

HANDS CRIT

May – June 2018

VOLUME 38 • ISSUE 6





The Houston Calligraphy Guild is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement and promotion of calligraphy as an art form. Membership is open to all.

Annual dues:

are payable on April 1st of each year. All activities of the Houston Calligraphy Guild are planned, directed, and implemented by the Board of Directors, consisting of Guild members. Membership Levels:

\$35 - Individual Guild Membership: entitles individual member to the following core privileges:

- Monthly Meeting Communications and Newsletters via email and web access
- Priority in registering for weekend programs and workshops
- Access to the password-protected Members Only HCG web page
- Ability to apply for the annual scholarship award after two years of membership
- *Calligraphers for Hire* advertising on the HCG web site at the current rate
- HCG Library borrowing privileges
- Access to Summer Study Programs

\$45 - Family Membership: includes all privileges of individual membership detailed above for a maximum of two members of one household

\$20 - Student Membership: granted to students who have proof of enrollment in a high school, college or post-graduate program. Privileges are the same as individual Membership with the exception of voting rights and the current Scholarship Program

\$20 - Supporting Membership: designed for individuals residing outside of Harris County and any adjacent county. This membership is entitled to HANDSCRIT, Houston Calligraphy Guild's bi-monthly Newsletter only

Patron - honorary category: recognizes past members who have contributed to the Guild over their association

Monthly Meetings

- The 2nd Saturday of the month
(except June, July & August)
- Time: 9:00 a.m. - Early Bird program
10:00 a.m. - Meeting and Program
- Location: Tracy Gee Community Center
3599 Westcenter
Houston, Texas 77042
713-266-8193

Mailing Address

Houston Calligraphy Guild
Post Office Box 421558
Houston, Texas 77242

Website: www.houstoncalligraphyguild.org

E-Mail: HoustonCalligraphyGuild@gmail.com

Member Change of Information (Email / Address / Phone)

Contact Sharon Halstead, Membership Chair
sharana819@gmail.com

HANDSCRIT LOGO - designed by Karla Hamilton
HCG Titling / pen - designed by Laurie Pearson
Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy Cindy Haller

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Troy Brooks

tbrooks@brooksacevedo.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Wolfgang Thun

wolf@thun.com.au

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mimi.reilly@comcast.net

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dot-t3@juno.com

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* Denotes Standing Committees

July-August 2018 HANDSCRIT submission deadline:

June 10, 2018

HANDSCRIT is published six times a year.

Contributions of articles, calligraphy, photographs, or any relevant information should be directed to Cindy Haller, Newsletter Editor, at sourceart@comcast.net

Editor reserves the right to edit submissions.

HANDSCRIT is mailed in PDF format (Acrobat Reader software required) to all current Guild members.

President's Pen

Another year has come and gone – at least for our Guild. What a year it has been! We started with an awesome retreat and then a colorful Summer Study program. Then Harvey hit and turned lives upside down.

I try not to get annoyed when I talk to people from other cities who seem to think that once the waters receded life simply went back to normal. They simply don't understand that for Houston, we have a new normal.

As Houstonians we keep on moving. As we move into the Summer we will have Guild members attending conferences across the country and we will also have our own Summer Study program.

We will also be doing Secret Pal drawing at our next meeting. If you've never done it, I encourage you to do it. Things I've received from my Secret Pals are some of my most cherished possessions.

Also, keep an eye out for information on our upcoming show – date still to be determined.

Until then..... keep writing.

Troy

Share your work with your fellow scribes. To submit artwork for the website's gallery area, make sure that your art is scanned at 300 dpi or higher and in JPEG form. Send as an attachment in your email communicate to Debbie Dutton for inclusion on the site, now or in the future.

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COVER ART CREDIT

Courtesy of (top) - Janet Reynolds; (middle) - Lynn Ayres; (bottom) - Amy Mueschke. See workshop review and more art beginning on page 12.

