

fiat lux

SPRING 2009 • NO. 11

The Library as Paradise

DANTE SCHOLAR DESCRIBES HIS APPRECIATION OF THE LIBRARY

IT STARTS HERE.

Berkeley's excellence is founded on its library. Opened in 1868 with one thousand books, the University Library now holds over ten million volumes, and ranks as one of the world's great research collections. Join us in supporting the growth and preservation of this stellar library.

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Steven Botterill sees the Library as having a role in making visible the life of scholarship. "In the reading rooms, which are heavily used, there's a sense of quiet, of respect, and importance—a sense that serious work is happening."

Italian Studies professor Steven Botterill is quite clear about the role of the Library at UC Berkeley, saying "What has kept the University in the front rank for years is the stature of the Library. It's a delusion to think they could be separated. Without doubt, this is one of the world's great research libraries."

Having earned his Ph.D. at the venerable University of Cambridge, Botterill was accustomed to having everything at his disposal in the library. When he arrived at UC Berkeley in 1986, he initially thought its collections might suffer by comparison, but once he had a chance to explore them he was delighted to find out that "it was all here! This Library was buying Italian books back in the 1860s, which is extraordinary. It is as comprehensive a collection as you'll find anywhere in the world."

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University Librarian's Letter

THE CAL-STANFORD EMBRACE



First Berkeley took the Stanford Axe, then we hired their basketball coach, now we are sharing books and librarians. Again, Cal should be pleased by the transaction.

The idea that Stanford and Berkeley should *compete* to hold books and other sources in every field has not made much sense for a long time. A generation ago both libraries made borrowing cards interchangeable and built a delivery system so that books could be shipped to the person on the other campus who needed them. Stanford and Berkeley librarians divided up some areas of the world, Latin America in particular, so that each campus would grow strong in its specialty and rely on the partner for what it had not collected. Berkeley led for Argentina, Stanford for Chile, as an example.

The wisdom of this cooperation has become more apparent in the past decade, with fewer and fewer North American libraries able to collect globally and new publishing centers emerging abroad. Berkeley and Stanford are in the company of only a half dozen libraries that acquire German materials seriously. The explosion of publications in China and South Asia (viewed by American librarians as a tsunami) require us to be more agile.

What is new today is a financial crisis for both universities that reduces the number of foreign language and “niche” subjects that we can buy and catalog. At both schools, when we lose a Slavic specialist, a cataloger of musical scores, or a person who manages the digital map collection, we lack

the resources to simply hire a new person. What we are likely to have, sitting across the Bay, is a person who could be helpful, in exchange for the time of another expert. (Berkeley is also fortunate to be part of a ten-campus system that forms a buying club for digital resources, as well as a pool of professionals.) Berkeley has followed the Stanford lead into a digital preservation program that has the best acronym in the Library world: LOCKSS – Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe.

Realistically, the time will come when the Axe must be handed back to Stanford and one of our celebrated coaches will move to Palo Alto. What will not change is that the cooperative collection we have built together will be here for students and faculty on both sides of the Bay.

No battle of the books is going to break out because the people who work for the libraries are honorable turn-coats. Tony Newcomb, chair of Berkeley Academic Senate Library committee, serves on the Advisory Council of Stanford's library. Chuck Eckman, our head of collections, has divided his career between Palo Alto and Berkeley. Michael Keller, University Librarian at Stanford, once headed Berkeley's Music Library and has taught at both universities.

Cut-throat competition between the schools has its place, of course. This past year the high tech firm of Tetra Tech on the Peninsula dedicated its office pool on the Big Game to the *library* of the winning football team. We are cashing that generous check.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'The Leonard'.

Thomas C. Leonard
Kenneth and Dorothy Hill University Librarian

The Interwoven World

STUDENT RESEARCHES INDONESIAN TEXTILES AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

In her first year at Berkeley, My Ket Chau '08 took a course that ignited her fascination with art—Dr. Joanna Williams' course on Southeast Asian art. In one class, a Laotian weaver (the wife of a graduate student) came and demonstrated, using a loom and traditional tools, how the textiles known as *ikat* are created.

