Review: *Catalogue of Damage Terminology for Works of Art - Paper*

Under the auspices of Bern University, a group of Swiss paper conservators, with input from an international council of advisors, has produced a comprehensive lexicon for describing damages to works on paper. While other glossaries exist, this one is an important contribution because it is a fully illustrated attempt to standardize and categorize the description of condition issues in works on paper. The *Catalogue of Damage Terminology for Works of Art and Cultural Property – Paper* is a beautifully designed two-sided fan-leaved book, which delineates terminology in English and German, on opposite sides of the fan. The format and clean typography make it very easy to read. Sturdily constructed, it opens easily and fits nicely into a hand. Its 248 pages of text, aided by a helpful index, describe just about every issue that might affect a paper artifact. For curators, registrars, and other museum and library professionals, the *Catalogue* provides standard terms for damages and clear explanations of their differences (for example, how a tear might differ from a fracture.) It is also a useful tool for dealers, auction houses, shipping agents, and insurance adjustors – anyone involved in producing descriptions of the state of paper artifacts. For the seasoned conservator, it may point to some better descriptors for the problems we typically note. The *Catalogue* is especially useful because it employs 398 photographic illustrations to clarify the issues described. The well-selected photographs depict classic examples of common paper damages. For example, if asked, “What does silverfish damage look like?” we now have a clear image to show – of that and many other paper maladies.

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