



EVENTS & SPECIAL PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHT



Thursday, December 1, 2011

Bi-Annual Members' Meeting & Author Program

5:30 pm Reception;

6:00 pm Meeting;

6:45 pm Author Program

The month starts off with our bi-annual Members' meeting, where members can find out what has been happening in the Institute, and can ask questions of the Institute administration. All members are welcome to attend, and to stay for the event afterward, *An Old Junker: A Senior Represents*.

Full listing on page 2

NEW BOOKS AND MORE

If you miss the New Titles List from the *Stereopticon*, please check out our ever expanding website! On the Library's home page you will find additional book reviews, staff blogs, and our *New Titles List*—now

updated biweekly. The *New Titles List* is also printed and available on both floors of the Library. If you would like assistance finding these new features please ask at the Reference Desk on the third floor.

HOLIDAY HOURS

The holiday calendar this year includes more **closed** days for the Library than usual because Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on weekends. Closed dates are: December 24-26 and December 31-January 2. *You may return materials in the book-drop in the lobby on December 24, 26, and 31, and January 2—see the website for complete information on building hours.*



IN REVIEW

Some Danger Involved

ERIKA SCHMIDT, CATALOGING /
REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

This book and its sequels, set in Victorian London, are narrated by a young man named Thomas Llewelyn. At the book's onset, Thomas is answering an advertisement for an assistant to an "enquiry agent" that has been listed in *The Times* for four days. Recently expelled from Oxford—and even more recently from prison—after being falsely accused of theft, he is overqualified for most of the clerical jobs available, but his criminal record makes him unemployable, and his humble background friendless. This odd job offer is his last chance before he throws himself into the Thames. But his eccentric new employer, although seemingly well-to-do, has his own unusual background. Is Cyrus Barker a civilized man with uncivilized acquaintances, or, like Thomas, someone dressing for a part?

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EVENTS



Thursday, December 1, 6:45 pm, after the 6:00 Bi-Annual Members’ Meeting

An Old Junker: A Senior Represents (IF SF) HOWARD JUNKER

Howard Junker

The founder and long-time editor of ZYZZYVA literary magazine offers his autobiographical “coming-of-older-age” story—a “Joycean” journey through the streets of San Francisco and the literary world that he has inhabited for over 25 years. This self proclaimed “blognovel” is a kaleidoscopic time capsule, distilled from 1,306 posts over five years, 2006-2010, plus quotes, photos and some art. He rambles, rants, reminisces, and reviews with irreverent humor and no regrets—offering his paeon to a life well lived and well read. **Members & Guests Free; Public \$12**



Tuesday, December 6, 6:00 pm

The Italian Baker, Revised: The Classic Tastes of the Italian Countryside—Its Breads, Pizza, Focaccia, Cakes, Pastries, and Cookies (Ten Speed Press) CAROL FIELD

Location: Instituto Italiano di Cultura, 814 Montgomery Street, San Francisco

This groundbreaking classic cookbook—now revised—introduces the artisanal doughs and techniques used by generations of Italian village bakers. Carol Field spent two years traversing Italy to capture the regional specialties and then adapted them through rigorous testing in her own kitchen. One of the most revered baking books of all time, this landmark work will continue to be a must for every serious baker. Who can resist bruschetta rubbed with garlic and drizzled with olive oil, almond-studded biscotti dipped in coffee, or pani festivi for your upcoming holiday dinner? **Reservations: (415) 788-7142 ext. 18 or <http://www.iicsanfrancisco.esteri.it/> Free to All**



November 3 through December 22, 2011

A Fine Romance: Jewish Songwriters, American Songs, 1910-1965: Exhibition and Programs

At the Jewish Community Library, 1835 Ellis Street, San Francisco. Co-sponsored by Mechanics’ Institute, 42nd Street Moon, Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, Oshman Family Jewish Community Center, Palo Alto.

