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## **WordArt: CBAS Sponsors National Juried Show**

The Cincinnati Book Arts Society is proud to announce the opening, on Friday, October 14th, of *WordArt*, a national, juried exhibition focusing on the word in visual art, cosponsored by CBAS and the University of Cincinnati. The exhibition is one of the inaugural shows at the University of Cincinnati's new downtown gallery in the beautifully renovated ground floor of Sycamore Place at the corner of Sycamore and 7th Streets. In addition to *WordArt*, the best of the university's permanent collection will be unveiled as well as *Focusing on Cincinnati: The Photographs of Paul Briol*.

*WordArt* was initially the brainchild of CBAS members Cran Campbell and Gabrielle Fox who wanted to put together an all media, national exhibition focusing on the use of words in contemporary visual art. The CBAS board supported this idea in keeping with CBAS's mission to create a more significant presence in the local community. Anne Timpano, Director of University of Cincinnati's galleries agreed to host the exhibition in early 2004. However, securing and renovating the new downtown gallery space took longer than expected and the show date had to be postponed. During this time, the CBAS Exhibitions Committee, headed by Celene Hawkins, continued working and planning, pulling the elements of this ambitious show together. She and her crew of volunteers are to be applauded for all the time and effort they put into the production of this show.

The juried exhibit drew entries from all over the United States and Canada. Selection of the 72 pieces in the show were determined by three jurors: *Gary Gaffney*, Professor, Painting and Drawing, Art Academy of Cincinnati; *Harry Campbell*, Book and Paper Conservator of the

Ohio State University Libraries; *Kelly Malec-Kosak*, Assistant Professor, Sculpture and Metalsmithing, The Columbus College of Art and Design. Work ranges from artist's books to works on paper, sculpture, mixed media, prints, and neon. Some of our own CBAS members entered and several were juried into the exhibit.

*WordArt will run from October 14th through November 23rd. Opening reception is Friday, October 14th, 5-7 p.m., University Galleries, 628 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, OH. Phone: 513-241-1400. All CBAS members are invited to attend the reception.*

## **CBAS Exhibit: Bookworks 6**

CBAS's 6th annual exhibit, Bookworks 6, showcasing the work of book artists in the Tri-State area, was held at the Main Branch of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County from May 19 through July 3, 2005 with an opening reception on Sunday, May 22, 2005 for CBAS members and guests. This year's entries were exhibited in the library's new upright cases which allowed the viewer to examine the entries "in the round." All sides of the books were visible.



Concurrently, on the third floor, the library mounted a special exhibit, *Ukulele Books*, by this year's featured workshop artist, Peter Thomas, and his wife, Donna Thomas.

To view Peter and Donna Thomas' work and more ukulele books, visit their website: <http://members.cruzio.com/~peteranddonna/>

## A Night with Peter Thomas

On June 4th, 2005, CBAS members gathered for a pot-luck supper at the home of fellow member Margaret Rhein and her husband, Stuart Golder to celebrate Peter Thomas's visit to Cincinnati for his scheduled workshop for CBAS the following day. Michael Dorsa, friend of the couple, and always fun to watch as he orchestrates the preparation, created a wonderful pasta dish that was the centerpiece of all the food items. Anyone stepping into the kitchen was invited to help out.

Later, in the evening, Peter Thomas, Stuart Golder and Bob Cuoco brought out their ukuleles and entertained the group. As the three played their favorite tunes, everyone sang along. The event was a lot of fun and a great opportunity for members to talk with Peter and each other about books, food, gardens, to name a few topics, as well as travels around the world by members.

Margaret Rhein

## Peter Thomas Workshop Exploring the Book: Innovative Structures

Each year, in concert with their book exhibit, Bookworks, CBAS sponsors a workshop. This year's workshop, *Exploring the Book: Innovative Structures* with book artist Peter Thomas was held on Sunday, June 5 on the campus of the College of Mt. St. Joseph. Peter taught basic bookbinding and introduced participants to two new and innovative book structures, the doweled flap book and the dowel spine non-adhesive portfolio.\*



Peter and his wife, Donna Thomas, are active in leadership of the Miniature Book Society and the International Association of Hand Papermakers and Paper Artists. Their research into the history of modern and ancient

papermaking is internationally recognized. Recently their miniature book, *Forty*, an innovative "stick structure" binding, was chosen as one of the three Distinguished Books by the Miniature Book Society and their *Real Accordion Book* was featured in an article in Time Magazine. They have been self employed in the book arts since 1977, making books, teaching workshops, giving lectures, and training apprentices. They currently reside in Santa Cruz, California.



