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Cover Art: Medallion created for the Guild of Book Worker's 75th Anniversary Exhibition. See related article on page 3.

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Historical Tidbits Have Surfaced



There is so much history to the Guild of Book Workers since its organization in 1906. Just check out the historical overview on the Guild's Web site at:

><http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/about/history.php><

Last September I was contacted by Susanna Borghese as Secretary to the Guild. She wanted to see what could be done with some Guild archival files she

found in her bindery upon cleaning to make for more room. She could no longer keep them. Having experience as an archivist for other organizations, I suggested they be sent to me.

Upon receipt of the big box, I only had enough time to take a quick look at the contents. Yes, they were quite historical, remembering that Susanna mentioned most were from the 75th Anniversary exhibition as well as other exhibitions. I reported on this at the Board of Directors meeting in Salt Lake City during Standards. Soon afterwards I thoroughly went through the files. What a joy to see all the photos, files, correspondence, and memorabilia!

When I first did the "quick look" I found the beautiful calligraphy and illumination piece seen on this issue's cover. I made a photocopy and showed it to Editor Cindy Haller while at Standards. She thought it'd be great for the cover of one of our issues. I had the art work professionally copied, sent it on to Cindy, and now

you can enjoy. Being a calligrapher myself, I certainly appreciate the beautiful work, the original of which is a bit larger than 11" x 14".

So far nothing else has been found in the box as to why it was with the other contents except that it was nicely matted and probably displayed during one of the Guild's exhibitions, which had items in the box. Yes, there were photos of the 50th Anniversary exhibition in the box – could it have been displayed then? Then there were photos of other exhibitions, especially the 75th... could it have been then?

Whatever, thanks to Susanna (*a former Guild Exhibitions Chairman!*) for not throwing this box of archives away, as we today can benefit from it. The statement in this cover art is by Edith Diehl, and the artwork by Josephine R. Debenoise. The last sentence, to me, is particularly important for those of us active in the book-binding world: *Today, the hand binder stands supreme, as both artist and craftsman, among the binders of books.*

If anyone knows anything related to these archival items I've mentioned, feel free to let me know. I plan to continue to clean up the items and organize them before sending them on to the Guild's archives storage facility. And by the way, the "A.I.G.A." seen above the Guild's name in the artwork is for *American Institute of Graphic Arts*, with whom the Guild was an affiliate in its early days.

Catherine Burkhard

Chapter Happenings

DELAWARE VALLEY: Finished bindings for a collaborative book project with theme and title of *Secondary Colors* came due January 12. The books will be exhibited at Harvard, January 24-May 19, 2013.

LONE STAR: Workshop on *The Amazing Dremel* with Jill Timm, March 16-17, 2013, Austin, TX, with Program Chairman Cindy Haller >sourceart@comcast.net< at the helm. Plans are being made for workshops in May and possibly in mid-summer.

NEW ENGLAND: *Exhibit: Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here*, a 3-part exhibit of artist books and broadsides began January 7 and will go through June 21 at CAC Gallery, Cambridge Arts Council, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, 2nd Floor, Cambridge, MA. See >negbw.wordpress.com/<

ROCKY MOUNTAIN: Workshop with Kitty Maryatt, *Let Me Count the Ways*, March 1-3, 2013, co-sponsored by the Chapter and Book Arts League, Ewing Farm, Lafayette, CO. Contact: >Sammy@studiosmlk.com<. Exhibition, *Fantasy and Nonsense*, held during the Seminar on Standards of Excellence October 10-13, 2012, Salt Lake City, UT, was well received. Exhibition juried with four winners. Catalog available for \$10 via Ethan Ensign at >scruboakbindery@gmail.com<

Catherine Burkhard
as of 1-4-13



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Calendar of Events

EXHIBITIONS

Currently and through February 24, 2013: *Southeast Chapter's Inaugural Juried Exhibition* of book artists from the Southeastern United States at Asheville BookWorks, Asheville, NC. >segbwnews.blogspot.com<

Currently and through February 24, 2013: *The Medieval Role in the Contemporary Artist Book II*, Denison Library, Scripps College, 1030 Columbia Ave., Claremont, CA., 909.621.8000.

Also at Scripps College: **Currently and through March 7, 2013:** *Hand, Voice, & Vision: Artists' Books from Women's Studio Workshop*, Clark Humanities Museum.

