In With the New for 2011

Renovation Creates New Research Commons in Bobst Library

All summer and into the early fall, floors four and five of the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library were a hardhat-only site. Library users patiently put up with space constraints, construction noise, book relocations. And then the reward: in November and early December, floors four and then five reopened, completely redesigned for comfort, productivity, efficiency and inspiration. And no sooner had the “open” signs gone up than the new Research Commons—comprising both floors and all their amenities and services—were populated with students intuitively using it as if it had been designed to their specifications. Which it had.

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Photos: Elena Olive

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Bobst Library Unveils a Versatile New Research Commons

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“We developed the Research Commons based on several years of user studies—focus groups, surveys, observations, usability studies, and more,” said Dean of Libraries Carol A. Mandel. “We placed a special emphasis on graduate student needs, but every student and researcher will appreciate the details that enhance productivity and comfort. After all our study and analysis, we are taking great satisfaction in seeing the spaces used so enthusiastically and appreciatively.”

The opening of the Research Commons marks the completion of Phase II of the Bobst Library renovation. Phase I, completed in 2004, redesigned Lower Levels 1 and 2 and the main floor. Both phases were designed by New York architect Jake Alspector of Alspector Architecture. In years to come and as funding allows, the remaining seven floors of Bobst, a Philip Johnson building opened in 1973, will also be brought up to date. Phase II was funded by the University and support from foundations and individuals, including a $10 million gift from the Elmer and Mamdouha Bobst Foundation.
Libraries’ DLTS Team Supports Online Scholarly Forum

NYU Libraries’ Digital Library Technology Services (DLTS) team designed and operates the network for MediaCommons, a digital scholarly forum in the humanities. One of the newest MediaCommons projects is The New Everyday, edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff, NYU professor of Media, Culture and Communication. The New Everyday is a web publication that exists between a blog and a journal, known as “middle state” publishing. Author Kathleen Fitzpatrick, who helped found MediaCommons, made news by using it to post chapters of and invite comment on her new book, Planned Obsolescence, upcoming from NYU Press. (See the August 23, 2010 New York Times front page story, “Scholars Test Web Alternative to Peer Review.”) A professor at Pomona College, Fitzpatrick is a visiting scholar at NYU. mediamcommons.futureofthebook.org

One student wrote: I really love the renovations, mostly because of the desk spaces. They are big enough to spread out and they all have outlets.

On the cover: Various scenes of the renovated 5th floor in Bobst Library. At lower right, Dean of Libraries Carol A. Mandel gets feedback from students in the south wing (also pictured at top left) where large tables and rolling whiteboards encourage collaboration and a communal atmosphere. At center, a room reserved for graduate students is a quiet place to study and write. Top right, the Data Services Studio; left, a row of “moby” portable lockers; bottom left, staff consultants in the Digital Studio.

Before and after shots: New carpeting, ceilings, and acoustical paneling make both floors quieter places to work. Page 2, top: Stacks were removed from five and replaced with research services and a mix of furnishing and workstations. Page 2, bottom: The 4th floor will serve as a model stacks floor for future renovation. Page 3, top: Roomy new workstations hold books, papers, laptops. Page 3, bottom: 4th floor corridors are now lined with comfortable seating.

Nicholas Mirzoeff, left, and Kathleen Fitzpatrick, right, with Eric Zinner, assistant director and editor-in-chief of NYU Press
Collections Update

The libraries of two distinguished NYU professors have been given to NYU for the general collections: from the late David H. Greene, a bequest of more than 1,000 volumes in Irish literature; and 1,300 volumes in medieval history and literature from the library of the late Robert Raymo, given by his widow, the writer and educator Judith Raymo (Steinhardt ’73,’81).

The NYU Libraries’ general collections include more than a thousand databases. Three of the newest are:

- **Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception** - coverage of the current state of knowledge on the origins and development of the Bible and the history of its reception
- **The Digital National Security Archive** - 500,000 pages of declassified government documents
- **Underground & Independent Comics, Comix, & Graphic Novels** - the first scholarly online collection of adult comic books and graphic novels

Holdings of Irish and Irish-American music in the Avery Fisher Center for Music and Media continue to expand, most recently with a gift from Barbara McGinty, who has donated her late husband’s collection of 150 LPs and more than 500 CDs. Jim McGinty hosted the Westchester (NY) Irish Association’s weekly radio program for 24 years.

Paul Langland has given to Fales Library his correspondence, photographs, programs, reviews and other documents of his work in downtown New York dance and theater. Langland is an associate arts professor in the undergraduate drama department of TSOA. Fales plans to mount an exhibition of performance posters from the Langland Papers in late 2011.

