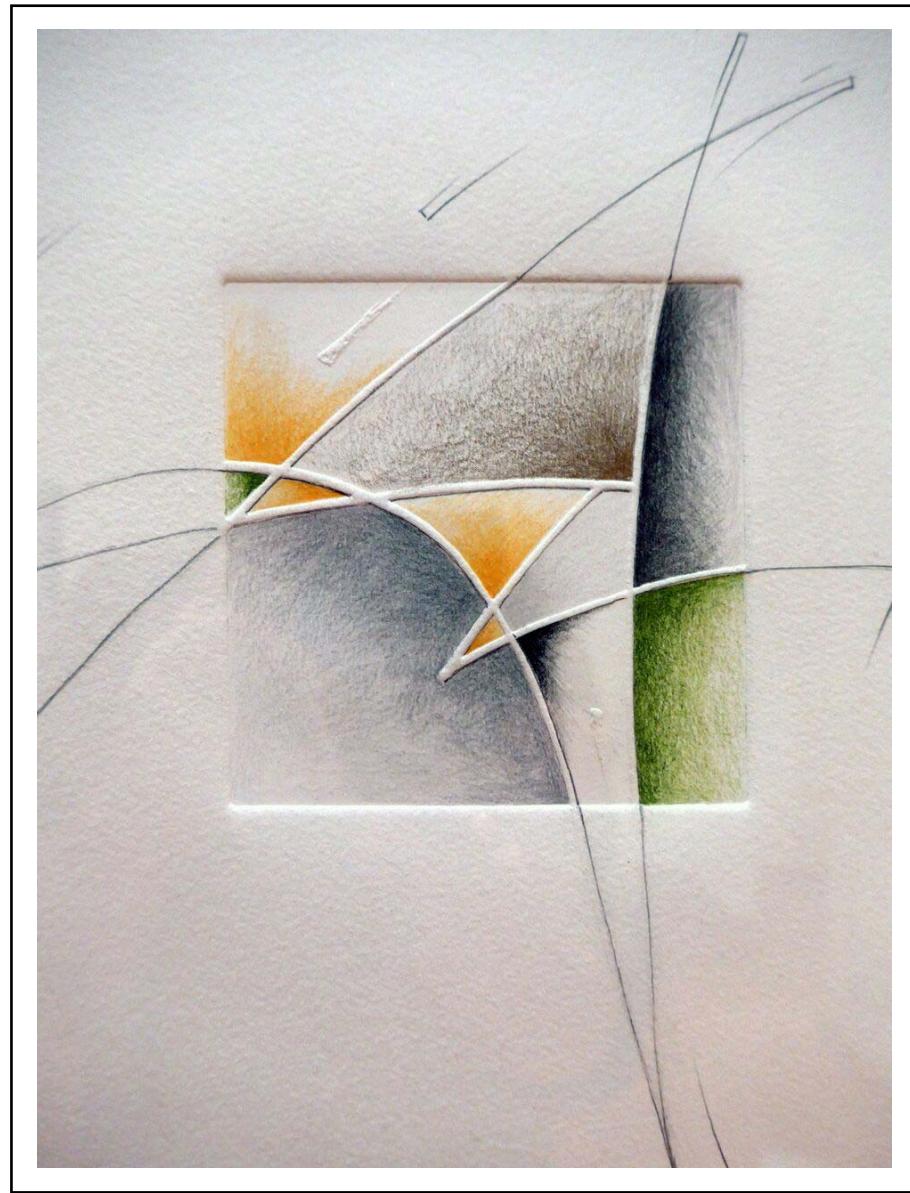


# Colorado Calligraphers' Guild

# INKWELL LETTER

SPRING 2017



Louise Grunewald: ACUMEN, 2015  
Solarplate relief embossing with graphite and colored pencil on  
Hannemuhle Copperplate etching paper, 11" x 14"

This newsletter is produced by the Colorado Calligraphers' Guild, a non-profit organization dedicated to furthering the education and appreciation of the calligraphic arts in Colorado. Membership in the Guild is open to all and annual dues of \$30. are used to sponsor the newsletter, special workshops and activities planned by the Guild.

