

GUILD OF
BookWorkers
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TRANSPARENT VELLUM IN FINE BOOKBINDING / *Jan Sobota*

In 1954 I became the last student of the fine bookbinder Karl Silinger (1881-1963) in Pilzen, Czechoslovakia. In the third year of my apprenticeship with him we received a work order to bind three hundred books in full vellum. It was an enormous work order even for Mr. Silinger's studio where bindings were often done in large quantities.

Our first problem was to find enough vellum for the job. In those days in Czechoslovakia vellum for bookbinding was manufactured only in limited quantity. Eventually my master found some vellum and parchment which was to be used for manufacturing small drums. It was goat parchment with a rough grain with pumice on one side. There were also some pieces of very thick, hard calf vellum originally made for large drums. This was almost absolutely transparent.

After seeing the calf vellum I had an idea to use it for covering a book—with decorative paper under it. I proceeded. It was very difficult to work with the hard vellum but ultimately the binding came out well and I was proud of the result. Mr. Silinger praised my work but informed me that what I had done was nothing new. It was an old baroque technique associated with the Edwards of Halifax bookbinding family (William Halifax, 1723-1808; James Halifax, 1757-1816) [PL. 1] which was being used currently by one of our colleagues, Jaroslav Dolezal (1909-1977) in Prague.

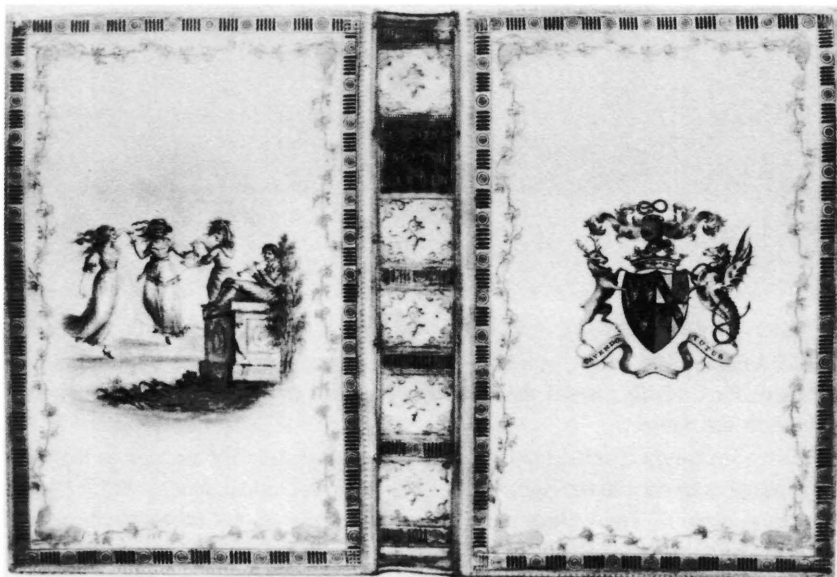


Plate 1

Needless to say I was disappointed that I had not invented this technique. I saw the work of Mr. Dolezal in which he used the technique of binding with transparent vellum with its fine effect. [PL. 2] Since that time I have been interested in this binding technique.

I believe that Mr. Dolezal had seen an original Edwards of Halifax binding and began to experiment with the process. I don't believe that Dolezal knew of Edward's process or the exact method of his work. Eventually Dolezal called his own technique of working with transparent vellum the "Vellucent Process," a term still used by some binders today in Czechoslovakia to describe transparent vellum.

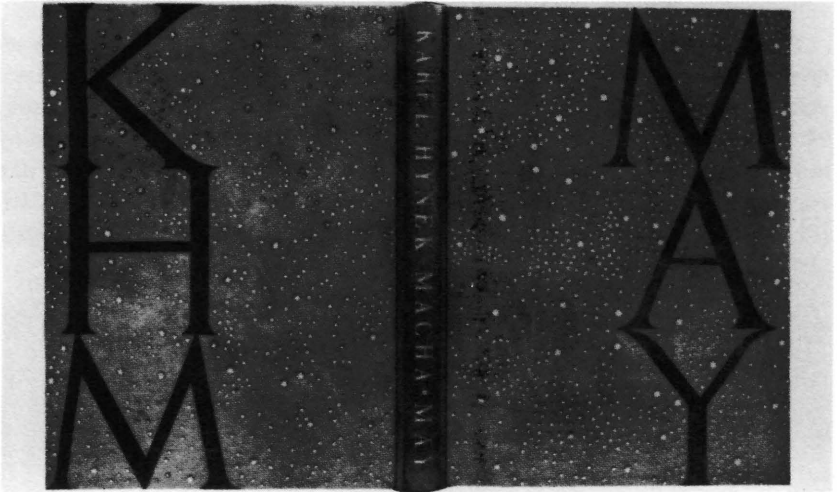


Plate 2

After Jaroslav Dolezal's pioneering work in this area many other contemporary Czech bookbinders were inspired to work with transparent vellum bindings. Many of them have gladly shared their experiences with me and I will present what I know on the subject.

There is common agreement that the first requirement for success in this type of binding is to choose the right vellum, one which is transparent or which "tends to transparency." The vellum must be non-filled, that is, not rubbed with pumice in its manufacture. This sort of vellum is often only partially transparent, i.e., unevenly transparent, and one must be prepared to deal with this situation when working with it.

By using an unrubbed vellum it is possible to adapt a decoration to it by drawing or painting on the underside of the more transparent areas. [PL. 3] If the natural transparency is not suitable for certain designs it is possible to pare the vellum at the needed areas or even over the total surface. A particularly thickened or opaque area can be scraped using an implement such as the rounded edge of plate glass. [PL. 4]

The majority of Czech bookbinders do not make a design or decoration directly on the underside of the transparent vellum, but rather make the decorative composition on the board before covering. First a good quality white or colored paper is pasted on the outside of the board. After that one is free to draw, tool with gold, make paper collages, incorporate printed reproductions, or even paste small flat objects on to the board. [PL. 5] If one uses water-based colors in the design it is necessary to fix them first, so that the colors won't run during the pasting of the vellum. A diluted nitrocellulose works well as a fixative.

