

Visible Language

The research journal concerned with all that is involved in our being literate.

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Special issue on calligraphy.

Guest editor: Gunnlaugur SE Briem

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Letters to the Editor

Comments on articles and letters that have appeared in the Journal are welcome and should be addressed to the Editor. The Editor will also relay to the author questions or comments on any article. Your response - and the author's comment in reply - will not be published without your permission and your approval of any editing.

Gummlaugur SE Briem:
Opening remarks.

The typical client knows very well what he wants from a calligrapher. He wants a style of writing called Old English. He wants stained paper with tastefully torn and singed edges. And he will pay ridiculous money, provided you give him sealing wax in sufficient volume. If you let him have what he wants, the news will spread among practising philistines that you are a genius and should be kept busy with this kind of work forever.

It is probably good business to specialize in historical voluptuousness. It can look properly imposing on the surface and will therefore be believed to be profoundly elegant. It drums up the greatest possible flutter on the cheapest terms at hand. And the only risk for a competent calligrapher in this line of work is to be outdone from time to time by the truly second rate who knows vulgarity by instinct.

The typical client wants befitting theatrical garniture of gilding and swashes.

You should of course try to reform his taste with quality of line, noble proportions and honest workmanship. And you are not supposed to throw the inkpot at him, even if the ethics committee of any calligraphy society will endorse it as a perfectly professional thing to do.

It is a part of artistic duty to select patrons who commission works of good taste. If they do not show up in great enough numbers, you may take on clients who have no taste and know it, leaving aesthetics to you. But if the situation arises when you find the typical client howling at your door, demanding cheap thrills and refusing to go, it is your obligation to give him blackletter in technicolour and charge him double. Somehow you must pay the rent.



I am very grateful to Merald Wroldstad, the sainted publisher of Visible Language, for lending an issue of his venerated journal to illustrated discourses on calligraphy. Regular readers will have observed that the magazine is bravely experimental on principle and that the publisher will try anything once.

Calligraphers are on the whole, an unusual lot and their motivation is generally a mystery to the outside world. I have tried to explain to my grocer what I did for a living. He thinks I am a sign painter which in a way I suppose I am. But for obvious reasons calligraphers do not want to think of themselves as glorified sign-writers. Calligraphy has fallen with such abandon to romantic snobbery that many people find the twentieth century a serious hindrance to their creative aspirations.

Bad copies of medieval manuscripts get made and displayed, stirring up our worst instincts and passions. In these times when fingerpainting by chimpanzees enjoy a market and gallery space, we need not worry about calligraphy amateurs.

And this brings me back to my starting point. We have a decent number of patrons who want nothing better than caricature of a map to a pirate treasure. And we have a great deal of calligraphers who have their heart set on making them. Which leads me to believe in mother nature's desire for balance and her wry sense of the absurd.

The contributors were asked to answer the question: 'What are the parts of your work that give you most trouble?' And those who for one reason or another are beyond all trouble with their work, we asked to talk about anything that interests them. The responses, I am glad to say, speak for themselves.

This issue is a working paper. Your views, gentle reader, are invited on the contributions. Another issue, on criteria in calligraphy, is in preparation and promises to be a sticky editing job if ever I knew one.



Contributors

Karen Ackoff

Alan Blackman

Tim Botts

Gunnlaugur SE Briem

Ewan Clayton

Rick Cusick

Sidney Day

Marc Drogin

Jean Evans

Peter Fraterdeus

Michael Gilbert

Georgianna Greenwood

Michael Harvey

Kris Holmes

Michael Hughey

Jerry Kelly

Karen Knorr

Jean Larcher

Brenda Larsen

Charles Lehman

Paul Maurer

Claude Medinavilla

Karina Meister

Pat Musick

Alexander Nesbitt

Mohammed Saggat

Rosemary Sassoon

Werner Schneider

Paul Shaw

Margaret Shepherd

Bonnie Spiegel

Maureen Squires

Sumner Stone

Jaqueline Svaren

Alan Swanson

Denys Taipale

Pat Topping

Cynthia Tyler

Jane Van Milligan

Mark Van Stone

Diane Von Arx

Julian Waters

Sheila Waters

Lawrence Wheeler

Joan White

Robert Williams

Allen Q Wong

James Wood

John Woodcock

Lili Wronker

Marilyn Zornado

Integrating illustrations



with letter forms
can present a problem. Each
should enhance but not de-
tract. To achieve a harmony
between the two can some-
times be gotten through

Karen Ackoff
P.O. Box 23481
Rochester, N.Y. 14692



something as subtle as thinning the
ink to a grey, the black being

too overpowering. More often than
not, it is a decision of what

HAND TO USE, AND SO I TRY
SEVERAL DIFFERENT ONES &

hold them next to the drawing until
I find one I am pleased with, integ-

RATING illustrations with
letterforms can present a

problem. Each should enhance but
not detract. To achieve a harmony

"MAKING LETTERS is not as difficult for me as knowing how to use them intelligently in blocks of text: layout is my demon. The page must go through many revisions. The originals of these examples are 14" across."

"O lovely
O PUSSEY! O PUSSEY MY
LOVE! ^{what a} BEAUTIFUL PUSSEY ^{you are}

O lovely PUSSEY
O PUSSEY
MY LOVE! ^{what a} BEAUTIFUL ^{pussey you are}

"O lovely PUSSEY!
O PUSSEY MY LOVE!
^{what a BEAUTIFUL PUSSEY you are}"



PORTRAIT BY
CAROL ROSENBERG

Alan Blackman
1125 Shrader Street
San Francisco · CA 94117

Pussell said to the owl "You elegant Fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married - too long we have tarried -
but what shall we do for a

"
Pussell said to the owl "You elegant Fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married - too long we have tarried -
but what shall we do for

Pussell said to the owl
"You elegant Fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
!"

I would like you to be able to read this, but if I weight the proper strokes it will be too heavy for a peony.

PEONY

I have an awkward hole here but I'm filling it in.

Gourd

I wanted to capture layers & translucency.

onion
potato

Is this too corny?
For me it is great fun.
And my kids love it.

CREATION has been my continual source of joy & inspiration as I learn from it the richness of variety.

FORGET-ME-NOT

The edges of my letters are too harsh for this delicate flower, but my pen is sharp-edged!

I love contrast!
It's big, but it isn't tall enough.

Willows

I'd like to fill a whole page of willows. What a wonderful effect that could be.

T

Tim Botts
367 Oak · Glen Ellyn IL 60137

Is this calligraphic? I used my flat pen
and held it at a consistent angle.
I wish I had varied the heights of my letters.

SAGUARO

It looks like a hedge
that's just been trimmed.

PINE

Exaggeration is the best way to
hide my
insecurity
of doing a
formal
roman.

BAMBOO

Sineapple

Biographical note:
I lived in Japan 3 years.

Bird of Paradise

WATERMELON

I must confess to all my fellow calligraphers:
I used a felt tip on this one. What do you
think of my Palmer "r"s? Speed seemed
important in order to achieve a bird-like
quality.

Oh how I hate ampersands!



Here's a tricky spot where you have to join two thick strokes. That's always an incentive towards some creative cheating.

Let's emphasize the horizontal stroke where it comes out of the curve

You take
the white
further in



The outline shows a logical shape, made with a broad-edge pen. And the black shows where we have adjusted the form.



Gunnlaugur SE Briem
21 Shepherd's Bush Road
London W6 7LP

In a world of conformity, they are the last
of the independents. They stand alone,
mock authority and break the rules.



And with
each new
variation you
strike a blow
for liberty

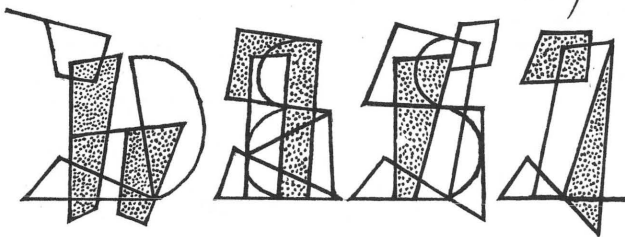
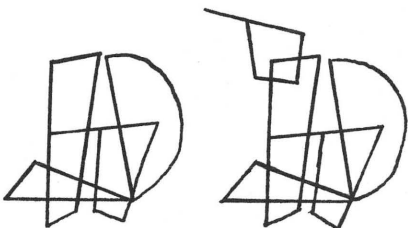
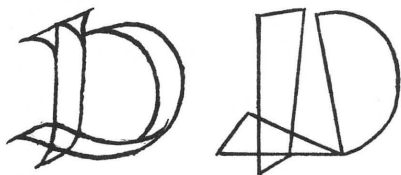
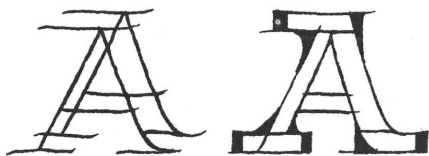
As long as
you have the
basic ingredi-
ents, E and I,
you can do any-
thing



So it's hardly
a surprise
that amper-
sands tend to

be conceited little swine, is it?
(Next we'll go after question marks!)

AM



Two letters from a nameplate designed for a naval officer.
Fig 3 shows the underlying structure of one of the letters when drawn with double pencils. Fig 4 shows altered serifs.
Figs. 5 to 9 shows the development of a letter D. Fig. 6 shows a scheme of shapes suggested by Fig. 5. Fig. 7 adds stability weight and stress. In Fig 8 the top left corner is emphasized. Unity has been encouraged by prefiguring each letter in the other 2s.

Ewan Clayton, Hassocks, Sussex.

A simple joy in making letters of any kind as well as the harsher necessity of earning a living in today's competitive climate encourages the calligrapher to broaden the work he undertakes. In so doing I for one cannot but use my pen based experience of lettermaking. In many ways it seems to be an asset. It enables one to make a rapid and direct statement of form, weight and stress and so establish a basis of related forms from which to work. Sometimes the relationship of the final form to its pen based origin is obvious as in Fig. 1 to Fig. 4, sometimes it is less apparent as in Figs 5 to 9.

Figure 1 shows letters from a nameplate designed for a young officer in the Royal Navy.

Figure 9 shows the first four letters from the word DESIGN. They are taken from a presentation piece for the organizers of a conference on 'Design in Education'. The organizers were lectures in Sculpture at the Royal College of Art. The idea was stimulated by a quotation from Le Corbusier, "We are not drawing board stylists we are organizers". How to reorganize the volumes, lines, weight and stresses of letters?

Unsold device done 4 or 5 yrs ago for GIB,
resurrected as a "Golden Anniversary mark".

Catalogue 16



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Our 50th Year

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ISAAC D'ISRAELI

9"

6"

Rick Cusick

11116 W. 71st Terrace

Shawnee, KS. 66203

One of the most appealing and obvious aspects of calligraphic letters is their inherent decorative quality. Sometimes it's beneficial to take advantage of this when quick reading is not necessary (or desirable).

← Catalogue cover: First of a series for an antiques dealer in Kansas City, Missouri. Letter, word and line spacing was manipulated to create desired texture.

Experiment for
Barb Ten Eyck — a
restaurateur in Cambria, Calif.

Ten Eyck

Problem / invitation to Lecture by John Dreyfus - distinguished
type adviser to Monotype and Cambridge University Press
Lecture title / 'Calligraphy & typography'

possible idea content - "From Harley 2904 to Monotype 262"
Transformation from the first appropriate written form to a
contemporary type (printed) form with Monotype connection -
use computer to transform and to demonstrate the lateral/vertical
compression and sizing factors common to both activities

word Calligraphy - in the one thousand year old Caroline minuscule

omnipotent

as written by the scribe who wrote Harley 2904 (British Museum)

