THE PERVERSE LIBRARY
The Perverse Library

CRAIG DWORFIN
THE PERVERSE LIBRARY
Craig Dworkin

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information as material publishes work by artists and writers who use extant material — selecting it and re-framing it to generate new meanings — and who, in doing so, disrupt the existing order of things.

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Étienne-Louis Boullée
Deuxieme projet pour la Bibliothèque du Roi, 1785

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Pinacographic Space

_The library is its own discourse. You listen in, don’t you?_

— Thomas Nakell,
_The Library of Thomas Rivka_
One night, a friend — a poet who had been one of the central figures in Language Poetry — noticed me admiring his collection of books, which lined his entire apartment, floor to ceiling. Political theory crowded the entryway; music and design pushed up against the dining room; in the living room he seemed to have a complete collection of publications from his fellow travelers: the most thorough document of post-war American avant-garde poetry imaginable. I noticed, one after another, books of which I had only heard mention but had never before seen. At the top of one shelf I thought I caught a glimpse of Robert Grenier’s infamous “chinese box”-bound set of cards, *Sentences*. I tried to express my admiration by saying something about the especially choice inclusions, mentioning a couple of particularly obscure volumes to let him know that it wasn’t just an off-hand compliment, or a statement about the sheer number of books, and that I had really read the shelves carefully and knew just how impressively replete the collection was. But I had missed the point.

“I don’t have any Leslie Scalapino,” he declared.

The laid lines texturing the cover stock of her first book, *O* [Berkeley: Sand Dollar, 1976], and the oblong formats of her early books of permutated narratives [*The Woman Who Could Read the Minds of Dogs* (Berkeley: Sand Dollar, 1976) and *This Eating and Walking at the Same Time Is Associated Alright* (Bolinas: Tombouctou, 1979)] came immediately to mind — I could almost feel them in my hands. I looked at him, a little surprised. It seemed impossible that among all the thousands of books in the apartment, all the books he’d bought or been sent over the years, he didn’t happen to have just one. Not the collaboration with Lyn Hejinian, I wondered? Or the one published by his friends at Roof? Nothing purchased decades before out of curiosity? I tried to think of the most likely title.
“She’s a total fraud,” he claimed, explaining.

On the train home I contemplated removing certain authors from my library. As the number of writers to be banished grew, I realized that libraries are defined not by what they have on their shelves, but by what they exclude from them.

Gerry Smith’s *Essential Reading* (2004) makes much the same argument, positing that the greatest insight into people’s characters is gained not from knowing what books are on their shelves, but rather from noting those books which are overtly absent. Smith confesses to possessing an extensive collection of truant volumes, which he has carefully organized into some dozen categories: Books I’ve Been Told I Ought To Read; Books I’ve Wanted To Read; Books I Want To Read; Books Loaned To Friends And Not Returned; Books Sold To Secondhand Bookshops; Books I’ve Given Other People The Impression of Having Read; et cetera.

Smith also offers practical advice on how to allocate the empty shelf space sufficient to represent the books which enter into such a conceptual collection. Bookshelves abhor a vacuum, and like all libraries the invisible collection quickly expands to overflow whatever space one might imagine it will need. Smith suggests that if one runs out of empty shelves some of the bibliographic ciphers can always be acquired, transferred to one’s traditional library and placed with other physically present books, thus freeing up space for additional notional acquisitions. The paradox is vaguely amusing, but it reveals a serious and fundamental logic of the library. As soon as an accumulation of books is conceived of as a library it enters into a calculus of expansion. The organization of a
library immediately invokes the absent volumes that would confirm, complete or contradict its categories: other books by a given author; missing titles in a series; issues from the same press; books published in the same year; or in the same format; or, more slippery and expansive still, the genres and subgenres that are themselves defined by affinities. The move from accrual to taxonomy sets in motion an endless chain-reaction of tantalizing remove — a perpetually retreating horizon — as categories proliferate just beyond the reach of the collection that would seek to compass them.

Every library, as such, is determined by this negative ontology. True libraries are haunted by other collections which they cannot, by necessity, contain and yet which nonetheless define their essence (the reading matter of Smith’s title is indeed essential in this sense). Those fugitive collections exert a palpable pressure — a phantom shelf in the sense that one might speak of a phantom limb — simultaneously supporting and distending the boards of a case. That phantom shelf accounts for the vague feeling conjured by even the most capacious collections that something is missing. The feeling, indeed, is all the more vivid the more replete a collection seems: the disquieting sense that one could find just the right book if only one could remember the title or author, could remember just what term to search for — tantalizingly just beyond grasp, always on the tip of the tongue. Or that there are holdings unrecorded by the catalogue and unlocatable by the finding aids; or, with a hint of paranoia, that there exists some inaccessible volume, or archive or vault not merely forgotten or misplaced but lying intentionally concealed, permanently just beyond the purview of the would-be reader. Displaced from the tangible collection it defines, the absent library takes part in an uncanny accounting: ordering and tabulating every addition to a catalogue by
a subtractive deduction; sketching a pinax of absence; and bartering ruthlessly in a general economy of anticipatory and permanent deaccession. However intimate and domestic a private home library might be, however overstuffed-snug and hearth-warmed and familiar, its heart is always elsewhere, exiled, unheimlich [away from home].

As the library reaches after that phantom shelf, accumulating and aggregating, it extends not only its conceptual scope but its volumetric expanse as well. The collateral effect of the concept of a library is architectural colonization. Left unchecked, a library will venture wall-space in an horizontal sprawl and a stratifying climb. It will annex any likely surfaces, and even essay a stake to entire rooms. A library is print in its gaseous state, filling every available space and then increasing pressure — compressing, rotating, double-shelving — until, according to the constant required by Boyle’s Law, either the current container breaks, loosing books onto new shelves and stacks, or else the volume stabilizes, stabilizing volumes.

That stabilization is known in cultural terms as canonization. Although we tend to think of canons as the result of abstract ideology, they are not, in the end, fundamentally issues of aesthetics or politics or philosophy, but rather of architecture. Architecture is what tests and proves a canon. Without further construction, without an architectural change, the economy of the entropic library shelf is closed: for a book to be added another must be decanonized. The books on the shelf must justify their place with some argument other than the mere fact that they are books. They thus enter into dialogue with one another, foregrounding allegiance or distrusts, forming alliances or staging competitions. That aesthetic contest, however, is not the last word, and it returns — with a surprisingly circularity — to the physical format of books.
In practical terms, the introduction of a new volume to the library, however much sense it makes, must still obey the law of the conservation of width. There must be room for the newly elect, and a large Collected Works might require the removal of a half-dozen others. Canonization, Seth Lerer concurs, “is as much a process of selecting space as of selecting value. How can we fit the range of literature on the shelf? The physical, artifactual nature of the book has made the canonizing of the literary work into an act of space management.”

