

CAXTONIAN

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The making of a Nobel Laureate in Literature

Discovery and selection of Gao Xingjian in the year 2000

Part I of IV

Junie L. Sinson
Contributing Editor
International Scene



Nobel Laureate Gao Xingjian gives his response at the Prize Award Ceremony, Stockholm Concert Hall, December 10, 2000. Photo provided through the courtesy of the Nobel Museum.

It is unlikely that there exists any single literary event which more greatly touches the international world of letters than the annual awarding of the Nobel Prize in Literature. When the award is given each year, one can accurately predict the appearance of an article or column critiquing the Swedish Academy's latest selection. Certainly, that at that time, the institution and/or the procedure responsible for the Nobel selection will be equally critiqued.

In the year 2000, the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Gao Xingjian (Gow-Jayjung), the first Chinese writer to receive that recognition. As always, a general secrecy and facelessness surrounded that selection process. The next several issues of the *Caxtonian* will examine the typical, or perhaps not so typical, journey, which resulted in the 2000 Nobel award being given to Gao Xingjian.

The procedure that produces a Nobel Laureate in Literature often appears to the

interested to be quite mysterious. The secrecy related to the selection process adds to the perception of mystery. That mystery continues despite the known provisions in the will of Alfred Nobel, which gave birth to the Nobel Prize.

As the Swedish Academy embraced its assignment, which it inherited and did not seek, it did, during its first century of involvement,

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Musings...

CAXTONIAN

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It is about 12:30 a.m., I should judge — I can't see the dial of my watch — on a pleasant summer night in 2002. I am standing with a small cluster of people on the dark shore of Jekyll Island, GA, about midway down the east side of the island. The outgoing tide surges 50 yards away. The only light, besides the stars above, is the red glow from an electric lantern held by a park ranger.

The dim light illumines a loggerhead turtle, which is just completing its annual nesting ritual — throwing sand with its flippers to camouflage the place where she just buried her eggs. In 60 days between 80 and 120 miniature turtles will struggle from the sand pit and make their way to the ocean. Daughter Erin, her husband David, and my two grandchildren Drake and Aspen watch with me in fascination as the 300-pound turtle labors in the darkness to complete her annual ritual on the same shore on which she was born, the park ranger tells us, 30 or 40 years ago.

No one talks; all watch in awe as the giant turtle completes her labor and begins the ponderous journey back to the wine-dark sea. The dim red light of the lamp follows her slow movements over the sand. She comes to a deep, water-filled swale, shaped by the force of the outgoing tide. The turtle is confused by the water and thinks she's reached the sea. With a few strokes, she's on the upward slope of the swale. Reaching the crest, she heads in a direction parallel to the coast line, and four park rangers come quietly and aim her toward the ocean.

Soon the turtle, illuminated by the soft red glow, reaches the undulating sea and with a few strokes of her flippers disappears from our sight. We all stand in silence for a few minutes, looking at the dark waves. I realize as I watch this ritual that we're observing the most primitive intellect culminate its own annual rite, so mysterious in its fulfillment that we do not begin to understand the homing instincts and navigational capabilities of this giant of the sea, whose ancestors have been performing in this exact fashion and in this place since before the time of the dinosaurs.

No one knows where the turtle will go. Little is known of its life-habits nor how it survives among dozens of predators in its ocean world. The sea turtle, unlike the land tortoise, cannot retract its head and flippers into its shell, and, thus, is extremely

vulnerable to predators. Park Service people estimate that one in 10,000 of the miniature turtles hatched in their sand-wombs will survive until adulthood. Because many of their nesting sites have been built on — for beach-front parking lots and seaside high-rises — fewer turtles are hatched each year. The loggerhead is, thus, considered a threatened species.

The *New York Times* reported in a page-one story (August 2, 2002) a black market in loggerhead turtle eggs in Florida. "They are sold just like drugs," a Florida Wildlife Conservation officer reported, for \$36 a dozen. Poachers and those who deal the ping-pong ball-sized turtle eggs from their car trunks or in the backrooms of bars add to the possibility of the species' demise.

