

Life Along the Potomac

*An Exhibition of Fine Bindings and
Artist's Books*

*Sponsored by the Potomac Chapter of the
Guild of Book Workers*

Life Along the Potomac

The exhibit features a wide variety of binding styles and highlights different artistic interpretations of the Potomac theme. It includes examples of traditional bindings, contemporary design bindings, and an array of artist books.

It opened December 1, 2015 at the Bethesda Library, Bethesda, Maryland and was on display at the Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, Maryland from January 4 through February 29, 2016.

All exhibit photos are by Edie Semler, Potomac Chapter.



Paige Billin-Frye
Nodding Acquaintances

The plants that I pass every day, plants with which I have an ongoing relationship, are the 'spontaneous urban vegetation' - the weeds - on my property. I battle them; I admire them; but I did not know their names. This project is an attempt to make their acquaintances. I photographed them, creating portraits somewhat reminiscent of botanical illustrations. They are contained in a box. The inner tray folds around the outside of the cover so that it acts as a garden edge. It opens like a flower to reveal the plants inside. There are more of them out there and room in the box for plenty more. This is an ongoing project.

Materials: Patterned fabric, book cloth, binding board, inkjet printing on kitikata paper, mulberry paper dyed with kakishibu (fermented persimmon juice), hemp cord, guitar string ball ends.





Elizabeth Curren
Through the Canal Lock

Through the Canal Lock is a tunnel book with split covers; the viewer opens the lock and travels through the four seasons along the C&O Canal as it parallels the Potomac River in Bethesda, Maryland.

Materials: Watercolors on Arch's Paper, with dyed Cave Paper concertinas. Cover: watercolor and collage on handmade paper, with museum board and Tyvek, Japanese fastener.





