

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN AMIENS
18-19 OCTOBER 2018

Baskerville

in

FRANCE

Caroline Archer & Malcolm Dick

Thomas Huot-Marchand, Charles Mazé,
Rosalie Wagner (ANRT 2017)

Albert Corbeto

James Barry Aurélie Marc
MOSLEY MCKAY MARTIN SMITH

QUENTIN SCHMERBER

Patrick Jérôme
GOOSSENS KNEBUSCH

Organised by the **École supérieure d'art et de design (Amiens)**
and the **Centre for Printing History and Culture (Birmingham)**,
with the support of the **Ministère de la Culture**, the **Baskerville Society**
and the **Bibliographical Society**



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Baskerville in France

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Venue

*Ministère de la culture
et de la communication
DRAC Hauts-de-France
Site d'Amiens
5 rue Henri Daussy
80000 Amiens*

Registration

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John Baskerville (1707–75) was an English typographer, printer, industrialist and Enlightenment figure with a worldwide reputation. He not only designed one of the world's most popular and important typefaces, he also experimented with casting type, improved the construction of the printing press, trialed a new kind of paper and refined the quality of printing inks. His typographic experiments put him ahead of his time, had an international impact and did much to enhance the printing and publishing industries of his day.

Baskerville, however, was a prophet without honour in his own land and 'only in France did he meet with the encouragement he undoubtedly deserved.' This conference considers the impact of Baskerville in France from the eighteenth century to the present day. Papers will present the technical, aesthetic, literary, political or philosophical influences of Baskerville on France and France on Baskerville. A companion exhibition displays rare artifacts, books and documents related to his career and his posterity.

THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER

9h15

Coffee & registration

9h45

Welcome address

10h

**Caroline Archer, Malcolm Dick
(Chair: Alexandre Parré)**

**John Baskerville: art and
industry of the Enlightenment**

This discussion introduces the eighteenth-century typographer, printer, industrial and Enlightenment figure John Baskerville (1707-75). Baskerville not only designed one of the world's most historically important typeface, he also experimented with casting type, improved the construction of the printing press, helped develop a new kind of paper and refined the quality of printing inks. His typographic experiments put him ahead of his time and did much to enhance the printing industry of his day. Yet, despite his importance, many aspects of Baskerville's life remain unexplored. Along side his typographic advances, this discussion will also look at his contribution to the arts, industry, culture and society of the Enlightenment both in Britain and France.

11h

Patrick Goossens

**Questions surrounding
Baskerville's printing
innovations and their
introduction into France**

This talk will give an overview of Baskerville's innovations in printing technology. While the English printing industry did not embrace his innovations, after his death, some of Baskerville's typographical material was moved to France. John Dreyfus has already studied aspects of this, but several questions remain unanswered. Firstly, what were the motivations for this move? Secondly, to what extent were French printers ready to receive Baskerville's new insights: his correspondence with the French printer Philippe-Denis Pierre showed some interest from France, but how widespread was this? Thirdly, were French printers able to use the new techniques to their full potential? Etienne Anisson-Duperron showed interest in the process, but once the equipment was employed at the Kehl printing house he found it was not used to its full potential. Finally, Baskerville was not the only innovator of printing technology, but he certainly stands out. How was this achieved?

LUNCH

14h

Barry McKay

Baskerville's Papers plain and coloured

Baskerville's constant search for improvements in all aspects of book production is well known. Less consideration, however, has been given to his use of wove paper. The first part of this talk will review the evidence for the development of this type of paper and how it met Baskerville's needs. It will then describe how Baskerville's early experiments with wove paper influenced papermakers both in Western Europe in general and France in particular. The second part will present work on Baskerville's marbled papers that I have undertaken with Prof Diana Patterson, with particular reference to some newly discovered examples of the printer's marbled papers and the possible influence of French and other European decorated papers on Baskerville's marbling.

15h

Aurélie Martin

Bound with France: French bindings on Baskerville editions and their owners

This talk will investigate the connection between Baskerville and France through a study of the bindings of his editions. Baskerville was, reputedly, appreciated in France where his books were purchased and collected. However, little attention has been given to the bindings of the volumes bought by French collectors. A study of these bindings, based on an analysis of the materials and techniques used, the decorative styles, and their provenance, can help reconstruct the history of their manufacture and help us understand when and by whom his books were collected in France. Did French collectors buy Baskerville's editions during his lifetime and did they continue after his death? Were the volumes bound in France or were they received in English bindings and kept as such? Finally, what can the binding tell us about the economic status and the taste of these French collectors, depending on the level of refinement of their books?