Membership inquiries, membership dues, change of address and correspondence should be sent to:

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Greetings, brother and sister scribes!

Another lovely Colorado Calligraphers' Guild newsletter is in your hands (or on your computer) to browse. I hope you find useful information and some upcoming events or workshops you fancy attending. Remember, the guild is for everyone interested in calligraphy--novice to professional. We love to see new and returning lovers of the hand-scribed letter, so if you have not attended an event recently, please don't be shy--join us!

As we look towards a new year for the guild, I want to take this opportunity to thank each of the board members who come together to brainstorm ideas for future workshops, programs, and events. Certainly, if you have ideas of your own you would like to share with us, please let any of us know. Our contact information is included in the column [indicate location] in this newsletter. We are open to new thoughts on ways we can make our guild more vibrant and useful to its membership.

In the meantime, go forth and make some beautiful letters inspired by nature and the newness of springtime...

**Scribe on!**

*—TESS VONFELT-GROSS*

*SPRING 2017*



*Holiday card for bicycle shop, 1990s.*

LQuise on LQuise

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I have never lived in California, but I am a longtime member of the Friends of Calligraphy. I joined after taking a workshop given by Georgianna Greenwood in Eugene, Oregon in 1979. The *Alphabet* magazine, which has gone through several incarnations, titles, and editors since then, has been a quarterly treat of articles about, and images of, fine lettering. I am honored to be included in this issue along with my female colleagues whose work and teaching I admire.

I can't remember ever *not* wanting to be an artist. I have loved making art since my childhood in Seattle, Washington writing stories, painting, and drawing in chalk on the concrete patio with my friends. In the rainy Northwest, a clean slate was provided for new drawings in short order! I was halfway through college pursuing a Fine Art degree when my pragmatic self recognized that "real life" was just around the corner.



*Buchstaben Cover, 2010  
Collection of Klingspor Museum of Book and  
Letter Arts in Offenbach, Germany*

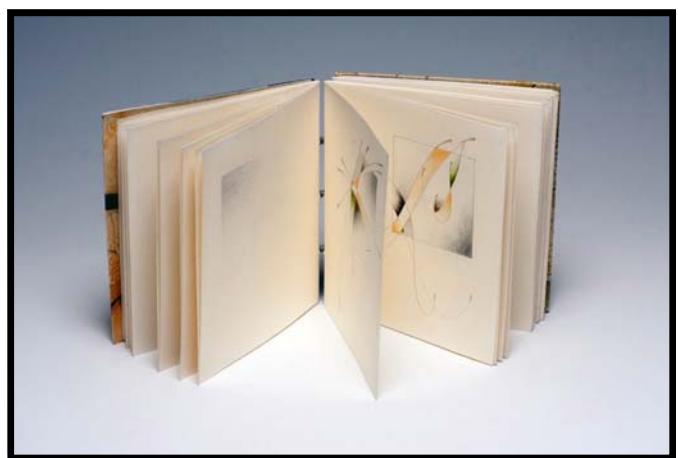
If I was going to make a living at this I would have to be creative in more ways than one. I began investigating two avenues: teaching or commercial art, and at that point in my life decided upon teaching. I finished at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA in 1974 with a Fine Art degree as well as a Secondary Education Teaching Certificate.

Many of my college pals were from Colorado and during visits there on winter and summer breaks, I fell in love with it. That is where I applied for work and landed my first job, heading up the Art Department of the Middle and Upper Schools at Colorado Academy (CA) in Denver. I was given the rare opportunity to design my own art curriculum as a first-year teacher. The love affair with Colorado continued and it became my adopted home state. Since Denver, I have also lived in Boulder, and now reside with my husband in the remote southwest corner of the state in beautiful Durango. My love for outdoor time is as strong as my love for my art.

