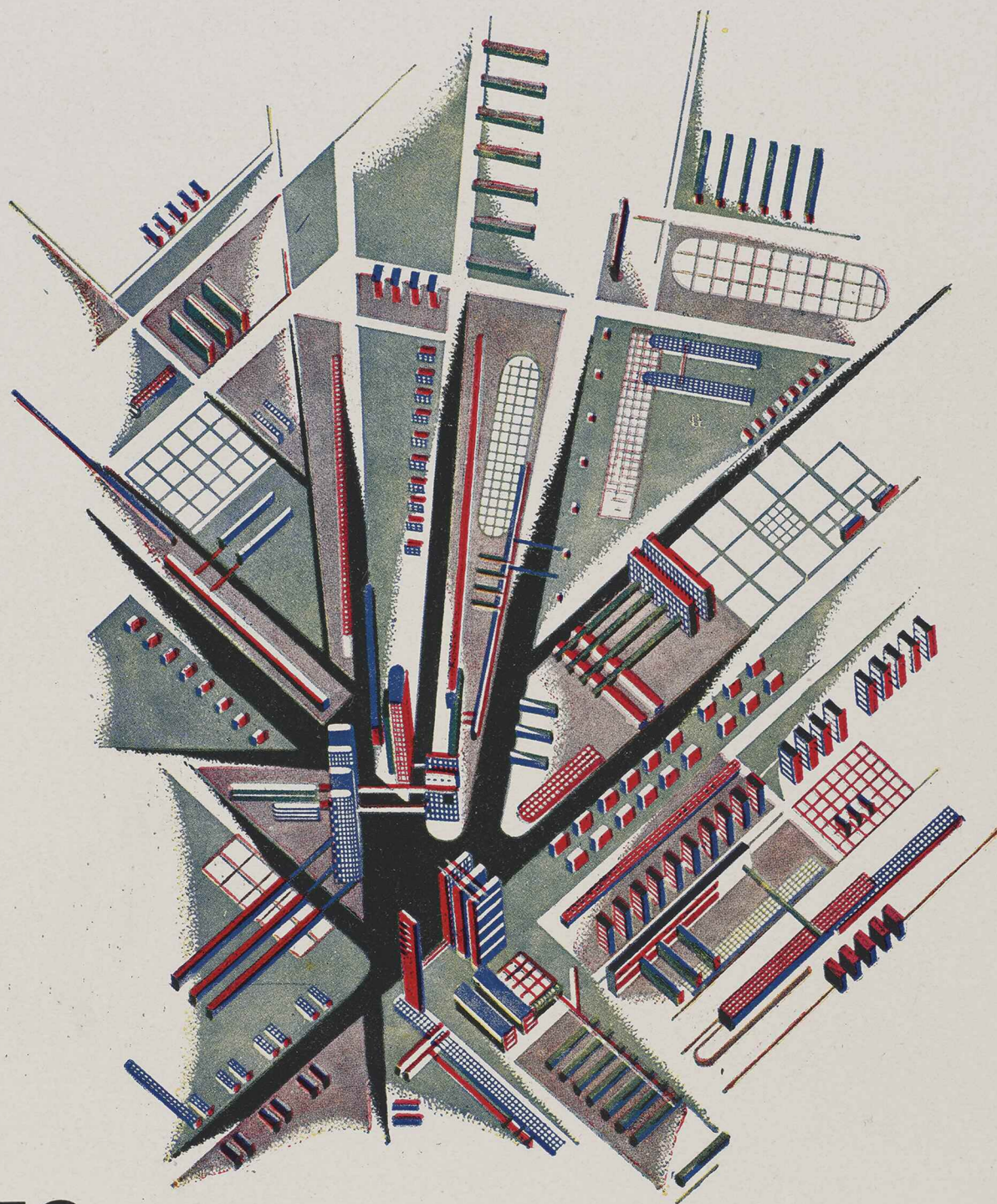




THE PIPER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

NUMBER 48 AUTUMN 2017



58

Своеобразно-утрированная аксонометрия нового индустриального города с выраженной узловой магистралью. Надуманное изобразительное выражение плановой задачи с цветовой гаммой.

