

Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*. Cody's Books in Berkeley, California actually had a bomb explode within its walls and preserved the damage after its closure in 2008, a reminder of the risks booksellers run to make controversial titles available.

One question waits in the wings of this book, which Carrión addresses by way of a sober conclusion: "Why now?" In a world in which technology is advancing rapidly, and international economic forces fuse local and global economies in lockstep, the bookshop, especially the ones Carrión explores, is surrounded on all sides by the imminent risk of elimination. There are moments throughout *Bookshops* where the stark reality of the bookshop's precarious conditions becomes clear as he discovers (via Google, ironically) that yet another shop that left an impression on him has closed. In this final discussion, Carrión's idea of the bookshop comes into full relief as a dynamic entity that has always been a site of transition and transmission.

Much of what Carrión's explores in this book will resonate deeply with bibliophiles, leaving them emphatically nodding with every page. Subtitled *A Reader's History*, it is also a book for readers. There is plenty of room to drift in Carrión's collection of bookshops and, much like the shops visited and cities lived in during its creation, this book gains richness with each read. Carrión inspires the reader to become familiar with the vital references made within *Bookshops*, both places to visit and authors to read. He inspires a wanderlust to explore worlds within the aisles of shops (both familiar and foreign) and avenues that lead one to the essential social space of the bookshop, a space only activated by our presence within them.

~ REVIEWED BY SPENCER W. STUART



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## *Everyday Artist*

ALTHOUGH LITTLE PERSONAL information about Franklin Bittner is readily available, his artistic works are widely distributed. The *Benezit Dictionary of Artists* says he studied with William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri, prominent American artists and art educators in New York, in the early years of the 20th century. His illustrations generally depicted American locations and architecture, including the cover and interior images for the *Book of Home Building and Decoration*, published by Doubleday in 1912, a map of New York in 1664 that included contemporary landmarks of 1927, and a series of collectible poster stamps

showcasing New York landmarks and scenes.

Bittner was also among 175 artists who entered the poster contest held to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the settlement of Newark, New Jersey, in 1916. One of several men offering opinions about the contest for the October 1915 edition of *The Poster*, a publication of the Poster Advertising Association headquartered in Chicago, Bittner wrote about his views of art and advertising. He lamented that design was typically given less consideration than the message, printing and physical product of the advertisement—in essence, the artist didn't have creative licence to lead the project. Bittner

saw the contest as an opportunity to showcase “good advertising combined with good art” and hoped that demonstrating this relationship would promote the power of the artist. Although his illustration was not displayed in the Newark posters catalogue, his submission was impressive enough to the judges to warrant description in the text.

Three years later, Bittner created the mountain-and-coconut-tree design used for Mason’s Peaks, a chocolate-coconut candy from Mason, Au and Magenheimer Confectionery Manufacturing Co. (the company that also originally produced the DOTs brand of gumdrops).

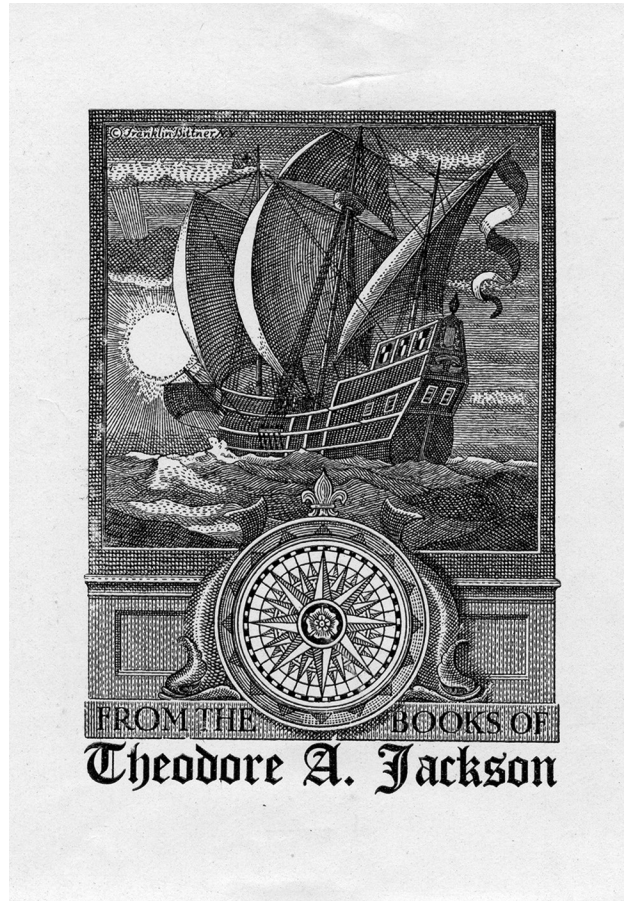
Yet another outlet for his skills was bookplate design. Bittner was advertising copperplate and coloured woodcut bookplates from a New Jersey address in the *New York Times’s* Book Exchange section in 1930. They sold for \$3 and \$5 per hundred, respectively, with samples for 10 cents. The Yellow Springs Historical Society, which blogs about records of the Antioch Bookplate Co., a prominent bookplate producer that sold Bittner’s designs, identifies him as being deceased by the 1940s.

The pictorial bookplate designed by Bittner that is featured here depicts common imagery for bookplates of the era: a three-masted ship at sea and a compass rose. Many similar styles were sold by the Antioch Bookplate Co. and were popular until the 1980s. This specific plate is printed with

raised black ink. The company’s designs were customizable to include a name or other text, and varying fonts, colours and papers could be used.

The extensive digital collection of bookplates at the Los Angeles Public Library contains multiple designs by Bittner, including a two-tone, yellow-and-red print of the same design shown here.

Although Bittner would have been originally personalizing his bookplates, the blank flag, crest and scroll on the stern of the ship would have made this design easy to reproduce when the company turned to mass-producing blank, non-personalized designs. Given the



wide distribution of these bookplates, the owner, Theodore A. Jackson, remains unidentified.

Although the Antioch Bookplate Co. no longer exists, another Ohio company, Bookplate Ink, acquired many of its designs and continues to print them today. This particular image is not listed for sale on its website, but a common caduceus bookplate designed by Bittner is available.

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The Rare Books and Special Collections Bookplate Collection can be accessed from the UBC Library Digital Collections and Services site, <http://digitalcollections.library.ubc.ca>.