I had taken just one semester of calligraphy in college, based on Lloyd Reynolds' Italic book, and it had sparked an interest. CA was offering its teachers a paid opportunity to take a summer enrichment course, so in 1975 I traveled to

Portland, Oregon and studied at the Museum Art School under Robert Palladino. It was there that I became serious about calligraphy. Making Roman capitals with a long-haired lettering brush was as daunting as it was inspiring and I recognized that it would take years of practice and commitment to gain proficiency.

I began to get requests from people for the services that a calligrapher could provide. And they would pay for it! I loved aspects of my full-time teaching job, but was still very young and wanted more time to further develop my own artistic skills. In truth, I had always wanted to be my own boss, and believed that if I could hone my lettering skills and utilize my drawing, painting, and design capabilities, this could be possible. I am so glad I did this at a young age! In a leap of faith, I quit my teaching job at the end of the 1976 school year. I was able to teach drawing at a local art center during the day, and after several night courses at a commercial art school plus a lot of self-study, my small graphic design business, Western Hands, was launched. To improve my lettering skills, I created my own "Masters Program" by taking workshops whenever possible from the master calligraphers who traveled the country. The Colorado Calligraphers' Guild was formed in 1976 and with that came teachers on the



*Freudige Buchstaben Inside page*



*Peace, 2014 Holiday Card*

international level. In the late 1970s I lived in Eugene, Oregon for a few years, benefiting from the proximity to the Portland calligraphy teachers as well as the many national and international instructors who came through. Now, years later, I too am one of those traveling instructors, particularly in the area of design as it relates to lettering. I have been able to remain a teacher but still have the time to maintain my own studio.

Back in the 80s getting work meant lots of phone calls to art directors and trips to their studios to show my portfolio. In the beginning I spent almost as much time on the road as at my drafting table. It paid off, both in the interesting assignments I got and the long-term working relationships that I still remember fondly.

Another long-time dream had been to find work as a greeting card designer. This dream came true when, in a serendipitous moment, the art director for Leanin' Tree Publishing in Boulder saw my holiday card on the wall in a colleague's studio. After many years of sending out slides and receiving polite rejection letters, I got the call! My first assignment: thirty-five card designs in two months.

I was young and hungry and I did it. This led to many hundreds of cards and a wonderful twenty-year relationship with the company as a freelance designer, providing both the lettering and the illustrations for my own line of cards.....plus posters, labels, mugs, magnets, and more. My desire to make a living at what I love to do was realized.

Age fifty marked another milestone. It was time to shift the balance and prioritize my own self-initiated work. I had been coming through for clients with what *they* wanted to say and it was time to articulate my own voice more fully.



*Square Deal*



*Leanin' Tree greeting card*

I have to express my appreciation for all those jobs and deadlines because they gave me the discipline to follow through on projects as my own art director. I travel about with a sketchbook at the ready in which to draw or write down new ideas. These days I create my own assignments and am continually experimenting with new ideas, materials, and techniques. The latest of these is Solarplate printmaking and there is now a gorgeous, large Takach etching press in my studio to facilitate that work.

When my work contains words, I use my own writing, particularly in my handmade books.

In my more abstract pieces, including drawings, paintings, and Solarprints, I use the tools of the calligrapher to make gestural marks. Often these shapes are based on the ductus strokes of an alphabet, but not meant to be legible. I choose now to create *bodies of work*, or a *series* of pieces based on a specific concept or theme. I work with an idea or technique until I have explored it to my satisfaction. If the work merits it, I seek out a solo exhibition. With my books, the content of the book is the body of work. Printmaking has added the option of creating book editions as well.

