enough to land an entry-level job at the Collections as a grad student, and no one's been able to pry me away since.

I found my life's passion among these incredible collections, and it's wonderful to see others doing the same. In this issue of The Jukebox, we're featuring two special contributors, both of whom are students: Austin Sims, a graduate student at Texas State, writes of attending the Cormac McCarthy conference we hosted last fall (see p. 11). Brandon D. Shaler is a doctorate student at Texas Tech who uncovered a treasure in our archives—a lost manuscript—that he has turned into a new book, just published by Texas A&M University Press (see p. 15).

The transformative effect the Wittliff Collections have had on students such as myself, Austin, Brandon, and many others is one of the great legacies of this place as we commemorate our 25th year. This fall we will celebrate the Wittliff Collections' 25th anniversary in style. We are planning major retrospectives from both our literary and photographic archives, and excitement is building around the anniversary gala we'll stage on November 13 at the Four Seasons in Austin. Our next issue of The Jukebox will be dedicated to the Wittliff's silver anniversary and will be updating the Events section of our website as plans progress, so stay tuned for more details.

Finally, here's a quick update on our Director position. In 2010 we conducted a search and interviewed several good candidates. Unfortunately, we didn't get the fit we were seeking. By that time, I was an English major, enjoying literature from across the globe. Yet Texas held a special place for me. I'd grown up reading Texas Monthly, and I admired books by Texas writers in my spare time. Seeing that my own university also valued this regional literature was inspiring. So, when the Southwestern Writers Collection was formally dedicated in its new space at the Alkek Library, I traded in my inner tube for a pair of long pants and joined the crowd at the dedication.

That program is among my fondest memories. I still remember the buzz that swept across the room when Governor Ann Richards walked in. Her aura was so bright it seemed to carry an electric charge. Two of my literary heroes, Larry L. King and John Graves, spoke at the occasion, and I caught glimpses of several other notable writers in the audience— Bud Shrake, Sarah Bird, Stephen Haygood, Shelby Hearon, James Crumley.

I saw Bill and Sally Wittliff for the first time, and I listened carefully as Bill spoke movingly of how J. Frank Dobie had sparked in him a new awareness, that "literature could spring from the very piece of ground that I had lived on or was living on."

Bill and Sally's creation sparked a fire in me, too. I decided to attend graduate school at Texas State, becoming one of the first students in the newly formed "Southwestern Studies" program. I studied under Mark Busby, an excellent professor who became my mentor and friend. I was lucky
Big Bend is otherworldly. It is one of the last places left that is a long way from everywhere, so far away that people get the feeling they’ve fallen off the edge of the earth. No one thinks twice when Big Bend is described as otherworldly. It is one of the last places left that is a long way from everywh here, so far away that no one ever thinks twice about it.

The exhibition also shows how the Big Bend has inspired storytellers and novelists. In the 1920s, J. Frank Dobie mined stories of lost treasure in the Big Bend, which he included in Coronado’s Children. In the 1950s, a young reporter named Billy Lee Brammer visited Marfa to write about the making of the epic movie Giant, starring Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, and James Dean. Brammer’s experiences on the set inspired a portion of his classic novel, The Gay Place. First published in 1961, The Gay Place celebrates its 50th anniversity this year.

The Big Bend offers a dramatic landscape for fiction. Contemporary novelists Cormac McCarthy, Nevada Barr, James Crumley, and Jim Sanderson have all set mystery/thrillers in the region. Playwright and actor Sam Shepard includes dispatches from the Big Bend in his book of stories, Cruising Paradise. Numerous films have been set in the region, including Giant, No Country for Old Men, The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada, and Basurero, Bill Witting’s 1982 movie starring Willie Nelson.

Throughout the exhibition nearly a hundred books from the Witliff Collections’ extensive supplementary materials show the Big Bend’s range of creative influence across genres of all types. A complete bibliography is available as a take-away for visitors.

