

# Alphabetical order

canberra  
CALLIGRAPHY  
society



Newsletter 160 - February 2009

The stillness;  
a bird  
walking  
on the fallen  
leaves:  
the sound  
of it.

SHIZUKASA YA  
OCHIBA WO ARIKU  
TORI NO OTO

Ryûshi



SLEEP FAT  
AND WALK THIN.

CATS WHEN THEY  
SLEEP, SLUMP;

WHEN THEY WAKE,  
PULL IN -

AND WHERE THE  
PLUMP'S BEEN

THERE'S SKIN.  
CATS WALK THIN



ROSALIE MOORE

# For your diary

Sunday 22nd February 1:30 — 4:30 <b>Negotiating the Nuances of Neuland script</b> Angela Hillier
27th February — 1st March <b>Royal Canberra Show</b> Canberra Show Grounds
Sat — Sun 21st, 22nd March 9.30 - 4.30 Sat, 11 - 5 Sun <b>Pilot Parallel Pens and Pointed Gothic</b> Elaine Witton
Sunday 26th April 1:30 — 4:30 <b>Celtic spirals</b> Jill Robertson
Sat — Sun 23rd, 24th May 9:30 — 4:30 <b>Paper Sculptures</b> Dave Wood
Sunday 28th June 1:30—4:30 <b>Calligraphic Panels</b> Pam Kemp

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## Thank you to:

Wrap writer: Chris Matthews

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Cover: Birds and Cats by Karen Woodhall.

*If you would like to receive this newsletter in PDF format and are not yet doing so, please email James Hislop, and let him know at jameshislop@ieee.org*

# President's Report

Dear Calligraphy Friends,

I hope you have had a good break over summer, and are ready to come back to workshops and other activities with the Society.

Some of us have had the privilege to go to Parliament House with Gemma and look at the Prime Minister's Apology speech that she wrote out last year. It is in pride of place in the hall with the Magna Carta, the (facsimile) declaration by Queen Victoria on the federation of Australia, and the claim by Aboriginal people for recognition that resulted in the referendum of 1967. There is nothing like seeing the real thing to appreciate the calligraphy and the wonderful colours and skill in the decorations. Do put it on your list of 'must see' places when you visit Parliament House.



The committee has been busy getting our workshops planned for the year and we are very pleased to be able to announce them in this issue of Alphabetical Order. As you will see we have a rich program with several visiting tutors. Elaine Witton and Lexie Arlington are coming from Sydney, Dave Wood is coming from Queensland for us in May, and in October we hope to have Charles Pearce from USA with us. His timetable is still to be confirmed but as he is definitely coming to Australia we hope to confirm time with him. Then our own Gemma Black is running a day for us in November. By the end of this year there should be no excuses for lack of inspiration and improvement in our skills!!

We do need everyone to remember to renew their membership at the moment. Things are getting underway again but our renewal rate is not all that fast. If you suddenly think you may not have sent in your form and money to Maureen, please check that and send it in. Our Society only exists if our membership is healthy.

As well as workshops we are also involved in demonstrating at the **Royal Canberra Show** from February 27 - March 1. Do go along and see the calligraphy section of the Show and say hello to our demonstrators. We will also be demonstrating in **Seniors' Week** on Thursday March 19th at the Bus Depot Markets.

I am looking forward to being with you all again at the workshops and hope you will support us by being at as many as you can too.

**Jill Robertson**

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In our thoughts.....

Please send your special thoughts to our very beautiful friend Beb Bartholomew who is struggling with esophageal cancer at present. Beb is in Clare Holland House.



Eckersley's **BRADDON** store offers a 10% discount to members of CCS on presentation of your current membership card.  
*42 Mort Street, Braddon*

Phone: (02) 6257 1711 [www.eckersleys.com.au](http://www.eckersleys.com.au)

# The Carolingian Story

Jill Robertson

Carl the Great, or Charlemagne was born in April 747 and died in January 814. He became the king of the Franks in 768 and ruled the greater part of western Europe for 46 years. On Christmas Day 800 he was also made Holy Roman Emperor - a position that hadn't existed for several hundred years. In his reign he brought about greater peace and unity than had been experienced since the fall of the Roman empire, some 300 years earlier.

