

WINTER 2008
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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Did you know...

- Special Collections holds the papers and published works of three Pulitzer Prize winning authors: Russel B. Nye (1945), Robert Coles (1973), and Richard Ford (1996).
- While Special Collections does not loan books, last year it received over 900 interlibrary loan requests of which 560 could be filled by copying materials electronically. Almost all of the filled requests were for magazine articles or small pamphlets from our popular culture and radicalism collections.
- Dan Gerber has donated his manuscripts and papers to Special Collections as part of the Michigan Writers Collection. Gerber, a graduate of MSU, is an award winning poet, novelist, and essayist. His latest work, *A Second Life, A Collected Non-Fiction*, is published by the Michigan State University Press.
- Special Collections has acquired one of the artists' books from the Guild of Book Workers 100th Anniversary show. *Reliquiae: An Abecedarium of Martyred Saints*, by the book artist Karen Jutzi will be added to the growing Book Arts collection for use by book arts classes in the new Residential College in the Arts and Humanities.
- In spring 2007, MSU undergraduate Robin Roots won first place in the annual MSU Student Book Collection Competition for her collection, *Picture Books for Peace and Social Justice*. In addition to winning \$500, Robin was automatically entered in a national collegiate book collecting contest sponsored by *Fine Books & Collections Magazine*.

Who's Who of American Comic Books

Archive joins the Comic Art Collection

MSU's renowned Comic Art Collection is now home to the archive of questionnaires and correspondence used to compile the *Who's Who of American Comic Books*. The *Who's Who* was created by Jerry Bails, a popular faculty member at Wayne State University, affectionately remembered as "the father of comic book fandom."

First published in the 1970s, the *Who's Who* immediately became a key reference work for the study of comic books. Bails continued to update the directory for more than 30 years, until his death in 2006, and it was his intention that the primary source material associated with the *Who's Who* become part of MSU's Comic Art collection. The archive includes the original handwritten questionnaires submitted by hundreds of artists, writers, and editors, correspondence between Bails and comic art creators, art samples and press clippings.

Along with the *Who's Who* archive, MSU has received many hundreds of Jerry Bails' books and comic art fanzines, plus a working set and the master

negatives of his amazing personal microfilm library of golden age comic books. These 350 reels hold about 7,000 comic books from the 1940s, and all are now listed in our online catalog. Both of these remarkable collections are available for consultation now, and are dedicated to helping future researchers build on the massive accomplishments of Dr. Jerry G. Bails.

— Randall W. Scott, Comic Art Bibliographer



Celebrating the Art of the Book

The fusion of word and image — literature and the visual arts — came to life in two recent exhibits in Special Collections: the Guild of Book Workers' 100th Anniversary Exhibition, and an exhibit of American fine binding called "The Book of Origins."

Ranging from the traditional to the avant garde, the works in both exhibits challenged viewers to see books not merely as vessels of knowledge, but as art objects worthy of study and appreciation. The emphasis on master craftsmanship elevates the physical manifestation of a literary work to the same realm as the literature itself.

The Guild of Book Workers' 100th Anniversary Exhibition featured more than 60 bindings, all created by Guild members and ranging from traditional fine bindings in full leather with gold tooling and gilt edges, to more sculptural works in the shape of crowns and bird's nests. All invited the reader to interact with the book, whether through the tactile pleasure of turning pages, the visual puzzle of examining multiple layers, or the creative act of using slotted tiles to build towers of words.

