

NO.67 SUMMER 2005

BENE LEGERE

NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

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The Centennial Campaign for the Renewal of The Bancroft Library

The University Library at Berkeley has embarked on a capital campaign effort to raise the final \$10 million of the \$32 million goal for private support for the seismic and programmatic renovation of The Bancroft Library, Berkeley's world-renowned rare book and special collections library.

The success of this campaign will ensure that Bancroft's irreplaceable collections remain secure and accessible to researchers and scholars for at least another hundred years.

The Bancroft Library stands today as the premier special collections library of the University of California, as well as one of the finest in the country. Its collections contain hundreds of thousands of rare and unique books, millions of historic and literary manuscripts, diaries and letters, and thousands of original paintings, photographs, and rare artifacts.

The core collection began in 1860 through the foresight of San Francisco book dealer Hubert Howe Bancroft, who assembled an unparalleled collection of primary sources on California and the American West. Understanding the educational and historical significance of this unequalled collection, the Regents of the University of California agreed to acquire it in 1905, culminating with a formal arrangement in 1906. The collection made the journey by ferry and horse cart from San Francisco beginning in May, 1906, after it narrowly escaped destruction in the 1906 earthquake and fire (by a mere two city blocks!)-the only major library in the City to survive the disaster.

Today, The Bancroft Library houses such rare artifacts as the letter Thomas Jefferson wrote to Dr. Benjamin Rush introducing Meriweather Lewis, the notebooks Mark Twain filled as he discovered the West, and the inspired drawings commissioned by Phoebe Apperson Hearst to make the Berkeley campus a "City of Learning." It also holds the world's greatest collection of primary source materials on the history of California and the West-from Spanish California to the Gold Rush Era to the emergence of Silicon Valley. Reaching beyond the Berkeley campus, Bancroft occupies a vital position as the custodian and trustee of California's historical and cultural heritage.

In an age when key documents of our culture are viewed primarily through reproductions, Bancroft places original documents into the hands of its patrons, inspiring students to become scholars. Providing both unmatched expertise and expanded public access to its collections, Bancroft has become an important public center for the promotion of innovative ideas and research.

Attracting and serving scholars and students from around the world, The Bancroft Library is vigilant in the pursuit and acquisition of new materials that will provide scholars in the 22nd century with invaluable resources for the study of today's world.

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Bancroft balances the need to continue building and preserving comprehensive collections with the need to provide access to its patrons-not only for today, but for years to come. The wealth of Bancroft's collections is apparent each day in the numbers of scholars and students studying the ever-changing "treasures of Bancroft."

With over half its patrons coming from the Berkeley campus-primarily undergraduate and graduate students-The Bancroft Library has placed greater emphasis on its instructional programs. Bancroft supports hundreds of classes each year with instruction in the use of primary source materials.

The Problem

Although The Bancroft Library is a vibrant and dynamic institution, constantly adding to its collections and enhancing its programs, it faces some serious limitations.

The space required to store and maintain the collections properly, to present exhibits and programs, and to accommodate curators and patrons is severely challenged.

For every new volume added to the collections since 1980, another volume has been sent to off-site storage. Today, over two-thirds of the Bancroft collections are stored off the Berkeley campus.

As The Bancroft Library prepares for its second century at Berkeley, these limitations must be addressed and critical needs answered. The most pressing issues facing Bancroft today threaten the library's very mission. The building's lack of adequate climate control places Bancroft's priceless collections at risk of physical deterioration, its insufficient instructional space limits student access to primary source materials, and its exhibition space lacks environmental controls, adequate security features, and flexibility, seriously restricting the display of Bancroft's materials for the public. The curatorial and materials processing space also is also limited, hampering staff productivity and creativity. As a result, newly acquired materials and collections cannot be processed in a timely manner.

The antiquated physical infrastructure of the fifty year-old building prevents the implementation of cutting edge digital technologies-many developed at Bancroft-to support teaching and research efforts.

The Solution

In 2002, The University of California's Office of the President mandated the immediate seismic renovation of the Bancroft building, with the State and University providing \$32 million in funding for this project. This seismic renovation would address the structural integrity of this fifty year-old building, but would not provide support for the internal redesign needed to improve Bancroft's facilities for its programs and collections-and for patron access. Funds for the reconfiguration and improvement of the building must be raised from private sources.

To launch The Bancroft Library into its second century, the Centennial Campaign for the Renewal of The Bancroft Library was created.

The project will create a remodeled facility to provide enlarged and improved storage, research, and teaching areas for collections, instructional programs, and curatorial workspace.

