



AMONG FRIENDS

a newsletter for the members of the Friends of the Duke University Libraries

Traditions and Transitions Among Friends

The Friends of the Libraries Annual Dinner offers an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of the academic year just ending, express appreciation for those members of the executive committee who have completed their terms of service, and welcome new members who will carry the group forward. The cold and stormy weather on the evening of this year's dinner didn't dampen the spirits of the 120 members and guests of the Friends who gathered at the Duke Gardens' Kirby Horton Hall. New acquaintances were at the tables of our sponsors, SunTrust Bank, DeHaven's Transfer, and the Gothic Bookshop, to share a delicious meal and enjoy a very entertaining conversation between author Haven Kimmel and Frank Stasio, host of WUNC's *The State of Things*.

Executive committee membership changes annually at the business meeting held during the dinner with the retirement of one third of the committee and the election of seven new members. At the April event, the group recognized retiring executive committee members David Guy T'70, Phil Leinbach T'56, Mary Ruth Miller G'66, Liz Roland T'66, Margo Rundles, and Ann Wilder and welcomed new members Pauletta Bracy, Macey Colvin, Leslie Dillon WC'62, Jared Mueller T'09, Marian Robboy, Ruth Ross WC'68, Sally Schauman WC'59, and David Stein.

Leadership and focus for the Friends of the Libraries are provided by the executive committee, which meets three times a year for updates on the Libraries and discussion and action in support of the Friends' three purposes: to encourage understanding of the work of the Duke University Libraries, to attract new financial resources, and to provide opportunities for service to the Libraries.

Rare Music in the Rare Book Room

The Libraries and the Duke University Musical Instrument Collections are already making plans for a third year of monthly Friday programs in the Biddle Rare Book Room at Perkins Library. The programs, which combine conversation, demonstration, and performance, feature a wide range of musical instruments and music. Each Rare Music event begins at 4:00pm and is followed by a reception. Complete information about the series will be available soon online in the Duke University calendar, but here's a preview:

September 12: "Echoes of the Past: Sounds of the American Civil War," in conjunction with an exhibit entitled *Songs of Glory, Songs of Sorrow: The Civil War in Music*, which will be on display in the Rare Book Room cases from July through September. On 12 September, vocalists, including Penelope Jensen, and instrumentalists, including Don Eagle, will perform selections from the musical holdings of the Special Collections Library.

October 17: A program featuring Steve Barrell, who will discuss the clavichord and perform on several historical instruments.

November 14: In a program titled "Reproduction: Some Thoughts on Recreating the Music of Bygone Ages," John Pringle will discuss "authenticity" in the performance of what has come to be called Early Music. Pringle has spent the last thirty years helping to recreate the sounds of music from past times by building stringed instruments based on historical models from the 12th to the 18th centuries. As a professional luthier, his specialty is the viola da gamba, but he has also built early violins, medieval fiddles, lutes, citterns, liras and lirones.

December 12: "Sound the Bright Flutes! Seasonal Music for Early Woodwinds," performed by Trio Rossignol: Karen Cook, Patricia Petersen, and Douglas Young. The program will include medieval English carols, French noels, settings by Praetorius of familiar German Christmas hymns, and more.

It's Not Your Mother's Library

Over the summer months the transformed second, third, and fourth floors of Perkins will open, now featuring architectural detailing and furnishings similar to those in the Bostock Library and on the first floor of Perkins. The spaces include meeting and group study spaces as well as book stacks, carrels, and some offices for librarians. Books are already being shelved on the second and third floors, and we have begun to use the meeting rooms.

On lower floor 1 of Perkins Library, a 25,000 sq.ft. teaching and learning center, the Link, will open in time for fall semester classes to meet in its six classrooms. The design of the Link, which is viewed as a model for future campus spaces, was a collaborative project of the Libraries, the provost, the academic deans, faculty, and the University's chief information officer. All Duke faculty teaching in 2007–2008 received an email describing the Link and the process by which they could request the use of one of its six classrooms. The Link, in addition to its innovative teaching spaces, includes four seminar rooms and eleven smaller project spaces and will provide learning tools and technology services.

Staff from the University's Office of Information Technology (OIT) and the college of arts and sciences will coordinate a walk-up help and information desk that will be open seven days a week, giving students extended access to the space and its resources and services.

All of the new spaces on lower floor 1 and floors 2,3, and 4 of Perkins are available for naming by individuals, corporations and foundations. The naming opportunities range from \$5,000 for a carrel to \$5 million for the Link. If you are interested in naming a space in Perkins, please contact Director of Development Tom Hadzor at 919.660.5940 or t.hadzor@duke.edu.

Let the Reading Begin!

For the second year, the Duke Alumni Association is sponsoring DukeReads, an online book club for alumni and friends of the University. You can get a head start this summer by reading Dave Eggers' *What is the What*, which is also the summer reading for the Class of 2012. Programs, October through April, will be moderated by National Public Radio's Frank Stasio, who will be joined by the person who recommended the book being discussed and virtual participants who send email or watch the webcast. The selectors for 2008-2009, and their books, have just been announced:

October: *In Our Time*, by Ernest Hemingway. Online chat on 22 October with Melissa Malouf, associate professor of the practice of English and director of the Office of Undergraduate Scholars and Fellows

November: *Howard's End*, by E.M. Forster. Online chat on 19 November with Judith Ruderman G'76, vice provost for academic and administrative services and adjunct professor of English

January: *Out of Africa*, by Isak Dinesen. Online chat on 14 January with Reynolds Price T'55, James B. Duke Professor of English

February: *The Towers of Trebizond*, by Rose Macaulay. Online chat on 18 February with Sam Wells, dean of Duke Chapel and research professor of Christian ethics at the divinity school

March: *The Known World*, by Edward P. Jones. Online chat on 18 March with Thavolia Glymph P'11, associate professor of African and African American studies and history

April: *Copenhagen*, by Michael Frayn. Online chat on 22 April with R. Sanders "Sandy" Williams M.D.'74, senior vice chancellor of academic affairs at the medical school

To learn more about DukeReads and how you can participate in the monthly book discussions, go to www.dukereads.com. The Duke Alumni Association sponsors DukeReads in partnership with the Duke University Libraries and several other University departments and organizations.

