



THE  
PUBLIC  
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and  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
**Press Release**

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## Check Out These Exhibits at the Main Library

### ***Dictionaries: Find the Word on View Through May 20***



On view in the Rare Books & Special Collections Department of the Main Library (800 Vine Street) through May 20, *Dictionaries: Find the Word* exhibits a “meaningful” understanding of dictionaries from yesteryear. Featuring some of the earliest vernacular in print, this special exhibit showcases a number of important rare dictionaries that served as a “defining” moment in the history of the printed word.

Louis E. Kahn, well-known philanthropist and business leader in the meatpacking industry, was also known as an avid book collector. He endeavored to collect as many editions of all dictionaries ever printed for nearly 20 years. After his death, the Kahn family donated the dictionary collection to the Public Library. Thanks to Mr. Kahn’s pursuits, the number of key English dictionaries in the Library’s collection at one time ranked it among the top ten English language dictionary collections in the world. Many of these dictionaries had fewer than a thousand copies printed.

In addition to English language dictionaries, the collection also features bilingual and polyglot dictionaries printed prior to 1800 and Native American language dictionaries up to 1900. Of special interest in the exhibit are the dictionaries of “slang, cant and the vulgar tongue,” one published as early as 1699. These dictionaries including *The Slang Dictionary of New York, London and Paris* (1880), provide an inside view of cultural influences of the day. Others, of note, include *An Illustrated Dictionary of Scientific Terms* (1879); *The Ladies Dictionary; Being a General Entertainment for the Fair-Sex: A Work Never Attempted Before in English* (1694) and a series of miniature editions such as *Little Webster 18,000 Words* (1928) and the *Lilliput Dictionary* (1930).

### ***Local Artists’ Books on View April 2-June 6***



When are books more than books? When they’re artists’ books purposely designed to be part book, part art. One recent addition to the Library’s collection is *Omniana* by local artist and Library employee, Aaron Delamatre. This interactive artist’s book is actually a game where players use their imagination to creatively debate battles between fantastical and strange characters in both exotic and normal locations.

Through the years the Library has acquired over 250 artists’ books in all

shapes, sizes and designs. Some are one-of-a-kind creations that are handbound. Some are printed and come in multiple copies. Others are interactive like *Omniana*, which according to Mr. Delamatre is meant to connect individuals with art and literature through an experience.

This spring, *Thinking Outside the Book: Local Artists' Books from the Collection of the Art & Music Department* will showcase 40 works by 30 local artists from April 2 through June 6.

### **Miniature Book Society Traveling Exhibit, May 1-June 30**



A traveling exhibit from The Miniature Book Society, Inc. (MBS) presents fine miniature books, along with photographs of collectors, designers and publishers at the Main Library from May 1-June 30. MBS is an international nonprofit organization that was chartered in 1983 to sustain an interest in all phases of miniature books, provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and to serve as a clearinghouse for information about miniature books.

Popular because they were easily carried or concealed, miniature books range from tiny “Thumb Bibles” to illustrated nursery rhymes. The earliest piece of block printing to which an accurate date can be ascribed—a Japanese wooden block print from about 770 AD—is a miniature scroll and part of the Lilly Library’s collections. A miniature book is usually considered to be one that is no more than three inches in size--height, width or thickness. Some collectors do occasionally acquire slightly larger books.

The Rare Books & Special Collections Department also has a wealth of miniature books in its collection, a few of which will be displayed alongside its exhibit *Dictionaries: Find the Word*. For more information, call (513) 369-6957.

Main Library, 800 Vine Street

HOURS:

Monday-Wednesday: 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Thursday, Friday & Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Sunday: 1:00-5:00 p.m.

✓ Information about events at the Main Library and 41 branch libraries is available on the Internet site: [www.CincinnatiLibrary.org](http://www.CincinnatiLibrary.org).