The Perverse Library, accordingly, argues for a particular canon. An architectural plan, it maps a set of shelves rather than exhaustively cataloguing every printed possession. It ignores most of the literary criticism, theory, art history, and music books kept at an office. Most contemporary journals have ended up there as well. Similarly, it happens to exclude anthologies, reference books, duplicate volumes, and almost anything written before the twentieth century — plus what I happened to be reading, and so was off the shelf at the moment I took inventory. More interestingly, it misses a small shelf of books notable for being the source of other books, including Whitfield’s *University Rhyming Dictionary*, E. A. Abbott’s *Flatland* and *How to Parse*; Herbert Stanley Allen’s *Electrons and Waves*. Misleadingly, other omitted volumes include works I love and return to more than anything listed here. Those books structure other spaces with their own psychogeobibliography. On one shelf: the collected writings of Benjamin and Barthes (fortunate incursions from a girlfriend’s contiguous collection). On another: the facsimile edition of Blake’s illustrated books. Elsewhere: all of Pepys’ diaries. To one side: Old English and Icelandic sagas. To another: decadent and fin-de-siècle prose of a certain lurid style (Ruskin and Swinburne, some Pater); early 20th-century translations of Marx. Not
to mention almost all except some misshelved French: from Villon and Scève to Pradon and Crébillon to Jacob and Ponge. Along another wall, the Littré and the Grand Robert above the 22 volumes of the second edition of the Oxford English Dictionary. Far less ostentatiously: double-shelved stacks of Penguin, Oxford, Norton and Harcourt Brace paperbacks, along with the Vintage pocketbooks, shelved together in a narrow case for reasons of space. These are mainly the remnants of college courses in literature and classics, or publishers’ desk copies, but they account for certain absences on the mainly modernist shelves as well. So, in the following catalogue, no Woolf or Calvino. Nor Orwell’s Homage to Catalonia, which always makes me hopeful and sad.

As errant, oversize, or oddly formatted items strike out beyond the borders to the shelves, extending the library into unpopulated, newly opened territory, they court encounters and collisions. For instance, the symbioses between the coffee table and the coffee-table book, or the broadside and the wall — rotations of text to the horizontal and around the axis established by shelved spines — reorient our reading postures and our attitudes (our bodies, our shelves). The bibliothetic problems of architecture and interior design hone and narrow particular canons, but they can also explode others. One afternoon, when I was in high school, I tagged along with a friend to the music library of the local university. In advance of auditions, she was looking for the score to a number from the newly produced Andrew Lloyd-Webber Phantom of the Opera. I was dutifully bored, wandering with a theatrically feigned, condescending teen insouciance. My nonchalance was ambushed, however, when I tripped, quite literally, over a book extending beyond the frame of the bottom shelf. It was John Cage’s oversized, square-trimmed Notations (compiled with
Alison Knowles [New York: Something Else Press, 1969]). At a glance, it changed my preconceptions about music, and books, and the arts. My introduction to the avant-garde was the result of cabinetry standards.

Conversely, a designedly opuscular set first taught me the difference between a library and a mere assembly of books. I was fortunate to have books even as a baby, but my first true library, as such, the self-contained *soi-disant* “Nutshell Library,” housed four miniature books by Maurice Sendak in a slipcased series: *Alligators All Around*, *Chicken Soup with Rice*, *One Was Johnny*, and *Pierre*. A portable library, providing an instant bookshelf, it was easily set up wherever a toddler might be dragged. They were exponentially better than four random books, because they were always arranged so that before all the pleasures of reading, before all the familiar repetitions of the text — repetitions replicated at the level of the material book — there was the pleasure of deliberate selection. The uniform format and design emphasized choice and encouraged a conscious focus: the trace of the finger over the gently ridged corrugation of the spines, the discernment of titles which because of their similar fonts and palettes had to actually be read (in contrast with a jumble of books that were recognizable at a glance, without thinking: one oversize, another squat, the familiar glossy jacket of one, the distressed cloth binding of another starting to fray).

One recent adult version of the nutshell library consists of a tin encasing a series of palm-sized books — classic modern novellas by Conrad, Hemingway, Kafka, Kipling, Louis Stevenson and Tolstoy — sealed in foil and bound in flip-top cellophane-wrapped cigarette packs [Tank Books (London, 2010)]. Clever to the point of cuteness, the design might at first seem a mere gimmick, an extreme version of
marketing by format in a mode familiar from schemes such as City Lights’ venerable “Pocket Poets” and the Penguin’s “60s” and “Great Ideas” series, not to mention the branding of entire presses like Green Integer and Éditions Mille et Une Nuits. Indeed, the binding of the Tank books clearly takes precedence over their content; the titles were evidently chosen more for being free from international copyright than for any pressing literary reason. To be sure, tobacco is a topic in some of the works included — the Russian sailor in Heart of Darkness asks, “where’s a sailor that does not smoke?,” and the promoter in Hemingway’s Undefeated pointedly declares “I never smoke” — but a more apposite selection would have been a collection of essays that included George Orwell’s Tribune article “Books v. Cigarettes.” Countering the “idea that the buying, or even the reading, of books is an expensive hobby and beyond the reach of the average person,” Orwell carefully catalogues his own library in economic terms. The total cost, in isolation, Orwell admits, sounds high (£25, or something over $1,000 today); but he compares that number to hebdomatical outlays for other commodities of pleasure and vice, habit and necessity (six ounces of tobacco and a half-dozen pints of ale per week). “Twenty-five pounds a year sounds quite a lot until you begin to measure it against other kinds of expenditure,” Orwell reasons, and he concludes that “the cost of reading, even if you buy books instead of borrowing them and take in a fairly large number of periodicals, does not amount to more than the combined cost of smoking and drinking.” The tin of books from Tank costs exactly the same as two cartons of duty-free Marlboro Reds (King Size). Or roughly a bottle of 10-year-old Ardbeg whiskey.