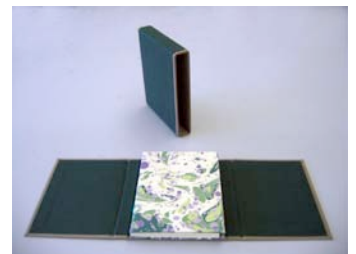
\* Complete directions on how to make the structures taught in the workshop can be found in the book *More Making Books By Hand*, written by Peter and Donna.

## Pamela Barrios Workshop a Big Hit

The third CBAS sponsored workshop this year, *Sewn Board Binding and Protecting Small Books with Matchbox and Chemise Casings*, was a big hit. The first day was a busy one with all participants making three sewn signature books (no tapes). No frames were needed which was nice for those with limited equipment who want to continue exploring this method of bookbinding. After completing the text blocks the participants bound each in a different way: cloth-covered spine, Japanese-paper covered spine, and exposed spine. Different methods of covering corners were also demonstrated.



The next day the group made a chemise, basically, a wrapper for one of the books, and a case, constructed like a matchbox cover, open on both sides, into which the the chemise and book were slipped. For the remaining two



books, everyone made a tray, or an open box, with open sides. Covering the tray was a challenge as there were lots of cuts to be made. The finished tray slipped into its own matchbox case.

At the end of the workshop, everyone was tired but proud of their accomplishments. Pam Barrios was a well-prepared and relaxed teacher, sharing lots of tips and shortcuts and gently urging everyone, to keep moving and not to worry about the inevitable mistakes that occur when one is learning something new.

## CBAS Study Group *Pop-ups & Moveable Books*

All CBAS members are invited to join the CBAS *Pop-ups & Moveable Books* Study Group at any time. The group



meets on the third Saturday afternoon of each month (no meetings in August, November and December) in the community room of the Corryville Branch of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, 2802 Vine

Street. There is adequate parking at the rear of the building.

Currently, the members are focusing on the mechanicals of making pop-up and, working on a pop-up alphabet book as a group project.

Small and informal, the group, is still getting organized and



welcomes new members. Consider joining. This is an excellent way to get to know your fellow CBAS members and investigate an area of special interest.

For more information or to receive email notices of the meetings, contact Cecie Chewning at 513-751-3252 or [j-cc@cinci.rr.com](mailto:j-cc@cinci.rr.com).

Cecie Chewning

## Robert Sabuda Prince of Pop-Up Engineering Coming to Cincinnati in 2006

Robert Sabuda is coming to Cincinnati. Often referred to as the "Prince of Pop-ups," Robert Sabuda is the best-known pop-up book artist working today, and is the



creator of the remarkable *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and *The Night Before Christmas Pop-up*. He has also created books that use a variety of media in inventive ways. Examples range from simulated handmade Egyptian papyrus for his book *Tutankhamen's Gift*, to paper cut to look like mosaics in *Saint Valentine*, to paintings that resemble stained glass for *Arthur and the Sword*.

The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County will be sponsoring an exhibit of work by the renowned pop-up book maker and paper engineer Robert Sabuda in November 2006. The exhibit, *Robert Sabuda: Travels in Space and Time* is organized by the

National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature (<http://www.nccil.org/index.html>) and will be a great opportunity to introduce pop-up books to a broad audience in Cincinnati.



The Library is planning to partner with other arts organizations to make this a city-wide celebration of pop-up books, and will be bringing Mr. Sabuda to town as well. This will be a tremendous opportunity for CBAS members who work with pop-up books to serve as resource people for programming, talks, and other related events. If you are interested in participating, contact Laura Dell, Programs and Exhibits Coordinator at the library at 369-6944 or [laura.dell@cincinnati.library.org](mailto:laura.dell@cincinnati.library.org)

