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A staff member and customers at an H.F. Dollar store in Queens, New York, wear protective gear in late April to avoid transmitting the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Camilo José Vergara/Prints and Photographs Division

Collecting on the Pandemic Begins Across the Library

The effort is being compared to acquisitions tied to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

BY WENDI A. MALONEY

People chatting in the sun beside a taco truck in Oakland, California; a woman peering warily over a surgical mask in a Newark, New Jersey, bus line; cheerful-looking mannequins sporting face coverings for sale in the Bronx; a sign reading “no gloves, no mask, no service” taped on the entrance to a Royal Chicken and Biscuit restaurant in Newark.

What do these images have in common? They're all by Camilo José Vergara, noted for photographing urban communities where life is often hard. They are also among the very first items the Library acquired documenting the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

And they will be far from the last: The Library anticipates a collecting effort that exceeds its coverage of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks – which was huge.

“That touched certain aspects of our society,” said Joe Puccio, the Library’s collection development officer, of Sept. 11. “But this thing is touching everything – from science and health care to business to entertainment to education – it’s everything.”

The job of the Library in this situation, he said, is to “determine what’s the most important material to acquire and what a researcher in a hundred years will need to see from what is being

COLLECTING, CONTINUED ON 6

DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Lisa Davis at (202) 707-0033.

Craig Andrews
Sharif Adenan
Lynette Brown
Eric Clark

Sharron Jones
Terri Harris-Wandix
Donna Williams

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COVID-19

June 10, 10 a.m.

www.youtube.com/loc

Constanze Stelzenmüller, Kissinger chair in foreign policy and international relations at the John W. Kluge Center, and Andrew Weiss, Library of Congress chair in U.S.-Russia relations, will discuss how the European Union is dealing with the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, internal politics in Russia and how these issues impact the United States. John Haskell, director of the Kluge Center, will moderate.

Free registration: <https://bit.ly/3cnToVi>

MINDING OUR MENTAL HEALTH

As our region and the nation continue to grapple with the pandemic, and in light of ongoing demonstrations and some acts of violence, it may be difficult to feel a sense of normalcy right now. There are numerous resources available to Library staff who are feeling overwhelmed and may need help adjusting or coping including:

Call the Library's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) hotline at (800) 869-0276 to speak with a counselor; contact your local mental health crisis hotline; call 911 for a critical crisis; contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's disaster distress helpline at (800) 985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 (TTY 1-800-846-8517); or visit the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on managing anxiety (<https://go.usa.gov/xwbmp>) and job stress (<https://go.usa.gov/xwbwF>).

For Library staff who need these and other kinds of support, EAP provides a wide range of resources (<https://go.usa.gov/xwbmS>).

Questions? Contact the Health Services Division at (202) 707-8035.

COVID-19 UPDATE

On May 29, the Health Services Division (HSD) announced two new cases of COVID-19. The newly reported cases involved staff who had not been in the Library recently, so contact tracing was not necessary.

HSD is communicating with all staff members who become ill. In cases in which ill individuals were present in Library buildings, HSD is also notifying their close work contacts and cleaning and disinfecting the areas affected. The same process is being followed when contractors in Library buildings become ill.

More information on the Library's pandemic response: <https://go.usa.gov/xdtV5> (intranet) or <https://go.usa.gov/xdtVQ> (public-facing staff web page)

BUILDING ACCESS UPDATE

The C Street West doors are closed as of May 4 at the request of the U.S. Capitol Police to support its workforce during the pandemic. Staff should enter and exit Library buildings through the Independence Avenue doors or the Madison Building garage.

loc.gov/staff/gazette

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MISSION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at loc.gov/staff/gazette.

GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

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GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the June 19 Gazette is Wednesday, June 10.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

To promote events through the Library's online calendar (www.loc.gov/loc/events) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to calendar@loc.gov by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

Boxed announcements should be submitted electronically (text files) by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

National Book Festival Goes Virtual for 20th Anniversary

The format responds to the pandemic while enabling outreach to a global audience.

In a time of social distancing during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, people from around the world have turned to books for inspiration. On the weekend of Sept. 25–27, booklovers near and far can indulge their passion through a reimagined virtual version of the Library’s National Book Festival.

