

**Editor/President**

Dr Mark Ferson  
4 Sofala Ave  
Riverview NSW 2066  
02 9428 2863  
m.ferson@unsw.edu.au

**Secretary**

Bronwyn Vost  
bronwynvost@bigpond.com

**Designer**

Mary Keep  
PO Box 555  
Dulwich Hill NSW 2203  
tnabs\_mkeep@hotmail.com



**Society President's Prize  
for Best Original Linocut  
runner up, Jamie Alexander**

**The Society's Bookplate Design Award 2016: Exhibition opening and  
announcement of prizes, 26 October 2016**

Mark J Ferson, Sydney

I would like you welcome you all — Design Award finalists, Society members and friends — to the opening of the Bookplate Design Award exhibition and the announcement of prizes, here at the Edmund and Joanna Capon Research Library at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Thank you Steven Miller for your introduction and for providing this great venue for the exhibition, very generously with catering thrown in, too!

Many of you, but not all, will know that a bookplate, or ex libris, is a label pasted into a book to indicate ownership, and that bookplates have an approximately 500 year history, having been introduced in Germany at the time that Gutenberg started printing from moveable type. For much of the time since, bookplates were armorial ie they used a coat of arms to represent the book's owner, usually commissioned by the aristocracy, landed gentry and monastic authorities who were the only ones who had libraries.

The collecting of bookplates really only began in Britain in the early nineteenth century as an offshoot of the gentry's pursuit of the

gathering in albums of printed coats of arms. Collecting, however, took off at the end of the nineteenth century with the formation in 1891 in London of the Ex Libris Society, accompanied by an avalanche of newly published books on the topic. The craze got to a point where letters were sent to the *Times* and other papers complaining of people tearing bookplates out of perfectly good books, destroying the books in the process. Several Australian collectors joined the Ex Libris Society, which unfortunately folded in 1908 when the Treasurer ran off with the Society's accumulated funds.

Interest continued to gather momentum here, and in 1923 the Australian Ex Libris Society was formed in Sydney. Due to clever marketing, including the use of members of the Royal Family for publicity, having a bookplate became an essential fashion accessory for members of the cultured elite, and membership of the Society peaked at 185 in 1930, with bookplate commissions and exchanges becoming a global pursuit. With the onset of World War 2 and the death in 1939 of the movement's figurehead, The Hon John Lane Mullins, the Society faded out.



**Bookplate Design Award recipients present at the Opening on 26 October 2016: (l-r) Marissa Watson, Martha Bowman, Libby Woodhill, Justin Watson, Isobel Robertson (photo: Ronald Cardwell)**

