GUILD OF BookWorkers
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Newsletter

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Guild Board of Directors

The Guild of Book Workers 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 Guild of Book Workers website:

guildofbookworkers.org

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Front Cover: *Dark Archives* bound by Samuel Feinstein. Photo courtesy of himself.

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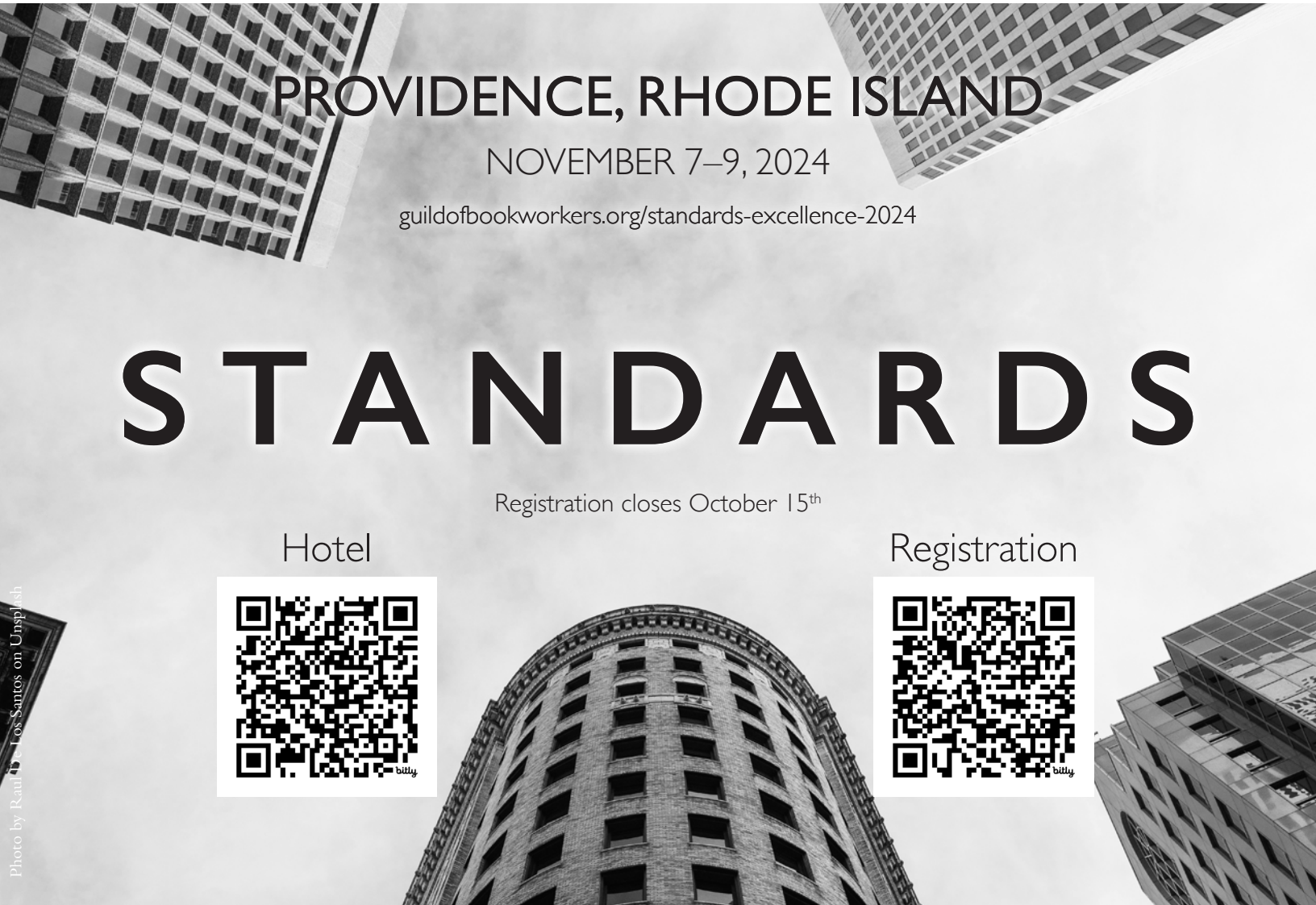


Letter from the President

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 look forward to seeing some of you in person in Providence next month for our Standards of Excellence Seminar.

The Fiscal Year 2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT 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 new members to the executive board: Mary Sullivan as Exhibitions Chair, Insiya Dhatt as Communications Chair, Spike Minogue as Newsletter Co-chair, and Rachel Baader as Journal Co-chair. I'm also very happy to welcome back Jennifer Pellecchia as Standards Chair and to be serving as President for another term. I'd like to give a big congratulations to our award recipients: Jeff Altepeter as the recipient of the Laura Young Award and Pamela Spitzmueller as the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award. You can read more about the award winners in the December issue.

The Guild is a volunteer-run organization that relies on our members to keep things running. 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 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

FALL GREETINGS, DEAR READERS!

Are you ready to curl up with some cozy book-related articles? If so, we have some treats for you. Our Conservation Correspondent, Nicole Alvarado, basks in the warm glow of a summer course on the history of Islamic bookbinding at California Rare Book School. Marbling Correspondent Iris Nevins shares some tips to heat up your marbling pace by—gasp!—skipping steps and taking some shortcuts. Pamela Wood, our Fine Print Correspondent, shares a virtual cup of tea and a conversation with Eleanor Ramsey about her journey through bookbinding. Intrepid book-reviewer Barbara Hebard discusses a book about the history of the dust jacket—or is it a book cozy? Okay, maybe we went too far with that last metaphor.

If you're a seasoned Guild member, you may be expecting to see the faces of our Laura Young and Lifetime Achievement Award winners on the cover of the October issue of the Newsletter. Surprise!! With Standards being in November this year, the awardees will be publicly honored a bit later than usual and the articles about their achievements will be in the December issue. Our Standards reporting will appear in the February Newsletter.

We hope to see you in Providence, RI for Standards! Fall in New England, what could be snugglier?

Enjoy!

Your Newsletter Co-editors

Photo by Kate Laine on Unsplash

Chapter Reports

CALIFORNIA

Co-Chairs: Marlyn Bonaventure & Rebecca Chamlee
Website: gbwcaliforniachapter.wordpress.com

The California Chapter held their annual chapter meeting via Zoom on Sunday, July 28, 2024. Eliminating the drive provided a better opportunity for a larger attendance. Many members shared their work in progress and recently completed.

We held discussions about future events and successfully recruited three members for the Programs Committee.

On August 27, 2024 our chapter has a planned event at UCLA Arts Library for an intimate viewing of a representative selection of artist books held at the Arts Library. Robert Gore, Visual Art Librarian, will talk and answer questions about his selection of books pulled for our visit, about the library, and the overall collection. Snacks and coffee will be provided before and after our talk.

Planning for our upcoming members' exhibition continues with Carolee Campbell as coordinator. *The California Effect: New Books from the California Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers* to open October 3rd, 2025. The exhibition will continue through January 4th, 2026 at the Long Beach Museum of Art.

DELAWARE

Co-Chairs: Val Kremser & Kristin Balmer
Website: dvc-gbw.org

On July 20th and 27th the Delaware Valley Chapter (DVC) participated in an online Stub Binding workshop with Kathy Abbott.

On July 30th the DVC held their annual meeting at V&S Lanes, continuing their tradition of Bookbinders, Beer, and Bowling. Fun was had by all!

DVC's current exhibition is open!

