

No. 108 - July 2018



MINIATURE BOOK SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

Eminent Miniatures

From the
McGehee Miniature
Book Collection



Selected by
Caroline Brandt





**2016: The Lilliput Oval Saloon Collection,
Parts I & II**

2017: The Library of a Gentleman Collector

2018: [Your Collection Here](#)

For more information on consigning,
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Gregory Jung

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello to everyone, I have the opportunity to speak with some members more than others but I welcome comments, contributions, and suggestions from everyone. We have had a lot of good feedback about our new web page and its content. Several new members have mentioned that the website was the key that 'opened the door' for them. Please visit the website and think about what contributions you can make both in pictures as well as feature content. The site was designed to be updated frequently so that we can highlight what we do in the world of miniature books.

The fruits of the planning for the Charlottesville Conclave are certainly beginning to blossom as we are able to count down the days until we all arrive in Charlottesville, on August 10th. My thanks to Rick Hill for his diligent planning work. I am looking forward to the opportunity to chat with everyone in person again. The Conclave is a wonderful experience for sharing and learning and the development of friendships. If you have attended a Conclave you are an MBS ambassador. If you have not had the opportunity to attend and would like to know more about the Conclave, start with the website: WWW.MBS.ORG, or give me a call.

We are continuing to expand our outreach needs and activities as opportunities to grow the organization. Our most important duty as a member of the MBS is to grow our organization through the expansion of our membership roster, especially with young bibliophiles. The MBS is an organization that is rich in member experience. Now is the time to look at where we are and think about where you can help make it happen.

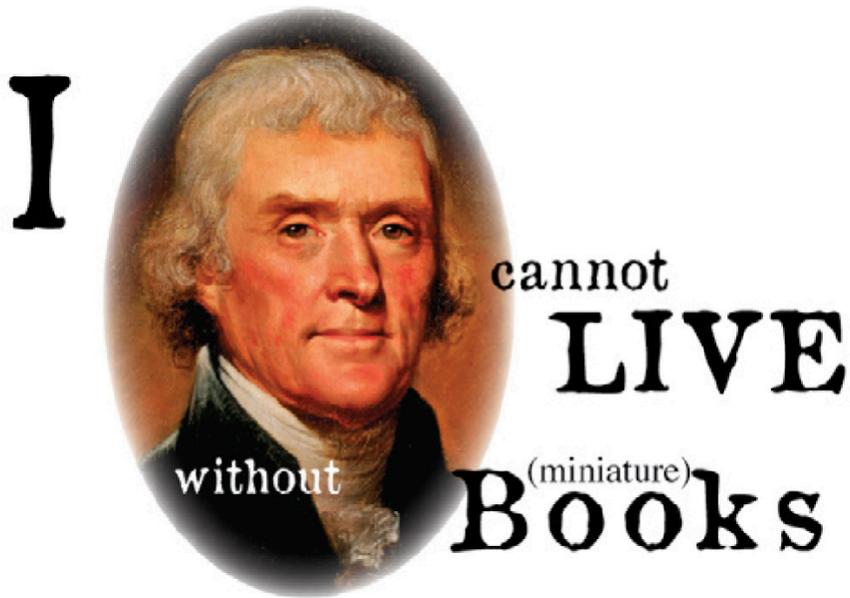
In closing, I am always glad to hear from members about their thoughts, suggestions, and advice or any problem that you may want to communicate. 'Office is always open.' Please feel free to email me at jbroganMBSpres@gmail.com or by telephone, 908.803.5647. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you as President.

Notes from Rick



Rick Hill

Come to the Conclave and find out.



Charlottesville Conclave Program and Sessions

Thursday, August 9

7:00 pm Pre-Conclave Dinner
The Downtown Grille
201 West Main Street

Friday, August 10

10:00 - 12:00 Board Meeting
Omni Hotel James Monroe Room

Friday, August 10

1:00 - 5:00 Registration~Take the Free Trolley to the Chapel Exit. Walk across the street to the Albert and Shirley Small Collections Library.