Currently and through May 10, 2013: *Catechisms*, an exhibition of the manuals of Christian doctrine organized in form of questions and answers for both Protestant and Catholics. Bridwell Library, SMU, Dallas, TX. >www.smu.edu/Bridwell/Collections/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/Catechisms<

Currently and through May 19, 2013: Delaware Valley Chapter's collaborative book project, *Secondary Colors*, on exhibit at Harvard. >dvcgbw@verizon.net<

February 15 to April 6, 2013: *Photo Book Works*, a juried exhibition of book works that integrate or utilize photography techniques. Abecedarian Gallery, Denver Gallery, for "Photography in 2013 Month". >www.abecedariangallery.com<

April 5 through July 10, 2013: *Horizon*, the Guild's Traveling Exhibition, in Special Collections Exhibit Hall, Chicago Public Library. This venue begins these travels around the U.S. following its opening in Salt Lake City. Future venues: 8-1-13 to 10-31-13, Penrose Library, University of Denver and 11-7-13 to 1-23-14, Loyola University, New Orleans.

CALL FOR ENTRIES

2013 Society of Bookbinders International Bookbinding Competition: Registration deadline is June 14, 2013. Entries due July 12, 2013. Five categories: fine binding, case binding, the complete book, restoration, and historic binding. All books on display during the biennial SoB Conference in Leeds, August 29-31, 2013, then winning books will form a touring exhibition around the UK. For details: >www.societyofbookbinders.com/events/competition/2013/2013.html<

WORKSHOPS, LECTURES & OTHER EVENTS

February 9, 2013: *Frederic W. Goudy Workshop, "The Illegal Practice of Typography – Creating glyphs from images: an experiment inspired by Iliad's great Maximiliana, or the Illegal Practice of Astronomy"* by Clif Meadow, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mr. Meadow will offer a lecture, *"The Book is Culture"*, same day at 7:00 p.m. Reservations a must for workshop. Both events at Scripps College Press, 1030 Columbia Ave., Claremont, CA., 909.621.8000.

February 12 - March 30, 2013: **The John C. Campbell Folk School**, Brasstown, NC, with the following classes. Contact: 800.FOLK-SCH or >www.folkschool.org<

Feb 12-17: *Paper Transformation to Books* with Bob Meadows

Feb 19-25: *Pens, Inks, Letters, and Books* with Sharon Coogler

Feb 26-Mar 3: *Binding Books -- Traditions and More* with Judith Beers

Mar 25-30: *Traditional Hand Bookbinding and Restoration* with Dea Sasso

March 1-3, 2013: *The Illuminated Journal* with Susan Newbold, Creative Arts Workshop, New Haven, CT. Contact: 203.562.4927. >creativeartsworkshop.org<

April 1-5 – November 1, 2013: **School for Formal Bookbinding** with Don Rash, located between Wilkes-Barre and Scranton, PA. Contact: >www.donrashfinebookbinder.com/sfbmain.html<

Apr 1-5 or Oct 21-25: *Cloth Binding Conservation*

Apr 8-12 or Oct 28-Nov 1: *Leather Binding Conservation*

May 6-10 or Jul 15-19: *Foundations of Hand Bookbinding*

May 13-17 or Jul 22-26: *Introduction to Case Binding*

Jun 1-2: *Introduction to Titling and Tooling*

Jun 10-14 or Sep 10-14: *Introduction to Leather Binding*

Jun 17-21 or Sep 17-21: *Full Leather Binding*

April 15 - June 14, 2013: Schedule for **American Academy of Bookbinding**, Telluride, CO. 970.728.8649, >www.ahhaa.org/academy-bookbinding<

Apr 15-19: *Repair, Restore or Conserve? Intro to Binding Treatment* with Chris McAfee

Apr 22-26: *Sewing Structures* with Brenda Parsons

Apr 29-May10: *Fundamentals of Fine Binding* with Monique Lallier

May 13-17: *Full Leather Miniature Binding* with Gabrielle Fox

May 20-31: *Intermediate/Advanced Fine Binding* with Don Glaister

Jun 3-7: *Fundamentals of Gold Tooling* with Don Glaister

Jun 10-14: *Edge to Edgier – Gilded and Decorative Edges* with Peter Geraty

May 24-25 and July 26-27, 2013: *Photo Album Structures and Strategies* with Richard Horton at Conservation/Restoration Department, Bridgeport National Bindery, 662 Silver St., Agawam, MA. Same workshop repeated. Contact Mr. Horton at >albumsandsuch@gmail.com<

June 27-28 and 29-30, 2013: Workshops with Karen Hanmer, Oregon Focus on Book Arts Conference, Forest Grove, with the following classes. Contact for this and other classes: >www.karenhanmer.com<

Jun 27-28: *Streamlined Style: Contemporary Decorative Techniques for Leather Bindings*

Jun 29-30: *Biblio Tech: Reverse Engineering Historical and Modern Binding Structures*

October 24-26, 2013: **Seminar of Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding**, Washington DC. Look for information in future Guild of Book Workers' newsletters. Registration limited. *Please note these dates are correct dates; not those published in previous Newsletter.*

Classes for 2013: Centro del bel Libro, Ascona, Switzerland. Many class offerings in "Bookbinding and Design" and "Book and Paper Conservation" available throughout the year. List of classes with dates and other information available at ><http://www.cbl-ascona.ch/><. Click on "EN" for text to show in English. Catalog available in pdf. format – will have full course descriptions and information.