'Culture shock is what happens when a traveller suddenly finds himself in a place where yes may mean no' Alvin Tofler

We hear a lot about 'cultural identity' these days: how it can be defined, what boundaries it crosses and what boundaries contain it. In Scotland we embrace our own national diversity of language and history while welcoming the contributions of other cultures. Our own Scottish Diaspora has crossed into other countries over many years and will continue to do so.

Our own Centre for Research Collections (CRC) shows the complexity and vibrancy of this exchange.

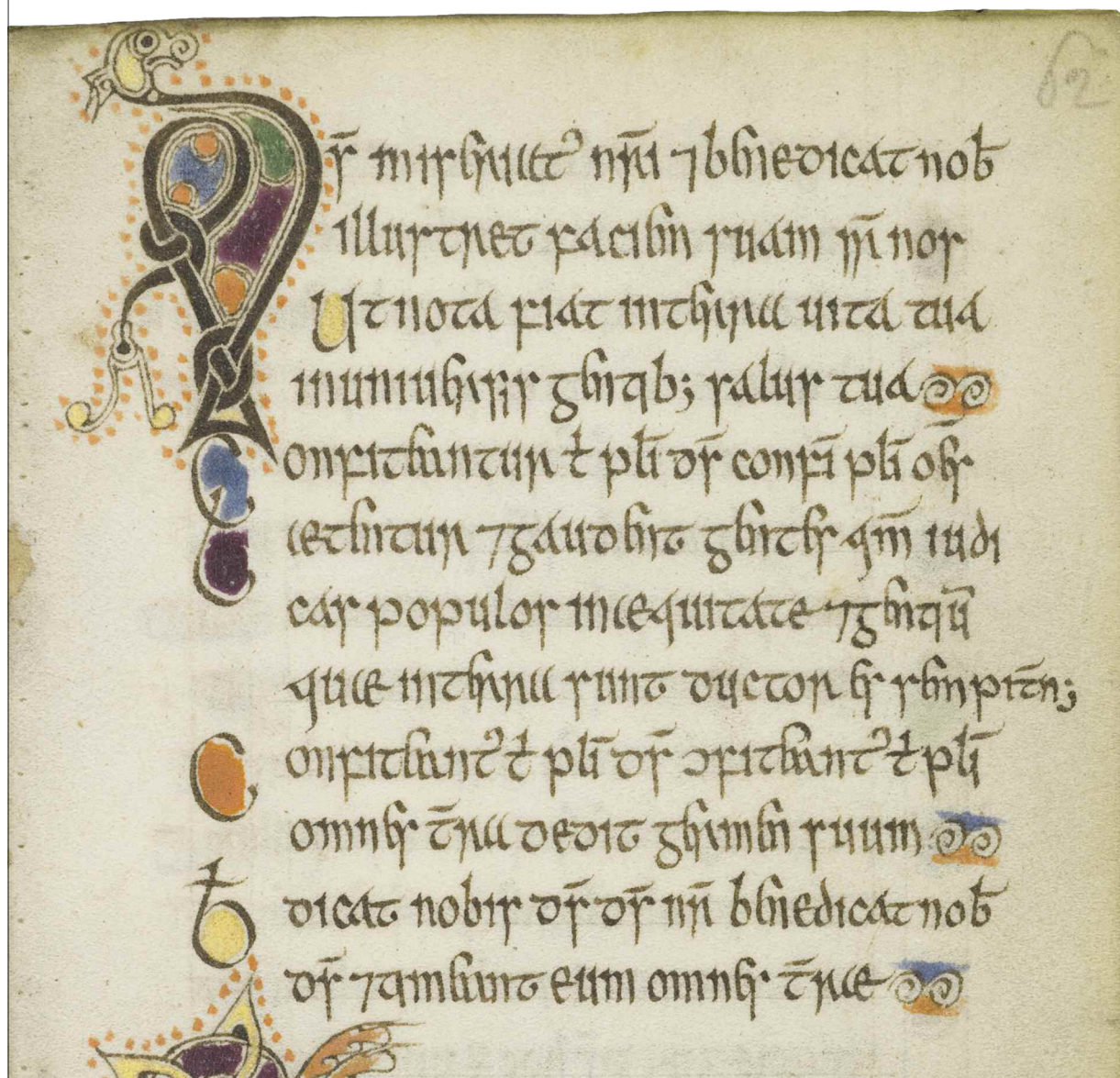
Identity is embedded in both the history of a nation and the people it harbours. Archives, the preservation of the past in all its forms, are crucial to this.