1:00 - 3:00 Caroline McGehee Miniature Book and Fine Artist's Book Exhibition
Small Collections Library

2:15 - 3:00 Pat Caenarven-Smith Session
Small Library / auditorium

3:00 - 5:00 Rare Book School Reception
Alderman Library

Friday continued on page 5...



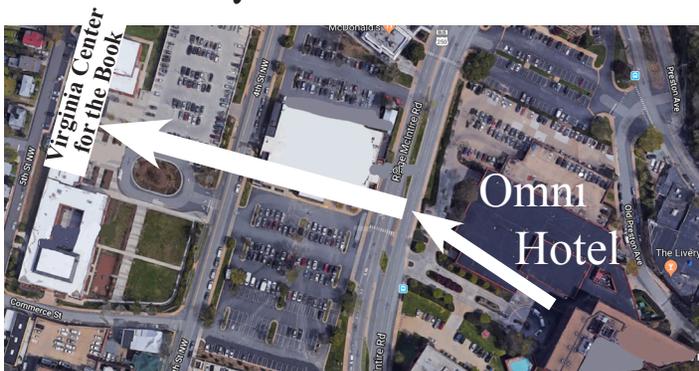
Friday, August 10

- 5:00 - 6:00 Return to Omni Hotel via the Free Trolley
- 6:00 - 9:00 Omni Hotel ~ Cash Bar
- 6:00 - 7:00 Silent Auction
- 6:45 - 8:00 Dinner (announce silent auction winners)
- 8:00 - 9:30 Live Auction

Saturday, August 11

- 7:00 - 8:30 Full Shenandoah Breakfast
- 8:30 Meet at front entrance of Omni Hotel to board bus to Monticello
- 9:30 - 11:30 Tour Monticello
- 12:00 Return to Omni Hotel on bus
- 12:00 - 2:00 Lunch on your own
- 2:00 - 3:00 MBS Membership Meeting
- 3:00 - 3:45 Tony Firman Session
- 3:45 - 4:00 Break
- 4:00 - 4:45 Gabrielle Fox Session
- 6:00 - 8:00 Virginia Center for The Book Reception Come and Go
- 5:00 - Dinner on your own

Map from Omni Hotel to the Virginia Center for the Book Reception 6:00 - 8:00 Saturday



Sunday, August 12

- 7:00 - 8:30 Full Shenandoah Breakfast
- 8:00 - 9:00 Set-up for Book Fair
- 9:00 - 11:00 Book Fair for MBS members
- 11:00 - 4:00 Book Fair open to the public
- 2:00 - 4:00 Virginia Center for The Book Demonstrations
- 6:00 - 9:00 Cash Bar
- 7:00 - 9:30 The Miniature Book Society Awards Banquet
- Guest Speaker:
Dr. Barbara Heritage
Rare Book School

Monday, August 13

Optional Tours on your own

Virginia 
*is for Lovers of
Miniature
Books*

Conclave Deadlines

Registration

Conclave Cost \$295

Deadline for Registration: **July 9**

Send Completed Registration and payment to

Cathie Abney / 3105 Milton Road / Middletown OH 45042-3656

Go to www.mbs.org to download a Conclave Registration Form

Hotel

Omni Hotel Charlottesville 434-971-5500 Press 1

Miniature Book Society Rate: \$189

Cut-off Date for special rate: **July 9**

Keepsakes

Deadline: **August 1** Send to:

Rick Hill

9290 Tower Side Drive #406

Fairfax VA 22031

Silent Auction

Proceeds split 50/50 MBS/Donor

Deadline: **August 1** Send to:

Karen Nyman

7835 Rush Rose Drive #124

Carlsbad CA 92009

Live Auction

Deadline: **July 7** Send to:

Jim Brogan

53 Dreahook Road

Branchburg, NJ 08876

Meet A Book Artist

Miyako Akai to Attend Conclave

A huge part of the thrill of every Conclave is getting to meet some of the most unique and interesting book people in the world. For the people who will attend the Charlottesville Conclave, they will be able to meet a true legend in The Miniature Book Society, Miyako Akai, a book artist from Japan.

