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2011 Annual Conference

THE APHA PROGRAM COMMITTEE announces the 36th Annual Conference, "Printing at the Edge." The two-day event will take place on October 14–15, 2011, at UC Diego. Complete details will be posted on the APHA website in January.

Annual Meeting

OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held at 2:00 p.m. on January 29, 2011 in the South Court Auditorium at the New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street in Manhattan. For those who have never attended, the annual meeting is a great

opportunity to meet fellow members from around the country, to network, to gather news and to hear important speakers. Our annual meeting marks the end of Bibliography Week in New York, when similar groups like the Bibliographical Society of America and the Grolier Club hold their annual meetings.

As always, the meeting will feature the presentation of our annual awards for distinguished contributions to the study, recording, preservation or dissemination of printing history. For 2011, the

Individual Award will be presented to Hendrik D.L. Vervliet. The 2011 Institutional Award will go to the MFA Program in the Book Arts of the University of Alabama School of Library and Information Science. Accepting the award will be Steve Miller, professor and MFA Program Coordinator. Both recipients will be in New York for the annual meeting. Thank you to our Awards Committee, chaired by Paul Gehl. The meeting is open to non-members (except for voting).

Chapter News to appear on Website Only

ESSENTIALLY, there is no chapter news for this issue of the *Newsletter*. It has become apparent that the APHA website is a more timely place for this information. Henceforth, please see the regional chapter tab at <http://www.printinghistory.org>.



Welcoming remarks by Casey Smith conference co-chair and chair of Arts & Humanities at Corcoran College of Art + Design. Photo: Jill Cypher.

Pre-conference Tours

The Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division

AN ENTHUSIASTIC GROUP of about 40 conference attendees was graciously hosted by Chief Mark Dimunation and his colleagues at the LOC Rare Book Reading Room. Approximately 50 items from a variety of LOC collections were on display. APHA members were given a printed guide to the items and with the help of willing and knowledgeable page turners (who were kept very busy), participants toured the room.

The oldest book on display was the *Catholicon* of Giovanni Balbi, printed in Mainz in 1460 (by Gutenberg, perhaps), and the newest was *Warrior Writers* from the Iraq Veterans Against the War and Combat Paper (Burlington VT, 2007). One of the most popular items on exhibit, judging by the number of people gathered around it, was an intact 12th-century Romanesque, white deerskin over leather boards binding of a German manuscript.

Personal highlights included the printed constellations in Galileo's *Starry Messenger* (Venice, 1610); the "Goddard Broadside," a copy of the Declaration of Independence printed in 1777 by Mary Katherine Goddard, the postmaster of Baltimore; "The Gerry-mander: A New Species of Monster," a broadside from the Printed Ephemera Collection (Salem, 1812); and an urgently produced "Wanted" poster bearing a photo of John Wilkes Booth and offering a \$100,000 reward for his capture (Washington DC, April 20, 1865).

Contemporary American printing and book arts were represented by material from the Janus Press Archive, The Gehenna Press Collection, Ken Botnik's emdash imprint, and broadsides from John Risseuw's Cabbagehead Press. APHA printers are clearly well represented in the LOC's Press Collec-

tion—when Dimunation asked those assembled to raise their hand if their work was held in the collection, about a third of the room responded.

Sara T. Saurers

Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of American History /Graphic Arts Collection

JOAN BOUDREAU (Acting Deputy Chair & Curator) met us in the lobby of the museum, where we split into three groups to visit three separate areas. We first visited Curator Helena Wright in the Graphic Arts Collection, then Stan Nelson in the printing



APHA Chesapeake chapter member James Walczak examines the Gordon Firefly Press. Photo: Martha Chiplis.

workshop, and we ended up in the Dibner Library with Kirsten van der Veen. Some highlights from the Graphic Arts Collection were 19th and early 20th c. wood engraving ephemera from Chicago, a 1916 Dard Hunter book, *The Etching of Contemporary Life*, written for the Chicago Society of Etchers, and a Kelmscott Chaucer with a special leather binding stamped with Chaucer's coat of arms.

Next we were taken down past the loading dock ('for non-objects only') and the biggest freight elevator I have ever seen, to the collection storage rooms. Posted on the door of the room was a warning about lead-containing material within, and we were thus required to don blue booties before we entered. Inside a number of presses were set up for demonstration and use. Host Stan Nelson posed next to a tabletop Albion Press to give his introduction, then showed off three portable printing presses used during the Civil War. Of special interest was a beautiful (and one of a kind?) Gordon Firefly Press card press, 1852. The Firefly prints on a continuous roll, and cuts the paper as it prints. Far too soon, we were hustled out to make way for the next group and encouraged to take some related publications home with us as well as a fresh piece of cast metal type.