In a world that some want to polarise we celebrate

internationalism every year with our Edinburgh Festivals. At the University our students come from many countries and bring other languages, ideas and cultures to our Library and take from it an equal bounty.

We are celebrating fifty years of the present Library building. Fifty years of growth, consolidation and change. Doubtless the next fifty years will encompass new challenges that we cannot envisage but they will have had a sound foundation on which to thrive. As the Chinese say, 'interesting times'.

Lady Caplan,
President, Friends of Edinburgh University Library



Edinburgh University
Library Ms.56, Celtic
Psalter, fol. 62r.

MEDIEVAL INK

Rare Books' contribution to CRC's workshops at this year's Edinburgh International Book Festival, was a session on the materials and industries which went into making a book in the Middle Ages. The Library's oldest book, the Celtic Psalter, was the focus; concentrating on materials available in tenth-century Scotland and known to be used in the Psalter. Participants in the workshop were able to try out ink made to a medieval recipe. In the spirit of the workshop, here is how to make it at home.

From Antiquity until the twentieth century ink was made in one of two ways. The first method is to mix soot with a liquid and gum. The alternative, which tests show to have been generally used on early Scottish and Irish manuscripts, is made by mixing a solution of tannin, usually from oak galls, with an iron compound, causing a chemical reaction which turns the mixture black, thickened with gum arabic.

There is a profusion of recipes for this form of ink, all different. The quality of the raw materials varied in different localities, scribes had different preferences, and there were elements of tradition and superstition in

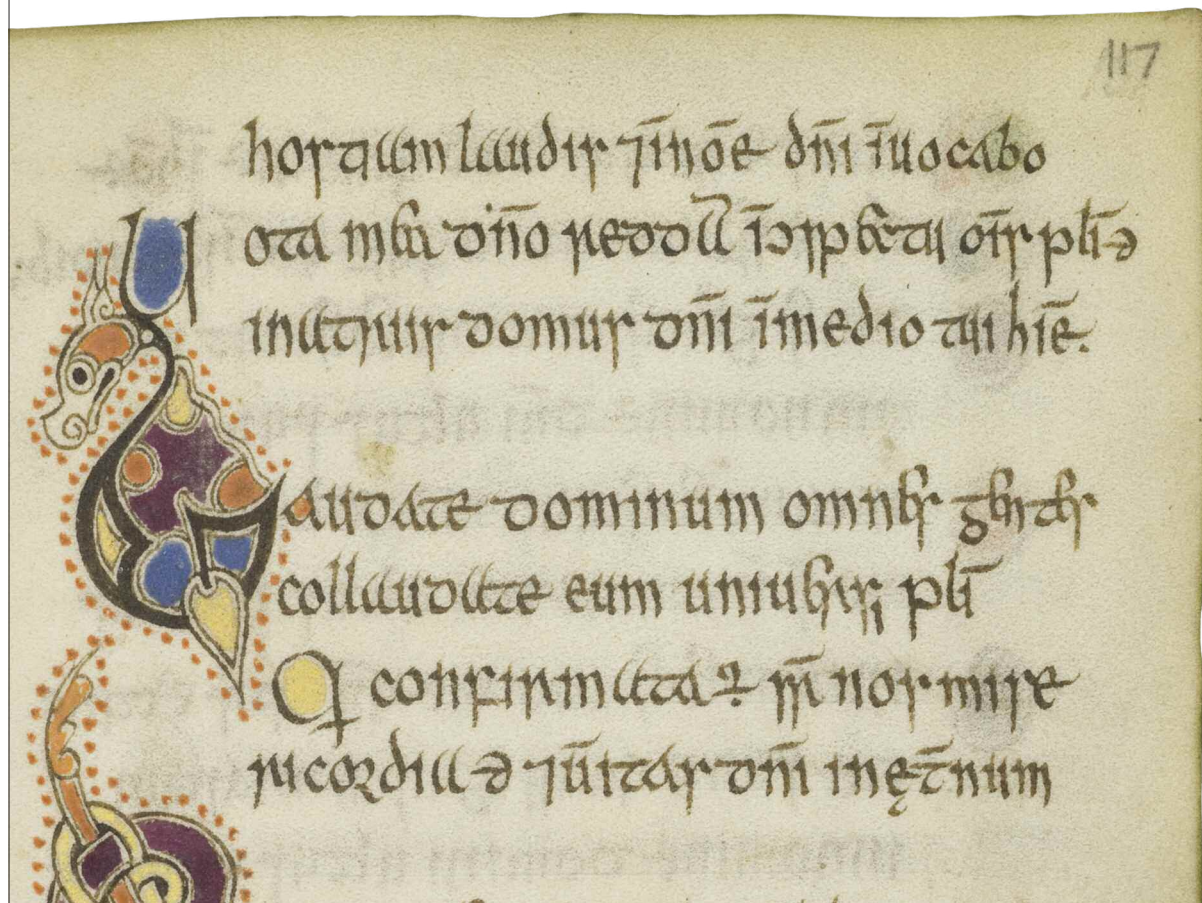
some recipes. It must be said that the process is far more forgiving than many of these authors would have you believe.

