



WORDS + *Images:*

BROADSIDES FROM THE BLACK ROCK PRESS

Last Gate

The valley pulls away in a haze, packs
its orchards and hardware stores off
to another time. The gate, short of
dragging, sags — falls open easily.

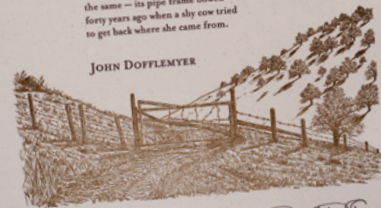
Black dots of cattle claim the shade
across the flat, a river bend straightened
when half the mountain slipped
down Pogue Canyon after months of rain.

It's dry — it's late August. The yellow hills
bleached and hollow-stemmed, empty-
headed wild oats arch upon the ridge
teasing flames that sweep my mind.

Up in the Blue Oaks, the first calf trails
its mother into hay — wobbly and lost
in a forest of legs, it finds her back —
sucks and stays with all it knows for sure.

As this gate in any season, it always feels
the same — its pipe frame bowed
forty years ago when a shy cow tried
to get back where she came from.

JOHN DOFFLEMYER



Reprinted from the Black Rock Press, University of Nevada, Reno
on the occasion of the author's visit in February 2004.
Arranged by Amelia Caserio. 100 copies.

GIVING A WATCH LIFE

The body is an animated machine.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Repair me, watchmaker. Insert your tool
into my chest, its oscillating springs,
my heart, and screw the spindle in the jewel
in silence while its tense mainspring will store
my spunk to last a day. Then close the case
and I'll hop downtown to a lover. Poor
in discipline and peace, now in my race
with night, I'll own another day to tick
and tick. But fix me just a bit. I want
my sweet to feel my movement, touch the dial,
to open me and poke around. Then sick
of perfect gears, she'll blow on dust and haunt
my parts and kiss me out of time a while.

Willis Barnstone

Willis Barnstone



Printed at The Black Rock Press, University of Nevada, Reno
on the occasion of the author's visit in February 2004.
Arranged by Amelia Caserio. 100 copies.

Gallery Notes



Front Cover Photo Credits:

Last Gate, 2005

Author: John Dofflemyer

Artist: Leslie Fry

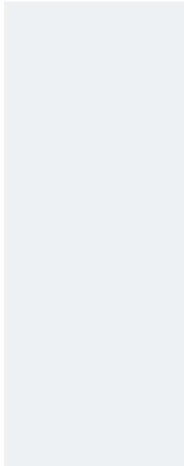
Letterpress printed

Giving a Watch Life, 2004

Author: Willis Barnstone

Artist: Amelia Currier

Letterpress printed



The Breaker in the Pen

There's a thousand year old story
involving beasts and men.
With one of each we set the stage
and let the play begin.

Take Tobippus' grandson
now on middle fingernail,
and the world's most recent primate
with no vestige left of tail.

The first outweighs the second
eight times or maybe ten.
Nothing new this story of the horse
and the breaker in the pen.

At times he thinks he's crazy
other times he knows for sure,
but centaur blood pumps through his
veins and there isn't any cure.

There are broncs that try his patience
and those that test his skill.
Make him lie awake in nighttime,
make him almost lose his will.

There are stiffened, aching mornings
when he questions if he'll last,
'cause the breaker's close to fifty
while the broncs are still two-past.

No imaginary spider web
connects him to the bridle,
just developed understanding,
maybe years in taking root.

A dozen broncs stand shivering,
the mist is rolling in,
there's a slicker on the top rail,
and a breaker in the pen.

He's a study in persistence,
even stubborn if you will—
can bend more often than he breaks,
and tough, damn tough to kill.

Rumor runs he nursed on mare's milk,
some say he's into Zen;
truth is he lives and breathes the work.
The breaker in the pen.

There are times he feels restricted
By the endless little rounds,
wishing he were on the cow crew
with the roundup sights and sounds.

But he's seen the cattle sorted
now the crew comes trotting in
attitude the horses started
by the breaker in the pen.

He's not high on riding buckers
and disdains the use of quiet;
He's eaten quite a little more
than his fair share of dirt.

So he reads what's there before him,
trying hard to catch the signs;
instinct or intuition
gives him what's between the lines.

This psycho-cybernetic work
has often saved his hide,
but the moment comes with every horse
when he has to mount and ride.

So feadens (or in spite of fear)
he moves to step astraddle;
now what will he will surely be,
for the breaker's in the saddle.

Here we redefine commitment,
for it's now the horse's deal;
the breaker's foot is shoved
into the stirrup to the heel.

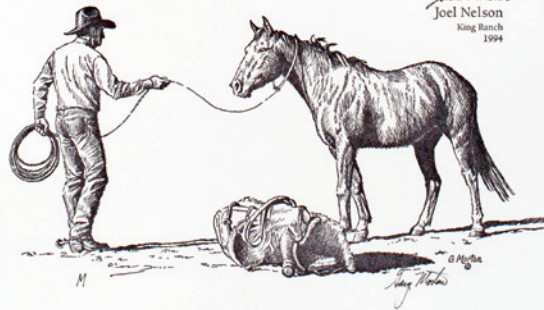
The ride might end with two as one,
just like it all began,
else the breaker finds the wherewithal
to rise and ride again.

With triple-digit temperatures,
it's tough to hang and saddle,
the breaker's butt is heatore
and bleeding in the saddle.

Hail the horses of the nations,
hear the stories of them told,
how they've carried kingdoms' armies,
how they've won Olympic Gold.

Carried Washington and Paul Revere,
helped set our country free,
carried Roosevelt and Houston,
John Wayne, and Grant, and Lee.

One thing they have in common,
their stories all begin
with one you seldom hear about—
the breaker in the pen.



Printed at the Black Rock Press, University of Nevada, Reno
for the Western Folklife Center, 2002.
Artwork by Gary Morton. Limited to 200 copies.

