

# ALPHABET BOOKS



**BERTRAM ROTA SPRING LIST 2008**

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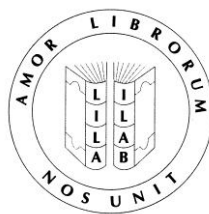
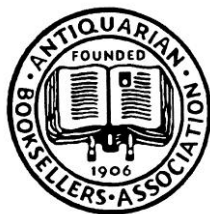
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**V.A.T.** We regret that Value Added Tax must be charged on orders from customers within the European Economic Community for autograph letters and manuscripts (unless they are bound in the form of a book), drawings, prints, photographs, artists' proofs of wood-engravings and engraved wood-blocks.

**WANTS LISTS.** We are pleased to receive lists of books especially wanted. They are given careful attention and quotations are submitted without charge.

**HOURS OF BUSINESS.** We are open from 9.30 to 5.30 from Monday to Friday. Appointment recommended.



Above: Edward's Frog, or *Rana bawdeni bardfieldii*,  
from *An Alphabet in Praise of Frogs & Toads*.  
Overleaf: [Beardsley] *The Keynote Series — The Key Monograms*



*6-line Wood Letter Alphabets*

**The Alembic Press**

*6-line Wood Letter Alphabets: Old Style Italic; Playbill; Round Serif; Sans Condensed; Winchester; Sans Bold Italic.*

Marcham, 1995-1997. First Edition. Six Volumes. Miniature. One of a limited edition limited to 100 copies.

Hand-sewn into colourful printed wrappers. Fine copy in marbled paper slipcase.

£35

An alphabet six times over, as each volume and wood type alphabet covers a different branch of typographic history: Type Designers; Type Faces; Typefounders; Typographic Words; Type Casting and Parts of the Press. A very attractive set.



*24-line Antique Bold Alphabet*

**The Alembic Press**

*24-line Antique Bold Alphabet*

Marcham, 2003. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 40 numbered copies. Slim landscape, 10.5 cm x 25 cm. Printed wrappers bound in Japanese stab binding. Fine copy.

£22

## Alphabox Press

Adler (Jeremy)

*The Electric Alphabet / Elekrika Abeceda*

Notes towards a Dictionary of the Universe; Czech translation by Eva Adler. Twenty-seven signed etchings by Jiri Sindler. 1996. First Edition. Square 8vo. One of an edition of sixty copies, signed by author and artist. Each definition is presented on a loose, thrice-folded sheet; the collection is enclosed in Ingres wrappers held in a canvas covered slipcase.

£75

Definitions from 'Alphabet' to 'Zero' among which 'History is a glamorous footnote to infinity...'

## [Beardsley (Aubrey)]

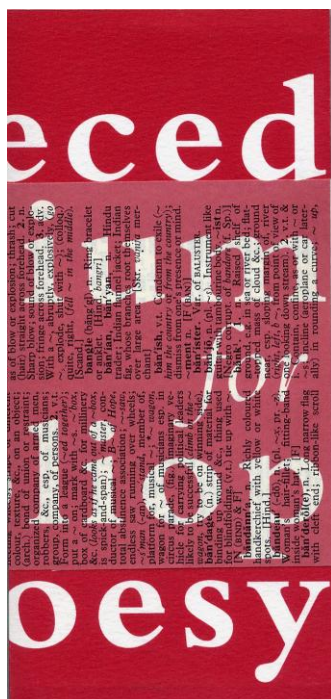
*The Keynote Series – The Key Monograms*

Proof pulls on three sheets (each approx. 11 inches by 9 inches) of 'Japanese vellum' of sixteen of the ornamental key monograms that appeared as part of the binding designs of John Lane's Keynote Series, described by Michael Sadleir as "the most elegant fiction series of the nineteenth century." In a very nice state, with some pencil and crayon markings, not affecting the images (See Cover Illustration).