To take one of the simplest examples available, written in 1515 by Sigismond de Fanti in his *Thesaurus de Scrittori*.

Recipe to make good ink: Take one ounce of gall nuts crushed to pieces, then place them in a piece of cloth that you will tie not too tight; put the galls to soak in twelve ounces of rain water and let macerate at least six days; once this is done, boil until the mixture is reduced to eight beautiful and unctuous ounces; then you will put in it one quart of German vitriol well ground and a half ounce of gum that will have soaked in vinegar; only use as much vinegar as is necessary and you will make a marvellous ink.

A practical method:

1. Take as many oak galls as you can get (you may know them as oak apples). All quantities given below are applicable to about two good handfuls of galls. These



Edinburgh University Library Ms.56, Celtic Psalter, fol. 117r. The black ink of both the illuminated capital and the text are likely to be oak gall ink.

**Top.** Oak galls.**Middle.** Crushed oak galls soaking in water.**Bottom.** Strips of hawthorn bark being cooked.

brown spherical growths develop on oak trees or hedges, where a gall wasp has laid its eggs. Many different types of gall were used in the Middle Ages, the most desirable for ink being those imported from the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

2. Crush them into chunks.
3. Put them into just enough water to cover; leave to soak for a few days, until the water is thoroughly soupy and brown.
4. Put the whole lot into a pan and boil it up. Unless you used much too much water you may not need to reduce the volume of liquid much, but the heat does seem to help extract the tannin.
5. Add a teaspoonful of ferrous sulphate and watch the whole solution turn suddenly black. (Ferrous sulphate, in the form of blue crystals, may still be available from a good chemist, but it is now widely available on the internet, sold mostly as a lawn fertiliser).
6. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or piece of muslin.
7. Add about a dessertspoonful of gum arabic pieces, preferably pre-dissolved in a very small amount of water, or vinegar as the recipe suggests. Gum arabic (the dried sap of the acacia tree) is sold by artist's pigment suppliers, and for culinary purposes and is widely available via the internet. Some of that sold ready diluted is a very weak solution.
8. Store the results in an airtight bottle, and shake it up if it starts to develop a sediment at the bottom.

The completed ink should work well with a quill pen, or metal dip pen. Do not put it in a fountain pen, as it will rot the inside.

