

Lynd Ward, Wood Engraving, and the Origins of the Wordless Novel

Jerry Meyer

In an article published in the April 2013 issue of the *Caxtonian*, I had occasion to discuss some of the wood engravings of the English artist and illustrator Blair Hughes-Stanton (1902-1981).¹ I noted at the time that Hughes-Stanton was among several artists who had revived interest in wood engraving (see Fig. 2), as well as woodcuts in general, as an art form during the first third of the 20th century. The wood engraving, executed on the cross section of fine-grained wood instead of the soft surface of a wood plank, is generally more detailed and sharper in its linear effects than a woodcut.

By the end of the 19th century, book and newspaper printers had increasingly replaced wood-engraved images with photographically reproduced illustration. Hughes-Stanton emerged as a distinguished printmaker in wood during the late 1920s. Concurrently, in the United States, Lynd Ward (1905-1985), (see Fig. 1) was creating some of his earliest wood engravings. These artists and others did much to make woodcut images popular again in book publishing. Lynd Ward's early wood engravings would crystallize as one of his most distinctive contributions to book illustration: the wordless novel. In this article I will explore Ward's early use of the wood engraving, influences on his development of the craft, and his various influences on book illustration in the 20th century.

While Lynd Ward was born in Chicago, the son of the famous Methodist minister Harry Ward, he spent his early childhood years in the suburb of Oak Park. Because Sundays were particularly sacred to the family, Lynd was not allowed to read Sunday comic strips. Thus, these were not an early influence on his later development of the wordless novel. One book that Ward did remember as making

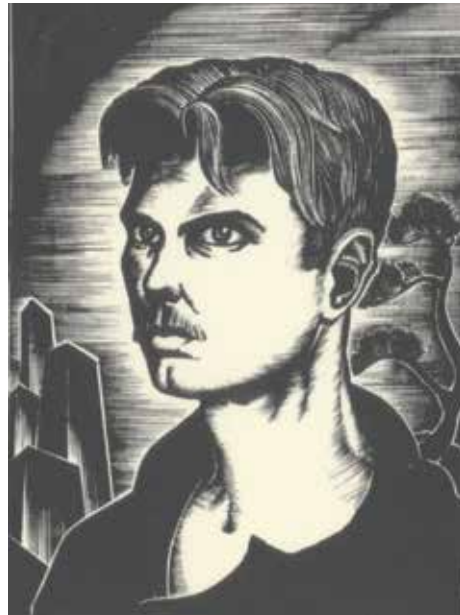


Fig. 1. Lynd Ward, self-portrait, wood engraving, 1930.

an impression was Gustave Doré's popular *Gallery of Bible Illustrations*.²

After receiving an undergraduate degree in art at Columbia University in 1926, he married May McNeer and immediately set out for Europe to study art. He arrived in Leipzig, Germany, in the fall of 1926 and enrolled as a "special" student at the Staatliche Akademie für graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe (State Academy for Graphic Arts and Book Production). For one academic year Ward studied printmaking under Hans Alexander Müller and Alois Kolb.³ The processes he learned included etching, wood engraving, and lithography. He would later use all of these printmaking processes during his distinguished career as a book illustrator, but his early reputation rests with his wood engravings.

At a shop in Leipzig Ward discovered an important book that excited him: *Die Sonne* by the Belgian artist Frans Masereel (1889-



Fig. 2. Blair Hughes-Stanton, "Christian and the Evangelist," wood engraving, frontispiece, Pilgrim's Progress, 1928.

1972). This was an important example of wordless novels executed with bold black and white woodcuts of which Masereel was an early pioneer. With the Masereel book, the concept of creating a series of unified pictures that would tell a story without text was planted in Ward's mind. Also important for Ward was the strong emotion and moral foundation of Masereel's work. A pacifist during World War I, Masereel championed leftist causes and the workingman, as particularly noted in his first wordless novel, *Die Passion eines Menschen*, initially published in 1918 (Fig. 3). Ward's father was also a strong advocate for social causes and this sense of morality had been engrained in Lynd from childhood.

