

CRISTA DAHL



The Migrators



An artist book by
CRISTA DAHL

The Migrators

Essay by
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Edited by
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CARDS

Modified fossil head drawings with *Life Rhythm* data about the prehistoric hominids and contemporary migrants

POSTER

Side A – *Life Rhythm Time*
Side B – *Life Rhythm Space*



LIFE RHYTHM HAND TABLE

	TIME	SPACE	ENERGY
Thumb (LIFE)	1 CREATE	16 NAM (North America)	PLANT
	2 DINO	17 CECA (Central America & Caribbean)	ANIMAL
	3 FLO	18 SAM (South America)	PEOPLE
Forefinger (DAY)	4 PRIME	19 EURA (Europe & European Asia)	FEEL
	5 GATHER	20 NAF (North Africa)	MOVE
	6 SOUND	21 SAF (South Africa)	FEED
Middle Finger (WEEK)	7 BURY	22 NOCA (North central Asia)	NEST
	8 MARK	23 SWAS (Southwest Asia)	REST
	9 FARM	24 SAS (South Asia)	LEARN
Ring Finger (MONTH)	10 WAR	25 NEAS (Northeast Asia)	PAIN
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	12 REASON	27 SEAS (Southeast Asia)	RULE
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	15 CHILD/ INFINITY	30 UNI (Universal & the Universe)	DREAM

Introduction

*Think about you in time and space, with energy
and know about you in a life rhythm.*

— Crista Dahl

Think about what you have in your hands. Probably, you are holding this handbook (*The Migrators*), and the set of cards that comes with it. Maybe you have just unwrapped it all from the colourful 2-sided poster that is still *close at hand*. For Crista Dahl, the hand that holds these objects also holds a way of ordering, imagining and knowing.

In all of the pieces making up this bookwork (book, cards and poster) the symbol of an open and segmented hand appears and reappears. This hand drawing is your guide to the characters—the migrants—whose images and data are recorded in this book and on the cards. These characters have migrated through all of human history and have covered nearly every segment of the globe. The highlighted segments of the hand that appear on the pages next to their images will help you to place these characters in time and space. You can link the numbers of those segments to the time and space categories on the Life Rhythm Table (page 5). Those categories are further illustrated on the accompanying poster that wrap this book.

The *Life Rhythm Hand*, drawn and symbolized on these pages and cards, holds fifteen segments of chronological history (time), geography (space) and energy (page 4). Its categories are evenly distributed onto the fingers: three for each of the five fingers. It is an arrangement that can work as a mnemonic (memory device) for learning place names or other categories of knowledge. It can also be used to visualize the flow of human history and evolution –something that you might imagine as beginning at the base of the thumb and traveling through fingers. You can imagine the fingers as distinct sections, but also inter-connected. In this way they are something like the continents, which appear

solid and distinct but are in fact characterized by their shifting human and non-human cultures. The poster that wraps up this package is a visual reference for the entire spectrum of the space and time categories. In it, the categories appear again, this time in illustrated columns making up tables of visual data.

The point of the lists and categories that fill in *Life Rhythm* project's hand and posters is not the accuracy of the information listed and pictured inside the categories. Instead, the project points us to the way systems of thinking and being can be invented and activated. Jairo Salazar's essay (pages 74–79) relates how Crista Dahl's visual methods follow early twentieth century artists and thinkers (from Hannah Höch to Aby Warburg). Salazar recalls their efforts to re-order knowledge and resist the oppression of linear and western approaches to history.

There are other hand-pictures that hold comprehensive cultural meanings. The *hamsa* is the protective eye/hand talisman from the Middle East that is both decorative and symbolic. It is worn or used inside of interiors to ward off dangers that one may encounter throughout the passage of life. The *Five Kingdom Hand* by Dorian Sagan, son of and collaborator with Lynn Margulis, one of the originators of the *Gaia theory*, presents a segmented hand to illustrate five orders of life forms, and to emphasize their symbiotic relation to each other.

Like the *hamsa* and *Five Kingdom Hand*, Dahl's *Life Rhythm* is overall a personally active schema. Just as Crista has done for me, you can sing it: "NAM, SECA, SAM | EURA, NAF, SAF | NOCA, SWAS, SAS..." (the words are found in the "Time" column of the table on page 5). This might work for teaching someone geographical place names, while pointing to sections of their hand and fingers. You can also use it to imagine your place as an individual, in an enlarged view of space, time and energy. The *Life Rhythm* hand can also be used to playfully reconnect or reorient. Use the posters to situate the characters illustrated in the cards—as if they were players on the surface of a board game.

That kind of reorientation in time and space is what Dahl is presenting here. She has highlighted fifteen hominids from prehistoric time and connected them with fifteen people from her own circle of colleagues, friends and family members. The prehistoric (skulls and data) and the contemporary (eyes, stories and tools) have been merged into the hybrid characters on the cards. The variation in how many categories from the hand each character represents demonstrates how variable and comprehensive human migration has been throughout our collective time on earth.

The Migrants challenges us to consider the collective ancestry of humanity, including the diversity and mobility that have resulted in our contemporary lived experiences. Like the fossil evidence of our 7-million-year-old ancestors, we are migrants who move out of necessity, interests and desires. Migration has been stymied by many factors, including now a pandemic. It is for many still urgently needed and full of risk. In other circumstances it is simply reckless travel. But with the numbers of forcibly displaced people growing to over 70 million (UNHCR, 2016), with an anticipated increase of climate change refugees, and with the pandemic disproportionately spreading to those in states of forced or failed migrations, there is a demand for those in the global north to expand asylum and resist the criminalization of migration. *The Migrants* encourages us to reflect on migration in a creative context. Through the use of this book, game and thinking tool, it is hoped that knowledges held in our hands will be used to broaden our understanding of our own placement inside of time, space and energy.

Artist Statement

In putting *The Migrants* forward for consideration, I really would like people to think about our shared human condition. They should consider, for example, the contrast of how we travel internationally and how the earliest humans moved out of Africa into the rest of the world. Our oldest ancestors are not much different from us today. Besides our commonality with prehistoric people, a key theme of this project is my working with communities of artists. *The Migrants* is a record of some of those relationships. This work has become a political statement for me. I want people to think about migration and mobility.

