

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

How Much Can We Do?

Chiwan Choi · Thursday, February 7th, 2013

Over the past weekend, we took time to check out the first [LA Art Book Fair](#) at the Geffen Contemporary at MoCA in Little Tokyo. It was presented by Printed Matter and is the west coast version, the LA companion, to the NY Art Book Fair held every Fall.

Not only did we want to check out the event, we wanted to go say hello to a few people and talk to them again about the upcoming Grand Park Book Festival and our [LA Writ Large Pop Up Shop](#). We also wanted to find new local publishers we hadn't heard of before.

The crowd was pretty massive. It's always great to see an event like this in our beloved Los Angeles so well attended. It's safe to say that people who still slam this city for not having culture are completely ignorant. We just happen to do it our own way and outsiders can't wrap their heads around it.

We were able to meet with [Siglio Press](#) and [Les Fignes Press](#) and get their thumbs up on the pop up book shop. With them in the fold, we now have over 20 local publishers who have agreed to bring their books out to Grand Park on March 2nd, including [The Rattling Wall](#), [Zero+ Publishing](#), [Kaya Press](#), [Bombshelter](#), [Punk Hostage](#), and some of the great folk from the LBC like [Bank-Heavy](#) and [Spout Hill](#). It's going to be a hell of an eclectic and awesome mix of books.

All in all, it was a fun event, although all of us were achy from the flu bug going around. I think my favorite area was the space dedicated to zines and chapbooks. It took me back to how I began. My teacher always made us put together chapbooks at the end of our 8 week session. Even I didn't realize it at the time, thinking that it was only about being a writer, it was my first foray into publishing.



There are, however, a couple of concerns that have popped up for me.

As the LA Art Book Fair wraps up, the zine week begins. Although the actual [Zine Fest](#) is on 2/17, various bookstores and venues are participating in the lead up with sales and other activities. That's also the weekend of the [SGV Literary Festival](#), which I'm incredibly excited about and will be participating in. And soon after that will be the Grand Park Book Festival...a month or so before the [LA Times Festival of Books](#). Kirk Pederson of Zero+, who'd just finished [Photo LA](#) and now was packing to head up north for [CODEX](#), mused about how there are so many fairs in LA now that they're starting to overlap.

My concern is about taxing the participants, both the publishers and the community. We at Writ Large Press have already started wondering out loud whether we can fit our planned lit crawl into the schedule this year. Will there be room for another event like this in this city? Will there be

energy for it?

The greater concern is more internal. With all the things we want to do—book festivals and lit crawls and think tanks and, you know, changing the city—I worry that the main thing we're supposed to be doing, actually publishing books by authors we love, might start getting neglected.

A few months ago, all I could think about were the authors on our release schedule. This weekend, I found myself not thinking about them at all. And that can't happen.

Balance is one elusive motherfracker.

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