Catherine Burkhard

The Marbling Tray

by Iris Nevins

MARBLING OFF THE GRID

Well, we were hard hit by “Sandy” here in NJ. I have to say I escaped with not too much damage, while friends have lost their homes and others still have no power over two months later. My power was out for 10 days, and I really wanted to try to marble the way they did it 200 years ago, but I was spending too much time hauling wood, collecting water, and cooking on the woodstove (thankfully I have one of those!) and trying to keep warm; it just never happened. So I tried it afterwards.

First job, collect the rainwater. Get the leaves out, and other debris. It would help to have a more proper rain collection set up honestly, than my large plastic open buckets. The bucket I used was five gallon, and I poured enough off to make it three gallons. That means six tablespoons of carrageenan powder. I felt I was cheating a bit... a “real” old time marbler would have used gum tragacanth, but if they had carrageenan it would not be in powder form, but rather it would have been whole dried seaweed. And it would be boiled on the wood stove or open fire. Instead, I sprinkled the powder in, as thinly as I could, a tablespoonful at a time, then stirred with a stick, in the cold water. The powder liked to stick to the stick though. I had in the past tried an eggbeater and a metal whisk but they got all clumped up. I found myself taking a good long while to squish clumps of carrageenan between my fingers, to make smaller particles that would dissolve better. This was about 24 hours ahead of when I’d marble. Every hour or so, until time for bed, I’d go stir and “de-clump” the size. Amazingly by morning, it was GOOD!! ready to go. Alum too, was dissolved and ready for the morning.

Lighting was a bit of a problem; using only natural sunlight from the window changed totally how the colors looked. It was throwing me badly. Move closer to the window and all you see are reflections of windows, trees, the sun... so move it back to where reflections didn’t interfere. I acclimated fairly well though, eventually. Really, once the preparations were done, the size made and poured, and the papers alumed and stacked (I worked on damp ones that day) there was little difference from a normal marbling day. It was somewhat colder with the furnace off, but my basement is half in the ground and never freezes.

It was about 62 degrees down there, which I find to be a good healthy temperature for marbling. It likes it cool. In fact I realized that there was nothing different because I dismantled the heat zone in the marbling room 20 years ago when we first moved in! Never caring if I were cold... what mattered more was... do the marbling materials like it!

What struck me most was that there were really very few differences between marbling today and in 1825 or so. The only thing different being that I had no running water and that I had to spend time de-clumping the carrageenan. If powdered carrageenan were no longer available, it’s not a tragedy to go back to boiling the seaweed; in fact I used to do this in my early years of marbling before knowing about the powdered carrageenan. The running water issue – my paints are formulated to not need the rinse step, if worked with properly and just the right amount of paint used, but one could pour a glass of rainwater over them into a sink or tub if desired before hanging to dry. If we truly were knocked back to no electricity for an extended period (let’s hope not!!) we could still marble. It was sort of an adventure, though I do like my electric lightbulbs! Hmm... maybe a solar kit is in my future... just large enough to power a lightbulb!



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Just Starting Out

by Ken Gilbert

Now that I am in private practice, with a couple of years of experience and a growing list of customers I am reminded of some of the opportunities I've had along the way.

One day that first October the phone rang around noon ... a rare event at that time. I was slightly annoyed because I was busy trying to decide if it was better to have my hand tools on the left side of my work bench or on the right.

I answered the phone and the caller said, "Hi, this is MP Bogan from the NEDCC." Now, most people know that the Northeast Document Conservation Center is one of the premier conservation labs in the country. MP Bogan is the Director of Book Conservation at the NEDCC. Why was she calling me?

If memory serves me right I said something clever like "Oh, hi."

MP dove right in and told me that the reason for her call was to ask for my help. She said, "I have a client who has a conservation problem that I am not equipped to handle and I was wondering if you would help me out."

I began to hyperventilate and my mind began a reboot. This is MP Bogan herself calling me, not an assistant, not a recording, not a

wrong number. She's asking my help with a client. A referral from MP Bogan. HOLY COW!!! My big chance to break into the big time. Seconds ticked by as I caught my breath.

"I'd be happy to help out", I said. "You're sure", she said, "I'll look for another bookbinder if you'd rather."