My interests in deep histories goes back to the moment when as a young woman I was accepted to San Francisco Art Institute but couldn't go because I didn't have the funds. I was told then that I should go ahead and study the semantics of art on my own. So, I bought books and read. I saw in them that other than European and Western points of view, there was a lot that was missing. It caused me to get into archeology and anthropology, and start piecing together missing histories and cultures. Since then, I have amassed an archive of books, clippings, recordings, drawings, images, and more. This research ended up becoming *Life Rhythm Project* which grew into an alternative educational program offered in the 1970s in such places as the SFU, Vancouver Museum, Vancouver Art Gallery, Burnaby Art Gallery and Surrey Art Gallery, as well as in an alternative program for youth at risk. My long-term project is a way of ordering all of human history that I developed over many years of research. The next work for me is a poster called *Energy* to complete the Hand Table.

The Migrators



*SAHELANTHROPUS
TSCHADENSIS:* TM 266-01-060-1



ANONYMOUS



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAF

LIVED	FOUND
7–6 million years ago	2001, Djurab desert, Toros-Manailia 266 site, Chad
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
320–380 cc	(none found)
HEIGHT	
1 m	

ABOUT MY NAME

I am also called Sahel Man from Chad and Toumaï, which means *Hope of Life* in the Chad Goran Language.

ABOUT ME

I lived in a woodland environment near a lake. Maybe my kind were a common ancestor of humans and chimpanzees. I am a vegetarian as shown from fossilized pollen grains discovered by paleontological analysis. You can see me because a high-resolution computed tomography (CT) scan generated a reconstruction of my cranium. The way that the opening (foramen magnum) for my spinal cord is at the bottom of my skull atop an upright vertebral column suggests that I may have been a 2-legged (bipedal) walker.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA, EAS

BORN
1982—Europe
TOOL
Passport

ABOUT ME

I don't know much about DNA but what I learned in high school, in the 90s. A double helix, a genetic portfolio. All my family members and my ancestors have lived in northern Italy for as long as we (and the archives) can remember. That is where I spent most of my life till 2009. Since then, I have lived as an uninvited guest on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səl̓ílwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations. My world travels are the result of various degrees of privilege, more than anything else.



AUSTRALOPITHECUS
AFARENSIS: AL 288-1



BRADY CIEL



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAF

LIVED
3.6 million years ago

FOUND
Hadar Afar Locality, Ethiopia

CRANIAL CAPACITY
380–430 cc

TOOLS
(none found)

HEIGHT
1 m

ABOUT MY NAME

Also known as *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds*, which you know from the Beatles hit—a song which the expedition team played when they discovered me. I am an ancestral ambassador to all of humankind. In Ethiopian Amharic language my name is *Dinqinesh*, meaning *wonderful thing*.

ABOUT ME

I am possibly the last one behind several branches of hominids that emerged between two and three million years ago. Biostratigraphy, the use of organism fossils in rock to identify a site's age, helped to identify the age of my site. There were fossils of savanna animals including giraffes, antelopes, rhinoceroses, buffalos and elephants found alongside mine. My complete pelvis indicates that I am a bipedal walker. Magnificent footprints forming a 28-meter long trail in a 3.6 million-year-old volcanic ash site at Laetoli, Tanzania, may have been left by my kind.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA, NAF, SAF, SEAS

BORN
1973, Tygerberg Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa

TOOLS
Rotring Mechanical Pencil
and a Sennheiser ME66+K6
Hypercardioid Microphone

ABOUT MY NAME

I gave myself the middle name *Ciel* – it is wistful, elegant and means sky. I have been called *Luftmensch*, one whose attention is in the clouds.

ABOUT ME

My mother's family is German while my father's is English. Both were immigrants to South Africa, third and second generation respectively. That makes me a third and a half generation South African, and first generation Canadian. My heart will always be drawn to the bold silhouette of Table Mountain and its windy shores. I want to finally rest there. I've been around the earth, having once traveled to South Africa from Vancouver via Singapore, and then returned via Europe. In 1999 I traveled by land with my best friend *A* from London (UK) to the Sahara (Erfoud, Morocco) – I wanted to see the breakdown of western civilization. We did. In the desert we were threatened with hijacking, but were saved by a German tourist's vulnerability, compounded with ignorance of women's lives on the part of our would-be hijackers.



AUSTRALOPITHECUS
AETHIOPICUS: KNM-WT 17000



The Migrators

CRISTA ELLEN



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF

LIVED
2.6–2.3 million years ago

FOUND
1978—Laetoli, west of Lake Turkana, Kenya

CRANIAL CAPACITY
410 cc

TOOLS
(none found)

HEIGHT
1 m

ABOUT MY NAME

Australopithecus means *southern ape*. I am also called the *black skull* because manganese-rich minerals stained my fossil. The *KNM* in my name refers to Kenya National Museums. Another name I have is *Paranthropus aethiopicus* meaning *ape that lived alongside hunters* from Ethiopia.

ABOUT ME

I have massive jaws for chewing that are supported by a sagittal crest that runs from front to back on the top of the head. These big jaws indicate that I am a vegetarian. My skull's shape raises the question: which came first, bigger brains or better tools? Possibly, I am an ancestor of *Australopithecus boisei* and *A. robustus*. There were a lot of us *A. aethiopicus* in central and southern Africa. I am a changer—my bones show the way to multiple hominoid evolutions. We are all in our own ways *missing links*.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, EURA, SAF, SAS, EAS, SEAS

BORN
1934—Ballard Hospital, Seattle, WA, USA

TOOLS
Pens and notebooks

ABOUT MY NAME

Crista is a Swedish name. I was called by my mother *Christoperellen-mathusaladahl*, which labels me as the boy, the girl and the old man.

