

# NOTES



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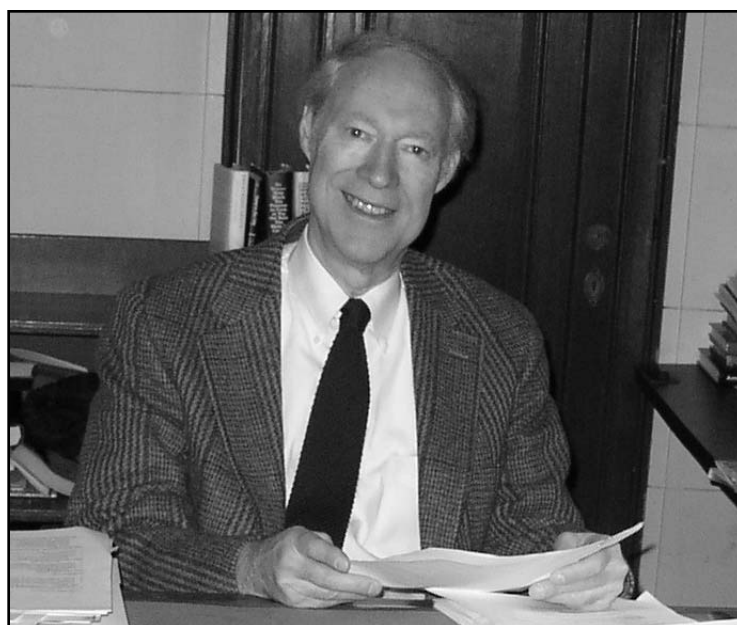
## MARK PIEL ANNOUNCES INTENTION TO RETIRE

At the Library board's December meeting, Mark Piel announced his intention to retire by the end of 2004.

Mark said in part: "More than a quarter of a century has passed since I assumed the position of Librarian here in February 1978. Planning for the Library's future expansion is now complete. It is time for someone new, who will live with the changes, to be in charge of that process. I will stay on until a successor is chosen and am at the board's service to aid in the transition."

The board has appointed a search committee consisting of Charles G. Berry, committee chair; Ralph S. Brown Jr., William J. Dean, Jenny Lawrence, Daniel M. Rossner, and Barbara H. Stanton. The committee is currently defining the criteria for a new Librarian.

There will be many occasions to honor Mark properly in the months ahead as the Library celebrates its 250th anniversary. In the meantime, the trustees want all those interested in the Library to know of Mark's plans. The committee very much welcomes input from all members concerning criteria and candidates. Please send your suggestions to Charles Berry, care of the Library. Staff also will have an important role in the search process.



The trustees are committed to finding the best possible successor to carry on the tradition of Library leadership and membership service which Mark has exemplified so splendidly for so long.

❖ *Correction: The Special Anniversary Library Notes incorrectly credited Jean Strouse with a Pulitzer Prize. We apologize for the error.*

## CALENDAR

January 13 6:30 P.M. Temple Israel <b>ROSS KING</b> on <b>MICHELANGELO</b>	February 3 6:00 P.M. Members' Room <b>COLUM McCANN</b> on <b>DANCER</b>	February 6 5:30 P.M. Members' Room <b>THE LAUGHTER</b> AND LORE OF <b>JON SCIESZKA</b>	February 10 6:00 P.M. Members' Room <b>CHARLES</b> <b>ROWAN BEYE</b> on <b>ODYSSEUS</b>	February 19 6:00 P.M. Members' Room <b>ELEANOR DWIGHT</b> on <b>EDITH WHARTON</b>	March 10 6:30 P.M. Temple Israel <b>DONALD KAGAN</b> on <b>THE</b> <b>PELOPONNESIAN WAR</b>
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❖ *Registration is required for all events. To register, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or [events@nysoclib.org](mailto:events@nysoclib.org).*

❖ *To receive technology news and articles electronically, send an e-mail to [webmaster@nysoclib.org](mailto:webmaster@nysoclib.org). To receive the monthly Children's Events Calendar, call the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230.*



## 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON: LIBRARY LECTURES

Registration is required for all events. Listed fees may be paid at the door.  
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### COLUM McCANN

