

# Aubrey Beardsley, 1872–1898

A Centennial Exhibition • Princeton University Library

5 October 1998 – 8 April 1999

Note: Unless indicated as loans, all items belong to the Princeton University Library.

1. ELLEN AGNUS BEARDSLEY. "Aubrey Beardsley." Autograph manuscript. [1903?].
2. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Vincent Paul Beardsley. [December 1878]. With embroidered bookmark by Beardsley.
3. Photograph of Mabel Beardsley. [London:] J. Caswall Smith, Gainsborough Studios, [ca. 1900].
4. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *A Disappointment*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1887].
5. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *The Cambridge Theatre of Varieties*. Pen and ink and wash. [1888–89].
6. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Album of 21 drawings. Pen and ink, sepia, wash, and watercolor. [1889–90].
7. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Album of drawings in a scrapbook. Pen and ink and pencil. [ca. 1890].
8. JONATHAN SWIFT. *Prose Writings of Swift*. Chosen and Arranged by Walter Lewin. London: Walter Scott, 1886. Beardsley's copy.
9. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. *The Poems of William Shakespeare*. Edited with a Memoir by Robert Bell. London: Charles Griffin and Company, [ca. 1888]. Beardsley's copy.
10. *The Brighton Grammar School. Annual Entertainment, At the Dome, on Wednesday, Dec. 19, 1888. Programme and Book of Words*. [Brighton: Tucknott's Steam Printing Works, 1888].
11. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. 4 January 1890.
12. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Hail Mary*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1891].
13. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. 4 January 1890.
14. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to G. F. Scotson-Clark. [July 1891].
15. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. [13 July 1891].
16. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Die Götterdämmerung*. Pen and ink, wash, and Chinese white. [1892].
17. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Carl Maria von Weber*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1892].
18. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Raphael Sanzio*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1892].
19. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Katharina Klafsky as Isolde*. Pen and ink and watercolor. [ca. 1892].
20. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. 9 December [1892].
21. *The Pall Mall Budget*. 9 February 1893.
22. *The Studio*. Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1893.
23. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Grotesques for the Bon-Mots Series. Pen and ink. [1893].
24. SYDNEY SMITH and R. BRINSLEY SHERIDAN. *Bon-Mots of Sydney Smith and R. Brinsley Sheridan*. Edited by Walter Jerrold. With Grotesques by Aubrey Beardsley. London: J. M. Dent, 1893.
25. LUCIAN. *Lucian's True History*. Translated by Francis Hickee, Illustrated by William Strang, J. B. Clark, and Aubrey Beardsley, With an Introduction by Charles Whibley. London: Privately Printed, 1894. Inscribed by Beardsley to Robert Ross.
26. J. M. DENT. Autograph letter to Ellen Agnus Beardsley. 24 September [1898].
27. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to G. F. Scotson-Clark. [ca. 15 February 1893].
28. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Sir Launcelot and the Witch Hellawes*. Pen and ink. [1893–94].
29. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for a full-page border for Le Morte Darthur*. Pen and ink. [1893–94].
30. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of wrappers issue of Le Morte Darthur*. Pen and ink and Chinese white. [1893]. (Lent by Mark Samuels Lasner).
31. SIR THOMAS MALORY. *The Birth, Life, and Acts of King Arthur, of his Noble Knights of the Round Table, Their Marvellous Enquests and Adventures, the Achieving of the San Greal, and in the End, Le Morte Darthur with the Dolourous Death and Departing Out of this World of Them All*. The Text as Written by Sir Thomas Malory and Imprinted by William Caxton at Westminster the Year MCCCCLXXXV, and Now Spelled in Modern Style. With an Introduction by Professor Rhys, and Embellished with Many Original Designs by Aubrey Beardsley. [London: J. M. Dent], 1893–94.
32. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover and title page of Keynotes*. Pen and ink. [1893].
33. GEORGE EGERTON [pseud. of Mary Chavelita Dunne Clairmonte]. *Keynotes*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1893.
34. FEDOR DOSTOIEVSKY. *Poor Folk*. Translated from the Russian by Lena Milman, With an Introduction by George Moore. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894.
35. FLORENCE FARR. *The Dancing Faun*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894.
36. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover and title page of Monochromes*. Pen and ink. [1895]. (Lent by Mark Samuels Lasner).
37. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover and title page of The Great God Pan and The Inmost Light*. Pen and ink. [1895].
38. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster to advertise the Keynotes Series. Color lithograph. [1895].
39. *Keynotes Series of Novels and Short Stories*. Twenty-one Designs by Aubrey Beardsley. With Press Notices. London: John Lane, 1896.
40. 20 *Miniature Posters*. Drawn by Aubrey Beardsley. Representing the Title Designs of the "Keynotes Series." Boston: Roberts Brothers, [ca. 1896].
41. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for the front cover and title page of The British Barbarians*. Pen and ink. [1895].
42. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for the front cover and title page and design for key of The Barbarous Britishers*. Pen and ink. [1896].
43. H. D. TRAILL. *The Barbarous Britishers: A Tip-Top Novel*. London: John Lane, [1896].
44. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *J'ai Baisé Ta Bouche, Jokanaan—J'ai Baisé Ta Bouche*. Pen and ink and watercolor. [1893].
45. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Robert Ross. [ca. August 1893].
46. Photograph of Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas. [Oxford: Gillman and Co., May? 1893].
47. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Proof of *Enter Herodias*. Line block. [1893]. Inscribed by Beardsley with poem to Alfred Lambart.
48. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *The Black Cape*. Pen and ink. [1893].
49. OSCAR WILDE. *Salome: A Tragedy in One Act*. Translated from the French of Oscar Wilde, Pictured by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894.
50. Prospectus for *The Yellow Book*. Vol. I, April 1894.
51. *The Yellow Book: An Illustrated Quarterly*. Vol. I, April 1894. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894.
52. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *The Comedy-Ballet of Marionettes, No. 1*. Pen and ink. [1894].
53. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of The Yellow Book, Vol. III*. Pen and ink. [1894].
54. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for a poster to advertise The Yellow Book*. Pen and ink. [1894].
55. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster to advertise *The Yellow Book*. Vol. XI, October 1896. Lithograph. 1896.

56. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of The Yellow Book*. Pen and ink. [1894–95].
57. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover and title page of Grey Roses*. Pen and ink. [1895].
58. JOHN DAVIDSON. *Plays. Being: An Unhistorical Pastoral, A Romantic Farce, Bruce: A Chronicle Play, Smith: A Tragic Farce, and Scaramouch in Naxos: A Pantomime*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894.
59. JOHN DAVIDSON. *A Full and True Account of the Wonderful Mission of Earl Lavender, Which Lasted One Night and One Day, With a History of the Pursuit of Earl Lavender and Lord Brumm by Mrs. Scamler and Maud Emblem*. With a Frontispiece by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Ward and Downey, 1895. Inscribed by Davidson to Beardsley. (Lent by Alexander D. Wainwright, Class of 1939).
60. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Messrs. Stone and Kimball. 2 January [1894].
61. [EDGAR ALLAN POE]. [*The Works of Edgar Allan Poe*. Newly Collected and Edited, with a Memoir, Critical Introductions, and Notes by Edmund Clarence Stedman and George Edward Woodberry. The Illustrations by Albert Edward Sterner. Chicago: Stone and Kimball, 1894–95]. Portfolio with 4 illustrations by Beardsley.
62. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Ada Levenson. [?2 January 1895].
63. Dummy copy of *The Yellow Book*. Vol. V, April 1895. Inscribed by Henry Harland and by Edmund Gosse; with proof of William Watson's "Hymn to the Sea," autograph letter from Watson to Gosse, 2 April 1895, and cablegrams exchanged between John Lane and The Bodley Head, April 1895.
64. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. "The Art of the Hoarding." Autograph manuscript. [1894].
65. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for a poster*. Pen and ink. [1894].
66. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster to advertise *A Comedy of Sighs* by John Todhunter and *The Land of Heart's Desire* by W. B. Yeats, Avenue Theatre, London, 29 March 1894. Facsimile of 1894 original. [1966].
67. W. B. YEATS. *The Land of Heart's Desire*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1894.
68. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster advertising Unwin's Children's Books. Facsimile of 1894 original. [1966].
69. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster advertising Unwin's Pseudonym and Autonym Libraries. Facsimile of 1894 original. [1966].
70. *Unwin's Chap Book, 1899–1900*. London: Printed at the Gresham Press for T. Fisher Unwin, [1899].
71. Photograph of Leonard Smithers. Richmond: Gunn & Stuart, [ca. 1895]. (Lent by Mark Samuels Lasner).
72. Catalogues of rare books offered for sale by Leonard Smithers. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896. (Lent by Mark Samuels Lasner).
73. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Siegfried*. Pen and ink. [1895].
74. Prospectus for *The Savoy*. [November 1895]. (Lent by Mark Samuels Lasner).
75. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Proof of design for front cover of *The Savoy*. No. 1, January 1896. Line block. [1895]. (Lent by Mark Samuels Lasner).
76. *The Savoy*. Nos. 1–8, January–December 1896. Edited by Arthur Symons. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896.
77. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Drawings for the front cover of Beardsley's copy of the vocal score of Tristan und Isolde*. Pen and ink and Chinese white on brown paper. [ca. 1893–94].
78. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Max Alvary as Tristan*. Pen and ink and wash. [ca. 1895].
79. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. [ca. 10 April 1896].
80. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. "The Ballad of a Barber." Autograph manuscript. [1896].
81. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Under the Hill and Other Essays in Prose and Verse*. With Illustrations. London: John Lane, 1904.
82. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Et in Arcadia Ego*. Pen and ink. [1896].
83. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. [1 December 1896].
84. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster for *The Savoy*. Color lithograph. [1896].
85. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for title page of Pierrot's Library*. Pen and ink. [1896].
86. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. [ca. 5 September 1896].
87. ALEXANDER POPE. *The Rape of the Lock: An Heroi-comical Poem in Five Cantos*. Embroidered with Nine Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896.
88. ALEXANDER POPE. *The Rape of the Lock: An Heroi-comical Poem in Five Cantos*. Embroidered with Eleven Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Leonard Smithers, 1897. Bijou edition, special issue. Inscribed by Beardsley to Robert Underwood Johnson.
89. ERNEST DOWSON. *Verses*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896.
90. ERNEST DOWSON. *The Pierrot of the Minute: A Dramatic Phantasy in One Act*. With a Frontispiece, Initial letter, Vignette, and Cul-de-lampe by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Leonard Smithers, 1897.
91. ARISTOPHANES. *The Lysistrata of Aristophanes*. Now First Wholly Translated into English and Illustrated with Eight Full-page Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley. London: [Leonard Smithers], 1896.
92. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Juvenal Scourging Woman*. Pen and ink. [1896].
93. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *A Book of Fifty Drawings*. With an Iconography by Aymer Vallance. London: Leonard Smithers, 1897.
94. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Proof for *Mr. Pollitt's Bookplate*. [1897]. Signed and annotated by Beardsley.
95. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to H. C. J. Pollitt. [7 March 1897].
96. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of The Life and Times of Madame Du Barry*. Pen and ink. [1896].
97. ROBERT B. DOUGLAS. *The Life and Times of Madame Du Barry*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896.
98. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Six Drawings Illustrating Théophile Gautier's Romance Mademoiselle de Maupin*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1898.
99. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. 29 November [1897].
100. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Volpone Adorning His Treasure*. Pen and ink. [1897].
101. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. 14 December 1897.
102. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. 26 December [1897].
103. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Mabel Beardsley. 10 January 1898.
104. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. "Volpone by Ben Jonson Illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley." Autograph manuscript. January 1898.
105. BEN JONSON. *Ben Jonson His Volpone: Or The Foxe*. A New Edition, With a Critical Essay on the Author by Vincent O'Sullivan and a Frontispiece, Five Initial Letters, and a Cover Design Illustrative and Decorative by Aubrey Beardsley. Together with an Eulogy of the Artist by Robert Ross. London: Leonard Smithers, 1898.
106. WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Aubrey Beardsley*. Colored chalks. [1893].
107. D. S. MACCOLL. *Aubrey Beardsley*. Pencil. [1893]. Inscribed to R. A. Walker.
108. FREDERICK HOLLYER. Photograph of Aubrey Beardsley. [ca. 1894–95].
109. Photograph of Aubrey Beardsley. Bournemouth: W. J. Hawker, [March 1897].
110. WILLIAM T. HORTON. *Caricature of Aubrey Beardsley*. Pastels. [ca. 1896–97].
111. WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Aubrey Beardsley*. Lithograph. 1897. Inscribed by Rothenstein to Beardsley. (Lent by Alexander D. Wainwright, Class of 1939).
112. MAXBEERBOHM. *Caricature of Aubrey Beardsley*. Pencil and red chalk. [ca. late 1890s?].
113. PENRHYN STANLAWS [pseud. of Penrhyn Stanley Adamson]. *Mr. Aubrey Beardsley*. Pencil. [1898?].
114. WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Albert Eugene Gallatin*. Pencil. [1913]. (Lent by Alexander D. Wainwright, Class of 1939).