The Breaker in the Pen, 2002

Author: Joel Nelson

Artist: Gary Morton

Letterpress printed

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HARRY REESE:

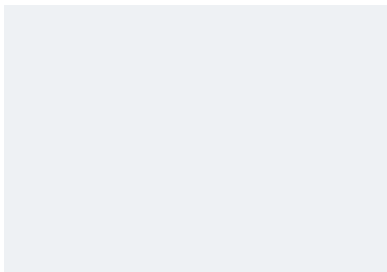
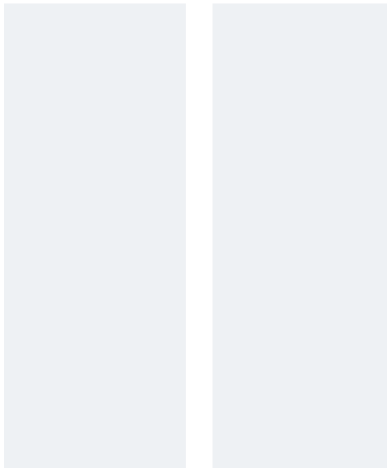
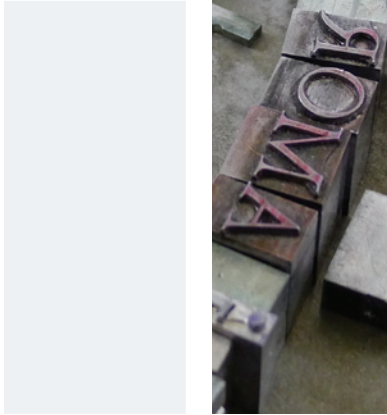
The Formality of Actually Occurring

Over the last 50 years, a major shift has occurred in the conception and production of print media, and we have seen its dominant cultural position diminished by electronic communication technologies and the social networks that have emerged in its immensely visual, post-literate wake. During that time there have been episodic debates about each stage of new media that, in large part, revive discussions that have been underway since the continuous European tradition of literate culture took shape in the 5th Century BCE.

In *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), Marshall McLuhan argued that significant changes in the technological environment sooner or later would generate massive cultural transformations that would, among other things, permanently alter the form and function of the book. McLuhan did not talk or write specifically about “the art of the book” as an emerging field of study and practice. But his probing remarks such as “the new technology turns the old technology into an art form” and “information overload leads to pattern recognition” helped me realize—through the university classes on letterpress printing and arts of the book courses I have offered since 1978—how effects of the mediated environment may have allowed the book form to upgrade its status as a work of art.

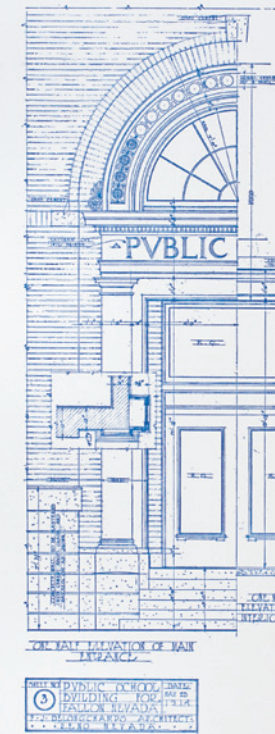
*Making things
is so human
that psychology
and philosophy
have gotten nowhere
in trying to
account for it.*

—GUY DAVENPORT



Aside from his elliptical style and confrontational syntax, McLuhan provided a reasonable response to one central question in this field: “Why are so many young people interested in letterpress printing and in making books by hand?” The persistence of letterpress printing and the emergence of artist books can be explained in many ways, but one has to do with our desire for tactility. Tactility primarily involves the sense of touch, but it is the common-sense meeting place of all of the senses. We learn through the fingers and hands in ways we cannot investigate otherwise. When we work with our hands, we bring together materials and ideas. It is as if we can touch words, visual impressions, and feelings. Language is our primary medium for describing both our experiences of the world and our refusal to accept its terms. Out of necessity, printing by hand slows down our highly mediated lives, demands close scrutiny at a short distance, and links our senses together.

OATS PARK ART CENTER



Oats Park School designed 1914
by Frederick J. DeLongchamps
Nevada's preeminent architect

One of the earliest perhaps his first
public school building placed on
National Register of Historic Places

For its architectural significance
use of contrasting brick colors
and attention to interior detail

Planned but not built
an auditorium raised stage
even a motion picture room

In 1995 the Churchill Arts Council
began renovation and construction
for its adaptive reuse and opened

The Burkley Theatre
on Valentine's Day, 2003

Commemorating the opening of
the Burkley Theatre, Oats Park
Art Center, Fallon, Nevada,
February 14, 2003. Text by Kirk
Robertson. Illustration from the
original architectural drawing of
the Oats Park School by
Frederick J. DeLongchamps.
Printed at the Black Rock Press,
University of Nevada, Reno
in an edition of 200 copies.

Oats Park Art Center, 2003

Author: Kirk Robertson

Artist: Fredrick J. DeLongchamps
Letterpress printed

Words Growing Wild in the Woods

A boy thrilled with his first horse,
I climbed aboard my father hunkering in hip boots
below the gravelled road ferns, Gossamer Creek
fennelling to a rosy colbert. Hooking
an arm behind one of my knees, he lifted
with a grunt and laugh, his creak harness creaking,
spitshot clattering in our bun boots.

I dreamed a Robin Hood-Paladin-Sinbad life
from those shoulders. His pigular pulse rumbled
into the rifle of my pulse, my thin veins
against his Adam's apple—a whiskered knuckle
prickly as cucumbers in our garden
where I picked nightcrawlers, wet and moonlit,
gluttening between vines across the black soil.

Eye-level with an array of flies, every crayon
color fastened to the silk band
of his tattered lidlora, the hat my mother vowed
a thousand times to burn. I learned to love
the sound of words in the woods—Jack Scott,
Silver Doctor, Mickey Finn, Quill Gordon, Gray
Ghost booming in his voice through the spruce.

At five, my life thymed with first flight
hustling into birdsong. I loved
the piquant smell of fiddieheads and trilliums,
hickory and maple leaf hums, the perine
housports of albatross we picked for Mom.
I loved the power of my father's stride
thigh-deep against the surge of dark swirls.

