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The Ransom Center and 50 Years of Collecting

Dr. Thomas F. Staley

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*Carl
Hertzog*
Lecture Series



**The Ransom Center and
50 Years of Collecting**

Dr. Thomas F. Staley

Carl Hertzog Lecture Series



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The Carl Hertzog Lecture Series

The Hertzog Lectures, inaugurated on February 5, 1989, and presented biennially in the month of his birth, honor the memory and life work of the "Printer at the Pass," J. Carl Hertzog (1902-1984).

A premier typographer and book designer long before his association with the University of Texas at El Paso, Mr. Hertzog brought his international renown to the then-Texas Western College in 1948. He launched Texas Western Press in 1952, serving as its director until his retirement in 1972.

Books bearing the distinctive Carl Hertzog colophon reached a standard of excellence that is unexcelled to this day.

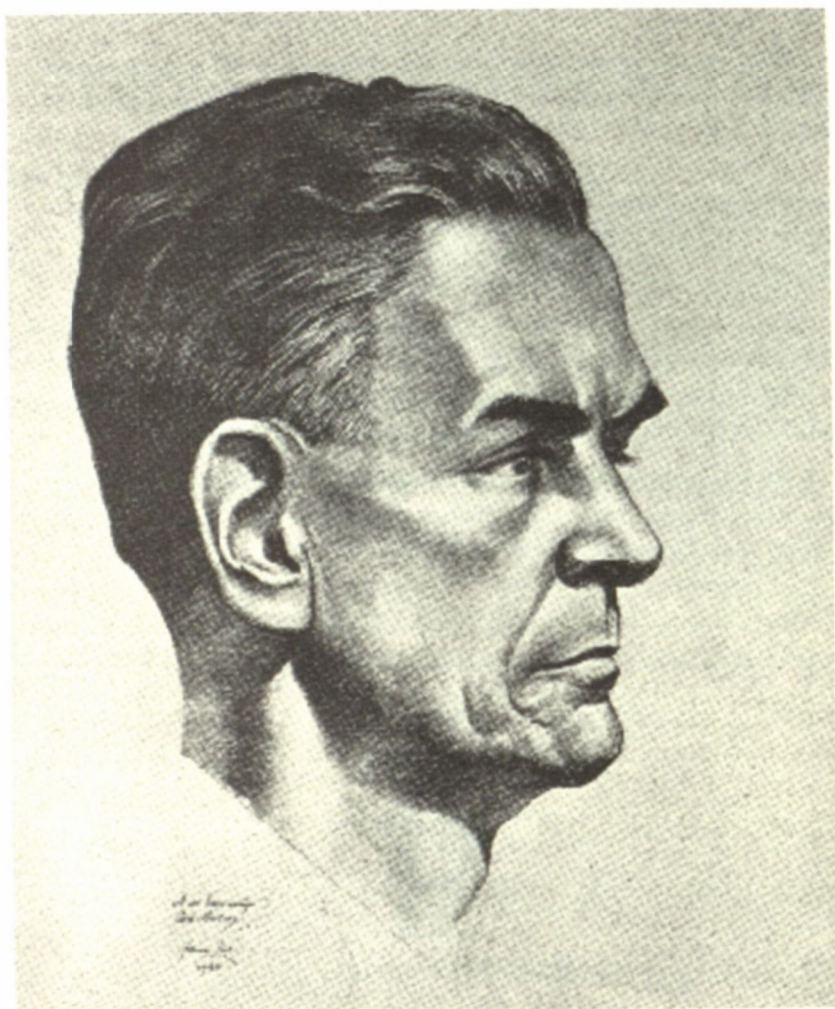
The University Library's Special Collections Department is the repository of the extensive collection of Carl Hertzog books and papers.

The Carl Hertzog Lectures and the biennial Carl Hertzog Award for Excellence in Book Design, are sponsored by the Friends of the University Library at the University of Texas at El Paso.



**Texas
Western
Press**

The University of Texas at El Paso



(Drawing by Tom Lea, 1946)

J. Carl Hertzog
1902 - 1984

The Ransom Center and 50 Years of Collecting

Dr. Thomas F. Staley

Director of the Harry Ransom Center
at the University of Texas at Austin

February 8, 2004

Carl Hertzog lecture series, no. 11

Dear Bill:

Your baccalaureate address to the Austin High School class was the best I have heard in years. Thank you for your thoughts and the way you presented them.

While following the service, I could not keep from studying the printing on your front page. The type at the top does not fit in with your stained glass windows, and does not harmonize with the sketch, which would be passable if it was squared with the page. The ragged handling of the type at the bottom is not in keeping with the careful precision of your services.

If you will excuse me for butting in, I will be glad to prepare the lettering for your front cover (at no cost to you) the next time you order a supply.

And so Hertzog generously fixed it, leaving his aesthetic mark on yet another printed work. Humor aside, Carl Hertzog's achievements in writing, printing, and publishing have made him an institution and a source of pride for El Paso and Texas.