Fales Library has acquired a huge food studies collection assembled by writer and food historian Andrew F. Smith, a scholar of 19th century cooking. Among the material are recipes; menus; advertisements; almanacs; patent records; booklets on farming, gardening, and canning; extensive ephemera; and 5,000 cookbooks and other volumes. Fales has the largest food studies collection in the United States.

From the Andrew F. Smith Collection: A moveable “metamorphic trade card” advertising catsup produced by the T.A. Snider Preserve Company of Cincinnati, c. 1894.

**Philip Agee Papers Given to Tamiment**

Tamiment Library has acquired the papers of Philip Agee, a CIA officer in Ecuador, Uruguay, and Mexico who broke with the agency in 1969 and devoted the rest of his life to exposing its support of repressive military regimes in Latin America. His 1974 book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*, infamously gave detailed descriptions of CIA operations and code names of agency operatives and informants. Agee died in Havana in 2008. The papers were a gift from his widow, Giselle Roberge Agee.

The Agee papers contain 20 linear feet of legal records, correspondence, papers relating to his exile in Cuba and Germany, lecture notes, photographs, and documentation of CIA activities.

At a forum in Tamiment Library on November 9, attorney William Schaap said, “I think the papers will show how important Philip Agee was to the struggle for social and economic justice around the world.” Other speakers included attorneys Melvin Wulf and Leonard Weinglass and historian Ada Ferrer.
Service Update

NYU faculty can now request circulating books for pickup at a circulation desk of their choice - Bobst, Courant, IFA, ISAW or Abu Dhabi. They can also request scans of journal articles and book chapters (within fair use guidelines) for electronic delivery. Students and staff at NYU Abu Dhabi also have access to this service.

Online research is easier and more efficient with single sign on, enabling users to sign on once for access to multiple tools. For instance, signing onto NYUHome now provides instant access to Bobcat’s E-shelf, article databases, interlibrary loan (ILL) and GetIt options.

The Libraries and NYU ITS now offer a new tool, Qualtrics, for creating and administering web-based surveys for research, teaching, and administrative needs. The NYU Survey Service, on the Research tab on NYUHome, is available to faculty (current and retired), administrators, staff, and students in degree programs. The library’s Data Service Studio provides support for this service on the 5th floor of Bobst or at nyu.libguides.com/survey.

Libraries Joins Partnerships to Archive Digital Resources

Maintaining its national profile in an area critical to research, NYU Libraries has joined two new organizations formed to address the need to preserve and archive born digital material: HathiTrust (www.hathitrust.org), a partnership of major academic and research libraries, and the National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA), a collaborative effort among government agencies, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and businesses. NDSA (www.digitalpreservation.gov/ndsa) is an outgrowth of the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP) led by the Library of Congress. According to Dean of Libraries Carol A. Mandel, a member of the NDIIPP advisory board and former president of the Digital Library Federation, “Preserving born digital material requires completely different approaches and complex arrangements” as compared with paper and other traditional collections, “and only with strategic partnerships will we produce the protocols, standards, and collaborations we need urgently and for the long term.”

NYU Libraries has several such projects underway. The Tamiment Library Web Archives document web based political communication in such areas as the labor movement, peace movements, anarchism, socialism, civil liberties, and more. The Tamiment Web Archives were created using the Web Archiving Service developed by the California Digital Library with support from NDIIPP and the University of California. Other web archiving projects underway in the Libraries, using an Internet Archive Service, include Food Studies, Judaica, and sites pertaining to Israel. An Avery Fisher Center project to archive the websites of musical composers is in the pilot stage.

Tamiment Images Now on ARTstor

Two Tamiment Library collections are now available for study on ARTstor, the non-profit digital image library for research and scholarship. The first comprises more than 1,500 color posters from international radical and progressive movements, labor unions and counterculture; the other includes 5,000 black and white photographs shot from the late 1930s to the 1960s for the newspaper of District 65/UAW, a New York City based labor union. For access to ARTstor and tips on how to use it, see the Research Assistance tab on the Libraries home page, library.nyu.edu.
A Prizewinning Start for Grads

On September 17, NYU’s subject specialist librarians hosted their annual reception, an opportunity for graduate students to meet the librarians who will help them find and use research resources in their fields. Three students took away gift certificates to the NYU bookstore. Shown with Dean of Libraries Carol A. Mandel are raffle winners Kristina Schrei (GSAS ’11), Andrew LaSane (Steinhardt ’12) and Whitney Johnson (GSAS ’11).

New from NYU Press

In Toilet, sociologists Harvey Molotch and Laura Norén bring together twelve revelatory and often humorous essays by urbanists, historians, cultural analysts, and others to illuminate the public restroom. These scholars assess our historical and contemporary practices, showing us the intricate mechanisms through which even the physical design of restrooms reflects and sustains our cultural attitudes towards gender, class, and disability. Available in paperback for $18.95; Friends of Bobst receive a 20 percent discount. Order at nyupress.org.