Perched offshore on a boulder—safe from wanderlust
but not from currents coiling below—
I prayed to the apostles for a ten-pounder
to test the steel of my telescopic pole,
while Dad, working the water upstream and down,
stayed always in earshot—alert and calling to me
after each beaver splash between us.

I still go home to reclaim my first love for words
echoing through those woods: I caught one!
Dad! I caught one! Dad! Dad!
sleeping like thin flat stones down the creek—
and him galloping through popples, spitshot ticking,
to find me leaping for a lingering, my first
brookie twirling from a willow like a jewel.

Paul Zarzyski

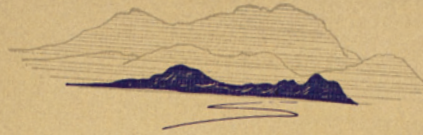


Printed by Rob Hesse at the
Black Rock Press, University of Nevada, Reno
Etching by Jim McCormick
No. 72 of an edition of 125 copies

Words Growing Wild in the Woods, 1995

Author: Paul Zarzyski

Artist: Jim McCormick
Letterpress printed, etching



VESPERS

A linnet pulls a tuft of cowhair
marbled on turbed wire.
The threads of hair shine red-gold
in her beak. She flies into last light.

At the horizon, earth & sky
reach a truce. The sun just down,
burn swallows tumble in the afterglow
above the slow-turning windmill.
The hill darkens,

a saddle rubbed with oil,
not yet the complete black of Nevada night.
There's the soft whickering of a horse,
the flames of a hundred Asian poppies nodding red,
then the descending quiet.

Gary Short
Gary Short

To commemorate the 10th annual
U.S. Conference of Mayors
Reno, Nevada, June 1998.

This broadside was commissioned by the Nevada Arts Council, Reno CLTY, 2000
Arts Commission and the Sierra Arts Foundation. Designed by Laurie Macfee and
printed letterpress from handset type at the Black Rock Press, University of Nevada, Reno,
by Rob Hesse. The poem is from the author's collection, *Flying Over Sonny Latta*.

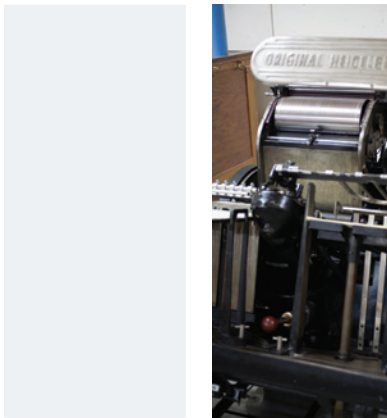


What once was the exclusive domain of trade unions and skilled craftspeople, the printing and making of handmade books by non-specialists has steadily gained in popularity as the electronic environment has spread. Students at every level now engage the art of the book—or book arts, as the field tends to be described by its participants. The term “book arts” refers to the study and practice of the making of books and related media as expressive artistic objects and for aesthetic purposes. This all-encompassing field rounds up the usual suspects—book design, history of the book, typography, printing, photography, binding, paper-making, artist books, publishing, conservation, among others. Emerging from a confluence of traditional crafts and late 20th century art theory, book arts leads us to think about how print images, paper surfaces, and their various structures create meaning, function culturally, and convey unique experiences as contemporary art.

Vespers, 1998

Author: Gary Short

Artist: Laurie Macfee
Letterpress printed



Book arts education today takes place in at least one of three ways: as individual professional training with a person or team in a studio environment; within specialized classes at non-profit community organizations; and in courses or designated programs at colleges, universities, and art schools offered by a range of related disciplines—most often in departments of Art, English, History, Library & Information, and other hybrid meeting grounds, such as Book Studies. It may surprise us, but book arts opportunities—especially in terms of publishing presses, experimental typographical and printing studios, bibliographic research study programs—have been in the university longer than there have been community workshops teaching book arts. Notable historic examples include: Porter Garnett's Laboratory Press at Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh, founded in 1923; the Eucalyptus Press, established at Mills College in 1930; most of the 12 residential colleges at Yale have had letterpress shops for student projects, beginning in 1936; Scripps College Press has been around since 1941; and Carroll Coleman moved his Prairie Press to the University of Iowa in the mid-1940s, where he taught classes and published books and broadsides. Each of these programs was custom built around the interests of the lead instructor, the funding base of the activities, and the administrative vision of the institution.



WE THINK OF GUTENBERG as "the man who invented printing" or at least the inventor of "movable type." But when we commonly identify him with the elegant Bible which was his first major work and which remains a treasure in our great libraries, we obscure his crucial role. For he was not merely a pioneer of the splendid incunabula of his own lifetime. He was a prophet of newer worlds where machines would do the work of scribes, where the printing press would displace the scriptorium, and knowledge would be diffused to countless unseen communities.

Daniel J. Boorstin
from *The Discoverers*

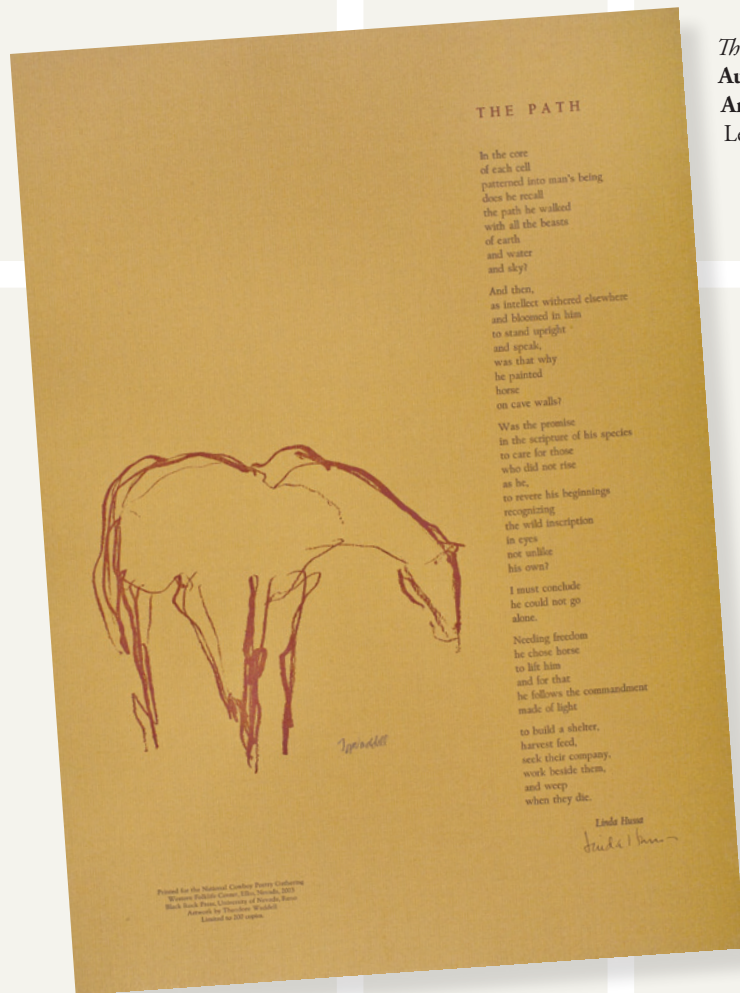
Printed at The Black Rock Press to commemorate Daniel J. Boorstin's keynote address
at the conference *The Evolution of the Printed Word*, April 14, 1994, at the University of Nevada, Reno.
No. 7 of 75 copies printed.

