CAXTONIAN

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Ibsen's 'Ghosts' premiered in Chicago — of all places

Bruce Hatton Boyer

GENGANGERE.

ET FAMILJEDRAMA I TRE AKTER

AF

HENRIK IBSEN.

KØBENHAVN.

GYLDENDALSKE BOGHANDELS FORLAG (F. HEGEL & SØN).

GRÆBES BOGTRYKKERI.

1881.

Title page for first edition of Ibsen's Gengangere *(Ghosts) (1881), a play first produced in Chicago. Used through cooperation with the Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, MN*

While Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) never visited America, he does have one little-known connection with Chicago — it was here that the world premiere of his play *Ghosts* occurred on May 20, 1882.

Why such an important premiere should have occurred here is a curious tale, which will help us see how misunderstood Ibsen was in the English-speaking world, where his championing by two of the most influential voices in theater, William Archer and George Bernard Shaw, far from securing his reputation, nearly scuttled it!

Ghosts occupies the central position in Ibsen's works. Chronologically, it lies near the middle of his output, the 17th of 26 plays. More significantly, it lies at the center of Ibsen's thematic output, for in no other of his works did he as explicitly examine the central theme of his *oeuvre* — that social environment imprisons and dooms the individual.

The plot of *Ghosts* is quickly recounted. It takes place in the household of Mrs. Alving, widow of the late Captain Alving, a noted (and notorious) member of the society in a small Norwegian town. At the play's opening, Mrs. Alving has established an orphanage in her late husband's memory, just as her only son Osvald returns from Paris, where he has been living as an artist. We soon learn that Osvald has inherited not only his father's philandering ways but a fatal, unnamed venereal disease. By play's end, Mrs. Alving is forced to see the curse her husband has laid upon her life as the orphanage burns down and, in one of the most wrenching moments in all European theater, she helps Osvald commit suicide to spare him the ravages of his disease.

Ghosts represented the high-water mark of the naturalist revolution then sweeping Europe. The father of the revolution was the French novelist, Emile Zola, who saw life as a struggle for survival and that the outcome of that struggle was determined by the collision between genetics and environment. That Ibsen was familiar with Zola's theories is evidenced by his famous remark that "Zola descends to the gutter to bathe in it while I descend there to cleanse it!"

However, the two men looked at life through distinctly different prisms. Zola came to literature through journalism, and he quite deliberately saw literature as an engine of social reform. He was no great stylist and his best novels, *Therese Racquin*, *Germinal* and *Nana*, are crude polemics compared to those of his nearest competitor in France, Gustave Flaubert. But what they lack in aesthetic refinement, they more than make up for in shock value. Zola's description of the harrowing life in Flemish coal mines led to many needed reforms, and his depiction of Nana's depraved sexual encounters rocked the country.

Ibsen, on the other hand, began his career as a poet and was never interested in social issues *per se*. Indeed, he spent most of his life in exile from Norway, first in Italy and later in Germany. He was a loner and an introvert, the opposite of Zola, whose great moment was not literary but political, when he defended the wronged Captain Adolph Dreyfus.

Unfortunately for Ibsen, however, the surface resemblances were strong. Both men believed that restrictive social conventions caused personal unhappiness and for them, as for so many other writers of the period, venereal disease was the perfect metaphor for depicting a corrupt society. It mixed both biology and social repression into a perfect Darwinist cocktail.

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CAXTONIAN

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Musings...

What is the shape of faith today? I mean, what configuration does faith take in the 21st Century, making it different from the ghosts of past centuries?

In one of the more brilliant essays of our time, David Sayre helps us understand what our greatest artists hinted at in their finest works — in art, drama, music, and poetry — what our best scientists came to understand through their experimentation, and what our finest mathematicians discovered in their reasoning.

