

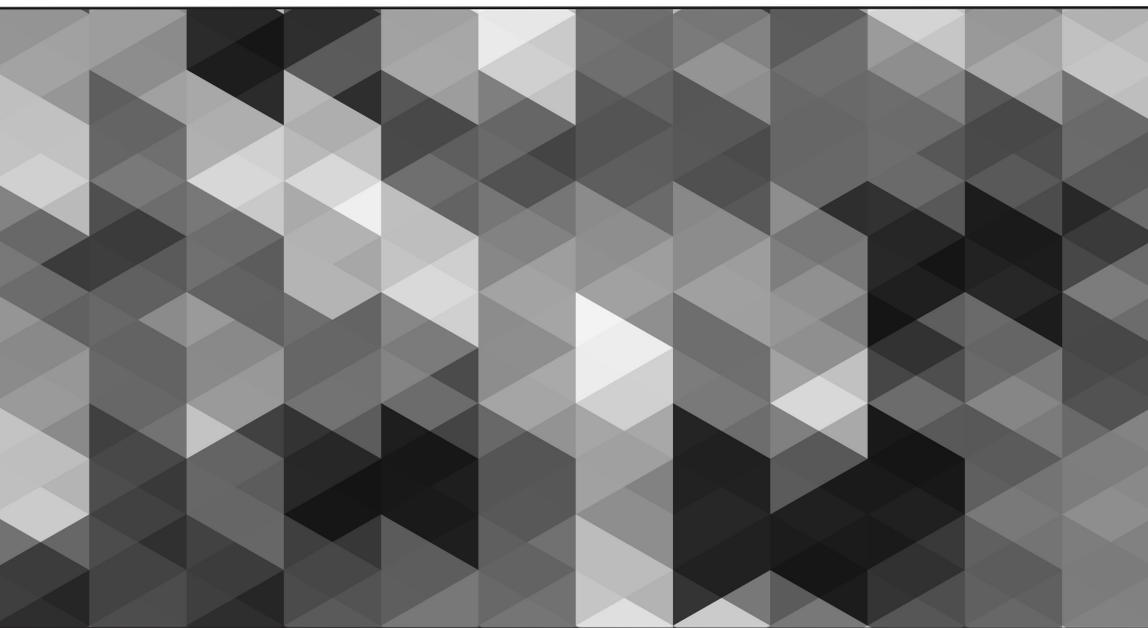
Bringing *the*
Arts *into*
the Library

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Edited by Carol Smallwood

Bringing *the* *Arts into* *the* Library



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Foreword

JUST WHEN WE SEEMED to be virtually consumed by social networking, digital content, and technology applications in libraries along comes this inspiring and useful book, *Bringing the Arts into the Library*. To be sure, libraries have been viewed as cultural and educational centers in their communities for decades. Yet we recently have been so engaged in keeping our libraries current with technology that we may have overlooked just how much we have advanced in bringing the arts into our communities.

Libraries have long designated spaces for exhibitions and programming, but what we have seen in recent years is a genuine expansion in how these spaces are being reinvented and used. As new libraries have been designed and existing buildings renovated, many planners have recognized the value of including professional performance space with not just a stage and banked seating but also sound, light, and recording equipment. This is true particularly in larger communities.

Collaboration with community arts organizations has been a key factor in the success of cultural programming in libraries. These community arts organizations have recognized the penetration that libraries have in communities and neighborhoods. With libraries of all types being identified as the heart of their communities, arts organizations have joined with us to bring a wide variety of arts programs to many people who would probably never have experienced them because of location, cost, or other barriers. Since libraries enjoy a high level of trust and engagement with their communities, they often help arts organizations connect with new audiences. Libraries, in contrast, gain a valuable partner for expanding and enhancing their own programming. These library–arts organization partnerships are particularly important in exhibiting and celebrating local arts, strongly identified with diverse elements of the broader community.

Carol Smallwood has edited five other ALA anthologies, and in this compilation of real-world examples of arts collaborative programming, we see noteworthy programs from all types of libraries and a variety of successful programs serving diverse communities and populations. The value for our profession comes in reading these descriptions, which are full of ideas that can inspire us in our own environments to look beyond what we are doing

now. The chapters include very practical advice and look at behind-the-scenes activities and the public components of the programs.

I often describe librarianship as a very generous profession. We willingly share our successes and lessons learned for just about everything we undertake. This is not necessarily true for other professions. Most of us feel very flattered when we introduce a program or service in our library and then watch others adapt it for their own environments and communities. We feel grateful to those who may have pioneered in a new area where we want to go. This book contributes to that generous spirit of sharing and building by offering a rich array of examples of how we can increase our contributions to helping our communities realize their aspirations through the arts.

