

Galleria

Black and white and grey
with one little colour

by Colleen Nagel

Kirsten Horel and Kerri Forster, who were also team-teaching in the Guild's yearlong course, lead the critique for the September Galleria. They had spent a lot of time preparing for their class and it was evident that the same care had gone into their preparation for the Galleria. With a list of design elements on the board, I knew that the Galleria would be an opportunity for analytical discussion and a lesson in design. Kirsten has provided a list of design questions for this article; keep it handy for your next project!

HAND
SPIRIT
COLOUR
BACKGROUND
CONTRAST
UNITY
BALANCE
FOCAL POINT
TEXTURE
RHYTHM
LINE QUALITY
CADENCE
FORMAT
PLACEMENT
SCALE
PROPORTION

- ♦ **Hand:** Does the hand or style of writing suit your message?
- ♦ **Spirit:** Can the reader tell at a glance what your artwork is about?
- ♦ **Colour:** Do the colours convey the meaning?
- ♦ **Background:** If there is a background or graphics, do they enhance or detract from the lettering?
- ♦ **Contrast:** Is there enough contrast to interest the reader, but not too much?
- ♦ **Unity:** Do the elements work together as a unified whole? Do they have enough similarity or does your creation look like pizza?
- ♦ **Balance:** If you squint, do the elements have visual balance?
- ♦ **Focal point:** Is there a focal point to grab the viewer's attention; and if so, is it appropriate?
- ♦ **Texture, rhythm and line quality:** Are there consistencies in lettering, graphics and background, which enhance the piece? Inconsistent marks can add interest, but can also distract the reader.
- ♦ **Cadence:** When reading it line-by-line are the breaks in the correct place?
- ♦ **Format:** Does the horizontal or vertical format add to the meaning? Did you make a broadside, greeting card, or write on a rubber boot?
- ♦ **Placement:** Are the elements scattered around like pizza or are they well-placed to enhance the meaning and to provide unity?
- ♦ **Scale and proportion:** Are the elements positioned and appropriately sized, to work together well?



▲▲ Donna Uncles – thank you card and envelope for Marlene

The embossed card was purchased in bulk through Coast Paper. It has a linen texture and comes with a matching envelope. All the lettering is based on Thomas Hoyer's instruction, written with a ruling pen using Higgins waterproof black. The butterfly is a punch and red seemed the classic choice for a hit of colour with the black lettering. The butterfly window was used to decorate the envelope near the recipient's name. More butterfly confetti was tucked into the envelope to add a little fun when the card is opened. Sorry, no grey although some could have been added with pencil to create a shadow on each letter.

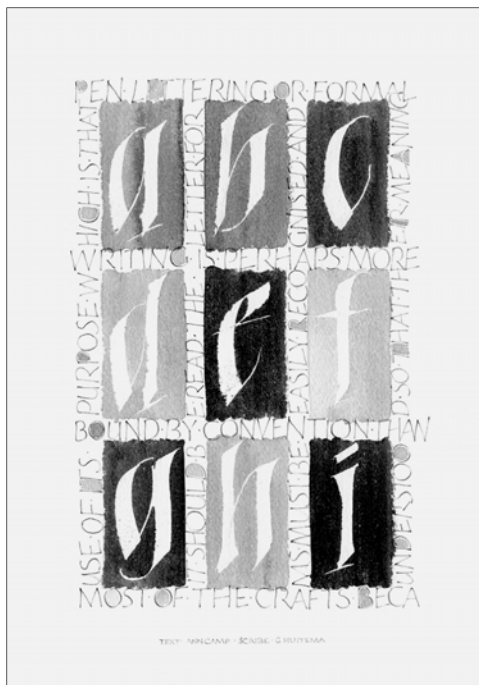


◀ Kirsten Horel -

"People are weird, there are no exceptions."

Materials: ink, pencil, folded pen, Arches text wove.

My first thought was to have grey letters that resemble people as a texture in the background. From those initial grey thoughts, the bottom line of grey writing is what made it to the final. I experimented with some letter forms on scrap paper, and then started this piece at the top, writing "people people". Reacting to that, I knew that "weird" had to be big, bold, and dense to offer contrast. I wrote "there are no exceptions" twice so that it would extend to the left edge of the page. I did not want my piece to be too centered and un-weird. The dark square is a piece of red paper which I moved around quite a bit before settling on its final location. The last words I wrote were "weird, weird, weird" in pencil, to fill what was previously, an overpowering white space.