Charlemagne himself was never completely literate but the story goes:

*He also tried to write, and used to keep tablets and blanks in bed under his pillow, that at leisure hours he might accustom his hand to form the letters; however, as he did not begin his efforts in due season, but late in life, they met with ill success.*

Among many other vitally important reforms, he recognised the need to bring some order out of the chaos into which the writing styles of the time had fallen. Many national styles had developed in isolation, with errors remaining uncorrected and lazy characteristics becoming entrenched to such an extent that legibility was severely hampered.

Charlemagne brought together many learned people of the time, including Alcuin of York, and gave them the task of developing a uniform, legible writing style. It was the style now known as Carolingian that emerged as being suitable to declare the national hand.

In 789 Charlemagne decreed that all works of law, literature, science, history and religion be rewritten in this standard hand.

Carolingian letters were the first to have definite ascenders and descenders, having evolved from the insular hand. To allow for these, greater spacing between the lines was necessary and this in itself improved legibility.

During the renaissance, scribes were looking back for a classical Roman minuscule - which never existed - and they found the Carolingian minuscule. They then adopted and adapted that for the humanist hand of the

14th and 15th centuries, which was when printing was becoming common. Thus, the Carolingian hand also became the base from which we get our present minuscule letters, and as such has an extremely important place in the history of writing. This page of **Centaur font** is a direct descendant of Carolingian!

As this script lasted for up to 4 centuries, there were many variation in its style. Some scripts have an x height of 2 nib widths and others up to 4nw or 5nw.

My exemplar is in 2 nib widths, but feel free to experiment yourself.

Cum esset desponsata  
mater eius maria  
ioseph. antequam  
conuenirent inuenta  
ē. in utero habens

Gospel of Lothair

Quidā eius libros nō ipsius esse sed Dionysii & Zophiri colophoniorū tradunt: qui iocādi causa cōscribentes ei ut difponere idoneo dederunt. Fuerunt autē Menippi sex. Prius qui de lydis scripsit: Xanthūq; breuiauit. Secūsus hic ipse. Tertius stratonicus sophista. Quartus sculptor. Quintus & sextus pictores: utrosq; memorat apollo dorus. Cynici autem uolumina tredecī sunt. Neniæ: testamta: epistolæ cōpositæ ex deorum p̄sona ad phisicos & mathematicos grāmaticosq; & epicuri fœtus: & eas quæ ab ip̄s luntur imagines: & alia.

