THE WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS

FALL 2013
On July 31, 2013, Texas and the nation mourned the loss of John Graves, whose 1960 classic Goodbye to a River and other authentic writings about his place on the land led Texas Monthly’s founding editor, William Broyles, Jr.,—and so many others—to revere Graves as the “literary godfather” of Texas. Broyles spoke at Graves’s memorial service on August 10, as did Stephen Harrigan, Rick Bass, John and Jane’s daughters, Sally Graves Jackson and Helen Graves, and our founder, Bill Wittliff, who told this story about a favorite past-time he and John shared: fly fishing.

**JOHN GRAVES**

JOHN GRAVES was my friend. my dear, dear friend. There are a lot of us here today who can say that. One of the really nice things about having a writer for a friend is that you never really lose them so long as you can reach over and grab one of their books off the shelf. That’s particularly true of John, I think—if you know his books you knew him. I mean that really is John in his books… and those really are the things he cared about… and it was one of his great gifts that he could write about those things in such a way that you cared about them, too.

Just a few weeks ago—June 20th, in fact—John sent me a little piece he’d been working on for a long, long time but had never really gotten comfortable with. He had kept at it draft after draft and was keeping at it still. Jane made that possible. Jane was the one who all along—even while having an illustrious career of her own as a designer—tended to the necessities and expectations of everyday life so that John could write (and John knew it)… and it says something about John Graves the Writer that he was still looking for just the right word, just the right sentence when he went out the door.

The truth is, I don’t remember a time when we weren’t friends once we met out at Dobie’s Pasano Ranch some forty odd years ago. John came home with me that night in November 1970, and he and my Sally and I stayed up pretty much the rest of the night talking about books and writing and lack of rain and other things and told wonderfully ribald jokes. And of course we talked about fly fishing to which we were both addicted, and in a few years we were making annual trips up to the San Juan River in New Mexico with my then teenage son Reid in tow to have a go at the Rainbows and Cutthroats.

Between trips John would tie flies and build flyrods and practice knots and try new casts, like the doublehaul, out on the grass in front of the house he himself had built at Hard Scrabble. One year he invented a fly to imitate a cluster of several hundred—maybe several thousand—midges floating down the stream altogether (kinda like a big Christmas dinner for a trout). Forgive me, John, but it was the most awful looking thing you ever saw in your life. If you’ve ever seen a dust ball about the size of golf ball roll across a hardwood floor you get the idea. But John just could not have been prouder, so Reid and I named it the Graves Cluster in his honor and John—along with us of course—just couldn’t wait to see it in action.

The next morning our guide Harry started pulling tiny flies out of his fly box with a pair of tweezers and handing them out. John watched for a minute then said, “Well I was thinking we might wanna start with this one right here,” and then he proudly opened his hand and the Graves Cluster lay there in his palm like some poor little of lost creature that had been deserted by its momma. Well, Harry’s nose went straight up in the air. I mean he just totally disdained the Graves Cluster and made some upitty remarks about the classic patterns he’d tied the night before that perhaps he might better suited to these waters and these elegant fish… in other words the Graves Cluster was just a damn Redneck and what self-respecting trout would even give it a glance…

John didn’t say anything, but Reid and I could see he was hurt and disappointed and maybe even a little embarrassed, too, at having brought the Graves Cluster out in public in the first place. In any event, Harry and I went downstream while John and Reid stayed where they were and began casting to rising trout along the cutbank. Then a really big trout showed himself and Reid went after him with the tiny midge Harry had selected for him… but no luck… the little midge just wasn’t enough to tempt the old boy. Finally Reid said, “John, lemme have that Graves Cluster.” John already had it out of the flybox and in his hand. “You damn right,” he said and Reid tied it on….

Harry and I heard the splash then busted our butts to get back upstream in time to see them net the big trout—and it was a big trout—and of course it’s been getting bigger and bigger ever since….

Harry was beside himself. “What’d you catch him on?” he said. “That little midge I tied last night!” John turned away—he was a polite man and I guess just didn’t want Harry to see him glow. But Reid smiled then carefully took the fly out of the trout’s lip and held it up for Harry to see: the Graves Cluster!

