

## Innovators In Print, Artist Books (And Editions) From Onestar Press And Three Star Books

Clayton Press | 1,311 views | Nov 2, 2017, 06:43am



Lawrence Weiner. EMPOWERMENT CANNOT BE TRANSLATED AS ENTITLEMENT. 2007. A bookcase for onestar press. © 2017 LAWRENCE WEINER; COURTESY ONESTAR PRESS.

As objects, artist books are frequently overlooked, especially in a cluttered art market. But books (and editions) are as critical and compelling as painting or sculpture. At a minimum, art books require the same creative effort, but usually more. Planning and collaboration between the artist and publisher can take years, especially when the publisher gives an artist the luxury of time. The motto of onestar press and Three Star Books—sister publishers in France—could be “Strictly Un-Edited by the Publisher,” since they offer artists nearly unlimited artistic freedom.

onestar press and Three Star Books (since 2002 and 2007, respectively) have been exceptional innovators in a rarefied niche of the art market. The artists’ books they publish are artworks themselves and not simply documents of or about existing artworks. Co-founded by Christophe Boutin and Mélanie Scarciglia, onestar press and Three Star Books work at the intersection of an important historical tradition of French Livres de Peintres and a more modern activity of artist book-making, which originated in the 1970s, when conceptual artists needed a means of dispersing their philosophy and works. Ed Ruscha to Lawrence Weiner, both internationally acclaimed artists, work in this tradition.

The projects all have vibrancy and life. onestar press and Three Star Books only work with living artists, because they require the full engagement and creative collaboration

of the artist involved. A book or edition is the work. Without the artist there is no artwork. They work across generations too, not limiting themselves to established artists. For example, Haim Steinbach was born in 1944 and mines cultural and ritualistic aspects of collecting; Matt Copson is a young fox born in 1992, who explores the “innate humour of camp villainy.”

Boutin and Scarciglia’s personal objective is to never get bored. This would be impossible to do when working with artists of such stature and creative impulse as Tauba Auerbach, Seth Price, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, John Baldessari, Maurizio Cattelan, Daniel Gordon, Mika Tajima and many more. Moreover, their collaborators tend to evolve into a broader, informal network of editors. Every artist who is published by Boutin and Scarciglia has the chance to submit new artists and ideas. Enthusiasm is infectious, if not contagious, among the publishers’ artists and collectors.=



Working on Mika Tajima's "Negative Entropy" for Three Star Books, 2015. © Photo: Florian Kleinfenn. ©2017 FLORIAN KLEINFENN.

Based in Paris, where they have their office and studio, which doubles as an exhibition space, Boutin and Scarciglia produce and carry a very limited stock of each of the approximately 400 titles they have published as onestar books. As innovators, they were early adopters of Print On Demand, which lets them be responsive when they come across an exciting new project. Quality is both consistent and high. From day one, onestar press, made accessible on their site all the PDFs of the published books. The book is an object and an artwork, but the digital version is also available to all.

Rather than being deterred by the Internet, onestar press and Three Star Books have embraced it. The Internet has enabled the publishers to work with artists around the globe—from project conception through completion—and to make its projects even more relevant and accessible in an age of dematerialization, where our computers and tablets store electronic libraries. But, while the Internet is great to advertise their publishing activities, the physical encounter with the actual works of art is crucial. In Scarciglia's words, "Our offices and competences could be transported anywhere; ideally we would love the idea of becoming nomads." They use social media as their main advertising tool along with their email list of interested people around the world. Instagram—the social medium that is preferred by artists—is also their favorite of the moment because of its emphasis on visuals.



The clientele of onestar press and Three Star Books is as broad as their selection of artists. The price range is equally wide—between 35 and 80,000 euros, appealing to clients who range from art student to the mega collector. Usually, sophisticated collectors enjoy the type of books and editions they publish, which amplifies the discussion about and experience of contemporary art. Of course, libraries, universities, art schools, museums and other cultural institutions are also clients.

onestar press and Three Star Books often produce presentations, conferences and workshops involving design and art schools. This is done in the context of BOOK MACHINE, a program that originated at the Centre Pompidou in 2014. BOOK MACHINE operates as a 3-week event entirely dedicated to the process of book production in the grandest sense: [www.bookmachine.info](http://www.bookmachine.info). Boutin and Scarciglia have conducted numerous other workshops and conferences focusing upon artists books in art schools and institutions such as, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, Akademie der bildenden Künste, The Moderna Museet, IUAV, Fondation De Appel and Ecole des Beaux Arts de Paris.

Art fairs are an important retail opportunity, since fairs have a high concentration of people sharing the same passions in art. onestar press and Three Star Books have been participating in numerous fairs, including the prestigious Art Basel (Switzerland.) Because the cost of fairs is high, they have to be selective, preferring to apply to the right projects. They regularly participate in the Printed Matter Art Book fairs in New York and Los Angeles. They also have been helping as creative directors for UNTITLED, Art, a younger art fair, in Miami Beach and San Francisco.

Their motivation for publishing artists books is to work with the leading artists of our times to conceive new ways of defining what exactly is a “page” or “book.” “The works we produce are as ‘useless’ and as ‘essential’ as any good work of art should be,” Boutin asserts. “Artists are our capital, we respect them and in return they respect us for our integrity. With both publishing houses the model is ever changing along with the projects. Up to now, we made this utopia possible. Artists dream ideas and invent things, we just have to be ready to follow up and give it a reality.”



Sean Micka. • 108 F.B. MONDIAL 250 BIALBERO GRAND PRIX 1957. 2017. Oil on canvas. © 2017 SEAN MICKA; COURTESY OF THREE STAR BOOKS.

onestar press and Three Star Books are currently operating a pop-up showroom in Brooklyn at Grand Army Collective. Their next exhibition with artist Sean Micka that opens November 3, 2017 from 6:00 - 9:00 PM at Grand Army Collective, 184 Sterling Place, 11217 Brooklyn (at Flatbush Avenue).

onestar press and Three Star Books, 49 rue Albert, 75013 Paris, France,+33 6 63 01 22 87