Masereel's bold use of the woodcut to express his passionate causes was strongly indebted to the woodcut revival in Germany involving Expressionists such as Erich Heckel



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LYND WARD, from page 1

(1883-1970) (Fig. 4), one of the founders of the German modernist group Die Brücke (The Bridge). Heckel and other German Expressionists looked back to the origins of the German woodcut print, coinciding with the invention of the printing press in the 15th century. The boldness of the images of the *Biblia Pauperum*, for instance, revealed the emotional effect of the woodcut (Fig. 5).

Masereel eventually created over 20 wordless graphic novels during his career, most completed in the 1920s and early 30s. In a letter to his friend Romain Rolland, Masereel mentioned having met George Grosz and finding much in common with Grosz's attitude toward art:

He . . . speaks of "the spirit," and we agree in saying that what one expresses is more important than the means of expressing it. He also believes that art must as far as possible be action, and that the artist must not be indifferent to social questions.⁴

Of course, Grosz had by the end of World War I created several portfolios of prints protesting the war. While these were not intended to be read as a continuous story in images like the wordless novels of Masereel, they undoubtedly influenced the tone of Masereel's work. Silent cinema was also important for both Masereel and Ward, since the ability of images alone to express drama and story line was integral to moving pictures in the 1910s and 20s. Relative to Germany, Robert Wien's powerful and disturbing *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* from 1920 (Fig. 6) comes to mind.

Masereel even worked on a film version of his



Fig. 3. Masereel, woodcut from *Die Passion eines Menschen*.



Fig. 4. Erich Heckel, woodcut illustration for Oscar Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Gaol*, 1907.

wordless novel *Idée* with Hungarian illustrator Berthold Bartosch, and Ward mentioned in an interview that Emil Jannings's silent film *The Last Laugh* was an inspiration for him.⁵ Finally, anticipating the concept of the wordless novel was the appearance of the comic strip by the early 20th century. In strips like *Little Sammy Sneeze*, created by Winsor McCay (1869-1934) around 1904, a sequence of pictures with minimal text and a story line looked forward to Ward's later wordless novel (Fig. 7).⁶

Ward's first wordless novel, *Gods' Man* (Figs. 8-13), with some 139 wood engravings, was published in the fall of 1929, coincidental with the collapse of the stock market and the beginning of the Great Depression. In spite of hard times, the book became an overnight success. Over four years, 20,000 copies were sold. The engravings have an appropriate descriptive realism, modified by an art deco feeling. The novel tells the Faustian tale of an artist struggling to make a name for himself in the city. A mysterious masked figure offers to give the young man a magic brush used by famous artists of the past in exchange for his signature on a contract (Fig. 9). The contract is signed and the artist begins to attract the attention of wealthy clientele and the success that he longs for.

Ward may have been influenced by Oscar Wilde's similar story, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, since he was familiar with the writer and provided 25 mezzotint plates for Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* in an edition published by George Macy in 1928. Like Wilde's character, Ward's protagonist is corrupted by the city and the people he consorts with. He becomes disillusioned (Fig. 10), spends time in jail for assaulting his mistress, escapes, and is chased from the city by a mob. He lies wounded in a forest, where he is discovered by a young woman who nurses him back to health. They commence an idyllic life and have a child together (Fig. 11). This idyllic existence is interrupted by the reappearance of the mysterious



Fig. 5. *Biblia Pauperum*, 1460s, Princeton University.



Fig. 6. Still frame from Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920.



Fig. 7. Winsor McCay, *Little Sammy Sneeze*, 1904.

stranger, who reminds the artist of the contract and asks that he paint his portrait (Fig. 12). During the process, the stranger removes his mask to reveal that he is, in fact, the personification of death (Fig. 13). The artist, horrified, slips off a cliff and dies.

It is noteworthy to mention that this first wordless novel was to have considerable influence. Michael McCurdy in conversation with Allen Ginsberg many years later discov-

ered that Ginsberg had seen the book and it had influenced his concept of Moloch in the famous poem *Howl*.⁷ James Colbert Reid (1907-1989), hoping to capitalize on Ward's success, produced his wordless novel, *The Life of Christ in Woodcuts*, in 1930 (Fig. 14). Finally, comic artist Milt Gross published his parody of a wordless novel, *He Done Her Wrong* (Fig. 15), in 1930 with the subtitle, "The Great American Novel, and Not a Word in It – No

Music Too."

