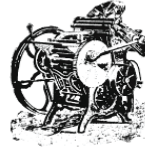


THE ITINERANT PRINTER



What: The Itinerant Printer Book Tour!

Where: Everywhere

When: September 2018

Who: Chris Fritton, Modern Tramp Printer

News: The Itinerant Printer Book Tour

The Itinerant Printer book is complete! After years of traveling the US & Canada, modern-day tramp printer Chris Fritton has finished the tome that concludes his epic project. During The Itinerant Printer trip he visited 137 letterpress print shops in 843 days, covering over 47,000 miles and making over 15,000 prints, and now there's a coffee table book that catalogs those exploits so readers can share in the once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Fritton left his position as Studio Director at the Western New York Book Arts Center in Buffalo, NY, in November 2014 and hit the road in January of 2015. For the next two and a half years, he criss-crossed the country bringing only paper and ink. At each of his stops, he'd use idiosyncratic elements in the print shops to create posters and postcards. Those prints, along with the studios, the people, the landscapes, and the curiosities along the way are now celebrated and collected in one massive volume that took an additional year to produce.

The book is a formidable work: it measures 12" x 12" and comprises over 320 pages, 1,500 photos, and 130,000 words that detail all aspects of the adventure. Fritton took his cue from older tramp printers that used to travel around the country, bouncing from shop to shop — nomadic vagabonds that used their skills and earned their keep but vehemently maintained their autonomy. They often recorded their escapades as well, so this newest book participates in a long tradition of itinerant printers' tales. Fritton's work takes a more modern angle though, and he describes it as "Part travel diary, part cultural anthropology, part philosophical musing, part poetic digression. It is a series of interconnected yet independent vignettes that tell the story of the 2015-17 journey. This is the ultimate index of this printing adventure, the culmination of all the miles, all the ink, all the paper, all the type, and all the blood, sweat, and tears."

The book is highly-stylized, incorporating handwritten elements as well as hallmarks of zine construction (torn paper, cut & pasted layouts, etc.). The photos, as well as the entries, invite the reader into a immersive experience, one that isn't just about letterpress printing — it's a story about people. Fritton speaks to that directly in the introduction, when he writes "I began to understand that the story I'd be telling would be told *by* me, but not *about* me."

He also had a unique way of constructing that story, composing the entire thing based not on notes or previous accounts he'd written. He discusses that in the preface, saying "This book is written from memory, and accordingly, it is a fiction. All memory is fiction, because it can't recount every detail, and it fills the empty spaces with colors and shapes and sounds, some of which never existed. Memory is a story that we tell ourselves. And I wanted to tell a story, not recite a list of facts or provide an encyclopedic overview. It was always intended to be this way — I carried no notebook, sketchbook, or pocket journal. This is the story of my trip, and it may or may not be exactly how it happened."

Fritton will return to the road to promote the book starting in the fall of 2018, visiting many of the shops that he visited before, along with plenty of new ones. The trip will be highlighted by speaking engagements and demonstrations at the Lancaster Printers Fair (Lancaster, PA), the Ladies of Letterpress Conference (St. Louis, MO), and the 10th Annual LA Printers Fair (Los Angeles, CA), with a later stop at the Hamilton Wayzgoose (Two Rivers, WI), among many others.

The official release date for the book is September 17th, 2018. Until that time, the book is available for pre-order through his website, itinerantprinter.com for \$75 plus postage.

For more information about the project, visit the associated social media links. For press inquiries, please contact directly.

Contact/Press Info:

The Itinerant Printer c/o Chris Fritton

61 Elmwood Avenue

Buffalo, NY 14201 716-392-7305

theitinerantprinter@gmail.com

itinerantprinter.com

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