Birthday Greetings

May 2018

5/4	Barbara Barrett
5/16	Krista Gessaman
5/18	Terry Hausner
5/20	Lynda Jolly
5/22	Debra Hrnecir
5/22	Teddi Meyer
5/23	Martha Raymond
5/24	Julie Freeman
5/26	Trish Taylor
5/28	Kerrie Hendrickson
5/30	Barbara Johnson



June 2018

6/14	Susan Davis
6/17	Amanda Enger
6/17	Analisse Orr
6/18	Maria Ferrer
6/24	Maureen Vickery
6/26	Christine Rothchild
6/27	Terri Barrow
6/27	Laurie Pearson

Past Meeting Highlights

March 10, 2018

EARLY BIRD

Basics of Depth and Lighting for Illumination – with Wolf Thun

With paint in wells, water in pots, and brushes at the ready, Wolf demonstrated the steps in building up dimension in letters and designs, beginning with a tint of the desired color, progressing through more concentrated pigment, to full strength of color. Some lettering artists use watercolors, but Wolf prefers gouache, which is more in keeping with historical ground pigment use. Allowing the colors to dry between each step is important; then shading and highlights can be added at the end with thicker colors used with an ultra-fine touch.

Participants were tested to work cleanly and precisely as they worked on color swatches, the details and overpainting of each design, which Wolf had graciously prepared for the participants.

Book recommendation for illumination work:
Calligraphers Project Book, by Susan Haines



PROGRAM

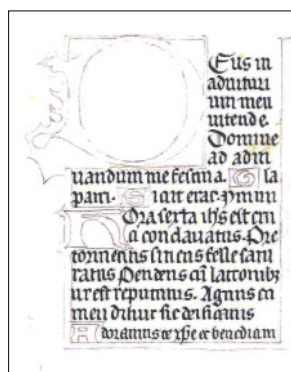
Illuminating a Manuscript Page – with Wolf Thun

Continuing in the vein of Medieval Manuscript work, Wolf showed samples of illuminated manuscripts, then passed out a miniature reproduction of a manuscript page with just body text in black printed on it. From the sample page provided for reference, we first dealt with the rubrics – the red lettering and versal letter accents.

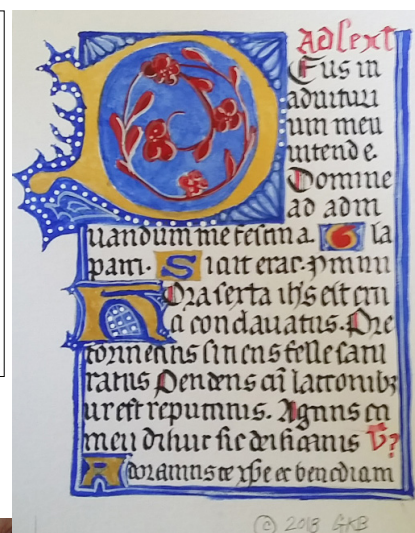
Then we emulated the gilded portions, using gold gouache. Wolf explained that gilding needed to be finished before any other painting. The reason – gold will stick to any paint, so it's necessary to gild first.

We then worked on the blue borders and red accents, along with the versal counter space design.

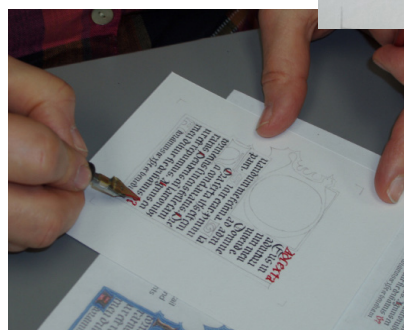
Finally, the scribe would work with a very small quill or brush for the white overpainting, providing design and depth in the areas used.



*Sample manuscript page
prepared for students by Wolf*



*Garri Butler's finished
sample from historical
reproduction provided to
students*



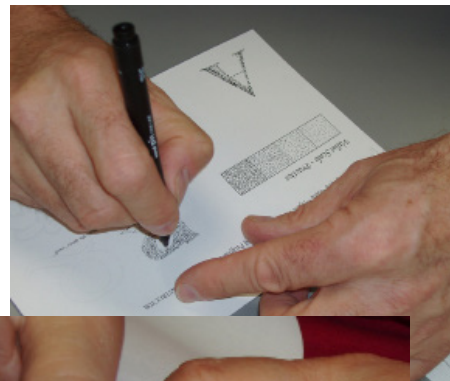
April 14, 2018

EARLY BIRD

Pen & Ink Technique: Stippling Letters and Illustrations – with Cindy Haller



After an explanation of how traditional stippling has been used, and viewing samples, the participants created a stippled value scale, followed by flat and dimensional gradation on provided letter shapes. They then drafted their own capital letters, using a simple transfer method. Cindy ended the session by showing a variety of ways stippling techniques can be varied through more samples.



