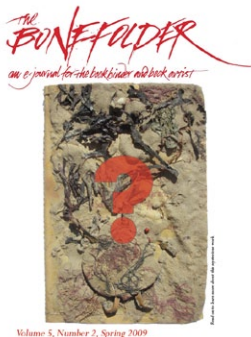
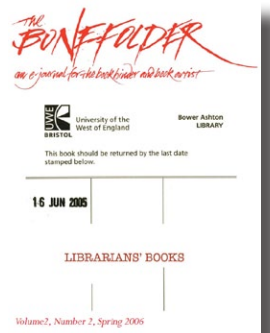


THE BUNEFOLDER

an e-journal for the book binder and book artist

2004



2012

Volume 8, 2012

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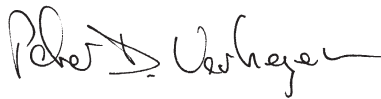
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Publisher's Note

Welcome to Volume 8, 2012, the largest (and regrettably last) issue of *The Bonefolder*. What started as an experiment in open-access online-only publishing “way back” in 2004 grew into perhaps the most widely read publication in the book arts with over a quarter million downloads for all issues combined since we began with a global readership. Listing of the *The Bonefolder* in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) placed us in just about every research library’s online catalog, and participation in LOCKSS will ensure long-term access to all issues (as do Syracuse University Library’s and the Internet Archive’s servers). This growth, however, also brought with it ever increasing workloads for the small and incredibly dedicated editorial staff who solicited articles, worked with authors, and much more. With the 2011 issue we switched to an annual format (something catalogers curse publishers for) in the hopes that it would allow us to streamline processes and spread the work out as it came in. Alas, that did not happen in the way we had hoped and the process became unsustainable... When we began we knew it would be a challenge, albeit a fun one inspired by other independent publications such as *Fine Print* and *Bookways*, but also membership publications such as *The New Bookbinder* and *The Guild of Book Workers Journal*. Since we started other publications in the book arts other sprung up but ours remains the only freely accessible journal in the field.

Looking back, I think we more than surpassed our initial goals, and while I have deep regrets about “closing the book” I feel it is far better to leave the field at the zenith when we all still have energy for other pursuits (that we all know will come) rather than forcing ourselves to continue. So, it is with an intense sense of pride that I thank all those who have worked to make this publication the success it became – Donia Conn who encouraged me to start things in 2004, Pamela Barrios, Chela Metzger and Don Rash who formed the original core, Karen Hanmer who soon joined the team, and finally Ann Carroll Kearney who was a very welcome addition with this issue. To Samantha Quell, a long-time student of mine, our thanks for indexing our 14 issues thereby enhancing access. All of you contributed greatly to our success. Finally though, we would have not been able to exist at all if not for our authors, some established, some new, who filled our issues with articles that covered the full spectrum of the book arts.

To all thank you!



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Full information on the *Bonefolder*, can be found at:

<<http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder>>

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Evolution of an Artist's Book

By Sarah Bryant

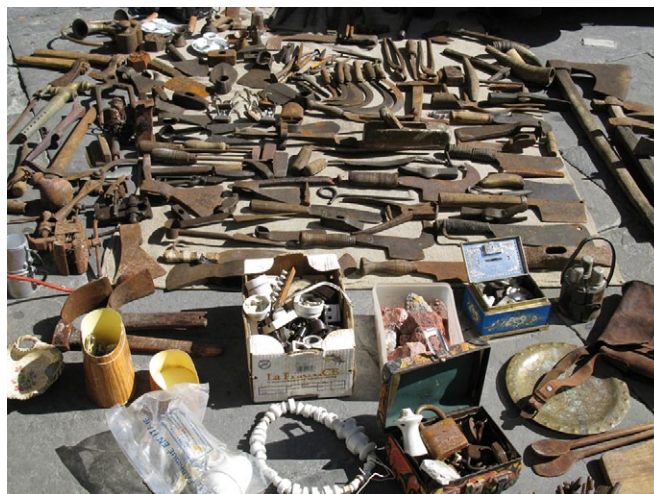


Biography is a letterpress printed artist's book that examines the chemical elements in the human body and the roles they play elsewhere in the world. This book grew out of my desire to use the periodic table, our visual method of categorizing every particle of matter in the universe, as a tool for creating a portrait of a human being, the viewer of the book. I designed, printed, and bound *Biography* over the course of two years. The following is a description of that process, from its crude beginnings as a desktop folder of digital photographs, through a dozen mockups, months of press time, and the completion of the binding in April of 2011.

As I write this article, I am aware that I am describing a process that I usually labor to hide. I don't want people to look at one of my books and immediately identify it as handmade. I want the book to stand on its own regardless of the production process. It is tempting now to write about that process, however, because producing this book dominated my life over a long period of time. It was impossible not to obsessively document the day-to-day journey of the book the way some people take photos of their children or vacations. I was taking what I considered to be gripping daily shots of colored rectangles, their numbers increasing with every press run. In photographs this seems strangely magical to me: (pop) red, (pop) yellow, (pop) green yellow purple. Having this record creates the temptation to write the narrative of the project, as I am doing now.

The primordial soup of this book formed while I traveled in Italy in 2008. I was teaching for the University of Georgia in Cortona, a place so beautiful that it was disorienting. In addition to the requisite *I-was-here-look-isn't-it-stunning* photographs of cobblestones and sunsets and glorious

churches, I began taking pictures of other things I found particularly interesting. I never intended to show these to people; I was simply taking photos when I felt a compulsion, and would then file them together on my laptop to see if any ideas would shake out of them later. Soon it became clear that I was repeatedly drawn to two kinds of images.



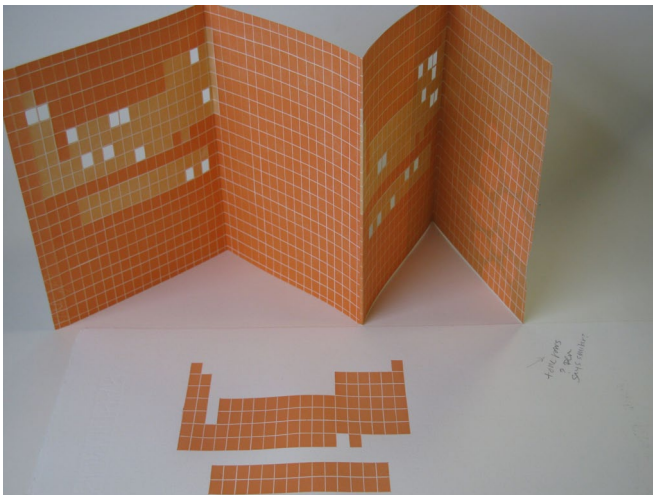
The first group of photographs consisted of odd collections of similar objects piled on tables in open markets, or arranged in cemeteries, or carefully guarded behind glass in museum displays. Piles of dental equipment, for example, or identical aged artificial flowers, or tiny, ancient stone figures. These objects had been created new somewhere, had been pumped out full of purpose into the wide world, and now, at the end of their lives, they had somehow found each other again.



The second group was a selection of specific moments in architecture; bricked up doorways next to functional doorways, the ghosts of old facades on renovated buildings. I was especially intrigued by stones that had once been carved with text, but had long ago been separated from their adjoining stones and reused in a purely utilitarian way. This led to portions of words found sideways on a wall, or upside-down ten feet up. All of these photos gathered together seemed to be whispering about the change in

function of objects over time, and about the dissemination and regrouping of the objects that we make and use. Before I could think any more about it, it was time to pack the bags, kiss Cortona goodbye (*Ciao!*) and move to upstate New York to start a fellowship at Wells College.

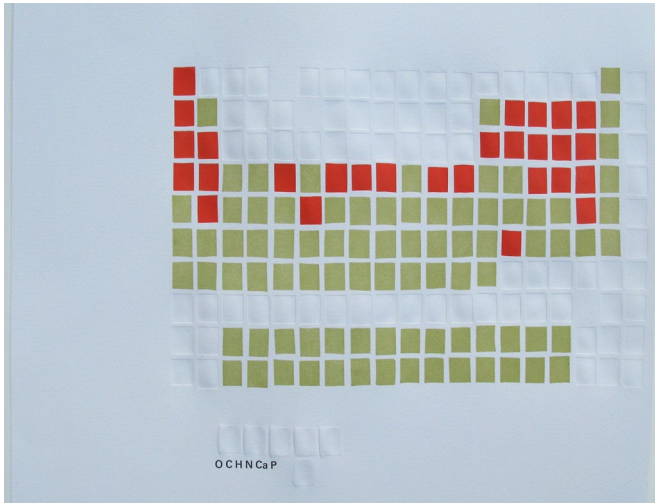
A hundred boxes and a thousand miles later, I found myself in Aurora, New York with a rough idea and no plan for how to proceed. At this stage I generally get started simply by making things. Moving my hands, folding some paper, cutting things out, playing around on my laptop. Ninety percent of what I produce in this way is eventually discarded, but without this mindless making, no progress is possible. This time around, I spent some time experimenting with calculation wheels, (turning wheels that reveal different information at different angles,) imagining that this mechanism might be a good way to talk about change and function. Starting from structure and trying to squeeze content to fit is dangerous, however. I quickly abandoned this format and continued to experiment with other things, playing with images of screws and bolts, cutting holes out of paper and layering sheets together.



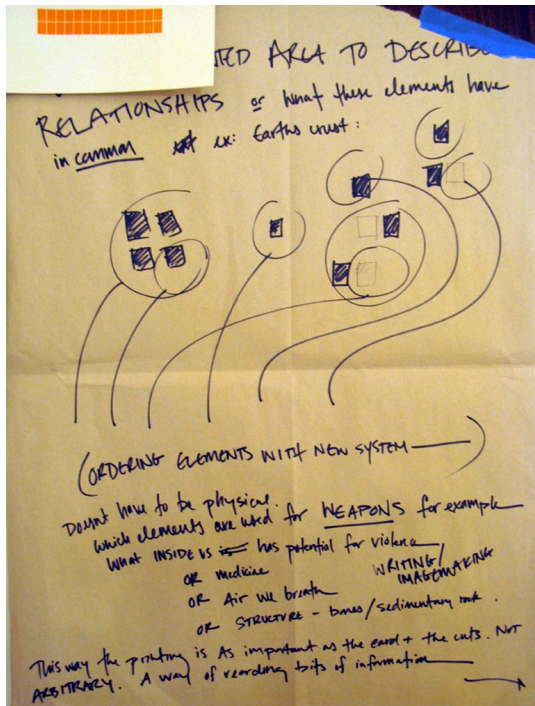
Maybe when I was driving to the college, counting cows, or maybe when I was in the shower, or when I was awake in the middle of the night, the periodic table arrived like a gift. Up from my subconscious bubbled the way to talk about these ideas of dissemination and reuse, of combination and recombination. The periodic table is the eternal story of the photos I'd been taking. With renewed focus, I got on the press and printed an assortment of periodic table-shaped things that I could use as a batch of raw materials with which to work. Another series of mockups followed, this time in the form of a modified board book. A card printed with the periodic table could be pulled out and placed between die-cut pages, the holes on each spread revealing the chemical composition of certain objects: your car, your apple, your body, your gloves.



How much about the periodic table do you remember? I remembered almost nothing. What is a glove made out of? or an apple? How in the world is a person supposed to work out the chemical composition of a car? It had been at least fifteen years since I had given the periodic table more than a passing glance. There was no way to move forward without admitting to myself that I was an utter chemistry bonehead. It was time to meet with a chemistry professor, and, happily, there was one in the building next door. Enter Wells Professor Christopher Bailey, who was kind enough to sit me down in front of a pull-down chart of the periodic table and explain it to me step by step. I had a little notebook, and I asked a lot of questions. I learned, most importantly, that the book I wanted to do was impossible. Things are made of too much stuff. The chemical composition of a car? Start with what the *bumper* of a car is made of. And the seats. And the exhaust pipe. I needed to reevaluate.



Simultaneous with all of my work making mockups and playfully putting things together, I had been producing small editions of prints. While books take an agonizingly long time, prints are small projects that I can get satisfaction from completing. They also help me work through undulating ideas about the direction a book should go. In the spring of 2009, I printed *Periodic #1*, a simple representation of the periodic table with the elements in the human body printed in a bright orange color. This print, along with the meeting with Christopher Bailey, gave me a final direction for the project. I would make a book about only the elements in the human body, and use those elements to talk about the larger world. The human body became a lens through which to focus the book, to give meaning to what would have been an arbitrary collection of descriptions.

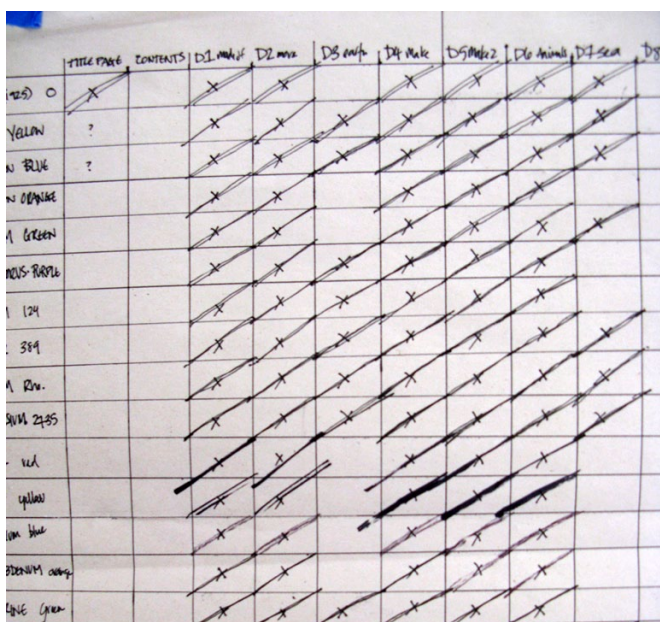


I began the serious design in the fall of 2009. I took up residence in an infrequently used room together with my notes and pad of newsprint and immersed myself in online research about the twenty elements that make up most of the human body. I was interested in what else these particular elements did and what they had in common. While sifting through this information, I found some things that made me scratch my head. For example, the same elements that make pesticides also make fertilizer. The chemical composition of our bodies is found in roughly the same proportion in sea water. As I compiled this information, I made decisions about what would and would not be contained in the book. Rough thumbnails sketched out the following:

title page
table of contents/list of diagrams
periodic table, human elements in color
something?
composition of the universe?
crust of the earth (sun?)
medicines/weapons
other things we make
animals
sea water
something
colophon

YOU ARE	
Oxygen	65%
Carbon	18%
Hydrogen	10%
Nitrogen	3%
Calcium	1.5%
Phosphorus	1%
Potassium	0.35%
Sulfur	0.25%
Sodium	0.15%
Magnesium	0.05%
Copper	
Zinc	
Selenium	
Molybdenum	
Fluorine	0.7%
Chlorine	
Iodine	
Manganese	
Cobalt	
Iron	

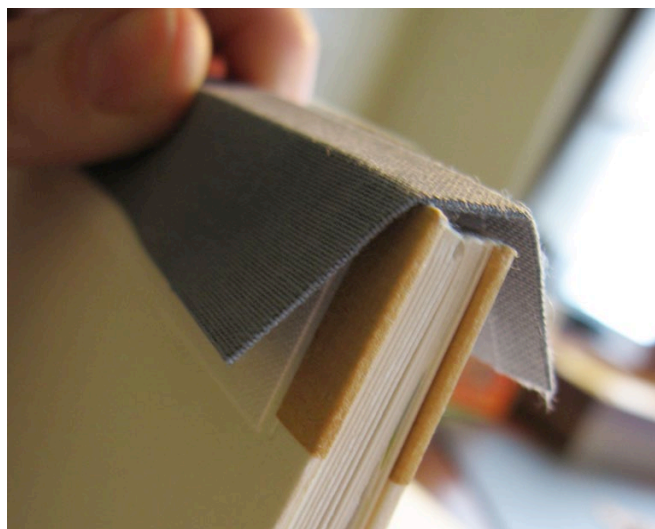
When the design was finished in the early spring of 2010, the book would be composed of twelve folios: a title page, a list of diagrams, the periodic table with human elements (“you are what you are made of,”) the same table but with wild organic forms printed instead of the gray (“you are part of something larger than yourself,”) the elements in the human body also present in the crust of the earth (“you are what you stand on,”) the elements in the human body that are used to make medicines and weapons (“you are what you make part 1,”) the elements in the human body that are used to make building materials and tools (“you are what you make part 2,”) the elements in the human body and a long list of animals that share our rough chemical composition (“you are what is similar to you,”) the elements in the human body that are present in seawater (“you are where you came from,”) two spreads that visually explore and break down the grid of the table with organic forms (“you are” and “you are”) and a colophon. It was time to order polymer plates and get on the press.



deep in Pantone 2735 Rectangle Day, I was having trouble talking to people about non-rectangle-related issues. By Pantone 692 Rectangle Day, I was sick to death of the whole book. Many of the folios had upwards of twenty runs. To ease the registration problems, I ordered a few polymer plates that would never appear in the book. I used these plates for printing proofs with a map to follow during the make-ready, or beginning stages of setting up a press run. And so the months dragged on, and I dreamed of rectangles every night.



Most of the book was designed well before I began to print, but I left portions of a few folios to work out on the press. I wanted to include something organic and spontaneous to counterbalance the harsh restrictions of the grid that dominated the rest of the book. I solved this problem with a combination of pressure printing organic forms in shifting colors onto the grid and blind stamping those same forms throughout the book. My use of these techniques culminated in the last spread, which I intended to be a bubbling, boiling set of pages.



I finished printing the book in the summer of 2010 and launched into binding the edition, a process I wouldn't complete until the following spring. I won't go into the specifics of the binding here except to say that I chose a drum-leaf structure because it allowed me to print the diagrams exactly the way they would appear in the book rather than worrying about imposition and collation, necessary considerations when using another structure. I bound 65 standard copies in this way and housed them in a clamshell box to protect the white covers from wear. For each folio, I had also produced a series of prints in an edition of 25. 10 deluxe copies were housed in a much larger box along with these prints from the book.



In April of 2011, I finished the last box and looked up from my table, slightly stunned. Finishing a book is disorienting. All of the little things that were crucially important for months- the jigs, the prepped materials, the scraps of paper with notes and measurements, the last few printed sheets- suddenly lose their purpose and become functionless waste. I lose my purpose, too. The process of completing a book is a slow one, constantly interrupted by other obligations and projects. But the book is there in the background, an overarching narrative, a guide through months and seasons. When the process is over I feel cut loose and lost. And then I begin again.

Note: The Evolution of an Artist's Book was presented by Sarah Bryant as the Spring 2011 Susan Garretson Swartzburg Lecture lecture at Wells College. In it she discusses the design and production of her most recent book, *Biography*. The lecture can be viewed online at <http://video.syr.edu/Video.aspx?vid=Tlzp3UMBD0045MptqQ5DuA>.

Sarah Bryant is a letterpress printer and bookbinder specializing in the production of editioned artist's books under her imprint, Big Jump Press. These books have been featured in exhibitions around the United States and have been acquired by special collections libraries internationally, including The Yale Arts Library, The Houghton Library at Harvard University, The New York Public Library and The Darling Bio-medical Library at UCLA. In 2011, Bryant won the MCBA Prize for her book Biography. Bryant has taught book arts courses for The University of Georgia, Wells College, and The University of Alabama MFA in the Book Arts Program. She teaches bookbinding and letterpress printing workshops around the country. She moves a lot, but can always be found at <http://www.bigjumppress.com>.

John DePol Digital Archive at The University of Alabama: Planning and Building an Online Archive and Exhibition Resource for Book Artists, Printers, and Scholars

By Amanda Haldy, Sara Parkel, & Dan Albertson

Several thousand wood engravings and related ephemera from the life and works of John DePol, master wood engraver (1913-2004) currently live at The University of Alabama. In 2009, through the collaborative efforts of the students and faculty of The Book Arts Program and School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS), work began in developing an on-line archive, also known as the John DePol Digital Archive Project. With more than five boxes of materials to be archived, the equivalent of seven to nine linear feet of material, including personal correspondence, wood engravings, carved blocks, chapbooks, articles and ephemera, this was a large project to tackle.

The challenge was even greater for Book Arts and SLIS students, because there was not direct access to a digital archivist, and they did not have the practical experiences of a special collections department. Archiving and digitizing such a sizable collection could quickly become overwhelming without a clear goal. Therefore, we began by asking: Why do we want to archive the work of John DePol? What is the first step in creating this archive? And, how will the archive be used once it is finished?

The natural place to begin constructing our vision for the archive was with John DePol himself. Master printer, engraver, lithographer, etcher, painter and illustrator, Depol was born in Greenwich Village in 1913. He worked on Wall Street as a young man and spent his early years in various office jobs while learning printmaking and developing his graphic work. Many of his engravings are based on street scenes, capturing the character of local architecture. In addition to work inspired by Manhattan, he was influenced by the countryside of Northern Ireland, where he was deployed while serving in the Air Force during World War II. After his retirement in 1978, DePol devoted his time to artistic collaborations with private press projects across the country, engraving illustrations for numerous presses including the Easton Press, the Yellow Barn Press, Pinkering Press and many others.



A Photograph of John DePol.

Steve Miller, coordinator of the Book Arts Program at The University of Alabama and proprietor of Red Ozier Press, was a longtime friend and collaborator of DePol's and has been receiving items from the DePol family for years, primarily from DePol himself before his death in 2004 and afterwards from his daughter, Patricia DePol. The organic nature of how Steve accumulated these materials from DePol reveals a lot about John DePol's generosity as a colleague and friend.

Miller began letterpress printing at the University of Wisconsin, Madison where he founded Red Ozier Press, beginning his career as a book artist and publisher. In the late 1970's he moved the press to New York and, along with fellow printer and studio partner Ken Botnick, began teaming up with a wide range of artists, poets and authors, creating limited edition handmade books that were sold nationwide. It was around this time that Miller met John DePol for the first time, joining forces with him for the Red Ozier Press publication of *Father Abraham*, a William Faulkner novella with wood engraved illustrations by John DePol. When asked about his work with DePol, Miller immediately smiles and recalls with enthusiasm the times when DePol came to his print studio and they spread the pages of the book on the floor, intuitively designing by arranging and rearranging the pages. "This is what John enjoyed the most," explains Miller, "He enjoyed coming to the studio on 28th Street and being part of the collaborative energy." *Father Abraham* was published in the early 1980's, immediately turning a collaborative project into a lifelong friendship. This is where the archive begins, with packages of prints, articles, exhibition announcements and letters amassed over the years, representing the large body of work that we have today.

Why Build an Online Digital Archive?

The motivation behind a DePol digital archive is to share a wealth of information on John Depol, creating a resource available to the public, specifically important to book artists,

engravers, art historians, and print culture scholars. The goal we set at the onset was to provide a Humanistic on-line collection which incorporates not only searchable images, but could also grow to include podcast interviews, photographs and personalized stories relating to John DePol and his numerous artistic partners. We also wanted the on-line aspect to be user friendly—a place where artists, collectors and researchers can easily find and contribute works, and browse through areas of interest as categorized by the main themes connected to DePol's work.

Developing a digital archive is a gradual process, moving from gathering the materials to cataloging information about them, designing the Web presence and ongoing evaluation, to say nothing of common research activities like scholarly communication and fund raising. The John DePol Archive Project is a joint effort between two different areas represented in SLIS: the Book Arts, including director Steve Miller and graduate student Sara Parkel, and Library and Information Studies (LIS), represented by Dan Albertson and graduate student Amanda Haldy. This partnership between the two areas of SLIS reflects both the artistic and the technical ambitions of the online archive and also provides the opportunity for Book Arts and LIS students to develop practical skills through web development and archiving a significant body of artwork.



Transferring archive materials into acid-free containers. From left: Sara Parkel and Amanda Haldy.

The archive will do more than house static images of art, and large portions of the collection include DePol's personal correspondence as well as notes from over a lifetime of collaborations. It is the goal of everyone involved to preserve DePol's personality and down-to-earth communications, reflecting the friendships that developed between him and the small presses, librarians and printers who populated his life.

Under Miller's direction, graduate student Sara Parkel began formalizing the ongoing process of digitizing the materials and transferring the items into acid free storage. Since the beginning of the project, two assistantship positions have been created for the program, allowing book arts students to work ten hours per week scanning items into digital formats. This team will also be responsible for most of the data-entry components and expansion of the archive over time, as well as securing copyright permissions to display previously published materials. Claire Seipser and John Michael-Perkins, the first scanning assistants, have been digitizing the flat items using Epson V300 flatbed scanners at 600 dpi. However, since there are also numerous engraved blocks in the collection, we determined that we would eventually need to professionally photograph rather than scan the blocks to better represent their size, texture and depth.



An unpublished illustration for a title page.



Claire Seipser, one of the first group of scanning technicians for the DePol Digital Archive.

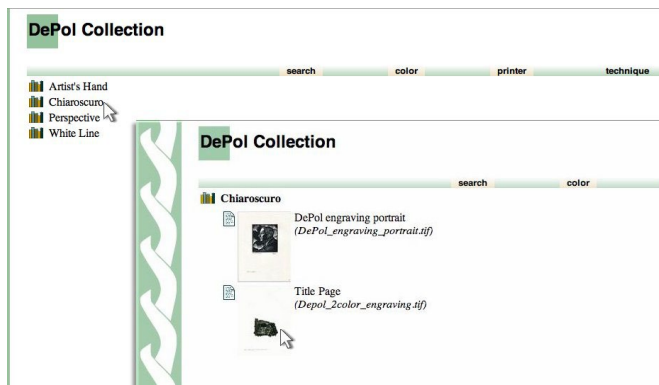


Sara Parkel and John-Michael Perkins of the first group of scanning technicians for the DePol Digital Archive.

With the scanning process underway, the web end of the archive required design and construction. Albertson and Haldy focused on the technical structure of the database and formatting the website design/software of the archive. Greenstone *(see sidebar), an open-source software product for creating digital libraries, was selected as a hearty and versatile tool for this purpose.

However, before we could begin adding digital items to the database, we faced the fundamental question of how to organize them. The usefulness of the archive would depend on this. How would visitors and scholars approach this archive? What would they be looking for? What groups of materials might they wish to explore?

Greenstone is an open-source software suite designed to help universities, libraries and other public or non-profit institutions create digital library collections and make them available on the open web. The software is produced by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, and developed and distributed in cooperation with UNESCO and the Human Info NGO, and is available at <<http://www.greenstone.org>>



A screen shot from the rudimentary archive, demonstrating the "browse" feature.

Nuts and Bolts of a Digital Archive

Generally speaking, digital archives offer collections in text, images, videos, audio, or any combination thereof. The topical scope or focus of digital archives also varies, and repositories are routinely developed for certain geographic or cultural interests, e.g. to help preserve the cultural heritage or record of a small town. It's also common for digital archives to be created for certain subject areas or items relevant to an academic discipline or domain, such as for information or knowledge found in science, the arts, history, or more "defined" fields like anthropology, ethnomusicology, law, nursing, medicine, cartography, and so on. Different types of digital media or resources, which may span multiple academic disciplines, can also be the basis for developing

digital collections, including projects that solely collect, organize, and offer eBooks through a digital library. Aside from actual digital collections, research projects have also been organized in order to develop novel digital archive technologies that streamline the creation of new projects, as in the case of Greenstone.

Given the array of choices out there, the question was how to best organize information about our DePol collection. The way our collection's items are presented by the archive, and how these items are described by metadata, impacts how visitors to the archive locate the resources they seek. What words would these potential users type into the keyword search? What sort of categorical information would they care most about?

User-Friendly: Online Survey

The organization of materials in any archive—physical or digital—is aimed to help people identify and locate what they need in an otherwise overwhelming sea of information. Anyone who has had to sift through hundreds of hit-and-miss Google search results understands that this is easier said than done. To deal with this problem, it was important to bring potential users into the design process. This process involved a survey to find out how book artists might most efficiently search for items on-line.

We used the online survey software provider, *WorldAPP Key Survey* which allowed us to have an image-based survey, providing the juxtaposition of high-quality images with each question box. The survey only incorporated images of engraving prints. We decided that correspondence and

published materials in the collection would be described using conventional methods already developed and available to organize such items. The survey presented five images displayed in random order. These images were selected by Miller and Parkel as being representative of the core of the DePol collection. The question which followed each image in the inquiry urged respondents to write openly and simply asked, *How would you describe this particular item to a colleague?* As a quantitative study, this allowed us to identify metadata tags *(See sidebar) tailored to the conceptual organization of wood engravings.

A sample population for the survey was solicited through an open email invitation dispersed over *Book_Arts-L* and the *Wood Engravers Network Yahoo Group*. Respondents participated on a voluntary basis. After ten days, our inquiry received seven responses. Seven is not a large sample, but given room to write at length and to any detail, respondents provided insightful descriptive information that helped us determine our categorization methods for the items.

Categories and trends started emerging from the response data. For example, as respondents used terms like “portrait” and “landscape,” we could group these into a category called *genre*, tallying each instance as these words appeared, as well as how many of the total respondents referenced a genre term. Through these results, we discovered categories to describe our collection, and these categories will act as searchable elements or “access points” in the on-line archive. The ensuing metadata schema describes collection items in thirteen different ways: By title, creator, type, date, genre, subject, technique, color, publisher/printer, purpose, size, relationship to other collection items, and copyright.

Currently, there are over 200 items digitized and stored on a computer that is dedicated for the DePol archive at SLIS; this includes over 100 items with full descriptions (records) entered into our Greenstone-powered digital archive, which can now be searched and browsed. Work on the digital archive will continue through the 2011/12 academic year, though updates to live collection items will no doubt continue for many months after that. After building a sufficient virtual collection, a follow-up study of users will gauge whether the archive’s design has indeed satisfied its objectives, analyzing how book artists, engravers and scholars actually interact (whether searching or contributing) with the digital archive.

Such a study will help us analyze the effectiveness of our organizational scheme and establish improvement criteria. We plan to collect and add podcast files and home videos as the archive continues to grow.

Our biggest task in the long run will be maintaining momentum as graduate students receive their degree and incoming students learn the process of digitizing an object and describing it in the Greenstone database. And, although this is a project that will ultimately take several years to complete, we have a solid groundwork set in place to make the transitions from a fluctuating, student-based effort possible.

This is an important project documenting the art and life of John DePol, whose graphic work was masterful and prolific.

A metadata schema is a set of elements that describes works in a library, archive or museum collection in surrogate of the work itself (i.e., title, creator, subject, etc.) to facilitate organization, which in turn facilitates how we find things. Those familiar with library and information studies will recognize Dublin Core as an example of a metadata schema designed to help managers of diverse collections quickly and effectively organize overwhelming amounts of information in the digital world.

As Miller observes, “Mr. DePol is an American treasure. John was keenly interested in the world of art and literature, and continued to create wood-engraved images of great beauty and serenity, principally for limited edition, hand-printed books into his late 80’s.”

He was a friend to many and left an indelible mark on every community he touched. Reading his correspondence and slowly working through the collection is very much like reading the story of someone’s life. The ultimate goal of this archive is to make that story available to artists, scholars, and students the world over. Digitizing

this collection while maintaining the personal aspects of his collaborations will not only preserve his work but also act as an organic, multifaceted portrait of John DePol.

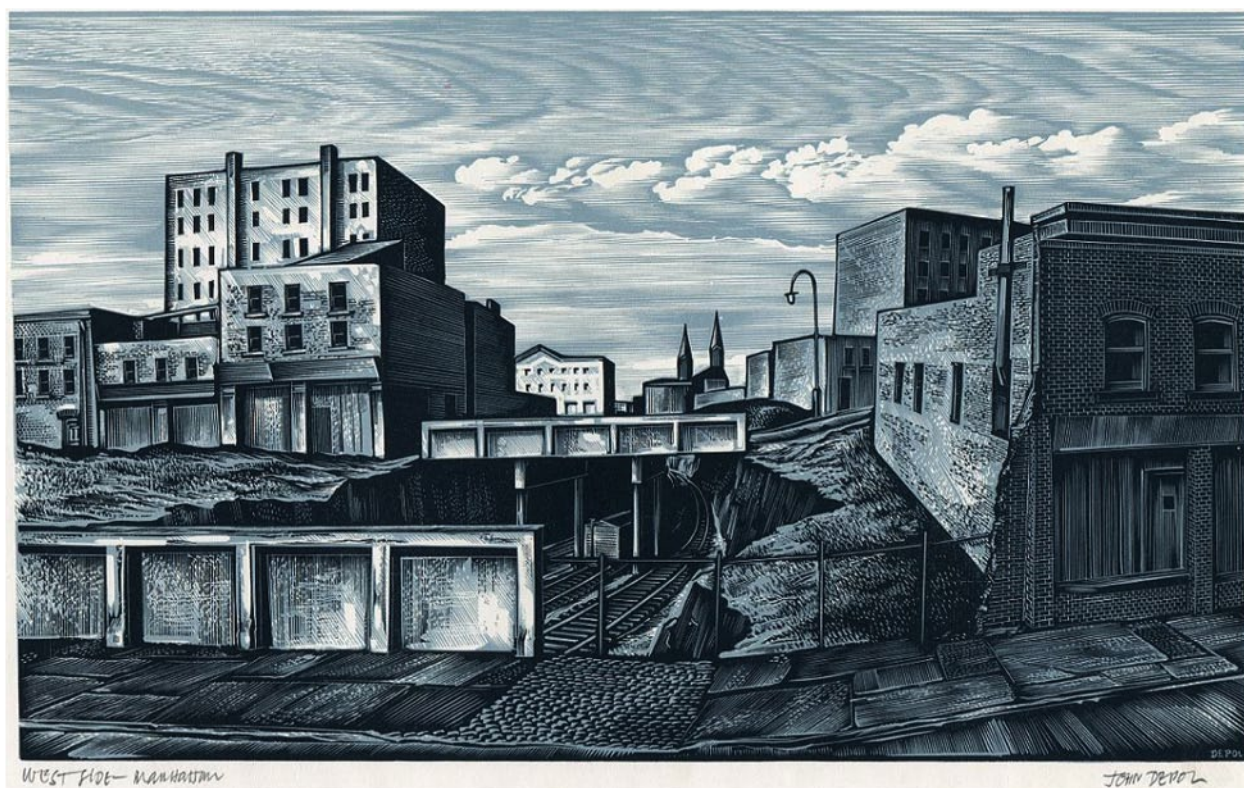
View the John DePol collection on the University of Alabama MFA in Book Arts website under Wood Engraver John DePol,
<<http://www.bookarts.ua.edu>>.

A gallery of John DePol images from the collection follows



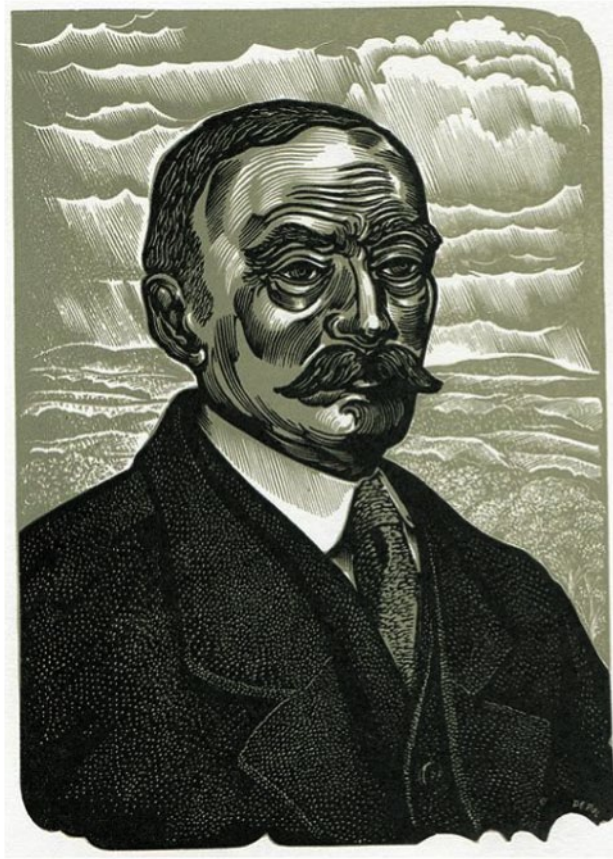


Red Hydra Pressmark



WEST SIDE MANHATTAN

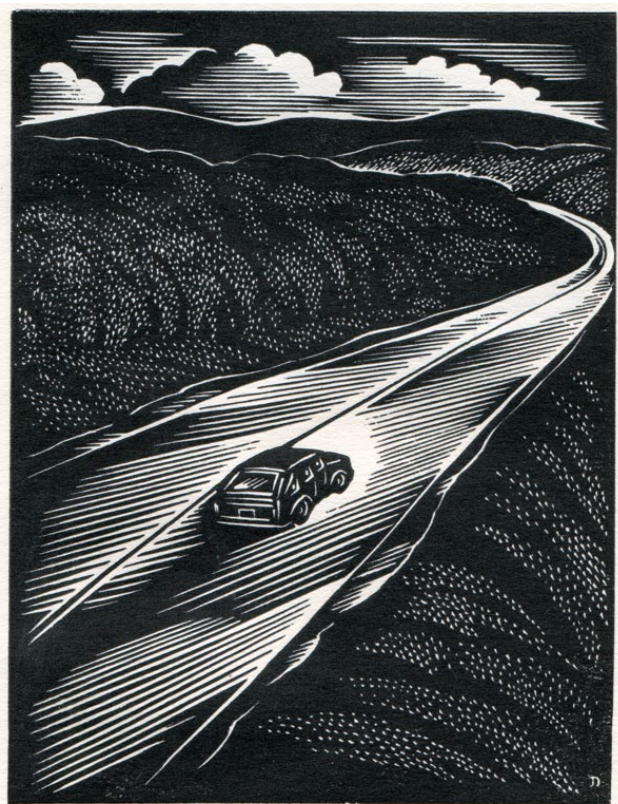
West Side Manhattan



Thomas Hardy



St. Basil's



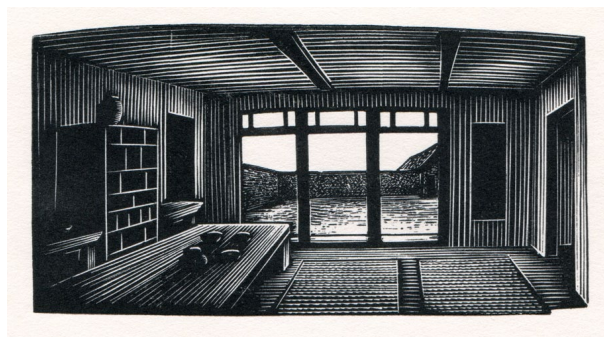
Pat's Chevette



BRUCE ROGERS

JOHN
DEPOL

Bruce Rogers Portrait



The Yalu Flows by Mirok Li

Acknowledgments

Steve Miller, Director of the Book Arts Program, University of Alabama; Printmaking and papermaking Professor; Spearhead of the John DePol collection and Digital Archive Project.

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Amanda Haldy: former MLIS graduate student in SLIS, lead SLIS Student Coordinator in Database and On-line archiving.

Sara Parkel: MFA in Book Arts graduate student, lead Book Art Student Coordinator of archival storage and digitization and digital item description.

Anne Edwards: Developed text for UA Book Arts John DePol webpage and links/resources to selected archives.

Reggie Perkins: IT director, SLIS. University of Alabama.

Claire Seipser: MFA in Book Arts graduate student and scanning technician.

John-Michael Perkins: MFA in Book Arts graduate student and scanning technician.

Reinventing the Flag Book: Taking book narratives a step further

By Jeff Tong

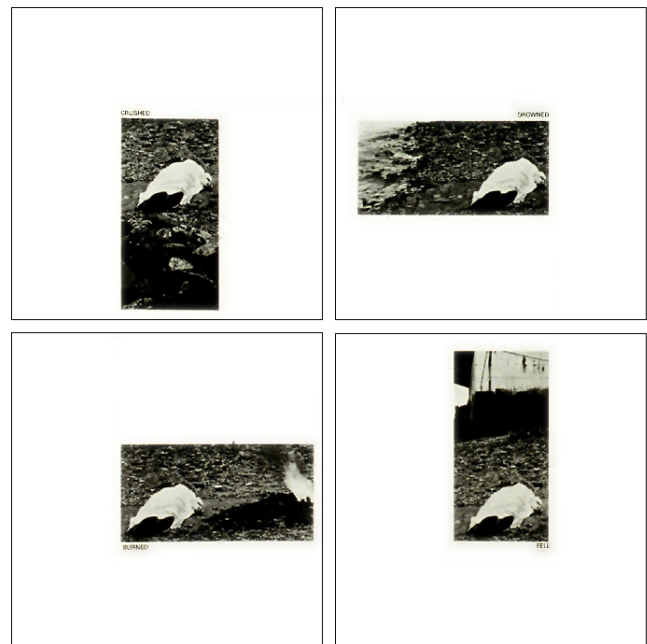
The huge influx of digital media has arguably taken over our daily lives. Since my three years of study in Graphic Design at university, I have become aware that Kindles are replacing books, libraries around my local London boroughs are closing down, and even the university course structures favour digital means. With jobs offered increasingly lying within web design and digital applications, new graduates (myself included) are under pressure to hone these technical skills over traditional book crafting methods.

It was only during my final year of study that our course tutor introduced us to bookbinding, demonstrating simple construction methods like perfect binding & Japanese stab binding, and emphasising the importance of using high quality materials. The satisfaction of producing a digital booklet is nothing compared to that derived from creating a handcrafted book--from watching all the elements come together to the anticipation of waiting for the glue to dry. I began to see the reason for the huge passion for bookbinding. I came across *The Bonefolder* while working on my graduation project, and that further ignited my love for books.



For three months, I decided to explore the notion of narration, “the telling of a story or part of a story, [that is] a chronological sequence of events involving entities” (Abbott, H.P. (2008). *The Cambridge introduction to narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Taking this definition as a starting point, the theory helped to establish an idea of narration I could apply to other forms. These technique include visual essays, photo essays, photojournalism, rebuses, short films and moving sequences.

John Berger’s *Way of Seeing* emphasises the contrast between a film sequence and a static piece such as a painting, and discusses the implications of time (Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of seeing*. London: Penguin Group). In a film, the story is dictated to a viewer, whereas a Graphic Designer must arrange his printed poster designs carefully in order to translate his interpretation to the viewer. John Hilliard’s piece *Cause of death c. 1970* <http://www.arts.ucsb.edu/faculty/budgett/algorithmic_art/Hilliard.html> uses composition and concealing ‘the bigger picture’ to great effect, enabling the artist to produce four different narratives from the same picture. With this as reference, I challenged myself: “How far can graphical pieces manipulate narration?”



I wanted to create a piece of work that shifts the way narration is normally told through a particular medium. For example, a moving sequence narrative may be fragmented; disjointed yet comprehensible. A book could alter the way a reader interacts with it in order to follow the narrative. Depending on the target audience, there could be humanitarian or social issues (reflected in Hilliard’s work) to resolve / consider as well. Moreover, I needed to decide if I wanted the story to be told in a linear or non-linear way. How could I manipulate the concept to the reader?

During my research, I looked at key theorists to support my project. University lecturer and writer Chris Crawford explained how people learn content and applied this notion to how a story is told; the whole plot must be revealed before the story is fully understood. This instant of comprehension is known as the 'aha' moment (Crawford, C. (2005). *Chris Crawford on interactive storytelling*. CA: New Riders Games). Utilizing this 'rule' enables storytellers to keep their audience engaged by withholding tiny keys of information that will eventually unlock the whole mystery. Additionally, I discovered key theorist Tzvetan Todorov's five stages of narrative:

All things begin with equilibrium.

An event disrupts this equilibrium.

There is the recognition that the equilibrium has been disrupted.

There is an attempt to repair the damage of this disruption.

The return / restoration of a new equilibrium.

<<http://www.slideshare.net/aelialicinia/approaches-to-narrative-theory/>>

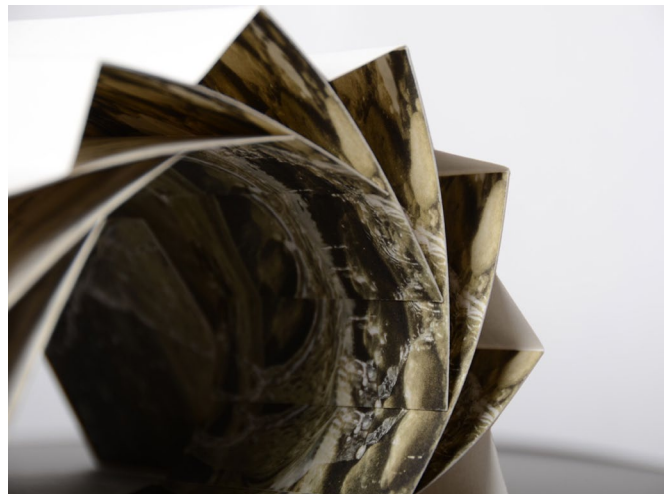
Todorov's theory plus Hilliard's reflection upon humanitarian and social issues led to the theme of my final project, The Ripple Effect. This metaphor is used to describe how our actions (or lack thereof) have consequences throughout the physical and social world, both positive and negative. Furthermore, I decided to cover current news stories, demonstrating how a single action can cause global consequences. Now all I needed was a medium to effectively deliver this narration.

First I was inspired by examples of playful manipulations of the physical book presented in Keith A. Smith's *Structure of the Visual Book*. Then I discovered the Flag Book (devised by Hedi Kyle). Further research led me to Karen Hanmer's article, "Interplay of image and text in the flag book structure" (*The Bonefolder* Volume 2, Number 1, Fall 2005 <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder/vol2no1contents.htm>>). In addition to simple step-by-step instructions on how to create a flag book, Hanmer described the flag book form as the perfect medium for my project, when she stated: "I had never seen anything like this simple structure that could... both reveal and conceal its richly layered content." This corresponded with my desire to manipulate narrative; and the fragmented nature of the flag book mirrors the reader attempting to piece each part of the story together, leading up to Crawford's 'aha' moment. Only one of my tutors was familiar with the flag book structure, so my project would be unique.

Current adaptations of the flag book have focused on the structure's aesthetics, yet only a minority have utilised the space beneath the flags, and fewer still explore any variations of how the flags opened out. The most commonly-available flag books generally adopt three rows, with each row in an opposing direction to the row adjacent. I wanted to consider all the variables that are specific to flag books and tailor each to the news story I was narrating. I created five flag books in total; each book narrates an event that has had global impact. Metaphors & properties of the flag books correspond with the fragility of equilibrium and its relation to a stage in the ripple effect. Material properties such as weight, thickness, span, size and type of paper helped produce a unique outcome for each event; still the five books remain a cohesive set.



Book 1 – The Ripple Effect



The Bonefolder: an e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist

The smallest book in the series signifies the single drop that starts the ripple and so acts as the keystone for the remaining books. A specially selected Victorian antique paper cover emulates a ripple pattern, while the whiteness was deliberately chosen to contrast with the final book.



