the key words of the traveling woman in the story, for the reader to collect.

Step 4/ putting everything together

In the last week of my residency I was joined by Maria Antonia Pingitore, and we put together all the material and ideas that have so far surfaced. The result was the first prototype of this book, which will be - hopefully - the first in a series of 14 woman travelers.

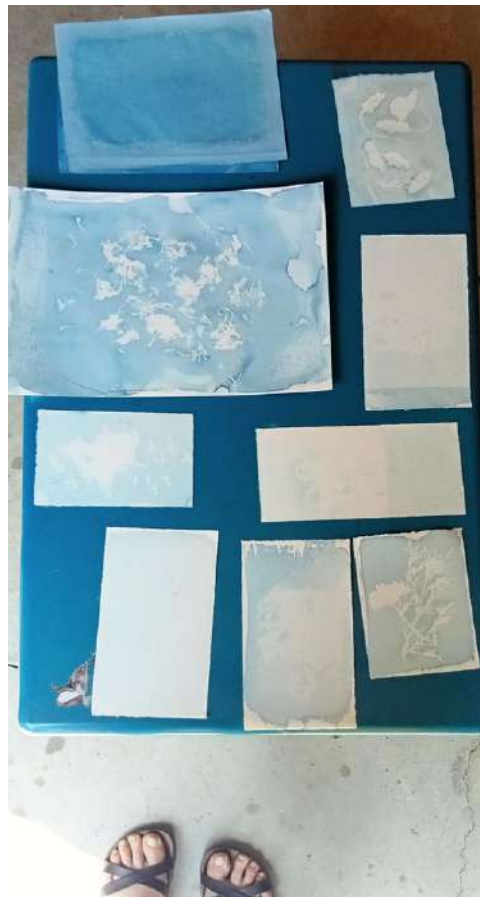
The book looks like this: On the large format that serves as cover the reader find the (historical) map used by the traveler for her journey. Inserted in the "cover" of the accordion book the reader will find all the writing part of the book, which can be loosened from the rest of the edition and simply read or used as a "base" for the game with pictures.

Inside the "pockets" there are different elements:

pocket 1/who is Ida? The reader is invited to find some of the few portraits of Ida (always represented in her typical Viennese female clothes). Instead, in the textbook he will discover who she really was (the woman often dressed up as a man during her travels, for example) and will be able to create his own image.

