

Bound & Lettered

ARTISTS' BOOKS & BOOKBINDING & PAPER CRAFT & CALLIGRAPHY



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"Making *The Olive Tree*,"
page 32.

Felt-tip Brush Pens, Fine



Kuretake Zig
Cocoiro Letter
Pen (extra fine)

Pentel Sign Pen
(brush tip)

Pilot Futayaku
Double Brush

Sailor Pocket
Double Brush

Tombow
Fudenosuke
Brush (soft)

BRUSH PENS FOR LETTERING

BY CATHERINE LANGSDORF

Whenever a calligrapher admires a piece of lettering art – whether in person or on social media – one of the first questions raised is always: “What did you use?” People may ask in hopes that the purchase of a new product will enhance their own scribal results, not remembering that all tools and materials come with an unstated warning: *results may vary*. With that said, the tool, media, and substrate do matter. If the product is inferior, this will have negative effects, even in the hand of the most seasoned scribe. Sometimes the right tool does make all the difference. Examining the options is important in order to find the qualities in a tool that are best for a particular project.

When it comes to brush markers and brush cartridge pens, there is an abundance on the market. They vary in their writing tip materials, writing fluid, price, and intended use. With so much to choose from, it is not easy to know which would be best for a particular task. So, I set out on a quest. After gathering just over thirty markers and pens, I created various practice sheets, testing each tool on a variety of papers, testing on top of other mediums, and checking for their reactions to water and light. I looked to the manufacturers for product details, read published opinions on the internet, and corresponded with several scribes about their experiences with brush markers and pens. I also had a group of calligraphers test out these lettering tools. The gathering of tools was easy, and it was a pleasure to scrutinize how each one performed; the funneling down of the information into a useable format was daunting.

Since all of these markers and pens have the fluid self-contained, in testing there were two elements to examine: the tip and the ink. (See page 10 for a Brush Marker/Pen Comparison Chart that compiles all the factors discussed below.)

The Tip: Softness, Flex, and Size

The terms “brush marker” and “brush pen,” when used by manufacturers to describe a product, can reference a variety of different tips. Some are not brushes at all but are just shaped like brushes. They may look like tapered pointed brushes, but they are rigid and don’t actually have qualities of natural brushes. For a marker to act like a brush, the marker’s writing tip needs some softness and flexibility. These two characteristics vary from marker to marker.

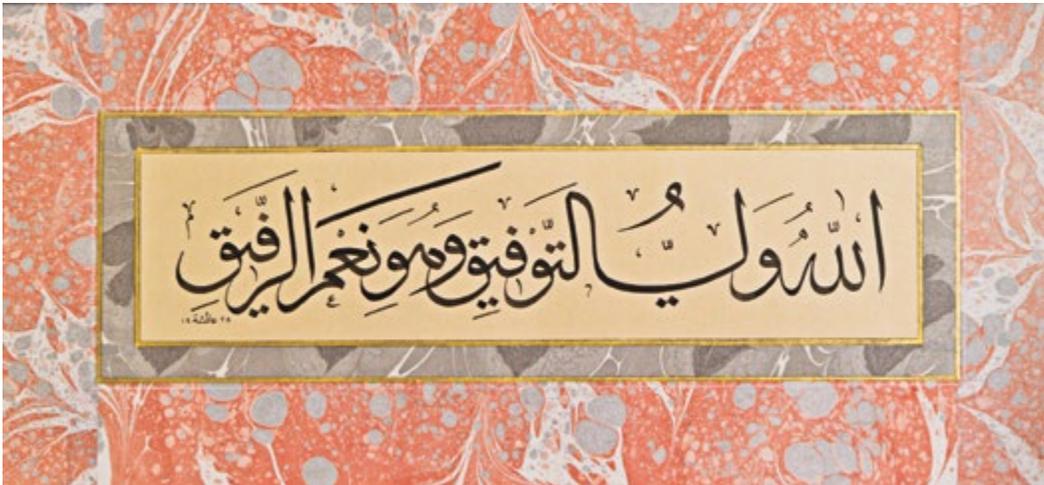
The firmer the tip, the more predictable the marks will be, giving the beginner easier control over each mark. These firmer-tipped markers can be your gateway into brush lettering. As you move to markers with softer tip quality, you will need practice to gain that same control. The softer tips will allow you to create more effects, as the tool is sensitive to every hand and arm movement.