The title is taken from the cohesive phrase the Japanese use to see them through the tough times ahead. Based upon the tragic earthquake that hit Japan in 2011, its content is split into the four pivotal elements of the disaster: the earthquake, the tsunami, the nuclear radiation, and offers of aid and assistance. The flag book pages are set as separate elements that form the bigger picture to show the separation caused by the earthquake. Traditional Japanese print and paper stock were used to maintain its authenticity.



Book 2 – All Japan

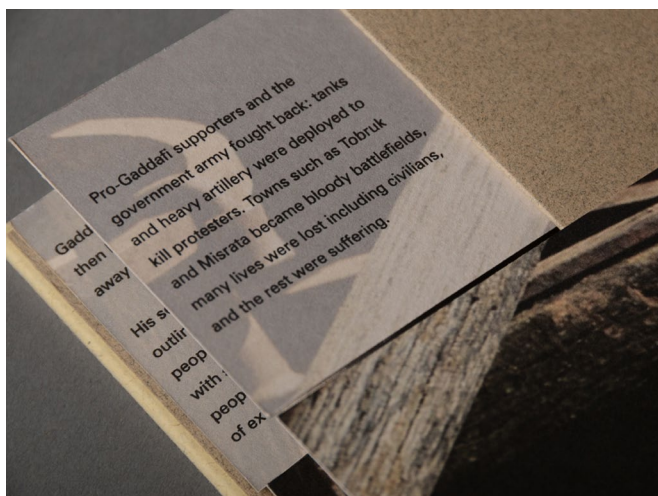


The Bonefolder: an e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist

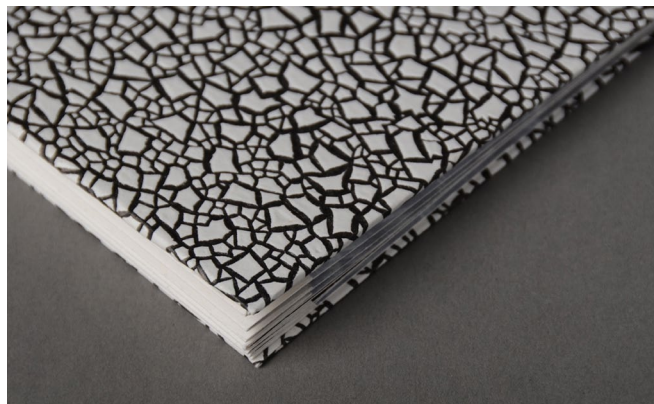
Book 3 – Jamahiriyya



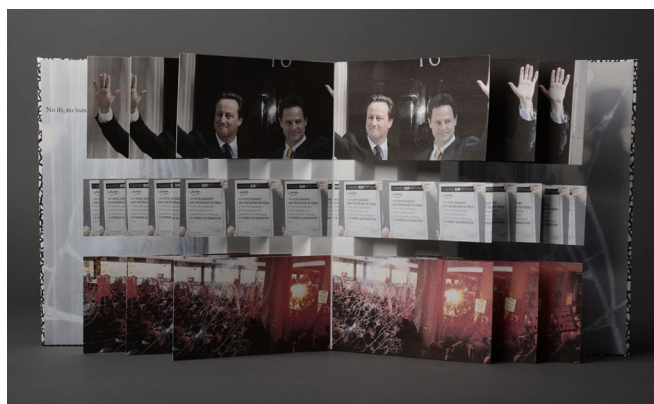
This book reports on the unrest in Libya, featuring metaphorical references to Gaddafi's system of governance as an elegant wheel that is in much need of replacement. It is also the heaviest book representing the overbearing nature of his 40-year reign.



Book 4 – No ifs, no buts...



This is based on the violent student protests against the spending cuts in education and the broken promises of the UK Government. The way the flag book pages divide symbolises the two-sided nature of politics. The front cover is made from a thick but hollow board, representing Parliament's strong promises which are based on weak foundations. The intersecting middle row features the pledge, which when broken became the catalyst for the students' protest.



Book 5 – Recovery



Dealing with the subject of recession, this book links all the previous events together. It demonstrates the nature of the ripple effect, how each event has contributed to the recession and its effect on people in other countries. The accordion structure and flags are constructed from 80 gms paper to signify the unstable and unpredictable conditions the world currently faces.



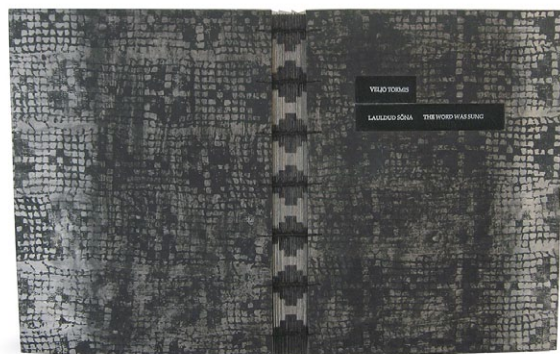
A physical book can evoke so much more emotion than scrolling a computer mouse to read news articles, or any text. A website can provide live images and up-to-date stories, but this comes at the cost of emotional contact with the event. The ability to handle a book brings the news alive; readers become more sensitive to the topic as they digest all the information page by page. The flag book has enabled me to relay events in an interactive form as the reader effectively deciphers the story him or herself, and understands that each event, suggested by the unique design of the book, is special in its own right.

Jeff Tong is a Graphic Design graduate from the Arts University College at Bournemouth, UK and has exhibited at the Design & Art Direction (D&AD) as part of the New Blood exhibition (dedicated to new graduates). His collaborative stand was awarded “Best Stand” out of over one hundred other competing stands across the UK. Jeff will be continuing his studies on the narrative form at the London College of Communication, UK, undertaking a Postgraduate study in Graphic Moving Image. He can be found online at <<http://graphicalresearcher.wordpress.com/>> and can be contacted through Twitter <@JeffYYTong> or by email at <JYYTong@hotmail.com>.

Bookbinding in Estonia

By Illu Erma, translated by Silja Oja

Since its establishment in 1995, the aim of the Estonian Association of Designer Bookbinders has been to preserve and develop Estonian bookbinding, to inspire the designer bookbinders to experiment in their work and to draw public attention to the unique art of bookbinding. Every 5 years the association has organized the international exhibition and competition of bookbinding *Scripta manent* (Latin: *written remains*) where everyone who can express himself or herself via the art of bookbinding in the framework of the set topic is welcome to participate. The last three *Scripta manent*s have been focused on Estonian culture. The fourth *Scripta manent* took place in Tallinn from September 28, 2010 through January 9, 2011. What follows is the story of how it came to life.



Binding by Illu Erna, Estonia from Scripta manent IV.

The rustic Estonian way of living and thinking has been shaped into European culture under the powers of the Danish, German, Swedish and Russian rulers, who have all left their trace in it. In the history of the Estonian bookbinding, the periods of national self-consciousness deriving from independent statehood and the escapist embellishments or formal clichés characteristic of Soviet applied art are clearly distinguishable.

In 1918 Estonia became an independent state and the Tallinn Applied Art School became the local centre of educating professional leather and bookbinding artists. The head of the bookbinding workshop was *Eduard Taska*, the future founder of the Union of Applied Artists in Estonia in 1932. Being familiar with the art scene of the world, he started seeking a way to the international market. Several bookbindings from his workshop earned international prizes (most prominent being Grand Prix from the Paris World Exposition in 1937 and honorary medal from the Berlin Handicraft Exhibition in 1938). In the 1930s Estonian

bookbinding vividly melted into international art life and by the end of the decade Estonian bookbinding was high-level, technically professional, with national characteristics and international connections.

The annexation of Estonia into the Soviet Union at the eve of World War II brought along the nationalization of business enterprises, the reorganization of educational institutions, the deportation of several talented creative people to Siberia or ideological pressure forced upon them. Leather and bookbinding art was continued to be taught, now at higher level, in the same building that in 1950 became the State Art Institute of the Estonian SSR. In the Soviet times artists were not creatively free and design was often determined by political canons. After the death of Stalin in 1953 the ideological framework loosened. Professional artistic skills enabled the artists creative self-expression in spite of general poverty and lack of tools and materials. However, the poor paper that books were printed on and the deficiency of good leather had a degrading effect on the quality of bookbinding. The defects of material were cleverly hidden in the interesting cover designs.

In spite of the absence of international contacts, the tightly interwoven arts of leather and bookbinding maintained their important role in Estonian national culture. Several leather decoration techniques – embossing, cutting, lining, burning, painting – were used, less gilding, batik and marbling. During that creatively fascinating period – maybe partly due to confrontation to the earlier period of canonization – traditional techniques of bookbinding were discarded and forgotten; attention was paid only to interesting cover design that became purpose in itself.

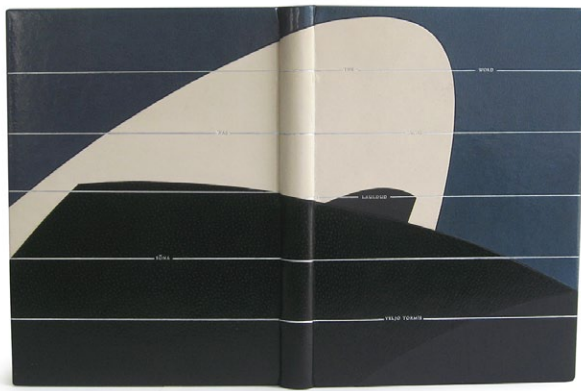
Art critique of that time praised fine sense of material and composition, beautiful proportions and color, variety of decoration techniques and the high-level mastering of these. The mindset and techniques of the Estonian leather artists, the academically highly educated professionals were shaped by local teachers. Everything happened in a closed system, there was no information about developments of bookbinding in the world.

The livening up of Estonia's connections with East Germany (DDR) the 1970s brought back understanding of bookbinding as an integrated whole. There was still a long way to go. It was in 1990 when the first international exhibition took place in Estonia – an exhibition of national epics where in addition to Baltic bookbinders also German, Czech and Finnish artists participated. For the first time, slides of contemporary Western bookbinding were shown at the conference. They had a catalyst effect upon changing the mindset of Estonian bookbinding. Our embellished book covers now seemed as

a coulisse hiding inappropriate surprises. Complacency was replaced by sense of embarrassment and urgent need for new knowledge and skills in bookbinding technology.



Binding by Sirje Kriisa, Estonia from Scripta manent IV.



Binding by Michel Fröhlich, Germany from Scripta manent IV.



Binding by Lennart Mänd, Estonia from Scripta manent IV.

In 1991, when Estonia regained its independence, the state borders opened and knowledge started flowing in. Networks

of personal contacts emerged and opened new possibilities for self-education. One of the first messengers bringing new contacts from abroad was *Sirje Kriisa*, the chairwoman of the Estonian Association of Designer Bookbinders, who, thanks to bookbinder *Marlis Egli* became acquainted with *Manne Dahlstedt* from the Swedish Bookbinders' Union who later became teacher of bookbinding techniques for many Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, teaching classical, French, Coptic and long-stitch bookbinding as well as introducing new possibilities of contemporary book objects and artist's books. *Hans-Peter Fröhlich* from Germany became another important patron of bookbinding and teacher for Estonians. Together with his son *Michel* he has run many courses and kindly shared his knowledge with us up to day. In 1994 our leading artistic bookbinder *Lennart Mänd*, who was a student then, found an opportunity to study bookbinding at the University of Halle in Germany. The reanimation of Estonian bookbinding through making contacts with foreign bookbinders and looking for international bookbinding events had begun. In 1993, three Estonians for the first time participated in an international exhibition in Copenhagen. According to the catalogue of the exhibition their works, born in creative isolation, stood out as interesting and original.

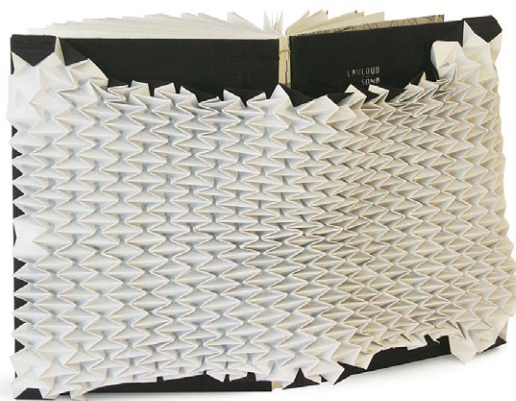
In 1995, regardless of organizational and financial difficulties, the first international exhibition of bookbinding and calligraphy *Scripta manent I* took place in the National Library of Estonia. The exhibition together with conference attracted 76 participants from 12 countries. The organizing of the exhibition created the need for a union of bookbinders, which was founded in 1996 under the name of the Estonian Association of Designer Bookbinders. Hence Estonian bookbinding started intensely developing. Invitations to participate in international exhibitions, co-exhibitions and personal contacts stirred the Estonian bookbinding out from stagnation. The fanaticism of the leaders of bookbinding spread like virus among leather-work artists. The sense of mission in organizing exhibitions and participating at exhibitions contributed in introducing Estonian culture and artists to the world. While the first *Scripta manent* consisted of random bookbindings, the following *Scripta manents* were built on specially selected pieces of writings from Estonian authors, bibliophile numbered sets of sheets printed parallelly in English and in Estonian.

In 2000, *Scripta-manent II* (157 bookbinders and calligraphers from 21 countries) introduced the artists' work (based on the creations of the top Estonian poets *Doris Kareva* and *Jaak Kaplinski*,) offering inspiration for interpretations in the form of bookbinding, book as art object, calligraphy, graphics, photo, movie, illustration and installation.

In 2005, *Scripta manent III* introduced 130 artists from 17 countries interpreting fairy tales written by Estonian children (selection of the best pieces from the Sten Roos competition of children's creative writing in Estonia.)

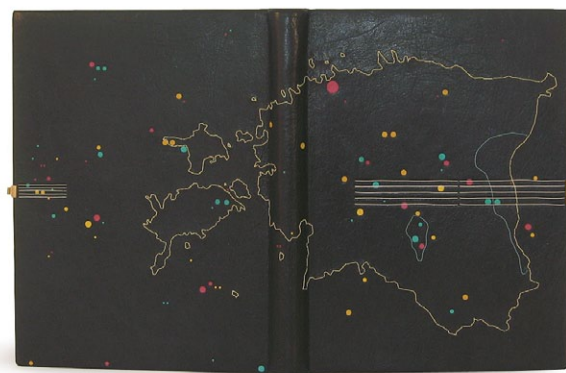
The latest and so far the biggest international exhibition of bookbinding in Estonia has been *Scripta manent IV* that attracted 171 artists from 22 countries and took place from September 2010 until January 2011. All the participating artists based their work upon a collection of text "The Word Was Sung" by the famous Estonian composer *Veljo Tormis*, written down by the musicologist *Urve Lippus* from audio transcripts and jottings. The text, exemplified with musical notes, consisted of four lectures where Veljo Tormis speaks about his creative work and the Estonian folk music. The sets of sheets were accompanied by a CD that contained the music of Veljo Tormis - compositions that convey to the audience the prehistoric spirit of our ancestors and help to perceive the true nature of *regilaul* (the Estonian runic song) – the world that existed in ancient songs and still continues to exist nowadays. The text and music gave the bookbinders rich possibilities to interpret Estonian folklore and Fenno-Ugric collective subconsciousness. [Note: all images that follow from *Scripta manent IV*]

Estonia is a small country, only one million Estonians live here. It is a pleasure to know that so many bookbinders from the world have paid attention to the cultural heritage of this small Nordic nation. *Scripta manent IV* was the biggest in terms of the number of participating artists as well as in variety of ideas and technical solutions. Some statistical observations of *Scripta manent IV*: 78 foreign artists participated and 93 locals of whom 62 were professional artists and 31 art students. From among the foreigners, the Japanese constituted the biggest part, being represented by 15 artists. All 9 Latvian and Lithuanian artists who participated had been graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts and thus familiarity was present in their works for the eyes of Estonians. All works reflected the influence of the national cultural background of artists that did not always coincide with the Estonian perception and understanding of the music of Veljo Tormis. Different angles and points of view were always justified with high level of technical skills or design.



Binding by Krete Pajo, Estonia.

The local bookbindings were organically connected to the topic of the exhibition. Irrespective of techniques or materials, they expressed a common sense or feeling that naturally varies in nuances, with the emphasis on laconism: (*Stella Soomlais*), national handicraft (*Kaire Olt*, *Tiina Piisang*), simple ethnographic motives (*Eve Kaaret*), unexpected architectonics (*Kaia Lukats*, *Marina Barinova*), sculptural form (*Elo Järv*) or the facture of paper (*Krete Pajo*).



Binding by Hana Brown, United Kingdom.

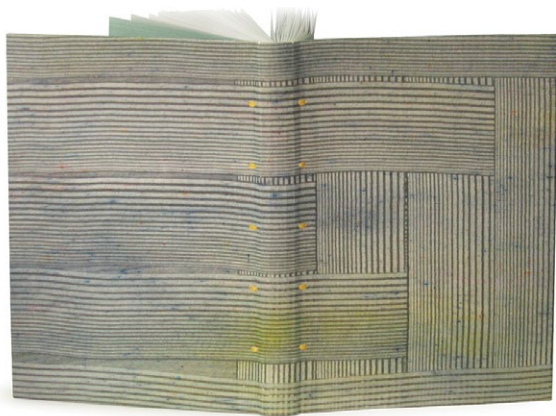


Binding by Jan Peter Zimmerlich, Switzerland .



Binding by Patricia Owen, USA.

Non-Estonian simple refined elegance matched pleasantly with national aesthetics in the works of the French bookbinders *Sün Evrard* and *Benjamin Elbel* as well as in the works of *Hans-Peter Frölich* from Germany. The map of Estonia stitched on black leather by *Hannah Brown* from UK reminded of ethnographic embroidery. There was musical rhythm and repetition of stripes characteristic of Estonian national clothes in the mosaic onlay by *Hiroe Takahashi* from Japan. The laconic beauty of the bookbinding by *Jan Peter Zimmerlich* from Switzerland, the vigor of the boxbinding *Patricia Owen* from the USA and the discreet modesty of the reversible binding structure by *Katinka Keus* from the Netherlands all convincingly hooked with the context.



Binding by Katinka Keus, Netherlands.

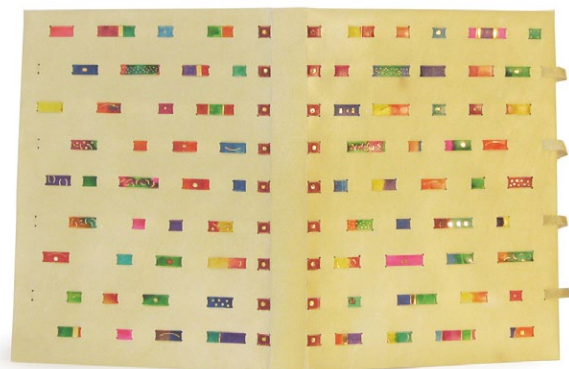


Binding by Rene Haljasmäe, Estonia.



Binding by Maila Käs, Estonia.

The jury that consisted of 7 members (2 members from abroad, head of jury *Rene Haljasmäe* from the Estonian Association of Designer Bookbinders) gave the main “Golden Book” awards to *Lore Hübotter* from Germany and *Maila Käs* and *Leelo Leesi* from Estonia. In addition, 1 student award and 28 incentive awards were given out.



Binding by Lester Capon, United Kingdom.

The Bonefolder: an e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist

The exhibition was accompanied by a conference where speakers talked about the characteristics and developments of Estonian, British (*Lester Capon*) and German (*Hans-Peter Frölich*) bookbinding. The keynote speech was delivered by the musicologist *Jaan Ross* who portrayed the composer *Veljo Tormis* who was present at the conference, too. A pleasant surprise for the maestro and the participants of the conference was the performance of the women's chorus of the National Library of Estonia.

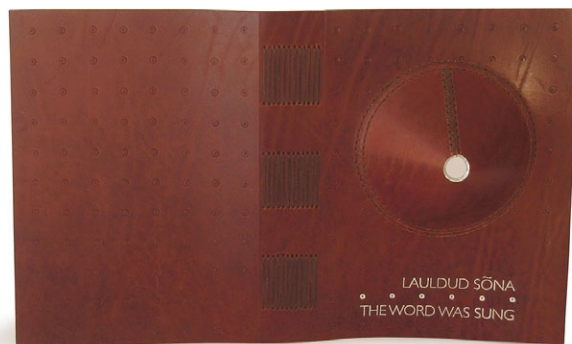
A book is a playground for many different ways of expression. From idea to print, from message to binding: the bookbinder decides which accent to add, which nuance to stress and which form and material to use. Objectives, skills and cultural background may be different, but the invisible connection between booklovers is tangible, soul kinship ties these people into a big family and sometimes this family comes together to have a party at an exhibition like this.



Binding by Eve Hintsov, Estonia.



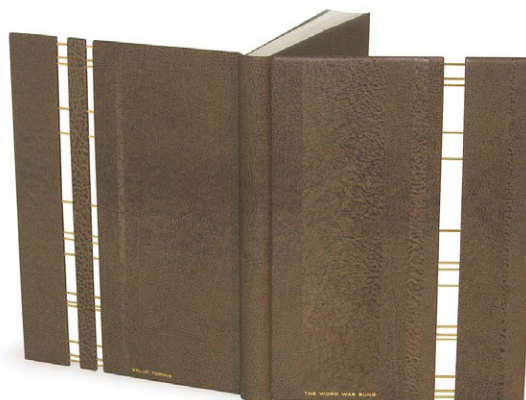
Binding by C.L. Ingalls, USA.



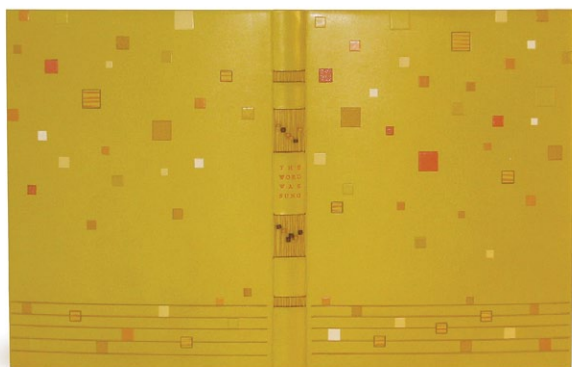
Binding by Ilizane Grinberga, Latvia.



Binding by Clive Farmer, United Kingdom.



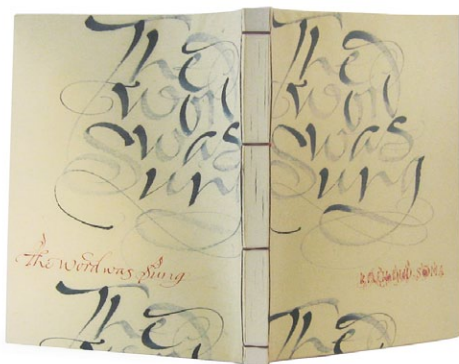
Binding by Jonathan Tremblay, Canada.



Binding by Keiko Fujii, Japan.



Binding by Rutt Maantoa, Estonia.



Binding by Makiko Odawara, Japan.



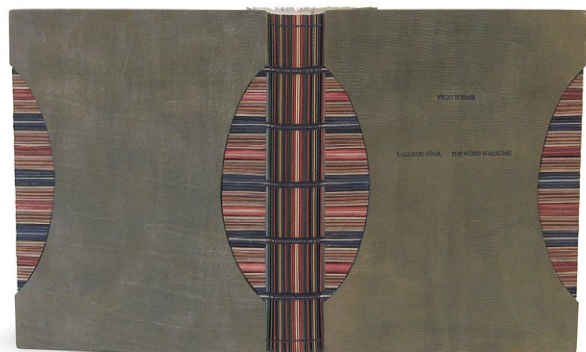
Binding by Lolita Grabauskiene Tarbunaite, Lithuania.



Binding by Miyuki Abe, Japan.



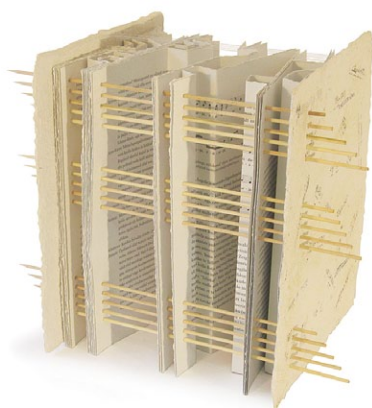
Binding by Tiina Piisang, Estonia.



Binding by Tiiu Vijar, Estonia.



Binding by Ulla Torop, Estonia.



Binding by Veronika Alu, Estonia.

All of the Scripta manent exhibitions can be viewed online at <http://www.scriptamanent.ee>.

Illu Erma is an Estonian bookbinder and a member of the Estonian Leatherwork Artists' Union. She is also lecturer at the Estonian Academy of Arts. She can be reached at illu@hotmail.com and http://www.nahakunst.ee/erma_e.html. This article was translated from Estonian by Silja Oja, <http://www.scriptamanent.ee>.

Modern Portuguese Bookbindings

By Sam Ellenport

Ars Libri, Ltd., a Boston bookstore which primarily handles books about art, is noted for the depth and variety of its stock. About 30 years ago, they purchased a major library from Portugal. That library provided me with an opportunity to examine 20th century Portuguese bindings as Antonio Capucho, the man who built the collection, had many of his books bound in leather by a variety of Portuguese bookbinders. Few have had the opportunity of seeing such a large collection of leather bindings from Portugal, representing the work of so many binders. The inventiveness and use of design elements among these binders is worth study and attention.



The collection is Bibliotheca Antonio Capucho, and is entitled “The Art of Portugal.” It comprises over 7,000 books, periodicals, pamphlets, and exhibition catalogues, almost all of which are on the history of art. Indeed, the collection contains about 98% of all the titles listed in the bibliography to Robert Smith’s standard work, *The Art of Portugal, 1500-1800*, London, 1968.

Mr. Capucho had many of the books and periodicals bound in leather bindings, and of these almost all were done between the 1930s and the 1970s. All but a handful of books are in

½ or ¾ bindings. They represent the work of a number of binders. These are not masterful bindings or showpieces, but a representative selection of the better work done by a large number of binders whose work is not generally known outside of Portugal.

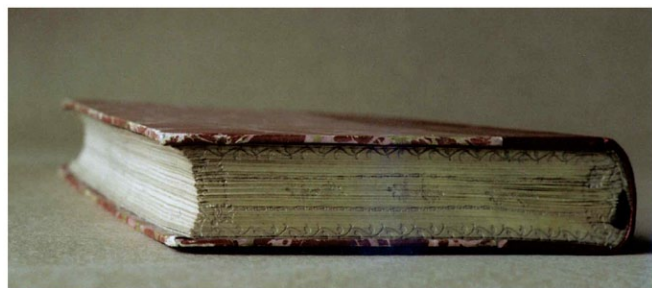
Portuguese binders have a reputation for using poorer quality materials and displaying undistinguished workmanship. The bindings I have seen from Portugal have been done with a modicum of accomplished skill or expertise. The main attraction of such work is that the bindings are in leather, are gold tooled by hand, and are produced and sold at a very low and therefore attractive price. The bindings I examined in Mr. Capucho’s library are, for the most part, examples of work which reinforced my earlier understanding of the level of binding within Portugal through most of the 20th century. For here was a major collector who was not necessarily shopping for binding services solely on the basis of price.



Before discussing some individual bindings, I should point out that my general impression of the forwarding is very low. Only one or two of the books have gilt top edges. Most have a colored edge which often fails to cover the tell-tale scratches

on the text due to a nicked or dull trimming blade. Many books appear to have been pasted up as if they were simply cased-in. There is a general sloppiness in the joint where the end paper would normally have been rubbed. In many of the books there are gaps in the joints, as if the endpapers had been pasted, the books closed, and then the entirety quickly nipped in a press. The uneven squares of the paste-downs on the inside of the covers would attest to this also, as would the fact that most of the books I handled opened stiffly.

Only one book in the collection has a gauffered edge, *Exposicao Olisiponense, Catalogo 1914*. The work is crudely done, and the gilding itself is not solid., which is true of the few others with gilt top edges in the library. I have rarely seen gauffering on a book unless all edges are gilt or colored, which is not the case here.



The major problem lies with the preparation of the edge. With its nicks and scratches, the edges provide a poor basis for a final edge that is smooth and solid. There seems to be almost no finesse in burnishing, a technique which would have done something to polish the gold and smooth the rough surface beneath.

Even on the richly decorated leather bindings, headbands are almost always made by machine with cotton. In many cases a solid colored cloth is simply rolled over a string or cord. As for leather, it is rarely high grade goatskin, and most often sheep. There are some bindings in calf and grained cowhides, and it is difficult to tell whether or not they were heavily chromed in the tannage as the leather is usually coated with a thick layer of varnish. The varnish could actually have been the sizing used for gold tooling, as varnish sizing was popular from the early to mid twentieth century.

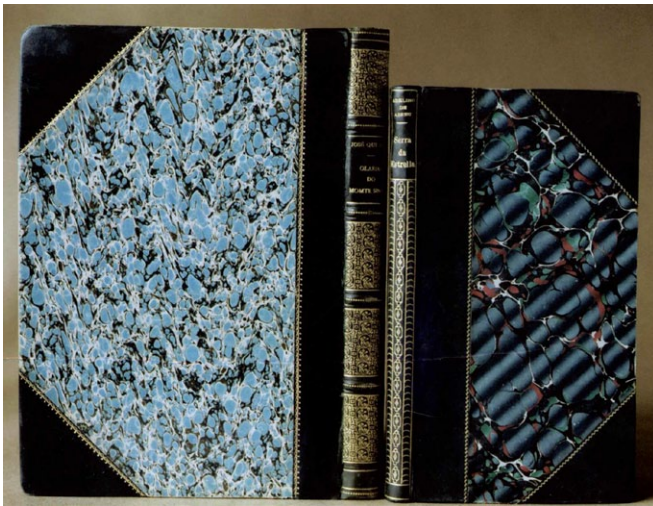
Other small things come to mind regarding the overall forwarding of these leather bindings. Most of the books which were rebound are not trimmed in the fore-edge or tail, as can be seen from poorly fitted endpapers which are generally tipped on. Also, in a fairly consistent manner among the various binders, most of the endpaper stock (colored, marbled or printed) is of a heavier stock than is usually used. The heavier weight of this stock reinforces the belief that many of the books had their endpapers pasted

before nipping, as the thickness of the endleaf stock precludes pasting up and rubbing the paper into the joints and then allowing the book to dry open.

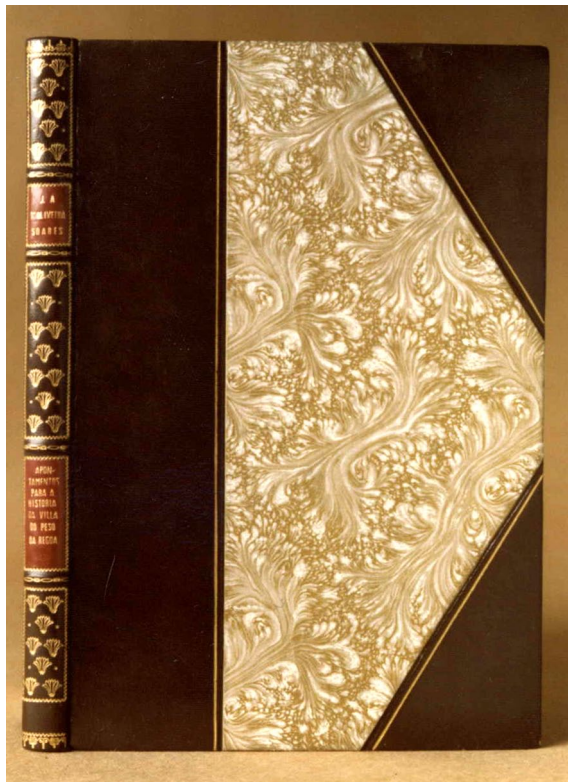


Leather corners present another oddity, and their proportions undoubtedly represent an aesthetic preference. On most $\frac{3}{4}$ bindings produced outside of Portugal, corners are isosceles triangles, with the length of the “legs” along the fore-edge and top (or bottom) of the cover begin equal. Within Mr. Capucho’s collection, however, the common practice employed by almost all the various binders is to make the leg along the fore-edge longer than that of the top or bottom, creating a scalene triangle (all three legs are different lengths). Also, where there is any gold on the covers of the $\frac{3}{4}$ bindings, there is a good chance that the border of the corners are rolled all around the three sides, rather than just along the hypotenuse of the triangle alone. Many of these rolls are decorated, too. This aesthetic is an interesting one to me, whose eye has been trained to seek the familiar balanced proportions developed outside of Portugal.

What is also representative of a different aesthetic regarding proportions in $\frac{3}{4}$ bindings can be seen in the size of the corners vis-à-vis the amount of leather coming onto the upper or lower cover.



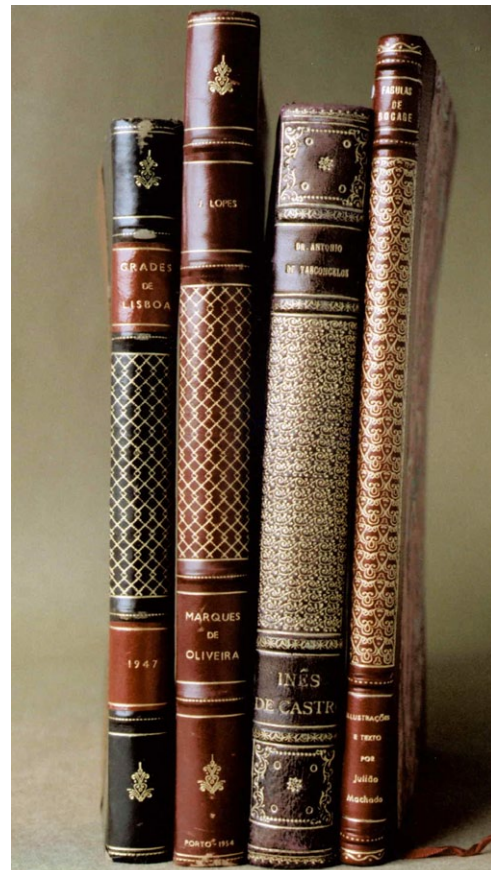
It is usual throughout most of Europe that the hypotenuse of the corner equals the width of leather coming onto the covers. However, in most of the Portuguese bindings in this collection the size of the corners do not follow any familiar pattern, usually appearing too large in comparison to what we usually see.



One of the aspects of Mr. Capucho's library that fascinates is that because labor was so relatively cheap in Portugal when these books were bound there is almost no evidence of machine work. Shortcuts were constantly taken in the forwarding of books in what must have been a continuous effort to achieve speed and production. The titling and gold tooling of the bindings, however, remain a separate

matter. While there are no bindings remarkable for their structure, there is a curious and intriguing array of tooled and decorated spines. Not only did the finishers incorporate banding techniques to a degree I have never seen before, but they showed remarkably imaginative and innovative efforts in their approach to gold-tooled designs. Two things are clear: that the finishers had a good selection of tools at their disposal, and that they had but a very general and hazy knowledge of what we would consider historical binding styles. What is surprising is the amount of freedom that exists in interpretation, even when designs are often the ones which one would consider "standard:" 4 or 5 bands, titling in the 2nd and 4th panels; a similar arrangement with the idle band missing to allow for a long decorative panel; no bands at all, but fake band lines.

Unlike in the United States, and in England, this Portuguese collection surprises further in that there is a relatively higher level of achievement reached by the finishers than by the forwarders. The gold work in general tends to be shallow but very clean. While much of it is not crisp, some is decidedly so. Certainly the quality of the leather must have added to the finishers' problems, and one must assume that the pressure of production was equally as great on them as on the forwarders. In comparison to the work of the forwarders, the gold work is quite superior and more than adequate.



It is apparent even from the few books photographed for this essay that a major element of design is the repetition of one or two tools. Looking at the entire collection, and even books done by the same bindery within the collection, there is clearly a great variety of tools available among the finishers. Yet in almost all instances where there is a great deal of gold tooling, the finishers invariably choose to repeat the same design over and over. This is undoubtedly for speed. These spines have so much gold decoration that they achieve a very rich effect, and the design is busy enough to detract the eye from flaws in workmanship. Such tooling also avoids the careful and time-consuming workmanship involved in tooling an intricate design with a multitude of tools.

Note that the design seems pleasing, and that the eye is caught and held. The reason one's attention is not only focused but remains so is that the panels are unbalanced. The traditional "eye" is more accustomed to a different and perhaps more subtle use of space to achieve an optical balance. Yet in these books the lower titling panels are different heights than the upper titling panel, giving the appearance of each book a disjointed effect. That this is not a mistake and in fact displays considerable forethought is evident in that someone took the trouble to measure the amount of space needed for the wording, and made sure that this was taken into account early in the forwarding process when the fake bands were attached to the spine.

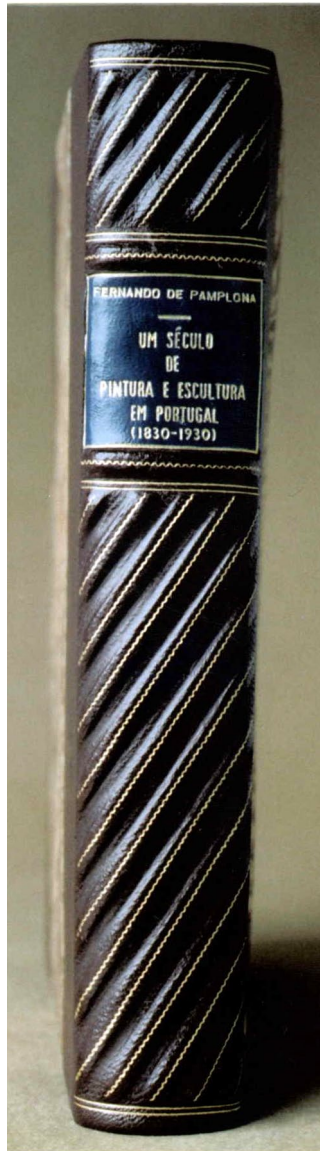


It is the banding, however, that is the most intriguing aspect of this collection of Portuguese bindings. Banding is used both as a design element within what has become known as standard types of spine design, but also as an experiment in forwarding and finishing, as an effort to achieve a dramatic visual effect. In this regard it is worth noting that a conceptualization of a finished spine decoration is imposed on the forwarders very early; there is little guesswork. The following image presents several representative examples of odd usage of band patterns, none of which could have been a mistake of an over-zealous forwarder or apprentice.

What is immediately striking about the books here is the position of the titles. All the books show an unbalanced title panel, awkward to the eye. Not even a spine with 30 bands, one every $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, provides enough weight to balance the position of the titling panel. [see the second book from the left in the image at left] In a similar manner, the book furthest to the right has its title placed in the true center of the spine, rather than the optical center; this causes the title to look very low and tends to split the spine visually rather than to meld the spine into a unified pattern. If one looks closely at this book, it can be seen that there are no bands at all. The overlines simply repeat down the spine, with wide, single blind lines used to separate the decorative pallet impressions.

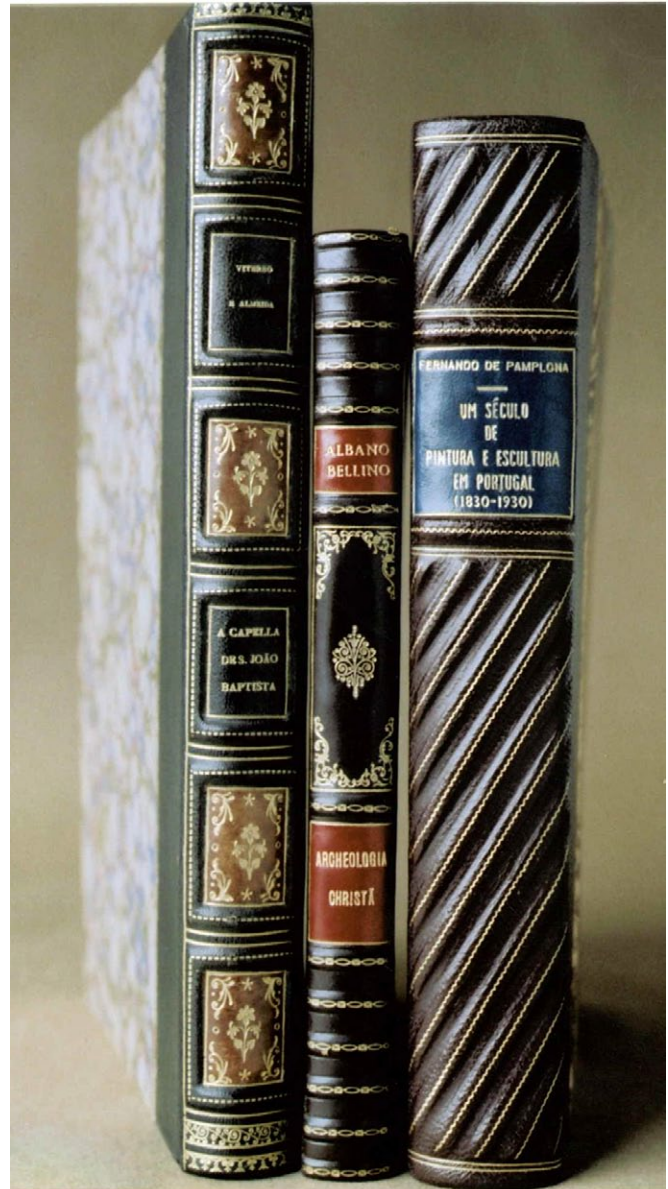
In the final image, the book on the left represents an awkward experiment that one would expect from an apprentice rather than a professional binder. The spine is decorated by the use of wide vertical banding. The problems are many with this approach, and they demand much more skill than is evident here. There is a problem with the titling panel, which breaks the effect of continuous vertical banding and produces a bunching of extra leather where the bands cease; this is hidden by the labels in the titling panels, but is evident on close inspection of the trouble the forwarder had in setting viable headcaps. The bands on the sides of the spine create a situation which almost forces the use of a French groove to reduce strain in the joints (it is not used here).

The most successful of the banding experiments is seen in this image:

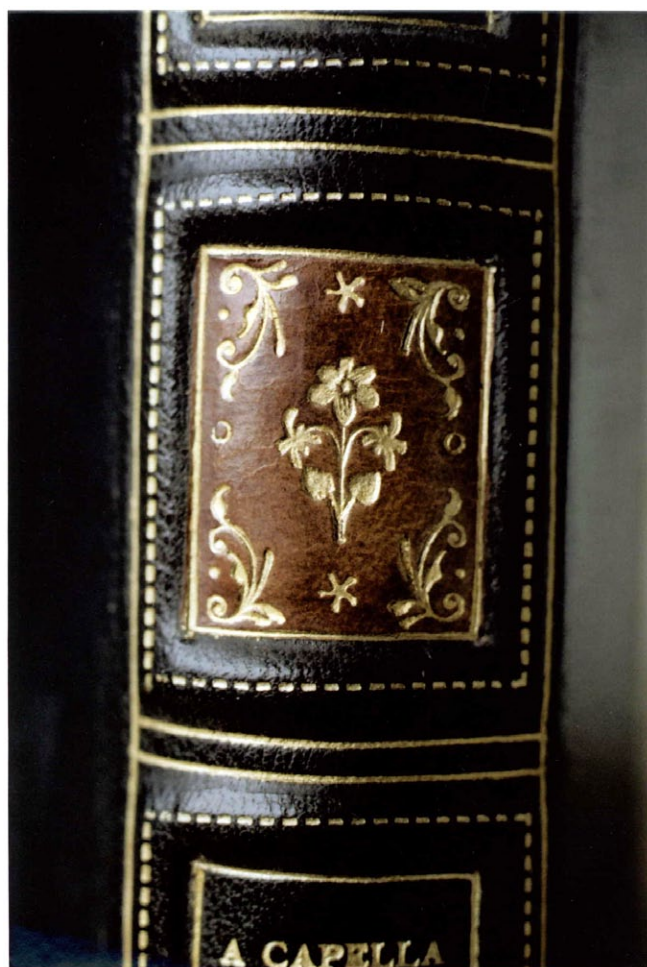


Here the spine is wide enough to show the spiral banding effect to advantage. The label, of an offsetting color, is well placed on the spine, and the heaviness or thickness of the bands themselves is alleviated by the clever choice of a dotted line tooling which, carrying in an upward direction, lends lightness to the book's appearance. My only criticism is not with the forwarder, whom I think has done a successful piece of work but with the finisher who has chosen a condensed sans serif typeface that is out of place.

Another example of odd banding is shown in this image:



The book on the left shows a more difficult forwarding exercise regarding banding. It has an array of raised bands on all four sides of each panel. This binding is one of the oddest in the collection. The panels (the traditional 6) are surrounded by bands, which form a high ridge around the entire paneled area. I have never seen such use of banding. While it effectively sets off the labels, there is a great strain on the leather which is pulled up over the bands and then must be stretched over the joint onto the covers. Great skill and care must be taken to cover such a book, though definition must be lost around the edges of the banded panels when the pasted leather relaxes and then dries back.



It is surprising that, with such an array of banding patterns, there was little experimentation in the size of the band width or the band height. Only one book has a double-high bands, and this is on a book with a traditional 5 band spine. Also, very few books have bands which are neatly rubbed up so as to produce a clear definition of the band itself. There is little evidence that any band sticks were ever used.

A final observation regarding spine design can be made on the concept of angled titling. In the image at right the finisher of each book has chosen not to hyphenate any long word.

For short titles with a long word this solution is appealing, especially when the titling is well spaced and carefully executed. Note that the angling of the long word in each case is on a spine without bands, without any other tooling but the minimum. Such tooling may well have had the effect of focusing the eye to the more standard horizontal



and vertical axes. That the word rises from left to right – that one is obliged to read upward – tends to lighten the spine as well. This is distinctive and attractive, though I have never seen anything like it. Most finishers would abbreviate the word or hyphenate it rather than run it uphill, or as an alternative they would run the entire title up or down the spine, a visually awkward solution when the spines of the books in question are more than ½ inch wide. The angled solution used here is a successful and creative use of space, yielding a pleasing aspect to the spine.

All in all, the inspection of this collection of 20th century Portuguese bindings is captivating. While the skill of the forwarders is uninspiring and unimpressive, one must show respect for the gold work of the finishers who have worked with poor materials and production schedules to produce acceptable work.



My hat is off to those patrons such as Antonio Capucho who encouraged and accepted some interesting and singular attempts at design and decoration. Surely there are some ideas here that would lend themselves to incorporation into contemporary work, if only we can be inventive enough to modify them and make them our own. As my late mentor, Fred Young, would have said, "try never was beat."