My subject today is another Texas institution of great cultural importance, the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, and its history and place in the world of rare books and manuscripts. This subject, like Carl Hertzog, is about books and culture in Texas. In 1956, Harry Ransom gave a talk to the Philosophical Society of Texas in which he proposed "that there be established somewhere in Texas—let's say in the capital city—a center of cultural compass, a research center to be the Bibliothèque Nationale of the only state that started out as an independent nation." His vision was partially realized as the Humanities Research Center at The University of Texas at Austin. Founded nearly fifty years ago, the Center has built one of the most important collections of twentieth-century literature in the world. That it is here in Texas is not nearly as unusual as the remarkable fact that this collection was built in such a short time.

In 1958, the Center made several significant acquisitions, including the extensive library of Edward Alexander Parsons, consisting of forty

thousand volumes and eight thousand manuscripts. The Parsons collection, with its strengths in Americana, classics, fine printing and binding, travel literature, Bibles, and European history and literature, provided a strong base for the fashioning of a major research library. That same year, Ransom purchased the extensive T. E. Hanley Library, with its great collection of modern literary manuscripts. It was this acquisition, with its collections of Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, George Bernard Shaw, and Dylan Thomas, among others, that gave focus to future collecting. Rather than attempt to match the holdings of older and more established rare books libraries, Ransom used the Hanley purchase as the foundation for an evolving collection of the works of twentieth-century writers. It is fair to say that the Hanley purchase launched the Ransom Center on its path to leadership in twentieth-century literary collections.

These and the many other great acquisitions made from the 'fifties' through the early 'seventies' and to the present day were guided by Ransom's first premise: the published work is not the beginning of literary study. The study begins where the author started, with the trail the author leaves behind, the map, if you will, that traces the trajectory of the author's imagination: the journals, outlines, false starts, the hundreds of changes, the cross-outs, the marginal notes, the diaries; in short, all of the recorded material that is either directly or indirectly involved in the creative process is pertinent for the scholar. Such a view of literary study most certainly privileges the author in contrast to many theoretical positions expounded in the 'eighties' and 'nineties'. At the Ransom Center, we believe that literature is created by human beings who breathe real air and write from their souls. John Fowles, the great novelist and author of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, has written, "I have had to convince a number of friends and relatives that the kindest act to the [writers] is remembering them—and that all art comes from a human being, not out of mysterious thin air" (September 15, 1980, in letter to Jo Jones). This great writer's archive is housed at the Ransom Center.

Only fifteen years after Harry Ransom started the Humanities Research Center, a chapter was devoted to it in Anthony Hobson's famous book, *The Great Libraries of the World* (Putnam, 1970). It

was one of only five libraries in America to be named (the others were the Yale University Library, the Pierpont Morgan Library, the Henry E. Huntington Library, and the Harvard University Library). In his book, Hobson dramatically describes the early collecting and purchasing for the Center. Of one sale, he writes:

The most prominent person at Sotheby's sale of nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature on the morning of 8 November 1960 was a New York bookseller, making his third appearance in the London auction-rooms. He was not conspicuous because of his appearance (which hinted at disguise: dark glasses, black raincoat buttoned to the chin—later explained as the result of oversleeping; below the raincoat was nothing but a pyjama top) nor from the way he bid, but from the amount he was willing to pay and from his habit of buying every lot he bid for. That day he bought 173 letters of Robert Southey for £1,950, five of Oscar Wilde for £220 and the autograph manuscript of D. H. Lawrence's *Etruscan Places* for £2,000. It was by now generally known that in making these purchases he was acting for The University of Texas, which was engaged in a programme of acquisition such as had not been seen in the USA since Henry E. Huntington's death. The previous June, after buying half the total value of a sale held at Sotheby's, including every lot of a T. E. Lawrence collection, he had secured the major part of a charity sale at Christie's to raise funds for the London Library, notably the manuscript of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* for £6,500.

The following May he bought over sixty percent of the next sale of modern literature, letters of the Pre-Raphaelites, Shaw, Yeats and D. H. Lawrence, manuscripts of Swinburne, Whitman, Edward Johnston the calligrapher, Maurice Baring and Stephen Spender. Edith Sitwell's manuscripts and notebooks were acquired in three later sales for £17,928, Graham Greene's for £14,550. Apart from these purchases at auction, an even larger quantity of material had been bought privately, in many cases directly from the authors: J. B. Priestley, David Garnett, Robert Graves, Compton Mackenzie, C. P.

Snow, Stephen Spender, A. A. Milne, A. P. Herbert, Hugh Walpole and John Lehmann; while in America the papers of Christopher Morley and Joseph Hergesheimer, and the Sinclair Lewis collection belonging to his first wife were bought, and those of Tennessee Williams given.

Hobson's book was written in 1971 before 700 additional authors' archives arrived at the Ransom Center, and before the purchase of the Gutenberg Bible in 1978 and the famous Pforzheimer collection, arguably the best collection of English Renaissance literature in the world. But even with these outstanding collections, the Ransom Center has to continue to enhance its holdings to remain a leading research library.