I began traveling to Germany to spend time with family in 2009. My visits there also included trips to the Klingspor Museum, the Offenbach Schreibwerkstatt, and the Berlin collection. These powerful experiences of seeing firsthand the strong, graphic qualities of the German calligraphers have ignited in me a brand-new way of working with letterforms, in my hand and on the press. My current series combines my own letter designs as blind embossings with my hand-drawn pencil letters, and is called *Alphabet Soup*.

One of the joys of becoming involved with art and particularly the lettering arts, is the fine people I have gotten to know over the years. I am indebted to my teachers and mentors who truly informed this story. And to my students! It was said by someone during a meal at the Sonoma conference that these gatherings feel like family reunions (sans "baggage") and we were all feeling quite blessed to be there. There is a wonderful blending of professionalism and friendship that has infused my relationships with my calligraphic colleagues. It makes for a rich life, and for that I am grateful.

-- LOUISE GRUNEWALD

# Hermann Zapf

-A REMEMBRANCE



Roman Alphabet with quotations, 1964 Original size 60 x 48 cm

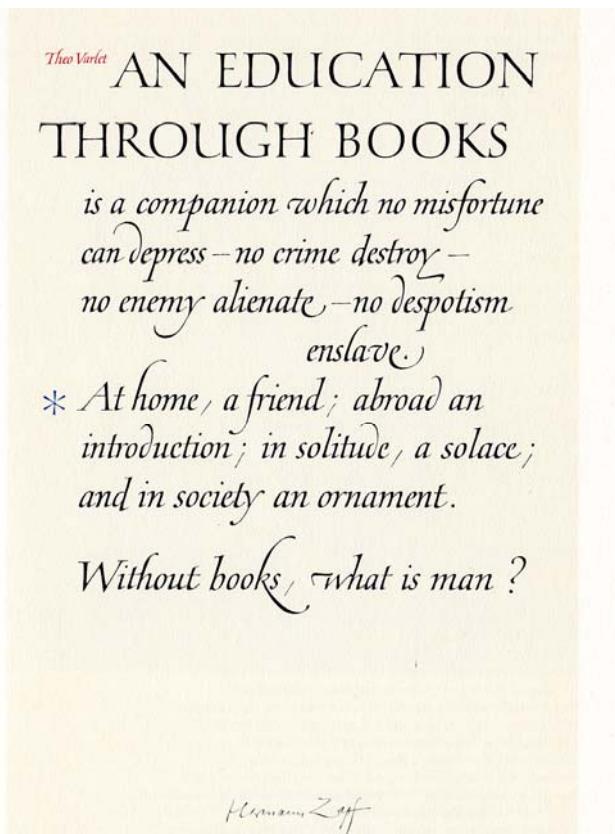
THE WORLD OF CALLIGRAPHY and type noted with sadness the passing of Herman Zapf in June, 2015. He was 96.

With the sadness comes a profound gratitude for a long and remarkably productive life as a calligrapher, type designer, book designer, illustrator, and a fine and generous human being.

Zapf was born in Nuremberg, Germany in 1918. His father was an auto worker and union organizer – and was briefly jailed by the Nazis in the 1930's. Herman Zapf aspired to be an engineer– but that career was unavailable to a young man with his family ties.

His search for a job was difficult indeed, but at age 15 he began a four-year apprenticeship as a retoucher for the Karl Ulrich Lithography Firm.