The tip needs to bounce back to its original shape after a pressure stroke. This spring (or flex) in the material of the tip – along with the artist’s practiced hand – allows for a variety of thick, thin, and tapered strokes.

A PASSIONATE GALLERY

The instructors of this summer's global gathering of scribes and artists, The Passionate Pen, hail from countries large and small: from all over the United States and Canada – from the West Coast (California, Oregon, Washington, and BC) and eastward (New Mexico & Nevada, Indiana & Illinois, Ontario & Ohio, Tennessee & Texas, New York & New Jersey); from the Republic of Ireland and the Republic of Slovenia; from Argentina and Australia; from England and Italy and Israel; and from the Kingdom of Belgium and the Republic of Germany.

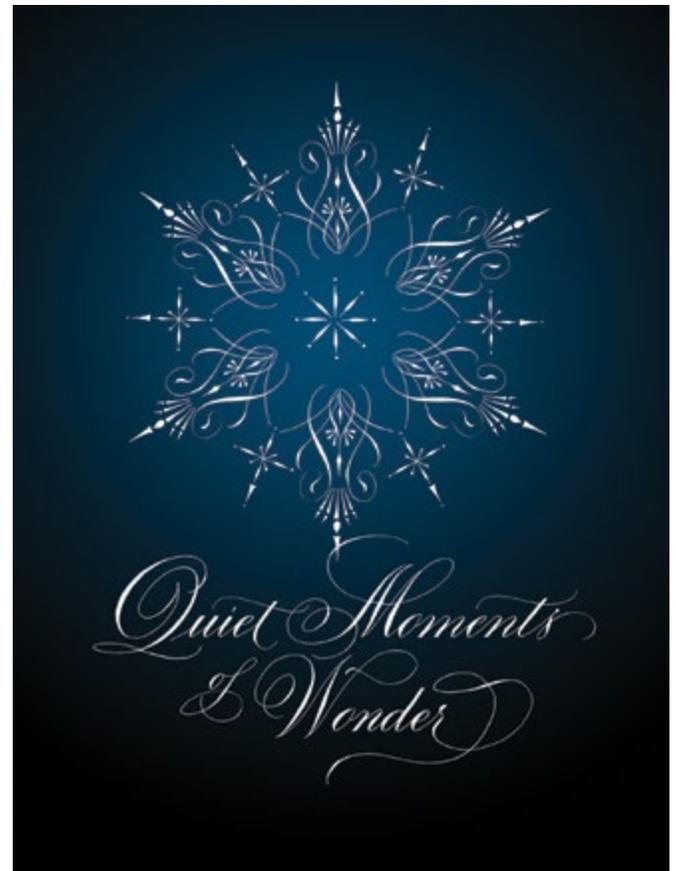
There will be a faculty exhibit at the conference, but since only a few of the readers of *Bound & Lettered* will be able to attend, here is a second installment of art from some of those talented teachers (see B&L issue 12.2 for the first offering).



The Protector of Success. 2013. Elinor A. Holland. Lampblack ink and 23k crushed gold on ahar-prepared paper, collaged with marbled paper made in the Turkish tradition (with homemade ink). The phrase is commonly practiced and rendered by calligraphers in the popular Thuluth style. The meaning is "God is the protector of success and what a wonderful companion is He." (Elinor's class at The Passionate Pen has been cancelled.)



Trees of White. Pat Blair. Gouache and Ivory McCaffery's Penman's Ink on Black Canford paper



Winter's Gift. Pat Blair. Ink and digital gradient background.

