

## PROSPECTUS

Announcing a New Nawakum Press Limited Edition



# THE REPUBLIC OF DREAMS

BRUNO SCHULZ

Translation by Madeline G. Levine

Etchings by Thomas Wood

*“The city fell into this profusion as if into a hundred-year sleep,  
unconscious from the heat, deafened by the glare,  
and slept cocooned a hundred times over in a spider web,  
overgrown with weeds, breathless and empty.”*

BRUNO SCHULZ died tragically over seventy years ago in 1942, lost during the Holocaust to a Gestapo officer's bullet. He was a Polish writer, painter, literary critic and art teacher born in 1892 in what has now become a part of Ukraine. He is often referred to as the "Polish Kafka" and was one of the greatest Polish-language prose stylists of the 20th century. Both Schulz and Kafka belonged to assimilated Jewish families of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, and both held down ordinary jobs while spending their free time writing. Schulz came to writing late, and his body of written work is small, just two volumes of short stories remain— *The Street of Crocodiles* and *The Hourglass Sanatorium*— along with a handful of compositions, a great deal of correspondence, some critical essays, and over five hundred paintings and prints. Several of his written works have never been recovered, including the unfinished novel *Messiah*, and the novella *The Homecoming* written entirely in German.

Schulz was a solitary man, who traveled little and wrote of familiar surroundings where he invested prosaic events with dreamlike imagery. In his stories, as in *The Republic of Dreams*, there is a fluid reality that is subjected to constant metamorphosis, blurring the borders of time, the real world and dreams, the physical and the spiritual. This story was written sometime in the first half of 1936, most likely in Warsaw, and the setting is not far from the city of Drohobycz where he lived and died, and where his family would occasionally go to escape the oppressive summer heat. The underpinning of the fantastic, with references to actual places where Schulz lived and from which he wished to escape, but which in smothering him fed his imagination, is a familiar theme in his work. In 1938 Bruno Schulz was awarded the Polish Academy of Literature's prestigious Golden Laurel Award.

#### THOMAS WOOD | ARTIST

Since the 1970s Thomas Wood has been an artist and printmaker; he studied at Western Washington University's Fairhaven College, and in Florence, Italy. His art brings easily recognizable elements of nature and civilization into strange concrete fusion, often combining moral and metaphysical ideas in a delicate dance that at once both challenges and delights. "Thomas Wood has created narrative and mythical metaphors about the world. . . . And not just the visible world, but also that of the make-believe-world, imaginary places filled with unknown surprises." The artist lives in Bellingham, Washington with a view of his garden, and Lummi Island beyond.

#### FOOLSCAP PRESS | CO-DESIGN, PRINTING AND BINDING

*The Republic of Dreams* was designed in collaboration with Peggy Gotthold and Lawrence G. Van Velzer of Foolscap Press. All print and bindery production was executed at their Press in Santa Cruz, California. Peggy Gotthold previously worked as a bookbinder at Schuberth Bookbindery in San Francisco and at the Arion Press. She trained in letterpress printing and typesetting at Cowell Press (UCSC), Yolla Bolly Press and Artichoke Press. Lawrence G. Van Velzer operated his own press and worked as a printer and typesetter at Arion Press. The proprietors of Foolscap Press are known for their inventive, finely made, hand-crafted books, and since 1990 have consistently published remarkable work that both surprises and delights.

## MADELINE G. LEVINE | TRANSLATOR

This new translation is from the Kenan Professor of Slavic Literatures Emerita at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Levine received her Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1971. Her translations from Polish include *Bread for the Deported* by Bogdan Wojdowski, *The Woman from Hamburg* by Hanna Krall, and four volumes of prose by Czeslaw Milosz. In 2018 Northwestern University Press published her translations of Schulz's *Collected Stories*. Bill Stanley from the University of Cambridge describes her work as both courageous, and impressive in her fidelity to the original text. Levine wrote "In a sense, in order to find an English voice for Bruno I had to suppress my critical habits, hold my breath, dive deep and start swimming."

## ABOUT THE EDITION

This bilingual edition of *The Republic of Dreams* includes three original etchings by Thomas Wood of Bellingham, Washington. Metallic decorative paper covers were produced by Ingrid Butler in Sausalito, California. The book is housed in a Japanese cloth, overlapping double panel box enclosure secured by rare earth magnets. The text is letterpress printed in green and black ink from photopolymer plates incorporating Preissig and Irena typefaces. Vojtěch Preissig was a highly accomplished Czech graphic designer, painter, illustrator, and typographer in the early 20th Century. He participated in the resistance movements of both World Wars and died at the Dachau concentration camp in June of 1944. *The Republic of Dreams* is thirty-six pages, and measures 9" x 15". It is printed on handmade DaVinci paper from Twinrocker Paper and Nideggen mouldmade paper from the German Zerkall paper mill. The edition is thirty-six copies, with thirty for sale, and all copies are numbered and signed by the artist.

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