

Connecticut College
Digital Commons @ Connecticut College

Friends of the Connecticut College Library
Newsletter

Friends of the Connecticut College Library

4-1-2012

Spring Newsletter 2012

Benjamin Panciera
Connecticut College, bpancier@conncoll.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/fo>

Recommended Citation

Panciera, Benjamin, "Spring Newsletter 2012" (2012). *Friends of the Connecticut College Library Newsletter*. Paper 27.
<http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/fo/27>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Friends of the Connecticut College Library at Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Friends of the Connecticut College Library Newsletter by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. For more information, please contact bpancier@conncoll.edu.
The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.



FROM THE ARCHIVES: SPORTS IN THE JAZZ AGE

Histories of athletics at Connecticut College tend to focus on the increased attention paid to physical education in the 1970s and the College's entry into the NCAA's Division III after the adoption of coeducation. The Archives holds newspapers, scrapbooks, photos, and yearbooks of the College's early years containing a wealth of information that tells a different story. Already by the time of the College's founding, athletics were a major emphasis of many college campuses, and that was especially true of East Coast colleges. Although Connecticut College didn't engage in interscholastic competition, athletics were present from the very beginning. The very first issue of the *Connecticut College News*, contains a story on a three game field hockey series on the green. Other sports recorded in 1916 included baseball, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and track.

By 1919 each of the classes fielded teams in hockey, soccer, and basketball. Participation was widespread with almost a third of the class of 1919 playing at least one sport, and six students playing all three. Even the faculty got in on the act, fielding a soccer team, which was headed by no less than President Benjamin Tinkham Marshall. The faculty and students played an annual game in the fall. The *Connecticut College News* was often coy about mentioning the score, but made it quite clear that the faculty played to win and generally succeeded. Inter-class and faculty-student competition was often heralded on the front page of the *News*. Sometimes game reports were delivered in a dry reportorial style, but they often took the form of mock-epic, displaying all of the reporter's skills as a satirist.

These core sports remained, although one year the traditional faculty-student soccer game appears to have been dropped in favor of a hockey match. Gradually, they were supplemented by other athletic pursuits as student interest demanded them. One year, even a cricket team was featured in *Koine*, the College yearbook, complete with a photograph and a mock epic poem celebrating their accomplishments. There appeared to be only one cricket team, so it is unclear whom they would have played, and the program disappeared the following season. By the end of the 1920s riflery, equestrian, tennis, track, and clogging were regularly offered, forming the core of a robust participatory sports program at the College.

FRIENDS OF THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library runs from January 1 to December 31, but it is never too late to join or renew your membership. The dues from the Friends are used to support the acquisition and preservation of materials, lectures, exhibitions, receptions, mailings, and scholarships.

If you wish to join, download a form at www.conncoll.edu/is/join-the-friends.htm or contact Benjamin Panciera at bpancier@conncoll.edu or by calling 860-439-2654.

Membership has the following levels, named for important benefactors at the College's founding: Bolles (\$500), Palmer (\$250), Plant (\$100), Gildersleeve (\$50), and Wright (\$25). For recent graduates there is also a Young Alumni level (\$10). All members receive the newsletter and invitations to lectures and other events. Those who contribute more than \$50 will also receive borrowing privileges at both the Charles E. Shain and the Greer Music Libraries. Those who contribute at or above the \$100 level will receive a set of Friends of the Connecticut College Library bookplates and for a gift of \$250 or more, we will personalize the bookplates.

2012 FRIENDS of the CONNECTICUT COLLEGE *Spring Newsletter*

CHARLES E. SHAIN LIBRARY ♥ GREER MUSIC LIBRARY ♥ LINDA LEAR CENTER FOR SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

ROYAL ADDITIONS TO THE PALMER COLLECTION

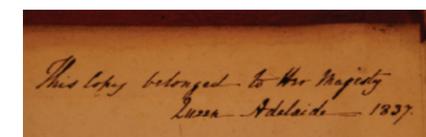
As many people know, the Palmer Collection is Connecticut College's first special collection. It is in fact two collections, one donated in 1926 by Cornelia Kissam Palmer, widow of Elisha Loomis Palmer, the other donated by Elisha's brother George shortly afterwards. The two collections reflect the brothers' interest in British and American history and literature, furniture, and beautiful books and bindings. The books in the collection were promptly cataloged, but not much used, so it was probably never noticed that a small but significant portion of the collection remained uncataloged and hidden from view. We discovered this situation while organizing the large flat oversize volumes on their shelves in the Lear Center for Special Collections & Archives.

The uncataloged items were luxury art books of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Even by the standards of oversize folio books they are particularly large, larger than almost every other book in the collection. In all likelihood, the Library had no shelving that could hold them and they were consequently separated from the collection and forgotten. As luxury items, they would have been highly sought after and treasured but, with a few exceptions, they are not particularly rare. Nevertheless, they are all remarkable books and valuable additions to the collection. A handful of them are especially worthy of mention for their rarity or for their history.

