



GBW 2025 AWARDS

Laura S. Young Award
– Jana Pullman

Lifetime Achievement Award
– Jim Croft



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Antique Finishing Tools: A Short Diversion
- Carrageenan Size: How to Make, Store and Transport
- Review of *Unseen Hands: Women Printers, Binders, and Book Designers*

And more...

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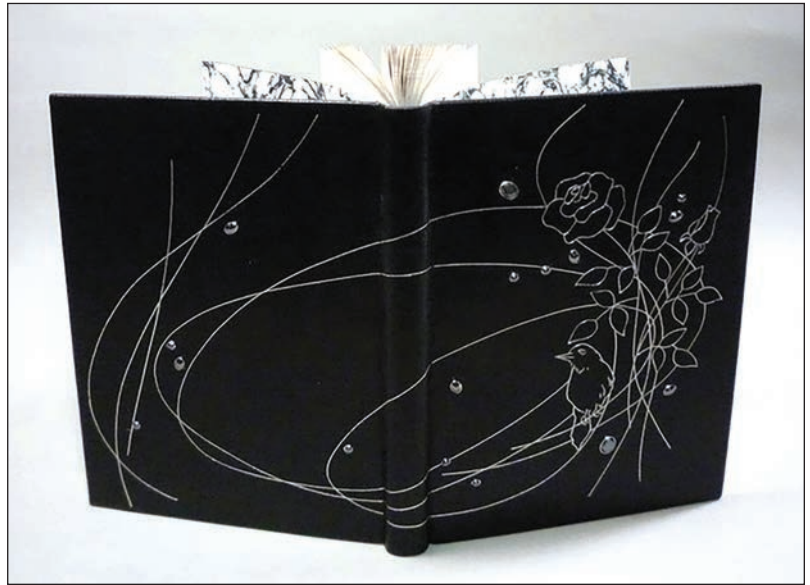
Jana Pullman (Photo courtesy of Madelyn Garrett) and

Jim Croft (Photo courtesy of JimCroftBookbinding.com)



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.



Jana Pullman's binding of *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* (translated in 1859 by Edward FitzGerald) complete with inset onyx and silver foil. (Photo courtesy of Catherine Lundoff)

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Letter from the President

DEAR MEMBERS

Thank you to those members who were able to attend the virtual annual meeting at the end of September. It was nice to see so many of you and I hope you found it useful. If you were not able to attend, a recording of the meeting was shared via email. I look forward to seeing some of you in person in Iowa City for the The Standards of Excellence Seminar in Hand Bookbinding very shortly! It is certain to be a great event, as always.

The annual report for fiscal year 2024–25 was released in September. If you missed the email, you can find the full report online under the “Annual Reports” heading on the “About” page of our website.

I’m happy to welcome back many of our board members for the coming year: Todd Pattison as our Vice President, Jennifer Buchi as our Secretary, Larry Houston as our Treasurer, Susie Cobbledick as the Journal Co-Chair, and Eliza Gilligan as the Membership Chair. Our Communications Chair, Insiya Dhatt, will be stepping down and Syd Webb will serve as the interim chair. Welcome Syd and thank you to Insiya for all the amazing work you have done!

Let us celebrate our two annual award recipients: the late Jana Pullman, recipient of the Laura Young Award and Jim Croft, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award. You can read more about these two admirable award winners in this issue.

The Guild is a volunteer-run organization that relies on our members to keep things operating smoothly. Without your service and support, our publications, exhibitions, annual conference, workshops, website, and other resources simply would not exist. My sincere thanks goes out to everyone who has volunteered for the Guild during this past year.

If you’d like to get more involved with our organization, I encourage you to volunteer! There are many types of opportunities available. If you want to get involved with GBW, we welcome you at both the national and chapter level. It’s a great way to get to know your colleagues, meet other book folks, and make an impact within our community. Please find more information about the committees and other needs on our website on the “Volunteer” tab in the menu.

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

Cheers,

Kate Levy
President, Guild of Book Workers
president@guildofbookworkers.org

Letter from the Editors

DEAR READERS

Do you feel the cooler air, the crisp evenings, the shorter days? That brief, quiet moment before the rush of holidays and the freezing blasts of winter? Welcome to October! Have you split enough firewood yet? (That’s what a chilly breeze always seems to be saying to me. But perhaps that’s from growing up in a city where six-foot snowdrifts are not unheard of.)

To welcome autumn, here are some not-so-fallen leaves for you to peruse. Sam Ellenport polishes up a pair of antique finishing tools with a twist. Check out his article to discover how a journeyman binder could ply his trade with the help of some clever design. Calligraphy Correspondent Beth Lee also highlights a useful object: the Pilot Parallel Pen. Read on to discover the many ways you can use this versatile tool. For a bit more about binding history, Barbara Adams Hebard reviews an exhibit catalog that celebrates women binders—some familiar, and some who may be new to you. The breathtaking image from the cover alone makes it worth adding to your reference library. And Marbling Correspondent Iris Nevins dives deep into carrageenan size. Okay, she didn’t actually dive into it. But her article is full of good suggestions and tips on how to make and store it!

As you have already cleverly guessed from our cover, this issue of the Newsletter features the Guild’s annual awards: the Laura Young award and the Lifetime Achievement award. I’m sure you will agree that this year’s recipients are most deserving. In our previous issue, we published an In Memoriam tribute to this year’s Laura Young award winner. With sadness and appreciation commingling, we honor Jana Pullman’s dedication to the art and craft of creating and teaching book arts. Our Lifetime Achievement winner, Jim Croft, is legendary. Nearly 20 members have contributed their thoughts and words to honoring Jim in this issue—including many other living legends!

By the time you receive your Newsletter, it will be just about time for Standards in Iowa City. All three of your intrepid editors are planning to attend—do find us and let us know what you think of the Newsletter!

NEED TO UPDATE YOUR SHIPPING ADDRESS?

- Login to your account at the Guild of Book Workers website. guildofbookworkers.org
- Select “Login/Member Area” from the top menubar.
- Once you are logged in, select the “Members Only Area” from the top menubar.
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The National Organization for All the Book Arts

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HOW TO SPOT AND AVOID EMAIL SCAMS

!! THAT'S NOT YOUR CHAPTER CHAIR !!