calligraphy

& typography in the typeface Monotype 262 Gill Sans serif

& typography

Draw in outline - digitize & plot using these programmes - paste up -

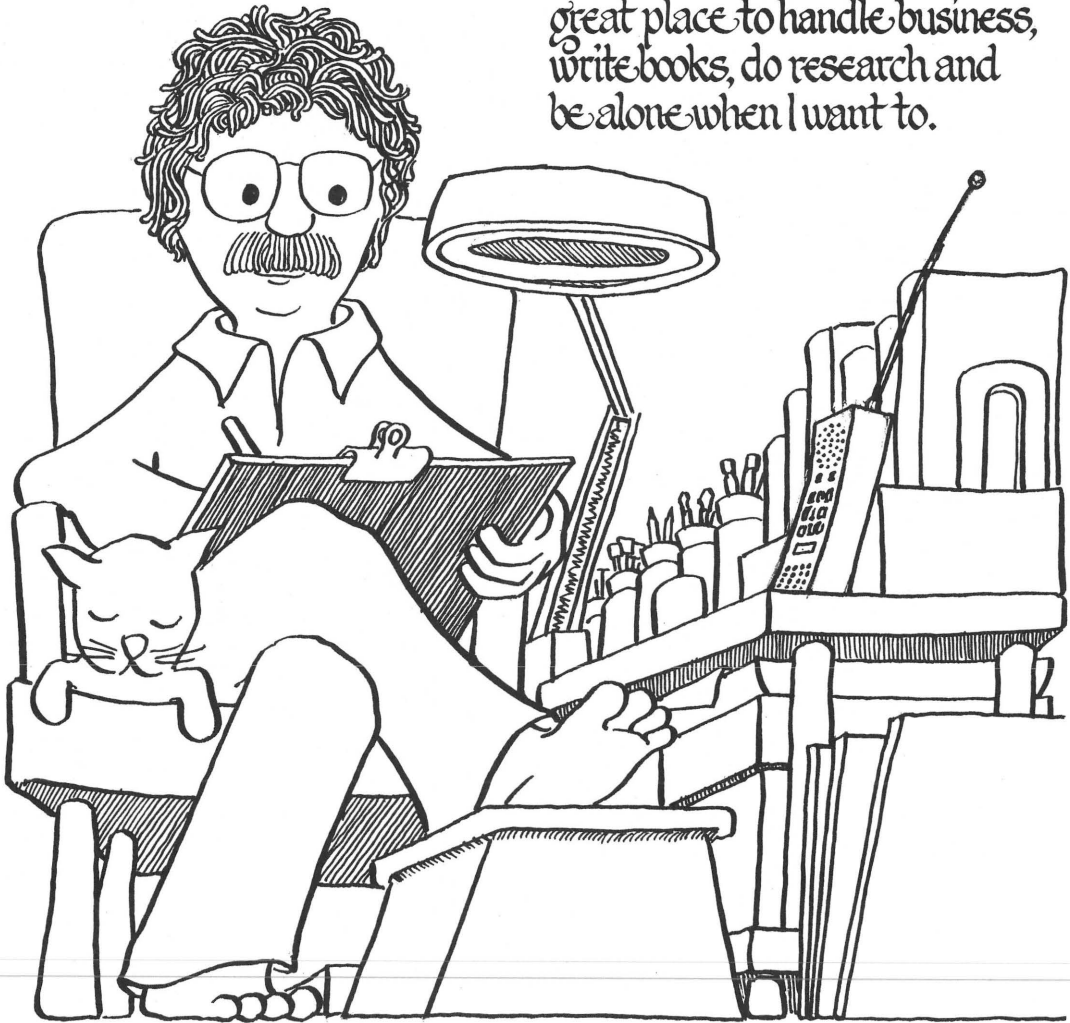
You have used 60% of your file -
OK, SLIST PULLIT

```
COMMON ***
CALL 1
CALL FSLIST CLORD
COMMON /CA/A(32767)
CALL 2 COMMON /C9/B(32767)
COMMON /CC/C(32767)
CALL 3
CALL START
CALL HL CALL FORMAT(60.0,30.0)
CALL SH CALL FRAME(0.0,5.0,0.0,5.0)
CALL ROT CALL IN2D(A,'CALLIG')
CALL COB CALL IN2D(B,'TYPOGR')
DO 10 I=
PERCENT =0.0
CALL ROTATE(A,0.0,0.0,0.0,A)
CALL PULL 10 CALL ROTATE(A,0,PERCENT,C)
CALL HATC DO 10 I=1,10
CALL DRAW CALL TRANSF(A,0,PERCENT,C)
CALL NEXT( PERCENT =PERCENT+10.0)
CONTINUE CALL NEXT (0.0,0.0)
CALL FINISH CONTINUE
STOP CALL FINISH
END END
```

Much difficulty
Analysing & understanding brief
Interpretation of problem
Search for ideas

At Ease

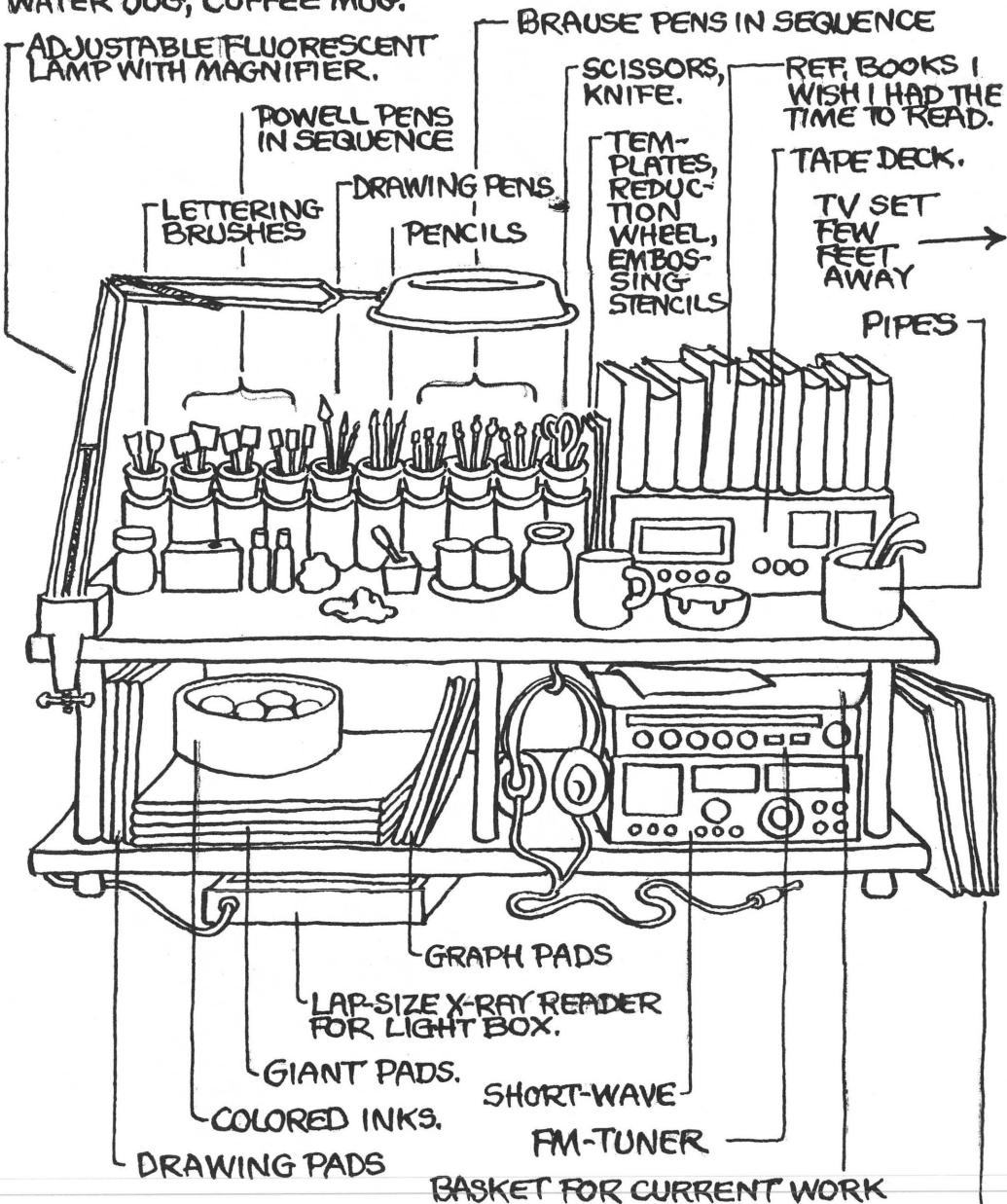
It always seemed a shame to spend so many hours a day working alone in my studio and being isolated from everyone. Alone is awful. I solved the problem by setting up a work area beside my easy-chair in the livingroom. Everything I need is well within reach. Why work at a desk or easel when you can sit back comfortably with family, friends, television, stereo, BBC-London, plenty of coffee, cordless phone & personal cat. And my studio at the other end of the house is now a great place to handle business, write books, do research and be alone when I want to.



Marc Drogin

74 COURT ST. · EXETER, N.H. 03833

FRONT OF TOP SHELF, LEFT TO RIGHT: RUBBER CEMENT, ELECTRIC PENCIL SHARPENER, WHITE-OUT, KNEADED ERASER, PEN-WIPE, EYE-DROPPER FOR DIP PENS, HIGGINS BLACK MAGIC, SUMI BLACK, WATER JUG, COFFEE MUG.

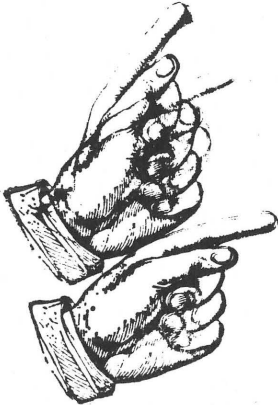
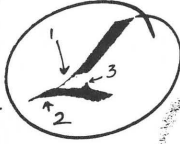


OTHER 111X12 MASONITE WORKBOARDS FOR WORK IN PROGRESS

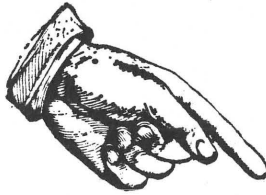
SEALF
NEEDS
WORK



- ① WITH LEFT CORNER OF NIB, PULL STROKE DOWN + LEFT.
- ② WITH NIB FLAT ON PAPER, GO RIGHT + SLIGHTLY CONCAVE.
- ③ WITH RIGHT CORNER OF NIB, PUSH INK UP INTO DIAGONAL.



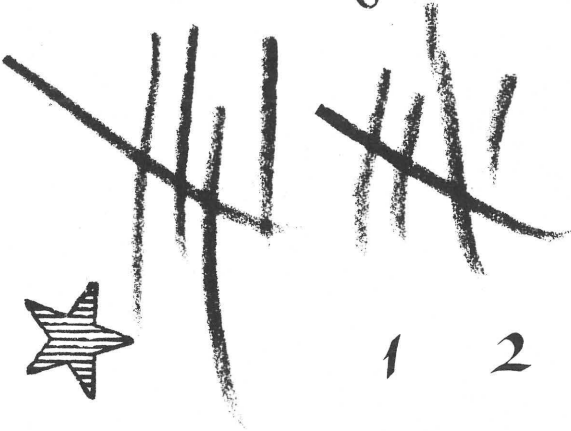
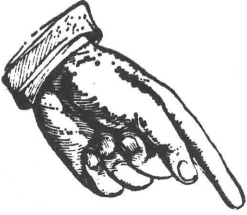
HARD
TO
READ!



IN THE
BEGINNING
THERE WERE
SCRIBBLES
PICTURES
SOUND
SIGNS.



Jean Evans



1 2 3

OLD STYLE
1 + 0 AT X HT.
(3 1/2 P.W.)
EVEN #'S ABOVE
LINE, ODD #'S
BELOW.

4 5 6

3 + 5: 1 LIKE
FLIPPERS

6 + 9: SMALL
BOWLS LOOK
BETTER.



7 8 9

²8³ DO NOT
MAKE STROKES
2 + 3 FLW
THROUGH.
INSTEAD, 2
ELLIPSES ON
TOP OF EACH
OTHER.

0

ZERO: NOT AS
WIDE AS
CAP "O."



numbers



My current work in Calligraphy involves, in part, the design of



MOON

MER.

VENUS

certain astrological signs to be used in a variety of applications.

The problem, then, is to take well known principles of alphabet designs and apply them to a non-alphabetic set of symbols. (The broad edged pen, held at a constant angle,

will give a definite bias to the stroke. The examples here show the effect of a pen held at $\sim 40^\circ$, which seems to work pretty well, over all, though I do find many points where it is necessary to twist the pen, or use the corner for certain effects. The two large glyphs were written with a brush, and both show this process.



ARIES

TAURUS

GEMINI

CANCER

LEO

VIRGO



LIBRA

SCORPIO

SAGITTAR-
IUS

CAPRICORN

AQUAR-
IUS

PISCES



Peter Fraterdeus
1024 Judson Ave
Evanston, Illinois
6 · 0 · 2 · 0 · 2



SUN



MARS



JUP.



SAT.



URA.



NEP.



PLUTO

The Zodiacal signs are less similar as a set than the planets, and require more of these "manipulations".

Of interest is the work on symbols by Rudolph Koch in his "Book of Signs", which may form a basis for further research into the origins of these ancient symbols.



Using the corner
of the pen



↑
Brush made

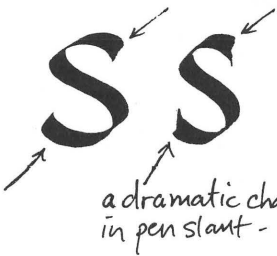


or trying for even division on the first stroke

The letter *S* has always been a difficult form for me. It takes a lot of practice and some careful analysis to develop a strong and consistent character.



this first stroke of *S* determines the width and general shape of the letter - it is the structure
pen slant effects the width of this stroke



the letter is further complicated by a variety of possibilities in the final two strokes & their terminations
a dramatic change in pen slant -



Since I find brush made letters more difficult and challenging I practice with the brush as well as the pen. It always adds to my perspective of a hand or specific letter.





Michael Gilbert
 Maryland Institute College of Art
 1300 Mt. Royal Ave.
 Baltimore Maryland, 21217



A few complete letters and corresponding first strokes with pen slants. My S's are often biased to a narrow form - This exercise has helped me to increase the width of S. On the narrower S the pen slant changes from the first stroke to a 'flatter' angle for finishing -

I enjoy making letters of a decorative type like the rotunda S - Looks more complex than it is -



This letter was a nice accident - my pen ran dry -



Experiments with order of strokes, pen angle, width of pen, attention to the joining of strokes, practice and alot of looking at good letters seem, to me to be the 'secret' ingredients for the well made letter.



MOST OF THE WORK I do is designed for reproduction, just like this little two-page spread right here under your nose?

Many of my problems come from what happens to calligraphy after it goes through the photographic & printing processes. Unfortunately, some of the attractive surface qualities of variation in value/color & vitality in writing are lost. The reader is several steps removed from the actual experience of seeing living letters.

What's more, it is often necessary to reduce the writing on business cards, ads, etc. by as much as 50% or more, leading to the difficulties illustrated here:



Careful attention to letter forms and spacing, & writing with a dense black ink will help alleviate these problems.



Georgianna Greenwood

Even with considerable experience in preparing art for reproduction, & knowledge of the various tools, materials & techniques involved, ACCURATE NEGATIVE SPACE perception is a major problem. Negative space reduces at the same rate as the writing but the result is more difficult to imagine.

Taking the time to make a precise, actual-size dummy helps to visualize how the layout



Printed Size
DUMMY



Mechanical/Paste-up

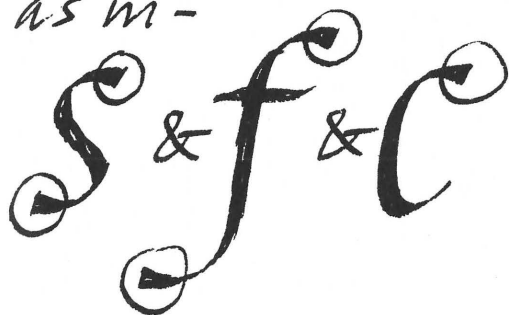
on the mechanical will look after printing, and for this, a Proportional Scale is indispensable for figuring out the dimensions accurately.