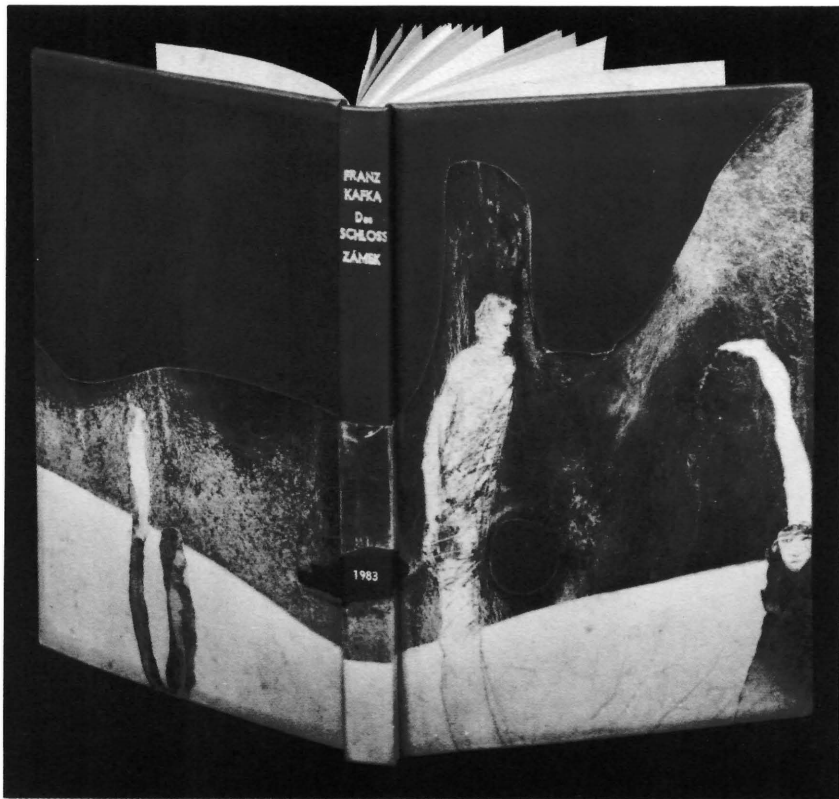


Plate 3

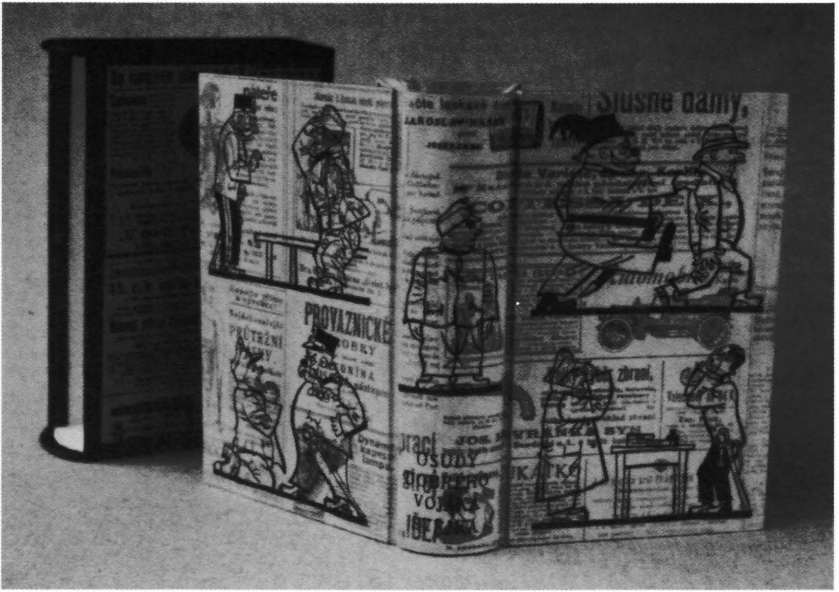


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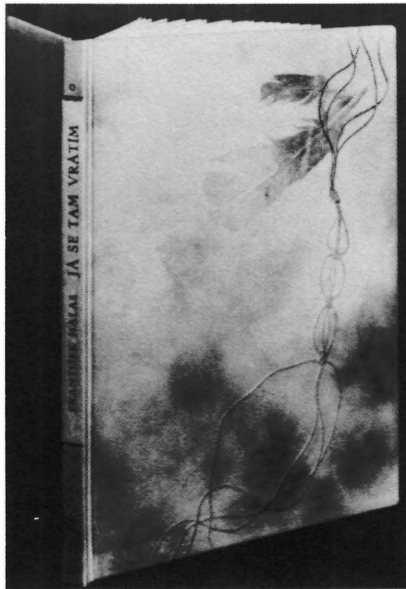


Plate 5

After the design is finished the next step is to cover the boards with the transparent vellum. In order to increase the transparency of the vellum some binders apply lanolin to the vellum before covering. It is also possible to add a little glycerin to the paste (a technique favored by J. Dolezal). Glycerin not only makes the vellum slightly more flexible, but also helps to increase its transparency. As regards the pasting of the vellum, wheat paste is most commonly used though the use of fresh hot animal glue, as well as the use of a mixture of methylcellulose, PVA, and water on a dampened vellum is also possible. As expected, it is also important to paste the inside of the boards with a good quality paper so that the boards do not warp. (Czechoslovak master binder Jan Vrtilek employs the alternative method of making very large turn-ins of the vellum over the inside of the boards, and pasting these down to counteract the pull of the cover material.) [PL. 6]

It is the consensus of opinion among Czech binders that a long, hard pressing at this point will further increase the transparency of the vellum. It is possible, afterwards if so desired, to add additional design now to the outside of the vellum by tooling, applique, or ink drawing. Any number of variations is possible. [PL. 7]

This brings us to the subject of Edwards of Halifax and this early binding family's work with transparent vellum. The Edwards of Halifax used the technique of drawing on the underside of the vellum (rather than building up a design on the boards first) to create many of their tasteful and exquisite bindings. Their findings have always seemed unusually transparent to me and I have been intrigued by this fact. Personally, I have tried many ways of working with vellum during my years of bookbinding practice, including that of drawing on the underside of the vellum in the manner of Edwards of Halifax. I had, for a long time, never been able to obtain the degree of perfect transparency which was such an appealing characteristic of the Edwards bindings.

Recently, however, I have become acquainted with their secret. It is mentioned in a patent taken out in 1785 by James Halifax entitled "Invention of embellishing books bound in vellum by making drawings on the vellum which are not liable to be defaced but by destroying the vellum itself."

The simple trick is the use of pearl ash (potassium carbonate— K_2CO_3) in preparing the vellum for covering. The following description by James Halifax of his invention describes not only his use of pearl ash but also his design technique:

"Having chosen a skin with a firm grain, take off with a sharp knife all the loose spongy part of the flesh, then soak the part to be ornamented with water, in which a small quantity of pearl ash has been dissolved till it is thoroughly wet, afterwards press it very hard when it becomes transparent. In that state it may be drawn upon, beginning with the most light and delicate shape, afterwards with the stronger, and ending with the coarsest, because a rough outline at first cannot

be concealed with a fine finishing or shading, as where the drawing is made upon the surface which is looked at. When it is made a finished drawing, it may be painted with strong opaque colours, but in this case the shades must be painted first and the lights afterwards. Copper plates may also be impressed so as to have a similar effect. When the ornaments are completed it must be lined with fine wove paper put on with paste made of the best flour, and is then ready for covering as other vellum books.” (*An Historical Sketch of Bookbinding* by S.T. Prideaux, Lawrence and Bullen, London 1893)



