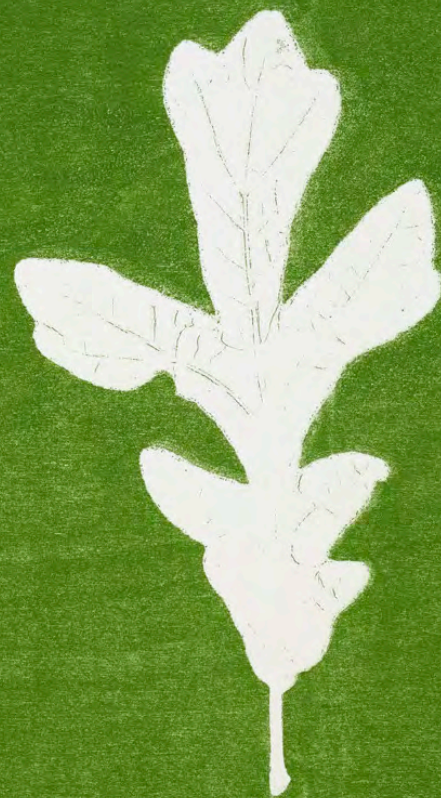


KNOW  
YOUR  
TREES









### **Know Your Trees**

A new artist's book by Blaise Drummond, published by Michael Woolworth Publications

40 pages. 30 x 25 cm. Ed. 40.

Original lithography, woodcut, collage, lasercut, hand intervention, pigment print, photolithography, monotype and letterpress.

Between the middle of Ireland and the heart of Paris, artist Blaise Drummond and master printer Michael Woolworth have collaborated on *Know Your Trees*, a 40-page artist's book that moves fluidly between drawing and poetry, memory and process, collage and lithography—offering a window into the inner workings of an artist's mind. Drummond, known for his work that gently navigates the space between architecture and the natural world, approaches his subjects not with irony, but with a wry, attentive sensitivity. His is an art of nuanced observation—at once romantic and critical—grappling with our conflicted relationship to nature: how we aestheticize, protect, and exploit it.

With *Know Your Trees*, Drummond turns inward. This is his first artist's book—a format he describes as uniquely suited to showing “the inside of an artist's head.” The project originated not as a narrative but as an accumulation of fragments: notebook sketches, colour experiments, scraps, and references, many drawn from the daily material of his studio practice. “We didn't want to illustrate a text, nor tell a story through images,” he explains. “It was about assembling what's already there—drawing from years of notebooks—and letting those pieces begin to speak to each other.”

