

Letter Perfect

March/April 2006

The Newsletter of the San Diego Fellow Calligraphers

Vol. 27, No. 4

March 10, 2006; 7:00 pm
SDFC General Meeting

The BP is Mightier Than the Sword

Louis Lemoine*, Guest Speaker

A person does not need fancy pens and equipment to make beautiful letters. Come see how a visual magician can make beautiful letters with a neglected tool. As a bonus, Louis will show some of his own freelance work and work with Walt Disney Imagineering.

March 11 & 12, 2006
SDFC Workshop

Variation of Peter Thornton's Button Alphabet with Louis Lemoine*

Learn pen and hand drawn variations of Peter Thornton's "Button Alphabet." It is very versatile, limited only by your imagination. The beauty of this alphabet is that anyone can achieve satisfying results in a relatively short period of time, due to its forgiving nature and the fact that there are only 26 characters to worry about! If you come with a positive attitude, you are guaranteed to leave with work that you will be proud of! All levels welcome!

SDFC welcomes Louis Lemoine!

*Louie Lemoine is a Visual Magician, that is, a designer, lettering artist and illustrator, along with being an educator and an entertainer. He is Principal Graphic Designer for Walt Disney Imagineering, a division of the Walt Disney Company, and also does design work through his company *lemoine design*. His latest projects for Disney include graphics for the newly opened Hong Kong Disneyland.

Louis Lemoine has a Master of Arts degree in Art with emphasis in design from Cal State at Los Angeles and has a valid-for-life Community College teaching credential. During the mid-1980s, he taught at Los Angeles Technical College. For ten years, he has been the guest speaker for Solar Nibs, a chapter of the Society for Calligraphy and for the Orange County Society for Calligraphy, recently giving the "Button Alphabet Workshop" in April of 2005. He has attended several of the Lettering Conferences and has given Serendipity Talks at a few. His work was published in two consecutive issues of *LAR* last year.

Louis is also a Magician Member of Hollywood's famous Magic Castle, a private club for magicians and magic enthusiasts.

Presidential Ponderings

Do you ever feel that the weight of adult responsibilities and obligations is taking its toll? How do you recharge your battery and rejuvenate your soul?

For many calligraphers, turning to art is a way to regroup and energize. There's a lot to be said about getting lost in the creative process and allowing one's mind to escape the pressures and time constraints of everyday life. Whether it's designing greeting cards or experimenting with new tools and materials or working out the kinks in a new lettering style, one usually walks away refreshed and ready to tackle the other distractions in life.

Recently four calligraphers from SDFC went to *Letters California Style*, the SFC mini conference held in Pomona. Imagine spending four days doing what you love. In many ways it was similar to a workshop in that it was a focused, learning environment. At the close of the conference most attendees walked away tired, but with a renewed and invigorated creative spirit.

This April, SDFC provides the opportunity to share our art and craft with the San Diego community at *Calligrafia*, the spring exhibition of calligraphy. Allow yourself to get lost in the creative process and make art! Refer to page three for guidelines for submitting your artwork. Not only will you feel a sense of accomplishment, but you may find a new and rejuvenated spirit has come to visit.

Happy Spring!

Diane Reiter

SDFC Presents CALLIGRAFIA

An Exhibition of Calligraphy

April 2 to May 12, 2006

Opening Reception Saturday, April 8 from 2:00 to 5:00 PM

The La Jolla Riford Library

7555 Drapers Avenue, La Jolla

Visigothic Versals *with* Risa Gettler

By: Diane Reiter

On January 14 and 21, 2006, Risa Gettler taught the SDFC workshop, *Visigothic Versals*. An odd and ancient letterform, Visigothic Versals are unique to 7th to 11th century Spain. The influence of Roman Capitals, Uncial and Textura are evident as one begins to analyze the copies of ancient manuscripts.

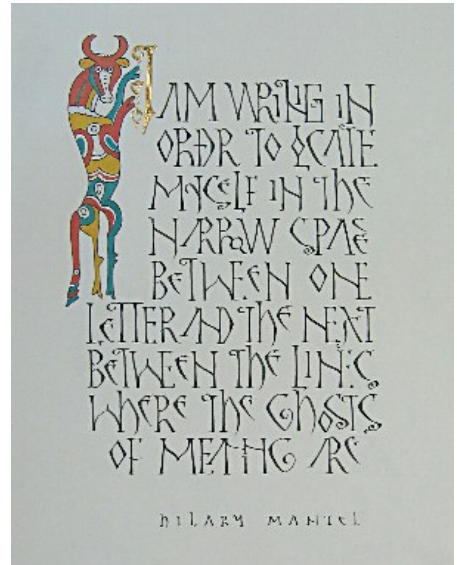
On the first Saturday, participants wrote the skeletal forms of the letters with pencils on grid paper. Using three squares for the letter height made it easier to learn the letterforms and proportions. There is a lot of pen manipulation, so it is important to know the "bones" of this alphabet before going to pen work.