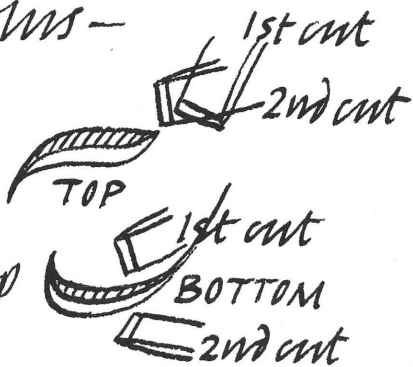
With a dummy one can look more objectively at the negative spaces within & around areas of writing. This often leads to design changes that are big improvements.

I don't do calligraphy with a pen,
but I do carve & draw calligraphic
letters & this means that I
translate written forms through
other techniques.

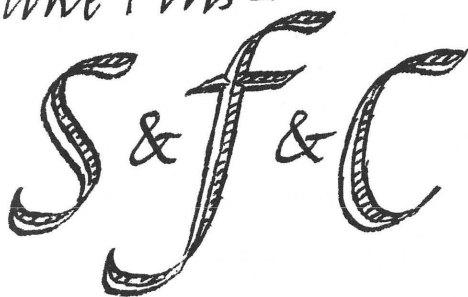
For instance, when cutting italic
letters in slate it is nice to let the
chisel - & the hand guiding it -
slightly modify pen terminals
as in -



these I treat like
this -



so these letters end up
like this -



of course, the chisel
can cut any shape
& could faithfully
follow the pen form,
but this feels right
for carving (& is
faster).

Drawing letters for reproduction I can build up the characters & use white paint to re-touch, making letters how I want them to be.



Michael
Harvey

The act of drawing allows me to give letters a calligraphic feel as my hand moves quickly, sketching first then firming up the character-

4 VALLEY ROAD
BRIDPORT
DORSET · ENGLAND
DT6 4JR

a a

mod

& condensing letters-

maybe adding a stencil effect-

g

drawing in outline -

e

or suggesting

depth -

P

For me drawing
means freedom from
the pen's dictatorship!

wear individually and lettering artists can help to preserve our oral traditions by choosing texts that are meaningful to us and that shed light onto our lives. The resulting written language will have significance and integrity. This approach to work and art could be a new beginning: the reaffirmation of our age-old linguistic traditions and the establishment of positive directions for our future use of language.

Friedrich Neugebauer



Now I passed by a cemetery
and then I would speak to them, I would
say to them, Do not look in
my direction! Turn the other way! Had
you liked me long, long ago,
you would not have left me. This one here
is your great-grandchild.

Passing a Cemetery

NARRATED BY VICTORIA HOWARD

TRANSLATED BY MELVILLE JACOBS

Aga nuxáxukt itk'imxátgmax,

aga wáwa andúxa.

Andulxáma,

«Néšqi amšgikšt gigat!

Iwat amšxálgag'a!

Qáma ángat tk'ix gamšgəntx,

pu néšqi gamšxangiduwole

Ámšaxaba amšáčmax dawax.»

PERENNIAL WHISTLING

Łgúšgiwal atxəlsəkəkə,
when some person goes around whistling,

aqtulxáma,
they would say to him,

“Ī. Łgúšgiwal ǂá-wit’álap’as-díwi,
“Yeh. He is going around just like Coyote,

səkəkəsəkəkə.”
whistling et whistling.”

Atgima,
Such a person might reply,

“K^wałqíci nixúxax iǂálap’as?”
“Is that the way Coyote was?”

“Ī. K^wałqí nug^wagím^x.”
“Yes. That is what they used to say.”

“?í. Gánč’a łga máyka gamilčəmlidəmx
“Oh. I thought it was you hearing

səkəkə nixúxax.”
him whistling.”

Quill Cutting

SOME TIPS

In selecting quills, choose feathers whose shape

is like this



rather than one whose barbs are fairly symmetrical about the shaft or stem.

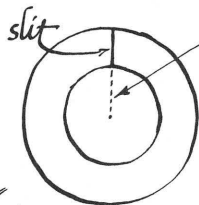
This shape is that

of a flight feather *et*, as they are subjected to more stress by the bird, will be stronger and better suited to service as a pen!

Cutting the slit: Be sure to get the cut that makes

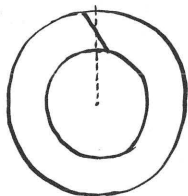
the slit centered on a radial

line through the quill wall, as in the upper sectional view at left. If the knife blade is not held perpendicular to the shaft wall when the cut is made, the resulting slit may look like the one in the lower sectional view at left.



CORRECT

Cross sectional views of quills



INCORRECT

When the second situation occurs, one need only make a cut beyond the slit and begin again or simply rotate the quill and recut the slit with appropriate attention to its centering.

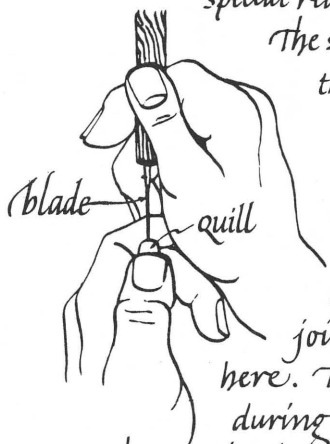


Michael W. Hughey
Twin Dolphin Press
303 Cumberland Ave.
Asheville, NC 28801 · USA



The length of the slit is normally $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 times the width of the nib, but may be longer for special reasons such as writing with gesso.

The slit should not be so long that the end of the nib begins to separate.



In making the slit, the knife is held in the right hand, as above, blade up, while the back or spine of the blade rests in the crease at the terminal joint of the left index finger, as shown here. The hands should ALWAYS be in contact during this procedure, providing mutual support.

The quill is held in the left hand, primarily between the thumb and middle finger, with the top up. The slit is made by rocking the knife toward the body, pivoting the blade on the index finger (as though one were going to split his left thumb with the knife). This is however, a very CONTROLLED motion with the hands supporting each other, and properly done, there is no danger whatsoever of cutting one's thumb, as it may appear at first. The quill, under the thumb, is neatly and precisely slit. One should hear a small "crack" when the slit is made.



I believe that many calligraphers find the Roman majuscule alphabet the most trying. Scribes have been in awe of these noble forms for 2,000 years. † Every scribe also has one or two letters which continually prove difficult to them. For many it is the M, or the S; but while I am still working on all the forms the U is the most trying forme.

T U V J U

This sample shows two forms of majuscule U, the first more pen-made and calligraphic, the second more manipulated and typographic.

I R P H O E B U

In this specimen the writing was done very freely and therefore the more calligraphic form was used. Below a more refined letter was employed.

E A S U R E

JERRY KELLY

This line is a more pen-written style showing somewhat more freedom than the previous. It was written very quickly, therefore the serifs are less consistently constructed than some of the other examples.

ALLUST

Below is an unusual trick to squeeze in a U. A more formal U which was needed elsewhere in the quotation is shown first.

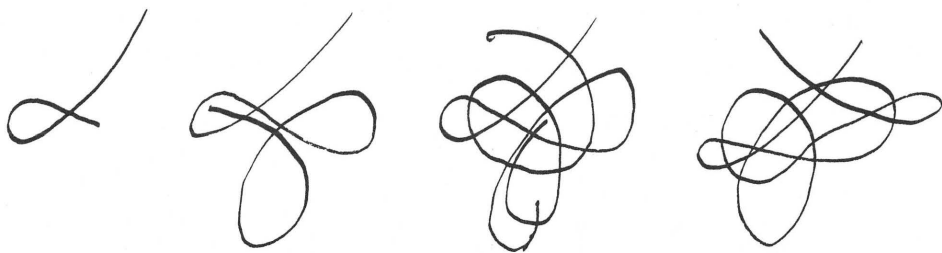
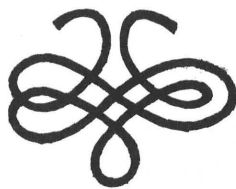
UYNKNS

The sample beneath shows some very refined capitals which were used with type. Thankfully no U was needed in this job.

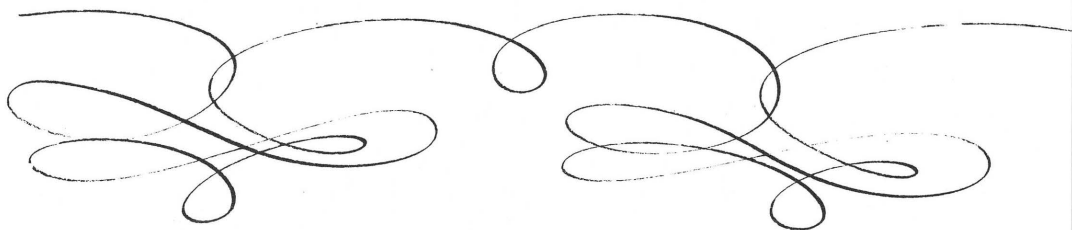
NATOM

My model →

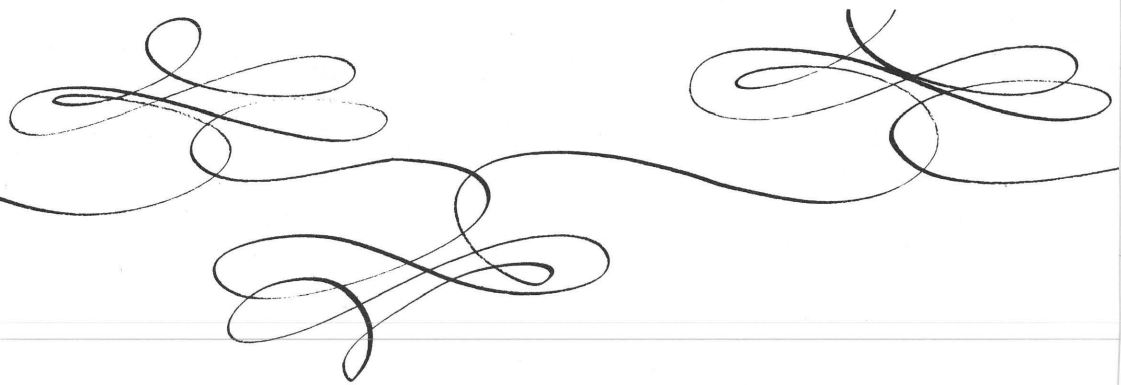
knotwork

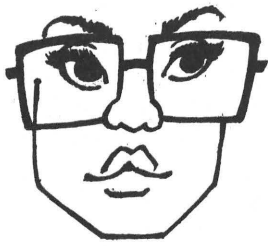


The construction of the knot isn't what counts.
What you must learn is the movement. Three
hundred knots later. ↘

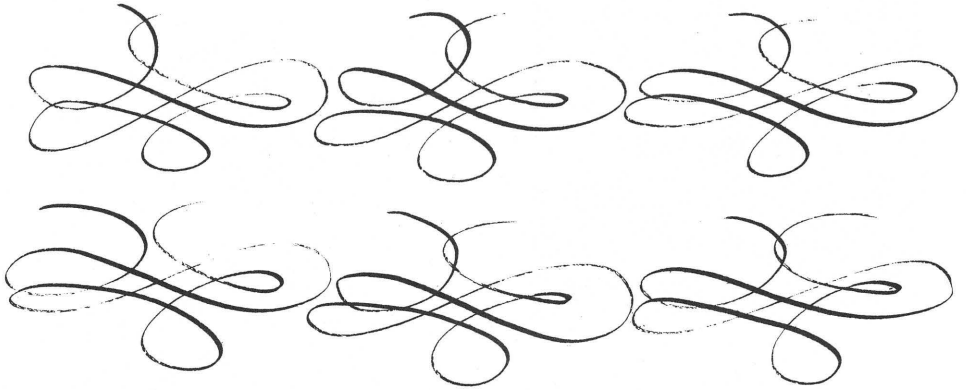


In a way it's like riding a bike. If you think
about it too much, you lose the rhythm and fall
flat on your face.

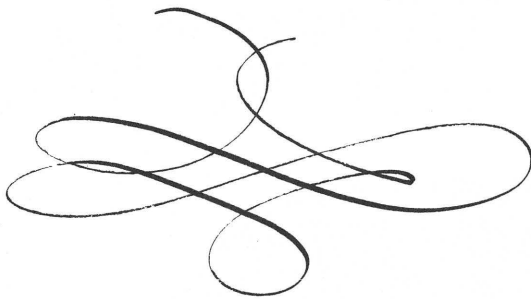




Karen Knorr
25 The Glen
Cedar Grove
New Jersey 07009



Three hundred additional knots later (and I'm getting double vision): You're not doing it right if you can't do it with your eyes closed.



Knowing the knot by heart is not what counts. I don't mind if I never see it again in my life. But once you have learned one flourish, the others get much easier. In fact, everything does.



For this cover in full color
 3 days working, unretouched,
 impossible to catch again
 whatever of any sort
 ← One preliminary sketch is
 obligatory before and well balanced.



Calligraphy entirely
 retouched, lot of points
 hard to draw (this kind
 of calligraphy is successful in
 the advertising area.)



Doing 27 ones identical
 as greeting card, it's
 not so simple, especially
 over only one afternoon!



