

Guenevere's Quest



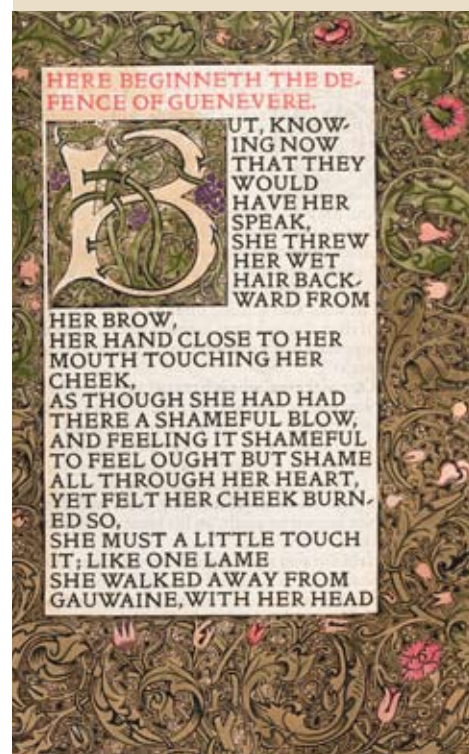
The Defence of Guenevere has returned to the UB Libraries' Special Collections following its chivalric journey to the British Isles to be a showpiece of the 2006-07 major exhibit held in Glasgow, Scotland and Liverpool, England, *Doves and Dreams: The Art of Frances Macdonald and J. Herbert McNair*. Curated by Pamela Robertson, Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, University of Glasgow, the exhibit was sponsored by the Hunterian and the Walker Art Gallery, National Museums, Liverpool.

The saga of *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems* began with the discovery by John Edens, Assistant Director, University Libraries, that UB's copy of this selection of poems by William Morris, published by the Kelmscott Press in 1892, contained twenty-one original watercolors on vellum by sisters Frances and Margaret Macdonald, making this copy a one-of-a-kind edition. The volume was donated to the UB Libraries by Thomas B. Lockwood in 1935. The circumstances surrounding the special commissioning of the magnificent watercolors remains a mystery. Frances and Margaret Macdonald, along with their husbands, James Herbert McNair and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, were known as the influential "Glasgow Four" during the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. The group produced remarkable watercolors, glassware, metalwork, furniture, textiles, and interior design.

In his quest for information about the watercolors bound in this special edition, Edens e-mailed Pamela Robertson, an expert on the Macdonalds. Amazed to learn about these original watercolors, Robertson traveled from Glasgow to Buffalo in January 2006 to examine the volume and to research the Thomas B. Lockwood materials hoping to discover more about the commissioning of the art works. Her travels were funded by a grant from the Carnegie Foundation. Thrilled by the vitality and freshness of the well-preserved watercolors, Robertson arranged with UB's Special Collections to loan the unique volume for the British exhibit. High quality digital images of all of the watercolors were also prepared for the exhibit. Robertson considers the discovery of the watercolors to be "the most exciting find in recent years. Having known the watercolours only through faded sepia photographs, it was so exciting to see the brilliance of the originals and to discover new works."

A special case was built in Glasgow to hold *The Defence of Guenevere* during the year-long exhibit. Throughout the exhibit's run, the pages of the volume were turned to display each of the watercolors by Frances Macdonald. Now, the Kelmscott *Guenevere* once again reposes in our Special Collections vault, a "grail" among our precious rare books.

(continued)



The exhibit is documented in the book, *Doves and Dreams*, edited by Pamela Robertson (Lund Humphries, 2006). Therein, Robertson discusses the artists' portrayal of Arthurian legend in these watercolors:

"In late nineteenth-century Britain, Arthurian subject matter, inspired by Malory's fifteenth-century *Morte d'Arthur*, presented a glorious world of knights, chivalry, courage and love, which provided a powerful and imaginative antidote to the harsher realities of urban industrialization. The sisters focused on poems addressing courtly love, not chivalric action, illustrating the narratives of the knights' beautiful and often tragic lady loves, including Guenevere, Guendolin, and Jehane. Love, loss and otherworldly powers permeate the images and, though the male is largely absent or at best a shadowy figure, the polarities of **male:female; action:passivity; duty:emotion; death:life** are prominent."