There was no way I was going to let this opportunity get away. If I refused I might not ever get another chance. "I don't care how tough the job is, I'll get it done", I said probably sounding a lot like Buzz Lightyear.

MP proceeded to tell me the story of a client who called her at the NEDCC. The client was begging for help because her cat had soiled the top edge of a half dozen books that had once belonged to her boyfriend's late father. I mean sick, litter box type soiling!!!!!!

MP didn't want this job and when she told her client that her lab was not really set up for that type of work the client broke down in tears. This was a major issue threatening her relationship with her boyfriend and she needed help. MP couldn't abandon this distraught client. She began to search for someone to take on the job.

How fortunate for me that one of my former North Bennet Street

School classmates was now working at the NEDCC and suggested me for the job. This resulted in my opportunistic phone call. The problem was, I didn't want the job either. I mean, cat poop, really? But I was stuck. I had to take it, I couldn't say no. How could I possibly say no to a referral directly from the Director of Book Conservation at the NEDCC?

"Gee MP, sounds like a wonderful challenge... thanks a whole lot", I said.

So I bought a hazmat suit and cleaned up six poop stained books. A tip I can pass along to the entire Guild is that cat poop is an all-natural resist. Not many people know this. I discovered it accidentally while attempting to cover the stubborn remnant of a stain with acrylics.

In the end, the client was happy with the work, a relationship was saved and a cat's life was spared. And MP and I are still friends.

Ken Gilbert graduated from the North Bennet Street School in 2010 and has been in private practice since then. His bindery is called *Willow Bindery* in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, specializing in repairs, conservation structures and custom bindings. One of Ken's pieces is in the current Horizon exhibition.

Mark Your Calendar!

2013
GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS

Standards of Excellence in Bookbinding

will be held
October 24-26, 2013
Washington, DC

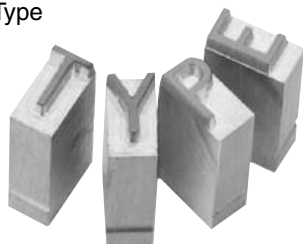
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Information will be available in the June 2013
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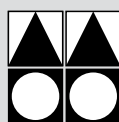
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A Modern Adaptation of a Historical Form

Pamela Barrios

I have made several historical models patterned after a 12th century Coptic book that I was allowed to examine in 1998 at the University of Utah Rare Books and Special Collections Department at the Marriot Library. I've also adapted the form (as many book artists have) for a more modern version. This is my version of my preferred elements of this historical form, using convenient but still elegant and structurally sound materials. Much has been written about this form. One good source for more historical information is J. A. Szirmai's *Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding*. For modern elements, Gary Frost's work on the sewn board system of binding provides great explanations of the engineering aspects of the form. A little research will bring you to many more sources. The historical Coptic form has intrigued me for years and generated many experiments. I hope it will do the same for you.

A Little Bit of History

The Ethiopian or Coptic book form was commonly sewn with pairs of link stitches connecting each gathering to the next. The sewing also connected the protective covering boards. The binding was sometimes covered with leather, and sometimes left uncovered. Endbands were sometimes added.

Papyrus was used in early Ethiopian books. A common way to create covers was to sew an additional section to the front and back, and laminate the pages together, making rigid covers out of the first and last signatures. The earliest of these were sewn with sinew. If thread was used, the thread was heavily waxed so it would be protected after sewing. It is good to remember that with an uncovered book, the thread is heavily stressed on opening and closing, making waxed thread a good choice. When wooden boards were used, the spine edges were drilled with sewing holes to match the sewing holes in the signatures, so that the thread could enter the center of the boards at the spine. An additional pair of holes was drilled so that the thread could exit through the top of the board, enter the second hole, and complete a loop back through the first hole, finally exiting the center of the spine edge of the board.

The Consequences of Modern Adaptations

The modern book artist may opt for an adaptation of this book form. To avoid the need for wood boards, some will wrap the thread around the back of the board, instead of entering the center of the board.

This way of attaching the boards changes the action of the original structure. Although it works to connect the board to the sig-

natures, the thread is not anchored to the top of the board. When opened and closed, the connecting thread will pull the board backward slightly past the spine of the book, where the signatures meet.

When anchored (when sewn through the board), the edge of each board sits directly above the spine of the textblock, and returns to the same place when opened and closed. Figure 1 shows 3 models: a historical model of a Coptic book at the center, the modern version described in this article at the left, and a modern version that changes the action of the boards on the right.



