



# Guild Board of Directors

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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:

[www.guildofbookworkers.org](http://www.guildofbookworkers.org)

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Cover image: Avril, from *Les Très Riches Heures du duc de Berry*. Illuminated by the Limbourg brothers, circa 1412-1416.

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## Letter from the President

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### DEAR MEMBERS,

As I reported in the last newsletter, the Board has unanimously decided that the Standards of Excellence Seminar will not take place in person this year. Although this saddens me greatly, I think it is the best course of action during these unprecedented times. We have been in contact with the hotel in San Francisco, and they've agreed to renegotiate our contract for 2023. This means we won't suffer a huge financial loss for cancelling this year's in-person event. We do plan to hold a virtual Standards seminar, and details are still being worked out. The annual business meeting will also take place in a virtual format. We will share more information as it becomes available.

Issue 48/49 of the *Journal* shipped out in January, and has hopefully made its way into your mailbox. If for some reason your *Journal* has not arrived, please email [journal@guildofbookworkers.org](mailto:journal@guildofbookworkers.org) to request a replacement copy.

For the last few weeks, entries for WILD/LIFE, our next traveling exhibitions, have been arriving at my office. It's been exciting to see the pile of packages grow, and I look forward to assisting with the photography for the jury process and catalog. The exhibition will open in the summer of 2021. Venues have been confirmed, but exact opening dates are still in flux thanks to the pandemic. We hope to have a list of venues posted on our website soon, with a more precise schedule to follow.

Please continue to send me ideas, feedback, and comments.

Be well,

Bexx Caswell-Olson, President, Guild of Book Workers

## News & Notices

### LETTER FROM THE AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Awards Committee is seeking written nominations for the 2021 Lifetime Achievement and Laura Young Awards.

**The Lifetime Achievement Award** — This is given to an individual "in recognition of significant contribution to the goals of the Guild, which can be external or internal, with the implication that it would be a contribution to the bookbinding field rather than just to the Guild." This individual does not need to be a member of GBW. Recipients of this award will also be awarded lifetime membership, with no obligation to pay dues.

**The Laura Young Award** — This award is given to an individual "in recognition of sustained commitment to the Guild; that is, service to the Guild given "above and beyond". This should be awarded to a current or former member of GBW.

Please contact any member of the Awards committee about your nomination:

Daniel Kelm	<a href="mailto:daniel.kelm@mac.com">daniel.kelm@mac.com</a>
Deborah Wender	<a href="mailto:dwender@centurylink.net">dwender@centurylink.net</a>
Eric Alstrom	<a href="mailto:alstrom@msu.edu">alstrom@msu.edu</a>

The deadline for receipt of nominations is **May 1, 2021**. More details can be found at [www.guildofbookworkers.org/awards](http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/awards)

### LETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has just released a survey to touch base with our membership (it's been nearly nine years since the last one!!) and to gauge GBW's ability to foster and sustain an inclusive and supportive environment. The survey is voluntary, and should take approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. It will be open for the month of April. All survey responses will remain anonymous and the data will be aggregated. As an added incentive, at the end of the survey you will be given an option to submit your email information to be entered in random drawing for one (1) of three (3) \$50 gift cards to Colophon Book Arts Supplies. Your email will not be associated or analyzed with your answers to the survey.

It has been sent to membership via email and posted on our website, but if you'd like a paper version or have any other questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch by writing to [dei@guildofbookworkers.org](mailto:dei@guildofbookworkers.org).

Thank you!!

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



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## DROP DEAD GORGEOUS:

### FINE BINDINGS FOR LA PROSE DU TRANSSIBÉRIEN RE-CREATION

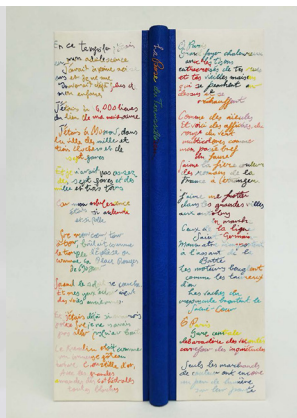
Virtual Exhibition at the Minnesota Center for the Book, Minneapolis, MN.

January 27 to May 9, 2021

[www.mnbookarts.org/drop-dead-gorgeous-virtual-exhibition](http://www.mnbookarts.org/drop-dead-gorgeous-virtual-exhibition)



Dominic Riley



Hannah Brown



Monique Lallier

*La Prose du Transsibérien*, published by Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars in 1913, is the armature on which the drop dead gorgeous bindings in this exhibit are built. Originally folded and bound in a vellum case, the 1913 book explodes into the space you occupy when opened, forcing you to change from a private to a public viewing, a dramatic change in the reading experience. Painter Sonia Delaunay virtually dominates the book, commanding your attention immediately when the book opens with her vibrant, sinuous colors leading you inexorably to the Eiffel Tower. The prose poem by Blaise Cendrars performs its own spectacle in blazing color, taking liberties with poetic form and guiding you on a journey of surprising typographic experiences. For her second act, Sonia Delaunay penetrates the poem with color, reinforcing the shape of the poem. A book with such vitality screams out to the binder: see what you can do with me. This exhibition was inspired by the celebrated binder Paul Bonet, who in 1964, designed an extraordinary binding for a copy of *La Prose*.

With support from twelve underwriters, Kitty Maryatt initiated the project in 2017 to re-create *La Prose* using original techniques of letterpress and pochoir. *La Prose du Transsibérien Re-creation* was published in 2018 in an edition of 150 copies, with an additional 30 copies hors commerce for the underwriters. The regular edition is bound in a simple folded vellum

cover as in the original, and the deluxe edition is bound in aluminum covers with cut-outs.

The brilliant idea to ask the underwriters (and others) to commission fine bindings for a traveling exhibit was supported enthusiastically by Simon Eccles and Toby Schwartzburg, co-curators of this exhibit. The result is the dazzling exhibition that is celebrated here.

A virtual two-hour demonstration of pochoir will be given on February 25, 2021 at 8–10 pm EST. The documentary, *The Making of a Masterpiece* by Rosylyn Rhee, will be shown on March 25, 2021 from 7–9 pm EST. Visit the website above for details about these events.

To purchase the DROP DEAD GORGEOUS catalog from the MCBA Store, visit [www.shopmnbookarts.org](http://www.shopmnbookarts.org). Cost: \$50.

You can also purchase it from the San Francisco Center for the Book Store, <https://sfcb.org>. Cost: \$50.

Kitty Maryatt, Exhibition Curator; Simon Eccles, Co-Curator; Toby Schwartzburg, Co-Curator

<http://laprosepochoir.blogspot.com>

# Chapter Reports

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## New England

**CHAIR: ERIN FLETCHER**

The New England Chapter's 40th Anniversary Exhibition was digitally hosted by the University of Southern Maine. To promote the exhibit, USM co-hosted the workshop *A Wardrobe of Paper Cases* with Karen Hamner and a "gallery talk" with exhibitors: Katrina Carye, Colin Urbina and Stephanie Wolff. During the talk, *A Wider Purpose*, board member Jennifer Pellecchia also discussed the process of creating an exhibit for an online presence. You can watch the talk by going to the events page of the exhibit website: [www.negbw40thanniversary.com](http://www.negbw40thanniversary.com)

## California

**CHAIR: MARLYN BONAVENTURE**

Upcoming workshop with John DeMerritt:  
Drop Spine Box, April 10, 17 and 24. Register at  
<https://gbwcaliforniachapter.wordpress.com>

The California Chapter is pleased to sponsor a virtual workshop presented by Los Angeles-based artist Debra Disman: "Folded Fan Sculptural Artists' Book: A Vehicle for Imagination, Experimentation, and Play." The workshop will be held live via Zoom on Saturday, June 5, 2021, 1-4 pm Pacific Time. More information and registration details will be emailed to the Chapter membership in mid-April.

## Southeast

**CHAIR: JILLIAN SICO**

The Southeast Guild of Book Workers hosted a successful virtual workshop on Exposed Sewing with Decorative Guards and Self-locking Wrapper with Karen Hamner on February 13<sup>th</sup>. The Southeast has also begun rolling out its 2021 Members' Showcase, which features one member book artist a week on our blog, <https://segbwnews.blogspot.com>.

## Potomac

**CHAIR: BETH CURREN**

The Potomac Chapter is pleased to announce we have joined the Creative Crafts Council ([www.creativecraftscouncil.org](http://www.creativecraftscouncil.org)), a consortium of 11 fine crafts guilds in the DC, Maryland and Virginia region. The CCC mounts a biennial show at Strathmore Hall in North Bethesda, MD. The next show will be this June. Our category of book arts joins other media such as ceramics, glass-blowing and fiber arts. The submission window closed in February and we are awaiting news to see if any of our members' work has been juried into the show. We are excited to be able to provide an opportunity for our member book artists to show their work in person—within the capacity of the site, of course. We are getting our shared chapter Zoom account up and running, and look forward to hosting a more regular series of virtual hangouts and events via this GBW supported resource, and seeing you all again in whatever form of gathering we may fold together!

## Northwest

**CHAIR: JODEE FENTON**

The Northwest Chapter is coming to the end of its "Working From Home" series of studio visits to members. We have had delightful virtual get-togethers to see how our colleagues organized their studios, their current and past work, and what new projects they are undertaking. Our Program Director, Bonnie Thompson Norman, has been developing new programming for the summer and fall including panel discussions, single artist presentations, and workshops. Elsi Vassdal-Ellis and Bonnie Thompson Norman designed and printed a new note card and envelope with the Chapter logo which we intend to use as welcome cards for new members and as thank you cards for our presenters. The Board is sponsoring an "exchange" among its members that gives each participant an opportunity to create a print/painting around the theme of Renewal. "The Nipper", our semiannual/biannual newsletter, will publish the work in its next issue. Mel Hewitt, our Communications Director, has been keeping our members informed of the Chapter activities and opportunities via a monthly email, "Newsbites", and notices for upcoming programs and events.

