

Open Book #1

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**Independent
Publishing and Arts**

Readers & Publishers

Independent Publishing and Arts

How do you envision the relationship between independent publishing and art?

Lolli Editions

The relationship between independent publishing and art is a crucial one. Publishing is in the best instance an act of art-making, whether we speak of producing actual art books or conventionally printed novels: the devil is in the details regardless of the genre/category, and the reader will notice. Independent publishers tend to, and should aspire to, approach books as works of art more than commercial products — formally, materially, contextually, thematically, curatorially. And that is rightfully so: it is the role of independent publishers to be more daring, more readily innovative than trade publishers — to be an avant-garde actor in its own right through the works of the writers, artists and designers they champion, together shaping our culture against the grain.

Tara Books

The question for me really has to do with independence, whether publishers assume it as a point of departure or whether editors within houses take risks with full knowledge of what they have set about to do.

Historically, independent publishers have pushed the limits of what books could do, that is, they have pushed readers to 'read' pictures, as much as words, integrated images and text into a single syntactical structure – The Gaberbocchus Press in UK is a good example of a house that worked with images and design in radical and startling ways. Within the Soviet Union, for example, independent minded editors too managed to do the same – take the case of Aldona Liobytė from Lithuania who undertook many bold experiments, both with respect to illustrations as well as book design, at a time when to conform to what the regime wanted was what most others sought to do.

At Tara Books we are committed to books that push the frontiers of form as well as content and we do this because we think some books need to be made that way, even if it does not always make commercial sense. On the other hand, we do want our books to be bought and read – and we do believe that every book ultimately finds its ideal reader or readers. The challenge is not to be pushed to think of 'independence' as cosily niche or a liability but instead to view it as a stance that unites us with others who are as committed to not being pressured by the market or the overwhelming power and attractions of what is considered popular taste.

Saqi Books

This is a question close to our hearts. We see books and literature as an organic part of the world of arts and culture and hate to see them separated. Often, if people are interested in any art form, be it painting, dance, sculpture, theatre, fashion, the written word, music etc., they are also the kinds of creative people who like to read books. We also publish lots about other cultural practices (including modern and traditional art, cuisine, embroidery, dance, graffiti...) so the relationship works both ways. We also like to hold author events at festivals and in spaces outside traditional book spaces, which we hope encourages people to engage who might not always think to go to a bookshop.

backbonebooks

They are both interconnected fields. The books I create and publish are works of art in a book form. Book as a medium allows me to explore different possibilities and to collaborate with other people. To me, having a publishing house is a platform and a pretext to be able to generate new ideas and share them with a wider audience.

In The End, Books?

We focus on publishing and working with artists because these collaborations always bring something new to the table. We are both graphic designers and we find it interesting to push the boundaries of what a publication can be. Since we are from a more traditional book-background working with artists who don't necessarily use the paper medium can be incredibly refreshing. Furthermore, we try to work towards a publication that can be a part of the artist's art practice and not just a representation of it. It can be fascinating to see in how many ways a book can become part of an exhibition, performance or artwork. We see the book become a piece of the art and the artist sees their art as part of the book. It's also interesting from readers' points of view because the book can be seen and remembered in a larger context once in their possession. It goes

from a text to an overall experience. We also find that most of the time, the audience for the exhibition of the artist is the best audience for the book. We take the books to book fairs, but often these materials work best when people are willing to take time to listen and understand the artist's practice, or at the least the story behind the book. The traditional method of circulating artists' books seems only feasible with the established publishing houses or with more eye-catching and visually interesting publications. This is also why, beyond integrating the book in exhibitions, we find the Readers & Publishers project interesting. It's another way for us to reach an audience.

Foe Publishing

It's a duty. A duty to support writers as artists and to provide a platform to engage readers with ideas, intelligent writing, and great storytelling.

