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Alphabetical ARTIST

canberra
CALLIGRAPHY
society 

Z 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 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N

~ newsletter no 184 ~
february 2013



photos from February's Rhythm, Sound, and Writing workshop by Massimo Polello



FOR YOUR
diary

Workshop: Making Quills (see p12)

led by Alison Lawrence

2 March 10am-2pm

@ Crossfolds, Goulburn

alisoncallig@bigpond.com

Workshop: Scripts from Nature

led by Angela Hillier

Sun 24 March 1:30pm

@ Urambi Village Hall

Community Centre, **Entry B**

81 Crozier Circuit, Kambah

\$10/\$15 members/nonmembers

+ gold coin donation for supplies

Workshop: Contextart Forum

led by Gemma Black

14-20 April

@ Faulconbridge, Blue Mountains

<http://tafta.org.au/contextart/>

Workshop: Character Building

led by Jill Robertson

Sun 28 April 1:30pm

@ Urambi Village Hall

Community Centre, **Entry B**

81 Crozier Circuit, Kambah

\$10/\$15 members/nonmembers

Workshop: Mod Blackletter Texture

led by Christine Wilde

Sun 26 May 1:30pm

@ Urambi Village Hall

Community Centre, **Entry B**

81 Crozier Circuit, Kambah

\$10/\$15 members/nonmembers

:calligraphy classes around town:

with Angela Hillier @ Lake Ginnindera College

<http://www.lakenitelearning.com.au/>

with Pam Kemp @ Erindale College

<http://www.erindalecep.com.au/>

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FOR
'12-'13

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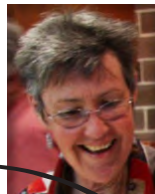
The Secretary CCS
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ACT 2614
Australia

Inspirational Snippet:

The person who inherited the late Anne Seaver's calligraphy gear was inspired by her work and is now attending beginners calligraphy classes.

This newsletter is typeset in Arno Pro. Headings were hand-calligraphed by Sara Rawlinson.

notes FROM THE President AND editor



Marg Peachey



Sara Rawlinson

Dear Calligraphic Colleagues,

Happy New Year to you all. Now Christmas, tennis, and holidays are over and we can get back to some serious calligraphy.

The program for this year is full and exciting. Already one workshop is out of the way - Rhythm, Sound, and Writing led by Massimo Polello. From all accounts, it was very good. Please see more on pages 8-10 and check out his website at <http://www.lacalligrafia.com>

By the time you get this newsletter, the Canberra Show will also be over. Congratulations to everyone who exhibited, especially to those who won prizes, and many thanks to the demonstrators. It's always a fun time demonstrating at the show because people think we are soooo clever!! And all the children who go home with their name on a piece of card love it.

Yours in calligraphy,

Marg Peachey

Editor's Note

I have been bringing you the CCS calligraphic news for most of the last three years and am sad to report that this is my last issue. I have learned so much being your Editor - in both calligraphy and newsletter layout! - and will truly miss it. I'll be instead devoting my time to our baby girl (due in April) and to our move to Aberdeen Scotland in August. If you find yourself up that way, please do get in touch and say hello.

Please welcome in our new temporary Editors Marg Peachey & Jill Robertson. July's AGM will elect a new Editor. Please consider standing for it.

Thanks so much for letting me be of service to the CCS!!

Best wishes,
Sara Rawlinson

Please welcome our new members:

Christopher Deeble and Meryl Hickey
and welcome back to Margaret Vaughan

Thank yous:

wrap writers: Jill and Angela
headings: Sara



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



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As a beginner calligrapher, it can be difficult to decipher the list of required equipment that comes out for each workshop: really, what exactly does "the usual calligraphy gear" actually mean to someone who barely knows what calligraphy *is*! I was in exactly this state three years ago when, for my first workshop, I was told to bring the first 3 items on this list only. When I arrived at the workshop, our generous workshop coordinator gave me a few sheets of bond paper and let me use her Pilot Parallel Pens for the afternoon - which was a great way for me to start!!

Here, I've tried to explain a few of those 'required equipment' quandries. This little list is meant as a very general suggestion for the absolute beginner: please keep in mind that a person could do an entire PhD on how Brand X compares to Brand Y and, frankly, a lot of it comes down to personal preference. At the end of the day, it doesn't really matter if you buy Brand Y first and it turned out to be the road less traveled, because (a) it'll do the job just fine, and (b) you'll probably be buying Brand X three months later anyhow! If there is ever a specific brand of something required for a workshop, it will generally be provided by the tutor, or at least s/he will let you know how to obtain it.