Big Bend: Land of the Texas Imagination was curated by Steve Davis with assistance from other Witliff Collections staff.
writers on writing PAULO FARIA

PAULO FARIA is a literary translator who for the past 15 years has turned into Portuguese the writing of George Orwell, Don DeLillo, Jack Kerouac, and Cormac McCarthy, among others. He works through the agency Relógio d’Aço, a publishing house based in Lisbon. In 2010, we were delighted to host his first visit at the Wittliff Collections to research the McCarthy Papers. He graciously agreed to speak with the Wittliff’s lead archivist, Katie Salzmann, about his approach to translating literature from one language and culture into another.

What is a translator’s typical job? Your question encompasses the core relationship with the original author, like? To there much communication or collaboration? I have had lots of different experiences in this respect. Don DeLillo, for example, is very hands-on like and organized. Every time he publishes a novel, his agents create a Q&A document with questions from the various translators for the original text. I try to fade as much as possible into the background, making myself invisible, a puppeteer behind the curtain, aware that my own hands have strings attached to them which in turn trace upward, into the author’s hands (to use McCarthy’s image in All the Pretty Horses), but also fully aware of my responsibility (and my limits) as a liner making out words from a tray of Mind tablets of metal before me (again All the Pretty Horses). At a more practical level, let’s say that I never insert footnotes when translating fiction, if anything it must be explained in order for the Portuguese reader to fully appreciate the beauty of the text (details of cowboys lore and work, for example, not use of All the Pretty Horses), then I add a short glossary at the end of the text.

You visited the Wittliff Collections in 2010 to view McCarthy’s archive. How did reading his original papers assist your translations?

When translating, I always try to make use of the “scarcity principle” an economist once said. Anything you can omit that you know you still have it in the writing and its quality will show. When a writer omits things, he does not know they show, they hide in the writing. I remember one afternoon at your reading room in San Marcos when I was able to trace a line from Cormac McCarthy’s notes on John R. Cook’s The Border and the Buffalo (Box 33, Folder 5), a book I had read myself as a preparation for my translation of Blood Meridian (draft of the novel in Box 38, Folder 3). “Don’t let’s shoot each other,” Brown says to the judge near the creek, among “the spectral armatures,” a sentence that is a slight reformulation of Cowan’s “don’t let’s shoot one another” that Cormac had taken note of. This struck me as wonderful, a glimpse into the inner workings of a superior mind. The fact that this sentence did not make it into the final version of Blood Meridian (and so in fact it did not have to translate it) does not diminish its importance: it had become part of my iceberg, part of the invisible mass of knowledge that keeps the tiny portion of ice above the water.

You have translated McCarthy’s Blood Meridian twice now, which must be very rare in the world of translation. Is this second translation vastly different?

The second translation benefited immensely from my trip to the Wittliff, and also from the fact that I read every book I could get my hands on that I knew Cormac McCarthy himself had read as a preparation to the writing of the novel. The truth is I made the second translation totally from scratch, resisting the temptation of looking at the first one, trying to recreate the emotion of translating those sentences for the first time—the someone having a second son who tries to create conditions to feel the same as he felt when he told (in the meaning, the climax of the climax) his first child was born. It is impossible to do, of course, but one must try.

What is a translator’s typical relationship with the original author like?

The BRACERO PROGRAM was a guest worker initiative created by President Franklin Roosevelt that spanned the years 1942 to 1969 when millions of Mexican agricultural workers (braceros) crossed the border to work in more than half of the states in America. New through April 20, the Wittliff Public Collections and Texas State’s Public History Program present Bittersweet Harvest. The Bracero Program, 1942–1969, a traveling banner exhibition developed by the Smithsonian which explores the braceros’ contributions to communities in Mexico and the United States, the opportunities that became available to them, and the challenges they faced as guest workers during the war years and afterward. The bilingual exhibition is comprised of 15 freestanding banners featuring oral histories, quotes, and images by photographer Leonard Naas, whose photographs inspired the exhibit.” Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program 1942–1969 was developed as part of a day symposium called “Immigrant America,” organized by the Department of History and the Center for the Study of the Southwest at Texas State.