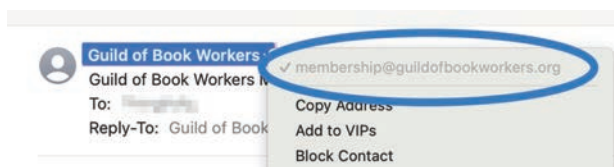
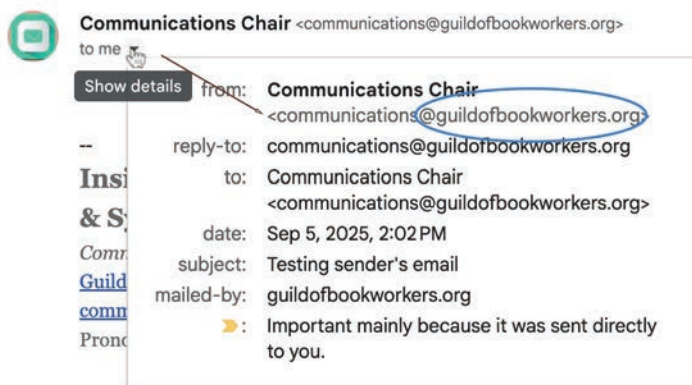
The Guild of Book Workers is experiencing increased spam and phishing attacks targeting members through impersonation of leadership roles like President and Chapter Chairs.

Spot the Email Spam/Phishing Trickery

The best thing you can do is look at the ACTUAL email address of the sender.

Here are a couple of examples of legitimate Guild emails.

Testing sender's email ▸ Inbox x



PLEASE do not forward suspicious emails, especially those from questionable email addresses. Take a screenshot and send that instead of forwarding a suspicious messages. Delete suspicious emails rather than forwarding them.

Chapter Reports

CALIFORNIA

The opening of the California Chapter's exhibition, *The California Effect: New Books from the California Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers* is soon upon us, and we have planned several events around its duration. We hope these events will bring us together and that you can add them to your "Save the Date" list.

We will hold a chapter meeting, which will provide members an opportunity to catch up on the state of the California chapter and to share their suggestions. The Sharing /Get-togethers in the past have been inspirational and a great way to introduce novel techniques, programs, workshops and members' creative progress. I hope you will make time to join in and plan to stay for luncheon together at Claire's at the Long Beach Museum of Art.

Saturday, October 4th, 2025 — The California Effect Exhibition at Long Beach Museum of Art opening reception. 5:00–7:00 PM for LBMA members, VIPs, and participating exhibition artists. 7:00–9:00 PM free public admission.

Saturday, October 18th, 2025 — Chapter meeting with a "Show and Tell" opportunity at 11:00 AM in the Miller Education Building classroom (the LBMA Carriage House). Lunch will follow the meeting at 1:00 PM at Claire's Restaurant at LBMA, surrounded by Claire Falkenstein's water sculpture, *Structure and Flow*.

Saturday, November 1st — Carolee Campbell will give a public tour of the exhibition at 11:00 AM.

Saturday, November 22nd — Rebecca Chamlee will give a tour of the exhibition at 11:00 AM.


Sunday, December 7th — Johanna Drucker will deliver a keynote speech at *The California Effect*. Johanna is a world-renowned scholar and writer on the history of the book. Her slide talk will discuss how contemporary books can become works of art.

NORTHWEST

On September 21, 2025 the Book Club of Washington awarded its annual Meade and Deborah Emory Award to Cynthia Sears at the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art. The Emory Award is given to a person who has made a major contribution to the culture of the book in the State. The Book Club of Washington's website calls Cynthia Sears "a tireless advocate for the book arts and a national figure whose impact continues to shape the

field. Her vision, generosity, and leadership have elevated the cultural landscape of Washington State, making her a most worthy choice for the 2025 Emory Award. In her work to create the Bainbridge Island Art Museum, she said "Artists' books are the Trojan horse of the art world... you don't know exactly what is inside until it is revealed." She has donated her very large collection of artist's books to the museum. Guild members artworks are well represented in this collection.

The Northwest Chapter is hosting its first in-person meeting for all members on Oct 18th at Partners In Print's new facility in Seattle. Fran Duranko, owner of the Kelmscott Book Shop, will speak to the group about audience and artists in the book world.



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Monique Lallier.

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pegs out right around the 15 mark.*

*This leather took dye flawlessly. It
pared flawlessly. It pasted up just
as well. I couldn't have asked for a
better skin to tool."*

- Wes Baker

Laura S. Young Award 2025

Jana Pullman

Photos courtesy of Jana Pullman's beloved, Catherine Lundoff.

MADELYN GARRETT

Jana Pullman, book artist, died earlier this year. During her many years working in the field of book arts, Jana was a papermaker, printer, bookbinder, illustrator, conservator and instructor. Jana truly spent her professional lifetime contributing to our field, both through her own bookwork and by her generous mentorship of colleagues and students.

Long-time member of the Guild of Book Workers, The Friends of Dard Hunter, The Ampersand Club and the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, Jana received her initial training at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with Walter Hamady and Jim Dast and at the University of Iowa with Kim Merker, Bill Anthony and Tim Barrett. Few bookmakers today can cite a gathering of more distinguished and diverse mentors. It gives insight into whom Jana would become.

After receiving her M.F.A. in 1988, Jana supervised the book repair unit at the University of Utah Marriott Library. In 1992, she returned to Iowa to work with Tim Barrett as the apprentice/manager at the University of Iowa Oakdale Paper Facility. There she made handmade papers tailored for book and paper conservation and assisted with ongoing research at the facility. Since 1997, Jana was based in Minneapolis, where she owned Western Slope Bindery, specializing in custom binding and repair of books. Jana focused her artistic energies on design binding and showed her work in national and international exhibitions.

Awards include two-time winner of the DeGolyer Bridwell Library SMU Award of Best Binding; the DeGolyer winner for Best Design; 2013 Minnesota Book Artist of the Year; 2006

MCBA Ignited Bookbinding Competition, Overall Excellence.

Jana's books are part of many public and private libraries and archives, including the Minnesota Historical Society; the Chicago Public Library; the University of Utah Marriott Library; and in multiple private collections across the U.S.

In later years, Jana created a blog doc-

umenting the making of her award-winning books. This blog is beautifully produced. Each description is thorough and lucid, with multiple photographs detailing her techniques. The blog is an excellent example of Jana's unique style of teaching—making the complicated understandable. It remains one of Jana's many enduring contributions to the field.

For thirty years Jana shared her in-depth mastery of papermaking and bookmaking through classes and workshops taught at the University of Iowa; the University of Minnesota; MCBA; Carleton College; Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts; the University of Utah; Penland; the Guild of Book Workers Standards; and art centers and conferences across the U.S. Modest and unassuming, Jana was a brilliant teacher—approachable, kind, and thorough.

I met Jana in 1992, when she was hired to supervise bindery repair of the University of Utah Marriott Library. At that time, I was book conservator and Jana and I worked in adjacent areas. I quickly discovered Jana's expertise and commitment to bookmaking. Jana generously shared her talents with me, with colleagues and with the nascent Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Guild. Throughout the years, Jana continued to teach workshops and intensives both for the Guild and for the newly-established Book Arts Program at the Marriott Library. It was by popular demand that she returned to Utah over and over again to teach papermaking and bookbinding. She never refused a request.

