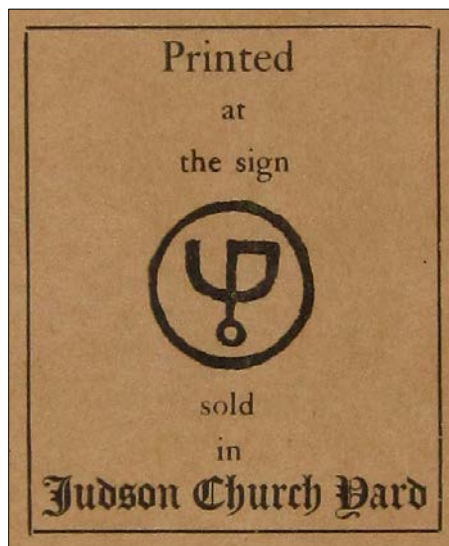


URANIAN PRESS, 1958-1963



This list features the work of the Uranian Press, the small but influential underground publisher of artist's books, chapbooks, and broadsides founded in 1958 by Richard Oviet Tyler (1926-1983), visionary artist and key figure in the downtown New York avant-garde scene of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

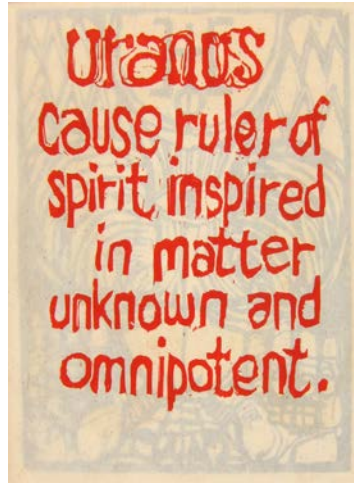
In 1958, Tyler moved with his wife, Dorothea Baer (1926-2012), to New York from Chicago, where both had attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and enjoyed early success in their artistic careers. In New York, the two dedicated themselves to a radical life-as-art vision, beginning with the establishment of the Uranian Press in the basement of a tenement building where Tyler had found work as a superintendent. It was in this basement studio where Claes Oldenburg (with whom Tyler collaborated in projects at Judson Gallery) made his first print, *Mamagangers*. By 1960, the press had acquired four printing presses and a small staff of artists, writers, and young apprentices whose work was published in broadsides, chapbooks, and artist's books and sold by Tyler from a pushcart in the yard of Judson Church on the south side of Washington Square Park.

Tyler was a fixture in Greenwich Village in the late 1950s and early 1960s and played an important, if still underappreciated, role in the nascent expanded arts movements of the New York avant-garde scene with both the Press and its performance arm, the Uranian Alchemical Players. The Uranian circle expanded into a quasi-religious collective incorporating Jungian and Gnostic ideas of creativity and consciousness, psychedelic drugs, Western astrology, alchemy, Tibetan Buddhism, and the political thought of Charles Fourier, becoming known officially in 1974 as the Uranian Phalanstery.

Our collection features three particularly rare and significant works: one of five bound copies of Tyler's 1958 book, *The Planets*, the 1960 first catalogue of the Uranian Press, containing various ephemera with which it was originally issued, and the artistic manifesto of the Press, *Creativity as a Mantic Procedure of the Intuitive Function*, also published in 1960.

Items are listed below in more-or-less chronological order, followed by a brief list of references consulted. To order or request additional images or information, please contact Will Baker at will@wcbaker.com. Once we have confirmed the order, payments may be submitted by check, wire transfer, or major credit card. Libraries and known customers may be billed. All materials are guaranteed to be as described. Purchases may be returned within ten days of receipt after contacting the seller. All items are subject to prior sale.





1. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. **THE PLANETS**. New York: Uranian Press, 1958. Folio. [40] leaves (29 printed), containing wood-block images and text printed in black, red, and blue. Original orange linen over boards, printed in black; dyed endpapers. Numbered 2 (of 5), signed, and dated 1958 by Tyler on flyleaf. Small red stain in upper-right portion of front cover, light foxing in outer leaves, a bit musty, else near fine.

One of five bound copies; an additional twenty copies were issued unbound in portfolios.

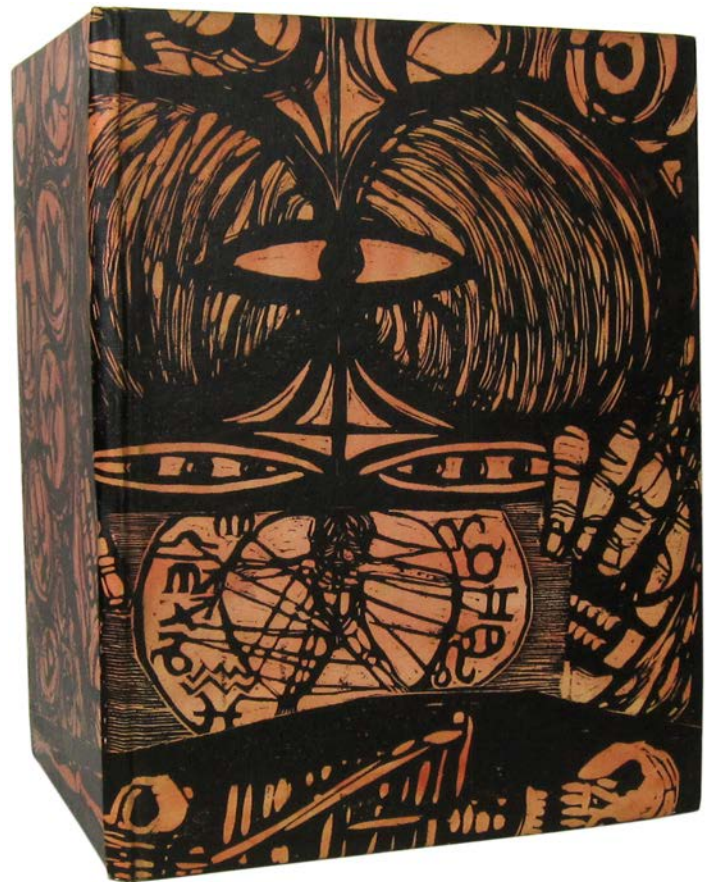
The book masterpiece of Richard O. Tyler (1926-1983), created in 1958, the year Tyler established the Uranian Press. Much of Tyler's printed, performative, and philosophical work married elements of Western astrology, Jungian psychology, and Gnostic Christianity; all are expressed brilliantly in *The Planets*' suite of woodcut text and images. The work is the first and most expensive item listed in Uranian Press's 1960 *Catalogue No. One* (see Item 2 below):

The Planets. Original astrological interpretations of the nine planets, written & illustrated by. R. O. Tyler. Twenty color woodcut plates 8 x 11 in. hand printed on imported sekishu paper. Edition limited to Five Books, & Twenty Folio, hand bound in woodcut printed line cover, with hand made end papers. Numbered & signed edition. Book – \$100 Folio – \$75.

An important 20th-century artist's book, by the man Stefan Brecht called in 1988 "probably the greatest XXth century wood-cut artist: I know of none other that has had anything to tell" (Brecht, p. 65).

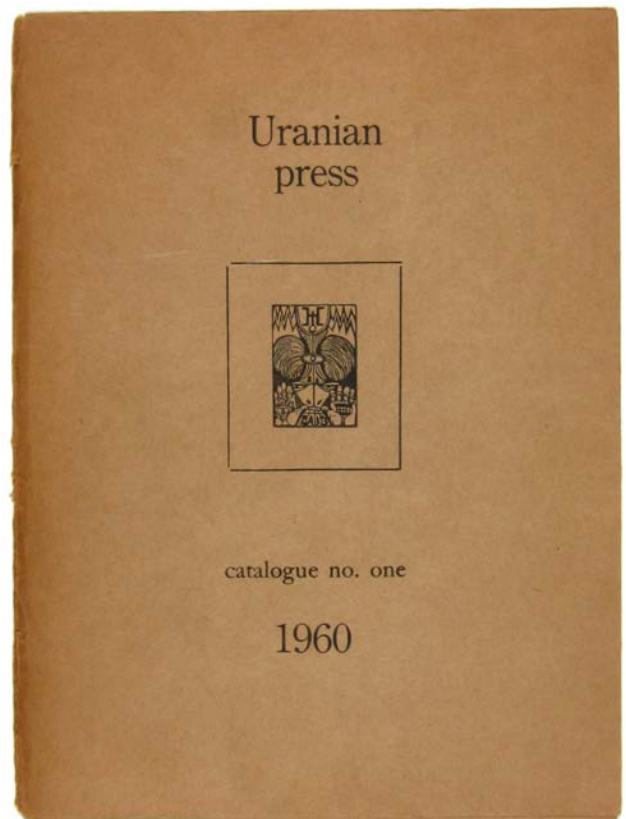
OCLC records no copies of either this or the portfolio edition. Rare.

