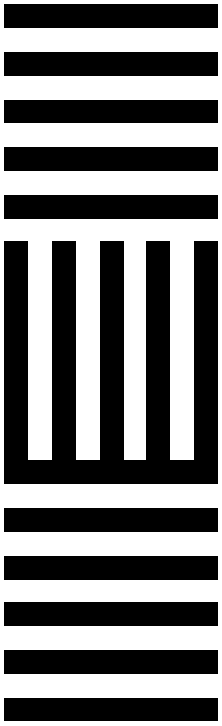
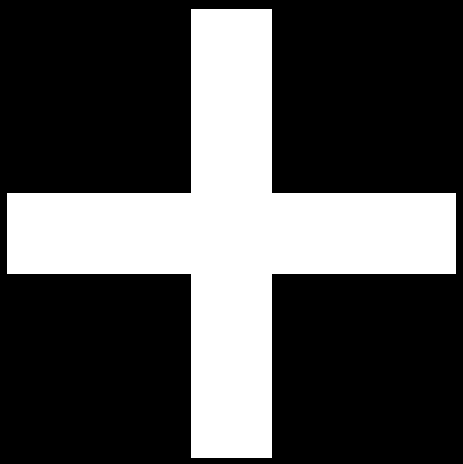
JAN ZUCHOWSKI