Acquisitions of the past few years, including the archives of Julian Barnes, Don DeLillo, Peter Matthiessen, Russell Banks, Booker Prize winners Penelope Fitzgerald and Penelope Lively, and photographer David Douglas Duncan, reflect our sustained commitment to collection development and the vigorous pursuit of cultural materials for scholarly research and education. We give great attention to building upon existing collections, from strength to strength, and are constantly tracking down caches of notebooks, sketches, and correspondence from those whose work is already on our shelves. We also put a premium on acquiring the materials of new talents whom we believe will be seen in retrospect as the stars of our current era. A humanities research center such as ours must always be aware of new artistic styles, new modes of discourse, new forms of expression, new and imaginative ways of seeing the world through art.

Soon after I arrived at the Ransom Center, I began to make a comprehensive study of our collections, and I quickly realized that we needed to develop a focused plan for acquisitions. In the economic realities of the present, the HRC can no longer simply pick up great collections by offering the highest price; we can no longer make the highest bids at auction, offer the highest prices for authors' or publishers' archives. We would lose in the early 1990s the Nadine Gordimer archive to Indiana, the Naipaul to Tulsa, an important collection of Graham Greene letters to Boston College, the Kenneth

Tynan to the British Library. Anticipating these issues and realizing that without a plan, the HRC, which had arguably the strongest collections in America if not the world of the first half of the twentieth-century's literature, would have just that, the first half only. We embarked on a clearly focused and systematically developed plan to balance our holdings in the literature of the next half of the century, not so much in French as in British, Anglophone African, Irish, and American literature.

With the help of faculty, bookdealers, writers, and our curatorial staff, we developed a list of approximately 375 authors who had published their first works after 1950. Now, the list has grown to include 550 names. For most writers on the list, we collect all first editions of their work. For a smaller number of these writers, we collect all their published work, including translations and special editions, and we also collect manuscripts. This list is frequently changing and is not based on aesthetic judgment alone. Other factors include availability of manuscripts, relationships with other writers in our collections, form or genre, and representation of particular modes of writing associated with a period.

If you think for a moment about this date of first publication after 1950, it spreads throughout the second half of the century from William Golding to Toni Morrison, from John Updike to Ethan Canin, from Walker Percy to Salman Rushdie. The list includes many young writers, such as Jonathan Franzen, Don DeLillo, Alice Walker, and Barbara Kingsolver. There is rarely a month that passes, by the way, where we don't get a request for a copy of this list. I have even had a few writers ask me whether they were on the list. It has been referred to by one bookdealer as a key document indicator in canon formation. Book collectors also ask about it. Two dealers, one in America and one in England, not only supply us with the new works of the writers on the list, they also have completely updated records of our holdings and are constantly buying retrospectively for us, filling in the missing items. I'm pleased to say that after 13 years, our retrospective purchases are getting to be fewer and fewer. This is the virtue and economy of a systematic purchase program.

I have not forgotten Benjamin Disraeli's admonition that an author who talks about his books is as bad as the mother who talks about her children, and although I am sure this caution extends to a Director talking about his library, please let me briefly indulge in this topic.

Today, the Ransom Center holds a million books, 40 million manuscripts, 5 million photographs, including the world's first, and over 100,000 works of art. With the reopening of our building last spring after extensive renovations and the addition of gallery space for exhibitions, the Ransom Center is embarking on a new chapter that calls for enhanced public outreach and accessibility. Our aim in the renovation was to transform our building from what looked like a forbidding bunker into a welcoming presence on campus. In addition to the functional aspects of our renovation, such as the creation and enhancement of public spaces, we hoped to provide more than a hint to the public of what it is that makes the Ransom Center so remarkable: our collections. We surrounded two corners of our building with walls of glass etched with images from our collections—a portrait of James Joyce, Picasso's eyes as photographed by David Douglas Duncan, images from *Gone with the Wind*—and surrounded the doors of our entrance with the signatures of many of the authors whose archives we hold. The transformation is astounding. (You in this audience are familiar with such transformation. Last December, Becky Reese took me through the structurally beautiful El Paso Museum building, with its brilliant use of space and light. It rose like a phoenix from a Greyhound bus station.) Just prior to our reopening, Stephen Kinzer of the New York Times wrote in an article published on February 4, 2003, "Scholars know the Ransom Center as one of the world's pre-eminent research libraries, but until now the public has caught only fleeting glimpses into its rich chambers." We have now opened the lid on the vault of our collections. We can no longer be called the best-kept secret in Texas.

Our public programs and our newly transformed building have brought us much public attention. For example, on the front page of the *L. A. Times* on August 5, 2003, in a flattering, funny article, Christopher Reynolds wrote:

No disrespect is intended to your local public library. But to glimpse 36 million of the most coveted pages in all of literature, and possibly also Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's underwear, serious book folk know they must come here, to the same Hill Country that gave this nation Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and its largest public university.

Once arrived, they look for the tall glass-and-concrete box at the edge of the University of Texas campus, and step into the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, home to a staggering trove of papers and artifacts from thousands of writers, artists, musicians, actors, and others.

Down these corridors, elaborately indexed, preserved, and arranged, is the smoking-gun evidence that James Joyce liberally amended the final page proofs of *Ulysses*, that William Blake hand-colored some copies of his 1789 *Songs of Innocence*, that D. H. Lawrence toyed with many titles before naming his novel about Lady Chatterly. In late July, 37 boxes of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's Watergate papers arrived.