Molly Raphael
2011–12 President
American Library Association

Introduction

WITH THE PREOCCUPATION of keeping up with technology, libraries may be perceived as no longer playing their traditional role as transmitters and centers of culture, of overlooking the visual and performing arts so necessary for a local community's quality of life. This anthology presents innovative ways to foster the arts even in times of cutbacks in staff and budgets: contributors provide concise examples that visual and performing arts are at the core of communities and that libraries play a central part in that.

Will Manley, in one of his commentary columns in *American Libraries*, observed that librarians must not just be seen as engaged with computer screens at library desks and not interacting with patrons. The twenty-five contributors to *Bringing the Arts into the Library* are engaged with their communities, actively support the arts, and are carrying on the tradition of libraries being cultural centers.

The twenty chapters written by school, public, academic, special, and library and information science faculty in the United States and Canada are arranged in four parts: "Literary Arts," "Visual Arts," "Performing Arts," and "Mixed Arts." Chapters cover various topics, including developing regional music collections, strengthening downtowns with library-arts partnerships, and raising money to support the arts in the library.

Anika Fajardo, online communications librarian at St. Catherine University in Minneapolis, noted, "*Bringing the Arts into the Library* is an affirmation of the role libraries can play in the arts, even in this time of technology overload."

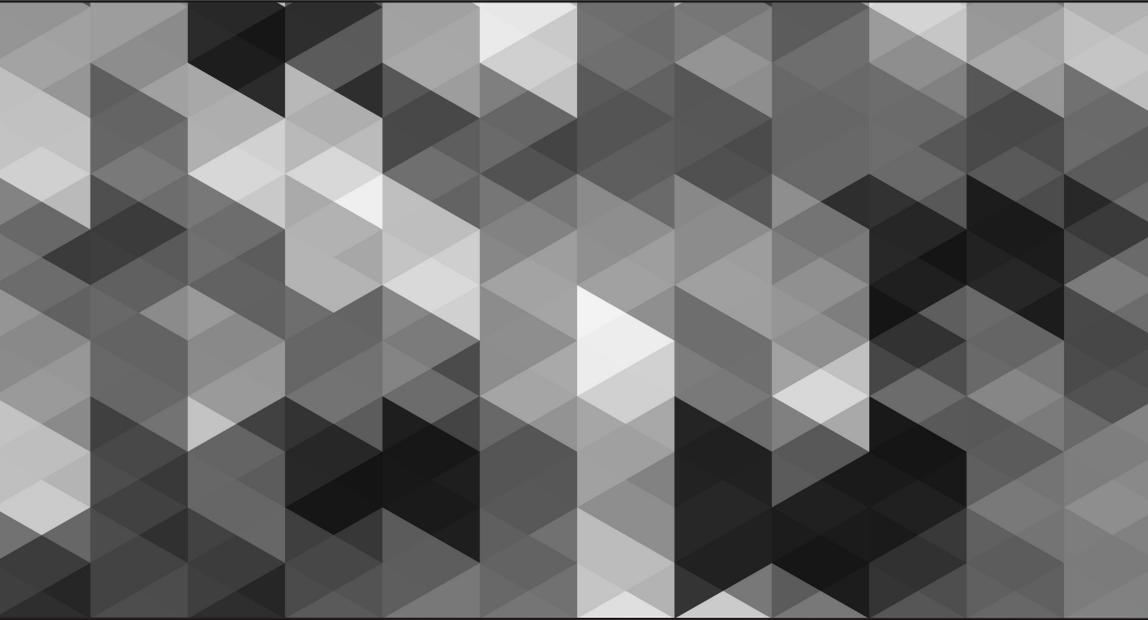
The selection of chapters was difficult and many contributors had to be turned away because of space limitations, which makes a strong case that the relationship between libraries and the arts is currently alive and well. A balance was sought between the many forms of art and types of libraries to achieve the most comprehensive application for librarians.