The final part of the tour was the Dibner Library. The collection includes many of the major works dating from the fifteenth to the early nineteenth centuries in the history of science and technology. Some of the books set out for us were a book of "Secrets" from 1660, which included a printing ink recipe; Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, open to a spread showing some printing images; and Byrne's colorful *Euclid* from 1847 (a Taschen reproduction was published this year). To cap it all off we looked at an Ernst Haeckel natural history book from 1888 containing drawings carefully composed on a black background, printed by color lithography. The tour,

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both memorable and worthwhile, ended there and we departed, grateful to our hosts, our bags full of Smithsonian NMAH publications, our heads full of printing history.

Martha Chipelis

The Government Printing Office

A PREDISPOSITION TO LOVE SOMETHING may be necessary relish for certain pleasures, and I can reassure you the Government Printing Office tour was better than it sounds to one's relatives.

Before the tour, I stopped in the Government Printing Office bookstore and bought a copy of the Congressional Pictorial Directory, a photo guide of every congressional member. A true "facebook," I was told this is a popular seller. At the back of the

store were some vitrines with printing objects, including a composing stick with the setting: "GPO Welcomes APHA."

The GPO has been on its site, which occupies a full city block, for nearly one hundred and fifty years. I understood it to be the largest printing facility in the country, despite the fact that something like 80% of their printed matter is contracted out to private printers.

During our Friday afternoon tour Congress was out of session. This meant a fairly quiet operation at that time of day since preparing and printing the daily Congressional Record is one of the major responsibilities performed on the site.

The proofreading section has a window view of the Capitol dome. Though the GPO no longer needs to eyeball the light on the Capitol to know whether Congress is in session, this sightline reflects

the critical connection between the U.S. Congress and the GPO.

Once you get into the plant proper it smells reassuringly of ink. Many floors throughout are laid with end grain wood to support the weight of machinery.

Three daily shifts are operated on site and several labor unions are represented within the GPO. (I was delighted by the sight of a flyer for a bookbinders local meeting.) Printing was in progress; we yielded to fork lift operators.

People who guided us worked in various editorial or plant management positions and were impressive in their knowledge. The fact that the delightfully entertaining fore edge marbler was wearing a "Sponge Bob Square Pants" smock was just a little something extra.

Tracy Honn

Mark Samuels Lasner Fellowship in Printing History

THE AMERICAN PRINTING HISTORY ASSOCIATION is pleased to announce a fellowship award for the study of printing history. An award of up to \$2,000 is available for research in any area of the history of printing in any form, including all the arts and technologies relevant to printing, the book arts, and letter forms.

Applications are especially welcome from those working in the area of American printing history, but the subject of research has no geographical or chronological limitations and may be national or regional in scope, biographical, analytical, technical,

or bibliographical in nature. Study related to the history of printing with a recognized printer or book artist may also be supported. The fellowship can be used to pay for travel, living, and other expenses.

APHA fellowships are open to individuals of any nationality. Applicants need not be academics and an advanced degree is not required.

Applicants are asked to submit an application form, curriculum vitae, and a one-page proposal. Two confidential letters of recommendation specific to this fellowship should be sent separately by the recommenders.

Applications and letters of support must be received by Monday, December 13, 2010. An announcement of the award will be made at the APHA annual

meeting, to take place in New York on Saturday, 29 January 2011.

An application form is available on the APHA website: http://www.printinghistory.org/programs/fellowship/fellowship-application_2010.pdf.

To receive an application form by mail contact the Fellowship Committee at fellowships@printinghistory.org or from the committee chair at this address:

Fellowship Committee
c/o Jane Siegel
Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Columbia University
Butler Library, Sixth Floor
535 West 114th Street
New York, NY 10027

Reports from the 35th Annual Conference: “Learning To Print, Teaching to Print”

A RECORD 165 PEOPLE attended the American Printing History Association’s 35th annual conference “Learning To Print, Teaching to Print.” Held October 15–16 at Corcoran College of Art + Design in Washington, DC, attendees experienced a broad range of thought provoking presentations and lively intermissions. Together, the APHA Program Committee, APHA Chesapeake Chapter, and faculty and staff of the Corcoran created a successful and memorable event—and the weather couldn’t have been better. Below are summaries of activities by participating APHA members.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

“History as Fable, Helix, and Aperture” by Betty Bright, independent scholar and curator

BETTY BRIGHT assessed the place of letterpress printing in today’s art world, and how we are defining it, through three constructs. She began by suggesting that history is not an orderly “fable” of events and accomplishments (also known as a canon) marching along, celebrated by the gatekeepers in society as we all follow suit. She led us through the history of how art and artisan have been interpreted over time from Fluxus of the 1960s, to modern movements in art that hybridized ambiguity and impermanence. We now live in a time when there is no single voice of authority: “art is what we say it is.” But what of letterpress and its place as art or craft or both? How does it fit into the mix? Is it one or the other?