Afterward

It is difficult to acquire or have access to books on Portuguese bindings which show development of style and technique. Aside from scattered references and the few pictures of Portuguese bindings in booksellers' offerings or auction house catalogs, images are hard to find. What is intriguing is that Portuguese bindings from earlier centuries show more familiar proportions and designs, probably taking cues from Spanish bindings. It is only in the 20th century that I have found such bindings as described here.

The following books are not too uncommon, and are worth seeing:

Matias Lima, *Encadernadores Portugueses*, Lima, Portugal, 1956.

Matias Lima, *A Encadernacao Em Portugal*, Gaia, 1933.

Clara Penney, *An Album of Selected Bookbindings*, NY, 1963.

Samuel Ellenport was born in 1943, and was educated at Amherst, Brown University, and Oxford. A sometime teacher of history, he bought the Harcourt Bindery in 1971, and remains its owner. He is an active book collector, lecturer, and writer about the history of bookbinding. Among his writings is the *Future of Hand Bookbinding* published in 1993. He was instrumental in the establishment of the bookbinding program at the North Bennet Street School in Boston, and was Chair of the New England Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers, helping formulate chapter development during the 1970s and 1980s. Website at <<http://www.harcourtbindery.com>>.



A Tale of Two Boards: A Study of A Bookbinding

By Sidney F. Huttner

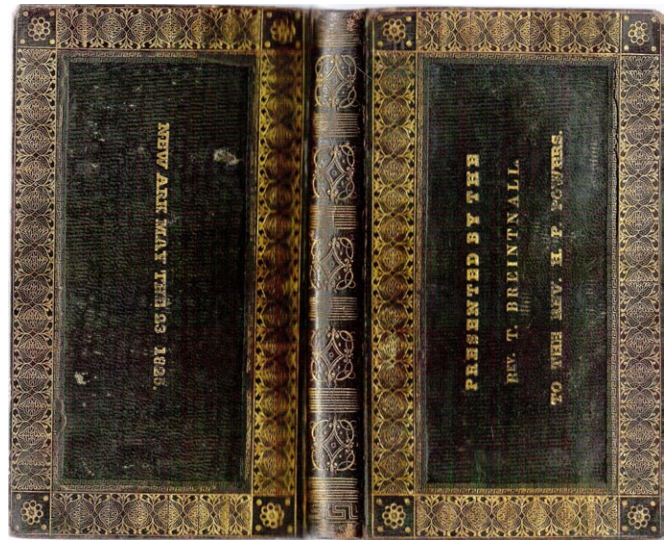
Prologue

In early 1977, almost thoughtlessly but with a newly minted interest in the history of American bookbinding, I began the research that underlies this essay. In 1981, I accepted an invitation to summarize what I'd learned at the American Printing History Association (APHA) meeting in September 1982. Current rather than historical events intruded on my time during that intervening year, and in 1982 I had as many questions, even more perhaps, as I had had in 1981, certainly more than I had had in 1977. The questions continued to gnaw, and I continued to unearth a fact here and there which went into later drafts read for library friends' groups during the 1980s. Then I put the paper away, only to pick it up again around 2010, thinking to update it modestly and make it available on the internet. While the large number of images I'd incorporated in the original presentation made publication impossible in the 1980s, in the digital environment they were no longer an impediment.

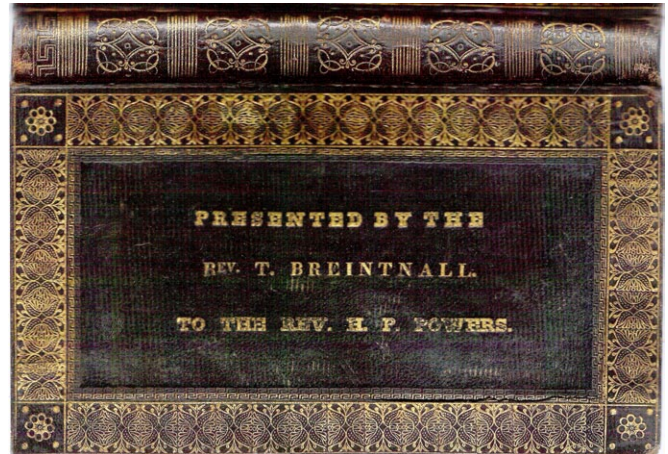
From tiny acorns, so we're told, mighty oak trees grow. "Modest updating" proved a chimera: the web had exposed a whole new root system! So I offer this tale with less confidence that I will, ever, conclude these stories. Today they still lack ends or beginnings; the pictures are sometimes merely pretty. The questions endure. Still, this essay does overdue honor to a largely forgotten but wonderfully skilled bookbinder, and, perhaps, it provides something of a model of idle curiosity usefully transmuted to obsessive need to know.

Chapter 1: The Object Examined

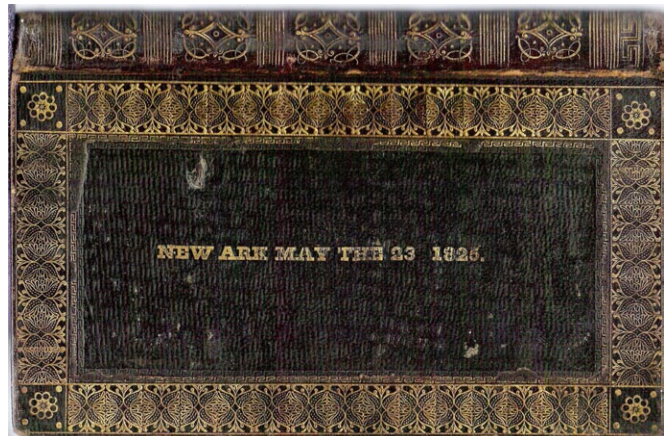
In the spring of 1977 a bookseller friend in Chicago, Douglas Stewart Wilson, knowing my interest in bookbinding, offered me a small volume – 105 by 180mm – in a handsome 19th century binding. The gold tooling was elegantly accomplished, but the most obviously curious feature was the inscription stamped on the two boards: "PRESENTED BY THE / REV. T. BREINTNALL / TO THE REV. H. P. POWERS. / NEW ARK MAY THE 23 1825."



The Clergyman's Companion, (1806).



Top board of The Clergyman's Companion.



Bottom board of The Clergyman's Companion.

The volume is also bibliographically curious. [1] It begins with the first 108 pages of an 1806 edition of the *Episcopal Clergyman's Companion* which comprise, in words from the preface by Bishop John Henry Hobart, "those occasional offices which [the clergy of the Episcopal Church] use in

the discharge of their Parochial duties.” Hobart’s preface continues, “The Editor also has thought that it would not be improper to annex to this book a connected view of the opinions of some of the most Distinguished Divines of the Church on several important points of Divinity, and particularly, on the qualifications and duties of the C[l]erical Office,” but these latter 50 pages have been removed and several gatherings - 31 leaves - of blank wove paper water-marked “Butlers & Ward / 1818” bound in.

On these leaves, one or several hands have entered six distinct prayers, beginning variously, “Wherewith shall we come before the Lord ...;” “Almighty and most merciful Father...;” “Direct us this day, O Lord...;” on the left and on the right, “Our Father who art in heaven...;” “Almighty God, in whose hands ...;” and “O Lord and Merciful God...”. The final ten leaves have been left blank, but to conclude the volume, at a date after binding, someone wrote a text headed “for a family under affliction” on the first four of 14 leaves of folded, blue-toned note paper, roughly trimmed the fore-edge, and tipped the stitched gathering into the volume.

Questions to my bookseller friend dashed any hopes of easily tracing provenance. He had himself discovered the volume in the shop of a colleague who had purchased many of the box lots at the sale of the Lawrence F. and Mary Ann Dicke collection in March 1975. Location of this volume in his neighbor’s stock suggested that it had been present in one of these lots, which had been considered minor and were largely overlooked at the auction of this vast accumulation of Americana. Lawrence Dicke, with his wife, a dealer in antiques, art works and books as well as a collector, operated a vigorous business, based in Chicago and Evanston, from the early 1920s. When he died in 1950, his wife carried on their activities until her own death in 1974. Tracing a single, inconsequential book through more than fifty years of business appeared hopeless, particularly when Dicke was, by all accounts, a secretive, even eccentric, man. [2]

Evidence from the water-marked paper proved of no great help. Gravell and Miller’s *Catalogue of American Watermarks, 1690-1835* [3] reproduces a specimen of this mark and refers to Frances Edwards’ article on Connecticut paper mills in *The Paper Maker* [4]. Two brothers, Simeon and Asa Butler, founded the second paper mill in Connecticut in 1816 – their

Eagle Mill in Suffield. By 1820 certainly, and from the evidence of this watermark by 1818, they had taken Andrew Ward into partnership. In 1820 the firm of Butlers & Ward obtained the first United States Government contract for American-made paper to be used by the Senate. Apparently at that time the molds were changed and the letters “U S” substituted for the date “1818”. The mill continued under

various owners until destroyed by fire in 1877. That stationers might stock a quality paper or bookbinders select it for a Super Extra binding is of course no surprise. That the paper was made between 1818 and 1820 is little more than consistent with a binding probably finished in or near New York City in or about 1825.

Looking at the book, then, left these questions to which it seemed there might be answers: Who was Rev. T. Breintnall? Rev. H. P. Powers? What happened in Newark on May 23, 1825? Might it be possible to learn who bound the book?

Chapter II: The Event Discovered

It seemed plausible that two men named as Reverend on the covers of an Episcopal text might be Episcopal clergy. Fortunately, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, from its early days, published a great many lists, directories, minutes of conventions and church histories, and I was quickly able to confirm that Thomas Breintnall was ordained a Deacon of the Church in 1818 (he is #410 in Cameron’s *American Episcopal Clergy* [5]). He was assigned in 1819 as Rector of Zion Church, New York City; remained at Zion until 1837 when he removed to the Philadelphia area where he worked until 1846; and moved to Newark, New Jersey only months before his death in 1847.

Henry P. Powers was ordained Deacon in 1820 by Bishop Hobart of New York – (he is #487 in Cameron’s list) – installed at Trinity Church, Newark on June 3rd 1821 and ordained a Priest there on October 16, 1822. He remained at Trinity until 1830, and then disappeared from the records available to me at The University of Chicago Library, where I was then employed. [6]

This much was easily gleaned, but the next step was by no means clearly indicated. Then, in one of those curious bits of serendipity which are at once a joy to librarians, a marvel to readers, and a source of our profound gratitude to the book trade, while browsing through a photocopied list of miscellaneous titles offered by Hieronymus Books, my newly sensitized eyes seized upon an entry: *History of the Church of Zion and St. Timothy of New York, 1797-1894* by David Clarkson (New York: Putnam, 1894). Offered at \$30 it was then beyond my budget, but a trip to Mansell Pre-56 [7] was not. Very shortly, courtesy of Washington University Library, a copy of Clarkson’s work was in my hands – and the event discovered on pages 40 and 41:

Married at Newark New Jersey on May 23, 1825 by the Rev. Henry P. Powers, Rector of Trinity Church. The Rev. Thomas Breintnall to Sophia Augusta Nelson. Present: George Nelson, Elizabeth Nelson, Rev. Benjamin T. Onderdonk; Rev. Manton Eastburn; Horatio Nelson, Julia Cammon, Gertrude Lee.



My *Clergyman's Companion* - does anyone not jump with me to the conclusion? - was Breintnall's gift to Powers on the occasion of his marriage!

One question answered; another asked: What did Powers do with his book that it should surface a 150 years later in the Dicke sale?

Chapter III: Powers Pursued

Closer attention to Powers seemed warranted. Further use of *Pre-56* established Powers as the author of three short works. The first, *A Christmas Sermon* delivered in 1821, was printed locally the following year. [8] My ear and mind have not been trained to attend to the subtleties of 19th century sermons, but the author's brief foreword seems to me more objective than modest:

To the Vestry of Trinity Church, Newark.

Brethren:

In complying with your request, and granting the following Discourse for publication, I cannot forbear saying I am at a loss to account for the reception with which it met. It is the production of but ordinary effort; and, I say it without affectation, I cannot persuade myself that it is executed with more than ordinary success. Yet, such as it is, I submit it without alteration; hoping your judgment may not prove erroneous, *that it may have a tendency to excite attention to the interesting duties of this day, and in other respects to do good.* [9]

His second work, also a sermon of 20 pages, was delivered on New Year's Day, 1825 [10]. Its theme is established by this paragraph:

Time is short when considered in reference

1. To eternity.
2. To human life.
3. To the business, and duties, with which life is loaded. [11]

His third, and to my knowledge final, work is more original and of greater current interest [12]. In discussing "the value of intellectual attainment; the defectiveness of female education, and the importance and feasibility of improving it" [13], Powers recommends the "best authors of rhetoric, and the best works of taste, ... a thorough acquaintance with Locke, Reed, Stewart, or Brown," [14] some study of astronomy, mathematics, music, and natural philosophy, including chemistry, and ends his *Discourse* with these words:

Ye fair ones, who have yet the season of pupilage to serve, rise, in the pride of your native powers, and evince your sex equal to more substantial accomplishments than the adjustment of ribbons, or the shaping of a dress. Emulate the worthy ones of your sex, who have broken through prejudice, and in defiance of obstacles, risen to literary consequence; demonstrate to a mistaken world, that you are competent to those sciences which expand, exalt, and dignify. Be not appalled at the false idea, that a wise woman is the dread and abhorrence of our sex. A loquacious pedant will indeed be shunned and detested: but it is only those who have dabbled in knowledge, whose brains are turned, and whose tongues are mad. More thorough acquisitions are as favourable to modesty as to morals. The deep majestic river flows smooth and silent; while nought but babbling is heard from the shallow stream. [15]

This final metaphor is the only justification I can find for the otherwise curious choice of a frontispiece to oppose the title page: "The Falls of St. Anthony in the River Mississippi."

Then, in 1830, after these apparently vigorous years as Rector, the bishop of the diocese notes, abruptly, that Powers has resigned his church and left the diocese. His departure is made more mysterious in an 1846 pamphlet by his successor, Matthew N. Henderson: "with mental powers of no ordinary kind, and talent for popular eloquence, there were yet difficulties that interfered with [Powers'] usefulness and retarded the growth of the congregation." But, "the incidents of this period are comparatively recent; I need not therefore dwell on them. [16]

A letter from Anne-Marie Salgat, librarian at the General Theological Seminary, put me onto *Swords' Pocket Almanac containing lists of the bishops and clergy in each diocese*, and in these small, annually issued volumes we find Powers listed in 1831 and 1832, "residing in Detroit" [17]. Although he is not listed again until 1842, he apparently remained in Detroit during this period. In 1840 the Bishop of the then newly formed Diocese of Michigan reported:

On Tuesday, the 12th, I instituted the Rev. Mr. Powers, as rector of St. Luke's church, Ypsilanti... the name of Mr. Powers has not hitherto appeared on the list of the clergymen of this diocese, although residing within its limits, and occasionally performing the duties of his office for several years. [18]

Powers seemed to have remained at St. Luke's until 1847 or 1848. The 1848 *Journal* of the Diocese of Michigan contains his report for the preceding year:

Since our last convention, my health has generally been poor, for which reason I have not performed a very

considerable amount of labor. I have preached several funeral sermons and performed some other ecclesiastical duties.

In the month of April I visited Ohio by invitation, and preached several times in Trinity Church, Lyme, Huron County. In this parish I found a number of families who were my early parishioners in New Jersey, and I cannot express my gratification and gratitude for the cordial welcome with which they greeted me. I also preached several times in the village of Bellevue, where I was most kindly treated. I likewise officiated in St. Paul's Church, Lower Sandusky, where they have a fine edifice, and every thing bore an attractive aspect. From all these places I received invitations to settle....

I am, as you are aware, suffering from a chronic bronchitis, and have not, therefore, as yet made up my mind whether it will be expedient to accept the charge of either of these places. [19]

In 1850, *Swords'* places Powers in Lower Sandusky, Ohio and in 1851 he appears as Rector of St. Paul's Church in that city. In the following years, however, he appears without post until 1855 when he is listed as rector-elect of Grace Church in Madison, Wisconsin. He remained in Wisconsin until 1865 – and beyond that, by 1982 and up to 2010, I found no trace of him. Then Google coughed up a link to the inventory of research files created by the Reverend Jasper Green Pennington, a more recent Rector of the Ypsilanti church, now lodged in the collection of Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan.

Pennington found that Powers was born in 1805. He followed a call from Bishop Hobart to Michigan Territory in the early 1830s – “a man of unusual gifts who found living in Michigan both a challenge and a cause of despair.” He became the first Episcopal priest at Grosse Isle, purchased 640 acres of land, and with his wife Eliza (1794-1864) added two sons to the two sons and a daughter born previously in the east. He also served as Supervisor of Monguagin Township in 1832 and 1835-1838.

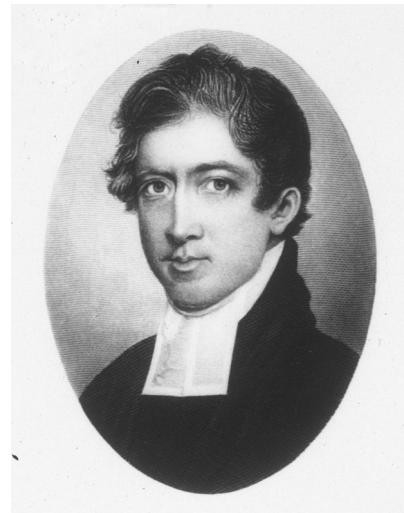
Powers prospered financially, and by 1840 had formal charge of St. Luke's Church, Ypsilanti, and begun a running conflict with the small and far from wealthy congregation which was never able to pay the modest agreed salary. Pennington finds much evidence that he disliked, and handled poorly, the mundane details of daily administration. At length he resigned, with money owed him, in 1846, continued to live in Ypsilanti and to be active in the ministry, preaching in many venues and taking charge of two parishes in Ohio and one in Wisconsin. Eliza died in April 1864 and was buried in Ypsilanti. Henry, “when he seemed to be returning home [from Wisconsin],” died in Indiana “in the 70th years [sic] of age

[i.e., 1875].” Pennington was unable to discover his burial site, but determined it was not in the company of his wife.

One is left to imagine the several ways a small but attractive volume among the possessions of an Episcopal priest might come into the stock and the collection of an aggressive Chicago dealer and collector.

Chapter IV: Breintnall Investigated

The name Breintnall appears in Pennsylvania from quite an early date. One of the better known of the clan was Joseph Breintnall, a copier of deeds who became a close friend of Benjamin Franklin and the first secretary of the Library Company of Philadelphia [20]. Joseph died in 1746, however, and thus far I've not been able to relate Thomas Breintnall – born I know not where in 1793 – to him. Thomas was, we know, ordained deacon of the Episcopal church on May 31, 1818 by Bishop White of Pennsylvania and served briefly as a missionary in Huntingdon County – that is, in the Philadelphia area.



Engraving of Thomas Breintnall from David Clarkson.

By June 1819, he had been installed as Rector of Zion Church, at Mott and Cross Streets, New York City. As we know, he married in 1825 – the engraving from Clarkson [IMAGE 4] seems to have been done about this time – and he stayed on at Zion until 1837 when “The prospect of usefulness in another but more destitute portion of the Lord's vineyard, and the hope that you may obtain a successor whose labors will be more abundantly blessed, has induced me to resign the Rectorship of Zion Church.” [21]

The following year, 1838, found him a “Missionary at Hamiltonville, Philadelphia County.” Laid out by William Hamilton in 1804, with lots set aside for Protestant Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, the site of Hamiltonville is now ground largely occupied by the University of Pennsylvania.

The following year Breintnall was appointed Rector of Zion Church in Spring Garden, Philadelphia, now the intersection of 8th Street and Columbia Avenue and near the center of the barrio a few blocks south of Temple University. In 1846 Breintnall resigned this position and removed to Newark where he died, age 54, on May 24, 1847. He was buried in the Trinity Church yard. [22]

In the city directory for Newark for the year 1847, Rev. Thomas Breintnall is listed at 320 High Street corner of Market [23]. From 1848 through 1880 Sophia Augusta Breintnall, widow of Rev. Thomas, occupies 320 High. The Newark directories begin in 1835, however, and listed each year from 1835 through 1846 at 320 High Street we find Elizabeth Nelson, widow. After 1851 John H.H. Breintnall, first medical student, then M.D., shares this address. These entries suggest that the Breintnall's returned to Newark at or near the death of Mrs. Breintnall's mother and that their marriage produced at least one son, later a physician. With the assistance of the Newark Public Library I have been able to confirm all this and more. [24]

Chapter V: The Binder Sought

As those of you who have had reason to review the literature on American bookbinding will know, the secondary sources are few. There are Hannah French's pioneering *Early American Bookbinding by Hand* [25] and Frank Comparato's study of 19th binding machinery, *Books for the Millions*. [26] Studies by French, by Willman Spawn, and by others of binders active in the Colonies and the early Republic are beginning to accumulate. Binders principally active between 1820 and 1900 – one could indeed say the present – have been little studied and rarely systematically. The primary sources are themselves difficult to access, and only slowly coming online digitally. Much of the mass of 19th century publication remains unindexed and uncollected, and as few libraries have cataloged even their easily identified bindings, surviving examples by known binders are difficult indeed to locate.

Knowing all this in 1977 I was not sanguine about the prospects for discovering the *Companion's* binder. Still, attempting to do so seemed a handy peg on which to hang continued investigation and an agreeably specific spur to attentiveness. To reduce somewhat the universe of possibilities it seemed wise to concentrate on binders active in New York City in 1825. I cast about for some way to determine who they were, and was soon led by Thomas Tanselle's *Guide to the Study of United States Imprints* [27] to George L. McKay's 1942 *Register*. [28]

Although McKay stops with 1820, I thought first to abstract from his book a list of binders, and perhaps stationers, active in say 1815 - 1820, reasoning that many would have remained in the trade five to ten years later. Backtracking McKay's sources, however, I found that Chicago held a nearly complete run from 1820 through 1842 of his most important source for the post-1800 period: *Longworth's American Almanac*, and I decided instead to compile a list of binders from the 1825 volume [29]. Ten hours later I had 66 names – and a conviction that I could manage an extension of McKay through 1842.

I was aware, of course, of the growth of the city in this period – the 1820 census found a population of 124,000 while that of 1840 counted 313,000 and a New York State Census in 1845 recorded 371,000. There was corresponding growth in the number of names in each year's edition of Longworth's *Directory*. Still, it appeared that a few hundred hours would suffice to read through the 22 volumes and copy out the relevant citations. A few *thousand* hours later the task was done: 5,000 names and an estimated 50,000 addresses had been selected from the 720,000 entries recorded by Longworth. I was not prepared, obviously, for the amount of information that could be teased from these directories. (Nor the work required to prepare it for publication: it appeared in 1993 as *A Register of Artists, Engravers, Booksellers, Bookbinders, Printers & Publishers in New York City, 1821-42*, Bibliographical Society of America).

Chapter VI: The Binder Revealed

For all my work with directories – time-consuming, fascinating, and instructive as it was – the *Companion's* binder was identified by quite another route. Early on Terry Belanger [30] suggested I send a rubbing of the binding to Willman Spawn at the American Philosophical Society. Those of you who knew Willman (1920-2010), as I later had the pleasure of doing, will know of the massive file of rubbings taken from early American bindings which he created over many years and will also be aware of his prodigious memory for tools once seen.



Detail of the rectangular hand tool used to compose the border of The Clergyman's Companion's cover.

Wilman soon called to say he was sure he had the hand-stamp in his collection, but since his 19th century rubbings were less well organized than his 18th century ones, he could not put his hands on it directly. A few months later, however, he wrote:

I have continued the search from time to time, and finally this past week I found the tool I remembered used on a signed binding of H.I. Megarey of New York. I recorded the binding some fifteen years ago when it was in a private collection in Providence; the owner later moved to Nova Scotia and I have no idea of his location now. [31]

Megarey first appears in McKay as a stationer, 281 Pearl Street, in 1811, but McKay also notes the firm of Megary & Andrews at 151 Water Street in both 1810 and 1811 [32]. McKay did not record all there is to find, however: Andrews is John Andrews who lives at 30 Gold Street in 1810, and Henry I. Megarey first appears in the 1809 directory, occupation painter, at 3 Old Slip. About Andrews I've learned nothing more: the name is too common to permit further tracing in the directories, and I've found no certain references to him elsewhere.

Megarey appears in the directories each year, however – at the six business addresses through 1820 noted by McKay and with no less than five changes in residence during the same years [33]. After 1842 the listings continue as publisher at 12 Greene Street, with a separate business address of 4 West Broadway Place in 1851 and 1852 and with residence at 19 Wooster Street in 1853. The following year, 1854, and again in 1856, Harriet, widow of Henry J., is listed at that address. Thus we have good reason to believe Megarey had a 45-year long career as stationer, bookbinder, and publisher.

He began his publishing activity quite early. In 1817 his name appears in the imprint of an edition of the *Psalms* [34] and in 1819 on the first of several editions of *The Book of Common Prayer*, this one sub-titled *Megarey's Elegant Edition* and enhanced with illustrations [35]. An edition of the *Psalms* also published in 1819 carried his imprint, [36] as did in 1820 another edition of *The Book of Common Prayer* [37].

In 1821 he brought out the first, and apparently the only, volume of a literary miscellany called *The Wanderer* whose printed boards solicited contributions to future volumes. [38] In the same year he began to publish the first of several ambitious series of aquatints, John Hill's *Drawing Book of Landscape Scenery*, consisting of twelve plates about 16 by 11 inches, each plate with four views, entirely hand-colored [39]. He also issued, with W.B. Gilley, the *Prospectus of a new and splendid publication... The Hudson River Portfolio*, a set of 25 aquatints based on a series of watercolors by William

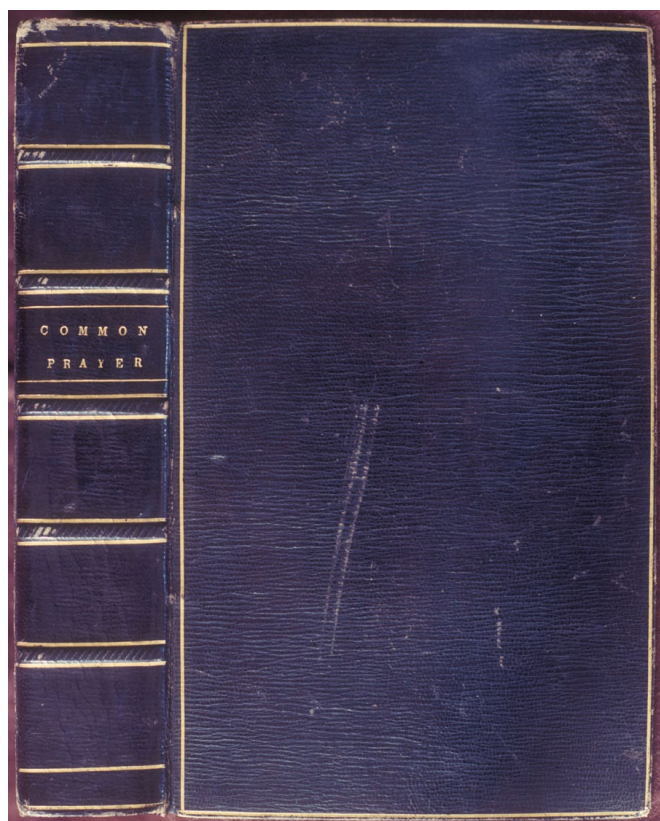
Guy Wall and engraved, again, by John Hill. This series was completed, with 20 rather than the announced 24 plates, in late 1825 or 1826. [IMAGE 6] Plate #20, "New York, From Governors Island," 1820, is reproduced. [40] [41]



"New York, From Governors Island" from Megarey's *The Hudson River Portfolio* (1820).

In 1822 I find reference to an edition of Arlincourt's *The Recluse* [42] and William Russell McDonald's collection of poems, *Dublin Mail*, wrongly attributed by Megarey to Thomas Moore [43]. In 1823 came John Galt's *Ayrshire Legatees* [44], in 1824 Parry's *Journal of a second voyage for the discovery of a North-West Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific* [45], and in 1826 another edition – this in five volumes – of *The Book of Common Prayer* [46], Disraeli's *Vivian Gray* [47], William Pinkney's memoir [48], and another volume of Irish poetry, Robert Sweeny's *Odds and Ends*. [49]

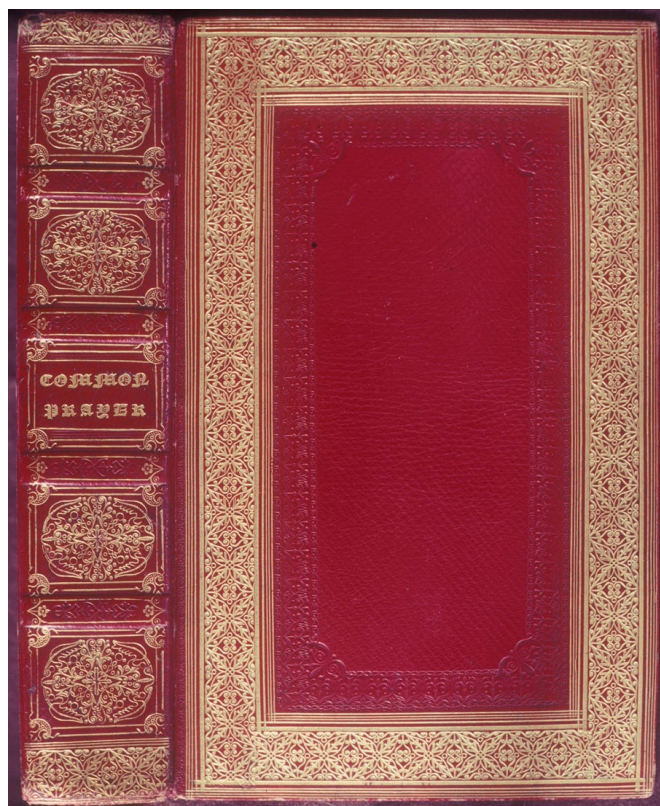
Megarey's bindings – those that have been located at least – appear most commonly on copies of his editions of *The Book of Common Prayer*. Their earliest notice seems to be Richard Grant White's in a newspaper article about 1875 which lavished praise on the binding of an 1819 volume whose binder was unknown to him. This article is quoted by William Loring Andrews, who identifies the binder, in his 1902 *Bibliopegy in the United States*. [50] Andrews describes two other Megarey bindings, one then owned by Beverly Chew with Megarey's ticket, and illustrates the second, then owned by Bowen Pierson. Another copy is illustrated in the catalog of the Papantonio collection now held, as are these other Megarey bindings, by the American Antiquarian Society, [51] and by one in my possession.



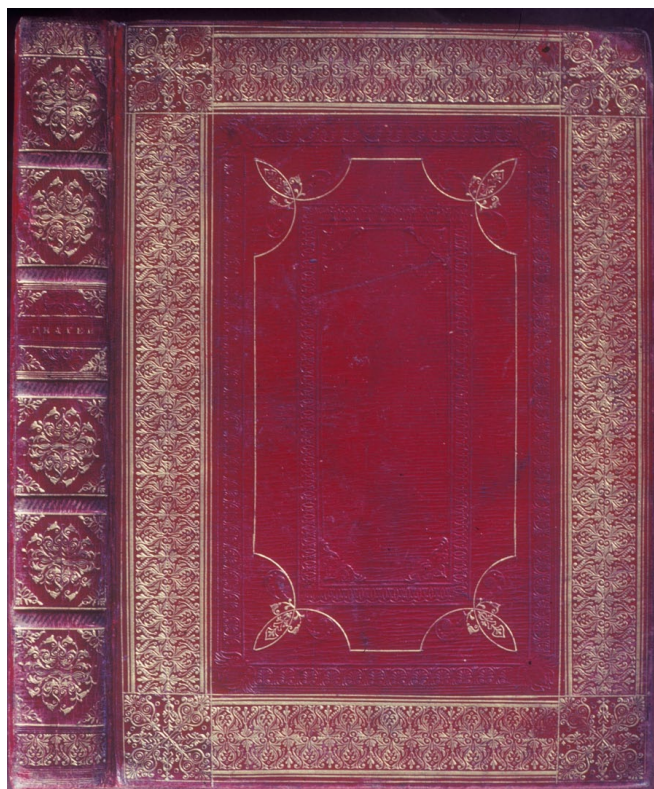
Megarey binding on copies of the 1819 Book of Common Prayer; Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.



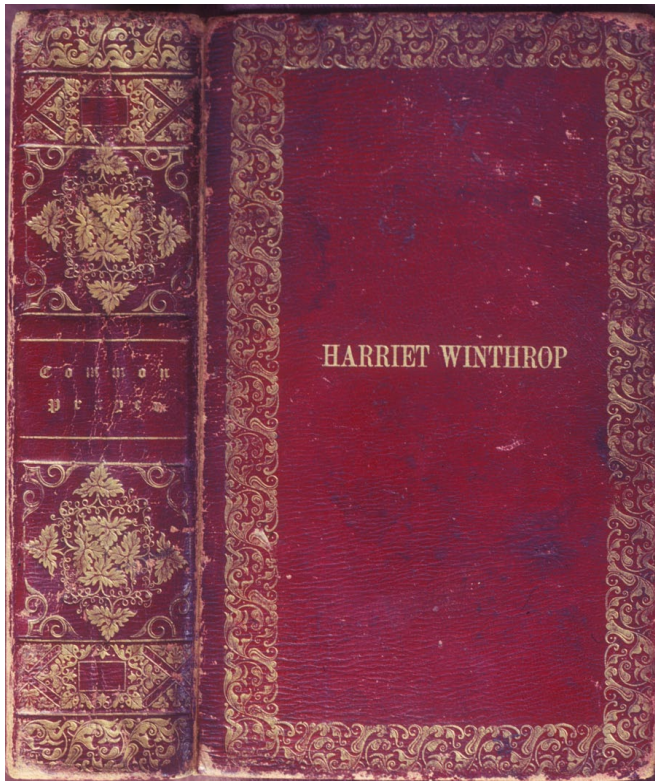
Megarey binding on copies of the 1819 Book of Common Prayer; Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.



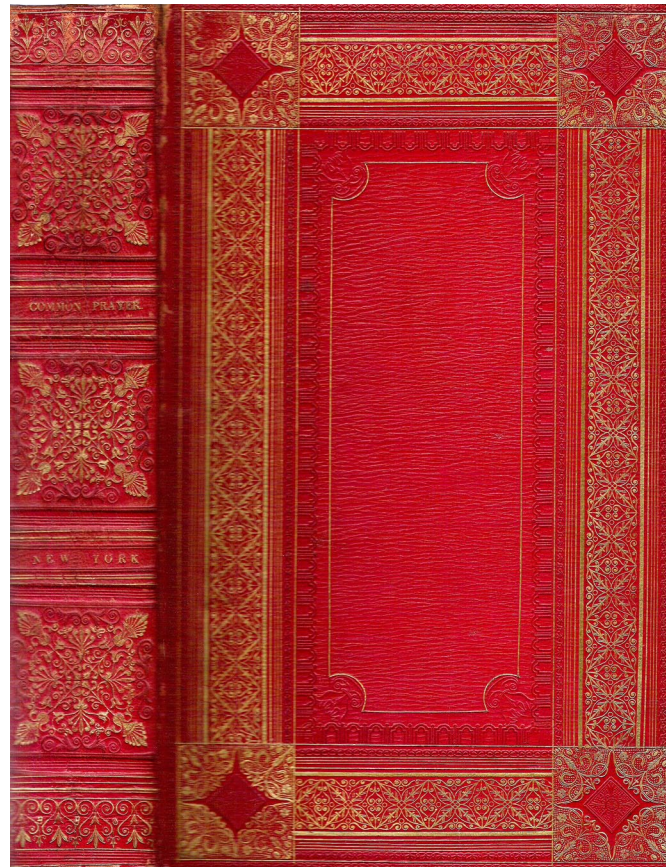
Megarey binding on copies of the 1819 Book of Common Prayer; Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.



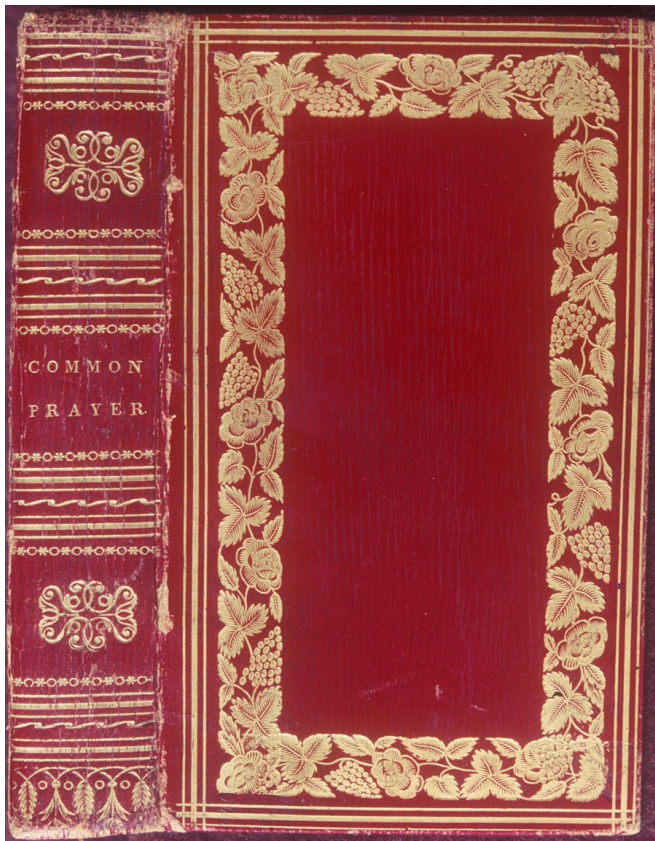
Megarey binding on copies of the 1819 Book of Common Prayer; Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.



*Megarey binding on an 1820 Book of Common Prayer;
Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.*



*1819 Book of Common Prayer, with Megarey's ticket;
Author's collection.*

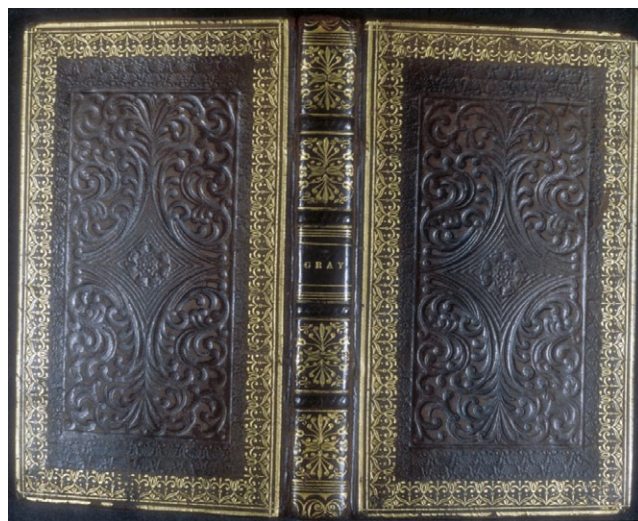


*Megarey binding on an 1829 Book of Common Prayer;
Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.*

Five Megarey bindings were shown in the 1907 Grolier Club exhibition of *Leather bookbindings executed in America before 1850*. Four of these, again from the Beverly Chew collection, are now at the Huntington Library. [52]



Book of Common Prayer (Megarey 1820), blue morocco attributed to Megarey. Grolier 41. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.



Thomas Gray, Letters & Poems (1821), brown calf with Megarey's ticket. Grolier 45. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.



Another copy, brown calf attributed to Megarey. Grolier 43. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.



Samuel Rogers, The Pleasures of Memory (1820), brown calf with Megarey's ticket. Grolier 44. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.

The doublure of a copy of a 1797 London translation of Salomon Gessner's *The Death of Abel*, with Megarey's ticket on a second, marbled, endsheet, was tooled with the hand-stamp used on my *Companion*. This volume was in the collection of John R. Turner Ettlinger, the former Rhode Islander who became a long-time member of the faculty of the School of Library Service, Dalhousie University, and this the binding recorded by Willman Spawn in 1962. Ettlinger kindly provided these slides to me in 1982; he died in 2001, and the current location of this book is again, regrettably, unknown [53].



Doublure and silk flyleaf of Gessner's The Death of Abel (London 1797). Courtesy of John R. Turner Ettlinger.



Front board of Gessner's *The Death of Abel* (London 1797).

Megarey in his role as bookbinder is fascinating for a second reason. The earliest bookbinding manual published in the United States, a reprint of the third London edition of *The Whole Art of Bookbinding*, was published in Richmond, Virginia, 1824, by Peter Cottom. A price chart, about 15 by 15 inches, drawn up as the "New-York Friendly Association of Master Book-binders' List of Prices, 1822" is bound, folded, into the Library of Congress copy. That the broadside was intended for this publication is made certain by the imprint which reads "Richmond: Published by Peter Cottom for the Art of Book-binding." The list is signed Henry I. Megarey, President, and Charles Starr, Secretary.

I have found only one further reference to the Association: in 1942, reacting to the appearance of French's "Early American Bookbinding," in the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, Albert Ehrman of England, then temporarily resident in New York, wrote to add names to her list of binders active before 1820, including nine drawn from "a list of members of the Association of Master Book Binders of New York published in 1822." This list, a portion of a broadside, is in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society as Rollo Silver brought to my attention. [54]

The Association's price list merits attention which we cannot give here, and it is too large to reproduce effectively. It gives over a full column, however, to an explanation of terms (Morocco, Russian and Calf are described in Super

Extra, Extra, Gilt, and Plain) and prices are charted by size (folio to 32mo.) and by covering material. Breintnall, it seems likely, was charged about \$2.00 for Megarey's work on the *Companion*. [55] Who can estimate the value of the pleasure H. P. Powers took from it over 50 years?



"South St. from Maiden Lane" (1834).



"New-York. Taken from the Bay near Bedlows Island" (1836).

After 1826 Megarey's name seems not to be associated with books, but prints and aquatints continue to appear at regular intervals until near his death. The view of South Street, engraved by William Bennett from his own painting, was issued in 1834. The view of New York was issued in 1836, engraved again by Bennett from a painting by John G. Chapman. It is one of a series of more than 20 folio views of American cities engraved by Bennett and issued between 1831 and 1842. Ten of these – including views of Baltimore, Boston, Troy, Buffalo, Detroit, New Orleans, Mobile, and Niagara Falls – carry Megarey's imprint in the first state. [56] [IMAGE 22] The last aquatint to carry his name seems to be a view of the city from atop St. Paul's Church, copyrighted by Megarey in 1849, engraved by Henry Papprell from a painting by John William Hill, son of the John Hill who had engraved

the *Hudson River Portfolio* for Megarey some 25 years earlier. [57]



"New Orleans, taken from the opposite side a short distance above the Middle or Picayune Ferry." (1841).



"New York from the Steeple of St. Paul's Church, Looking East, South and West" (1849).

There can be little doubt that Megarey had a long, varied, and active life. Yet we have nowhere found a biographical notice for him, even an obituary. His entry in Groce and Wallace's *Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860* confuses him with his son John, born in 1818, a painter admitted to the National Academy of Design in 1844 and dead at the age of 27 in 1845. [58].

The name Megarey – consistently spelled M-E-G-A-R-E-Y by Henry but otherwise appearing M-' or c -G-A-R-Y or G-A-R-R-Y – is not common in the New York directories before 1860, and we have compiled an inventory of them all. From this we can link Henry with some confidence to Thomas McGary, ornamental painter, gilder, and glazier; and to Alexander H. Megarey, who with his wife, Jane, manufactured and sold mathematical and nautical instruments between 1822 and 1851. At the New York Genealogical and Biographical

Society Library we have found, on microfilm, Henry's will, entered in probate in the Surrogate's Court on December 12, 1853. [59] At the New-York Historical Society we located two documents signed by Megarey as well as a fascinating letter about the family written by a son, Charles, a "smart, correct man" and an exchange broker in "gold, sovereigns, money, etc." [60] There is yet hope of more to learn about Megarey. [61]

Postlude

Oak trees produce acorns. They harbor truffles. Examination of a trifling little book has sprouted a bunch of branches, rooting around unearthed delectables. Were there but world enough, and time!

Endnotes

1. *The Clergyman's companion, containing the occasional offices of the Protestant Episcopal Church* New York: Printed for P.A. Mesier, No. 107, Pearl Street; Davis, Printer; 1806. (Shaw-Shoemaker 11221).
2. Van Allen Bradley, "Lawrence E. Dicke, Collector," *American Book Collector*, 25:5 (May-June 1975), p.26-7. Also telephone conversation with Reid Michener, bookseller of Chicago.
3. Thomas H. Gravell & George Miller, *A Catalogue of American watermarks, 1690-1835*. New York: Garland, 1979.
4. Frances Edwards, "Connecticut Paper Mills," *The Paper Maker* (Wilmington: Hercules Incorporated, 1966) vol. 35 #2, p. 2-9. I am grateful to John Bidwell for bringing this reference to my attention.
5. Kenneth Walter Cameron, *American Episcopal Clergy: Registers of Ordinations in the Episcopal Church in the United States from 1975 through 1904, with indexes*. Hartford: Transcendental Books, [1970].
6. The minutes of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church typically, in this period, include lists of clergy assigned in each diocese as well as reports of changes and activities.
7. *The National Union Catalog: Pre-1956 Imprints*. London: Mansell, 1970+. The Clarkson title is entry number NC 0465718, vol. 111, p. 416.
8. Henry P. Powers, *The Angel's Salutation to the Shepherds: A Christmas Sermon*. Newark: Printed at the office of the New Jersey Eagle, 1822. (Mansell Pre-56: NP 0534066).