Plate 6

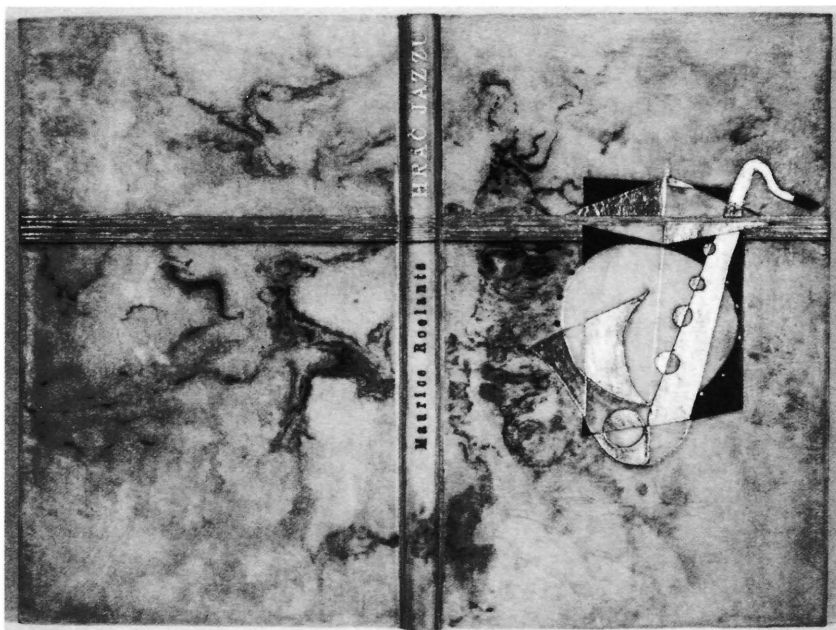


Plate 7

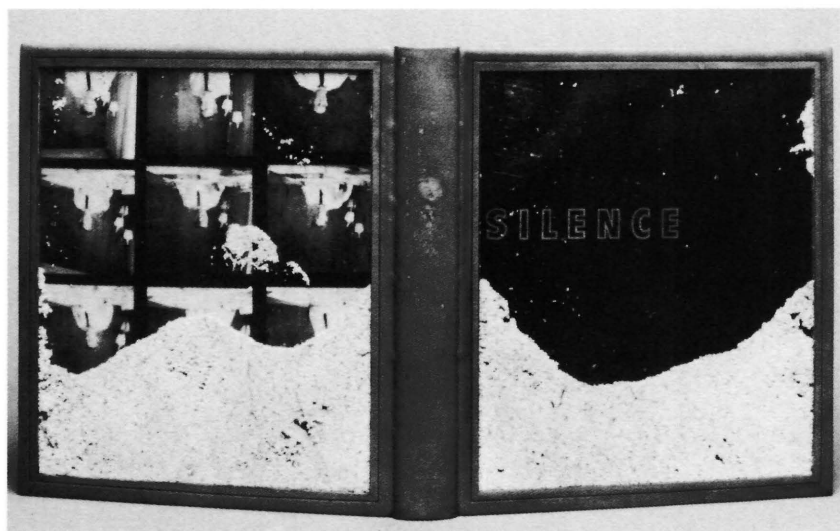


Plate 8

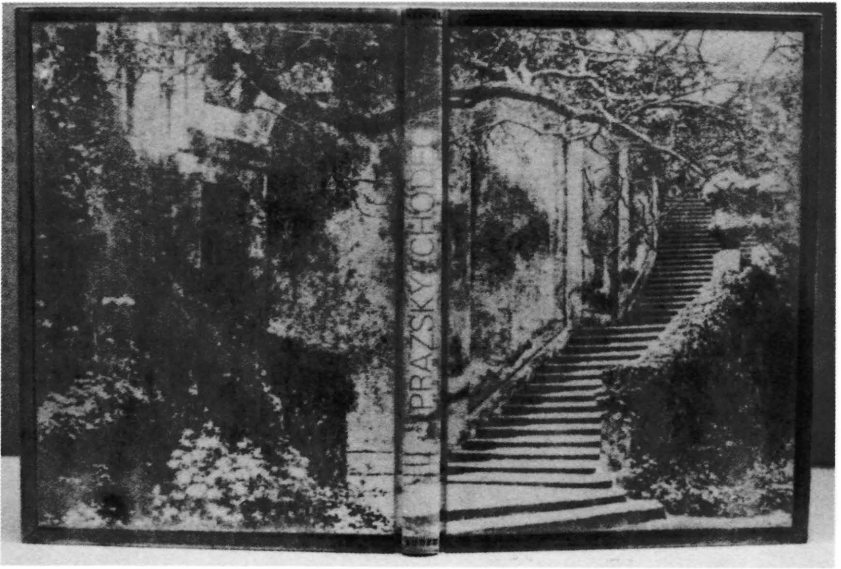


Plate 9

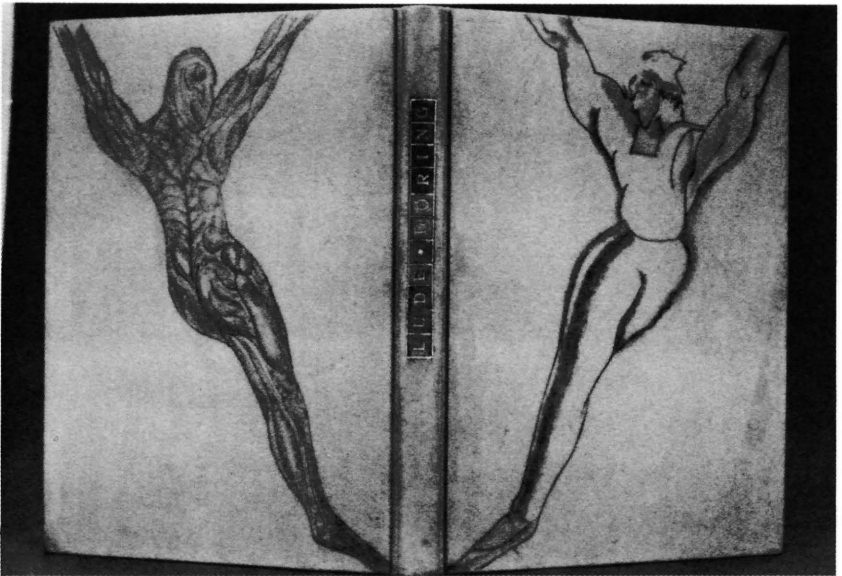


Plate 10

In reality it has not been proven whether the real inventor of the transparent vellum technique was James Halifax himself, or his father William, or one of his relatives. But this is a moot point. We know that the “underside painting” technique was used by the Edwards’ family, men of considerable taste. Edwards’ bindings were executed in London as well as Halifax and they can rightly be called a blend of English baroque and neoclassical treasures.

Through the Edwards’ pioneering work and patent, bookbinders today have the opportunity of further creative expression with the possibilities presented by working with transparent vellum. It is not only Czech bookbinders that I am familiar with who are currently working in transparent vellum. I know of two other individuals, Jenni Grey from England and Metchild Lobisch from Germany [PL. 8] who are working with it and I am sure there are others, perhaps in the United States as well. [PL. 9, PL. 10]

Recently I had the good fortune to be reacquainted with an Edwards of Halifax binding in my current work in Cleveland. I was asked to restore one of the Edwards’ bindings (with a fore-edge painting under gilt—but that is another story) for the Rowfant Club, a private book society in Cleveland. As is the situation with all recognized high quality and, in this case, innovative work Edwards of Halifax bindings are prized and highly valued 200 years after he lived. Because they are innovative they are also “timeless” as anyone who has seen an Edwards of Halifax binding is aware.

The example of the Edwards’ techniques and development as a binding family contains a message for binders of today. After we have familiarized ourselves with past binding traditions there is the obligation of producing contemporary bindings, with a view to the future. In this way our work will have something interesting and important to say to our posterity.

Jan Sobota, a well known Czech bookbinder, now lives in the United States. He believes that design bookbinding is one of the artistic disciplines and that artistic books belong to interior design as much as painting, sculpture and other arts. He is currently bookbinder-conservator at Case Western Reserve University.

Mr. Sobota thanks the Czech and West German binders who shared their experiences and for sending photos of their work; special thanks is given to Frank Fabray for his assistance in preparing this article.

1. *The English Garden* by W. Mason. Halifax Binding by the Edwards Bindery, c. 1783. Transparent vellum with underpainting and gold tooling.
2. *May* by Karel Hynek Mácha. Binding by Jaroslav Doležal. Cut black paper letters under vellum with gold tooling on the outside of the vellum.
3. *Der Schloss* by Franz Kafka. Binding by Frantšek Jelinek. Full leather binding in calf with partially transparent vellum applique with white paper and under vellum drawing.

4. *Good Soldier Svejk*, by Jaroslav Hášek. Binding by Jan Sobota. Full transparent vellum binding with black ink drawing on pasted newsprint under the vellum.
5. *I Will Return*, by František Halas. Binding by Frantisek Jelínek. Full transparent vellum drawing with feathers and twine pasted to board under the vellum.
6. *Nov gorodian Icon Painting*. Binding by Jan Vstílek. Full transparent goat parchment with color printed reproduction pasted to board and gold stamped under the vellum.
7. *Jazz Musician*, by Maurice Roelants. Binding by František Kusý. Full transparent vellum binding with handmade marbled paper "face" under the vellum. Gold tooling and black gold goatskin onlays on the surface.
8. *Silence*. Binding by Mechthild Lobisch. Full Morocco leather binding with cut out central panels covered with transparent vellum. Back cover lined with photographs and filled with egg shells.
9. *Journeys on Foot Through Prague*, by Vítěslav Nezval and Josef Sudek. Binding by Jan Sobota. Full transparent vellum binding with specially prepared photographs under the vellum.
10. *Ballet Sketchbook*, by Lutke Doring. Binding by Jan Sobota. Full transparent vellum binding with watercolor drawing on the underside of the vellum.

. . . When I fell a tree, before I raise the saw I pray, "I pledge, as a temple carpenter, that I will do nothing which will extinguish the life of this tree."

Nishioka,
Japanese Master Carpenter¹

The conservation ethic; in recent times, most book workers have come to know its value and its necessity. But do we know this ethic with the fullness of Nishioka's vision? Have we assured the continuity of the tree as well as the paper to which it gives life? There is nothing in our book conservation standards now that considers the preservation of anything beyond the book itself, and consider it we must, for both practical and moral reasons:

Between 1 and 1650 A.D., about ten mammals and ten bird species went extinct, which equals the rate of 1 every 165 years. Between 1650 and 1850, the rate changed to one every five years. From 1850 to 1900 the rate soared to 1 every 9½ months, and to one every eight months between 1900 and 1950.² Presently, the National Wildlife Federation estimates that an average of one species per day becomes extinct.³ Right now, approximately 25-30,000 plant species are at risk of extinction, which equals about 10% of all plant species. Approximately 8% of mammals are now endangered worldwide (with at least 15% of the United States' mammals at risk).⁴ Bob Currie, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Asheville, North Carolina, states that "the *U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Species* now totals 883 with the addition of 60 species in 1985."⁵ There are tens of thousands of species whose status we do not even know.⁶

Why is this happening? Has nature gone awry? No, but perhaps one of its creatures has; those species extinctions occurring from 1600 A.D. on are largely attributable to human activities (book workers take note). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cites the following as the major causes of extinction.⁷

- 1) Destruction and degradation of habitat
- 2) Excess commercial exploitation
- 3) Diseases and parasites introduced by international trade
- 4) Release of non-native animals and plants into foreign areas
- 5) Many protections laws being poorly written or inadequately enforced
- 6) Natural extinction, not fully understood [often occurs in species that lack great adaptability—i.e., they only eat one specific plant or animal, that food source vanishes, and then they vanish.]

As the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service points out, “human activities are present as a basic ingredient nearly every time.”⁸

It is the general consensus of conservation organizations and governmental agencies that habitat loss is the major factor contributing to the extinction of a species. This destruction occasionally results from a natural disaster, but most often is caused by agricultural encroachment, timber industries and ranching, housing and industrial developments, all spreading further and further into the wildlands due to human over-population (and greed). The other major destroyer of habitat is pollution.

