

# **GOING THE EXTRA MILE**

## **Some Philosophy and Observations**

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### **THE PHILOSOPHY:**

By your own qualifications, you the exhibitor are embarking on an adventure in the international arena. You are among the relatively few who will ever aspire to do so. Set your goals high and give it all you've got. Keep the dream alive, you may not get there in one fell swoop, that will be most of us. It doesn't matter, you do your very best and then tackle it again. If you suffer a disappointment, turn it to your advantage. Pick yourself up, hold back the emotion and transfer it to the Persistence that pays off. Tell yourself you have the wherewithal to endure.

The road isn't easy. If it were so, there would be no challenge and any award would be meaningless. I am reminded of another road, the VIA DOLOROSA, of Holy Land fame. If He could fall three times, put up with the tribulations and go on to eternal glory (reward), so can you. It won't be quite as difficult.

### **OBSERVATION:**

The picture is still worth a thousand words. You can't do it all from the confines of your study. Get to the exhibition with pencil and pad in hand. Pay heed to the top awards in ALL CATEGORIES across the board. We thematicists can take a lesson from all the disciplines. Our material cuts across the traditional, classic, modern, postal history, postal stationery, etc. If it works for them, then you can and ought to adapt that which is excellent to suit your needs. There is no exhibit on any level that is perfect or can't be improved. Should you notice something you deem inappropriate or not up to your specifications don't nit pick it to death. Pass over it and get on to what else is good. The very point that you have been discerning with a judgment is also an asset. You have learned a POSITIVE from a NEGATIVE.

### **SOME "EXTRA MILES" FROM WINNERS:**

These points may seem insignificant when discussed in isolation. However, when combined with Consistency throughout your exhibit as a whole, then can be very potent.

It can give you THAT LOOK which will be a standout. On the preliminary walk through which precedes actual judging, judges will often comment, "It has the look". Later, they'll decide if it has the SUBSTANCE also.

### **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:**

A traditional exhibit "Wrapper Bands (Printed Matter) and Their Usage" reverted to ivory tinted paper with very narrow, deep chocolate colored borders behind each item. The reason for doing so was not because of the fact that such treatment was noticed among those exhibits doing well. Rather, because the nature of the material DEMANDED IT. On bright, white pages, the many items of manila & brown, often toned, appeared ugly and dirty despite minor cosmetics. In the final version, the colored borders caused the items to pop off the page and the ivory offset toning to a remarkable degree. Mary Ann's "The Elephant" also contains similar type material and, therefore, is enhanced by the treatment. Who knows? It may have been the inspiration for the "Wrapper Bands" and others. Cutting all those colored borders is time consuming work. It was well worth it, the extra mile. This treatment is not a panacea for all exhibits. Experimentation is necessary.

### **DUAL FONT TEXTS:**

This idea is not new. One style type for the THEMATIC TEXT and another for PHILATELIC INFORMATION. It is often seen overseas, particularly in Italian exhibits and also in others. No rule or regulation insists that you do so. It is merely an observation for consideration. It does allow the juror to assess those point categories with greater facility and accuracy. Changing heads or disks is bothersome and time consuming. However, it can also be said that such treatment (dual font texts) are gaining momentum and distinguished awards at international level.

### **FEAST OR FAMINE:**

Usually we have a choice of material which allows us to make a page. On occasion, we are confronted with only two or three single pieces. They float in a sea of white and sparseness. You have consulted the checklists and your fingers are sore from turning pages in the standard catalogue. There are some options here. Consider these three pieces your PRIMARY SUBJECT. Look for further extension in specialized works. Is there a postal stationery piece you missed? How about a large proof, cancellation or cover? If these primary subjects are from NORTH INGERMANLAND, you may be awhile in locating such additions. Try a multiple of one of the 3 items, for space and balance, of course. Page still look lonely? Enter the ASSOCIATIVE item. Will a postal item depicting a map help? Perhaps a landscape, building, personality or monument RELATED to subject on hand will just fit the bill.

Take time to think about options. If you do so, then you're on your way to the winners' circle. Don't be afraid to ASK QUESTIONS, there are many who would love to help you.

### **INNER PAGE CAPTIONS:**

Here's an idea that is recent, somewhat experimental. You might say, the waters are being tested. I use them for the following reasons:

1. To assure the continuity of story-line when more than one thought or aspect is being discussed within a page. Its purpose is to forestall losing or confusing the viewer.
2. The caption as a HEADLINER which is meant to ATTRACT ATTENTION and convey the ESSENCE of the page's theme at a glance.

Thus, if a juror is under time pressure, he or she can quickly ascertain your thematic intent by noting the chapter heading, inner page caption and viewing the material. If for any reason more detail is desired, that can be found in the accompanying text. Captions type 1 and 2 relate to thematic information. Caution: Such captions should be BRIEF and not interfere with material.

A third kind of caption is used to facilitate dissemination of your philatelic knowledge. The advantage is that you can make your point with less need for two or three sentences. You hit the nail square on the head with two or three words. In addition, your point will STAND OUT and not be lost in verbiage. Such captions might read: AS ISSUED – RE-ENGRAVED, SHORTPAID, DUAL CENSOR, EARLIEST KNOWN USAGE, COPY OF RECORD ' etc. Judicious use can inform the viewer you are knowledgeable in philately as well as your chosen theme. Some captions obviously can stand alone. Example: AS ISSUED – RE-ENGRAVED, VAR; BLUE PAPER. USED ABROAD & SHORTPAID may require a few words under the items. Either way, the inner page caption acts as a FLAG. Take a moment to see if these ideas will work for you.

### **THE FULL PAGE: HOW FULL IS FULL?**

It has been noticed that there has been a tendency by even some advanced exhibitors to **OVERREACT** to advice that pages be full. The American preference has traditionally leaned towards a more open look. Conversely, European pages contain more items than has generally been the rule here in the U.S.A. Overseas, great stress is laid on getting the most use of space. Maximum frame allotments are not always possible resulting in combining of material within fewer frames.

In the exuberance to comply with **FULL** pages, a few instances have cropped up where the effect has been **CROWDED** or **OVERKILL**.

### **CROWDED:**

A good general rule of thumb is that if you don't know what to look at first on a page it is not **FULL** but **CROWDED**. It usually appears as a large block of items equally spaced. Try to separate and group the items. Use a little more space to **FEATURE** your best or most important piece.

### **OVERKILL:**

Also produces a crowded or jammed effect. Most often seen in attempting a study, one need not show all 36 varieties of the setting of an overprint. Same for a dozen mixed shifts, misperfs, printed on gum side, paper fold, etc. Use a few of the best and you've made your point. Overkill **CROWDS** and **DETRACTS**. If you put six Ming vases across the mantelpiece, you won't be able to **APPRECIATE** any of them.