Material World

September 4th, 2024–December 9th, 2024

Material World encourages viewers to question the traditional understanding of what constitutes a book. Twenty six artists and bookbinders from the DVC have been challenged to use non-traditional mediums to create their bookworks.

Kamin Gallery and Lobby, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center
University of Pennsylvania
3420 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA
Philadelphia, PA 19104

MIDWEST

Chair: Lisa Muccigrosso
Website: midwestgbw.wordpress.com

The Midwest Chapter held its Annual Gathering at the Peter H. Raven Library at the Missouri Botanical Garden on August 17th, 2024. Fourteen participants met to create faux bamboo Japanese bindings with Peggy Johnston, a small book of asemic writing with Joanne Kluba, and a sewn-on wraparound paper conservation binding with Susie Cobbledick. Plus, the participants learned about bookbinding equipment maintenance with Noah Smutz. The day was punctuated with a hands-on printing activity with Botanical Garden staff members in the sensory garden, and a broadside printing activity at Central Print in the evening. We enjoyed dinner together and an excellent time was had by all—we laughed, we learned, and we reveled in a day just for book and printing arts.

Images from the event may be viewed on our website. The Board sends a huge thank-you to Susie Cobbledick for her efforts as our local host; she offered meeting space, recruited instructors, taught, and handled the catering arrangements. Additionally, she arranged a local on-site housing opportunity at the Botanical Garden Scholar Housing.

The Guild is run by volunteers both regionally and nationally, and we couldn't do it without the participation and hard work of folks like Susie. Thank you to all for an amazing day!

NORTHWEST

Chair: Jodee Fenton
Website: northwestcommunica.wixsite.com/nwgbw

The election for the Northwest Chapter board positions has concluded with these results: Chair, Jodee Fenton; Secretary, Mari Eckstein Gower; Treasurer, Michael Sobel; and Events Coordinator, Paula Jull.

We are also pleased to acknowledge the volunteer help we have received from Roberta Lavadore, Ealasaid Haas, Misty McIntosh and Jane Carlin. With their help we are expanding our publicity reach and beginning to develop exhibition opportunities for our members.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Co-Chairs: Holly D'Oench & Trisha Weekes
Website: rockymountain@guildofbookworkers.org

Congratulations to Christi Beckmann, the first recipient of our new chapter scholarship! Christi received $350 towards instruction with Lindsay Wolf, where she will create

a long stitch binding that emphasizes telling a story through its content. We're looking forward to the next application round in January of 2025!

The Rocky Mountain chapter had an informational booth at the annual Rocky Mountain Book and Paper Fair in Castle Rock, CO. We met with many enthusiastic people who love the idea of a traditional craft.

The chapter has launched a new event this year! Jennifer Büchi is leading a Halloween Ephemera Exchange where 13 lucky participants have created spooky items to pass around. We will have an unboxing party on Zoom to celebrate the event and connect with other chapter members.

Photo by Javier Molina on Unsplash.

News and Notices

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE 2024—EARLY AUTUMN UPDATE

Registration for Standards in Providence closes October 15th, 2024. For the most up to date information, or to register, please visit bit.ly/gbw-standards24.

2024 VENDORS

The Standards vendor rooms will be open to the public. As of September 6th, the following vendors have registered:

- Amanda Degener Handmade Paper Editions
- American Academy of Bookbinding
- Atelier-Galerie A. Piroir
- Chena River Marblers
- Colophon Book Arts Supply
- Crowing Hens Bindery
- FreeFall Laser
- Harmatan Leather
- Herramientas Grosso
- Hiromi Paper
- J Hewit & Sons Ltd.
- Kerner Marbled
- Maziarczyk Paperworks
- Peachey Tools
- Pergamena Parchments & Leathers Inc.
- Shepherd & Maudsleigh Studio
- Steven Siegel
- Studio Alcyon
- TALAS
- The Wide Awake Garage

2024 SPONSORS

The Guild of Book Workers offers sponsorship opportunities in an effort to keep registration affordable. Thank you to the following groups and individuals for contributing to the upcoming seminar:

Opening Reception

- Guild of Book Workers, New England Chapter

Friday Mix and Mentor

- American Academy of Bookbinding
- North Bennet Street School

Coffee and Snack Breaks

- Anonymous
- Book Island Bindery in memory of Sandra Good, Bookbinder
- J Hewit & Sons Ltd.
- Mark Valentine

Video sponsors

- Deborah Wender

Additional sponsors

- Anonymous
- Atelier-Galerie A. Piroir

Sponsorship acknowledgments are current as of September 6th. To make a contribution to Standards or GBW, please visit guildofbookworkers.org.

MIX AND MENTOR EVENT REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

On Friday, November 8th, GBW will host a "Mix and Mentor" event from 8:00–9:30 PM at Poindexter Coffee, located just off the lobby of Graduate Providence, the conference hotel for Standards 2024. Interested participants may register to "speed-meet" colleagues and potential friends in a fun, lightly structured environment.

We are hoping that this community event will be a chance to find people to collaborate or share skills with, explore common interests, meet new people, or learn something new about an old friend. Snacks will be sponsored by the North Bennet Street School and the American Academy of Bookbinding; beer and wine will be available for purchase.

To register, visit bit.ly/gbw-mix-n-mentor-2024. If you have questions please contact vicepresident@guildofbookworkers.org.

MEMORY AND MESSAGE BOARDS AT STANDARDS REGISTRATION

Have photos or stories from a past seminar you'd like to display? Want to thank a teacher or mentor, or pay tribute to a friend or colleague?

Looking to post a business card, or share a ride to Pawtucket? Have you been trying to source a rare paper for years?

Participate by visiting the *Memory and Message Boards* in the Standards registration area, to connect with other attendees.

Please note that any items left at registration should be picked up before the end of the silent auction (6:30 PM on Saturday, November 9th), or they may be discarded.

Serge Pirard sewing a wove mould facing in Marche, Belgium in 2019. Photo courtesy of Aimee Lee.

RIP Serge Pirard, Mould Maker (1974–2024)

by Aimee Lee

LAST WEEK I WAS in NYC for a whirlwind trip to see friends, family, and table at an art fair that went really well. Except when I got horrible news right before my last two days of tabling work.

I learned from Claudine Latron that on July 16th, we lost the inimitable Serge Pirard, a Belgian mould maker who worked directly in the English mould making tradition, trained by the late Ron Macdonald. Serge would have been 50 yesterday (Sept 10th) and left us far too soon.

I am far too bereft and heartbroken to adequately pay homage to Serge's memory, but all of us who had the joy of knowing him, working with his tools, and meeting him at various gatherings of papermakers, have lost a giant. Not only was he very tall, he was the last thoroughly trained mould maker in this tradition, making every bit of the tool by his own hand. He had received Ron's blessing to continue his legacy.

Serge and his best friend transported Ron's enormous loom to weave mould facings from England to Belgium. The loom had been built in 1889 for Amies and was in continuous use until now. All of Ron's old tools, supplies, notes, and anything related to mould making were carefully cared for by Serge in his Brussels home and mountain studio. This latter studio was housed at his best friend's family home, in the detached workshop of his friend's late grandfather, who was a woodworker. In the midst of old woodworking equipment not powered by electricity, work benches, and a climbing wall (Serge had been an avid rock climber earlier in his life) stood the loom, giant spools of wire, bags of tacks, wood pieces, and god knows what else.

