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Features

• Bronze Man spawns 'Ants'

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What sounds like the best home? A cold, shiny, metallic tube? A spit-filled funnel? A vibrating platform constantly lashed by wood? Having rejected the flute, tuba and snare drum as habitats, the heroes of "Ants in the Band Room" finally settle beneath the conductor's podium. This book is the first published by university publisher Bronze Man Books.

Sports

How does one become a part of this fledgling publishing company?

Don't assume that taking Dr. Randy Brooks' class, "The Art of Publishing," automatically makes one part of Bronze Man Books.

The process is actually far more finite than that. "The student-staffed editorial board, which interviews and evaluates possible candidates, must consent to any new members," Brooks said. The editorial board also has the opportunity to reject proposals from any author who meets the criteria for submission, which is simply attaining an association with the university.

Once one has either run the gauntlet of submitting a proposal or being interviewed to join the staff, the production process has five main steps.

"First, we review the manuscript and make a contract agreement with the author," Brooks said. From there, the manuscript's graphic design is developed.

Next, a "production management plan" is created, containing a possible publication date and marketing ideas.

During this stage, team members begin to look for "venues for both advertisement and sales of the book," junior Brian Blankenship, a member of the staff, said. They also begin "gathering bids from surrounding printing companies, looking for a price that fits into our budget."

When an acceptable quote is attained, a final, print-ready copy is made, edited and sent out to print, Blankenship said.

The final step in publication is a "celebration," Brooks said.

What made Laura Podeschi's proposal for "Ants in the Band Room" so ideal for publication?

"Ants worked well for us because Laura's one of the founding members of the publishing company, so we all knew her. She also was familiar with our processes, which was helpful since this was our first production. It was a learning process for everyone," co-editor Leah Hurt said.

"The press felt Laura submitted a quality manuscript. It fit well with both our mission statement and our capabilities as a press," Blankenship said.

"The kids at test readings at the public library and daycare centers loved it, so it was a good choice for publication," Brooks added.

Because the book focuses on musical instruments, First Step Records is producing an accompanying audio track, which features the reading of the story along with specially-arranged music.

"Both parties felt that the synergy between two student-run companies of the university lent itself well to the project," Blankenship said. "The CD would help publicize both organizations and only widen our opportunities in terms of marketing and sale."

Hurt said the publisher is currently working on a poetry chapbook by alum Josh Wild. "The book is called 'Mathematics of Fire' and will feature original photography," Brooks said.

"Everyone worked really hard to raise this book to its highest potential, and I think that hard work is evident. That's what I see every time I look at this book, and it's always outstanding," Hurt said.

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