MEDIA / 2026



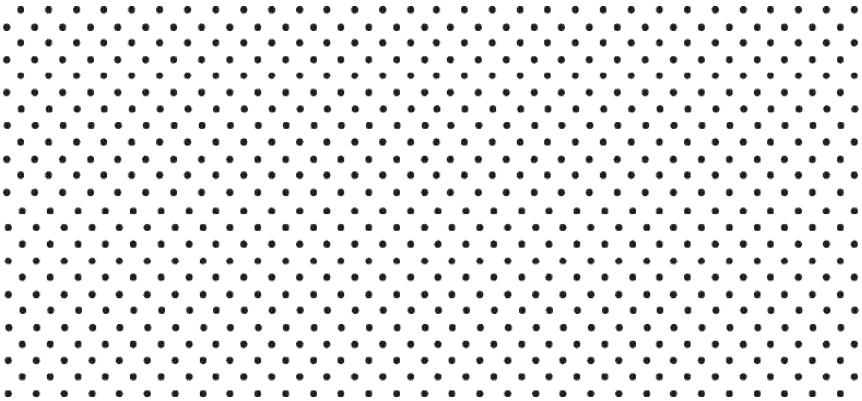
MEDIA EDITION 01

LONDON





BOOKS AUTHORSHIP PUBLISHING
READERS AI AUTHORITY IDEAS



AUTHOR IN
COMMAND



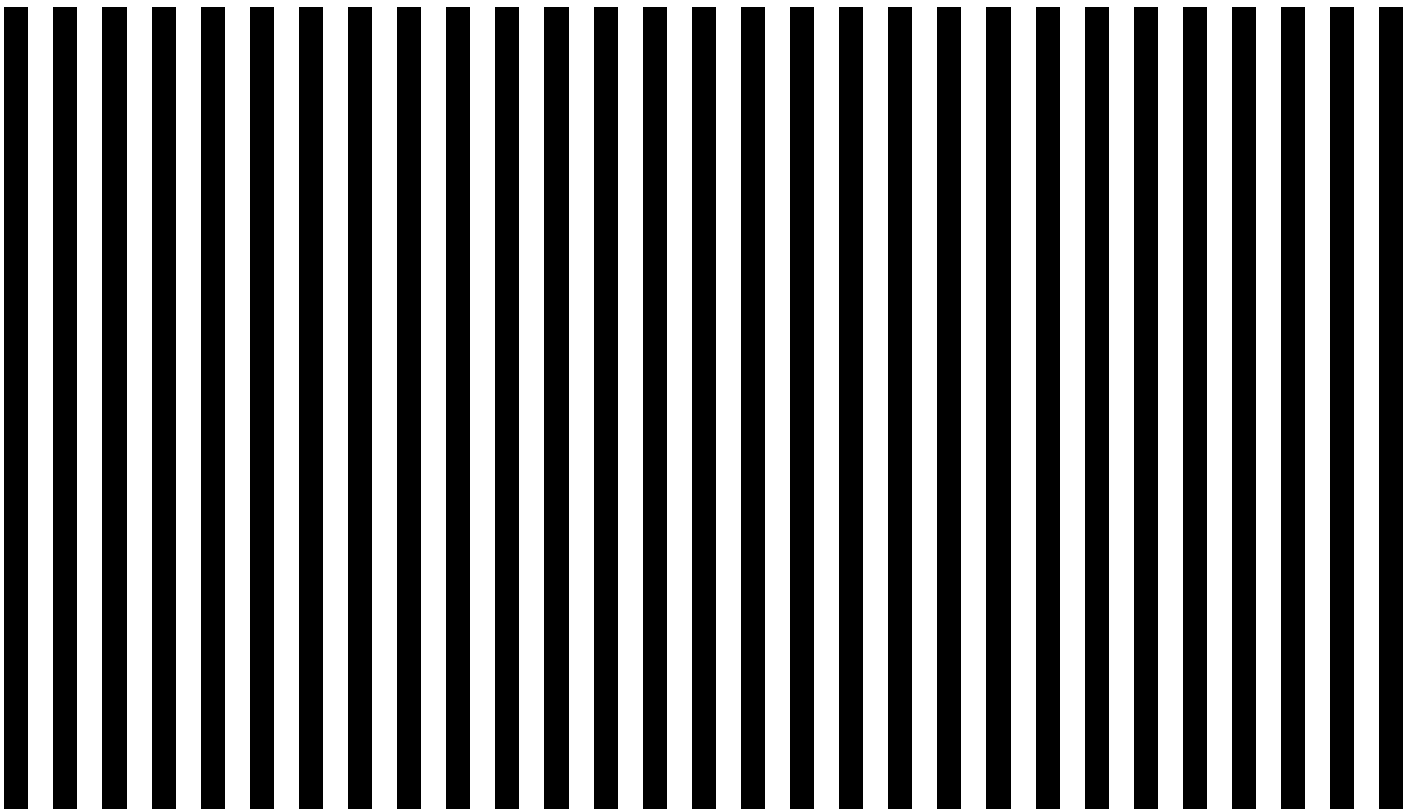
Jan Zuchowski

AUTHOR STRATEGIST

LONDON

WHO OWNS

THE LIFE OF A BOOK



MEDIA 2026

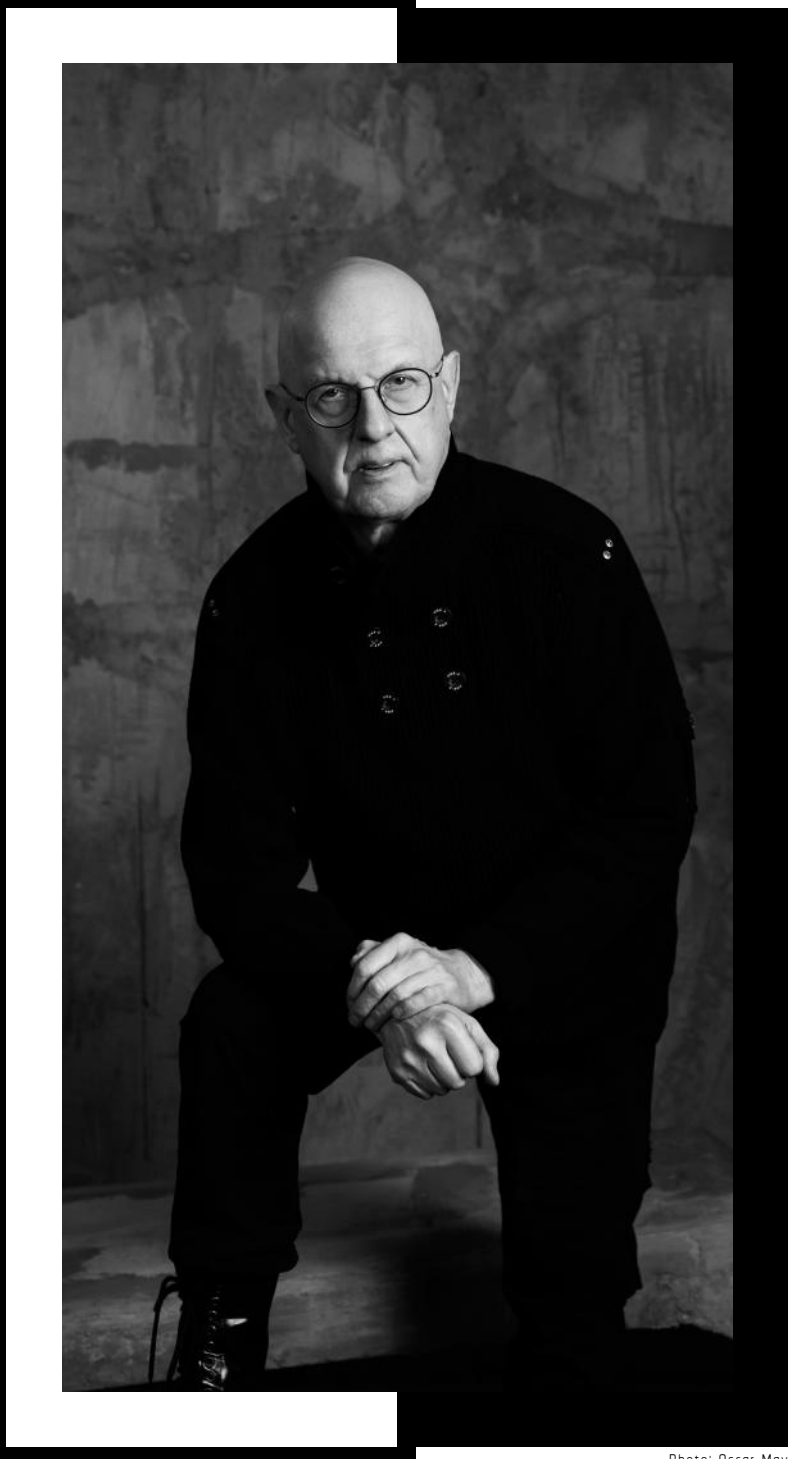


Photo: Oscar May

BOOKS | AUTHORS | AI

AUTHOR IN COMMAND

THE BOOK IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

OWNING THE LIFE OF YOUR BOOK

Publishing has always had a rather peculiar idea about when a book ends.

There is the manuscript. The publication date. The launch. The reviews. The interviews. And then, almost imperceptibly, everyone moves on.

Except the book.

A serious book can remain alive for years. Its ideas travel. Circumstances change around it. New readers discover it. Sometimes the world catches up with a book long after the machinery that published it has moved elsewhere.

PUBLICATION IS AN EVENT.
AUTHORSHIP IS LONGER.