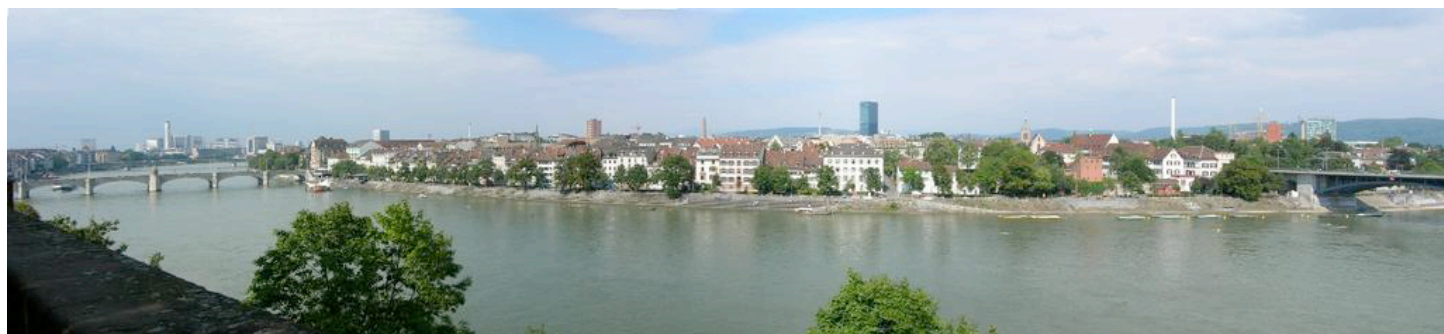
Keith Kuhn

For further information about Robert Sabuda, visit his website: <http://www.robertsabuda.com/>

## CBAS Member Leah Konicki Moves to Eastern Europe

As most CBAS members know by now, I left Cincinnati in late May to start a new phase of my life as an English teacher in Eastern Europe. I left Cincinnati on May 31, and on the morning of June 1, while folks at home slept, I landed at Charles de Gaulle and negotiated my way to the scarcely heard of Czech run (with surplus American planes) Smart Wings airline, tucked away in the mysterious Terminal 3. Terminal 3 is where all of the little airlines operate. Schlepping my 35-kilo suitcase from Terminal 2 to the far-flung Terminal 3 was an adventure.

The month of June was spent in Prague learning to be an English teacher. Speaking the language all of one's life is not in and of itself enough qualification to teach others the intricacies of the language. I earned a certificate endorsed by Trinity College London, and am now equipped



to teach English as a second language. In early July, I was offered a position with a school in Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, about 4 hours southeast of Prague, which I accepted, effective September 1. Note: The Czech and Slovak Republics officially split in 1993; although there are many similarities between the two countries and their cultures and languages, there are also differences.

I spent the remainder of the summer in Prague and sight-seeing in neighboring parts of Europe. Prague lives up to its reputation; it is incredibly beautiful, in terms of both its setting and its architecture. The city sits in a valley created by the erosion of the Vltava River, and has gentle hills, much less steep than those ringing Cincinnati. It is a very compact city of 1.2 million people in 500 square kilometers. It is a low-scale city, and of course, is very historic; the Charles Bridge, one of the oldest structures extant, dates to the mid-14th century. The majority of Prague's historic buildings date from the late nineteenth century, when many Art Nouveau and Baroque structures were built in a rebuilding campaign. My summer travels included trips to a variety of Europe's historic cities, including Budapest, Krakow, Berlin, Vienna, and Zurich.

While in Poland, I also visited Auschwitz, which I found incredibly moving.

I am settling down now to my new life as a teacher of English in Bratislava, and getting used to daily life in a country where most people do not speak the same language I do, or where, rather, it would be more appropriate to say, I do not speak their language. This can create some challenges, such as being able to read the directions on the back of a package of soup. Nor can I always read a label to determine if I'm actually buying shampoo rather than conditioner, for example. It took me two tries to buy a moisturizer; the first time I actually bought some sort of facial wash. Little things that we can take for granted, such as how to use the washing machine, can also become complicated by the language barrier.

My students are all adults and, for the most part, I am teaching business people at their workplaces around Bratislava. My students, mostly men so far, are charming

and eager to learn. I am also working with one Korean businessman who works for Samsung and is spending a year abroad, learning both Slovak and English.

Regrettably, although I brought a few basic supplies with me, I have yet to attempt any book or other art while on my travels. I have been taking many photographs, and have some ideas for projects, but haven't yet had a chance to execute any of the ideas. It may be awhile before that happens. Being an English teacher, it turns out, is a full-time job.