Cooper Gallery DJCAD

Independent publishing can operate as a crucial infrastructure for both galleries and artists who use publishing as a mode of practice. In the former sense, publishing can provide a means to expand upon exhibition making and curatorial practice that is focused on the discursive potential of gallery situated projects. In terms of the latter, publishing as practice, independent publishing provides a key 'venue' for a range of contemporary arts practices that are often marginalised by galleries, moreover it can be a crucial platform for accessing publics and audiences who may not identify with the 'spectacle' of much contemporary arts programming.

ATLAS Projectos

Both stating the obvious and obviously repeating the words of others who said it before, there is almost no 'in-' in independent publishing. To publish is to rely on a series of relations and modes of production that are mutually dependent. There is hardly any other cultural practice that is so heavily entangled and where roles can be easily swapped, shared, and multiple, as when envisioning and creating a vehicle for publication. Us at ATLAS have been at times editors, writers, artists, designers, proofreaders, PRs, salespeople, distributors, couriers; but neither all at the same time nor alone in doing so. To publish implies an imbricated positioning where a network of agents is actually coming together and giving more than taking, so that

printed and digital formats can be called publications. As a recipe for art — and writing from the position of an artist — it means the atomisation and alienation of the artist-as-genius-as-entrepreneur is countered by the concerted action of an independent dependency, a community that defines the mode of how it wants to communicate and act, not because it is authorised to do so by the institutions of power, but by virtue of an unconditional politics of dedication and exuberance.

Looiersgracht 60

Although the book form has held the attention of artists since the start of the 20th century, it rose in popularity in the 60s as a means of extending the exhibition platform and dematerialising the 'precious art object'. The intention of artists' books then was not to create highly crafted, invaluable objects, but rather to create mass produced books and make them available to a new audience using different distribution systems. Today however, these books are often either too expensive or are devalued due to difficulties in categorising, marketability, pricing, or because they lack funding and distribution by mainstream publishing houses. This is where independent publishing houses can afford artists opportunities to experiment and produce books that may not necessarily be geared towards commercial success but lead to certain possibilities for the book to become a site for artistic discovery.

MARIA†. editions

We are based in Nicosia and New York, but founded the imprint in Glasgow while sharing an apartment and studying at the Glasgow School of Art. It started as an inside joke and a continuous online conversation. For some reason it took us over a year to realise we have the same given name, 'Maria'. The imprint's name and logo originated from a glitch in Microsoft Word. The dagger symbol looks like a cross in most sans serif fonts reflecting our shared familiarity with religious iconography (Catholic and Greek Orthodox). We adjust these motives for our own needs and applications. In essence, our selection tends to focus on neglected aspects surrounding art related activities.

Las Injurias

For me, publishing is an answer. Books are the perfect democracy, a book can contain anything. Art could be a language to express thoughts through images-words. My inherent interests as a publisher are archives and information, but I use an artistic language, so, for me publishing not only has a relationship with art, it has a relationship with knowledge. Being specific and using my experience as a reference, I imagine that publishing will grow, but sometimes I think contemporary art is elitist, limited and alienated from the real world. For that elitist art you will find elitist publishers, but contemporary independent publishing is about sharing. I see publishing as a different realm, independent from art, galleries and the internet.

dpr-barcelona

Independent publishing allows some level of experimentation which is not marked solely by commercial urgencies, but is not in conflict with the possibility of monetization. The question would be how far can move independent publishing without the danger of relying on precarious working conditions.

Community

**What role can
independent publishers
have in creating
communities
or being supported
by them?**

In The End, Books?

We strongly value the 'Independent' in the term 'Independent publishers'. We use our position as a smaller publisher to invest in younger and lesser-known artists who we believe in. We found that working within the community of artists we graduated with, the new generation of artists as you will, is most interesting. They are all up-and-coming, as are we, and sharing the networks we create as we go along can make for interesting and new collaborations. Our own initiated projects also strongly focus on a sense of community between the participating artists. We are currently working on an open call format that brings together artists that use writing in their practice. Publishing as an independent publisher allows us to put the focus on the group or the individual as we see fit.