For decades, scholars have rummaged here in solitude and wonder, sorting through a collection laid out something like a bottom desk drawer eight stories deep. But now, for the first time in its improbable 46-year history, the center has a clean, well-lighted place to show off its massive holdings for a wider audience. And as an increasing number of libraries nationwide begin to behave more like museums, this Austin building may stand as a hint of things to come.

What are the things to come for rare books collections, manuscript archives, and, more generally, libraries such as ours? Obviously we must look outward.

Our building renovation and public outreach seem to be successful. Our initial exhibit in the new first floor galleries,

entitled *In A New Light*, attracted over 23,000 visitors in four months. We expect to have approximately 90,000 visitors annually to our exhibitions and 8,000 scholars a year use our reading and print-viewing rooms. We are currently exhibiting *Make It New: The Rise of Modernism*, which is perhaps one of the most extensive exhibitions of Modernism in all its aspects ever to be displayed. This exhibit features items and works from our collections of significant writers and artists of this period, including James Joyce, F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Butler Yeats, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and others. Some highlights of the exhibit include various materials related to the writing and publication of Joyce's *Ulysses*, artwork by Pablo Picasso, a manuscript of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and corrected typescripts by William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway. This exhibit has been widely acclaimed, and we are experiencing record-breaking attendance numbers. The exhibit will be on display through March 7th. Please come visit it and view many of the great achievements in literature, art, and technology from this intriguing period.

As is becoming our custom, we schedule academic and public events around our exhibitions. For example, in two weeks we will be hosting the Fleur Cowles Flair Symposium on "The State and Fate of Modernism." This symposium will bring together leading figures from a range of different fields—scholars, librarians and archivists, publishers, and collectors—to discuss the origins and legacy of Modernism.

In addition to the changes we have made to our building and our enhanced public programs, we are increasingly incorporating advanced technology into our center, and this, too, has widened our audience exponentially. Last spring, we digitized our Gutenberg Bible and made it accessible on the web. In merely three months, it received over 14.6 million hits online. We have also added three touch-screen, electronic kiosks to our galleries that provide visitors with extensive information about the Ransom Center and two of our permanently displayed items, the world's first photograph and the Gutenberg Bible. And we continue to enhance and enrich our already substantial web site, which is increasingly becoming a point of first contact for the public. Through our web site, we provide remote

access to information about our collections, exhibitions, and events. As discussed at the fine meeting of the Texas Philosophical Society held here in El Paso last December, the future of special collections libraries, and libraries in general, certainly includes digitization and advanced technology. At the Ransom Center, we are committed to using digital technology to enhance access to the physical artifact and provide information to our patrons.

Many exciting things happen at the Ransom Center, but the greatest fun for me, of course, has always been pursuing authors' archives because you never know the outcome, never know with whom you will come in contact or what sort of a relationship will develop. The fun, too, is in the chase.

My negotiations with John Osborne, the great British playwright, began when a friend of his, a lawyer in New York, called me and told me that Osborne was thinking about selling his archive. He told me to go visit Osborne but warned me that, years before, Osborne had been bitten by a bat in a barn and had contracted a disease that made him rather strange. I went to visit him, and nothing came of our initial discussions. But he called me a year or so after our negotiations had broken down and said, "Tom, I have finally settled upon a price." I asked him what it was, and without hesitation he said, "The exact amount I owe the Inland Revenue for back taxes." I said, "John, that just might be the figure I have in mind, too." I had no idea of the extent of his back taxes. I did not discuss with him the logic of setting a price for his archive on that basis. We kept in touch for three years, meeting two or three times a year. We became friends, but we never got the archive from him. He would cry to his fellow playwrights about how cold-hearted I was to try to steal his life's work from him. But he trusted no one, as he said, "in the whole bloody business" and moaned that he was stuck with me. He would have David Hare and Tom Stoppard, whose archives were here, attempt to intercede for him. And then he did the dumbest thing imaginable, and I told him so when he did it. He put the manuscript of *Look Back in Anger* up for sale at auction at Sotheby's. I told him he had reduced the value of his archive by 35%. He was furious. He said that I just didn't know how desperate he was. Fortunately, the

manuscript was called in, for the bids were well below the reserve. So the reputed angriest man in England turned his wrath on Sotheby's. Behind the scenes, they desperately tried to negotiate with me. I told them that I wanted the whole archive and not just the cornerstone. Yet I took a gamble that we would still be able to get the archive, bought the *Anger* manuscript from Sotheby's by private treaty, and insisted that the invaluable notes he made for the play be included. Shortly after John's death, we bought the archive at a good but fair price from his widow. This story reveals our interest in completeness in a collection. We do not buy highlights, and only in exceptional cases do we buy materials if the bulk of the collection is held elsewhere, and then only if the major holder has refused it.

Writers who sell their archives to us are frequently asked, "Why Texas?" And the press continues to run headlines such as "The Scandal of Britain's Lost Literary Archives: U.S. universities are snapping up the papers, however trivial, of our leading living writers." There is indeed a growing sense of nationalism about cultural property such as the papers of prominent contemporary writers. But "scandal" is hardly the appropriate word to characterize the acquisition of these archives by American research libraries. There is abundant evidence that far from inhibiting literary scholarship, worldwide use of these materials has enhanced scholarly and general interest of these British writers. And many authors have made deliberate decisions about to whom to donate or sell their archives—it is from them that we can best learn the motivating factors.

