



Research Contextual Paper  
Projects under development

Nick Pride November 2015

## Research Context

I have been exploring a range of themes in my practice-led research relating to the communication of ideas through printed and written language, symbols and signs. I will continue to focus on the artefacts relating to communication technologies that reside in both official and unofficial collections from different periods of time, both the significant and the overlooked object – the material witness to the great events of history and the modest trace of the everyday.

I work within the historical, cultural and contemporary context of artefacts in collections across several countries, periods and cultures, focusing on how language and ideas have been communicated in physical form. I am continuing to extend my existing work as a designer and fine artist – I classify myself as operating between the two areas – by developing a series of personal creative responses in the medium of collage, typography and print. I have established contacts for future projects with a range of institutions detailed below, and have initial agreement to develop single and joint exhibitions, a conference, seminar and joint publications.

## Institutions and individuals with which I am developing projects:

### Europe

I will build on my previous collaboration with Tipoteca, an extensive private museum of printing artifacts in Cornuda, Northern Italy. The collection is an archive of letterpress type, printed artifacts, print-production machinery and associated material assembled in the 1990s as these technologies were discarded across the western world, bringing to a close 500 years of movable type printing. Tipoteca have extended an invitation for me to respond to their collection through a series of residencies, and to exhibit there in their recently completed gallery. Through Tipoteca, and its director Sandro Berra, I will have access to the Biblioteca Marciana, which includes some of the very first *incunabulae* printed in the Venetian Republic during the Renaissance. In addition, I have completed a residency in 2007 at the nearby Scuola di Grafica in Venice, which allows me continuing access to their printmaking facilities, and will work in their print studios during the residency at Tipoteca. I am due to return to Tipoteca in December 2015 to start developing the project.

In Berlin I have approached the Druckwerkstatt in Kreuzberg, which also houses an extensive letterpress collection and print facilities. Within the Druckwerkstatt, Gangolf Ulbrich, an artist papermaker has his workshop. Gangolf editions paperworks for leading contemporary artists including, most recently, Jenny Holzer's redacted National Security Council documents, and he also makes the world's thinnest paper, Berlin Tissue, at just 2gsm. We have agreed to explore a creative collaboration resulting in a practice-based publication, working also with the type collection held by the Druckwerkstatt, and the facilities afforded by Gangolf's expertise in papermaking. I will visit Berlin in February 2016 to develop the project.

### Central Asia

In Iran I have received an invitation to work with Vije Gallery and School of Visual Communication in Tehran and its director Dr. Amrollah Farhardi, ex-president of the Iranian Society of Graphic Designers. I have scheduled a visit in Spring 2016 to finalise plans for a collaborative project exploring the different cultural traditions that inform typographic and information design in Farsi and Western cultures, and the demands on cultural traditions in an increasingly globalized culture.

We have held initial email discussions about convening a similar scale of conference I co-organised with Dr. Farhardi in 2006, and we will organise an exhibition in the Vije Gallery of contemporary Iranian and Western design, followed by a one person show of my work. The 2006 project was part-funded by the British Council in London and Tehran, and I will be approaching them again once the conference subject and logistics are confirmed. In addition I will engage with the extensive calligraphic tradition that informed pre-digital type design, and work with contacts I have in the Ferdowsi Street printing quarter, where a number of traditional printers, publishers and calligraphers have their workshops.

The political situation that exists between Iran and the west has recently improved considerably due to the signing of the accord regarding nuclear development. Thus, projects promoting cultural understanding and the collaboration of Western and Middle Eastern artists and designers are both timely and welcome. These are not easy projects to develop, but drawing on considerable past experience, and the quality of contacts and potential participants involved I am confident that this project will prove to be beneficial to all.

## **Summary of projects and outcomes**

### **Tipoteca, Cornuda, Northern Italy**

Visits July and December 2015

Exhibition and publication 2017 - 19

### **Druckwerksatt and the workshop of Gangolf Ulbrich, Berlin**

Visit and workshop February 2016

Publication resulting from collaboration 2016-18 - probably artists book or folio of paperworks.

### **Vije Gallery and School of Visual Communication, Tehran working with Dr. Amrollah Farhardi**

Visit Spring 2016

Conference, seminar and exhibition 2018 -19

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From top, left to right:

Typographic collage THR (2008) 150 x 440 cm Collage, silkscreen , letterpress and stencil

Printing at Tipoteca, Cornuda, Italy 2015

Printing at scuola di Grafica, Venice 2015

Exhibition at Vije Gallery, Tehran 2006

Typographic Collage Target (2007) 104 x 150 cm Collage, inks silkscreen and stencil

Temporary studio in Tipoteca, Cornuda, Italy 2015