# AUBREY BEARDSLEY (1872–1898): A CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION

The Leonard L. Milberg Gallery for the Graphic Arts  
Harvey S. Firestone Memorial library  
5 October 1998–8 April 1999

# AUBREY BEARDSLEY (1872–1898): A CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION

The English artist Aubrey Beardsley (1872-1898) lent his name to a whole era in art and literature. So strong was his impact on his time that as early as 1895 Max Beerbohm could write, "I belong to the Beardsley period." Through his art Beardsley became the leading exponent of a British movement referred to by its detractors as "decadent," much as was Oscar Wilde in literature. "For some, the decade conjures yellow visions of Decadence, of putrescence in life and art," Karl Beckson has written, "for others, the 1890s suggest the artist's protest against a spiritually bankrupt civilization, his imagination striving for the unattainable to restore his wholeness." The perceived challenge to traditional bourgeois values raised the specter of cultural crisis, which has a particular resonance in America a century later. Although Beardsley had a short professional career lasting only six years before his death from tuberculosis at the age of 25, he produced more than a thousand designs and illustrations, virtually all in the medium of pen and ink. Brought before the public by entrepreneurial publishers and periodicals that took advantage of recently introduced technology to serve a mass audience, his books, posters, bookplates, and magazine contributions—most notably Wilde's *Salome* and *The Yellow Book*—gave Beardsley international celebrity status.

In commemorating the centennial of Beardsley's death, we remember him as emblematic of the *fin-de-siècle*, as a controversial artist in whose black-and-white world the literary and visual ideas of the avant garde culture of the 1890s coalesced. This most literary of artists developed an extraordinary knowledge of English and French literature. "Certainly, he seemed to have read, and to have made his reading into culture," Max Beerbohm wrote, "more than any man I have ever met." Virtually untrained, Beardsley absorbed the Pre-Raphaelites, the Aesthetic movement, Japanese woodblock prints, Greek vases, and 18th century engravings. These influences, seemingly eclectic, produced the bold, distinctive, instantly recognized "Beardsley style." Seen then (and now) as amusing, grotesque, decadent, perverse, liberating, erotic, even obscene, Beardsley's artistic vision remains unique and arresting.

Beardsley's family was of middle and lower middle class origins, but his early life was decidedly "shabby genteel." His father Vincent worked irregularly at London breweries, while his mother Ellen Pitt, who was born into an Anglo-Indian family, derived a small income from piano teaching. Both Beardsley and his sister Mabel, later an

actress, were considered artistic and musical prodigies. The artist's health was always fragile. Tuberculosis plagued him from childhood, periodically reducing him to the status of invalid and finally causing his death. When in 1884 his mother became for a short time too ill to care for him and his sister, they were both packed off to live with an aunt nearby. Beardsley attended the Brighton Grammar School for four years, three and a half of those as a boarder. At Brighton the housemaster Arthur William King provided Beardsley with encouragement and access to a good library of literature. Beardsley honed his talents by drawing caricatures of his teachers, as well as acting in school plays and attending the theater. In 1888-89 Beardsley and his sister staged private theatrical performances in the family home, with the young artist providing pen-ink-and-wash drawings for the programs. The amateur theatricals were called "The Cambridge Theatre of Varieties" after the Beardsley residence at 32 Cambridge Street in Pimlico. In 1889 he worked first as a clerk in a surveyor's office and then in 1890 as a clerk at the Guardian Fire and Life Assurance Company.

Words came easily to Beardsley, who loved literature, attended the theater, read indefatigably, and prowled the second-hand bookstores of London. His first published work was "The Valiant," a poem in the June 1885 issue of *Past and Present*, the Brighton Grammar School magazine. Two years later his first reproduced drawings, a series of humorous sketches entitled "The Jubilee Cricket Analysis," appeared in the same journal, and he provided the program book illustrations for "The Pay of the Pied Piper," his school's 1888 Christmas entertainment. In 1889 his prose piece "The Story of a Confession Album," was published in *Tit Bits*, a *Reader's Digest*-type publication of the day. Even though these and other works of juvenilia brought Beardsley little attention, he sought entree into the art world. For this reason, the artist and his sister went uninvited to see the studio of Sir Edward C. Burne-Jones. They were sent away by a servant, but as they were leaving, Burne-Jones spotted Mabel's red hair and asked them in. The eminent Pre-Raphaelite artist was so impressed by the drawings in Beardsley's portfolio that he encouraged him to attend night classes at the Westminster School of Art in order to become a professional artist. The stylistic influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and French literature are unmistakable in Beardsley's 1889-90 album of drawings in India ink, sepia, light wash, and watercolors.

He relatively new technical possibilities of photo engraving had created a commercial demand for artists like Beardsley, whose drawings could be mechanically reproduced more efficiently in books and periodicals for an expanded readership. In 1892 Beardsley's professional career began inauspiciously as an artist-reporter for the *Pall Mall Budget*. But the years 1893 and 1894 were to be perhaps the most important in Beardsley's career. Through the London bookseller and bibliophile Frederick Evans, the artist was introduced to the British publisher J. M. Dent, who offered the young artist his first commission, a modestly priced edition of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. This massive work, issued first in 12 parts and later as a single volume,

contained over 300 different illustrations, chapter headings, borders, vignettes, and other designs from Beardsley's pen. In these illustrations, it is easy to see the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites, especially the medievalism and aestheticism of Sir Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, though Beardsley felt that his fresh effort had surpassed their work. J. M. Dent was inspired perhaps by Kelmscott Press to produce an exquisitely illustrated book, but also saw the virtue of reaching readers of modest means, much as the publisher's *Everyman Classics* were able to do in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Beardsley's reputation as an illustrator grew after publication of *Le Morte d'Arthur*, and accordingly he began to receive commissions for bookplates for various people and designs for other books. He drew 127 grotesques and designs for *Bons-Mots*, published in three volumes by J. M. Dent in 1893-94; and he contributed illustrations in 1893-95 for 22 titles in John Lane's *Keynotes* series, including works by contemporary English writers such as Grant Allen, Arthur Machen, and George Egerton. Also in 1893 Beardsley entered into a working relationship with Oscar Wilde, the writer with whom the artist is most often associated. In February of that year (1893), Wilde's scandalous play *Salomé* was published in its original French version. Fortuitously, Wilde saw and admired a drawing by Beardsley in Joseph Pennell's article about him in the inaugural issue of *The Studio*. Beardsley was commissioned to illustrate the English edition (1894). Not content with art alone, Beardsley expressed an intense desire to translate the French text after Wilde found the translation by his intimate, Lord Alfred Douglas, to be unsatisfactory. This assignment was the beginning of Beardsley's celebrity but also of an uneasy, and at times unpleasant, friendship with Wilde, which officially ended when Wilde was tried and convicted of sodomy in 1895. In his justifiably celebrated illustrations for *Salomé*, we see Beardsley fully under the spell of Japonisme, emphasizing simple lines, areas of black ink and white paper, and asymmetrical compositions. Clearly, he was influenced by the work of James McNeill Whistler and the Japanese printmakers, but once again produced a unique and original vision. While Oscar Wilde admired Beardsley's drawings, ironically, he did not consider the Japonisme appropriate to his controversial play and was displeased by having been caricatured in several of the drawings.

Beardsley's next triumph, albeit short-lived, was *The Yellow Book*. His reputation seemed to have been assured when the first volume *The Yellow Book* was published in April 1894, shortly after *Salomé*. This famous quarterly of art and literature, for which Beardsley served as art editor and the American expatriate Henry Harland as literary editor, brought the artist's work to a larger public. It was Beardsley's startling black-and-white drawings, title pages, and covers contributed immensely to the journal's tremendous success, as did the writings of the so-called "decadents," a unique format, and publisher John Lane's remarkable marketing strategies. Although well received by much of the public, *The Yellow Book* was attacked by critics as indecent. So strong was the perceived link between Beardsley, Wilde, and *The Yellow Book* that

Beardsley was dismissed in April 1895 from his post as art editor following Wilde's arrest, even though Wilde had not been a contributor to the magazine. Beardsley's summary dismissal from *The Yellow Book* left him feeling "bitterly humiliated," according to his sister Mabel.