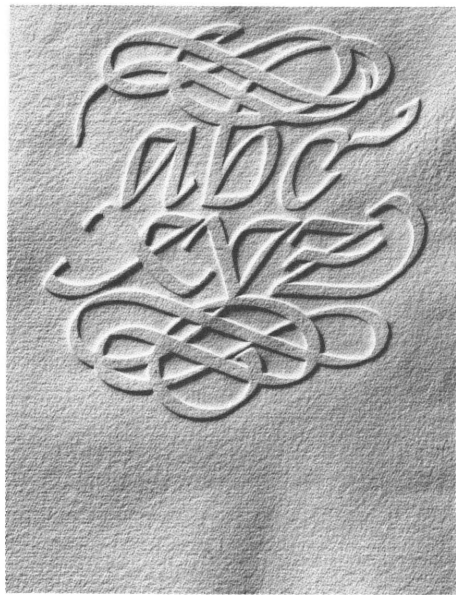
Here the whole
 problem is the
 balance, also numerous
 preliminary sketches
 by nib.



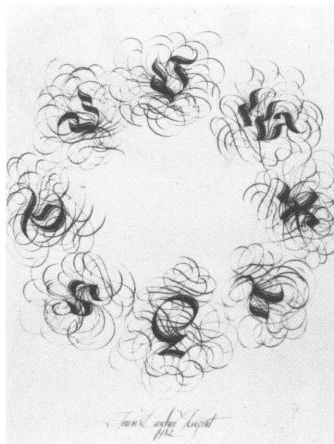
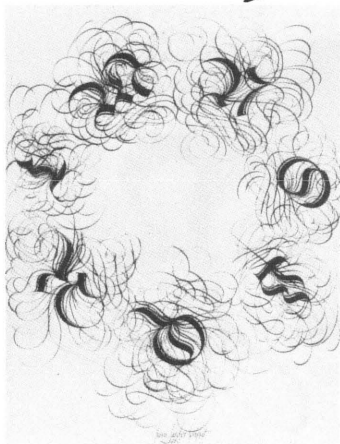
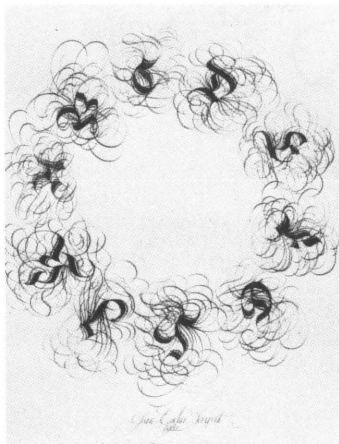
Jean Larcher
16 Chemin des Bourgognes
95000 CERGY - France

This embossing made
by hand request lots of
cures and patience, at
last we breath when it's
finished!

Below always a problem of
balance, lot of sketches by mb before



In this own work, the difficulty
was to design the 3 boards in the same
time, in the same day with an equal rhythm,
and an equal energy, no faintless allowed in this kind
of work!



THE PLAN, THE HOPE IS TO MAKE ONE "B" NICE ENOUGH TO EMBOSS ON A SET OF NOTECARDS. THE PROBLEM IS: SCRIBBLING ON THE CORNER OF MY COIT PEN IS MORE FUN THAN SERIOUS "B" MAKING.



FIRSTLY, ONE CONSIDERS A PROPER "B"; OF WHAT DOES IT CONSIST?

Lots of strong right angles (So we quickly abandon them for other possibilities.)



THIS CURVED BACK ON THE LETTER SEEMS TO SOFTEN THE SHAPE & ENHANCE DECORATING POSSIBILITIES...

IF THE BASIC SHAPE IS UGLY THEN NO AMOUNT OF FLOURISHING WILL HELP IT. YUK.



THESE MAY BE UGLY BUT WHO WILL EVER HAVE TO KNOW THAT UNLIKE OTHER FAMOUS CALLIGRAPHERS, not every mark I make is wonderful. Will that day come? Never



I TELL MY STUDENTS THAT IT'S FINE TO MAKE "IMPERFECTLY BEAUTIFUL" LETTERS, AS LONG AS EACH ONE IS DIFFERENT.

THEN THE PERFECT ONE CAN APPEAR ANYTIME

Brenda Larsen,

RTE 3 · TWIN FALLS · IDAHO · 83301

SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN
CONTROL AND
OUT-OF-CONTROL
LIES A GOOD
SCRIBBLE
(AND A GOOD
LIFE?)



WHEN IS A LETTER NOT A LETTER,
BUT A THING TO HOLD A SCRIBBLE?



INK SPOTS CAN BE
A NICE TOUCH-OF-
CHANCE



NOW THE HAND IS
REALLY WARM AND
THE POSSIBILITIES ARE
SEEMING ENDLESS...



THE HAND
FLIES; THE MIND
NO LONGER
CONSCIOUS OR
CARING OF
"BEAUTY"

TOMORROW
OR THE NEXT HOUR I
WILL LOOK OVER THESE
ZILLIONS OF BEES TO FIND
ONE TO SUIT MY PURPOSE
WHATEVER IT WAS ...



REVERSE CURVES



*A reverse curve must
be subtle to be two different
things at once:
a "straight line for strength"
yet, all "curves for gracefulness"*



wks

www

gj



Charles L. Lehman

安

毒

With help from

Friends -
Wright, Clark
Tiguan, F...
Koch, Edward
Johnston

Parti modicum
rip bon

The Great Wall
Dante
Kenny
Lead
H. rab...
Anthony Gardner
John Nature
Christina

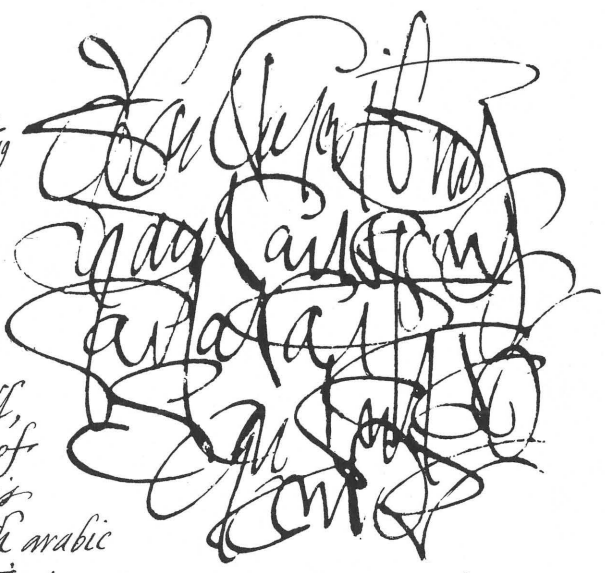
Handwritten calligraphic flourishes and stylized letters.



The goose quill is a writing tool really fantastic!.. Indeed better than the metallic pen.

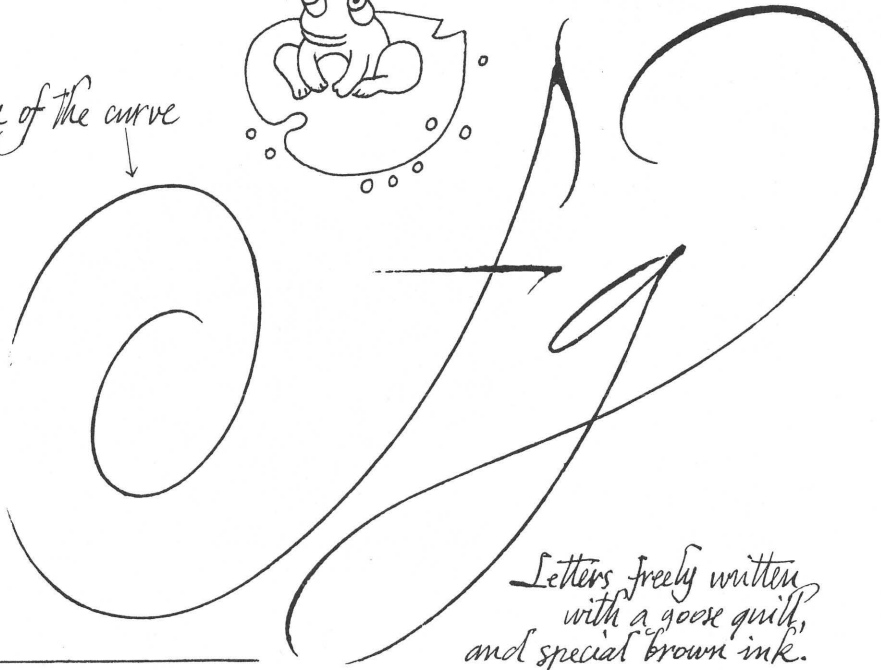
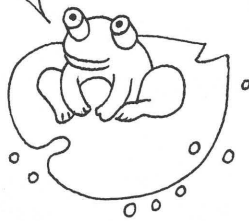
It's important to insist about the choice and preparation of the quill, and the good quality of ink. A good ink in this technique, is made with arabic gum. All these conditions are essential for a real success!..

Vulture quill, and specially eagle quill, are very suitable, but unfortunately, so difficult to purchase!..



This work is an abstract composition. The tool used is the quill.

perfection of the curve



Letters freely written with a goose quill, and special brown ink.



Claude Mediavilla
 9 rue de Chartres
 92200 Neuilly-France

There are two parts of calligraphy very essential to my point of view: the free hand chinese brush and goose-quill.

I think that it's my interest in calligraphic fields, and the interest and problem of many others calligraphers!

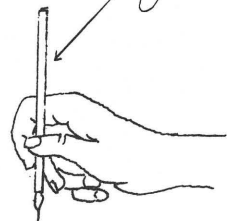
All is difficult in this technique: the hand

thick strokes



logotype written with a chinese-brush

brush position



and brush position, the speed of tracing. Note a fact very important: the contrast between

hairlines and thick strokes!...

Really, I believe that it's not very easy to get this feeling and sensitiveness with an other tool.

hairline



look at the shape of the tail →

Note the powerful of the chinese brush, in this sample.

This selection of studies for an informally written

→ fibris

illustrate, what interests me most in this part of my work and, at the same time gives me most troubles:

How far can I reach out in order to gain as much as possible expressivity without omitting legibility, without destroying the message?

& fibris
Henriette
Vander Horst

To which point can difficultly legible words still be accepted by the reader?*

When exactly this point is reached, I am not able to tell. I have to ask several persons to try to read.

* This question I only ask for the case showing and similar ones!

& fibris
Henriette
Vander Horst



Karina Meister
Ten Kate Straat 65"
1053 BZ Amsterdam
The Netherlands

With the formal question I feel easier: what the structure of my text allows.

I soon felt bound to more or less one composition.

~~H~~ibrijs
Henriette
van der Horst

In order to abandon twice the same capital H, I have chosen two different letter forms. By doing so I meant to get more variety in the structure.

~~H~~ibrijs
Henriette
van der Horst

insular majuscule

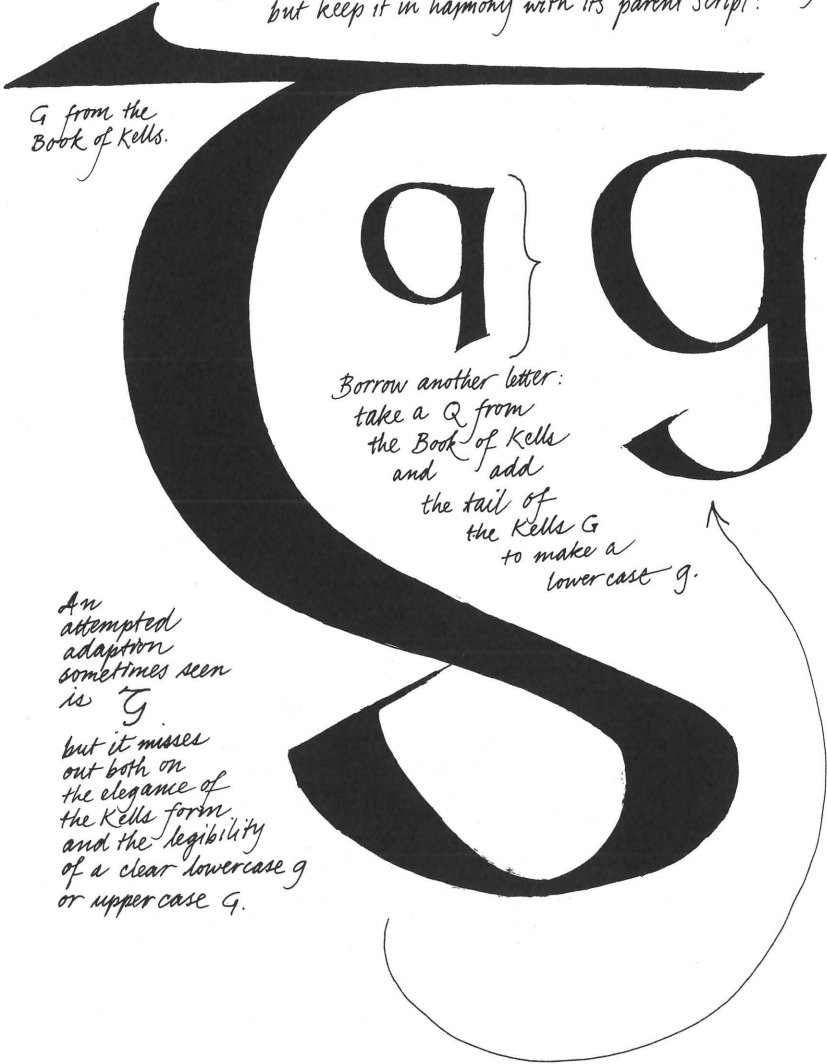
Some ancient scripts are illegible enough to modern readers even aside from individual letters that are nothing like their modern forms... like the insular majuscule (or Irish half-uncial) G. How to adapt such a letter to resemble its modern form but keep it in harmony with its parent script?

G from the Book of Kells.

Borrow another letter: take a Q from the Book of Kells and add the tail of the Kells G to make a lowercase g.

An attempted adaptation sometimes seen is *G*.

