

Topical Exhibiting and Judging of One-Frame Exhibits

Old World Archaeologist, Vol. XVII, No. 2

Eileen Meier

Rereading my article "Why Exhibit?" I realized that I had omitted mention of a synopsis page. The exhibit prospectus for National Topical Stamp Show 99 states that each entry must be accompanied by a "photocopy of the title page and the plan page; in the absence of a plan page, a one page synopsis is required". I never did a synopsis page as I had done a first draft of my Hercules combined title and plan page before I began to do my exhibit pages as a guide for me to follow.

In preparation for doing this article I wrote to Ann Triggler, the US representative to the FIP Thematic Commission. I asked for her opinion on the need for a synopsis for a one frame exhibit. She answered that "a synopsis is just as important for a one frame exhibit as for a multi-frame as it helps the judges understand your exhibit better".

I would greatly appreciate it if any OWASU members have done a synopsis page for an archaeology exhibit to send it to me for my guidance. If the member is willing to share his/her synopsis page with the entire membership I will send them to George so that he may include them in a future issue.

To date, 2 February 1999, I have not received any requests for reference photocopies on one frame exhibiting! The members have not sent in any questions about my first article.

With no feedback I do not know if a series on topical exhibiting and judging will be of interest and use to journal readers.

I will complete this article and wait for reader letters to me at POB 369, Palmyra, Virginia, 22963, or to our editor, George Holland, before I do another installment.

Having CFS and severe arthritis I do not have the energy or the ability to sit and write for long periods of time to write articles that no one wants to read. If there is interest, I will be happy to continue this series. Thank you in advance for your letters.

I failed to mention that the Ameristamp Expo 93 prospectus included much helpful information for the first ever one-frame exhibition held in the US. This information of 1993 is just as valid today as when it was first published.

I am asking our editor to publish these guidelines and the Philatelic Elements Check List in full size so that the information will become a part of our OWASU reference files. (Editor's Note. They have been added at the end of the story on Pages 13 and 14.)

If one decides to exhibit, I strongly recommend that you carefully study the Philatelic Elements Checklist prepared by Mary Ann Owens. Mary Ann is a well known, knowledgeable thematic exhibitor and judge.

If anyone has questions about topical judging or understanding and using the Philatelic Elements Check List please drop me a line.

Now I will give you ideas on how to do the pages 2 through 16 by showing the reader how I improved my one frame exhibit over three different versions.

Looking at the first version of the second page one sees an all single stamp page. This shows a lack of philatelic knowledge of philatelic elements available for my topic. One needs to go beyond the ATA Hercules stamp checklist and search dealer stock and auction listings for appropriate meters, cancellations, postal stationery, etc., to gain a high point count for philatelic knowledge from the judges. Always seek out philatelic items in the best possible condition as the judges will mark you down for poor condition in the quality category.

Major problems:

I had devoted two pages to why Hercules performed the twelve labors but didn't tell the reader that was my intent.

Other problems:

The downward arrows need to be reversed as father precedes the son in the thematic text.

Unclear what the right hand arrow points to, i.e., Alceme in the window.

Hermes stamp will not get one point for philatelic knowledge as judges will expect to see a classical Hermes issue from Greece here.

Try to avoid the use of Paraguay (1977 Scott 1712), a country known for issuing many stamps not for local use but to sell mint to stamp collectors for profit as they will not be used to perform postal service. As Paraguay is the only stamp showing Hera and baby Zeus together it can be used in a pinch. The painting is titled "The Birth of the Milky Way". Information from the FAP Paintings Checklist - artist Paul Peter Rubens (1577-1640 done 1636-37, oil on canvas, size 181 x 244 centimeters, Madrid, Prado

Heracles* was the son of the chief Greek god, Zeus (Jupiter) and the mortal Queen Alceme (Alcemene).

The messenger god, Hermes (Mercury) brought Heracles to Olympus where Zeus placed him to suckle on his ' wife's breast. Awakening the goddess Hera (Juno) angrily pushed Heracles away; her milk spraying across the heavens to become the Milky Way.

*He was called Alcides, Alcaeus or Palaemon, according to different accounts; the name Heracles came later.

Location - the label states that the picture is in London, England. The discrepancy in location might have been caused by the fact that Rubens did two similar paintings or unlikely Prado sold this work to the London Museum.

Our topic is the Twelve Labors of Hercules and not an art history of Hercules in art; however, one tends to learn more thematic information than is possible to include in a page write-up. Books consulted do not always agree! A solution is to keep researching and write an article on your findings for a philatelic publication.

It should be noted that until one can find a definitive answer, which might not be possible, the solution to the problem is to make use of a footnote on the page making note that scholars don't agree but you have used the most commonly used version for your exhibit or something to that effect.