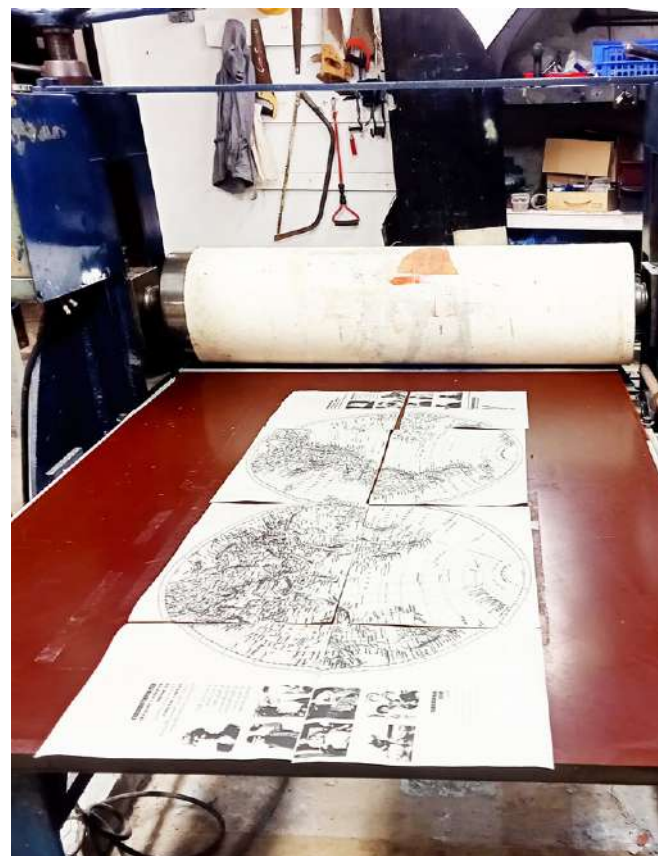
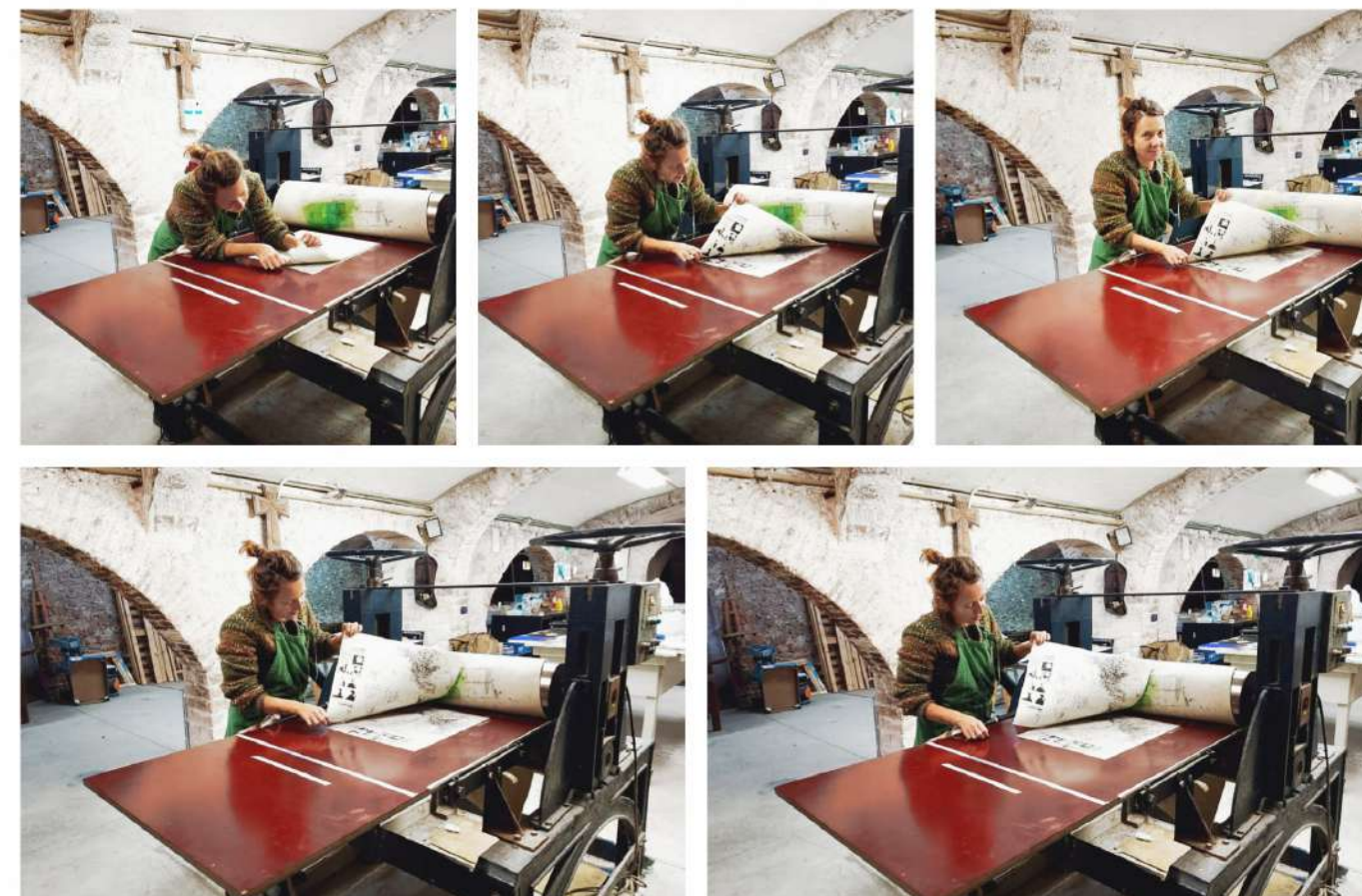
pocket 2/ Ida's travels. The reader will find a variety of elements: illustrations of Ida's travel stops, as small postcards, detailed maps. He/she will be invited to "track" her travels on the map on the cover, navigating historical maps of the period. A QR code will lead back to a reconstruction via google map of the woman's travels. The world is also a matter of representation.

