

# The Books 1

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**The Books** were an American-Dutch duo, formed in [New York City](#) in 1999, consisting of guitarist and vocalist [Nick Zammuto](#) and cellist Paul de Jong. Their releases typically incorporated [samples](#) of obscure sounds and speech.<sup>[1][2]</sup> They released three critically acclaimed albums on the German label [Tomlab](#), and released their fourth studio album, *[The Way Out](#)*, on [Temporary Residence Limited](#) in July 2010.

Zammuto and de Jong first met in [New York City](#) in 1999 as they shared the same apartment building.<sup>[3]</sup> De Jong invited Zammuto to dinner at his apartment, where he played him some of his collection of audio and video samples, including a [Shooby Taylor](#) record.<sup>[4]</sup> Zammuto said of their meeting that "we both kind of knew at that moment that we listened (to music) in interesting ways and had similar approaches to music".<sup>[5]</sup> Soon after, they began playing what they considered [pop music](#), in comparison to their own works, under the name the Books.<sup>[5]</sup>

In 2000, the Books started work their début album *[Thought for Food](#)*.<sup>[6]</sup> Zammuto and de Jong moved often during this time,<sup>[6]</sup> recording in New York, [Los Angeles](#), [Boston](#), and finally in the basement of a hostel in [North Carolina](#) where Zammuto worked for a while after hiking the [Appalachian Trail](#).<sup>[5][7]</sup> *Thought for Food* was released on October 22, 2002.<sup>[8]</sup> Praised by critics for its distinctive sound,<sup>[9]</sup> it featured extensive sampling from obscure sources coupled with mostly acoustic instrumentation.

Shortly after the release of *Thought for Food*, the band relocated to [North Adams, Massachusetts](#), near where Zammuto had graduated from [Williams College](#) in 1999, studying [chemistry](#) and [visual arts](#).<sup>[10]</sup> Zammuto and de Jong began the recording of *[The Lemon of Pink](#)* around this time. Anne Doerner, a guest vocalist on the album, said the process was much more arduous than the recording of *Thought for Food*, with Zammuto working on the album for five straight months.<sup>[5]</sup>

*The Lemon of Pink* was released to critical acclaim<sup>[11]</sup> on October 7, 2003.<sup>[12]</sup> It is similar in style to *Thought for Food*, but oriented more around vocals performed mostly by Anne Doerner.

In 2004, the French [Ministry of Culture](#) asked the Books to compose music for a new elevator in their building. The Books released a [Mini CD](#) of this work in 2006, under the name *[Music for a French Elevator and Other Short Format Oddities by the Books](#)*.<sup>[13]</sup>

On April 5, 2005, the Books released their third studio album, *[Lost and Safe](#)*. Zammuto has a greater vocal presence in this album, and the album was criticized for this change of sound.<sup>[14]</sup> Aside from this, *Lost and Safe* was well received by critics.<sup>[15]</sup> Throughout early 2005, the Books collaborated with the electronica artist [Prefuse 73](#). The Books appear on his album *[Surrounded by Silence](#)* ("Pagina Dos"), and the E.P. *[Prefuse 73 Reads the Books E.P.](#)* collects remixes of material sourced from the Books' albums.

Before starting a three-month<sup>[16]</sup> tour of North America in April 2006, the Books had played only one concert,<sup>[7]</sup> in October 2003 at a festival in [Chicago, Illinois](#).<sup>[17]</sup> Zammuto expressed apprehensiveness towards touring, but says it is necessary to make a living, given his belief that people downloading the Books' music via [file-sharing](#)<sup>[18]</sup> has put him under financial strain.