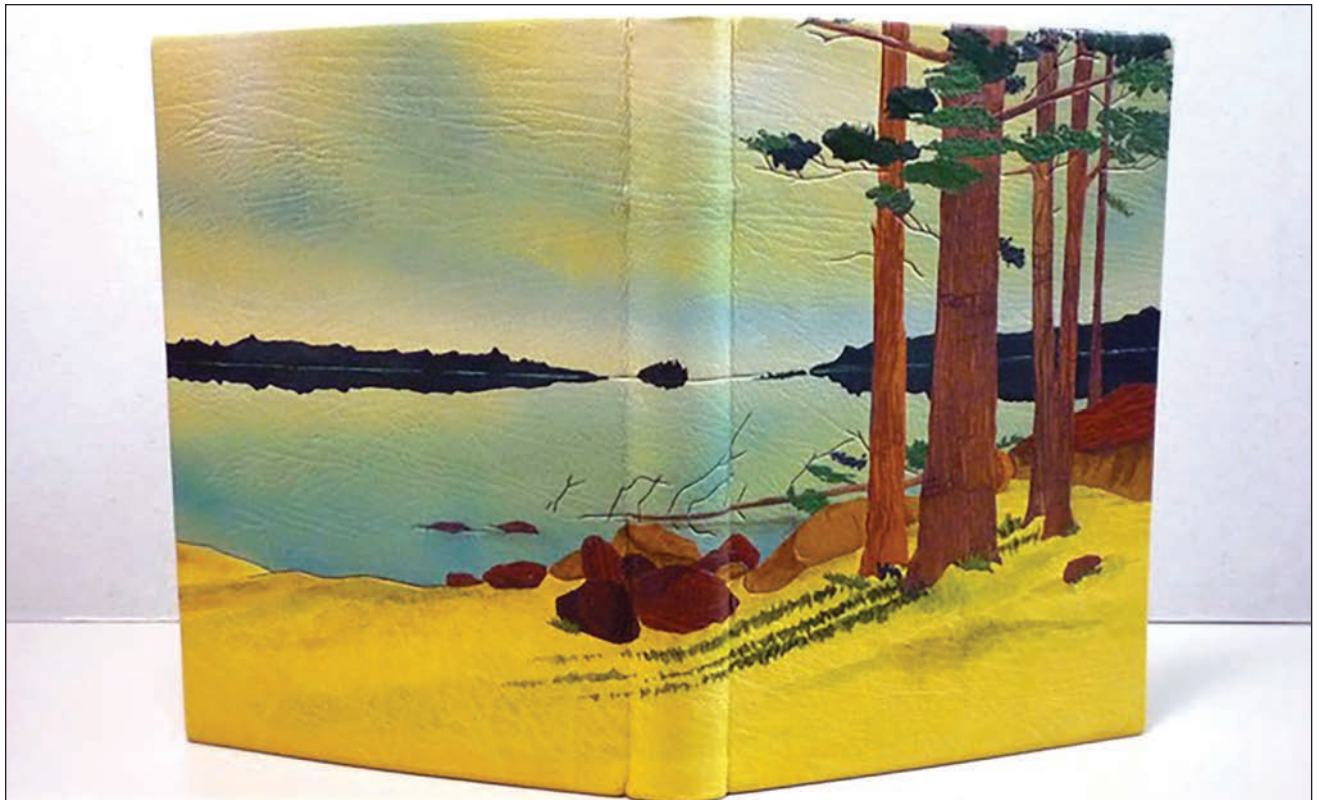
First and foremost, Jana will always be remembered for her gentle spirit and limitless generosity, sharing her deep knowledge of the book arts with students, colleagues and friends. I can think of no one who deserves more the Guild's Laura Young Award than Jana.

STEVE PITTELKOW

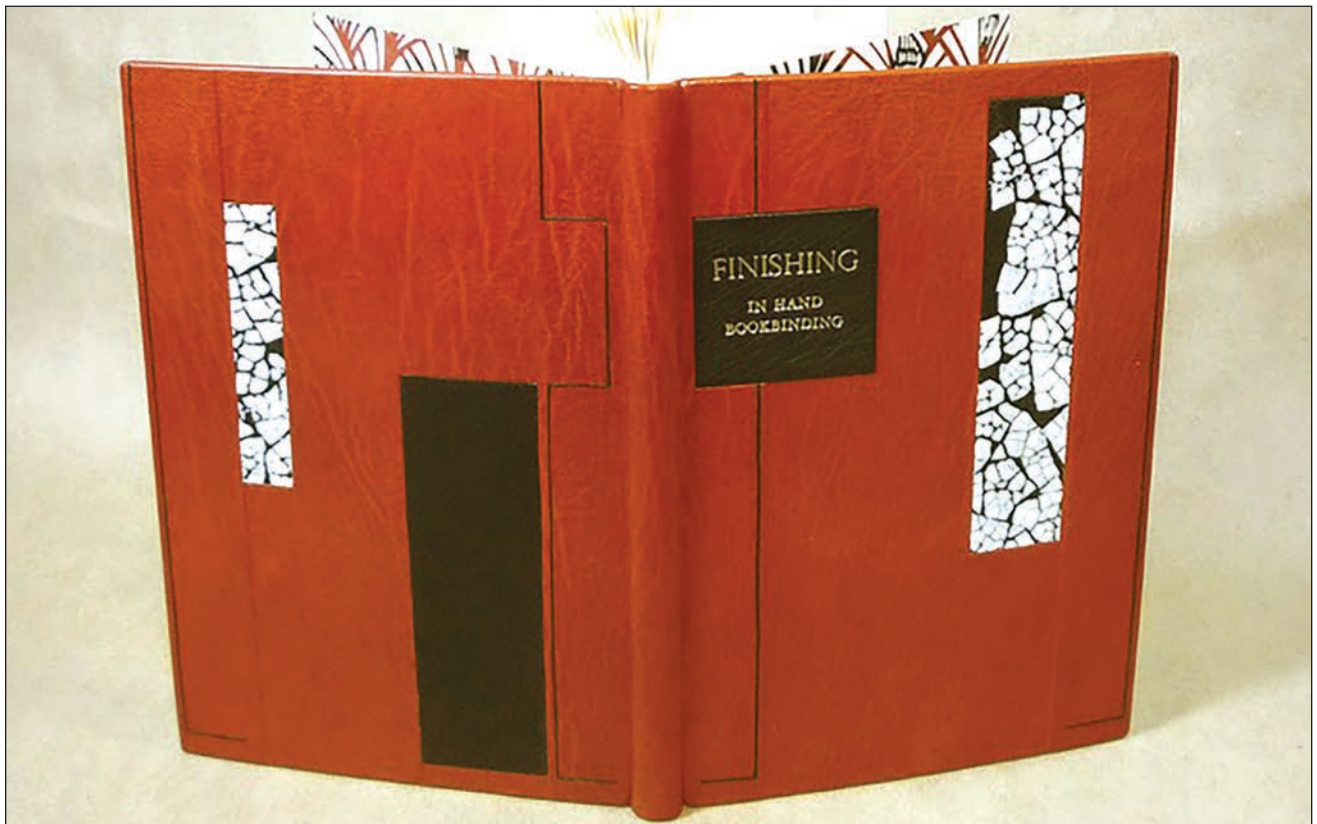
Jana Pullman was the consummate book artist. She was a gifted teacher, fine binder, printer, papermaker, conservator, and designer. As a teacher she imbued in her students a keen sense of the importance of proper technique as well as history. Yet her classes were not only instructive but also filled with lively discussions designed to evoke a continued study by students. Jana was modest about her exquisite work and was completely devoted to her craft. She will be remembered for the body of her work and she will be missed by the hundreds of students she inspired. She is most deserving of the Laura Young Award.



