



The Write Stuff

By Will Coviello

Writing will never go out of style, but sooner or later people might just start calling it typing. Laptop computers are replacing desks. Airplane seats double as office space. Someday not even doctors will scribble illegibly on paper.

But racing into the future has already given writing a shot in the arm. "The yearning for the past is stronger than ever," says Margaret Jones of **Scriptura** (5423 Magazine St., 897-1555). Her Uptown store is an emporium of fine writerly things, like fashionable fountain pens, leather-bound journals of handmade papers, exotic stationery, and even a wide selection of ink colors to use with quill-like glass pens.

The Uptown writing boutique has been so well received that she recently opened a new Scriptura in the French Quarter (328 Chartres St., 299-1234). The cozier Quarter store will feature more of the beautiful accessories, especially custom stationary and sleek Italian-made leather folios, organizers and briefcases.

People seem to have a revived interest in saving things in a personal manner, Jones says. Punching a key may be quick and easy way to save words, but it's hard to summon much nostalgia for a pile of floppy disks. Instead, Jones sees a lot of people creating their own personal journals and photo albums. In spite of all of the fine pens and papers, one of the most popular items is a leather-bound photo-album with the embossed title "My Pious Friends and Drunken Companions."

But there is plenty for those who are nostalgic about actual writing. Scriptura carries exquisite designer fountain pens by designers like S.T. Dupont and Recife from Paris, Montegrappa from Italy and Shaeffer and Pelican pens from the United States. Models range from \$42-\$650, some are even outfitted with gold nubs. There are all sorts of high quality roller balls and ball

points in different designs. For the meticulous, there are feather quill pens and Venetian glass pens, complemented by a selection of 70 colors of ink.

Scriptura is best known for its selection of papers. There are handmade, watermarked papers from Amalfi, Italy. From France there are linen papers. And other exotic parchments include papers made with crushed flower petals. Many are available in leather-bound journals. And some finer photo albums use archival quality, acid-free papers that don't damage photographs.

For those into writing letters and buying stamps, there is custom stationery. Scriptura is one of several local stores that carries the work of Alexa Pulitzer. She's a local fashion designer who crafts paper designs under the name **La Cartoleria** (897-1133). Essentially she is using the same method of printing designs on paper as she uses with silk when she designs ties.

Having previously owned a print shop she is very familiar with paper. For stationery she takes all kinds of papers and prints her designs on them. Her style is very subtle, and can look as light as a watermark, or be more dramatic with bold borders. She makes heavy use of architectural themes, using Greek columns in designs. And she does a lot of design with ornate Renaissance patterns incorporating twisting vines of flowers and fleur de lys.

Sallie and Margaret Jones at Scriptura.





Her work is available in several other cities. But her designs are offered in small print runs so that each remains relatively rare and fresh. A few downtown hotels also carry her stationery, pads and stickers. She also does custom designs and unique invitations .

Perhaps an unlikely place to hunt for fine stationery, journals and pens, the day spa **Belladonna** (2900 Magazine St., 891-4393) carries many bright and beautiful writing tools. They offer two lines of fine writing tools which feature funky and campy looks. ACME writing tools are fat fountain pens in very bright colors, including pop art designs of Campbell Soup pens and rainbow colored PEZ dispenser pens. By J.D.V. International, they have thick fountain pens with marbled looks and other bright patterns like zebra stripping. They are complemented by funky silver rings and hardware. All the pens are refillable.

Journals come in all shapes and sizes, filled with all sorts of high quality papers. Some of the fancier fabric bound covers offer pastoral prints in lavender and olive green.

For writing accessories, Belladonna seems to suggest that one can't write without candlelight. That's a romantic vision, but it captures the more personal and pleasurable sides of writing. ■

Papers at right and background images are the designs of Alexa Pulitzer.