Regardless of their content or their cost, however, the Tank books comment with a wry camp on the very idea of the
library as such. Like the sequential narrative structures of the Nutshell books (alphabetical, calendrical, numerical, insistently rhyming — formal elements psychologically dramatized by Pierre’s symptomatically routine *idée-fixe* phrase), or the far-from-coincidental ordering of issues in an explicitly numbered series by Green Integer and Mille et Une Nuits, the addicting, habituating, repetitive logic of nicotine reiterates the repetitive and compulsive logic of a collection.

Moreover, part of the appeal of the Tank collection, no doubt, arises from the frisson generated by the metaphoric association it posits between cigarettes and books. Both are composed of paper-wrapped leaves, but the burning required by the former is inimical to the latter. The cheerfully clean, bright designs of the Tank books grin ironically, presenting a feigned façade behind which the dark threat of book-burning — with all its long, troubling cultural resonance — smolders subliminally. The tone of that grin, moreover, shades into a species of hubris. As a collection underscoring the psychological characteristics of collecting, as a miniature library presented as complete and self-contained — each book safely double-wrapped and housed snugly together in metal — it brazenly summons the bibliocaustic spectre that haunts all libraries and seems at times to be their inevitable telos. Once completed, when the last sought volume terminates the phantom shelf, a collection suddenly strikes stasis, lying inert in an unwinnable waiting game against inevitable accident. The library, once its logic has been put in play, can end only with its own complete destruction. Partially diminished or damaged, the collection still coheres *as a collection* — its phantom shelf simply expands again accordingly. Lost or dispersed items can be replaced; damages can be restored, reconstituted book by book if need be, until the collection regains its former condition. But once
equilibrium has been reached again the only further consumption of a collection is its wholesale disappearance, an utter razing without reserve. To \textit{consume}: “to read (literature).” To \textit{consume}: “(of fire) to burn up.”4

The measure of all libraries is the ideal of the Ptolemaic collection at the Museum in Alexandria, which housed more than half-a-million scrolls (most of them containing more than one work). The collection was not simply large, but unprecedented in its comprehensive aim. Indeed, if libraries are defined by what they omit, the Library at Alexandria would not really have been a library at all. Less an articulated collection than an exhaustive record of publishing, Ptolemy’s Collections Development Department sought, simply, to amass every book, by anyone, from everywhere. Had the king achieved his goal, the Alexandrian catalogue and a history of writing would have been identical. From its earliest mention, ancient writers repeat one another verbatim, in Greek and Latin and Arabic, for centuries; the Library sought, in the words of the earliest extant commentator (the Pseudo-Aristeas in his \textit{Letter to Philocrates}), “to collect […] all the books in the world.” The ambition of the Library was to construct a map of literary production drawn to a scale of 1 : 1.

Despite the vast scope of its monumental holdings, the Library is most famous, of course, not for what it acquired, but for what it lost. In a desperate attempt to escape Africa and outmanoeuvre the vastly superior troops of Ptolemy XIII, Julius Caesar set fire to the ships at dock in the Alexandrian harbor. The fire spread, reaching the Museum complex, causing what we would refer to euphemistically today as “collateral
damage.” Imagined in flames, the Library has come to represent the erasure of cultural memory rather than its repository, the ephemeral nature of the archive, and the degree to which accumulation tempts the fate of its own dissipation into fragment and ash. Indeed, like the Tower of Babel, the Library at Alexandria has become an emblem for the blind ambition of totalizing enterprises. Collections court destruction with a hubris directly proportional to their ambition. Total compass invites annihilation.

Surprising to remember, then, that the Library at Alexandria never burned at all.⁵

Indeed, whatever the risk at which it put the literary patrimony of mankind, during its flourish the Library at Alexandria generated texts rather than simply archiving them. Inextricably bound up with its attempt to assemble and conserve tradition was the Library’s simultaneous creation of a new literature, its inadvertent construction of a future literary legacy. Ptolemy’s institution was an enormous scroll-driven engine for the production of forgeries. The accumulative imperative of the Library, which put it in necessary competition with other libraries, encouraged hoaxes, fabrications, and plagiarisms. Entire bibliographies — pseudo-Platonic and pseudo-Aristotelian corpora — arise from the logic of the Library. As Daniel Heller-Roazen notes, in an essay on which I have drawn heavily for my sources, this dynamic was common knowledge even in the ancient world. In Aelius Galen’s diagnosis, which echoes others:
It was when the Attalids and the Ptolemies were in competition over their own libraries that the recklessness of forging books and titles began. For there were those who, to increase the price of their book, attached the names of great authors to them and then sold them to the nobility.

The “structural conditions of falsification,” Heller-Roazen writes, “are none other than those of the archive itself.” Facilitating the falsification of the tradition it aimed to preserve, the Alexandrian Library “made it possible to betray the past in the very gesture by which it aimed to remain faithful to it, and — with the most implacable inevitability — it exposed its own texts to the chance of being ruined the moment it acquired them.”

Conversely, the ancient library that we know for certain did in fact burn — the Villa dei Papiri in Herculaneum — was paradoxically saved by its immolation. Instantly carbonized by a surging, 300°C fountain collapse of pyroclastic current from Vesuvius, the thousands of scrolls in the Villa, prepared for a tardy evacuation, were then crushed beneath the twenty meters of vented bibliotaphic tuft that kept the collection together until it was discovered over sixteen hundred years later. It is the only library from classical western antiquity to survive intact (save for those scrolls mistaken for coal and burnt as torches by the site’s first excavators).

Within a few years of the mid-18th-century rediscovery of the Hurculaneum library, Vatican copyist Father Antonio Piaggio had invented a sort of miniature scaffold to slowly unroll the scorched and compacted scrolls recovered from the Villa. Hung by fine silk threads sewn to the lead edge of the compressed and curled sheets, the exposed versos were then
affixed with fish paste by a camel’s-hair pencil to a reinforcing film. Externalizing and literalizing the desire for an ecclesiastical, scholarly digestion — the mental comprehension and philosophical assimilation that the charring prevented — that film was made from the outer membrane of oxen intestine, known in papyrology as “goldbeater’s skin” and serving as an odd kind of anatomical complement to the sturgeon’s piscine isinglass glue. Suspended in this way, the scrolls unraveled under their own weight. They were aided by the silken threads’ natural constriction over time and by the gentle encouragement of the screw-frame of the scaffold which could be adjusted incrementally as it simultaneously distended and supported its racked relics. The device might have been a machine for canonization: the patience required for the procedure was saintly, the time frame less secular than divine. Using judicious doses of spiritous liquors and an engraver’s burin, the leaves might be unpeeled by a skilled bibliothecary to reveal a line or two per week. At its fastest, the device succeeded in unrolling about one scroll a year.