Book workers probably have little to do with habitat destruction (although those chemicals, dyes and paints we indiscriminately throw down sinks *do* pollute), but trade and non-commercial collecting are becoming more and more significant as the overall situation worsens and book workers certainly have been involved in the latter.⁹ In his article on wildlife trade for *National Geographic*, Noel Grove quotes William Conway, Director of the New York Zoological Society as saying that “no imaginable consumption can threaten animals if they have sufficient habitat into which they can retreat, but at the rate the world’s rain forests are disappearing—50 acres every minute—excessive trade can contribute to the downfall of some.”¹⁰ The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora’s (CITES’) opinion of the situation goes even further, stating that “trade has now also become a major factor in the decline as improvement in transport facilities has made it possible to ship live animals *and their products* anywhere in the world.”¹¹

When one or more of these factors finally pushes a species to its limit, and the species is no more, all life is affected in some way, often in a very dire way. Chain reactions occur: Suppose water pollution fouls a pond and the pond’s frogs disappear. The insect populations normally controlled by frogs multiply rapidly and the insects become bothersome pests¹² or disease carriers. Also, snakes and other species will suffer if the frogs were the main source of their diet.

Another example, which actually occurred, went as follows: In the jungle, spotted cat populations were greatly reduced. Their prey, mostly rodents, greatly increased in number, invaded the jungle villages, fed on human food stores and spread disease.¹³ Plants also take part in the chain. Most of the air we breathe comes from the microscopic plant and animal life of the oceans and from the Earth’s forests. When we pollute and wipe out ocean species, clear-cut rain forests and over-collect exotic plants, we are losing the breath of all life.¹⁴ The examples could go on and on, but their essence would remain the same—there is an interdependence of all living things. The Earth and its life probably could adjust to species losses at the rate of one every 165 years, but at the rate of one per day, the effects are devastating and too fast to allow adjustment. We are all in danger.

The world's losses due to extinction go beyond practicalities; there are moral and aesthetic costs as well. Beauty, uniqueness, durability, restoration and preservation are all values that most book workers commonly share. When the Earth loses any species, it is deprived of some or all of these values. It is likely then that most book workers, if aware of the problems now facing innumerable wild species, would want to avoid contributing to their plight as well as to participate in resolving it. Ignorance is our greatest hindrance to either of those goals; it is essential that we become and remain informed.

The first and foremost fact for book workers to become aware of is that the most significant contributors to illegal and endangering wildlife trade are the people who create and maintain a market for an animal/plant or its products. Most poachers and wildlife traffickers would disappear if no one bought their products. Open the door to them, however, and the seedy, violent, abusive, wasteful and cruel underground enterprise begins, complete with its suppliers, middlemen and distributors, and with its overwhelming concern for profit and volume at the expense of quality, legality and ethics.¹⁵

To completely avoid contributing to the endangerment or extinction of a species, it would be best, considering the present vast number of endangered species as well as the complicating circumstances discussed below, neither to purchase nor request to purchase products derived from *any* wild species. That is a controversial stand; there are those who will not choose to take such a stand since there are wild species that are legal to buy and possess and that are currently at no risk of extinction. What follows then, is written for those who do not choose the former, more cautious position; it is information that is imperative for them to know if they wish to stay within the law and to prevent further species destruction.

Endangered and threatened species are protected now by numerous national and international laws, acts, conventions and treaties. Book workers who are United States' citizens should abide by (among others) the following:

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (also called "CITES" and "The Washington Convention");¹⁶ the Migratory Bird Treaty Act; the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956; the Endangered Species Act of 1973; the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1978; and, the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation for the Western Hemisphere.¹⁷ There are state as well as federal laws to consider and state laws may be more restrictive than federal (but not less).¹⁸ The United States generally adopts the strictest approach to any discrepancies between our own endangered species laws and the various international agreements we are obligated to, erring on the side of the species, so to speak. If you are a citizen of another country, you will need to know that government's specific laws and act accordingly.

The *U.S. Code Annotated* defines "endangered species" as "any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range . . ."¹⁹

The same authority defines “threatened species” as “any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.”²⁰ The term “species” includes “any subspecies of fish or wildlife or plants, and any distinct population segment of any species of vertebrate fish or wildlife which interbreeds when mature.”²¹ The terms “fish or wildlife” include “any part, product, egg or offspring thereof, or the dead body or parts thereof;”²² the term “plant” means “any member of the plant kingdom, including seeds, roots and other parts thereof.”²³

These definitions are essential to understand because there are existing protection laws regarding endangered/threatened wildlife and that protection *does* extend to the dead as well as the living—to the (readily recognizable) parts as well as to the whole; in other words, to the products that book workers might use. This legal protection for what is already dead is not a matter of bureaucratic waste;²⁴ the laws were created to prevent establishing or supporting markets for these species’ products, markets which necessarily would endanger the living species.

For the most part, U.S. book workers would not be able *legally* to buy, sell or possess endangered species in this country. Sometimes it is legal to purchase an item from the country of export, but illegal to import it to or export it from this country since the species is listed on the CITES’ Appendixes, the *U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Species* or in some treaty we are obligated to. There are some exemptions to the laws, but for the most part these concern non-commercial activities such as museums, scientific research and breeding programs established to help the species. It is unlikely that a book worker would qualify for such exemption, although the only sources that could answer that question with certainty are the protection organizations and attorneys.²⁵ It is possible that a Guild of Book Workers’ Exhibition would qualify for a permit since it is a non-commercial activity, but, again, that question would need to be answered by authorities. Whether or not the Guild could get such a permit, however, it would not be ethical for the Guild to display works that the individual book worker legally should not have purchased or possessed, and it would be demeaning to conservation standards for the Guild to exhibit works using species at risk of extinction.

The laws are numerous, lengthy and complicated, with some being revised daily. Since ignorance is no defense under the law, the first step you should take if you are considering using wildlife products in your book work is to consult an attorney versed in state, national and international wildlife regulations.²⁶ If you do not take this effort, and, through ignorance or misinformation break one of the innumerable laws, you are risking penalties (in the U.S. at least) ranging from \$1,000.00 to \$20,000.00 fines and/or 6 months to a year in jail and forfeiture of the item illegally obtained or possessed.²⁷

If you choose not to consult with an attorney, you should at least contact one of the official agencies involved in endangered/threatened species protection described in Appendix I at the end of this paper. These agencies should be aware of most of the laws and can provide lists of the endangered/threatened species.²⁸

These lists are essential to abiding by the laws since they contain the names of the species for which the laws were written. The lists are not identical, and it would be best to check them all if your goal is to be a responsible contributor to a sound conservation ethic.²⁹ Difficulties arise in using these lists though, largely due to the fact that few of us are qualified zoologists or botanists. As the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service points out, "common names are included [in the lists] but cannot be relied upon since they vary greatly in local usage."³⁰ For example, the East may call a "buffalo" what the West calls a "bison." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommends the use of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* and the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*. We, indeed, are not scientists, however, and thus may not know what a *Capra aegagrus* is, much less what its leather looks like. On top of that, there is not a standard use of taxonomy among wildlife traders at this time and, what is worse, the wildlife traffickers frequently mislabel items in order to avoid detection or to make bigger profits.³¹

When you have consulted with authorities, conducted research regarding the endangered/threatened species lists and are certain enough of your knowledge to be able to act legally and ethically, the sad part begins; you may acquire a jeopardized animal or plant whether you intended to or not. The reasons for this unfortunate fact are twofold: the difficulties encountered in enforcing the existing protection laws and the deceptions encountered in traffickers' avoiding them. Some of these problems are described briefly below:³²

Enforcement Problems

- Lack of funding and personnel: obviously, this allows for continued poaching and illegal exports/imports when there are not enough customs officials.
- Lack of standardization of forms (export, veterinary certifications, permits), of taxonomy and of shipping regulations: results in forgeries.
- Lack of rescue centers for confiscated wildlife: leads to corrupt protection officers allowing the items back into the market.
- Difficulties in getting international cooperation due to corruption, apathy and poverty: results in smugglers not being apprehended and illegal items getting into the market.
- Corrupt, uninformed and lax customs officials: results in bribery, identification of species problems and continued trade.
- Impossibility of identifying all wildlife species and their parts: customs officials unknowingly allow illegal items through or give up in dismay.³³

- Often, a backlash of protection laws is a raise in prices or the exploitation of another species: pushes the markets further and further underground and increases trade in the endangered items.
- Poverty in the nations where many endangered species occur; promotes poaching for food and survival incomes.

Tricks of the Trade (all of the below result in illegal wildlife appearing legal)

- Transit laundering (illegal exports are smuggled to another country in which they are either not illegal to export or in which the laws are known not to be enforced, where they receive “valid” documents or they go to “free ports,” where there are no customs officials).
- Illegal skins are packed between legal skins, within bales of cotton or are hidden in secret compartments.³⁴
- Wild skins are exported under the cover of being “ranchd” or “farmed” when the ranch or farm actually consists of skins derived from eggs or juveniles taken from the wild and then raised at the ranch or farm.
- Traffickers operate under such misleading titles as “Michigan Center for Research” or the “Laos Biological and Experimental Centre,” leading people to believe they are legal sources for wildlife and that they are able to acquire permits.³⁵
- Forged documents (including quarantine certificates, veterinary certificates, export documents, permits . . .). These are forged either by the trafficker or by bribing the various authorities to either forget them or give the traffickers blank forms.
- Illegal wildlife kept in separate, remote storage centers, away from inland protection authorities.
- Mislabelling of wildlife.
- “Worked” on items, such as art work, polished shells, etc., can sometimes be exported/imported since they are not readily recognizable as the protected species.
- Bribery of officials.