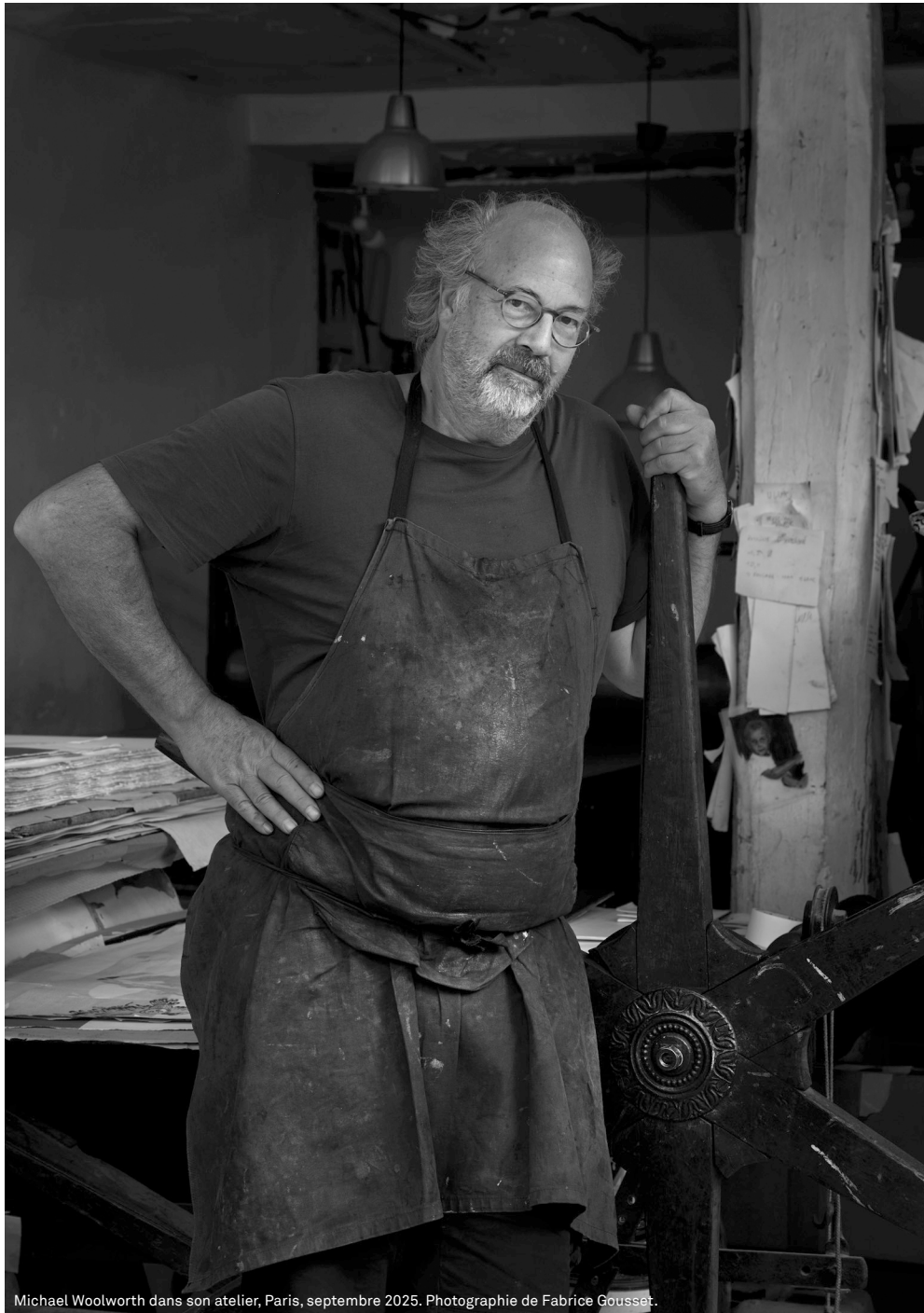
Among the first of those pieces was a small drawing tucked in a notebook from before 2018—a reflection on Bellini's *Madonna of the Meadow* in London's National Gallery, with a margin note: “artist book idea for Michael.” Researching that painting led Drummond to discover it was inspired by Virgil's *Georgics*—a favourite text from his time studying Philosophy and Classics at Edinburgh University. “I'd reread it over the years, even during art school, and would often plunder lines from it for titles. When it came time to finally work on this book, it made perfect sense to return to it.”

But rather than illustrating the *Georgics*, Drummond and Woolworth worked to find subtle resonances between the ancient text and the contemporary visual fragments. Lines were selected for their tone of attention, care, cultivation—qualities also embedded in the making of the book itself.









Michael Woolworth dans son atelier, Paris, septembre 2025. Photographie de Fabrice Gousset.

*Know Your Trees* was produced at Atelier Michael Woolworth in Paris using traditional, time-intensive techniques—lithography, woodcut, collage, and hand-set type. These slow processes mirror the spirit of the work: patient, observational, grounded in the rhythms of manual making. “We wanted to show this moment of freedom,” Woolworth notes, “that lightness of mind when there’s no obligation to perform. Each page documents elements that may end up—or not—in finished works. But all contribute to the drive behind them.”

The pages read like a loose constellation: a stem of fennel from the rooftop of Drummond’s studio, an ash tree seen from his bathroom window, a list of birds from the *Georgics*—with an image of a wheatear, pointedly absent from the poem. A photograph of Tolstoy with Maxim Gorky suggests another thread—the recurring question of how to live a good life. There are fragments pulled from music (Jonathan Richman), from paintings (a nod to Fairfield Porter), and from nature filtered through culture—fruit box logos, stamps, word lists, and scattered thoughts on depiction and language.

Each image leaves space for interpretation. They are not illustrations but reflections, notes to self, visual footnotes in an ongoing dialogue between the mind, the page, and the world.

The title, *Know Your Trees*, is both suggestion and invitation: to observe more closely, to name what we encounter, and to stay alert to what surrounds us.

Michael Woolworth is an American-born master printer who has been based in Paris for forty years. He works exclusively in printmaking using hand presses, with techniques including traditional stone lithography, woodcut, linocut, and monotype.