Jana Pullman



Jana's masterly binding of *Open Horizons* by Sigurd Olson won the 2013 Minnesota Book Artist of the Year Award.



Jana's binding of Herbert and Peter Fahey's *Finishing in Hand Bookbinding*, graced with duck eggshells that originated on a farm where Jana and Catherine held shares in a community supported agriculture (CSA) farm.

Lifetime Achievement Award 2025

Jim Croft

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JIM CROFT (JIMCROFTBOOKBINDING.COM)

JEFF PEACHEY

I'll never forget the first time I met Jim. We were both accepted into a 1997 Mellon funded workshop at the University of Iowa, and spent a week together studying sewing frame history and making a German style cantilevered wooden sewing frame. I'd heard of Jim—reportedly an idiosyncratic, off-the-grid, unwashed post-hippie, medieval-craft-tool-guy—but had never met him.

While my preconceptions were not completely inaccurate, Jim really impressed me. We bonded instantly. We both idolized Christopher Clarkson. We were into tools; I was more into machinery, and Jim adhered to hand-work with the rigorous devotion of a biblical scholar. I was introduced to some of Jim's persistent passions: chair bodgers, lignum vitae, medieval flax cordage, cabinet scrapers, overly porous elk bones, and of course "God's plywood (aka quarter sawn oak)." He practices what he preaches, living sustainably off the grid in rural Idaho. Authenticity permeates his teaching, his tools, and his books.

Most bookbinders I've met own and treasure his exquisitely made bone folders. Or made their own under his tutelage. He inspired Shanna Leino to create her successful business selling high end decorative tools. His gentle critiques have improved my own tools as well.

Jim generously shares his knowledge in his "old ways" workshops, an intoxicating entry into the world of Croft. His expertise guides students from preparing the raw materials—fiber to thread, linen firehose to paper, tree to board, etc—to then binding the book. He attracts a variety of students from newbies flirting with a new hobby to internationally known conservators. His Dard-Hunter-esque approach to making a complete book is informed by careful attention to quality materials, technical reenactment, and careful examination of historic texts. His own artist's books are instantly recognizable, with their chunky handmade paper book blocks, pack sewing, wooden boards, and often with curvaceous clasps. Recently Gabby Cooksey seems to have been influenced by his clasps on her prize winning "Helen Fragments" binding. His influence is wide ranging. No former student forgets his occasional, well-placed trombone blast for emphasis during a lesson. He often teaches from his hand-built home and studio. In a way, the students briefly live in a Croftian world — a home-spun, 21st century post-gothic craft paradise. Jim also shares his work with broader audiences, from an essay on making wooden book boards published in *Suave Mechanicals*, and through his legendary teaching road trips.

At the risk of interpreting the term "lifetime achievement" too literally, Jim has devoted his life to investigate and spread the gospel of the book. What could be more deserving of a lifetime achievement award?

BRIEN BEIDLER

For over 40 years, Jim has been researching and recreating old world methods of processing fiber, wood and hides into exquisitely crafted medieval-inspired book and paper that embody his commitment to the land. Not only has Jim's dedication to making books, paper and tools from raw materials provided critical insights into historical bookbinding technologies, but his generosity and curiosity have and continue to inspire generations of binders, conservators, and artists... In 2014, I attended [Jim's] "Old Ways" intensive where participants make books and tools from raw materials on his homestead in rural Idaho... this class changed my life and transformed the way I made books and interacted with the material world.

His passion is contagious and his unconventional presentation both refreshing and approachable. Jim's ability to inspire others is in large part due to his encyclopedic breadth of knowledge that stems from decades of sweat equity and experimentation... With his research on early bookbinding materials and methods, his ability to turn raw materials into beautiful bindings, and his passion for sharing this hard-earned knowledge with others, Jim has and continues to be a consistent and invaluable source of knowledge and inspiration to the communities of the fields bookbinding, papermaking, and book history.

ETHAN ENSIGN

I still hear his words of encouragement when I sharpen my knives or use a bone folder that I made from one of his blanks... His professional demeanor and continuous encouragement as well as mentoring of bookbinders of all ages has never stopped in the 27 years that he has participated in the Guild. Jim has always kept a positive and upbeat attitude throughout all those years. I cannot express enough how he has helped and encouraged me over the years—and how I have witnessed his infectious happiness and desire to learn and teach. I couldn't think of a better teacher/binder/mentor to nominate for a lifetime achievement award. Jim has been an untiring teacher and mentor of bookarts for his entire adult life.

SHANNON KERNER

Jim is a great bookbinder, devoted to the craft for many years. Has inspired who knows how many people. Certainly Me. His "Old Ways" workshop is possibly one of my favorite experiences in bookbinding and anyone who has gone will probably agree... unless they like to use toilets.



Jim Croft—whose hands, heart, and mind are equally wise—being studious.

RACHEL PAYNE

Every time I had a question, he had an answer. In addition to the workshops he teaches in his home studio, he has taught countless workshops elsewhere, including at Penland, Standards, multiple universities and centers for the book, and Paper and Book Intensive... His technique of edge carving is unique, his tools are sought after and his kindness in sharing techniques and tools is legendary. His understanding of the raw materials used in traditional bindings is both deep and broad. He has the character, experience, knowledge, and technical skills to make him one of the best binders I know.

DENISE CARBONE

Under a light on the sidewalk, we'd be making bone tools and lifting knives till the wee hours, talking about books and tools. Honestly, this was better than some of the workshops that were actually being taught there, and for me he made that PBI [Paper Book Intensive] explode with enthusiasm.

He taught at least half dozen workshops in Philadelphia for the Guild and at the University of the Arts. In 2000 he organized an event at his home, Timeless Tech, and invited a dozen book enthusiasts to present a class. For 2 weeks we immersed ourselves in the art of the book. I have to say, the highlight of my career.