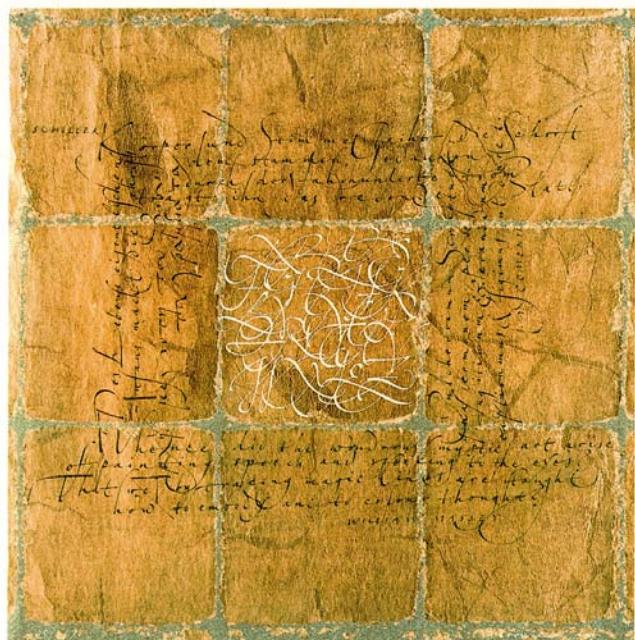
For three solid months, his full-time job was to draw straight lines against a ruler with a pointed brush and Chinese stick ink. Zapf reported, "You cannot *imagine* how boring this was!" After this training he could "rule lines of many weights, start thin, increase thickness; start thick, decrease thickness; rule subtle curved lines—and more." He also noted that these skills were useful in designing type—all of which were drawn about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " high with stick ink and pointed brush on smooth Japanese paper.



Hermann Zapf / Quotation for the Harrison Collection, 1966

Nuremberg has a rich artistic heritage, most notably Albrecht Durer, but also the early printer Anton Koberger, who in 1493 printed the famous Nuremberg Chronicle. Zapf familiarized himself with these treasures and was always interested in drawing and, a bit later, calligraphy and lettering.

Zapf was self-taught as a calligrapher, which he did *not* recommend. "I wish I had a class or teacher – I had to unlearn many bad habits later on!" The only resource I could find was Rudolf Koch's *The Little ABC Book*."



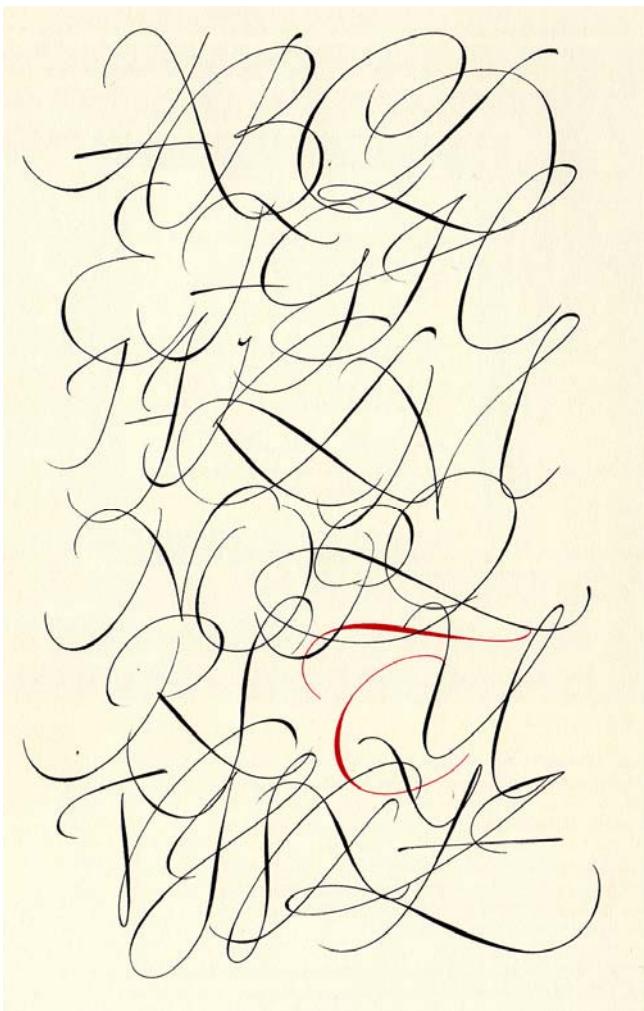
Calligraphy on gold leaf, 1970

To watch Zapf work was a revelation. Unlike most scribes, who "stroke" their letters in distinct, joined strokes, Zapf "sketched" his letters a little bit at a time, with astonishing control. The resulting letters have an unmatched finesse and beauty—with long strokes that vary in weight subtly; graceful curved letters that look as though inflated with the perfect amount of air; or a capital "Y" that looks as if it were the sturdy, graceful shoot of an emerging seedling.