Pocket 3-8/ the tarot cards. Each pocket contains a tarot card, exclusively female figures. Each tarot is dedicated to a key word (the guide, the adventure, the strength, the courage, the fame, the journey) and accompanied by a text (written by the author) which narrates its significance in the life of the traveler. Behind the card there will be a small questionnaire, to be read or given to other players. Through these cards one will discover the story of the traveler, but - hopefully - one's relationship with this great adventure.



Cyanotype and silkscreen



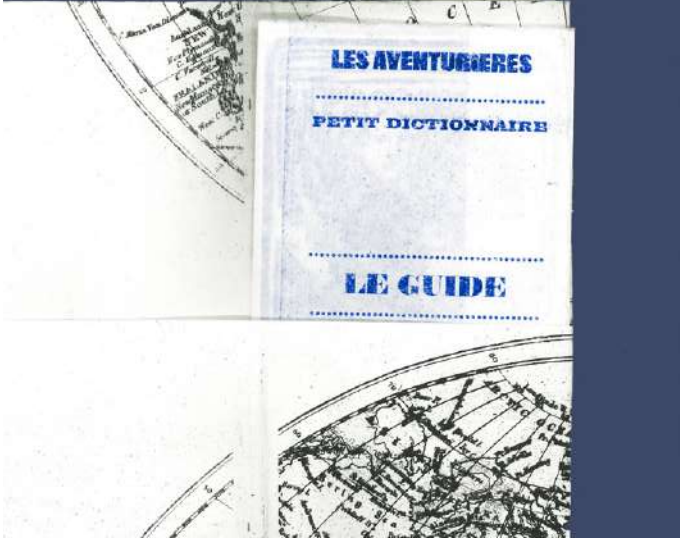
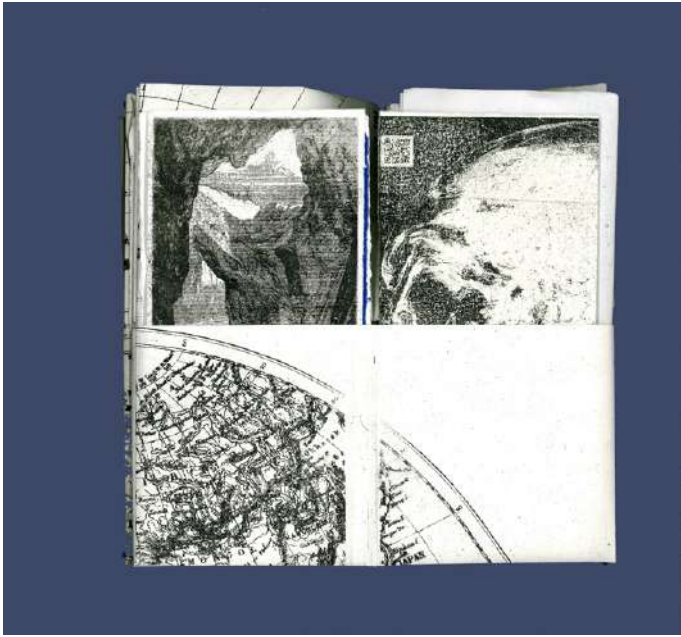
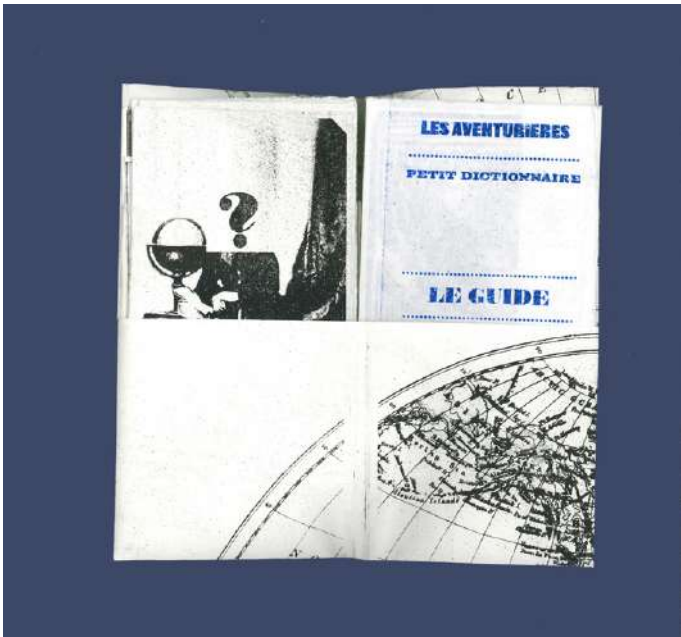


