

## RICARDO ROUSSELOT — CALLIGRAPHY AND THE SPANISH CONNECTION

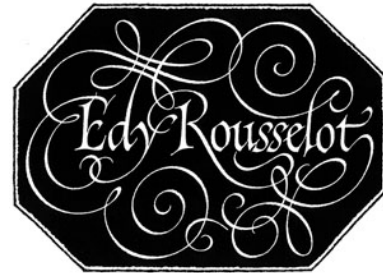
by Thea Paul

Imagine the perfect holiday — okay first imagine being home with a 15 and 17 year old — now imagine the perfect holiday! An invitation to spend a week in Barcelona with my aunt and uncle and NO KIDS was hard to resist. My wonderful husband said one too many times “you should go” and before he knew it my flight was booked and I was on my way.

One of the wonderful things about traveling on your own is that you get to do what you want. Being new to calligraphy (after about a year and a half of pure amazement at the depth and breadth of the Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild and its members — so giving of their knowledge and encouragement), I decided to pursue my calligraphic dream on the trip. It was as simple as a Google search of “Barcelona” and “calligraphy”. Ricardo Rousselot was one of the hits. A warm and immediate e-mail reply invited me to come and visit his studio. His extensive website assured me this would be a worthwhile connection to make. After a few more e-mails back and forth the plan was in place.



Thea with Ricardo Rousselot in his studio



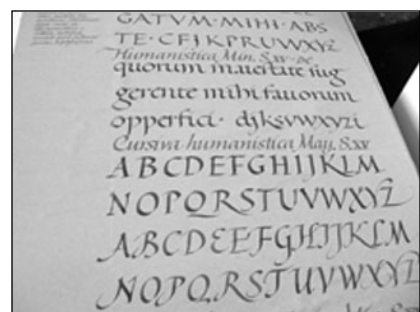
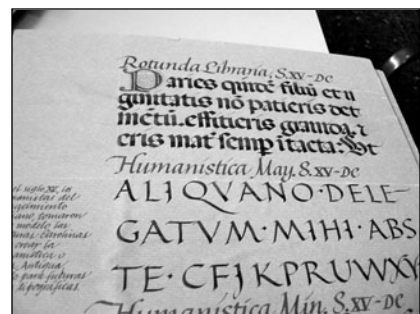
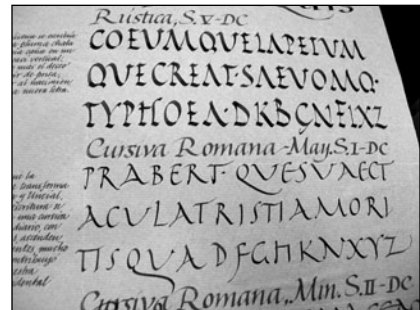
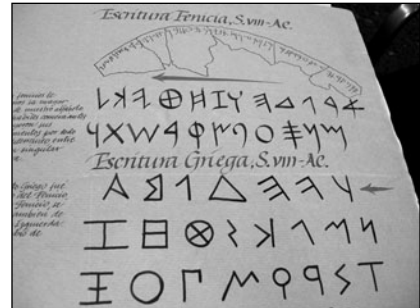
My aunt, who studied calligraphy years ago in Calgary, and I took public transit to the northern end of Barcelona where Mr. Rousselot met us and led us back to his studio. Mr. Rousselot works with his wife and children, all of whom are profiled on his extensive website. Mr. Rousselot was born in 1936 in Argentina. Internet research further acquainted me with a respected, gifted and passionate artist. On one website he is described and quoted as follows:

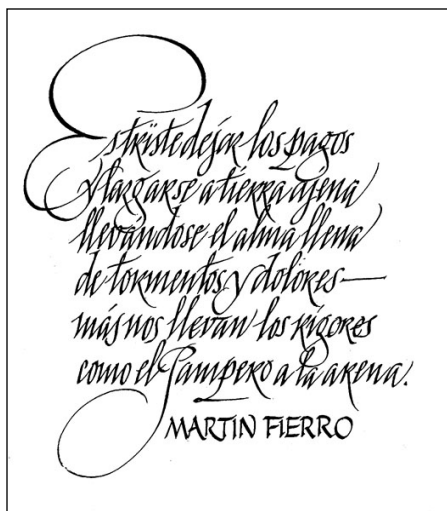
“Rousselot began as a freelance designer at a very young age, soon devoting himself to the alphabet. He worked in Chicago with pupils of Goudy and Cooper: William Ficho, Carl Corley and Ferrell Daniels. He wrote about his experience, ‘I’ve done everything, but nothing has ever kept me away from my first love: the alphabet. I’ve tried to improve it each day, inspired by the letters on Trajan’s column: never to be forgotten, without equal ... Calligraphy must be expressive and clear, emanating warmth and ‘joie de vivre’. Anything worthy of being written is worth being written well’.”

Mr. Rousselot is a calligrapher, a type designer and a package designer. In his office he has a wonderful display of calligraphic Exlibris and he gave me samples of the work he had done. His work is detailed and full of delightful flourishes.

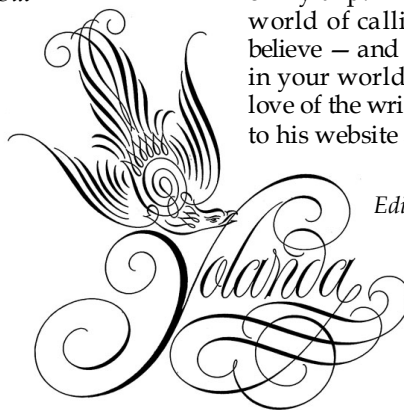
He has taught extensively and has created a history of calligraphy on large boards which show all of the many different alphabets, chronologically through the years. These can all be seen on the website at <http://www.grupoerre-rousselot.com/descargas.html>. Click on the link to Historia de la Escritura. This is a large download (5.6 MB) but well worth the wait. Many other examples of his work are detailed on this website including his Exlibris.

In his studio Mr. Rousselot has many examples of his packaging designs for products including tobaccos, liquors, brandies, wines and cosmetics. He also designed the Spanair logo which is on their airplanes. Mr. Rousselot has designed two fonts, released by Neufville Digital. These are Carlomagno (1997) and Uncial Romana (1996).





The day before we met, on February 21, 2007, Mr. Rousselot was at The Casa Àmerica Catalunya, as part of its conferences on "Latin American Publicity and Design". He was described as one of "three indisputable masters in graphic design who, by chance or not, share their country of origin and many crossed experiences." The three masters referred to were Mario Eskenazi, Ricardo Rousselot and America Sanchez, all of whom spoke during an informal lecture. These gentlemen are three of the protagonists of the book *Six Argentine Designers From Barcelona*, edited by Santa & Cole in 2006, and written by Norberto Chaves. Mr. Rousselot had a copy of this book to show me when we met and it was very interesting to scan the chapters profiling him and his life's work.

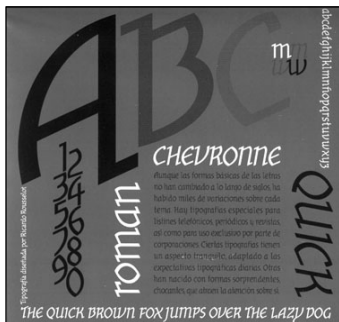


On April 19, 2007, Mr. Rousselot is traveling to Offenbach, to participate in an exhibit at the Klingspor Museum. The exhibit is called "Coverings For Things" and is on from April 20 to June 3, 2007. This show highlights how type and calligraphy play an important role in product packaging and design.

Mr. Rousselot is extremely modest and very generous. He gave me two of his handmade reed pens and copies of many pieces of his work. This was a memorable part of my trip! In today's age of the world wide web, this world of calligraphy is even smaller than you might believe — and I would highly recommend taking the time in your world travels to seek out others who share the love of the written words. At the very least you can travel to his website at <http://www.grupoerre-rousselot.com/web.html>. Enjoy!

Editor's note: Artwork has been reproduced with the permission of Mr. Rousselot.





LA VANGUARDIA

El Corte Inglés

Larios

Smoking

Tabacalera

ALFAGUARA