PIANO ACCORDION BOOK

BY BETH LEE



Piano Accordion Book. Beth Lee. Two views of an edition book done for a book exchange.



A number of copies of this small book were created for a book exchange. It is in the shape of a piano accordion, and the text of the book is in three parts. Two parts of the text are on freestanding sheets that are accordion-folded. The third sheet of text forms the piano accordion's bellows – the part of the musical instrument that may have inspired the accordion-fold book structure.

The accordion text that fits into the button box (at the back of the structure) tells the story of how our son became interested in

learning the accordion after a visit to New Orleans and of how I eventually began playing the accordion with him. The accordion text in the box beneath the piano keys is a just-so story, which I wrote to explain how the politically incorrect lyrics to a popular accordion song of the 1940s (“Too Fat Polka”) came to be replaced with lyrics about healthy eating for use in a children’s piano accordion primer. The bellows of the accordion is lettered with alternating versions of the lyrics, old and new.

PEBBLES AND POUCHES

BY FIONA DEMPSTER



A set of pebbles for Scrabble, with large letters and the small numbers used for the letter values in the game.



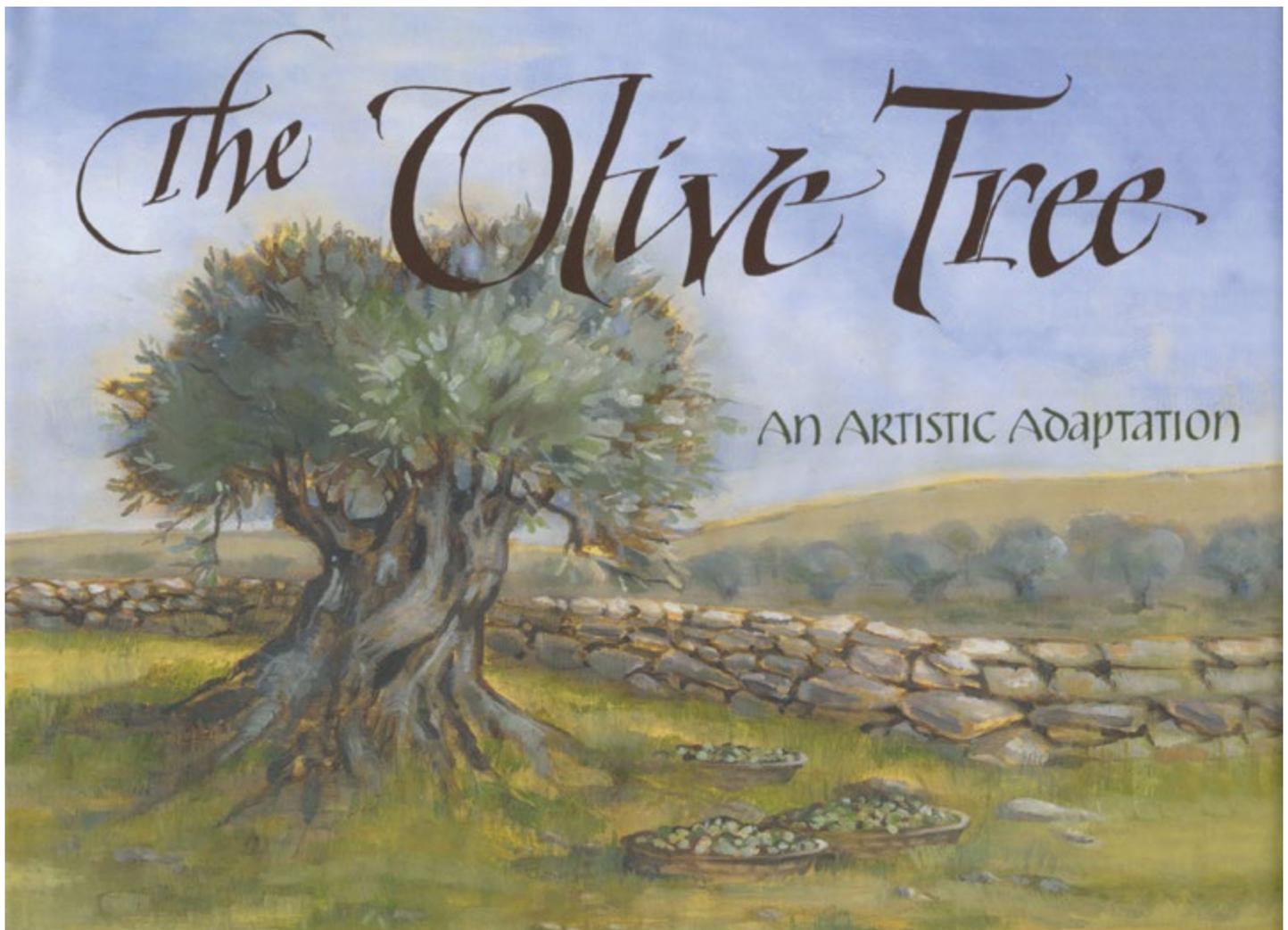
IT WAS AROUND the year 2000 that I wrote my first letters on pebbles. I collected eight pebbles and wrote STEPPING, one letter on each pebble. I called these pebbles “Stepping Stones.”

