

On the Digital Brink

**TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 20-22, 2000**

THIS YEAR'S annual conference features a two-fold theme: how modern optical and digital imaging technologies are being used by scholars to study book and graphic arts history and the changing nature of the book and the technologies of its dispersion. This year's program will take place at Rochester Institute of Technology, in Rochester, NY, and is sponsored by the Cary Graphic Arts Collection in RIT's Wallace Library.

Robert Bringhurst will deliver the keynote address on Friday evening, October 20, at 7:00 PM. Robert Bringhurst is a noted scholar, lecturer and the author of *The Elements of Typographic Style* and *A Story Sharp As a Knife*, a groundbreaking study of a Native American oral literature. In 1993, he delivered APHA's J. Ben Lieberman lecture at the Clark Library, UCLA. His address, "The Voice in the Mirror," will explore the idea that, to an extraordinary degree, physical books and the physical processes by which they are made and distributed are metaphors rather than entities. Because they are metaphors, they can change without necessarily damaging or destroying the things they represent. The book is a cultural universal like the marriage or the funeral, or the meal and should not be taken for granted, whatever tangible or intangible form it might take today.

A gala reception in the Cary Collection will follow Mr. Bringhurst's address. Attendees can view an exhibition of rare printers' manuals, as well as a special installation of material from the Hamilton Wood Type Museum in Two Rivers, Wisconsin. "Educating the Good and Curious Workman" focuses on the printer's manual and its fascinating history. Some of the rarest manuals in existence, including Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises* (1683) and Van Winkle's *Printers' Guide* (1818) will be on display. "The Hamilton Wood Type Museum" puts old and new wood type, prints, specimen sheets, and other material from the recently established Hamilton Wood Type Museum in Two Rivers on view in a special gallery near the Cary Collection. Curator Richard Zauft will deliver a gallery talk as part of the welcoming reception activities on Friday evening, October 20.

The conference will continue on Saturday, October 21, at

8 AM with a presentation by Robert Johnson, Roger Easton, and Keith Knox. They will jointly discuss the collaborative digital reconstruction of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The lecture, entitled, "Image Restoration of the Dead Sea Scrolls," will report on image enhancement technologies used to reveal faint or previously unseens information on ancient documents, including the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Archimedes Palimpsest. Their optical and digital imaging techniques hold wide promise for the study and preservation of these as well as other legacy documents. Roger Easton is a professor in the Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science at RIT and has published widely in the field of optical and digital analysis of images, including ancient documents. Dr. Easton also maintains research interests in computer-generated holography and astronomical imaging. Robert H. Johnston is a dean and professor emeritus at RIT and currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Imaging Science. Dr. Johnston is a highly regarded archaeologist specializing in ancient ceramics and, more recently, the Dead Sea Scrolls. He has expertise in xeroradiographic, infrared, and ultraviolet analysis, as well as in the recovery of degraded images using digital imaging technologies. Keith Knox is principal scientist at the Xerox Digital Imaging Technology Center in Rochester, NY, where he coordinates collaborative research between local industries and universities. Dr. Knox's current research interests are in digital image restoration through the use of edge enhancement and other techniques, with application to the enhancement of writings on ancient artifacts.

The morning will continue with the presentations of Kay Amert and Keith Knox. Kay Amert is a professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and Director of the Typography Laboratory at the University of Iowa. She teaches courses on the history of the book and conducts research on French Renaissance books and typefaces. Her lecture, "The Digital Comparison of Letterforms" will describe a method she has developed for scanning and then evaluating, through a series of individual comparisons, the typefaces used by early printers. Her research has focused on sixteenth-century French printers and this paper will reveal new information about the types of Simon de Colines and the Estienne family of printers.

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CHAPTER NOTES

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

APHA NE met on Tuesday, July 11, in the Rare Book Department of the Boston Public Library. The Curator of Rare Books, Susan Glover Godlewski, treated chapter members to a survey of highlights of the printing treasures held by the BPL, including book by Gutenberg, Caxton, Baskerville, Bodoni, Morris, Rogers, Updike, and Dwiggens. Susan is a splendid guide, quite willing to share her knowledge and her collections.

Members next gathered on Saturday, August 12th in Newport, RI for their annual meeting and a visit to 3rd and Elm Press.

APHA NE looks forward to Greer Allen's lecture, "Carl P. Rollins, First University Printer," Saturday, October 28th, 2:30 PM, John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.