You do not know David Sayre. He is an engineer and a sage (as well as a marathon runner and a vocal soloist, who loves singing Bach). NJC and I shared dinner with David and a party of three others — including Caxtonian Peter Stanlis — in Cambridge, MA, on September 28, 2002, a private affair during the annual Robert Frost Colloquium at Harvard University, which we were all attending. You've never read David's essay, "The Berkshire Hills," and you cannot buy his book, *Something There Is*, in any bookstore, for it was privately printed by the author in 2001. But the book, and this essay in particular, are marvelous vessels, suggesting the contours of faith for our day.

The essay is set in a cemetery in the Berkshire Hills on a bleak November day, "just after the color fled the land, just before the forgiving snow." They are burying Winston, an unidentified youth who died before fulfillment, and only their despair accompanies them as they leave the gravesite. "Can we survive this despair?" he asks, and then adds, "In some ways we have come so far, yet truth still feels cold to touch, and we wonder how to replace the old religions with a rational faith that gives some warmth."

As he passes in the ancient churchyard the graves of many long dead, he remembers the tombstones marking the graves of the family of Mary and Oliver Pollard, who lost seven of their eight children between 1775 and 1812. "In our own grief we wonder at their survival." Most of the demons that "haunted your world," he muses, "have been exorcised from ours, ... [and] we have raised on your foundation a home of promise, of possibility, nearly safe from the demons without." It is, he confesses, the "demons within" that plague our lives today. "Our home is still primitive in many ways, still insular. We distrust intrusion still, and seek our comfort and meaning by drawing shelter and secrets about us. We slip easily into quarreling, but now with deadlier effect than you could imagine. Our view of the world, our expectations of nature, our notions of other life forms, are still anthropocentric. Still we wander."

In the context of memory, he imagines a graveside service for our time. He invites "Martin Buber to officiate as Rabbi." Buber would remind us "that we find ourselves in others, in relation." Einstein would be there to "set up 'thought experiments'," both quantitative and qualitative in nature about the existence of life beyond our own planet, life which would increase the opportunity and responsibility of finding relations more difficult than we have on this planet.

Abigail Adams Eliot — a New England woman who lived to be 100 and had three pioneering careers in her life (she was T.S. Eliot's cousin) — is asked to host the gathering. She continually keeps things on track — "are we drifting into mysticism and wishful thinking here?" Werner Heisenberg is present, suggesting that the "word 'soul' refers to the central order, to the inner core of a being whose outer manifestations may be highly diverse and pass our understanding." Einstein responds that the "separation we experience from each other is an 'optical delusion' of the individual consciousness...." Erwin Schrodiner says, "The only possible alternative is simply to keep to the immediate experience that consciousness is a singular of which the plural is unknown;...there *is* only one thing and that what seems to be a plurality is merely a series of different aspects of this one thing, produced by a deception...." Jacob Bronowski responses, saying, "analogy and metaphor are at the root of scientific advances." He adds, "Science is nothing else than the search to discover unity in the wild variety of nature....Poetry, painting, the arts are the same search,...for unity in variety."

David then moves us toward summation: while we "cannot devise a conclusive test" of divided or limited intelligence, we can know what matters in human life: "beauty, freedom, trust, commitment, truth, the capacity to build, to learn, to heal, to communicate, to love." David's conclusion, it seems to me, elucidates what our first modern dramatist, Henrik Ibsen, meant in the echo of Hedda Gabler's pistol shot, Nora's slamming door, Mrs. Alving's heart-wrenching grief: "If we can be freed of limiting concepts and discarded world views, why not seek a broader identity? We are no longer children. We have the means to stretch." The shape of faith stretched to its fullest will shroud few. if any, ghosts.

