

Newsletter

GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS • EST. 1906

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Cover art: Books and tools from a Kyoto book-binding studio. See related story and photos by Kitty Maryatt beginning on page 7.

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GBW Exhibition

Marking Time at the University of Utah until April 23.

The Guild of Book Workers *Marking Time* exhibition is on view at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City until April 23. The show then travels to the Denver Public Library, opening May 3.

Exhibition catalogs are still available, including a very limited number of unbound copies in sheets. The exhibition is online at www.guil-dofbookworkers.org, along with information and a complete tour schedule. There may be slight variations in the start and end dates at each venue. Please check with the venues before making travel plans.

Several Guild regional chapters are in the early planning stages for their own exhibitions. Watch for details in future chapter newsletters or their own exhibitions. Watch on chapter web pages or blogs.

Karen Hanmer

karen@karenhanmer.com

www.karenhanmer.com

Events in the Chapters

California Chapter:

The Chapter will stage an exhibition of recent and no-previously-exhibited work at the Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge, opening on April 13 and going through May 26. Check Library for hours: ><http://library.csun.edu>< or contact Joe Giangrande >rinnovi@cox.net<.

Delaware Valley:

A lecture (free) by Paul Johnson will be **May 7**, 5:15 p.m., Library Company of Philadelphia. Mr. Johnson will then have a workshop on **May 8**, 9:00-5:00 p.m. on "The Book as Architecture", at the Philadelphia Center for the Book.

Lone Star:

Plans continue for venue arrangements for the 2011 Exhibition. Chapter members participating are to bind Lone Star member Pamela Leutz's book *The Thread That Binds: Interviews with Private Practice Bookbinders*. Unbound signatures available from Oak Knoll Press.

Midwest:

The Chapter's Annual Meeting will be in Ann Arbor, MI **April 16-17**. A paper marbling workshop with Stephen Pittlekow will be offered also. Efforts are underway to organize an exhibition of member's work in the fall.

New England:

The Chapter is co-sponsoring a variety of lectures at the North Bennet Street School in celebration of the School's 125th year. See NBSS Web site: >www.nbss.org< and check the Chapter's blog: >negbw.wordpress.org<

New York:

Upcoming events sponsored by the Chapter:

Apr 6 – lecture, Sylvie Merian at New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM), Main Reading Room.

Apr 24-25 – workshop, *Color Theory and Color Matching*, with Julia Rabin at Judy Ivry's Studio.

May 6-7; possibly 8th – workshop, *Introduction to Photo Conservation*, with Nora Kennedy at MYAM

Jun 18-19 – workshop, *The Nag Hammadi Codex*, with Julia Miller at NYAM. Contact Clare Manias or Rachel Lapkin, >newyork@guildbookworkers.org<. See >gbwny.org<

Northwest:

A Limp Vellum Binding workshop taught by Don Etherington will be held in two session, Friday, **April 9**, and Saturday, **April 10**, co-sponsored by the University of Oregon. A workshop taught by Jim Canary on Himalayan bindings is being planned for the summer in Portland, Oregon.

Potomac:

The Chapter has organized, in conjunction with Pyramid Atlantic, an Edible Book Festival 2010 on **April 3**, 2:00-5:00 p.m., Pyramid Atlantic, 8230 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD. The festival pays homage to Brillat-Savarin - 1755-1826 (a French Gastronomer, famous for his book *Physiologie du goût*, a witty meditation on food.) The only rules are making edible art that have something to do with books as shapes and/or content.

Calendar of Events

EXHIBITIONS

Currently and through April 30, 2010: *Conservation History: Irish Roots and Boston Craftsmanship*, an exhibition exploring the role of conservator in the John J. Burns Library, Bapst Building, Boston College, Boston, MA. and marking the 20th anniversary of the presence of conservators in the library. The conservation lab's beginning had an important Irish connection in terms of training. William Anthony, Irish born and apprenticed, was a well-respected bookbinder and conservator who taught Burns Book Conservator Mark Esser bookbinding and book conservation. Before joining the Burns Library staff, Mark was the founder of the Bookbinding Program at the North Bennet Street School. The Boston school, well-known for its tradition of craftsmanship, is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year. Burns Library conservators Marilyn Heskett and Barbara Adams Hebard were students of Mark Esser at North Bennet. Library hours and directions available at: <http://www.bc.edu/libraries/collections/burns.html>

Currently and through March 2011: Guild of Book Workers' traveling exhibition of 50 works with a theme of *Marking Time*. At J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, March 5-April 23, 2010. Catalog available. Information and order form at: <http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/gallery/markingtime/>

Currently and through May 1, 2010: *Lives on the Mississippi: Literature and Culture along the Great River* from the Collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association. A stellar selection of books, maps, prints, ephemera and objects which chronicles the influence of the Mississippi River on the American consciousness through the centuries. For further information, see St. Louis Mercantile Library website: www.umsl.edu/mercantile

April 1-May, 2010: *Artists Bookworks Cornucopia*, a juried show of artists' bookworks. See "Call for Entries". www.abecedariangallery.com

May 14-June 2, 2010: *Inventive Structures: Books Beyond the Codex*, a national exhibition juried by Hedi Kyle, at Creative Arts Workshop, New Haven, CT. Call 203.562.4927 or email triciay@creativeartsworkshop.org

May 19-July 31, 2010: *Bound for Success* -- The Designer Bookbinders exhibition, the first international bookbinding competition of the Designer Bookbinders, a UK based, international organization devoted to the craft of fine binding www.designerbookbinders.org.uk. At the Grolier Club, New York. Features 117 winning bindings from binders in

21 countries. Entrants all bound the same text, *Water*, designed and printed by Incline Press. A printed exhibition catalog accompanies exhibition.

