



GBW 2024 AWARDS

Laura S. Young Award
– Jeff Altepeter

Lifetime Achievement Award
– Pam Spitzmueller



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The Making of an Artist's Book – *Penelope's Web*
by Barry McCallion

Night Circus, NBSS, Boston
reviewed by Barbara Adams Hebard

Jen Lindsay's *Fine Bookbinding:
A Technical Guide* – 2nd ed.
reviewed by Jodee Fenton

And more...

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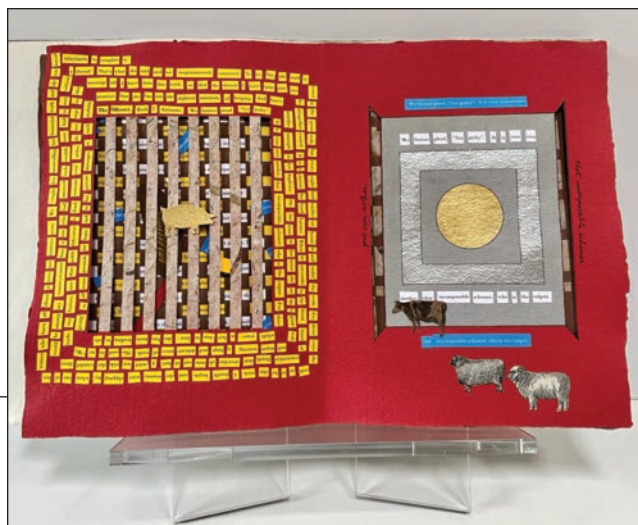
The Guild of Book Workers (GBW) is a national organization representing the hand book crafts. There are regional chapters in *New England, New York, the Delaware Valley, Washington DC, the Midwest, California, the Rocky Mountains, Texas, the Northwest and the Southeast.*

Membership is open to all interested persons and includes a print copy of this Newsletter, among many other benefits. To become a member, please visit the **GBW Website:**

guildofbookworkers.org The **GBW Newsletter** is published six times a year by the Guild of Book Workers, Inc., 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175.

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Penelope's Web (see page 12)

Letter from the President

DEAR MEMBERS

For those of you able to attend our annual Standards of Excellence Seminar in Providence, I hope you had a wonderful time! There were excellent presentations, an amazing vendor room, and lots of great time spent with fellow book folks.

I can't thank Standards Chair Jennifer Pellecchia enough for all of her hard work in planning this impressive event. I would also like to thank the generous local host committee, the New England Chapter, and the Standards standing committee for everything they did to make this event a success. Plus, a mighty shout out to our Treasurer Larry Houston—who, along with Jennifer, worked tirelessly to make sure everything ran smoothly.

Outgoing board members officially concluded their term during Standards. I would once again like to thank Jeanne Goodman, Marianna Brotherton, Lindsie Yost, and Kyle Clark for their service over the years. I'd like to welcome our new board members Insiya Dhatt as Communications Chair, Mary Sullivan as Exhibitions Chair, Spike Minogue as Newsletter Co-chair, and Rachel Baader as Journal Co-chair. I'm happy to have Jennifer Pellecchia continue her service as our Standards Chair. I look forward to working with all of you!

As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns at president@guildofbookworkers.org.

Wishing you all a very happy holiday season ahead!

Cheers,

Kate Levy

President, Guild of Book Workers
president@guildofbookworkers.org

Letter from the Editors

WINTER GREETINGS, DEAR READERS!

You may have noticed something a little different about your Newsletter already. The Newsletter Editorial Board first wants to thank Lindsie Yost for making the Newsletter a beautiful, polished piece of work for nearly three years. As the magician putting a public face on all the behind-the-scenes work that goes into the Newsletter, we thank her for making us look so good! Beginning with the issue you now hold in your hands, we welcome Spike Minogue to the Editorial Board as our layout and design artist, bringing us a fresh new look. Let us know what you think at newsletter@guildofbookworkers.org!

While two-thirds of the team enjoyed the camaraderie, edification, and energy of our annual seminar, fondly known as Standards, in Providence, RI the other third of us dug into copyediting this issue. And what an issue it is! Even if you weren't able to attend Standards this year, here you can take a sneak peek at the contents of our February issue, which will describe each of the four seminars. Feast your eyes on a dazzling array of images from the tours, venue, and seminars. This month we celebrate our Laura S. Young Award and Lifetime Achievement Award winners, Jeff Altepeter and Pam Spitzmueller, respectively! These two amazing book people have clearly left their mark on many of us Guild members, since both of them have spent a great deal of time and effort on teaching and mentoring others. Many of us can attest to their generosity of spirit and fathoms-deep knowledge of all things book.

Calligraphy Correspondent Beth Lee shares an envy-inducing calligraphy retreat in Italy. An incredible opportunity to take Medieval art and letters into the 21st century, bringing the Book of Hours into the modern world. Marbling Correspondent Iris Nevins shares a magical gift from the marbling angels that you won't want to miss. Barbara Adams Hebard takes us to a carnival, in her review of the GBW traveling exhibition NIGHT CIRCUS. Catch it when it rolls into your town! Jodee Fenton, our Fine Binding Correspondent, also shares a review—of the new edition of a classic bookbinding manual, Jen Lindsay's *Fine Binding: a Technical Guide*. If you weren't able to get a copy of the original edition, you may want to snap up one of the new ones for your technical library. We also start a two-part series by book artist Barry McCallion, who details his inspiration and methods for creating an artist's book based on a recurring episode in the Odyssey. Spoiler: part two in the series is inspired by the Anglo-Saxon epic Beowulf. Look for it in the February issue!

One more note on the machinery of the Newsletter itself. Thank you to those of you who expressed interest in joining us as a Book Arts Correspondent! We appreciate Kim Norman's service and welcome Lisa G. Scarpello to the Editorial team. Lisa is a Board Member of the Guild's Delaware Valley Chapter and a member of the Philadelphia Center for the Book. She volunteers in the Conservation Lab at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the Winter Shelter Program at Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church. Lisa lives in Philadelphia, PA with her husband, Jude and her cat, Sophie.

We hope that you are enjoying the warmth of family and friends as the year draws to a close. Or that you're finding a nice book to curl up with by the fire, if you prefer!

Chapter Reports

CALIFORNIA

The California Chapter has an event planned for Wednesday, January 29th, 2025 at The William Andrews Clark Library (UCLA). This event will include a tour of the library itself by the Clark's Rare Books Librarian, Nina Schneider, who will show us some of the Clark's most important books as well as its great contemporary holdings for close inspection. Questions will be invited.

If you are in the Los Angeles area, join us from 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM at the William Andrews Clark Library, 2520 Cimarón Street, Los Angeles, CA 90018.

In order to judge the group size please RSVP to california@guildofbookworkers.org.

Meanwhile, the Exhibition Committee of the California Chapter has invited members to participate in The California Effect exhibition, which will be held at the Long Beach Museum of Art from October 3, 2025 – January 4, 2026.

MIDWEST

This October we said goodbye and thank you to Lisa Muccigrosso as she finished her term as co-chair and we had engaging conversations at our first-ever online Annual Meeting. Many thanks to all who attended and shared their thoughts on the direction of the chapter and the future of GBW. We look forward to continuing the discussions and momentum into 2025.

NORTHWEST

The Chapter Board is developing a plan for a member exhibition, possibly in early 2026. An annual meeting for members will be scheduled for late winter 2026. Thoughts and suggestions about either are most welcome. *Jodee Fenton, Chair*

POTOMAC

The Potomac Chapter held its annual meeting via Zoom on October 30th, 2024. We socialized, discussed business, and had a wonderful show-and-tell of completed works and works in progress. Board Chair Charlotte Mauler Hayes showed us her cute "elf press," a tiny 3D-printed purple press, complete with adjustable pressure and a tiny felt. She printed some leaves and a coin to show us.

Board member Paige Billin-Frye participated in a group show and also gave a talk about her hand bookbinding and

paper art at the Martin Luther King Library in Washington, DC. Member Elizabeth Curren had a solo show of her books, prints, and collages. Paige Billin-Frye and Charlotte Mauler Hayes are teaching workshops at the Frederick Book Arts Center in November and December.

Chapter members will get together to tour the recently renovated Folger Shakespeare Library on Friday, Dec. 13th. We are also looking into a tour of artist's books at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. *Charlotte Mauler Hayes, Chair*



PHOTO CREDIT: BETH CURREN

Street Calligraphy from Elizabeth Curren's exhibit.

