

and his effort to gain some kind of acceptance for the cruelty he witnessed in war while keeping his patriotic sense. Koch's art is quite eclectic, and our purpose at the Klingspor Museum is to communicate all these different aspects of books and writing in his work and in the work of the other artists in our collection. The museum was founded in 1953, based on Karl Klingspor's collection of books and graphic works, and for more than 50 years now its treasures have been steadily growing. Almost 80,000 works of the book and printing arts of the 20th and 21st centuries are stored in the library's shelves and drawers. The stock is constantly being expanded in practically all areas of the collection: print samples, calligraphy, tapestry, books, posters, and so on.

The immense oeuvre of Rudolf Koch, working in Offenbach from 1906 till 1934—his prints and handwritten manuscripts, along with his illustrations and type designs—are among these treasures. The exhibition changes about four times a year. Karl Klingspor's and Rudolf Koch's approach to type and lettering as an artistic medium is something we try to impart every day in our museum's work with children and adults. The digital version of Kabel, a Koch type design of 1927, has been used in our booklet for educational courses, and I sometimes think it would have been something Koch might have liked, to see his work still in the hands of young people 100 years later, a new generation finding its own expression in lettering.

#### FURTHER READING

Gerald Cinamon, *Rudolf Koch: Letterer, Type Designer, Teacher* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2000).

*Die Kriegserlebnisse des Grenadiers Rudolf Koch* (Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1934).

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 ↪ Dorothee Ader is responsible for museum education at the Klingspor Museum in Offenbach, Germany.

## Through Battle to Beauty

The arts help us understand war, PETER MITHAM says, but also bring peace to those who served.

PAPERBACK NOVELS SET during the Second World War were popular reading material for me as a teenager. But looking back, what stands out most is the short space of time between the end of the conflict and the time those novels were published—30 years or less. I was born closer to the end of the First World War than today's Millennials were to the end of the Second World War.

With mature hindsight, I wonder how many of those novels I enjoyed were written to relive a moment in history for those who were there as well as to appeal to an appetite for the stories themselves. There were so many then—Len Deighton, *Bomber* (1970), remains memorable, as well as Jack Higgins, *The Eagle Has Landed* (1975). I loved leafing through the series *World War II* from Time-Life. My uncle, who served with the 12th Manitoba Dragoons and was awarded the Military Cross for action following D-Day, had the whole set.

Shell shock and battle fatigue were familiar concepts, but the long-term effects of active service were less familiar. Most of the men I knew returned to civilian life, took up jobs, raised families and, to all appearances, coped. Photographers and war artists captured the experience of soldiers, but we heard less about veterans using art to convey their experiences in battle and life afterwards.

I have a folder of clippings from that time in my life, and leafing through it I see that art therapy wasn't unheard of. Writing in the *Montreal Gazette* in November 1980, James Quig recounts his visit with Edward Charles Mackisoc, an 80-year-old former sniper with the 24th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force—the Victoria Rifles. He signed up the same year as Rudolf Koch, and in 1980 was living at the veterans hospital in Ste. Anne de Bellevue. Quig found residents making music, and many haunted by their experiences. Mackisoc saw it daily:

[It] drove him near crazy to see old soldiers whose brains had been damaged by war.

“They let them loose in here sometimes and they root in the garbage cans for things to eat and drink. Because they’re sick. The war did that.”

Before Quig leaves, however, there’s something else he’s invited to see:

It’s time to go. But first he wants to show us his latest project in the Arts and Crafts Room.

“I do these pictures on canvas with one of those punch needles and threads,” he says.

It was a picture of a clown.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was formally recognized in 1980, the same year as Quig’s article. Today, creative endeavours continue to be a way for veterans to both process their military experiences—not unlike Rudolf Koch—and reintegrate into civilian life. The works take many forms, as sculpture, painting and words written and spoken.

Sometimes, several media combine. The Man/Art/Action tribute pole raised at Canada House in London, England, in 2015, an initiative of artist Foster Eastman and the Veterans Transition Network at UBC funded by the Movember Foundation, is one example.

“Through drama, painting, music and art, Man/Art/Action gave veterans the opportunity to publicly reinterpret their experiences and resiliently transition back into civilian life,” states the project’s summary. “Building on the idea that men share more when working with their hands, the project had veterans hand-craft a tribute pole in memory of those who lost their lives in the Afghanistan war.”

The pole includes engraved text listing the first names and rankings of the 158 Canadian

soldiers who didn’t return from Afghanistan.

A play, *Contact! Unload*, in which some of the men acted, presented a series of vignettes drawn from the men’s collective experiences to examine the challenges veterans face after active duty. (A short video of the project is available here: [https://youtu.be/TxkAPna\\_EjU](https://youtu.be/TxkAPna_EjU).)

But often, military experiences support future creative endeavour, too.

Steve Quick of Weathervane Press in Ottawa recalls how in his 35 years in the Canadian Forces he volunteered with several community newspapers in North America, Europe and South Asia. He learned paste-up, design and printing. On two occasions, he served as editor. A few years before retirement, the experiences pointed a way forward and he founded Weathervane Press.

“When I retired from the military in 2010, I had a purpose for my day—from 9h30 until 16h00, seven days a week there was always something to do in the studio—setting type, distributing type or printing type,” he says.

“I began producing a series of chapbooks, started the *Letterpress Gazette* for the OPG (Ottawa Press Gang, our local group of private printers), and began publishing our annual *Christmas Keepsake*—125 small hand-bound, letterpress printed and linocut illustrated books that we send to family and friends each year.”

Credit the graphic arts with one more successful transition, though less trauma than others experience.

“My overseas deployments were filled with great adventure and danger, but I was fortunate enough to be spared some of the issues that have plagued other soldiers,” Quick says. “I enjoyed every day I got to wear my uniform. I am also very proud of my new work as a private press—new skills to learn, techniques to try and a sense of accomplishment when a project is completed.”

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~ Peter Mitham is editor of *Amphora*.

