

A photograph of a narrow street in Vietnam. On the left, a building has a vertical sign for 'Giay Thiên Cầm' and a string of small red flags. A banner across the street reads 'TUẦN ĐÀN ĐOÀN KẾT KAY ĐÓNG CUỘC SỐNG MỪNG TRÊN ĐỊA BÀN ĐẢNG CỘNG SẢN KHU PHỐ 9, PHƯỜNG 19, Q.Đ'. On the right, there are signs for 'INC BANH' and '38 TOWER QUARTER 19, Q.Đ'. People are sitting on a motorcycle in the foreground, and a bicycle is visible further down the street.

Zumaya

Guidelines for
submitting your work
to Zumaya

Submissions

GUIDELINES FOR ZUMAYA PUBLICATIONS



Bad news first: we don't pay advances. Under our standard contract, your book begins earning you money the moment it goes on sale. How much will depend on your willingness to market it and promote yourself. We help as much as we can, given limited staff and a tight budget. By limited, we mean Zumaya is essentially a one-person operation, so keep that in mind if you're in a hurry.

On the other hand, we contract only for the rights we're going to use—world English trade paperback and ebook—leaving you free to sell or use the others as you see fit. In some cases, for example, audiobooks, we do ask for a use fee, but it's nominal and goes to the editor and cover artist.

We do not accept queries or submissions other than electronically. Queries and manuscripts sent by surface mail will be neither read nor returned. We will not go to your website or one of those collective sites where authors are encouraged to post their queries and samples. We have rules for a reason.

In addition to the above, all aspects of our production process are handled electronically, using email, Google Drive and Google Calendar, among other services. If you aren't at least reasonably knowledgeable about your word processor application, browser and other computer programs, or are willing to become so, please don't waste your time and ours.

All genres are welcome; a list of our imprints and what we want for each is provided at the end of this document. This isn't to say we wouldn't consider a beautifully written manuscript that doesn't meet those requirements. We just know from experience those are rare.

We do publish short-story collections, but only with these caveats: at least half of the stories must have been published elsewhere and/or the author must have had stories published elsewhere in professional anthologies or publications.

Factual accuracy is important. While we understand that fiction is fictional, that doesn't apply to verifiable and/or historical facts. Using TV, films or even other novels as resources for action scenes or cultural elements, for example, isn't a good idea. We look for diverse, multi-dimensional, believable characters, good pacing, and solid plotting.

Minimum word count for adult fiction is 50,000 words and up *actual count*.

We do not accept queries by surface mail. The easiest way to reach us is to send an email that contains the following information; brownie points are awarded if you can tell me in 25 words or fewer what your book's specific audience is and how you'd go about reaching it. Send your query to acquisitions@zumayapublications.com.

Name:

Pen Name (if any):

Website:

Blog: <http://>

Email:

Tell us a little about yourself (500 words or fewer):

Genre/ZP Imprint:
Word Count:
Synopsis (750 Words Max):
Title is Unpublished: y/n
Manuscript is Complete (for nonfiction only): y/n
Is this manuscript currently in consideration elsewhere?: y/n
Brownie Points Round! :

Artists, editors, copyeditors, proofreaders and other production freelancers: The above address is **only** for manuscript queries. The correct address for your inquiries is production@zumayapublications.com

We try to respond within two weeks of receiving a query but that's not always possible; See previous note about this being essentially a one-person operation. However, we have an auto-responder that will let you know your query has arrived.

We no longer accept simultaneous submissions. We tried to be flexible on this issue, but time is too limited to spend it reading a manuscript only to be told it's already been placed elsewhere. So, sim-sub at your own peril.

However, as we also live in the real world, a note advising us you've placed a manuscript we're considering is also appreciated.

Should we request a sample (or in some cases, the full manuscript), it should be sent to requested@zumayapublications.com in the following format:

1. Word or iWork Pages, single-spaced, chapter headers flush with the top of the page, any basic 12 pt. font, no page numbers, no headers or footers.
2. Do not use tabs except to indent paragraphs, and preferably not then; actual paragraph formatting is preferred.
3. Do not use hard returns to move chapters to a new page; insert a hard page break or one space between end of one chapter and beginning of the next.

Send the text of the sample/manuscript in one file with a *brief* synopsis at the beginning. "Brief" means no more than 1,000 words; less is better. If you can't describe your book in two or three paragraphs, you're already in trouble. Attach the title page as a separate file.

On the manuscript file: title and author at the top of the first page.

On the separate title page: title, your pen name as you want it to appear on the book, your legal name if different from that, your mailing address, your street address if different from your mailing, telephone(s), email, genre, word count. When sample chapters are requested, send *only* the first five chapters or 50 pages, whichever is larger.

Put the information in the form in the body of the email; send the sample/manuscript as an attachment **only**,

You'll receive an auto-response when we receive your submission, but we also try to acknowledge receipt.