9. *Ibid.*, p. [31].
10. Henry P. Powers, *The Shortness of Time* [Newark?: 1826?]. (*Mansell Pre-56*: NP 0534069).
11. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
12. Henry P. Powers, *Female Education, an address delivered in Trinity Church, Newark, N J , on the anniversary of the Newark Institute for Young Ladies*. Newark: printed by M. Lyon and Co., 1826. (*Mansell Pre-56*: NP 0534068).
13. *Ibid.*, p. [37].
14. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 17-18.
16. Matthew H. Henderson, *The Days of Old: a centennial discourse delivered in Trinity Church, N.J., February 22, 1846*. New York: printed by Leavitt, Trow and Company, 1846. (*Mansell Pre-56*: NH 0273745). I am indebted to Anne--Marie Salgat, Librarian, General Theological Seminary, New York City, for this citation.
17. Title varies; see *Mansell Pre-56*: NS 1109852.
18. Protestant Episcopal Church. Michigan (Diocese). *Journal*, 1840, p. 9.
19. *Ibid.*, 1848, p. 24. For this and the previous reference I am grateful to Elinor S. Hearn, Assistant to the Archivist, Archives and Historical Collections, Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas.
20. See Stephen Bloore, "Joseph Breintnall, First Secretary of the Library Company," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (Philadelphia, 1935), vol. 59, p. 42-56.
21. David Clarkson, *History of the Church of Zion and St. Timothy of New York, 1797-1894*. New York & London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, [1894], p. 40-41.
22. Breintnall's death is noted, among other places, in the *Newark Daily Advertiser* for May 27, 1847 – unfortunately without obituary.
23. *Newark Directory*. [Newark, N.J.]: 1835-79. Title and imprint vary. See *Mansell Pre-56*: NN 0223531 or Spear, *op. cit.*, p. 205-7 for full description.
24. I am delighted to acknowledge the assistance of Robert Blackwell, Principal Librarian of the New Jersey Reference Division of the Newark Public Library who provided confirmation of some details noted and leads for further investigation of the Breintnall's and Nelson's of Newark.
25. Hannah Dustin French, "Early American Bookbinding by Hand," in Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, editor, *Bookbinding in America* (Portland: Southworth-Anthoensen Press, 1941). Reprinted New York: Bowker, 1967.
26. Frank Comparato, *Books for the Millions*. (Harrisburg: Stackpole, 1971).
27. Thomas Tanselle, *Guide to the Study of United States Imprints*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).
28. George L. McKay, *A Register of Artists, Engravers, Booksellers, Bookbinders, Printers & Publishers in New York City, 1633-1820*. (New York: New York Public Library, 1942).
29. *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory;* New York: Thomas Longworth, 1825
30. Belanger was at that time director of the Rare Book School at Columbia University, later removed to the University of Virginia.
31. TLS, November 15, 1977.
32. McKay, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
33. 1812-13: 47 Nassau; 1814: 8 Ann Street; 1815: 58 John Street; 1816: 12 Lumber; 1817-19: 8 New Street.
34. Though noted in the imprint catalog of the AAS I have been unable to confirm it elsewhere. Megarey apparently continued to bind, however: the *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York 1784-1831*, VIII:621, note payment of \$118 for 12 Port folios for "Street Commissioner" (perhaps in conjunction with a survey of the East River) audited at the meeting of 26 August 1816. The *Minutes* for 28 February 1820 (X:761) note payment of \$22 for "binding Laws of Corporation for Charleston."
35. Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. *Book of Common Prayer* See *Mansell Pre-56*: NP 0609557; Shaw-Shoemaker 49199. WorldCat (5/17/2007) notes 26 holding libraries.
36. Bible. O.T. Psalms. English. Paraphrases. 1819. Protestant Episcopal Church New York: H.I. Megarey, 1819. See *Mansell Pre-56*: NBi 0028087; Shaw-Shoemaker 47346. WorldCat (5/17/2007) notes 7 holding libraries.
37. *Book of Common Prayer*. New York: H.I. Megarey, 1820. *Mansell Pre-56*: NP 0609559; NP 0609561. Shoemaker 2877. Includes an edition of the *Psalms*; see *Mansell Pre-56*: NBi 0028109. WorldCat (5/17/2007) notes 3 holding libraries.

38. *The Wanderer*. New York: H.I. Megarey, C.S. Van Winkle, printer, 1821. Only volume 1 published. The same year also saw *Mary of Scotland; or, The Heir of Avenel, A Drama in Tree Acts founded on the popular novel of The Abbot [by Scott], and originally performed at the Theater, New York, with universal applause*. A critical abstract of this play can be found in Zoe Detsi-Diamanti, *Early American Women Dramatists 1775-1860* (New York: Garland, 1998), p.

188. Megarey's name also appears in the imprint of a very early – among the earliest? – literary annual, *The Wreath, a collection of poems from celebrated English authors* (New York: W. B. Gilley & H. I. Megarey, 1821); this is noted in Frederick W. Faxon, *Literary Annuals and Gift Books* (Private Libraries Association, 1973 reprint of 1912 edition) whose chronological index of “all” the annuals listed actually begins with 1823.

39. John Hill, *Drawing Book of Landscape Scenery*. Drawn and engraved by I. Hill; published by H.I. Megarey New York and I. Mill Charleston S.C. Described, *inter alia*, Carl W. Drepperd, “American Drawing Books,” *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* (November 1945) vol. 45, no. 11, p. 795f.

40. I.N. Phelps-Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island*. New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1918. Vol. 3, p. 571-575 contains a full description of the states of the plates of the *Hudson River Portfolio*. See also Koke, Richard J., *A Checklist of the American Engravings of John Hill (1770-1850)*, (New-York Historical Society, 1961).

41. Philip J. Weimerskirch, “Two Great Illustrated Books about the Hudson River: William Guy Wall's *Hudson River Port Folio* and Jacques Gérard Milbert's *Itinéraire pittoresque du fleuve Hudson*” in Caroline Mastin Welsh, *Adirondack Prints and Printmakers, The Call of the Wild* (Syracuse: The Adirondack Museum/Syracuse University Press, 1998), p. 25-44, draws on Koke, Richard J., “John Hill, Master of Aquatint, 1770-1850” in *New-York Historical Society Quarterly* 43:1 (January 1959), p. 51-118, for a brief account (p.28-30) of the Megarey-Hill relationship. Koke's article draws heavily on Hill's account books, held by the New-York Historical Society, for much more detailed discussion of the long and complex business relationship between the two men. Weimerskirch has also brought to my attention William Diebold, “Four Great Sequences of Hudson River Prints,” *Imprint: Journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society* 20 (1995, p. 5-18, which has a few remarks on Megarey (p. 3-4 and footnotes 3-5).

42. Charles Victor Prevost Arlincourt, Vicomte d', *The Recluse; a translation of “Le Solitaire”* New York: printed by William Grattan for E. Duyckinck [etc.], 1822. Shoemaker 7832. *Mansell Pre-56*: NA 0410062.

43. [William Russell McDonald], *Dublin Mail; or, Intercepted Correspondence* by Thomas Moore. New York: H.I. Megarey, 1822. Noted by Roorbach, *Bibliotheca Americana* (under Moore, p. 374); *Mansell Pre-56*: NM 0037391; Shoemaker 8573.

44. [John Galt], *The Ayrshire Legatees; or the Pringle Family*. New York: W.B. Gilley ... H.I. Megarey, 1823. *Mansell Pre-56*: NG 0030640; Shoemaker 12639. WorldCat (5/17/2007) also notes Citizen of Carolina, pseud., *The Henriade of Voltaire*, translated into English verse, canto 1-3 & 9. New York, Henry I. Megarey, 1823; 2 holding libraries.

45. Parry, Captain William Edward, Sir, 1790-1855. *Journal of a second voyage for the discovery of a North-West Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific: performed in the years 1821--22--23, in His Majesty's ships Fury and Hecla, under the orders of Captain William Edward Parry, R.N., F.R.S., and commander of the expedition*. New-York: Published by Evert Duyckinck, George Long, Collins & Co., Collins & Hannay, W.B. Gilley, and Henry I. Megarey. W.E. Dean, printer, 90 William-Street., 1824; 5 holding libraries.

46. *Book of Common Prayer*. New York: Henry I. Megarey, 1826. *Mansell Pre-56*: NP 0609580; NP 0609581; Shoemaker 25848. WorldCat (5/17/2007) identifies 5 holding libraries.

47. [Beaconsfield, Benjamin Disraeli, 1st earl of], *Vivian Grey*. New York: Collins & Hannay ... H.I. Megarey, 1826. *Mansell Pre-56*: NB 0217346; Shoemaker-Cooper 23721.

48. Pinkney, William, 1764-1822. *Some Account of the Life, Writings, and Speeches of William Pinkney* [Author: Wheaton, Henry; Madison, James]. New York: Henry I. Megarey, 1826; 6 holding libraries.

49. Robert Sweeny, *Odds and Ends; Original and Translated*. New York: H.I. Megarey, 1826. *Mansell Pre-56*: NS 1096069; Shoemaker 26163. Also noted by Roorbach, *op. cit.*, p.528. Roorbach also attributes “Voltaire, F.M., *Henriade. Translated into English Verse*. O 75 ... ‘2” to Megarey; it has proved impossible to verify this title [but see note 44]. WorldCat (5/17/2005) identifies W. J. Bennett, 1787-1844, author; Henry I. Megarey, artist; *Boston, from City Point near Sea Street*. New York: Published by Henry I. Megarey, 1833; 2 holding libraries, but this is likely a separately issued aquatint.

50. Andrews, William Loring. *Bibliopegy in the United States and kindred subjects* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1902), p.9-15. <<http://bookbinding.com/bibliopegy-in-america.html>> (11/3/2011).

51. *Early American Bookbindings from the Collection of Michael Papantonio*. New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library [etc.], 1972.

52. *Catalogue of Ornamental Leather Bookbindings Executed in America Prior to 1850*. Exhibited at the Grolier Club, 1907. The items displayed are items 41-42: *The Book of Common Prayer* (Megarey 1819); 43: *The Book of Common Prayer* (Megarey 1820); 44: Rogers, Samuel, *The Pleasure of Memory, and other Poems* (New York: R. & W. A. Bartow, et al., 1820); and 45: Gray, Thomas, *Gray's Letters & Poems* (New York: R. & W. A. Bartow, et al., 1821).

53. Salomon Gessner, *The Death of Abel*. London: 1797. Ettlinger (1926-2001) was a history graduate of Magdalen College, Oxford with a library degree from McGill. He served in the Royal Air Force and Royal Canadian Air Force from 1944-47 and was Deputy Director and Librarian at the Institute of Jamaica; Assistant Librarian, Special Collections, Columbia University; curated the Annmary Brown Memorial at Brown; and went to Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada, in 1966 as Collections Librarian. From 1969 to 1988 he was a member of the faculty of the School of Library and Information Studies at Dalhousie. Fighting cancer, he moved in 2000 to Tumwater, Washington, to place himself in the care of a former student, by then an oncologist with a prominent practice in the Olympia area. He died August 31, 2001, and was buried in Tumwater. His collections, still largely in Halifax, were packed by friends and sent to Dr. Dunstan C. Osborn. Osborn has not responded to my requests for information on the disposition of Ettlinger's book collection. Unfortunately, Ettlinger made the slides he generously shared with me in 1982 by placing the book on an oriental carpet and clicking off the images while standing over the book; his focus was slightly off, something he would doubtless have noticed and corrected in digital images.

54. Shoemaker 9697. A broadside apparently held uniquely by the American Antiquarian Society.

55. A medium and demy 12° of 350 pages finished Super Extra in morocco is priced at \$2.00. Super Extra Morocco, from the "Explanation of terms, etc.," included "Gilt edge, lined with coloured paper, rolled inside the square and on the edge, finished on the back in the best manner with match stamps, etc. the sides finished with large border rolls or stamps, and blank rolled. If tabling or centre work be added, it must be considered an extra charge."

An 1825 trace of Megarey also appears in the *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York 1784-1831* (XIV: 627) in the form of a petition presented during debate on appropriate requirements to impose on gravesites:

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed, certify that before and during a part of the time of the prevalence of the late Yellow Fever in New York, we resided in a neighborhood of Trinity Church burying ground; that we were frequently annoyed with the offensive effluvia arising from the said burying ground, and particularly so when the wind swept over its surface, before reaching us. The stench was so powerful, as to oblige many of us, to shut the doors and windows of our stores and dwellings, to keep out the sickening and disagreeable smell; Signed by Joseph Brewster, Richard McKenzie, Henry J. Megarey, William Gale Clark, Pelletreau & Upson, and others." Since Megarey "resided" in the "neighborhood of Trinity Church," it is even less surprising that he was known to Powers and Breintnall.

56. It is one of the four plates of Megarey's *Street Views in the City of New York*. Phelps-Stokes, *op. cit.*, offers a full description; see p. 589-90; 605-6.

57. See Phelps-Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 619-22. 73. *Ibid.*, p. 698.

58. George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, *The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America 1564-1860*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957. p. 437. The statements made apply correctly to Henry's son John – save the first sentence which very likely refers to the Bennett series of city views and therefore makes the New Orleans visitor more probably Henry than John. The New-York Historical Society owns two paintings by John: entries 1319 and 1320 in their *Catalogue of American Portraits*, 1974.

59. Records of the Surrogate's Court, New York City, Book 109, p. 200-2. The will, read into the record in the presence of the heirs, directed the executors "to sell and convert into money" all assets, real and personal, pay debts and expenses, and establish a fund whose income was to be enjoyed by his wife, Harriet, during her lifetime. On her death the principle was to be equally divided among living children – Charles, Robert, James, Anna Campbell, Jane Hogan and Harriet – with a further proviso that grand-children, if orphaned, were heir to their parent's share.

60. The characterization of Charles is quoted from the report of an agent of the R. G. Dun & Co. dated December 16, 1865 and entered in the company's credit ledgers now on deposit with Harvard's Baker Library. Vol. 341, p. 200.



The four documents are in the Megarey file of the New-York Historical Society Library's Manuscripts Division: 1. New York 3 February 1831, signed Peter Maverick; agreeing to hold two copper plates of "Megarey's Niagara Falls." 2. same date and text signed "John Hill." 3. New York 5th February 1831, signed Henry I. Megarey, promises to pay William H. Harrison \$200 with annual interest at 6%. 4. 25 May 1832 to W.H. Harrison asking him to release plate of "Ballemore" for printing, signed H.I. Megarey.

The letter, a typed transcript of an ALS dated 20 February 1879 and addressed to a grand-niece, is in the cataloged collections of the Society. It traces the family from 1745 when "Mynheer and Dame" Dealing emigrated to New York from Holland. Their daughter Ann married Robert Affleck whose daughter Maria (1795-1828) was Henry Megarey's first wife, Henry emigrating from Ireland in March 1800. Maria and Henry, the letter notes, were the parents of 10 children. The letter was loaned to the Historical Society in 1950 by Mss. Anna C. Alexander, then of Long Island.

61. *The New York Herald* for Sunday, October 23, 1853 (newly searchable online) carries the following obituary note, Deaths: "On Friday evening, October 21, after a protracted illness, Henry J. Megarey, aged 72 years. / His friends are respectfully invited to attend his funeral, this afternoon, at two o'clock, from his late residence, No. 19 Wooster street." He would thus have been born in 1781.

Appendix: Directories Described

In preparing the APHA talk I considered how to communicate some sense of the possibilities directories offer researchers. As it happened, the first card in my file was that for Abijah Abbot, first identified as a publisher in 1835. It became my practice to begin a record as each new name came up and to note in each succeeding year the appearance of that name whether it appeared with no, the same, or another occupation. It is reasonable to assume, I think, that the Abijah Abbot listed as clerk in 1837 and 1838 is the same person listed in 1836 as "proprietor and publisher of the *New York Weekly Messenger*," since his address, 6 Suffolk, remains the same. Whether the accountant of 1839-1841 is the same man is less certain as the addresses vary.

Realizing early on that names often appeared in directories before bearing an occupation that brought them to my attention, I also backtracked all names at least four years. Consequently I could learn that Abbot came into the directories as early as 1827, perhaps 1826, and was in most years before 1835 a clerk of the United States Bank.

In 1835 there is a second entry for Abbot & Boggs. Among the Boggs' we find William G. Boggs, listed as early as 1825 as printer and in his later years as publisher. He shares the 17 Ann Street address with Abbot in 1835. Most volumes of Longworth's also contain a separate list of newspapers and periodicals. Checking this we find the *New York Evening Post* at 21 Pine Street in the 1838-1842 period during which Boggs appears as publisher.

A couple of dozen cards away were those for William C. Bryant, editor of the *Evening Post* from 1829; Bryant, Leggett & Company (the Leggett is William Leggett); Michael Burnham (whose widow Elizabeth appears in 1836); and William Coleman.

The story implicit here is partially completed by a source as ready to hand as the *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Scribners, 1943. Vol. 3, p.200-5) which, in its article on William Cullen Bryant, tells us that William Coleman, editor of the *Evening Post*, injured in an 1826 accident, hired Bryant as assistant. On Coleman's death in 1829 Bryant became editor and, quickly, one-third owner. In June 1834, intending to leave the *Post*, Bryant sailed for Europe where word reached him in early 1836 that his partner Leggett was ill and the *Post* in financial trouble. On his return the paper was reorganized, Leggett separated, and Bryant assumed half-ownership, retaining editorial control of one of the country's best known papers another four decades until his death in 1878.

This example is not typical in its complexity nor in the caliber of its characters. It does, however, suggest some of the richness of interrelated detail that can be traced in the directories.

The earliest New York City directory, published by David Franks, appeared in 1786. [1] It contained 800 names. Directories were issued annually thereafter with the first under the imprint of David Longworth, principally a publisher of plays, in 1796. In 1806 compilation was taken over by David's son Thomas--"my father then deeming it an unthankful task, and the support of it not sufficient to reward his attentions to the work" [2] -- and continued each year, occasionally with competition from others, until 1842.

A study of the way in which directories were compiled, printed, distributed, and used would be a substantial contribution to the literature. While we wait for this study an outline can be read between the lines of the two or three page publisher's advertisements which were a routine part of the directory. In New York, at least, the process began in May, encouraged perhaps by a convention whereby landlords set rents for the coming year on February 1st with May 1st the removal date for tenants who could not or chose not to meet the new rates. [3] The publisher hired canvassers to comb the city during May collecting names, occupations, and addresses which were put in alphabetical order by about the first of June, then set in type, printed, and bound for distribution in mid- to late June.

This schedule could be interrupted and interfered with at each step -- and Longworth's annual lamentations indicate that indeed it was. In 1823 he writes:

. . . but never at any former time have we experienced so much difficulty in collecting the names as at the present season; the number of hands temporarily employed, and the nature of the task, subject us to peculiar difficulties, and the work being such as to exclude us from a personal superintendence of the labor, we are thereby exposed to much abuse; this year alone some of the hands were greatly in fault, which involved us in much extra expense and labor; consequently the number of additional names--[that is, the number listed out of alphabetical order at the end]--is greater than usual in our book. We would have the public bear in mind, that the method pursued [sic] by us in constructing our work renders it in our interest and convenience, that all our collections should primarily be done with all possible care and accuracy, all omissions produce a subsequent increase of expense and labor to us. [p. 494]

It is never entirely clear whose names the canvassers were to collect. The early advertisements manage to suggest that everyone's was sought, but:

The very nature of the work renders perfection unhopd for: many people are shifting about at the time we take the names -- to obtain their address is almost an impossibility, and they think not of furnishing their address until the work is published, at which time they manifest their importance by finding fault. Some unenlightened merchants in this city have refused to furnish their names and address, when politely called upon; this is mentioned to account for some of the omissions. [1821, p. 488]

Longworth's principal focus seems to have been somewhere between employed persons and heads of household. He says in 1822, "The number of names obtained in a house is from 1 to 4; frequently in the upper part of town, from 4 to 8, and in many instances more than 8." [1822, p. 496]. In 1829 he amplified:

. . . as far as the Directory offers data for conjecture, the population must have increased in somewhat a greater proportion than the increase in the number of names, as the editor has endeavored, in the last two publications, to restrain the increasing bulk of the work by the judicious omission of many names that can be of no importance to persons in business, or to those who patronise [sic] the work; the names of laborers, colored people, persons in low obscurity who rent tenements by the week or month, may be excluded without impairing the utility of the work. . . [p. 638]

and in the following year, responding to a newspaper editorial, still further:

. . . The present editor is censured for omitting the names of journeyman mechanics, whom the writer thinks entitled to have their names in the Directory:-- So thinks the editor, and consequently the names of all persons doing business, heads of families whether journeyman or master mechanics, editors of newspapers, clerks, coloured people, gentlemen and commoners, are all indiscriminately inserted, without other distinction than that resulting from alphabetical arrangement. [1830, p. 673]

Women's names make up a small percentage of the entries, appearing most frequently with the designation, "widow of..." but from time to time as shopkeepers, milliners, boarding house keepers, teachers, and so on through a large number of trades. Several in the 1830's are identified as map colorers.

Still, it must be the case that most women and all children are represented -- if at all -- by some male family member. Assuming that women and children made up 70% of the population permits a crude estimate of Longworth's success. In 1820, for example, with a census population of 124,000, adult males may have numbered about 37,000. Longworth's 23,000 entries for this year, adjusted downward 10% for the names of women, businesses, institutions, and so on, imply that he named about 56% of them. Similar calculations for 1830 and 1840 yield figures of 46% and 35% respectively. Longworth, as so many others, doubtless found it difficult to keep pace with the growth of the city.

Once obtained, however, names were not easily released. In 1838 Longworth writes:

The anger of not a few, and the displeasure of many, will be provoked upon finding their names and addresses in the Directory; in the compilation of the work, the object of the editor is only to render the work accurate and valuable; he therefore does not stop to inquire whether he has any right to publish the name and address of any individual; he is governed solely by the consideration that the public rely on the faithful performance of his duties;-- that confidence must not be betrayed; he therefore avows that he has disregarded all directions to omit names. [p. 723]

The names themselves posed severe problems. Many did not know how to spell, either their own names or those of others. In 1832 Longworth advised that one looking for the name "Pierce" check also under the spellings: Pairce, Pearce, Pearse, Peirce, Persse, and Pirce. [p. 749-50] Some wanted their occupation described in detail -- Longworth insisted on a word or two -- others offered only generic descriptions, for example, "merchant," which Longworth found of little value. Women wanted designation as Miss or Mrs.: no titles of any kind decreed Longworth.

Addresses, too, bedeviled the editor. Streets were not named, or named but called something else by their residents; numbered, renumbered, or renamed and renumbered. Few advertisements lack complaint about these matters, as in 1827:

A few years since Fulton Street was numbered throughout, which the Editor presumes to consider should have rendered unnecessary a renumbering of this street for a century to come; nevertheless it has again taken place, much to the dissatisfaction of the residents, and greatly to the displeasure of the Editor, who had just made his collections. [p.554]

Finally, the manuscript complete, publication still might be delayed. In apology for an unusually late appearance in 1839, Longworth notes:

Perhaps the Book might have been published some four or five days earlier, were there no obstacles in a Printing Office,-- but the difficulties in the business, prophetically denominated the "Black Art," are beyond his control. [p. 751-2]

Never later than the end of July, however, the edition appeared. Longworth records printing 900 copies in 1823, 1040 in 1825; ten years later, in 1835, he ordered 2200 copies reporting 1700 sold the previous year. [p. 754] In 1839 he again reports a print run of 2200. [p. 751-2]

Sales were never adequate in Longworth's opinion, and he was driven to annual frenzy by the thought of those who borrowed another's copy of his book. In 1832 he sputtered:

[The editor] is not competent to express in sufficiently pointed terms, the indignation entertained for those wealthy persons who set so at defiance all the rights of meum and teum, as to resort throughout the year to their neighbor's directory, thus enduring the humiliation of being dependent upon the unrequited assistance and labours of a man so humble as the Editor of the N.Y. Directory. [p. 750]

One would like to know not only the accuracy of this outline of the construction of the New York directories, but more about those which appeared in other cities early in the 19th century. There has been, to my knowledge, no general article on them despite Dorothea Spear's 1961 *Bibliography of American Directories* through 1860. Neither have I yet found studies of their publishers, although these may be scattered in the literature. Yet by 1860, 80 American cities had populations greater than 13,000 and only seven of these had no directory in either 1859 or 1860. After 1820, directories were published more or less annually in most cities with a population greater than 10,000. [4]

Spear based her work on the great collection of directories at the American Antiquarian Society, citing copies located elsewhere when feasible. While it has thus been possible since 1961 to consult virtually all known directories, it was often not easy to do so before their re-publication in microform by Research Publications, Inc. in the mid-1970's. This re-publication includes all but 45 of the more than 1600 directories cited by Spear and all directories published in 72 cities between 1861 and 1901. Micropublication of directories for most of these cities for the period 1902-1935 was in progress through the 1980s, and it appears that many directories have now been digitized, though perhaps not systematically. Ancestry.com may offer the most complete and accessible collection.

Notes

1. See Dorothea N. Spear, *Bibliography of American Directories through 1860*. Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1961. Reprinted by Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978.

2. *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*; New York: Thomas Longworth, (1828), p.72.

3. The custom is mentioned several times in passing by Longworth. It is also noted in Bayrd Still, *Mirror for Gotham*. (New York: New York University Press, 1956), where a satirical woodcut, "First Day of May in New York. -- A General Move" is reproduced on page 107. It is also reproduced as a frontispiece in Sidney F. Huttner & Elizabeth Stege Huttner, *A Register of Artists, Engravers, Booksellers, Bookbinders, Printers & Publishers in New York City, 1821-42* (Bibliographical Society of America, 1993). This compilation of some 5,000 names and 50,000 addresses remains in print and is available from Oak Knoll Books.

4. Peter R. Knights, "City Directories of the United States," New Haven: Research Publications, n.d. Introduction for the advertising brochure for the Research Publications micropublication series.

Sidney F. Huttner holds BA and MA (Philosophy) degrees from The University of Chicago. After ten years as assistant head of special collections at Chicago, Sid served as head of the George Arents Research Library, Syracuse University; then for 14 years as curator of special collections at the University of Tulsa; and he is winding down his career after 12 years as head of special collections and university archives at The University of Iowa Libraries. He transitioned to part-time Senior Librarian in July, following a month in research at the Houghton Library as a 2011-2012 Katharine F. Pantzer, Jr., Fellow in Bibliography.

Sid served as Book Review Editor of *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship* (Chicago: ACRL), 1992-1998 and as Book Review Editor for *The Guild of Book Workers Newsletter* 1993-2003. A bookbinder when he frees time for the bench, Sid's interest in the history of binding led him to co-author (with Elizabeth Stege Huttner) their 1993 *A Register of Artists, Engravers, Booksellers, Bookbinders, Printers & Publishers in New York City, 1821-1842* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America). His current project is recovering the publishing history of a 19th century bestseller, Owen Meredith's *Lucile*, 1860-1938. He has amassed some 1200 personal copies of this long narrative poem, all imaged and described at <<http://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu/lucile>>.



Book Conservation at West Dean College

By Abigail Uhteg



West Dean College in West Sussex, England.

The usual chatter over the last several years about the future of book conservation education reached a peak recently after the AIC Book and Paper Group's Annual Meeting in June of this year, which featured a panel discussion about book conservation education post-Texas. While the news surely has spread to all corners of the States, many of my colleagues in the UK have not yet heard that the University of Texas at Austin graduated its last students in book conservation in 2010 and will not take any more for the foreseeable future. This leaves the United States with three programs in art (on paper) conservation at NYU, the University of Buffalo, and Winterthur, all three of which recently received support from the Mellon Foundation to provide for and encourage the study of book and library conservation. I chose probably the worst time to look for schools, in 2009, right in the middle of the dissolution of the Texas program and before any of the others planned to fill the void. I felt my options were to study paper conservation at one of these programs, cobbling together experience in books through internships and outside workshops, or jump the pond and get more cohesive book training from Camberwell College of Arts or West Dean College in England. Of these two remaining English-speaking book conservation programs I chose the latter, motivated by a combination of advice from colleagues and graduates of both programs, curriculum, workshop resources, finances, and (don't tell me you weren't thinking it) the castle.



The Oak Hall at Christmas, where a fireplace burns wood from the estate all winter long.

Housed in a 19th century mansion on a medieval manor, the college was established in 1964 by a charitable trust set up by its last owner, Edward James. It opened to students in 1971 and eventually grew to offer advanced degrees and diplomas in the conservation and making of various objects, including books and library materials, metals, ceramics and glass, furniture, tapestries, clocks, and stringed musical instruments, in addition to relatively new degrees in studio art and writing. The close proximity of these other departments is a resource few of us book conservators will have in the future and offers lovely opportunities to interact with and learn alongside a greater segment of the conservation field, both increasing resources for treatment and taking the conservation of our objects out of isolation and into the context of cultural heritage as a whole.



The author and Tiago Oliviera (ceramics) help Tristram Bainbridge (furniture, supervising from behind the camera) consolidate & fill losses in a gilt frame. For fun.

I won't pretend to know enough to compare the book conservation program at West Dean line-by-line with the offerings at NYU, Buffalo, and Winterthur, particularly in light of recent changes, but I will attempt to describe our program and my experiences in hopes of adding an overseas perspective to the dialog and giving prospective students information that might aid their decision-making.

The books department at West Dean, headed by David Dorning, offers graduate and postgraduate degrees (the equivalent of doing one or two years in the States maybe, but I'm sure many of you know the system isn't quite parallel) in the Conservation of Books and Library Materials as well as an accelerated MA in Conservation Studies that takes place over the second year and into the summer. Students have the option, based on experience and career goals, of doing different combinations of these degrees or going through to do all three. While the curriculum addresses issues surrounding library and museum collections care, it is not as part of a MSIS like Texas or an art history degree like in the three US paper conservation programs. While this may mean less preparation for the information science aspect of working in a library, it does give more time for benchwork, one of the widely-acknowledged strengths of the West Dean program.



The upstairs of the book conservation workshop.



Each bench has a cabinet underneath and a set of shelves against the wall.

The workshop has benches for ten students, as well as another room with table space for larger projects. There's a dirty room with the usual woodworking tools and a milling machine for board slotting, a finishing room with a Pragnant and wide array of hand tools and letters, and a small lab stocked with chemicals, analytical equipment, and the ever-familiar Cook'n'Stir.



The lab.

Graduate coursework includes bookbinding, conservation benchwork, conservation theory and ethics, and science. We work with Maureen Duke, a well-respected and incredibly talented bookbinder, to build models of books we might come across in the future, from case bindings to springback account books to full leather over raised cords, as well as learning to finish in blind and gilt. The sessions with Maureen, about once a week for half a day, are fast-paced, a combination of working under her hawk's eye (she can tell from downstairs by the sound of the backing hammer if someone upstairs is properly rounding his spine!) and independently preparing work for

the next session. On the top ten list for this program I'd put Maureen down twice.



A term's worth of bookbinding and conservation work: four board reattachments, two cloth repairs, one rebinding, two bindings in full-leather over raised cords, one springback stationery binding, and sewing models.



Postgraduate student You-jin Min rebinding an 18th century French book for the Admiralty Library.

Conservation benchwork is directed by David and assistant tutor Sonja Schwoell, with visits from other conservators over the course of the year. Our objects come from the nearby Chichester Cathedral library, Admiralty Library in Portsmouth, and a smattering of other public and private collections. Graduates start out with Middleton-style Japanese paper repairs to small full-leather volumes, then cloth bindings, and from there work more individually on books chosen with the tutor to provide opportunities to problem-solve treatments and use new techniques, with an emphasis on board reattachment. My projects included rebinding a 17th century textblock and recasing it in its 19th century cloth case, joint and cap repairs to a full-vellum springback, paper

and spine repairs to a Victorian *carte-de-visite* album, a few leather rebacks, and extensive textblock repairs in addition to a vellum reback to this hot mess (yes, the front board is taped upside-down to the textblock):



Before.



After.

Work is generally independent; the tutors check in with us and are available for questions, but nobody stands over our shoulders while we work. A lot of the teaching is one-on-one, during discussions about a particular object, though this is interspersed with frequent group lectures and occasional demonstrations of treatments or techniques. Again, we were encouraged to investigate treatment options both in writing and at the bench, as well as to pursue self-directed projects. Mine included the development of a drop-spine box with a clear spine, by adapting boardslotting techniques to Perspex (more on this was posted at Jeff Peachey's boardslotting blog at <http://boardslotting.wordpress.com/2011/07/02/slotting-perspex-for-a-drop-spine-box/>). An assignment to test the tensile strength of something came in handy for an excuse to test the adhesion of the cloth in the Perspex slot.

Study visits formed a significant part of the first term and continued into the rest of the year. We went to the Chichester Cathedral Library, the Admiralty Library, Southampton University, the University of Sussex, the British Library, the National Archives, in addition to a three-day whirlwind tour to Germany, where we went to the Berlin State Library and the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin and the breathtaking Herzog August Library in Wolfenbuttel. The organization of these visits varies. At the National Archives we heard presentations from conservators and conservation scientists on specific projects and research. At Southampton we had a lesson in disaster management. The curators at Sussex University were so generous as to let us comb through the stacks to find books to take back into a reading room and study with David. At the Admiralty and Chichester Cathedral we learned about the collections but we also went through with the curators to select books to bring back to the lab for treatment.



Making pigment sample slides for polarized light microscopy.

Which brings us to science—David Dorning teaches it, once a week to graduates and a double session every other week to postgraduates, and all conservation students are in the class together. Unlike the US schools, there is no science requirement for admission to West Dean, so we start at the beginning with atoms and molecules and work our way up to describing and investigating the materials we encounter in conservation. As far as chemistry goes I think the material is introduced in as friendly a way as possible, with the understanding that few of us have science backgrounds and probably for a reason. David got his own degree in chemistry after he got into the conservation field and so understands our perspective. That the our science tutor is also our books tutor means that we do a bit more science than the other disciplines; we get book-specific science lectures in the department as well as analytical assignments such as the tensometer testing throughout the graduate year.

The role of science in conservation, and how much science the conservator needs to know given the existence of conservation scientists, seems still to be a contentious one and no less so amongst my colleagues at West Dean. I see a distinct split between conservators who want to be able to understand the chemistry of their treatments and the ones who would prefer focus on hand skills, to know enough to read and trust the latest research in the journals but otherwise stay out of it.

For my part, since I had originally planned to go to Texas, I had taken four general and organic courses at night while I worked at Columbia University. At the time I struggled; I found the material dense and dry and, for a printmaker straight out of art school, difficult to make relevant. I think probably everyone I knew at the time had to listen to me muttering about the highest occupied and lowest unoccupied molecular orbitals and why did I need to know this to put a book back together? Some of it seemed good to know: when we got to pH, for example, I asked my professor after class if we could talk about acidity in paper. “Oh,” he said shaking his head, “that’s a whole class in itself.” *But I’m going to be taking that class*, my frustrated head thought.

Now that I’m at West Dean and learning (or reviewing) the science in the context of conservation, and some of it is a review of things I’ve already learned, I find it much easier to understand the material itself and also why we’re learning it. I find it directly useful in my benchwork to know why and how these objects behave over time. And although I can promise you I’d be singing a different tune if I hadn’t already done the science, I do think there should be some kind of science prerequisite for the conservation programs, or at least a strong encouragement to take a few classes first. With that I’ll get off my soap box.



In the end I think there isn’t a particular program better than the others, but perhaps one might best suit a student’s particular strengths and weaknesses. I don’t know what if any

difference it will make that I won't have the MSIS I would have gotten at Texas, or that in the UK jobs seem more scarce and visas lately more difficult to get. Given that I ended up here more or less by accident I have been trying to be as flexible as possible, to take advantage of the resources at West Dean, make up on my own for what I feel is lacking, and bury my nose in some old books for another year before I have to make any decisions about what's next.

Abigail Uhteg recently completed a Graduate Diploma in the Conservation of Books and Library Materials at West Dean College in West Sussex, England, and will return next year to pursue an Postgraduate Diploma in the same and an MA in Conservation Studies. Prior to this she worked for two years as a technician in the book conservation lab at Columbia University and on a freelance basis as a conservator at Paper Dragon Books in New York City. She is online at <<http://www.pressejanvier.com>>.



Summary of a Recently Taught Workshop: "How Do I Make It Stick?" – A Non-Scientific Discussion of Selected Adhesives For Use In Conservation and Book Arts

By Tish Brewer

I recently gave a workshop through the GBW Lone Star Chapter to a group of interested folks on the adhesives I tend to use most during treatments in my paper conservation lab, many of which can also be applied to the work book and paper artists produce. There is increasing concern and awareness about the use of appropriate adhesives not only in the conservation and visual arts professions, but also in related fields such as framing and exhibition.

Archival materials, including adhesives, help to ensure a longer life of the things we are repairing and creating. Stability, reversibility and ease of use are high on the list of desirable qualities for these materials. Other characteristics such as low-moisture, low-solvent, shelf life, and affordability often factor in as well, depending on the needed application. Following is a short (relatively speaking) summary of the topics covered in my adhesive workshop.

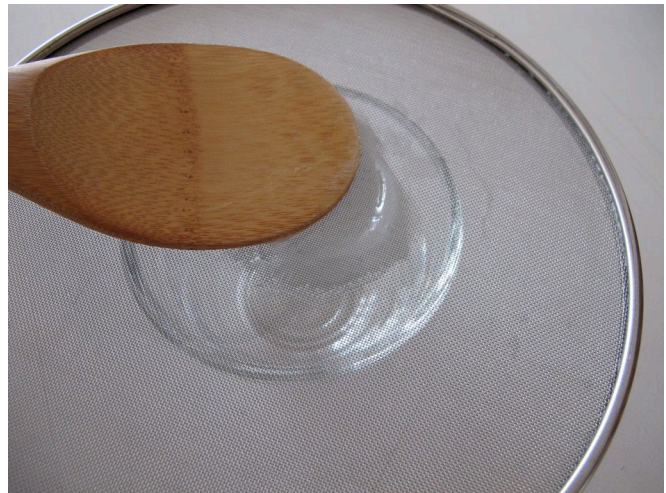
Wheat Starch Paste

Wheat paste has several characteristics that make it ideal for conservation treatment: it is reversible with water, it is inert, and it is strong. Wheat paste is purchased as wheat starch powder and mixed with water and cooked in a pot or microwave to make paste. The starch is highly refined and closely resembles flour. After cooking, the paste is worked through a strainer. Once made, it may be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator or kept in a cool dark place. It can also be stored in a jar submersed in water, or on top of Mylar as brain paste (where an outer "skin" forms to protect paste inside/below). Brain paste is named such because when the paste is dumped out of the pot to cool on a piece of Mylar, it resembles a tiny brain and forms an outer skin; just leave it on the Mylar until cool, then turn it upside down to scoop some paste out of the bottom/center. The paste will keep for about a week. If paste discolours, grows mold, or develops a sour smell, discard it immediately.



Brain paste.

Before using paste it should be strained. You may use a Japanese horsehair strainer, a nylon strainer, a plastic or a metal restaurant strainer/sifter. (My best strainers are from a pottery supply store.) After straining, the paste should be diluted by brushing it against the bottom of a container while gradually adding small amounts of distilled water until the desired smooth consistency is achieved. If water is added too rapidly the paste will separate into clumps.



Straining paste through fine mesh with a bamboo spoon.

WS Paste Recipe (one of many recipes):

Combine 1 part paste with 4 parts distilled water

Let sit covered, for about an hour

Cook and stir constantly in a pot over medium-high heat until thick and translucent (15-25 minutes, depending on the volume)

Remove from heat and allow to cool

Before use, push through a strainer (anywhere from one to ten times) and dilute with water using a stiff bristle brush until a creamy consistency is obtained. The diluted paste may also be stored in an airtight container, but has a shorter shelf life than undiluted paste.

I use the above recipe almost every time I make paste for general mending purposes, and for overall linings. If what I desire is a low-moisture paste, I might cut the water in half and make the recipe 1:2, though this is harder to do with a really small amount of paste when cooking in a pot. If I choose that route, I typically make brain paste at the 1:2 ratio. The brain paste, kept on top of Mylar and out at room temperature, will continue to shrink over a couple of days while the enclosed center remains good for use. Eventually it will grow mold, at which point you want to toss it in the trash.

Because paste doesn't stay fresh for too long, and because I have a small one-person lab, I make up only small amounts of paste at a time. If all I need is a very small amount for just a few mends, that's when I might make just a bit up in the microwave:

Microwave WS Paste (how to make a small amount of paste)

Place a tablespoon of wheat starch paste in a microwave-safe container, add five tablespoons of distilled water, and place in a microwave oven. Microwave on high for 20 to 30 seconds (watch to make sure it does not bubble over the side of the container). Remove the paste and stir. Place back in oven and microwave another 20 to 30 seconds. Remove again and stir again. Continue this process several times until the paste is stiff and translucent.

Store in a covered glass jar that has been cleaned with ethanol, in a cool dark environment (refrigerator).

The typical pH level of paste is between 6 - 6.5. It can be buffered with calcium carbonate, though it's not something I do because I don't want the pH of my mends to cause (or prevent) a difference in the tone of the support over time.

Buffering Instructions

Add 10% (by weight) of calcium carbonate. Example: If you have 1 lb. of mixed wheat starch paste, add 1/10 lb. calcium carbonate.

Wheat starch paste is the most common adhesive used in my paper conservation lab, as I'm most concerned with stability and reversibility over time.

Here are some things to keep in mind when mending with wheat starch paste:

1. Take the time to make great paste. Use fresh paste, carefully thinned with water to the appropriate consistency. Typically, paste the consistency of skim milk works well for most paper supports. Paste should be diluted by brushing it against the bottom of a container (preferably glass) while gradually adding small amounts of distilled water until the desired smooth consistency is achieved. If water is added too rapidly, the paste will begin to have lumps. Start with a dry brush to stretch the paste, then move to a wet brush, and slowly add drops of water. Take your time. Water-sensitive objects may need "drier" mends, and the consistency of paste for these can be as thick as whole milk.

2. The repair should be weaker than the support. Always choose a weight of mending tissue a bit lighter than the weight of the paper being mended. If the mend is too heavy, it may cause more damage to the support, or even create a new breaking point. The same concept can be applied to the thickness of the mending paste. Too strong a paste can cause distortions to the support, a change in weight, and difficult reversibility of the mend (or hinge) once dried.

3. Paste out mending strips on top of blotter. Be sure to mark blotter with a pencil, so it can be easily distinguished from any pieces placed directly against the damaged object. Pasting out on top of blotter allows the water in the mixture to wick into the blotter beneath, leaving mostly particles of paste on the mending tissue. This can be observed as the surface of the tissue becomes dull as the water is pulled into the blotter. Pasting over blotter allows for a drier mend, causing less distortion to the support, less likelihood of staining, and faster drying time. Lift the strip with a finger or tweezers to transfer the tissue to a support. Strips can also be rolled around the wooden end of a brush, and then unrolled onto the support, a useful method when the strip is long and difficult to handle while wet. For stronger contact, press the mend to the support using a Teflon folder before weighting.

4. Use blotter boards (see below) when drying mends. Having these at the ready makes for easier drying of mends and hinges. All the materials needed are already together: board, blotter, and non-woven polyester (Hollytex or Reemay). Simply place a blotter board on top of the mend (with the taped side up), and place a weight on top until the mend is dry. If the mending strip was pasted out over blotter, the blotter board should not have to be changed during drying.



A stack of blotter boards at the ready.

Blotter Boards For Use in Drying Mends and Hinges

In my workspace, I try to keep several of these made and always at the ready for easier drying of mends and hinges. They are efficient, and mitigate wasteful and unorganized use of off-cuts and scraps.

Materials needed:

Non-woven polyester (Hollytex or Reemay)

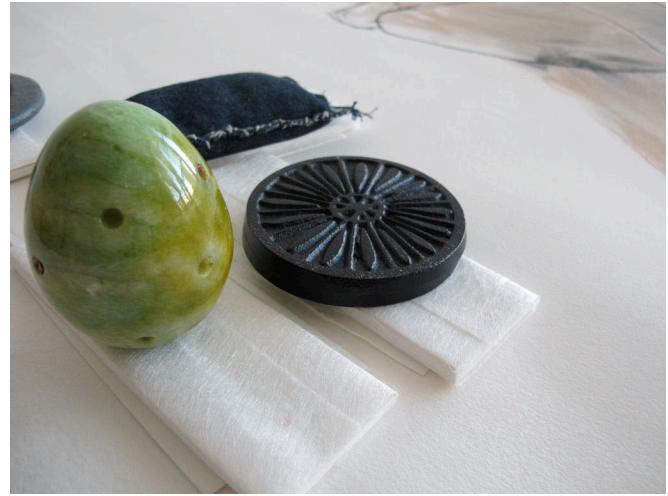
Blotter paper

8-ply museum board (or thick mat board or Davey board)

Double stick tape

Instructions:

Cut board to desired width and length, whatever dimensions of blotter and polyester you would commonly use under weight on top of a mend or hinge. (I typically make mine about 5 3/4" x 2 1/4".) Cut pieces of blotter to the same size, two for each piece of board. Using double stick tape, attach a piece of blotter to each side of the board. Cut polyester pieces to match the long dimension of your board, but make them wide enough to wrap around the board in one piece with an overlap (approximately two and a half times the short dimension of the board). Using double stick tape, attach the polyester to the middle of one side of the board, and wrap it around the board. You will have overlap, so use another piece of double stick tape to secure the polyester to itself. When using blotter boards, be sure to place your weight on the side with overlap, leaving the smooth side to act as the release layer in contact with the object. When the Reemay or blotter gets dirty, just change it and re-use the same board.



Mends drying beneath blotter boards and small weights.

Mixing Paste With PVA

I mix paste with PVA usually when making boxes if I need more working time, and PVA has applications for me in bookbinding, as well as the occasional string mounting of parchments and parchment repair. Because I don't use it often, and because it has a tendency to mold over time after opening, I keep only small jars on hand, typically Jade 403. I recommend keeping it well sealed, with wax paper over the top, and stirring it often.

When to use paste

To mount large pieces, to mount lightweight pieces of paper, to reinforce folds, to line boxes and portfolios; also used when more working time is needed

Advantages of paste

A major advantage of working with paste is that stains can usually be removed with clean water. Objects mounted with paste can generally be removed without damage; degree of reversibility is high.

PVA

PVA is sold under various trade names (i.e. Jade). It can be thinned with water, but once dry, it becomes insoluble in water. PVA dries clear, and strong but flexible.

When to use PVA

To glue board (also Davey board, mat board, etc.) together, to attach medium weight or heavy paper to board, and to glue small areas such as fraying corners; also used when quick drying is needed

Mixing Paste & PVA:

Mixtures of paste and PVA result in a versatile adhesive, but even a small addition of PVA makes the adhesive insoluble in water once dry, so the reversibility factor goes down. The drying process is accelerated with the addition of PVA, and the contained moisture causes paper to buckle less than it would with the use of pure paste. On the other hand, PVA can be improved by the addition of a small amount of paste; it will dry more slowly, giving more working time, and can be easier to apply. Paper that has just been mounted can be taken off (if not too much time has passed), and paste can be used as a thinner for PVA instead of water. Below is a general chart of when to use which adhesive, but of course there can be endless combinations in between these:

Paste	PVA	Use on
100%		Lightweight paper on paper or board (i.e. Davey board, etc.)
4 parts	1 part	Medium weight paper on paper or board
1 part	1 part	Heavy paper and woven materials on board
1 part	4 parts	Lightweight board on heavier board or wood
	100%	Board on board

The following tips and tricks are some I keep in mind when gluing papers:

1. Think wallpaper. Brushes may not be the best tools when you need an even coating of glue, especially for something like a pastedown. Instead, try a small paint roller, which gives a light and even application of adhesive, and can be reused almost as much as a brush with the right care.



Applying PVA to paper with a tiny foam roller.