Once Serge realized that mould making would become his passion, or, as Tim Moore said, his "second act," he went full force into learning everything he could from Ron, and then reaching out to the papermaking world. He donated his moulds to a Hand Papermaking auction, devotedly attended Dard (NAHP) meetings, and connected with all of the people and places that would need or want top-notch tools across the European-style papermaking world. In my

visits with him, it seemed like after his adventures climbing, learning didgeridoo in Australia, and sailing around the world (where, in South America, he eventually fell alarmingly ill and was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes), he had finally found a community that loved and embraced him and his impeccable skills.

After working at the Coca-Cola Company since the age of 19, he left his job on April 30th, 2021 to make moulds full time and never looked back. He had previously made moulds on weekends, which he expanded by negotiating a four-day week with Coca-Cola. But there was never enough time, always too many orders, and too many places and people to visit. He burned himself at all ends but somehow was full of energy all the time, particularly when it came to his work.

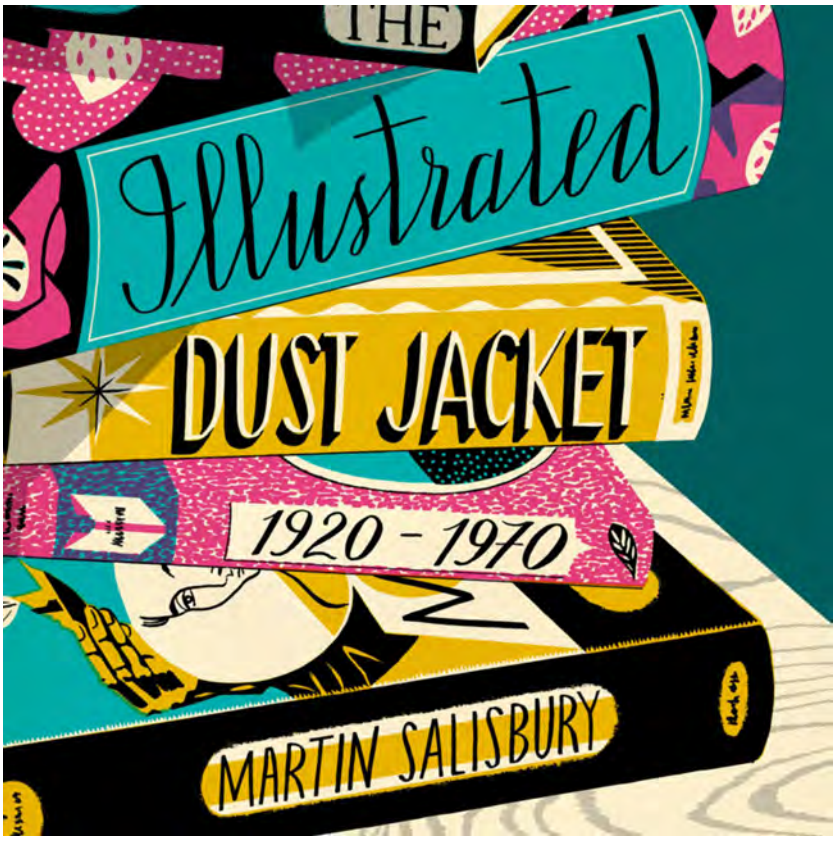
We talked a lot about how he wanted to start making *su* and *bal*, Japanese and Korean bamboo tools for papermaking, because he couldn't imagine it being that much harder than the moulds he made. He searched for European sources for adequate bamboo and traveled to London in the spring of 2023 to meet my Korean bamboo screen weaving teacher, the national treasure of that craft. He had planned for years to visit Japan to meet screen makers there but was stymied by the pandemic.

I wrote to him in Sept 2022 to confess I had made very little headway on my book about toolmakers for hand papermaking, and noted I had to hurry before more people died (this was after Ron passed away). I had no idea that Serge would be next, and have been blindsided by grief. As I dig further into our correspondence, I see how we shared our own worries about not getting enough done, yet being too worn out to do everything we wanted: he had to recover from a shoulder injury and reminded me last year, "take your time and put priorities on things that matter most. I learned it the hard way."

I had intended to write my chapter about Serge for over a month and am aghast that he is not around anymore to edit my mistakes. I will still write it, so if you have anecdotes, stories, or photos to share about him, please let me know soon as my manuscript is due at the end of this year. This is a devastating loss, not only personally, but to the entire papermaking world and the wider world of those who are safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

A version of this piece—with many images of Serge Pirard—can be found on Aimee Lee's blog at bit.ly/gbw-rip-pirard.

AIMEE LEE, author of *Hanji Unfurled*, is an artist and culture bearer who makes paper, writes, and advocates for Korean paper making practices.



The Illustrated Dust Jacket 1920–1970, Martin Salisbury, London: Thames & Hudson, 2017.

BOOK REVIEW

The Illustrated Dust Jacket 1920–1970

Reviewed by Barbara Adams Hebard

IN HIS COMPREHENSIVE WORK, *The Illustrated Dust Jacket 1920–1970*, British author Martin Salisbury follows the transformation of the dust jacket from its use as a plain protective paper wrapper for expensive leather-bound books to its role as an attention-catching lure to encourage book sales. The jackets beautifully reproduced here—in 371 full-color illustrations—reflect the changing styles of fifty years of book design, from the Art Deco period to the Pop Art of the Sixties.

Martin Salisbury, a professor of illustration at the Cambridge School of Art, also wrote *Children's Picturebooks: The Art of Visual Storytelling*. For *The Illustrated Dust Jacket* he features the commercial styles favored by publishers in the years prior to the adoption of photographic images as cover art. He has focussed on those illustrators whose work notably influenced other artists and future book design. In his introduction, Salisbury makes it clear that the majority of the illustrators presented here are British. He does include some European and a few American artists as well. With a couple of exceptions, the handful of women artists mentioned here (whether British or otherwise) are a part of husband-and-wife teams.

GBW members will encounter many unfamiliar dust jackets in this book, since for a long time these jackets were considered disposable. Indeed, even today the policy in American university libraries is to discard dust jackets. The copy of *The Illustrated Dust Jacket* used for this review, borrowed from a university through interlibrary loan, no longer has the bold, colorful jacket produced for it by the publisher. Salisbury's work may change this practice, as more people will become aware of the plethora of talented artists who created highly collectible book designs.

In its heyday, the need for dust jacket art provided a new source of freelance income for commercially trained illustrators as well as artists from the fine arts tradition. The artists quickly realized that the jackets not only supplemented their income, but also showcased their art to a wider general audience. Examples of work by well-known artists such as Rockwell Kent, Vanessa Bell, Ben Shahn, and N.C. Wyeth are seen here. Some of the other illustrators may be unfamiliar to readers, in part because publishers did not always allow the cover art to be signed. Salisbury's research has now brought these artists and their jacket illustrations to the attention of a wider audience.

In addition to gathering many fine dust jackets for his book, Salisbury also provides biographies for all of the artists. Locating biographical information, particularly about artists who had died young and were difficult to trace, required the author to undertake a great deal more research than might otherwise have been required for this book. His diligence proved worthwhile; he found connections between artists and was able to ascertain their influences on one another. Your reviewer does have a quibble about the biographies and Salisbury's introductory comments, though. The font size used for the text is very small, making them a challenge to read.

