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Summer Newsletter 2007

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WHAT'S NEW IN THE CHU ROOM

When Charles Chu and Toby Griffis began the Chu-Griffis Art Collection in 1985 their purpose was not just to create a collection of beautiful paintings but to establish a body of distinguished examples that could be used as a learning resource for teaching Asian art to undergraduates at Connecticut College. It took a while for



Portrait of Shih Lu by Yang Zhi-guang

this to happen but in the meanwhile the Chu-Griffis Collection grew considerably and was exhibited many times at the college and throughout the region. Eventually a permanent gallery space was built—the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room—where items from the collection and visiting exhibits can be displayed in the library.

But now the collection is being used as a teaching resource for undergraduates. Ning Qiang was appointed in 2005 to be the first Chu-Niblack Associate Professor of Art History and Curator of the Chu-Griffis Asian Art Collection. During the Spring Semester the students in Professor Ning's Modern Chinese Art course created an exhibition using paintings from the

Chu-Griffis Collection. For this purpose the class met several times in the Palmer Room of Special Collections where the scrolls were taken out of the storage cabinets and unrolled on the big tables for study. The paintings were examined and discussed, and then each class member chose one or more works to study and to write a detailed label for a group show.

The result was "Masters of 20th Century Chinese Art from the Chu-Griffis Collection, Connecticut College." It opened on February 28 with a gallery talk given by the students themselves who took the audience around the room, stopping at every one of the paintings so that each student could talk about the works that he or she had studied. The show was only up for a month but if you missed it you can visit the virtual exhibition on the web site created for it by Professor Ning at <http://oak.conncoll.edu/qning/> The digital images that were used to create the web site were taken last summer during a Luce Foundation grant-funded project to photograph the entire collection.

Later in the semester, the Chu Room was used to display its first ever exhibition of artistic photographs in the show "Visual Memory of the Silk Road: Photographs by Wu Jian." Mr. Wu came from China for the opening of the show on April 10 and gave a talk interpreted by Professor Ning about his work as an official photographer of the Dunhuang Caves. The photographs in the visiting exhibit were used by the students in Professor Ning's advanced seminar "Art and Archaeology along the Silk Road." The masterpiece of the exhibition is the long photograph of the Great Buddha in Parinirvana at Zhangye shown in the large horizontal display case. This photograph is composed of 90 separate images taken over the period of a week and then painstakingly melded into one very large image. The exhibition of "Visual Memory of the Silk Road" has been held over until the end of the summer.

Hold these dates!

Thursday afternoon, September 6:
Celebrating 30 Years of Shain Library.
Program and reception. Charles Chu
Asian Art Reading Room

Thursday evening, September 20:
Sound Lab Foundation Lecture by
Elizabeth Kolbert. 8 p.m., Ernst
Common Room

Friday afternoon, September 21:
Rachel Carson and her legacy. Program
and reception. Charles Chu Asian Art
Reading Room.

More details will be announced later.

MEMBERSHIP in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library!

Membership in the Friends of the Library runs from January 1 to December 31 but it is never too late to join or to renew your membership. The dues from the Friends are used to support the preservation of the collections, to purchase books, to sponsor lectures, exhibitions and receptions, to print the newsletter and to send out mailings, and to fund the library scholarship.

If you wish to join at this time, or know of someone who is interested, a check payable to "Connecticut College" may be mailed to the Friends of the Library, Charles E. Shain Library, 270 Mohegan Avenue, New London, CT 06320. Membership has the following categories: contributing (\$30), associate (\$50), patron (\$100), and benefactor (\$300 or more). All members receive the newsletter and invitations to lectures and other events but dues in the associate, patron and benefactor categories include library-borrowing privileges.