# Clara Hatton, An Appreciation

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by Karen Jones

IN CELEBRATION OF ITS SESQUICENTENNIAL, Colorado State University (CSU) is honoring Clara Hatton, the founder of its Art and Art History departments. *Clara Hatton: A Vision for Art at CSU*, on display February 8 to June 20, 2021, is curated by Dr. Emily Moore, Associate Professor of Art History and Associate Curator of Art, Colorado State University; and Bill North, independent curator and Director of the Clara Hatton Center, Salina Art Center, Kansas. Visit <https://artmuseum.colostate.edu/exhibitions> for details. A catalog of the exhibit is also available; for more information, call 970-491-1989. The exhibition demonstrates the breadth of her art—from bookbinding to metal working, oil painting to watercolors, printmaking to calligraphy, ceramics to weaving.

In 1936, Hatton (1901-1991) was hired as one of the earliest faculty members to teach design in the Division of Home Economics. Over the next thirty years, she built an art curriculum at the college, teaching a variety of media herself and hiring the faculty who would help her establish the Department of Art in 1953.

Born in Bunker Hill, Kansas, the oldest of six children, she worked her way through school after enrolling at the University of Kansas in 1922. She exhibited at a faculty show there in 1934, displaying work in a variety of media. The Smithsonian purchased one of her woodcut prints (Shambles Restaurant) in 1935. During her final year at KU (1934-35) she taught bookbinding, among other classes, under the supervision of Prof. Rosemary Ketcham,<sup>1</sup> her binding teacher. Included in the exhibition is Clara's first binding in leather, *Poems of Henry W. Longfellow*. The binding was made by Clara while she was a student at KU in 1925.

At the height of the Depression, Clara was encouraged to take an unpaid sabbatical from KU, so she went to London to study in 1935-36.<sup>2</sup> In 1961, when she joined GBW, she reminisced at great length when responding to a query from the Guild about her studies in London, indicating that she attended the Central School of Arts and Crafts and the Royal College of Art, taking classes in bookbinding with William F. Matthews, Sydney (Sandy) Cockerell, Peter McLiesh and Lynton Lamb—all students of Douglas Cockerell. Matthews was her main instructor and taught her finishing. Lamb taught book design. Sandy Cockerell taught her marbling and how to make her own finishing tools. She particularly appreciated learning how to sharpen knives and gravers, and continued to make her own tools throughout her career. She noted that some of the recipes she learned in her classes had to be changed for use in the dry climate of Colorado.

Clara also described her delight in being invited for tea with the Cockerells at Letchworth and seeing parts of the *Codex Sinaiticus* as it was being restored. She was able to purchase one of the alum-tawed pig skins Cockerell had purchased for the bindings of the *Codex*. Apparently, the British Museum rejected those skins, noting that a pig is considered an “unclean” animal in the Old Testament; goat was chosen instead.<sup>3</sup>

She also purchased a set of 24 pt. handle letters that she used on several of her bindings. The font is the Doves Type, designed by Emery Walker for the Doves Press in 1900. Douglas Cockerell apprenticed with T. J. Cobden Sanderson at the Doves Bindery for four years (1893-97) before opening his own bindery. Sydney (Sandy) Cockerell (son of Douglas) worked at the family bindery starting in 1924 and ran it after his father retired in 1935. I was able to establish provenance of the handle letters through correspondence with Karen Smith, curator of special collections at Dalhousie University, which holds a collection of Douglas Cockerell bindings. For a description of the collection, see *Vessels of Light*, Karen E. M. Smith, Dalhousie University Libraries, Dalhousie University Halifax, Nova Scotia; 1996.

In addition to binding, Clara found time to study calligraphy with Lawrence Christie and Rosemary Ratcliffe. She wrote out and illuminated the “Book of Ruth” (see below) in that class. She also attended lectures by Edward Johnston, Grailey Hewitt, and William Gardner. She was very appreciative of being able to learn “when the revival of the book crafts was at its height.”<sup>4</sup>

The important influence of Clara's year in England was evident in her future studies. In 1944-45, she took a sabbatical from CSU to earn her MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art. She worked in the ceramics department with Maija Grotell and spent time at the Cranbrook Press. Her thesis, “Design in the Graphic Arts,” is basically a history of printmaking and the book arts, illustrated by samples of her work and citing much of what she learned in England.<sup>5</sup>

As one of the first art professors hired by CSU, Clara increased the number of art courses offered and hired more faculty, many of whom were graduates of KU. Her method was to teach a class herself until interest was established, then hire faculty with expertise in that medium to continue developing the class. As acting head of the department in 1950 she taught ceramics, drawing, painting, bookbinding, and art history.<sup>6</sup>

The CSU catalog bulletin of 1946-47 lists bookbinding as part of the “handcrafts” classes offered.

This was a new course Hatton developed as part of a post-WWII program in occupational therapy, “Course of Study in Occupational therapy and Related Art.” She created this program as, “an appropriate response to the needs of the post-war (WWII) period, that eventually became one in which the College achieved national recognition.”<sup>6</sup> Eventually the Occupational Therapy program split off from Art, around the time that Clara established the Art Department as its own entity in 1953.<sup>7</sup>

Under her tenure, an Art majors program followed in 1957. By the time she retired in 1966, she was chair of a department with twenty faculty members and eighty majors. When CSU built its first Visual Arts complex in 1974-75, the exhibition gallery was named in her honor. She also received a citation for distinguished professional achievement from KU that year.<sup>8</sup>

After retiring, she moved to Salina, Kansas, and continued to work in a variety of media. There was an exhibition of her bindings in 1978 at the Perry-Castaneda Library at UT, Austin. At a retrospective exhibition in 1979 at CSU, she exhibited oils, watercolors, bindings, calligraphy, etchings, engravings, woodcuts, textiles, jewelry, pottery and drawings. One of her bindings, *The Book of Kells*, was selected for the GBW 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary show in 1981 and *The Book of Ruth* was exhibited at the GBW Centennial in New York, 2006. In addition to bindings created for herself and family members, she accepted commissions. She bound her last book in 1984 and died in Salina in 1991 at age 90.<sup>9</sup>

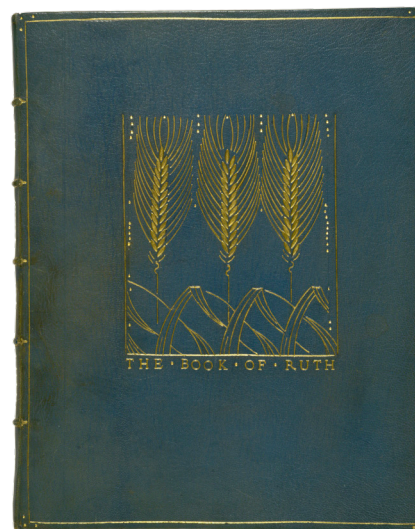
My appreciation of Clara began when I was introduced to her work while doing re-search for an exhibition entitled, Bookbinding in Colorado.<sup>10</sup> Learning more about the range of craft techniques that she had mastered and excelled in, I could not help but be impressed by how much time she devoted to a craft that was not one that she taught once the Art Dept. at CSU was established. As a book conservator, I appreciate the time and practice needed to produce a fine binding. She must have loved binding very much to pursue it in addition to all her other work.

Most of the bindings she completed started with previously bound textblocks that she disbound, then re-sewed on raised cords—lacing-on boards before covering with goat-skin. She sometimes used other materials as covering material for the boards. They were all bound in the English craft-binding tradition. However, she did scribe the text of at least two of her bindings. They are my favorites:



### THE VERY WISE MINNOW

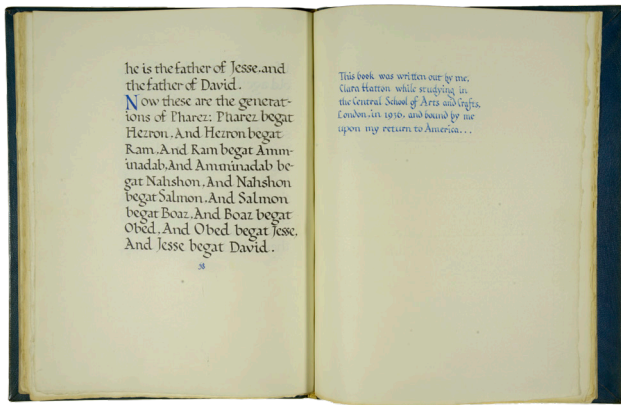
The text was scribed by Hatton in Sept. 1935, before she started writing classes at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, London. It is bound in full leather, with a whimsical design of fish tooled in silver with leather onlays. The design is built from an assortment of gouges and other decorative brass hand tools.



### THE BOOK OF RUTH

According to the colophon, the text was scribed by Hatton in 1936, while studying at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, London, and bound after she returned to the U.S. The binding is not dated. Bound in full Morocco goat, the covers are tooled in a strong stylized design of wheat sheaves made from an assortment of gouges and decorative brass hand tools. The spine and front cover are titled in gold, using 24pt. Doves handle letters.





