

A Roundup of Titles Worth Hunting

IN AN ERA when most private press productions rarely rise above a single signature, I want to tell you about a few new books that go beyond this.

BARBARIAN PRESS

www.barbarianpress.com

The most recent publication from the Barbarian Press of Mission, B.C., is *The Ingoldsby Legends*. The contents are eight poems from Richard H. Barham's *Ingoldsby Legends* with eight previously unpublished Victorian wood engravings by the Brothers Dalziel. These are printed from the woodblocks in the collection of Massey College in Toronto. The book is a broad quarto of approximately 160 pages.

The types are Poliphilus and Blado; the text is printed on mould-made Heine and the engravings printed on Zerkall Cream Smooth and tipped in. The text includes not only one poem for each block but also notes on the poems by Crispin Elsted. The regular state is quarter bound in cloth with patterned paper over boards. The deluxe edition is quarter bound in leather with pattern paper, slipcased with a portfolio of all eight of the blocks in the book plus a titling block which was too large for the book. The cost is \$525 and \$750, respectively.

The Elsteds brought a copy for viewing purposes on the evening they received the Robert R. Reid Award and Medal for Lifetime Achievement in the Books Arts in Canada (see feature page 3 in this issue). I had a chance to look at it briefly, an experience that fired anticipation of the arrival of my very own copy.

They have also announced the forthcoming publication of *The Splendour of Morning: Poems by C.P. Cavafy*, which they expect to publish by the end of the year, and *Fancy: 8 Odes of John Keats*, expected to be published in the fall. The press can be contacted and books ordered at its website, listed above.

GEORGE WALKER PRESS

www.george-walker.com

The limited edition books of George Walker of Toronto do not have a consistent limitation in the number of copies, but there is always a good reason for the number chosen. *The Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook* was issued in 80 copies in celebration of Cohen's 80th birthday. *Conrad Black: A Visual Biography Told in 100 Wood Engravings* was issued in 13 copies to remind one of the 13 boxes that Mr. Black was filmed removing from his office.

In September 2015, George Walker's *Pierre Elliott Trudeau:*

La vie en rose will be published in an edition of 15 copies. Fifteen is the number of years that Trudeau was prime minister. Like the others, this wordless biography

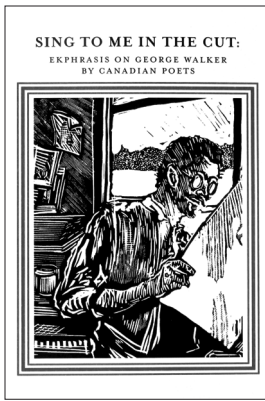
tells its story using only wood engravings—in this case, just 80. Walker will print the engravings directly from the maple woodblocks onto Rising Stonehenge 250 gm paper, a 100% archival rag paper. The text, set in Bembo with Bernhard for headings, consists of Justin Trudeau's eulogy for his father, a commentary on the Trudeau years by George Elliott Clarke (author of the dramatic poem *Trudeau: Long March, Shining Path* [Gaspereau Press, 2007]), a note by George Walker, a chronology of the Trudeau Years and an endnote by Tom Smart. At \$2,000, the book is not inexpensive but look at it this way: it works out to roughly \$25 per engraving. Contact George Walker through his website.



FROG HOLLOW PRESS

www.froghollowpress.com

If your budget refuses to make room for the Trudeau book but you want an example of



Walker's engravings, then seek out a copy of *Sing to Me in the Cut: Ekphrasis on George Walker by Canadian Poets*, edited by Shane Neilson with contributions from 15 Canadian poets and published in 2015 by Frog Hollow

Press of Victoria. This has been typeset in Mrs Eaves and printed on 80 lb Mohawk Via Velum. I looked but could not discover whether the engravings were printed from the original blocks. I suspect not, but with a limitation of 150 copies, it is possible. This is an attractively designed and printed book and well worth the \$22 price tag. An added bonus is a bibliography of Walker's work, commencing in 1985 with his work for his private press known as Columbus Street Press. Copies can be ordered from the Frog Hollow Press website.

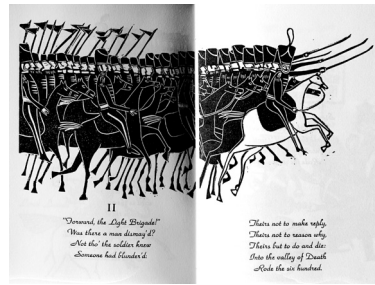
THEE HELLBOX PRESS & GREYWEATHERS PRESS

www.theehellbox.wordpress.com & www.greyweatherspress.com

It is rare to see a collaboration between private presses, but *The Truth About Rabbits* brings together Thee Hell Box Press of Kingston, Ontario, and Greyweathers Press of Merrickville, Ontario. The text is a series of eight poems and one short prose piece by Winona Linn. The text was set by Hugh Barclay of Thee Hell Box Press in Garamond on Saint-Armand's cream mould-made paper. The pages were then sent to Larry Thompson of Greyweathers Press, who made and printed his own wood engravings on those pages. The sheet size is large (25 x 27 cm), with generous margins that gave Thompson much freedom in placing the wood engravings. The collaboration is a success, and issued in an edition of 142 copies. \$75, available from either press.

GRIMSBY PUBLIC ART GALLERY

www.grimsby.ca/Art-Gallery/Wayzgoose
A collaboration of a different sort is the annual *Wayzgoose Anthology* from the wayzgoose in



Grimsby, Ontario. These anthologies have been issued at the annual April wayzgoose since 1981 (see my review of the anthology from the 32nd wayzgoose in *Amphora* 155 [July 2010]). I always find them uneven in quality, but a collection gives an overview of private press printing through the years. It is a pity that this idea has not been taken up by other groups hosting a wayzgoose. The 2015 edition has signatures from 28 presses. My favourites include George Walker's contribution, wood engravings from his *Trudeau* book printed from the blocks; "The Charge of the Light Brigade," from the printery at Cumberland Heritage Village Museum; and Gerard Brender à Brandis, "When a daffodil I see." A total of 115 copies were issued at a cost of \$80 apiece; they are available from the Grimsby Public Library (see website) or by calling (905) 945-3246.

RABBITTOWN PRESS

www.rabbittownpress.org
One book I look forward to having a closer look at is from David Brewer's Rabbittown Press in Fredericton, New Brunswick. That province is not noted for its private presses, so a new press here is encouraging. The book is Bliss Carman's *Low Tide on Grand Pré*. I don't know whether the intent of the press is to mine the Canadian literary canon, but that is an area whose texts are under-represented in any catalogue of Canadian private presses. Brewer can be contacted at his press website (see above) or through his blog at <https://rabbittownramblings.wordpress.com/about>.

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~ Chester Gryski is a lawyer practising in Toronto and a contributing editor of *Amphora*. Readers, and presses keen to inform him of their current projects, may contact him at cgryski@sympatico.ca.