

The *ITALIC* Hand

(or, in common lingo, the *Italic style of calligraphy*)

ITALIC is by far the best-known and most used of all calligraphic hands, and is what people usually envision when calligraphy is discussed. It is very versatile and may be employed to express a wide range of sentiments and emotions (which is, after all, why we “do calligraphy”.)

Its primary identifying characteristics are an oval - shaped ‘o’, letters that lean forward (slant), and a stroke weight that is about one - fifth the height of the small letters. One can modify all three of these factors, and several others, in myriad directions and degrees to express a sense of strength or delicacy, structure or casualness, formality or informality, etc. Italic is arguably the most difficult of all calligraphic hands to

master. This is because of the many subtle nuances that make up its forms, joins, branches and interliteral relationships; and the almost limitless design options available.

Even so, Italic is the hand that most beginners want to learn first. It's rather like wanting to jump behind the wheel of a sleek Indy race car before learning to handle the family's solid Chevy. I strongly advise you, if you have an interest in the art form, to start with the basics.

Postscript: One's ability, or the lack thereof, to “draw a straight line” has absolutely nothing to do with an ability to learn calligraphy. The quality of one's personal handwriting has no bearing either.

– Don King

Getting Around

TARHEEL TALES: The Imperial Arts Center in Rocky Mount recently held their annual event, “Tarheel Tales”, a one-day festival of local art, story-telling and homemade edibles of every sort. Don's prints were featured in the display presented by The Ink Slingers. Ink Slingers is a calligraphy club made up of letter-lovers from Nash and Edgecombe Counties and other locales generally east of I-95. Don had a hand in advising and assisting the organization to get started two years ago and still acts as their general go-to guy for things calligraphic.

SALEM STREET FESTIVAL: The fast-growing town of Apex, in western Wake County, held its first annual Salem Street Festival on Saturday, October 6. Among the many artists and craftspeople presenting their wares was a booth, hosted by Don, representing the Triangle Calligraphers' Guild. TCG is a gathering of about twenty to forty lovers of letterforms throughout the Triangle area. Membership is open to anyone who has an interest, at any level, in the making and using of beautiful letters. If you have an interest, please contact Don for details. All are welcome to attend a meeting as a guest and get acquainted.

STOP & SHOP

BOUND & LETTERED, an internationally-distributed publication for book, album and scrapbook enthusiasts, recently featured calligraphic art by Don entitled “I AM GOD”. The piece is available as a print in two different calligraphic versions through Ardie & Friends (www.ardieandfriends.com)



THE SHOPS OF OLD CITY HALL in New Bern, North Carolina's historic downtown now carries Don's prints, plaques and other treasures. The 6,000 square foot restored building at 224 Craven Street is filled with antiques, original art, home accents, jewelry and a music store.

AMAZING GRACE, located in North Market Square in North Raleigh, is selling Don's prints, both framed and unframed. It specializes in Christian books, art and miscellany, and is owned and operated by one of the sweetest ladies you'll ever meet. Stop in and say Don sent you.

A Christmas Gift Suggestion:

NAME PLAQUES

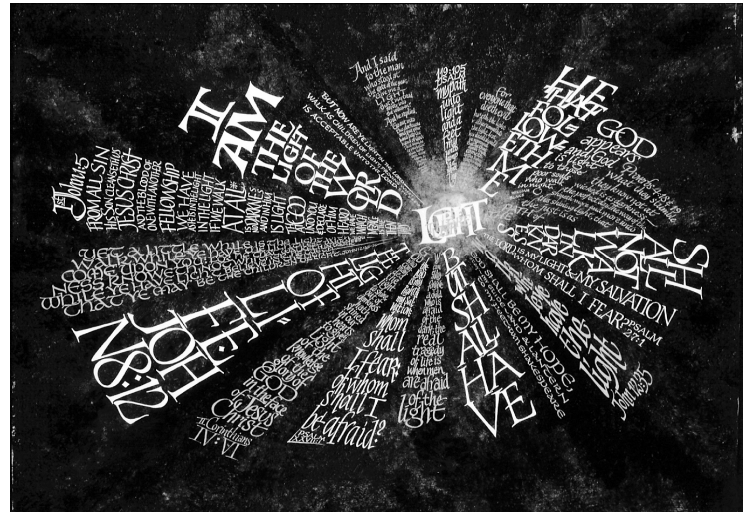
Over the past twenty-five years, I have created many name plaques, and I'm proud to say they have become family heirlooms. Most of the plaques have been of children's first names, with details of the name - origins, variants, history, etc. - added around the perimeter as a border. However, the design and content possibilities are endless. The kids who receive them as gifts are thrilled by the colors and design, and the fact that “it's my name!” Then later on, as teenagers and adults, the informative content and one-of-a-kind-in-the-world uniqueness and quality make it a very special possession, worthy of passing on to the next generation. (Call Don at 919-847-9408 to learn more.)

ANOTHER EXTRA-ORDINARY AND EXTRA PERSONAL GIFT

This calligraphic artwork, featuring scripture from the King James version of the Holy Bible, was created in 2006 specifically for a juried exhibit in Asheville, NC.

It was done on a full 22"x 30" sheet of D'Arches 140# hot-press watercolor paper, which was covered with a mixture of archival wheat paste and acrylic paints, and the surface pattern created using a variety of brushes and other tools, a technique is known as "paste paper".

The calligraphy was done using gouache: white for the five elements making up the focal point and theme of the piece, and two shades of yellow for the supporting verses. Extensive retouching of the letterforms, espe-



"LIGHT"

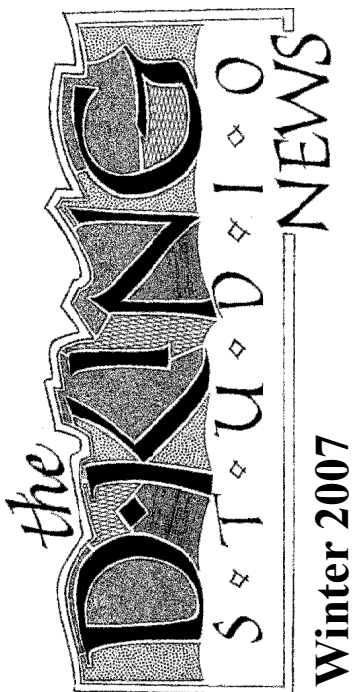
cially the formal Roman capitals, was done. All of the calligraphy was done using steel dip pens in a variety of sizes from 1/2 mm to 1/4 inch. Pen manipulation and double-stroke techniques were employed in many of the letters.

Archival prints of this work are available directly from Don in three sizes:

Full size 22" x 30"	\$300.00
Half size 16 1/2" x 22 1/2"	\$100.00
Quarter size 11" x 15 1/2"	\$50.00

NC sales tax, packaging and shipping are additional. Don can also archivally mat and frame your print. Please contact him to discuss the details and pricing.

To view this work, visit www.dkingstudio.com



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