Save the Date—For Oliver Sacks

Noted neurologist Oliver Sacks will present the 2008 Weaver Lecture on 12 November at 6:00pm at Duke's Page Auditorium. The Weaver Lecture, established to honor the memory of former Library Advisory Board member William Weaver T'72, is being co-sponsored this year by Duke's Institute for Brain Sciences. Sacks will speak on the subject of music and the brain, the topic of his most recent book, *Musophilia*. Additional information about the event will be available in the fall issue of *Duke University Libraries* and the online Duke University calendar.

Recommended by a Friend...

A Sense of the World; How a Blind Man Became History's Greatest Traveler

Jason Roberts
New York: Harper Perennial, 2007

This is not a typical travel book nor is it about a typical traveler. From an early age, James Holman wanted to travel around the world. Joining the British navy was his first step, but in a few years he was blind. Undaunted, Holman set out to follow his dream.

Traveling in the early 19th century by foot, cart, carriage, ship, horse and sled, Holman circumnavigated the globe, made several less extensive trips, and visited every continent, avoiding heavily-populated areas when possible. He had very little money, no white cane and no knowledge of the many languages he encountered, yet he chose to travel alone whenever possible.

Holman published a narrative of his adventures which was praised by many. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society and was quoted by Charles Darwin. Holman contended that he saw better with his feet. However, his writings were belittled by others because in that day the blind were not thought to be acutely aware of their surroundings. For that reason, his final manuscripts were never published and his story disappeared from view until now.

—Barbara Branson

The Savage Detectives

Robert Bolano
New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007

In terms of technique, I have never read anything even remotely like *The Savage Detectives*. Ostensibly about a Latin American literary movement called visceral realism, it begins and ends with diary entries from a peripheral figure in the movement, and the vast central section is a mock oral history focusing on two of its major figures, Arturo Belano and Ulises Lima. Apparently the similarity in names is intended: Bolano himself founded a movement called infrarealism in 1976, and Belano's life roughly parallels his own. For the Latin American reader the book is full of inside jokes and vicious jabs at various writers, but for me it was just the age-old story of young men and women who yearn to write and be a part of the literary world. In that long central section, the narrators not only tell us things about Belano and Lima, but also unwittingly characterize themselves. I found that section endlessly fascinating, and wanted it never to end, a feeling I rarely have with any book. Bolano is like a Latin American Kerouac or Henry Miller, with that kind of freedom and zest, but he writes better than both of them. This is a brilliant novel.

—David Guy

On Agate Hill

Lee Smith
Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 2006

In *On Agate Hill*, Lee Smith tells the compelling story of a woman whose life is irrevocably changed by the Civil War while providing a view of life in North Carolina from the 1870s until the 1920s.

In 2006 the new owners of Agate Hill, an ante bellum home near Hillsborough, North Carolina, find the childhood diary of Molly Petree. Molly, writing in the 1870s, explains how she came live in North Carolina after the deaths of her father and brothers in the Civil War and tells the story of life at Agate Hill during Reconstruction. By the time she is sixteen, Molly has lost all the members of her immediate family as well as the cousin who adopted her on the death of her mother. Just as Agate Hill is about to fall into the hands of creditors, Simon Black, a friend of her father from his days in the Confederate army, rescues Molly and becomes her benefactor. The rest of her story—her school days at Gatewood Academy, her life in the North Carolina mountains as a teacher and wife, and her return to Agate Hill—is told through letters, journals, and court records.

—Ann Wilder

Coming off a short-story reading phase, I have three (short) recommendations in this single submission. I began, of course, with *Our Story Begins* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), Tobias Wolff's latest volume of collected and new stories. Character-evoking descriptions like these linger in the mind: "Her boy had a good heart. He had a soul. For the first time, she feared he might lose it." Joyce Carol Oates' *Wild Nights!* (New York: HarperCollins, c2008) invents—with impressive exercise of imagination—the last days of literary luminaries of the past. Emily Dickinson comes back to life as an automaton; Edgar Allan Poe descends into isolation-induced madness as a lighthouse keeper. Maybe the most remarkable of these three collections is *The Boat* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), a first book by Nam Le that probes the meaning of place and the inescapable power of relationships. On the "macro" level, the title story illuminates the lot of displaced people. On the "micro" level, it's a wrenching tale of strength and suffering.

—Bob Bliwise

The Law of Dreams

Peter Behrens
Hanover, NH: Steerforth Press, 2006

The Law of Dreams tells the story of the long and often desperately lonely journey of Fergus O'Brien from a farm in Ireland to England and eventually to a new life in North America at the height of the Great Famine in 1847. During this odyssey he meets, and at times comes to depend on, an array of unforgettable characters, each struggling to survive in his or her own way. Under often nightmarish circumstances he persists, moving forward as best he can against what may seem like insurmountable odds. In the process, described in rich detail and beautiful language, Fergus undergoes a transformation from initial innocence to a much different state. Behrens is a fine writer who portrays the grim results of this natural catastrophe and the associated political context in a bold, vivid and yet graceful way, transporting the reader to the time and places in which Fergus followed "the law of dreams."

—Deborah Jakubs

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