AN OPEN MIND

Not much gets done without one!

PENCIL AND ERASER

We generally warm up with a quick pencil sketch, draw light outlines, and then want to later remove those lines. Any old pencil will work, but 2B is generally easy to erase. Gummy erasers are best (*any art shop*) as they are used to dab instead of rub. Black erasers (*'better' art shops*) are handy for black paper. I like Faber-Castell Kneadable and Factis Black.

OLD RAG OR TOWEL

Not only are we a friendly bunch, but we're a messy bunch too!

DRAWING BOARD

Most of us prefer to write at an angle rather than on a flat table. Some swear by covering the board in calico, others don't like it. The board should be slightly bigger than A3 - but only because we say A3 bond paper below! Smaller paper = smaller board. I use MDF board (*Bunnings*).

GENTLE ADHESIVE

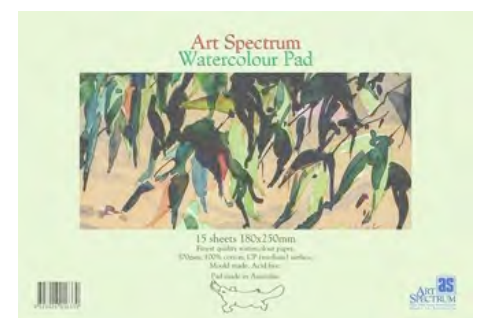
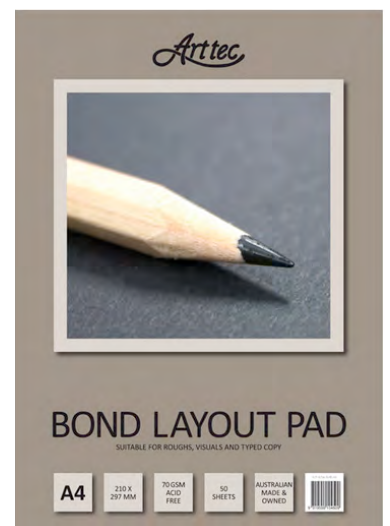
We like something else besides our elbows to hold the paper in place. Masking tape or blu-tak are both fine. I most recently purchased yellow-tak (*news agent*).

PAD OF A3 BOND PAPER

"Bond Paper" is a special type of paper that is both bleedproof and slightly transparent (*any art shop*). It's great for practicing because of its smooth surface and because we can see the ruled lines that we place underneath. Bond Paper itself is not required, as there are several others that also fit the bill. Careful of regular printer/photocopy paper as many inks bleed on it. I like the ArtTec "bond layout pad".

FEW PIECES OF GOOD QUALITY PAPER

Not only do we like to practice calligraphy (see Bond Paper, above), but we also like to do finished pieces of work for the fridge, our in-law's living room wall, or a gallery. There are thousands of kinds of paper that can be used for finished calligraphic work. We tend to prefer some type of "watercolor paper" (*any art shop*): it is designed so that most inks won't bleed and the surface is both smooth and tough enough to drag a sharp metal nib across it without damage. I like the Art Spectrum brand (*online or some art shops*) or Arches individual sheets (*most art shops*), although the latter tends to be a bit pricey.



SEVERAL BROAD EDGED DIP NIBS & HOLDERS

There are so many types of broad-edged nibs and holders, and a comprehensive description is far beyond the scope of this little article. Many beginners prefer Speedball C-Series (sizes C0, C1, C2, & C3 - in other words, the thicker ones) are recommended for the ultimate beginner. Calligraphy nibs are a specialty item and only tend to be available at larger or 'better' art shops. If you don't know where to get some in your neighborhood, please ask us because we'll likely have a suggestion of where to go. *I started with the full set of 9 Brause nibs, as they happened to be on sale.*

BOTTLE NON-WATERPROOF BLACK INK

We prefer non-waterproof ink as true-waterproof ink tends to clog the nibs and is quite difficult to clean. Brands of ink are as diverse as brands of paper or nibs and the specific brand is, generally, not important in the beginning. The ink should be runny and flow - with a consistency of something between (and including) water to milk. There are some named "calligraphic" inks or "drawing" inks, and these tend to work great. Japanese Sumi ink is popular for finished pieces. *I like Parker Quink (OfficeWorks) and Pelikan 4001 (pen shop). I also like working in turquoise rather than black most of the time: the colour really doesn't matter!*



