

Announcing the publication in fall 2013 by the Arion Press
of a deluxe illustrated limited edition of

ANIMAL FARM

the novel by George Orwell
with an introduction by the historian Peter Stansky,
twenty-four prints by the artist Jonathan Hammer,
and an extra suite of the prints, hand-colored.

THE NOVEL

In *Animal Farm*, the farm animals rebel against their subjugation and drive out the farmer and his wife. The pigs take charge, and one of them, named Napoleon, becomes dictator. There is the heroic horse Boxer, the kindly cow Clover, and the cynical donkey Benjamin, along with vicious guard dogs, chickens, ducks, and the like. In the beginning they all cooperate, but soon hierarchies set in, and in the end the pig leadership has established alliances with neighboring human farmers, drinking whiskey with them, and wearing clothes. The name over the gate, Manor Farm, replaced with Animal Farm after the revolution, is

reinstated and the superior swine, walking on their hind legs, are indistinguishable from humans.

As the Stanford University historian Peter Stansky writes in his introduction, “Orwell is a writer of extraordinary power and this may be his greatest masterpiece, a perfect text. As a fable about human nature it transcends the political era in which it was written. It is in so many ways a despairing book, but it has such compassion and empathy. In the end, there is still a glimmer that possibly some day we might create a better and more equal society.”

THE AUTHOR

George Orwell was born Eric Arthur Blair in 1903 in India, where his father was a civil servant supervising the opium trade. He came to England in 1907 with his sisters and mother, while his father remained in India until 1912. He was a King’s Scholar at Eton but did not go to University. Instead, in 1922, he went to work as a police officer in Burma. He returned to England in 1927 and dedicated himself to being a writer, eventually adopting the pseudonym of George Orwell, and publishing his first book, *Down and Out in Paris and London*, in 1933. Soon after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Orwell went to Spain as a reporter and joined the militia of a semi-

Trotskyite group, the POUM. His account of that time, *Homage to Catalonia*, was published in 1938. During the Second World War, he worked for the British Broadcasting Corporation and became a regular columnist and literary editor for the socialist weekly *Tribune*. Orwell's ideas about how the socialist revolution was betrayed by the Communists are the basis for his fable *Animal Farm*, published in 1945. It was the work that made him internationally famous. His novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, published in 1949, has a similar theme. Its central figure is employed to rewrite history to conform to ever-changing political positions of the government. The book made permanent contributions to the language, such as Big Brother, the Thought Police, and two plus two equals five, and has special relevance to government surveillance as practiced today. In the year of the publication of *Animal Farm*, Orwell's wife Eileen died unexpectedly. Orwell died in 1950 of tuberculosis.

THE ARTIST

Jonathan Hammer was born in 1960 in Chicago. He graduated from Bard College and studied bookbinding at the London College of Printing. For a time, when he lived in San Francisco, he worked at Arion Press as a bookbinder. Then he went on to fame and fortune as an

artist. Hammer has had more than forty one-person exhibitions. For twenty-five years he has worked in several mediums including works on paper, photography, unique books, sculptures, and prints, as well as his signature screens made from marquetry of exotic skins. Hammer has exhibited widely in Germany, Switzerland, Norway, France, England, Spain, Mexico, and the United States. He has had nine solo exhibitions in New York (including five at the Matthew Marks Gallery). Along with numerous group exhibitions in museums, Hammer has had solo shows in Geneva at the Centre d'Art Contemporain and the Berkeley Art Museum. His works are in many private and public collections including: the Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, UCLA; Berkeley Art Museum; Whitney Museum of American Art; New York Public Library; and the Jumex Collection. An authority on Zurich Dada, Hammer has published his critical writings on the subject in his book *Ball and Hammer*, Yale University Press, 2002. Hammer has recently completed a cycle of large sculptures in porcelain with the Bernardaud Foundation in Limoges, France. He has received honors from Art Matters, Pro Helvetia (the Swiss Arts Council), and The Memorial

Foundation for Jewish Culture. He is represented by the Miyako Yoshinaga Gallery, New York.

