Cole Porter Notebooks at the Music Library

A collection of old college notebooks, manuscripts and music discovered in a Kennebunk, Maine, home has provided a fresh glimpse into the mind and music of American composer Cole Porter. A gift from the family of Henry Humphrey Parsons, Porter's senior-year roommate at Yale, the papers were Porter's while he was a student at Yale College. Their discovery and recent acquisition by the John Herrick Jackson Music Library have brought to light an outline for a previously unknown college show and the original score of a "lost" Porter football song.

Harold Samuel, librarian at the Music Library and adjunct professor at the School of Music, helped secure the material. The papers had been stored in a closet for more than 80 years at the Parson's summer home, apparently left behind when Porter visited after graduation. Professor Samuel learned of their existence through an acquaintance, who had noticed them while at the Parsons' Kennebunk house one summer. Samuel then contacted Mary Parsons Liversidge—Parsons' niece and now owner of the house—and the next week, Mrs. Liversidge delivered the papers herself to the Music Library.

The newly discovered collection contains eleven of Porter's notebooks, comprising more than 700 pages. Dozens of "doodlings" of elegant ladies drawn by Porter during class and numerous elaborate versions of his name are included in the material.

Exciting among the finds are early versions of lyrics for two musicals Porter wrote during his senior year at Yale, and an outline and fragment from an unfinished, untitled, heretofore unknown college show. The piece is a musical fable about a circus troupe that includes a clown, bareback rider, snake charmer, fat lady, skeleton, Yale student, lion and manager.

The collection also contains Porter's own copies of three of his earliest published songs: "Bingo Eli Yale," "Bridget," and "Flah-Dee-Dah" (1911), a tune that appears on a list of college songs from 1912. Prior to the Yale find, there was no known copy of the song.

Cole Porter was born in 1891 in Peru, Indiana. His mother, Kate, an accomplished amateur pianist, arranged for him to study violin from the age of six and piano from the age of eight, and he soon began writing melodies, publishing his first work, "The Bobolink Waltz," in 1902. The songs Porter wrote during his college years remain an integral part of the Yale tradition.—LAT

British Letterpress Printing

A special exhibition "Endangered Craft/Evolving Art: British Letterpress Today," at the Yale Center for British Art in February, demonstrated how contemporary British printers acknowledge the traditions of the past while facing the future of letterpress in the computer-design age. Organized by Miko McGinty, Yale '93, the exhibition featured examples of letterpress printing and photographs of craftsmen at work.

Letterpress is the process of printing directly onto paper from inked relief surfaces, developed by Gutenberg in the middle of the fifteenth century when he cast movable type in lead. Letterpress dominated printing for 500 years virtually unchanged. Offset printing, a photo-mechanical process, replaced letterpress in the second half of the twentieth century. Offset printing, in turn, gave way to today's more efficient computer typesetting.

To set the stage for contemporary British letterpress, the exhibition compared several editions of Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, from the first edition printed in 1476-78 by William Caxton to a 1972 version by Elizabeth Frink. While modern technology has largely superseded letterpress, firms such as the Gwag Gregynog, the Circle Press, and the Rampant Lions Press strive to preserve the craft of letterpress printing and to match previous standards of expertise.
Recent designers and producers of letterpress books have risen to the challenge of modern technology by combining originality with orthodoxy to create unique works of art. One of the most interesting books in the exhibition, Anansi Company, results from such a collaboration between Ron King of the Circle Press and the poet Roy Fisher. This work stretches the concept of the book, featuring 15 sections silk-screened, hand-stencilled, and printed in letterpress by Ron King, and including 13 hand-bent brass wire and card puppets. Anansi Company was on loan from the Arts of the Book Room at Sterling Memorial Library.—MP

Watching Orbis Grow
In January signs appeared by the Orbis terminals in Sterling Memorial Library, exhorting users to “watch Orbis grow.” Some growth is immediately apparent in the new introductory screen; along with the on-line public catalog (OPAC), Orbis now makes available two new databases, PsychINFO and Expanded Academic Index, which index periodical literature.

Less immediately visible are enrichments to the database resulting from the slow process of creating electronic catalog records of the older works in Yale’s collections. Also quietly expanding the Orbis database are new records for individual titles in some large microform sets. The articles below explore in detail these enhancements.—SFR

Article Indexes in Orbis
The Yale University Library recently implemented a major enhancement of Orbis, its online information system, through the addition of two large databases, Expanded Academic Index (EAI) and PsychINFO. These files are delivered through a program which allows users to search them with Orbis commands and to link resulting citations to entries in the online catalog for titles owned by Yale. EAI indexes citations in the social sciences, humanities, and general sciences from over 1500 English-language periodicals from 1985 to the present. The subject coverage of Expanded Academic Index includes the following general areas: art, anthropology, economics, education, ethnic studies, government, history, literature, political science, general science, psychology, religion, sociology, and leisure. Indexing and abstracts are included for journal articles, news reports, editorials on major issues, product evaluations, biographies, short stories, poetry, and reviews. The database is produced and copyrighted by the Information Access Company and will be updated monthly.