Soon he was approached by Leonard Smithers, a publisher of limited editions, who in time resolved to create a rival periodical but was also known for publishing pornography and erotica. The unemployed artist joined forces with Smithers to produce *The Savoy*, with Beardsley as art editor. His editor was Beardsley's friend Arthur Symons, who two years earlier, had helped popularize the French writers Stéphane Mallarmé, J.-K. (Joris-Karl) Huysmans, and Paul Verlaine in England through his influential article "The Decadent Movement in Literature." Beardsley found in *The Savoy* an outlet for his writings as well as art. "Under the Hill" (his provocative retelling of the Tannhäuser legend, republished posthumously as a "romantic novel") and "The Ballad of a Barber" both appeared in numbers of *The Savoy*. When publication ceased in December 1896, Beardsley continued to illustrate other authors' works for Smithers. Among these volumes were editions of Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1896), Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (1896), and Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (posthumously). In his book illustrations for Smithers, Beardsley occasionally shows the influence of neo-classical and rococo sources of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Yet under Smithers' patronage, some of Beardsley's work became more grotesque, sexually explicit, and deliberately shocking than it had been. At the same time, paradoxically, the increasingly infirm artist sought spiritual solace in the Roman Catholic Church. On his deathbed, Beardsley even commanded Smithers to destroy "all copies of *Lysistrata*" and "all obscene drawing."

Aubrey Beardsley was eulogized by Max Beerbohm, Aymer Vallance, Arthur Symons, and other friends and admirers, though unable even in death to escape the controversy that surrounded him during his short but productive life. Leonard Smithers published posthumous *A Book of Fifty Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley* (1897), which was followed by John Lane's *A Second Book of Fifty Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley* (1899). His memory was also kept alive through the immense influence that his drawings were to have on artists such as Charles Ricketts, Laurence Housman, Henry Clarke, Alastair (Hans Henning Voight), Sidney Sime, and Arthur Ricketts.

Most of the drawings, papers, and books of Aubrey Beardsley exhibited here were generously donated to the Princeton University Library in 1948 by A.E. [Albert Eugene] Gallatin (1881–1952), the American artist, art critic, art historian, and collector. In marking the centennial of Beardsley's death and fiftieth anniversary of the Gallatin Beardsley Collection at Princeton, it is fitting to remember the person who amassed this fine collection. Trained as a lawyer, A.E. Gallatin is chiefly remembered today as a patron of modern European and American artists from the 1920s to 1940s. He admired, collected, and wrote about such artists as Charles Demuth, Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Gaston Lachaise, and Pablo Picasso. From the 1920s Gallatin actively

collected contemporary art, and his Gallery of Living Art collection came to constitute New York University's Museum of Living Art before being transferred permanently to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1943. Gallatin himself was an artist, working in the Cubist and Constructivist styles.

Gallatin had a lifelong passion for the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley and other artists associated with the English *fin de siècle*, such as Max Beerbohm, Charles Ricketts, Will [Sir William] Rothenstein, and James McNeill Whistler. Gallatin acquired a fine collection of drawings, photographs, correspondence, manuscripts, and printed books from private collectors such as Frederick H. Evans, John Lane, and R. A. Walker. In addition to collection, Gallatin wrote about Beardsley, beginning with brief publications about Beardsley's bookplates (1902) and drawings (1903). Gallatin's continuing interest resulted in three publications largely based on his Beardsley collection: (1) an introduction to the catalogue of the E. Gimpel and Wildenstein exhibition of Beardsley (1920); (2) a catalogue of a Grolier Club exhibition (1945); and (3) an essay on Beardsley in the *Princeton University Library Chronicle* (1949). The latter was reprinted in Alexander D. Wainwright's catalogue of the Gallatin Beardsley Collection, published in the *Princeton University Library Chronicle* (1951) and as a separate catalogue (1952).

In the half century since Gallatin's gift, the collection has been supplemented by drawings and other items in the J. Harlin O'Connell Collection of the 1890s, donated by Mrs. Pierre Matisse; items purchased with funds provided by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., Gilbert S. McClintock, J. Harlin O'Connell, Sidney Rheinstein, and others; and selected items acquired individually by the Princeton University Library. Also on display are items from the Rare Books Division, the Robert Taylor Collection, and loans from private collections. The exhibition has been co-curated by Mark Samuels Lasner and Don C. Skemer.



# LABELS

ELLEN AGNUS BEARDSLEY. "Aubrey Beardsley." Autograph manuscript. [1903?]. This brief biographical sketch by his mother provides some intimate glimpses of Beardsley's childhood and schooling. It was probably written for John Lane at the time he published *Under the Hill and Other Essays in Prose and Verse*.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Ellen Agnus Beardsley. [ca. July 1880]. Written when he was a student at Hamilton Lodge, a boarding school near Brighton, this letter records the seven-year-old artist's musical precocity: "I thank you for the piece of music which I received this morning. I am learning *Fading Away* and then I shall begin the Sonata."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *A Disappointment*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1887]. An early drawing done in the manner of George Du Maurier's humorous cartoons for *Punch*.

*Past and Present: The Magazine of the Brighton Grammar School*. Vol. XII, No. 2, June 1887. This issue of his school's magazine contains Beardsley's first published illustration, "The Jubilee Cricket Analysis."

*The Brighton Grammar School. Annual Entertainment, At the Dome, on Wednesday, Dec. 19, 1888. Programme and Book of Words*. [Brighton: Tucknott's Steam Printing Works, 1888]. Each Christmas, the Brighton Grammar School put on an "entertainment" at the Dome, a public theater in Brighton. The 1888 performance featured "The Pay of the Pied Piper: A Legend of Hamelin Town," a comic opera based on the old legend and on Robert Browning's 1842 poem. Beardsley was in the cast and also recited the part of Mercury in the play's "Prologue," written by his teacher A. W. King. He also provided eleven illustrations (described as "Original Etchings by A. V. Beardsley, A Present Boy") to this program book.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. *The Poems of William Shakespeare*. Edited with a Memoir by Robert Bell. London: Charles Griffin and Company, [ca. 1888]. Aubrey Beardsley's copy, with his ownership signature "A V Beardsley. March 27, 1889." A typical early acquisition for his library, this volume contains a sketch of Shakespeare by Beardsley and extensive annotations.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to G. F. Scotson-Clark. [July 1891]. To a former fellow student at the Brighton Grammar School with whom he shared many of his artistic interests, Beardsley describes his visit to the London home of Frederick Leyland, millionaire Liverpool shipbuilder. "His collection is GLORIOUS," he writes, going on to list specific paintings by the Pre-Raphaelites (Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Watts, Millais) and by Italian Renaissance masters (Botticelli, Lippo Lippi, and Giorgione).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. [13 July 1891]. This letter records—ecstatically—a crucial moment in Beardsley's career, his 12 July 1891 meeting with the Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones. "Yesterday (Sunday) I and my sister went to see the Studio of Burne-

Jones, . . . When we arrived however we were told that the Studio had not been open for some years and that we could not see Mr Burne-Jones without a special appointment. So we left somewhat disconsolately. I had hardly turned the corner when I heard a quick step behind me, and a voice which said, 'Pray come back . . .' The voice was that of Burne-Jones, who escorted us back to his house and took us into the studio, showing and explaining everything. His kindness was wonderful as we were perfect strangers, he not even knowing our names. By the merest chance I happened to have some of my best drawings with me, and I asked him to look at them and give me his opinion. I can tell you it was an exciting moment when he first opened my portfolio and looked at the first drawings . . . After he had examined them for a few minutes he exclaimed, "There is *no* doubt about your gift, one day you will most assuredly paint very great and beautiful pictures. . . . All are *full* of thought, poetry, and imagination. Nature has given you every gift which is necessary to become a great artist. I *seldom* or *never* advise anyone to take up art as a profession, but in *your* case *I can do nothing else.*' And all this from the greatest living artist in Europe."

[EDGAR ALLAN POE]. [*The Works of Edgar Allan Poe*. Newly Collected and Edited, with a Memoir, Critical Introductions, and Notes by Edmund Clarence Stedman and George Edward Woodberry. The Illustrations by Albert Edward Sterner. Chicago: Stone & Kimball, 1894–95]. In the end, Beardsley only completed four illustrations for Stone and Kimball's Poe—"The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Black Cat," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Fall of the House of Usher." These were reproduced, not with the text in the actual volumes, but in a separate portfolio believed to be associated with a special issue limited to ten sets. (The elaborate art nouveau design on the portfolio's cover is the work of Frank Hazenplug, not Beardsley.)

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for a poster*. Pen and ink. [1894]. This design, reproduced in Beardsley's article, "The Art of the Hoarding," was used in late 1895 for a poster advertising Cecil Raynor's otherwise forgotten novel, *The Spinster's Scrip*, published by William Heinemann.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. [ca. 5 September 1896]. In September 1896 Smithers began work on *A Book of Fifty Drawings*, the first album of selections from Beardsley's work. The artist writes: "It seems to me you have an embarras de richesses in the way of drawings. . . . Lane has not replied yet about the *Salomé* drawings. They had better be reproduced from the book as I have practically destroyed all the originals (for purposes of block making)."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *A Book of Fifty Drawings*. With an Iconography by Aymer Vallance. London: Leonard Smithers, 1897. Beardsley himself chose the works reproduced in *A Book of Fifty Drawings*, published by Smithers after some difficulty in January 1897. The volume contained a number of previously unreproduced drawings, including a tailpiece self-portrait and the front cover design. Vallance's "iconography" was the first attempt to list the artist's *oeuvre*.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. 26 December [1897]. Even after the failure of *The Savoy*, Smithers did not give up the idea of founding another periodical in which Beardsley would be involved. In this letter, Beardsley, who offered to serve as editor and stipulated that nothing by Wilde should appear, discusses the content of the proposed venture: "On the art side I suggest that it should attack *untiringly and unflinchingly* the Burne-Jones and Morrisian medieval business, and set up a wholesome seventeenth and eighteenth-century standard of what picture making should be." Plans for the new quarterly, tentatively titled *The Peacock*, came to nothing.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Album of drawings in a scrapbook. Pen and ink and pencil. [ca. 1890]. The four drawings in this scrapbook preserved by the Beardsley family include depictions of the contemporary avant-garde theater—an illustration for Ibsen's *Ghosts, Act I* and a portrait of Sarah Bernhardt.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *The Cambridge Theatre of Varieties*. Pen and ink and wash. [1888–89]. The Beardsleys, like so many other Victorian families, organized amateur theatrical performances to entertain family and friends. This drawing was made for one of the programs. The actors “Madame Mâbèle” and “André” were, of course, Mabel and Aubrey Beardsley, and the title “Cambridge Theatre” was derived from their address, 32 Cambridge Street, Pimlico.

