



ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

Winter Newsletter 2018

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Arizona member, Pamela Wood's *From Seed to Sewn* (see description on p. 13)

Dear Rocky Mountain Chapter Members,

Happy New Year! This newsletter includes an interview with Karen Jones, our RMC co-chair. She talks about what led her to book conservation, its evolution in Colorado, and her enthusiasm for the GBW. Also featured is a binding, *From Seed to Sewn*, by member Pamela Wood (see picture above). Note the GBW Gathering in Provo that is part of the A. Dean Larsen Book Collecting Conference and Peter Thomas workshop, March 22-23, and the GBW Denver Gathering on March 3rd - both listings on page 2. You will find a great write-up on page 12 by Kim Hetherington covering the Denver RMC gathering in November where Karen Jones discussed and demonstrated sewing endbands. And take a look at the exciting classes being offered in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Utah on pages 4-5.



**Pamela Wood's *From Seed to Sown*
Artist's Statement**

Title: " From Seed To Sown" - 2013 -10 1/2 " high x 4 1/4" wide

I am the author, designer, binder, the works, all me. My studio name is Rarehare Creations.

Info: Full leather cover with leather and sunflower paper inlays. Inside, hand lettered background map paper. Table prop pop-up is original prisma color pencil drawing on handmade sun flower paper.

I was invited to participate in a show that used hand made sunflower paper in original art work. Arizona State student papermakers took sunflowers they grew and turned into paper. They gave us artists 2 sheets of sunflower paper to turn into art, culminating in a gallery show of all the results.

RMC Upcoming Events

Utah

GBW Gathering in Provo, March 22, 2018, 6-8 PM

In connection with Peter Thomas' visit to Utah in March (see *Upcoming Workshops, page 5*), GBW members are invited to a gathering at the Harold B. Lee Library at BYU not only to see an exhibit of Peter and Donna Thomas' work with Peter himself as guide, but also to join together for food and, hopefully, some rousing ukulele performances by Peter and any others keen to join in the fun! Please RSVP or direct any questions to Christopher McAfee.

(christopher_mcafee@byu.edu) or Christina Thomas (christina_thomas@byu.edu).
<https://www.regonline.com/registration/checkin.aspx?EventId=2152473&RegTypeId=763248>

Colorado

RMC Gathering in Denver, March 3, 2018, 2-4 PM

Denver Art Museum, Sharp Auditorium

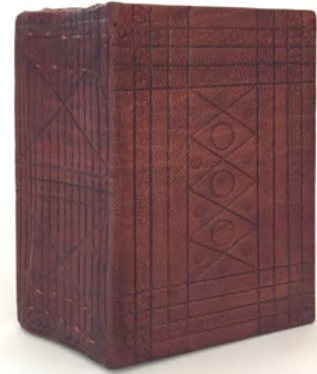
View a one-hour documentary about an artists' search for books banned in China throughout its long history.

Artist Xiaoze Xie's art reflects his fascination with media and his contemporary art<<https://denverartmuseum.org/membership-support/dam-contemporaries>> projects revolve around the temporality of media, often depicting books and newspapers in his paintings, photographs, and installations. Then we'll walk across the plaza and take a look at *Bibliothecarii et Glutinatores*, on view at Denver Public Library, 5th floor. There will be time for Chapter updates and conversation as well.

Rocky Mountain Chapter-Denver: Progressive Box-making class series: from basics to improvisation - with local instructors - FILLED
Archival Drop-Spine Box (clamshell) and 4-flap enclosures, Feb. 11. Karen Jones, instructor.
Slip Case with magnetic closure and panel, March 10. Richard Pollock-Nelson, instructor.

SAVE THE DATE - RMC Denver Workshop coming in the Fall:

Karen Hanmer Ethiopian binding workshop, Sept. 8-9, 2018
DESCRIPTION: The Ethiopian binding structure may have emerged as early as the fourth century and has been in use unchanged for centuries. This humble, elegant binding opens flat and is the inspiration for many contemporary “Coptic” book arts structures. Characteristics include wood boards trimmed flush with the text block, paired sewing stations, and chain stitch-sewing that enters the board edge to incorporate board attachment. Historically the text blocks were made of vellum. Any covering would be done with goatskin. In this two day workshop, students will make a full-leather binding with braided leather endbands and cloth board linings. Look for registration information in the May newsletter.



