



Duration

00:31:17

Reference

OH16

Subjects

Printmaking / Letterpress / Book Design

Recording date

15 September 2015

Recording location

Cambridge

Interviewee

Carter, Sebastian (SC – speaker, male)

Interviewer

Lin, Gloria (GL – speaker, female)

Synopsis

In this 2015 First Decade interview, the scholar, publisher and book designer Sebastian Carter (b. 1941) talks to Gloria Lin about running the Rampant Lions Press (founded by his father Will Carter in 1924, the workshop closed in 2008) and the processes of printing, letterpress and designing a book. He discusses how his edition of *The Story of Cupid and Psyche*, held in the Crafts Council Collection (1974; B9), came about, telling the story of taking up the project from William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones.

Recording

01:23 SC talks about taking up William Morris's and Edward Burne-Jones's book *The Story of Cupid and Psyche*.

04:42 SC talks about the complex process of printing and letterpress, suggesting that: 'A lot of young people are interested in letterpress because it's slightly smelly, it's got some texture and if you've been doing nothing but computer design, you crave something that's a bit not-too-perfect.'

11:02 GL asks if SC came up with ideas for books or if people requested them. SC responds that it was 'half and half'. He talks about the different styles and designs of binding and creating patterned prints.





14:24 SC talks about working with his father Will Carter, with whom he ran the Rampant Lions Press. SC talks about working for the publisher John Murray and a firm in Paris before returning to his father's press.

15:32 SC comments on giving away all his press machinery after closing the Rampant Lions Press workshop in 2008, and doing 'ephemeral printing [like business cards and letterheads] to pay the bills'.

17:27 GL asks about his influences. SC suggests that his work is 'rectilinear' [shows GL some of his work and describes his process].

21:48 GL asks if there was a 'scene' in the 70s. SC says there was a printmaking scene and describes 'beavering away on the margins' of printmaking.

22:42 GL and SC talk about the pressure to commercialise. SC comments that it was always a 'good day's work' when they did letter heading, but 'incredibly boring'.

26:22 GL and SC discuss the conservation of limited-edition books.