Tara Books

I think many of us are 'networked' — we meet at book fairs, learn from each other, share spaces, ideas... In this sense some of us are already part of informal communities that include not only publishers, but also agents, authors, artists, and designers. We seek each other out on account of common interests as well as a shared faith in the imagination and of how it can actually negotiate and transcend limits of language and context.

At Tara we have built two sorts of communities. We work with indigenous artists from India, and today we are a community of sorts, that sets store by shared aesthetic values. The second sort of community is more global and includes artists and designers, publishers and writers that we work with or learn from — the art and design residencies that we offer for professionals who would like to work with us have rendered this community open-ended and endlessly stimulating.

dpr-barcelona

Independent publishing gather around them audiences interested in quite specific topics. They are builders and caregivers of audiences. They work as a node helpful to trigger discussions and build intellectual communities. In reciprocity the community help to build and support the reputation of the publisher.

Cooper Gallery DJCAD

Creating communities is implicit with publishing. The strength that independent publishing has is that it is very responsive to small scale communities, both in terms of providing a textual space in which they can articulate themselves, but more importantly in offering a public realm outside of an increasingly constrained and conventional mainstream.

Looiersgracht 60

Independent publishers working outside the constraints of the mainstream hold a unique position in that they often serve more than one purpose – perhaps alongside their publishing house they run a lecture series or an exhibition space. Their modes of production typically rely heavily on collaboration with the artists they publish and also with their local community of suppliers, printer, and distributors. This localisation of resources and concurrent dependency creates a tight-knit community which can sometimes be extended trans-nationally, with such ventures as Publication Studio, Independent art book fairs and now, with Readers & Publishers.

MARIA†. editions

The imprint was conceived at an art school so we are naturally interested in an artistic community. Small independent publishers who are dedicated to providing reliable platforms can foster these communities and create lasting bonds.

Artists who we find interesting and who offer a strong viewpoint on subjects related to our publications tend to use writing as an extension to their artistic practices. Collections of texts initiated and edited by other artists (Sofia Duchovny's 'Overnight' and John Ryaner's 'WOUEO – A WORD OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN') have acted as hubs for like-minded individuals.

Saqi Books

We run a healthy events programme and it's great to keep in touch with the friends of our publishing house in this way. We collaborate with many writers who do close work in the community – for example, Sabrina Mahfouz who runs many workshops engaging with readers and aspiring writers in the community. We also keep our followers up to date with the latest news about our books via newsletters and our social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube). We are also involved in Shubbak Festival and Nour Festival and work with other cultural organisations throughout the UK to reach varied audiences.

Las Injurias

Publishing could be a rebellious act. I started to make books because I wanted to avoid several limitations from my environment. I didn't have a relationship with Caracas' art scene, so my only option was to create my own space to share and distribute ideas. From that perspective publishing can provide a framework to collaboration, and as a final result, that could create a community. In my opinion, publishing is like having a long distance relationship with the future, a way to avoid death.

Book Works

Our community is flourishing more than ever — with shared interests and mutual respect in what the independent and self-publishing sector can do outside of the commercial world of publishing in the arts.

backbonebooks

Believing that a work of art exists within the physical or mental activation through an individual, I see books as objects that demand an active user rather than a passive observer. My productions are not meant as the endpoint of an artistic process — they can serve as a vehicle that hopefully leads to an unexpected path, a point of asking questions and forming new perspectives. Books are bridges between me and other artists, and between the object and the person that activates the work.

Readership

How do you see the relationship between independent publishers and their readers?

Tara Books

More than ever, readers have opportunities to directly communicate with publishers because of social media. In any case, independent publishers have historically been dependent on a loyal following and newer forms of communication only augment this today.

For us, readers are not merely fans but thoughtful supporters who keep up with what we do. Some even undertake to pass the word out about our books, others offer voluntary support, say, helping out at a pop-up store... Ultimately if the reader seeks a publisher out, that is perhaps the best sort of praise — they are looking out for what one does, and that is gratifying.

