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E. Ellin Carter: Art Leatherworker

Book Review

by Rene Hackstetter

Reading through some old issues of "The Studio", a British magazine founded in 1893 and devoted to the Fine and Applied Arts, I discovered a reference to an "E. Ellin Carter", an Art Leatherworker whose studio was located in the West End of London.

The issue of August 14, 1926, has an advertisement from Miss Carter, a gold and silver medalist from the Paris Salon and London, indicating that her production includes "Caskets, Covers, Cases and Bags...suitable for GIFTS and presentations".

I wondered if there might be more information on this artisan and, scanning through "The Studio" published in the years after WWI and before WWII, I found other advertisements and discovered her studio was originally at 3 Stratford Court, then moved to 128 Crawford, around 1927. The information was scant, until one day, on a ride to the Beaches, I stopped into a little bookshop and found a small volume entitled "Artistic Leatherwork" by E. Ellin Carter. This copy was the third edition 1926 New Impression, and the publisher was E & F Spon Ltd., an Industrial Publisher from London. It runs 67 pages and there are six plates and twenty-one illustrations.

This delightful book is divided into seven chapters - Introductory Notes, Tools and Materials, Methods of Decoration, Colouring and Staining, Gilding, Padded and Embossed Work and Making Up.

Miss Carter's critical observation in the introduction is that "...the thought, the conception at the back of the expression (is what)...stamps the work as either vital or lifeless." Miss Carter then outlines six methods of decorating leather - Cut or incised Work, Embossed, Modelled, Carved, Hammered or Punched and Mosaic Work.

Worth reading...and it's in the Library!

Miss E. ELLIN CARTER

ART LEATHERWORKER



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Exhibitor, Paris Salon and
London

Caskets, Covers, Cases and
Bags of every description
suitable for Gifts and Pre-
sentations. Work may be
seen on Tuesdays, Wednes-
days and Thursdays.

128, Crawford Street, Baker Street, W.1
(Eight minutes' walk from the recent Studio)

ARTISTIC LEATHER WORK

A HANDBOOK ON THE ART OF
DECORATING LEATHER

BY
E. ELLIN CARTER

6 Plates from Work executed by the Author
and 21 Illustrations

THIRD EDITION
NEW IMPRESSION



London
E. & F. N. SPON, LTD., 57 HAYMARKET, S.W.1
New York
SPON & CHAMBERLAIN, 120 LIBERTY STREET
1926

ADIEU

This February, C.S.C.L. lost a valued and remarkable friend in leather - Bob Muma. Bob's life and history as a charter member of C.S.C.L. will be celebrated by Fred Brown in a future issue of Canadian Leathercraft.

MOVING?

There are so many people to inform when you move -friends, utilities, credit card companies, government agencies, circulation departments and clubs and organizations you belong to. **THAT'S US!**

Please don't forget to let Madeleine Mitchell know if you change addresses. We need to know in order to keep your bulletin coming!

WORK SAFETY

Although it was a surprising revelation earlier this century, today we are well aware that the stresses and strains of working in unnatural positions or

remaining static for many hours can have serious negative, long-term effects on our health. A great deal of time and money have been spent minimizing the risk of back, neck and joint injuries to computer operators and others who "sit on the job", but more attention needs to be paid to appropriate chairs for working at home.

The lumbar region of the back needs to be well supported and chairs should allow you to place your feet flat on the floor and to sit with your elbows at a 90 degree angle to the work surface. If your chair are not adjustable, a foot rest or chair pad can be used to improve the fit.

You also need to face your work squarely, without twisting. The construction of your work table must allow room for your feet to fit underneath so that you are not leaning forward an unnatural angle.

Proper lighting is important, too. Plan both natural and installed lighting to eliminate glare as well as shadows. Lighting problems interfere with the ability to distinguish visual detail, creating an unsafe situation when using sharp tools or handling hot substances.

(Canada Safety Council)

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE APRIL 1, 1993

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS - \$20.00

SUSTAINING MEMBERS - \$35.00

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AND SEND TOGETHER TO SAVE POSTAGE.

MEMBERS ATTENDING THE ANNUAL MAY PAY THEN.

Madeleine Mitchell

FREE FORM STACKED BOX

by Bruce White

STRAPS FOR BOX

1. Decide on the approximate dimensions.
2. Cut sole leather pieces for body, about 5 or six pieces to a depth of about 1-3/4".
3. Cut top - 2 pieces.
4. Glue body together. Rough all surfaces but the top piece.
5. Glue 2 pieces for the top. Make sure the inside piece is in good condition.
6. After the glue has set, cut the outside of the body of the box. Free form is best, but it can be rectangular or oval.
7. To cut the inside of the box, make sure you have 2 points in opposite corners that are thicker, for the lid swivel.