In its 20th anniversary year, the festival is moving online to serve a global audience and demonstrate how authors and their stories help to connect and illuminate the world. The move addresses the need to mitigate risk of person-to-person transmission of the virus. The Library is also in discussion with possible broadcast partners to ensure the broadest possible access to the great authors that fans have come to expect each year.

“Although we cannot hold our usual National Book Festival, which attracts more than 200,000 attendees of all ages, I believe this virtual festival has the potential to convey the same spirit of inventiveness and creativity to an even wider book-loving community,” said Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden. “I invite everyone who loves to read – including students resuming their studies this fall – to join us in September.”

The festival will celebrate “American Ingenuity” this year and showcase the creativity and inspiration of some of the nation’s most gifted authors, including dozens of bestselling novelists, historians, poets and children’s writers. As in the past, the festival will host new book launches as well.

“I am proud to once again serve as the co-chairman of the National Book Festival,” said philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, the festival’s



Authors headlining the 2020 festival include John Grisham (from top left), Joy Harjo, Kate DiCamillo, Madeleine Albright, Jason Reynolds and Melinda Gates.

longtime principal benefactor. “Now, more than ever, we need books for the insight and reassurance they offer in a time of great uncertainty.”

The lineup for this year’s festival includes, among many stellar authors:

- Madeleine Albright, former secretary of state, on “Hell and Other Destinations,” her memoir.
- U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo on “An American Sunrise,” her new volume of poetry.
- Melinda Gates on “The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World.”
- John Grisham on his new legal thriller, “The Guardians.”
- Jenna Bush Hager on “Everything Beautiful in Its Time,” a collection of stories about her grandparents, Barbara and George H.W. Bush
- Colson Whitehead, 2020 Pulitzer Prizewinner, on his novel “The Nickel Boys.”
- National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi on their book, “Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You.”

- Kate DiCamillo in conversation with Ann Patchett on the 20th anniversary of “Because of Winn-Dixie.”
- Ann Druyan on “Cosmos,” the sequel to Carl Sagan’s blockbuster.
- National Book Award winner Sarah Broom on her childhood house in New Orleans.
- Jared Diamond on his new book on world affairs, “Upheaval.”
- Prizewinning graphic novelist Gene Luen Yang on his warm-hearted memoir, “Dragon Hoops.”

More details will be announced at a later date. The doorway to this year’s festival will be the National Book Festival website at loc.gov/bookfest.

The National Book Festival is made possible by the generous support of private- and public-sector sponsors, led by National Book Festival Co-Chairman David M. Rubenstein. Among other generous sponsors, charter sponsors are the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Washington Post, and patron sponsors are the National Endowment for the Arts and the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission. ■

Kluge Staff Fellow Researches Banned Books in China

The Asian Division's Yuwu Song gains greater insight into a topic he has long studied.

BY ANDREW BREINER

Yuwu Song has learned to expect strange things when studying censorship in China, but even he was surprised to hear in 2016 about pages being torn from a dictionary – bookstores in China opened plastic-wrapped copies of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary to remove pages on Taiwan before sale. It's just one example of the way China's government exerts control over the publication of books, Song said.

A reference specialist in the Library's Asian Division since 2008, Song is concluding a residency as a Library of Congress staff fellow at the John W. Kluge Center.

Since January, he has been researching a project titled "Book Censorship in Post-Tiananmen China (1989-2019)" using the collections of the Asian Division. As the culmination of his fellowship, he will finish a research paper on the topic and submit it to a scholarly journal for publication.

Each year, the Kluge Center's staff fellowship gives up to two Library employees the opportunity to conduct independent research using the Library's resources and collections. The 2020 round of applications is already under consideration, with the next call for applicants coming in January 2021.

Song had a personal experience with China's censorship more than a decade ago when he considered publishing the 2006 book he edited, "Encyclopedia of Chinese-American Relations," in China. Its entries on the 1989 Tiananmen massacre and other topics considered controversial by



Song works from his home office this spring.

China's government would have made publication there difficult, he learned.

Since then, Song has studied China's censorship of books, something he is well-suited for at the Library, where he reviews, selects and recommends thousands of Chinese books each year to be added to the collections. Song has also published three books and more than 20 articles on topics related to China.