- 2. To keep the glue from drying too fast when you need some working time, add a little wheat starch paste or methylcellulose.
- 3. It is better to apply too little adhesive than too much. This is particularly important if you know a paper to be stretchy. When you see wrinkles, grooves, or bumps, it typically means there was too much glue used.
- 4. Glue up the paper, then wait a few seconds to let it move, curl, and take up the moisture of the glue before securing the paper to the board or other material. You will be able to notice a point when the paper settles down, so wait until then and the results will be happier.
- 5. Remember to burnish with a Teflon folder, not a bone folder, to minimize unwanted abrasions and changes in surface sheen. Wet paper means fragile paper, so do this gently or you'll likely cause wrinkles, tears, or other unwanted movement.
- 6. Keep a damp cloth or paper towel handy so you can quickly clean glue off your fingers and hands, rather than accidentally transferring it to your paper, board, or cloth in an undesired place. If you happen to get glue on book cloth, let it dry and try to remove with a crepe eraser, but do not try to remove it while wet.
- 7. Wax paper is your friend. Use it when closing a book after pasting down, or when weighting papers together for drying, so your glue does not stick to surfaces it shouldn't, or to other papers.

8. It seems simple, but use good quality materials. Archival or conservation adhesives act better, dry better, and age better than cheaper products. Quality papers typically play nice, especially when wet, and mold onto and around things easily.

Methylcellulose

Methylcellulose is commonly used as an adhesive for paper, a sizing for papers and fabrics, and as a help to swell and clean off old glue from book spines and boards. Like wheat starch paste, it can be added to PVA to slow down drying time. The adhesive is stable, dries matte and clear, and forms a flexible but weak bond.

How to prepare it

Methylcellulose does not dissolve in hot water, but hot water does help to disperse the particles.

Pour half of the total water from the hot water faucet (or pot/kettle) into a container with a lid. Add MC powder and stir. Pour the second half of water cold. Cover, shake to mix/disperse, and allow it to sit over night.

METHYLCELLULOSE MIXTURES		
%	MC POWDER	WATER
1%	25 ml	975 ml
2%	50 ml	950 ml
4%	100 ml	900 ml

Methylcellulose (MC) has an indefinite shelf life and it is much easier to make than wheat starch paste, so this may be a more appealing adhesive choice for non-conservators.

Methylcellulose is the second-most frequently used adhesive in my paper lab, often in combination with wheat starch paste. Because the consistency of MC is a little slimy, using it gives me some “slippage”. When doing an overall lining, after I’ve pasted out my Japanese tissue with WSP, the addition of methylcellulose on top gives me a lot more working time to slide pieces or tears around in order to align them properly.

I often use MC for resizing skinned areas of paper, re-adhering lifted areas of paper, or over abrasions as an isolating layer before filling and/or inpainting.

Methylcellulose is also something I use when making remoistenable tissue:

(The information below was derived from a handout prepared for the 2002 IIC meeting held in Baltimore Maryland by the Walters Art Museum.)

Remoistenable tissue has been adapted for a variety of uses in book and paper conservation. It enables mending without making paste, can be applied to various types of tissue (even toned ones), and the premade mending tissue may be easily stored.

Prepare the following:

Cooked wheat starch paste, diluted to the consistency of skim milk

3% methylcellulose

Materials:

Lightweight (up to medium weight) Japanese tissue

Pieces of polyester film at least 3 mil. in thickness

Wide brush (Japanese brushes are ideal, but wide brushes are available at hardware and paint stores as well)

Directions:

Mix the wheat starch paste and methylcellulose 1:1 and place in a shallow tray. Cut mending tissue into desired sizes (a size that can be easily stored). The sheets should be smaller than the polyester sheets. Lay out the polyester film, and brush the adhesive mixture onto it in a smooth even stroke.

If using a very thin tissue, mist the surface of the brushed out adhesive with water before laying the tissue down. Humidify or mist heavier papers before applying them to the adhesive. Drop the tissue onto the adhesive and film. Allow the tissue to dry completely. Label the polyester film with the tissue type and store in a clean dry environment.



Mixing methylcellulose and wheat starch paste to prepare for making remoistenable tissue.

Application Techniques

Needle tear or cut tissue as needed. The adhesive can be activated with a minimal application of water or with water/ethanol mixtures. Brush water or water/ethanol directly on the strip over a piece of blotter or ceramic tile, or apply moisture through the reverse of the strip after it has been placed on the object. Quickly place the activated tissue onto the desired area. Weight with blotter or felts as with wet paste mending. Drying time is much shorter than with wet paste mends.



Remoistenable tissue ready for use, some already cut into mending strips.

Funori

A carbohydrate extract from seaweed, Funori is a type of agar (*similar to carageenan*) that is used as a weak water-soluble adhesive. It can form a gel at concentrations as low as 1%. It is primarily composed of galactose. The mucilage has a low viscosity and dries to a thin, flexible, matte film. Funori is traditionally used by Japanese scroll mounters as a consolidant for friable media. Funori primarily comes from Japan where it has been cultivated since the 17th century.



A detail of Funori in its dried state, before preparation.

I discovered Funori through the suggestion of a colleague when I was pondering whether to consolidate a very damaged and friable pastel. I was looking for something other than an acrylic based consolidant to dispense through an airbrush or really good spray bottle, because a brush could not physically touch the media. Funori is similar to methylcellulose in that it is a weak adhesive (therefore making it a good size, consolidant, or material used for slip/more working time). I don't use it often but do keep it on hand, and usually make the solution by feel, without a recipe so I can play around with consistency. Here is a general recipe:

Cut up 0.25 grams and soak overnight in 75 ml water. This will make a good volume for all but huge jobs at a consistency that requires only a little thinning. After the overnight soak, cook in a makeshift double boiler over low heat until dissolved. Do not boil, check for temperature by occasionally sticking a finger in the solution; if the Funori gets too hot, it will become noticeably stringy. Once cooked in solution, some stringy parts will remain, so strain with cheesecloth or a similar fabric, unless keeping these small fibers to help "hold". Straining can be done as soon as the solution is prepared, or you can wait until after cooling. The solution will be light gray/tan, hazy, and feel slimy. Store in the fridge when not in use, and warm before use.

Instead of storing what extra you might have as a solution, the Funori can be spread across a flat but flexible surface (such as heavy Mylar or a self-healing cutting mat) and dried. Once dry, it can be chipped off in small pieces, like flakes, that can be stored in a jar. When you need a small amount of Funori, just put a few flakes in water for use again as a solution. (This works with wheat starch paste too!)

Gelatin

Used in conservation as an adhesive for vellum repairs, sizing of paper, and paper splitting, it's sold in food grade and also photographic grade. I also make this in a "double boiler", which is one beaker inside another, or a flask inside a beaker/ small glass bowl, with water about half way full in the outer container, heated on top of a coffee warmer. I don't use a specific recipe for gelatin either, I usually just do it by feel, and it of course depends on the application. I tend to make my gelatin pretty thin (no more than 4%), because I use it for re-sizing and consolidating, but you can make it thicker if you need a little more tack and are actually going for a gelatin glue. For mending photographs, 3-4% is good, and for consolidation or sizing the percentage may be less. I store it in the fridge if I think I'm going to use it again in the near future, and heat it slowly before use.



Cooking adhesive in a makeshift double boiler.

Lascaux

There are two types of this acrylic adhesive, Lascaux 360 and Lascaux 498, both the consistency of cold cream. The Lascaux 360, when a dry film, remains permanently tacky and can be used as a contact adhesive when doing heat sealing mends or linings. The Lascaux 498 works for both wet and dry applications, and dries elastic hard, making it a good choice for mounting applications. Both can be thinned with water, but are insoluble in water once dry. They are stable, reversible (with heat or solvent), and have great working

properties. They can be mixed together in different ratios to achieve different results, useful for hinging, mending, and even fills. I test several ratios depending on the application and the amount of permanent tackiness I am looking for (if any). These mixtures have grown especially helpful when hinging works of art on paper, a task during which I'm often advising framers. In this application, I have started to suggest using Lascaux as opposed to linen tapes, which I feel distort a support too much once dry.



The cold cream-like consistency of Lascaux.

Lascaux is really useful in situations where the material being lined, mended or hinged is reactive to moisture. It's a great adhesive option for treatment of transparent or coated papers as well as supports with water sensitive media. Use Lascaux to evenly coat a sheet of silicon coated polyester, dry quickly with a hair dryer to prevent dust from settling in the still tacky adhesive, and place almost any Japanese tissue on top and adhere with an iron. Then, remove the polyester and proceed with a dry lining, or use the coated tissue as mending strips; either will be applied with heat. In book conservation, I find Lascaux to be a favorite adhesive used for hinge repairs, because it dries strong but very flexible.

A final thought

As a paper conservator, long-term preservation and reversibility are at the forefront of my mind when evaluating an item, performing treatment, and in my choice of materials. But, you don't have to be a conservator to see the value in prolonging the life of a piece through a more "conservative" and mindful approach. We share a short but intimate time with these objects, whether conservators or creators, or both. Preservation and art meet often, I just try to encourage a happy marriage!

List of preferred suppliers (specific to adhesives):

Talas: <<http://talasonline.com>> – 212.219.0770

University Products: <<http://www.universityproducts.com>> – 800.628.1912

Polistini Conservation Materials: <<http://www.polistini.com>> – 202.290.7531

Conservation Resources: <<http://www.conservationresources.com>> – 800.634.6932

Tish Brewer received a degree in studio art and chemistry from Hendrix College in 2000, with an emphasis on ceramics. After a suggestion that she marry her loves of art and science by pursuing a career in conservation, she worked for several years learning techniques in the specialties of sculpture, objects, and paintings. Tish began to study bookbinding, and decided on a focus toward book and paper conservation. She obtained her Master's degree from The Kilgarlin Center for Preservation of the Cultural Record at the University of Texas at Austin. She received additional conservation training through various AIC courses, and through internships and professional experience while at the National Preserve of Tauric Chersonesos, Sevastopol, Ukraine; Biblioteca Ludwig von Mises, Universidad Francisco Marroquin Guatemala City, Guatemala; and the National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center. Tish now lives in Dallas, working as a paper conservator, as well as a book and paper artist and educator. Her private practice, the Center for Art Conservation, was established in 2007. She can be reached at <<http://www.centerforartconservation.com>> and <<http://www.bucketheadandbear.blogspot.com>>.



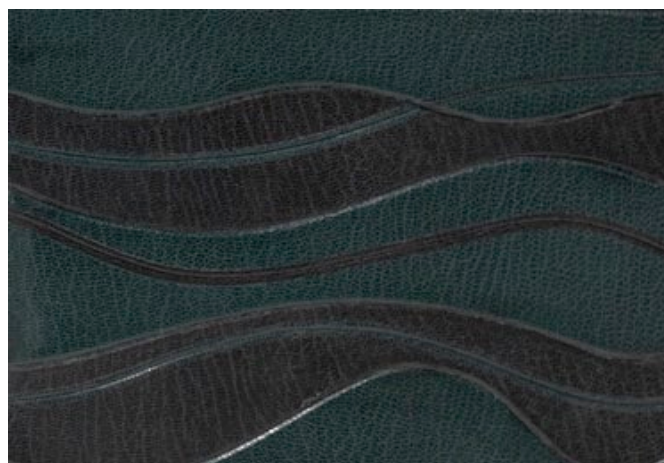
A Bookbinder's Gamble

By Gavin Dovey

There are times when opportunity knocks at the bookbinder's door. Identifying these opportunities and reacting accordingly can be career changing. This was certainly true for me when I got a call from a prospective client interested in seeing examples of my design work. I knew few details about the project but my interest was piqued, and I met with them in March of 2006.

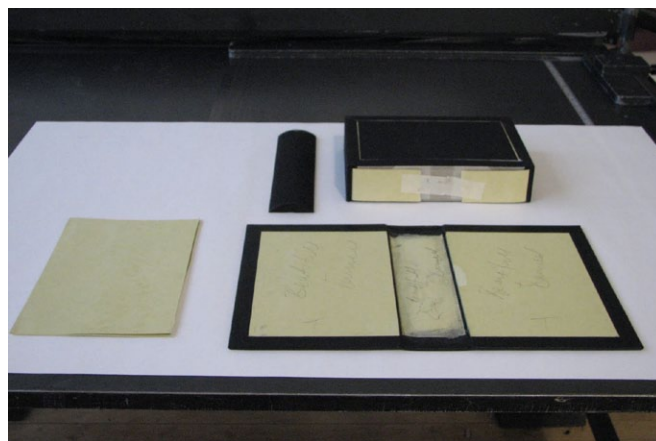
I had been working for myself for under a year, renting bench space and teaching at the Center for Book Arts, New York City and was gradually taking on more and more work. The client told me that they were looking for custom-designed, full-leather clamshell boxes crafted using traditional binding techniques to house a collection of signed modern first editions and valuable ephemera. The original brief was to make custom designs for each box in harmony with the typically visually-striking dust jackets, and that these designs were to be completed using tooling and different leathers. This would soon narrow to include full gilt title and author, and a distinctive design on the spine.

I made no attempt to hide my enthusiasm at such a prospect, and after some conversation it was agreed that I would complete one box as a test of my skills. The choice of the box was up to me and I eagerly scanned the rack of jackets. I was looking for something nice, something simple, a jacket that would compliment my relative skills or lack thereof, a box that would design itself, that I could complete with confidence. After a few moments I was relieved to come across the jacket of a 1935 edition of Tom Wolfe's *OfTime and the River*. The design was made up of intertwining lines in green and black, and I instantly imagined recessed onlays and blind tooling. I wanted the job and I was determined to get it.



Detail of recessed onlay.

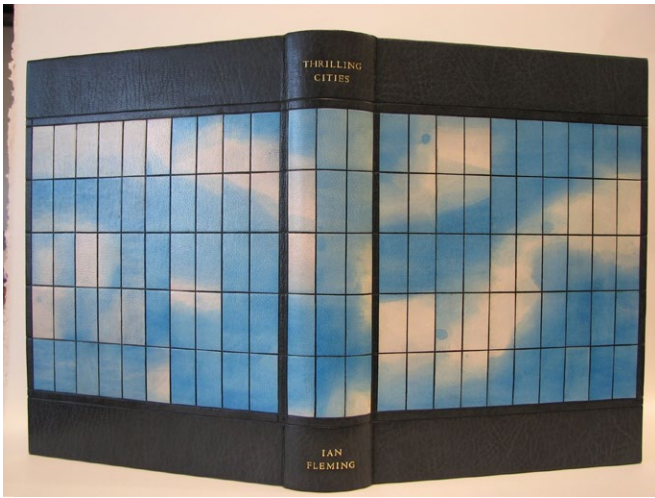
Having already decided on the style of construction, the box took a week or two to make. The box was a variation of the trade traditional and a style documented by Scott Kellar in his publicized notes in the 1990s – a style that I had picked up working alongside the talented Ramon Perdomo, who I continue to work with today. Essentially, a case is made around a rounded form, at the same time forming the inside, with leather joints and a top and a bottom tray. The boards are given a steep bevel at three edges, and the spine of this particular case, made up of a laminate of Bristol board, in order that I could carry the recesses across the boards. The case was made and the back “put-in” (spine glued to the form), then I applied large onlays across the recesses, finishing at the edges.



The three main parts of box construction.

Using recesses to carry the design on the first box was akin to using training wheels on a bike, or the cushioned gutters on a bowling lane. It enabled me to achieve a good finish without much skill, simply running a hot wheel along the sides. The dark colours of deep green and black further obscured any deficit of technique, and the leather could be relatively thick, measuring at .3 on a micrometer (today all my onlays are between .10 and .12).

The trays were put down and the box closed and pressed with a form custom-made using board, a technique that is particularly useful when pressing a number at once, which would be an important factor later on. The only obstacle now was my lack of skill in hand finishing.

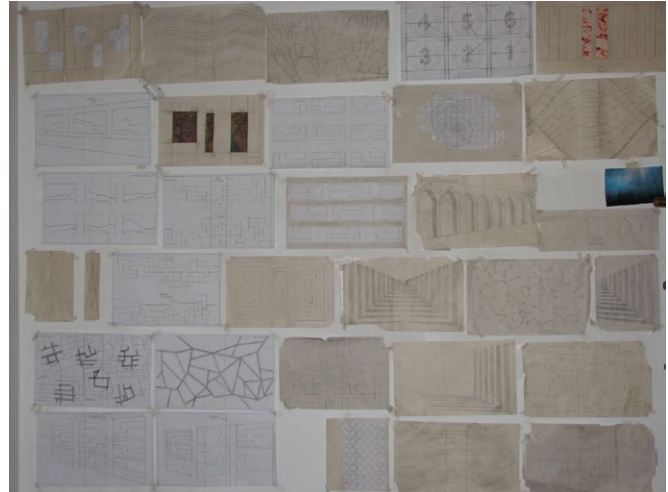


Leather pared to desired thickness; finished tooled design.

I had been planning to rectify this at some time, evident by a box of brand-new, untouched 16 point Centaur Hand letters from P&S Engraving, abandoned in the corner. I decided that this was too important an opportunity to take a chance on my shaky hand-lettering in leaf, and so I cheated and made labels, in leaf, for the title and author, a disguise that worked surprisingly well. I was confident when delivering my first attempt - I had three things going for me in my mission to get the rest of the job: I was cheaper, I was independent, and I was right on their doorstep. Lucky for me then that my first box was well received, and after an initial negotiation, I received my next batch. The importance of filling the bare shelves of the clients was impressed upon me, requiring a quick turnaround. After I had completed my first five boxes, I attempted to work on 30 at once, which I completed in a month.

When at the London College of Printing (1999-2002), I had resolved to learn the fundamentals of binding such as forwarding, though foregoing early attempts at gold tooling and leather inlaying and onlaying, and I made the odd design binding here and there. This meant I was able to get a job in a bindery pretty quickly, and that I could work in any bindery

(Wyvern Bindery, London, UK), anywhere, which was useful in the coming years. However, I had failed to develop my skills in those years, and consequently when starting this project in 2006, I had only the few techniques I had picked up whilst working with Paul C. Delrue, who had reintroduced me to binding after some years away.



The design wall, aka "The Spaghetti Method".

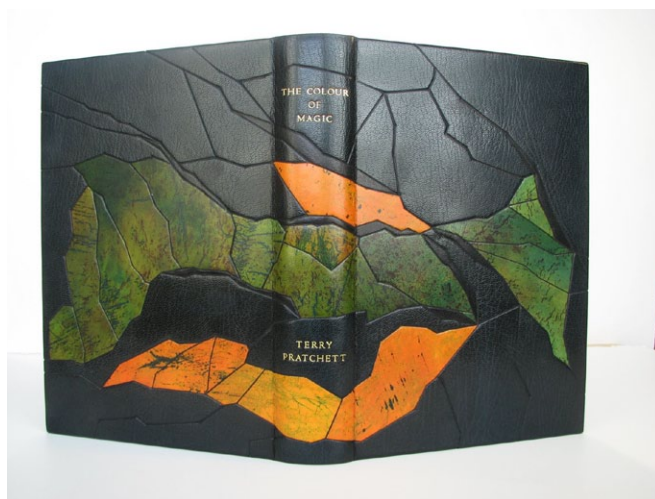
The designs were rudimentary and completed using recesses, splits, and the one or two onlay techniques I learned from Paul, and they all had labels worked into the design. After consistent performance and delivery, I was able to negotiate a contract for a larger number of boxes, which provided me with the security I would need to develop my skills, another reason I worked hard to get and keep the work in the early days.

Looking back at the boxes made in the first year does make me wince a little, and although my boxes were well-received, I knew that I had to make improvements in all areas - construction, design, and finishing. The first thing that had to go were the labels, which I realized shamefully after a staff member at Paper Dragon Books declared them "unimpressive."!!!



Mapping out a design using straight line tools; preparation for hand lettering.

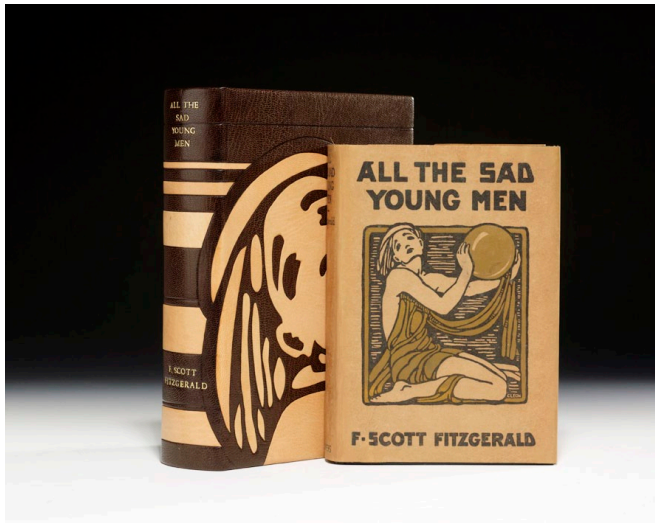
The other problem of using labels was that they had to be worked into the design so that the edges could be tooled over, resulting in some quite special-looking designs! It was an awkward way to work and restricted the design possibilities. Buoyed by a recent weekend class in finishing with Stuart Brockman in Philadelphia in the winter of 2005, I dusted off the hand letters and decided I would not stop until I had perfected a procedure that would guarantee consistent results in leaf. This was achieved in the middle of 2007, and from then on, every box was to be hand lettered. Don't get me wrong, I had plenty of practice using hand tools, but needed a system in order to finish in leaf consistently. The one I use now consists of using the right part of the skin, paste-washing, burnishing, damp-tooling, glaring, and a combination of skills for manipulating the leaf. A bit of shellac powder doesn't hurt either. To my continued shame, the first 50-or-so boxes had been finished with labels, and I've resolved to re-letter each one. Luckily, in an apparent accident whilst installing new boxes in the library, one or two of the shelves fell, crashing some of what I regarded as my worst efforts to the floor, giving me the chance to remake them.



Building the onlay design; final box design.

I had now gained a skill and suddenly had more freedom with the design of each box. I was to continue balancing between a demanding delivery schedule and my reluctance to turn in work that was the same, not improved, or that could have been done better.

When not using the safety of recesses, which of course required more planning, I completed many of the early designs by making a batch of boxes and then applying the design. If a design could not be completed using wheels or recesses, the pattern was transferred using a bonefolder and then finished in a style I think peculiar and particular to me, by running a metal tool with a round ball at the end of it over the onlay and through a piece of vellum film, giving a "cushioned" effect.



Design based predominantly on dust jacket.

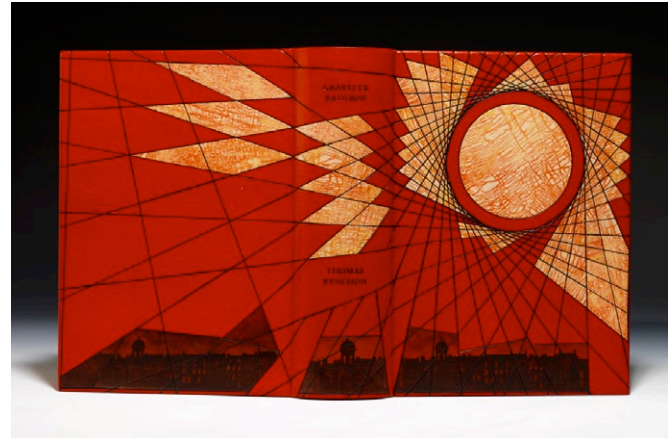
This worked well for a while, but I knew it was not proper, and that if I was not going to back-pare, sand or recess an onlay, it would be necessary to tool on top of it to finish it professionally. Tini Miura has a pretty definitive description of this technique in her book *My World of Bibliophile Binding*. I had only one problem: I had no handtools. I ordered my first set of single line pallets from Talas and I started to finish my onlays using tooling where required. While the planning required to create a pattern to tool a design before and after applying onlays did sharpen up my designs, it restricted them too. In an attempt to escape the growing tyranny of the single line and forced by the eventuality of every design looking the same, I had thought it prudent to acquire some curves or “gouges” as we call them.



Design using onlays, gold tooling and inlaid lacunose panels.

In the period of 2007-08, whilst trying to master the straight and curved line, I had done some inlaying, a bit of “lacunose,” and many boxes had gold work as well. I was locked in a constant struggle between pushing to learn and use new techniques, and delivering the work relatively on

time. With an increase in technical proficiency, I was able to keep the designs different and apply new techniques while producing boxes at the same rate. As I improved my skills, I was less and less willing to cut corners and deliver work that wasn't different, new, or at the top of my ability. If the boxes were going to take longer, I would just have to put in more hours at the bench. I had also to overcome some issues with the construction of the boxes.

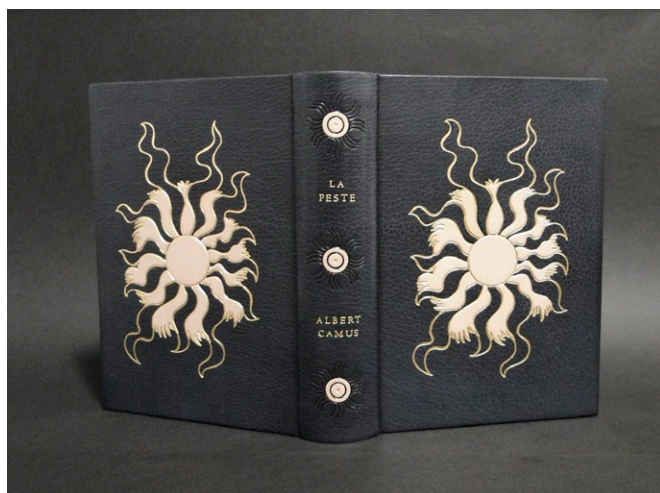


Straight-line tooling with cracquele and polymer printed goatskin.

Stress in the leather joints was decreased by placing the joint underneath the tray with the board open at a 90 degree angle, instead of inside the tray. Precautions were taken to keep the boards level while making the case so that the box stood up straight.

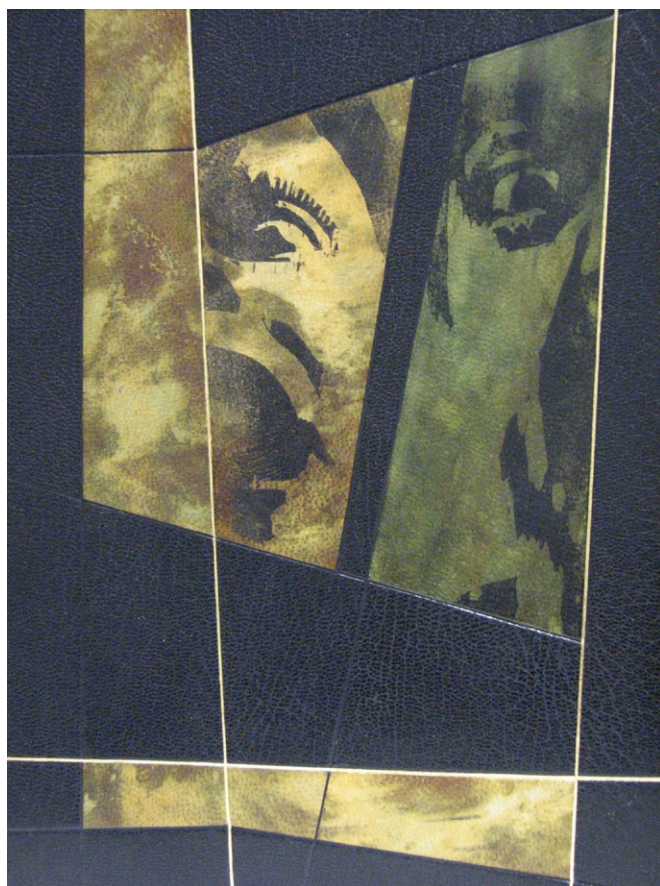
I had discovered that on some boxes, the dust jackets pushed the front board out when stood up, so the bottom trays had to be made deeper than the book and a thick lining was added on the top tray to lock it up. A dust-proofing strip of goat was also added.

All of these improvements in construction resulted in an increase in production time, delays that were perhaps assuaged by the increase in the quality of work, I hoped! In 2008, I renegotiated a new contract and moved from the busy bindery in Chelsea to a quieter studio in Brooklyn, giving me the opportunity to devote more of my time to experimenting with new techniques in order to keep the work interesting. After I discovered tooling, the designs became more structured, planned and ultimately better conceived and finished. I would wing it on a few here and there, but the really good boxes were well-planned and drawn out on templates. They also became increasingly detached from the original jacket designs, due in some part to uninteresting jackets, but more so to my growing confidence and willingness to explore original designs.



Design using stamped onlays in foil and leaf.

Tooling onlays on a batch of a dozen boxes in a week may be good for your biceps, but it is grindingly labourious and limited in scope within the timeframe. Using stamping plates for onlay work saved me a lot of time but were only used on the jackets with very distinctive designs, as I found it tends to make the work look very machined or generic. I needed to find new ways to transform goatskin, and was looking for an inventive, artistic method of transferring images onto the skins.



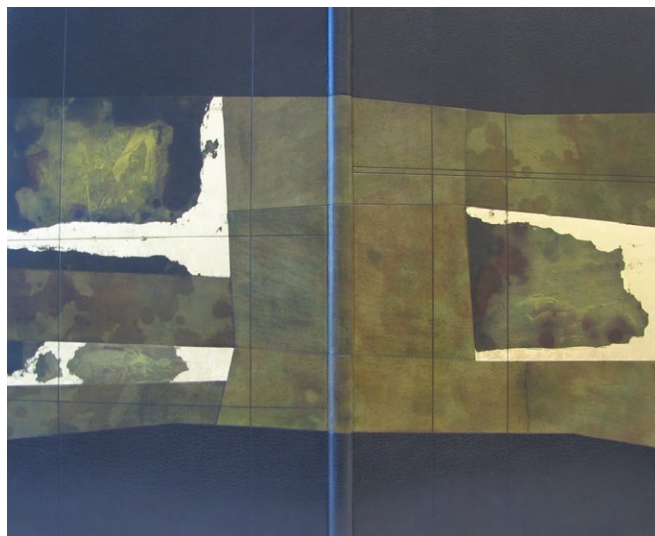
Woodblock-printed goatskin.

It was with this in mind that I carved images into blocks of wood for Cormac McCarthy's *Child of God*. I dyed some fair goat, inked up the blocks and pressed them onto the pared onlays. I used this method for a few boxes, but found it difficult to get a good printing from a flat press, as opposed to a cylinder.



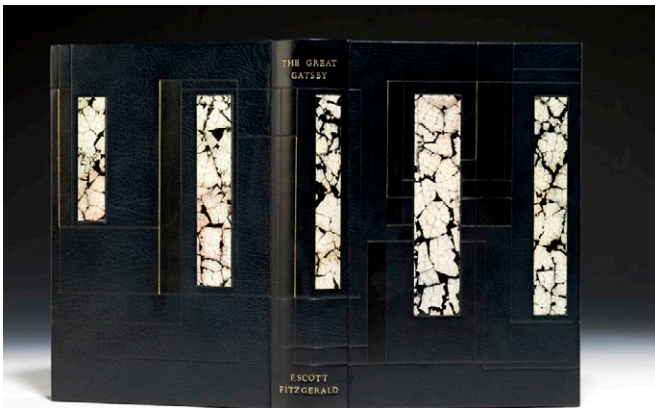
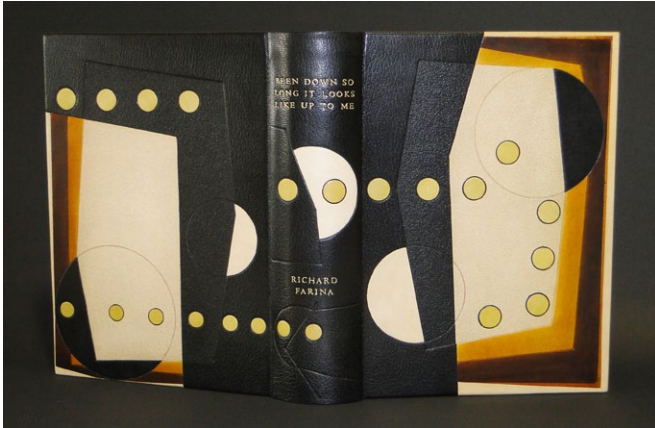
Civil-war photography printed on goatskin using half-tone polymers.

For my next attempt, I had regular polymer plates made by Box-Car Press to be used on a hand-cranked Vandercook cylinder press, "regular" referring to a simple plate with a positive and negative printing area. With the help of friend and print artist Mindy Beloff from Intima Press we set them up on her Vandercook. I used this method to transform onlays on a few boxes but was disappointed in the lack of any real detail in the image, and moved on.



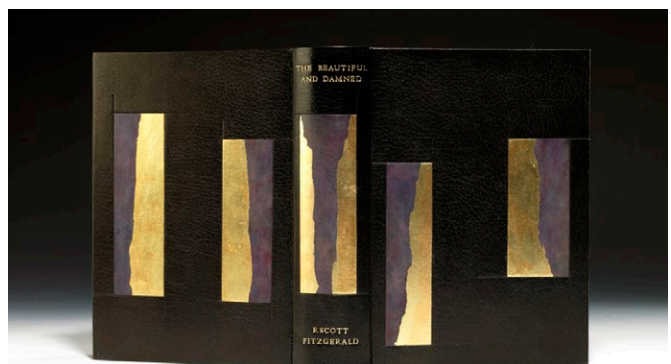
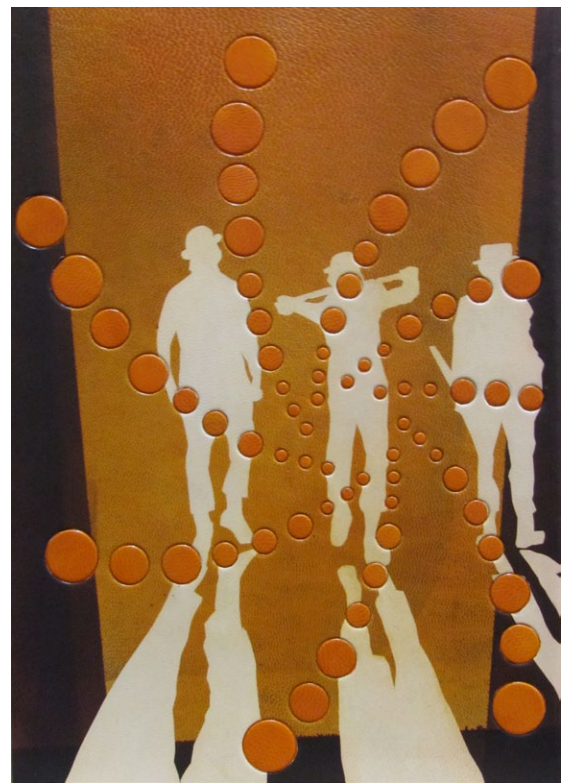
Design binding for Wrenching Times completed using inlays of half-tone printed goatskin.

I next used half-tone polymer plates with great effect, reproducing American Civil War photography for the endpapers of a binding of Walt Whitman's *Wrenching Times*, which I worked on in 2009. The results were very impressive and a long way from the rudimentary wood block printed onlays. The half-tone plate works using a series of small dots allowing for a variety of tones in the image, much the way older printing technologies have worked.



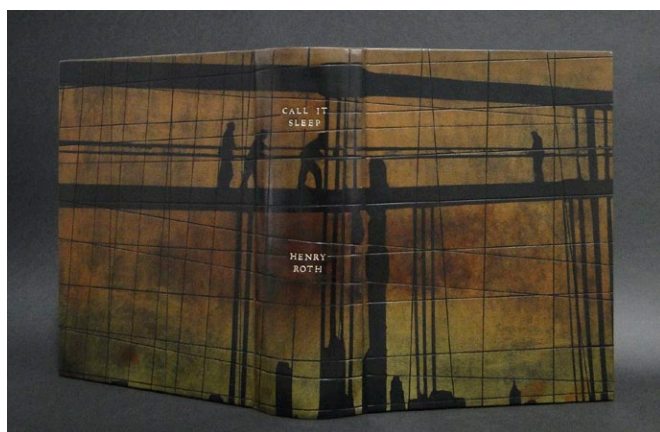
Design using dyed and crushed inlay technique; eggshell panels.

During this time I made boxes with inlays, but more importantly had made the transition from tooled onlay to back-pared onlay. I understood the concept behind it but was reluctant to stray too far from my comfort zone, and so left it until moving into the new studio. An onlay technique where I didn't have to be constrained by what I could hand tool in order to achieve a good finish sounded great. I made boxes with a few techniques I picked up from Dominic Reilly, via Rachel Ward-Sale, of pressing materials into the skin. I have made a box here and there using an eggshell panel technique I picked up from Mark Cockram in 1998, and have used also sheets of mother of pearl from New York Central Art Supply in NYC.



Positioning of back-pared onlays using stencil; design completed using stenciled airbrushing, back-pared and tooled onlays; surface gilding.

Perhaps the most enjoyable bookbinding tool I purchased during this time was my Iwata Airbrush, and I have completed many designs with it this year, both with and without stenciling. Working with this tool was a surprisingly enjoyable experience from the beginning and I've found it to be a good way to add interest or colour to a blank skin. I found Hewit's fair-goat extremely versatile in this regard.



Designs utilizing air-brushing and low tack stencils.

At this time, there was also an exciting development in the actual construction of the boxes, as they took on the form of a “two-tray lipped clamshell,” as Mark Cockram likes to call it. It was originally suggested to me by Mark back in 2006, but I had stored it away for later review, and I now had time to make a few. Mark suggested gluing a strip of board to the edges of the inside of both boards, resulting in turn-in similar to that of the spine where the leather is turned over a square vellum core. The resulting “lip” provides the following benefits:

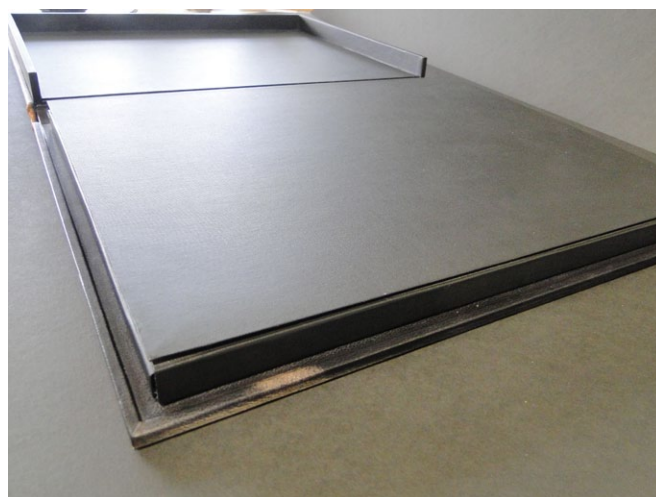
1. The extra thickness at both edges make a tidy recess for the top trays to sit, making sure that they are attached in the correct position, and thereby further ensuring that the box close properly and stand up straight. This is particularly useful on tall slender boxe, though please note that differences of a millimeter in the position of the trays can result in the

twisting of the case as it is closed, which will result in a box that leans.

2. The lip in the same position on the back board of the case provides for an extra “locking” of the box. This further ensures the box stays straight and adds to dust-proofing the structure, which is always good.

3. As this style of box that I have been using is made with “squares,” the lip also helps to ensure against possible sagging of the walls and de-laminating of the trays from the case, also enabling you to keep the fabric of the walls away from the bottom of the shelf.

This development, and the different way I make and use the form and joints, make for a very different box, building an existing structure into something different.



Dust-proofing piece; new lip added to construction.

It may be considered a solander box with a small difference, or a big one, and while it may not be new, I've never seen it before. I had learned a lot from Mark in 1998, and am only beginning to understand some of it now.

I continue to experiment today and continue to make new personal discoveries, the latest of which being a surprisingly simple and effective method for image transfer, that miraculously does not use acetone or solvents. I used it at the end of October this year for a box housing Woody Guthrie's personal copy of his book *American Folksong*.

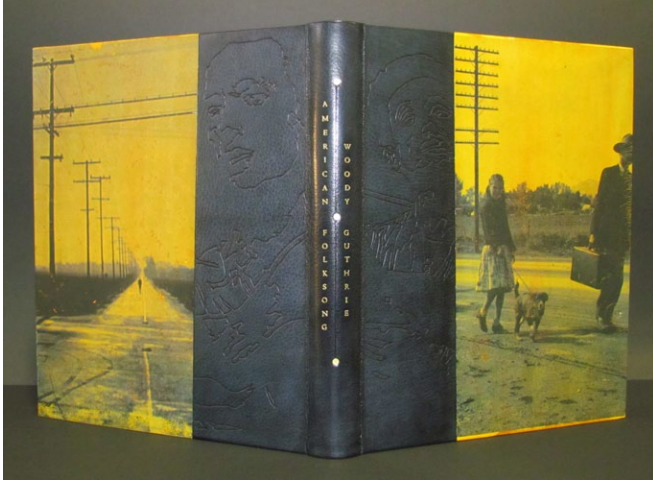


Photo-transfer technique.

Since starting this project in 2006, I have made over 300 boxes, some of them ghastly, some of them borderline, and others that were alright. I was aware of the limitations of my skill when I started and had tried to play it safe, though after the first 50-or-so in the first year, it became clear I would have to take risks. This is the greatest lesson I've learned in this project, that working at the edge of my skill requires I take risks. Pushing oneself to make modest leaps in each area of personal improvement is not without danger. You may not know how your book will be received, or if you'll even get paid for it. However, when the opportunity presents itself, we should always be ready.

Gavin Dovey started bookbinding in 1998 with fellow of DB -UK, Mark Cockram, and received a diploma in Design Bookbinding at the London College of Printing 2002. He then went on to work at the Wyvern bindery, London - as well as many other binderies in and around UK and Eire – as a forwarder. Later he was fortunate to work alongside fellow of DB- UK Paul C. Delrue at his bindery in Wales, UK . Gavin came to New York in 2003 to work in a Manhattan bindery, and along the way taught some basic and advanced bookbinding at the Center for Book arts, The Chicago Center for Book and Paper art, and the Smithsonian Institute. He started Paper Dragon Books and opened a store-front bindery in 2006, in the Chelsea area of Manhattan. He has since relocated to Brooklyn, where he continues to specialize in fine and design binding and box making for private libraries, museums, galleries as well as offering a variety of trade binding services for art and commercial presentation. Gavin continues to teach bookbinding from the bindery, runs classes and takes private students. In June 2011, along with Sean Richards and Amy Borezo he founded Designer Bookbinder of America (DBOA), <<http://www.designerbookbindersofamerica.org/>>, seeking to promote design bookbinding within North, Central and South America. He can be reached at <<http://www.paperdragonbooks.com/>> and <<http://paperdragonbooks.blogspot.com/>>.

Reliquary for a Book

By Florian Wolper

Introduction

The idea for this box comes from a diagram in Thorwald Henningsen's *Handbuch für den Buchbinder* (St. Gallen: Rudolf Hostettler Verlag, 1969) that was not accompanied by any form of description or instructions for its construction. Neither was I able to find any images depicting an actual box built based on this design.

In my instructions I am assuming that the reader understands that fundamentals of bookbinding as I will not be discussing basics of grain directions or how to cover the exterior of the box. These things can be learned in numerous other texts if not already understood.

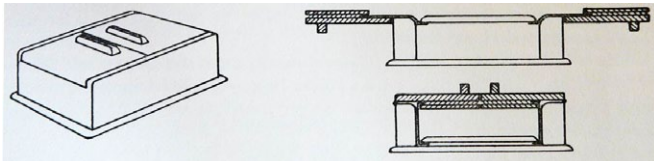


Diagram from Henningsen's *Handbuch für den Buchbinder*.

As we will be working outwards from the book to be housed in the box we need to the exact dimensions of the completed book. Note that while these instructions are based on a book, once understood they could also be used for other objects.

When completed this box will be substantial in its dimensions and weight, and will need to be stored flat. It's complexity of design and construction also mean that it will likely only be applied to very special items, hence its description as a reliquary.

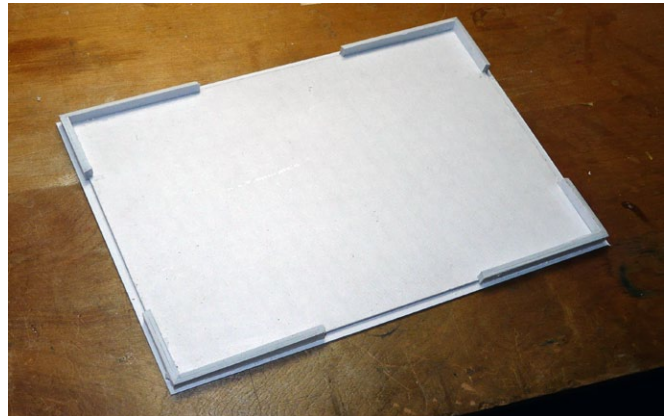


Book to be housed.

The Base

First we must construct the base that will support the book as it is lifted out of the box. The low side walls will keep the book in position, and do not need to equal the thickness of the book. In the examples being shown in this tutorial their height represents about half the thickness of the book.

Once the basic concepts are understood, the base can be as simple or complex in its design as desired. In the example shown the base is additionally framed by a slightly larger board below and the top edges of the low side walls are angled to the outside.

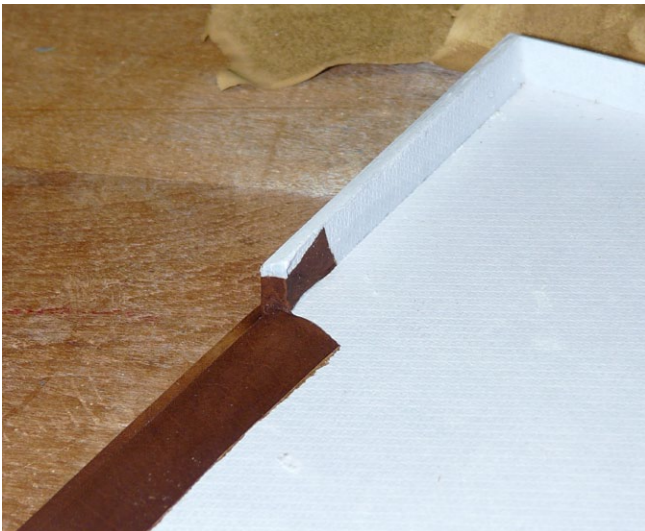


Above, the uncovered base is mounted on an additional piece of cardboard that frames the actual tray and upon which the low side walls are glued. This second piece of cardboard was added as an aesthetic detail and is not structurally necessary.

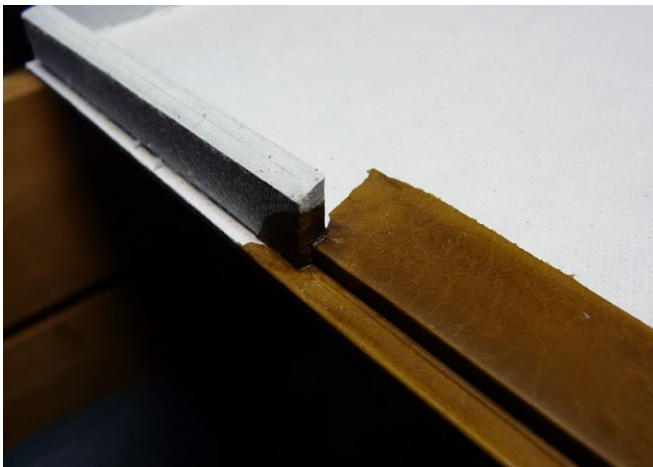
Because of the complex corners, edges, and steps of the base it was decided to use leather for covering these as it would conform more easily to the contours when softened by the paste. Cuts must still be made to the leather however so that the turn-ins are tight to the board and cover all areas.