The *New York Evening Post* perpetuated Ward's fame by running *Gods' Man* as a feature on the arts and literature page. In describing the process of creating his narrative wood engravings, Ward commented:

The woodblock, whether cut with a knife or engraved, develops its image by bringing details out of darkness into the light. This seems to give it an advantage over ways of working that start with an empty white area. In a sense, what is happening is already there in the darkness, and cutting the block involves letting only enough light into the field of vision to reveal what is going on.⁸

In rather quick succession in the early 1930s, Ward produced a total of five additional wordless novels: *Madman's Drum*, *Wild Pilgrimage*, *Prelude to a Million Years*, *Song Without Words*, and *Vertigo*. The second novel, *Madman's Drum* (1930), had 118 plates and Ward attempted to make it more sophisticated than *Gods' Man*: "I realized . . . that when I was working on *Gods' Man* . . . I had probably seen things in too simple terms . . . inventing characters just to make a needed point, using them without sufficient consideration for their identities as persons with individual backgrounds, histories, and needs."⁹

In *Madman's Drum*, a prosperous but brutal seafaring slave trader kills a black native on one of his trips to Africa and acquires the native's drum as a souvenir (Fig. 16). The drum bears the face of a demon. With the wealth acquired from selling slaves, the trader buys a mansion, displaying the sword used to kill the

Figs. 9-13. Wood engravings from Lynd Ward's *Gods' Man*.

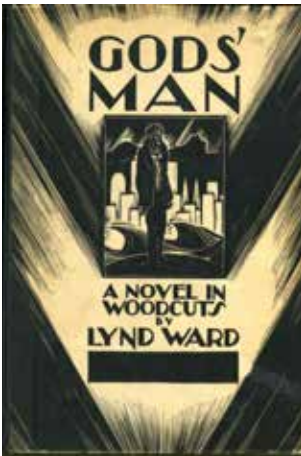


Fig. 8. Cover of Lynd Ward's *Gods' Man*, 1929.



Fig. 9.



Fig. 10.



Fig. 11.



Fig. 12.



Fig. 13.

See LYND WARD, page 4

LYND WARD, from page 3

African over the hearth as well as the man's drum. Much later, having established a family and farm, he discovers his son playing with the drum (Fig. 17) and beats him. The son is given books to read rather than let him play with souvenirs from his father's past life. The son grows up to be a scientist and write books. He is a loner, rejects religion in favor of science, marries, and has two daughters. The remainder of the narrative is complex and difficult to follow, but in the end the sins of the father are visited upon the son's grown children. The son ends up clutching the drum with a demented expression on his face and walking away with a jester (Figs. 18-19).

Capitalism does not fare well in the wordless novels of Ward. Like Masereel, and Ward's own father, the political leanings tended to be leftist. But one must remember, too, that Ward created his wordless novels during the Great Depression. Unemployment was high, and the wealthy were, for the most part, not sympathetic figures. By the end of the 30s and the commencement of World War II, the period of wordless novels had largely run its course. Nonetheless, Ward would continue to illustrate the books of other authors, including some children's books written by his wife. Ward also founded a progressive cooperative press, Equinox, devoted to artfully printed literary and political books. As its purpose statement read, the press was aimed at "the creation of books that shall be outside of and beyond the categories established by the other publishers."¹⁰ During its seven-year existence in the 30s, the press printed 16 limited editions, including Ward's *Prelude to a Million Years*.



Fig. 14. James Reid, wood engraving from *The Life of Christ in Woodcuts*, 1930.



Fig. 15. Milt Gross, drawing from *He Done Her Wrong*, 1930.