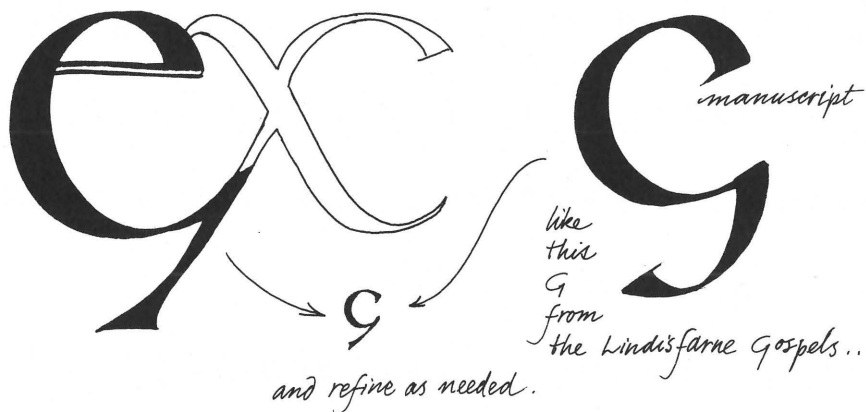
but it misses out both on the elegance of the Kells form and the legibility of a clear lowercase g or upper case G.



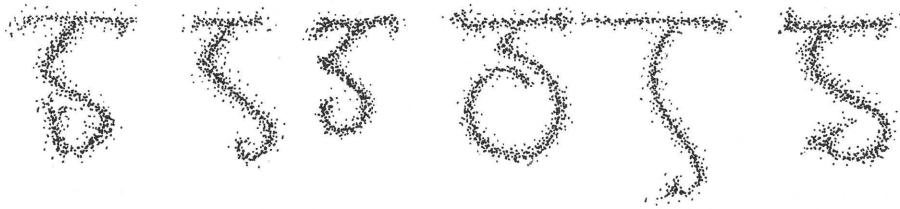


Pat Musick
1921 Sheldon Avenue
Colorado Springs Colorado 80904

Upper case G: borrow a form from EX;
eliminate the crossbar of E
and most of the X ... or just steal a letter from another



I could excuse the collecting of insular inscription G's (these from Clonmacnois) with pragmatic rationales: they could provide prototypes for designing capital S, or numerals 3, 5, 8... but I just admire the versatility of insular G



My doubts and dislikes concerning writing stem from various sources. In the first place is the word calligraphy, which has become the fancy-pants, blanket term for everything scratched, scrawled, or doodled on a surface. I know that it is impossible to get rid of the word and its usage, especially in the U.S.A. with its love for phony, soft-sell, pernicious advertising; still, it is a stumbling block that is always there.

Goethe, in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, said, "Writing is a misuse of language." This is an aspect that is quite understandable when one has just come from a large "calligraphy" show where more than half of the pieces were below the line of understanding and represented some sort of obscure



Alexander Nesbitt
29 Elm Street
Newport, R.I. 02840

soul-searching or willfully tangled doodles without meaning).

One tries - at least I do - to make the statement clear and unequivocal; and that is a difficult task. But it is also possible to heighten the meaning and to give it an added thrust. Somewhere in the attempt to achieve the perfect communication is the point at which "calligraphy" sours the brew. And I find, after having worked at writing and lettering for some sixty years, that the word is just a nuisance.

الصكاري
١٩٨٢



Since the Arabic Calligraphy is rich, various, and well standardized; my problem is to find my own language ~~work~~ within this historical position. And my solicitude is to give my work the movement and harmony, beside the presence of my time.



MOHAMMED SAID SAGGAR
82, GALERIES DES DAMIERS
92400 COURBEVOIE
FRANCE





Sevenoaks Kent

I hate drawing

=====
=====
LINES
=====
=====

*but I cannot make
a page out of that*

*SO as a designer
what interests me?*

pattern

pattern



Pattern can teach



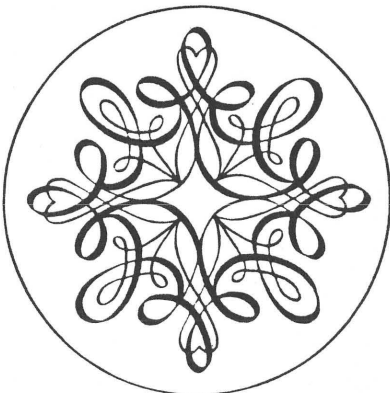
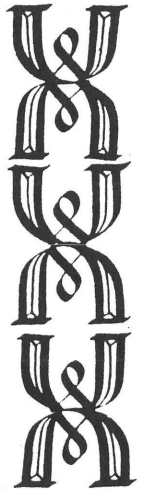
or be repeated



or help headings



*They look so simple
but can take hours to design*



*It is difficult to be consistent
I believe in making life as easy as possible for students*

N m r h u i l j

These letters show how much to compress

O o c e a g d q b p

anti clock wise

clock wise

Round letters then have flat sides

v w x y z s k f t

or oss bars

Change the angle of oblique strokes

*All alphabets formal or informal
are best learned in stroke-
related sequences*

17-05-

Because of the time limit I want to answer spontaneously to the entreaty for a comment about Calligraphy.

I've to say, that I feel more of fascination, as I have efforts or difficulties to the Calligraphy.

Therefore in great haste I hymn about the Calligraphy. Even today, in the age of technical roughness, it represents a artistic contribution from inestimable merit.

It gets terrible to discover the impoverishment of form in the written communication nominate by the electronic media like digital signals; pocket computers (calculators and so on).

Calligraphy is a artistic way to realize that something like a culture of writing is able to exist.

Additional Calligraphy shapes the base to understand written form seriously.

A truly great task, to appreciate one of the most ingenious inventions, the mankind ever made.

With fascination, which creative work, how many possibilities to form, which personally possibility of interpretation.

-- and now I'll take my brush to have music.



Werner Schneider
Am Lungen Land 2
D-5928 Laasphe



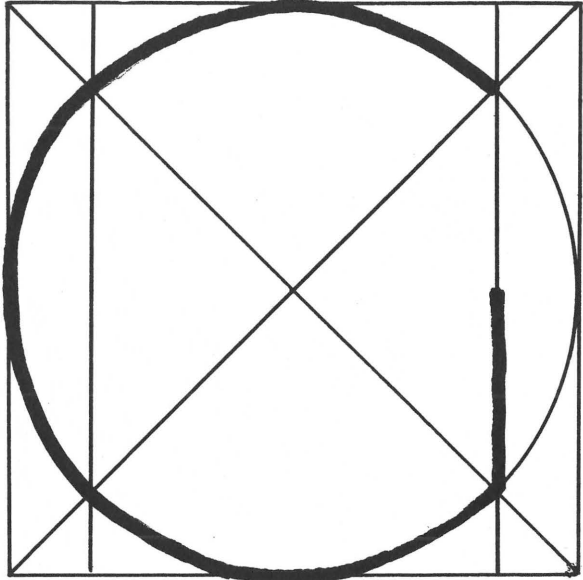
Symphony
of letters



I am fascinated by the shapes of letters, calligraphic or otherwise. Of all the letters in the Roman alphabet the most complex, and hence most intriguing, is the minuscule g. Here is a look at the G in its majuscules & minuscules.

C + 7 = G

The Roman majuscule G at its simplest is a C with a short vertical line for a jaw. (We often assign anthro-pomorphic terms to various letterparts with the G having not only a jaw but a beard and, in its minuscule form, an ear and a neck.) When the G is cursive the jaw descends and often sprouts a beard. The curl on the 2nd cursive beard is a nascent serif. The jaw on the Roman majuscule G can take four basic forms:



Trajan Column Proportions of G



cursive G's based on Free English Caps



simple jaw

half crossbar



full crossbar

crossbar with beard

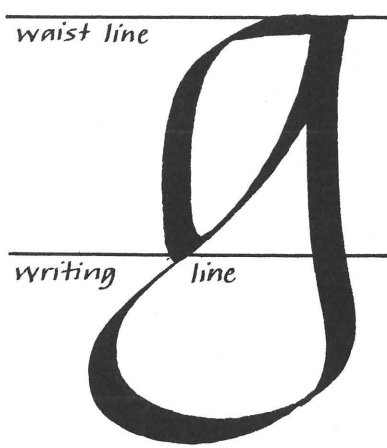
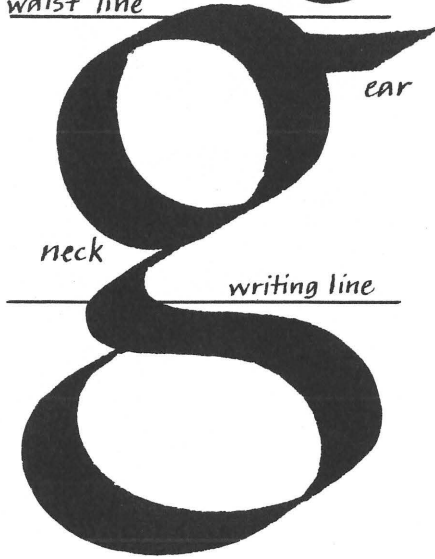
The G with a crossbar & beard can be confused with an ampersand & or CT monogram if one is not too careful.

There are two forms of the minuscule *g*. The simple *g* is derived from the majuscule *G*:



waist line

waist line



The pelican jaw on the italic *g* is often left off, resulting in a *g* that can be confused with a swashed *q*.

The ear provides visual direction in reading →



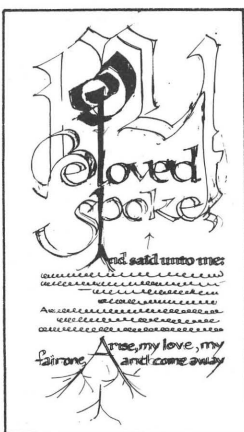
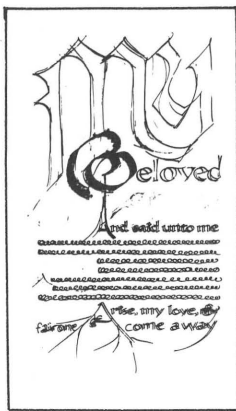
The complex minuscule *g* has evolved from the Insular *G*'s of the Book of Kells and similar manuscripts. It is a delicately balanced letter. The upper counter is o-shaped, but smaller than an o. It does not rest on the writing line. The lower counter is elliptical in shape — wider than the top counter to provide visual gravity. The two counters are connected by a curved stroke called the neck. The ear extends to the right of the top counter.



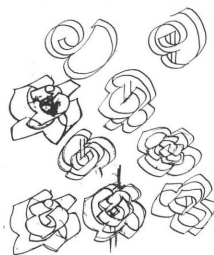
MARGARET SHEPHERD

It started when a logo I was working on for a landscape architect suggested a combination of the same 'M' and 'B' I needed for a quote—about gardens, no less—from *Song of Solomon*. A few preliminaries showed that the idea basically would fit.

The problem: fitting the quote into the idea so that it will be both decorative and legible, without adding extra decoration beyond the letters themselves. I like my letters to do double duty on the page. This makes for a lot of rough drafts!



Some roses—
calligraphic
hybrids—
including
an inverted
letter 'B'.



Above: 1/8-size copies of tracing drafts. Left: the current final version, just a temporary breathing space before more work. Not shown: an equal # of drafts in color. It's easy to go off on a tangent, refining the original idea until it is utterly cryptic.



And said unto me:
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, And
the vines in blossom give forth their fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

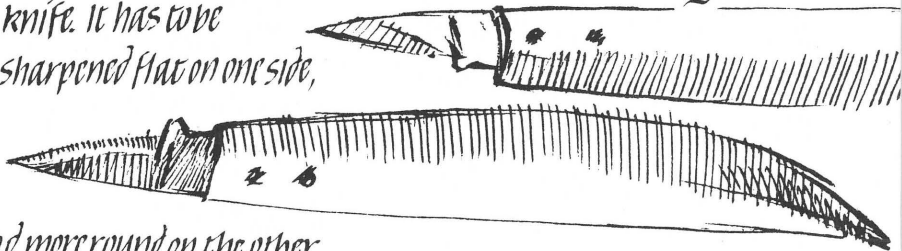


Sharpening & the Knife

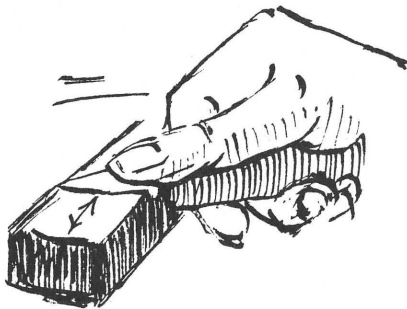
Cutting a quill isn't hard enough?

So it will cut the quill into a pen.

Of course not. First I have to sharpen and shape the quill knife. It has to be sharpened flat on one side,



and more round on the other.



I need to press down firmly on the blade as I move the knife back and forth across the stone to make the flat side. To make the round side, I have to swivel the blade gently as I move across the sharpening stone. Getting that round side right is the hardest.

I use a Japanese Water Stone, 1000 grid.

Bonnie Spiegel
121 William Street
Portland, Maine
04103

Shaping and sharpening at the same time isn't easy. Each time I get one side done, I seem to have dulled the other. In order to end this repetitive cycle, I've had to sacrifice one side. I've not rounded the round side enough. But I can live with it.

At first I got too many facets on the blade. I needed to press down more.

Shaping the knife well is essential for a sharp and smooth writing quill.

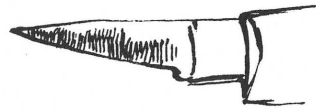
round side →

flatside ←

An extra sharp cut here makes the nib work well. The quill knife must be sharp and flat to do that.

Shaped with the round side.

Why doesn't the knife come shaped and sharpened already when you buy it?



words·images·signs·

Are what interest me right now.

For the most part, I work large-by traditional calligraphic scales. Personal work is on the largest, most colorful paper I can find, though lately I've been experimenting with making my own backgrounds. Rough papers make for lovely textured effects but any semblance of freedom has a good deal of "planned spontaneity" to it. The gouache tends to dry in the pen and clog it quickly because of the necessarily slow pace the heavily rubbed papers require. I've found that cleaning the pen every four or five words promotes fluidity-if not speed?