Cut the inside with a coping saw or scroll saw. Do not try to use a chisel, as the pounding will loosen the glued leathers. If you have trouble with sawing, add numerous drill holes around the area to be cut out. the inside piece can be used for another box, so no waste.

After cutting, sand inside and out.

I use a drill press or drive with sanding drums. (If you can't get sanding drums, cut a length of 3/4" dowling, about 3" long. Put a long bolt (4 x 1/4") through it. Make a narrow saw cut along the dowel, then place sand paper in the saw cut and wrap sand paper in the same direction as the drill runs. Then put elastic bands around the top to hold the sandpaper and start sanding. (Use up to about 300 grit.)

TOP

8. Tack the finished box on the lid. Cut the lid into 2 parts - no straight lines (gentle or "S" curve) Sand this cut, both sides, and make sure they align closing. After finishing, put the 2 pieces together again and put the bottom of the box on and trace around the outside. Then cut and sand the outside. Now take the sander and sculpt the top (small dip in the centre of one side).
9. Put the top on and drill 2 holes through the top and body at the thick part of the body. Use 2 pieces of brass rod - coat hanger wire will work. (1-1/4" or longer)
10. Now cut 2 pieces of leather slightly larger than the top section and tool your pattern.
11. Cut the bottom piece (6/7 oz) and tool for inside pattern on the bottom.
12. Glue 2 top pieces, cut to shape and finish. Finish bottom inside.
13. Dye all parts and finish.
14. Place the brass rods in the holes of the top and glue in place.
15. On the inside of the bottom, glue the tooled leather in place and cut it to the shape of the outside. Now assemble the top by placing the rods in the holes. If the rods are too loose, remove and carefully make a slight bend in the middle. This tightens the rods in the holes.
16. Now glue a piece of suede to the bottom, as a protector and to finish it off.

Happy leather working!

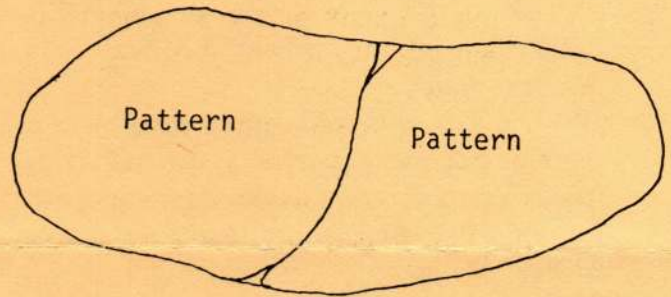
FREEFORM STACKED BOX

Top - 2 pieces

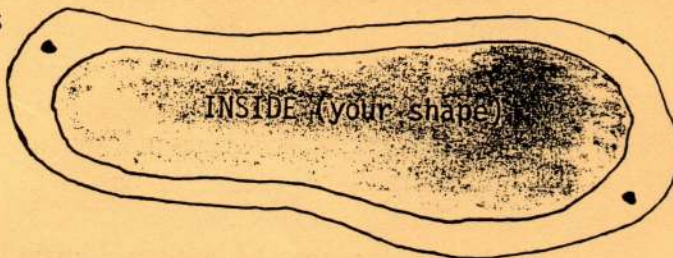


SIDE VIEW

Bottom, approx. 5-6 pieces
(Approx. 1-3/4" deep)

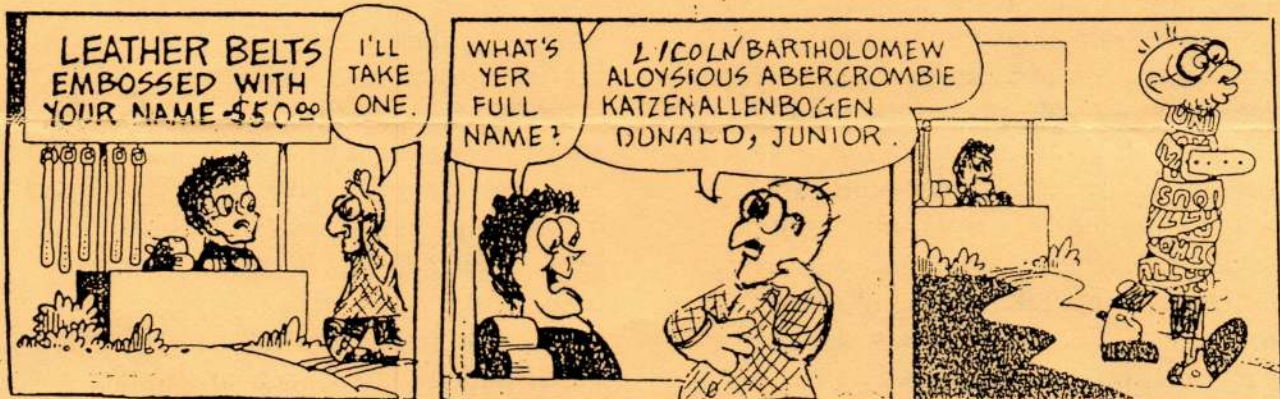


Brass
Rod



Brass rod

HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE.....?