PROGRAM

Artist Trading Cards – with Cori Austin

Following an explanation of the origination of *Artist Trading Cards*, and an overview of the possible steps in designing cards, including design techniques of background, middleground and embellishments, participants got down to work, creating up to three cards. All signed and dated cards were dropped into a basket, followed by drawing out as many cards as one designed. As these little artistic gems are designed to “trade”, people were delighted with the variety of techniques, materials and ephemera used in designing the cards as they drew cards out of the basket.



Spring Social

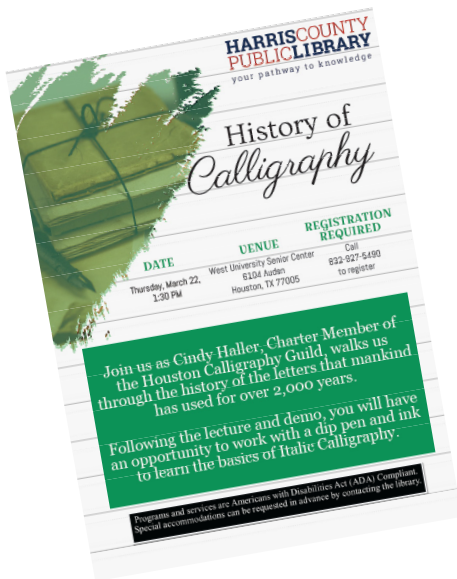
APRIL 14, 2018

How better to celebrate springtime at a Guild meeting than a wonderful table of savory and sweet treats while visiting with fellow scribes. The lovely flower pot centerpieces were given away from the Welcoming Drawing activity.

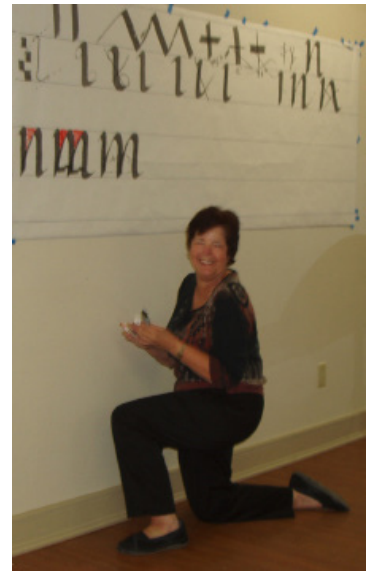
Thanks to Terri and Pattie for the lovely decor, and to everyone who shared yummy food with their friends.



Community Outreach



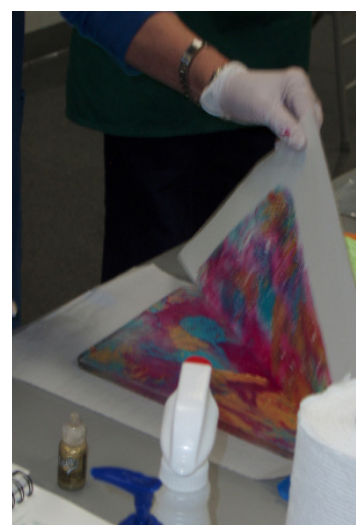
On March 22, 2018 Cindy Haller and Dottie Cook presented a program on the history of western lettering, followed by a hands-on demonstration of Italic Calligraphy. The participants spent the majority of the afternoon session learning about pens, ink, pen angle, and letter structure. The Friends of the Library budgeted for supplies, which participants took home, to continue their study.