£150

The Keynote Series comprised thirty-three titles in all, twenty-two of which have binding designs that can be reasonably attributed to Beardsley, though not necessarily each of the key monograms employed in those designs. In his *Selective Checklist of the Published Works of Aubrey Beardsley* (1995), Mark Samuels Lasner describes the twenty-two volumes with the caveat "it seems best to take a conservative approach in attributing the key monograms". These pulls may have been made during the preparation of the revised editions of *The Early Work of Aubrey Beardsley* and *The Later Work of Aubrey Beardsley* (both 1912), when there was a considerable rearrangement of plates between the two volumes.

The sixteen monograms here include those for George Egerton, Florence Farr, Ella D'Arcy, Arthur Machen, Henry Harland, Evelyn Sharp, Gertrude Dix, Netta Syrett and Fiona MacLeod.



## Bush (Melanie)

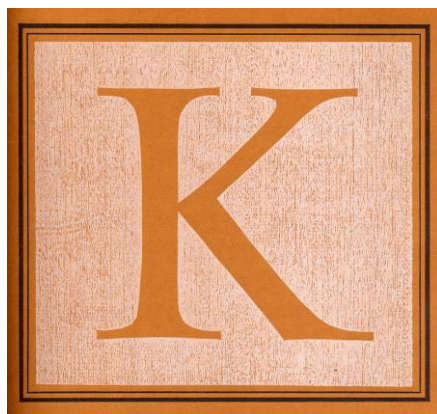
*Abecedarium for Bibliopoesy*

Privately printed by the artist, Northampton, 2007. First Edition.

This is an early, numbered copy, from an open edition which is estimated to have been limited to 80 copies. 12mo. Printed wrappers with dictionary collage. Fine copy.

An elegant 40-page specialised reference dictionary containing many words which a bibliophile will find both delightful and useful, from 'addendum' and 'adversaria' to 'zeugma'.

£15



*Carter's Caps*

**Carter (Will)**

*Carter's Caps; an alphabet of capital letters cut by Will Carter and printed from the wood with commentary.*

Rampant Lions Press, Cambridge, 1982. First Edition. Landscape 8vo. Printed wrappers. Fine copy. £15

A particularly elegant production, printed on a rust-coloured orange Ingres. The blocks on which the letters are carved are lightly brushed with white ink, and the resulting texture of the grain gives a very pleasing appearance. Carter's short introduction is printed in Octavian, the typeface that he collaborated on with David Kindersley.



*Little But Often*

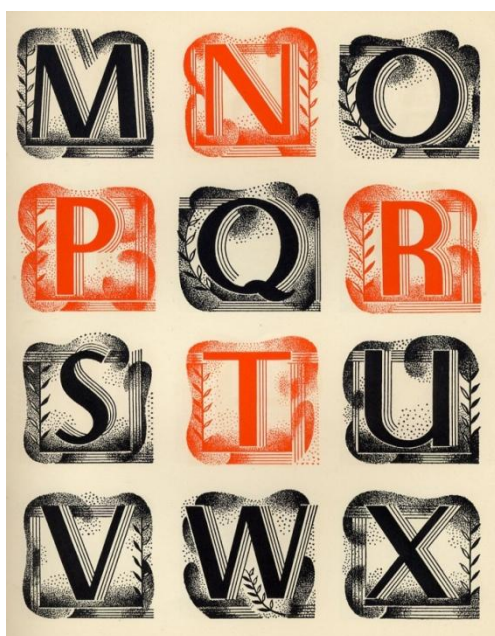
**Circle Press**

Price (Richard) and King (Ronald)

*Little But Often*

Bosham, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 350 copies, signed by the author and designer. 8vo, 3 metres at full extension. Accordion binding between decorated boards, preserved in clear plastic box. Fine copy. £60

Acid-free Heritage Bookwhite paper is printed in scarlet, then die-cut with letters reminiscent of King's famous pop-up alphabet. The new 'concertina miniscule' is, according to King, "in a sense a 'reply' in lower case form to the ... original 'cap' version published in 1983". The book is an intimate object, wholly appropriate to its narrative: as the alphabet moves from A to Z, a relationship is charted from beginning to end in Price's elegant poetics.



