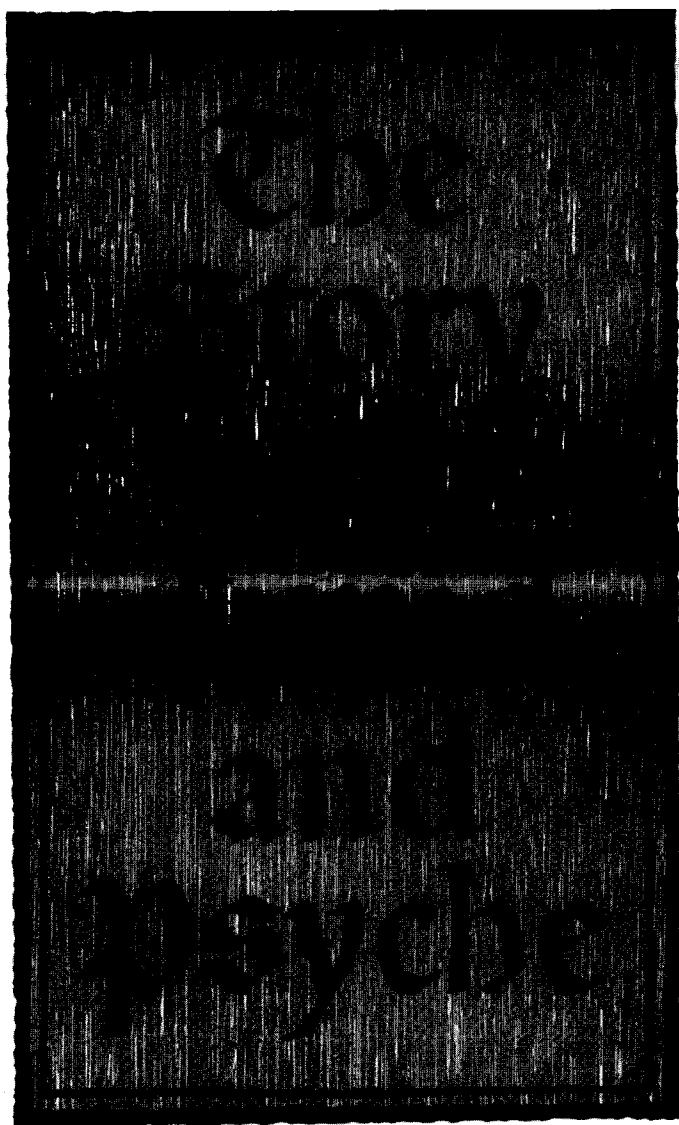

The APHA Newsletter

NO. 137 • FALL, 1999

The Century in Letters is Fêted by The Society of Scribes, American Institute of Graphic Arts, The Grolier Club, and the American Printing History Association

Several events and exhibitions are planned in the New York area this Fall to celebrate the century in letters. A major exhibition of calligraphic art from 1900 to 1999 by American scribes and four influential European artists is being sponsored by the New York Society of Scribes and the American Institute of Graphic Arts. The show, curated by Alice Koeth and Jerry Kelly, opens 14 October at the American Institute of Graphic Arts, Fifth Avenue at 22nd Street. See below for more details.



Another major exhibition, this one on fine printed books of the twentieth century from Europe and America, will be held at the Grolier Club, New York. One hundred books will be displayed, ranging from examples of the great private presses [The Doves Bible; the Golden Cockerel *Four Gospels*; The Bremer Press *Dante*; the Cranach Press *Virgil*; etc.] to recent examples of the printers' art [such as The Whittington Press Bibliography; Meriden-Stinehour's volume of Alfred Stieglitz's photographs for The National Gallery; and The Pennyroyal *Frankenstein*]. Also included are examples of great French *livres d'artiste* by Matisse, Picasso, Derain, and others; as well as less well-known examples of the printers' art, such as rare editions by John Fass, Gotthard de Beauclair, and Vincent FitzGerald. Still, many famous masters of the century are represented, including prime examples of the work of Bruce Rogers, D.B. Updike, Giovanni Mardersteig, Francis Meynell, Stanley Morison, Hermann Zapf, Will and Sebastian Carter, Leonard Baskin, and The Grabhorn Brothers — among numerous others. The exhibition opens 15 September and continues through 13 November at The Grolier Club, 47 East 60th Street, New York City. See the previous issue of the APHA Newsletter for more information.

