

BERTRAM ROTA LTD

ARTISTS' BOOKS



Summer 2008

Bertram Rota Ltd

31 LONG ACRE

COVENT GARDEN, LONDON WC2E 9LT

Telephone: + 44 (0) 20 7836 0723 * Fax: + 44 (0) 20 7497 9058

E-mail: bertramrota@compuserve.com

www.bertramrota.co.uk

TERMS OF BUSINESS. The items in this catalogue are offered at net sterling prices, for cash upon receipt. Charges for postage and packing will be added. Dollar equivalents at the current rate of exchange may be shown on accounts for the convenience of customers in the U.S.A. All books are insured in transit.

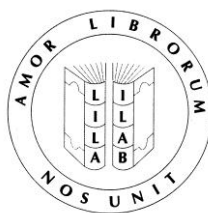
PAYMENT. Payment from abroad may be made by Money Order, Banker's Draft, personal dollar cheque or Giro. Our Girobank account number is 58 423 4201.

We also accept payment by BARCLAYCARD/VISA and MASTERCARD/EUROCARD/SWITCH. To make use of this facility please quote the number, date of expiry and three digit security number of your card, as well as your name and address.

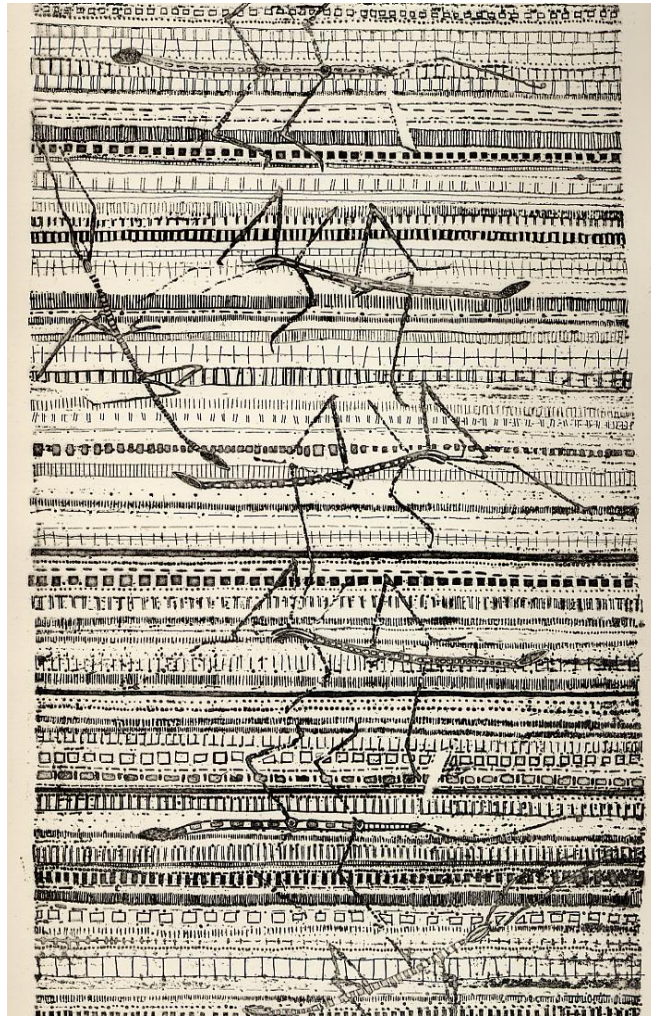
V.A.T. We regret that Value Added Tax must be charged on orders from customers within the European Economic Community for autograph letters and manuscripts (unless they are bound in the form of a book), drawings, prints, photographs, artists' proofs of wood-engravings and engraved wood-blocks.

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.



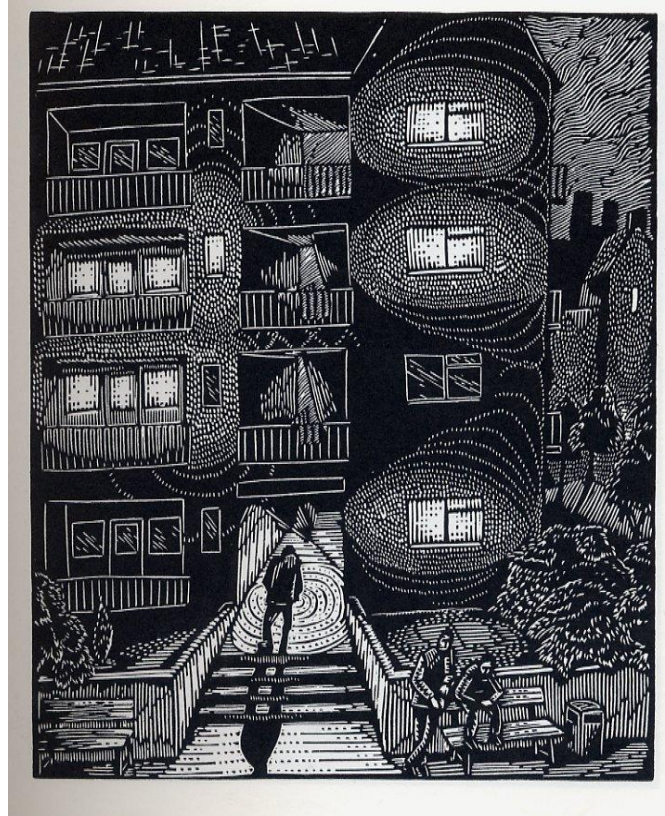
Cover Illustration: Verdigris Press *12 O' Clock News*



