

**PROCEED**

**AND**



**BE BOLD**

## Proceed and Be Bold: The Pear Tree Press

25 August – 6 October 2014 / Central Library Peterborough

There is something simply joyful about holding a book that has been printed and bound by hand, the mark of the maker present before you as you turn the pages. It's an experience that fills me with admiration for the skill of the craftsperson who produced it. This is certainly true of the books, posters, broadsides and ephemera printed by Tara McLeod, one of New Zealand's most distinguished and prolific hand-craft letterpress printers.

McLeod originally trained and worked in the commercial world of graphic design, but for the past two and a half decades he has been producing exquisitely designed and printed material under his imprint The Pear Tree Press, which he established in Auckland in 1988. Work produced at The Pear Tree Press is grounded in traditional, now obsolete, letterpress techniques such as metal and wooden type set and printed by hand on original printing machinery, including an Albion printing press dating from 1832.



Tara McLeod with The Pear Tree Press's Albion printing press, 2011

While much of the work produced at The Pear Tree Press involves McLeod's own imagery and writing, he has also collaborated with several notable New Zealand writers including Alan Loney, Brian Gregory and Hone Tuwhare and artists such as Richard McWhannell and Mike Ferris. McLeod himself is a prolific illustrator and has included his own linocuts in many printed texts.

What is most striking about printed matter from The Pear Tree Press, however, is McLeod's absolute commitment to and mastery of his craft. He labours over the quality of inking, the layout of a page, the use of appropriate typography and how an illustration sits with the text. One of McLeod's greatest skills is his ability to engage with traditional letterpress printing processes but in a modern and experimental manner. This marriage of historical and contemporary aspects of design makes his work stand out. McLeod is a letterpress printer who has an in-depth understanding of his craft and a sympathetic yet inventive eye when it comes to collaborating with poets and artists.

Peter Vangioni  
Curator, Christchurch Art Gallery

## Case 1

1. Tara McLeod  
*Look Again* 2012  
(portfolio of 26 sheets of typographical designs)
2. Brian Gregory and  
Richard McWhannell  
*In Winter Vineyards* 1999
3. Hone Tuwhare  
*Haiku* 2007
4. Alan Loney  
*A Little Book of Epigraphs* 2008
5. El Lissitzky  
*The Elements of Letters* 2011  
(broadside)
6. Samuel Pepys  
*After This to a Bookseller's* 2011  
(broadside)
7. Brian Gregory and  
Tara McLeod  
*Between Us* 2009
8. Alan Loney  
*Black & White Book* 2006

## Case 2

9. Selection of ephemera from The Pear Tree Press, including type samples, broadsides and business card, 1980s–2014.  
Private collection, Christchurch

## Case 3

10. Tara McLeod  
*Contemporary Letterpress* 2010  
(portfolio of 20 sheets of typographical designs)

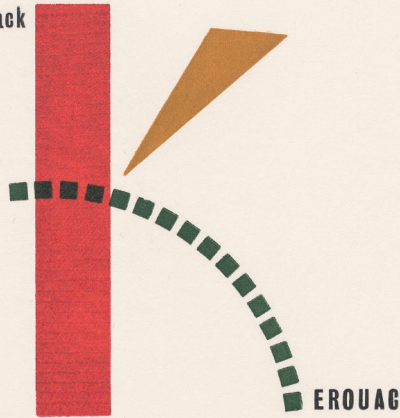
## Case 4

11. Tara McLeod  
*Specimens of Metal Type* 2000  
(including two loose sheets)
12. Tara McLeod  
*Pear Tree Press Design* 2013
13. Tara McLeod  
*Letterpress Typography* 2003
14. Tara McLeod  
*Specimens of Wood Type* 2001
15. Tara McLeod  
*Vanishing Events* 1996
16. Tara McLeod  
*Sounds Song* 1996

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**Proceed and Be Bold: The Pear Tree Press** coincides with the 2014 WORD Christchurch Writers & Readers Festival (27–31 August).

Jack, Jack



EROUAG

I've left my home and can't go back.

