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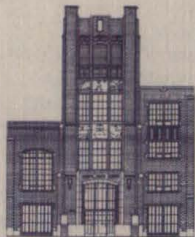
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Lux et Lex

"By the light of Knowledge we read the laws of life"

Volume 4 Number 1

Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota

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JANE KURTZ: AUTHOR IN THE KINGDOM OF THE SNOW

One of North Dakota's best-kept secrets is no longer a secret: the state is home to Jane Kurtz, one of the new stars of children's literature. Kurtz has had seven books published. The latest is *Miro in the Kingdom of the Sun*. Six more are scheduled for publication within the next three years. The reviews are in, and all are rhapsodic about Kurtz's writing. In my recent conversation with Kurtz, she discussed her life, her writing and her feelings about teaching.

Kurtz came to Grand Forks in January 1990. She remembers the cold as the movers propped the front door open to bring in box after box. "I thought, Oh, I can deal with this," she says with a laugh. "But I wasn't prepared for how long it lasted!" She can be forgiven her initial shock about North Dakota. She and her family--husband Leonard Goering and children David, Jonathan, and Rebekah--came from Trinidad, Colorado. Plus she had grown up in a warmer place, and that place was halfway around the world. When she was two years old, Jane Kurtz went to Ethiopia with her missionary parents, and did not move back to the United States until she entered college.

She did not begin her career writing children's books, nor was her focus her Ethiopian background. Instead, she started with an adult audience in mind, and wrote poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. The idea of writing for children did not come to her until she had children of her own. With David, her oldest child, she read mostly books that had been her childhood favorites. When Jonathan came along, and then Rebekah, she began to tire of reading the same stories again and again. As a family, they discovered the public library, and as a writer, she discovered her true talent. It was love by immersion. She read children's books, "and nothing but children's books," she recalls. By doing so, she realized that she wanted to write for children.

And she has succeeded. Today, Kurtz's books are well received by publishing companies and hailed with critical acclaim. When asked what propelled her success, she's ready with an answer, and it's clear she's given it thought. First, she points out, she prepared. She studied for her new career. She haunted the library, reading and evaluating children's books and reviews of children's books. With this approach, she developed an overview of what had been published, and more importantly, what was being published. Kurtz points out the importance of being aware of the current state of publishing. As much as she may like an older book, she

recognizes that today's market might not give that same story the reception it received when it was first published.

Kurtz uncovered two helpful sources: the "New Books" shelf at the public library and publishers' catalogs. These provided a comprehensive picture of the publishing arena, and by scanning through the listings, she formulated an idea of publishers' interests. As she prepared, Kurtz understood the need to balance creativity with profit. She began to ask herself the question every editor and publisher asks before accepting a manuscript, "Is there something here that will make this stand out and be financially successful?"

The second reason for her success was a sudden homesickness for Ethiopia. Perhaps lengthy winters on the flat plains of eastern North Dakota evoked a nostalgia for the green mountains of Ethiopia. Or perhaps Kurtz's children, as they grew older and asked questions about their mother's childhood, invoked memories that Kurtz had forgotten. Their childhoods were so different from hers. Her childhood seemed foreign, and it was.

The third reason was a seemingly casual conversation with Jim Aylesworth, author of several children's books, whom she met at the Writers' Conference in Children's Literature in Grand Forks. She asked Aylesworth about the marketability of retold Ethiopian folk tales. He encouraged her to submit them, despite the fact that Kurtz's prior agent had dismissed the possibility of their success. She followed his advice, and tapped into her knowledge of Ethiopian culture.

Kurtz credits UND's Chester Fritz Library with supplying the materials needed to hone her stories. Sometimes, she said, a book can evoke a new idea. As we spoke, she pulled one of the Library's books from her bag, *The Qemant: A Pagan-Hebraic Pleasantry of Ethiopia* by Frederick C. Gamst. This book, which she used while writing *Ethiopia, Roof of Africa*, became the root of her forthcoming work *The Storyteller's Beads*, a story of two girls from opposing ethnic groups who



grow from hostility to tolerance to friendship. In Kurtz's words, the story depicts "how prejudices get shaped, how fears are shaped."

While revising the manuscript of *Miro in the Kingdom of the Sun*, she found she needed details of everyday Inca life. A fellow graduate student in the English Department told her about the Summer Institute of Linguistics' material in the Library's Department of Special Collections. There, Kurtz found studies of Quechua and got a sense of how this ancient Inca language, which is still spoken today, works. For example, *tipuk*, which she uses in *Miro*, means "heart flutters." Quechua speech rhythms were also garnered from her studies in the Department. Kurtz explains that the "broad strokes" of the manuscript were done, but these finishing touches made the story come alive. She has recently returned to the Department to work on her present project, the story of two women who homesteaded in South Dakota.