PsychINFO provides an index to the fields of psychology and related social and behavioral sciences. It covers over 1300 periodicals, technical reports, and monographs, and contains information from 1967 to the present. The database is produced and copyrighted by the American Psychological Association and will also be updated monthly.

A third file, BIOSIS, will be made available later in the spring semester. BIOSIS serves as a master file for biology and biomedical and covers approximately 7000 periodicals worldwide. The Library will initially load records for the period 1988 to the present.

The new introductory screen requires that the user choose either OPAC (the Yale online catalog), ACAD (Expanded Academic Index) or PSYC (the PsychINFO database). A user must enter his or her Yale identification number (Social Security Number) before searching EAI or PsychINFO but can search the online catalog without an ID number.

Because the new files use the same author, title, subject, and keyword commands as the online catalog, students, faculty, and staff should find them easy to use. In addition, library patrons who use Orbis to find periodical articles will be able to see at a glance whether Yale owns the issues in question and where they are located.

A message at the bottom of the screen indicates when the Library holds any issues of a cited journal. The HO command displays a summary of volumes held and latest issues received. A user’s ten most recent searches will be saved and can be executed in any of the three files. The system will return a workstation to the introductory Orbis screen after five minutes of inactivity.
The addition of the new files to Orbis was the culmination of nearly a year of analysis and planning by staff members at the library. The three indexes were chosen from among the available databases because they were considered the most relevant to the needs of the Yale community.

If you have questions or comments about Orbis, please contact a reference librarian.—PJC

Western Americana Online
Faculty and students at Yale as well as scholars from around the world make frequent and heavy use of the extensive collections of the Yale University Library. The limitations of the card catalog, however, seriously restrict access to the collections. Machine-readable records provide considerably expanded and more convenient access. They enable researchers—at Yale and elsewhere—to employ powerful search strategies that cannot be executed in a card catalog.

In response to frequent requests from the Yale University Library community, several efforts are underway to meet the need for better access to the Library’s collections. Preservation microfilming, for example, is an ongoing, national activity that results not only in microform copies of important works but also in machine-readable records that are loaded into bibliographic databases. Retrospective conversion is the process by which catalog records are converted to machine-readable form and loaded into an online catalog such as Orbis.

Retrospective conversion projects are ongoing in several Yale libraries, including the Cross Campus Library and the Music Library. The Law Library is also about to launch a large retrospective conversion effort. Currently funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education is a project converting more than 40,000 Western Americana titles from the collections of Sterling Memorial Library and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The Yale Collection of Western Americana in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library has helped thousands of scholars to understand better the history of the American West. More than 20,000 printed monographic works, several thousand serial titles, and more than 1,600 cataloged manuscript collections document the history and culture of Native American communities and the exploration, settlement, and development of the trans-Mississippi West from Mexico to the Arctic Circle. The collection preserves both the major works of important authors and the anonymous ephemera that was generated during the course of everyday life. Landmark titles are represented in numerous editions which permit scholars to trace their impact over time, while unique copies of brief tracts help provide a more complete picture of the literary heritage of America’s western past.

The Western Americana materials in Sterling and other campus libraries extend the rare book and document collection in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. In addition to an extensive collection of twentieth-century scholarly monographs, Sterling has collected the publications of numerous private presses throughout the West. Like the Beinecke Collection of Western Americana, Sterling’s collections are broad and comprehensive. Together they trace the development of the region from its original settlement by the ancestors of modern American Indians to the impact on the region of more recent events.

The creation of machine-readable records for Western Americana titles will enable Yale students, faculty, and staff to consult a single source—Orbis—for their work in this subject area. The records will be available to individuals throughout the world by means of the Internet, which enables personal computer users to gain access to the online catalogs of many public, research, and special libraries. Scholars around the world will thereby have access to titles that are held only at Yale.—MOC

Panel representing Manufacturing, from the iron doors of the Sterling Memorial Library elevators, by Samuel Yellin.
Microform Access Improved
Over the years, the Library has acquired in microform numerous collections of primary source documents and other publications. Famous collections at other institutions and fundamental works are thus available in the Yale collections. Effective use of titles in such collections has, however, been hindered by the lack of catalog records for each publication. The Early English Newspapers collection, for example, which includes 933 titles, was entered only under the collection title, thus preventing Yale scholars and students from exploring the pages of such newspapers as The Oracle and public advertiser (London, 1734–1798) or of The Gentleman's Magazine (London, 1731–1967).