*Signature*

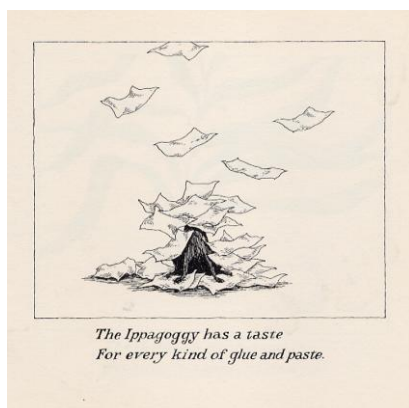
**Freedman (Barnett)**

Simon (Oliver) (Ed.)

*Signature; A Quadrimetrial of Typography and the Graphic Arts*

Extensively Illustrated. 1935. First Edition. Printed at The Curwen Press. 4to. Printed wrappers. A nice copy, despite slight foxing to margins and fore-edge in places, not affecting illustrations or text. £120

The first issue of the celebrated typographic journal, and one of the scarcest. This issue was graced with an eight-page two-colour inset of an alphabet by Freedman, the 'Baynard Claudia' initials commissioned for the Baynard Press. The issue is, of course, replete with other delights, including a selection of wood engravings by Eric Ravilious and collotype reproductions of drawings by Edward Bawden and Graham Sutherland.



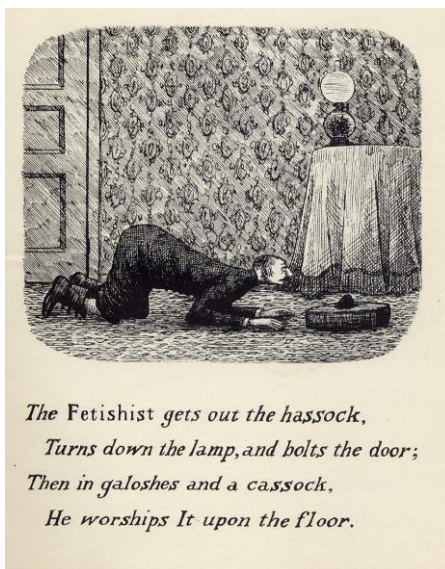
*The Utter Zoo Alphabet*

**Gorey (Edward)**

*The Utter Zoo Alphabet*

Hawthorn Books Inc, New York, 1967. First Edition, Third Printing. 8vo. Pictorial boards, Fine copy. £17

A delightful assortment of chimera, worthy of Gorey's literary forebear Edward Lear, stumble and tiptoe through this abecedarium.



*The Gorey Alphabet*

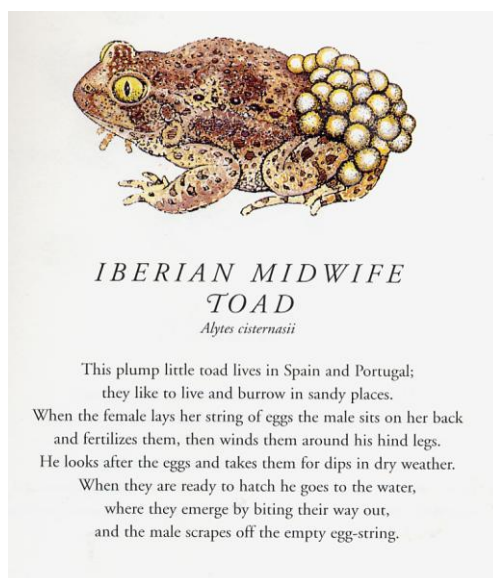
**Gorey (Edward)**

*The Gorey Alphabet*

Constable, 1960. First Edition. Despite slight fading to the spine, this is a very nice copy.

£20

Gorey's variation on a theme of The Beggarstaff's *Alphabet of London Types*.



*Inky Parrot Press*

**Inky Parrot Press**

*An Alphabet in Praise of Frogs & Toads*

Foreword by Len Deighton; afterword by Olive Cook. Illustrated by the author with water-colours and linocuts Church Hanborough, 2002. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 360 copies, numbered and signed by the artist. Typeset in Garamond by Charles Hall in Cornwall and printed litho by Adrian Lack at The Senecio Press in Charlbury on Arches Rivoli paper. Printed boards and endpapers. Square 8vo. One small dent in upper gutter otherwise a fine copy.

