

2011 Magazine Culture Jeremy Leslie



Diego Ortiz and Pepe Murciego, *La Más Bella*, Spring 2010
Courtesy the publisher



Penny Modra, *Is Not Magazine*, issue 1, *Love Is/Not Lust*, 2005
Courtesy the publisher



Designer unknown, *Nice Magazine*, 2002
Courtesy Jeremy Leslie



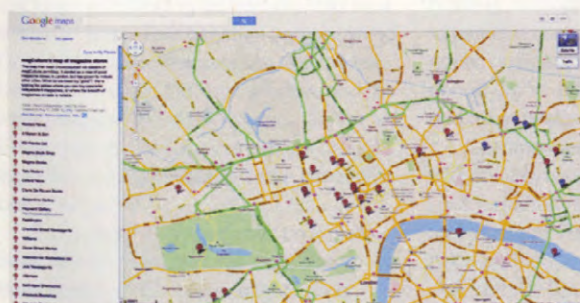
Joseph Ernst, *One Page Magazine*, *French Vogue*, March 2007
Courtesy the artist



Left to right: Nick Mrozowski, *i* newspaper, vol. 2, no. 392, August 9, 2010; *i* newspaper, vol. 2, no. 395, August 12, 2010; *i* newspaper, vol. 1, no. 249, February 23, 2010
Courtesy the publisher

magCulture Map

In 2009 Jeremy Leslie, editor of *magCulture*, launched this Google-based map, which pinpoints the best magazine stores around the world as identified by the blog's readers.
—EL See magCulture.com



Colophon Conference 2007, International Magazine Symposium
Photo ©Eric Chenail

Colophon Conference
This international biennial event, launched in 2007, brings together independent magazine-makers from across the world. Events are held across Luxembourg, and the curators Mike Koeberling, Jeremy Leslie, and Andrew Losowsky oversee an online database of independent magazines and publish a series of books about the genre.
—Wolovecolophon.com

Rethinking the Magazine

Magazines are such a ubiquitous part of today's media landscape that we easily take them for granted. But what is a magazine? The word brings to mind a specific physical object. We think of a standard package of full-color pages printed on glossy paper. But in recent years a number of publishing projects have challenged such assumptions, reminding us that magazines can in turn challenge their readers in terms of how they look, feel, and read.

Nice Magazine—a magazine-size piece of wood imprinted with just its name, or masthead—tests our basic physical expectations of what a magazine is, while *Naked woman covered in glitter, and words* and *One Page Magazine* are genre-specific critiques that use humour and visual analysis respectively to highlight the underlying banalities of much mainstream content.

The advent of the web as a common utility has led magazines to reexamine their physical properties, with some, like *Monocle*, deliberately adopting a more booklike format. *Monocle*'s cover design is composed similarly each issue, rejecting the received wisdom that covers should be a rotating series of familiar celebrity faces from issue to issue.

The web has had an acute effect on newspapers, many of which have turned to magazine-style content and design to justify their existence now that they are no longer the first source for breaking news. The Portuguese newspaper *i* is effectively a daily magazine rather than a newspaper in the traditional sense.

Other publishing projects have taken the word "magazine" back to its Arabic etymological roots, where it means emporium or warehouse, coming up with surprising ideas of what a magazine can be. The editors of *La Más Bella* produce themed collections of objects embellished with content, while South Africa's *Afro* presents new, non-magazine paper formats for delivering content.

Thanks to technology, it is cheaper and easier than ever to create a magazine, but the hardest part of the process, getting your publication to readers, remains as difficult as ever. The makers of *Is Not Magazine* solved this by posting their poster-size publication on city walls. *I Am Still Alive* appears as part of other magazines, taking over several pages as a parasite project that cleverly piggybacks its host.