Much later in the 20th century, Ward's wordless novels were to have some impact on the evolution of the graphic novel. Will Eisner, one of the pioneers of this format arising out of the tradition of comic books, often cited Ward's woodcut novels as an inspiration. Eisner first used the term "graphic novel" on the cover of his 1978 collection of comic stories for adults, *A Contract with God*.¹¹ The term also appeared in print two years earlier describing works by Richard Corben, George Metzger, and Jim Steranko. And the stark black-and-white drawings of Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (published serially during the 1980s) depicting aspects of the Holocaust look back to the dynamics of the wordless novel (Fig. 20). (Spiegelman received a Pulitzer for *Maus*.)

More recently, *Pitch Black: Don't Be Skerd*, by Youme Landowne and Anthony Horton, chronicling African American experience in the city, provides only minimal text with its often textless black illustrations (Fig. 21). It looks back to *Maus* and, more distantly, to Ward. Finally, Eric Drooker's *Flood! A Novel in Pictures* (1992) turned back, again, to the wordless novel (Fig. 22). In this American Book Award-winning novel, Drooker, like Masereel and Ward, explores the sense of alienation in the city, in this case New York City. The pace of the pictures and the darkness of the drawings are indebted both to Masereel and Ward for inspiration.

Early on, Ward wanted to create something innovative in book illustration using tradi-

Figs. 16-19. Wood engravings from Ward's *Madman's Drum*, 1930.



Fig. 16.



Fig. 17.



Fig. 18.



Fig. 19.



Fig. 20. Drawing from Art Spiegelman's Maus, 1986.



Fig. 22. Drawing from Eric Drooker's Flood!, 1992.

We are sorry to note the passings of Joseph Bela Girardi on January 20 and Wilbert Hasbrouck on February 10. Appreciations of their lives will appear in a future issue.



Fig. 21. Drawing from Youme Landowne and Anthony Horton's Pitch Black: Don't Be Skerd.

tional techniques that were being overlooked in the 20th century. Looking back, he noted of his exploration of wood engraving:

When I returned to this country [from Europe], I was convinced that there was a need, in book illustration, to relate as close as possible to the basic technical processes that artists used and that had, in a sense, been somewhat lost with the earlier coming of photographic reproduction.¹²

While wood engraving for the most part faded as a favored technique after the first third of the 20th century, the woodcut continued to be used by artists throughout the century's remainder. Late in his career Ward created one last wordless novel, this time for children: *The Silver Pony* (1973). This was one among more than 100 children's books he had illustrated,

including six Newbery Honor Medal books and two Newbery Medal books. Ward remains one of the most innovative and prolific American illustrators of the his generation.

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NOTES

1. Jerry D. Meyer, "Blair Hughes-Stanton and D.H. Lawrence: The Wood Engraver and the Priest of Love," *Caxtonian*, vol. xxi, no. 4 (April 2013), pp. 1-11.
2. "Lynd Ward as Interviewed by Gil Williams," *Bibliognost*, vol. ii, no. 11 (May 1996), p. 6.
3. Perry Willett, *The Silent Shout: Frans Masereel, Lynd Ward, and the Novel in Woodcuts*, Indiana University Libraries, 1997, p. 2.
4. Roger Avermaete, *Frans Masereel*, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1977, p. 25.

5. Perry Willett, *The Silent Shout*, p. 7.

6. On the evolution of the comic strip, see John Carlin, *Masters of American Comics*, Los Angeles: Hammer Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art; New Haven: Yale University Press.

7. Michael McCurdy, "Lynd Ward," *Bibliognost*, vol. ii, no. 11 (May 1976), p. 36.

8. Lynd Ward, *Storyteller Without Words: The Wood Engravings of Lynd Ward*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1974, p. 22.

9. Art Spiegelman, editor, *Six Novels in Woodcuts by Lynd Ward*, Library of America, 2010, p. xiv.

10. Henry Holt, "Image vs Word," *Bibliognost*, vol. ii, no. 11 (May 1976), p. 27.

11. Art Spiegelman, *Six Novels*, p. xxiii.

12. "Lynd Ward as Interviewed by Gil Williams," p. 7.