Photograph of Mabel Beardsley. [London:] J. Caswall Smith, Gainsborough Studios, [ca. 1900]. A musical and theatrical prodigy like her brother, Mabel Beardsley later pursued a moderately successful career as an actress, appearing in productions of Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance* and Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, among other plays. She and Aubrey were exceptionally close, and her joining the Catholic Church in 1896 likely encouraged his own conversion a year later. The artist portrayed her (nude) in the frontispiece he drew for John Davidson's *Plays* (1894).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. 9 December [1892]. In this long “outrageously egotistical letter” to his former teacher, Beardsley breathlessly comments on books-in-progress (the Bon-Mots series, *Le Morte Darthur*, and *Lucian's True History*), possible commissions, an exhibition of his drawings at the New English Art Club, and *The Studio*, the newly-founded magazine which is to include his work. (The pasted-on clipping from the Brighton School magazine, *Past and Present*, gives an indication of Beardsley's growing fame.) Of particular interest is the announcement of the artist's success with a new, wholly personal style, an “entirely new method of drawing: Fantastic impressions treated in the finest possible outline with patches of ‘black blot.’” As Matthew Sturgis suggests, Beardsley had “taken the elements of Japanese design and fashioned them into something quite new, both in style and content.” The result can be seen in the non-historicist Bon-Mots grotesques and in the increasingly unconventional and asymmetrical massing of black and white found in such works as *Carl Maria von Weber*, *Raphael Sanzio*, *Incipit Vita Nova*, and *The Birthday of Madame Cigale*.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Album of twenty-one drawings. Pen and ink, sepia, wash, and watercolor. [1889–90]. Signed “A. Beardsley” and dated 5 June 1890, this album was later presented by the artist's mother to Robert Ross. The subjects of virtually all these sketches derive from Beardsley's enthusiasm for French literature and culture: *Manon Lescaut*, *La Dame aux Camélias*, Balzac's *Contes Drolatiques*, Jeanne D'Arc, Watteau. The drawing displayed, however, depicts *Beatrice Cenci*, the sixteenth-century Italian historical figure who inspired Shelley's 1819 play, *The Cenci*: its artistic style owes much to D. G. Rossetti.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Hail Mary*. Pencil. [ca. 1891]. Burne-Jones's strong influence is obvious in this work. Beardsley presented this drawing to his friend Frederick H. Evans, and it was among the works the bookseller and photographer showed J. M. Dent in the summer of 1892 when Dent was looking for an illustrator for *Le Morte Darthur*.

FEDOR DOSTOIEVSKY. *Poor Folk*. Translated from the Russian by Lena Milman, With an Introduction by George Moore. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894. It is not surprising that

*Poor Folk*, the third volume in the Keynotes series, was bound in yellow cloth. For it appeared only two months after *The Yellow Book* began publication, and its two collaborators, translator Lena Milman and her friend, novelist George Moore (then in the public eye for his *Esther Waters*), were both contributors to the magazine. Remarkably modern, Beardsley's cover and title page design was described by Kenneth Clark as containing the most elegant piece of plumbing in the history of art.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster to advertise the Keynotes Series. Color lithograph. [1895]. Beardsley's front cover and title page design for *Keynotes* was adapted for this poster, which lists the first ten titles in the famous fiction series.

*Keynotes Series of Novels and Short Stories*. Twenty-one designs by Aubrey Beardsley. With press notices. London: John Lane, 1896. Another tool in John Lane's extensive marketing campaign for the Keynotes series, this prospectus contains extracts from reviews of the volumes already issued (and announcements of those to come), along with reproductions of twenty-one front cover and title page designs and eighteen "key" monograms by Beardsley. The artist also supplied the front cover design which has, on occasion, been reproduced upside-down with no ill-effect.

*20 Miniature Posters*. Drawn by Aubrey Beardsley. Representing the title designs of the "Keynotes Series." Boston: Roberts Brothers, [ca. 1896]. Roberts Brothers of Boston published their own editions of most of the volumes in Lane's Keynotes series. These appeared in a smaller format than their English counterparts; in some cases title page alone carried Beardsley's design, the cover having instead an adaptation of the author's "key" monogram. In contrast to Lane's freely distributed prospectus, Roberts Brothers offered for sale sets of differently (and inappropriately) colored "miniature posters" clearly aimed at collectors already caught up in the mid-1890s mania for posters. This is one of perhaps a dozen examples known to survive.

WILLIAM T. HORTON. *Caricature of Aubrey Beardsley*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1896–97]. One of the many minor illustrators of the period, Horton was admired by Yeats, with whom he corresponded for many years and who provided the introduction to *A Book of Images* (1898). A schoolmate of Beardsley's at the Brighton Grammar School, Horton early on fell under his influence and kept up the association, with the result that six of his drawings appeared in *The Savoy*. (Smithers published an edition of Poe's *The Raven* and *The Pit and the Pendulum* with Horton's very Beardsleyesque illustrations in 1899.) This caricature can only be tentatively dated. It may have been done in or about 1896 when Horton visited Beardsley and received, so he said, welcome words of encouragement (Beardsley's one written comment about Horton was that "he has a sort of a kind of talent").

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of The Yellow Book*. Pen and ink. [1894–95]. *The Yellow Book* did not use this drawing, although Beardsley intended it for the magazine. The design is wonderfully self-referential. On the table of books being perused by the woman are, beside volumes of Dickens and Shakespeare, George Egerton's *Discords* (published by Lane in the Keynotes series with a Beardsley cover and title page), *The Yellow Book*, and Beardsley's own *The Story of Venus and Tannhäuser* (first advertised in Volume III of *The Yellow Book*, published in part as "Under the Hill" in *The Savoy*).

JOHN DAVIDSON. *Plays. Being: An Unhistorical Pastoral, A Romantic Farce, Bruce: A Chronicle Play, Smith: A Tragic Farce, and Scaramouch in Naxos: A Pantomime*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894. John Davidson was a prominent poet of the 1890s and a contributor to *The Yellow*

*Book*, in which his best-known poem, "A Ballad of a Nun," appeared. Beardsley's frontispiece is believed to depict (from left to right) his sister Mabel Beardsley (in the nude), Henry Harland (future literary editor of *The Yellow Book*), Oscar Wilde, Sir Augustus Harris (theatrical manager), Richard Le Gallienne (poet and critic), and the dancer Adeline Genée. Criticism of the design led to a letter from Beardsley to *The Daily Chronicle*: "In your review of Mr. Davidson's plays, I find myself convicted of an error of taste, for having introduced portraits into my frontispiece... I cannot help feeling that your reviewer is unduly severe. One of the gentlemen who form part of my decoration is surely beautiful enough to stand the test even of portraiture, the other owes me half a crown." The copy of Davidson's *Plays* belonged to the noted American collector and patron of the arts, Jon Quinn.

Dummy copy of *The Yellow Book*. Vol. V, April 1895. Inscribed by Henry Harland and by Edmund Gosse; proof of William Watson's poem, "Hymn to the Sea," and autograph letter from Watson to Gosse, 2 April 1895, tipped in. With cablegrams exchanged between John Lane and The Bodley Head, April 1895. On 5 April 1895, following the close of his unsuccessful libel suit against the Marquess of Queensberry, Oscar Wilde was arrested on a charge of committing offenses under the 1885 Criminal Law Amendment Act, which had criminalized homosexual conduct. Newspaper reports that Wilde (erroneously) had a copy of *The Yellow Book* at the time of his arrest led to a public outcry and the smashing of the windows of the Bodley Head's offices. The contents of the forthcoming April issue were in the hands of Ella D'Arcy, the magazine's subeditor, and Frederic Chapman, the firm's manager. In New York, Lane received a cable sent on 6 April, presumably by Chapman: "Propose delete last name from catalogue and announce decision to supply no more books failing this watson and meynell withdraw..." The "last name" alphabetically in the Bodley Head's "List of Books in Belles Lettres" was that of Wilde, whose books were then no longer advertised for sale. Among the firm's prized authors was the poet and prose writer William Watson, whose lengthy "Hymn to the Sea" was quite literally "set" to be in Vol. V. Supported by the best-selling novelist Mrs. Humphry Ward and others, Watson now asked that Beardsley be dismissed because of his association with Wilde. On 8 April, the following cable was sent to Lane: "Watson demands exclusion from [Volume] five [of the Yellow Book] and future all designs [by] art Editor with whose name he refuses connection meynell when urging former excision said this must follow watson immovable advise concession his defection just now most damaging..." The concession was made: Beardsley's contributions to Vol. V were pulled from press, and he was removed from his post as art editor. The volume displayed here is inscribed by Edmund Gosse: "Of this dummy copy of The Yellow Book, in its suppressed form, the cover, with Aubrey Beardsley's design, and the four rejected plates by the same artist, were given me by the Editor, Henry Harland. Hardly another copy exists, so rigourously were they destroyed, when W. Watson telegraphed that either Beardsley must withdraw, or he should. The cancelled list of Contents, and his own poem, were given me by Watson, as described in the attached letter. E. G. Jan. 1896." It is further inscribed by Harland: "This is, so far as I know, the only copy of this suppressed Yellow Book in existence. H Harland."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Siegfried*. Pen and ink. [1895]. This design was used by Smithers as a publisher's trademark in *The Savoy*—the words "Leonard" and "Smithers" added to the panels above and below.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Proof of design for front cover of *The Savoy*. No. 1, January 1896. Line block. [1895]. This is the first state, showing the infant about to urinate on a copy of *The Yellow Book*—a sign of Beardsley's displeasure at being fired from the art editorship of that periodical nine months earlier.

The offending magazine and the putto's genitals were removed when the design appeared on *The Savoy*. (Lent from the collection of Mark Samuels Lasner).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster for *The Savoy*. Color lithograph. [1896]. Adapted from the front cover design of *The Savoy*, No. 8, this poster promoted the sale of the collected issue of the magazine in three volumes. Beardsley produced the work by adding color, thick horizontal and vertical lines, and additional lettering to a line block proof of the original black and white design.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to A. W. King. 4 January 1890. After reporting on his "shocking state of health," Beardsley writes: "I have been doing a little writing. My first attempt has been successful, *vide* 'The Story of a Confession Album' in *Tit Bits*. They sent me £1.10.0 for it." At this stage of his life Beardsley was unsure if his talents lay in literature or art.