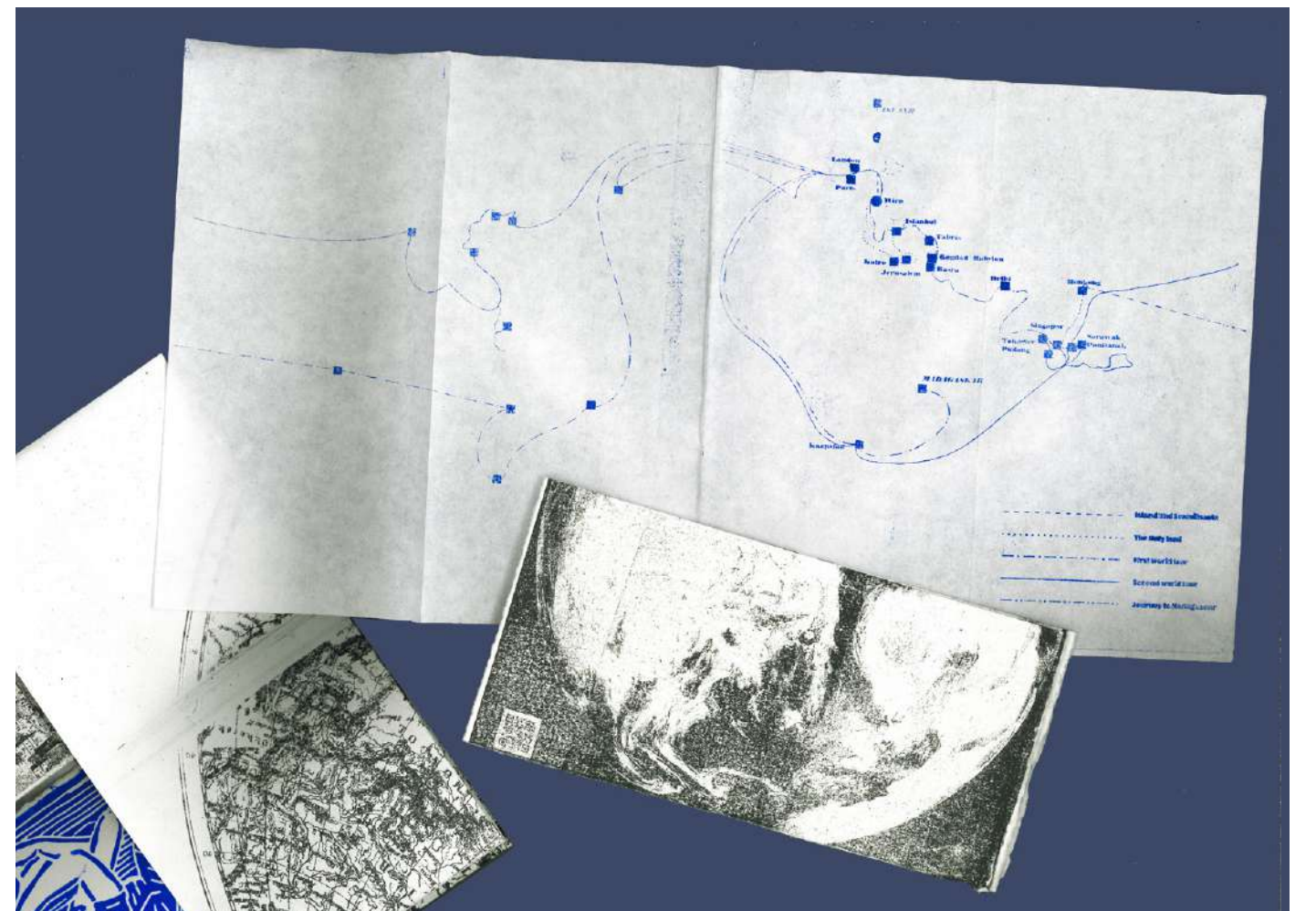
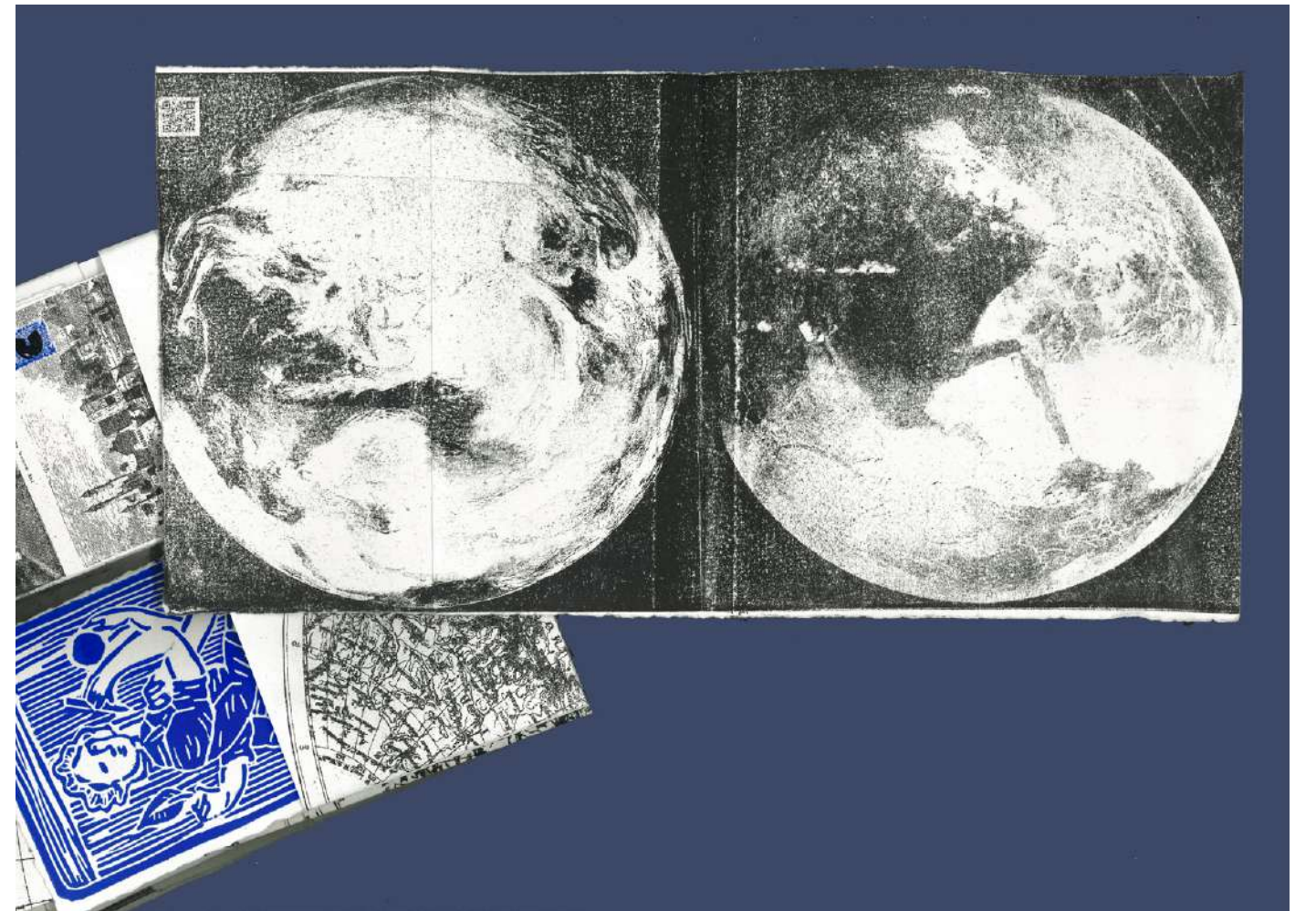