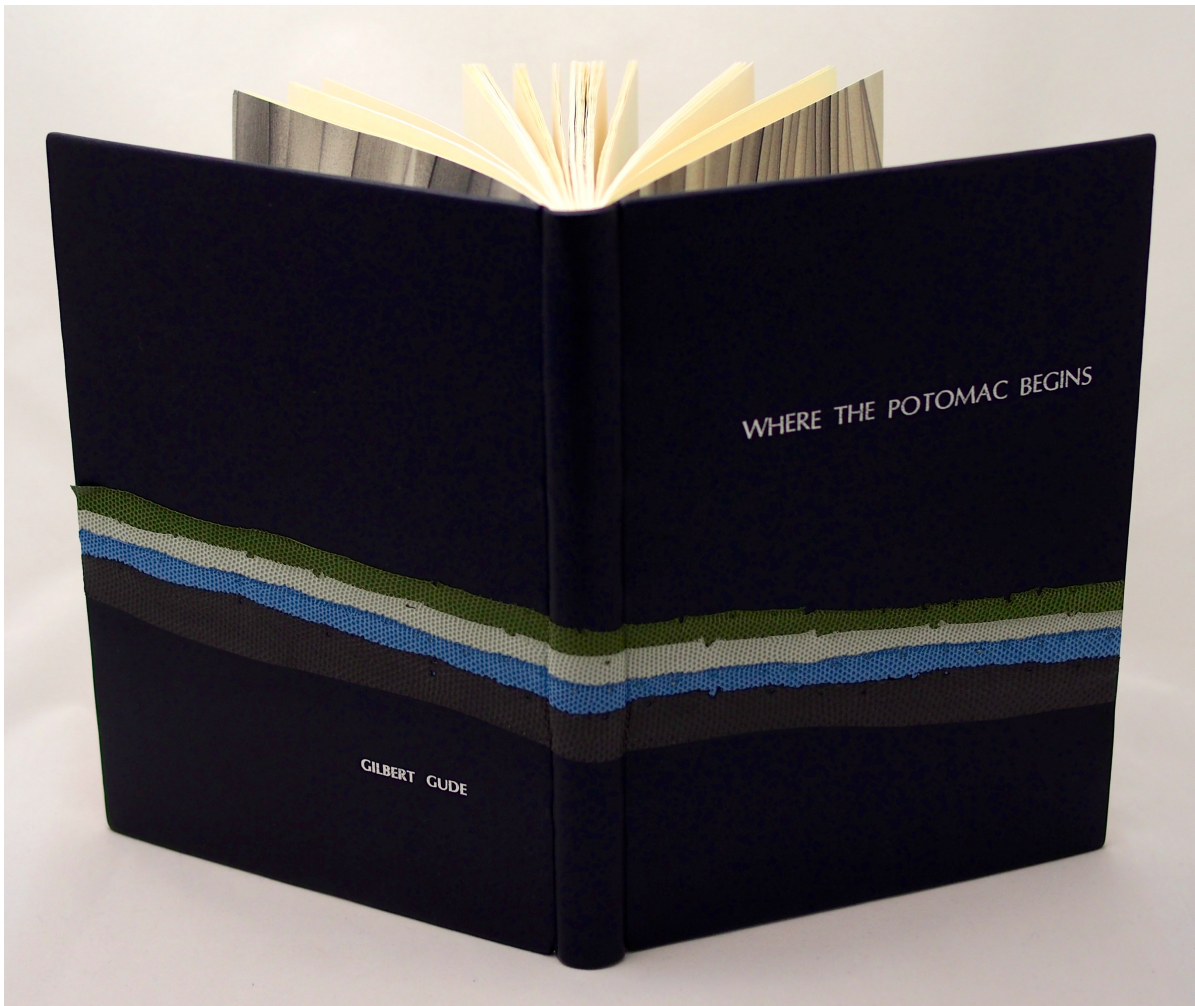
Jennifer Evers

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Tunnel book based on Alice Austin's book structure depicting the view from a window in Baltimore.

Materials: Arches watercolor paper, Canson Mi Tientes paper, Winsor & Newton watercolors, binder's board, Japanese book cloth.





Jane Bortnick Griffith

Where the Potomac Begins by Gilbert Gude

French technique full leather binding with onlays designed to reflect the geology of the region of the Upper Potomac. The layers of coal deposits, the river, and the surrounding forests shaped the mining communities that arose there.

Materials: Goatskin, sea snake, paste papers.





Dorothy Haldeman
Skinny Dipping in the Potomac

Accordion book with hand drawn illustrations showing humorous scenes of Presidents who have skinny dipped in the Potomac beginning with John Q. Adams.

Materials: Paper, marker, colored pencil, collage.





Karen Hanmer

Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery and Booke of Sweetmeats

A compilation of Martha Washington's recipes, reflective of the modest leather bindings of the era: no paring, headbands or pastedown; uneven turn-ins overlapping at the corners, minimal board and spine lining. Structure and decoration based on Julia Miller's research.

Materials: Colonial American style scaleboard binding: sewn on alum-tawed thongs, horizontal-grain birch plywood boards lined on the inside only with vintage printers' waste. Covered in full, dark brown sprinkled calf with blind tooling, edges sprinkled red.





Carolee Jakes
Dead Run

Dead Run is an irregular accordion book construction. Photographs and text describe snippets of the author's life along this small local tributary of the Potomac River.

Materials: Cover: Collage, monprint, and screenprint on prepared Davey Board
Body: Photos digitally printed on Staples Photo Supreme paper.
Text printed on handmade paper.





Vicki Lee
Cherry Blossom Time

The Cherry Blossom Festival is a significant event in Washington DC along the Potomac River. The box structure contains origami cherry blossoms, which can be moved anywhere in the box or on the branch that is in the lid of the box. The branch can be full of blossoms as in the Spring or barren as in the Winter. As the haikus by Issa and Basho in two miniature books illustrate, the cherry blossom also speaks to the transitory nature of all things, uniting strangers in beauty and spirit. A third miniature book is blank and can be opened 360 degrees to form a flower.

Materials: Binders board, Japanese, Indian and Nepalese tissues and papers, ribbon.





Nancy Lev-Alexander
Doors of Knowledge

Pop-up star book inspired by The Evolution of the Book, a series of six lunettes displayed in the Thomas Jefferson Building Great Hall, Library of Congress, Washington DC. Bronze door panels and torch of knowledge created from polymer clay.

Materials: Zanders elephant hide paper, gilt polymer clay, wooden dowel, decorative bead with magnetic closure.

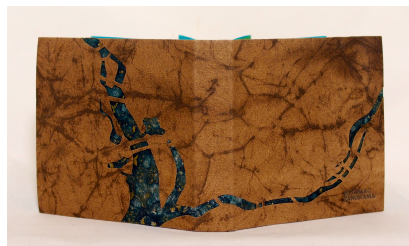




Nora Lockshin
Potomac Panorama

Experiments in onlay, inlay, popups and papercutting, inspired in part by Potomac Chapter workshops. Iconic images are chosen specifically to reflect the time and place in which we meet. The star-shaped accordion configuration serves both to display the panorama and to subtly call to mind the Star Spangled Banner, sewn by Mary Pickersgill and the women flag sewers of Baltimore. The Potomac connects us, most notably featured as the cover image in recollection of the Rivers of America binding competition, which honored Edith Diehl and the American bookbinder in 1946.