Johannes Gutenberg, 1994
Author: Daniel Boorstin
Artist: John Balkwill
Letterpress printed

The Path, 2003

Author: Linda Husa

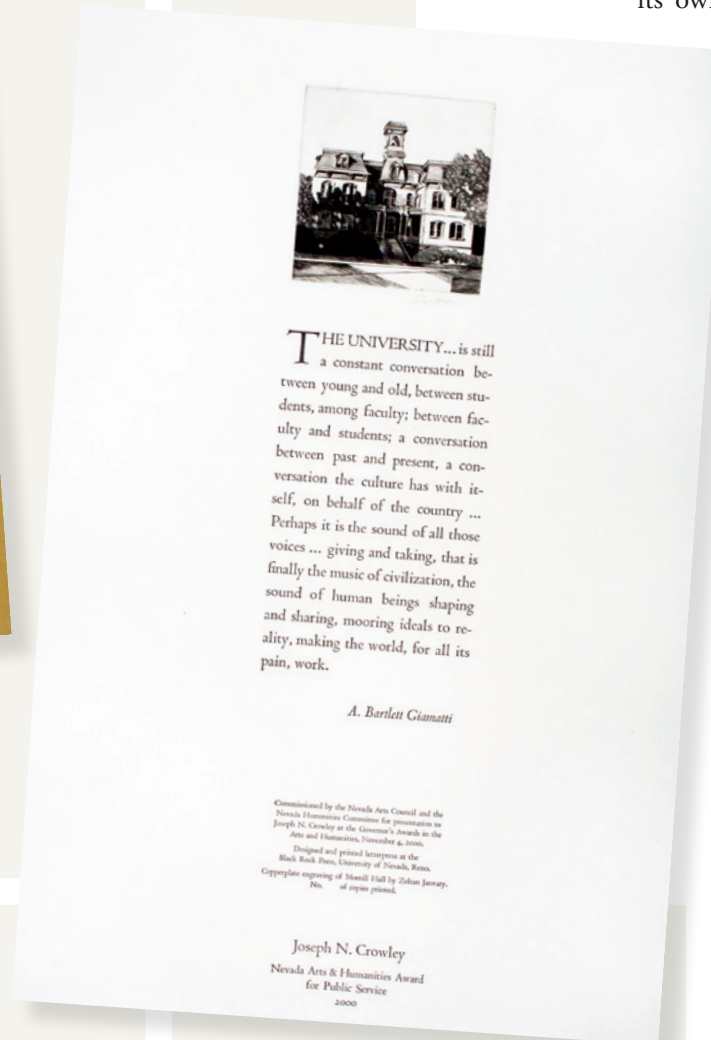
Artist: Theodore Waddell
Letterpress printed



In response to the growth of teaching programs nationwide, the College Book Art Association (CBAA) was created in 2008 by college and university teachers who also print, bind, write, manage libraries, and make art—many who had met together informally during the previous thirty years. Although from different backgrounds and academic appointments, they all knew this diverse field had to have

its own professional organization. These book arts

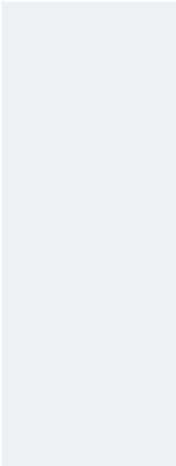
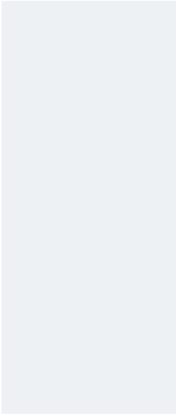
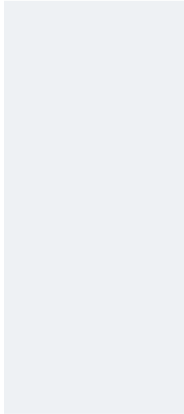
educators held one of their most important organizational meetings at the University of Nevada, Reno in 2006, hosted by Bob Blesse, in which specific plans for the national non-profit were proposed and confirmed. With its own distinctive history as a bibliographic, publishing, and teaching program, the Black Rock Press has received national recognition as a place where inquisitive minds and hands (often working together) can expect to receive a grounding in the theoretical, historical, and craft foundations of contemporary artists' bookmaking through classes and projects that combine studio work, scholarly study, collaborative potential, and independent initiative. Book arts education, in Nevada and around the country, is alive and well today.