Laura S. Young Award 2024

Jeff Altepeter

BRIEN BEIDLER

I'm delighted to be writing the Laura S. Young Award announcement for Jeff Altepeter. On top of his merit as a binder and his dedication to bookbinding education in general, after two decades Jeff continues to embody the qualities represented by this award—sustained service to the Guild and its members—though he'd be the last one who'd want to talk about it. Rather, like a well-cooked wheat starch paste, Jeff Altepeter is an almost invisible but pervasive binding agent whose presence helps strengthen our community, and whose positive influence will hold for years to come.

When scouring the internet for information about Jeff's career, almost any bio you find is modest, almost dismissive. Here's one from the North Bennet Street School's (NBSS) webpage: *Jeff is the head of the Bookbinding Department, a 2003 graduate of the American Academy of Bookbinding, and a graduate of the program. After graduating, Jeff worked at Harcourt Bindery and Harvard University's Tozzer Library. He is a past Chair of the New England Chapter of the Guild Book Workers and has mentored many NBSS graduates as they serve in GBW leadership positions. Jeff operates a bindery in Somerville, MA, and he specializes in traditional leather bindings, metalworking for bookbinding, and bookbinding exhibits.*

While this does highlight the major facts of Jeff's career, it fails to capture what he's meant to so many of us. I'll attempt to provide an example through the context of my own experience interacting with him.

I first met Jeff while attending the Paper and Book Intensive in 2013. At that time, I was early in my journey as a bookbinder and awed to learn that Jeff (who was teaching a class that year) was the head of the Bookbinding Department at NBSS, one of the only traditional hand bookbinding programs in the country. However, having no formal training myself I was desperate for any information, and I decided to chance approaching Jeff. Though originally intimidated by his title and experience in the book world, I was quickly put at ease. In his characteristically laid-back way, he answered my rapid-fire questions about leather working despite the fact that I wasn't in his workshop, and he hadn't even finished his breakfast. I was deeply touched by the fact that Jeff was willing to share his time and hard-earned knowledge with someone who he had no obligation to whatsoever. Not only did this interaction benefit me from a practical standpoint, but his open generosity set an example for the type of community I wanted to be a part of. Though Jeff could have easily been a gatekeeper of bookbinding expertise, he had clearly ripped the gate off its hinges some years ago.

Several years later I joined the GBW Board as Vice President, and while in that capacity I was really able to see how engaged Jeff is with the Guild of Book Workers. Even after his decade-long tenure as the New England Chapter Chair (2002–2012), Jeff continues to invest his skills and passion for mentorship by helping organize initiatives like the Mentor-Protégé events at Standards, fostering a sense of belonging through his work on the GBW Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and opening the doors and resources of NBSS to the broader Guild community by facilitating workshops, exhibitions, and other book-related events. On top of all this, he even chaired the local host committee for this year's Standards in Providence. And, judging by the number of North Bennet Street School students and alumni that become long-term active, generous, and influential members of the Guild themselves, Jeff is an outstanding and effective ambassador for the organization.

I, like so many other members of the Guild of Book Workers, am profoundly grateful to Jeff for his generous service and approachability. While the Guild would still exist without it, our community definitely wouldn't be the same. Thank you Jeff!

ERIN FLETCHER

Jeff is so deserving of this award because he so generously offers his support and time to the Guild and fellow members. He does not seek affirmations for his work, he simply strives to see the strength of the Guild community flourish.

My own experiences within the Guild would not have happened if not for the encouragement I received at the end of my second year at NBSS from Jeff. He saw the potential in my ability to lead and organize and suggested that I take on the Program Chair position for the New England Chapter. I held this position for 4 years before becoming the Chapter Chair, which I held for 5 years. I'm currently serving on both the Exhibitions and DEI Committee. Nominating Jeff for this award is my way of thanking him for that nudge to become more involved with the Guild—for the Guild has gifted me a beautiful community that has supported my career in numerous ways, and I give back by volunteering whenever possible.

SAM FEINSTEIN

While he's quick to downplay his own impact, there's no denying the amount of work Jeff has done for the Guild. Directly, in his capacity as the New England Chapter Chair, setting up lectures and workshops, contributing to Guild exhibitions, and helping with Standards when it was in Boston. Indirectly, by training the next generations of Guild members and instilling in them the importance of the Guild to our fields, urging them to take positions within the Guild to run it, and in general being

an incredible influence on so many people working within the field and in the Guild. There's really no question that he deserves this award.

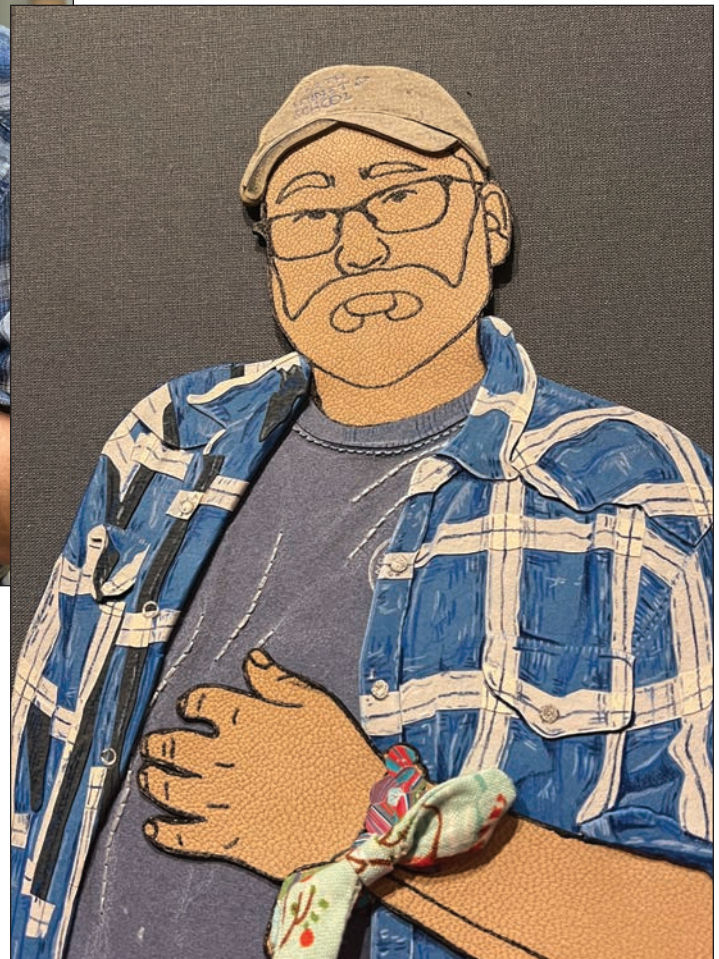
GABBY COOKSEY

[Jeff] knew I wanted to make it as a design bookbinder/book artist and never dashed my hopes. Sure, he jested with me, but it was all love. He has helped SO many bookbinders in their craft. He will answer any question, he will help you figure it out and gently nudge you that maybe you should do more conservation work while at Bennet. I still count on him as one of my

teachers even if I have been out of school for 10 years. I visit Bennet every time I go back to Boston to visit family because Jeff is there and he has created such a wonderful space to be in. He encourages all of us to go to Standards to meet other binders and listen to the presentations. Through his encouragement, I went to Standards in D.C. (2013) to talk to Don Glaister about being his apprentice, and all is history after that. Jeff is one of the best people and teachers I know. He deserves this award for all the bookbinders he has helped along the way. Thank you!



Jeff Altepeter, *Laura S. Young Award 2024* winner.
Which one is the real Jeff??



Lifetime Achievement Award 2024

Pam Spitzmueller

JANE MEGGERS

“Pam has devoted much of her life to become an explorer of the book, and there is hardly a factor or a new discovery connected to the history of the book that has escaped her. She has paid attention to all aspects of the book and passed on her extensive knowledge in her role as conservator, mentor, teacher, colleague, friend, traveler. Her wisdom has taught, influenced and inspired me and many others as well. Nobody else I know has such a keen eye of an observer and such a quiet and modest attitude when sharing discoveries and insights. She made us aware of overlooked or misunderstood details, she revived ancient techniques and came up with methods she revised and invented. Pam is a true genius.” (Hedi Kyle)

I’m not sure if any bookbinder, conservator, or book artist today could not have been influenced by Pam Spitzmueller. Quiet and unassuming, Pam was a pioneer during the evolution of the field of book conservation, where she broke traditional gender barriers both as a book binder and artist. “She served as (founding) co-director for the Paper and Book Intensive for many years, helping shape the programming and teaching. She traveled to Cairo to see the Nag Hammadi codices first hand in order to understand their structure and significance in book history. She was one of the first to give focused attention to European long and link stitch binding, introducing their history and potential to bookbinders world-wide.” (Julie Leonard) While at the University of Iowa, where the Guild library is housed, Pam served as GBW librarian. She attended Standards, AIC and PBI without fail, and collaborated with fellow notables such as Tim Barrett, Nicholas Pickwood, Chris Clarkson and others.