PARRY CADWALLADER

Jim has been one of the few people in my life that has permanently altered the way I see and do things. Many binders, craftspeople, or artisans pass on their experiences, their techniques, or their viewpoint on things, but, through no fault of their own, rarely do they pass on a way of being. A way of thinking about a problem, a way of weighing two options, a way of holding something in your hand and understanding where it came from, not just where it is going. Of the many things that make Jim unique, I think it is this—his way of being—that justifies his lifetime achievement award. He inspires those who spend time with him to slightly change their path, to understand that more is possible, and that maybe you need fewer things to accomplish those possibilities. In a world made anxious by the technology around us, Jim's slow, soup-to-nuts approach to the book is perhaps the truest achievement of his career and a source of motivation for many. But even aside from this, Jim's consistent exploration of the dustier corners of the book is a testament to his lifetime in service to bookbinding. It is a rare binder who does not have a Jim Croft bonefolder. It is certainly even rarer the individual who has thought more about wood than Jim has. Or thread! Or how you can pull a deer skin out of a dumpster and make leather from it!



Jim Croft and his beloved, Melody Eckroth, creating music.

GABBY COOKSEY

Jim is so giving of his knowledge, let alone tools. If you don't have the right tool, well then we will make it right now. I'm lucky enough to visit him when our schedules work out (he is a 6-hour drive away). One time I called him up asking about an anvil and he invited me over for a week so we could make a really nice pagoda anvil.

KIM NORMAN

Jim and Melody called me to talk for an hour about the workshop, to ensure that I knew exactly what it was, and to say that they had really nice outhouses. Before the summer of 2024 and facing some personal challenges, Jim decided to wait another year to host more students and soon returned everyone's deposits.

With this news, we all rallied around Jim to buoy him in tough times and care for him like only the Guild of Book Workers members know how to do. Even now it is US that most concerns Jim. His teaching, instruction, kindness, knowledge, and class offerings have always been FOR US.

JEFF ALTEPETER

Jim Croft has dedicated himself to a lifetime of work based on

understanding, and in many cases literally recreating, an approach to bookbinding and connected craft skills at a depth and intensity that stands essentially in defiance of the 20th and 21st century in which he lives. His passion, knowledge, and generous approach as a craftsman, teacher, historian, and colleague has inspired countless others in our field.

I have had the good fortune to work directly with Jim many times and had the pleasure to watch his own excitement spread to students like a contagion (in the best possible way)!

VELMA BOLIYARD

What can I say about Jim Croft, besides he is deeply deserving of this award? You all know Jim's work, you know what a man of modesty and genius he is. Jim is a treasure and totally deserving of the Lifetime Achievement Award. Besides, who else awakens workshop guests with a trombone solo?

TIM BARRETT

Jim is not your classic career bookbinder as in someone who has been a binder for an institution or an instructor in binding at a program like North Bennett Street School. Instead, for his whole life Jim has been an "off the grid" binder. I mean that literally of course, but more importantly I see Jim as a unique individual who has practiced bookmaking and many allied crafts such as wood working, papermaking and thread and cord mak-



Jim teaching his Old Ways bookbinding workshop.

ing—from nature. That is, his whole professional life he has sought to reinvent the craft of bookbinding as it was practiced for centuries, if not millennia, using only hand tools and locally available materials.

In this sense, I feel Jim has been the keeper of the heart and soul of the craft of bookbinding. In his life and work he has attended to the origins, the essence of bookbinding...He is well aware that what he has learned and inherited comes from the past and belongs, not to him, but to the future. Not everyone, but many who have attended Jim's workshops have come away, as Gary Frost says, tattooed. Changed. Blessed, with a new way of seeing and practicing the craft...His books honor book-makers dead and gone. Like Jim, they inspire a new way of seeing the craft of bookbinding.

GARY FROST

He is exactly the exemplar of a book worker in a legacy guild of artisans and in the future of folk art. I have participated in his series of "Timeless Tech" workshops and learned about living and bookmaking off-the grid in up-land Idaho. This workshop has been a revelation for me in the heritage of wooden board codex making. His dedication to instruction is mighty and he is an inspiration. He travels the country delivering much needed beech wood. His bookbinding is a rare folk art. About time for his recognition.

KATE MARSHALL

Jim's offering to teach the manufacture of a medieval-style book goes far beyond what's taught in the modern day. Jim provides heaps of information, material, tools and guidance making paper from raw and recycled materials—beating, pulping, deckling and loft-drying sheets in spurs; burnishing, gelatinizing and



Melody Eckroth spinning away.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

After graduating from Texas Christian University with a history degree in 1970, Jim got a job working on a transatlantic passenger ship and eventually disembarked in Barcelona. While exploring Europe via kayak and bike, Jim saw the intricate carpet pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels in the British Library and his passion for medieval craft was ignited. In Jim's words: "When I saw the carpet pages on the Lindisfarne Gospel, my hair stood on end (raised my hackles) and I thought, 'I want to make things that last.'"

sizing paper; retting, scutching, hackling and spinning flax into string; selecting, cleaning, cutting and forming bones into tools for folding and burnishing paper; cutting and refining wood into book boards; nibbling and shaping brass into clasps; and tanning leather for covers. We also made our own pigments from stones, bones, and charcoal.

People drawn to his work are not all Luddites—we're all people who appreciate beauty, form, and function. Jim's handmade books themselves and the spirit of his attentiveness to the process of making and collaboratively sharing them with others is what sets him apart.

SAM FEINSTEIN

Over the years I've had the honor of having many conversations with him, and what he shared with me in those relatively few moments I have always taken to heart and cherished. Eventually I got to a place where I could also share insights from my own work, and even with the very different styles we work in, and he has been an incredible role model for me now that I am a teacher and established in the field.

Beyond his devotion to the craft, Jim's spirit truly sets him apart. He is, without a doubt, one of the most joy-filled individuals I have ever known. His infectious positivity, kind-heartedness, and passion for both bookbinding and its community inspire everyone lucky enough to meet him. What he does, he does out of love and care—not just for his craft, but for the people around him. While this may come naturally to him, it's clear that he dedicates time and effort to living in this way.

Jim Croft's lifetime contributions to the bookbinding world can't really be measured. His work has preserved the history of the craft, he has taught people to love their tools, to make and modify their own, and created a sense of camaraderie among practitioners. Honoring Jim with this award is the perfect way to celebrate not only his exceptional achievements but also the legacy of joy, generosity, and inspiration he leaves behind. His impact will resonate for generations to come.

MARY SULLIVAN

The honesty of his work, the craftsmanship, and dedication to his trade tugged on a primal thread within me that I didn't know existed.

[Attending the] "Old Ways" of Making Books intensive workshop culminated in a committed lifelong deep dive down the rabbit hole of book arts history that after fifteen years has not diminished. By knowing him and continuing to learn from him, my conviction to follow this path and my desire to continue his book evangelism has provided me with a calling and a richer, fuller life.