Mini Workshop Review

Gelli Plate Printing – with Lynn Ayres

March 10 , 2018

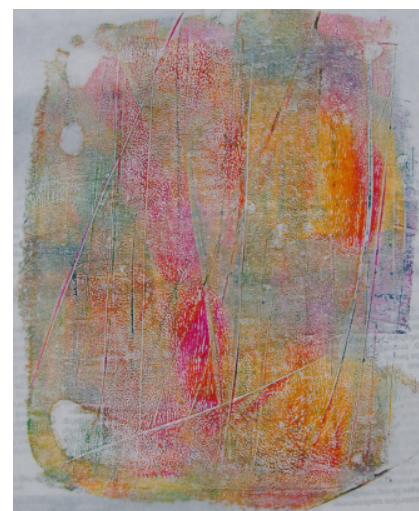
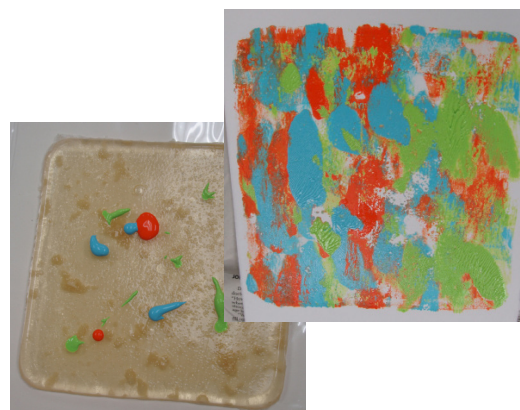


Gelli Plate printing is creative, expanding and messy! Commercially purchased gelli rectangles and squares are available (which Lynn brought for students to try), but homemade plates of gelatin, water and glycerine were also used (Lynn and Cindy Haller made up about 12 of these). This process is easy, but one needs a lot of space to spread out papers, AND the supporting supplies and tools to work efficiently.

Lynn began by explaining the paints, tools, paper and plates, along with samples. The students then jumped in at their stations, experimenting with squeezing paints, rolling them on the plates, using tools, stencils and fingers to create a monoprint design, then laying paper on the plate and pressing, then pulling a print or prints.

The session went by quickly, as paper after paper lined the tables. At the end, one fortunate student won a book on Gelli Plate printing, and everyone left with a homemade plate to continue their printing adventures.

Cindy Haller



Creative Cards: Blending Hand Lettering with Stamping, Layout & Embellishment Techniques

By Eliece Edge

I took my first class in calligraphy studying Blackletter with Skip Blakely and James Storrs. I was thrilled to be able to address a “fancy” envelope to my daughter using a Platignum fountain pen. I had no idea what I was getting into. 35 years later, I have to look back and laugh. Yes, folks, all we need is a bottle of ink, some paper, and a pen. Right?

Actually, that is all one needs to do calligraphy, but as most of us have discovered, we want all the other fun stuff, as well. After joining the Guild, I discovered all kinds of related arts and crafts such as watercolor, embossing, marbling, stenciling, paper-cutting, rubber stamping, art journaling and book making. Over the years, I have tried them all, but the one craft that now gives me the greatest pleasure is making cards. It's a delight to be able to incorporate all of those techniques into making cards for special people and imagining their joy at receiving them.

As many of us who've been at this awhile, I've accumulated an enormous amount of “stuff”. There are things I thought I just had to have that I rarely, or never, use. Like a white carpenter's pencil, a ruling pen, crackle medium, Lazertran, fluid acrylics, and umpteen different colors of embossing powder.

But then, there are a few things that I use every time I make a card, and would so hate to be without. It's possible that all of you may not know about these wonderful tools, so I consider it my duty to help you expand your hoard of supplies!

• **Teflon Folder** – most every calligrapher owns a bone folder and probably thinks it's unnecessary to have a Teflon one. The advantage it has is that it will not leave a shiny mark on your paper.

• **Paper Trimmer** – The one I use most often when making cards is the Fiskars 12” Rotary Trimmer. I think several of us in the Guild bought one after watching Maggie Gillikin use one to easily cut book board. It has a grid on the base to help align material. Decorative blades can be purchased for unique edges. At 20” x 13” it requires a fairly large surface if you wish to keep it out and ready to cut. I have mine sitting on top of a mini file cabinet in a walk-in closet beside my desk. The blades and cutting strips are extra expenses which need to be replaced periodically. I also use a Marshall paper trimmer which has a much smaller footprint than the Fiskars at 18” x 5”. One of its advantages is that it

uses single-edge razor blades which are available for just a few cents each from hardware stores. For safety the blade retracts into the cutter when not being used, and when the tip becomes dull you can flip it over for a new sharp edge. A second real advantage is its precision. It will literally slice a pencil line in half. A disadvantage is that the grid is not usable for measuring anything wider than 3 ½”. You will just have to use a ruler and mark where you want to cut. That's why I tend to use the Fiskars for card making.

