

Aspen Magazine



Fig. 1. Front cover: *Aspen* 1, 1965

One winter in the early 1960s, while staying in Aspen, Colorado, Phyllis Johnson, an editor at such magazines as *Women's Wear Daily* and *Advertising Age*, decided to create a multimedia magazine devoted to covering “culture along with play.”¹ The first issue of *Aspen Magazine* was published in the winter of 1965. Johnson decided that each issue of the magazine should have a different designer and editor: “*Aspen* should be a time capsule of a certain period, point of view, or person.”²

The Multimedia Magazine in a Box

According to Johnson, “we wanted to get away from the bound magazine format, which is really quite restrictive.”³ She opted instead for making the magazine boundless—a box that contained many different things, such as booklets, posters, postcards, flipbooks, vinyl recordings, and in one issue, a reel containing four Super-8 films. This was the first magazine to be published in this manner, paving the way for other magazines to include additional media, such as CDs or DVDs as some magazines do today.



George Lois, Tom Courtos, Ralph Turzo designed it

Fig. 2. Advertisement for *Aspen 1*, 1965

Aspen Stays True to Its Name

Fig. 3. Ski-roaming photographs, *Aspen* 1, 1965



The first two issues of *Aspen* covered many things relating to the ski resort from which its name had been taken; articles on the skiing and wildlife in the area were featured. In the first issue, there were also articles on jazz, relative to a music festival in Aspen, and several essays that were presented at the International Design Conference in Aspen. In the second, there were several excerpts from papers presented at the Aspen Film Conference. This theme, however, was short-lived; the magazine soon went far beyond its place of origin.

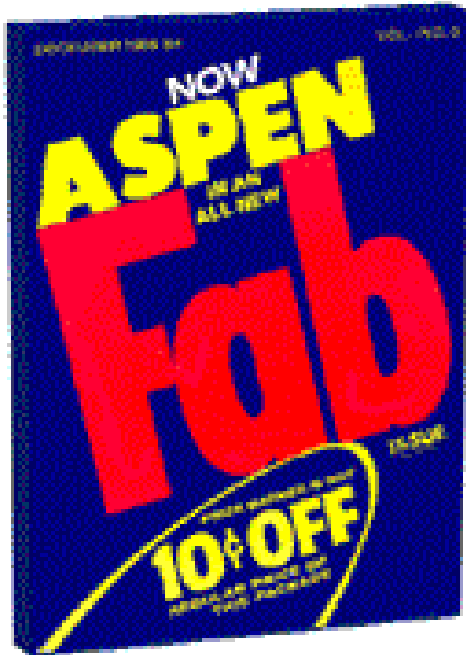


Figs. 4, 5. Martin Luray, Ski-racing photographs, *Aspen* 2, 1966

Warhol and Dalton

Change Aspen

Fig. 6. Front cover of *Aspen* 3, 1966



The third issue of *Aspen*, designed and edited by Andy Warhol and David Dalton, left the ski resort town behind to explore the realm of pop art. It featured 12 reproduced pop art paintings, flip books of underground movies, a small book of acid trip tickets, and a copy of Warhol's newspaper *The Plastic Exploding Inevitable*, among other things. And while the previous issues had included jazz and classical recordings, this issue's record contained guitar feedback from John Cale of the Velvet Underground and Peter Walker's Indian raga-influenced music.