Antmothbeetlemillipedespider

Bonnell (Mandy) and Gbadamosi (Gabriel). *Antmothbeetlemillipedespider*. EMH Publications, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to twenty copies signed by the artist. 34 cm x 34 cm. Quarter leather with digital print and collage decorated boards, and digital printed endpapers designed by the artist; 22 page concertina structure, hand printed etching with collage; text printed letterpress on Fabriano Artistico paper by Graham Bignell of New North Press, London. Bound by Elizabeth Neville, enclosed in light sage card slipcase. Fine copy. £1,500

The poems reference insects that can be found on the island of Lamu in Kenya. At first glance the intricate etchings form abstract patterns - spots, coils and strips in varying hues of blacks, greys and silver - but the lingering eye recognises the sensuous curls of millipede stripes, paisley beetles and camouflaged stick insects. 'Bonnell's re-workings of her original drawings bear reference both to Robert Hooke's *The Micrographia* and 1950s pattern making, while the abstract cover design is inspired by the richly decorative Kangas worn by Kenyan women. The joy of the book lies in the combinations of different printing techniques, with the insects rendered in etched line and aquatinted tone and texture. Very fine details are added by hand: 'a fragment of transparent collage to show a stick-insect's wing, or a hand-drawn silver line to trace the progress of a slug across the page spread.' (Emma Hill, *Printmaking Today*, Spring 2007).



The Cycle

Bousfield (Neil). *The Cycle*. Inky Fingers Press, Stonehouse, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to twelve copies signed and numbered by the artist. 4to. Printed by hand from the original blocks on Zerkall mould-made, with introductory text in Plantin; decorative end-papers and chapter headings intercept the different stages of the narrative. Bound in maroon buckram with yellow printed dust-wrapper. Fine copy. £1,250

Bousfield's 'novel in woodcuts' contains over two hundred engravings. 'The Cycle' refers to the pattern of social exclusion repeated through different generations in a family. The book's narrative follows two boys who repeat their father's example of crime and alcoholism to escape their own difficult reality, until an event occurs which enables one son to break free. Bousfield's strong white-line work is direct and challenging, and yet his treatment of subject matter is sensitive, detailed and deeply moving.



New World Suite Number Three

Bringhurst (Robert). *New World Suite Number Three; a poem in four movements for three voices.* Afterword by the author outlining his approach to polyphonic poetry. The Center for Book Arts, New York, 2006. First Edition. One of an edition of seventy-five copies signed by Robert Bringhurst, Hedi Kyle, and Richard Minsky. Three volumes. Folio. Printed letterpress in hand-set display type and 'Monotype' Dante, arranged by Barbara Henry to Robert Bringhurst's specifications. Binding structure designed by Hedi Kyle, each volume forming its own lectern when open. Fine copy. £1,000

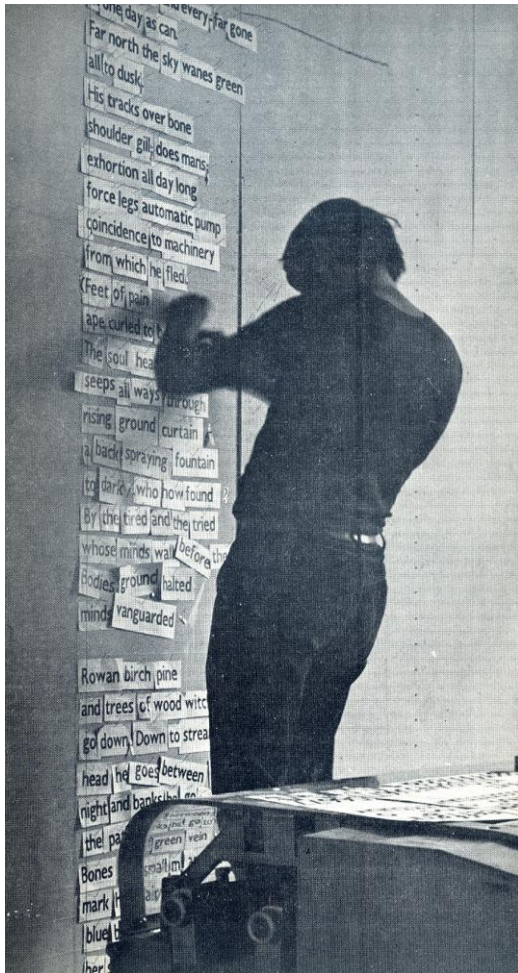
In his afterword, Bringhurst, a revered poet and book designer, and author of *The Elements of Typographic Style*, states that 'the printed text should be as fine as it can be, but it should never be the final incarnation. A book must be a place where things begin.' This innovative interdisciplinary work is a poem for three voices, to be read simultaneously, and its incarnation involves not only literature, but graphic design, fine binding and performance. The volumes are also available in a specially commissioned box, at a cost of £1,250.