A year ago I wrote to Miyako and invited her to attend our upcoming Conclave. I was thrilled to get a response that said she and her husband, Hiroshi, would make the arduous journey.

Besides winning numerous MBS awards, Miyako is a published author of numerous books on book making



Miyako Akai (c) Atsuko (Lasp Inc.).

and teaches workshops throughout Japan.

She brings a sensibility, creativity, and perspective to her unique book making that we have seldom seen in western miniature books. She has also grown in her imaginative ap-

proach to creating a total package of a true work of art in her latest creations. Intricate boxes with hidden magnetic closures conceal the delicate miniature scrolls

“The text is in Japanese. There are 68 short stories to play with the moon and stars written by Taruho Inagaki. I printed texts with a laser printer. And



Issen Ichibou Monogatari 一千一秒物語

to another paper, I printed the illustrations with letterpress and drypoint with many gradation colors. Two sheets of thin Japanese papers were glued together crossing the eyes of the paper so that the paper would not easily torn. By using glue for restoring cultural properties so as not to deteriorate easily.” Akai says in her description.

Miyako Akai is one of the kindest and most delightful people you will ever meet. She and the many other young book artists will be a high point of the Conclave experience. You will be charmed to get to know this talented artist. And she will be selling at the book fair!



Defining The Rainbow

When I was granted the privilege of editing *The Miniature Book Society Newsletter*, I promised myself that I would never get into the trap of reviewing miniature books. I call it a trap because as a journalist I am bound to tell the truth. And I take this volunteer 'job' just as seriously as the editor of *The New York Times*. (Note that the *Newsletter* and *The New York Times* are both **bold AND italicized!**)

Then it happened. *Defining The Rainbow* by Rebecca Press crossed my desk and my promise melted like a snowman in a scorching Texas sun. And here is why: I have lots of miniature books. I have been collecting since 1966. Raise your hand if you were even alive in 1966! Ask me how many miniature books I have... Go ahead, ask me...I'm glad you asked me. "I have no idea." They are in big boxes, in an entire library of miniature books, and throughout my house, and storage shed.

So, I have seen thousands of miniature books, but I only have one very small half shelf of my most prized

miniature books. And even they are mostly from friends such as Julian Edison, Neale Albert, Stephen Byrne, and Caroline Brandt. However at the front of that most precious pack is one designed by a fellow I never had the privilege of meeting in person, Joe D'Ambrosio and written by an old friend, Ray Bradbury. It is called *The Stars* and was printed by Gold Stein Press in 1993. If you own a copy, boy, are you a lucky duck.

What I recognized in the crafting of *The Stars* was the same genius that Frank Lloyd Wright espoused in architecture: "form follows function." He would actually yell that phrase at his architects and builders.

D'Ambrosio took Bradbury's words and the form of the pages followed the function and meaning of his beautiful words. Two artistic geniuses collided like two super novas and the stars were literally created from nothing in the universe of miniature books.

I never thought there would be another Joe D'Ambrosio and I still don't think there will ever be another Ray Bradbury, but then BAM, *De-*

fining The Rainbow shows up. The only word that I can adequately use is gobsmacked.

I'm fairly jaded about miniature books. I've seen them all and they are merely copies of better books. But not so with Rebecca Bingham's newest creation. Again, the words of Lloyd Wright echo in my ears as I open the package and behold the usually mundane spine of the book. Oh, my God! The Spine! It's just a spine! Yet, I already am experiencing an emotional connection with a miniature book. How unusual. How curious. How...unexpected?

I must explain the phrase 'emotional connection.' It is different with each reader or viewer. It is that thing that takes your breath away, that makes you gasp, that may even bring a tear to one eye. That thing was in the spine of Rebecca Bingham's stunning masterpiece.