Other publications with more recognizable formats challenge editorial conventions in their pages. *City* appears using a different person's name each month; *O.K. Periodicals* curates content submitted

by readers in response to a theme; *Carlos* eschewed photography in favor of illustration; and *Kasino A4* and *Monika* play with the concept of the didactic editorial voice to subvert the idea of lifestyle advice. Perhaps most confrontational of all was *Re-Magazine*, which during its seven-year lifespan went through several distinct phases, such as embracing the ordinary lives of everyday people as its editorial subject matter, toying knowingly with the expectations of both publishers and readers. ☒



Above and right: Peet Pienaar, Afro, Cube edition, 2006. Courtesy the publisher



Abake, I Am Still Alive #8, in Sugo, issue 1, 2004. Courtesy the artists



Clockwise from top left: Mike Meiré, Brand Eins, vol. 2, no. 7, September 2000; vol. 12, no. 10, October 2010; vol. 1, no. 1, October 1999; vol. 2, no. 3, April 2000. Courtesy the publisher



O.K. Parking, O.K. Periodicals, issue 2: Failure, Winter/Spring, 2009. Courtesy the publisher



Jop van Bennekum, Re-Magazine, Hester issue, 2004. Courtesy the artist



Monika, Monika, It's About What Is Said issue, Spring/Summer 2010. Courtesy the publisher

Print x Digital

Newer media always arrives to fanfare about replacing older media, and we've been hearing about the web replacing magazines for more than a decade. But the relationship between magazines and websites is far more complex than that, and still largely unresolved. Whatever their long-term relationship, in the short-term magazines have benefited creatively from the arrival of the Internet and other digital forms.

Many independent magazine-makers discovered their voices writing blogs; others, like *Karen*, have bypassed the web while applying a highly personal bloglike sensibility to content creation. Increasing numbers of bloggers have found a use for printed publications alongside their websites. *It's Nice That* launched a biannual print edition to counteract the disposability of their daily posts and enable a more precise editorial voice. Blog and magazine live side by side, supporting each other through their distinct roles. *magCulture* produced a printed publication to focus on several years of archive material, and *Linefeed* identified common themes in their posts and created the printed *LineRead* as a vehicle to investigate those themes in more depth.

Some of the most interesting cross-overs occur when print and digital media are entwined. *Things Our Friends Have Written on the Internet* was a one-off newspaper project that combined multiple sensibilities. Content was sourced by its editors from a selection of their favorite blogs and websites and reproduced without the permission of the originators. Instead, the blogging convention of providing URL links was used. The result was a printed newsfeed—an aggregation or collection of unrelated content, a snapshot of the web.

Club Donny is a magazine that explores the relationship between nature and the city and is composed of folded poster-size sheets of paper left unbound. Its content—from a nudist camp in the Netherlands to a former Soviet resort overgrown by nature—is submitted unsolicited online through its website. Its editorial hand is largely absent, allowing the individual vision of its authors to be fully present.

Newspaper Club is an award-winning concept that takes advantage of newspaper printers' downtime to provide access for outsiders to print small-run newspapers. Users can either upload finished PDFs or take advantage of a series of ready-made design templates. Either way, a few days after uploading your content, printed newspapers—in runs as small as five copies—arrive by courier.

Print-on-demand services such as MagCloud (used by *LineRead*, for example) mean individual copies of a magazine are printed to order. While more expensive per unit, they allow the publisher to avoid the heavy investment involved in printing hundreds of copies in advance of sales.

The Internet has also revolutionized the distribution of magazines, vastly increasing the reach of magazines of all types and sizes. Smaller, specialist magazines can now find global niches they could only have dreamed of just five years ago.

The latest digital development is Apple's iPad, seen by many before its April 2010 launch as the savior of publishing. Less than two years on the market, it's too early to tell if iPad magazines will live up to such lofty expectations, but huge resources continue to be devoted to editorial apps in the hopes that they will do so. To date, much creative effort has been spent trying to define how an editorial app should function, with major projects such as *Wired* defining a busy, clamorous visual direction, and the independent iPad-only publication *Letter to Jane* taking a calmer, more reflective route. There should be room for both approaches, but what will define their success will more probably be their ability to link and share content with other parts of the digital world through social networking, something the stand-alone Flipboard app has focused on since its launch. ☒



It's Nice That in collaboration with Joseph Burrin, *It's Nice That*, issue 3, April 2010. Courtesy the publisher