• **Scoring Board** – I resisted buying one of these until I found one on sale. I'm sorry I waited so long. If I had known how much I would love it, I would have paid full price! This is one of those tools that seem so simple that you can't believe how very useful it is, and how much of a timesaver.

I have the Martha Stewart brand, but there are a number of other ones available. It comes with a scoring tool, but I prefer to use a ball burnisher. You position your pre-cut cardstock all the way to the top left corner and use the ruler printed across the top to decide where to score the fold line. I most often make my cards in the A2 size which is 4 ¼” x 5 ½”. Because A2 and A6 cards are the most common sizes, those score lines are specially marked. After scoring with my burnisher, I lightly press the fold with my thumb after carefully bringing the corners together, and then crease it well with my Teflon folder.



• **Stamp Positioner** –

For years, I have used my Stamp-a-ma-jig, and I still use it for wood-mounted stamps. But I kept hearing rave reviews about the Misti stamping tool, so I finally broke down and bought one. What a treat! You never have to worry again about whether you will get a perfect impression. It is meant to be used with cling stamps. You position your stamp face down on your card and close the lid. When you reopen the lid, the stamp clings to it ready to be inked. Close the lid again to stamp. Then if the inked impression is not as distinct as it should be, re-ink



it without moving the stamp or card (which is held in place with a magnet). Voila...perfection! This photo shows the stamped card on the left and the stamp clinging to the lid on the right. Since I bought mine, several other companies have come

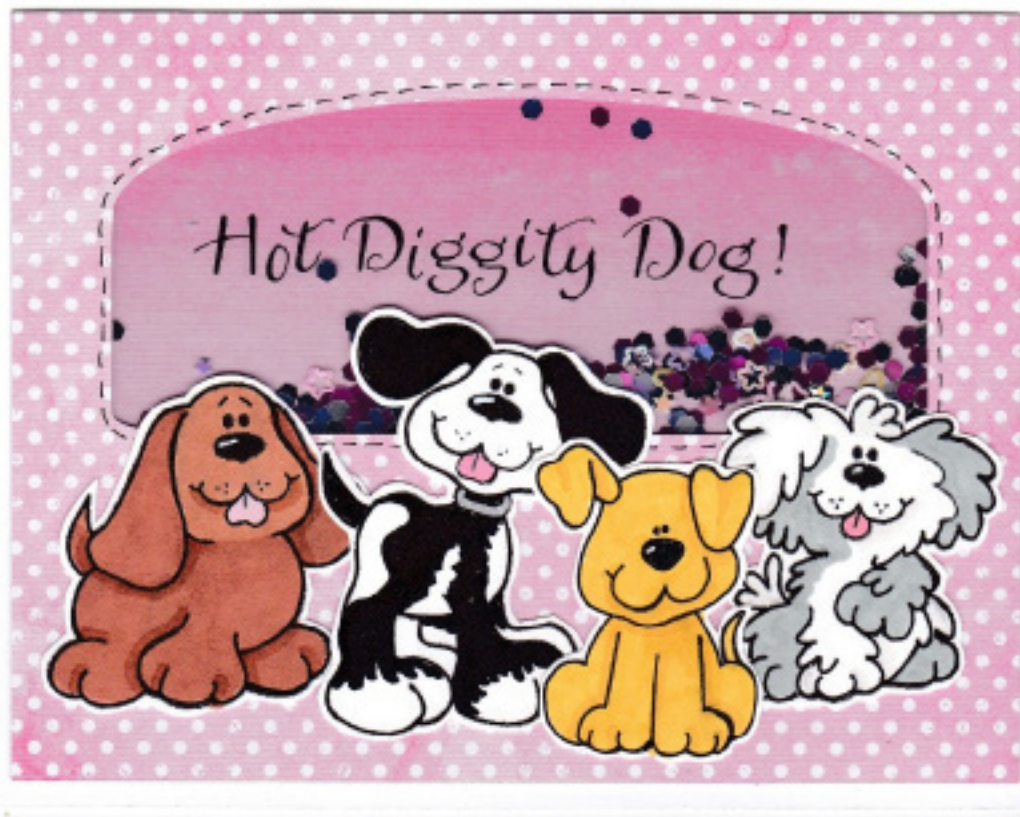
out with their versions which are quite a bit less expensive and probably work just as well.