**Current and Upcoming
Events & Exhibitions**

Colorado

Denver

RMC Gathering in Denver, March 3, 2018, 2-4 PM

Denver Art Museum, Sharp Auditorium , see information above in RMC Upcoming Events, page 2

EXHIBIT: The Printed Page III

University of Denver, Anderson Academic Commons, February 21- June 10

The Printed Page III is a series of exhibits hosted by multiple venues in the Denver metro area. It includes artists' book works and prints by artists from Australia, Austria, Canada, Italy, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom and The United States. <https://www.moprint.org/exhibitions/>

EXHIBIT: Women and the Printed Page

O'Sullivan Gallery, Regis University, Denver, March 13 - April 12

An exhibition of works by six book/print artists. <https://www.abecedariangallery.com>

@MO'PRINT 2018 Print + Studio Tour, March 24, 10am - 4pm.

The Month of Printmaking Denver is happening during March - April, 2018. Mo'Print's endeavor is to showcase talented local printmakers, educate people about the varied processes of making fine art prints, and foster stronger community ties among Denver area (and beyond!) printmakers. More information available at <https://www.moprint.org/studio-tour>

Utah

Provo

GBW Gathering in Provo, March 22, 2018, 6-8 PM (see RMC Upcoming Events, page 2)

A. Dean Larsen Book Collecting Conference and Peter Thomas workshop:

The A. Dean Larsen Book Collecting Conference is an opportunity for professional and amateur book collectors as well as just the curious to gather together to immerse themselves in the world of rare book collecting. The 2018 conference will occur 22-23 March in the Harold B. Lee Library on the campus of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Two, all-day workshops will occur on 22 March, and the conference seminars and luncheon will take place on 23 March. Conference registration is \$35; workshop registration is an additional \$35. In connection with this conference and a library exhibit of Peter and Donna Thomas' work, Peter Thomas will be teaching a workshop on making simple and complex miniature accordion books. Workshop attendance is capped at 10, so be sure to register early! Please note that you must register for the entire conference in order to attend a workshop. Peter will also be the keynote speaker at the luncheon. More information can be found at <https://bookcollectingconferenceblog.wordpress.com/>. Registration: <https://www.regonline.com/registration/checkin.aspx?EventId=2152473&RegTypeID=763248>

Upcoming Workshops/Classes

Colorado

Denver

Rocky Mountain Chapter-Denver: Progressive Box-making class series: from basics to improvisation - with local instructors - **FILLED**

Archival Drop-Spine Box (clamshell) and 4-flap enclosures, Feb. 11. Karen Jones, instructor.

Slip Case with magnetic closure and panel, March 10. Richard Pollock-Nelson, instructor.

Alicia Bailey classes in **Denver, Ridgeway, Co, and Carbondale, Co,**

Book in a Box - March 5-26, Denver, Art Students League of Denver

Panorama Concertina - May 5, Ridgeway, Weehawken Arts

Miniature Diorama Box - May 6, Ridgeway, Weehawken Arts

Folded Book Forms - May 12, Carbondale, Carbondale Arts

details: <http://www.aliciabailey.com/ravenpress/product-category/events/workshops-events/>

Telluride

American Academy of Bookbinding - upcoming classes include:

Protective Box Making - April 30-May 4

Introduction to Bookbinding II - May 7-11

Fundamentals/Intermediate Fine Leather Binding - May 14-25

Select Shorts: 3 Valuable Techniques in one Week - May 28-June 1.

<https://www.bookbindingacademy.org/courses/>

(see News below for information on scholarship applications due March 1)

Montana

Missoula

[The Vespiary Book Restoration & Bindery](#)

Leather Longstitch binding - Feb 10th, 11am - 4pm

Belgian Binding Class - Feb 24th, 11am - 4pm

New Mexico

Truth or Consequences

Hands On Bookbinding - Classes with Priscilla Spitler

Bookbinding Warmup, The Flatback Case Binding

February 24 (Saturday) 9:00am - 4:00pm ~ \$100.