*Leah Konicki*



*One of my co-teachers has a great idea for introducing himself to his students, postcards from home, or places he has called home, that help to tell his European students a little bit about his life, and life in the United States. It's a great idea, and one I mean to copy, with your help. I would appreciate postcards from Dayton, Cincinnati, and Covington, from*

the Bluegrass, and all over Kentucky, where I have spent so much time. One of my colleague's most popular images is the Michigan State football stadium, full of football fans (and he's not from Michigan). I am thinking somebody in Columbus can send along an image of OSU's stadium, full of dedicated fans. I would also like pictures of Fairmont, Wright library, New York state sites, Wisconsin, Cleveland, Covington, Springfield, anything and everything. Send the postcards to:

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Bratislava  
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Visit Leah's blog at <http://www.blogger.com/start> and keep abreast of her adventures.

## ART\*O\*MAT The Vended Book

My biggest reservation about fine binding as a career has always been its inaccessibility. When a book sells for hundreds or thousands of



dollars, I always wonder, will it really be read? Will someone really fill the pages of a precious blank book with writing, or will the buyer be afraid to touch it? A summer spent making books for *Artists In Cellophane's* Art\*o\*mat has given me a chance to explore, if not answer, my own questions.

Art\*o\*mat's are retired cigarette vending machines that have been converted to vend art ([artomat.org](http://artomat.org)). For \$5.00, "art collectors" pull a knob to receive work by one of about 400 artists, each with a column in an Art\*o\*mat somewhere in the country. They total 76, from Cincinnati's own, located at the ArtWorks Time Warner Gallery

downtown, to one in the Whitney Museum in New York City.

I became an Art\*o\*mat artist through ArtWorks, an arts-based employment and job-training program for youth in the Greater Cincinnati area ([artworkscincinnati.org](http://artworkscincinnati.org)). When the project came along I had been bookbinding for several years already, but with no formal training. My introduction to binding came from my mother, who apprenticed and trained as a fine bookbinder in Switzerland and taught me intermittently through my growing up. I always liked



to read, write, and work with my hands, so bookbinding was a natural extension of these interests. As I got older, I started to think seriously about pursuing binding as a career, and so this summer the opportunity to become an Art\*o\*mat artist was a chance for me to practice on a small scale before continuing on to college. The venture became an apprenticeship with the generous col-

laboration of master bookbinder Gabrielle Fox, an internationally recognized miniature book specialist.



Under her guidance, I committed myself to binding 80 books during the course of the summer, at a projected pace of 1 book per hour.

To ensure the quality of each book under the quantitative pressure, we gave careful thought to the

structures we could use. I made most books in editions of five or ten, with a differ-

ent new structure for each edition. While Gabrielle taught most to me, I was able to make up a few structures myself. I also worked hard on the design of the books; my experience with photography and graphics led to some projects that contain my own content, or contents produced in collaboration with a friend. During the course of the summer, Gabrielle also helped me sharpen my own leather paring knife, enter a competition, and learn about new equipment. In return, I worked on her graphic identity and photographed some of her bindings.

The project had its difficulties. The hardest factor was time: Instead of one hour per book, I typically took two or three, and many more during the design stages. Few steps progressed as fast as I had planned, and I was unwilling to sacrifice time-consuming design work for efficiency. The repetitive tasks of mass production forced me to admit that five dollar accessibility comes at a real price. The thought and skills invested in a fine binding require a large amount of time, and the product is a book that recalls thousands of years of history as well as the binder's individual meditations on text and form. Essentially *Art\*o\*mat* books are a different genre altogether; even produced reasonably fast they must be treated as parts of a whole, and the design must bespeak the language of manufacture.

But there are 80 2.125x3.25" books in my bindery right now, and I can't help but feel proud. For each time that I

discarded an imprecisely cut folio, or sat back down at the computer to find a way an idea could cohere, or re-sewed where the thread had broken. For each renewed effort is a small book, a piece of myself, and a preponderance of ideas and learning. I find my own projects becoming more efficient and more exact, thanks to Gabrielle's demonstrations and advice. I also find the books themselves appealing. Even if they took too long, they each fulfill many aspects of my expectations for design and craft. Each book individually forms a nicely proportioned unit, and together they are a body of work that I like, and that I have made myself.

Each of my books will sell for \$5.00. I have yet to be convinced that money can be a measurement of time or learning, but because of the fixed price and the large number produced, a whole new venue has opened for hand (if not fine) bookbinding. I hope that these books will find themselves purchased by working people and children, by friends buying birthday presents, or curious passers-by who have never owned a piece of art. I hope that every one will be read or filled with writing, and enjoyed.

*Jane Cheng*

*Jane Cheng is pursuing her studies and craft this school year at Harvard College, where she will major in Art History while working in the Weissman Preservation Center for the archival conservation of books and works of art on paper.*