Even then, the charred leaves were often illegible — black ink on blackened papyrus — and most have been read only by advanced spectral imaging. They reveal unique copies of Epicurean philosophers, notably Philodemus of Gadara, long thought lost. According to their teachings, the cosmos — like the survival of the library containing their works — was the consequence of accident.

Whatever the fate of Ptolemy’s scrolls, the idea of the Alexandrian Library — of a comprehensive, global collection — helps one to picture the multitude of imagined libraries that
might extend beyond any particular, local, contiguous space. Without the folly of actually trying to assemble and house such a massive repository, we can still envision the totalizing category of The Library: all the books in the world belonging to a single encompassing master collection, dispersed across the manifold subsets and branches of private collections, institutions, athenæa, and miscellaneous contingent repositories. Which is not, in the end, so far-fetched as it might at first sound. After all, one still considers a research library to have a unified, coherent collection, even when some of its holdings are stored off site. By the bedside, rather than on the shelf, a book is still considered to belong to one’s library — even if all the other books are shelved together elsewhere. Just as a particular volume is still imagined to be part of one’s own library even when it happens to be on loan to someone, no matter how far that person travels. In the terms of new media, the Alexandria Set is the database from which each actual library is a subset, the return displayed by one particular interface.

More interesting and complex, those separate, scattered and disparate local libraries in turn come to be conceptually linked and aggregated by the particular books they unknowingly share. If the phantom shelf contains all the volumes that ought, ideally, to be assembled in a single place, the phantom library collects all the volumes of a particular sort that are in fact distributed in different spaces. The view from Alexandria reveals the reach of those phantom libraries, with seemingly discrete collections intersecting in endless protean permutations, like solar systems expanding and contracting, dispersing and consolidating, as networks form and dissolve depending on what connections are pursued and which titles are tracked. Rather than a number of static, discontinuous assemblages, the view from Alexandria discloses a dynamic ecology of books in
active affiliation and repulsion. One could, for instance, col-ligate those libraries which hold a certain title, or map those which contain books from a collection that has been dispersed, or federate the league of those which temporarily include books on loan from a given library, each in precise degrees of separation from one another, or graph the set assembled over time as a particular copy trades hands, in metempsy-chotic progress from one library to another, or tabulate the sequentially ranked and ordered series of libraries in which a numbered limited edition is distributed. Indeed, very limited editions and severely restricted print runs make it easier to fully grasp the connections — simultaneously personal and anonymous — that they establish between owners. I read the edition number in a colophon not as a mark of exclusivity but rather as a reminder of my inclusion in a community of other actual, individual readers. Such numbers can indicate not so much rarity as rarefaction.

Other connections of course are more intimate, explicitly identified, and direct. The artist Douglas Gordon and the collector Bernhard Starkmann, for instance, established a legally bound library in the mid-1990s. The latter provided an acquisition fund of £3,200 (plus a £2,000 fee), in exchange for which Gordon agreed to purchase a duplicate copy of any book he bought for himself and send it to Starkmann, who would maintain the expanding mirror library. If an additional copy were not available Gordon was not permitted to buy the book. Neither party, moreover, was permitted to dispose of a book from the connate collections without prior written permission from the other (any proceeds to go toward further duplicate purchases). Starkmann, not coincidentally, made his fortune as the founder of Starkmann Library Services, which distributes scholarly imprints to libraries by subscription. So
Starkmann’s artistic association with Gordon copies the corporate association that makes possible an artistically linked library composed, by definition, entirely of association copies.

While we usually think of communication, in literary terms, as a transaction between the author of a book and its reader, books can also serve as direct missives between two readers, and they can be countersigned by the author in a direct epistolary address. Books, in short, are not a read-only medium. The anecdotes on the subject are numerous, if apocryphal; but they are telling precisely to the degree they feel too good to be true. One story has John Ashbery habitually inscribing his books to Ted Berrigan with the spoiler “Dear Ted, Not for resale, John.” Another, conversely, has a young San Francisco poet under the aegis of Michael McClure receiving support in the form of two copies of McClure’s books, one to be read and one to be resold. The latter were signed “to my dear friend, Henry Miller.” Yet another, told with varying degrees of schadenfreude in the details, describes Steve McCaffery presenting Barrett Watten with a presentation copy of Watten’s own Progress — which had been discarded from the library of Louis Zukofsky. In the rare book world, inscribed association copies can inflate the value of a book exponentially. McCaffery, however, had found this copy in the discount bin outside the Phoenix Bookshop in New York, marked down from $2 to $1. From the perspective of collecting, as well as narrative, the story is delicious on account of the incongruous long regress of a single Progress — the original price was $7.50, copies sell now for around $40 — but the title would be apt in any event, since the story recounts the journey of the copy through successive hands. Progress, more precisely, is “an act of proceeding or coming from a source” with the historical legal denotation of “an unbroken series of possessors, tenants, etc., extending over several years, which
sufficiently constitutes a valid and effectual title to property.”⁹ The title itself names a kind of title, progress as property, and it foretells issues of provenance and possession.

Curious, I check my own shelves and find Watten’s 1–10 inscribed to David Ignatow. *Under Erasure* is also inscribed to Ignatow, at the conference on the poetry of the 1930s held at the University of Maine at Orono in 1993. *Decay* and *Frame* are similarly inscribed. *Progress* I remember buying new, at the old Small Press Distribution when it was just off University Avenue in Berkeley, after hearing that a fellow graduate student was also a poet. *Opera-Works* is unsigned. *Bad History* carries a little haiku apology to its dedicatee: “But this is an opportunity/ to get at underlying causes,/ they say.” By the obverse of the same token, my copy of the first printing of Lyn Hejinian’s *Writing Is an Aid to Memory* carries Watten’s ownership inscription at the top of the front free end paper. It was only a few dollars more than McCaffery’s copy of *Progress*, marked down for containing “highlighting/ underlining/ notes.”