To provide better access to these collections, the Library is loading catalog records for ten microform collections into Orbis. The ten collections are: Early English Newspapers (933 titles); Western Americana: frontier history of the Trans-Mississippi West, 1550–1900 (6,096 titles); The Furniture Library Collection of Bernice Bienenstock (390 titles); History of Photography (1,830 titles); Sahel (900 documents from the North African Sahel Documentation Center and 100 American doctoral dissertations on the subject); Spanish Drama of the Golden Age (410 titles from the Comedia Collection in the University of Pennsylvania); Russian History and Culture (2,216 titles from the 19th- and early 20th-centuries from the Helsinki University Library); American Fiction, 1774–1850, based on the bibliography of Lyle H. Wright (10,688 titles); Early English Books, 1641–1700, based on Donald G. Wing's Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and British America and of English books printed in other countries ... (41,213 titles); and Early American Imprints, 1639–1800, based on Charles Evans's American Bibliography and its many supplements (39,173 titles). This enrichment of the Orbis catalog is intended to encourage more use of these collections. –MAK

Access to Newspaper Holdings Enhanced with Title VI Grant Funds
Because Orbis contains minimal information about Yale's newspaper holdings, Sterling Library's Reference Department has developed a PC-operated, Notebook II database. It currently contains 4,350 entries and comprehensively covers current and retrospective newspapers from all parts of the world, exclusive of East Asia. Each record contains the following fields of information: title, country, city/state, dates of publication, publication frequency, title history, notes, Yale holdings, location(s), and call number(s). Printed copies of the database are available for consultation at the Sterling Reference Desk and in the Microforms Room.

In 1991–92, under the auspices of a Title VI Department of Education grant to the Yale Council on International and Area Studies, Sterling Memorial Library expanded its foreign newspaper coverage by adding more than a dozen foreign newspaper microfilm subscriptions. In addition, Title VI funds enabled the library to add the missing backfiles of Jornal do Brasil; Folha de Sao Paulo; Gramma; Juventud Rebelde; El Gráfico; and Los Trabajadores. Other special funds permitted the acquisition of needed backfiles of Le Monde; Le Figaro; L'Unità; Irish Times; and El Pais from Western Europe. A number of new East European and Arabic newspapers were added with separate funds as well. In 1992–93 Title VI funds are being used to acquire additional foreign newspaper titles which librarians have identified as desirable during this project.

Anyone with comments or suggested newspaper acquisitions may contact Fred Musto, Reference Librarian and Supervisor of the Microform and Newspaper Reading Rooms, or Martha Brogan, Social Sciences Bibliographer. –MLB

Nota Bene is published during the academic year to acquaint the Yale community and others interested with the resources of the Yale libraries. Please direct comments and questions to Susanne Roberts, Editor, Bibliography Department, Sterling Memorial Library (432-1762).

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Design is by John Gambell and Rebecca Gibb.

Millicent D. Abell, University Librarian
Susanne F. Roberts, Editor
"Carved in Wood" at Sterling

"Carved in Wood: Selected Prints from the Arts of the Book Collection" is the current exhibit in Sterling Memorial Library's Arts of the Book Room. Drawn from the rich and varied resources of the collection, the exhibition features the work of eight artists/illustrators who have utilized wood engraving or woodcuts as their preferred medium.

The artists included are mostly from the twentieth century, although the work of John Warner Barber, a nineteenth-century historian and wood engraver, is included along with a group of his original wood blocks. The other artists represented are Leonard Baskin, Gustave Baumann, John De Pol, Jacques Hnizdovsky, Clare Leighton, Rudolph Ruzicka, and Ethelbert White. Of special interest are a series of five proofs by Ruzicka demonstrating the steps involved in producing a multi-colored print.

In addition to this exhibit, two cases in the center of the room contain changing displays featuring recent acquisitions, other aspects of the collection, or student work.

Located on the first floor of Sterling Memorial Library, the Arts of the Book Room is open to the public from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.—LHS

"Nothing But Degeneracy" at the Beinecke

The Beinecke Library exhibition "Nothing But Degeneracy: Modernism at The Dial" draws on original materials in The Dial archive, showing how this monthly journal introduced modernism to American readers. The title comes from the letter of an irate subscriber, who complained that the magazine represented "nothing but degeneracy." The exhibition, which continues through April 10, was organized by Patricia Willis, Curator of American Literature at the Beinecke.

The Dial became one of the most distinguished literary journals of the 1920's, the product of avant-garde arts and letters. Relentlessly modernist in spirit, The Dial was the first publisher of T. S. Eliot's poem "The Waste Land."

In addition to the manuscript of Eliot's "Waste Land," the exhibition includes typescripts by Virginia Woolf ("Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street"), Ezra Pound (selections from The Cantos), Wallace Stevens ("The Emperor of Ice Cream"), W. B. Yeats ("Leda and the Swan"), D. H. Lawrence, Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams, and Maxim Gorky, with related correspondence and copies of the magazine. The exhibition also features original drawings by the poet e. e. cummings.

Modernism, which dominated literature and art after World War I, is a loosely defined movement characterized by experimentalism, rejection of old forms, and the attempt to express unmediated reality. The works of Picasso, Stravinsky, and Ezra Pound epitomize the modernist spirit. In Scofield Thayer's words, critics of modernism complained that it produced "poems that do not rhyme and pictures that are not lifelike."

Founded in 1886, The Dial was purchased in 1920 by James Watson and Scofield Thayer. Thayer served as editor until 1925, when deteriorating health forced him to retire. From 1925 until 1929, The Dial was managed by Marianne Moore, whose editorial practice forms an important part of the exhibition. The journal ceased publication in 1929 when the Thayer family withdrew financial support.—CAS
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Bookplate by W. E. Hopson, from the Bookplate Collection.