

'I sat down in the evening to read...'

Books from the Library of Charles Brasch, Poet, 1909-1973

13 July to 23 October 2009

Special Collections de Beer Gallery
1st Floor Central Library University of Otago
Hours: 8.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday



‘I sat down in the evening to read...’

2009 is Brasch year. Charles Orwell Brasch was born in Dunedin on 27 July 1909. He was educated at Waitaki Boys' High School and St John's College, Oxford. He lived abroad for many years working as a teacher in England, as an archaeologist in Egypt, and as a civil servant in wartime London. He returned to New Zealand in 1946 and a year later founded *Landfall*, New Zealand's premier literary magazine. He was a patron of the arts, offering support and encouragement to many artists and writers. He was also a fine poet, producing six volumes of verse, translating volumes of Russian, German and Indian poetry, and writing a memoir, published posthumously in 1980 as *Indirections: A Memoir 1909-1947*. He died 20 May 1973.

To achieve his literary output, Brasch read. His library of 7,500 volumes is housed at Special Collections, University of Otago Library. This exhibition on the 100th anniversary of his birth celebrates his life through what he read. The documenting of an individual's reading habits is never easy; sometimes it is impossible. However, by utilising Brasch's memoir and his journals, which have been recently transcribed, it has been possible to track what books he read and when. Books were re-read; books were not finished; books were praised; and of course there was always the critical eye.

Of his entire library, only a small selection of what he actually read is on display. They include early readings such as *An Anthology of Modern Verse* (1923) and Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1899); Oxford books such as Oscar Wilde's *Salome* and Ezra Pound's *Exultations* (1909); the pre- and post War readings such as Georges Bernanos's *The Diary of a Country Priest* (1937), James Courage's *One House* (1933), Rainer Maria Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet* (1943), and Eric Gill's *Autobiography* (1940), and materials read while editor of *Landfall* such as *The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt* (1948), Archibald Baxter's *We Will Not Cease* (1939), Nicolas Berdyayev's *Dream and Reality* (1950), David Ballantyne's *The Cunninghams* (1950), and Lady Barker's *Station Life in New Zealand*. (1950). There are also his favourites: Shakespeare, Dante, W. B. Yeats, and Robert Graves. Selective as it is, the exhibition highlights the reading life of a remarkable New Zealander.

Many of Brasch's books represent what was current and fashionable at the time. Everybody read them; everybody discussed their merits. Remembrance and re-evaluation is a good thing, and the title list below forms a handy cultural checklist prompting the question: 'Have I read that?' It is hoped that Brasch's reading will prompt more.