The book is all about the dramatic visual impact of the dust jackets and it succeeds in conveying that very well. Salisbury has selected multiple examples of jacket art by each of the artists to demonstrate the development of their skill and style. Because all the examples are printed in full color, he could clearly discuss color choices and how that influenced the overall feeling or tone of the illustrations. Seeing the variety of interpretations of the books' contents by the artists is educational; the reader learns how the graphic arts can respond to the written word. This may be especially important for book artists to observe as they plan their own compositions. For GBW members, the wonderful images throughout *The Illustrated Dust Jacket* could serve as inspiration. Many of the jackets have cleverly executed illustrations that wrap gracefully over the spine and around the covers. The styles and placement of titling on these dust jackets also may trigger ideas for the titles on your next book projects.

BARBARA ADAMS HEBARD was trained in bookbinding by Mark Esser at the North Bennet Street School. She is the Conservator at Boston College for the Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History. 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.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

COURSE REVIEW

Summer Learning: California Rare Book School

Reviewed by Nicole Alvarado

EVERY YEAR, CALIFORNIA Rare Book School (CalRBS) hosts three one-week courses on topics ranging from *Artists' Books in Education: Strategies for Institutional Libraries* to *Preservation Stewardship and Administration* to *History of the Book in America*.

WHAT IS CALRBS?

It is a "non-degree education program dedicated to providing the knowledge and skills required by collectors and professionals working in all aspects of the library, special collection, archives, museums, and rare book community, as well as for students interested in entering the field of justice studies, library ethics, critical librarianship, and rare book conservation and preservation." Founded in 2005 by the UCLA Department of Information Studies, CalRBS will be celebrating its 20th anniversary next year.

ISLAMIC MANUSCRIPT AND PRINT CULTURE

This year I had the opportunity to take *Islamic Manuscript and Print Culture: From the Middle East to South Asia*, taught by Gwendolyn Collaço, the Anne S.K. Brown Curator for Military & Society at Brown University. In this course, we viewed, analyzed, and interpreted texts from UCLA Library Special Collections' Islamicate Collections. This collection is currently being described at the item level for the catalog records, rehoused in archival boxes, and conserved on a triage basis.

The course began with a review of the historical background and material context of manuscript production in the Islamic and pre-Islamic world, from the 6th to the 19th century. Arabic script developed from a largely oral history through the first transcriptions of the Qur'an, which were written on parchment after the prophet Muhamad's death in the mid- to late 6th century. Standardized text was not developed until the 8th–9th century. The Qur'an was not written on paper until 952, almost 100 years after the first secular writings can be found on paper. We discussed the effects of multiple waves of occupation, including the evolution of illumination styles, the costumes portrayed (from traditional garb to westernized styles), and the materials available to the scribes. For example, the Mongols, beginning in 1280, destroyed all texts for many years. Likewise, the Napoleonic French, in 1798–1801, brought the knowledge of the printing press, but did not leave behind movable type adapted to the Arabic script.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

With this historical context established, we practiced identifying, describing, and dating Islamic manuscript bindings. We learned that manuscripts can be roughly dated based on the style of Arabic writing. There are six primary styles, with another six chancery scripts. Clues include the orientation of the writing—horizontal, long rows of writing, or vertical narrow texts—and ornamentation on frontispieces such as architectural design elements of known, dated buildings. Details like the use or lack of rubricating, foliation (catchwords), rosettes, Noktas (:.), and diacritics can also help date a text. These scribal tools help the reader to understand the text, so the lack of them can indicate the expectation of previous oral transmission of the text.

There are three categories of binding styles. Type 1 is a horizontal format, often (but not always) a box construction with ties. Type 2 is what most people think of when they think about Islamic bindings, with an envelope flap, and type 3 has a flush cover. Types 2 and 3 are the most common styles. An image of type 2 binding can be found at kislakcenter.github.io/islamicmss/binding. The writing surface can also be an identifier. The transition from parchment to paper, and the type of paper—handmade laid (no chain lines), burnished western paper (look for watermarks), or machine-made paper—can all help date a manuscript. The use of iron gall ink or carbon ink can sometimes be helpful. Though both were used at the same time, the use of iron gall ink ended in the 20th century. For complete books, colophons if they were present, seals, and inscriptions were also helpful. As previously mentioned, illuminations are also quite useful in dating based not only on the architectural elements, but also costume style, features of the figures, and the pigments used.

The format of a page design can indicate what type of text is contained within the manuscript. For example, poetry is almost always written in two narrow columns encompassed by a decorative border,while there are other formats of writing styles for astrology, alchemy, and recipes. The calligraphy style can indicate the hierarchy of the script, whether it is a header, the body of the text, or commentary. Decoupage calligraphy stencils, where words create figures and shapes, were also popular at times as an artistic element to inscribe prayers for God or names of people. Some blank books were filled by their owners with combinations of these styles of writing, as well as glosses (texts written to describe other texts) written in different directions and on top of other glosses. Composite codices, albums, and anthologies were also common, gathering parts from various other writings, illuminations and illustrations. These compilations were often given an explanation or dialog to follow.

We also discussed the transition from manuscript writing through the early attempts with movable type to the revolutionary lithographic techniques popularized around 1820. Both of these innovations helped to propel the Islamic world into the printed era. İbrahim Müteferrika (1674?–1745), who made only 7 books before his shop closed, was one of the first to be granted royal permission to print with type. With the introduction of photography in the late 19th and early 20th century, books changed again. Photographic elements such as portraits, scenes, and collages often replaced painted portraits, landscapes, and illustrations.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

Toward the end of the week, we each chose a book from UCLA's collections to interpret and present using the techniques we had learned from our readings and lectures, Islamic history in relation to manuscripts and print culture, and our knowledge about book history and material culture.

MATERIAL BACKGROUND

A majority of the manuscripts, incunables, and printed books we looked at from Special Collections were collected in the 1960s. At that time, they were cataloged only to the box level due to lack of subject expertise. Now, with the Islamicate Cataloging Initiative, these books are in the process of item-level cataloging and description by subject experts, native speakers, and students. Some have already been digitized and have full item-level descriptions including their place of origin, language, date, type of binding, and the significance of the text. Where possible, authors, calligraphers, and titles of these texts are noted in the catalog record. Further digitization of significant texts is intended, pending funding.

SEARCH AND DISCOVERY

As part of the course, we discussed the history of the movement of these books throughout the Islamic world, as well as how and why so many of these manuscripts ended up in the West. We explored various western databases housing digitized manuscripts, analyzing the pros and cons of navigating the websites, how useful the catalog records are, and how accessible the digital files are.

Lastly, we talked about increasing the transparency of the provenance of these books in collections and in researching prospective purchases. We considered whether in certain cases, repatriating materials to their rightful owners would be appropriate.

FIELD TRIP TO THE FOWLER MUSEUM

Most CalRBS courses include a field trip that helps to highlight other collections outside of the UCLA library. Our class went to The Fowler to see their Swahili Qur'an and other Islamic materials. For example, we also viewed ceremonial daggers, protective talismanic clothing, and wooden panels from various countries in Northern Africa, where Islam was introduced as early as the 7th to 9th century. An image of the Swahili Qur'an can be found at fowler.ucla.edu/product/x90-184a-koran.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

In the middle of the week, we all gathered for a keynote presentation by Tamar Evangelestia-Dougherty entitled *An Illuminated Perspective On Why Everybody Knows My Name: Rare Book Schooling While Black! Mediated Inclusion, Contested Belonging and Why Black Bibliography Really Matters*. She described her journey to becoming director of the Smithsonian Libraries and Archives and how she came to teach at CalRBS. She spoke about her "impressions navigating the landscape of rare books and special collections as a woman of color. Drawing upon her story as a point of reference across the continuum of past, present and future rare book school inclusion initiatives," offering ways rare book schools can create space for engagement and belonging for diverse communities.

