

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Keeping the Idea Alive

Chiwan Choi · Thursday, July 25th, 2013

I was having drinks the other day with Jonathan Jay, the co-publisher of [RA](#) (along with Gwen Galvan), at King Eddy. He'd offered to buy me a couple of whiskeys and we met up to discuss all things literary Los Angeles. He and I like to discuss the status quo, what is wrong with the world, and how to disrupt and destroy everything that we hold dear.

At some point during my third drink, I told Jonathan that Writ Large Press might be the only publisher I know that is trying to not publish books, trying to convince writers to *not* publish books with us, with anybody actually. Anyway, we laughed about it.

But really, even if we're not really actively trying to destroy the book (which we are not...), we keep asking what the role is filled by the book. We explored this with our [PUBLISH!](#) event in New York back in June. And it's continuing to come up.

Returning to King Eddy, Peter and I were discussing the details of our brand new Tuesday night DJ series at the bar called [Music to Drink To](#). It starts on July 30th and the first DJ we'll be featuring Danny Holloway. I [wrote last week](#) that this wasn't a *literary* event and that we didn't care that it wasn't. And we don't. But...



What we were discussing is writing about the event, about the DJ, about the set, about the audience and the night. We would get a writer each week to document the history of a night that occurred. We applied sort of the same logic when we asked three writers to live-blog our [PUBLISH!](#) event, which was not only projected on a wall at the event, but printed out and incorporated into *You Can Too*, the book that was *published* at the closing of the weekend festivities.

So basically, we keep returning to this idea of books as a record of an event that occurred.

Is this making any sense?

One thing that bothers me often is how the artifact, whether it's a book or a CD or a painting, becomes not only the thing that the public celebrates as a product from an artist, but works as a shield, a wall that keeps the reader and the writer separated into their respective (safe) compartments.

We want to experiment with that a little (not that others haven't thought of this or done this before and frankly, it's not much different than a beat writer writing a piece about some game that the Lakers played in Milwaukee in the middle of February). We want to approach the book as the *evidence* of a moment where the artist and the audience met and had an experience together.

I don't know how this will work out logistically, finding not only writers but actually producing the books in a timely manner, but we would like to find a way to do this with *all* of our events. *ALL*.

Before you say that's impossible (I've already said that to myself), just know that it's just the way we like to do things—think of something impossible, then see how we can make it happen. I don't think we will be doing this with the first *Music to Drink To*. Time got a bit crunched. But we'll be experimenting with the idea as soon as we can find a few writers to commit.

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