POETRY IN CLAREMONT: From Manuscript to Print

POETRY IN CLAREMONT: From Manuscript to Print draws on the rich literary holdings in the Claremont Colleges Library Special Collections and in Denison Library at Scripps College. The exhibit focuses on the inspiration, creation, and evolution of poetry, bringing together authors’ manuscripts and typescripts, published works, and book artists’ interpretations. Among the manuscripts featured in the exhibit are those of Emily Dickinson, May Sarton, Joaquin Miller, Yone Noguchi, and Dick Barnes. Poetry by Omar Khayyam, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Maurya Simon has inspired artists’ books in the exhibit.

Special Collections presents this exhibit in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Tufts poetry awards. These are two of the most prestigious poetry prizes given in the U.S. to contemporary poets. The Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award goes to a mid-career poet. Kate Tufts, widow of Kingsley Tufts and creator of the awards, said she wanted to create a prize “that would enable a poet to work on his or her craft for awhile without paying bills.” The Kate Tufts Discovery Award, created in 1994, a year after the inception of the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, is presented to a first book by a poet of genuine promise.

CASE 1

Kingsley Tufts
Kingsley Tufts enjoyed great success in business and the arts. He was an executive in the Los Angeles shipyards and wrote poetry as his avocation. In the 1930s and 1940s, his poems were featured in Harper's, The American Scholar, The New Yorker, Esquire, and Coronet.


“Under the Stairs of Heaven.” Published in Harper’s Magazine, December 1940.

“Dawn Fisherman.” Typescript, Kingsley Tufts Papers, Special Collections

“Down the Hill Together.” Typescript, Kingsley Tufts Papers, Special Collections

Percy Bysshe Shelley
Shelley was one of the major Romantic poets and is generally considered among the best, as well as among the most influential poets in the English language. Adonais is a pastoral elegy of 495 lines in 55 Spenserian stanzas. Shelley composed the poem in the spring of 1821, after he learned of the death of poet John Keats. It is one of his best-known poems, and regarded by many as one of his best.

Pencil portrait of Shelley, in Edward Ellerker Williams Notebook. [1820?]. Manuscript. Edward John Trelawny Collection, Special Collections

Edward Ellerker Williams recorded his travels during his stint in the Navy then
afterward on the Continent with his friends and family, and are an important source for study of Shelley's last days. Williams, Shelley, and Trelawny were together in Pisa in 1822, when Shelley and Williams died in a boating accident. The notebook in the Prell Collection contains many sketches, botanical specimens, fragments of poems, and one particular pencil portrait that might be of Shelley.

The Prell Collection of Edward John Trelawny, accumulated over a period of fifty years by Donald B. Prell, enhances the excellent holdings of British authors in Special Collections.

*Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats, author of Endymion Hyperion etc.* Pisa: with the types of Didot, 1821. Special Collections, PR5406 A1 1821

First published edition of the poem. The margins of every page are filled with notes by Shelley's friend John Taaffe, elaborating on the poem, explaining its allusions and sources.

Special Collections' copy of the Pisa edition of Shelley's *Adonais* was a gift from William Clary, who graduated from Pomona College in 1911. He was an attorney at O'Melveny & Myers in Los Angeles; a trustee of Pomona, Harvey Mudd, and Pitzer colleges; a founding trustee of Claremont College (now, separately, Claremont University Consortium and the Claremont Graduate University); and founding member of the Zamorano Club.

**Emily Dickinson**

“My Cricket.” Denison Library Manuscript Collection

Dickinson’s manuscript is written on a small folded sheet of notepaper. The first page shown here is the original manuscript; the other pages are printed from digital images of the middle 2 pages and last page of the manuscript.


Dr. Susan Allen, Director of the California Rare Book School and Denison Librarian, Scripps Colleges, printed “My Cricket” at her Oldtown Press in Claremont in a limited edition of 150 copies.

**Max Beerbohm**

Sir Henry Maximilian "Max" Beerbohm (24 August 1872 – 20 May 1956) was an English essayist, parodist, and caricaturist. He was educated at Oxford from 1890 until he left without a degree in 1894.


George Nathaniel Curzon became Chancellor of Oxford University in 1907, and served in that office until his death in 1925. In spite of his reputation both as a statesman and as Chancellor, some of his contemporaries thought he was pompous, and even
snobbish. In this sonnet, a parody of Wordsworth’s “London 1802,” Beerbohm satirizes four Oxford Chancellors, beginning with Curzon. The sonnet was discovered among his papers in 1960, four years after his death.