\$6000

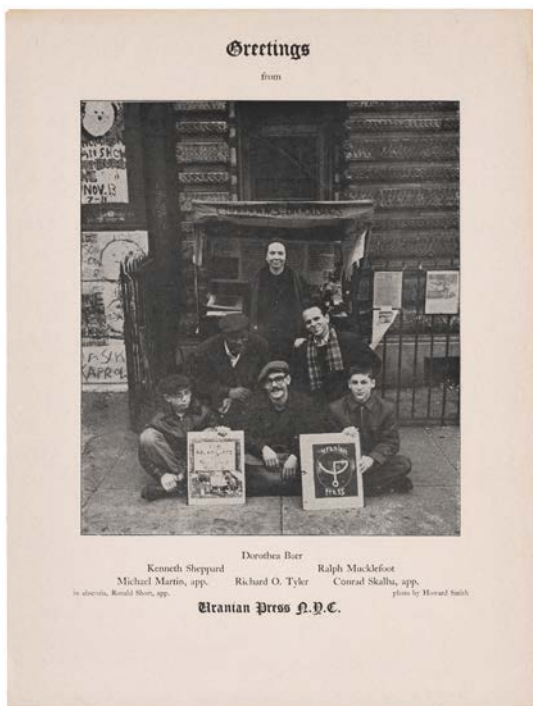


2. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. **URANIAN PRESS CATALOGUE NO. ONE.** New York: Hand set & printed by Michael Martin & Conrad Skalba at Uranian Press, 1959-1960. Bifolium, 12 x 9 inches, [4] pp., with 5 inserted leaves (2 broadsides and 3 newspaper clippings – see below), as issued. Printed in black on brown paper, illustration on first page, logo on last. Page [2] printed faintly. Worn at edges, mostly separated at fold. Good to very good, with inserts in good to fine condition.

The brief first (and only known) catalogue of the Uranian Press, printed two years after its founding and showing five kinds of wares: artist's books, broadside portfolios, posters, a magazine, and greeting cards. The first, "Fine Art Editions," begins with Tyler's major illustrated work of "[o]riginal astrological interpretations," *The Planets* (1958 – see Item 1 above), listed in both bound and loose-leaf portfolio forms. The catalogue's cover image is taken from a plate from the "Uranus" portion of that work. Second listed is the portfolio, *The Life and Death of Chickenman*, "[b]eing an account in Twenty-One Plates of the time & trauma of everyman." The third and final artist's book is *The Adventures of Tom Gray*, "[w]ritten, drawn, cut & printed by Ronald Short apprentice, age nine. A classic cowboy story in eighteen plates." The latter was the subject of a March 9, 1960 article in *LIFE* magazine, "Boy Printer and His Book," and mentioned in articles in *The Village Voice* in 1959 and 1960, all of which are present in original newspaper clipping inserts.



Two broadsides printed at the Uranian Press were inserted along with the newspaper clippings. The first, *Elizabethan Ballads*, bears a 1959 Uranian Press imprint above a rubber stamp of the press's seal. It refers to the "Blackletter Broadside Ballad of the 16th & 17th cen." and the "Chapbook of the 18th cen." that inspired most of the works printed and sold by the Uranian Press and advertises several items being sold from the pushcart at the Judson Church Yard.



The second broadside, *Greetings from . . . Uranian Press N.Y.C.*, features a halftone photographic image of the Uranian Press staff outside the Lower East Side tenement that housed its basement studio. Richard Tyler and Dorothea Baer are shown with Kenneth Shepherd and Ralph Mucklefoot (i.e. Victor Lorenz Kaplan) and two young apprentices, Michael Martin and Conrad Skalba. Apprentice Ronald Short is listed in absentia, a copy of *The Adventures of Tom Gray* held in his place.

The catalog and its supplementary materials together constitute a small archive of invaluable historical and bibliographical information on one of the most daring and original of New York's underground presses.

OCLC records two institutional locations: at the Harry Ransom Center and University College Dublin. Two copies are held at the Ransom Center in the Edward G. Fletcher collection. In these copies, the

Village Voice articles are contemporary reproductions on one two-sided leaf (the present copy's are clipped from original newsprint), but the inserts are otherwise identical to those here.

\$900

3. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. **CREATIVITY AS A MANTIC PROCEDURE OF THE INTUITIVE FUNCTION.** New York: Hand Set & Printed by Michael Martin & David Lewis, apprentices at Uranian Press N.Y.C., 1960. Bifolium, [4] pp., with 2 inserted leaves, all 12 x 9 inches, printed (recto only) in red and black on brown paper. Light wear at edges, 1¾-inch crease in outer edge of first leaf, else near fine.

The existential manifesto of the Uranian Press, presenting the original basis of Tyler's integrative vision of art, life, creativity, and journeys through forms of consciousness. Its main text, printed in three pages on a bifolium, is supplemented with two broadside inserts, one of which introduces the manifesto:

In this this paper Creativity is to be understood in the sense of a Self Documented life work toward a more fully integrated individual, able to bridge consciousness between these states, & impart the result in a symbol system seeking to evolve self transcendence to the point of holding in consciousness the knowledge of unity with the universe.

From his decision to leave Chicago in 1958 to his final years conducting underground tattoo and burial ceremonies under the aegis of the Uranian Phalanstery and the First New York Gnostic Lyceum Temple, Tyler was committed to the vision outlined in this document. He also increasingly came to know the "very real dangers" with which "exploration of this dark & terrible, spaceless primordial realm is fraught." He warns in both *Creativity's* main text and a second broadside insert about these risks: demon possession, "the nihilistic necromancer becom[ing] the False Magician," the "Yang & Yin balance of Violent, vandalistic, nihilistic, Murderous destruction."

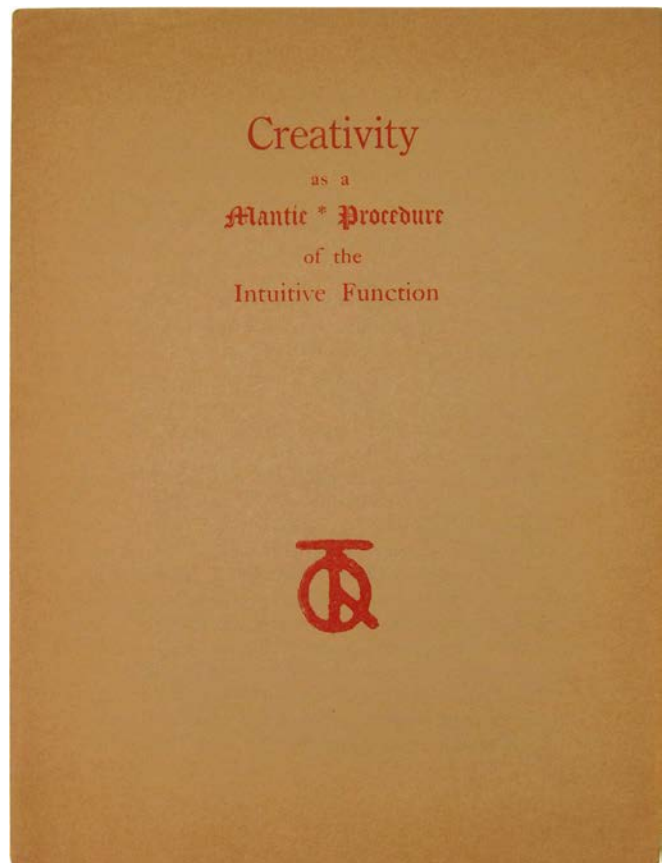
Stefan Brecht, who dedicates a chapter of his history of the Bread and Puppet Theater to Tyler, suggests that Tyler ultimately succumbed to those dangers, casting him as both an influence on and a kind of antithesis to Bread and Puppet's founder, Peter Schumann. In their early acquaintance, the two had both seen "the threat of nuclear war as crucial, contemporary fact, saw it as a symptom of the preponderant form of madness, rational madness, and saw as only salvation a mass transformation of consciousness from the intellectual to the intuitive" (Brecht, p. 68). Whereas Schumann's "sacrifice of consciousness," however, called on radical love traditions and archetypes from Christian sources, leading him to become a major, transformative player in the peace movement, Brecht contends that Tyler's art was stuck in the sacrifice alone – the "mission is reported on, not any achievement of it" (p. 66).

