

Photobooks & is an ongoing research project and publication (Onomatopoe, 2021) by Matt Johnston which seeks to encourage and facilitate critical conversations around the contem-

porary photobook. This poster is designed by Studio Ward Goes. Source files for DIY Risograph printing and further resources are available at: photobookclub.org/photobooks.

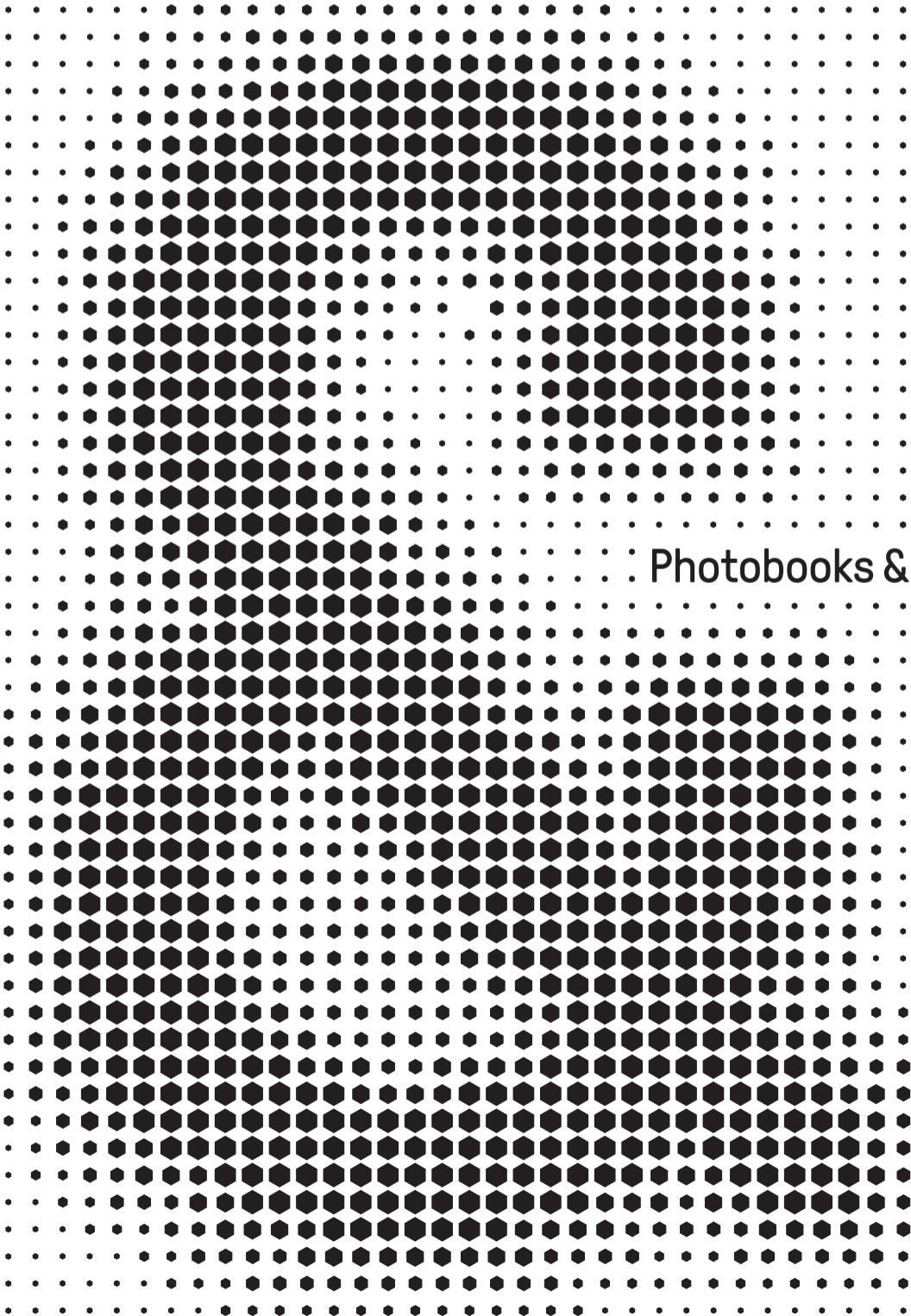
Christia, Natasha. 'The (Photo)Book: On Potentiality', 2020. <https://bel-photobooks.org/the-photobook-on-potentiality/>.

Gilberger, Ruth. 'Photobooks for All!' In *The Photobook in Art and Society: Participative Potentials of a Medium*, 2020, p32.

