

Making a CD Exhibit Catalog: the Stone Eye Project

by Pamela Rups

The GBW Standards Seminar in September 2002 debuted three firsts—the first book exhibit catalog by a Guild chapter to be published as an interactive dual-platform CD; the first Chapter exhibit catalog published without financial support from the Guild; and the first exhibit catalog produced by the Midwest Chapter. This article will hopefully encourage and enlighten members who embark on similar projects.

The *Stone Eye* exhibit and CD catalog project began during the 2000 annual meeting of the Midwest Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers. Participants traveled to Monterey, Kentucky to meet Gray Zeitz at the Larkspur Press and discuss the possibility that he print a book that Guild members could bind for an exhibition. At that time, Richard Taylor was Kentucky's Poet Laureate, and he assembled a collection of poems entitled *Stone Eye* for Gray Zeitz to print. Canadian artist Wesley Bates was then invited to cut wood engravings for the book.

Two editions of *Stone Eye* were printed. Six hundred copies were printed on Mohawk Superfine paper and fifty-five on dampened Biblio. Some were hand-bound by Carolyn Whitesel and are offered for sale. Thirty-one copies of both editions in sheets were hand bound by Guild members for the 2002 Midwest Chapter exhibit, which traveled from March through December 2002 throughout the Midwest, including the Guild of Book Workers' Standards of Excellence 2002 at Minnesota Center for Book Arts.

The Stone Eye catalog consisted of a hybrid CD viewable on both Windows and Macintosh computers. The CD program was stand-alone, which means it did not require any other software in order to run. The CD was packaged in a standard jewel case and was accompanied by a full-color printed catalog about the same size as the jewel case. The catalog cover was accordian-folded with two separate gatherings. It was on heavy grey-brown paper debossed with the symbol of an eye and foil stamped in red-orange and blue with the words "Stone Eye." Extra covers were printed and used as jewel case covers and invitations to exhibit openings. The complete catalog consisted of the jewel case with CD on the bottom, the printed catalog on top of that, and a rounded beach stone on top of the catalog. All three items were tied together with raffia. A special edition of 100 catalogs with stones that had been sand blasted with the eye symbol was available at higher cost.

In this article I will discuss things that our group found to be very important and which everyone making a CD or DVD catalog should consider for a successful project.

Why Make a Multimedia CD or DVD?

This is what comes of a casual conversation with co-chair Jeanne Drewes while walking to the Museum of Natural History in Chicago during the Midwest

Chapter's 2001 annual meeting. I don't know what makes me think I can walk and perform rational mental processes at the same time. Somehow the fact that it was *possible* to do a catalog as an interactive CD became a project that I was *doing* as an interactive CD.

Why should bookbinders, archivists, conservationists, artists, and other members of the Guild of Book Workers have any interest in how to make an interactive CD? On the one hand, it is the wave of the future; on the other it is a new technology that might disappear in a few years. But CDs have many advantages over printed media. Print can last longer and is accessible without equipment, but you can't provide things in print that you can on an interactive CD, such as sound and video. A CD can show things at an exhibit that viewers cannot otherwise see. Additionally CDs can contain much more material than a printed piece, while the final cost of reproduction is the same no matter whether you have a 16 MB program or a 670 MB program. When pages are added to printed material, the costs increase greatly, especially when printing in color.

For me one of the strongest cases for making a CD is to provide additional material as part of an exhibit. When examining most traditional book structures in exhibit cases, viewers are limited in what they can see. By making an interactive CD for viewing as part of an exhibit, more parts of the books could be viewed by visitors. This would also be true for an exhibit of any other items where the object must be manipulated for everything to be seen. The CD could be sold or distributed, and it is a good way for information to travel on to the next exhibit venue. Sound files relative to the topic can also be included, even animation and video, to make the experience even more informative.

