

“A Form in Time”: A *Typographical Dante* by Barrie Tullett, or a Radical, Vital New Aesthetics for Dante’s *Divine Comedy*

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Note: A selection of images by the artists discussed in this essay is included at the end.

In *The Decay of Lying*, Oscar Wilde writes that “Things are because we see them, and what we see, and how we see it, depends on the Arts that have influenced us. To look at a thing is very different from seeing a thing. One does not see anything until one sees its beauty. Then, and then only, does it come into existence”¹. It is a typical Wildean aphorism, full of paradox, antithesis, and utter brilliance. It distils, in just a few, flinty words, humankind’s predicament of having to strive constantly for a balance between the superficial images and shadows, the mere phenomenal impressions that we take to be reality itself, and the true forms of things that the mind recognises through a higher wisdom and a certain leap of faith that depends on an ineffable sense of mystery and enlightenment.

If anything, that leap of faith is at the heart of Dante’s *Commedia*, and Wilde’s distinction between looking and seeing lies at the crux of the rite of passage from Hell to Paradise. It is also fair to say that our relationship to Dante’s poem has been inseparable from “the Arts that have influenced us”, from the long history of that parallel figurative narrative that has accompanied the *Commedia* from the very start in the form of ornamental illuminations that rendered the first manuscript editions and incunabula into worlds of enchanted vision, to the long series of illustrations that followed and which added, individually, as well as cumulatively, layer upon layer of complementary or supplementary exegesis to the poem.

The *Commedia* is full of real and transcendental visions, it is surfeit with figurative narrative tropes, graphic language and symbolic images, and it relies on our mind’s eye, on a heightened

¹ First published in 1889, in the January issue of the literary monthly periodical *The Nineteenth Century*, this is in the form of a Socratic dialogue between two interlocutors that bear the names of Wilde’s sons, Cyril and Vivian; it was substantially revised in 1891, and included in a collection of essays with the markedly Kantian title *Intentions*.

physical as well as conceptual visual perception for the full understanding of its urgent and vital meaning, for the claim to our attention, veneration, initiation even. The intense pictoriality of the text has led to a fervent, engrossing tradition of collateral textual images, and each generation of readers has engaged in its own unique fashion with Dante's poem through the 'visual aids' available to them and specifically tailored for them at their moment in time.

The printed images (or artworks of any shape or form) that were engendered or inspired by the poem have created a cognate space of understanding and interpretation, a definitive explanatory haven anchoring the existential and semantic crisis, or again a secondary place of exile that intensifies the pilgrim's experience of loss, doubt, abnegation, and reaffirmation that transforms him from observing poet into poetic seer². It is an exilic space that is inseparable from the aesthetic way of life, from the realisation that a philosophy and a theology of goodness are inextricably linked to the contemplation and pursuit of the truly beautiful. In its essence, this is the Dantean revelation of Wilde's own *De Profundis*: "Art has made us myriad-minded. Those who have the artistic temperament go into exile with Dante and learn how salt is the bread of others, and how steep their stairs" --an almost verbatim quotation from *Paradiso* XVII.58-60³.

For Dante and Wilde, the aesthetic perspective acts as a spectroscope, deflecting false images and focusing the mind's eye on real insight. For both, and it would be interesting to explore how far this companionship of 'intentions' may be said to extend, the revelation of that higher truth, the Revelation, more particularly, of Christ, is, in so many ways, an aesthetic event, a creative, artistic gesture that unites the temporal with the atemporal, the secular with the sacred, the isolated, forsaken human individual with the cosmos. It is no longer "art for art's sake", but art *sub specie aeternitatis*: "To the artist, expression is the only mode under which he can conceive life at all. To him what is dumb is dead. But to Christ it was not so. *With a width and wonder of imagination that fills one almost with awe*, he took the entire world of the inarticulate, the voiceless world of pain, as his kingdom, and made of himself its eternal mouthpiece. Those of whom I have spoken, who are dumb under oppression, and 'whose

² An example of the first, would be the comforting sense of order and transcendent beauty in illustrations intended for *Paradiso*; emblematic of the second would be the multifarious attempts to give physical reality and form to the 'monsters' and 'terrors' of the *Inferno*, to evil itself, and to Dante's (and our own) confrontation with it.

³ *De Profundis* was written between January and March 1897 in Reading Gaol. It was first published in 1905, after Wilde's death, although the full, corrected text only appeared in 1962. Wilde had already used Dante's lines and imagery twice before, in the poem "Ravenna" (1878), and in the sonnet "At Verona" (1881).

silence is heard only of God,' he chose as his brothers. He sought to become eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and a cry in the lips of those whose tongues had been tied"⁴.

Dante too may be said to possess that "width and wonder of imagination that fills one almost with awe" almost ideally, to have become, by the end of the *Commedia*, "eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and a cry in the lips of those whose tongues had been tied". His poem has been the object of such awe or even cult-like adoration, the subject of the deepest, longest contemplation ever since it was written. Not only for its words and their meaning, but quite crucially for its images and aesthetics, for that vision of the imagination and of the soul that it so lavishly, mesmerisingly and inexpressibly unveils before, and for us. In Dante's hands, both verbal and visual aesthetics become the medium of discursive disputations on ethics, politics, humanity itself⁵. Inextricable from the poem's own *vita*, is the story of its engagement with the aesthetic process, with the visualisation of the good and the beautiful, or with "the inarticulate, the voiceless world of pain", and the periplus through the vast landscape of illustrations and pictorial representations it has engendered makes for a mighty, awesome journey across time and human experience, through the world of art and ideas, the pragmatics of history and society, and into the innermost recesses of the human soul⁶. We have as much read Dante's words as we have pored over their reflexions on the page, and each time, these 'mirror images' have defined, biased or liberated our own vision of Dante's world and the significance that it holds⁷.

In its 700-year-old history, the *Commedia* has spawned an almost incalculable number of such aesthetic, visual supplements, and in as innumerable many, varied, contrasting, even contradictory styles. Remarkably, they are all what Wilde's Vivian would call "*documents humains*"⁸, realistic engagements with "Life and Nature", adhering, even in their most radical

⁴ Ibid, my emphasis.

⁵ The supreme example of this would be Dante's appropriation and redefinition of Aristotle's and Ptolemy's strict geocentric and geometric models for the order of the divine. In his hands, in the words and symbolic language of the poem, divine order is consubstantial to both earthly and divine beauty –such as the sublime yet so very tactile beauty of the *candida rosa* evoked in *Paradiso XXXI.1*.

⁶ Cf. *Inferno* I.91, "un altro viaggio". From images that directly correspond and explicitly pictorialise Dante's text, to projects that aim to create a fusion between Dante's voice and the highly individual diction of the artist (Flaxman, Fuseli, Blake, Amos Nattini, Rauschenberg, Dalí, Moebius and many others easily come here to mind), the encounter with the *Commedia* through the filter of each attempt to illustrate it cannot but constitute a perpetually reaffirmed, highly personal revelation of the polyvalence and ecumenical permanence of its meaning and significance.

⁷ A poignant example is Alberto Martini, whose starkly unflinching, enigmatic and Goyaesque illustrations for the *Commedia* (1901-1944) create a powerful dialectics between the poem as part of its own time, and Martini's equally ravaged and politically tempestuous, newly 'united' Italy. They also provide a particularly fecund, contrasting ground for examining the idolisation of the *Commedia* by the Fascist regime or artists and intellectuals such as Gabriele d'Annunzio.

⁸ "The Decay of Lying", op. cit. above.

manifestations, to a distinct sense of *imitatio*. From illuminating cameos and medieval woodcuts, to surrealist or postmodernist extravaganzas, they are figurative transcriptions and descriptions of Dante's text, relying on a direct correspondence between signifier and signified: the eye sees what the poem tells. One can argue that visual iconography, especially in Dante's case, operates as a means towards an *ideography*, the images rendering the narrative memorable, familiarly recognisable to the mind's eye, so that concepts, transcendental truths and visions may become intimately experienced, personally embedded⁹. Two artists who have ventured perhaps further than most into a transposition rather than an exposition of the poem's meaning and intentions, are the Ukrainian artist and art historian Olga Mykolaivna Petrova, and the Polish printmaker, book illustrator and painter Stefan Mrozewski. For both, Dante's text would provide not only a spiritual metaphor, but also a socio-political idiom, becoming a catalyst and a prism for translating specific historical *Infernos* and realities without ever falling into the trap of politicised ideological dogmas¹⁰.

Mrozewski's images, created in the aftermath of WWII, enunciate the clash between good and evil, truth and falsehood, through the juxtaposition between anthropomorphic monsters (or bestialised humans), and pastoral figures of translucent virtue evoking a simpler, now lost, human experience. They are full of nostalgia, accentuated chiaroscuro layers and a mordant interplay between darkness and light, as well as intimate historic and cultural references, echoing the artist's equally poignant and evocative scenes of the everyday life of Polish Jews. Dante's poem provides here a vital key for decoding the cypher of human malevolence and destruction, both diachronically and with relentless historical specificity. Unlike Alberto Martini's better-known efforts, with which they share some stylistic similarities and contextual

⁹ Before Gustave Doré's widely disseminated illustrations for Dante, which would mark all later readers or artists, perhaps the most seminal pictorial paradigms are arguably the so-called Yates-Thomson 36 Ms, featuring the images of Giovanni di Paolo, and Botticelli's unfinished set of (mostly) silverpoint sketches, that came after the earlier Baldini edition of engravings based also on drawings by Botticelli. At the other extreme, one can cite the 1477 Venice edition of Windelin of Speyer, set in a gothic type historically reserved for religious texts, rather than in the roman or humanistic fonts favoured for secular works. This semiotic codification, even at the typographical level, would be of particular significance: Windelin's edition is the first to include a suggestion that the *Commedia* ought to be deemed sublime and called *divina* --at the end of the editor's own note to the text, Dante is hailed as the "inclito et divo Dante Alleghieri Fiorentin poeta" (see *Renaissance Dante in Print 1472 - 1629*, University of Notre Dame <https://www3.nd.edu/~italnet/Dante/>).

¹⁰ Neither has received due critical attention in relation to Dante and the history of illustrating the *Commedia*. I am indebted to the Prints and Drawings Department of the British Museum, and especially to Giulia Bartram, Assistant Keeper, for allowing me to see and photograph their set of some of Petrova's prints, and to the Prints Collections department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, for generously allowing me to study and photograph their own set of some of Mrozewski's illustrations.

references, Mrozewski's images are free of rhetorical trappings, superimposed agendas or fraudulent appropriations of Dante's text.