Lately I've been working very large-even by my standards-doing 4' x 8' signs for a client using calligraphic letterforms. It's a great way to learn about brushwork and to increase one's appreciation for sign painters.

For gaining a new perspective on your own work, especially if you hesitate to work large, feel tight-

Maureen McSquires
10 Charmer Court
New Monmouth NJ 07748

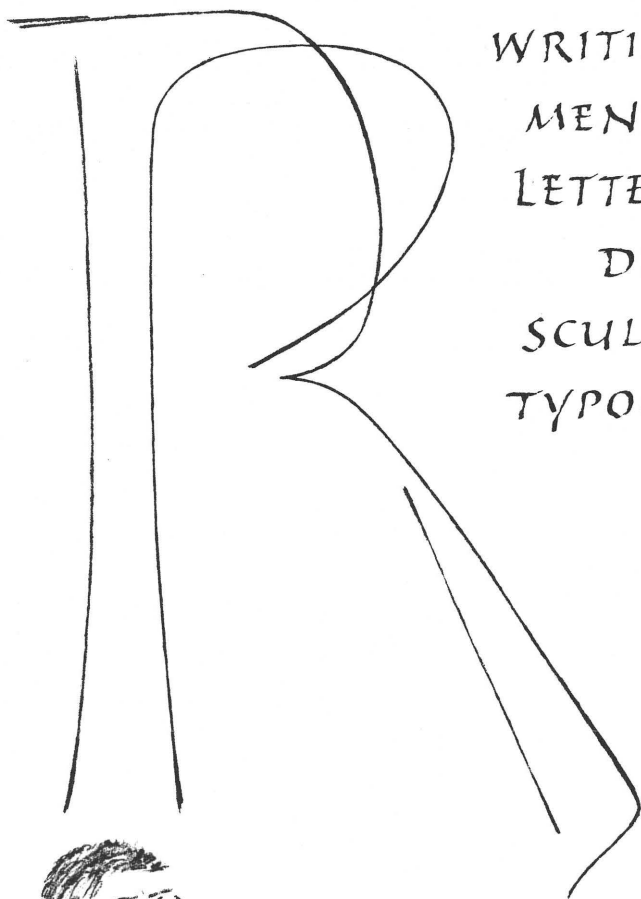


you might try working in your favorite or most troublesome letterforms in 6 to 10 inch high letters on newsprint or bond paper with at least an inch wide brush. The subtleties of the particular alphabets come jumping out at you—especially when they're missing! Brush writing will certainly discourage an iron grip because you must have a light touch to attain an evenness of stroke and proportion. It's such a pleasure—when it works...

Written out on Fabriano 100/100
with 3/8" & 3/4" sable flat-ferruled
brushes, 2 mm Brause pen and a
"00" Koh-i-noor Rapidograph

THE R AND O DRAWN
HERE REPRESENT TO ME ONE
OF MY PERSISTENT
INTERESTS IN LETTERFORMS=
THE INTEGRATION OF

LETTERS AS
WRITING/MOVE-
MENT AND
LETTERS AS
DRAWING/
SCULPTURE/
TYPOGRAPHY.



WHAT
IS
THE
OUTLINE
OF
A
LETTER?



SUMNER STONE



*The strokes have
their own counters.*



V G

Only ONE of many problems:

Hairlines or no?

Maybe this is o.k.?
a combination of baddies
what to do here?
certainly this branching seems too thin again!
too heavy.
maybe this is too long?

This heavy branching destroys the grace of the letter
BUT this thin branching is weak
Retouching the "hair" makes it stronger - but it doesn't seem right.
Goodness knows punctuation marks deserve a page of their own.

A flatter pen angle? Ugh! Look at those feet!
Maybe better
Two strokes slow you down - but almost eliminate the hair line. (Do I want to eliminate it?)
What about these hairy lifts?

The ribbon is ok here
thin spot much too long
a bit weak here
Really too light
But this is heavy & ugly. It really closes the counter
This seems pretty to me - but it may not reproduce.

This is a major concern! - if its to be reproduced drop outs should be avoided, but IF NOT - must we worry about it?



Jacqueline Svaren
11182 S.E. Tyler Rd.
Portland, OR. 97266

When the pen picks up speed at a relatively steep angle, the hair lines seem inevitable.

moving quickly

Must we sacrifice speed & movement for "strength"?

I suppose one can go back in with a crow quill & beef up those hair lines - but it tends too much to fill the letters.

*But slowing down
& lessening angle*

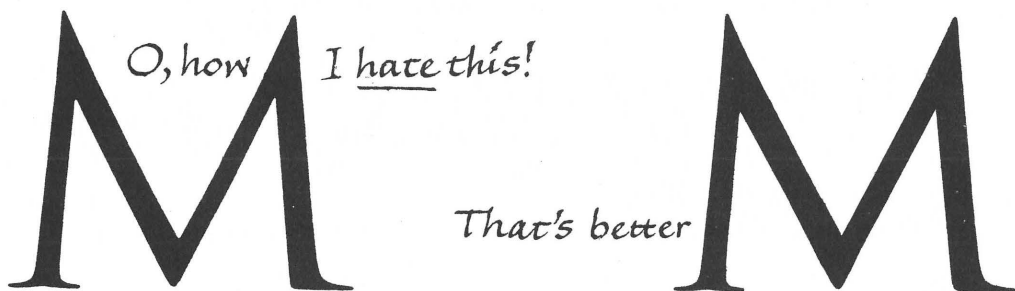
may be the answer - WHEN WE WANT heavier, stronger letters.

I'm not sure that I always do. It becomes a matter of PURPOSE & TASTE

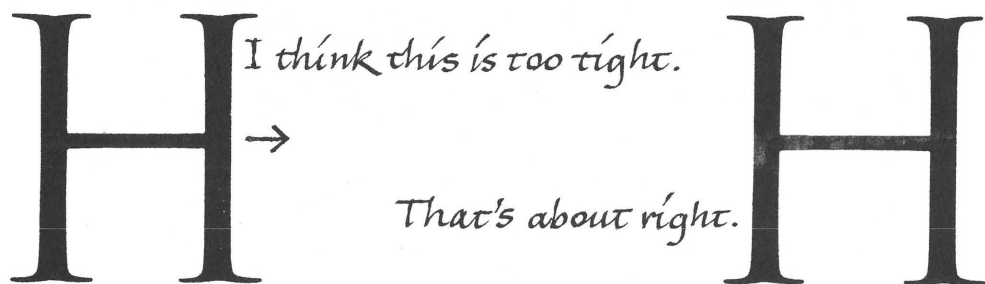
JS
5/83

No student of Father Edward Catich ever came away from his classes unmarked. Such dents were usually permanent, and mine are deep. Disagreement was difficult; difficult - hell, it was impossible!

I have always hated M, not only because it's a bear to splay the legs properly, but because of the three differing stroke-widths: the third downstroke is thinner than the first and the fourth downstroke is



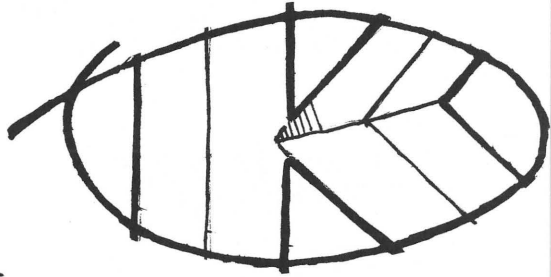
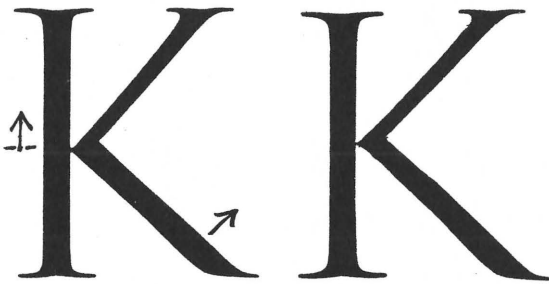
thicker than the second. I prefer to make the first and third downstrokes much the same and not to worry about comparing the fourth to the second.



Catich used to say, "There are 48 ways of making the letter H, of which 47 are wrong!" Most of mine were, too. I think the letter needs to be wider. There is evidence to support both views.

Alan Swanson

Asst. Professor of Scandinavian
and Comparative Literature
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

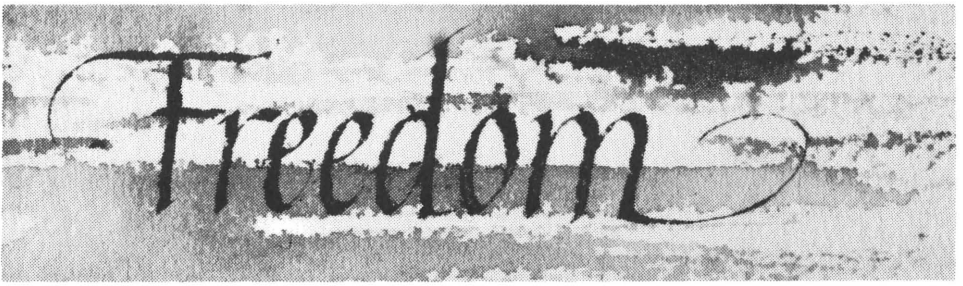


Father Catich used always to tell us that the first oblique stroke of K should just touch the center of stem. His own inscriptions, however, carried the oblique slightly into the stem, but the balance of his letter (to the left) has never satisfied me. I like to lift the waist slightly and extend the lower oblique, which seems to me to give better proportions.

Catich insisted that the top crossbar of F came first. I really don't think it does. I always have trouble bracketing the serif.

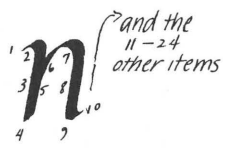


In the foyer of Bob O'Hara's house is an alphabet cut by Catich. The letters are so delicate, they all but float off the stone. If one can lust after letters, I lust for these.



In transition right now from discipline and readability to freedom and perhaps illegibility.

learn the rules



break the rules

When does 'loose' become too 'loose'? Tired of verse poetry, all those profound thoughts. I mean, how many times can one read that paragraph that is framed and

hanging on the wall. Eventually, I've seen it all. There are no surprises left and it fades into boredom. Currently looking more toward space, shapes, color values and texture into design.



Movement

Alive

this rough will be O.K.



STC

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION
PRESENTED TO

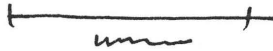
Helen Gershen

IN RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO
SOCIETY FOR CALLIGRAPHY

THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY IN
OUR DEEP APPRECIATION OF YOUR GENEROSITY
OF TIME AND FRIENDSHIP,

APR 13 1964

?



But what hand?
Something dignified
yet... warm?
Formal but friendly?

CERTIFICA^{NO}

CERT^{NO}

CER^{NO} ?

CERTIFICA^{NO}

CERTIFICA^{NO} ?

IFICATE^{NO} ?



Pat's Topping
(IN A QUANDARY)

Is everything spelled correctly?
Is all the copy

THIS CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION
IS PRESENTED TO

CERTIFICATE OF
NO PRESER

OF TIME AND
FRIENDSHIP

O.K.

Now-what colors shall I use? Get out the paints & start mixing!



Larger
& reverse

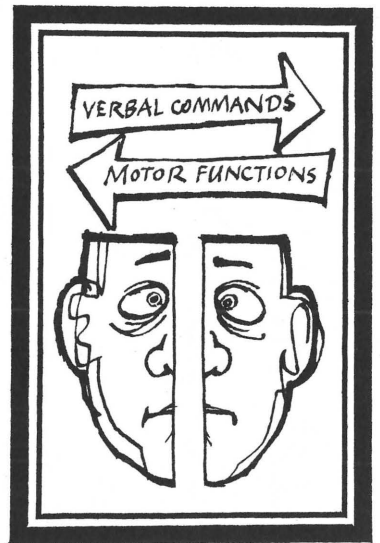
O.K.

This will work with the italic name if I clean it up.

Helen

My trouble with

I have a scientific excuse to give my clients for all the errors! The right side of my brain seems to become disengaged when my right hand shifts into gear. Since I can't dial a phone & chew gum at the same time, it shouldn't be a surprise that I can't write and spell simultaneously, either! The latter is truly detrimental in my life as a scribe! Now that we know about right and left brain sections, I at least have science on my side.



World famous model of hemispherical division with the top of his head removed.



CYNTHIA TYLER

2244 Virginia Pl NE
Atlanta GA 30305

bananananananas!

Alabamamamamama

oops! It might work in Toledo,
but not in Montgomery!

or this: igeriger

I sit down to write, taking all the care in the world.
The pen feels right in my hand. The letters are coming
along just fine but this is what happens!

refrigerigator

PROBLEM: THE LETTERS
a & e CLOSING IN WHEN LETTERING
IS PHOTOGRAPHICALLY REDUCED.

FOUNDATION HAND



* THE PROBLEM LIES WITH
THE COUNTER SPACE WHICH
IS ENCLOSED - AS OPPOSED
TO THE PART HAVING
"VISUAL ESCAPE."

AS LETTERS REDUCE, THE
CENTER HORIZONTAL BAR IS
THE OFFENDING STROKE THAT
FILLS THE COUNTER SPACE IN.

JANE VAN MILLIGEN

1717 FAIRMOUNT
WICHITA, KS. 67208




SOLUTION :

KEEP GOOD WIDTH TO THE LETTERS
IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE THE AMOUNT
OF COUNTER SPACE AVAILABLE -
THEN RECONSTRUCT THE LETTERS:



AVOIDS
THICK-ON-THICK
CONNECTIONS

ON A PAGE CHANGES IN LETTER
CONSTRUCTION ARE LESS NOTICEABLE
THAN CLOSED-IN COUNTER SPACE.
IN EXTREME REDUCTION TRY THIS: 



Scott Kim has said,
 "Just about anything with a dot
 over it reads as an i."

