



NOTES

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 1, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

☞ To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

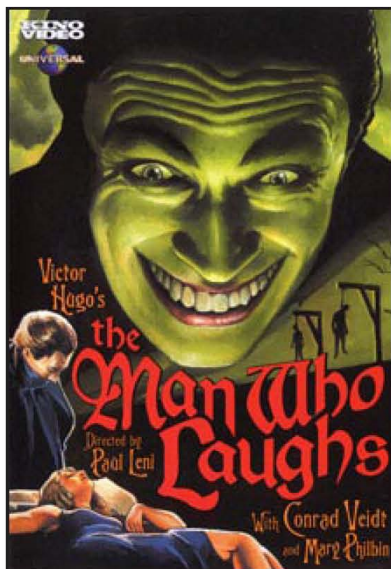
☞ The listed fee may be paid at the door.

THE OCTUOR DE FRANCE

A SILENT FILM PRESENTATION WITH LIVE MUSIC

THE MAN WHO LAUGHS (1928), BASED ON VICTOR HUGO'S *L'HOMME QUI RIT*

TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$30 PER PERSON



Seven years after *Les Misérables*, Victor Hugo returned to the theme of society's outcasts with *L'Homme Qui Rit*, a romantic tale of a nobleman's son horribly disfigured in revenge for his father's error. The story of how he gains his humanity and his love was adapted in 1928 for the silent screen by the famous director Paul Leni. Conrad Veidt, who would later immortalize such characters as Major Strasser in *Casablanca*, achieved an early triumph as the title character.

The film's original score was lost, but in 1998 a new score was commissioned from acclaimed Canadian composer Gabriel Thibaudeau for the Cannes Film Festival. This score, blending a contemporary sensibility with a feel for the seven-teeth-century setting, will be presented live by the Octuor de France.

The Octuor de France, founded twenty-five years ago by clarinetist Jean-Louis Sajot, is one of the leading ensembles for the promotion of French music throughout the world. Played in formations from duet to octet, their wide repertoire includes popular classical, romantic, and contemporary works combined with rediscovered or rarely played works. They also commission scores from present-day composers and participate in the revival of the silent film by giving "concert-projections" with scores composed especially for them. These have been presented in many prestigious venues including the Cannes Film Festival, the Bologna Film Festival, the Telluride Film Festival, and the New York Film Festival.

Reviewing a 2000 "concert-projection" of *The Man Who Laughs* at the Sodankylä Film Festival in Finland, the newspaper *Aamulehti* said, "The 15th Sodankylä Film Festival saw the best silent film performance in its history, and it could easily be the best in the world. When the French chamber music ensemble the Octuor de France accompanied *The Man Who Laughs* in the cold Festival tent, the audience, totally immersed in the performance, was transported into another dimension. We were assailed by love, hate, horror and tenderness in their most basic forms. The last time I experienced something like this, I was a child watching Disney's *Fantasia*....It was difficult to decide if you were applauding the film or the performance of the chamber ensemble....The combination of Leni's film and Thibaudeau's music was really brilliant—one with his pictures, with other with his music, both with compassion."

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

The past few months have seen many significant milestones for the Library. In early November, the Board of Trustees held a retreat for the first time in our history. We gathered in a conference room at SIBL (the New York Public Library's Science, Industry, and Business Library) on a rainy Saturday for five hours and had productive discussions about the Library's future. For the first half of the retreat, senior staff members gave thoughtful and inspiring presentations about our needs and their aspirations for the growth and development of the Library. In the second half, Board members discussed how we can meet approaching challenges.

We face challenges and opportunities in our increasingly technological world, where the Internet has become so central to our lives. But we also face a more immediate challenge: our need for space. We have only two more years' worth of shelf space for new books, which we acquire at the rate of 4,000-4,500 titles per year. Our public rooms are in high demand, and we are running out of creative solutions for staff work areas.

All the participants in our retreat recognized our urgent need to raise funds for completing the expansion plans we put in place a few years ago, and our need for professional help in realizing our goals.

Which brings me to another milestone the Library is fortunate to observe: the hiring of our first Director of Development. Joan Zimmett (profiled on page 3) has had an excellent track record with both individuals and foundations, especially at the 92nd Street Y. We are delighted that she will bring her insights, contacts, energy, and love for this Library to this important position, which will be key to meeting the challenges we identified at the retreat.