Robert Cotner
Editor

Recent visions of 'Ghosts'

Theatrical poster for the Mad Cow Theatre, Orlando, Florida. production of Ghosts, *June 2002. From www.best-voice-actress.com*

***Ghosts.** When I heard Regina and Oswald in there, it was just like seeing ghosts before my eyes. I am half inclined to think we are all ghosts, Mr. Manders. It is not only what we have inherited from our fathers and mothers that exists again in us, but all sorts of old dead ideas and all kinds of old dead beliefs and things of that kind. They are not actually alive in us; but there they are dormant, all the same, and we can never be rid of them.*

Mrs. Alving
From Ghosts, *Act II*

Kim Crow as Helene Alving, and Christopher Lee Gibson as Engstrand in the Mad Cow Theatre's production of Ghosts. *From www.best-voice-actress.com*

Scenic and lighting design by R. Finkelstein for a production of Ghosts *at the University of Colorado at Denver, College of Arts and Media at Denver's Acoma City Center Theatre, October 1999. From www.rfdesigns.org*

Victor Hugo's literary achievement

Part II of II

Pierre Ferrand

In a poem first published in a magazine, the *Revue des deux Mondes*, in 1831, Victor Hugo proclaimed his own arrival in this world, 200 years ago, with characteristic fanfare: "Ce siecle avait deux ans. Rome remplacait Sparte..." (This century was two years old. Rome was replacing Sparta...). He was referring to the fact that by the year of his birth, 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte had definitely ended the First French Republic. He assumed the title of Emperor two years later.

The epic quality of Napoleon I's career appealed to Hugo, the son of one of the Emperor's generals, and he wrote many fine poems about it, which fostered the legend, though what he had always found most impressive about him was Napoleon's ultimate failure. Hugo still was haunted by his memory after he had become the arch-enemy of his nephew, Napoleon III, whom he called "Napoleon le petit," (Napoleon the Little). In exile and dedicated to democracy, social justice, and to an united Europe, he included in his *Chatiments*, his collection of vehement attacks in verse on the Second Empire and all its works, published in 1853, a last poem about Napoleon I, arguably his greatest on this theme. It starts with the retreat from Russia, Waterloo, and St. Helena, and ends with a vision of Napoleon's true punishment for his crime of having assumed power by force: his nephew's regime. The Second Empire was started by street violence and deportations and was characterized by sordid speculation, vulgarity, and orgies. A long chapter in *Les Miserables*, written nearly a decade later, is a description of the battle of Waterloo and a meditation on it.

There are many other epic themes in Hugo's huge poetic output, which in the latest complete edition fills some 5,000 pages. In his *Legende des Siecles* (Legend of the Centuries), he writes impressive verse about Cain, Jesus, and Mahomet. He creates his own cosmic myths, such as the one about one of the giants who fought the Greek gods. He gives voice to the glory of the "Seven Wonders of the World" of antiquity. A grim poem, "The Epic of the

Victor Hugo by Auguste Rodin in Maison de Victor Hugo, Paris. Image from the collection of Pierre Ferrand.

Worm," stresses that all of them, except for those tombs, the pyramids, have been destroyed, and graphically proclaims the doom of all human endeavor. It is followed by a proud nod to nihilism, and a note of hope in spite of all.

He evokes the historical and mythical tyrants of the East and the West, and the brutal evil of medieval robber barons and the Inquisition. On the other hand, he revived the more attractive legends about Roland and the Cid, and invented his own tales of knights' championing justice and compassion. He described the sufferings and the decency of the common people through the ages and presented his hopes of a better future. While he presented Dantesque visions of horror and doom, a long and powerful poem, *The End of Satan*, suggests that even the devil will be redeemed. Among his many other visionary verses, there are the impressive fragments of a lengthy epic entitled *Dieu* (God) in which he struggled, as in many of his other poems, with the problems of belief and of the existence of evil. It is totally wrong to claim that he is satisfied with bland and facile answers of any kind.

Besides his epic, visionary and, indeed, cosmic poetry and his political and literary satires, Victor Hugo's work includes exciting descriptions of nature, notably of the oceans and clouds, and also beautiful idylls, such as his retelling of the Biblical story of Ruth. In his moving verse about personal tragedies in his life, he more than matched the other French poets of his time on such themes. He also wrote colorful exotic pieces, rousing songs, and bewitching love poetry. He described charmingly, in some poems, episodes of his own childhood and of his encounters with his grandchildren. There is hardly any kind of verse in which he did not excel, and, indeed, his work anticipates in some ways practically all outstanding French poetical styles from his age onwards.