ABOUT ME

I am first an artist and mother to four children. Without training in art, I used many techniques and materials in my art practices in Seattle, San Francisco and Vancouver. At one point I was told by a gallery owner that people *don't buy women*. This changed my approach to an attitude of, *just do it*. So, I did. There is an archival aspect in my work. I brought an intense interest in filing papers and tapes to Satellite Video Exchange Society (now known as *Crista Dahl Media Library & Archive*). I continue work to have it open and accessible for everyone. I have traveled through North and Central America, Europe, Asia and South Asia. I almost lived in South Africa. My DNA analysis tells me that my ancestry is Swedish (56%), Norwegian (43%) and Finish (1%).



AUSTRALOPITHECUS
AFRICANUS: STS 71



BRIT



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF

LIVED
3.0–2.5 million years ago

FOUND
1947—Transvaal site,
Sterkfontein Cave, South Africa

CRANIAL CAPACITY
428 cc

TOOLS
(none found)

HEIGHT
1–1.35 m

ABOUT MY NAME

Australopithecus africanus means *southern ape of Africa, man ape of South Africa* or *African southern ape*. Names I less commonly go by are *Australopithecus prometheus*, which means *southern ape fore thinker*, and *Plesianthropus transvaalensis*, which means *near man from Transvaal*.

ABOUT ME

I am male, once designated female. In paleontology there's often not much to go on, and it seems more people are deciding than the number of bones themselves. There is agreement that our kind walked on two legs better than those before because of our pelvis. The connection of skull to spine in our neck region shows that we were upright. The shape of our pelvis indicates that our babies would have had smaller-sized heads. Endocasts of our cranium indicate that we may have used language. I am a vegetarian with teeth worn flat. Other famous members of my kind include *Taung Child* (referred to as *no true man*), *Mrs. Ples* (eventually identified as male) and *Little Foot*.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, EURA

BORN
1989—Kelowna, BC, Canada

TOOL
Kaleidoscope

ABOUT MY NAME

Brit is the name I use professionally and interpersonally for the following reasons: To avoid *Britney Spears* jokes; because *Britney* sounds stupid in French.

ABOUT ME

I am a multidisciplinary artist with a ceramics practice and a social art practice. I am drawn to shiny objects and strange textures. My community work is directed by a strong impulse to support and mentor emerging artists, and to highlight labour inequities in the arts. I was raised as a third generation settler on the territory of the Syilx/Okanagan Nation, known colonially as Kelowna, BC. I have also lived on the traditional lands of the Songhees, Esquimalt and *W̱SÁNEĆ* (Sanich) people in Victoria, BC, and in Paris, France. I currently reside on land belonging to the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh people in Vancouver, BC, but not forever. Wherever I move next, I hope the soil will be rich in clay.



*PARANTHROPUS
BOISEI: OH 5*



LOIS ELAINE



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF (EAST CENTRAL)

LIVED
 1.2–2.3 million years ago

CRANIAL CAPACITY
 500 cc

HEIGHT
 around 1.5m

FOUND
 1959—Olduvai Gorge site
 (edge of Serengeti), northern
 Tanzania.

TOOLS
 (none found)

ABOUT MY NAME

I was named after Charles Boise, an American businessman who funded digs in the 1950s. Other names I less commonly go by include *Zinjanthropus boisei* and *Australopithecus boisei*, and, with affection, *nutcracker man* because of my big teeth.

ABOUT ME

Teeth are my only tools for food preparation. My jaws support heavy chewing. Personally, I suffer with a painful metastatic abscess on a tooth. When my preferred food is hard to find, I eat nuts and tubers. We are vegetarian. Our males are bigger than the females. I have a face like no other in hominid evolution. Besides the face, we have an overwhelming number of body characteristics that are common to others in southern Africa in my time.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, EURA

BORN
 1963—Arborg General
 Hospital, Interlake, MB,
 Canada, Treaty 2 Territory,
 Turtle Island

TOOLS
 Needle and thread

ABOUT MY NAME

I'm told that my first name was chosen from the Bible. Since it is followed by *Elaine*, maybe *Superman* was an influence? My last name is evidence that my ancestors moved through Flanders in the early 16th century.

ABOUT ME

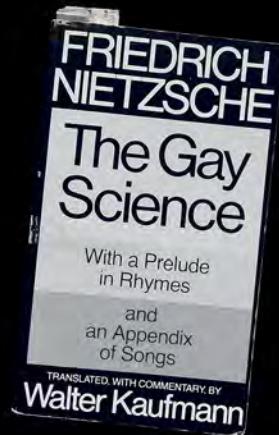
I aim to make artworks that are accessible and participatory, and I research/write about other artists and projects. My ancestors taught me to sew, sing, garden and cook. Two generations ago they migrated from Ukraine (then Russia) to Canada. Both of my grandfathers entered Canada with falsified stories. I hear in my Mennonite ancestors' stories gratitude for migrant asylum and distrust for the notions of *nation* and *homeland*. Besides Coast Salish Territory (BC), I've lived on Treaty Two Territory (MB) and Katarokwi/Kingston (ON). I'm also grateful to have been in residence as an artist and researcher in AB, SK, New Mexico, Texas and Ciudad México.



PARANTHROPUS
ROBUSTUS: SK 48



ALEX DOUGLAS



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME, GATHER
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF

LIVED
2.0–1.0 million years ago

FOUND
1950—Swartkrans Transvvaal
Caves site, South Africa

CRANIAL CAPACITY
476cc (estimate based on SK
1585)

TOOLS
(None found)

HEIGHT
1.1–1.3 m

ABOUT MY NAME

Robustus refers to my robust teeth and skull. I am less commonly known as *Paranthropus crassidens*. *Paranthropus* translates as *next to man*; *para* meaning *beside* or *near* and *anthropus* refers to *man*. *Crassidens* combines *crassus* meaning *thick*, and *dens* which refers to *tooth*.

ABOUT ME

I was found as a result of explosive blasts that broke apart old cave sites for calcite, a building material for new towns. My excavation site was declared a monument in 1992. We are similar to *Paranthropus boisei* and *Australopithecus aethiopicus*. Most of the bones of our kind found so far are mandibles. My teeth have puffy cups and thick enameled caps on dental crowns. I have a slight sagittal crest for the support of chewing with my big teeth. My teeth have high incidence of enamel pitting showing that I was an opportunistic omnivore. I ate meat but I am mostly a vegetarian.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA

BORN
Calgary, AB, Canada

TOOL
Books

ABOUT MY NAME

My name has been given before. While it responds to genealogies, I've been told that it was given to me because I responded to it. My middle name, *Douglas*, is my uncle's. *Alex* means *defender*. My son's name, *Bruno*, also derives from *shield*.