# Know Your Trees

Blaise Drummond

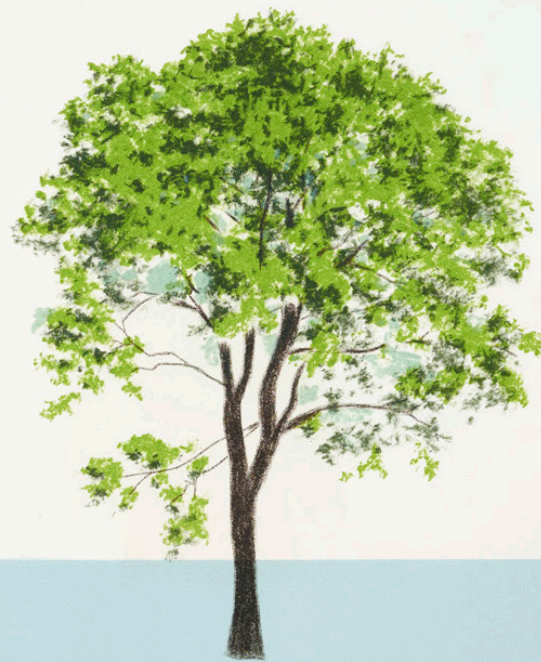
with selected texts from Virgil's *Georgics*

Michael Woolworth Publications

Paris



What makes the cornfields happy  
under what constellation it's best to turn the soil, my friend  
and train the vine on the elm  
the care of cattle  
the management of flocks  
the knowledge you need for keeping frugal bees.





For the father of agriculture gave us a hard calling  
he first decreed it an art to work the fields  
sent worries to sharpen our mortal wits  
and would not allow his realm to grow listless from lethargy.

Early spring  
when a cold moisture sweats from the hoar-head hills  
and the brittle clods are loosening under a west wind  
is the time for the bull to grunt as he pulls the plough deep-driven  
and the ploughshare to take a shine  
scoured clean in the furrow.

That crop  
which twice has felt the sun's heat and the frost twice  
will answer at last the prayers of the never-satisfied farmer  
and burst his barns with an overflowing harvest.  
But plough not an unknown plain:  
first you must learn the winds  
and the changeable ways of its weather  
the land's peculiar cultivation and character  
the different crops that different parts of it yield  
or yield not.

A corn-crop here  
grapes there will come to the happier issue  
on another soil it is fruit trees  
and the grass  
of its own sweet will  
grows green.



ROOK

KING  
FISHER  
FISHER

GULL

FROG

EMMET

RAVEN  
SWALLOW

LARK



Look!

From the hilltop he coaxes the water out of its course  
and it slides over smooth pebbles  
whispering hoarsely  
and soothes the parched fields  
with its purling.

Be the first to dig the land  
the first to wheel off the prunings for the bonfire  
the first to bring your vine-poles under cover  
but the last to gather the vintage.  
Twice will the vines grow thick with shade  
and twice will a tangle of briars overrun the vineyards  
each makes for hard work  
so admire a large estate if you like  
but farm a small one.

For a law of nature  
makes all things go to the bad  
lose ground  
and fall away.

Just as an oarsman, when he is sculling his skiff against the current,  
needs but relax the drive of his arms a little  
and the current will carry him headlong  
away downstream.