Author in Command begins there: with what happens after a book enters the world. It asks how an author can remain responsible for the life of the ideas they have created — finding new readers, recognising new possibilities, and using AI without surrendering the judgement that made the book worth writing in the first place.

ONE QUESTION

What happens to a book when everyone else has moved on?

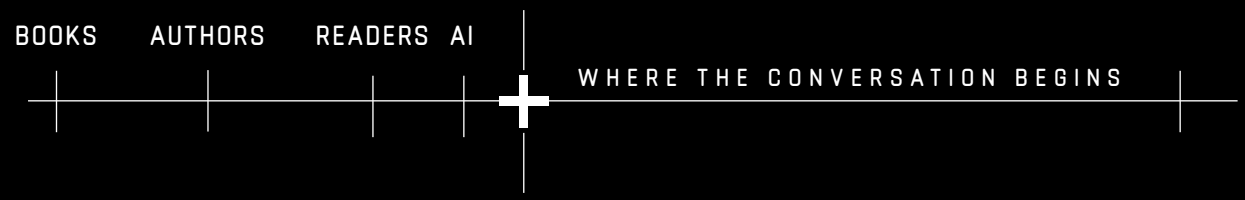

THE
CONVERSATION

JAN ZUCHOWSKI
Author Strategist
Author in Command
LONDON, UK

AUTHOR IN COMMAND

For serious non-fiction authors
Owning the life of your book in the age of AI

Helping serious non-fiction authors take command of the long-term life of their books



BOOKS

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER PUBLICATION?

WHO OWNS THE LIFE OF A BOOK?

A book does not stop being alive because its launch is over. Ideas travel, readers arrive late and the world changes around them. What happens when an author stops thinking about publication as the end of the process — and begins thinking about the long life of the book instead?

AI

WHAT SHOULD AN AUTHOR NEVER GIVE AWAY?