Olga Petrova also opts for printmaking as her medium for creating images that exercise a scathing critique on Soviet social politics, while being, at the same time, among the most insightful, imaginative and aesthetically powerful visual representations of Dante's poem. Her work was condemned as "surrealist" or "existentialist" by the Soviet regime, the equivalent to Nazi Germany's *Entartete Kunst*, and Petrova herself would be ostracised¹¹. Her images are quite unique in their aesthetic quality, the ingeniousness of their thematic array and topography, the subtlety of the conceptual, historical and hermeneutic connections she introduces between a more philosophical tradition of reading and interpreting, and what emerges as a brutalist, ratiocentric ideological narrative that the illustrations both reference and confront.

It is perhaps with Mrozewski and Petrova that Barrie Tullett, a contemporary British artist who has been working on Dante's poem for the past three decades, should be compared, contrasted and even aligned. More than anything, all three seek a vital connection and transition between past and future through the common visual and verbal language of the *Commedia*. The poem for them is not static, certainly not a thing of the past, yet neither is it an arbitrary template that can be adapted *ad libitum*, with no constraints as regards its original, ethical frame of reference. The poem's cultural effect across the centuries and its received meaning cannot be dismembered from the actual words, images, circumstances of the poet. Appropriation is never an option, nor is liberal adaptation. What is central, is the poem's diachronicity and quintessential human resonance. To them, the *Commedia* is itself the pilgrim's *favella* that sails from time to infinity, from historical impasse to a possible human future. They echo, wittingly or not, Osip Mandelstam's words that "it is inconceivable to read Dante's cantos without directing them towards contemporaneity. They were created for that purpose. They are missiles for capturing the future. They demand commentary in the *futurum*"¹².

For all three, the *Commedia* is akin to what Mandelstam called "a form in time"¹³: both aesthetically and critically, this would be a fitting description of the relationship between Dante's words, ideas, images and shadows in the *Commedia*, and the long tradition of artists

¹¹ First published in *Vsesvit* magazine, Petrova's illustrations are now in the collections of the Ukrainian State Museum for Books and Printing.

¹² Osip Mandelstam, *The Collected Critical Prose and Letters*, ed. Jane Gary Harris, Collins Harvill, 1991, p. 439. I am indebted to Rachel Polonsky, University of Cambridge, first of all for her intellectual companionship and her friendship, and for sharing with me her paper "Dante and Russian Poetry" (*The Cambridge Review*, November 1996).

¹³ Mandelstam on Pushkin, op. cit., p. 83.

who have attempted to capture them materially and iconographically, to transubstantiate Dante's Logos into a visible, palpable human body. What differentiates Tullett's work from that of Mrozewski or Petrova, or from the efforts of everyone who has grappled with Dante's visual impact before them, is that although he too seeks to translate Dante's poem across time, while retaining its essence, he uniquely succeeds in giving it a form that is unprecedentedly new, almost beyond temporality or space. His illustrations for *A Typographical Dante* intriguingly stand apart from everything that has preceded them, yet without breaking up with the tradition he wishes to join, enhance, germinate in so many ways.

Similar to Dante's poem, Tullett's illustrations are poignant, stark, bold and unequivocal, while being at the same time sphynx-like, profoundly enigmatic, the expression and form of a meaning beyond mere narrative or visual representation¹⁴. Transcending the notion of illustration as a subsidiary narrative device, Tullett aims at capturing what one can only call the idea of an image. Unlike every other illustrator of the *Commedia*, he does not create a single figurative image of Dante, Virgil or Beatrice, or of anything that can be passively or objectively perceived by the eye of the beholder. The resulting illustrations are both concrete and abstract, a consummate distillation of the essence of each of the poem's cantos using the atomic particles of written language – letters and typographical markings.

His non-representational, non-pictorial iconography restores the emphasis on Dante's wordiness, the sheer bulk of the verbal element, in an almost literal exegesis of John 1:1, *In the beginning was the Word*. It is the words, and their constituent parts, the elements of writing, that become the icons, not just as tesserae in a composite, figurative mosaic, but as autonomous semantic signifiers. For perhaps the first time in the publishing history of the *Commedia*, the tacit gap between text and illustration, between word and image is bridged. The corporeality of words, as integral physical bodies, as *membra disjecta*, fragments of a meaning now misplaced or lost, and as the steps in the process of retrieval, claims an equal role as the bearer, rather than as the complement, of significance.

Tullett's style could be called abstract expressionism executed with modernist daring, transcending the focus on the I, and on the artistic gesture, in order to focus instead on the centrality of colour or on the purity of the perfect union of all colours, namely white, as well as on the tactility of ink and paint, using simple materials and manual dexterity to produce

¹⁴ See, crucially but not exclusively, John Freccero, *Dante: The Poetics of Conversion* (1986); Robert Hollander, *Allegory in Dante's Commedia* (1969).

works of deep intellectual and aesthetic complexity. There is a minimalist austerity in his expressive mode that belies the extraordinary richness of meaning evinced throughout.

In the *Inferno* he draws upon the aesthetics of Imagism (“Canto XVI: The Waterfall”), and the typographical paradigm of the Metaphysical poets (cf. the starlings of “Canto V: The Lustful”, which are mirrored in the distribution of letters resembling swooping bird formations), to produce a contrapuntal iconography to the text. His strikingly geometric compositions contrast deliberately with the historical semantics of Vorticist-like panoramas. Elsewhere in the same cantica, he translates the text’s violence or anarchy through brutalist masses of block typefaces (cf. “Canto VI: The Gluttonous”; “Canto XII: The Minotaur”; “Canto XIX: Simonists”), disorder or entrapment through cascading fonts (cf. “Canto XIII: The Wood of Suicides”), he uses primary colours or superimposed layers of different inks to create a sense of dejection or loss (cf. “Canto XI: The Stench of the Abyss”), oppression and existential or spiritual darkness (cf. again “Canto XI: The Stench of the Abyss”; “Canto II: The Pilgrim Begins to Waver”; “Canto XXVI: The Thievish Fire”), as well as the destruction of meaning through the obfuscation and perversion of words (cf. “Canto VIII: The Wrathful”; “Canto XIV: Origin of Infernal Rivers”; “Canto XVIII: Panders and Seducers”; “Canto XXII: The Barrators”), or through aural cacophony (cf. “Canto VII: The Hoarders and Wasters”; “Canto XXI: The Demon Escort”). Intransigent geometric perfection or abstraction becomes the embodiment of totalitarian power and order (cf. “Canto III: The Gate of Hell”; “Canto IX: The Medusa”; “Canto XXXI: The Giants”), whereas the sense of void at the end of the cantica is translated as an erasure, with letters being gradually faded out in consecutive prints, as though ink, words, meaning were now completely spent (“Canto XXXII: The Ice”; “Canto XXIV: Consumed and Restored”).

Purgatorio begins with the arresting image of four stars set against a violet-blue background. Here the particles of words, the rudiments of meaning, are still disjointed, yet the effort and impetus of the cantica is towards the retrieval of shape and form (cf. “Canto III: The Mountain”). The visual effect is myopic and astigmatic rather than nyctalopic, with transposed series of letters struggling to come back into focus (cf. “Canto II: The Ship of Fools”; “Canto IV: The Ascent”; “Canto XVIII: The Slothful”; “Canto XIX: The Souls of the Avaricious”; “Canto XX: The Mountain Trembles”). In “Canto V: The Unshriven”, the visual effect is virtually Platonic, the word ‘remember’ being serially truncated, so that it also acts as a trace of the word ‘member’, thus perhaps juxtaposing *Purgatorio* V.46-47, “O anima che vai per essere lieta con quelle membra con le quai nascesti...” to the unmistakably Platonic *Inferno*

V.103, “amor, ch’a nullo amato amar perdona”. *Purgatorio* is the soul’s journey back as well as forward, a quest for missing membra and halves, truths and states of wholeness and innocence, and pages or illustrated patterns are correspondingly split to articulate this point of ambivalence, transition, transformation (cf. “Canto VI: The Late-Repentant”; “Canto VII: The Rule of the Mountain”; “Canto VIII: The Three Stars”). Other illustrations for this cantica translate the physical effort of reordering and reclaiming the soul almost like a formal process of re-education and rehabilitation (cf. “Canto XII: Examples of the Punishment of Pride”; “Canto XIII: The Sin of Pride”; “Canto XIV: The Envious”), of therapeutic craftwork and embroidery (cf. “Canto XV: The Black Smoke”; “Canto XXI: The Avaricious”; “Canto XXV: The Refiner’s Pride”; “Canto XXVI: The Lustful”) that gradually restore both text and textile, the communal word and the social fibre

Paradiso has always been a challenge, even for the sublime genius of Botticelli: “with its emphasis on light and music [it] is far more difficult to describe in visual terms. As *Paradiso* was represented infrequently, this led to a lack of established images and models for subsequent illustrators to copy, ensuring its continuing lack of popularity as far as illuminations were concerned”¹⁵. Tullett’s *Paradiso* is still a work in progress, yet what he has produced so far evinces the very solid underlying premises of his overall vision for the poem. His illustrations could be said to redeem, redefine and complete the aesthetic and symbolic idiom he has created for the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*. The tonal scale is here dichromic rather than polychromic, in order to capture “the tonal complexities of Dante’s text”¹⁶; boldness is replaced by a *sotto voce* sense of contemplation and nuancing (cf. “Canto VII: The Fall of Man”; “Canto XXVI: The Assembly Sings”), and an increasing use of patterned punctuation marks (cf. “Canto I: Invocation”; “Canto II: Ascent to the Moon”; “Canto V: Ascent to the Heaven of Mercury”) denotes the limits of language and the emergence of a meaning beyond verbal or cognitive understanding. The visual direction in this final cantica is upward, rather than downward or suspended, a gesture perhaps referencing Swedenborg: “The rational man [...] is spiritual or celestial when he looks upwards, but merely animal when he looks downwards”¹⁷.

Radiating forms (“Canto XXXII: The Angel Gabriel”), floating swarms of letters (“Canto XXV: Concerning Hope”), or harmoniously interlacing letter chains (“Canto XXII: The Starry

¹⁵ Rachel Owen, “Dante’s Reception by 14th and 15th century Illustrators of the *Commedia*”, in Claire E. Honess, ed., *Reading Medieval Studies XXVII: Current Trends in Dante Studies* (University of Reading, 2001).

¹⁶ Eugene Paul Nassar, “Illustrations, Medieval and Renaissance”, *Dante Encyclopedia*.

¹⁷ *Arcana Coelestia: Or the Heavenly Arcana contained in the Sacred Scriptures*, trans. John Clawes (New York, 1873), vol. II, p. 150.