ATLAS Projectos

Paraphrasing the words of late Canadian composer Martin Bartlett, independent publishing has — even if just so slightly and certainly askew — succeeded in overcoming the capitalist notion of commodification and wealth concentration (since publishing does presuppose a public, and hence, an audience and a market): we can think of almost no other economic activity that has eluded so well profitability and rentability while making its readership grow. The increase in readers goes hand in hand with an increase in publishing since what the independent means is not so far from the punk ethos stated in the cover of The Strangers 'Sideburns' fanzine: "A: This is a chord; E. This is another; G: This is a third. Now form a band!"

MARIA†. editions

We appreciate making things visible and available to new audiences. A book not only lifts the burden of physical walls and temporary exhibitions, but also gives an artist freedom to explore new ideas and work in different ways. MARIA†. editions projects serve as open studios — insights into work, process, and approach. Books allow for slow exposure, consideration, and conversation surrounding an artwork, medium, or an exhibition. Most of the readers attend our book launches and events, but once in a while we get emails from individuals from different countries because they are genuinely interested in a specific subject or artist. Gatherings, meeting new people, and conversations are all very rewarding.

backbonebooks

It is not only about the activation of the work in a given situation: I consider a physical or mental engagement of the created object with an individual in a very early stage of production. I am conscious that there will be a user before I even start to work.

Foe Publishing

The relationship is one built on trust. Readers align themselves to an independent publisher in the same way they do a favourite author because of a positive experience they have had with a previous title and an expectation that any future work will be of a similar voice, quality, or subject matter.

We all know that the market is saturated, and with the prohibitive cost of marketing it's very difficult to get our voices heard. So we have to engage readers who have the appetite, the desire to break from the mainstream, to have faith in us that they are discovering stimulating, thought-provoking new voices, and taking a chance to support fresh and exciting work.

Cooper Gallery DJCAD

The relationship between a printed work and its readership is always hard to pin down, but with the recent upsurge in independent publishing there is definitely an emerging community composed of a wide range of voices and views. At the heart of this is an excitement of developing new networks and peer groups around specific cultural ideas and positions. In this sense the relationship is one of dialogue and feedback, which over time will, I think, produce a radical new set of perspectives on culture and its possibilities.

dpr-barcelona

We wonder if there are ways of getting real feedback from readers. In this sense social media can play an essential role. However we think is yet to see if there exists real dialogue or if there is mainly self-promotion. We do need better feedback and metrics than report sales, to effectively know the way published contents are having relevance in the construction of discourses and critical narratives in our field of expertise.

Saqi Books

Maintaining an ongoing relationship with your readers is more important now than ever. There is so much noise online that sometimes it's difficult for all of us to find the content that chimes with us. It's very clear what our mission is and what kinds of books we publish — so the hope is that if you've read and liked one of our books, you'll like more! We're focusing energy into building up our mailing lists, social media accounts and direct sales via our website. We are always delighted to hear from readers directly, who we respect very much. To us, readers are our families — we meet them regularly at our author events and have conversations via social media. Without this core group of readers, who are bold enough to explore literature outside the mainstream, we wouldn't exist.

Las Injurias

Back in 2015 I was really broke, no money, nothing. Then I received an email from Printed Matter sending me a payment for my books sold there. That money allowed me to make more books, to pay pending bills, and to buy some food. In that moment I understood the importance of an audience who is willing to pay for your work, that's more relevant than Instagram followers, reviews or likes. From that very moment, an abstract idea became a tangible subject. I still remember the first Las Injurias zine sale. It was magical how someone from another continent paid for some printed sheets of paper. That possibility changed my mind and gave me hope.