The library, among other things, is also perfume factory, a laboratory of archived olfactory data. The spines on the shelf are like the keys of a synaesthetic clavichord. Alexander Scriabin scored one part of his 1910 *Prometheus: Le Poème du feu* [Op. 60] for a *clavier à lumières*, associating particular keys with specific colors, but one might equally associate particular volumes with specific odors. The library shelf would thus be seen as something akin to the “orgue à bouche [mouth organ]” described in Joris-Karl Huysmans’ 1884 *À Rebours*. An instrument of knobs and spigots connected to bottles of liquor, the mouth organ allows Huysmans’ protagonist, Des Esseintes, to
play “symphonies intérieures [metabolic symphonies]” and compose quartets “sous la voûte palatine [upon the palatal arch].” Learning to properly assign different spirits to the timbre of specific instruments,

[Des Esseintes] était parvenu, grâce à d’érudites expériences, à se jouer sur la langue de silencieuses mélodies, de muettes marches funèbres à grand spectacle, à entendre, dans sa bouche, des solis de menthe, des duos de vespéro et de rhum.

[(Des Esseintes) had, thanks to erudite experiments, reached a level at which he could play — upon his tongue — silent melodies or mute funereal marches of magnificent and solemn pomp; he had reached the point at which he could hear — in his mouth — solos of crème-de-menthe and duets of vespetro and rum].

The library might thus be construed as a similar instrument, a series of spines ready to pull and open and replace — the stops and valves of a scent organ — with a distillate bouquet of anthologies in enfleurage. Indeed, elsewhere in À Rebours Huysmans conflates the smell of old books with their contents. In his delirious account, the history of perfumes develops in coeval accord with the French language. Basic notes, like a classical lexicon, combine in syntactic periods of scent, with parseable grammars and analysable forms, emerging in scanned aromatic stanzas of balanced olfactory phrases and fully fragranced texts. Skillfully crafted, these bibliographic aromas parallel literature with “effets analogues à ceux des poètes [effects analogous to those of the poets],” and the evolution of perfumery ultimately culminates in a refined style that
describes Huysmans’ own prose, a fastigium of decadence: “ce style d’une concision inouïe, sous son apparence flottante et vague [that style of unprecedented concision veiled by apparent vagueness and haze].”

My copy of À Rebours, as it happens, smells strangely antiseptic, like the vinyl in a medical examination room. I am tempted to mask it with perfume. Dutch designer Irma Boom has experimented with pre-scented bindings, but a less costly option would be designer Jacques Flori’s 1994 blend of patchouli and amber over a darkly lingering resinous base, like the wake of a censer. The nose suggests the smell of the case in which copies of the books on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* were caged. Called “Messe de Minuit,” Flori’s *eau de cologne* might have been an homage to Huysmans; it intentionally invokes the musty monastic smell of abandoned wooden pews, desecrated leather, and ancient tomes. Less lurid would be artist Christopher Brosius’ “In the Library,” sourced from the bindings of Russian and Moroccan leathers, worn cloth and wood polish, with the main note mimicking the first edition of a 1927 English novel. Sweet and fraying, the scent suggests not just the book but its milieu: the library architecture of oiled wood and the faintest residue of smoked pipe-tobacco and mug-brushed shaving cream staling over an afternoon nap — a distant promise of evening dark and Speyside scotch in the linger. Subtle and evaporative, the perfume’s refinement would suit Huysmans’ character. But then even an odorless copy read by an anosmiac would connect the text to fragrance. Perfumes are fundamentally about *essence*: the heart of a scent, and a homophone for the literary character’s family name (*Esseintes*). All reading matter, left for long, becomes essential.

Over the years, unmolested molds and sizers concentrate their scents in the cloister of the closed page, their volatiles
blooming when a volume is opened. The smell of books measures time — a record of the chemical markers of materials aging, molecular tics on an elemental clock. The smell of books correlates to the fungal chronography of dry powdered spores, the tracery of tacky webs, and the constellated fox of stains expanding. Sufficiently old libraries project the temporal axis onto an olfactory rule: the delayed decay of plastics, their cellulose backbones breaking down; bacteria breeding at rates rising in direct proportion to the ambient temperature; the slow burn of oxidization in the form of a whiff of wisped smoke suspended over centuries; the terpenous camphor of rosin; the aromatic cloy of wood pulp in an etherous benzaldehyde decay; the must and tang of aspergillus, anisol, mucor and chaetomium excreting the sugars and fatty acids of microbial waste — a palpable sense of the sponge of absorbent pages slowly weeping their long-acquired humidity, invisible aphid eggs deposited on unlaid leaves, a fall of mild dew, microscopic tears in runs from untorn sheets.

“Sinon l’histoire,” as Saint-Jean Perse’ Prince describes it, “j’aime l’odeur de ces grands Livres en peau de chèvre [If not the narrative, I love the smell of those great tomes bound in kidskin].” 14 Roger Caillois, reflecting on Perse’ line, deems those who love books for their smell rather than the story or the words — those drawn to inhale the peculiar smell of binding and the scent of ink and paper — the ultimate bibliophiles. 15 But those bibliophiles pursue their refined indulgences at their own risk. Medical studies have identified an occupational hazard known colloquially as “historians’ lung,” a potentially deadly bronchitic condition caused by inhaling the mycotoxic spores of bibliophilic fungi. Others have identified old books as a probable source of hallucinogenic spores, the entheogenic grimoires of ecstatic monastic visionaries. 16 Common
experience evinces the allergenic potential of old tomes, which can be asthmatic triggers. In 1997, the public library in Las Cruces, New Mexico, was closed and cordoned when fungus expanded its colonizing ambitions from Reference to History and Literature, threatening the entire collection.17

The danger of decay is part of its appeal. Without harming the binding, one can open most codices far enough to still snugly fit the nose into the gutter, each page resting on a cheek — the bibliographic version of a paper bag soaked in solvent and packaged with a warning that it is not to be concentrated and inhaled. Some books still harbor the bituminous burnt depth and high isopropyl bite of carbon and petrol in the scent of their pre-soy inks, the degrees of smoke and hydrox-ure varying according to the number of illustrations and the type of offset lithographic process used. Others now size their sheets with a sheen evoking the bleach-clean expanse of new commercial buildings, a uniform suite of synthetic carpet and particleboard in the shielded formalin space of mandatory disinfection, insulation, and perfect hermetic seal. As it happens, I am particularly drawn, with a sort of morose delectation, to a certain British binding glue, brittling even when it’s new, which fumes in a deliciously overwhelming aerosol of kerosene and industry: first, a fugacious heady hydrocarbon rush of sinus linings flushed, mucus and natural oils vaporized in the vacuum flash of a chemical desiccant, and then, a long finish leaving the tingle of brain cells dying out along the fringes of the temple.