And if the mere spine evoked such a strong emotion, what would the book hold for me?

I was in the printing business in one way or another for over forty years. One of the almost magical tricks-of-the-trade is to learn the ancient art of using thumb and the first three fingers

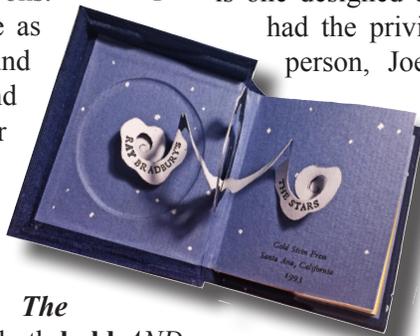
to allow that first light rubbing to feel the paper. The papermaker's art conducts a tactile emotion.

That is why I love the almost lost art of letterpress. Like a blind man I can gently pass my fingers across the page and feel the dried ink on the textured paper. It creates a union of me with words, the printer, and author. It is emotional.

The first touch was on the front lid or cover. The paste papers made by Madeleine Durham were soft like a rainbow. It was like touching an image in the sky as my fingers sailed across the multicolored cover. I looked down to see what my fingers were experiencing and I beheld

a section of that very rainbow with streaks of gold and the word Rainbow gently and elegantly inscribed in the same gold. A more perfect blend of font, color, and texture I had seldom beheld. Again, my breath was taken away. Another emotional connection and I had not even opened the book!

We are all familiar with the phrase, "You can't judge a book by its cover." And that is true with most books and especially miniature books. The space is so small to convey any kind of a message that most publishers are happy to just be able to quickly gold





stamp a short title. Not so with Ms. Bingham. She employs every pica of her publication to express the emotion of color. Again, I harken back to Joe D'Ambrosio. His publications utilized every possible venue to evoke an emotion in the reader / viewer. D'Ambrosio and Bingham both speak to the soul of the reader. Like an arrow their message goes directly to the heart and spreads a warmth throughout the body that one seldom feels in a mere publication. And they perform this feat of magic through meaningful design.

Again, 'form follows function' echos in my mind.

Now, I must admit that I am a sucker for marbled endsheets. I would say that I own several hundred very large marbled sheets that I have promised to put in my miniature books some day. Alas, they stayed rolled up until once in a while, I dig them out and allow myself to drift into the magic of the swirls and fans.

Defining the Rainbow begins with a lovely marbled endsheet but the eye is immediately drawn to the title page. The designer is in total control

of where I will look and what I see. We have an immediate and emotional relationship. She is in charge and she is going to tell me her story of color and I WILL listen. I have no other choice, as the genius of design demands it.

My eye is drawn to a half circle (rainbow) of swirls of color. It is a petite marbled canvas attached to the title page and the colors compel my attention. It is married to the title of the book set at a rainbowsque angle. The designer has set a hook and I have been caught. I am now into the book and I can sense that I am about to go down the rabbit hole and experience whatever this modern day Alice demands of my emotions.

As I open the first page of the book my publisher's eye goes right to what I perceive as a flaw! I'm crestfallen to think that this may just be another miniature book. The 'flaw' is in the gutter of the double page spread and it is the white thread that dangles uncut and in my mind unkept.

But I look closer and see, to my delight, that I am wrong. This is intelligent design. The thread is in the form of a bow. This is a gift from Ms. Bingham directly to Mr. Hill. And as I will find out the thread color changes with each new color. The simple gutter is used to convey emotion. Genius. Sheer genius.

I am suddenly struck with the realization that were it not for members such as Barbara Williamson and oth-

ers, Rebecca Saady Bingham might still be doing her daily household chores and washing the dishes rather than creating art. Williamson encouraged Bingham to get back into the miniature book game after an absence of two decades. So, KUDOS to Barbara Williamson and others who encouraged Rebecca Bingham. Your dedication to miniature books has paid off with a huge win for the future of miniature books. Can we give Barb a second Glasgow Cup?