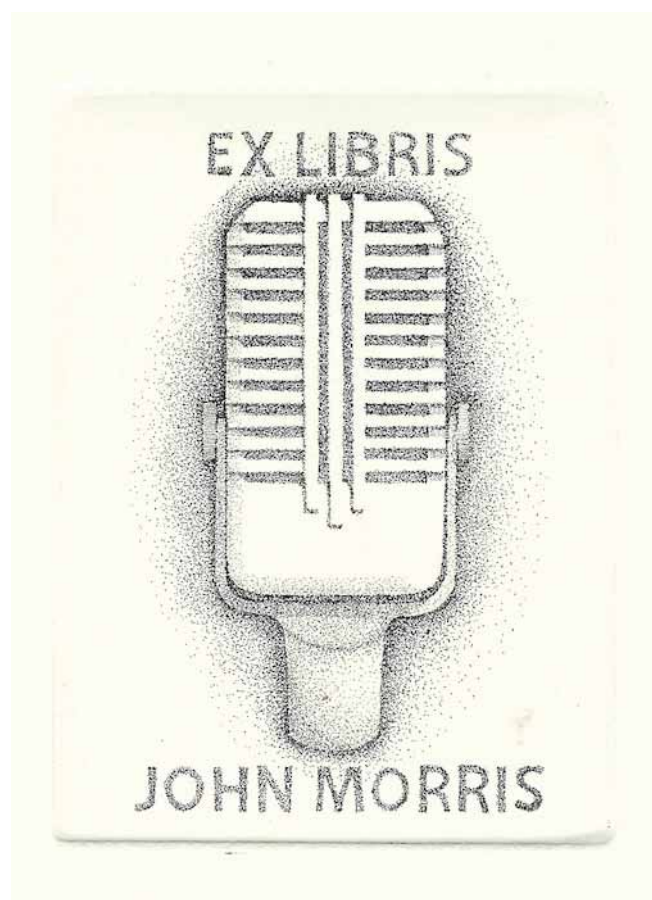
**CONTENTS**

The Society's Bookplate Design Award 2016: Exhibition opening and announcement of prizes |  
Editorial 4

The enthusiasm of individuals like Pat Corrigan AM, Robert Littlewood and John Gartner led to resurgence of interest in bookplates in the late 1970s onwards: bookplates were commissioned from Australian artists, exhibitions mounted, monographs published, and collections accumulated and donated to museums and galleries.

Almost exactly ten years ago the New Australian Bookplate Society was formed in Sydney, and last year we started to talk about ways to celebrate the Society's tenth anniversary. At the 2015 Annual General Meeting, the idea of a design competition was knocked about and I think it was Nick Ingleton who suggested conducting the competition among tertiary students as a way of raising awareness of the bookplate as an artform.

Earlier this year we started to write to art, design and typography course coordinators at universities and colleges throughout the country with information on the Bookplate Design Award 2016, seeking entries from students. We invited entrants to submit up to four designs in triplicate so we could donate a set to the bookplate collection at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The rules of the competition were reasonably strict in that all designs had to be on a 10 by 14cm slip of paper and to be designed for a specific person or institution, real or imagined. Three prize categories were available: the Geoffrey C Ingleton Prize for Best Bookplate (non-digital); the Corrigan Prize for Best Bookplate (digital) and the President's Prize for Best Original Linocut Bookplate.



**Geoffrey C Ingleton Prize for Best Bookplate (non-Digital) winner, Justin Watson**

Despite the Society's website crashing prompting danger warnings on the computers of anyone who attempted to view the Bookplate Design Award web page – which must have put off many potential applicants – we received around 140 designs from exactly 100 entrants, studying at institutions in Adelaide, Canberra, Geelong, Newcastle, Perth and Sydney, and you now see around you the finalists we have selected to display.

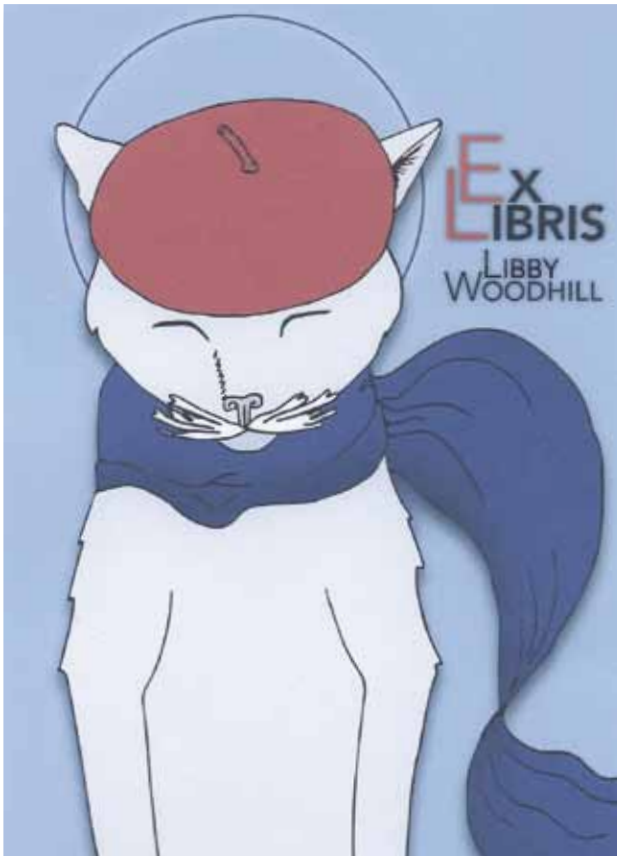
The bookplates use a wide variety of techniques and huge range of design ideas; we were amazed at the celebrities who feature as 'owners', Donald Trump, Elon Musk, Kim Kardashian, Pink, Kanye West and many others.

