

**Doctoral Thesis**  
**Moholy-Nagy University of Art and**  
**Design, PhD in Art History**

**Beáta Istvánkó**

**Publishing in the post-digital era**

Hungarian independent publishing practices in the  
field of art and design after the millennium

**Thesis Supervisor:** József Tillmann CSc

**Co-PI:** Dóra Balla DLA

## **XVII. Thesis Booklet**

### **1. Purpose and relevance of the research:**

The aim of this dissertation is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the history of independent art publishing in Hungary between 2000 and 2020, highlighting its main aspects and historical context. The analyses revealed that art publications as a medium of art and design represent a significant field of study, opening new perspectives for the discourse of art history.

### **2. Methodology and research area:**

The research used qualitative methods, in the form of a horizontal baseline survey, to assess publications by artists from different visual arts disciplines. The focus of the research was on the activities of independent micro-publishers and the self-publishing practices of visual and photographic artists, with a particular focus on the most visible and less documented print products.

### **3. Clarifying the concept of artist's publication:**

An important objective of the research was to clarify the concept of artist publication, which includes artist books, photobooks and artzines. The analysis has shown that artist publications are not the same as art publications and that the different formats can be considered together as part of a larger set.

#### **4. Historical background and contemporary practices:**

The development of the genre was closely linked to the political and social changes of the second half of the 20th century, especially in Hungary, where artist's publications became part of artistic practice only after the fall of communism. The turn of the millennium is a period of particular importance for research, when printed publications started to play a role alongside digital art genres.

#### **5. Archives and documentation:**

Research has used the tools of the archive as a space for contextualized knowledge sharing. Some of the works produced in the period under study had already disappeared

or been destroyed by 2024, underlining the importance of documenting and archiving art history. Publications often do not have ISBN numbers and are therefore invisible to traditional library databases.

## **6. Research results and future research opportunities:**

The results of this research demonstrate that printed publications continue to play an important role in the field of art and design, even in the age of digital tools. The connections identified open up new avenues of research, particularly in the detailed analysis of micro-publishing and self-publishing practices, which may provide deeper insights into the specificities of the field.

## **7. Conclusion:**

The results of this research will contribute to the understanding of post-digital publication types and open up new perspectives for the academic community. The database created in the course of this research can be expanded and

further developed, defining the long-term possibilities for documenting and interpreting art and design media.