The most beautiful tribute to the loggerhead turtle in recent literature is told by American novelist Pat Conroy in *Beach Music* (1995). The loggerheads and their annual egg-laying ritual provides the background motif for the events of World War II, Viet Nam, and more recent national events. Conroy, who makes personal much of modern American history, concludes *Beach Music* with a community ceremonial release of 4,633 baby loggerheads along the North Carolina coast, where much of the novel is set. A grandmother, her son, and his daughter lead the community in the morning release of the tiny turtles. "The first turtle to reach the wet sand was five yards ahead of any of his competitors when the wave hit him and sent him somersaulting backward as it always did. But the small loggerhead recovered quickly, righted itself, and was a swimmer by the time the next wave hit. Each turtle tumbled when the first surf rushed over it, but each swam with great economy on the second wave."

Under the stars over Jekyll Island in the dark silence of this summer's night, as I stood with my family watching the primordial, eternal sea, the final lines of Robert Frost's splendid poem, "Neither Far Out Nor in Deep," came to mind, so appropriate for the moment — so significant for the times: of the "people along the sand," Frost concluded, "They cannot look out far./They cannot look in deep./But when was that ever a bar/To any watch they keep?"

Robert Cotner
Editor

The Austrian Intellectual Renaissance and Hermann Broch

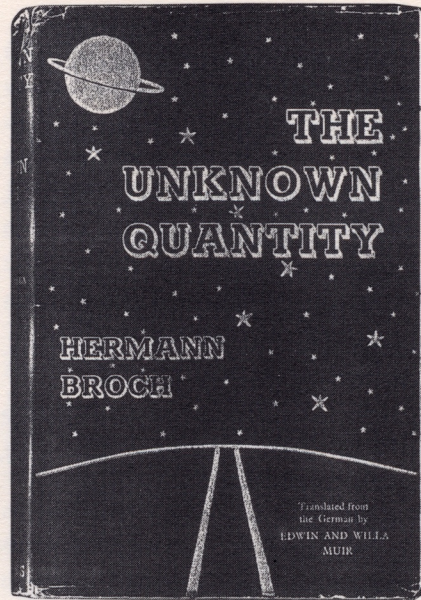
Pierre Ferrand

The Austrian Empire was the world's center of classical music in the late 18th and much of the 19th Centuries, with Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Gustav Mahler, as well as non-natives like Beethoven and Brahms, who spent much of their creative lives in Vienna. In literature, the record was not as distinguished. There are no world-class names familiar outside of Central Europe. Only specialists know much about worthy playwrights, like Grillparzer, Anzengruber, and Nestroy, fiction writers, like Stifter, or poets, like Lenau.

On the other hand, during the first decades of the 20th Century, several authors who wrote in German and were natives of the Austrian Empire have gained truly international fame. They include two poets born in Prague, Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) and Franz Werfel (1890-1945), the latter chiefly known in the U.S. (where he died), for one of his novels, *The Song of Bernadette*. There was also Franz Kafka (1883-1924), whose name has suggested "kafkaesque," an indispensable English adjective. Another generally known name is Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and no student of modern philosophy can ignore the Viennese-born Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), who spent the last two decades of his life in Cambridge, England.

Other distinguished Austrian writers during the same period included the playwright, novelist, and autobiographer Arthur Schnitzler (1862-1911), the essayist and dramatist Karl Kraus (1874-1936), and three authors of notable novels about the decline of Central Europe, who have won international critical acclaim though they have not been best-sellers abroad. They were Robert Musil (1880-1942), the author of a 1,600-page (unfinished) account of *The Man Without Qualities*, Hermann Broch (1886-1951) with his trilogy, *The Sleepwalkers*, and his subsequent work, *The Guiltless*, and Joseph Roth, who wrote *The Radetzky March*. Some would add Heimito von Doderer (1896-1966), *The Demons* and other books.

With the exception of Rilke, Musil, and von Doderer, the representatives of the Austrian Intellectual Renaissance of the first decades of the 20th Century, mentioned above, were of Jewish origin. No new writers of their stature



Dust jacket of Broch's *The Unknown Quantity*. From the Edwin Muir Collection, Newberry Library through whose courtesy it is used.

have been identified with Austria since the Nazi takeover of the country in 1938, though Austrians have sometimes claimed Paul Celan (1920-1970). Considered by some the greatest German-language poet of the past century, Celan, however, was born in Bukovina (Ukraine) and became a French citizen. He lived for most of his life in Paris after surviving German concentration camps.