Figure 1

I prefer to make a Coptic-style book with boards that are anchored, but I like the convenience of modern materials. So I've developed a way of creating covers of binders board to mimic the placement of the wood boards that are "sewn". Each board is made of two pieces of binders board, equal in size. They are not laminated but instead are wrapped together with covering material. Paper or cloth work well as a wrapping for the boards. The needle enters and exits easily, as there is still movement (no adhesive) within the wrapped boards. The book assumes the same shape as a book with wood boards drilled at the center of the spine. The edge of the board is always at the edge of the signatures, at the spine.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the Boards and Drill the Holes (Fig 2)

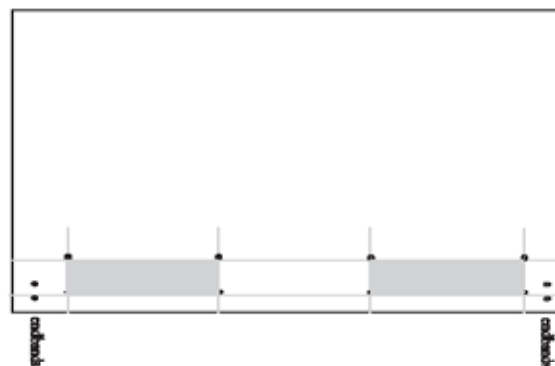


Figure 2

continued on
page 10

continued from page 9

The holes should be just large enough for the needle and thread.

- A 1/16 inch drill bit will usually work. You can easily make the holes with a handheld drill.
- Remember, this is binders board, not wood.

Each board needs 2 columns and 4 rows of sewing holes (indicated by gray lines).

- Row 1 is 1/4 inch from the spine edge.
- Row 2 is 1/2 inch from column 1.
- Column 1 and 4 are 1/2 inch from the head.
- Column 2 and 3 are measured and distributed to accommodate two pairs of sewing pairs.

Optional endband holes should be 1/4 inch from the head or tail, from the spine and from each other.

2. Remove a Bit of Board at the Spine (Fig 3)

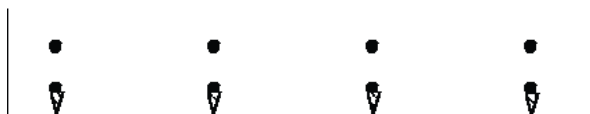
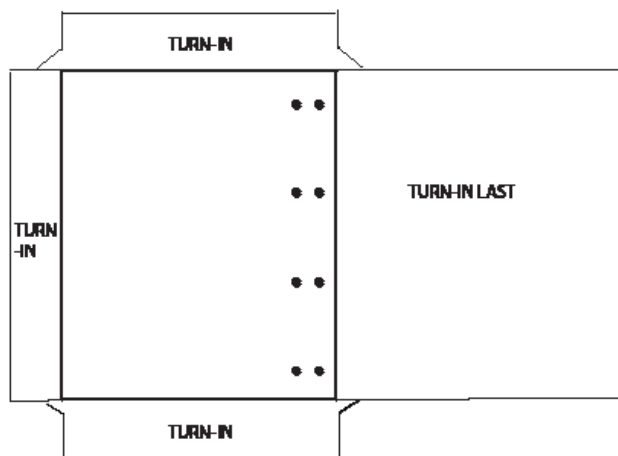


Figure 3

On the inside of each pair of boards, remove a bit of board between the spine edge of the binders board and the first hole on the top of the book. A few millimeters will be sufficient.

3. Match Up the Channels and the Holes and Wrap the Boards (Fig 4)



One board is glued to the wrapping material in the position shown. The second board is placed on top and secured by the turn-ins only. The covering is glued onto the second board, finishing the board.

Figure 4

The diagram shows one way to fully cover the boards. Many systems will work. With weaker paper, you will want to reinforce the area where the needle will enter, with cloth or Japanese paper.

4. Sewing Instructions (Fig 5)

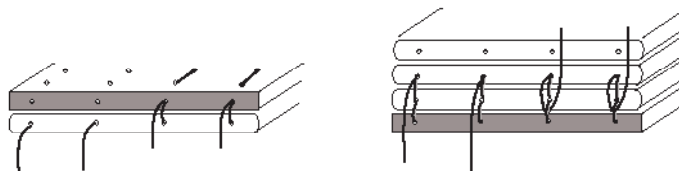


Figure 5

This book has 2 pairs of sewing stations. I will refer to them as sewing pairs.

Enter the last signature of your book (facing down) at one end of a sewing pair and exit the other, leaving 2 equidistant tails of thread.

Move to the next sewing pair and repeat.

Place the back board on top of the signature and line up corresponding sewing pairs. Enter the center of the spine of the board at one end of a sewing pair.

Exit the nearest hole on top of the board and travel to the next. Make a loop that goes through the board, back to the first hole you entered, and exits the center of the spine.

Repeat with the other side of that sewing pair. Continue with the next pair, etc. This will attach the board.

Flip over the signature and board, so that the board is on the bottom.