Fig. 7. Jack Smith, "Buzzards over Bagdad," *Aspen* 3, 1966

Fig. 8. "The Plastic Exploding Inevitable," *Aspen* 3, 1966

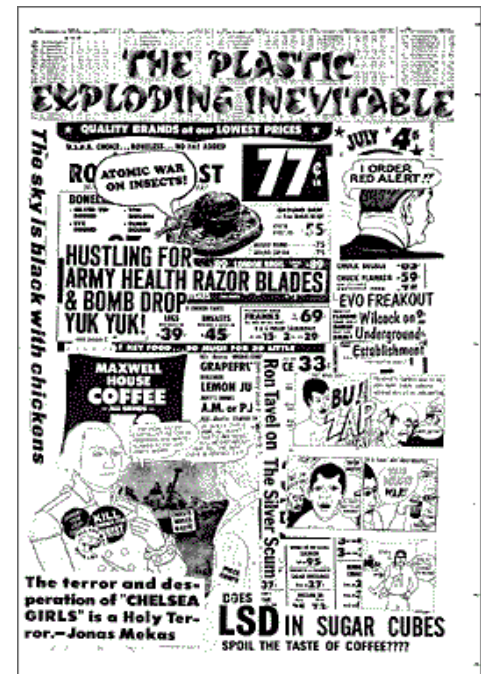


Fig. 9. Andy Warhol, "Kiss," *Aspen* 3, 1966

The New Aspen

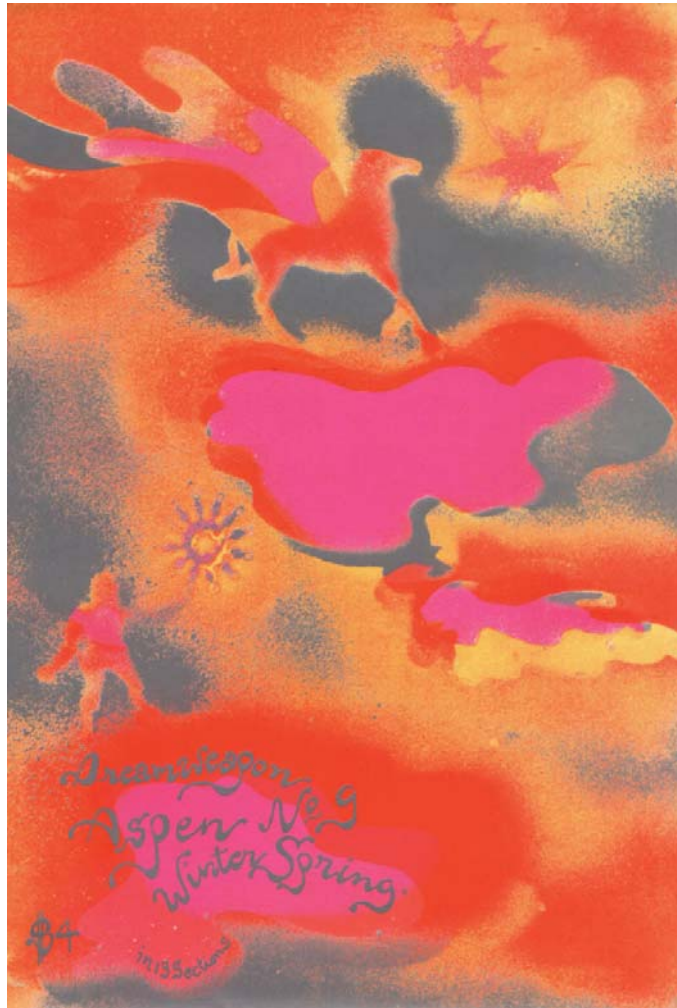
With the subject matter of the magazine now open to anything, *Aspen* began covering a significantly wider range of subjects. Starting with the pop art issue, *Aspen* went on to cover such subjects as minimalism, performance art, British art, psychedelic art, and Asian art, among many other artistic styles and traditions. Because of the enormous artistic effort required to produce the magazines, these issues appeared infrequently. Ultimately, there were ten issues of *Aspen*; the final issue was published in 1971. The magazine's demise may have been owing to the fact that it was an advertising nightmare; the advertisements, located at the bottom of each box, were easily ignored. The ads were even removed from the magazine after issue 5 & 6.



Fig. 10. Collection of Issues of *Aspen*, 1965–1971

The Psychedelic Issue

Fig. 11. Hetty MacLise, Front cover of *Aspen 9*, 1971
Weingrow Collection



Perhaps the most interesting issue of *Aspen* was the psychedelic issue, published in the winter and spring of 1971. Called *Dreamweapon*, it featured a cover designed by Hetty MacLise, who together with Angus MacLise was responsible for the design of the entire issue. Recalling the ten acid trip tickets provided by Andy Warhol in issue 3, this issue appears to have taken all of those trips in order to create its contents. The cover itself makes manifest the wildness of the issue. On the back cover is written, “Lucifer, Lucifer, Bringer of Light,” followed by the Neal Cassady quote “You gotta zig when they zag” on the inside cover.⁴



Fig. 12. Advertisement for *Aspen 9*, 1971

Lucifer, Lucifer, Bringer of Light



Fig. 13. Detail of Dale Wilbourn, "Triptych," *Aspen 9*, 1971

As the quote on its back cover suggests, the psychedelic issue contained several demonic-looking images and texts. The third piece of Dale Wilbourn's "Triptych" is quite devilish; and Ira Cohen and Bill DeVore's "From The Invasion of Thunderbolt Pagoda" contains images of what are meant to be spirits and wizards and sorcerers, distorted through camera techniques.



