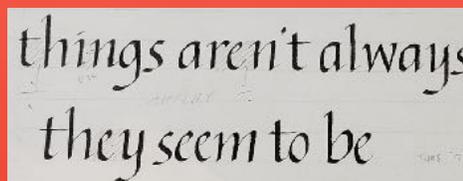
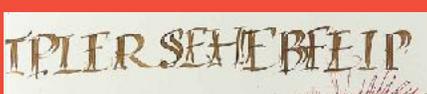
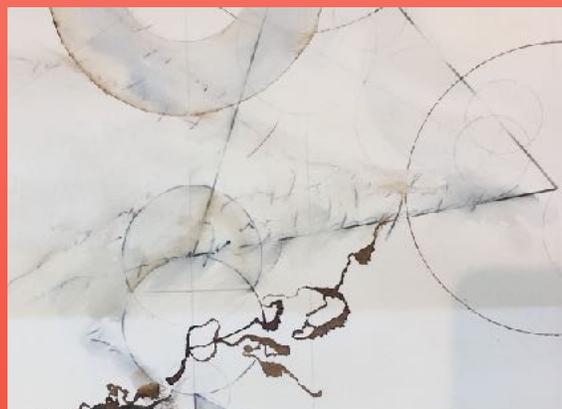
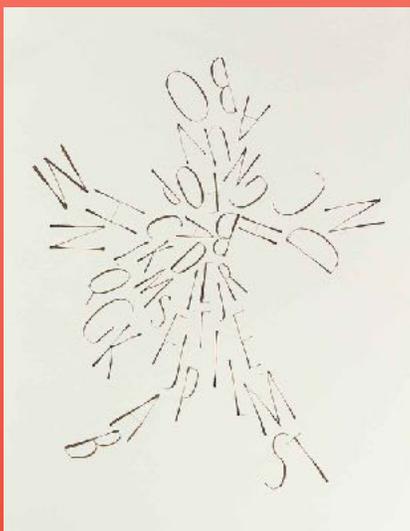
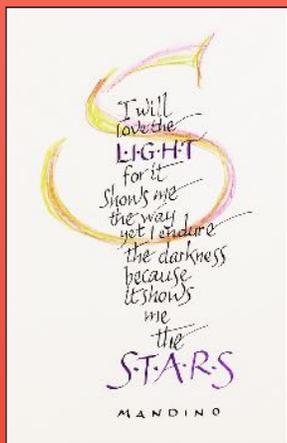
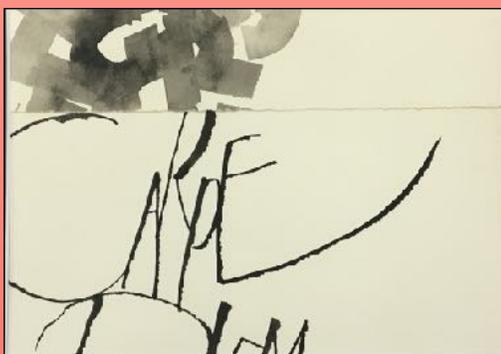
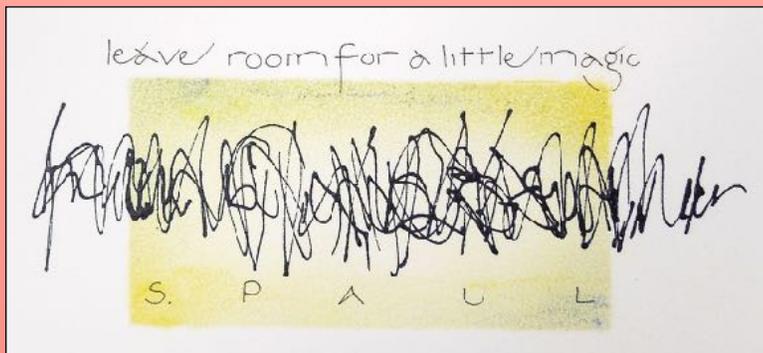


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Dear Members,

For the past four years I have had the honor of serving you as President. I was never more proud of Masscribes than when we were at the Rendez-vous Conference this summer. Besides Elissa's tireless work with Marco before, during and after the conference, the members that attended conference stepped up to assist in a variety of ways. We sponsored an evening talk with Ewan Clayton, facilitated a peer group discussion with all the guild representatives, assisted with a tribute slide show for Aimee Michaels, held a silent auction for Dancing Letters and much more behind the scenes work. Masscribes Calligraphy Organization became synonymous with commitment, legacy, quality, and generosity. The respect that the other guilds have for us was evident.

The work we have accomplished over the years could not have been done without the commitment of the extraordinary members that make up the Masscribes Board and Members at Large. I can't say enough about the incredible commitment of Elissa and Nita to bring us such great workshops year after year (applause, applause). This year we welcomed Rachel Diamond Calow to the Board. She initially joined as a Member at Large and has recently stepped up as Secretary. I want to also take the opportunity to thank Paula Howard who has been a great Vice President with her excellent experience and willingness to step in whenever needed. And thank you Sheila Delahanty who keeps the books as an excellent Treasurer.

This year we continue to utilize technology to increase efficiencies in our organization. Every other month our board meetings are conducted through an online meeting platform which I introduced so we don't even have to leave our homes! We also streamlined an online payment option which has improved workshop registration and member renewals. I want to thank Anna Belkina for her commitment to making this happen.

We also said goodbye to some who have not renewed their terms this year. I would like to thank them warmly for their support, ideas and contributions. As positions open up, a few of our current Board members have committed themselves to more than one role and, as such, we are looking for enthusiastic members to fill some of these openings. Opportunities for involvement can be on a regular or ad hoc basis. Contact me for more information.

Finally, thank you all for your continued commitment to making this a great Masscribes Calligraphy Organization.

Cindy Pendergast, *Proud Masscribes President*

From the Editor

Dear Members,

This has been a year with wonderful workshops here at home and a great attendance by Masscribes members at Rendez-vous in Sherbrooke, Canada. We could drive, which made things much easier, so we could pack everything and the kitchen sink, like we all like to do!

This newsletter is mainly dedicated to Rendez-vous, since Masscribes was so well represented and members have shared their experience from their respective classes along with photos and memories.

As you all know I wear 2 hats on this board, co-workshop chair and interim newsletter gal, we have an exciting line up of teachers for 2020 and we are already planning for 2021!

Thanks as always for sending me your articles and I am sorry for bugging some of you. I try to keep the newsletter informative, fun and colorful, so that those of you who would like to study with different tutors in the future, can read and ask other members about their experiences.

Warm wishes for the coming winter.

