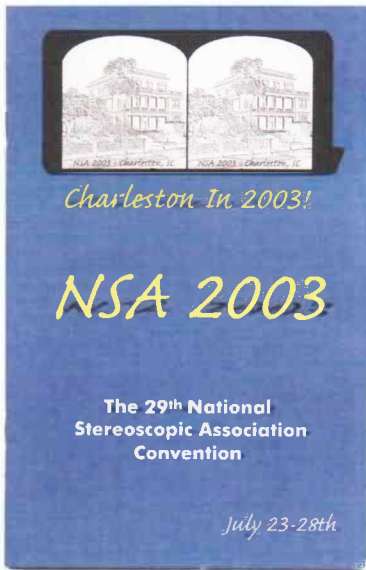


Adventures In Graphic Design

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When Suzanne and I agreed to help with the National Stereoscopic Association convention it was with the understanding that we would only help with the pre convention stuff. We shot the “Come to Charleston” slide show and did the handout to promote the convention. That was all we intended to do.

So much for good intentions! About a month before the convention we got a call from the convention chairman who casually mentioned that he was going to have to have the convention program book done at Kinko’s from a Power Point file. He’d run out of time to do anything else. It was a very simple way of getting us to volunteer to do it since he knew we just couldn’t let it be done that badly.

It worked to. Suddenly we only had a couple of weeks to get the material together and layout a 36-page program book complete with full color covers. Just to make it more interesting, the convention had an agreement with a printer to produce the booklet. So things like the format and paper had already been agreed on.

Suzanne called the printer and discussed how we would deliver the zine. They wanted the contents in one file, an InDesign file, and the cover in a separate file.

They also wanted the cover delivered with all the images in the correct color space for their film printer.

This was the first commercially printed zine I’ve done in almost 25 years. When I did the last one, rubber cement and press type were the state of the art in layout. The complexities of color spaces and output profiles simply didn’t exist. Nor did you have to worry about how fonts were going to look. They looked just like they did on the originals. Things are not so simple these days.

I spent a lot of time researching “direct to press” technology in between working on layout and writing stuff for the program booklet. At the same time Suzanne was getting the adds together and laying out the convention schedule.

The more I learned about commercial printing the happier I am doing the printing myself. Admittedly it is great being able to skip all paper output and simply send the printer a CD. Pity that it’s so hard to figure out what the colors are going to look like before it’s printed. It can be done.

A few hours of research on the web and some downloads turned up the appropriate color profiles for the printer and for our Epson 2200. In theory, this let me print the document and see how it would look when it came off the offset press. In practice it worked pretty well.

We had to buy a font for the printer and they messed the cover up on the first pass but we got it printed in time for the convention and everybody liked it.

We also helped to produce a ViewMaster® reel for the convention. That involved spending over 100 hours retouching 7 pairs of images. They were all stereo cards from during or before the War Between the States. When they looked like I wanted them to, I had to format them into VM’s templates and burn a CD.

The actual production was done by ViewMaster’s commercial division with a cover done by View Productions. I would have put it through the APA but at \$7 each it was a bit pricy ☺.

Then we did a series of 11x17 signs for each meeting room and 8x10 direction signs to help guide people from the hotel to the meeting rooms. Oh, did I mention the daily schedules and pocket program guide or the plastic bag with the convention logo hot stamped on it?

Someday I’ll learn to stop volunteering for things!