Fig. 14. Detail of Ira Cohen and Bill DeVore, "From The Invasion of Thunderbolt Pagoda," *Aspen 9*, 1971

Dream Music

Fig. 15. Christopher Tree, "Spontaneous Sound," Aspen 9, 1971
Weingrow Collection



The psychedelic issue also centered on psychedelic perceptions of music. It contained "Keyboard Study #2" by Terry Riley—a music score contained in a circle—and included a record with *Spontaneous Sound*, in which various instruments were played spontaneously, on one side, and "The Joyous Lake," a psychedelic piece with wild drumming and an entrancing flute and organ, as well as vocals, on the other. This issue also included a triptych by Aymon de Sales, entitled "Musical Scores and Glyphs," with a poem.

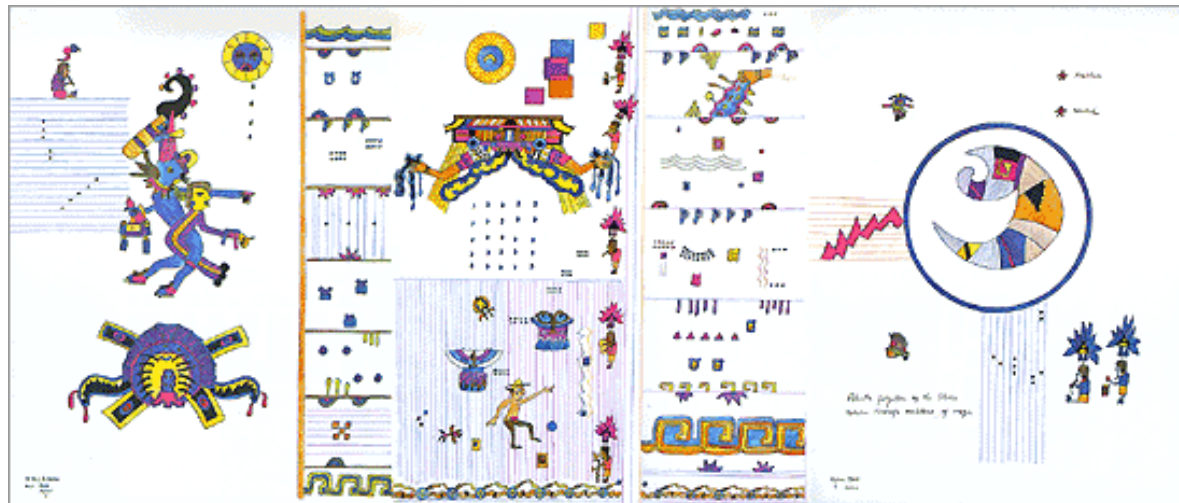


Fig. 16. Aymon De Sales, "Musical Scores and Glyphs," Aspen 9, 1971

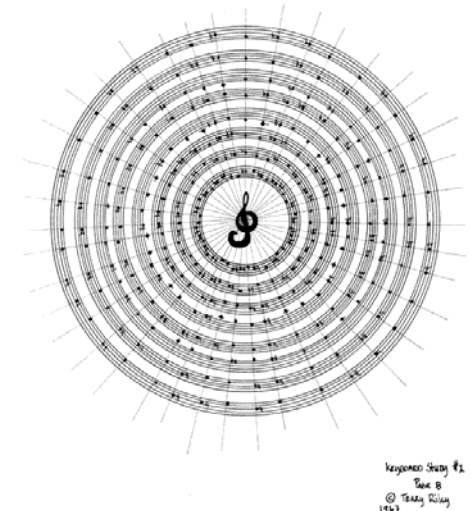


Fig. 17. Terry Riley, "Keyboard Study #2," 1967, Aspen 9, 1971

Musical Scores and Glyphs

In blue mist the outer worlds split
I am unhuman looking through liquid eyes
I perceive Earth crying beneath tar roads, Time divided by
strange minds

Long ago in slip stream waves homosapiens mingled with
star bright races. Where I was born green feel of Alinth
touches their receding wing light as they flee in fear of
the mammal lust their ageless desire has mutated in magic
spheres.

