THE QUESTIONS MENU

INSIDE THE BRAIN OF JAN ZUCHOWSKI

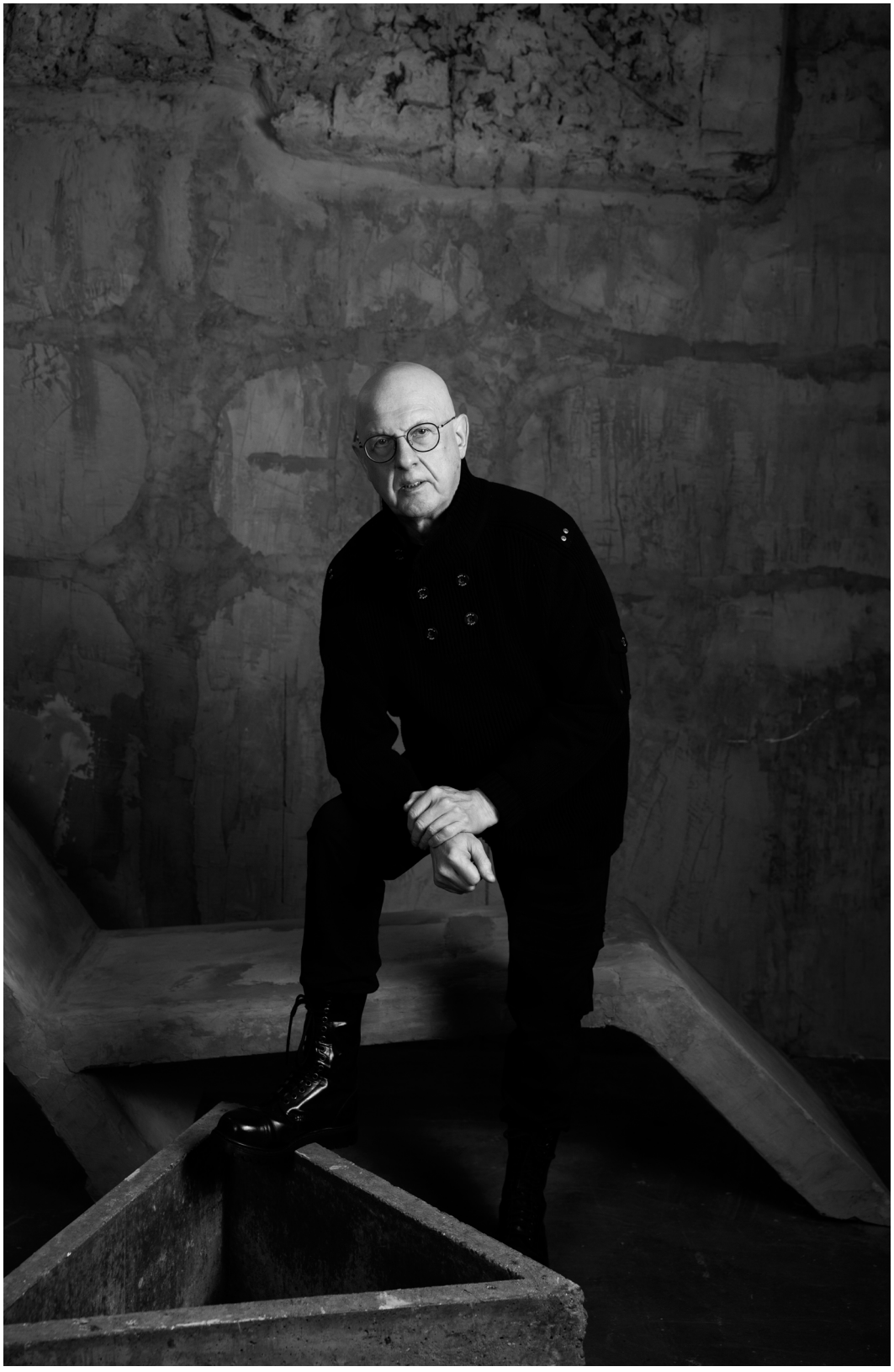


Photo: Oscar May

WHERE SHALL WE BEGIN?

