

Nota Bene News from the Yale Library

Travel Expands Collecting in the Middle East

In May 2002 I traveled on behalf of the Yale Library to five Middle Eastern countries. My trip had three major goals: to develop new means of acquiring library materials from Iran, to set up additional gift and exchange programs, and to seek partners for Yale's new oacis program (see related article on page 2).

Since the library is enlarging its Persian collection, my first stop was Iran, where I succeeded in finding a dealer to supply the library with materials in Persian and in making contact with different universities and government agencies. Discussions with the heads of the acquisitions and business departments of the University of Tehran Library resulted in the establishment of gift and exchange programs between our libraries. A visit to the Library of the Foreign Ministry in Tehran, a very specialized and automated library, produced a similar result. Traveling to the city of Qom in the south of Iran, I met with the director of the Mar'ashi Library, the most important manuscript library in Iran. It houses more than 30,000 unique and important Persian and Arabic manuscripts. I began negotiations with them for micro-filming manuscripts needed by Yale graduate students.

From Iran I went to Egypt for discussions with our dealer in Cairo and with the Cairo office of the Library of Congress. This office supplies Yale with books and periodicals from regions with which it is difficult to establish and maintain regular relations, such as Mauritania, the West Bank, and some North African countries. Traveling on to Lebanon, I established a gift and exchange program with the Associate Librarian at the American University of Beirut. Next, I went north to visit the University of Balamand where the Vice President, Dr. Georges Nahas, escorted me on a tour of the library and of different research centers at the university. I learned about their programs and arranged to acquire their publications. One such center, the Center for Christian-Muslim Studies, offers numerous publications on exchange. I investigated the potential for collaboration with Balamand on the project for Online Access to Consolidated Information on Serials (oacis).

In Jordan I visited the major university in Amman, the University of Jordan, where I met Dr. Hani al-Amd,



Simon Samoeil, Curator of the Near East Collection, with volumes from the recently acquired Kamal Collection (see article, page 2)

Director of the Library. We explored the possibility of microfilming some rare documents about Palestine during the Ottoman Period and sending copies to the Yale Library. After I established yet another gift and exchange program for materials on history and science with Yrmuk University in Irbd, the next stop was Damascus, where I discussed the oacis project with the director of the Asad Library, the national library of Syria, and with the librarians for technical services and systems. My purpose was to assess their technical capabilities for supporting the project. The Asad Library is an official and enthusiastic partner in the oacis Project. In addition, I met with the President of the University of Damascus, whom I had previously hosted at Yale during the Tercentennial Festival. Finally, at Tishrin University in Latakia I gave a workshop for the library staff that introduced them to the concept of a library system integrating cataloging, acquisitions, and circulation functions.

Many conversations with dealers and librarians in five countries have expanded the library's ability to gather materials from the region and further developed Yale's leadership in supporting Middle Eastern Studies.

– simon samoeil, *Near East Curator*

Library Acquires Important Egyptian Private Collection

Two years ago, Simon Samoeil, Curator of the Near East Collection, traveled to Egypt to examine the collection of Professor Mohammad Kamal Al-din Ali, Dean of the Faculty of Art at Menoufiyah University and Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies at Riyadh University in Saudi Arabia. The impressive assemblage contained about 13,000 volumes; in addition to some reference works, many books related to the history of the Near East and to Arabic literature and philosophy. A major strength of the collection was the inclusion of valuable copies of very important Arabic manuscripts. Another highlight was a large number of books on classical Arabic studies written and edited by important scholars in the field of medieval Arabic and Islamic studies and published in Iraq in the 1960s. Because the collection had the potential to enhance Yale's holdings and to fill some significant gaps, Samoeil pursued it through long and difficult negotiations and was finally able to purchase it. It is currently housed in the Near East Collection's cataloging backlog. The challenge now is to find resources to catalog the books and make them available to scholars at Yale and beyond. –ss

Grant Awarded for Middle East Database

The Yale Library announced in July that its proposal to lead and coordinate a collaborative database project that will make available important Middle Eastern resources was awarded a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant under the "Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access" program. Project OACIS (Online Access to Consolidated Information on Serials) will be funded for three years, at a level of \$145,000 in the first year and comparable amounts thereafter. The library is adding its own staff and technology resources to this significant cost-sharing arrangement.