Songs like “As Time Goes By,” “It Had to Be You,” and “Over the Rainbow” have captivated audiences and remain beloved musical icons of American popular culture. This exhibition tells the compelling stories of the artists who created songs of wit, sophistication, and optimism through America’s volatile 20th century. Curator David Lehman has combined text and images from Broadway musicals, classic films, posters, and personal collections to celebrate the contributions of Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, George and Ira Gershwin, Oscar Hammerstein, Yip Harburg, Richard Rodgers, and others. **Information: 415.567.3327 ext. 703 or www.bjesf.org/library.htm**



JANUARY 2012 PREVIEW:

Thursday, January 12, 6:00 pm

Lost Kingdom: Hawaii’s Last Queen, the Sugar Kings, and America’s First Imperial Adventure

Julia Flynn Siler



Tuesday, January 17, 6:00 pm

Pacific Crucible: War at Sea in the Pacific, 1941-1942
Ian Toll



Thursday, January 26, 6:00 pm

No Enemies, No Hatred: Selected Essays and Poems
Liu Xiaobo; Perry Link, editor



CINEMALIT

CURATED & HOSTED BY MICHAEL FOX

Fridays: Cafe 5:30 pm; Program 6:00 pm.
Members Free; Public \$10



DIRECTED BY JOHN HUSTON: CONCLUSION



Friday, December 2

Prizzi’s Honor (1985)
Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner

Huston’s penultimate film is a cunningly crafted, quasi-romantic Mafia comedy.

JANUARY PREVIEW: NEW YEAR’S REVOLUTIONS REDUX

Our second annual salute to tempestuous upheavals and righteous beginnings pays homage to the French, (*Reign of Terror*) Mexican, (*El Compadre Mendoza*) and Russian (*Anastasia*) Revolutions.

We begin on January 6 with *Reign of Terror*, also known as *The Black Book*, a crackling spy thriller starring Robert Cummings and Arlene Dahl set at the height of Robespierre’s bloody dictatorship. The real star of Anthony Mann’s entertaining 1949 costume drama, though, is John Alton’s stunning black-and-white cinematography.

CLASSES AT THE LIBRARY

Thursday, December 8, 10:00 am
Do-It-Yourself Investing: Using the Library's Financial Newsletters
Learn to use the Library's collection of financial newsletters that represent the best of the field. Unearth expert commentary and analysis in *ValueLine*, *Morningstar*, *Dick Davis Digest*, *Dow Theory Letters*, and many more. Our extensive holdings provide timely investment advice, statistics, and forecasts.

Tuesday and Wednesday, December 13 and 14, 10:00 am
Computer Basics for Paper-and-Pencil People
It is never too late to learn to use a computer, and this class makes it easy for you. This



two-session class introduces non-users to the basic hardware and operation of the personal computer, including navigation and basic software. How to use the mouse and understanding computer vocabulary will be covered. Following each class session members will have an opportunity to receive one-on-one assistance on a Library computer.

Thursday, December 15, 10:00 am
Is it time for Email in Your Life?
This class will teach you to set up a free email account that you can use anywhere that Internet access is available. Learn to compose, send, reply to, and attach files to mail messages using Gmail, Yahoo! Mail, or Windows Live Hotmail. Basic keyboard skills are required.



Information & registration: 415.393.0102 or reference@milibrary.org. Advance registration is required. Note start time for each class.

AUTHORS' CARNIVAL

Readings, workshops, and camaraderie for, by, and in support of our members who are writers.



NANOWRIMO
December 6, 5:30 pm
NaNoWriMo Wrap Up Celebration
4TH FLOOR MEETING ROOM
You've done it—written a novel in a month! Join other member participants and rehash your best and worst writing moments.

For more information or to make reservations for any Authors' Carnival events, contact Taryn Edwards tedwards@milibrary.org or 415.393.0103.

A GLIMPSE AT JANUARY
January 19, 6:00 pm
City of White Gold: a conversation with the director
Meet MI member and film director Geordie Lynch and learn about the intricate details of producing a historical documentary in the City – from creating the script, securing the expert speakers, getting funding, marketing, shooting the trailer, and more. Film students, film lovers, and San Francisco history



and culture lovers will appreciate this "behind the camera" look at the documentary making process. Lynch is thick in the production of *City of White Gold: San Francisco in the Gilded Age*, a documentary that tells the fascinating stories of Gilded Age San Francisco: the Comstock Lode, silver madness, the San Francisco stock exchange, and the epic struggles of San Francisco entrepreneurs William C. Ralston, William Sharon, George Hearst, Adolph Sutro, and the Bonanza Kings.