Nita Padamsee, Editor



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Sharon D. Eisman • Cindy Pendergast
Jan Boyd • Diane McDougall Desautelle
Adele Sanborn • Elissa Barr
Nita Padamsee • Bertha Petruski

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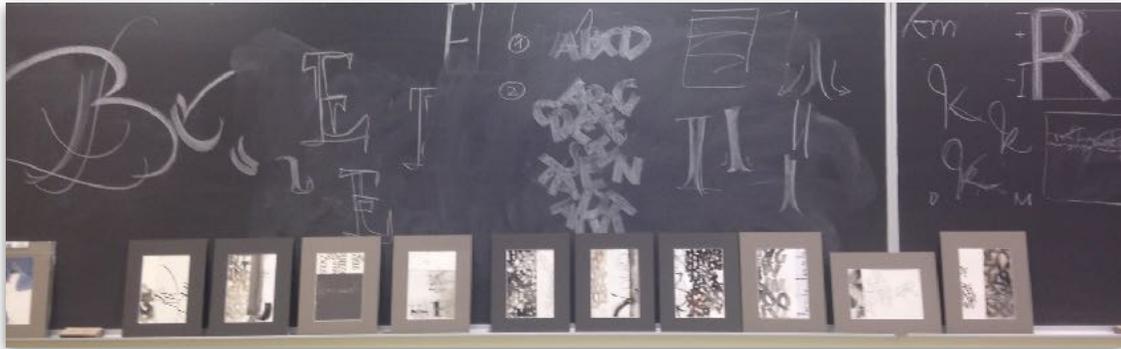
MASSCRIBES

NEW ENGLAND CALLIGRAPHY ORGANIZATION

Pen/sonoma
2019

Massimo Polello: All Writing Leads to Rome: Through Rigor and Freedom

Masscribes had four members who studied with Massimo Polello.



by- **Heather Wiley**

How fortunate to be in the Italian calligrapher Massimo Polello's course—I did not get into one of Massimo's short courses at conference at Passionate Pen/Sonoma conference (my first) and had not forgotten that. What I did not know was that this year was the first time that Massimo taught a 5-day course at conference. He really liked teaching the "longer" course, too, and he did so in three languages, simultaneously and interchangeably. Elissa Barr, Lydia Batten, Nancy Galligan, and I took up one third of the students and how lucky we were.

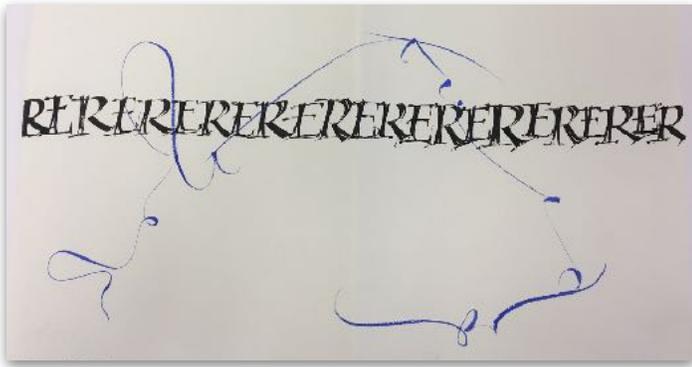
We began looking at the Romans. Old Romans, Middle Romans, Late Romans. We went through good exercises, designed to get our brains moving through our shoulder to arm-hand-wrist-nib. Working with thin ink, drops of ink, "the pen is the transportation." Gestured mark and formed letter with "elbow up." Repetition to engrain it (at least temporarily). This reminded me that I need to do this type of exercise myself, instead of approaching the page or the project without that rigor of form and freedom. Also a lot of splattering.

Corsiva, via Rome, of course, Romano Corsiva. I would have liked more time and instruction with Corsiva; it is a beautiful extension of Romans. We are using Speedball Cs, we are moving quickly, we are keeping the rhythm of the letters, we are remembering Rome and her shapes, her ratios. Massimo introduced

us to the wonderful Japanese brush: Menso Kolinsky, used for Manga [Zig Menso Kolinsky, in three thicknesses; available through your Google search; rumor has it that John Neal may carry it soon]. We thought that we didn't really need another brush for lettering. We ooded, we aahed, we were pleased with what we could do with this unknown brush, whether left handed or right handed. We used gouache with this brush, not ink. Brush, automatic pens (the side, the other side, the points), and, for greatest fun but also for expression, texture, movement, the off-set syringe. Best not worked near white walls.

Massimo introduced many of us to an accordion folder form, which we made to hold and show some of our work. These, together with framed pieces, were shown on the last day of conference. As a group of work the course showed wonderful and idiosyncratic pieces, which is what it should be unless you are after the formal chiseled Roma, which Massimo was not, I was not, and it was not the focus of the course.

I liked placing one exercise in the grey mat frames and seeing my work together with everyone else's. In this exercise we were looking for contrast from the gazillion sheets of our previous work in class. We could fold or cut for placement. Grey mat frame was interesting and something I will use (I always like black) in the experiment—not waiting to formally frame something.



by - **Lydia Batten**

I love Roman Capitals, in all shapes, sizes, and styles—from mono-line penciled skeletal to the very formal Trajan-esque; from the informal to the built-up versals, the decorated... you get it.

The workshop at Rendez-vous this summer with Massimo Polello touched on just about all of these and then some I hadn't considered before! At the core of all he shared with us was the same message: stay true to the traditional proportions while playing with all these alternate iterations. This message lies behind any study of Roman capitals, but for some reason it rang truer for me this time—maybe this was just the right time for the message to register and finally 'click'. Or maybe re-click...



Despite my past exposure to Romans, I felt like I was still pushing and challenging myself beyond my comfort zones. Maybe it was the variety of tools—pencils, pointed nib, B nibs, C nibs, Automatic #5 (on its side, like a ruling pen—who knew???), the Kolinsky

Menso brush, balsa wood (a variety of sizes) and a syringe (an adapted version off an offset hypodermic...)!!! Whew! Coupled with the stream of different instructions to push boundaries with each tool shortly after putting it in our hands, regardless of our familiarity (or lack of) with each one, took discipline, focus, and voilà- there was the 'freedom' exploding from the rigor!

I have never used so many sheets of GOOD paper in one week (at least 20 quarter sheets of Arches TW, 5 sheets of Canson Mi-Teintes, and about 20 sheets of practice drawing paper), and when I look back at them I'm surprised I did all that, amazed at the sheer variety, AND it's all pretty good!!! And in addition to the variety of work, Massimo also showed us two clever

Massimo Polello:

All Writing Leads to Rome: Through Rigor and Freedom (*continued*)



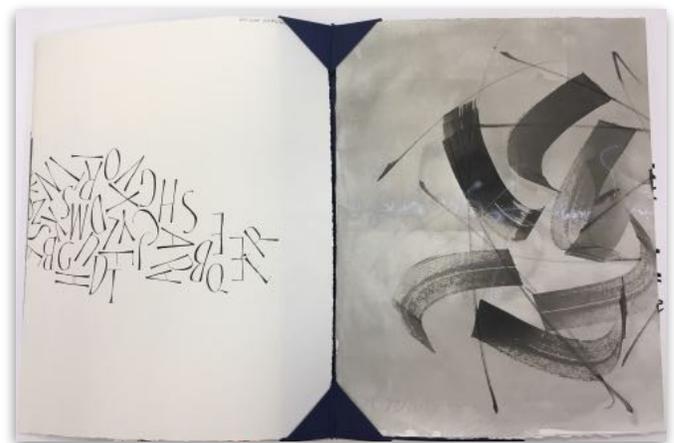
folding techniques to create books to showcase our work—no needles or thread needed, just a keen sense of how to fold paper!