What's the funniest, most frustrating or most embarrassing story in your leathercraft experience? Jot it down and send it to us. Give us all a laugh, even if it's at your expense!

BUSY YEAR

By Dorothy McPherson

"Good morning, and welcome to Haliburton School of Fine Arts. I'm sure glad you're all here, because if you weren't here, I wouldn't be here", was instructor David McPherson's opening remark to the Class of '92 in LEATHER BOXES at Haliburton School of Fine Arts last summer.

C.S.C.L. was well represented by five people. for many students, me included, it was a first attempt at box-making. Don Colvin, talented Toronto leather garment maker, always wore an earring to class while he was instructing that week, so our BOXES class made him a dangling earring cut from the side of one of our boxes. That week, leather made headlines in Haliburton's newspaper, THE ECHO, when a reporter had me pose on a handmade wicker seat with one of my leather decoys, outside Rail's End Gallery. Risking life and limb, I perched on the very edge of the railway station platform. The feature article resulting from my death-defying act of courage on behalf of "leather", highlighted the Haliburton Highlands Guild of Fine Arts (HHGFA) show and sale held the following week.

HHGFA membership (\$15 single, \$25 family) is open to all media and, as Guild members, we sold at the popular annual show, with the Guild keeping a graded commission from sales, depending on how many volunteer hours we put in demonstrating leather work and cashiering. Other jobs included checking crafters in and out of the show. When the fashion show section needed someone to model a man's handknit pullover sweater, David good-naturedly agreed to do it and I captured the event on film.

Our Donnelly dolls and triangular box, submitted to the juried portion of the show remained on display throughout

the week. We each had separate tables of leather goods and I sold out of decoys. Then I had to make more. While other people at our Lake Kashaga-wigamog trailer park were soaking up sunshine, we were busy making leather earrings and pins.

Leather was represented at the lively auction held by HHGFA at Pinestone Inn, when David, as a '92 instructor, donated a box. Several BOXES students attended the Haliburton School of Fine Arts buffet supper and evening of casual entertainment at Wigamog Inn.

CLASS OF '93: LEATHER BOXES course is scheduled to run Monday-Friday, July 19-23. Registration/information: Sir Sandford Fleming College, Box 339, Haliburton, ON, K0M 1S0.

Meanwhile, we've been busy preparing work and slides for OCC's ONTARIO Crafts '93 show. David made a box and I inset gemstones in a leather bowl. The show runs from June 9th to September 5th, at the Craft building, 35 McCaul Street, Toronto.

To promote leather crafting, we spoke about it at a Niagara Guild of Crafts regular meeting last year. My leather horse, PEGASUS-GALAXY TRIPPER was in the Midwest '92 OCC show. It appeared in my Welland/Port Colborne newspaper column. That essay also appears in my Canada 125 cardbook, MISS JANEY CANUCK desktop published in June.

Our latest venture? In November we leased gallery space at Guildhouse, 140 Talbot Street, St. Thomas, where they sell leathergoods for us.

David and his studio apprentice are now preparing entries for the C.S.C.L. '93 Annual.

SEE YOU THERE!

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DEE RINGS

BRUCE H WHITE LEATHERCRAFT

MAGAZINES
KEY PLATES

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SNAPS

AT THE C.S.C.L. ANNUAL MEETING

RIVETS

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NEW HORIZONS

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2-9 OZ

NATURAL SKIVER

BELTING SPLITS

SEE YOU AT THE ANNUAL!

C.S.C.L. WORKSHOP

WHEN: Saturday May 29, 1993 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: Cooksville United Church
2500 Mimosa Row
Mississauga, Ontario

DEMONSTRATOR: BETSY RENNIE

PROJECT: Making a Pattern for a Leather Vest.

PLEASE BRING: Brown or White paper suitable for a Pattern.
Large enough to draw a Front and a Back
2 pieces 18" x 40" or 1 Piece 36" x 40"

Meter stick and Square
or a Roll of Tape measure
Masking Tape
Pencil, eraser, and Paper Scissors

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy # 401, take Hurontario or Hwy # 10, go south one street past Hwy # 5, turn left (there is a Plaza on the left and a service station). Turn left onto Mimosa Row.