In an article published in April 2001 in the *San Francisco Chronicle's* *Datebook*, American novelist and biographer Diane Johnson explains why she sent her papers (or as she referred to them, the "stuff in my garage") to the Ransom Center, rather than to a library in California. She says, "Of course money had something to do with it. But not everything." She goes on to say, "Texas preserves the complete papers of people, where other institutions seem to want [only] things that add to the existing collections organized around particular themes." Even more important was the experience Johnson had while visiting the Ransom Center to conduct research for her biography of Dashiell Hammett. She found the staff to be helpful and thorough,

and thus she held the Center's professionalism in high regard. She was also pleased that we had the papers of John Ruskin and Ernest Hemingway (writers like their papers to be in good company) and was flattered when, on a visit to the Center, we asked her to sign our authors' door, a door that leads into the stacks where the collections are housed. To her, it was like having her own Hollywood star. Most importantly, Johnson concluded that at the Ransom Center, "her manuscripts would be in a place where people cared about such things...in a spirit of preserving literary materials in general."

But back on to the trail. John Fowles, a highly successful writer whose sales to film production companies have brought him great financial success, agreed on the spot to my offer when I went to visit him at his home in Lyme Regis on England's south coast. He said, "Tom, you're going to get my collection, but just give me three good reasons why it should go to Texas." I said, "Because Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, and a great collection of Joyce are already here." He said, "Three good reasons. Take it away."

Of course there are characters in this business, such as the man in West Texas who slept on his front porch on a box spring mattress, had eleven wild dogs, and made his living making medicine balls with real leather. Inside the house was reported to be one of the best modern collections in America. I haven't had the nerve to go inside to see it.

And Tom Stoppard is as bad a packrat as I've ever seen. We had moved three cargo boxes of his material—nearly a ton—from his large offices and country home in Iver, outside of London, when we first purchased his archive. One day a year or so later, he called and asked if I would go out to Iver with him the next time I was in London because he was selling the place, and his secretary didn't know what to do with all the papers and correspondence as well as three trunks of earlier manuscripts that they thought had been lost. After we had spent the day going through everything, he began going over the material and kept asking me, "Do you want this? And this?" until finally he said, "I should have known that you want everything." As we were getting ready to go off to a pub and then back to London,

an elderly woman with snow white hair and a blue cardigan sweater draped to her knees came in and said, "Tom, you still have stuff everywhere, even after that man took the first truckload away, and after all this you have gathered today, I have three boxes in the old log house from last summer. I wish you'd get rid of that, too. It's drawing more mice." Tom thanked her and headed for the car. I said, "Wait a minute." He turned, smiled, and said, "I was afraid you would say that." We went into this damp outbuilding and saw hundreds of moldy paperbacks and several boxes overflowing with papers. One was tilted, and I went over to look at the fallen papers, chewed by mice and heaven knows what else. I bent over and fell two feet through the rotted wood of the floor, and as I went down, I caught a file folder of letters. As I tried to get out, I noticed letters from Pinter, Beckett, and hundreds of other theater luminaries. Tom said, "Okay, take them, and let's get out of here before the whole floor falls in and we both get buried by this junk." One man's junk is another's treasure.

The greatest luck and least danger I have had was not in chasing after an archive, but getting one out of France. Stuart Gilbert was Joyce's friend and literary helper. His widow, a strange woman, kept her rich treasure trove of Joyce material under a huge dining room table in her apartment in Paris. Everyone visited, but even Dick Ellmann, Joyce's biographer, didn't get more than a peek. It had been untouched for twenty years, since her husband died. She would not let me see it, but I could just feel that what was under there was important. A few years later, through an agent and a trusted friend of hers, a deal was struck. Although Gilbert was an English citizen, his wife was not, and I wanted desperately to avoid any entanglement with the famous French export licensing broker. It was a very large collection, though we weren't sure of just what it contained because Mrs. Gilbert had no light in her dining room and did not trust us to take anything out of that dark room. During various earlier visits, she would tantalize me by pulling out a signed *Finnegans Wake* or a numbered *Ulysses* or a few Joyce letters. But finally, here we were about to take off. We rented a bread truck and drove it to the border on Holy Thursday, when we thought customs would be at half staff. We were waved through and got everything to England. We had it shipped from there

directly to Austin. We had been made to agree on a price and were still not sure what the collection included. We worked on the collection slowly and sorted everything, pleased with the rich horde that was there. One day about three months later, the cataloging department was ready for it. We went through it again to inventory many of the complex Joyce manuscripts. Then I found some onion skin leaves. The first page was missing, but as I went through, I realized what I had before me. It was the famous lost link in the stemma, the missing draft with Joyce's corrections in his own hand to the opening of *Finnegans Wake*, an item more valuable than the price of the entire collection. We told Mrs. Gilbert, who was suspicious of us in the first place, and everybody else for that matter. She said, "I don't want it, and I don't want any more money and any more to do with Joyce."