2007 Friends of the Connecticut College Library Summer Newsletter

SOUND LAB LECTURE FOR 2007 TO HAVE ENVIRONMENTAL THEME

Elizabeth Kolbert is the author of the recent book *Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature and Climate Change*, chosen as one of 100 Notable Books of the Year in 2006. Ms. Kolbert's book grew out of the three-part series "The Climate of Man" about global warming that appeared in *The New Yorker* in 2005. Her research took her from Alaska to Greenland and to interviews with top scientists to explain the science and politics behind the studies of the global warming phenomenon and asking what can be done to save the world's climate as we know it.

A graduate of Yale University, prior to joining the staff of *The New Yorker*, Ms. Kolbert was a political reporter for *The New York Times*. Her work has been anthologized in *The Best American Science and Nature Writing* and *The Best American Political Writing*.

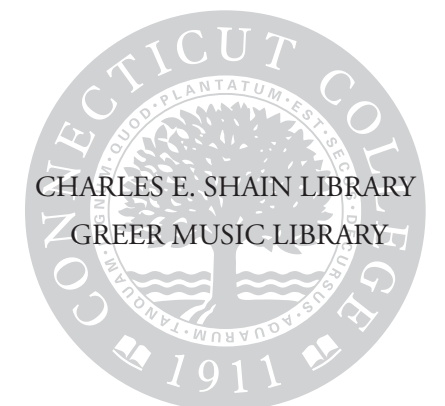
The annual Sound Lab Lecture is held every fall at Connecticut College and supported by an endowed fund created by the Sound Lab Foundation with additional support from the Friends of the Connecticut College Library. 2007 is a milestone in the history of the series since it is the tenth year since the first lecture was held in 1998. Earlier speakers were G. Pascal Zachary (biographer of Vannevar Bush), Stephen E. Flynn (expert on national security), Barry Moser (artist and book illustrator), John Lienhard (engineer and NPR broadcaster), Robert de Michiell (artist), Susan Orleans (author),



Elizabeth Kolbert

Mark P. Malkovich, III (musician and music festival director), Liane Hansen (NPR broadcaster and commentator), and Ric Burns (historical documentary filmmaker).

The 2007 lecture will take place on Thursday, September 20, at 8:00 p.m. in the Ernst Common Room of the Blaustein Humanities Center, followed by a book signing.



THIS IS A HEARTWARMING STORY
ABOUT HOW TWO LIBRARIES GOT TOGETHER TO FIND A
GOOD HOME FOR AN INTERESTING ARCHIVAL COLLECTION...

Nearly one hundred years ago, Loraine Wyman, a classically trained American singer who studied in France and New York, and composer Howard Brockway made a walking tour of the Cumberland Mountains in eastern Kentucky, listening to and writing down the words and melodies of the folk songs of this region. The efforts of these pioneering "song catchers" resulted in the publication of two books: *Lonesome Tunes* (1917) and *Twenty Kentucky Mountain Songs* (1920). Over the years Loraine Wyman acquired an extensive collection of books about folk music and folklore mostly of the British Isles, the United States and France.

After Loraine Wyman's death in 1937 her collection passed to her sister, Florence Wyman Ivins. According to library records, Mrs. Ivins and her husband attended a regional Conference of Renaissance Studies at Connecticut College in 1948, and "Mrs. Ivins was so impressed ... with the College that she thought it was an appropriate setting for her sister's collection." Thus the nearly three hundred books and scores became the Wyman Collection in Special Collections and it has been the subject of exhibits and a resource for scholars. During the past year the rare copy of Thomson's 1822 collection of Scottish songs scored for piano by classical composers was an important resource for a Connecticut College graduate student preparing an MA thesis and voice recital.

But the Wyman gift also included a number of other items that were not so easy to place. Eventually her rare 1921 French-made Gaveau harpsichord was given to the Yale University Collection of Musical Instruments. But for many years

several boxes of manuscripts, sheet music, and miscellaneous material languished in a corner of Greer Music Library. The papers were considered to be interesting



Loraine Wyman in French folk costume by Florence Wyman Ivins

but not especially appropriate for an undergraduate library. Concerned about the physical deterioration of the papers, music librarian Carolyn Johnson made inquiries among other academic music libraries to see if anyone else would like them. In 2004 these papers finally found a home at Brown University.