Associate University Librarian Ann Okerson described the project as one that will create a public and freely accessible, continuously updated listing of Middle Eastern journals and serials, including those available in print, microform, and online. The listing, which will be available on the Web, will identify libraries that own the materials as well as their exact holdings, initially for Arabic and English language titles and then for an ever-expanding group of Middle Eastern languages. As it develops, Project OACIS will also serve as a gateway to those serials by enhancing delivery of their content.



Both of these window decorations in *sm1 314*, formerly the *Orientalia Study*, come from Laurence Binyon's *Poems of Nizami*. Nizami, also spelled *Nezami*, (c1141-1209) was the greatest romantic epic poet in Persian literature.

Project OACIS is international in scope. While initial titles will be contributed by U.S. partner libraries, the database will expand to include titles and holdings of targeted partner institutions in Europe and the Middle East. The project design includes interactions with teachers of foreign languages and with librarians in Middle Eastern countries who will offer input on design and functionality. The records will be searchable in non-Roman alphabets.

Yale Library staff, along with selected faculty, have been developing Project OACIS over several years in a commitment to provide access to the literature of this increasingly important region of the world for a wide range of educational, government, and commercial institutions. The aim is to develop a better understanding of the varied economies, politics, languages, and cultures of the Middle East.

Yale University was one of the earliest higher education institutions formally to study the Middle East, and its library collections and other educational resources –and faculty–are among the strongest in the world.

The leadership of the project will be shared by Ann Okerson as Principal Investigator, Kimberly Parker as Co-Principal Investigator and Technical Director, and Near East Curator Simon Samoeil as Project Manager and Director of Networking and Relationships. The U.S. libraries committed to participating in the project include: Cornell, University of Michigan, Ohio State, University of Pennsylvania, University of Texas, and University of Washington. The principal European partner is the Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt. Middle Eastern partners have been identified in Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria.

For additional information about OACIS, please visit the project's Web site at www.library.yale.edu/oacis/.

–aso



The Near East Collection Online

Users of Yale Library's online catalog are learning that Orbis now contains records for about 95 percent of the library's holdings and that many of the remainder are records for materials in non-Roman scripts. Projects are underway to integrate these scripts into the catalog and its display.

One of these scripts is Arabic, and over the past three years a retrospective conversion project has made great progress. After careful research and consideration, Curator Simon Samoeil decided to convert the catalog records of the Near East Collection into electronic form at Yale rather than sub-contracting the work to a vendor. In-house conversion, he felt, would ensure that records would meet high standards of accuracy and completeness. Because the bibliographical information on some of the manual cards was written by Orientalists more than one hundred years ago using different romanization rules, it is limited and unclear. Thus it was necessary to refer to the actual books in order to complete the bibliographical information for the electronic records.

The project began in 1999 with the hiring and training of several staff members. By September 2002, the team had converted 35,418 records. Curator Samoeil expects to finish the project by March 2003. This is one of the most important priorities in the Near East Collection. When finished, the conversion will benefit not only scholars at Yale but also all other users of the collection in the United States and abroad. They will have access via the Internet to the oldest and most important Middle Eastern collection in an American academic library. In addition, the conversion will have an important impact on collection development. Not only will the curator's purchasing trips be more productive, but dealers in distant lands can check Yale's holdings and offer to supply what is lacking. —ss

Chance-Inspired Books on Display

The exhibit *By Chance: Serendipity and Randomness in Contemporary Artists' Books* illustrated how chance is often a factor in the creation of artwork. Making books and other art works by hand allows serendipity and randomness to sneak into their creation. Over the years many artists have incorporated into their creative process chance operations, randomness or blind collaboration (working separately on the same project, without knowing what the other is doing). The exhibit focused on the purposeful use of chance in the concept and/or execution of contemporary artists' books. Using both historical and modern examples, the show illustrated different approaches by artists who have embraced unpredictability.

By Chance was based on the idea developed by guest curator Robin Price, a printer and publisher from Middletown, Connecticut. Price's recent work embraces chance, and she was curious about others' ventures into this arena. Her research led her to the Arts of the Book Collection at the Yale University Library, where Special Collections Librarian Jae Rossman took on the idea for an exhibit. The display was on view through early November 2002 in Sterling Memorial Library. —jwr



"Flower," an etching by Brian D. Cohen (1993), was recently on display in the exhibit *By Chance* in Sterling Memorial Library.