The Rounded Spine for Case Binding

March 24 & 25 (Saturday & Sunday) 9:00am – 4:00pm ~ \$195.

Structures for Artists Books - Bindings that function for collage, pop-up construction, or other creative bookwork. April 21 & 22 (Saturday & Sunday) 9:00am – 4:00pm ~ \$195.

The Authentic Sewn Boards Binding - May 19, 2018 (Saturday) \$115.

For registration or further information and view workshop details: www.priscillaspitler.com or contact her at: prisplit54@gmail.com

Santa Fe

Santa Fe Book Arts Group

Workshops available for BAG members <https://santafebag.org>

Utah

Provo

Peter Thomas workshop, March 22-23 (part of A. Dean Book Collecting Conference)

Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

(See more complete information on this event under *Upcoming Events and Exhibitions*)

March 22, all day workshop - **Peter Thomas will be teaching a workshop on making simple and complex miniature accordion books.** Workshop attendance is capped at 10, so be sure to register early! Please note that you must register for the entire conference in order to attend a workshop.

More information can be found at <https://bookcollectingconferenceblog.wordpress.com/>.

Registration: <https://www.regonline.com/registration/checkin.aspx?EventId=2152473&RegTypeID=763248>

RMC Gathering in Denver, held November 12th

The Rocky Mountain Guild of Book Workers met this past November. The gathering was dedicated to exploring headbands through history. Karen Jones brought many examples of headbands, including pieces removed from old books. Sample books ranged from very old structures to modern-day headband construction. Initially headbands were an integral and structural part of the book, as it helped hold the entirety of it together. Visible headband materials ranged from linen thread, leather, silk, and paper. Internal cores (of the headband) could be anything from wood, string, leather, and paper. An early headband (example shown) was a Coptic binding. Coptic endbands (headband and tailband) incorporated cover pieces by stitching the spine of the book block and cover pieces together. This gave stability and strength to the connection between cover and book block.



Over time, headbands lost their structural purpose and became a decorative element in binding. Beautiful threads, fabric and paper were some of the elements used to adorn the top and bottom spine edges of finished bindings.



Karen demonstrated modern-day headband construction. She placed markers throughout a book block to indicate where to anchor the headband to the spine. A piece

of cord to serve as the headband core.

The core was then wrapped with a yellow thread, alternating at points with the anchor thread.



After the demonstration, participants were given the opportunity to create a headband. The hands-on experience complimented the discussion and provided an excellent understanding on the construction and decoration of headbands. An afternoon well spent in discussion and activity. Many thanks to Karen Jones.

Kim Hetherington

The **American Academy of Bookbinding** in Telluride, CO is accepting applications for Scholarships until March 1, 2018. See <https://www.bookbindingacademy.org/scholarships/> for details.

Narrative Thread, Curated by Abecedarian Artists' Books, “a traveling exhibition of works combining physical threads with a narrative content” - Deadline for submissions - March 5, 2018

INTERVIEW WITH KAREN JONES

Karen Jones was part of a small group of binders that were founding members of the Rocky Mountain Chapter in 1995, formed with the intent to provide learning opportunities in the region. Today, she continues to be enthusiastically involved in the Chapter as she serves as co-chair .

In this interview, Karen talks about how she discovered and became interested in book conservation. She reflects on the opportunities she had to be part of Colorado’s preservation outreach in the 80’s and gives a glimpse into the Denver book arts scene in those days. She opens up about how technology has changed her library job and shares her opinions about the state of book arts and related crafts today. She concludes by talking about why the Guild is important to her.

We are fortunate that Karen gives so generously of her time and talents to our Rocky Mountain Chapter.



Karen Jones in her studio.

I'm so glad to be doing an interview with you. You've been very involved in the Rocky Mountain Chapter for a long time, and I look forward to hearing you talk about the history of our Chapter and the current status of it. In addition, you are a well-respected book and paper conservator in the Denver area – and I'd like to learn more about that work here.

What path brought you into book conservation? What got you interested in this field?