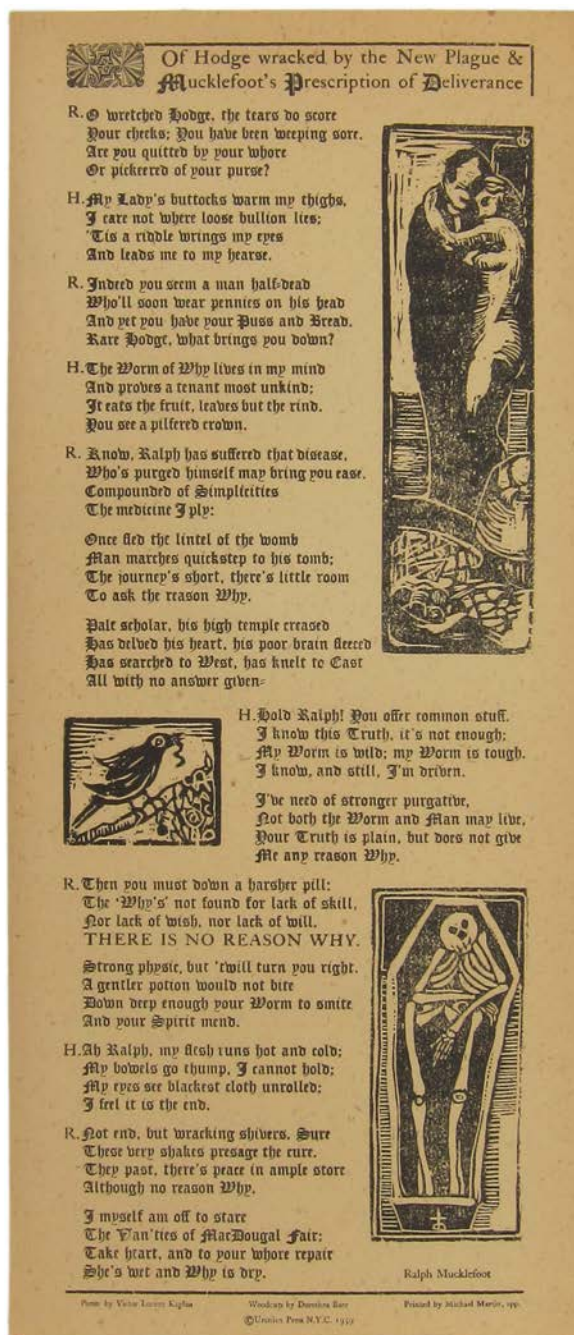
Peter Schumann's son, Max Schumann, himself remembers Tyler as "part genius, part madman" and has long been engaged with his art and philosophy, recently curating the first major retrospective of Tyler's work, *The Schizophrenic Bomb*, at Printed Matter. He contrasts Tyler's work not with Bread and Puppet's but with the commercial gallery culture surrounding Tyler on one hand and insipid New Age movements that emerged around him, using similar symbolic systems, on the other. Tyler defied them all to the end, "not only not being engaged or aspiring to high art or the institutions of arts – just completely not recognizing the values" and remaining fully committed to an integrated "art-life practice" that never yielded its "dark, death current" to facile spiritual formulas (Lynch, 2017).

A rare and significant document in postwar psychic exploration and American antiestablishment art.

OCLC records two copies, at Northwestern and the Harry Ransom Center.

\$500





4. **Kaplan, Victor Lorenz (poetry); Dorothea Baer (woodcuts). MUCKLEFOOT MISCELLANY.** New York: Hand set in Caslon Old Face & Priory Text, by M. Martin & C. Skalba, apprentices, & printed at Uranian Press N.Y.C., 1959-1960. 4 broadsides, approximately 20 x 8½ inches, in original printed paper folder, 21 x 8¾ inches. Printed on tan paper. Signed and numbered in pencil on front cover of folder by Baer and Kaplan. Front cover of folder embossed with seal of the Uranian Press. Fine.

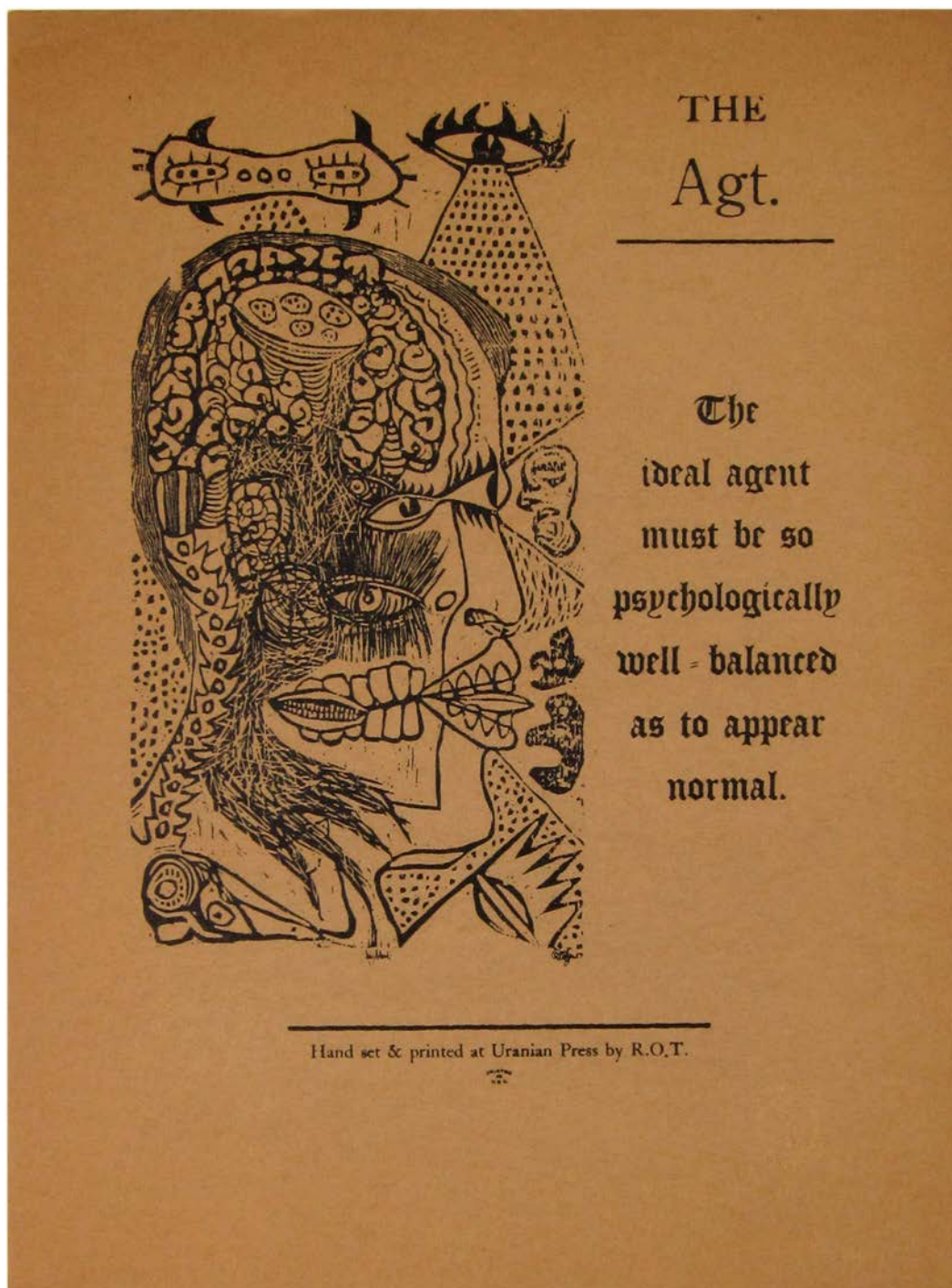
Numbered 298 of 400 copies. The first Uranian Press "Broadside Ballads Folio," inspired by the blackletter broadside ballads of Elizabethan England, advertised in the 1960 Uranian Press Catalogue One, and sold by Uranian Press founder Richard O. Tyler in the Judson Church Yard in Greenwich Village.