Every other year (next course in 2025), Tamar teaches *Developing and Administering Ethnic and Cultural Heritage Collections* at CalRBS.

OUT WITH A BANG

To conclude the week, all the course participants convened at The Fowler Museum. The Director of Education and Interpretation, Amy Landau, guided us through their current exhibition, *Sangre de Nopal/Blood of the Nopal: Tanya Aguiñiga & Porfirio Gutiérrez en Conversación/in Conversation* (open until January 12, 2025). The exhibit focuses on issues of immigration and labor justice. Both

Photo courtesy of Nicole Alvarado.

artists' works are self-produced, cochineal-dyed woven works of art. The tour was followed by a reception hosted by UCLA Library Special Collections in the museum's courtyard, where students from the four in-person courses closed out their time by sharing their experiences, food, and wine.

COURSE THOUGHTS

As a book and paper conservator who will be treating many of these manuscripts and printed books, my goal in taking this course was to gain a better understanding of how to look at these materials from a subject expert's point of view rather than from a conservator's perspective. I wanted to create a broader understanding of the book. To be able to look at the features of the written text and to better maintain and, where necessary, recreate the material culture of the book. In the Islamic world, the written word, Kitab–used as a term meaning book, but more literally, the writing–is the focus of the book. Whereas the German word Buch refers to the material culture of what the book is bound in–a piece of writing, bound and covered. So, with this in mind, I will take note of the writing style, illuminations (or lack thereof), and care taken in the overall creation of these Islamic manuscripts to make treatment decisions going forward.

I will still leave the identification, reading, and description of these manuscripts to the experts. I now have a greater respect for paleographers and subject experts, who dedicate their studies on interpreting centuries-old manuscripts. Most importantly, I learned that, when in doubt, contact a specialist for help, whether it's a language specialist to decipher a text, a historical specialist to identify garb and style trends of the past, or conservators specializing in Middle Eastern binding styles to discuss treatment strategies.

USEFUL LINKS

CalRBS courses: calrbs.org/2024-courses

Islamic Manuscript and Print Culture: calrbs.org/program/courses/islamic-manuscript-and-print-culture-from-the-middle-east-to-south-asia

Developing and Administering Ethnic and Cultural Heritage Collections: calrbs.org/program/courses/developing-administering-collections-of-african-american-resources

UCLA Islamicate Collections guide: guides.library.ucla.edu/c.php?g=180194&p=1185888#s-lg-box-3580863

Fowler Museum *Blood of the Nopal* Exhibition: fowler.ucla.edu/exhibitions/sangre-de-nopal

Introduction to Islamic Manuscript Culture Resource: international.ucla.edu/cnes/islamic

NICOLE ALVARADO is the Book & Paper Conservator at the UCLA Library Preservation & Conservation Department.

SKIPPING STEPS AND TAKING SHORTCUTS

BY IRIS NEVINS

MARBLING CAN SEEM VERY complicated, with many exacting steps to follow, and Heaven forbid, if you miss one, you will not get the results you would like. This is true, yet I have found there are certain steps you can sometimes omit and still be just as successful.

The funny thing is, being self-taught at a time where there were scarce few books, and there was no internet or support groups to turn to for advice, one had to fumble on one's own until something worked. If you were lucky, you may have found a small booklet or article, but for the most part a lot of the learning was by trial and error. May I add, lots of error! We learn from our mistakes though!

This was at a time when I had no clue that other marblers existed! Well, I figured they must have, because you could find a pamphlet or two on marbling, and Dryad marbling paints existed ... so there must have been "others" out there, somewhere in the vast universe. I just didn't know of any personally. Really, it was the "Dark Ages" ... and the brief instructions that were available had you boiling handfuls of dried carrageenan seaweed in huge pots, and straining the liquid when cool, though a nylon stocking, and spilling half of it all over the kitchen floor. I do NOT fondly recall wiping up the slime!

The resulting size was always too thin or too thick. I quickly learned to overcompensate, and only made it too thick after a couple of failed watery batches. You couldn't add thickness, but if the size was too thick, you could water it down. Then… I heard of instant carrageenan powder! My very first shortcut and skipped step! I actually felt guilty, as though hundreds of years of tradition were being disrespected. Surely the Marbling Gods would punish me severely! After the initial feeling that I was "cheating" somehow abated, I decided that wherever possible, I would streamline the process, but not if it were to the detriment of the end results.

I had been unexpectedly jettisoned into an unlooked-for marbling career in 1978. Never having had one thought of selling a paper, they piled up in the corner, until a bookbinder bought every sheet, and ordered more, AND told all his bookbinder friends. I suddenly had a lot of orders, and this forced me to become a sort of efficiency expert, looking for ways to work more quickly. They all seemed to want rush orders!

Experimenting, by bending the rules here and there, became almost as much a hobby as marbling had been, before it became "work." It was really fun. The next shortcut of sorts was aluming. Not so much a shortcut, but I really hated to stop the marbling now and again to alum some more papers. From what I had read, damp, alumed papers would lose their effectiveness somewhat after about 1/2 an hour to an hour. I had found that true for myself anyway. I much later learned you can stack them damp, cover in plastic and they stay good a few days ... but I wanted more than that. I wanted to have hundreds of papers, alumed, dried and ready to marble at all times. Never to

have a time limit on effectiveness. So I gradually discovered, yes, you can do this… line dry, leave overnight and stack. Keep the humidity 55% or under, and they stay good indefinitely. I have found 20-year-old unused alumed papers that still worked fine. And the biggest skipped step, since I really hate to alum… I hired an "Alumer!" Now that's an odd job title!

Another step I skip most of the time, is that I don't rinse the papers after marbling. Only if I have to… if there is a really tight vein, like in a Spanish paper, it can run a little if the paint went down too thick, so they get a rinse. For the most part no rinsing though. You have to know what is just the right amount of paint to lay down, though. I had read a lot of old manuals, and they never seemed to mention rinsing. So I tried it, and it works. At this point I knew of other marblers, and several were horrified! What about the alum left on the paper? Well, it's been nearly five decades, and I have had no degradation of any of the papers whatsoever. I think it's safe.

Another example is fabric marbling. Again, I pretty well had to figure that out on my own, so had no idea what others did. One step I never did was pre-wash the fabric. Surely there are some that have so much sizing, you might have to, but I did pretty much only silks and satins, which are very cooperative with my method. What I did instead was, I made the alum water very very hot, placed it in a bucket and dunked and swished the fabric. If there was anything to wash off, I figured the dunk in hot alum water would both alum and and wash out the size at the same time. I never analyzed anything so couldn't say how much sizing was there, to start and after the fact, but the only thing that mattered was that it worked.

Another shortcut with fabric was, I had heard of many, after the fabric was marbled, who would toss it, once dry on a line, into the drier, to heat set the paints. Then since it was maybe a little wrinkled, they would iron it. However… I thought… why not just iron it? Isn't a hot iron hotter than the clothes drier? Why do it twice? So I never did use the drier.

The first time I ever met another marbler, I was told YOU CAN'T MARBLE THIS WAY! However, I was marbling "that way," and continue to do so, and am always looking for a way to make it more streamlined and efficient. I never tell anyone else they have to change, we can all marble in the ways that work best for us. But consider, especially if you do a lot of marbling, that it might be fun and more efficient to look into ways to streamline your process.