After graduating from UCONN in 1977, I had a fine arts degree with a focus on letterpress. I tried to find a job in printmaking, and the only thing I could find was to be a photo-composition typesetter, working the graveyard shift. I was looking for something to do during the day and happened to meet a bookbinder in New Haven. I started

taking classes with her – Connie Mortensen. Her shop was close to Yale. I'm pretty sure she told me at the time that she had studied with Jane Greenfield, (who wrote several books about binding and the preservation of library collections). I liked it so much that I stayed and apprenticed with her for a couple of years. We were doing straight-forward binding, and she taught by having us take books apart and put them back together again, per her instructions. I didn't have an awareness of conservation in my head yet; I just thought of being a bookbinder. And since she was my first teacher, I took all her instruction as gospel.

In 1980, my husband got a job offer in Denver, so we moved west. I figured I would find a job as a bookbinder there. Once we settled in, I found out that was not as easy to do as it might have been in New Haven. I was lucky to make a connection with the library director of Jefferson County PL where they had a CETA program [Comprehensive Employment and Training Act] for book repair. The director could see that I knew a lot more about bookbinding than the CETA people and hired me to do book repair and to teach other staff and volunteers. I also made a connection with a paper conservator. There was a conservation lab associated with the University of Denver, the Rocky Mountain Regional Conservation Center, so I interned with another Connie, Connie Wanke, the paper conservator at RMRCC. I trained with her for a couple of years, while working part-time at the library. My interest in conservation evolved from that. At that time there were no schools for book conservators in the US, and I can't say that I was motivated enough to drop my family life and pursue study [abroad] or an advanced degree.

I joined the GBW and subscribed to *The Alkaline Paper Advocate*, edited by Ellen McCrady. I started seeing what was available. There were Mellon grants for apprenticeships and study, so I started applying for little grants. Johns Hopkins had a three-month internship program, *Preservation of Library Materials*, directed by John Dean. I applied and got it. What a great opportunity! I learned so much and made long-lasting friendships. What a revelation to find there was more than one way to bind (or repair) a book! This was in 1983. In the 80's through the early 90's there were a lot of different internships available. I did one at the University of Utah. I did a couple of short intensive classes at the University of Iowa and at the University of Texas, Austin. My employer (Jefferson County Public Library) wouldn't pay my salary during these studies, but I could get time off and still keep my job.

Meanwhile, an awareness of the importance of preservation in libraries began to grow in Colorado. Myra Jo Moon became the first preservation librarian at Colorado State University and galvanized that effort. I really consider her to be my mentor. She was important as a pioneer in preservation in Colorado. She kind of adopted me, and we traveled the state together, doing preservation outreach. As library faculty, she wrote grants and got Dick Smith's Wei T'o spray booth and a modified commercial freezer for freeze-drying at CSU. She really pushed me to enter the field of library preservation. I liked bench work, observing how books were made, returning them to use while

saving as much of the original as possible. So I didn't pursue an administrative position, but I was happy to have the opportunity to go to conferences and gain an awareness of what was going on in an evolving field.

You didn't have a community of bookbinders and paper and book conservationists or preservationists in Colorado. I imagine it was helpful to have her in your life.

Yes; she was a great friend as well! I spent a lot of time in Fort Collins working with her throughout the 1980s and early 90s until her untimely death in 1995. I still miss her. There have been several efforts to organize sustained support for collections preservation in the state, and I've been involved with most of them, because of her. Through her, I met the State Archivist at the time, Terry Ketelsen. He presented occasional training in archives management for county clerks, and would sometimes include preservation. I traveled with him to do that part.

There was a small group of fans of bookbinding-as-a-craft in Denver at that time - many were retired doctors. Solange Gignac, librarian of the Botanic Gardens, hosted meetings. Tom Parson (letterpress printer), Ray Tomasso (papermaker) and David Ashley (calligrapher) were part of that group. Laura Wait and Nancy Missbach (GBW members) were as well. We met once a month to either look at books or talk about books; we took turns teaching some small skill that could be done during the meetings. It was a lovely close-knit group of people with similar interests: letterpress, bookbinding, calligraphy, paper making. We found ourselves together over and over again at related events. That was how the 80's went.