SEVERAL COLOURS OF GOUACHE OR WATERCOLOR PAINT AND PALETTE OR MIXING CONTAINERS

Again, brand and colour as per your liking, as this is usually for your finished piece. *I like Winsor & Newton Designers Gouache (many art shops).*

MEDIUM SIZE GLASS JAR

We tend to rinse the ink off nibs immediately after use, so it's handy to have some water in a jar next to our workstation. *I use an old mustard jar.*



OLD TOOTHBRUSH

We clean the nibs at the end of each workshop. Soft bristles are best to not degrade the nib. If you forget yours, you get to ask the super-strange question: can I borrow your toothbrush? *I use a yellow-handled one.*

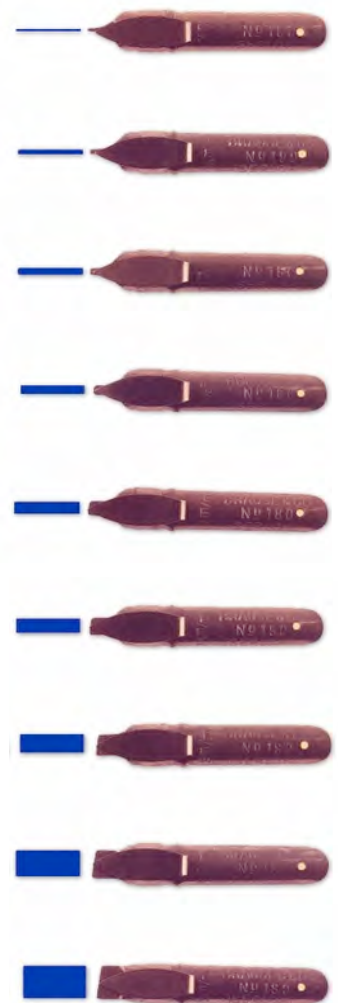
40-50 CM RULER

Metal rulers make good cutting edges and clear ones are handy for when you need to see what is going on underneath the ruler. The length is so that it will span an A3 page, but shorter will also do the job.

Pen holders: The angled, copperplate, or elbow holder attachment (left) fits onto the generic holder (middle left). My favourite holder has a bit of cork (middle right) because I tend to be heavy-handed (not ideal). Thicker/fatter holders (right) are popular with creaky knuckles.



full set of Brause Nibs



Speedball Nibs



2013 Workshops

shouldn't they be called funshops??

Workshops are on the **fourth Sunday of the month from 1:30-4:30 PM** *unless otherwise stated* and are located in the Urambi Village Community Hall (entrance B) on Crozier Circuit in Kambah.

The cost for each regular workshop is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. Extra charges may be incurred for special materials and for our visiting tutors.

Bookings should be made in advance either at a preceding workshop or by ringing or emailing Christine Wilde: 6231-9922 or cm.wilde@bigpond.net.au


SCRIPTS FROM NATURE
24 March
with Angela Hillier




@. Character Building

A fun afternoon of creating your own "letters" with easy instructions, and inspiration from all those around you.

April 28th: 1.30 - 4.30
Tutor: Jill Robertson



with Christine Wilde
26 May
Mod Blackletter Texture




practical
Flourishing
CALLIGRAPHIC

for Copperplate & Spencerian scripts

with Marg Peachey
23 June






**ACM
28 JULY**

12:30pm
Lunch (provided
by committee)