ABOUT ME

I am a reader—always responding to what's happening and what's happened. The intake of my eyes, ears and nose delays and stunts the expressiveness of my hands and mouth. There are texts and textures to read and experience everywhere in my work. At VIVO Media Arts Centre and elsewhere I facilitate the mediated communications of others. Through supporting their work, I learn—always. I backed my way into this—learning on the job in the world that I wanted to be a part of. It was a reverse-engineered tinkering with the pre-existing constructions of those around and before. New ways and old are always possible. I've traveled throughout Canada, the US and Europe. Many cities! My ancestry is of Scottish, English, Irish (Irish hiding itself in an anglicized name), Dutch, etc.



AUSTRALOPITHECUS
GARHI: BOU-VP-12/130



SHARON



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAF (EAST CENTRAL)

LIVED	FOUND
2.5 million years ago	1997—Bouri site, Middle Awash, Ethiopia
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
450 cc	Early stone hammers
HEIGHT	
1–1.5 m	

ABOUT MY NAME

Garbi in the Afar language means *surprise* or *southern ape surprise*.

ABOUT ME

I may be the transition point between *Australopithecus* and *Homo*—at the halfway point! The surprise in my unique skull, with its distinctive jaw and teeth, is the possible link between early hominids. My teeth are big and good for chewing, but I also ate meat and had tools for scavenging or hunting. I demonstrate how early stone tools came into use before brain enlargement.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, EURA, SAS, EAS, SEAS, AUPO

BORN
1984—Grace Hospital, Vancouver, BC, Canada
TOOL
Jeweller's File

ABOUT MY NAME

I'm told my first name has no real significance—my parents just liked it. Its origin is Hebrew. It refers to a biblical, coastal plain where roses and oak trees grew. Both my first and last name refer to wide, flat expanses of land.

ABOUT ME

My current energy is focused on traditional methods of jewellery making. I also facilitate other artists' creations through work with various visual and literary art non-profits. My maternal grandparents emigrated from Calabria, in search of better economic conditions and quality of life. Until retirement, my grandfather worked for CN Rail as a section hand to support his wife and six children. He was frequently away, hitchhiking to job sites across the province. I'm infinitely grateful for the sacrifices made by my family that allow me to live the very privileged life I have here in Vancouver. My DNA analysis indicates 31% Italian ancestry. The rest is composed of smaller percentages of Irish, British, French (Acadian), Spanish, Middle Eastern and North African ancestry.

*HOMO
HABILIS:* KNM-ER 1470



The Migrators

SHAWN DIANA



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME, GATHER
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF (EAST CENTRAL)

LIVED	FOUND
2.1–1.5 million years ago	1972—Koobi Fora site, Kenya
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
700 cc	The name of my crude tools is <i>developed Oldowan</i> —they are <i>choppers, flakes and flaked cobbles</i> .

ABOUT MY NAME

Homo means *human*. *Habilis* refers to *handy*; thus, I am the *handyman*. KNM-ER is the museum identification for Kenya National Museums East Rudolf. I am less commonly known as *Homo rudolfensis*. *Rudolf* is the old name for Lake Turkana.

ABOUT ME

I am proof of *Homo* inhabiting east Africa, before the appearance of *Homo sapiens*. Reconstruction of my form from more than 150 fragments brings me to you now. Compared to earlier hominoids, I am taller, my cranial capacity is bigger, and I have modestly sized molars and premolars. I have a generalised omnivorous diet, but not particularly tough foods. My teeth are different from *Australopithecus*. I am taller and my face shape has changed. Brain endocasts show the real possibility that I voiced language. My time may have been the time of *Adam and Eve*.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, EURA

BORN
1956—Ballard Hospital, Seattle, WA, USA

TOOLS
Woodturning tools

ABOUT MY NAME

Shawn is an Irish name meaning *God is gracious* or *gift of God*. I was named by my grandmother, on the Irish-English side of my family. My second name, *Diana* (meaning *divine*), is identified with the Greek goddess Artemis. It was my mother's preference.

ABOUT ME

My early life involved moving around (Seattle, San Francisco, Bear Valley, Seattle, Powell River and Lund) before our family settled in Vancouver. I became an artist in the early 1970's. I was involved in media for social justice and artistic expression. Family inspirations were established from my hard-working European ancestors. A strong influence on my life is collaboration—similar to cooperation—which led me to Satellite Video Exchange Society. At the centre of my careers has been social justice. I would rather teach someone to do something than to do it for them. As a wood-turner I'm brought close to my grandfather. I also work in photography and with paints, glass, and fibre. My DNA analysis shows ancestry from Norway, Germanic Europe, England, Wales, Sweden and Ireland/Scotland.



*HOMO
ERGASTER: KNM-ER 3733*



MARGARET



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF (EAST CENTRAL)

LIVED
 1.8–0.6 million years ago

FOUND
 1975—Koobi Fora Formation,
 Lake Turkana site, Kenya

CRANIAL CAPACITY
 848 cc

TOOLS
 Oldowan

HEIGHT
 1.4 m

ABOUT MY NAME

Ergaster is derived from the ancient Greek word for *workman*. I am more commonly called *Homo erectus*.

ABOUT ME

To a Kenyan fossil hunter I was a find! I was identified as a female because of my teeth and closed sutures between the cranial bones. Our tools were carefully flaked, transported across the region and used on a number of now extinct animals. Position emission tomography (PET) of my premotor cortex shows that I likely used language. I am the best example of the co-existence of *Homo* with *Paranthropus robustus*. My birth canal is more like that of *Homo sapiens*. I ate a variety of vegetables and meat. Further east in Asia, the hominoids had thicker skull bones. I am tall and have a brow and chin. *Turkana boy*, who is one of our kind, is a complete skeleton and very tall and slim. The climate in our world was much like yours.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA

BORN
 1953—Regina, Saskatchewan,
 Canada

TOOL
 Stove

ABOUT MY NAME

I'm named after my grandmother, *Margaret(a)*—a common Romanian name. It means *pearl* in Greek. My last name means *my darling*. So, my name is *Pearl My Darling*.