Beyond book structure in the context of historical research and constructing models, Pam likes to stretch what a book is. Her exploration into historical bookbinding has led her to imagining and creating artistic structures. From books in jars to hanging books, her organic creations take materials and binding techniques beyond tradition to pieces that seem to float on air, while reflecting respect for both form and function. Pam’s replicas of historical book structures and her artist’s books have been widely exhibited at libraries and art galleries including the National Museum of Women in the Arts, New York Center for Book Arts, The Boston Athenaeum, Grolier Club, Art Institute of Chicago, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt, and the Barbican Centre in London.

Pam was born in 1950, and grew up in suburban Chicago, “making things” in her father’s wood workshop. After graduating from the University of Illinois with a degree in art education, she went on to study bookbinding with conservator Gary Frost at the Newberry Library, where she worked from 1976 to 1983. During that time in Chicago, Pam furthered her skills

and knowledge by taking evening classes from Bill Anthony. In 1983 she left Chicago to work at the Library of Congress, then in 1988 she took the position as head of rare book conservation at the University of Iowa and served as associate professor in the School of Art and Art History. In 1998 Pam was appointed the first James H. Needham Chief Conservator for Special Collections at Harvard University’s Library Preservation Center.

For me, Pam has been a friend, an inspiration, a mentor and an advocate. While she was head of University of Iowa rare book conservation, I was the book and paper conservator for the State Historical Society of Iowa, just up the hill from her lab. Pam always included me in workshops and seminars she organized. I took her class in Historical Structures, as well as independent study. We traveled to conferences together, and she was always game for some fun adventures along the way. She is an avid gardener and by chance I brought her a houseplant the day we met. That plant was the spark that led to our friendship, and I treasure her Christmas cards, postcards and mysterious (“secret admirer”) valentines over the years.

Although Pam is retired now, her contributions live on in every aspect of book conservation and art. It is with profound pleasure that I have the opportunity to congratulate Pam, to applaud her as the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, and to thank the Guild for recognizing this amazing woman.

JANE MEGGERS was the Book and Paper Conservator at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library in Iowa City for 22 years, and the GBW Librarian for 10 years. She is retired but keeps her hands busy at her home workshop, where she enjoys making books with her four granddaughters.

JODY BEENK

Sitting in Pam’s former office as I type this letter, it is hard to summarize the impact she has had on my understanding of the history of the book, book arts, and on my own career in book conservation. So many individuals have been influenced by her passion for books and her creativity and talent as a craft person. I first studied and worked with Pam at the University of Iowa (1989–1999) where I attended numerous semester-length classes and workshops and was lucky to be hired to work in the conservation lab alongside Pam. At this time the Center for the Book was developing into a graduate program, and Pam had acquired Mellon funding for a series of workshops. Experienced conservators and younger students alike came to Iowa City to attend workshops, and I was introduced to a great many people in the conservation field. I also had the opportunity to work with Pam on the administrative side of organizing Paper and Book Intensives. Over my approximately 35 years working in the field, I have rarely met anyone so thoroughly devoted to the

scholarship of the book and so adept at both book conservation and book arts... Throughout this time Pam has remained a role model for me, as she has taught and mentored hundreds of interns, students and staff during her career; has taught and exhibited her work nationally and internationally; and has reached multiple generations, like when she demonstrated resewing a book on Reading Rainbow!

MARTHA LITTLE

Just knowing Pam taught me a way of looking at something with deep curiosity, without stopping at what I first thought I saw. This quality would be a major source of her profound influence on her colleagues and students over the next forty years... Throughout her career Pam has been committed to sharing what she found through classes, presentations, published articles and demonstrations, for innumerable artists and conservators of all levels. It has only been in recent years that I've come to realize what an impact she has had on my own career—and I'm guessing on the careers of many others. It was Pam who first prodded me (in her quiet way) to teach to a wider audience than my local students. Several times over the years she called to say I should do a workshop at this or that national venue, somehow persuading me to do the immensely rewarding research and preparation for teaching a structure—to students who ended up enriching my own understanding of the subject even further. Pam's urging of other practitioners to teach was a benefit she bestowed on everyone in the field.

Pam's serious scholarship, her slyly droll artists books, her contagious delight in finding the clues and oddities in historical books, her generosity to students and colleagues, her long career of teaching and mentoring, have enriched and inspired us all.

OLIVIA PRIMANIS

Pam Spitzmueller's life and work embraces many specialties that find their home under the umbrella of book arts. Through her keen sense of observation and analytical skills she made discoveries about binding structures in the early days of the book conservation field—the 1980s—that inspired me and many other colleagues to become more observant and to seek discoveries of our own. Her creativity and experiments with artist books brought historical binding structures into the present-day vernacular of book arts. Ultimately, Pam's bindings, publications, and her workshops, as well as her generous and casual sharing of knowledge with colleagues, and her mentorship of conservators, artists, and historians, made a tangible impact that is felt throughout the field of book arts in the areas of book history, skilled craftsmanship, creative experimentation with book structures, and conservation theory.

SHANNON ZACHARY

Pam Spitzmueller has accomplished so many things book: book artist, scholar of historical binding structures, book conservator, and teacher. But when I think of Pam my mind always goes back to her series of book art pieces titled *Preserved*. She created these sculptures of recognizable books supported or suspended in Mason jars early in her career. They caught my attention long

before I met her in person, and even now they bring to mind the qualities that make her unique and outstanding: curious, creative, knowledgeable, a person always up for a technical challenge and with a sly sense of humor. These qualities have made Pam an especially treasured teacher and lecturer. She has shared her knowledge and enthusiasm with generations of book people, including at GBW Standards, the Paper and Book Intensive, Montefiascone, and the University of Iowa Center for the Book—just to name a few. Her teaching has helped to encourage and nourish literally hundreds of students and colleagues. Less public but no less impactful has been her body of work as a book conservator at the Newberry Library, Library of Congress, University of Iowa, and Harvard. For all her diversity of interests, Pam's career demonstrates how one person can move seamlessly across different aspects of the book arts and how the different specializations can inform each other. She was an early practitioner exploring the creation of historical binding models to gain a deep understanding of how books were made and the technical solutions binders of the past found to make their bindings work. Insights from the examination and re-creation of historical structures in turn gave her sensitivity and confidence as a conservator and skills as an artist.



Pam Spitzmueller, *Lifetime Achievement Award 2024* winner

Standards of Excellence 2024 – Providence, RI



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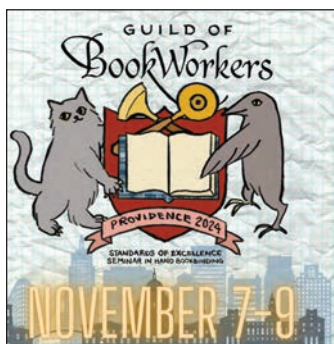
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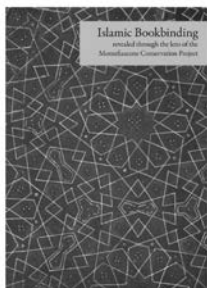


A beautiful venue, great attendance, wonderful work, happy vendors, and fun and informative talks—we even found a travelling bookbinding studio in a member's van.

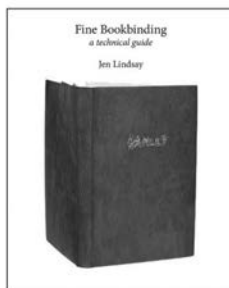
Who could ask for more?

Stay tuned for the scholars write-ups about the presenters in the February 2025 issue of the GBW Newsletter.

Recently Published Bookbinding Titles



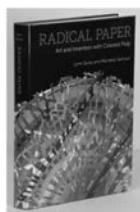
Islamic Bookbinding



Fine Bookbinding

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Volume 9 is the last volume in this acclaimed series, and it will be published in Spring 2025. Visit <https://www.thelegacypress.com/forthcoming-titles> for more information.