It is fitting that the Library breaks this new ground as we observe two special anniversaries. I hope you will all see the exhibition in the Peluso Gallery on the second floor, commemorating our 70th year in our beautiful building. Much as we love our elegant home, we recognize its physical constraints. The passage of so many years since we moved here from University Place underscores the fact that our needs in the first decade of the 21st century are outstripping the bounds of this handsome structure.

A final anniversary that we are delighted to observe is the 100th birthday (on November 30, 2007) of our beloved former Board member Jacques Barzun. A stalwart of the intellectual and literary life of New York, he came in 1923 from Paris to Columbia College, where his broad love for and knowledge of the humanities inspired several generations of students, readers, and thinkers. His long affiliation with the Society Library was a source of joy and exhilaration for those fortunate enough to know him here. As a fledgling Board member in the mid-1990s, I held him in great awe, as I did Walter Lord, Shirley Hazzard, Robert A. Caro, and so many others whose literary accomplishments have done us proud.

Mr. Barzun's intellectual memoir *cum* humanities survey course, *From Dawn to Decadence*, quotes a marvelous statement from Matthew Arnold (grandfather of our longtime Board chair, Arnold Whitridge): "The men of culture are the true apostles of equality." For me, this is an apt expression of the Society Library's mission over our long history. We have nurtured generations of men and women of culture who—to continue Arnold's quote—"have a passion...for carrying from one end of society to the other the best ideas of their time." If we can meet the challenges that face us today, we can ensure that this passion continues to be fueled here for many generations to come.

Best wishes for a happy New Year.



Members enjoying the new exhibition at its opening on December 15



Charles G. Berry
Chairman of the Board

FROM THE HEAD LIBRARIAN

BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP NEWS

As we begin our 254th year as an institution, I am reminded that the many pleasures of the Head Librarian position include learning about both the depths of our rich collections and our members' reading and research interests. Whether by a talk at the Reference Desk, an e-mail exchange, or a letter through the mail, I learn a lot. All these encounters keep me conscious that my role as Head Librarian is to look towards the future and to focus on the long-term needs of the institution.

Most recently, I had the great pleasure of visiting Irving Kahn, who, at a young 102, is the most senior member of the Library. Our March/April *Library Notes* will include a profile of Mr. Kahn and highlights of his stimulating discussion.

STAFF NEWS

I am very happy to announce the appointment of Joan Zimmert as the Library's Director of Development. Joan (*pictured at right*) has many years of professional development and fundraising experience with the 92nd Street Y, Rich Associates, and the Bruce Porter Company. Joan, her husband Mark, and their children have been Library members for many years.



We also welcome Joel Blaha as our new Systems Assistant and Matthew Haugen as a new Bibliographic Assistant.

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK, APRIL 13-19, 2008

This year our Library will join thousands of other North American institutions in celebrating National Library Week. On April 15, we will offer a discussion entitled "The Book is Dead! Long Live the Book," featuring panelists Michael Gorman and James G. Neal and host Maggie Jackson. Mr. Gorman was Dean of Library Services at the Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno, and served as president of the American Library Association in 2005-06. Mr. Neal is currently Vice-President for Information Services and University Librarian at Columbia University. A longtime Library member, Ms. Jackson is the author of *What's Happening to Home?: Balancing Work, Life, and Refuge in the Information Age* and the upcoming *Distracted: The Erosion of Attention and the Coming Dark Age*. Other events during this busy week will include our Annual Meeting of Shareholders and a reception celebrating libraries on the second weekend. More details on all events will be available in the March/April issue of this newsletter.

First observed in 1958, National Library Week is sponsored by the American Library Association and libraries across the country each April. It is a celebration of the country's libraries and librarians and a time to promote library use and support. More information on NLW can be found in the National Library Week fact sheet, available at the circulation desk, or at www.ala.org/ala/pio/natlibraryweek/nlw.htm.

I hope you all join me in looking ahead to an exciting and challenging year. Thank you for your ongoing support. Happy reading.

