

# Buk Shop News: Collecting Charles Bukowski Broadsides

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CHARLOTTE, NC, UNITED STATES, August 19, 2024

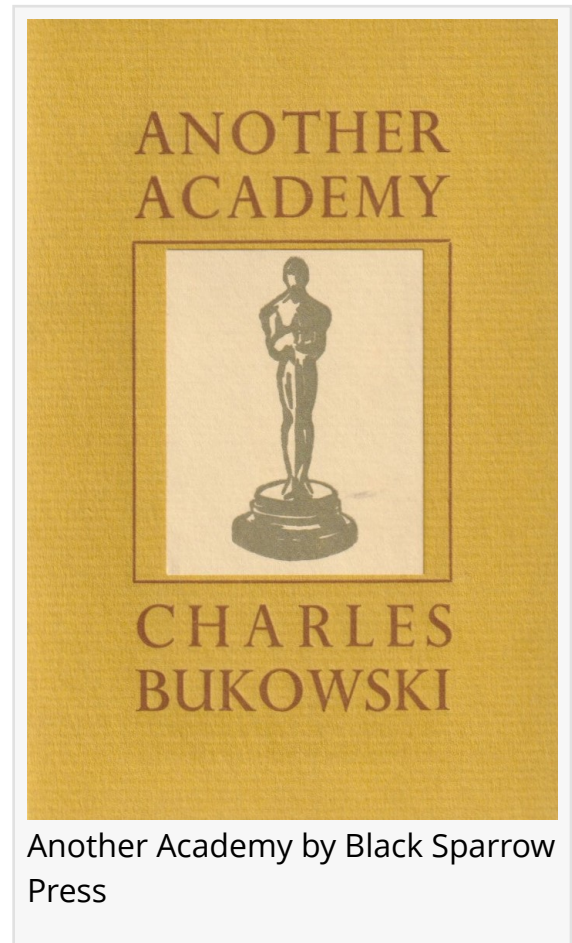
/EINPresswire.com/ -- While books are the most popular way to collect works by Charles Bukowski, [broadsides](#) represent an equally satisfying way to build a Bukowski collection.

There are over 60 known Charles Bukowski broadsides spanning the years 1946 to 2017. This includes Bukowski's second published work, a short story titled "[20 Tanks from Kasseldown](#)", published by Black Sun Press as part of Portfolio III in 1946. The portfolio included a total of 31 works, including broadsides by Henry Miller, Jean Genet and Kenneth Rexroth.

It's also worth noting that the first Bukowski poems published by Black Sparrow Press were produced in the form of a series of five broadsides created between April and July 1966. That was approximately two years before Black Sparrow Press published "At Terror Street and Agony Way", its first Bukowski book. These broadsides are considered the most valuable Bukowski broadsides to collect: Only 30 copies of each were produced and they were all signed by Bukowski.

Typically, broadsides are only published in a single edition, eliminating some of the complexity that's involved with collecting books. They are also published in limited quantities, with many printed by hand using vintage presses that require a high degree of craftsmanship. The whole idea is to create literary art that's displayed on a wall as opposed to spines a bookshelf.

To make things even more interesting for the collector, it's not uncommon to find different variants of the same broadside -- often the result of designers trying different colors and paper stock before selecting the final design. And while some Bukowski broadsides did have an official



signed edition, many others did not. So, finding a signed copy of what should be a non-signed broadside adds even more fun to the hunt.

While some broadsides were sold in bookshops, most were distributed organically to friends of the printer or writer, as a supplement to a poetry journal, or passed out at events like readings. Broadsides were used as a marketing tool for Black Sparrow Press, but for the small press printer, the idea of profit was never a motivation. Something that's still true today.

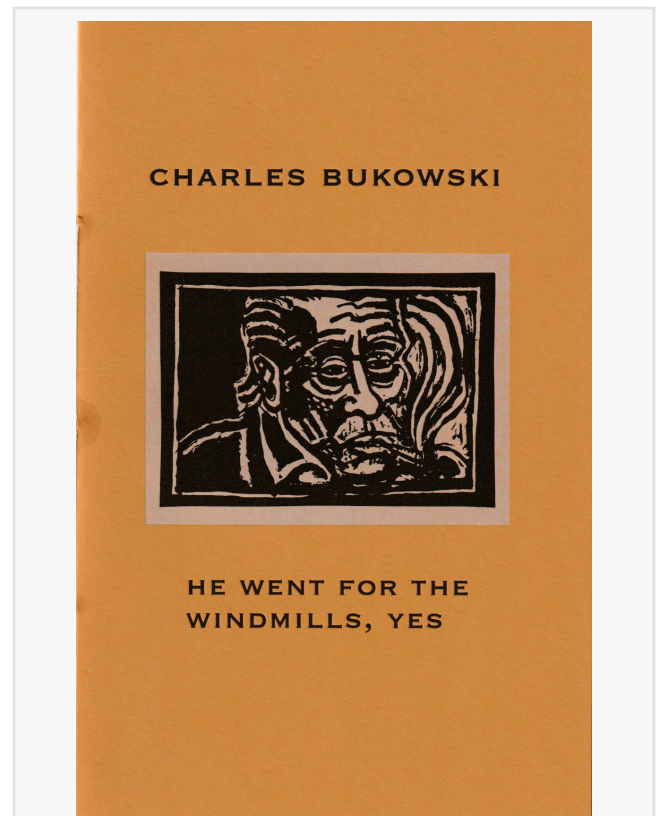
Contemporary examples can be found in the work of Bill Roberts from Bottle of Smoke Press and Johnny Brewton of X-Ray Press, both of which started creating broadsides after Bukowski's death.