I have not, to this day, met a man as kind, inviting, and generous with his time and knowledge. There is not a single topic that he secretly safeguards. He is, pun intended, an open book who welcomes enthusiasts, scholars, and practitioners from all walks of life to share in his passion for the codex. A perpetual

student of his muse, he has never lost his zeal for learning, and continues to add to our understanding of this trade. His bindings, research, and working and theoretical knowledge are invaluable resources that—I have no doubt—will continue to be an infectious siren song that lures future generations of bibliophiles to the fold.

TODD PATTISON

I would like to nominate Jim Croft for The Guild of Book Workers' Lifetime Achievement Award. The award is designed to recognize "significant contribution to the goals of the Guild and to the field of hand book arts at large via education, professional practice, research, mentorship, etc." I feel very strongly that Jim Croft contributed in every one of these ways.

To hold one of his books is an experience that will fundamentally alter the way you look at a handmade book. The feel of the materials is wonderful but the mechanics of how the book opens and used is pleasing beyond understanding. It brings a joy to the user in the same way that any artwork would.

This leads me into the "etc." part of the award, which is admittedly not defined at all. Jim excels at etc., with his easy friendship, welcoming smile and a natural ability to include everyone. He has worked tirelessly and with incredible focus to understand and then communicate how the medieval book was made, along with all the tools used to make them and the materials that they are made from. The ultimate "etc." certainly has to be the construction and operation of a water-powered hand stamp paper mill, modeled on ones from the 15th century. It is not necessary to have or use this mechanism to make paper that has an appearance and characteristics of 15th century paper, but to really experience how paper was made at that time period Jim wanted to be as authentic as possible. That is an excellent word to define Jim Croft: authentic.



A binding built to last.

Antique Finishing Tools: A Short Diversion

By 1978 I had already bound or repaired several folio copies of John Evelyn's popular work *Silva: A Discourse of Forest-Trees and the Propagation of Timber*. First published in 1664, it is a beautiful and important book with numerous engraved plates. The title went through three subsequent editions by 1706. Visiting London, I had seen a play about Evelyn, an interesting man mostly known now for his voluminous diaries, though he was a bookman too. I became fascinated enough to read his biography and, when I learned that his library was to be sold through Christie's in 1977/1978 in several sales, I wanted to make an effort to see it. I finally made it to London in time for the last sale.

What also fascinated me about Evelyn's library was that, unlike books of other notables in England and on the continent, he not only marked his books with an identifying seal stamped on the front cover, but often instructed the binder to place his monogram JE at the corners of a lozenge on the covers as well. The books are immediately recognizable and distinctive. **Figure 1** shows a prime example from the upper cover on Thomas Carew's *Poems*, 1651, ex libris John Evelyn.



Fig. 1 Evelyn Monogram

To be fair, I have not thought about John Evelyn often, but was reminded of him when I came across and bought two antique bookbinding tools. These are both small rolls. What makes them interesting is that they are designed to have interchangeable heads. This feature suggests that they could be used by itinerant binders, working not from a shop but traveling to country houses and estates to do their binding work on site. I had heard that Evelyn had binders working in his library, and I believe that by the 17th and 18th centuries there were enough journeymen that they would take commissions in the countryside. **Figures 2–5** are some images of the first tool I acquired. **Figure 2** shows a group of rolls without a handle in varying widths and designs, all 1¼" in diameter. The centered drilled hole is the same on each roll, into which the shaft fits easily.

Figures 3 and 4 show the tool head and how the small decorative roll is attached. Note that the upper gauge in **Fig. 4** is a set-screw that can accommodate rolls in a variety of widths.

Figure 5 shows the entirety of the tool with handle, 14" in length.

The second antique "traveling" tool I acquired is even smaller, and with little solid evidence I believe it is from the early 19th century. The entirety is 8 inches. **Figure 6** shows the wooden case of the tool closed.

Figure 7 shows the part to the right unscrewed, exposing the roll itself.

Figure 8 shows a close up of the tool.

What appears to be the end of the handle also unscrews to expose a cavity which may have held other small rolls, as seen in **Figure 9**.

While this is a bit rough compared to the first antique tool I acquired, the patina of the wood attests that it was well used. Unlike the first tool, the wooden case protects the small fillet which would have been used for single line borders.

I had often wondered how itinerant binders carried around an array of tools and type. These two examples show how it might have been done. Three or four corner or center tools, perhaps with a universal handle, a fillet or roll that could fit easily into one's pocket, and a set of handle letters and one is good to go!

SAMUEL ELLENPORT can be reached at 205 School Street, Belmont, Massachusetts 02478.



Fig. 2 Universal rolls



Fig. 4 Universal rolls on head (B)



Fig. 3 Universal rolls on head (A)



Fig. 5 Universal roll unit




Fig. 6 Antique roll



Fig. 7 Roll head and body

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Fig. 8 Roll head

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Fig. 9 Roll all apart

Pilot Parallel Pens

Pilot Parallel Pens (PPPs for short) were introduced to the calligraphy world in 1998. I bought my first PPPs a few years later. I liked the smooth delivery of ink, but the supplied ink is fugitive, and so I didn't use my PPPs much. Then I prepared to present about them at our local guild meeting, and I learned a lot more about them.

The main difference between the PPP and standard fountain pens is the nib construction. With the PPP, ink is delivered between two flat metal plates rather than through a slit in a single shaped metal nib. This means that the corner of the nib can be used for writing indefinitely without running out of ink. The PPP consists of relatively few parts, handy for cleaning. Once you've broken down the pen and put it back together a couple of times, you have a good understanding of it.

The PPP was first offered in 4 sizes: 1.5mm, 2.4mm, 3.8mm, and 6mm. Later, two more sizes were added: 3mm and 4.5mm. The color of the cap indicates the width of the PPP nib.

There are two excellent books that have been written about PPPs: *Parallel Pen Wizardry*, by Brenda Broadbent, and *Colours & Curves: Pilot Parallel Pen Workbook*, by Alice Young. Both are available from John Neal Bookseller.

As I mentioned earlier, the ink cartridges that come with PPPs work very well and the colors are beautiful, but the ink fades. However, empty cartridges can be filled with watercolors, gouaches, and some lightfast water-soluble inks. The ink cartridge consists of the cartridge barrel, a ball bearing, and a black disc that sits at an angle in the barrel. The empty ink cartridges can be refilled with a slender pipette or syringe that reaches past the disc to the main barrel of the cartridge. If you accidentally push the disc down into the barrel, a loop turner—a handy sewing tool—can hook it and pull it back up into place.

Alternatively, you can buy twist-action fillable converters, reminiscent of the old cartridge pen bladder but with cleaner action. I have never tried watercolor or gouache in these converters, but I have been successful with inks.

