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and the *Gest Collection*

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"End Matter", The Gest Library Journal 5, no. 2 (1992): 175-177, accessed January 14, 2017, <https://library.princeton.edu/eastasian/EALJ/end.EALJ.v05.n02.p175.pdf>

NEWS AND NOTES: FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

THE GEST LIBRARY SPACE PROBLEM: AN UPDATE

The Gest Library's most urgent problem, that of space for present use and future growth, has been the subject of previous reports to the Friends of the Gest Library in these pages. In volume three, numbers 1-2, Spring 1989, we discussed possible options in "A New Gest Library" (pages 56-64). In that article we not only described the present space crisis, we also asked Cary Y. Liu, a member of the American Institute of Architects who received his A.B., M.A., and M. Arch. degrees at Princeton and is now a doctoral candidate in Art and Archaeology, to analyze possibilities for enlarging Palmer Hall to accommodate new physical space for the Gest and the East Asian collections. In volume four, number 1, Spring 1991, we published an interview with Mr. Antony Marr, then new in his job as curator of the East Asian Collections, in which he reported on emergency plans to gain space by moving some books out of the collection, and also proposed a different plan to gain physical space by creating mezzanines on each of the two floors in Palmer now occupied by the Gest stacks (pages 66-68). Mr. Marr has provided us with a current report on the space problem in an interview held on May 8, 1992, on which the following is based:

Following the decision to gain space temporarily by moving some books from the Gest Library to the Forrestal Annex, Mr. Marr had to select books whose removal would interfere the least with our day-to-day use of the collections. Instead of arbitrarily moving out certain subject categories en bloc, the easiest but most harmful way of accomplishing the task, Mr. Marr personally examined each title in the entire collection and selected 91,486 less-used volumes and second editions for removal to Forrestal. That task of selecting and removing was completed at the end of October 1991. Users can recall items from Forrestal and receive them the second day. The care with which that selection for removal was performed is seen in the fact that the average call for books to be returned from the Annex runs at about eight to ten items per month. Once called back, they remain in Gest.

Nonetheless, no one considers this plan a success. One senior faculty member refers to it as "an amputation," and Mr. Marr himself calls it a "painful compromise." Even though the number of items users have called back is small, that masks the fact that browsing, a major means of using an open-stacks collection, has been seriously reduced. Books that otherwise would be used, and used significantly, simply cannot be used in the many ways implied by the word "browsing." Those ways include informing oneself about the full scope of a collection (something that cannot be done by using

catalogues, especially when subject cataloguing does not exist), comparing content in different editions, and spot checking for bibliographic identification, not to mention the sheer pleasure of looking into books that one has not seen before.

Moreover, the space so dearly purchased by this draconian measure will suffice to accommodate new acquisitions only until the summer of 1997. We cannot stop purchasing new books, nor can we again select books for removal to the Annex. Neither the library staff or the faculty and student users would agree to that. Mr. Marr says that he dreads each new day that brings him one day closer to the summer of 1997 with no fundamental solution in sight.

The provost has been asked to rule on the possible use of two additional rooms on the top floor of Palmer Hall, adjacent to the Gest stacks, to relieve space for the serials collections. Urgently as that is needed, it is of course but a small part of the solution that must be achieved, and soon, if there is to be time to build before the dreaded date of 1997 is at hand.

In his interview carried in the Spring 1991 *Gest Library Journal*, Mr. Marr called attention to his proposal that an engineering study be made to see whether mezzanines could be built to double the floor space of the two floors of Palmer Hall now occupied by the Gest stacks. That study was carried out, and the results are that to build such added floors within existing space is not feasible, either from an engineering point of view or from that of costs. We must therefore again call attention to the article "A New Gest Library" in volume 3, numbers 1-2, in which Cary Liu discusses possibilities for adding a wing to Palmer Hall. If any of our readers can suggest a way to solve the space problems, by adding space or by other means, or has ideas on ways of helping to raise some of the funds that will be necessary, the entire East Asian academic community at Princeton and all the Friends of the Gest will be grateful. It will challenge our energy and our ingenuity; may we hear from you with your ideas about how to meet the challenge?

A NOTE ON NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The *Gest Library Journal* has not raised subscription rates in the six years since it began publication. It now faces the need to do just that. Present rates for individuals will remain in effect for subscriptions to volume six, to be published in 1993, if renewals or new subscriptions are received before January 31, 1993. After that, the current rate of twenty-five dollars will be raised to thirty dollars per year. Enrolled students may continue to subscribe for fifteen dollars per year. Also, beginning with volume six, subscriptions to addresses outside of North America will carry a surcharge of ten dollars for postage.

FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

The Friends of the Gest Library is a group of private individuals dedicated to the idea that an East Asian library resource like the Gest Oriental Library (the East Asian Research Library at Princeton University) must be known, supported, and encouraged in order to enrich both the aesthetic knowledge of East Asia and the growth of scholarship and contemporary information concerning that part of the world. Many individuals have already been active for years in guiding the Gest Library, and contributing their time and resources ad hoc. In 1986 they formed the Friends of the Gest Library in order to broaden the Library's support and foster communication among other interested parties.

As a group, the Friends sponsor colloquia and exhibitions on East Asian books, calligraphy, art, and their historical relationships. They secure gifts and bequests for the Library in order to add to its holdings items and collections of great worth. They disseminate information about the Library (and about other East Asian libraries) so that members and non-members alike can benefit from its resources.

JOINING THE FRIENDS

Membership is open to those subscribing annually twenty-five dollars or more. (As of January 31, 1993, this will be raised to thirty dollars.) With that membership fee is included a yearly subscription to the *Gest Library Journal*. Members will be invited to attend special exhibitions, lectures, and discussions that occur under the aegis of the Friends. Checks are payable to the Trustees of Princeton University and should be mailed to:

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