Carol Smallwood, editor

Arts Acknowledgments

- Mary Lou Andrews**, technical help, Spring Mills, Pennsylvania
- Dr. Kim Becnel**, contributor, *Contemporary American Women: Our Defining Passages* (All Things That Matter Press, 2009)
- Robin Bourjaily**, certified Yoga as Muse facilitator, www.radiantomyoga.com
- Vandella Brown**, librarian and author of *What Is a Zawadi to We? A Poetic Story Celebrating Kwanzaa and Gift Giving* (Lumen-Us Publications, 2007)
- Dr. James B. Casey**, director, Oak Lawn Public Library, Oak Lawn, Illinois
- Tom Cooper**, director, Webster Groves Public Library, Webster Groves, Missouri
- Mark Donnelly**, winner of best playwright award in 2010 and 2011, Northport (New York) One-Act Play Festival
- Martha Engber**, author of *The Wind Thief* (Alondra Press, 2009) and *Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up* (Central Avenue Press, 2007)
- Anika Fajardo**, online communications librarian, St. Catherine University, Minneapolis
- John Glover**, reference librarian for the humanities, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond
- Janet Husband**, contributor, *Writing and Publishing: The Librarian's Handbook* (ALA Editions, 2010)
- Jason Kuhl**, library operations director, Arlington Heights Memorial Library, Arlington Heights, Illinois
- Terry Ann Lawler**, librarian, Phoenix Public Library, Phoenix, Arizona, and contributor to *Library Management Tips That Work* (ALA Editions, 2011)
- Dahlma Llanos-Figueroa**, author of *Daughters of the Stone* (St. Martin's Press, 2009)
- Ann McCauley**, former registered nurse, freelance writer, and author of *Mother Love* (CB Publishing, 2012) and *Runaway Grandma* (Madison Avenue Publishing, 2007)
- Foster Neill**, founder and editor of *The Michigan Poet*, <http://themichiganpoet.com>
- Rebecca Marcum Parker**, school district librarian, Kansas City, Missouri
- Stacy Russo**, electronic services librarian, Santa Ana College, Santa Ana, California, and author of *The Library as Place in California* (McFarland, 2008)

Part I
*Literary
Arts*



CHAPTER 1

The Big Write-In

*A Collaborative Outreach Event for Writers during
National Novel Writing Month* **STACEY R. EWING**

NATIONAL NOVEL WRITING MONTH (NaNoWriMo) was founded by a small group of writers in San Francisco in 1999. The goal of NaNoWriMo (or NaNo) is to begin writing a fifty-thousand-word (approximately 175-page) novel on November 1 and to electronically submit the completed word count to the official NaNo website (www.nanowrimo.org) by midnight on November 30. Over the past eleven years, NaNo has grown from a modest 21 participants in 1999 to more than 200,500 participants in 2010.

The mantra of NaNo organizers and participants is “quantity not quality.” NaNo is all about fighting and overcoming the inner critic and getting the words out and down on paper, so that after November 30, the true editing process can begin. The beauty of NaNo is that it is not just for seasoned writers; anyone can participate, which makes this an excellent opportunity for beginners to give writing a try while receiving encouragement from others participating in the event.

So as not to stifle the creative spirit, the official rules of NaNo are few: write a novel of fifty thousand words or more, between November 1 and November 30. Participants must be the sole author and may not use previously written prose, although NaNo allows the inclusion of outlines, character sketches, research, and citations from the works of others. To get credit for reaching the fifty-thousand-word count, participants must upload their completed novel to the NaNo website between November 25 and 30.

NaNo seemed like the perfect opportunity around which to craft an event for library outreach to writers, especially since we had the perfect space and the right atmosphere for writing—and what better inspiration than to be surrounded by a building full of books!

PLANNING OUR FIRST NaNoWriMo EVENT

While planning the first NaNoWriMo event at the University of Florida's (UF) library, I researched NaNo and consulted the website (www.nanowrimo.org) to locate the NaNo writing group closest to Gainesville, Florida. I was pleased to find that Gainesville had its own NaNo writing group and contacted the municipal liaison, the NaNo title for someone who officially organizes NaNo groups in his or her hometown, to see if she would be interested in collaborating on an event.

We met and discussed my idea of hosting a write-in event in the InfoCommons area of Library West, the humanities and social sciences branch of the University of Florida's George A. Smathers Libraries. The primary goals of the event were to foster the creation of new literature in the library, to promote both the UF Libraries and National Novel Writing Month, and to bring together writers from the University of Florida and the local Gainesville writing communities to provide a networking opportunity for the members of those groups. We decided that we would try a "final push" writing event on November 29, 2007, and provide space, refreshments, and computers to those who would like to join in and work on their final word count from 5:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M.

The municipal liaison helped identify and invite two local published writers, Sandra Lambert and R. Michael Burns, to come give motivational pep talks on writing. Both writers spoke about their methods for overcoming writer's block, their experiences participating in past NaNos, and the process of getting published. Their sessions during our event were approximately thirty minutes long, with the last ten minutes reserved as a question-and-answer period. We scheduled their talks two hours apart to break up the evening and to give the event participants a pleasant intermission from writing.

In preparation for the event, I used a free online wiki program by PBworks to track the checklists, assignments, brainstorming, and communication for the event preparation. The wiki allowed me to easily assign projects to volunteers and to streamline the event-planning process by creating an online collaborative checklist.

