

Printing History News

The Newsletter of the Printing Historical Society and
Friends of St Bride Library

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Europe's biggest printing museum opens in Malesherbes, France

28th September 2018 saw the arrival of a major new actor on the European printing museum scene with the opening of the Atelier-Musée Imprimerie (AMI) at Malesherbes, 40 miles south of Paris. The AMI is the brainchild of Jean-Paul and Chantal Maury, and covers over 50,000 square feet of exhibition space including workshops where visitors can make paper or learn the arts and crafts of paper marbling, type composition, printing and bookbinding. The 700 objects on display include 150 machines selected from the 300 which the Museum currently owns.

The Atelier-Musée Imprimerie offers a panorama of how printing and printed products have evolved over the centuries, from Gutenberg's time through the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, until the appearance of photographic processes, electronics and the digital revolution. The themes which are dealt with in the different sections of the museum often underline the continuities which run through the history of graphic communication and the pertinence of printing history in the digital age, with titles such as: The First Media; The Triumph of the Written Word; The Arts and Crafts of Printing; The World as Graphosphere. Likewise, by exhibiting side by side machines and printed products, films and audiovisual displays,

and even a digital printing workshop, the Atelier-Musée Imprimerie situates the technical advances which have marked printing within the context of an ever-changing society.

What's on at St Bride

'Unfolding the First Hebrew Typeface Family' by Ismar David Shani Avni, Wednesday 6th February 2019 at 7pm. Tickets £8–£12.50.

Ismar David was a prolific type designer, calligrapher, graphic designer and illustrator. He also engaged in architectural design and taught calligraphy. From the 1930s to the 1990s he created exquisite designs, studying in Berlin in 1928, emigrating to Jerusalem in 1932 and to New York City in 1952. His most important work is considered to be the David Hebrew Typeface family. It was the first of its kind when it was issued in 1954 and it remains one of the most highly regarded Hebrew typefaces.

The talk will cover the challenges entailed in designing a Hebrew typeface family, how David tackled these obstacles and why this work is paramount and what has become of it over the years.

The Justin Howes Memorial Lecture: 'Progress? On the Evolution of Arabic Type' by Titus Nemeth, Thursday 14th March 2019 at 7pm. Tickets £8–£12.50.

The history of typography is also a history of technologies. As the means of multiplying texts evolved through time,

different tools left distinct marks on letterforms. This dynamic accelerated from the late nineteenth century, as technological developments began to radically change the making and setting of type.

At increasingly shorter intervals, new machines and techniques shaped how text was represented and multiplied. Arabic typography is no exception to this, but its history is shorter.

'More than Just Books' printing exhibition in Glasgow

The Scottish Printing Archival Trust's exhibition in the Lighthouse, Scotland's Centre for Design and Architecture, ran from November 2018 to early January 2019. The Lighthouse building was designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh to house the *Glasgow Herald's* printing plant, and this was a welcome opportunity to highlight the printing links of the building. As well as marking the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the Trust, the exhibition covered the history of the printing industry in general, highlighting the sectors important to the City of Glasgow itself – the production of newspapers/periodicals, printing for business and the production of labels for the whisky and mineral water industries. We were able to include a short film of the *Herald* being printed within that very building, courtesy of the National Library of Scotland's Moving Image Archive, together with exhibition panels on the history of the industry and displays of printing plates belonging to Tim Honnor, one of our Trustees, and of print-trade ephemera from our own collections.

The exhibition's launch included a lecture from Professor David Finkelstein about the nineteenth-century printers who moved throughout the world, and was followed by a reception. The press took an interest in the exhibition, and Helen Williams, the Honorary Secretary, was interviewed by John Beattie for his programme on BBC Radio Scotland. The Trust is very grateful to all its sponsors for the opportunity to put on this event.



Essex-based letterpress studio advises on Mike Leigh's *Peterloo* film

In June 2017, Typoretum was contacted by a set designer working on a new film by acclaimed director Mike Leigh.

The film would be based on the infamous 1819 Peterloo Massacre, where a peaceful pro-democracy rally at St Peter's Field in Manchester turned into one of the bloodiest and most notorious episodes in British history. The Peterloo Massacre was a defining moment in British democracy and also played a significant role in the founding of the *Guardian* newspaper.