£68

The illustrations to this delightful volume, many of them in colour, show a naturalist's enthusiasm for evolutionary variety. Short scientific anecdotes accompanying the main illustrations lay bare some unusual facts about the world of amphibians, and occasionally scientific terminology is used to resolve the problem of awkward letters, for example the 'Unken reflex' which is the defensive posture of the fire-bellied toad. Our fascination with what Cook describes as 'these utterly convincing masterworks of portraiture' is all the more intent as many of the creatures have become extinct in the few years since publication.



*Anne to Zoe: an alphabet of girl's names*

**Inky Parrot Press**

Harrison (Michael)

*Anne to Zoe: an alphabet of girl's names*

Illustrations by Annie Newnham. Church Hanborough, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 136 numbered copies, signed by the author and artist. 8vo. Text set in twenty-seven different typefaces by Charles Hall (one for each letter of the alphabet and preliminaries). Laser printed on Zerkall paper, bound in bright pink wrappers with decorative endpapers. Fine copy. £46

Annie Newnham's lively and colourful illustrations depict women in a variety of characteristic postures and poses. The text traces the history or mythological origins of each name, and gives a witty commentary on its current fashion.



*Root Words – an alphabetic exploration*

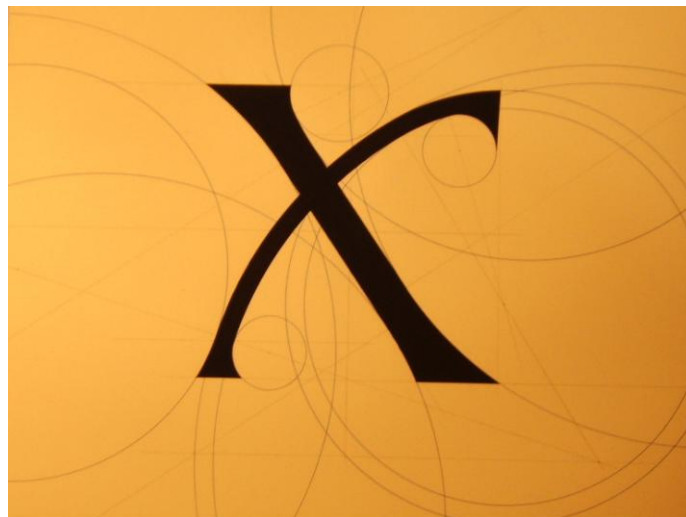
**Land Marks Press**

Avadenka (Lynne) and Zakariya (Mohamed)

*Root Words – an alphabetic exploration*

Michigan, 2001. First Edition. One of an edition of fifty, signed by the artists. Landscape 4to. Seven significant words are hand-lettered in Arabic and Hebrew and printed from polymer plates onto Gampi Torinoko and Hanga-shi. These are accompanied by English translations and epigrams exploring the nature of language printed letterpress in Garamond and Trajan, and eight dynamic lithographs in which expressive calligraphic shapes are laid over traditional rubrics and manuscript motifs. The combination of codex and concertina bindings unfolds to 77 inches at its full extension. Fine copy. £1,500

Alongside Avadenka's prints and the central calligraphic representations, a seven-page text explores the symbiotic development of the two Semitic alphabets. The text "demonstrates generosity of scholarly spirit, cultural intelligence and an eloquent lyrical style." (Joel Lipman, *Letter Arts Review*, 18.1).



*Eclectic Geometric*

### **Maret (Russell)**

*Eclectic Geometric; twenty-six letters rendered with compass and straightedge*  
New York, 2002

One of an edition limited to eight copies, numbered and signed by the author. Folio. The required points and intersections for each letter's construction are hand-drawn in pencil on Fabriano Artistic, with the component circles in blue liquid watercolour. The letters are outlined in India ink and hand-painted in black gouache. Text printed letterpress in a digital version of Monotype Fournier. In total the work comprises twenty-eight unbound sheets, enclosed in cloth drop-back box with printed paper label. £4,500

Witty and accomplished, this tribute to Nicolette Gray is a modern typographic masterpiece. In a series of 26 hand-drawn plates, Maret proves that the letters of a geometric alphabet need not 'lack movement and resist the human desire to animate them into words.' Quoting W.H. Auden's definition of a community, Maret views the alphabet as an entity of diverse voices, and therefore employs a rich repertoire of geometric practices on the letter designs in this portfolio: 'Eclectic Geometric is not intended to be a functional alphabet, but rather a gathering of twenty-six Roman majuscules, each of which is allowed to proclaim what it will.'



