



# ART PUBLISHERS, ARTISTS & E-BOOKS GREG ALBERS

A BIBLIOGRAPHIC PRIMER



*Art Publishers, Artists and E-Books:  
A Bibliographic Primer*

Greg Albers



**WWW.HOLARTBOOKS.COM**

**@HOLARTBOOKS**

*Tucson, Arizona*

What We're Talking About,  
.....  
When We Talk About E-Books  
.....

These three e-book characteristics, give us a framework to both identify and evaluate the variety of digital publications now available, and those yet to come:

1. Dynamics: *interactive, adaptable*
2. Mobility: *portable, interoperable*
3. Objectness: *containment, structure*

..

..

Currently, we can divide e-books into four digital publication formats:

1. EPUB ♥
2. App
3. Web
4. PDF

## EPUB Fundamentals

- ♥ The primary e-book format for most e-reading systems ( $\pm$ *Amazon*), and therefore also for most publishers
- ♥ Open specification, no licensing agreements, no lock-down
- ♥ Works on a wide range of devices, but makes concessions to achieve this --> hence slow adoption for art books
- ♥ Currently in 2.0 version, 3.0 will be rolling out to devices in the coming year --> hence future adoption for art books

## EPUB

---

*Highly adaptable and increasingly interactive, interoperable, mobile-optimized, structured and contained. The primary e-book format for every major publisher and every major e-reading system (±Amazon).*

### Hol Art Books

Editorial focus is writing on visual art. Publishes e-books in fiction and non-fiction, including original titles from the press and e-book releases of older or out of print titles from other publishers :: 18 titles available, buy direct or on multiple platforms (all major retail plus Overdrive library), \$1.99–\$9.99 each ::

[www.holartbooks.com](http://www.holartbooks.com)

---

### Badlands Unlimited

Founded by artist Paul Chan and undoubtedly one of the most experimental and free-wheeling e-book publishers currently working; publishes the work of Chan and other artists :: 20 titles

available, Amazon and Apple platforms; \$.99–\$9.99 each ::  
[www.badlandsunlimited.com](http://www.badlandsunlimited.com)

## D.A.P.

Major distributor of art books in print; now working with its distributed presses to publish e-books :: 6 titles available, Amazon, Apple and Barnes & Noble platforms; \$11.99–\$16.99 each ::  
[www.artbook.com](http://www.artbook.com)

## Guggenheim Museum

Published an e-book exhibition catalogue through D.A.P. (Maurizio Cattelan: All), but has also begun publishing EPUB chapters of past, print exhibition catalogues :: 20 chapters available, buy direct or through Apple platform; \$1.99 each ::  
[www.guggenheim.org](http://www.guggenheim.org)

## Trade & University Publishers

Every trade house and university press currently publishing e-books in the arts—art history, criticism, biography, etcetera—is publishing in the EPUB format or is moving in that direction.

## Apps

*Interactive, formatted for specific environment, mobile but not interoperable, contained in feel if not also function.*

### Exhibition Catalogues

**AB EX NY** (MOMA) :: Highlight works from the exhibition with tombstone information and brief descriptions; audio and video; glossary; annotated map of historical locations in New York :: Free :: <http://bit.ly/H1R04j>

**REDON LE CATALOGUE** (REUNION DES MUSEES NATIONAUX) :: Major exhibition catalogue with 361 images, 8x zoom, bookmarks and note taking :: \$24.99, French :: <http://bit.ly/GX5rIH>

**KOREAN BUNCHEONG CERAMICS** (METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART) :: Highlights from the printed catalogue, enhanced with video, multiple images and a novel interface :: Free :: <http://bit.ly/H1ratI>



**MAURIZIO CATTELAN:** *ALL* (GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM / TOURA) :: Narrated/hosted by director John Waters; numerous videos, information about artworks, with multiple images; Information on Cattelan's other projects :: \$3.99 :: <http://bit.ly/Hicrfd>

## Museum and Event Guides

**ART IN L.A.** (THE GETTY / TOURA) :: Companion to the Getty's portion of its self-initiated multi-institution exhibition project, Pacific Standard Time :: Exhibition information, artworks and audio :: Free :: <http://bit.ly/HprTW1>

**IBIENNALE** (LOG607) :: Companion to the 2011 Venice Biennale :: Includes basic exhibition information and in-app purchase of the digital exhibition catalogue :: Free, app; \$18.99, catalogue :: <http://bit.ly/GZeRAT>

## Reference

**OXFORD DICTIONARIES** (HANDMARK) :: Art & Artists, Art Terms, Architecture, Modern and Contemporary Art, American Art and Artists :: Not clear what information is in which :: \$14.99 each :: <http://bit.ly/Hlgqco>

**TATE GUIDE TO MODERN ART TERMS** (TATE GALLERY) :: 300 art terms searchable/browsable by text, category or image :: \$2.99 :: <http://bit.ly/GYNZo0>

## Ephemera

**BALDESSARI: IN STILL LIFE 2001-2010** (FORYOURART) :: Create your own Dutch still life; originally created for exhibition at LACMA :: Free :: <http://bit.ly/HfGjOa>