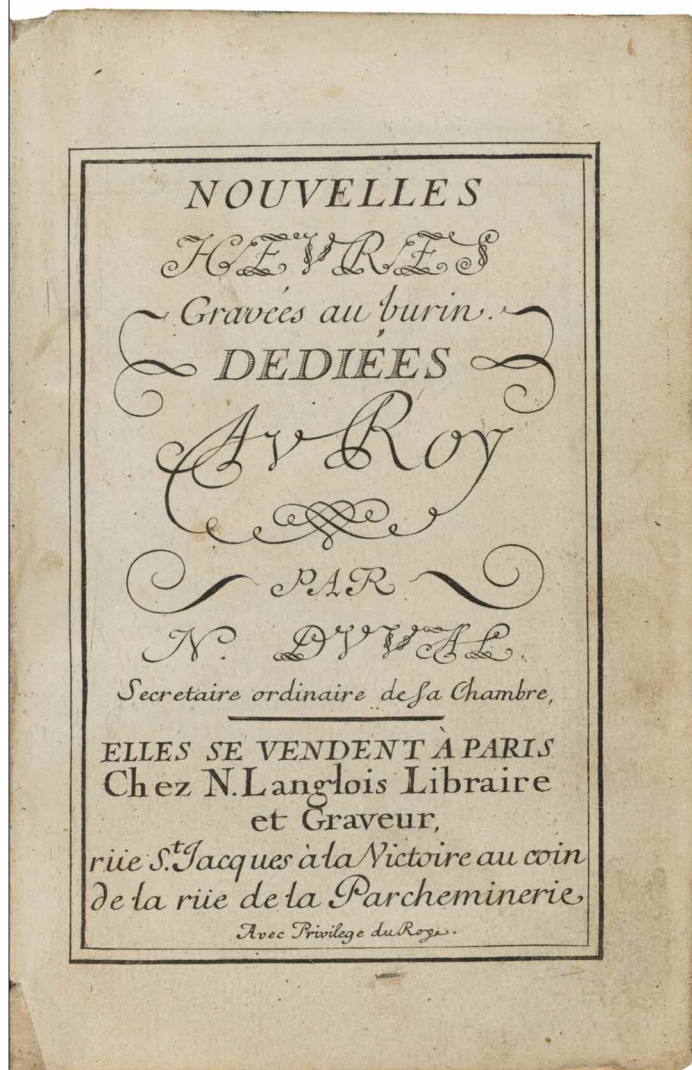
One twelfth-century recipe describes an alternative source of tannin, if oak galls are in short supply. Cut some sticks of 'thorn' – hawthorn works well – let it dry out for a couple of weeks, then strip off the bark. Cover it in water and let it stand for a week or so, then proceed with the instructions as for the oak galls.

For further information, go to: <https://travelingscriptorium.library.yale.edu/inks-and-pigments/>

Elizabeth Quarmby Lawrence
Assistant Rare Books Librarian
at the Centre for Research Collections



RECENT FOEUL PURCHASES



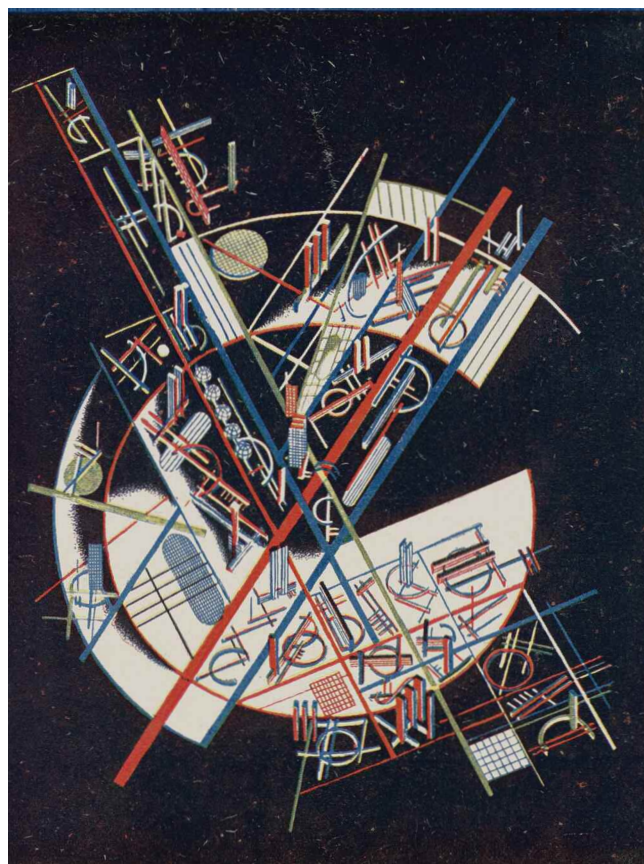
Nouvelles Hevres Graves Au Burin Dediées au Roy.

Louis Senault, *Nouvelles Hevres Gravées Au Burin Dediées Au Roy*. (Paris: Chez N. Langlois Libraire Et Graveur, 1695.) Elaborately-engraved French book of hours.

