

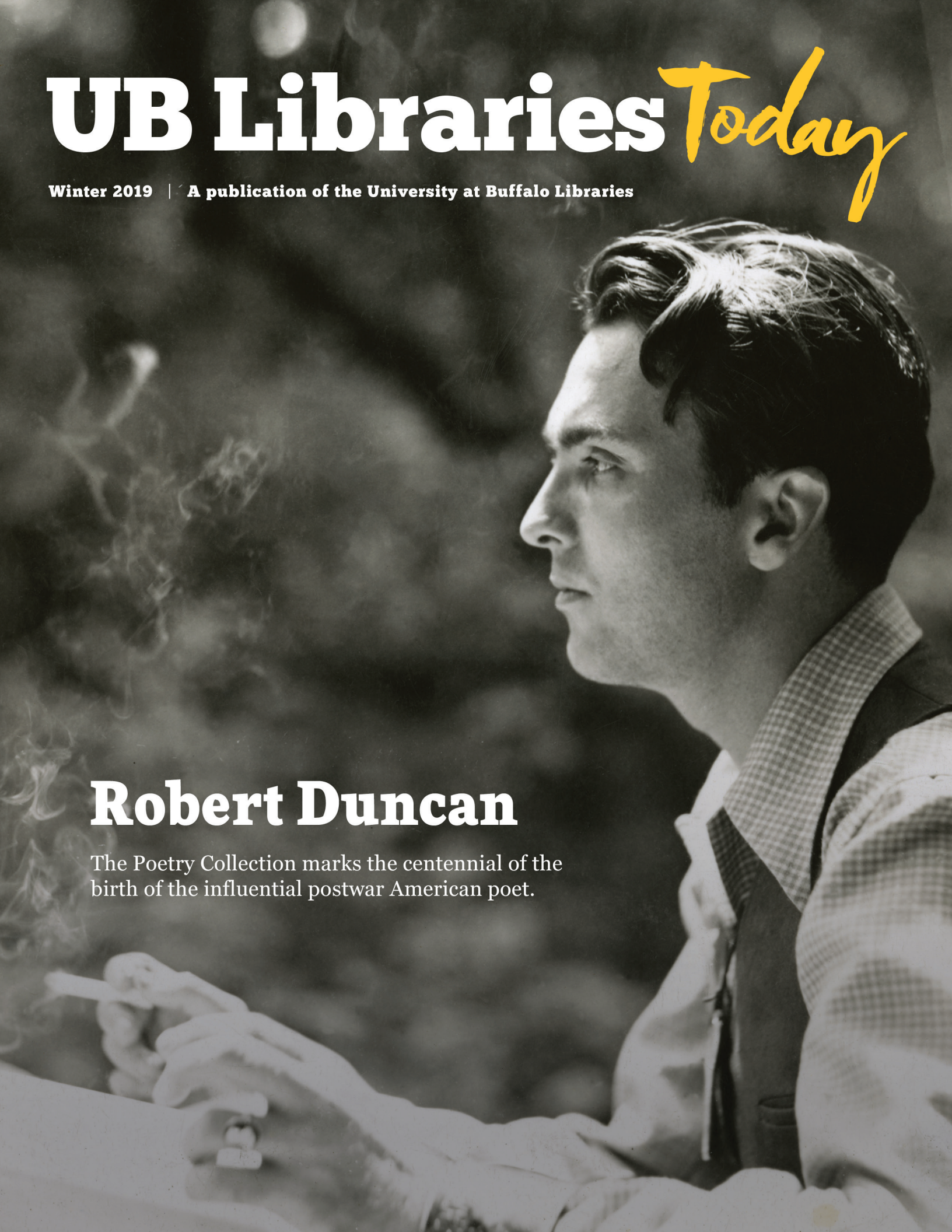
# UB Libraries

*Today*

Winter 2019 | A publication of the University at Buffalo Libraries

## Robert Duncan

The Poetry Collection marks the centennial of the birth of the influential postwar American poet.



UB Libraries Today is published by the University at Buffalo Libraries for alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends.

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Robert Duncan, ca. mid-1940s.

Photographer unknown

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## DID YOU KNOW?



Fifty years ago, on Oct. 27, 1969, Cesar Chavez, head of the United Farm Workers Union, addressed an audience in UB's Norton Hall on the need to find a common thread between the working conditions of migrant farm workers and the issues facing university students.

from **EVVIVA**

## By way of introduction...

Greetings! It is my honor and privilege to join the University at Buffalo as Vice Provost for University Libraries. I am excited at the opportunity to lead the Libraries and the outstanding individuals who make UB Libraries an active partner in the research and learning enterprise.