THE EDGE OF TIME

THE EDGE OF TIME: Photographs of Mexico by MARIANA YAMPOLSKY marks the beginning of our 25th anniversary celebration with more to come. It will be on view May 16 through December 11, 2011.

Mariana Yampolsky (1925–2002) played an important role in building Wittliff’s contemporary photography archive. In 1994, Yampolsky met with Connie Todd (then Bill Wittliff’s assistant, now director, retired) in Mexico City to discuss Yampolsky’s idea of a Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection. Yampolsky put us in touch with virtually every outstanding photographer in the country. In 2005, she talked to the artists themselves, enthusiastically promoting the project, and in so doing, authenticated our then little-known repository to the Mexican photographic community.

To honor her role in our history, we are exhibiting the black-and-white photographs of Mexico she created during the 30-year span of 1944 to 1974. The images of the indigenous in Mexico reveal her compassion and sincerity for people and document Mexican traditions, customs and rituals, as well as building details and structures.

Born in 1925 in Chicago, Yampolsky moved to Mexico in 1944 and worked as an engraver with the Taller de Gráfica Popular (Popular Graphic Arts Workshop). Yampolsky took her first photography class with Lola Alvarez Bravo and soon after started a career in photography. Bill Wittliff commented in 1998, “She was never interested in photography as a means to express herself but to show us the dignity and humanity of a people we otherwise might never have even heard of. She used her social conscience to lead the Mexican photographic community.”

In 1944, Yampolsky met her husband, Arjen Van der Sluis, founded the Mariana Yampolsky Cultural Foundation in her former house in the historic district of Tlapah in Mexico City. The Edge of Time: Photographs of Mexico was originally organized by the Wittliff Collections in 1990 and toured with Exhibits USA from 1990 through 1999. It is also the title of the second volume, published in 1998, in our award-winning book series with UT Press. In print, you can purchase it yourself through the Wittliff’s online gift shop.
GRACIELA ITURBIDE

Considered one of the world’s finest photographers, Graciela Iturbide was born in Mexico City in 1942 and mentored in photography by Manuel Álvarez Bravo. Her familiarity with Mexican culture is central to her art. In 1979, she began a photographic series on the Zapotec in Juchitán, Mexico. Her photographs of this town, where women dominate the village and marketplace, was awarded the Eugene Smith Award in 1987. She has since published several books of her Juchitán series, most recently Juchitán de las mujeres, 1979-1989 (Editorial RM, 2010). The Wittliff holds the world’s major archive of her work.

If anyone has been granted the gift of tenderness, it is Graciela Iturbide. No wonder she has been able to portray even the most intimate wrinkle of Juchitán. She is almost imperceptible; she weaves an invisible spider web around each of her subjects, trapping them bit by bit. She takes her camera out of her pocket and in the flutter of a butterfly, click, click, click, she flaps her hands that are wings and they vanish in thin air.

—ELENA PONIATOWSKA from the introduction, Juchitán de las mujeres Conversación, conversación, / Women Friends in Conversation, Juchitán, Oaxaca, 1986
Gary Cartwright

AS A SPORTSWRITER, Gary Cartwright would write under the pseudonym, “Crew Slammer.” Friends have long known him as “Jap.” We call him “The Best Damn Magazine Writer Who Ever Lived,” and we mean it. His incredible body of work at Texas Monthly—183 articles strong—proves this claim, not only in quantity but quality. Inherent and larger-than-life characters, underground and off-the-beaten-path cultures, all come alive in his stories.

Cartwright appeared in the very first issue of Texas Monthly, in February 1973. Thirty-seven years later, on August 31, 2010, he officially retired. The Wittliff Collections has strong ties to Cartwright and Texas Monthly, as both are major donors. We hold the magazine’s complete on-line archive, over 1400 linear feet, and we also hold Cartwright’s literary papers, which he began donating in 1989. The Wittliff Collections joined forces with Texas Monthly on November 11 to celebrate the writer’s life and career. The memorable evening featured a public conversation with Cartwright, Texas Monthly Editor Jake Silverstein, and Senior Editor John Spong, in front of an enthralled crowd of Cartwright’s friends, colleagues, and fans.