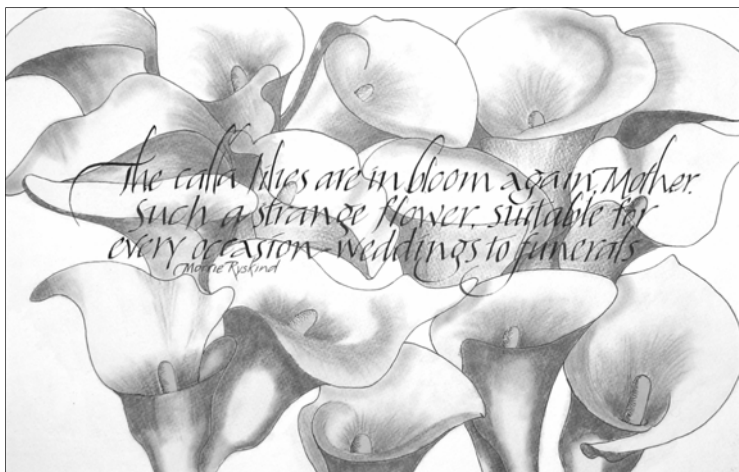
▲ George Huitema - Letter Mosaic

I had more fun with this piece. The large letters were done using masking fluid in a 1/2" Automatic pen. When dry, black and grey watercolour was painted over top to form the rectangles. The text around the rectangles was done using an H pencil and comes from a classic lettering manual by Ann Camp. I filled in a few counter spaces with black watercolour and added three yellow counters. The use of the pencil lettering was influenced by a recent class with Peter Thornton. Overall, I was very pleased with the outcome.



▲ George Huitema - In Haying Time

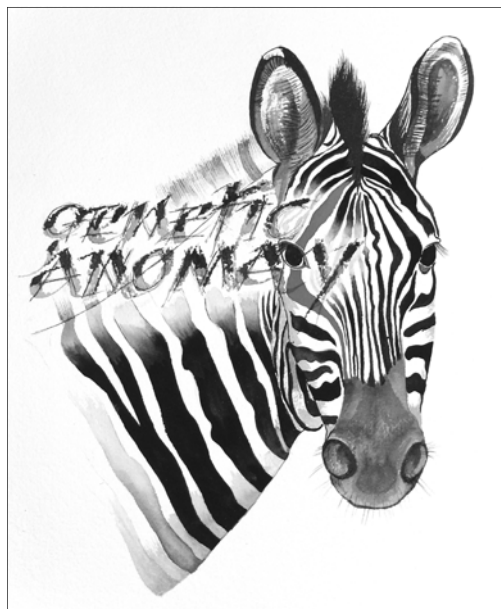
I chose this poem because it is fall, a beautiful time of year for driving in the country and seeing the wonderful colours. My piece does cry out for more colour but that did not fit the Galleria topic. The word "meadows" was written with a 1/2" Automatic pen, using black and grey gouache, and in a lettering style that was influenced by a recent class from Carrie Imai. I used a Nikko G nib to do the pointed pen lettering which is based on Kecseg's pointed-pen variations. If you look closely, there is black and grey blending in and out. The word rose-red was done in red and is the only colour. I chose a more formal layout as this seemed to fit the poem better.



▲ Barrie Callaway - Calla lilies

Materials: Strathmore 140 lb. cold press watercolour paper, soft pencil, Micron pen, gouache lettering, yellow gouache for the flower centres.

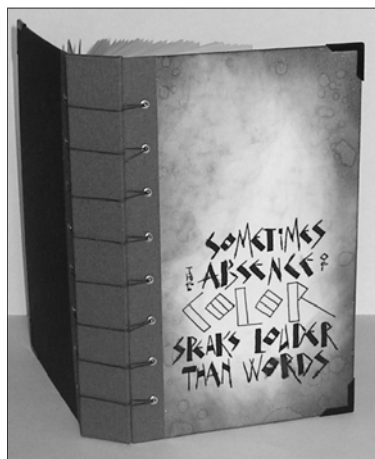
This is my first attempt at a pencil drawing for a Galleria piece. The calla lilies, also called *arum lilies*, were commonly, in the past, associated with funerals. Calla lilies nowadays come in many colours. I think I have made the drawing too dark; perhaps I should have used a variety of pencils? The lettering is in the Denis Brown style; much practice is still needed.



▲ Barrie Callaway - Genetic anomaly

Materials: Arches 300 lb. cold press watercolour paper, Ivory black gouache, red ink, Micron pen, 5/16" Technical pen.

