Title: Art Books and Bindings

Art books come in different shapes, colors, bindings and are made with different materials.  Many books in the Ricker Library of Architecture and Art collection implement these variations of content and technique to create a unique visual and tactile experience.  These variations not only enhance the aesthetics of the books but also the experience for the user by conveying more about the contents and subject.  Examples of this can be seen in some of the collection’s Chinese and Japanese flatbooks which are what I want to highlight in this exhibition.  Since flatbooks have a special construction compared to modern bound library books the goal is to highlight these differences and give students another way to think about the how books help them learn.  It’s not just the contents that matter in learning and discovering, but also the presentation.

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List of Materials

1. Ten Bamboo Studio stationery register: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_2697944>
2. The painting of Ch'i Pai-shih. : <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_2864327>
3. Masterpieces of Chinese painting, 700-1900: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_7374343>
4. Jewels of light : from the Jung-Pao-Tsai workshop: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_1960887>
5. Tesuki washi shuho = Fine handmade papers of Japan: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_136839>
6. Japanese masters of the colour print : a great heritage of oriental art: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_1124723>
7. Japanese prints by Harunobu and Shunshō in the collection of Louis V. Ledoux; catalogue: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_1926594> (this item might not be used, but I added it as an alternative).

Label Examples

Label 1

*Tesuki washi shuho = Fine handmade papers of Japan* by Yasuo Kume

Yushodo, 1980.

This flatbook case is an example of how color and materials of a book’s encasing play an important role in the user experience.  The outer casing that has a texture like mulberry paper holds several side stitched books and reflects the contents inside as can be seen in the open book from this set which is actually a collection of textured and colored fibrous Washi style paper and not just a written list of styles or surrogate images.  You can feel the paper and see the actual colors.

Label 2

*Ten Bamboo Studio Stationery Register* by Zhengyan Hu

1952.

*Japanese masters of the colour print : a great heritage of oriental art* by Jack Ronald Hillier

Phaidon, 1954

Flatbooks are a special format where a case surrounds a stitched books with soft cloth coverings (1).  The bindings on these books are different than most modern books you’ll see in the library. *Japanese Masters of the Color Print* imitates the traditional style with it’s cover but doesn’t use the same materials or binding techniques (3).  The traditional method for bookbinding these kinds of works is called side-stitched binding. Sheets of paper are folded down the middle with the print sides out so that the folded page act like a leaf in a book. The leaves are then stacked together and the cut edges are bound with string stitched through the leaves (2). The paper varies in texture and material and are usually made out of grass fibers instead of wood pulp like most modern books.

Label 3

*The painting of Ch'i Pai-shih* by Ch'i Pai-shih

1952.

A unique format in this set of books is the accordion binding (4).  Pages are folded back and forth from a continuous sheet of paper and then encased between two covers.  This book is different from the other books in that instead of a stitched binding the covers have been attached with adhesive. The covers on this book play a similar role to the casings and covers for flatbooks which were originally meant to be easily replaceable if they became worn overtime.

Citation for information in the labels:

1. Martinique, Edward. 1973. “The Binding and Preservation of Chinese Double-leaved Books”.

*The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 43 (3). The University of Chicago Press:  227–36. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4306286>.

2. Munn, Jesse. 2009. "Side-stitched books of China, Korea and Japan in western collections."

*Journal Of The Institute Of Conservation* 32, no. 1: 103-127. *Art Source*, EBSCO*host* (accessed October 29, 2015).Japanese prints by Harunobu and Shunshō in the collection of Louis V. Ledoux; catalogue: <http://vufind.carli.illinois.edu/vf-uiu/Record/uiu_1926594> (this item might not be used, but I added it as an alternative).

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