Roman Inscriptional Letters were always a touchstone and standard for Zapf – he noted the wide currency and quality they had throughout the Roman Empire – including fine examples in obscure corners of the empire near Zapf's home.

In the course of his long career, Zapf would design around 200 typefaces, in Latin, Greek, Cyrillic, Arabic, and even Cherokee scripts.

Zapf's unique introduction to calligraphy served him well in the main—he understood that making beautiful letters is as much about *seeing* as it is *doing*.



*Swash Alphabet for Takeo Company, 1983*

If a scribe wants to make a perfectly circular O, one draws not the letter itself, the stroke—but the space it contains. He also understood the primacy of the gesture—the arc or shape that a letter embarks on when it starts its dance on a page. This is best seen in his wonderful handwriting, which he adapted some years ago into the magisterial type font Zapfino.

He was able to demonstrate these skills easily on papers of all kinds; famously on glass for Hallmark cards in the 1960's (which was filmed), fluidly sketching with a diamond or pointed glass tool to engrave a goblet, for instance; or



*Plate III from Pen & Graver, 1950*

even rendering remarkable letters with his trademark subtleties with chalk on a chalkboard.

I have a wonderful swash alphabet in fine ballpoint that he did as a demonstration at a class I was fortunate to attend. Pleasantly jocular, he talked away, practicing each letter then whipping it quickly onto the page. Then, ever so gently, he would come back and add weight to the strokes exactly where he wanted. We told him about the vintage television show "Zorro" (with the hero's famous sword Z), and with a wry grin, Zapf said, "I think I like this Zorro!"

I have found this method quite useful in my own calligraphy—especially for monograms or logotypes where one requires fluidity and control.

Zapf produced the lettering for his memorable *Pen & Graver* just before the outbreak of World War II. These were engraved into lead plates by the noted German punch cutter August Rosenberger while in Frankfurt's bomb shelters during the war. The book was published in the early 1950's. The connoisseur of fine letters, Jan seminal figure. In the end, he became a kind of engineer after all—coming up with some of the first methods to determine the vectors which allow digital type to flourish.

I cherish with a special fondness the two weeks I spent studying calligraphy with Herman Zapf at the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1983. His talent, astonishing skill, humor, and humanity were ever present and stunningly evident in his glorious letters. Edward Johnston wrote: "Our task is to make good letters and arrange them well."

Herman Zapf was a superb master of this ideal.

