

the lively art of Lettering

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

by Our Readers

The Lively Art of Lettering department provides a community where lettering artists from all levels and backgrounds can learn from one another. Within these pages, we showcase timeless and traditional calligraphy projects, as well as other mixed-media art projects that incorporate new, exciting and experimental lettering techniques.

Whether your lettering skills are advanced, intermediate or just beginning, we invite you to join this community by submitting artwork, articles and tips to share. For each issue, we seek lettering and mixed-media artists to submit Exemplars. If your Exemplar is chosen and published, you will receive a FREE one-year subscription (or six-issue extension if you already subscribe) to *Somerset Studio*.

Please submit your work to *Somerset Studio*, c/o The Lively Art of Lettering, 22992 Mill Creek, Suite B, Laguna Hills, CA 92653.

CRITTERS ON PARADE

by Jana Holstein

It's not uncommon for artist Jane Harrison-Williams to glance out her front door and literally see critters on parade. She shares her Nevada City, California, yard with a variety of wildlife — bears, coyotes, deer, bobcats, and mountain lions.

The critters as her muse, along with a genuine love of animals and nature, inspired her to create this colorful and lively Exemplar.

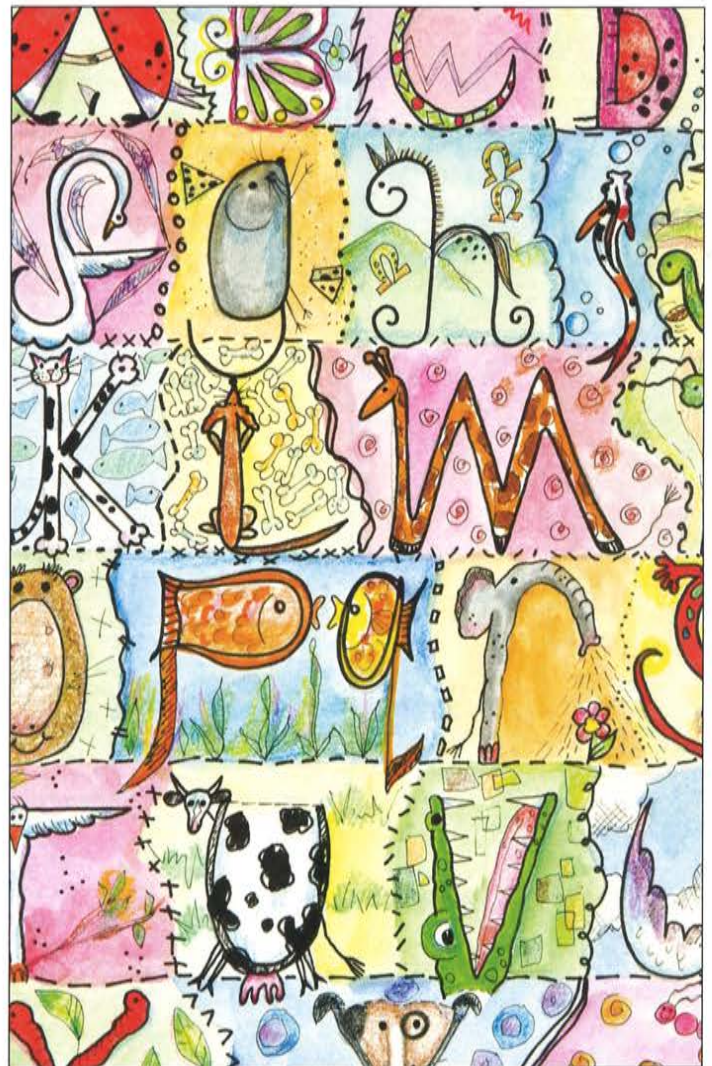
She began by doodling and sketching on scratch paper until she had some workable ideas. Next, she took a piece of hot press illustration board and penciled in the whole composition. Using watercolors, Jane "blocked in" the big areas of background color and then set it aside to dry completely, sometimes using a hair dryer to speed the process. Once dry, she used watercolors, a variety of pens, and colored pencils to add details, shading, and outlines on the letters. She chose the color scarlet red and repeated it here and there randomly as a sort of "thread" to draw one's eye through the piece.