— *Alice Beckwith, Chapter President* <ahrhb@aol.com>

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

On June 8th, a lovely late spring evening, APHA's Northern California chapter, traveled to the offices of Octavo, publisher of rare books, manuscripts, and antiquarian printed material in technologically advanced digital formats. This visit was part of APHA NoCal's year-long focus on technology and the book. Located in Jack London Square, Oakland, Octavo is busy putting old and rare books onto CD-ROMs in a rich multimedia format. The user can move from broadly viewing the spreads of a book on a CD to zooming in on illustrations and the printing in order to minutely inspect the detail of the work. Key word searches take the reader directly to the pages of the book where the reference is made.

Octavo staff provided an overview of the company and its efforts, explained the digital camera room used for photographing the books, and demonstrated some of their new projects. Octavo's respect for rare books was evident, as was their enthusiasm for providing rare books in a format which makes them accessible to a broader audience.

On September 2nd APHA NoCal traveled to the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose to view the exhibition called "The Future of Reading"

organized by the Xerox research unit, Xerox PARC. Members and guests enjoyed the opportunity to test the latest technological experiments in the way reading might be done in the future. Picture, for instance, a cozy wing chair with built-in speakers and a reading wand which, when dragged across the surface of the book, will produce the sounds described in words and images on its pages. The studio for book arts that has been set up in conjunction with the exhibition was also available for viewing and questions. Then, on September 15th, APHA NoCal attended a special reception at the San Francisco Center for the Book. Rich Gold, Xerox PARC member and chief organizer of "The Future of Reading," summarized the work represented at the Tech at a public lecture after the reception.

Finally, APHA NoCal will enjoy a members-only dinner, hosted by Chimera Books & Music, after its annual meeting in December. Details for this event will be announced later.

— *Greg Graalfs & Kathy Walkup*

CHESAPEAKE CHAPTER

APHA's Chesapeake Chapter will meet for lunch at the Oak Knoll Fest on Saturday September 30th in New Castle, DE. The chapter has been invited to hold an overnight meeting in late fall at the Book Arts Press at the U of VA. Members will receive further details by a mailing. If you would like to be notified of Chesapeake chapter events, such as this one, please send your contact information to <Mike.Kaylor@washcoll.edu> or to the general AHPA mailing address listed in the masthead of this newsletter.

— *Mike Kaylor, Chapter President*

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Frank Romano is regarded as one of the foremost authorities on digital publishing technology today. He has founded eight publications and is the author of over thirty books, the most recent of which is a guide to Adobe InDesign. He is a professor in RIT's College of Imaging Arts and Sciences where he teaches courses on digital publishing and printing. His lecture is entitled, "Time Capsules: Preserving the History of Print." Rapid changes in composition and printing technologies over the past thirty years have had a dramatic and largely positive effect on the publishing industry, but are posing problems for historians of printing used to hot metal artifacts. Professor Romano will discuss what he believes needs to be preserved from the photocomposition and now the digital eras, that is both representative of the technology and useful as a record.

The afternoon program will include talks by Czeslaw Jan Grycz and Douglas Holleley as well as a demonstration of some of the digital printing technologies that are reshaping the graphic arts industry.

Czeslaw Jan Grycz is CEO and Publisher at Octavo, a digital preservation and publishing company working with important early manuscripts and printed books. He was scholarly and academic designer and production manager at Stanford University Press and the University of California Press. His ample printing technology experience ranges from hand setting type to developing collaborative Internet-based databases. "Perdurability: Digital Books and Beatrice Warde's Vision of Permanence" is the title of his talk. Beatrice Warde compared the permanence of a text

printed in multiple copies on flimsy paper to that of one deeply chiseled on a massive Roman monument in her celebrated broadsheet announcing Eric Gill's Perpetua typeface. She concluded that inscribed letters wanted permanence, and used the term "perdurable" to describe her thesis that printed and distributed copies of a text, however refractory the material upon which they may be printed, will likely far outlast seemingly permanent inscriptions in stone. In his talk, Grycz addresses Warde's conclusions in a digital publishing context.

Douglas Holleley, an Australian-born artist, lecturer, and author, received an MFA in photography from Rochester's Visual Studies Workshop and recently completed a PhD at the University of Sydney. Dr. Holleley is the author, designer, and co-publisher of the forthcoming *Digital Book Design and Publishing*, a comprehensive text on designing, printing, and publishing high-quality books using readily available digital technology. "Re-reading the Book Digitally" will address the assumptions and issues involved when attempting to communicate the appearance and "feel" of a book via digital photography and digital desktop printing. Of necessity, there will be a discussion of the factors involved when one is forced to both utilize and simultaneously question the apparent indexical nature of photography. In doing so, practical issues of lighting and viewpoint, digital image correction, and the maximization of desktop printer quality will be examined.