-DAVID ASHLEY

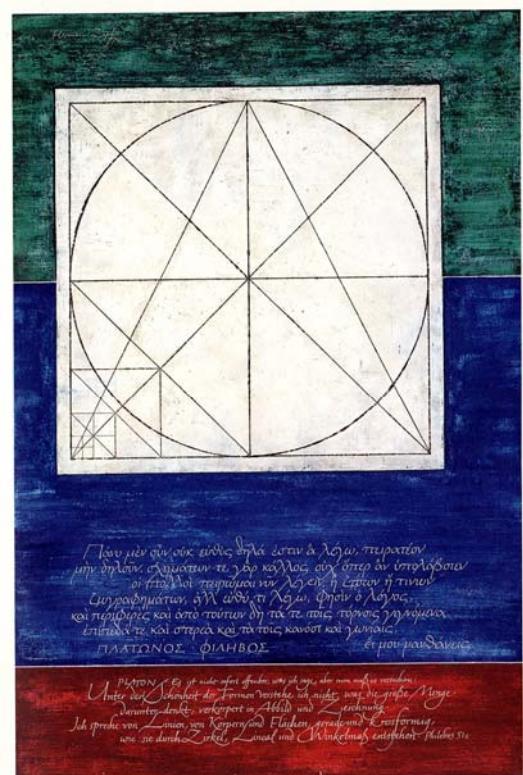


Bookmark, 1980's

#### ABOUT THE TYPE:

The body of this newsletter is set in Palatino, designed by Hermann Zapf in the early 1950's. This design was inspired by his studies of Classical and Renaissance inscriptive capitals in Italy in the years following the war. His preferred name was always "Medici", but the Stempel foundry chose the name "Palatino," named after the sixteenth century Italian writing master.

The captions are set in Cataneo, designed by Jacqueline Sakwa, 1991-92. "Designed in the spirit of sixteenth century Italian writing master Bernardino Cataneo."



Sgraffito Panel, Tempera and oil, 1970



From Das Blumenbuch, 1946  
Plates engraved by August Rosenberger,  
hand colored



## **TRADITIONAL PAPER TREATMENTS:**

Many scribes are familiar with Gum Sandarac, which when lightly pulverized and placed in a little linen or cotton bag, tied shut, is "pounced" onto your ruled sheet before writing. This is a type of resin that is especially useful to inhibit the flow of ink just a little, and give crisp, clean strokes. Sandarac is also really good if you need to put one color of gouache or ink on top of another color, to prevent excess spreading.

On the other side of the spectrum are papers that are so smooth and slick that it can be hard to letter on them. For that, scribes can use Drafting Pounce. For this, a very small amount is shaken onto the paper, and a felt top on the can is used to spread the pounce around. Then, virtually all of the pounce is brushed off, and you are ready to write! With a little practice, this skill is easily acquired. The main ingredient of Drafting Pounce is powdered pumice, so you could also use pumice powder, as you would for work on Calfskin Vellum.

## **NON-TRADITIONAL PAPER TREATMENTS:**

For Asian or non-western papers that are unsized, there are a few techniques to consider. One, the sheet can be sized with a coat of Methyl Cellulose, which is brushed onto the paper, and then pressed between blotters until dry. A similar treatment is to use Golden Polymer Varnish with UVLS (Satin), mixed in a ratio of five parts water to one of varnish, brushed onto the paper and then pressed between blotters to dry. (This tip is from Suzanne Moore.)

Islamic Scribes characteristically use papers that have been thoroughly burnished with an agate. For softer handmade and Ingres papers, I have

developed a version of this. On a heavy 1/2" glass sheet, I place the paper under a large piece of .005" Duralar Mylar. I then burnish the whole sheet with a large agate burnisher (wide, made to burnish the tops of books when gilding book pages.) I burnish thoroughly in both directions, flip the paper over and do the other side, and then return to the first side for another pass. This makes a soft-surface paper (such as German Ingres, Bugra or Nideggen) have a much smoother surface, with fewer splatters and fiber catches.

-- David Ashley

This newsletter has been long in the making—I did newsletters for the Colorado Calligraphers' Guild many years ago, and have had ideas for others for a few years.