I could go on and on with these adventures. As for predicting what directions research and scholarship will take, we find ourselves in a Janus-like position, looking to the past for its cultural riches, while we peer into the future to examine trends and currents in literature and the arts. Distinguishing the permanent from the ephemeral in the arts and humanities is not an exact science; it involves informed judgment, keen intelligence, and not a little luck. All that can be said for sure is that research and scholarship will change, and as they do, the Ransom Center will evolve to meet the needs of a new generation of scholars, students, and visitors in the endless pursuit of knowledge.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today.



Dr. Thomas F. Staley

Director of the Harry Ransom Center
at the University of Texas at Austin,
where he is also a professor of English and
holds the Harry Hunt Ransom Chair in Liberal Arts.

He has written or edited thirteen books and is also the founding
editor of the *James Joyce Quarterly*, which he edited for 26 years.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Thomas F. Staley

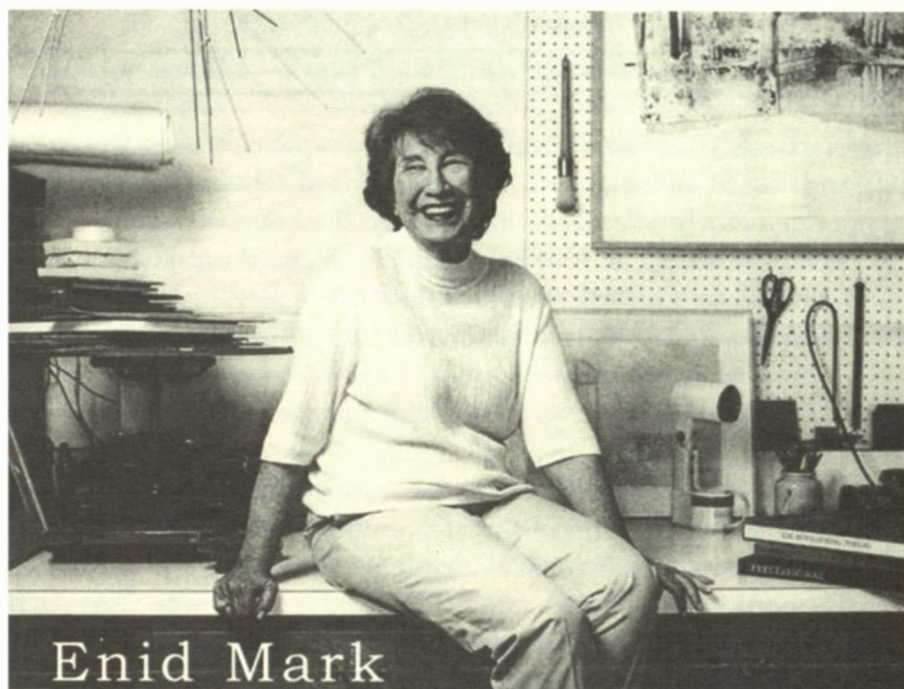
Dr. Thomas F. Staley is Director of the Ransom Center at The University of Texas at Austin, where he is also Professor of English and holds The Harry Hunt Ransom Chair in Liberal Arts.

Staley has written or edited thirteen books on James Joyce, Italo Svevo, modern British women novelists including Jean Rhys and Dorothy Richardson, and on modern literature in general. His critical articles on a wide range of subjects have appeared in journals in this country and abroad. He has been the chairman or co-chairman for four international James Joyce symposia in Dublin and Trieste, and is a board member and former president of the James Joyce Foundation. He was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Trieste in 1966 and again in 1971. His most recent books are *An Annotated Critical Bibliography of James Joyce* (1989) and an edited edition of *The Paris Diaries of Stuart Gilbert* (1993), and *Writing the Lives of Writers* (1998), which he co-edited with Warwick Gould.

Staley is the founding editor of the *James Joyce Quarterly*, which he edited for 26 years. He initiated *Joyce Studies Annual*, which is published under the auspices of the Ransom Center and The University of Texas Press and is in its fourteenth year of publication. He also edits a series of books on literary modernism at The University of Texas Press.

He has written and spoken widely in the United States and Europe on literary subjects, libraries, and the state of the humanities in contemporary culture, and, more recently, the building of modern library collections.

Former Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at The University of Tulsa, as well as McFarlin Professor of Modern Literature, Staley serves on a number of editorial and educational boards, including *Twentieth Century Literature*, *Journal of Modern Literature*, the International James Joyce Foundation, and the Christopher Isherwood Foundation. He also served on the Board of Advisors of the Library of America for five years.



Enid Mark

Enid Mark

**2003-2004 Recipient of the Carl Hertzog Award
for Excellence in Book Design**

Title:	The Elements
Author:	Susan Stewart
Publisher:	The Elm Press, Wallingford, Pennsylvania, 2002.
Printer:	Daniel Keleher, Wild Carrot Letterpress

REMARKS BY SUSAN NOVICK

(Accepted the award on behalf of Enid Mark—February 2004).