That’s where “helix” comes in. Betty says that canons are not static but fluid and can be interpreted by multiple perspectives. Over time we turn away from heroic art to accessible art. Letterpress is an accessi-

ble medium. She mentioned with slight incredulity that the new book, *Makers: A History of American Studio Craft* (2010) makes not a mention of book arts as a studio craft. So is it art? The resurgence of letterpress, Betty informs, has found a place in higher education, because of the academic trend of interdisciplinary study. Surveys of book arts programs indicate an incredibly growing field, and that artist’s books are well represented in academia’s special collections.

“Aperture,” Betty’s final exploratory term was defined as an opening through which light travels. It provides focus. She showed many examples including *Black Ice and Rain* an emotionally charged work in both its poetic imagery by Michael Donaghy and



Betty Bright. Photo: Jill Cypher

tactile interpretation of it by book artist, Barbara Tetenbaum. This, she asserts, is where letterpress is in our ideal between what is and isn’t art and what is and isn’t craft. “More important is the recognition that we can affect the discourse and the identity of letterpress and its presence as art and craft; indeed, crafts such as letterpress that involve the body, the intellect, and all of our senses can address the gap in art that has been weighted solely toward the conceptual for some time.”

Betty suggested that those involved with letterpress integrate this kind of understanding in their teaching and writing. There are several letterpress printers whose works integrate conceptual content with exceptional craft (such as Gaylord Schanilec), or who experiments with strategies such as chance (Robin Price), or who has a strong sense of material to literally embody a poem (Tetenbaum). “All of this can inform art, if we learn to select our focus. If we do so, we add our voices to the discourse. That is the good news and the challenge for those of us who care about letterpress printing.”

Sarina Wygant

PLENARY ADDRESS

“21st Century Letterpress Printing and the Artisan Book” by Steve Miller, University of Alabama

TO HEAR STEVE MILLER SPEAK is always a pleasure, and this address was another of his invigorating and humane talks.

Steve began by noting his influences and looking back over a long career in book arts, from study with Walter Hamady to conducting the Red Ozier Press with Ken Botnick in New York through his present teaching at the University of Alabama. Then he recounted his current connections with Paper and Book Intensive, Penland School of Crafts and

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Taller Experimental de Grafika in Cuba. For Steve, the best part of printing is the process, especially collaboration with writers and artists and other artisans; it's the relationships that interest him more than the object being made. Steve announced his disinterest in making distinctions between craftsmen and book artists, stating: "We're all artisans."

Jane Rodgers Siegel

SESSION I

"New Art/Old Technology: The Challenges of Teaching Innovation while Preserving Tradition" Panel from the Center for Book Arts. Moderated by Programs Manager, Sarah Nicholls with Roni Gross (Zitouna Press) Amber McMillan (Post Editions), Barbara Henry (Harsimus Press) and former Resident Artist James Walsh,

THE PANEL DISCUSSED how they instruct students from varied backgrounds and expectations by correlating the student's own work to letterpress. For example, artists are encouraged to try as many techniques as possible and poets are guided toward a goal of starting their own press by teaching them how to set their words in metal type.

Many students are product oriented and intend to start a business (contrary to the objectives of university instruction). They want their money's worth immediately. This can be challenging especially when confronted with a limited number of aging presses and the finite nature of metal type. Efforts to protect these assets include requiring students to have 30 hours of instruction before being allowed supervised rental times.

Amber McMillan said that teaching digitally oriented students poses challenges in tempering their expectations of the letterpress process.

Roni Gross added that graphic designers, accus-

tomed to doing things quickly, must learn that patience and correct body posture are factors in what makes good printing. Part of the learning process is discernment—learning to see what good printing is and the difference between what letterpress does well as opposed to offset.

Barbara Henry noted that learning to set type can help poets to consider every word, every space and the way that the poem looks on the page in a very concrete way.

James Walsh provided an artist's perspective recounting how letterpress, polymer platemaking and bookbinding gave him more range in expressing his art. He illustrated this by showing images of traced letters from an actual Ruskin journal and reproduced plates to produce his work.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Vandercook Proof Press Roni and Barbara produced the Vandercook Book to highlight the work that master printers across the country were doing on the presses. Printers contributed folios using handset type, polymer plates, linocuts, pressure printing, and woodcuts. The methods of creation are described in individual colophons. This has become a highly successful teaching tool for many book arts and printing programs.