Mark Bartlett
Head Librarian

THE 2007-2008 AUTHOR SERIES

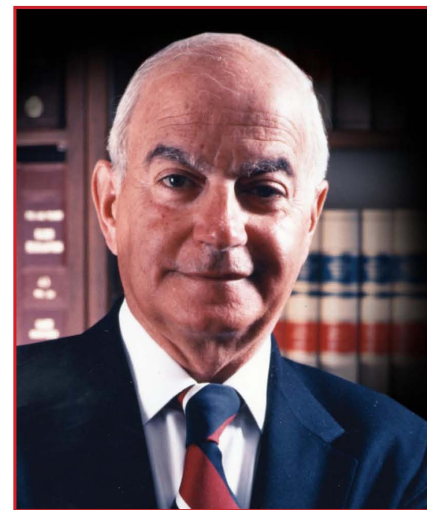
☞ *The Author Series is co-sponsored by the Library and Channel 13/WNET. Attendance is free for members of those organizations and their guests.*

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

RALPH BARUCH

TELEVISION TIGHTROPE: HOW I ESCAPED HITLER, SURVIVED CBS, AND FATHERED VIACOM
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 7:00 P.M., TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET

As a teenager, Ralph Baruch faced the Pyrenees Mountains separating Nazi-controlled France from Spain as his family fled Hitler's Europe for freedom; in his adult life he faced CBS, government bureaucrats, Hollywood stars and shysters, greedy outsiders coveting Viacom, and the loss of his wife, the mother of four young daughters. Intimate and uninhibited, this autobiography also provides a revealing top-to-bottom tour of the television industry with anecdotes of the stars.



One of the founders of Viacom International, **Ralph Baruch** served variously as its president, CEO, chairman, and member of the office of CEO from 1971 until 1987. Under his leadership, Viacom created the channels now known as Showtime, Lifetime, MTV, and Nickelodeon, among others; he was also a co-founder of C-Span. Mr. Baruch also serves on many boards, including those of Carnegie Hall, Lenox Hill Hospital, and Channel 13/WNET. He has received an Emmy Award and many other honors for excellence in broadcasting and his contributions to society.

LIBRARY LECTURES

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☞ *Listed fees may be paid at the door.*

MARY TAVENER HOLMES

MY TRAVELS WITH CLARA

FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN THIRD GRADE AND OLDER

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

Sponsored by the J. Paul Getty Museum, *My Travels with Clara* honors the five-thousand-pound rhinoceros Clara and her history-making tour of eighteenth-century Europe. Born in India, Clara visited Berlin (where she met Frederick the Great), Paris (where she inspired rhinoceros hairdos), Versailles (where Louis XV tried to include her in his zoo and her portrait was painted by the famous Jean-Baptiste Oudry), Rome (where she lost her horn), and finally Venice (where she joined in the annual Carnival). This was all accomplished in the care of Dutch sea captain Douwe Van der Meer, who narrates the book.



In this event, Holmes will talk about Clara's impact on the science and society of her age and introduce the wide range of rhinoceros art and artifacts from the era, using slides. Although the book is written for children, the event should appeal to anyone with an interest in art history or eighteenth-century Europe.

Mary Tavenor Holmes is an independent scholar from who specializes in French eighteenth-century paintings and drawings. She is the author of numerous publications, including *Nicolas Lancret: Dance Before a Fountain* and, with George T.M. Shackelford, *A Magic Mirror: The Portrait in France, 1700-1900*.

LIBRARY LECTURES CONTINUED

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RICHARD WENDORF

AMERICA'S MEMBERSHIP LIBRARIES: PAST AND PRESENT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

The Boston Athenaeum took the lead in publishing *America's Membership Libraries*, the first book to profile these historic libraries. The Athenaeum's director, Richard Wendorf, is one of the country's primary authorities on the history and practices of membership libraries. In this event, he will use slides to share facts and anecdotes about our sister institutions, their history, current collections, memberships, and policies, putting this Library in the context of a nationwide group of living historic organizations.

Richard Wendorf has served as Stanford Calderwood Director and Librarian of the Boston Athenaeum (founded 1807) since 1997. Prior to that appointment, he directed the Houghton Library and lectured on the fine arts at Harvard University. In the field of portraiture and eighteenth-century British art, literature, and cultural history, Mr. Wendorf is the author of the award-winning *Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Painter in Society*. As an expert on libraries, he has published *The Scholar-Librarian: Books, Libraries, and the Fine Arts*, as well as leading in the creation of *America's Membership Libraries*. More information about *America's Membership Libraries* is available at the front desk or in the November/December 2007 issue of this newsletter, www.nysoclib.org/notes/notes14-5.html. More information about Mr. Wendorf's work and the Boston Athenaeum can be found at www.bostonathenaeum.org.



VICTORIA REDEL

THE BORDER OF TRUTH

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

In 1940, a Jewish boy from Brussels whose visa was rejected writes desperately to his heroine Eleanor Roosevelt, asking her to save him and his fellow refugees from being returned to Nazi-occupied Europe. In 2003, his daughter Sara turns from the turmoil of her own life in America to search out the truth of her father's escape. These stories alternate and overlap in Victoria Redel's acclaimed novel *The Border of Truth*, producing a multi-faceted portrait of two eras and the influence of refugees' trauma on future generations. The *L.A. Times* called the book "such a good novel that it could also be any American's story."

Victoria Redel is the author of *Loverboy*, *Where the Road Bottoms Out*, the poetry collection *Swoon*, and *Already the World*. She serves on the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College and teaches in the Graduate Writing Program at Columbia University. She has received both a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and a Fine Arts Work Center Fellowship.



READING GROUPS

☞ To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

READING PLAYS FOR FUN AND UNDERSTANDING WITH ROB ACKERMAN:

WOMEN AND THE MEN WHO LOVE THEM

THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 21, MARCH 6, AND APRIL 3, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

\$15 PER PERSON

Rob Ackerman is a widely produced playwright whose works include *Origin of the Species*, made into an award-winning independent film, *Tabletop*, which received a 2001 Drama Desk Award, and *Icarus of Ohio*, chosen for the 2008 hotINK International Festival of New Plays at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

In this group, participants will read the play aloud under Mr. Ackerman's guidance. Everyone who wishes to read will have an opportunity; good parts will be available for both genders. The idea is to bring the story to life in real time, and no theatrical experience is required.



- Plays for discussion:**
- | | |
|--------------|---|
| February 21: | <i>Learned Ladies (Les Femmes Savantes)</i> by Molière,
translated by Richard Wilbur |
| March 6: | <i>Fallen Angels</i> by Noël Coward |
| April 3: | <i>A Feminine Ending</i> by Sarah Treem |

The stated fee will cover the cost of providing copies of the plays, which will be available to participants at each session.

GENRE-CROSSING AUTHORS WITH CAROL RIAL

FRIDAYS, FEBRUARY 8, MARCH 7, APRIL 11, 11:00 A.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM

Writer and educator Carol Rial joins readers to discuss books and short works by authors who write in more than one genre. Each session will consider a novel in the company of a selection of shorter works in a different genre.

- Books for discussion:**
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| February 8: | <i>On Beauty</i> by Zadie Smith, with critical articles |
| March 7: | <i>Call Me By Your Name: A Novel</i> by André Aciman,
with autobiographical selections |
| April 11: | <i>Tepper Isn't Going Out</i> by Calvin Trillin,
with selections of his food writing |

The novels will be available for purchase; when you register, please indicate which titles you would like to purchase. The other works will be made available to participants free of charge in advance of the first session.

THE ODYSSEY WITH DONALD McDONOUGH

Due to the overwhelming response to this group in the fall 2007 season, Professor McDonough will be offering it again on February 19, March 18, and April 22 at 11:00 A.M. Members waitlisted for the fall group have first priority; however, a few spaces are still available. Inquire with the Events Office if you would like to participate.

PROJECT CICERO 2008

BOOK COLLECTION AT THE LIBRARY FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 6

Project Cicero is now in its eighth year of bringing new and gently used children's books to the under-resourced public school classrooms of New York City. Since its founding in 2001, Project Cicero has placed over 1,000,000 books in more than 5,500 New York City classroom and school libraries, reaching an estimated 200,000 children.

Project Cicero is proud to be doing its part to protect the environment through its reuse activities and is delighted to be included in the New York City Materials Exchange Development Program's inaugural reuse study, fall 2007.

To join over 90 schools and other organizations in donating books, look for the boxes in the Library's entry hall or call the Project Cicero mailbox at 212-288-6900 x511. More information about the book drive and a wish list of titles is available at www.projectcicero.org.