The poems are composed by Victor Lorenz Kaplan, a.k.a. Ralph Mucklefoot, type-set by young apprentices Michael Martin and Conrad Skalbo, and illustrated with woodcuts by Dorothea Baer, wife of Richard Tyler and co-founder of the Uranian Press and the later Uranian Phalanstery. The first three broadsides, "Simple Simon," "Of Hodge wrack'd by the New Plague & Mucklefoot's Prescription of Deliverance," and "Ralph O' Bellevue," bear 1959 imprints and are presumably the items referred to in the Press's 1959 *Elizabethan Ballads* broadside. The fourth broadside, "A Fable for Foxes," and printed folder bear 1960 imprints. OCLC records six copies. \$150



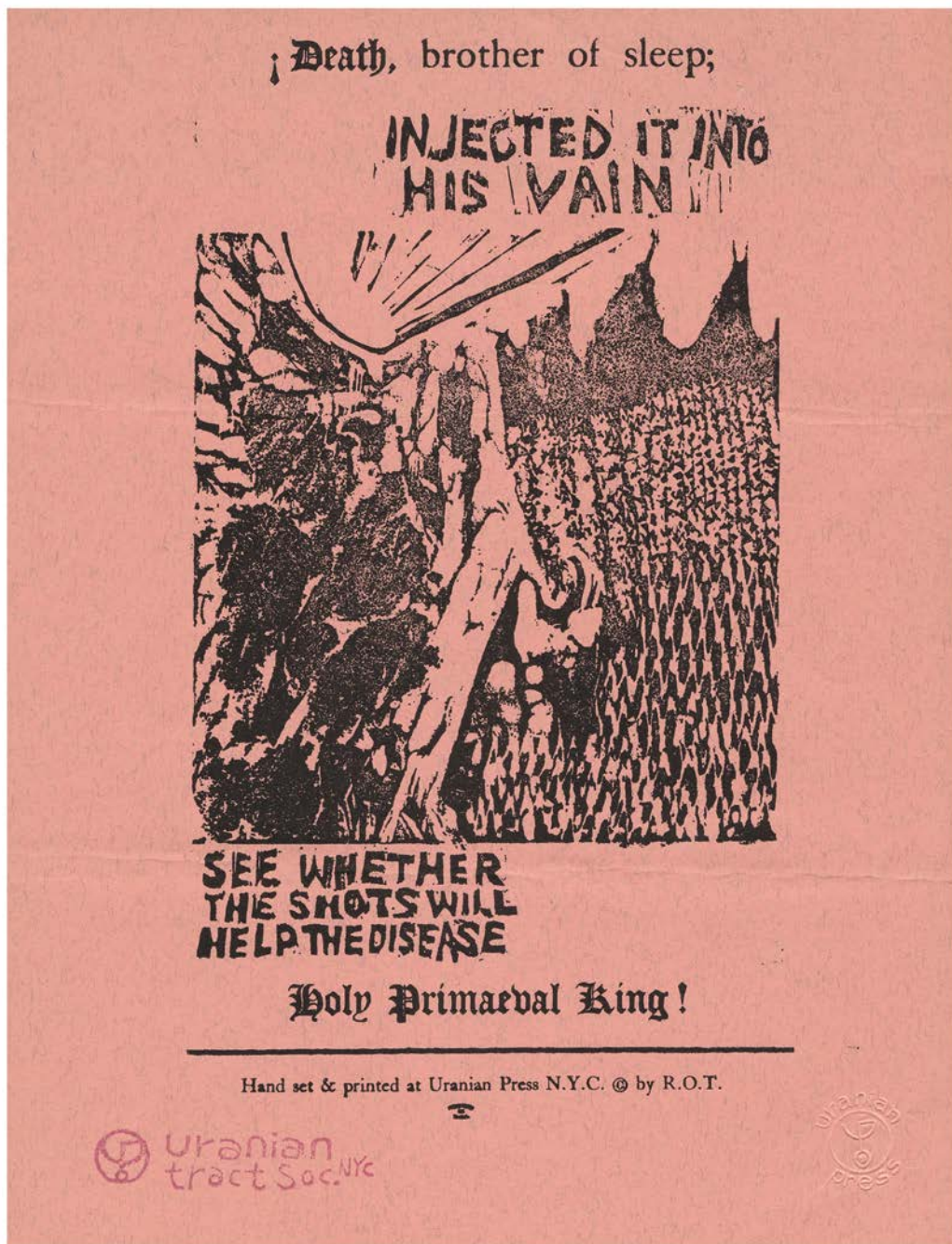
5. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. [R.O.T.]'S 8 DEATH TRACTS 8. New York: Uranian Press, 1960. 8 broadsides, 11 x 8½ inches, in original pictorial paper folder, 11½ x 9¾ inches. Printed in black and red, broadsides on pale yellow paper, folder on orange stiff paper. Signed and numbered in pencil by Tyler on folder second leaf verso. All broadsides and first leaf of folder embossed with seal of the Uranian Press. Fine.

Numbered 12 of 300 copies. An early Uranian Press portfolio, containing 8 broadsides with text by Richard Tyler and four deep-etch relief prints by him and four by Manuel Narciza, all hand-set and printed at the Press and bearing its imprint. Each tract consists of two lines of cryptic thanatological text, one above and one below an associated image. OCLC records three copies. \$125