Thank you, Friends and guests. I am pleased to accept the Hertzog Award on behalf of Enid Mark this afternoon. She would have enjoyed being here, but long before she knew about winning the Hertzog Award, she scheduled hip replacement surgery for tomorrow. Consequently, she has asked me to read her remarks and I feel honored and privileged to do so.

However, before doing that, I would like to say a few words about Enid Mark. She is a warm, friendly, and elegant woman who is passionate about books, in particular, art books. And, best of all, she has a connection to El Paso – her husband Gene was a Harvard classmate of my cousin Haskell Goodman and was stationed at Ft. Bliss during World War II. It is indeed a small world!

As you will see from her award-winning book, *The Elements*, Enid creates large, limited-edition books that combine poetry (her own or other people's), hand lithography, and fine craftsmanship. Two of her most important inspirations were the poet Sylvia Plath – her classmate at Smith College in the 1950s – and the artist Jackson Pollock. After spending many years as a printmaker, she began making cloth-bound art books in the early 1980s, when she launched the ELM Press out of her Philadelphia studio.

You can get a feeling about her work by the way she speaks about it:

“Often I work with poetry by or about women. Either I compile disparate texts that assume greater power when gathered together, or I collaborate directly with poets. For instance, in *To Persephone* (which is in UTEP's collection), nine 20th-century poets recast the Homeric myth explaining the origins of the seasons as the story of a young girl caught between a lover and a mother.

In *About Sylvia*, a collection of poems about Sylvia Plath, lithographs of broken glass appear throughout the book. Enid explains:

“I wanted to write a poem about Sylvia, but I wanted to do it visually, so I had to find a visual metaphor for Sylvia’s experience. The idea of shattering glass occurred to me. The glass begins as a crack, it’s rather ambiguous; you really don’t know what I’m trying to articulate on that first page. Eventually the crack grows and the shards of glass crack apart and begin to extrude from the perimeter. The image gets larger until it explodes. Then the image changes from a vertical image to horizontal, and becomes a very quiet image. If you were listening to a piece of music, it builds to a crescendo and diminishes and resolves itself.”

In addition to her bachelor’s degree from Smith, Enid studied at West Chester University and the Philadelphia College of Art. Her work is included in numerous rare book and print collections such as those at Cornell University; the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. the Delaware Art Museum, the Library of Congress, and of course, at Smith College. In addition to the Carl Hertzog Award, recently she has been awarded several prestigious awards, among them a \$50,000 fellowship from the Pew Charitable Trusts in 2001 and the 2002 Award for Achievement in Photography/ Works on Paper from the Leeway Foundation in Philadelphia.

I now share with you Enid’s remarks.

Enid Mark's Remarks for Hertzog Award – February 8, 2004

It gives me great pleasure to have these remarks presented by my friend Susan Novick, although, of course, I am sorry not to be able to greet you in person. It is particularly appropriate that Susan speak to you for me, since she and I served together on the board of the Friends of the Smith College Library, (our shared alma mater), and thus we both are especially aware of the value of Friends groups, and the importance of their support to libraries. However, your group at the University of Texas at El Paso is unique because of its sponsorship of the Carl Hertzog Award for Excellence in Book Design. I am most honored to be the recipient of its ninth biennial award, and want to extend my appreciation not only to the jury of selection, but to the Friends as a whole. Not only do you make this honor possible, but you lend importance to the often overlooked art of book design, by calling attention to it and to the work of Carl Hertzog.

Book designers enter the world of books through different doors. We are guided by shared historical perspectives, but our individual interests and concerns guide us down different paths. I entered the world of books with a background in literature and studio arts. My initial professional career was as a printmaker; lithography was my medium of choice. My focus shifted in 1980, when the late Ruth Mortimer, then Curator of Rare Books at Smith College, suggested that we collaborate on a limited edition *livre d'artiste*. As an artist who originally planned on being a writer, the idea of creating a book had great appeal. There was, however, a minor problem. I knew absolutely nothing about book design. I wasn't even aware of what I did not know. I did, however, know enough to realize that I could not collaborate with Ruth Mortimer, a foremost librarian and bibliographer, without doing my homework. I commenced an ongoing study of book design, both in and out of the classroom, by reading and looking at the classic printed texts, learning to set type, and investigating book structures, etc. My early training in studio art and literature remained a constant influence. In 1985, when I started to publish under the imprint of The ELM Press, it was the relationship between text and image that challenged me. My aim was, and is, to have my art considered as books, and my books considered as art.

An artist's book is a unique form of visual disclosure, which at its best, transmits slowly with the turn of each new page. Like a poem, the book itself gains new meaning with each rereading, but only if all of the discrete elements that compose the book – the shape of the page, the choice of type, the imposition of type on the page, the weight and color of the paper – as well as the text and illustration, are mutually responsive to one another. In the end, however, I believe that the ultimate success of the work depends on the audience. It is when the reader/viewer experiences the book itself, and responds to the interplay between these elements, that the book as it exists in time and space truly becomes complete.

In closing, I want to thank both the Selection Committee and the Friends, not only for the Hertzog Award, but for being that special audience that makes *The Elements* reach its successful completion.

