



NOTES

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 4, SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2007

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

This time of year puts me in mind of my earliest days as a user of the Society Library. As a boy, ages five to eleven, I used to spend most of the summer with my family at a house near the Connecticut shore, in a community about twenty miles west of New London. Although there was plenty of tennis, swimming, sailing, and bike riding—and, on rainy days, jigsaw puzzles, cards, and games in the attic—there was also the pleasure of spending a good deal of time alone. It was there that I first learned to read, shortly before starting the first grade.

As the days stretched into weeks and the cherished excitement of New York City grew dim, one of the highlights of the day would be the delivery of the mail. I would

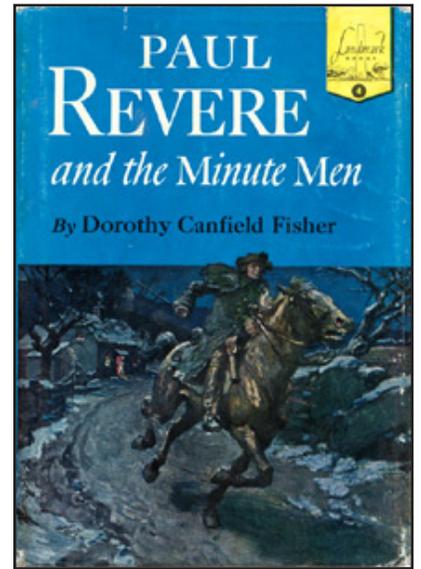
eagerly look for the latest issue of *Junior Scholastic*, full of fascinating articles. What was most enthusiastically anticipated, however, was a package wrapped in brown paper, tied with a string and bearing a neatly addressed label with the printed return address “53 East 79th Street, New York 21, New York.” That meant a new supply of books from the Society Library: detective stories and the latest novels and histories for my mother to devour, and a variety of books for my brothers and me.

I enjoyed biographies, and I remember reading about Gandhi, Garibaldi, Sun Yat-sen, Paul Revere, and Alexander Hamilton from the Landmark Series in third and fourth grade. Adventure was a hallmark of much of the later summer fiction I recall: John Buchan’s *The Thirty-Nine Steps* and *Prester John*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Toby Tyler*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Tom Sawyer*. In younger years, it was a treat when our father would read to us from *Treasure Island* (“One more step, Mr. Hands, and I’ll blow your brains out!”) or our favorites from Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll and Hillaire Belloc’s *Cautionary Verses*. We could never have enough of “Matilda, Who told Lies, and was Burned to Death,” a perverse variant on the boy who cried wolf culminating in the couplet “For every time She shouted ‘Fire!’/They only answered ‘Little Liar!’”

During those childhood summers the Library kept us in touch with something more stimulating than the circumscribed world of our insulated summer community. Its books spurred our imaginations and held out the promise of return to Manhattan, for which we were very ready by the second week of September. Our first nights back from “the country” were full of the forgotten noise of the city, including the thrill of being kept awake by the comforting sound of the trains running under Park Avenue up the street, only a few blocks from the Library.

I hope that all our members enjoyed their reading this summer, and that if they have been away—whether or not they availed themselves of the Library’s ever-reliable books-by-mail service—they return to the city with a renewed sense of the pleasure of being here.

Charles G. Berry
Chairman of the Board



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Registration is required for all events. To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org. A full listing of workshops, plus more information on all programs, is inside.

Wednesday, September 26, 6:30 p.m.

The Law of Dreams
Peter Behrens

Wednesday, October 3, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *The Odyssey I*
Donald McDonough

Thursday, October 11, 7:00 p.m.

American Food Writing
Molly O’Neill

Friday, October 12, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *Going Global I*
Carol Rial

Thursday, October 25, 6:30 p.m.

“Left Bank New York”
Virginia Budny

Wednesday, October 31, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *The Odyssey II*

Thursday, November 1, 4:30 p.m.

Library Mouse
Daniel Kirk

Thursday, November 8, 5:00 p.m.

An Unfortunate Evening with Brett Helquist

Friday, November 9, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *Going Global III*

Wednesday, November 28, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *The Odyssey III*

Friday, December 7, 11:00 a.m.

Reading Group: *Going Global III*

FROM THE HEAD LIBRARIAN

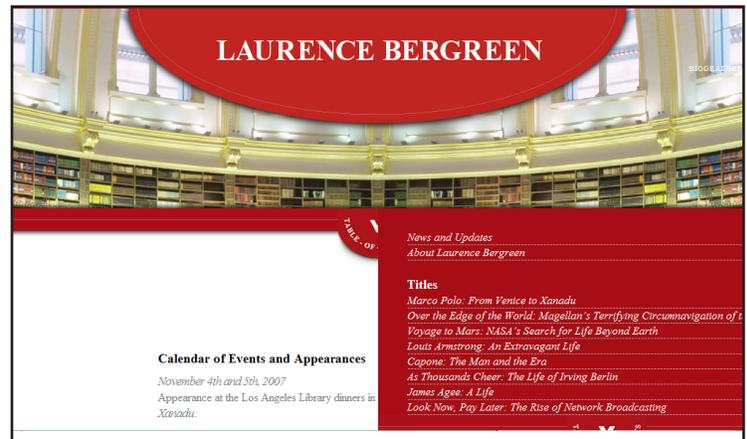
As you will see in this issue of *Library Notes*, we have an exciting events season starting this month. I am particularly pleased to welcome novelist and screenwriter Peter Behrens on September 26. After reading Peter's stirring and beautifully written novel *The Law of Dreams*, I heard him speak at the National Arts Club. Register early for this event in our renovated Members' Room—I know you will remember this evening at the Society Library. You might also enjoy Peter's 1987 short-story collection, *Night Driving*, and his informative website, www.peterbehrens.org.

I have been pondering the many ways modern authors communicate with readers, especially their Internet presence. Their websites include everything from writings, bibliographies, and reviews to photos, online diaries (blogs), and audio and video content. Some authors encourage e-mail from their readers. Author websites are one more way that the Internet has become a kind of reference book on the computer screen. If you are interested in author websites, I would be glad to show you a selection at the reference desk, or try these Library member author sites: www.laurencebergreen.com, www.elizabethwinthrop.com, www.carolveston.com, and www.thomasflemingwriter.com.

Does the abundance of author websites eliminate the need for the Library's print reference collection? By no means; our collection of electronic resources does not (yet) include a comprehensive contemporary author database. Our print sources for current author biographies include *Current Biography Yearbook* (Ref 920 C9763C), *World Authors* (Ref 920 W1495W), *American Writers* (Ref 820.9A) and *British Writers* (Ref 820.9B). For some additional help online, the *Oxford Reference Online* electronic resource includes a growing number of Oxford University Press' "Companion" series (e.g. *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Poetry in English*, *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature*). If you use the New York Public Library's electronic resources, try these useful databases: *Contemporary Authors*, *Literature Resource Center*, and Twayne's *Authors Series*. I would be happy to demonstrate these resources at the reference desk as well.

Speaking of the reference desk, this year you will see some new faces there, as Laura O'Keefe (Head of Cataloging) and Keren Fleshler (Catalog Librarian/Systems Assistant) join the desk rotation. Current desk hours are 10-4 Monday through Saturday. The reference desk should be your first port of call if you are puzzling over an in-depth question, want to do a literature review on a particular topic, or need a general refresher on the online catalog or an electronic resource. You can also reach the reference desk by phone at 212-288-6900 x202 or e-mail at reference@nysoclib.org. We aim to answer members' questions within a day or two.

I look forward to seeing you at the Library.




Mark Bartlett
Head Librarian

INTRODUCING THE HERMAN MELVILLE SUPPORTERS

THE LIBRARY HONORS HISTORIC MEMBER AUTHORS WITH DONATION CATEGORIES

When the Library's Annual Appeal letter arrives, you may notice that the names for our donor categories have shifted for the 2007-2008 year. Those who donated in 2006 will be acknowledged in the upcoming Annual Report under the previous categories.

The new categories give us the opportunity to honor both our generous donors and more of our historic authors and notable members. The categories are:

Herman Melville Supporters	\$5,000 or more
Washington Irving Patrons	\$2,500-\$4,999
Lorenzo Da Ponte Sponsors	\$1,000-\$2,499
Willa Cather Fellows	\$500-\$999
Clement Clarke Moore Friends	\$250-\$499
James De Lancey Contributors	\$1-\$249

NYSL AT ALA

IMPRESSIONS OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION 2007 CONFERENCE

Library staff members Randi Levy (Children's Library) and Keren Fleshler (Cataloging/Systems Departments) represented the Library at this year's annual American Library Association Conference and Exhibition, June 21-27 in Washington, D.C. The conference is attended by thousands of librarians, authors, scholars, publishers, and others; this year set a record with almost 29,000 attendees. For more information about the American Library Association and the conference, see www.ala.org.

KEREN FLESHLER:

The ALA conference was a whirlwind experience filled with presentations, discussions, and exhibitions. As a cataloger, I attended relevant sessions on the future of library cataloging. The discussions addressed the appropriate description of library materials to enhance access for users in the age of web-based catalogs. With more library collections becoming available online, there was also a focus on creating the most effective access to newly scanned digitized collections. Speakers included leading librarians and professors from major universities—the forefront among creators of new standards for the description of library materials. Librarians also told of their experiences in implementing new technologies.

The conference gave me the opportunity to meet librarians from around the country, inform them about the significant collections of our Library, and become aware of the most recent trends in cataloging. All of this helps us to raise awareness of this Library and to develop and enhance our own catalog.

RANDI LEVY:

The ALA conference was professionally invigorating and fulfilling. With an extraordinary diversity of programs, lectures, receptions, and exhibits to choose from, there was rarely a time slot where I did not have to make a choice between two or more sessions. As a children's librarian, I attended events that covered the gamut of youth services, from babies and toddlers through young adults.

Among the programs I attended were two related to early literacy—what children know about reading and writing before they know how to read and write—and how the emphasis on certain skills and the use of rhymes, songs, and games in children's library programs can help lay the foundation for actual literacy. I also enjoyed author panelists' perspectives on audiobooks and the adaptation of their books into Readers Theater as two more ways to nurture young people's love of literature. Authors such as Cornelia Funke, Pam Muñoz-Ryan, Lee Bennett Hopkins, Christopher Paul Curtis, Erica Perl, and Norma Fox Mazer read from recent and upcoming books at the publisher receptions I attended. At the conference exhibits—a panorama of 7,000 publishers and library product vendors—I had the opportunity to speak to several authors, including past speakers Mo Willems and Johanna Hurwitz and others we hope to invite to the Library in the future. Keynote speakers I enjoyed included Robert F. Kennedy Jr., discussing the suppression of environmental information and the closing of EPA libraries, and lawyer and activist Marian Wright Edelman, speaking about the state of children in America today.

Throughout my stay in Washington, D.C. I met interesting library people from all over the country. Many were fascinated, surprised and pleased to know that an institution with our history still exists and that we serve children as well as adults. It was rewarding to be among so many people who have such a passion for libraries, books, and people.



LIBRARY LECTURES

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

☞ Listed fees may be paid at the door.

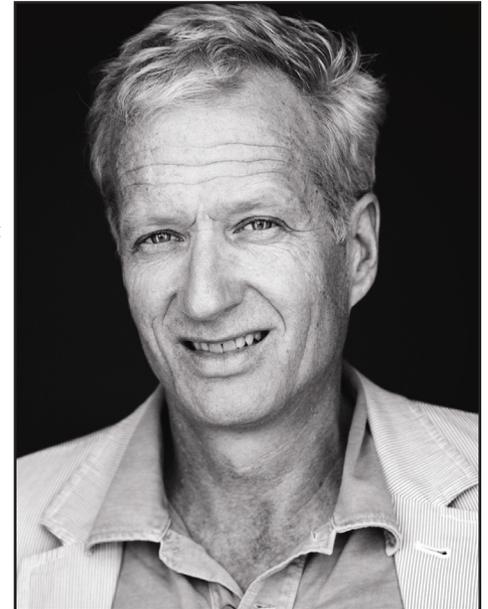
PETER BEHRENS

THE LAW OF DREAMS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

The Law of Dreams tells the story of a young man's Homeric passage from innocence to experience during the Irish Famine of 1847. On his epic journey through Ireland and Britain and across the Atlantic to 'the Boston states,' Fergus is initiated to violence, sexual heat, and the glories and dangers of the Industrial Revolution. Along the way, he meets a lost generation of boy soldiers, brigands, street toughs, and charming, willful girls, all struggling for survival in the aftermath of natural catastrophe magnified by political callousness and brutal neglect. "Peter Behrens writes about the famine and its consequences as if he were an eyewitness," says the *New York Times Book Review*. "What Behrens knows, what he teaches us again in this masterly novel, is that the past was indeed wondrous, and terrible and strange, but that it was a very real place, lived by real men and women, and that it sits over us still."

Peter Behrens is a native of Montreal, where he was educated at Lower Canada College, Concordia, and McGill. He held a Wallace Stegner Fellowship in Creative Writing at Stanford University and was a Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. His other work includes a volume of short stories, *Night Driving*, and writings in *The Atlantic Monthly* and many other publications. *The Law of Dreams*, his first novel, won the 2006 Governor General's Literary Award for fiction.



VIRGINIA BUDNY

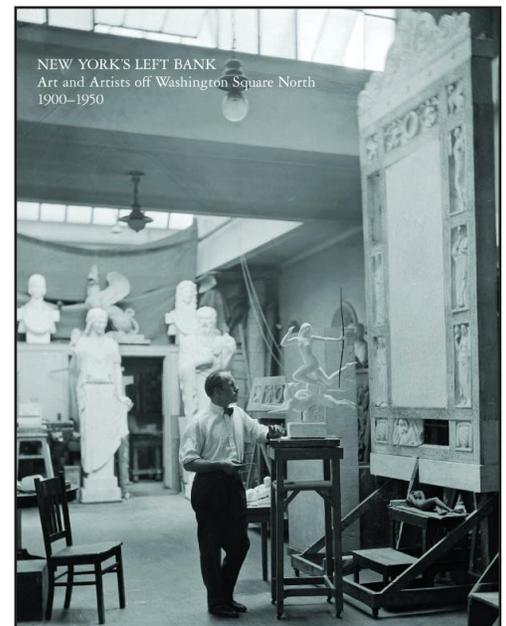
NEW YORK'S LEFT BANK: ART AND ARTISTS OFF WASHINGTON SQUARE NORTH, 1900-1950

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 6:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$10 PER PERSON

In the first half of the twentieth century, Washington Square North saw an influx of almost 200 artists, many of them recently trained in Europe, who converted unused stables and townhouses into a hotbed of new American art. Among them were Thomas Wilmer Dewing, Daniel Chester French, Gaston Lachaise, Paulanship (designer of the plaque on the Library's facade), Isamu Noguchi, Edward Hopper, and Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. Their use of space turned the two blocks north of Washington Square into an echo of Paris' Latin Quarter, and New York's art world would never be the same.

"New York's Left Bank" began as a traveling exhibition surveying the artists' studios and institutions in this neighborhood; its creator and curator, Virginia Budny, will present highlights and information from the exhibition using slides.

Virginia Budny is a research assistant for the Department of European Paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and consultant to the Lachaise Foundation in Boston. She is the author of the catalog *New York's Left Bank: Art and Artists off Washington Square North, 1900-1950*.



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.*

MOLLY O'NEILL

AMERICAN FOOD WRITING

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 7:00 P.M., TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET

Henry David Thoreau raved about watermelon; Herman Melville described clam chowder in loving detail; Ralph Ellison explored the appeal of baked yams; and Alice B. Toklas offered a creative recipe for lobster. These writers and hundreds more are gathered in *American Food Writing*, an anthology covering over 250 years of American culinary history, from Meriwether Lewis' success at hunting to Michael Pollan's account of the politics of organic food. *Publishers Weekly* says, "With so many wonderful ingredients, this rich, delectable treat is a must-have for American foodies."

Molly O'Neill has been called "the Damon Runyon of the New York food world," having spent more than a decade as food columnist for *The New York Times* and hosted the PBS series *Great Food*. Her other books include the award-winning *New York Cookbook* and the memoir *Mostly True: A Memoir of Family, Food, and Baseball*.



READING GROUPS

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

☞ *All books listed for groups will be available for sale from the Events Office. When you register, please indicate which books you would like to purchase.*

☞ *Reading Groups are free of charge.*

THE ODYSSEY WITH DONALD McDONOUGH

WEDNESDAYS, OCTOBER 3, OCTOBER 31, NOVEMBER 28, 11:00 A.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM

Donald McDonough, Professor Emeritus of English at Central Connecticut State University, returns by popular demand to guide readers through Robert Fagles' now-classic translation of Homer's *Odyssey*.



Book for discussion: *The Odyssey* by Homer, translated by Robert Fagles.

This translation is available in several editions; one inexpensive one is published by Penguin, ISBN 0-140-26886-3.

- ☞ October 3: *Odyssey* books 1 through 8
- ☞ October 31: *Odyssey* books 9 through 16
- ☞ November 28: *Odyssey* books 17 through 24

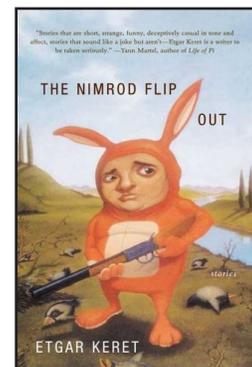
GOING GLOBAL: NEW WRITING FROM THREE CONTINENTS WITH CAROL RIAL

FRIDAYS, OCTOBER 12, NOVEMBER 9, DECEMBER 7, 11:00 A.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM

Writer and educator Carol Rial joins readers to discuss stories set in modern Israel and India, and wartime France.

Books for discussion:

- ☞ October 12: *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai
- ☞ November 9: *The Nimrod Flipout: Stories* by Etgar Keret
- ☞ December 7: *Suite Française* by Irène Némirovsky



TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARY WORKSHOPS

- ☞ To reserve spaces, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or events@nysoclib.org.
- ☞ These free workshops take place in the Whitridge Room and last about 90 minutes.
- ☞ More information on all classes being offered is available at www.nysoclib.org/tech/.



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2

- 10:00 A.M. Digital Images ■ Taught by Lucy Ross ■ For computer users
Learn how to create, store, edit, and send photos online.
- 2:00 P.M. eBay ■ New Class ■ Taught by Keren Fleshler ■ For Internet users
Learn the basics of buying and selling on eBay.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 10:00 A.M. Windows Vista ■ Taught by Ingrid Richter ■ For PC users
Discover new features and functions in Windows Vista.
- 2:00 P.M. Google Advanced Features ■ Taught by Ingrid Richter ■ For Internet users
Explore Google Maps, Earth, Scholar, and other basic and advanced features of the popular search engine.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18

- 10:00 A.M. Online Public Access Catalog ■ Taught by Keren Fleshler ■ For those with some computer experience
Learn more about how to use our Library's online catalog, review checked-out materials, and place holds on books from home.
- 2:00 P.M. Hidden Treasure Websites ■ New Class ■ Taught by Keren Fleshler ■ For Internet users
Discover some of the Web's innovative, fun, and useful offerings.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26

- 10:00 A.M. PC Upgrade and Repair ■ Taught by Ingrid Richter ■ For advanced PC users
Learn how to repair and upgrade your desktop or laptop computer.
- 2:00 P.M. JSTOR/WilsonWeb *Reader's Guide* ■ New Class
Taught by Patrick Rayner and Brandi Tambasco ■ For Internet users
Learn more about two of the Library's newest electronic resources: JSTOR: The Scholarly Journal Archive and WilsonWeb's *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature Full Text*.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30

- 10:00 A.M. Library Policies ■ New Class ■ Taught by Jane Goldstein ■ For everyone
Everything you always wanted to know about the Library but were afraid to ask.
- 2:00 P.M. *The New York Review of Books*/Book Reviews Online ■ New Class
Taught by Steve McGuirl ■ For Internet users
Try fresh ways to find book reviews online, including our new electronic resource, the *New York Review of Books* Online.

WHERE ARE NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER EVENTS?

LIBRARY NOTES NOW PUBLISHES FIVE TIMES A YEAR

In order to bring you fresher news and more information about upcoming programs, this newsletter will now publish five times a year. Watch your mailbox in late October for the November issue listing more useful information and exciting events for the remainder of 2007.

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS IN NEW (AND OLD) SUGGESTION BOOKS

White suggestion books are now available in more locations throughout the building: in the Reference Room, the Members' Room, the Children's Library, and the Large Study Room. Please have a look at past questions and staff responses, and, if your suggestion isn't covered, write it in. A staff member will respond in writing as soon as possible, and many suggestions will get immediate physical attention as well. We do our best to incorporate members' opinions as we work constantly to enhance our services.

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.

DANIEL KIRK

MEET THE AUTHORS: DANIEL KIRK AND THE LIBRARY MOUSE

FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH FOURTH GRADE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 4:30 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

Daniel Kirk is the author and illustrator of *Rex Tabby*, *Snow Family*, and *Breakfast at the Liberty Diner*, and/or Aillustrator of more than twenty-five other popular books. "I like to make kids smile," he says. "I like to write things that are funny, and quirky, and bring fantasies to life. I think kids like honesty, even in the most outrageous or ridiculous situations!"

Kirk's new book, *Library Mouse*, tells the story of a mouse who lives in the reference section of a library and decides to become an author himself. In this event, Kirk will talk about the creation of *Library Mouse* and his other books. He will share his pictures, stories, original songs, and a drawing game to inspire participants to create their own characters and stories. "I like reading my books out loud, because that is the way they were meant to be read!....It is always wonderful to travel and share my work, my experience and my energy with kids."



BRETT HELQUIST

BROKEN PENCILS, DRIED-UP PAINT, AND BOXES AND BOXES OF TISSUES: AN UNFORTUNATE EVENING WITH BRETT HELQUIST

FOR GRADES THREE AND UP

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 5:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM, \$5 PER PERSON

Brett Helquist is best known as the man who brings Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire and their archenemy Count Olaf to life in Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, for which he uses "broken pencils, dried-up paint, and boxes and boxes of tissues" to depict the tragic lives of the Baudelaire orphans. Sometimes he finds this work so distressing that he "sends himself flowers, but it never helps." His other works include the acclaimed illustrations for *Chasing Vermeer* and *The Wright 3* by Blue Balliett, *Capt. Hook* by James V. Hart, James Howe's *House of Bunnica* series, and the story and pictures for *Roger, the Jolly Pirate*.

In this event, Helquist will talk about how he became a children's author and illustrator, starting with a childhood love of comic books, and describe the process of creating the illustrations for *A Series of Unfortunate Events* and other books. Participants will also learn the techniques of drawing his favorite characters.



The ill-fated illustrator

THEATER ON YOUR TOES: IMPROVISATION WITH INGRID ABRAMS

FOR GRADES 4 AND UP; SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 3:00-4:30 P.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM, FREE OF CHARGE

Participants in this event will learn the basic rules of improvisation, which are building blocks for more formal theater performance. Actors will play theater games, use props, and experiment with voice and movement to hone their creative skills. Theater on Your Toes will help young performers become more spontaneous—always staying one step ahead of the audience.

Ingrid Abrams, Children's Library Assistant, has numerous credits with the Baltimore Shakespeare Partnership, the Baltimore Theatre Artists' Consortium, and other companies. She has helped children write and perform plays for many years.



RARE BOOK NEWS

LORENZO DA PONTE COLLECTION NOW FULLY CATALOGED

Congratulations are due to the Library's Cataloging Department, which completed full cataloging of all items in the Lorenzo Da Ponte Collection at the beginning of June. The collection contains 54 bibliographic titles, many of them comprising multi-volume sets. Da Ponte's books continue to be used by visiting scholars; their full cataloging will let researchers all over the world find what they need at our Library. More information on the collection and the individual books is available at www.nysoclib.org/collections/index_daponte.html. A search in the online catalog with "Da Ponte Collection" in the keyword or author field will also retrieve the records.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY SCHOLAR VISITS DA PONTE COLLECTION

In April and May, the Library was pleased to host a visiting researcher from Cambridge University in England. Katherine Wallington engaged in thorough research of our Lorenzo Da Ponte collection for her doctoral dissertation in the Italian department, on the subject "Self-Representation in the Books of Lorenzo Da Ponte and Carlo Goldoni." Ms. Wallington also paid shorter visits to the New York Public Library, Columbia University, Yale University, and the Boston Athenaeum, but the Library remained her main and favorite source.

Rare Book Librarian Arevig Caprielian is grateful to Ms. Wallington for sharing the catalog from Da Ponte's London bookselling business, which had been auctioned off in April 1804, just prior to his move to New York.



*Katherine Wallington
and Arevig Caprielian*

The Library survives through the generosity of our members and contributors. To join, renew, or make a contribution in support of our activities, send mail to the address below, visit our website, www.nysoclib.org, or call the Development Office at 212-288-6900 x214.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY
53 EAST 79TH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10075