Much of the discussion focused on Cartwright’s legendary reporting in the early days of Texas Monthly. He shares an excerpt from Cartwright’s 1973 story, “Who Was Jack Ruby?” which got him talking about his days in Dallas and Fort Worth as a sportswriter with literary aspirations. Cartwright and his writing cohort, Bud Shackle, spent a lot of time hanging out at Jack Ruby’s nightclub in the days leading up to the Kennedy assassination.

The journalist left Texas in the mid-1960s for a brief, unhappy stint at the Philadelphia Inquirer, where he discovered he had burned out on sportswriting. He was more interested in writing about a janitor who wanted to be a bullfighter than in covering the Philadelphia Phillies, which did not endear him to his new bosses. Eventually fired, Cartwright returned to Texas and started a long career as a freelance journalist. In addition to Texas Monthly, he has published work in many major magazines, including Esquire, Harper’s, Sports Illustrated, and Rolling Stone.

In 2000, the Wittliff collected 17 of Cartwright’s best Texas Monthly articles from the 1980s and 1990s, along with his essay, “My Most Unforgettable Year,” about the lasting legacy of the Kennedy assassination, in Turn Out the Lights, and published it as part of the Southwestern Writers Collection Book Series with UTP Press.

In THE FALL of 2009, I made two significant changes in my life. I moved back east from Texas and decided to pursue a second bachelor’s degree, this time in the sciences. Aside from the consideration of tuition costs, anywhere seemed a viable option. While researching major Texas state schools, I found that Texas State University in San Marcos had acquired the Cormac McCarthy archives in late 2007, and this seemed as good a reason as any to apply. Granted, these archives would be of no consequence in my new field. They might, however, provide a much needed indulgence when chemistry became particularly odious.

Just two months into my new degree, I decided medicine was not for me. I’d visited the Wittliff Collections numerous times for the artistic outlet it provided, and I had to accept that the sciences would remain nothing more than a hobby. I applied to the graduate college on what might be called a whim, and what I still sometimes refer to as my dispensing with practicality.

I quickly felt at home in academia in a way I hadn’t in my professional life and education up to that point. I dove deeply into research and found that, rather than it being a necessary evil, I loved it. I found that my research topics were Cormac McCarthy’s move from Tennessee to the American Southwest, and thus I finally had a good reason to sit down with his papers. I read all of his correspondence with John Howard Woolman, as well as his writing notes concerning Suttree and Blood Meridian. While discussing what I might go with my research, my Southwestern Studies instructor, Twister Marquis, brought up the following McCarthy Society conference to be held at the Wittliff. If I’d needed any further indication that I’d made the right choice by enrolling in graduate school, my first conference would have more than sufficed. Prior to the opening session, I purused the conference schedule, hoping to find those events I couldn’t stand to miss. Using my own shorthand and markings, the conference schedule ended up looking a bit like an edited manuscript, so I decided to simply attend every session possible. Given the concerns of my research, I wasn’t missing any sessions dealing with Suttree, Blood Meridian, or generally the Southwest. (It is here apropos to apologize to the keynote speaker, Peter Joseph, for my brash abbreviation of the novels true title: Blood Meridian or the Evening Redness in the Way.) These sessions accounted for well more than half of the total.

It was a difficult task to pull out those speakers whose work most impressed me. The crop was an exceptional one. Early on in my research, a few of Mark Buishus publications served to elucidate McCarthy’s presence in the Southwest and thus direct my focus. His presentation on the Styphian qualities in Blood Meridian’s epilogue was no less useful. Alexander Engstrom’s study of the physical structures of Blood Meridians was invaluable, in my making, for arguing that McCarthy’s rightful place is steeped in the uncertainty and paradox of the American Southwest. There is not a good deal of primary research concerning McCarthy, but that which was presented by Diane Luce and Stacey Peebles made me appreciate among those delving into his papers.