These aren’t questions Jan needs you to ask. They’re places we might choose to begin.

Choose the question that interests you most, and follow what it opens up. Each route offers three starting questions, each with a follow-up for going further. The conversation can move between them, or stay with one idea long enough to discover something unexpected.

01 **THE AFTERLIFE OF A BOOK** 03

Publication, responsibility and the years ahead.

02 **THE READERS WHO ARRIVE LATE** 04

Discovery, relevance and the people still to come.

03 **AI WITHOUT ABDICATION** 05

Resistance, judgement and intellectual ownership.

04 **AUTHORITY WITHOUT PERFORMANCE** 06

Visibility, conviction and the pressure to be a brand.

05 **THE AUTHOR AS HOST** 07

Giving ideas somewhere to live beyond the book.

A FEW LESS PREDICTABLE QUESTIONS 08

01

THE AFTERLIFE OF A BOOK

A publication date is easy to put in a diary. The life of a book is harder to measure.

01.1 Why are you so suspicious of the book launch?

GO FURTHER

What does the excitement of publication make it difficult for an author to see?

01.2 What does a book need from its author five years later?

GO FURTHER

How might that differ from what it needed in its first five weeks?

01.3 If publication is the birth of a book, what does looking after it involve?

GO FURTHER

Where does responsibility end, and the reader’s freedom begin?

02

THE READERS WHO ARRIVE LATE

Some readers meet a book when it appears. Others meet it when their lives make room for it.

02.1 Who is the reader an author’s book hasn’t met yet?

GO FURTHER

What might make the book matter to that person now?

02.2 How do you tell whether a book has lost its relevance or simply lost its visibility?

GO FURTHER

What would you look at before deciding it had run its course?

02.3 Can a book become more useful as it gets older?

GO FURTHER

How can an author recognise that moment and help new readers find it?

03

AI WITHOUT ABDICATION

Jan’s interest in AI began with resistance, a birthday dinner and a question about Vespers in seventeenth-century Venice.

03.1 What happened after that birthday dinner that made you reconsider AI?

GO FURTHER

What changed your mind, and what are you still suspicious of?

03.2 Can AI make an author more original?

GO FURTHER

What would a useful challenge to an author’s thinking actually look like?

03.3 What should an author never hand over to a machine?

GO FURTHER

How can you tell when you’re accepting its judgement instead of exercising your own?

04

AUTHORITY WITHOUT PERFORMANCE

An author can be highly visible and still struggle to make the work matter.

04.1 Do authors really need to become personal brands?

GO FURTHER

What might an author build around the work if that role doesn’t suit them?

04.2 What is the difference between being recognised and being trusted?

GO FURTHER

What earns that trust over time?

04.3 Can an author spend years writing a book and still not know what the book is really about?

GO FURTHER

What becomes possible when they begin to see it differently?

05

THE AUTHOR AS HOST

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

05.1 What do you mean by intellectual hospitality?

GO FURTHER

What would someone experience that made them want to return?

05.2 What kind of conversation do you wish people had more often?

GO FURTHER

How might an author create the conditions for that conversation?

05.3 If a book became the beginning of something, what might that something be?

GO FURTHER

What is the smallest worthwhile step an author could take towards it?

A FEW LESS PREDICTABLE QUESTIONS

What are you trying to protect?

What’s something you believe about books that you can’t quite prove?

What are you still trying to understand?

ONE QUESTION TO LEAVE WITH

What do you hope your book will still be doing in ten years?

And what might you need to do now to give it that chance?

JAN, BRIEFLY

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

He is the creator of Author in Command, a programme helping serious non-fiction authors take responsibility for the continuing life of their books: finding new readers, recognising fresh possibilities and using AI as a thinking partner while retaining their own judgement and voice.

His starting question is simple: you've written the book and published it — what are you going to do with the rest of its life?

© 2026 Jan Zuchowski. All rights reserved.

LET’S HAVE THE CONVERSATION

FOR PODCASTS, INTERVIEWS & CONVERSATIONS

jan.zuchowski@secondactadvisory.com

authorincommand.com/media

© 2026 Jan Zuchowski. All rights reserved.