



THIS YEAR'S GUILD of Book Workers Lifetime Achievement Award goes to Katie MacGregor, who has been making fabulous handmade papers for more than 40 years.

Katie has an artistic background, having studied art in college, majoring in drawing and painting. She began her papermaking journey as an apprentice with Kathryn and Howard Clark at Twinrocker Handmade Paper, starting in 1980. Katie moved to Maine in 1982, opening a paper mill with Bernie Vinzani. For the last 23 years she has operated her own papermaking mill in Whiting, Maine. Her work has been so influential and important to members

of the Guild of Book Workers that she was mentioned in Cathy Baker's presentation, "Hand Papermaking in the Twentieth Century," at the Guild's centennial Standards of Excellence in 2006.

Katie produces permanent/durable papers with great initial strength and working qualities, combined with chemical stability that will allow them to last for hundreds of years. Part of her secret is the water source at her mill in Maine, a deep well with traces of calcium carbonate that produces a natural alkaline buffer to the paper. Significantly, she understands that the appearance of a paper sheet is just as important as its working qualities. She has long been



Photo courtesy of Katie MacGregor



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interested in color progression – some of her earliest papers explored color themes. Her ability to accurately match and convey color has made her papers important for printers, calligraphers, and book artists alike. Katie has worked with many artists, including Claire Van Vliet, Walter Tisdale, and Nancy Leavitt, to develop specific papers tailored to their needs, sometimes changing the color, fiber content, and surface finish to meet unique project specifications.

Her papers have been equally important to the conservation and bookbinding community. Since 1994 she has been making paper specifically designed for conservators. Instrumental to this was Katie's participation in the Library of Congress Endpaper Project in the 1990s. The goal of the project was to develop papers that accurately matched historical texts produced from the 15th through 18th centuries. Katie's papers not only have the correct color and translucency but also working characteristics, sizing, weight, and bend to give them the right feel for the books to which they are added. The strength and consistency of her papers also makes them wonderful for use as a higher-quality spine and boards lining and for text blocks for blank books. Over time, she has added heavier cover stock papers that are useful for limp, paper case structures and covering materials for both soft- and hard-cover bindings.

Katie MacGregor is not just a fabulous papermaker, she is also a wonderful person who has given to the Guild in other ways. When the New England Chapter of GBW



Photo courtesy of Katie MacGregor



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was planning a regional conference in 2014, Katie was instrumental in finding the location for the program and lodging for the participants. She was one of two instructors for the conference, creating a half-day papermaking program (taught twice) where conference participants learned about her process and how she logs her paper formulas. She showed eager participants a collection of books created with her papers, and generously let everyone make sheets of paper using a special Guild of Bookworkers watermark that she had developed for the day. Katie even helped to organize and make the Saturday night banquet dinner. The success of the event was directly related to all the work she put into the conference.

For all that Katie MacGregor has done for GBW members, I'm so pleased that she was chosen this year to be the Guild of Book Workers Lifetime Achievement Award winner. It is her work, the work of a papermaker, that binds us all—printer, calligrapher, bookbinder, and conservator.



Photo courtesy of Katie MacGregor