About mid-week Massimo introduced us to the ancient Roman Cursive writing system. It was clear he had studied this closely. As a Latin teacher, I had seen

ancient graffiti and images of surviving papyri over the years with this writing but had never taken the time to investigate it more closely. So, this was a pleasant 'addition' for me. Again, something that had (has) its own inherent structure and style, went from prescribed to perhaps one of the most 'free' elements we added to our work (in my opinion)—especially when done with the brush.

The offset syringe (the needle had been cut back to about 1/2" and smoothed off by MP) was a VERY free tool! He encouraged us to create large gestural letters with it, but my creations were mostly just the gestural movements—it will take some more practicing (lots of butcher paper will work well for this!) to squeeze the syringe and move my arm with the notion of making a letter to master that. Or maybe it will just be a really fun away to practice letting go!

Since the workshop, my most difficult decision is which tool to focus on first!!!! Each one has its own merits and deserves its own dedicated time to explore further! For now, the B nib and what we did with it have



captured my attention. He gave us SO MUCH to explore and consider!

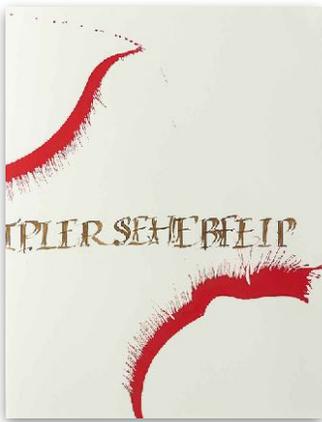
Winter is coming... and a good thing, so I know I'll have LOTS of time to continue moving from rigor to freedom with my Roman capitals!

Massimo Polello: All Writing Leads to Rome: Through Rigor and Freedom (*continued*)

by - **Elissa Barr**

I was nervous about taking this class but I have wanted to study with Massimo since meeting him in Sonoma in 2015. But Romans are daunting and the class was based on Roman lettering.... All Writings Lead to Rome- but I also hoped that my Romans were strong enough for this experience.

I found that this class was about discovering possibilities, trying new things and bringing home many new ideas. We started with the rigor of the traditional Trajan Romans- and very quickly moved to the freedom. We varied the size of the Romans from large and

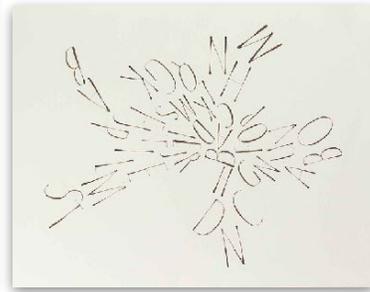


square to small and square to tall and narrow. We made letters close together to create patterns. We changed tools from pencil to pointed pen, B nibs, automatic pens, balsa wood and pointed brush. We explored composition using just a few words - always keeping in mind the rigor/ structure of the Roman alphabet.

I often felt that I was behind in the exercises- I just wanted to be able to spend more time with each one. But, I plowed on and hope that I wrote enough notes that I will be able to take some time in the coming months to further explore the ideas we just touched upon at some future time.

After covering many sheets of paper with letters and exercises, we were asked to create a diptych by putting two very different elements into a mat and observing how they relate to each other as a composition. We looked at chaos vs. order, bold vs. dainty, black vs. white, equal vs. non-equal parts, unexpected combinations, and the role of empty space.

This class was exciting, challenging and hard all at the same time. I thoroughly enjoyed this course and Massimo, who was an interesting person and teacher. I would look forward to studying with him again.



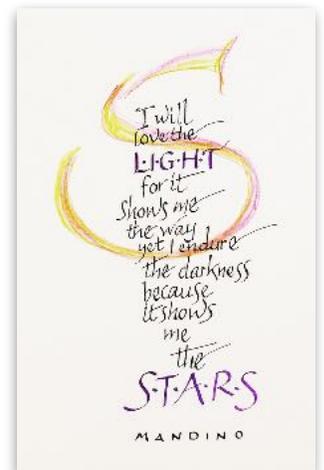
Barbara Close: Power Pages - Layout and Design Techniques

by - **Adele V. Sanborn**



I was lucky enough to attend Rendez-vous! From start to finish a wonderful experience but most especially my class with Barbara Close. She was teaching, "Power Pages, layout and design techniques", a taste of some of her bag of tricks to expand a calligraphy quote with a variety of lettering styles,

watercolor techniques, and unusual layouts. She challenged us right off by asking us to layout and illustrate an alphabet of our own design. We worked on refining the letters, then taking those letters and choosing a word to be illustrated with our alphabet. From there, we further refined each letter to layout a small book of up to 8 pages.....and this was all in the first day!. What I especially loved about Barbara's teaching was her encouragement, her personal engagement with each of us, and the fabulous critiques. I left this class with an excitement and sense of challenge that is still stimulating me today!



Studying with Lorna Mulligan and Gemma Black

by - **Chris Roberts**

The lure of Rendez-vous 2019 being on the East coast for the first time since Odyssey 2010, plus the fact that we had such a large number of Masscribes members in attendance, were huge positives before the conference even began. As I departed my home base, I was armed with an old style AAA triptik, in case GPS signals were nil, and off I went with the convenience that, by driving, I had the freedom to bring any or all art supplies, unlike on a flight! I personally broke up the trip by visiting my Mom in NH overnight on the Thursday before, and booked an Airbnb in VT on



Friday. That made for an emotional palate cleanser and the short trip to the border very manageable early Saturday. The night before, I experienced a magical evening of fireflies flickering in the meadow outside my windows. That scenery materialized as part of my text to be featured in a Gemma Black project in the second series of the week. I crossed the border quickly with no hang up

and headed for nearby Sherbrooke. I had the fun of connecting with friends who live near the school and one of them even works on the campus of Bishop University, where we would gather. Pre-conference communication in my experience was responsive and informative, and it continued in live mode. Signage was great, guiding us to the registration zone where the familiar routines of acquiring packets and room keys and attendees finding roommates was well under way. The opening ceremony was still hours away after dinner, but not before we endured a power outage and wind flapping the panels of the tent we had all occupied earlier. The conference committee had early onset of

angst as we waited out the storm and eventually were able to enter the auditorium for a calligraphic/photographic/dance routine to kick off the ceremonies. A special tribute was made to our beloved Aimee Michaels by Marco Chioini...it was Aimee who had challenged and encouraged Marco to direct a conference. Emotions were palpable as we saw slides of Aimee! The team was introduced and brought up on stage and that was it, 350 black metal water containers with the conference logo and we were underway!

Entering the buildings on campus, we found our way to the assigned classrooms, where more spectacular signage identified our individual instructors. Rooms I saw were spacious and equipped for our artistic needs.