Looiersgracht 60

Independently published books, be it artists' books, multiples, catalogues or limited-editions, often have a localised circulation which means that artists often depend entirely on those select loyal bookshops that distribute their publications to reach an audience. They also serve as a platform for young and emerging artists whose ideas often do not see the light of day, to publish experimental and out-of-the-box book works. Thus there is a certain responsibility placed upon the shoulders of publishers to reach out and continually enrich their community of readers, many of whom are artists themselves, that rely on their activities for stimulation. Take Amsterdam for example, this is a city with a vast and diverse history of artists' books and independent publishers, yet there has

not been an artists' book fair here since 2011 when, after a world-wide redistribution of art funds there was no longer the means to host such an event. As publishers ourselves we realised how difficult it is to reach a global audience as an independent publisher. 'Printing Plant' was therefore created to provide a new platform for progressive publications, allowing these works to be viewed by a wider and local readership. We hope to establish an enthusiastic community in Amsterdam that is both locally and internationally engaged.

Book Works

Our readership is fundamentally important as without them the books remain undiscovered. We have two types of readers: those we see most regularly, who come to our launches and events, and visit us at book fairs and exhibitions; the other readers are unseen, finding our books in libraries, buying them in bookshops or online, and this expanded readership acts as a barometer of how far these books can travel beyond our immediate community and shape its future direction.

Thinking about the future

How do you imagine the role of independent publishers in shaping the future of publishing?

Cooper Gallery DJCAD

It would be important to the arts sector if more independent publishers entered into sustained relationships with contemporary galleries and museums with appropriate programming strategies, as it is often beyond the scope of many institutions to produce and deliver publications on a regular basis. This would have tremendous benefits, the least of which would be to provide a professional context to support the many interesting writers currently emerging from within the contemporary arts scene in Scotland.

Tara Books

We have been around, and will be, for a long time to come. Today's communication possibilities have opened up ways of being in touch with readers that are far more direct, and today we all have our own constituencies of critics and reviewers, thanks to the internet. There is something inherently freeing about not having to compete for display space or discounts at bookstores, or worry about negotiating with distributing chains — though we all continue to do this — and we think this freedom today is possible, to be sure within limits, because it is possible to reach out widely.

In terms of how this would shape publishing: we can be sure that we will find readers for even the most recondite or eccentric content since we are literally looking for them everywhere and in virtual space. This means that we can do books that are truly diverse and unified only by a vision of what we think works for our publishing vision — in our case, the visual book — and expect to find ways of reaching constituencies that will enjoy them.

ATLAS Projectos

We are witnessing a sharp increase in fringe experiments within publishing alongside a sharp decline in physical bookshops, especially independent ones. So paradigms of marketability and readership-ability will continue to shift. The only certainty is that there is much more to come than what has already been done. Publishing is inherently futuristic. Even if it seems anachronistically avoiding the paperless revolution it precludes new relationships to readability, legibility and object-ability, pushing the boundaries of what the future may bring.

backbonebooks

I can't speak for others. I believe my role is to question what a book can be, and open a possibility for new thoughts.

Foe Publishing

Indies do have the ability to publish work that the big publishers can't or won't take a risk on. This is crucial in maintaining freedom of expression and nurturing creative diversity in the books that we publish. Indies sell themselves largely on brand, on creating that relationship with readers who are perhaps looking for something different, something not so prescriptive, and as an antidote to the competition — social media, online streaming services, gaming and more.

But there still has to be quality control. We still have to love a book, feel that it has artistic and intellectual importance, and that it represents us as a publisher.

Saqi Books

There are many uncertainties about the future of publishing. Due to developments in technologies and international trade, there are many changes taking place. Thanks to the nature of the role of independent publishing houses — publishing in a specialised, specific area and doing that well — we are naturally dynamic and perhaps find a flexibility that bigger publishing houses would take longer to implement. We are also better placed to take risks on the kind of content we can publish.

However, unlike the bigger publishing houses we can't invest in new technologies so tend to be less innovative with different digital formats. I don't think that's a bad thing — we're seeing a reversion to print books over electronic now, anyway. No one mentions eBooks as the certified future anymore.