Colophon from the Book of Ruth



### ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

Another binding with fanciful tooling is *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*; Three Sirens Press, ca. 1930. Bound in red leather, the spine titling letter forms are built up with gouges, line segments, and other decorative brass hand tools. The charming cover decoration is tooled in blind in a grid pattern to suggest a chess board. Black leather on-lays fill in the board. Figures from the illustrated text, tooled in gold (built up with gouges, line segments, and other decorative brass hand tools) complete the design, which continues onto the wide turn-ins.

Thanks in large part to the efforts of her niece, Ora Shay, Hatton's accomplishments are being appreciated anew. There is now a Clara Hatton Center, Inc., headquartered in Salina, Kansas. The exhibition on the CSU campus is a beginning. Hatton devoted her life to her career—a pioneer in the field of education at the time; and she expressed her creative self in the many mediums she mastered. That bookbinding was one of them speaks to her perseverance and energy and the joy of creating beautiful books that were a synthesis of her many talents.

*Karen Jones is a book and paper conservator in private practice in Denver. A long-time member of GBW and board member of the Rocky Mtn. chapter, she wrote and presented "Westward Bound: Surveying the History of Bookbinding and the Book Arts in the Rocky Mountain West" for the Guild centennial in 2006.*

### ENDNOTES

- 1 Conroy, Tom. "Teaching Genealogies of American Hand Bookbinders," GBW Journal Vol. 1 XXVIII, 1990.
- 2 KU archives.
- 3 Correspondence from C Hatton to GBW secretary Thomas Patterson, 1961.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Hatton thesis, Cranbrook archives.
- 6 Annual report submitted by Hatton, 1950.
- 7 *Democracy's College in the Centennial State: A History of Colorado State University*, J. Hanson; Salt Lake City, UT; Publisher's Press, 1977.
- 8 CSU archives.
- 9 Oral interview with Ora Shay, niece of Clara Hatton.
- 10 Bookbinding in Colorado exhibition catalog, Auraria Library, Denver CO, 1994.

# Rare Book Cafe: The book lovers' rendezvous

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By T. Allan Smith and Sophia S.W. Bogle

**T**HE RARE BOOK CAFE WAS created in 2015 at the confluence of developing internet technology and a need to spread the word about the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. Now in its sixth year, Rare Book Cafe is the internet's only weekly live streaming TV talk show-style program devoted to rare and collectible books, including buying, selling, and even just enjoying books. It is now simulcast through Facebook and YouTube, although the only way to have your comments seen in real time is through Facebook.

Creator and executive producer T. Allan Smith, a retired journalist and former bookseller, had helped promote the 30+year-old book fair for more than a decade (in more traditional ways). That all changed when a platform with the inelegant name of Blab came on the internet scene. It made live streaming to a selected audience both accessible and practical. Video conferencing, of course, had been around for years, but it was the purview of big business and industry. It was expensive and cumbersome. It certainly wasn't for narrow-niche endeavors like collecting old books.

The development of Blab gave Smith the free tools he needed to create an ongoing program designed to appeal to people who love old books, maps, prints, ephemera and the like. The irony certainly wasn't lost on him that he could use 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to promote such an old technology as books. In 2016, the Blab platform suddenly closed down though, and the Rare Book Cafe went in search of another home, and eventually ended up on the BeLive platform, which was designed to work with Facebook.

The hosting of the show has evolved over time. It started with Steven Eisenstein, a rare book dealer and appraiser, and Thorne Donnelley of Liberty Book Store, both regular exhibitors at the Florida book fair, and experts in their field. Steven is now host for a call-in radio program in Florida called *Bucks on the Bookshelf* and is the administrator for the Vintage, Rare, & Antique Books Facebook group. Today the Rare Book Cafe features the gregarious Portland, Oregon bookseller Ed Markiewicz of Montgomery Books as host.

The original idea for Rare Book Cafe was to promote the booksellers who would be appearing at the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair, which usually takes place in the first weekend in April. With the new technology, dealers could join the conversation from their desktop computers. That plan worked well, and the willing booksellers gained welcome exposure leading up to the book fair. It quickly became clear, though, that Rare Book Cafe would need to expand its scope if it was to be a viable vehicle year-round. Fortunately, the Rare Book Cafe discovered that there was an abiding interest in bookish subjects around the world and so they

began featuring booksellers who weren't connected to the Florida fair, authors (who often showed their collections of books that had influenced them), book collecting prize winners, appraisers, book fair managers, bookbinders and book artists, and many others.

Several special segments have been developed along the way. It started with Edie Eisenstein (Steven's wife) who joined Rare Book Cafe with a very popular segment about miniature books. A more recent addition is California bookseller David Hess, who has a weekly prerecorded segment called *Things Found in Books*. Then there is Lin Thompson, who provides some highly researched segments on particular authors. Thompson has been with the show for a long time, starting when he was a bookseller in North Carolina (now in Chester, South Carolina). He has since become an associate producer for the program. Another special segment was brought about by the Ashland, Oregon book restorer, Sophia S.W. Bogle of [saveyourbooks.com](http://saveyourbooks.com). Along with Sherif Afifi, the head of rare book conservation and restoration unit in Alexandria, Egypt, they work to help educate the book collecting public about what repairs can be done for books and what should be avoided. This segment has now expanded to include Book Artists and is called *Book Arts and Repair* to reflect that change. Well known Book Artists such as Richard Minsky have been on the show already, and some new artists are scheduled such as Suzanne Glémot and Keri Schroeder.

In addition to these special segments there are a few "regulars" on the show, including Florida genealogist Gigi Best, Georgia bookseller Lee Linn, and Florida ephemerist Barbara Loe. The show also features the occasional prerecorded contributions from Florida bibliophile Jerry Morris, and Florida bookseller Michael Slicker. There is a dizzying array of rotating guests dealing with all aspects of the rare and collectible book world. They're all there for the love of books: *Nam amor librorum*. Rare Book Cafe has, indeed, become the book lovers' rendezvous.

Rare Book Cafe is now simulcast on Facebook and YouTube every Saturday at 12:30 p.m. Eastern:

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RareBookCafe](https://www.facebook.com/RareBookCafe)

YouTube channel: <https://bit.ly/3fbPbt4>

**Note:** The Book Art and Repair segment of the Rare Book Cafe needs a volunteer to help connect book artists and bookbinders and conservators with the show. This is perfect for someone who loves making connections and only takes a few hours a month! Contact Sophia at [sophiaswbogle@gmail.com](mailto:sophiaswbogle@gmail.com) for more information or to suggest yourself or someone else to be on the show.

# Voices from the Field

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Last issue, we put out this call for content:

Making a way in the book arts is extremely challenging in many respects, from acquiring adequate training to supporting oneself financially, and we are interested in sharing the experiences of those who have been trying to make it work. If you've graduated from a book arts, conservation or trade program in the past ten years, or if you have trained via a less formal route, we would like to hear how you've been doing. There are many options for presenting your stories in print, including ones where you can remain anonymous if that is a concern.

Gabby Cooksey and Mel Hewitt, two members from the Northwest, wrote in to share their experiences.

## GABBY COOKSEY

*Give us some information about your training. Do you think that it has been sufficient to prepare you as a working book artist?*

I started off my bookbinding training at American Academy of Bookbinding (one year, taking all the classes) and then graduated from North Bennet Street School in 2014. When I was thinking about life after North Bennet Street, I didn't feel quite ready to start all on my own. I wanted more training, and specifically how to make life work as a bookbinder. I came up with a list of names I was going to contact and see if they would take me on for a couple months after graduating. One of those names was Don Glaister, who was my first bookbinding teacher at AAB. The first time I asked to work with him, he said there was only enough work for himself, but I was persistent (I won an award in grade school for tenacity) and asked again a couple months later. He actually did have work, and so did his wife, Suzanne Moore. So I planned on living in Washington state for the summer until I figured out the next thing. They paid me by funding the materials for my first artist book. This turned out really well since it gave me the know-how to actually produce an artist book and what it would take. They decided to keep me on after the summer was up and I worked there for 6.5 years as their studio assistant.

Another key component to making it work as a bookbinder was working for Springtide Press. This relationship and trust has given me access to letterpress printing equipment and Jessica Spring's expertise. To make ends meet I also teach, garden, dog sit, and a handful of other jobs. Sometimes I would work 5 different jobs in one week! That proved to be exhausting!

*Do you have ready access to the equipment you need?*

I have the equipment I need now. Of course I always need more (looking at you Vandercook press and type cabinet filled with Packard). Definitely not when I started though! I had access to Don and Suzanne's studio if I needed a board shear or a job backer, but I eventually acquired more. My first major pieces were a standing Kuttrimmer (bought out-right), large press (someone forwarded me a listing), and flat files that were going to the dump (someone also told me about this). I have found the rest of the equipment by word of mouth, people

know I'm looking for this, or just given things because people don't know what to do with it. I have been very fortunate that people have had my back on this part. Also, if I don't have it, like a large hot stamper that I would only use once a year, I call up local bookbinders to use their space and know-how.

*Describe the work you do or would like to do. Do you feel that there are sufficient opportunities to find this work and be successful doing it?*

I am a bookbinder who makes artist books and design bindings. This has always been my goal when I first saw a book on books at a library. I was also 19 when I started and very impressionable. This career is hard and stressful but can be very rewarding. I have had people looking out for me wherever I go, too, and that has made the journey better. You never know who you will meet and when, but always be kind because this is a small pond.

I had two major design binding sales while I was at my 2nd year at North Bennet Street. This gave me the confidence to keep going. When I moved to WA, seeing Don and Suzanne's artist books, I knew I wanted to make something like that. My first artist book, *Monsters and Beasts*, sold out in a matter of months. This fueled me to keep going even more and proved that I could do it. Having a strong work ethic, a will to learn and grow, and being very frugal has gotten me to now.