In recent years, he said, books have been undergoing more rigorous censorship than ever. "The research indicates that the censorship system has helped the Chinese government maintain a degree of stability," Song said. "However, it is eroding freedom of expression and laying the foundation for discontent in China and overseas."

Song cited the removal of Taiwan pages from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, reported on Oct. 13, 2016, by the Washington Post, to be "one of the most bizarre and

illogical examples of the absurd surrealism of Chinese censorship" he has encountered. The political status of Taiwan is a contentious issue with China's government, which maintains the island is part of the People's Republic of China.

The "all-embracing and oppressive qualities of China's censorship" would surprise casual observers, Song said. "There are censored materials the likes of which not even George Orwell could have imagined."

Through the fellowship, Song said, he expects to broaden his knowledge on book publishing and censorship in China and improve his research and analytical thinking skills. "All of this will help me do a better job in my normal position," he said.

His staff fellowship concludes on July 6.

More information about the Kluge staff fellowship: <https://go.usa.gov/xwZ4d> ■



Dana Scherer

Dana Scherer

Dana Scherer is a specialist in telecommunications policy in the Resources, Science and Industry Division of the Congressional Research Service.

Tell us a little about your background.

I grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota. My father was the art librarian at the University of Minnesota, and my mother held a variety of positions in the field of radiography. I studied economics and speech communication at Macalester College. I spent a semester in Brussels as an intern at the European Parliament and completed an honor's thesis about the European Union's media policies.

After graduating, with my interest in public policy piqued, I worked as a congressional intern in both Minnesota and Washington, D.C., and as an economist in the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), working on broadcast television issues.

I then earned an MBA from Columbia Business School and, while there, spent a semester in Mexico. Subsequently, I worked for Univision Communications, a Spanish-language media company, in

Los Angeles, New York and New Jersey. My next move was back to the FCC, where I was a policy analyst for seven years before joining the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

What brought you to the Library, and what do you do?

Through about six degrees of separation from one of my now-former CRS colleagues, someone forwarded me a posting of a position at CRS. Never before had I seen a job position that matched my background so exactly. CRS was seeking someone who could focus on the media industry, economics and public policy.

CRS provides members of Congress and staff with authoritative, confidential, objective and bipartisan analysis. Each analyst covers a different subject matter.

My portfolio keeps expanding. It includes music and television statutory copyright licenses, FCC media policies and media-entertainment mergers, among others. I write reports available to all members and staff, as well as confidential memoranda.

Fortunately, to learn more about copyright matters, I can walk down the hall to the Copyright Office. I have also made great use of the Law Library.

You have some family connections to the Library's collections. What are they?

I have connections through both parents as well as my husband, Mark Cattell. The families of my husband and mother (formerly named Alma Scherer) have genealogies in the collection.

I also have connections to the NBC Collection in the Recorded Sound Section. My grandfather, Daniel Scherer, had a day job as an attorney and played the violin as a hobby. Throughout the 1920s, he performed at one of the first commercial radio stations in New York City, WEA. RCA renamed it WNBC after buying it from AT&T in 1926, making it the flagship station of the NBC broadcast network. The NBC Collection has the original program logs. I visited one day during my lunch hour and saw my grandfather's name in typewritten ink nearly 100 years old. That gave me chills both personally and professionally, since I cover broadcast radio issues for Congress in CRS.

How has the pandemic changed your work?

My work itself is the same – I still speak with congressional clients on the phone and via email, and I still research and write reports and memoranda. The major difference is that I can no longer do in-person briefings. I have also become much more adept at using Webex, Skype and other applications in meetings. Since the Library's Toastmasters chapter continues to meet remotely, I can still practice my public speaking skills.

I do miss seeing the smiles of the Capitol Police and other colleagues in the Capitol complex and visiting the art displays on the sixth floor when I need to stretch my legs. On the plus side, I enjoy my views from my windows and spending more time with our cat, Auden.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

Prepandemic, I enjoyed going to movies and restaurants, seeing plays and musicals, exercising

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produced today.”

The Prints and Photographs Division (P&P) is adding new pandemic images by Vergara to the website (<https://go.usa.gov/xwCNM>) every week – since 2013, the Library has been the permanent archival home for the MacArthur Award-winning photographer’s work.