Before the week was out, we had had both opening and closing ceremonies, the wonderment of the faculty art exhibit, a chance to see several moons around Jupiter with the aid of the on-campus telescope, and the ever popular (and crowded) conference wide Show-and-Share at the completion of the week. The tables for each class overflowed with art, featuring styles of so many artists. We descended upon that large room eager to see what others had created, and left, inspired by so many.

The general feel of this conference to me was a noticeable shift from the top tier of calligraphers like Sheila and Julian Waters, Ward Dunham, to a new, vital, and brilliantly talented wave of artists from Italy, Brazil, Slovenia, France and Argentina. Massimo Polello, Claudio Gil, Loredana Zega, Julien Chazal, and Marina Soria brought with them skills, energy, and personalities that enhanced the week. There were still the gifted calligraphers we admire, Ewan Clayton, Yukimi Annand, Amity Parks, and Gemma Black. I took my first class series with Montreal based Lorna Mulligan. Her class was of "chaos and composition". It was her first conference ever, and she did a LOT of preliminary work as a member of Marco's home team, but her teaching experience is vast, and it showed. We produced a lot of work and had fun doing it. Her style was attentive and encouraging. She motivated us, pushed us, and praised us. My second half week was with Gemma Black from Australia, and she came well prepared to show us her techniques and in my class, promoted the Retro Deco look. Handouts were helpful, techniques of painting were discussed, and we have enabled to create like little Gemma disciples!

There were also a handful of Dancing Letter Scholarship recipients who were soaking up every bit of techniques they could to learn and master, and spread the joy. Their appreciation of how they got to Rendez-vous as palpable. It was gratifying to see. And I was a

Rhythmic Capitals - Gemma Black *(continued)*

witness to a classmate giving one of the recipients a personal check, after conferring with her distant husband, in order to send that individual over to John Neal to splurge on more art supplies. It was such a selfless act, and humbled me.

The summer heat was a factor as we lived through it, but in hindsight, that seems negligible. The

camaraderie was palpable, the faculty, available, the end results showed success.

With no future conferences planned beyond this year's, there was motivation to think hard about where we must gather again to have another version of passionate lettering artists.*

I crossed the border back into the US a happy, motivated, and grateful calligrapher!

*Conferences are being planned for 2021 through to 2025

Christopher Haanes - Vitalize your Hands



by - **Dana Unver**

I attended Christopher Haanes's full week course, Vitalize Your Hands. I chose this course because I wanted an instructor to really critique my lettering—someone who would take me back to the basics.

This class turned out to be perfect for me. We worked very diligently on Italic for the first 2½ days, followed by Foundational, and then ended with a small dose of Roman capitals. Christopher is a purist—he values precise lettering and a strong layout. He rarely uses much color or decorative elements in his work. His style allowed me to focus fully on my lettering.

I gained exactly what I had hoped to from this class. Christopher helped me rework my Italic, which was my number one goal. I feel that my lettering is much better now. I am more confident in my ability to critique my own work, and I have a better understanding of which areas of my lettering need work. I was excited to get home and put what I had learned into practice!



I thoroughly enjoyed my first conference. I met so many interesting, talented people. It was an experience that I will never forget!

Studying with Heather Held & Rick Paulus

by - **Kate Spencer**

I took my first-ever calligraphy class this past January; but even so, I decided to dive into Rendezvous 2019 and immerse myself in an international community of calligraphers. I'm so glad I did!

Given the choice between one five-day class or two two-and-a-half-day classes, I took the two. My first was with Heather Held, The Dancing Line, where I had the pleasure of learning the art, beauty, rhythm, and flow of off-hand flourishing with a master! Heather is amazing!

I next studied with Rick Paulus, The Truly Flexible Pointed Pen, where we tackled multiple scripts with the pointed pen that are traditionally produced with the broad-edge pen. Wow! As a beginner, I found this quite challenging. But the upside was a major boost in confidence. If I got through Romans, Italic, and Uncial, majuscules and minuscules, and applied it all to a poem, all in under three days, I could achieve anything!



Overall, I was thrilled to see my calligraphic skills develop so quickly over a short period of time, and that experience is still unfolding.

I'm currently working on building a website to show my work. Coming soon! Until then, you can connect with me through email:

kate.rose.sp@gmail.com.

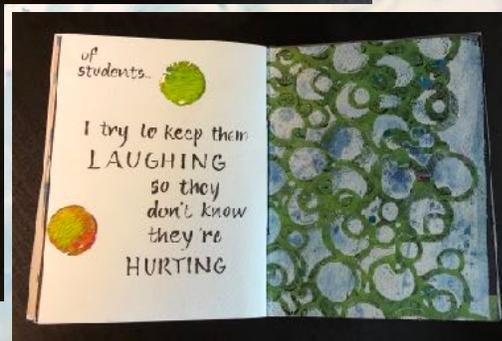
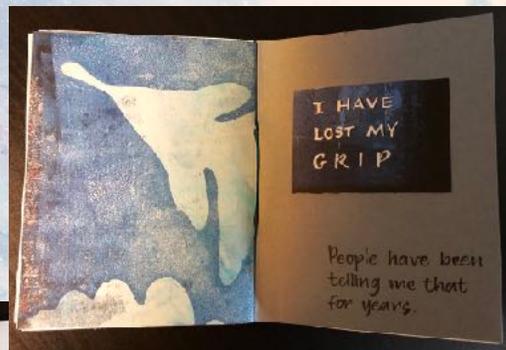
Cherryl Moote - Amuse-Bouche

by - **Cindy Pendergast**

The class I chose at Rendez-vous was Cherryl Moote's Amuse Bouche. I chose this class because I wanted to focus on creating interesting backgrounds and book structures that I could use with my lettering and art. I also liked the idea of learning a variety of techniques and I was excited to meet and work with Cherryl. From what I knew about her from our interactions on social media, her books and the stories Aimee Michaels shared, I had an idea that the class would be fun as well as informative. From day one Cherryl had us laughing. Her natural teaching talent is both calming and entertaining. Cherryl (what her friends call her) would gather us for a demo and then generously let us "play" with all the toys, tools and materials she brought with her from Toronto. She barely had room in the car for herself!

We began by learning five different book structures on the morning of the first day. We each made little book "models" that we could refer to in the future. This was followed by a demonstration of many tips, tricks and techniques for decorating papers that Cherryl shared out of her years of experience. I will share a few of my favorites.

The first was learning how to push the boundaries of "Gelli Printing". This is mono printing using acrylic paint that is rolled onto a gel printing plate with a brayer. Cherryl brought all



kinds of tools and stencils for creating textures on the plate before printing. Because it is acrylic paint you can build infinite layers of texture and color, and we did! Gelli printing is a messy business and it's a natural tendency to want to clean the plate as you work, but it's not necessary with Gelli printing! Cherryl taught us to stay in the flow and don't bother cleaning the plate until you are done for

the day. When we asked if she was sure, she wryly said "I'm not into cleanliness, until it's important" and explained she had discovered a foolproof method using Pellon which is a cotton fabric used to line shirt collars for structure. At the end of the day, Cherryl had us brayer paint onto the plate, lay a sheet of Pellon over the entire surface and leave it overnight. When we came back the next morning and peeled off the Pellon, the entire surface of the plate was clean and the Pellon had a really cool design which could then be used in projects!

