

**Cataloguing Creativity: A Symposium on Cataloguing Literary Archives**  
**Organised by the Group for Literary Archives and Manuscripts (GLAM) Cataloguing Working Party**  
**British Library, Friday 15 November 2013**

**Programme and abstracts**

**09.30-10.00: Arrival and coffee**

**10.00-10.15: Welcome and introduction by David Sutton (Chair of GLAM) and Zoë Wilcox (Chair of the Cataloguing Working Party)**

**10.15-11.30: Panel 1 – The writer's trace: preserving the authorial process**

**Chair: Zoë Wilcox**

**Jonathan Smith, Trinity College Library, Cambridge**

**'Authors, avant textes, archives'**

Literary manuscripts (in the narrow sense of those produced in the creation of a literary work) are essentially the records of a cognitive process that are not only informational but also evidential of the process of which they form a part and which they record. Developments in criticism based on the study of the process of literary creation, such as the archive-driven work of the French genetic school have brought into focus the importance and the potential of such material, helping to move it from the preserve of the textual critic into the world of the literary critic. However, there is often necessary tension between the authorial process and its record-keeping subordinate. The potential of this material can only be fully realised if the documents forming the complex archival entities produced by the writer are carefully preserved, arranged and catalogued in a way that respects the authorial and record-keeping processes. With publication of GLAM's guidelines it seem timely to remind all parties with an interest in such material of the importance of good archival practice and of the vital, if often undervalued, role this plays in literary scholarship.

**Sarah Hepworth and Dr Sam Maddra, Glasgow University Library**

**'Second Lives – Jane Duncan, Edwin Morgan'**

Cataloguing the papers of two Scottish writers, Jane Duncan (1910-1976) and Edwin Morgan (1920-2010), has been informed and illuminated by researchers with particular perspectives. One was a friend of Morgan who has written an authorised biography, the other an Archives graduate with in-depth knowledge of Duncan's (currently rather neglected) publications and who is now researching 'affective presence in the Archive'. This has led to interesting discussions about what these writers have left behind and why, including how this might affect appraisal – e.g., is this empty envelope an insignificant survivor, ripe for disposal, or was it crucial inspiration for a poem? If a writer has been meticulous in ordering their papers, is this evidence that all the contents have been carefully considered by them and deliberately kept? In both cases, there is a strong sense of the writer's posthumous influence – affecting what has been left behind and how it might be listed and interpreted.

**Jan Stuyck and Lies Galle, Letterenhuis, Archive for Flemish Literature, Antwerp**

**'“I am large – I contain multitudes.” How to encounter the versatility of a writer's archive'**

Literary archives generally show a great diversity with regard to their content and form. Writers for example commonly work as a librarian, an academic, a clerk, a priest and so on. Besides this full time job - which guaranteed them a stable financial income - they participated in different literary events, seated in diverse editorial boards of (literary) magazines and some of them broadened their scope to other artistic disciplines like visual arts. One could argue that due to the different 'functions' a writer often exerted, and subsequently the 'networks' they moved in(to), their archives reflect their varied lives. For the same reason, different types of documents like contracts and bookkeeping, are an integral part of the archive. How can an archivist provide researchers in an optimum way with the manifold life and work of a writer? Cataloguing strategies are one thing, a good database another. The Archive For Flemish Literature ([Letterenhuis](http://Letterenhuis)) in Antwerp tries to encounter the versatility of a writer's archive/life with its database Agrippa ( [www.letterenhuis.be/agrippa](http://www.letterenhuis.be/agrippa) ). In our presentation on Agrippa we want to tackle some cases that illustrate how cataloguing strategies are a result of the diversity peculiar to literary collections.

**11.30-11.45: Tea/coffee**

**11.45-13.00: Panel 2 – The cataloguing challenge**

**Chair: David Sutton**

**Karen Sayers, University of Leeds Special Collections**

**'Cataloguing literary archives: from the West Yorkshire Playhouse Archive to the future'**

Cataloguing a substantial theatre archive can be a challenge especially when it has a great diversity of form and content. This paper will firstly examine the organisation and cataloguing of the West Yorkshire Playhouse Archive. The Playhouse is a performing venue which organises many community and educational events. The paper will review the internal and external sources consulted to understand the structure of the theatre and its archive, and describe how the collection was processed and catalogued in some detail to make it accessible.

Secondly the paper will look at how Special Collections has since revised its approach to processing and cataloguing. We are currently introducing MPLP, the More Product Less Process model, to enable us to make collections available to researchers more quickly. This has affected the division of tasks among the team and has implications for front desk staff. The paper will examine the early results of using MPLP particularly in processing the Ken Smith poetry archive.