The same is true for an exhibit catalog. A CD could contain multiple views of the pieces in the exhibit, as well as background and supporting information in the form of audio, video, and animation files. This is an area in which planners can get creative. Things that would interest other binders might be video or audio interviews or diaries of the exhibit's binders and artists as they developed their work. Interesting binding or artistic techniques could be demonstrated. In the case of *Stone Eye*, where a poet, printer, and artist were involved in making the book, it would have been nice to have video interviews of these people talking about their creative processes and other aspects of the work. Every exhibit and project provides unique opportunities for creative use of the CD to enrich and expand the knowledge and enjoyment of the viewers. As standard supplemental fare, the *Stone Eye* CD included audio files of the poet Richard Taylor reading two of the poems in the collection. On the more creative side, I created an animated tour of Kentucky. Pictures taken in the area where Richard Taylor lives and writes were shown along with related phrases from his poems in the *Stone Eye* collection. This was accompanied by music played in the Kentucky style by an old-time string band.

Two Catalogs?

As the Midwest Chapter officers and I discussed the catalog, the now perennial issues of accessibility and permanence became hot topics. How long would the CD be readable on viewers' computers? How long would it last? What

computers would be able to read it? Technology is changing so quickly that we don't have answers to all of these questions, except that we do know things will change greatly within a matter of only a few years. For this reason, and also to accommodate people without computers, the group decided to produce a small printed catalog to accompany the CD. If your group goes this route, though, be forewarned—this about doubles the work. It is true that some of the text and graphics will be used in both media, but keeping versions consistent between the two takes a lot of extra time. In addition, the technical requirements for print and multimedia are very different, often requiring two different versions of the same element to be produced.

To have a professional-looking printed catalog and multimedia CD, I would highly recommend that people with expertise in those areas do the work. I know of someone who told me she produced newsletters using PowerPoint! For those readers lucky enough not to be familiar with PowerPoint, this is software for producing visuals such as slides and overhead transparencies for use during presentations. There is no way to take such a file to a printer and have a catalog produced. The project will have a better outcome if a graphic designer is doing the work and dealing with the printer. And because the software for producing a multimedia CD is quite difficult to learn, it is best to have a person with some experience in multimedia production, too. Because the two mediums have such different technical requirements, expertise in both areas is a must. Although I had limited experience with multimedia software, at least I did have some, as well as many years of teaching myself software and using graphic applications.

Organization? What Organization?

The Midwest Chapter found that a key element to the success of a project of the magnitude of *Stone Eye* is the project coordinator. This position is especially essential if, as in the Midwest Chapter, the people working on the project live so far apart that virtually all work is done through e-mail and by telephone. Even when members live within the same area and can meet in person, having a project coordinator is essential. All production elements, such as text and graphics, are channeled through this person to maintain consistency and prevent time-wasting confusion. This is especially true if both a CD and a printed catalog are being produced, because you have two different products that must still contain some of the same elements. For example, copy for the various sections of text will probably be written by several people. This copy would then be passed on to one or more editors, who then pass it on to other people in the group for additional checks on content and for proof reading. For *Stone Eye*, much of this was done by e-mail, and often more than one person was copied as a recipient. This meant that changes and suggestions were flying all over the place and in random order, causing much confusion. It is the responsibility of the project coordinator to keep such events to a minimum by constantly reminding participants to send e-mail only to the coordinator. The coordinator then sorts everything out and passes the final version of that element on to the production person(s). For *Stone Eye*, where the staff count was low, I ended up being a copywriter, editor, and part of the production staff, as well as project coordinator. In spite of the fact I was one person wearing many hats and there

were only two or three other people contributing and proof reading, I still spent a great deal of time in this capacity.

Besides coordinating text and graphic production, the project coordinator has many other responsibilities. This would be the person to whom ideas, questions, and problems are brought, so that they could be dealt with by the coordinator, directed to the person with that particular responsibility, or brought to the group for discussion. Additionally the project coordinator is in charge of keeping the project to its time line and making sure people are doing their part on schedule and within the budget.