Jane has been a lettering artist for about 30 years. "My first roommate in college introduced me to traditional calligraphy," she says, "and from there it snowballed into experimenting with many styles and techniques of lettering."

Describing her style as whimsical, she believes subject matter is extremely important and feels artists should always pick something they have a passion for. "Otherwise," Jane says, "you risk your finished project possibly turning out rather blasé' and flat."

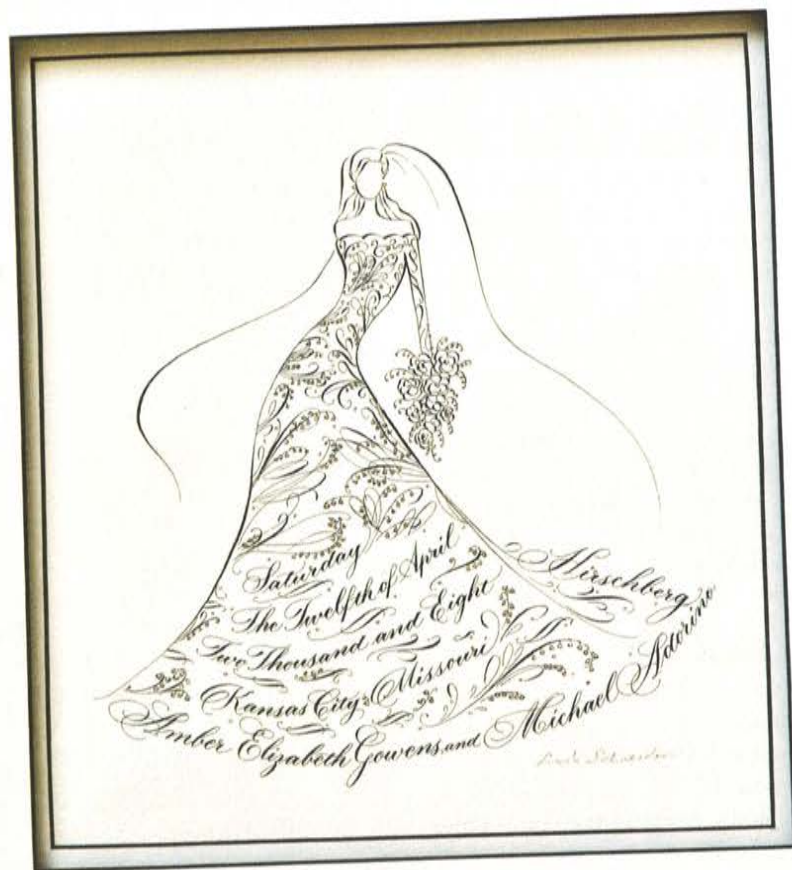
For this piece, Jane says the most difficult part was coming up with a border that complemented and enhanced the piece. And the hardest letter to draw was the letter "r" (the elephant) because it was minimalist in what she had to work with. "The letter 'z' was a breeze," she says, "because it's primarily a series of imperfect little circles, which form a caterpillar of sorts."

Jane Harrison-Williams lives in Nevada City, California, with her husband where she helps him run his custom home building business. She has her own greeting card line called Plain Jane Cards. She welcomes e-mails at zardoya@comcast.net. To see more of Jane's work, please visit her Web site at plainjanecards.com.



Penned Personas

Linda Schneider is passionate about the pointed pen. And with hers, she is able to create not only the classic letters that this lettering instrument is known for, but also unique faces and personas — like this beautifully penned bridal persona that she created for Cheryl Gowens to bestow onto Cheryl's daughter, Amber, to celebrate Amber's nuptials.