Hermann Broch escaped from Austria in 1938 and spent the remainder of his life in the U.S. He deserves special attention from English-speaking amateurs of fine writing because his key prose works have been unusually well translated. This was a difficult task, since Broch is an exceptionally skillful writer, fascinated by literary techniques and a perfectionist, who brings into play the full resources of the German language. Aspects of his work have reminded readers of the achievements of Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka, the James Joyce of *Ulysses* (about whom he wrote an interesting essay), and the John dos Passos of the *U.S.A.* trilogy. It would be simplistic, however, to speak of mere imitation.

Edwin Muir and his wife, who did a brilliant job with much of Kafka, were responsible for the English versions of the *Sleepwalker* novels and other works. Ralph Mannheim translated *The Guiltless*, and Jean

Starr Untermeyer, former wife of the well-known American poet and anthologist, Louis Untermeyer, spent four years on the English translation of *The Death of Vergil*, an impressive 170,000-word prose poem, probably the most challenging text of them all.

Broch had been groomed to succeed his father, a textile magnate, as a manager of an industrial empire. He had been trained as an engineer and was fascinated by mathematics, philosophy, and the social sciences. While he had published some essays and short stories, he started writing full-time at the age of 41, after selling the family's factories in 1927.

The novels of the *Sleepwalker* trilogy, published 1931-2, won the respect of many discerning critics throughout the Western world. Their theme is the decline of the intellectual values of modern civilization, chiefly illustrated by the careers of three Germans of dramatically different backgrounds. The suggestion is that such "sleepwalkers" unconscious of their primordial guilt, were somehow responsible for such catastrophes as World War I.

Like many other emancipated Austrian Jews of his generation, Broch was deeply impressed by conservative Catholic ideals and ideology. He had indeed converted to Catholicism in order to marry a daughter of Catholic converts (he divorced her a dozen years later). While he eventually rejected organized religion, he longed for ideological unity and moral certainties and believed in the divine virtues of sacrifice and redemption. He rejected many aspects of modern life, literature, and art as a wasteland of "kitsch," and wrote a notable essay on that subject.

He was an avowed Platonist. His novels are no naturalistic or literal accounts, but rather parables or visions projected on the wall of the cave described in Plato's *Republic*. Despite his obvious love for words, he did not think that ultimate reality could be understood by man or expressed in human language. On the other hand, unlike Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russell, and the

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Nobel

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reach a major conclusion. The Academy long ago concluded that in literature, there is no "best person" in the world at a given moment.

The late Lars Gyllensten of the Swedish Academy stated, that in choosing a winner, the Academy is being asked to evaluate non-comparable achievements. Gyllensten felt that the prize should remain sensitive to Alfred Nobel's objective of recognizing a literary figure who produced a high quality of work and a usefulness of purpose.

The Nobel Foundation reported that on December 31, 2000, it possessed Investment Capital with a market value of 3,894 (SEK m). With such extraordinary wealth, one would conclude that the Swedish Academy possesses almost unlimited funds to efficiently explore the world in its search for an outstanding recipient.

There exist four sources from which a Nobel nomination may come: 1. Members of the Swedish Academy; 2. A University Professor of History or Language; 3. Existing Nobel Laureates; 4. Presidents of Authors' Organizations. Irrespective of the great financial resources and the eminence of the nominators, a recipient can still be nominated as a result of most unpredictable and fortuitous circumstances.

An example of that fortuity was the discovery, nomination, and selection of Gao Xingjian in 2000. The discovery, study, and interaction with Gao is an interesting story, when told in the words of his presenter, Gäoran Malmquist, a member of the Swedish Academy. Malmquist was born in 1924 and began the study of Chinese in 1946. He is the senior selection committee member of the Nobel Prize in Literature. He founded the Department of Sinology at Stockholm University.

In March, 2002, in Stockholm, I had the pleasure of interviewing Malmquist. The following dialogue developed:

JLS: I understand that within the Academy, you are recognized as their major Sinologist.

GM: I am the only one they have.

JLS: How did it come about that you were the presenter of Gao Xingjian when he received the Nobel Prize?

GM: Normally, the Nobel Secretary speaks for the Academy.

JLS: Yes, I wish to know why they chose you to be the presenter.