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 also is a Celtic Harper, and Guitarist. She plays professionally, teaches both instruments and builds harps. She also makes Ancient Style and Celtic Jewelry.

the Wide-Awake garage

Daniel E. Kelm



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LOOK FOR DANIEL WITH THE VENDORS AT STANDARDS

Daniel E. Kelm was awarded the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Guild of Book Workers. He enjoys expanding the concept of the book, and is known for his innovative structures as well as his traditional work. He has an extensive knowledge of materials and their properties.

From Ruth R. Rogers, Curator of Special Collections, Wellesley College

The codex structure has evolved over millennia, and Daniel Kelm's invention of the wire edge binding is now a fixed point on that long timeline. Indeed, it is part of the vernacular of the contemporary artist book.

From Timothy C. Ely, Artist

What else is a book but a vision of the space-time continuum? With Daniel's invention of the wire edge binding, the book as a spatial referencing and imaging tool took on an entirely new identity. This binding structure is one of the greatest developments of 20th-century bookbinding because it gives artists a new, completely original set of tools and expands the platform for expression.

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The GBW *Newsletter* needs a volunteer to serve as our Book Arts Correspondent. Responsibilities would include submitting a book arts related article to the *Newsletter* twice annually. To learn more, contact the *Newsletter* committee at newsletter@guildofbookworkers.

A Conversation between Pamela Wood and Eleanore Ramsey

by Bridget McGraw

NOTE FROM AN EDITOR: When our Fine Print Correspondent, Pamela Wood, suggested that she and Eleanore Ramsey have a conversation for the Newsletter, I set up a Zoom call, sat back, and listened to them talk. I enjoyed it immensely and hope that you, dear reader, will do the same.

I extend my gratitude to Devin Berkowitz, the Guild of Book Worker's Summer Intern, for comparing the accuracy of an AI-generated transcript with an audio recording of this conversation.

As usual, the text has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Bridget McGraw

PAMELA WOOD: Hello Eleanore, When we met a couple years ago, you said, "Oh, it's too bad you don't have time for a cup of tea. From that point on, I've always wanted to have tea with you.

ELEANORE RAMSEY: Well, I would have brought a cup, but you're always welcome to stop by and we'll have some tea. Thank you for this invitation.

PW: Is there a discipline that you were doing prior to bookbinding? Or prior to when you first got into it? Were you in some other field?

ER: Actually, I did all kinds of things. I spent a couple of years working in ceramics pretty intensely. This is before I started bookbinding. But I've also done metal work. I love metal forming; it's amazing how plastic metal is. You think of it as an incredibly hard substance, but it's not. Metal is really quite fluid. And to be able to form things by hammering was wonderful. I dabbled in jewelry making and all kinds of things when I was young. Plus, I did a lot of linoleum block printing.

Last night I remembered that I won a prize for making a poster for my grammar school. I probably was in fifth or sixth grade. The poster was to advertise a fundraising event at the school and my poster showed flying saucers heading to the school parking lot, which was set up for parking the flying saucers. They looked like a stack of 78 records, sort of like pancakes. I had a few other little awards through school. One was for a book cover actually. Some sculptures and various things. I really had to think about that question because I didn't remember these until just recently.

PW: That's interesting. I've had some dealings with ceramics and metal too. Regarding what you said about metal, I remember one of my classes with Hélène Jolis. We bought some brass at a hardware store and then pounded out our tools. We were on the street in Telluride: bang bang bang, I still use those tools today when I do my inlays! Metal is amazing.

ER: Yes, it truly is. I wouldn't mind doing some more actually.

PW: You studied French techniques. What was your teacher's name?

ER: Barbara Fallon Hiller. When I finished college, I took a job in a rare bookstore, and I read constantly when I was young. The job was fantastic. I've always loved books

and proverbial old bookstores. I found a catalog that was three rows back, deep in a shelf. It was an exhibition catalog from New York of contemporary French bindings. I was completely taken by it and felt that I had to learn more about these exceptional books. There were no computers, so I had to write everywhere to try to find someone to study with. I mean, I wrote to everybody I could think of, including printers, for example, I remember writing to Henry Morris in Pennsylvania. No one really suggested New York even though I was living on the East Coast then. I wish they had because that would have been fine.

Eventually, I learned about Barbara Hiller, and moved to San Francisco. I was much too shy to even consider writing to her before I arrived, however it all worked out. To me it felt like it was a crazy confluence of situations. She's not French, but she had studied in France with several of the people who worked for Paul Bonet.

PW: Oh, my Goodness. Fabulous work.

ER: Her work was fabulous. I felt like I was in the right place.

I did work a couple of years with an English binder before that, also in San Francisco, because Barbara was busy when I first got here. She suggested that I study with him briefly. And I did. Later Barbara and I became good friends; we went on vacations together and we just had fun. We shared a studio for probably 10 years. It was a grand opportunity for me.

PW: Yes! What sort of differences did you find between the French and the English style of binding?

ER: I've always thought that it's worth understanding both. I'm not going to say that I'm an expert, but it is important because you have a better perspective, you can draw on whatever you think is right for a particular book. French or English, it's not important, really, but the experience of learning different techniques contributes hugely to your work.

PW: Did you like both styles? Or did French just match up to your style?

ER: It was more complex. The results were very elegant. I'm not saying that English binding is not, though. But with this particular teacher, I did not see that aspect. I would never say one is better than the other.

PW: Right. Was there anything that you had to unlearn? I mean, anything that got in the way of growing into your own personal style?

ER: I think when you work on your own, you develop that and you make changes, huge changes. You may start off doing what you have learned, but then slowly, over time, you change everything to suit what you perceive to be a better approach for whatever you're working on. So having a broad perspective, I think, is very helpful.

PW: Prior to bookbinding you had other disciplines like metal or ceramic work. Did these other mediums relate to your bookbinding?

ER: Yes, they're definitely related. I've used all sorts of techniques I've learned in other disciplines and incorporated them in all kinds of amusing ways. I love resolving problems. You think: I want to accomplish this. How do I get from here to there? What can I figure out to do?

I remember telling one of my students that I couldn't imagine how anyone could get along in life without having a studio. I mean, I just couldn't imagine it. You need to have the space and tools. I must say I have been very indulgent, spending all my money on tools and equipment. But I also had to work full time for a long time to support my habit.

PW: Oh, what was your job?

ER: I did social work for about 20 years, but at least they allowed me to work halftime for much of the time, which was very rare. I was really lucky. I worked hard and made some friends and was fortunate to work halftime, which really helped. Whenever I was not on that job, I was totally focused on bookbinding. I can't say I played much, although I felt like I was playing.

PW: It's hard to play sometimes. Give yourself permission to play.

ER: Well, I consider bookbinding very playful. And we have all these questions to resolve. And I consider them very fun. Sometimes it is exasperating though.

PW: What excites you in your work?

ER: Well, there are two main things that I love doing. It seems to me that, in binding, we are building something that has to function and we would like to be beautiful if we can. This takes a lot of thought. Initially working on the design is intensely interesting, and then actually producing the book, that is, putting it together in a way that suits the design.

The way I design, if you'd like to know that, is straightforward. For example, a book arrives in the mail that someone has commissioned, I wait until I have a few hours ahead of me that aren't obligated to do something else and sit down with a pad of paper on a quiet day. I simply unwrap it and go through the book very carefully and slowly, just getting an impression of the whole.