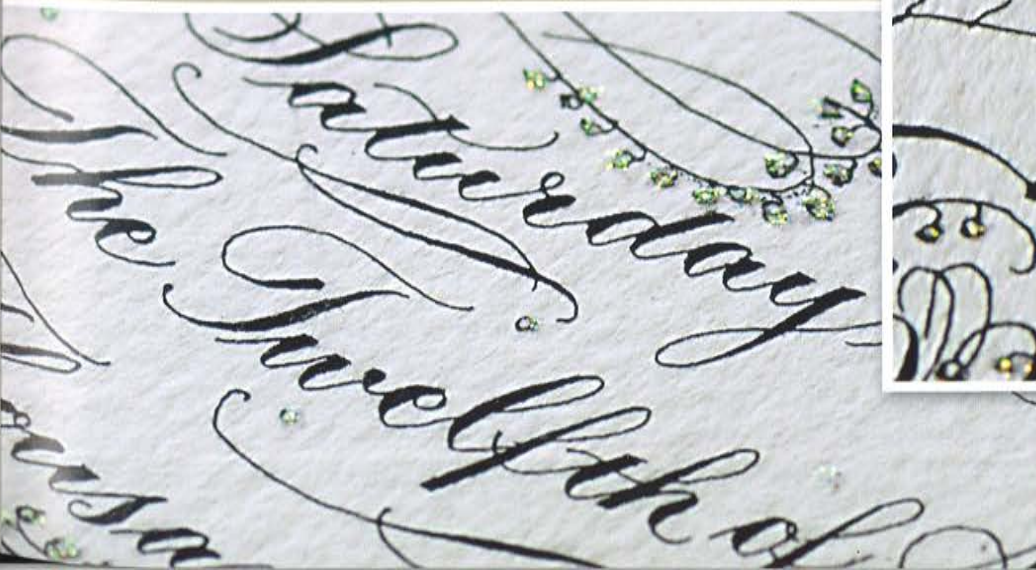
14" x 14"



Cheryl sent photos of Amber in her wedding dress to Linda, along with descriptions of what her hairstyle and bouquet would be like. Cheryl also suggested weaving information from the invitation into her lace dress, as well as Lily of the Valley — Amber's birth flower and the theme flower for the wedding. With all of this information, Linda began imagining executing the design for the main bridal piece, as well as corresponding Thank You cards.

Linda describes her stunning technique as applying slight pressure on the upward strokes, making very thin lines as the stroke is continued with additional pressure applied to the downward strokes, to create heavier lines. These techniques are the ones that Linda has practiced, alongside her many years of studying master penmen of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Linda Schneider is a frequent contributor to Somerset Studio. Details about her techniques are generously illustrated and offered in her book titled Faces, Figures, Florals, and more, which can be ordered through Linda's Web site at lindaschneiderart.com.



BOOK



GHOSTS

by Joyce Bank



One day, while enjoying a pot of tea, I decided to see how a tea bag was put together by taking one apart. I was surprised to see that once unfolded, the bag was tube-shaped. The seam peeled apart easily. I added the spent tea leaves to a houseplant and once the papers were dry, decided to try and write on them. I had taken a couple of calligraphy classes where projects involved writing on sheer and translucent mylar and unryu papers. I'm sure this influenced my decision to try and write on the tea bag paper. In one class we had lettered with a soft 5B pencil, so this was what I tried on the tea bag. I liked the look.

