

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <http://www.djreprints.com>.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/book-store-gets-to-heart-of-the-matter-with-expansion-1444352852>

U.S. | NEW YORK | NY CULTURE

Book Store Gets to Heart of the Matter With Expansion

Art book store Printed Matter, Inc. will have twice the space in its new location on 11th Avenue



Printed Matter is expanding because its inventory, programming and staff have more than doubled over the past decade, said Max Schumann, center, the director of art book store. *PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

By **ANDY BATTAGLIA**

Oct. 8, 2015 9:07 p.m. ET

Of New York's many bookstores, there may be only one that stocks volumes published on pages made of sandpaper and glass.

That would be Printed Matter, Inc., a not-for-profit destination for artists' books which offers playful and conceptually minded publications ranging from picture collections and photocopied magazines to small-edition curios made by hand.

Founded in 1976 as part of the downtown art scene, Printed Matter has served as both a resource and a hub for such work over the last decade. Next week, it will move from its

location in the Chelsea gallery district to a nearby space with extra room for exhibitions and programming that reveal the many possibilities of artists' books.

“The book is an architectural object with moving parts and multiple surfaces,” said Max Schumann, director of Printed Matter and steward of its growth in recent years. “It can be multidimensional and interactive.”

The new home on 11th Avenue at West 26th Street features twice the square footage and two stories, connected by a spiral staircase. Mr. Schumann said the expansion was needed because inventory, programming and staff have all more than doubled over the past decade.

The NY Art Book Fair, an annual gathering organized by Printed Matter, has helped that growth—last month it drew 35,000 attendees to view artists' books from 380 exhibitors at MoMA PS1 in Queens. But more is attributable to the long-standing reputation of the shop itself.



Printed Matter has a current stock of around 12,000 titles. PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

When shopping around his 1968 publication “Statements,” a pioneering work in the artist-book legacy, Lawrence Weiner said bookstores in the city didn’t know what to do with a volume comprising nothing more than descriptions of ideas for artworks. (“One sheet of plywood secured to the floor or wall,” reads one page. Another: “One standard dye marker thrown into the sea.”)

“Printed Matter did—and still does—serve an extremely important function,” Mr. Weiner said of a store that was conceived by artist Sol Le Witt and critic Lucy Lippard to champion just that type of work.

Among its current stock of 12,000 titles are meticulously handmade books as well as several decades' worth of 'zines—small-circulation periodicals often printed via photocopier and focused on eccentric fields of interest from punk rock to esoteric history.

'Zine culture relates to the underground press of the '60s and all the way back to political pamphleteering in the 18th century, Mr. Schumann said of a lineage that prizes independent and idiosyncratic publishing.

As a nonprofit, Printed Matter covers 55% of its operating costs through sales, with grants and other fundraising making up the rest.

“We’re not based on commercial interest,” Mr. Schumann said. “Sales is an important part of our income, but our mission is to foster the distribution and understanding and appreciation of artists’ books.”

A capital campaign has already secured \$750,000, with hopes of raising \$1 million, to cover costs of the move and build-out of the new space, designed pro bono by New York-based Handel Architects. The operation includes a staff of 10 to oversee everyday business and a series of events.



Printed Matter's Chelsea location at 195 10th Ave. Its new, bigger space on 11th Avenue and West 26th Street will open next week. *PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

“They involve everybody from established artists to people who are really new to art-making. It’s democratic,” said Josh Smith, a painter whose work in book form includes “The Signing,” a facsimile of the sign-in book from a gallery show of his in 2007. The text is nothing but names scrawled on the page.

“Asperity,” by David Stairs, lists statistics comparing the U.S. to other cultures around the world, all screen-printed on sandpaper. An issue of the experimental-poetry journal “Generator” came published on a single sheet of glass.

Such books share shelf space at Printed Matter with more conventional works, with new areas designated for exhibitions curated to give artists’ books more context.

“They have consistently good programming that is often overlooked because their space has been small,” said Miriam Katzeff, co-founder of the influential art-book publishing enterprise Primary Information. “They have created an audience.”

The first exhibit in the new shop, set to open to the public next Thursday, is a survey of Paper Rad, a collective that published ‘zines and directed various web activities from 1997 to 2009. Another will be an exhibit of a mail-art piece inspired by the late artist Ray Johnson, known, in part, for sending out drawings and asking for additional decoration from random recipients in a chain.

Copyright 2014 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our Subscriber Agreement and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit www.djreprints.com.