I had thought of the zebra idea long ago but could not think of a suitable quote to go with it. Then the *Boing* idea flashed – why would a zebra have one single red stripe: a genetic anomaly! I studied many zebra pictures and settled on this one with modifications. I'm not sure how well the red letter "L" works in "anomaly".



◀ Yogi Grunwald - The Book

I sponged a black dye-based pad (Ranger's Distress) around the edges of the mat board, then rubbed Perfect Pearls into it to give it the glimmer. My quote was written with a parallel pen and black Sumi ink and then I sprinkled it with water to distress the cover. I did a Belgian Eyelet binding with red waxed linen thread as my dash of colour.

The book measures 5.75" wide x 9" high x 1.4" thick.

► Yogi Grunwald - The Broadside 6" wide x 10.5" high

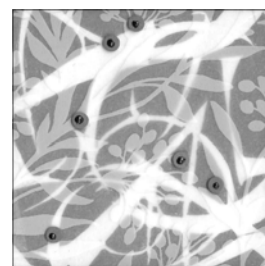
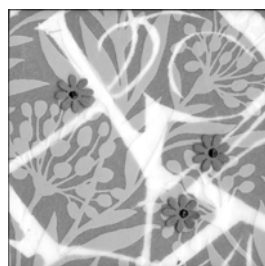
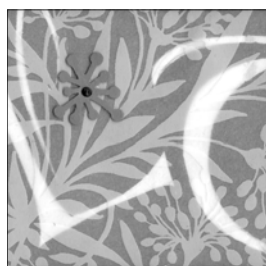
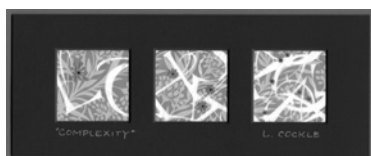
Using one of my funky styles, I drew my words/letters in black on some white paper. I scanned it, manipulated it in Adobe Photoshop Deluxe, and saved it as a bitmap file. Then using a couple other software programs, I got it to a file extension for my Cricut Create personal cutting machine which I used to cut out my design. Needless to say, that would have taken ages if I had to hand cut it all. I tried it on various papers and eventually settled on glossy black paper, and a white pearlized textured paper. I added my colour with a Quickie Glue pen and variegated red leaf.



▼ Lorraine Cockle - Complexity

In the process of cleaning out boxes for a basement renovation, I came across a stash of these little mats as well as this practice piece that I had worked on after Peter Thornton's workshop. They begged to be combined and embellished with a piece of patterned vellum to create greys, and little punch-outs of red. The original lettering project consisted of six squares, each of which contained an increasing number of letter shapes, randomly placed, until the entire alphabet had

been included. The plan was to ink the backgrounds around the sketched letter guidelines rather than the letters themselves in much the same way that Adolf Bernd had painted his background spaces. One objective was to simply gain more control of this process of creating letters by painting everything but the letter(s); the second was to see if I could reverse the proportions of black and white spaces between the first and sixth squares in the series. Complexity consists of framed portions of the first three squares.



◀ Andi Bartnek - *Carpe Diem* (One of two submissions is shown.) These two pieces were inspired by a request from a friend who is a minister in a hospice. I chose Neuland, done with a brush, for the simplicity of the lettering, which I thought complemented the simplicity of the quote. It worked reasonably well in terms of weight, position, and composition; but I would like to have had more dry brush texture, with more obvious dark to light shading across the letters. The hot pink touch of colour was done with a fine point paint pen. Touches of colour in the borders were added with a fine Pigma pen, and in the next version I will probably add more colour.



▲ Nancy Dormer – wooden sign

I made this sign for our summer property at Bergen, Alberta; my very first sign done on wood! The name *MarBia* is in memory of my parents, Martin and Bianca. I used a discarded piece of 2"x6" treated lumber; the actual front size was about 5 1/2"x30". I did not put any kind of sealant on the wood, so time will tell how it survives. Acrylic paints were used for the whole project. I painted a rectangle of white and let it dry. Using grey, I stencilled over the white using my own hand cut design. I calligraphed *mar* and *bia* onto a separate piece of paper and then cut a stencil.

This was stencilled over the grey using black. The *mar* did bleed a bit. I decided not to get too caught up in a perceived perfect mark. The "one, two, three" is the lot address which was stamped with hand-cut stamps of my own lettering. "Moose" is stamped with the same letters. Underneath "moose", I lettered directly onto the board using a Speedball C-2 nib and thinned acrylic. The touch of colour was the heart and the three lines. I have not coated it with anything else at the moment. The sign is now ready to be mounted onto two posts with a bird house attached to the top of one of the posts.