Bill Roberts mainly produced his broadsides as part of his Bottle series, a body of folios that included works by Bukowski and other poets. But Roberts also published the classic Bukowski poem "I Saw A Tramp Last Night" as a stand-alone broadside. He also created a portfolio of miniature broadsides titled AS BUDDHA SMILES, containing 20 Bukowski quotes printed in different colors and paper stock.

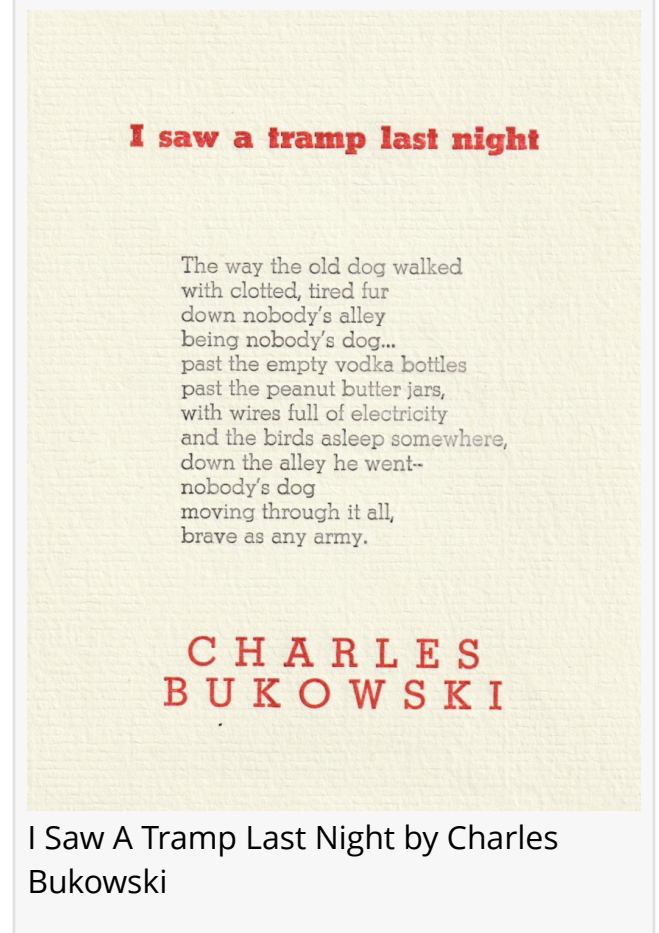
Bill is also notable for creating separate variants for the numbered edition and the lettered edition of his broadsides, with the lettered ones obviously being more collectible.

In recognition of his craftsmanship, Bill's work was recently added to the Yale University archives.

Johnny Brewton is an equally talented craftsman and artist. His first Bukowski work was a reproduction of a 1962 drawing titled "Self Portrait of Inner Man." Published in 1994, It was printed thermographically on heavy stock, resulting in the ink being raised above the paper.



He Went for the Windmills, Yes by X-RAY Book Co.



I Saw A Tramp Last Night by Charles Bukowski

Many of Brewton's works were published in his X-RAY Magazine. But don't let the term magazine fool you: Each issue of X-Ray was composed of individual pieces printed on different paper stocks and colors before being bound into a single volume. Copies of X-Ray now sell in the range of \$200-\$500.

Brewton has also produced several individual Bukowski broadsides, his most recent being "HE WENT FOR THE WINDMILLS, YES". He also collaborated with Michael Montfort on a photo project named POOP. Housed in a decorative box, it consists of a very long broadside by the same name and 13 color photographs of Bukowski taken by Montfort.

No matter what your reason for collecting them, broadsides offer a combination of visual art and literary art that is equally satisfying to display as it is to collect. In the process, you'll be supporting small press printers like Bill Roberts and Johnny Brewton. That alone is a worthwhile investment.

Learn more about collecting Bukowski Broadsides at [The Buk Shop](#).

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