I asked Kurtz to describe her writing style. "I have projects bubbling at all different stages," she said. Although her present focus may be on a manuscript's final revisions, she may simultaneously be refining a first draft of a story, beginning another, and filing away ideas for future stories.

When asked what advice she would give a budding author, she smiles. Her first words are surprising for someone who has met with her success: "Don't get so focused on marketing that you ignore writing." But don't most people forget the business angle of writing when they start out? She nods, but explains that "Writing is a joyous, creative act that adds meaning and texture to your life. People who like to write should be writing." She believes that a beginning writer should undergo some self-analysis. Professional writing takes energy. Commitment. Drive. And above all, it takes time. Kurtz encourages writers to ask themselves if they have the needed dedication. Not everyone does. "Writing is a lot of work!" Kurtz acknowledges.

But she believes that writers are "hungry" to share their words. Publishing is not the only way to get an audience: readings, regional presses, small presses and magazines, on-line sites, critique groups—all offer audiences. The desire for an audience is a valid one, but it does not necessarily mean that the writer should try for a national market. Major publishers of children's books have limited slots. Kurtz describes the market as "extraordinarily competitive. Make [writing professionally] a priority if you ever have a hope of doing it." As she speaks, it's easy to see that she has the two ingredients for success: talent and a passion for writing.

Kurtz acknowledges the benefits of writers' conferences: "If you want to get published, it's crucial to go to conferences." Writers need every competitive edge, and Kurtz encourages them to attend conferences, where they can meet other writers and editors, and gain a realistic sense of the publishing world. Face-to-face contact with an editor may get the careful reading needed.

(Kurtz indicates that sales have grown out of the Grand Forks Children's Writers Conference, which is held every fall.)

North Dakota abounds in writing talent, and Kurtz would like the state to nurture its writers. A would-be writer need not live in New York. Kurtz says we could "celebrate our

strengths" by looking for ways to get excited about books and writers. She does her fair share, frequently traveling throughout the state to promote reading.

She also travels in other ways. Kurtz has developed what she calls "The Box." Its contents are unique. She makes sure that it contains something about Ethiopia for each of a student's senses: Berebere spice to taste, eucalyptus leaves to sniff, a miniature drum and a wooden cowbell to touch and hear, a tape of an Amharic song to listen to, a shemma to drape over oneself. The box also contains an issue of the magazine *Faces* that focuses on Ethiopia, as well as examples of Amharic writing, photographs and maps of Ethiopia. Examples of a manuscript's different stages are included to illustrate the

writing process. These items, Kurtz feels, "give context to books." She states that "The Box" makes Ethiopia "seem like a real place" when she can't be there. She has two versions of "The Box," and although one usually travels with her, the other has gone on its own to teach children in California, Missouri, Maine, Texas, and Minnesota.

"The Box" is just one example of Kurtz's creative teaching approaches. She tells of a teacher assigning students to illustrate *Trouble*, one of her unpublished works. Kurtz supplied the teacher with copies of the photographs used by the book's illustrator. When *Trouble* sees print later this spring, the class will compare their versions with the published one. Kurtz talks about creative ways to help children "get curious." With this curiosity, they begin to realize how peoples' lives are alike and how they are different. Above all, she is interested in making children aware of the lives of other people lead.

When we spoke one snowy day in early March, Kurtz was preparing for a two-week trip to Ethiopia, where she would speak at three schools: an international school, a British school, and a mission school. She mused that the schools' motive for inviting her was interesting: besides wanting her to speak to students about her books and writing, they wanted her to do an in-service for the teachers. The purpose? Sharing ways to bring Ethiopian studies into their curriculum. It was intriguing, we thought, that someone from North Dakota was coming to Ethiopia to teach Ethiopian culture. Kurtz's life had come full circle.

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A NATION ON TRIAL

The Second World War arguably altered global history to a greater degree than any previous or subsequent conflict. It is thus unsurprising that the fiftieth anniversaries of the war's major events were so prominently observed. Perhaps such observations should not have ended in 1995. The war's aftermath spawned other historical watersheds. Not the least of these were the Nuremberg Trials.

The Trials marked the first time that legal action was taken against the leaders of a nation. From November 1945 to October 1946, the International Military Tribunal (IMT) judges tried twenty-two high ranking Nazi officials in Nuremberg, Germany for war crimes. This was followed by the American Military Tribunal (AMT) trials, a series of trials before twelve different tribunals consisting solely of United States judges (among these was native North Dakotan James Morris, who later became a judge on the North Dakota Supreme Court). 185 prominent German personalities were indicted for the AMT trials, which began in December 1946 and ended in March 1949.