Once you've sent me a sample, please allow a minimum of four weeks for a response. If we request a full manuscript, response time could be as long as three months. We wish it could be otherwise, but we can only promise to get back to you as quickly as we can.

We hate to be a hard-nose, but not following these guidelines will result in your query and/or your sample going unread. Yes, we realize we may end up missing out on the next Stephen King, but we have to know you're prepared to work with us. So, yes, this is a test.

Zumaya is a growing company with a reputation for publishing high-quality fiction and nonfiction. We distribute through Ingram and several other well-respected companies, and do all we can to accommodate booksellers without compromising our first commitment, which is to our authors and the environment.

What we are **not** is a poor-man's subsidy press that will prepare your manuscript for publication according to *your* dictates. Our contract specifically states final decisions regarding acceptability of

manuscript, title and cover art are ours. We will consider your suggestions, but we've been doing this long enough to know what works and what doesn't. Again, if your goal is self-publishing, our Blue Iris Author Services is ready to help.

The publishing business is in a state of flux. Zumaya has been developing a business model that utilizes the new technologies mainstream publishing is now scrambling to adapt to for the last decade. We consider ourselves to be in the forefront of 21st-century publishing. If security is your goal, you're likely better off submitting to the mainstream.

One last thing. If you're in a hurry to have that book in your hand, literally or virtually, be aware that we sign for publication at least a full year in advance. That is, we will contract a book in the current year for at least one year and possibly two in the future. Like any other business, we need to plan ahead, and in this business that means knowing what manuscript you have queued so you can develop marketing well in advance of publication and have sufficient time for preproduction.

Good books, like other forms of great art, take time. Ours are essentially custom-made, and we prefer to take the time needed to create something both you and we can be proud of.

Manuscript Formatting Guidelines

I'll repeat the formatting guidelines as a reminder:

1. Word and iWork Pages formats are acceptable. Please don't send a PDF. In a pinch we'll also accept ODT (Open Office format).
2. Remove headers, footers and page numbers. Begin chapters at the top of the page.
3. Use hard page breaks to separate chapters not returns. In other words, use Insert Page Break instead of hitting the enter key till you're on the next page.
4. Place your name and the title in the upper left of the first page of the sample/manuscript. This should be followed by a short synopsis. Send the title page as a separate document; include your name, your pen name (if any), title, word count, mailing address, street address (if different from mailing), telephone and email. If you've already sent the title page with a sample, you needn't send it again with the complete manuscript.
5. The file name of your sample/manuscript should be your real last name and the title of the book. Period. It should be like this: Burton-TheUglyPrincess. If you're sending a sample add -sample. The title page file should have -title added to your name and manuscript title. Given how little time we have to read submissions, wasting some of it changing the name of your file so we know who sent it and which book it is makes us cranky. Also, if we receive a manuscript file with our company name as part of the filename, either in whole or in part, we will assume it has been simultaneously submitted elsewhere and will not read it.
6. Don't use fancy formatting—we review manuscripts on an e-reader so it's all lost on us anyway. Sans serif fonts like Arial, Helvetica and Verdana are the best, but any standard text font will do.
7. Send the files as attachments.

We look forward to reading your work, and will make every effort not to keep you waiting long.

Liz Burton
Executive Editor/Publisher



IMPRINT SPECIFICATIONS

The best way to get a handle on what Zumaya is looking for is to sample what we've already published. Trying to explain what is a very subjective selection process is all but impossible, but a skilled writer should be able to determine what sparks our interest by analyzing what already has.

The following may help a little, if only to make it clear what we aren't interested in.

EMBRACES

Although Zumaya Embraces publishes romance, what we look for might more properly be referred to as women's fiction. We look for quality stories about women, which may take the form of the traditional romance but aren't limited to the standard requirements. We don't want category romance, and we aren't interested in stories riddled with the standard category cliches or shortcuts. As with all Zumaya imprints, diversity is and has been our watchword for as long as the company has been in business. *We do not publish erotica*. That doesn't mean your romance can't contain, for example, elements of BDSM, but only for character development or to advance the story.

OTHER WORLDS

Our Otherworlds schedule is almost always over-full so we're very particular. We look for solid SF without fantasy elements (think *Star Trek* rather than *Star Wars*), epic fantasy that's not yet another rehash of Tolkien or Robert Jordan, and horror that relies on psychological terror rather than slice-and-dice gore. Alternate history is always welcome, provided it shows real knowledge of history, as is post-apocalypse fiction that's positive and shows the triumph of the human spirit in the face of disaster. In other words, realism.

ENIGMA

As we already have several cozy mystery series (or potential series), we're in the market for police procedurals and noir PI more than anything else. We look for reality in our procedurals, which means don't get your information on how law enforcement works by watching TV. The same applies to mysteries with paranormal elements; we expect authors to research the field of paranormal investigation and apply that information.