The Constant Conversation, 2000

Author: A. Bartlett Giamatti

Artist: Zoltan Janvary
Letterpress printed and copperplate engraving

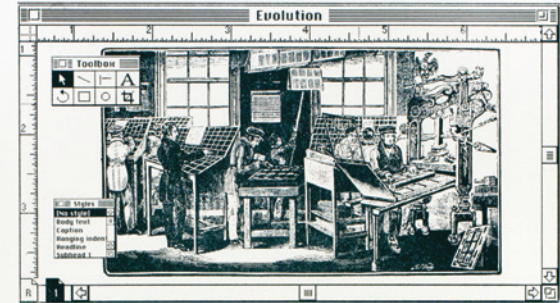


Although the practice is rewarding in itself, classes in letterpress printing and the other book arts do more than teach people how to make things using commercially obsolete technology. Technical instruction always brings with it a conceptual awareness that transcends the specific project. The central activity in art is the making of things. Art classes start with the knowledge that is obtained through doing and through the senses. Because they unite language with images, book arts classes invariably offer more than visual or tactile experiences. Language preserves and extends complexity, for when we read art, we simultaneously look at text and image, and see through it, while reading silently or aloud.

A poet is a “maker” and it is an easy step to realize that the making of a book is a poetic act. Book art as a field of study at the University of Nevada, Reno and other important institutions offer significant opportunities for students to explore and create traditional and contemporary artists’ books in this rapidly evolving field, to bring into the world things that matter, and to savor the pleasures, within one’s own hands, of what the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead called “the formality of actually occurring.”

Harry Reese

ISLA VISTA | 2013



The Evolution of the Printed Word

For thousands of years before the invention of printing, books were written by hand; in places like the scriptoria of medieval monasteries scribes laboriously copied books one letter at a time. This meant that books were rare and the knowledge contained in them available only to small, elite groups within the general population. When Johannes Gutenberg invented the technology of printing with movable type, in the middle of the fifteenth century, he started a revolution in the way knowledge and information was diffused. Suddenly a page that may have taken hours to copy by hand could be reproduced with the simple pull of the lever of a printing press. The invention of printing was the catalyst for an explosion in the number of books on countless subjects produced for a vast new audience of readers. The ferment of this new intellectual activity led to the creation of what we call the modern world. ¶ The technology created by Gutenberg seems uncomplicated. His most essential innovation was the development of a method to cast individual letters in metal, pieces of type that could be assembled into words and lines and placed together on the bed of a printing press. There the surface of the assembled “text” was inked and paper was placed in contact under pressure with the relief surface, thus transferring the image to the sheet and creating the printed page. This method of printing from an inked relief surface came to be known as letterpress printing. It should be noted that Gutenberg was not actually the first to accomplish this kind of printing. In the Far East the Koreans and Chinese both experimented with systems of relief printing from interchangeable characters some years before Gutenberg. It seems certain, however, that Gutenberg achieved his results independently of the Asians and it was, in fact, in the European societies with their alphabet based systems of writing that the technology of printing with movable type took hold and flourished. ¶ Letterpress printing technology remained dominant for five hundred years although, to be sure, there were many technological advancements during this period. The iron handpress which replaced the wooden press in the late eighteenth century made possible the printing of larger sheets of paper. In the mid-nineteenth century large, power-driven cylinder presses helped create the modern newspaper industry by increasing the speed by which printing could be done. Late in the nineteenth century machine-driven typesetting and casting systems replaced hand typesetting. ¶ By the 1950s the development of phototypesetting systems and offset lithography, a planographic method of printing, made letterpress printing decline as a viable commercial process. These newer technologies allowed for greater speed of production and made easier certain tasks, such as full color printing. From the 1960s onward the role of the computer came to loom large in the technology of printing, taking over many of the functions that had previously been accomplished by skilled tradesmen. In the last decade of the twentieth century the primacy of digital technology in the printing industry has become overwhelming. Virtually every aspect of the graphic arts and printing process is dominated by computers, from the design and type composition done on desktop computers to computerized ink mixing and printing presses. ¶ In the apparent dawn of the era of interactive electronic media, hypertext and virtual reality, we have reached a point where some speculate that traditional printing, that is to say ink on paper, may no longer be required, and that text, i.e., written and printed language, may lose its prime role in communication and learning. It is impossible to know where this increasingly sophisticated technology will lead, but it seems fair to assume that its impact on society will rival or surpass the impact Gutenberg’s revolutionary technology had in its time. Nonetheless it is difficult to imagine how the pleasure of holding a printed book in one’s hands and reading it will not continue to exert a unique appeal for some time to come.

Printed letterpress at The Black Rock Press, The University of Nevada, Reno.

Evolution of the Printed Word, 1994

Author: Kevin Stevens

Artist: John Balkwill

Letterpress printed

NEVADA ARTS COUNCIL, NTI-TRAVELING EXHIBITION

All of the broadsides in the NTI-Traveling Exhibition, *Words + Images: Broad­sides from the Black Rock Press*, were produced at the Black Rock Press at the University of Nevada, Reno using the letterpress process with handset type and relief plates. The printing was done on a Vandercook cylinder proofing press.



WORDS + *Images:*

**BROADSIDES FROM THE
BLACK ROCK PRESS**

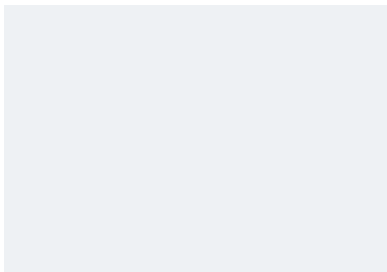
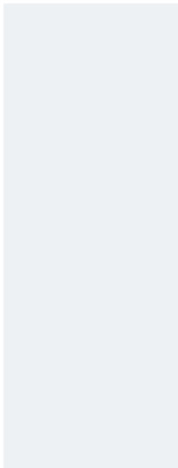
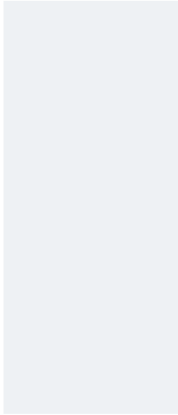
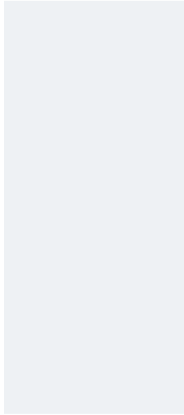
BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BLACK ROCK PRESS

Since it was founded by Kenneth J. Carpenter more than forty years ago, the Black Rock Press at the University of Nevada, Reno has been dedicated to the practice and teaching of the arts and crafts associated with the creation of finely printed books. The Press now has a national reputation for its outstanding work and has become a living museum of traditional printing technology, housing a variety of cabinets filled with metal type, and a number of historically significant printing presses. Its centerpiece, a gilded 1837 super-royal Columbian iron handpress, is one of the finest examples of a nineteenth century iron handpress to be found anywhere in the country.

