

Mary Lou Powers

Lettering Artist, Calligrapher, Paper & Book Artist,
Personalized Engraver

What an absolute privilege it is to have been selected by Iowa State University to engrave these treasured carillon bells, reflecting our iconic campanile. It is a genuine honor to memorialize each and every one of your individualized inscriptions.

Fascinated by her grandfather's beautifully flourished Spencerian penmanship, Mary Lou's passion for letterforms began early in life.

After graduating from Iowa State University with a B.S. in Interior Design / Art Education, Mary Lou joined Trans World Airlines, and later American Airlines, as an International German and French qualified Flight Attendant, and collected styles of writing while traveling the world. She took her first course in Calligraphy from Iowa State University and went on to earn a Certificate of Calligraphy at California State University Long Beach, which included paper marbling and book arts. She took classes at Cerritos College and engaged in directed studies for several years from acclaimed calligrapher, Marsha Brady. While there, Mary Lou took third place in their juried art show and placed first and third in the Orange County Fair's Graphic Arts Competition. Her work was published in the premiere issue of "Somerset Studios" magazine. At Orange Coast College she studied Chinese Brush Watercolor under the guidance of Ning Yeh from Taiwan. Mary Lou placed Honorable Mention in the International Graceful Envelope Contest, sponsored by the National Association of Letter Carriers. During Art Walk in Ames, Iowa, she was the featured artist at the Octagon Center for the Arts and served as Official Calligrapher for the National Special Olympics.

During three terms at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Iowa State University, Mary Lou taught Calligraphy and has given private lessons. She has attended twelve International Calligraphy Conferences and has taken countless workshops and classes from internationally known instructors across the nation. Her works have been sold from galleries and exhibited in numerous shows in Iowa and California.

Mary Lou was commissioned to write a special dedication inscription in the Bible which Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds used for her inauguration. As an owner of one of Mary Lou's framed pieces, Iowa's outgoing Governor Terry Branstad requested that it accompany him as he took his position as the United States Ambassador to China.

Mary Lou has furthered her skills by incorporating personalized engraving. She has been featured at many events in Iowa, Nebraska and Florida, at wineries, Dillard's, Youngers, Von Maur, Miami Aventura Mall, etc. Some of her clients include Calvin Klein, Marc Jacobs, Vera Wang, Hugo Boss, Thierry Mugler, Estee Lauder, Clarins, Tiger Woods, the international Agricultural & Applied Economics Association, American Heart Association, etc.

Presently, Mary Lou continues her calligraphic pursuits doing private commissions and exploring lettering avenues worldwide.