Carol DuBosch has demonstrated PPPs at more than one calligraphy conference, and she shares some tips and tricks in a PDF that can be found online at caroldubosch.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Pilot-Parallel-Pen.pdf.

Because of the double plate, the natural thins of the PPP are twice as thick as a single-plate nib. For this reason, the smaller nibs are not as satisfying as the larger sizes. But a 6mm PPP delivers smooth, consistent letters at a large enough size for sign lettering.

At John Neal Bookseller you can also buy Pilot Parallel Pens that have been modified after manufacture in various ways. The radius-cut pens have a rounded shape and function somewhat




like folded pens to make gestural and less controlled marks. Left oblique and scroll options are also offered. But my favorite is the original nib.

But wait! There's more. I just don't have space to include all the ways you can hack your PPP. For instance, there are online resources that guide you through dispensing with the cartridges altogether and simply filling the barrel with your medium.


There was more to Pilot Parallel Pens than I had realized, and presenting the tool to our local guild proved to be rewarding. As Joseph Joubert wrote, "To teach is to learn twice."

As a book artist and calligrapher, **BETH LEE** is most interested in that magic edge where symbols, marks, and patterns shimmer into transmitted meaning. She edits *Big Sky Scribes*, Montana's statewide journal for amateur and professional calligraphers and artists.

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Carrageenan Size: How to Make, Store and Transport

There are many questions that marblers, especially beginners, have about carrageenan size. I get emails often, and there are many questions about it on the Facebook International Marblers' page. I will only write about carrageenan because, honestly, it is all I use, and I do not know much about other sizes used for marbling. I have tried methyl cellulose numerous times, and, for me, the only plus was that it could be kept longer—but others do like it, especially with acrylics, so I am sure there are other advantages that I am not aware of.

The most-asked question is about proportions: how much carrageenan powder to how much water. I will be commenting here on the no-cook variety most suppliers sell. All I can say, is it can vary, depending on your water chemistry, though not wildly. The most recommended way is to blend one tablespoon into a quart of water, then add another quart. Repeat until you have enough to fill your tray or trough if you call it that. It is a great starting point. I have marbled in areas with soft water and hard water, and find in the hard water areas I personally need to use rounded tablespoons of the powder, not level, to achieve the consistency I like. But... there is always a but... I often find my Spanish waves come out a little better if the size is slightly thinner sometimes—and keep in mind my water is very hard, so it could be something peculiar to my water chemistry. So all

I can say is use the measurement as a starting point, and experiment. You don't want the size too thick, or the colors won't spread, or too thin, and they sink or go wimpy! It's a very personal thing—I almost wonder if one's MOOD can affect it!

Another big question is about when to make it, how long does it need to settle—I did go into depth on that in the last article, so won't belabor this point again—but it is recommended to leave it sit overnight, or about 12 hours. Again... very personal. I like to leave it way less, an hour or two. It needs a lot of skimming, but it is very nice and fresh. Again, this could be peculiar to my own water. Just experiment with your timing.

Distilled water? Many swear by it. I have tried it many times, I don't see any real difference, but if your water is a problem, then go for it. Rain water? Yes, tried that too in my experiment after Hurricane Sandy, marbling "off grid"—I pretended it was 1850! It was OK, but I actually liked my hard well water better.

Hot water? Cold water? A mix? What I mean by a mix is that you blend the size in the first quart with hot tap (or heated distilled) water, then when you add the second quart of plain water, it is cold or room temperature. I have tried all the ways, and favor hot/hot.

What about making mass quantities of size? This came up on the Facebook group, someone was going to teach a class and



wondered how to carry all the needed size. Or you may have a huge tray, to do multiple sheets at once or large pieces of fabric. What I do then—I actually blend four tablespoons size powder to two quarts of hot water and add six more quarts of hot water. So it yields two gallons in one swoop. I let it settle in a bucket, and use when ready. This way if you teach a class, you can eliminate carrying endless jugs of size. Just go in early enough to give it time to settle. If you don't live too far, go in and make it the night before. If you are not close by, and have no time in the morning to arrive early to make it, you can just make the concentrate—in a gallon jug—and let sit overnight and once you go into the classroom, dilute it. I did that for many decades.

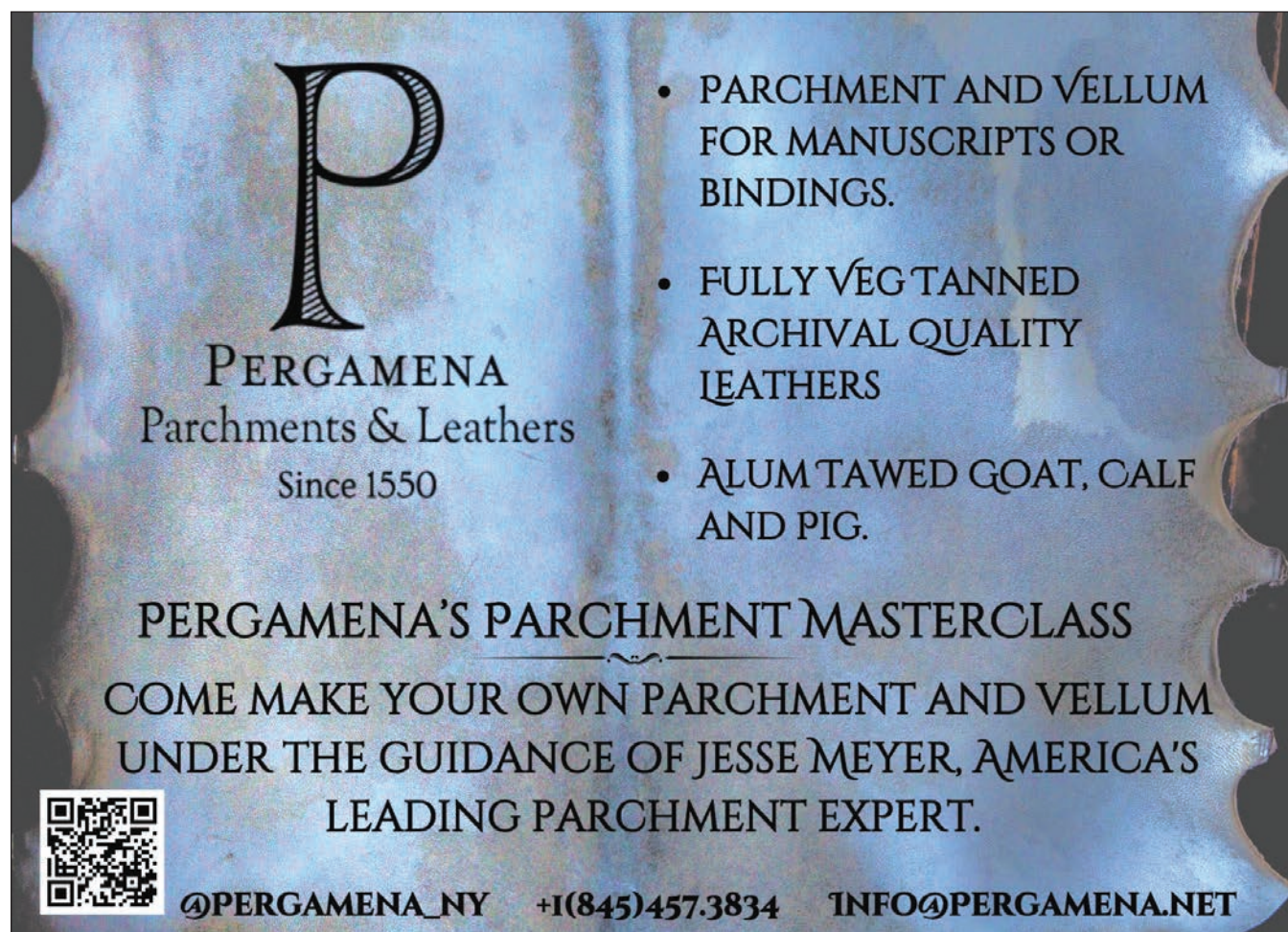
Refrigerate it? Yes, you can. When I had a rented studio in town for many years, what I would often do was to make up the concentrate on a Friday afternoon. The fridge wasn't very large, so I'd make four gallons of concentrate and just dilute with hot-tap water on Monday morning. I was using a large tray that held four sheets of 19 x 25 paper, so it took a lot of size.