In this issue of *UB Libraries Today*, you will discover some of the people, places and programs that connect us, online and in person, in our buildings and around the world. Our cover story highlights the influential postwar American poet Robert Duncan, and, in celebration of his centennial, reports on the work currently underway in the Poetry Collection to process the wealth of materials in our Robert Duncan Collection. Once this collection has been fully processed, a complete listing of the assets of the collection will be available online as part of the Special Collections' new finding aids database.

This issue also includes an overview of our newly opened Digital Scholarship Studio and Network; an update on our new library services platform; and a preview of what the future might hold in terms of our facilities, space utilization, and institutional identity as envisioned in the 2019 Libraries Master Plan. Most notably, within these pages, you will meet some of the wonderful librarians, staff and student employees whose combination of energy, talent and expertise is vital to the success of our endeavors.

I look forward to meeting you in person in the months ahead and I invite you to visit us, to let us know how we are doing, and to make use of everything the University Libraries have to offer.

In this season of gratitude, I would like to thank you for your partnership and support. Your generosity and enthusiasm helps us thrive, and your gifts to the University Libraries are an investment in the future that will yield outstanding returns for generations.

Warm regards,

**Evviva Weinraub Lajoie**, Vice Provost for University Libraries





UB doctoral student Azalia Muchransyah with a selection of tech equipment available for students and staff to borrow from the Libraries.

# More than books!

Whether you're completing a multimedia assignment, borrowing a laptop, perfecting a video recording, recording a podcast or adding audio to a PowerPoint, the University Libraries are here to help. UB students, faculty and staff can stop by Silverman Library any day of the week to borrow all types of high-tech equipment including GoPro cameras, camcorders, headphones, microphones and even selfie sticks!

One student who makes the most of the Libraries' equipment loans is Azalia Muchransyah, a PhD student in UB's Department of Media Study. Azalia's specialty is filmmaking and after browsing the Libraries' website, she found that "UB has a great collection of equipment that students can access."

Though she often works on larger projects that involve a cast and crew, Azalia finds the equipment available in the Libraries useful for other projects. "As I am exploring different aesthetic techniques in my practice, I like to have a camera with me to film the mundanity of life," she says. "This is where the equipment I borrow from the library comes in handy. I can check cameras out for a week, film by myself, and use the footage I get to make short films. In fact, the Libraries' equipment has been useful for me to make several short films which have been officially selected to be screened in local and international film festivals all over the world."

Asked if she would recommend this service to fellow students, Azalia enthusiastically replies, "Yes! In fact, I do it all the time."



Learn more about our equipment loans at [library.buffalo.edu/equipment](https://library.buffalo.edu/equipment)



New York State Senator Tim Kennedy looks on as James Maynard, curator of UB's Poetry Collection, introduces Daniel Mulhall, Ireland's Ambassador to the United States, to UB's James Joyce Collection.

DOUGLAS LEVERE

# A Warm Welcome

Daniel Mulhall waited nearly 20 years for the opportunity to experience UB's James Joyce Collection, the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of the famous Irish author. This July, Mulhall, Ireland's Ambassador to the United States, and his wife Greta, finally had the chance to view the Joyce Collection firsthand.

The collection, which includes Joyce's working papers, notebooks and manuscripts, as well as portraits, photographs, family memorabilia and private library, captured the couple's interest and drew their enthusiastic accolades.

"I saw things in there that I've never seen before anywhere, and I've seen a lot of Joyce material around the world over the years," Ambassador Mulhall told *UBNow*. "I think it's one of the greatest treasures of Ireland that we happen to have this extraordinary literary heritage. And I'm so delighted to see that heritage being treasured here in Buffalo."

“

*It is my sincere pleasure to get to know many of our library student assistants while working with them on a daily basis. Each day, I learn more about different cultures from our students, as well as share in their challenges and joys while they are pursuing their education here at UB.”*

**Janiece Jankowski**  
Manager, Circulation Services



## Barbara von Wahlde 1937 - 2019

The University Libraries mourn the loss of Barbara von Wahlde, former Associate Vice President for University Libraries, who died on June 14, 2019, at age 81. Von Wahlde led the UB Libraries from 1986 to 2006. Under her leadership, the university's online public access catalog, BISON (Buffalo Information System Online) was implemented, and the Libraries strengthened ties with the university's computing and information technology functions. Von Wahlde played a leading role in considering issues related to copyright, intellectual property rights and alternative means of scholarly communication.