1:30pm
AGM

2pm - onwards
Ribbon Writing
with Christine Wilde


Julian Waters
in August




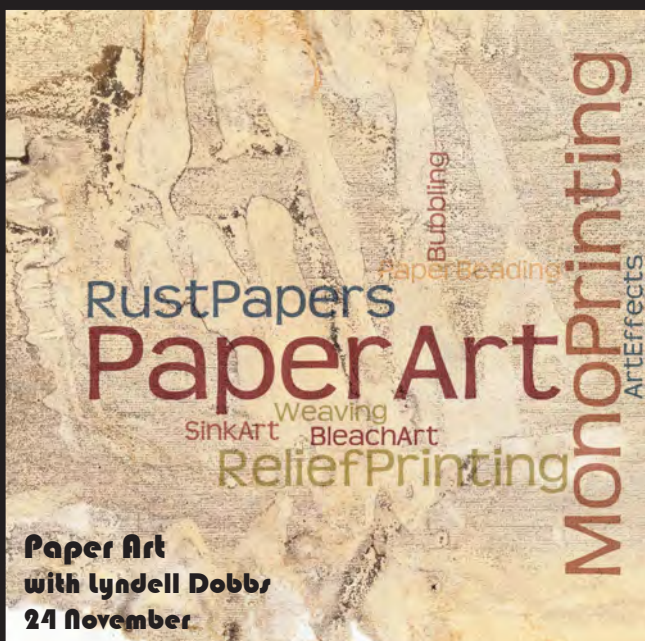
exact dates and prices TBA



Purely Pencils
with Gemma Black
21-22 Sept
exact times and extra charges TBA



Bring Back the Envelope
with Jenni Cole
27 October

Paper Art
with Lyndell Dobbs
24 November

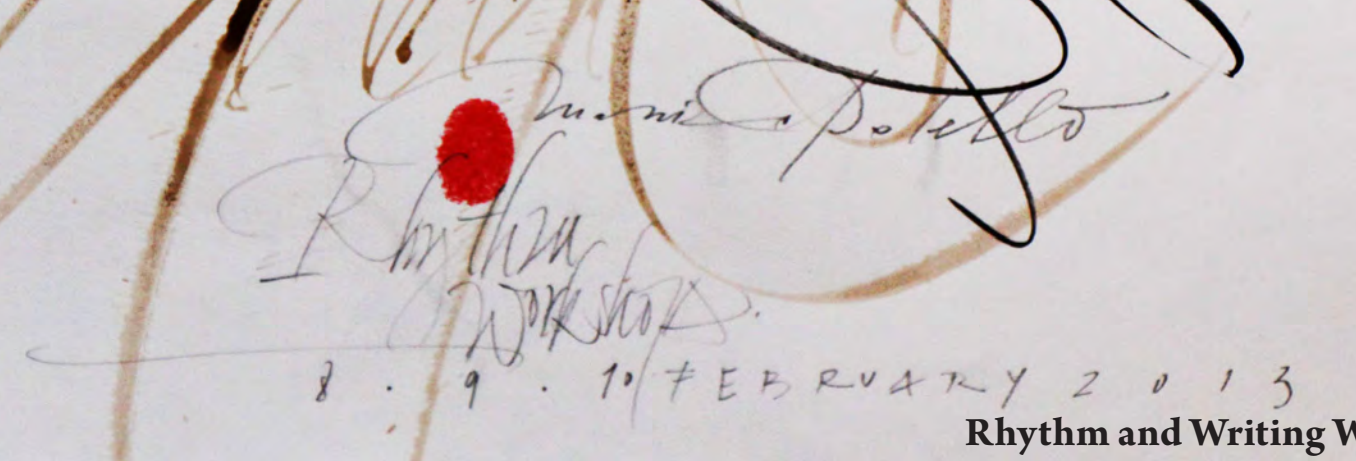
ReliefPrinting
BleachArt
Weaving
SinkArt
Bubbling
Paper Beading
MonoPrinting
ArtEffects
RustPapers

**Christmas
Lunch**

& Handmade Holiday Card Swap

7 December 12:30pm
suggestions for location are welcome





Rhythm and Writing Workshop

tutor: Massimo Polello

article authors: Cathy Sayer, Glenis Sheather, and Angela Hillier

DAY ONE

Firstly thank you to Massimo for travelling all the way from Turin, Italy to present this three day workshop to us. Secondly thank you to Christine and all, for organising such a great opportunity for all of us, and third, thank you to Canberra Calligraphy Society for making the out-of-staters so welcome as always.