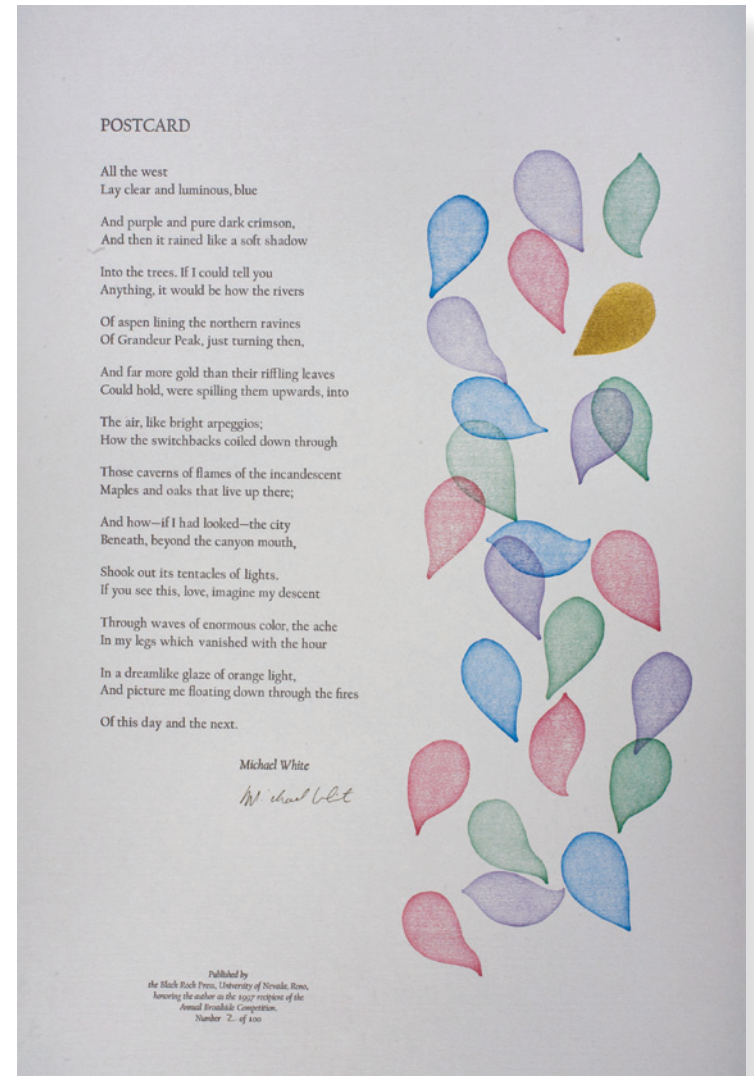
Through the Press's program of publishing books and broadsides, it seeks to create literary and artistic works of high merit in well designed and crafted limited and commercially printed editions. Most of the work is done at the Press itself, using both traditional and contemporary book production methods.

The Press received wide acclaim for Ken Carpenter's first Black Rock Press book, *Springing of the Blade*, poems by William Everson. This was followed by what is considered to be his masterpiece, *Straight with the Medicine*. Carpenter's legacy has continued throughout the years and has been exemplified by the Press's outstanding design and production of *Finding the Space*, poems by the renowned American poet, Gary Snyder; and followed by the award-winning limited edition, *Cartwheels*, by Steven Nightingale. Along with limited edition books, the Press also produces books of contemporary writing for its Rainshadow Editions series, by both emerging and established writers. *Blood Sister I am to These Fields*, by Linda Hussa, won three major awards as poetry book of the year.





Letterpress broadsides printed by the Black Rock Press are created for numerous reasons, frequently to honor a visiting writer, a campus event. The Press produced broadsides to honor university residencies by U.S. Poets Laureate Robert Pinsky and Billy Collins. Several broadsides were printed in conjunction with a national poetry broadside competition held in the 1990s; winning poets received cash awards and had their poems printed as broadsides. In recent years, broadsides have been produced for the Robert Laxalt Distinguished Writers Award, presented annually by the university's Reynolds School of Journalism. Each broadside features a quotation from the writings of Robert Laxalt, one of Nevada's finest writers. Most of the broadsides in this exhibit were designed and printed by Bob Blesse, director of the Black Rock Press. Others have also contributed, including John Balkwill who was in residence as a book artist and printmaker at the Press during the mid-1990s. Many former students also assisted with the design, production, and illustration of the broadsides.



Postcard, 1998
Author: Michael White
Artist: Bob Blesse
 Letterpress printed

HEIRLOOM

My family doesn't save anything
Perhaps we moved too often, or
had too little and plain wore it all
out. Once we owned chickens,
small store fronts, acres of fickle wheat.
Just outside the family plots, oil
rigs pumped day and night
making millions for their distant owners.
Homes we have lost: the first sod one
subsumed by plain; the next rickety
farm house got tired of leaning
into the wind.
This might explain our reverence,
immoderate, for what is left:
the single boot, the leather case
missing its spectacles, the photographs
whose subjects can no longer
be named. We try to reclaim,
as a circle of chairs recalls a gathering,
the curling yarn, its skein.

DONNA JOHNSON



Printed at the Black Rock Press, University of
Nevada, Reno. Honoring the author as the
recipient of the press's 1999 National Broadside
Competition award.
No. 7 of 100.

