

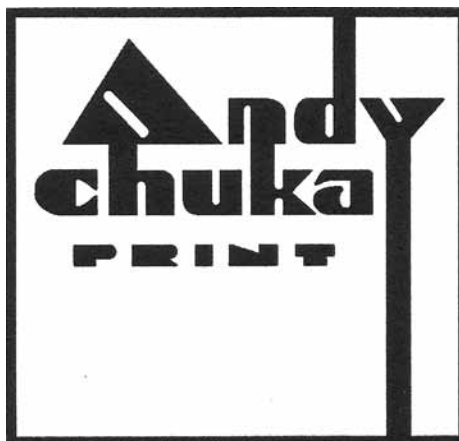
## *Tiny Satellite Press at Cattle Track Ranch*

A MID-WINTER EXCURSION to visit my sometime snowbird sister in Scottsdale, Arizona, introduced me to a fine press endeavour operating in an unlikely setting. My sister, a contemporary and folk art appraiser/dealer, mounted an expedition to Santos Press, a publisher of fine art editions. Following a bus trip and walk through the surreal and immaculately groomed gated condos with not another pedestrian in sight, we arrived at Cattle Track Ranch, also known as Cattle Track Arts Compound.

Cattle Track is the antithesis of just about everywhere else in Scottsdale from what I have seen. The first of the 11 buildings on the 13-acre site was constructed in 1937, and “the complex” grew organically, with little evidence of a master plan. Three Cattle Track buildings are listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. The residents include two letterpress presses, a blacksmith, and a number of artists and craftspeople. The compound also hosts a variety of exhibits and concerts.

Our host was the painter and printer Mark McDowell, the proprietor of Tiny Satellite Press. Using a salvaged Vandercook press and drawers of type, McDowell has produced some wonderful limited edition books and photograph and etching portfolios. One of the most beautiful is the first publication to come off the press, the Brent Bond portfolio *Back Stage* (2004). Issued in a clamshell case, the portfolio includes a printed title page and colophon with 22 black and white photographs of the back rooms of La Parroquia de San Miguel Archangel, the church at the heart (and very much the soul) of San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

Other titles associated with Tiny Satellite include children’s books and collaborations with notable western artists Bill Schenck and Jay Dusard. On the more eccentric side is John J. Moore’s *The Creation* (2003), which, as McDowell explains it, was an effort to set



.....  
*The linocut logo of Andy Chuka,  
a Hungarian-born typographer and artist.*

a record in obtaining an ISBN for the shortest text. It has five words in total, excluding an author’s note, title page and colophon, and is accompanied by two etchings.

In introducing Tiny Satellite’s output, McDowell was most enthusiastic when talking about *Art in Printing: The Linocuts of Andy Chuka*. The edition comprises two volumes with a total of 20 linocuts, accompanied by a booklet on Chuka written by McDowell. Chuka came from Hungary to the United States as a 14-year-old art student in 1914. The Great War brought an end to his scholarship and eventually to any thought of returning home.

An uncle was a pressroom foreman at the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and took him on as an apprentice. In nine months he was a master typographer and continued his art studies. Relocating to Phoenix in the early 1920s, he set up a small commercial printing company. His operation expanded and incorporated picture framing and art sales. The company used the slogan “For the promotion of Art in Printing.”

As well as operating a successful commercial printing operation, Chuka produced a series of fine linocuts of the Arizona landscape that form the heart of *Art in Printing*. Reproductions of Chuka’s typesetting of Beatrice Warde’s famous broadside “This Is a Printing Office” and his logo accompany this article. Chuka’s company closed in 1974, following his death in 1972.

THIS IS  
A PRINTING  
OFFICE



CROSS-ROADS OF CIVILIZATION  
REFUGE OF ALL THE ARTS  
AGAINST THE RAVAGES OF TIME  
ARMORY OF FEARLESS TRUTH  
AGAINST WHISPERING RUMOR  
INCESSANT TRUMPET OF TRADE



FROM THIS PLACE WORDS MAY FLY ABROAD  
NOT TO PERISH ON WAVES OF SOUND, NOT TO VARY WITH THE WRITER'S HAND  
BUT FIXED IN TIME, HAVING BEEN VERIFIED BY PROOF

FRIEND,  
YOU STAND ON SACRED GROUND  
THIS IS A PRINTING OFFICE

.....  
*Andy Chuka's edition of Beatrice Warde's famous "This Is a Printing Office."*

Santos Press, operated by Brent Bond, is the other press at Cattle Track. With a far greater focus on art prints than Tiny Satellite, Bond has produced a series of diverse and beautiful images in the clearly supportive environment engendered by the artists' colony.

Reminiscent of a 1960s commune (and I mean this as a compliment), Cattle Track Ranch thrives amid the pristine yet sterile surroundings of Scottsdale's gated communities, pseudo-western tourist attractions, golf courses and high-end

shops. It reminds us that fine printing can be nurtured in unlikely environments. If you are ever in the area, be sure to visit and support Cattle Track printers and artists. And if you need a blacksmith, they can help with that too.

.....  
~ Paul Whitney is a library consultant and former City Librarian at the Vancouver Public Library. For more information about Tiny Satellite Press, visit [www.tinysatellitepress.com](http://www.tinysatellitepress.com) and [www.tinysatellitepress.com/\\_OLD](http://www.tinysatellitepress.com/_OLD).