My Chau was mesmerized by witnessing this demanding, time-consuming art. "I was blown away by how intricate the process was of creating such masterpieces," she says. "I became engrossed by it, and kept studying it on my own after the class ended."

Four years later, My Chau's senior thesis delved into the topic, looking in particular at the role of international exchange in Indonesian and Indian textiles. Her promise as a budding art historian was recognized by the 2008 Library Prize for Undergraduate Research, which was awarded for her outstanding senior thesis.

After graduating, she was named to the Lifchez/Stonach Curatorial Internship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art for 2008-09. During this nine-month appointment, she has been working on the Met's "Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C." exhibit. Her future plans include applying to graduate school in art history.

MINING THE UCB LIBRARIES

In developing her interest in art history, My Chau benefited from the supportive programs and resources offered by the university and by the Library. The Cal Opportunity Scholarship program had awarded the Oakland native a full scholarship for four years. Established by faculty, this program aims to attract to Berkeley high-achieving students who have overcome challenging socio-economic circumstances.

Gujarat



Bali

My Chau also earned a place in the McNair Scholars program, which prepares a select group of undergraduates for doctoral work, through tutoring, research stipends, and faculty mentorship.

A key stage of her journey as a budding scholar was learning her way around the Berkeley libraries, which were at first overwhelming. "There are so many libraries on campus, and so many books—it was hard to know where to begin!" she says. She learned to be flexible and open-minded in approaching her

Geringsing
Wayang Kebo
(sacred cloth).
Tenganan
Pegeringsingan,
Northeast Bali,
Indonesia. Cotton;
double ikat; 19th/
early 20th century.
Collection of Thomas
Murray, Mill Valley, CA

continued on page 6

Morrison Library revives Graphic Arts Loan program

ADAPTED FROM A STORY BY KATHLEEN MACLAY, UC BERKELEY MEDIA RELATIONS



This 1847-48 woodcut by Ando Hiroshige, *Fireworks at Ryogoku Bridge*, is among the artworks available through the Graphic Arts Loan Collection.

“Once the prints leave the Morrison Library, they will become part of the stories our students tell about themselves.”

This year, the University Library has revived a Graphic Arts Loan Collection program that 50 years ago began placing Picassos, Miros and the works of other renowned and emerging artists into the hands of students, faculty and staff.

“Cal alums tell me how proud they were to show off this original art in their simple digs,” said Tom Leonard, UC Berkeley librarian. “I predict that a new generation at Cal will boast about this on Facebook and MySpace. Once the prints leave the Morrison Library, they will become part of the stories our students tell about themselves.”

A new website, galc.lib.berkeley.edu, offers images of approximately 700 framed original, numbered prints that are signed by their creators. The artwork can be perused and favorites selected for checkout.

One of the program’s first customers when it began in the 1950s was UC Berkeley alumnus David Littlejohn, now an emeritus professor at

the campus’s Graduate School of Journalism. During his senior year, he and a roommate shared a second floor apartment on 58th Street near Telegraph Avenue, just over the Oakland city limit. They feasted on homemade pizza, salad and cheap jug wine with friends in their home that was decorated with a handful of inexpensive, commercial prints of old masters such as Cezanne, Vermeer and Feininger.

“But we wanted to impress our girlfriends and guests with our impeccable taste, so we stood in line at the Morrison and came home with a fantastic tangled-line ink drawing—or possibly a print—by Stanley William Hayter that now would sell in the thousands,” said Littlejohn. “It instantly upgraded our humble flat, and probably the whole neighborhood. We were so cool—although I’m not sure we used that word in 1958.”

Herwin Schaefer, UC Berkeley emeritus professor of architecture, said the program

began with University Librarian Donald Coney. He recalled that Coney had some money that he wanted to spend on reproductions of famous paintings that could be loaned to students, and brought up the idea with Schaefer, who was teaching in decorative arts and the history of design. Schaefer said he nixed the idea of buying reproductions and insisted on original prints.

He personally chose the first prints in the collection, which he saw as a powerful extension of UC Berkeley's art education and a tool to help students develop an appreciation for art by living with original prints for a semester.