New Faces

Melissa A. Brown, Scholarly Communications Librarian

Formerly: Research associate, Copyright Advisory Office, Columbia University; litigation associate, Kaye Scholer, LLP

Education: MLIS, Pratt Institute, 2009; JD, NYU, 2004; BA, Macalester College, 1999

My goal is to assist the Libraries and faculty in understanding and employing the laws relating to intellectual property, copyright, and fair use in order to promote the creation and sharing of intellectual content. I am working to develop and implement resources and services related to copyright and licensing laws and how the laws apply to research, teaching, scholarly publication and other academic activities.

Contact info: melissa.a.brown@nyu.edu; 992.7311; Bobst Library 8th Floor

Dawn Gross, Assistant Head Librarian, Library of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Formerly: Head cataloger, project leader, ISAW

Education: MSLIS, Palmer School of Library & Information Science, Long Island University; BFA, Film, NYU Tisch School of the Arts

Establishing a library in a new institute is a dynamic process. In my present position, I will continue to be immersed in improving day-to-day workflows even as I work closely with Chuck Jones (Head Librarian, ISAW) to envision an ISAW library that will satisfy the future needs of our user community. Part of our vision is the Ancient World Digital Library project currently underway.

Contact info: dawn.gross@nyu.edu; 992.7811; 15 East 84th St, #314
Grants Help Preserve Downtown Films

Fales Library continues to preserve important films from its Downtown Collection with assistance from the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF). A 2011 NFPF grant will enable Fales to preserve In Artificial Light (1982), Curt Royston’s portrait of New York artists including Madonna Ciccone (before she dropped her last name).

Fales’s new print of 11 thru 12, an eight-minute, 1977 movie by Andrea Callard also preserved with a grant from NFPF, was shown to acclaim at film festivals in Toronto; Vienna; and Oberhausen, Germany as well as at the Orphans film festival in New York, all in 2010. The NFPF plans to include it on a new Treasures of the Avant-Garde dvd.

Martin Kurth, Director, Knowledge Access and Resources Management Services (KARMS)

Formerly: Director, Information Technology Infrastructure, Cornell University Library

Education: MA, English, Eastern Washington University, 1996; MLIS, University of Iowa, 1987; BA, Broadcasting and Film, University of Iowa, 1981

I’ve been working with staff in KARMS and other areas of the library to take a comprehensive approach to acquiring and presenting scholarly resources in all formats. We are identifying areas where increased collaboration will benefit library services as a whole and align them even more effectively with the current needs of the NYU community.

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Alexa Pearce, Librarian for Journalism, Media, Culture and Communication

Formerly: Reference associate, NYU Division of Libraries Humanities and Social Sciences

Education: MSLIS, Palmer School of Library & Information Science, Long Island University; MA, World History, NYU; BA, History, NYU

The faculty I work with strongly encourage their students to use all that the library has to offer, including consultation with me. The digital research environment is not always intuitive for them, so I give classes in tools and techniques and I design research assignments for faculty to use. Librarians in all areas need to constantly update these skills, and this spring I will be teaching an Emerging Web Technologies class for the Palmer School of Library and Information Science.

Contact info: alexa.pearce@nyu.edu; 998.2666; Bobst Library, Mezzanine #1MO4H
Historian, Biographer Win Cold War Fellowships in Tamiment

Ruth Martin, PhD candidate in American History at Clare College, University of Cambridge, is a new fellow in Tamiment Library’s Center for the US and the Cold War. She is studying the work of civil libertarians who committed themselves to defending the due process rights of such historically unpopular groups as extreme segregationists and suspected communists. “I am impressed by the breadth of the collection, and so far have found the papers of labor leader Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Communist Party organizer Earl Browder very illuminating,” said Martin. She has also been making use of the archive of the law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman, founded in 1944 by Victor Rabinowitz and Leonard B. Boudin, known for their defense of prominent left wing clients.

Leandra Zarnow, a Cold War Center post doctorate fellow, is working on a comprehensive political biography of Bella Abzug (1920–1998). Zarnow plans to detail how the New York Representative’s prior work as a student radical, political lawyer, and anti-war feminist strategist framed her broad policy program in Congress between 1971 and 1976. “I have been using the National Lawyers Guild archive and the papers of Guild members who worked with Abzug,” said Zarnow. “Because the files from her work as an attorney have been lost, the Guild papers offer one of the only glimpses into Abzug’s legal career.” Zarnow also found a rare interview with Abzug in the Barbara Kopple Peekskill Riots Collection. Abzug was injured at a famous 1949 concert near Peekskill featuring Paul Robeson and Pete Seeger, where local organizations attacked concertgoers. Zarnow received a PhD in history from UC Santa Barbara and teaches at the University of Waterloo and at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.