Heaven”) create the sense of a sacred choreography that gives voice to that higher reality, as well as providing glimpses of the actual form of the divine (cf. again “Canto 1: Invocation”; “Canto IX: The Heaven of Venus”; “Canto X: Spirits of the Wise”; “Canto XIV: Hymn of the Spirits”). In “Canto XXIV: The Prophecy”, letters emanating from a black centre suggest the source of all meaning, the origin of the Alpha and Omega. From the blood-coloured primitivist circle of “Canto IV: The Virtuous Pagans” of the *Inferno*, we now move to lacework-like rings of fulfilment, promise and celestial perfection, but also of conceptual enclosure, as human perception is tested against and superseded by divine truth (cf. here too “Canto II: Ascent to the Moon”; “Canto X: Spirits of the Wise”; “Canto XI: The Vanity of Worldly Desires”; “Canto XIII: The Vanity of Human Judgement”; “Canto XIV: Hymn of the Spirits”). Rauschenberg’s *Mother of God* painting (1950) comes here to mind. Although not part of his Dante illustrations, it uses oil, enamel, printed maps, newspapers and metallic paint on Masonite. The sense of protective immanence that it creates is perhaps echoed in Tullett’s own circular designs for these particular cantos. Throughout the three canticas, but especially in *Paradiso*, Tullett’s white backgrounds will perhaps remind readers of Dante’s political allegiances as a White Guelph, as well as providing the visual metaphor for pure vision and transcendence. The captions and quotations from the poem anchor the images to Dante’s text, while at the same time focusing the viewer’s eye and mind, inviting further reflection, radical debate and contemplation.

Tullett creates his own idiolect out of the stylistic elements he uses, deploying the polyvalence of circles, the radical dynamics of linearity and the visual robustness of typefaces, the polarities of diagonals, the disruptive potential of spires, and the calming subtext of verticals and horizontals to optimum effect. His style may be described as a deeply reflected improvisational aesthetics, where spontaneous or instinctive artistic choices emerge as the elements of a much vaster architectural plan. Like Tom Philipps, one of his own Virgil-figures in art and in life, Tullett is pointedly conscious that “the hard edge and the constant use of lettering also *enforce the very literary, highly intellectual impact of the work [so that it may become] a modern commentary on Dante, a bridge in time and reference*”¹⁸.

Barrie Tullett goes against the grain not only of a figurative tradition of illustration, but especially against the monumentalising gesture that lies at the heart of much of that tradition. He undercuts the urge to use illustrations as shrines to verses or themes through a sharp, almost

¹⁸ Philipps to Vincent Katz, *The Print Collector’s Newsletter* vol. 15, no. 2 (May-June 1984). My emphasis.

ironic interplay between the associative semantics of the typefaces and the deliberate dissolution of pictorial expectations. His visual interpretation of and commentary on Dante is unique, a formidable feat of originality and conceptualisation in the context of what is nearly a 700-year-long engagement with the poem. In so many ways, Tullett's project is total, final and definitive, a perfect, flawless, unimprovable expression of Dante's vision, as well as being momentarily open-ended, dialectical and unlimiting, a gesture of both fidelity and liberation. Whatever follows from here on, can only be a variation on a theme, with Tullett's *Typographical Dante* marking the point of critical reference for both arrivals and new departures. His illustrations, redefining and rewriting an entire visual tradition, but also the forbiddingly limiting visual culture of our 21st century, resonate with these words by Mallarmé: "I content myself with reflecting on the clear and durable mirror of [art] that which perpetually lives yet dies every moment, which only exists by the will of Idea"¹⁹. Or, to echo Wilde's words once more, these are images that transform the act of looking truly into an art of seeing.

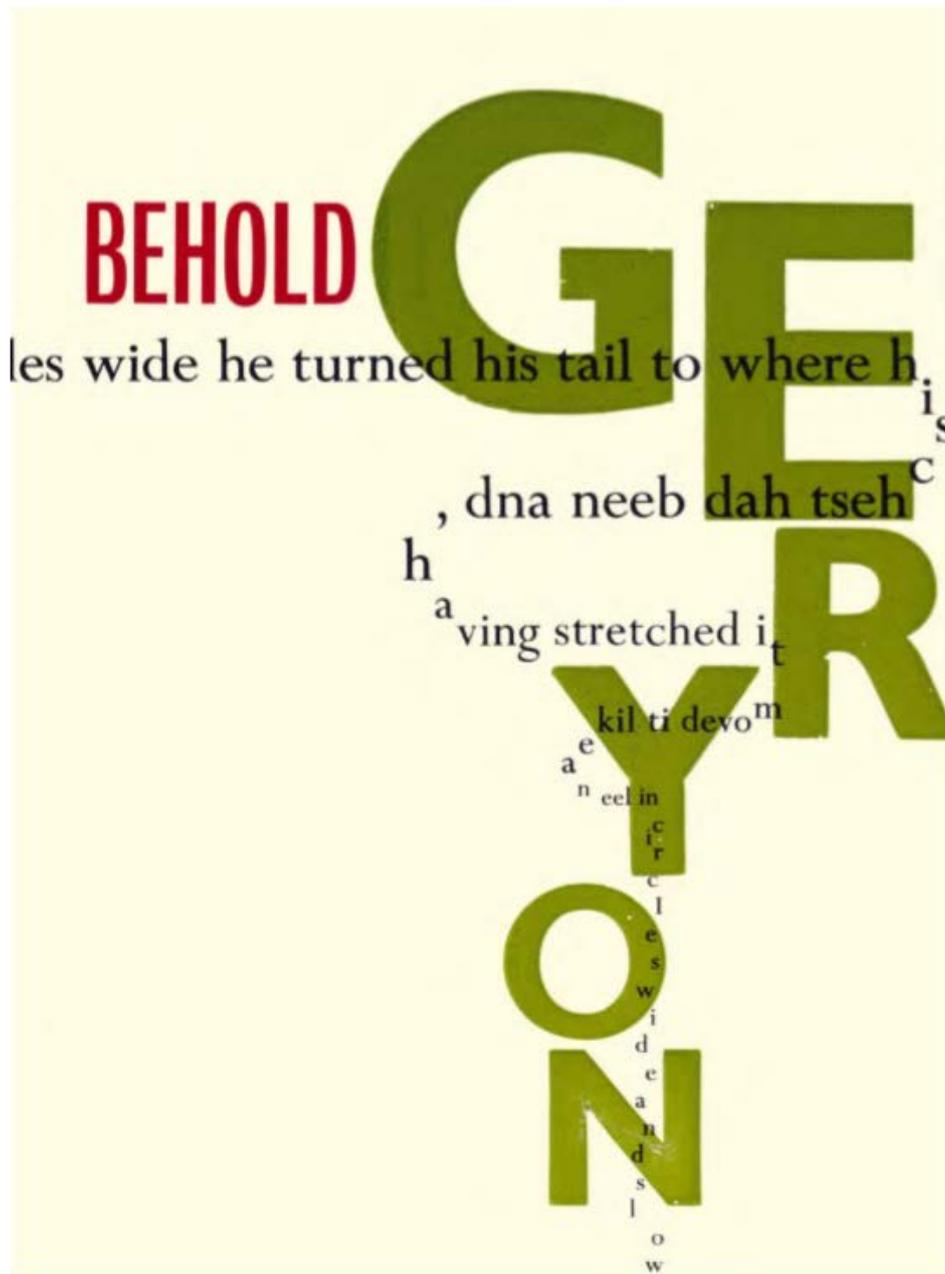
¹⁹ Stéphane Mallarmé, "The Impressionists and Édouard Manet" [in English], *Art Monthly Review and Photographic Portfolio*, London, 30 September 1876.

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Inferno* XIV "The Waterfall"

Letterpress

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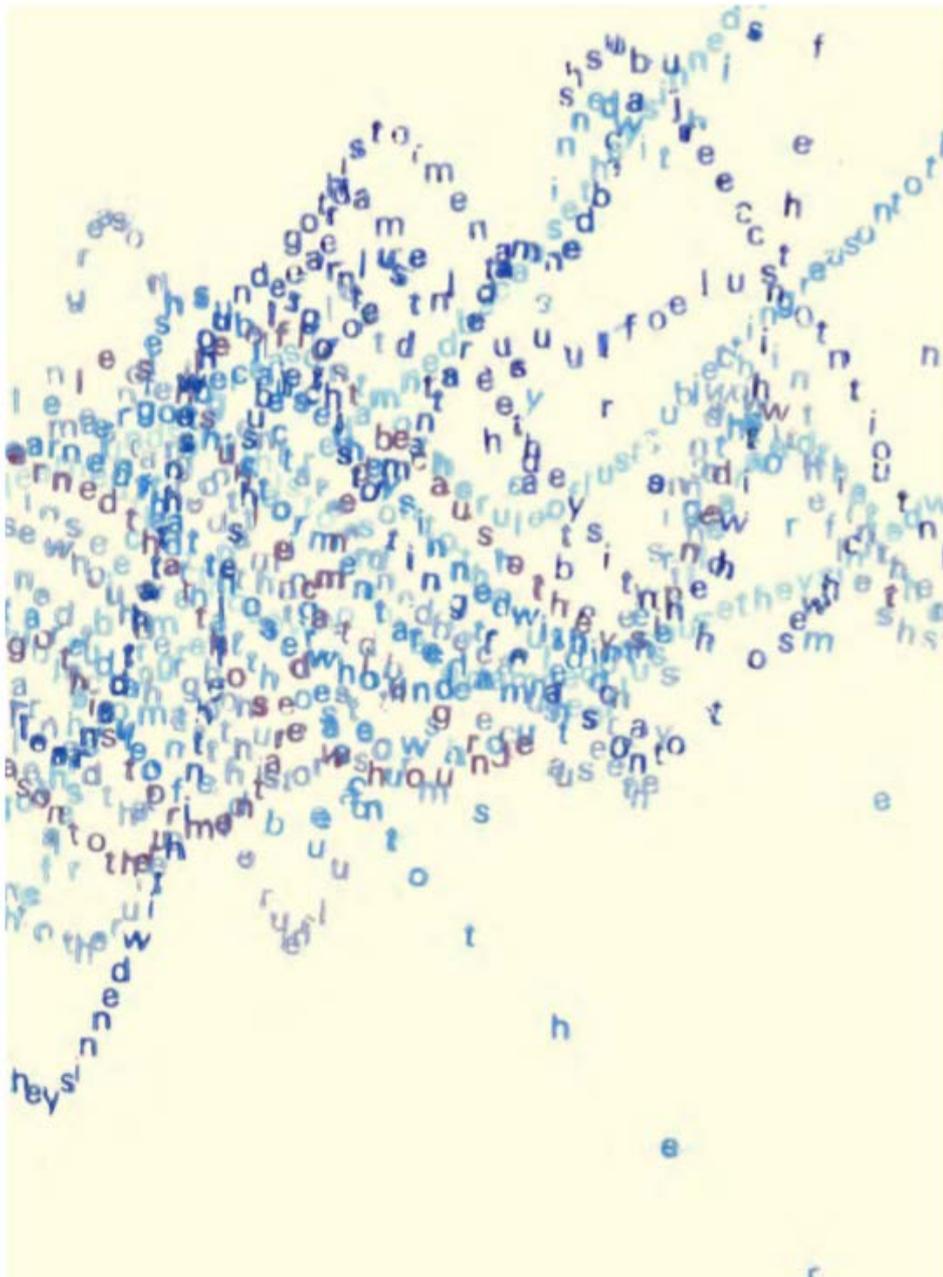
*That I beheld through that thick murky air
Come swimming up a shape most marvellously
Strange for even the stedfast heart to bear.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Inferno* V “The Lustful”