I work with book dealers who sell my work as well. Having them as my cheerleaders and salespeople takes the stress out of me having to do all that. The commission hits hard at the beginning (and still does sometimes, but I have learned to set MY price first and then add on the 40% or whatever on top of that so I'm paid enough).

*Please feel free to describe any things you feel would help you to become more successful within the field.*

My next steps in my work is I would like to have a booth at Codex (or somewhere like that) so I can meet the people who would be interested in buying my work. I would really like that. I also want to open my studio up to people who don't have equipment or studio time once Covid guidelines permit.

Random Thoughts: There are definite ups and downs when you get paid. Sometimes it's just flowing and sometimes it's months where you don't see a check. I'm still learning this rollercoaster, but knowing that this will happen makes it easier to plan and less panic inducing.

Things I have learned so far:

- Taxes (I now have an accountant for that...)
- Retirement (Roth IRA for me)
- What every day looks like for a career bookbinder/book artist
- Advice on sharing your work with others before it is finished (tell them what you want to hear, sometimes it's just praise but if you want their opinion, ask for it)
- If you need help, ask for it
- Walk away if something goes really wrong, then come back after that cup of tea and look at how to fix it when you aren't twitchy. You'll also never make that mistake again if it was that jarring.
- Shop dogs really help
- How to price your work, also when you think you figured it out, call trusted folks and ask their thoughts.
- Plug others wherever you go. Sure you did the work, but did Duckabush Bindery help with your foil stamped title? Did Springtide Press pick the perfect ink for your book? Did Suzanne say that this acrylic would flow better than that other paint? It's not a one-man (woman) show.
- If you find a better way to do something, even if the thing you did in the past is grained into your mind, do the better way. It'll make your books better and easier.

All in all, I think one can make it in this career. I really wanted to make it work, and I still do, so having that drive makes it easier to keep going when it looks bleak. I love working for myself, my own schedule, and I love selling my work knowing that people really enjoy it. My story started off as a college drop-out so I could learn about bookbinding, no ties to anyone or anywhere and no kids/pets. I was free to roam, and roam I did. I'm grateful of where I have ended up, and there is lots more to do.

Please email me ([boundbycooksey@gmail.com](mailto:boundbycooksey@gmail.com)) if you are starting up and need help or someone to talk to. I know I had that at the beginning and that helped me a lot. Thank you Sam!



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## MEL HEWITT

Six years ago I grabbed an old commercially made saddle stitch notebook and tore it apart. I folded those torn out pages, grabbed some heavy cardstock and a needle, and I started sewing. I had decided I was just going to jump in. I had always been interested in books, from reading them to how they looked to how they were made. In college, I had learned that there were actually classes that could be taken to learn how to bind them, but I was dissuaded by my master's student roommate who said those classes were nearly impossible to get into because they were all filled up by grad students before us lowly undergrads could even think of registering. So I didn't bother. It wasn't until we bought and moved into our first house, until my kids were more or less sleeping through the night, and until the prospect of having more time to myself thanks to the light at the end of the potty training tunnel, that I went full head on.

I live in Spokane, Washington. We are the largest city between Seattle and Minneapolis, and I'm one of maybe four book artists (that I recently came to know of) in the immediate vicinity. I wanted to learn how to bind books, and I wanted to do it well. Living where I do, though, the education for such an art is nil. Of the three colleges here, none has a book arts program. My searching online showed that there were colleges across the U.S. that had programs, heck, there was even North Bennet Street School that was solely for hand craft arts. But they were all *across* the U.S. and I was a mother of two young children and the wife to a husband who had just gotten his first real salary job at a tech company. Attending any of those establishments was geographically and financially unfeasible.

So I bought books on how to bind books! I picked up Edith Diehl's two volume work *Bookbinding: Its Background and Technique*, Douglas Cockerell's *Bookbinding: The Classic Arts and Crafts Manual*, and Arthur W. Johnson's *The Thames and Hudson Manual of Bookbinding*. Here was the problem with these texts: they all stated that they were meant as a guide, or a reminder, for those who had already been trained at the bench. There were techniques and terms and descriptions that I couldn't wrap my head around thanks to my being a visual learner. But I managed to glean some things from those texts and even figured out how to bind a book using split boards! Eventually I found little snippets of techniques being taught on YouTube and Instagram and thanks to those I can now sew a pretty nice headband, amongst other things.

This leads me to call myself a self-taught bookbinder. I'm sure this means that I have many bad habits that I will need

to unlearn in order to make technically correct and beautiful books. I haven't had the pleasure of standing side-by-side with binders boasting decades of training and experience who can help correct those habits, but I hope to, one day! I learned about the American Academy of Bookbinding last year and had been making plans to begin attending classes, but because of current events, my plans have been way-laid. I'm slowly learning as best I can by picking up little things here and there thanks to articles in the Guild of Book Workers *Newsletter* (I've only been a member for a year), the online meet ups we have through the Northwest Chapter, and the various networking I've been able to do through social media.

With my current knowledge of bookbinding, I feel largely underprepared to make the work I want. My work began as stationery binding. I focused largely on making journals and daybooks in order to practice and learn new binding structures and techniques. The work that I really want to be doing is in artist books, fine bindings, and design bindings. I want to create beautiful works of art that will end up in collections; the kinds of things that people commission to have boxes made for in order to preserve them for decades.

Having looked at others' bindings of the kind that I want to be able to do, not only am I lacking in training, but I'm also lacking in equipment. And being as I'm one of four in an area where not even the colleges have a class on bookbinding, I'm having to make do with what I can. Seeing this need in our area, and knowing that perhaps there are others out there who might want to learn the art of the book but are hesitant because of all the expensive equipment that is required, I have become a part of Spokane Print & Publishing Center, a non-profit member based community print shop dedicated to the education of printing and providing the use of expensive and large printing equipments and materials. Now that I am on the board of the organization, we are implementing the book arts into our offerings to provide an education that is greatly lacking in our area along with equipment! I have been teaching the basics of bookbinding there for the past year to great success. I'm hoping that this will raise the profile of book arts in our area and create more interest in the craft. I am now more determined than ever to learn from experienced bookbinders, not just the binding of books, but the business of being a bookbinder (i.e. how to get your books in collections, how to sell your books, etc.), and to then bring that knowledge back to Spokane and be the resource that I didn't have when I first started out.

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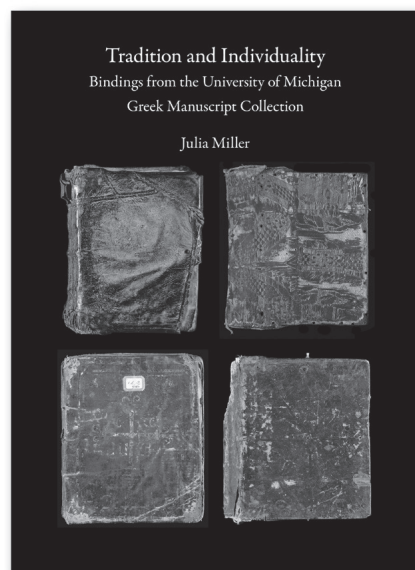
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## Book Review: *Making Impressions: Women in Printing and Publishing*

Editors Cathleen A. Baker and Rebecca M. Chung, The Legacy Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 2020

Reviewed by Barbara Adams Hebard

**M**AKING IMPRESSIONS: WOMEN IN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING, edited by Cathleen A. Baker and Rebecca M. Chung, includes eight essays by a group of impressive women authors. In the introduction, the editors note that they chose the topic of women in printing and publishing because it would be an important way to celebrate the centenary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution, when women gained the right to vote. Add to that, it was a worthy book to read and review during March, Women's History month.

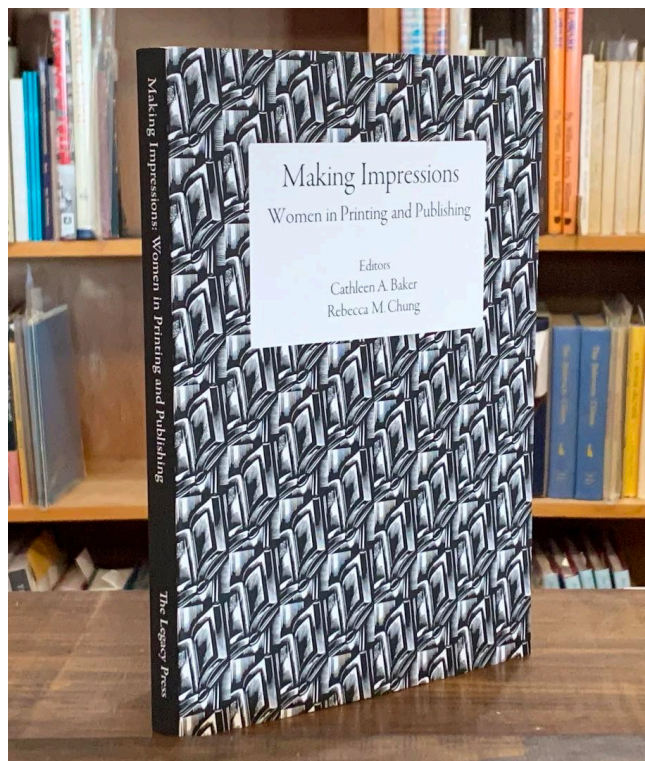
The potential impact of this book on those interested in the history of women in printing and publishing should be comparable to that of the Women's Building library room, during the Columbian Exposition of 1893, when visitors were confronted with a visual display that revealed, as never before, the number of women authors. That 127 years have passed since the Exposition's acknowledgement of thousands of writers points out the negligence—until now—of historians and scholars in affirming distinguished women printers and publishers. This book will lay to rest any speculation as to the number of women in the field and the significance of their achievements.