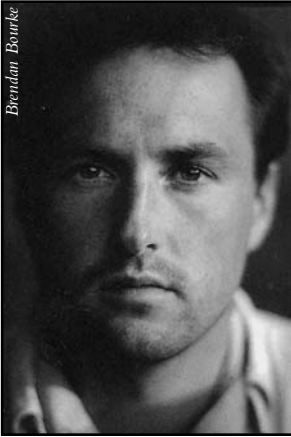
#### DANCER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

*"Just when we all thought they were finished, a small blond boy stepped out of the line. He extended his legs, placed his hands firmly on his hips and hitched his thumbs at his back. He bent his neck slightly forward, stretched his elbows out and began."*

The acclaimed author of *This Side of Brightness* turns to the wild life and times of the Rudolf Nureyev. Covering Nureyev's life from his obscure beginning in a small Soviet town to the high life of 1980s New York, McCann employs a chorus of voices, fictional and nonfictional, to present multiple sides of the story. *Publishers Weekly* says, "the novel is a lovely showcase for [McCann's] fluid prose and storytelling skill," while David McCullough, in *The New York Times Book Review*, states that "McCann writes a dazzling blend of menace and heartbreak."

McCann has been awarded the Pushcart Prize for his short fiction and is a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and *The Atlantic Monthly*. This event is \$10 for members and their guests.



Brendan Bourke

### CHARLES ROWAN BEYE

#### IMAGINING A BIOGRAPHY OF ODYSSEUS

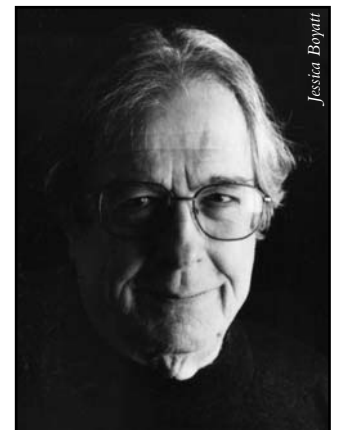
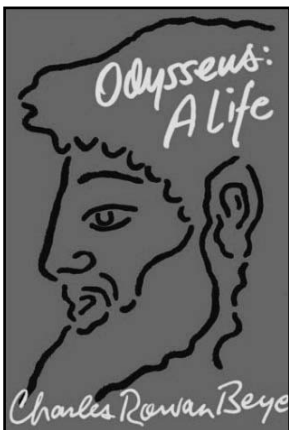
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

*"You stubborn man, full of so many plans, deceits, not even in your own land have you any intention of stopping your cheating, your lying words, which you know you love from the bottom of your heart."*

—Athena to Odysseus, *Odyssey* (13.293-95, trans. Beye)

Odysseus has been imagined in works from Homer's *Odyssey* to the film *O Brother Where Art Thou?*. In *Odysseus: A Life*, classicist Charles Rowan Beye pieces together ancient sources and modern scholarship to tell a life story which *Kirkus Reviews* calls "lively, informative, and great fun: the perfect introduction to Odysseus and the society that shaped his exploits."

Beye is Distinguished Professor of Classics Emeritus at the City University of New York and has also taught at Boston, Yale, and Stanford universities. He is the author of *Ancient Epic Poetry: Homer, Apollonius, Virgil* and *Ancient Greek Literature and Society*. Members may recall his popular Conversations on Greek tragic drama in May 1997. This lecture is \$10 for members and their guests.



Jessica Boyatt

## READING GROUP

### ANTHONY GRONOWICZ: NEW YORK CITY, AN INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

THURSDAYS, JANUARY 22, FEBRUARY 26, AND MARCH 25, 11:00 A.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM

Anthony Gronowicz returns to lead three discussions of the history of New York City with special attention paid to the role of The New York Society Library in educational and cultural life. Primary and secondary sources on the history of the city and the Library will be read. Gronowicz is the author of *Race and Class Politics in New York City Before the Civil War* and a professor at Bronx Community College. The group is free of charge, but registration is required. To register and receive the first reading assignment, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or [events@nysoclib.org](mailto:events@nysoclib.org).