Online Exhibition: Library and Archives Canada (LAC) launches an online exhibition of "Artists' Books: Bound in Art", which showcases one of the most diverse, yet lesser-known genres of artwork held at LAC. Featuring beautiful, fragile, rare books, the Web site makes these treasured pieces accessible to all and teaches youth that artists' books are an important means of artistic expression. See <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/livres-d-artistes/index-e.html>. For more information, contact webservices@lac-bac.gc.ca

Exhibitions for 2010: The Walters Art Museum, 600 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21201, 410.547.9000 or www.thewalters.org. Contact: Amy Mannarino, amannarino@thewalters.org

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WORKSHOPS, LECTURES & OTHER EVENTS

Spring Classes: At Oregon College of Art and Craft, 8245 SW Barnes Rd., Portland OR. Contact: Sarah LaBarre, >slabarre@ocac.edu< or 971.255.4159.

Apr 3-4: *Etching*, Stephen Funk (#BA704)

May 21-23: *Illuminated Paper*, Helen Hiebert (#F1701)

Jun 4-6: *Double Raised Cords Meet the Gutter Wire*, Daniel Kelm (#BA701)

Jul 14-18: *Color Woodcut Printmaking*, Karen Kunc (#BA703)

Jul 24: *Letterpress Ink Intensive*, Rebecca Gilbert (#BA704)

Aug 2-6: *The Secrets of the Magic Tablet*, Julie Chen (#BA705).

Scholarships available for OCAC. Contact: Kristin Shiga, >kshiga@ocac.edu< or 971.255.4217.

Spring & Summer Offerings: At J. Willard Marriott, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT, >http://bookartsprogram.org< or >bookartsprogram@utah.edu< or 801.585.9191:

Apr 9-10: *A Little Topsey in the Turvey: Materiality and Mechanics of Letterpress Production*, with Emily McVarish. Lecture also.

May 19-Aug 4: *Letterpress Printing 1, 2, 3* with Marnie Powers-Torrey & David Wolske.

Aug 26-Dec 9: *Bookbinding 1, 2, 3* with Chris McAfee.

Jun 9-12: *A Space to Make Your Mark: Complex Multi-Level Boxes* with Julie Chen.

Jun 26: *Peep Show: Design & Construction of the Tunnel Book* with Amber Heaton.

Jul 31: *Flex-a-sketch: Crafting the Custom Sketchbook* with Chris McAfee.

Sep 24-25: *Binding the Strange & Unusual: Books with Rigid Pages* with Alicia Bailey.

Beginning in April, 2010: at Garage Annex School, Easthampton, MA, new workshops being offered along with old favorites. Instructors include: Eric Alstrom, Martin Antonetti, Julie Chen, Peter Geraty, Daniel Kelm, Art Larson, Nancy Leavitt, Linda Lembke, Julia Miller, Suzanne Moore, Shawn Sheehy, and Pamela Spitzmueller. In July there will be a concentration of workshops with the option of housing, breakfast, and dinner at Williston Northampton School. Workshop details, and new pages for "Private Study" and "Get Involved" at >www.GarageAnnexSchool.com<

April 23-August 16, 2010: At North Bennet Street School, Boston, MA, which is celebrating its 125th year, >www.nbss.org<:

Apr 12: *19th Century Bookbinders' Mistakes, Why They Are So Fun to Look At!*, Todd Pattison, lecture, 6:00 p.m.

Apr 30: *Books Without Folds: An Artist Talk with Paul Johnson*, lecture, 6:00 p.m.

May 1: *Pop-up Extravaganza*, Paul Johnson, 9:30-4:30 p.m.

June 21-25: *New Oriental Bindings*, Monique Lallier, in collaboration with American Academy of Bookbinding.

Jul 29-31: *Islamic Bookbinding*, Katherine Beaty

Aug 12-16: *Tips and Tricks for Book and Paper Conservation*, 8:30-4:30 p.m.

For fall semester 2010, the "Three Month Bookbinding Intensive" will return, taught by Stacie Dolin.

April 26 - October 18, 2010: Classes at the School for Formal Bookbinding, Plains, PA, about 3 hrs from both Philadelphia and New York City. Maximum for class: 5. Call Don Rash, 570.821.7050 or e-mail >studior@epix.net<. Classes offered:

Apr 26-30: *Foundations of Hand Bookbinding*

May 3-7: *Introduction to Case Binding*

May 15-16: *Introduction to Edge Gilding*

Jun 7-11: *Introduction to Leather Binding (Quarter Leather)*

Jun 14-18: *Full Leather Binding*

Jun 21-25: *Conservation of Cloth Bindings*

Jun 28-Jul 2: *Conservation of Leather Bindings*

Jul 10-11: *Introduction to Titling and Tooling*

Jul 19-23: *Foundations of Hand Bookbinding*

Jul 26-30: *Introduction to Case Binding*

Sep 13-17: *Introduction to Leather Binding (Quarter Leather)*

Sep 20-24: *Full Leather Binding*

Oct 11-15: *Conservation of Cloth Bindings*

Oct 18-22: *Conservation of Leather Bindings*

May 9-June 5, 2010: Workshops at John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC, 800.FOLK.SCH, >www.folkschool.org<

May 9-15: *Books and Batik*, Barbara Bussolari and Suzanne Hall

May 28-30: *Book Arts Sampler* (weekend), Joyce Sievers

May 30-Jun 5: *Paper Making for Books and Boxes*, Claudia Lee

Jul 11-17 (Session I) and July 18-24 (Session II): Book Arts Summer Institute, Wells Book Arts, Aurora, NY. Session I offerings with Andrew Huot, Cheryl Jacobsen, Katherine Ruffin,

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and Michael Bixler. Session II offerings with Julia Leonard, Barbara Tetenbaum, and Sharon Zeugin. >www.wells.edu/bookarts<

July 26 through August 20, 2010: Montefiascone Project, north of Rome, Italy, Maria L. Fredericks, contact, 212.590.0379 or FAX 212.768.5673 or e-mail >mfedericks@themorgan.org<:

Jul 26-30: *Re-creating the Medieval Palette*, Cheryl Porter

Aug 2-6: *Introduction to the Islamic Book Structure*, John Mumford

Aug 9-13: *The Biccherne of Siena*, Jennifer Storey and Caroline Checkley-Scott

Aug 16-20: *Paper Bindings of Montefiascone*, Maria Fredericks (w/Nicolas Barker)

October 14-16, 2010: 29th Annual Seminar on Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding, Tuscon, AZ, Radisson Suites. Presenters are Martha Little, Jeff Peachey, Michael Burke, Nancy Leavitt.

