Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Our Year of Underground Publishing

Chiwan Choi · Wednesday, August 7th, 2013

This weekend, Judy and I spent time cleaning the vault upstairs at The Last Bookstore and trying to get it ready for the big grand opening of **dtLAb**, while Peter was getting the next installment of *Music to Drink To* all set up and ready.

So if you're like us, you are asking how all these things are connected. What direction are all these projects taking us when they seem so disconnected and different. Well, these aren't all separate projects. They are each a part of one big project.

Put another way: Writ Large Press *is* the project.

And for right now, we are in the midst of our Year of Underground Publishing 2013–2014.

Let me explain.

Here are the three separate things we have created as distinct parts:

PUBLISH!

After a successful show in New York at the beginning of June, we have plans to take our exploration of text/subtext, reader/writer, and the role of publishing in our success and failure to communicate to underground venues in Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and Seattle, with additional cities (*Tokyo!!!*) to be possibly added.

MUSIC TO DRINK TO

More than once, we have been asked what business a small press has in creating a DJ night at a downtown bar. And I joke that writers like music and booze, so it's perfect. But it goes deeper than that. At each event, we are inviting writers to come and while listening to the records and enjoying the whiskeys, to also take notes, write, report on the event, not just the factual details of the night, but how the writer is experiencing it all. After six weeks, we'll be publishing a zine on what various writers have had to say, how they have interpreted, the previous six installments of Music to Drink To.

dtLAb

The first space for Writ Large Press is going to be more than a store that sells our books (and books from other local publishers and writers we love). We're also curating local musicians and artists to make their works available in our store. But even more than that, as the name suggests, we are going to use it as a *lab*. The **LA** in **dtLAb** doesn't stand only stand for Los Angeles, but for "Literary Alchemy" (which, you know, is the name of this column). It will be a space where we try things we are not supposed to try socially, artistically, and commercially. In this store deep in the Labyrinth of The Last Bookstore, we will experiment and discover new methods of creation, presentation, and collaboration.

Even though PUBLISH! is the only one of these three things that take place in an actual underground environment, I believe each one fits the *idea* of the underground. An underground gallery. A skid row bar on a Tuesday night. A vault inside a miraculous bookstore.

In these off the main trail locations, Writ Large Press and the many artists and neighbors and people of our community will mix together unexpected elements and create magic.
And we will make a lasting impact.
This is how the underground works. From the bottom up. From the shadows. From the backrooms where rules can’t contain us.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, August 7th, 2013 at 7:57 pm and is filed under Fiction, Discourse, Lifestyle
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