One of my other favorite paper decorating techniques was using Brusho powdered pigments. During the demo Cherryl said great care must be made to protect surfaces and skin when using these pigments because they are permanent. She doesn't even open the containers but instead pokes a very small hole from which she sprinkles out the color. For this technique we used 90lb Arnhem printmaking paper (available from John Neal Bookseller). We laid our paper on the grass outside, sprinkled the desired colors onto dry paper, spritzed with water and then watched the explosion of color! While the paper is still wet, texture can be added

by laying various objects such as crinkled plastic wrap, string, bubble wrap etc. onto the wet surface. Once the paper dries you get some surprising and amazing results. If you like having complete control of the outcome of your art, this technique might not appeal to you. But, since the pigments are permanent you can keep layering color and texture until the desired effect is achieved.

Arnhem paper has a luscious semi-smooth, vellum finish that takes color and lettering so nicely. It is inexpensive and also works well for bookbinding. Cherryl's ideas are infinite and as we worked, she also worked along with us and we made new discoveries together. Did I mention Cherryl is hilarious? She says "I try to keep them laughing so they don't know they're hurting." Her sense of

humor lightened the mood and helped free us up to be fearless in our work. We had so much fun experimenting and before we knew it the week was over. We each used our beautiful papers, combined with the book structure of our choice to create some unique treasures for our show and tell. I really enjoyed this class and I am still unpacking the things I learned.

by - *Jan Boyd*

This is the second time I've studied with Georgia. I previously took her Greek and Gilded class and, while there is some overlap in the use of natural pigments, each class is a fully formed singular experience, except to note her complete immersion, joy and fascination in both topics. She is a dedicated scholar, bringing an overwhelming depth of knowledge and an ongoing curiosity and desire to share and collaborate with her students. Her classroom is filled with tables of natural pigments, boles and gouaches, with casein gesso for mixing to keep all the materials natural. The back wall was covered with samples of inspirational William Morris wall-paper and book cover designs along with books, posters and fabrics.

We began by gathering natural elements on the campus grounds— leaves, berries, twigs and flowers - to use as the basis of our designs. We were encouraged to develop patterns in the style of Morris, without direct copying. After ruling many small squares (very simplified by a supplied window the correct size), we began to fill them with backgrounds, mixing natural pigments + gum arabic,



boles and gouaches with casein gesso and brushing on with a texture. While that dried we worked out patterns and colors to add to them, trying to create active looks with asymmetrical balance, paying attention to shapes and spaces, with no shading or shadowing. Each design could then be adapted to use larger or perhaps to create a repeating pattern or a dingbat. Later in the week we

added ground metals and metallic pigments (not using leaf metals as they do not match the aesthetic). These were then tooled and debossed.

As the week closed out we studied Morris' typefaces and experimented with creating our own initial letters/monograms/chops keeping in mind using the design elements we had created earlier in the week.

There would never be enough time to absorb everything Georgia has to teach on a particular topic. Rather, she is an inspiration to study Morris' amazing life and work more fully on our own and to continue to create well conceived

designs with the foundation in his style we learned in this class. It is always a joy to study with Georgia.

Be The Best Fish You Can Be

As I reflect back on the Rendez-vous Calligraphy Conference I realize that being around so many artists with varied abilities might cause one to fall into the comparison trap. Depending on who you are "swimming" with, one minute you might feel like a big fish in a small pond and then the next, a small fish in a big pond. As the big fish you feel the freedom of applying your knowledge in a space where no one else is, building confidence in others and inviting innovation with an agile approach. As a small fish in a big pond, perhaps you are pursuing opportunities for growth as you learn from others but that might also come with feelings of invisibility and vulnerability.

What if we didn't think about pond size at all and simply chose to be the best fish we can be? Living in the constraint of self appraisal about how you compare to others is a false narrative that kills creativity. Instead, simply choose to keep moving forward by increasing your skills and knowledge. As you learn and grow, share your knowledge with others and soon you will have the reward that comes with seeing others grow. This comes with a deep satisfaction and is the essence of community. You realize you are a great fish, fearless and determined to make a difference in whatever pond you swim in!

-*Cindy Pendergast*

“Give Me an Inch” Uncials - The Whole Story with EWAN CLAYTON

by - **Diane McDougall-Desautelle**

The impact of our late friend and fellow calligrapher, Aimee Michaels, who shared her conference photos over the years at our general meetings, was powerful. The effort and passion she put into doing this allowed me and others who did not make it to conferences not only to see entirely new styles of work, but also to connect the work by different instructors and participants with their names



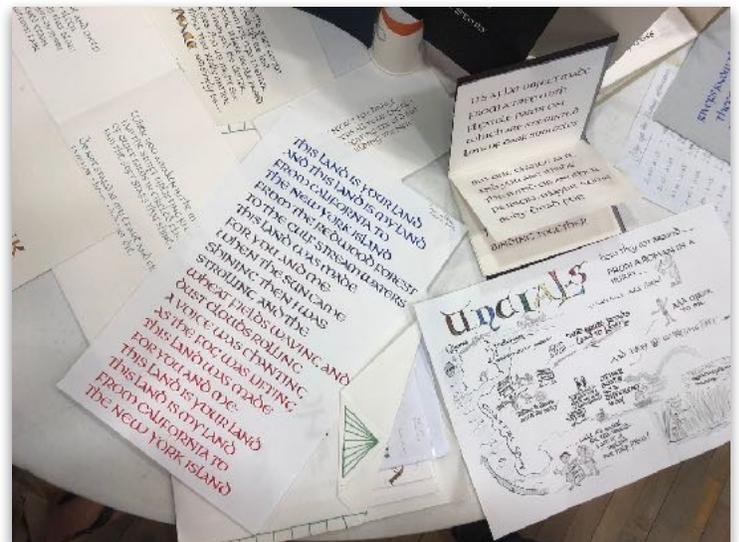
and sometimes their faces. These slideshows and her stories (some touching, some inspiring, some hysterically funny) fed my desire to attend one of the big international calligraphy conferences ... “someday”. I worked ... and I waited. Eventually

available time and finances would somehow have to align. I went through college ... I rode out the years of working as a graphic designer in Boston, paying off my student loans ... I became a wife, a mom, a homeowner. Sadly, I allowed my pens to stay packed away for some years while I was taken up with early motherhood. I would “come and go” from Masscribes, never taking for granted that the organization was still being held together by its dedicated board members. I forced my pens to resurface once the kids were in school, taking on one calligraphy job and then another. Fully recognizing that my letterforms were “decent” but could be vastly improved by study and practice, that is exactly what I started and continue to do. Eventually much of my work comfortably slid into the Celtic style and I realized that I very much wanted to feel more comfortable with and knowledgeable about the alphabets appropriately used together with the Celtic knotwork designs that I so love creating. This made it easy to decide that Ewan Clayton's week-long class “Uncials – The Full Story” would be my number one choice for the Rendez-vous 2019 International Calligraphy Conference. Having always heard his name spoken with utmost reverence, I knew he was a master

and professor with whom I absolutely did not want to pass up the opportunity to study.