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A Newsletter from the University at Buffalo Libraries

Winter 2007 - 2008

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New Entrances to Capen and Lockwood Libraries— Spacious, High Tech, and Vibrant

The inviting areas feature new lighting, specially designed service desks, plasma screen TV monitors, and new furniture.



Initiated to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act standards, new entrances to the Capen Libraries and to Lockwood Memorial Library opened at the beginning of the academic year. The inviting areas feature new lighting and flooring, specially designed service desks, plasma screen TV monitors, and new furniture. Funding for the redesign of these spaces is provided by the New York State Capital Fund and the University at Buffalo.

Architectural Resources, a firm specializing in the planning and interior design of large scale commercial, educational, and institutional projects, developed and oversaw the new library entrances, the first two projects among many planned to enhance the University at Buffalo's three campuses. These projects and the new Founders Plaza are the harbingers of the University's recently initiated

"Building UB: The Comprehensive Physical Plan" with its vision to create a model 21st century university setting standards for academic excellence and quality of life. Architectural Resources has locations in historic buildings in Buffalo and New York City. Concept Construction Corporation, Elma, NY, performed the actual construction of the entrances and their structural features.

The furniture, featuring "laptop bars," casual seating, and exhibit display units, comes from Millington Lockwood, Buffalo, and Displays2Go, Bristol, RI.

Students, enjoying the color, spaciousness, and plasma screen TV, have dubbed the Capen lobby "Club Capen." The UB Libraries invite you to come experience these new engaging spaces.





This is my first opportunity to communicate with you since the "Acting" designation was removed from my title, and I have officially become the Associate Vice President for the University Libraries. It's definitely an honor – if not a bit intimidating – to assume the reigns of this prestigious organization, especially, at a time when so many important changes are taking place in the environment in which academic libraries operate. Change was also central at the UB Libraries 30 years ago when I was first hired to help oversee the migration of most of the Libraries from the South Campus to the new buildings on the North Campus. Now, as Associate Vice President, it looks as if I will again have the exciting opportunity to update and enhance the physical Libraries one more time to move us in synch with President Simpson's ambitious master plan to grow and further improve all facets of the University at Buffalo, UB2020.

Many of you will remember that the Libraries opened an off-campus Annex last year and that we started moving low-use and electronically superseded research materials to that site to free space in our primary facilities. We have already moved nearly 500,000 volumes to the Annex, thus pockets of space are appearing in library stacks that have been over-packed for decades. This has prompted us to begin intensive space renovation planning to envision and develop libraries to meet the needs of 21st century students and scholars. Several months ago, I was invited to serve on a facilities planning project called the "Heart of the Campus," a demonstration effort associated with the UB2020 Comprehensive Physical Plan. Two things excited me about this effort. First, the Libraries were acknowledged as being the heart of this University, a central and crucial component of the institution. Second, the University acknowledged that one of the best ways to make the campus attractive, more effective, and more inviting to the existing community, as well as to potential students and faculty, was to invest in and update the Libraries. I am chairing a "21st Century Libraries" subcommittee that has been looking at innovative library facilities at the finest universities and planning renovations at UB that will have an immediate impact. Increased quiet study space, flexible areas for collaborative group work, technology-enabled seminar rooms, cafés, and comfortable lounge seating rank high on the list of the modifications we plan to make. What won't ever change is the Libraries' commitment to provide access to quality information and to provide expertise in locating and using that information. I will keep you apprised of our progress; I appreciate your continued interest.

Steve Roberts

Charles D. Abbott Library Fellow Wicked Wyndham—Self Proclaimed "Enemy" of His Culture



Yolanda Morato, a professor at the University of Huelva, Spain, spent three months this past summer in the UB Libraries conducting research in our extensive Wyndham Lewis manuscripts holdings, held in the Poetry Collection. Among other scholarly projects, Professor Morato is engaged in a major venture with Impedimenta, a Spanish publisher, to produce a set of translated Lewis works. She hopes the venture will introduce this author to the Spanish audience since Lewis was banned in Spain during the dictatorship era. She found the manuscripts, letters, and art works to be a treasure trove for investigators and felt she was in "heaven" while immersed in our Lewis collection.