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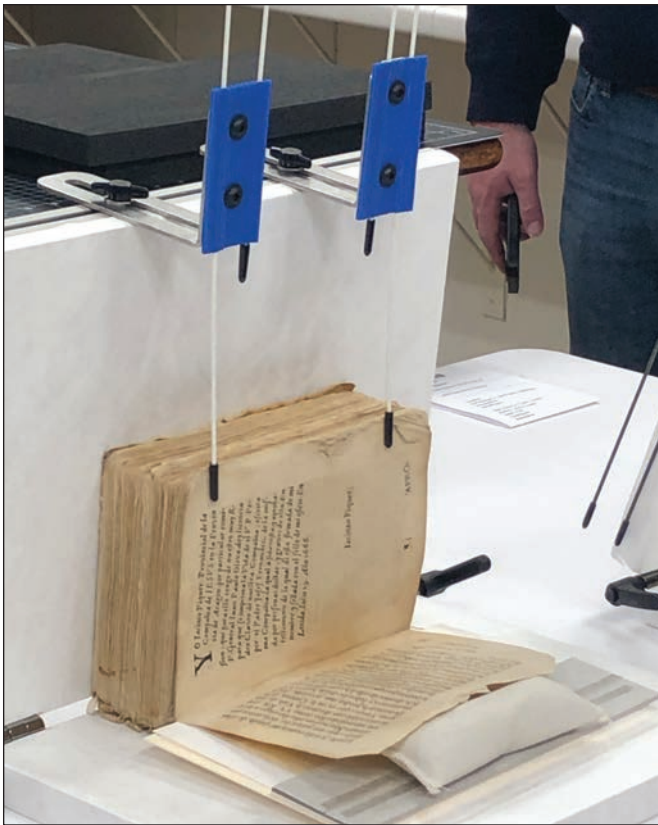


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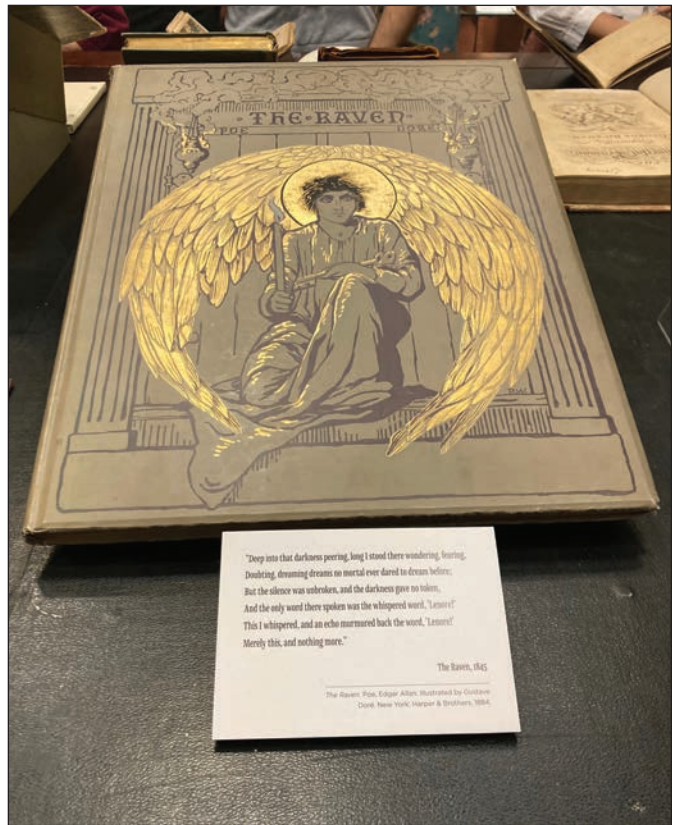


PHOTO CREDIT: ELIZABETH MCHUGH

More photos from 2024 Standards – live auction, tours of local libraries and the beautiful architecture of the city.

“Penelope’s Web” - The Making of an Artist’s Book

In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Penelope fools the suitors for three years, weaving and unweaving a cloak that she never intends to finish. My book treatment of the episode, *Penelope’s Web*, became a work of weaving on many levels.

The background story is familiar enough: twenty years have passed since the fall of Troy, but Odysseus has not returned to Ithaca. Convinced that he is dead, unruly suitors descend on his estate, make free with the wine, mistreat the servants, and reduce the farm flocks to barbecue. When the suitors insist that Penelope choose one of them to marry, she delays by weaving a shroud by day and undoing the work at night.

The story of Penelope’s attempt to deceive the suitors is told by three different characters. First by Antinous, one of the suitors, who is outraged and indignant over Penelope’s “duplicity.” Next, Penelope confides in the shabby wanderer (Odysseus in disguise) who has arrived at her door. Lastly, upon reaching Hades, the ghost of Amphimedon, one of the slain suitors, tells the story of Penelope’s ruse to Agamemnon.

Each “telling” of the story mirrors the one before it and whole sentences are repeated. Although Antinous, Penelope, and Amphimedon have different perspectives—one criticizes, one confides, and one laments—they all rely on the same narrative framework and use the same expressions. Homer, by subtly turning from one narrator to another, weaves and unweaves Narrative itself, using multiple voices and different perspectives to pull us back and forth through narrative time.

I printed each of the speeches, first in black, then in drop-out type, on several colors of card stock. For the book’s pages I chose sheets of heavy beige, brown, and red St. Armand paper. I treated some pages as looms, preparing them by making parallel cuts. Having cut the texts into long strips, I then wove the strips through the cut lines in the pages. I collaged other pages with images and designs made from India ink drawings, metallic inks, acrylic paint, and rubber stamps of farm animals. Sometimes the printed word was legible, often (as in the woven pages) I reduced the text to an abstraction, and it became a pattern.

Each narrator’s twelve pages begins with a handwritten copy of the speaker’s speech. Antinous, as a living suitor, has his mind on the worldly benefits of marrying Penelope. I collaged his pages using the objects of his desire: gold and silver coins, outlines of a female form, and the cutout rubber-stamp forms of farm animals. I wanted the viewer to feel his ambition and sense of urgency, so I cut through some of the pages, creating a pre-view of what is to come and providing a backwards look at what has gone before.

Penelope’s pages are quite different. While Antinous and the others go on with their riotous living, Penelope is trapped, a strong woman weakened by circumstance. Odysseus, her long-

absent husband, is presumed dead, and custom expects a widow to remarry. Besieged by suitors, watching the estate’s resources plundered, Penelope tells us her plan: “First a god gave me the inspiration to set up a great web on my loom... So, by day I used to weave the great web, but every night I had torches set beside it and undid the work.” Her deception succeeds for three years, but eventually, a maid betrays her to the suitors and her ruse is discovered.

Penelope presents a character in contrasts: she is beautiful and noble, but her circumstances are degraded. Her situation seems hopeless. She has no one to hear her misfortunes besides a shabby old wanderer who asks merely for a place to rest. In despair, she ends her tale with the words: “And now I can neither evade marriage with one of them nor think of any means of escape.” I designed many of Penelope’s pages in glittering color, but counteracted the bright colors with a motif of interlocking rectangles and other images suggesting confinement and constraint. When I cut through Penelope’s pages, the openings reveal a network of bars and blank walls. Each new “view” opens onto further obstructions. I wove some text strips into a dense web, and separated others into individual words arranged along a tight, dizzying spiral.

The theme of escape and confinement plays out in subsequent chapters as Odysseus shuts the palace doors, trapping the suitors inside the great hall. As they flee for their lives, the suitors form a great wheel of moving and falling bodies, a form I employed several times throughout the book.

Amphimedon, our third speaker, is killed by Odysseus, arrives in Hades, and tells his story to Agamemnon. He accuses Penelope of concocting an elaborate plan to “bring about our downfall and our death.” Agamemnon is an interesting choice of listener, having returned from the war in Troy years before, only to be the victim of a plot by his own wife.