But my mind wandered away from the book. Excuse me.

My fingers gently ply between the pages of the text. I can barely feel the lettering which means the amount of ink used was near perfect and my fingers recognize a rag paper that is possibly linen in origin. I flip to the colophon to find out but alas, Ms. Bingham has not granted us the privilege of knowing the genealogy of the paper. But my fingers usually do not lie and I am fairly confident in



what they have told me. An excellent quality paper that is not too thick and not too thin. And one that will last the ages.

There are eight signatures (sewn together sections) in the book. And

each signature is a different color of the rainbow. The divider between each signature is a heavier cardstock paper with a marbled cover that closes the last color and then on the other side opens the next color. The marbled divider pages were created by Jemma Lewis and she did her magic with great skill.

Having tried my hand at the art of marbling I know some of the difficulties. My own marbled papers adorn some of the finest trash can liners in our house. So, I try to figure out how one gets a two sided marbled page? The answer is one doesn't. The book artist has skillfully attached two different thin sheets to a card stock divider. It takes me several minutes to pry just a tiny edge apart to confirm my suspicion. Genius.

Form follows function. The words are simple. Merely different words used to describe a color. But many of the words contain emotional triggers. I am sure that they are meant to evoke a unique emotion in each individual reader / viewer. And that trigger word is then amplified with the visual stimulation of the striking marbled dividers.

When I closed the book and returned to the spine, I had an epiphany. This is not just another miniature book; this is art. There's not another Joe D'Ambrosio. But there is a Rebecca Bingham. And like the rainbow, she brings joy and magic to the eye and soul. 

Eminent Miniatures

A Lifetime of Collecting the Best in The World

by Molly Schwartzburg



For many years, Caroline Brandt has been working on an exhibition concept: to display examples of miniature books by eminent printers, publishers, and binders who are known widely for their non-miniature work. Finally, for the



2018 Conclave in Charlottesville, we have made this concept a reality. The exhibition, “Eminent Miniatures from the McGehee

Miniature Book Collection: Selected by Caroline Brandt” spans four centuries and includes works by a wide range of firms and individuals. It includes famous publishers such as the Plantin Press and the Oxford University Press, elegant fine presses such as the Perishable Press and the Whittington Press, and fine binders such as Sangorski & Sutcliffe and Jan Sobota. Of particular note are examples of the work of craftsmen who may be little known today, but were well known in their own time and place, such as the Salmin brothers, the Paduan printers who hand-set 2-point type for the famous Dantino.

UVA’s libraries have many bibliophile visitors in the summer months, when The Rare Book School is in session and visitors come from around the world to attend week-long sessions in Alderman Library, next door to Special Collections. Many of these exhibition visitors will bring with them the knowledge of the Didot family of type designers, or the fine books on papermaking by the Bird and Bull Press, and we hope they will depart with a new appreciation for the miniature productions as-

sociated with these names. Conclave attendees may learn new information about the broad productions of presses with large followings in the miniature-book community, such as the Press of the Indiana Kid or Dawson’s Book Shop. If I have one regret about the exhibition, it is that I did not have enough space to display the miniature books alongside their creators’ larger volumes. But

with just shy of one hundred volumes on display, it’s limited to miniatures.

This exhibition has been, like all such projects, a group effort. Because craftsmanship is a fundamental focus of this exhibition, the show features large detail photographs by Shane Lin, to help visitors understand just how remarkable are the volumes on display. Our miniature book project cataloger, Jacqueline Parascandola, cataloged a number of the books which were, until this exhibition project, only searchable in a back-end database. Our exhibition coordinator Holly Robertson bent beautiful clear acrylic cradles by hand, each custom-made for its book. We worked on the exhibition’s

welcoming design with Charlottesville graphic designer Mike Powers. The show’s deep purple background and gold accents evoke the bookmaking “royalty” on display.