Caxton Club COUNCIL NOTES

Leora Siegel, Secretary

The Caxton Council met on January 17, 2018, at the Union League Club. The Membership Committee presented two applicants, who were unanimously approved. Manu Chhabra (Resident Member) was nominated by David Karrow and seconded by Bob Karrow. He is a researcher with interests in history, poetry, and science and nature journals. Stephen Paul Durchslag (Resident Member), nominated by Jeffrey Jahns and seconded

by John Chalmers, is a retired attorney whose collection of Haggadah is one of the largest private collections of its kind. Elected by e-mail ballot during the month of December when the Council does not meet, Gregory G. Krisilas (Non-Resident Member) was nominated by Susan Hanes and seconded by Kurt Gippert. He is a book dealer, whose interests include Kurt Vonnegut, T.E. Lawrence, signed and authored books by U.S. presidents, and fine press books.

In other Council business, the Exhibition

Committee reported that the book launch of *Chicago by the Book: 101 Publications That Have Shaped Chicago and Its Image*, will be held October 17 at the Union League Club. The Grants Committee reported that the Caxton Club scholarship for rare book study was awarded to a student in the English department at the University of Iowa. Following a resignation, Arthur Frank will be starting a search for a new webmaster for the Club. Additional agenda items included reports from the Treasurer and the Development Committee.

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Book- and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Lisa Pevtzow

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

American Writers Museum, 180 N. Michigan Avenue, second floor, Chicago, 312-374-8790: **“Capturing Stories: Photographs of Writers by Art Shay”** (unique angles on the moments and personalities making the news), Meijer Gallery, through spring 2018. **“Roberta Rubin Writer’s Room/Laura Ingalls Wilder: From Prairie to Page,”** ongoing.

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: **“Dress Codes: Portrait Photographs from the Collection”** (convergence of modern fashion industry with commercial portrait photography), Gallery 1 through April 22. **“The Medieval World at Our Fingertips: Manuscripts from the Collection of Sandra Hindman”** (nearly 30 manuscript illuminations), through May 28.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: **“Asian Orchids,”** through April 15.

Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago, 312-744-6630: **“Keith Haring: The Chicago Mural”** (36 original panels of the mural created in 1989), Sidney Yates Gallery, 4th Floor, opens March 3.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: **“Chicago and the Great War”** (Gold Star Memorial Portraits, collected in 1919-21), through November 12.

DePaul University John T. Richardson Library, 2350 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, 773-325-2167: **“Incarceration: Art, Activism & Advocacy.”** (prisoners and activists revealed by words and artistic expression), into summer 2018.

Northwestern University Block Museum, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, 847-491-4000: **“William Blake and the Age of Aquarius”** (Blake’s impact on American artists in the post-World War II period), through March 11.

Northwestern University Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: **“On Board with Design: Passenger Transportation and Graphic Design in the Mid-20th Century,”** ongoing.



University of Chicago Joseph Regenstein Library / Manhattan Project

LESLIE R. GROOVES PINS A MEDAL OF MERIT ON PHYSICIST ENRICO FERMI

“African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean: Culture, Resistance, and Survival” (aspects of the history, culture and religion of people of African ancestry in subject areas) Herskovits Library of African Studies, ongoing.

Open Books Warehouse and Bookstore, 905 W. 19th Street, Chicago, 312-243-9776: **“Pablo Helguera’s Librería Donceles”** (an installation repurposing used bookshelves from closed CPS schools and Spanish-language books from the exhibit at the Chicago Cultural Center), ongoing.

Pritzker Military Museum and Library, 104 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-374-9333: **“Lest We Forget: Sailors, Sammies, and Doughboys over there in World War I.”** (explores the experiences of those who served in World War I), ongoing.

Spudnik Press Cooperative, 1821 W. Hubbard Street, suite 302, Chicago, 312-563-0302: **“Chicago: A Crosstown Exchange”** (a print portfolio bringing together 26 artists/collectives from numerous print shops and studios across the city and surrounding neighborhoods), through March 3.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 1100 E. 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: **“Well Equipped: Library Technology from Days Past”** (latest library technology from years ago), Crerar Library, through June 8. **“Science and Conscience: Chicago’s Met Lab and the Manhattan Project”** Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, through April 13.

Send your listings to Lisa Pevtzow at lisa.pevtzow@sbcglobal.net

Save the date . . . Mark your calendar . . .
Prepare to celebrate . . .