Re-enter the signature and cross each pair of threads, exiting opposite ends. You will have 3 threads inside the signature at each sewing pair.

Enter the next sequential signature at the end of each sewing pair and cross the threads, exiting opposite ends.

You will have 2 crossing threads. Create the first link stitches between the board and the signature above it by circling the threads between the signature and the board at each end of a sewing pair.

Enter the next sequential signature.

Cross the threads between sewing pairs.

Drop one signature below and make a link.

Repeat until you have attached the beginning signature.

Attach the front board as you did the back, tying off inside the signature.

FINAL THOUGHTS

This image (Figure 6) shows two models. One is a small (3 x 3 inches) model with only one pair of sewing stations. The outer signatures are stiffened and wrapped to provide the covers.

The larger book (4 inches x 5 inches) follows the instructions in this article and has a simplified endband. There is an explana-

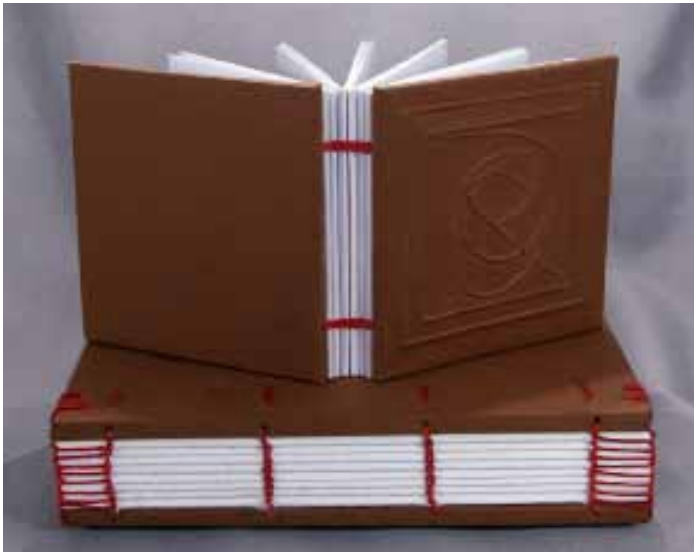


Figure 6

tion of the historical Coptic endband in Jan Greenfield and Jenny Hille's *Headbands: How to Work Them*.

Here is a simple version that I adapted from Jane Greenfield's description. It was part of a workshop devised by Marnie Powers-Torrey for the University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Book Arts Program to make recipe cards for separate endband styles (Figure 7).

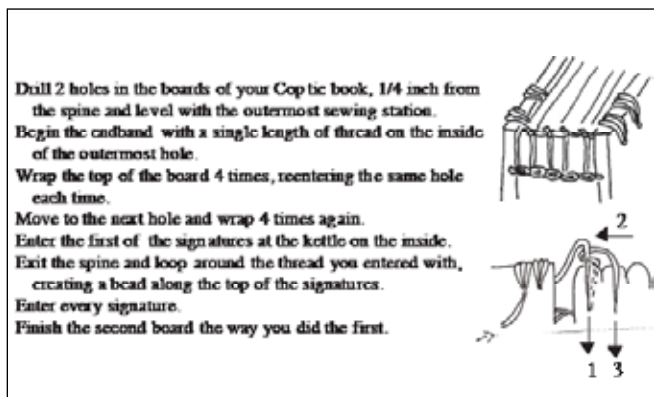


Figure 7

Pamela Barrios has been exhibiting her fine bindings and book structures nationally and internationally since 1989. She teaches workshops and classes, and has published many articles on book structures. She was an associate editor of the *Bonefolder* for its inaugural years. She began her conservation/fine binding training at the New York Botanical Gardens in 1976, and worked for the New York Public Library, Yale Conservation Studio, New York Academy of Medicine, and was Conservator of Rare Books at Brigham Young University for twenty years, until 2010.

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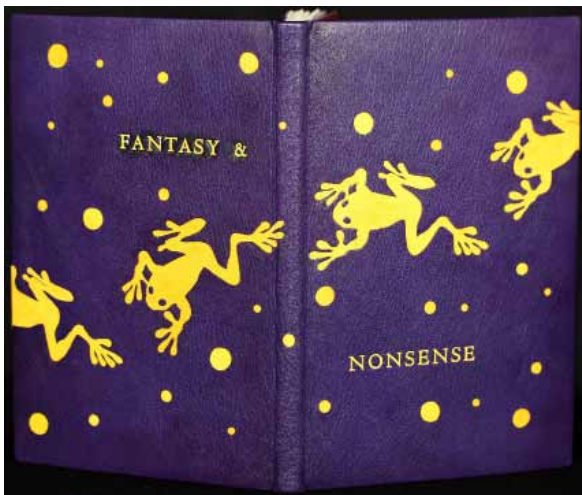
Nonsense and Fantasy in the Rockies...