16h15

Albert Corbeto

**Baskerville's types in XVIIIth
century Spanish printing**

The second half of the eighteenth century is regarded as the golden age of Spanish printing, when, for the first time, the productions of leading indigenous typographers such as Ibarra, Sancha or Monfort reached levels comparable to those of the most prestigious printers of Europe. These printers benefited from the skills of various craftsmen in the art of punch cutting who freed Spanish printing from its dependence on the major European type-exporting centres. However, despite the magnificent designs by Pradell, Gil and Espinosa, the prestige of Baskerville's work led to the attempted acquisition, in 1766, of some of his punches and matrices for the planned printing press of the Real Biblioteca. Although this transaction did not take place, some years later, the Spanish government obtained several of Baskerville's types which were used towards the end of the century in a number of books printed by the Imprenta Real.

17h30

Exhibition opening

Esad Amiens gallery,
40 rue des Teinturiers

This exhibition is open until
Thursday 8 November (Monday to
Friday, 9.00-12.30 – 14.00-18.00)

FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER

10h

Marc H. Smith

**English, French and European
Handwriting in the Age
of Baskerville**

The eighteenth century witnessed new forms of handwriting which profoundly affected the evolution of type. English writing masters in particular, long under the influence of French and Dutch models, blended these into an original cursive style, 'English round hand', in which a pointed nib, subjected to delicate pressure, produced typically contrasted thick and thin strokes. English copybooks show some roman alphabets that clearly inspired the types of Baskerville, himself a writing master. When Beaumarchais in France first used Baskerville's types, English round hand also began to spread across Europe as the *Anglaise*, *Inglese*, or

Englische Schrift. Despite opposition from French writing masters, in defence of national character in handwriting, English round hand became the new European standard of the nineteenth century, parallel to the spread of ‘modern’ type and its similarly contrasted letterforms.

11h

James Mosley

Baskerville after Baskerville

Baskerville acquired a wide reputation with his edition of Virgil, which included among its subscribers not only a typefounder in the Netherlands but also a former printer and rising politician in Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin. His types were mentioned with approval by Fournier le jeune and Giambattista Bodoni. They were imitated in Britain, but bought after his death and used and copied in France. After long neglect, the original matrices were rediscovered, and the types not only came back into use, but became the models for new ‘Baskerville’ types in the twentieth century. More recently attempts have been made to make faithful recreations of the originals as digital fonts, and also to design creative variations of them. This talk will offer a survey of the ‘brand’ that has continued to bear the name of Baskerville.

LUNCH

14h

Quentin Schmerber

Temeraire: When a French millennial rediscover Baskerville legacy, an exploration into English Vernacular

In 1757, Baskerville’s ‘Virgil’ was set in new types that were cut by John Handy between 1750–57. Unlike those of his predecessor, William Caslon, these types were not inspired by Dutch punch cutters but by Baskerville’s own practice of calligraphy, and by copper-plate works from English writing masters such as Georges Bickham and Joseph Champion. Baskerville’s design was copied by his peers and influenced lettering artists and stone carvers around Britain, leading to the development of what is known today as the *English Letter*. Historians, such as Alan Bartram and James Mosley, have documented this genre, also named *English Vernacular*. The Temeraire family is an attempt by a young French designer to submit a contemporary interpretation of the *English Letter* through an investigation of its history. This talk will demonstrate Baskerville’s influence on the *English Vernacular* and introduce the Temeraire family, its design

process and some of the shapes directly inherited from Baskerville.

15h

Jérôme Knebusch

**Between Baskerville & Didot:
Messine**

In 2011 students from ESAL Metz, in combination with Argentinian type designer Alejandro Lo Celso and their teacher Jérôme Knebusch, began work on a specific design for their school. Looking for a bookish typeface with a tendency toward modern forms, the students found particularly interesting references to the work of Baskerville and Didot. The typeface developed, over the ensuing years and during intensive workshop sessions, to form a complete type family named *Messine*, which included text, display, poster, italic, bold, sans and serif versions. This talk will go back to its genesis, show the evolution of the design (not afraid of historical giants) and discuss pedagogic and type design methodologies of an on-going inter-generational project.

16h15

**Thomas Huot-Marchand,
Charles Mazé, Rosalie Wagner
(ANRT 2017)**

Baskerville

In 1784 Claude Jacob, with his partner Henri Rolland, engraved a copy of Baskerville for his new foundry, the Société Typographique de Strasbourg. With its rounded forms and marked contrasts it closely resembled Baskerville's types, except for the italics which were less calligraphic and more rational. Jacob's italics echoed those of François-Ambroise Didot and thus Jacob's typeface provided a link between the English style and the seeds of French typographic modernity.

This talk will return to Jacob, whose name is eclipsed by that of Baskerville, to present a digital interpretation of Jacob's typeface, produced at the Atelier National de Recherche Typographique in Nancy (Alexis Faudot, Rémi Forte, Morgane Pierson, Rafael Ribas, Tanguy Vanlaeys, Rosalie Wagner) in autumn 2017. This new version is based on historical records at the Imprimerie Berger-Levrault & Cie (1878) and composed in 'type characters Baskerville (property of the House)' now in the possession of the company Berger-Levrault.