# Stack Your Strengths with micro-credentialing

Micro-credentialing has come to UB, and the Libraries are now a part of this new, university-wide initiative. Increasingly, higher education institutions are implementing digital badges as an online representation of skills that are not always captured on a transcript. For example, digital badges can document achievements and competencies that take place outside of the classroom, such as skills gained through internships, volunteer work and other activities.

By earning digital badges, students can focus on gaining specific skills in areas relevant to their academic and professional goals. Badges can be placed on social media sites, added as a link on a digital résumé, embedded in an e-portfolio and more. Multiple digital badges can be stacked to showcase new and developing strengths.

Identifying reliable information sources can be challenging, and UB Libraries now offer a digital badge in Advanced



Information Literacy. This digital badge is designed to help students expand their search skills and discover accurate methods for finding information. By pursuing this badge, students can save time conducting literature reviews, efficiently gather and organize information, ethically use sources, and protect their own intellectual property.

The Libraries' digital badge in Advanced Information Literacy is one of many ways that the Libraries are providing career-building opportunities for our students, helping them to stand out in their chosen field.



*Building connections with students is something that is often forgotten, but as librarians we have the opportunity to play a special role in their lives."*

**Bryan Sajecki**  
Undergraduate Education Librarian

## What We're Reading

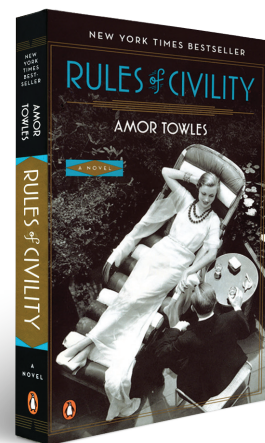
**Rules of Civility** by Amor Towles

Set in Manhattan during the late 1930s, Amor Towles' *Rules of Civility* immerses the reader in a time of tremendous change in the United States. The Great Depression is drawing to a close, and a nascent industrial boom is on the horizon.

Katey, the main character, is the daughter of immigrant parents. Growing up in Brooklyn, she strives for an independent life and career, and through a chance encounter, falls into the glittering lives of the privileged and wealthy elite in pre-WWII New York City.

Towles' richly drawn characters, with their foibles and strengths, made me burn through the pages to see how their situations would play out. The author's descriptive language and dialogue are so evocative, that I was effortlessly transported to that era in history.

**Kathleen O' Brien**  
Assessment and Resource Planning Officer





# You Search. We Deliver.

## Libraries Launch New Search & Discovery System

**A**fter months of preparation, UB Libraries, along with 61 State University of New York (SUNY) libraries, began operating on a single, unified system. The new system increases efficiencies and optimizes performance while offering several enhanced features designed to improve the user experience.

Provided by Ex Libris, a supplier of cloud-based solutions for higher education, the new system is a one-stop resource for finding material, giving patrons the ability to search databases, library collections, and all SUNY campus library catalogs, all in one place, all at one time.

Some of the changes most apparent to our users are longer loan periods and the removal of daily overdue fines for most circulating library materials, quicker access to materials owned by other SUNY institutions, and the ability to conveniently save, share, locate and request library resources to individual library accounts.

“Our new system strengthens and enhances library services at UB and across SUNY,” says Nicole Colello-Klubek, Head of Delivery Services for the University Libraries. “The advanced technology and high-level features of the system will allow us to better support teaching, learning and research at the university.”

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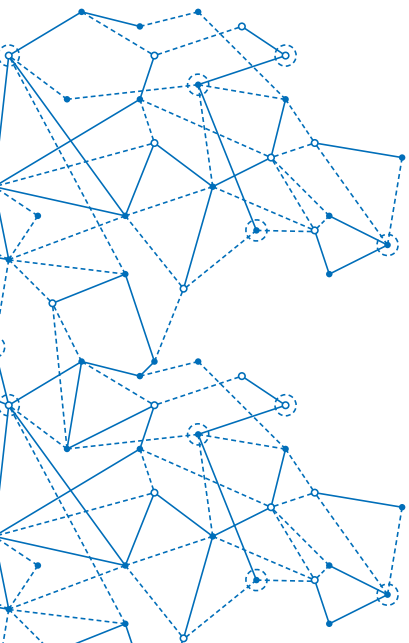
## Promoting Digital Innovation

The recently launched Digital Scholarship Studio and Network (DSSN), located in 320-325 Lockwood Library, delivers ongoing collaborative and coordinating assistance for faculty across the university who are creating digital content and systems.