Coleen Curry



Mary Uthappuru



Scott Kellar

In October of 2012 the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the GBW held a set book competition titled *Fantasy and Nonsense*. The book selected for the competition was **Fantasy and Nonsense**, a series of poems by James Whitcomb Riley. The book was printed by Tryst Press using hand-set type and wood engravings. The bindings were judged by Susan Makow and Pamela Barrios. (3 bindings shown here).

Prizes were awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. The books were displayed at the Marriott Library at the University of Utah through October and November of 2012. A catalog was produced and given to the binders that participated. Additional copies of the catalog were sold for \$10.00, a few of which are still available through the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the GBW.

-Ethan Ensign

co-chair for the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the GBW

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Activity since 11 / 2012

Thanks to everyone who has joined, reinstated and sent in change of address forms. We are working on a new online membership directory, and it should be ready in the next few months. Sorry for the delay! If you have any membership questions I am always happy to answer them. We have a wonderful new color membership brochure (thanks to our Journal Editor and others) I can send as a PDF for members to print and hand out at events, just let me know if you want one.



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Book Review

The Restorer

Murphy, Daniela

Guerilla Books 2011, hardcover, 491 pp., ISBN 978-1-907248-02-3, cost 20 pounds (GB)

Reviewed by Barbara Adams Hebard

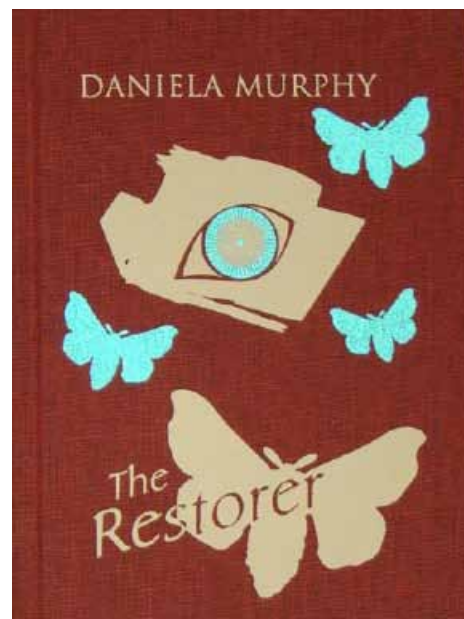
The anticipated copy of *The Restorer* arrived in my mailbox just as I was about to dash off to an appointment; nevertheless, I immediately opened the package and pulled out a chunky, appealing sized book. Charmed by its feel, I opened the cover and quickly turned to the prologue. I was intrigued by the accompanying illustration; a black and white image of a simple stone church in a mysterious, leafy setting. At the top of the adjacent page it read, "Prologue", then "Ireland, Winter 1985". Drawn in, I began to read but reluctantly stopped after only two pages, since I was also unwilling to be late for my appointment.

I first learned about *The Restorer* when Daniela Murphy received 1st prize from the International Rubery Book Award, an award set up to acknowledge independent and individual publishers and writers. Ms. Murphy, in addition to being an award winning author, is an art restorer based in Florence, Italy. In this country she would be called a conservator. Although Murphy's novel is not about book conservation, I thought that GBW members would be interested learning about it.

For me the book had an immediate appeal because of its appearance. Guerilla Books makes limited editions and their books are sold at the British Library. The book is chunky, 6 5/8" high x 5" wide x 1 1/2" deep, a nice proportion to hold open in your hands. The case binding is covered in a deep-red colored fabric embellished with images of moths and a fresco fragment. The sewn text block is printed in Baskerville type. The plotline, except for the prologue set in Ireland in 1985, alternates between the years 1497 and 1999. The years are noted at the start of each chapter, but the book design also elegantly cues the reader to each time-period by use of an ornate foliated initial letter for the 15th century chapters and a simple, stencil-like first letter for the chapters set in the 20th century. Black and metallic silver end-bands, although machine-made, are another nice decorative element which enriches the overall pleasing appearance of the volume.

When I returned home from my appointment, I eagerly picked up *The Restorer* and began reading again from the start, this time without haste. Earlier, I had very much liked the first couple of pages of the prologue and wanted to experience the story's beginning without interruption. It is well-written and pulls you into the book; Ms. Murphy captivates her readers in the first few sentences. The story, about the making of a fresco and the woman who later restored it, mostly takes place in Italy, only the prologue is set in Ireland. That bleak, wintry Irish setting mirrors the emotionally cold life of the protagonist, Elfa Monroe, and is in stark contrast to the boldly colored Italian frescoed church setting where she and the passionately emotional 15th century artist, Francesco di San Lorenzo, work in this novel's narrative of parallel time and place. Although the prologue read easily and kept me engaged, I initially had trouble with the dialogue in the first couple of chapters. It seemed like there wasn't enough difference in the speech patterns of the characters, whether male or female, 15th or 20th century. This, being a debut novel, maybe was a challenge for the author. But, after a while I ignored the homogenous dialogue, or became used to it. Certainly there was enough action in the plot to move the story along.