BOUNDLESS

Our goal at Boundless is to publish LGBT novels with broad market appeal. We don't do erotica per se, but graphic anything—sex, violence, language—is acceptable provided it's essential to the plot. The character's sexual orientation should not be the focus of the work, with the exception of coming-of-age stories or those in which that orientation is a pivotal plot point necessary to establishing the conflict or the conflict resolution. As one of the current Boundless authors put it, these are books with LGBT people rather than about them.

All genres are welcome. We are particularly interested in SF/F, police procedurals, romance, historical and dark fantasy. We are also open to YA and middle-grade material, which may be released under our Thresholds imprint. The specifications noted for the other imprints also apply here.

THRESHOLDS

We want good stories with characters young readers can relate to. We aren't interested in teaching them about anything, except what evolves from the stories. If you set out to write with a particular lesson in mind, please seek publication elsewhere. We also don't follow trends, so knock-offs of *Twilight* or the Harry Potter books need not apply, either.

Science fiction should be based on the same facts as adult SF. Fantasy involving characters who are the savior of their world had better have something seriously original to say. This also applies to lost royalty. Mysteries need to challenge the reader to figure out the puzzle. Historical novels should provide accurate information without being boring.

Much of modern contemporary fiction for young readers focuses on sex, abuse and drugs. These are easy topics to write about. They are also foreign territory for a large number of young people. We challenge writers to find a way to create an interesting story that uses a world where those subjects may intrude, but where they are not the focus, and do so in an original and entertaining manner.

ARCANE

Arcane is our newest imprint, and encompasses both fiction and nonfiction. For nonfiction, we want ghosts, but only material that reflects application of paranormal investigation techniques. In other words, we don't want yet another compilation of folklore and anecdotal tales that lack any vestige of having been investigated.

Fiction submitted for Arcane should be based on actual beliefs and practices. If the characters in a romance are Wiccan the story should have Wiccan ceremonies and beliefs as outlined in the literature, not what passes for it on TV and in the movies. If the protagonist in a paranormal suspense novel is a Voudon priest, then he should behave as such based on actual Voudon practices.

YESTERDAYS

Yesterdays wants historical fiction, including Westerns. We will consider memoirs but *only* those that reflect the writer's experience with a specific era in modern history, c.f. Vallie Fletcher Taylor's *Eyes in the Alley*. We are *not* in the market for recovery memoirs, whether from addiction or abuse, or memoirs of self-discover. Our goal is to preserve world history as experienced by those who lived it. We define history as anything that occurred 30 or more years ago.

The general Zumaya Publications imprint is an eclectic mix of literary fiction and niche nonfiction. There are no specific categories; decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Short story collections that aren't of a single genre are also published under the Zumaya logo.

HOW NOT TO GET PUBLISHED

1. Ignore any of the requirements listed above. Publishers establish guidelines for a reason. That reason has to do with efficient company operations.
2. Send a query that is (a) written entirely in lowercase, (b) contains egregious grammar, spelling and/or punctuation errors. Some leeway will be applied if you're a resident of a foreign country and English is not your native language. However, unless you're a published writer with an established following, it's unlikely we'll be interested in your work.
3. Send a *manuscript* that is full of grammar, spelling, usage and punctuation errors. Contrary to what some aspiring authors seem to believe, it's not the publisher's job to make a silk purse out of their sow's ear. Publishers and editors require a well-written, clean manuscript, which they will then make even better.
4. Send a query that's addressed to "Dear Sir," "Dear Publisher," or someone else's name. That's a dead giveaway you've not read these guidelines or even bothered to do a little research about the company. That's unprofessional.
5. Send a sample or, worse, your entire manuscript before I've requested it.
6. Send me a query by mail. These will be neither read nor returned. Don't waste your money.

7. Send me a query that includes your entire resume. I'm delighted you're a successful attorney/physician/technical writer. If you're sending me a novel, it's irrelevant. It's the book that has to impress me, not your credentials. And all those colleagues who've been saying they can't wait to read your book? Don't count on it.
8. Send me a synopsis that's twelve pages long in the body of your query.
9. Tell me you've exhausted all the real publishing alternatives so you've decided to bite the bullet and offer me the opportunity.
10. Send us your self-published book, apparently in hope we'll take it off your hands and re-publish it. Won't happen. That said, if you're looking for help getting that self-published book out and about, swing by our hybrid arm, [Blue Iris Author Services](#).

Querying a manuscript is no different from applying for any other job. You wouldn't show up for an interview wearing torn jeans and dirty sneakers. At least, you wouldn't if you were serious about getting the position. Nor would you barge into the HR office without an appointment.

You're asking Zumaya to spend time, effort and money turning your manuscript into a book. It behooves you to take the time to ensure that manuscript is something we're likely to want, and to proceed according to the rules we've established to ensure we can give it the proper attention.