Coinciding with these exhibitions is APHA's 1999 Conference "A Century of Book Design in Europe and America: Printing, Practitioners, & Presses." A very special schedule is planned, including talks by noted APHA members John Kristensen, Nancy Finlay, Kenneth Auchincloss, and Carol Grossman; together with two very important foreign speakers: Martino Mardersteig of the Stamperia Valdona in Verona, Italy will speak on his father's work for a very exclusive Italian book club; and Sebastian Carter of the Rampant Lions Press in Cambridge, England, will talk about the books he and his father, Will, have produced through half a century. More details about this exciting event are given in Peter Hanff's article later in this newsletter. By now all APHA members should have received the announcement for this exceptional event. Space is limited to the first 140 respondents, and applications are sure to come in quickly for this exceptional conference, so please send in your reservations soon.

—Jerry Kelly, Vice President, Publications

Left: Will Carter's lettering from the title page of the Rampant Lions Press edition of *The Story of Cupid and Psyche*, on display at The Grolier Club from 15 September through 13 November.

SPECIAL CENTENNIAL EVENTS

A Century for this Century Fine Printed Books, 1900–1999

15 September through 13 November 1999

at the Grolier Club

47 East 60th Street, New York, NY

(212) 838-6690

Artist & Alphabet: Letter Art in the Twentieth Century

14 October through 19 November 1999

at the American Institute of Graphic Arts

Fifth Avenue and 22nd Street, New York, NY

A Century of Book Design in Europe & America: The 24th Annual APHA Conference

22 October through 24 October 1999

at the Grolier Club

47 East 60th Street, New York, NY



Page from *Pen & Graver* by Hermann Zapf. This 1950 publication is the only item to be exhibited in both the "Century for the Century" (Grolier Club) and "Artist and Alphabet" (Society of Scribes and AIGA) exhibitions.

24th Annual Conference, The American Printing History Association A Century of Book Design in Europe and America: Printing, Practitioners, and Presses, October 22 – 24, 1999

When Ben Lieberman and a few fellow printing enthusiasts founded the American Printing History Association in 1974, there was considerable confidence that there were sufficient like-minded individuals around to sustain a viable organization devoted to the book arts. New vitality revealed itself through the first APHA Conference just a year later. And by 1979, following four years of publication of an excellent newsletter conducted by Catherine Brody, APHA launched its twice-yearly journal, *Printing History*. As Susan O. Thompson commented in her opening editorial, the scope of *Printing History*—and APHA—are American only in that they are based in the United States. “Printing” has been taken to mean the book arts in general, wherever manifested. Over the years, APHA’s programs have expanded to include regional chapters, national conferences held in different areas of the country, and the annual J. Ben Lieberman Memorial Lectures. In addition, in recent years APHA has become a publisher of outstanding books on the subject of printing history. That early confidence has been amply justified over the years.

To celebrate the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the American Printing History Association, the National Conference, after a series of conferences in different parts of the United States, will return to New York City. Reflecting the organization’s intention of encompassing a broad spectrum of printing history, our program will focus on fine printing during the entire twentieth century. Complementing our program and virtually surrounding us at our meeting will be a major exhibition at the Grolier Club of one hundred printed books selected by our own Jerry Kelly and Martin Hutner to demonstrate the wide and varied range of well-wrought printing. The opening reception of the conference will be held Friday evening at the Grolier Club, 47 East 60th Street, New York, in its Exhibition Room from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

The program itself will be held in two sessions on Saturday, October 23, starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Grolier Club. The morning session will deal with the half-century before the Second World War with John G. Kristensen of the Firefly Press presenting “The Ivory Tower as Seen from the Shop Floor: A Printer Looks at Fine Printing, 1900 – 1949,” Nancy Finlay of the Connecticut Historical Society focusing on “A Noble Piece of Printing: Daniel Berkeley Updike’s *Tacitus*,” and Martino Mardersteig of Stamperia Valdona discussing “Giovanni Mardersteig and *I Cento Amici del Libro*: A Very Exclusive Italian Book Club Founded in 1939.”

Following a break for lunch, Kenneth Auchincloss will focus the group on the second half of the twentieth century with “The Second Revival: Fine Printing Since World War II,” complemented by Sebastian Carter, The Rampant Lions Press, dealing with “The Rampant Lions Press at Fifty: Retrospectus and Prospectus,” and by Carol P. Grossman, Four Rivers Books, Ltd., covering “William

Blake and the Triannon Press: A Melding of Book Arts Traditions.”

