LAST FALL, several more of America’s finest writers thrilled audiences at the Southwestern Writers Collection. The English Dept’s Theresé Kayser Lindsey Series continued to draw crowds with Heather McHugh, W. S. Merwin, and Barry Hannah.

Posttranslation and Academy of American Poets Chancellor HEATHER MC-HUGH read from her newest work, Eyeshot, as well as a few powerful pieces from her previous books—and kept listeners rapt with smart comic banter in between. The legendary W. S. MERWIN, author of more than 15 books of poetry and nearly 230 books in translation, treated a standing-room-only crowd to some of his most famous poems and shared a few new, as yet unpublished pieces. BARRY HANNAH, Texas State’s current Roy F & Jaolene Mitte Chair in Creative Writing, read a selection from his latest novel, Tinder Stands Your Orphan, and chatted with the crowd about fiction writing in general.

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The grand waterway is celebrated in this new exhibit that coincides with the recent publication of Jan Reid’s anthology, Rio Grande, by the University of Texas Press. Manuscripts, photographs, and music from the Southwestern Writers Collection holdings present portraits of life along the river. Featured writers include John Graves, Dagoberto Gilb, Cecilia Ballí, Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, Dick Rrravis, Joe Nick Patoski, Stephen Harrigan, Gary Cartwright, and Jan Reid.

A special panel discussion on the Rio Grande is set for April 7, moderated by Reid (see sidebar, left). Following are excerpts from work by these featured authors.

**Cecilia Ballí, from “Ciudad de la Muerte”**

The Lower Valley road they traveled was paved two-lane but Mickey didn’t see it that way because of the dust rising up from it, the tumbleweeds reeling across like drugged roadrunners. Mickey didn’t see it that way because of the dust rising up from it, the tumbleweeds reeling across like drugged roadrunners. In the West is where they were. Where Billy the Kid was supposed to be locked up, where John Wesley Hardin twirled his pistol and dealt cards, where Pancho Villa lived forever and Preshing became a street downtown. And out here at dusk this day, the whoosh from a storm chasing after the setting sun, snapping branches and shadows off the cottonwoods and cholla or yucca on one side of the street, the darker plowed loam on the other, in the reach of the once-wider, fertile Rio Grande, planted with cotton or alfalfa or chile.

**Dagoberto Gilb, from “A Sense of Place”**

Both aliens had been told that La Migra men come with rifles for shooting rabbits along the route. Both had also heard reports from Mexicans who had dodged bullets along the road, like rabbits. The two immigrants crossed over the road and went into the brushland behind. Then they headed westward, ducking mesquite branches and trampling huisache underfoot. Thirty minutes ahead, Pelón had told them, they would run into an irrigation canal. They were to follow it until it came to a paved road, like rabbits. The two immigrants crossed over the road and went into the brushland behind. Then they headed westward, ducking mesquite branches and trampling huisache underfoot. Thirty minutes ahead, Pelón had told them, they would run into an irrigation canal. They were to follow it until it came to a paved road, then they were to cross the road. After that, they would spot a series of radio towers with red lights to the northeast. They were to follow the lights to San Antonio, a walk about six nights long.

**Jan Reid, from “La Ruta”**

The Rio Grande’s narrative is like the silt of its bottomlands and delta—a complex layering of many locales and traditions. The river belongs to two countries, and as a fictional barrier and was not to be until almost one hundred years later; but, by then, the border had its own history, its own culture, and its own sense of place: it was Nuevo Santander, named for old Santander in the Spanish Peninsula. The last names were similar up and down both banks of the river, and as second and third cousins were allowed to marry, this further propagated and promulgated blood relationships and that sense of belonging.

**Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, from “A Sense of Place”**

For me and mine, history began in 1749 when the first colonists began moving into the southern and northern banks of the Rio Grande. That river was not yet a jurisdictional barrier and was not to be until almost one hundred years later; but, by then, the border had its own history, its own culture, and its own sense of place: it was Nuevo Santander, named for old Santander in the Spanish Peninsula. The last names were similar up and down both banks of the river, and as second and third cousins were allowed to marry, this further propagated and promulgated blood relationships and that sense of belonging.

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The Rio Grande’s narrative is like the silt of its bottomlands and delta—a complex layering of many locales and traditions. The river belongs to two countries, and as a consequence it is protected and managed by neither. It is a broken river now, overused and abused and in peril. Yet still it glows, emerald-like, in a collective imagination. And that mystique is its best hope for salvation.

