

The
SCRIBES
& Scribblers

Inklings

Vol. 39, No. 4 The Fort Worth Calligraphers Guild

December 2017



COVER ART

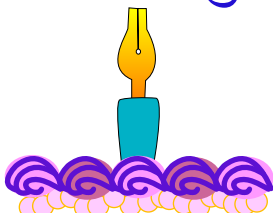
Artist Suzanne Raif immediately put the Jubilee Script she learned at the Carol DuBosch Retreat to work. See Suzanne's project directions elsewhere in this newsletter (page 6). "JOY" was lettered in red ink with a 6mm Parallel Pen.



Inklings is published by the Fort Worth Calligraphers Guild monthly, September through May. To submit an article for this publication, please email text to news@fortworthcalligraphers.com - attention Newsletter Editor, by the 26th of the month prior to the publication. Text should be in MS Word document or equivalent. Photos should be submitted in JPEG 300dpi format. Prints and hard copy can be mailed to P.O. Box 101732, Fort Worth, TX 76185. We try our best to give our members accurate and current information.



Happy
Birthday!



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From the President's Pen

Beginning, Middle and End

Every story has a beginning, a middle and an end. The year 2017 is such a story.

Glancing through my 2017 calendar — the one I try to carry with me at all times because ya never know what's gonna insert itself into the schedule, ya never know what's gonna change or drop on a given day — I see some trends of what's apparently important in my life. I can tell because of what gets in the grids of my month. Almost every block is allocated to 'something.'

In my own calendar, I see some freelance work, some craft time, a little time for art journal, a good bit of music rehearsal and performances, and weekly (Sunday school, church) and monthly commitments like (guess what) Fort Worth Calligraphers Guild or other arts organizations, some workshops, exhibit participation (two for FWCG and two for Kaligrafos). I see volunteer work, making a 25-year scrapbook for a friend; making printed programs for hubby's and my music groups, and monthly newsletter for another. There were some months when I got to teach lettering to some non-calligraphers; time for knee surgery, rehab and recovery; some time for travel (two singing events and family reunion at Thanksgiving). This year, more than any year past, I have made time to lunch with friends. It keeps us connected, aware, challenged.

What doesn't show in my calendar, however, were the bits of time spent on Facebook and Pinterest. Nor actual time for lettering. Or much on a daily basis like meal prep, taking vitamins, exercise, reading, etc. Those are moments that are "given" but not written down (like work, family, chores).

There's a little time left for lettering this year: you can locate and wrap a gently used or new calligraphic item for the December meeting/party. You can stay and letter gift tags for the gifts you send. See Mary's article on gift tins with chalk lettering. You can elegantly address holiday card envelopes (and if you're really industrious, letter and/or make the cards, tags or gifts you send).*

There's also an opportunity to share lettering with others by gifting one of our newly printed calendars for 2018 to family or friends or associates.

What is the story of your year 2017? What will be the beginning of your 2018 story? I have bought a journal/calendar for 2018 to keep an even better record of the new year. I am purposing to do at least one calligraphic line on every day's page — either a quote or my thought of that day. If you like that idea, let's plan to review these in a couple of months and see how the daily-ness of the idea is working. At least it is a GOAL.

Letter lavishly this month!
Sharon Schmidt, President

** In fact, if you do choose to design and send calligraphic Christmas or holiday card, or handmade gifts, or even letter on gift tags, do please photograph or scan and send to me. We will post them in the January newsletter.*

HARVEY'S HELPFUL HINTS



DECEMBER 2017

THE VINTAGE HUNT #100 GREY NIB has the nib spotlight shining on it this month! It is smaller than average in size, but has a delightful snap to the tines allowing for wide swells and delightfully fine upstrokes. This nib will soon become your “go to” nib in your collection as it reduces your down stroke pressure which reduces your hand fatigue. Buy several because when you touch it to paper, you will discover the beauty of its action.

A WONDERFUL “DIPPING CUP” is a single candlestick crystal or plastic holder (purchased at any craft store) which can hold a good supply of ink, and can be used with either broad or pointed nib pens. Be sure to secure it to your writing table so that it won't get knocked off. When not in use, you can keep out dust and critters by inserting a wine cork into the mouth of the holder. This can be a very useful tool every time you use your ink.