Later, when we were back at our little cabin at Abe’s, we laughed about it… Oh listen, we laughed and we laughed and we laughed. “Well, it was just a goddamn triumph that’s all,” John said. “Just a goddamn triumph.” Lord that was fun—it was all such fun. All those years… you just couldn’t be around John without feeling enriched… enlarged… blessed… That’s exactly the right word: blessed. You felt blessed… and it was a blessing you could carry around with you for the rest of your life.

—BILL WITTLIFF

Written on August 6, 2013, John’s 93rd Birthday

(above) John Graves in his barn office (detail), 11/2/1977, Bill Wittliff

(left) The Graves Cluster, approx. 3” long

(above) Reid Wittliff and John Graves, 6/25/1987, Bill Wittliff
FOR YEARS THE Wittliff Collections have exhibited individual pieces from SAM SHEPARD’s impressive archive, which Shepard began donating in 1992. Now we are presenting our first-ever comprehensive exhibition focused on the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and Academy Award®-nominated actor—and we’re featuring him on this issue’s front cover.

The Writer’s Road: Selections from the Sam Shepard Papers reveals the raw intensity of the man as it maps the arc of his celebrated life and career: from his days as a young, rebellious one-act off-Broadway playwright to his reinvention as master of the complex family drama with plays like Curse of the Starving Class, Buried Child, and True West. Shepard reveals his thoughts and moods in handwritten notes, from his spiritual sojourns in England in the early 1970s to his unexpected fame as a Hollywood star in the 1980s. Other materials show the roles of important people in Shepard’s life, including Bob Dylan and Jessica Lange.

Lending depth and intimacy to the exhibition are numerous pieces from a collection of nearly 300 letters, candid photographs and other materials exchanged across four and a half decades between Shepard and his long-time close friend Johnny Dark. (pp. 6-7)

The Writer’s Road also showcases Shepard’s densely filled notebooks, which contain the earliest handwritten drafts of his stories and plays, sometimes composed while he was, literally, driving across America. Now, visitors to the Wittliff can trace Shepard’s creative process—and the restless energy he brings to his work.

Curated by Texas State faculty member Chad Hammett and Wittliff Southwestern Writers Collection curator Steve Davis with assistance from Wittliff staff, The Writer’s Road runs through February 14, 2014.

**THE EXHIBITION ONLINE:** A dynamic virtual presentation of The Writer’s Road: Selections from the Sam Shepard Papers is now on our website. Viewers can see a reproduction of the Wittliff’s physical exhibition and explore specific artifacts that offer insight into Shepard’s life and creative process. The online exhibition was created by Chad Hammett and fellow Texas State faculty member Twister Marquiss. Visit anytime: www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/exhibitions-events/online/shepard.

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**SELECTIONS FROM THE SAM SHEPARD PAPERS**

**The Writer’s Road**

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NEW in the Wittliff’s Southwestern Writers Collection Series:

The Letters of Sam Shepard and Johnny Dark

Edited by Chad Hammett

We are excited to announce the newest volume in our Southwestern Writers Collection Book Series: Two Prospectors: The Letters of Sam Shepard and Johnny Dark.

Two Prospectors gathers nearly 40 years of correspondence and transcribed conversations between Sam Shepard and his good friend Johnny Dark. In these gripping, sometimes gut-wrenching letters, the men open themselves to each other with surprising honesty. Shepard’s letters give us the deepest look we may ever get into his personal philosophy and creative process, while in Dark’s letters we discover insights into Shepard’s character only an intimate friend could provide.

The men also reflect on their relationships with women (including Shepard’s anguished decision to leave his wife and son for actress Jessica Lange), their personal struggles, and the accumulating years. Illustrated with Dark’s candid, revealing photographs of Shepard and others taken across the decades, as well as facsimiles of numerous letters, Two Prospectors is a compelling portrait of a complex friendship that has anchored two lives for decades.

The book will be published by the University of Texas Press in mid-October. Editor Chad Hammett teaches at Texas State University where he received a master of fine arts degree in fiction.

DON’T MISS THE DOCUMENTARY

SHEPARD & DARK is a portrait of the multilayered relationship between playwright/actor Sam Shepard and his longtime close friend Johnny Dark. Director Treva Wurmfeld documents the men reminiscing as they sift through their years of correspondence in preparation for turning the materials over to the Wittliff for our newest series book, Two Prospectors: The Letters of Sam Shepard & Johnny Dark (left). Music Box Films Home Entertainment will release the award-winning Shepard & Dark on DVD and VOD on October 22, 2013. The documentary will be available for viewing in the Wittliff reading room free of charge.