**Dr Bethany Sinclair-Giardini, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland**

**'The challenges of cataloguing and promoting an archive: the Tyrone Guthrie Archive case study'**

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) is not a literary archive; we are the resting place for the documentary heritage of the north of Ireland. Whilst we are not a literary archive, we do hold important literary archive material, including the rich documentary heritage of Sir Tyrone Guthrie, playwright, director and theatre man extraordinaire of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This paper will introduce the challenges of cataloguing a literary archive within a non-literary repository, and also unpack some of the issues experienced in promoting the archive to suitable audiences.

**Charlotte Berry, Alfred Gillett Trust / University of Edinburgh**

**'Alchemy in the archives: research challenges of accessing literary archive collections'**

Negotiating access to literary and publishing archives can be both challenging and rewarding. This paper will offer a personal perspective on using literary and publishing archives, taken from a dual research and curatorial standpoint. Practical examples will be drawn from the author's recent PhD research which extensively used modern publishing archives and oral history sources relating to the history of children's literature publishing.

Firstly, the problems of locating the whereabouts of relevant collections will be addressed. Here the value of using informal social networks as well as longer established portals is considered, as well as the issue of 'missing' collections and collections not held in the UK.

Secondly, the challenges posed by the wide range of repositories (individual, commercial and public) holding literary and publishing archives will be outlined. Particular emphasis will be given to the resulting impact that these issues have on planning and undertaking original research successfully. Topics such as cataloguing availability, quality and adequacy, the extent of cataloguing backlogs and the importance of available curatorial expertise on the collections will be included here.

Finally, some personal suggestions for increased collaboration between researchers, collection owners and curators, both in terms of addressing catalogue backlogs and collection accessibility, will be offered!

**13.00-13.45: Lunch**

**13.45-15.00: Panel 3 – Cataloguing and collaboration**

**Chair: Helen Melody**

**Rebekah Taylor, University for the Creative Arts Archives and Special Collections**

**'Working Press, books by and about working class artists, 1986-1996: collaborative cataloguing'**

*'WORKING PRESS: books by and about working class artists' 1986 – 1996'* was an unfunded self-publication imprint that was started in 1985 by Doctor Stefan Szczelkun (an artist and academic at Westminster University) and Graham Harwood, Graphic Designer.

The publications produced explore perceptions of the working class, women artists, disabled artists and black artists, and gives an insight into self-funded publishing activity of the time.

Material has been donated to the University for Creative Arts through Doctor Stefan Szczelkun, after approaching UCA's research cluster bookRoom, who suggested that it should be hosted within the library. bookRoom, formed in 2004, focuses on critical and practice based research into the photographic book and the printed page, and has an interested in the Working Press self-publication imprint.

The collection includes correspondence and financial material related to the Working Press (and written to and by, Stefan Szczelkun), the imprint itself, and Artist Books and pamphlets collected by Stefan Szczelkun. The collection does not include books collected by, or correspondence administered by Graham Harwood.

The paper would look at issues and ways of cataloguing this collection, Stefan's involvement in the cataloguing of these papers, and bookRoom's requirements as researchers.

### **Laura Outterside**

#### **'Ambiguous input: archivists and writers'**

This paper considers the extent to which writers depositing their papers into an archive could, or should, play a role in the description of their own collection. Focusing on the interaction between the records creator and the archivist in the description of personal papers, I examine the potential for participatory description as beneficial in both practical and theoretical ways. Exploring the relationships that are forged between archivists and writers as record-creators, I consider the ways in which the outcomes of these relationships can be utilised, through creative cataloguing that could reflect the creation of the record itself.

### **Ian Johnson and Tara Bergin Newcastle University**

#### **'Poetic licence: for or against the uncatalogued archive?'**

*We asked the archivist to make us copies.*

*We promised not to tell.*

*We signed his orange form in pencil –  
and pocketed everything.*

#### **From 'What We Found in the Archive', a poem written during a residency at the Bloodaxe Archive, Newcastle University Library**

In February 2013, Newcastle University acquired the archive of Bloodaxe Books, a poetry publisher of national and international significance. As part of a Cultural Engagement Project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, two poets and recent PhD graduates Anna Woodford and Tara Bergin, were asked to take a first look into the uncatalogued boxes, to gain an initial sense of the archive's potential. Their task was to respond creatively to the papers on arrival.

Amidst the frantic conservation checks, re-shelving and box logging, the relationship between Archivist, Archive and Researcher were defined through necessity; a short-term, scratched-surface approach actively sought over a scope and content inventory.

When the experience of responding itself is a tenant of artistic interpretation, this raises polarising questions: are catalogues an artificial, intrusive and imposing construct? Do Archivists, bent on categorising and describing, discourage those seeking to explore manuscripts to create an artistic impression from the act of "discovering" contextually? Is the Archivist's role as explainer and hand-holder (rather than collaborator), needlessly adversarial, at least towards first responders?