More cultured, the collective snuff of certain bookshops seems to seek the reader’s chest instead. Such atmospheres arouse the panic of entombment, so the browse becomes a thrill akin to deep diving, the linger to a dare. The odor of the headspace shrouds the alleys of the shelves in an oppressive
cryptal smother: evocative, suffocative, pulmonad. Close and closing, it draws the air to stiff and tarry in an inspissative stifl e. The buccal membranes on the cheeks’ inside leather from what little oxygen is swallowed. The ribs, submerged, compress as if to stave. Part dry hay-barn dust and part port-barrel damp — pollinose, rasped and tannic — the sour tack of hides colloids the clouds of powdered sheets and asphyxiate flakes in a desert abattoir of eluting turpentine and pepper, black birch oil and exsiccated pastes of starched and sugared wheat. Among ammonium bloom and acacine and buried brime, the dress of neat and castor and shellac — a subtle wash of sumac in suffusion — hand-tanned saffians pulver in the must.

Less intoxicating than those leathers and adhesives, the scent of papers from the last several centuries is itself a pleasure. At its best the cense of antique papers wafted with the loft and fall of volumes from the shelves rings a base of fungal earthiness with a certain clean slate brightness and adds a slightly acrid tingle to the top fumes of the nose. This distinctive odour of old books — the dusty dry-wood hint of carpophoric mushrooms and its surrounding tones of damper mould and musty camphoraceousness — comes not from any single source, but rather from a combination of fragrant cyclohexanol derivatives. The must of carbonal, with a tarry head of butyl and a light isoborneol bloom, combines with piney isopropyls and amygdalic benzaldehydes. Fusel fermentation and the reminiscence of neroli from dimethoxybenzene tempers the fungal octanols. The resinous fumes of certain older paper preparations — the warmth of terpenes and volatized camphene — or the lignid catabolism of yellowing paper that results in vanillin and anisole — grace the basic tone. We register these scents because they are no longer being blocked by the overwhelming smell of connective tissue glue — lower amines and catabolic
products of collagens and proteins that have broken down and dissipated over time. The familiar odour of old books, that is, results in large part from what we can no longer smell. It is thus the very smell of the triumph of the vegetative over the faunal, the forest over the pasture. At a chemical level, the fragrance arises from the fiber pulps that replaced the vellum that had briefly in turn supplanted papyrus. But at another level the smell of old books is an olfactory allegory for the longevity of kingdoms in dynastic time. In an analogue to the naturalized ruminal cudding of cattle, we now pulp fibrous plants to make paper, and its odor over time is the smell of the flora which predated and will long outlive the terminal domestication of caducous mammals and their devastating latifundial raze.

Libraries are zoos for books. Like a modern menagerie, the typical home library (in contrast to the archive or the research stacks), both displays and preserves. But exactly what they display is never immediately clear, nor is the circumstance for which they conserve their volumes. Home libraries present their books, of course, but they also advertise something about a collector’s character, although that projection can be either feigned or inadvertently confessional depending on whether the shelves display books that one has in fact already read or books that one thinks, for whatever reason, one ought to read. Some commentators hold a principled objection to displaying unread books; in one critic’s verdict, “tener a la vista libros no leídos, es como girar cheques sin fondos: un fraude a las visitas [to have unread books on view is like passing bad checks: a cozening of guests].” On the other side, Walter Benjamin famously relates Anatole France’s frank counter to a guest who
wondered if the great belle-litterist had actually read all the books on his shelves; he proudly declares: “Not one-tenth of them. I don’t suppose you use your Sèvres china every day?”

Indeed reading, France suggests in one of his stories, might only confuse the issue:

Monsieur Froidenfond a l’esprit simple et l’âme pure. Il vit catalogalement. De tous les volumes qui garnissent ces murailles il conait le titre et le format, possédant ainsi la seule science exacte qu’on puisse acquérir dans une bibliothèque, et, pour n’avoir jamais pénétré au dedans d’un livre, il s’est gardé de la molle incertitude, de l’erreur aux cent bouches, du doute affreux, de l’inquiétude horrible, monstres qu’enfante la lecture dans un cerveau fécond. Il est tranquille et pacifique, il est heureux.

[Monsieur Froidenfond has a simple mind, and a pure soul. He lives catalogically. He knows the title and the format of every book which adorns these walls, and thus possesses the only exact knowledge which it is possible to acquire in a library. Having never investigated the contents of a single book, he has been saved from the nerveless uncertainty, hydra-headed error, hideous doubt, and horrible uneasiness, monsters which reading engenders in a fertile brain. He is calm, peaceful, and happy].

As France’s cold-bottomed curator suggests, bibliophiles, of course, need not be readers at all. Roger Caillois, in fact, argues that the two are antithetical. Readers, drawn to “la rigueur d’une pensée, à l’art d’écrire, à une réussite tout intellectuelle
[rigorous thought, artful writing, and purely intellectual accomplishment],” endanger the mint grade of the very qualities valued by the bibliophile: “caractères irréprochables, de la reliure emphatique, du papier somptueux, de l’illustration magistrale, les mille perfections diverses [flawless type, impressive bindings, sumptuous papers, masterful illustration, and a thousand other perfections].”23 Attracted to the haptic pleasures of leather, the formal niceties of fine design, and the smell of ink and paper, the bibliophile “manipule sans l’ouvrir, palpe et respire le livre à l’odeur impure [handles the physical object without opening it, explores it with his touch, inhales its peculiar smell]” but does not risk the book with reckless acts of distracted reading:

Être bibliophile, qu’est-ce sinon préférer l’objet-livre à la qualité du texte qu’il enferme? Ces goûts qu’on imaginait complémentaires, je les crois en réalité incompatibles. En fait, il est dangereux pour l’intégrité de l’objet fragile de lui faire subir les différentes opérations qui permettent de placer tour à tour sous le regard chacun des feuillets imprimés.

[What is a bibliophile if not a person who values the book as object more than the quality of the text within? While people tend to think of these two tastes as complementary, to my mind they are in fact incompatible. Indeed, what must be done in order to scrutinize a book’s printed pages is a threat to its integrity as a physical object].24
Even the most modest display, which at the very least exposes books to light, is ultimately at odds with conservation. The pride of collectors drives them to imperil the very qualities on which that pride is founded. “Ici, comme il arrive souvent, le pervers est en outre dévot [here, as is often the case, perversion is coupled with sanctimony].”