In Visigothic Versals, there are many ways to do several of the letters. Risa suggested making a several page reference with the basic letters, letter variations and letter combinations. We were also encouraged to write out commonly used prepositions and phrases so we don't have to reinvent the wheel.

The following Saturday, the day began with the sharing of practice pages and homework. For homework, students were to write a quote or short saying, then rewrite it several times using alternative letterforms and letter combinations. A question/answer session about double letters, letter combinations and legibility followed.

Then the search began for a decorative letter to be used with the quotes we selected. Participants were involved with lots of layout and design work, and Risa gave many helpful suggestions. Risa also gave out a Visigothic Versals palette with the colors mainly used in the Mozarabic Manuscripts.

By the end of the workshop, participants were well on their way to creating a finished piece. Everyone seemed to enjoy learning this distinct and exclusive lettering style.



Above: A sample piece done by workshop instructor, Risa Gettler.

Below: Yvonne Perez Collins, Britta Brice and others busily practicing their Visigothic Versals.

photos by: Lorraine Brown



Tips from Risa

Throughout the workshop, Risa gave several tips and suggestions, including:

- ♦ the pen manipulation is where the fun stuff happens
- ♦ you can't go any faster than you breathe; exhale on the down strokes; inhale on the upstrokes
- ♦ "A" is one of the trickiest letters and is used a lot
- ♦ in Visigothic Versals, push the letters around to work with you
- ♦ the serifs help the reader identify the letter
- ♦ the common spine is useful when combining letterforms
- ♦ when stacking letters, use two with the same basic shape

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Letter Perfect is the bi-monthly newsletter of the San Diego Fellow Calligraphers. SDFC is a non-profit group dedicated to the art of calligraphy and related subjects. We include beginners, professional artists and all levels in between. Our purpose is to share and to educate.

Meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month, Sept. to June. Locations may vary. Check our website www.sdfconline.com for information and directions.

Those wishing to join SDFC or to renew their membership may do so by contacting **Dianne Decker-Houser**; SDFC; P.O. Box 84960; San Diego, CA 92138-4960.

Publication of any article in *Letter Perfect* does not imply endorsement by the San Diego Fellow Calligraphers or its Board.

Tell me what company
thou keepest, and I'll tell
thee what thou art.

— *Miguel Cervantes*

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ART AROUND TOWN

The La Jolla Art Association is proud to present France-Marie Haeger who will speak on "How to Tap Deeper into your Creative Core to Expand your Art Beyond Expectations" at the Village Gallery, 7932 Ivaehoe Ave., La Jolla at 7-9 pm on Wednesday, March 15. The event is free and is expected to be enlightening.

The Athenaeum Music and Arts Library will exhibit the work of San Diego artist Kathy Miller April 1 through May 6, 2006. "Leaving a Mark", artists' books, encaustic paintings, sculpture, and assemblage pieces. Kathy's work is recognized by their richly layered surfaces that incorporate visual elements of mark making, writing, letters and symbols. Opening reception, Friday, March 31, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free. Athenaeum Music and Arts Library, 1008 Wall Street, La Jolla. (858) 454-5835. Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Wednesdays till 8:30 p.m. Walk through with the artist, Saturday, April 1, 11:00-12:00.



Plans are well underway for the upcoming exhibit at the La Jolla Library. On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself, I'd like to extend an invitation to all of our members to submit your most recent original calligraphy pieces. This year we have decided to cut the cost of putting on an exhibit and in an effort to encourage you to submit your work we have eliminated all entry fees. Our only requirement is that you must be a member of SDFC to have your art displayed. While there is no specific size limitation, larger pieces are preferable.

There will be limited space for 3D items such as books, boxes, handmade cards, sculptures etc. and they will only be displayed the day of our opening reception. These pieces will be removed from the exhibit at the end of the day.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns: Marsha Vanetsky.

Framing:

All entries must be suitably mounted or framed behind either glass or plexiglass and wired on the back for hanging.

Liability:

SDFC assumes no responsibility for damage, theft or loss of entries. Insurance is the responsibility of the entrant.

Items for Sale:

We have permission to sell our work on display with all proceeds going to the artist.

Forms:

A label must be attached to each art piece in the upper right hand corner on the back of the frame. A duplicate form must be completed and placed in an envelope to accompany your entry. Labels are available at www.sdfconline.com under forms.

Drop off and pick up:

Drop off deadline is March 25th. All work must be delivered wrapped in protective packaging material, with the name of the entrant and art work marked on the outer wrappings. Shirley Wineberg, Diane Reiter and I will be drop off contacts.