Time Stumbles On

Making a multimedia CD plus a full-color printed catalog, even a small one such as the *Stone Eye* catalog, takes a great deal of time. After counting up over 200 hours devoted only to my parts of the project, I stopped counting. It is essential not to underestimate the amount of time needed to do the work, especially if project participants also have regular jobs. The idea for the project was formulated in June of 2001 and the target finish date was the first exhibit opening in the beginning of March 2002. However, the target date was not met and the project was published in a limited quantity for the chapter's annual meeting in April in St. Louis, Missouri. At the meeting, volunteers were solicited to sew the printed catalogs, assemble the catalog packages, and shrink-wrap them. After the CDs were replicated and labeled by a service bureau, they were then shipped out to these volunteers.

There were many different things that determined the scope of our CD project, but probably the most limiting factor was time. An interactive multimedia CD can include so much extra material that the project definitely needs a timeline, especially with several people having various responsibilities and some things requiring that they be done at a certain time of the year. Numerous things happened during the production of the *Stone Eye* CD that emphasized this point. One of the biggest snags came when, shortly after the Midwest Chapter had decided to proceed with the project in July, I sold my house and bought another. This and the winter holiday season took up a little more than five months of time I would have otherwise been able to devote to production and organization work, and also meant that we were not able to do anything but the bare minimum for the CD. As it was with our late start, the photos of Kentucky were taken in the fall when they should have been taken in the spring and summer. For my part, I was just plain lucky to find a sunny day with almost no snow on the ground—in Michigan, in February, no less—on which to shoot the numerous pictures of stone walls for the poem's animation. Most challenging of all was getting the smooth stones on which the eye symbols were etched. For those I went to the Lake Michigan beach and hacked them out of the frozen sand or picked them out of the icy water in January. Now if only I could have done that when I didn't need an ice pick!

Planning far enough ahead means the group can take advantage of scheduled events and have time to organize more complicated things. Since we started formulating the project almost nine months in advance, our group was fortunate

to be able to record the poet, Richard Taylor, when he gave a reading, which included two of the poems in the *Stone Eye* collection. In spite of nine months seeming like plenty of time, it turned out that there was only one day during a four-month period when both the band and the recording technician could get together. And if the project had started far enough ahead and I hadn't moved, we could have worked out how to get audiotapes and pictures and videos of the binders, the printer, the poet/author, and other people and places involved in the project. I also would have had time to take more pictures of each binding, which would have better shown the unique aspects of each book.

The Copyright Bug and Other Legal Creatures

You know that little round circle with the "c" in it? That's called the copyright bug. And it can bug you these days unless you do things correctly. All the text used was original, written by members who signed copyright agreements saying it could be used for the Stone Eye project. We got copyright permission from the printer, poet, and artist, too, to use their work on the CD, the catalog, and for promotion. The band played traditional tunes and gave us permission to use their recording. The photographer of the outdoor pictures also signed a permission sheet. And ultimately we are formally filing for copyright with the Library of Congress. The company we used for mass reproduction of the CD would not do the job until we assured them we were clear in the area of copyright.

An even bigger legal issue, at least as far as cost, was the software. Because the CD would be for sale, we had to have full retail copies of the software we used to create the CD. This meant that we had to purchase such programs as Adobe Photoshop and Macromedia FreeHand and Flash before we could start the project, and that cost several hundred dollars. Software purchased at an educational institution is usually purchased at a greatly reduced price and is for educational purposes only. Even though the Guild of Book Workers is a non-profit organization, it is not legal for its members to use educational versions of software for a CD which is offered for sale.

No Free Lunch

A big issue for the Midwest Chapter in producing its first exhibit catalog was money, because the Guild informed us they would no longer provide funding for catalogs as they had in the past for other chapters. It had been thought that fundraising would have been done in the fall so that the designers would know how much money they had to work with. With December almost over, though, nothing had been done and we had only what was in our treasury.