The format is hugely important to the design. There is one book that I immediately knew what I was going to do, but that doesn't usually happen. That was something a long time ago for the Bridwell library. The exhibition, I believe was called *50 by 25*. Each invited binder had to do two books that were illustrated by the Czech artist Ladislav R. Hanka. The title of the one that I was asked to bind, (because there were several different titles), was *Leaves of Organic Verse*. The images were of deciduous trees in winter. There was no writing in the book, other than the title page. That was it. There were no explanations and no information, really. You wouldn't read it like a regular book because there were

no words, but there were lines—like paragraphs of images—throughout the book on each page. Well, first of all, it was a huge book, but it was also quite thin. Both factors made a big difference in my decision as to how I wanted to bind it, and then there was the fact that it had no writing. I decided I didn't want to bind it in a normal way because you don't read it in a normal way. What was clear to me as soon as I saw it is that this book had to be able to stand, so that one could see the pages and turn them. You could have it on your table and slowly turn the pages over, but it's standing in front of you, rather than lying on the table. That was a fun challenge.

PW: Where is it now? Is it in your collection?

ER: No. We were supposed to make two and one is in the Bridwell. I think the better one, in my opinion, is with a collector now, who liked it very much. I am delighted he has it.

I didn't want it to open like a picture frame. I wanted it to self-stand with an unusual way of standing, so I took some of the negative spaces in the etchings and made them sit into the cover. They open out, they're hinged, so when it's open you have a sculptural effect. If you look down the side at it, you will see all these things, but they would return into the covers flat if you wanted to put the book away. Does that make sense? It's hard to describe.

PW: I've definitely got a visual. Now I'd like to see it!

Is there ever a time when you're working that you're in a place where time becomes nonexistent or different?

ER: Yes. Hours go by and I have no idea. It will be dinner time, and I feel like I'm just about to have breakfast. Really, it's really an odd thing, and I do mean that seriously. I'll be thinking, "Well, I've got to get up to get another cup of coffee or to have some Cheerios," and it'll be time for dinner.

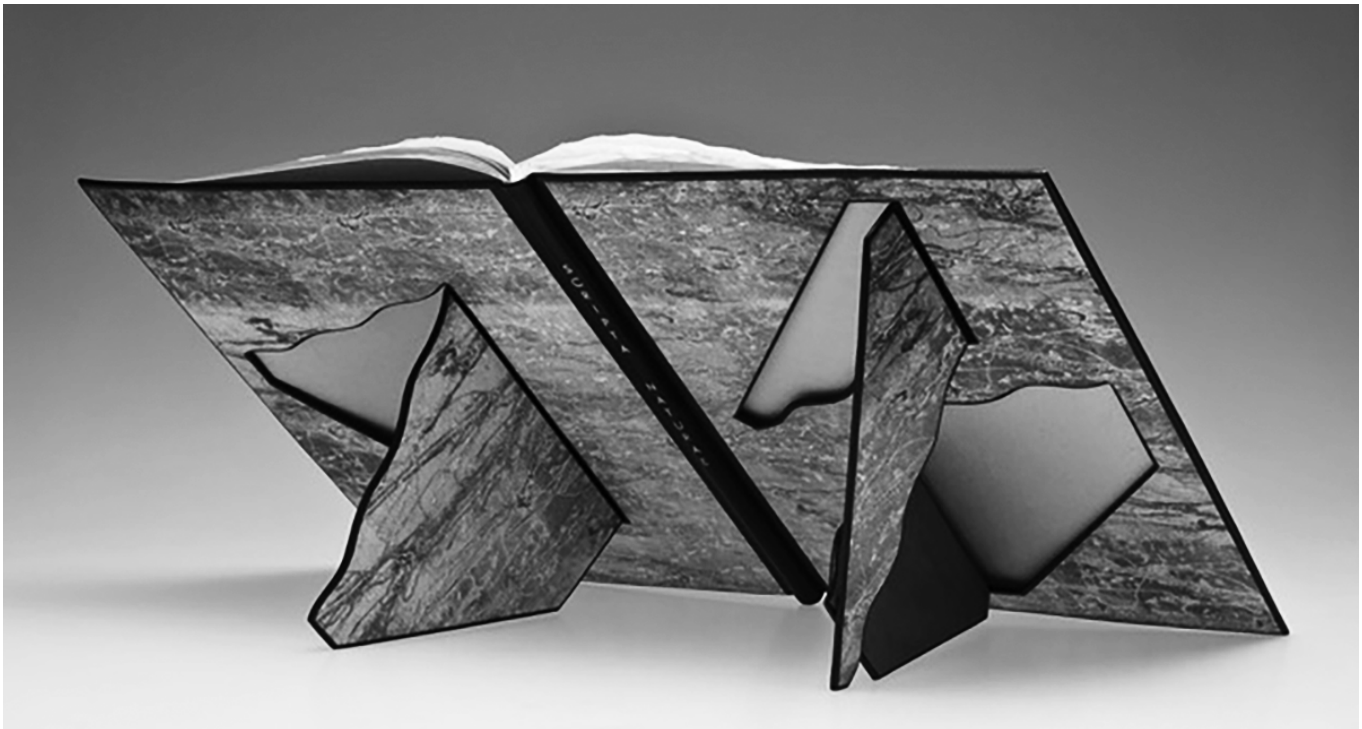
PW: Exactly. It happened to me recently. And I looked in the mirror and I said, "Pam, you've got to wash your hair." I do love those moments where you realize, "Oh, holy moly. Four hours have passed?" I'm glad it happens to others.

ER: It's not unpleasant. It's just that you just don't know what happened.

[At this point in the conversation, the co-editor who was hosting the conversation barged in with a somewhat disjointed description of the concept of flow, as described by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in his 2008 book, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. She talked about the magical zone created by finding the edge of one's own 'x' and 'y' axes of skills and challenge, respectively.]

PW: What materials do you go back to again and again that will take you into that excited place?

ER: I think materials for binders are special because we—at least I—go to great lengths to find the absolute best of whatever material we're looking for, everywhere and anywhere in the world. It takes a lot of time, I suppose. But you get leads from all sorts of different places. If you want something really special, then you've got to figure all that out. I think that not having the very best materials you can find really negates your work in a huge way because it's not



Ladislav Hanka, *Scripta Naturae: Leaves of Organic Verse*, 1981. Printed on handmade paper from Velke Losiny Paper Mill, 1981, number 18 of 40, 17 x 13". The book was included in a slideshow at the Guild's 100th Anniversary celebration's slideshow: bit.ly/gbw-art017.

going to last as long. We want to make something that's going to be valued and is going to last a long time. We want to know that we haven't wasted all our time and life doing something that's fugitive or will only work for a few years. It would be nice to think that our work outlasts us, certainly.

I was going to speak to that when I was talking about when I first started studying with Barbara Hiller. She thought, since I had already been studying binding structurally, that maybe I should start by doing gold tooling. I managed to get six months off from my job, which then was full-time. I just tooled every day. It was interesting, to say the least, and it was very fun. Gold is a beautiful material that seems to go with everything. It dramatically enhances any design. Perhaps it is not as popular as it used to be, but it enriches everything if you like to do it. I don't have time to gild every day anymore. Like anything, you lose skill if you don't work on it frequently. If necessary before I do something major, I can make a little plaque for myself just to get up to speed, making sure it will be bright and strong enough. I used to think that you should be able to look at it and put your lipstick on in the reflection.

PW: Yes, the challenge is getting that floor in the little tiny letter nice and crisp so that the gold really stays in there perfectly.

Is there something that you find helpful when you have a slow period or when inspiration is slow in coming? Something to help you hear the Muses.