eius

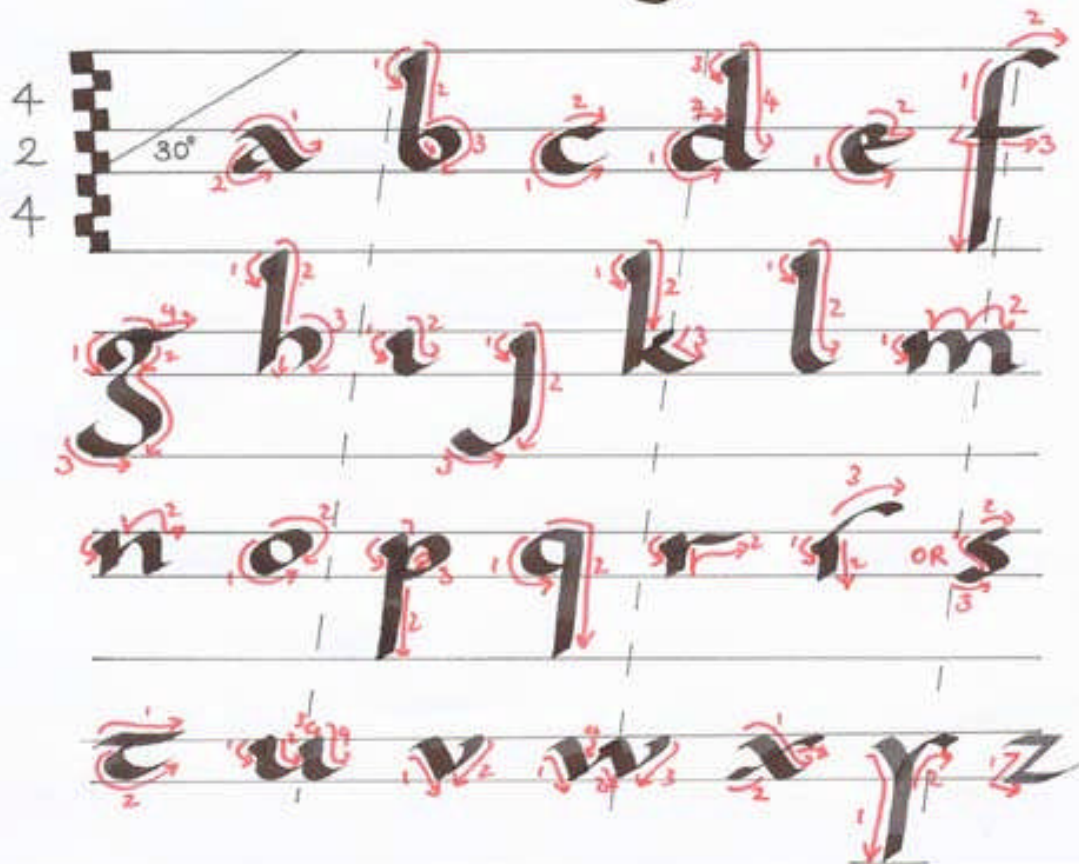
above- Nicolas Jenson type, circa 1475

# centaur

a Humanist-inspired type designed by Bruce Rogers and based on Nicholas Jenson's roman type.

# carolingian

8th - 12th centuries



This script was developed by Alcuin of York in Tours in the late 8th century. Carolingian became the model for the humanist script & later typescript.

Jill Robertson 2008

# 2009 Workshops

Your committee is pleased to let you know that we have completed a program of workshops for 2009!

All workshops are on the **fourth Sunday of the month** from **1.30pm – 4.30pm** unless otherwise stated. Go to Urambi Village Community Hall, (Entrance B) Crozier Circuit, Kambah.

*The cost for these workshops is \$10 each, with an occasional extra charge for special materials provided by a tutor or when we have a visiting tutor.*

Bookings are to be made in advance either at a preceding workshop or by ringing Christine Wilde on 6231 9922 or by email at [cm.wilde@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cm.wilde@bigpond.net.au)

**NEULAND**  
*the NUANCES of*

FEBRUARY 22 UVH

1.30pm - 4.30pm

**Tutor - Angela Hillier**

In the Neuland workshop the basic letter forms will be identified and then used to make a colourful piece (or two!) by interlinking and overlapping the letters.

**NB - change of times and venue**

**March 21 - 22**  
Sat 9.30 - 4.30 Sun 11.00 - 5.00

*Parallel Pens  
Pointed Gothic*

Tutor - Elaine Witton  
Cost \$100 for the weekend

*NB We will be running this workshop at  
Weston Creek Community Centre  
- details will be sent to those enrolled*

 **Celtic Spirals**

**April 26th** 1.30 - 4.30  
Tutor - Jill Robertson

Do you know the name of this shape and what it signifies? Come and learn some of the history of Celtic spirals and how to draw and decorate them for yourself. Easy when you know how!

**Sat/Sun May 23 - 24**  
A two day workshop on  
**Paper Sculpture**  
with **Dave Wood**

Dave is coming down from Queensland to bring us this workshop. He has a world-wide reputation for his unique paper sculptures and we have the chance to have a go ourselves.

Cost: \$100 for the weekend



**28 June**  
1.30 - 4.30

**Tutor - Pam Kemp**

An exciting way to get layering of calligraphy working for you.

An exciting way to get layering of calligraphy working for you.

panels panels

**26 July**  
1.30 - 4.30

*Copperplate*

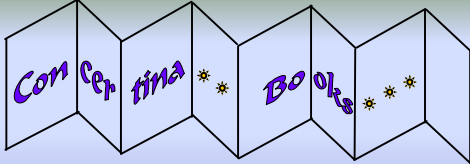
*Tutor - Marg Peachey*

*Come and learn or fine-tune your copperplate hand with Marg. Always a popular script to tackle.*

**23 August**

**AGM**

Lunch provided at 1pm  
AGM meeting at 1.30



workshop with Angela at 2pm

**27 September**  
full day - 9.30 - 4.30

**Tutor - Lexie Arlington**

**Cnut Charter Hand**

Lexie will be coming from Sydney to teach this 11th century hand and its modernisation for 21st century use.

Cost - \$50 for the day



**24 - 25 October**

*Put this whole weekend in your diary as we are hopeful that international calligrapher*

**CHARLES PEARCE**

*will be giving us a weekend workshop. Dates are not confirmed at the time of printing this newsletter.*

*For more information on Charles, go to*  
[www.charlespearce.com](http://www.charlespearce.com)  
or [www.whiskeyspring.com](http://www.whiskeyspring.com)

**Saturday November 21**  
9.30 - 4.30

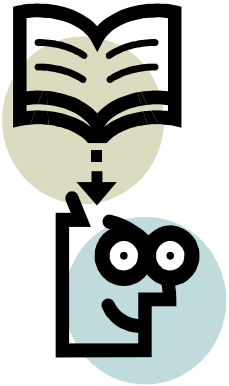
Tutor - Gemma Black

**Ampersands etc.**



The fascinating story of the contraction of words into symbols.

# NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY



## BOOKS

***Graphic designers & copyright : a practical guide*** is a recent publication of the Australian Copyright Council. Chapter headings are: Copyright in your designs; Using other people's work; Dealing with clients; Promoting your work; and, If things go wrong. As you can see, it is aimed at those who do work on commission, not just calligraphers, & the implications of who owns copyright in the finished work. It is very easy to read, & I am sure will help some of you with those troublesome copyright problems.

## NEWSLETTERS

***Colophon*** has a lengthy article on the German typographer & calligrapher Hermann Zapf, who recently celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was responsible for the typefaces Optima, Palatino, Zapf Chancery, Hunt Roman, Zapfino, & many others. The profiled calligrapher is Susan Bradshaw from Queensland, whose interests are traditional illumination & Copperplate. There is a review of Coffs Calligraphers' exhibition *Expressive lines*, & also of Southscribes (Sydney) exhibition *Inkspiration*. In fact, every article in this issue deserves a mention!

**Penny Price's workshops** are reviewed in ***Colophon & Dancing pen***.

***The newsletter from Calligraphers of Kapiti (NZ)*** has the first in a series of articles by a calligrapher on the techniques & practicalities of designing a computer font.

***The newsletter from Calligraphy Society of New Zealand*** has a helpful report on a workshop *Fantastic filigree*, with some useful examples. It also reprints a Wikipedia entry on *History of Western typography*, which you may wish to check out online.

***Postscript (Vic.)*** shows us how to sharpen a nib, together with clear diagrams. Calligraphy entries in the Royal Melbourne Show are also featured.

***Tasmanian pen craft*** has an article on miniature books – defined as a book not exceeding 76 mm. in either height or width. The National Library has a collection of these in the Rare Books Section, if anyone is interested.

All these will be on display for you to see at our monthly workshops. And remember – you can borrow a folder of any newsletter, or any book for just \$1. All loans are for one month, so just return it at the next Workshop! Just see me (or a Committee Member if I am unavailable) to borrow.

That's all for now.  
Penny Sohier

Have you remembered to renew your membership of the Society yet? If not, please send in your details and money to our treasurer at the address on the inside cover of this newsletter.



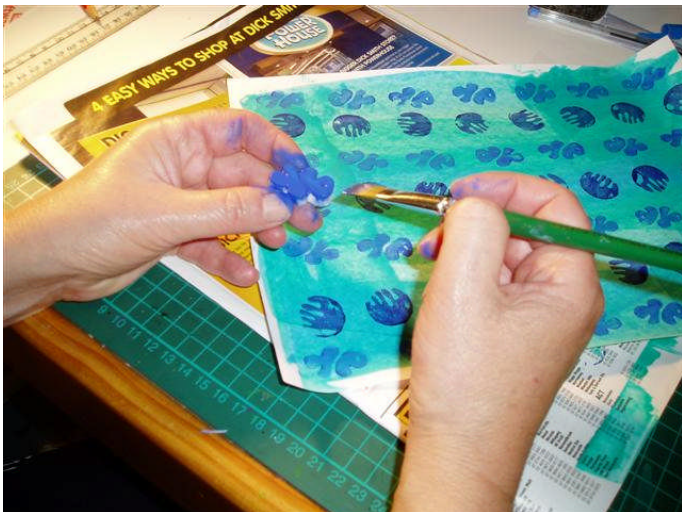
# PASTE PAPERS AND CARVED STAMPS

Making instant paste papers and carved eraser stamps

It isn't necessary to spend a lot of time and preparation making paste papers. They can be made simply and easily, on a smaller scale, using a few tools and ingredients.

Mix equal amounts of glue and acrylic paint to make your paste. PVA glue makes a nice smooth surface, and clag paste makes for a grainier look.

Acrylic paint is cheap to buy, in craft sized bottles, in bargain stores – and comes in a range



of colours. Mixing the paint with glue stretches it further too, making it even more economical.

Place blobs of the paint and glue mix on the edge of an A4 piece of paper, and drag it along the surface with an old credit card. If you have used several colours, they will blend together, as you go. You can cover the whole surface this way, or leave interesting contrasting white areas, which you can use to write on later.