Some book workers already have been either deceived, misinformed or, at the least, have been walking precariously close to the edge of contributing to species of extinctions. In recent years, for example, works have appeared in various book binding exhibition catalogues, journals and studies that list the following as covering materials: water buffalo, buffalo, Indian buffalo calf, black kangaroo, crocodile, black elephant, cobra, deer and walnut. What follows shows why the use of these materials is troubling, if not illegal:

*Listing on CITES' Appendixes and
U.S. List of Endangered and
Threatened Species*

Material

Water buffalo	CITES' Appendix III (Nepal)
Bison (possibly just another term for buffalo or Indian buffalo calf)	CITES' Appendix I, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Various kangaroos (do you know the difference between an endangered and non-endangered kangaroo skin?)	CITES' Appendix I and II, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Various wallabys (do you know the difference between a kangaroo and a wallaby skin?)	CITES' Appendix I, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Crocodiles	Most are on CITES' Appendix I, the rest are on Appendix II, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Asian elephant	CITES' Appendix I, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
African elephant (do you know the difference between an Asian and African elephant skin?)	CITES' Appendix II, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Cobras, pythons	Some are on CITES' Appendix I, and all the rest are on Appendix II, U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Various deer (can you distinguish deer skins? Do you know whether the skin was taken legally under the game quota?)	Some are on CITES' Appendix I and some on Appendix II, some on U.S. Endangered/Threatened Species List
Walnut	Reported to be scarce ³⁶

How did these binders get materials listed on the CITES' Appendixes and the U.S. Endangered and Threatened Species Lists? Did they know exactly what they were getting? Did they see the permits? Did they know they might be using endangered/threatened wildlife? Probably not, on all counts. One thing is certain: any merchant can acquire whatever wildlife species they desire (albeit illegally); it's as easy as closing their eyes. It is time we stopped closing ours.

Book work stirs with wonderful creativity in our time. Experimentation abounds, not only in connection with exploring for expressive materials, but also in searching for better, more durable materials. These are valid and valuable concerns, but they are dangerous as well. They may lead us to ignore the fundamental value: the treasure of life itself. The fact that kangaroo or elephant skin is stronger than all others is irrelevant if the use of those skins means the total death of those species; we obliterate meaning in art and permanence in craft if we extinguish any part of that which gives them their voice and their life; we act immorally. As Tom Albro put so well, "at some point in the future someone will handle and examine your work . . . , and by that examination will connect with the past and will know something about who we were and what values we had."³⁷

In summation, to contribute to a strong conservation ethic, book workers must first become informed: check with authorities about protection laws, check endangered species lists and ask questions about what you purchase. Also, be aware of what materials you use that might be at risk. The following list is certainly not complete, but may serve as a guide: leather, fur, plants (for making paper,³⁸ dyes, used as inlays on the newer clear plastic covering materials, woods for book boards and inlays), butterflies, shells and ivory for inlays, and sponges for use in dyeing and wetting leather. Even if book workers use legally obtained wild species, due to the perilous state of all of Earth's wildlife presently, that use would be more justifiable if limited to special and valuable works instead of being indiscriminate in purpose.

The choice of action in all of these matters is an individual one. There are precedents, however, for an organization such as the Guild of Book Workers to take a stand on the issue. For example, The International Organization for Succulent Plant Study has discouraged the purchase of habitat-collected plants and, cactus societies often mark down such specimens in competitive exhibitions and refuse to accept advertisements for them in their journals.³⁹ The Guild could do similarly by discouraging the use of wildlife in book work and by not accepting works using species listed on the CITES' Appendixes and the U.S. Endangered Species List in exhibitions, workshops and Guild publications.

Tom Albro, in his article on conservation binding in the Vol. XX, Nos. 1 and 2 *Guild Journal*, listed five fine standards he felt to be central to conservation binding, his fifth being: "In general, the treatments and materials used in book conservation should have as the basis for their use a commitment to the greatest life of the book over every other consideration."⁴⁰ The Guild must expand that ethic, however, to the fullness of Nishioka's vision; we must have a commitment to the greatest life of the book over every other consideration *except* the original life of the materials that give the book its life. Without this affirmation, we soon will be contributors to the *Red Data Books*, and those are books with which book binders should never have anything to do.

APPENDIX I

Authoritative Agencies Concerning Endangered/Threatened Species: A Description, Their Listings and Contact Information

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

The most authoritative agency concerning the *U.S. Endangered Species Act*. The Secretaries of Interior and Commerce are required to compile lists regularly of the species in concern, which documents are the most authoritative U.S. listings and are placed in the Federal Register, Title 50, part 17.

List: *Title 50, part 17 – Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants*

List of all species (national and international) detected by the service to be endangered or threatened. Also includes wildlife species *treated* as endangered/threatened because they are sufficiently similar in appearance to truly endangered/threatened species.

Address: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):

Established in Washington, D.C., 1973. Originally, eighty nations met (the membership now includes 85 nations) to draft this convention. It is the official agency for international concerns regarding endangered/threatened species. CITES members meet every two years for review. The Secretariat of CITES is the UN Environment Programme, which contracted its duties to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).41.

List: Appendix I – Dangerously threatened with extinction and therefore banned from any commercial trade except in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix II – Potentially threatened, but commerce can take place under strict regulation, with shipments necessarily accompanied by authorizing documents from country of export. Also includes non-threatened if similar in appearance.

Appendix III – Not considered endangered by the world at large, but listed by some countries where they originate, out of concern for their existence there.

Address: For CITES, see IUCN's address below.

International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN):

The organization contracted by the CITES' Secretariat to perform its duties, which include monitoring of the species and compiling the official lists of endangered species into the *Red Data Books*.

List: The Red Data Books

The IUCN's Survival Service Commission prepares and updates the *Red Data Books*. These are authoritative international works on threatened species, indicating the degree of threat to the species. They apply to wild populations only. The books come in separate volumes according to various classifications, i.e.: *The Red Data Book for Mammals*, *The Red Data Book for Plants*, and *The Red Data Book for Invertebrates*.⁴²

Address: IUCN

Avenue du Mont Blanc
1196 Gland
Switzerland

OR

IUCN Conservation
Monitoring Centre
219c Huntingdon Road
Cambridge
CB3 0DL, United Kingdom

Trade Records Analysis of Fauna and Flora in Commerce (TRAFFIC):

An organization (supported mostly by the World Wildlife Fund) that monitors the movement of animal and plant products around the world. The information gathered by TRAFFIC is supplied, upon request, to governments, CITES officials and conservationists. A typical activity of TRAFFIC is to test customs officials and their enforcement or lack thereof, of endangered species' laws so that they can report where problems in wildlife trafficking occur.

List: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* – devoted entirely to all aspects of wildlife trade.

Address: TRAFFIC, U.S.A.

1255 Twenty-third Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

APPENDIX II

List of Endangered and Threatened Plants Used for Paper Making
(from Arid and Semi-Arid Zones Only)⁴³

	REGIONAL CATEGORY	WORLD CATEGORY
VASCULAR PLANTS (ANGIOSPERMAE)		
MILKWEED (ASCLEPIADACEAE)		
<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>		K
BORAGE (BORAGINACEAE)		
<i>Cordia dichotoma</i>	V (Philippines)	V
SPURGES (EUPHORBIACEAE)		
<i>Euphorbia tirucalli</i>	nt (Angola; Ethiopia; Kenya; Tanzania; Uganda; Zimbabwe; Many countries)	nt
PALMS (PALMAE)		
<i>Borassus aethiopum</i>		nt
<i>Borassus flabellifer</i>		nt
<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	nt (Burma; India) K (Nepal; Pakistan; Fiji; Sri Lanka)	nt
GRASSES (GRAMINEAE)		
<i>Heteropogon contortus</i>	K (Nepal; Old World)	K
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	V (Balearic Is.)	
<i>Saccharum spontaneum</i>	V (Sicily)	V

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¹*The Dawns of Tradition*, Ed. by Teiji Itoh and Gregory Clark (Japan: Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., 1983), p.32.

²Lorus and Marjory Milne, *The Arena of Life. The Dynamics of Ecology* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Natural History Press, 1971), pp.174-5.