Saving size? Another question. Ha... I am the wrong person to ask. I find it really depressing to start a marbling day with used dingy grey size. So I only ever make up the amount I will

need. I always start fresh the next time. However, yes indeed you can save it if you are not as fussy! If it is only to be used again the next day, then just leave it out at room temperature. Maybe top it off the next morning with some fresh size if you think you might run out. This works best in cooler weather. If left overnight in summer it could get watery and break down, so in that case you can refrigerate it.

So the best way, honestly, is to try many different ways, and see what is suited to your climate, water chemistry—oh, and let's not forget, maybe your MOOD! Marbling is affected by so much, I'd almost not be surprised!

IRIS NEVINS is a self-taught marbler, and began marbling in 1978 as a hobby. Much to her surprise, bookbinders started buying her papers, and it became her full time career. She has written four books, plus reprinted a facsimile edition of Nicholson's *Manual Of The Art Of Bookbinding*, with 18 marbled samples tipped into the marbling section. Iris is also a Celtic Harper, and Guitarist. She plays professionally, teaches both instruments and builds harps. She also makes Ancient Style and Celtic Jewelry.




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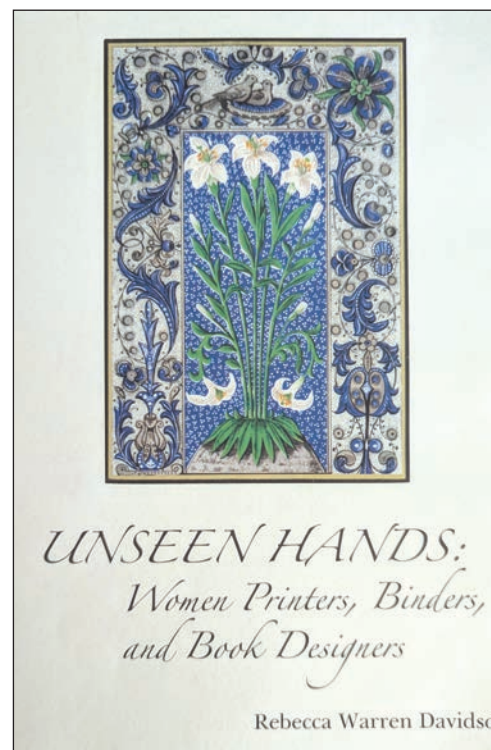
Unseen Hands: Women Printers, Binders, and Book Designers

Unseen Hands is the catalog printed to accompany the 2003 exhibition of that title held in the Leonard L. Milberg Gallery for the Graphic Arts, at Princeton University Library. It merits another reading even now, twenty years later. The exhibit featured books both from Princeton's Special Collections and from the General Stacks in the Firestone Library, demonstrating how ubiquitous the presence of women has been in the history of book making.

Those interested in acquiring a fuller understanding of women's work in our field will find this catalog a useful starting place. The curators assiduously sought to bring to light many of the "firsts" for women: as printers, binders, graphic designers, illustrators, employees and owners (of presses, binderies). It should be remarked, however, that the primary geographic focus of this Princeton publication is Europe and the United States. The catalog includes useful Notes and a Selected Bibliography which supplies additional reading material. Numerous black and white images and twenty full page, full color plates accompany the entries describing the works displayed in the 2003 exhibition.

Readers will be reminded of well-known book artists, such as cover designer Sarah Wyman Whitman and bookbinder Sarah Prideaux. They also will be introduced to lesser known, yet important, women such as Elizabeth Harris Glover, owner of the first printing press in the American English colonies. Indeed, although the catalog covers a long span of book history, from the 15th to the 20th centuries, and mentions a crowd of women in the Book Arts, a disclaimer was added to encourage further exploration. "Thus each woman in this exhibition must stand in for thousands of her sisters, known and unknown, who have loved books and printing, and have gotten on with the work."

The Unseen Hands catalog is especially suited for GBW members, since it addresses several disciplines within the book arts. It must be noted that the Guild has in no way ignored the work of women book artists in its exhibitions or this newsletter.



By Rebecca Warren Davidson,
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Library, 2005

BARBARA ADAMS HEBARD was trained in bookbinding by Mark Esser at the North Bennet Street School. After a distinguished career as Conservator at the Boston Athenaeum and Boston College, she currently 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.

Publications celebrating women's work, as seen in past GBW newsletter reviews.

These publications postdate the Princeton bibliography and are recommended as supplemental sources.

No. 255	April 2021	Review of <i>Making Impressions: Women in Printing & Publishing</i>
No. 248	February 2020	Review of <i>Calligraphy: How I fell in, out, and in love again</i>
No. 246	October 2019	Review of <i>Marguerite Makes a Book</i>
No. 237	April 2018	Review of <i>Anna the Bookbinder</i>
No. 222	October 2015	Review of <i>The Beautiful Poster Lady</i>
No. 213	April 2014	Review of <i>Limp Bindings from the Vatican Library</i>
No. 209	August 2013	Review of <i>Book Art Studio Handbook</i>
No. 179	August 2008	Review of <i>The Proper Decoration of Book Covers: The Life and Work of Alice C. Morse</i>

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A selection of Jim Croft's bindings, made the old way.
Photo courtesy of JimCroftBookbinding.com

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