Alphabetica

Calligraphy. Wood (Dave). *Alphabetica*. Queensland, Australia, 2006. First Edition. 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 master calligrapher's remarkable project has been much acclaimed. 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, Kelmscott, 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.

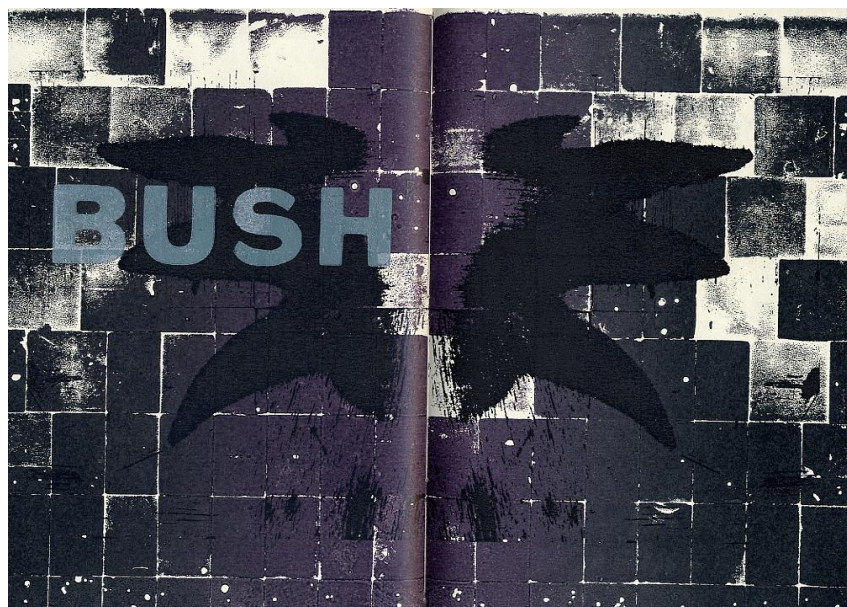


Campbell (Ken)

Terror, Terror.

Privately printed, 1977. First Edition. Unnumbered limited edition, signed and dated by the artist. Pictorial wrappers, double-folded either side of 'perfect' binding. Scarlet endpapers. 78 pages, bound in with an external oriental fold throughout. Text printed letterpress using sans serif wood type, the individual words pinned to a wall and photographed at varying angles both during the act of assembly and after completion, the resulting images printed offset (in black-and-white) on an office rotary press by Dennis Marriner. Fine copy. £500

In this early work Ken Campbell explores the ambiguity of the page, the process of revealing and then concealing words which is continued through much of his subsequent work. At first the book in its naked binding appears to lay bare the act of creation, through an assemblage of photographs which reveal the artist in the studio, the proof press on which the words were created, colour sensitivity charts, as well as the text itself. Yet the ambivalent structure of the book, the distortion of the image by overlay and over-exposure, and the 'broken poetics' of the text, gesture towards the complexities - and terror - implicit in the act of reading.



'sWings 'sWings

Campbell (Ken). *'sWings 'sWings*. 1999. First Edition. Artist's Proof from an edition of 30 copies. Black laser-printed images overprinted with polychrome letterpress. Bound using a cloth adaption by Charles Gledhill of the seventeenth-century limp vellum form and wrapped in a folded black cloth. 64 pages. Fine copy. £500

Dark laser-printed images of wings are overprinted with a chant to the fire god Agni in strong sans serif wood type and an abstract block design composed using printer's furniture. The text records the spread of a forest fire by the flight of 'birds aflame'. The book is an experiment in extending the lifespan of the newer technology, arresting it within the tested (and enduring) traditional inks and book structure. Will the images in the book mutate over time, the dark becoming lighter and the light, dark?

Campbell (Ken). *PANTHEON*. 2000. First Edition. One of an edition limited to forty-five copies, signed and numbered by the artist. Folio. Printed letterpress in numerous colours from composing room materials, woodblocks, zinc and polymer plates; images derived from photographs by Esther May Campbell, the artist's daughter. Japanese sewn binding with alum-tawed calf. Fine copy in cloth drop-back box. £4,500

This volume is a meditation on the art of illumination, a portrait of the artist from within. The primary images are taken from the classical architecture of the Pantheon - in particular the 'oculus' in its domed roof through which sunlight makes its way into the interior - which are overlaid with photographs of the artist and texts in a variety of colours and typefaces. The layout of each page is structured within a continually shifting square frame composed of printer's blocks which references the grid-like routes of Roman pavements and the wanderings of the mind. A monumental achievement from an artist known for his intellectually rigorous and physically compelling work.