Sarina Wyant

SESSION II

Panel of APHA Chesapeake chapter members. Moderator: Gregory Robison (Peregrinus Press). Panel: Ray Nichols (Lead Graffiti), Val Lucas (Bowerbox Press), Mike Denker (Stoney Creek Press), Chris Manson (Crooked Crow Press), and Roland Hoover (Pembroke Press)

IF I LIVED ANYWHERE NEAR the Chesapeake chapter, I would join immediately! Not only did the

group have masterly printing on display in the Corcoran's Gallery 31, this lively, sometimes rowdy panel of printers told entertaining and heartfelt "life of letterpress" stories in answer to three questions posed by moderator Gregory Robison. As he put it, no "hermeneutics of haptic" would be discussed in this session. Instead, panelists were first asked to describe their "moment of clarity"—the event that moved them to learn to print.

For Ray Nichols it was viewing 19th-century ornamented type at St. Bride Library, London. For Roland Cooper it was learning skills in lettering arts and typography in the 1950s as an apprentice at Presentation Associates in Dupont Circle.

Question two: What keeps you interested? Mike Denker struck a fine chord as he de-scribed his admiration for the deftly-printed, simple statement, such as: FRUIT STAND. He also thrills to the hunting, hauling, hoarding—and even sharing—of abandoned printing equipment. Chris Manson savors the independent moments of problem solving printing provides him, and appreciates the maturity of letterpress technology—how one isn't pestered by their equipment for constant "upgrading."

Robison then asked the group to offer their suggestions to those starting out in letterpress. Val Lucas has been printing for five years and successfully operating her business for the last two. She recommended starting small, though admitted her first press was a Colt's Armory she hired riggers to move, and then spent several months rehabbing. Mike Denker was philosophical, saying, "It's all out there with a little help from your friends." But Roland Hoover said it all: "Dampen your paper!"

Sara T. Sauers

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Special APHA Presentation

AFTER THE CHESAPEAKE CHAPTER PANEL, members presented a surprise award to Roland Hoover for his lifetime achievement, which revolves around letterpress. The award is comprised of a handcrafted box by Val Lucas filled with letterpress keepsakes. Featured is a certificate printed by Lead Graffiti and signed by friends and fellow chapter members attesting to his generosity of spirit, knowledge of and skill in the printing arts; and his substantial efforts to preserve printing history, as well as his encouragement to others.

Roland was completely surprised and it took a moment for the award to sink in. Even once his name was announced, you could see him trying to put the whole moment together. Roland is humble enough to not grasp that his fellow panel members retook the stage to give an award meant for him, while he was left sitting in the audience. A standing ovation put big, bold quote marks around the occasion.

Jill Cypher

[See the Chesapeake Chapter website <http://www.printinghistory-chesapeake.org>]

SESSION III

Panel 1 "Reworking History: Rare Books in the Letterpress Studio" Kathleen Walkup and Lyall Harris, Mills College,

KATHY WALKUP, Director of the Book Arts program at Mills College, and student Lyall Harris, spoke on the integration of history and innovation. The grandmother of the Mills program was Rosalind Keep, whose Eucalyptus Press was founded in 1930 and taught Mills students. Some of that equipment became the nucleus of the Mills Book Arts

program in the 1970s. Now one of the most comprehensive programs in the country, it features a new MFA in Book Arts and Creative Writing. Lyall is the first of those MFA students. A painter, she said she found letterpress and typography daunting at first. She spoke about her project, a reissue of Vasari's *Lives* in which the male artists are omitted. Lyall's work uses her extensive research in rare book libraries in the US and Italy as inspiration to reinterpret and retell Vasari's story. The Mills program is unusual in being part of the English department which Kathy says allows for a broader definition of book arts. A class in the history of type, and one in the history of the book, draw heavily on the rare book room and give the students a base from which to let their individual voice and experimentation, like Lyall's, grow.

Jane Rodgers Siegel

Panel 2 "The Revival and Making of Wood Type", A presentation on the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum: Jim Moran (Executive Director), Bill Moran (Creative Director), and Richard Zauf, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Graduate Studies, Emerson College.

WOOD TYPE LIVES! The presenters informed their audience that dynamic new designs are still being produced at the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum and used their time to describe two of Hamilton's amazing projects.

Thanks to type designer Juliet Shen, children of the Tulalip Tribes in Washington State are now able to hold the letters of their native language in their hands. The Lushootseed language became a written language in the late 1960s to preserve the culture and stories of the Tulalip. Now young Tulalip students can form words with the large wooden printing letters created by Hamilton and watch



Wood type font of the Lushootseed alphabet by Juliet Shen. Photo courtesy of Hamilton Wood type Museum.



Van Lanen Latin a two-color wood type designed by Matthew Carter. Photo by Celene Aubry

what had been a dying language come to life as they actually print their language on a simple letterpress. By sponsoring a Language Camp and using tools such as this, the elders of the Tulalip Tribe hope to keep their ancient language alive.