Letterpress

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*Like as the starlings wheel in the wintry season
In wide and clustering flocks wing-borne, wind-borne,
Even so they go, the souls who did this treason.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Inferno* XII "The Minotaur"

Letterpress

Image reproduced with the kind permission of the artist



*Just so I saw the Minotaur perform,
and my guide, alert, cried out: 'Run to the pass!
While he still writhes with rage, get started down.'*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Inferno XIII* "The Wood of Suicides"

Letterpress

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*No green here, but discoloured leaves and dark,
No tender shoots, but withen and gnarled and tough,
No fruit, but poison-galls on the withered bark.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Inferno* – X “The Gates of Dis”

Letterpress

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*Thus onward still, following a hidden track
Between the city's ramparts and the fires,
My master goes, and I go at his back.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Inferno XXII* "The Barrators"

Letterpress

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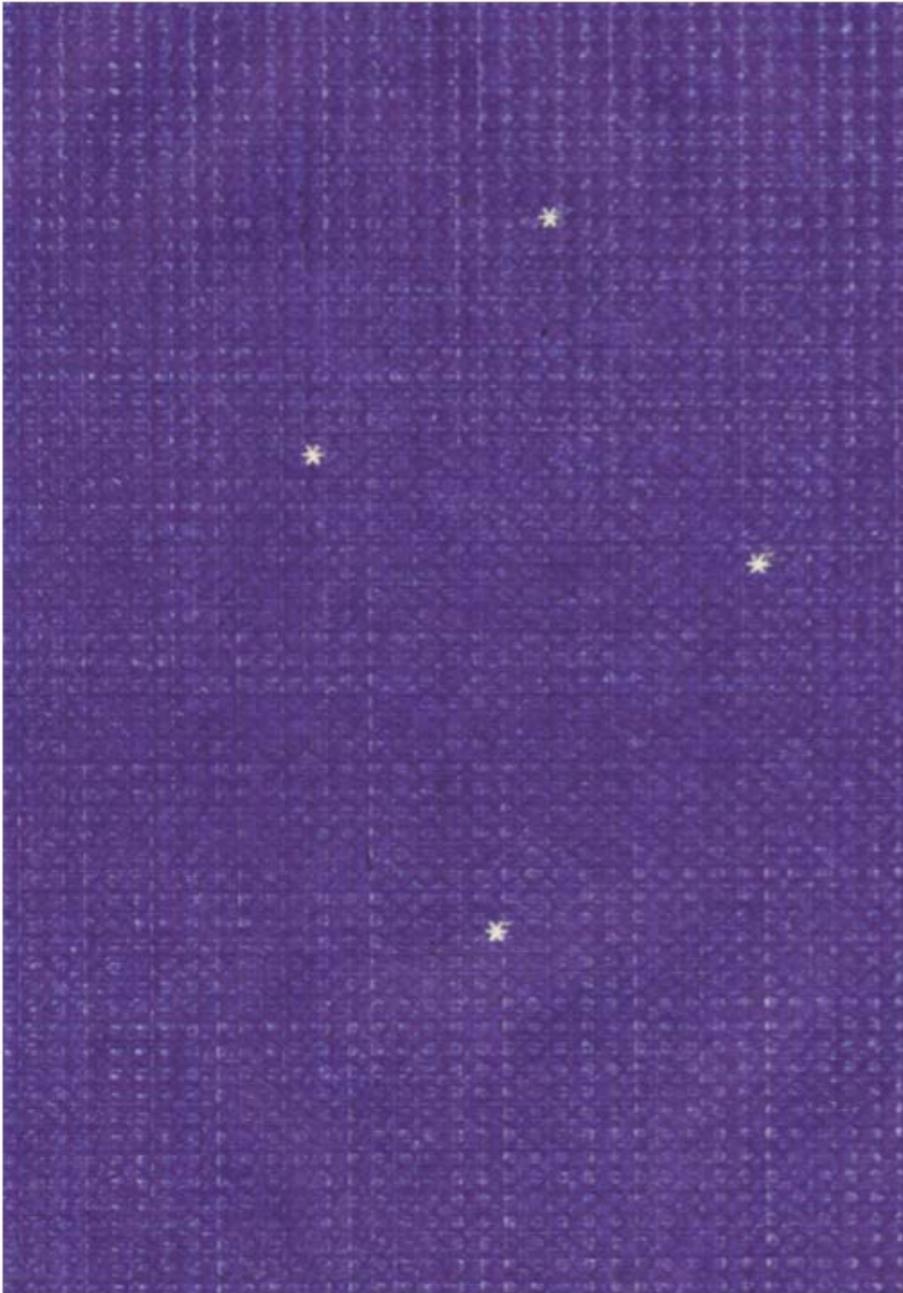
*Nothing; only great bubbles black as ink
Would rise and burst there; or the seething tide
Heave up all over, and settle again and sink*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy – Purgatorio I* "The Four Stars"

Typewriter

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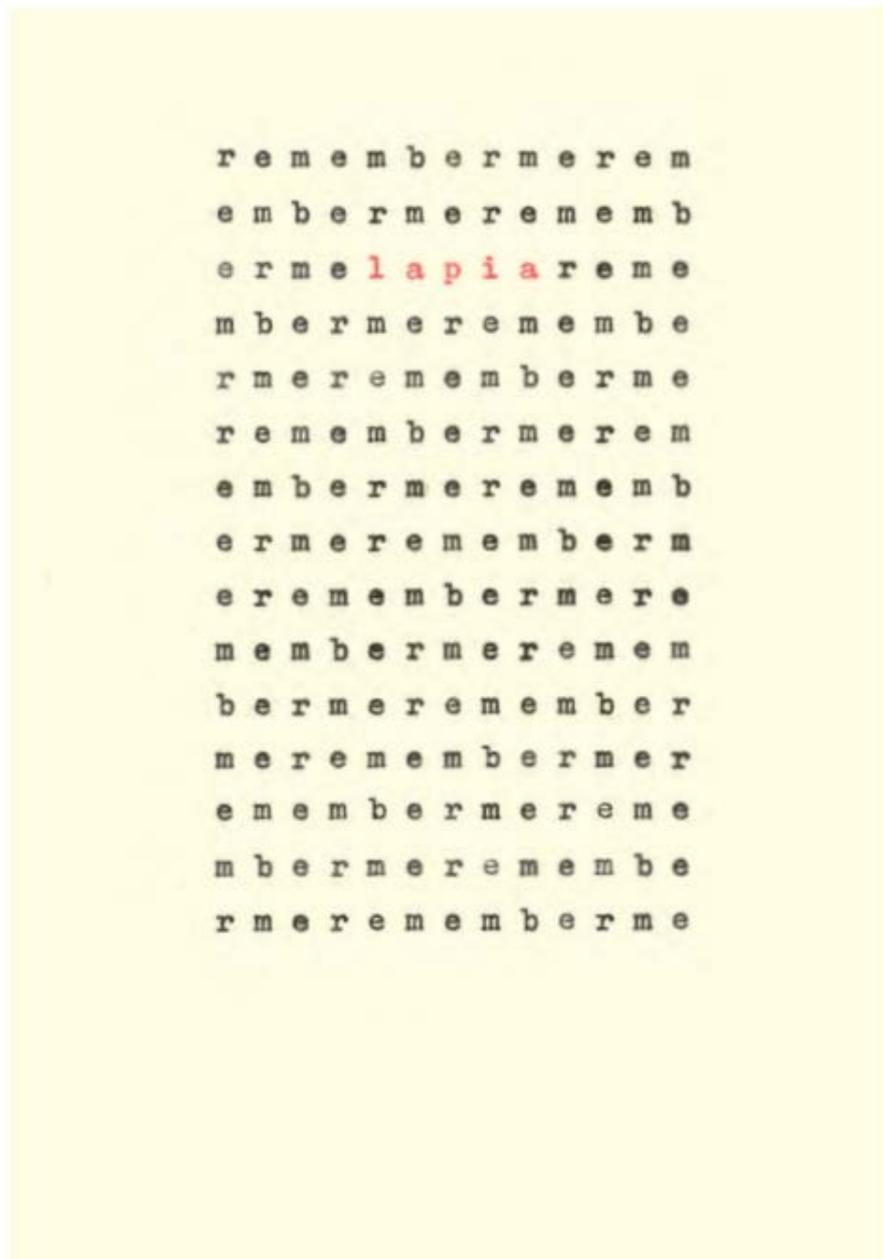
*Then to my right I turned to contemplate
the other pole, and there saw those four stars
the first man saw, and no man after him.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Purgatorio* V "The Unshriven"

