Plan a Gift to the Library

Director of Development Tom Hadzor was pleasantly surprised recently when he learned that the Library was the beneficiary of a $500,000 bequest from the Estate of William H. McGraw. Mr. McGraw, a resident of New York City, attended Duke in the mid-1940s but did not graduate from the University. Clearly, he had fond memories of the time he spent on campus! A bequest like Mr. McGraw’s is one of several ways of making what is described as a “planned” gift.

Planned giving enables donors to make more significant gifts than they might imagine possible. Benefits to the donor of a properly planned gift may include a lifetime income, reduction or elimination of capital gains taxes and/or gift and estate taxes, and a charitable income tax deduction. In addition to bequests, planned gifts may be made as life income gifts, charitable lead trusts, and outright gifts.

Each of these methods of making a planned gift is described in detail on the Office of Gift Planning website at http://www.giftplanning.duke.edu/index.htm.

If you would like to know more about planned giving to the Duke University Libraries, contact Tom Hadzor at 919.660.5940 or hadzot@duke.edu.

Perkins Renovation Project Reaches Another Milestone

In October 2005, when the new Bostock Library and the von derHeyden Pavilion opened, the first floor of Perkins closed for a complete renovation. Now, the drilling and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are being applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have stopped and the finishing touches are applied to a space that is elegant, light-filled, and pounding have 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**A Perfect Stranger and Other Stories**
Roaxana Robinson
New York: Random House, 2005

I was not sure I wanted to read short stories. It was summer, and I had time to get into a novel. But, while looking for another book, I came across this collection by Roaxana Robinson. Alice Munro had a recommending blurb on the front cover: “Start in on any sentence and I’m absolutely sure you’ll read to the end of the story, and of the book, and you’ll come out of it feeling grateful, deeply stirred, and Seriously happy.” I decided to try it, and I’m so glad I did.

In clear, fine prose, the thirteen stories in Robinson’s third collection explore many truths of our lives, our loves, and our leavings. Her characters wrestle with grief, lost love, terminal illness, aging, renewed friendship, and mutating love. You will read each story and plunge right into the next. You will be “deeply stirred” and will want a best friend to read these so you can share them.

—Liz Roland

**The Namesake**
Jhumpa Lahiri

In this novel of the immigrant experience in America, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli, after an arranged marriage in Calcutta, move to the United States. The couple settles in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Ashoke completes his graduate studies and Ashima works to overcome her homesickness by developing ties with the Bengali population in the Boston area. The book opens with the birth of their son Gogol, named for a favorite author of his father’s. The reader follows Gogol through his undergraduate days at Yale and graduate school in architecture at Columbia to a career in New York City. Along the way, Gogol struggles in relationships with women as he attempts to blend in as an American. With humor and sympathy, author Lahiri portrays the tension between Gogol’s desire to fit in and his loyalty to his family’s Bengali traditions.

—Ann Wilder

**Pearl**
Mary Gordon
New York: Pantheon, 2005

In a disturbing call on Christmas night from the U.S. State Department, Mary Meyers learns that her daughter Pearl has chained herself to a flagpole in an anonymous protest of those works with ideas that were anathema to the monarchy, but whose collected works fill fifty-two volumes. **Candide,** on Christmas night from the U.S. state department, Mary Meyers learns that her daughter Pearl has chained herself to a flagpole in an anonymous protest of those works with ideas that were anathema to the monarchy, and was forced to live in Switzerland and Prussia at various times.

Pearson’s chronological account of Voltaire is vivid and witty (as was Voltaire), yet erudite and authoritative. Read it for a picture of French life and thought in the eighteenth century as much as for the life of Voltaire.

—Phil Leinbach

**Saturday**
Ian McEwan
New York: Doubleday, 2005

Occasionally, I seek out a book that might reveal something about the mysterious working of the male psyche. **Saturday** proved to be an excellent choice. McEwan’s protagonist Henry Perowne, a successful London neurosurgeon, resembles the commanding figures striding the halls of the Duke University Medical Center. However, the determination and competitiveness that have served Perowne so well professionally constitute character flaws in the wrong situation. During the twenty-four hours in which the plot unfolds, these qualities precipitate a series of events that endanger Perowne and those he most loves. Ian McEwan, author of a number of books, including the Man Booker Award-winning Amsterdam and the best-selling Atonement, is a brilliant storyteller. His vivid writing evokes compelling, complex characters, establishes a strong sense of place, and creates a heightening sense of impending danger.

—Elizabeth Dunn

**The Bright Forever**
Lee Martin
New York: Shaye Areheart Books, 2005

One summer evening in a small Indiana town, teenaged Giley rats out his kid sister at the dinner table for overdue library books. A tired father, the town’s leading businessman, loses his temper, and nine-year-old Katie dashes barefoot from the house, throws her books into her bike basket, and Pedals off. Hours later father and son discover the bike, sans books, leaning against a parking meter in front of the J.C. Penney store.

This skillfully crafted work weaves through various character viewpoints, sometimes in the first person and sometimes in the third, unveiling interrelated layers of fact, opinion, and incongruity to create a lightning fast tempo, while at the same time painting a complex, textured portrait of people caught in the consequences of ill-considered choices and the all-to-human desire to slough off responsibility. The Bright Forever is a “must” read.

—Mark Kearney

**Voltaire Almighty: A Life in Pursuit of Freedom**
Roger Pearson
New York: Bloomsbury, 2005

The subtitle sums up this eighteenth-century French philosopher, historian, poet, dramatist, essayist, and champion of human rights. Voltaire was always fighting for freedom (his own and others)—from religion, from autocracy, from narrow thinking, from unjust treatment. This new biography explores the life, writings, and times of Voltaire (1694–1778). best known, perhaps, for the philosophical novel Candide; but whose collected works fill fifty-two volumes. However, Voltaire constantly downsized his writings or published abroad and anonymously those works with ideas that were anathema to the monarchy, and was forced to live in Switzerland and Prussia at various times.

Pearson’s chronological account of Voltaire is vivid and witty (as was Voltaire), yet erudite and authoritative. Read it for a picture of French life and thought in the eighteenth century as much as for the life of Voltaire.

—Phil Leinbach

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