³William E. Clark, "Endangered Species of the U.S.," rev. ed. (Wash., D.C.: National Wildlife Federation, 1984), p.1.

⁴Milne, *The Arena of Life*, p.176.

⁵*The Burlington (N.C.) Times-News* (Saturday, February, 1986).

⁶"Endangered Species List" ((Compiled from IUCN *Red Data Books*, 1984) _____ : World Wildlife Fund, 19__?), p.1; The *Red Data Books* are a multivolume series of books (see Appendix I) that list all threatened wildlife in the world. Leafing through these lengthy volumes is a distressing experience indeed.

⁷"General Information," *Wildlife Biologue Series*, ES-22-81 (Wash., D.C.: Department of Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Public Affairs, Office of Current Information, 19__?), pp.1-2.

⁸*Ibid*, p.1.

⁹See pages 11-12 below.

¹⁰Noel Grove, "Wild Cargo: The Business of Smuggling Animals," *National Geographic* (Vol. 159, No. 3, March, 1981): 294.

¹¹"CITES Secretariat" (Martigny: Imprimerie Pillet, 19__?), p.3 (my underlining).

¹²Clark, "Endangered Species of U.S.," p.3.

¹³Clark, "Endangered Species of U.S.," p.3.

¹⁴We also may be losing the healers of all life by many of these extinctions since 40% of our prescription drugs are derived from plants and animals; "Endangered Species List," World Wildlife Fund, p.1.

¹⁵Jean-Yves Domalain, *The Animal Connection. The Confessions of an Ex-Wild Animal Trafficker* (New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1977), passim; There is not enough space here to go into the gory details of what constitutes the abuse, violence and cruelty, etc., mentioned above. I would suggest this book

for those who wish details for verification, and I would also point out that the first-hand experiences relayed in this book also can be affirmed in many of the items listed in the bibliography at the end of this paper, particularly in: Tim Inskipp and Sue Wells, *International Wildlife Trade* (_____ : International Institute for Environment and Development, Earthscan Publ., 1979), passim.

¹⁶Hereinafter referred to as “CITES.”

¹⁷Note that *this is not a complete list*. It only gives titles of some of the major endangered species laws affecting United States’ citizens. To be certain that you are following all of the existing laws and understand their details, you should consult a lawyer.

¹⁸*The United States Code Annotated*, Title 16: *Conservation*, §§1151 to 3100 (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publ. Co., 1985), §1535(f).

¹⁹Idem, §1536(6).

²⁰Idem, (20).

²¹Idem, (16).

²²16 *U.S.C.A.* §1532 (8).

²³Idem, (14); The CITES organization uses such terms as “endangered,” “threatened,” “rare,” and “vulnerable,” which terms are much more complicated in their definitions than those of the *U.S. Code Annotated*.

²⁴There is, however, considerable waste of many wild animals used for their leather products. Seals, for example, are most often not eaten (except by a small number of native American hunters), nor are elephants and alligators. There is almost no waste of domestic animals such as sheep and calves, however, once they reach the market.

²⁵See Appendix I; See also 16 *U.S.C.A.*, §1539, passim.

²⁶Note that you should also consult a lawyer or wildlife authority about game species. Official decisions are made about game quotas, often each year, so you cannot be sure that an animal was taken legally unless you check first with qualified personnel (i.e., federal or state Fish and Wildlife Departments).

²⁷16 *U.S.C.A.* §1540, passim. These penalties could be revised tomorrow, so again, I stress consulting with an attorney.

²⁸The most important of these lists are the CITES’ Appendixes, the *U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Species* and the enormous *Red Data Books*.

²⁹See Appendix I, n. 42.

³⁰“Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants,” 50 CFR 17.11 and 17.12 (Wash., D.C.: Department of Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jan. 1, 1986): §17.11(b) and passim.

³¹Domalain, *The Animal Connection*, pp.48, 59 and 60.

³²Inskipp and Wells, *International Wildlife Trade*, pp.18-20 and passim; Domalain, *The Animal Connection*, pp.47-50, 80-81 and passim. Read both of these works for more complete details on this matter.

³³“Identification of species is a real and difficult problem of enforcement. Identification often involves details of measurements, skin pattern or bones, particularly where subspecies are concerned. It is even more complex where one is dealing with parts and derivatives of similar species, such as crocodile skins, wolf versus coyote skins, or ivory from Asian versus African elephants; Inskipp and Wells, *International Wildlife Trade*, p.20.

³⁴Note that traffickers also use the hidden compartments for *live* animals, with no breathing holes and often no food or water; a despicable business. It is no wonder then, that “many more animals are killed during capture and when in transit than actually arrive at their final destination,” nor that even with dead products there is enormous wastage due to spoiled, bruised and poor quality materials; *Ibid*, p.28.

³⁵Domalain, *The Animal Connection*, pp.62 and 80.

³⁶Little, Elbert L., *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees. Eastern Region* (N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), p.359.

³⁷Tom Albro, “Conservation Binding,” *Guild of Book Workers Journal* (Vol. XX, Nos. 1 and 2, 1982): 3.

³⁸See Appendix II for a listing of endangered and threatened plants (arid and sub-arid zones only) that have been used in making paper.

³⁹Inskipp and Wells, *International Wildlife Trade*, p.77.

⁴⁰Albro, “Conservation Binding,” p.5.

⁴¹Grove, *National Geographic*, pp.294-6; Note that the Appendix II listings are most significant for book workers since the main threat to these species is trade for fur, skins, art, pets and research. By the time a species is on Appendix I, there are *usually* too few left for trade so their major threat comes from zoos or private collecting.

⁴²The *Red Data Books* are more concerned with scientific data and information about the status of species as opposed to the CITES' Appendixes, which are more concerned with trade and are the lists used for legal purposes; many *Red Data Book* species are on CITES Appendix I or II, but others (for which there is no likelihood of trade) are not. On the other hand, some CITES' Appendix I or II species are not in the *Red Data Books* because, although they are not yet rare, they are particularly heavily involved with trade, and thus, at risk; Inskipp and Wells, *International Wildlife Trade*, p.30.

⁴³Jana Zantovska, "IUCN List of Endangered and Threatened Plants (Arid and Semi-Arid Only) Used in Making Paper; Taken from IUCN's SEPASAL Records, Compiled by Frances Booth" (Surrey, United Kingdom: IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre, 1986); the IUCN categories listed above may be defined roughly as follows: V = vulnerable—not endangered but likely to become so if present practices remain; K = insufficiently known, but suspected to be endangered, vulnerable or rare; nt = not rare or threatened but if population becomes depleted, would move to one of those categories; see "How to Use the IUCN Red Data Book Categories" (Surrey, U.K.: IUCN, 1980).

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*Items with an asterisk are being placed in the GBW Library for reference.

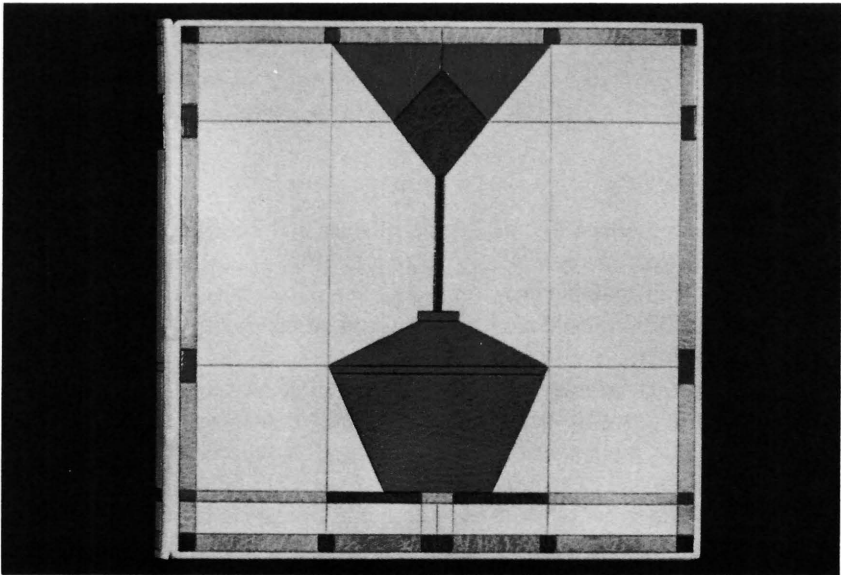
Marcia Livesay is a self-taught amateur bookbinder and calligrapher since 1980. In her spare time she makes blank books for journals or poetry/writings designed specifically for individuals according to what she knows about them and their work.