All around us independents are disappearing. There are fewer independent retailers, fewer independent outlets of any kind, generally, here in the UK. It's essential in the current polarised global climate that indies continue to exist as we champion voices outside the mainstream and the establishment, encouraging intellectual development and inter-community engagement. Culture cannot be determined by the bottom line. Indies publish works that are notoriously difficult to publish if your programme comes down to financial profit and loss account, such as work in translation, which confirms our shared humanity.

In conclusion, I think indies will continue to pave the way with content, whilst the bigger publishing houses keep abreast of tech going forwards.

MARIA†. editions

As contemporary art is reduced to documentation snaps, it is essential to create new platforms for understanding and expanding the space surrounding art making. Printed matter grants the freedom to execute important gestures that would not be possible or not as transparent in other modes of dissemination.

Las Injurias

It's necessary to create new spaces to discuss and share information. I'm not sure about the future, but publishing is a strange activity. Probably this will depend on the context of each publisher, it's always evolving, and there are so many people doing amazing books. In that case, I tend to imagine a bright future, not in a romantic way, just pragmatically, a good future.

Looiersgracht 60

With the emergence of more and more young, independent and not-for-profit spaces as well as advances in technology such as print-on-demand printing, there is a renewed interest in independent publishing. Publishers and artists are in turn coming up with unique and creative solutions for recurring industry issues, such as a lack of financing for artists and the wastefulness prevalent in commercial printing. For example, Brussels based Good Surface fashions their publications from unused materials sourced from local print shops and suppliers. Meanwhile in Los Angeles, Hesse Press provides local artists with support in the form of financial micro-grants and design-based assistance. These sharing-based economy initiatives allow younger artists and graphic designers to realise projects that would otherwise be impossible.

Against this inspiring backdrop, Readers & Publishers' new and innovative open source model works to bring readers and people working in this industry into contact with one another. A worldwide online index of independent publishers that are able to help artists and independent publishers to promote audacious and bespoke projects is very welcome.

Looiersgracht 60 is pleased to be a part of these changes. As independent publishers and organisers of 'Printing Plant' Art Book Fair in Amsterdam we are very excited to be able to gather so many fascinating book works, all under the same roof, for what we are hoping will become an ongoing event for years to come.

dpr-barcelona

As long as we can keep building and caring specific audiences, we see that independent publisher have a lot to say in shaping the future of publishing: as explorers of niches and trends, as promoters of critical thinking. However, for us there is one capital question yet to be solved, and it is about finding a way for a fairer distribution of royalties for artistic and intellectual creators rather than intermediaries. Maybe the development of decentralized networks of independent publishers could be useful to revert such situation.

What can you imagine for the future of independent publishing?

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List of Publishers

ATLAS Projectos
www.atlasprojectos.net

ATLAS Projectos is a publishing collective founded in 2008 by artists André Romão, Gonçalo Sena and Nuno da Luz. Running in parallel to each one's individual practice, ATLAS has published books and records by a circle of close collaborators, outlining zones of affect and affinities. We edit, design and distribute what we publish, along with collaborations with other publishers.

Art / Ecologies / Fiction / Poetry / Time

backbonebooks
www.backbonebooks.net

My artistic work with the medium book developed with time in a very organic way. The process of accumulation, the (re-)ordering of information as well as the relation between language, word and image appeared to be major subjects since the beginning of my artistic practice. I kept/started thinking about the book as the “ideal form,” which serves as a physical and conceptual container, opening an imaginary space. Sequenced in pages, chapters or volumes, the chosen form opens multiple possibilities to think about content and form — I feel free to (re-)invent forms and spaces that allow to order, connect or deconstruct information. Being able to exist at the same time in different rooms — as part of an installation, as well as outside of an artistic context, is a challenging and inspiring aspect of this medium for me.

Artist's Books / Conceptual / Language / Space

Book Works
www.bookworks.org.uk

Book Works is an arts organisation with a unique role as makers and publishers of books. We see our role as both a commissioner of artist publications, and through collaboration generate a collection of works that might not otherwise be published.