MARK VAN STONE
 809 STATE STREET
 Portsmouth NH 03801

Its flares was white as snow
 And everywhere that Mary

↑ TOP OF TEXT MAKES MORE CALLIGRAPHIC EXPERIMENT
 BETTER TEXTURE AT LEAST

M appears quite naturally from the broad pen,
 but for 400 years Europeans, wielding flexible
 pens, have maintained M in favor of the
 equally-balanced M or a symmetric so-
 lution like M which appears in some
 Spanish Manuscripts. For the simple
 time-honored reason WE HAVE
 ALWAYS DONE IT THIS WAY.

IN JAPA-
 NESE,
 EVERY
 CHAR-
 ACTER

FITS INTO A SQ-
 VARE, SO THE
 PERIMETER IS
 LESS, AND THE
 DENSITY EX-
 TREMELY IM-
 PORTANT
 FOR LEGIBILI-
 TY.

房
 総
 の
 台
 地
 に

In decorated letters, the 14th Century Illuminators simply em-
 phasized the bold strokes:

ABC O ODDRM

note similarity
 of S N only here
 are they any
 different

by an odd coincidence, in Japanese katakana,
 "so" ソ resembles "n" ノ → ソソ = SON

inks pigments

INCONSISTENCIES

What gives me a good deal of grief is the inks that I'm using. I've tried many different kinds and brands, including fountain, India ink, Chinese, Japanese, sticks, etc. I cannot say that I've conducted vast experiments, that may be the solution. However, commercial work affords little time for such valuable experiments.

I've had the most luck with fount India after leaving the cap off the bottle for about a week. There is sufficient





Diane M. von Arx
3340 Bryant Avenue South
Minneapolis · Minnesota
55408

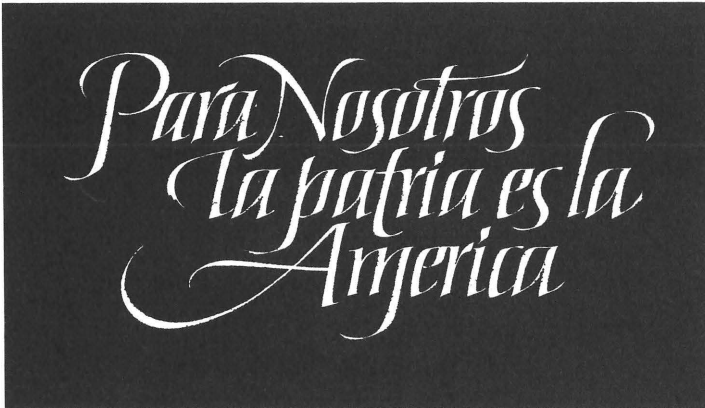
evaporation to allow a very desirable flow with acceptable opacity. But is it archival quality? Filling the pen with a brush helps me eliminate excess ink on underside of nib.

With pigments, I find the same situation. Keeping an opaque coverage and still allowing paint to flow freely from the pen is a difficult accomplishment, indeed. I find some cake paints (Maribu) and Designers Gouache are the best for me, but they still require constant mixing and precise measuring of water.

No great solutions, just continuous challenges. I hear all of you out there too, who may believe my problem can be solved with ground inks and a well-cut quill. And, I'm afraid, I do not have a good argument AGAINST the quill.

Print and Culture in the RENAISSANCE

ABOVE: PEN MADE CAPS+TYPE (GALLIARD). 2.5" IS TRICKY SO I DIDN'T TRY TO MAKE THEM IDENTICAL. THE TYPE LOOKS A BIT HEAVY NOW



POSTER PEN WORK EMPHASISING ROUGH TEXTURE.

RIGHT: PHOTO BACKGROUND OF LEAVES



MUCH OF MY WORK IS LETTERING WITH TYPOGRAPHY: HEADINGS, LOGOS, CALLIGRAPHY AS EDITORIAL ILLUSTRATION. EACH PROJECT HAS ITS OWN NEW SET OF PROBLEMS AND EACH IS OFTEN A STRUGGLE. WHEN EVERYTHING IS WORKING WELL, THE ACT OF CALLIGRAPHY CAN BE MEMORISING AS ONE ALLOWS THE FORMS AND SPACES TO ARRANGE THEMSELVES INTO INTERESTING COMBINATIONS. I TRY TO EXPLORE NEW OR DIFFERENT VARIATIONS OF LETTERFORMS CONSTANTLY, RATHER THAN CONCENTRATING ON A FEW "STOCK" STYLES OVER AND OVER AGAIN. EACH PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED HAS ITS OWN SPECIAL QUALITIES, AND THE CHARACTER OR "FEELING" OF THE LETTERS, (TYPE OR CALLIGRAPHY) SHOULD BE IN SYMPATHY WITH THE SUBJECT. NOTHING IS EVER QUITE AS GOOD AS ONE HOPES BUT THERE IS SATISFACTION ALONG THE WAY. IT IS A NEVER-ENDING QUEST TO IMPROVE, BROADEN AND TO SHOOT FOR THE ELUSIVE STATE OF DISCIPLINED FREEDOM.



CYRILLIC FOR A HALF-TITLE PAGE

The Friends of
CHESTERWOOD

The Rockville Times

ABOVE:
BUILT-UP WITH A BROAD NIB. THIS
TECHNIQUE WAS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE
CERTAIN SWELLS IN THE FLOURISHES.
RIGHT: BRUSH-DRAWN, AFTER FIRST
SKETCHING WITH THE BROAD NIB

BELOW: LETTERING FOR
SOS ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR
SERIFED ROMAN
MINUSCULE WITH
SOME PEN MANIPULATION
PLAYFUL MONTHS &
FUNCTIONAL DAYS &
AND CONTRIBUTORS' NAMES

May
August

MONDAY TUESDAY Judy Detrick
Diane Amarotico WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY Georgina Artigas
Centennial SATURDAY
Linda Abrams

alice-bacon-champagne-d
s-frankfurters-gaspacho-howar
ade-mulligatawny-noodles-ovs
ail-richie-swordfish-tournedos-
ster-yorkshirepudding-zabagli
laise-catherine-dough-escarole-
g-jackie-kebabs-lobster-motok
retzels-ravioli-scallons-tom-ier

PART OF THE COVER OF THE 1984 SOCIETY OF SCRIBES ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR

THE FINE
ART OF
PRIVATE
COMMIS
SIONS

TITLE PAGE CALLIGRAPHY

beyond the call of duty

BRUSH LETTERING DONE WITH SPEED ON ROUGH PAPER
PART OF A PRINTED POSTER FOR THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE



ABCDEFGHI

Simple Roman Caps

BROWN



Diagram to show theory of letter spacing

HEAVY PLAIN



OPQRS

UNCIAL - 4th century style

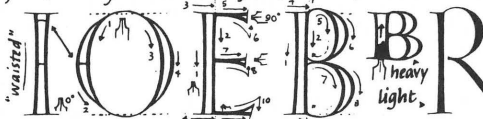
The quick

BUILT-UP VERSAL CAPITALS FOR INITIAL LETTERS AND HEADINGS



ABCDE

a flexible, sharp broad-edged nib, preferably a goose quill. first be plotted with pencil, afterwards carefully crased. To fill agent or ink from the bottom of a stem upward, while still wet.



EXEMPLAR SAMPLER Exemplar sheets are difficult to write freely as students will exaggerate subtleties. Shown are "snippets" from my more successful efforts

? ! , & e

"waisting" of stems; about 2 pen widths between downstrokes;

3 Lombardic

- 1. Glyph: light & heavy 2. Uncial: hairline & glyph



vvvvv w ww zzzz LMN OP

QRSTU LMN & PQRS

MMMMMMMM NNNNN ABC XYZ

ABCDE OPQR

Two varieties of capital to go with the Johnston-style of Compressed hand.

IKLGNW

BCD

ABCD

ABCD

ZZE

AB

STUV

Decorative Double Capital

KLMNOPQR

Roman Capitals - Relative Proportions of the Skeleton Forms

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

Who will favor extemporizations

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
CAROLINGIAN European 9 century

Carolingian: extract from 'Under Milk Wood' ms, enlarged to over twice size

sheets, in her spruced and scoured

11c. narrow hands

foreshadow
Black Letter

quick Medieval
brown fox Batarde

No. in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye

SONNET VII

"Gothicized Italic" or
"Compressed hand" after
Edward Johnston's style

The quick brown fox

The Italic Alphabet Italic Cursive Handwriting

originated in

Join diagonally out of:
uacdltinmhkez

Renaissance Italy,

Join horizontally out of:
otfvrwxr

Those who deny

Unsafe to join out of:
syypj qqob

Freedom Upright and formal italic

FIG. 1 n n n n

FIG. 2 n n n n

the lazy dog

FIG. 3 n n n n n n

FIG. 4 n n

slanting-formal italic

1234567890 W SHEILA WATERS

20740 Warfield Court, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879

10c. English (Edward Johnston revival)
Foundational Hand

being resolved quickly by jingle
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzklm

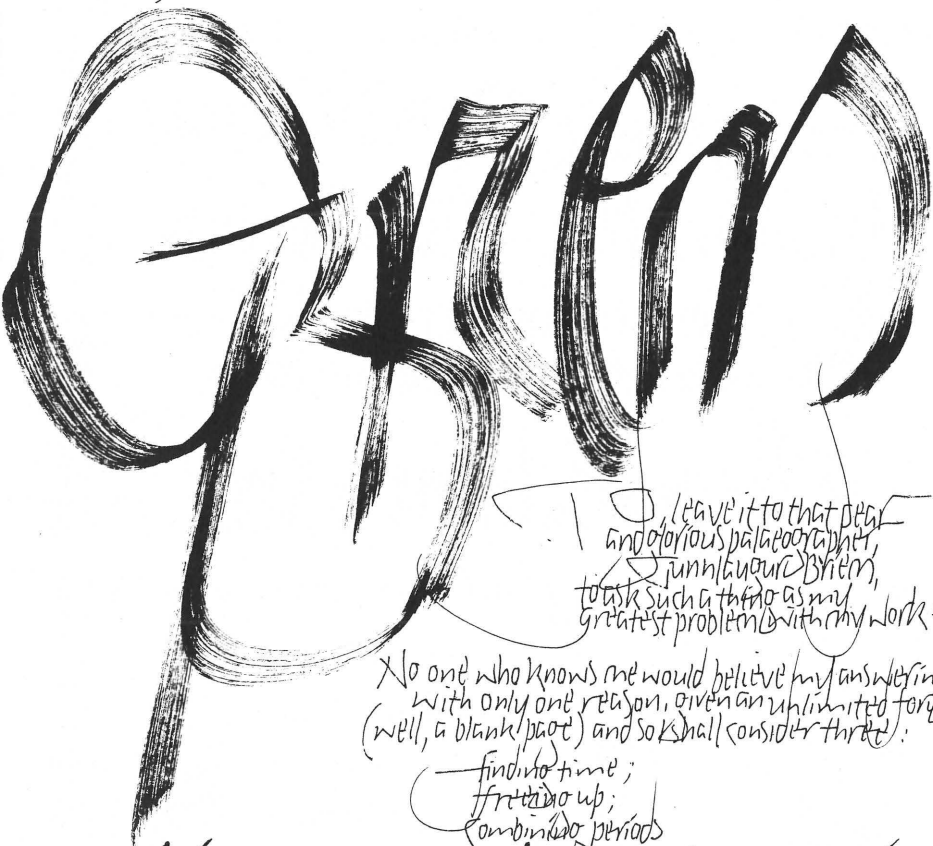
7 century European

HALF UNCIAL

15c. Italian (Renaissance of Carolingian)

HUMANIST

This was an attempt to combine S, B
into as close to a two-stroke form as I could



Oh, leave it to that dear
and glorious paleographer,
Junnhauur Briten,
to ask such a thing as my
greatest problem with my work!

No one who knows me would believe my answer is no
with only one reason, given an unlimited forger
(well, a blank page) and so shall consider three:

- finding time;
- finding up;
- combining periods

This was supposed to be about calligraphy

but, inasmuch as I'm not sure what that is, and since I have
no intention of including a sketch of myself, I am going to
write about writing and myself.

I teach literature and linguistics
at a public university on the west coast and my first great problem with
my work is finding time for it. I have as many (or more) technical
problems as anyone else, but, given time to work, I can imagine few
ecstatic experiences comparable to solving a design problem.

Lawrence Whiteley / 1222 NE 22nd
Portland, OREGON / U.S.A. / 97232

Ben Shahn, in *The Education of an Artist*, has a glorious discussion of the tension between tradition and individual means.

We must recognize both. Shahn tells of drawing Roman letters over and over again, painstakingly, until they were his. But he also lauds Paul Klee for exploring the field of his own work to expand his oeuvre. In short, the problem is to, somehow, at once submit oneself to an impersonal model and to put one's own mark upon that model. That seems to me my second great difficulty in my work.

**Always
Always**

I think there are interesting possibilities open for the development of notions of Greek letters. I find I have a number of notions about how they must flow (and hence) can experiment.

SWEET MOTHER, I CAN NOT WORK
Epitho of XVIIIth cent

Finally, third, I am fascinated by the possibility of combining work from different periods and cultures -

For example, the opening of the lyric from Sappho above, in its simple diction, is very reminiscent of songs by, say, Phoebe Snow or Joan Armatrading.

How, then, represent the similarity? How join two disparate pieces of poetry without causing the reader acute graphic indigestion? Can we do at least minimally palaeographically faithful while managing to be aesthetically innovative?

25 April 1983 final draft of
 Foundational Workbook for
 Advanced Membership in
 C. of C. Written out on Strathmore
 fairfield paper - ruled with
 horizontal, vertical and
 diagonal lines - Quill +
 Stick ink -

Jo White
 1848 Pinehurst
 St. Paul, Mn. 55116



Even in a straightforward rendering of the utmost simplicity there is a personal touch, but, in any deliberate departure from such simplicity, the scribe is intruding his own ideas. This he may rightly do if he keep to the terms of his safeguard: to be true to his letters, his pen and his author will actually help him to be true to himself.