Enid Mark is an artist, poet and publisher: her ELM Press, based in Pennsylvania, specializes in limited editions featuring hand-lithography, letterpress printing and archival hand-binding. She has a B.A. from Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, magna cum laude, and Graduate Studies in Printmaking and Typography, West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania. In recognition of her work in the book arts, Ms. Mark received the Leeway Foundation Award for Achievement (2002) and The Pew Fellowship in the Arts (2001).

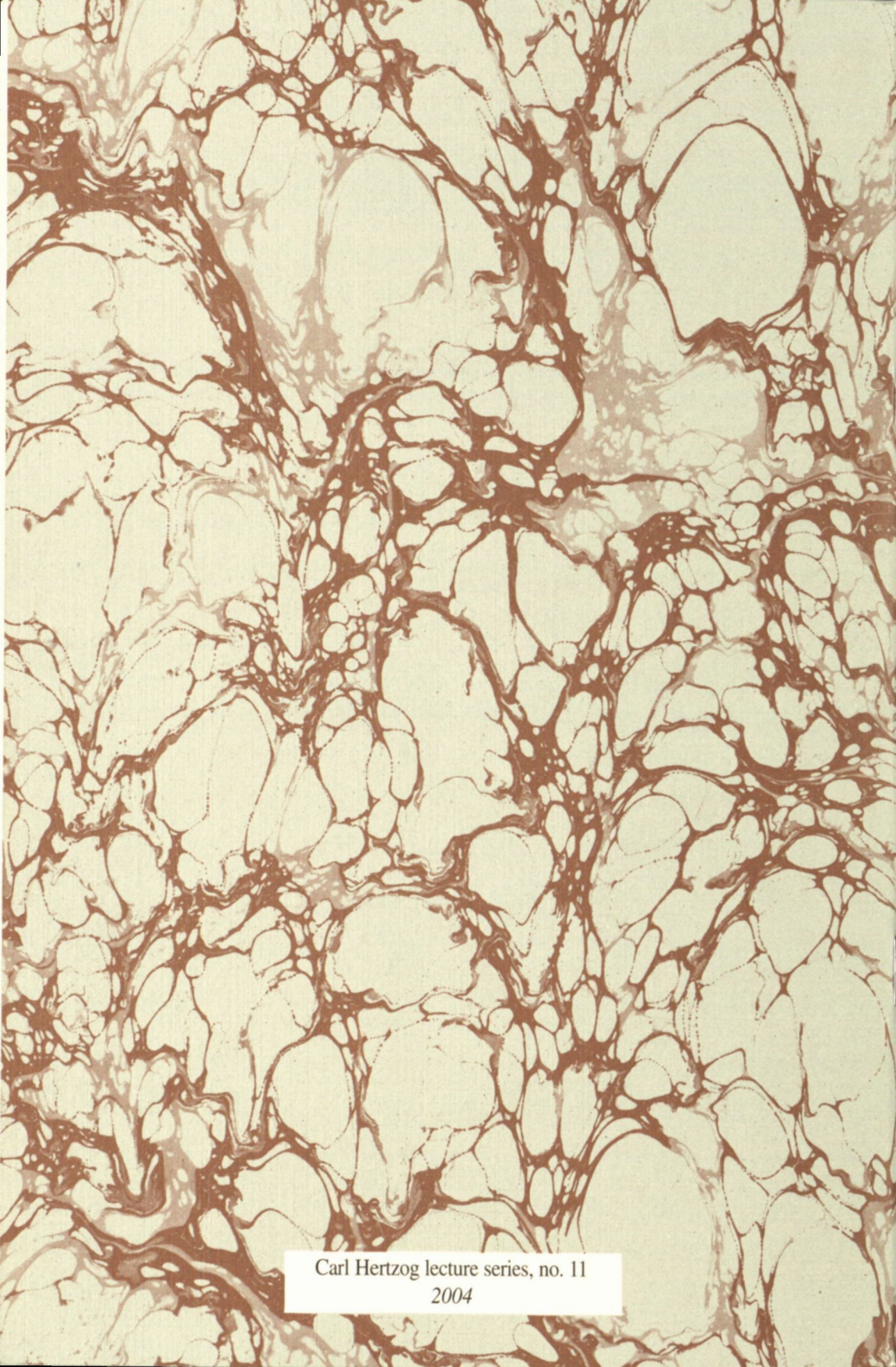
About the ELM Press

In a world geared to mass production and computerization, artists' books emerge as individual and personal statements. If successful, they challenge the mind, welcome the touch, and are a visual delight.

Founded in 1986, The ELM Press publishes such books. Its finely crafted limited editions feature hand-lithography, letterpress printing, and archival hand-binding. Within their covers, words, art, design, texture, and structure interact, presenting a unified, artistic statement.

Books from The ELM Press are edited or written by Enid Mark, who also creates the visual imagery and book design. Edition sizes range from twenty-five to fifty numbered and signed copies, plus artist proofs. Production is by collaboration with craftspeople who consider each effort a special challenge to their own artistic integrity.



The background of the entire page is a traditional marbled paper pattern. It features a dense, organic design of dark brown, swirling veins and irregular, cell-like shapes against a light cream or off-white base. The pattern is reminiscent of stone or biological tissue, with larger, more rounded shapes interspersed with finer, more intricate web-like structures.

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