Book Works will be 35 years old in 2019, and the role we have as a publisher changes and gets reinvented in relation to each generation of artists, writers and designers we work with, and the networks we're part of. The trick to remaining truly independent is to keep on experimenting, taking risks, and holding on to what's important and urgent in terms of publishing, whilst keeping the economies of what we do real.

Archive / Artist's Books / Assemblage / Contemporary Art / Document / Library / Spoken Word

Cooper Gallery DJCAD (Responses by Sophia Hao,
Director of Cooper Gallery DJCAD)
www.dundee.ac.uk/cooper-gallery

Cooper Gallery DJCAD is internationally recognised as a distinctive platform in Scotland for its radical curatorial research, international approach and focus on critical discourse in contemporary art and culture. Advocating the pooling of knowledge from different disciplines, our programme implements a sustained and rigorous critical engagement. Acknowledging current political concerns our exhibition programme and publishing projects explore the full breadth of the creative, social and educational impacts of contemporary arts practice.

**Alternative Politics / Art & Critical Writing /
Contemporary Art / Critical Discourse /
Visual Culture**

dpr-barcelona
www.dpr-barcelona.com

We are an architectural research practice dealing with three main lines: publishing, criticism and curating. Our activity intends to expand the meaning and means of publishing by mixing critical contents with conventional and new formats. While testing and challenging tools that exploit the complexity and advances of current digital scenarios it has surprisingly allowed to us increase and improve our outcomes in printed form.

**Architecture / Cities / Politics / Society /
Technology**

Foe Publishing
www.foepublishing.com

As an idealistic publisher you set out your proposition. You look around you and think, 'Are these publishers like us? Do they publish the sort of work we want to read?'. And as diverse as some mainstream publishers might be, it's really left to the indies to champion the outsiders, the rogues, the unknowns and the almost forgotten.

That's where we sit. And so, we're committed to producing high quality literature that doesn't economise on ideas and storytelling, with value placed on the intellectual activity of reading a book. We want novels that make us think, that are intelligent, that dare us, and challenge the reader to drag themselves out of their comfort zone.

Art / Experimental / Fierce / Music / Original

In The End, Books?
www.intheendbooks.be

In The End, Books? is an independent artist books publishing house founded by Elena Op 't Eynde & Dexian Feng in 2017. We publish young artists who use aspects of publishing as part of their artistic practice. We work closely and collaboratively with the artist to ensure that the publication – a physical or digital edition – is produced cohesively alongside the artist's practice. The publications go on to be part of exhibitions, websites, open calls, and beyond. Besides collaborating we also work on self-initiated publishing projects that allow us to further experiment with the boundaries of the medium. Currently these projects are mainly focused on the creation of new platforms (like open calls) that can bring together the publication and the artist.

Art / Artist's Book / Collaborations / Culture / Experimental

Las Injurias
www.lasinjurias.com

Las Injurias was born in Caracas in response to isolation. In that context I started my practice as publisher. I had no idea about publishing, and my best option was to turn into zines. I wanted to keep things simple. I created a layout, and without a specific interest I started to publish zines. I like to translate experiences into books. I make small editions, no publicity and an erratic distribution scheme.

Conceptual / History / Performance /
Photography / Poetry / Zines

Lolli Edition
www.lollieditions.com

Lolli Editions is an independent publisher based at the Barbican in London. Founded in 2018, it takes its name from Stazione Lolli in Palermo where its first publication, Walking Through Palermo, was written and designed by cand.mag. Denise Rose Hansen and architect Oskar Kohnen. It was published on the occasion of Manifesta 12, The European Nomadic Biennial, hosted in Palermo until 4 November 2018.