A ravenous dark angel serpent in the space grasses twines his
tail around my bee hexagon heart as he swallows the human moon,
beckoning material shit eating astro-nats to virgin platinum ships
raped from the doors of Eden.

Pollution thoughts with LSD boosters Space Be Ins strive to
understand their double helix coil - lost in maze of dimensional
body wasters sucked with venom they move clay footed in tomb
cities

From wheat fine threads of intelligence murdering in oxygen, I
search stars for green Alinth where wait astrologers divining
earthquake signals which break from elemental prisons joining
calculations to empling points bent beyond death into
Luminesence!

Fig. 18. Aymon De Sales, "Musical Scores and Glyphs," *Aspen* 9, 1971
Weingrow Collection

Sentential Metaphrastic



Fig. 19. Detail of Nikki Grand, "The Pomegranate," *Aspen 9*, 1971



Fig. 20. Diane Rochlin. A small selection of a large group of photographs, *Aspen 9*, 1971

The psychedelic issue contained many psychedelic poems and essays. These included an excerpt from an essay on "The Soul of the Word," written and illustrated by Marian Zazeela; an excerpt from an "1100 page work in progress" called *Sentential Metaphrastic* by Lionel Ziprin, with a photograph by Tom Carroll; a poetry sheet with poetry from Gerard Malanga, Paolo Lionni, Harvey Cohen, Nikki Grand, and John Cale; and a "Letter to Diane and Shelley from Vali," written by Vali with photographs by Diane Rochlin.

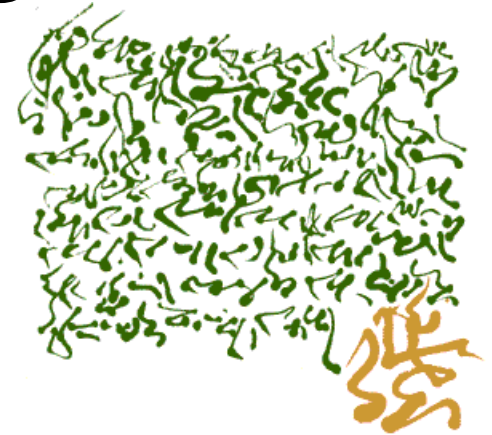


Fig. 21. Detail of Marian Zazeela, "Soul of the Word," *Aspen 9*, 1971



Fig. 22. Tom Carroll, Untitled photograph, *Aspen 9*, 1971

Weingrow Collection

Lumagraphs and Westerns

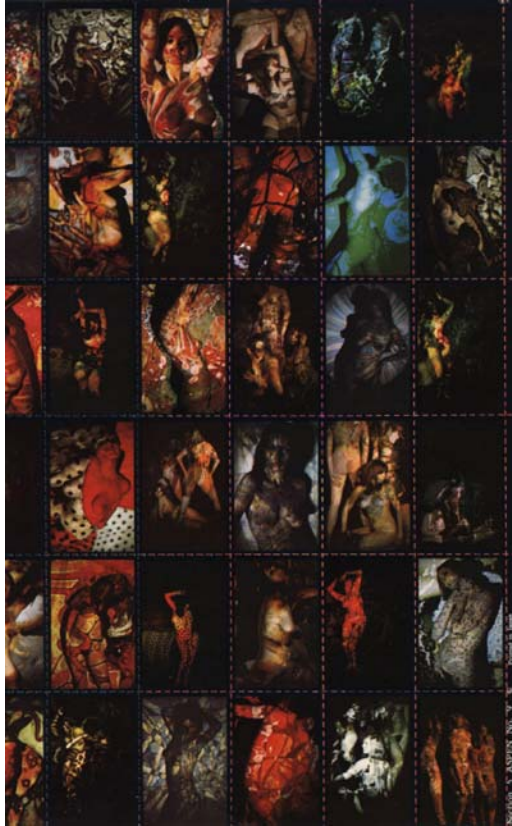


Fig. 23. Don Snyder, "Lumagraphs,"
Aspen 9, 1971
Weingrow Collection

The psychedelic issue also contained a stamp sheet of "Lumagraphs" by Don Snyder, as well as a piece entitled *Dream of Goeralegan*, and a booklet by Benno Friedman, "Benno Friedman's Westerns," made up of frames from classic Westerns that are subtly double-exposed, merging two images, all in sepia tones. All in all, the psychedelic issue was a significant collection of psychedelic art, and perhaps marked the high point of *Aspen's* unique nonconformity.