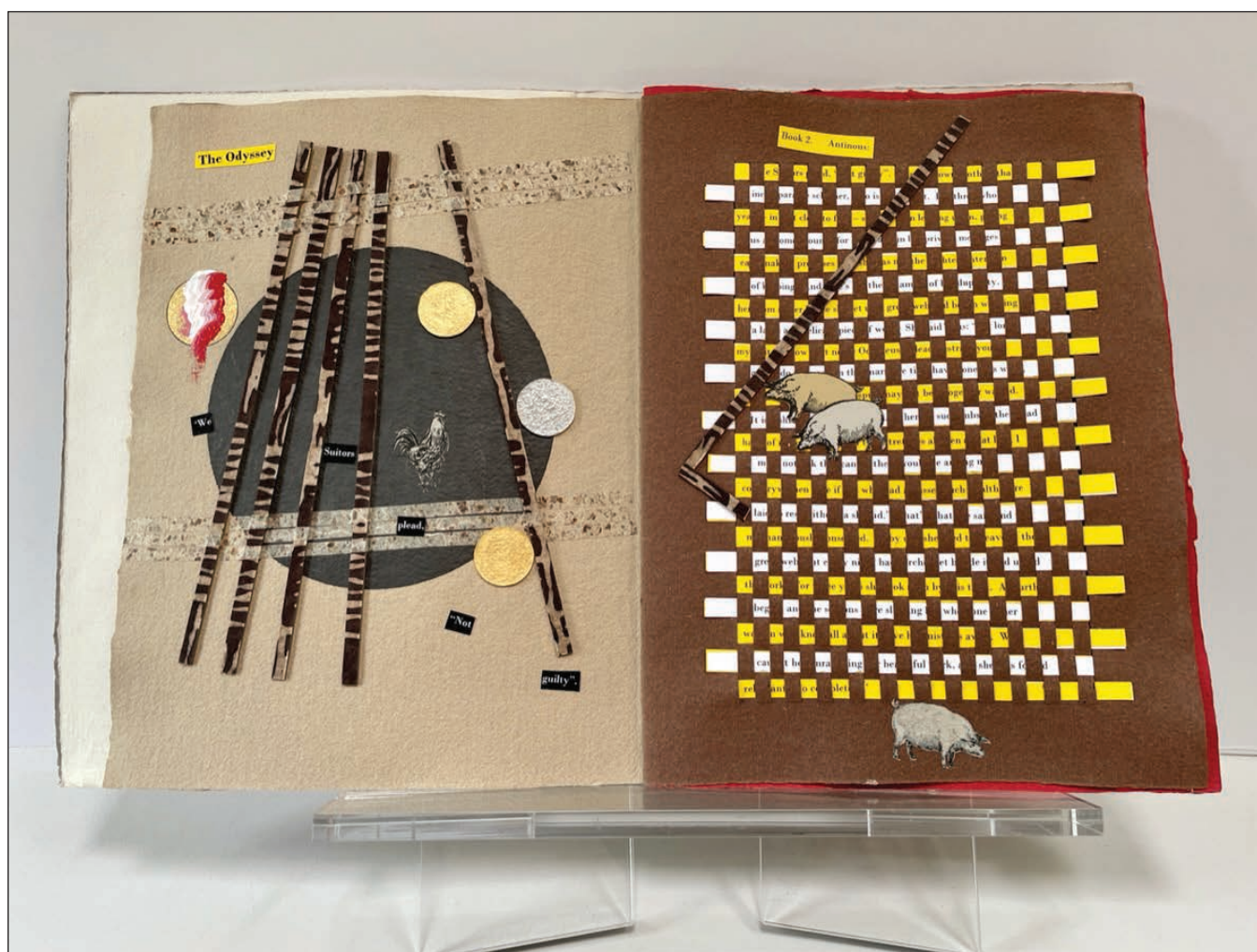
For Amphimedon’s pages I conjured the dim, shadowed world of Hades. Instead of the red paper in the Antinous and Penelope sections, I substituted heavy, black paper. I further dulled the beige and brown pages with gray acrylic paint and stark black and white type. I drew outlines of a male figure that resembles the chalk outline at crime scenes. Hollowed-out and insubstantial, the splayed figure of Amphimedon tumbles through space. All is underworld: bleak, unregulated, and untethered. Words form lines and swirl around the souls of the dead. Twisting and turning on the page, they take a meandering, somewhat aimless journey of their own.

I have always found *The Odyssey* appealing, particularly the story of Penelope’s web. As a narrative device, her story, told by different people, posed interesting questions which Penelope’s Web enabled me to explore.

Lines of interwoven type hold a particular fascination for me. I experience a certain “thinklessness” and meditative immersion in the repetition of making “woven” books. There is also a sense that an episode or action, told and retold from different points of view, is very modern. But is it? In contemporary film and fiction we know it as the Rashomon effect. To me, *Penelope’s Web*, with its woven skein of words and imagery, reveals a similar fragility of certainty and its replacement by a world guided (or misguided) by the same ambiguity and indeterminacy that characterizes the Rashomon effect.

Did you hear that?

What sounds like a new perspective in modern literature may just be a three-thousand-year-old echo.



“Night Circus” – Boston Review



Exhibition display at North Bennet Street School, Boston, MA



**Guild of Book Workers' 2024–25
Traveling Juried Exhibition, Boston Venue
October 18 – December 3, 2024**

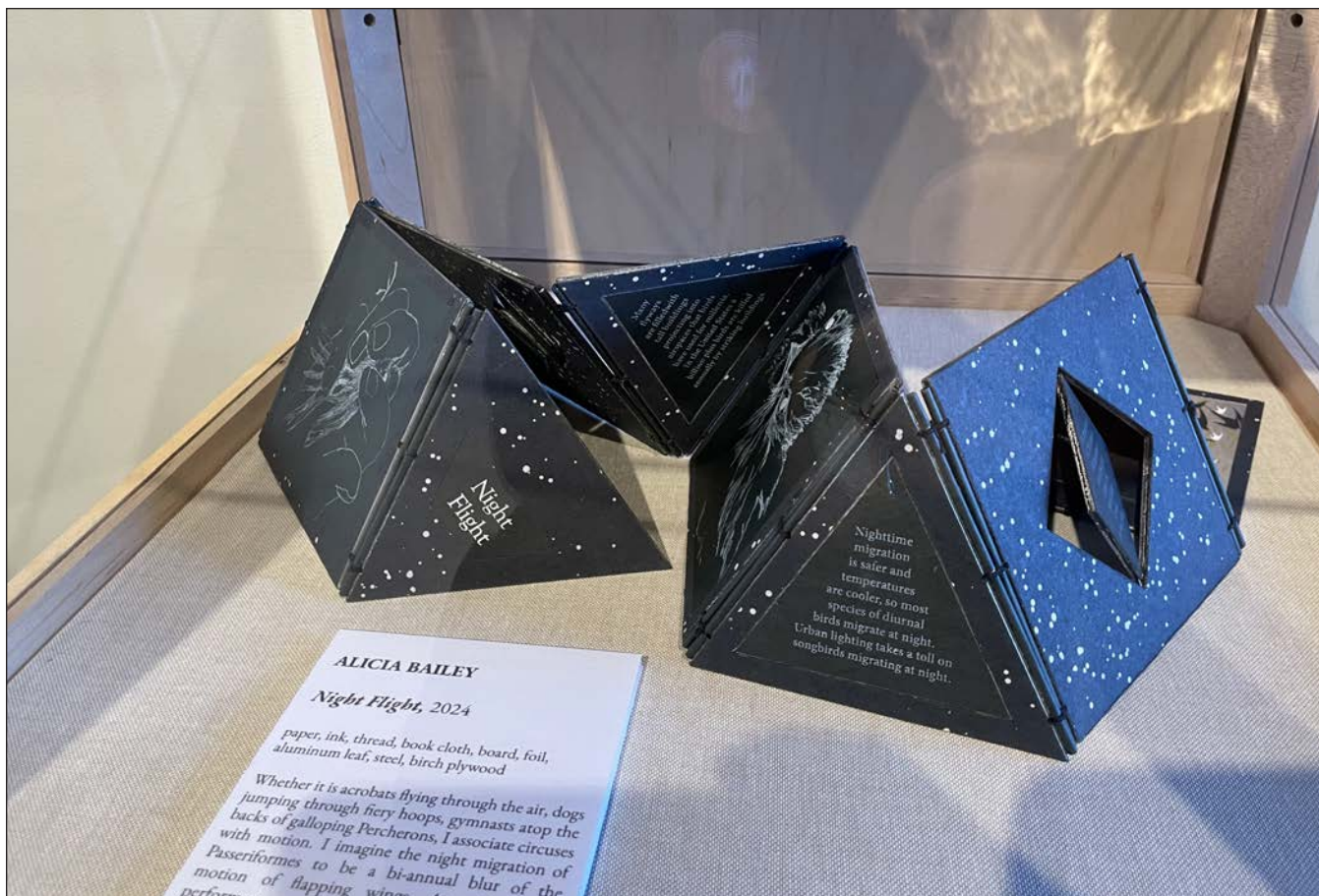
The Guild of Book Workers' 2024–25 traveling juried exhibition, NIGHT CIRCUS, opened in the gallery of the North Bennet Street School (NBSS) in Boston, where it ran until December 3. It was greeted with enthusiasm in its premiere setting. NBSS was very proud to host the fine work of the members of GBW and to showcase the bookbindings of nine of its graduates and the NBSS Bookbinding Program Advisors.