**Dick Rrravis, from “La Ruta”**

But a place is merely that until it is populated, and once populated, the histories of the place and its people begin. For me and mine, history began in 1749 when the first colonists began moving into the southern and northern banks of the Rio Grande. That river was not yet a jurisdictional barrier and was not to be until almost one hundred years later; but, by then, the border had its own history, its own culture, and its own sense of place: it was Nuevo Santander, named for old Santander in the Spanish Peninsula. The last names were similar up and down both banks of the river, and as second and third cousins were allowed to marry, this further propagated and promulgated blood relationships and that sense of belonging.

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TEXAS LITERARY OUTLAWS IN THE NEWS

The new book by Southwestern Writers Collection Assistant Curator Steve Davis continues to attract positive attention. Drawn largely from the Southwestern Writers Collection archives, Texas Literary Outlaws tells the stories of Texas writers Bud Shrake, Larry L. King, Billy Lee Brammer, and Gary Cartwright, placing them squarely within the context of Texas' own cultural evolution from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Effusive reviews keep pouring in as well as some end-of-the-year accolades. The Fort Worth Weekly made it their staff choice for best book by an area writer. The San Antonio Express-News named Texas Literary Outlaws one of the "Best of 2004," calling it "groundbreaking and highly entertaining." The Writers Collection salutes Steve for not only having written such a fine book, but for having written one that showcases the extraordinary research potential of these important archives.

NOVEMBER 11, 2004. Four Texas writers discussed their "points of view" on the Vietnam war during a Veterans' Day evening that included an Asian-inspired hors d'oeuvre reception in the Vietnam from a Texas POV exhibit room, and a book signing with the panelists. (Above, left to right) Moderator Dr. Mark Busby, panelists Michael Rodriguez, Sarah Bird, and Robert Flynn. (Right) Steve Davis, Southwestern Writers Collection Assistant Curator, began the program with remarks and an introduction of Dr. Busby. (Below) The audience, which included several Vietnam veterans, asked a variety of lively questions during the panelists' discussion.

25,800 (approx.) items of correspondence exist in the Larry L. King Archives at the Southwestern Writers Collection. King has saved nearly every letter he's received over the past decades; he's also retained carbon copies of the thousands of letters he's written. King's correspondence offers an uncensored look at his life, from personal exchanges with senators and congressmen (such as Ralph Yarborough, Morris Udall, and Jim Wright), to his relationships with family, friends, and literary colleagues (such as Willie Morris, Norman Mailer, and Bud Sh tease). A good selection of King's correspondence was collected in his 1999 book, Larry L. King: A Writer's Life in Letters, or Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye. But there's plenty more to discover in this breathtaking collection, and we anticipate that the King correspondence will continue to be heavily mined by researchers in the years ahead.

OCTOBER 8, 2004. (Clockwise from upper left) Texas State President Dr. Denise Trauth, Sally and Bill Wittliff, and Jane and John Graves at the champagne and chocolate reception. / Bill and Sally (who commissioned the statue) unveil the 6' 11" bronze by sculptor and Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Pat Oliphant / President Trauth christens the statue / Bill and Sally say a few words; in the foreground is the 11" maquette Oliphant designed from photos taken by Bill / President Trauth remarks, "I think Bill and Sally and Connie have always thought we needed a greeter to the Southwestern Writers Collection, someone who would stand by the door and welcome visitors. Now we have one. A permanent one."

More memorable EVENTS

OCTOBER 12, 2004. (Above) Fort Worth-born photographer Jayne Hinds Bidaut was guest of honor at the exhibit reception and book launch for the eighth volume in our Wittliff Gallery Book Series, ANIMALERIE, published by the University of Texas Press. (Left) Poet and photographic historian John Wood presented the book's introductory essay, entitled "Jayne Hinds Bidaut's Magic Cabinet," before introducing Jayne to a large audience of friends and guests for a Q & A about her work. Afterwards, visitors had a chance to chat one-on-one with Jayne while she signed books. The evening also included a cocktail reception with Jayne, John, founding donors Bill & Sally Wittliff, and Texas State President Denise Trauth. The thought-provoking exhibit featuring over 70 of Jayne's "animal shop" photos runs through March 12, 2005.

JOHN GRAVES statue dedication

OCTOBER 22, 2004. (Clockwise from upper left) Texas State President Dr. Denise Trauth, Sally and Bill Wittliff, and Jane and John Graves at the champagne and chocolate reception. / Bill and Sally (who commissioned the statue) unveil the 6' 11" bronze by sculptor and Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Pat Oliphant / President Trauth christens the statue / Bill and Sally say a few words; in the foreground is the 11" maquette Oliphant designed from photos taken by Bill / President Trauth remarks, "I think Bill and Sally and Connie have always thought we needed a greeter to the Southwestern Writers Collection, someone who would stand by the door and welcome visitors. Now we have one. A permanent one."