Heirloom, 1999

Author: Donna Johnson

Artist: Black Rock Press

Letterpress printed

THINGS OF INTRINSIC WORTH

Remember that sandrock on Emmells Crick
Where Dad carved his name in 'thirteen?
It's been blasted down into rubble
And interred by their dragline machine.
Where Fadils lived, at the old Millar place,
Where us kids stole melons at night?
They 'dozed it up in a funeral pyre
Then torched it. It's gone alright.
The "C" on the hill, and the water tanks
Are now classified "reclaimed land."
They're thinking of building a golf course
Out there, so I understand.
The old Egan homestead's an ash pond
That they say is eighty feet deep.
The branding corral at the Douglas camp
Is underneath a spoil heap.
And across the crick is a tippie, now,
Where they load coal onto a train.
The Mae West Rock on Hay Coulee?
Just black-and-white snapshots remain.
There's a railroad loop and a coal storage shed
Where the bison kill site used to be.
The Guy place is gone; Ambrose's too.
Beulah Farley's a ranch refugee.

But things are booming. We've got this new school
That's envied across the whole state.
When folks up and ask, "How's things goin' down there?"
I grin like a fool and say, "Great!"
Great God, how we're doin'! We're rollin' in dough,
As they tear and they ravage The Earth.
And nobody knows...or nobody cares...
About things of intrinsic worth.

Wally McRae



Printed for the Carolyn Porter Gorking,
Western Public Library, Reno, Nevada, 2004.
The Black Rock Press, University of Nevada, Reno.
Designed by Clint McRae. Limited to 200 copies.

Things of Intrinsic Worth, 2004

Author: Wally McRae

Artist: Clint McRae

Letterpress printed

Through its instructional programs, the Press introduces students to the graphic arts techniques and intellectual disciplines involved with the creation of books and related materials. They are encouraged to develop an appreciation of books as special kinds of objects, whose form can help reveal its content. In the Book Arts course, students learn typographic design and letterpress printing, as well as the historical aspects of printing and book production. Students also learn other aspects of bookmaking including image making techniques, bookbinding, papermaking, and paper decoration. In addition to its own classes, the Black Rock Press works closely with university classes in art, history, English, and journalism, providing orientations, in-depth tours, and lectures on various aspects of the book arts. The goal of the Press is to make its resources as a center for interdisciplinary activities in the book arts available to the university community and beyond.

To properly fulfill its role as a book arts program in an institution of higher learning, The Black Rock Press seeks to promote an awareness of the significance of books and their related arts to the history and future of culture. In an era of rapid changes in communications technology, the Black Rock Press seeks to provide an historical perspective on the importance of book arts and the printed word to the unfolding process of human knowledge and the creative process.

Bob Blesse

RENO | 2013

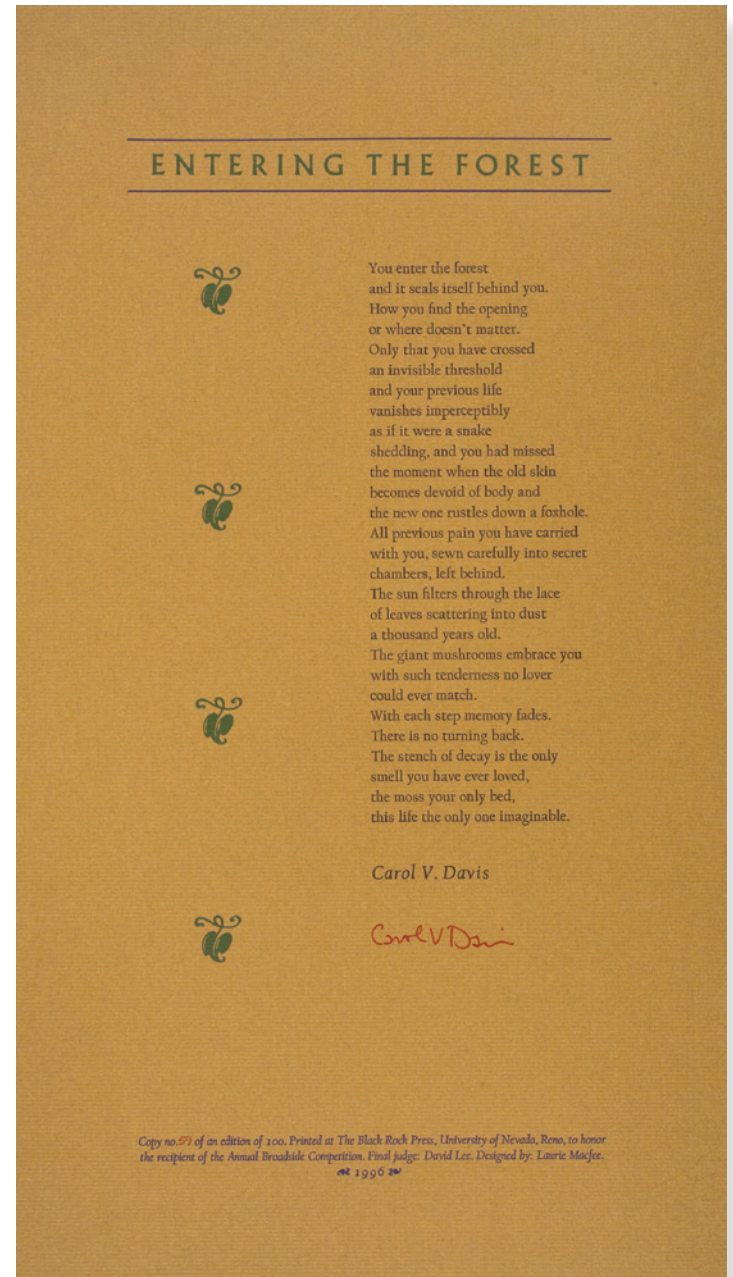


BROADSIDES

Broadsides are large sheets of paper printed on one side. They began to appear in the 15th Century, soon after Gutenberg's development of moveable type and the spread of printing. In Britain, early broadsides were used to inform the public about government decrees, proclamations, meetings, and events, for advertising, and as a vehicle for selling popular poetry, song, and music. Broadsides, also known as broadsheets, were sold for a penny apiece and were intended to be short-lived. They were often used as a vehicle for political agitation. During the reformation Martin Luther and his followers used printed broadsides and other propaganda to attack the Pope.

After the first American printing press was established in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1638, broadsides appeared immediately. Along with government announcements and news, early American broadsides included commercial announcements and popular and topical songs. The most famous American broadside, the Dunlap Broadside, is the Declaration of Independence, printed by John Dunlap of Philadelphia on the night of July 4, 1776 in an edition of approximately 200 copies.