Art Theft and Archives

When I first started working in the Manuscripts and Archives Department at Sterling Library the summer after my freshman year at Yale, the staff and I used to joke that I would end up writing my senior essay on the collection I was organizing. The Deane Keller Papers, which I was hired to process, contained the studio records, personal correspondence, and World War II memorabilia of a longtime professor in the Yale School of Art. At the time, no one knew much about the contents of the forty-odd cardboard boxes of material donated by the family. Little did I know that the summer job I took to support my education would become a research opportunity that would *be* my education. Three years later my senior essay in the History of Art, advised by Professor Timothy Barringer, focused on art theft during World War II, and my source was a remarkable series of photographs from the Keller collection. This project later grew into a library exhibition on the career of Deane Keller, displaying for the first time a selection of photographs documenting wartime art theft and art preservation efforts in Italy.

During World War II, artworks and monuments were subject to everything from accidental destruction to opportunistic pilfering and systematic theft by the Nazi hierarchy. Deane Keller, in civilian life an art professor at Yale, was part of a small group charged by the U.S. Army with the identification, restoration, and return of artworks that had been damaged or plundered during the war. As a fine arts officer with the Fifth Army in Italy, Keller witnessed first-hand the ravages of war

and its toll on artworks. In places like Pisa, Keller and his fellow arts officers struggled to salvage shattered medieval frescoes. After the liberation of Florence, they were greeted by empty museums and missing collections. Stolen works from the famed Uffizi Gallery included some by Botticelli and Michelangelo. Taken north by the retreating Germans, the works were later discovered by American forces, piled haphazardly in an abandoned carriage house near the Austrian border. Deane Keller then undertook the task of returning the looted artworks to Florence. Throughout the war, he and his photographer friend Charles Bernholz recorded these events with their portable black-and-white cameras, and those photographs eventually found their way to Yale.

The photographs in the Keller collection, nearly 12,000 in number, provide a vivid portrait of the fate of art during wartime. They are fascinating both for the events they depict and as works of art themselves. Images such as that of Michelangelo's *David* surrounded by rubble depict familiar masterpieces in horrendous situations. Immediate and compelling, these pictures, like the best wartime photography, have the power to move their audience.

The Manuscripts and Archives processing project resulted in a finding aid for the Deane Keller Papers as well as a full Orbis record for the collection. The entire body of material, with its detailed records of the treatment of Italian artworks during the war and its rich materials from Keller's lifelong career as a portrait painter and art teacher, is now accessible to researchers.

– Catherine Roach



Deane Keller with the upper part of an equestrian statue of Cosimo de' Medici in hiding outside Florence

Yale University Library Selectors Directory

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Director of Collection Development

Ann Shumelda Okerson sml 116b 432-1763 ann.okerson@yale.edu



Requests for new materials in all formats should be directed to the appropriate subject specialist below or, as a last resort, to the e-mail account book.requests@yale.edu. The area code for Lewis Walpole Library is 860; for all other numbers, it is 203. A slightly expanded list can be found at <http://www.library.yale.edu/NotaBene/selector.htm>.

Subject	Selector/Address	Telephone/ E-Mail
Accounting and Finance	Judith Carnes ssl	432-3306 judith.carnes@yale.edu
African Studies	Dorothy Woodson sml 317	432-1883 dorothy.woodson@yale.edu
African-American Studies	Nancy Godleski sml 226	432-4798 nancy.godleski@yale.edu
American Literature Collection (brbl)	Patricia Willis brbl 25	432-2962 patricia.willis@yale.edu
American Literature (sml)	Todd Gilman sml 226	432-1761 todd.gilman@yale.edu
American Studies (Historical)	Nancy Godleski sml 226	432-4798 nancy.godleski@yale.edu
American Studies (Literary)	Todd Gilman sml 226	432-1761 todd.gilman@yale.edu
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Reference Library	Susan Brady bac	432-2846 susan.brady@yale.edu
British Commonwealth Studies	Susanne Roberts sml 226	432-1762 susanne.roberts@yale.edu
Canadian Studies (Historical)	Susanne Roberts sml 226	432-1762 susanne.roberts@yale.edu
Canadian Studies (Literary)	Todd Gilman sml 226	432-1761 todd.gilman@yale.edu
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Education	Soraya Magalhaes-Willson ssl	432-3213 soraya.magalhaes-willson@yale.edu
Engineering & Applied Sciences Library	Andrew Shimp becton	432-7460 andy.shimp@yale.edu
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Gay and Lesbian Studies	Pamela Mann sml 226	432-7171 pamela.mann@yale.edu