*Making Impressions: Women in Printing and Publishing* boldly sets out to make up for the lost time by covering the work of women in a wide range of categories, from early printing to internet publishing. The essays on historic printers set out to show the early involvement of women, the astounding numbers working in the field, and the important books that they produced. "Potluck Books and the Women of the Distaff Side" and "Case Studies: How a Generation of Women Came to Print" allow the female printers to have a voice in their own history. It would be a mistake to pass over "Women's Work in the Nineteenth Century, Economy of Pornography", as this reviewer almost did, because it offers interesting insight into the "moral danger in the workplace" for the women employed in binderies. Kitty Maryatt's essay on pochoir is not only a detailed account of the history of the process, but also a thorough guide for others to engage in the method. The

essayists have generously taken on a mentorship role by suggesting useful ways to frame future research on women printers and publishers. It is clear that many hours of research went into these papers and the authors have magnanimously given extensive bibliographies that will provide a solid groundwork from which more scholarship can evolve.

These 340 pages, lavishly illustrated with 220 full-color images, bring visibility to the women in the printing arts in a way that draws attention to and appreciation of their undeniable presence in the field since its very beginnings.

*Barbara Adams Hebard was trained in bookbinding at the North Bennet Street School. She became the Conservator of the John J. Burns Library at Boston College in 2009, after working at the Boston Athenaeum as Book Conservator for more than 18 years. Ms. Hebard writes book related articles and book reviews, gives talks and presentations, exhibits her bookbindings nationally and internationally, and teaches book history classes. She is a Fellow of IIC, a Professional Associate of AIC, was chairperson and long-time board member of the New England Conservation Association, and has served several terms as an Overseer of the North Bennet Street School.*





# The Calligraphic Line

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by Beth Lee

**T**HERE ARE A FEW CALLIGRAPHY books that I return to again and again. One of these is *The Calligraphic Line*, by Hans-Joachim Burgert, with 1989 English translation by Brody Neuenschwander.

A review of this book is always guaranteed to get me out of the technical-practice rut and looking out on the horizon to the greater world of graphic design and fine art. Like the musician who practices scales and arpeggios and never gets around to making music, we calligraphers often concentrate on the shape of an A or the rightness of a flourish at the expense of more basic and global concerns. Burgert is the antidote. He considers, among other things, the changing role of calligraphy throughout history, the relationships between calligraphy and type, and calligraphy as graphic mark-making.

## HANS-JOACHIM BURGERT

Hans-Joachim Burgert was a painter, calligrapher, sculptor, and organist who lived in Germany and died in 2009. He studied painting and architecture at the Berlin School of Fine Arts from 1947 to 1954. Burgert worked in many art mediums, designing stained glass windows and wooden principle pieces (altar, pulpit, font) for churches in the Berlin area. He also produced many fine press prints and books. In 1977, he became the professor for “Free Design” in the Architecture Department at the Technical University of Applied Sciences in Berlin.

In 1999, he was instrumental in founding the Berlin Calligraphy Collective at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, donating 70 of his own pieces to start the collection. A virtual stroll through these works is a pure delight ([www.berliner-sammlung-kalligraphie.de/index\\_e.htm](http://www.berliner-sammlung-kalligraphie.de/index_e.htm)).

Through the magic of the interlibrary loan system, I was able to borrow *Das kalligraphische Werk und die Pressendrucke von Hans Joachim Burgert : Werkverzeichnis : Kalligraphie, Pressendrucke, Schrift*. This is the catalog of a 1991 exhibit of his work in Luxembourg. I have only the German that was foisted upon me as a long-ago music major, and it is entirely inadequate to translate the text. However, the images alone are worth some trouble to access. In particular, his approach to combining text and image is inspiring, as are his works that treat text almost entirely as painted images.

## THE CALLIGRAPHIC LINE: THOUGHTS ON THE ART OF WRITING

This book is organized into six sections. In the first section, Burgert examines the role of form and function, with a discussion that spans the history of writing around the world. In the second section, he covers the history of the graphic form as it relates to writing and writing systems. An entire section is devoted to cursive hand: why it is needed, how cursive develops, and the history of cursive in the West.

Burgert then moves on to the subject of calligraphy in the modern era. Especially informative are his thoughts on the place of calligraphy in the Western world after the invention of printing. He speculates about what might have happened if the calligraphic tradition had established a boundary between itself and type. Following this discussion are some thoughts about where calligraphy may yet be taken.

The last section is given over to the constructive criticism of 6 student pieces. He spares the identities of the students, but not their work. One criticism begins: “This piece is a work of pure kitsch.” The rest of the criticism, though, details just what doesn’t work in the piece, and why. I find this refreshing, and wish that there were a tradition of constructive criticism in the calligraphy world.

While this spiral-bound soft-cover book with its photocopied illustrations is by no means the eye candy that other calligraphy books offer, it addresses vital questions about calligraphy that relatively few people are considering today.

## RECOMMENDED WATCHING

The 2020 three-part BBC documentary, “The Secret History of Writing”, is now available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/TyflS9b77A8>. It is a celebration and history of writing, comparing writing systems throughout history and around the world. Production design by Brody Neuenschwander.



# Copyrights

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By Iris Nevins

**I**N THE NOW 43 YEARS I have marbled, I have seen both my work and other marblers' work "stolen". It is usually discovered by either ourselves or another marbler, or a friend, after being seen on a book jacket, a calendar, a package design, etc., and nowadays it can be a background on someone's web page.

Sometimes it is an innocent mistake, though usually not, and every marbler I know uses a copyright stamp on the back of the paper. However, sometimes someone gets a partial sheet and uses it for reproduction for one of the uses just mentioned. Sometimes the copyright stamp is missing from that part of the paper. I have had this happen a few times and could tell when the person was telling the truth. Usually they have been very upset and offered compensation, or if able, say if on a web site, to remove it, or we come to an agreement where they can use it but they gave me a credit line and contact information was listed.

Other times, and more often, unfortunately, the paper was bought in a shop and a designer used it as a background, say on a book jacket, added a photo and some type, titling, and was paid handsomely by the publisher. If you look in the credits, it only says, "Cover design by so and so".

I have had this happen countless times, and it is infuriating. In nearly every case, I called the publisher, and they generally are very upset that their designer did this; they generally are not told. They are very quick to offer a licensing fee in most cases. I have had one or two problems, one requiring a lawyer.

There are people who see the copyright notice, yet think they will get away with it. I imagine there are quite a few I have never known about, and suspect the same has happened to most professional marblers too.

So how do you copyright your work? The patterns are mostly very old, and public domain. Well, what you are getting the copyright on is not the patterns, but your interpretation of them. Your artwork. The simple act of creation actually gives you a common law copyright, but if you run into a legal problem, it is much easier to collect a fee or damages if you have a registered copyright.

"But," many say, "I make hundreds or more papers a year. I have to go through getting a copyright for all of them?"

No. When I did this way back in the 1980s, I learned that you can take a group photo of all the patterns you do, make one paper in each pattern, or you can make up a sample booklet. And then they ask, "But I do each in many different colors! It is so many!" Well, the good news is color is not copyrightable: one will do for each pattern, any color. You can have your sample in blues and make it in greens, still covered! You register essentially just a group of your styles.

Another question, "But each paper is a little different." That too is easy: slight variations are covered.

Most somewhat experienced marblers are able to tell one person's work from another's, and certainly their own; it is like handwriting. The copyright system is very pro artist, and registering is likely much easier to do today than it was 40 years ago! My booklet of samples I did then is still good today, and I highly recommend taking the little bit of time to do this, as you will be protected for life. And 75 years after if you want to leave your images to your heirs!

## Matters Technical: Leather Corners

*The idea for this issue's topic came from Lang Ingalls, and since she suggested it, I asked her to discuss her preferred methods as a kind of introduction.*

### LANG INGALLS

I have learned several different methods for turning a corner. The first consideration in deciding which one to use is the covering material.

For paper, my favorite corner is the one by Kylin Lee Achermann.

For bookcloth, I use a regular 45° trim at 1.5 board thickness from the tip of the board, assuring complete coverage of the corner. I often round the board tip slightly, then tap into a nice square once the corner is turned.

With leather, I have learned several methods. I prepare all of them with slight thinning in the area and no trim to start. I always mark a pencil line at 45° across the inside of the board for visual guidance at each corner.

One method I learned is from Eleanor Ramsey. She brings both edges toward the corner, then firmly pulls at a 45° across the top of the board using band nippers, toward the center spine, over the flat of the board. Then, with scissors flat on

the board and about 1–2mm above the corner, she snips the extra material and works the leather back in to create a fully covered and tucked corner. I use this “band nipper tug” for buffalo or any other leather that I feel may fight me.

Tini Muira taught me the method of trimming first one edge at a 45° cut, the scalpel perpendicular to the board, then turning the other part over that and cutting at the same 45°. She proceeded with the “bandaid” to finish—this is a very small feathered onlay piece that just covers the crease at the corner, over the turned area. I find this technique is particularly useful if I made a poor corner and the suede—a different color—is showing. (I often use the bandaid if the plan is for paper pastedowns, which exposes the corner areas to the eye.)

Monique Lallier taught me another method, which I believe is covered in this article. I use this method regularly.

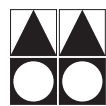
Another method I use is when I make a leather case binding. In this method, the leather is folded over tightly, first one side then the other, in a buildup of layers. Then, perpendicular to the board, I hold my Swiss paring knife along the 45° line and toward the corner, rocking down through all the layers and fully to the corner. The leather is slowly pulled up and the excess removed and then pulled to a nice corner.