Present were the standard benefits of attending such a conference: I made great academic connections and was able to build on my research with both secondary works from noteworthy McCarthy scholars and letters from the Erkine archives at the University of Virginia. I must thank Dr. Stacey Peebles for her assistance in acquiring the contents and citation information of the latter.

What I did not expect was how much I enjoyed meeting and speaking with my fellow Cormackians. My exposure to McCarthy as a man was largely affected by the papers previously mentioned, but any preconceived notions I had of the scholars devoted to him were surely altered. What I took away from the conference is the among the greatest surprises I’ve experienced since deciding on a university based purely on a collection of papers held by the university’s library. A distinction likely to be maintained.

My only regret is that I couldn’t attend the CORMAC McCArTHY conference

The McCarthy McCarthy Conference

The Cormac McCarthy Society held its biennial conference on October 27 through 31, 2010 at Texas State University. The conference was well attended and provided a wonderful chance for scholars to immerse themselves in the Pulitzer Prize-winning author’s archives (and sometimes in lieu of) attending sessions on his literary work. We had a full reading room throughout the conference, as nearly half of the attendees took advantage of the opportunity to read from across the country—and from as far away as Japan, the United Kingdom, and France—to make time to access the resources that are readily available at the Texas State Community Appointments to access the McCarthy Collection can be requested via the form in the RESEARCH SECTION of our website. Visitors continue to get a glimpse of McCarthy’s notes and drafts in a special exhibition case that is dedicated to his archival materials.
by ROBB KENDRICK

IN 2004, FROST Bank commissioned Robb Kendrick to travel across 16,000 miles of Texas, visiting more than three dozen ranches to photograph cowboys and cowgirls as Tom Frost said, “to document the character of the land as seen in the faces of its truest men and women, those we call cowboys.”

Frost Bank featured the images in a marketing campaign then turned the project into an exhibition that traveled across Texas for more than three years. At the end of the tour, Frost donated all 32 tintypes and 12 archival lightjet prints from the exhibition to the Witliff Collections, completing the Witliff’s archive of the photographs Kendrick published in his Revealing Character monograph by Bright Sky Press in 2005.

To honor Frost’s gift, the Witliff Collections present Revealing Character: Texas Tintypes by Robb Kendrick now through July 31, 2011. Kendrick, a frequent contributor to National Geographic, is a sixth-generation Texan who has been making tintypes for the past decade. He will be the guest speaker at the exhibition reception and program on Saturday, April 9 (see the sidebar, right).

Kendrick’s commitment to this project stems from his belief in the historical and cultural importance of working ranch hands in their many manifestations—vaqueros, buckaroos, cowpunchers, cowgirls and cowboys—and that “they will proudly and determinedly endure.” He’s published two books of these tintypes, Revealing Character and Still: Cowboys at the Start of the Twenty-First Century (University of Texas Press, 2008).

Over 120 of Kendrick’s images from the Witliff Collections’ permanent holdings are on display in the exhibition, including those gifted by Frost and a selection of some of his more recent works.

Photographs on loan from the artist’s personal collection are also on view: the First tintype Kendrick made 10 years ago (enclosed in a union case he created from scratch); images from Still: Cowboys at the Start of the 21st Century, and pictures from his Changelings mummy series (Cloverleaf Press) taken in Guanajuato, Mexico. Additionally for this exhibition, Kendrick has lent his boxed set of tintypes of the Tarahumara people mounted with magnets on letterpress boards, titled Raramuri Thiriont Ferrotypes.

Invented in the mid 1800s, tintypes (also called ferrotypes) are made directly on a thin iron plate that has been coated with chemicals, exposed in a camera while still wet, and developed on the spot. Kendrick is one of only a few photographers in the United States making tintypes using this historic wet-plate method. Each tintype he produces is one of a kind—handmade from start to finish. Kendrick’s tintypes are environmental portraits of working cowboys with a natural timelessness. The sepia and blue tones, the intentional scratching of the surface of the image by the artist, add to the depth of each image. The lines and expression on the men and women’s faces testify to their dedication to the solitary, tough, yet rewarding job of being a cowboy. Kendrick’s images reveal the moral character of those people who have honor, integrity, and an intense pride in their jobs.