JONATHAN SWIFT. *Prose Writings of Swift*. Chosen and arranged by Walter Lewin. London: Walter Scott, 1886. Aubrey Beardsley's copy, with his ownership signature dated 29 January 1887. On the fly-leaf with his signature Beardsley has drawn a portrait of Swift with copies of his books and a lamp. The book also contains twenty additional small drawings and a second sketch of Swift.

PENRHYN STANLAWS [pseud. of PENRHYN STANLEY ADAMSON]. *Mr. Aubrey Beardsley*. Pen and ink. [1898?]. Born in Dundee, Stanlaws attended Princeton University in the late 1890s and later enjoyed success as an American illustrator, dramatist, and film director. This portrait was reproduced in his "Some Personal Recollections of Aubrey Beardsley," published in the October 1898 *Bookbuyer*. Long considered an accurate account of Beardsley, the article describes a visit to the artist's house in Cambridge Street which had to occur before August 1895, at which time the writer was no older than eighteen. One suspects that this not entirely convincing portrait drawing, like the text of Stanlaws's "recollections," was, if not somewhat spurious, in part supplied by his older brother, painter Sydney Adamson, a contributor to *The Yellow Book*.

H. D. TRAILL. *The Barbarous Britishers: A Tip-Top Novel*. London: John Lane, [1896]. Although a parody of a volume in the Keynotes series, *The Barbarous Britishers* was issued in wrappers in a larger size.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for the front cover and title page and design for key of The Barbarous Britishers*. Pen and ink. [1896]. A witty self-parody, this drawing mimics the artist's designs for Grant Allen's 1895 Keynotes series volume, *The British Barbarians*, of which *The Barbarous Britishers* was a burlesque. The woman caricatured is thought to be the actress Ada Lundberg.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for the front cover and title page of The British Barbarians*. Pen and ink. [1895]. The bestseller in the Keynotes series was Grant Allen's *The Woman Who Did*, a shocking but ultimately moralistic novel about a young woman who deliberately has a child out of wedlock. Eager to take advantage of its success, John Lane published a successor, *The British Barbarians*, which did well enough to elicit a parody, *The Barbarous Britishers*, by the journalist and fiction writer H. D. Traill. Beardsley designed covers and title pages for all of these books.

Prospectuses for *The Yellow Book*. Vols. I-V, April 1894-April 1895. Publication of the first volume of *The Yellow Book* was preceded by a prospectus bearing on its front wrapper a drawing by Beardsley. (The artist, who loved inside jokes, depicted a woman selecting books from a bin in front of the Bodley

Head's Vigo Street premises, with a sour-faced caricature of Elkin Mathews, John Lane's partner.) Inside, the text described the new journal as "the most interesting, unusual, and important publication of its kind that has ever been undertaken. . . . beautiful as a piece of book-making, modern and distinguished in its letter-press and its pictures, and withal popular in the better sense of the word." Such language, allied with a notable list of probable contributors, some unusual features—a cloth binding, a high price, the complete separation of the literary and art contents, and Beardsley's work, ensured that *The Yellow Book* received a lot of attention. In order to capitalize on the ensuing controversy, John Lane included extracts from both favorable and unfavorable reviews in similar advertising brochures issued for Vols. II–V of the quarterly. These also have designs by Beardsley, taken from the front covers of the volume being announced.

SIR THOMAS MALORY. *The Birth, Life, and Acts of King Arthur, of his Noble Knights of the Round Table, Their Marvellous Enquests and Adventures, the Achieving of the San Greal, and in the End, Le Morte Darthur with the Dolourous Death and Departing Out of this World of Them All.* The Text as Written by Sir Thomas Malory and Imprinted by William Caxton at Westminster the Year MCCCCLXXXV, and Now Spelled in Modern Style. With an Introduction by Professor [John] Rhys, and Embellished with Many Original Designs by Aubrey Beardsley. [London: J. M. Dent], 1893–94. In the summer of 1892, probably in July, through the offices of F. H. Evans, the photographer and bookseller, Beardsley was introduced to the publisher J. M. Dent. Impressed by his drawings, including *Hail Mary* (seen in this exhibition)—and as a specialist in illustrated volumes well aware of the impact being made by William Morris's medievalistic Kelmscott Press books—Dent saw a remarkable opportunity in the unknown twenty-year-old artist, considering him the potential illustrator of an already-contemplated edition of Malory. A sample drawing, *The Achieving of the Sangreal*, met with the publisher's approval and Beardsley was commissioned with "everything to do for the book" for £200. Beardsley began work on the designs in the fall of 1892, and the work was issued from June 1893 to November 1894 in 12 parts and in two types, an ordinary issue of 1,500 copies priced at 2s. 6d., and a special or "superior" issue of 300 numbered copies on Van Gelder paper at 6s. 6d. The virtuosity of Beardsley's work is matched only by its sheer quantity: for *Le Morte Darthur* he supplied the cover, sixteen full-page and four double-page illustrations, forty-three borders, and 288 chapter headings, initial letters, and ornaments.

SIR THOMAS MALORY. *The Birth, Life, and Acts of King Arthur, of his Noble Knights of the Round Table, Their Marvellous Enquests and Adventures, the Achieving of the San Greal, and in the End, Le Morte Darthur with the Dolourous Death and Departing Out of this World of Them All.* The Text as Written by Sir Thomas Malory and Imprinted by William Caxton at Westminster the Year MCCCCLXXXV, and Now Spelled in Modern Style. With an Introduction by Professor [John] Rhys, and Embellished with Many Original Designs by Aubrey Beardsley. [London: J. M. Dent], 1893–94. When, in 1894, the parts issue of *Le Morte Darthur* was due to be completed, subscribers were offered the opportunity to have their sets bound in either cloth or vellum. Beardsley's front cover and spine designs for these bindings, totally original with simplified yet highly decorative floral forms, are among the masterpieces of British book art of the 1890s.

Photograph of Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas. [Oxford: Gillman and Co., May? 1893]. The text of the English edition of *Salome* caused almost as much trouble for the publisher as the illustrations. Wilde, who wrote and first published the play in French, found Lord Alfred Douglas's translation so poor it had to be considerably amended; at the same time he rejected Beardsley's offer to supply a substitute version, much to the artist's chagrin. These complications led to what Beardsley referred to

as “the Salome row” in which he was also forced to replace several drawings with other, less “indecent” designs. When the book eventually appeared, in February 1894, a compromise had been reached: Douglas’s name was not on the title page but the dedication read: “To my friend Lord Alfred Bruce Douglas, the translator of my play.”

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *The Black Cape*. Pen and ink. [1893]. *The Black Cape* is among the most extraordinary of all Beardsley’s drawings. Described by Kenneth Clark as “a completely liberated exercise in abstract design,” it shows the influence of Japanese prints in an image that depicts a virtually formless woman wearing a version of fashionable dress of the mid-1890s. The subject—this is one of the replacement *Salome* illustrations the artist called “simply beautiful and quite irrelevant”—has nothing to do with Wilde’s play.

*The Studio*. Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1893. It was Joseph Pennell’s “A New Illustrator: Aubrey Beardsley,” published here, which brought Beardsley to public notice. In fact, this inaugural issue of this important art journal might be said to have been devoted to the artist: he supplied the front cover design and inside were reproduced nine of his drawings (six in Pennell’s article), including several from the forthcoming *Le Morte Darthur*, *J’ai Baisé Ta Bouche Jokanaan*, and a fold-out plate of *The Procession of Jeanne d’Arc*.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Die Götterdämmerung*. Pen and ink, wash, and Chinese white. [1892]. A Wagnerian subject, treated in a manner strongly reminiscent of Burne-Jones’s series of *Briar Rose* paintings illustrating the Sleeping Beauty legend.

FLORENCE FARR. *The Dancing Faun*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894. A witty novel in Wildean style by an Irish compatriot, actress Florence Farr (who had earlier commissioned the poster for the Avenue Theatre), *The Dancing Faun* was the second volume in the Keynotes series. The “faun” in Beardsley’s front cover and title page design is a caricature of James McNeill Whistler.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Mabel Beardsley. 10 January 1898. To his sister Beardsley writes about his last work and about Smither’s projected periodical, *The Peacock*: “The *Volpone* gets better and better with each drawing. ... Campbell [AB’s doctor] says I may go to Dieppe this summer. I hope it can be managed as it will mean a chance of seeing you. Unless Smithers is willing to make the new quarterly a Catholic magazine it don’t interest me much. Do think of it, and tell me if you feel that there is any chance of a Catholic quarterly having any buyers, and, what is as important, any staff.”

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. “*Volpone* by Ben Jonson Illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley.” Autograph manuscript. January 1898. These erudite notes on what Beardsley described as “undoubtedly the finest comedy in the English language outside the works of Shakespeare” were incorporated by Smithers into the *Volpone* prospectus he distributed in July 1898.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Proof for *Mr. Pollitt’s Bookplate*. [1897]. Signed and annotated by the artist. By early 1897 ill-health and work on various projects—*Mademoiselle Du Maupin* and *The Rape of the Lock*, among them—meant that Beardsley had difficulty in finishing all his commissions. To fulfill Herbert Pollitt’s long-standing request for a bookplate, he produced not an original drawing, but instead simply added “crazy lettering” in india ink to the plate titled *Aubrey Beardsley’s Book Plate* in Pollitt’s copy of *A Book of Fifty Drawings*. The result was then sent to Beardsley’s favorite engraver, Carl Hentschel, to be printed for a new line block. This proof was sent by Hentschel to Beardsley, who



had written on it "This could be better. A.B." "Whether by [these words] Beardsley meant the design, or the quality of the line-block, it is difficult to see how the result could in fact have been better," wrote Brian Reade, who saw in the "fully-fashioned nude woman" and "misshapen punchinello" a metaphor for Beardsley's personal life.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to H. C. J. Pollitt. [7 March 1897]. Herbert Charles Pollitt, who later adopted the given name of Jerome, was a rich Cambridge-educated connoisseur and a transvestite dancer (performing at Cambridge as Diane de Rougy) who amassed significant collections of Whistler and Beardsley. He became one of the artist's patrons in late 1895 or early 1896, making contact probably through Leonard Smithers. Among the drawings he commissioned was *The Impatient Adulterer*, an intended (but then unpublishable) illustration to Juvenal; this is likely the work referred to (price £10) in this letter, which also mentions *Lysistrata* and the gift of a portrait photograph of Beardsley by W. J. Hawker, seen elsewhere in this exhibition.

