One of the most valuable paintings in the University art collection, a large, early Renaissance altar panel, is on loan to the Uffizi Gallery in Florence for its special exhibition on the International Gothic style in Florence: Baglioro Dorati: Il gotico Internazionale a Firenze, 1375 – 1440. Depicting the Annunciation and painted by a little-known Florentine artist named Giovanni Toscani (1372-1430), the panel was donated to Georgetown in 1893 by Maria Coleman, a benefactor of the College. At the time of its donation, the over four-by-five-foot egg tempera on panel painting was attributed to a follower of the Renaissance painter Fra Angelico (“Angelic Friar” c. 1395-1455). This opinion had been substantiated in the 1930s by three independent art historians, and published in the 1963 catalogue of the University art collection written by then curator Erik Larsen, a specialist in Northern European art.

But in 1969, Dr. Miklòs Boskovits from the art history department of the University of Bologna requested a photograph of the painting, and in a letter to Georgetown two years later wrote, “I am convinced that your panel is a work by Giovanni Toscani (i.e. by the so-called Master of the Griggs Crucifixion) painted about the year 1420, at a time when Fra Angelico, still just a beginner, was hardly in the position to influence anybody.” He noted further that the “inconsistencies of the architectural setting” were due to the naïveté of a painting that pre-dated Masaccio’s discovery of vanishing point, or true linear perspective in two-dimensional art. This ambiguity in spatial perspective, together with the liberal use of gold leaf,
If I had a dollar for every time I’ve been asked whether libraries remain relevant in society, I could make a transformational gift to the Georgetown University Library! I hear more and more frequently that “libraries are changing,” “libraries are being superseded by the Internet,” “libraries are no longer necessary because everything is available online.” You have no doubt heard similar assertions. Different types of libraries will likely offer different services in the future to meet different needs. But most, if not all, libraries will remain concerned about the need to protect, promote and preserve their collections regardless of format.

It’s obvious why a specialized library serving the corporate world will want to retain its assets. It’s also obvious that medical libraries will need to continue to provide information on the history of medical issues, not just access to the latest discoveries or most recent literature. It’s obvious that libraries holding archives, special collections, historical materials and the like will keep the artifacts they hold, even if those libraries digitize the original materials for worldwide accessibility. Perhaps what is not so obvious, however, is why academic libraries retain so many of their print collections and why the stewardship of digital items is so critical.

In generations past, each academic library carefully crafted its holdings to reflect the focus and ambitions of its college or university. As a result, many institutions prided themselves on the uniqueness of their libraries and it was, I believe, an assumption that the libraries would retain those holdings for generations to come. In more recent years, as universities deliberated the cost-benefit ratio of library shelving “real estate” to use of the materials retained, some libraries succumbed to the temptation.

continued on page 4
The Library welcomes Margaret (Peggy) Fry, who joins the Georgetown University Library as our new Deputy University Librarian this October 1.

Peggy Fry comes to us from the Georgetown University Law Library, where she has been Associate Law Librarian for Administration since 1990, responsible for leading strategic planning, personnel, organization development and project management initiatives. Peggy also served a three-year appointment as the Law Library’s Interim Director from 2007 to 2010. Career highlights include overseeing the planning and construction of a satellite library, twice guiding library reorganization processes, and leading the development of three successive strategic plans.

She has spoken to professional associations on topics ranging from library service quality assessment to strategies for moving into senior management. She was selected for the prestigious and highly competitive Research Library Leadership Fellowship by the Association of Research Libraries, and has participated from 2010 to 2012 in their executive leadership program to develop the next generation of senior-level research library leaders. A graduate of The Catholic University of America (M.L.S.) and Loyola University, Maryland (B.A., summa cum laude), Peggy is a recipient of Georgetown University’s Vicennial Gold Medal and the Law Center’s McCarthy Award for Excellence in Administration and Service.

“Peggy will bring a wealth of knowledge and breadth of experience to the Georgetown University Library,” says University Librarian Artemis G. Kirk. “A number of us across the University have worked with Peggy in various capacities over the years, and we have all been impressed with her many abilities, as well as with her gracious and collegial demeanor. We are truly fortunate to be able to attract such a well-respected campus leader to our library. Her expertise will help all the University Libraries, as a whole, advance toward our strategic and common goals.”
In 2005 the Library instituted the annual Library Staff Excellence Awards, in which staff members are able to nominate their peers for special accomplishments. Congratulations and thank you to the winners of this year’s awards: from left to right, Ted Jackson, Manuscripts Processor in the Special Collections Research Center; Amanda Rudd, Weekday Evening and Consortium Loan Service Coordinator; Salwa Ismail Patel, Head of Library Information Technology; Dawn Rapoza, Electronic Resources and Serials Unit Head; and Zewdie Muleta, Acquisitions Unit Head.