For a scene in the film, they needed to re-create a print room that was historically accurate to the period, and dress it with authentic printing equipment. After a meeting at Typoretum, Justin Knopp was asked to advise, consult and assist them with this at the filming location. Typoretum also agreed to loan some of their equipment, held in a private collection, to use within the set.

Justin had the pleasure of spending three days working with Mike Leigh, the production team and actors on set in his advisory role. A reproduction page of the *Manchester Observer* was created from a magnesium block and letterpress printed on site. Justin trained the actors on how to print on the iron press and supervised the technical aspects of the process during filming, to ensure that everything was done correctly.

Typoretum is a creative design and letterpress printing studio, based in Coggeshall, Essex and operated by husband and wife team Justin & Cecilia Knopp: www.typoretum.co.uk.

Peterloo is currently being screened in cinemas nationwide.

Photo: Peterloo Ltd.

'Post-war Printing: Technologies, Processes, Products': call for papers

10th and 11th October 2019, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

When the first post-war printing trade show opened its doors in 1955 the organisers enthusiastically declared: 'man is on the threshold of a new age of technological development'. This excitement was reflected on the show floor, which was brimming with photo-composing machines, automatic engravers, vast photogravure presses and mammoth cameras. In the press-room offset was dominant, while in the composing room computer-assisted typesetting had come of age.

As the century progressed, technology opened up new prospects for the industry, with innovative materials, inks and finishing techniques. One of the furthest reaching of the advances came in 1985 when Apple adopted Adobe's PostScript page description language for its Apple LaserWriter printer, and this, combined with the advent of 'desktop publishing' software, sparked a revolution in typographic technology.

Today the revolution continues and printing has become hybrid, having merged with other technologies to create electronic paper, conductive ink and three-dimensional printing.

Over a period of 70 years technological advancements have revolutionised how printed material is designed, manufactured, distributed and consumed.

Despite the huge amount of change in the post-war printing industry and allied trades, this era seems to have received scant attention from historians. This conference seeks to address this gap and

will consider the progress of post-1945 printing including the technologies, processes and products of print, and also the users and consumers of the printed word.

Individual papers of twenty-minutes duration or panel presentations of one hour are invited for this interdisciplinary conference from practitioners, independent researchers, established scholars and postgraduates working in the fields of twentieth-century bibliography, printing history, typographic history, print culture, social and economic history.

Papers are invited on, but not limited to, the following themes:

- *Culture*: changing attitudes to the reception and consumption of printed material.
- *Design*: movements, designers, graphic design, type and typographic design, book design, magazine and newspaper design, corporate design.
- *Printers*: individual printers, printing companies.
- *Printing processes*: digital, letterpress, lithography, gravure, screen, flexography, transfer.
- *Products*: books, magazines, newspapers, printed ephemera, posters, maps, security printing.
- *Structure*: trade unions, management, trade shows.
- *Technology*: computer processing, printing, composing, type making, graphic reproduction, engraving, stereotyping, image processing, electrotyping, printing science, colour, paper, inks, bindings, packaging, machine manufacturers.
- *Training*: schools of printing, manuals of printing.
- *Other*: book trade, journalism, news agencies, editing and authorship.

We also invite delegates to bring typographic items from the post-war period for redistribution to those who might use them either in practice or in teaching activities: a box-full of unwanted golfball heads perhaps, or photocomposer master plates, or examples of paste-ups or negatives.

Speaker fee: £60.00

To apply, please send a suggested title, synopsis (300 words) and biography (150 words) via a Word attachment to david.osbaldestin@bcu.ac.uk by 19th April 2019.

The conference is being organised by the Printing Historical Society, the Centre for Printing History and Culture, and the Centre for the Study of the Book, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.



Workshops at St Bride's

We have a good range of workshops available in bookbinding, letterpress and wood engraving – suitable for all levels, there is something for everyone!

One-day Adana/letterpress course: 13th February, 10.30am; 27th February, 10.30am; 13th March, 10.30am.

Wood engraving (relief printing) taster day: 23rd February, 10.30am–5.30pm; 6th April, 10.30am–5.30pm; 4th May, 10.30am–5.30pm.