Typewriter

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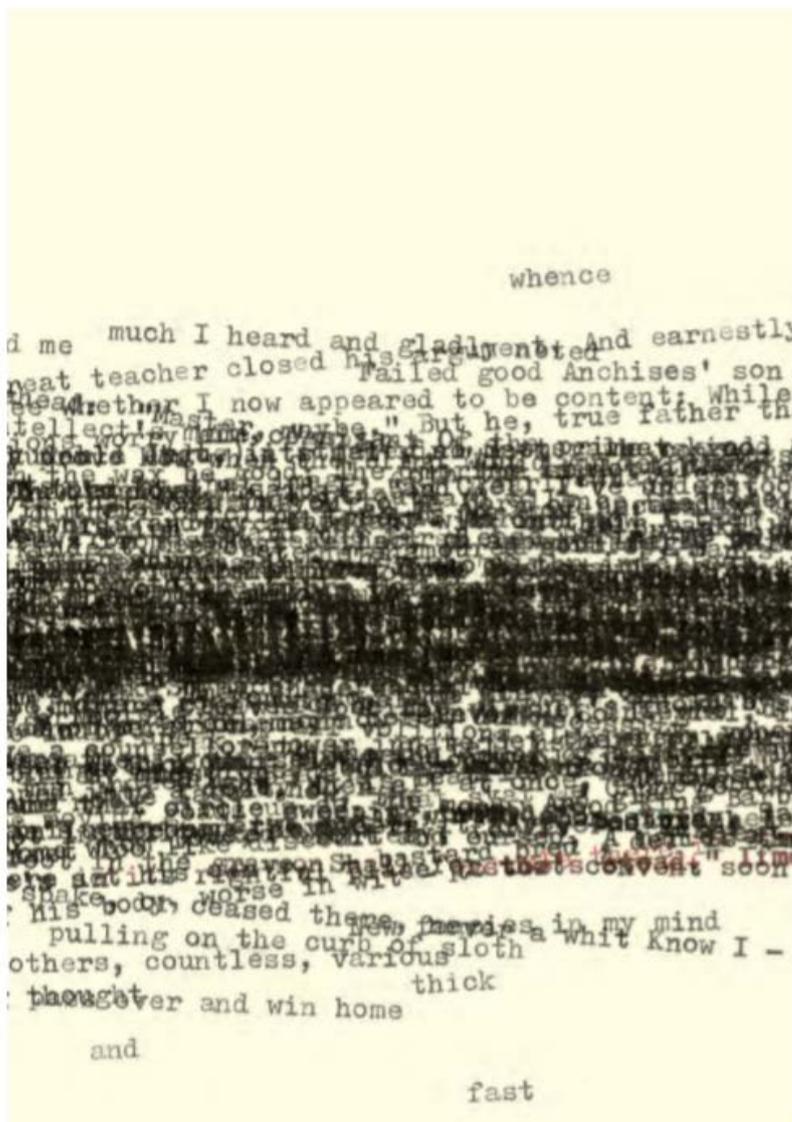
*'Remember me, that am called Piety;
Siena made me and Maremma undid me,
As well he knows who plighted troth to me...'*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Purgatorio* XVIII "The Slothful"

Typewriter

Image reproduced with the kind permission of the artist



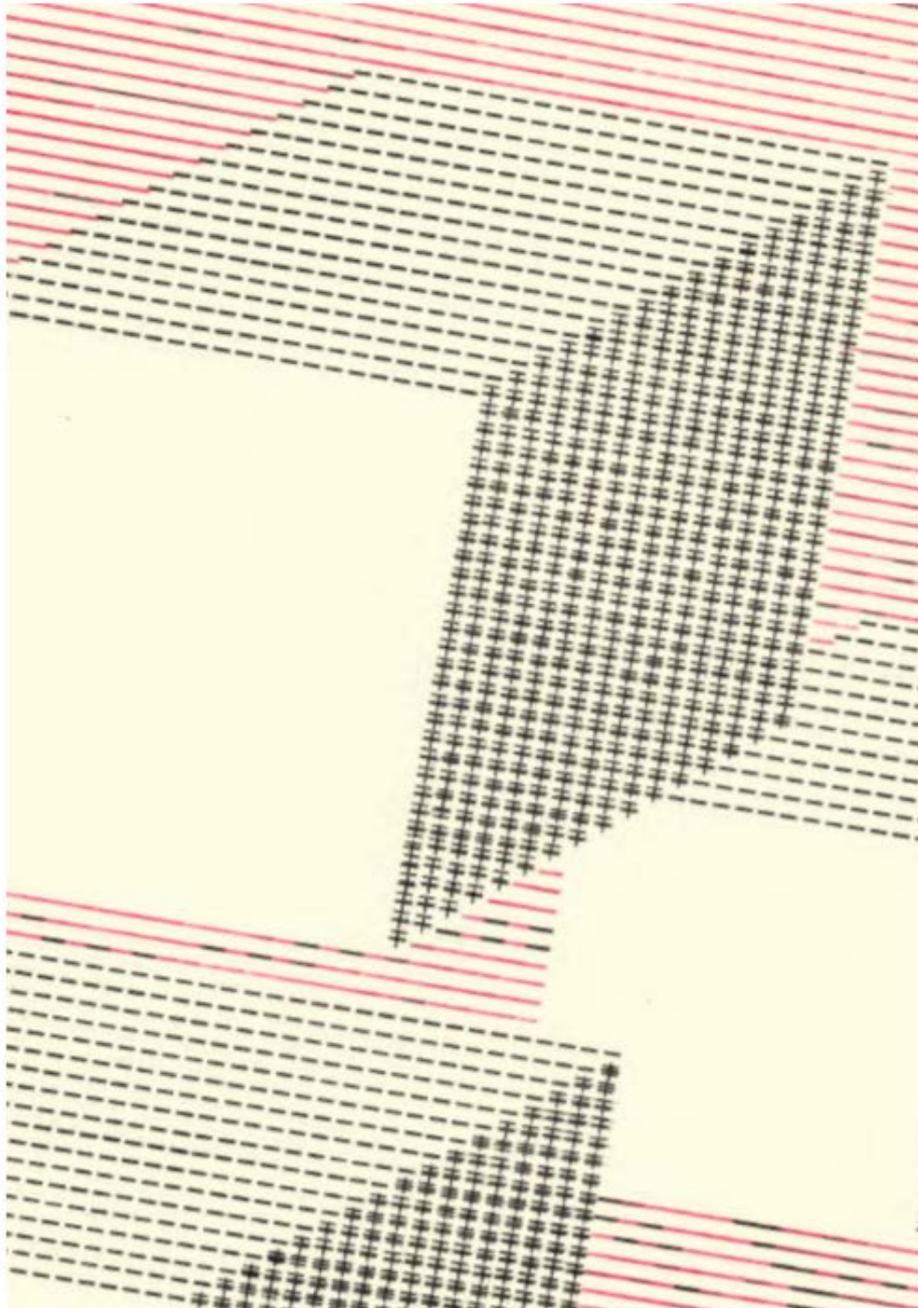
*When, all at once, and close behind our backs
Startling me up, a throng came roundabout,
Wheeling towards us in their circling tracks.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Purgatorio* VI "The Late-Repentant"

Typewriter

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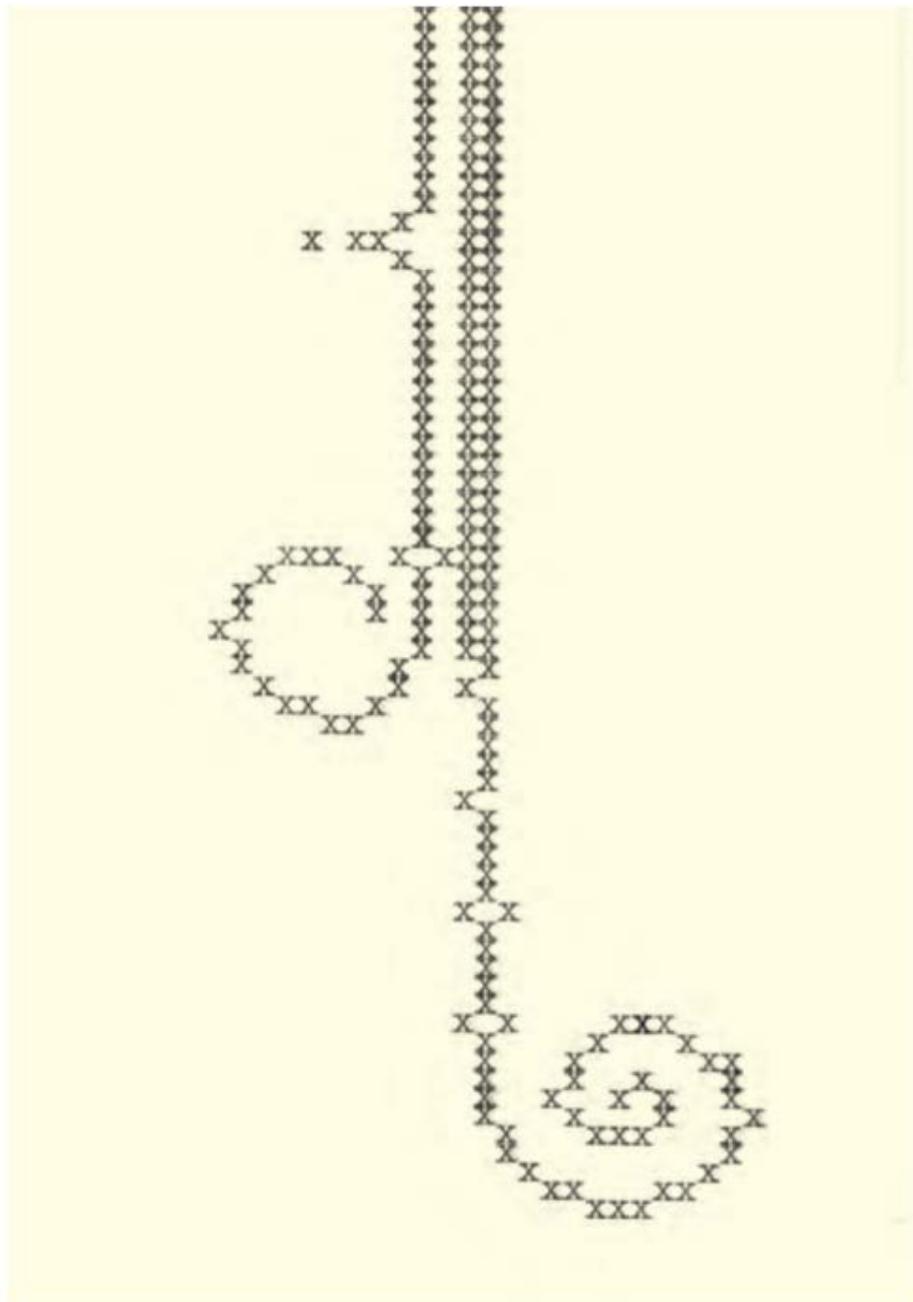
*The Loser at the hazard, when the game breaks up,
Sadder and sorrier lingers on alone,
Re-plays each throw, and drinks of wisdom's cup.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Purgatorio XXI* "The Avaricious"