**LIBRARY LECTURES *continued***

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To register, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.*

**ELEANOR DWIGHT**

**EDITH WHARTON, ITALIAN STYLE**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM**

Although Edith Wharton is known for her novels about "Old New York," she actually lived almost half her life in Europe. Her experiences there, particularly in Italy, threw her New York subject into relief. Dwight will begin with Wharton's early Italian travels and writings, where Wharton sharpened her pencils on Italian subjects, producing her first novel about a fictional Italian duchy modeled on 18th-century Parma and Mantua. Later she wrote on Italian villas and gardens, used Italian settings in her novels, and continually criticized New York for not living up to her Italian fantasy. Her love of Italian art, history, and landscape surfaced as late as 1934 in her story "Roman Fever," written three years before her death.

Dwight is the author of *Edith Wharton: An Extraordinary Life*, which Louis Auchincloss called "the best book on Edith Wharton" and Leon Edel called "a distinguished and beautiful work." She has curated Wharton exhibitions at the National Academy of Design and (with Viola Winner) at the National Portrait Gallery. Her most recent book is a biography of Diana Vreeland. The lecture will be given with slides. There is a \$10 fee per person.



Creighton University



Kyle Eriksen/WWD

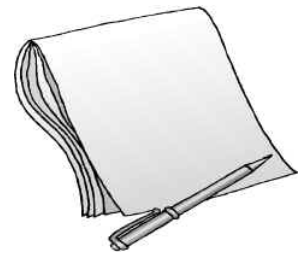
**OUTREACH**

**YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS 2004**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 2**

The New York Society Library Young Writers Awards honor excellent writing by young Library members. Writers in grades 3 through 12 are invited to submit a short story or essay, fiction or nonfiction, or a poem. Prizes will be presented in three age categories in both prose and poetry, with the winning entries chosen by authors Dave Johnson, Robert Quackenbush, Elizabeth Winthrop, and Edra Ziesk. In honor of the Library's anniversary, the theme is books and libraries.

All submissions are subject to the competition rules, which are available at the circulation desk, on the web at [www.nysoclib.org](http://www.nysoclib.org), or by mail by calling 212-288-6900 x230. Entrants must be children or grandchildren of Library members, or students at a member school. Entries must be postmarked no later than April 2. Watch this space for announcements of the awards ceremony and the winning entries.



**PROJECT CICERO™ 2004**

**COLLECTION: FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 4; SORTING: MARCH 3, 4:00 P.M.**

This year, more than 1,000 teachers are expected to benefit from Project Cicero's collection and distribution of books. To help, bring new or gently used children's and young adult books to the Project Cicero boxes in the Library entry hall, February 27-March 4. Adults and children in third grade and up can help sort books at the Library on March 3. For more details, see [www.nysoclib.org/kids/cicero.html](http://www.nysoclib.org/kids/cicero.html) or leave a message at 212-288-6900 x511.

Project Cicero is a partnership of sixty New York City Independent, Parochial and Public Schools, The New York Society Library, Children For Children Foundation, Teach For America New York, The New York Teaching Fellows, HELP USA, Choice Courier Systems Inc., Project Renewal, NEMF, *The New York Post*, and Vornado Realty Trust.

**CHILDREN'S LIBRARY AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES**

Registration is required for all events. Listed fees may be paid at the door.  
 To register, contact the Children's Library at 212-288-6900 x234 or [carrie@nysoclib.org](mailto:carrie@nysoclib.org).

**JON SCIESZKA**

**SAY CHEESE: THE LAUGHTER AND LORE OF JON SCIESZKA**

FOR FIRST GRADE AND OLDER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 4:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

"That's your story?" said Jack. "You've got to be kidding. That's not a Fairly Stupid Tale... That's an Unbelievably Stupid Tale. That is the Most Stupid Tale I Ever—awwwk!" *The Giant* grabbed Jack and dragged him to the next page.



Jon Scieszka's fractured fairy tales, including *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* and *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs*, have changed the way children and adults see classic stories. "I write books because I love to make kids laugh," Scieszka says. "Kids are the perfect audience, much more willing to be goofy and wonder what if." Along with his fairy tales, he writes the popular *Time Warp Trio* series.