Fast forward a few years, and I had a big bowl of hand-lettered pebbles on my desk at work. They were a great icebreaker: people would come in and take pebbles from the bowl – holding them, playing with them, composing words with them. Staff would even leave me messages in the pebbles!

I still write on pebbles and now sell them in a gallery shop, from

my studio, and online. They appeal to people of all ages and for all sorts of reasons – I often get requests for grandchildren’s names, as well as for *thank you* and words of positive affirmation like *begin*, *shine*, and *believe*. It’s also lovely just to have a single pebble in your pocket or purse.

I write on so many pebbles that I have ended up buying large stocks from a local hardware store, often in 10 kilo bags (around 20 pounds). I don’t write on fancy, highly polished pebbles; rather I tend to write on simple river pebbles, nearly always ones off-white in color.



The Olive Tree: An Artistic Adaptation. *The text of this book is an allegory on the olive tree that was adapted by Christine Layton Graham. The book is hand-lettered throughout by Joan Layton Merrell and illustrated by Carol Layton Ogden. Just published this spring, it is offset-printed and hardbound. The book is a collaboration of three sisters. 36 pages, 10" x 8" closed.*

MAKING THE OLIVE TREE

BY JOAN MERRELL PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANELLE ROWLEY

In this digital age it is rare to find a fully hand-lettered book in the mainstream publishing world, but it still happens. Recently, I collaborated with my two sisters to produce just such a book. The process was very different from my usual solo work, where I create custom pieces for individuals. I work mainly with single-page documents – broadsides, certificates, calligraphic paintings; I had never done a book, other than a few small projects of a few pages. This project was a thirty-page creative collaboration – one sister adapted text, the other painted the illustrations, and then I lettered up the entire text – for a publisher.

The project started with my older sister, Christine Graham, who is a writer. Several years ago, she had the idea to write a book based on the allegory of the olive tree from the Book of Jacob in the Book of Mormon. The olive tree is an important symbol in Scripture, but with the repetition common to Hebraic literary structure, the

allegory here is rather long and complicated. Christine wanted to do a simpler, artistic version of it, and she asked me to try writing out some of the text in calligraphy. I immediately thought of a lettering style that reminded me of the shape of olives. I did some samples, but then we weren't quite sure where to go with it, and the project was set aside. A few years later, realizing that my younger sister Carol Ogden could paint illustrations for the project, Christine pulled it out of storage. We sent several proposals with sample pages to publishers, and – rather suddenly – we found ourselves with a book contract.

THE PAPER

From my stash, I pulled out some wonderful, golden tan Indian hand-made paper that includes bits of grass or straw. I did a few sample texts