1. Tara McLeod, broadside from *Look Again* 2012



The elements of letters are:  
The horizontal, the perpendicular,  
the diagonal, the curve.  
These are the basic line-directions  
on the plain surface . . .  
*El Lissitzky*

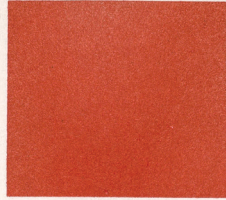
After this  
TO A  
BOOK  
& SELLER'S  
bought,  
for the love of the  
3 bindings,  
BOOKS...



*Samuel Pepys Diary*

*Handprint 3/10*

*Tanith Bead 2011*



RECTANGULUM  
IN SE  
PERFECTUM  
ET CRIMINIS  
EXPERTS  
EST



ABCDEFGH  
abcdefghi  
HIJKLMNO  
jklmnopqr  
PQRSTU  
stuvwxyz  
WXY&Z

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*48pt Monotype Garamond*

RATDOLT  
VOLAT  
IRREVOCABLE  
TEMPUS  
̈  
ABCDE  
FGHIJKLM  
NOPQU  
RSTVUW  
XYZ

8

9. The Pear Tree Press type samples: Garamond 2009, Ratdolt 2000



9. The Pear Tree Press logo design, 1989



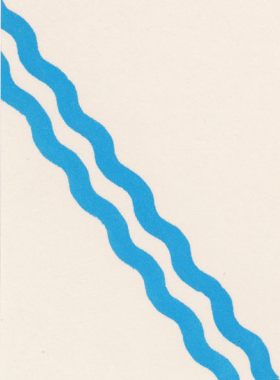


# LETTERING

*Struck an awful  
snag in the river of  
time when printing  
was invented.*

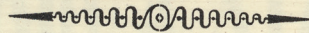
# TYPOGRAPHY

tends to establish  
letterforms frozen  
in tradition and  
limited by its mech-  
anical medium.



## Kneeling,

Rilke thought, is the proper posture  
**To Goethe, colour was the**  
for the artist. He must have experienced the  
**voice of God speaking through**  
mystery of kneeling, must know that a man  
**nature. Blackness was not**  
upon his knees 'is greater spiritually speaking,  
**merely the absence of light,**  
than a man standing upright' otherwise he  
**it was the background of the**  
risks forfeiting that divine grace without  
**cosmos, a field of intense**  
which a work of art remains empty.  
**activity for beings of a vastly**  
The artist who kneels before his work  
**higher order than humanity.**  
concentrates his feelings in his heart.



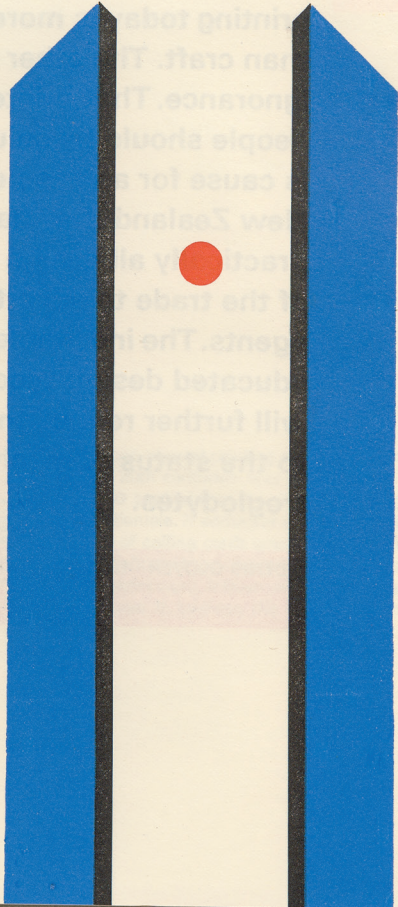


IN THE DAMP  
SPRING EVENING  
BLACKBIRDS  
CHANGING TREES

# Isaac Newton

... is the enemy of type-  
graphy & good printing. It is  
a condition of industrialism &  
printing today. The enemy is  
an craft. The enemy is of all  
people should understand  
cause for the loss of  
new Zealand. The enemy is  
sections of the trade  
gents. The enemy is the  
tured by the printer  
will further the  
the struggle  
employees.