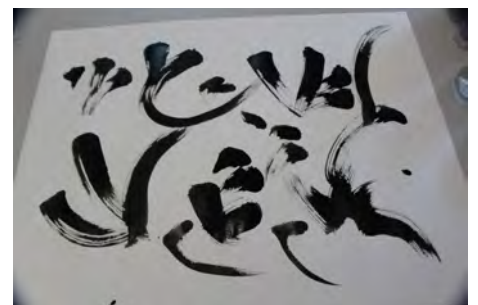
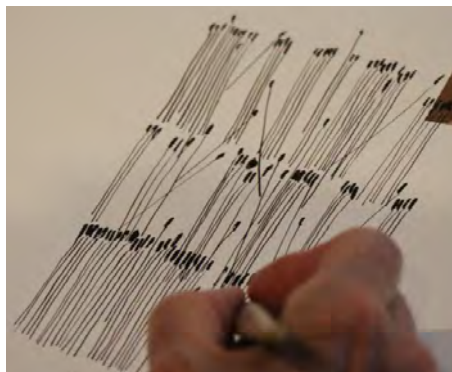
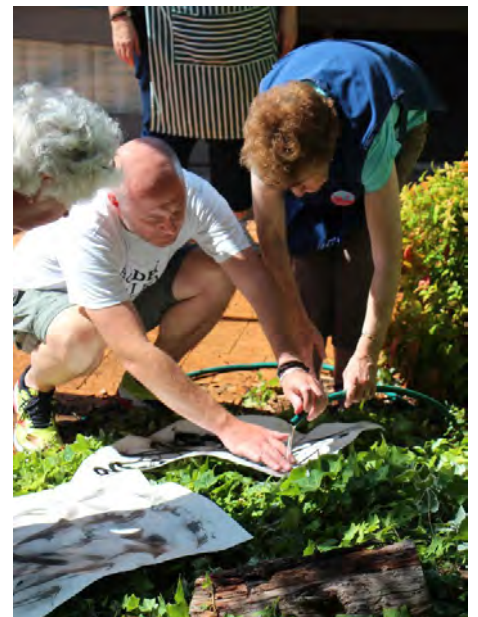
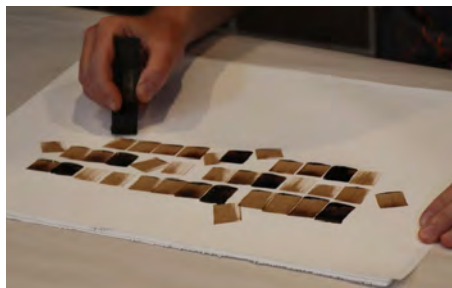
On such a hot day (predicted and reached 35C) it would have been easy to believe that it would be too hard to concentrate, but Massimo had our attention from the beginning.

The introduction began with: this workshop is not technical you cannot teach rhythm, it is in your soul. Rhythm is in all the arts! Scary but true, we thought and this looks like a trip outside of our comfort zone. We would obviously need to rethink any preconceptions we had brought with us (admit it: we all took a peek at Massimo's work on the net).

Massimo went on to explain that letters as we know them are geometry; the repetition of letters is less creative. We discover our rhythm by using different tools; by using these different tools, something unexpected happens and this is where it becomes interesting.

We watched Massimo display his rhythm (no written words just his rhythm with strokes) using different tools: balsa, sponge, brush and pen. Yes, we have it, when asked did we understand then it was off to do our first exercise – control your rhythm - monoline. So we then spent time

discovering our rhythm and learning to control it with a piece of balsa firstly. If I had any rhythm, it certainly was AWOL that day as everything I produced was repetitious and I don't think I was the only one. We then moved onto binary exercises, producing a and b rhythms.





Our next exercises involved repetition of both our monoline and binary rhythms, finally moving onto a poly rhythm. We needed to be able to produce an a, b and c rhythm. Confused? I think a lot of us were until we could discover our natural rhythm and in my case it would take longer than a day.

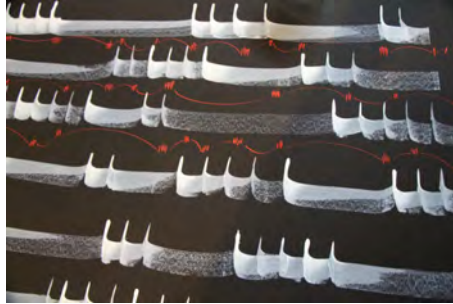
Massimo demonstrated that you can have repetition that is both up and down, and left and right. The method is: basic rhythm, an opening and then reverse.

Finally, we had an exercise in contrast. This meant taking a sheet we had covered with our balsa wood rhythm and adding a line of rhythm with a pointed pen for contrast. We contrasted the heavy, thick rhythm of the balsa wood with some light and fine rhythm from the pointed pen.

By the end of the day I was tired and stretched, mentally, which I'm sure many others were but that is why you come to workshops!