“We aim to connect faculty from varied disciplines with others working on similar projects via a database of those who have an interest in digital scholarship,” says Stacy Snyder, Digital Scholarship Librarian. Snyder and Cristanne Miller, SUNY Distinguished Professor and Edward H. Butler Professor of English Literature, serve as DSSN co-directors.

During the fall semester, the DSSN sponsored several workshops and discussions, including a Wikipedia editing workshop, a talk on 3-D pedagogy, and a discussion of textual bias. “We are hoping these presentations will spark further collaboration,” Snyder says. “We are very interested in meeting with anyone engaged in digital scholarship. This is an ever-growing, ever-evolving endeavor, and we want to meet the needs of DS scholars.”

For more information about digital scholarship projects underway at UB and upcoming DSSN events, visit: [buffalo.edu/dssn](https://buffalo.edu/dssn)





JULIE PAVLOCK

## After Hours

It's late afternoon, and the day is starting to wind down for most UB Libraries' staff, but it's a different story for Omar Brown, Sarah Patton, Christine Riggi and Paul Whiting, evening supervisors in the Libraries. Although they work in different buildings, they share a common goal. As Sarah Patton sums it up, "Our responsibility is to ensure our students and staff enjoy the same level of service in the evening that they are accustomed to receiving during the day."

With a steady stream of students after 5 p.m., as well as members of the public arriving later in the day, the Libraries count on our evening team to keep everything running smoothly into the early morning hours. Each supervisor has a thorough understanding of library operations and is experienced in dealing with a wide range of requests and inquiries. From processing

*Delivery+* and interlibrary loan requests, to training library student assistants, our evening supervisors ensure that the transition from daytime to nighttime is seamless.

The evening team is also prepared to handle any issue that arises. Whether it's a printer jam, a scanning problem or an emergency in the building, the evening supervisors are able to manage unexpected situations. And sometimes, there are surprising moments in the Libraries after hours, especially during midterm and final exam weeks. "Students once brought in camping gear for overnight course cramming during exams," explains Brown. "You also see more students coming in with blankets and pillows, and food or snacks," adds Whiting. "You can tell they plan on being here for a long time!"



Did you know the Libraries employ more than **150** students?

Robert Duncan, early to mid-1950s.  
Photographer unknown







# Robert Duncan at 100

## Celebrating the Poet's Centennial

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of the influential postwar American poet Robert Duncan (Jan. 7, 1919 – Feb. 3, 1988). A key figure of the San Francisco Renaissance of the 1940s and '50s, Duncan played a significant role in the 1950s in the development of what became known as the Black Mountain School of Poetry, named after the *Black Mountain Review* which published many of the postmodern writers associated with the group. In 1949, Duncan first met the artist Jess Collins (known widely as simply "Jess"), his longtime partner and often creative collaborator with whom he lived for the rest of his life.

Duncan's writing is distinguished by its commitment to a poetics of open forms where, rather than imposing formal structures upon language, the poet instead works with the words of the poem (their sound, shape, etymologies, arrangement on the page, and especially their vast meanings and cultural associations) in a process of finding and developing meaningful patterns:

The poem  
feeds upon thought, feeling, impulse,  
to breed itself,  
a spiritual urgency at the dark ladders leaping.

-Excerpt from "Poetry, A Natural Thing"

A self-declared derivative poet whose thinking draws from a wide variety of discourses, from science and philosophy to myth and mysticism, Duncan was influenced by such earlier modernists as H.D., Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams as well as such classical writers as Dante and Shakespeare.