LIBRARIES, continued

of discarding older materials. The more fortunate libraries that formed consortia or collaboratives managed their combined print collections so that unique titles, old and new, could be retained without unnecessary duplication.

Today’s generation of libraries deals with old, new, print, digital, data, media and much more. Materials that are received electronically are generally licensed, not owned; so the issue of what organization(s) may be preserving and archiving the information is a concern. The corpus of a writer popular in one century may be archived somewhere, and few people may wish to read that author’s work today. However, it’s critical for us to realize that the entire history of language, literature—even a people—resides in the recorded word, however that word is recorded. Librarians, scholars, students, and historians know that the process of communication is not a moment in time, but a timely continuum. For generations past, language and literature have provided a means to understand cultures around the world. Without the preservation of the knowledge of the past, generations to come will never understand their own history, let alone others’. In today’s era of abbreviated communications that employ symbols for text and acronyms for words, language and literature are themselves abbreviated. Memory of things past will be important for culture in the present and future. Libraries are, in the title words of Alain Resnais’s film, “Toute la mémoire du monde” – The memory of the entire world. The reality and potential that libraries hold to document human knowledge contributes to the creation of new knowledge, which is at best superficial unless grounded in prior understanding. Prospect and retrospect: the libraries of the 21st century are humankind’s remembrance and future generations’ opportunities for imagination.

I have the optimism to believe that libraries, however their structure evolves, will be relevant for generations to come.

--AGK
EVENTS

ASSOCIATES IN BOSTON

Boston area Library Associates and alumni joined us for a talk with Peter J. Tanous (C’60) at the Union Club of Boston this May: *The Economy, The Deficit, and the Outlook for the Financial Markets*. Drawing on research discussed in his most recent book, *Debt, Deficits, and the Demise of the American Economy*, and his own experiences, Tanous talked about the current state of the economy and the markets and speculated where they may be headed. He discussed the impact of fiscal and monetary policy on investments and both positive and negative trends in today’s markets.

Peter J. Tanous is President of Lepercq Lynx Investment Advisory, LLC. Prior to founding Lynx, an investment consulting firm based in Washington D.C., in 1992, he spent three decades in the financial services industry: with Smith Barney, where he was head of international operations and managed the Paris office; at Petra Capital Corp., an investment bank he co-founded; and at Bank Audi in New York. In addition to *Debt, Deficits,...*, co-authored with Jeff Cox of CNBC, Mr. Tanous is the author of several books on investments, including the bestseller *Investment Gurus* and Kiplinger’s *Build a Winning Portfolio*. He co-authored, with Arthur B. Laffer and Stephen Moore, *The End of Prosperity*, published by Simon & Schuster in 2008. Peter is active at Georgetown University and serves on the University’s investment committee and the Georgetown University Library Board.

The Library thanks Georgetown University Library Board member Neil Moynihan (C’61) and former member William D. Benjes (C’60) for sponsoring this event.

Upcoming Events

**September 21**

The Great American Songbook
Opening Friday Music Series Concert
Steve Ross (C’61), Cabaret Artist
McNeir Auditorium, New North Hall
Georgetown University

**October 25**

Making Politics Work
The Inaugural Tanous Family Endowed Lecture
Chris Matthews, Political Commentator, TV Host and Author
Lohrfink Auditorium, Hariri Building
Georgetown University

**November 15**

On Manners
Karen Stohr, author and Georgetown University Professor
Copley Formal Lounge, Copley Hall
Georgetown University

March sheet music, from the Georgetown University Archives.
Toscani’s Annunciation, continued

are the general characteristics of the International Gothic style that preceded High Renaissance painting in Florence. Giovanni Toscani, whose life is not well documented, was a painter from Arezzo whom the Renaissance biographer Giorgio Vasari praised as the most gifted pupil of the master, Giotto.

Having seen an image of Georgetown’s Annunciation in a 2002 article by Boskovits in the book Masaccio e le origini del Rinascimento (Skira: Ginevra-Milano), two American scholars came to view the painting independently in 2003 and 2004: Everett Fahy, then chairman of the department of European paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Carl Strehlke, Adjunct Curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. They both supported Boskovits’s attribution to Toscani.

Strehlke explained Annunciation is likely the central composition for a multi-panel altarpiece commissioned by a prosperous family for their chapel in the no-longer extant church of Santa Maria della Minerva on the banks of the Arno in Florence. Smaller panels known as predella that once joined the bottom of The Annunciation altarpiece, depicting alternative scenes in the life of the Virgin, are in the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the National Gallery of Melbourne in Australia. Works by Toscani are not in plentiful supply. According to Fahy, there are only about thirty worldwide, including both mural paintings in Italian churches and approximately five works in public and private collections in the United States.