Although many of the attendees brought their own laptops or netbooks, we reserved several desktop computers adjacent to our event space. Anticipating heavy laptop usage, I borrowed several power strips and extension cords from the libraries' facilities department to provide ample and convenient power for all participants. We staggered the power throughout the event area, and everyone was able to plug in and keep their mobile devices charged.

At 1:00 A.M. (the closing hour of Library West), we still had ten participants hanging in there and working on completing their word count. We

even had one participant submit her fifty-thousand-word novel to the online NaNo submission form for verification that night, with cheering from attendees crowded around her computer screen watching her hit the “Enter” key.

PROMOTION AND MARKETING

During the first NaNoWriMo event at UF, I had a zero-dollar budget. Therefore, creative thinking led to creative advertising ideas. Electronic marketing was an effective method that also extended the reach of the information. We publicized the event on the main UF Libraries’ homepage and events calendar, in both the UF Libraries and Library West Twitter accounts, as well as on the Library West InfoCommons blog. We created a PowerPoint slide advertisement and posted it on the large annunciator board in the very busy Marston Science Library as well as our own Library West’s annunciator screens located in front of each computer at our active circulation desk area. We were also able to add a slide to ResTV, one of the university’s television channels that broadcasts UF events in all the residence halls and dorm rooms. We forwarded event information to the UF English Department via its departmental electronic discussion list, and our libraries’ public information officer submitted our event details to the university’s weekly e-newsletter, the *Gator Times*.

Our library’s public relations administrator also designed a template for a poster and flyer that allowed us to reuse the design each year, necessitating only the change of dates and times, thereby saving us the energy of recreating a poster every year. All flyers and posters were printed in-house, and the Gainesville NaNo group assisted in posting flyers around town while we took care of posting the information at key locations on campus, such as in the student union and in all the dining halls.

A donation request asking for coffee and treats was sent to the campus Starbucks Coffee Company; Starbucks gave us two gallons each of caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee along with various coffee-cake samples. The library provided a large electric carafe to heat water for the tea and hot chocolate donated by UF librarians and members of the Gainesville NaNo group.

To meet our goal of promoting the UF Libraries and National Novel Writing Month, we set up a display table of books from our library’s collection to present materials we felt were supportive of the writing process and books on the craft of writing, biographies of famous writers, as well as several books on baby names to help inspire character development. This allowed participants to browse a small selection of the library resources available to them while taking a break from writing. We also set out promotional brochures on library services offered by UF Libraries and the Alachua County Public

Library. We provided table space for the local NaNo group to set up its own NaNo poster-board display to advertise the group and the history of NaNo. The display tables were positioned at the entrance of the event space and next to the refreshment table to maximize foot traffic as participants entered and exited the event space and paused from their writing. Many curious UF library patrons who were not participating in the write-in stopped by to look at the displays, so there was a nice bit of advertising for all parties represented.

PARTICIPANTS COLLABORATING AND NETWORKING

Since the first NaNoWriMo event, participating groups have included members of the Writers' Alliance of Gainesville (WAG), students from the University of Florida and Santa Fe College (English literature and creative writing students, as well as students in other majors who write as a hobby), Gainesville NaNo group members, NaNo participants with no affiliation, students from the local high schools, and usually one or two people from the Gainesville community not participating in NaNo but who want to hear the speakers and talk to participants for advice on getting started on writing for pleasure. At all four of the events we have hosted so far, the diversity of the participants' backgrounds has helped foster a creative and inspiring writing environment. The attendees have been excited and have spent time networking with other participants and various local writing groups.

USING EVENT FEEDBACK

Feedback for this event (and subsequent events) has been overwhelmingly positive. We put out a very simple and informal questionnaire asking attendees whether they thought the event helped promote National Novel Writing Month, whether they learned anything new about the UF Libraries, whether they would like us to hold this event again the following year, and whether they had any suggestions or comments about the event. The first three questions received 100 percent yes answers, with approximately 75 percent of attendees submitting a completed questionnaire. Many thanked us for holding the event, and comments were all positive, with most noting that it was fun and helpful to meet other writers, and many requesting that we do it again the following year. I used the wiki to record the participants' suggestions and to make a running list of things I thought worked really well, what could be improved, and what needed to be done differently the next time.

One of the things we decided to change for subsequent events was the hours. The 5:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. time frame during our first event made for a long night, and although we still had ten participants hanging on until the bitter end, participation dropped off drastically and quite noticeably after 10:00 P.M. For this reason, the following year we decided to change the event window from 5:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. This worked so well that we have continued with the same time frame ever since. Because we had reserved our event space for the entire evening, participants were able to continue working in the same space after the “official” event ended at 10:00 P.M. We also decided that the speakers, games, and refreshments were too distracting for a “final push,” because some participants were rushing to finish their word count before the deadline the following day. The following year we moved the event to the middle of the month and called it “The Big Event,” so that we could carry on with entertainment during the evening.