It definitely was a class for experienced calligraphers – as we spent little or no time reviewing things such as how to prepare your ink, choose your pen nib, and find your letter height. These things were for the most part left to us. We simply began the first day by exploring the early Uncial alphabet enlarged (with a large 4 or 5mm nib). Ewan emphasized that tracing an exemplar is an excellent way of observing, and at this large scale we could see the subtle nuances in the shapes of letter strokes formed by little changes in pen angle. He reminded us to always think of creating harmony across all the letters in any hand by balancing angle, weight, and form – almost like an algebraic formula.

We looked at the evolution of every letter in the Uncial alphabet and sorted them into letter groups based on the types of strokes with which they are formed. Fascinating things such as how invisible pathways in the air taken by the reed or quill stylus eventually (over hundreds of years) end up ON the page as part of a letter are explained by Ewan with the greatest certainty and ease. He is exceptionally fluent



in the history of writing. He took us along the chain of time periods, looking at Greek, Roman, and Egyptian writing examples revealing how Old Roman Cursive turned into Uncials. My favorite tidbit of information from the class is probably the fact that the word Uncial means “inch”. The name was given as a term of abuse to this hand by St. Jerome in the 400's AD – as he found the large, round, over-elaborated letters of his time to be displeasing. The reason I found this amusing is that it wasn't until only a few years ago that

I started to be able to look past that same first impression that I had of these letters. In truth, I myself never found Uncials the least bit attractive until I really started to look at them closely and create their shapes with my own pen. Now – especially following this class, I see them with entirely new eyes.

In addition to our classroom work, we did exercises in the hallway to heighten our awareness of ourselves in space ... from our breath and our limbs to our hands and thus our letters. We energized our hands and minds, doing hand circle exercises in the air and rubbing our palms together. This really helps with centering your energy and focus. As we quietly worked, Ewan would suggest that we imagine the tide of the ocean coming in and going out with our pen strokes. In our writing hand are two different sorts of flow. An arching stroke at the top of a letter C might be the quietly receding water – and the bottom stroke coming down and to the right might be louder, heavy waves crashing in.

By the second half of the week we were developing our own individual alphabet based on our favorite elements of the alphabets Ewan introduced to us during the first few days. On Friday we each finished our final projects – any quote or verse we liked, with letters as small or large as we liked, using this new alphabet we created ourselves. I ended up keeping my project short and simple (as I know I have a tendency to get in way over my head with grand ideas). It was my Uncial alphabet from A-Z with a Scottish thistle on top for good measure. Since it was completed a bit early I was able to spend late Thursday afternoon rendering a verse that had been in my head all week as a

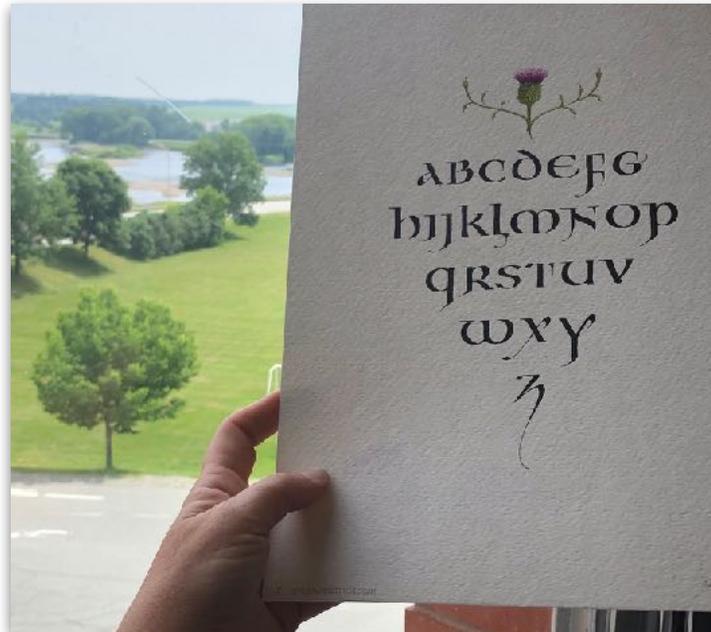
second project. (People called this one “the dragon piece” and it was SO much fun to create.)

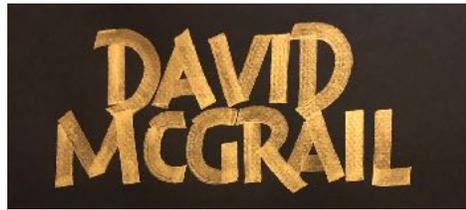
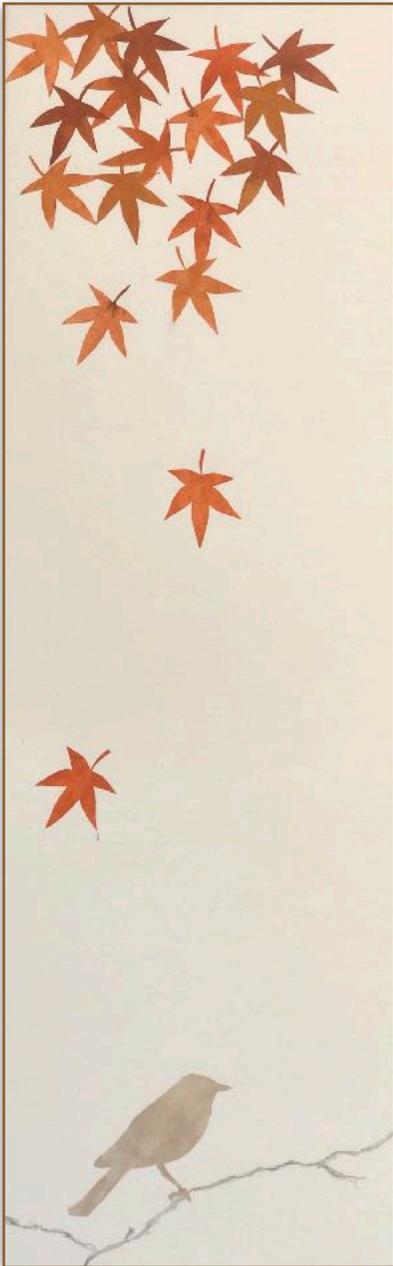
It was a thrill to have Ewan personally sign my newly purchased copy of his book, *The Golden Thread - The Story of Writing*. (Copies were made available by John Neal Bookseller at the conference store.) While I would love to have been in several of the other classes offered at the conference, I will forever be grateful that Ewan's class is where I ended up. I felt right at home

listening to him go with his humble enthusiasm into story after story bringing paleography to life... helping us understand the origins of the different styles we were learning. To ease the “ouch” of not being able to participate in all the other wonderful classes at *Rendez-vous*, the Show and Share on Friday allowed each and every one of us to take in and be inspired by all the amazing work produced by the members of each class. It was mind-blowing to the think of all the cumulative hours of focused creativity spread out on the tables in that room! All that color ... all that energy transferred into such a variety of mediums. It was the perfect ending to a tremendous week of learning and exploring and pushing ourselves to try new things.