A former elementary school teacher, Scieszka is also the founder of the literacy initiative Guys Read, which encourages reading for boys in and out of school. His books have been honored by the American Library Association, *Publishers Weekly*, and many state educational organizations.

In this lecture Scieszka will talk about his work and read favorite passages, including a preview from his upcoming book *Science Verse*. This event is \$10 per family.



John Chapple Photography

**YOUNG WRITERS' WORKSHOP**

Young writers in grades four through six can explore different genres with notable writers. There is a \$10 per session fee. All sessions take place from 4:30 to 6:00 P.M. in the Whitridge Room.

**FICTION WRITING WITH RACHEL COHN \* TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

The author of *The Steps*, Cohn will teach character and plot development in writing original stories.

**PLAYWRITING WITH ROB ACKERMAN \* TUESDAY, MARCH 2**

Ackerman's play *Tabletop* has been produced Off-Broadway. Here he will share the elements of playwriting and guide participants in writing their own scenes.

**BOOK DISCUSSIONS**

Parents and children are invited to join Children's Librarians Carrie Silberman and Randi Levy for discussions of these award-winning books. All sessions will take place in the Whitridge Room.

**FOR MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS IN GRADES 4 TO 6**

**AT THE SIGN OF THE STAR BY KATHERINE STURTEVANT \* THURSDAY, JANUARY 29 AT 5:30 P.M.**

In seventeenth-century London, independent Meg dreams of becoming a bookseller.

**ELLA ENCHANTED BY GAIL CARSON LEVINE \* THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26 AT 5:30 P.M.**

Ella must overcome the curse of obedience to win the handsome prince.

**FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN GRADES 3 TO 5**

**FRINDLE BY ANDREW CLEMENTS \* TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24 AT 5:30 P.M.**

To challenge his teacher's love of the dictionary, Nick invents a new word that takes on a life of its own.

**2003-2004 AUTHOR SERIES**

Registration is required for all events.

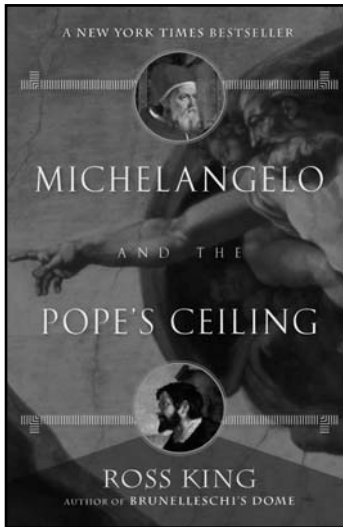
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**ROSS KING**

**MICHELANGELO AND THE POPE'S CEILING**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 6:30 P.M., TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET**

*"Michelangelo...wrote a response to the pope, a defiant letter informing Julius that he did not intend ever to return to Rome; [and] that in exchange for his faithful service he had not deserved such maltreatment."*



In 1508, stubborn and irascible Pope Julius II commanded the sculptor Michelangelo to learn the art of fresco in order to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Ross King's *Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling* describes the artist's day-to-day struggle to complete his masterpiece, despite ill health, family troubles, the whims of his employer, and a growing rivalry with the young Raphael. Critics have praised King's clear descriptions of Renaissance Rome's rich history and politics as well as of fresco technique. *Booklist* says, "King chronicles Michelangelo's aesthetic decisions and clarion triumphs over myriad forms of adversity with expertise and contagious enthusiasm."

King is also the author of a bestselling history, *Brunelleschi's Dome*, and *Ex-Libris* and *Domino*, novels. This lecture is free for members and guests.



