

A Great Art Magazine Falls Prey to the Economy

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One of my favorite art magazines, *Art on Paper*, has ceased publication. Always illuminating, *Art on Paper* focused on paper-based art including limited edition prints, portfolios and books from contemporary artists. After downsizing to a smaller format, the magazine still had severe trouble raising advertising dollars to pay for their overhead.

Advertising dollars spent for magazines is at an all time low. It's an uphill battle for any magazine to be able to survive these days, including those on the web. Though new internet magazines are sprouting up daily, most are labors of love and many will fall by the wayside unless a successful business plan emerges.

Will the impending announcement of the Apple tablet save magazines like these? I'm hopeful and even a bit optimistic that it may be able to, but magazines will still need to find advertising revenue in order to survive.

Here's the *Art on Paper* email I received over the weekend.

"Dear readers, friends, and advertisers of artonpaper magazine, Forty years after the founding of the Print Collectors Newsletter, our predecessor, it is with great sadness that we announce the temporary closure of artonpaper magazine. Emotionally, this has been very hard for us. We know, for instance, that the magazine's absence will leave an important segment of the art world - namely, publishers of limited editions prints, multiples, and artists' books - unattended at a difficult time. Nevertheless, all of our efforts to ride out the recession (reducing the magazine's size and thereby cutting our printing costs in half, laying off staff, creating other revenue streams) have proved inadequate in compensating for the 65% drop in advertising revenue we experienced over the past year and a half. We want you to know that we did not go gently. In addition to making drastic changes to our daily operations, and exploring a variety of long-term strategic options, we also spent six months looking for new financing, possibly even a new owner. We set January 15, 2010 as a final deadline. When that date arrived without an investment, we had to close shop.

It is certainly our hope that six to twelve months from now, when the economy has improved, someone new will come along and revive the publication, either in print or digital form. In the meantime, if you are a subscriber, please email circulation@dartepub.com for an auto-response on what this means for your subscription and what efforts we are making on your behalf. We know that this comes as bad news to many, and we want to thank all of you who have been so supportive of artonpaper over many years. Your encouragement has meant the world to us, and it was because of you that we remained in publication as long as we did. Sincerely, Shelly Bancroft and Peter Nesbett Co-Publishers, artonpaper magazine"