ABOUT ME

I am an artist. I think that has always been true. My life has been a series of choices. But there is always art. It is the main feature. I had a long-established relationship, and we did good together—plus we had a daughter. The doing of art, in spite of what anyone else thinks, is my life. And, if you look closely, you see politics in my work. During the years, I had to make a living and found *care-full* things to do for cash. The food item is crucial for me—the making of it, and the feeding of people—is important for my life and others. I have migrated and traveled throughout Canada, almost every place but not the US for political reasons, and Europe. I have nothing to say about my DNA except I think the whole *Ancestor 21* phenomena is silly and of no interest to me.

*HOMO
GEORGICUS: D2700*



The Migrators



VICKY



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PRIME
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NOCA, SWAS

LIVED	FOUND
1.8 million years ago	1991—Eurasia—Republic of Georgia, between the Caspian and Black Seas, site Dmanisi.
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
780 cc	Oldowan tool kit

ABOUT MY NAME

I am more commonly known as *Homo erectus*, and sometimes *Homo ergaster*.

ABOUT ME

We are the earliest hominids found outside of the African motherland. We lived in Eurasia in a mixed woodland somewhat warmer and drier than today. This is a good climate for us. I am a part of a supportive group that offers a safe place for elders. Endocasts of my cranium, and the shape of my chin and brow, show that I was able to talk. My *Oldowan* tool kit enabled me to have a varied diet. There is evidence of saber tooth tigers, hyenas, bears, leopards, wolves, horses, deer, short necked giraffe, giant ostriches, gazelles, elephants, and a variety of mice as food choices. All in all, I lived a fairly good life.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, SAM, EURA, EAS, SEAS

BORN
1990—Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

TOOL
Google (search engine)

ABOUT MY NAME

My parents took ages to name me. They were probably tired. In the end, I think it was my sister who suggested *Victoria*. I always felt it was too formal. Anyone who meets me in person knows me as *Vicky*. Not crazy about Vicky either, but I will always prefer a more approachable version of my name.

ABOUT ME

I am a graphic designer working with clients in the arts sector. My father was a photographer who inspired his children to pursue careers in art. None of us are artists, however we all support creatives. I have lived in Vancouver, Toronto, and Hong Kong. I have never had illusions of being an artist, but I value practitioners who work hard to find new subjectivities in this world. In seeking new perspectives and critical discourse, I feel it is increasingly important to perform independent research. I have been fortunate to have many mentors, however the ability to seek out knowledge and learn on your own, when no one is around, is a skill for which I continue to strive.



*HOMO
HEIDELBERGENSIS: ATAPUERCA 5*



DANA



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: GATHER, SOUND
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: EURA, NAF, SWAS

LIVED	FOUND
700,000–300,000 years ago	1992 to 1993—Gran Dolina Cave site, Sima de los Huesos, Sierra de Atapuerca, Spain
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
1,125 cc	Oldowan

ABOUT MY NAME

My name came with our 1907 discovery at Mauer, near Heidelberg, Germany. I am less commonly known as *Homo antecessor*, meaning *predecessor human*. My own skull is sometime called *Miguelón*, after a famous Spanish cyclist.

ABOUT ME

I am a labeled *completely premodern* in the skull fossil record. The remains of 32 of us were found when the Sima de los Huesos or *pit of the bones* was discovered in caves in Spain. It was a find—a paleontological *pay dirt*. The bones showed that our men and women were about the same size. Our brain capacity is bigger than most *Homo neanderthalensis* that followed us. Strongly built, we use our jaws to hold objects, maybe while preparing animal hides. In Schöningen thousands of horse bones from 500,000 years ago were revealed in a 1.8–2.5 m space in a canal pit. A question remains—did we bury our dead?

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM

BORN
1952—Ballard General Hospital, Seattle, WA, USA
TOOLS
Roofing tools

ABOUT MY NAME

I am also known as *Dad* and *Grandpa*.

ABOUT ME

I am a roofing specialist. I decide the way to work with roofs of all kinds big and small. Before my present job, it was one roof at a time for many years. I took courses to learn about all types of roofing in North America, doing estimating for a big company. During this period—which included marriage and three kids—life has been *family first* despite the problems that brings. There were many, but they were worked through. My wife dying of cancer was the hardest. Now I am in retirement with property up the Fraser River and have a wonderful new friend to spend time with. Best of all are visits from grandchildren. I have traveled in the US and in Canada.



*HOMO
ERECTUS*



KAREN RUTH



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: GATHER, SOUND
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF, EURA, EAS, SEAS

LIVED	FOUND
2 million to 50,000 years ago	1920's—Dragon Bone Hill site (Zhoukoudian Cave), south of Beijing, China. We have relatives that were found on the island of Java, Indonesia.
CRANIAL CAPACITY	
1,059 cc	
HEIGHT	TOOLS
1.5 m	A wide range of tools

ABOUT MY NAME

Erectus means *upright*, so my name means *upright human*. I am also less commonly known as *Sinanthropus pekinensis* and *Peking Man* after the site where I was found. I was first known as *Anthropopithecus erectus* and *Pithecanthropus erectus*.

ABOUT ME

I am from Dragon Bone Hill where parts of me have been dug for medicine. Just before WWII my bones were lost, but casts had been sent to the American Museum of Natural History. Our bones form the largest collection found in the east. Our skulls show that we had a big cranial capacity. Over the generations we have used at least 17,000 stone tools. We ate 97 types of animals and 62 kinds of birds. Herbs, seeds, nuts, roots, and tubers were also part of our diet. By the way, I also used fire!