Typewriter

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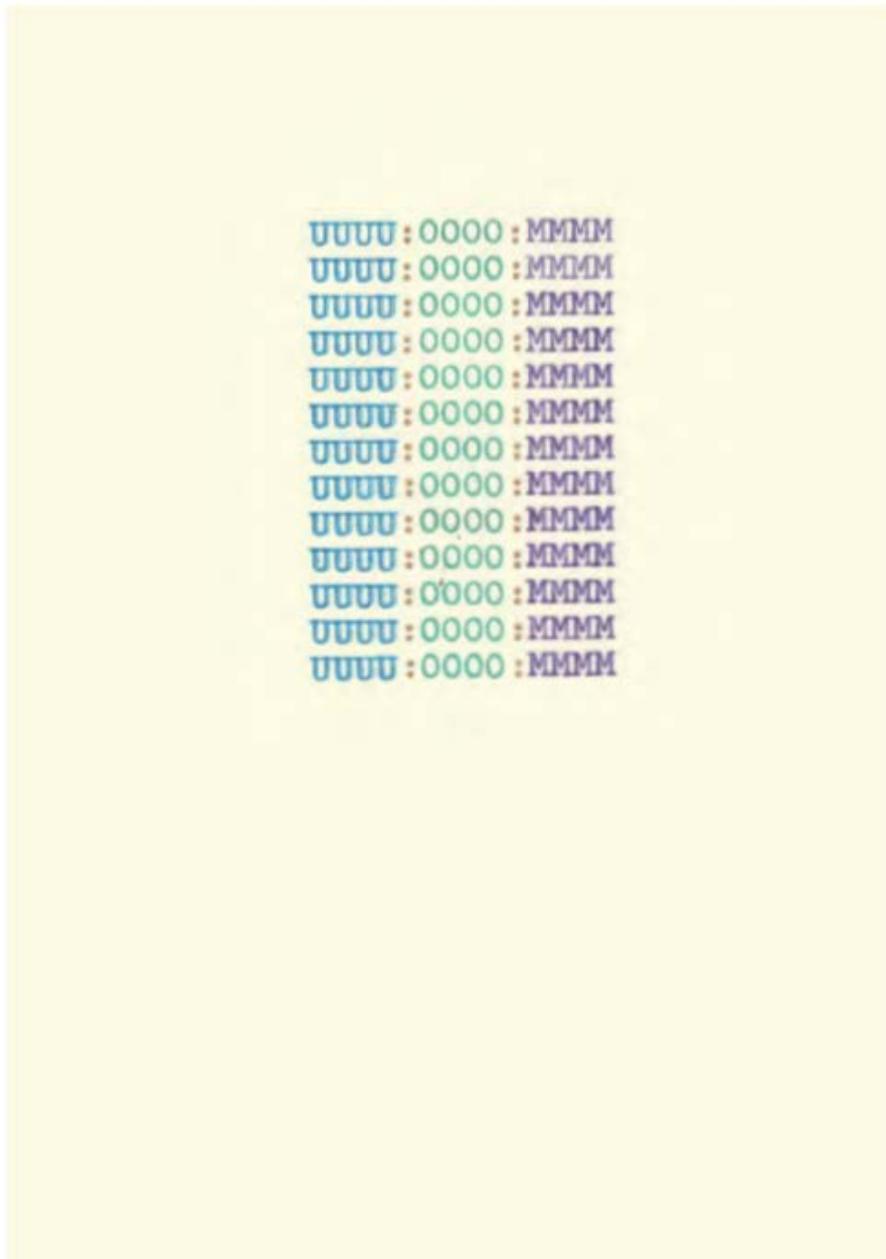
*And then my teacher said: 'If you observe
those marks the angel has traced on his brow,
you'll see that he must dwell among the Just.'*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Purgatorio* XXII “Examples of the Punishment of Pride”

Typewriter

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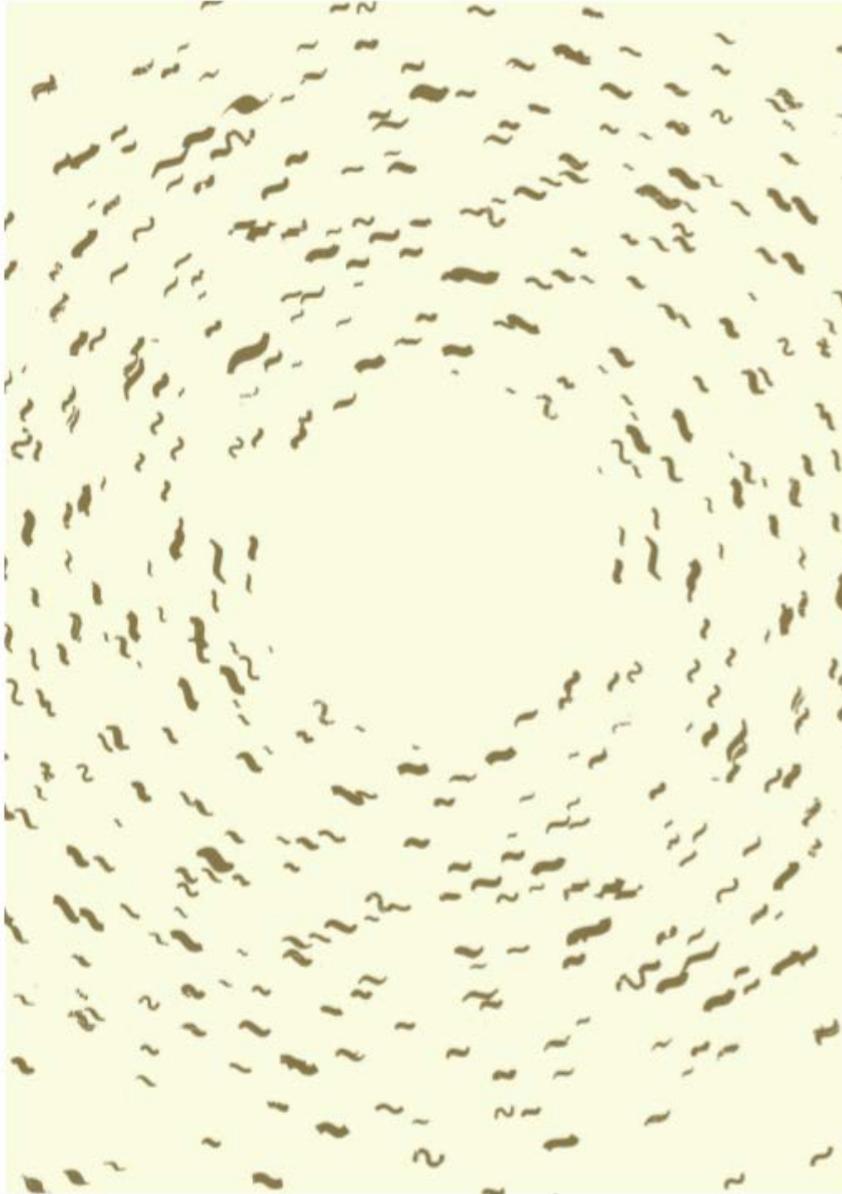
*I saw, on one side, him who was supposed
to be the noblest creature of creation,
plunge swift as lightening from the height of Heaven.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Paradiso I* "Ascent to the Moon"

Letterpress

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*I set my course for waters never travelled;
Minerva fills my sails, Apollo steers,
and all nine Muses point the Bears to me.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Paradiso XXVI* "The Assembly Sings"

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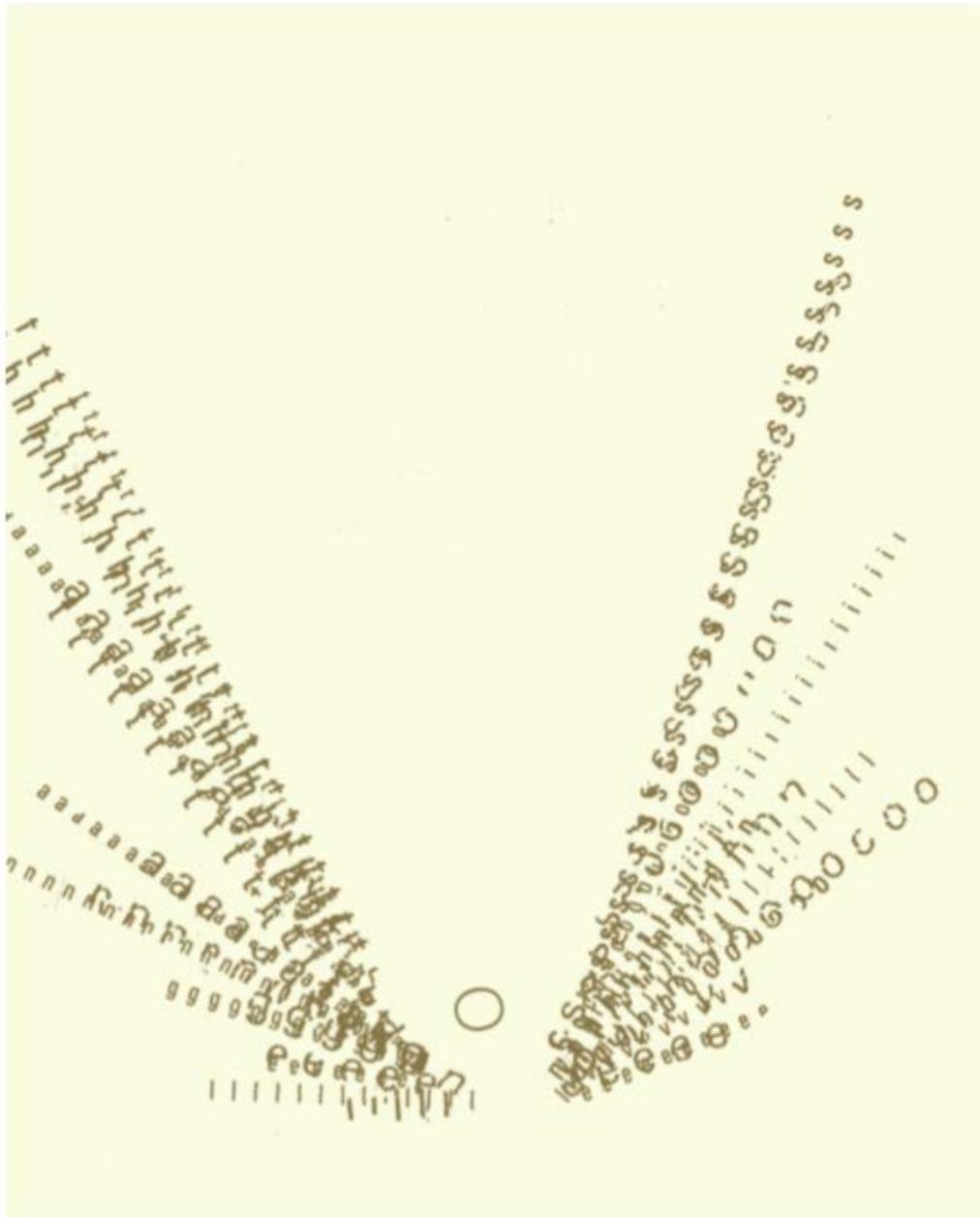
*The instant I stopped speaking all of Heaven
filled with sweet singing, as my lady joined
the others chanting: 'Holy! Holy! Holy!'*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Paradiso XXXII* "The Angel Gabriel"

