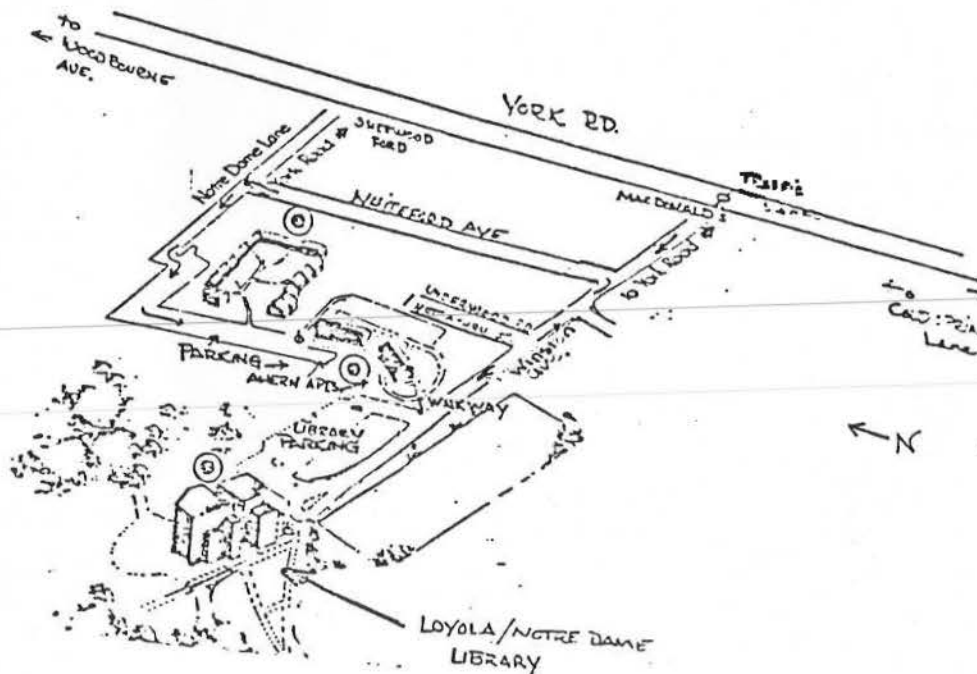


Baltimore Area Conservation Group

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BALTIMORE AREA CONSERVATION GROUP SUMMER MEETING: THE ART OF THE HYOGUSHI

The Loyola/Notre Dame Library will host the Baltimore Area Conservation Group's summer meeting on July 29, 1986 at 7:30 p.m. The Art of the Hyogushi is a 45-minute color film made by the Freer Gallery of Art, which features the restoration of Oriental paintings on paper and silk. The processes demonstrated in the film include cutting the paintings from their old mounts, washing, drying, reinforcing cracks, filling holes, applying backing papers, retouching, and constructing new supports.



NEW MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Abigail Quandt, Conservator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Walters Art Gallery, has accepted the position of Member-at-Large on the BACG's Executive Committee for 1986. Ms. Quandt is replacing Anita Prewitt, who recently moved to Austin, Texas.

Vol II 1985
no. 2

RETAINING THE ORIGINAL

The Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in cooperation with the Department of the History of Art at the Johns Hopkins University sponsored a two-day symposium on "Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions." The symposium was held in the lecture hall at the West Building of the National Gallery of Art on March 8-9, 1985.

Ten papers were presented by speakers from colleges and universities from various states as well as from Canada and Great Britain. The main topic was: Is it possible to determine whether a copy of an original can become so meaningful that it will stand as an original itself for any further reproductions. As one of the speakers, Brunilde Ridgway from Bryn Mawr College, stated: "Implicit in the definition of copy is the definition of original, a facet of which is the understanding of the role played by the artist--whether painter, sculptor or architect--in the creation of the work being copied, as well as the role of the copyist vis-a-vis the original maker."

Presented papers and the discussion which followed did not lead to any conclusions. The problem in terminology and definitions of terms seemed to be the most complex and complicated. I think we might expect in the near future other participating centers to pick up the subject for its further investigation.