From the description: "This broadside honors the members of the Zamorano and Roxburgh clubs who have given so generously to Special Collections at The Claremont Colleges.” It was printed at the First-Floor Press, Honnold/Mudd Library, by Carrie Marsh, Head of Special Collections and Libraries, Claremont Colleges Library.

May Sarton
May Sarton (Eleanore Marie Sarton) was an American poet, novelist, and memoirist. Her family fled Belgium for England in 1914, when she was two years old. A year later they moved to Boston. Sarton was a prolific writer, publishing many novels and books of poetry, but she may be best known for her journals and memoirs. Sarton visited Scripps College and gave two convocation lectures there in the late 1950s.


“Death and the Turtle.” 4 manuscripts. May Sarton Papers, Denison Library

These manuscripts show how a poem may evolve. Notice how the opening of this poem changes before publication. Also notice where the published opening becomes added to the manuscript.

CASE 2

Joaquin Miller
Joaquin Miller (Cincinnatus Heine Miller) was a colorful, turn-of-the-century Western writer. Mining-camp cook, lawyer, judge, newspaper writer, Pony Express rider, and horse thief are among his many occupations.

He is sometimes called the Poet of the Sierras after his book, Songs of the Sierras. Original manuscripts, diaries, letters, photographs, and first or limited published editions, many beautifully illustrated, comprise the bulk of the collection, which was assembled by Samuel Morse and purchased by the library in 1938.


William Smith Mason of Evanson, Illinois, a former Pomona College Trustee, gave his Western Americana library to Pomona in 1915. The collection is one of the most
distinguished assemblies of books on the Western United States and California in any library.


In the 1880s Miller moved to Oakland, California, and built a home he called “The Hights.” Japanese poet Yone Noguchi came to The Hights in 1894, and met Joaquin Miller, who introduced him to the San Francisco area literati.

“Im alone alone in this Valley of Snow,” entry on December 15, 1856, in manuscript diary, California. Joaquin Miller Collection, Special Collections.

“The Arazonian,” in Songs of the Sierras manuscript. Joaquin Miller Collection, Special Collections

Dick Barnes


Printed by Dr. Susan Allen, Director of the California Rare Book School and Denison Librarian, Scripps Colleges, at her Oldtown Press in Claremont. Special Collections’ copy is no. 23 of 65 numbered copies and is signed by the author. More works by Dick Barnes can be seen in Case 3.

Yone Noguchi

Yone Noguchi was the first Japanese-born writer to publish in English. He wrote both novels and poetry. He traveled to San Francisco in 1893, and spent several years there, where he worked for a time as a journalist and as a domestic servant. In Oakland he met Joaquin Miller, who introduced him to the Bay Area literary community, and led him to pursue writing poetry.


“Moon Night” and letter. Honnold Manuscript Collection, Special Collections

The “Moon Night” manuscript was written on stationery from The Grand Hotel and dated October 1908. The letter is addressed to “Dear McGehee.” The manuscript poem, along with the letter and a photograph, were found folded into a book, American Diary of a Japanese Girl by Yone Noguchi, owned by Ramiel McGehee.

Photograph of Yone Noguchi. Honnold Manuscript Collection, Special Collections
**Edna St. Vincent Millay**
An American poet and playwright, Millay won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1923. She was only nineteen years old when she published one of her most famous poems, “Renascence.” From the Edna St. Vincent Millay Society: “As part of this milieu, Millay’s work and life came to represent the modern, liberated woman of the Jazz age, free of the restrictions of the past, as represented in her famous line of poetry, ‘My candle burns at both ends...’” Millay visited Scripps College in the late 1920s.


Lithographs are by Enid Mark, ELM Press, and are hand-pulled by Timothy Sheesley at Corridor Press in Philadelphia. Text is letterpress set in Monotype Dante and printed on Rives heavyweight paper by Daniel Kelcher at Wild Carrot Letterpress in Hadley, MA. Handbinding is by Barbara Blumenthal, Northampton, MA. Denison’s copy is no. 36 of a limited edition of 50 numbered copies.

**JahHannibal Abba-Ra**
JahHannibal Abba-Ra, born Eric James in Havre de Grace, Maryland, described himself on Twitter as “Spiritual Outsider Artist/Musician Cosmic Visionary Shaman of Aether Wisdom / Deconstructive Rhythmitist / Polymetric Anti-Drummer / Pioneer in Non-linear sound.” Born in the early 1950s, he graduated from high school in 1971 and attended college for two years. He died in a car crash in May 2012.