In preparation for the loan to the Uffizi, Toscani’s Annunciation underwent much-needed, extensive conservation treatment by art conservator Carol Christensen, who specializes in this period of painting for her work at the National Gallery of Art. She had performed a stabilizing treatment for flaking paint loss on the Toscani in 2003 following the recommendation of Everett Fahy. However, due to lack of funds at the time, she was not able to perform the extensive repairs needed for discoloration due to a 19th-century application of varnish as well as areas of clumsy over-painting and cracks in the surface of the panel. Thanks to funds from the Uffizi, which covered almost half the considerable cost of the conservation, the painting has been returned to its original stunning color and form.

There were a few surprises along the way. It turned out that the right wing of the angel, which dominates the center of the composition, was not originally the muddy brown tone present before restoration. The original color of the wing transitioned from cream to brown to vermillion, matching the reverse left wing color. Removal of old varnish also revealed a “cloud-like” translucent paint upon which the angel and the dove of the Holy Spirit appear to float. After treatment the Virgin’s garments are now a deep, rich blue, with a border of gold gilding along the hem, and the halos are much brighter. Beneath the gold gilding one can see a pattern of incised strokes in a technique known as sgraffito, first developed on pottery in ancient China. Additionally, the overall bottle green hue on the painting has been replaced with clear, bright color and the architectural features of the columns and capitals glow with a rosy pink tone suggestive of dawn.

Christensen began her treatment work in January, and finished only days before the panel was to travel to Italy in early June. Its large size made it impossible to ship on a passenger flight, so the Toscani flew on a cargo carrier from New York to Milan, and from there via truck to Florence.

While the Uffizi exhibition, curated by a team of Italian curators and scholars, includes more familiar artists such as Lorenzo Ghiberti, Paolo Uccello, Masolino and Donatello, Georgetown’s Annunciation is the only piece by Giovanni Toscani. Of the twenty-seven pieces on view, only six are from collections outside Italy. We are proud and delighted to own this work and to see it on display among other treasures in the world-renowned Uffizi. Bagliori Dorati runs through November 4th, 2012, and may be viewed at www.unannoadarte.it/bagliori/galleria2.html.

--LLW
This year’s Marino Family International Writers’ Academic Workshop, in which entering Georgetown University students read a work of international fiction, featured author Téa Obreht and her debut novel, *The Tiger’s Wife*. Téa Obreht was born in 1985 in the former Yugoslavia and spent her childhood in Cyprus and Egypt before eventually immigrating to the United States in 1997. Her first novel, *The Tiger’s Wife*, was published by Random House in 2011 and was a National Book Award finalist and winner of the Orange Prize for Fiction. She has been named by *The New Yorker* as one of the twenty best American fiction writers under forty and included in the National Book Foundation’s prestigious list of 5 Under 35.

Georgetown University first conceived the idea of engaging new students in the thoughtful reading of a text by a major international author 18 years ago. During the summer prior to their matriculation, first-year students read the selected work of fiction and complete a reflection assignment. At the beginning of the fall semester, the author comes to campus to discuss the novel and the life of writing with all incoming freshmen. Following the author’s conversation, more than seventy faculty, librarians and staff members meet with the students in small discussion groups and together embark on a thematic and stylistic analysis of the novel. These small group seminars encourage students to comment on and debate the author’s premises, challenge each other’s interpretations and discuss any questions they have.

Téa Obreht’s talk with the Class of 2016 during New Student Orientation included thoughts about her writing process. Though the book officially took her three years to write, she said, she realized that she had been writing the book her entire life. She discussed how her own stories, drawn from her childhood in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious household and from the many places she had lived, impacted her writing. Through her writing process, she came to understand that a narrative arc occurs in life as well as in writing, and that everything is connected, even if the connections aren’t immediately apparent.

The Workshop, funded by Frederick Marino (SLL’68) and his family, functions as an introduction to the challenges and rewards of the University’s intellectual life of the mind. It affirms Georgetown’s commitment to the highest academic standards and adds a significant international cultural dimension to the academic formation of Georgetown students.
FOOTBALL, 1914

One of the photographs featured in the current exhibition from the Georgetown University Archives in the Fairchild Gallery depicts this football game against the University of Virginia on the Georgetown College field in 1914.

Football was a very different game at that time. According to newspaper accounts, several games in the 1890s were played in near riot conditions. In the October 23, 1915 Georgetown game against Army at West Point, circumstances required the referee to issue a ruling that biting, while not explicitly prohibited by the rules, did constitute unnecessary roughness.