Professor Morato presented a talk to the UB community, held in the Special Collections Research Room on August 29. She discussed Lewis' rather angry or disenchanted nature and his interactions with the most celebrated writers of his time—T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Ernest Hemingway—who he alternately praised and condemned in print (while continuously requesting their monetary assistance). She also wove together Lewis' work

in several mediums, writing, painting, editing, and as a vocal critic of modernism. Her travel to and research at UB was funded by the *Charles D. Abbott Library Fellowship*, sponsored by the University Libraries to enable extensive scholarly research in our Special Collections.

Next to Wyndham Lewis' vibrant full-length portrait of Samuel Capen, the University at Buffalo's influential Chancellor from 1922-1950, Professor Morato is pictured here accompanied by Dr. Michael Basinski, Curator of the Poetry Collection. This Capen portrait, which graces the entrance to Special Collections, will travel next summer for exhibition at London's National Portrait Gallery.

DRAWN FROM LIFE



Harvey Breverman



Breverman/ePic/Libraries Collaboration Creates *Drawn From Life*

The University Libraries Poetry Collection, in collaboration with the UB Experimental Print Imaging Center (**ePic**), the UB Libraries' Center for Book Preservation, and the UB Art Galleries, presents *Drawn From Life*, lithographs created by Harvey Breverman, SUNY Distinguished Professor of Art Emeritus. An internationally renowned artist and educator, Breverman's paintings, drawings, and prints are found in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum, the British Museum, London, and the Library of Congress. In 2003, he was honored with the prestigious Distinguished Teaching of Art Award by the College Art Association.

The *Drawn From Life* lithographs feature striking images of individuals with literary and artistic connections to the University at Buffalo. In this collection, one encounters pioneering American poet Robert Creeley together with visual artist Jim Dine, acclaimed poets and former UB faculty members Carl Dennis and Susan Howe, poet Robert Duncan, and best-selling author Amy Tan, a presenter in UB's 2003 Distinguished Speakers Series. Also included are a self-portrait and "Harvey's Hip," a poem by Robert Creeley which celebrates Breverman's creative process, imagination and insight.

Hand drawn on stones and plates by Harvey Breverman, the *Drawn From Life* portraits are based on his detailed sketchbook notations. Breverman sketched his subjects as they participated in panel discussions and receptions on the UB campus, and he often displayed the sketches to his subjects at the event's conclusion. Of his subject matter, Breverman comments: "I have drawn them all, on one or many occasions. Some are surrounded by cryptic jottings wrenched out of context; they comprise a panoply of human emotion."

What began as a single drawing by Breverman blossomed into a multinational collaborative effort, the first of its kind based in UB's **ePic**, which served as the portfolio's publisher. The **ePic**, located in the UB Center for the Arts, fosters the growth of local printmaking by making contemporary, hand-made print technologies more accessible.

Drawn From Life was printed in a limited edition of twenty by Master Printer Chunwoo Nam with the assistance of graduate students John Shera, John Lee, and Seung Ho Shin. Nam currently serves on the faculty of the Herron School of Art and Design, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis. As the project evolved, Breverman engaged in frequent conversations with the student printmakers, and spent many late-night hours working with the students.

Breverman describes the portfolio, completed in 2005, as the result of "the human element of the collaboration." He views the project as one that benefited from the viewpoints and multifaceted talents of the international graduate students involved. Breverman's working documents and other materials related to the creation of *Drawn From Life* serve as valuable teaching tools which document the creative process.

Each copy of *Drawn From Life* is encased in a clothbound portfolio handcrafted by Conservation Technician Kim Wagner of the Libraries' Center for Book Preservation. The lithographs are printed on beautiful Magnani Pescia Cream, Rives BFK Cream and Tan papers, and each piece measures 16 x 22 inches. Each lithograph is signed and numbered by the artist, and profits from the sale of *Drawn From Life* go directly to **ePic** to support future cooperative artistic and literary endeavors.

Those interested in purchasing the limited edition *Drawn From Life* may contact Michael Basinski, Curator of the Poetry Collection, mbasinski@buffalo.edu / 716-645-2917.

"I have drawn them all, on one or many occasions. Some are surrounded by cryptic jottings wrenched out of context; they comprise a panoply of human emotion."