Items on Display

CABINET 1: INTRODUCTION

- Charles Brasch, c.1935. Brasch Papers MS 996-12/64. Hocken Collections
_____, *The Land and the People, and Other Poems*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1939. Brasch PR9640.B67 L3
Helene and Charles Brasch. c.1911. Brasch Papers MS 996-12/59. Hocken Collections
Lafcadio Hearn, *The Boy who drew Cats*. Tokyo: T. Hasegawa, [1898]. Brasch PS1917.B69
Charles Brasch, *The Quest: Words for a Mime Play*. London: Compass Players, 1946. Brasch PR9640.B67 Q4
_____, *Disputed Ground: Poems, 1939-45*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1948. Brasch PR9640.B67 D5
Willi Fels in Stockholm, 1935. c/n E6132/3. Hocken Pictorial Collections
Franz Hoffmann, *Willy: Eine Erzählung für meine Jungen Freunde*. Stuttgart: Schmidt und Spring, 1864. Brasch PZ38.HP47
Charles Brasch, *Journal. July 1954*. Brasch Papers MS-996-9/23. Hocken Collections
Robert Browning, *Selected Poems*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1938. Brasch PR4202 1938
Joseph Conrad, *The Arrow of Gold*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1919. Brasch PR6005.O4 A8 1919
Charles, Hyam [Henry], and Lesley Brasch. c.1920. Brasch Papers MS 996-12/58. Hocken Collections
[Books in bookends]
Charles Brasch, *Charles Brasch in Egypt*. Wellington, N.Z.: Steele Roberts, 2007. Special PR9640.B67 Z5 A33 2007
Charles Brasch and C. R. Nicolson, *Hallensteins: The First Century, 1873-1973*. Dunedin: Hallenstein Brothers, 1973. Special HD9940. N54 H36
Hilde Zissermann, *Gedichte aus Neuseeland*. Translated by Charles Brasch. Dunedin: John McIndoe for the Author, 1970. Brasch PT2653.I677 G4
Charles Brasch, *Collected Poems*. Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1984. Special PR9640.B67 A17 1984
Amrita Pritam, *Black Rose*. English versions of the Punjabi by Charles Brasch in collaboration with the poetess. [New Delhi, Nagmani, 1967]. Brasch PK2659.A44 B5 A22
Charles Brasch, *Six Water-colours after Doris Lusk: Poems*. Christchurch: Templar Press, 1966. Brasch PR9640.B67 SL55
_____, *The Estate, and Other Poems*. Christchurch, N.Z.: Caxton Press, 1957. Brasch PR9640.B67 E8
_____, *Indirections: A Memoir, 1909-1947*. Wellington [N.Z.] ; New York : Oxford University Press, 1980. Private Collection
_____, *Not Far Off: Poems*. Christchurch, N.Z.: Caxton Press, 1969. Brasch PR9640.B67 N6 1969
_____, Brasch, *Ambulando: Poems*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1964. Brasch PR9640.B67 A75
_____, *Home Ground: Poems*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1974. Brasch PR9640.B67 H6
_____, *Present Company: Reflections on the Arts*. Auckland, N.Z.: Blackwood and Janet Paul, 1966. Brasch BH221.N43 BT51
_____, *The Universal Dance: A Selection from the Critical Prose Writings of Charles Brasch*. Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1981. Brasch PR9640.B67 A16 1981
Poems by Esenin. Translated by Charles Brasch and Peter Soskice. Wellington: Wai-te-ata Press, 1970. Brasch PG3476.E8 A23
Charles Brasch, *North-east and South-west: Windwords for Mary at Eighty*. Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1970. Brasch PR9640.B67 N67
_____, *Octonary*. Dunedin: Printed at the Press Room, University of Otago, 1963. Brasch PR9640.B67 O25
Landfall Country: Work from Landfall, 1947-61. Chosen by Charles Brasch. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1962. Brasch PR9634.4.L758

CABINET 2: FORMATIVE YEARS

- An Anthology of Modern Verse*. 14th ed. London: Methuen, 1923. Brasch PR1224.AL65 1923
Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*. 1st ed. London: Macmillan, 1899. Brasch PR4854.J8 1899
John Keats, *Poetical Works*. London: Oxford University Press, 1931. Brasch PR4831.FP66
James Elroy Flecker, *Collected Poems*. London: Secker, [1916]. Brasch PR6011.L4 A17 1916

CABINET 3: LONDON & OXFORD

Oscar Wilde, *Salome*. London: John Lane, the Bodley Head ; New York: J. Lane Co., 1912. Brasch PR5820.S2 1912
Journal of Katherine Mansfield. London: Constable, 1927. Brasch PR9640.M35 Z5 A345
Plato's Symposium or Supper. London: The Fortune Press, [1925]. Brasch B385.A5 BL35
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*. London: Dent; New York: Dutton 1925. Brasch PR2833.A1 1925
_____, *Hamlet*. London: Dent; New York: Dutton 1925. Brasch PR2807.A1 1895

CABINET 4 (DRAWER): LONDON & OXFORD

Robert Graves, *Another Future of Poetry*. London: Leonard & Virginia Woolf, at the Hogarth Press, 1926. Brasch PN1031.GS12
Rupert Brooke, *1914 and Other Poems*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1915. Brasch PR6003.R4 N5
D. H. Lawrence, *Nettles*. London: Faber & Faber, 1930. Brasch PR6023.A93 N35
Ezra Pound, *Exultations*. London: Elkin Mathews, 1909. Brasch PS3531.O82 E9

CABINET 5 (DRAWER): EGYPT

Ludwig Borchardt, *Egypt: Architecture, Landscape, Life of the People*. [New York: B. Westermann, 1930]. Brasch DT47.BQ16
Egypt and the Sudan: Handbook for Travellers. 8th rev. ed. Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1929. Brasch DT45.B351 1929
J. Seldon Willmore, *Handbook of Spoken Egyptian Arabic*. 4th ed. enl. & rev. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1927. Brasch PJ6779.WQ58 1927
Richard Crashaw, *English Poems*. London: Methuen, 1901. Brasch PR3386.A6 1901