### 2021 Class Schedule

now available on our website  
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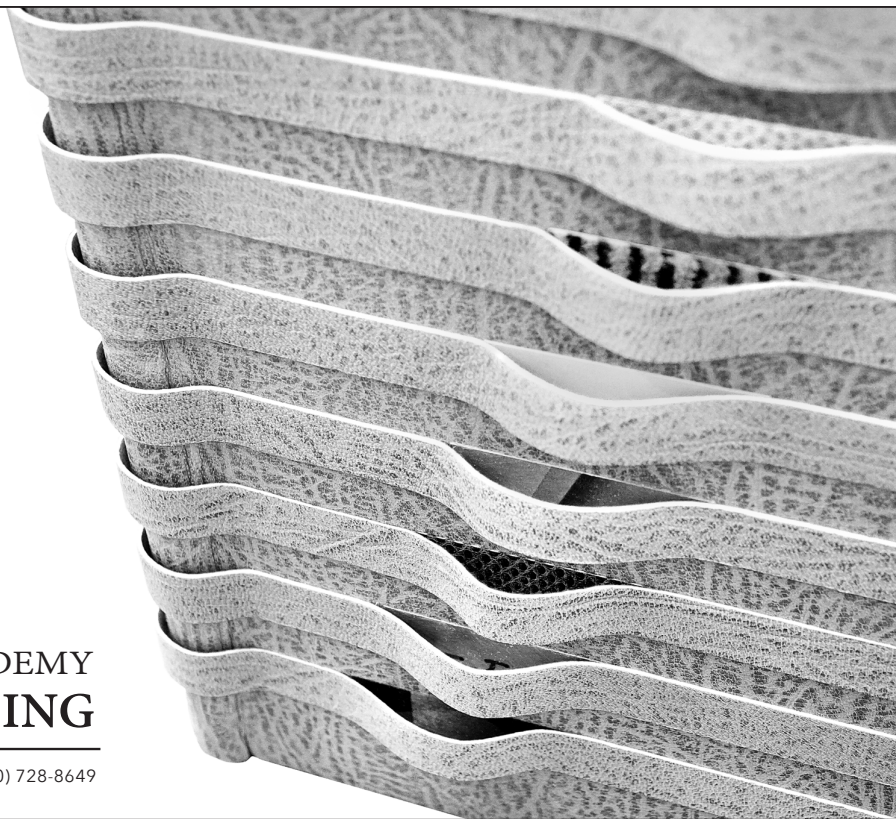
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## KYLIN LEE ACHERMANN

### Dry Leather Corners

My technique for working leather corners evolved from the challenge of working with partial chrome tanned leather. Such leather does not wet through in the same way that traditional vegetable tanned leather does and therefore does not allow for the leather to be worked, molded, and adhered with paste. The idea is to create a mitered corner with a clean, flush, overlapping scarf joint.

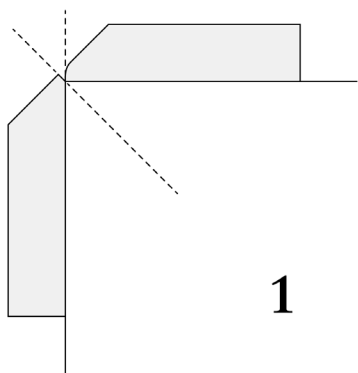
I use this technique with a variety of covering materials, as it can be successfully applied to recycled or composite fiber leathers, as well as any variety of thicker covering materials that lend themselves to being pared with a scalpel.

I use a mix of PVA and paste, or even straight PVA depending on the qualities of the material I am working with. Leather is adhered to the board, usually by gluing off the board. The turn-ins are then trimmed, and corners cut and prepared according to the diagram figures 1 & 2. The shaded areas in figure 2 indicate where the leather is pared down to a feather in an even bevel. There is a small “tab” of leather that will tuck around the corner with the first turned edge to insure good coverage over the corner.

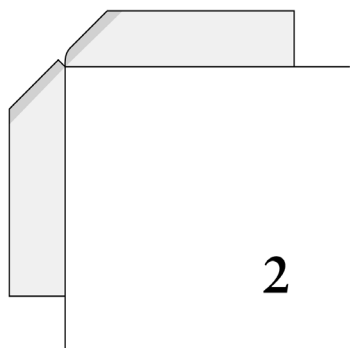
At this point, I use the scalpel to remove a small amount of material from the board corner, if necessary, to create a softer corner and to compensate for the “tab” of material that can bunch a bit as it gets tucked around.

The tab side is glued off and turned first, and the tab tucked around the corner and smoothed down (figure 3). I then bring the second side around (before gluing off) and check to see if the overlap is smooth and flush and if the exposed edge looks clean and lays nicely creating a tidy seam directly up the board edge corner and along at a 45° angle. When paring the edges, start with removing less rather than more. It is always easy to shave off a little extra material to make the miter completely smooth and flat. With some practice, one gets a feel for quickly paring the bevels such that they meet for a nice level scarf joint. Of course, with leather one can take advantage of the grain structure. Paring down to a feather allows for the grain to visually meld together and the joint all but disappears.

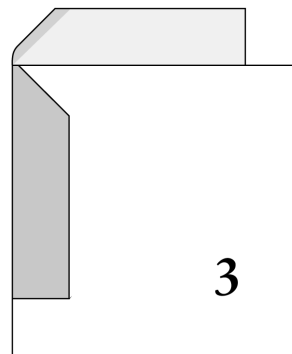
*Kylin Lee Achermann is an American-born hand bookbinder and craftsperson. Her work focuses on contemporary bookbinding and using those materials and techniques as a launching point for the design and creation of a variety of beautiful and functional objects. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Photography and Cognitive Science at Hampshire College, Kylin dedicated eight years to working for and learning from Master Bookbinder Daniel Kelm at The Wide Awake Garage in Easthampton, MA. In 2007 Kylin established her own studio producing small editions of artist books and fine press books. Since moving to Switzerland in 2010, she has become an active member of the group [buchundform.ch](http://buchundform.ch) and teaches regularly at the centro del bel libro in Ascona, Switzerland. [www.cbl-ascona.ch](http://www.cbl-ascona.ch)*



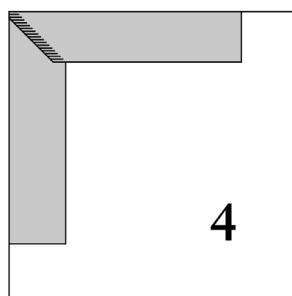
1



2



3



4



## BEN ELBEL

### Step 1: Preparation

The first thing to do to get a nice leather corner is to prepare the leather and the board adequately. In this example I am using 2mm presspahn board which I have thinned down along the edges (chamfering) to approximately 3/4 of its initial thickness. I have slightly broken its sharp edges but not rounded the tip, as the leather will naturally do this job! The leather (goatskin) is pared to 0.6/0.3mm, which means it is 0.6mm thick on the outside and 0.3mm thick on the edge and on the inside (turn-in). These thicknesses are variables but this particular combination works for me in 99% of the cases. I have marked the position of the turn-ins with a biro line [ball point pen].

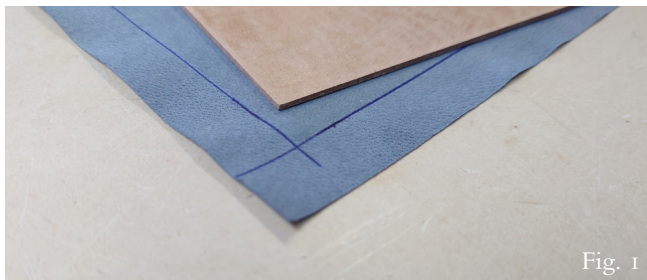


Fig. 1

### Step 2: Gluing down the board

I do this by applying PVA to the outer face of the board, using a roller.

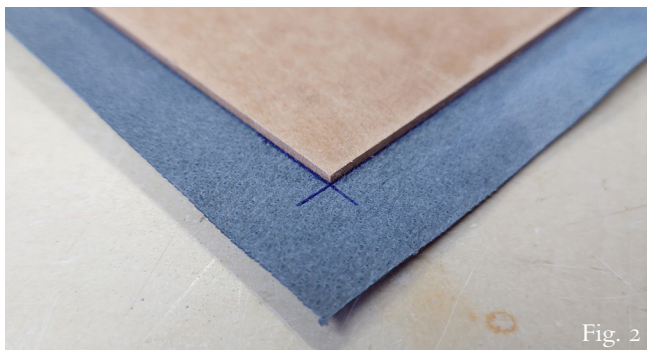


Fig. 2

### Step 3: Cutting the corner

I cut the leather at a distance from the board tip equivalent to the board thickness (at the tip), plus 1 mm, which is the amount of overlapping which will occur on the inside. In this case this distance is approximately 2.5mm.

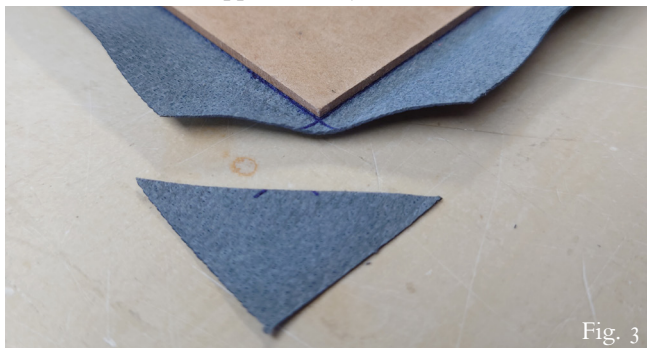


Fig. 3

### Step 4: Paring

Then I proceed to paring the leather. My goal is to edge-prepare it (1mm wide, the amount of overlapping) and also to remove some flesh from the small triangle between the tip of the board and the edge of the leather. I execute both things with a scalpel with blade #10A. I do the edge paring in two steps because of the board in the way (figures 4 and 5), and the triangle, well...carefully! (Figure 6). This step is a bit tricky but it makes for a sharper tip, and easier pleating.