Above, cutting the leather at the end of the side wall to turn in. See next image for precise location.



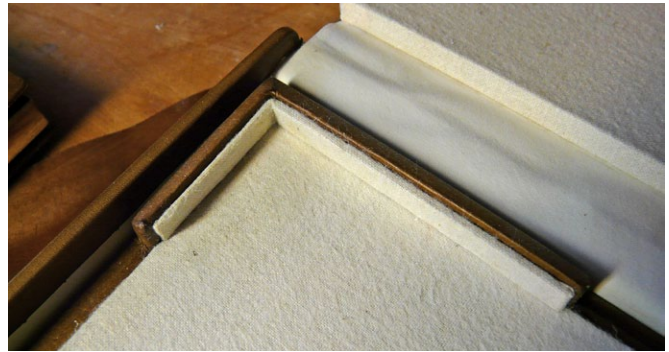
After turning-in the leather.



The outside edge showing how the leather conforms to the contours of the base.

Once the edges of the low side walls have been covered we can cover the remainder of those walls. In the images shown this was done in leather, but other materials can be used.

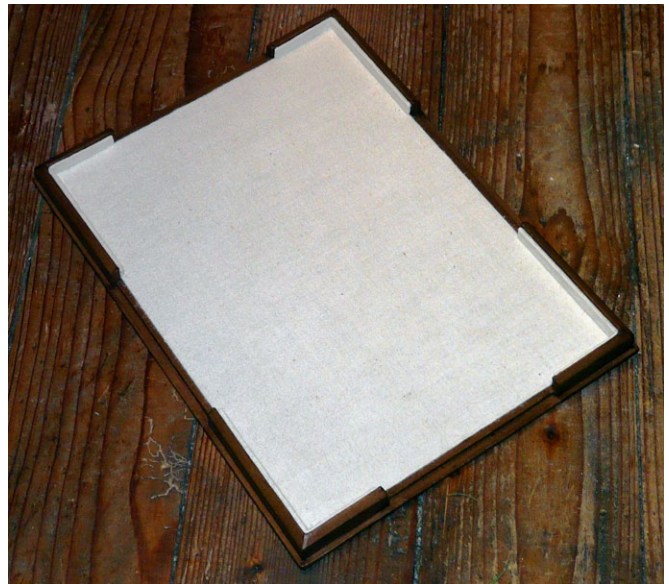
The bottom of the base will be covered in soft fabric such as felt. Apply the felt to a thin sheet of cardstock and turn-in, or cut flush but remember to color the edge of the card as appropriate where it will be visible. If turning-in, fill-in to compensate. Glue into place. If desired, the insides of the side walls can also be covered in felt. Just as with the covering for the base, adhere the felt to thin cardstock and turn-in... However, this additional material must be considered when measuring for the base.



Detail of the base showing the felt padding along the insides of the walls.

Covering the base is one of the most difficult steps during construction of this box. Making the design simpler than I have shown here would save much time and make things somewhat easier.

Now that the base is completed we can begin measuring for the construction of the actual box as its dimensions are derived from the book and the base.



The finished base.

Design and Construction of the Box

The diagrams on the following pages illustrate how the various parts of the box fit together.

Essentially to the correct functioning of the box is the "lift," the material that will be attached to the bottom of the base and the lids and lifts the base up when the box is opened.

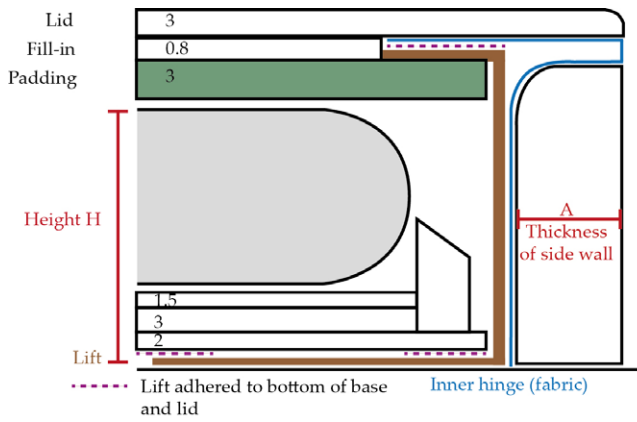


Diagram showing cross-section of box. The height (H) = thickness of the book + thickness of the base + thickness of "lift."

The numerical measurements in the cross-section above are in millimeters and represent those I used during the construction of this box. These should be adjusted to fit your book on the base you have made..

Important to keep in mind when designing and constructing this type of box is that the lids need to have enough heft to counteract the weight of the book/base when open. Maintaining tight tolerances between the base and side walls also ensures that the box does not close by itself.

The hinge connecting the lids to the bottom part of the box is attached to the inside of box and lid. So that the lids can lay flat in an open position a gap of approximately 1 board thickness must be left in the hinge.

Thickness "A" of the side walls equals the height of the book on the base (H), divided by two, minus 2 mm. These 2 mm are subtracted to account for the rounded inside edge of the side walls that lessen the total distance the "lift" travels.

Another reason for rounding the inside edge of the side wall is to reduce friction and resulting wear on the lift as the box is opened and closed.

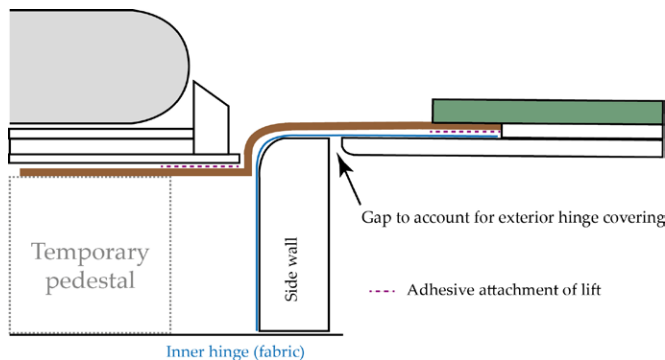


Diagram showing side wall and hinge construction.

The previous cross-section shows how the "base" should be attached to the box with the lids in an open position. Note how the base is supported from below with a temporary pedestal of scrap board...

The base should not be raised too high as the lids will not be able to exert enough leverage to pull the "lift" taut. A more substantial base raises the book higher and compensates for not pulling the "lift" taut.

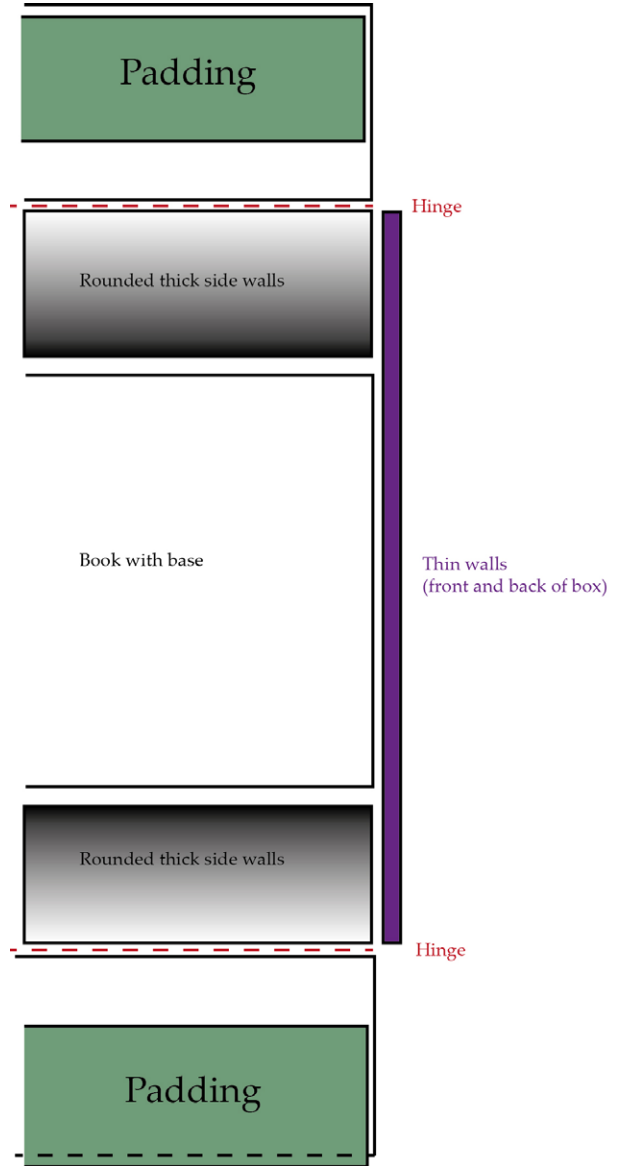


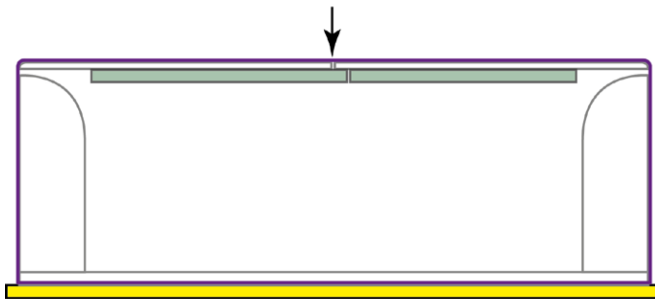
Diagram from above showing the box with lids open and indicating how the thin walls at the front and back of the box are attached to the rounded thick side walls.

In the diagram above one can see where the thin walls at the front and back of the box are attached to the thick walls. Leaving them off at this stage allows us to place a temporary pedestal under the base so that the "lift" can be attached to the lids in the open position. We will attach the thin walls and

begin covering the box after the base has been attached via the “lift” and the pedestal is removed.

The diagram below shows how the dimensions of the thin walls at the front and back of the box (in purple outline) are as high as the box with the lids closed so that the walls and lids are flush at the top. After covering, the box is adhered to a base (yellow) that provides additional support for the side walls.

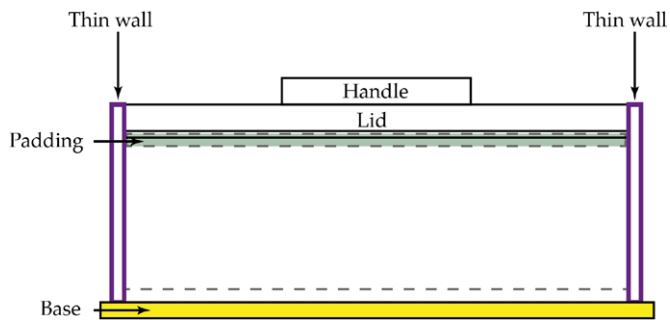
Leave a narrow gap between the lid-halves to allow for the covering material to be turned in.



Thin walls (front and back of box) extend above the thick walls to account for the thickness of the lids.

Cross-section showing the box with lids closed and showing offset of padding as attached to lids.

In addition we note the felt padding that is attached to the inside of the lids. The offset of the padding with the lids ensures that no dust enters the box when closed.



The diagram above illustrates how the closed lids and the thin walls form a plane surface.

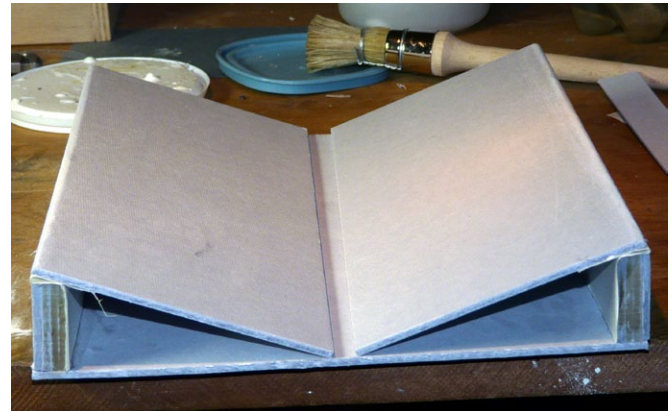


View of the hinge at the lid of the box as completed.

Assembling the Box: Attaching the lids

First we attach the side walls to the base. The interior dimensions should be ca 4mm wider and 2mm taller than the base for the book. The side walls are built up of layers of binders board that is rounded when dry.

The lids together are slightly narrower and shorter than the box is wide and tall to allow for turn-ins and to prevent the box lids from protruding outwards at the hinge. It is critical to also account for additional wiggle room on the inside of the hinges so that these open fully and the turn-ins of the exterior covering don't restrict the closing of the lids.



The box with lids attached.



Attaching the lids with spacer inserted and lid supported to facilitate weighing down.

When attaching the hinges a strip of board was laid in as a spacer. Note that if the spacer is too thick that the lids will have a tendency to sag.

Attaching the lids is one of the hardest aspects of constructing the box as these must be fit precisely. If they do not, the lids will not close properly.



Detail view of spacer.

The "Lift"

The "lift" should be constructed of a thin but robust material. A smooth surface is advantageous to reduce friction and wear during opening. Unsized material should be lined with thin paper or a similar material so that is dimensionally stable. [Tyvek could be an ideal material for the lift as it is smooth, robust, dimensionally stable and can be colored.]

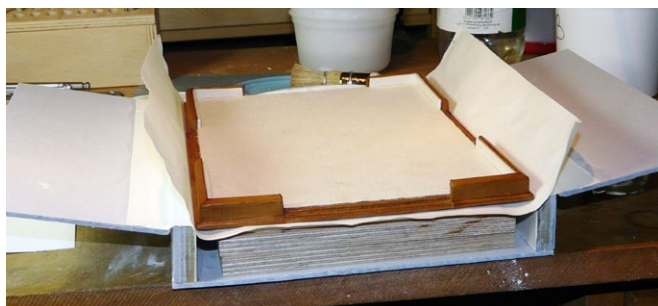
Cut the fabric so that it is taller than the base for the book to allow for turning-ins of ca. 5 mm at front and back. This will prevent fraying as wear will not be as noticeable.

The width of the fabric should be calculated so that it can be attached to the lids with between 3-5 cm of fabric + the height of the thick side walls + a quarter with width of the base for the book. See images 9 and 10 for further explanation. It is better to have more width to work with as the material can always be cut back later if needed.

Before attaching ensure that the fabric is smooth, ironing/ flattening if needed.

Attaching the Base

If you haven't done so yet, check to see that the base fits into the box. The thin walls can be held temporarily in place during this "fit check."



The "lift" fabric has not yet been adhered to the lids but we can see how the base will fit into the box.

Once we are certain the base fits into the box the "lift" fabric can be attached to the base. It is not necessary that this be constructed of one continuous piece, but it does need to be securely attached as the base cannot rise if the adhesive bond fails.

To reduce possible warping of the base, the "lift" fabric is adhered to the underside of the base with glue only along the two long sides.

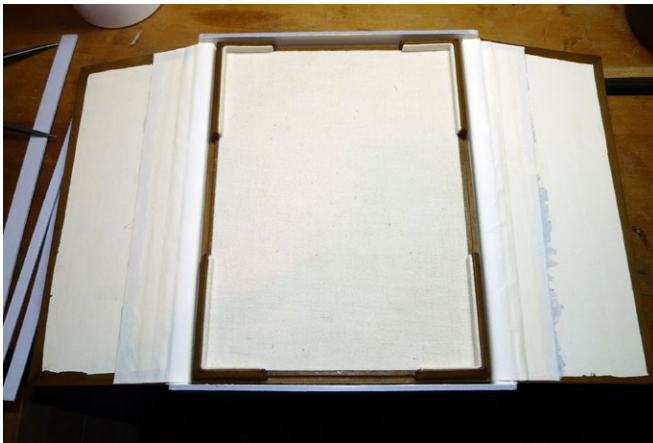
Next cover the edges of the lids with leather as we will not be able to do so once the "lift" fabric is attached to the lids. (see diagram on page 76). Trim out and fill in to counteract the pull that will be exerted by the exterior covering and to reduce bumps from turn-ins.

Once this is done we can attach the "lift" fabric to the lids of the box. First we support the base at the level we want it to rise to by supporting with boards from below. Hold in place with weights. Now we can secure the "lift" fabric to the lids. Measure out an area equal to 2x the thickness of the thick side walls and hinge that needs to remain free of adhesive to allow the "lift" fabric to move. Glue down at least 5cm of the "lift" fabric beyond that area. (see diagram on page 76).



The lids must be horizontal while attaching the base. Boards under the base are used to hold it in place and level while the "lift" fabric is being secured to the lids.

When dry, remove the weights and boards to test the "lift" mechanism. This will allow us to ensure that the base descends all the way to the bottom when the lids are closed. To ensure that the lids close completely lay the book and the felt padding onto the base. If the base does not descend to the bottom the "lift" mechanism will remain under constant tension leading to a premature failure over time. To counteract this, a riser could be attached to the bottom of the base. Likewise if there is a gap between lids and books the thickness of the felt padding could be adjusted so that the lids lay flat and don't sag.



In the image above one can see the height of the thin walls and how the top of the lids will be flush with it when closed.

Next, line the insides of the thin walls with a paper or fabric that is consistent with the design of the box. The leather edging can also be applied at this stage as it will be harder to work once the walls are in place. Check to see that the top edge of the walls is plane with the lids in closed position. (see images page 77). Now we can secure these to the side walls and begin covering the exterior of the box. The base that the box rests on can be covered separately before this is joined to the box itself. It will not be possible to apply pressure to the full surface but by putting into press carefully we can secure along the edges.

After covering we attach the handles, securing through the lids for extra strength. This attachment point will be hidden when we attach the padding to the lids.

Attaching the Padding

In order to prevent dust from entering the box and leaving a line down the front of the binding we attach the padding to the insides of the lids so that this is offset slightly per the image below.



Padding attached to the lids with offset to prevent dust from entering.

Cut the padding to the height of the lids and the width of the base. Next cut so that one “half” is slightly wider than the other to provide the offset shown above. To adhere to the lids first mark out the off-set on the inside of the lid and padding. Open the box and support the lids. Next glue out the first piece of padding and using the top or bottom edge of the lid as a guide put in place noting the offset and rub down. Repeat on the other lid. Alternatively, the book can wrapped in a tight fitting foil and be placed on the base. After the padding is glued out it is placed on the book (Glue side up) and the lids gently closed with light pressure applied. The box is then opened so it rests on the supports and the padding rubbed down to secure.

The Finished Box

The “reliquary” is now complete. Open the lids and watch the base rise. Place the book on the base and close.



The box with lids closed showing the leather edging and handmade marbled paper used to cover the surfaces.



The box with lids open and binding on the base.

The box and binding illustrating this article were created by Florian Wolper. Florian Wolper is a bookbinder and conservator working in Hunzenschwil, Switzerland. He made an apprenticeship in the small bindery Steckelers' in South-Germany, specialized in springback bindings.

Florian Wolper worked in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy before studying conservation at the Bavarian State Library in Munich. He is currently working in one of the most renowned private practice conservation labs in Switzerland. He received additional training in the field of bookbinding, decoration and historical binding techniques from Geert van Dahl, Jean-Luc Honegger, Ana Beny and Jeff Peachy. He can be reached at <florian@pressbengel.de>. He is also the moderator of the Pressbengel Forum at <<http://www.pressbengel.de/>>, the leading German language discussion group for bookbinders..

This article was translated from the German by Peter D. Verheyen.

Towards Practice: The Art of Bookbinding Used to Instill Craft in Graphic Design

By Law Alsobrook

To begin, I feel it important to explain to you where I live because where I live is both exotic and mystifying for lots of people. It is also terribly misunderstood, and for this reason generates fear for many. You see, I live in the Middle East, in the State of Qatar, in the middle of the Arabian Gulf (to be very exact: we are located just east of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and north of the UAE. Iran is only 50 miles east, as the crow flies). It is a rather small, flat and very hot desert country with just over 1.5 million inhabitants. It has also been my home for the past four years.



In that time, I have been teaching graphic design at *Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar* (a satellite campus for *Virginia Commonwealth University*). VCU was invited to Qatar approximately 12 years ago at the request of His Highness Sheikh Hamid bin Khalid Al-Thani and Qatar Foundation to establish the first American university in the Middles East with the understanding that the people of Qatar are the essential resource for this country, not only the abundant natural gas reserves they have. To this end, the majority of our students are, for obvious reasons, Qatari (ca 60%), with the rest of our student population rounded out from areas such as Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Iran, the Sudan, Bahrain and from further afield like, the Philippines, Pakistan, and India. On rare occasions, we have students from Europe or from our exchange program with our home campus in Richmond VA.



How this situation has anything to do with bookbinding began when we introduced such a course two years ago during one of our summer sessions. With each bookbinding course, 10 students from our graphic design program, as well as a students from interior design meet for three weeks, for four hours each day. It has proven to be a rather popular and gratifying class. And even though it is a relatively unfamiliar subject for the students, they all learn new things: about books, themselves and their expectations.

Interestingly, while bookbinding has had a venerable history in this part of the world, many of our students are unaware of its significance or of even the contribution Arab culture has made to the book, to bookbinding or to the preservation of knowledge in general. Equally compelling is the fact that many students are divorced from this history as designers. In fact, the study of design is only a recent phenomenon for this part of the world.

Part of our intended goal with our curriculum here at *VCU in Qatar*, is to create a group of women and men who can design from a place inherent to their culture and its place in the world. And while many of our students may not have had much exposure to making things by hand or craft in general, we feel it is a vital part of the designing experience. It is an intriguing challenge, and things have steadily changed in the course of the last 12 years. With the addition of these summer classes, there has been a notable growth in the respect for craft that has greatly impacted design and design thinking within our students.



The purpose for the class is two-fold: introduce students to bookbinding as part of the design experience in order to increase their knowledge base while at the same time hone their crafting skills (one); and to make books by hand using unexpected and/or experimental materials (two). The former idea stands to reason: designers need to know how to translate their ideas into producible, tangible items while at the same time do so knowing that how that something looks is also part of the message. All students need the space to practice hand skills in order to get better. Bookbinding offers beginning designers a unique opportunity for this because so many of the forms require an exacting hand and an eye for detail before they can move forward. It is in this zen-like state of crafting that learning takes root because once the steps are understood, it is only in their doing that the mind and body incorporate the wisdom of the structure.

Interestingly, the use of unexpected materials is (while exciting) always a leap for students because many of them have so little experience with exploration outside of normative processes and/or media. In exploring unusual materials, the hope is that our student's creative borders will be broadened, and thus their design will benefit from this creative stretch. Students have a natural curiosity, but when it is sanctioned in a classroom, they begin to realize the great potential learning offers when things blur and they can cross into territory that previously frightened them or held them back. Bookbinding in this way allows for much more carefree exploration that many of the students no longer care about the grade, instead they care about learning what the material can teach them. This discovery for them is by far one of the most amazing things that takes place in this class.

For the most part, the goals for the class, improving craft skills and challenging boundaries, have met with great success, but in some ways the unforeseen outcomes are the most interesting. Many of the students, perhaps the majority, take the class because they need to fill some curricular gap in their course load. However, and this is the telling bit, they all come away from the class having learned more than expected. Of course, some take the class out of a genuine curiosity, but they all come away changed in some respect. Certainly, they learn skills that they never had before, but what is most interesting are the lessons learned that were never planned for. A change in personality is never easily gauged (especially after such brief contact like that in a classroom), but there are moments (in other future classes, on the job, perhaps even during life), when the effort the student has applied pays off. That confidence, a sense of accomplishment and a measure of poise can come from bookbinding is wholly new for them and...me. Practice not only makes the perfect more achievable, it generates a profound shift in one's potential.



Since most of the material is new to all the students, when they master a new skill there is a marked boost in their self-confidence. In subsequent semesters what they have learned and developed allows them to explore and experiment in deeper ways with their design projects. They begin to push themselves, and each other, because they are all more capable, but also they know what each other is capable of as individuals.



In addition, because this class is open to all grade levels, with the free mixing of our Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors, there is a marked exchange that takes place between the students because they are all equal (certainly with regards to bookbinding skill levels). Those that know more about typography, say, are more than willing to help the more novice. While vice-versa, say when a Sophomore who is more handy with a certain tool or craft helps an upper classman achieve their desired outcome. It is truly gratifying to watch camaraderie build as skills grow.

In all, the learning of bookbinding has produced multiple benefits in and among our students. Certainly they have gained new skills that propel their design and design thinking to greater heights. But it has also given them something intangible (and perhaps more valuable): self-esteem. With each and every bookbinding form they learn, I have watched them swell with self-confidence. In turn, they have become stronger as designers because their sense of accomplishment has set new benchmarks for both their craft abilities and their ideas as designers.



Life in Qatar is not much different than anywhere else. Certainly bookbinding is the same. What makes it so fulfilling, I suppose, is knowing that students anywhere are the same, facing the same dilemmas and overcoming them in their own way. Practice may make perfect, but it might make us all the same too. It certainly bridges a gap that has all too often led to misunderstanding and mistrust.



Law Alsonbrook is currently working as Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at the Qatar campus of the Virginia Commonwealth University. He is online at <http://www.qatar.vcu.edu/layout/staff-and-faculty-detail/law-alsobrook> and can be reached at lcalsobrooki@vcu.edu

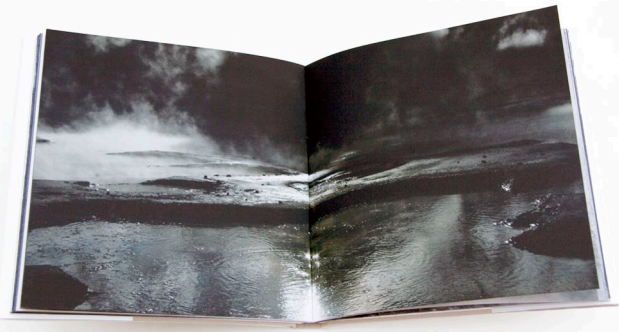
Durante and Wallace-Crabbe: LINES

By Perle Besserman

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Inspired by Canto III of Dante's medieval socio-religious allegory "The Inferno", LINES combines the digital imagery of artist Tommaso Durante and accompanying text by poet Chris Wallace-Crabbe to offer a contemporary Dantesque meditation on our 21st-century globalized world. Shot during what the artist calls "a visual and philosophical journey" to Rotorua ["Hell's Gate"] on New Zealand's North Island, these powerful digitally-rendered volcanic landscapes are at first glance unsettling and, in some cases, even terrifying: churning abysses harboring the shades, ghosts, and shadows of our ephemeral existence on a planet borne of continuous violent change. No surprise, then, that these emblematic images of unappeased human longing, decay, death, and retribution should evoke reminders of Dante's infernal angst. But these are only first impressions. Further contemplation of these volcanic 'wastelands' reveals that beneath the death and destruction, barrenness, lifelessness, and woe, lies a surprising geological subtext. Look at Durante's compelling images long enough and you will find that what may at first have appeared as a fiery liquid dance of death is in fact the bubbling elixir of new life. Lashed by the stench of noxious gases, the earth is perpetually giving birth to itself in a variety of complex forms. Within the witch's cauldrons pock marking this volcanic landscape, hides the secret of planetary transformation. Cleansed and purified through the crucible of liquid fire, vapor, sulfur, and ash make way for a new world—a re-formed and potentially more fertile world. There is no denying, however, that this new world's tumultuous birth and rebirth must come at the cost of the old.



The extent of this cost is revealed in Wallace-Crabbe's reflections on the planetary degradation characterizing postmodern life. Today's "Inferno" is an urban wasteland overrun by a traffic jammed "pack of snorting swine," its "screaming whingers" pointed out to the poet by the "good cop" [Virgil] as "dodgy consultants and investment bankers who lived by the main chance . . . / And they all believed in Progress, the other deity." No positive subtext here; what you see is what you get in the desolate trash heap we have made of our beautiful planet in the name of "Progress." Left with nothing more than "that marbled crust of troubles," the "hoarse complaint" of greedy dwellers in "the filthy mire" echoes across the globe:

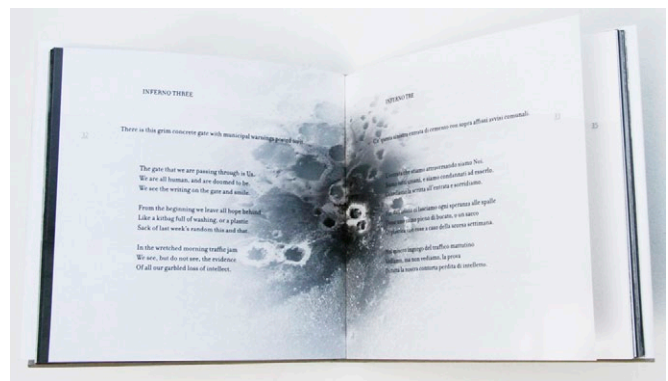
Why was all this horror heaped on me?

I believed as I had long been told

In the fortunes of my share portfolio

I did no harm, but now I am choked in smog

And frightfulness is built on petrol fumes . . .



Wallace-Crabbe neatly binds the greed for profits that unleashed the recent Global Financial Crisis with an unwitting forecast of the latest hellish nuclear disaster that would follow in its wake. In his apocalyptic portrayal of the generic global city, the poet chillingly anticipates the carnage suffered in the earthquake and tsunami-struck coastal towns of Japan:

...a swamp or bog without memory of colour. Black / and off-black, or almost-black. In it you might just glimpse, half- / sunk, old freezers, tools, tins, old TVs, even the rusted frames of / burned-out Jags, all of use to nobody at all. Any possible / ferryman here would be crazed beyond belief. And he would be / the product of us, I'm afraid.



Mariella Barbara's finely wrought Italian translations effectively mirror the poet's lugubrious depictions. Here is a taste of her delicately nuanced rendering:

Immagina, allora, una palude o un acquitrino senza memoria di colore. Nero / e tendente-al-nero o quasi nero. In esso puoi appena scorgere, meta' / sommersi, vecchi frigo, attrezzi, barattoli, vecchie TV, perfino le carcasse arrugginite di / Jaguar bruciate, tutto inutile per chiunque. Un qualsiasi / nocchiero in questo luogo sarebbe un incredibile folle. E sarebbe / il prodotto di noi stessi, temo.



Perle Besserman is a writer who divides her time between Melbourne, Australia and Honolulu, Hawai'i. Her latest book, co-authored with Manfred Steger, is 'Zen Radicals, Rebels, and Reformers'.

About LIMES

LIMES is a stunning marriage of imagery and text; but it is also a meticulously ordered dialectic. Like the first, the book's final section again features Tommaso Durante's uncaptioned volcanic landscapes—spoken for nonetheless by their supple, almost palpable, textures. Come too close and you will shrink back in fear of being splashed and scalded by the bubbling heat of the spray dancing off the page. The sulfurous vapors are so alive and true, you can almost smell them. But you must walk through this valley of the shadow of death alone—with neither god nor guide to comfort or shield you from the spectral remains of a “world that has lost its way.” As Dante cautions, “Beware all ye who would enter here.” But enter we must. The rewards are certainly worth it.



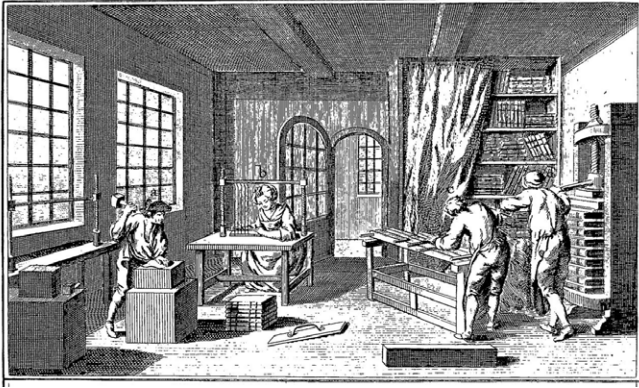
LIMES (2011) is a limited edition artist book of 15 copies plus 6 artist's proofs, 210mm x 210mm, 92 pages. The bookwork and the dust jacket were printed on 125gsm Awagami Inbe paper by Brian Gilkes (Pharos Edition) on a 10 color inkjet pigment printer. Hand made case bound in buckram and sewn with waxed linen thread by Elke Ahokas. Signed and numbered by the artist and poet. English text with Italian translation.

LIMES was presented by The Australian Academy of the Humanities, in collaboration with The Australian Poetry Limited, World Poetry, and The Globalism Research Centre of RMIT University, at The Ian Potter Museum of Arts of Melbourne University, Australia on the 7th of April 2011.

Enquiries can be addressed to Tommaso Durante <tdurante@tpg.com.au> (USA representative: Vamp & Tramp Booksellers, LLC Contemporary Fine Press and Artists' Books <mail@vampandtramp.com>

Of the Bookbinder

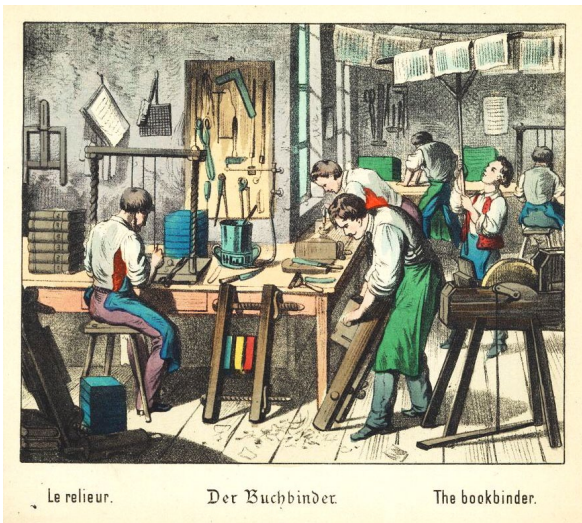
(From *The Parent's and Guardian's Directory, and The Youth's Guide in the Choice of a Profession or Trade* by Joseph Collyer, Esq., London, 1761)



The Bookbinder's Workshop from Diderot & D'Alembert's Encyclopédie, France, 1751 and 1766

Of this business there are several sorts, as the calves leather binder, the vellum, and the sheep's leather binder.

The boy intended to be a calves leather binder, ought to be both strong and pretty ingenious in order to become perfect master of the several branches of the art of binding books in calf: But no extraordinary education is necessary; reading, writing, and a little arithmetic being sufficient. This trade requires strength to beat the sheets smooth with a heavy hammer, and ingenuity in gilding and neatly lettering the back, as well as in beautifully marbling the edges of the leaves; but this last is part of the art known to few of the trade; and those make an extraordinary advantage of it.



Was willst du Werden?: Bilder aus dem Handwerkerleben. Berlin : Winckelmann + Söhne, 1880

The vellum binder is chiefly employed in binding shop books in vellum or parchment; he also rules paper for the account-books. His is the most profitable branch of binding both for the master and journeyman.

The binder in sheep is chiefly employed in binding of school books, and little books in gilt paper for children and requires no genius.

The calves leather binder may set up a master with about 50 l. and his journeymen have seldom more than 12 s. a week, except they are very curious and uncommon hands, and are employed by a master distinguished by the neatness of his work. The vellum binder may become master with even less money; or get 15 or 18 s. a week working as a journeyman. The sheep binder may begin trade for himself with about 30 l. but the journeyman can seldom earn more than 10 s. a week. All these branches take about 10 l. with an apprentice.

John Nove is a bookbinder working for private and institutional clients in western Massachusetts. He graduated from the North Bennet Street School and opened the Grey Seal Bindery, named to honor the selkies he hears singing from his summer cottage on the Scottish island of Papa Westray in Orkney. He can be reached at <nove.john@gmail.com>.

Bind-O-Rama 2011

Artistically Reversible: Where Conservation and Art Meet

We are pleased to present *Artistically Reversible: Where Conservation and Art Meet*, the 2011 *Bonefolder* Bind-O-Rama. This online exhibit was inspired by the tenets of the Tomorrow's Past (TP) movement that seeks to provide antiquarian books with new, conservationally sound yet innovative bindings. The UK-based movement has its roots 1999 with Sün Evrard and was in part inspired by the late Edgar Mansfield who wrote that "surely it is better to create tomorrow's past than to repeat today's." As British binder Jen Lindsay wrote in 2007, "Why go on making books based on Then – copying outdated methods and conventions, instead of making books based on Now – applying current knowledge and practice with a modern sensibility."

TP member Kathy Abbott, a binder and conservator acknowledges that the work of TP has created quite a bit of controversy: some book conservators think we are imposing our will onto the books and think we should be more invisible; book restorers think that we should be making bindings which imitate the period of which the book was printed and book artists seem to like our structures but see us as a bit 'staid'. This Bind-O-Rama created similar controversy in the US perhaps due to a misunderstanding of both the outcomes and on a deeper level of conservation ethics which as expressed consider every book to be rebound or treated as a cultural heritage artifact. This latter conflict was discussed at length in Barbara Appelbaum's paper that was presented at the 2011 American Institute of Conservation meeting and entitled *Conservation in the 21st Century; Will a 20th Century Code of Ethics Suffice?* <http://barbaraappelbaumbooks.com/wp-content/uploads/paper_aic_conservation.pdf>.

While many books are most certainly cultural heritage artifacts either as objects themselves or as part of the collection that holds them, many, the majority perhaps are use objects that have seen a great deal of handling and exhibit their age and provenance through the wear that is exhibited by their deterioration of materials and structure. It is these objects that TP seeks to give new life and a renewed significance whether for collectors or antiquarians. Conservation principles of doing no harm, reversibility (or as expressed by James Reid-Cunningham, conservator at the Boston Athenaeum *retreatability*) expressed by the use of proven materials with long-term stability, sound structure, and a skillful and respectful expression of craft married to innovation in structure and design. It is the latter which seems to touch the most sensitive nerve with concerns about

"appropriateness." Conservator Chela Metzger writes, "most conservation treatment discusses "appropriateness" or even used the word sympathy when describing a treatment goal. The original old part must meet and mingle with a "non original" new part. The meeting and the mingling must work well at every level. But this appropriateness and sympathy are hard to sum up. Appropriate to the text subject matter? Appropriate for the text paper qualities? Appropriate to the text time period? Appropriate for the owner of the text at the time of the binding?"

As Abbott says, "why can't we make really, sound, conservation bindings, with a bit of structural ingenuity and a sensitive aesthetic too?" This theme was also echoed in a side-discussion at the Guild of Book Workers 2011 Standards of Excellence Seminar. That discussion featured several conservators and binders working in the US, both with cultural heritage collections and as binders in general. <<http://bonefolderextras.blogspot.com/2011/10/discussion-of-tomorrows-past-at-guild.html>>.

While the response to this Bind-O-Rama was lower than we hoped, we were very pleased to see conservators and binders take up the challenge. In reviewing the entries we asked "what treatments would disqualify entries from this exhibit? Ones that immediately strike one as hurtful to the text. Ones that do not use stable materials? Ones that require damaging the text to remove it from the new binding. Fortunately we found no evidence that disqualified entries, however we do encourage those interested to see that it is not about traditional "design bindings" or "restoration" but sympathetically innovative conservationally sound bindings.

We hope that binders and conservators will adhere to the highest standards of conservation materials and structure while keeping an open mind and willingness to consider the aesthetic and structural options for rebinding. A large part of that will be an ongoing civil dialog in which conservators continue to stress and share their best practices and we all pragmatically consider the options for rebinding a given book in full consideration of its value and historic significance whatever that may (or may not) be. Writes Abbott, "I do hope that in the future, books bound in this way will be as accepted as every other binding style," and "I think it could become the most exciting and challenging concept that has come out of the world of bookbinding for a long time."

Comments by Kathy Abbott and *The Bonefolder* editorial staff.



Eric Alstrom, Okemos, MI, USA

E.J. Goodspeed, History of the Great Fires of Chicago and the West (New York, 1871).

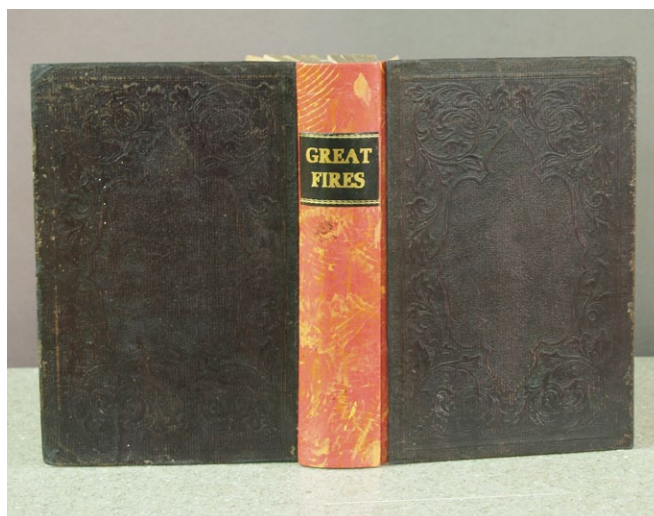
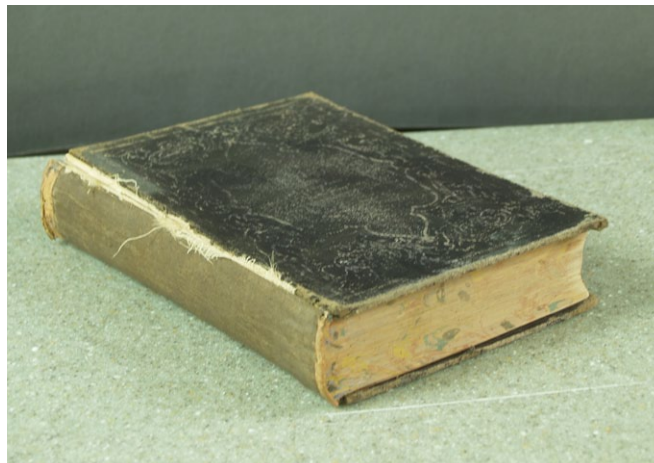
Condition Description: Book bound in leather case-style binding in poor condition. Joints broken, front board detached; spine missing. Cover blind stamped. Headbands were machine made in poor condition. Sewn on recessed cords; sewing sound. Edges marbled. Paper acidic. Endsheets torn at joint.

Treatment Report: Mended tears in fold out map. Hinged in map and titlepage. Paste washed spine. Front board attachment strengthened with cloth hinge inserted under endpapers. Reinforced and reattached original headbands. Handmade paper hollow added. Spine rebacked with Japanese paper. Leather consolidated with Klucel G. Corners and edges reinforced with paste and Japanese paper. Added new gold stamped skiver label. Cover and spine waxed.

Treatment Philosophy: Being both a design binder/book artist and conservator, I don't have much chance to combine these two areas (besides skill sets). This approach lets me use my creative side while still adhering to the principals of the conservation code of ethics. While it will not be for most books I treat, it is another approach to use when something more than a strict historic reproduction is called for.

More images available at <<https://picasaweb.google.com/webalstrom/BindORama2011TomorrowSPast>>.

Eric Alstrom has been in the binding and conservation field for over 20 years. He apprenticed under James Craven at the Bentley Historical Library and then worked at the Bessenberg Bindery, both in Ann Arbor, MI. He has headed the conservation programs at Ohio University and Dartmouth College. Currently he is head of conservation at Michigan State University. Eric teaches conservation and the book arts around the country and also for the Book Arts Program at Michigan State University. He is a member of the Guild of Book Workers and a Professional Associate in the American Institute for Conservation. Currently Eric is planning yet another conservation lab, the fourth of his career.



Anna Embree, Tuscaloosa, AL, USA

Joost van den Vondel, *Dichterlijke Werken van Joost van den Vondel* (Amsterdam 1821).

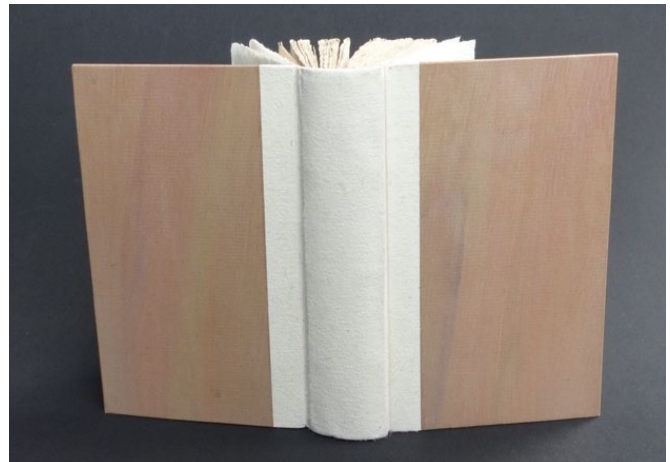
Condition Description: Cover boards and spine missing; sections no longer bound (remains of sewing threads in some of the sections but sewing not intact); text block untrimmed.

Treatment Report: Rather than box the loose sections, I chose to rebind the book. Through examination of other books from the same set, I was able to determine that the book had originally been bound in a case structure with thin boards, and covered in half-paper with paper sides. I chose to rebind the book using a format and materials that would be modern in appearance but but related to the original binding.

Built-in groove case binding. Sections mended and guarded minimally with Japanese paper and wheat starch paste; text block resewn using original sewing holes and link stitch sewing; spine lined with 2 layers of Japanese paper (applied with wheat starch paste) and 1 layer of handmade paper (applied with pva/methyl cellulose mix); new unbleached abaca hand-made paper endsheets (to match the original); case constructed using 4-ply museum board and quarter covered with hand-made flax paper and paste paper sides (acrylics and wheat paste on Bugra paper).

Treatment Philosophy: I create sound bindings that function well and are designed with the materials and contents of the texts in mind. My aim for this project was to following established good conservation practices, and provide the item with a new binding that is both aesthetically pleasing and also sympathetic to the original structure of the book.

Anna Embree is an Assistant Professor for the MFA in the Book Arts Program in the School of Library and Information Studies at The University of Alabama. She holds an MS in Textiles and Clothing from Iowa State University, a Graduate Certificate in Book Arts and Technologies from the University of Iowa Center for the Book, and a BA in Art from the University of Iowa. In addition to her formal degrees, Anna completed an apprenticeship in Rare Book Conservation at the University of Iowa Libraries. She teaches courses and workshops in bookbinding, box making, and special topics in book preservation and book history.



Karen Hanmer, Glenview, IL, USA

Walter Crane, *Of The Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New* (London, 1896, First edition).

Condition Description: Of original cloth case, only the heavily water-damaged rear board and a fragment of front board bearing the title remain. Staining only visible on the gilt head and the final few signatures, which contain plates on coated paper. Thread weak and sewing broken in places.