From the bookseller: A remarkable handwritten book of poetry and lyrics by Baltimore resident JahHannibal Abba-Ra. His impassioned writings in this compilation reveal a complex and engaged man of his time and place. Abba-Ra’s writings are of war, power and its misuse, conflict, oppression, history, and much more.

Written in black ink, with many pages including some color and small designs. Bound in black leather with top and bottom edges decorated in color and gold flecks. Decorated endpapers in black and gold. Housed in a black cloth box with sides with the same black and gold decorations used on the endpapers. 117 numbered pages on verso only.

**Gertrude Stein**
Stein was born in Pennsylvania and grew up in Oakland, California. In 1903, she moved to Paris, which was her home for the rest of her life. There she hosted a salon that brought together leading writers and artists of the modernist movement. From the Poetry Foundation: “Remembered today largely as an interesting personality whose works are
seldom read, Gertrude Stein nonetheless has left her stamp upon modern literature.”

The Addison M. Metcalf Collection of Gertrude Steiniana is vast. The Scripps College collection includes first editions, translations, articles by and about Stein, correspondence, typescripts, letters, photographs, paintings, graphics, theater posters, recordings, programs and other memorabilia related to the life, associations, and influence of Stein.


**CASE 3**

**Ruth George**

Ruth George was a member of the first faculty at Scripps College, where she taught English and creative writing. Ruth George’s papers are held in the Denison Library Archives.


Emily Hale, who taught theater and diction at Scripps 1932-34, expressed great affection for Miss George. T. S. Eliot came to Claremont just after Christmas in 1932, to visit his friend Emily Hale, who taught drama at Scripps College. Eliot was in Claremont until January 6, 1933, and during his stay he met Ruth George and many other members of the faculty and the Claremont community.


*Is the Seed Yet in the Barn?* was published by the Ward Ritchie Press, one of many fine presses represented in Denison Library’s collection of fine press publications.


Notice that the title and some text of the poem changed between the typescript and the galley sheets, from which the book was published.

“A Christmas Card in Time of War,” in corrected galley sheets for *Is the Seed Yet in the Barn?* Denison Library Archives

**Henry G. Lee**

A Pomona College alumnus, Lee was a lieutenant in the U.S. Army during World War II. He died in 1945 when a Japanese POW ship sank. According to an unconfirmed account, Lee’s poems were later found hidden in the POW camp in the Philippines where he had been a prisoner when the American Army liberated the camp. His parents Published his poetry in 1948 in *Nothing but Praise.*
Nothing but Praise. Poetry typescript. Special Collections Archive


Ross Gay
Gay received his B.A. from Lafayette College, his MFA in poetry from Sarah Lawrence College, and his Ph.D. in American Literature from Temple University. His honors include fellowships from Cave Canem, the Bread Loaf Writer's Conference, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He currently teaches at Indiana University, Bloomington, and in Drew University’s Low-Residency MFA program in Poetry and Poetry in Translation. Gay is also a founding board member of the Bloomington Community Orchard, a non-profit, free fruit for all food justice and joy project.


From the description: Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude is a sustained meditation on that which goes away--loved ones, the seasons, the earth as we know it -- that tries to find solace in the processes of the garden and the orchard. This volume won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Kingsley Tufts Award in 2016.

Dick Barnes
Dick (Richard) Barnes was educated at Pomona College, Harvard, and Claremont Graduate School. He taught medieval and renaissance literature at Pomona College for nearly forty years. He published many volumes of poetry. His published works as well as his archive -- correspondence, manuscripts, teaching materials, and more -- are held in Special Collections.


“When Erastus Plays His Old Kazoo.” 2 manuscripts. Dick Barnes Poetry Collection, Special Collections


Thirty-one Views of San Bernardino: Poetry. [Pomona, Calif.]: Spectator Press, 1975. Special Collections Archive, XP 14 B3 T4

Poetry in Claremont
Claremont – the Colleges and the city – has a rich literary heritage. These chapbooks include poetry by Claremont Colleges students and faculty and by members of the broader Claremont community.
Brent Armendinger is a poet and teacher. He earned his MFA at the University of Michigan, where he received an Avery Hopwood Award for Poetry. He is Associate Professor of English & World Literature/Creative Writing at Pitzer College. Poetry, Roundabout, and Advanced Poetry, publish the poetry of students in his classes.