DOMINION

Campbell (Ken). *DOMINION*. 2002. First Edition. One of five artist's proofs produced alongside an edition of thirty books, signed and numbered by the artist. Folio. Printed letterpress on Zerkall. Bound in full reversed goatskin in wraparound holding case with handmade flax endpapers, contained within black felt wrap. Fine copy. £3,500

In Ken Campbell's latest work, the subtle gradations in ink tone and variations on a theme of abstract geometric shapes (printed from the relief forms of a set-square, rule and printer's furniture) testify to the work of an artist at the peak of his powers. *DOMINION* uses the division of the page as a metaphor for the surveying of land by exiles and emigrants. This visual narrative is accompanied by texts progressing from a European sensibility to that of the American West. The geometric structures are intended to reflect the surveying and mapping of the American Midwest, but also suggest more internal, psychological explorations. The whole is a monumental addition to the Campbell canon.



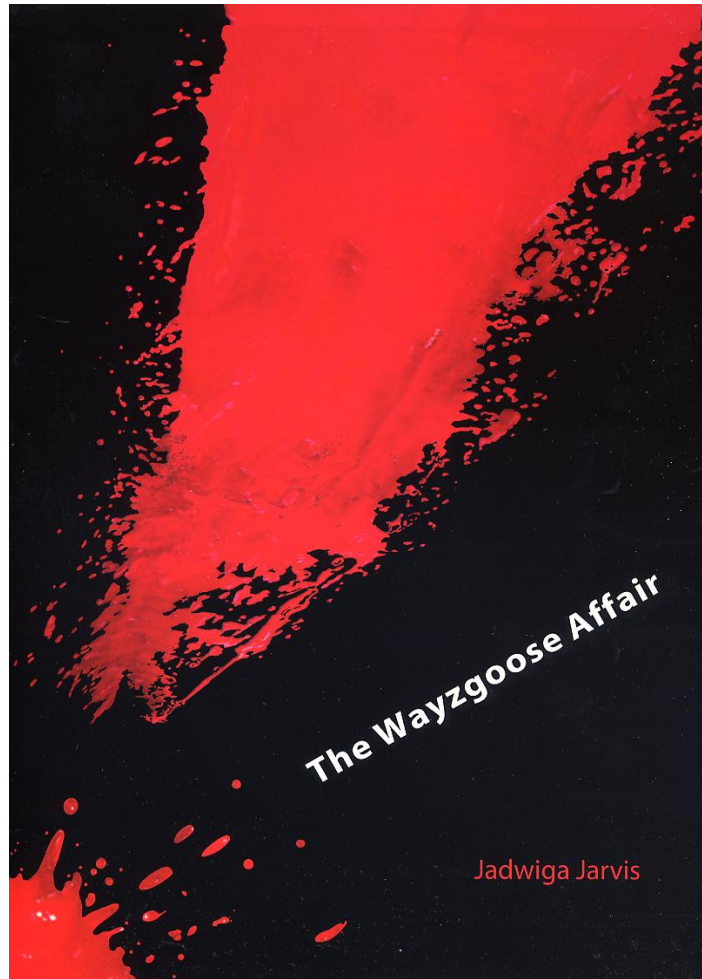
Submerged

Curtis (Clare). *Submerged*. Illustrated. Privately Printed, Felixstowe, 2003. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 60 copies, signed and numbered by the artist. Square 8vo. Printed black card wrappers with printed dust-wrapper. Text printed on Zerkall in Stephenson Blake Granby. Illustrations printed from wood blocks. Fine copy. £150

This book was made in response to the fiftieth anniversary of the floods that devastated the East Coast in 1953 - Britain's worst peacetime disaster. The narrative follows a week's events, charting meteorological reports and the shipping forecast, in varying hues of black to buff type. The full-page illustrations chart the intensifying effect of the rising waters on the domestic scene. Their slow, and fatal, encroachment is mirrored by sinuous lines printed on faux Japanese tissue which interleave each page, and also function as a dust-sheet for the illustrations.

Farrer (Julia). Rudolf (Anthony). *Mandorla*. Ki Press, 2006. First Edition. Of an edition of 25 copies, this is one of five deluxe copies. Folio. Etchings printed by the artist on Moulin de Gue paper; accompanied by letterpress printed text. Nine loose sections contained in quarter vellum chemise, blind stamped to upper cover, held within cloth drop-back box. Additional signed drawing enclosed in paper sleeve. Printed by Phil Abel at Hand & Eye Press, and bound by Charles Gledhill. Fine copy. £2,500