GM: Speeches and presentations are normally given by the Nobel Secretary and on occasion by the Chairman of the Nobel Committee for Literature, who, in this instance, would have been Kjell Espmark. Rarely are members of the Academy asked.

JLS: How then did you first learn of Gao?

GM: I was traveling to China to attend a conference. It must have been 1987. Before rushing to the airport, I grabbed a copy of a literary journal to have something to read.

JLS: How was that significant?

GM: My wife, who is Chinese, was accompanying me. She looked at the journal and said, "ahhhh...you must read this." It was a story by Gao called "The Shoemaker and His Daughter"—a very tragic tale about a shoemaker who completely dominates his daughter.

JLS: Was it unusual for your wife to assist you?

GM: No, she reads very fast. She occasionally will find a new writer whom she will suggest that I read. All the way home, I'm thinking about contacting Gao. I wrote to Gao. It is actually very easy to contact Chinese writers in Peking.

JLS: Oh, really?

GM: I told him that I had seen what he had written and that I very much liked his story. I invited him to send more stories to me. He then sent to me stories that had been published in journals.

JLS: Did he know he was corresponding with someone in the Swedish Academy?

GM: No, I didn't think so. I then translated those stories into a volume called Baghdad Fisherman. It's a magnificent story. As I was about to finish that translation, I met Gao. I asked him what he was working on. He told me and, within three or four months, additional material arrived.

JLS: Did your relationship continue?

GM: Yes. I received from him both dramas and short stories. I continued to translate them. They were unique. You could lift them up on the stage and perform them as a monologue or dialogue.

JLS: Was there anything else special about his short stories or dramas?

GM: Yes, yes, yes. His dramas relied upon both his knowledge of classical Chinese opera, its techniques

and, additionally, on the techniques of modern western opera.

Gäoran Malmquist has translated more than 700 Chinese literary works from Chinese to Swedish. Included in that list are virtually all of Gao's two novels, his short stories and 14 of his 18 plays.

Readers throughout the world are surprised and delighted each year when, in October or early November, the Swedish Academy identifies the recipient of that year's Nobel Prize in Literature. Sometimes the named award winner is unknown and a total surprise. On other occasions, he or she seems to be an old friend, whom one feels is receiving the long-overdue recognition, which the recipient richly deserves.

On several occasions, I have discussed the nomination and selection process with a member of the Swedish Academy. Because the selection process is both private and very secret, readers of the world often describe the process as mysterious. In February of 2001, I discussed the process with the Literature Committee Chairman, Kjell Espmark. I also talked about the process in the March, 2002, visit with Gäoran Malmquist. Here is that conversation:

JLS: When are nominations received for the following year?

GM: Nominations generally arrive between September and February 1. They must be in by February 1.

JLS: What then happens?

GM: The Nobel Literature Committee is presented a list of the nominated candidates. It is a long list of 200 names, roughly.

JLS: What was that committee and what does it do?

GM: The Committee has five members. Its current head is Kjell Espmark. Initially, they tabulate the nominations and recognize the identity of the nominators. They accept the list and by mid-March, they reduce the list to 20-30 individuals.

JLS: What next does that Committee do?

GM: The Secretary, Kjell Espmark, and the members of his five-person Committee begin to speak and discuss the list of candidates. Toward the end of May, they will have arrived at a final short list of five or, occasionally, six candidates.

JLS: What do they do with that list?

GM: They present that list to the entire Academy. We then spend the summer reading. We are given assistance by the Academy's Librarian.

JLS: What does the Librarian do?

GM: First, the Librarian begins to make books available. They must be in sufficient number so that you do not have to wait. Next, we get a huge compilation of material on each of the five nominees. It includes such things as newspaper clippings and additional reviews from journals.

JLS: Is this applicable to all five nominees?

GM: It is not generally necessary to begin to study all five nominees. In my 15 or 16 years, I never received a list of nominees who were all new nominees. The only thing we have to do is read the new ones.

JLS: Certainly Naipal did not come as a surprise; he was not a new one.

GM: No! Oh, no! He was very good.

JLS: Do you have any idea of how many books, as a member of the Academy, you would read during that year?