KEEP A DUSTING BRUSH HANDY for removing your erasure crumbles from your work. Make sure the ink has dried before using it. And for that purpose you should keep a hair dryer close by when using ink – to help the ink dry faster.

DID YOU KNOW PELIKAN 4001 (BLACK INK) DRIES PERMANENTLY? It is very pleasant to use, water based, and a dense black when dry.

TO GIVE YOUR PAPER AN “AGED” LOOK you can

use coffee or tea in a “mister” to spray the paper, or dip a cotton ball into the liquid to dab on the paper. By tearing the paper edges slightly, or cutting out small pieces from the sides, then dabbing the paper will give an authentic look.

BABY WIPES WILL HELP REMOVE INK STAINS from hands and fingers if the ink hasn't dried and set. Also use paper coffee filters as pen wipes – they will not leave lint.

TENSION ADDS UP OVER WRITING TIME so using your head “write” numbers 1 thru 10 with your head to help loosen up. If you are really tight “write” the whole alphabet with your head. One of the best methods to relax is to take a 15-30 minute break every hour or so. You will find that this helps reduce hand fatigue also.

TO KEEP AN INK BLOTTER HANDY stand a roll of paper towels or a roll of bathroom tissue on your work area – out of the way, but handy enough to reach. Be safe, not sorry.

For beautiful calligraphy, contact me for your vintage nibs and supplies at: penstaff@verizon.net, (H) 469-320-9754, (C) 817-470-2735 (I have moved).

Harvey Anton, til next month . . .

Welcome New Members

Please add the following new members to your 2017-2018 Directory.

If you haven't received your 2017-2018 Guild Directory, let Linda Jones know at Lindajones817@gmail.com.

Nancy Santiago Fuentes
3960 N Story Road, Apt. 825
Irving, TX 75038
nancymysantiago@gmail.com

Aug 20
863-207-2718

Brooke Owen
2724 Lakeside Drive
Burleson, TX 76028
brookeowen333@gmail.com

Dec 11
817-343-9822

Board Meeting Alert!

The guild's board will convene in early January. Guild president Sharon Schmidt will contact the committee members to arrange a mutually convenient date.

Dress Up Those Holiday Cookie Tins with Calligraphy

We all know we shouldn't judge a book by its cover, or a wine by its pretty label, or a letter by its gorgeous handwriting, but most of us do it anyway -- and that's good news for us calligraphers, especially those of us who bake so-so to sorta burnt holiday cookies like me. Do you want to jazz up your cookies up by packaging them in beautifully hand-decorated holiday tins? Do you want to transform your simple gift into a work of art? Do you want to sit back and enjoy the ooh's and ah's of your friends and family when they receive a simple tin can of cookies? Then read on.

Supplies:

Round white cookie tins – The Container Store has reasonably-priced round tins in several sizes

Black Chalkboard Paint – Krylon makes one – Hobby Lobby sells it – get that 40% off coupon

Drop cloth, masking tape

White marker – I like the Faber-Castell Pitt Artist Pen – white 101 – it's big and covers well

Cookies – home-made, store-bought, or left-overs from the office party (shhh, don't tell)

What to do:

1. Tape around the side-edge of the cookie tin lid(s)
2. Place all the lids on a drop cloth (I laid mine out in the back yard) and spray the tops with black chalkboard paint (I moved mine inside to dry so leaves and dust wouldn't stick to the wet paint)
3. After they are dry, remove the masking tape, and begin writing
4. Although the Faber-Castell pens are India ink and waterproof – I found that they are not so waterproof on the chalkboard paint – so if you make a mistake, try washing it off with soap and water. If that doesn't work, you can always respray – it dries fast.

Inspiration:

Search “holiday chalkboard tags” for ideas on the internet



Happy Baking, Happy Writing, Happy Holidays!

— Mary DeChellis

Simplify!