Teachers selecting books at Project Cicero 2007

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY EVENTS

☞ To reserve spaces, contact the Children's Library at 212-288-6900 x234 or children@nysoclib.org.

☞ Listed fees may be paid at the door.

☞ A Children's Calendar listing events for younger children is sent monthly by mail and e-mail. To receive it, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.

ELIZABETH WINTHROP

BECOMING A WRITER

FOR THIRD GRADE AND OLDER AND THEIR GUESTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 5:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

Author Elizabeth Winthrop tells aspiring writers, "By the time you are twelve years old, you'll have all the memories you need to write a hundred books." She herself is the author of the classic *The Castle in the Attic* and more than fifty other books for children and adults, including *Counting on Grace*, selected by the state of Vermont as its 2007 Community Read. She is the winner of the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award, the PEN Syndicated Fiction Award, and the Jane Addams Peace Prize Honor Book, among many other awards and honors.

In this event, Ms. Winthrop will describe the creative process, answering the age-old question of where she gets her ideas. A selection of her books will be available for sale and autographing.



BRUCE DEGEN

THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS AND BEYOND

FOR FIRST GRADE AND OLDER AND THEIR GUESTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 4:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

Bruce Degen's love of art began in his childhood in Brooklyn. He is now best known as the illustrator of the highly acclaimed *Magic School Bus* series, written by Joanna Cole, as well as Nancy White Carlstrom's *Jesse Bear* books and Jane Yolen's *Commander Toad* series. He is both author and illustrator of the picture books *Jamberry*, *Sailaway Home*, and *Daddy is a Doodlebug*. In this event, Mr. Degen will talk about his creative process and share slides and sketches of his favorite characters, especially Ms. Frizzle's students from the *Magic School Bus* series, who, he says, are based on children from his childhood neighborhood, "although they don't know it." A selection of his books will be available for sale and autographing.

"The nice thing about books is that they go out into the world," says Mr. Degen. "When a kid, parent, or teacher tells you how much he or she likes your book, you realize that you've given something that has become part of someone else's life."



THE SIXTH ANNUAL YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

COMPETITION OPEN JANUARY 14-APRIL 7

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, essay, or poem on a theme of their choice. Prizes will be presented by notable authors for prose and poetry in four age categories.

All submissions are subject to the competition rules, which will be available starting January 14 at the circulation desk, on the web at www.nysoclib.org/kids/young_writers.html, or by mail by calling 212-288-6900 x230. Entrants must be children or grandchildren of Library members, or students at a member or invited school. The deadline for submitting entries is Monday, April 7. Watch this space for announcements of the awards ceremony and the winning entries.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

☞ *Registration is required for all events.*

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☞ *More information on all events, including locations and fees, is inside.*

Tuesday, January 22, 6:30 p.m. (see page 4)

My Travels with Clara

Mary Tavener Holmes

Wednesday, January 30, 6:30 p.m. (see page 5)

America's Membership Libraries: Past and Present

Richard Wendorf

Thursday, February 7, 5:00 p.m. (see page 7)

Becoming a Writer

Elizabeth Winthrop

Fridays, February 8, March 7, April 11, 11:00 a.m.

(see page 6)

Genre-Crossing Authors Reading Group

Carol Rial

Tuesday, February 12, 7:00 p.m. (see page 4)

Television Tightrope

Ralph Baruch

Wednesday, February 20, 6:30 p.m. (see page 5)

The Border of Truth

Victoria Redel

Thursdays, February 21, March 6, April 3, 6:00 p.m.

(see page 6)

Reading Plays for Fun and Understanding

Rob Ackerman

February 25-March 6 (see page 6)

Project Cicero book collection

Tuesday, March 11, 6:30 p.m. (see page 1)

Film Showing with Live Music: *The Man Who Laughs*

The Octuor de France

Wednesday, March 12, 4:00 p.m. (see page 7)

The Magic Schoolbus and Beyond

Bruce Degen

The Library thrives and prospers through the generosity of our members and contributors. We thank all of you who donated in 2007. A list of contributors will be published in the Annual Report. To make a contribution in support of our activities, send mail to the address below, visit our website, www.nysoclib.org/donations.html, or call the Development Office at 212-288-6900 x214.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY

53 EAST 79TH STREET

NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021