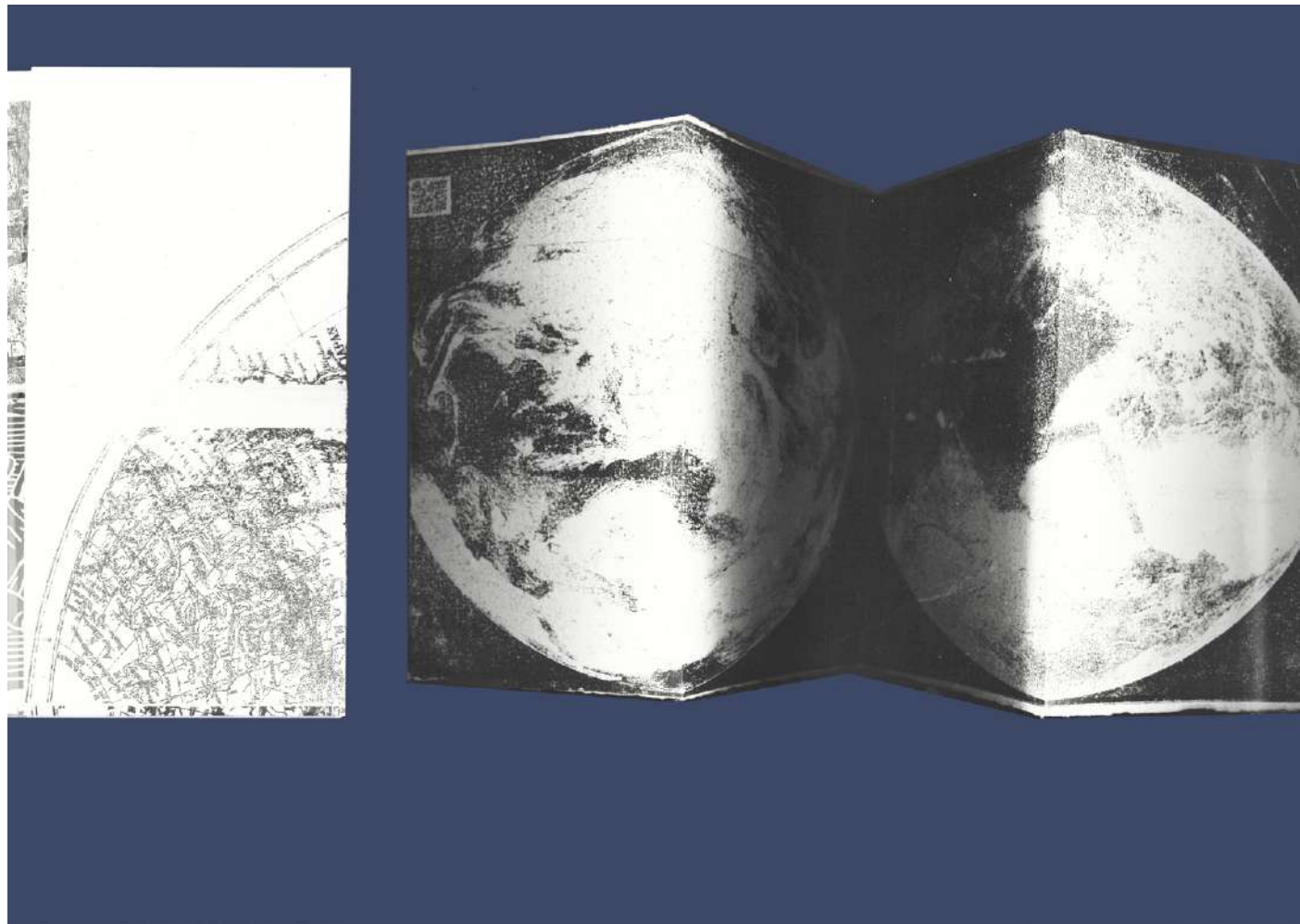
Gumprint and linocut

Presentation of all printed materials and the book idea



Selected materials and final book mockup







Sketchbook of the residence (side project)