The renovation will expand the gallery and exhibition space to provide the public with a better understanding of and improved access to the Bancroft collections, and will enhance scholarly and public access to Bancroft with redesigned and more efficient spaces for the reading room and circulation services. Up-to-date heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems will be installed as part of the renovation to support the ongoing preservation of rare and unique historical collections, and a state-of-the-art security system to protect collections from fire, water damage, theft, or other loss will be implemented.

The Centennial of The Bancroft Library in 2006 provides an exceptional opportunity to advance Bancroft's mission and vision-and to meet the priority needs.

This greatly improved facility will allow future generations of students and scholars to continue to benefit from this remarkable library.

The Bancroft Challenge

With \$32 million already committed from the State of California, the Library now needs to raise a final \$10 million of the \$32 million additional funding needed from private sources to complete a full programmatic renovation. As the public campaign begins, \$22 million has already been raised in private support from leadership gifts.

To encourage greater donor support, the Wayne and Gladys Valley Foundation of Oakland is very generously providing a \$5 million challenge grant that will match every dollar raised until the final goal is achieved.

You can help us reach this remarkable goal with a gift or pledge to the Bancroft Centennial Fund. Your gift will be matched dollar for dollar and will ensure that the treasures of the University Library will be secure for many generations to come-and that Bancroft's remarkable collections will continue to thrive well into the 22nd century.

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St. Catherine's Library Conservation Project

by Gillian C. Boal, Hans Rausing Conservator



St. Catherine's Monastery.

St. Catherine's Monastery lies toward the foot of Egypt's Sinai peninsula, a six-hour journey by road from Cairo. The drive takes you through the Sinai desert—stark and arid landscape, with only wadis to break up its rugged beauty. Ghostlike container ships glide eerily across the horizon as you tunnel under the Suez Canal. The monastery is situated on the lower slopes of "god-trodden" Mount Sinai. It is the oldest active Christian monastery in the world. It has endured for 1700 years, not least because the prophet

Mohammed himself declared St. Catherine's a holy place not to be desecrated. Mount Sinai is a site of pilgrimage for Christians, Jews and Muslims; besides a number of chapels in the monastery itself there are also a synagogue and a mosque. It is a holy place because Christians believe that God spoke to Moses through the "burning bush" (which still grows within the monastery walls). Many pilgrims come daily to re-enact the climb that Moses made to the top of Mount Sinai to receive the tablets.

As a result of its special place and the longevity of St. Catherine's in the history of Christendom and Middle Eastern antiquity, the monastery is home not only to a stupendous collection of icons, but to a stunning and priceless library of books and manuscripts. Among the treasures of the collection is the largest surviving corpus of Byzantine bindings in the world. Its most famous document is, of course, the world's oldest Bible, the Codex Sinaiticus, a Greek uncial manuscript from the middle of the 4th century, copied apparently by three different scribes. It was "borrowed" for transcription in the 1860s by the German scholar Constantin Tischendorf on behalf of the Russian Emperor, and not returned.

The British Museum later bought it from Stalin for one hundred thousand pounds sterling, and ever since then has, in the phrase of the Archdiocese of Sinai, "detained it." In 1975, a few leaves from the original codex were discovered to be still in the monastery. The British Library has recently embarked on a four-year project to create a high-resolution digital copy of the entire Codex (including the few scattered pages that remain in St. Petersburg, in Germany, and in Sinai) by means of a new technique called hyperspectral imaging, borrowed from medical diagnostics and invented at the Technical University in Crete. It works by looking at each image in very narrow bands of wavelength-specific shades of red, green and so on. However, the imaging spans

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more than just the visible part of the spectrum, going from the ultra-violet to the infra-red. Because both the ink used to write on the vellum and the vellum itself are transparent at various wavelengths, this technique will allow scholars to see all the layers of the manuscript, and so detect the various rewrites it has gone through.

The Codex Sinaiticus is only the most famous among the 3307 bound manuscripts belonging to St. Catherine's. St. Catherine's Library Research Project is administered by Camberwell College of Arts in London, with the support of the St. Catherine Foundation. Professor Nicholas Pickwoad is the project leader. The details of the project can be viewed at www.arts.ac.uk/research/stcatherines.



St. Catherine's Monastery Library.

In 2001, conservators were chosen from throughout Europe to begin a systematic survey of the entire contents of this remote and ancient library, whose remit is to report on the condition of all the materials in the library, with a view to future conservation. Our conservation team consisted of the Project Leader, Dr. George Boudalis and Maria Kalligerou from Greece, two members from Italy, Sarah Mazzarino and Marco Di Bella, Cedric Lelievre from France and Clare Prince from England. I was

very fortunate to be chosen to be part of this multilingual team that visited the monastery in February 2005.