ER: When I had my studio in Sausalito, which is just across the bay from San Francisco, I didn't have a place to cook there. I was living in the city but worked all the time, so I had needed a place to eat. I found a perfect little place in Sausalito that I still go to, but not every day anymore. I went to this restaurant, probably every day, for many years. When they would see my old car coming, they would set up the table for me with a glass of wine, and I would work there. If there was something I just didn't want to do, or couldn't figure out, or had to write up for somebody, this restaurant was my go-to. I'd just bring a pad of paper and pencil, and I would totally get lost in it. They would bring me fantastic food. It was a family restaurant that serves delicious Thai food.

PW: Changing the place can be amazing for ideas.

ER: And when you're perfectly comfortable in a situation with nothing to worry about. Sometimes I go to a museum show; that kind of thing can spur me on. Just changing your environment is a real key.

PW: Have you ever had a long time being detached from your studio? What did it take to bring you back in? Or did you return little by little?

ER: Well, I got sick and couldn't work very much for a while. By the time that was done I just wanted to work, but didn't have it in me because I was extremely tired and still recovering. It took me a while to get back into my work. I knew I was going to return, so there wasn't a question of that. Finally, something intriguing caught me. I went right back into full-time immersion and kept going. That was a couple of years. The pandemic was a bit hard because I never went out, but it was fine. Not feeling well was really bad.

PW: Do you like doing set books? Or do you create your own stories? Or do you do both? What do your works contain? Are they mostly published first editions?

ER: It could be anything. However, eventually I lost interest in working on set books, because if you need to earn a living, it isn't an ideal situation. I've done a number of fine press books which were an absolute joy. It means choosing a design and materials that are beautiful to go with beautiful paper and wonderfully printed by a fine printer. I have also found that commissions people bring to be bound are often wonderful books. I can't imagine giving a binder a book to do that wasn't somehow valuable and exceptional. So, most of the books I have bound have been a privilege to work on.

PW: When you came back after you were you were sick did you find that you had more energy? And was there any special point that that you knew you were back in the flow?

ER: Once you have that feeling of time passing, without your noticing and you're feeling really comfortable, when it's almost effortless, is when know you're back to work. That's a very nice state to be in. I don't recall having a difficult time getting back into work. Really. It was kind of a relief because being sick is a real bore. I got a lot of reading done, but still …

PW: Right. Sometimes people ask me, "Why don't you watch movies and all this stuff, or go here or there?" And I say, "Listen, I don't go to these workshops because I really need to do X, Y, and Z."

ER: I started to become a librarian and wanted to go to library school. I was admitted into Berkeley, and when I was on my way over there to start, I couldn't do it. I had crossed the bridge, but then I turned around and came back. I just couldn't leave my studio. Building something by applying layer on layer of different materials and seeing it become something you have designed is addicting. Making an object is a phenomenal experience. When you think about the materials you use you realize individually they couldn't be more basic, and yet, you come up with something that moves, operates, feels nice in the hands, is very friendly, and you can put it in your pocket, (proverbially speaking). Each book is really an adventure requiring research and preparation.

PW: Isn't it exciting? About a year ago I had to order some more leather, and I always order more than I should. Or, when I'm unwrapping a package from Talas when it arrives in Arizona, it feels so amazing. I felt like I was going dizzy—like I was in the middle of a Coach bag. When I open the rolls, I'm just in another world.

ER: I have a lot of leather that I keep in a closet in my studio. I can't go in there without coming out feeling like I need to get to work and use the gorgeous colors of leather to make beautiful books. Leather is one of our most beautiful materials. Think about it. What else can expand and contract like that? Not a lot of materials can accomplish what leather can do. It's not that we're the same substance, exactly, but we get fat and thin and we expand and contract. Leather is amazing stuff in beautiful colors and textures.

PW: Isn't it fun when you've completed a book? When you show it and share it with a colleague or somebody close to you? Don't you enjoy the first opening?

ER: Yes, it's really interesting to have that kind of feedback. To see how other people perceive your work, what they see first and how they see the relationship between the design and the text is fun and important. I have also noted how others see the relationship between a sketch and the finished book. I think it's difficult to imagine a sketch in 3 dimensions. Preparing a mock-up is helpful but still I think it's difficult, particularly for someone who doesn't understand our materials. Concerning showing your newly finished book to a friend I also have liked watching people interact with some of my books that do not open up in the usual way. It takes them a while before they figure out what's going on, which is pretty interesting.

PW: Right. A little mystery.

ER: I think we need some humor.

PW: Yes. Is there something in the current bookbinding world that you find exciting? And on the other side, is there something that just leaves you flat?

ER: I'm afraid I like all styles. I love thinking about old books and their history, how they were made, their printers, their subjects, who might have owned them, their epoch and country… one could go on. My husband's a book collector and we have thousands of old books here. I love the old design styles, but as a binder today I am strongly interested in current and modern design, new materials, and the ideas that have developed with new inventions and infinite combinations. I like to think that we can make whatever designs we dream up. That is what I find exciting. I suppose what leaves me flat are people who wonder why someone would spend time and energy as a bookbinder. It's disconcerting, I would like to think we at least respect other artists in whatever work they choose.

PW: Yes, that is surprising.

It seems that work has to be really serious right now and serious topics are what's selling. I think that humor and tragedy are related. They are separated by millimeters. I was wondering what your take is on that, and you just said it: all things are valuable.

ER: Yes, I do believe that. And I think that's one of the things that makes our work exciting. Literally, what you dream up you can make. So make good dreams.

And I love the idea of having a little humor in your work, but we're also serious. You can't just throw it together and expect it to look okay. We think about it and work through what we need to do to assemble it.

PW: I also think of the example of watching people open my work. Sometimes they actually pick up on a little mysterious thing that I call the ether or vapor—the fumes go under the door and come up in and hit them as they're opening up the book. Finally, you see the glisten in their eyes and hope they got it.

ER: Thinking on that, I remember working very hard on an *Alice in Wonderland* binding which took me a long time to design. Unlike the one the one that I mentioned earlier that stands up, where the design was instantaneous, this design took a long time to work out. I liked the book very much and the client did as well, which always makes me happy.

There was one requirement that the client had. Because the book was illustrated by a Canadian artist, he wanted something Canadian—no matter how small—as just a reminder to whoever had the book that it was Canadian-based. By the time I was finishing it, I had forgotten all about that. The book was covered, and I was finishing the last details and I remembered his request and went into a serious panic. I called the Canadian Embassy and asked them if they had something to include in the binding. I was imagining that maybe they had some objects for sale for tourists… or something. I had no idea. The man at the Embassy said, "How about a tie tack?" I immediately rushed there, got the tie tack, and included it in the binding. When my client saw it, he seemed very amused. It worked out well. The binding has watch crystals and watch parts included. There's a cuckoo clock hand and all kinds of things to focus on time as used in the story. Behind one of the watch crystals is the tie tack. I removed the back so that it could move around inside the watch crystal.

PW: I could go on forever, but we'll just have to have tea in person sometime. I'm so glad we could talk with you today.

ER: I'm very pleased and honored to have been asked. I hope that I've perhaps made some suggestions that might be helpful.

PW: Absolutely, my honor.

PAMELA WOOD is a full-time fine bookbinder located in Tempe, AZ. rarehare.com

ELEANORE RAMSEY began studying bookbinding in 1975. She has been exhibiting her work, teaching fine binding and accepting commissions in her San Francisco studio since 1980. Her work has received numerous awards, and may be found in national and international collections.

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