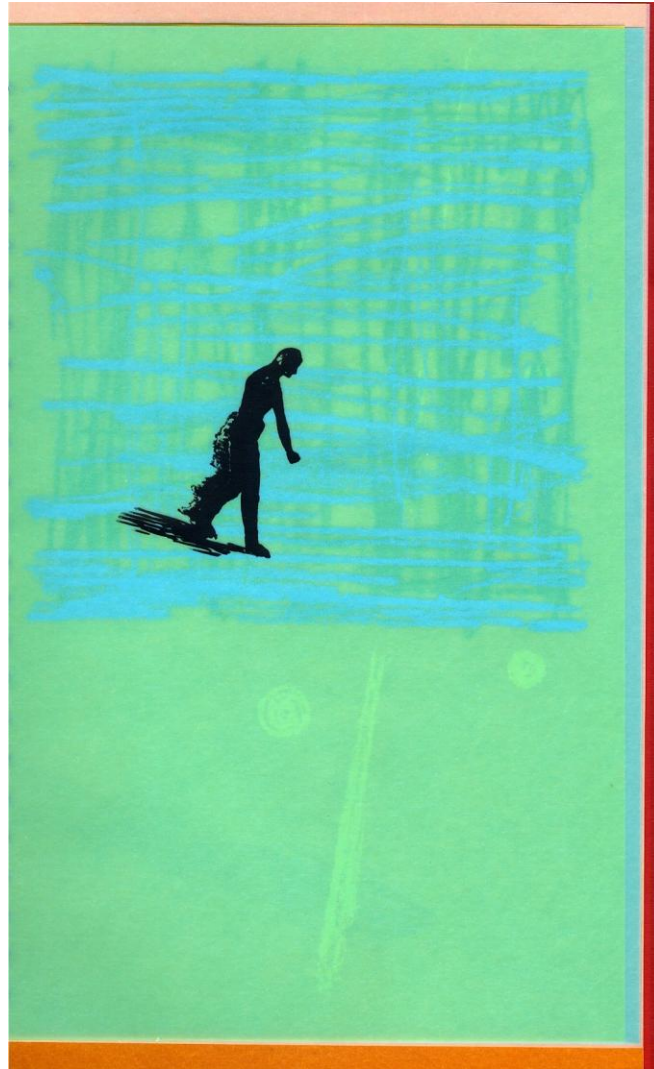
The collection of poems was written in response to a selection of Farrer's sketches in 1993. After a long gestation and multiple variations the book was finally completed in 2006. 'Mandorla' (meaning 'almond' in Italian) is the shape formed by the overlapping of two circles and is known as a liminal, or threshold, shape. The images in the book are formed by the overlapping of geometric forms and are pointed to the centre of the page thus linking one poem to the next. The volume is a graceful meditation on the threshold between literary and visual ideas; the sharp prints achieve astonishing subtleties of tone and impression. The work is also available in the standard edition, with a variant binding and without the original drawing, at £1,950.



The Wayzgoose Affair

Jarvis (Jadwiga) and Hudson (Mike). *The Wayzgoose Affair*. Profusely illustrated in colour throughout. The Wayzgoose Press, Katoomba, Australia, 2007. First Edition. Large 4to. Full cloth. Fine copy in dust-wrapper. £150

A biography as much as a bibliography of the Press' productions over twenty years, this book is an enthralling account of the author's passion for printing. The Wayzgoose Press has consistently adopted a *sui generis* style of workmanship from its vantage-point of Australian isolation, and yet maintained close links with practitioners, librarians and collectors throughout the world. Such universality makes this publication, which quotes abundantly from letters and associated literature, a reflection of the preoccupations of the contemporary printing community, and the book would be an essential component of any library concerned with the second wave of the Private Press movement.



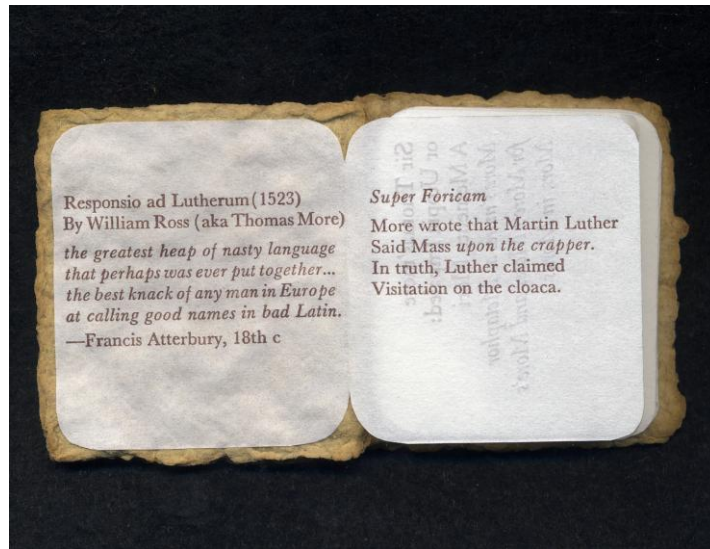
Kos (Helga). *Ode aan de Kolossale Zon/Ode to the Colossal Sun.* Last Poems of Wallace Stevens. Typography and creative editing by Josje Pollman. Dutch translation by Meino Zeelemaker. Amsterdam, 2001-2003. One of a limited edition of 288 copies, signed by the artist. Large 4to. Three volumes, each bound in stiff card wrappers, comprise 150 pages of graphic works by Helga Kos, printed at the Rijksakademie van Beelende Kunst. The book was created in response to the work 'Last Poems of Wallace Stevens' by the contemporary American composer Ned Rorem. A CD of the song cycle, performed by the Dutch chamber group Wendingen, forms part of Volume I. Wallace Stevens acknowledged that his work was open to influences from both the visual and musical fields. Helga Kos explains her production as 'a third, visual stratum to Steven's poems and Rorem's music.' Stevens' interest in typography and the design and materials of his books makes a new edition of his poems a highly appropriate objective for this talented printmaker. Fine copy. £1,000
'One experiences a book not at one glance but by leafing through it... My intention with this book is that the pages should not be separate graphic sheets, but acquire their meaning in relation to each other. The image changes by turning the pages. After-image and transparency play an important part in this.... 'Smut' and 'show-through,' traditionally a printer's nightmare, were consciously sought techniques.'