... will be  
... to know that  
... to understand  
... to some  
... The printer  
... business was  
... of the  
... by inspiration.



*the contrasting attitudes of these two writers of course*  
In our classrooms and our society, punishment is  
*evited different responses from the reader since fear of the co*  
isolation and silence. In the East, these are the  
*judgemental dissidents very clear about this position he*  
prerequisites for enlightenment. Many people are  
*often provoke you to argue with him and consequently they*  
afraid to be alone with, and are uneasy with silence.  
*to formulate and defend your own perspective Schjeldahl*  
There must always be a clatter. The times they  
*writing is much less concerned with principles it's more p*  
cannot avoid being alone they rely on their elect-  
*than ideological to read Schjeldahl is not to agree or disag*  
ronic companion — TV/computer. Anything is done  
*but rather to center the enbhaning flow of a fertile imagina*  
to avoid meeting and getting acquainted with their  
*at the beginning of an essay on minimalism Schjeldahl wr.*  
best friend — themselves.

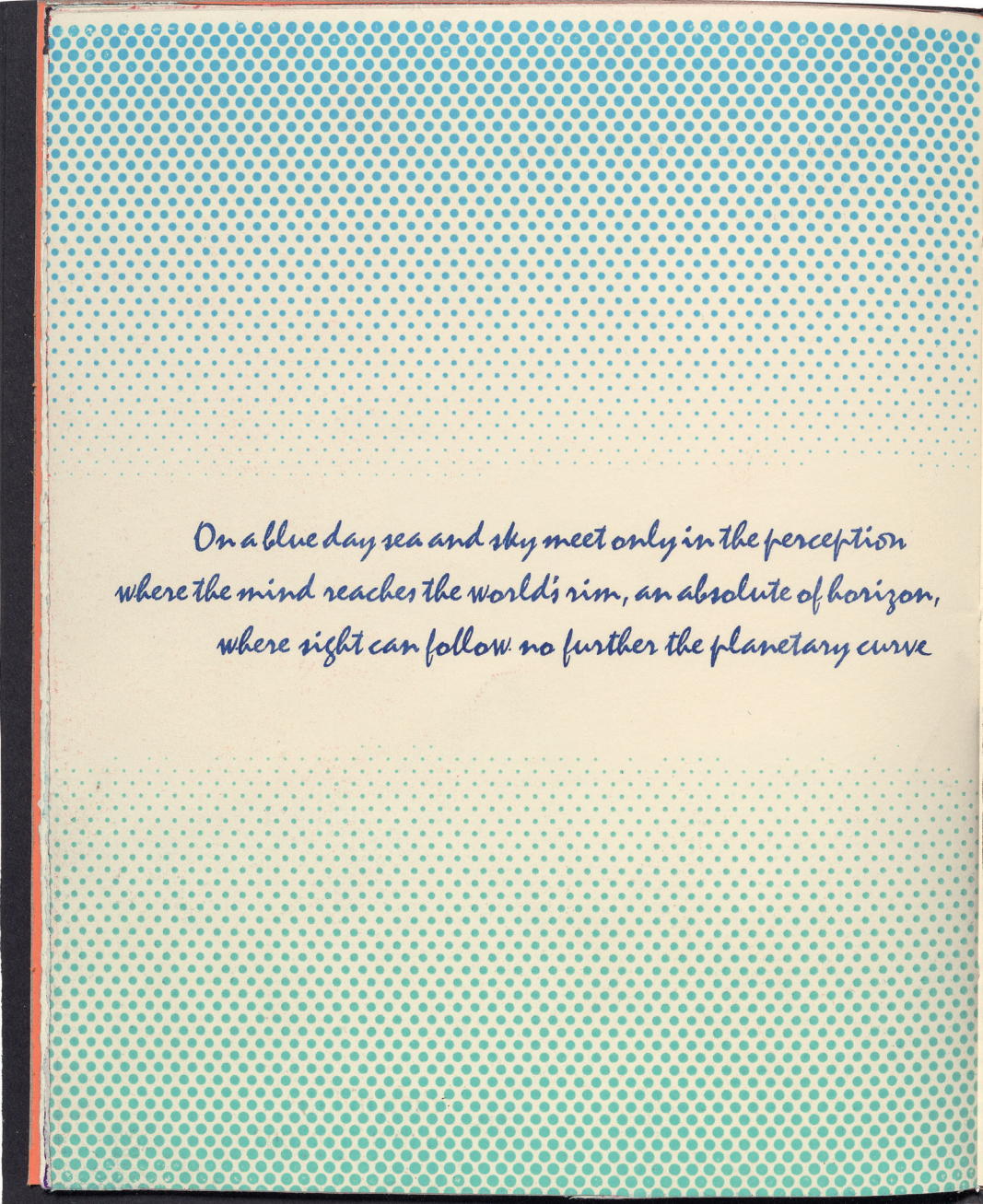
*this type of reaction is what you will find in his criticism*  
Visual books don't make much use of blank pages.  
*of undereyed hyper response versus it's love nothing more th*  
It is similar to radio and TV. The last thing a station  
*to be limited by art new unfamiliar shockings!! and gift*  
wants is more than a split second of silence.