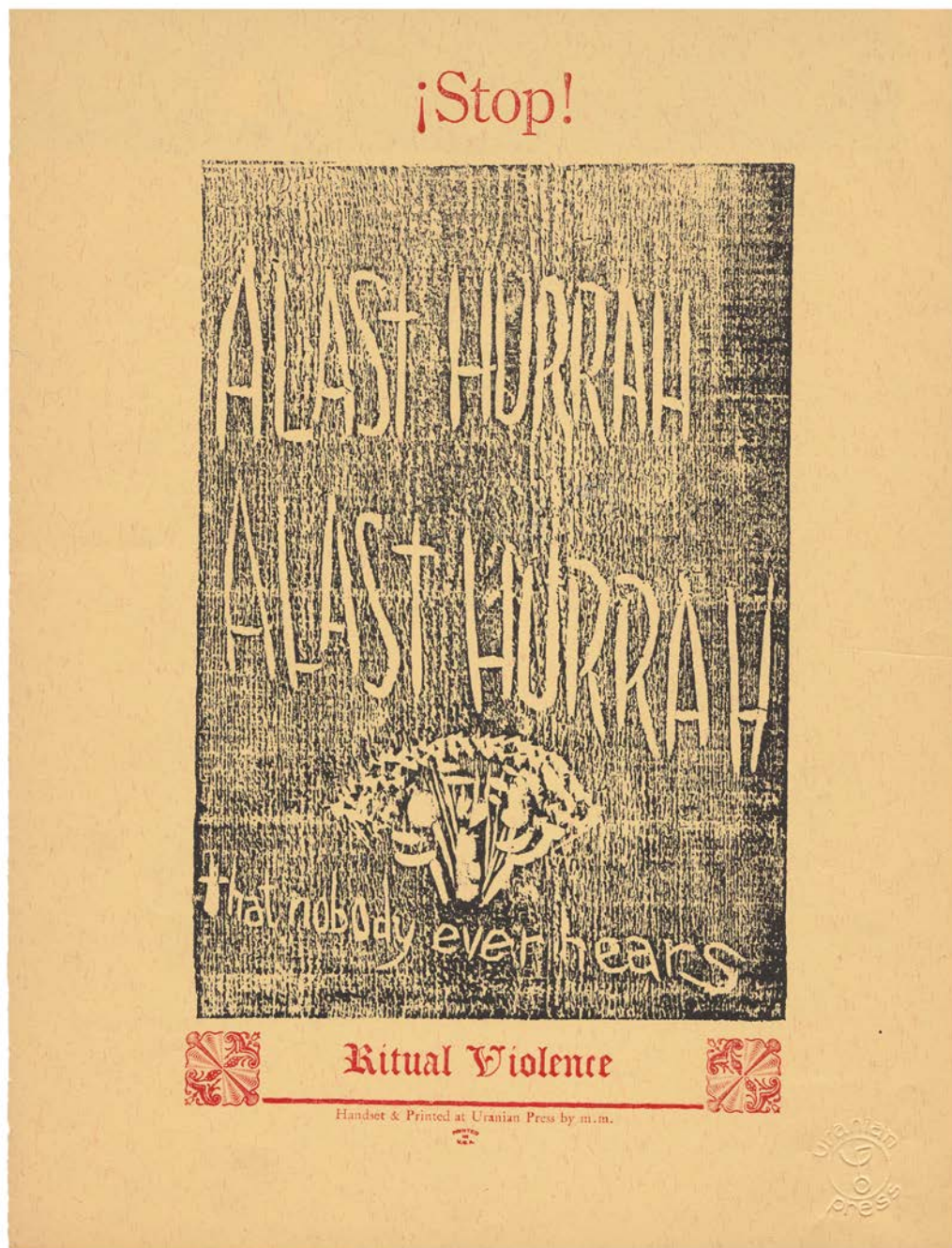
6. **R.O.T. [i.e. Richard Oviet Tyler]. THE AGT. : THE IDEAL AGENT MUST BE SO PSYCHOLOGICALLY WELL=BALANCED AS TO APPEAR NORMAL [caption title].** New York: Uranian Press, [ca. 1960]. Broadside, approximately 12 x 9 inches, printed on brown paper. Embossed seal of Uranian Press on recto; rubber stamp of Uranian Tract Society on verso. Fine.

Early broadside of the Uranian Press, written, illustrated, hand-set, and printed by Richard Tyler. The text is a lightly abbreviated version of a quotation from the third section of Tyler's 1960 treatise, *The Paranoid's Primer*, "A Modus Operandi, for Schizothymic AGT.'s." In the PRIMER, the quotation reads, "The ideal agent must be a psychologically well-balanced individual – not ordinary, but so well-balanced as to appear normal," and is attributed to "Govt. C & D, Agt.'s M." OCLC records one copy, at the Harry Ransom Center. \$175



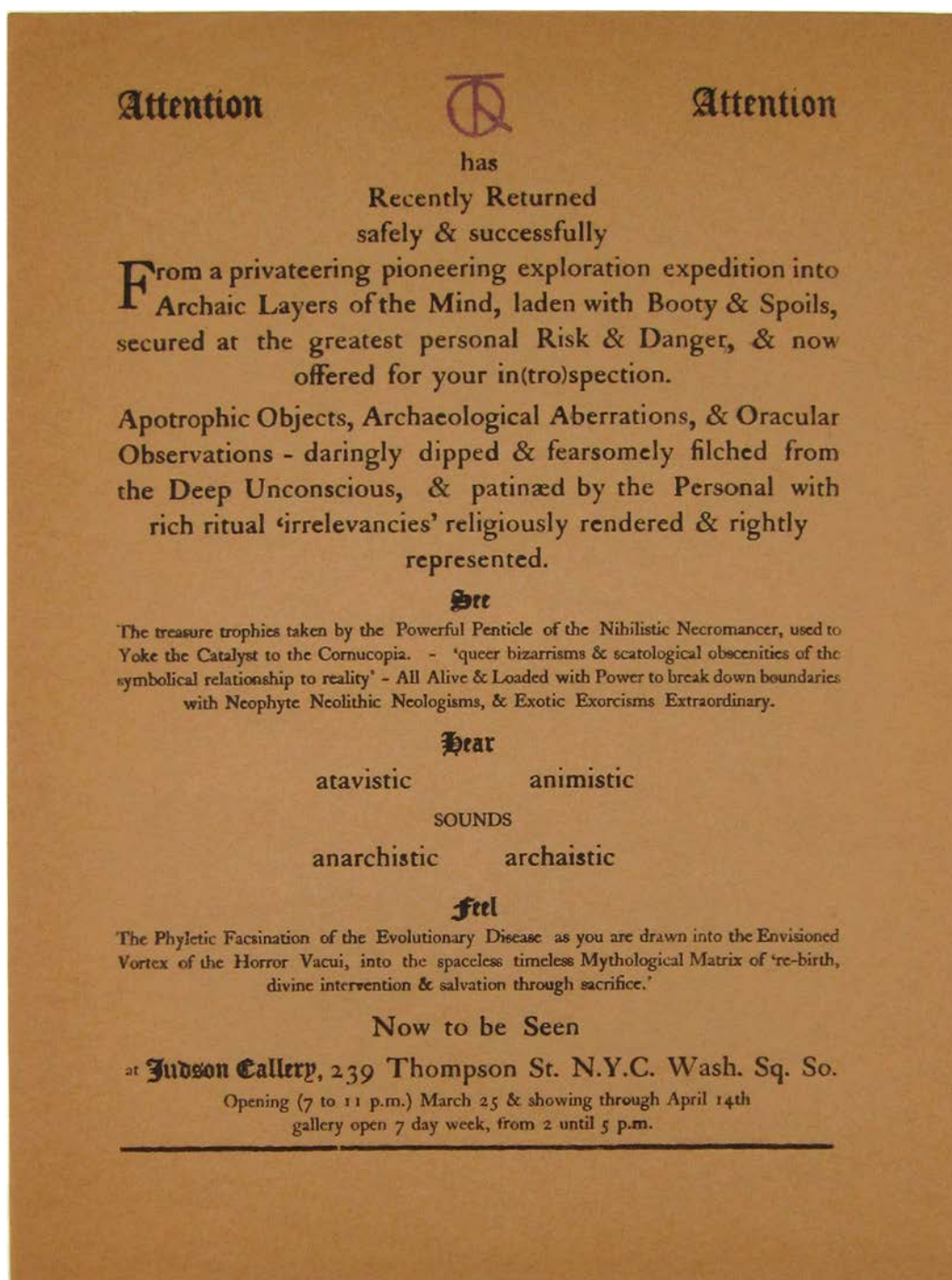
7. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. ;**DEATH, BROTHER OF SLEEP; HOLY PRIMAEEVAL KING!** [caption title]. [New York]: Hand set & Printed at Uranian Press by R.O.T. [i.e. Richard O. Tyler], [ca. 1960]. Broadside, 11 x 8½ inches. Printed in black on salmon paper. Embossed seal of the Uranian Press and rubber stamp of Uranian Tract Society in lower margin. Two horizontal folds, else fine.

An early broadside printed by the Uranian Press, issued in a slightly different form in the 1960 DEATH TRACTS broadside portfolio. In Uranian Press tract style, two lines of text (here, “;Death, brother of sleep;” and “Holy Primaeval King!”) are printed above and below a relief print. The print adds the text, “INJECTED IT INTO HIS VAIN | SEE WHETHER THE SHOTS WILL HELP THE DISEASE,” around a fairly inscrutable image. OCLC records no copies of this separate edition. \$100



8. [Tyler, Richard Oviet et al.]. ¡STOP! RITUAL VIOLENCE [caption title]. [New York]: Handset & Printed at Uranian Press by m. m. [i.e. Michael Martin], [ca. 1960]. Broadside, 11 x 8½ inches. Type printed in red, woodcut printed in black on yellow paper. Embossed with seal of the Uranian Press; rubber stamp of Uranian Tract Society on verso. Quarter-inch closed tear on left edge, else fine.

