

A sense of déjà vu



Stations of a Bookbinder's Life: Peter D. Verheyen

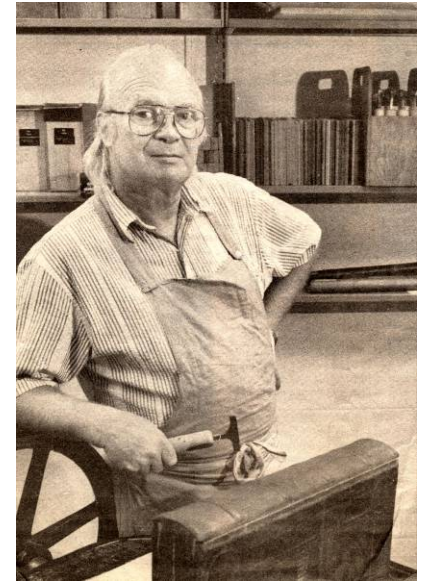
*Cornell University Book Arts Club
Ithaca, New York
October 11, 2007*



Who would have thought?

Beginnings

- Introduced to as student by John Dean at Johns Hopkins
 - Rehousing and book repair
 - Challenging production environment
 - Nurturing environment and real look at field as profession due to apprenticeship program being on site.
 - Volunteering with Paper Conservator.
 - “Once a twit, always a twit”



A First Look at the Old World

○ Nuremberg

- Return to old stomping ground
 - Haunted galleries as small child
- Learning the basics of the German binding and “the trade”
 - Hierarchical
 - Steeped in traditions
- Experience working with old materials
 - Not just blank books
 - Variety of structures
 - First encounters with leather



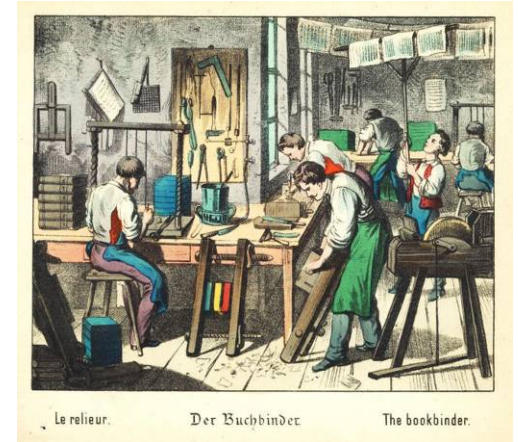


A First Look at the Old World

- Formed decision to “return” to Germany to learn trade towards career in conservation
 - Lack of opportunities to learn in US
 - Columbia program still young
 - No formal schools/programs in US
 - No formal apprenticeship system, and informal hard to come by
 - Opportunity to learn about “old” culture since emigration to US as a child
 - Where do I belong
 - Opportunity to learn in a system steeped in tradition
 - Very different from current system of learning
 - Regulated in terms of learning outcomes and practice of the trade
 - Ensured minimum level of competency
 - Vast change in landscape since 1987

Return to US: Finding a “Meister”

- Application to trade “hand” binderies
 - Apprenticeship required for conservation programs
 - Definition of “hand” bindery very broad
 - “Letters of application” and resume
 - Hand-written...
 - Letters of interest and interview trip



A “Meister”: Kunstbuchbinderei D. Klein

- “Artist’s colony” in heart of Ruhr Valley

- Exposure to creative people
- Wide range of “treatments.”
- Small family run bindery
 - Chance to learn more
- In heart of large industrial area
 - Area in decline and transformation



DK



Apprenticeship / Lehre

- Regimented learning
 - Hierarchical and linear
 - Same skill sets nation-wide
 - Learning by doing/repetition
 - Production environment
 - Lots of “library binding,” all by hand
- Trade School



„Irgendwelche Beschwerden?“

Life of a “Lehrling”

- Starting at the bottom
 - Sweeping, cleaning, sorting
- Working in large batches
 - Individual or as part of “team”
- Blind obedience
 - The master is always right, ...
- Keeping notes
 - Journals part of formal requirements
 - Still useful today



Life of a “Lehrling”

○ Trade school

- Filled in gaps between what was required and what was learned in shop
- Learning to work with the big toys
 - Exposure to industrial binding and equipment
 - Change and adjust 2 meter guillotine blade alone
 - Program cuts to create a postage stamp from A0 (ca 30” x 40”_
- Chance to socialize and learn from peers.



Teilansicht der Buchbinderei
Buchbinder-Fachschule Badersleben a. Harz

An apprenticeship teaches one how to work, be able to complete core tasks, work with a variety of materials, all in a high production environment. These skills are requisite for all further levels of work.