Robert Duncan's books include *Letters* (1958), *The Opening of the Field* (1960), *Roots and Branches* (1964), *Bending the Bow* (1968), *Ground Work: Before the War* (1984), and *Ground Work II: In the Dark* (1988). He was also an accomplished prose writer whose early essay, "The Homosexual in Society,"

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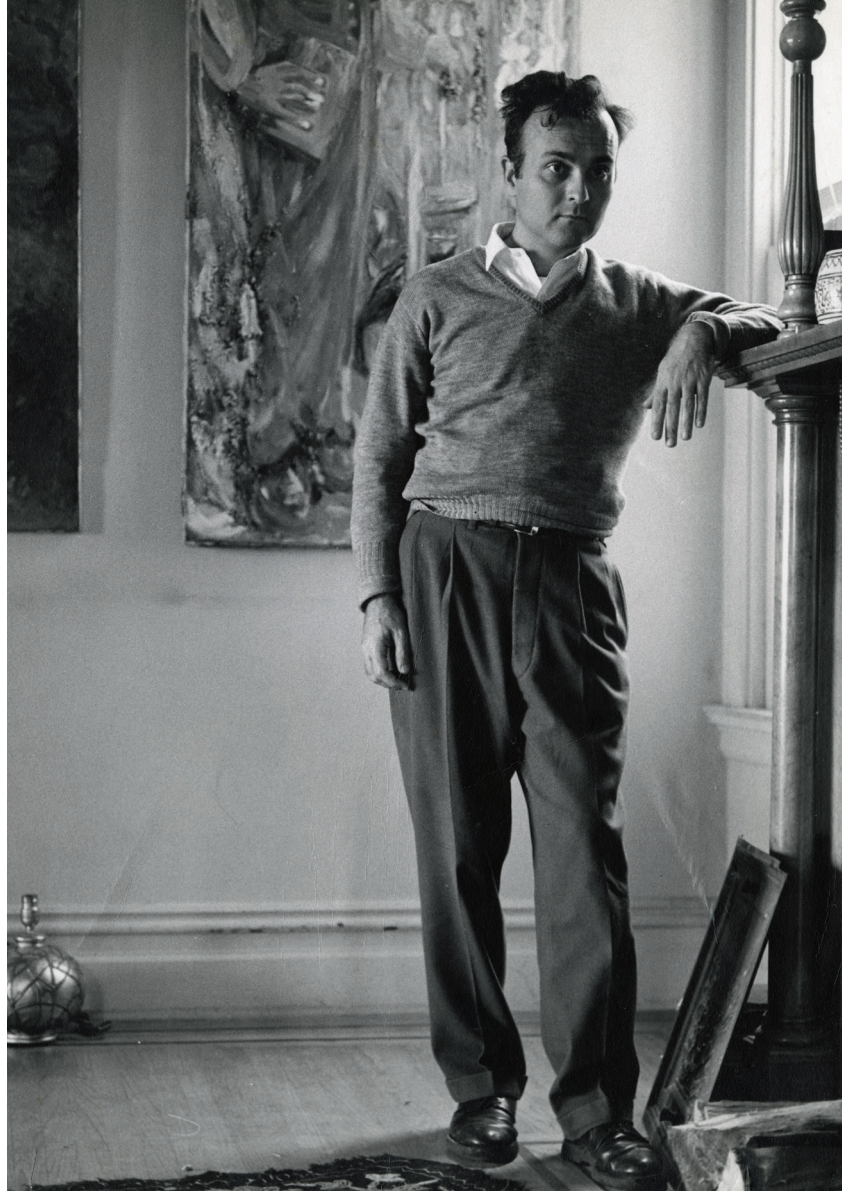
first published in 1944, was groundbreaking as much for its public declaration of the author's sexuality as for its discussion of homosexual issues several years before the organization of the gay rights movement in the late 1960s. A visual artist as well, Duncan's artwork has been displayed in several exhibitions over the years.

In honor of Duncan's centennial, the Poetry Collection is currently processing its Robert Duncan Collection. The collection first came to Buffalo from the poet in the late 1980s, thanks to former Poetry Collection Curator Robert J. Bertholf, a Duncan scholar and editor and longtime friend of the poet. The Robert Duncan Collection, steadily augmented over the years, is the largest collection of the poet's papers, consisting of over 80 notebooks dating from the early 1940s through early 1984; handwritten and typed manuscripts for hundreds of poems; thousands of pages of manuscripts by other writers; thousands of items of correspondence with various individuals, publishers and associations; and other personal and professional papers relating to Duncan's publications, reading tours and literary relationships.

There are also numerous works of art by Jess, Duncan and other artists; audio recordings; and a large selection of photographs. Additionally, the Poetry Collection holds virtually all of Duncan's publications (including small press publications, broadsides and little magazine appearances), Duncan criticism, and the large and eclectic personal library he shared with Jess, all of which can be found in the UB Libraries catalog.

