23rd Annual
Seminar on Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding

Wednesday, October 22, 2003
Registration at the Hyatt Regency Denver, Denver, Colorado: 7PM – 9PM

Thursday, October 23, 2003
Registration at Hyatt Regency Denver: 8:30AM – 11:00AM & 1:00PM – 4:30PM

Tours
Tour to Boulder (limited to 48): 9:30AM – 3:30PM
Denver book arts show/studio on your own: 1:00PM – 5:00PM

Foundation Sessions
Demonstration: Constructing a double tray drop spine box
Presented by Craig Jensen at the Hyatt Regency Denver: 9AM – 12 noon or 1PM – 4PM

Opening Reception for GBW Exhibition In Flight
Denver Public Library (15 minute walk or shuttles will run from hotel to Library): 5:30PM – 7:30PM
Dinner on your own

Vendor Room Hours
The Vendor Room will be open on Friday from 8:00AM through 5:00PM and 6:00PM – 6:45PM, and on Saturday from 8:00AM to 3:30PM

Friday, October 24, 2003
Registration: 7:30AM – 8:15AM
Coffee & Refreshments: 7:45AM – 8:45AM
Announcements: 8:30AM
MORNING SEMINAR SESSION: 8:45AM – 12 NOON
AFTERNOON SEMINAR SESSION: 1:30PM – 4:45PM
GBW Annual General Meeting: 5:00PM – 6:00PM
Friday Night Forum with light refreshments and cash bar: 6:15PM – 8:30PM
Dinner on your own

Saturday, October 25, 2003
Coffee & Refreshments: 7:45AM – 8:45AM
MORNING SEMINAR SESSION: 8:45AM – 12 NOON
AFTERNOON SEMINAR SESSION: 1:30PM – 4:45PM
Cash bar: 6:00PM
Banquet: 7:00PM
The banquet speaker is Joyce Meskis, owner of the Tattered Cover Bookstore
The Annual Live Auction directly follows the speaker

Sunday, October 26, 2003
Continental Breakfast: Hyatt Regency Denver: 8:30AM – 10:00AM
Symposium on Education in the Book Arts: 9:00AM – 12 NOON
Tour to local printing / book arts group: 1:00PM – 5:00PM
In Memoriam

On March 4 the world of fine binding lost one of its leading exponents with the passing of Hugo Peller.

The son of a Swiss masterbinder, Hugo followed in his father’s footsteps. From his beginnings as an apprentice from 1934-1938, he went on to study binding, finishing, and design with Professor A. Jeanne at the Ecole Estienne, Paris, from 1945-1946, completing his studies with honors.

From 1946-1967 he taught binding at the Fachgewerbeschule (specialized trade school) in Solthurn, and in 1978 he was a founding member of the Centro del Bel Libro. After retiring from the Centro del Bel Libro, Hugo made several trips to the United States in the mid-1980s to teach workshops for the Guild. It was while he taught at the Centro del Bel Libro and during these trips that Hugo influenced some of this countries best binders. Often honored for his design binding work he was elected a member of Meister der Einbandkunst in 1955.

While Hugo will always be remembered for his binding and teaching, what stands out are memories of his resourcefulness, sense of humor, and love of life. As a teacher, he set high expectations for his students’ work, and helped them rise to the challenge with encouragement and support. When a student had a problem or something was not working out the way it should have, he always had a (randomly numbered) trick at the ready, turning what could have been a disaster into a valuable learning opportunity. During his workshops he instinctively sized up the participants, identifying those who would do well and those who would need extra assistance. It should not be a surprise that many of Hugo’s students are among the best practitioners of the craft.

Once when he was given a collection of signatures to bind by a student, Hugo looked at the student and asked if he really wanted him to bind this book. The student said yes, and Hugo laughed, saying it would work out well. The student and Hugo worked on their designs together, the student learning about the relationship between text and design in the process. They bound their books together and when finished Hugo presented the student the binding he had done. Only later when showing the binding to some fellow students did he realize that the book was called Kisses, describing 19 of them in graphic detail. The student had never looked at the actual text. The design took on new significance for the student, especially Hugo’s choice of red for the binding. When asked by a student why her marbling worked so much better in Ascona than at home in Germany, Hugo responded that it was because of the warmer climate; that the water in Ascona was less wet. Whereupon the woman bought several bottles of water in Ascona to take home.

As much as Hugo loved his work and teaching, he loved the outdoors and sharing his world with his students. He would often bring his students to the Alps above Ascona, where they would enjoy food, grappa, and hikes. After Switzerland, Finland became Hugo’s second home, where he spent many months searching for solace and inspiration in the endless forests.

His epitaph reads: Fang nie an, aufzuhören, höre nie auf, anzufangen [Never start quitting, never stop beginning]. He will be missed.

[Special thanks to Sarah Creighton, Claudia Cohen, Monique Lallier, Todd Pattison, Deborah Wender, and others for sharing their memories of Hugo.]

Peter Verheyen

Publications

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Morte D’Arthur, Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Chatto & Windus, 1937. Facsimile of a manuscript “designed, written out, and illuminated” by Alberto Sangorski. Lacks cover. The book is bound in such a way that the