GM: I've never investigated that. No one forces us. We don't share our reading list with each other. We read as much as we can. For example, Horace Engdahl, our Permanent Secretary, advised me that he reads three books a day. I said to him, "That's impossible!" He said, "No, I've done that throughout my adult life."

JLS: Yes.

GM: For me to read three short collections of poetry, I can do that.

JLS: I'm sure that they couldn't read three books in a day, like Gao's *Soul Mountain*?

GM: No, no, no, no. But, it is amazing the amount of books these people go through. I am very busy translating and writing. I mainly spend the summers catching up. I continuously try to follow poetry.

JLS: How many members comprise the Swedish Academy?

GM: We have 18 members, but three do not attend meetings. Twelve members is like a quorum, and we require a majority of seven. The Academy meets every Thursday at 5:00 p.m. The meeting is at the Academy Assembly Room, located at the Stock Exchange building. The meeting lasts 1½ hours. We are each given a piece of silver for our attendance.

JLS: When you must replace a member in the Swedish Academy, what is your practice?

GM: Well, when a member dies, for two months, we don't mention a new name. After two months, we begin a process, which is more difficult than suggesting a Nobel Prize winner.

JLS: When recruiting to create an efficient sports team, one often recruits to fill one's weaknesses.

GM: Indeed we ask, where are our weaknesses? It can be, for instance, language. For example, we ask, "Do we have anyone to take on Slavonic style, Russian?" We try to complement the whole.

JLS: Are there other considerations?

GM: There are always practical considerations. We will address age. We investigate the candidate's ability to attend most meetings. It is quite important that the individual be able to work on small committees. Participation requires a lot of work.

JLS: In these troubled times, do you have someone sensitive to Islamic literature?

GM: We do have members specializing in Islamic studies.

JLS: Is not Naguib Mahfouz of Egypt the only Nobel Laureate you have had from the Middle East?

GM: It is true. Mahfouz was the only one from the Middle East.

JLS: If I were a Muslim, I would be asking, "What about us?" Don't they have any writers?

GM: Oh they have! Yes! They have fine books, of which we are aware.

This contributing editor chose to describe the function of the Swedish Academy and Nobel Literature Committee in a question-and-answer format.

The answers of Göran Malmquist not only defined a procedure, but revealed something of his humanity and the spirit in which he and his fellow Academy members address their duties. ❖

To be continued

Save the Date

January 15, 2003

**Gala Private Reception
of the
Caxton Club-Organized
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**"Inland Printers: The Fine-Press
Movement in Chicago,
1920-1945"**

**wine reception, exhibit viewing,
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\$45 per person

**Watch for more information
in next month's
CAXTONIAN**

"Now is the time . . ."

"for all good people to come to the aid of the party." Remember that slogan we all used to practice in Typing 101? Well, practice-time is over, and now is the time for all good Caxtonians to come to the aid of their club.

Every member (and friend) is invited — nay, urged — to donate a book of at least \$50 value to the club for auctioning at the Annual Holiday Revels, scheduled for the dinner meeting, December 18, 2002, at the Mid-Day Club.

Choose a book or printed artifact from your collection, send it to Dan Crawford, the Caxton Club office, Newberry Library, and be part of the generous spirit of the season by showing your personal appreciation to one of the premier organizations in Chicago, which celebrates month in and month out something of a Renaissance spirit in the modern world.

Your contribution will count toward the matching gift program currently in progress under the direction of the Development Committee, discussed in a related article in this issue of the *Caxtonian*. Make plans now to attend the Holiday Revels with your book friends. ❖

logical positivists, he vigorously opposed their scorn of metaphysics, for he felt that ultimate reality (however irrational it might appear to mere human minds) is all that matters. He even claimed that logical positivism was an "integral part of the kind of world view which gave birth to Hitler." (While this certainly expresses his strong feelings about the subject, it seems rather dubious as a proposition).