AUTHORIAL JUDGEMENT

AI can now write, summarise, imitate and generate at extraordinary speed. But those may be the least interesting things an author can ask it to do. Used differently, AI becomes a thinking partner — one that can challenge assumptions, expose weaknesses and sharpen ideas without taking command of the work.

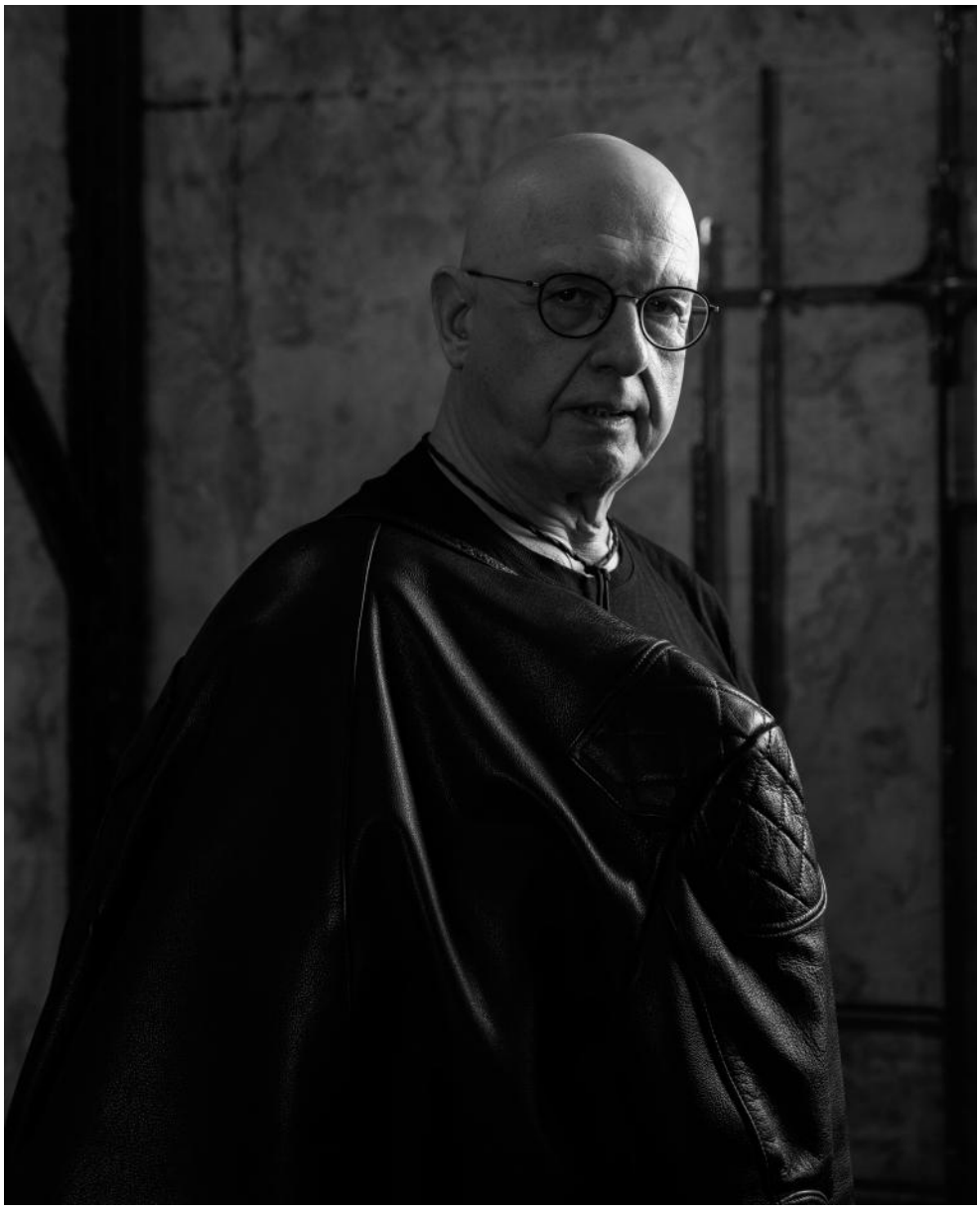


Photo: Oscar May

DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS OF AI

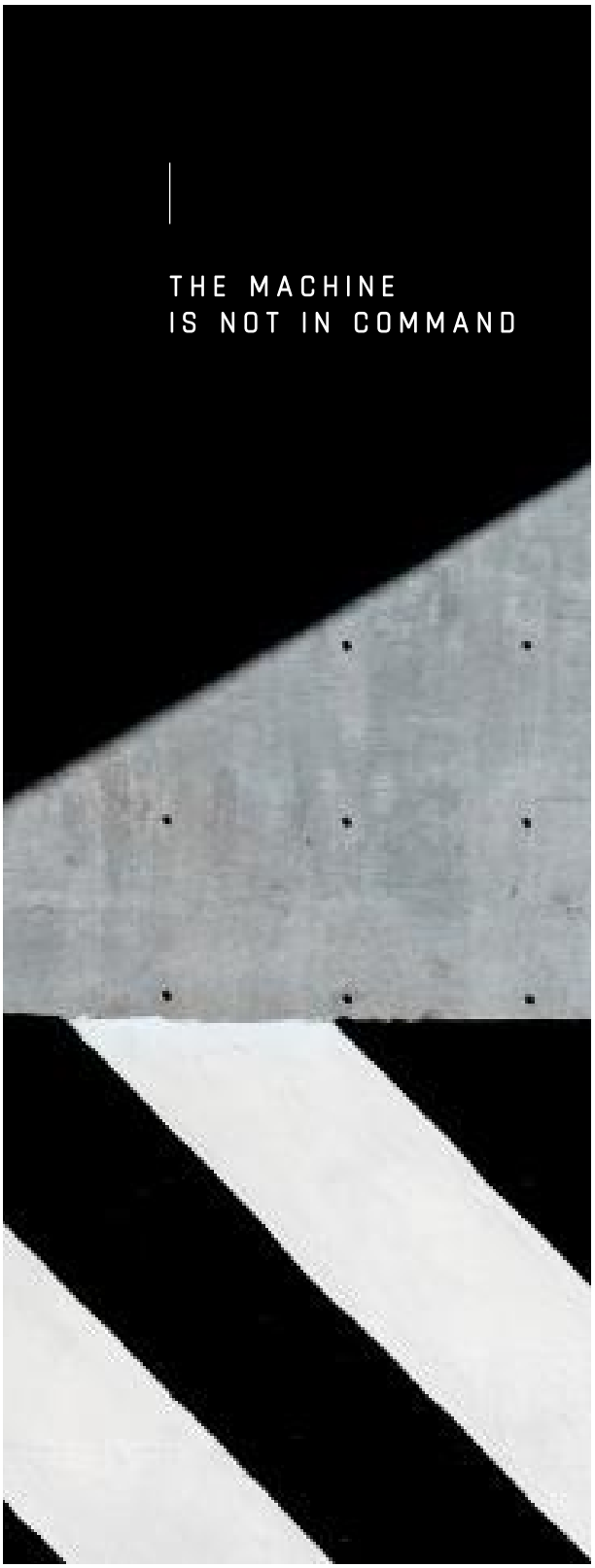
I didn’t arrive at AI as an enthusiast. Quite the reverse. I thought the idea that a machine could contribute meaningfully to serious intellectual work was faintly absurd — and potentially rather dangerous.

THE INTERESTING PART WASN'T WRITING

What changed my mind wasn’t discovering that AI could produce words. It was discovering that, used properly, it could make me think harder about my own. That distinction changed everything.

THE BEGINNING

IT STARTED AFTER A VERY DRUNK BIRTHDAY DINNER



AI is often presented to authors as a machine for producing things — words, summaries, content, ideas. But its more interesting role may be as a source of resistance: questioning assumptions, exposing weaknesses and forcing an author to decide what they actually think.

MIRROR
ORGANISER
CHALLENGER

THE MOST
INTERESTING THING
AI CAN DO FOR
AN AUTHOR MAY BE
TO DISAGREE.

AUTHORIAL JUDGEMENT

The machine can apply pressure.
The author decides what matters.

WHERE ARE THE READERS?

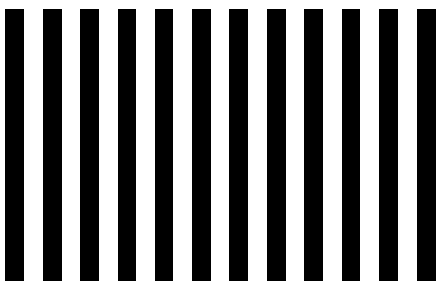
A book may have exhausted its launch audience without coming remotely close to exhausting its readership. The question is what happens when the author starts looking beyond the readers the publishing machine already knows how to reach.