October 15-17, 2010: The American Printing History Association's 2010 annual conference,

Learning to Print, Teaching to Print: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives. Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC. ><http://www.printinghistory.org/>> .

Corrections to February 2010 GBW Newsletter

Page 13: *Book Art Object*, The Codex Foundation
The founder of Codex is Peter Koch, not Peter Loch.

Page 20: **Parchment Making** Article
The article's author is Demetrios Vital.

Apologies for the inaccurate information listed in the February issue.

Waste Not: Japanese Bookbinding

by Kitty Maryatt

I rented an art studio in Kyoto, Japan for two exciting and rewarding months last summer. I was in Tokyo the first week and a half, giving three bookbinding workshops and two lectures on the history of bookbinding for the Alpha Club. My entire stay swirled around studying Japanese traditional calligraphy and scroll-making, and seeking out Western calligraphy and artist books done by Japanese people. It was peppered with extraordinarily lucky events: an exhibit of Western-style calligraphy paired with Belgian calligraphers opened in Yokohama just after I got there; two weeks later a huge Japanese calligraphy exhibit (probably 400 pieces on display) opened in Kyoto; several weeks later a Silk Road exhibit opened in Kyoto displaying hundreds of years of hand-written texts from Central Asia and China. I was in calligraphy heaven. This was in addition to experiencing stick ink-making, ink stone carving, scroll-making, ink squeezes (takuhon), carving a seal, traditional bookbinding, kumihimo braiding, indigo dyeing, silk dyeing and cutting intricate stencils for silk dyeing (katagami).

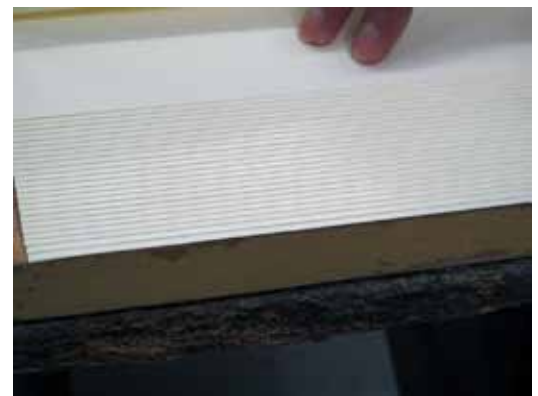
My constant companions in Kyoto were my calligraphy teacher Yoko Nishina and my former Scripps College student Miki Matsuda, who was born in Kyoto. To my delight, both of them were dedicated to helping me experience their Japanese world. They arranged meetings with the most fascinating and accomplished craftspeople and interpreted for me. Miki contacted one of the top bookbinding craftsmen in Kyoto, Fumihiko Yasui, who generously came in with his staff on his holiday to give us a presentation. This was videotaped by Teruko Hayamitsu from Unsodo Co., publishers of woodblock prints, who is recording the work of craftsmen in Kyoto. Mr. Fumihiko's workers demonstrated two binding styles: the first was an accordion-folded calligraphy book, the second a stab-sewn traditional book with a case that wraps around the book and closes with bone clasps.

But first he showed us some examples of his work and the tools of his trade, including a beautiful knife used to cut the edges of the books, used as a hand guillotine. This is possible because the paper is so much thinner and softer than Western book papers. The blade is quite wide and rests vertically along a board as the pages are cut; your knee holds down the board as you cut the edges. Today, he uses a hydraulic paper cutter, however those blades are no longer made.

The accordion-fold book was made of paper suitable for calligraphy and was more like text-weight Western paper. The pages were folded and placed back to front so that folds were next to the cut edges. The worker then fanned out one side, pasted with a wide Japanese paste brush for a few millimeters over the edge of the table, turned over the whole pile and fanned out the other side, pasted that up, and then knocked up the whole text block. The pages were perfectly aligned because the thin paste allowed the pages to slide into place. Note that he pasted over the



Pasting edges of folded sheets, placed back to front, cut edge to fold



Closeup of pasted fanned edge



Fanning glued-up accordion-folded books to separate pages

continued next page



Pounding holes with hammer & awl into template prior to using it for placing holes in book



Traditional book press holding partially glued-up text blocks



Cutting bookcloth corners quickly

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edges of a board so that no waste paper was necessary. He placed the text blocks into tall piles to dry. The head and tail were cut later on the hydraulic guillotine to a standard size to sell in art stores. After cutting, he said that it was essential to air out the pages by fanning. The covers were Japanese bookcloth turned over boards as usual; the boards themselves were pasted and stuck to the single folded endsheet. They worked with a bamboo folder shaped like the bakelite case folder sold by Harcourt Bindery in Boston. The whole calligraphy book was thus two-sided for writing, since each page was doubled. The books were placed in a traditional metal standing press upon completion.

The stab-sewn book was a miracle of efficiency; the pages were folded at the foreedge by a machine folder, lightly pasted at the corners so they could be divided into groups so they could be cut and dried together. In this instance, they placed the text blocks into a traditional press to dry and flatten. The worker next pounded four holes near the spine edge and laced in a paper twist to each pair and tied it off. That held the book while he quickly pasted on the spine corners. He worked on five books at a time. The book was laid on the bookcloth cover; the cover was folded up to the edge and the corner turned in. The corners were cut zippity zap by lifting up each corner in the pile. After five were done, then the edges were pasted to the text block, one group of sides only; then he turned over the group and pasted the other side. A template had been prepared for the lacing holes, and he used the template to pound in the holes with an awl and hammer. He took away the template and pounded the holes all the way through. His co-worker then sewed the books at the edge with silk thread.

The protective case boards were cut in a guillotine to fit the books. The only significant difference from our usual case was that the boards were beveled at the spine, thus allowing the boards to be placed fairly close together. The worker used a plane with a specially shaped blade to bevel the board edges in several long cuts. He had a template for the placement of the straps for the bone clasps and used a chisel to cut the slits. While we were taking photos and videotaping, we paused for tea and beautiful cookies with little tiny leaves baked into them. Afterwards, we went to Unsodo and had a demonstration of printing with woodblocks and viewed their amazingly extensive collection of woodblocks created by the most famous artists of the last three hundred years. They encourage graduate research into these thousands of woodblocks at Unsodo. We were in the middle of the Gion Festival, so after a full exciting day we happened upon parades of costumed men riding horses. The Festival continued for a full month with showings of gorgeous treasures in houses and the building of the floats, fitted together without nails and tied with thick ropes.