Two illustrated manuscript albums of sketches by R. M. Ballantyne

Iakov Chernikhov *Arkhitekturnye fantazii/Architectural fictions*, 1933. (Russian constructivist fantasy architectural forms)

Manuscript scrapbook volume of E. M. G. Colquhoun containing anecdotes, stories, poems, music and pen and ink illustrations



Iakov Chernikhov: *Architectural Fictions* (Leningrad 1933).

Collection of printed calligraphy manuals, with ornamental alphabets by Gabriele de Sanctis: *Cenno storico sull'origine, progressi et utilita della scrittura; Esemplare di calligrafia scritto; Esemplare di alfabeti diversi*, 1824.

Manuscript volume of genealogies of Scottish families, drawn up by Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh

Scott Moncrieff family letters and legal documents: many letters from, to, and between members of the Scott Moncrieff family including Robert Scott Moncrieff of Fossaway and his wife, Susan, and others of the family. The letters are mostly 19th century, some 18th century, and earlier.

Erno Goldfinger and Ursula Blackwell *Planning your neighbourhood for home*, 1944. A set of display boards, intended to help members of the public contribute to planning for redevelopment after the Second World War.

THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH COLLECTIONS AT THE FESTIVALS

It is important that the University engages with a wider audience to inform and highlight the work of important areas in addition to academic teaching. So this year the CRC became involved in a variety of Edinburgh festivals culminating in events at the Fringe and Edinburgh International Book Festival.



The Centre for Research Collections at the Festivals

This year the CRC wholly embraced festival fever and was involved in nearly all the festivals. We began in June with a strong presence at Edinburgh International Film Festival and continued to have events at the Fringe and Edinburgh International Book Festival. Edinburgh Art Festival also used material from our Patrick Geddes collections and worked with our project archivist on using them to inspire new works of art. In total we had nine individual events ranging from conservation and palaeography workshops to on stage Cabaret of Dangerous ideas with comedian Susan Morrison. Many of the events were near to capacity on attendance and the places at the Book Festival workshops were completely full. Here is a brief look at some of the highlights.

Edinburgh International Book Festival

Our EIBF activities began with an 'in conversation' event on 'How we share our memories,' discussing the idea of memory and archives in the digital world. Myself and colleague Ruth Reed from The Royal Bank of Scotland archives joined author Daniel Gray to explore the stories of people's lives in archives and how people document their lives today.

This was followed by four workshop sessions in the last week of the festival where we encouraged people to have a go at quill making, think about how medieval manuscripts are made, learn basic conservation skills, have fun with palaeography games and decipher archival films.



Fringe: Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas

A rather different type of event involved two 'performances' in the Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas (CODI) where we put forward the idea of 'Alternative Facts: Is the truth out there and is it in the archives?'

The audience was very engaged with the subject, bringing up questions such as 'Are digital, or physical archives more truthful?' The favourite question undoubtedly was: 'Are there rogue archivists out there?' which prompted compere and comedian, Susan Morrison, to think up a whole film plot!

Working with Susan from the Stand Comedy Club was great fun and she brought the humour to what can be quite serious subject matter. The audience seemed to be persuaded that archivists really do have a social conscience and that 'truth' can definitely be found in the archives when we remember to highlight archives for what they are: evidence of opinion, perspective, deception, forgery, alternative facts, and all manner of varied historical record.



Fringe: The University of Edinburgh and the Festivals, 70 Years of Collaboration

The university was not just a major venue provider for festival events, but had its own event with a reflective look at its role in collaborating with the festivals over the past 70 years. The panel introduced by Vice Principal Dorothy Miell, was led by Patricia Erskine, Head of Stakeholder Relations, and included Professor Gary West from Celtic and Scottish Studies as well as myself, representing the archives. What was clear from the discussion was that university connected individuals, creativity found here, and our staff and students drove the initial idea and festival culture forward to embrace a celebration of culture.

Key figures for whom we hold archive collections were highlighted.

Reid Music Professor, Sidney Newman, encouraged and brought internationally renowned musicians to the first Edinburgh International Festival and helped set the tone that established this festival.