The catalyst that sparked the remarkable fundraising efforts of co-chair Jeanne Drewes was a mock-up that I created showing my idea for the catalog cover design and packaging. I sent the mock-up out to several people on the chapter board, and everyone was enthusiastic and inspired. Giving a definite form to the project gave people something visible towards which to work. With the mock-up approved, I then was able to get printing, embossing, and sandblasting quotes,

which gave the group a more definite goal for fundraising and working out a budget. Jeanne simply called various book-related businesses in the Midwest and asked them to contribute in return for a listing as a sponsor in the catalog. Instead of hoping for a large sum of money from a couple donors, Jeanne asked for a moderate amount from several. Two hundred fifty dollars got donors their name, address, phone number, and Web page. More got them a one-line blurb, and less allowed them to list less information. She even got the printer and embosser in Kalamazoo to contribute! There were also several individuals who donated money. All in all Jeanne raised more than \$2,000, enough so that the Guild was willing to grant our chapter a loan until we had money from the sale of the first 100 or so CDs.

This is backwards from the way in which I often work as a graphic designer. Many clients give me the amount they have to spend, and I create a design that can be produced within that budget. For *Stone Eye*, though, working the other way around proved to be the most effective—have a design as a goal, and see what can be done to produce it.

Mountains and Molehills

Along with this article I have included two lists to assist others who are considering such a project as *Stone Eye*. The lists overlap in some places, but their purposes are different. The first list, *Stone Eye Project Considerations*, are the things a group should discuss and make provisions for very early on in the project planning stage. The *What You Need* list is more specific and gives a good idea of the expertise needed to produce a multimedia CD and printed catalog. This list also includes things we didn't think of until almost too late, so hopefully others will benefit from our experience and not be caught short as we sometimes were.

These lists are long and may make such a project look too daunting. Yes, it is very time-consuming, but if several people share the work and plenty of time is allowed, any group can do it. The tricks are planning well, sticking to a timeline, and simply concentrating on one task or stage of development at a time. The *Stone Eye* project was indeed a high mountain for our chapter, but we got there by simply concentrating on completing one small goal after another.

Stone Eye Project Considerations

Why interested in making multimedia CD?

What is needed: content/production.

What can be done.

Professional photographer?

Technical considerations/problems

- working with sound/video

 - technical experts, equipment available

- file formats and platform compatibility

- run on more than one platform?

- font compatibility

- CD hybrid burning

Copyright

- have signed forms

- must use original material

- copyright filing

- must have if using company for CD duplication

Legal software

Project organization/timeline

- must have project coordinator

- photos in correct season?

- photos/video from related events

- time for production

- time for raising money

CD production

- duplication

- label

- cover/case

Printed material to accompany CD?

- pros and cons

- what's needed

Color accuracy challenges

Packaging/ mailing/ ordering

Design

- need professional to deal with technical aspects of production

- mock-up sells it

Budget/ fund-raising

- need extra money for mailing, supplies, services

- ALWAYS add extra to any estimate

Pay talent

Promotion

- listservs, publications, reviews, talks, invitations to openings, Web page

Thank yous

- allow for copies to be given to donors, creative people, people who help

Volunteers to do hand work, folding, assembly.

What do you need?

LOTS OF TIME!

- project coordinator
- writer(s)/editor
- people to proof
- graphic designer(s)
- computer multimedia developer
- photographer(s)
- sound recording (same for video)
 - performers for voice and music
 - sound recording technician
 - sound recording equipment
- exhibit coordinator
- fundraiser(s)
- sponsors/donors
- people to do hand work, folding, assembly
- person to ship catalog orders

- computer/digital equipment
- legal computer software—NOT educational
- way to make hybrid CD (viewable on Windows and Macintosh)
- CD duplication source
- signed copyright permission forms
- packaging/design
 - cover for CD jewel case
 - CD labels/artwork
 - cover for catalog
 - invitations to openings
 - insides for printed catalog
 - instruction sheet for using CD
- photographs
- bindings
- other
- text
 - artists' statements
 - biographies
 - project history
 - organization history
 - binding descriptions
 - credits
 - book contents
 - list of sponsors
 - production notes
 - anything else of interest
- Budget
 - supplies

mailing
CDs (transferring files, backup, testing)
jewel cases
packaging (shrink wrap, mailers, stones, sewing thread, etc.)
lots of mailing/shipping costs
pay talent (musicians, voice-overs, etc.)

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