...the body disappears, the legs fall off, the eyes bleed, the hands go numb, the mind shuts down, and then, suddenly, something new begins to appear.
TITLED IN TRIBUTE to the traditional song “México lindo y querido”—whose lyrics evoke a love of the homeland—this exhibition celebrates the beauty of Mexico as seen through both native and foreign eyes. A survey of more than 100 photographs drawn from the Wittliff’s permanent holdings, México lindo explores subjects that illuminate the diversity of the country’s landscapes, speak to the dignity of the individual, and reveal the importance of family, community, tradition, and faith. Images by 49 camera artists represent a variety of printing techniques, from tintype to traditional darkroom to digital.

ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, the Wittliff Collections celebrated the exhibitions Mexico lindo and Manuel Álvarez Bravo with an afternoon of festivities. Lively and talented, El Mariachi Carta Blanca welcomed attendees with “Mexico lindo y querido” and other traditional music.

Several photographers with work in the México lindo exhibition mingled with visitors at the reception, including Keith Carter, John Christian, Faustinus Deraet, Robin Renee Hix, Joel Salcido, Rocky Schenck, Geoff Winningham, and Bill Wittliff.

Writer, curator, and former Austin Museum of Art director Elizabeth Ferrer presented a talk entitled “Between Tradition and Modernity is a Bridge: The Photograph in Mexico,” to an engaged audience of more than 200 guests. Ferrer discussed and illustrated the many ways that photographers, both native and foreign, have continually looked to the past in elaborating their visions of Mexico. A touchstone for her discussion was the oeuvre of Manuel Álvarez Bravo, broadly considered Mexico’s greatest 20th-century photographer, and one who profoundly influenced and acted as a bridge to generations of camera artists who followed him. Referring to images surrounding the audience on the gallery walls, Ferrer explained the importance of key figures in the history of Mexican photography, such as Lola Álvarez Bravo, Graciela Iturbide, Yolanda Andrade, and Héctor García, and pointed out the many Americans—including Edward Weston, Paul Strand, Keith Carter, and Bill Wittliff—who have long been inspired by Mexico’s people, cultures, and landscapes.

THIS IS THE first time the Wittliff has mounted a solo exhibition of its prints by one of the founders of modern photography, Manuel Álvarez Bravo (1902–2002). After 20 years of collecting, the Wittliff presents 51 signed vintage and modern prints taken by this important master over a span of 70 years. Don’t miss this landmark exhibition at Texas State.
méxico lindo
YOLANDA ANDRADE

Yolanda Andrade was born in Villahermosa, Tabasco, in 1950, and attended the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, New York, from 1976 to 1977. She has received grants from the National Endowment for Culture and Arts in Mexico and in 1994 was the recipient of a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowship. Andrade has published many books and has taught photographic workshops, most recently on photographing urban environments and landscapes and on photographic editing. Since 2003, she has exclusively worked in color with digital cameras, and she no longer produces black-and-white work. The Wittliff Collections have 79 of her photographs. This image is on view now through December 13 in our México lindo exhibition. (p. 8)
this october, Twelve Books publishes Dallas 1963

by Bill Minutaglio and Wittliff Collections literary curator Steven L. Davis

A vibrant account of a city brewing with political passions, where larger-than-life characters are dead-set against the Kennedy presidency, Dallas 1963 is not only a fresh look at a momentous national tragedy, it is also a sobering reminder of how radical, polarizing ideologies can poison a city—and a nation.

The book has been generating advance praise. In a starred review, Publishers Weekly said: “After fifty years, it’s a challenge to fashion a new lens with which to view the tragic events of November 22, 1963—yet Texans [Minutaglio and Davis] pull it off brilliantly.”

On Thursday, October 24 at 4:00 pm, Steve Davis and Bill Minutaglio, who teaches journalism at UT-Austin and has been cleaning his papers to the Wittliff, will talk about their ground-breaking book and sign copies. Here is a preview:

Q. How important were archives in your research?
A. We kept being too polite to each other. And then, finally, we learned to be as tough on each other as we are on ourselves. That was kind of a breakthrough, and once it happened, the drafts began to fly back and forth.