The museum challenged renowned type designer Matthew Carter to create a new typeface in wood. The resulting Van Lanen Latin is a bold font with wedge-shaped serifs. It's lively appearance looks perfectly suited to the hand-printed broadside or handbill. It is also available in a reversed version ("white" letters cut out of solid inked rectangles) which gives printers the opportunity to play with ink transparency and unusual trapping when using both the "black" and the "white versions" of the type.

Josef Beery

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SESSION IV

Panel 1: "Teaching Typesetting: The Monotype University Experience" Richard L. Hopkins (Hill & Dale Private Press and Typefoundry)

BOTH RICH HOPKINS AND MIKE ANDERSON know that the preservation of letterpress depends on teaching the basic arts and crafts that Gutenberg invented more than 500 years ago, and both of them continue to practice what they preach, especially when it comes to passing on knowledge about how to cast the type that makes letterpress printing possible.

Hopkins began with handouts that tangibly emphasized the difference between the superficial impact of a photocopy about Monotype with the third-dimensional impact of three-color, monotype-composed and letterpress printed publication that offered texture and impression. In "Typographic Curiosities 19," composed in Monotype and printed by Hopkins as a "Special Issue" for the APHA Conference, he preserved "Changes in the Composing-Room upon Introduction of the Monotype."

Then Hopkins showed a short video of the "Monotype University Experience" in which a group of novices become full-fledged typesetters in an intensive, hands-on immersion course held at the Hill & Dale Private Press and Typefoundry in the basement of his home in Terra Alta, West Virginia. His video documented the seventh class in the program, which included Jim Walczak and Mike Anderson together with Hopkins as instructors.

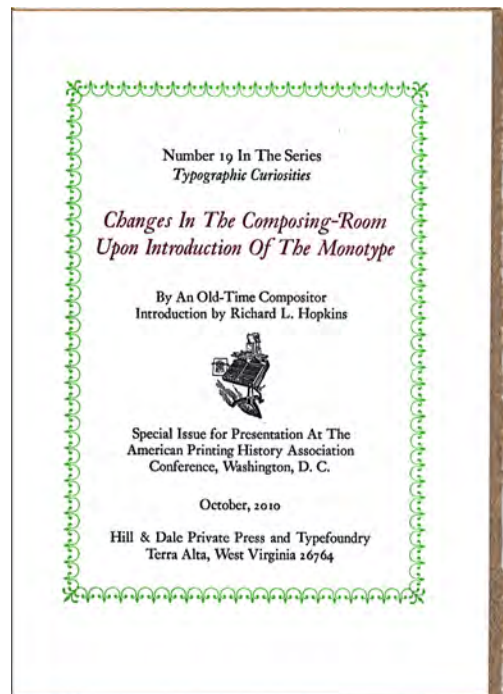
Hopkins concluded with an announcement that met with spontaneous applause: that he is inviting expressions of interest in another session of the free Monotype University. He underscored the importance of being able to train a new generation of typesetter who would continue to produce type for the

new generations of printers eager to carry forward the letterpress tradition.

Some printers today dispense with metal type in favor of photopolymer, but Rich describes that as "off-set printing on a letterpress." Metal type wears out, so typesetting is necessary if printers will continue to print in a traditional way. Both men preach a can-do attitude: anyone can learn to operate Monotype machines to cast new type, or even cut new punches to cast types of their own design.

Anyone who is interested in learning typesetting at Monotype University 8 should contact Rich Hopkins by mail or email:

Richard L. Hopkins
169 Oak Grove Road
Terra Alta, WV 26764-6939
wvtypenut@frontier.com



Anderson began his talk on "Gutenberg the Teacher" with a grounding in punchcutting as he distributed a page of his replica Gutenberg type B-36, for which he produced the designs and mats, cast the type, made the paper, and printed a two color keepsake for the session that reproduces a page of Gutenberg's Donatus, circa 1454-55. He also underscored how much of a teacher Gutenberg was. He not only invented the process, but taught others how to do it. He invented ways to handle and sort his types, the division of printing into steps and stages, techniques for inking and operating the press. At each stage he would inevitably be teaching others how to do it.

He also showed PowerPoint images of some of the many Gutenberg printed samples he studied in the course of designing and cutting his version of the 36-line type. He pointed out how Gutenberg also must have taught others how to avoid "workups," for in some of the proofs, raised spacing material had clearly been inked and become visible on the printed page. These also offered evidence that the types had been set with separate spaces used between and at the ends of words, which Mike observed was good reason not to think that the lines had been cast in other than separate letters.