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, CECA, EURA, EAS

BORN
1955—BC, Canada
TOOLS
Files

ABOUT MY NAME

Karen was my mother's victory over my father's choice, *Katherine*—the name of a woman he met overseas in the war. *Ruth* is after my English grandmother, a first-generation settler in North America. My surname derives from a co-habitation arrangement. In 1920, my Bavarian-Prussian paternal grandmother, a single, 32-year-old immigrant domestic, moved in with an English-born, prairie-raised, farm labourer who had recently returned from *killing the Hun*. He agreed to tolerate and share his surname with her illegitimate son by a migrant Greek confectioner.

ABOUT ME

I caretake the histories and creative work of artists and radicals. I manage the collections at The Crista Dahl Media Library and Archive. My tools are files—analogue, digital, and paper. I also use these tools to trace genealogies. The facts and fictions of my family's migrations and settlement haunt this place and time. I carry them with me. My DNA contains markers from populations common to England, Wales, North-Western Europe, Germanic Europe, France, Greece, the Balkans and Italy. These boundaries are fluid and changing.

*HOMO
HEIDELBERGENSIS*



DINKA



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: GATHER, SOUND
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: SAF, EURA and possibly SAS, SEAS

LIVED
 700,000–300,000 years ago

FOUND
 1959—Petalona site, Greece

CRANIAL CAPACITY
 1,200 cc

TOOLS
 A wide range of tools

HEIGHT
 1.5 m

ABOUT MY NAME

My name comes from the site where others of my kind were found around Heidelberg, Germany.

ABOUT ME

There were 60 humanoid fossils found at Petralona, Greece. As one of them, I was identified as part of the archaic European population which preceded *Homo neanderthalensis*. About 790,000 years ago we may have been using fire, as shown by burnt wood and grass seeds found from that time (inconclusive). Our bones show early signs of adapting to the Pleistocene glacial ice age in western Europe. I have some *Homo neanderthalensis* features, and a more primitive brow and chin. Our bones are like those of Zhoukoudian in China, Koobi Fora in Kenya, and Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania.

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA

BORN
 1951—Bosnia, Sarajevo

TOOL
 Mac laptop

ABOUT MY NAME

I have a French surname because I was once married to an Englishman with a French name.

ABOUT ME

A three-year-old in Czech Republic, I was not old enough to know I was in a foreign country, but old enough to know what *foreign* meant. Once lost in a department store, I was surrounded by shoppers murmuring a language I didn't understand. It was the scariest—not knowing your location with no one to help because they, like you, don't know where you belong. My father was a diplomat. The only times I saw other kids were occasional visits and gatherings like New Year's. We would be put in a circle holding hands, speaking different languages. That was also horrifying. Yet, I had a happy childhood. When we moved back to Serbia it was all new except the language, which made it feel like home. A year later we moved to Macedonia. I was again a stranger and lost a sense of home and belonging, never to regain it. Culture is external. I look inward for grounding. Home is everywhere.



*HOMO
NEANDERTHALENSIS: AMUD 1*



FRANS



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: GATHER, SOUND, BURY
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAF, EURA, SWAS

LIVED	FOUND
500,000–30,000 years ago	1961—Amud Cave site, Israel
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
1,750 cc	Stone tools; evidence of other materials

HEIGHT
 1.8 m

ABOUT MY NAME

My name comes from where I was first found in Germany in 1856. Remains were found in 1829 in Belgium, but at that time they were labeled *Homo sapiens*. *Neander* refers to Joachim Neander (1650-80), a teacher, theologian, and hymn writer. *Thal* means *valley*. *Amud* is Hebrew for *pillar*.

ABOUT ME

I lived 45–41,000 years ago. I'm similar in height to *Homo sapiens*. My skull bones are thinner, and my teeth are small. Generally, I was more evolved than *Homo erectus neanderthalensis*. A hyoid bone (Kebara 2 site, Mount Carmel) shows that we had speech. Bone needles, ivory beads, pierced teeth and buttons show that we had clothes. We were light skinned and some had red hair. We lived in forested coastal areas. Always near a river, we had abundant game and plant sources. The animals that we drew on cave walls are still admired. A good life, no? Many of you still carry my bloodline.

RHYTHM TIME: PARA
 LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA

BORN
1948; Lamalou-Le Bains, France
TOOL
glass of wine

ABOUT MY NAME

I am Frans.

ABOUT ME

I am a well educated, at times reflective, underperforming neurotic.

In the course of my life I have taught philosophy, practised law, volunteered as a zoo keeper and driven the train in Stanley Park, Vancouver. Culture is the transmission of thought and feeling. I support this preoccupation to the extent I can. I have traveled in Europe, Canada and the US.

*HOMO
SAPIENS: SKHUL 5*



The Migrators

JILL



LIFE RHYTHM TIME: SOUND/BURY/MARK FARM/WAR/PEACE/
REASON/GREN/PARA/ CHILD
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: ALL

LIVED	FOUND
315,000 years ago +	1932—Es Skhul Cave, Mount Carmel, Israel
CRANIAL CAPACITY	TOOLS
1,518 cc	Mousterian (stone arrowhead) +

HEIGHT
variable

ABOUT MY NAME

Homo means *human*. *Sapiens* refers to *wisdom*. Thus, I am *wise human*.

ABOUT ME

I am part of ancestral humans—like you! My brain is much like yours. Our species indicates changes in habitats, tools, art, burials and domestication of animals and plants. 5000-year-old *Ice man* Ötzi (Italy) was clothed. Personally, I lived about 90,000 years ago and had arthritis, abscesses and gum disease. We coexisted in Europe and southwest Asia with *Homo neanderthalensis* for about 40,000 years. We migrated southeast and to India and Australia (60,000 years ago). In the north we built mammoth-bone homes (40,000 years ago). There is contested evidence of us in Americas 50,000 and 11,500 years ago (*Clovis* tools). Did we replace other species, or did we combine? We developed conversation, debate, books, theatre, songs, sports, internet ...

LIFE RHYTHM TIME: PARA
LIFE RHYTHM SPACE: NAM, EURA, SAS, EAS, SEAS

BORN
1949—Evanston, IL, USA
TOOLS
Calculator and spreadsheet

ABOUT MY NAME

I was named after my mother whose name was *Helen*. However, my mother wasn't happy with nicknames for Helen (she particularly disliked *Nellie*). My brother, named after my father *John*, was called *Jack*. So, I became known as *Jill*. I have used Jill ever since, although it is not on my birth certificate.