• **LED Light Board** – This is my most recent indulgence. I had been making do forever by rigging up a light table with a portable fluorescent light under a clear acrylic cookbook holder...a real Rube Goldberg affair. It worked fairly well, but I had been yearning for one I had seen in the calligraphy catalogs. The only problem was it cost \$150. However, I saw the LitEnergy Tracer online for only \$25.99 with fantastic reviews. It has a 9x12 workspace that is dimmable and stays cool. It is only 5mm thick and completely flat with no raised edge to get in the way of your hand. The light has a rating of 50,000 hours. I mostly use this when I need to be able to see guidelines for envelopes. However, it is bright enough see through 216 gms cardstock. Like all the above cited items, I don't know how I ever got along without it.

• • • • •

Of the hundreds and hundreds of cards I've made over the years, here are a few of my favorites:

This is a shaker card with sequins encased behind the acetate window. The pups are digital printouts colored with alcohol markers. I use both Spectrum Noir and Copics. Alcohol markers are fabulous to use because they are so blendable and aren't streaky like ordinary markers. Both of these brands are refillable and you can replace the tips if they become mushy. They can be quite pricey, especially the Copics, but the Spectrum Noirs are very affordable online from Consumer Crafts or with a coupon from a local craft store. If you've never used alcohol markers, google them and you'll find a wealth of information and instruction.



continued page 8



The little girl on this birthday card is also a digital image I colored with alcohol markers and fussy-cut. I got her from this site <freed-earedollsdigistamps.blogspot.com/>. Mary Ellen Smith is the generous artist who offers her cute little drawings for free. Just left click on any you want to save, then right click the large image that comes up and choose “save picture as”. After that you are free to print it any size you want, color, cut out, etc. Instead of using strips of foam tape to lift up an image, I now have a new trick. I trace around the cut-out on a piece of thin fun-foam and cut it about 1/8” inside the line. This is adhered to the image. Because it basically covers the whole back, it is less likely to get dented in the mail.

I used a Fudenosuke hard tip brush pen (the one with the silver logo) to write the message. The cardstock was linen-textured and difficult to write on. A more flexible brush pen such as a Pitt would have probably been a better choice.

I used scrapbooking paper for the background layer of this card, while the little cat was cut out and hand colored. The message was written with Dr. Ph. Martin’s Pen White ink using a Hunt 56 nib. This was one of the 100+ cards I made for the Caring Hearts Card Drive in 2017. Thousands of handmade Christmas cards are collected and distributed to nursing home residents.



This is a stair-step card that I made for an 80th birthday. There were \$10 bills rolled up and inserted into the “candles” to equal the recipient’s age. This is a fun way to gift a person with money when you have no idea what they might like. I was able to give this card in person, but it will actually fold up to fit in an envelope, even though the candles will probably flatten a bit along the way.



I never have any trouble thinking of how to make a card for a female, but I'm often scrambling to think of what to do for a man. Here is a get well card that would work, although I actually sent one of these to a woman.

You don't always have to use a calligraphy pen to write calligraphy. This lettering that I learned from Sherri Kiesel was done with an ordinary Zebra 01 millipen.



For my brother's birthday I came up with this card. There is so much extraordinary paper available today. The left side is a piece of silver commercially embossed paper, while the right is cardstock printed with a photo of wooden planks. I punched holes from a bronze metallic paper and drew an X to resemble the head of a screw. I used a white Sharpie Poster Paint pen to write the words. I colored the handle of the hammer with alcohol markers in several brown shades to look like wood, but wanted the head to have a real metal look, so I painted it with silver Niji Pearlescent watercolor, although the scan failed to show the shine.