Early broadside printed by the Uranian Press. Two lines of text – “¡Stop! and “Ritual Violence”) – are printed above and below a reverse-relief print. The print here shows additional text, “A LAST HURRAH | A LAST HURRAH” carved above what appears to be a cluster of flowers and farm implements. The broadside was handset and printed by one of the young apprentices of the Uranian Press, Michael Martin. OCLC records no copies. \$125



9. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. **ATTENTION ATTENTION ROT HAS RECENTLY RETURNED SAFELY & SUCCESSFULLY FROM A PRIVATEERING PIONEERING EXPEDITION INTO THE ARCHAIC LAYERS OF THE MIND . . . NOW TO BE SEEN AT JUDSON GALLERY . . . [caption title]**. New York: Uranian Press, [ca. 1960]. Broadside, approximately 12 x 9 inches, printed on brown paper. Contemporary rubber stamp monogram of Richard O. Tyler. Fine.

Early broadside of the Uranian Press, advertising founder Richard Tyler's first exhibition at Judson Gallery, March 25 – April 14, 1960. An April 6 review in the *Village Voice* points to "pages from his Uranian Press folios and chapbooks . . . Here too are stark and striking woodcuts in the manner of Mexico's great Posada, aptropaic [sic] icons, giant paintings, and collages set off by fantastic hand-worked frames. Prices range from 30 cents for broadsides up to \$1000 for a collage." OCLC records no copies. \$150



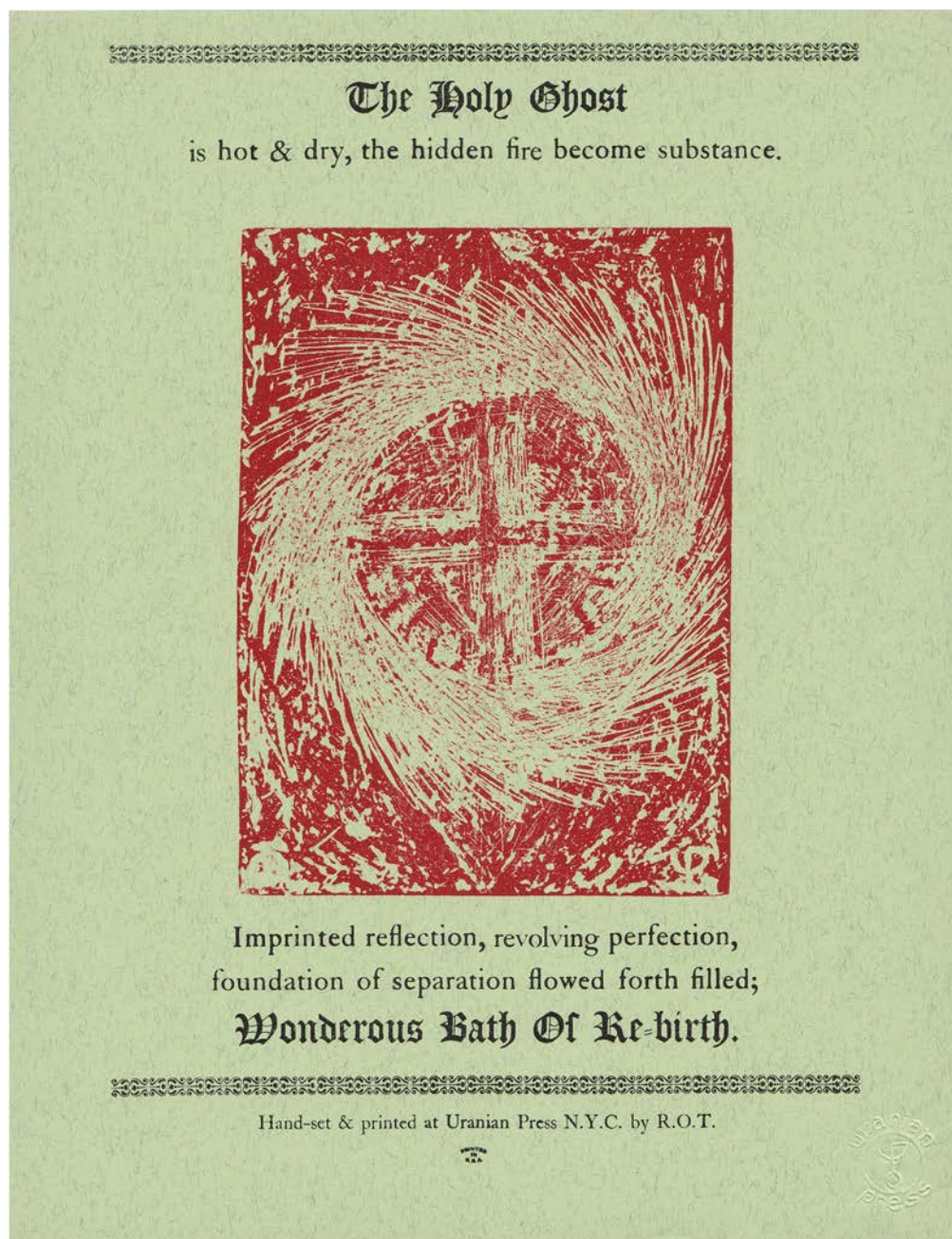
THE SCHIZOPHRENIC BOMB
An Artifice For Armageddon

10. Tyler, Richard Oviert. **THE PARANOID'S PRIMER : CONTAINING SOME NOTES ON RAY MACHINE REALITY AND DEUS EX MACHINA OR THE 'S' BOMB TOGETHER WITH A MODUS OPERANDI, FOR SCHIZOTHYMIC AGT.'S.** New York: Uranian Press, 1961. [28] pp., including in-text woodcut and deep etch relief illustrations. Original green wrappers, printed in red, saddle-stapled. Numbered and signed in pencil by Richard Tyler on the publisher's page over his rubber-stamped monogram. Seal of Uranian Press embossed in title leaf. Fine.

Numbered 41 of 300 copies. An early and important chapbook of visionary artist Richard O. Tyler's Uranian Press, "Offered not only as an Object of Curiosity & Entertainment, but as a Work of Real & Substantial USE." The work brings together three texts reflecting Tyler's interest in nuclear-apocalyptic fears, Jungian psychology, Western astrology, and psychosis. The first is referred to as a revised version of "Some Notes on Ray Machine Reality," which had been written by Tyler originally for the Ray Gun Documents series and printed by Claes Oldenburg and Jim Dine for their 1960 Ray Gun Exhibition at Judson Church Gallery. The second, "Deus ex Machina or the 'S' Bomb," was printed separately by Tyler the same year as the *Primer*. It contains a double-page deep-etch relief print in red, "The Schizophrenic Bomb : An Artifice for Armageddon," a nightmarish city scene that would become one of Tyler's best-known images. The text, printed the same year as Michael Hollingshead's famous first meetings with Timothy Leary, includes one of the earliest counterculture references to LSD. The final piece, "Modus Operandi for Schizothymic Agt's," comprises a series of quotations from psychiatry textbooks, Jung's writings, and other sources, as well as an advertisement for "The Complete Assassin's Kit for disassociated anarchists" (\$5) on the final page.