ABOUT ME

I am an accountant. Bookkeeping and accounting have been the door into many wonderful adventures in areas like midwifery/childbirth education, graphic arts, feminism, co-operatives for workers, consumers and housing, as well as credit union management. I served on boards for provincial credit unions and co-operative federations. I have been involved in and support national co-operative associations and in international cooperative development. I have traveled in all provinces in Canada, as well as in Nunavut. I have traveled in all US states except Texas and Oklahoma. I have traveled in Europe and Asia (Sri Lanka, Yunnan Province in China, Hong Kong and Singapore). DNA analysis indicates ancestry from Ireland, Scotland, England, northwestern Europe and Norway.

Migrating Images and Words

I don't have a practice without archiving. There is nothing that I have not done since I moved to Vancouver that does not reflect archiving in some way. —Crista Dahl, 2012



Figure 1: Crista Dahl (2013). *Crista Dahl: Life Rhythm*, exhibition detail, VIVO Media art Centre. A set of found images ("sculptures") mounted and varnished on both sides of cardboard; a set of painted geometric wooden forms and boards for play and learning. Both sets of objects were created in the 1970s (according to the artist). Photo—Elisa Ferrari.

The title of *The Migrants* is a subtle but suggestive expression. By incorporating the term *migrants*, on behalf of migrants, it not only speaks of the still-nomadic condition of humanity but also it resonates with the elusiveness and transient meanings attributed to images in our time. The semantic power of this title seems to increase a connotation that could be simply traced to people rather than to objects. In fact, by using this title the work is not simply about the life of migrants, which would be the most straightforward interpretation. It is apparently mostly about the way audiences understand images when they are seen out of context or when they are given an imposed, hierarchical, categorical, canonical meaning. *The Migrants* reminds us of non-traditional ways of interpreting strategies learned from an early age—how to make sense of the world through a didactic, playful interweaving of words and images.

Pre-historic humans and artifacts overlapped or juxtaposed with contemporary subjects are part of what audiences see in Crista Dahl's montaged photos in this handbook. The connotative aspect of the title, in addition to evidencing the obvious allusion to peoples or entire communities moving from one place to another, stresses the way objects, words, and ideas are used to configure and organize a complex web of categories into an orderly, rationale world. The history of human migrations is also the history of human communications and epistemological explorations through linguistic exchanges. Historically, images have been used by human societies as communication strategies that also aimed to become a solid, permanent testimony of previously lived experiences. Prehistoric humans attempted to understand the world by designating, naming, and categorizing. Today, however, we make use of images in unexpected ways.

The Migrants can be seen as a deep study into the journey of humankind through the upheavals of history. However, a universal exploration on how humans mobilize also becomes an insight onto how visual communication spreads and travels. In their elusive, fragile, and temporary nature, images are

not even a tangible witness of time anymore. In the era of high-speed technologies, and highly sophisticated gadgets, not only is information traveling faster than people, but the sole concept of information becomes a sublime idea rather than a material reality. More than a companion, images became a substitute for memory. The carefully montaged images seen here are a significant reminder of our approaches to photography as a phenomenon that permeates both the visual and the linguistic.

About a century ago German art historian Aby Warburg relentlessly worked on *The Atlas Mnemosyne*, an ambitious project which resonates with aspects of Dahl's larger *Life Rhythm Project*. Warburg embarked on the possibility of creating a non-linear system of images (a *mnemonic apparatus*) based not on canonical standards determined by hierachal achievements in western art, but mainly on the deconstruction of localistic and Eurocentric understandings of human creative accomplishments (Figure 2). At an early stage in her career, as a self-taught artist in San Francisco, Crista Dahl perceived the perpetuation of the western canon as a problem for her own artistic interests. Along that process she had encountered the exclusive, selective, and biased ways upon which the epistemological foundations of western artistic narratives are based. Warburg was devoted to examining the importance of philology (the study of words and language), the history of religion (as a motto for artists) and ethnography (as the study of the human condition and its development through the centuries). Despite the apparent lack of organization of the atlas, and in a striking coincidence with the sets of objects that Dahl once compiled (Figure 1), Warburg's endeavor was by no means arbitrary. His was rather a remarkable attempt to restructure a cohesive bond between the visual and the linguistic. Dahl's interactive objects and image-boards that she developed in the 1970s for use in alternative educational programs similarly invites participants to select and describe or rearrange, by their own logic. Dahl's photos of sculptures and paintings from

modern and prehistoric art were culled from books and magazines that made their way to her ongoing program of self-study and teaching.



Figure 2: Aby Warburg (1929). Panel B, *The Mnemosyne Atlas*. The Warburg Institute University of London. Reprinted with permission.

In fact, the resonating interests between Warburg and Dahl converge as they revisit orthodox and rationalistic ways of knowing which they saw as hindering spontaneity and the human faculty of learning through observation. Warburg's epistemological approach was known as *Pathosformel (Emotive Formulae)*. According to Warburg, these emotive and intuitive formulas are reiterated and visible throughout several stages of history. With this method for working, Warburg anticipated the current method of *hypertext* as a method of understanding and organizing archival material—not simply as a stack of collections but mostly as relational repositories of collective and communal memory.

Dahl's envisioning in the larger *Life Rhythm Project* epitomizes in our current time many of the previous ideas Warburg had in mind when solemnly working on his *Mnemosyne Atlas*. The clustered montaged images reveal a committed attempt to decolonize hierarchical and Eurocentric modes of configuring human history. The narratives embedded in these photographic montages, in all their asynchronous but clearly organized nature, appeal to and speak of the innermost structures of the human condition. Similarly, Dahl's non-linear overlapping of the formal qualities of skulls from pre-history with physical features of the contemporary participants offers an intricate web of associations that deconstruct—and hence *reconstruct*—the complexities of human memory, before being officially rendered as history. Such an attempt to redefine our human origins through syncretism rather than colonial or imperial power can also be tied to the very essence of the modernist project.