Each piece of artwork available for loan to the campus community is valued at \$600 or less, said Morrison Library head Alex Warren. Some 70 items in the collection worth more than that are kept out of circulation, some on permanent loan to the Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive.

The rules for borrowing from the collection are simple. The limit per person is two prints for one semester. If a print isn't returned or comes back damaged, the borrower must pay the Library the value of the piece and appraisal costs. Otherwise, the loan is free.

"Berkeley students are pretty responsible people," said Warren.

The proceeds of past fees were added to seed money contributed early on by the



John August Swanson's *Circus Bicyclist*, a 1982 serigraph, can be borrowed through the Graphic Arts Loan Collection.

Columbia Foundation, the International Graphic Arts Society, individual donors and families. (In the 1960s and 70s, the Pardee sisters, Helen and Madeline, were notable donors.) The funds have allowed the purchase of new lithographs, woodblock prints, etchings and engravings ranging from Baroque to the avant-garde, said Warren.

Some might wonder why the Morrison Library operates the Graphic Arts Loan Collection. Not Warren, who said it's an ideal fit for the reading room/browsing library with its trademark comfortable sofas, overstuffed chairs and extensive collection of current fiction and non-fiction, contemporary poetry, music CDs and walls adorned with artwork. In many ways, Warren said, borrowers are treating art like a book. 🌿

Fiat Lux, or Let there be light, is the motto of the University of California.

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Kenneth and Dorothy Hill University Librarian: Thomas C. Leonard

Director of Development and External Relations: David Duer

Director of Communications: Damaris Moore

Photography: Peg Skorpinski, p 1, 7, 9, 11

Illustration: Aisha Hamilton, p 3

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research, and to take her time in mining the collections. "You never know what books and articles you might stumble upon at the Library, which may lead to your big conclusions," she says. "It could take four weeks or four months."

For her Library Prize-winning paper, My Chau relied principally on the Gardner Stacks in Doe

Library, Moffitt, the South/Southeast Asian Library, and the Anthropology Library. She also requested numerous publications through the interlibrary loan system.

My Chau was exceptionally resourceful in her research. After viewing an example of double *ikat* from Gujarat (western India) at the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology on campus, she got in touch with the scholar who had collected it, finding out more than the museum's records revealed. She also made personal contact with Clifford R. Jones, a leading scholar of the artistic traditions of Kerala in south India.

Dr. Joanna Williams, My Chau's faculty mentor, praised her tenacity in conducting research, joking that she belonged either in a detective agency or in graduate school!

"THE ART CAME ALIVE"

One of the most exciting adventures of My Chau's years at Berkeley was her semester studying in Paris during her junior year. The daily challenges of studying and living in an unfamiliar culture required her to develop her resilience and determination. "Going to Paris for that semester changed my life completely, in terms of becoming my own person. I had to push myself every day," she remembers.

The art she was studying came alive for her in a new way as she explored Paris's many museums, and saw the actual sculptures, vases, paintings, and other objects. My Chau remembers being captivated by a *geringsing* textile from Bali in the Musée du Quai Branly. "Especially with textiles," she says, "you really need to see the actual object, its texture, dimensions, and colors."

THE MAGIC OF COLLECTIVE EFFORT

In her Library Prize-winning thesis, "The Power of Patterns: Double *ikat* for Textile Exchange in India and Indonesia," My Chau explored the theme of cultural exchange by focusing on two types of textiles. Known as "double *ikat*" because they are produced by tie-dying the warp and weft

"Bali Style" *Patolu*
Gujarat, India for
the Indonesian
market. Silk; double
ikat; 18th/19th
century. Collection of
Thomas Murray, Mill
Valley, CA

threads before they are woven, these textiles are called *patola* in Gujarat and *geringsing* in Bali. Her paper tracked how double *ikat* textiles moved from being a luxury item in Gujarat, to being something endowed with religious power in Kerala, and then to being a strong marker of cultural identity in Bali.