ANIMALERIE book launch
PABLO ORTIZ 
MONASTERIO
plays a pivotal role in Mexico’s thriving and
dynamic photography. He helped establish the
Centro de la Imagen in Mexico City, instituted
the famous photography festival, Fotógra
fiembre, and was the founding editor for
Luna Córnea, Mexico’s premier photography
journal. Ortiz Monasterio also edited the
non-fiction series
Colección Río de Luz,
twenty volumes on
important Mexican
photographers. He is an
accomplished photog
rapher and has been
exhibited and collected
by museums around
the world, including
the Wittliff Gallery.
Among his books on
photography are
Testigos y cómplices
(Martín Casillas Edi
tores, 1982), La Última Ciudad / The Last City
(Twin Palms, 1995),
Corazón de vanado
(Casa de las Imágenes,
1998), Sexo y progreso
(Mestizo, 1999), and
Dolor y belleza / Pain
and Beauty (Landucci
Editores, 2000). He
currently lives and
works in Mexico City,
and serves on the
Special Collections
Advisory Committee.

Volando bajo / Flying Low,
1986, Mexico City, is
published in La Última
Ciudad / The Last City.
The photograph is one
of many by the artist in
the Wittliff collection.
spotlight on CATALOGING

The Southwestern Writers Collection and Wittliff Gallery have both earned world-wide reputations for collecting and preserving the primary sources that document the culture, literature, history, and photography of the American Southwest and Mexico.

One of Special Collections’ important missions is to provide researchers and patrons access to our materials. This begins by creating a way by which any person interested in looking at our materials can find them.

Catalogers Karen Sigler and Joe Sumbera examine each item and create a detailed description (bibliographic record), which is then exported to the Alkek Library Online Catalog, as well as to a worldwide database, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center), thus allowing national and international access to the information.

Karen and Joe’s bibliographic records become the doorway to accessing Southwestern Writers Collection and Wittliff Gallery materials. Their descriptive notes in each record provide specific details about the item: its donor(s); its condition; any signatures, inscriptions, or inserted materials it may have; or anything else that describes and enhances its uniqueness.

Karen and Joe handle everything from books to non-book formats, screenplays, manuscript collections—any item that comes to them from the Special Collections Department.

In particular, they catalog all of the Southwestern Writers Collection and Wittliff Gallery “source materials” (see below).

After cataloging an item, they determine if basic preservation is needed. This may be as simple as enclosing the item in mylar or as complex as building archival boxes to protect fragile or rare materials. Karen and Joe also search items for evidence of biological pests or mold and alert the archivist if a problem exists.

The cataloging process is basic to maintaining intellectual control of the growing number of items in our collections. Karen and Joe’s careful descriptive analyses enable researchers awareness of just how unique the holdings of Special Collections are. For an in-depth explanation, visit their website: www.library.txstate.edu/alc/catalog.

RESEARCHING? TRY THIS!

The Southwestern Writers Collection contains a dazzling variety of archives, but the wealth of material can often be daunting to students unfamiliar with the collection. To assist beginning researchers, Assistant Curator Karen Davis compiled a comprehensive subject guide to the Southwestern Writers Collection materials. The guide points students to pivotal work focused on areas of study.

Here are just some of the many possible topics:

- African American studies
- American literature
- Architecture
- Art
- Biochemistry
- Business
- Civil Rights
- Crime and Punishment
- Dance
- Drama
- Ethnic studies
- Film
- Fine arts
- Forensic science
- Gender
- Geology
- Geographic information systems
- Government
- Health
- History
- Hispanic studies
- Immigration
- Indigenous studies
- Informatics
- Jewish studies
- Journalism
- Law
- Latin American studies
- Latinx studies
- Linguistics
- Literature
- Mathematics
- Medicine
- Medieval studies
- Military
- Music
- Natural sciences
- Native American studies
- Philosophy
- Political science
- Psychology
- Race and Ethnicity
- Religion
- Science
- Sociology
- Spanish studies
- Speech and Debate
- Sports
- Technology
- Texas history
- Urban studies
- Women’s studies
- Wildlife
- World history

See the complete guide online: www.library.txstate.edu/alc/catalog

SUPPORT MATERIALS — A SAMPLER

The Southwestern Writers Collection: The Pastoral Vision of Cormac McCarthy

This is the first ever exhibition of original manuscripts, drawings, photographs, and manuscripts by Cormac McCarthy. The exhibition is on display at the Wittliff Gallery of the Southwestern Writers Collection. The exhibition features the original manuscripts of McCarthy’s novels, including The Border Patrol, Ate My Lantern, and The Lost Days.