Known for portraying changes in the same locations over time, Vergara is capturing over and over again busy intersections, mostly in New York City, to show the evolving response of all kinds of people to the pandemic: street vendors, shoppers, school children, people on their way to work or coming home, police officers. A National Building Museum online exhibition from earlier this year, “Documenting Crossroads: The Coronavirus in Poor, Minority Communities,” highlights Vergara’s project.

His pandemic photos are among the first Library collection items to be publicly accessible. A fast-growing list of pandemic-related content in other subject areas – science, education, economics, psychology – is also available online to those who have access to the Library’s subscription databases, consisting now mostly of staff, however, since the Library is closed to the public.

Researchers will have to wait a while to sift through most of the Library’s pandemic content, including newly acquired websites, to allow for processing and adherence to Library policies. “All of our content is embargoed for one year,” said Abbie Grotke, head of the web archiving team in the Digital Services Directorate of Library Services.

Gathering the Ephemeral

Already, though, web content is an enormous focus of collecting. Teleworking recommending officers from across the Library – the staff who propose materials for the Library to collect – are nominating a steady stream of sites and pages within sites to add to exist-

ing thematic collections as well as a catch-all space for content that falls outside the themes.

“At this point, our focus is on collecting and making sure we’re preserving,” Grotke said. “How we present it to the public may evolve.”

State and federal government websites are major sources of nominations, said Rashi Joshi of the Collection Development Office, who supports recommending officers in acquiring digital collections. The sites are important, she said, because they reflect governmental responses to the pandemic and public guidance.

Other collecting emphases include sites documenting the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, and sites related to business, community and individual responses to the pandemic. Culture is also a big focus.

Melissa Wertheimer, a recommending officer in the Music Division, is leading a team researching performing arts sites. “We’re scouring the web for content related to all the division’s collecting areas,” she said.

Examples so far out of 200-plus nominations include videos of distance performances by dance companies, original musical compositions inspired by quarantine, blogs contemplating the future of public performance and online projects like the Social Distancing Festival, which promotes virtual shows whose live editions were canceled because of the pandemic.

Some websites the Library has collected for years are also now capturing virus-related content, Joshi noted. These include sites devoted to web comics and emerging cultural traditions. One such site, Urban Dictionary, an online compilation of slang, has added “coronabrain” to its inventory of terms.

Helena Zinkham, chief of P&P, believes social media – which in the Sept. 11 era was just getting started – will turn out to be an

especially rich source of pandemic collecting. While the web archiving team acquires sites, Zinkham’s division is researching images presented in venues such as Flickr.

“We’re able to see the kinds of photographs being made by everyday people,” she said. “We’re not planning to vacuum them up, but selectively we can reach out.”

Documenting Culture, Data

In other collecting areas, Asian Division recommending officers last month selected 142 Chinese-language print titles on COVID-19 in China. Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate librarians are facilitating their delivery, and cataloging librarians are prioritizing their processing so they can quickly be made available.

Since March, John Hessler of the Geography and Map Division has been involved in mapping the pandemic and searching for geospatial data and cartographic visualizations to add to the Library’s vast map collections.

And the Copyright Office has already registered dozens of pandemic-related titles, including “Coronavirus Gas Mask Skull,” a visual arts work, and a sound recording called “COVID #19 Baby!” Recommending officers will review associated deposits to determine which to add to the Library’s collections.

The American Folklife Center (AFC) plans a “multipronged and multiyear approach” to pandemic collecting, said its director, Betsy Peterson. In April, Rep. Ami Bera of California introduced a bill in the House of Representatives charging AFC with directing a COVID-19 oral history project to document the experiences and stories of people across the U.S.

Should the bill become law, Peterson envisions establishing a fellowship program to interview first responders, essential workers, COVID-19 survivors and others, including planners of emergency and civic responses to the pandemic.

AFC is also the archival home

OBITUARY

of StoryCorps, which in March launched StoryCorps Connect, a platform enabling people to interview loved ones remotely, and it is cooperating with other organizations to document the pandemic.

“I think the Library can join and learn from these efforts and, I hope, help amplify them through development of a national COVID-19 oral history collection,” Peterson said.