Letterpress

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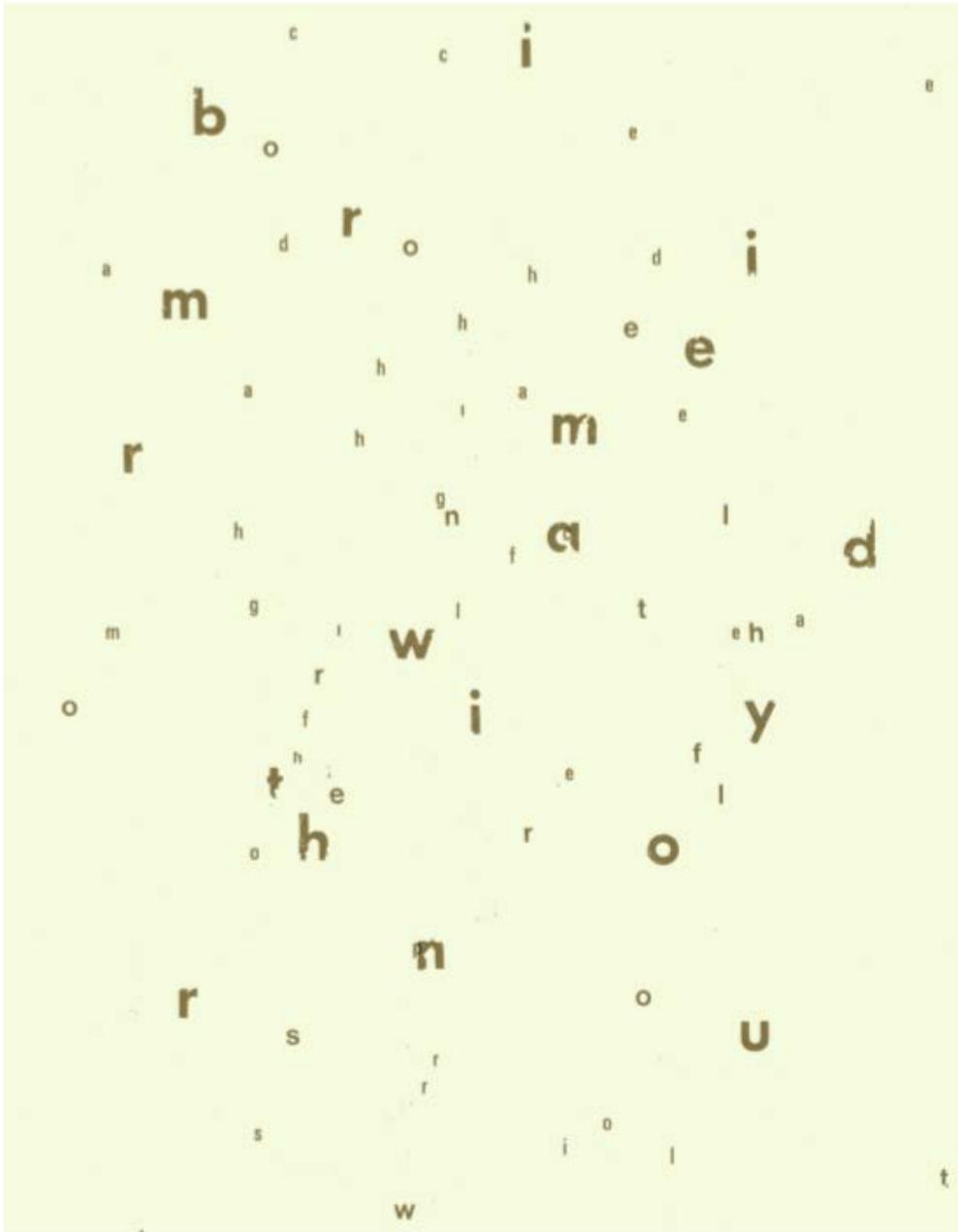
*Who is that angel who so joyously
looks straight into the eyes of Heaven's Queen,
so much in love he seems to burn like fire?*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Paradiso XXV* "Concerning Hope"

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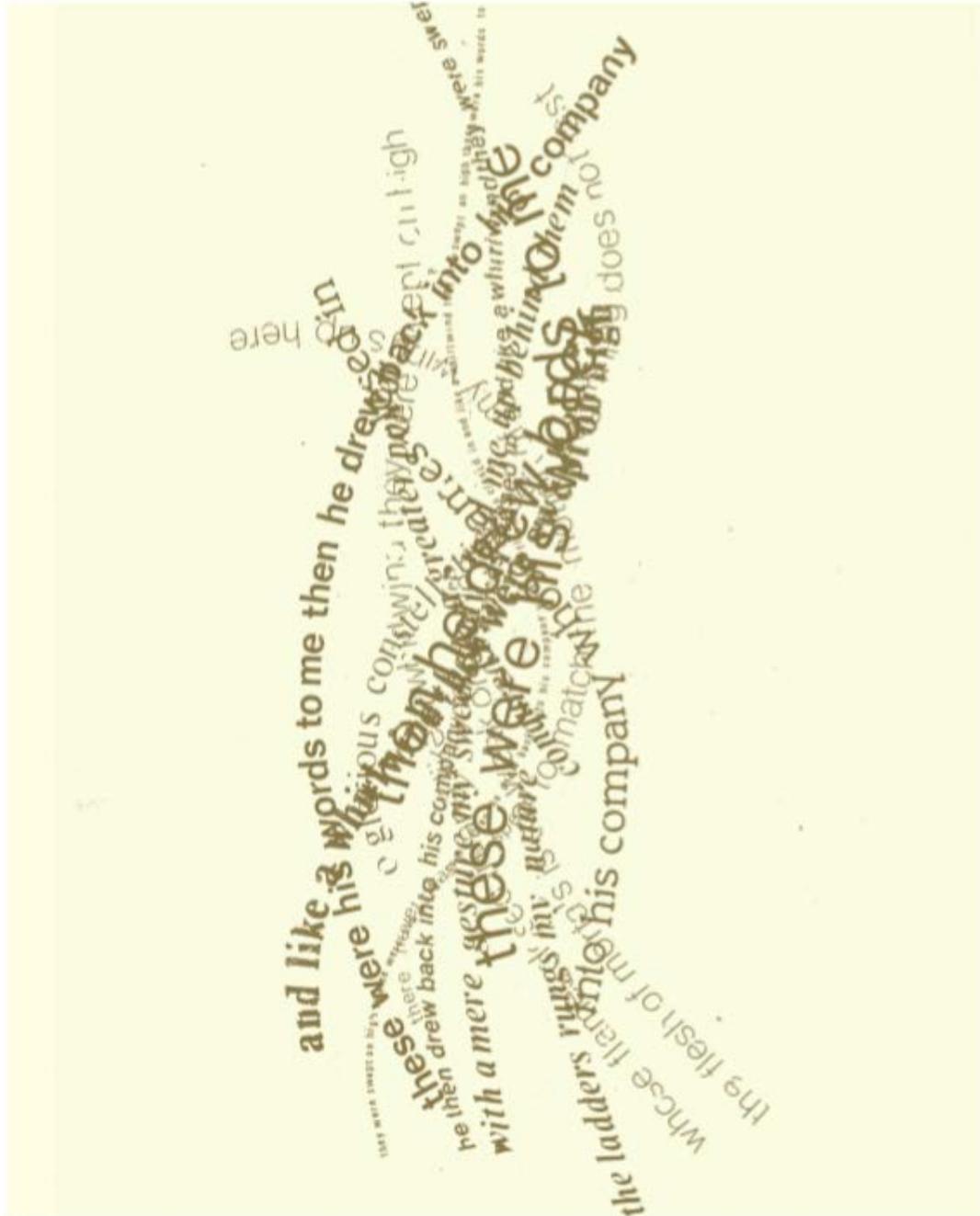
*Next, in thine own epistle didst so
instil me with hid dew that evermore,
brimmed with your rain, on others I o'erflow.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Paradiso XXII* "The Starry Heaven"

Letterpress

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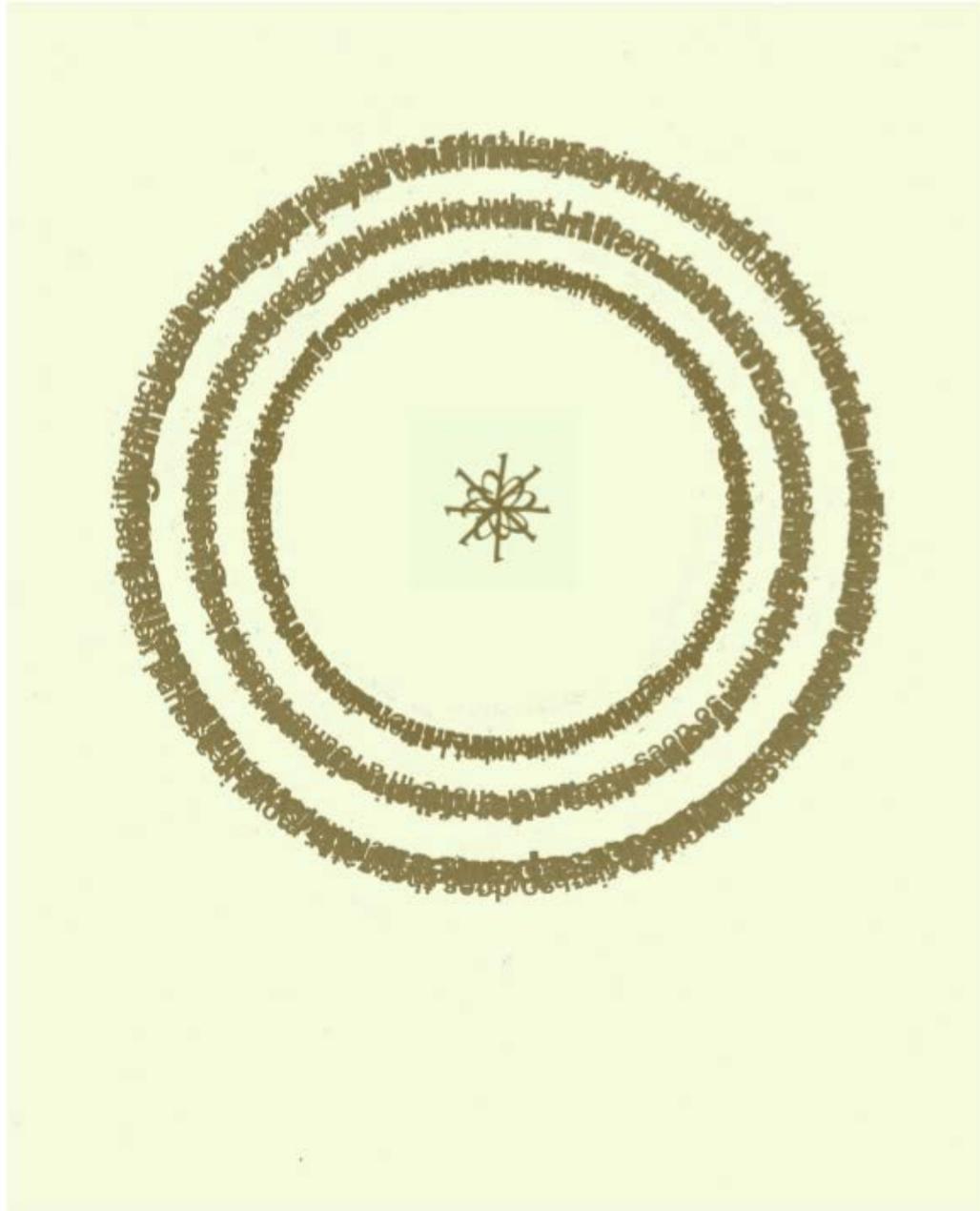
*So did he speak to me, and he drew back
to join his company, which closed compact;
then, like a whirlwind, upward, all were swept.*