Her advisor, Dr. Williams, commented that Chau's thesis "showed originality, intellectual imagination, and good judgment to produce a plausible new historical and cultural picture. Were she enabled to conduct fieldwork in Gujarat, Kerala, and Bali, this paper could readily be published."

As well as working closely with her professors and searching online catalogs for resources, My Chau consulted with the librarians who specialize in her subject—Virginia Shih, the South/Southeast Asian librarian, and Kathryn Wayne, the fine arts librarian. "They know their stuff and are really willing to help," she says. "They even found me a hard-to-locate book that was published only in Indonesia!"



My Chau '08 won a Library prize for her outstanding research on Indonesian and Indian textiles. Now interning at the Met, she plans to attend graduate school in art history.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

Join more than 6,000 other friends, book lovers, alumni and faculty who recognize that the influence of a great research library extends beyond the university it serves to the many communities of which it is a part.

The Library adds an astounding amount of printed and electronic resources each year, including rare and unique materials. In order to continue to acquire, organize, and make accessible new information, the Library depends on the support of those who understand how important a world-class library is to the education of students who will one day shape our future. Your gift is crucial to the continued excellence of the University Library.

Library Associates receive complimentary copies of the quarterly newsletter as well as invitations to special occasions at the Library. For more information or to make a gift, contact us at (510) 642-9377 or give@library.berkeley.edu. Or visit our website at www.lib.berkeley.edu/give/

Discussing her senior thesis topic, My Chau said she was intrigued by the collective effort behind double *ikat* textiles. "We're constantly interacting," she says, "and in community. That's how patterns transmit across cultures."

As she persevered in the complex process of developing her paper, she learned that research, too, is a collective effort; it is a weaving together of the researcher's curiosity and enterprise, the knowledge and support of faculty and librarians, and the rich collections of the University Library. "We frequently think of research as a solitary process," she says, "but at Berkeley you realize how collaborative it is."

Thanks to Dr. Joanna Williams, librarian Virginia Shih, and private collector Thomas Murray, who kindly loaned textiles from his private collection for an exhibit on My Chau's project. 🌿

"We frequently think of research as a solitary process, but at Berkeley you realize how collaborative it is."

continued from page 1

Botterill's scholarship focuses on the Middle Ages, and he is the author of two books and numerous articles on Dante. His teaching covers the spectrum of Italian literature and culture from 1200 to 1500, with forays into the Romantic period and modern poetry. This semester, he is

teaching a course on the 20th century poet Eugenio Montale, and a freshman and sophomore seminar on Dante and T.S. Eliot as Christian poets.

His major work-in-progress is a book entitled *Dante and the Language of Community*, which discusses Dante's ideas about

language as a

medium for the communication of social and ethical values in the strife-torn cities of fourteenth-century Italy. Botterill is a two-time elected member of the Council of the Dante Society of America, and was editor of the Society's journal, *Dante Studies*, from 2003 to 2008. In addition to his departmental teaching and advising responsibilities, he serves as Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Division in the College of Letters and Science.

For Botterill, the Library is far more than an array of books, no matter how vast. Teaching is a central aspect of the Library's role, and cannot be separated from research. For example, seminars offered at the Bancroft Library, in which rare books and manuscripts are studied, are powerful occasions in which students can "actually see some of the original documents that are part of the foundations

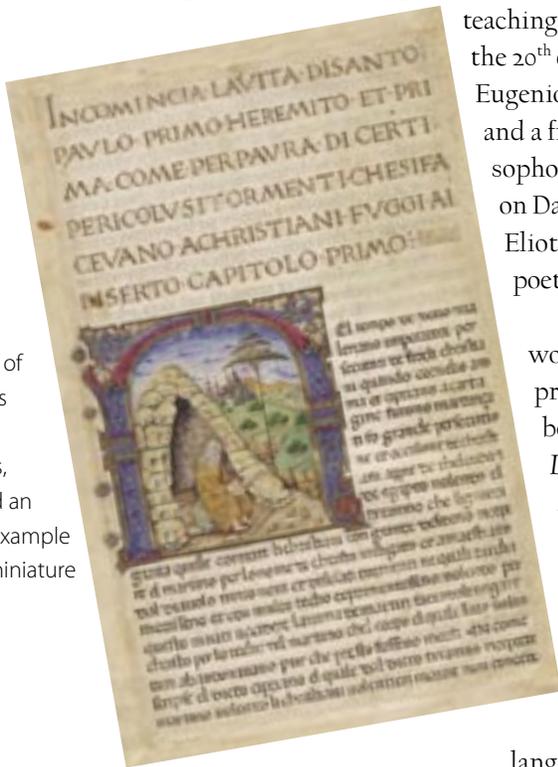
of Western and other cultures," Botterill says. "This can make history and literature come alive for them in a new way."