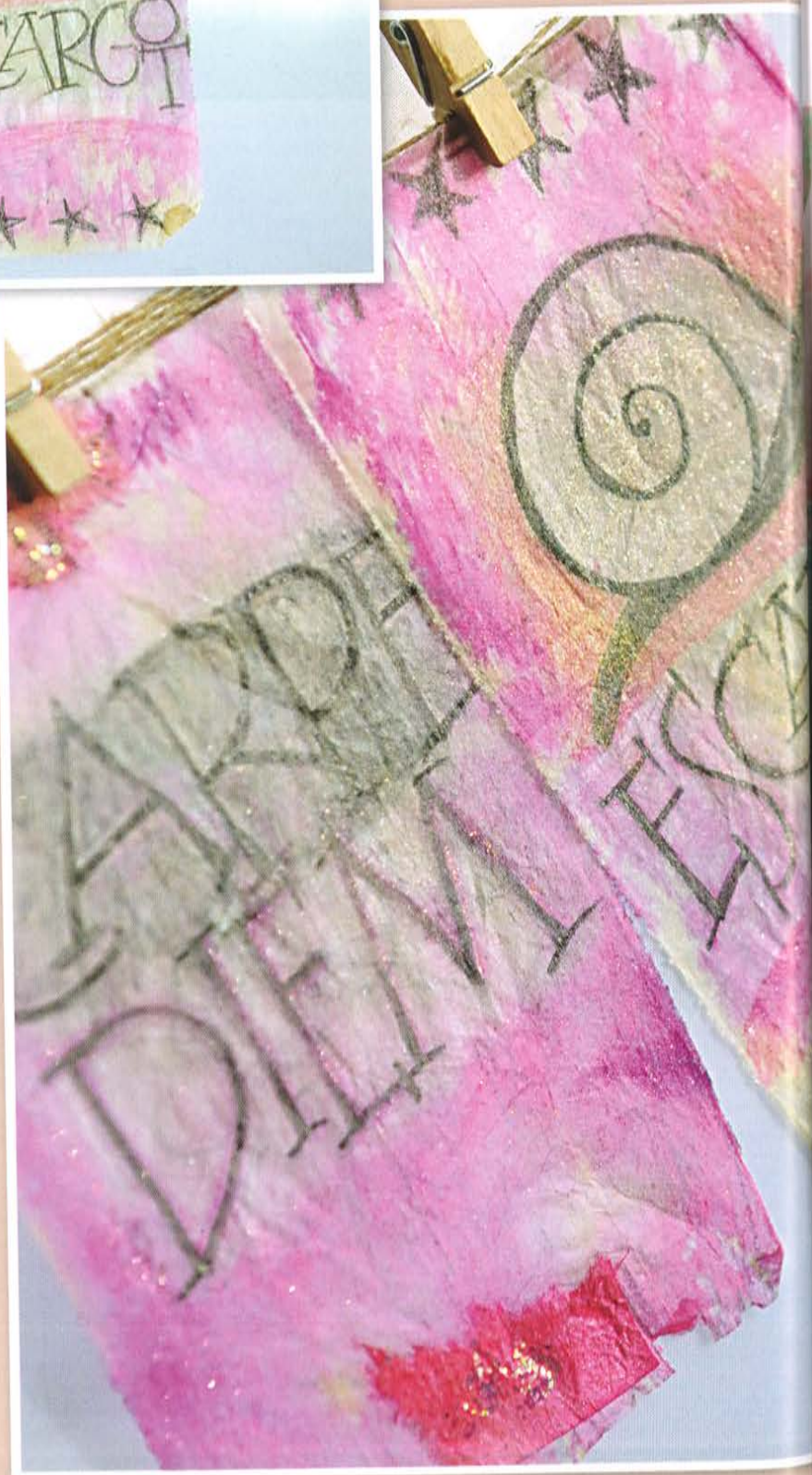


Because I drink a pot of tea nearly every day, with three bags per pot, I had a steady supply of tea bag papers to work with for this new discovery I was making. I decided that I would letter on them and then set them free into the world by placing them into library books that I was returning to the library. I very much like the idea of my little bit of art going out into the world, and not knowing what might become of it — who might find it and what, if anything they would do with it. I decided to call my little lettered papers “book ghosts” because they are wispy and ethereal and they don’t actually mark a page, but they live inside a book and “haunt” it.

To make the book ghosts, I take the tea bags apart while they are still damp, but cool to the touch. My favorite tea, Twinings Lady Grey, has bags that are stitched together. I use a seam ripper to break the string and remove it before unfolding the bag and removing the tea residue, and give the papers a rinse in a bowl of water. Once the papers are dry, I letter on them with a soft 4–6B pencil. Then I stack them and color them with the Stardust Gelly Roll pens. (The Gelly Roll color goes through to the underlying tea bag paper and makes the coloring job more efficient.) Once the tea bags have been lettered and colored, I spritz the tea bags with water. The water diffuses the lines of gel ink into soft areas of color.

I have also been experimenting with other media and decorating ideas, but almost always include lettering on my book ghosts. So the next time you’re in the library, consider inserting a beautiful book ghost of your own. You just never know whose day you might brighten.

Joyce Bank is a lettering artist who lives in Tempe, Arizona. She welcomes e-mails at joyce@studioescargot.com.



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ARTIST
PORTFOLIO: **DANIELLA WOOLF**

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