In 1995, Laura Wait, with Pam Barrios in Utah, decided to form a Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Guild to expand opportunities to learn. There was a lot of enthusiasm for that because local resources were scarce. This was way before Telluride, way before the internet. And we were not averse to traveling the region to learn. Small groups of us would travel together pretty regularly to take workshops in Utah. At the same time, institutional preservation efforts expanded. The Colorado Preservation Alliance was founded. It was later absorbed by the Society of Rocky 1990, after becoming a professional associate member of AIC.



One of Karen's conservation jobs

How does it feel different these days? It sounds like there was a closeness back then of people in the related fields, and a push for learning.

There is still the same camaraderie with people that are interested in the book arts. But collections preservation has changed a lot, especially since much of it is concerned with preservation of digital media. With the changes in technology, the whole idea of “library” is morphing. Public libraries in particular, experienced a sea change in how they are used. As I was learning letterpress printing at school, first generation photo-comp (*the setting of material to be printed by projecting it onto photographic film from which the printing surface is prepared*) was coming in, and the printing industry



was changing. What used to be the way of the world 40 years ago is now a niche art. The people that practice these crafts appreciate them and the general public may admire them in a vague way, but only a small percentage pursue or support them. Changes in print technology, and access to information digitally happened concurrently. More information is available now about bookbinding, and it's great that certificate programs in bookbinding and book conservation now exist, but I'm not sure it's any easier to make a career in the book arts.

In your work in the library, do they still prioritize the preservation and conservation work?

No. For almost 30 years, my work was mostly book repair and collection conservation. Around 2010, the recession hit Colorado as well as the rest of the country. Because of budget constraints along with technology-driven changes in library priorities, my position as a conservator was deleted. I continued at the library by transitioning to the graphics department. Now I do layout and production. I work 20 hours a week. I've been really lucky to have the security of a steady job along with the flexibility to sustain a small conservation practice. I can be in the 21st century in the morning and back to the (mostly) 19th century in the afternoons and evenings. I really love that mix; so when I work on conservation projects, it's because I love to do it, and I don't feel the pressure to bill a certain amount to survive. Because my shop is in my home, I don't have to worry about paying rent. It's been a slow and incremental process over the past 30+ years to get equipment and word-of-mouth clientele. I've never advertised. It was easy to make connections in a slow, organic way without marketing when Denver was a smaller city.

There are probably not many people who do what you do in this city.

No, there are not. I do know conservators who work on objects and on paintings. A conservator, especially a free-lance conservator, needs to work on big-ticket items to earn a good living. Books and printed paper are not usually in that category. I have worked on some valuable items, but regional institutions don't have the budget to support their library collections.

Do you have a consistent amount of work?

Yes, I do, but only because my library job helps to support my conservation business. If I had to make my sole living as a conservator, I would be paying a lot more attention to marketing. As a conservator, I document my work and have no shortage of images. I'm pretty laid-back, but I do feel like I need a website now and am working on that.

I think you make it work. You put together two different types of work, and it seems you enjoy them.

I do, and feel very lucky it's worked out.

And selfishly, we're lucky that you have the time and energy, and, mostly, the desire to give time to the Rocky Mountain Chapter as our co-chair. You've done a lot for our community in the book arts, not just RMC members, but to all of the different book arts related groups in the city, keeping us all informed about events in our area. That's so valuable.

I really do enjoy sharing that information. I'm so enthusiastic about all of those crafts and I want to do my part to help them continue; I want for people to be introduced to them. It's like a part of my job.

You've taken it upon yourself and it's helped our community, and it's helped our chapter that you are involved in helping find workshop people, and a big job was the chapter exhibit, Souvenir, which you almost single-handedly took on. I know you had help, but I was so in awe of what you did – you got the word out, and you organized it, and planned it, had all the books delivered to you, unwrapped them, documented them, sent them to exhibit locations, and at the end you packaged them up and sent them back to the binders, and you did a beautiful on-line catalog.

Working up to that effort grew slowly. We haven't had a lot of shows in our chapter, but when Laura [Wait] was RMC co-chair, I helped out a bit. *In Flight* opened here when we hosted

Standards in Denver. Our chapter was pretty small. A few people did a lot of work to get it going. Having an opportunity to show your work is an important benefit of Guild membership.