The papers dry quickly, and if they are stored a few at a time, in plastic sheet protectors, don't really need to be pressed flat.

The next step is to make a stamp, to decorate

your papers further. Any plastic eraser will do, and can be carved easily with a Stanley knife. For better control, and for fine detail, a lino cutting tool is perfect. Use the smallest V-gouge (Speedball No. 1) and practice making straight and wavy lines on an old eraser. Anyone who has struggled with carving a linoprint, will find the ease of cutting into vinyl a delight!

When you are ready, draw a simple abstract shape on your eraser, and carve it out. Make your first print on scrap paper. The image will look rough, but you can refine it further. Experiment, cut more bits out...you can always make another stamp quickly, if you ruin that one.

For a clear cut image, apply full strength acrylic paint to your stamp with a paintbrush. If you would prefer a blurrier image, just dip the stamp into your paint and glue mixture and print.



To prevent your paint and glue mixture from drying out too quickly, you can make a wet palette. Wrap baking paper (the non-coated, non-waxed kind) around a flat wet kitchen sponge. Place on a plastic or Styrofoam tray. Make sure the paper is dampened, and add paint. The evaporation from the sponge will keep the paint moist for a while.

*Paste papers continued from page 9.....*

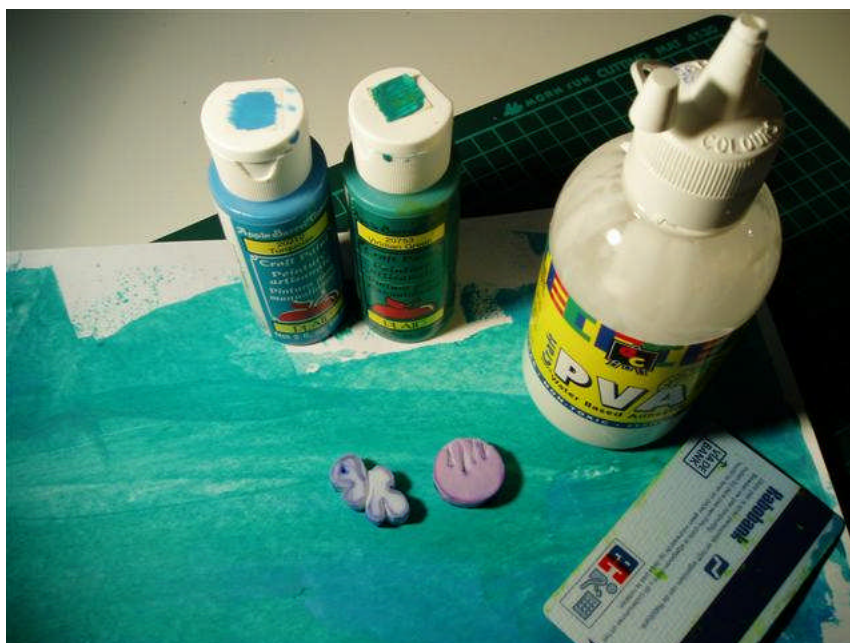
Have fun stamping all over your paste paper. If the decoration becomes too busy, you can apply a glaze of white or yellow paint/glue mix to the sheet. Just drag the mixture over the surface, and the stamped images will show through partially. This can have the effect of unifying the design, toning down intense colours, and can also produce an interesting depth...with images appearing between layers of paint.

Even the "busiest" paste paper looks really good cut into strips, or geometric shapes, and used to decorate a card.



Look on the internet and in the public library for ideas, for abstract designs and new ideas for stamps. An excellent book about creating painted surfaces on paper is "Painted Paper Techniques and projects for handmade books and cards" By Alisa Golden.

Karen Woodhall



## The Society Web Site

Most of you would know that the society has a web site on the internet at [www.canberracalligraphysociety.org.au](http://www.canberracalligraphysociety.org.au).

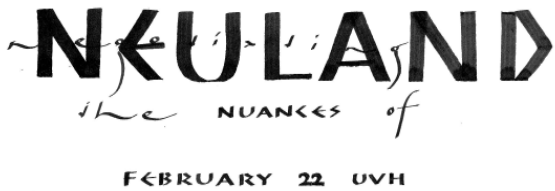
It contains details of upcoming workshops, cover pages of newsletters, and some of the better examples of our work. The web site is managed by myself, James Hislop, the newsletter editor. It is interesting to note that the examples of our works on the gallery pages came from just five people. Membership of the society is not huge, but I know it's more than five.