DAY TWO

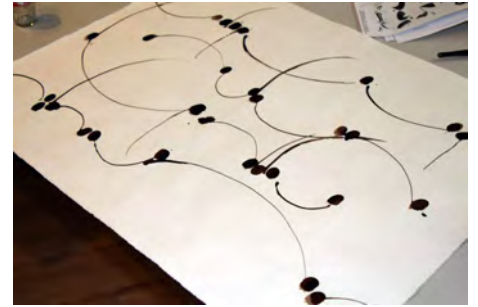
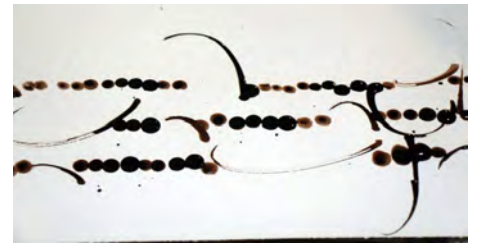
Day 2 of the workshop proved to be just as busy and hot as the previous day. Massimo commenced the day with a demonstration of how to use a Chinese pointed brush, which could be held upright so that very thin lines could be produced from the tip of the brush or used on its side for thicker strokes. Brush control was important with results varying by using either quick brush movements or slow controlled movements. When it was our turn to practise using our brushes, Massimo reminded us to keep to the rhythm principles we had learnt the previous day: basic, open, mirror. Unfortunately, Lyndall's brush found it all too much, not only losing its rhythm but its hair as well.



Massimo then demonstrated making patterns with a very large brush and Chinese ink. When the ink was starting to dry he put the paper under the tap, washing away most of the ink but leaving behind a pale grey image of the original pattern. We then made our own patterns and it was decided that hosing the work outside was the quickest and easiest way to go. Unfortunately, I made the mistake of standing outside while awaiting my turn with the hose and, of course, the ink dried quickly in the heat. Lots of scrubbing was needed to get something near a grey background. Getting a little wet was quite cooling on such a hot day.

The last tool to be demonstrated was a finger (and fingernail). As Jill commented, "there is nothing you can't write with". Practising with this "tool" took me back to my kindergarten days and finger painting. I think we all had way too much fun playing with finger, nail and ink but removing the ink stains from our hands was a different proposition.

Once our washed background pieces had completely dried, Massimo



demonstrated how to add another layer to them. Because our patterns were bold, we needed contrast. Therefore, he suggested using a finer tool (e.g. pointed nib or thinner brush), using a compressed pattern in a small area and introducing a contrasting colour. In other words have a contrast rhythm, contrast colour and contrast tools.

Our next exercise was to follow the rhythm principles we had been practising as we listened to a series of musical pieces. Following this exercise we had to take a favourite element from one of the 8 sheets and use it as the basis to develop a new piece of work, which we were to put on good paper.

The final exercise of the day was to look at all of the work we had produced so far and get inspiration for one word from one of the pieces. We had to find the rhythm for the word and, using the same tool, develop letters from the rhythms we could see on the page and from our own inner rhythm. I chose the work I had done with a piece of kitchen sponge, which I loved using.

Phew! What a busy day.

DAY THREE

Having established our writing rhythm by doing the calligraphic exercises for two days, we were then encouraged to develop an alphabet with the evolved script using these rhythms. At least we were asked to write some words so we could get away with a few letters, rather than the 26!