BOOK DISCUSSIONS



Monday, December 12, noon; no registration required
Brown Bag Mystery Readers' Book Group
The House Sitter

PETER LOVESEY
For literate thrillers, Lovesey is at the top of the list. Winner of the 2000 Crime Writers' Association Cartier Diamond Dagger Award, he is one of the most respected and admired mystery writers working today. This 2003 complex and ingenious title in his popular Peter Diamond series will not disappoint.



Tuesday, December 20, noon; no registration required
Fiction You Wish You Had Read
Potpourri of Favorites

Join us for our 3rd annual Potpourri of Favorites. Bring in a book you have enjoyed, and convince the rest of the group that they will "wish they had read" it, too. You may find yourself departing with a list of good books for winter reading!



The Proust Society of America: San Francisco Chapter
operates two bi-weekly groups, *Proust: In Search of Lost Time* and the *World Literature Group* which continues reading pre- and post- Proustian novels. **Enrollment for both groups has closed for this semester but will open to new members in March 2012.** For more information contact Mark Calkins at mark@tempsperdu.com.

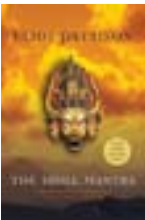
Information & registration: 415.393.0113 or Sharon Miller smiller@milibrary.org
All readings are available at the 2nd floor Circulation desk.
All Book Discussions are held in the 4th floor Board Room.

In Review

(continued from page 1)

The Skull Mantra

Former Beijing Inspector Shan Tao Yun has been imprisoned with monks in a Tibetan prison, filed away by Chinese authorities who wish to forget him. But they are forced to use his skills when a prison work gang finds a headless corpse dressed in American clothes. Hampered by political constraints, much like Arkady Renko in Martin Cruz Smith's *Gorky Park*, Shan must nevertheless navigate a complex political/cultural milieu consisting of Chinese bureaucrats, Tibetan holy men, and American scientists, in order to solve the crime.



Devil's Trill

Professional musician Gerald Elias vigorously rejects the image of the classical music concert world as genteel and respectable, instead exposing the charades of competitions—complete with social-climbing stage-mothers—and of instrument dealers as seamy and corrupt. Our unofficial sleuth is embittered ex-musician Daniel Jacobus, who was forced years ago by blindness into teaching. A 3/4-sized Stradivarius violin used for an annual children's competition has vanished. A friend working for the insurance company responsible for the violin has asked Jacobus for help in finding it. The police might be less of an obstacle if Jacobus himself hadn't been so keen to destroy the instrument the night it disappeared...



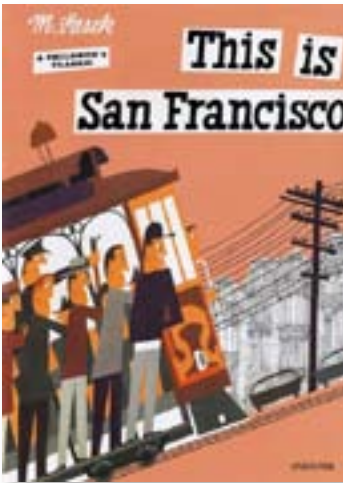
Hand Bookbinders Exhibit

SHARON MILLER, LIBRARY DIRECTOR



The Library is pleased to host the 39th Members’ Exhibition of the Hand Bookbinders of California, November 1 – December 16, on the second floor of the Library. This traveling exhibition offers Mechanics’ members a look into the world of hand bookbinding. Thirty-nine entries, in three glass towers, illustrate a wide range of one-of-a-kind exquisite bindings featuring luxurious leathers, hand tooling, new oriental bindings, and many more unique structures.

