"grow" is Eugen Gomringer's early concrete poetry, written in 1954. One year earlier, Gomringer coined the term Concrete poetry in an analogy to the term Concrete art. Concrete poetry is poetry in which a typographical arrangement of words is as important in conveying the intended effect as the conventional elements of the poem, such as the meaning of words, rhythm, rhyme and so on.

In his poems, which play with materiality of writing and typeface, he follows the Abstract art of his time. This gave me an idea to apply geometric construction and aesthetics of Concrete art from his minimalistic poem "grow" for this book.

Square-shaped paper rings gradually increase in size at regular intervals. A total of 21 rings are inserted into each other and housed in a rhombus-shaped box. Each of them stands for a different letter or word. The original poem in German (in dark gray) is embossed on the edge of the rings and their English translation (in light gray) follows on the opposite side of the edge. The title of the book — "grow (ger.: wachsen)" — also appears twice in the text, highlighted in blue. These rings can be put in the right order with the help of the full text, printed in both languages inside the lid.

Depending on the placement of the smallest ring, a different context of meanings will be created or disappear. In this sense, moving a ring is like leafing through the pages in the book. But you are able to control the constellation of words or sentences all by yourself, so that new contexts arise.

Captions

image_1_grow.jpg — A view of the book showing the appearance of a rhombus.

image_2_grow.jpg — Once the book is opened, the small spaces divided by paper walls are revealed.

image_3_grow.jpg — A total of 21 rings, increasing in size in regular intervals, are inserted into each other. Each of them stands for an individual letter or word.

image_4_grow.jpg — Depending on the placement of the smallest ring, a different context of meaning will be created or disappear. In this sense, moving the ring is like leafing through the pages in the book.

image_5_grow.jpg — The letters are loosely placed based on the modular structure of the rings. This loosens the rigor of the exceedingly mathematical structure of the book.