

Book furniture

Charlotte Howsam, David Pearson and Maickel van Bellegem

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British Library Centre for Conservation
96 Euston Road
London
NW1 2DB

Map: www.bl.uk/aboutus/quickinfo/loc/stp/

This course will consider the history of book furniture from the late medieval period to the 19th century, examining various types of book fittings and how they changed in style and use over time, from the functional to the decorative. The production techniques and materials will also be discussed, as well as techniques for the identification of different materials and their deterioration.

Charlotte Howsam completed a PhD in Archaeology at the University of Sheffield in 2016 on late medieval book fittings archaeologically recovered from English monastic sites. She is currently a Post-Excavation Archaeologist for Archaeology South-East (UCL).

David Pearson retired in 2017 as Director of Culture, Heritage & Libraries for the City of London Corporation. He is now concentrating on academic work as a book historian, is a Research Fellow of the Institute of English Studies at the University of London and the Lyell Reader in Bibliography at Oxford for 2017/18. His books include *Oxford Bookbinding 1500-1640* (2000) and *English Bookbinding Styles 1450-1800* (2005, new edition 2014). He regularly teaches on the Rare Book Schools in London and Charlottesville.

Maickel van Bellegem ACR is the Metals Subject Leader at West Dean College.

Maickel is a goldsmith and metals conservator who has worked both independently and in museums, notably the Rijksmuseum, the British Museum and the V&A Museum. He has worked on a range of metal objects for display, loans, storage and research purposes, and has published regularly. Topics of publications included historical manufacturing techniques relating to patination of 'black bronze' alloys in 19th century Burmese lime boxes and their conservation, authentication and developing conservation treatments for corroded silver.

For further information about the course, please contact the Course Organiser: cpd@westdean.org.uk or +44 (0) 1243 818219.

For further information about booking, please telephone the Bookings Office: +44 (0)1243 818300.

Website: www.westdean.org.uk

Programme

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| 09.45 | Registration and Coffee on arrival |
| 10.00 | Welcome and introductions |
| 10.15 | History of Book Furniture
This session will examine the various types of metal book furniture that were used on books in late medieval England. Using a range of examples, the production and decoration of book fittings, and the materials used for their manufacture, will be discussed, as well as the varying states in which book fittings are found both archaeologically and on extant bookbindings.
Charlotte Howsam |
| 11.00 | Break |

- 11.20 History of Book Furniture:
Post-Reformation use, down to the 19th century – when clasps and bosses were still functional to begin with, but increasingly came to be used more in a decorative sense. The different metals used and the kinds of bindings on which furniture is found.
David Pearson
- 12.15 Lunch can be purchased from the nearby British Library Terrace Restaurant
- 13.10 Identifying Metals: How Metals Deteriorate
Basic concepts of the wide range of metals which may be encountered and visual characteristics to look out for together with the associated signs and ways of deterioration.
Maickel van Bellegem
- 14.30 Case studies of Metals
Case studies in conservation of metal book furniture including Limoges enamels in the Metropolitan Museum of Art collection and silver bible covers in the Waddesdon Bequest to the British Museum.
Maickel van Bellegem
- 15.30 Discussion
- 16.00 End