The survey is designed to be comprehensive, compiling detailed information about the structure and state of each binding and textblock. Every item is scrutinized and the relevant data systematically entered in a 16-page protocol (one for each book) developed under the supervision of Professor Nicholas Pickwoad. The protocol is organized according to the following headings: bibliographical, page markers, text leaves, ink and pigments, endleaves, sewing and edges, boards and their attachment, spine, endbands, primary covering, secondary covering, foredge flaps and edge flaps, furniture and fastenings. I was particularly interested in the opportunity to study early Eastern paper-I was able to examine a large group of highly polished papers characteristic of Greek manuscripts of the period, from the 10th to the 16th century.

One hour is allotted, on average, for documenting each item-10-15 minutes to sketch the binding style on the insides of the front and back boards, and the balance for filling out the rest of the form. In addition, a photographic record of each book is made using Kodachrome colour slide film. The slides are to be digitized for inclusion in the database, currently under development at Camberwell by the project research assistant Thanasis Velios, which will hold all the survey information. Each survey visit, at the invitation of the fathers, is conducted by a team of six members, one of whom at least must be Greek-speaking, in order to facilitate communication with the monks-St. Catherine's being a Greek Orthodox monastery. The conservators work in pairs, for mutual aid, as a check on consistency, and to be able to confer over bindings when they

are difficult to interpret or assess. Sometimes the project leader is brought in for further consultation. This is occasionally necessary when a book or manuscript presents an anomaly that cannot be dealt with according to the routine categories. At first, surveying a book was slow going and took well over an hour. But gradually as one became more familiar with the form and the materials, in particular the binding styles of the Greek manuscripts, things began to speed up. The entire survey is expected to be completed by the beginning of 2006; however, the current five-year survey is merely preliminary. Ahead lies the treatment phase and the long task of conservation.

Our conservation team spent one month in the Sinai desert working at St. Catherine's monastery. By the end of our time there we had worked our way through three hundred and twenty items, all in the Greek manuscript collection, and for security every single page was counted by a father both before, and after, any handling by a conservator. We settled into our own version of a monastic regime, working 9-12 and 4:30-7:30, Monday to Saturday. We were hardly aware of the visiting pilgrims from Nigeria, Russia, and other parts of the world, or the windsurfing tourists, who come by the coachload from Red Sea resorts for an excursion to this holy site.

The month was soon over, and at the end of our time in the remote fastness of the Sinai mountains, we spent a day in Alexandria, visiting Egypt's other world renowned library.

The new library at Alexandria, a massive project personally supervised by the wife of the president of Egypt, lies within a few metres of the supposed site of the ancient bibliotheka, on the great crescent of the bay. It is a dramatic postmodernist structure of Norwegian design-the roof is an enormous canted disk, evoking Ra the ancient Egyptian sun god, and facing out across Alexandria's harbour, flanked by the faded glory of the corniche with its old British and French colonial hotels and salons de thé. The reading room is the largest on earth, a vast space, but still uncannily lacking in books. It is said to be able to house eight million books eventually-at the moment the collection amounts to just 260 thousand volumes, and other assorted objects including the deposed King Farouk's sunglasses.

From Alexandria we took the train back to Cairo, along the western edge of the intensively cultivated Nile delta. One-third of all Egyptians now live in the capital; perhaps twenty million inhabitants-nobody knows the true number-leading lives of heroic improvisation. "Land of contrasts" is a grisly cliché of travel brochures, normally deployed to avoid words like "poverty" or "apartheid." But for our small international crew of book conservators no greater contrast could be imagined than between Cairo, explosive and thrilling megacity at the crossroads of Africa, Europe and Asia, and the ascetic calm of the monastery in the desert and the deep silence of its ancient library.

My thanks to the University Library for granting me leave for this four week trip which allowed me the opportunity to experience the beauty and the history of St. Catherine's Monastery.

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Campus Art Installations Feature "Flying Books" and Foam Balls

by Kathleen Maclay, UC Berkeley Media Relations

Students may wonder if they've spent too much time in the stacks when they glimpse hundreds of books floating in the air around the staircase that winds through three underground floors connecting the University of California, Berkeley's Doe and Moffitt libraries.



The scene in the stairway of the Gardner stacks is the product of the imagination, design skills and physical labor of J. Ignacio Diaz de Rabago, an award-winning European artist well known for his large-scale, site-specific art installations.

Books seem to fly through the staircase atrium leading down the Gardner stacks in Doe Library in an art installation by J. Ignacio Diaz de Rabago.

