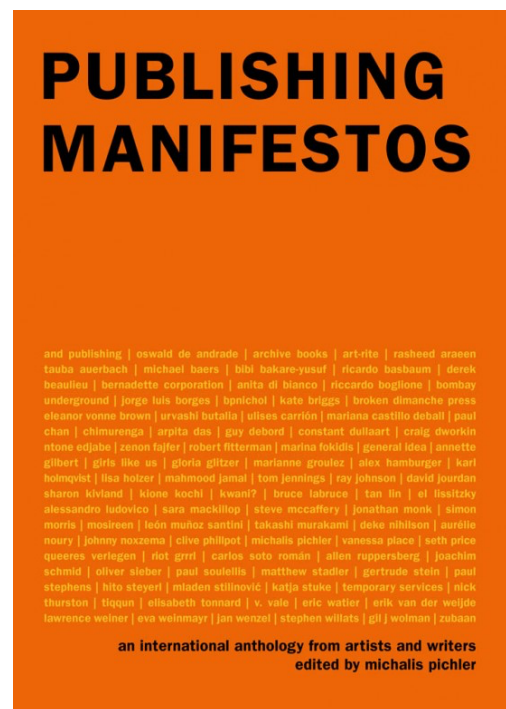


Publishing Manifestos

edited by Michalis Pichler. MIT Press, April 2019. 340 p. ill. ISBN 9780262537186 (h/c), \$29.95.

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Publishing Manifestos is a book about the book, both as a material entity and a conceptual vector. It is edited by Michalis Pichler, co-founder of MISS READ: Berlin Art Book Festival. Pichler has assembled over forty entries, spanning a century, that together illustrate a constant truth unshaken by the digital media revolution: the book and the act of publishing have always been contested sites, primed for artistic deconstruction and reimaging.

This collection of primary source material grapples with questions of the book as art, the act of publishing as art, and the artist as writer and/or publisher. Roughly the first quarter of the entries are from the twentieth century, while the remaining bulk of the book reflects the rapid expansion of the DIY art publishing scene and the attendant explosion of art book fairs in the twenty-first century. Many contributors such as Ulises Carrión, Tauba Auerbach, and Paul Chan will be familiar to readers versed in

independent art publishing. Pichler also makes efforts to represent lesser-known voices from marginalized identities and/or the global south like Marina Fokidis, Yoda Press, and Queeres Verlegen, a German Queer-Feminist book fair.

Many of the entries take the form of a manifesto, putting forth the authors' intentions to upend entrenched modes of behavior toward imagining a better world (or at least a better book). Many are taken from radical DIY publications, artist's writings, and artist-as-publisher mission statements. These entries make for fascinating reading, though the book does suffer from a lack of contextualizing information about the artists, writers, publications, and publishing initiatives represented. Aside from citations for each entry and extremely brief contributor bios, Pichler makes no real attempt to describe who the authors are or the

significance of their work.

The entries are presented chronologically, and when read as such, interesting patterns emerge. Most authors from the twentieth century are preoccupied with the book: what it is, who it no longer serves, and how it can be different. Zines and artists' samizdat are well-represented, as well as artists who see books as a means of reaching audiences beyond the gallery. As the book progresses into the twenty-first century the entries are increasingly concerned less with the book as object and more with the act of publishing itself. Print and digital media are not in tension, but instead tools to be deployed according to a publisher's goals.

Beyond a linear reading, Pichler suggests alternative paths through *Publishing Manifestos*. He identifies entries by themes such as Structural Analysis of the Book, Appropriation, Queer Identities, and Tackling Western-Centrism. This is a useful feature, and one that in mimicking hyperlinked subject faceting perhaps reflects the fluidity of practice between print and digital media.

Publishing Manifestos is recommended for academic and museum libraries supporting populations that study, or make, artists' publications.