The Chester Fritz Library offers a wealth of primary resources on the Nuremberg Trials. There are three sets of volumes published by the United States Government Printing Office reproducing primary documentation. As a whole, they represent three different stages of the Trials. The first set, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, was published in 1946, shortly after the onset of the International Military Tribunal Trials. These eight volumes contain documentary evidence collected by American and British prosecutors in preparation for the IMT Trials. As such, it is much like a Grand Jury indictment of leading Nazi officials. The second set, entitled *Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal*, consists of forty-two volumes. The first twenty-three contain the complete IMT Trial proceedings. These are indexed in the twenty-fourth volume, which is in turn followed by eighteen volumes of documents admitted as evidence. The majority of these are in German, although each is preceded by a brief abstract in English, and all are summarized and/or excerpted in English during the trial proceedings. The final set, *Trial of War Criminals Before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals*, consists of 14 volumes that extract portions of the American Military Tribunal cases. The volumes attempt to provide "as full and illuminating a picture [of the trials] as is possible within the space available." Although this set reproduces less than four percent of the complete record, it does provide an overview and a representative sample of the AMT cases.

Those looking for more detailed information on the Nuremberg Trials can find it within the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. The Department houses the *Nuremberg Trial Records*, a collection of 480 boxes, totaling 240 linear feet. Each box contains approximately 1,000 pages of mimeographed typewritten text. Only twenty-two sets of Nuremberg Trial records are located in the United States, and the set housed here is one of the most complete (a fact that appeared as an answer on a March, 1995 episode of the quiz show, "Jeopardy"). This remarkably comprehensive collection documents virtually every aspect of the Trials. Materials include transcripts and proceedings from both the IMT and AMT trials, as well as documents introduced as evidence by both the prosecution and the defense, indictments, reports, biographies of the judges, and contemporary articles and speeches on the trials by legal experts. Witness testimonies, statements by the prosecution and defense (including opening and closing statements), legal briefings and final evidence analysis are all present. Although some materials are in

German, English translations accompany these in most cases. An extensive usage guide and index to the records is available in the Department of Special Collections, where staff are available to offer assistance and answer any questions about the materials.

The University of North Dakota acquired the records through the efforts of Dr. Howard H. Russell. Russell joined the UND English Department faculty in 1930. He earned his Ph.D. from UND in 1938 and was promoted to Professor of English Language and Literature. He left in 1943 to serve as an educational adviser for the U.S. Army. In May 1948, Russell was appointed Secretary General of the American Military Tribunals, a position he retained until the Trials were completed in December 1949. Russell never forgot his alma mater and ensured that the University would receive a set of Trial records.

Chester Fritz Library patrons thus have access to extensive primary material available in few other locations. Many have taken advantage of this opportunity. Recent theses crafted from researching the Nuremberg Trial sources include Nels Erickson's *Nothing in Mitigation: Natural Law and the Nuremberg Trials* (1984) and Mark Foster's *IG Farben and the Road to Auschwitz: Failed Ethics in an Early High-Technology Enterprise* (1994). Bound copies of these and other UND theses are available in the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. Microform copies may also be accessed in the Library's Periodicals Department.

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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS HIGH AND DRY

The Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections sustained no damage during the 1997 flood. The water never reached the Chester Fritz Library, and Special Collections resides on the Library's fourth floor. The Department is again open for research, and staff are readily available to provide reference assistance.

PROJECT MUSE REVOLUTIONIZES SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

Project Muse, an electronic publishing venture from Johns Hopkins University Press and Hopkins' Milton S. Eisenhower Library, is now available to the University of North Dakota campus community through the Chester Fritz Library Home Page. The Project emerged to make "works of scholarship more widely available within individual university communities by using on-line technology to produce affordable electronic journals in the humanities, the social sciences, and mathematics."

Funded in 1995 by a \$400,000 grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation and a recent \$320,000 award from the National Endowment for the Humanities, this ambitious undertaking is one of the first initiatives in the country in which a University's library and its academic press have collaborated to provide electronic access to the full text of scholarly journals. Project Muse currently provides access to over 40 journals, and eventually intends to include others.

The Project offers searchable and printable full text of journals that span a wide range of subjects including literary studies, classics, history, social and political science, Judaic studies and American studies. The journal collection contains well-established titles of interest to both

I. G. FARBEN

INDICTMENT

OFFICE OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN NUREMBERG-1946

humanists and social scientists. These include *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, *Human Rights Quarterly*, *American Quarterly*, and *Modernism/Modernity*. A listing of all titles is available on the Project's main page. On-line versions of journal articles are available up to four weeks sooner than their print counterparts. While the text is designed for on-screen reading, Project Muse attempts to retain the identity of each journal. Graphics are enhanced from the print version and are often in color.