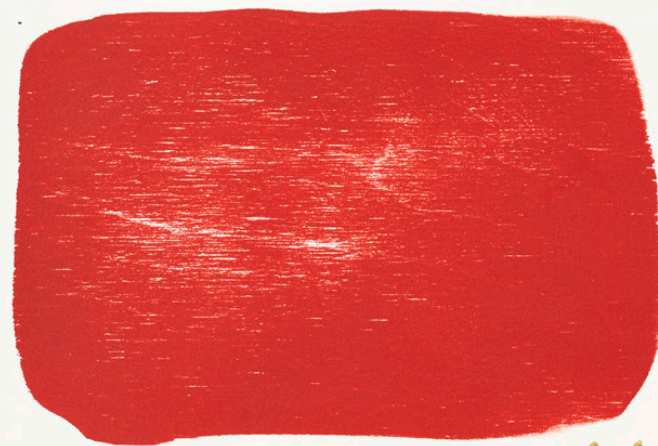


Meanwhile  
singing a song  
to lighten the lengthy task

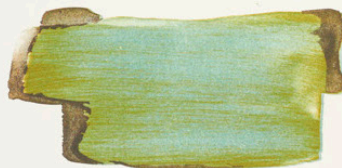


CRANE STAG  
HARE  
FALLOW  
DEER

This North Pole's always above us  
the South appears beneath

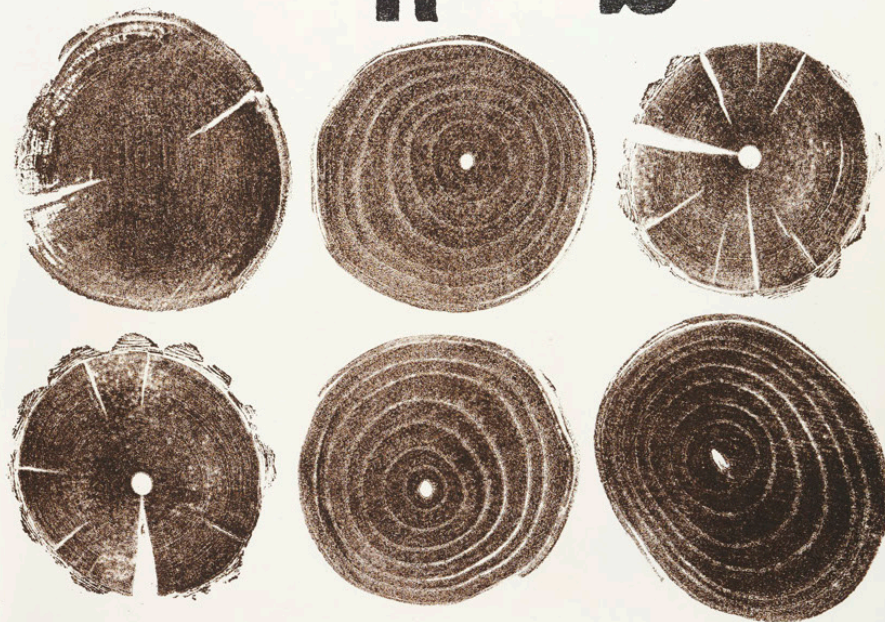








# KNOW YOUR TREES





Then are the trackless copses alive with the trilling of birds  
and the beasts look for love  
their hour come round again.  
Lovely the earth in labour  
under a tremulous west wind  
the fields unbosom  
a mild moisture is everywhere.



by a minute fungus, *Ceratoisidium*, which grows in the outermost annual ring of wood that the tree forms each summer. It blocks the flow of sap and kills a high proportion of trees attacked. The fungus is spread by little black beetles, *Scolytus scolytus*, which feed on the bark and bast of weakened trees; they carry fungal spores on their bodies, which infect healthy ones. Both fungus and beetle are almost impossible to detect by direct means, so tree growers hope that strains of an immune to the disease will soon be found.

78



# PLANE

*Platanus × hispanica*

PLATANACEAE

Plane trees are usually first recognized by their dappled bark, for as each segment of olive-brown bark ages, it flakes off and exposes a creamy-white surface below. This turns green and later brown. Bark shedding definitely helps the plane to thrive in smoky cities, for trees must breathe in oxygen through bark as well as leaves.

79



BOX

ILEX

ROWAN

YEW

ALDER

ARBUTUS

MYRTLE

PINE

CEDAR

PLANE

OSIER

CORNEL

OAK

WILLOW

ELM

ASH

LIME

CYPRESS

HAZEL

CHESTNUT

WALNUT



Or acres  
from which the ploughman has carted the wood away  
intolerant of trees that stood idle for many a year  
he felled them  
root and branch  
he demolished the ancient dwellings of birds  
their nests abandoned  
the birds have made for the sky  
but the land that once was wild  
is gleaming now  
with furrows.





To begin.

Nature is catholic in the propagation of trees.

Some without human help spring of their own sweet will

and spread abroad by winding streams and on plains—

soft osier, the bending spanish broom

poplars and the pale willow that shows a silver-blue leaf again some grow from seed  
they have dropped—

the high-tiered chestnut

the common oak, most prolific of leaf among woodland trees

and the oak that in Greece they fancy is able to tell their fortune.

Others like elm and cherry have a thick undergrowth

cropping up from their roots

the Parnassian bay-tree also when tiny

shelters beneath the immense shade of its mother.

Nature gave from the start such modes

to evolve the green of each tribe of trees

in forest, shrubbery, sacred wood.

Others we've found by experience.

One man takes suckers off the tender stock of the mother

and plants them in trenches : another fixes sets in the field

by notching stakes cross-wise or sharpening the wood to a point.

Some forest trees there are prefer the pinned-down arches of the layer that make a  
nursery alive in the parent's earth.

Some need no root

and the pruner can safely commit to the soil

cuttings from off a high branch.

What's more, and this is a marvel,

if you take a saw to the trunk of an olive

a root will come pushing out from the dry wood.

Often again we observe the boughs of one tree change

without harm into another's—

grafted apples growing on a pear

and stony cherries reddening on a plum tree.

So come, you countrymen,

learn the correct training of each in its kind

domesticate wild fruits by your cultivation

and let not the earth be lazy!

It's good to plant with vines Ismarus

and to clothe in olives Mount Taburnus.

And you be at hand and help me complete the task I've begun—

my pride, who rightfully share the chief of my renown— my friend,

and unfurl your flying sails

for the sea lies open.