While there have been many photographic essays of working cowboys made over the years using numerous types of photographic methods, Kendrick’s images are the first to document the 21st-century cowboy. Kendrick has said that the point of this project “has not been to romanticize the cowboy and transport him back to the 19th century, but to document those who still carry on the traditions, values, and lifestyles that many today would find isolating, lonely, or simply too hard.”

Collectively, these images reveal the individuality and independence of the people who have chosen this work—all the things that define character.

As a kid, the older cowboys help keep you on the straight and narrow. They care about me and want to keep me pointed in the right direction. It’s a good life with few worries. —CHANCE STOUT

456 is the number of LUÍS MÁRQUEZ photographs, maximum photo cards and postcards, plus a small collection of books and magazines that Susan Tomney Frost donated to the Witliff in August 2010. Born in Mexico on September 23, 1899, Luis Márquez was a photographer and folklorist. For political reasons, his family moved to Havana, Cuba, in 1904. Márquez learned about photography and traditions of Mexico while he worked for the Cultural Center of the Ministry of Public Education. He hand tinted his photographs before color film was readily available in Mexico. Márquez worked in the Mexican film industry in the 1920s as a cinematographer, producer, actor and writer. His photographs were made into postcards and were very popular in the 1930s. His work was first published in the magazine Suecuro in Mexico in 1932, and he gained international recognition when his photographs appeared in the May 1937 issue of National Geographic. He died in 1978.
recent ACQUISITIONS

the SOUTHWESTERN WRITERS COLLECTION

The collection currently comprises over 6,653 linear feet of materials from the region’s authors, screenwriters, and songwriters. Recent acquisitions listed below represent archive additions from August 2010 through January 2011. Not listed are the numerous gifts of books, magazines, films, CDs, and other supplemental materials. The success of the Southwestern Writers Collections depends on the generous support of our donors. Thank you! * An addition to the PAUL BAKER papers highlights the career of the noted theatre director and educator. The collection documents Baker's tenure at the Dallas Theatre Center, and it includes correspondence and files relating to his assignment as Special Services Entertainment Officer in Ireland and Paris during WWII. [Gift of the Dallas Theatre Center] * The papers of prolific music journalist and author of Austin City Limits, 23 Years of American Music, JOHN T. DAVIS, include articles, research files, field notes, correspondence, and photographs that document over three decades of music, personalities, and culture of Texas and the Southwest. [Gift of the Davis Family] * The extensive holdings of Dallas Morning News reporter LEE HANCOCK includes documents, videos, books, and reports on the 1993 Waco branch Davidian incident. Hancock covered the stand-off and the aftermath for the DM News. [Gift of Hancock] * SHARON GREN’S BOOKS was a cultural landmark in San Antonio from 1935 to 1987, and it attracted local lit vitas as well as prominent visitors including Robert Frost, J. Frank Dobie, and Walter Prescott Webb. The records of the store include newspaper clippings, invitations to book events, photo graphs, and account registers. Note of is a selection of letters from American artist Rockwell Kent to Florence Rosengren soon after her relocation from Chicago to San Antonio. On January 27, 1930, he writes “Your letter presents a vivid picture of the difficulties of the fine-line book dealer in the wilderness of the south west. I wish you luck.” [Gift of the Rosengren Family] * THE CLARENCE SCHULZ Collection contains research and drafts for his unpublished manuscript, "Texas Laugh: A Chronicle of Sixteen Humorists, 1836–2000." An extensive selection of over 500 books on Texas and southwestern humor supplements the papers. [Gift of Schulz] * The 40+ year friendship of WALTER SHEPARD and JOHNNY DARK is documented through letters, photographs, and audiocassettes (see p. 3). * Additional BUD STRAKE material includes correspondence and drafts by the late author. Also included is a battered briefcase Strake used during his travels for Sports Illustrated with his initials printed on the front. [Gift of Ben Strake] * We would also like to thank the following for donating additional materials to their papers: JIM HIGHTOWER, LARRY L. KING, DICK J. REAVIS, JOHN SEPICH, MARC SIMMONS, TEXAS MONTHLY, and BILLY SALLY WITTLLIFF. * the SOUTHWESTERN & MEXICAN PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION New gifts include photographs by JIM BONES, including his Paisano portfolio, PITCHHIT -11 from the images of Big Bend (on the cover) [Gift of Bones], photographs of Billy Joe Shaver (left) and Sam Shepard, and a baton used by MATT LEE in his performances. [Gift of Bill & Sally Wittliff] * Photographs of William Wayne Justice by MICHAEL O’BRIEN [Gift of O’Brine]; and photographs of the surviving Lindes series by BILL WITTLLIFF. [Gift of Wittliff] * New purchases include painted works by KATE BREAKLY, photographs by MICHAEL O’BRIEN; and images by JOEL SALCIDO from his Spain: Millennium Paint series. *—Special contributor BRANDON D. SHADER is pursuing his doctorate in Literature, Social Justice, and the Environment at Texas Tech University. He is a frequent contributor to Outdoors Illustrated, Texas Books in Review. He is currently working with James Lea and the Tom Lea Institute to edit the correspondence between Tom Lea and Fred Dobie, forthcoming from UT Press in the Wittliff’s Southwestern Writers Collection book series.