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German Language & Literature (sml)	Dale Askey sml 226	432-1757 dale.askey@yale.edu
German Literature Collection (brbl)	Christa Sammons brbl 23	432-2964 christa.sammons@yale.edu
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Greek Imprints	Anthony J. Oddo sml 110	432-7961 anthony.oddo@yale.edu
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Maps	Fred Musto sml 709	432-1867 fred.musto@yale.edu
Mathematics Library	Paul Lukasiewicz lom 224	432-4179 paul.lukasiewicz@yale.edu
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Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry	Lori Bronars kbt c8	432-6213 lori.bronars@yale.edu
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Yiddish Language & Literature	Nanette Stahl sml 335	432-7207 nanette.stahl@yale.edu



Three decorated book covers from the recent exhibition *Gleaming Gold, Shining Silver: Nineteenth-Century Book Covers from the Collection of Leonard and Lisa Baskin* at the Beinecke Library

Beinecke Library Exhibition Catalog Honored

A Beinecke Library publication has been selected as one of the fifty best-designed books of the year by the American Institute of Graphic Arts (aiga) in New York City. The exhibition catalog *Commonplace Books: A History of Manuscript and Printed Books from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century*, written by Earle Havens and published by the library last summer, was selected by aiga in their prestigious competition *50 Books/50 Covers*, the oldest book design competition in the country. The 50 selected books are listed in *365*, the aiga yearbook, displayed at the organization's Fifth Avenue gallery, and were exhibited at the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany this fall. They will also be entered in the Leipzig International Book Design competition.

Printed by the Stinehour Press of Lunenburg, Vermont, *Commonplace Books* was designed by Greer Allen, a member of the faculty at the Yale School of Art graphic design program, who served as Yale University Printer from 1972 to 1983. Mr. Allen now works as an independent designer, producing catalogs and books for libraries and art museums such as Colonial Williamsburg, the Metropolitan and Philadelphia Museums of Art, Harvard's Houghton Library, and Yale's museums. His numerous stunning designs for the Beinecke Library have been central to the library's mission of interpreting its collections for readers around the world.

Commonplace Books: A History of Manuscript and Printed Books from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century accompanied an exhibition of the same name on view at the Beinecke Library in 2001. Author of both the book

and the exhibition was Earle Havens, a doctoral candidate in History and Renaissance Studies at Yale. Using examples from the Beinecke Library's holdings, particularly the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Mr. Havens described the origins and history of the commonplace book, a book for recording quotations or other information for reference.

—cas



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, Research Services and Collections Department, Sterling Memorial Library (phone: 432-1762, e-mail: susanne.roberts@yale.edu)

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Alice Prochaska, *University Librarian*
Susanne F. Roberts, *Editor*



Calendar of Exhibits

ARTS LIBRARY

Richard Rodgers
through November

*Bruegel as Muse: Poetry Inspired by the Paintings
of Pieter Bruegel*
December through January

BEINECKE RARE BOOK LIBRARY

William Walton, Composer
through December

*Buxheim Library: Books from the Carthusian
Charterhouse on the Occasion of Its 600th Anniversary*
through December 20

*Notable Bindings Described by Jane Greenfield
in the Yale University Library Gazette*
through December 20

Please see our Web site: <http://www.library.yale.edu/NotaBene/exhibits.htm> for a complete listing of exhibits.

MEDICAL LIBRARY

*A Brief History of the Department of Internal Medicine,
1813-1994*
through January 15

STERLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Anatol Girs
through November

Yale Library Staff Art Expo
through January

Man and Beast in Mesopotamia
through December

*From Copper-Plate to Chromolith: Nineteenth-Century
Commercial Art and Graphic Design*
December through January



From the
Bookplate Collection

Nota Bene News from the Yale Library

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