Oh... And if you're wondering what ever “happened” to the Uncial family – which took its influences from as far away as North Africa -- it didn't just die. It merged with Rustic and evolved into Lombardic – those fun display letters that are “exercises in

exuberance”... “like the touch of anarchy that relieves the tension in the very disciplined lowercase letters on a typical page.” Well – thank you, Uncial!





I Flamed Amazement

by - **Nita Padamsee**

I had never heard of David McGrail teaching a class close to home or in another conference I had attended. I was intrigued by his simplicity of design and layout when I saw his works in LAR a few years ago. Design has always been a top priority when I approach a project so I wanted to experience his approach. He is very soft spoken, almost Zen-like and extremely organized, which was perfect as the class was full, with 20 of us!

Our supply list was long, but as we all know, we wish we had our entire studio with us! David had so many techniques to show us. We started off by using the #5 automatic pen and a large Speedball C nib to warm up. Soon we moved on to acrylics, where all the fun was to be had. With removable tape, we masked off panels on hot press paper and applied flat acrylic paint. While wet, we used the automatic pen to make marks. Next we masked out more panels and painted the panels with acrylics, but this time we let them dry. When the second layer was applied on top of the first and the acrylics were still wet, we made marks so that the first layer that had dried showed through. Frisket was also used to mask out circles and other shapes as seen on the image with bird and the leaves. We were encouraged to mix colored acrylics with gold and or silver and discover new and beautiful colors. With the Speedball C nib, we worked on black paper with water colors which I had never really tried before, and was pleasantly surprised by the beautiful effects that were created. Watercolors were blended with iridescent and metallic powders, to give a fun shimmering effect. David asked us to save all the removable tape, which at first made no sense, but he had a plan! At one point he also asked us to lay down long strips of the same removable tape on a sheet of paper and apply acrylics with a palate knife! There were so many techniques that David had up his sleeve. As we went along, David would show us samples of how we could use these techniques to enhance our calligraphy projects. We were asked to bring some pages of glossy magazine paper. To four of the pages we applied black gesso and to the other four we applied white gesso, in such a way, that some of the image showed through, but one couldn't figure out what the image underneath really was.

On day 3, we used some of the techniques I mentioned and we created small accordion books of 5 panels, which were rather fun to make. Here we used the tape as a design element to support and enhance the design of the little books along with other techniques. At the end of day 4, David asked us to come up with 5-7 words like a haiku almost, without the use of pronouns, interjections or conjunctions, but didn't tell us what they were for, till we came to class on the final day. Well, he had a point...since we all had produced so much over the past 4 days, he asked us to sift through all our pieces and pick five pieces that would best illustrate the five words we had. On a 11" x 17" sheet of either black or white heavier paper, we cut out five equal size windows. This was like a mask through which each of the five pieces would show through! It was an excellent assignment, which taught me a valuable lesson, about how we can distill techniques that we have learnt over the years and come up with a project, or how you can tailor the techniques to enhance a project.





This was my final project in class. The earthquake in California had just occurred the day the assignment was given. These were the words I worked with, TREMBLING EARTH BUCKLING FLOORS RESOLUTE HEARTS

David truly “*Flamed Amazement*” as we learned techniques to refine aesthetic sensibility into our calligraphic works. In drawing on the fundamentals of Japanese aesthetics, we were able to appreciate its significant contribution to contemporary design. The beauty of a simple, unadorned piece of calligraphy is evident. But it is in the juxtaposition of elements where a work becomes truly interesting and transcends beyond the level of craft. David is an exceptionally organized tutor; kind, knowledgeable and generous!



PAMELA PAULSRUD - SOUNDING THE INNER LANDSCAPE

by - Sharon D. Eisman

It was my second adventure to an International Calligraphy Conference, the 1st about 24 years ago. Now, after eight years of no traveling, it was time to hit the road. This year’s Conference was too close to pass up. So, I packed the car (of course with half the studio) and off to Rendez-vous 2019 I went!



Native American flute played by Pamela Paulsrud
Image by Sharon D. Eisman

With a recommendation from Elissa Barr, I chose “Sounding the Inner Landscape” with Pamela Paulsrud. A wise choice from a wise friend. As Pamela described her class, it was about “investigating the illusive underpinnings in the hidden laws of nature, sacred geometry” - combining line with the artistic qualities of pattern and beauty. Ok, well, not too much experience in this subject, but something more quiet was calling.

With a mix of silence, meditation, and sounds of chosen music, and special Native American flute playing by Pamela, it sparked the flow to let go and create each of our own narratives. So with the use of graphite, ink, pens, compasses and straight edges we began the journey into sacred geometry, the springboard for a week of varied demonstrations, exercises, videos, stories, history, movement and stillness.

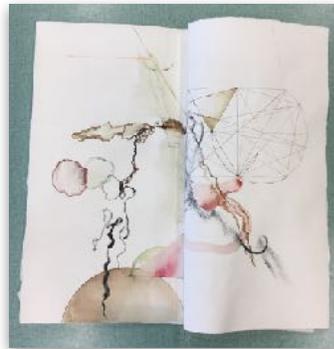
The use of a wide variety of supplies and tools for mark-making were jumping points for new ideas, gestures, and making decisions, or no decisions - to just let it happen. While many of the techniques were

familiar, Pamela's varied exercises were unique. Letting go, by using your non-dominant hand, or writing fast, or "crazy" lettering were enjoyable and motivating. In the end, all culminating into a book of pages of assorted marks, writing, circles and color. This was serious play!

The class was what I needed to help quiet my mind after a difficult period in time. While it took a few days to get to the ah-ha moment, the class and meeting Pamela with her caring spirit and gifts, and a wonderful group of classmates, was worth every bit of the trip. This experience opened minds to the beauty and organization of nature, seeing art and the natural world in a different way. Pamela was a wonderful instructor and leader, to bring us all to a new place in our own journey through the landscape of our inner creative beings.



Demo night, Pam Paulsrud and students creating geometric designs. Images by Sharon D. Eisman and Nita Padamsee



Images of Kay Johnson's work in Pamela Paulsrud's class

GENERAL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 14, 2019

RENDEZ-VOUS MEMORIES AND MUCH MORE

by - **Bertha Petruski**

At our General Meeting on September 14th, about 19 people attended. One of the things I loved and felt immediately comfortable with, was sitting around a long table so we could see and support each other - and in taking turns talking this way got to know each other better. Then different participants shared their recent art projects - amazing calligraphy and imaginative designs - and it never fails to amaze me how beautiful this skill is and how endless its creativity can be. One participant showed and explained the lettering she had learned from a program she attended by scholarship.