Nearly twenty years ago I had a chance to study scroll-making with Nell Meldahl at PBI (Paper and Book Intensive). I fell in love with the gorgeous brushes and the thin paste which worked so perfectly with

Japanese paper and bookcloth. A couple of years ago I created my own ten-foot tall whirlwind calligraphic scroll. I wanted to know more details, so I visited with three scroll-makers in Kyoto, arranged by the amazing Miki Matsuda and Yoko Nishina.

The first visit was to an ongoing year-long scroll class which they allowed me to observe for a few hours. It was taught by Kashu Yabuta and his son, who also teach takuhon at other times of the year. No one spoke English, so I just watched and finally got up the courage to ask if I could take photographs. Students were in various stages of making scrolls, so I was able to see a variety of techniques. The whole process is rather like piecing together a quilt: you start with the artwork and back it, then attach lined bookcloth side panels, top and bottom, turn the side edges, and then line everything again. Two different pastes are utilized: one for the backings that is very, very thin and a second stronger mix made specially for scroll-making.

Drying time is needed at several stages, so they had the traditional latticed and paper laminated boards stacked around the room for drying. I was particularly interested in how they attached the hanging wood rods at the head and tail, with an added lining of very thin silk at the head, where the scroll winds up. All the pasting up was done on long tables with a finish sort of like formica, so they could just wipe up the paste afterwards. They typically pasted just over the edge of the table as well. Again, no waste paper needed. The long turned side edges need special care, as they are so narrow, and are sealed with an iron.

My second visit was with the head of the scroll-makers association in Kyoto, Okazaki Kiyoshi, who also worked with his son. They had unexpectedly prepared a demonstration of backing a nearly finished scroll for us. I had the advantage of Miki's presence as they explained in Japanese the reasons for even more refined techniques, including the paper reinforcements where the wood rods are attached to the scroll. After spraying with water, the son started attaching the backing layers; after several sheets, he then switched to pounding (to embed the fibers to the artwork) while his father continued to add the rest of the sheets of backing. They didn't attach one long piece to the back but overlapped reasonable widths of feathered sheets. The son pounded the layers up and down the whole scroll at least four times. They even asked me if I would like to pound for a few minutes (of course!). They had dozens of brushes for various purposes and several thicknesses of different pastes. After the demonstration, they generously called a brushmaker so I could purchase the pounding brush that I had been lusting after for so many years.

My calligraphy teacher Yoko Nishina accompanied me to the scroll-maker Hashimoto Fumio, where she has her own scrolls mounted. I spent two whole days watching the entire process from start to finish on two different scrolls, one of which was my own son's Japanese calligraphy. The other one was for the takuhon that we did in a workshop together with Yoko's son. I took about 500 photographs of every single step. In all

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Forming a beveled edge using a planer while books are in a pile



Close-up sample of spine bevels



Piecing together parts of the scroll

my visits, I noticed that they all used plastic straightedges of various lengths which were coordinated with a standardized system of edging widths and lengths. Parallel and perpendicular lines are ruled right on the boards to keep everything straight. At one point, Mr. Hashimoto used a heat-set tissue for the silk lining at the head, for the turned edges and for the final liner. He also has abandoned his beautiful large hand-sharpened knife for a snap-off blade style of knife.

Many kinds of scrolls and standing screens are repaired in Mr. Hashimoto's shop. He has found at least one hundred hand-cut stencils (katagami) for dyeing kimono used as liners for the old Edo-period screens he has repaired. When he learned that I had been on the hunt for katagami-makers and had inspired Yoko to help me find them (in Ise), he gave us each a few of the over one hundred-year-old treasures, an act of generosity that I found ubiquitous on my fantastic trip.

Kitty Maryatt is Director of the Scripps College Press and Assistant Professor of Art at Scripps College. She has taught Typography and the Book Arts at Scripps for 24 years. She also teaches a Core Humanities class to sophomores called From Materiality to Immateriality: The Coming of the Artist Book. Kitty has been involved in the book arts since 1971 when she started her life-long study of calligraphy. She took up binding in 1975 in Los Angeles, studied with master binder Hugo Peller at Centro del bel Libro in Ascona in 1981 and started letterpress printing in 1977.



Laying down backing paper on my son Jason's scroll



Father & son working in tandem; son pounds fiber, while father lays down backing layer



My teacher Yoko Nishina selecting katagami gift from Mr. Hashimoto

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The Book Arts Program at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah

See information in the *Exhibitions* and in the *Workshops, Lectures* sections.

For more information on all events, contact Amber Heaton at >amber.heaton@utah.edu<;

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Membership Report April 2010

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Calligraphy Report

Silent Music and A River of Words/ the tactile quality of reading and writing

by Nancy Leavitt

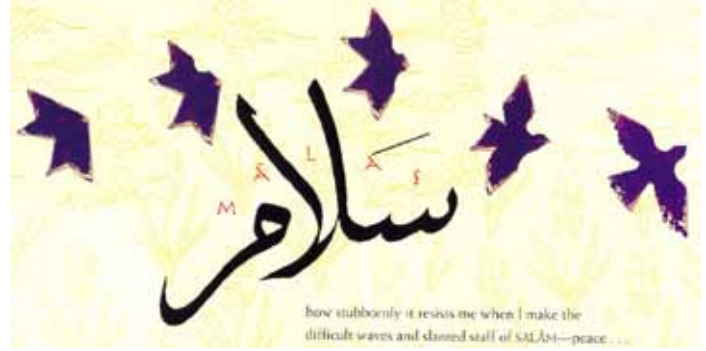
I recently taught my first class of college students who had been educated with the computer – in other words, they had never, not known a computer. The creative pen holds are a giveaway to the modern calligraphic student however, the days of daily penmanship instruction disappeared in the 1960's so it was not a shock. Much has been written about the demise of handwriting and the written word ever since the invention of moveable type and more recently the computer. I found their enthusiasm and joy at touching pen to paper no different from that of my students 25 years ago.

