



# TIMELESS

## PRECISION

WITH VINTAGE MACHINERY AND AN ARTISANAL APPROACH TO PRINTING, LUCY LANDSBERG TURNS TO THE 500-YEAR-OLD CRAFT OF LETTERPRESS TO EXPRESS HER CREATIVITY.

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**P**eacocks roam the grounds. Cuban coffee wafts into the bright orange building from the cafe next door as a slew of tiny pink tutus rush into the adjacent ballet studio. Inside the Lucy Print workshop, "Our Day Will Come" plays tenderly in the background. It's an ordinary day in Miami and Lucy Landsberg is about to start the letterpress.

"Customers often say that it feels like a museum here," says Landsberg, who owns one of the oldest letterpress machines in America that is still in production—a 1950 Heidelberg Windmill—as well as one from 1967. The self-taught entrepreneur spent a year researching before starting her new venture into this 500-year-old craft. As an accomplished punk/hard rock drummer and classically trained pianist, it was new territory for Landsberg. "I felt like I stepped into a different world," she says. "Miami doesn't have a history in this, so there was no one here to teach me. If something breaks, there's no one to call." Instead, she does it herself—from oiling the arms, to changing out the drive belt and all of the mechanical minutiae, which makes every product a challenge and a custom work of art. "Each machine is unique and the settings are completely different," she says. And weighing in at 3,000 pounds and producing 40 tons of pressure, they're a force to be reckoned with.

Though the vintage letterpresses add a historical quality to her shop, Lucy Print is also seemingly part chemistry lab, as soy and rubber-based inks are found throughout the studio, waiting to be measured on a triple-beam mechanical scale before being mixed. Landsberg uses a production process similar to a windmill—an arm picks up the paper and then sets it down as text or artwork are pressed into the surface. But "this is not like using a half-million-dollar machine that does everything for you," she says. "You can't turn on the press and walk away." Cutting the paper, mixing and manually distributing ink on the rollers, hand-setting the dies, edge painting, and foiling lend a handmade quality to her prints. Clients range from wedding planners to ad agencies to high-end restaurants; and last year, she produced and installed signage for the Design Miami/ tent and some of their visiting galleries.

Hers is a craft that conjures notions of a simpler time and face-to-face, lingering conversations. So rather than look toward trends, Landsberg takes an approach that pays homage to the age-old craft. "My most treasured keepsakes are the wood and lead pieces I have collected over the years from print shops all over the country that have closed their doors as the shop owners retired," she says. "You have to love what you do, and I like to think that what I'm doing has meaning. If I won the lottery tomorrow, I'd still be doing letterpress." **L**



Lucy Landsberg, of Miami's Lucy Print letterpress studio, often mixes her own inks using the Pantone Formula Guide to create a host of customized hues. She's in constant connection with her vintage Heidelberg machines to ensure an artisanal, handcrafted quality to all of her prints. Shown below center is an invitation in progress.