CABINET 6: BEFORE THE WAR

Georges Bernanos, *The Diary of a Country Priest*. London: Boriswood, 1937. Brasch PQ2603.E5875 J6 A25
Llewelyn Powys, *Dorset Essays*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1935. Brasch DA670.D7 PW16
Marmaduke William Pickthall, *The House of Islam*. London: Methuen, 1906. Brasch PR6031.I35 H6
The Odyssey of Homer. Translated by T.E. Shaw (Colonel T. E. Lawrence). London: Oxford University Press, 1935. Brasch PA4025.A5 LD43 1935

CABINET 7: A NEW ZEALAND INTERLUDE

James Courage, *One House*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1933. Brasch PR9640.C68 O5
Walter D'Arcy Cresswell, *Present without Leave*. London: Cassell, 1939. Brasch PR9640.C74 P7
A.R. D. Fairburn, *Dominion*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1938. Brasch PR9640.F3 D6
John Mulgan, *Man Alone*. London: Selwyn & Blount, [1939]. Brasch PR9640.M86 M3 1939

CABINET 8: THE WAR YEARS

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*. London: Langley & Sons, 1943. Brasch PT2635.I65 L4
George Henry Lewes, *The Life of Goethe*. London: J. M. Dent ; New York [N.Y.] : E.P. Dutton, 1908.
Brasch PT2049.LN35 1908
E. M. Forster, *Nordic Twilight*. London: Macmillan, 1940. Brasch PR6011.O58
Eric Gill, *Autobiography*. London: J. Cape, 1940. Brasch NB497.G55 A2 1940
Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*. London: Dent, 1906. Brasch PQ4306.A1 1906

CABINET 9: THE WAR YEARS CONTINUED

Federico Garcíá Lorca, *Poems*. London: Dolphin, 1939. Brasch PQ6613.A763 A17 1939
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Possessed*. London: William Heinemann, 1914. Brasch PG3326.B6 1914
The Best of Henry Miller. London: Heinemann, 1960. Brasch PS3525.I5454 A6 1960
Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Complete Poetical Works*. London: Oxford University Press, 1927. Brasch PR5402 1927

CABINET 10: HEADING HOME

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Select Poetry & Prose*. London: Nonesuch Press, [1933]. Brasch PR4472.FV35
Edwin Muir, *Journeys and Places*. London: Dent, 1937. Brasch PR6025.U6 J6 1937
Hugh MacDiarmid, *Stony Limits and Scots Unbound, and Other Poems*. Edinburgh: Castle Wynd Printers [1956]. Brasch PR6013.R735 A17 1956
Arthur Koestler, *The Yogi and the Commissar, and Other Essays*. London: J. Cape, [1945]. Brasch PR6021.O4 Y63
Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*. London: Dent, 1900. Brasch PQ4305.A1 1900

CABINET 11: HOME

W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies: Reveries over Childhood and Youth*. London: Macmillan, 1926. Brasch PR5906.A312
Matthew Arnold, *Poems: 1849-1867*. London: Oxford University Press, 1921. Brasch PR4021.Q6 1921
Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1942. Brasch PR6045.O72 O7 1942
Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, c1935. Brasch GN400.BE936 1935
Martin Buber, *Mamre: Essays in Religion*. Melbourne ; London: Melbourne University Press in association with Oxford University Press, 1946. Brasch BM45.BW78

CABINET 12: THE WORDSWORTHS & OTHERS

William Wordsworth, *The Prelude, or, Growth of a Poet's Mind*. London: Oxford University Press, 1933. Brasch PR5864.A2 DE51
Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*. New York: Modern Library, 1928. Brasch PQ2631.R63 C6 A27
Lord Byron, *Don Juan*. London: John Lehmann, 1949. Brasch PR4359 1949
Dorothy Wordsworth, *Journals*. London: Macmillan, 1952. Brasch PR5849.A8

CABINET 13 (DRAWER): TOWARDS AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt. London: Cresset, 1948. Brasch PR4813.A4 1949
Archibald Baxter, *We Will Not Cease*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1968. Brasch DU434.B3 A3 1968
Nicolas Berdyaev, *Dream and Reality: An Essay in Autobiography*. London: Bles, 1950. Brasch B4238.B44 A3 1950
Michael de la Bedoyere, *The Life of Baron Von Hügel*. London: Dent, [1951]. Brasch BX4705.H77 DA24

CABINET 14: AUTOBIOGRAPHIES & VERSE

David Ballantyne, *The Cunninghams*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1950. Brasch PR9641.B18 C8
Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*. London: Dent ; New York: Dutton, 1948. Brasch PR2358 1948
A Book of Australian and New Zealand Verse. Chosen by Walter Murdoch and Alan Mulgan. 4th ed. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1950. Brasch PR9605.25.BP97
E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India*. London: Dent, [1942]. Brasch PR6011.O58 P3 1942
Stephen Spender, *World within World: The Autobiography of Stephen Spender*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951. Brasch PR6037.P47 Z5 A38

