

a living,
breathing,
manifesto,
for publishing the humdrum way

we are seeking methods, outputs, forms, experiments towards

publishing as practice.
publishing as a community, shared, collective resource.
publishing as relational.
publishing as doing, ongoing.
publishing as the act and art of making public.

through publishing, we endeavour to

- *make and work with printed matter (currently our preferred form is the pamphlet publication) of all shapes, styles, subjects, themes, disciplines
- *explore what publications can be and can do
- *open up each stage of the publishing process to create a communal space and structure for collaborations, readers, designers, printers, wider networks, etc.
- *push the threshold of who gets to make publications,
(not just as something more accessible, but also more desirable for wider groups of readers, writers and makers, especially those who have not yet considered publishing)
- *understand, learn from, contribute towards (critically, positively, collaboratively) the existing and established independent (art) publishing field
- *collaborate wherever, whenever, with whomever, in any possible way.
- *activate and expand styles, methods, and acts of readings and readership
- *produce publications that people want to, and will, read again and again, and that bring joy, insight, and instances of reflection—all with meaningful impact

we wish to build this using a commons-based model

- *by thinking of how the resources used and produced through publishing can be shared and maintained by the many
- *by exploring how to expand and open up each stage of the publishing process with collectivity, accessibility, approachability and sustainability in mind*
- *by creating a model that is open to be adopted, adapted, used, shared, disrupted and reshaped by the many

we seek to establish and maintain a broad ecosystem of readers and writers that stand in for....

*when a person or collective contributes to the publishing process, they are invited into the publishing ecosystem for the long-term

*the ecosystem is maintained by different stands: a newsletter, digital copies of all publications emailed directly as they are published, regular meetups and exchanges such as open crits and feedback sessions, maintenance meetings, long-term connections and collaborations

*this does not only apply to an internal ecosystem, but also an external one, including forming relationships with other publishers, bookshops and local services, and using and promoting these same services

*to print locally, distribute locally, and organise events with local organisations and initiatives, as much as possible

this ecosystem of readers, writers and makers

*typically begin with those already engaged in art publishing and the wider arts fields, here we think of artists, designers, researchers, academics, architects, fellow publishers, and the many who sit in between.

*however, this will coincide with a community engagement and outreach model

 this means working directly with, then printing and placing publication copies into venues directly related to a given community, to engage with readers outside the usual sphere of bookshops, as well as connecting with new potential authors

*alongside an open admission policy, to work with anyone who wishes to publicise thoughtful, engaging, meaningful, reflective critical work

saying no, saying not right now

*practising saying no, or operating an “on hold” system, when we do not have the capacity, or do not feel that the project aligns with our values, even if later on in the publishing stages

*saying no, or not right now until we have the resource means that all parties can be sustainably supported

*operating as a needs and requirements-based publisher.

 with our collaborators, we offer core services, but we do not offer a strict working model. instead we ask, “how can we help you, what do you need?” at each and every stage and work from there.

we sustain ourselves

Inspirationally

*through a (hopefully) flourishing reader base, where we wish to build a sustainable network of readers, writers, and subscribers over time with whom we share common values

*reserving time and resources to continue, connect, collaborate, share and learn from other publishers in the field

*finding time to read

financially

*by establishing a subscription model to support our authors, our internal publishing costs, and eventually, our ecosystem

*by working in collaboration with institutions, much like School of Commons who we currently work with, to financially support our core resource costs, as well as our larger publishing vision

*by continuing to apply for public funding

*by researching alternative financial models

*Some examples of how this could work in practice:

1. Making everything possibly in house, and when not possible, collaborating with local organisations and institutions who provide the needed services to create a local ecosystem of production
2. Making a limited number of copies (around 15) which go directly into the hands of the communities best connected to the project and printing on demand thereafter
3. Adopting a subscription based distribution model
4. Facilitating open “knowledge sharing” crit/feedback sessions at the beginning of the publishing process so the content of the book is explored openly and freely, and made publicly accessible from the start, not after publishing date
5. Create an ongoing logbook, that is digitally available, documenting each of the stages and milestones into the process from meetings, to decisions, to admin work, to reworks etc.
6. Provide open-source and print-at-home versions of all publications with translation option and editing options
7. Offering other means for people to purchase a book (book exchanges, labour exchanges, skill exchange etc)
8. Sharing part of, or all, of the publication content via newsletter, either in stages or in one go
9. Maintaining the “shorter long-form” of the pamphlet, to ensure we can continue to experiment with form, style and content, and ensure the level of content required from collaborator is accessible and sustainable

We acknowledge that none of our insight and ideas into publishing are entirely original. With every book we read, event we attend, conversation we have that links knowingly or unknowingly to this practice, we absorb information and knowledge. Below are some of the sources we can consciously credit towards shaping this manifesto and model, however there are many more that remain unnamed or buried deep in our subconscious, these are no less valuable to us.