When a good friend's mother was about to turn 100, I knew I wanted to make her a very special card. I used my Silhouette Cameo electronic cutting machine to cut the flowers, leaves, and pot. These machines allow you to change your images to whatever size you need. When



I first began using my Cameo, I mainly cut the pieces from various colors of cardstock, which is what I did here. However, in the last couple of years I've become really enamored of alcohol markers, so I very often just cut everything from alcohol-friendly white cardstock (Neenah Classic Crest 80 lb.) that I color to suit me. At first, I didn't think it mattered what cardstock I colored, but I found that it really does make a difference. The flowers are glued together to form a bouquet which lifts out of the pot in one piece to reveal a message inside. I wrote on the front with Best Bottle ink and a Mitchell No. 6 nib in a Foundational variation that I learned from Maggie Gillikin and Leslie Winakur.



SPECIAL TREAT: Eliece will teach the July 14th *Summer Study* session for us, showing how to incorporate your hand lettering with stamping, your original designs, embellishments, etc. Description of session is included in the May Blast & info mailing.

Workshop Review

Be Fearless: Ways of Working Without Worry – with Amity Parks March 3-4, 2018

If you missed Amity Parks' recent workshop, you missed an opportunity to move behind the sometimes tightly-refined parameters of calligraphy to a comfortable open space combining art and words and lettering. In particular, we experienced the freeing process of working on several (as in a dozen or so) pieces at once, putting effort into one while others dried, or rested, or allowed us to rethink, refine or perhaps repurpose our initial plans.



Any
Mueschke



The techniques utilized included painting, drawing, and collage, often using pages from old books, musical scores, even hand-written recipes. Calligraphy was used sometimes at the start of a work, and then subsequent media was placed on top so that the lettering was a fainter backdrop to what came after. Calligraphy was often used again late in the process. We worked with gesso to create a lighter, glazed effect, and with matte medium we learned to transfer

images onto our art. Having several pieces moving along at the same time allowed us to redesign our art mid-stream when we learned new layout ideas. More than one student who was disappointed in one piece's "mistake"



Christy
Town

Analisse
Orr



continued page 14



Cori
Austin

saw new opportunities when it was used in conjunction with a second piece, another advantage to not being married to a single piece of art.



The end result of our work was a layered commingling of paper, text, and art. The walls of New Spring Art Studio were alive with color, whimsy, wisdom, and surprise. And the happy workshopers left with the knowledge of how to recreate and refine the process on their own. Many thanks to Amity Parks for a wonderful workshop, and to Lynn Ayers for bringing her to Houston!

Review by Pattie Murchison



Dottie
Cook



Debbie
Dutton



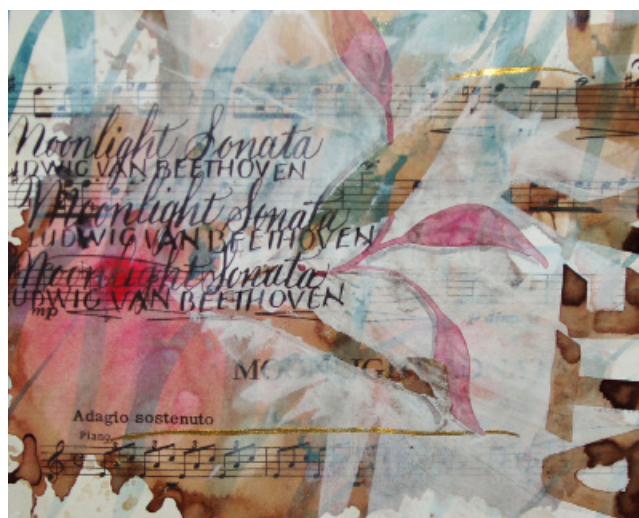
Laurie
Pearson

Suzie
Ickles





Maureen
Vickery



Cindy
Haller



Wolf
Thun



Pattie
Murchison

Sharon
Bippus



Mary
Reed



Save the Dates

Workshops

June 16-17, 2018 – Marina Soria

Weaving Letters

Registration available now via the Members Section of the website.