On Saturday evening, at 6:30 PM, conference participants are invited to a banquet (transportation provided) at the famed Oak Hill Country Club, host of the 1995 Ryder Cup, with after-dinner activities including a book auction.

The conference fee of \$60 for members and \$75 for non-members is exceptionally reasonable and includes admittance to the opening night reception and all lectures, demonstrations, and exhibits, as well as a continental breakfast and box lunch on Saturday. An additional charge of \$25 will be required for those participants wishing to attend the not-to-be-missed banquet at Oak Hill Country Club on Saturday evening. APHA 2000 conference reservations will be confirmed upon receipt of payment and a registration form.

If you are not already a member of APHA, you can join now. New members joining at this time will

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receive the member's discount for conference registration. If you have not received an order form please visit <www.printinghistory.org> or contact Steven Crook, APHA's executive secretary, for registration information and membership information: APHA, PO Box 4922, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163-4922.

A campus map and a detailed schedule of events will be mailed to all registrants. Up-to-date information about the conference may be found at APHA's website <www.printinghistory.org>. Immediate inquiries can be directed to David Pankow, Curator, Cary Collection by telephone: 716.475-2408; or by email: dppwml@rit.edu.

A block of rooms has been reserved for APHA participants at the Radisson Hotel on the edge of the RIT campus and within easy walking distance of all conference

activities. (A hotel shuttle will also be available. Call 716.475.1910 and ask for the special APHA conference rate of \$86, single or double occupancy. A supplementary list of other local hotels, ranging from economy to upscale, will be provided upon request. Most of these will provide shuttle service to the RIT campus. Please contact David Pankow at the Cary Collection if you would like to receive this list.

An agreement with USAirways provides discounted airfares to Rochester for APHA conference participants as follows: 5% off the lowest applicable published fares. To obtain this special discount, call USAirways's Group and Meeting Reservation Office at 877.874.7687 (8 AM to 9:30 PM EST). Refer to Gold File No. 99631417. The Radisson Hotel offers shuttle service to and from the airport and there is a full complement of rental car agencies. ✿

New Production Editor Begins Work; Copy Editor Still Needed

This is the second issue for our new production editor, Suzanne Micheau. We welcome Suzanne's proficiency in design and production. Look for her touches in the layout of the Newsletter in the next issues. Suzanne and I create each issue via email. Editorial work done in New York is emailed to Suzanne in Iowa City for formatting.

Suzanne Micheau earned her BA in English from the University of Iowa in 1994. She has been the Program Assistant at the Center for the Book since then. She enjoys digital text design, but prefers to work in metal.

A copy editor for the Newsletter is still urgently needed. We are looking for one editor or for coeditors who will work with Suzanne to lead this publication. Please contact me, 212.304.8157, to learn more about this position. If this Newsletter is important to you, I need your help to write and edit four issues each year.

—Lissa Dodington

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2000 J. Ben Lieberman Memorial Lecture

“Ink, Type, and Serendipity,” is the title of the 2000 Lieberman Memorial Lecture to be given by British printer John Randle, founder of the Whittington Press and of the journal *Matrix*. He will speak at 5:30 PM on Monday, October 2, at the University of Pennsylvania’s Van Pelt Library on the sixth floor. The library is located at 3420 Walnut Street in Philadelphia, PA. The lecture and reception immediately following are free and open to the public. APHA extends its thanks to Michael T. Ryan, director of the Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Van Pelt-Deitrich Library Center of the University of Pennsylvania, for his help and co-sponsorship with the University of Pennsylvania Library.

The Lieberman lectures, given annually by a distinguished figure in the history of printing or the book arts, are sponsored by the American Printing History Association in honor of J. Ben Lieberman, APHA’s first President. The annual lectures are hosted by different institutions across the United States and speakers have included Barry Moser, Kenneth E. Carpenter, Robert H. Hirst, Claire Badaracco, G. Thomas Tanselle, Robert Bringhurst, David Kaser, Stephen O. Saxe, Clive Griffin, James Gilreath, Paul Needham, and Claire Van Vliet. This year APHA welcomes John Randle as the Lieberman lecturer.

John and Rose Randle started the Whittington Press twenty-seven years ago in the Cotswold village of Whittington as partly the result of an early enthusiasm for Caslon type, Albion presses, and hand-made paper; and as partly weekend escape from London publishing jobs. The Press has printed and published some 150 titles, including *belles lettres*, collections of wood-engravings, bibliographies of

other presses, type specimens, and its internationally acclaimed annual review for printers & bibliophiles, *Matrix*.