Of Woodland Pools

Lone Oak Press. Thoreau (H. D.). *Of Woodland Pools, Spring-Holes and Ditches. Excerpts from the journal of Henry David Thoreau.* With engravings by Abigail Rorer and an introduction by Bradley P. Dean. Massachusetts, 2005. One of an edition of seventy copies. Oblong 4to. Quarter morocco with hand-made marbled paper boards, contained within a clamshell case. Fine copy. £950

Thoreau's eloquent descriptions of the ephemeral springtime wetlands of New England and the many species which thrive therein are accompanied by twenty-eight engravings, some with hand-colouring, which represent a phenomenal achievement on the part of the artist.



Sir Thomas'more or Utopia Impaled

Lorenz (Angela). *Sir Thomas'more or Utopia Impaled: A Memento Mori More's'mores as Metaphor for More's Mores and More's Mors, in Morus.* Bologna, Italy, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to 26 numbered copies signed by the artist. Box: various dimensions. Book: 6 cm x 6 cm. Text letterpress printed on 16-page concertina of mulberry paper by Wolfe Editions in Portland, Maine. Marshmallow and graham crackers made with cotton pulp from Israel. Presented in cardboard replica of chocolate box with brass wire handle. Fine copy. £650

Angela Lorenz's latest work is a tribute to Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), a lawyer, writer, practising orator and trained grammarian. Her research into Thomas More led her to believe that he 'played the fool his whole life': this included punning on his name, which contains Latin suggestions of death and folly, as well as (important for this artist) the seeds of reference to the mulberry tree. The texts, sandwiched between the life-like paper replicas of graham crackers, comprise examples of More's 'gallows humour' while in prison and prior to his execution, as well as scatological exchanges between More and Erasmus. The book is accompanied by a marshmallow on a stick, made entirely from paper fibres, branded with an image of More based on a portrait by Holbein. The image references the American snack known as 'Smores' as well as the more tragic image of More's head impaled on a spike after his execution.

Maret (Russell). *Eclectic Geometric; twenty-six letters rendered with compass and straightedge.* New York, 2002. First Edition. 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 Artistico, 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 28 unbound sheets, enclosed in cloth drop-back box with printed paper label. Fine copy. £4,500