The historical depth of the University Library's holdings is illustrated in the special collections housed at Bancroft and other campus libraries. As Botterill was delighted to discover, the Library's collections date back a century and a half: "Even obscure and elderly stuff can usually be found here. This has been a great help over the years. Colleagues at other institutions can't count on this for their research."

The Library's teaching role, Botterill notes, is embodied in its close connections with academic departments. Librarian Claude Potts is the point of contact with faculty and students in Romance Languages; frequent communication with them ensures that Library acquisitions respond to current and emerging research interests.

Claude Potts and other area studies selectors build the library collections in Middle Eastern, Germanic, South and Southeast Asian, Latin American, and Slavic and East European studies, as well as in Romance Languages, Africana, and Judaica. The Library's commitment to these acquisition and networking programs testifies to the excellence and global scope of the research conducted on the Berkeley campus.

Botterill is also a strong advocate of the Moffitt Library Revitalization Project, a component of the Campaign for the University Library (lib.berkeley.edu/give/moffitt.html). A member of the campus-wide planning committee for the project, he comments that "this is a unique opportunity to re-envision an aging facility and turn it into what it was always meant to be: the focal point of every undergraduate's academic experience at this university. That means adapting the space for twenty-first-century study habits and incorporating the very latest in information technology, of course; but it also means helping our students to get their hands on books. It will be a long time before the printed page outlives its usefulness to undergraduates." 🌱



A 15th-century Italian translation of St. Jerome's Lives of the Fathers, considered an excellent example of Italian miniature painting.

The Moffitt Library project will update the facility and incorporate the latest in IT—but also help our students get their hands on books.

Open House at the Library



Sunny weather greeted the guests at the January 17 Library open house.

In January, the University Library opened its doors to over 300 alumni and friends, who were invited to tour Doe and Bancroft Libraries. Thanks to winter break, few students were on campus during the event, so the reading rooms and study tables in the Gardner Stacks, normally filled with people quietly working, were open to attendees.

As the crowds filtered through the Library, many old acquaintances were renewed, and memories revived. People remembered waiting for their number to appear on the illuminated call board outside the then-closed stacks, indicating they could now retrieve the books they had requested; and handwriting notes and pages of quotes from reserved books, because Xerox machines hadn't been invented. Alumni who hadn't been back to campus for years were amazed at how often students today prefer to study in groups, and at the compact shelving in the Gardner Stacks.

Guests enjoyed lunch in the Morrison Library and had an opportunity to learn about the Campaign for the University Library, with the two goals of revitalizing Moffitt Library and strengthening the research collections. See www.lib.berkeley.edu/give/campaign.html for more information. 🍷



Over 300 alumni and friends enjoyed a luncheon in the Morrison Library during the open house in January. A portrait of May Treat Morrison watches over the group shown above.

Watson "Mac" Laetsch

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER SINCE 2005



CAL CONNECTIONS

Professor Emeritus of Plant Biology and former Vice Chancellor at UC Berkeley. Dr. Laetsch served as director of the Botanical Garden (1969-74) and of the Lawrence Hall of Science (1973-80). He co-chaired the recent Bancroft Library campaign. Currently, he serves on the University Library Advisory Board, the College of Natural Resources Advisory Board, and the University of California Press Foundation Board. He also co-chairs the Mark Twain Luncheon Club.