CABINET 15: HISTORIES

Jacob Burckhardt, *Reflections on History*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1943. Brasch D16.8.BX98
Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge*. London: Published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf [at] The Hogarth Press, 1930. Brasch PT2635.I65 A9 A25
Lady Barker, *Station Life in New Zealand*. Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1950. Brasch HN930.5.C3 B762 1950
Arthur Waley, *Chinese Poems*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1946. Brasch PL2658.E3 W478 1946
Peter Quennell, *Spring in Sicily*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1952. Brasch DG864.2.Q3

CABINET 16: JAMES & OTHERS

Henry James, *Roderick Hudson*. [London]: Lehmann, 1947. Brasch PS2116.R6 1947
Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim*. New York: Schocken Books, [1947-1948]. Brasch BM532.BW78
George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin*. London: Joseph, 1953. Brasch PR9219.L3 I5
Angus Wilson, *Hemlock and After*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1956. Brasch PR6045.I577 H4 1956
Heinrich Wölfflin, *Classic Art*. 2nd ed. London: Phaidon Press, 1953. Brasch N6915.W861 1953

CABINET 17: MODERN READS

Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago*. London: Collins and Harvill, 1958. Brasch PG3476.P27 D6 A24
Lawrence Durrell, *Justine*. London: Faber and Faber, 1957. Brasch PR6007.U76 J8
Solomon Maimon, *An Autobiography*. New York: Schocken Books, 1947. Brasch B3068.A3 1967
Ruth Dallas, *The Turning Wheel: Poems*. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1961. Brasch PR9641.D25 T8
J. M. Cohen, *Robert Graves*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960. Brasch PR6013.R35 Z5 C6
Patrick White, *Riders in the Chariot*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1961. Brasch PR9611.W5 R5
Bill Pearson, *Coal Flat*. Auckland: Longman Paul, 1963. Brasch PR9641.P47 C6

CABINET 18: THE LAST YEARS

Charles Brasch, *Indirections: A Memoir, 1909-1947*. Wellington ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Brasch PR9640.B67 Z5 A16
William Shakespeare, *Sonnets*. London: Dent, 1934. Brasch PR2848.A1 1934
Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*. London: Macmillan, 1952. Brasch PQ4315.3.BL16
Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward*. London: Bodley Head, 1968. Brasch PG3488.O4 R31 A22
Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*. London: Anthony Blond, 1964. Brasch PQ2613.E53 N6 A23 1964
C. K. Stead, *Smith's Dream*. Auckland: Longman Paul, [1971]. Brasch PR9641.S7 S6
Patrick White, *The Solid Mandala*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1966. Brasch PR9611.W5 S6
George Herbert, *Poems*. London: Oxford University Press, 1961. Brasch PR3507.A1 1961
Robert Graves, *I Claudius*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1953. Brasch PR6013.R35 I23 1953
William Makepeace Thackeray, *The History of Henry Esmond*. London: Dent, 1898. Brasch PR5612 1898
George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*. Edinburgh: Blackwood, [1868?]. Brasch PR4664 1868
Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Poems*. Vol. 4. London: Julian Editions, 1928. General PR5400 1926
Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope against Hope: A Memoir*. New York: Atheneum, 1970. General PG3476.M355 Z5 M8292.

VITRINES

1. *Landfall*, edited by Charles Brasch, 1947-1966.
 2. A Selection of books from Charles Brasch's Library
 3. A Selection of books from Charles Brasch's Library
 4. Picture Books from Charles Brasch's Library
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Charles Brasch, *Indirections: A Memoir, 1909-1947*. Wellington [N.Z.] ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Brasch PR9640.B67 Z5 A16
Charles Brasch, *Charles Brasch in Egypt*. Wellington, N.Z.: Steele Roberts, 2007. Special PR9640.B67 Z5 A33 2007
Charles Brasch, 'Journals, 1939-73'. MS-996-9. Typescript.
Charles Brasch, *Collected Poems*. Auckland, N.Z.: Oxford University Press, 1984. Special PR9640.B67 A17 1984
Enduring Legacy: Charles Brasch, Patron, Poet & Collector. Edited by Donald Kerr. Dunedin [N.Z.]: University of Otago Press, in association with University of Otago Library, 2003. Special PR9640.B67 Z5 KD2

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