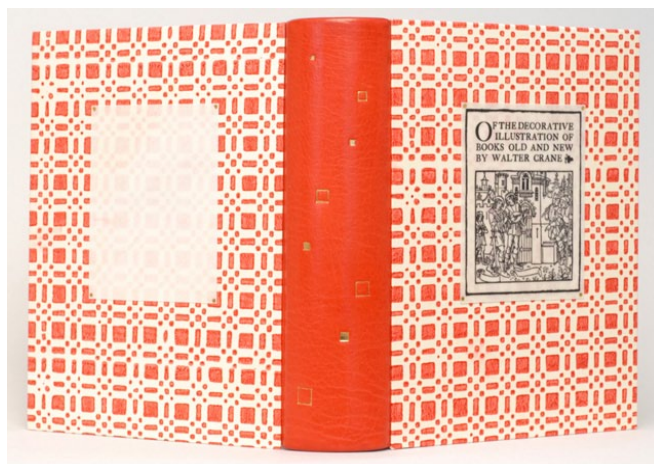
Treatment Report: Modified Simplified binding. Book disbound and re sewn on ramieband. Discolored tissues adjacent to plates discarded. Single page with detached corner repaired. Interior and exterior folios of each signature guarded to protect folds when resewing. New endpapers of handmade paper sympathetic with the text block. To treat the text block gently and reversibly, it was pasted up (no PVA) and rounded but not backed, “superior archival millboard” boards beveled at inside spine edge to match natural round. Spine linings of Japanese tissue, linen, then alum-tawed calf sanded smooth to even spine. Boards covered in decorative paper acquired at a Guild of Book Workers auction marked “Italian old.” Handsewn three color silk headbands, spine piece covered in Harmatan goatskin. New label is frontispiece from text, scanned and inkjet-printed onto calf vellum. Gold tooling on spine echoes pattern of decorative paper.

Treatment Philosophy: As a non conservator, my challenge with Artistically Reversible was to let the needs of the book and a philosophy of minimal intervention dictate the treatment, rather than my usual practice of making the book subordinate to my conceptual desires. Several candidates were dismissed because their condition did not merit resewing or the discard of their detached, but sound, boards. I have a new appreciation for those distressed but still handsome 18th century books, now as examples of period design and structure, rather than as raw materials for an art project.

More images available at <http://www.karenhanmer.com/gallery/piece.php?gallery=bindings&p=Walter_Crane>.

Karen Hanmer’s artists’ books, bindings and installations intertwine cultural and personal memory. The work is often playful in structure or content, and may include social commentary. She exhibits widely, and her work has won numerous awards, including the 2009 DeGolyer Jury Prize for Binding. Her work is included in collections ranging from Tate Britain and the Library of Congress to Yale University and Graceland. She curated the Guild of Book Workers Marking Time exhibition, and *The Book of Origins: A Survey of American Fine Binding*. She serves on the editorial board of *The Bonefolder*, and as a reviewer for the *Guild of Book Workers Journal*. Ms. Hanmer is well

aware that several workshops with Don Etherington and numerous consultations with Eric Alstrom and Peter Verheyen do not make her a conservator. She has studied binding with Priscilla Spitler, Scott Kellar and Monique Lallier, and holds a degree in Economics from Northwestern University. She offers workshops and private instruction focusing on a solid foundation in basic binding skills. Online catalog at <<http://www.karenhanmer.com>>.



Roberta Lavadour, Pendleton, OR, USA

James R. Boyd, A.M., *Elements of English Composition* (New York, 1868).

Condition Description: Bound in quarter leather with embossed cloth boards; old repairs of thick leather spine cover and flour sack spine lining failing, covers and spine detached, text block sound with faded marbled edges.

Treatment Report: Bound in a modified German Case binding, original sewing retained; spine lined with Japanese paper and mull; new endpapers of Canson Ingres; dyed vellum (Jesse Meyer) spine, decorative paper.

Treatment Philosophy: I rarely do conservation work, and then only for my own use or continuing education. I have great respect for conservators and try to honor the best practices of the trade.

Roberta Lavadour maintains a private studio practice publishing her own artist's books and bindings. Her work is published under the Mission Creek Press imprint. Her conservation education includes a mix of workshop study with conservators like Ann Frellsen and John Townsend, and vigorous independent investigation.



Chela Metzger, Kennett Square, PA, USA

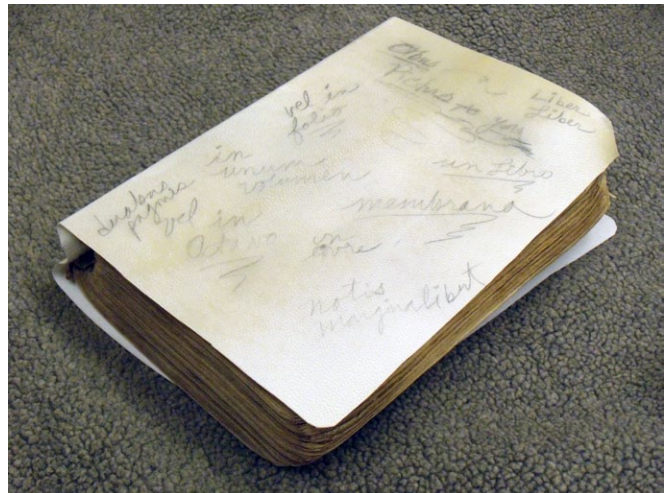
Comenius, *Obus Sensualium Pictus* (n.d., ca. 1666 and 1780).

Condition Description: No binding present. 100 pages missing in the front, and an unknown number missing in the back. Sewn 2-on on utilizing three double twisted cord supports, with sewing intact. No evidence remains of endbands. Sprinkled edges. Tears and missing pages throughout the handmade paper textblock. Manuscript and hand-coloring throughout in watercolor, crayon and graphite. Spine of text has gone completely concave with use but is intact enough for normal reading.

Treatment Report: Though the book has no binding, I use it for teaching, and I wanted a binding to protect the pages and provide support for the spine when I passed it around the classroom. While it has losses and the spine is misshapen from use, I prefer to keep the textblock exactly as is as long as possible as evidence of use. A simple one piece cover of goatskin parchment was molded around the asymmetrical textblock, using closely spaced parallel creases on the spine to bring the parchment into a curve to match the text's concave spine shape. The cover has no turn-ins. The cover was attached in three places to the text using a haphazard "archival longstitch" sewing. (Colophon "best blake" 18/5 linen thread) The cover was then decorated with scribbled and scratched words using graphite and Prismacolor raw umber pencil. Most of the scribbled words are vocabulary words related to school, or books, and are taken directly from the text. The cover was wiped with a cotton cloth and cosmetic sponges until no media came off, to be sure media did not transfer from the cover to a reader's hands.

Treatment Philosophy: I rarely rebind special collections books anymore. When I do, I often create a binding meant to sympathize with the date of the textblock. I deeply respect what a well done "period" binding requires, and how those new bindings interact with the old text. But, since I was the curator for this book I chose a rather rustic "period" binding curators might not agree to, with decorations that suite my style or lack thereof. I may not always love my decoration, but removing the non-adhesive cover will take two minutes and leave the textblock exactly as I received it.

Chela Metzger has worked as a conservator since 1994 when she completed her internship at Library of Congress. She has worked at the Huntington Library, University of Texas, University of Michigan and the Winterthur Museum. She got her library degree in 1990, and her certificate in hand-bookbinding from the North Bennet Street School in 1993.



Klaus von Mirbach, Mönchengladbach, Germany

Das goldene Tor, Ein Lesebuch für die 3. und 4. Schulklasse (Düsseldorf, 1930).

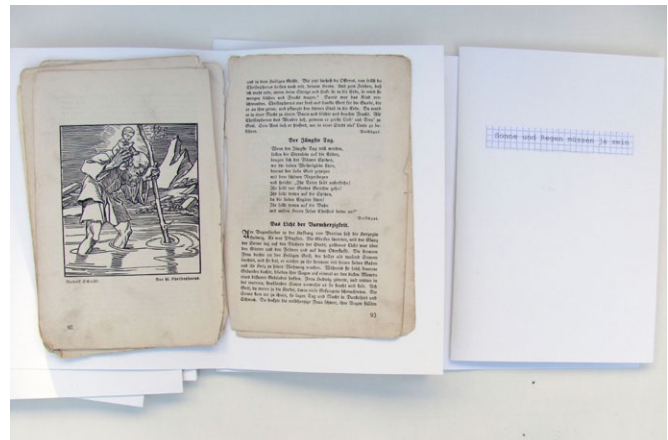
Condition Description: The binding is totally broken down, most folios split, the covers very worn.

Treatment Report: All the remains of the binding have been removed, the paper cleaned dry. The whole book was divided into sections. I put the pages of each section in a folio of 300 grams of strong acid-free paper. On these folios, I wrote the chapter headings. I arranged newly the index of contents, so that it could be printed out on one folio. 190 pages of the book in 7 folios. And then I made a box, covered with white acid free paper. On the box the title of the book: *Das goldene Tor*.

Treatment Philosophy: It was very astonishing and a great pleasure for me, that a book, that some loose sheet of paper, impossible to repair to a familiar, commonly accepted form, with a simple but imaginative treatment, could become such a poetic outlook, that it is a pleasure to sit in an armchair, you can find any story and you can read once again the book.

More images available at <http://www.klausvonmirbach.blogspot.com>.

I grew up in a print office and bindery, studied graphic design at the Folkwang Schule, Essen-Werden, Germany, worked in a publishing house, currently I work as a self-employed artist, bookbinder and restaurator.



Suzy Morgan, Chicago, IL, USA

Johann Habermann, *Christliche Gebete* (1713).

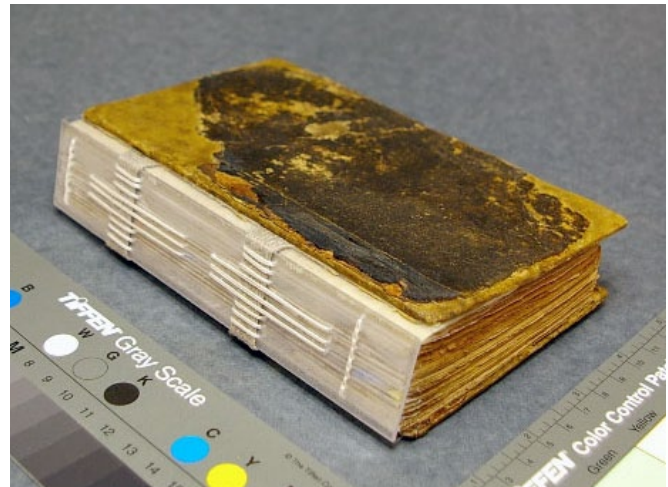
Condition Description: Quarter-style with brown paper and black leather over paperboard boards; covering damaged, spine missing; textblock torn at outer edges and damaged along folds by repeated sewing repairs.

Treatment Report: Adapted Medieval-style longstitch through stiff spine piece. Repair sewing removed, textblock washed in alkaline bath and resized with Methyl cellulose; folios guarded or lined overall as needed, with Tengujo tissue applied with wheat starch paste. Textblock sewn with linen thread through a stiff spine piece constructed of Vivek plastic mounted to oversized Mylar with 3M mounting adhesive, with the Mylar facing out; Mylar flanges cut to size, then sanded and lined with Kozo tissue applied with PVA. Boards consolidated with toned Kozo tissue and paste; corners reinforced with paste and 10pt board; paste-downs lifted along spine edge; exposed board under lifted paste-down lined with tissue applied with paste. Mylar flanges inserted under lifted paste-down and adhered with paste.

Treatment Philosophy: This treatment allowed me to explore the meanings of reversibility, conservation and book arts, and reinforced my understanding that they are not exclusive, binary definitions but rather are part of a semantic spectrum. This treatment both challenges and upholds the traditions of my training, as I have combined modern materials with a very old structure, using the same conservation methods and principles employed for more conventional treatments.

More images available at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/suzypictures/sets/72157627145298417/>.

Suzy Morgan is a 2009 graduate of the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin, where she received a certificate in advanced studies in conservation from the Kilgarlin Center for the Preservation of the Historic Record. She has had internships at Northwestern University, Syracuse University, the Cincinnati Art Museum and the Ringling Museum of Art. She is currently self-employed as a book conservator and preservation consultant.



Nancy Nitzberg, Elkins Park, PA, USA

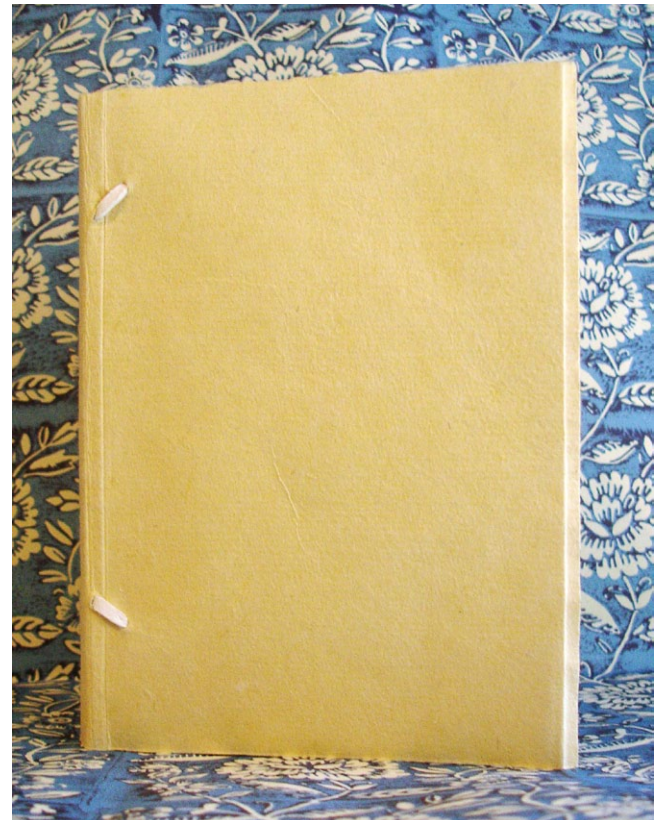
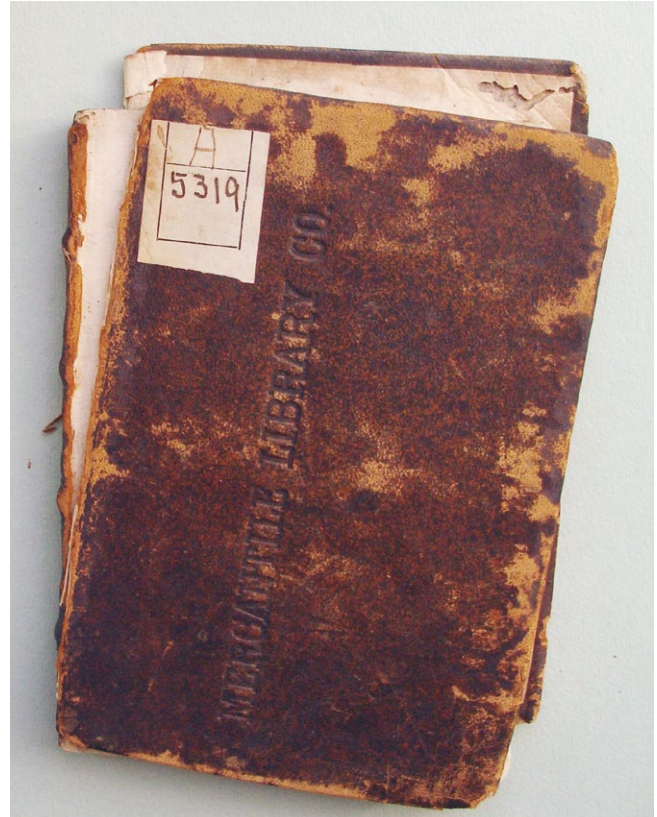
Juan Perez Lopez, *Joao Duns Escoto* (Lisboa, 1744).

Condition Description: Bound in full leather, property-stamped and deteriorated boards detached, portion of spine missing, textblock sound, losses to lower corners of first few leaves.

Treatment Report: The boards and spine fragments were removed and saved. The spine of the textblock was lined with long fiber tissue. The paper losses to the lower corners of the first few leaves were filled with long-fiber tissue. New alkaline handmade endpapers were sewn on with linen thread. Alum tawed goat strips were anchor-sewed through existing sewing holes. Covering material was made of two medium weight handmade papers adhered together with wheat starch paste. The textblock was laced into the cover with the alum-tawed supports. The lacing is at an angle to prevent the cover from shifting vertically.

Treatment Philosophy: Preparing this binding is a reminder to me of what great options paper case and laced-on paper covers are for collections that have limited funds. Such bindings are chemically stable, aesthetically sympathetic and minimally labor intensive for early printed materials. The flexible paper binding can be stored in a four-flap folder with the wrapped original boards if they're to be kept. For this 1744 Portuguese imprint, this treatment is appropriate as it is reminiscent of many limp vellum bindings produced on the Iberian peninsula through the centuries, often using few sewing supports or endband cores for the lacing in.

My first exposure to bookbinding was in 1982, at the Harvard College Library's Conservation Unit where I received on-the-job training in book repair. Four years later, I then attended Columbia University, receiving an M.S. in Library Service and a Certificate in Library and Archives Conservation that also included a full year as an intern at the Library of Congress Rare Books Conservation Section. After working as a professional book conservator in major research libraries and a regional conservation center, I established my own business, Book-Care, providing conservation and custom bookbinding services to institutions, the book trade, and to individuals. My independent research pursuits have included examining Yemenite, Judeo-Persian, and Jewish-Chinese historic bookbinding (structures, materials and aspects of text), early Philadelphia bookbindings, and other styles of historic bookbinding in which local materials were utilized and utilitarian needs of the populations were considered. I also enjoy creating interpretive bindings.



Jana Pullman, Minneapolis, MN USA

Friendship in Death in Twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living, translated from the *Moral Essays of the Meffieurs du Port Royal* (London, 1729).

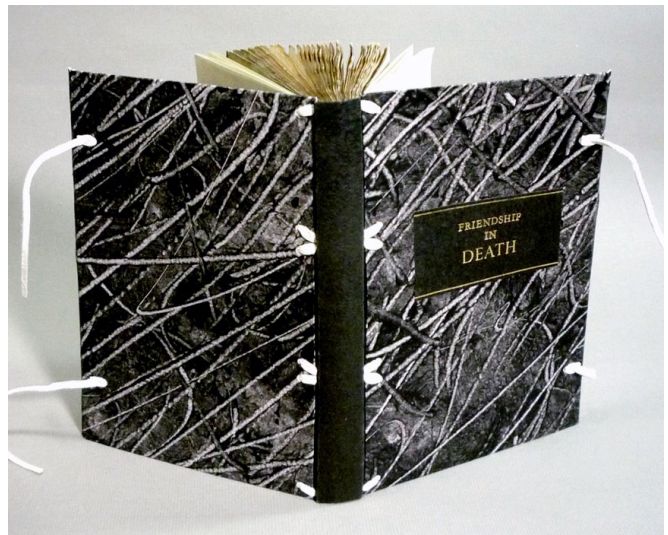
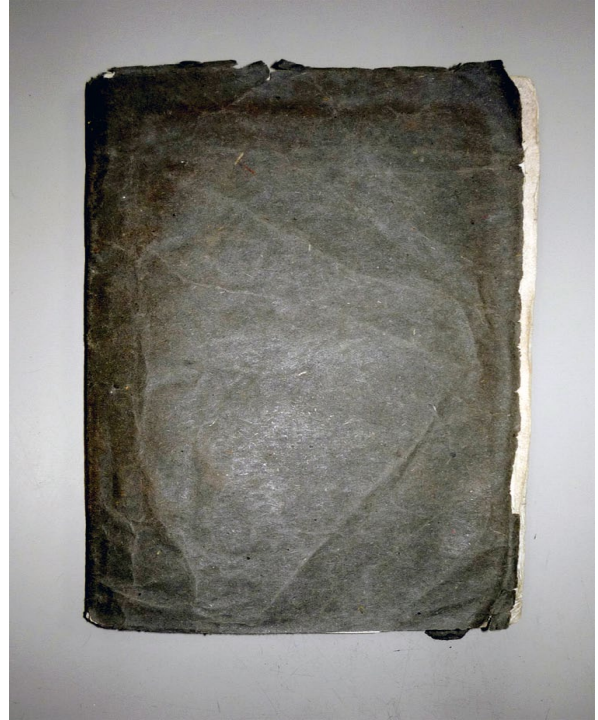
Condition Description: Binding: Dark grey paper cover and a lightweight paper glued on the spine. Sewn with a simple link stitch that had broken in several places. The spine had been coated with hide glue. The cover papers were machine made papers with a woven finished, not original to the book and the pages show signs of being sewn previously through the sides of the folded sections. Text block: Pages are in good condition with the exception of the first and last pages, which are discolored. These two pages also felt soft and weak when compared to the rest of the book.

Treatment Report: The book was disbound. The first and last pages were washed and lightly sized with methylcellulose. After seeing the improvement to the color and feel of these pages the remaining pages were also washed but after being dried they did not seem to need resizing. Small tears were mended with Japanese paper and each section was guarded with a thin Japanese tissue and paste. A two-folio section of Iowa B9 handmade paper was added to the front and back of the book. The book was sewn on tawed double leather thongs and simple endbands on tawed thongs. Spine was lined with Japanese tissue and paste between the thongs. The new cover is a three piece laced on binding made with flax handmade paper. The spine piece is walnut dyed and the cover pieces are decorated with paste and acrylic paint. A label made from the walnut flax paper was added to the front cover.

Treatment Philosophy: With my work on books I have always looked back to the old methods and designs of antiquarian books and looked forward to see the new material and methods my colleagues use in their design bindings. These two worlds have stay separate most of the time. With this project I was able to make an additional bridge between the two.

More images available at <<http://aboutthebinding.blogspot.com/2011/10/friendship-in-death.html>>.

Student of Jim Dast, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Bill Anthony, University of Iowa. MFA in printmaking with an emphasis in book arts and papermaking. Managed the repair unit for the circulating collection at the Marriott library at the University of Utah. Worked for libraries and institutions in book and paper conservation and now I am in private practice.



Sol Rébora, Buenos Aires, Argentina

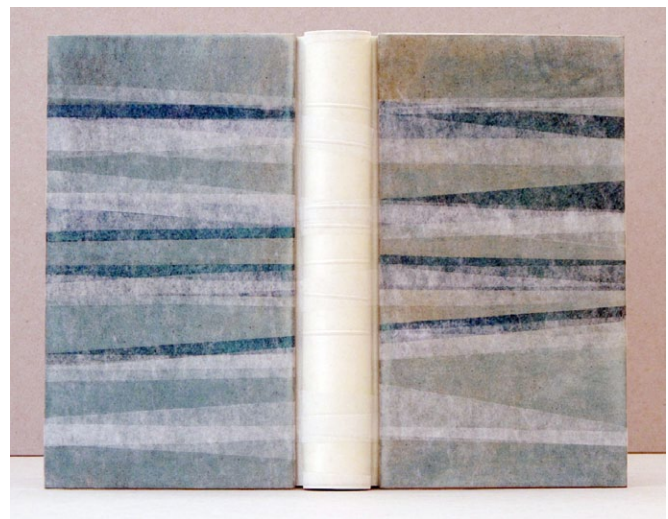
Lorenzo De' Medici, *Poesie* (Venezia , Aldo, 1554).

Condition Description: Original binding: (19th Century) half leather with marble paper boards, part of the spine missing, leather completely dry, broken hinges; edges colored dark turquoise.

Treatment Report: Simplified binding. Original sewing retained; old spine lining cleaned up, new spine lining with acid free Japanese paper, new embroidered endband, built outside the book block. Japanese hand-colored endpapers (divided in three parts). Spine: parchment, decorated with lens tissue paper strips; soft bands made up with thread placed below the parchment. Boards: Light and dark turquoise flesh side leather inlays covered with lens tissue paper and decorated with crossed lens tissue paper strips.

Treatment Philosophy: When working with antiquarian books I always try to use the most appropriate structure for each work. In this case, using a simple binding construction was the less intrusive approach, making it is easy to take apart the binding without damaging the text block. The cover is attached with a hollow back to the text block, and the endpapers are attached with Japanese hinges. I chose parchment for the spine because it is a traditional element in XVI Century Venetian bindings. The inspiration of the cover design comes from the colored edges and the marble paper from the previous binding. All materials used in the binding are acid free.

Sol Rebora's education in Fine Bookbinding began in Buenos Aires in 1996 . In 1999 Sol began specializing in Bookbinding and conservation in Toronto at the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild, with Betsy Palmer Eldrige and with Deborah Evetts in N.Y.C. In 2000 Sol began specializing in Design Bookbinding by taking classes with Monique Lallier in North Carolina , Foundation Centro del Bel Libro, in Ascona, with Edwin Heim, Jean-Luc Honegger and Pascal Theron for finishing in Paris. She has participated on many international exhibitions and has been awarded several prizes such as 1st Prize in the "Case Binding" category; "Institute of Bookbinders and Allied Trades Award for Craftsmanship" and "Award for Forwarding". Since 1999 Sol has worked in her private studio as a Designer Bookbinder in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



James Reid-Cunningham, Cambridge, MA, USA

Insect Architecture (London, 1830).

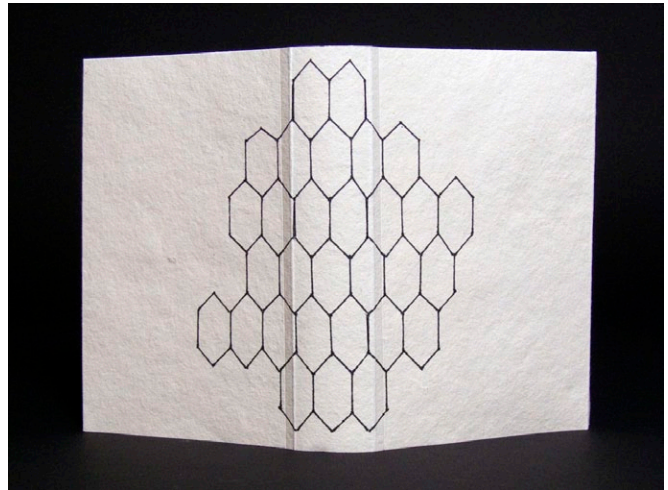
Condition Description: Bound in a half leather binding in atrocious condition. The leather is very degraded, with the hair layer missing over almost the entire surface. The corners are severely bumped, with losses. The sewing appears intact.

Treatment Report: The leather on the spine was removed using a poultice of wheat starch paste, one flyleaf was hinged back onto the textblock and the spine was lined with kozo tissue using wheat starch paste. A new case was fabricated with fore edge yapps using Iowa flax paper PC4. The case was decorated with a Pigma Micron black pen using the pattern of the cells of a wasp's nest. The case was sewn on using a long stitch and 35/3 linen thread colored with acrylics. The extant boards were retained and re-housed with the new binding.

Treatment Philosophy: The discovery after disbinding of a second set of sewing holes demonstrated that the extant binding is not the original binding, which gives a conservator greater latitude in altering the volume during treatment. The rebinding is loosely based on vellum binding at Athenaeum: the detached textblock was reattached by sewing through the case into the first and last sections. *Insect Architecture* was repaired in the least intrusive manner, ensuring the volume can be disbound in the future. Minor ink decoration was added to the paper case as a visual accent, but the binding could have been left undecorated.

More images available at <<http://www.reid-cunningham.com/Design%20Bindings/insectarchitectu.html>>.

James Reid-Cunningham studied bookbinding with Mark Esser at the North Bennet Street School in Boston, and was the President of the Guild of Book Workers from 2006 to 2010. Following twelve years as the conservator of the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, in 2003 he was named chief conservator of the Boston Athenaeum. He is currently the associate director for digital programs and preservation at the Boston Athenaeum. In 2006, he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the North Bennet Street School. He is the adjunct lecturer in book conservation in the graduate art conservation department at Buffalo State College (SUNY). His design bindings and book art can be seen at <<http://www.reid-cunningham.com>>.



Constance Wozny, Eastwood, KY, USA

A.J.B. Parent Duchatelet, *Prostitution in Paris* (New York 1852).

Condition Description: No cover boards or spine, text which was loose but in good condition.

Treatment Report: All pages washed, resewn on tapes. Used simplified binding of yellow ostrich on spine with leather label, and marbel paper designed by Eineen Miurs. Endsheets were a blue grid pattern designed by Mokuba Ribbon. Since this was a first edition, my customer requested something fun and not a traditional look.

Treatment Philosophy: My structures take into consideration paper conservation along with the request of my client.

Constance received a BBA degree in Marketing and worked for a major corporation for 17 years. She is currently self-employed as a bookbinder. She continues her education at the American Academy of Bookbinding and with Tini Miura. The organizations she exhibits with are the Guild of Book Workers, Hand Bookbinders of California, One Book Many Interpretations (Chicago Library) and the Cincinnati Book Artists. Books collected at The Special Collections of the Cincinnati Main Library and the Ann Arbor, Michigan Library.

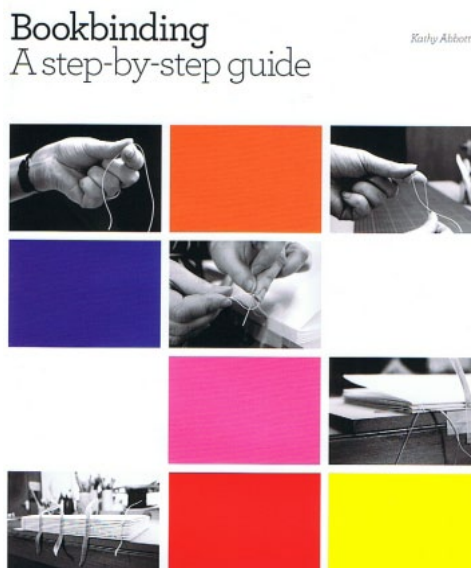


For more information on Tomorrow's Past see <http://www.outofbinding.com/tp.htm>, Volume 7 of The Bonefolder at <http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder/vol7contents.htm>, and Bonefolder Extras at <http://bonefolderextras.blogspot.com/search/label/Tomorrow%27s%20Past>.

Book Reviews

Abbott, Kathy. *Bookbinding: A Step by Step Guide*. Ramsbury: Crowood Press, 2010. 160pp. ISBN-13: 978-1847971531 (hardcover) \$29.95.

Reviewed by Anna Embree



Kathy Abbott's book *Bookbinding: A Step by Step Guide* is a well organized, clearly written manual on bookbinding that fills a much needed gap in the literature that is currently available to book binders about the tools and techniques of the craft. There are certainly flaws in this guide, as there are in every such guide, and it must be noted that this book may be particularly useful for more experienced binders and bookbinding instructors rather than beginners. However, the detailed instructions Abbott provides, coupled with clear photographs and diagrams make this a potentially useful bench manual and a valuable resource.

The book is divided into four chapters containing introductory information about materials, tools and supplies, and nine project descriptions. An appendix provides supplementary information, a glossary and a list of suppliers. In the chapter on materials and tools, the author clearly describes the equipment and supplies needed to outfit a functional bindery. She provides photographs of the items and an explanation of the ways each tool is used.

The chapters containing descriptions of projects are also laid out in a very logical format with step-by-step instructions and additional information about history and practice. The numbered instructions are coded in red to indicate an accompanying photograph, and this little key is very helpful for staying on track with the text. Also provided are boxes

with supplemental text that give background information about the techniques that are described.

Despite the careful consideration put into the layout of this book and the wealth of information therein, the book suffers from the serious drawback of trying to appeal to too wide an audience. In the introduction the author asserts that the book is aimed at complete beginners, with the idea that they will be working at home. However, the beginner would be hard pressed to have a fully stocked and equipped bindery and - although she states that the tools and supplies she lists can be easily replaced with other, more available supplies - a beginner would have great difficulty doing this as they would not have the experience to know where to turn. In fact, it takes a strong understanding of procedure in order to see the best ways to make substitutions and yet attain good results. Further, the chapter on tools and materials, though very extensive, does not go far enough in explaining the importance of these items to the craft. For example, the section on grain direction clearly illustrates how grain can be determined in various materials but says very little about why grain direction is so important, both in the construction process and in a finished book.

Most of the projects in this book are also not really at the level of an absolute beginner. Many of the techniques covered in the projects would be difficult for someone absolutely new to the craft to accomplish from instructions alone. Rounding and backing, for example, is a very complex topic and, especially without an understanding of, or access to the proper equipment, would be hard to execute with any degree of success. The same is true for modifying equipment for leather paring and the leather paring techniques. Further, the description of the sewing structures for the book projects may be clear only to someone with some experience. These descriptions would benefit from accompanying diagrams to provide a clearer picture of the sewing patterns.

A section on basic techniques would also be extremely useful for the reader and would improve the overall coherence of the text. Processes such as gluing out, tipping on end sheets, and adhering turn-ins are described multiple times throughout the text, and the instructions would have been easier to follow had all of the information about each of these procedures been listed in one location. In fact, the book continually addresses simple concepts with repetition but glosses over some of the more complicated techniques. While the goal may be to provide something for everyone, I fear that this may make the book less than satisfactory for binders of all levels. As a teacher I believe that repetition can be very useful for reinforcing concepts, however the repetition within the step-by-step format creates a lot of duplicate information. A section on basic techniques would allow the beginner to refer

back to these directions as often as necessary without forcing the more advanced binder to read through the fundamental instructions again and again.

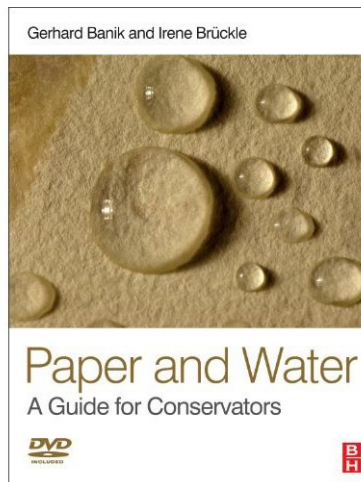
Regardless of the limitations of this book, it does contain a great amount of information and is a truly practical bench guide. The repetition found in the first few chapters decreases somewhat as the book progresses, and the value of the content makes up for the inconvenience of replication in the instructions. Importantly, the projects are interesting and are all grounded in traditional craft. The straightforward descriptions of techniques are an excellent resource for any binder with a solid foundation in the craft but little overall experience, and for any advanced binder interested in reviewing procedures or seeing how another binder approaches the work.

While this book may have limited use as a manual for beginners working on their own, it is an ideal resource for the classroom. Much of the difficulty a beginner might face working through this book alone, could be easily overcome with some knowledgeable assistance. One of the greatest assets of the book is the huge number of photographs that accompany the text and the strong organization of these images with the step-by-step descriptions. There are very few books on bookbinding that illustrate binding techniques so clearly; and students who have seen binding demonstrations, but are not yet confident in their skills, will find this book instructional and informative. It is a huge accomplishment to put together a manual of bookbinding that covers traditional practice in such detail and with such clarity. This is a book I can confidently recommend as a solid resource for bookbinding instruction.

Anna Embree has been teaching bookbinding for the MFA in Book Arts Program since August 2003. She came to the University of Alabama from Iowa City where she was associated with the University of Iowa Center for the Book. She has worked as studio coordinator for the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina and in conservation at the University of Iowa Libraries. Ms. Embree received a Bachelors degree in Art from the University of Iowa in Iowa City. She received a Masters degree in Textiles and Clothing from Iowa State University in Ames, and a Graduate Certificate in Book Arts and Technologies from the University of Iowa Center for the Book. In addition to these degree programs, Ms. Embree completed a four-year apprenticeship in Bookbinding and Rare Book Conservation at the University of Iowa Libraries. She taught bookbinding at the University of Iowa from 1998–2003. Ms. Embree is Vice-President of the Guild of Book Workers and a Co-director of *Paper and Book Intensive*.

Banik, Gerhard and Brückle, Irene. *Paper and Water: A Guide for Conservators*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2011. ISBN 13: 978-0750668316. (hardcover). \$165.

Reviewed by Abigail Wendler Uhteg



With great pleasure I introduce you to *Paper and Water: A Guide for Conservators* by Gerhard Banik and Irene Brückle, finally published this year by Butterworth-Heinemann. The book is the result of ten years of collaborative planning, research, writing, designing, and reviewing by conservators, conservation scientists, paper manufacturers, animators, and graphic designers. This information is not new, but the presentation is: the first textbook to bring together the chemistry and conservation of paper, it bridges an enormous gap between learning chemistry and bench work. Its most important contribution may be less the information itself and more the encouragement of the conservation student to recognize the value of understanding and seeking out relevant scientific research. That said, the authors have scoured an incredible number of textbooks, journals, technical bulletins, research guidelines, and production manuals to explain as thoroughly as possible in one place the chemistry of the various aspects of paper manufacture, aging, and treatment, along with the role that water plays at each stage. This book is an excellent reference for anyone having anything to do with paper conservation.

Contents

The book begins with general chemistry, covering the basic principles of atomic structure, covalent and ionic bonding, molecular geometry, intermolecular forces, the role of functional groups. While cellulose and water are often used as examples, the focus is to establish a grounding for the more complicated chemistry to come. Chapters on the specific properties of water follow, covering surface tension,

viscosity, volatility, solvent properties, and purification. A discussion of acids and bases follows, both in terms of water and other hydronium and hydroxide-producing liquids. Here the concept of the pH scale is introduced, along with an explanation of how acids and bases function at different strengths, and how weak acids and bases might be used as buffer solutions. This segue brings the subject around to paper conservation and how carbonate, in particular, functions as a buffer against pH change in paper.

The chapters on paper first address the cellulose polymer and the interaction of cellulose with water in both dry and wet paper. The authors explain that paper strength is partly a function of moisture content, and show how too much or too little water adversely affects the sheet. They cover paper manufacture, traditional styles and modern, and what changes in the cellulose fibers as they go from plant to sheet, including the effects of beating and chemical processing; gelatin, rosin, and reactive sizing; and drying methods. They explain the shrinkage of the sheet as it dries, and how it reacts upon reintroduction of moisture. All of this explains the newly-formed sheet, whether made in 1200 or 2010; the information is applicable both to understanding the former properties of an old paper, and the repair papers used in the conservation lab today. The authors then address cellulose degradation, both in terms of visual and structural changes, and put this in the context of current and historical research.

The final chapters cover the chemistry of paper treatments in conservation practice: humidification, washing, deacidification, and drying. Each of these begins with the basic idea behind the process and moves on to explain the particular reactions involved. The washing section discusses preparation of the object, methods of washing (immersion, floating, with blotters, on a suction table), and the effects of various factors (paper thickness, treatment duration, temperature, previous moisture content, surfactants, deacidification) on the rate and effectiveness of washing. The deacidification section gives a description of how oxidized cellulose affects ion exchange, and how this might in return affect the potential to change the acid content in the paper. It includes methodology of measuring pH in paper, and options for establishing an alkaline reserve concurrently with addressing the excess acid. The drying section also gives practical advice, following a discussion of the effect of loss of moisture content during and without physical restraint of the sheet.

Finally, there are a few extras. Among the expected tables in the appendices, a significant section is devoted to teaching practical chemistry as might be appropriate for full-time conservation courses but also conferences and professional development workshops as well as perhaps in outreach to

the general public. The authors give a range of experiments and demonstrations, including a brief background on the principles, and the full procedure and expected results. And a DVD included with this edition is filled with animations, videos, and still images to further illustrate the text (which includes references throughout to sections of the DVD). The animations and videos are short clips with no audio, more moving pictures than movies, so could be used alongside a teacher's own lecture or simply as an extension of the textbook for the student studying on his or her own.

Philosophy

The novel presentation of science and paper conservation in the same textbook is a wonderful one. The varied backgrounds of conservators and the tendency to come more from an art historical perspective than a chemical one often means they don't come to the field with as significant a scientific founding as is ideal. While a small number of books exist which present the chemistry of various relevant materials, they almost always presume pre-existing knowledge, written more for someone in the field than a student. The conservation student getting chemical information from one source, and conservation information from another, might understandably have a difficult time relating the two or even understanding why the chemistry is important. This book, written both by conservators and chemists, clearly links the two disciplines, beginning with Gerhard Banik and Irene Brückle, who respectively represent conservation science and paper conservation, and continues with the rest of the many authors who collaborated on the text: Vincent Daniels, D. Steven Keller, Joanna M. Kosek, Reinhard Lacher, Anthony W. Smith, Alfred Vendl, Günther Wegele, and Paul M. Whitmore, and Kate Colleran and Jan Wouters, who wrote the forewards. Throughout each topic they show a clear pathway between the understanding of chemistry and more responsible decisions, more effective treatments. Risk factors and their evaluation are discussed alongside the involvement of scientific principles and research in strategizing treatments.

One thing that they must have struggled with is how much straight chemistry to include; obviously even a general chemistry textbook can't cover everything, and the involvement of so much specific to paper and water necessitates leaving out a significant amount of background chemistry. In the midst of explaining the cellulose polymer, for example, the idea of numbering a carbon chain and involving these numbers in nomenclature is introduced in order to discuss the 1,4-glucosidic bond (page 20), but why the numbering starts where it does is not addressed. Accuracy is not sacrificed for simplicity in this text, however; and extensive citation of sources often gives a starting place for

further research if a concept is not fully explained.

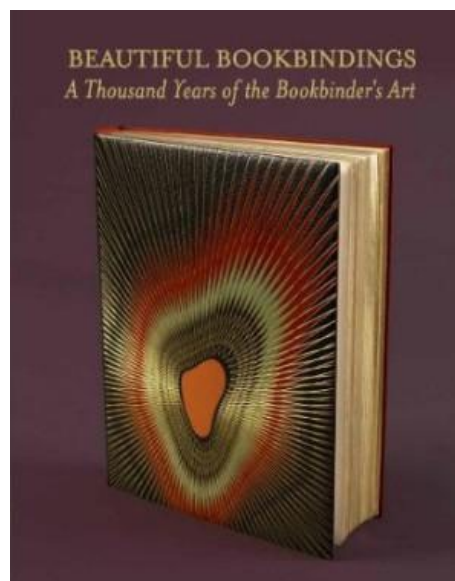
Evaluation

The information is presented in as approachable a manner as possible, using language familiar to the conservator but directly relating it to chemical vocabulary: for example, a discussion of discoloration reactions uses “mat burn” as an example of local discoloration as a result of acid-catalyzed hydrolysis (page 239). In doing this the book still reads like a chemistry textbook, not something simplified for conservators, but it is less intimidating. The reader can relate from whichever perspective makes more sense, and learn to fluently pass between the vocabularies of both disciplines. The diagrams are also clear, with consistent color-coding throughout the book and even in the DVD extras. This coding is explained in the beginning (page xxiv), and rather than simply distinguishing elements in an image from each other, the consistency makes the interpretation of that image easier. The images themselves were well chosen, and further clarify the text effectively. The only aspect I find lacking is in the application of the text: almost all of the information in the text is qualitative, with minimal working-out of problems and none given for practice. Perhaps this is the realm of the pure chemistry textbook, but it is difficult to teach only the theory without explaining how to generate figures, particularly to novices. There are some equations; the authors give the equation for calculating the acid dissociation constant K (page 66), and calculate the pH of pure water (page 70), but such things are limited. This may have the advantage of being more reader-friendly to the conservator who is less strong in math and science, but on the other hand working out equations in the text provides transparency for the tables of figures, allowing the student to see how the numbers were derived. But this is a small note compared to the overall picture, and the only hole I have any desire to poke in an otherwise glowing appraisal. Put a copy on your shelf, and be prepared to fight your colleagues for it.

Abigail Uhteg recently completed a Graduate Diploma in the Conservation of Books and Library Materials at West Dean College in West Sussex, England, and will return next year to pursue an Postgraduate Diploma in the same and an MA in Conservation Studies. Prior to this she worked for two years as a technician in the book conservation lab at Columbia University and on a freelance basis as a conservator at Paper Dragon Books in New York City. She is online at <<http://www.pressejanvier.com/>>

Marks, PJM. *Beautiful Bookbindings, A Thousand Years of the Bookbinder's Art*. New Castle & London : Oak Knoll Press & The British Library 2011. ISBN 9781584562931. 190 pp. \$49.95.

Reviewed by Beth Doyle



Beautiful Bookbindings is a collection of bindings selected by the staff of the British Library primarily to “please the eye.” [1] The introduction includes a brief history of the book, illustrations of book anatomy and explanations of the economic and design influences that changed the way books were made over the centuries. The bindings are presented chronologically in six chapters starting with pre-16th Century and continue through the 20th Century. Additionally there are several “special themes” that highlight furniture, embroidered bindings, painted edges, and other notable binding details.

The history of bookbinding is a vast and complicated one that spans the globe through many centuries. *Beautiful Bookbindings* focuses primarily on the Western tradition although the author does acknowledge, and the book briefly highlights, bindings from non-European geographies. There are prime examples of Persian lacquer bindings [2], Indian pothi [3], Chinese red lacquer bindings [4], and traditional North African bindings [5] that give the reader at least a minimal understanding of what books from non-European countries might look like.

Each binding is accompanied by a short text describing what makes it special, how a specific binding was produced, or who may have commissioned or used such a book. It

highlights well-known designers and artisans including William Morris [6] , Francis Sangorski [7] , Philip Smith [8] and Alice Morse [9] but also shows work from lesser-known binders. Many of the early bindings represented here are Christian texts and the author accurately describes the religious symbols found on the covers, something that is remarkably missed in many publications. But you would expect this level of breadth and accuracy from a British Library publication.

The bibliographic notes on each page are sparse, listing only the place of publication, size and a brief citation with more descriptive titles and footnotes listed by page number at the back of the book. Be sure to place a bookmark at the “Notes and Further Reading” section so you can flip back and forth to figure out exactly what you are looking at. It may also be helpful to have the British Library’s online catalog open if you are interested in finding additional bibliographic information.

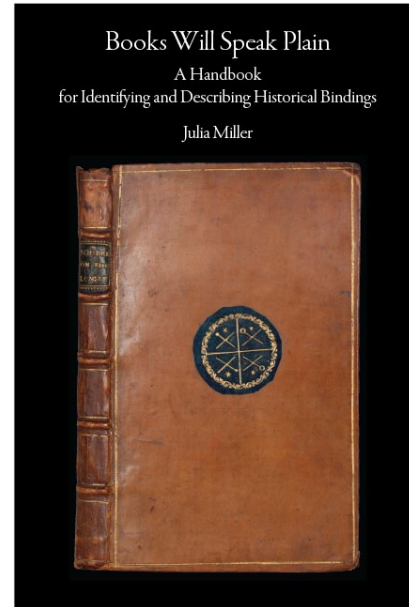
When presenting artwork or fine craft it is important that the design and production aids the close study of the subject. Each binding in this book is expertly and beautifully photographed and presented in a way that you can clearly see very fine details. The explanatory text, however, is fairly small so grab your reading glasses if you want to do more than simply look at the pictures. The binding itself is made with a high quality paper and sewn, not adhesive bound, so it should hold up to many readings.