The books published by the Whittington Press display the highest standard of traditional letterpress book production. Fine papers are used, and the Press commissions or makes marbled papers, which are the most usual covering for the books. Caslon is a special favorite of the Randles,



and about half of the Press’s titles are printed with hand-set or Monotype Caslon. The Press casts and handsets its own type to perpetuate technologies many believe will never be equaled for the purity of the typefaces, the crispness of impression, and for that third dimension entirely lacking from the computer-derived books.

The evening’s talk will include serendipitous tales of the acquisition of letterpress equipment, foundry and Monotype types and paper stock. An unusual Whittington project will have tipped-in samples of papers from a collection of hand- and mould-made papers that the Press bought from Oxford University Press in 1986. Stacks of some 20,000 sheets of sixty different papers were the forgotten left-overs from books printed at OUP from about 1900 to 1970. They were lying neglected in a separate storeroom until the paper warehouse was moved and this treasure came to light.

An important milestone for the Whittington Press was the publication in 1981 of *Matrix*, an annual review for printers and bibliophiles. According to Randle, “*Matrix* came about partly because we had projects in mind which would not quite make a book, but which nevertheless needed publishing, and partly because, although the Americans had their *Fine Print*, we in England, with the notable exception of *Albion*, seem to be poorly provided with a journal devoted to fine printing in its finest sense, from practical printing to book collecting.” [*The Whittington Press, a Bibliography 1971-1981*, Andoversford 1982, p. 65.] Two years later in the reprint of *Matrix I*, John Randle summarized his editorial view: “Broadly, *Matrix* has to concern itself with twentieth-century printing in all its many aspects.”

Come to this year’s Lieberman Lecture and listen to the serendipitous story of ink meeting paper under the hand of John Randle on Monday, 2 October 2000, at the University of Pennsylvania’s Van Pelt Library. 🐦



CALENDAR

CONFERENCES

October 5-8 Salt Lake City, UT: 20th Guild of Book Worker's Seminar on Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding. Presentations by Gabrielle Fox, Terry Buckley, Pam Spitzmueller, Bill Minter, Karen Zukor. Contact: Monique Lallier, 336.643.0934.

October 20-22 Rochester, NY: APHA Annual Conference at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Digital technologies and their impact on the history of printing. See cover story in this issue.

EXHIBITIONS

September 31 - October 1 New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Fest VII Fine Press Exhibition: 35 or more fine presses from Germany, UK, Canada and the US. Contact: 800.996.2556; oakknoll@oakknoll.com; www.oakknoll.com.

October 5 Salt Lake City, UT: "Best of the Best" Opening of the Guild of Book Worker's exhibition. Contact: Monique Lallier, 336.643.0934.

Through November 18 NYC: Grolier Club: "Fritz Kredel Centennial Exhibition" including some works previously unseen from the private collection of Kredel's daughter, Judith Kredel Brown, and his granddaughter, Mathilde Kredel Brown, co-curators. Contact: Nancy Houghton, 212.838.6690; nsh@grolierclub.org; www.grolierclub.org.

December 13-February 10 Grolier Club: "Hermann Zapf" curated by Jerry Kelly. Contact: Nancy Houghton, 212.838.6690; nsh@grolierclub.org; www.grolierclub.org.

FELLOWSHIPS

John Carter Brown Library Research Fellowships will award short- and long-term (2-4 months: stipend \$1,200 and 5-9 months: stipend \$3,000) for the year June 1, 2001-May 31, 2002. Application deadline: January 15, 2001. Contact: Director, JCB Library, Box 1894, Providence RI 02912; tel: 401.863.2725; JCBL_Fellowships@brown.edu; www.JCBL.org.

LECTURES

September 30 & October 1 New Castle DE: Two world-renowned engravers will speak: Barry Moser, one of the foremost engravers in the US, and Simon Brett, the dean of British wood engravers. Oak Knoll Fest. Contact: see previous entry.

October 2 Philadelphia, PA: "Ink, Type, and Serendipity," the APHA 2000 Lieberman Memorial Lecture by British printer John Randle, founder of the Whittington Press and of the journal *Matrix*, at 5:30 PM on Monday, October 2, at the University of Pennsylvania's Van Pelt Library, 3420 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA. Reception to follow. Free and open to the public. See article in this issue.

The APHA Newsletter

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PRINTING DIGITAL TYPE ON THE HAND-OPERATED FLATBED CYLINDER PRESS

This technical guide provides a wealth of invaluable information on printing with photopolymer plates on hand-operated flatbed cylinder proof presses such as the Vandercook, Challenge, and Asbern.

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