Last month, our long-distance member, Betty Barna from Richardson, made me think! She said, in regard to calligraphic book design (but it can apply to so many areas of life), one should SIMPLIFY. In book design, she mentioned predetermined attributes such as size of paper, color choices, etc. could be decided ahead of the project. That way, you'd know what materials you'd be working with, and all that would remain would be what you'd choose to say.

Now, making a calligraphic book (actually, ANY lettering project you choose) represents sizable commitments of time, resources, thought processes, etc. Your time is valuable. Therefore, it follows that, to commit to this endeavor, you would want to “say something significant.”

So, how would you decide on a project worthy of your time, your creativity, your love of letters, and also say something bold or beautiful with your art?

And, while you are at it, what can you decide ahead of time that will aid in executing the project efficiently and skillfully?

Having immersed myself for many years in lettering arts, I'd have to surmise that, first, you'd want to (1) familiarize yourself with hand lettering choices, styles. Are you gravitating to historical or liturgical letters as seen in manuscripts? Are you in love with the elegant grace of pointed pen? Do you love the artsy and energetic look of brush letters? Have you decided? Now pick ONE of those to (2) explore, research and practice. Unless you are a life-long student and teacher of letters, i.e., Sheila Waters or Donald Jackson, you probably haven't had systematic study of letters. Make it a GOAL to (3) really look at letter forms, study their width-to-height ratio, analyze if it is done by broad edged pen, pointed nib or brush (pointed or flat). Then (4) mindfully practice the hand. Use clean tools, fresh ink, good paper. Don't write out pages of ABCs. Slow down and make three really good A shapes that are proportionate, consistent pen angle, consistent slope. Then move on. Finally, in this context of Simplification, (5) pick a 3-line quote of significance to you and write it out (including good line spacing). Boom.

As with most creative forms of expression, the bulk of the time is spent in PREPARATION (gathering info), INCUBATION (studying info, testing papers, fluids, techniques), and ILLUMINATION (the spark of insight that leads to igniting your imagination with a project or goal). The rest of the story (EVALUATION and IMPLEMENTATION) reveal themselves in time. You can't get “there” without the groundwork.

I believe, if you letter with these things in mind, your hand will become comfortable, your arm muscles will begin to ‘remember’ how to make consistent arcs and slants. Your lettering will improve. Once you log a few significant sessions like this, your future calendar pieces or exhibit pieces will be easier to execute and more organic to what you have been practicing.

Hopefully these little tips will help your lettering awareness to sharpen and your results to satisfy. Our guild has its own library of reference books that are otherwise hard to find at public libraries. If you have a specific interest, let me know and I'll locate a book for you that may help. Let me know via email if any of this has helped inspire you. I have a couple of other thoughts (future articles) if so.

Are there other areas of your life that will benefit from trying to SIMPLIFY?

— Sharon Schmidt

sim•pli•fy (ˈsim-plə-fi)

verb = make (something) simpler or **easier to do** [or understand].

synonyms: make plain, **clarify**, make more comprehensible/intelligible

Christmas Tree Banners

These banners create a focal point in your Christmas tree as well as help to fill bare areas. Letter words or a message of your choice on paper and mount to scrapbook paper or any type of paper in any color that you desire. There are no hard and fast rules – your imagination is the limit.

The banner may be decorated with stamps, stickers, embossing, glitter, etc. You may ink or paint the edges. Again, anything that pleases you works.

Banners do not have to be the size given in the video listed below. You can make them any size or proportion that you desire. It is not required to mount it onto another type of paper. If you are working with large sheets of sturdy paper, your banner can be one length and will require little or no assembly. Also, banners are not limited to Christmas Trees. They could be used to decorate the mantle, doors, windows, centerpieces or wreaths. Small ones could be made for place settings.



Christmas Tree Banner created by Suzanne Raif. Script is the Jubilee Script we learned at the Carol DuBosch Retreat back in October. She did the lettering with red ink and a 6 mm Parallel Pen.

The inspiration for my banner was a YouTube video: Banners as Ornaments for Christmas Tree by Maymay Made It Crafts; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_-NJigtzfk.

Supplies:

Cardstock, specialty paper, scrapbook paper, etc.