MagCloud

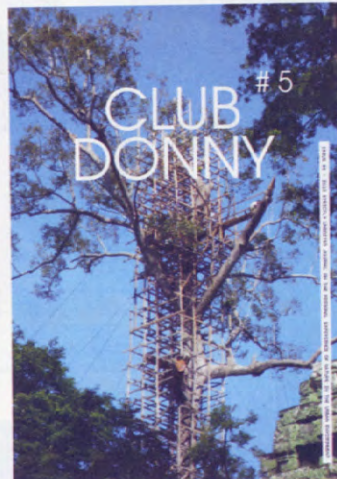
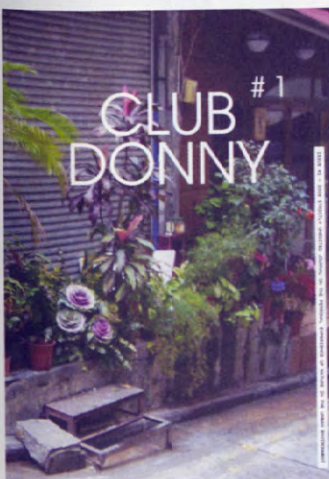
A service of HP, MagCloud is a print-on-demand tool that allows users to produce and distribute their own magazines. Readers order the magazines from the MagCloud site, which handles printing, fulfillment, and digital downloads. MagCloud's direct-mail service is a new kind of DIY marketing tool, allowing small producers to print and distribute catalogues and other collateral. —EL See MagCloud.com



Michael Bojkowski, *LineRead*, issue 3, March 2011. ck interrupt (design) Courtesy the publisher



Above and right: Jeremy Leslie, *magCulture Paper*, 2010. Courtesy the publisher



Left to right: Frank Bruggeman, Ernst van der Hoeren, and Ben Lalova/Didier Pascal, *Club Donny*, N° 1, 2008, and N° 5, 2010, and N° 3, 2009. Courtesy the publisher

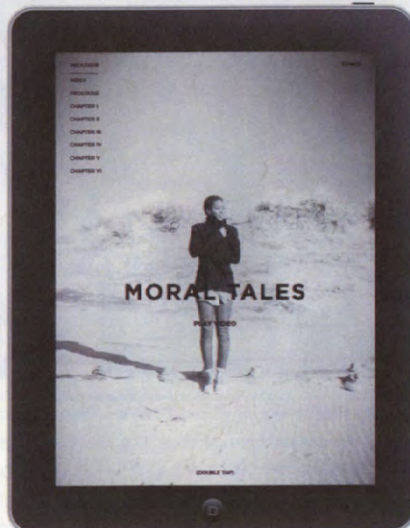
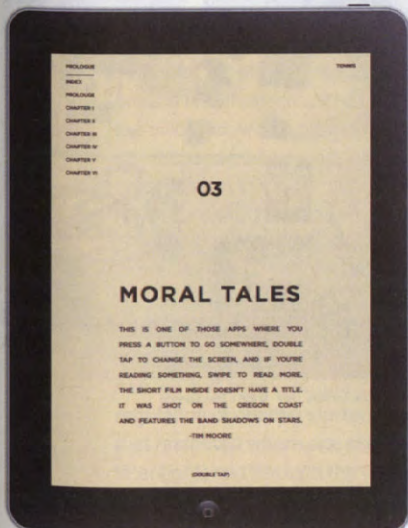
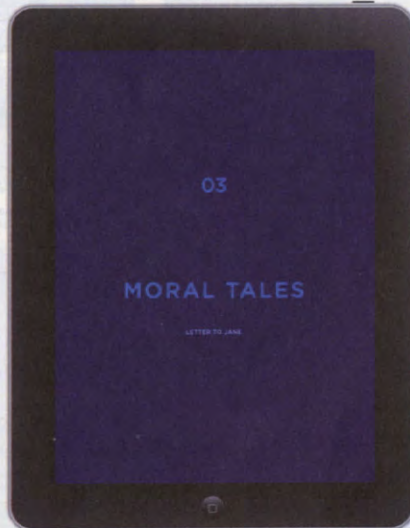


Newspaper Club

Courtesy Newspaper Club

Newspaper Club

Keep the engines of capitalism moving! Newspaper Club utilizes the high-capacity printing plants employed by major newspapers to produce short-run tabloid editions. Serving as a broker between manufacturers and DIY publishers, this web-to-print service allows users to upload PDFs online and order print runs as low as a single copy. (Unit cost goes down as volume goes up.) Publications have included everything from wedding keepsakes to community newspapers. Newspaper Club offers a "bespoke service" that assists customers with design and editorial; clients have included Penguin to the BBC. —EL See NewspaperClub.com



Ben Terret, Things Our Friends Have Written on the Internet 2008, issue 1, 2009
Courtesy the publisher

Tim Moore, Letter to Jane, 2011 Courtesy the publisher