

**Collected Masks**  
**Main Library, Second Floor, through October 31**  
**HOURS: Monday-Wednesday: 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.**  
**Thursday-Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.**  
**Sunday: 1:00-4:00 p.m.**  
**Contact: Richard L. Helmes, (513) 369-6959**

Just in time for Halloween, the Main Library, 800 Vine Street, is featuring 130 masks from around the world during the month of October. Presented by an anonymous collector, the masks have had an integral role in human mythology for centuries and appear in nearly every country in the world. In the United States we generally use masks only at Halloween, but many countries use them throughout the year: hunting rituals, religious festivals, and honoring the deceased are just a few of the uses for masks and costumes around the globe.

In the U.S., our relatively new Halloween tradition has also given rise to an abundance of masks and mask types. Early costumes were often homemade and might include a painted cloth sack as a mask. In the early 1900s hand painted papier-mâché and starched cloth masks from Germany began to appear. Soon after, an influx of affordable masks from other countries was being imported as Halloween activities rose in popularity. Vacuum formed plastic, rubber and a host of synthetic materials allow modern mask makers to create the remarkably realistic and often gruesome masks we see today.

The masks in the exhibit are part of a private collection and represent over 15 years of collecting. The first mask acquired, the green bull (El Toro) with leather ears, was purchased as a souvenir in Mexico in the mid 1980s. Since then, additional masks were acquired in Mexico and at flea markets, antique stores, and via the Internet. All are fine examples of the art of mask making.

**The collector as a mask**

