Cultural Collections Projects Program 2015
The University of Melbourne

Rare Books Collection, University Library

Student/Volunteer Position Guide

Position Title: Re-housing and Research project - Meanjin printing blocks

Supervisor: Susan Millard, Senior Curator, Cultural Collections
            Helen Arnoldi, Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator

Position Goal: The primary goal of this project will be to create an inventory and re-house the Meanjin linocut and woodblock printing blocks held in Rare Books. There will also be the opportunity to pursue research exploring an aspect of the Meanjin printing blocks, from an art, printing or literary point of view. The student/volunteer will also have the opportunity to write an article on the materials for publication in a future edition of the Collections magazine or similar. This project will contribute to the management, longevity and appreciation of this collection.

Background: The Rare Books Collection holds around 250,000 volumes of books, journals and ephemera that have been placed on closed access by reason of their age, value or uniqueness in order to ensure their long-term care and preservation for future generations of scholars and researchers.

The literary and cultural affairs journal Meanjin was founded by C.B. (Clem) Christesen in Brisbane in 1940. In 1943 the University invited him to bring the journal to Melbourne where it has been published under its auspices ever since. The journal published the leading figures in Australian letters and introduced Australian audiences to many international writers. Rare Books holds a collection of linocut and wooden printing blocks dating from the 1960s that were used to illustrate editions of the journal.

Responsibilities: The first part of this project, will require the student/volunteer to sort and then create an inventory to aid in the management of the Meanjin blocks collection. After being sorted, the printing blocks will need to be brush vacuumed, and then re-housed in archival boxes to meet conservation standards. Once rehoused, labels will need to be created, identifying the contents of each folder and inventory lists attached. During the course of the project research may be undertaken exploring a specific aspect of the Meanjin printing blocks, either from an art, printing or literary point of view which may form the basis of an article for publication.

Qualifications: A basic understanding of collection management principles specific to the documentation of objects (progress towards the completion of a degree in Art Curatorship / Museum Studies, Conservation or History would be ideal).

Knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of collections items.

An interest in Australian literary history and cultural issues would be desirable.
A methodical, prudent approach with a keen eye for detail is required.

**Training and Supervision:**

On-the-job training specific to the task will be provided.

Training in the procedures for the cleaning and re-housing of the blocks.

Ongoing supervision and advice on the progress and direction of the project.

**Benefits:**

Opportunity to work at close hand with one of the University of Melbourne’s extensive cultural collections.

The opportunity for professional development through experience gained in the application of collection management procedures and practice.

Satisfaction gained from sorting, rehousing and researching the *Meanjin* printing blocks in Rare Books. Through this project, you will be contributing to the long term management and preservation of the University’s cultural collections. The application of collection management principles to the University’s cultural collections is necessary to enhance our long term understanding, management and appreciation of the collections.

For more information on this position please contact:
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