**ART SWIPE** (LACMA / JODY ZELLEN) :: Digital-age exquisite corpse using artworks from the museum collection or ones users add :: Free :: <http://bit.ly/GZyHzQ>

## Artist Books

**AS IT IS AGAIN, JOANN VERBURG** (LOCATION BOOKS) :: Artist's photobook :: Free :: <http://bit.ly/HgNnE1>

## Web

---

*Highly interactive and adaptable; interoperable; mobile but requires a connection; lacks containment, permanence, narrative structure.*

### Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative (OSCI)

**ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO** :: Has produced the first working prototypes of online scholarly catalogues (Monet and Renoir) in this multi-year Getty-funded program :: Free, online :: [www.artic.edu/aic/books/online](http://www.artic.edu/aic/books/online)

Participating Museums: Art Institute of Chicago, Freer + Sackler Galleries, Getty Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, National Gallery of Art, SFMOMA, Seattle Art Museum, Tate, Walker Art Center. Funded by the Getty Foundation.

Download the interim OSCI report at <http://bit.ly/HcmC5a>

## Online Serials

**TRIPLE CANOPY** :: An online magazine, project platform and network of artists, writers and researchers :: Free, online :: [canopycanopycanopy.com/](http://canopycanopycanopy.com/)

**ART WRIT** :: A quarterly and monthly online publication of art criticism and reporting :: Free, online :: [www.artwrit.com](http://www.artwrit.com)

**FRACTION MAGAZINE** :: A monthly online publication of new photography and photography reviews :: Free, online :: [fractionmagazine.com/](http://fractionmagazine.com/)

## PDF

*Static pages, non-interactive, universally readable, not mobile-optimized, low cost, highly structured.*

### Museum Archives (ie., Digitization)

**LACMA READING ROOM** :: 37 titles organized around three categories: German Expressionism, European Art, Pacific Standard Time :: Free, downloadable :: <http://bit.ly/H8VNPe>

**GUGGENHEIM PUBLICATION ARCHIVES** :: 67 titles dating back to the museum's founding in 1937 :: Free, embedded :: <http://bit.ly/GTRL2s>

**GETTY MUSEUM** :: 115 titles from the Getty Conservation Institute, and 4 each from the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Getty Research Institute :: Free, downloadable, some by chapter :: <http://bit.ly/H7Kjhj>

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART LIBRARIES** :: Thousands of past catalogues, museum publications and volumes

from the library collection have been scanned and digitized ::  
Free, downloadable, also available in text :: <http://bit.ly/H2lEek>

## Art Presses

**PUBLICATION STUDIO** :: Based in Portland and with satellites in a half dozen other cities, Publication Studio is a publishing lab for artists and writers :: 160 titles for sale as PDF e-books, and sometimes for free online reading :: [www.publicationstudio.biz](http://www.publicationstudio.biz)

**PRIMARY INFORMATION** :: Along with their growing print publishing program, Primary Information offers a few dozen source documents and essays from the 1960s and early 70s, including the Seth Siegelau Archive, the Art Workers Coalition, and Something Else Press Newsletters :: Free, downloadable [www.primaryinformation.org](http://www.primaryinformation.org)

## General Sources

**INTERNET ARCHIVE** :: [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)

**GOOGLE BOOKS** :: [books.google.com](http://books.google.com)

**UBUWEB** :: [www.ubu.com](http://www.ubu.com)



## Questions for the Experts

---

How are you **collecting e-books** now, if you're collecting at all? Or, do you have any plans to do so?

How will you **add e-books to your collections**? Through a library service, capturing academic and trade titles? Or, D.I.Y. purchasing and management to allow for the collection of apps, web pubs, and epubS from smaller producers? Both?

How will you discover and then help discover these materials? Could we collaboratively build an open, vetted, **web-based bibliography** of these digital, art publications?

..

..

For consultation or conundrums:

galbers@holartbooks.com

*Thank you*

*Hol Art Books* is an independent press dedicated to publishing and promoting exceptional writing on visual art as a means of engaging readers with art objects and art spaces in the real world. We publish classic works of art criticism and history; artist texts and biographies; and the best of contemporary writing, including fiction, non-fiction and works in translation.

Thoughtfully crafted, encryption-free and modestly priced, our multi-format e-book program brings the best art literature from Hol authors and other independent publishers to art lovers everywhere.

E-BOOK ISBN 9781936102358

*Art Publishers, Artists and E-Books*, by Greg Albers, was first presented at the 2012 Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) conference in Toronto, and is available under a Creative Commons License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0>)

Cover Image: Installation at Adobe Books, San Francisco, 2004, by Chris Cobb. Photo by Dawn Endico, [www.flickr.com/photos/candiedwomanire/1651870](http://www.flickr.com/photos/candiedwomanire/1651870)



[WWW.HOLARTBOOKS.COM](http://WWW.HOLARTBOOKS.COM)

*Love Art. Read Books.*