The author of *The Wasteland*, T.S. Eliot, was in sympathy with Broch's approach and published a philosophical "key" to *The Sleepwalkers* in his magazine, *The Criterion* (V. xi, # 45, July, 1932). Thomas Mann, who admired Broch, helped him immigrate to the U.S. He lived in Albert Einstein's home in Princeton, NJ, for a couple of months and also was repeatedly a long-term guest of Henry Seidel Canby, the editor of the *Saturday Review*. Aldous Huxley, Thornton Wilder, and Hannah Arendt were among the many other intellectual leaders who thought highly of him. He also received Guggenheim and Bollingen fellowships, a subsidy from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and from the Rockefeller Foundation. He was poet in residence at Yale University, whose library now houses an extensive Hermann Broch Archive. He was considered repeatedly for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Many of the subsidies were received for a "work in progress," *The Death of Vergil*, which was finally published simultaneously in German and English in 1945. Jean Starr Untermeyer has described at some length her struggles with the complex text, which Broch himself, in a moment of discouragement, called a "salad of words." His continuous revisions made her work particularly hard.

The Guiltless, the last major work published by Broch during his lifetime, is a kind of coda to *The Sleepwalkers*, suggesting the further decline of Central Europe up to the advent of the Nazi Regime. It is an unusual construct, composed of 11 linked short stories or sketches, some of which were originally written 20 or more years earlier, and several topical poems. It partly echoes the Don Juan motif (with characters called "Juna" (sic), the seducer, Elvire, and Zerline. It also suggests Kafka, with the main non-hero mostly called "A." One of the

sketches evokes a kafkaesque atmosphere of paranoia. Another sketch, set in the framework of a drinking bout reminiscent of Joyce's *Ulysses*, contains a notable satire of the German beerhall customer, a pompous and asinine secondary school teacher ranting against Einstein's relativity theory. It effectively portrays the kind of person who turned into an enthusiastic supporter of the Nazi regime.

The title, *The Guiltless*, (1949) is meant to be ironical. Broch emphatically thinks that modern man is guilty and responsible for all the horrors of the 20th Century. His analysis has some parallels with that of sociologist David Riesman in *The Lonely Crowd*, published one year later, and which caused quite a stir half a century ago. In addition, Broch is ruthlessly condemning his anemic anti-heroes, except for "A," eventually redeemed, he feels, by committing suicide. He blames them for refusing to assume the responsibility to become part of a spiritual community which may eventually contribute to human salvation. The shape of this future salvation, however, remains somewhat nebulous.

The Death of Vergil evokes the last 18 hours of the life of the Roman poet and his desire to destroy his epic masterpiece, *The Aeneid*. There is a long dialogue with his patron, Emperor Augustus, who induces him to desist from doing so. The book ends with impressive verbal fireworks describing Vergil's voyage into death and the stars, becoming one with the universe. The book starts with paragraphs longer and more complex than those of Marcel Proust. It uses repetitions and the German language resources of elaborate compound nouns and adjectives like bludgeons. It thus evokes to considerable effect the nightmarish experience of the fever-racked Roman poet, carried from his sickbed on a galley up to Augustus's palace in Brundisium through the terrifying alleys of this harbor town, guided by a young boy, (an attendant spirit seen by no one else). This opening section is paralleled by the dramatic ending.

Broch's Vergil is in sympathy with Augustus, a (relatively) benevolent ruler, who reestablished peace and prosperity throughout the Empire after years of bloody civil wars and who did his best to support the arts and letters. However, he feels that his epic, which glorifies the Emperor

who saved the empire, is still imperfect and, above all, does not promote sufficiently the deeper values he yearns for, those of human salvation.

Broch was thoroughly aware of the fact that Vergil had written an eclogue which was interpreted in the Middle Ages as a prophecy of the Christian Messiah. Indeed, this is why Dante made Vergil his guide through much of the *Divine Comedy*. Critics have pointed out that Broch's prose poem is written in a similar spirit. It remains a remarkable achievement, which, admittedly, requires rather resolute and dedicated readers. However, they are likely to find it rewarding. Bibliographical Note: A valuable "commented edition" of Hermann Broch's works and correspondence in German was edited in the 1970s by Paul Michael Luetzeler, Professor of German, Washington University, St. Louis, and published in 13 volumes by Suhrkamp, Frankfurt. An earlier edition of Broch's works (in 10 volumes), was published by Rheinverlag, Zurich, 1952 ff.

