

# NOTES



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## FROM THE INTERIM HEAD LIBRARIAN

As I write this, I am 38,000 feet in the air on a plane from Denver, Colorado, where I attended an exciting educational conference, the 14th annual Innovative Users Group (IUG). Innovative Interfaces is the automated library system we purchased in 2003. It successfully allows you to identify titles in the collection, place holds, and renew books, while helping us to check books out and perform the myriad other behind-the-scenes functions of the Library. The IUG conference gets larger every year—this year it hosted over 1,600 attendees from the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Sweden, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, China, Japan, and other countries—but it still fosters a strong sense of community among library folk of all kinds.

On a more intimate scale, this sense of community is also shared by Society Library members. Each month, we welcome hundreds of people who share a passion for reading and learning. They enjoy the comfortable and quiet spaces of the reading and writing rooms, private study rooms, and open stacks, attend lectures and other events, and appreciate the socializing element of the Library. From my perspective at the reference desk, it is wonderful to see staff and members interacting at the front desk, suggesting old and new books to one another, catching up on world news, or even discussing the day's weather forecast.

I am very happy to report that the Library is an ongoing subject of scholarly research. Tom Glynn's article "The New York Society Library: Books, Authority, and Publics in Colonial and Early Republican New York" has been published in the journal *Libraries and Culture* (Vol. 40, no. 4, Fall 2005). Mr. Glynn is a librarian at Rutgers University Libraries. If you would like to read the article, we have some reading copies available at the front desk.

In addition to Mr. Glynn's article, my summer reading offers a few quiet moments with both old favorites and new discoveries, including Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Joyce Cary's first trilogy (*Herself Surprised*, *To Be a Pilgrim*, and *The Horse's Mouth*), Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, and the beautiful poems of Stanley Kunitz. I would be happy to hear about your summer reading at your next visit to the reference desk, and I hope the Library will be a resource for your literary treasure-hunting.

Mark Bartlett

A screenshot of the NYSL Web Catalog interface. At the top, it says "NYSL WEB CATALOG". Below that are several navigation buttons: "Previous Record", "Next Record", "Return to List", "Start Over", "MARK Display", "Save Records", and "Request". There is a search bar with "AUTHOR" selected, "Lahiri" entered, and "ALL" selected for the search type. The search results show "Record 2 of 2" with details for "Lahiri, Jhumpa", "The namesake / Jhumpa Lahiri", published in Boston by Houghton Mifflin in 2003. A table shows two locations: "Circulation Desk" (Call No. c.6, Status: IN LIBRARY) and "Stack 6" (Call No. F L, Status: IN LIBRARY). Below the table are fields for "Description" (291 p. ; 22 cm.) and "Subject" (East Indian Americans -- Fiction, Children of immigrants -- Massachusetts -- Fiction, Assimilation (Sociology) -- Fiction, Alienation (Social psychology) -- Fiction, Gogol, Nikolai Vasilevich, 1809-1852 -- Appreciation -- Fiction).

## STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT

Children's Librarian Carrie Silberman and her husband Omid Zareh are pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Benjamin Ryan, born May 1 in Manhattan. Benjamin weighed seven pounds, four ounces, and both mother and baby are in good health. Carrie anticipates returning to the Library on a part-time basis later in the summer and looks forward to introducing Benjamin to the wonderful world of books. She appreciates the many good wishes heard from members during recent months.



## SPRING EVENTS REVIEW

### THE NEW YORK CITY BOOK AWARDS CEREMONY

The eleventh annual New York City Book Awards Ceremony and reception was held on May 3. Charles G. Berry, the Library's Chairman of the Board, welcomed the winners and guests, and Constance Rogers Roosevelt, chair of the Book Awards jury, gave a tribute to longtime juror Wendy Wasserstein.

Photos by Dave Ortiz

Steven G. Kellman accepts the Award for Biography for *Redemption: The Life of Henry Roth*. Inset: presenter Jules Cohn.



Donald Albrecht accepts the Award for Photography for *The Mythic City: Photographs of New York by Samuel H. Gottscho, 1925-1940*. Inset: presenter Martin Filler.



Jill Lepore accepts the Book of the Year award for *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan*. Inset: presenter Ellen Feldman.



### THE 2006 YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

The Children's Library Committee honored nine young writers at a ceremony and reception on May 9. Committee chair Susan L. Robbins welcomed guests and Children's Librarian Randi Levy introduced the competition's judges and read remarks from judge Robert Quackenbush. Judges Dave Johnson, Carol Weston, and Edra Ziesk made the other presentations and spoke about the writing life. The competition asked young writers to submit a work of prose or poetry about New York City.

The winning entries can be viewed on the Library's website at [www.nysoclib.org/kids/young\\_writers.html](http://www.nysoclib.org/kids/young_writers.html) and will be bound in a book for the Library's collection.