As an adult it is easy to forget how we felt when first learning to read and write. Do you remember catching the 'reading bug', a term still used today to describe the voracious reading habit a child acquires after learning how to read? We all understand that reading and writing is not just a vehicle for learning but helps us develop ideas and dreams throughout our lives.

I draw to your attention two children's books that speak of the compelling desire to write words and tell stories. *Silent Music, A Story of Baghdad*, written and illustrated by James Rumford tells the story of Ali, a boy who loves calligraphy. "I love to make the ink flow – from my pen stopping and starting, gliding and sweeping, leaping, dancing to the silent music in my head." It is a joyful record of a child learning to write words – his grandfather's name, 'peace' and 'war', everywhere, on margins of newspapers and envelopes, even on the steamed up mirror in the bathroom. The story is delightfully illustrated with patterned images of his family and friends and lots of Arabic writing.

The second treasure is *A River of Words, The Story of William Carlos Williams*. Written by Jen Bryant and illustrated by Melissa Sweet, the book won a 2009 Caldecott honor. This picture book biography tells the story of 'Willie', a boy who grew up to become a doctor and was compelled his entire life to write poetry describing the word around him. A paragraph reads, "But no matter how many babies he delivered, no matter how many sick people he cured, Willie could not stop writing poems." It is a wonderful story and Melissa Sweet illuminates the text with inventive alphabets and layers of collage and painted illustrations.

The reading and tactile handling of books is as important to children today as it is to us who continue story telling tradition through the making of books in our respective crafts. As book artists we understand the physical act of holding a book close to your body near your heart, and turning its pages helps move the story through our limbs and body as much as reading the words and drinking up the illustrations with our eyes. In any performance art form, such as dancing and singing, the artist relies on muscle memory to carry the body and mind through the music.



This quality extends to all work done with the hands and body so like performance artists, we as practitioners of book art have choreographed our own movements and routines in our daily work. What began with a love of reading and writing continues to be intertwined in the tactile qualities of our respective craft.

Thank you for taking time to read this column. I look forward to hearing from you.

Nancy Leavitt

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Book Reviews

Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide by Jen Lindsay
New Castle, Delaware and London, Oak Knoll Press and The
British Library, 2009, 9 x 9.75 inches, Paperback, 216 pages
Price: \$59.95

Reviewed by Frank Lehmann
Lehmann Bindery

First, what this book is not –

- It is not a beginner's book.
- It is not a general manual, describing a variety of binding styles.
- It is not an Artist Book, popup, flag, exposed sewing structure, ancient binding style, etc. book.

Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide is an outstanding, detailed, step-by-step manual describing the English modern design binding style which was first made popular by The Guild of Contemporary Bookbinders and then later by Designer Bookbinders in the UK.

Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide is intended to be on your workbench as you follow the numbered steps for each procedure. Its layout is a bit unusual. Each procedure starts with a section (printed in black) that explains the rationale behind the method employed and what considerations have to be taken into account when working on the book you are binding. This is followed by step-by-step instructions (printed in red). The detail here is excellent and often profusely illustrated – forming the headcap alone takes four pages and has 10 photographs. It is this level of detail that makes this manual stand out.

Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide covers a number of topics that I have not seen before in print (at least in modern manuals). The section on headbanding describes sewing multi-colored headbands that use a bundle of threads to form the bead. Different colors can be introduced at any time from this bundle, allowing considerable freedom in forming color patterns. With this description, I don't have to scratch my head any longer as I try to decipher the sewing model I made while I was in training. The section on boards harkens back to earlier times when paste boards were made. This method may seem needlessly labor intensive, but with the lack of quality bookboard available today, it is very appropriate.

What I do not like about the format of this book is that the footnotes are grouped together at the end of the book. This means that you have to flip back and forth between the two as you read, a pet peeve of mine. Another consideration is that the instructional steps are printed in red. This is great in separating them out from the descriptive sections, but it may make it difficult for some to read.



More experienced binders in the English tradition might take exception to some of the methods employed, but they would be missing the point of this book. In *Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide* Jen Lindsay describes one specific binding style that she has used for decades. I expect that the more experienced will find many useful techniques, even if they do

not follow the methods from start to finish.

Finally, *Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide* does not include any information on finishing. This is as it should be. Finishing is a subject all unto itself, and requires a separate book such as John Mitchell's. There was a reason that the trade made it a separate apprenticeship.

In summary – if you are interested in fine binding techniques, then *Fine Bookbinding: A Technical Guide* is a book you must have. It has also set the bar high for future fine binding manuals. I would love to see future books of this caliber that describe other binding styles such as the French and German.

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Books and Their Covers: Decorative Bindings, Beautiful Books

Boston College Law Library, Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room, Boston College Law School, Newton, MA

On view through May 2010, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm (contact Curator to confirm hours)

The exhibition curator: Karen Beck, Curator of Rare Books/Collection Development Librarian

Bookbinders who are disappointed by the scarcity of exhibitions featuring historic bindings will be delighted by this comprehensive show. The exhibition is mounted in the beautiful Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room: the reading room alone is worth a visit to admire. The books in the exhibition, lovingly selected by Boston College Law Library Curator Karen Beck, range in dates from 1475 to 1893. She not only has chosen a broad time range but also has made a point of exhibiting books bound in a variety of materials and using numerous techniques. The books in this exhibition are generally grouped in the cases by material, such as vellum, and within each case books of different dates, styles, and sizes are displayed. The curator's enthusiasm for the external appearance of books from her collection allows a rare look at items such as the vellum cover of a William Morris imprint. Morris books are more commonly shown opened to the printed pages: so bookbinders who haven't previously had an opportunity can now view the cover composition favored by Morris. Ms. Beck's exhibition showcases fine bindings with sumptuous gilding, but she also has included very modest printer's wrappers as well. Because of the span of decades and designs the show certainly will be a great educational experience for those just becoming familiar with bookbinding history. The exhibition also has a bit of playfulness about it: one book, clearly repaired by a non-professional, is labeled a "frontier binding", and elsewhere in the exhibition a tiny, tiny vellum book written by Emperor Justinian rests atop an oversized, chunky incunabula of the same title. The exhibition is a joy to see and, if you make arrangements ahead of time, you can enliven

your visit by hearing the affectionate curator give an enchanting and informative gallery talk.