AT FIRST IT’S a tap... tap... tap... followed by a wrist, elbow, and shoulder-wrenching tug. What happens next sends most into an obsessive quest in search of an elusive fish—the tarpon—that great, ancient dinosaur of our present-day estuaries, rivers and beachesfront. The Silver King, writer and musician Junior Bobo has flashy jumps and line and heart tug bravado, commands respect. He also gives us Tarpon Fever, which needs the collection. Texas novelist and journalist HART STITWELL was there during the Silver King’s reign, and he had the fever. To cure himself, Stilwell chronicled the rise and decline of the Texas tarpon fishing. Unfortunately, he didn’t live to see the sport’s demise and his manuscript never materialized. Hart Stilwell (1902–1975) is a little-known Texas treasure. He published three autobiographical novels in the 1940s: Border City, Uncrowned Wagon, and Campus Town. Uncrowned Wagon is included in A.C. Greene’s Fifty Best Books on Texas, and Stilwell’s treatment of Anglo-Mexico relations in Border City has drawn praise from literary scholars. But Stilwell’s better known for his outdoor writing. He was a major writer for Field & Stream and Outdoor Life, and his books on the subject include Hunting and Fishing in Texas (1946) and Fishing in Mexico (1948). Then there’s his “lost” manuscript. I first heard of Stilwell’s silver king manuscript from other tarpon fishing fanatics. In fact, the manuscript has a mystical aura in tarpon Texas fishing circles. Every few years a battered, incomplete, drink-stained copy will make its rounds through the community. Yet each time the manuscript comes around, it seems to be a different version, with new sections completed, or other sections missing, or composed in a slightly different voice. I decided to see if I could solve this mystery by visiting the headwaters of Stilwell’s literary papers: the Wittliff Collections.

the ARCHIVES

the Hart Stilwell archive is small, but tricked neatly inside Box 1, amid original research photos and various correspondence, is the answer to the mystery of “Glory of the Silver King.” The Stilwell collection has three coffee- and nicotine-stained drafts of “Glory of the Silver King”—two very disjointed and unpolished manuscripts and a final polished draft. The mystery for me was solved, but there were greater forces at work, and I was compelled to cure a bit of the Tarpon Fever that has infected generations of fishermen. So, with the blessing of Benjamin Acosta-Hughes, Stilwell’s grandson, and the Wittliff Collections, I edited the various drafts into a single version of Glory of the Silver King, a book I think Stilwell would be proud of. Glory of the Silver King The Golden Age of Tarpon Fishing is being published this spring by Texas A&M University Press. The text is a subtle polemic against man’s exploitation of our natural resources, wrapped inside a compelling fishing tale. Stilwell’s silver king manuscript from connection with the reader, and prescient conservational advice makes the text unique in Texas letters. Glory of the Silver King is a treasure of Texas literature, and my hope is that it will be regarded as one of our best environmental texts, alongside the likes of Gone to a River and A Question of A Texan Naturalise. The Wittliff’s Southwestern Writers Collection is full of gems like Glory of the Silver King. It’s a mine waiting to yield up its lode. Although my mining didn’t turn up the alchemist’s stone, I did discover “Silver.”

