Unnamed Press Submissions Guidelines

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Presses vary in what they're looking for but a completed manuscript (as a WordDoc) in the initial query will set you apart.

Title page should include Title, Name, Contact info on bottom right-hand corner.

Text formatting is generally Times New Roman, pt. 12, with page numbers. Not necessarily double spaced, but easy enough to read.

Manuscripts shouldn't contain egregious errors that detract from the story. There isn't an expectation of perfection, but nor should it be your first draft.

The goal of your queries is to catch the attention of an editor who may receive hundreds of submissions a week from unagented authors. Presenting your manuscript is the first impression of not only your work, but what it may be like to work with you. Small presses are looking for great work that fits with the overarching tastes and ideas of the press, but they will also rely on you as an author to work with them at every step of the process (editorial to production to PR and events).

Your understanding of what needs to happen for specifics like translations, orthography, etc. is key! Editors need to work *with* you. It's an exciting venture to develop and can be pitched as so.

Formatting the Unagented Query

It may seem obvious, but formatting and how you introduce yourself can say a lot about the level of care and attention to detail you place on your work. For example, I've received many emails (without attachments) that go something like:

From: joemama@aol.com

Subject line: submission

Manuscript attached
Joe

Sent from my iPhone

An email that considers the people behind it like this works wonders:

From: joemarmalade@aol.com

Subject line: MARMALADE: A Sticky Memoir, or how Paddington Bear left me his recipe cards.

Dear ___ (press or head editor's name),

I hope this finds you well. [Title] (word count) is about ___. A snappy one liner at the top. Then go into what your book is about. Succinctly: what is the story? What happens? What are some similar books from the past three years?

A little about yourself. How you see yourself working/writing long term. How does your work connect beyond publication.

Why Unnamed Press (or any press) specifically? What have you noticed that you appreciate? What are you open to? Thank you for your consideration.

All the best,
Joe Marmalade

You're always welcome to email me with any further questions or requests for notes. I'm happy to go over more specifics with you. Thank you for reading.