Three-week hand composition and letterpress course: Monday evenings 11th, 18th and 25th February, 6–9pm. Monday evenings 11th, 21st and 28th March, 6–9pm.

Wood engraving (relief printing) tutorial evening: 11th April, 6–9pm.

One-day introduction to bookbinding: 24th February, 10am–4pm.

Introduction to wood engraving (four weeks): Wednesday evenings 27th March, 3rd, 10th and 17th April, 6–9pm.

One-day Japanese binding course: 30th March, 10am–4pm.

One-day travel journal binding course: 27th April, 10am–4pm.

Jarrold Printing Museum

The John Jarrold Printing Museum remains under threat from the redevelopment of its premises in Norwich. In November the PHS issued a press-release in support of the Museum, and the developers have revised their plans, but only in a small way so that the bulk of the Museum's holdings will still be surplus to requirements in the new development. A final decision on the planning application is expected in February or March.

For the latest situation, please see the campaign's Facebook page (open Facebook and search for 'Save the John Jarrold Printing Museum'). Information may also be published on the Museum's website, albeit this is controlled by the Jarrold Company, which is the landlord of the Museum and the partner of the developers (www.jarrold.com/what-we-do/museum.aspx).

The PHS press-release may be read here: <http://printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk/JarroldPressRelease.pdf>.

'Safeguarding Intangible Heritage: Passing on Printing Techniques to Future Generations': AEPM annual conference 2019: call for papers

23rd–25th May 2019
Nationaal Museum van de Speelkart
Turnhout, Belgium.

For its 2019 annual conference, the Association of European Printing Museums invites 20-minute paper proposals on issues raised by the transmission of traditional printing techniques and skills to future generations.

The 1980s and the decades which followed saw the creation of a large number of printing museums and heritage workshops which preserved not only the machines, equipment and techniques which had recently disappeared; they were also able to preserve the skills and knowledge of the craft workers who operated them. Indeed, many museums and workshops were set up by, or with the active collaboration of, printers who in many cases had recently retired. Forty years on, this generation of printers who had an intimate knowledge of the techniques which they employed, is retiring for a second time, this time definitively.

As a result, printing museums and heritage workshops have become increasingly preoccupied in recent years with the problem of how to preserve and transmit the traditional skills necessary to continue using what have now become historical machines and processes. Some techniques have found a second home in creative workshops where they continue to be used, adapted and even renewed. In this way many of the techniques of wood cutting and engraving, copperplate engraving and etching and stone lithography have been preserved and transmitted. The techniques and skills of letterpress printing have also been preserved and transmitted, in this case by fine printers and small publishers who place traditional methods of production at the heart of their activities. Most of these workshops are oriented towards some form of literary, artistic or creative production. Important as these workshops are, only a few include the preservation and transmission of printing heritage among their core missions: which means that printing museums remain the most visible champions of printing heritage.

The preservation and transmission of the intangible heritage of printing raises many problems for printing museums. Resources are generally scarce. Budgets

are modest, skilled personnel are scarce both for the restoration, operation and maintenance of machines and for the development and day-to-day running of educational activities and mediation programmes. And for larger institutional museums, the specificities of printing heritage are often difficult to reconcile with bureaucratic imperatives. Employing a printer in a public museum, for example, is a veritable obstacle race with the result that essential working knowledge of a central aspect of collections can be all too easily lost if the existing printer changes job or retires.

As a result, the preservation and transmission of traditional techniques and skills are among the biggest challenges facing printing museums, heritage workshops and other organisations involved in printing heritage.

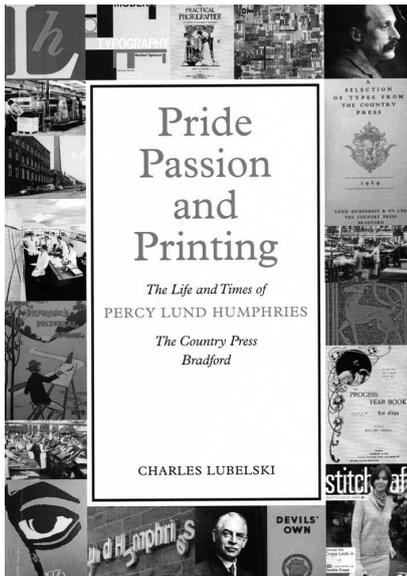
Possible topics for the conference include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtaining recognition for traditional printing techniques as intangible heritage.
- Apprenticeships, national treasures and other means of transmitting highly specialised skills.
- Can techniques survive without the skills required to exploit them?
- What kinds of techniques are amenable to being passed on?
- Health and safety considerations: living with lead and other hazards.
- Learning by doing: practice as a means of transmission.
- Collaborations between printing museums and heritage workshops.
- Conservation: to what extent can material artefacts be used?
- The role of documentation and archival collections in preserving skills.
- Documenting intangible printing heritage by oral history projects, films, etc.
- Exhibitions, digital media, visits, demonstrations.
- Teaching mediators printing techniques.
- Teaching practical printers the techniques of mediation.
- After the founders: managing the long-term development of printing heritage organisations.