Art will be returned after the show at the general meeting or special arrangements can be made by contacting me at mvanetsky@yahoo.com

Opening reception:

There will be an artists reception held on Sat. April 8th from 2-5 pm at the La Jolla Riford Library. All members, guests and general public are invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Congratulations to Lisabet Wilson for designing the winning exhibit logo!

Corrections/additions for roster:

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by: Linda West

"Let's Get to the Point" was the November SDFC weekend workshop with Linda Hirsch. The subject was America's own Engrosser's Script, known to many as "Copperplate." While this script requires the calligrapher's basic tools, being particular about tool selection makes all the difference in practicing this hand.

According to Linda, "This beautiful form of pen art is basically an American twist on the old English Round Hand script so wonderfully represented by Bickham's *The Universal Penman*." Copperplate became such a practical tool in the United States that scribes went to school (the most well known was Zanerian) to learn it and were then employed in the business world. While typewriters changed the need for Engrosser's Script, it has remained a prominent artistic hand.

Linda displayed books and work in Copperplate and gave us a brief history of the hand that included some of the more prominent calligraphers who specialize in Engrosser's Script. Those who specialize in this script have created inks, penholders, books and exercises to enhance their calligraphic work.

Saturday's task was the lower case alphabet and experimentation with several inks and nibs. We tried McCaffery's, Walker's and Sumi inks. Linda also reviewed the best nibs and how to use them in the oblique holder. We used the pointed pen to create the "shades"—down strokes and "hairlines"—upstrokes, oval shaped letters and loops. Our handout information and our teacher emphasized the importance of consistency to make this script beautiful.

Sunday's work was with the capital letters. Linda demonstrated each one and its variations, emphasizing the proper stroke technique. She also taught flourishing which requires big arm movements.

IAMPETH is the "International Association of Master Penmen, Engrossers and Teachers of Handwriting." Their mission is to teach the use of the pointed pen to all levels of learners and to keep the Copperplate script alive. IAMPETH has a quarterly magazine which addresses the art and craft of pointed pen; their website includes information about membership and their annual summer convention. The convention, which features the display of historic works of Engrosser's Script, will be in Chicago this July.

Armed with a multi-page handout, ductus, super ink and vintage nibs those of us who attended the Copperplate workshop are prepared with the supplies and knowledge to create beautiful writing with the pointed pen.

Let's Get to the Point with Linda Hirsch

Please send your information, pictures, etc. for the May/June 2006 issue of *Letter Perfect* to Trisha Martini; 11151 Socorro St.; San Diego, 92129-1311; or by fax to (866) 673-2145; or by e-mailing it to her at TRISHAINK@yahoo.com. If you have any questions, call (858) 672-2016. Material must be received by April 21, 2006.

www.sdfconline.com

is the official website of the San Diego Fellow Calligraphers. Bookmark this address for the latest SDFC news, photos, calendar of events and other society information. For our online gallery, we would like to publish .jpg files of your scanned calligraphy. Send them to Naomi Lesberg at nlesberg@cox.net

SDFC 2005-2006 Calendar of Events

March 10: General Meeting: Louis Lemoine, *The BP is Mightier than the Sword*

March 11 & 12: Workshop: Variation of Peter Thornton's **Button Alphabet** with Louis Lemoine

April 8: SDFC Exhibit Reception; 2:00-5:00 PM; La Jolla Riford Library

May 12: General Meeting: Sylvia Kowal, *Pop-ups 2*

June 9: General Meeting: Trash 'N Treasures and general elections

What tool did you buy, and later regret the purchase?

Jan Lohner: device lever to help make hand punching "easier"---still in the box!

Yvonne Perez-Collins: foil pen; doesn't work well and is not easy.

Britta Brice: the rolling ruler; I still cannot do exact spaced lines and it was my last hope!

Vivian Salazar: The handy-dandy 3-in-1 glass cutter/scorer. I put it away because I couldn't find the time to use it. Then it got packed and put into storage. I've recently relocated to San Diego and when I unpacked it, I found I had forgotten how to use it. So there it sits.

Jean Porter: a mat cutter (a large one); I never used it! It was sold in my house sale.

Risa Gettler: circle cutter; never used it.

Phyllis Miller: a fine-tune pencil pointer in shrink wrap that the clerk said I could return if it didn't work. It didn't work but I did not return it.

Lisabet Wilson: ruling pen for \$25. I can't get it to work.

Naomi Lesberg: circle cutter; I haven't needed to use it yet but it's actually been fun to compare it's non-use with all my calligraphy friends who purchased one.

Trish Martini: an oval cutter to cut ovals in paper for cards; it takes too much pressure to "cut" the hole. It wouldn't work even after reading its directions --- too complicated!

Diane Reiter: paper marbling kit; still waiting to try it out. The inks are probably dry by now.

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Address Correction Requested