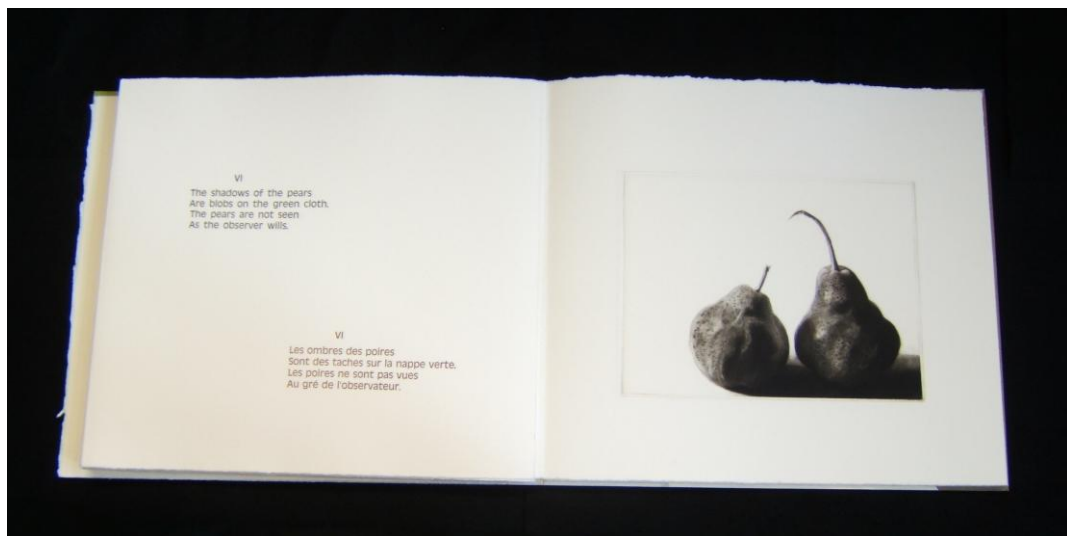
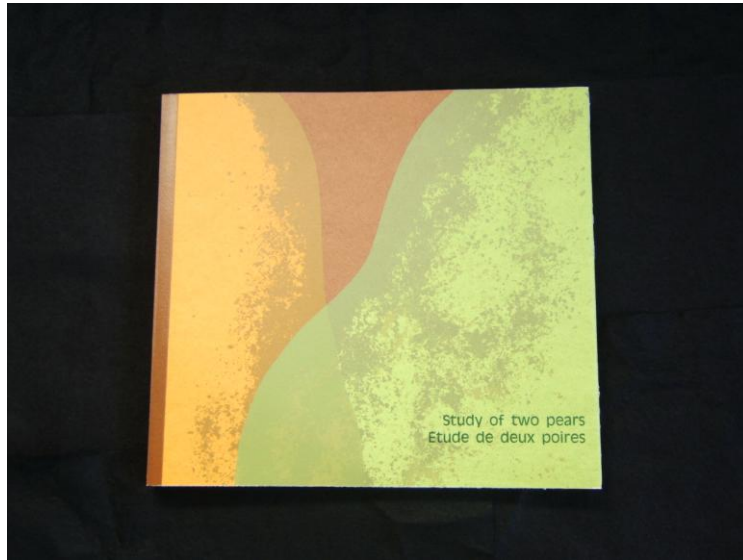
Witty and accomplished, this tribute to Nicholette Gray is a modern typographic masterpiece. In a series of 26 hand-drawn plates, Maret proves that the letters of a geometric alphabet need not 'lack movement and resist the human desire to animate them into words.' Quoting W.H. Auden's definition of a 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.'



Superimpositions

Meyer (Klaus). *Superimpositions*. Preface by E.H. Gombrich. Suite of eight groups of polychrome relief prints. London, 1995. First Edition. One of only 24 copies, signed by the artist, and with the first print of each group numbered and signed by him. The text was printed and designed by Sebastian Carter at the Rampant Lions Press, Cambridge. Folio. Loose sheets enclosed in blue buckram drop-back box. The portfolio also contains the original prospectus, designed and printed at the Rampant Lions Press. Fine copy. £1,500

Twenty-eight prints cut in wood and lino by the late artist Klaus Meyer, and printed by him in up to five colours. The first print in each group is on Japanese Hosho paper, the others on Japanese Tengujo paper or polyester film. The semi-transparency of the film allows "the viewer to retain contact with the previous design while looking at the present one. Added together, superimposed images of each group form a more complex whole". The visual composition strives to emulate the experience of hearing a piece of music. The work as a whole is a variation on Pater's dictum that "All art aspires to the condition of music." Gombrich wrote: "I regard this portfolio as a splendid refutation of the conventional wisdom that there is nothing new under the sun ... Meyer has found a new way to appeal to our deep seated desire to watch a work of art taking shape." Meyer, who died in 2002, lost his brother Ulrich, a talented cellist and composer, his mother and other family members in Auschwitz before escaping to England. Here he became a reclusive, but much admired, artist, whose work radiates with implications for the book work as a whole.



Study of Two Pears

Verdigris Press. Stevens (Wallace). *Study of Two Pears/Étude de Deux Poires*. Together with a translation into French by Bernard Noël. Accompanied by mezzotints and embossments within the text by Judith Rothchild. Octon, France, 2003. One of an edition of fifty numbered copies signed by the artist and printer. Square 4to. Text hand-set and printed on Hahnemuhle paper using an Albion Press by Mark Lintott. All images printed by the artist. Leporello binding. Fine copy. £700

Wallace Stevens used the pears as a starting point for a reflection on ways of seeing: "The pears are not viols,/ Nudes or bottles./ They resemble nothing else." These sparse, abstract verses defining the pears' beauty are given a luscious compliment in Judith Rothchild's prints. The images combine a sense of suspended animation with an ethereal classicism; the subtle monochrome shading conveys as much imaginative colour as Stevens' text. So graceful and detailed are the images, that it is a bold design choice to pair them with the strong sans serif type in which the poem is set, but the risk is more than justified by the results.