Speakers will have 20 minutes in which to present their paper, and 10 minutes for discussion. Papers in English are preferred but proposals for talks in other languages will be considered.

Proposals, no longer than 300 words, should be sent to: info@aepm.eu.

Deadline for proposals: 28th February



Pride, Passion and Printing

Self-publishing is not for the faint-hearted. A second book could be written about my experiences in getting this book produced. It has been a stressful task, at times hugely disappointing and always uncertain. I have lost count of the number of publishers who rejected my script; the principal reasons given being limited sales potential and the high costs of production relative to low or negative financial returns. Finally, after a severely edited text to fit 200 pages, the book was published.

The book

The history of our former great printing companies is precious not only in terms of preserving and adding to local and national history but also as a record of the educational, artistic and cultural enrichment these companies made to society. Percy Lund Humphries was such a company. Occupying a former mill in Bradford, Percy Lund Humphries was one of the world's great printers which played a central role in the development of fine art publications and cutting-edge printing technologies in the twentieth century.

Founded in 1895, it developed a reputation for the highest quality colour reproduction and creative typography, making it a magnet for artists, typographers and designers. Its seminal publications of the work of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, for example, played no small part in securing their reputations internationally, while it introduced the British art public to the latest modernist painting, sculpture and architecture from the European continent and America.

PLH invested huge sums of money on type and typography. The company printed in over eighty languages including Chinese. At one time the remarkable sinologist Bruno Schindler was head of the foreign language department.

During the Second World War, work on the atom bomb was done at the factory. Printers and scientists were committed to this highly secret project; several former employees were recalled from military duty to work on the project.

Known locally as 'The Academy', the history of Percy Lund Humphries is a story with many surprising twists and turns – of craftsmen and craftswomen, of inspired leadership, co-operative workplace teamwork and pride in making a superb product. But the effects of globalisation, intense competition, financial crises, new digital technologies and the company's unwillingness to compromise on quality inevitably forced Percy Lund Humphries, in 1994, to silence their presses.

Pride, Passion and Printing by Charles Lubelski is now printed and published. Soft cover, large octavo, 200 pages with over sixty illustrations, £16.99 (plus £3 postage and packaging). Email: cdlubelski@talktalk.net for details.

CHARLES LUBELSKI

Digital Printing History News

In 2019 the PHS will trial a digital version of *Printing History News*, with a future number being published in both digital (PDF) and paper copies. Members who have already supplied their e-mail addresses will be sent the digital version rather than the paper, unless they contact the editor in advance (see column 3) and ask to continue to receive hard-copies of the newsletter. Those members (including institutions) for which we have only mailing addresses will continue to receive paper copies of *PHN*. The intention is for this model to be adopted for one number only in 2019 (which number will be announced in the next newsletter), but if the experiment is successful, dual digital/paper publication will be adopted from 2020. The Society's *Journal* is not affected by this experiment, which is intended to reduce postage and printing costs for the newsletter, which have become heavy indeed (especially the postage) in the past few years.

Grants for 2019

The PHS is pleased to announce that it welcomes applications for research funding to be awarded in 2019 under its grants programme. The deadline for applications is Sunday 12th May. For further information visit the Grants Programme page on the Society's website.

Subscriptions

Individual members of the PHS and institutional subscribers to the *Journal* are reminded that subscriptions for 2019 fell due for renewal on 1st January. For further information on current subscription rates visit the Society's website and look for the 'Join us' page, or contact the Hon. Secretary.

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