Fig. 24. Benno Friedman, "Benno Friedman's Westerns,"
Aspen 9, 1971

Notes and Illustrations

Notes

1. Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/> (accessed December 10, 2005).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. *Aspen 9* (1971), BeatBooks, <http://www.beatbooks.com/cgi-bin/beatbooks/09472.html> (December 12, 2005).

Illustrations

1. Front cover: *Aspen 1* (1965). Randall Ross, *Modernism 101*. Courtesy of *Modernism 101*, http://www.modernism101.com/aspen_black_box.php (accessed December 12, 2005).
2. Advertisement for *Aspen 1* (1965). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/advertisements/aspen1Ad.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
3. Ski-roaming photographs, *Aspen 1* (1965). 12-page booklet, 9 x 12 in. Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen1/skiRoaming.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
4. Martin Luray, Ski-racing photographs, *Aspen 2* (1966), single horizontal page, 45 x 6 1/8 in., accordion-folded into booklet covers, 4 3/4 x 6 1/8 in. Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen2/skiRacing.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
5. Martin Luray, Ski-racing photographs, *Aspen 2* (1966). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen2/skiRacing.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
6. Front cover: *Aspen 3* (1966). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/> (accessed December 10, 2005).
7. Jack Smith, "Buzzards over Bagdad," underground movie flipbook, reversible 36-page booklet, 6 x 3 in., *Aspen 3* (1966). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen3/flipbook.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
8. "The Plastic Exploding Inevitable," *Aspen 3* (1966). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/> (accessed December 10, 2005).

Notes and Illustrations

Illustrations (continued)

9. Andy Warhol, "Kiss," underground movie flip book, reversible 36-page booklet, 6 x 3 in., *Aspen 3* (1966). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen3/flipbook.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
10. Collection of issues of *Aspen*, 1965–1971. Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/> (accessed December 10, 2005).
11. Hetty MacLise, front cover, *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of the Howard L. and Muriel Weingrow Collection of Avant-Garde Art and Literature at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.
12. Advertisement for *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/advertisements/aspen9Ad.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
13. Detail of Dale Wilbourn, "Triptych," single sheet, 27 1/2 x 8 1/2 in., *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/triptych.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
14. Ira Cohen and Bill Devore, "From The Invasion of Thunderbolt Pagoda," six perforated postcards captioned on reverse, accordion-folded. The caption of this postcard reads: "Maya wakes to pigeons in a ghostly light." *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/invasion.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
15. Christopher Tree, "Spontaneous Sound" (gongs, drums, cymbals, flutes, bass clarinet, Tibetan temple horn and voice), Flexi Disc, 33 rpm, *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of the Howard L. and Muriel Weingrow Collection of Avant-Garde Art and Literature at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.
16. Aymon De Sales, "Musical Scores and Glyphs," single sheet, 25 3/4 x 11 in., *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/musicalScores.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).
17. Terry Riley, "Keyboard Study #2," 1967, 9 x 12 in., *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/dreamMusic.html#riley> (accessed December 10, 2005).
18. Aymon De Sales, "Musical Scores and Glyphs," Poem, *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of the Howard L. and Muriel Weingrow Collection of Avant-Garde Art and Literature at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

Notes and Illustrations

Illustrations (continued)

19. Detail of Nikki Grand, "The Pomegranate," typeset poem with integral handwriting and drawing, *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/poetrySheet.html#grand> (accessed December 10, 2005).

20. Diane Rochlin, a small selection of a large group of photographs that accompany "Letter to Diane & Shelley from Vali," *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/vali.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).

21. Detail of Marian Zazeela, "The Soul of the Word," text (1963) with calligraphic designs, *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/soul.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).

22. Tom Carroll, untitled photograph that accompanies an excerpt from a work by Lionel Ziprin entitled "Sentential Metaphrastic," *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of the Howard L. and Muriel Weingrow Collection of Avant-Garde Art and Literature at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

23. Don Snyder. "Lumagraphs," sheet of perforated, gummed stamps, 8 1/2 x 12 1/4 in., *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of the Howard L. and Muriel Weingrow Collection of Avant-Garde Art and Literature at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

24. Benno Friedman, "Benno Friedman's Westerns," 16-page booklet, 12 x 9 in., *Aspen 9* (1971). Courtesy of Andrew Stafford, *Aspen: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*, <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen9/westerns.html> (accessed December 10, 2005).