Pressed Letters: Fine Printing in New Zealand since 1975
30 August – 24 September / Central Library Peterborough

Pressed Letters: Fine Printing in New Zealand since 1975 brings to light the achievements of New Zealand’s leading letterpress printers and emphasises the collaborative nature that often exists between printers, poets and artists in the production of finely crafted, hand-printed books.

During the 1970s the printing industry worldwide purged itself of the last vestiges of letterpress printing technologies – technologies that had changed little since the invention of the printing press and movable type by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-1450s. As a result, obsolete letterpress printing equipment became available and affordable for the private press movement. This was certainly the case in New Zealand, where one of the most notable presses to be established in the 1970s was Alan Loney’s Hawk Press with which he began producing quality designed and printed limited edition books by contemporary New Zealand poets.

Other New Zealand private presses of note have followed in Loney’s footsteps, including Auckland’s Pear Tree Press and Puriri Press, Wellington’s Fernbank Studio, Dunedin’s Frayed Frisket Press, and Homeprint in Feilding, all of which are still printing today. Bob Gormack’s Nag’s Head Press and Leo Bensemann’s Huntsbury Press, although no longer operating, have left a legacy of beautifully designed and printed books.

New Zealand’s university private presses – Wai-te-ata, Holloway and Otakou respectively at Victoria, Auckland and Otago universities – have also made significant contributions to New Zealand’s private press movement, actively encouraging and engaging printers to work at their presses. The Otakou Press in particular is notable for its annual Printers in Residence programme, which provides invaluable opportunities for letterpress printers throughout New Zealand and Australia to produce hand-printed publications in collaboration with poets and artists.

What sets the books in this exhibition apart from commercial printing and publication is the care and skill with which they have been produced. These are hand-crafted objects and their production has involved firsthand input from the printers, the poets and the artists involved.

Peter Vangioni
Curator, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu
Case 1

1. Joanna Margaret Paul
   **Imogen: Poems by Joanna Margaret Paul** 1978
   Hawk Press, Days Bay. Designed and printed by Alan Loney. Collection Christchurch City Libraries

2. Rachel McAlpine and Michael Smither
   **Thirteen Waves** 1986
   Homeprint, Feilding. Designed and printed by John and Allison Brebner. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

3. Another Twenty-Seven Listed Publications from the Nag’s Head Press: Numbers 93 to 119 2002
   Nag’s Head Press, Christchurch. Designed and printed by Bob Gormack. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Peter Dunbar collection

4. Peter Bland
   **Primitives: Poems by Peter Bland** (frontispiece by Grant Tilley) 1979
   Wai-te-ata Press, Wellington. Designed and printed by students from the Department of English, Victoria University. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

5. Bzou: A Tale from the French (frontispiece by Leo Bensemann) 1979
   Huntsbury Press, Christchurch. Designed and printed by Leo Bensemann. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the Bensemann Family

6. Bartolomeo Vanzetti
   A letter from Bartolomeo Vanzetti to his friend’s son Dante Sacco from the Death House, Massachusetts State Prison: 7/4/17 – seven years, four months, seventeen days 1975
   Huntsbury Press, Christchurch. Designed and printed by Leo Bensemann and Max Hailstone. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the Bensemann Family
Case 2

10. Peter Olds and Kathryn Madill
    Skew Whiff: Poems by Peter Olds
    2011
    Otakou Press, Dunedin. Designed and printed by John Denny. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

11. Michele Leggot and Gretchen Albrecht
    Journey to Portugal
    2006
    Holloway Press, Auckland. Designed by the artist and printed by Tara McLeod. Chine collé images executed by Elizabeth Steiner in collaboration with the artist. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

12. Ruth Dallas and Alan Loney
    Open Sky
    2008
    Otakou Press, Dunedin. Designed and printed by Alan Loney. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

13. Bill Manhire and Ralph Hotere
    PINE
    2004
    Otakou Press, Dunedin. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

14. Max Gimblett
    Searchings: selections from the artist’s Journals chosen and arranged by Alan Loney
    2005
    Holloway Press, Auckland. Printed by Tara McLeod. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by Alan Loney

15. Robert Creeley and Max Gimblett
    The Dogs of Auckland
    1998
    Holloway Press, Auckland. Designed by Alan Loney, printed by Alan Loney and Natasha Herman. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by Max Gimblett

7. William Sutton
   The Scott Memorial Windows, Christchurch Cathedral
   1983

8. Bill Manhire and Andrew Drummond
   DAWN/WATER
   1979
   Hawk Press, Eastbourne. Designed and printed by Alan Loney. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

9. Ian Wedde
   Pathway To The Sea
   (cover design by Ralph Hotere)
   1975
   Hawk Press, Taylors Mistake. Designed and printed by Alan Loney. Collection Christchurch City Libraries
Case 3

Prime: 7 Poets from Australia & New Zealand 2010
Otakou Press, Dunedin. Designed and printed by Caren Florance. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

16. Vincent O’Sullivan Untitled
17. Stephen Edgar Sight Reading
18. Michael Harlow The Piano’s Birthday
19. Robert Adamson The Sibyl’s Avenue
20. Les Murray At The Opera

11. Journey to Portugal
14. Searchings: selections from the artist’s Journals chosen and arranged by Alan Loney
17. Sight Reading

Pressed Letters
21. Pip Culbert, Jenny Bornholdt and Gregory O’Brien
   **Air Pocket** 2004
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

22. Joanna Margaret Paul
   **The Cherry Now** 2001
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

23. Geoff Cochrane and Brendan O’Brien
   **Nine Poems** 2002
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

24. Jenny Bornholdt and Mari Mahr
   **Two Walk in Paris** 2007
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

25. Gregory O’Brien
   **Winter I Was** 2000
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

26. Josephina O’Brien
   **Hello Mr Tomorrow: A Book of the Year** 2009
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

27. Brendan O’Brien
   **Where is Carlo?** 2002
   Fernbank Studio, Wellington. Designed and printed by Brendan O’Brien. Private collection, Christchurch

28. Samuel Marsden and Charles Darwin
   **Christmas in New Zealand** 2011
   Frayed Frisket Press, Dunedin. Designed and printed by John Holmes. Private collection, Christchurch

29. The Trevor Dagbottom Library Acquisitions 1990
   Cock and Bull Press, Christchurch. Illustrated, designed and printed by Ed Cutler. Collection Ferrymead Printing Society, Christchurch

30. **Specimens of Wood Type** 2001
    Pear Tree Press, Auckland. Designed and printed by Tara McLeod. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

31. Brian Gregory and Richard McWhannel
    **In Winter Vineyards: Poems** 1999
    Pear Tree Press, Auckland. Designed and printed by Tara McLeod. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu
Pear Tree Press posters

Ready MM 2011
Fog H 2009
F & X TYPO Design 2011
El Lissitzky: The Elements of Letters 2011

Designed and printed by Tara McLeod at Pear Tree Press, Auckland. Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

10. Skew Whiff: Poems by Peter Olds
21. Air Pocket
Cover: F & X TYPO Design (detail) 2011.
Designed and printed by Tara McLeod at
Pear Tree Press, Auckland. Robert and Barbara
Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch
Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu