

# ACORN | Chronicle

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*Music Under African Skies*





Paul M. Gherman

On the cover:  
The performance group "Uganda Heritage Roots," comprised of street children from Kampala, Uganda, perform the Bagandan *ngoma* "Baakisimba." Dennis Clark, director of the Anne Potter Wilson Library at the Blair School of Music and Blair Professor Greg Barz traveled to Africa last summer to record traditional music in Uganda for a new "Music Archive of Africa and the Americas" at the Wilson Music Library. The cover photo was taken by Clark. For more information, see the two articles on pages 4-8.

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Vanderbilt University is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

As I have mentioned before, libraries exist in a turbulent world of scientific and social change brought about by technology. Today's entering university students have very different expectations than did those of just a few years ago. For example, a recent study of the library environment, sponsored by the Online Computer Library Center and published under the title "Pattern Recognition," found that today's students would prefer to have all their information needs supplied by their cell phones. The University is also engaged in change via its strategic plan, which contains several important goals: To enhance undergraduate education, to strengthen and recruit excellent faculty, to seek even greater research distinction, to advance graduate education, and to establish interdisciplinary and transinstitutional initiatives.

In light of these changes, the staff of the Heard Library system early in the year began an intensive strategic planning effort to better understand our patrons, evaluate our services, and examine our organizational structure to assure the Library's activities remain relevant and supportive to the mission of the University. More than 50 library staff members served on a number of task forces, gathering information about the needs and expectations of our alumni, faculty, students, and the Nashville community. These task forces proposed more than 40 recommendations for new or modified services for our users. We are now entering a second stage of the planning effort to evaluate and rank the recommendations and to better understand how we can implement these recommendations with our current resources and staff.

### Wish List for Special Collections

Special Collections is looking for hardbound, first edition, first printing copies of the following literary classics. Fine or near fine condition with original dust jackets is preferred. As Special Collections continues to build its book collections we welcome donations of books in fine condition. If you would like to help, contact Kathy Smith, associate university archivist, at (615) 322-2807 for more information.

*The Waste Land*, T. S. Eliot (1888-1965). London: Hogarth Press, 1923.

*Tobacco Road*, Erskine Caldwell (1903-1987). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932.

*Gone With the Wind*, Margaret Mitchell (1900-1949). New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936.

*To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee (1926 - ). New York: Lippincott, 1960.

The organizational structure of the Heard Library system is almost unique among U.S. research libraries, with the exception of Harvard. We depend on each dean to underwrite the cost of library services for his or her faculty and students. This unique structure is our greatest strength, since it fosters a deep connection between the various schools and their libraries. But our organization also impedes the development of system-wide new services, especially those dependent on technology, unless we reach consensus among the various colleges. To implement a number of these recommendations will require us to achieve a new level of consensus and common vision not only among library staff, but also among the University community. I know that many of our patrons were not contacted by the task forces, and if you have suggestions for me, I would welcome them. Modern organizations must be responsive to our patrons and to our quickly changing environment, or we can easily become irrelevant.

This issue of the Acorn Chronicle focuses again on some wonderful new acquisitions to the collection made possible by the generosity of those who care deeply about our library. We are grateful to have benefactors such as the Shaviros, the Wills, and the Friends of the Library. Likewise, we are fortunate to have especially creative faculty and librarians like Professor Greg Barz and Dennis Clark, who established the new archive of African music that you will read about in this issue.

— PAUL M. GHERMAN



Ridley Wills III and his wife Betsy (from left) look over the Heard Library's three millionth book with Latin American Bibliographer Paula Covington and University Librarian Paul Gherman. The Wills gave the rare and valuable book, *Monuments Anciens du Mexique, to the library. It is considered a classic early source on Maya archaeology and the ruins at Palenque.*

### Author Speaks at Friends of the Library Event

The Oct. 28 Fall Friends of the Library Dinner featured a talk by Richard Powers about how he came to write his novel *The Gold Bug Variations*. Powers is the author of eight novels that employ multiple narrative frames to explore connections among disparate disciplines such as photography, artificial intelligence, musical composition, molecular biology, game theory, virtual reality, race, and American business. His books have won various prizes, including the Rosenthal and Vursell awards, both from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; James Fenimore Cooper Prize, Society of American Historians; Corrington Award; PEN/Hemingway Special Citation; and *Time* magazine's Book of the Year. His most recent novel, *The Time of Our Singing*, has won two awards.



### MOSAIC: The Many Facets of the Library

The Heard Library's first electronic report, "MOSAIC: The Many Facets of the Library," is available online at [www.library.vanderbilt.edu/mosaic/](http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/mosaic/). The publication may be accessed from the Heard Library's main Web page by clicking the MOSAIC icon at the bottom left. Thanks to all the writers and to Suellen Stringer-Hye, who designed the publication.

### Lorenzi Receives Noyes Award

Nancy Lorenzi, assistant vice chancellor for health affairs at Vanderbilt, received the Marcia C. Noyes Award from the Medical Library Association at its annual meeting last May. The Noyes Award is the association's highest professional distinction and recognizes a career that has resulted in lasting, outstanding contributions to health sciences librarianship. Prior to coming to Vanderbilt in 2000, Lorenzi was director of the library at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center and later director of its Medical Center Information and Communications.

### Special Libraries Association Holds Conference

The Special Libraries Association held its 2004 conference at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville June 5-10. The conference theme was "Putting Knowledge to Work." Sharon Gray Weiner, director of the Peabody Library and president-elect of the Southern Appalachian Chapter of the Special Libraries Association,

was heavily involved with local arrangements and hospitality. Playing an equally major role was current president of the chapter Leslie Reynolds, associate director for public services at the Owen Graduate School of Management's Walker Library. Tours of the Peabody Library and Vanderbilt's Television News Archive were part of the convention's official program.

### Heard Library's Haar Co-Authors Book

*Collaborative Collection Development: A Practical Guide for Your Library*, co-written by John Haar, associate university librarian of Vanderbilt's Heard Library, James Burgett of the University of Kentucky Libraries, and Linda Phillips of the University of Tennessee Libraries, was released this past June by the American Libraries Association. The authors have worked collaboratively for 10 years, and the book shares their expertise so that others can incorporate their winning strategies. The book is available for purchase at the ALA Web site and from Amazon.com.



The Peabody Library recently opened the Iris Café. Operated by Provence Breads, the café is open from 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 7:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Friday. Outside the café is an attractive terrace with tables and chairs that has become a popular gathering place for students, faculty and staff.



# Music under African Skies: Researchers create digital archive of rare African music

BY LEW HARRIS

Britney Spears, Celine Dion and other pop artists dominate the radio waves in Uganda to the point that traditional music and dance are being eclipsed and forgotten.

The traditional African music may be preserved, however, by an innovative collaboration between the Vanderbilt University Library and the Blair School of Music that is also helping shape the future of the modern library.

Because of a strong working relationship between the Library and the Blair School, Dennis Clark and Greg Barz were able to spend two weeks in Africa last summer. They recorded traditional music in Uganda for a new Music Archive of Africa and the Americas. The archive will be available in digital form online and on produced recordings for students, researchers and the general public.

"It's a joint venture," explains Clark, director of the Anne Potter Wilson Music Library. "To their credit, neither (University Librarian) Paul Gherman nor (Dean) Mark Wait were reluctant to engage in this effort. Both of them were handed a proposal, both read through it thoroughly, and both immediately decided to do it."

The Blair School funded the expedition equipment and travel costs. The library is committed to funding the infrastructure supporting the archive—cataloging the music as well as covering the cost of the hardware, software and servers needed to disseminate the music online.

Preserving the music is important, says Barz. He and his wife lived in Africa while he was working on his Ph.D. about 10 years ago. He has continued to visit the continent periodically trying to understand the role of music in the fight against HIV/AIDS. He has found that women living in rural villages, for example, seldom have access to sources of information such



Dennis Clark (left) and Greg Barz display traditional Ugandan instruments.

as radio, television, or newspapers that many Americans take for granted. Thus, information regarding the spread of the disease can often be scant or misunderstood. In response, many women have formed musical groups in order to embed medical

information within traditional means of storytelling. Barz has found that when women sing, play the drum, and dance about AIDS, medical interventions enter into villages in meaningful and productive ways.

## Traditional Music, Dance Disappearing

Barz has observed traditional music and dance forms disappearing and being forgotten in the span of just one decade. The culture is at least partially being eclipsed by Western music and culture. English is the main language in Uganda, since it is a former British colony. Young Ugandans in the major cities often wear Western clothes. All but the very poor have cell phones. Even in the remotest villages there is usually at least one person with a cell phone.

Many Africans have asked Barz if he could do something to preserve their traditional music, dances and culture. The new archive is part of the answer.

During their African trip Clark and Barz also established a pipeline that will continue to send African music to the archive on a monthly basis. They retained Ugandan traditional musician Centurio Balikooa to travel throughout East Africa recording traditional music on a direct-to-CD recorder that Clark and Barz brought with them. Balikooa will ship about eight hours of music to Vanderbilt each month, all of it recorded by traditional musicians. Many of them live in remote villages far away from urban areas. Clark and Barz have already

begun reaping the benefits of Balikooa's work and are thrilled with the quality of the music. It is lush in instrumentation and rich in vocals.

"We had this idea of enabling Africans to decide what recordings are valuable to them and their culture and providing them the opportunity to make those recordings," Clark says. "Our work here would be in preserving and disseminating the music."

Clark and Barz envision a collection of music available with a few clicks on a computer to students and researchers from around the world. Many of them will never set foot in Vanderbilt Library.

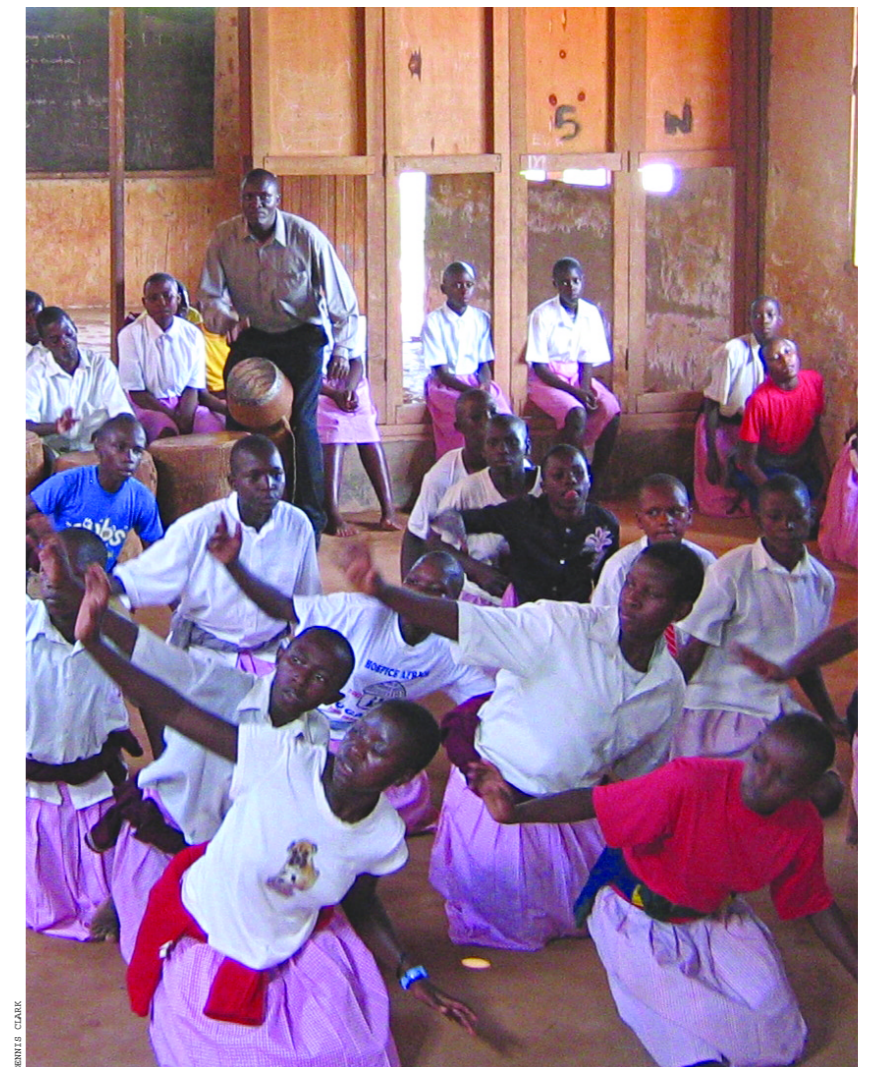
## Focusing on Digital Preservation, Dissemination

"If we were talking about a physical archive of getting cassette tapes and putting them on a shelf in the Music Library, I don't think I'd be very interested," says Clark, a lecturer in music bibliography at the Blair School of Music. "Vanderbilt libraries are increasingly focusing on digital preservation and dissemination. The Vanderbilt Television News Archive is our major model for that."

The new Archive of Africa and the Americas will consist of other music than strictly that of Africa. The late Vanderbilt History Professor Simon Collier bequeathed to the Heard Library all the recordings he used in researching his highly acclaimed book on the tango. The material was subsequently sent to the Anne Potter Wilson Blair Library and will be a major collection in the music archive.

"These are mostly commercial recordings so they will be owned by the Music Library," Clark says. "Conceptually, it's right in line with the archive. We also have an adjunct ethnomusicologist at the Blair School, Helena Simonett, who just returned from a semester of doing work in rural Mexico, where she made her own recordings. We'll want to talk to her about bringing some of her recordings into the archive as a Mexican component, so we can support her work, too."

Barz, with his long history of involvement in Africa, is pleased with the progress. "Vanderbilt can establish a cyber archive that can be accessed from the middle of a jungle in



Young children at Kibuye Primary School in Kampala, Uganda, rehearse a traditional dance in preparation for national music competitions.

Africa if they have Internet access," he says. "It can exist in London, it can exist in Nashville, and wherever anyone can connect to it. That is the genesis of the dream that supports this archive."



# Universal Language of *Music*

BY JULIE NEUMANN

The music of a 90-year-old blind Ugandan thumb piano player fills the room. The sound is so clear and full it gives the impression of a live performance. But the aging artist is not giving a concert, nor has he ever set foot inside a recording studio. A fellow African musician, using state-of-the-art field recording equipment, has collected 80 minutes of the thumb piano player in his own village, creating a CD that is now being played in an office at the Blair School of Music. This rare recording is the foundation for Blair's new Music Archive of Africa and the Americas.

"We are trying to approach music, in particular music of smaller communities in Africa and America, on their own terms," said Greg Barz, assistant professor of ethnomusicology. "We want to empower other communities, other countries, to record for themselves and make choices on what they want preserved by Vanderbilt."

Barz began to consider such an archive on a research trip to Africa when he was approached by villagers concerned over the gradual disappearance of their traditional music. Dennis Clark, director of the Anne Potter Wilson Music Library, confirmed that the library had both the technology and expertise to set up a modern archive at Vanderbilt that would act as a repository for indigenous music.

In May, Clark and Barz traveled to Uganda with recording equipment to begin collecting music for the archive. After establishing a network in Africa, they turned over their equipment to Centurio Balikoowa, a world-famous Ugandan traditional artist and close friend of Barz who has visited Vanderbilt several times. Balikoowa agreed to travel to rural villages and record music over the span of one year, sending CDs back to Barz and Clark every month.

"We think we will get much more authentic and realistic recordings that [way]," said Clark. "So it can be very proactive and very organic—it can grow wherever it goes rather than us putting a pre-determined imprint on top of it."

## Unique Music Archive

The archive is unique in that the artists provide written consent, allowing Vanderbilt the freedom to license and share the music with the world via the Internet. Similar archives generally do not provide such broad access. Clark also foresees the release of CDs through a University-run record label, with the creators of the music sharing in the proceeds.



Young performer with Uganda Heritage Roots, an organization for street children in Kampala.

"There are tons of wonderful recordings in archives all around the world that [you] can't make copies of," Clark said. "Some of them you can't even play, because the format is so fragile that playing it would destroy it. We have committed to this process of not only having it available for access but migrating to the next level of technology in perpetuity."

After Barz and Clark realized the potential importance of the archive, they began to tackle the difficulties of making a top-quality recording in rural Africa.

"We had to figure out the idiosyncrasies of making a field recording with no electricity," said Clark. "We used a direct-to-CD machine that runs on a lead acid battery so you can take it into a village and make a recording on CD in a place that does not have electricity, much less the ability to play a CD."

The equipment also had to travel well. Many East African villages are inaccessible by car, so the entire recording platform had to fit into a backpack that could be worn during bumpy motorcycle rides into the countryside.

Clark viewed all of these technological hurdles as signs of progress.

"It is an experiment not only as a project of ethnomusicological importance but also in the changing paradigm of the library," he said. "Libraries need to embrace this technology, to become proactive and more niche-based to their user community."

## Collecting Kandas

During their trip, Clark and Barz discovered that being proactive archivists did not eliminate the possibility of gathering existing recorded material. Though the focus of the research trip was on making traditional music recordings, Barz began a side project of collecting *kandas*, cassette tapes of popular music that are sold in kiosks and on street corners throughout Uganda.

"As someone who has been working in Africa for a long time, I realize cassettes are the reality of everyday music in Africa," Barz said. "You can't buy them, you can't just go on Amazon.com and find the cassettes that are for sale in the villages and towns throughout Africa."

Western music libraries and archives generally don't collect these, instead collecting CDs of African music produced in Europe.

"It would be like us only collecting music by people who covered other people's music, which is ridiculous to even think about," he said. "But when it comes to other people's cultures we very often will only trust interpretations rather than going to the source."

With help from young Ugandans and Barz's research assistant, Vanderbilt undergraduate John Dick, the research team collected hundreds of these tapes in an effort to document the cassette culture and its effect on other music. The result is the largest archive of popular African cassette recordings in the world, truly representative of contemporary Ugandan culture and music.

## Building Relationships

Building and supporting relationships between Africa and America is at the heart of this project, and one of the most difficult moments for the research team was leaving the work they had

begun in the hands of others. But the first recordings they received proved beyond all doubt that the new archive would be a success.

"Balikoowa has been traveling throughout East Africa taking this project very seriously, collecting from the true culture bearers," said Barz. "The field recording made of the thumb piano player was a triumph not only in the quality and importance of the recording, but it also proved the importance of entrusting the recording process to the culture itself."

Balikoowa's collection of 80 minutes of recorded materials of the notable blind musician is probably one of the last links to a very old playing culture, he said.

"I know how difficult it can be for a foreign researcher with limited time to locate and record local African musicians in optimal recording conditions," Barz said. "The fact that Vanderbilt has a true partner on the ground makes me realize that the archive is not only for Vanderbilt. This is clearly of importance to Ugandans themselves."

*(Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the Vanderbilt Register.)*



Centurio Balikoowa (right) instructs a student at Kibuye Primary School in Kampala, Uganda, on the traditional adungu harp.



# Tropical Book *Tales of a Book Hunter*

BY PAULA COVINGTON



Paula Covington

My colleagues are quick to say, “NEVER travel with Paula.” It DOES seem that many of my book-buying trips for the Heard Library should be less eventful. Why, for example, did I end up having to board a Russian reject plane from the '50s while flying from the Petén in Guatemala? And why, on my trip to Nicaragua, was I the only one going to a conference in Costa Rica whose plane ticket was stolen in Managua? Then there was the sizeable earthquake in Costa Rica the next day and the bomb in front of the hotel...and the riot in Bogotá while I was in the bookshop. Finally, there was the time they wouldn't let me on the ship in the Yucatán because I mistakenly mailed my visa home with the books. My husband, who had already boarded, was happily eating salad for the first time in weeks in the ship's dining room, unaware of my dilemma. After some pleading and discussions with

multiple intransigent local policemen, one official took me aside and agreed to look the other way if I could persuade the Norwegian pursuer to take my name off the ship's passenger list. No problem, the pursuer said, whipping out her “White Out” and blotting out my name. Technically, I'm still in Mexico. Ah, well, it's a beautiful country, and the people are so welcoming, and the books can be such bargains.

My most recent book-buying trip was to Cuba. The profusion of new Cuban writers has generated research by both students and faculty in the Spanish Department at Vanderbilt. When a frustrated Ph.D. student from Spain said she was going to Cuba to find the books and journals she needed since Vanderbilt and other U.S. libraries did not have these recent writers' works, I realized that I had put off the problem of getting Cuban materials too long. A recent NEH-funded international collaborative project to digitize decaying colonial documents in Cuban archives is being directed by Vanderbilt History Professor Jane Landers. Since the library is supporting this effort, Jane and I coordinated our trips to overlap in May.

“Lady, I'm happy to take you to the terminal but they don't fly to Cuba anymore,” my Miami cab driver informed me. Indeed, when I entered the airport no boards listed flights to Havana. I finally found an information desk and was directed to an inconspicuous barricade. Rounding it I felt suddenly transported to another country. Not only

# Fever!



*A taxi from the 1950s picks up passengers at the Capitolio in Havana. The Capitolio, modeled after the U.S. Capitol in the 1920s, is now the Ministry of Science. (Photo © Barry Dawson, from his book Street Graphics Cuba, Thames & Hudson, London and New York)*

had the language changed to Spanish but also the level of informality, laughter, and melodic patter. Everyone was talking to everyone in the midst of cartons and duffel bags, shrink-wrapped and overflowing, of all shapes and sizes.

A large Cuban woman parked her bag in front of me, talking rapid fire Spanish about the delays and her headache. She said I should come visit her and then bombarded me with questions about what I would be doing and who I knew in Havana and how many times I had been there. “Nunca,” I say, I've never been to Cuba. (She continued to stick with me and I was later warned she might be a Cuban government “minder.”)

### Who Were All These People?

Given the restrictions on travel to Cuba these days, I wondered who all these people were. Besides a Swedish couple selling herbal medicine, they seemed to be mostly Cubans returning home after family visits or Cuban Americans going to visit siblings and aging parents. One was returning to Cuba for the first time since she was a child. A man in his twenties (who said he had his U.S. citizenship) was visiting his mother for the first time since he left in an inner tube as a teenager to make the 90-mile trip to Miami.

And me? I was probably the only passenger going to buy books for a university library, as I have done in Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, and other countries in Latin America.

Vanderbilt has a long history of collecting Latin Americana and a highly ranked program of Latin American Studies. The university developed the first Brazilian center in the U.S. in 1947, established as a result of Chancellor Harvie Branscomb's interest in the country. Even before that time collecting on Latin America had begun at Vanderbilt through gifts by donors and collectors.

Maintaining and strengthening the Heard Library's collection in the field has been one of my jobs as Latin American and Iberian Bibliographer since 1976. (I also co-teach an interdisciplinary course in Latin American research methods and help students and faculty with research.) I try to project current and future research needs of students and faculty in the Center for Latin American and Iberian Studies, the Department of Anthropology and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

### Book-Buying Likened to Guerilla Warfare

The difficulty is that the Latin American book market is very different from other parts of the world. A colleague of mine once said that if the acquisition of books for a university research library were com-





*Cars from the 1950s, with the distinct front grills and tail fins of that era, are a primary form of transportation in Cuba.*

yet thoroughly unboxed or priced, it was a steal. These lucky finds, however, are no substitute for trips to Latin American countries.

The archaeological discoveries at Maya sites in Guatemala and subsequent digs by members of Vanderbilt's anthropology faculty have led us to hope to become a national resource in the areas of Mesoamerican anthropology and archaeology. We need to be creative and resourceful to stretch the Latin American library budget funds to strive for our goal.

#### Encounters with Dobermans

I was in Guatemala at just the time a noted archaeologist was selling his private library. The Friends of the Library gave us the funds to buy a portion of it. The man lived in a lovely colonial mansion in Antigua. I had tea with him and he regaled me with stories of his early explorations. He told me he would be away but to come back in the evening to make my final selections.

That night, I was greeted at the mansion by a male servant holding a chain attached to a lunging Doberman. The books were all spread around a patio and the servant proceeded to chain the lunging, growling dog to a post in the center. I spent a nerve-wracking evening selecting books while praying the chain wouldn't break. (Oddly enough, once in Berlin I visited a bookseller of Maya archaeological materials in his home in Nuremberg and he, also, had an intimidating Doberman.)

Buying trips are especially important in countries where a recent revolution has occurred. After the dancing in the streets ends, there is usually a flourishing of poetry, fiction, treatises, political propaganda, memoirs, and other literature of the revolution. It's often hard to obtain these materials, because during such a period publishing is likely to be even more erratic and limited than usual.

My first venture to an immediately post-revolutionary society was to Nicaragua after the Sandinista revolution. A group of U.S. librarians attending a conference in Costa Rica was invited to Managua by the Sandinista Ministry of Culture to meet with the first professional librarians in the country. We were also to meet with poets, writers, and other notables. Little did we know one of the notables would be Comandante Tomás Borge. The leader of the Sandinista Revolution and head of internal security forces, he materialized one night from a grove of trees, complete with an armed entourage, just as we were about to return to our hotel. He kept our group of 10 up half the night to discuss our impressions of Sandinista Nicaragua, to describe his con-

cerns for Nicaragua's security, and U.S.-Nicaraguan relations. Talk of invasions and plots to bomb Nicaraguan sites created tense undercurrents. Whatever the polarities of views on Sandinista Nicaragua, Vanderbilt and other U.S. libraries now have a rich sampling of books, political pamphlets, papers, and posters of that early Sandinista era, and our students and scholars can glean a sense of those turbulent times.

But I digress. Now back to the trip to Cuba. From the plane the long, thin island I had peered at with curiosity so many times en route to Latin America came into view, and as we began to land most passengers made the sign of the cross followed by thunderous applause and cheering.

#### \$4,000 in Cash

Carrying documentation from Vanderbilt and proof that I was legitimately traveling on a professional license and only engaging in work, not tourism, I expected a good amount of red tape. To my great relief, I was never bothered. I was more concerned (as was my husband) about arriving alone at 9 o'clock at night at the Havana airport and having to take a strange taxi with \$4,000 in cash stashed in my concealed money belt. (Because U.S. banks cannot do business with Cuba, American credit cards are not accepted). The Cuban crime rate is reportedly very low, but such a sum would be a powerful temptation in a country where the average monthly income is about \$20. I had received a cryptic e-mail from Cuba the night before. The student from Spain warned me to "take care—all is in upheaval." After all her previously upbeat messages this was unexpected and a bit disturbing.

After a lengthy search of my baggage, I was relieved to find an official had come to meet me. I was taken through a crowd to a locked van outside and driven to the city. We passed the dwindling crowds of a May Day protest that had concluded just that afternoon. One million Cubans organized by Castro had marched in protest of President Bush's recent announcement of an appropriation of almost 60 million dollars for anti-Castro efforts to liberate Cuba.

Tension continued during that week of my trip with the rhetoric escalating.

The newly announced restrictions on travel to Cuba and on dollars sent to families caused hardship for many Cubans. The Cuban government closed the "dollar stores", cutting off the supply of some basic necessities. Several times I was stopped by people asking me to buy milk for their babies. I don't know if they had exceeded their small rations or wanted it for resale. Food was scarce and they were in the middle of the worst drought in 40 years, so many livestock had died and milk was scarce. The economic hardships mean



*Cuban revolutionary icon Che Guevara joined Fidel Castro in Mexico in 1954. Castro led the 1956-59 Cuban Revolution, and Guevara was a top commander. He left Cuba after criticizing the Soviet Union and returned to revolutionary work abroad. In 1965 Che set up guerrilla forces first in the Congo and then later in Bolivia, where he was ultimately captured and killed in October 1967. Images of him still abound in Cuba.*

private libraries are being broken up for resale, and stolen books are also not uncommon.

Economic hardships notwithstanding, the Cuban government promotes a plethora of publishing and cultural events. UNEAC, a union of writers and artists, is a busy and exciting spot filled with authors, students and lecturers. The government has subsidized publishing so that book buying in peso stores can be amazingly cheap (3-5 books per dollar). Bargaining and buying antiquarian books in the



# Vanderbilt Acquires Baudelaire Masterpiece

BY PAUL KINGSBURY

plazas and from other places can be the opposite, however, and one must obtain a *comprobante* (supporting document) to be able to take pre-1940 imprints out of Cuba.

## Surreal Revisit to the '50s

Many of these plazas and magnificent colonial architectural beauties are being restored. Old hotels are being renovated through investment by other countries (49 percent foreign; 51 percent Cuban). Tourism from non-U.S. nations is reasonably popular despite shortages faced by the general populace. Nevertheless, much of Havana is like a surreal revisit to the '50s. Coming out of a bookstore one day I noticed the square seemed spiffier. With the grand old English hotel and royal palms waving in the background and everyone dressed to the nines in '50s clothing, it was a sight to behold. I had stepped back into my childhood and could see my mother's hat and dress and bag and our family car. But these '50s cars were all pristine. Where were all of the usual rundown cars and bicycle carts Cubans use instead of taxis? Then I noticed they were making a film. It wasn't hard to find the extras and the cars for the set since—in one way, at least—time has stood still in Cuba during the 40 years since the U.S. blockade began.

Despite the lack of resources and food, Cubans are surprisingly upbeat and vibrant. I found the people I met incredibly generous, in spite of the current political divide. When I arrived at the national library to visit several librarians I had met at a conference in Cartagena last year, the electricity was out. Therefore, neither computers nor lights functioned and I was unable to see their duplicate exchange collections. They closed the national library that afternoon because they could not serve their employees a meal. On a return visit, I noted their computers were so old they lacked virtually any memory. It took three tries for them to type a letter giving me permission to take a duplicate collection of a Cuban literary journal. The box of floppy discs and pens I brought them were carefully parceled out to the staff. Despite their problems, these librarians took the time to help an American university research library fill in journals and books it lacked.

The Vanderbilt graduate student from Spain put me in touch with a professor of Cuban literature who spent several days of her personal time helping me locate many of the new writers' works. People in the plazas wanted to give directions and use it for an opportunity to talk about the U.S., and ask what life was like. Despite the several protests in the square they were friendly and able to separate U.S. politics from individual North Americans.

With such help, I had soon acquired so many books and journals that I began to worry about getting all the volumes

out of the country. I had considered parceling them out to the Vanderbilt students who had arrived on a Maymester course trip, but now there were too many for the 70-pound limit on their charter flight.

## Thousands of Tiny Parakeets

Finally, I located a cargo company that would ship to Canada and spent half a day in a high security area of the airport making the arrangements. The agent's office walls were covered with reverent quotations from El Presidente Castro and photographs of Fidel at all ages. The agent, however, sported a Tommy Hilfiger shirt, a new fax and a computer the likes of which no one else in Havana had. After endless paperwork, I was finally taken to a loading dock with my many bags of books. I sat on the dock while a young but intimidating customs official looked at every book and pored over the pages. We were accompanied throughout by the desperate squawks of thousands of tiny parakeets stuffed into pallets bound for Spain. The only other shipments were boxes of vaccines from Germany. The shipping boxes I had been promised never arrived. The severe customs official finished and then smiled and pitched in with all the other agents to scour the airport for gunny sacks and boxes and then helped pack.

I'm not sure where my next opportunity to strengthen the collection may take me. There are so many other great finds to be discovered ... and so little time ... but what wonderful places, books, and people to get to know along the way.

I'd invite you to go, but remember what my colleagues say: "Don't ever travel with Paula."



Several Cuban Revolutionary Army soldiers carry out their duties near the Parque Central in Havana.

Since its founding at Vanderbilt in 1968, the W. T. Bandy Center for Baudelaire and Modern French Studies has assembled one of the world's most comprehensive research collections on the poet Charles Baudelaire, whose unbridled, intensely vivid style exerted a significant influence on modern poetry. This past April, with generous funding provided by the Friends of the Library, the Bandy Center secured perhaps its greatest collecting coup ever: an exceedingly rare, complete, first-edition copy of Baudelaire's masterpiece, *Les Fleurs du Mal*, in excellent condition. The acquisition also marks a major milestone: the 3 million and first volume for the Jean and Alexander Heard Library collection.

*Les Fleurs du Mal* (*The Flowers of Evil*), the first book-length collection of poetry written by Baudelaire, was published in 1857, when the poet was 36. The book caused an immediate sensation in France, challenging the mores of the time. Many of the poems were erotic, sensuous, and flouted conventional morality and religion. In August 1857, Baudelaire was prosecuted for "offending public and religious morality." Ultimately, the French court fined Baudelaire 300 francs and banned six of the most erotic and sexually explicit poems from the volume: "Les Bijoux," "Le Léthé," "A Celle Qui Est Trop Gaie," "Lesbos," "Femmes Damnées," and "Les Métamorphoses du Vampire."

"While there has always been literature that's highly erotic, it often has been published clandestinely," says Bandy Center director Patricia A. Ward. "The kind of free expression that we're used to now was not the case then. This was a period when writers were breaking some of those boundaries in a more public way."

As a result of the verdict against Baudelaire, booksellers were forced to sell the first edition of *Les Fleurs* with the offending poems razored out, leaving obvious gaps in page numbering. When an expanded second edition was published in 1861, it did not include the banned poems. The Bandy Center has long owned one of these expurgated first-edition copies. But a complete, original edition of Baudelaire's landmark work had eluded the Center. Only 1,100 copies (plus 20 printed on special paper and inscribed by Baudelaire) were printed of that first edition; no one knows how many escaped the knife. Naturally, then, when a complete copy in excellent condition was advertised by Parisian book dealer Michel Bouvier, Patricia Ward immediately looked into acquiring it. Fortunately, the Friends of the Library made available the necessary funds to purchase the book.

Making the purchase all the more apropos was its unusual provenance. The book was originally owned by a well-to-do American journalist and author who spent several years in France, Charles Astor Bristed (1820-1874). His spidery ink signature is still visible atop the book's title page.

Bristed was an acquaintance of Edgar Allan Poe and had even given Poe money when he was in financial distress. For his part, Baudelaire was an enthusiastic champion of Poe and translated his works with such skill that they are still read in French schools today. There is a strong probability that Baudelaire visited Bristed in Paris to discuss Poe, and Bristed probably acquired Baudelaire's first book from a Paris bookstore in 1857.

As part of its mission to document the work of Baudelaire, the Center has long explored the links between Baudelaire and Poe. Founder William T. Bandy first became aware of the Bristed volume in 1986 (when it came on the market for the first time in many years) and conducted preliminary research on the connections between Bristed, Poe, and Baudelaire. Following Bandy's death in 1989, Professor of French Emeritus James S. Patty built on Bandy's research to publish a groundbreaking 1996 *Romance Quarterly* article on the three writers. Patricia Ward has recently undertaken new research on the subject with plans to publish her findings in the Center's annual *Bulletin Baudelairien* journal.

The Bristed volume had only recently resurfaced in the market when the Heard Library purchased it this year. "It remained in the Bristed family until the early twentieth century," says Bandy Center Assistant Director Mary Beth Raycraft. "Then it was sold to a book dealer in Massachusetts, and then a European prince had it in his personal library."

The newest addition to the Bandy Center collection joins more than 200 copies of *Les Fleurs du Mal* spanning more than 30 languages, including Italian, Dutch and Turkish. But the new volume, kept in an acid-free box under lock and key, is in a category unto itself.

"It is a very rare volume in that it contains those six poems," says Raycraft. "Given the history of research at Vanderbilt on the Bristed copy of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, we are delighted to have acquired this particular copy, which is a most appropriate complement to the collection."



University Librarian Paul Gherman (left) and Friends of the Library President Marshall Eakin examine the rare, first-edition copy of Baudelaire's masterpiece, *Les Fleurs du Mal*.



# Wachs Collection Is “World Class”

BY PAUL KINGSBURY

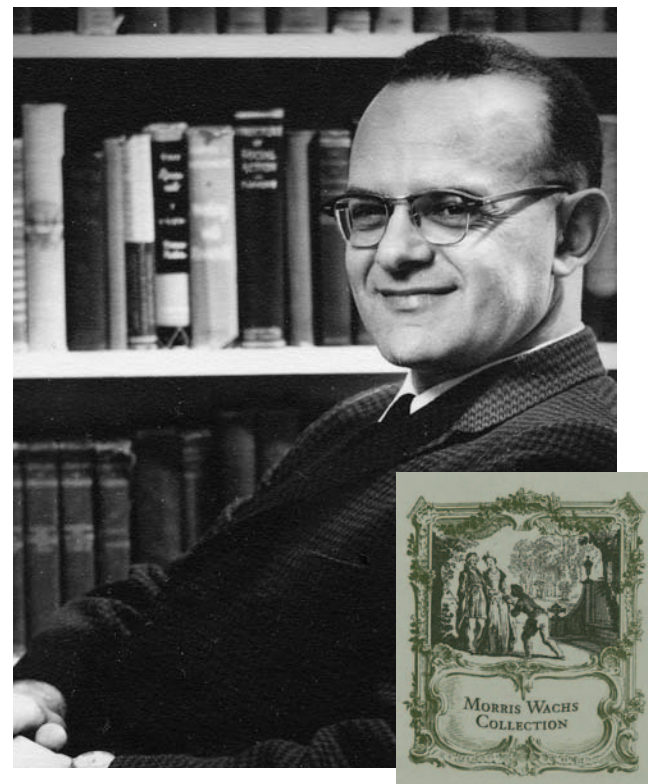
Quietly and frugally, during the 30 years he served as a Vanderbilt professor of French, the late Morris Wachs assembled a magnificent collection of some 1,000 rare volumes of French literature of the eighteenth century. For years it was his personal, working library. Now, thanks to a generous donation by his sister and brother-in-law, Frieda and Sol Shaviro, this unusually well-preserved and carefully selected library of French books—many of them still encased in handsome original leather bindings—has become the newest named collection within the Heard Library’s W. T. Bandy Center for Baudelaire and Modern French Studies. The Morris Wachs Collection of Eighteenth-Century French Literature expands the scope of the Bandy Center’s holdings to encompass the dawn of the modern era.

Originally established in 1968 as a collection and research center focused on the study of French poet Charles Baudelaire (see related story), the Bandy Center has in recent years acquired complementary collections, such as the Gilbert Sigaux Collection on modern French theater and the Pascal Pia Collection on modern French literature and culture. The Center’s newest addition, says Bandy Center Assistant Director Mary Beth Raycraft, “serves as both a complement and prelude to the Baudelaire collection.”

Morris Wachs retired from the faculty in 1992 and passed away in 2001; his wife, Jacqueline Touret Wachs, another longtime member of Vanderbilt’s French faculty, died in 1999. In memory of them, the Shaviros donated this valuable collection, along with another 2,000 related titles from Wachs’s personal collection, to the Heard Library in late 2003.

“For years and years, Morris Wachs sought out books in Paris and elsewhere whenever he visited booksellers,” says Patricia A. Ward, director of the Bandy Center. “Although he had a limited amount of money that he was willing to spend for each volume, over a period of time he built this very fine collection, which is very strong in popular fiction of the eighteenth century.”

Rather than concentrate on the well-known and widely collected work of France’s most famous eighteenth-century philosophical authors—Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot—Morris Wachs chose to build a collection that focused on lesser-known works, many of which had limited publication runs. Today a good number of these works are rare and difficult to find; some appear to be the only known copies in existence. The collection encompasses not only novels but also satires, translations, almanacs, travel literature, and fictional travel accounts. “It gives a wonderful overall view of the popular taste of the 18th century,” says Ward.



*The late Professor of French Morris Wachs’ valuable personal working library of about 1,000 rare volumes of French literature from the eighteenth century has become the newest named collection within the Heard Library’s W. T. Bandy Center for Baudelaire and Modern French Studies. The bookplate for the new collection is most attractive.*

Even before it was cataloged and shelved, the Wachs Collection drew the praise of a notable expert on 18th-century French literature. Richard L. Frautschi, emeritus professor from the Pennsylvania State University, spent some time examining the collection in the spring while preparing a new edition of a definitive academic bibliography of 18th-century French novels. Following his visit, Frautschi wrote to thank the Bandy Center staff, marveling at the number of rare volumes and remarking, “The Wachs material, now in the public domain, is of capital importance for students of the Enlightenment.”

Much like William T. Bandy, the Center’s founder and namesake, Morris Wachs amassed his outstanding collection bit by bit by prowling French bookstores looking for hidden jewels in the years before rare book dealing was available to anyone on the Internet.

“This is a world-class collection,” says Ward, “that we are adding to an already world-class collection.”

# Seigenthaler Donates Papers to Library



John Seigenthaler

John Seigenthaler, eminent journalist, author, civil rights leader and founder of the First Amendment Center, announced in June that he will donate his papers to Vanderbilt University Library’s Special Collections division.

“I am honored and more than a little surprised that Vanderbilt University is interested in these papers,” Seigenthaler said. “If the documents can help explain the journalism, literature, government and politics of the last half-century, I will be doubly honored.”

The papers contain correspondence, book manuscripts and photographic material spanning Seigenthaler’s life, including correspondence from his 43 years at *The Tennessean*, his tenure at *USA Today* and his service as a special aide to Robert Kennedy during the Civil Rights Movement. In addition, there are research materials, drafts and proofs for his latest book, *James K. Polk*.

“John’s papers will greatly augment the library’s holdings in history, political science, literature and, above all, journalism,” said Vanderbilt University Librarian Paul Gherman.

Seigenthaler, a Nashville native, has been a strong advocate for upholding the First Amendment and the public’s right to know since his early days at *The Tennessean*, where he began as a young reporter and eventually became editor, publisher and CEO. The former president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors was named chairman emeritus of the Nashville morning newspaper in 1991.

The award-winning journalist took a leave of absence from *The Tennessean* in 1958 to serve as a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University. He also left the paper in 1960 to work for Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. He became the federal government’s chief negotiator with George Wallace, governor of Alabama, during the Freedom Rides, which challenged outdated segregation practices that had been ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1961, Seigenthaler was beaten unconscious while attempting to help two student protestors escape from a violent group of Klansmen.

While serving as editor of *The Tennessean*, the newspaper carried out several major undercover investigations and

won a Pulitzer Prize for a story about corruption involving union and management in the coal industry.

In 2002 the Vanderbilt Board of Trust named the expanded and renovated building on its Peabody campus that houses the First Amendment Center and the Nashville offices of the Freedom Forum the John Seigenthaler Center. Seigenthaler founded the First Amendment Center in 1991 to promote awareness, discussion and debate about First Amendment rights and values.

## Library Honors Seigenthaler with Special Purchase

Vanderbilt’s Jean and Alexander Heard Library has made a special purchase to honor John Seigenthaler for his lifetime achievement and to thank him for his recent talk to the Friends of the Library. Seigenthaler enthralled a Friends gathering in May with information about the life of James K. Polk, the subject of his most recent book. The library has acquired a rare typeset copy of an “Address of James K. Polk, to the people of Tennessee.” The date of the speech, according to the aged document, was April 3, 1839.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, Polk was a close friend and chief lieutenant of President Andrew Jackson in his various political battles. Polk served as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives between 1835 and 1839, leaving to become Governor of Tennessee. Often referred to as the first “dark horse” president, Polk was the last of the Jacksonians to sit in the White House, and the last strong president until the Civil War.

While president, Polk successfully added three states to the Union, started the United States Naval Academy and the Washington Monument, and issued the first postage stamp. His 1839 address to the people of Tennessee augments the Heard Library’s holdings of Tennessee history and its presidential documents.



## TIME CAPSULES HIGHLIGHT LATEST EXHIBIT

A pair of worn saddle oxford shoes... A mint condition black and gold freshman “beanie” from the class of ’68... An intramural football jersey... A burnt draft card... Former Chancellor Alexander Heard’s commencement address... A year’s worth of issues of the *Vanderbilt Hustler*, the student newspaper.

These are just a few of the many unique and interesting items placed inside time capsules prepared by the classes of 1968 and 1969 at their graduation. The time capsules and their contents are featured in the exhibit, “Lost in the Sixties,” which will be open at Special Collections through mid-January.

The 1969 capsule is painted in bright psychedelic colors. The 1968 capsule is not as aesthetically pleasing, painted a bright yellow, but has enjoyed a more exciting “life.” It was opened and eagerly perused by the ’68 graduates at the class’ 25th anniversary reunion in 1993. Subsequently, it somehow made its way to Antics, an antique shop in Hillsboro Village. The shop’s owner asked Associate Archivist Kathy Smith if the University Library had an interest in acquiring the item.

“We told her we were very interested in something documenting that era at Vanderbilt,” Smith said. “It’s a fascinating era for students of today to look back and understand issues of their parents’ day.”

A notebook filled with predictions for the next 25 years by members of the Class of ’68 is especially unique. While some students took a lighthearted viewpoint, others were eerily accurate. Many students commented on the possible after-effects of the then raging Vietnam War. One student predicted that nuclear warfare would cease being a real threat and that “biological warfare would be a big threat.”



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