Victor Hugo has remained tremendously popular in France. Still, for various reasons, many literary connoisseurs have had the reaction of Andre Gide, who, when asked who was the greatest French poet, answered, "Victor Hugo, alas!" What sophisticated French writers have missed in him has been what the French call "*mesure*" — equilibrium, a sense of limits, and "good taste," indeed, classical characteristics. Also, since familiarity breeds contempt, the standard anthology pieces, which Frenchmen have had to learn in school, have often not been valued as they deserve to be. It is only in the past 50 years that his less familiar visionary verse has been closely studied and has gained him again the respect of French literary connoisseurs. The fact is that he was a poetic Titan, larger than human-size, and serious readers should study him in the context of his work as a whole.

There were strong political reasons for reservations about him. He was for the separation of church and state and was anticlerical, though he admired good priests (as witness a pivotal scene in *Les Miserables*) and

See HUGO, page 7

Love for Sale— 2002 Caxton auction report

Dan Crawford

The 2002 Holiday Revels drew a crowd of some 94 booklovers, which isn't bad for 75 reservations. Among the company was the Auction Statistician, who made sundry observations on the proceedings, in case we ever publish a "Caxton Book of World Records." Among the notable statistics this year are:

Number of lots: 77
Number of donors: 51
Number of winning bidders: 36
Number of absentee bidders: 5
Non-members who won items: 4
Items bid on by the busiest bidder: 10 (won 3)
Items won by the most successful bidder: 6

Heaviest item for sale: leatherbound facsimile of the *Gutenberg Bible*, officially weighing in at 36 pounds but feeling heavier (donated by James R. Donnelley) Honorable mention: leatherbound 19th century *Paradise Lost*, illustrated by Gustave Dore (donated by Roger S. Baskes)

First item ever to draw a four-figure price at a Caxton auction: see "Heaviest item"

Oldest item for sale: a leaf from a 15th century *Book of Hours* (donated by Michael Thompson)

Newest item in the sale: FABS keepsake, 2002 (winner of a Chicago Book Clinic Award, if you missed that somehow)

First Star Trek novel sold at a Caxton auction: *War Dragons* by L.A.Graf, with an appearance by a member of a smelly disgusting race called "Caxtonians" (donated by Dan Crawford)

Autographs of Caxtonians available in the sale: 13

Autographs of non-Caxtonians available: 4

Autographs of Nobel Laureates available: 2 (Pearl S. Buck and Seamus Heaney)

Number of items for sale published by people or presses represented in the upcoming exhibition: 4

Number of items for sale illustrated in the exhibition catalog: 1, *This Last Devotion*, by Hugh Western, published at the Pocahontas Press (donated by Toni Harkness)

First Caxton Scholarship recipients to help out with an auction (Jill Summers and Emily Reiser —because they are the first Caxton Club scholarship recipients: they even bid on books!)

Most laughs raised by an auctioneer who looked like Bill Drendel: Bill Drendel

Most bid-upon item: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which received 15 bids (donated by Joe Like)

Book donated from farthest away: *My Cricket*, by Emily Dickinson, printed (and donated) by Susan M. Allen in California

Bids coming from farthest away: e-mail bids from Caxtonian Lee J. Harrer in Florida

Most fun item for sale: a tie between the letterpress gift tags and enclosures, printed (and donated) by Caryl Seidenberg and the Century of Progress postcards, donated by Susan Levy

Leftovers from 2000 and 2001 auctions which sold in 2002: 10

Item most hemmed and hawed over by prospective bidders: first edition of *Little Dorrit* by Charles Dickens (donated by T.S. Vandoros)

Item with the most disappointed bidders, crying "Didn't I win that?": Three bidders were amazed to find themselves outbid on the 14th edition of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (donated by Leonard Freedman)

Second highest take for an evening's auction: 2002 brought in $5509.50, well above the $4500 and $4000 raised in 1999 and 2000 but not approaching the phenomenal 2001 total (over $9500)

Most beautiful, most amazing, most wonderful item in the whole extravaganza: why, the one YOU bought, of course.