If any of you have some works that you think are worthy of publicity on the web site and are wondering how to publish them, the answer is simple: either scan the piece or bring it to the next workshop and Jill Robertson or I will photograph it. Give me the photograph in electronic format and I will do the rest.

If the work requires copyright permission, that is your responsibility to obtain. You can find an example of copyright permission on the second gallery page of the web site on my piece "Ophelia". Permission for this work was recently provided to me by the author, Natalie Merchant, after I contacted her via her web site.

# Requirements for workshops

## Usual Calligraphy Gear



### You will need:

- your usual calligraphy gear,
- any new or unusual items.
- 2x2B pencils, taped together,
- watercolour pencils,
- lots of practise paper
- a couple of sheet of better paper, e.g. Canson white/coloured, smooth watercolour paper etc.
- scissors and a glue stick

When we say “usual calligraphy gear” it means something like the following:

- **A pad of A3 Bond paper** - (a paper that will take ink is what you need)
- **4 broad edge dip nibs** - say Speedball C series in sizes 0, 1, 2, 3 or other nibs if you have them already - Mitchell or Osmiroid nibs are fine.
- **a 2B pencil** - the propelling pencil types are best
- **an eraser,**
- **a 40cm ruler**
- **a bottle of non-waterproof black ink** - Pelikan 4001, or Japanese ink with a blue lid
- **a medium size glass jar**
- **some rags or old towelling or tissues**
- **an old toothbrush** - for cleaning nibs
- **masking tape, blu-tak**
- **a drawing board** - approx 450mm x 600mm (doesn't have to be fancy - off cuts from hardware store are fine and can be covered in calico)

*The things you need to buy are available at Eckersley's - see ad on page 3.*

**Saturday & Sunday**

**March 21 & 22**

**PARALLEL PENS – AN EXCITING INVENTION!**

**Tutor - Elaine Witton - from Sydney**



Come and be creative with parallel pens at this workshop. Parallel pens have all the fine nib definitions of a dip pen with the advantages of its use as a fountain pen, and also allow you to easily create fine hairlines. After experimenting on the first day, where we will also trial its use with different mediums - inks, gouache and watercolour, on the second day will use a Parallel pen to explore a Pointed Gothic script.

### You will need:

- Your usual calligraphy gear - incl old toothbrush
- any **Pilot Parallel Pens** you have, but these will be available for sale on the day
- inks, watercolours, gouaches - whatever you have, don't buy anything new.
- empty cartridges
- the bits that come with the PPP - small black plastic film nib cleaner, converters, etc.
- eye dropper
- pad of Bleedproof paper

# CALLIGRAPHY CLASSES

## The Illuminated Letter

This course by Gemma Black will cover all aspects of the illuminated letter and medieval illustration with practical application. An illustrated lecture will cover illumination in certain time periods and a variety of styles down through the centuries with a fascinating look at ornamentation, decoration and of course gilded manuscript treasures.

The course will be a step by step approach to the art of illuminated letters in the traditional manner and will be suitable to all skill levels. We will gild with 23ct gold on a gum ammoniac size, transparent colour layering, plus filigree and foliage painting. Learn techniques dating back to the medieval period. Participants will work at least one very fine and intricate illuminated letter that will be treasured for many years to come. As well as prepare and create a medieval bestiary miniature using the same techniques.

Participants will be introduced to, and experiment with, tools such as quills, metal nibs, brushes, sizes, different golds, walnut ink, gouache and water colour, and also experiment with medieval diaper and pattern making. A variety of supports will be discussed including paper and vellum, and detailed note taking in an artist journal.

This is an all encompassing and enlightening course concentrating on practical application of medieval painting, gilding, tools, materials and supports. Each participant will take away with them at least one, if not more treasured family heirlooms.

To enrol go to: <http://www.anu.edu.au/cce/vaacourses/painting.php#calligraphy>

12 weeks starting Tuesday March 3rd (two week break April 14 & 23)



**Just announced Calligraphy & Kells** in Wagga Wagga April 23 to 26, a four day workshop by Gemma Black.

Learning from past masterpieces such as the Irish Book of Kells makes for an exciting way to understand the workings of early medieval manuscripts. Enjoy this beautiful calligraphic hand using it to move forward and create visually stunning contemporary pieces in an atmosphere of learning and enjoyment.

To enrol go to: <http://www.mscawagga.com/>