The exhibition also includes a selection of letters written by McCarthy to his wife, Elaine, during their time in the New Mexico desert. The letters provide insight into McCarthy’s life and work, as well as his relationship with his family.

The exhibition runs from September 1 to October 30, 2023. For more information, please visit the Wittliff Gallery’s website at www.library.txstate.edu/wittliff.
O DISCOVER AN EPHEMERAL IMAGE, capture it, and show it to the world is a task pursued both by artists and collection curators—in some what divergent ways. A photographer—serendipitously or following a particular esthetic trail—encounters an image, yanks it out of the time stream with the camera's click, fixes it on paper, and reveals it. A curator, in pursuit perhaps of a particular artist, working in a particular collecting area, or simply by happy accident, finds an image, acquires it—budget permitting—and makes it available to the public through exhibitions, books, private viewings.

Thus, in the best of all possible worlds, rising from their shared but bifurcating task, a wonderful symbiosis can occur between an artist and a collecting gallery like the Wittliff as they create together a visionary body of the artist's work. And when that happens it's like catching lightning in a bottle, like capturing something powerful and elusive and then being able to hold it and show it to the world. Very heady stuff, and certainly for me one of the most rewarding aspects of the curating business.

Ours is primarily a contemporary photography collection, and many of our artists are living, so we're able to confer with them, ask them which images they would like to see preserved, which images express their creative path, which images, though aberrant, might be included as illustrative of the road not taken—sometimes those are the most instructive of all. We listen to the artists we collect, and we respect their talent and their intuition as we conduct the ongoing dialogs that give Texas State's Wittliff Gallery of Southwestern & Mexican Photography vitality and dash and a rare immediacy of vision shared by artist and collecting institution.

Because we've added so many extraordinary images to the Wittliff collection during the past couple of years, we thought it was high time to share them with you—hence this truly astounding show. There are new works from favorites like Yolanda Andrade, Kate Breakey, Keith Carter, Henri Cartier-Bresson (p. 2), Edward Curtis, Graciela Iturbide, Russell Lee, Francisco Mata Rosas, Michael O'Brien, Josephine Sacabo (p. 14), Sebastião Salgado, Rocky Schenck (p. 2), Erwin Smith, Bob Wade, Geoff Winningham, Bill Wittliff, and Mariana Yampolsky; and spectacular images from artists new to our collection or seldom exhibited: Faustino Deraet, Hector Garcia, Annie Leibovitz (cover photo of Willie Nelson), Rodrigo Moody, Robert and Shana Parke Harrison, Joel Salcido, Cathy Spence, Jack Spencer, Gerardo Suter, Doris Ullman, Kathy Vargas, and Joel-Peter Witkin (p. 2). You will see a few historical photos in the mix as well: Royce H. 1945 Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima, a 1906 image of the last survivors of the Battle of San Jacinto—and, from Mexico, an amazing little anonymous post-mortem in its original tin frame.

Lightning in a Bottle runs from March 26 through August 28. I hope you can join us Saturday, April 16 at 7:00 pm, as we celebrate the exhibit with a cocktail reception, and a very special program featuring guest artists. It's fun, it's free, and it's good for you. Come grab the lightning! —Connie Todd

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON ON PHOTOGRAPHY

To me, photography is the instantaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organization of forms which gave that event its proper expression. I believe that, through the art of living, the discovery of oneself is made concurrently with the discovery of the world around us which can mold us, but which can also be altered by us. A balance must be established between these two worlds—the one inside us and the one outside us.

As the result of a constant recuperative process, both these worlds come to form a single one. And it is this world that we must communicate.

But this takes care only of the content of the picture. For me, content cannot be separated from form. By form, I mean a rigorous organization of the interplay of surfaces, lines, and values. It is in this organization alone that our conceptions and emotions become concrete and communicable. In photography, visual organization can stem only from a developed instinct.