Before we go on to announce the prize winners and runners up, there are many people I would like to thank: my wife Sheree for putting up with a somewhat distracted husband in recent months; the organising committee of Bronwyn Vost, Monica Oppen and Nick Ingleton; generous donors of prize money, Pat Corrigan AM, Nick Ingleton, Paul Feain of Sydney Rare Book Auctions and Ronald Cardwell; staff at the Art Gallery of New South Wales and its Research Library, Steven Miller, Vivian Huang and Sarah Bunn for generously giving the exhibition a home and helping us to organise the display; a special thank you to the lecturers and other staff at the universities and colleges who actively promoted the Award among their students, and in some cases coordinated, gathered and posted the entries to the Society, in particular Dr Caelli Brooker of the University of Newcastle, Caren Florance of the Australian National University and those at the TAFE colleges in Perth and at the Gordon TAFE in Geelong; and, of course, the one hundred students, ranging from certificate to doctorate level, who sent in bookplates.

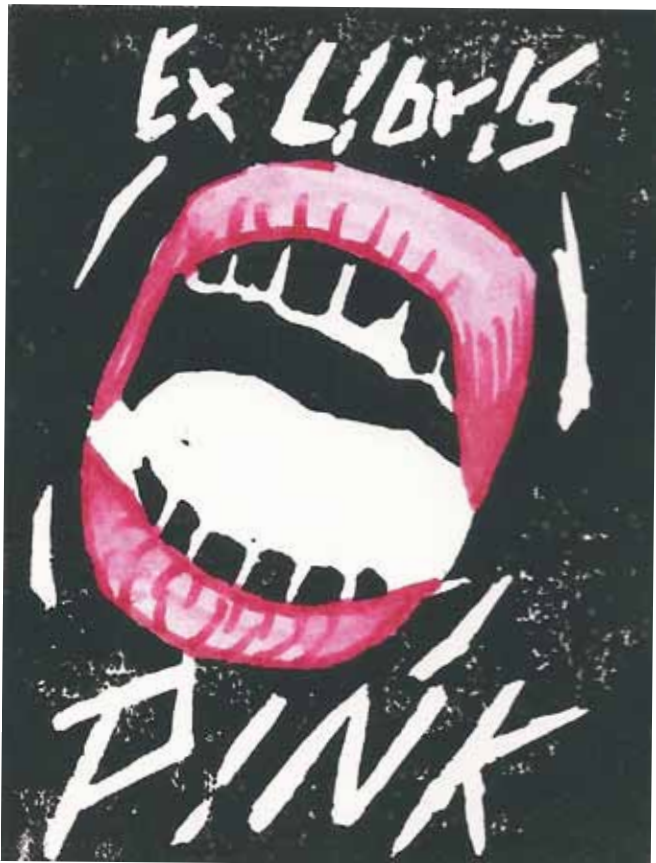
Finally, I would like to thank Akky Van Ogtrop, President of the Print Council of Australia, who despite a very busy schedule readily agreed to join me in judging the entries and devoted time to, as it turned out, a very pleasant session judging so many marvellous designs, and for making it here tonight to help present the prizes.

