A note from the editor · For me, the Annual Juried Issue follows a familiar pattern, always the same. Yet every year the experience is distinct. Each Annual is unique.

What’s familiar is the sequence of tasks the Annual involves. The envelopes come in from all over the world. I open each one, and check the entry forms against the prints of the artwork. I always enjoy this—so much of the personality of each artist comes through, not only in the artwork, but in the way the package is prepared. Some entries are carefully wrapped in neatly folded tracing paper; others are an artistic jumble of offcut sheets from someone’s studio. I especially enjoy the odd serendipity of the occasional entry that’s wrapped up in trial sheets with scraps of writing—a little evidence of a lettering artist at work.

Once the jurors’ selections have been made, I face the daunting logistics of assembling the issue. Emails fly back and forth across continents as I gather reproducible images, biographies, and caption information. For some artists, I need to do some coaching to get their work properly photographed. There are often questions that need to be asked to get the captions right. And there’s a lot of translation involved with texts in multiple languages. It’s challenging, but it’s a fun challenge.

For the Annual, as we do with all our issues, we check the quotations in the works that have been selected. I want to express my deep appreciation for John Neal and Shannon Benton, who do thorough fact-checking to make sure we get all our captions right.

By the time I begin laying out the pages, I’ve already been working on the issue for four or five months. As the issue is put to bed, the familiar round of duties comes to a close.

But each Annual also has its own particular flavor. Every year, we receive entries from old friends of the publication, but we also see new faces, people who have never entered before. And the mix of artworks is always unique.

The biggest change each year—at least for me—is the pair of jurors who are invited to make the selections. This year, the Dutch lettering artist Elmo van Slingerland joined my local colleague Cynthia Dantzic. It was a tremendous pleasure to work with them through one long day. I enjoyed listening to them as they debated which pieces to choose.

And so here we present this year’s selections. Thank you to all who entered. And congratulations to those whose work is featured on these pages.

Here are some comments from our jurors:

Elmo van Slingerland · I was asked to teach a workshop in October of 2018 for the Society of Scribes in New York City. I was happy that this visit to the city had a pleasant extra—the selection for the Annual Juried Issue of Letter Arts Review.

On a beautiful sunny morning I joined my fellow jury member Cynthia Dantzic, and we rode to the apartment of Christopher Calderhead, where the selection took place. We had a pleasant taxi ride, and we had the chance to get to know each other a bit more.

I was impressed by the quantity and quality of the submitted works. We heard from Christopher that compared to previous years, fewer works were submitted, but in my opinion, the number of works we had to judge was still quite large. To make a well-considered selection, the judging took a large part of the day.

We had a good look at all the submissions. Cynthia and I decided whether the works should be given a Yes, No or Maybe status. We were told that in previous years this system worked very well for the jurors.

In general, Cynthia and I quickly agreed without much discussion. Sometimes we needed some more background information on a certain work and, when possible, Christopher provided us with that by reading from the work’s entry form.

What was striking about the entries this year was that a relatively large number of handmade books was submitted. There were quite a few concertina books.

There was a lot of quality and diversity to choose from. Nonetheless, I would like to take
Ann Bailey
*Fondly Do We Hope*
Ink and gold paint on paper; mat of collaged Japanese papers and paper stars marked in braille.
20 × 16 × 1.5 inches
The text is by Abraham Lincoln, from his Second Inaugural Address.

Yukimi Annand
*Flourished Fraktur Capitals*
Gouache on Japanese paper
11 × 14 inches
The text is by Marcel Proust, from “Les Regrets, Rêveries couleur du temps.”

Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.
The great things in this universe are things that we never see
you walk out at night
and look up at
the beautiful stars
as they bedeck the heavens
like swinging lanterns
of eternity
and you think
you can see all
Oh, no.
You can never see
the law of gravitation
that holds them there

Martin Luther King, Jr.
C.C. Elian
Scratch the Surface and You Find—Lust
India ink and gouache
on a matte-finish photo
9.75 × 4.25 inches
This is one of a series of six panels
on the theme of looking below the
surface. The script is the artist’s
personal Elian Script.
The text is by the artist.
Alicia Márquez
_Umbra_
Carved stone
8 × 8 × .75 inches
Made at a John Neilson workshop in Wales.

Alicia Márquez
_Sequoia_
Carved Indiana limestone
15 × 15 × 3.5 inches

Alicia Márquez
_Serious_
Ink and colored pencil on paper
13 × 10 inches
The text is by Julia Cameron, from _The Artist’s Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity_ (Tarcher).