

Friends of the Smith College Libraries



SPRING UPDATE-MARCH 2005

WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON LIBRARY • SMITH COLLEGE • NORTHAMPTON, MA 01063

"Fingers in Pages: How to Read a Renaissance Book"

"The history of reading is a history of the "index" - a word that means both a part of the body and parts of a book. An index is also a pointing hand that was frequently drawn or printed in the margins of books to draw attention to a particular passage. The "index" in all its senses reminds us of the intimate connection between our hands and the books we read." -Peter Stallybrass.

A noted authority on the history of the book, Peter Stallybrass is Annenberg Professor of the Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania where he directs the seminar on the History of Material Texts and co-directs the Penn Humanities Forum. Professor Stallybrass is currently working on a material history of reading and writing in early modern Europe for which he received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2004. He received the James Russell Lowell Prize from the Modern Language Association in 2001 for his book, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) which he co-authored with Ann Rosalind Jones, Esther Cloudman Dunn Professor of Comparative Literature, Smith College. He is currently teaching a course on "Technologies of Writing in the Renaissance" with Roger Chartier at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington D.C.

"Drawing a Line, Walking a Wire"

This year's annual meeting program will feature a joint presentation by children's book author and illustrator Mordicai Gerstein and high wire artist Philippe Petit. Gerstein won the 2004 Caldecott Award and Boston Globe/Hornbook Award for his book *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers* which describes the 1974 exploit of Philippe Petit at the World Trade Center. Both men are wonderful storytellers, and together bring back the magic of Philippe's daring adventure.

Born in Los Angeles, **Mordicai Gerstein** attended Chouinard Institute of Art before moving to New York City to make animated films. In 1973, he and author Elizabeth Levy created the *Something Queer is Going On* series of illustrated mystery books. Gerstein began writing and illustrating his own books in 1980. He has now written and illustrated over thirty. *Arnold of the Ducks*, his first, was named one of the year's best by the New York Times. *The Mountains of Tibet*, *The Wild Boy*, and *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers* were named Best Illustrated Books by the Times. In 2004 Mordicai's young adult novel, *Victor*, was named one of the years best by the New York Times and several other journals. His new young adult novel, *The Old Country*, will be published by Roaring Brook this spring. Mr. Gerstein lives in Northampton with his wife, illustrator Susan Yard Harris.

Philippe Petit, universal poet laureate of the high wire, was born in France and took his first steps on the wire at age 16. Using his wire to extend the boundaries of theater, music, writing, poetry and drawing, he has become an inimitable high wire artist. On August 7th, 1974, Philippe walked a high wire illegally stretched between the rooftops of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, making eight crossings over the course of an hour, a quarter mile above the sidewalks of New York. (*continued over*)

SPRING EVENTS:

Thursday, March 24, 2005, 4:30 p.m.
"Fingers in Pages: How to Read a Renaissance Book"

by Peter Stallybrass
Neilson Browsing Room

Annual Meeting:

Thursday, March 31 2005, 7:30 p.m.,
"Drawing a Line, Walking a Wire" with Mordicai Gerstein and Philippe Petit

Weinstein Auditorium.

A reception and book-signing will follow in the Neilson Browsing Room.

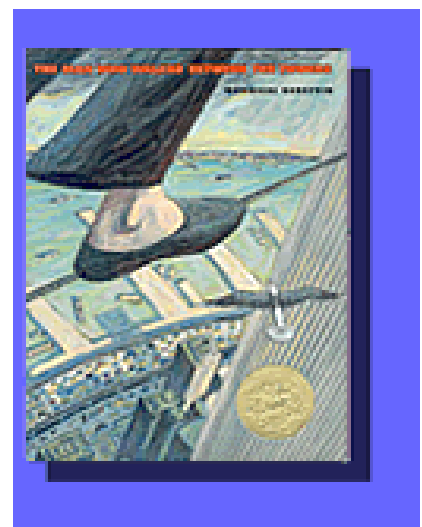
This event received support from the Smith College Lecture Committee.

Saturday, May 14, at 3:00 p.m.,
Commencement Reception

Mortimer Rare Book Room.