Life of a “Lehrling”

○ Examination

- Three pieces under supervision
- Theory
- “Loßsprechung”
 - Being spoken free of the “Meister”

○ Next steps and their value

- Journeyman – work in various shops and assimilate with primary training
- Master – not just craft, but tools for managing business and staff

Prüfungszeugnis
(nach § 31 HwO)

Herr/Frau/Fräulein
Peter Verheyen
Wittener Str. 31
4650 Gelsenkirchen

geb. am 14. Januar 1963
hat vom 01.08.1985 bis 11.07.1987
im Betrieb Dietmar Klein, Half-
mannsweg 52, 4650 Gelsenkirchen
das Buchbinder
Handwerk erlernt.

Er/Sie hat vor dem zuständigen Prüfungsausschuß die
Gesellenprüfung
abgelegt und mit folgenden Ergebnissen bestanden

Fertigkeitsprüfung befriedigend
Kenntnisprüfung befriedigend
4400 Münster, den 11. Juli 1987
Ort/Tag der letzten Prüfungsteilnahme

Im einzelnen wurden folgende Ergebnisse erzielt:

Gesellenstück	befriedigend
Arbeitsprobe	befriedigend
freies Stück:	gut
Fachkunde/Technologie	befriedigend
Fachrechnen/Techn. angew. Mathematik	befriedigend
Fachzeichnen/Techn. Zeichnen	./.
Diktat:	befriedigend
Wirtschafts- u. Sozialkunde	gut

DER VORSITZENDE
DES GESELLENPRÜFUNGS-AUSSCHUSSES
Linka Rabe-Rohling
Unterschrift

DER BEAUFTRAGTE
DER ZUSTÄNDIGEN STELLE
[Signature]
Buchbinder-Innung
Münster

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Wander Years as “Journeyman”

- Centro del bel Libro, Ascona
- Mellon Internship, Folger Shakespeare Library
- Chicago
 - Monastery Hill & William Minter
- Yale
- Cornell
- Syracuse
 - First chance to set up “own” shop



Journeyman on his wanderings

Centro del bel Libro

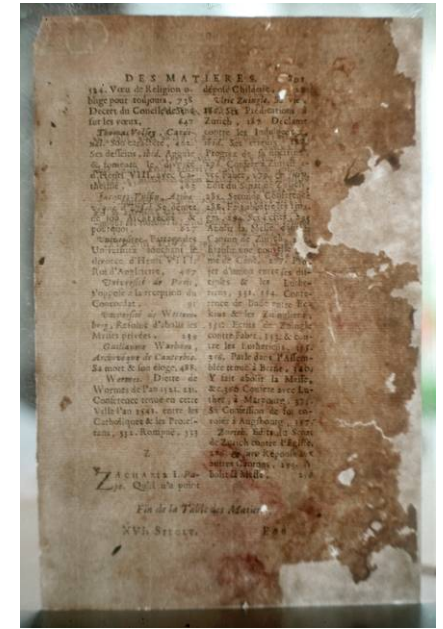


- Schools for artistic bookbinding and conservation
 - Course length varied
 - Int'l students
 - Apprenticeship required



Centro del bel Libro

- Participated in full conservation program
 - Chemistry
 - Paper
 - Leather
 - Wooden boards
- Intensive
- Practical



Back in the U.S...

- Finding a job
- Internship at Folger
 - Finer points of conservation
- Monastery Hill to William Minter
 - Old family trade bindery with conservation studio
 - Move to Minter best for professional growth
 - Challenging
 - Greater responsibilities
 - Supportive



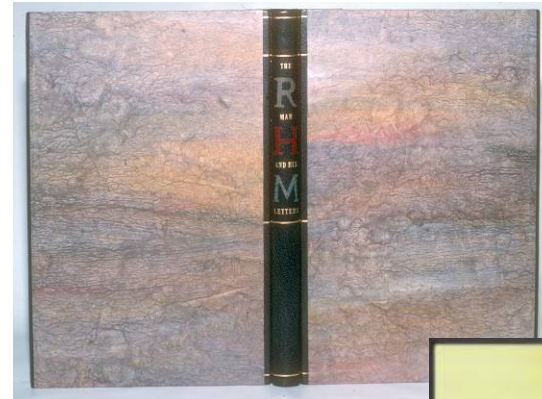
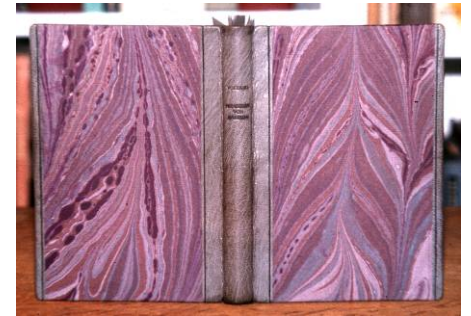
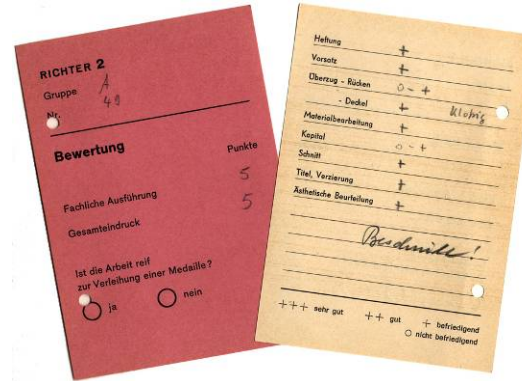