It is now our very enjoyable task to announce the recipients. The Geoffrey C Ingleton Prize for Best Bookplate (non-Digital) was won by Justin Watson, of the National Art School (Sydney) for his etched bookplate for a friend; runners up were Martha Bowman for a letterpress bookplate for herself and Cathy Nacion for a typographic bookplate for her own use, both studying typography at the Australian National University. The Corrigan Prize for the Best Bookplate (Digital) was awarded to Cate Benardout of Perth's North Metropolitan TAFE for a design featuring a very stylish cat; runners up were Daniela Torquete, also of North Metropolitan TAFE, and Libby Woodhill of CATC Design School, Ultimo. The winner of the Society President's Prize for Best Original Linocut is a bookplate for popular performer 'Pink' cut by Isobel Robertson of the University of Newcastle; the two runners up were Jamie Alexander of the Adelaide College of the Arts for his own 'JSA' design, and Marissa Watson of the University of Newcastle for her bookplate for the cult fictional figure Daria Morgendorffer.

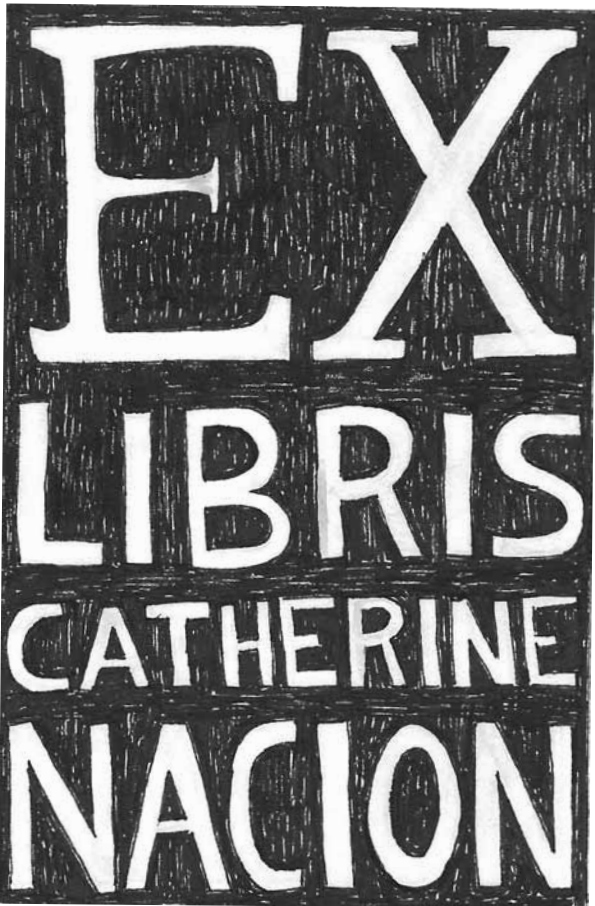
Thank you all for coming to the opening, I now invite you all to see and delight in the exhibit.



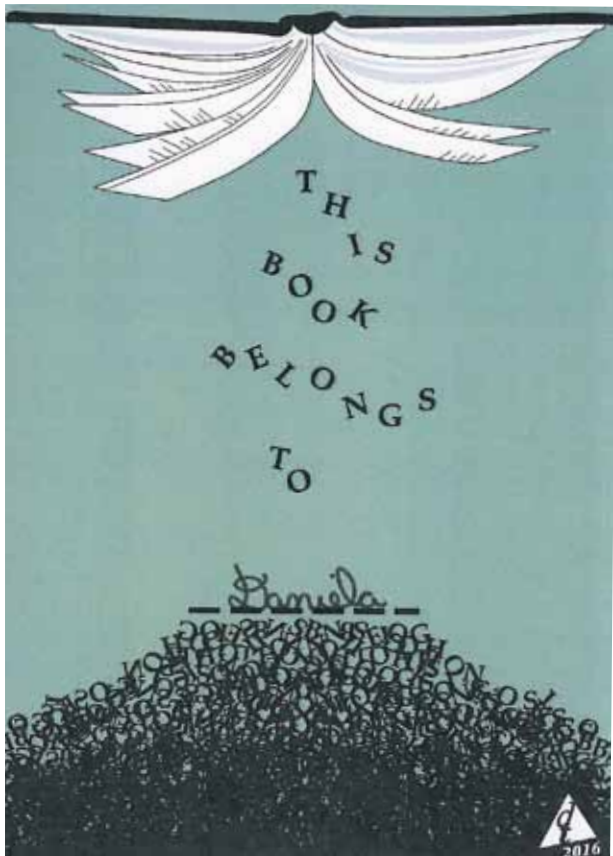
The Corrigan Prize for the Best Bookplate (Digital) runner up, Libby Woodhill