Joanna H. Mankowski

BAGG MEMBER PETER VERHEYEN'S EXPERIENCES AT THE GERMANIC NATIONAL MUSEUM

Last fall, I had the privilege of having an internship for three months under the tutelage of Georg Reinwald in the bindery of the Germanic National Museum in Nurnberg, West Germany. This bindery was responsible for the preservation and maintenance of a significant collection of bindings from all time periods, with a special emphasis on medieval manuscripts. The centerpiece of this collection is the Codex Aureus Epternacensis, an elaborate illuminated manuscript dating back to 1030. It is this and other contemporary pieces that the bindery faces from across an open courtyard providing an inspirational vista.

My first impression when I arrived there was that everything proceeded at a much more relaxed pace, and with a great deal of effort. Everything was done manually, from the shaping of the back to the lettering. In my first days, I was given a tedious task of repairing and restoring an 18th century book which had been heavily water-damaged through about 15 signatures and which was in such a state of decay that the pages were literally crumbling. Doing this apparently tempered my zeal sufficiently and instilled me with patience, which is reflected in later works I completed.

While quality of work and solidity of materials was of prime importance, esthetics did not take a back seat. Headbands were replaced with identical copies, paste or marbled papers were made to suit a particular book, leather work or the like was carefully restored. Wheat pastes and hot animal glues were used for all work on the books themselves, while PVA (polyvinyl acetate) was used for such things as boxes or slipcases.

In the course of my internship, I learned to repair signatures and pages, sew signatures by different techniques, sew different styles of headbands, work with leather, make boxes and different kinds of marbled and paste papers.

The purpose of my trip was to help me define my career plans more fully and to help me arrange contacts which have given me the opportunity to apply for apprenticeships in Germany. Early in May I will be returning to Germany for two weeks for interviews and hopefully able to finalize plans for an apprenticeship.

Peter Verheyen

CONSERVATION AT THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY

On Wednesday, February 27, the Baltimore Area Conservation Group, together with the Washington-Baltimore Chapter of the Women's National Book Association and the Washington Conservation Guild, cosponsored a tour of the Folger Shakespeare Library's Conservation Laboratory. Frank Mowery, Chief Conservator at the Folger, gave a slide presentation and conducted a tour of the facilities.

The Folger Library is renowned for its collection of Shakespeare's First Folios of 1623; subsequent folios; Shakespeare source material and Shakespeariana. The scope of the collection includes materials published between the 15th and 18th centuries. The library is used by an average of 40 scholars per day, qualifying it as a truly working collection.

Frank Mowery has been chief of the conservation lab for the last eight years. After high school Mowery went to work with Obermeister Kurt Lundenburg in Hamburg. He was involved with restoration work in the German National Library for four years. He moved on to work with Otto Lichter in Vienna, and finally studied at the National Library in Florence before taking his post at the Folger Library.

Mr. Mowery says that it is the responsibility of the conservator to know binding styles appropriate to specific times, authors, geographical areas, and works, as well as the correct ornamentation required in each case. He also points out that structure is more important than covering or ornamentation. His perspective is that books were made quite well during the fifteenth century, and that loss of part of the spine covering does not require rebinding the work.

However, when works do require repair, Frank Mowery has a good facility at his disposal. As with all conservation work, he is concerned with maintaining the original state or integrity of the work, and in using materials and processes which are reversible. Many of his repairs are light, requiring a limp paper case binding which is inexpensively made from handmade paper produced by Timothy Barrett. Such a binding is historically compatible with many works as it was fairly typical among Italian bookbinders of the 17th century.

One of the most intriguing pieces of equipment in the laboratory is the leaf-caster which Mr. Mowery created for the Folger Library. The leaf-caster uses a deionized and recalcified water system which removes old adhesives and by-products, deacidifies the paper, and permits gentle paper repairs if desired. But it is most useful in making major paper repairs when large portions of manuscript or printed page are missing entirely. In the leaf-caster the paper is