Bookplates inside the four volume set *Tableaux, Statues, Bas-reliefs et Camées de la Galerie de Florence et du Palais Pitti* indicate that they were donations numbers one through four from George Palmer to

Connecticut College. These books were printed in Paris during the tumultuous years between 1789 and 1807 and contain fine engraved reproductions of some of the most famous works of ancient and Renaissance art. They are a testament to high-end illustration techniques and to the taste for classical culture that was prevalent in France during this period. The first volume contains an additional interesting detail: a note explaining that it was owned by Her Majesty, Queen Adelaide in 1837. It's hard to know what to make of this attribution as there are no other ownership marks, or any other evidence that might connect the book to the wife of William IV, King of England. The date of 1837 is very significant as it is the year in which Adelaide suffered a serious illness and recovered, only then to suffer the loss of her husband and retire to private life as the Queen dowager. Renowned for her modesty, it would not be surprising if she did not have the books in her library elaborately bound or adorned with lavish bookplates. Still, while we are happy to accept the book's provenance, we feel we must do so with just a touch of skepticism.

Ladies of the Court of Queen Victoria is a large folio volume containing 23 engraved portraits of female courtiers during the latter part of Victoria's reign. Printed in London in 1874, the folio measures nearly two and a half feet tall, making it one of the largest items in our collection. The formal portraits are accompanied by brief biographies that make note of each of the ladies' titles and by detailed discussions of



TOP: The frontispiece to *Ladies of the Court of Queen Victoria* bears an engraved portrait of Victoria herself. This portrait, like many of the others in this book, was hand-signed in the lower right corner.

BOTTOM: This curious ex libris indicates that this four volume set of engravings of ancient and Renaissance art was owned by Queen Adelaide of England. No other marks of ownership are evident.

continued on page 2



The Friends of the
Connecticut College Library
www.conncoll.edu/is/friends-of-the-
library.htm
W. Lee Hisle
Vice President for Information Services and
Librarian of the College
Benjamin Panciera
Ruth Rusch Sheppe '40 Director of the Lear
Center for Special Collections and Archives
and Newsletter Editor
Charles E. Shain Library
Greer Music Library
Connecticut College
270 Mohegan Avenue
New London CT
06320-4196

This and other issues of the Friends of the
Library Newsletter may be viewed online at
digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/fol/
This newsletter was designed by Susan Lindberg.

April 2012



CONNECTICUT
COLLEGE

THIS YEAR IN THE CHU ROOM

The past year has featured two outstanding exhibitions of loaned Chinese artwork in the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room. For much of the fall and winter, the Chu Room played host to works from the Faculty of Graphic Design of Lanzhou Jiaotong University in western China. These unusually bright and colorful abstract paintings made for a dramatic break from the traditional watercolors normally on display.

This has been followed by *My Heart is Red*, an exhibition by the contemporary painter Zhen Guo. Raised and educated in China, Zhen emigrated to the United States in 1986 and she currently paints and teaches in New York. Her work has been exhibited across the United States and Canada, and has won major national awards in China. The exhibition features modern figures, which are described as reflecting the complicated and contradictory world of the human being with heroes who appear wounded and vulnerable. This exhibit will continue until May 5.

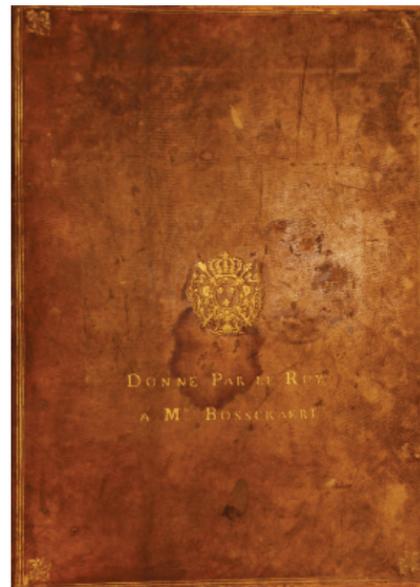
In the coming year we hope to feature more exhibitions displaying the wide variety of art of contemporary East Asia as well as more familiar works from our own collection.

ROYAL ADDITIONS

continued from page 1

their family backgrounds. Where appropriate, the date of their marriages and the lineage of their husbands are mentioned. Many of the portraits are hand-signed. What most distinguishes this folio, however, is its rarity. According to British and American union catalogs, only one other copy of the folio exists and it is held by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

A final volume is both extremely rare, if not unique, and has a royal provenance. A collection of plates bearing the simple title in French, *Collection of Prints by Italian and French Masters from the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture*, contains dozens of portraits of French artists dating from the early 17th to the late 18th century. Only one other book with a similar title could be found and it is located in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. However, the Bibliothèque Nationale's copy contains pastoral and hunting scenes, making it clear that although the books are likely similarly composed collections, they are not identical. Our copy also has a gold stamped cover with the coat of arms of Louis XVIII of France (1814-1824), and the gold inscription, "Given by the King to Mr. Bosschaert." It is tempting to think that this might be a reference