The Project offers its own searching facility. It is possible to keyword search titles, articles within selected titles, headings, or the entire database. Journal issues are available from 1995, although the Project is exploring the possibility of adding back files. A "What's New" page announces the latest additions and enhancements, and also highlights notable features in upcoming issues. For example, the May 1997 issue of the Henry James Review features responses to the recent film "The Portrait of a Lady," directed by Jane Campion ("The Piano", 1993).

The Chester Fritz Library's Home Page hyperlinks to the Project Muse site at <<http://www.und.nodak.edu/dept/library>>.

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UND ALUM GIVES A GIFT OF ART

In August 1993, Colonel Eugene "Gene" E. Myers and the late Florence Myers established the Florence H. And Eugene E. Myers Endowment through the University of North Dakota Foundation. The Endowment reflects Colonel Myers' appreciation for his UND education and his endorsement of the role of liberal and fine arts. The annual income from the endowment, held in perpetuity, has been designated for purchases of art books, graphics, plastic arts, and art history materials.

Colonel Myers was born May 5, 1914, in Grand Forks. He earned a bachelor of science in education in 1936 from UND, majoring in art, history, and social science. In 1938, he received a master of science in education, also from UND, with an emphasis in art and history. Myers then received a graduate degree in art from Columbia University and completed the Advanced Management Program at the Harvard Business School, as well as programs of study at Cambridge and Oxford Universities. He served as an art instructor at Columbia University and was a Professor of Art at the University of Vermont. Following a distinguished Air Force career, which ended in 1966, he became Dean of the Corcoran School of Art, Washington, D.C. He subsequently became Vice President for Management of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Colonel Myers has co-authored or contributed to three books and published more than eighty articles on art, education, and his world travels. The late Florence Myers was a graduate of the Convent of Notre Dame in Philadelphia and was active in Colonial Dames, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Huguenot Society.

Myers Endowment materials are selected by a committee of designated individuals from the Visual Arts Department and the Chester Fritz Library, in consultation with the North Dakota Museum of Art, the UND Foundation, and the UND President's Office. The first disbursement

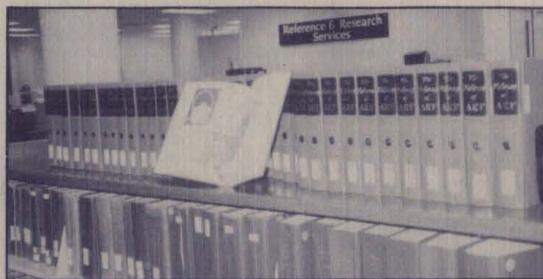
was received in the fall of 1996 and exceeded the expected \$9,500. Endowment funds will enable the Library to substantially enhance its visual arts collection.

One outstanding recent acquisition made possible by the endowment's generous terms is Grove's *The Dictionary of Art*. More than fifteen years in preparation, the *Dictionary*, edited by Jane Turner, was released to critical acclaim in the fall of 1996. Publication was originally approved in 1980 by Harold Macmillan, former Prime Minister of Britain and owner of the family firm of Macmillan Publishers Ltd. The objective was to produce, in 25 million words, an illustrated reference work that provided comprehensive worldwide coverage of all the visual arts from prehistory to the present. The massive final product is a 34 volume set containing 32,600 pages, 15,000 images, and 45,000 signed articles written by 6,700 scholars from 120 countries.

No more complete guide to the world's art exists. Coverage ranges from descriptions of civilizations, to biographies, to archaeological excavations and much more. The decorative arts and the traditional fine arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture are given equal weight. Photography and contemporary art forms, such as performance art and multimedia installations, are also included. For those interested in the history of aesthetics, close attention is paid to collectors and collecting. Picture frame connoisseurs will discover 127 relevant illustrated pages, with specially commissioned drawings of representative types. Every country in the United Nations has its entry, from Afghanistan (27 pages) to Zimbabwe (3). The overview of African cultures extends to over 200 pages, and 431 pages describe Japanese art, from its earliest beginning to the 20th century. Every major subject has multiple entry points, including individual artists, schools, national origins and techniques. The final volume is an index to the entire set and contains 750,000 items. At a list price of \$8,800, *The Dictionary of Art* exceeds the means of many libraries that might wish to acquire it. The Chester Fritz Library feels most fortunate indeed that the Myers Endowment has allowed the acquisition of this outstanding reference work.

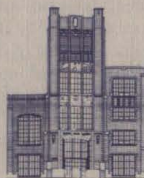
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