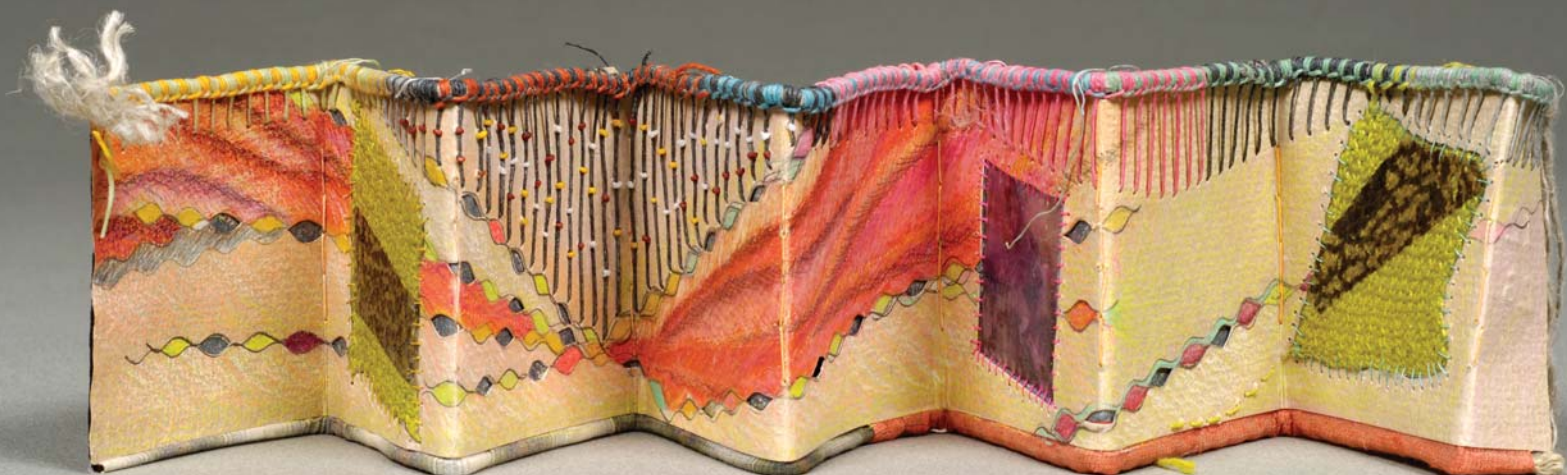
Later in the year, Special Collections hosted "The Book of Origins: A Survey of American Fine Binding," showing the work of ten U.S. binders who participated in the exhibit "Le Livre des Origines." Organized by the French Canadian bookbinding society Les Amis de la Reliure d'Art du Canada, this international exhibit featured a "set piece," meaning all participants bound the same book: a fine press printing of the Native American Huron tribe's origin myth. The exhibit displayed a rich array of artistic interpretations of this single literary text.

The "Survey" exhibit was also a homecoming for one of the works: Special Collections owns a copy of the *Book of Origins* bound by conservator Eric Alstrom.

Both exhibits have catalogs available online: The Guild of Book Workers' 100th Anniversary Exhibition can be found at <<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/gallery/100anniversary/index.shtml>>. The Survey can be found at <<http://library.syr.edu/digital/exhibits/b/bookoforigins>>.

— Eric Alstrom. Library Conservator

Headbanded Strip (created in 2004) by Susan Joy Share, was among the works featured in the Guild of Book Workers' 100th Anniversary Exhibition. Photo by David Broda (Syracuse University Photo and Imaging Center).



Supporting African Democracy and Freedom

Special Collections is the home for MSU's new African Activist Archive, a project of the African Studies Center. Dedicated to preserving the history of activism in support of African struggles against colonialism and apartheid, the archive will preserve organizational records, personal papers, photographs, oral histories, and ephemera such as posters and buttons.

From the 1960s through the 1980s, hundreds of organizations and individuals around the world mounted protests of apartheid and advocated economic sanctions against South Africa. In East Lansing, the Southern Africa Liberation Committee lobbied the East Lansing City Council, the MSU Board of Trustees, the MSU Foundation, and the Michigan Legislature for divestiture of holdings from companies operating in South Africa. The Patricia L. Beeman SALC Collection, housed in Special Collections, details the activities of this organization.