The church which figures as the principal location in *The Restorer* is in the care of the Franciscan Order of monks throughout the timeline of Ms. Murphy's tale. Padre Lorenzo, in charge in the 20th century, and Padre Teodoro, his 15th century predecessor, both have to come to terms with the startling and peculiar behavior of the two fresco workers; Lorenzo dealing with the emotional breakthrough of the restorer, Elfa, and Teodoro contending with the wild tantrums of the artist, Francesco. Both Padres risk the ire of their superiors by condoning the actions taken by the re-



storer and artist as they move forward with their potentially scandalous work on the wall fresco in the Tuscan church.

In addition to Elfa and Padre Lorenzo, the 20th century chapters of the book are populated with: a psychiatrist, other restorers, a corrupt art historian, an ambitious Italian politician, an aging nobleman, and an enlightened scientist. The members of this group either aid or seek to ruin Elfa depending upon which goal they hope to achieve: lasting love, significant sums of money, recognition, or political gain. Besides Francesco and Padre Teodoro, the cast of characters in the 15th century chapters includes a group of Franciscan monks (the infamous Savonarola even has a cameo appearance), the painters' apprentices, a Cardinal's wily messenger, a dead woman, and a young daughter. The members of this group either aid or seek to ruin Francesco depending upon which goal they hope to achieve: redemption, financial security, recognition, or political gain.

The story is, as you can tell from that list of characters, in fact more complicated than just a tale of a fresco and its restoration. I read most of it over a series of visits to my local coffee shop, relaxing in a comfortable leather chair while sipping coffee (dark, Italian roast). I recommend that you do the same.

Barbara Adams Hebard, Conservator of the John J. Burns Library at Boston College, is a graduate of the North Bennet Street School bookbinding program. Ms. Hebard enjoys writing reviews and articles on book related topics.



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Calligraphy, Vietnamese Style

One of the pleasures of foreign travel for me is puzzling over evidence of the graphic design of the country. Once I get over the reflexive impulse to read the signs, I become interested in the typography. This trip to Vietnam is no different.

The current Vietnamese writing system employs the Latin alphabet, so the alphabet is familiar, although the inflection embellishments are not. The vast majority of signs employ capitals-only Helvetica or some version of sans-serif type, with a substantial majority of Cooper Black. I'm wondering now whether a similar percentage of signs in the US are capitals-only.

I wondered why the rare script lettering that I saw was made in a distinct brush-lettered style, one that I recognized from a greeting card company in the US. It was not until we visited a Cham temple and watched a calligrapher demonstrating his work that I realized why. Vietnamese calligraphy is adapted from traditional Chinese calligraphy, using the Chinese tools and strokes, even though the characters are no longer ideographic. It was a pleasure to watch this calligrapher as he lettered a quotation of Confucius.

Vietnamese written language has an interesting history. Before Vietnam gained its independence from China in 939 CE, an ideographic Chinese system was used in official documents and scholarly writing. After independence, a vernacular system, also ideographic, was adapted from the Chinese and used for most documents until 1910. In the 17th century, missionaries had developed and codified a version of the Vietnamese language based on the Latin alphabet. When the French colonized Vietnam in 1910, this Romanized writing system was dubbed the "national script" and its use mandated for all public documents. By the end of the 20th century virtually all Vietnamese documents were written in the national script.

I wonder how this switch from the ideographic to phonetic writing system has affected Vietnamese typography, calligraphy, and graphic design in general. Meanwhile, I'm enjoying the rice paddies, the mountains, and the hundreds of children who have high-fived me, shouting "hello!", as I bicycle from Saigon to Hanoi.



Photography, courtesy Beth Lee

— GBW Journal —

Call for Papers

The *Guild of Book Workers Journal* welcomes submissions of papers, articles, essays and proposals for photo galleries for our forthcoming issues. Both members and nonmembers are welcome to submit. We will consider submissions addressing any of the fields represented by the Guild's membership, including but not limited to:

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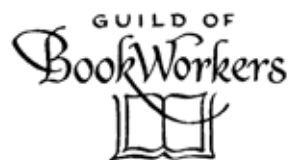
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Cara Schlesinger

Journal Editor



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Catherine Burkhard
as of 1-4-13

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