LUCAS

THE KEYSSTONE

exhibitions & events CALENDAR

exhibitions

FEB 23 – JULY 31, 2011
REVEALING CHARACTER: Texan Tintypes by ROBB KENDRICK. Commissioned by Frost Bank, Kendrick drove to 30 ranches across 18,000 miles of Texas making one-of-a-kind portraits of cowhands using the historic method of wet-plate tintype. Over 120 of his images are now on display, including recent works. APR. 9 Reception / program. (pp. 12-13)

FEB 23 – APR 29, 2011
BITTERSWEET HARVEST: The Bracero Program. (pp. 7-8)

MAR. 1 Reception / program. (pp. 9-3)

JAN 18 – JULY 17, 2011
BIG BEND: Land of the Texas Imagination. Big Bend has inspired generations of writers and photographers, and many of their works are on display from the Wittliff’s permanent archives. Supporting Texas State’s Common Experience. MAR 31: Reception / program. (pp. 4-5)

JAN 18 – JU LY 17, 2011
The Rising STAR of Texas. A member of the Texas State University System

TOURS & INFO

E-MAIL thewittliff@txstate.edu

ONLINE (Directions, parking, archive info, etc.) worsen@wittliffcollections.txstate.edu

FACEBOOK: Join us for all the news!

RECEPTION

O N P ERMA N EN T D I SPLAY

T H E  E D G E  O F  T I M E :

Tom “Stretch” Bowe rman, XI Ranch, Texas. Photographs of Mexico by Mariana Yampolsky. (p. 7)

RANCH, TEXAS

FA BI L I S S T O M E N T

Crossing the Border, 1936. © Leonard Nadel

R E C E I V E

T H E  K E Y S T O N E

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THE WITT LIFF COLLECTIONS

Southwestern Writers Collection
Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection
Texas State University-San Marcos

601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666-4604

THE MFA STUDENTS read their poetry and fiction. 5:00 pm

ROBERT STONE reads as the University Endowed Chair in Creative Writing. Book signing to follow. 3:30 pm

31 BIG BEND panel discussion celebrates the exhibition with photographer LAURENCE PARENT. Authors JOE NICK FOSTER and BARBARA “BARNEY” NELSON, Big Bend National Park Ranger MARCOS PAREDES, and Texas Monthly editor JAKE SILVERSTEIN. RSVP smithsonianlatino@txstate.edu. 6:30 pm (pp. 4-5)

5 BOBBY ROBERTSON reads from the CBE manuscripts based on Larry McMurtry’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. 7:00 pm

8 THE MFA STUDENTS read their poetry and fiction. 5:00 pm

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14 GEORGE SAUNDERS reads for the English Department TKE/AP Series. Book signing and Q&A to follow. 3:30 pm

TRAVELING SHOWS

FEB. 3 – MAY 31, 2011
Photographs from the Mexican series by Gracelya Lurdivé are featured in the Her Gaze / Su mirada exhibition at the Museo de las Americas in Denver, Colorado. (pp. 8-9)

L O T S & A S S I S T A N C E

Would you like to schedule a group or class tour? Call us at 512.245.2313 or request a tour online at www.thesouthwesternwriters.com/about/visit/tour.html. If you require assistance due to special needs, call ahead and we’ll be happy to help.

S A V E T H E D A T E!

THE WITT LIFF COLLECTIONS 25TH ANNIVERSARY celebration will be NOVEMBER 13 at Austin’s Four Seasons. Watch the online events calendar for details. For more information, contact mj200@txstate.edu

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NOVEMBER 13

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