Richard Mathews and Sean Donnelly

Panel 2 "Living with Legacy at the University of Iowa Center for the Book: Contemporary Problems, Traditional Methods, Innovative Practices" with a panel from University of Iowa Center for the Book: Sara Langworthy, Julie Leonard, and Sara T. Sauers

PANELISTS SARA T. SAUERS, Julie Leonard and Sara Langworthy find it daunting and inspiring to teach at UICB while charting a way forward in the

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wake of master craftsmen Carroll Coleman, Harry Duncan, K.K. Merker and Kay Amert.

Sara T. Sauers, Adjunct Assistant Professor in Printing and Book Design, summarized the history of letterpress instruction at Iowa that began in 1945 when Coleman established the Typography Laboratory in the UI School of Journalism through the founding of the UICB by Merker in 1986. (The recent acquisition of the Lab's contents by the UICB is described in the Spring 2010 Newsletter.)

Julie Leonard, Lecturer and Bindery Supervisor, noted that Merker was largely responsible for setting the next confluence of great practitioners at Iowa in motion: William Anthony, Timothy Barrett, Gary Frost and Jim Snitzer and Pamela Spitzmueller, among others, who emphasized materials, structures, and an approach to content and meaning. Julie continues this effort by teaching historical and experimental binding methods.

Sara Langworthy, Lecturer and Printing Facilities Supervisor, focused on the current atmosphere explaining the shift from a master-apprenticeship

model to a curriculum based on academic professional practices and examination beyond artifact to the impact of the book on society and culture.

Paul Moxon

Panel 3 "Designer-as-Author: The Form of the Book as Lens for Shaping Research" Ken Botnick, Washington University; "Engraving: Letterpress's Shy Sister" Nancy Sharon Collins, Louisiana State University; "CityTech Students in Wonderland: Strategies for Teaching Print in the Age of the Internet" Tanya Goetz, New York City Technical College

How CAN 500-year-old printing technologies engage students in the digital age? Each panelist presented three completely different answers to this question.

Ken Botnick challenges his design and communication students to use letterpress to design and create a book. Botnick believes that, "the form of the book itself presents a radical model for organizing thought" and uses its production to teach students to understand visual information in entirely new ways.

Nancy Sharon Collins' love of engraving ink on paper becomes contagious when she demonstrates the powerful pieces of equipment and dies she has saved from the scrap yard. The printing of exquisite type and images, unmatched in any other printing medium, has captured the imagination of her students.

Tanya Goetz asked her technology students to address the topic on every publisher's mind today, "Compare the experience of reading *Alice in Wonderland* as a printed book and a digital book." Taking advantage of the humanities offerings elsewhere in the college, the recent release of the new "Alice" movie with Johnny Depp, and the incredible exhibi-

tion of Tim Burton work (Burton directed "Alice") at the MoMA, she could not fail to inspire her students to take a serious look at the value of the printed page.

An entertaining interlude was provided during this panel when Ken Botnick presented without musical accompaniment his amazing "Typographic Rap" a hilarious retelling of the history of type design.

Josef Beery

SESSION V

*Panel 1: The Nuts and Bolts of Running a Letterpress Studio: Sharing Resources and Tips for Studio Management. Panel: April Sheridan *Studio Technician and Special Projects Coordinator, Columbia College Chicago Center for Book and Paper Arts), Paul Moxon (Fameorshame Press and Vandercook-press.info) and Katherine McCanless Ruffin (Book Arts Program Director, Wellesley College)*

EACH PANEL PARTICIPANT spoke briefly, after which there was a lengthy question and answer session. The cozy room at the Corcoran School of Art's Georgetown facility was filled to capacity, and the audience was eager for information. April Sheridan began with a photo of standing galleys at Columbia—as an example of the kind of thing she is up against. April explained that although she doesn't know everything about the presses and equipment in the Columbia shop, she makes sure that she knows someone who does. Katherine McCanless Ruffin gave a rundown of her organizing principles for the Wellesley shop, which is situated in the library: safety first, quality over quantity, and nothing in the shop should get so out of whack that it can't be put back in a couple of days. Paul Moxon's

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Julie Leonard talking about William Anthony. Photo: Paul Moxon.

Vandercook tips and guidelines include: upgrading your tool box, building a spare parts kit, and approaching packing and deep impression mathematically. The Q&A session revealed the pent up demand for this kind of information. Questions were asked on the topics of lead safety, maintaining board shears, use of solvents, sustainability, type distribution, keeping spacing in order, the safety of C&Ps, and ergonomics. After the Q&A, a resource list was given out. Time ran out and the audience was ultimately directed to online resources to continue the discussion.

