BUILDING 3-DIMENSIONAL SURFACES

3-dimensional elements find their way into my binding design quite frequently. Consequently, I’m always looking for new objects to stick on and new ways of doing the sticking. These techniques were developed through the process of trial and error. There are, of course, any number of ways of making these attachments. This poster presentation is a compilation of some of the tricks I have found successful.

No matter how you go about building up the surface of a binding, three things are critical to your success:

1. Planning the design is essential. (Many of the methods described required drilling holes into the coverboards and recessing areas - both front and back. Hard to hide these mistakes.)

2. The attachment must be secure. (Books are meant to be handled and read.)

3. The method of attachment should be invisible on the inside board. (Flat, clean pastedowns are important to the appearance of the binding AND to protect the textblock from damage and distortion from a sharp or lumpy inner board.

Making the actual attachments happens in a variety of ways with various methods. Some involve thread. All involve adhesive. And while it’s always preferable to attach design elements with tried and true bookbinding adhesives, it’s not always feasible. Paste, for example, is perfect when applying leather onlays; PVA, when adhering dimensional onlays that have a paper substrate. In fact, for most porous to porous material adhesion (wood, paper, leather, cloth) PVA or paste work best and are reliable. However, for objects that are not porous (horn, metal, glass or plastic), a different kind of adhesive is necessary.

After experimenting with numerous glues, I’ve come to love one product that is manufactured under a variety of names, but is most commonly known as Shoe Goop or Household Goop. Goop is a transparent, silicone-based glue. As such, it is both an adhesive and a sealer. Silicones were developed to work well under extreme conditions. They don’t fail in cold weather and will continue to hold even if the bond becomes wet. While cold weather is not a pressing consideration when talking about binding, adhesion under wet conditions is. Goop allows objects to be set in place on the board and worked back around with wet leather without fear of movement.

Thick in nature, Goop is easily applied to intricate areas without running. It sets up within 15 minutes, adheres in 12 hours and cures in 24. Once cured, the adhesive becomes inert. Its most satisfying property, and the reason I use it almost exclusively when attaching 3-D forms, is that any excess that might ooze out from the application of too much adhesive can be cut away with a scalpel and peeled off most surfaces with no damage.
PUCKERED LEATHER

A decorative technique discovered by Edgar Mansfield in the 1950's; employed here to hold a flat object in place on a cover.

Leather is cut slightly larger than usual and pared more thinly in areas to be puckered.

Press object into place and pucker leather over edge.

Cut recess in board to accommodate flat object and thickness of leather.

NO ADHESIVE NECESSARY!!
"RELIQUARY"

an idea that sprung from looking at reliquaries and reliquary bindings

Adapted from wooden to paper boards

NO NAILS!!
GEMS, STONES & JEWELS

useful for objects that will sit in a bezel.

The stone is "set" after bezel is attached.

Holes are drilled through bezel cup and board. Cup is stitched into place.

Adhesive (just in case!)
CLASPS, TIES, RIBBONS, THONGS, CORDS & other ways to tie things up!

in most cases, the final operation before the paste-down is put in place.

Chisel or drill through covered board.

Recess board to allow fastening material to lie flatly on inside board. Apply patch and sand well.

Adhesive (pretty much needed this time!)

Paper patch
Onlays

Adhere onlays with PVA after slightly abrading cover leather.

Virtually anything can be covered with leather or paper and added to the cover of a book.

Paper clay and molds allow for duplication of unique objects.

Areas where 3-D onlays turn over the edges of the board should be recessed to allow thickness of onlay.

Position thick 3-D onlays on boards so that they don't interfere with the opening of the book.

Cover paper or leather

Board

THICK & THIN 3-DIMENSIONAL ONLAYS

covering plastic, wood, paper, board

TEXT

NOTES
MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTS

a few last minute ideas...

or how to attach nails, make pulls for boxes, see yourself or others in the cover of a book!