Our new publication *Chicago by the Book: 101 Publications That Have Shaped Chicago and Its Image* Will launch at our October 17, 2018 Caxton Club Dinner Meeting at the Union League Club.

All authors have been invited.
Full details will be released closer to the event
and reservations will be *required*.



Chicago History Museum / Chicago and the Great War

CURRY D. BRECKENRIDGE, TOP ROW, SECOND FROM RIGHT

Caxtonians Collect: Paul Gehl

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Paul Gehl started his collection of books about Americans and Rome long before he realized he was going to be a librarian, but at a different turning point, just after he realized what an important place Rome would be in his life. He was in college, working towards a history degree, and spent an academic year in Rome.

Caxtonians have known Paul for many years as the Custodian of the John M. Wing Foundation on the History of Printing at the Newberry. But he is now retired.

Paul and his partner of 25 years, Rob Carlson, are paring down their possessions. They gave away 2-3,000 books in the last year or so, mostly to the Newberry: partly book arts items to be added to the Newberry collection, and partly for the book sale. But there are some things that it is harder to figure out what to do with. "I probably have 30 linear feet of personal files, and it's difficult to decide where they should go. Recycling makes sense for many of them, but picking *which* is the problem." Then he adds, "But the drawer full of rolls of microfilm is the real question mark."

But Gehl is keeping the Rome books. He believes that he has spent about three years of his life in Italy. "There were 3 academic years, which is a total of 27 months, and then some fellowships, and these days we try to spend a few weeks every year." Rome is included in almost every trip. Now Paul and Rob pick a different neighborhood to stay in each time, since they like to explore on foot, but don't have the stamina for long hikes to distant ones. These days the subways are so crowded that they make an unattractive solution. "For some reason we gravitate to areas near the monumental gates in walls that once surrounded the ancient city." On one recent trip, they picked the San Giovanni Lateran neighborhood, which had the drawback of being noisy but that also led them to two museums they hadn't seen before.

Gehl was raised a Catholic, attending parochial schools in the German-Catholic tradition. He continued with a Jesuit college, John Carroll in Ohio. After receiving his PhD from the University of Chicago, he taught religious history at Northwestern (while simultaneously working for the Religion and Ethics Institute in Evanston). He still calls himself "culturally Catholic," though he distinguishes between Italian Catholicism and the German-American



version he was raised in. "This change was brought home to me when I convinced my parents to visit Rome," he says. "I took them to the Audience Hall at the Vatican, built in 1971. It provides a huge pillar-free space where as many as 10000 people can be indoors with an unobstructed view of the Pope. I thought they'd be excited to see him. But my mother was horrified! The Romans were too demonstrative! She said, 'If everyone would just sit down, we could *all* see!'"

Paul's love of Rome developed on the spot, but he quickly found other American enthusiasts in books like Eleanor Clark's *Rome and a Villa* from 1952. "She was a popular magazine writer who also wrote novels but who fell in love with Rome just as I did. It's really a personal memoir cast as travel essays," he explained. He went on to her other published writings about such things as the oyster farmers of Normandy.

Another favorite book is *Tempo di Roma*, a 1959 title by the Belgian Alexis Curvers. "I must have read it at least ten times," Gehl confesses. "It's the best evocation of the city as I experienced it. I wore out one paperback copy, and replaced it, and looked repeatedly for a hardback. Rob finally found me one online. That was 1994, before internet searching was easy!"

The era of Pope Pius IX (the longest-tenured Pope, 1846-1873, a remarkable 31 years) is also a continuing interest. He was the Pope who, after starting with liberal policies, ended up losing control of the temporal Papal states

to a nationalist Italian government. By the end, he insisted on staying within the Vatican, and styled himself its prisoner. He was also the Pope who promulgated the doctrine of papal infallibility, ratified by the First Vatican Council, which he convened. One of Gehl's books on Pius IX, Bernard O'Reilly's richly illustrated *A Life of Pius IX down to the Episcopal Jubilee of 1877* is among the oldest in his Americans-and-Rome collection.

