The Perfect is the Enemy of the Good

Josh Greenberg
Director, Digital Strategy and Scholarship
The New York Public Library
Where I’m coming from
Lucy Suchman,
Plans and Situated Actions
Perfect and Good in two contexts:

1. Discovery
2. Data
Perfect vs. Good
1. Discovery
They’re not going to come to us first
Digital discovery currently happens in two ways:
Conversation
What’s good, if not perfect?
Writing:
2 birds, one stone
“Writing for Google”
“Writing for Google”
+
“Writing for referral”
“Writing for Google”
+
“Writing for retweeting”
Blogs
(Florence Silk Mittens from NYPL Digital Gallery)

Although it might not seem like it considering recent temperatures here in New York, autumn will be here soon enough. With the season's arrival my thoughts turn to warm knitted goods, and this weekend I got a start on what I suppose you could call fingerless mittens, or perhaps wrist warmers, knitted with a fuzzy mohair blend. I'm trying a new stitch that I learned in *Vogue Knitting*—it's called the purse stitch, and it's very easy and works up quickly because it is lacy and open. Here's the basic stitch (found on p. 145, in the book's oh-so-helpful Stitch Dictionary):

Work in multiples of 2 stitches plus 2 extras.

Row One: Knit 1, * yarn over, purl 2 together, repeat from *, end with Knit 1.

All rows follow the same pattern as Row One.

If you are new to knitting and want a primer in order to understand knitting instructions, you can't turn to a better source than *Vogue Knitting*, with its great illustrated explanations, stitch dictionary, and patterns both simple and complex. You'll find plenty of other contemporary knitting guides to check out at the [NYPL Branch Libraries](https://www.nypl.org), too (just search for the subject keyword "Knitting"). At [NYPL Research Libraries](https://www.nypl.org/research), you can examine over one hundred knitting guides published over the last two hundred years. And finally, two online resources that I especially recommend are: [Knitty](https://www.knitty.com) and [The Daily Knitter](https://thedailyknitter.com).

Filed in: Hand-made, knitting
Open house, open book.

Posted September 12th, 2007 by Jessica Pigza, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, Gen. Research Division

(Printer at right from NYPL Digital Gallery)

Although a huge commercial book production industry exists today, there remain many devotees of the traditionally-made book. The creation of books by hand is an art practiced by highly skilled individuals adept at setting type, executing design, printing pages, and binding; often their printed works incorporate novel book structures as well. NYPL has an exemplary collection of such lovingly produced books from small or private presses ranging from Adagio Press to Zephyrus Image. Additionally, NYPL holds a great number of guides, histories, and bibliographies of private presses in the United States, England, Australia, Canada, and more for further reference. (The links provided here are to just the tip of this particular iceberg.)

If you live in New York City and want to get a behind the scenes peek at traditional book making combined with creative re-thinking of the book as an art form, go to the The Center for Book Arts on Sept. 15th, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm, for its Fall Open House. This is an excellent opportunity to take in a book arts exhibition as well as to see the tools and supplies needed to make paper, set type, print, and bind books. Think of the institution as an open book! The Center is well-known for its classes as well, so the crafty and curious among you can learn book arts there.

Filed in: events, book arts, Hand-made

» Jessica Pigza's blog  |  Add new comment
Remembering Cuesta Benberry.

Posted September 12th, 2007 by Jessica Pigza, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, Gen. Research Division

(Qilt from NYPL Digital Gallery)

I learned in today’s New York Times that Cuesta Benberry, a renowned historian of the craft of quilting, has passed away. She worked to collect, interpret, and preservequilting traditions of African American women over the course of many decades, and her scholarship resulted in books, archives, as well as collections of patterns. If you wish to learn more about her work and about the rich contributions African American women have made to the world of quilting, I would recommend any number of Benberry’s books that we have here at NYPL, including especially Always there: the African-American presence in American quilts and A Patchwork of pieces: an anthology of early quilt stories, 1845–1940.

Filed in: sewing, Hand-made, history

» Jessica Pigza’s blog  |  Add new comment

Open house, open book.

Posted September 12th, 2007 by Jessica Pigza, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, Gen. Research Division
Design by the Book

The New York Public Library holds a wealth of unexpected sources of inspiration for artists and designers—from vintage valentines and textile patterns, to fabric samples and turn-of-the-century menus from around the world. For this online-only miniseries, Design by the Book, the Library partnered with the leading design blog Design*Sponge to invite five New York City-based artists to sift through our collections in search of inspiration. Watch as the artists, who range from a glassblower to a letterpress printer, create unique works inspired by what they found. Special guest Isaac Mizrahi joins us in Episode 2 to share his sources of inspiration. You can stream the episodes by clicking the links below; these videos are also available for download from the Library’s iTunesU site.

Design by the Book was produced by Amy Azzarito and James Murdock, of The New York Public Library Digital Experience Group, with assistance from reference librarian Jessica Pizzi, in partnership with Grace Bonney of Design*Sponge. The artists are: Lorena Barrezueta; Rebecca Kutys; Mike Perry; John Pomp; and Julia Rothman. Music by Clear Tigers.
A/V
Artichoke

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article is about the globe artichoke. For other uses, see Artichoke (disambiguation).