**DONALD KAGAN**

**THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 6:30 P.M., TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET**

*"For this was the greatest upheaval that had ever shaken the Hellenes, extending also to some part of the barbarians, one might say even to a very large part of mankind."*

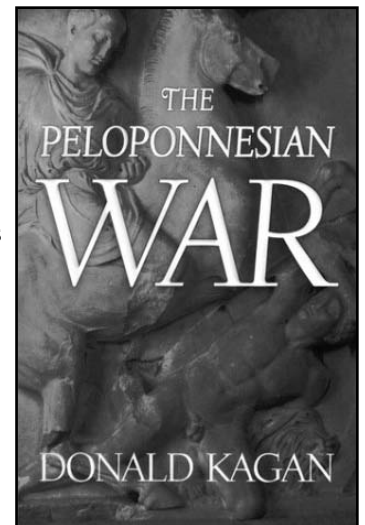
—*Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War (1.1.2, trans. Richard Crawley)*

The long and futile war between the advanced societies of Athens and Sparta continues to instruct not only historians, but also analysts of international relations, military tactics and political science. Donald Kagan calls it "a source of wisdom about the behavior of human beings under the enormous pressures imposed by war, plague, and civil strife, and about the potentialities of leadership and the limits within which it must inevitably operate." Kagan's four-volume *History of the Peloponnesian War* has long been considered the leading scholarly work about the savage demise of ancient Greece. His new one-volume edition presents this tragic and cautionary chapter of history to the nonspecialist.



*Ancient map of the Greek isles*

Kagan is Sterling Professor of Classics and History at Yale University. His other books include *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace* and *The Western Heritage*. This lecture is free for members and guests.





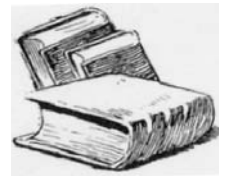
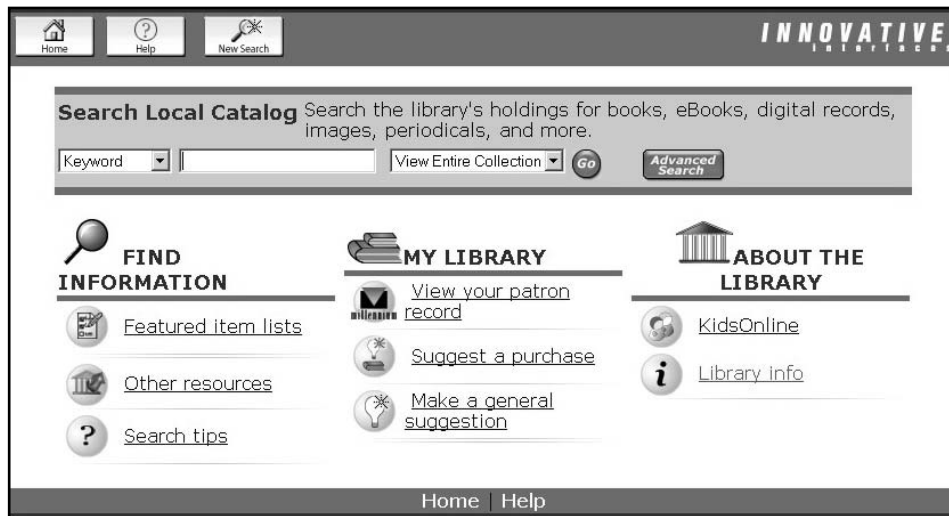
# THE NEW SYSTEM

After five years with the current cataloguing/circulation system and a year of vendor evaluations, the Library is pleased to announce the installation of a new automated system: Innovative Interfaces' Millennium. Millennium will be open to Library members and to the general public this spring.

The new system's improvements include an easy-to-use Internet interface (accessible from the Library or from home without a password) and easier access to our remote resources, such as the ProQuest-*New York Times* archives, *American National Biography*, *Oxford English Dictionary*, and *Oxford Reference Online*. Members will also be able to renew books, create book "wish lists," and place or cancel holds themselves.

For a preview, visit other New York City libraries that use Millennium: the American Museum of Natural History (<http://www.libcat.amnh.org>), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (<http://www.metmuseum.org>), or the New York Public Library Research Libraries (<http://catnyp.nypl.org>).

Technology workshops on using the new system will be held for all interested Library members in the spring. Look for dates and registration information in the next *Library Notes*. If you would like to receive e-mail notifications about workshops or system installation updates, send an e-mail to Ingrid Richter at [webmaster@nysoclib.org](mailto:webmaster@nysoclib.org).



❖ Please write or telephone the Library with any comments or suggestions. Visit our website at [www.nysoclib.org](http://www.nysoclib.org).

**THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY**

53 East 79th Street  
New York, NY 10021