Martha Chiplis

Panel 2 : The Book Arts Program at the University of California, Riverside, Gwido Zlatkes; 90 years of Teaching Fine Printing in Pittsburgh at Carnegie Mellon, Mary Catharine Johnsen; Book Arts for the Book Historian: Learning the History of Printing in the 21st Century, Allison Jai O'Dell (Corcoran College of Art + Design)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARIAN Gwido Zlatkes explained that he and his colleagues at UC, Riverside, work and teach with a valuable resource—the largest collection of printing presses and type held by any American university. The Petko Collection was donated by bibliophile Dr. Edward C. Petko, with the expressed desire that it be put to teaching use. Zlatkes showed student broadsides and chapbooks from beginning and intermediate book arts classes, and explained that students are taught the history of the book, text selection and editing, and binding skills alongside printing methods.

Mary Catharine Johnsen, Special Collections and Design Librarian, spoke about the influential history of instruction in fine printing at CMU. Porter

Garnett's Laboratory Press, with its focus on "printing in the spirit of experimentation," operated from 1922–1935, and became a model for other universities. From 1960 to 1963 the New Laboratory Press was directed by Jack W. Stauffacher. He and his students had the first U.S. opportunity to work with Hermann Zapf and his types. A second New Laboratory Press (1976–1988), was directed by Edward Fisher, Jr., a graphic design professor. No press has existed at CMU since, but the university has had a continuing degree program in printing/graphic media management since 1921.

As both a librarian and a student in the Art and the Book MA program, Allison Jai O'Dell posed a series of thought-provoking questions to her 21st-century audience—questions highlighting the difficulty contemporary book historians might have in fully understanding processes used by historical bookmakers. O'Dell suggested that even bibliographers who take the time to "learn by doing," should consider whether printing on a Vandercook can truly provide them knowledge about what early handpress printers faced. Can printing type from a polymer plate tell you anything about hand composition? How *can* a bibliographer begin to think like a printer?

Sara T. Sauers

Panel 3 "Desktop Publishing in the 19th Century" Tracy Honn (Silver Buckle Press); "The Printers' International Specimen Exchange: Education on a Global Scale in the 1880s" Matthew Young (Independent scholar); "Scrambled Eggs: The Rise and Fall of the Bibliographical Press" Terry Belanger (Founding Director of Rare Book School)

TRACY HONN DISCUSSED the complex issues surrounding the history of amateur printing. As small

presses became more affordable in the last quarter of the 19th century, there was a boom in amateur printing, creating tensions such as commercial versus noncommercial, and self-taught versus trained. Tracy's window into this world is a 2004 gift to University of Wisconsin-Madison of the Library of Amateur Journalism put together by Edwin Hadley Smith, a collection of over 25,000 amateur newspapers from 1854-1941, bound into 320 volumes. Tracy has concentrated on newspapers from the 1880s, which are contemporaneous to three presses she is restoring for teaching. Tracy showed images of many of the papers where it could be seen that their production values vary greatly, and noted that all the printers were proud of their amateurism. In the Q&A after the panel, the audience expressed its great interest in the Smith collection.

Matthew Young told the story of the The Printers' International Specimen Exchange, a publication series begun in 1880 that comprised the best modern printing of its day. Matthew showed examples from the first three volumes which included editorial criticism and commentary and provided a venue for spectacular contributions demonstrating American technical superiority. Matthew said that compiler Andrew Tuer always refused to see the volumes as a competition rather than merely an exchange; he saw the comments as a place to encourage and note printers' improvement, and give special

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Two Hundred Years Ago

ISAIAH THOMAS published his monumental *History of Printing in America*. ¶ Fat face types first appeared in the specimen book of Bower & Bacon, Sheffield, Great Britain.

APHA's Executive Secretary Retires

ON OCTOBER 26, Steven Crook, APHA's long-serving Executive Secretary, who will retire at the end of 2010, was honored at the Grolier Club. In appreciation of his two decades of service, APHA members presented him (through Terry Belanger's good graces) with a Flavian dynasty denarius.

This ca. 80AD Roman coin shows Domitian on the obverse and the dolphin and anchor symbol on

the reverse. The symbol and its corresponding motto "festina lente" are famous among bibliophiles as the printer's mark of Aldus Manutius.

Many members have known Steve as the main contact for our organization. APHA President Paul Romaine has said that Steve's conscientiousness has largely shaped its public face. In addition to leaving his APHA post, Steve has retired from the staff of New York Public Library's Berg Collection of English and American Literature.



The Flavian dynasty denarius presented to Steve Crook. Photo: Terry Belanger.

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praise to the work of apprentices. Tuer and the Leadenhall Press withdrew after volume three, and the series was taken over by the printers Raithby & Lawrence, who emphasized the freestyle artistic printing. Eventually, the foreign contributions dropped away, and the Exchange slowly died out, but not before spawning national exchanges in France, Germany and the U.S.