The NBSS setting was especially apt for the exhibition. The gallery space has a gorgeous floor-to-ceiling glass wall boasting a panoramic view across the charming North End of Boston, which gave a “big top” feel to the setting. The styles of the exhibition cases were fitting for a circus theme; there were standing cases on rolling wheels and lying cases supported on nicely finished sawhorses. Both styles reflect the transitory set-up and takedown of a working circus. Within the cases, to use circus phrasing, were “exhibitions of human skill,” books and book-like forms “spectacularly” representing the many aspects of the “greatest” traditional binding structures and “amazing” innovative techniques.

The work of many familiar, long-respected binders such as Monique Lallier were seen alongside that of recent NBSS graduates like Mimi Zycherman BB'23. Among the outstanding pieces on display, visitors likely picked out favorites, as did your reviewer. One could not help but gaze in awe at the incredible tooling by Samuel Feinstein BB'12, gracing Ubu Roi, elegantly titled in an oversized font. Jim Reid-Cunningham BB'90, well-known as a top producer of miniature books, here offers a folio-sized book, covered with triangular-shaped leather onlays that suggest the spotlights focusing on circus artistes. Brenda Gallagher decorated her binding with elements that create the sense of movement and excitement of a circus: bright red dots, spinning Ferris wheel forms and bold lettering. Alicia Bailey also explored motion in her Night Flight, unfolding her tale with a sculptural book that follows the night migration of Passeriformes.

Jurors Gabby Cooksey BB'14, Jesse Hunt, and Keri Schroeder came up with a very cohesive group of work by GBW members that effectively evokes a circus. “Come One Come All,” thanks to their choices, the tents are set up, the acrobats are soaring, and the caravan is ready to roll your way.

For those who were not able to see the exhibition during its run in Boston, an online gallery has opened on the GBW website. Check out the website for the upcoming locations and dates for the exhibition as it travels around the United States. This is an exhibition worth seeing in person, if possible. Rather than view it on a computer screen, “step right up” and go to NIGHT CIRCUS when it travels to your area.



Night Flight, Alicia Bailey



Barbara Adams Hebard was trained in bookbinding by Mark Esser at the North Bennet Street School. After a long career as Conservator at the Boston Athenaeum and Boston College, she now is the Preservation Coordinator at Brandeis University. She is a Fellow of The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, a Professional Associate of The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works and was a long-time member of GBW.

The Boundless Lady Bookbinder
 Gabby Cooksey and Erin Fletcher

Jen Lindsay's "Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide" – 2nd Ed. (2024)

Bookbinding is a life-long journey with much to learn, new territory to traverse, many people to meet, and a world of new perspectives to explore. Binders have to constantly work on their craft—stretching and flexing to keep improving, letting mistakes become their future teachers, and learning/relearning processes. In order to do this, binders must be proactive in seeking out new methods, constantly evaluating their work, understanding what and how other binders are doing, looking for better ways to do things in our own studios. We stay alert by attending in-person classes, taking online workshops, practicing, and visiting the studios of our colleagues. When these resources are not available, it can be exceptionally helpful to have a working library of bookbinding manuals in the studio that can illuminate a process from the past or suggest alternatives to a standard way of thinking. Or give us hope when it seems we backed ourselves into a corner. Bookbinding manuals cover a wide range of binding techniques, from non-adhesive bindings to Japanese stab-stitched bindings to artists' book structures to full leather covered books and beyond. Some manuals are written for a particular type of fine binding—French, English, or German—while others try to encompass the broader spectrum of binding. Most have diagrams or photographs.

One such manual was published in 2009 by the British Library and Oak Knoll Press, *Jen Lindsay's Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide*. It received very positive reviews and the edition sold out. Binders who were able to purchase a copy had one of the best bench manuals for fine leather-covered bindings. Lindsay takes us through the British way to bind a book. The book is arranged according to the "sequence of operations" a binder would do, with each section opening with a rationale and then a detailed step-by-step guide through that operation. We follow a single book through all these steps, and there are clear and plentiful photographs to

help the reader understand the process. The author writes "If you are a novice, you may think that this kind of work is beyond you or that it is something to aim at once you have much more experience of the craft. But why wait?" As Lindsay puts it, mastering the technique will free your intent. As you are able to successfully complete all the steps, your intent will be able to flourish, whether that be for conservation, edition binding, artists books, box making or fine leather binding.

Jen Lindsay is a British bookbinder who has been a teacher, lecturer and writer on bookbinding and the history of the book for over 40 years. She studied bookbinding at Camberwell School of Art and Crafts in London and worked as a freelance binder. She was a bookbinding tutor and Program Convener for the BA Bookbinding and BA Calligraphy programs at Roehampton Institute, West London (1983–2001), and then bookbinding tutor at The City Literary Institute, London (2001–2005). She returned to her study of the Coptic bookbindings from the Edfu in The British Library, which was recently published in Vol 8 of *Suave Mechanicals: Essays on the History of Bookbinding* published by The Legacy Press in 2023.

Now a second edition of *Fine Bookbinding* has been published by Legacy Press (Ann Arbor, MI, 2024), and while there are some differences, the new edition is almost identical to the original text. Both editions are intended to be used as an active guide

during the process of fine binding. It is arranged into sixteen sections, listing the sequence of operations (rather than a table of contents), beginning with opening a "day book" for the project and ending with preparing and putting in leather doublures. Each section includes numbered instructions, which allow the user to find their place in the sequence of operations and provides a reference for what step is next. There are also correspondingly-numbered explanatory sections that include a rationale



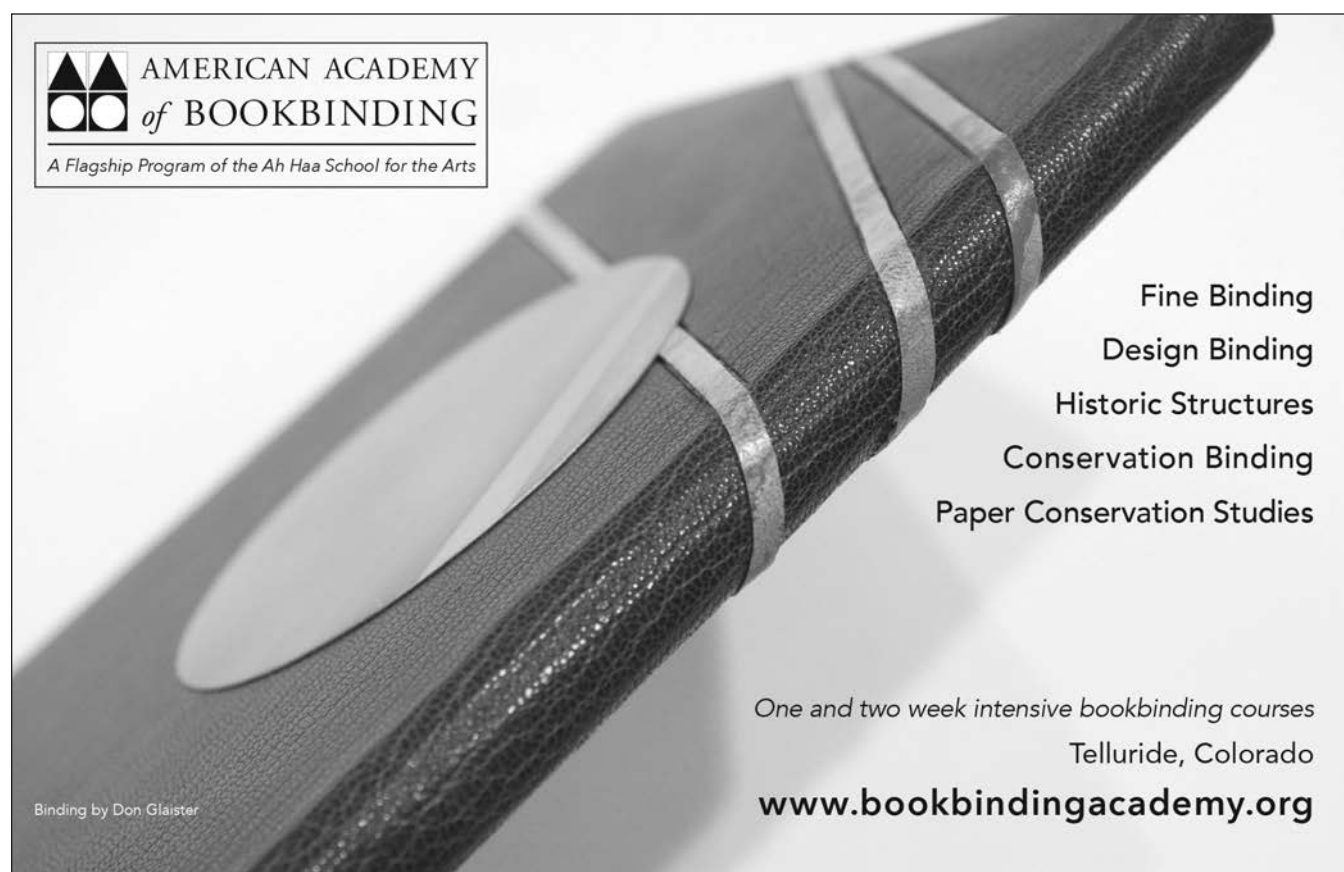
Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide
Lindsay, Jen
Ann Arbor, MI: The Legacy Press, 2024
8.5 x 10 inches
hardcover, sewn, 216 pages
ISBN: 9781940965277
Oak Knoll Books: \$70.00 USD

