



Fleet Street Apocalypse: London Doomed



1st day of printing - 4th March 2008
Printed at St Bride's, Fleet Street
Shirley Down Jos

It took a while, but the linocut showing the devastation of Fleet Street by flood and fire that was initially proof printed back in March has been editioned. As you can see above, it's a companion piece to the 'London Views' linocut, which was exhibited at Lazarides gallery and subsequently used as the artwork for Thom Yorke's record 'The Eraser'.

Fleet Street Apocalypse is a large print (640mm x 970mm) showing the Royal Courts of Justice, the Cock Tavern, the Daily Express building, St Dunstan's church, the Dundee Courier building, St Bride's Church, a distant St Paul's Cathedral, and the King and Keys pub all in flames, whilst a few desperate survivors attempt to escape a terrible flood that is sweeping along the Street.

The linocut was created specifically to be printed at St Bride's Institute, based on photographs and observational drawings of Fleet Street.

Fleet Street Apocalypse was cut into linoleum during January and February 2008. It was proofed on 4th March, and editioned on 23rd July and 3rd September

2008 by myself and Richard Lawrence at St Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London.

Due to the large size of this linocut we had to think laterally when it came to working out how to print it. The picture was made up of two sections of linoleum, each cut separately and designed to fit on the platen of the press. The process we developed involved wrapping sections of the oily press with paper, rolling half of the large sheets of paper within a protective sheet and then printing the unrolled half. When the edition was done, we then repeated this process with the other section of lino.

Registration of the two halves of the print was achieved with the archaic technique of making pinholes in the sheets during the first printing then lining up the pinholes for the second.

The printing press used is an enormous cast-iron beast made in 1844 in Finsbury, London by Hopkinson & Cope. The paper is acid-free archival quality Somerset White 300gsm satin, made at St Cuthbert's Mill, Wells, Somerset.

The print area is 25" x 38" (640mm x 970mm approx), and the paper size is 30" x 44" (760mm x 1120mm approx).

An original edition of 10 proofs was printed in March 2008, and an edition of 50 prints is available from www.slowlydownward.com. The prints are priced at £750 each.

The editioned prints are available from www.slowlydownward.com, though if you are interested in one of the proof prints, which are a little mucky in an inky way, please contact enquiries@slowlydownward.com.

Additionally, I will be producing an edition of 100 screenprints of **Fleet Street Apocalypse** which will be done in black ink and gold foil, priced at £300 each, and a much smaller (150mm x 100mm) platen press version in the near future., using Richard's 48-year-old Heidelberg press. These will be available at £25 each. For more information about these, again contact enquiries@slowlydownward.com.

NEXT ISSUE: SIX INCH RECORDS!