I have learned a great deal about Caroline Brandt’s collection in the process of transforming her exhibition concept into reality. It has enabled me to spend more time in her 15,000-item collection than

I have ever before, and it has taught me so much about just how rich the collection is. It is a joy to be able to share a tiny sliver of this collection--and Caroline’s exhibition vision--with the MBS community. I look forward to seeing many of you in the gallery!

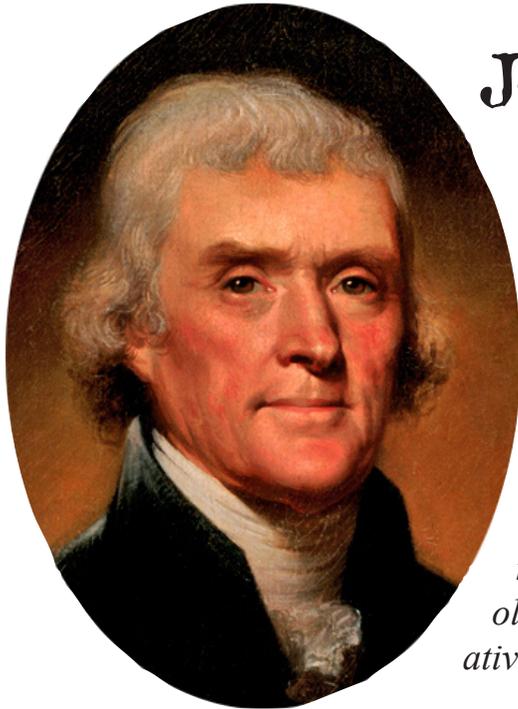


Caroline Brandt



Eminent Miniatures

June 6-August 26 at the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia



Jefferson said:

“But friendship is precious, not only in the shade, but in the sunshine of life, and thanks to a benevolent arrangement the greater part of life is sunshine.”

“I find friendship to be like wine, raw when new, ripened with age, the true old man’s milk and restorative cordial.”

“Books constitute capital. A library book lasts as long as a house, for hundreds of years. It is not, then, an article of mere consumption but fairly of capital, and often in the case of professional men, setting out in life, it is their only capital.”

“I cannot live without books.”

Come to

Conclave XXXVI in Charlottesville

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1/4 Page	2.25” x 3.75”	\$30

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Miniature Book Society Newsletter

A publication of the Miniature Book Society Inc. Number 108

Issued in March, July, November. Items for publication, including advertising material, should be sent to the Editor. Publication deadlines are: February 1, June 1, October 1. Payment for advertising should be made to **Miniature Book Society Inc.** and sent to the Treasurer: **Cathie Abney** / 3105 Milton Road / Middletown, Ohio 45042-3656.

The Miniature Book Society is an international nonprofit organization founded in 1983 and chartered by the state of Ohio, USA. Its purposes are to sustain interest in all aspects of miniature books, to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and to serve as a clearinghouse for information about miniature books.

Website: <https://www.mbs.org>

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Preferably submissions should be made electronically, by e-mail or disk. Attachments in Microsoft Word for text, or PDF and JPEG for images are preferred. Articles in the *Newsletter* do not necessarily express the views of the Board or of the Editor. Any article without a byline was written by the editor of the MBS *Newsletter*.

Deadline for the next issue **October 1, 2018**

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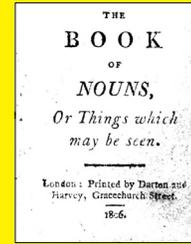


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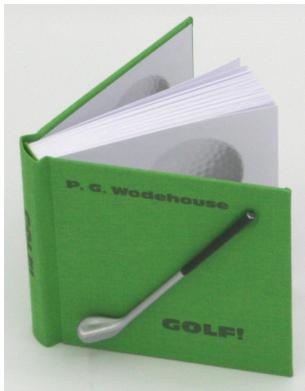
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