How to know if the leather has been cut at the right distance and if the edge-paring is sufficient? Turn in and check the overlap: there should be neither a bump nor a recess at this spot.

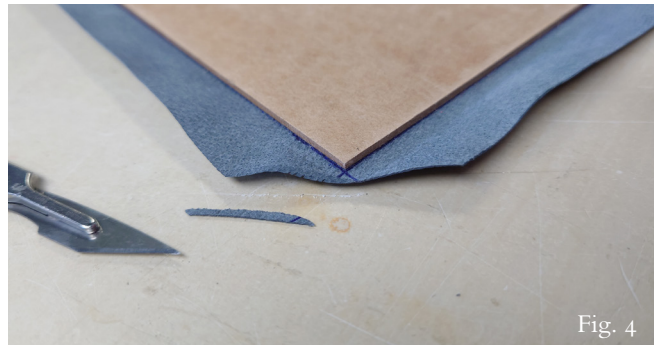


Fig. 4

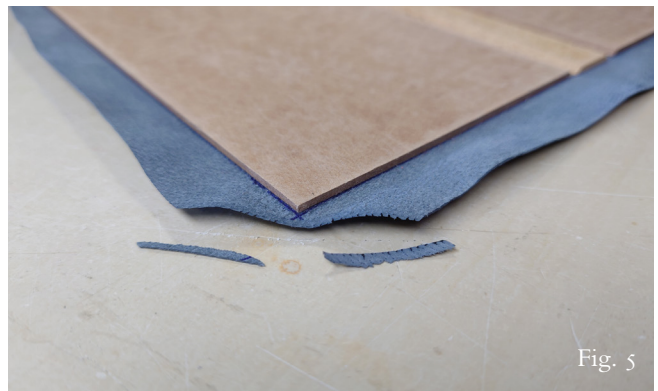


Fig. 5

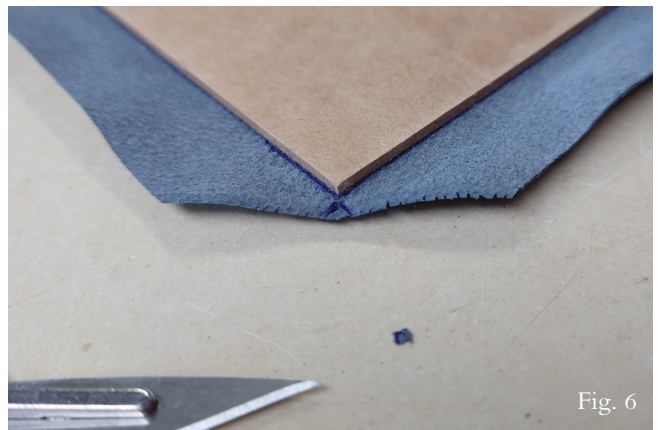


Fig. 6



### Step 5: Turning in

Now we can proceed with gluing and turning in. I use PVA for this as well but adding a bit of paste in it can't hurt. I like to do this in two steps, two turn-ins at a time. If we focus on the corner only, you can see that I have done one turn-in (figure 7), and before doing the second one (figure 9) I have lifted the leather slightly at the tip to be able to insert new glue in there (figure 8) to allow for pleating, which I do with an awl (figure 10). After some more rubbing and smoothing using various bone and Teflon folders, both inside and outside, the corner is finished (figures 11 and 12).

*Benjamin Elbel (French nationality, 1983) has a background in illustration and trained as a bookbinder at the 'Centro del bel libro' in Ascona (Switzerland), and at the bench of various fine bookbinding firms in Germany and England, before setting up his own business in 2012, first in London and since 2015 in Haarlem, Netherlands. His studio currently provides services to bibliophiles, antiquarian book dealers and the hospitality industry. An inquisitive mind, Ben has a passion for the engineering side of bookbinding, and has developed many structures and processes which he uses in his practice, and shares with the community via Bookbinding Out of the Box, a project dedicated to innovation in hand bookbinding.*

[www.elbel-libro.com](http://www.elbel-libro.com) | [www.bookbindingoutofthebox.com](http://www.bookbindingoutofthebox.com)



Fig. 7



Fig. 10



Fig. 8



Fig. 11



Fig. 9



Fig. 12

## JEFF ALTEPETER

### Tini Corners

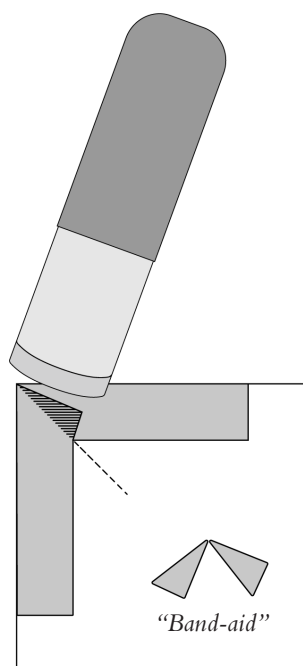
This is a technique I learned from Tini Miura for nearly invisible corners on a goatskin binding. It utilizes the off-cut of the leather to make an onlay over the butt joined edges of the turn-in. There are many little tricks for executing this perfectly and I have to admit that I most often use Don Etherington's English style corner technique. Don's technique is easier and I can't do Tini's corners as well as she does!

#### The simplest explanation:

- Overlap the corners while covering
- Cut through the all layers with a Swiss knife, rolling it toward the tip of the corner
- Open up the corner and remove the little triangles of excess leather.
- Stick those triangles down on the inside of the board right next to the corner from which they were cut
- Carefully push the turn-ins together to form a neat butt joint
- After drying, cut a shallow v-groove along that butt joint
- Cut a matching v-groove from the excess leather you saved and use that little strip as an onlay to make the join invisible

#### Some of the little tricks:

- When you open up that cut corner to remove the excess leather it is usually not completely free. Gently lift up on that piece to pull some of the cover leather up over the tip of the board corner and slice it off at a low angle. That will give you a little more leather



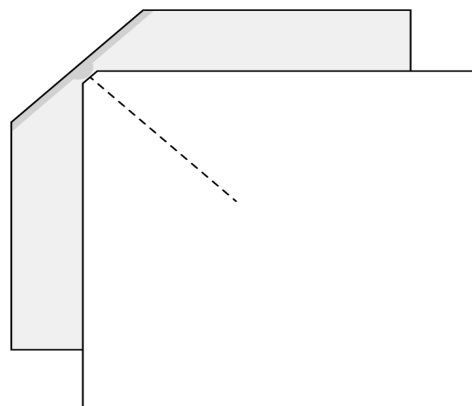
to work when you re-form the corner. Make sure it fully covers the corner, all the way to the inside of the board surface, pleating a bit at the tip as needed.

- Make sure you push plenty of leather toward the butt joint to avoid the joint opening up while drying as the leather wants to shrink.
- Saving the little triangles with their exact corner means the color and grain of the leather will match best when applying the onlay.
- When applying the leather onlay be very careful to not over-work it. Place it and gently press into position. Wait to dry before rubbing it down more firmly through paper. If you work it wet or damp it will easily bruise and discolor and fail to blend in nicely with the turn-ins.

*Jeffrey Altepeter has been the bookbinding department head at North Bennet Street School since 2007. He is a graduate of the bookbinding program at NBSS and also earned a diploma in Fine Binding from The American Academy of Bookbinding. In addition to full time teaching Jeff is a self-employed bookbinder specializing in leather bindings and box making.*

## DON ETHERINGTON

- Pencil a 45° line at the corner.
- Barely nip off the corner of the board (the diagram is exaggerated).
- Cut the leather at a sharp bevel with a paring knife 1.5 board thicknesses away from the corner.
- Scoop out a thinner area of leather right at the corner with a scalpel.
- Turn in one edge and align with the pencil mark.
- Turn in the other edge and carefully align the beveled edges to make a flat line.
- Pleat the leather at the tip of the corner and smoothly align all—no valley, no gap.