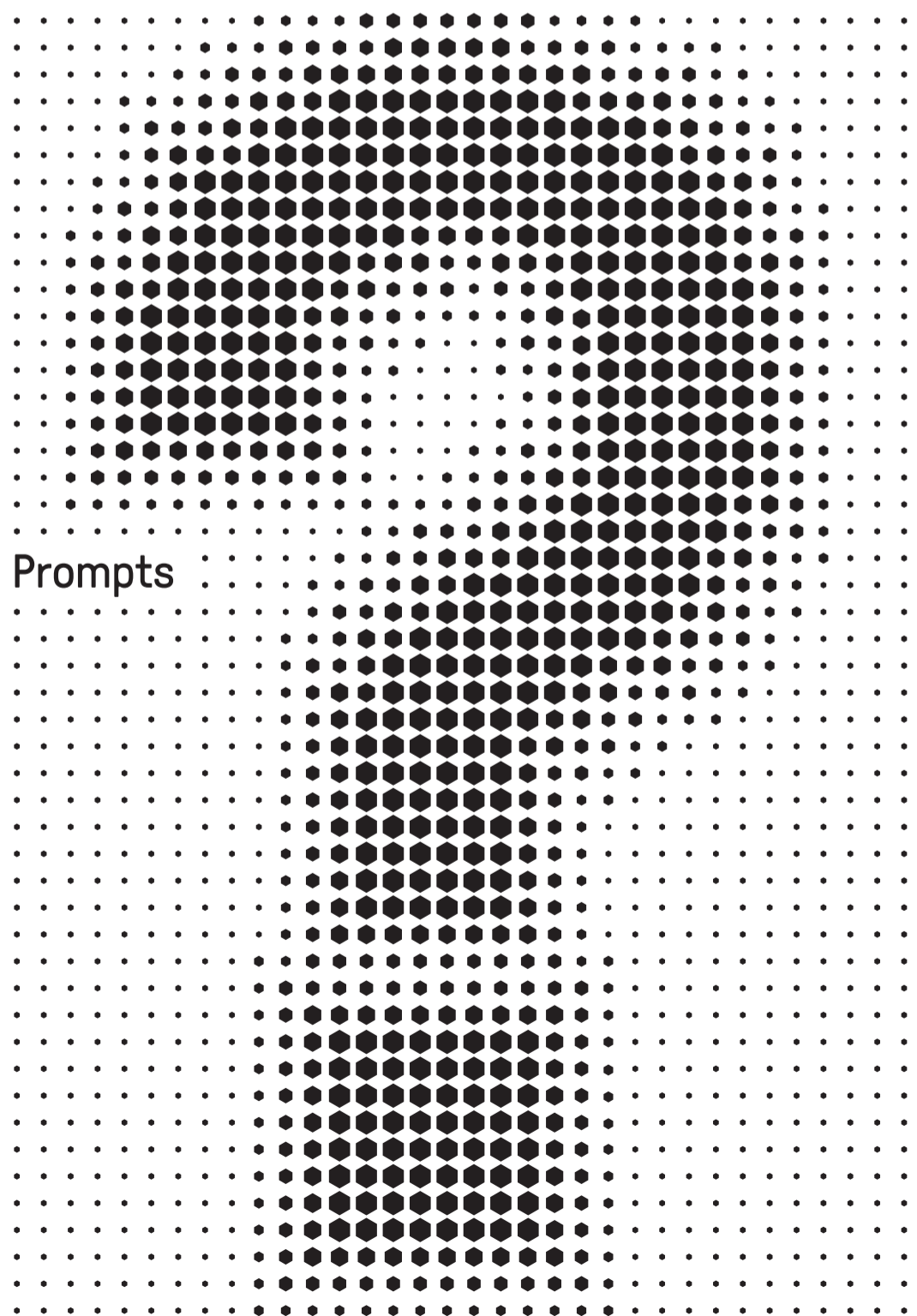
*Though the questions here are a result of research in and around the photobook ecology, there are overlaps with the artist's book and other closely related codex-oriented outputs. In an effort to encourage inter-medium connections and open up conversation '*book' is adopted in place of 'photobook'.

Once found in the interstices and addenda of the book arts and photography, the photobook now occupies its own dedicated spaces. Aided by a vibrant community of practitioners and a desire for the fixed and finite in an increasingly fluid visual environment, the medium has thrived. Yet in celebration and legitimation of the photobook as an independent art form, intents of publishing are masked. The vitality of the medium should not be attributed to, or confused with, the vitality of individual works.

The photobook presents immeasurable opportunities to make our world 'visible, understandable and alterable' (Gilberger) but is dormant without action. Its communicative potential is only realised through purposeful interventions which amplify and activate the powerful but otherwise inert codex. Considering the photobook as an 'encounter and an event' emphasises our responsibility to use the medium for the construction of 'more inclusive environments of hospitality, discussion, and knowledge production' (Christia). If such a future is to be realised, we will need to ask critical questions of the works we produce and encounter; re-drawing a production-oriented discourse to accommodate and elevate reception. Aligning making with making public.



Photobooks &



**A SERIES
OF PROMPTS**

**FOR
*BOOK MAKERS,
READERS**

**AND ALL THOSE
IN-BETWEEN**

What does this *book seek to do in the world?

Who would benefit from seeing this *book?

Who needs to see this *book?

Who knows about this *book?

Who would enjoy seeing this *book?

How are readers accommodated?

What knowledge does the *book rely on?

What contextual information or resources are presented with (or in) the *book?

Is space for reader response important?

How can the work be seen without purchase?

How is the *book amplified in order to reach its readers?

How is the *book activated to support reader engagement?

How does the *book fit into a larger plan of publishing?

Does the *book act as a beginning, way-marker or end-point?

What form does the *book take?

How does the form of the *book support its purpose?

How does the cost of production impact the cost of purchase and resulting readership?

How do production choices reflect resource sustainability and environmental impacts?

What papers, bindings and production flourishes are used?