Although I'm not a book artist, I'm always happy to promote people who do have work and want to show it. Whenever I hear about a book art show at a library, I volunteer to do the conditioning and help with installation. It's inspiring to see what people are doing. I never think of it as a chore; it's a pleasure! And because I've helped with other exhibits, *West of the Plains* (RMC show in 2009) among them, it wasn't hard to organize *Souvenir*. The hardest part was coming up with a theme. Once that came, it wasn't hard to go forward.

It's also great that we're able to use our Chapter blog spot to host our online catalogs. I want to thank Alicia Bailey of Abecedarium and Laura Russell [23 Sandy] for paving the way in creating online book art catalogs. Laura had a very useful primer for submitting good digital images on her gallery site. I don't think there would be such an awareness of regional book art if it weren't for Abecedarium and 23 Sandy.

Back when the Guild had its Centennial, a lot of us got assignments to write about our region. I wrote up a history of bookbinding and the book arts in the Rocky Mountain region - all 8 states! The project required research, collaborating with fellow chapter members, visiting and interviewing a lot of people. I gained a great appreciation for the continuity of our craft by many small efforts in the region over time. That history has to be rediscovered periodically because people forget. That project is current through 2006. Much more has happened since then, accelerated by IT. I'll bet book art activity in the past 11 years surpasses in quantity and variety that of the previous 100.

At the [RMC Denver] gathering last month, people seemed to be really interested in your presentation on the history of endbands and your demonstration of endband sewing. You have a lot of information that people would be interested in learning. And to hear you talk about it and see your models is valuable.

I enjoyed doing it. I don't know how many people went home and sewed endbands though.

But there is an energy about it. I think it encourages people to go work on books. I think about that because I would love to encourage an active group of members. We have quite a few members.

It is the most widespread chapter geographically, with eight states and we average 60-70 members.

What do you think we can do as a chapter to get more people involved, and to make the chapter valuable to members?

We talked about this at the Chapter meeting at Standards. I find one is happier if you can accept the ebb and flow of energy within a group and just keep plugging away, working toward the group's goals. We try to schedule classes that have broad appeal. We are going to alternate between invited presenters from outside the region and local instructors so the classes won't be so expensive. Book arts encompasses crafts that require practice and doesn't always lend itself to one-off workshops. I think it is important to encourage members, and I hope that we get into a rhythm of scheduling chapter shows regularly. It's a good way to give every member a chance to participate. Technology has made a lot of strides, but unless we start doing VR sessions, I don't know how we can get members from different states to feel like they are in the same room.

I know you went to Standards, and often go. Why do you like attending?

I guess my main reason for attending Standards is to have some face time with chapter members that I don't have a chance to see any other way. Our chapter has co-chairs, one Utah-centric and one Colorado-centric. It's been that way since the chapter started 20+ years now, and even though we schedule separate workshops, we maintain our chapter website together and talk about joint projects. The chapter shows are done in collaboration with local arrangers and travel to several states. It's not enough to just email someone occasionally and feel like you have a strong connection. And I always enjoy the presentations. The best vacations in the world for me are when I can travel and also learn. There is no downside in going to Standards.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed, Karen. Is there any last take-away that you would like to share?

Thank you, Pam. I'm so glad you're part of our chapter! *The Thread that Binds* showed me the range of possibilities to succeed in this niche and helped me to feel a part of it. I've been recommending it to anybody that expresses an interest in a career in bookbinding ever since it was published. I feel very lucky - never bored with work or with fellow book art fans. There is great curiosity when I start a new project, appreciating the work of the often anonymous crafters who created the object - and great satisfaction in being a part of that chain.



The Rocky Mountain Chapter blogsite, <http://rmcgbw.blogspot.com> , includes a member page <http://rmcgbw.blogspot.com/p/members.html> and calendar <http://rmcgbw.blogspot.com/p/events-calendar.html>). If you would like your contact information included or updated on the member page, <http://rmcgbw.blogspot.com/p/members.html>, please send information to pleutz@me.com.

If you have a picture of your book-work that you would like us to feature in the next issue, please send it to pleutz@me.com by April 15, 2018. Also, please send articles, tips, and book related news and event information to pleutz@me.com by April 15, 2018, so they can be added to the next newsletter that comes out May 1, 2018.

Warm Regards,
Pamela Train Leutz, Communications Coordinator