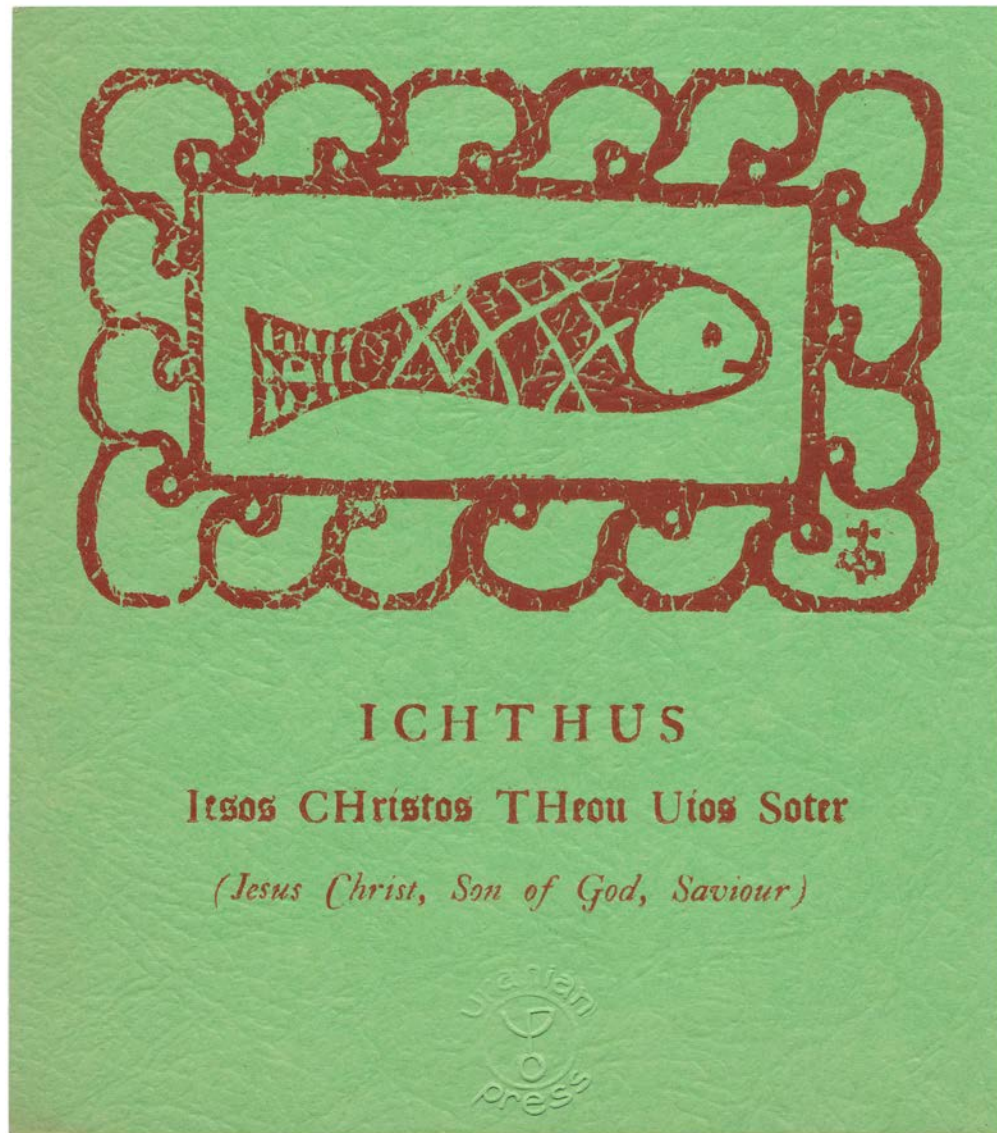
A fine, clean example, without the usual rusting of the staples. OCLC records six copies.

\$200



11. [Tyler, Richard Oviet]. [R.O.T.]’S 9 Gnostic Tracts 9. New York: Uranian Press, 1962. 9 broadsides, 11 x 8½ inches, in original pictorial paper folder, 11½ x 9¾ inches. Broad-sides printed in black and red on pale green paper, folder in red on green stiff paper. Numbered in pencil by Tyler over his rubber-stamped monogram on folder first leaf verso. All broadsides and first leaf of folder embossed with seal of the Uranian Press. Fine.

Numbered 12 of 300 copies. 9 broadsides, written by Richard Tyler, all illustrated by him with deep-etch relief prints but one, which is illustrated with a linocut by Manuel Narciza. All broadsides hand-set and printed at the Uranian Press and bearing its imprint. The folder’s front leaf contains a deep-etch relief print by Dorothea Baer Tyler, who signs in the print with her monogram. Tyler introduces the contents of the portfolio with a quotation from C. G. Jung in *Psychology & Alchemy*: “The Christian opus is an operari in honor of God the Redeemer undertaken by man who stands in need of redemption, while the alchemical opus is the labour of Man the Redeemer in the cause of the divine world-soul slumbering and awaiting redemption in matter.” The brief tracts cover themes of energy, matter, mystical union, redemption, and transfiguration with evocative illustrations of largely astrological and astronomical subjects. OCLC records four copies. \$125

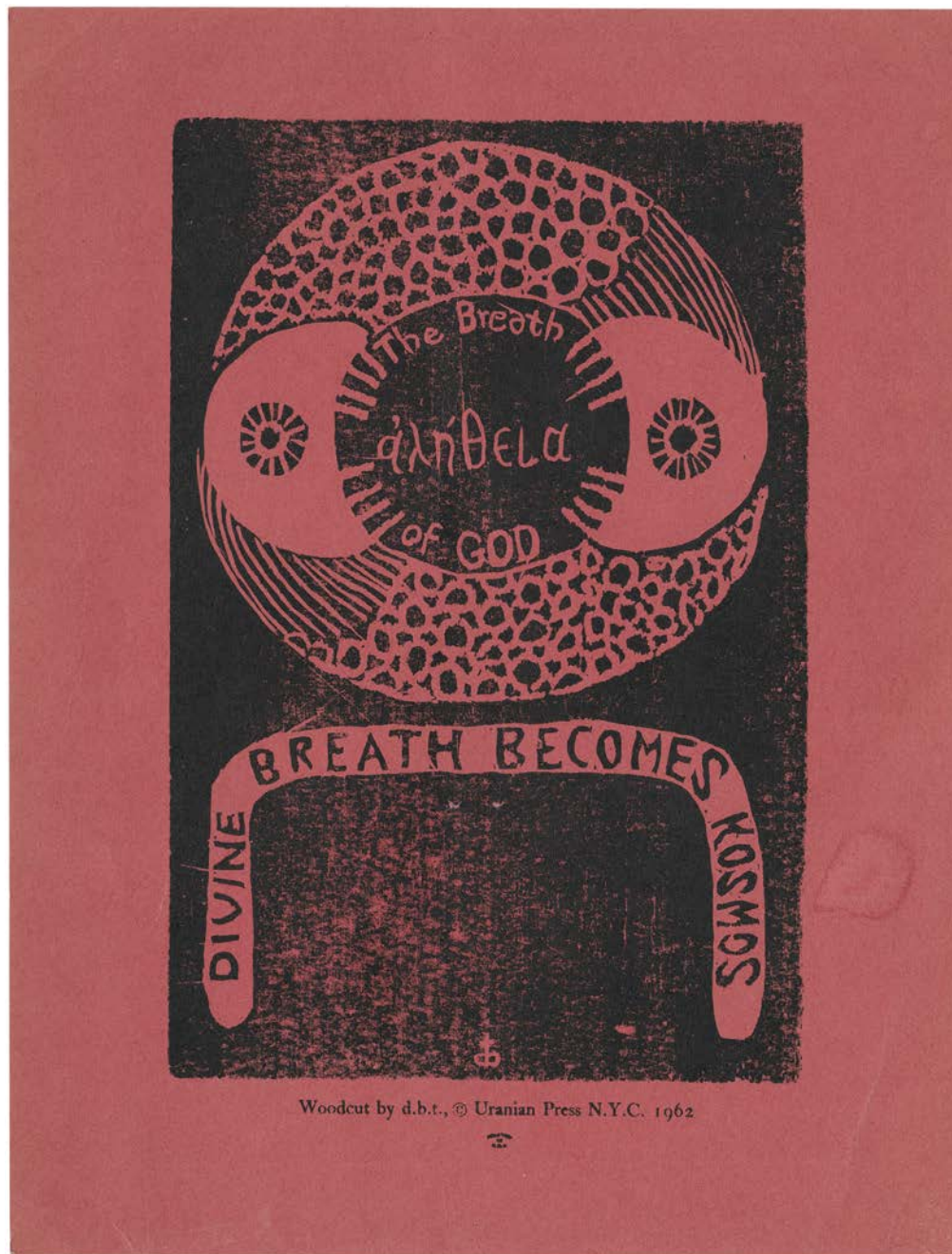


12. [Baer, Dorothea [ill.]]. **I CH TH U S : Iesos CHristos THEou UIos Soter . . .** [caption title]. [New York: Uranian Press, ca. 1962]. Broadside, approximately 6½ x 5½ inches. Printed in red on green paper. Embossed with seal of Uranian Press in lower margin. Signatures of Dorothea Baer and Richard O. Tyler over rubber stamps of their monograms on verso. Faint toning at bottom edge, else fine.