ARTIST'S NOTE

I live in a Spanish village of twenty-eight human inhabitants, many pigs, about a thousand sheep, and countless chickens. There was once an ass; he was euthanized when he was too old to work. Laguarres has two streets, but I count at least four distinct barrios and five cliques. Divisions from the Civil War still run deep. Spanish friends laugh when we tell them where we live. La Guarra is slang for a filthy sow.

One reads *Animal Farm* as a parable, with a strong moral lesson to be learned, maximally pedagogical. There is not a lot of room for art. No wonder the book is taught in every school! In historiographical terms the literal struggles Orwell recounts are fading fast. He subtitles *Animal Farm* a fairy story. What if we actually read it as such, not as a factual text to be illustrated, but as a guide to an archetypal sense of human interaction and desire? Perhaps satire and corruption are all around us. For me, the interest lies in the place where the art sparks. There is nothing more deliciously frightening than the collision/collusion of the sneering repressed self-deprecating right as it meets and melds with the disdainful well-meaning passive left. In the

village, I live within the midst of this equation every day. Violence is nearby and skin deep. I have always worked with books and bindings. Skin is my tool, to be cut and skived, hacked, and chopped. Write with the knife. Expose the extreme to the bone.

Here, like everywhere, we have a veneer of education that somehow holds it all together in civility. But education in the hands of whom, as a tool for what purpose? Who is the victim and who is the victimizer? Who is the master and who is the gelding? A silk purse from a sow's ear. Pearls juxtaposed with swine. Indeed, what more natural way for me to make *Animal Farm* art, than through the welcome of butchery and finery in cohabitation.

THE BOOK

The Arion Press edition of *Animal Farm* is large octavo in format, 10-1/8 by 7-1/2 inches, of 156 numbered text pages, plus 24 unnumbered leaves for the illustrations, for a total of 204 pages. The type is Times New Roman in Monotype, with display sizes set by hand. It was printed by letterpress on Zerkall ivory book, a German mouldmade paper. The 24 relief prints are printed by letterpress from polymer plates made from films scratched by the artist with an etching needle for the black images, with photo-polymer plates made from overlay drawings in pencil for the red

tints. The binding is three-piece cloth, with a maroon spine and ochre sides, imprinted with images of the gate of Manor Farm on the back and the gate of Animal Farm on the front, with the same materials used for the slipcase. A sample print from the book is enclosed with this prospectus, which is printed in the type and on the paper of the book.

THE EXTRA SUITE OF PRINTS

Jonathan Hammer's images for *Animal Farm* make up a meaty mélange of Dadaistic multichotomy. The 24 relief prints in the book are offered as an extra suite of prints on larger sheets of Zerkall natural white, 15 by 12-1/2 inches, in a heavier weight than the paper for the book. Whereas the prints in the book are printed in black with red tints, the prints in the extra suite are entirely hand-colored in watercolors for the red tints with various second colors for the accessories. A title page provides the pertinent information about the suite. The suites are presented in a cloth-covered portfolio with titling label on the front. The prints are sold only as a complete set, with a copy of the book. They are signed by the artist and numbered, and are suitable for framing.

THE EDITION, PRICE, AND ORDERING

This is the ninety-ninth publication of the Arion Press. The book edition is limited to 300 numbered copies for sale and 26 lettered copies for complimentary distribution to participants in the project. Of these, 30 copies are accompanied by the extra suite of 24 hand-colored prints, of which 30 are for sale, numbered 1/30 – 30/30; 5 are artist proofs, numbered AP 1/5 – AP 5/5; and 5 are printer's proofs, numbered PP 1/5 – PP 5/5. All of the books and the prints in the suites are signed by the artist.

The price of the book is \$600. The book with the extra suite of prints is \$5,400. A portion of the edition has been reserved for subscribers to Arion Press, individuals and institutions committed to purchasing the annual series of publications.

To place an order or for further information, contact:

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