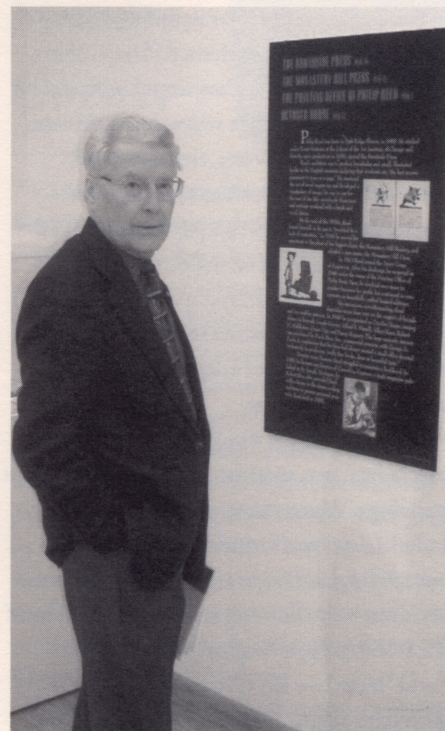
'Exhibition catalogs as autonomous works of art'

From Kathryn DeGraff
Libraries/Exhibits Contributing Editor

The Betty Rymer Gallery of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 280 S. Columbus Dr., will present an exhibition, "The Consistency of Shadows: Exhibition Catalogs as Autonomous Works of Art."

Bringing together over 120 exhibition catalogs, dating from the 1960s to the present, the exhibition opened February 21 and will continue through April 11. A curator's talk is scheduled for Monday, March 3, at 4:30 p.m. For more information, please telephone AnneDorothee Böhme, at 312/899-5098.❖

Caxton Club Nominating Committee appointed



Caxtonian Charles Miner, pictured above at the opening of the Caxton Exhibition, January 15, has been appointed chair of the 2003 Nominating Committee. Serving with him are Kim Coventry, Dan Crawford, and Bob Karrow.

This year, the club will elect from its membership a President, Vice President and Program Chair, and Secretary/Treasure, and five Council members for the Class of 2006. Members are urged to submit names of candidates to the Nominating Committee within the next 30 days. Members may, as well, volunteer for service to the club by submitting their own names.

Candidates must be available for dedication of portions of time from their schedules for meetings and activities of the club and Council. The great success of The Caxton Club is, of course, the willingness of so many to donate so freely of their time in service to the organization.

The slate will be presented to the Council at its May meeting and the finalized slate will be submitted to the membership during the Annual Meeting at the June dinner meeting.❖

Ibsen

Continued from page 1

It was this similarity with Zola that proved Ibsen's undoing in English-speaking countries, and the greatest malefactor in this regard was none other than George Bernard Shaw. Shaw, like Zola, was a social reformer at heart, and he saw the theater as a place where he could vent his Fabianist ideals. Witty, charming, and acerbic as he was, Shaw was a second-rate dramatist and a fourth-rate psychologist. Yet, when Ibsen's star rose on the continent, Shaw insisted on seeing a kindred spirit. He turned Ibsen into what he wanted Ibsen to be, and the result was his catalog of misperceptions, the *Quintessence of Ibsenism.*

The result? Ibsen was seen in England as a social radical, not as an astute observer of human psychology. Worse, he was seen merely as dirty-minded. *Ghosts* was forbidden public performance in England for nearly 40 years, and even then it was only allowed performance in front of British troops departing for France during World Wear I — the original VD movie we all suffered through in high school sex education classes! And the idea of Ibsen as a social reformer lingered hard — the present author remembers an otherwise-revered Oxford-trained professor's remarking that "the problem with Ibsen is that once you've invented penicillin, he's obsolete!"