A BOOK DOESN'T RUN OUT OF READERS.

IT RUNS OUT OF WAYS TO FIND THEM.

THE LATE READER

STILL OUT THERE



AFTER PUBLICATION

WHEN THE MANUSCRIPT ENDS,
STEWARDSHIP BEGINS

A book changes when it is published. Until that moment, the author has been making it. Afterwards, other people begin making things of it. Circumstances change around it. Readers interpret it. Ideas travel into places the author never anticipated.

The writing may be finished, but the author's relationship with the book need not be. A different kind of work begins: recognising where the book still matters, finding the readers who have not yet encountered it, and remaining responsible for the ideas it has put into the world.

STEWARDSHIP

THE BOOK HAS LEFT
YOUR HANDS.
IT HAS NOT LEFT
YOUR CARE.

THE LONG LIFE

Stewardship begins with a different question: not how do I promote this book, but what does this book need from me now?



Photo: A.C.

PUBLICATION DOESN'T END
THE AUTHOR'S RESPONSIBILITY.
IT CHANGES IT.

QUESTIONS I KEEP COMING BACK TO

BOOKS / READERS / AI / AUTHORITY / THE LONG LIFE

CAN A BOOK OUTLIVE ITS PUBLICATION?

What happens when the machinery around a book moves on, but the book still has work to do?

WHERE ARE THE READERS YOU HAVEN'T MET YET?

WHAT SHOULD AN AUTHOR NEVER HAND OVER TO AI?

Is an author's job to promote a book
— or to remain responsible for its life?

WHAT DOES A BOOK NEED FROM ITS AUTHOR FIVE YEARS LATER?

JAN ZUCHOWSKI

AUTHOR STRATEGIST

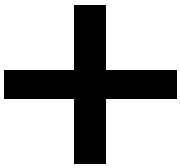
Jan Zuchowski has spent more than fifteen years working with authors, publishers and creative organisations — developing books, publishing strategies and long-term author careers.

Along the way — publishing technology, a seven-nation European creative programme, and conversations about the future of books and publishing around the world.

None of which explains why he became interested in AI.

That began rather differently.

A VERY DRUNK BIRTHDAY DINNER.
VESPERS IN EARLY SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY VENICE.
AND A QUESTION HE DIDN'T EXPECT
A MACHINE TO BE ABLE TO ANSWER.



What followed was not conversion so much as investigation: could AI become useful to a serious author without gradually taking over the work that makes authorship worth having?

Author in Command grew out of the investigation.

STILL SUSPICIOUS

JUST MORE INTERESTED

CONVERSATIONS



Photo: Nick Fancher

TALK + WANDER

NO TALKING POINTS

JUST THINGS WORTH TALKING ABOUT

FIVE PLACES WE COULD START

THE BOOK DOESN'T END WHEN PUBLICATION DOES.

01 — THE AFTERLIFE OF A BOOK
What happens when publication stops being the finish line?

02 — THE READERS WHO ARRIVE LATE
Why the most important reader may not know your book exists yet.

03 — AI WITHOUT ABDICATION
What should an author never hand over to a machine?

04 — AUTHORITY WITHOUT PERFORMANCE
Do authors really need to become personal brands?

05 — THE AUTHOR AS HOST
What changes when an author stops chasing attention and starts creating a place for ideas?

ASK ME THIS

WHY ARE YOU SO SUSPICIOUS OF THE BOOK LAUNCH?

Because it encourages everybody involved to mistake the loudest moment in a book's life for the most important one.

CAN AI MAKE AN AUTHOR MORE ORIGINAL?

Perhaps. But not by having better ideas for them. By making them think harder about their own.

WHEN DOES AN AUTHOR LOSE CONTROL OF A BOOK?

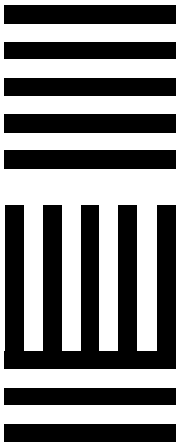
THE MACHINE CAN WRITE.

THAT ISN'T THE INTERESTING PART.

AI has made producing words astonishingly easy.

But authorship was never simply the production of words. It was choosing what mattered. Knowing what to leave out. Recognising the argument worth making. Taking responsibility for it once it entered the world.