To arrange for a group tour to hear Karen Beck's gallery talk contact her at:

karen.beck@bc.edu

Directions to Boston College:

<http://www.bc.edu/about/maps.html>

Those not in the vicinity of the "Hub of the Universe" may see an on-line version of the exhibition and can read the checklist prepared by Karen Beck at:

<http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/library/about/rarebook/exhibitions/BookCovers2010.html>

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Briggs, Asa. *A History of Longmans and Their Books, 1724-1990: Longevity in Publishing*
New Castle, Delaware and London, England Oak Knoll Press
and The British Library 2008 7.5 x 9.75 inches Hardcover, dust
jacket 624 pages, US \$110

Review by Frank Lehmann
Lehmann Bindery

In 1924, Longmans celebrated their bicentennial. In 1994, Longmans ceased to exist. The list of authors Longmans published over its 200 plus year history is astonishing – Johnson (dictionary), Scott, Wordsworth, Roget (thesaurus), Burton, Gray (anatomy), Trollope, Disraeli, Haggard, Lang, Churchill, Planck, to name just a few.

A History of Longmans and Their Books, 1724-1990 chronicles the history of this publishing house from the time when type was handset to the computer age. Briggs' work accounts the history of the firm as we would expect. However, what made this book so enjoyable for me was that it does so within the broader context of the political, social and technological history of the times. Not only do we see how the firm is influenced by the individuals involved, but also how these outside forces played a part. As the British Empire expands, so does Longmans. In 1906 they opened a

Calcutta branch, and earlier they published works by Burton and Haggard. As medicine evolves into a science, Longmans is there with *Gray's Anatomy* (1858). As an epilogue, Briggs writes how personalities, globalization and economic forces close the House of Longmans.

By putting the history of Longmans in a broader context, Briggs has turned what could have been a dry history into one that is instead interesting and informative.

I was also very pleased with how the book was laid out. Unlike what seems to be the current trend of bunching all the color plates into one section, *A History of Longmans and Their Books* is sprinkled throughout with color and black and white illustrations. Bookbinders should find particularly interesting the color photo of the papier mache and plaster binding of *The Black Prince* on page 269. As is usual with Oak Knoll publications, the sections are sewn. I just wished the case was covered in cloth instead of embossed paper.

A History of Longmans and Their Books is at once informative and entertaining. Anyone who is interested in the overall history of the publishing industry during this time should thoroughly enjoy it.

The Texture of the Universe: A New Selection of the Writings of Henry and Thomas Vaughan in an edition limited to 75 copies in a quarter-leather binding, ed. Glyn Pursglove and with wood engravings by Hilary Paynter. Gwasg Gregynog Press, 2010. Quarter leather £ 450, special binding details on application, in sheets for bookbinders £ 300.

Review by Sandy Cohen

Gwasg Gregynog Press, since 2002, the registered charity successor to the Gregynog Press has been printing beautiful letterpress books in the same workshop since 1922. To say the very least, *The Texture of the Universe* is no exception. This limited edition (75 numbered copies in quarter goatskin, a maximum of 15 in a special design binding by Dutch binder, Geert van Daal Hot, and an unspecified number of unbound sheets available for bookbinders.) The edition is cast in 11 and 13 point Perpetua Monotype and printed letter-press on mold-made paper. Some of the green titling is hand-set from the original Gregynog type. Hilary Paynter's wood engravings are printed directly from the blocks (and are also available separately as signed prints).

The 17th century writers, Henry and Thomas Vaughan were, like the Gwasg Gregynog Press, Welsh (according to Wikipedia, the twins were born exactly one year apart. No wonder one became a metaphysical poet, the other an alchemist. Little word on their mother.) Though Henry, the metaphysical poet, is the more famous, and rightly so, Thomas was himself a prose writer of considerable power. This edition seeks to illustrate the relationships between their writings and philosophical ideas. *The Texture of the Universe* is a beautiful melding of many arts; in its unbound form it is a more than worthy project for any binder's skill.



The Marbling Tray

by Iris Nevins

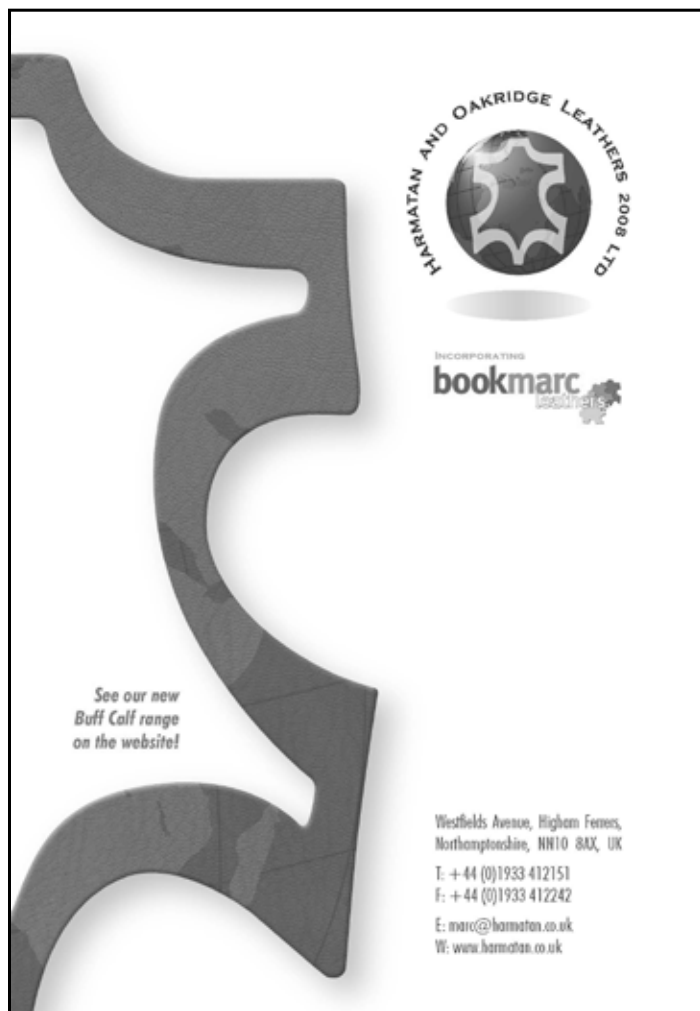
After shoveling nearly two feet of snow, and actually, due to being stuck in the house, cleaning my studio, I was trying to look at the upside of this nasty snowstorm and cold weather in general.