Revisionist order, playful intuition, cultural syncretism and collective memory are all but few concepts that are integral in understanding the correlations between Dahl's and Warburg's projects. In a similar fashion to German Dadaists in the first decades of the twentieth-century, Dahl assembled images coming from diverse sources to playfully reconfigure a renewed epistemological

puzzle for our conventional modes of learning through visuals and written language. Hannah Höch's photomontages and Luis Bunuel's *An Andalusian Dog* come to mind because of the playful, intuitive undertone in Dahl's montage choices. The skull constitutes the tangible foundation of human thought; while the eyes, conversely, offer a corporeal window to the visible world. Dahl's work is henceforth a confrontation between the *known* (the human skull of sapiens) and the *seen* (the eyes). Coincidence or not, the decades of the Dadaists' creative paroxysms also gave birth to one of the first versions of Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*.

And, why is archiving so important to the artist? Archiving is a way of compiling, selecting, and organizing. *The Migrators* is part of a broad archival project that, despite its apparently strict organization, also suggests with its title a transitory nature. "I don't have a practice without archiving", Dahl admitted to her colleagues in an interview for the project *Anamnesia: Unforgetting* that marked the naming of The Crista Dahl Media Library and Archive at VIVO Media Art Centre in 2013 (233). Indeed, her life and home reveal an on-going practice of collecting and ordering mostly visual artifacts from the worlds through which she has migrated. Our current digital world, from PowerPoint and its derivatives to social media with non-stop newsfeeds, is no longer composed of a unitary pattern of discursive or epistemological practices. In our hyper-connected, non-linear context, where everything becomes transferable and immediate information, *Life Rhythm Project* is eerily relevant. With the mnemonics of the hand, the oversize time and space charts and even a deck of skull cards, the pieces of *The Migrators* are a reminder of the importance of alternate methods of holding human memory as material knowledge.

Bradly, Sharon, Crista Dahl, Amy Kazymchyk, Donato Mancini, Alex Muir, and Cecily Nicholson. *Anamnesia: Unforgetting – polytemporality, implacement and possession in The Crista Dahl Media Library & Archive*. Vancouver, BC: VIVO Media Arts Centre, 2012.

Acknowledgements

The production of this book and the artworks took place on land that is now known as Vancouver Canada. It is in fact the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the xʷməθkʷyəm (Musqueam), Skw̱xwú7mesh (Squamish), and səl̍ilwətaɬ /Selilwitulh (Tsleil-waututh) Nations. We honor the first peoples of this land and are thankful to live and work here. There are many Indigenous stories of origin and mobility that are not included here.

The Migrators refers to the knowledge of the movement of global peoples. Information of the early hominids was assembled from a multitude of sources collected over many years by Crista Dahl. We are very grateful for the individuals behind *The Migrators* who shared information about their lives by involving themselves with interviews and photographs of their eyes and the tools that they use. The texts that appear in this publication were gone over and over by the participants.

A big thank you goes to Dinka Pignon for the *Time* poster design, photographing the participants, their tools, providing image editing and doing graphic design. Thank you goes to Sebnem Ozpete who continued the graphic design this year. Another big thank you to Victoria Lum for her beautiful and generous work on this very intricate book design. We also thank paleontologist Dr. James Campbell (University of Calgary) for reading and commenting on the texts.

There are many others who assisted with *Life Rhythm* project over the years. These include Elisa Ferrari, Julie Gendron, Emma Hendrix, Karen Knights, Alex Muir and the VIVO Media Arts Centre organization as a whole. Crista especially thanks Frans Van de Ven, her friend of 40 odd years who is still in her life.

Crista Dahl and Lois Klassen

Biographies

CRISTA DAHL is a senior Vancouver-based artist with a long history of involvement in artist-run culture in the Pacific Coast region. She is a founder and participant in some of Vancouver's original artist organizations including Intermedia Society, Little Hot Stove League, the Matrix International Video Exchange Conference, the New Era Social Club, the Satellite Video Exchange Society, Disasteroids, and more. She is the namesake of the Crista Dahl Media Library and Archive at VIVO Media Art Centre, which is western Canada's most significant repository of media art videos and artists' documents. Dahl initiated the archiving of these materials over 43 years ago and has since then ensured that they are accessible and available for artists, researchers and the general public.

LOIS KLASSEN is the hosting artist of Reading the Migration Library. In that capacity she initiates collaborations with artists, writers and designers, and edits the final bookworks. Klassen is a second-generation immigrant/settler, born in Treaty Two Territory, in what is known as the province of Manitoba, Canada. She is a volunteer Workplace Connections Mentor with MOSAIC (an immigrant services organization) and a Post-Doctoral Fellow at criticalMediArtstudio (cMAS), School of Interactive Arts and Technology, Simon Fraser University. She researches and writes about ethics and creative methods. Klassen is the founder of Light Factory Publications.

JAIRO SALAZAR earned his M.A. in art history from the University of North Texas in 2008. His background includes teaching and research experience in the fields of modern and contemporary art history in the United States, Colombia, and Canada. His academic research is devoted to exploring the dialogical intersections between war, catastrophe, and trauma reflected in contemporary art practices.

2020

Reading the Migration Library
The Migrators

An artist book by
CRISTA DAHL

Book, poster, cards (together): Edition of 200
Poster: Edition of 400

© 2020 Crista Dahl and named contributors
Bookwork (book, cards and poster together):
ISBN 978-1-988895-20-8
Poster: ISBN 978-1-988895-23-9

Book Design by Victoria Lum
All drawings by Crista Dahl
Printed by Copies Smart, Vancouver
Riso-print of covers by Moniker Press, Vancouver
Cards printed by Linx Print, Vancouver
Posters printed by Metropolitan Fine Printers, Vancouver

Light Factory Publications
Vancouver, Canada
www.lightfactorypublications.ca

Reading the Migration Library is a publication project initiated by
Vancouver-based artist, Lois Klassen in 2016. The project aims to
create and circulate artist books and ideas on the topic of migration.

This project would not be possible without the financial support of
the BC Arts Council and Canada Council for the Arts.

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