The happy ending of this story was told by Carolyn Johnson and Ned Quist, music librarian at Brown, when they gave a presentation about the transfer of the Wyman papers at the joint meeting of the New England Music Library Association and the Greater New York Chapter held at Connecticut College in March, 2007: "Loraine Wyman: A Tale of Two Libraries." Now part of the Brown Archival & Manuscript Collections the Loraine Wyman Collection has its own online finding aid and is already being used by scholars.

RACHEL CARSON
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AT CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Rachel Carson was born in 1907 in Springdale, Pennsylvania and grew up to become the famous author of *Silent Spring* before her untimely death from breast cancer in 1964. Celebrated and vilified in her time, Carson's message became the clarion call that signaled the birth of the environmental movement in the United States and around the world.

The Department of Special Collections and Archives at Connecticut College is fortunate to hold the Lear/Carson Collection, the papers that biographer Linda Lear '62 gave to her alma mater following the publication of her book, *Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature*, in 1997. This large collection of personal documents, photographs, articles about the pesticide controversy and other material gathered during years of exhaustive research on the life and work of Rachel Carson, has become a valuable resource for students of environmental issues.

In 2007 Carson's centennial has been celebrated around the United States and abroad. On the afternoon of Friday, September 21, Connecticut College will hold its own Carson centennial celebration in Shain Library. This program is not intended as an examination of

the life of the author of *Silent Spring* but rather to focus on the implications of her intellectual and scientific legacy in the nearly fifty years since her death. Maril Hazlett, an independent scholar with a PhD in environmental history from the University of Kansas who is completing a book manuscript titled *In the Beginning: Evolution, Creation, and the Thinking of Rachel Carson* will be the keynote speaker, followed by a panel discussion. The panel will be composed of Connecticut College faculty and students as well as other local experts. The afternoon will end with a reception in the library and an opportunity to view an exhibition of photos, documents and Carson first editions from the Lear/Carson Collection.

Cartoon published soon after publication of *Silent Spring*.



SUMMER EXHIBITION:
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SHAIN LIBRARY

The "new library" at Connecticut College is celebrating a significant milestone: it is now 30 years old. Shain Library has proven to be a remarkably flexible space as the college's research and technology needs have changed dramatically since it was built.

An exhibition of photos and documents from the College Archives showing highlights of the history of the Shain and Palmer libraries was created for Reunion 2007 but it will be on display in the cases on the main floor of the library until September 10. On the afternoon of September 6, the library will host a celebration of Shain Library at which the Friends of the Connecticut College Library will be the guests of honor.



ALPHABETICUM

German-born artist Werner Pfeiffer began working on the typographic experiments that resulted in *Alphabetium* in the early 1960s. "The computer as we know it was still a figment of our imagination. The visionaries of the digital age, the likes of a Bill Gates or a Steve Jobs, had barely shed their diapers. Metal or hot type was still in vogue and instead of Photoshop or Illustrator it was tracing paper, the stat machine or plain sketching, which encouraged typographic experimentation."

In 1965 the Museum of Modern Art exhibited some of these experiments. Four decades later, Mr. Pfeiffer decided to edition a sampling of the eighty originals. *Alphabetium* was published in 2006 by Pear Whistle Press in Red Hook, New York, and printed on a Vandercook proof press in a limited edition of 52 signed and numbered copies on Stonehenge paper and set by hand in Clarendon with Bembo Italic. Special Collections has purchased copy number 30 with money from the endowed fund established in memory of Charles Price. Mr. Pfeiffer was a professor at Pratt Institute in New York City and the director of the Pratt Adlib Press for many years.

The Friends of the
Connecticut College Library

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