ERNEST DOWSON. *Verses*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896. Ernest Dowson was one of Smithers's prominent authors and a contributor to *The Savoy*. *Verses*, his first volume of poetry, is one of the quintessential books of the British 1890s, justly celebrated for both its contents (the first appearance of the famous "Non sum qualis eram bonae sub regno cynarae") and for Beardsley's cover design, which in its linear simplicity reflects the epitome of art nouveau.

LUCIAN. *Lucian's True History*. Translated by Francis Hickes, Illustrated by William Strang, J. B. Clark, and Aubrey Beardsley, With an introduction by Charles Whibley. London: Privately printed, 1894. To this edition (actually issued by a prominent publisher, Lawrence and Bullen, who did not wish to be associated with such a risqué work) Beardsley contributed two drawings: "A Snare of Vintage" and "Dreams." Large paper copies of the book included an additional illustration, a platinotype, presumably by F. H. Evans, of a variant version of "A Snare of Vintage" printed on Japan vellum. (Two other designs intended for *Lucian's True History* were published by Smithers in 1906 in *An Issue of Five Drawings Illustrative of Juvenal and Lucian*.) Beardsley gave this copy of *Lucian's True History* to the art critic Robert Ross, best remembered as Wilde's intimate friend and literary executor; below the presentation inscription are written out extracts from (possibly imaginary) reviews of the book.

*The Pall Mall Budget*, 9 February 1893. In early 1893 C. Lewis Hind left *The Studio*, then in preparation, to edit *The Pall Mall Budget*, a long-established weekly newspaper. He invited Beardsley to join the staff, and from February to March 1893 the artist contributed twenty-one rather uncharacteristic drawings, including the humorous series, "The New Coinage" (depicting how various celebrities would appear on British coins), a portrait of Zola, and a number of sketches of theatrical figures such as Ellen Terry and Henry Irving. The front cover of the 9 February issue reproduces a wash drawing of Irving in his title role of Becket in Tennyson's eponymous play. In November 1893, under instruction from Joseph Pennell, Beardsley used this image to make an etching, his only original print.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Carl Maria von Weber*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1892]. Another in the series of tall, narrow portrayals of musical, literary, and artistic personages real and imaginary, this early drawing contains the elements of Beardsley's later, mature style.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Raphael Sanzio*. Pen and ink. [ca. 1892]. Here Beardsley's "Japonesque" manner is applied to the portrait of the famous fifteenth-century Italian painter.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Katharina Klafsky as Isolde*. Pen and ink and watercolor. [ca. 1892]. This drawing, which bears only the legends “Klafsky” and “Isolde,” depicts a well-known German soprano. Its date is uncertain, but may possibly be as early as June 1892, when Klafsky starred in the role in a Covent Garden production of the opera.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. “The Ballad of a Barber.” Autograph manuscript. [1896]. Originally intended to serve as Chapter IX in Beardsley’s *Under the Hill*, this macabre and sexually ambiguous poem appeared separately in the third number of *The Savoy* (July 1896), where it was accompanied by two illustrations, “The Coiffing” and a cul-de-lampe. There are significant differences between the published text and the manuscript displayed, which is written on the writing paper of the Hotel Englischer Hof in Cologne, a city Beardsley never visited.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of wrappers issue of Le Morte Darthur*. Pen and ink and Chinese white. [1893]. This drawing, with its elaborate Morris-like vegetation and calligraphy, was preceded by another, more naive design. That Beardsley was still unsure of himself is seen in the somewhat faulty placement of the lettering which, when published, was replaced with letterpress (in typical fashion Beardsley has also here misspelt the title of the book). (Lent from the collection of Mark Samuels Lasner).

OSCAR WILDE. *Salome: A Tragedy in One Act*. Translated from the French of Oscar Wilde, Pictured by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894. This was not only the first edition with Beardsley’s drawings but also the first English edition, the first illustrated edition, and the first edition in English—*Salomé* having appeared in French a year earlier. Wilde, who was caricatured in four of Beardsley’s drawings (including the frontispiece shown here), has been quoted as saying, “I admire but do not like the illustrations. They are too Japanese, while my play is Byzantine.” But whatever the author’s misgivings, the association of Wilde and Beardsley and their roles as pivotal cultural figures of the 1890s was forever established by *Salome*, which has been reprinted in myriad forms over the last century. Several of the drawings Beardsley made were rejected by John Lane on the grounds of indecency; others, including a first version of *The Toilet of Salome*, were replaced; and some of what was published, such as the title page and *Enter Herodias*, was “bowdlerized.” (It was not until 1957 that all of Beardsley’s contributions were published in unexpurgated form.)

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Proof of *Enter Herodias*. Line block. [1893]. Inscribed by Beardsley to Alfred Lambart. When this drawing was published in 1894 a fig leaf was placed on the male figure’s genitals. This proof of the uncensored design was inscribed by the artist to “Alfred Lambart from Aubrey Beardsley” with a bit of doggerel:

Because one figure was undressed  
This little drawing was suppressed  
It was unkind—  
But never mind  
Perhaps it all was for the best.

(Alfred Charlemagne Lambart, for those who wish to know, remains one of the most obscure people associated with Beardsley. A friend of the decadent writer Eric, Count Stenbock, Lambart was known to Max Beerbohm, who caricatured him on at least one occasion. According to John Adlard, he “was related to the Earls of Cavan, and seems not to have any definite profession.”)

OSCAR WILDE. *Salome: A Tragedy in One Act*. Translated from the French of Oscar Wilde, Pictured by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1894. In contrast to the illustrations, the binding on *Salome* was pedestrian. Beardsley had produced a large peacock feather design—probably inspired by Whistler—which Lane rejected, presumably to save money. The published book was bound in unappealing blue cloth (ordinary copies) or in green silk (large paper), with only a small ornament by Beardsley on the front cover and just the artist's three-candle device on the back. Unpleased, Wilde wrote to the publisher: "The cover of *Salome* is quite dreadful. Don't spoil a lovely book. Have simply a folded vellum wrapper with the design in scarlet—much cheaper, and much better. The texture of the present cover is coarse and common; it is quite impossible and spoils the real beauty of the interior. Use up this horrid Irish stuff for stories etc.; don't inflict it on a work of art like *Salome*. . . I loathe it, as does Beardsley."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Sir Launcelot and the Witch Hellawes*. Pen and ink. [1893-94]. A typical full-page illustration for *Le Morte Darthur*, showing the influence of Burne-Jones. The floral border, although derived from the example of the Kelmscott Press, is bolder and simpler than Morris's work.

JOHN DAVIDSON. *A Full and True Account of the Wonderful Mission of Earl Lavender, Which Lasted One Night and One Day, With a History of the Pursuit of Earl Lavender and Lord Brumm by Mrs. Scamler and Maud Emblem*. With a Frontispiece by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Ward and Downey, 1895. Inscribed by John Davidson to Aubrey Beardsley. The appearance of a Beardsley frontispiece seems almost obligatory for *Earl Lavender*, an archetypal *fin de siècle* burlesque novel which attacked "decadence" while exploiting the attractions of flagellation and the excesses of London life. This is the copy Davidson presented to Beardsley, whose response to the book is unknown. (Lent from the collection of Alexander D. Wainwright, Class of 1939).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Grotesques for the Bon-Mots series. Pen and ink. [1893]. At the same time he was working on *Le Morte Darthur* Beardsley supplied a total of 127 grotesques (or vignettes) for the first three volumes in Dent's Bon-Mots series. These amusing sketches supposedly illustrate humorous quotations from eighteenth and nineteenth-century writers; in fact they have nothing to do with the texts and are purely the product of Beardsley's startling imagination, influenced by Japanese art and, perhaps, by Toulouse-Lautrec.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Ada Levenson. [?2 January 1895]. A novelist who contributed to *Punch* and *The Yellow Book*, Ada Levenson was an intimate friend of Wilde (who called her "Sphinx"). Here, Beardsley thanks her for inviting him to the theater, possibly for the opening night of *The Importance of Being Earnest*: "It is so sweet of you to give me a place in your box tomorrow. I was so sorry you weren't able to come to see you [us] yesterday. How exciting about Oscar and wonderful. By the way the most amazing biographies are being published of me in American papers just now."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Messrs. Stone and Kimball. 2 January [1894]. The Chicago firm of Stone and Kimball had a role in American publishing roughly equivalent to that of the Bodley Head in Britain; purveyors of limited editions of *belles lettres* and avant-garde writers, they issued *The Chap-Book*, a pocket-sized monthly which paralleled *The Yellow Book*. In late 1893 Stone and Kimball embarked on a multi-volume edition of Poe's collected works and asked Beardsley to contribute illustrations. In this reply he writes: "I feel that Poe's tales would give me an admirable chance for

picture making and I am sure that I could do something that would satisfy us both. I should be quite willing to undertake the work and begin it in February (that is to say, to make four drawings for Volume 1 and four drawings for Volume 2 of Edgar Allan Poe's works) under the following conditions: that I shall receive five pounds for each of the drawings and that half of the total amount should be paid in advance."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for a full-page border for Le Morte Darthur*. Pen and ink. [1893–94]. The drawing was used for the chapter opening in Vol. I, Book iii of *Le Morte Darthur*. It combines in one image the stylized medieval knights of Burne-Jones and the peacock feathers of Whistler's Peacock Room.

GEORGE EGERTON [pseud. of MARY CHAVELITA DUNNE CLAIRMONTE]. *Keynotes*. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, 1893. This volume of short stories about women's frustrating domestic lives and liberating sexual imaginations brought together the Bodley Head's sensational new book designer with its newest literary sensation, "George Egerton," pseudonym of the Irish-Welsh feminist Mary Chavelita Dunne Clairmonte. So successful was the result that it launched the Keynotes series of controversial works of fiction, for which Beardsley provided front covers, title pages, spines, and "key" monograms incorporating each author's initials until his firing from *The Yellow Book* in 1895. In an experiment which prefigures today's "original paperback," the initial 500 copies of *Keynotes* were issued in pink wrappers; the rest of the edition, and all subsequent Keynotes volumes, appeared in uniform cloth bindings in different colors.

SYDNEY SMITH AND R. BRINSLEY SHERIDAN. *Bon-Mots of Sydney Smith and R. Brinsley Sheridan*. Edited by Walter Jerrold. With grotesques by Aubrey Beardsley. London: J. M. Dent, 1893. Beardsley was also responsible for the title page border and cover ornament for Dent's Bon-Mots series. This selection from Smith and Sheridan was followed by volumes devoted to Charles Lamb and Douglas Jerrold and to Samuel Foote and Theodore Hook; each of these reprinted grotesques from the previous volumes and added new ones.

WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Albert Eugene Gallatin*. Pencil. [1913]. (Lent from the collection of Alexander D. Wainwright, Class of 1939).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *J'ai Baisé Ta Bouche, Jokanaan—J'ai Baisé Ta Bouche*. Pen and ink and watercolor. [1893]. According to Kenneth Clark, this drawing "aroused more horror and indignation than any graphic work hitherto produced in England" when it appeared in Pennell's article on Beardsley published in *The Studio* in April 1893. The subject was shocking—the climactic moment in Wilde's play when Salome kisses the severed head of John the Baptist; so too was the disturbing, unconventional manner in which it was presented, with the all-too-obvious drip of blood into a deep pool. Wilde was impressed, however, and induced John Lane to commission Beardsley to illustrate the English edition of *Salome*.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for a poster to advertise The Yellow Book*. Pen and ink. [1894]. As if his connection with the controversial "yellow quarterly" was not apparent enough, Beardsley wrote out his full name in large block letters instead of using the three-candle device found in other drawings of this period. The poster, with letterpress reading "SOLD HERE THE YELLOW BOOK" and a full contents list varying with each volume, was printed in eye-catching dark blue on yellow paper.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster to advertise *The Yellow Book*. Vol. XI, October 1896. So recognized was the poster created by Beardsley to advertise *The Yellow Book* that Lane continued to use the design even after he had fired the artist. Some examples issued by the magazine's American publishers, Copeland and Day of Boston, have a different arrangement, adding the front cover design (in reduced size) of the volume being advertised and altering the letterpress. Volume XI of *The Yellow Book* contained a number of interesting literary contributions—Max Beerbohm's "The Happy Hypocrite," a poem by Olive Custance, and stories by Henry Harland, Ella D'Arcy, and the notorious figure, the eccentric Frederick Rolfe, writing under the name Baron Corvo. The art side, as sometimes happened to the magazine after Beardsley's dismissal, was weak, distinguished only by Beerbohm's caricature of Henry Harland as "The Yellow Dwarf," drawings by Charles Robinson and Charles Conder, and a cover design by Nellie Syrett.

Prospectus for *The Savoy*. [November 1895]. There are two distinct prospectuses for *The Savoy*, each with a different Beardsley design on the cover. Of the several and varying explanations, that of Bernard Shaw (a contributor to the magazine) is the most plausible: "It was not the cover of *The Savoy* that made the trouble, but the preliminary pictorial circular. Beardsley made a charming design of a Pierrot stepping out on the stage to announce the paper. Smithers foolishly objected that it suggested flippancy and that John Bull would like something serious. Beardsley revenged himself by substituting a monumental John Bull for the Pierrot. Eighty thousand of these were circulated before George Moore's scrutiny detected that John had been represented in a condition of strained sexual excitement. All the contributors therefore met and informed Smithers that he must 'withdraw' the circular. Not having any of the 80,000 left he agreed; and peace was restored." It seems that by the time of Moore's protest the Pierrot version had already been printed, the copies either distributed or—given Smithers's methods—retained for sale as "suppressed" Beardsleyana. The whole wrangle delayed *The Savoy*, which, as both prospectuses state, was scheduled to appear in December 1895 to take advantage of the Christmas market. (Lent from the collection of Mark Samuels Lasner).

W. B. YEATS. *The Land of Heart's Desire*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1894. The design for the program and poster for the Avenue Theatre production was again used on the title page and front cover of the first edition of Yeats's play.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster advertising Unwin's Children's Books. Facsimile reproduction of 1894 original. [1966]. The second poster design Unwin obtained from Beardsley, this was produced in a number of varying sizes listing different books for sale. This reproduction shows the poster in its most common form, advertising *Topsys and Turvys* by P. S. Newell, four works by Palmer Cox, the first nineteen volumes in Unwin's Children's Library series, *The Land of Pluck* by Mary Mapes Dodge, and the magazine *St. Nicholas*. In a move which showed how popular Beardsley was, Copeland and Day utilized this design on a poster promoting *The Yellow Book*. They did so without Unwin's authorization, a step which led to threats of transatlantic legal action—ironic in light of the fact that in most of the children's books and magazines the originals advertised were of American origin.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster to advertise the joint production of *A Comedy of Sighs* by John Todhunter and *The Land of Heart's Desire* by W. B. Yeats, Avenue Theatre, London, 29 March 1894. Facsimile reproduction of 1894 original. [1966]. Early in 1894 the actress (and novelist) Florence Farr asked Beardsley to design a program for the Todhunter play, *A Comedy of Sighs*, which, with Yeats's *The Land of Heart's Desire*, was produced at the Avenue Theatre on 29 March 1894. The drawing was used for a poster for the Todhunter–Yeats double bill, for the poster and program for the inaugural run

of George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, and also for the first edition of *The Land of Heart's Desire*. Depicting a typical "Beardsley woman" peering through a partially transparent curtain, this was one of the most striking poster designs of the 1890s. It received much attention in the press, including Owen Seaman's poem, "Ars Postera," published in *Punch* (where it accompanied a cartoon version of the design), which begins:

Mr. Aubrey Beer de Beers,  
    You're getting quite a high renown;  
Your Comedy of Leers, you know,  
    Is posted all about the town;  
This kind of stuff I cannot puff,  
    As Boston says, it makes me "tired";  
Your Japanese-Rossetti girl  
    Is not a thing to be desired.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover and title-page of Monochromes*. Pen and ink. [1895]. It is interesting to note that the lower right corner of the drawing was deliberately left "unfinished." The design attests to the intricate relationships among John Lane, his principal illustrator (Beardsley), his magazine (*The Yellow Book*), his book publications (the Keynotes series), and his authors. Ella D'Arcy. A New Woman novelist whose *The Story of a Modern Woman* was also published in 1895, not only had contributed to *The Yellow Book* since its inception but served as its unpaid and unacknowledged assistant editor. *Monochromes*, her book of stories in the Keynotes series, was dedicated to "The Chief," e.g. Henry Harland, with whom she may have had an affair, and was published with Beardsley's cover and title page shortly after the artist had been sacked from *The Yellow Book*.

ARTHUR MACHEN. [pseud of ARTHUR LLEWELLYN JONES]. *The Great God Pan and The Inmost Light*. London: John Lane, 1895. Arthur Machen, a Welsh novelist, journalist, and translator, combined two linked stories of horror in this, the first of his two volumes published in the Keynotes series. The Pan theme appealed to Beardsley, who had already used it in a number of chapter headings for *Le Morte Darthur* and for the title page of Kenneth Grahame's *Pagan Papers* (1894).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover and title page of The Great God Pan and the Inmost Light*. Pen and ink. [1895]. Arthur Machen, a Welsh novelist, journalist, and translator, combined two linked stories of horror in this, the first of his two volumes published in the Keynotes series. The Pan theme appealed to Beardsley, who had already used it in a number of chapter headings for *Le Morte Darthur* and for the title page of Kenneth Grahame's *Pagan Papers* (1894).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for title page of Pierrot's Library*. Pen and ink. [1896]. After John Lane dismissed Beardsley from *The Yellow Book* he tried to make amends by giving him several minor commissions. For the four novels in Pierrot's Library (the name came from the first, H. De Vere Stacpoole's *Pierrot!*), the artist designed a uniform binding, title page, and endpapers. This title page, with the characteristic Beardsley motif of a Pierrot reading in a library, is used for the bookplate for Princeton's Beardsley collection.

Catalogues of rare books offered for sale by Leonard Smithers. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896. Beardsley's first job for Smithers was to provide a cover for the publisher-bookseller's third catalogue of rare books, which appeared in September 1895. The picture of a faun reading to a woman was

adapted from a drawing intended for Vol. V of *The Yellow Book*. For Smithers's fifth catalogue Beardsley drew a new design of a woman reading on a sofa. Both covers were reused on subsequent catalogues.

*The Savoy*. Nos. 1–8, January–December 1896. Edited by Arthur Symons. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896. Issued at first as a quarterly, then as a monthly, the eight numbers of *The Savoy* contain some of Beardsley's greatest work. In its pages are found over forty drawings, title pages, cover designs, and devices, including such achievements of the artist's later style as *The Abbé*, *Ave Atque Vale*, *Ali Baba*, and the *Das Rheingold* series. The *Savoy* additionally printed the bulk of Beardsley's writings, all of which he illustrated: *Under the Hill* (the expurgated version of *The Story of Venus and Tannhäuser*), "The Three Musicians," "The Ballad of a Barber," and a translation of Catullus CI. By any measure this was an enormous output for a man who was increasingly ill and constantly traveling in search of better health (it is even more remarkable when one realizes that the final number, issued in December 1896, was *entirely* by Beardsley and by Arthur Symons, editor of *The Savoy*.)

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Drawings for the front cover of Beardsley's copy of the vocal score of Tristan und Isolde*. Pen and ink and Chinese white on brown paper. [ca. 1893–94]. Throughout his life Beardsley had an intense passion for music, culminating in an obsession with Wagner's operas, *Tristan* in particular, which led to a considerable number of drawings and, indirectly, to the writing of *The Story of Venus and Tannhäuser*. This drawing, with its perfect calligraphy and hybrid flowers, was perhaps intended for a special binding for the artist's copy of the vocal score, which is also at Princeton.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Poster advertising Unwin's Pseudonym and Autonym Libraries. Facsimile reproduction of 1894 original. [1966]. This poster was adapted from the drawing, *Girl and a Bookshop*, exhibited at the New English Art Club in 1894 and first reproduced in *Good Reading About Many Books* (1894), an anthology distributed by Unwin to advertise his publications. Unwin's popular Pseudonym and Autonym libraries consisted of short stories and novels published without the authors' real names in a distinctive, narrow format. The poster were issued with varied letterpress and the design was adapted for a small advertisement slip, for the cover of *Unwin's Chap Book*, and for the cover of *The Dream and the Business* (1906), a novel by John Oliver Hobbes [pseud. of Pearl Craigie].