While the English versions of the three novels discussed above are readily available in inexpensive paperback editions, the Jean Starr Untermeyer translation of *The Death of Vergil*, published in 1945 by Pantheon Press, is actually the very first edition of the book. It was issued a few weeks before the German text, also published by Pantheon, and commands prices on the rare book market ranging from about \$200 to over \$2,000. Jean Starr Untermeyer's discussion of her problems as a translator of the book is contained in an essay, "Midwife to a Masterpiece," published in her book, *Private Collection*, New York, 1965. There is a lengthy essay on Broch's prose poem in *The Cambridge Companion to Vergil*, describing it as the most notable modern piece of fiction about the Roman poet. ❖

Author's note: The above essay was written on the 50th anniversary of Hermann Broch's death in New Haven, CT.

Important exhibitions at University of Chicago

Kathryn DeGraff
Contributing Editor
Exhibitions

Through the Lens: Stephen Lewellyn
Photographs of the University of Chicago
An Exhibition in the Special Collections
Research Center, Main Gallery
September 16, 2002 - January 10, 2003

Works by photographer Stephen Lewellyn document University events, personalities, and campus scenes from the mid-1940s to the late 1960s. A local Chicago photographer, Lewellyn was commissioned for hundreds of photographic assignments on the University of Chicago campus. The prints on display, ranging from student activities to campus events, were made from more than 10,000 negatives. Lewellyn recently presented as a gift to the University of Chicago Archives.

Preserving the Photofiles: Digitizing Images at the University of Chicago
An Exhibition in the Special Collections
Research Center, Alcoves Gallery
September 16, 2002 - January 10, 2003

The visual history of the University of Chicago is preserved in more than 60,000 images in the University Archives Photographic Files. A project to preserve and digitize these files is currently under way. On view is a selection from this rich collection documenting individuals, buildings, activities, and events associated with the University, dating back to the pre-Civil War period founding of the Old University of Chicago. The exhibition displays a variety of photographic formats, including the cyanotype, carte-de-visite, and dry plate negative, and highlights recent publication of Photofiles images in works on civil rights activist Ida B. Wells, physicist Enrico Fermi, and ecological researchers of the University of Chicago Department of Botany.

Enhancing the Legacy: Gifts from Irmgard Rosenberger to the Ludwig Rosenberger Library of Judaica
An Exhibition in the Special Collections
Research Center, Ludwig Rosenberger Library of Judaica Gallery
October 1, 2002 - June 20, 2003

Judaica presented by Mrs. Irmgard Rosenberger. Mrs. Rosenberger's gifts include manuscripts, correspondence, broadsides, caricatures, prints, maps, and ephemeral materials. Items on view range from a 16th-century decree restricting Jewish actions to the visitor's book used at the Palestine Government House in the 1920s and 1930s.

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An Exhibition in the Special Collections
Research Center, Main Gallery
March 3, 2003 - June 20, 2003

Recent developments in digital technology and the work of contemporary book artists have stimulated debates about the nature of a book. Shared assumptions about what will be found "between the boards" persist — a printed or handwritten text, sometimes accompanied by tables, charts, illustrations, or other media. Over 20,000 volumes from the John Crerar Collection of Rare Books in the History of Science and Medicine were recently cataloged, thanks to a gift from University of Chicago Trustee Harvey Plotnick. This exhibition celebrates the completion of the project and the surprising discoveries it made possible. Online records for many landmark books in the history of science and medicine are now fully accessible to researchers. So too are collections of lichen, algae, and wood samples; compilations of clippings and articles on aeronautics; books on anatomy and machines with models and moveable parts; and other novel uses of the book format to communicate and preserve information. The examples on view illustrate the ingenuity of the authors and other compilers, the creative scope of the personal and institutional collectors who brought these items together, the skill of catalogers who described the materials, and the exciting opportunities awaiting researchers.

For information on these exhibitions, telephone Daniel Meyer, 773/702-8714. ❖

Harold Washington Library exhibition features work of Caxtonians

An exhibition, "Books Chicago Bound and Bedecked," focusing on the history of bookbinding and the book arts in Chicago, is currently on display in the Special Collections Exhibition Hall of the Harold Washington Library, 400 South State St., 9th Floor. Curated by, and highlighting the work of, Caxtonians William Drendel, Scott Kellar, and Barbara Korbel, this exhibit will feature the work of master binders from the late 19th through the 20th Centuries, as well as current artisans in the field.