I cannot hope to include everything in my poem

no, not if I'd a hundred tongues

a hundred mouths

and a voice like iron.

But come and coast the shore

dry land is near

I'll not detain you with lengthy preambles,

digressions, or any poetic fiction.

Trees that spontaneously reach up to the world of light

bear no fruit it's true

but they grow up bonny and strong

for natural vigour is in their soil.

Yet even these

if you graft them or transplant them into prepared trenches

will cast their wildwood ways

and by constant cultivation

be disciplined soon to whatever habits you design for them.

Even a barren sucker

that shoots from the bottom of a tree will do the same

if you plant it out in open ground

otherwise the leaves and boughs of its mother blanket it from above

stifle its growth

dry up its fruitfulness.

A tree that springs from dropped seed grows slowly

it'll give shade one day to your descendants

apples deteriorate, losing their pristine savour

and the vine bears nasty grapes that are good for nothing

but birds.

The fact is, all of these require attention,

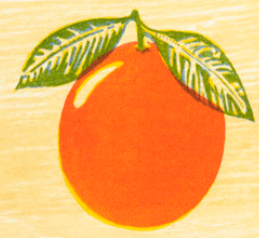
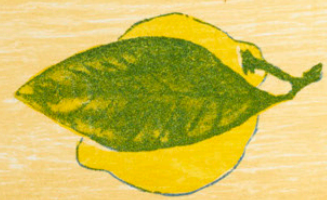
all must be forced into furrows

and tamed

with much expense

of labour.





Before Jove's time  
no settlers brought the land under subjection  
not lawful even to divide the plain  
with landmarks and boundaries  
all produce went to a common pool  
and earth unprompted was free with all her fruits.  
Jove put the wicked poison in the black serpent's tooth  
Jove told the wolf to ravine  
the sea to be restive always  
he shook from the leaves their honey  
he had all fire removed  
and stopped the wine that ran in rivers everywhere  
so thought and experiment might forge man's various crafts  
little by little  
asking the furrow to yield the corn-blade  
striking the hidden fire that lies in the veins of flint.  
Then first did alder-trunks hollowed out take the water  
then did the mariner group and name the stars  
the Pleiads, Hyads  
and the bright Bear

# TURN



# STONE



Crops fail  
a prickly forest comes pushing up  
goose-grass, star-thistle  
unfeeding dandelion and barren wild-oats  
tyrannize over the shining tillage.  
Unless you make war on the weeds relentlessly  
with your mattock  
and scare the birds away  
and pare with a bill-hook  
the darkening overgrowth of the country  
and the rain has come to your call  
vainly alas  
you will eye another man's heaped-up harvest  
and relieve your own hunger  
by shaking an oak in the woods.





And send to our sown fields  
the plentiful rain from heaven.





This book was designed by Blaise Drummond and Michael Woolworth. Printed by hand on BFK Rives 250g paper, it juxtaposes images with excerpts from Virgil's poem *The Georgics* (published in 29 BC), selected by the artist from the 1966 English translation by C. Day-Lewis.

The project was completed in December 2023 at Atelier Michael Woolworth, Paris.

Lithographs, monotypes, woodcuts and photo etchings were hand-printed from July 2022 to December 2023 by Léa Tupper and Paul Moragues, with additional printing by Gaëtan Girard and Michael Woolworth. Printers' assistants were Marion Bernard, Cyril Boivin, Jonas Droff, Léa Manzano, Émile Mariot, Eva Nieto, Theodora Paillason and Robinson Plesse-Costa.

The book also includes manual interventions by the artist (watercolor, colored pencil), collages (thread, paper, aluminum foil) and monotypes (leaf imprints). The leaves were collected by the artist in the printshop's immediate surroundings, Place de la Bastille, Paris.

Cover in laser-cut plywood. Letterpress by Pascal Duriez, Issy-les-Moulineaux. Bookbinding by Atelier Houdart, Paris. Slipcases made by Stéphanie Dumont, Vitry-sur-Seine. Photoengraving by Vincent Fardoux, Paris. Laser cutting by Cutter, Paris. Digital printing for the collages by I-Labo, Paris.

The artist extends his sincere thanks to the Arts Council of Ireland for supporting the development of this project.

The edition is limited to forty copies and five artist's proofs, signed and numbered.

Copy n°







### **Know Your Trees**

**Tuesday, September 23, 6–8 p.m.**

Meeting with Blaise Drummond and Michael Woolworth  
about this publishing project

**From September 18 to October 11**

Exhibition dedicated to the artist's book project  
published by Michael Woolworth Publications  
Galerie Loevenbruck, 12 rue Jacques-Callot, Paris 6<sup>th</sup>