

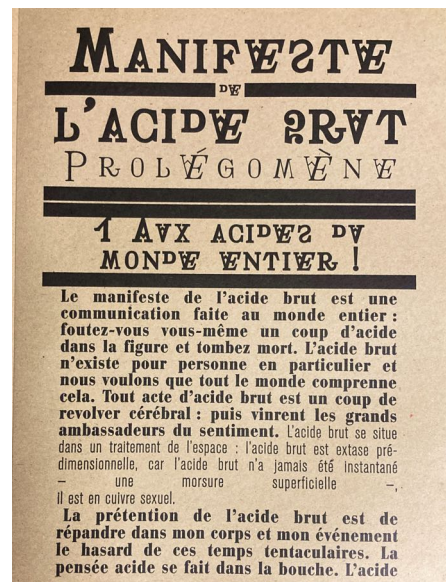
## Mutel's *Manifesto* in defense of acid etching



Mutel, Didier. *Manifeste de l'Acide Brut*.  
Paris: Didier Mutel, [2006].

(44 x 32 cm). [81] leaves with text on rectos only. Printed on a Heidelberg press from polymer plates and perfect-bound. 15 leaves of introductory text followed by 60 statements of artistic principles.

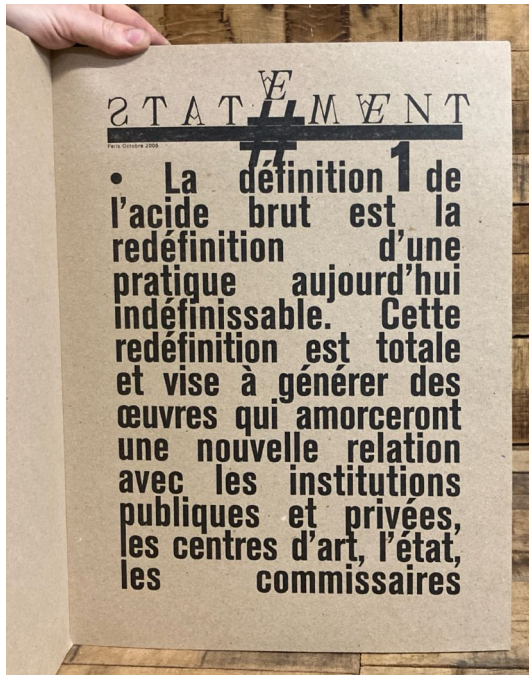
Mutel's *Manifeste de l'Acide Brut* is a *cri du coeur*, an impassioned defense of etching, which he saw in a perilous state in France at the time of publication, an endangered art form that in earlier centuries stood shoulder to shoulder with painting and drawing. In this call to arms he instructs how to engrave, on what surface, with whom, how to reopen the artistic field of engraving in the face of digital realities, and finally how to best transmit the practice and the result of printing via engraving and etching. Mutel's manifesto vigorously takes up the intellectual tradition of artistic manifestos that preceded it, and is materially produced for widest dissemination: printed on inexpensive brown paper, perfect-bound, and very powerfully typeset with multiple faces of varied eye-catching sizes. No colophon, no deluxe edition on fine paper. Around 400 copies printed on a Heidelberg press for maximum impact à la Marinetti.



Mutel began showing and promoting his work in Paris in 1991 at a time when, in his eyes, the gloried time of book production faced the beginning of a crisis in the French bibliophilic world. This crisis brought into question the meaning and value of the techniques that were no longer being used by dominant artists. Following this crisis, from 1991-2005, many studios closed or changed their methods of production.

**\$700**

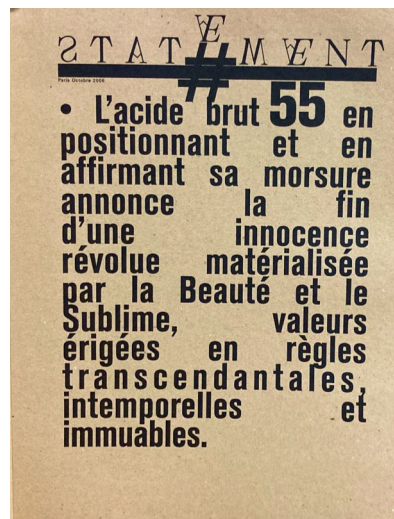
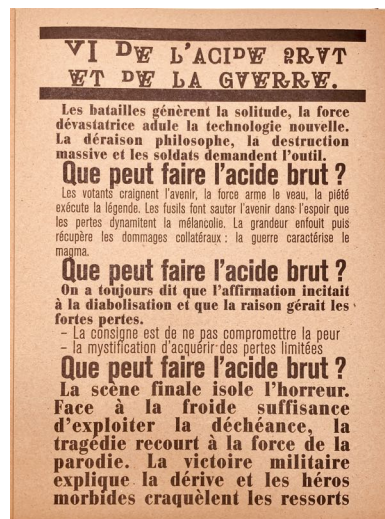
*Manifeste de l'Acide Brut* is Mutel's analysis of the collapse of the earlier period and the predefinition of a new era of artistic production.



Statement # 1: The definition of acid brut is the redefinition of a practice that is indefinable today. This redefinition is total and aims to generate works that will initiate a new relationship with public and private institutions, art centers, the state, exhibition curators, critics, historians, journalists, curators, booksellers...



The Manifesto is divided in two parts. The first is a collage of 20th century texts, from Dada, the surrealists, De Stijl, the constructivists, etc., with excerpts cut from F. T. Marinetti, Hans Arp, A. M. Cassandre, Théo Van Doesburg, Raoul Hausmann, Jan Ischichold, El Lissitzky, Lazlo Moholy-Nagy, Tristan Tzara, Ivan Puni, Paul Renner, Kurt Schwitters, and Christof Spengemann—manifestos of the past evoked not to return to the past, but to incite new graphic creations dedicated to etching and acid engraving, an art form that for Mutel is inseparable from expression.





Statement #60:

L'acide brut est un volonté empirique, une hypothèse qui reste à être démontrée.

*Acid brut is an empirical will, a hypothesis that remains to be proven.*