The Globe Artichoke (Cynara cardunculus)\(^2\) is a perennial thistle originating in southern Europe around the Mediterranean. It grows to 1.5-2 m tall, with arching, deeply lobed, silvery glaucous-green leaves 50–82 cm long. The flowers develop in a large head from an edible bud about 8–15 cm diameter with numerous triangular scales; the individual florets are purple. The edible portion of the buds consists primarily of the fleshy lower portions of the involucral bracts and the base, known as the "heart"; the mass of immature florets in the center of the bud is called the "choke". These are inedible in older larger flowers.
New Online Exhibiton! Treasures of The New York Public Library

Treasures of The New York Public Library Video Series

Menus & Cookbooks

[Image of a woman in a kitchen with pots and pans]
New nypl.org
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center

40 Lincoln Center Plaza
New York, NY 10023-7498
(212) 870-1630

The Reserve Film and Video Collection is now open! More than 6,000 16mm films, 5,000 VHS videocassettes, and 1,000 DVDs.

Explore the Song Index: over 40,000 songs ranging from Broadway show tunes to pop and jazz standards.

New Debussy's Les Papillons, facsimile/transcription from the Music Division's autograph manuscript.

Upcoming Events at the Library for the Performing Arts

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2009
12:30 pm  Ballets Russes Movie Marathon

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2009
1:30 pm  "On A Sunday Afternoon"

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2009

Easy part: tools
Hard part: Policies & training
Discovery pt. 2
Electronic Resources
2. Data
Maps
Author: Perris, William.
Title: Maps of the city of New York / surveyed under directions of insurance companies of said city.

Connect to

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Image ID: 1270002
[Plate 2: Map bounded by Rector Street, Broadway, Exchange Place, William Street, Beaver Street, Broad Street, Marketfi... (1852)]
buildings.38

buildings

- user_id: 9
- layer_id: 861
- name: Mechanics' Banking Association
- number: 38
- street: Wall Street
- materials: brick or stone
- use_type: Commercial
- use_subtype: Bank
Data pt. 2: Crowdsourced collaboration
How to use this tool

The NYPL Map Rectifier is a tool for digitally aligning (“rectifying”) historical maps from the NYPL’s collections to match today’s precise maps. Visitors can browse already rectified maps or assist the NYPL by aligning a map. Play the video above to tour the site and learn.

My Maps

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| Plate 26, Part of Sections 3,4&5: Bounded by W. 42nd Street, Fifth Avenue, W. 37th Street and Seventh Avenue. from Atlas of the city of New York, borough of Manhattan. From actual surveys and official plans / by George W. and Walter S. Bromley. (In 2 layers) View Map | Plate 26, Part of Sections 3,4&5: Bounded by W. 42nd Street, Fifth Avenue, W. 37th Street and Seventh Avenue. from Atlas of the city of New York, borough of Manhattan. From actual surveys and official plans / by George W. and Walter S. Bromley. (In 2 layers) View Map | 3 days ago. | 4 control points.
How to be good
(at least sort of)
Building from user experience down, rather than technology up
1. User feedback loops
Do you have time to answer one question?

Help the New York Public Library!

We're looking for feedback on our web sites. Your answer to even a single question will be a great help.

Yes! I'd like to help!  
No thanks, not right now.

Please forward the address of this website to anyone you think might be interested in answering a few of our questions. The more people who participate, the better our sites will be!
Where would you click below to find information on the Library’s collection of historical maps?

Not sure where to click? Just take your best guess.
Where would you click below to find information on the Library's collection of historical maps?

Stripes revised standard size W/LABELS / Sep 11, 2009 / 9.42 seconds
since February:

> 10,000 unique users
> 100,000 questions answered
Real-time results for nypl

Prima_voce I'm @ NYPL for Performing Arts for a recital called "A Spanish Garden." Program looks interesting.
about 1 hour ago from txt

collazoprojects @nypl: Just want to thank you for the new extended hours— that made my week. I’ve always dreamed of a 24 hour library, though...possible? :)
about 3 hours ago from web

swesleys Beautiful day. NYPL for homework.
about 3 hours ago from web

emilybackfires <img
about 9 hours ago from API

boa_muenchen Revolutionary Voices: Performing Arts in Central & Eastern Europe in the 1980s
http://tinyurl.com/m44ebo #Arts (via nypl.org )
about 12 hours ago from web

lachendwolf RT @leokitty: David Cone gives the Staten Island Yankees winning the NYPL a shoutout! :)
--- YAY Baby Bombers!!
about 14 hours ago from TweetDeck

leokitty David Cone gives the Staten Island Yankees winning the NYPL a shoutout! :
about 15 hours ago from web

bbabbo Excited that NYPL emailed to say copy of the new LeBron James autobio is being held for me at my branch library. Just need time to read it.
about 19 hours ago from TweetDeck

people's favorite tweets.

Home
@mlascarides
Direct Messages 79
Favorites

nypl

Trending Topics
#inmyhood
Jets
NFL
Chris Johnson
Pats
Saints
Eagles
X Factor
Patriots
Lions
Following

RSS feed

RSS feed for this query
2. Agile Development
One last point...
In the eyes of digitally networked researchers, institutional value and identity derives from service, expertise, and community organization rather than possession of collections.