Materials: Canson paper, Cave paper (O'Malley Crackle), acrylic adhesive.





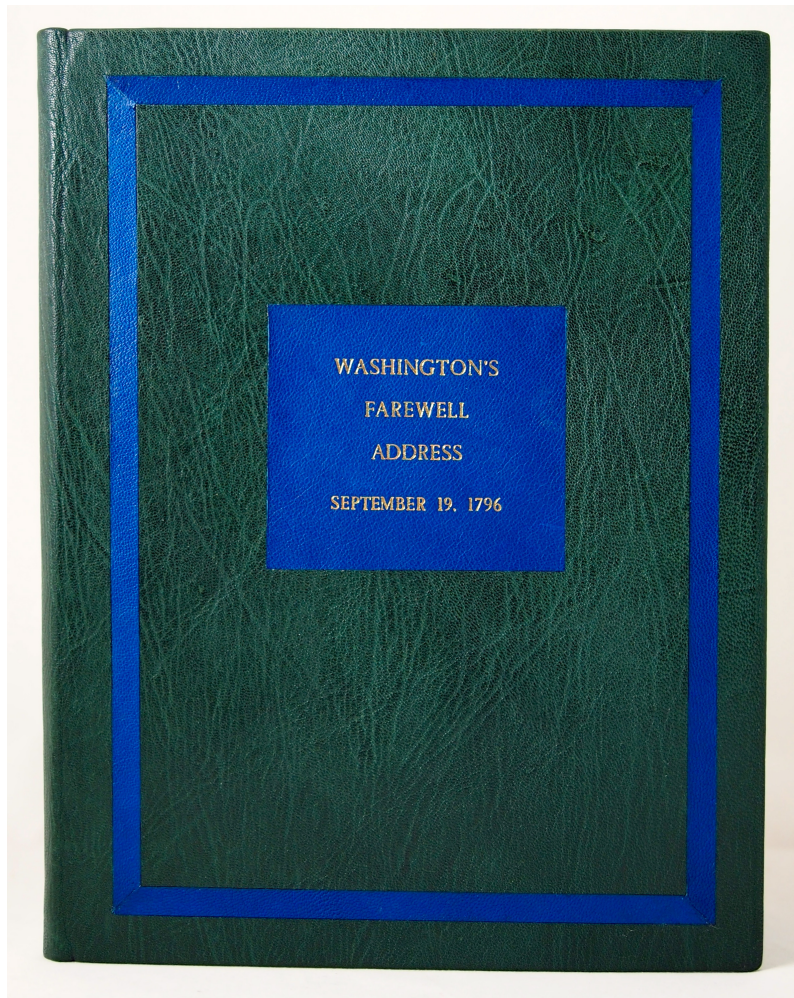
Tawn O'Connor

Leaning Sycamores: Natural Worlds of the Upper Potomac
by Jack Wennerstrom

Jack Wennerstrom's book describes familiar plants, animals, and seasons along the Potomac towpath and mentions that people often pick up the scrolls of bark that drop from sycamore trees. The shed bark looks like old leather. Underneath, the trunks display camouflage patterns of green, gray and gold. This inspired the use of sycamore bark as scrolls for containing chapters from the book, photographs of the trunks as end papers, and pawpaw seeds as natural buttons. A caterpillar making its way across the towpath at Great Falls became the inspiration for caterpillar stitch sewing.

Materials: *Covers:* Sycamore bark coated with satin-finish Mod Podge; pawpaw seeds, Moriki, and linen thread. *Interior chapter separations:* Handmade paper with natural inclusions; photos of sycamore bark inkjet-printed on photo paper.