Over the years, the Robert Duncan Collection has been actively used by researchers, editors, students and teachers. Recent projects making extensive use of the collection include Lisa Jarnot's biography *Robert Duncan, The Ambassador from Venus* (2012); the four volumes published to date as part of the University of California Press series, *The Collected Writings of Robert Duncan: The H.D. Book* (2011), *The Collected Early Poems and Plays* (2012), *The Collected Later Poems and Plays* (2014), *Collected Essays and Other Prose* (2014); the traveling exhibition and catalogue *An Opening of the Field: Jess, Robert Duncan, and Their Circle* (2013); and several dissertations, monographs, archival collections and edited collections of essays.

However, it is only now, more than 30 years after some of the early items first arrived in Buffalo, that the entire collection is being fully processed. Equal to the challenge has been Archivist for Special Collections Marie Elia, who is still in the midst of the project. In Elia's words, "This collection has been in the back of my mind since I started at the Poetry Collection in 2013. I knew it would



Robert Duncan, 1957. Photograph by Harry Redl.

"I THINK OF A POEM BEING READ, RE-READ, AND THE MEANING OF IT FOUND IN DIFFERENT WAYS OVER A LIFETIME. THAT'S THE WAY I FIND MY POEMS, READ MY POEMS."

Excerpt from *A Poet's Mind: Collected Interviews with Robert Duncan, 1960-1985*



Robert Duncan and Jess, ca. mid-1950s. Photograph by Helen Adam.  
From the Poetry Collection's Helen Adam Collection.

be a challenge, partly because of its size and partly because it had been rearranged and used for both research and exhibitions over the past 30 years. I needed everything I have learned as an archivist to tackle this work, and now I am very proud to publish the first public finding aid for what is really the heart of the Poetry Collection." Once the collection has been fully processed, a complete finding aid will be available online as part of the UB Special Collections' new finding aids database: [findingaids.lib.buffalo.edu](http://findingaids.lib.buffalo.edu)

In addition to processing the Duncan Collection, the Poetry Collection also celebrated Duncan's centenary year by co-sponsoring "*Passages*": *The Robert Duncan Centennial Conference in Paris*. Organized by individuals from Sorbonne Université, Simon Fraser University, Université Paris Nanterre, and the Poetry Collection, and held June 12-14 at Sorbonne Université and Maison de la recherche, the international conference featured presenters from several countries discussing Duncan's life and work, keynote speeches and poetry readings. As evidenced by the number and variety of Duncan-related research projects presented in Paris, the poet's centennial comes at an exciting moment for Duncan studies, and the Poetry Collection looks forward to continuing to support the work of anyone interested in its Robert Duncan Collection.

## ANNUAL FUND

Poetry Collection's Robert Duncan/Jess Collins Fund

For this year's annual fund, we invite you to join us in our celebration of Robert Duncan's centennial by making a tax-deductible gift to the Poetry Collection's Robert Duncan/Jess Collins Fund. This endowment helps support the Duncan Collection and the acquisition of new materials. To give to the Duncan/Collins Fund, simply write the fund name under "Other" on the enclosed donation envelope, or visit:

[library.buffalo.edu/pl/support](http://library.buffalo.edu/pl/support)

Erin Hartnett, Director of Advancement  
716-829-2576  
[ehhartne@buffalo.edu](mailto:ehhartne@buffalo.edu)

# Planning for the Future

A transformation could be coming to the University Libraries.

The \$7.2 million renovation of Silverman Library in 2016 has inspired a facilities master plan to reinvent UB's campus libraries into technology-rich spaces tailored to educational experiences and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The aspirational plan envisions a civic square in the Law Library where faculty and the public could engage in discourse; relocation of Special Collections to a prominently placed gallery in Abbott Hall that would feature UB's unique collections and literary treasures; and several scholars' labs that would provide research support for faculty.

Led by Pfeiffer Partners Architects and Foit Albert Associates, the 2019 Libraries Master Plan was completed with consultation from University Libraries leadership and a steering committee comprised of stakeholders from across UB, including faculty and senior staff. Workshops and focus groups were held to inform planning. The plan is designed to serve as a guide in developing short- and long-term capital projects to transform the Libraries – central to the

university's teaching, research and service missions – into an incubator for scholarship and a global gallery.

The facilities master plan aims to touch University Libraries facilities located in Capen Hall, Lockwood Library, Abbott Hall and O'Brian Hall, which receive more than 3.5 million visits annually and cover more than 300,000 square feet of space on the North and South campuses.