Saturday, May 21, at 2:00 p.m.,
Library Special Collections Tour:

Mortimer Rare Book Room, the College Archives and the Sophia Smith Collection.



The Man Who Walked Between the Towers

CAMPUS PARKING

Visitor parking is available in the Parking Garage on West Street. Use blue or white-lined spaces on levels 2, 3, or 4. Please display your invitation on the dashboard to avoid getting ticketed. Street

parking may be available along Green Street and Elm Street.

Dear Friends,

We are indeed pleased to present these two very interesting events this spring. You will notice the change in time of the annual meeting from a Friday afternoon to a Thursday evening. We hope this will make it easier for people to attend. I welcome your feedback regarding this change.



I would like to welcome new members, and thank everyone who has made gifts to the Libraries this year of annual dues, contributions to endowed funds, and gifts of materials. Your generosity helps define the Smith College Libraries. Of the many gifts received, I'd like to mention just a few: A significant endowment was received from the estate of Phyllis Williams Lehmann for Hillyer Art Library acquisitions. Professor Lehmann was a generous supporter of the Libraries throughout her career. Actress and long-time member of the Friends, Patience Cleveland '52 left a generous bequest to the FSCL in memory of Margaret S. Grierson '22 and Marine Leland. The Sophia Smith Collection is the beneficiary of a new endowed fund established by the estate of Ruth Mehrtens Galvin '42. Mrs. Galvin served as a Smith College Trustee from 1987 to 1992 during which time she acted as trustee liaison to the Friends. She also served on the committee that hired former Director of Libraries, Sarah Pritchard. The Sophia Smith Collection also received a generous bequest from YWCA archivist Elizabeth Downe Norris '36.

I was delighted to see the large outpouring of support for the creation of a new reading room in Neilson that followed our mailing last summer. This was an impressive start, and is a testament to the enduring interest of our members. A naming opportunity still exists for a major donor. You can see images of the proposed room at www.smith.edu/libraries/readingroom. To make a donation, simply make out a check for the Neilson Library Reading Room Fund and send it to the Friends' office. Contact Adam Siegel at the Advancement Office if you would like additional information. He can be reached at (413) 585-2694 or asiegel@smith.edu

The next time you visit the campus I would encourage you to view the huge, 9 feet by 43 feet, Tamayo mural that is being reinstalled this month over the entrance to the Hillyer Art Library in the Atrium of the Brown Fine Arts Center. "Nature and the Artist: The Work of Art and the Observer," by Rufino Tamayo (Mexican, 1899-1991) was commissioned in honor of Elizabeth Cutter Morrow, class of 1896, and painted on the walls of the original Hillyer Art Library in 1942 and completed in 1943. It was removed in 1970 prior to the construction of the Fine Arts Center and was most recently on extended loan to the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

Friends make a crucial difference to the well-being of the Libraries. I hope you will continue to remain involved with this essential part of a Smith education, and that you will encourage others to join the Friends as well.

Sincerely,

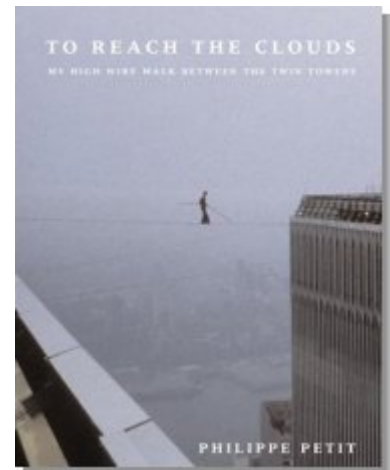
Sarah E. Thomas '70, Chair

Philippe Petit

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In the thirty years since that adventure, Philippe has performed on the high wire more than 80 times around the world including Paris, Tokyo, Frankfurt, Jerusalem and New York City where he has been an Artist-In-Residence at The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine since 1982.

In addition to the high wire, Philippe gives lectures and workshops on creativity and motivation. He has been the subject of numerous films, and is the author of five books, including his most recent, *To Reach the Clouds; My High Wire Walk between the Twin Towers*. When he is not traveling, Philippe shares his time between New York City and a small hideaway in the Catskills.



2004-2005 FSCL Executive Committee

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