The dialectic between read and unread books, between display and conservation, also indicates the range of temporalities encoded by a bookcase. On the one hand, library shelves are retrospective; they look back to what one thought was worth saving at some point, and their strata perhaps expose a fossilized record of reading, with clues to the climacterics of intellectual or aesthetic evolution. They can also serve as souvenirs, talismanic mementos by which to recall the circumstances under which they were acquired (this is Benjamin’s Proustian use of books as he famously unpacks his library). On the other hand, libraries are proleptic. Depending on the eventualities for which they are being saved, their prospects tap a range of modal emotions. These are the books one will want to flaunt or will need to resell or will require for the comfort of their nostalgia; they adumbrate what one ought to read or should have read before reluctantly reshelving. They might, more purposefully, anticipate the ambition of a scholarly project or a course of study. “Toda biblioteca personal es un proyecto de lectura [every home library is a reading project],” as an aphorism attributed to José Gaos has it. Most poignant of all, unread books are often emblems of the hope that one will someday have the time to read them. As Arthur Schopenhauer wrote: “Es wäre gut Bücher kaufen, wenn man die Zeit, sie zu lesen, mitkaufen könnte, aber man verwechselt meistens den Ankauf der Bücher mit dem Aneignen ihres Inhalts [buying books would be a good thing if one could also
buy the time to read them in: but as a rule the purchase of books is mistaken for the appropriation of their contents].”

Libraries of unread books are like safe-deposit boxes storing shares of literary stock, where any dividends can only be rolled over; they are wagered against a future when one will have the leisure to do so much reading. Each unread book puts earnest money against that unlikely bargain, making incremental payments toward the maintenance of self-delusion. This is why large libraries are always a little melancholic, and risk making the visitor wistful, but this is also why they are always optimistic: “une bibliothèque est un acte de foi [every library is an act of faith].”

Faith and reason, chaos and order, intangible phantoms and sanded boards, symmetry and skew — the library is animated by a set of dynamic tensions. On the one hand, there is what Benjamin calls the “mild boredom of order” elicited by all books organized according to a system. Comprehensive methods of arrangement attempt to block the shock of unexpected recognition (what Benjamin would call profane Erleuchtung [profane illumination]), in favor of familiarity, predictability, and control. On the other hand, the energy required to maintain such order is ultimately unsustainable; the curve climbs, impossibly steep, as it approaches a cogent mastery. Benjamin has to stay up unpacking into the night, covered in sawdust and scattered wadding, just to get his library started; Des Esseintes, like the sickly shadow of Clerk Maxwell’s Demon, collapses in anemic defeat before he can manage even a semblance of order:
sa bibliothèque dont le rangement demeurait inachève, l’agaça; ne bougeant plus de son fauteuil, il avait constamment sous les yeux ses livres profanes, posés de guingois sur les tablettes, empiétant les uns sur les autres, s’étayant entr’eux ou gisant de même que des capucins de carts, sur le flanc, à plat. [...] Il tenta de faire cesser cette confusion, mais après dix minutes de travail, des sueurs l’inondèrent; cet effort l’épuisait.

[his library, which remained unarranged, irritated him. Confined to his chair, his profane books were constantly in view, askew on their shelves, encroaching on each other, buttressing their neighbors or collapsed flat, imbricated like a pack of cards. [...] He tried to stay this confusion, but after ten minutes of work he was drenched in sweat; the effort was enervating].

I empathize with them both. For a long time, I had ordered my library by author, but packing to move several years ago I began boxing the books by format. Certain presses with identical trims were easy to fit together in a neat geometry and lent themselves to safer stacking within a box. When it came time to unpack, though, the task of redistributing felt overwhelming; gauging exactly where a name would fall across the tiers of empty shelves was impossible, and my heart sank at the thought of the time it would take to correct and calibrate, to adjust and shunt — whole sets of shelves would need to be shifted as they filled. So I simply reshelved by publisher. As a literary historian, I thought I would learn some unexpected things from the new arrangement; after all, it was not the first bibliognostic scheme predicated on the space of the shelf; Vitruvius describes the eccentric habits of the great orthographer Aristophanes of
Byzantium, inventor of diacritics and punctuation: “every day he did nothing other than read and reread all the books of the Library, for the whole day, examining and reading through the order in which they were shelved.”

That such an arrangement produces surprises is no surprise. “In the archive we encounter things we never expected to find; yet the archive is also the condition under which the unexpected, the sudden, the contingent can be sudden, unexpected, and contingent.” No system, however totalizing, can obviate entropy, errors and clinamina. The stochastic swerve and the random scatter are not unfortunate, avoidable exceptions to the uniform rules of a system; they are generated by the uniform rules of the system itself, and are its guarantors. Although they present themselves as figures of rational organization, library catalogues and classification systems can only hope to distract from the aberrant chaos they cannot exorcise. Those systems, moreover, necessarily obscure as much as they reveal. Only a keen and patient bibliothecal accountant, for instance, could discover in the following pages what a standard catalogue would reveal at a glance: the complete or nearly complete works of a number of unlikely writers. But there, in the blind spots of the register, in the inframince spaces between each shelved volume and among the shadows bred by dust, down the aporetic passages behind the hidden bristle of fore-edge and deckle in recto, is where the library can speak for itself, where it shares out its secrets in a silent discourse of its own.

Reason, in short, indexes obliquity. The linear-point perspective of the shelves, with their rigid grid of Euclidean orthogonals all tending toward an unseen horizon, converges on the vanishing point of the collection. “Toda biblioteca personal es un proyecto [an architectural blueprint, a map drawn
to scale, a scatter-point graph] de lectura.” In the present case, the architectural geometry of my shelves centers on a 48-page perfect-bound volume by Clark Coolidge [New York: Sun & Moon, 1982]. No such book actually exists; its details are merely the projection of a statistical mean. Though standing before the shelves I can almost see it, a perpetual spectral shimmer on the edge of my peripheral vision, with a bleared title and a nictitant spine, gone as soon as I turn to look. And I know exactly where that book would be placed (right-most cabinet, top shelf, sixteen volumes in). But it is the very last book on the phantom shelf, the lynchpin that keeps it cantilevered.

One night, a colleague — a professor of modern literature and theory — came to my house for dinner. Drifting away from the conversation, he stood for a long time in front of the bookshelves that line one of the walls, silently shaking his head. He finally announced: “This is a very perverse library.”

I wasn’t sure at first if he were referring to the collection, or to its organization. Either way, I was pleased and took it as a compliment. I smiled and thanked him.