Chose the quill for the final draft as the writing seemed to be under stress than when written with a pen.

Quill - Stick Ink

Forget this
 finished

Missed numbering line 5 - so rule up 18 lines only

Final ruled out on fairfield Strathmore Paper. Quill and stick ink.

price: Matted in 19x24" writing 8, 12x2 - Considered reducing each letter - because it is a cursive is so demanding. I have studied this work from (Jean) Res Charles Pearce - and any similarity is purely coincidental - *** Feet drawing in the 30° lines kept -

straightforward safeguard

this whole preparation with a review of 4 months of student form etc and of

Mitchell "O" Sumi Ink

wrote out the exercise daily till I nearly killed All the spirit and total liveness of the work - Perhaps wrote it 30 - 40 times - Am not sure that it is living now.

Prague Sumi Ink

straightforward

Much difficulty in remembering that some diagonal strokes SHIFTS to a 45° angle.

One works so long & diligently on an exercise (such as this) that you lose all objectivity towards your own mistakes - in the ability to recognize the good points - and a total lack of judgement as to when it is time to QUIT!!!

Even in a straightforward

Quill - Stick Ink

To recognize the good points - and a total lack of judgement as to when it is time to QUIT!!!

My particular bête noire (besides clients who want a job in a "few days," describe it as "real easy," don't provide typed copy, & don't want to pay what the job is worth) is the roman capital

M

The subtle and elusive three angles within the letter, the distribution of space between the legs and the central diagonals, have always made this a fearsome letter for me.

M, of course, is not an upside-down W. Dorothy

Mahoney use to call (α probably still does) that kind of shape "bat's ears":



Serifs are another problem, but less so, as they can vary according to the style of the letter, and the context into which it

falls— M M
M M

I do feel, however, that lead-in & lead-out serifs should be somewhat longer than retrograde ones: serifs of equal lengths give a

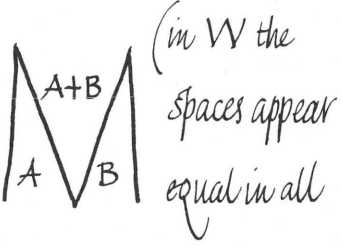
rather static look to a letter, while this slight exaggeration produces a more dynamic form:



For a long time I could only make an M by first making a V and propping it up:



adequate, but awkward. Studying roman inscriptions, I eventually was struck by how the space under the legs appeared to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ the area of the central space:



three triangles). This observation led me to consider how every stroke of a letter—any letter—determines the next stroke, & the next, etc. Like making a square, lettering/calligraphy/drawing is “merely” a way of dividing space. One thing led to another & now I find myself concerned with where the letter isn't as much as where it is.




R. WILLIAMS
5703 S. BLACKSTONE
CHIC. IL. 60637



An exploration of an Anglo-Saxon script - Old English square minuscule alphabet ca. 9th century. Thought it might be appropriate for an Edward Lear nonsense piece in a calligrapher's calendar.

The Quangle Wangle said

To himself on the Crumpetty tree,
Jam; and jelly; and bread;
Are the best food for me!

A check with my friend and scribal authority, Chaz Sartwell, showed that I'd taken quite a few liberties with the letter forms. Chaz is the only person I know whose regular cursive is based on this script.  So back to the drawing board.....

Allen -

Ɑ in Johnston's Pi abbreviation for BEI scribes, particularly abundantly (as well

The Quangle Wangle said

To himself on the Crumpetty tree,
Jam; and jelly; and bread;
Are the best food for me!

wen = w

High "e" common in 10 c.

Another version p looked very much like wen (p), so a dot was added to distinguish as 'y'.

Was this the letter symbol mistaken for a "y" causing the oft-used but erroneous "ye olde maision, etc...?"

But, in the end, I scuttled it because the design didn't fit the format.



Allen Q. Wong
1405 N.W. Vista Place
Corvallis, Oregon 97330



In terms of Chinese calligraphy, I feel as I am taking but the first steps of a thousand mile journey. It continues for me a humbling experience. So much to learn and so little time.

A SYMBOL OF WEDLOCK
using the surnames of the two
families in the Chinese chops
manner. The top characters are
as written in regular way.

李 顏



"DRAGON" in 4 Key Styles

龍

SEAL SCRIPT

龍

CLERICAL SCRIPT

龍

REGULAR SCRIPT

龍

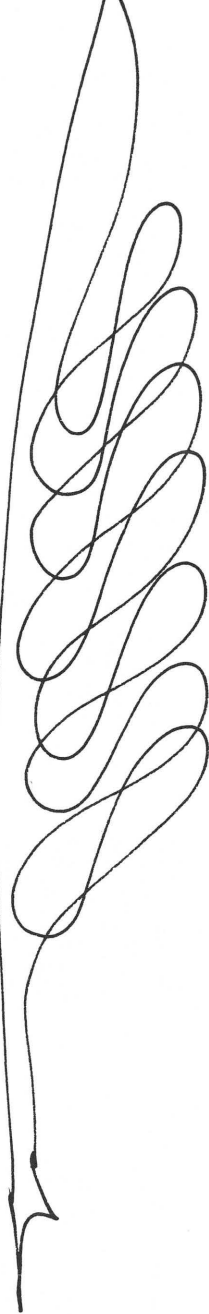
RUNNING SCRIPT

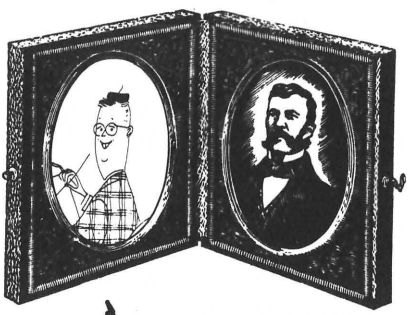
雲 只 言 松
深 在 師 下
不 此 採 問
知 山 藥 童
處 中 去 子

Beneath a pine tree I inquire of
a young disciple
Who says, 'My master is away
gathering herbs
Somewhere among the mountains.
But the clouds are thick and
I do not know the place.'

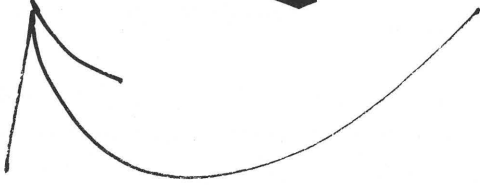
JIA DAO / TANG DYNASTY POET
Written for Patrick Wallis Burke

What I find most
challenging
is that old saw
Viva La Plume
with the many
variations that are
possible and how
difficult it
can be to get the
free flourishes...





James L. Wood
8032 West Third
Los Angeles California



Calligraphy

Thanks to great
Calligraphers
like Hermann Zapf
and Arnold Bank
and Donald Jackson
Viva La Plume swingers!

Ruminations Regarding tails of Rs & B

R is a delightful letter to write or draw when it has space to 'grow' freely, into a margin or between generously-spaced lines – especially when a certain amount of playfulness is warranted by the words & occasion. But on occasions when less space is available how easily it looks uncomfortable.

The junction of the tail and bowl seems to me the crucial point of its making and the size and form of the bowl largely condition what is pleasant in tail and the junction of the two.

When the letter needs to sit between the lines of the cap height many are the tribulations of getting it to exist happily with its neighbour on the right, especially those of a diagonal nature.

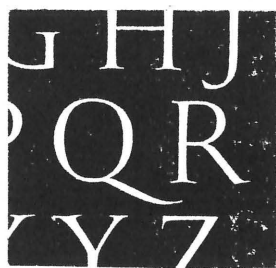
I have always felt happier with a double curve joining bowl and tail so that the letter seems an organic unit, not a tail tacked on, however subtle the join. So most of my Rs follow this pattern, though it does tend to increase the problem of controlling the following space a little.

- 1 Letters from a practice sheet: Versals
- 2 From a wood-engraved alphabet
- 3 A company logo (video sales)
- 4 Poem. Coloured inks/resist letters brush-written
- 5 Poster written with 'double' nib
- 6 Title of printed broadsheet
- 7 Printed diploma
- 8 Map of the world with decorative borders

1 P Q R r

1

& B P R



2

ReView

3



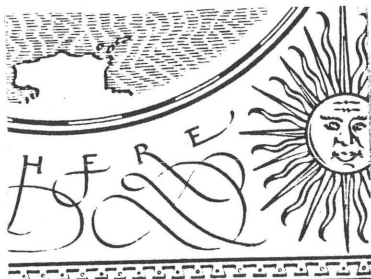
BRAMBLE
Weave an
Wind and
Lace

TATTERS
blossoms
EDGE ROSES

4

RY
TT

5



8

11-1120
ard

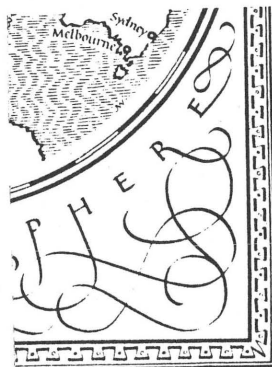
The Royal
of Success

(From William the Conqueror to Prince)

6

Royal Acci
of Ar

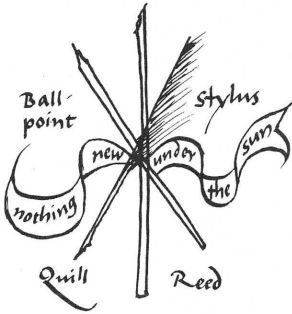
7



Some personal thoughts written on short notice, not based on statistics or careful research.

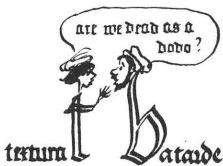


The phenomenal growth of calligraphic societies in the United States fascinates me at a time when penmanship is not taught in schools and the word processor is IN! In 1974 Donald Jackson advised a small group of New York calligraphers to help one another. Apparently the time was ripe as numerous societies flourished and grew - almost too fast. Often one strong personality with a gift for leadership and ideas, makes the difference. Societies collect dues, publish newsletters, hold workshop classes and exhibits, yet I know of none that owns its own rooms or library or slide collection. While a few private persons have outstanding collections of lettering books and Typography, there is no PUBLIC Graphic Arts Museum with access for the beginning student in the U.S. nor has anybody left funds for a calligraphic paradise (exceptions: San Francisco Public Library - and Congratulations to the Minnesota Colleagues of Calligraphy who are pioneering with a 'Manuscript Initiative' - hopefully others will follow with the idea!)



In Europe there is no equivalent of a U.S. Society - affluence is not the only reason for the American development, perhaps it is the democratic spirit of admitting anyone to membership.

In teaching, my favorite subject "The History of Writing from Cave Painting to Computer Alphabets," I notice that very few are interested in the past - it is considered a bore! My insistent refrain that 'there is nothing new under the sun, does not register. Most students want INSTANT calligraphy. Some start teaching after one course, others dream of exotic cultures: Chinese, Islamic, Hebrew, Cyrillic, but usually without comprehension of historic and linguistic





P An American contribution to punctuation: Martin Speckter's INTERROBANG

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backgrounds. Some want instant perfection but don't realize that 8-10 violin lessons do not result in a Carnegie Hall performance.

Now comes the amazing part: A HARVEST - a gradual outgrowth has begun to emerge out of all this searching: A young woman who designs excellent computer letters/ An art director for a bank who quilts like a medieval master/ A barman and bouncer who creates gothic and baroque pieces of great artistry/ A young man who is on his way to become a fine paleographer specializing in Roman Cursive and Celtic scripts/ A dynamic Lady who organized the first conference week of sharing and learning with 400 persons. (These annual calligraphic gatherings are closer to a winetasting, so many flavors of letters & design are offered at once.) Many gifted teachers have appeared to satisfy an enormous hunger for MORE knowledge. I am describing students who are not professionals - from housewife to grandmother, retiree, doctors etc. and I think they should always be ENCOURAGED!

Finally I proudly salute the Friends of Calligraphy, San Francisco, whose work will be exhibited at the Klingspor Museum, Offenbach, Germany, the town where Rudolf Koch taught. This is indeed a great compliment to American freshness, creativity and enthusiasm developing out of this movement!



CALLIGRAPHY FOR VIDEO

With video becoming more accessible you may get a chance to work with this exciting medium. Here are some basics:

ASPECT RATIO

The aspect ratio, or proportion, of a TV screen is 3 units high and 4 units wide. All your work for video must conform to that format for the best results.

LEAVE AMPLE MARGINS

Any writing that is close to the edge of the TV screen could become illegible or even cut off by some sets. Leaving a generous margin on all sides of your artwork is advisable.

DON'T WRITE ON WHITE

The video signal has trouble with white and reds. Use a colored or grey background, or white letters on a dark field, and use reds sparingly.

BE BOLD

TV is not the place for those hair-line strokes, they get lost in the electronics. Almost any lettering style can be adapted by making the thin strokes thicker.



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**SPACE
LETTERS
WIDELY**

Just as your thin strokes get thinner, your thicks will get thicker. Use generous spacing between letters or you will get some unplanned fusions.

**WORK
LARGE**

Small artwork when enlarged by the video camera will show every stroke, even the paper's surface. If that is not your purpose, work big, at least 7½ x 10 inches.

**KEEP IT
SIMPLE**

Due to the limited resolution of a video camera the amount of information on the screen at one time is also limited, usually to about nine or ten lines of copy.

**MURPHY'S
LAW**

If possible be present when your artwork is inserted into the program and bring your supplies. Studio time is precious and last minute changes may be needed.

After you are familiar with the basics you can begin to explore the possibilities of movement & editing. Have Fun!

This special issue deals with
calligraphy. The
guest editor, Gunnlaugur SE Briem, wrote
out incidental pages and
designed the cover

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Don't let the bastards get you down

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p
q r s t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 0

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