Q. How important were archives in your research?
A. We noticed a big gaping hole in all the previous Kennedy books: while authors kept trying to explain the assassination, none of them ever bothered to explain Dallas. We knew there were mysteries, unanswered questions, about Dallas during the Kennedy years—how it gained a notorious reputation that many of JFK’s friends and advisors warned him to avoid the city. That was kind of a breakthrough, and once it happened, the drafts began to fly back and forth.

Q. How did the concept for Dallas 1963 originate?
A. It was home to the fantastic, outsized gathering of titans leading the fight against Kennedy: the world’s richest oilman; the leader of the largest all-white Baptist congregation in the world; the most ideologically extreme member of Congress; and the publisher of the hugely influential Dallas Morning News, whose hostility towards Kennedy was so feverish that he wasn’t content to just attack JFK in editorials—he traveled to Washington, D.C. to personally berate the president inside the White House. Dallas’s reputation as an extremist haven grew, and the city began attracting even more radical elements, including a rogue ex-Army general relieved of command by JFK and a former communist defector named Lee Harvey Oswald.

Q. What was it like working together on the book?
A. We knew each other first as friends and colleagues who admired each other’s work, and it was hard to move beyond that at the beginning. We kept being too polite to each other. And then, finally, we learned to be as tough on each other as we are on ourselves. That was kind of a breakthrough, and once it happened, the drafts began to fly back and forth.

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ACQUISITION highlights

AFRICAN AMERICAN THEATER in Texas has a rich history, and Texas State professors Sandra Mayo and Elvin Holt have spent the past several years traveling the state collecting programs, reviews, posters, and photographs to document this thriving theater community. The pair is authoring two books on the subject: an anthology forthcoming this spring in the Wittliff’s Southwestern Writers Collection series, Acting Up and Getting Down: Plays by African American Texans; and a history of black theater in Texas. The archive includes many of the items they collected as well as research materials and files on dramatists containing correspondence and interviews. [Gift of Mayo]

OVER THE PAST six months, the Wittliff acquired additions to the archives of:

Bill Arhos, Jim Hightower, Larry L. King, Joe L. Landale, Joe Nick Patoski, Dick J. Reavis, Jo Pridemore, James Reasoner, April Ross, Tom Slaughter, Bill & Sally Wittliff. [Gifts of the authors or their estates]

SUSAN TOOMEY FROST, a San Antonio collector of art, artifacts, books, and antiquities, recently donated two major collections. Her Mexican border-town postcards consist of 3,857 images, among them photographic postcards and printed postcards representing 22 Mexican cities and towns along the 1,969-mile border between the U.S. and Mexico. Brochures and books are part of this collection as well. Frost also donated her Guillermo Kahlo collection of 120 photographs, postcards, booklets, and books. Kahlo, father of renowned artist Frida Kahlo, is best known for his architectural photography of early 20th-century Mexico. Some of the Kahlo rarities are a sleeved booklet of ten views, entitled Recuerdo de la Ciudad de México, and a bifold panoramic postcard of a street scene with the Santo Domingo Cathedral. There are also 14 silver-gelatin architectural prints of churches and buildings in Cholula, Metepec, Mexico City, Puebla, San Miguel de Allende, Tepotzotlán, and Tlaxcala. [Gift of Bill & Sally Wittliff]

PATRICIA BROWNING GRIFFITH, a native Texan and Baylor University graduate, is a well-respected author of novels, short stories, and plays. Her work has been anthologized in O. Henry Prize Stories and featured in the Paris Review. Publishers Weekly praised The World Around Midnight as a “graceful novel of small-town-Texas eccentricity.” She is currently on the faculty at George Washington University where she teaches creative writing. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the PEN/Faulkner foundation. Her papers include correspondence, reviews, and drafts of her works, as well as screenplay treatments for many of them. [Gift of Griffith]