*saying at the flying kayak reflected that the lead a shelteree*  
There is never-a-break. They never let up. That is ex-  
*life on the river where people are paddling yahoo! down*  
hausting. In a book, unlike electronic media, the  
*white water rapid so other people are making things in silic*  
viewer can pause and continue at will. In addition,  
*valley and the workshop of the world to change things for a*  
pause is incorporated within the book. Dominant  
*what is the point of trotting around galleries to look at art p*  
and subordinate pictures are accent and pause.  
*conizant to such daring and such industry? Oh there is a p*  
Within each page, negative areas are as import-  
*suppose but Burdon makes me impatient to fly to im port*  
ant as imaged areas and their shapes are created  
*Often he recklessly zoom from one engagement after ano*  
with strength.

*To the French poet Philippe Soupault pictured in the expo*  
In music, drama and poetry, silence is used for rest,  
*land of skyscrapers and tycoons but the birth place of jazz*  
but also to intensify, to create rhythm. Silence is a  
*of a civilization on the verge of cataclymic change yet for*  
means of clarification, as punctuation is in writing.  
*portrayal of Gwendolyn Bors mildly late work on a portrayal of the*  
And so it is in the book format.

KEITH SMITH  
Structure of the visual book

*painters offer them on a gel crowd of city streets and subje*



*On a blue day sea and sky meet only in the perception  
where the mind reaches the world's rim, an absolute of horizon,  
where sight can follow no further the planetary curve*

You are walking  
over wood that  
is locked exactly  
into wood, frames  
of the carpenter's thinking.  
In an ossuary of ships  
they are springing apart,  
**the black skeletons  
of ships; bones cut  
from the flesh of forest.**



# CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU OUTER SPACES

[christchurchartgallery.org.nz](http://christchurchartgallery.org.nz)

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## Christchurch City Libraries

Ngā Kete Wānanga-o-Ōtautahi

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**PROCEED AND BE BOLD:  
THE PEAR TREE PRESS**

**25 AUGUST – 6 OCTOBER 2014  
CENTRAL LIBRARY PETERBOROUGH  
A CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY  
OUTER SPACES PROJECT**

**WORD**  
**CHRISTCHURCH**  
**WRITERS & READERS**  
**FESTIVAL 2014**  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
**THE PRESS**

**Proceed and Be Bold:**  
**The Pear Tree Press**  
coincides with the 2014  
WORD Christchurch  
Writers & Readers Festival  
(27–31 August).

All books are from the Robert and Barbara Stewart  
Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery  
Te Puna o Waiwhetu unless otherwise stated.

Cover: Tara McLeod, broadside from *Contemporary  
Letterpress* 2010

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**THE PRESS**



Christchurch  
City Council 