BOOK WORK: Diversity and Standards in the Modern Craft of Hand Bookbinding, an educational travelling exhibition produced by the Standards Committee / Report by Gary Frost

In the enthusiasm of the good response to the initial Standards Seminars the Standards Committee decided to produce a small traveling exhibit. The exhibition is traveling around to various sites distant from the large cities where the Standards Seminars are held. The exhibition is intended to have some of the same functions as the seminars; it is to educate viewers in the methods of modern hand binding and it is to establish an awareness of the standards of work in use by hand binders. An ultimate hope is to reveal the current strength and scope of the craft and to encourage hand binders to greater enthusiasm and excellence in their own work.

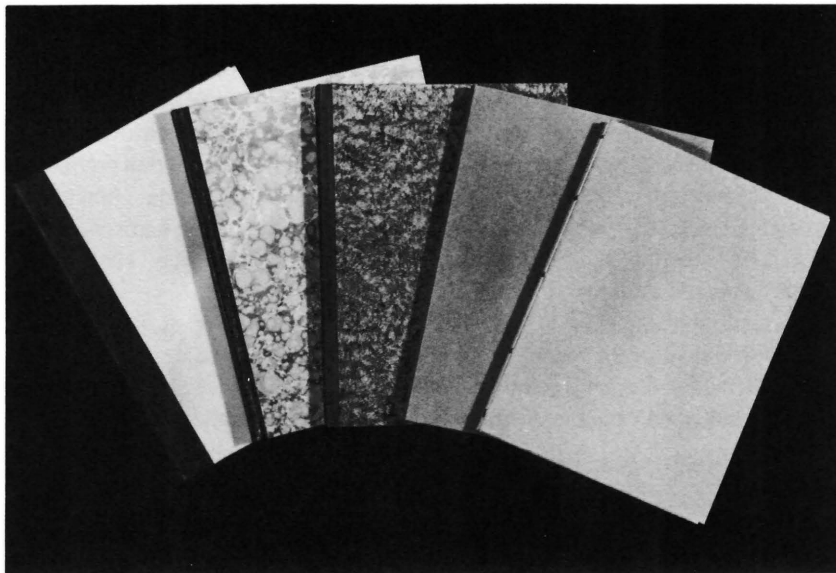
A small, volunteer exhibition team was established and the exhibition produced, assembled and opened in April of this year in Austin, Texas, at the Humanities Research Center. The exhibit team includes Bill Anthony, Lage Carlson, Mark Esser, Don Etherington, Gary Frost, Craig Jensen, Carol Joyce, Hedi Kyle, Martha Little and Pam Spitzmueller.

The contributions of each of the exhibition volunteers are as follows: Bill Anthony a model of an edition binding, Lage Carlson a model of endbanding and cap formation for design binding, Mark Esser a cut away of a design binding, Don Etherington an example of full covering, Gary Frost captions and bookings,



Example 1

Craig Jensen limited edition bindings, Carol Joyce illustrations of limited edition production methods, Hedi Hyle concertina fold artists' books, Martha Little examples of cloth cover restoration and Pam Spitzmueller models for conservation rebinding. The exhibition consists of thirty-nine items including nine framed illustrations. The exhibition travels in three small crates and is usually installed in six display cases.



Example 2

The exhibition presents the preparation of tools and materials, the nature of the sequence of steps of the work and examples of thoughtful craft skill in four specialized areas in hand binding. These four specialized areas are design bookbinding, limited edition hand bookbinding, conservation book work and artist's work in book format.

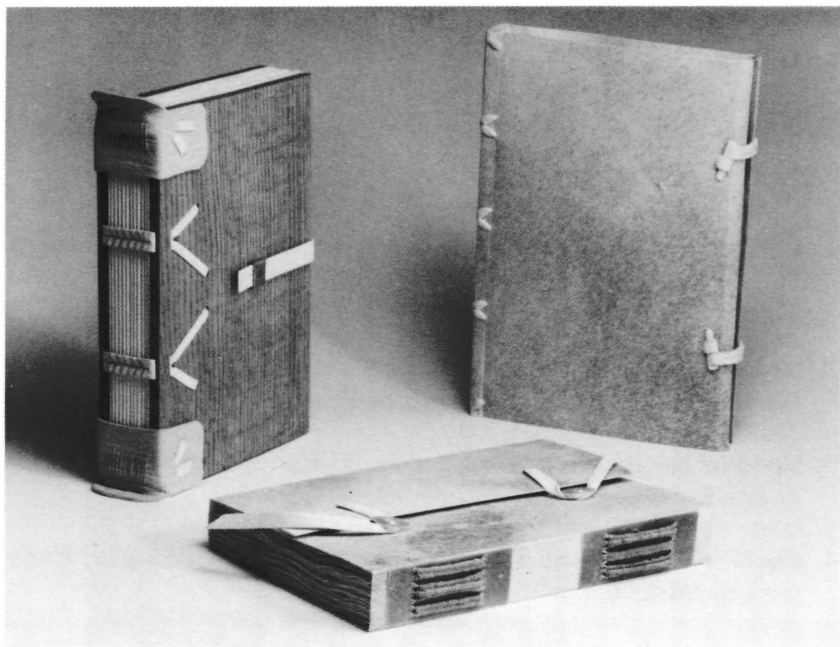
In design binding the craftsperson has full control of forwarding and covering techniques and a mastery, however personalized, of finishing technique. The binders' technique is continually refined through constant work and practice. There is a graceful and elegant use of tools and materials. [Example 1]

The limited edition craftsperson has a design skill, manual precision and work organization that will assure uniform multiple bindings. The binder can produce cleanly detailed work quickly and there is an economical use of materials and time. [Example 2]

The book craftsperson who does conservation book work has skilled, non-damaging technique that will not endanger artifactual books. The binder has judgement in the specification of work, considering both historical prototypes and modern adaptations. There is a patient, persuasive and sensitive manual skill. [Example 3]

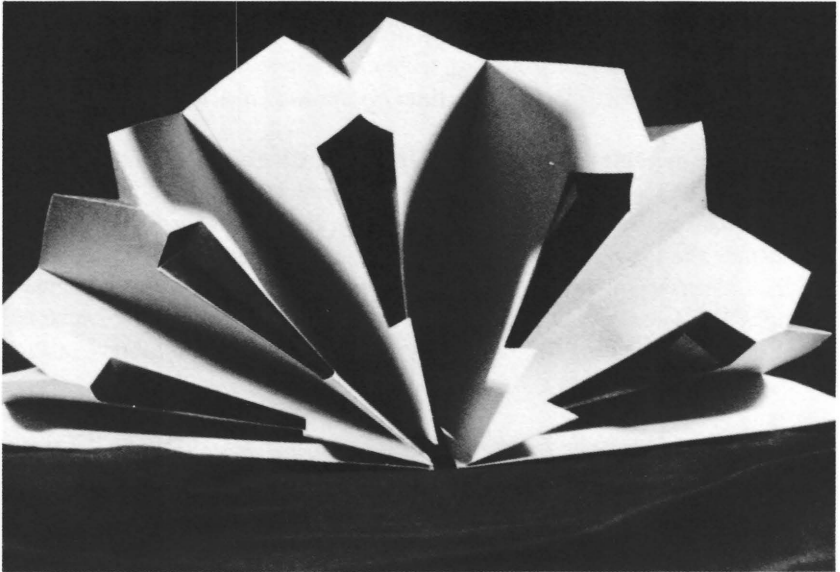
The book artist has a well developed understanding of the book format and an understanding of the expressive devices of book structure. The bookmaker has an appreciation of traditional binding technique. There is an innovative use of materials and the talent to develop experimental and accidental discoveries. [Example 4]

In addition to being displayed at the Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas, April to May 1985 and the University Graduate Library School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama from June to September 1985, future sites for BOOK WORK will include the Newberry Library in Chicago from January to February 1986, and the Dalhousie University Art Gallery in Halifax, Nova Scotia from February to April 1986. Other sites will include the Maison de la Culture Notre-Dame-de-Grace in Montreal during May 1986, the Metropolitan Toronto Library in June



Example 3

1986, the Provincial Archives of Manitoba in Winnipeg, July to August 1986, the Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery in Victoria, British Columbia from September to October 1986 and in Seattle, Washington from November to December 1986.



Example 4

1. *Chicago Ceramics & Glass*, published by the Chicago Historical Society, 1979. Design binding in full leather with colored leather onlays by Mark Esser, 1984. Photograph by Richard Schlefer.
2. Models for private press, limited edition binding, bound by the Conservation Department, University of Iowa Libraries. Photograph by Richard Schlefer.
3. Models of historical book structures, bound by Pam Spitzmueller. Photograph by Jack Ramsdale.
4. One of five variations on a concertina structure bound by Hedi Kyle. Photograph by Frank Mowery.

THE BOOK THOUGHT THROUGH, Small Press Comes of Age in America: Contemporary handmade books in limited edition, an exhibition at the Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, December 3-27, 1985 / Review by Graceanne A. DeCandido

The Guild of Book Workers will celebrate its eightieth birthday next year. It has begun its festivities with a small show displayed at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art's Watson Library called "The Book Thought Through: Contemporary Handmade Books in Limited Edition." "Small Press Comes of Age in America" is the subtitle, and if there were any doubt that such is indeed the case, this charming show would surely dispel it.