#### Young Writers Awards 2006 Winners

Kristian Bailey, "A World of Its Own"

Amelia Cai, "New York: A Sestina"

Lindsay Jadow, "Brooklyn Bridge Poem"

Elly Katz, "My Backyard"

Garth Morgan, "Duane Reade"

David Zask, "Country Kid"

#### Honorable Mentions

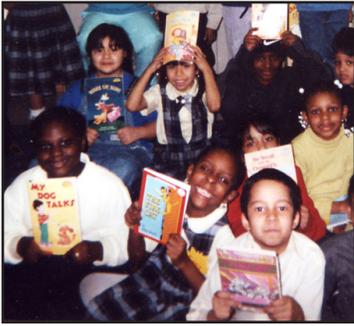
Sari Flomenbaum, "Piece By Piece"

Lauren Krause, "Out of the Ashes of Tragedy"

Jeffrey Radin, "Rush Hour, New York"

From left to right: Lindsay Jadow, Lauren Krause, Sari Flomenbaum, David Zask, Jeffrey Radin, Amelia Cai, Elly Katz. Not pictured: Kristian Bailey, Garth Morgan





## PROJECT CICERO 2006

Project Cicero's sixth annual book drive took place March 6 through 12 and was once again a huge success. In cooperation with 80 independent, public, and parochial schools and hundreds of student and adult volunteers, the project collected and distributed more than 125,000 books to create and enhance classroom and school libraries in under-resourced schools throughout New York City. Nearly 900 teachers selected books for their schools. Since its inception in 2001, Project Cicero has put well over 725,000 books into more than 3,700 classrooms, reaching more than 150,000 children. The generous participation of Library members is a vital part of that success and is gratefully appreciated.

## LIBRARY RENOVATION

The Library is now in the midst of Phase II of the renovation. The only remaining work on the building's facade (Phase I) are repairs to the glass front doors. These will soon be removed for a brief time for cleaning and replacement of the cracked pane. New, sturdier hinges will also be installed to avoid future damage to glass and frame.

Construction for the east elevator's new sixth-floor stop is in full swing. The Library's contractor has demolished the parapet on the room to make room for the stop. Masonry work for the new shaft is nearing completion, and space has been created for the new mechanical room in the basement. We regret any inconvenience on the fifth floor from noise and dust, and the contractors are working to minimize future disruption. We expect the new elevator cab to be ready for installation sometime in late summer. The new elevator will be three to four times faster than its predecessor and will comply with all city ordinances, while retaining the elegant paneling appreciated by so many members.

The other half of Phase II consists of interior renovations, which are also well underway. Books and art objects have been removed from the Members' Room, Reference Room, and lobby for storage during the painting, sanding, polishing, and reupholstering planned for those spaces, the entry hall, and the main staircase. In addition, new carpets will be installed on the third and fifth floors and in the Members' Room. Although the Library had initially hoped this interior work could be accomplished without closing the whole building, our architect and contractors advise that the work will be significantly expedited by a two-week closing. We have scheduled this closing from July 1 through 16, a period that includes the Fourth of July weekend, when we would have been closed anyway. In addition, the Members' Room will be closed from June 15 through June 30. The Whitridge Room on the third floor, the fifth-floor study room, and desks throughout the stacks will remain available as quiet reading and writing spaces when the Members' Room is closed.

To ensure that you have enough to read during the two-week closing, we are modifying our book lending policies through September 5, as follows:

- Each membership may take out a total of 20 books at a time.
- Effective June 15, all books will circulate for at least one month.
- No books will be due between July 1 and July 17.
- No overdue fines will be imposed between June 15 and September 5.

Please contact the front desk if you need more time with checked-out items or if you have special requests.

For updates on Phase II work, please consult the Library's website, [www.nysoclib.org/renovation\\_update.html](http://www.nysoclib.org/renovation_update.html), or call the main Library phone number, 212-288-6900.

As always, we appreciate your patience and cooperation as we improve our beautiful building.



*Art movers from Gander & White prepare the stairwell statuary for storage*

## LOOKING FOR BIOGRAPHY RESOURCES?

The Library is always looking for new ways to be of use to both the serious and the casual researcher. To that end, we offer in-house and remote access to two essential online reference sources for biographical information, both produced by Oxford University Press.

The **Dictionary of National Biography** includes the entire sixty-volume edition released in 2004, with biographies of over 55,000 individuals who left their mark on the history of the British Isles. The online edition also reproduces articles as they appeared in the original DNB (completed in 1900) and all of its later supplements. The online version is updated three times a year with new entries and revisions.



The online edition of **American National Biography** is based on the twenty-four-volume print edition published in 1999. It features over 18,000 entries and is updated quarterly with new entries and revisions.

Both these resources include helpful, easy-to-use templates with a variety of searching options, allowing users to obtain accurate, manageable results. Entries in both resources

include bibliographies, hyperlinks to other entries, links to selected online resources, and more.

### The Library's Online Resources

Available at [www.nysoclib.org](http://www.nysoclib.org) via the drop-down list "Resources" at the right side of the main page

- American National Biography
- The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
- The Oxford English Dictionary
- Oxford Reference Online
- Patron Books in Print
- Proquest—New York Times
- The Times Literary Supplement

The site also includes instructions for using the resources and for getting access from outside the Library.

If you have comments or suggestions regarding the Library's collection of electronic resources, please e-mail [eresources@nysoclib.org](mailto:eresources@nysoclib.org).

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

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