*Unwin's Chap Book, 1899–1900*. London: Printed at the Gresham Press for T. Fisher Unwin, [1899]. An example of further commercial use of a Beardsley design. The front cover of this yearbook promoting Unwin publications was adapted from the Pseudonym and Autonym Libraries poster. Among the literary contributors to this rare volume were Lewis Carroll and E. Nesbit.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. "The Art of the Hoarding." Autograph manuscript. [1894]. Beardsley played a pivotal part in the worldwide development of the "artistic" poster. Even though he produced but a handful of designs actually used for posters, these were widely reproduced (and imitated), with the result that his work had equal stature with that of more prolific masters of the medium, Jules Chéret, Toulouse-Lautrec, Alphonse Mucha, and Will H. Bradley. What Beardsley had to say about the subject is found in "The Art of the Hoarding," a witty essay published in *The New Review*, July 1894, illustrated with the poster to advertise *The Yellow Book* and the design later used for *The Spinster's Scrip* poster (the original drawings of both are in this exhibition). The opening paragraph read: "Advertisement is an absolute necessity of modern life, and if it can be made beautiful as well as obvious, so much the better for the makers of soap and the public who are likely to wash."

Photograph of Aubrey Beardsley. Bournemouth: W. J. Hawker, [March 1897]. Signed by Beardsley and dated 8 August 1897. In March 1897 Beardsley and his mother had their photographs taken while staying in the south coast resort of Bournemouth. The artist was pleased with this image, which, deceptively, showed him in apparent good health. Sending a copy to Herbert Pollitt, he wrote, “The local photographs turn out quite a success.”

FREDERICK HOLLYER. Photograph of Aubrey Beardsley. [ca. 1894–95]. A professional photographer, Frederick Hollyer specialized in portraits of artists in making reproductions of art works, especially the paintings and drawings of Burne-Jones and D. G. Rossetti. The dandified Beardsley is seen here at the time he served as art editor of *The Yellow Book*.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of The Yellow Book, Vol. III*. Pen and ink. [1894]. In 1894 this drawing of a woman with her hair down putting on make-up was considered provocative, especially on the front cover of a literary magazine. Beardsley may have been echoing here not only Whistler’s *The Little White Girl* (1864) and Rossetti’s *Lady Lilith* (1873), but also Max Beerbohm’s essay, “A Defence of Cosmetic,” published in Vol. I of *The Yellow Book*.

Photograph of Leonard Smithers. Richmond: Gunn & Stuart, [ca. 1895]. A Sheffield solicitor, Smithers came to London about 1891 to form a bookselling and publishing partnership with printer H. S. Nichols. (Nichols later circulated the forgeries reproduced in *Fifty Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley* in 1920). Smithers’s specialty was pornography, but after the Wilde trials, he took over from the frightened John Lane the publishing of many of the so-called “Decedents” including Wilde, Beardsley, and Arthur Symons. Although his business methods were suspect, his finances precarious, and his demands sometimes irksome, Smithers proved benefit to Beardsley, providing him with an income, friendship, and *The Savoy*. The best description of the publisher is (not surprisingly) by Wilde, who wrote: “I don’t know if you know Smithers: he is usually in a large straw hat, has a blue tie delicately fashioned with a diamond brooch of the impurest water—or wine, as he never touches water. . . . His face, clean-shaven as befits a priest who serves as the altar where God is Literature, is waxed and pale—not with poetry, but with poets, who, he says, have wrecked his life by insisting on publishing with him. He loves first editions, especially women: little girls are his passion. He is the most learned erotomaniac in Europe. He is also a very delightful companion. . . .” (Lent from the collection of Mark Samuels Lasner).

J. M. DENT. Autograph letter to Ellen Agnus Beardsley. 24 September [1898]. After Beardsley’s death, his mother presented his friends with examples of his work. Here, the publisher who commissioned *Le Morte Darthur* expresses his gratitude for a “beautiful and pathetic drawing,” saying that some day the world will treasure Beardsley as it does Raphael.

D. S. MACCOLL. *Aubrey Beardsley*. Pencil. [1893]. Inscribed to R. A. Walker. A painter better known as an art critic, MacColl was a leading exponent of Impressionism in 1890s London. He was among the writers and artists—centering around Beardsley and Henry Harland—who formulated the idea of *The Yellow Book* during a group holiday spent at Ste. Marguerite, near Dieppe, in the summer of 1893. This sketch of Beardsley, drawn on the back of a map of Paris, was likely made in a Paris café.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Under the Hill and Other Essays in Prose and Verse*. With Illustrations. London: John Lane, 1904. The full text of Beardsley’s erotic romance, *The Story of Venus and*



*Tannhäuser*, was not made available until 1907, when Smithers issued a privately printed edition. The version printed in *The Savoy as Under the Hill* was collected by Lane in this volume, which contains most of the artist's other writings and "Table Talk of Aubrey Beardsley," a brief record of his witticisms. The front cover was adopted from the cover prepared for *Salome* in 1894 but not used.

ARISTOPHANES. *The Lysistrata of Aristophanes*. Now First Wholly Translated into English and Illustrated with Eight Full-page Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley. London: [Leonard Smithers], 1896. Smithers and Beardsley had contemplated this edition of Aristophanes's anti-war sexual comedy before Christmas 1895 but the artist did not make the drawings until July 1896, when he was staying at the Spread Eagle Hotel in Epsom. *Lysistrata* was one of the few works acknowledged by Beardsley himself to be a masterpiece: he told Herbert Pollitt (in a letter included in this exhibition) that it was "a sumptuous quarto, something worthy of Aristophanes, myself, and maroquin." Despite—or because of—their openly erotic nature, the illustrations, although rarely reproduced until the 1960s, have come to be regarded as typical of Beardsley's work.

WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Aubrey Beardsley*. Lithograph. 1897. Inscribed by Rothenstein to Beardsley. In his autobiography, *Men and Memories*, Rothenstein recalled Beardsley, a recent convert to Catholicism, at the time this portrait was made: "I found Aubrey staying at a hotel in the Quai Voltaire, much changed. . . . All artifice was gone; he was gentle and affectionate, and I realized now how much I cared for him. He had found peace, he said, but how rudderless he had been, how vain; and he spoke wistfully of what he would do if more time were allowed him; spoke, too, of many drawings he had done, and of his anxiety to efface of a self he was now no more." The lithograph displayed here, possibly a proof, was the one the artist presented to Beardsley; the work was printed in Rothenstein's album, *Liber Juniorum* (1898). (Lent from the collection of Alexander D. Wainwright, Class of 1939).

EDMUND GOSSE. Autograph letter to Aubrey Beardsley. 16 May 1896. Gosse thanks Beardsley for sending him a copy of *The Rape of the Lock* and dedicating it to him: "How am I to find words to thank you for so kind a compliment and so exquisite a gift? I am immensely flattered & gratified. I do not think you have ever had a subject which better suited your genius, or one in the 'embroidery' of which you expended more fanciful beauty. I am truly proud to be connected with such an ingenious object. . . . My wife joins her thanks with mine for the delicious golden book, and its inscription . . ."

ERNEST DOWSON. *The Pierrot of the Minute: A Dramatic Phantasy in One Act*. With a Frontispiece, Initial letter, Vignette, and Cul-de-lampe by Aubrey Beardsley. London: Leonard Smithers, 1897. Following on the eighteenth-century manner Beardsley developed for *The Rape of the Lock*, the illustrations to this two-character literary playlet (actually performed during the 1890s) owe some of their inspiration to Watteau. Although not, as the book's prospectus announced, "the most charming Drawings which have come from his pen," these are among the most overlooked of the artist's later works: the cover design, reproduced in gold on both large and small paper copies of the book, is especially striking.

BEN JONSON. *Ben Jonson His Volpone: Or The Foxe*. A New Edition, With a Critical Essay on the Author by Vincent O'Sullivan and a Frontispiece, Five Initial Letters, and a Cover Design Illustrative and Decorative by Aubrey Beardsley. Together with an Eulogy of the Artist by Robert Ross. London: Leonard Smithers, 1898. Beardsley began work on *Volpone* in November 1897 but did not live to finish the elaborate scheme which was twenty-four pen and ink illustrations, with a frontispiece and initial letters drawn in pencil. What he had completed at the time of his death four months later—the

frontispiece, the cover, and five pictorial initials—was published posthumously in this handsome edition example of 1890s book-making. The praising and heartfelt eulogy of the artist was by his friend Robert Ross. Vincent O'Sullivan, who wrote the essay on *Volpone*, was another Smithers author; Beardsley had done a frontispiece for his *A Book of Bargains* (1896) and a cover for his *The Houses of Sin* (1897).

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Volpone Adoring His Treasure*. Pen and ink. [1897]. This frontispiece for *Volpone* is one of Beardsley's most spectacular drawings. In its fine detail it evokes—deliberately—the style and technique of a seventeenth-century engraving, entirely appropriate for Jonson's play, which was first published in 1607.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Juvenal Scourging Woman*. Pen and ink. [1896]. Beardsley planned to translate the Sixth Satire of Juvenal and make it the subject of a series of illustrations for Smithers. The three designs the artist finished were reproduced in a portfolio issued in 1903 by the mysterious "Jesus Press," probably a clandestine Smithers operation. Although the drawings are similar to those for *Lysistrata* the subject matter of Juvenal's misogynist "diatribe" is quite different.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. 29 November [1897]. To his publisher: "You will be pleased I am sure with my present drawing. . . . the first picture, *Volpone Adoring his Treasure*, is one of the strongest things I have ever done."

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. Autograph letter to Leonard Smithers. 14 December 1897. Beardsley writes to his publisher about *Volpone*: "By all means print the cover [*Volpone*] in *gold on blue*, it will look best that way. . . . By the way, have you noticed (with your fine poetic insight I am sure you have) that *Volpone* rhymes to *Mentone*?" Smithers followed the advice; the small paper copies of *Volpone* have the splendid cover design stamped in gilt on turquoise blue cloth. (Large paper copies, even more sumptuous, have the same design on their vellum covers.)

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Design for front cover of The Life and Times of Madame Du Barry*. Pen and ink. [1896].

ROBERT B. DOUGLAS. *The Life and Times of Madame Du Barry*. London: Leonard Smithers, 1896. Along with his contributions to *The Savoy* and such major works as *Lysistrata*, *The Rape of the Lock*, and *The Pierrot of the Minute*, Beardsley was kept busy during the years 1896–97 with a quantity of minor commissions for book covers, illustrations, and drawings. Most of the demand came from Smithers, who was expanding his "list," but the artist received requests from others, including Smithers's rivals, John Lane and William Heinemann, and from private individuals, such as the poet Olive Custance (late to marry Lord Alfred Douglas), for whom he designed a bookplate. That nothing touched by Beardsley, not even a piece of hack work, was ever less than attractive and original can be seen in the classically succinct design he made for one of Smithers's minor publications, a vaguely salacious biography of the mistress of Louis XV.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Max Alvary as Tristan*. Pen and ink and wash. [ca. 1895]. This drawing of another famed opera singer of the day may be seen as a pendant to the very similar *Katharina Klafsky as Isolde*.