Calligraphy pen or brush

Ink

Double sided tape

Scissors

Paper cutter

Embellishments (optional)

Stamps, glitter, foil, stickers, embossing powder, watercolor, metallic paints or inks

Directions:

For my banner, I used 8 ½ x 11 cardstock and 12 x 12 scrapbook paper. Adjust measurements according to

what you are using. My banner consists of a center piece and two end (or tail) pieces. I lettered the center piece before assembling the banner.

Cut the following for each banner

White card stock:

One 3 1/2 x 11 inch piece to letter on

Two 3 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch pieces for the tail pieces

Scrapbook paper:

One 4 x 11 inch

Two 4 x 5 inch for the tail pieces

Mount white cardstock onto scrapbook paper using double stick tape. Cut “fish tail” edge to tail pieces and mount white cardstock onto scrapbook paper using double stick tape.

Using 1/4” double stick tape, adhere tail pieces to each end of the center piece.

Apply additional embellishments, as desired.

Curve center portion by gently working with your hands, then bend end portions forward to make banner three dimensional.

Gently place into boughs of tree. Tada!

— *Suzanne Raif*

2018 FWCG Calendars

If you would like to reserve one or more calendars (delivered to our December 14 meeting), please contact Nancy Teigen at 817-346-7684 (home number). Calendars sell for \$10 each (28 pages full color). They are coil bound to lay flat (and drilled to hang handily near your computer). If you cannot make it to the meeting for pickup, we can mail to you. Postage for a single calendar is something like \$2.12 or we can work out another delivery time. We hope to hear from you right away.

Oh yes, the newer pricing structure is: one to two = \$10 each, three to six = \$9 each, seven to ten = \$8 each, eleven or more = \$7 each.

Minutes of our Meeting

Fort Worth Calligraphers Guild
November 9, 2017
General Meeting

Meeting was called to order by president Sharon Schmidt at 6:40 p.m. We had 9 members present tonight. Previous meeting's minutes were reviewed and approved. The treasurer's report was read and approved, although Ollie was not able to be at the meeting due to an injury and inability to drive.

Old Business: Our exhibit for Haltom City Public Library was taken down after a month of showing. Thanks to Mary Jane Ott for helping with that.

Newsletter contributions are due Tuesday, November 28.

Last call for calendar submissions, see Nancy Teigen. Color

scan 300 dpi, email to Nancy by November 13.

Website update by Monica Kelley, check it out.

New Business: SWCC Feb 23-25, 2018; review of expected expenses. Because of housing that weekend, adequate funds were approved to add to that line item in the budget.

December program = desserts and calligraphic gift exchange.

Welcome new member Brooke Owen of Burleson Texas.

The program on lettering with Scratchboard will be presented by Tom Campos following a five minute break.

Adjourn 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Trudie Simpson

Experimenting with Scratchboard Art

The FWCG program for November 9, 2017 featured a new medium for us to try incorporating lettering and drawing skills. Tom Campos, as the presenter, gave a quick overview of the process (explained below) and furnished us with scratchboard purchased through Dick Blick. See several photographs that accompany this article.

Scratchboard refers to both a fine-art medium, and an illustrative technique using sharp knives and tools for engraving into a thin layer of white China clay that is coated with dark, often black India ink. This produces mainly black and white illustrations with stark highlights and black backgrounds. Scratchboard Art by graphic artists can produce three-dimensional drawings, unlike works by craftsmen and artists using Wood-cuts or Silhouettes which produce a two-dimensional representation of the outline or cutout of an object or drawing.

It is helpful to first experiment with different tools to get a feel for what they can do and then try various techniques like the following:

- Hatching: scratch making parallel lines
- Varied Hatching: scratch sequential thin, thick, thin lines
- Cross Hatching: scratch parallel lines in one direction and then in the opposite
- Contour Hatching: scratch curved lines to give image depth and a three-dimensional look.
- Stippling: scratch small dots depicting certain kinds of textures or parts of a picture plane. Closely placed dots create lighter area to simulate the highlights of the object.

To begin, lightly draw design on the scratchboard with a pencil. Indicate the lighter and lesser shadows. Using a sharp implement, gently scratch into the board to create your design. You can use sandpaper or a flat area of a blade or fingernail file to remove larger surfaces.