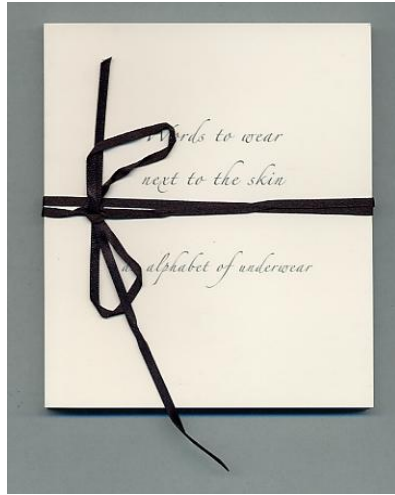
*An A to Z Treasure Hunt*

### **Melvin (Alice)**

*An A to Z Treasure Hunt*

Don't Shoot The Messenger, Edinburgh, 2005. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 18 copies signed and numbered by the artist. Square 8vo. Fifty-three accordion bound pages with silkscreen illustrations enclosed by boards hand-decorated to emulate a treasure chest. Fine copy. £350

Melvin's work is inspired by an appreciation of the small details of life. Her love of systems is also apparent in this alphabet book, a tour de force which features semaphore, currency and playing cards. While invitations to the reader to customise each page with their own found objects wittily echo the inclusive practise of many children's books, this work would not be ashamed to sit on the shelves of adult lovers of fine illustration and innovative book design.



*Words to wear next to the skin*

**Pelinore Press**

Richardson (Meg)

*Words to wear next to the skin; an alphabet of underwear.*

Illustrated throughout. Banbury, 2006. First Edition. One of an edition of 450, signed and numbered by the artist. 10.5 cm x 12.5 cm. Zapfino text printed offset litho in subtle green shades on alternating pages of opaque and translucent Advocate archival paper. Perfect bound with cream card cover, black ribbon ties. 128 pages. Illustrated with photographs of underwear, each letter of the alphabet being noted by a selection of words relating to lingerie and the body. Fine copy. £20

Also available in commissioned hand-bindings by the artist - please contact us for further details.

**Tallone (Alberto)**

*Manuale tipografico*

Torino, 2005. First Edition. Of an edition of 395, this is one of 120 copies on Magnani Avorio with 12 original frontispieces and signatures (from Tallone publications including Hamlet, Leopardi's Canti, and Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ) tipped or sewn into pages of grey Fabriano. Large 4to. £200

Primarily a discourse on the typographic art of using titling faces, the volume comprises essays by Maurizio Pallante and Luigi Balsamo, and an extract from a text by Tallone himself. The sample pages are followed by fifty full-page arrangements of display alphabets composed for this volume, including examples of Greek and Hebrew type, Roman numerals, and a variety of Caslon and Garamond faces.

**Whittington Press**

*An Acrobatic Alphabet*

Andoversford, 1986. Illustrated with wood-engravings by Barbara Crow. One of 35 special signed copies from an edition of 335, for which the engravings were hand-coloured by Sylvia Stokeld. Full silk, with portfolio pocket at rear containing signed proofs of the 26 engravings. A very nice copy in slipcase. £345

**Whittington Press**

Weissenborn (Hellmuth)

*Picture Alphabet*

The Acorn Press and The Whittington Press, 1975. First Edition. One of an edition of 60 copies numbered and signed by the artist. 4to. Oriental binding in paper-covered boards. A very nice copy in slipcase, bookplate on front pastedown. Contains 28 linocuts by Hellmuth Weissenborn, 26 of which are printed in two colours.

