Symposium
A HUNDRED YEARS OF THE FUTURE OF THE BOOK
EXPERIMENTAL PUBLISHING TODAY

There is little doubt, as El Lissitzky argues in The Future of the Book (1926), that 'an alteration in the structure and mode of language implies a change in the usual appearance of the book'. Conversely, one can also argue that the formal structures of the book shape not only physical and intellectual encounters with the object, but also future modes of thought. Drawing on a vision of the future from a hundred years ago, this workshop asks what editorial experimentation can mean in the present and how the processes of book production – design, printing and distribution – influence the interpretation of the world. Drawing on five interrelated aspects articulated in El Lissitzky's manifesto, the workshop explores (1) the material and political history of printing techniques examining the evolving relationship between materialism and dematerialization in contemporary society, (2) the concept of the book as architecture staging a unique encounter between ‚sound' (time) and ‚exposure' (space), (3) the role of writing in editorial experimentation, (4) the differential bodily experiences associated with various printing techniques (e.g. the immediacy of vision in American posters versus the deliberateness of reading in Russian revolutionary poster books), and (5) the modalities of reproduction and circulation.

Programme

10:00 – 12:00	Workshop with Claudia de la Torre
12:00 – 13:30	Opening of the Exhibition with Michalis Pichler
13:30 – 15:00	Lunch break
15:00 – 16:30	Panel I
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee break
17:30 – 19:00	Panel II
19:00	Wrap-up

An ICI Berlin event in cooperation with University of Galway

ici BERLIN KULTURLABOR INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL INQUIRY

OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

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Symposium

16 March 2026 • 10:00 – 19:30 In English

A Hundred Years of The Future of the Book

Experimental Publishing Today

With

Janneke Adema
Claudia de la Torre
Michael Hagner
Jae Kyung Kim
Gill Partington
Michalis Pichler
Niki Rhyner
Rachel Robinson
Verónica Stedile Luna
Madeline Zehnder

Organized by

Rachel Robinson and
Verónica Stedile Luna

Workshop
A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

With Claudia de la Torre

16 March 2026
10:00-12:00
In English

Claudia de la Torre will lead an informal gathering to share and reflect on her editorial practice. It will be structured around a selection of artist books she has produced over the past fifteen years, placed in dialogue with other books from her personal collection that in different ways resonate with them. This will not be a chronological or theoretical presentation, but rather a meeting of editorial objects that allow participants to think together about materiality, narrative, and publishing as an artistic practice. By exploring the connections between her own work and that of others, she will facilitate a discussion about the ways in which artist books function as relational and performative objects, encouraging interaction and dialogue. The gathering aims to create a space for close observation, where books can be handled, read, and discussed collectively.

Claudia de la Torre is a Mexican, Berlin-based artist, educator, and independent publisher whose work sits at the intersection of printed media, conceptual publications, and installation. She founded *backbonebooks* (2011), an independent publishing house conceived as an extension of her artistic practice. Since then, the platform has produced 95 titles and editions to date, dedicated to publishing and conceptualizing artist books as artworks. Since 2021, she has led the Artists' Books Workshop in her studio, working with creatives, who want to explore the idea of publishing their work in book form.

Exhibition
CHAMAELEONS AND BUTTERFLIES
BIBLIODIVERSITY IN AN AGE OF BIBLIOPHAGIA

Curated by Michalis Pichler

16 March 2026
12:00
In English

All of the works on display are 'book objects' —hybrids of unique artworks and mass-produced artefacts that oscillate between sculpture and publication. Michalis Pichler uses antiquarian books as his main material and subjects them to surgical interventions that highlight their physical fragility and their cultural resilience. Through precise cuts, excisions, and rearrangements, these once familiar volumes become altered entities, revealing the hidden structures of their bindings, margins, and paratexts. These objects encourage visitors to reconsider where a book begins and ends, and how much can be removed or transformed before it becomes something else.

This exhibition focuses on two major series: 'Butterflies' and 'Chameleons'. In 'Butterflies', Pichler opens, folds, and fans out pages so that the fragments spread across the spine like wings, capturing a moment of arrested flight between legibility and pure form.In 'Chameleons', the animals brought to life by their absence. They have been cut out to reveal the pages behind them, blending their altered forms seamlessly into their textual environment, much like the reptile they evoke. Together, these works propose a taxonomy of transformed books, with each species being defined by a particular mode of intervention and metamorphosis.

Michalis Pichler is an artist and editor who works on the imaginary border between visual art and literature. He co-founded and organizes Miss Read: The Berlin Art Book Fair and the Conceptual Poetics Day. His latest publications include *Publishing Manifestos* (MIT Press and Miss Read 2022), *Coup de Dés* (COLLECTION) (The Center for Book Arts and Spector Books, 2024), *Pathosformeln #1&2* (COLLAGE, 2025), and (co-edited with Pascale Obolo and Parfait Tabapsi) *Reading Ecologies: Transforming Publishing in Africa* (Miss Read 2025).

Opening Hours:

Thursday, 19 March 2026, 14:00–18:00
Wednesday, 25 March 2026, 14:00–18:00