Today, broadsides are produced as an artistic form, usually containing a poem or quotation accompanied by an image. Frequently produced by small printers using fine paper and the letterpress process, contemporary broadsides are intended to be framed and displayed.



Entering the Forest, 1996
Author: Carol V. Davis
Artist: Laurie Macfee
 Letterpress printed



The Soft Time of the Year, 1993
Author: Hayden Carruth
Artist: Linda Tay'nahza'
 Letterpress printed

CREATING A BROADSIDE

Producing a broadside includes numerous decisions and processes.

DESIGN: An overall design that integrates text and image is created.

FONT: A typeface with appropriate sizes for the text, title, and colophon* is selected.

IMAGES: An artist creates an image for the broadside. These images may be a drawing, linoleum cut, or a relief plate of some kind.

COLORS: Inks are selected, generally black for the text, a title color, and an image color.

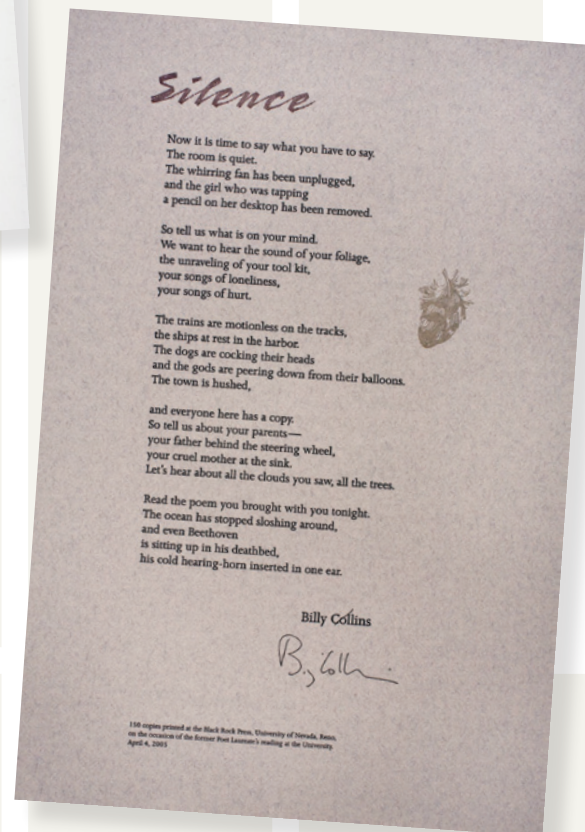
PAPER: A range of beautiful paper choices, frequently European, work beautifully for broadsides. A stock frequently used at the Black Rock Press is Rives BFK, a printmaking paper with lovely texture and color that is produced at the Rives paper mill in southern France.

TYPESETTING: The textual component of a broadside is usually handset type from the cases at the Press or, in recent years, production of a relief plate using the photopolymer process.

PRESS RUNS: The printing of a broadside usually includes several press runs, one each for the text, image, title, and colophon. The press must be cleaned and new ink applied for each color used.

FINISHING: Once the final press run is completed, the broadsides must dry for 24 hours. The broadside is then ready to be signed by the author, distributed or sold.

**The Colophon is a short statement about the production of the work, the number of copies printed, date of printing, and who was responsible for the production. This usually appears at the bottom of the broadside.*



Silence, 2004
Author: Billy Collins
Artist: Colin Robertson
 Letterpress printed



BIOGRAPHIES

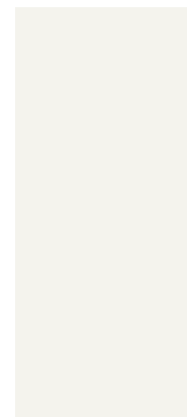
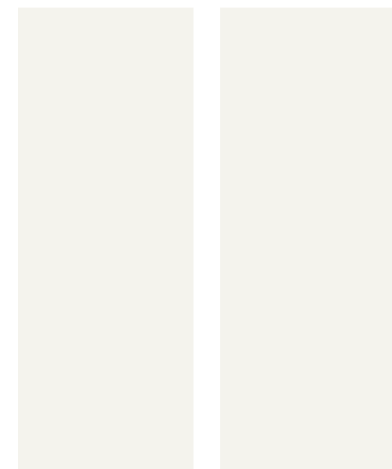
Bob Blesse

For more than 25 years, Bob Blesse has been the director of the Black Rock Press, a nationally recognized book arts program that teaches the history, art and craft of finely printed books and publishes hand printed, limited edition books, broadsides and editions of contemporary literature. During this time he has designed and produced more than 65 publications, many of which have been recognized with awards. Head of the Special Collections Department in the University of Nevada, Reno Library for 25 years, Blesse is currently a Professor of Art in the Department of Art. In 1999 he received a Nevada Governor's Arts Award for Lifetime Contributions to the Arts. He is a native of Oakland, California and has an M.A. in English from California State University, Chico, and a Masters of Library and Information Studies from UCLA.

Harry Reese

An artist whose work involves many aspects of the hand-produced book, Harry Reese is a Professor in the Department of Art at University of California, Santa Barbara—where he has taught classes in printmaking, book arts, papermaking, visual literacy, public art, and media ecology since 1978. For the past six years he has served as the Associate Dean of the College of Creative Studies. In addition to making and exhibiting his own prints and paintings, he has worked on seven public art projects since 1991 as a consultant, collaborator, and/or solo artist.

For more than three decades, Reese has published limited edition books and prints, in partnership with Sandra Liddell Reese, for their *Turkey Press & Edition Reese* imprints. These projects are known for their letterpress printing, distinctive bindings, relief prints, handmade paper, and unconventional image making. The Press has received grants and recognition from a number of organizations, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the American Institute of Graphic Arts, the College Book Art Association, and the Getty Research Institute, which purchased the archives of Turkey Press in 1992.



WEBSITES

BLACK ROCK PRESS — blackrockpress.org

TURKEY PRESS · EDITION REESE — turkeypress.net

NEVADA ARTS COUNCIL

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