**Roundabout: A Book of Poems: or an Imperfect Map of Various Sites Along the Eastern Edge of Los Angeles County.** [Claremont, Calif.]: [Pitzer College], 2012. Special Collections Archive, XA10 .E54 2012

> From the Introduction: “This book is the result of an experiment. During the Fall of 2012, my students and I formed a group called The Roundabout Poetry Series. Our goal was to reclaim both poetry and public space for meaningful contact between strangers....We composed poems in and for various locations in Claremont and Pomona....Every other week we performed our poems in the places where we had written them....Sometimes people stopped and listened for a few minutes. A few people performed along with us....For this book, I asked my students to return to a place that held particular meaning for them and lengthen their original poem..”

**Advanced Poetry.** [Claremont, California]: [Pitzer College], [2014]. Special Collections Archive, XA10 .A38 2014


> Contributors are faculty and students from The Claremont Colleges and individuals from the Claremont community: Kate Barnes, R.G. Barnes, Samuel Irving Bellman, Steven Bigwood, Betty Coon, Robert Duvall, David George, P. Edward Haley, Malcolm Hall, Katherine Goodridge Ingram, Marcia Lapierre, Bert Meyers, Darcy O’Brien, W.R. Rodgers, Jim Rosenberg, Nancy Ware, Edward Weismiller, Steven Young.

**Maurya Simon**

Maurya Simon is an alumna of Pitzer College and earned an MFA in English and creative writing from the Univ. of California, Irvine. From the Poetry Foundation: “Simon’s poetry often combines the natural world with spirituality and metaphysics; her writing is enlightened by the classics and art, and attentive to formal traditions. . . . As a Fulbright/Indo-American Fellow, Simon lived in Bangalore, South India. She has been a Visiting Artist at the American Academy in Rome, was awarded National Endowment for the Arts fellowships in poetry, and received the Celia B. Wagner and Lucille Medwick Memorial Awards from the Poetry Society of America.” Currently on the Faculty at the Univ. of California, Riverside, she is Professor Emerita, Department of Creative Writing, and Professor of the Graduate Division, College of the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

WEAVERS combines Gaila Goldenthal’s Weavers Series paintings and her daughter Maurya Simon’s ekphrastic poetry. The book is handset using Optima and Times New Roman type, printed on Zerkall Book paper. It is bound with Tyvek strips and handmade Japanese Kyosei-shi covers. Denison’s copy is #29 of 80 signed copies.

“House of Women.” Typescript of poem from WEAVERS, in revision by the author during 2016 for future a publication. [On loan from the author.]

Simon is in the process of revising the poems published in WEAVERS for a new publication of her poetry.

VITRINES

Omar Khayyam
The Corrin Collection, a gift from Philip Corrin, a former member of the Trustees of The Honnold Library Society, and his wife, concentrates on 19th and 20th century authors. Included is an extensive Rubaiyat Collection of 179 volumes containing many printings of the five Edward FitzGerald versions, other English translations, as well as Persian, French and Swedish versions.


Facsimile of the rare 1859 first edition of Edward FitzGerald’s translation of the work into English. Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites were enthusiastic in their praise when they discovered the text in the 1860s.


From Carol Schwartzott’s artist’s statement: “The book is divided into seven segments, each separated by a divider of hand-marbled Japanese paper. The first contains the title page and introduction and the last an artist’s statement, bibliography, and colophon. The remaining five are dedicated to the seventy-five quatrains of FitzGerald’s first edition. Each contains a vellum window, reminiscent of a Persian archway that opens to reveal my version of a miniature painting.”

Text is printed on Mohawk Via vellum using pigmented inks. The Persian archways
have been created using two lasercut pages of clear vellum, one with an intricately cut pattern and the other printed on an etching press. The book and its box are bound in Japanese bookcloth.

**Yusef Komunyakaa**
Currently the Distinguished Senior Poet in New York University’s graduate creative writing program, Komunyakaa served in the Vietnam War as a correspondent and was managing editor of the *Southern Cross* during the war, for which he received a Bronze Star.


Komunyakaa won both the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award and the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1994 for this work. Of Neon Vernacular, the Poetry Foundations says, “Komunyakaa pulls together all of the most powerful strands of his poetic vision. The images are those of the South and its culture, of Black resilience to white supremacy, of war in Southeast Asia, of urban experience, and of musical forms such as blues and jazz.”


Komunyakaa began writing these poems in 2003, when the United States invaded Iraq. In 2013, book artist Robin Price, Pomona College alumna, letterpress printed the 25 poems with silver ink. The sheets are individually painted, hand-dyed silk. The aluminum covers are photochemically etched in a pattern based on camouflag fabric.