The goal of future renovations is to establish a clearer University Libraries' identity through construction of prominent entrances, consistent visual design across facilities, and improved layout. Next steps involve construction of new entrances on three levels of Silverman Library, completed in lockstep with UB's Heart of the Campus initiative, and expansion of the Libraries' Annex, a 16,000-square-foot, high-density storage facility that houses more than 1 million books and journals.

The largest UB library in terms of square footage, Lockwood Library could become the "Library of the North Campus." The



The Libraries Master Plan reimagines the use of unused space in Lockwood Memorial Library by proposing the creation of a central atrium within the heart of the existing building. A visually and sculpturally appealing staircase would extend up to the full height of the building, and would serve as a center-point in the atrium.

Originally built in 1933 as Lockwood Memorial Library, the present-day Abbott Hall was designed by architects E.B. Green & Son. The Libraries Master Plan proposes the creation of a new central staircase that would replace the existing first-to-second floor stair, helping to better connect the entry to all four floors of the library. Design and character play a role in the success of this stair, so a light and airy structure is proposed in order to maintain visibility across the space.



plan calls for construction of a central atrium that would provide the building with a new heart where library services, exhibits, and reader and instruction space are easily accessible. The atrium would also create a more identifiable main entrance to the library.

The master plan calls for a new, prominent, first-floor entrance to the Law Library, as well as a grand reading room and civic square, which would provide the campus with an open space for lectures, conferences and informal use.

Home of the Health Sciences Library and Architecture and Planning Library, Abbott Hall would become the “Library of the South Campus.” Special Collections would receive prominent exhibition space on the first floor for engagement with the UB community.

By reimagining current space, the Libraries Facilities Master Plan envisions a library that has the flexibility to address the evolving needs of the university community both today and in the future. To view the complete plan, visit: [library.buffalo.edu/master-plan](http://library.buffalo.edu/master-plan)

The Libraries Master Plan proposes enclosing O’Brian Hall’s underutilized exterior fifth-floor courtyard with a dramatic skylight that would create a stunning new space suitable both for daily reader use as well as for special events. With this Grand Reading Room as the center point of the fifth floor, the entire level would be transformed from a one-sided cluster of rooms to a resource-rich hub of learning.



# Cassandra

Mary Heebner and Stephen Kessler,  
*Cassandra* (Simplemente Maria Press, 2019)



A collaboration between artist Mary Heebner and poet Stephen Kessler, *Cassandra* explores what is seen and unseen, heard and unheard, through visual and written homage to Cassandra of Troy, whose warnings about the impending destruction of the ancient city by the Greeks famously went ignored.

In Heebner's collages, Cassandra's fragmented faces reflect her unfolding traumas before, during and after the Trojan War, while Kessler's poem provides a corrective to centuries of doubt and judgment. Housed in a zinc box, the accordion-fold book includes individual collages and hand-paintings, reflecting the ephemeral quality of the materiality of memory. Edition of 25.

# Seven Silks

Jen Bervin, *Seven Silks* (Granary Books, 2018)

Produced in conjunction with Tufts University's Silklab, an interdisciplinary research lab studying the intersection of technology and life sciences, *Seven Silks* investigates the biomedical possibilities and historical contexts of silk.

This work includes a book of poetry composed in a six-character chain corresponding to silk DNA and written from the perspective of a silkworm addressing a person with a silk biosensor implanted in her body; a silk cocoon image printed on silk; a silk poems strand, printed on silk; and four glass jars holding a silk cocoon, silk skein, silk scroll, and liquid silk. Edition of 100.