As was the custom in those days, *Ghosts* was published before it was performed, and theaters across the continent were afraid to stage it lest censors shut them down. The reaction in England was especially adverse. A sample of contemporary criticism tells us all: "An open drain. . . Candid foulness . . . Absolutely loathsome and fetid . . . Gross, almost putrid indecorum."

Given this environment, it is hardly surprising that the first performance had to occur far from a shocked European establishment, and Chicago in the 1880s certainly fit the bill. It was, by any standards, a city not easily shocked. Its unrestrained gambling, drinking, and prostitution were so pronounced that even Mayor Carter Harrison declaimed that "you can't make people moral by ordinance and there's no use trying."

In the 1880s, Chicago was still primarily a Germanic and Scandinavian town. The Swedes and Norwegians had settled north and west of downtown, around what is now Kedzie and Diversey. Norwegians were especially plentiful. Between the Civil War and World War I, for example, there were some 565 Norwegian-language newspapers and magazines published in America.

In Chicago, the leading paper was *Norden*, edited by a Synod minister named Hallvard Hande. Contrary to its counterparts on the continent, *Norden* did not shrink from controversy. In 1880, it carried a heated debate over *A Doll's House*, even while English-speaking *literati* in Chicago remained ignorant of the play's existence. The native-language theater was active as well and, while records are spotty, we do know that there was enough demand that the Norwegian actor Thorvald Koht founded the Norske Folketeater in Chicago in 1913 and for the next decade produced works by Ibsen, Holberg, and Bjornson. All this was, remember, while England was still keeping Ibsen out of theaters at all costs!

Aurora Turner Hall, 3124 N. Clark St., where Ibsen's Ghosts *was first performed. This image shows the building in a 1905 Chicago* Sun-Times *photo, when the hall was a bowling alley. Used in cooperation with the Chicago Historical Society.*

We know nothing of who produced *Ghosts* in Chicago. That it was a semi-professional production is attested to by the presence of the Danish actress Helga von Bluhme as Mrs. Alving. Following the single performance in the Aurora Turner Hall "before a large audience with a successful outcome," it subsequently toured to Minneapolis and other Midwestern cities. The most striking fact about the performance, however, is that there were no riots and no bellicose statements from the clergy. In the words of another paper, *Verdens Gang*, the play's "reprimand of vices in certain portions of the upper level of Norwegian society [was] no hindrance to its acceptance in Chicago." The absence of attacks from the English-speaking clergy is especially significant because at the very same time, the Protestant clergy was engaged in an active campaign to curtail English-speaking theatrical activities in Chicago.

Why the marked difference between the reactions here and abroad? Victorian prudishness is part of the answer, although Scandinavian Lutheranism of the 1880s was hardly more tolerant than the American Methodism of the day. The answer lies in part, I believe, in how Ibsen had been translated into English.

William Archer, Ibsen's first English translator, was a member of Shaw's circle and a noted dramaturge himself. Archer happened to speak Norwegian by a fluke; as a youth, he had summered in Orkney, halfway between Scotland and the Scandinavian mainland, where Norwegian was common. So it was sheer coincidence that, when Ibsen took the continent by storm, there was waiting for him in England someone who not only spoke Norwegian but who had a keen interest in the theatre.