In his talk, Terry Belanger defined a bibliographical press as a laboratory for learning technologies such as hand casting of type, papermaking, ink-making, and printing. He listed over a dozen such presses starting in the 1960s, variously under the aegis of the English or Art departments, libraries, or library schools. Terry's venture in this field in the 1970s at Columbia University was part of the library school. Students took a two-semester course in descriptive bibliography with two hours a week of lab sessions. They would be assigned to set 30-40 lines of type, and each stood at the press for an hour as pressman or inker. Students also made prints of various kinds. It was never about creating a product to sell, but about exposing students to the processes. Now, Terry suggests, teaching presses tend to be

more about making new books than teaching book history, and links this to the popularity of deconstruction in English departments in the last 30 years, to the overwhelming changes in the technical environment of libraries, which make presses seem less central, and to a loss of interest in the history of the book in library schools. He also worries about the effect on our understanding of printing processes by the passing of trained craftspeople from the pre-digital printing trades and their replacement by amateur and occasional printers whose skills will never be as rich.

Jane Rodgers Siegel

January Rare Book School Course

"15th-Century Books in Print & Manuscript," will be taught by Paul Needham (Scheide Librarian, Princeton University) and William Noel (Curator of Manuscripts and Rare Books, Walters Art Museum). The course will take place January 10-14, 2011 at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore. For a full course description, please visit <http://www.rare-bookschool.org/courses/history/h25/>.

Summary of 2010 Lieberman Lecture

FROM PALM LEAF TO BOOK: A SOUTH ASIA QUEST

PALM LEAF WAS LONG THE DOMINANT MATERIAL for making books in South and Southeast Asia. By the mid-twentieth century, it was almost entirely replaced by paper. In contemporary India, the craft of working with palm leaf is practiced by a community of hereditary illustrators (Chitrakars) in several villages near Puri in the eastern state of Orissa. My current project is to make a book on palm leaf, with the methods and materials of the Orissan artists as my starting point and model.

Their work, known as “palm leaf engraving” or “palm leaf etching,” utilizes a double-layered structure that is of great interest to me as a book artist. Unlike the most common traditional book structure (a stack of single palm leaves with holes, strung together on a cord, held between wood covers), this unusual structure joins one double layer of leaves to the next by sewing, producing a jointed stack that opens out flat. The artists do elaborate cutwork on the upper layer, including flaps (often circles) that open to reveal secondary images on the hidden lower layer. In my own handmade-paper version of the structure (*Darshan of Dancing*, 2009), I used the upper layer for public text and images regarding Siva Nataraja, while the lower layer held my inner life of dream and poetry.

In January, 2010, after two years of library research into palm leaf craft (providing incomplete detail) and unsatisfactory experimentation using Bay Area fan palms and Western etching tools, I visited the Heritage Village of Raghurajpur and nearby Nayak Patna. Assisted by Purna Chandra Mishra of Puri, a longtime scholar of traditional Orissan culture, I was given an informative demonstration in the household workshop/school of Kalu Charan Bariki, who was among the first students of Jagannath Mohapatra (1916–1998), the Chitrakar credited with reviving palm leaf engraving in the later twentieth century.

I was told that new-growth fronds are cut for the Chitrikars during the dry season from the palmyra palm tree (*Borassus flabellifer*), which thrives in the Puri district. The leaves may be boiled with turmeric and/or neem as insecticide. They are sun-dried. As I saw demonstrated, the leaves are trimmed to size by the artists and sewn into the desired structure, then worked by incising with a needle-pointed iron stylus called lekhami. The resulting lines are inked by smearing with an ink made from lampblack,



Students working on palm leaf incising at Nayak Patna (state of Orissa, India). Photo: Betsy Davids.

wood apple gum (an insecticidal agent), and water. The uncut surface of the leaf is then wiped clean with a rag and water while the cut lines retain ink.

Like other traditional arts and crafts of India, palm leaf engraving has been encouraged by government initiatives to develop training programs, cooperatives, and craft-fair venues in major cities and tourist sites throughout India. The Chitrakars (who also produce paintings on cloth) rarely include text, as befits their own heritage of illustration and their current multilingual, international audience. Favored subjects include Dasavatara (Vishnu’s ten incarnations), Krishnalila (Krishna’s childhood exploits), and Ganesha. Underlayer images include women dancing, couples lovemaking, and animals.

I returned from India with a short stack of prepared palm leaves, a lump of wood apple gum, enough photo and video documentation to enable my next stage of learning the craft, and the understanding that my first palm leaf book may take a lot longer than my first letterpress book did. A Bay Area blacksmith, Shawn Lovell, has made a lekhami for me, and I’m practicing.

Betsy Davids

The 2010 Lieberman Lecture was delivered on July 26 at The Book Club of California

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