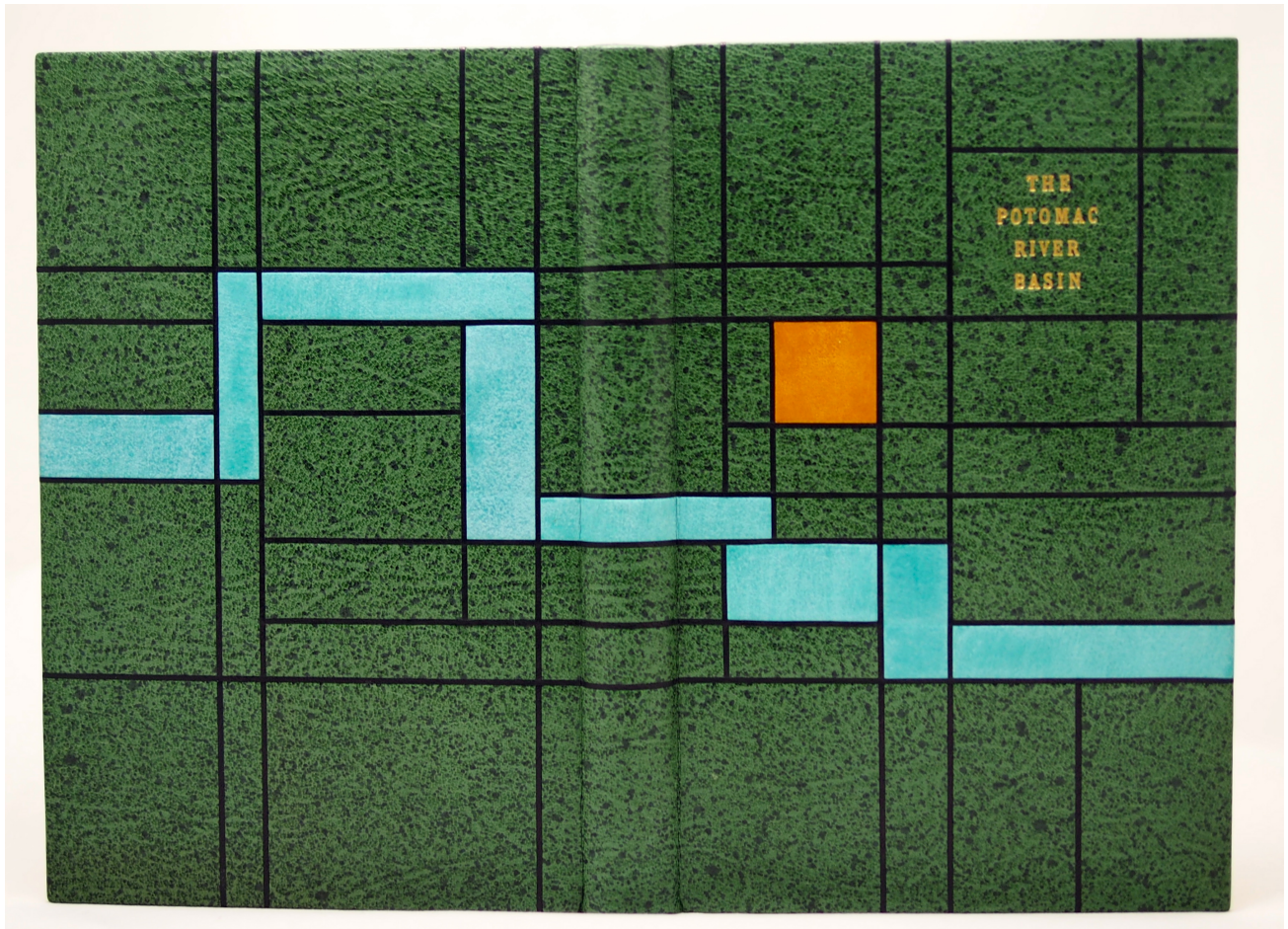
Dan Paterson

Washington's Farewell Address

The full text of George Washington's farewell address, originally printed in 1796, is read before the Senate every year, a tradition first suggested during the height of the Civil War. The mostly traditional appearance of the book is inspired by both the gravity of Washington's words and the style of bindings in the 18th century. The use of inlays in this version of George Washington's farewell address is meant to give a contemporary feel to a document that is still relevant and read to this day.

Materials: Ink Jet printed on Canson 27lb text weight; silk endbands; forest green goat skin cover; inlays of French split royal blue goatskin; label stamped in 24 carot gold foil.





Todd Pattison
The Potomac River Basin

The text of this volume is a 1907 US government publication that attempts to describe the Potomac River in numbers, charts and graphs. In reality, the river is constantly changing and its course and shoreline is anything but straight and neat.

Materials: leather, contact printed paper, gold.