USING TECHNOLOGY TO BRING PUBLISHED AUTHORS TO THE EVENT

We also added technology to the mix the following year. Since our budget did not allow us to pay for authors’ travel expenses, we used the free online chat program Meebo, which allowed us to invite speakers from outside of the Gainesville region. The municipal liaison was able to embed a chat widget into the Gainesville NaNo WordPress site. We were originally going to embed it in our libraries’ web page, but it worked better using the local NaNo group’s site, because users could more easily log in to the chat forum instead of worrying about a UF network login.

The chat technology proved a crucial step in the development of the event. Local participants at the event could choose to watch the live chat on the sixty-one-inch screen in the event space, to follow along on their own laptops, or to completely ignore the chat (given the silent nature of instant messaging) and continue their writing undisturbed.

Knowing that the majority of the participants in 2007 had been writing stories in the science fiction, paranormal, and urban fantasy genres, the following year I wrote to several nationally known and published authors in those genres to see whether they would be available to chat with our participants via Meebo. In 2008, we were able to set up chats with Ann Aguirre, who lives in Mexico City, Mexico; Jeanine Frost, from Southwest Florida; and Ilona Andrews, who at the time was living in North Carolina. I asked whether they would be willing to do a thirty-minute chat session, reserving the last ten

minutes for a question-and-answer session. We had to be careful in scheduling and advertising, since Ann Aguirre was located in the central time zone. In addition to the writers participating online, the Gainesville NaNo municipal liaison identified two local published authors whom we invited to speak in person: Marjorie Abrams (M. D. Abrams) and Pierce Kelley. Every hour during that event we had a fifteen- to twenty-minute talk going on either online or in person. The talks were staggered so that in-person chats could be sandwiched between the online chats, and Ann Aguirre, in a different time zone, anchored the spot for last online guest speaker.

It has been surprisingly easy to persuade authors to volunteer to be online guest speakers. Social networking makes self-promotion much easier, and today most authors are highly accessible through their blogs, Twitter, and Facebook pages. I send an e-mail describing the details of the event along with a polite request asking whether the author would be interested in joining in and “speaking” to our participants via online chat. All the authors we have contacted in the past four years (including J. V. Jones, J. C. Hutchins, and Mur Lafferty) have been excited to participate and willing to freely donate their time and share their experiences.

Communication with the authors was essential, given tight scheduling, potential technology issues, and different time zones. The municipal liaison obtained permission from each author to post edited transcripts of the chats on the Gainesville NaNo website.

IMPROVING THE EVENT

In the years following our first NaNoWriMo event in 2007, I tried to make the event even more fun and engaging for participants. In 2008, as a donation to the libraries, I purchased books written by each of the guest speakers, and at the end of each chat session and in-person talk we held a “word war,” a contest in which participants tried to write as many words as they could in ten minutes. Once the time was up, we collected the word count from each participant (on the honor system), and the winner won a copy of the book by the author who had just spoken in person or online. In addition, both authors who were present autographed their books, and Ann Aguirre offered to personalize the winner’s copy of her book and include a galley copy of the sequel if the winner mailed her the copy of the book he or she was writing. All the authors were very friendly, very interested in promoting their work, and very encouraging to all the NaNo participants by offering great advice on writing, editing, finding an agent, and getting published.

In addition to the books we gave away, I created commemorative NaNo pins using the library's button maker and small NaNo icons freely available on the NaNoWriMo website to help promote the month. Municipal liaisons also receive a certain number of free NaNo stickers and postcards each year to share with local groups, so we were able to use some of these items as fun giveaways and consolation prizes for the word-war contestants who did not come in first place. We also used some of the UF Libraries' promotional items, such as branded pencils, sticky notes, and InfoCommons stress-relief squishy balls.

Every year since 2007, I have been compiling a slide show in conjunction with the Gainesville NaNo group to play on the sixty-one-inch monitor throughout the event when author chat sessions are not taking place. These slides include quotes by authors, photo excerpts from a great Salon.com blog article about authors and their writing spaces or studios, photos of books, photos designed like inspirational posters, and more. Over the past several years our slide show has grown from fifty slides to more than two hundred. We also slip in slides to promote the UF Libraries' resources and services available to both UF affiliates and community users.