Also (and this was really an utter delight) tables were set up with a 'great Give-Away' of art and calligraphy supplies, many from the studio of Aimee Michaels and other local calligraphers. For me, it was like the best Christmas ever! Participants could donate to the Dancing Letters Scholarship Fund (DLSF) if they chose to. I learned from Elissa Barr, that the DLSF is an independent non-profit entity, even though it was founded by Aimee and Elissa in memory of Ann Van Tassell. As explained in the pamphlet, "This fund provides financial assistance to those wishing to further their knowledge of calligraphy and its related

art through attending workshops, lectures, classes, or international, regional and local conferences.” Thank you to the artists and calligraphers who generously donated supplies to the “Give-Away.” I’ve already used some of the inks and one of the nibs. The ribbons helped finish off the 40 mini book projects and the paper punches helped decorate the envelopes they were put into. I’m still so elated by everyone’s donation. Thank you all.



◀Bertha Petruski sharing her mini concertina matchbox book

Carole Roy showing her work from Marina Soria’s class (Calligraphy in Bloom) at Rendez-vous ▶

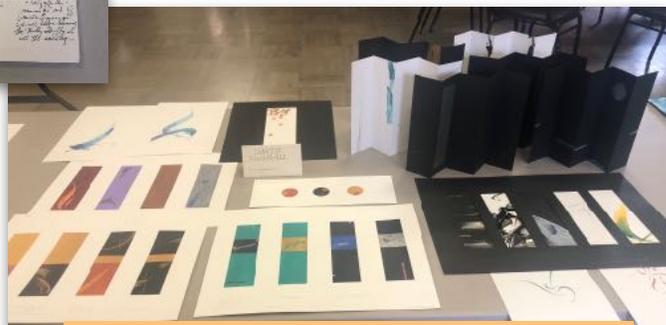
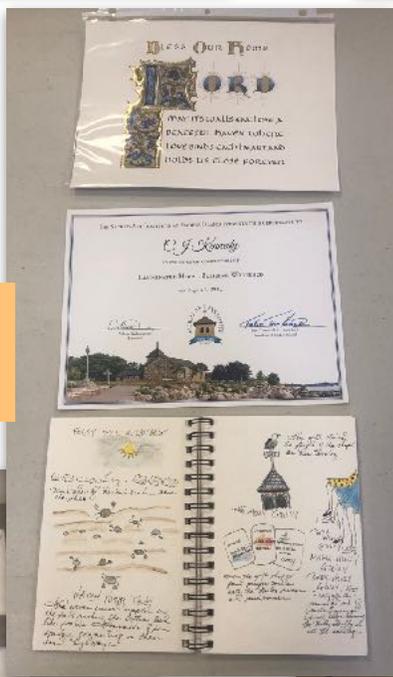


Jan Boyd’s botanical drawings from her course at Wellesley College ▼



Rachel Diamond Calow’s class work done at Rendez-vous with Renee Alexander ▼

C J Kennedy’s work done at the Sacred Art Institute at Ender’s Island with Valerie Weilmuenster ▶



▲Elissa Barr’s work from Massimo’s class at Rendez-vous

▲Nita Padamsee’s work from David McGrail’s class at Rendez-vous

Upcoming Workshops for 2020

General Meeting Saturday November 9, 2019 from 1 to 3 pm

Featuring a **special guest speaker** from the Netherlands and the new **JNB Try-n-Buy**.

Baukje Scheppink, a friend of CA Millner's, will be here from the Netherlands and is bringing Braun Quills, which she has been producing since 2017. She will be sharing the fascinating story about how she acquired the machinery from Ben Braun and then came to produce the classic quill in 9 sizes plus 3 new quills! Baukje's work appeared In Letter Arts Review issue 32:4, on the cover showing one of her handmade books written with one of the new Braun Quills.

JNB Try-n-Buy is new program available to guilds. John Neal Books will be sending us an array of tools, pens, inks, markers, and papers to try. If you are interested in purchasing any of the things that you try, you will have the chance to be part of the Masscribes group order for those items, and Masscribes will earn 10% of those sales! We will be sending in one order and then notify you where you can pick up your order.

Come join the fun

March 13, 14 & 15

Denise Lach

May 2 & 3

Judy Melvin

August 28, 29 & 30

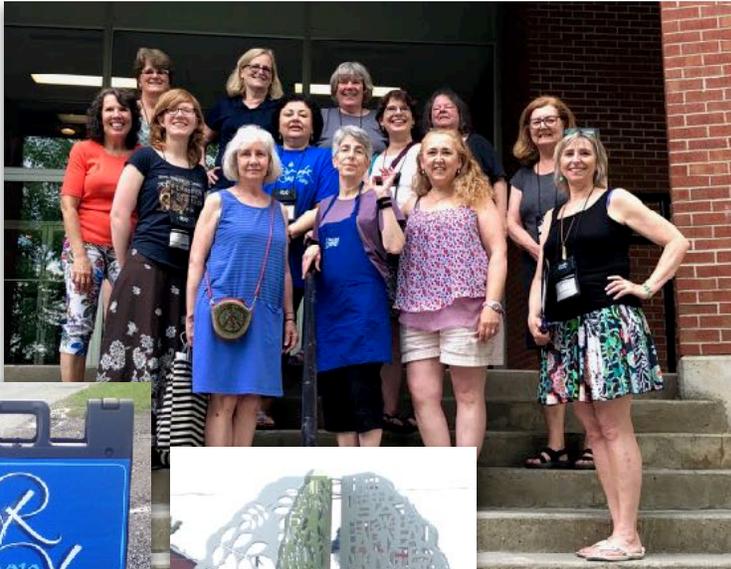
Gemma Black

October 16, 17 & 18

Liesbet Boudens

Rendez-Vous
2019

Mosaic of Memories from Rendez-vous, 2019



A special tribute was made to our beloved Aimee Michaels by Marco Chioini...it was Aimee who had challenged and encouraged Marco to direct a conference. Emotions were palpable as we saw slides of Aimee!

-Chris Roberts





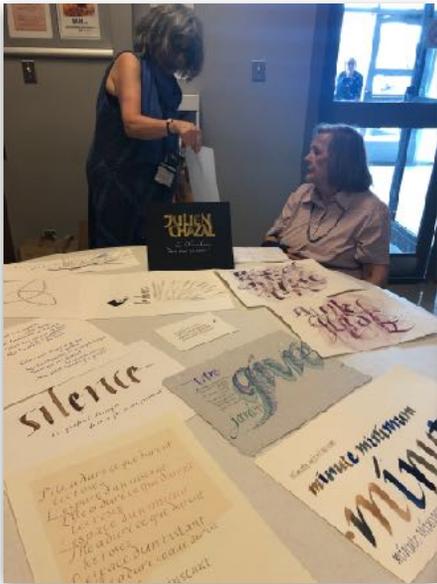
▲ Show and Share on the last day

Massimo, Loredana and Claudio performing at the closing ceremony ▼



Tutor name tags for the classroom doors ▶







▲ Claudio Gil



▲ Amity Parks



▲ Georgia Angelopoulos

