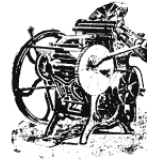


THE

ITINERANT PRINTER



What: The Itinerant Printer Project

Where: Various Cities Across the United States

When: Throughout 2015

Who: Chris Fritton, Modern Tramp Printer

News: The Itinerant Printer Project is Coming to a Print Shop Near You!

The history of tramp printers is a long and storied one, and Chris Fritton, former Studio Director of the WNY Book Arts Center, plans to add to that chronicle. In early 2015, Fritton will set out on an ambitious cross-country journey that will take him to all 48 contiguous states; he's calling the project "The Itinerant Printer."

Fritton left his position as Studio Director of the Western New York Book Arts Center in Buffalo, NY, to embark on the trip; he worked there for almost 6 years. "It's time for me to be a journeyman printer. I never had the opportunity to learn from a diverse group of printers, and it's important to have that experience - but it's just as important to share what I've learned with others and create a nationwide collaboration of sorts."

The Itinerant Printer is visiting letterpress printshops across America, producing unique prints at each venue culled from their idiosyncratic collections of antique wood type, metal type, cuts, ornaments, and photopolymer plates. These prints are being mailed back to followers and supporters of the project as postcards (and care packages) from the road. He plans to visit Universities, book arts centers, private printshops, upstart presses, and well-established presses. "This is the perfect time" says Fritton, "public interest in analog art is cresting right now and letterpress shops are everywhere."

The project intends to capture the spirit of the analog revival, send real samples of it to people's mailboxes, and convey the ethos of the handmade revival to a broader audience via social media. But it's not just another travel blog - as a culmination, it will result in a coffee table book that features photos all of the prints, printshops, and people from the trek.

Fritton says "it's also about reviving a sense of adventure in printing, along with the analog sharing of information. It's about going out into the world, seeking work based on your skill set, making something with your hands, and delivering that object to someone. It's about an exchange of ideas, of techniques, of information, of style, and of the consummation of all those things: prints."

The trip is no vacation, however - Fritton estimates that he will cover over 30,000 miles and make over 30,000 prints during the excursion - it poses any number of challenges, from travel logistics to working in unfamiliar spaces. "Creativity within constraint is at the core of this project," he says, "when I walk into each printshop, I don't really know what I'm getting myself into, what I have to work with, and what the people will be like." He has close to 100 shops on the itinerary, and more contact him each day.

The project has already taken on great national sponsors like Mailchimp, Van Son Holland Inks, Legion Paper, Field Notes, Write Notepads, and New York outfits like Virgin Wood Type, Block Club, and Pistachio Press, but the major source of capital is a successful Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign that Fritton ran himself. He raised over \$22,000 through the campaign, and will offset more travel and mailing costs with honoraria and speaking fees from schools and Universities along the way. The campaign and perks can still be viewed at igg.me/at/itinerantprinter

The Itinerant Printer website will track his progress, it features a travel diary, photos of the printshops, landscapes, and people along the way: www.itinerantprinter.com

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