Questions, contact Lynn Ayres at lynnayres49@gmail.com

October 6-7, 2018 – Carol DuBosch

Neuland Alphabet

Info/Registration – TBA

April 27-28, 2019 – Sigrid Altmann

Topic: TBA

Annual Summer Study Program

June 9, 2018

Stenciled Letterform Techniques – with Laurie Pearson

Supply list TBA

July 14, 2018

Creative Cards: Blending Hand Lettering with Stamping, Layout & Embellishment Techniques
– with Eliece Edge

Supply list TBA

August 11, 2018

Working with Gouache – with Wolfgang Thun

Supply list TBA

Registration available now. Log onto Members Only section of our website. Go to the “Payments” title, and underneath, you will see the three Summer Study months for registering. NOTE: Register for each Summer Study session separately, depending on which or all of the sessions you wish to attend, i.e. register for June 9, register for July 14 and register for August 11.

INFORMATION FOR ALL PAMMENTS ONLINE

Just a reminder that when you log onto the **Members Section** for any proprietary information, you will see the title **Members Resources** with info below; just below that you will see **Payments**, and under that you will find the different departments to make your payments: Renewal, Major Workshop, and right now 3 individual months to register for the Summer Study (click on each one to fill in the fields, follow the prompt, like ‘Next’, to take you to entering your credit card; don’t forget to hit the Submit button.) You will receive acknowledgement of your payment in your email shortly.



Debbie Dutton smiles above her calligraphy inspired by an old prayer book in the UH collection. Her recent trip to Israel was in the forefront of her mind as she decided on one word to illuminate—PEACE

“book” and a book of palm leaves strung together. After the Salon, these new pieces will be archived into the library as their own special collection. This illustrates that everything in the collection isn’t old. Contemporary highlights include artists’ books. Other totally unexpected artifacts include handmade paper dolls of famous women and an accordion book made from an actual accordion. The library truly acts like a museum: It even conserves an artifact made in 2051 B.C., a Sumerian clay tablet. Attendees of the Salon were amazed to see something with cuneiform writing 4,000 years old.

continued on page 18



The inspiration for Wolf’s piece is based on the Book of Hours, Use of Reims at <http://digital.lib.uh.edu/collection/reims/item/13/show/10> “I never get tired of looking at old manuscripts – I am always amazed at how, in studio conditions 1,000 year ago, a scribe could do such wonderful work. It’s a shame that these works are rarely seen by the general public.” – **Wolfgang Thun**



The Kammavaca Manuscript from Burma inspired **Cori Austin** because of this “book’s” lack of binding. It appealed to her because like it, each page of her piece is like the spread wings of wild geese flying from Mary Oliver’s poem

How to Visit the UH Special Collections

Dean Lisa German invites all to visit the Special Collections Reading Room located on the second floor of the MD Anderson Library. Access is open and free to the general public from 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, plus four hours on Saturdays during the fall and spring semesters. Contact information, maps, directions, and where to park on the UH main campus are readily found on the university website.

How Rare Books Are Collected

The Rare Books Collections grow primarily through gifts of rare books from the public and rare book collectors.

The Rare Books Collections welcome donations of rare, unique, and irreplaceable items of intellectual, cultural, and societal distinction, where they will be cataloged for use and preserved.

Rare Books are used extensively for teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels, so Special Collections has a small annual budget that is used to purchase books, usually at the request of professors, for the support of various classes.

To learn how your books can be archived into the Special Collections, or find out how to memorialize someone with a bookplate, contact curator Julie Grob, jgrob@uh.edu or call 713.743.9744.

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Anyone May Experience These Exceptional Materials

Students, researchers, and our Houston community members have access to the historical books and significant artifacts housed in the UH Rare Books Collections. That's right, the general public, you and I, can see and experience this collection.

In the reading room on the second floor of the library, rare books come out of the stacks to play. Here they are provided to Houstonians and other patrons. Digital is wonderful, but "hands-on" of original source material is matchless.

Satisfy your curiosity about the wealth of information and beauty to be experienced in the Rare Books Collections and visit the MD Anderson Library.



Janet Reynolds focused her book structure on a Balinese palm leaf book with its separate, round-cornered pages strung together with cord

I'm Happy Because...



Marie Lynn Hayes

I'm with my Calligraphy Friends!

I'm Happy Because...



Garri Kaye Butler

I got to practice my favorite hand today and learn refinements