Unfortunately, Archer, like Shaw, had a social agenda, and his translations — while literally accurate — tended toward the melodramatic. Generations of English-speakers, prejudiced by Shaw's misconceptions and weaned on Archer's stilted language, have seen Ibsen as a social critic shuffling cardboard characters around the stage. It was not until the 1960s that the starchy Ibsen of Archer yielded to the more nuanced and psychological Ibsen of Michael Meyer and Rolf Fjelde, both translators who spent their lives immersed in Scandinavian languages. In their hands, the character of Pastor Manders in *Ghosts*,[1] for example, traditionally seen simply as an attack on the church, emerges as a narcissist with great sexual charm, an understandable temptation

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Ibsen

Continued from page 6

to the emotionally-battered Mrs. Alving. So, too, Mrs. Alving's sexual and emotional needs become apparent enough to make her tragedy a distinctly human one. *Ghosts* becomes a play not about venereal disease but about doomed people, just as *Pillars of Society* loses its theme of "leaky boats" and *Enemy of the People* its theme about "polluted water." The result, for anyone willing to go back and revisit Ibsen in new translations, is an Ibsen far closer to the one those Norwegian-Americans saw with such clarity 140 years ago in our very own city. ❖

[1] Even Archer's translation of the play's title is misleading. The title in Norwegian is *Gengangere*, a gerund structure better translated as "those who have gone before."

A chronology of plays by Henrik Ibsen 1826-1906

Catalina, 1850
The Normans, 1851
St. John's Night, 1853
Lady Inger of Oestratt. 1855
The Feast a Solhoug, 1856
Olaf Lilyekrans, 1857
The Vikings of Helgeland, 1858
Love's Comedy, 1862
The Pretenders, 1864
Brand, 1865
Peer Gynt, 1867
League of Youth, 1869
Emperor and Galilean, 1873
Pillars of Society, 1875-77
A Doll's House, 1878-79
Ghosts, 1881
An Enemy of the People, 1882
The Wild Duck, 1884
Rosmersholm, 1886
The Lady from the Sea, 1888
Hedda Gabler, 1890
The Master Builder, 1892
Little Eyolf, 1894
John Gabriel Borkman, 1896
When We Dead Awaken, 1899

Hugo

Continued from page 4

had deep (though unorthodox) religious feelings. This made him unpopular with the Catholic establishment. Since he became, with his white beard, a true icon of the Third Republic, the intelligentsia of the French left has scorned him for his "bourgeois" values and sentimentality, and the French right has hated him for his democratic ideals and dreams of equality and justice, which have been described as "superficial" or even "stupid." These were absurd judgments, to my mind, for his principles remain much less stupid and more valid than all the reactionary or fundamentalist religious bigotry or Marxist and Fascist jargon adopted by many of those who claimed to despise him. The fact that much of the 20th Century has been a disappointment for believers in peace, social justice, and human decency does not mean that these are not worthwhile ideals.

Much of his unique verbal skill is language-bound and not really accessible to those who do not know French. The half-a-score plays he wrote for the stage, some of which were very successful in his time in France, have hardly crossed its borders except in the form of opera librettos adapted from them (particularly Verdi's *Ernani* and *Rigoletto*, Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* and Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*). With the exception of *Ruy Blas* and *Hernani*, the plays themselves are comparatively rarely performed even in France, though they are not without some interest and appeal. On the other hand, some of his half-a-score novels have remained very popular in France and elsewhere. *Notre Dame de Paris* and *Les Miserables* have been the subject of many movie adaptations, and the latter book has become a phenomenally successful musical. ❖

Emile Bayard's illustration for Hugo's Les Miserables, *in Maison de Victor Hugo, Paris. Image from the collection of Pierre Ferrand.*

Saints & Sinners Corner

Caxtonians Lynn Martin and Alice Schreyer were honored recently when a publication, *Building a Long Future*, designed and published by them, received the Silver Award from the Gallery of Superb Printing, an international print competition sponsored by the International Association of Printing House Craftsmen. Based on printing and finishing excellence, overall quality, effective and outstanding design, and for innovative use of paper, the Caxtonian publication was designed by Lynn and published by Alice. It is an illustrated publication about the early history of the University of Chicago and accompanied an exhibition in the Special Collections Research Center of the U of C Library.

Caxtonian Scott Kellar has a new webside: www.scottkellar.com A delightful place to visit!