To address these questions, this paper looks at the ways in which a lack of intellectual control (with the logistical, security and legislative anxieties this brings) might mean that creative responses about the nature of archival research as secret, voyeuristic, and elite, are in fact misleading. Using extracts from poems, photographs and film, made by writers and artists, this collaborative presentation embraces, explores and also exposes the arguments for and against the uncatalogued archive.

### **15.00-15.15: Tea/coffee**

### **15.15-16.30: Panel 4 – Rethinking cataloguing: new approaches and opportunities in the digital environment**

**Chair: Fran Baker**

**Simon Wilson, University of Hull Archives**

#### **‘Stephen Gallagher: lessons learnt (so far) from a hybrid literary collection’**

Stephen Gallagher the novelist, screenwriter and former Hull graduate, deposited his paper archives with the University in 2005. The papers join the modern English literature and drama collections alongside material by Philip Larkin, Alan Plater and John Godber. The material features short stories, radio plays, books and screenplays of a wide and diverse nature including *Dr Who*, *Bugs*, *Rosemary and Thyme*, *Chimera* and *Oktober*. In the last three years he has made a number of subsequent deposits predominantly of born-digital material which now totals over 80GB.

Hull University Archives collaborated with the University’s of Virginia, Stanford and Yale in the Mellon-funded AIMS Project (An Inter-institutional Model for Stewardship) with the experiences of the four institutions shared through the publication of the AIMS White Paper in January 2012. Although the project funding has long since ceased, the archives have continued to receive born-digital material and developed its policies and practices in this area.

Work to review and process both the paper and born-digital material is happening concurrently and the session will look to share our experiences to date with regard to cataloguing and arranging this hybrid collection.

**Sophie Baldock, University of Sheffield / British Library scholarship holder**

#### **‘Cataloguing correspondence in the digital age: Wendy Cope’s Email Archive’**

In 2011 the British Library purchased the hybrid archive of poet Wendy Cope, which contains 15 boxes of paper material such as poetry notebooks and handwritten letters, as well as a significant amount of born-digital content, including approximately 40 000 of the poet’s emails. My paper aims to consider the challenges of cataloguing and making available digital correspondence in hybrid archives, using my experience of cataloguing the Wendy Cope email archive as my primary example. These challenges include the extent of the email archive and the difficulty of reading and describing such a large body of material. I will consider the formal qualities of emails: message threads, attachments, pictures and hyperlinks, and how these might affect the kinds of information recorded in a catalogue. I also address the ethical and practical problems posed by the email archives of contemporary writers, and the difficulty of balancing the protection of individuals’ privacy with the desire to make such collections available to researchers. Finally, I reflect on the ways in which future

researchers might use an email archive, providing an example from my own research exploring the connections between poetry and correspondence.

**Bill Stocking, British Library**

**'Archival authority files and the representation of literary networks: first steps and opportunities**

This paper will illustrate how archival authority files might be used to link related literary collections within and beyond individual institutions with reference to developing online user interfaces at the British Library and beyond.

An introduction will briefly outline the data model, and the national and international standards on which it is based, of the Library's recently developed cataloguing system – the Integrated Archives and Manuscripts System (IAMS) – which has separate but related descriptions of people as well as those for archives and manuscripts.

Using examples from the Library's literary collections, initial attempts to display the relationships captured between people and the archives they are associated with will be demonstrated. This will include the Library's online catalogue – Search Our Catalogue, Archives and Manuscripts (<http://searcharchives.bl.uk>) – as well as the innovative interfaces being developed as part of the international Social Networks and Archival Context Project (SNAC: <http://socialarchive.iath.virginia.edu/index.html>) in which the Library is a partner.

It will be shown that while both interfaces allow user access to related primary resources via biographical descriptions, the prototype interfaces developed for the SNAC project also include links to related secondary sources created by or about literary figures as well as visualisations of the social and professional networks in which they lived and worked.

The paper will conclude with a brief discussion of potential issues of such interfaces for researchers and other related developments.

**16.30-16.40: Closing remarks**

## Cataloguing Creativity

### Speaker biographies

**Jonathan Smith** has been archivist at Trinity College Cambridge since 1991. His interests include the uses (good and bad) of archives in the study of literature and of thought.

**Sarah Hepworth** is Deputy of Special Collections, University of Glasgow Library. Her responsibilities include the management of the department's archive collections (which are particularly strong in art and literature), 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs and the ongoing development of the Library's online manuscripts search.

**Dr Sam Maddra** is an Archivist in Special Collections, University of Glasgow Library, where she is currently cataloguing the Papers of Edwin Morgan. She also works as an Assistant Archivist: Cataloguing in the University's Archive Services.

**Lies Galle** (1984) is an archivist at the Archive for Flemish Literature (Antwerp, Belgium). She published on different archivist topics, notably on the dissemination of literary archives. Besides this she collaborated on a guide for creators and collectors of literary archives. Galle participates in the development and implementation of the literary database Agrippa.