—from The Decisive Moment (Vervier and Simon Schuster, 1952)
Recent ACQUISITIONS

at the SOUTHWESTERN WRITERS COLLECTION

With recent additions since our last issue, the Collection now comprises over 3,040 linear feet of materials from authors, screenwriters, and songwriters. Materials listed below include recent additions from August through December 2004. • One hundred and fourteen TEXAS MUSIC POSTERS (1960s to 1980s) by various Austin poster artists including Micael Priest, Kerry Ann, Ken Featherstone, and Jim Franklin, advertise music events at venues such as the Armadillo World Headquarters, Vulcan Gas Company, Austin Opera House, and Ritz Theater. [Gift of Tom Wilmore] • The papers of CELIA MORRIS, author of Fanny Wright Rebel, in America, Finding Celia’s Place, and Bearing Witness Sexual Harassment and Beyond—Everywoman’s Story, document her writing career and include correspondence, typed manuscripts, photographs, research materials, interviews, audio and video cassettes, conference and seminar materials, newspaper articles, and ephemera. [Gift of Morris] • Additional MARK BUSBY notes, research materials, and manuscripts relating to his novel, Fort Benning Blues. [Gift of Dr. Busby] • Manuscripts, correspondence with publishers, notes, and other materials related to JUDY ALTER’S writing career. Included are several unpublished manuscripts as well as typescripts for various works-in-progress and short stories. [Gift of Alter] • The papers of poet and 1989 Austin Book Award winner, ALBERT HUFFSTICKLER, include manuscript drafts of many of his poems, notebooks, biographical materials, correspondence, reviews, photographs, and awards and prizes. [Gift of Sylvia Manning] • More boxes from JOE NICK PATOSKI that include posters, photographs, notes, newspaper clippings, research materi-als, correspondence, invitations, compact discs, and ephemera related to his research and writing career. [Gift of Patoski] • Various items from BILL WITTLIFF’s personal collections: childhood memorabilia, early stories and drawings, school papers, and “the best rubber-band gun ever.” Also materials related to the film The Black Stallion (written by Wittliff); items documenting his writing career, Encino Press, and various personal and professional relationships. [Gift of Bill & Sandy Wittliff] • Several additions to the LARRY L. KING papers include recent correspondence, thank-you notes, postcards, receipts, and an article by King for the Old Soundbead Gazette. Also included is a typescript of King’s reading at the 2004 Texas Book Festival, where he was honored for lifetime contributions to Texas literature. [Gift of Dr. King] • CHICANO LITERATURE & CULTURE invitations and programs. [Gift of Jaime Chávez] • SUSAN WITTLIFF ALBERT donated materials relating to her most recent China Bayles mystery novel, An Untimely Death and Other Garden Mysteries. She also donated type-scripts of members’ memoirs from the OLDER WOMEN’S LEGACY CIRCLE WORKSHOPS. [Gift of Albert] • The DONLEY WATT papers include manuscripts for the novels, Reynolds, Dancing with Lysen, and Haly, Texas 1938. Also typescripts to the short-story collection, Can You Get There From Here? and correspondent, photographs, and ephemera. [Gift of Watt] • Mencken praises Sanford’s writing while exhaling her to continue work on her novel-in-progress. Unfortunately, due to a variety of factors including a difficult battle with tuberculosis, Sanford never completed her novel. She published her last story in 1931, and for many years afterwards was forgotten by readers. In the 1980s, Sanford was rediscovered. A collection of her work, Windfall and Other Stories, was published, and it remains in print today. A film based on her story “Luck,” starring Robert Do-val, was directed by James Keach and released in 1995 as The Stars Fell on Kansas. Today Sanford’s reputation as one of Texas’ most talented early writers is well established. In 2004, Helen Sanford donated her mother’s literary papers to the Southwestern Writers Collection. Included among these distinguished holdings are about ten dozen letters between Sanford and Mencken that chronicle their editorial relationship. The Winifred Sanford archives have been processed by volunteer librarian Kristen Davis and are available for researchers. See the finding aid online at www.library.txstate.edu/swwc/archives/sanford.html. • FROM THE ARCHIVES

BACK IN the 1920s, before the ascent of J. Frank Dobie as “Mr. Texas,” it was Texas women who brought the state’s literature to a national audience. Chief among these was Dorothy Scarborough, author of several books including The Wind, which was made into a movie starring Lillian Gish in 1928. An equally prolific writer to many readers was WINIFRED SANFORD, a Wichita Falls resident who chronicled the effects of the Texas oil boom in a series of penetrating short stories. Most of Sanford’s work was published in The American Mercury, a magazine edited by one of America’s foremost journalists, H. L. Mencken. Three of her stories also appeared in the 1926 edition of Best American Short Stories. Mencken was an early admirer of Sanford’s writing and he accepted nearly every story she submitted for publication. In letter after letter,