(why you do it) and technique (how you do it). Both editions have 279 photographs. The second edition includes four appendices, and a bibliography. The first edition contains a supplies list which has not been included in the later edition. The bibliography in the second edition also includes some additional titles. Both editions have an important appendix to help the binder appraise their work. It can be challenging to learn to see the problems in one's work, and this checklist of critical details makes it easier to evaluate a fine binding. It also provides a visual vocabulary to use when looking at the work of others.

There are some differences in the physical aspects of the two editions. The first edition sections were loosely cased in a paper cover, which allowed it to stay open to whatever page is needed. On a personal note, my copy of the first edition no longer has its paper cover attached, but the textblock remains solid and tight. A full color photograph of Lindsay's binding of *The Mint* by T.E. Lawrence is the frontispiece. The second edition is a hardcover cased binding with a color photograph of a Lindsay binding of *Hamlet* on the recto of the frontispiece. The first edition is printed on a soft eggshell paper with chapter divisions marked on the foreedge, and the appendices are printed on a

deep yellow paper, making navigating the book's contents a bit easier. The second edition is printed on white paper throughout, with no additional markings for chapters or appendices. The photographs in the second edition have been edited to be clearer, with more focus on the detail being shown, and the white paper makes reading them easier. Both editions use black type for the rationale parts and red type for the operations parts. The second edition is slightly taller and not as wide as the original edition.

Lindsay's book deserves a space on your shelf. If you missed getting a copy of the first edition, this is a really good opportunity to pick up a bookbinding manual that will be a great companion for your bookbinding journey. Book Artists will appreciate the sections on rough edge gilding, textblock preparation, endbands, and the discussion about backing the textblock. In the leather paring section she advises the reader "Paste has a long 'open time'; be considered and calm in all your movements." Lindsay's teaching philosophy is considered and calm, and she will be with you every step of the way with practical advice and cautionary insights.



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Your Book of Hours – A Calligraphy Retreat in Umbria

This September I attended the debut retreat, “Your Book of Hours,” in Rapicciano, a tiny village in Umbria, Italy. Brody Neuenschwander and Amity Parks, our instructors, welcomed eight students for two weeks of education, discussion, experimentation, fellowship, exploration, and so much more.

Books of hours were a medieval method of keeping time. They were often also works of art, richly illuminated and personalized. Inspired by these beautiful books, we were to design a contemporary book of hours that would be personal to our own lives.

Our work began at home, long before the retreat began. We examined our memories and records to compile a list of events, public and private, that have shaped our lives. Then we chose a few of these and wrote about them using specifically prescribed processes. It was a surprisingly emotional exercise.

We arrived at the imposing medieval house, Casa Verna, to be greeted by our hosts and the delights of beautiful weather and wine and cheese in the garden. For the next two weeks Casa Verna was our home, where we worked and ate and slept. Meals were lively and the food delicious. We took to saying “Dove!”—short for “Where else could you get this food? Nowhere!”

In the studio, we looked at the characteristics common to most books of hours, and the variety within them. We experimented with a variety of styles of illustration, illumination, and lettering, from medieval to contemporary. We got a crash course in medieval border design. We examined different page layouts. We dyed paper and superimposed our old photos on these dyed papers. We stretched a 9-by-3-foot piece of kozo on a frame and then painted, wrote, dyed, and drew on it in layers from both sides. We admired—and sometimes borrowed—ideas from our fellow classmates. We spray-painted and stenciled and collaged to our heart’s content.

We also took time to explore the surrounding towns and their treasures. We visited Assisi and explored the magnificent art in San Damiano, Volte Pinta, and the Church of St. Francis. We visited a 16th century library, la Biblioteca Augusta in Perugia. There the curator showed us some amazing medieval illuminated manuscript books dating from the 6th to the 14th centuries. I gasped when I saw this page of bookhand so exquisitely written! Later, I copied that illuminated Q into my book of hours. We visited a watercolor manufacturing concern and a stained-glass factory with a long history. We immersed ourselves in medieval European art.

We were a diverse group of students from the United States, Sweden, Peru, and Finland. As our books began to come together, we got to know one another through the life experiences we were writing about, and through our shared enthusiasm for the book arts. As with the food, “Dove!”—“Where else could you get this experience? Nowhere!” And it was an experience that will be informing my work for years to come.

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**Incipiunt capitula
libri dialogi sci
pape urbis ro me**

- I** De sancto honorato.
 - II** De sancto libertino.
 - III** De monacho ortolano. qui bestie
impauit hortum custodire.
 - iiii** De sancto equitio.
 - v** De sancto constantio.
 - vi** De scō marcellino anconitane
urbis episcopo.
 - vii** De sancto nonnosio preposito.
 - viii** De sancto anastasio.
 - iiiiii** De scō bonifatio ferentine urb epō.
 - x** De scō fortunato tudertine epō.
 - xi** De scō martirio.
 - xii** De scō seuero presbitero. **Exple cap**
- Incipit dialogus sci pape urbis ro me**

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suis negotiis plerumque
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nos certum est non debere. secretum
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cipio iuuentutis flore. in amicitia fa-
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sacri uerbi indagationem socius.
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laboris sui primum amabat. At
nunc ex occasione cure pasto-
ralis. secularium hominum negotia
patitur. et post tam pulchram
quietis sue speciem. tremulum actus
pulvere fedatur. Cumque se pro
conuersione multorum ad ex-
teriora. sparserit. etiam cum interiora
appetit. adhuc perculdubio.

In libro 2. mon. iustitiae. sic iustine ordinis. ad Benedictum & priorem
huius mon. ad petrum & iustine. 8. 47

A Delightful Marbling-Related Surprise

A few times, I think about three or four, in my 46 years of marbling, I have had a delightful little gift from the “Marbling Angels”... if there is such a thing. Anyway, whether there are any or not, I haven’t a clue, but it is always an amazing surprise.

Leftover alum solution, on rare occasions, will crystalize into the most wonderful little formations. I had this happen last winter, and set them aside after looking at them for a while. My studio, frankly, is a disaster area. I don’t know where anything is much of the time. I recently unearthed these crystals, while of course, looking for something else, which I never found! I was really getting frustrated with myself, and then suddenly the crystals appeared and immediately cheered me up. I could not, however, recall what in the world I was looking for in the first place.

This particular formation of crystals was spectacular. Three specimens lay at the bottom of a forgotten bottle of stored alum solution. It was aluminum sulfate, which is used in marbling preparation, sponged on the paper before marbling to make the paints adhere. I have over the years also used aluminum potassium sulfate, which is another choice that works for marbling. Both types have produced crystals.