A large portion of the slide show consists of excerpts from past "idea jars." Each year, the local Gainesville group puts together what it calls the idea jar, an empty jar next to a stack of blank paper slips. During the event, NaNo participants can take a break from writing to add an idea or pull a slip from the jar for random inspiration. Ideas can be names, places, or things, but they are most often leading sentences or prompts, such as "She was horrified to find that her skirt had been caught in her pantyhose as she walked through the restaurant back to her table," or "The sun was setting quickly," or "A freak storm blows up the power to your scene—characters must continue their work in the dark." Everyone contributes to the jar throughout November, and the following year the funniest and most interesting ideas are culled and added to the slide show.

At our first NaNo event, one of the participants brought a little handful of fortune-cookie slips to keep by the idea jar for inspiration. I have actually been keeping my fortune-cookie slips for the past twenty years, so now I bring in my large jar of fortunes for participants to use as a fun source of writing ideas.

"Jailing the Inner Critic" has been another great way to help keep participants focused and engaged. Each year the Gainesville municipal liaison brings a paper "jail" that she created out of a large clasped envelope with slots cut out to represent the bars of a jail cell. This is placed in the center of the room near the idea jar and fortune-cookie jar along with crayons. At the

beginning of the event, participants are encouraged to draw a quick representation of their “inner critic” with the crayons and place that drawing into the cage for the duration of the evening, or if they like, the municipal liaison holds on to them until the end of the month. This is a fun way for participants to take a break and a nice exercise in putting the inner critic at rest so that a blocked writer can again write freely.

Budgeting for this event has remained very low. After the 2007 event, we decided to put in a small \$50 funds request to our libraries’ public relations and marketing committee for a fruit platter and granola bars as a healthy alternative to the donated Starbucks coffee cake. I hope to secure additional funding to supply prize novels in the future.

As we approach the fifth anniversary of our NaNo event, I see it as drawing the arts into the library and making my job more relevant to the community.

Contributors

The American Library Association Public Programs Office (PPO) promotes cultural and community programming as an essential part of library service. Through professional development activities, programming resources, model programs, grant opportunities, and the library programming website programminglibrarian.org, PPO supports libraries as they fill their role as community cultural center, a place of cultural and civic engagement, where people of all backgrounds gather for reflection, discovery, participation, and growth.

Regan Brumagen, a member of the Rakow Library's public services team, answers reference questions; coordinates e-reference; and provides expertise and leadership in the identification, assessment, and recommendation of emerging technologies and electronic resources that enhance and expand library services and instruction. Her chapter on institutional planning for outreach appeared in *Art Museum Libraries and Librarianship* (Scarecrow Press, 2007). Brumagen received her MLS in 1996 and her MA in 1993, both from the University of Kentucky.

Robert Craig Bunch has been a librarian for twenty years at the middle school, high school, and school-district levels. He has published more than two hundred reviews and articles in *Booklist*, *Art Book*, *Folk Art*, *Kyoto Journal*, *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*, *Encyclopedia of Recorded Sound*, *Dictionary of American History* (3rd ed.), and other publications. He is working on a book of interviews with Texas collage and assemblage artists. Bunch lives in Houston, Texas, with his wife, Delana.

Florence F. Caddell, arts director for the Frankfort Community Public Library in Frankfort, Indiana, from 1995 to the present, studied art at Hanover College, in Hanover, Indiana, and earned a master's degree in museum studies at Indiana University/Purdue University, Indianapolis, Indiana. Caddell cares for the library art collections and schedules art programs and exhibitions for the Anna and Harlan Hubbard School of Living at the Frankfort Library, which is based on the philosophy "we can make our life a work of art."

Lance R. Chance, assistant professor of library science and instructional services librarian at Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, has a BA in English from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and an MSLIS from Louisiana State University. He has written reviews for *Louisiana Libraries* and has contributed to the *Bayou State Periodical Index*. Chance was a coprincipal investigator for the grant establishing the Cajun and Creole Music Collection and has been involved with the collection's development, digitization, and promotion.

Allan Cho is program services librarian at Irving K. Barber Learning Centre at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, where he helps design and deliver programs and services to support the broader community and a variety of learners and instructors, as well as integrate other virtual resources and services to support a broad range of users at the Learning Centre and UBC Library. He serves as editor of the Special Libraries Association Western Canadian Chapter's *Wired West* and as book reviewer for *Library Journal* and *Choice Review*.

Sarah Cisse is a reference librarian at the Alvin Sherman Library Research and Information Technology Center at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She received her MSLIS from Pratt Institute in 2005. Cisse began her library career at the Metropolitan College of New York as an information specialist. Previous experience includes positions as information assistant in the museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology and as records manager at the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. Cisse also holds a BA in English literature and an AAS in advertising and marketing communications.