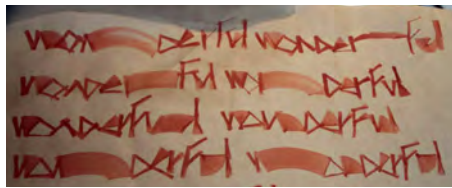
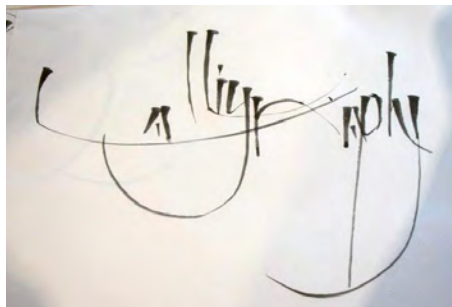
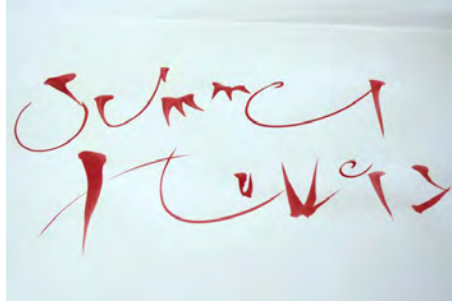
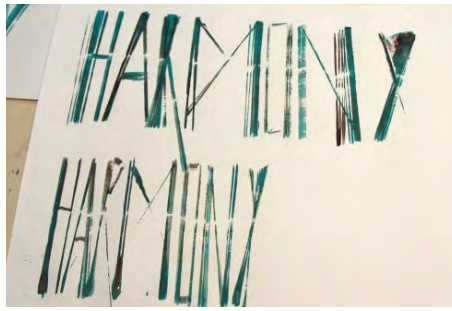
Next we applied these forms to work done previously on Arches, black and brown paper, thereby combining textures and now introducing a contrast colour. The rest of the morning was spent developing these ideas and at noon it was tools down and look at examples of the books that we could make from our works.

To make the covers, we used a half sheet of calligraphically marked Arches paper and made a W fold, making the covers 250 mm square. We could make 2 or 3 sections in this way and then sew pages of our work into these sections, using pamphlet stitch. Much measuring and consulting went on while we sorted out what was required. Fortunately Massimo was on hand, as were people who had done bookbinding previously, and eventually an amazing array of books was produced.

The thank you card for Massimo was spelt out with each of us scribing a letter and then presented in a colour co-ordinated hand marbled envelope.

This quiet gentle man from Turin, was able to draw from us work that we never would have imagined we could do. It was an exhausting but exhilarating three days. I'm sure I speak for all when I say that we consider ourselves very fortunate to have had this opportunity of working with this world famous calligrapher.

Thank you Massimo.



News

FROM THE
LIBRARY

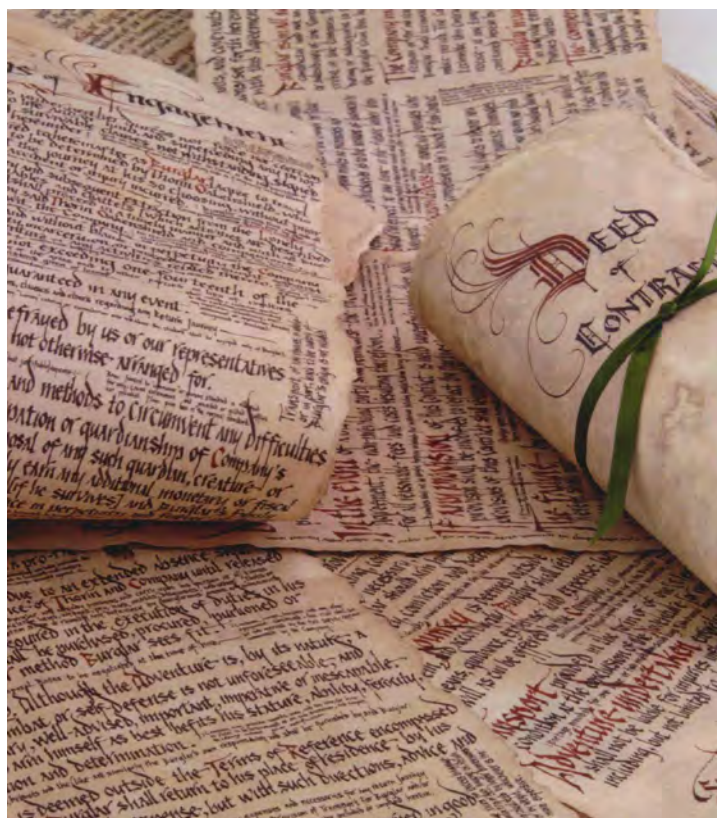
DANCING PEN SUMMER '12

<http://www.chooseit.org.au/calligraphy>

If you have ever hesitated when cutting a mitred corner (and who hasn't), when covering a book then the instructions in this edition are for you. A simple tool helps to save time, cutting to fine a mitre and the anxiety involved. What a great idea! The 'Sunday Scribes' report on the continuing tradition of making a book at the end of each year. There are lovely examples of herbal quotes bound into books using Coptic stitch binding.