Barrie Tullett

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – *Paradiso XIV* "Hymn of the Spirits"

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*so I began to see, it seemed, new shapes
of spirits forming there, making a ring
around the other two circumferences.*

Stefan Mrozewski (1894-1975)

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* - Dante and Virgil in *Purgatorio*

Wood Engraving, ca. 1943

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Stefan Mrozewski (1894-1975)

Illustration for canto XXX of Purgatory from Dante's *Divina Commedia*, showing Beatrice descending from heaven to rebuke the poet

Wood Engraving, 1943

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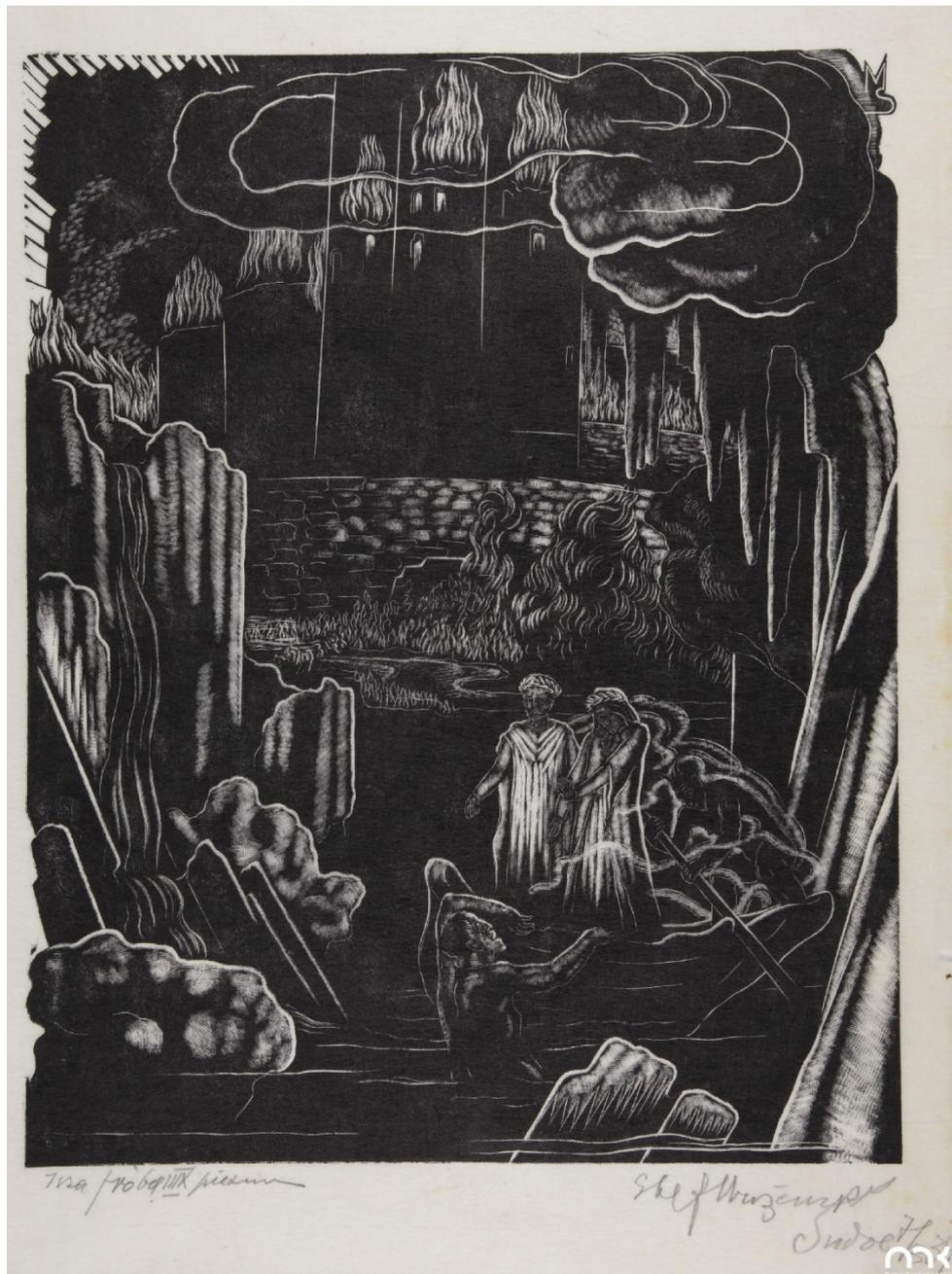


Stefan Mrozewski (1894-1975)

Illustration for Dante's *Divina Commedia*

Wood Engraving, ca. 1943

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Olga Petrova

b. 1942

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – Geryon (ca. 1974-77)

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Olga Petrova

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Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – Bertran de Born (ca. 1974-77)

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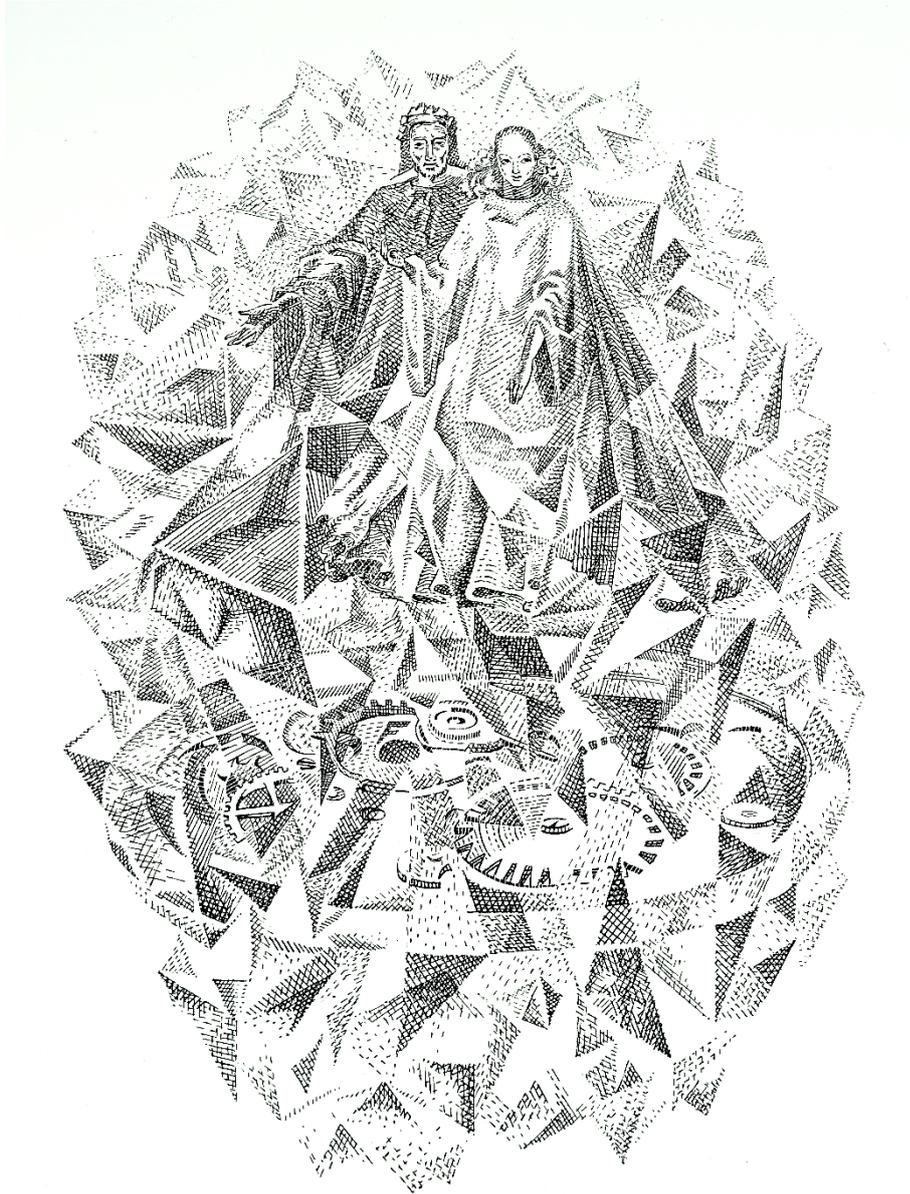


Olga Petrova

b. 1942

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – Dante and Beatrice in *Paradiso* I.64-66 "The eyes of Beatrice were all intent / on the eternal circles; from the sun, / I turned aside; I set my eyes on her." (ca. 1974-77)

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Olga Petrova

b. 1942

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – "The Visions of Purgatory" (ca. 1974-77)

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Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* - The Forest of Suicides (ca. 1974-77)

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b. 1942

Illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy* – The Worthless (ca. 1974-77)

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