By the author’s own admission, beauty is an individual assessment, “but who can deny the visual and tactile appeal of a beautifully bound book?” [10] If you are interested in the history of the book, or if you simply love exquisitely made objects that are beautifully presented, you won’t be disappointed with this purchase.

Beth Doyle is the Head of Conservation Services Department at Duke University Libraries. She holds a B.A. in Photography from the University of Dayton, and an MLIS and Certificate of Advanced Study in Library and Archives Conservation from the University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

Miller, Julia. *Books Will Speak Plain: A Handbook for Identifying and Describing Historical Bindings*. Ann Arbor: The Legacy Press, 2010. 511pp. Illus, with DVD. ISBN-13: 978-0-9797974-3-9 (hardcover) \$80.00

A critical review by Chela Metzger



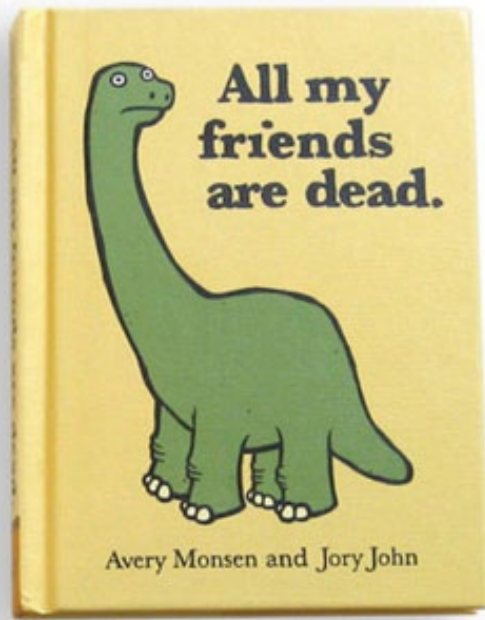
The book is dead is a phrase that seems to have generated a cottage industry of keynote speakers and opinion pieces over the years. Lets leave questions of the books relative death or life until the end of this review. Lets agree that both dead and living things can be carefully and lovingly described, and an accurate description may be the best way to honor a book, dead or alive. Julia Miller, conservator, binder and book historian, has undertaken an enormous task in her *Books Will Speak Plain: A Handbook for Identifying and Describing Historical Bindings*. She has championed the miles of shelves holding historic bindings in Americas research collections. She has tapped into the unique perspectives of book conservators and librarians, as well as book historians. She has placed todays books artists alongside the anonymous binders of years past, and she has drawn all these different groups into a continuum. She builds from this synergy, and the synergy lends her book force and weight.

[1] introduction (pg. 17); [2] pg. 65; [3] pg. 23

[4] pg. 96; [5] pg. 24; [6] pg. 141

[7] pg. 154; [8] pg. 178; [9] pg. 144

[10] introduction (pg. 8)



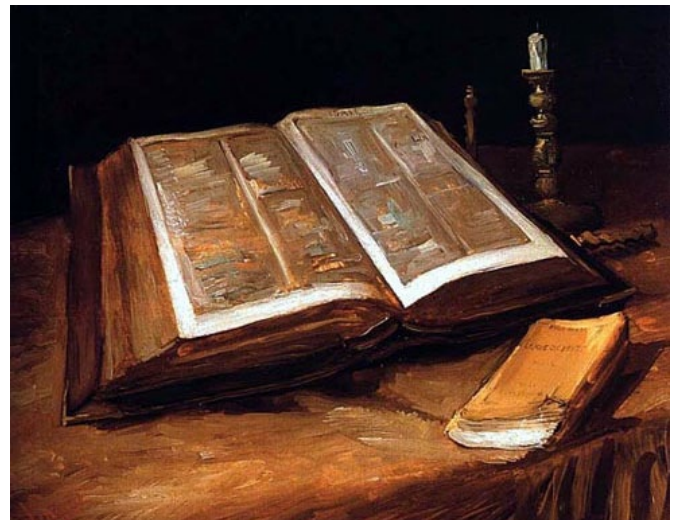
Book skeleton image

Image from Letterology blog Monday November 29, 2010, book structure models by British Artist Sarah Mitchell.

The Structure

Look through the chapter headings, and you see that the book offers what a handbook needs to offer. Miller lays out well-organized information and images that you would want by your side as a reference. As an introduction, she has four chapters of western book history, starting with the earliest codex forms in the west, and ending with the electronic book reader. She then lays out two chapters on identifying and describing historic bindings, and a final chapter entitled The Task Ahead and Conclusions. This final chapter is followed by three appendices offering a set of binding terms in a

hierarchy form, a sample historic binding survey with a case studies, and a set of guidelines for book stack maintenance and book condition assessment. She also includes a glossary, a bibliography, an index and a DVD packed with additional images of historic binding features. Illustrations are crucial to this book. Miller has groups of full color photographs, as well as black and white photographs dispersed throughout. Some historic structures are delightfully illustrated with original drawings done by book conservator and book artist Pamela Spitzmueller. Miller has done a thorough job packing an extraordinary amount of information into a single volume (and DVD).



Vincent van Gogh *Still Life with Bible* 1885 from Wiki Commons.

Passion

Certainly Millers book is not entirely new in subject matter, but it offers a new and useful combination of information. Others have given us heavily illustrated books on western bookbinding history, like Szirmai's *The Archeology of Medieval Bookbinding*, (1999) or Jane Greenfield's *ABC of Bookbinding* (2002). And we already have a few handbooks, which focus on dating a national binding style, like David Pearsons *English Bookbinding Styles 1450-1800: A Handbook* (2005). Arguments for including binding information in bibliographic description have already been developed by a few bibliographers, as Miriam Foot has shown in her excellent chapter on bibliography in *Bookbinders at Work: Their Roles and Methods* (2006). And in his short, highly illustrated *Book as History: The Importance of Books Beyond Their Text* (2008), Pearson has already argued passionately, as does Julia Miller, for the unique artifactual qualities of historic books in libraries. What Millers book does which is especially innovative is offer a set of carefully crafted tools to carry out the bookbinding documentation she has argued so passionately for.

Miller is urgent in her arguments. She wants all who can do so to add to the bookbinding description work that has already been done, and she would like people to do this work SOON. As those of us who work in research collections well know, cataloging is an enormously time consuming and intellectually demanding process. Given time and money constraints, special collection materials are sometimes very minimally cataloged. (For more on the Council on Library and Information Resources funding to catalog these hidden collections see <<http://www.clir.org/hiddencollections/>>) This cataloging problem makes intellectual access difficult or impossible. If these sometimes unevenly cataloged collections are moved to remote storage, an additional burden of access will be imposed. To describe a book, it is best to have the book in hand. So, Miller seems to argue, now is the necessary time to begin careful binding description projects. Her fear is that already inaccessible closed stacks will soon become even harder to access after being taken away to remote storage. Her urgency combined with a crystal clear love for historic books drive the book forward.



"Librarian" merit badge from the Boy Scouts of America.

Thinking Like a Librarian

A unique feature of Miller's work is her painstaking development of controlled vocabulary for describing historic bindings. This element of her work is one of its greatest strengths, and needs to be addressed in some detail. The task of carefully describing bindings has merit in its own right, and has been done by esteemed scholars for years, though rarely on a national scale, or with a comprehensive visual documentation component. If we consider a book as a technology, and think of how other technologies, from

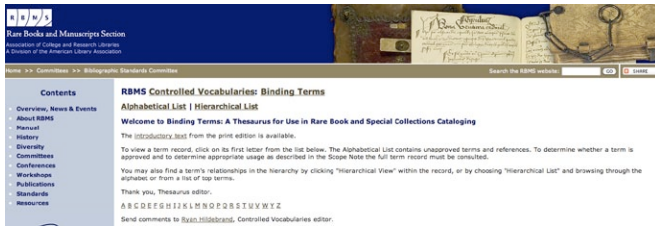
arrowheads to wheels, are documented in archeology then we can imagine books described the same way arrowheads are described, with a controlled vocabulary developed by those who know the most about arrowheads and their gradual changes over time.



Story in Stone by Val Waldorf.

Such efforts at controlled vocabulary for describing books have been part of book history for years, and Miller is careful to acknowledge this. Glaister's 1960 *Glossary of the Book* is an important effort, as is of course the excellent *ABC For Book Collectors* by John Carter, which came out in 1951. Etherington and Roberts' *Bookbinding and Book Conservation a Dictionary of Descriptive Terminology* (1985?) is a reference book many of us cannot live without. There are certainly other efforts past and present being made internationally in this area, for one example see <<http://www.ligatus.org.uk/>>.

But librarians, who rightfully claim dominion over the rigorous development of controlled vocabulary for accurate information retrieval, have generated their own somewhat lesser known list of binding terms. Miller is well aware of the American Library Association Rare Books and Manuscripts Division thesaurus of binding terms. She is actively working to have specific terms she considered crucial added to their approved list so more librarians can use them in cataloging of historic bindings. For example, the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section is now considering officially approving her term visible structure through damage (see page 4). Imagine if you could go into any rare book library, type that term into the catalog, and could accurately generate a list of every book in the collection damaged in a way that reveals the book's manufacture and use. This is the power of controlled vocabulary used for information retrieval, and Miller is intent on harnessing that power for research.

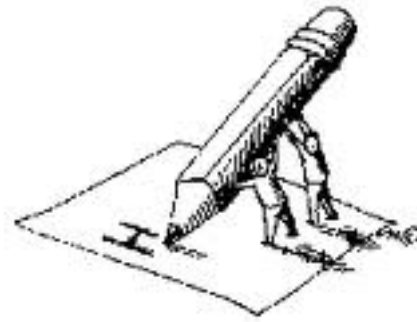


Screen shot of capture of RBMS Binding Terms List .

Millers own descriptive hierarchy lists terms in a way that relates them to each other and ties each descriptor to her own survey form. The effort put into this thesaurus and glossary in her appendix is enormous. As she says The author draws on long experience as well as the work of many scholars who have suggested and compiled terms and definitions for hand-bookbinding in the past. (p. 306). Millers Historical Bindings Structure and Style Hierarchy is meant to help in creating and filling out her *Historical Binding Survey Form*, and terms are all defined in her glossary. Her efforts pay off, not just in the sheer number of terms, but in her works intellectual care and sophistication.

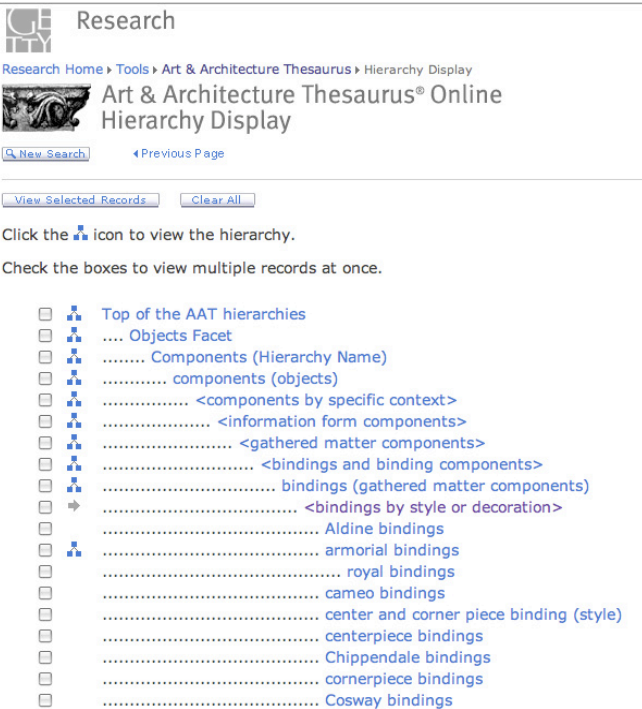
It is instructive to briefly compare Millers thesaurus with the RBMS thesaurus and with the Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus. (The AAT is an increasingly international resource Miller does not mention, but which aspires to be useful for library and archival materials--accessible online at <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/>

context, narrowed down to *gathered matter components*, narrowed down to *bindings*. When finally further narrowed down to *binding by style or decoration* the AAT lists 26 style terms (not all are shown in the illustration above). The RBMS binding thesaurus lists 31 style terms. Miller has 141 style terms listed, and that is just for the common styles with numerous examples. She has 50 uncommon styles listed, where there were few made or few survive. AND Miller defines her terms in a glossary as well as offering a wealth of explanatory photos. Unlike Etherington and Roberts or the AAT she does not footnote individual entries so you can follow them back to a specific citation. We could quibble over what to call a style and what to call a structure and other finer points of vocabulary--but the sheer numbers here speak for themselves. Millers thesaurus has brought together many more bookbinding terms than two of the standard hierarchies for bindings terms used in the US today.



Documentation

For many conservators, using other peoples documentation forms is an enjoyable professional challenge. In some ways description and condition forms are our special form of literary production in conservation, and a good form helps the person filling it out notice the book in front of them more deeply. It was very useful to sit down and describe a real book using Millers Sample Historical Binding Survey Form Categories and Sub-Categories in chapter 6. Her survey form is designed to be used in concert with chapter five Identifying Binding Materials and Applications. Careful use of her appendix Sample Survey Suggestions and Description Case Studies helps the reader understand her survey rational and offers a survey designer many workflow tips. Miller moves from the outside of the book to the inside in the survey structure. She warns the reader that one size does not fit all when developing a survey, and that it is to best to first try your survey on a sample section of the collection. These suggestions, along with the form itself, make sense.



Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus.

With the Gettys AAT you see bindings and binding components classified under *objects in the information*

to bookbinding elements they are not sure of, particularly in the case of sewing patterns and endpaper attachments. The wisdom of this is clear. The pages of diagrammed endpaper types and textblock sewing styles offered in articles by Nicholas Pickwoad like “The Interpretation of Binding Structure: an Examination of Sixteenth-Century Bindings in the Ramey Collection” (in *The Library*, 6th series, 17 (September 1995), pp 209-249) and by Bernard Middleton in his *History of English Craft Bookbinding Techniques* (1963) are extremely useful and important. But positive identification of one style or another of these often well hidden bookbinding features like sewing and endpaper construction requires more specialized training in bookbinding history than Miller is looking for here. In her quest for basic historic binding description implemented by interested but not necessarily expert people, she has made choices about the level of binding detail to include in her survey. Some details the conservation reader might be used to seeing in a description form, such as exact collation, layers of endband structure, spine lining types and structure, composition of sewing supports, and board lacing patterns are not emphasized in Millers book. This is an important distinction. The survey form Miller offers is not a conservation documentation form, and serves other purposes.



Image by Yukio Miyamoto using Adobe Illustrator. From Image from geekologie.com, posted May 27, 2007.

Worthy Pictures

This book is replete with illustrations, and with photographs in particular. She makes excellent use of photos to explain terms in her survey form, as well as to delight the reader with interesting and beautiful examples of bookbindings. Like many photographic images meant to show technical information, there are occasional limitations. For example, while using Millers survey form a reader might want help in identifying the type of board used to construct the binding. Her written descriptions of pasteboard, waterleaf board and pulpboard are very good. The fully exposed inner board face of pulpboard she uses as a photographic example clearly shows the book edge trimmings and other recycled matter she describes as commonly found in pulpboard. But on simple inspection her pulpboard and waterleaf board photos are similar enough to cause confusion. In fact the waterleaf board photograph also seems to show the bits of paper and refuse found in the pulpboard. Miller recommends a magnifying glass as basic equipment for describing bindings. To complement that basic identification tool, magnified photographic details of materials like pulpboard could be very useful in a handbook. But this is a small complaint. Miller offers far more photographic references to aid in identifying historic binding elements than any reference book I can think of, and that is not even including the supplemental DVD with its many fine color images. (If you are still hungry for more images of historic bindings, see the British Library's <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/bookbindings/>, one of a growing number of online visual resources.) Miller has used many images from the University of Michigan collections in her book, and from a few other institutions. But her private study collection of historic bindings is perhaps essential to the development of this book. Sensitivity to binding features is finely tuned over time by daily living with these artifacts, and her photographs represent this sensitivity is well.



Image from U of Wisconsin Madison History of Science and Technology Digital Collection.

Historical Context

This review has not yet touched on the four chapters of western bookbinding history Miller offers the reader of this handbook. Since in some ways Miller's concerns about description seem to overshadow the context of bookbinding, it is easy to skim these and move on to the more action oriented chapters. One rarely reads a handbook in order from page one to the end in any case. But for those looking for a masterful summary of bookbinding history, these chapters are very useful.

The chapter on the birth of the codex from earlier scrolls and tablets is extremely scholarly and detailed. This is to be expected given Miller's work with early codices in Egypt, and her access to University of Michigan's department of papyrology. Miller is careful to note that information on the earliest codices is given in her handbook to show the reader how decorative and structural elements ebb and flow through the long history of bookbinding, not because she expects readers to survey these ancient materials.

Miller's chapter on the medieval manuscript book gives an especially in-depth look at Gothic bindings. As she notes on page 61: The Gothic board attachment set in motion a train of structural change that remained in force for a long time, apparent in the curves spines of books from the Gothic era right up to the end of the twentieth century. While more typical bindings dominate her condensed history, she is careful to also cover limp and stationers bindings. I think her statement that stationers binding were part of a class of binding plainer, more pedestrian and intended primarily to protect. (page 84) bears a bit of examining. Her own chosen example of an Italian stationers binding from the mid-fourteenth century has a lovely two part scarlet dyed cover, careful lacing patterns, and a buckle closure--all steps that went far beyond basic protection into the realm of decorative. Perhaps it is safer to say stationers and other limp bindings had their own traditions. (To be fair, she does specifically note the lack of documentation for this style of binding.) Overall, Miller carefully reminds the reader that manuscript books came in many styles and forms, and does an excellent job setting the stage for the transition to books printed on paper.

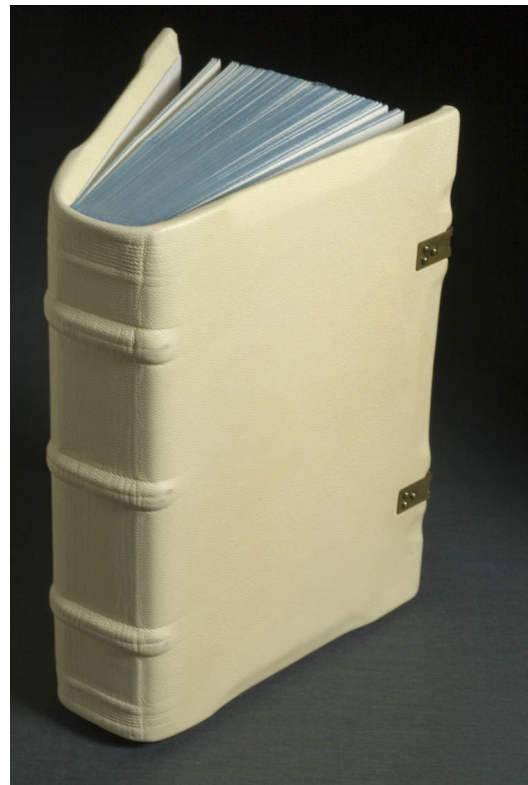


Image of 15th century wooden board binding from University of Iowa Library Bookbinding Models Collection.

The two bookbinding history chapters covering 1450-1800 and 1800 to 1900 will probably be the ones most referred to by users of this handbook, since most US collections have material created in these eras. It is here that she really delves into the nitty-gritty of bookbinding steps like sewing, endbanding, lining, board shaping, edge trimming and coloring, leather paring, clasps and so on. Some binding steps, like endbanding, are just hard to understand without technical drawings, and adding a few more line drawings here could have helped a less experienced reader. As in her earlier chapters, Miller is careful to note different bookbinding formats like stab sewn or stationer's bindings. Her excellent section on Colonial American bookbinding traditions is particularly useful, and we can all look forward to the publishing of her current research into the use of wooden boards (scaleboard) in early American bookbinding. In her last chapter, which romps through the intense innovation and variety in bookbinding from 1800 to 1900, she pays special attention to case binding elements, the changes in paper production, the manufacture of bookcloth, and of course the shift to publisher controlled binding choices. Miller notes that the variation of bindings within 19th century editions, coupled

with the wide use of stereotyping to produce the textblocks, can both lead to serious problems dating material from this era. These features can make typical bibliographic research for these under-appreciated materials even more difficult.

All four of these history chapters are well written and delightfully footnoted. Any teacher who wants a comprehensively illustrated introduction to western binding that covers everything from the Nag Hammadi codices to Smyth sewing to would be well advised to send her students to this handbook.

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The Death of the Book

At the beginning of this review the dreaded is the book dead phrase was used as a red flag, then dropped, with the promise of bringing it back. So here it is again: Is the book dead? In chapter four *The Book From 1800 to 1900*, Miller has already introduced the book-death theme:

The end of the nineteenth century and the end of making books by hand for the masses could be seen as the end of the road for the making of the handmade book. This occasional feeling of impending doom is magnified by the rush of institutional collections to digitize their books, including their rare collections, and the suspicion that, after digitization, inaccessible storage will be the fate of some of the collections we have a few years to establish our claim to access artifact bindings, and we must hope our small voice will be heard (p.190)

Miller's final chapter in *Books Will Speak Plain* begins with Emily Dickinson's voice saying:

Forever is composed of now —

This mysterious line of poetry makes the reader stop and contemplate. What does it mean? Taken negatively, the Emily Dickinson's NOW could be the sad dwarfing of historic bookbindings in the face of massive institutional responsibilities to digitize information and preserve digital information. Taken negatively the FOREVER of Dickinson's phrase could be the permanent lonely isolation of historic bindings warehoused in cold and remote storage as if in a morgue. Or taken positively the NOW of Emily's poem could be the current efforts Miller and many others are making to describe historic bindings accurately and share that information. And taken positively the FOREVER in this line of poetry could be the permanent new life historic binding description will have when incorporated into a library catalog accessible to all--the dream of universal and permanent access to information that has been the dream of librarianship since ancient Alexandria.

Miller starts each of her chapters with an evocative line of Emily Dickinson poetry, and the temptation to add more poetry to the mix here is strong. T.S. Elliot writes:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time
(Four Quartets 1943)

Perhaps our special collections are not headed for remote storage immediately, since it seems general collection materials may be first to move that direction, and that could take a long time. Indeed it is often harder to access these historic bindings now than is ideal even though they may live right on campus. Remote storage may not be much of a change, given that reality. But it is easy to share Miller's sense of urgency about describing our nation's extraordinary historic bindings. This urgency can be based as much on opportunity as fear. Miller mentions the vital twenty-first century book arts communities, bookbinding communities and book conservation communities. These groups are all passionately engaged with books as physical objects. Couple this synergy with new digital tools and the ease of sharing information. Then keep in mind the energized interdisciplinary and growing field of Book Studies within academe--these factors all add up to making this a prime time to do the historic binding

study Miller is calling for. Miller has filled her book with her excitement at these possibilities, and they bear repeating. As we move toward a screen-based world, we may indeed know books for the first time. The book seen deeply and lovingly described for the future is brought alive. The book described and made accessible in new ways is given new possibilities -- it is not dead.

A Footnote

Finally, the comprehensive, articulate, wonderfully footnoted and gently humorous vision Miller brings to her book is a tribute to what might perhaps be called the heroic generation of American bookbinders/conservators that she is part of. Many of these people are thanked in Miller's preface, and it is a long list of names. Those of us who have relied on this group's energy and teaching in our own work can never thank them enough.

A Footnote to the Footnote

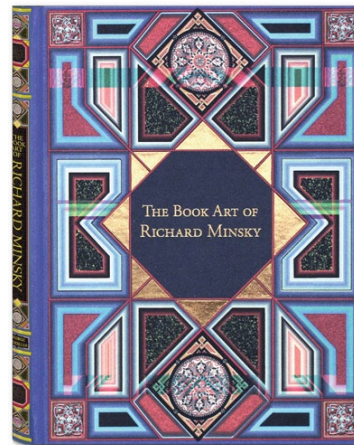
Legacy Press has also recently published Cathleen Bakers *From Hand to Machine: Nineteenth-Century American Paper and Mediums*. (Reviewed in the Bonefolder Jeffrey S. Peachey). The press must be commended for nurturing this level of scholarly work, and presenting it beautifully.

Chela Metzger started her official association with books by working as a library assistant at the age of 9. She graduated from Simmons College as a card-carrying librarian in 1990, and began her more intimate association with the craft of bookbinding at the North Bennet Street School in 1991, working 2 years with Mark Esser. She followed that with an internship in rare-book conservation at the Library of Congress in 1993, and began her paid conservation career as a project conservator at the Huntington Library in 1994. She began teaching book conservation to visiting Latin American interns in 1999, and moved into full-time lecturer work in 2001 at the University of Texas at Austin. In 2011 she began as Conservator of Library Collections at the Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library in Winterthur, DE. Having been the recipient of amazingly generous teaching in the past, she hopes to help carry on the tradition, integrity and discipline of bookwork in all its facets. On-going bookish research interests include: history of the book, binding in Spain and Latin America, future of books and libraries, the binding of archival materials historically, how books are depicted in art, social life of books. She is also a member of the Editorial Board of The Bonefolder.

Bound for Glory, the Book Artistry of Richard Minsky

Minsky, Richard. *The Book Art of Richard Minsky*. New York: George Brazillier, 2011. ISBN-10: 0807616060 (hardcover). 136pp. \$31.97.

Reviewed by Miriam Schaar



It's no exaggeration to say that Richard Minsky's bindery is also his soapbox. Across a nearly half-century career, and counting, Minsky has produced a steady flow of bound volumes infused with anger, wit and passion. Expertly crafted, they transform workmanship into artistry by the ideas they embody and the propulsive energy of their maker.

Along the way, Minsky also became Johnny Appleseed to a growing community of people and organizations devoted to book arts, a term Minsky, himself, is credited with coining. In 1974, he founded the non-profit Center for Book Arts in New York, an organization of which (full disclosure) I am a long-time member, and the model for many other centers for the arts of the book.

A natural evangelist, Minsky has taught book art classes, curated book art exhibits, exhibited his own book arts, contributed to book art scholarship, challenged art world orthodoxies, outraged traditionalists, and founded (online) a Book Art Museum. *The Book Art of Richard Minsky* arrives as a timely, handsome, well-deserved retrospective of his most interesting, most photogenic works.

The Bound and the Beautiful

Book Art in America author Betty Bright sets the stage with a crisp introduction and clarifies the distinction between "art books" and "book arts" which, after Minsky, should nevermore be confused. Following Bright, Minsky himself takes over as

tour guide to the Minsky oeuvre. A long section engagingly recounts his early years before tapering off into short takes on individual projects, most notably *The Bill of Rights*. Notes on additional works follow, anticlimactically ending with a CV.

Completed in the shadow of 9/11 and the ensuing threats to civil liberties, Minsky's *The Bill of Rights* consists of 10 volumes, one for each of the first 10 amendments to the constitution. The work's overall tenor can be seen in its treatment of the Second Amendment, concerning the right to bear arms. The amendment is represented by a Minsky-bound edition of *Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat* by Morris Dees and James Corcoran, its cover enhanced by such interior quotes as "America is quickly moving into a long dark night of police state tyranny." Other amendments are similarly treated. The series is angry and impassioned.

Members of the Center for Book Arts will be familiar with pieces of the Minsky saga, as it's long been absorbed into the Center's creation myth: his boyhood in Queens, his discovery of letterpress printing in junior high, the death of both parents at early ages, his close relationships with his grandmother and sister. All this had an enormous impact on Minsky, and imprinted on him the importance of living at full throttle.

Other parts of the story will be less familiar: how he studied fencing and sang in the Brooklyn College choir, loved music and dance, applied for a job at the CIA to avoid being drafted and sent to Vietnam (hey, it was the Sixties), graduated with an economics degree, withdrew his CIA application, and transferred to Brown University to begin graduate studies in economics. (Believe me, this is not how most people become book artists.)

At Brown, he discovered the university bookbinder and bindery, which he duplicated in his tiny dorm room. The romance was on. Economics became a girlfriend left behind. But not entirely, and Minsky acquired an MA in the subject before transferring, under scholarship, to the New School in Manhattan, where he credits Prof. Horace Kallen's *Philosophy of Art* course with changing him "from a bookbinder to a book artist."

Weary of Nixonian America, Minsky headed to Europe in 1971. He visited master bookbinders, binderies and book conservators, and performed with a traveling folk-rock band, before returning to Queens where, with a loan from the Small Business Administration, he opened a bindery and book repair shop. His formal career had begun

Those who have known, studied or worked with Minsky will be unable to read of these events without hearing his voice. Those newly encountering Minsky will find his voice an

easy companion, and wish only there were more of what in London is referred to as the naughtier bits.

Épater la Bourgeoisie

The Minsky works that receive the most attention share a progressive sensibility and a commitment to civil rights. Volumes like *Chemistry in Warfare* (1993), with its gas-mask cover; George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four* (2003-2006), a prescient take on the surveillance society; and *The Bill of Rights*, bristle like leather-bound agitprop with the metaphors of outrage. Minsky's desire for action traces back to his family. Both parents moved in political circles. His father created *The Religious News Service* to promote religious tolerance, and his mother worked for the Anti Defamation League and with the League of Women Voters. Minsky, himself, performed for a time with an anti-Vietnam performance troupe.

At the time they were first exhibited, many Minsky bindings were characterized as outrageous or scandalous, but chiefly within the conservative world of bookbinders. Always interested in pushing boundaries, Minsky doesn't seem to have thought twice about binding Thomas Pettigrew's *A History of Egyptian Mummies* (1973) in linen strips, as if mummifying the book itself, without the owner's permission. Fortunately, he loved it.

Minsky adorned *The Birds of North America* (1975), submitted to a Guild of Bookworkers exhibition at Yale, with pheasant skin, so the first thing the reader sees is a dead bird on the cover. This reportedly caused a conservator to scream on opening the package. Looking at the book now, it's hard to see what the fuss was about, especially in light of Damien Hirst's formaldehyde-fueled career. Among the interesting aspects of Minsky's work is his attraction to unorthodox materials, such as the rat skins he tanned and applied to Patti Smith's *Babel* (1979), and the mystery skin covering Barton Lidice Beneš' *The Dog Bite* (1970).

Personally, I find *The Geography of Hunger* (1988), creepier than the rest. The edge of the binding, embedded with teeth, creates a mouth on the fore edge that makes it look as if the book could bite off one's finger. Bits of food labels on the outer edges, make one feel the book has already chewed up a meal and is about to spit it back out.

Many Minsky books are off-the-shelf editions re-bound from his perspective. Usually strategic about the books he binds, he often selected hot-button titles and subjects along with binding materials certain to engage readers in a dialog about their content. Minsky decorated George Plimpton's *Fireworks: A History and Celebration* (1992) with live fireworks and a box of matches; *The Biological Time Bomb*

(1988) with explosives, batteries, electrical tape and a timer; and *Nineteen Eighty-four* with a miniature hidden video camera and embedded LED monitor so the reader sees on the cover his or her own image staring back above the warning “Big Brother is Watching You.”

Many volumes were bound deliberately to provoke or make a statement about important issues. For *Holy Terror: The Fundamentalist War on America's Freedoms in Politics, Religion and Our Private Lives* (1988), Minsky foil-stamped on Nigerian goatskin a picture of himself as a TV preacher surrounded by the flames of Hell. *Laying Waste: The Poisoning of America by Toxic Chemicals* (1988) sports a hypodermic needle, crack caps and a phosphorescent death head.

When Minsky develops a book from scratch — writing, illustrating and binding both the covers and their content — the subject is often sex. In *Minsky in London* (1980), the artist's sex life shares the stage with instructions on tanning rat skins. *Minsky in Bed* (1988) explores the former subject further, continuing a long tradition of artists and writers who have harvested their exploits as artistic fodder, from Casanova and Henry Miller to Tracy Emin's tent installation, *Everyone I Ever Slept With 1963-1995*.

Minsky's twist was to do it in the style of incunabula. Sculpted brass knobs, called bosses, shaped as a copulating couple, protect *Minsky in Bed's* leather covers from coming in contact with any reading surface, while handcuffs chain the whole apparatus to a brass bed rail. Other Minsky projects stretch the very idea of a book. He bound Erica Jong's *Sappho's Leap: A Novel* (2003) in the form of a scroll, and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Philosophy of Umbrellas* (2008) as a Tyvek umbrella to commemorate the late Judith Hoffberg, editor and publisher of *Umbrella*, long an important resource for information about artists' books.

At heart, however, Minsky is a traditionalist. His works include numerous traditional bindings, like the ones for *Cook's Voyages* (1968) and Tom Phillips' translation of *Dante's Inferno* (1980), as well as many blank books and guest books bound in exotic leathers with Art Deco and other historically inspired cover designs. And nearly all his books use traditional codices, even when attached to a bed, an electric chair, barbed wire, or linen wrappings. The form of the codex, even if not fully intact, is almost always recognizable.

Minsky has also called attention to earlier era's bindings with compendia like *American Decorated Publishers' Bindings 1872-1929* (3 volumes, 2006-2010) and *The Art of American Book Covers 1875-1930* (2010), which revived interest in a number of important book cover designers. Many were women, who were encouraged to find employment

creating designs for book covers and other objects of the new industrial age, and who have otherwise been written out of the history of the decorative arts of the period. Their stories are an important addition to the history of artists' books, and publishing.

The Book Art of Richard Minsky deserves a place on every book arts shelf. It brings us up to date with, and up close to, the career, still active, of an essential book artist. The photographs are clear, bright, inclusive and abundant. Minsky's vision is no less.

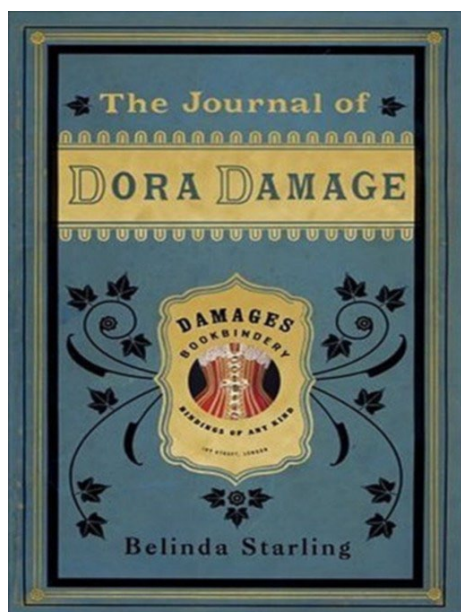
Miriam Schaer is a Brooklyn-based multimedia book artist, and a Lecturer in the Interdisciplinary MFA Program in Book and Paper at Columbia College in Chicago. She has exhibited steadily and extensively in solo and group exhibitions, and her work has been mentioned in a long list of articles and reviews. She is a recipient of a NYFA Artists Fellowship and her work has been included in the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series at Douglass Library, the oldest and longest-running exhibition series dedicated to showcasing women artists in the United States. Her work can be seen in many public collections including Arts of the Book at Yale University, The Mata & Arthur Jaffe Collection: Book as Aesthetic Object at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida, The Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture at Duke University in Durham NC. Her work can be seen on-line in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for the Feminist Art Base at the Brooklyn Museum, and at <<http://www.miriamschaer.com>>.



Starling, Belinda. *The Journal of Dora Damage*. London: Bloomsbury, 2007. 464pp. ISBN-10: 1596913363. Out of print but available.

Review by John Nove

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A chance meeting with an English woman over dinner on a remote Scottish isle last summer led to the mention of her friend Belinda Starling, recently deceased, who was the author of a novel that, as a bookbinder, she was sure I'd find interesting. No other details were shared, but a week after she left the island a parcel arrived via the Royal Mail containing the paperback version of *The Journal of Dora Damage*. The several blurbs on the back cover included one from the French women's magazine *Marie Claire* ("a riveting tale of bookbinding and Victorian pornography") and another from *The Guardian* which proclaimed the book a "scrupulously researched racy tale".

I immediately began reading it and was transported into the Lambeth district of London in the mid-19th century with all its bleakness, despair and poverty – a very Dickensian setting whose sights, smells and tastes Starling expertly captured. The story's narrator is twenty-something Dora Damage, a binder's daughter, then binder's wife, who sets out to support her severely arthritic husband Peter and their epileptic young daughter Lucinda by taking over the family business at a time when women were seldom permitted to perform other than menial bindery tasks (=sewing). Her options are few – make an attempt at successfully running the bindery or debtors' prison for the entire family. So with her husband's verbal guidance and the forwarding assistance of his young apprentice she sets out to resurrect Damages Bindery under the disapproving gaze of her neighbors.

Salvation appears in the form of Sir Jocelyn Knightly, an Africa explorer, physician, bibliophile and exoticist. Attracted by her unusual tooling and choice of cover materials, Knightly and his group of friends, the Noble Savages, likely modeled after Sir Richard Burton and his Kama Shashtra Society, begin to provide commissions – along with morphine for Peter, an experimental therapy for Lucinda, and for Dora, entry into an unimagined netherworld of Victorian smut. Courtesy of Lady Knightly, Dora is also sent Din, a freed slave from Virginia, to become her apprentice (and she his!) after Peter dies.

The novel plunges deeper and deeper into the realms of vice, racism and pornography while providing what seem to be accurate details of the day-to-day operation of her bindery and the local tanneries. Dora finally draws the line at the degree of depravity to which she is willing to close her eyes. (For me the line would have been drawn sooner – some of the material in this book, based on well-researched Victorian predilections, is strong stuff.) With all the information she has, however, and the police closing in on their 'business', the Savages declare her expendable, and as a fitting termination to their relationship kidnap her and tattoo their logo onto her buttocks, planning to eventually use her skin (vegetable-tanned, we assume) on yet another one of their nefarious volumes. ("The perfect quarto, you said? Mrs. Damage's arse, I'm afraid, will cover little more than an octavo, and a crown octavo at that.")

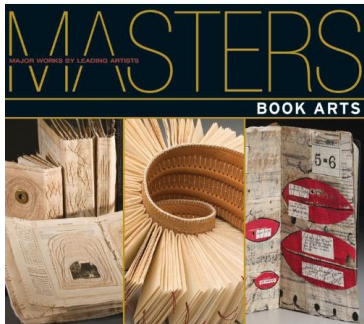
Good finally prevails, as it usually does in these Victorian novels – and their Masterpiece Theatre versions. Dora, Lucinda (now free of epilepsy), and Mrs. Knightly and her newborn half-black son move off to Gravesend as a family. Dora then uses some of newly-acquired wealth to create a support organization for women binders that by 1917 evolves into the Society of Women in the Bookbinding and Printing Trades.

In recent years I've seldom devoured a book as voraciously as I did this one. Its depiction of Victorian bindery life, together with its intrigue and malignant darkness – overshadowed by the fortitude of Dora herself – lead me not only to recommend it strongly but to also suggest that it might make an ideal (if somewhat unusual) 'set book' for a binding competition.

John Nove is a bookbinder working for private and institutional clients in western Massachusetts. He graduated from the North Bennet Street School and opened the Grey Seal Bindery, named to honor the selkies he hears singing from his summer cottage on the Scottish island of Papa Westray in Orkney. He can be reached at <nove.john@gmail.com>.

Wallace, Eileen. *Masters: Book Arts*.
Lark Books: Asheville, 2011. ISBN-13:
9781600594977 (paper). 330pp. \$24.95.

A review by Jules Siegel

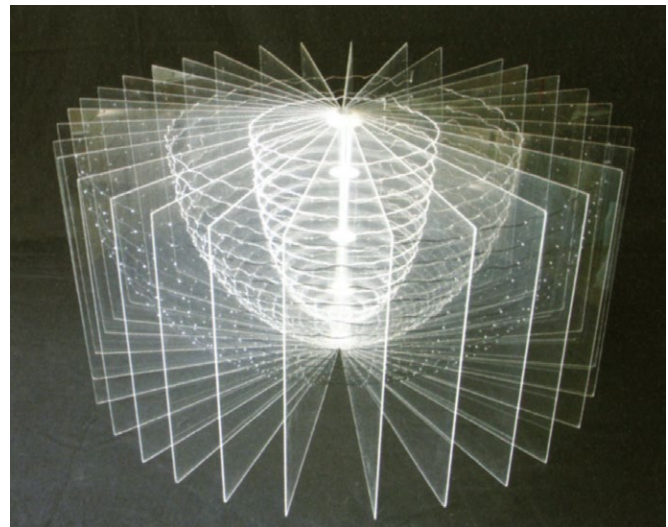


Masters: Book Arts by Eileen Wallace is an exhibit in book form that presents intriguing glimpses of the works of 43 book artists. Printed in full color on heavy coated matte stock, this large, solid book is satisfying to hold and read. The layout is lively but well-organized, with highly coherent use of editorial elements to chart a path through the luxuriant maze of book art. The photography is uniformly excellent. Vivid yet non-intrusive light and simple settings show the often complex works with obvious affection, but without over-dramatization. The text is factual, terse and sympathetic. Eileen Wallace, who is described as the curator rather than author or editor, remains decidedly in the background. *Masters: Book Arts* is easy to read and a pleasure to browse. The text informs rather than challenges, a very good thing, as the works themselves are challenging enough.

Few of those statements will apply to most of the works it contains, many of which strike me as anti-books that caricature the traditional book as either a sacred cow or a beautiful but meaningless artifact from some long-dead civilization. Some of them really don't even qualify as book-like, much less books. Appropriately, the works depicted here will be in museums and collections while *Masters: Book Arts* will be in libraries. *Masters: Book Arts* is a collaborative, corporate work of art. It does not possess what George Braziller described to me as the "singularity" of the artist's book, which is almost always the work of a single artist (or a very small group of collaborators) exercising the same control over the work that a painter exercises over a canvas.

The publisher's blurb for *Masters: Book Arts* says it "shows field-defining work from 43 master book artists." While these highly imaginative and beautifully executed works are worthy examples of book art, they hardly define the field. To the contrary, most are a subset of production aesthetic that Johanna Drucker described in "Critical Issues/Exemplary

Works," her landmark *Bonefolder* article on setting parameters for curating and cataloging book art, as "book-like objects...sculptural and free-standing...usually not readable, containing very little content." (Johanna, Drucker. "Critical Issues / Exemplary Works." *Bonefolder* 1.2 (2010))



Vessels by Adèle Outridge, 2004 (136, *Masters: Book Arts*).

It's easy to ridicule innovative art, but I think it is fair to ask what works such as Adèle Outridge's wordless constructions of Coptic-bound transparent acrylic pages have to do with books. They don't look like books. In these photographs, they look like lamps, as do some of the works of Margaret Couch Cogswell.



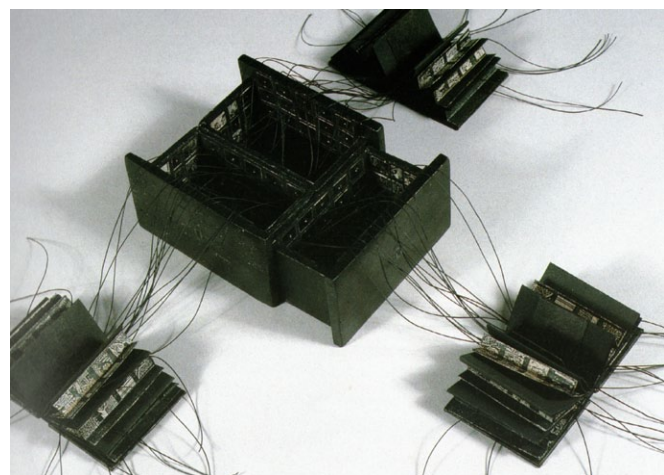
Birdbrain by Margaret Couch Cogswell, 2009. (32, *Masters: Book Arts*) Photograph by Steve Mann.

To me, all but a few of the works in *Masters: Book Arts* are not so much books, as statements about books. They are not meant to be read, but to be possessed, to provoke admiration and discussion, the ultimate coffee-table books.

As a book artist dedicated to producing narrative works that mimic the style of industrially-produced books, I admire their craftsmanship and provocative spirit. As a writer, I find them entertaining but ultimately beside the point. As a graphic designer, I love them because graphic designers don't care about words except as shapes. Professional art critics, however, struggle to understand and define book art.



Tunnel Book from *The Living Inside Series* by Andrea Dezsö, 2009 (202, *Masters: Book Arts*) Photograph by Péter Hapák.



The Slow Ties of Love and Pain by Genie Shenk, 1993 (189, *Masters: Book Arts*).

In a general sense, the sometimes baffling works in this catalog are perhaps best appreciated in the context of Marcel Duchamp's signed urinal. They are political (or philosophical, if you prefer) statements about the social meaning of art. This kind of book art can be seen as the latest development of the historical trend toward art that is defiantly meaningless except for its ability to annoy people by setting the latest Sotheby's price record. At its most meaningful, book art is, perhaps, funerary art. The book as we have known it is not yet on the

endangered species list, but the current outlook is filled with gloom and doubt.

In the late '90s a subscriber to a discussion list for copy editors reported that a publishing marketing executive instructed a group of editors to consider books concrete blocks. He was not joking. The ideal book, in this sense, was all cover, no book. The packaging was far more important than the content. He was prophetic. Today, discarded books are raw material for sculptural book art, like the ancient gravestones used as paving blocks.



Science in the Twentieth Century by Brian Dettmer, 2009 (30, *Masters: Book Arts*).

When I first saw altered books I felt a deep, almost unspeakable revulsion for the desecration of the sacred totem that had defined my life and work. It took me a while to remember that books are routinely destroyed in the ordinary course of the publishing process. Publishers pulped an estimated 77 million unsold books in 2009. (Alberge, Dalya. "How 77 Million Books a Year Are Turned Into Pulp Fiction." Mail Online. The Daily Mail (UK), 30 Dec. 2009. Web. 3 Sep. 2011. <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1239252/How-77million-books-year-turned-pulp-fiction.html>>.) How long can a system survive that creates tons of lovingly crafted products that are trucked out to distribution points for exhibition and then returned and destroyed if unsold?

This negative cast of mind extended to much non-traditional book art, but when I put aside my prejudices, I found myself charmed and impressed, indeed, enchanted by

these joyful works. Their superb craftsmanship, playful spirit and loving enthusiasm for the book as a cultural expression give me hope that what I – and many others – consider real books will continue to flourish and survive, for they are the true living spirit — revered, if not read — that book artists honor in this new kind of devotional art.

Jules Siegel is a writer and graphic designer whose works have appeared over the years in Playboy, Rolling Stone, Best American Short Stories and many other publications. He is an active book artist, with works in the Museum of Modern Art's Artist Books Collection and other private and institutional collections. He categorizes his work as narrative book art.

He writes: "In 1981, I walked away from what most people consider the real world to live and work in remote beach locations in Mexico where the written word was superfluous. I survived because of my commercial skills as a graphic designer and photographer.

"With the advent of the laser printer, I began making my own books in one-of-a-kind editions I bound by hand using primitive but sturdy techniques that I adapted after examining conventional books. My books today look like ordinary trade books. One might say I make counterfeit books. They look exactly like real books. But the content is 100% mine. I am not interested in creating a new medium. I am interested in communicating with readers using the highest professional standards of traditional book design." He can be found online at <<http://www.bookart.us>>.



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