As machines become more capable of producing the work, the distinctly human part of authorship becomes easier to see.



THE SCARCE RESOURCE IS JUDGEMENT.

WHAT DOES THE AUTHOR BRING THAT THE MACHINE CAN'T?

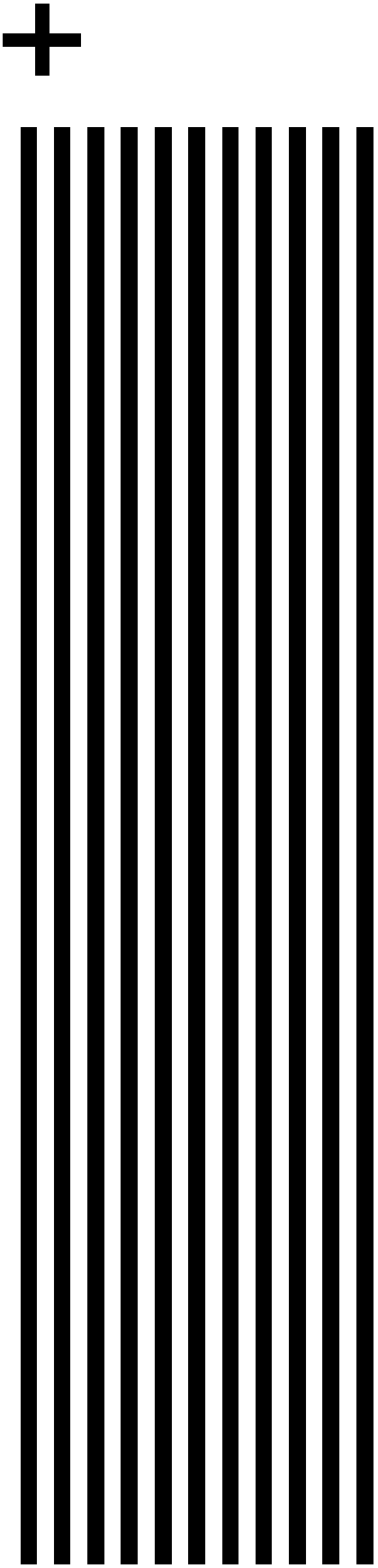
Not more words.

A reason for choosing these ones.

AUTHOR IN COMMAND

THE BOOK WAS THE BEGINNING. WHERE COULD IT GO NEXT?

Author in Command is for serious non-fiction authors who want their books to have a longer, richer life.



INSIDE
AUTHOR IN COMMAND

A BOOK IS A WORLD. START THERE.

The programme begins by asking an author to look again at the book they thought they already knew — not as a finished object, but as a world of ideas, arguments, possibilities and readers.

FIND THE BOOK AGAIN

What world has the book created?

What has changed since it was written?

What does it mean now that it is out in the world?

KNOW WHAT MUST REMAIN YOURS

The judgement.
The argument.
The decisions that matter.

PUT AI TO WORK

Not to produce more words.
To make the author think harder.

NOT MORE REACH. MORE RELEVANCE.



Photo: Nick Foncher

FIND THE READERS WHO HAVEN'T ARRIVED YET

THE BOOK CAN TRAVEL FURTHER

The life of a book can change when it reaches someone it was never originally expected to reach.

The work is to recognise where the book still matters — and create ways for those readers to find it.

INTELLECTUAL HOSPITALITY

DON'T BUILD AN AUDIENCE.
CREATE A PLACE.

A book can begin a conversation.
The author can give that conversation
somewhere to continue.