Diaz de Rabago and an interdisciplinary team of UC Berkeley students working with him on campus spent a day this spring drilling holes in approximately 300 discarded and unsalvageable volumes that had been withdrawn from the library. They inserted a thin metal cable through each book, arranged them as directed by Diaz de Rabago, and used the stair's railings to help lower the books into place in the air.

Diaz de Rabago, trained as a sculptor and painter, was an artist-in-residence for six weeks with UC Berkeley's Consortium for the Arts and the Arts Research Center. He toured the campus some time ago, taking photos of potential sites for his art projects and mulling over ideas.

His final selections include the glass-enclosed spiral staircase of the Gardner stacks in Doe Library, where he said that he likes the light and proximity to the library's vast book collection, and the lobby of the recently restored Hearst Memorial Mining Building, which he chose for its beautiful architectural space. He said he also may choose the inner courtyard of Wurster Hall, in part for its "Brutalist style."

The installation in Doe Library is Diaz de Rabago's first in the United States and will remain in place for close to a year. An installation involving suspension of foam balls in the Hearst Memorial Mining Building will remain there until July. No dates have been set for the Wurster work.

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University Librarian Tom Leonard was excited about the Gardner stacks project, noting that online images of Diaz de Rabago's previous work "take your breath away." Visitors to the recently restored North Reading Room typically respond with a "wow," Leonard said, "and if they say that about this exhibit, too, I think that's great."

About three years ago, Diaz de Rabago met Anthony J. Cascardi, a UC Berkeley professor of comparative literature, rhetoric, Spanish and Portuguese, and director of the Consortium for the Arts and its research center. Cascardi said he was giving a lecture in 2002 in the University of Copenhagen's Department of Romance Languages. Diaz de Rabago, a native of Spain who now lives in Copenhagen, attended. Afterward, the artist introduced himself and showed Cascardi a photograph of some of his art.

"I instantly started imagining something like it down in the atrium staircase of the (Gardner) stacks," recalled Cascardi, who later contacted Martin and Berkeley Art Museum Director Kevin Consey about bringing Diaz de Rabago to campus.

A plan for a plume of open-faced books piled on the floor and rising to the ceiling was nixed by estimated scaffolding costs and concerns about fire danger and safety. That's when Diaz de Rabago came up with the idea of suspending books in mid-air. Cascardi said it is part of Diaz de Rabago's ongoing exploration of what it means to exist in a world with gravity as a pervasive force, as well as what it means for thoughts to be embodied in material form. "Most of my work has to do with gravity, and to get free of gravity," Diaz de Rabago said over coffee at Cafe Strada near campus. "I like to make things flying or be without weight." Since 1996, he has worked primarily with books. "Now I know the stomach of the books, how they smell, and I look at books in a new, physical way," he said.

"There's a wonderful freshness and innocence about a lot of the work he does," Cascardi said, commending Diaz de Rabago for finding new ways to use materials indigenous to his installation spaces. "He makes art in places that you don't expect to find it, and it takes you by surprise, reawakening your attention to spaces you're in every day."

Samples of Diaz de Rabago's work can be found online at www.rabagoarte.com.

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The Sam Spade Test of Berkeley Scholarship

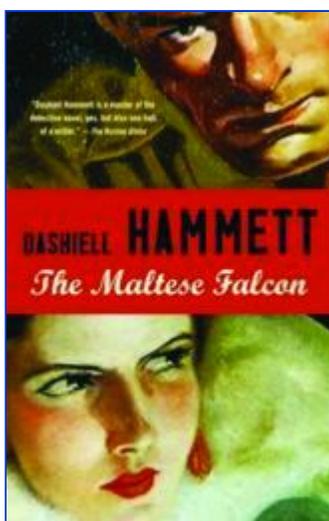
by Thomas C. Leonard, Kenneth and Dorothy Hill University Librarian & Professor in the Graduate School of Journalism

and David A. Hollinger, Chair, Department of History & Preston Hotchkis Professor of American History

Dashiell Hammett's *Maltese Falcon* has five beatings, four murders, three arrests, two druggings, and one trip to Berkeley for bibliographic instruction. In the decade before World War II, Americans were familiar with private eye Sam Spade, the "knock out" Bridget O'Shaughnessey, the Fat Man Casper Gutman and the perfumed Joel Cairo.

Published and republished in lowbrow and highbrow editions, Hammett's detective story was also made into three Hollywood movies in these ten years. By now, seventy-five years after they showed up in San Francisco, every tic of this dangerous crew has been gone over carefully. But not their encounter with Berkeley scholarship.