When I Googled Gehl, the first thing that came up was his CV, maintained on the Newberry's server. Despite his retirement, he retains the title of Curator Emeritus there. (He also retains the title of Caxton Club Historian and Archivist.) It lists 31 "scholarly articles" and 38 other published items. (This does not count book reviews.) Rome is mentioned six times, and "Italy" or "Italian" 15 times, but that number is low because articles about such things as "Provincial Publishing in Tuscany," "Paper Trade in Sixteenth-Century Milan," or "Giovanni Battista Bosso and the Paper Trade in Sixteenth-Century Milan" do not use the word "Italy." His three books (two on paper, one online) all have something to do with Rome or Italy.

As the interview was drawing to a close, this consummate bookman (who has been a Caxtonian since 1988, shortly after he was made a curator at the Newberry) had a confession. "My Roman collection is not so much about the books as it is about the city."

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**Luncheon: Friday, March 9, Union League Club
Tad Boehmer On A Window Into A Library**

It was 1925. The jazz age. *The Great Gatsby* had just hit bookstores and *The New Yorker* was debuting on newstands.

In Urbana at the University of Illinois an artist was commissioned to design a series of stained glass windows to help illuminate the main reading room in a library that was rising from the prairie. The theme for the windows? The devices of early printers – a motif that sparked a lively argument . . . pitting the designer, library director, architect, and university administration against each other.

Who won the debate? How did printers' devices come to be used as architectural decorations in American libraries? What do they look like? How many windows were installed . . . and how many wound up being misplaced?

You'll learn those answers and more as Caxtonian Tad Boehmer, Special Collections Catalog Librarian at Michigan State, shines a light on . . . no *through* . . . a window into a library, in a richly illustrated and revealing presentation.

March luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Luncheon buffet (main dining room on six) opens at 11:30 am; program (in a different room, to be announced) 12:30-1:30. Luncheon is \$35. Reservations or cancellations by noon Wednesday for Friday lunch. Call 312-255-3710 or e-mail caxtonclub@newberry.org.

Beyond MARCH . . .

**DURING APRIL,
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APRIL DINNER

April 18 at the Union League: Mark Samuels Lasner, authority on and collector of materials from the Victorian era, on "Victorian Passions: Stories from the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection." This was the largest and most transformative gift given to the University of Delaware Library.

**Dinner: Wednesday, March 21, Union League Club
Liesl Olson on "The Chicago Renaissance"**

Author and scholar Liesl Olson will share with us how Chicago's literary life in the first half of the 20th century was essential to the modernist movement. Her new book *Chicago Renaissance* goes beyond the famous individuals – the Carl Sandburgs and Richard Wrights – to describe an arts environment and infrastructure whose development after the Columbian Exposition made the city a crossroads of cultural influences and a place of possibility for the avant garde. Liesl identifies the lesser-known figures who built the infrastructure. Many of them were women – the "midwives of modernism" who managed galleries, bookstores and magazines. Liesl is Director of Chicago Studies at the Newberry. A graduate of Stanford and Columbia, she has taught at the University of Chicago and has research interests in modernism, 20th century literature and the visual arts. Her ground-breaking book *Chicago Renaissance* will be available for sale and signing.

March dinner: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Blvd. The evening will follow this order: social gathering, 5-6 pm; program 6 pm; dinner to follow. Program is free and open to the public. Beverages available for \$6-\$12. Dinner: \$63. Reservations are required for either the program only or the dinner/program combination. Reservations must be received no later than NOON, Monday, March 19. Payment will be required for dinner cancellations made after that time and no-shows. To reserve call 312-255-3710 or email caxtonclub@newberry.org.

MAY LUNCHEON

May 11, at Union League: J. Kevin Graffagnino, director of the Clements Library at the U of Michigan on *The Pioneer Americanists – Early Collectors, Dealers, and Bibliographers.*

MAY DINNER

May 16, Union League Club. Kitty Maryatt, Director Emerita of the Scripps College Press and proprietor of Two Hands Press, discusses the 1913 avant-garde book *La Prose du Transsibérien*. Created by Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay, this was perhaps the greatest illustrated book of the 20th century. The lecture explores the making of the book and suggests why the planned edition of 150 was not completed.