Those attending the conference will have a second opportunity to inspect the fine exhibition at the Grolier Club during the Saturday evening reception in the Exhibition Room from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Two optional tours have been scheduled for APHA members on Sunday, October 24. Curator Isaac Gewirtz of the General Theological Seminary, 75 Ninth Avenue (between 20th and 21st Streets) will welcome visitors to a special exhibition commemorating the 450th anniversary of the Book of Common Prayer. The exhibition, “But One Use,” reflecting Archbishop Cranmer’s goal of establishing uniformity of liturgical practice in the Anglican Church through publication of the Book of Common Prayer, will include medieval liturgical books that were precursors to the Book of Common Prayer and published versions from 1549 to the present day, including the great books printed by Daniel Berkeley Updike in 1898 and 1930. Visitors will have the opportunity to view the Seminary’s beautiful Close, designed by Charles Coolidge Haight, leader in the American Gothic Revival movement. This event is open to all, but registrants should check off the option in filling out their registration forms.

From 1:00 to 2:30 p.m., APHA trustee, John Bidwell, Astor Curator of Printed Books and Bindings at the Pierpont Morgan Library, 26 East 36th Street, West Conference Room, will show examples of contemporary book design in the Morgan Library collections, including several of the books of the century discussed during the conference and on display at the Grolier Club. This event, because of space considerations, will be limited to twenty-five. Registration is required and should be completed as part of the conference registration form.

The Local Arrangements Committee, headed by Lowell Bodger, has reserved a block of rooms for Conference Registrants at the Salisbury Hotel, 123 West 57th Street, a few blocks from the Grolier Club. Particulars are included in the conference flyer and registration form recently mailed to APHA members.

Join us in our wonderful celebration of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the American Printing History Association and our assessment of excellent fine printing of the Twentieth Century. Because the Grolier Club’s space is limited, attendance is limited to 140, so members will want to register early.

—Peter E. Hanff, *Vice-President, Programs*

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WESTWARD BOUND: An Exhibition Celebrating Book Arts in the West

SAN FRANCISCO — Westward Bound, a juried exhibition of artists' books, fine press editions, and design bindings, travels to San Francisco this August. Developed by the University of Utah Marriott Library Book Arts Program, the exhibition celebrates the remarkable growth of book arts in the Intermountain West. It includes the work of thirty-one book artists — many from the Bay Area — and presents a Polaroid of contemporary Western book art. Also included are the books of eleven invited artists, all of whom have made significant contributions to the university program's success.

The exhibit opens Saturday, August 21, and continues through Friday, October 1, 1999, in the Jewett Gallery, Lower Level, San Francisco Public Library, Civic Center. Opening events include a catered reception from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Latino-Hispanic Community Meeting Rooms, and a talk, "Did Someone Blow Up the Bridge?", by guest lecturer Richard-Gabriel Rummonds in the Koret Auditorium. Mr Rummonds is widely acclaimed as one of the preeminent handpress printers of the twentieth century and is the author of *Printing on the Iron Handpress*, which has been hailed as the definitive work on the subject. He was proprietor of the Plain Wrapper Press in Verona, Italy, in the 1970s before moving back to the U.S. in the '80s to establish the book arts program at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, where he also started Ex Ophidia, another fine press venture, in nearby Cottdonale. Although retired from printing, he continues to lecture, write, and give workshops. He currently lives in Seattle, Washington.

A full-color, 64-page catalogue for the exhibition may be purchased for \$20 from the Marriott Library Book Arts Program,

University of Utah, 295 So. 1500 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84112-0860 (\$20 plus \$3 shipping; checks should be made payable to Marriott Library Book Arts Program; for more information, please contact Madelyn Garrett at mgarrett@alex.lib.utah.edu). Catalogues will also be available at the reception.

In conjunction with Westward Bound, an exhibit of books from the Allen Press of Lewis and Dorothy Allen will be on display in the rare book room of the San Francisco Public Library. The Allens operated their private fine press from 1940 to 1992, primarily in San Francisco, Kentfield, and Greenbrae. In 1981, the Allens donated their 1846 Columbian handpress to the Marriott Library at the University of Utah, followed, upon their retirement in 1993, by their Albion handpress and the remainder of their equipment, tools, and type, as well as their considerable reference collection. These presses, equipment, tools, and books now comprise the Marriott Library's Red Butte Press, a unique resource for researchers and students of the book arts. The Allen Press books on display are drawn from the San Francisco Public Library's own extensive collection of fine and private press books representing the work of approximately 400 presses. This exhibit will run concurrently with Westward Bound, August 21 through October 1, 1999, in the Book Arts and Special Collections Center, sixth floor, Main Library, Civic Center.

These free events are sponsored by the Book Arts and Special Collections Center of the San Francisco Public Library and the J. Willard Marriott Library Book Arts Program of the University of Utah. For our hours or other information, please call the Book Arts and Special Collections Center at 415.557.4560.

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