This is a wonderful opportunity for Mechanics’ members to see this beautiful work “up close and personal.” Exhibit catalogs are available for sale at the Circulation Desk for \$10. Docent tours will be scheduled in early December—watch for a posted schedule. Library staff on the second floor will provide access for non-members to enter and view this exhibit.



Take Something Home for the Kids...

SHARON MILLER, LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Do your holiday guests include children? Stop by the children’s section on the second floor to see our selection of holiday books. Have a look also at our “local interest” display with fiction and non-fiction titles about San Francisco, the Bay Area,

and California. These will provide you with discussion fodder and possibly new ways to amuse out-of-town guests. Our children’s book section has picture books, easy readers, and books for children through sixth grade.

FROM THE TECH OFFICE

SEAD SEHOVIC, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER

Mechanics’ Institute welcomes our new staff member, Jonathan Golles. He is the latest addition to the Institute’s Information Technology department, in a role of a Desktop Support Specialist/ Audio Visual Technician.

Jonathan is a California native and has lived in the Bay Area for the past three years. A recent graduate of San

Francisco State University with a degree in Cinema, he brings to us a passion and experience for Audio Visual and IT technologies.

I know that I speak for everyone when I say that Jonathan is truly a wonderful addition to our



team. He happily supports the Institute’s exciting programs and projects and takes pride in assisting people with any technology-related needs.

An outdoor enthusiast, in his spare time, Jonathan enjoys snowboarding and scuba diving.

Welcome, Jonathan!

Chess

News

INTERNATIONAL MASTER JOHN DONALDSON,
DIRECTOR OF THE CHESS ROOM

M Ricardo De Guzman defeated National Masters Samuel Seviaan and Michael Pearson on the way to winning the 39th Carroll Capps Memorial at the Mechanics’ Institute in Chess Club early November. The former Filipino Olympiad team member’s score of 5.5 from 6 put him half a point ahead of the ten-year-old Seviaan, whose rating should now go over 2300, making him the top-rated player in the country for his age. Tying for third at 4.5 in the 52-player field were Pearson, eighty-two-year-old IM Walter Shipman, NM Hayk Manvelyan and fast-rising young A-player Art Zhao, who took a half point from De Guzman in the last round.

The San Francisco Mechanics’ were eliminated in the first round of the 2011 US Chess League Playoffs by the Los Angeles Vibe by a score of 2.5-1.5. The Mechanics’ leading scorer, with 6.5 points points from 9 games, was Grandmaster Jesse Kraai of Berkeley who divided his duties between first and second board.



The sixteen-team league, which just completed its seventh season, conducts its matches over the Internet. As in seasons past, the Mechanics’ team had a decided emphasis on youth, with fifteen-year-old IM Daniel Naroditsky, fourteen-year-old Yian Liou and ten-year-old Samuel Seviaan all playing key roles for the team.

Chess for Women

Sundays, December 4, 11, and 18
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Taught by Ewalina Krubnik
FUNDED BY A GIFT IN MEMORY OF MARTIN WISKEMANN

Tuesday Night Events

December 6 and 13
5:15 pm - 6:15 pm

Lecture by IM John Donaldson
December 6
6:30 pm – 10:30 pm
Fall Tuesday Night Marathons

Tournaments

Sunday, December 4
10:00 am - 8:00 pm
The 39th Carroll Capps Memorial

Sunday, December 11
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Children’s Quad



Annual Holiday Gathering

Thursday, December 8, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
2nd floor Library

Join members and friends for some holiday cheer and lively conversation while relaxing to musical interludes.
Enjoy gourmet cheeses and hors d'œuvres, delectable desserts and tempting libations!

Admission \$10 – Open to Members & Guests

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
Call 415.393.0100 or email rsvp@milibrary.org



Holiday Gift, Book & Poster Sale

Thursday, December 15

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

4th floor Meeting Room & Café

Last minute holiday shoppers can come and select the perfect gifts for friends, family, colleagues, or significant others! A delightful and diverse selection of hard-covers, paperbacks, book art, posters, and *more* will be available for purchase.

The café will be open for refreshments. The sale is free to all.

Your purchases benefit both Library programs and the Events Department.

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Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 1 pm - 5 pm

Erika Schmidt, Editor