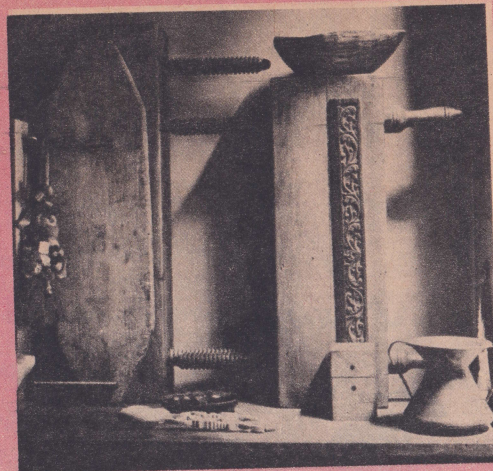


THE LADIES LOVE BOOKS



Photos by Karel Bauer



PETER FAHEY (left) and Stella Patri, both with extensive European training, have an eye for the finest.

THOSE WITH AN AFFINITY for such things will understand immediately the warmth and fascination of this place.

It's an upstairs workshop/living quarters and, more formally, a San Francisco bookbindery — a place where words and papers and leathers reign and books are for handling, gently please.

Peter Fahey (a lady with a gentleman's name plus her late bookbinder husband's love of design and fine books) and Stella Patri (originally Peter's student, now her partner) live and work here. Peter designs covers for new books and tutors apprentice students. Stella deals mainly in repairing the very oldest books, mending pages and sewing them together again. A pair of lazy or else extremely contented cats pad back and forth through the rooms peering first at Stella as she toils over an aged copy of Sir Francis Bacon, then into Peter's tools on a work table overlooking the Kong Chow Chinese Temple next door.

For further perusal, the studio is bubbling at every turn with curious "things we've collected through the years." Books from their private collection line the sitting room walls and stack gingerly on the floor and tables and benches. Book presses, glue pots and brushes, lithographers' stones, cutting tools, multi-colored binding threads plus a happy assortment of intriguing trivia and collector's pieces. . . . It would take days to discover and fully appreciate every item.

Time, however, seems less than important here. Rush jobs do occasionally arise but, for the most part, these two craftsmen are working in a medium beyond deadlines and mass production for mass consumption.

To perfect the cover for a fine book requires time, patient skill and a great deal of respect.

The two smiling ladies, speaking softly, are quick to tell you so.

Judy Vaughn