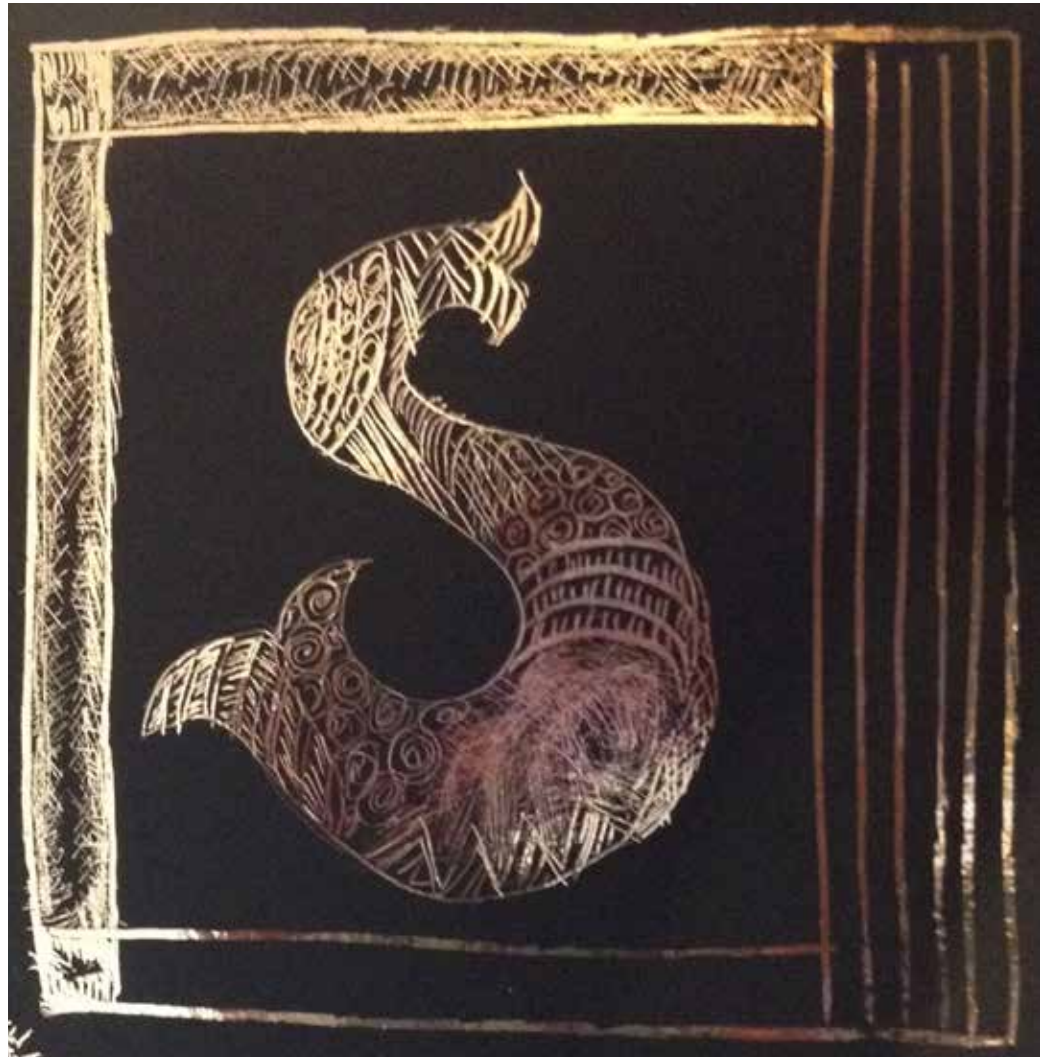
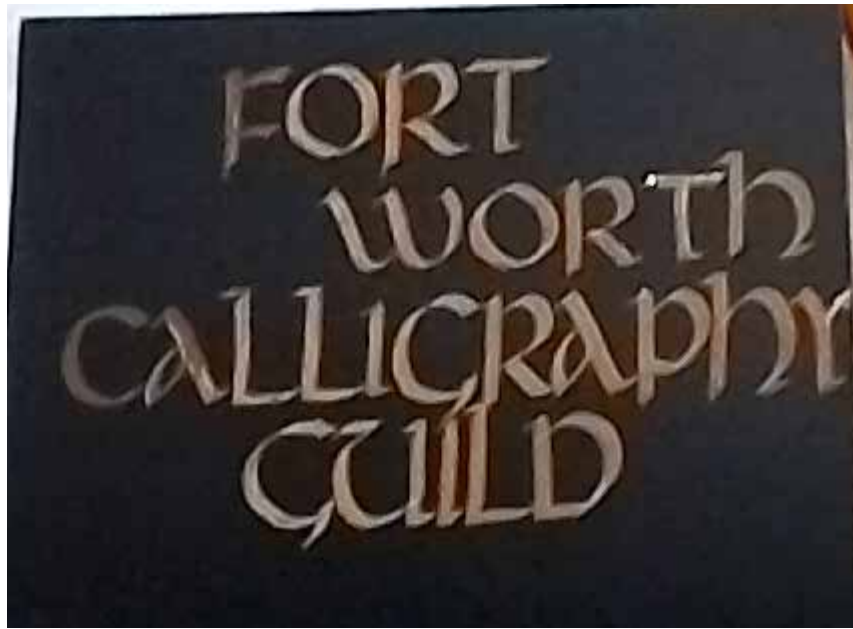
As you work, cover your scratchboard surface with a sheet of paper. This protects your image from the oils in your hands and the residue ink that is being removed.