“Very perverse!” he corrected (apparently I was not to take it as a compliment).

This is a book about architecture.

I use my Sèvres china every day.
Thanks to Barry Weller, Julie Gonnering Lein, and Anne Jamison for help with the manuscript, and to Moe Moskowitz, Steven Clay, Philp Smith, Jeff Maser, Marvin Granlund, Jay Millar and David Abel for rare finds and satisfying wants.

1 Smith’s project was first presented at Waterstone’s Bookshop (Dundee, 1999), and revised for subsequent installations; his self-published pamphlet Essential Reading: Including The Apocryphal Library, from which I draw, was printed in 2009.


5 Indeed, the Cæsarian conflagration is the only cause of the Library’s demise that can be safely ruled out. See Bertrand Hemmerdinger: “Que César n’a pas brûlé la bibliothèque d’Alexandre;” Bolletino dei Classici 3:6 (1985): 76–77.


9 Oxford English Dictionary.


11 Ibidem, 64.

12 Ibidem, 155–156; 151.

13 See the perfumier’s notes at <www.cbihateperfume.com>, accessed 1st July, 2010. I like to think the English novel might be To The Lighthouse, which so evocatively describes the smell of long absences, the salt and weed of the sea, and “some winey smell” mixed with the “fire scent” of red and gold. But Brosius states the edition of his source text was limited to only one hundred copies; the Hogarth Press first edition, printed by R. & R. Clark in Edinburgh, was 3,000. Excluding a number of short stories published that year as chapbooks
by E. Archer in London (T. F. Powys’ *What I Lack Yet* and *The Rival Pastors*, Rhys Davies’ *The Song of Songs* and *Aaron*), the most likely candidate may be Henry Williamson’s *Tarka the Otter: His Joyful Water-Life and Death in the County of the Two Rivers*, with an introduction by the Honorable Sir John Fortescue, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order [G. P. Putman and Son’s: London and New York, 1927]. The association is marred because while the work does record the olfactory perspective of its lutrine character and his canine predators (“across the vivid smear of duck scent strayed the taint of man” [86]; “the thick scent of the muscovy ducks had checked the hunt” [189]), the smells described in the novel are most often “painful,” “disgusting,” and disturbing (122, 52, 200). There is, however, a nice intertext with its contemporaneous modernist landmark: “The bright eye of the lighthouse, standing like a bleached bone at the edge of the sandhills, blinked in the clear air” (82). Or, as Woolf has it, more impressionistically: “The Lighthouse was then a silvery, misty-looking tower with a yellow eye that opened suddenly and softly in the evening” [Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992): 152].


The Perverse Library

Yo, que me imaginaba el paraíso en forma de biblioteca.  
[Personally, I always imagined heaven as a library]  

— Jorge Luis Borges
THE PERVERSE LIBRARY

A REST PRESS (New York, 2004). Stephens, Paul. Potlatch / Potluck. 100
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The Diamond in the Grass. 250.
ATTICUS/FINCH (Buffalo, 2003). Sailers, Cynthia. Rose Lungs. 100.
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CHUSMA HOUSE (San José, 1991). Arteaga, AlfrEditor Canso.


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ETRUSCAN BOOKS (Devon, 1996). Etruscan Reader IV.


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THE PERVERSE LIBRARY

HANDWRITTEN PRESS (Brooklyn, 2002). Austin, Nathan. Glost.

HORSE IN A STORM PRESS (Brooklyn, 1995). Maher, Miranda. 100 Coordinates of Violence. 200.


MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (East Lansing, 1973). Fox, Hugh (Editor). Ghost Dance 17 (Fall 1973).


SINGING HORSE PRESS (San Diego, 2007). Higgins, Mary Rising. *Joule Tides.*
THE PERVERSE LIBRARY


(Edinburgh, 1968). No. 25. Finlay, Ian Hamilton (Editor). *Poor Old Tired Horse*.
A Perverse Library

If there is a counterpart to the confusion of a library, it is the order of its catalogue.

— Walter Benjamin
ABOVE/GROUND PRESS (Maxville, 2002). Volume 1, No. 30 (March, 2002). Mclennan, Rob (Ed.). *Stanzas: Douglas Barbour and Shelie E. Murphy Issue.*


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Amphora (San Francisco). Nos. 3; 6. Hejinian, Lyn and John Milonas; David Gitin (Eds.). Amphora.


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a perverse library


tor: Alexis Lykiard.

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Larisa Gureyeva and George Hyde.

Richard Sieburth.
Johnston.
(New York, 2005). Cortázar, Julio. Diary of Andres Fava. Translator: 
Anne McLean.
Bononno.
(New York, 2005). de Melo Neto, João Cabral. Education by Stone: 
Manheim.
Pound.
Richard Sieburth.
Author. Translator: Peter Wortsman.
Translator: Lee Fahnestock.
(New York, 2009). de Nerval, Gérard. The Salt Smugglers. Transla-
tor: Sieberth, Richard.
(Brooklyn, 2010). von Kleist, Heinrich. Selected Prose. Translator:
Peter Worstman.

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Patrick. Ark Dive. 82 of 163.
ASHANTA (Boise, 2003). Foust, Graham. Leave the Room to Itself.
(Boise, 2010). Iijima, Brenda. If not Metamorphic.
A perverse library


Jacques Jouet, Claude Berge, Harry Mathews. Oulipo Labora-
tory: Texts from the Bibliothèque Oulipienne. Translators: Harry
Mathews and Ian White.

lator: Iain White.

Soupault, and Paul Éluard. The Automatic Message, the Magnetic
Fields, the Immaculate Conception. Translator: Jon Graham

Home: Selected Longer Prose.

’Pataphysics: Collected Works I. Translators: Paul Edwards and
Antony Melville.

II. Translators: Paul Edwards, Alexis Lykiard and Simon Watson
Taylor.

and Gabriel Vicaire. The Deliquescences of Adoré Floupette: Dec-

and Guy Debord. A Game of War. Translator: Donald Nichol-
son-Smith.

Mirror of Tauromachy. Translator: Paul Hammond.

The Life and Death of La Belle Desiderata. Translator: T. Hale.
250.
A PERVERSE LIBRARY


(Buffalo, 2005). Biglieri, Gregg. *I Heart My Zeppelin*.


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Translator: Ron Padgett. 1000.  
(Bolinas, 1994). Coolidge, Clark. *Registers (People in All).* 750.  
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(Buffalo, 2002). Durgin, Patrick. from Color Music. 100.
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