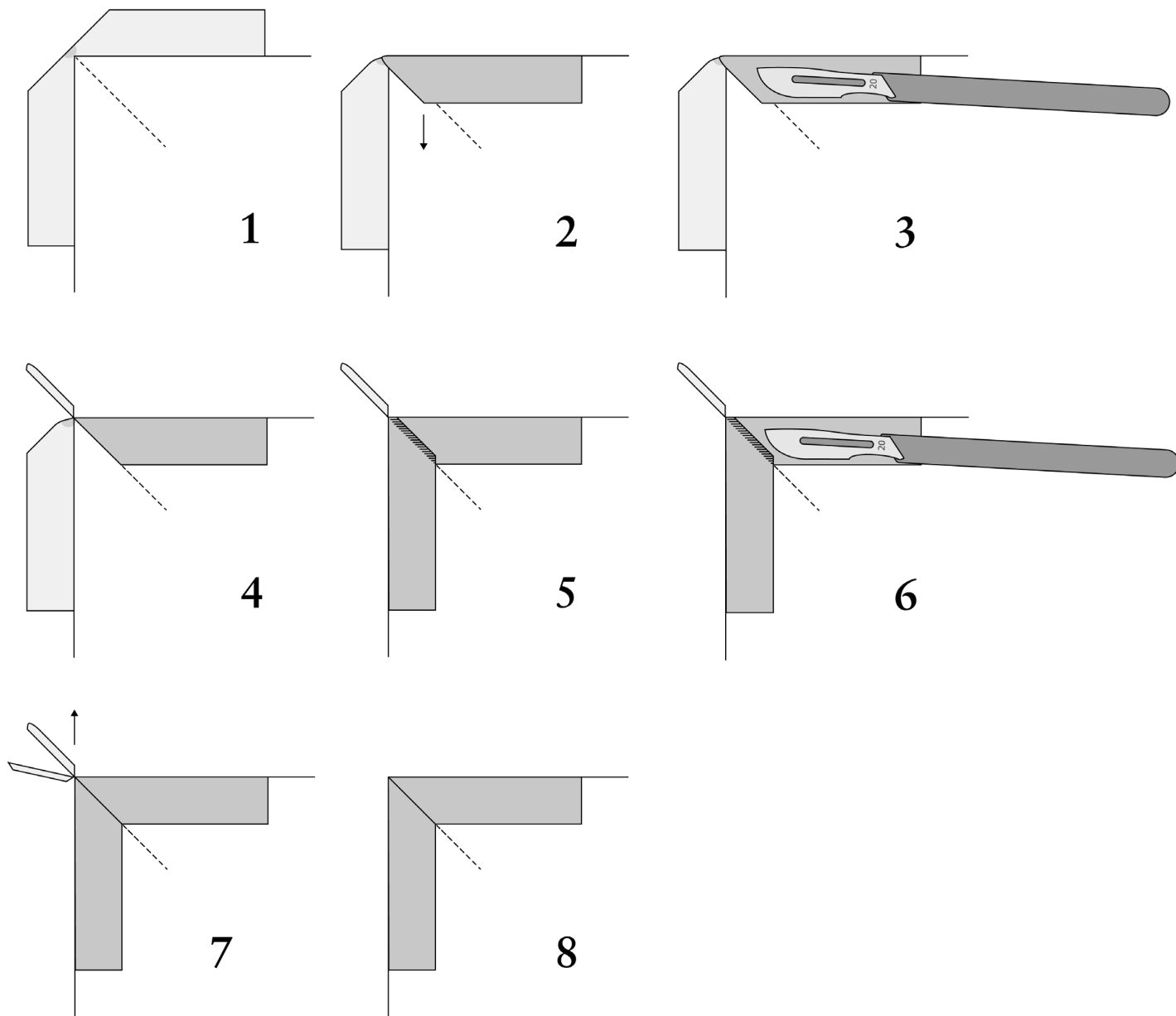
## MONIQUE LALLIER

Most of the time my leather is already pared at 0.6 or 0.7mm, depending on the leather, and it can be 0.5mm for Buffalo, as it is a very strong skin. I start by drawing a 45° line bisecting the corner of the board (figure 1). I cut the corner of the leather at 45° two board thicknesses away from the corner of the board. I then turn in the right side of the leather, making it tight at the edge of the board (figure 2). With a #20 Swann-Morton scalpel blade held at an angle of 45°, I cut along the 45° line previously traced on the board (figure 3). I then bring the excess leather from the cut up, extending straight out from the corner; do not cut or pull it now (figure 4). Next, I bring the left side over, making sure it is tight at the corner and on the edge of the board by pulling the leather toward me (figure 5). With the scalpel blade held again at 45°, I cut on the same line (figure 6). Next, I lift up the two excess pieces of leather

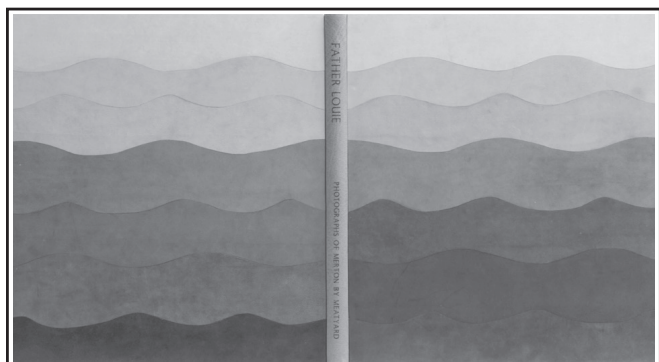
from the two cuts and pull them off (figure 7). Finally, I bring inside the cut the remnants of the leather and mix the grain for a clean cut corner (figure 8). Do not rub too much as you can kill the grain.

For a calf or box calf leather the angle of my blade is a little more, as I want to get just the skin to go over the other side.

*I started bookbinding in Montreal with Simone B. Roy in 1972. When I first walked in Simone's studio, I knew that it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. After four years as a student, Simone asked me to work with her. I went to Paris to study gold tooling with Roger Arnoult, in Ascona with Edwin Heim and Solothurn with Hugo Peller. Nicole Billard and I had a studio in Montreal for six years...and I was invited to Finland for a private conference and met Don Etherington...the rest is history!*







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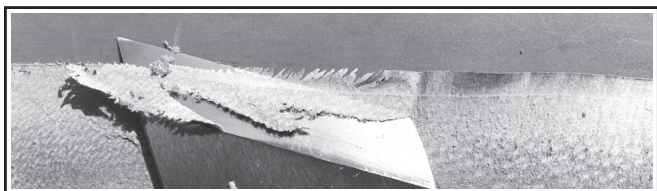
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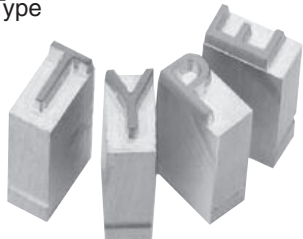
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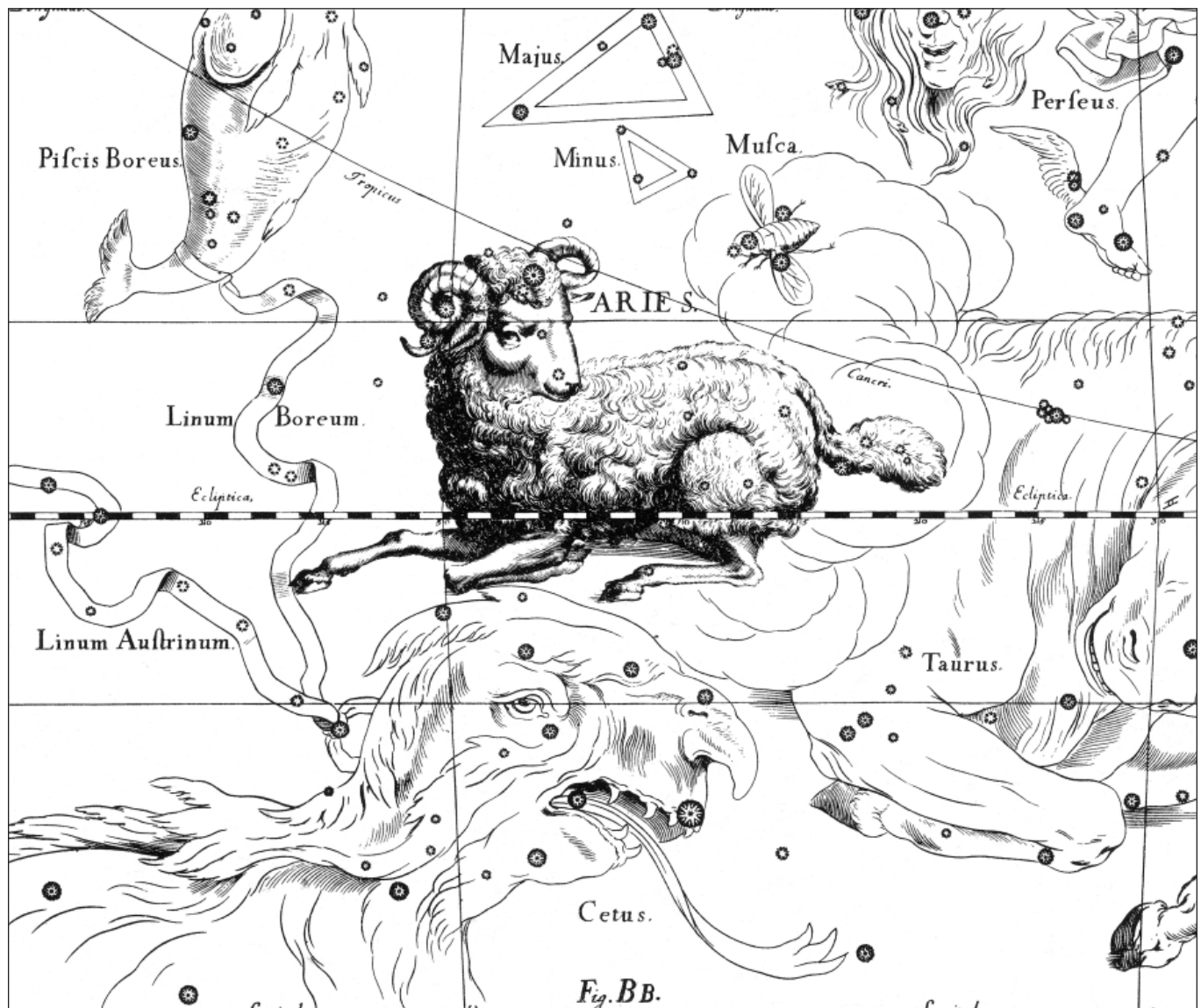


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