One thing that kept hitting, after 32 years as a marbler, that was that the marbling was always so much nicer and brighter if done during the winter months. It is likely due to the size maintaining a great viscosity in winter, where in summer it just falls apart more rapidly while working. I can keep a batch of carrageenan size going up to three days if I wanted to in winter, where it would be thin and watery the next day in summer. I only ever make as much as I need for one day in the hot weather for that reason.

The paints (traditional watercolor mostly in my case) due to the viscosity being so good, will float longer, the colors will stay brighter also, because what we don't see with the eye really, is that a little of the paint/pigment is always trying to partially sink a little. It can look bright on the bath, but when you print the sheet of paper, the color can go pale. This almost never happens in winter. Often in summer, I also will make the size a little thicker to help counteract this. It also prevents the colors from swimming around uncontrollably on a weakened bath.

Spanish Marbling, and its related patterns requiring shading, is always better in winter. I can look at an old paper on a book and pretty well guess the season it was marbled in. In winter, the shaded lines are ideal most of the time, and have a subtle air brushed sort of look. In summer the lines can be harsher, not looking like rolling waves, but rather having white lines at times across the paper. Some people though, find this quaint and old looking, and ask for this look. I have a hard time explaining that the size was warm most likely. To be able to copy it, for a reproduction binding, if in winter, I have to water down the size considerably with hot water! Also, by early May I try to stock up on many Spanish style papers, just in case they are needed through the summer.

So take advantage of the cold nasty weather and get to the marbling trough and ENJOY!



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GOLD LEAF: a Brief History of Gold Leaf on Rolls

By Sam Ellenport

Over 100 years ago, gold leaf used by bookbinders and related crafts was hand-beaten, prepared in 3 3/8 inch squares. This gold leaf was and continues to be sold in packs of 20 booklets, each comprised of 25 sheets. Gold leaf was most commonly 22k or 23k. It came in single or “double” thickness, though this was not actually twice as thick as the regular sheets, but only 10-20% thicker. Double thickness gold leaf was used most often for edge gilding.

In recent centuries gold has been beaten within a small range of thickness, usually 1/8000-1/10000 mm thick, or 1/250,000 of an inch. It may be easier to think in terms of weight: 15 grams will produce 1,000 leaves of gold or two packs, depending on the variation of the thickness of the beaten gold. Manufacturers usually have a formula which determines thickness, varying between 13 and 17 grams per 1,000 sheets. Approximately one ounce of gold will yield 4 packs of gold leaf. A pack of gold will cover just over 39 square feet.

The color of gold leaf is determined by the metal used to make up the difference in purity between the 22 or 23k gold and 24 k. Because 24k gold is too soft for almost any use, it is mixed with another metal to give it a little more rigidity. One of two other metals most commonly used for this purpose: were copper to give a deeper color or silver for a paler color. These shades of colors, and other shades as well, were part of the variety of gold leaf offered to bookbinders over a century ago and well into the 20th century.

The bookbinding trade, however, has always struggled to control waste of such a precious material, and the gold manufacturers worked to provide solutions to this challenge. The solutions offered by the manufacturers took two forms. One solution was the manufacture of genuine gold leaf carried on a backing or carrier which, when struck with a heated die, a brass tool or a pallet of type, acted as a transfer foil. This allowed the finishers to use genuine gold in a form that could be handled quickly and easily without the use of gold cushions, sizing, etc. Such foil was readily available throughout the 20th century even though the number of firms manufacturing them continued to shrink. With the closing of M. Swift and Sons of Hartford, Connecticut in 2007, the author is aware of only one domestic producer of genuine gold foil, The Quick Roll Leaf Company of Middletown, New York. The Quick Roll Leaf Company [founded in 1929] still makes genuine gold leaf foil that is sold through Earnest Schaeffer, Inc., a company in Union, New Jersey. Their gold is somewhat brassy in color. On their website they attest that their foils are mostly used for stamping in production binderies on covers, and in related trades where production runs are large.

Gold foil, as well as all the pigment or colored foils, has almost always been used by edition binders for stamping enormous quantities of cloth covers for commercial publishing. During

most of the 20th century such foils were not used by binders who tooled and decorated leather books by hand. To these finishers, foil presented a problem. The gold foil covers an area larger than that of the tool, type or decoration used to make the impression. As a result, a finisher would be working blind, with the oversize foil blocking the view of the actual surface. Also, the finisher would be faced with an excessive time commitment for set-ups and jigs which would be needed to insure the proper placement of the impression. Both of these challenges are inconsequential when producing multiple covers, as even lengthy set-up times are acceptable if there are many covers to decorate and title. Gold foils helped the edition binder but not the true hand bookbinder.

A second solution to contain waste and save time that was provided by gold manufacturers was geared primarily to hand bookbinders working in leather, and some specialized craftsmen who used gold leaf in narrow widths, such as sign painters and specialty gilders. The solution offered was the introduction of free gold leaf mounted on a special tissue paper which was rolled onto spools rather than placed in booklets in sheet form. Again, there were many producers of this item, though possibly one of the first was Coe and Co. of Providence, RI which also produced the Coe Platform and Coe Wheel for further ease in handling the spool or roll of gold leaf. **[see footnote #1]



Figure 1

These illustrations (above and page 21) show a modified gold cushion with a spindle at one end which allows the gold to be unwound on top of the familiar cushion. Also shown in Figure 2 is a Coe Wheel, a hand tool with a removable cover that holds the spool on a spindle, so that the gold ribbon can literally be rolled onto a surface by using the little roller head at the front end of the tool. M. Swift and Sons of Hartford, Ct. made a similar tool called a “gilder’s wheel.”