£380



*Alphabetic*

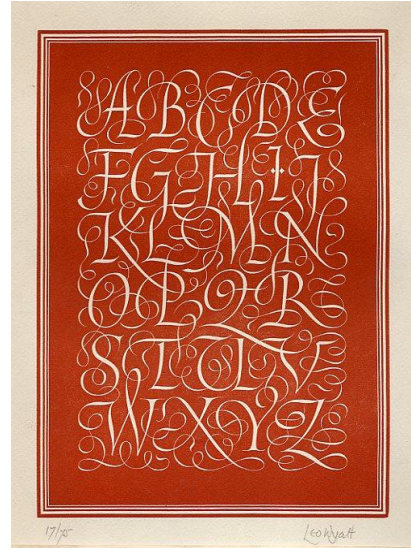
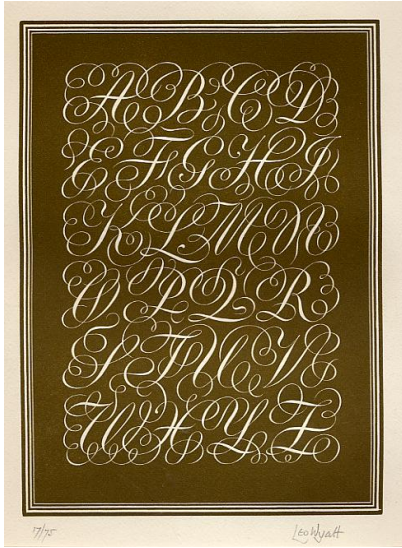
**Wood (Dave)**

*Alphabetic*

Queensland, Australia, 2006. Unique work. 8vo. The signatures are sewn in an open codex binding. Boards, collaged with a graphic title, are covered in vellum and long stitch binding on leather thongs. Fine copy in cloth clamshell box. £3,500

The artist states that the project evolved into ‘a graphic statement of historic content although I did have fun at times running off into whimsical textual byways.’ Colourful and inspired, each page displays a knowledge of not only calligraphy but traditions of letter carving and typography in general, with reference to Edward Johnson, Kelmescott, Palatino, the Rosetta Stone and many other topics. Predominantly executed in calligrapher’s ink, with gilding and collage elements in places, it is a virtuosic mix of styles from Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian to a more contemporary freeform hand. Occasional production faults perhaps serve to highlight the ambitious nature of the undertaking, but do not lessen its impact.

Also available in the trade version at £450. Please enquire for details.

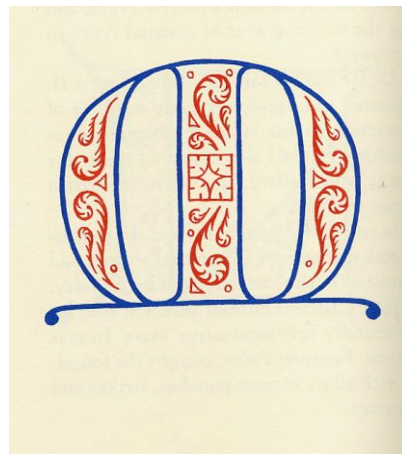


**Wyatt (Leo)**

*Two engraved display alphabets*

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, c.1970s. Two engravings from an edition of 75 numbered and signed by the artist in pencil. The engravings originally formed part of a loose portfolio of prints, printed at the artist's Newcastle studio, which featured alphabets and maxims (for illustration see previous page).

£50 per print (We regret that we must charge VAT on orders from within the EU)



*Printer's Abecedarium*

**Yale University Press**

McCrillis (John O.C.)

*Printer's Abecedarium*

Introduction by Dale Roylance. The Bodley Head, 1975. First Edition. Slim 4to. Text hand-set in 18-pt Inkunambula and printed by The Meriden Gravure Company on Mohawk Superfine. Blue cloth, title gilt on spine. Fine copy. £5

An alphabet book designed by John O.C. McCrillis, senior designer and typographer of the Yale University Press. The two-colour alphabet initials printed on the verso are taken from Gutenberg's "Catholicon", freely adapted by McCrillis, and on the recto are printed concise biographies of the greatest printers from Aldus to Zainer.