From the workshops of world-class craftsmen at Cuneo Press, R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co., Monastery Hill, and Hull House, to the studios of contemporary artists, over 80 bindings are presented. The show traces the roots of the Chicago book arts and examines the foundations upon which current book art trends are based. Through February 3, 2003. ❖

Caxton Development Committee needs help

Eugene Hotchkiss

The Development Committee of The Caxton Club calls on all Caxtonians to support the current drive with its goal of raising \$30,000 by December 31, 2002. This campaign will fund the catalog for the upcoming Caxton Club exhibit, publicity for that exhibit, and a new outreach program, including a scholarship to be awarded to a student in the book arts.

The drive requires that the leadership gifts, of \$15,000 and already in hand, be matched dollar-for-dollar by contributions either monetary or by appropriate books for the Holiday Revels auction at the December dinner meeting, and that 50% of the Club membership must contribute.

Contributions, either monetary or books, should be sent to Dan Crawford at the Caxton Club office at the Newberry Library. ❖

Bookmarks...

Dinner Program

November 20, 2002

Caryl Seidenberg

"A collaboration: Press and Poet"

Caxtonian Caryl Seidenberg, owner-proprietor of Vixen Press will present an illustrated lecture on "Collaboration: Press and Poet." Her collaborations have been, primarily, with living writers.

But she will highlight especially her work with American poet laureate Robert Pinsky, between 1997 and 2000. In 1997, when Pinsky was Poet in Residence at Northwestern University, Caryl wrote him, and he responded. She then met with him, and they hit it off immediately.

She asked him if he had a poem he would consider for a limited edition from Vixen Press, and he said, "Yes!" That led to the production of his "The Rhyme of Reb Nachman" by Vixen. "He was wonderful to work with," Caryl comments, "and very generous with his time, in spite of being so very busy with his laureateship and his own teaching. (He's a professor at Boston University, as well as other duties.)"

Caryl found that the email was the best way to communicate with Pinsky, and they established an ongoing dialog, which led to a second collaboration, Vixen's publication of a long narrative poem by Pinsky, called "Shirt."

Pinsky has this important distinction: his tenure as poet laureate was extended because of the exceptional outreach programs he initiated, which became a part of the celebration of the millennium. Caryl was a part of that extension.

With a background in the fine arts, as well as in the technologies relating to printing, Caryl has illustrated her own publications over the years. She was featured in the *Caxtonian* (December 2001). She is the publisher of the poems of Martha Friedberg, whose late husband Stan was a long-time and devoted Caxtonian.

Caryl will share illustrations of her work and show slides, as well. This is a program Caxtonians will not want to miss. Join your friends in November.

*Peggy Sullivan
Vice President and
Program Chair*

***Parking Note:** Since parking is no longer available in the BankOne garage, you may use the valet parking service at Nick's Fish Market, Clark and Monroe, for \$10 (after 5pm). Or you may take advantage of special arrangements made with the Standard Parking self-park lot at 172 W. Madison (Madison at Wells) for Caxtonians to park for \$5.25, between 3:30 and 9:30pm. Identify yourself as a Caxtonian for the special rate at this lot.*

Luncheon Program

November 7, 2002

"A conversation with book people"

Looking for a most unusual luncheon engagement?

How about sitting with a group of knowledgeable people to discuss, say, the long-term impact of Johann Gutenberg's contribution of printing — the introduction of moveable type? Consider, as well, why Gutenberg (1400?-1468) was selected as "Man of the Millennium."

Such a conversation is going to take place at the next Caxton Club luncheon meeting, and you are invited.

Ed Quattrocchi, Paul Ruxin, and Bob Karrow will offer their views of the importance of Gutenberg and his work. Paul will consider Elizabeth Eistenstein's important studies on the Renaissance and early modern printing. Bob will discuss the influence of printing over the years on graphic design, and Ed will lead a discussion in which YOU will be invited to share and participate.

This promises to be a vitally stimulating meeting, and YOU are invited to be part of the event. Join your friends and colleagues who love books, at our November luncheon meeting.

*Edward Quattrocchi & Leonard Freedman
Co-Chairs*

All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of BankOne, BankOne Plaza, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30pm. Dinner meetings begin with spirits at 5pm, dinner at 6pm, lecture at 7:30pm. Members planning to attend luncheons or dinners must make advance reservations by phoning the Caxton number, 312 255 3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$25. Dinner, for members and guests, \$45.