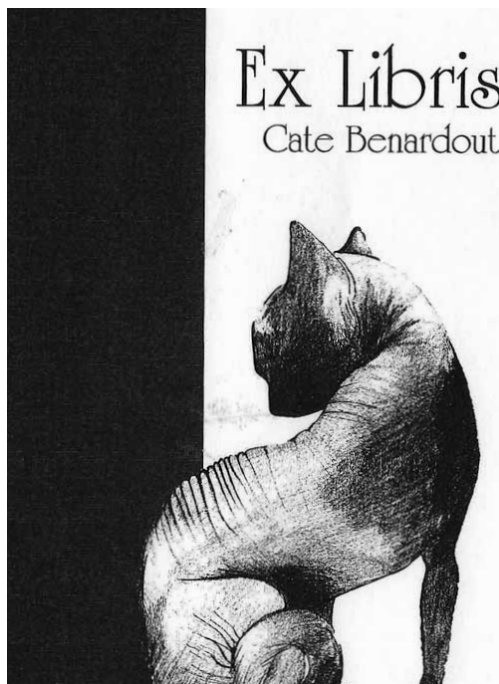
Society President's Prize for Best Original Linocut bookplate winner, Isobel Robertson



Geoffrey C Ingleton Prize for Best Bookplate (non-Digital) runners up; Cathy Nacion (left) and Martha Bowman



The Corrigan Prize for the Best Bookplate (Digital) runner up, Daniela Torquete



The Corrigan Prize for the Best Bookplate (Digital) winner, Cate Benardout

## Editorial

It is with great pleasure that I close the year (or maybe open the new year) with a focus on the Bookplate Design Award 2016, the major activity in the celebration of the Society's tenth anniversary. Through the hard work, and generosity, of officers and members of the Society, and despite a scary crash of our website, the Award managed to attract entries from an even 100 students from around Australia. I hope that we have raised awareness of the art of the bookplate, whilst it was gratifying to learn that some of the courses from whom entrants were drawn had already been using the bookplate as a design exercise before they became aware of the Award. Although it has only been possible to show here the nine bookplates which received prizes in the Award, the exhibition featured 76 designs by the finalists, and many of these delightful images will be posted in coming weeks on the Society's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/NewAustralianBookplates/> and web page <http://www.bookplatesociety.org.au/> click on 'Design Awards'.

I have been asked by a number of members whether we are planning to repeat the Award in future years. My answer so far is that it is a 'definite possibility', but to do so will rely on members again agreeing to put the substantial effort needed to organise any future competition, whilst prize money, which on this occasion came from members' individual donations, will need to again be found from beyond the Society's normal funds.

My other duty, also a pleasurable one, is to thank the contributors to the *Newsletter* for this year who provided a diverse range of articles of local and international interest, and to those who suggested ideas for material or who drew my attention to events worthy of record. The production of the *Newsletter*, and hence its remarkable attractiveness, continue to rely on the wonderful skills of designer Mary Keep, and I again thank Mary and our printer Siung Tan of Sydney Design & Print for its continuing high quality.

Finally, I would like to wish members and readers compliments of the Season and a happy and creative 2017.

MF



Society President's Prize for Best Original Linocut runner up, Marissa Watson