IN COMMEMORATION OF Cormac McCarthy’s 80th birthday this past July 20, Peter Greenleaf donated eight letters he received from the author between 1981 and 1988. The brief but personal letters reveal an open, friendly McCarthy who discusses his progress on writing, his reading interests, mutual acquaintances, and travel. In a letter dated November 19, 1984, McCarthy observes, “You may be right in saying that the English are fascinated by the West. I thought it was because they watched Dallas on television. Friends of mine from El Paso who have been to Europe recently say that if you’ll wear your cowboy boots you’ll be surrounded by new friends instantly.” [Gift of Greenleaf]

IN COMMEMORATION OF the eighteenth century, Pat & Keith Carter donated three archival photographs by Rocky Schenck: eight hand-colored prints by Kate Breakey: two from her series Creatures of Light and Darkness, and six from her Slowlight series which are currently on display in México lindo. (p.8)

HIGHLIGHTS of photographic acquisitions from the past seven months include the following PURCHASES

- Five vintage prints by Martina Vancloksdijk
- Five digital color prints by Rocky Schenck
- Eight hand-colored prints by Kate Breakey

NEW GIFTS include four additional photographic postcards by Hugo Brehme from Susan Frost; four tin-types of portraits of Bill and Sally Wittliff taken by Keith Carter [gift of Pat & Keith Carter]; three archival pigment prints from The Road to Tepeyac series by Alinka Echeverria, which are on view now in México lindo [gift of Echeverria]; an oversized print of JA Corral by Robb Kendrick [gift of John Scott]; and three archival digital prints by Bill Wittliff, one of which is the first photograph Bill took in 1947—with his Donald Duck camera [gift of Bill & Sally Wittliff].

THANK YOU to all our donors

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JOE R. LANSDALE
mojo storyteller goes graphic

Located in Lansdale’s papers housed at the Wittliff Collections are scripts, art, and correspondence related to his graphic novel work. Lansdale has contributed to multiple horror magazines, graphic novels, and comic books, such as Blood and Shadows, Marvel Adventures: Fantastic Four #32, and Conan and Songs of the Dead.

Lansdale’s own zombie western, Dead in the West, was readily converted into a graphic novel. Neal Barrett, Jr. adapted the story, Truman created the cover, and writer and illustrator Jack Jackson, who also donated a collection of his work to the Wittliff, designed the story panels. A star in his genres, Lansdale counts among his many awards eight Bram Stokers, one Edgar, and the Horror Writers Association Award for Lifetime Achievement. And Lansdale’s success is international, as evidenced by the multiple translations of his work and international interviews he has conducted over the years. In addition to his fiction, Lansdale has contributed to magazines, television, and film, including the cult-classic Bubba Ho-Tep, which is based on a story from Sanctified and Chicken Fried published in the Wittliff’s Southwestern Writers series.

This September Lansdale published his newest novel, The Thicket, and he has recently been on the set of the film adaptation of his novel Cold in July with Michael C. Hall, Don Johnson, Vinessa Shaw, and Sam Shepard, who is portraying Ben Russel.

Lansdale began donating his archive to the Wittliff in 1992, and he generously continues to add to his eclectic collection. Keep up with Joe at www.joerlansdale.com.

RESEARCHERS travel from far afield to reach us

Over the past several years, scholars from across the United States as well as from Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Mexico, Scotland, and South Africa have traveled to the Wittliff Collections to conduct research in our reading room. Our number of researchers surged with the opening of the Cormac McCarthy Papers in 2009, and his archive remains the most frequently requested by scholars. The Sam Shepard Papers, however, come in a close second in popularity, with biographers and theater scholars eager to access this unique resource. (pp. 4–7)

The 1993 siege of the Mount Carmel Center, the Branch Dividian compound outside of Waco, well documented in the Dick J. Reavis Papers, continues to fascinate the international community as well, and documentary filmmakers have come from as far away as the United Kingdom to view records housed in Reavis’ archive.

Scholars who travel great distances to conduct research at the Wittliff typically spend anywhere from a full week to several months immersed in the archives, and many come back for return visits.

We greatly enjoy having visitors from so many diverse backgrounds and geographic regions conducting research in our reading room, and it demonstrates the international significance of our cultural resources from the American Southwest.

If after reading a story you are left horrified and brimming with suspense, yet full of laughter, then you may be a fortunate victim of the writings of champion mojo storyteller Joe R. Lansdale, a man who once convinced a fan that “Lonesome” Joe Lansdale “pens his books in blood, ‘cause ink is for wimps.”