**Jan Stuyck** (1971) is a researcher at the Archive for Flemish Literature (Antwerp, Belgium). He published on different Flemish writers and publishing houses. Stuyck collaborates on the development and implementation of the literary database Agrippa.

**Karen Sayers** is an Assistant Archivist at Special Collections at the University of Leeds with responsibility for new accessions and cataloguing. After training as a librarian she worked as a rare books cataloguer at York Minster Library. In 2000 she joined the British Library as a cataloguer and researcher. From 2002 she spent several years as an Information Officer in the voluntary sector. In 2007 she began an MSc in Archive Administration. Her first archive post was as the Project Archivist on the Everton Football Club Project, followed by a position as Project Archivist on the Ramsbottom Revisited Project at Bury Record Office.

Following a career with the National Trust in England, **Bethany Sinclair-Giardini** gained her PhD in English at the Queen's University of Belfast before taking up her position as a Research Archivist with PRONI in 2009. She has since qualified as an archivist, is currently working on her MSc in Archives dissertation and is also writing her first monograph on the Ulster Plantation.

**Charlotte Berry** read English Language and Danish at Edinburgh before training as an archivist at the University of Aberystwyth in 2000. She worked extensively with literary manuscripts as the first full-time archivist at the University of Exeter and now works with Quaker, family and business collections for Clarks Shoes (Alfred Gillett Trust) in Somerset. She is currently completing minor corrections on her PhD thesis submitted to the University of Edinburgh, 'Publishing, translation, archives: Nordic children's literature in the UK, 1950-2000'.

**Rebekah Taylor** is the University for the Creative Arts' Archivist and Special Collections Officer, in post from June 2012, graduating with an MScEcon in Archive Administration from the University of Aberystwyth in 2012. Work that she has undertaken includes cataloguing the university's creative arts archives, developing an archives website, and promoting the university's collections, externally and internally, including speaking at the London Metropolitan Archives LGBT conference, and working on a display at the Surrey History Centre.

Website: <http://community.ucreative.ac.uk/archives>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LibraryUCA>

Storify: <http://storify.com/LibraryUCA>

**Laura Outterside** is Assistant Archivist at the Sainsbury Archive, at Museum of London Docklands. This eclectic collection includes a large collection of photographs, packaging, advertising and objects, as well as corporate records. Prior to this she was an Assistant Archivist at Unilever Archives in Port Sunlight, after completing a Masters in Archives and Records Management at Liverpool University. Her first degree was in English Literature.

**Tara Bergin** received her PhD in Literature at Newcastle University in 2013. Her academic work includes talks given in Russia, Hungary and Poland. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry Review*, *Poetry London*, *PN Review*, and *Modern Poetry in Translation*. Her debut collection, *This is Yarrow*, is published by Carcanet Press.

**Ian Johnson** has worked as an Archivist at Newcastle University since 2011. He has previously worked as a Records Manager in Local Authorities and as one of the Archivists on the Hillsborough Disaster Disclosure Project. His last project was cataloguing the papers of Sir Liam Donaldson, the previous Chief Medical Officer for England.

**Simon Wilson** has been Senior Archivist at the University of Hull since November 2008 and helped prepare the collections for the move to the purpose built Hull History Centre which opened in January 2010. Simon was seconded to the role of Digital Archivist on the AIMS Project (a collaboration between the Universities of Hull, Stanford, Virginia and Yale) which sought to identify commonality in processing born-digital archives.

Simon has spoken and presented on a range of topics from web page design to practical steps in digital preservation and is currently Chair of the Archives and Records Association Section for Archives & Technology.

**Sophie Baldock** is a postgraduate research student and British Library scholarship holder at the University of Sheffield. Her PhD research focuses on literary letter writing in the twentieth century. As part of her scholarship, Sophie spent six months at the British Library cataloguing emails in Wendy Cope's archive, which contains 15 boxes of paper material as well as approximately 40 000 of the poet's emails.

**Bill Stocking** is an acknowledged expert on archival processing, description, and its digital automation. At the Public Record Office and National Archives, he was a member of the team that developed the first online catalogue system (PROCAT) and managed the groundbreaking Access to Archives (A2A) Programme. At the British Library, he has lead the development of the Integrated Archives and Manuscripts System (IAMS) which has provided single cataloguing and access environments for the Library's archive and manuscript collections for the first time. He is a former

chair of the then Society of Archivists' Data Exchange Group and has trained fellow professionals in description standards, automation and access in the UK, Ireland and across Europe. Bill is currently the co-chair of the Society of American Archivists' Technical Sub-committee on Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and also sits on the sibling committee for Encoded Archival Context - Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (EAC-CPF) as well as being a member of the International Council on Archives' (ICA) Expert Group on Archival Description which is developing a conceptual data model for the archives domain.