CALLIGRAPHERS OF KAPITI DECEMBER '12

For any who has seen, or is contemplating seeing the film of the Hobbit, this edition brings you a wonderful insight into the conception and processes used to complete the contract between the dwarfs and Bilbo undertaken by Daniel Reeves. This is a very witty read that many calligraphers who have undertaken commissions will commiserate and emphasise with. AND then after finally meeting all the criteria, achieving the desired length and look, Daniel was asked for a second copy!



CAPITAL LETTERS DECEMBER '12

<http://cso.ncf.ca/>

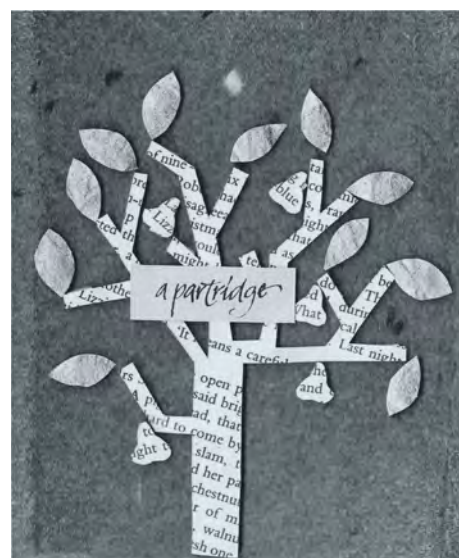
What a lovely idea! The first article in Capital Letters is about Meander Books. Five calligraphers each began a book (traditionally an accordion folded book made from one sheet of paper) which is then sent to the other participants, who each contribute something special and pass it on to the next person and so on, finally returning to the original artist. I want to do it!! I just have to find some like-minded people! Let me know if you are interested. <http://meanderingbooks.blogspot.com>

I also like the way Capital Letters feature a calligrapher for each month. It is a great opportunity to see and admire many different styles of calligraphy. A great chance to see how other calligrapher's work is progressing.

POSTSCRIPT, VIC DEC '12 - JAN '13

www.calligraphysocietyvictoria.org.au

The exhibition named the Calligraphic Line features a number of diverse calligraphic styles. Stunning work reproduced in beautiful colour. Also featured is a whimsical article entitled 'Alice in Letterland'. Nice play on words. The article follows Annmaree Bellman's adventure while decorating a school foyer for a production of Alice in Wonderland.



Miscellany

CANBERRA SHOW

Many congratulations to Lyndell Dobbs (first prize, pictured left), Angela Hillier (second prize) and Ann Streeter (third prize and highly commended) for their winning entries at the 2013 Canberra Show. Well done to all who exhibited, thanks to the demonstrators, and a special thank you to all exhibitors from the Chief Steward.



Snippet from demonstrator Jill Robertson: When demonstrating at the Show this year I had a wonderful experience with a family of a Dad and 2 children with cerebral palsy, both kids in their teens. I asked the girl if she would like her name written out and soon found out she understood and spoke perfectly understandably – which is what I suspected. So I did her name and then the brother spelled out his name on his communication computer (the read-out faces the person opposite him). He spelled his name for me and after I had done it he wrote another question on this machine for me which I just caught in time. He said “What happens if you make a mistake?” I said “I cry” and he laughed and laughed fit to burst! It made my day. The dad was just lovely with them too.

MAKING QUILLS WORKSHOP

There will be an informal workshop on Saturday 2nd March at Crossfolds, 296 Mountain Ash Road, Goulburn, when I'll be teaching you to cure and cut quills and make a reservoir for the quill. If I can find some reeds and some bamboo, I'll teach you how to cut them as well - if not I'll trim the hydrangea bush and we can make pens out of that! I propose having the studio open between 10am and 2pm and you can come when it is convenient to you and I'll have the river sand hot and available all the time for the curing. I've got lots of feathers but you might have some wing feathers from a chook, a duck or a turkey or even a seagull which you could bring along. Coffee and scones will be available in the kitchen courtyard. I'll just ask for \$10 to help cover my costs. Alison Lawrence alisoncallig@bigpond.com or 02.4822.0024

DAVID JONES VISITS TUSCANY

Gemma Black will be leading a calligraphic workshop in Cortona, Italy from 8-15 June, 2013. The workshop is part of Toscana Americana and is based on the works of writer, painter, and scribe David Jones (1895-1974). More information can be found at <http://www.ToscanaAmericana.com/gemmabcalligraphytuscan.html> or by emailing infotuscany@aol.com