Master of the short story, and an award-winning writer of horror, science fiction, westerns, and mysteries, Lansdale has conquered multiple genres and formats, authoring over 30 novels and countless short stories. Even though Lansdale’s writing needs no help infiltrating the reader’s imagination, his work lends itself easily to the world of graphic novels.

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RESEARCHERS travel from far afield to reach us

Over the past several years, scholars from across the United States as well as from Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Mexico, Scotland, and South Africa have traveled to the Wittliff Collections to conduct research in our reading room. Our number of researchers surged with the opening of the Cormac McCarthy Papers in 2009, and his archive remains the most frequently requested by scholars. The Sam Shepard Papers, however, come in a close second in popularity, with biographers and theater scholars eager to access this unique resource. (pp. 4–7)

The 1993 siege of the Mount Carmel Center, the Branch Dividian compound outside of Waco, well documented in the Dick J. Reavis Papers, continues to fascinate the international community as well, and documentary filmmakers have come from as far away as the United Kingdom to view records housed in Reavis’ archive.

Scholars who travel great distances to conduct research at the Wittliff typically spend anywhere from a full week to several months immersed in the archives, and many come back for return visits.

We greatly enjoy having visitors from so many diverse backgrounds and geographic regions conducting research in our reading room, and it demonstrates the international significance of our cultural resources from the American Southwest.
have you joined us on facebook? Become a fan of the Wittliff Collections page and discover “behind the scenes” stories like these plus much more:

a sign of the times: On Tuesday, September 3, 2013, a new painted mahogany relief carving by Austin artist David Everett was installed at the entrance to the Wittliff Galleries. A number of Everett’s works are on display around the main gallery entrance and the dedication plaques for the two components of the Wittliff: the Southwestern Writers Collection and the Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection. His latest work, titled Las Lomas (The Hills), serves to physically unite the two areas under the Wittliff Collections name.

The animals in the carving are native to our land, including the bobcat—an obvious inclusion for Texas State. Rain clouds were a special request by our founder Bill Wittliff, who commissioned the piece—symbolic hope for relief for this drought-affected region.

Born in the southeast Texas town of Beaumont in 1950, David Everett displayed an interest in the visual arts and the natural world from his earliest years. He was drawn to his home state of Arkansas all the way to San Marcos, Texas, to visit Riordan’s archives at the Wittliff Collections. The animals begin to emerge from arkansas to the rick riordan archive: What’s a great way to commemorate the opening day of the latest film based on a book by your favorite author? Travel hundreds of miles to get your hands on his handwritten notes and original manuscripts, of course. At least that’s what Courtney Clotyes and Zoe Tollette, both 15, did the day Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters hit theaters. Binky Martin-Tollette, Zoe’s mother, brought the two young Rick Riordan fans from their home state of Arkansas all the way to San Marcos, Texas, to visit Riordan’s archive at the Wittliff Collections. When asked why they were such big fans of the author and the series, Courtney exclaimed: “Why not?!” Well, ask a stupid question...

Zoe, who is from Little Rock, became interested in Greek mythology as a sixth grader. She liked the first Percy Jackson movie when it came out, but when she picked up the book, she found she enjoyed reading the story so much more. Part of that enjoyment may come from being able to identify with Percy himself, since, like him, Zoe is dyslexic. Up until then, Zoe had not been an avid reader, but once she started Riordan’s Percy Jackson books, she read the entire series in a week. Her mother said she hardly left her bedroom during this time.

Courtney, who lives in Searcy, was actually reluctant to read the first Percy Jackson book, even after seeing the movie. However once she finally decided to read it, she got into the characters and story so much that she made her way to the local library to check out the series. She read (and reread) it in a couple of weeks. Throughout the process she became more knowledgeable and interested in Greek mythology.

Once in our reading room, the girls perused Riordan’s early manuscripts, observing his own notes as well as the notes that editors had given his work. They were just as fascinated by what did not make it into the books as they were with what did. For example, the working title of the first book was Son of the Sea God, which was abandoned in favor of The Lightning Thief—so the title doesn’t give away the identity of Percy’s father. They capped off their visit by watching the video of the talk Rick Riordan gave at the Wittliff on May 11, 2012. His appearance was made in conjunction with the exhibition of his archives that we had on view at the time. —posted 8/7/13  

holy batboat, batman! With multitudes of fans in a state of anguish over Warner Bros.’ latest choice of actor to play the Dark Knight, our archives team has uncovered something to serve as a pleasant distraction. Instead of asking yourself if the Batman franchise can be kept aloft by Ben Affleck, try your attention to an actual boat used by the Caped Crusader in the 1966 Batman movie. That’s right, the Wittliff is in possession of an original sketch of the first Batboat!