The crystals have only ever formed in winter. I do keep my studio cool, I find the marbling to be better when it is on the chilly side, under 65 degrees if possible. The studio is in a walk out basement... partly underground, so it never seems to get below 50 degrees, even at times when the heat is off to the whole building. So, extreme cold is not necessary for the crystals to form.

I had thought to make some of the previous crystals into jewelry, but they are very fragile, unlike quartz-type crystals. So I think maybe they are going to go somewhere safe and out in the open, so they can be seen.

My alum was also a little dirty, a sponge dipped in and out of it, and they have some grey dirt in them... but I think it sort of adds to the look. I have had others that were totally clean and transparent though.

If any marblers reading this would like to try to make this happen, there are many how-to videos on YouTube. I may try some of the methods, but then again, it’s much nicer when it happens by itself. You may want to leave some old alum solution in a jar out overnight in the cold next winter, and see what happens.



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Crystalized Alum (K) (mindat.org – Accessed November 21 , 2024)



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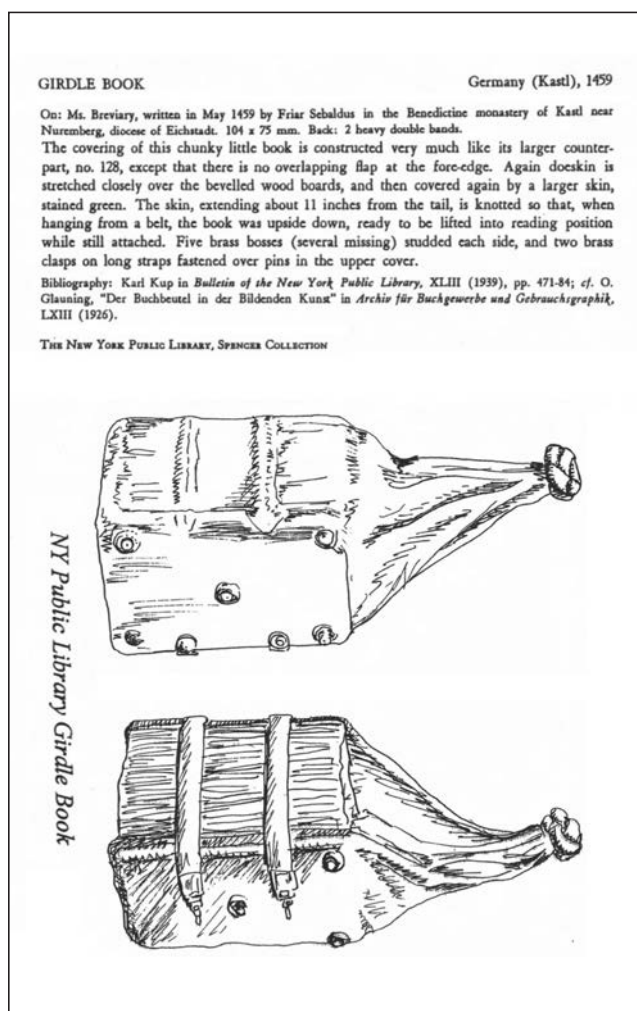
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Visit the GBW website to download informative handouts from previous seminars. Look for this year's *Laura S. Young* and *Lifetime Achievement* award winner's presentations. Remember, guild members have **FREE ACCESS** to past Standards presentations.

Did you know that Pamela Spitzmueller presented at Standards in 1988, 1997 and 2000? The video of Jeff Altepeter's 2019 presentation, which addressed "some fundamental concepts of metalworking in an effort to demystify metals for the book worker."

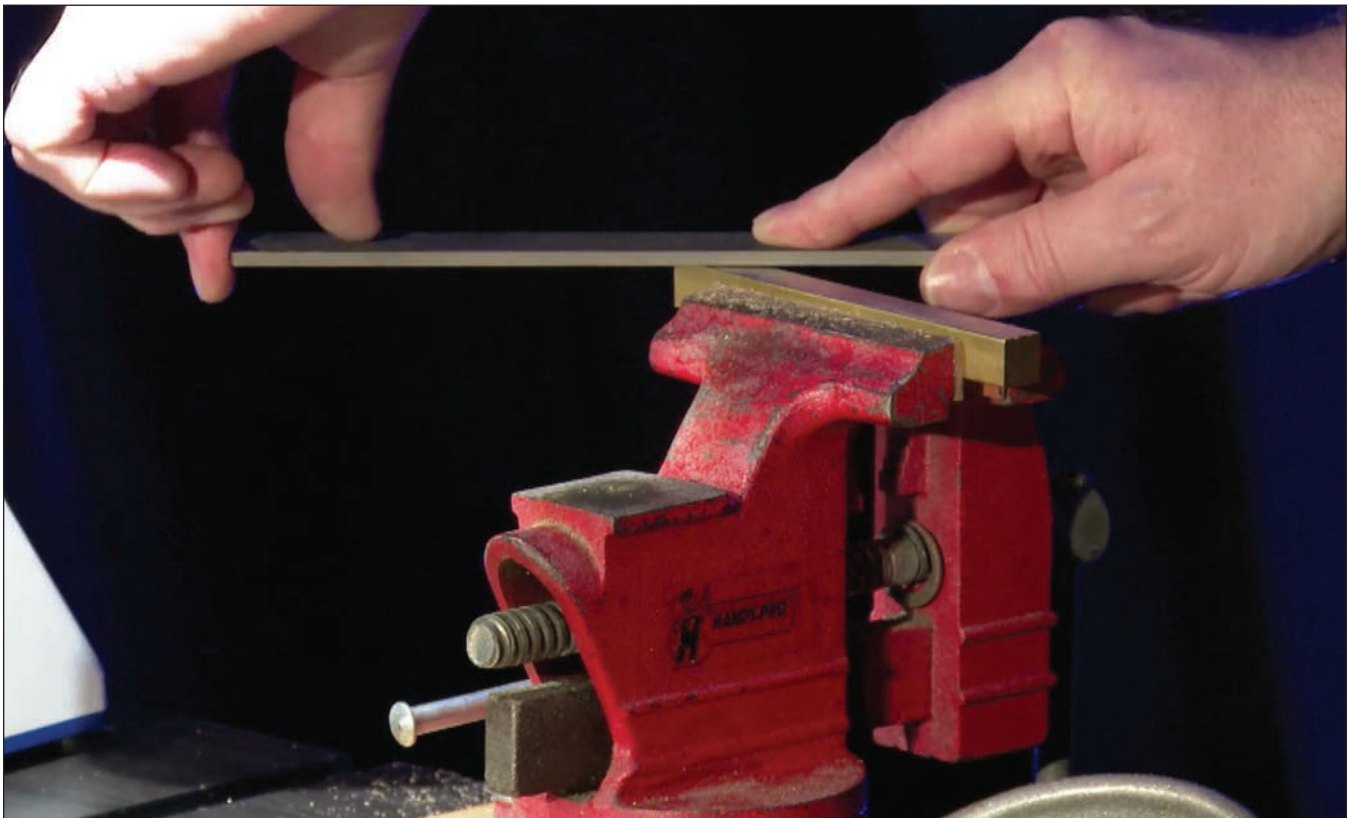
Visit "Past Standards" under the **RESOURCES** tab on our website to find a treasure trove of enlightening information: guildofbookworkers.org/past-standards.



Excerpts from Pamela Spitzmueller's 2000 Standards presentation



Jeff Altepeter's 2019 Standards presentation



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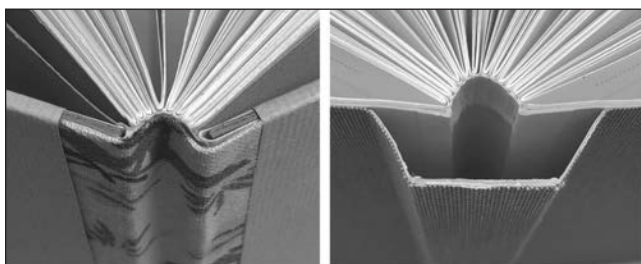
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**SUBMISSIONS FOR EACH ISSUE ARE DUE
ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH
PRECEEDING THE ISSUE**

Submission Date	Issue Month
January 1	February 2025
March 1	April 2025
May 1	June 2025
July 1	August 2025
September 1	October 2025
November 1	December 2025

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