12 O' Clock News

Verdigris Press. Bishop (Elizabeth). *12 O' Clock News*. Illustrated with mezzotints by Judith Rothchild. Octon, France, 2006. First Edition with these Illustrations. One of an edition limited to 50 numbered copies on Hahnemuhle paper, signed by the artist and printer. Landscape QuartoText hand-set by Mark Lintott and printed in Vendôme using an Albion press. The title was set in wood type. Bound with a Japanese stab-binding in printed paper boards with maroon cloth detail and matching endpapers, enclosed in a matching slipcase. The mezzotints are interleaved with Japanese cloth that protects them whilst revealing the text. Fine copy. £1,200

In this, one of her most unusual compositions, Bishop describes her writing desk cryptically, as if she were a broadcaster describing a distant conflict. The subtle typographical arrangement of the two parts of the essay mean that it takes some time for a new reader to realise, for example, that the escarpment that rises abruptly from the central plain... [with] elaborate terracing of its southern glaxis is a typewriter. Bishop writes 'What endless labor those small, peculiarly shaped terraces represent! And yet, on them the welfare of this tiny principality depends. Touching and witty when applied to the writer's station, the analysis of strange terrain is chilling when applied to a wider context. Bishops work, which mocks the superior vantage point of occupying regimes in international conflicts, was first published in *Geography III* (1976). In this edition, the colophon is followed by Colin Powell's speech to the U.N. Security Council (5th February 2003) on the use of satellite images to provide evidence of Iraqi munitions facilities. Judith Rothchild's exquisite mezzotints offer a suitably mysterious accompaniment to the text.

Trant (Carolyn). *Kracow Pages (from The Falcon Bride)*. Parvenu Press, Lewes, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to six sets of images originally made as part of the travelling room-sized book installation originally located in the Star Gallery, Lewes. 18 cm x 12 cm. Fifteen loose boards with ornate images of Kracow, painted and collaged with paper, cloth, newspaper and other ephemera. The images evoke a mythical past in which the artist participates. Enclosed in hand-made box, painted by the artist. Fine copy. £200



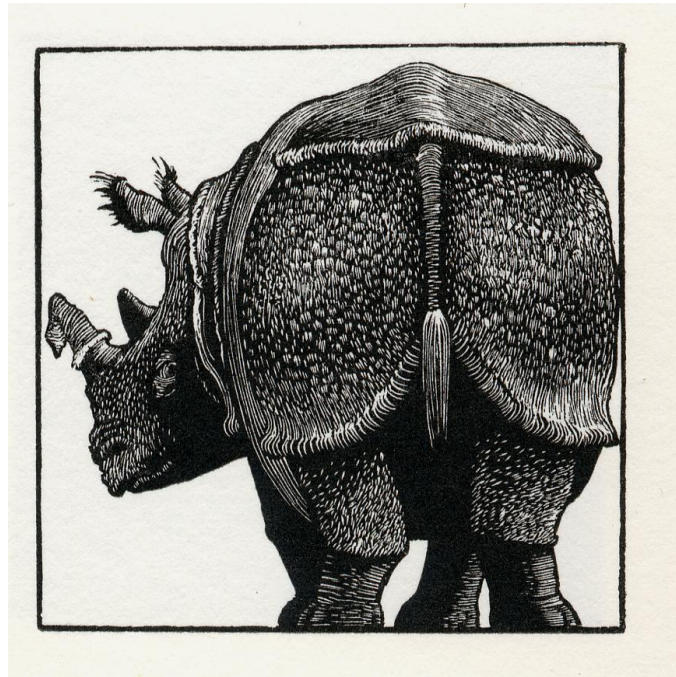
Boat Book

Trant (Carolyn). *Boat Book* (from *The Falcon Bride*). Parvenu Press, Lewes, 2007. First Edition. One of an edition limited to six copies signed by the artist. Landscape 8vo. 28 pages. Bound in heavily-painted textured paper. Hand-painted background of atmospheric greys and blacks over a series of photographed images of a boat taken during a room-sized book installation originally located in the Star Gallery, Lewes, 2007. Hand-painted text. Fine copy in painted slipcase. £350



Hunting the Wren

Trant (Carolyn). Simpson (James). *Hunting the Wren and Love Poems and Curses*. Illustrated with collographs by Carolyn Trant. Parvenu Press, Lewes, 2007. First Edition. Of an edition of 35 numbered signed copies. Two Volumes. 4to. Collographs printed by the artist. Text, set in Book Antiqua, silk-screened by Jane Sampson at Brighton Independent Printmaking. Quarter bound by the artist in white pigskin and grey goatskin respectively, with decorative paper covers. Housed in a box made by the artist with painted outer boards of sage-green merging into grey, secret compartment and painted title. Fine copy. £950



Two By Two

Wood Engraving. *Two By Two; A Noah's Ark*. The Society of Wood Engravers, Isle of Skye, 2003. One of an edition limited to 185 copies. Oblong 8vo. Bound in a French-door format; quarter cloth with Ann Muir marbled paper boards, presented in a cloth folding portfolio with printed paper label on spine. Text set in Perpetua and printed by Paul Kershaw. Fine copy. £300.

This book is a unique project done in collaboration between forty-eight European and North American members of the Society of Wood Engravers. Each artist contributed an engraving depicting a pair of animals or a variation on the theme. The result is an elegant survey of contemporary wood engraving and a cabinet of natural history that is amusing and astonishing by turns. Despite diversity of artistic styles, the discrete book design unites the species in a harmonious whole. [The featured illustration is by Jim Westergard].