I'M  
*Thankful*

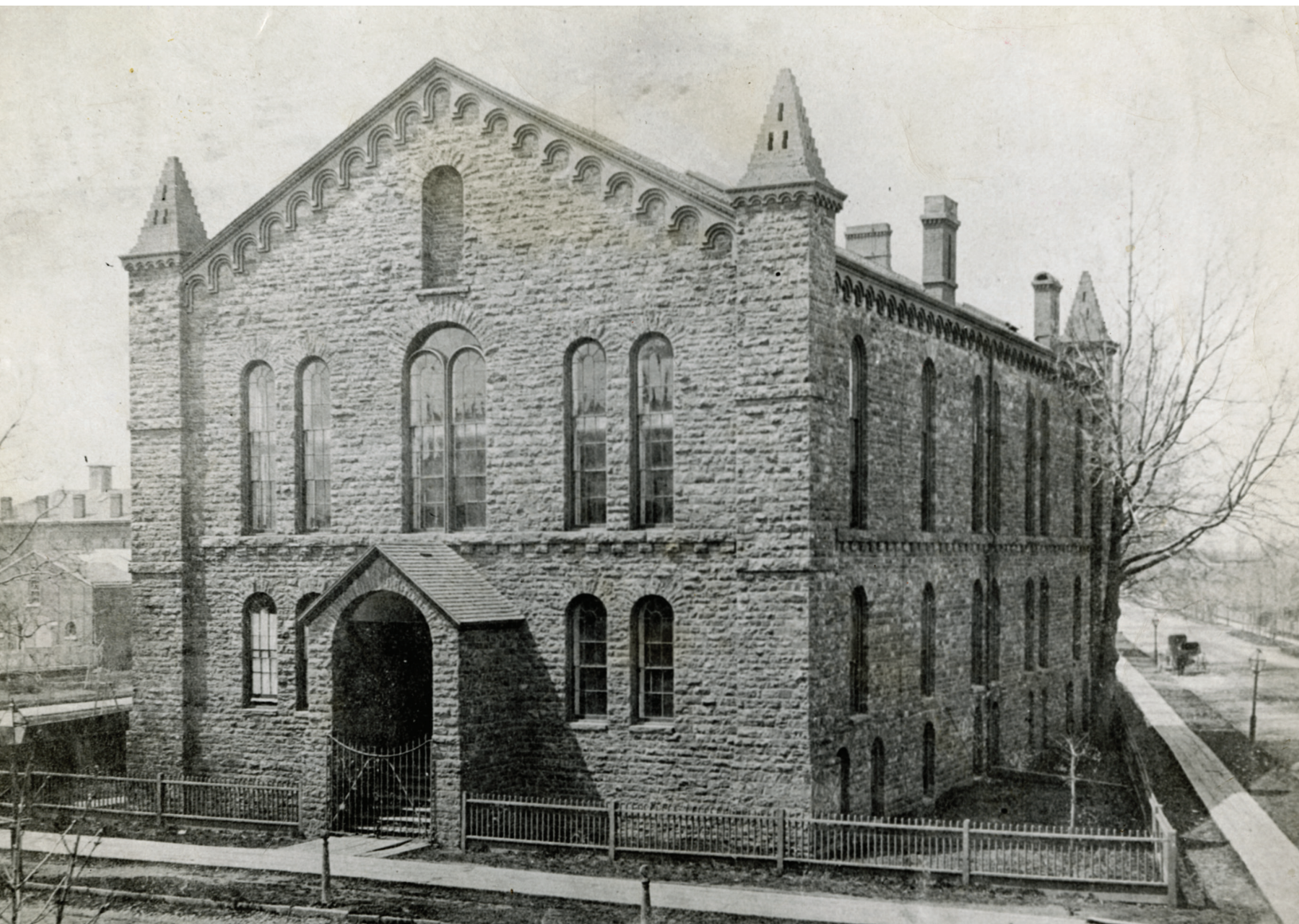
One has to wonder how Mohamed Abdelazim Eltantawy Badawy is able to seek a doctorate in international politics, work 20 hours a week in the Libraries, and still find time to spend with his family. It's a fine balance and Mohamed admits that it's not easy to excel in his studies, serve as a Library student coordinator, and as a father of three children, carve out time with his family.

Mohamed started working in the Libraries in 2018 and brings a spirit to the Libraries that is rare. Asked why he wanted to work in the Libraries, Mohammed responds, "The atmosphere in the library is fantastic. It really promotes your feeling for this place. I am always working to enhance the environment in the Libraries; I feel as though I am a part of that."

Mohamed works on both North and South campuses, and as he puts it, "I'm everywhere!" He takes his job as a student coordinator seriously and delivers a positive message to incoming student assistants. He advises them to, "Focus on customer service. This is especially important for new students who might find the Libraries overwhelming."

Mohamed also values the resources that UB Libraries offer. "You need a book but can't buy it? The library will get it for you! *Delivery+* is the most important thing for me as a student. I will not forget the days, months and years I have been working and studying here...it is an honor to be part of the Libraries."

Your generosity affirms the vital role the UB Libraries play in learning, discovery and service to society: [library.buffalo.edu/support](https://library.buffalo.edu/support)



**Flashback**  
UB History

This building, constructed in 1849, once stood at the corner of Main and Virginia Streets in the City of Buffalo, New York. It was the first building in Buffalo built solely for collegiate education and served as the second home of UB's medical school from 1850 to 1893.