

Alan Kitching

BIOGRAPHY



1940 Born Darlington, Co Durham

Alan Kitching became an apprentice compositor with a local letterpress printer four days after his fifteenth birthday and continued working there until 1961. In 1962 he moved south to pursue a career in design.

In 1964 he met Anthony Froshaug and co-established the experimental printing workshop at Watford College of Technology, School of Art. Kitching worked with Froshaug until 1967 and later collaborated on student projects at the Central School of Art & Design, London.

Kitching established own design practice London in 1973 and became a partner with Derek Birdsall at Omnific in 1977. He started letterpress printing there in 1985. He began teaching typography as a visiting lecturer at the Royal College of Art in London and continued to teach there until 2006.

The Typography Workshop, established in 1989, is based in London and uses traditional techniques of letterpress printing. Through wood and metal type, relief printing processes and an assortment of presses, the studio produces highly evocative graphic images which will be familiar to every reader of the Guardian newspaper or visitor to Borough Market. The exhibition at Advanced Graphics London in 2009 was an overview of the previous two decades and carries us through the complex, wordy, London-centric 'Broadside' series to the deliciously blocked, highly textured, vividly coloured recent works.

The hand-printed images, in tiny editions on fine paper, link the two aspects of graphics by being simultaneously related to both design and fine art. Alan met designer and writer Celia Stothard (1949 - 2010) in 1994 and so began their fruitful collaboration including relocating the Typography Workshop studio, teaching workshops and collecting letterpress materials together.

The Typography Workshop's collection of original letterpress type expanded dramatically in 1997 following the purchase by Celia and Alan of a collection of nineteenth century wood-letter alphabet and title blocks from Wrington, near Bristol.

As well as notable commissions for The Guardian newspaper, Borough Market and Clark's shoes Alan completed a set of cards for the Tate Gallery in 2010.

Alan Kitching has two sons and lives and works in London.

SELECTED RECENT EXHIBITIONS

- 2009 Alan Kitching & Celia Stothard: The Typography Workshop 'Twenty Years of New Letterpress Prints', Advanced Graphics London
- 2010 The London Original Print Fair, The Royal Academy of Arts, London
- 2011 The London Original Print Fair, The Royal Academy of Arts, London
- 2011 Summer Exhibition, The Royal Academy of Arts, London *invited by Chris Orr RA*
- 2011 IFPDA Print Fair, New York with Advanced Graphics London

Advanced Graphics London

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