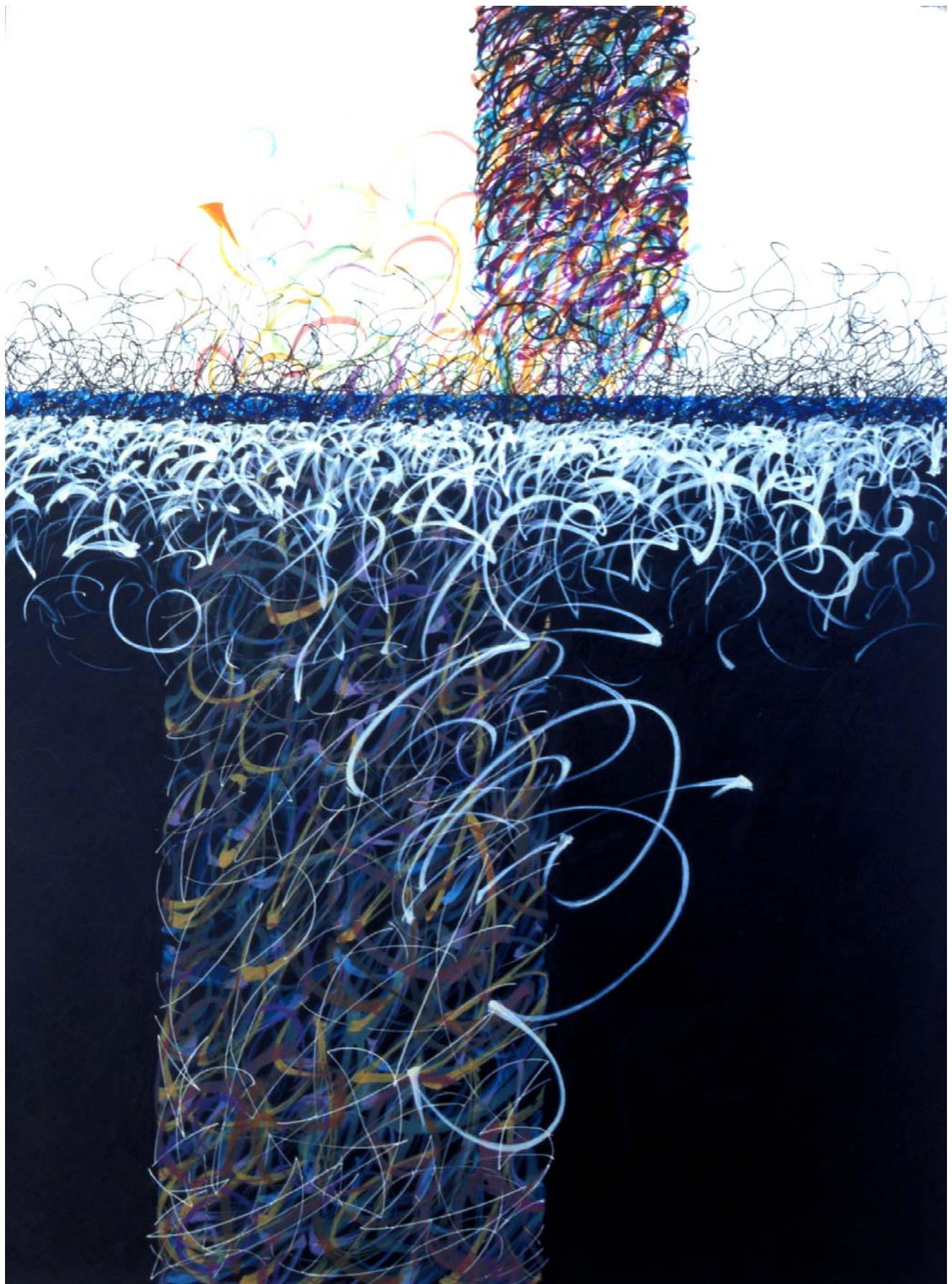
Alas, time, family and medical matters have delayed me, but at last, I am getting to the point where I have the articles, and have someone to help me with the digital parts (not my strong suit!) so the result is at last in your hands!

We start this issue with a fine article about Louise Grunewald, originally printed in the Bay Area Friends of Calligraphy Newsletter, it is reprinted with the kind permission of both Louise and F.O.C.

I am also reprinting my remembrance of Hermann Zapf—there were glitches in the version that came out in 2015, some parts were “eaten”...so thanks for indulging me.

Look forward to more articles by and about Louise in the next issue, and an article about Renee Jorgensen’s large St. John’s Illuminated Piece. Please forward any of your ideas to me!

-- DAVID ASHLEY, EDITOR



*Balancing Art, Calligraphic painting, 2006*