Second Page:

First version of the exhibit did not have a plan page so viewer was not aware of the way in which the story would be told. The title "The Greek Hero Heracles" was not sufficient to tell the reader that pages 2 and 3 were telling the story of why Heracles had to perform the twelve labors and was corrected in the second version.

On the earlier page two there were problems as I had identified the stamp design subjects above the stamp on this page. I had trusted the order of the text

The Greek Hero Heracles

As an illegitimate son of Zeus, Heracles was subject to *Hera's jealousy and she caused him to go mad and kill his children. When sanity returned, Heracles went to the Oracle at Delphi; to ask how to atone for his dreadful deed. He was ordered to perform twelve labors for King Eurystheus and change his name to Heracles, meaning glory of Hera.

*Hera, goddess of marriage

To indicate the order of the subjects shown on the philatelic material. Wrong, the reader is confused, i.e., first stamp on left, Italy 1973 (Scott 1128), shows only Hercules as one of many statues as part of the Trevi Fountain in Rome, Italy.

Hercules is in the center niche to his right is a figure of Health and to his left a figure of Fertility. All statuary are by Pietro Bracci. The FAP Sculpture Checklist also informs us that the Trevi Fountain was begun by Nicola Salvi aided by a Gian Lorenzo Bernini drawing and took from 1732 to 1762 to complete.

Zeus is not included in the statues of the Trevi Fountain.

I had this information in my library at home and an arrow to the center niche with name Heracles might have helped - but where was a philatelic presentation of his father Zeus? The identification of the subjects depicted on every stamp on this page was corrected when the exhibit was redone.

The meter from India using the name Hercules in connection with strength and stability is definitely in place here.

In my second version, I combined the two pages on why Hercules performed the labors into one page as I needed a page elsewhere for new material.

Good points:

I was using chapter numbers and had identified the figures above the stamps on which they appeared.

Bad Points:

Page is too crowded and I had failed to change text and arrows so that Zeus, Hercules' father, came before his son to agree with the thematic text.

Postal stationery should not be cut so I made slits in the page in order to obtain room for the philatelic write-up. On both pieces of postal stationery the parts that I wished to show (Ancient Delphi and Ancient Mycene) were not printed on the same side as the stamp; therefore, a reduced copy of the stamp side was placed to the right of the Greek aerogram and postal card.

There was no need to give year of issue as this was easily obtained catalog information. A judge would also know by looking at the postal stationery which type they were so no need to identify type in the page write-up. One does not mix philatelic write-up and thematic write-up in the same sentence. It is necessary to separate thematic and philatelic write-ups by placing the thematic write-up above the philatelic write-up.

A good idea is to use a different typeface for each type of write-up making it easier for the reader to follow your storyline and how you used philatelic elements to develop it. Remember an exhibit is a stamp exhibit not an article illustrated with stamps so make your philatelic items the focus of your page and let each philatelic item have room to be noticed and not be lost in a sea of text and other philatelic material.

The third and final version of the page has a greatly improved thematic write-up. In earlier attempts I had not made it clear that King Eurhythus wanted Hercules to fail at the tasks that he asked Hercules to perform. New thematic text explains that the King saw Hercules as a strong political rival to his throne at Mycene. The weak King hoped that Hercules would find the labors to be impossible and likely to result in Hercules' death. No philatelic element showing a mad Hercules killing his family has been issued yet. His dreadful deed was the reason Hercules went to the

Oracle at Delphi to learn how to atone for his crime. Therefore, to understand this, I included this unsupported philately fact in my thematic write-up.

Other interesting information that I was unable to include for the same reason was that Eurystheus was prematurely born due to Hera's jealous maneuvers. If Hera had not interfered Hercules would have been first.

I have included a copy of a Greek booklet cover to remind readers that designs on booklet covers may fit their story line. A booklet cover may have an enlarged version of a stamp within it such as this one (Greece 1988, Scott 1623-1627, stamp design on booklet cover is Scott 1623), or a completely different picture on the same topic as the stamp within it. A booklet cover of an enlarged stamp design may show small details clearer.

Knowledge:

The exhibitor obtains a great deal of information during the research process. In exhibiting due to limited space and time for judges to evaluate your work one must resist the temptation to put all one learned on a page. Remember you must try to be brief. Do not have thematic text which is not supported by philatelic material unless it is absolutely necessary to your story line. To my knowledge there are many mythological scholars that believe Hercules' performance of the twelve labors represent a conquest of a death theme. So that Hercules not only atones for his crime but wins the prize of immortality in the after life.

All agree that Hercules' Journey and conquest of the monsters along the way results in Hercules becoming a hero and a demigod which is a common theme in mythology worldwide.

Editor's Note:

Our thanks to Eileen Meter for these two stories on her exhibit. We apologize for cutting some of her exhibit pages up, but it was done to fit the artwork more closely to the references in the article. The last pages are printed in their entirety, and hopefully the reader was able to cross the gap between the text and the exhibit pages.

Thanks again, Eileen.