If you do not recall Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre, Mary Astor, Sydney Greenstreet, or others in John Huston's classic film sending anyone to Berkeley, that is because in 1941 the screen play streamlined Hammett's story. You will have to use your mind's eye to see the Fat Man, who "smiled complacently" and "held up three fingers" as he gave a stone-faced Bogart these "references" to a jeweled falcon from the Crusades.



With the pressured erudition that we have come to associate with graduate students taking oral exams, the Fat Man also cites work he has read in which "there's nothing said about the bird"-

Sam Spade "stumbled over the names of authors and their works" Hammett writes, convincingly. In the novel the detective recalls that his secretary has a relative in Berkeley's History department and sends her on the ferry from San Francisco to see if the references check out:

"Is it probable? Is it possible even barely possible? Or is it the bunk?" Sam Spade asks.

The Berkeley History professor determines: "none of your authorities or their works are out-and-out fakes." The answers to these bibliographic questions cause more grief than is normal in the academy. Sam Spade stays on the case and many more people do, in Hammettese, "take the fall."

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But this begs the question: Did they know what they were talking about at Berkeley? As the University Librarian and the Chair of the History department, it is our job to care about this. Sam Spade had his famous code. We have ours. After plunging into *The Maltese Falcon* recently, we detect some taunting by Hammett. Spade worried when his secretary told him that the History professor was excited by the research possibilities.

"That's swell, as long as he doesn't get too enthusiastic to see through it if it's phoney," the detective said.

"Oh he wouldn't," the secretary says, firmly.

Do we really have the books and are we afraid to follow the evidence?

Answering these questions reveals quite a lot about how scholars work at Berkeley and our resources to satisfy them.

Berkeley's core research collection sits under the Memorial Glade, where sun bathing and frisbee throwing are the main activities. The majestic north entrance of Doe is handy, and a five-minute break would be enough to select the Fat Man's first and last references, *Les Archives de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean* and an original edition of the *Memoirs of the Verney Family*. These volumes came to us soon after they were published in Paris and London at the end of the 19th century. They now live, with more than two million companions, in the light and airy space that honors former UC president David Gardner.

Any Berkeley student is free to check these out and to read them on the lawn if they choose.

Carutti's 600-page tome on a Sardinia king requires a one-day wait, because it is stored at the Richmond Field Station (along with 3.5 million works we own). Time has not been kind to this edition of 1897 and in 1990 we made a reader's copy on microfilm. Berkeley's Library has not invested in Paoli's work on the Knights of Malta, published in Rome. We did not need to. UCLA has archived this book and we can order it from a storage facility we share for delivery in two days. Turning the pages of this 1781 edition, readers today will think they are handling linen.

A student could learn exactly what we have, and place their requests, without stepping into our Library. Indeed, they could do this with frisbees overhead (if they brought their laptop) because our Air Bears wireless service stretches across Memorial Glade.

Great libraries are not built for hypothetical readers, let alone fictitious readers. Real people drive collections, reflecting the changing world and its current problems. The clash of Christian and Islamic civilizations engages the campus today and it is important to understand how this estrangement began. This year we will find hundreds of thousands of dollars in our budget to add to the venerable works that, somehow, were memorialized in Dashiell Hammett's yarn about the Bay Area and a statue dear to the Crusaders.

Some of the most exciting courses we offer will use what we acquire. History professor Maria Mavroudi, for instance, is building up our resources in

Byzantine history. She has won a "genius" award from the MacArthur Foundation along the way.

Like other faculty, we have worked hard on strategic academic plans, and they are wiser (if not better written) than Dashiell Hammett's hard-boiled fiction. But when we went back to Sam Spade, we found fresh lessons for scholars. The private eye should be remembered as a poster boy for the need for Berkeley students to understand many cultures and global networks. The intriguing bunch he chased around San Francisco was Hong Kong based and Istanbul bound and the Falcon itself was brought in by a ship in the China trade. Hammett had the detective uncovering documents in Arabic, as well as the European scholarship. In the first Hollywood film of the novel, Sam Spade used his knowledge of Chinese to solve the crime. John Huston's film dropped the linguistic feat but added something better: loving attention of the camera on the Chinese newspapers that wrapped the Falcon. This is how one of our great collections at the Center for Chinese Studies Library was built in the 1950s, taking the newsprint wrapping that came out of Mao's China at a time when newspapers were banned at the border. In this case at least, creative minds in Hollywood and creative minds on campus were not so far apart.

The Maltese Falcon made its appearance in the popular imprints and movies that Americans in the Great Depression used to stretch their imaginations. Universities with great libraries still have this mission.

Are there clues to lost treasures in the Berkeley Library then? Alas, we only ask questions, offer leads, then step back and let readers find out.

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