The show is refreshingly manageable in size, with forty-two books, and has a general air of liveliness, even humor, with not a breath of frivolity. Edwina B. Evers, proprietor of the Califia Bookstore in San Francisco, chose the books and wrote the catalogue with her staff. Califia was queen of the Amazons, California's namesake. Evers herself is a tall, wide-gestured woman who fits that striking image. At the opening of the exhibit she mentioned how much fun she had pulling the show together, and it shows. She also noted that some of the artists were quite young, and attributed some of the fresh and unpretentious quality of the show to their youthful vision. Several of those artists and makers of books were present, as pleased and sometimes nervous as any proud parent, and that made for an added gloss.

The whole exhibit took up only two cases, comfortably displayed and easily accessible to the eye, if not to the hand. Those of you who follow these pages regularly might remember that I had lost my sentence structure over the bewitching papers of Claire Van Vliet. She is at it again, and so am I. W.R. Johnson's poem "Lilac Wind" by the Janus Press is printed on Kathryn Clark's and Van Vliet's paper. Van Vliet did the stencil and letterpress work. The colors are lilac, blue, and green, erotic in their wanton softness. It is not my practice to review things that I do not like—John Simon is so much better at invective. Still, I confess to a bit of embarrassment over my lack of coherence in the face of Van Vliet's work.

Another of my favorite papermakers is represented in *Careless Love and Its Apostrophes*, printed by New York's Red Ozier Press. Claire Maziarczyk's paste-papers for William Bronk's poem are deep black-red with the jewel-like intensity sometimes possible in pastepaper.

The first item listed in the catalogue is the peculiar, whimsical brass concertina book, *Offset and Finely Printed*, by San Francisco's Antipress. It is sort of a folded brass plate with hinges, and I found it very funny.

The Arion Press is another favorite of mine. Andrew Hoyem's San Francisco press is represented by a striking *Apocalypse*, with woodcuts by Jim Dine. St.

John, looking like the Father (or perhaps Dine himself), looks at us from the frontispiece: stern, sorrowing, full of mystery. Despite my misgivings about oak, dubbed at home the yuppie wood of choice, the binding is beautiful: oak boards and a white pigskin spine.

On bright paper in acid primary colors, Christy Bertelson's *Mama* (Rara Avis Press) has but one word per page: SLEEP . . . EAT. My son is quite a bit taller than I am now, but I remember those very early days with fondness if not nostalgia.

A lovely, balanced book is Pickering Press's *The Words of the Masters: Reflections on the Fine Art of Type Design*. Six of this century's finest type designers are quoted on their craft, and the quotations are set in types of their own design.

There were a whole slew of books almost small enough to be called miniatures. Susan Acker and Dianne Weiss of Feathered Serpent Press brought forth *Bags*, a 2½" × 2¼" book and portfolio of visual and verbal explorations of the myriad meanings of the title word. The slipcase is a tiny leather bag complete with handles.

In 1910 Philip Youtz kept a journal of his family's seven-day journey from Auburn, New York to western Massachusetts. Hardly seemed worth the trip. New York's Johnnycake Press published it as a small book with a large foldout map recreating the trip to the Youtz summer retreat.²

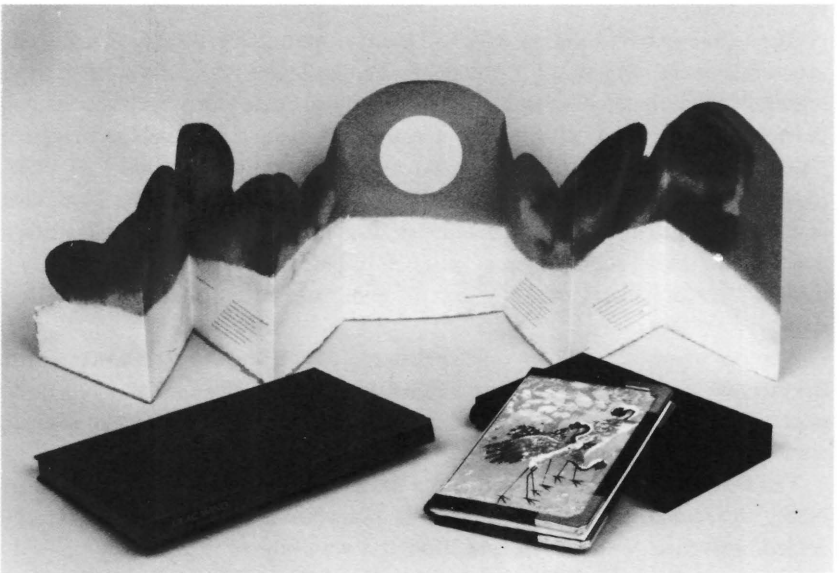


Plate 1

A third small book is *Shaker Herbs*, an essay by Cynthia Elyce Rubin with nineteenth-century herb labels, in an appropriately subdued Shaker green.

Paul Anderson's poems from Wisconsin's Small Planets Press are printed on delicate, textured handmade paper, and Yolla Bolly Press has a most extraordinary debossed bear on the leather cover of its *True Bear Stories*.

Margaret Atwood's *Snake Poems* are printed in snake-like accordion fold. Green ink, crinkly binding paper, and snaky script for the titles all contribute to the creepy-crawly effect.

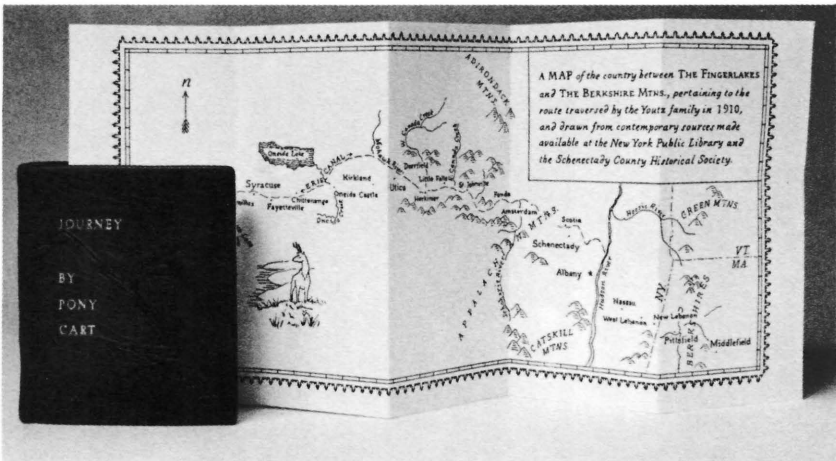


Plate 2

Once again, a California press stars as the sole producer of a miniature popup book: Poola Press's *History of Printing*. The book rests in a drawer in the slipcase. The slipcase is decorated with a miniature chase in which is locked real type spelling out the title. The text is set in verse; the whole book is about $3\frac{3}{4}'' \times 2\frac{3}{4}''$.

The oldest book in this exhibition (*Fire in the Wax Museum*, from the Press at Colorado College) dates from 1980; most are only a year or two old. Their charm, inventiveness, and the obvious pleasure taken in their making was a cheerful Solstice gift indeed.

Graceanne A. DeCandido is the assistant editor of a library periodical and a freelance writer, mostly about books and the book arts.

Reprinted with the permission of the *American Book Collector*.

1. *Lilac Wind* by W.R. Johnson, printed by the Janus Press (Claire Van Vliet) on paper by Van Vliet and Kathryn Clark (left), and Joseph D'Ambrosio's *Birds in Paradise or Life Upon a Japanese Screen* (right). Photograph by Joseph Macdonald.
2. P. Youtz's *Journey by Pony Cart* (New York, Johnnycake Press, 1985), bound by Carol Joyce. Photograph ©1985 by Robert Mahon).

The Guild of Book Workers, Inc., 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175, a non-profit organization, publishes for its membership the biannual *Journal*, bimonthly *Newsletter*, and up-to-date lists of supply sources and study opportunities. Its members are also invited to participate in tours, exhibitions, workshops, and lectures sponsored by the Guild. Dues cover the fiscal year July 1 through June 30, and are tax-deductible. Checks and money orders could be payable in US dollars.

Annual Dues 1985-1986

US Resident	\$30
New York City Regional Chapter	\$10.00 additional
New England Regional Chapter	\$10.00 additional
Non-US Resident	\$35.00
Junior (through age 25; proof of age requested)	\$15.00

Institutional serials subscribers receive the biannual *Journal* only. Fees are \$10 per annum for US subscribers. \$12 for Canadian and Mexican, and \$15 for all others.

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