Tony Bell, then a 23-year-old comic book creator living in Austin, contacted Bud Shrake, who at the time was writing for Sports Illustrated—Shrake’s archives are held here at the Wittliff—to pitch a “drawing-story” about a boat race that took place in Houston. As proof of his drawing ability, and perhaps as a way to gain some credibility with the magazine, Bell enclosed the sketch of the Batboat, a project he was currently building in a friends’ garage.

Batman opened on July 30, 1966, at the Paramount Theatre in Austin. Bell was hired by the Austin-based company Glastron, whose payment for being contracted out to build the Batboat was the film premiere in their hometown. —posted 8/23/13  

The animals begin to emerge

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Did you know the first Batman film premiered in Austin? The Wittliff holds an original drawing of the Batboat by artist Tony Bell!
**THE KEYSTONE**

**THE WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS at the ALKEK LIBRARY**

Southwestern Writers Collection
Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection

**LOCATION**

7th floor, Alkek Library, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX

**ADMISSION** is free

**TOURS & INFO** 512.245.2313

**E-MAIL** thewittliff@txstate.edu

**ONLINE** (Directions, parking, archives info, etc.) www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu

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**EXHIBITION HOURS** Please see the website.

**RESEARCH HOURS** Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (Please call to make an appointment. Closed breaks & holidays.)

**THE GIFT SHOP** is open online:

www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/shop

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**THE KEYS...**

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**JANUARY 2 – MARCH 30, 2014**

**FINE LINE: Mental Health / Mental Illness: A Documentary of Voices, Stories, and Portraits by MICHAEL NYE**. Pairing portraits with voice recordings, Nye’s documentary project reveals the courage and the fragility of people living with disorder, confronts stereotypes, and draws attention to the tenuous threshold between stability and unbalance. Presented in support of Texas State’s Common Experience.

**MARCH 18 – AUGUST 1, 2014**

**ACTING UP AND GETTING DOWN: Plays by African American Texans** celebrates the new book in the Wittliff’s literary series: an anthology showcasing African American dramatists in Texas edited by Texas State faculty members Sandra Mayo and Elvin Holt. This exhibition springs from the theater archives donated to the Wittliff Collections by Dr. Mayo. (p. 14)

**OPENING JANUARY 21, 2014**

**MAN AND BEAST: Photographs from India and Mexico** presents over 100 images by renowned photographer Mary Ellen Mark, many of which explore the fundamental, intimate working relationships between people and animals in two countries half a world apart. From the new Wittliff photography series book of the same name.

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**down the road...**

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**ELIZABETH, 2002, Michael Nye**

**JANUARY 2 – MARCH 30, 2014**

**F I N E  L I N E:  M e n t a l  H e a l t h / M e n t a l  I l l n e s s:  A D o c u m e n t a r y o f  V o i c e s ,  S t o r i e s ,  a n d  P o r t r a i t s  b y  M I C H A E L  N Y E**. Pairing portraits with voice recordings, Nye’s documentary project reveals the courage and the fragility of people living with disorder, confronts stereotypes, and draws attention to the tenuous threshold between stability and unbalance. Presented in support of Texas State’s Common Experience.

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**A C T I N G  U P  A N D  G E T T I N G  D O W N :  P l a y s  b y  A f r i c a n  A m e r i c a n  T e x a n s** celebrates the new book in the Wittliff’s literary series: an anthology showcasing African American dramatists in Texas edited by Texas State faculty members Sandra Mayo and Elvin Holt. This exhibition springs from the theater archives donated to the Wittliff Collections by Dr. Mayo. (p. 14)

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**Boy with a Holy Cow, India, 1995, Mary Ellen Mark**

**on the cover**

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Sam Shepard, 1992, by Bill Wittliff is currently on view in The Writer’s Road. (pp. 4–5)