OTHER INTERESTS

Dr. Laetsch grows walnuts commercially in the Sacramento Valley and raises antique apple varieties. He and his son Krishen '87 have a vineyard producing Chardonnay and Merlot grapes, from which they make wine. Dr. Laetsch has been very involved with Bhutan (which he first visited in 1981), and is advising on establishing their first University.

BOOKS RECENTLY READ

A Splendid Exchange: How Trade Shaped the World by William J. Bernstein, and *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire, 1781-1997* by Piers Brendon

WHY HE SUPPORTS THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

"A great library is essential for a great university. For much of the university's faculty and students, the Library is really the heart and soul. So if you're deciding how to support the University, the Library should be near the top of your list. It is indispensable." 🌿

UC BERKELEY UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD • 2008-2009

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Story Hour in the Library

A SPECIAL EDITION

MICHAEL ONDAATJE

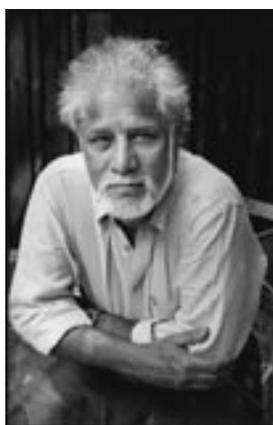
in conversation with ROBERT HASS

introduced by MICHAEL CHABON

Friday, March 20, 2009

[Listen to the event at webcast.berkeley.edu](http://webcast.berkeley.edu)

Best known as a novelist, especially for *The English Patient*, MICHAEL ONDAATJE's work



includes poetry, autobiography, and film. Born in Sri Lanka and a resident for many years of Canada, he researched his recent novel *Divisadero*—set partly in 1970s northern California—at the

University Library at Berkeley. Ondaatje's haunting writing often blends the factual and the imaginary, poetry and prose, and displays his interest in cinematic techniques and fragmented narration.

ROBERT HASS's most recent book of poetry, *Time and Materials: Poems 1997-2005*, was awarded the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. He has taught at UC Berkeley since 1989. He co-chairs the Campaign for the University Library with Mr. Robert D. Haas.

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, screenwriter, columnist and short story writer MICHAEL CHABON is considered one of the most inventive and entertaining authors of his generation. He serves on the Library Advisory Board as our author-trustee, and introduced the March 20 conversation with Hass and Ondaatje. 🌿

Then & Now

MORRISON LIBRARY • 1951 and 2008



Solitude and society: the Library is a home for both. Quiet, individual reading and reflection, as in the peaceful 1951 image above, is traditionally associated with libraries—and in an increasingly crowded, noisy world, this role is perhaps more important than ever. At the same time, the vitality and interaction offered by readings and lectures, group study, and social gatherings is equally essential. “The social nature of learning,” a phrase much used in today’s educational thinking, speaks to this latter role. The University Library has always been a primary venue at the university both for focused individual research, and for the gatherings and interactions that stimulate the campus’s energy and intellectual vigor.



Exhibits & Events



**GREENWOOD COMMON:
UNCOMMONLY MODERN**

through May 8, 2009

Environmental Design Library

This exhibition reveals the history of Greenwood Common, an enclave of eight distinct modernist houses, developed between 1951 and 1957 in the Berkeley hills by architect William W. Wurster. Greenwood Common has become an icon of regional mid-century modernism and continues to thrive as a well-maintained and comfortable community site—all as it was originally intended. The exhibit was curated by Waverly Lowell, author of a forthcoming book on Greenwood Common.

STORY HOUR IN THE LIBRARY

A monthly reading series celebrating prose writers from Berkeley and beyond, hosted by Melanie Abrams and Vikram Chandra.

Vendela Vida

Thursday, April 9, 2009

5 – 6 pm in 190 Doe Library

(across from Morrison Library)

Vendela Vida is the author of the novels *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* and *And Now You Can Go*, both of which were New York Times Notable Books. She is the co-editor of *The Believer* magazine, and a founding board member and teacher at San Francisco's 826 Valencia, a nonprofit youth writing lab.

2008-09 Story Hour readers have included Michael Chabon, ZZ Packer, and Bharati Mukherjee; past readings can be enjoyed online at webcast.berkeley.edu.

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