

Potter, Norman. (1991). *Models and constructs : margin notes to a design culture*. Hyphen press. — cf, [APA6th](#) style (English: top right).

*Precepts of the literalist movement* (Potter, 1990, p.90)—selected passage:

1. Begin at the beginning; a fresh start
2. Seek always the resident principles (corona)
3. Find them where they belong—in the job itself
4. Expose the elements
5. Imply the components
6. Propose discourse
7. Be clear full spare consistent and sufficient
8. Take pains
9. Ask questions
10. Affirm contingently
11. Contingency respects situations [a must? NP]
12. Equate means, constraints, opportunity, response
13. Refer always and at all levels
14. Reach out—nothing to be self-contained
15. Be functional—all parts must work for their living
16. Be just, and let justice be seen to be done
17. Be taut but not tight; the work must breathe
18. Be literal; there must be nothing else
19. 'It was so; I was there, and I saw it'
20. Make, do, go; scorn to publish: encounter!

0. Start always at zero. The facts. Concern, response, enquiry. The place and the situation. The means. Contingent affirmations in a world without precedent. Anonymity. Particularity. No truck with taste, style, eclecticism, magazines, picture books. Universals: number, relation, geometry, sense-data.

*The Modern Movement starts with zero!*

We begin *here*—Starting with zero! To a certain degree a book-presentation can be categorised *between* the Black Book and the interview. Which I will attempt/try again to demonstrate here. We start with looking at the book as a dark object, that will reveal itself to us, beginning with its passive side.

The copy of *Models & Constructs* that I have in my keep measures 17.5 X 23.5 X 3 (W-H-D in cm). The shirting is a black cloth with the title embossed in silver. The end paper is black. The spine is stitched and glued. The book is set in two types: Plantin (Linotype), and a type-writer font (cf, colophon).

The book is illustrated with a wealth of black & white photographs: spaces are in *bleed*, objects as *cut-outs*. The book starts with people and places. And then the machine around which the entire reflective project of the book appears to revolve: a Universal Woodworker—the *Dominion*. NP is a *joiner*.

All his reflections in writing, image, projects, products and handicraft gravitates around joinery. Joinery is a third specialisation *between* carpentry and cabinet-making. His book is a joinery. The spaces in NP's projects define the interior-space *between* the items and the architecture.

Which means that he has acquired a *deep* knowledge of *both*, and how they work *together* for a decent everyday life! For manufacturing elements needed to complete his interiors, he resorts to local materials and manufacture (crafts). Alternatively, a strict selection of industrial items.

The sample of projects he includes in this book are two kitchens, wall-furniture (he loves stuff that slides in and out—between space and furniture), a bedroom, a student lobby, a small bookshop and a fashion shop (Gowens in a small town called Knightsbridge). *That's it!*

The book contains a sample of correspondence (letters) with people that mattered to NP. And whole section of personal works: ranging from poetry, a play w/scenography and performance. NP's story of how it went. The play —*In:quest of Icarus*. The story of a young man who flew near the sun.

The wax that fixed the feathers to his arms melted, he lost his wings and fell. He was not content—like his father Daedalus—to behold the Cretan labyrinths that they had built together. He was not content with the overview of the work, but wanted to flight as high and close to the sun as possible.

This play is about NP's own life; or, is his way of coming to terms with it. Like the book. He is paying for his sins, asking forgiveness, of declaring his love for a wife (a pianist) that left him. He organised piano concerts in his workshop. His dedication took a heavy toll on his relationships. *But yet...*

*I ask him: 1) are we affected at the same level of materiality that we succeed at picking up in our work? 2) is life connected? 3) can crowds be intelligent? 4) can the earth be gardenized? 5) is design a way of working that is located between the industrial way of thinking and crafts; 6) does design serve life?*