A FEW THINGS I HAVEN'T WORKED OUT YET

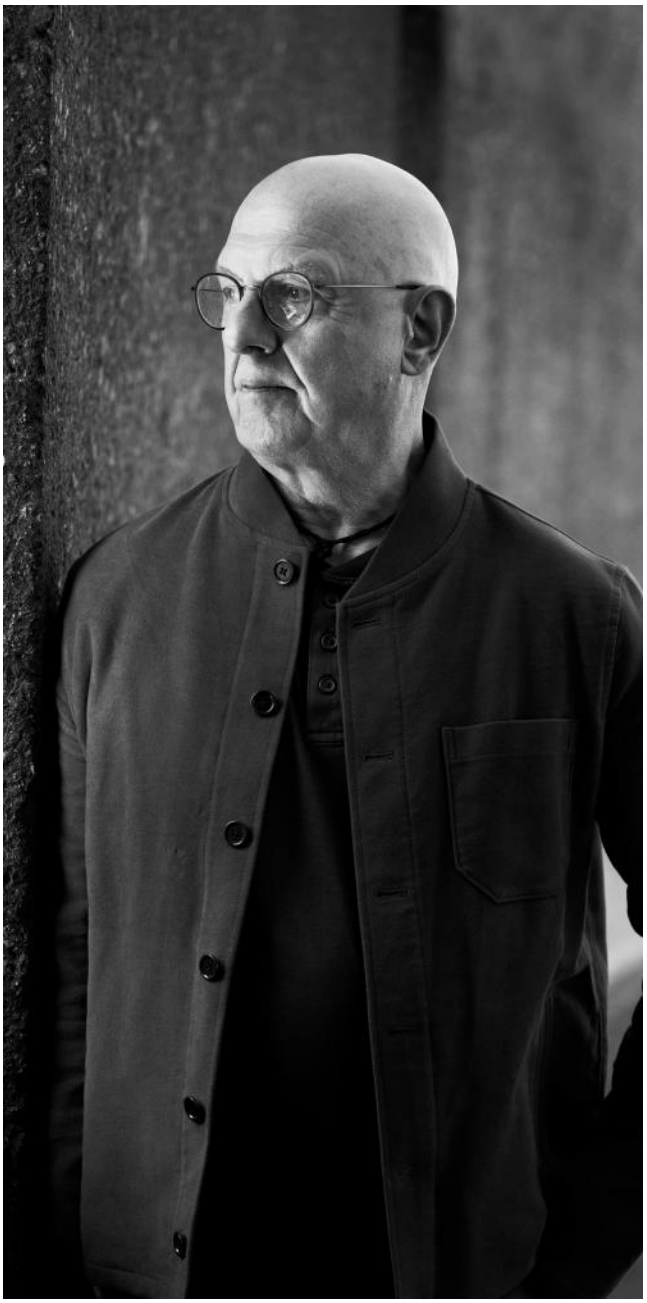


Photo: Oscar May

CERTAINTY ISN'T VERY INTERESTING TO TALK TO.

01

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AI BECOMES ORDINARY?

I’m interested in what becomes valuable when using AI stops being interesting.

IF WE HAD 45 MINUTES...

WE MIGHT START WITH A BOOK.

What happens to it after publication. Why the launch may be the least interesting moment in its life. How a book might find the readers who haven't arrived yet.

WE'D PROBABLY END UP TALKING ABOUT AI.

Not how to make it write faster. What happens to authorship when producing words becomes easy — and judgement becomes more valuable.

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, WE MIGHT GET INTO AUTHORITY.

Why being visible isn't the same as mattering. Why an author might need something people choose to return to rather than another place to accumulate followers.

WE PROBABLY WOULDN'T GET THROUGH IT ALL.

THE SHORT VERSION

JAN ZUCHOWSKI
AUTHOR STRATEGIST

Jan Zuchowski has spent more than fifteen years working with authors, publishers and creative organisations, helping develop books, publishing strategies and long-term author careers.

He is the creator of Author in Command, a programme for serious non-fiction authors exploring what happens after publication: how books continue to find readers, how authors retain authority over their ideas, and how AI can become a thinking partner without taking command.

CURRENTLY INTERESTED IN

The longer life of books. Readers who arrive late. What happens when AI becomes ordinary. Intellectual hospitality. Why judgement may become more valuable as words become easier to produce.

AVAILABLE FOR
PODCASTS
INTERVIEWS
PANELS
CONVERSATIONS

BASED IN LONDON.
OFTEN ELSEWHERE.

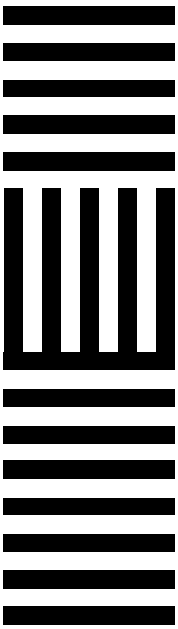
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LET'S HAVE THE CONVERSATION.

If any of these ideas have left you with a question, that's probably where we should begin.

authorincommand.com



AUTHOR IN COMMAND

JAN ZUCHOWSKI
AUTHOR STRATEGIST

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