“Our problem,” said Puccio of the Librarywide collecting effort, “is that there is just so much content about this situation. But I think in the end – like in 10 years – we’re going to look back and say, wow, we did a heck of a job collecting back then.” ■

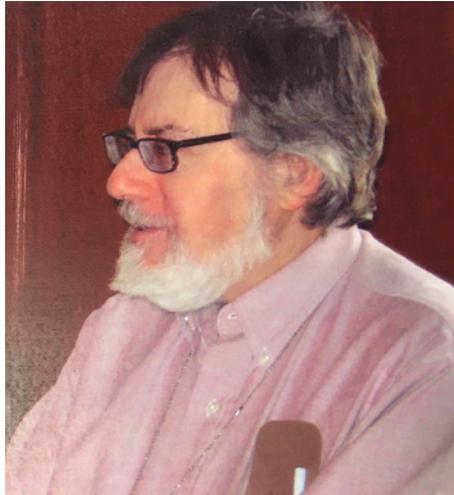
Q&A, CONTINUED FROM 5

at the gym, meditating at a local center and traveling. Since my husband moved to Fort Myers, Florida, a year ago for a job, we explore that area together when I visit.

Postpandemic, I cook more and do more things online, such as exercising, meditating and watching video services. My husband and I connect by watching the same shows, and we alternate who gets to choose. I also savor the food that I order online from the vendors who have traditionally sold food at the farmer’s market in Old Town, Alexandria.

What is something your co-workers may not know about you?

They may not know, but will likely not be surprised to learn given my interest in the entertainment industries, that I used to be quite a performer during my childhood and adolescence. My musical debut was as Piglet in a Winnie the Pooh production when I was 8 years old. I was in a metropolitan young women’s choir throughout my teens, and I participated in Follies while attending Columbia Business School. Since I hate to audition, I decided that I needed to pursue an alternative career. CRS has turned out to be the perfect fit. ■



Steven Permut

Steven Permut, a close friend and colleague of many past and present Music Division catalogers, died on March 9. He was a cataloger of music at the Library between 1979 and 2014.

Permut was born in the Shaker Heights suburb of Cleveland on March 25, 1945, and he spent most of his childhood there before moving with his family to St. Petersburg, Florida. He graduated from nearby University of South Florida (USF) in 1966 with a bachelor’s degree in music with an emphasis on piano performance. He then attended the University of Michigan for a year before returning to USF to earn a master’s degree in piano perfor-

mance. Next, he enrolled in the University of Maryland to pursue a Ph.D. in music. In the early 1970s, he changed career paths and received a master’s degree in library science from the university; in 1974, he became a cataloger in its McKeldin Library.

Permut joined the Library of Congress staff in 1979 as a music cataloger, becoming well known for the accuracy of his work. He was also well liked by his co-workers – he was known for being kind, gentle and friendly, supporting new catalogers while consistently providing support for veteran colleagues.

Permut was seen as having an inexhaustible fund of knowledge regarding piano literature and classical piano performers and their recorded legacy. A decadeslong effort to document every piano recording ever made was a labor of love. The work filled about 20 large loose-leaf binders by a conservative estimate.

Permut was also a longtime member of the Association of Recorded Sound Collections and a supporter of the International Piano Archives at the University of Maryland.

He leaves no immediate survivors, his parents and an older brother, Harvey, having preceded him in death. ■

An advertisement for the Library of Congress Federal Credit Union (LCFCU) Visa card. The ad features a large "0% APR" graphic and text stating "HURRY, LIMITED TIME ONLY" and "ON BALANCE TRANSFERS, CASH ADVANCES & PURCHASES". It includes the LCFCU logo, a Visa logo, and contact information: "New & Existing Visa Card Holders – Apply Today LCFCU.org | 202.707.5852 / 800.325.2328". A disclaimer on the right explains the promotional rate: "*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Special promotional 0.00% APR on Balance Transfers, Cash Advances and Purchases is for a LIMITED TIME ONLY. After six billing cycles balance transfer and cash advance rate converts to 8.75% APR. After six billing cycles purchases' rate converts to 9.75% APR. LCFCU reserves the right to discontinue this special promotion rate at any time without notice. Other restrictions may apply." A small "NCUA" logo is also present.