Academia and new directions

- Yale
 - First job in research library
- Into the wilds
 - Cornell
 - Greater responsibilities for treatment decisions
 - Seduced by digital
 - Syracuse
 - The ultimate work-study job. Established lab, worked as conservator, earned MLS, and became an “administrator”
- Away from support system
 - New tools and ventures
 - Will get back to later

Exhibitions and Creative Binding

- First as apprentice
 - Reality check
- Chicago Hand Bookbinders
- GBW
 - Paralleled by 1st stint as GBW Exhibits Chair



Binding Interests

- Love of French vs. German tradition

- Materials

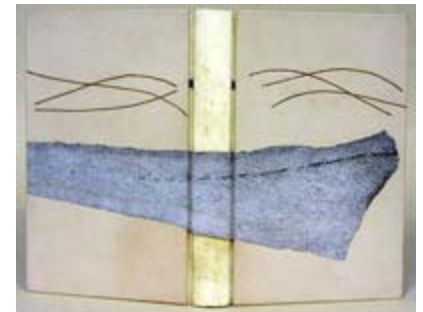
- Paper
- Cloth
- Leather
- Vellum

- Structures

- Case binding
- Millimeter binding
- Vellum on boards
- Springback

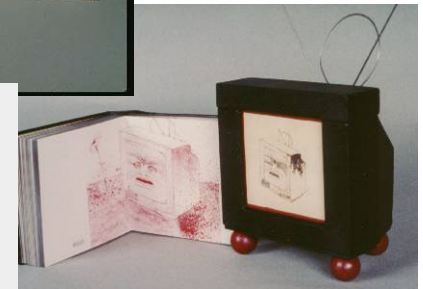
- Other

- Pastepapers
- Historic endbands



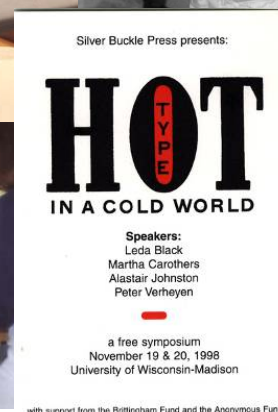
Highpoints

- An American in Paris
 - *Contemporary American Bookbinding*
- 50 x 25
- *2nd National Book and Paper Arts Biennial*
- SoB Competition
 - Binding awarded the Harmatan Leather Award for Forwarding in the Society of Bookbinders' 2003 Competition



Giving Back

- Teaching
 - Case binding
 - Millimeter binding
 - Vellum on boards
 - Presenting at 2001 GBW Standards first “big gig”
 - Springback
 - Pastepapers
 - Historic endbands
- The Guild of Book Workers
- Lectures and articles
- Other ventures



The Guild of Book Workers

○ Exhibitions Chair for 6 + 2 years

- Why start small

- Fine Printers Finely Bound Too, 1992
- Paper Bound, 1996

○ Publicity / PR Chair for 6 years

- Brought Guild online

- Exhibits
- Communications
 - Internal
 - External



Yes, it's a book



Sharon Bennett/University Photography
Peter Verheyen, Cornell rare book conservator and exhibition chair of the Guild of Book Workers, can't resist a book sculpture by book binder designer Jan Sobata. The book is *William Butler Yeats, Poems of W.B. Yeats*. The traveling exhibition is on display at the Carl A. Kroch Library through June 17. The juried exhibition is being hosted by the Department of Rare and Manuscript Collections.

Guild of Book Workers 100th

- Back again.
 - Biggest Guild exhibit, ever
 - Organizer
 - Participant
- Swansong with Guild
 - Repercussions and “starting over”



Other Ventures

- Book_Arts-L listserv
 - Founded to overcome geographical isolation in 1994
 - Over 2000 subscribers worldwide
 - Virtual Community
- *Book Arts Web*
 - Since 1995, grown to become largest book arts resource online
- *The Bonefolder*
 - A foray into “open access”, 2004-



What's Next?

- Refocus on selected binding projects
 - Designer Bookbinders' 2008 competition
 - Guild of Book Workers' exhibitions
- Continued teaching and mentoring
- Continue and refocus online activities
 - *Bonefolder*: Develop plan to make sustainable
 - *Book Arts Web*: Redesign and slim down
 - List: How much longer...
- Thoughts of manual on German techniques in English



*The future?
Is there a future?*