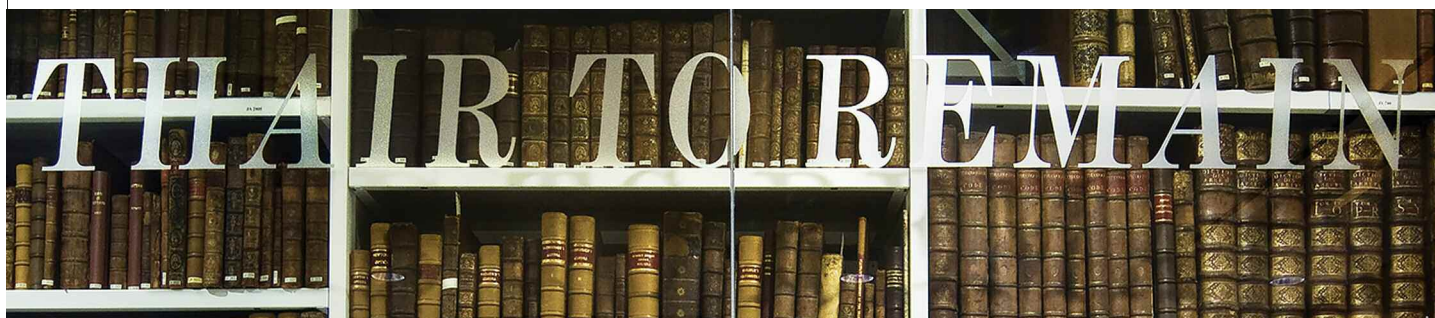
Hamish Henderson's championing of a 'People's Festival' to bring the Scottish music, poetry, writing and culture to the International Festival echoed the feeling within our student population in the early days.

Edinburgh College of Art hosted key exhibitions with sets designed by the students, the most notable being *Homage to Diaghilev* in 1954, which was visited by Margo Fonteyn. Our students have always got involved in the festivals.

Students led changes to the nature of the film festival from documentary film to wider artistic and feature films.

Edinburgh University Dramatic Society who consistently staged performances in every fringe festival.

It has really been a bumper year of festival activity for the Centre for Research Collections, something very different from our day to day work. However being involved in these events has allowed us to share some of our wonderful collections and showcase some of the key work we do in preserving them and making them available. It has allowed us to very publicly engage with new audiences and put the CRC on the festivals map for future years.



Exhibitions on 6th floor at Binks Trust Exhibition Wall Centre for Research Collections

It may be that many of you never get as far as the 6th floor but it is highly recommended to visit the exhibition wall and especially over the next few weeks to look at – and remember – scenes from the past history of the Library.

Library 50: From Old College to George Square
4 August – 8 November 2017 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
Binks Trust Exhibition Wall, Centre for Research Collections

Fifty years ago, in September 1967, the University of Edinburgh Main Library opened its doors for the first time. Part of the wider celebrations marking the 50th Anniversary of the building, this exhibition features photographs and drawings charting the Library's progression from conception to completion. These seldom-seen images are testament to the quality of Spence Glover & Ferguson's design – many of the original fixtures and fittings of which are still in use today.

The next exhibition in this space on the 6th floor will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation:

Incendiary Texts:
Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation
10 November 2017 – 8 March 2018
(Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)

Contact details

If you have not yet supplied your email address, please do so now to the Friends' Administrator: Alason Roberts: a.roberts@ed.ac.uk

Special Offer for Friends

The recently published *Directory of Collections* is on offer at £12 – a discount of 20%. Don't miss out on this splendid volume; an excellent Christmas present. Buy now from CRC while visiting the exhibitions.



Calendar for 2018:
another ideal
Christmas present.
Price: £8.00
Available: from
end of October



Events

AGM: 2.30pm: Tuesday 28th November: Dr Yuthika Sharma will speak on: Highlands to Hindustan: Indian Art in the University of Edinburgh Collections

If you have not yet visited the exhibition on the Ground Floor: *Highlands to Hindustan* then do take this opportunity before hearing Dr Sharma speak in depth on the subject.

Spring 2018: date tbc: Grant Buttars, Centre for Research Collections, will speak on 50 Years of the Main Library.

Spring 2018: date tbc: Owen Dudley Edwards

Bequests

The late Dr Margaret Fleming has left a legacy of £5,000 to the Friends of Edinburgh University Library.

Please remember that a bequest to the Friends is much appreciated and contributes to the good work of the Library and the Collections.



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