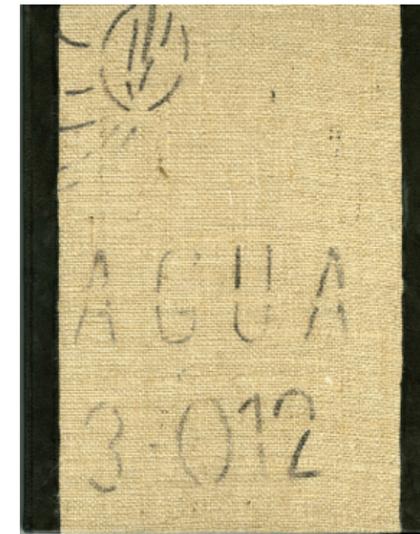
The gold-stamped cover of this collection of prints is evidence of a royal provenance.

to Guillaume Bosschaert, first curator of the Brussels Museum of Art. Bosschaert spent much of his career struggling to repatriate Belgian paintings looted in the aftermath of the French Revolution. It is known that Louis, upon his restoration to the throne in 1814, expressed approval of Bosschaert's efforts.

We are grateful that these jewels of the Palmer Collection with their distinguished history are now available for our patrons.

NEW ACQUISITIONS COSAS PERDIDAS/FUNDSTÜCKE

In 1998, the sister cities of Wuppertal, Germany and Matagalpa, Nicaragua began TallerContil, a collaboration drawing together professional artists and regular people with an interest in the visual arts. Beginning with the most basic woodcut printing, the cooperative has grown dramatically, acquiring sophisticated equipment like an etching press and tools for making handmade paper and with it the ability to produce fine artists' books.



The cover of Cosas Perdidas was created from fine leather and a coffee sack.



Engraving of a carved wooden head in an artisan's shop in Matagalpa, Nicaragua.

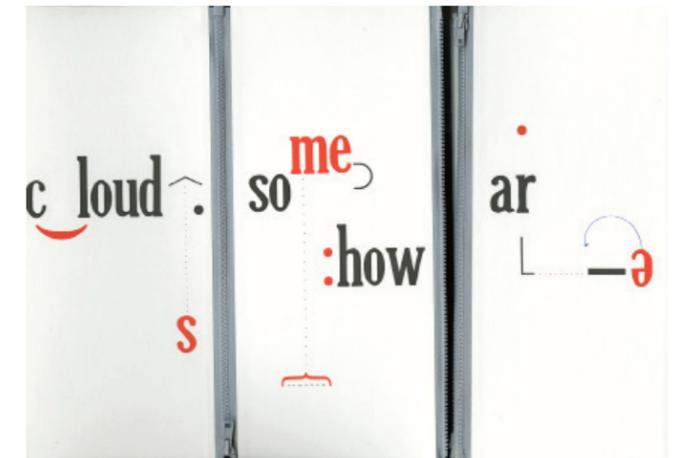
Cosas Perdidas is the first large format artist's book to come out of Matagalpa. The book's prospectus describes it this way: "A dried-up fruit, a shadow, a dead dog: these are some of the objects Eckhard Froeschlin portrayed in the Nicaraguan town Matagalpa. Accompanying twelve of them worked as color etchings are twelve short stories written by Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Soto from Matagalpa, who gives to the objects a history according to the place where they emerged. Terse and full of dry humor, they give us a view into life in a Central American province town." *Cosas Perdidas* is truly an international collaboration. It was printed in Germany by Froeschlin's Edition Schwarze Seite using paper from Matagalpa and bound in Germany using Nicaraguan coffee

sacks as the cloth covering. We hope that the book will be of great use to students both the in arts and in Latin American studies.

WOO_DEN\CLOUD}S

We are enthusiastic collectors of Werner Pfeiffer's creations. His playful experimentation with books leads to deeper reflections on typography, language, and meaning. Experimentation, play, and meaning are all key elements of *Woo_den\c-loud}S*, his recently published ZiPo or Zipper Poem.

Woo_den\c-loud}S consists of a poem in which each word is printed on a separate board. The individual boards can then be rearranged and attached by means of zippers. Pfeiffer's book invites readers to deconstruct and rearrange the words of a poem, creating new constructions of sense and nonsense. It is an experiment in the interchangeability of words and in the use of typography to build works of visual art.



Three "pages" from Werner Pfeiffer's Woo_den\c-loud}S. One of the pages has been unzipped and can be reattached to any other part of the book.

2012 LIBRARY SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Every year the Friends of the Library offers an award of \$500 to a Connecticut College senior or alumnus/a who is or will be pursuing a degree in library or archival studies. This year's winner is Rebecca Reel. Rebecca, a 2011 summa cum laude graduate of the College, is currently enrolled in a master's degree program at the University of Texas, Austin. Rebecca worked for four years in Shain, an experience that convinced her to pursue a career in academic librarianship. The Library Scholarship Award was founded by the Friends of the Library in 1993 to encourage Connecticut College students and alumni to enter the field of librarianship.