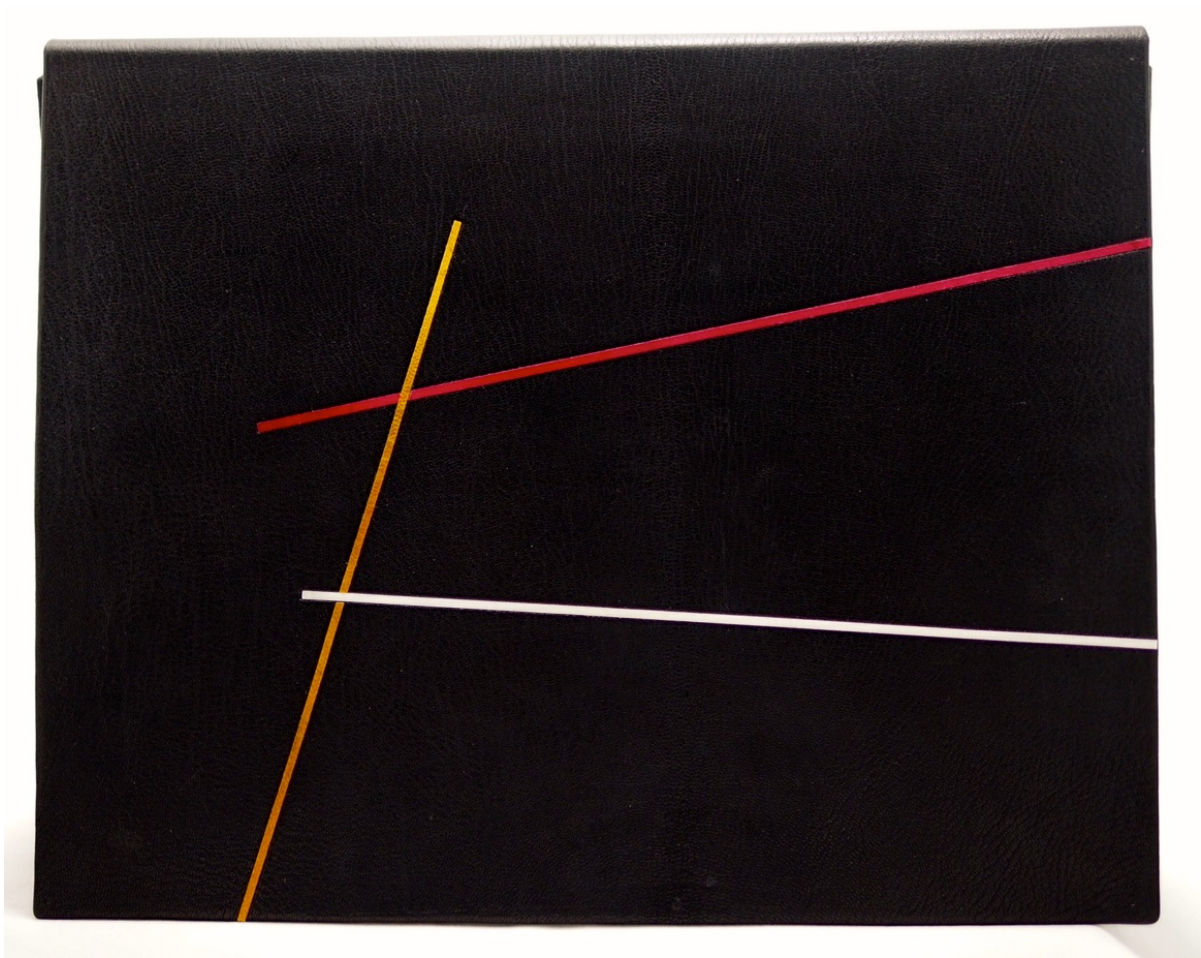
Edie Semler

I Cannot Live Without Books

Stage set box with sliding door, decorated with the theme of Thomas Jefferson's Library as the foundation for the collections of the Library of Congress.

Materials: Binder's Board, ink-jet printed papers, hand-marbled paper, balsa wood, acrylic paints.





Steve Skowron, Annie Immediata, and Renate Mesmer
Pay It Forward

A handmade special edition of four photogravure prints number (1/10), housed in a unique black leather portfolio decorated with colored parchment inlays. The prints represent the Folger Shakespeare Library, where they all met, a Shakespearean play, the Capitol Hill neighborhood, and possible transportation to the neighborhood.

Materials: Prints on Somerset white paper; portfolio made with goat skin, colored parchment, suede.