Jeri Weinkrantz Cohen, assistant department head of the Young Adult/Audiovisual Department at the Patchogue-Medford Library in Patchogue, New York, obtained her MSLIS from the Palmer School of C. W. Post, Long Island University. She is a member of the American Library Association and currently serves on YALSA's Amazing Audiobooks for Teens Committee. She is also a member of the New York Library Association and the Suffolk County Library Association. Her writing has appeared in *VOYA*, and she was editor of the Suffolk County Library Association newsletter for five years.

Stacey R. Ewing is an assistant university librarian at Library West, the humanities and social sciences branch of the George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida. She coordinates the Information Commons and specializes in outreach, instruction, and emerging technologies. Ewing received her MSLIS from the University of North Texas, where she was an Institute of

Museum and Library Services fellow in the digital-image-management program. Her most recent publication, “Building a Participatory Culture: Collaborating with Student Organizations for 21st Century Library Instruction,” appears in *Collaborative Librarianship*.

Carol Luers Eyman is the outreach and community services coordinator at the Nashua Public Library, in Nashua, New Hampshire. She does publicity and marketing, plans adult programs, works with community groups, and books meeting rooms. She has a master’s degree in education and a certificate in technical communication. Before joining the library staff, Eyman was a computer programmer, technical writer, editor, and teacher. She is the author of *How to Publish Your Newsletter* (Square One Publishers, 2006) and the editor of *The Nashua Experience: A Three-Decade Upgrade, 1978–2008*.

Elizabeth Goldman is chief executive officer of the Perth & District Union Public Library in Ontario, Canada. She previously worked at Kingston Frontenac Public Library in Ontario and at Chelsea District Library in Michigan, where she was part of the team that won the award for Best Small Library in America from *Library Journal* and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2008. An active writer, presenter, and consultant, she can be found online at www.theblackrivergroup.com. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan School of Information.

Larry Grieco, library director of the Gilpin County Public Library, in Black Hawk, Colorado, obtained his MSLS from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Larry’s memberships include the American Library Association and the Colorado Association of Libraries, and he serves on the board of directors of the Association for Rural and Small Libraries. He is chair of the American Library Association’s Loleta D. Fyan Award Jury and is an adviser for Dartmouth College’s Pushing the Limits project (to bring math and science programs to rural libraries), funded by the National Science Foundation.

Vera Gubnitskaia, youth services manager at the Orange County Library System in Orlando, Florida, obtained her library degrees from the Moscow Institute of Culture (Russia) and Florida State University. Gubnitskaia has worked as librarian, manager, and library consultant in public and academic libraries. She has published in *Librarians as Community Partners: An Outreach Handbook* and *Florida Library Youth Programs* newsletter. Gubnitskaia has presented at several conferences, including the Florida Library Association and Florida Literacy conferences. She is currently serving on the Florida Library Association Awards Committee.

Kerol Harrod (MA, University of North Texas) works at the Denton Public Library in Denton, Texas. He writes and coproduces the television show *Library Larry's Big Day*, which won a first-place award in 2010 from the Texas Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors and received the 2011 North Texas Regional Library System Margaret Irby Nichols Award. Harrod also won the 2011 Texas Library Association Branding Iron PR Award for Speechwriting. He is currently coediting a book for McFarland Publishing titled *Marketing Methods for Libraries*.

Sandra M. Himel, associate professor of library science, is head of research and government information services at Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She holds a BA in history and an MSLS from Louisiana State University. Himel is coordinator of the Cajun and Creole Music Collection and was the principal investigator for the grant establishing the collection. She has been a principal investigator for other state and national grants and an indexer for the *Bayou State Periodical Index*.

Natalie Houston is currently youth outreach coordinator for the Orange County Library System in Orlando, Florida. She received an MSLS from the University of South Florida and a BA from the University of Miami. Houston has worked as a young adult librarian and has contributed to the *Florida Libraries Youth Programs* newsletter and blog. Natalie is a member of the Young Adult Library Services, American Library Association, and the Fabulous Films for Young Adults Committee 2009–11.

Beth Hylan is reference librarian at the Rakow Research Library of the Corning Museum of Glass, where she provides leadership and expertise for library outreach to national and international communities and oversees the library's oral history activities. She earned her MSLS at UNC, Chapel Hill. Hylan has been a featured speaker for Art Libraries Society of North America, Glass Art Society, and other glass associations. She has published articles in a variety of glass-related publications, and in 2010, she served as president of Art Libraries Society, Western New York.

Greg MacAyeal, assistant head of the Northwestern University Music Library, is an active member of the Music Library Association. He has contributed reviews to the journals *Notes and Music Reference Services Quarterly*. MacAyeal holds an MLIS from University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, and in 2008 he received the GOLD Award from the university's alumni association. In addition, MacAyeal teaches in the Graduate School of Library and Information

Science at Dominican University, in River Forest, Illinois, and in the School of Music at North Park University, in Chicago.