Architecture / Art / Culture / Literature / Travel

Looiersgracht 60
www.looiersgracht60.org

As well as being a non-profit exhibition space in the heart of Amsterdam, Looiersgracht 60 is an independent publishing house, regularly producing limited-edition paperbacks to accompany its exhibition programme. Each volume is a bespoke, limited edition pocket book, designed by the London-based Studio Veronica Ditting. The collections of essays by specialist writers from a variety of cultural, creative and academic backgrounds, furnish each book with a multidisciplinary and integrative context that underpins the featured artist's work. The books are a supplement to our exhibitions, while also being an autonomous interpretation of the artist's oeuvre. Our main goal with each new publication is to compile a body of work that provides a range of interpretations on a given artist's practice and oeuvre. Together these volumes will form a limited-edition set that can be added to with our subsequent publications.

Architecture / Art / Design / Interdisciplinarity / Limited-editions

MARIA†. editions
www.mariaeditions.com

MARIA†. editions is an independent publisher founded in Glasgow by Marysia Gacek and Maria Toumazou in 2014. Based in Nicosia and New York, MARIA†. editions is devoted to producing digital and printed matter, providing a platform for new artworks, collaborations, writing, and exhibitions.

Art / Erotica / Poetry

Saqi Books
www.saqibooks.com

Saqi Books is an award-winning independent publisher of books on the Middle East and North Africa, with two imprints: Telegram is committed to publishing the best in new and classic international writing; and The Westbourne Press publishes nonfiction works offering an alternative, progressive perspective on the leading issues of our time.

Since 1983, Saqi has become a byword for the development and promotion of Middle Eastern culture. Our efforts to bring censored works and authors into the light are an important contribution to resisting the imposition of cultural orthodoxies and to keeping the range of Middle Eastern writing diverse, alive and provocative.

Saqi also offers a platform for writers and artists from all cultures and places. Our internationally renowned authors have prominence not just for the quality of their prose but also for their contributions to public debate. We publish cutting-edge, authoritative voices from around the world, all of which help to form a clearer picture of these misrepresented communities, challenging dominant narratives.

Above all, we pride ourselves on providing a safe space for free and open expression.

Activism / Art / Cultural Studies / History / Politics

Tara Books
www.tarabooks.com

Tara Books is a collective of writers, designers and bookmakers publishing illustrated books for children and adults based in Chennai and founded in 1994. While we generate many of our titles in-house, we also work with creative professionals across the world. Known for our richly visual content, we offer a curated list that includes children's literature, photography, graphic novels, art and art education. Our books made entirely by hand have found their way to readers around the world.

Children / Design / Ecologies / Feminism / Indigenous Art

Readers & Publishers

Connecting readers and independent publishers around the world with an online directory, projects and conversations.

Readers & Publishers: Open Book #1, has been produced on the occasion of the launch of Readers & Publishers online directory in November 2018. This book shares thoughts from independent publishers listed on Readers & Publishers with the keywords 'art' 'contemporary art' 'design' or 'artist's books' who were invited to respond to questions on the themes of community, readership, and the relationship between arts and independent publishing. Their contributions help us to take part in a conversation within this book where we imagine the future(s) of independent publishing together. The discussions started by Open Book #1 will help inform the next phases and concerns of the Readers & Publishers project.

We would like to thank all those whose words have shaped this book.

Readers & Publishers launched in Autumn 2018 at Printing Plant – Art Book Fair, Looiersgracht 60, Amsterdam. The project, initiated in 2017, is an extension of the imagination of My Bookcase, a social enterprise that creatively explores the role of the book and its reader in today's society.

On the launch of Readers & Publishers, we would like to thank all those who have helped make this project possible, including the crowdfund supporters and Deutsche Bank Awards for Creative Enterprise who helped us to realise the Readers & Publishers website. We would also like to thank Joel Galvez for his great work in designing and developing Readers & Publishers website.

We are very grateful to Looiersgracht 60 for hosting the launch of Readers & Publishers project at Printing Plant – Art Book Fair, and for our collaboration together 'Printing Plant x Readers & Publishers, In-Conversation Event' as part of their public programme. Thank you to David Maroto (The Book Lovers), Francis McKee (director of CCA, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow) and Astrid Vorstermans (founder of and editor/publisher at Valiz) for their valuable contributions in taking part in the event.

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