Sherlock Holmes was voted the best fictional sleuth by English readers. Agatha Christie's Belgiun sleuth Hercule Poirot was second, and Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse was third.

Gagosian Gallery, 555 W. 24th St., NYC 10011, announces a new edition of Ed Ruscha's *Fore-Edge Book Me/The*, listed at $1,500. Interested parties should call Kimball Higgs at 212/741-1111.

"France interred Alexander Dumas, the author of *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Christo*, in a crypt of the Pantheon, reuniting him with Victor Hugo, his friend and fellow novelist. France's best-known writer of romantic adventures was reburied in the nation's official tomb of honor alongside Hugo, as well as philosophers Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire...." French President Jacques Chiroc said at the ceremony, "Today Alexander Dumas is no longer alone." (*Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 1, 2002, Sec. 1, p. 6)

"The entire personal library of William Butler Yeats, comprising more than 2,500 volumes, has been donated to the National Library of Ireland. The collection was donated by the poet's son, Michael B. Yeats, and his daughter-in-law, Grainne." (*The Irish Times*, May 25, 2002, p.4)

Bookmarks...

Luncheon Program
March 14, 2003
Bob McCamant
"Book Arts in Northampton: Show and Tell"

Caxtonians will remember that Bob McCamant reported in a delightful article in the September issue of the *Caxtonian* on his trip to Northampton, MA. Bob will bring samples of each book artist's work from that story for discussion, display, and handling.

Among the highlights of the presentation will be a Rudolph Koch silhouette book, which binder Claudia Cohen found in sheets at the Klingspoor Museum. It is bound sumptuously in brown leather. There is an early Gehenna Press typographic book, *Flosculi Sententiarum*. You will see and handle a Cheloniidae Press tribute to Harold McGrath, bound by Dan Kelm. And there is the Kat Ran Press *Match in a Bottle*, which includes original "smoke drawings" made with combustible media, including matches, cigarette lighters, and the like. And there is much more — which you won't want to miss.

Beyond these physical details and their associative tactile experiences, you will hear tales of that remarkable New England center of the book arts, told by one of the masters of our own Midwestern book arts community.

Join your friends and fellow Caxtonians as they celebrate their love of books over lunch and in fellowship.

Edward Quattrocchi & Leonard Freedman
Co-Chairs

Wood block image of Hedda Gabler, from John Gassner, Three Plays by Henrik Ibsen, *Oslo: Limited Editions Club, 1964. Used through the courtesy of Newberry Library.*

Dinner Program
March 19, 2003
Eden Martin
"Collecting Whitman"

Our very own Eden Martin, Partner, Sidley Austin Brown & Wood, and a Caxtonian since 1977, will present what we hope is the first in a series of talks on his rich experiences in book collecting in America and Europe. The March dinner program will focus on his collection of Walt Whitman, although his collection of American writers is general.

The result of his broad collecting is a fine gathering of important collections of Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, Longfellow, Melville, Whitman, Bierce, Hemingway, Faulkner, Frost, Stevens, and Merrill. The collection includes pristine and inscribed editions by all authors, including some of the earliest publications by Whitman, Emerson, Thoreau, Frost, and Hemingway.

This collection of American writers represents a part of Eden's total collection. He has, as well, a collection of First World War poetry, and also of 19th and 20th Century Russian literature, particularly the poets of the early years of the 20th Century. Besides his important role as an attorney in Chicago, Eden is president of the Commercial Club of Chicago and of its Civic Committee. He is also an active board member of the Chicago Historical Society, the Chicago Orchestral Association, Ravinia, Northwestern University, and the Foundation of the University of Illinois. A graduate of Harvard Law School, he has written and edited several books on the local histories of Sullivan and Moultrie Counties, IL. One of his books received the highest award of the Illinois State Historical Society in 1998.

This is a program of great delight and importance for book collectors. Join us at the Mid-Day Club this March evening.

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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.*