Jennifer Mayer is the fine arts and women's studies librarian at the University of Wyoming Libraries, in Laramie, Wyoming. She received her MSLIS from the University of Oklahoma. Mayer is an active member of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA). She recently served as chair of the ARLIS/NA Mountain West Chapter and currently serves as chair for ACRL's Women and Gender Studies Section Publication Committee. Her writing has appeared in *College & Research Libraries*; *Art Documentation*; and most recently, in the *Handbook of Art and Design Librarianship* (Facet, 2010).

Jack G. Montgomery, professor and collection services coordinator at Western Kentucky University Libraries, obtained his MLS at the University of Maryland-College Park. Montgomery's memberships include the Kentucky Library Association, and he is a conference director for the annual Charleston conference "Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition." Montgomery is a column editor for *Against the Grain*; also, he coauthored with Eleanor I. Cook *Conflict Management for Libraries: A Strategy for a Positive, Productive Workplace* (ALA Editions, 2005). In 2007 Montgomery received the Vicky Speck Memorial Leadership Award.

Sarah Naumann is a library literacy instructor for Berkeley READS Adult and Family Literacy program, Berkeley Public Library, and a circulation assistant for the Academy of Art University Library. She holds a BA in liberal studies from California State University, Hayward, and an MLIS from San Jose State University. Naumann also holds a certificate in art gallery and museum studies from California State University, East Bay Extension. She is a member of the American Library Association, Association of College and Research Libraries, California Library Association, California Academic and Research Libraries, and Special Libraries Association.

Heather Payne was director of library services at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for twelve years. She now works for City College in Fort Lauderdale, where, among other responsibilities, she is the corporate liaison to the libraries. Payne obtained her MLIS from Florida State University and her MBA from Argosy University. She is a member of the American Library Association and the Special Libraries Association. She is an alumnus of the Harvard Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians.

Nora J. Quinlan is the director of reference at the Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. In addition, she oversees the library's gallery and is responsible for identifying possible exhibits, developing programming, and installing shows. In addition to her work at the university, Quinlan has previously worked in rare books and special collections. She was previously head of special collections at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Molly Raphael, 2011–12 president of the American Library Association, is the chief elected officer of the oldest and largest library organization in the world. A public librarian for forty years, Raphael directed two urban public libraries: Multnomah County Library (Portland, Oregon) and the District of Columbia Public Library. In 2009, Multnomah County Library received the Institute for Museum and Library Services' National Medal, the nation's highest honor for libraries. Raphael earned her MLS from Simmons College and her BA from Oberlin College.

Sue Samson, professor and humanities librarian at the University of Montana, Missoula, received her MA from the University of Missouri, Columbia. Her research has appeared in *College & Research Libraries*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, and *Reference Services Review*, among others, and she contributed to *The Teaching Library* (Haworth Press, 2007), *Books, Bytes and Bridges* (ALA Editions, 2000), and *Document Delivery Services* (Haworth Press, 1999). Samson received the 2010 Outstanding Faculty Mentoring Award, the 2008 Department Assessment Award for Information & Research Services, and multiple merit awards.

Carol Smallwood, MLS, is featured in *Best New Writing in Prose 2010—Compartments: Poems on Nature, Femininity and Other Realms* (Anaphora Literary Press, 2011), nominated for the Pushcart Prize. A chapter of *Lily's Odyssey* was short listed for the Eric Hoffer Prose Award. Smallwood is a Federation of State Poetry Societies winner. Her nearly three dozen books have been published by Scarecrow Press, American Library Association, and others; *Women Writing on Family: Tips on Writing, Teaching and Publishing* is forthcoming from Key Publishing House in 2012. Smallwood's experience includes academic, public, school, and special libraries as librarian, consultant, administrator.

Sara Wedell joined the Chelsea District Library as head of adult services in August 2009. Along with programming, community partnerships, and collections and supervisory duties, her position involves projects such as the Stories

of Chelsea documentary series (www.storiesofchelsea.org). She presented at the 2010 Public Library Association conference and the 2008 and 2009 Michigan Library Association conferences. Wedell previously served as the adult services librarian at the Delta Township District Library. She received her master's degree in the science of information from the University of Michigan's School of Information.

Heather Pippin Zabriskie, youth programs coordinator, Orange County Library System, Orlando, Florida, holds a bachelor's degree in linguistics from the University of Florida. Zabriskie routinely works closely with her local community to bring innovative programming to the youth of Orange County. During her career, she has presented poster sessions at the Public Library Association and Florida Library Association conferences, and she has represented the State of Florida at the Collaborative Summer Reading Program conference. Zabriskie is a regular contributor to the *Florida Library Youth Programs* newsletter.

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