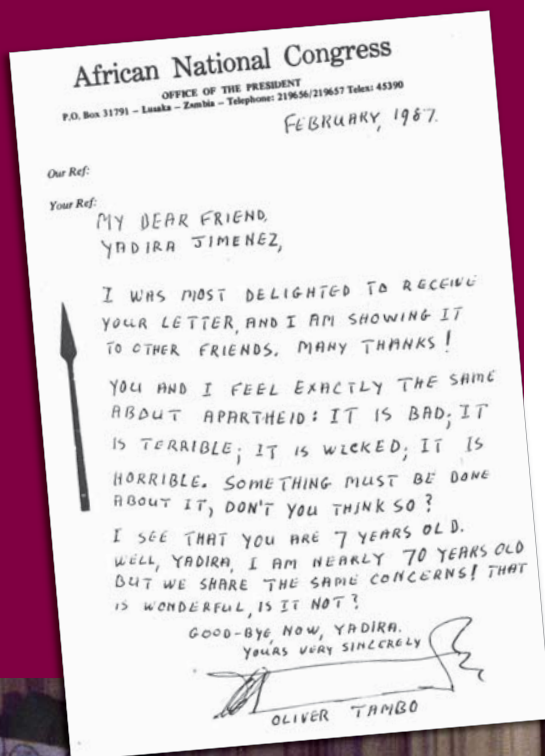
With the establishment of the African Activist Archive, MSU Special Collections has received the records of several other organizations, including:

- the American Coordinating Committee for Equality in Sport and Society
 - the Boston Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa
 - Educators Against Racism and Apartheid
 - the Seattle Coalition Against Apartheid
- as well as the personal papers of Mary Louise Hooper, an American Quaker who served in the 1950s as personal secretary to Albert Luthuli, President of the African National Congress and winner of the 1960 Nobel Peace Prize.

The African Activist Archive Project website (www.africanactivist.msu.edu) provides a directory listing archives in depository institutions in the U.S. and abroad and an expanding collection of multimedia materials documenting the African solidarity movement, including buttons, posters, photos, written (and soon video) remembrances.

For more information or to help with the project contact: David Wiley (wiley@msu.edu) or Project Director Richard Knight, (rknight1@juno.com). To enquire about recently received library collections contact: Peter Limb (limb@msu.edu) 517-432-6123 ext. 239.

— Peter Limb, Africana Bibliographer



Top: a letter from African National Congress president Oliver Tambo to a young correspondent.

Bottom: children in a New York City public school perform a play about apartheid in the early 1990s.

Both from the Educators Against Racism and Apartheid Archive.

New: The Latino Film Collection

Expanding Cultural Studies at MSU

Students of film and Chicano and Latino history now have a major new resource at the MSU Libraries: the Latino Film Collection. This unique archive of rare ephemera dating back to the 1916 silent film era includes nearly 600 scripts, lobby cards, photoplay editions, press books and press kits.

The Collection offers researchers an unmatched opportunity to examine how Latinos – the descendents of Latin American immigrants to the US – and Mexican Americans have been portrayed in American films over the past 90 years. Scholars of gender studies, cinema, ethnic and Latin American studies, and American history and culture will all find valuable primary resource material here.

The collection focuses on American-made films with Latino characters, and includes the full range of roles played by the great Latino movie stars, including Rita Hayworth, Anthony Quinn, Lupe Velez, Cesar Romero and Duncan Reynaldo.

The collection also provides significant insights into the treatment of Latino characters in film and television as it has evolved over the decades. Early films portrayed Latino characters almost exclusively as Mexican, often using negative stereotypes. In the silent era, for example, actresses like Lupe Velez and Dolores Del Rio were often cast as “Mexican spitfires” or sultry seductresses. In the 1930s and early 1940s, stars like Cesar Romero and Carmen Miranda often portrayed characters in lighter comedies and musicals, and after World War II, a new generation of Latino actors emerged to wider recognition, including Ricardo Montalban and Fernando Lamas.

Though the majority of items relate to American film and television, the Latino Film Collection also has examples of Cuban, Mexican, and South American films, and ephemera from Britain, Italy, Mexico, Cuba, and East Germany.

For more information about the Latino Film Collection, please contact Diana Rivera, the library's specialist in Ethnic Studies, at dianar@mail.lib.msu.edu or 517-432-6123 x252.

—Diana Rivera, Ethnic Studies Librarian



Colorful vintage movie posters are part of the rich holdings of the new Latino Film Collection.