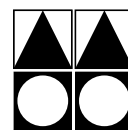
Figure 2

The spools of gold leaf were almost always 23k gold and were XXD in color. The author has never seen any other shades of gold leaf offered. All spools were 67 feet long (Leblanc, *Gold Leaf Techniques*, 1980, p. 140). Although all the spools are 67 feet long, they were provided in many different widths. The spools were usually sold in a box or tin in groupings of 3 or 3 ¼ inches. This length was divided into 1/16", 1/8", 1/4", 3/8", etc. to make up the length of 3 or 3 ¼ inches. The total area of a box or tin of this roll leaf is about 17 sq. feet, or just under ½ of that covered of a pack of gold leaf in the square 3 3/8" format.

Gold leaf in spools or rolls historically has cost a bit more than sheets of gold in books. ## [see footnote 2]. The savings for bookbinders, sign-painters and other craftsmen is significant. Most binders today use little gold, yet it is easy to imagine the savings in ease of handling and minimal waste. For example, imagine tooling a single line border on the covers of a book. The step after sizing the book would be to place a sheet of gold leaf on a gold cushion, cut it into long and narrow strips and then laboriously transfer these strips to the cover. Since long thin strips of gold are difficult to cut, handle and transfer, this is a tiresome and often frustrating process. Thin strips often break in handling and have to be laid twice. An easier way to handle the thin strips is to cut them much wider than needed. These are easier to handle and transfer, but produces great waste. Now imagine a spool of 1/8" inch gold leaf, contained in a hand-held tool which can simply run the gold over any length on the sized cover. The initial method requiring great skill, dexterity, time and patience now could be replaced by a method to lay strips of gold with little chance of error in a few seconds.

To save time in other areas of tooling, the finisher can work with the gold leaf on the tool or type rather than making an impression through gold laid onto the cover or spine of a book. Using the Coe Platform or anything similar, one could attach a spool of an appropriate width and, after sizing the book, simply pick up a small amount of gold directly onto the heated tool before making the impression on the leather.

continued next page



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Again, this requires no cutting, handling or transferring roll leaf gold as is necessary with sheets of square gold leaf. While this procedure might not be suitable for all work, it is a very fast and economical way to put in single or double panel lines on spines or, for example, to patch a broken letter in a title panel, or add small design elements on covers.

Gold has become less of a necessity in the modern binder's arsenal for design and even titling. Genuine gold stamping foil is still available, but most quality binders stay away from using these foils for reasons already mentioned. With foil, finishers can only make shallow impressions, and genuine gold foils often seem dull when compared to leaf gold. There are also issues of shoulder creep with foil, as well as a justified lack of trust of the adhesion of the gold on the material's surface over time.

Free gold leaf remains the best choice for any finishing, although it is available today primarily in sheets. Roll gold leaf is available primarily from past inventories. The Wehrung and Billmeier Company of Chicago still produces gold leaf on spools, but none less than ¼" wide. I encourage you to explore the possibility of using roll gold leaf. With its ease of handling, its economy of

time and material, you may find that this product makes the use of gold much more accessible in your binding designs. After all, there is nothing like the radiance of genuine gold leaf which, even after centuries, stands apart from all other decoration in its brilliance, warmth and welcome.

FOOTNOTES:

****1.** In the 20th century there were several U.S. companies which produced gold leaf and ribbon gold. These included M. Swift and Sons of Hartford, CT., W. H. Kemp and Company on Spring Street in New York City (a street known for its numerous binding supply shops and binderies), Hastings of Philadelphia, PA., and The Coe Company in Providence, RI. Other well-known companies that made gold leaf included American Roll Gold Leaf Company of Providence, RI, F.W. Rauskolb Company of Boston, Wehrung & Billmeier of Chicago [founded in 1905 and still in business] and The Grecht Gold Leaf Company of Orange, CA [founded in 1900 in California, but was earlier established in Brooklyn, NY; see W. E. H. Rasmussen, *The Goldbeaters of Orange, California*, 1974]. For further information about gold manufacturing companies, see F.T.C. versus U. S. Gold Leaf Manufacturers' Association as reported in the New York Times on April 27, 1918. The Trade Board accused members of the association of price-fixing, and the list of those involved was estimated to cover more than half of the gold leaf manufacturers in the U.S.

##2. From the little information that can be found, and the author's experience, there seems to be a generally accepted ratio between the cost of an ounce of gold and the price of manufactured gold leaf. The ratio is that the cost of manufactured gold leaf is approximately double the cost of the actual gold. For example, an ounce of gold worth \$1,100 today will make approximately 4 packs of gold leaf, each of which should sell for \$550. In fact this is true. This general rule of thumb holds for roll leaf as well with a slightly different ratio. In this case the manufactured roll leaf is twice the cost of the raw gold plus 15%. Each 3" length of roll gold is equivalent to ½ pack of gold leaf, and should sell for $\$275.00 + \$40 = \$315.00$. This ratio is apparent in a recent Swift price list. When gold was at \$660 in 2005, a 3" length of rolled gold sold for \$180, though a pack of gold was \$325. With gold currently at \$1,100/ounce today, a pack of gold leaf today from any reputable supplier is \$500+. As far back as can be ascertained, these pricing ratios hold. For example, after the gold price in the U.S. was allowed to float in 1971, the value of an ounce of gold reached \$58.60 by the fall of 1972. An invoice from a supplier shows a box of gold leaf rolls, XXD, sold for \$16.50 per box. The bullion price of gold in the rolls of gold leaf was \$7.325. This value, $x2 + 15\%$ equals \$16.84. (for historical gold prices see tables at www.measuringworth.org or T. Green, Historical Gold Price Table, London; invoices showing retail prices of gold are in the author's possession).

Please contact me if you are interested in purchasing genuine gold stamping foil; widths of 1/8" to 7/8" are available. Also



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