Suggested tools: pencil, small ruler, a soft brush, a small black/white photo or drawing, quotes or ideas to complete a piece. Scratching implements include but are not limited to an X-acto knife, small metal nail file, push pin or even old pen nibs. Just about any sharp object is a possible tool. Tom showed us how the flanged end of a push pin could be cut off and inserted into an empty Bic pen shaft, X-acto knife handle (largest size) or something comparable. Jonathan Berg used a flat head screwdriver which worked beautifully for his Uncial lettering. I tried a brass brush which made delicate and airy strokes. There is a special scratchboard tool that can be purchased, but I found that an X-acto knife worked very nicely.

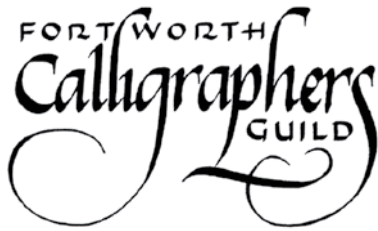
Tom provided everyone with a scratchboard and we were expecting the hidden layer to be white. But it was a glimmering gold. Very lovely. This was a fun program which provides an excellent application for calligraphy.

You can find organizations like the Scratchboard.org and International Society of Scratchboard Artists for general information and intricately drawn gallery works. You can also Google search for images or view YouTube videos of Scratchboard Art. There is a wide variety of techniques, tools and scratchboard styles – some very impressionistic and others almost photo-realistic and some abstract and rustic looking.

The following page has samples of participant's work from that night. Please check our website, www.fortworthcalligraphersguild.com, for snapshots of other participants' work.



Top right is scratchboard art done by Jonathan Berg. The designs on the left and the "S" and it's borders were done by Suzanne Raif.



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Guild Meeting

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Meeting Location:

Bedford Public Library
2424 Forest Ridge Drive
Bedford, TX 76021

Holiday Food and Fun for the December Guild Meeting.

The December 14 meeting at Bedford Public Library will include:

- Holiday Desserts and Calligraphic Gift Exchange
- Members and Guests are welcomed to dress up in festive attire (optional)

Please bring some home-made desserts to share.

Those who bring a wrapped “calligraphic gift” can participate in a white elephant gift exchange; meaning participants take a turn in choosing a gift from the table of gifts. Then the fun begins. The next person in turn can steal that previous gift or choose another, until the final gift is gone.

(Steals are limited to three per gift, of which the final person keeps)

Gifts should be limited to \$10 whether new or gently used. They can be inks, books, tools, paints, pads of paper, nibs, holders — anything of benefit to the calligrapher.

The fun begins at 7 pm.