Small Uranian press broadside of the ancient Christian symbol of the fish, in a decorative border, signed in the print by Dorothea Baer Tyler with her “d.b.t.” monogram. The caption prints, “ICHTHUS,” the Greek word for fish, as an acronym for the Greek words for “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.” No date is provided for the print, but circa 1962 is likely; that year, “ichthus” was also printed on the cover of the Uranian Press’s 1962 portfolio, 9 *Gnostic Tracts* (there, in Greek letters), in red on green paper. Dorothea Baer Tyler frequently alternated, between using “Baer Tyler” and “Baer” alone, as she does here between the initials in the print and those in her monogram on the verso.

Dorothea Baer (1926-2012) helped her husband Richard Tyler found the Uranian Press shortly after their move from Chicago to New York in 1958 and cofounded the Uranian Phalanstery in 1974. After the death of Tyler in 1983, Baer maintained the Phalanstery until her own death in 2012; it survives today under the care of her protégé, Mehdi Matin. OCLC records no copies.

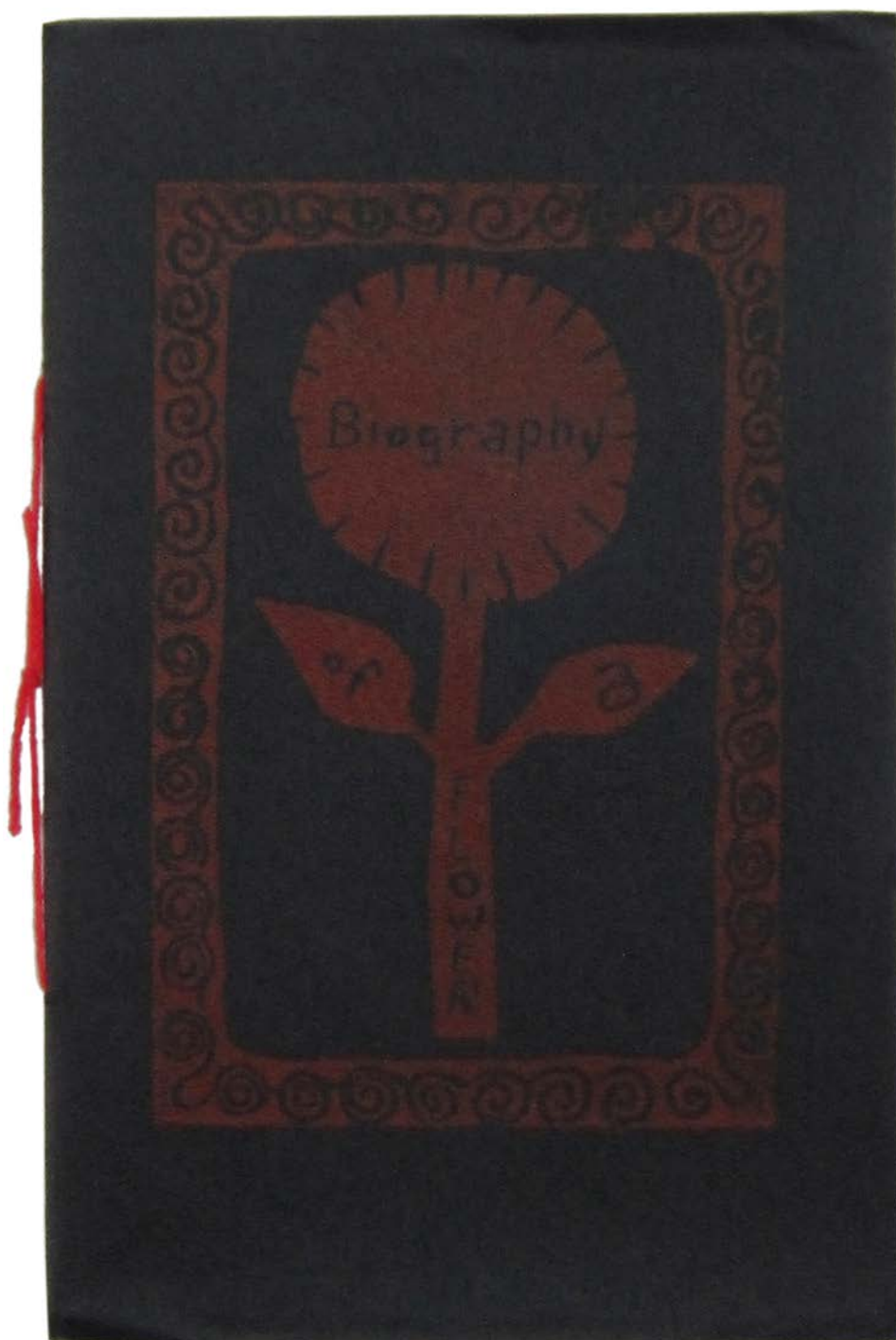
\$75



13. [Baer, Dorothea & Richard Oviet Tyler]. **THE BREATH | ἀλήθεια | OF GOD | DIVINE BREATH BECOMES KOSMOS** [text in print]. [New York]: Woodcut by d.b.t. [i.e. Dorothea Baer Tyler], © Uranian Press N.Y.C., 1962. Broadside, 11½ x 8¾ inches. Printed in black on red stiff paper. Rubber stamps of the text, “seasons greetings,” and monograms of Dorothea Baer Tyler, Richard Oviet Tyler, and the Uranian Press on verso. Autograph initials of the Tylers in pen over their stamps. Soft vertical creasing in center, four small pinholes, one-inch dampstain in right margin. Good.

Gnostic-themed broadside featuring a textual and pictorial woodcut by Dorothea Baer and issued by the Uranian Press for the 1962 holiday season. The Greek word at the center, “aletheia,” is often translated as “truth,” but as Martin Heidegger expounded upon in *Being and Time*, where it was a central concept, it may best be understood as “unconcealedness.” For Dorothea Baer, it was further associated with the creative “breath of God,” as formulated by the prominent American Theosophist, Alexander Wilder (1923-1909). OCLC records no copies.

\$125



14. **Valentinus; Dorothy Baer (ill.). BIOGRAPHY OF A FLOWER [cover title]. VERSES “THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH” : A VALENTINIAN MEDITATION 2nd CEN. Gnostic : WOODCUTS : DOROTHEA BAER : 20th CEN. MYSTIC.** New York: Uranian Press, 1963. [20] pp., including 8 in-text woodcut illustrations. Original pictorial wrappers, printed in red on black paper, tied with red string. Text printed in black and red. Fine.

Verses from the “Gospel of Truth” manuscript discovered in the Nag Hammadi library and attributed to the 2nd-century Gnostic Valentinus, here illustrated in eight woodcuts by Dorothea Baer (1926-2012), artist and co-founder of the Uranian Press. The verses and illustrations – the latter largely through the imagery of the life cycle of a flower – both touch on themes of coming into being, material reality, divine revelation, and spiritual knowledge. OCLC records four copies.

\$100

SOURCES

Richard Axsom and David Platzker, *Printed Stuff: Prints, Poster, and Ephemera by Claes Oldenburg: A Catalogue Raisonne 1958-1996* (Manchester, Vt.: Hudson Hills Press, 1997).

Stefan Brecht, *Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre, Volume 1* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

Dennis Lynch, "Rolling Out a Slice of Village Art Psychedelia," in *The Villager* (April 6, 2017), accessed online December 2018 at <http://thevillager.com/2017/04/06/rolling-out-a-slice-of-village-art-psychedelia>.

Printed Matter, Inc., "Schizophrenic Bomb: Richard Tyler and the Uranian Press," accessed online December 2018 at <https://www.printedmatter.org/programs/events/577>.

Vale, "Uranian Magician: Richard O. Tyler," in *TATTOOTIME Magazine, Vol. 2 No. 1* (Forked River, New Jersey: Permanent Press, Winter 1983).