

Breaking Out of the Silos: Teaching as a subject librarian and as a curator in special collections

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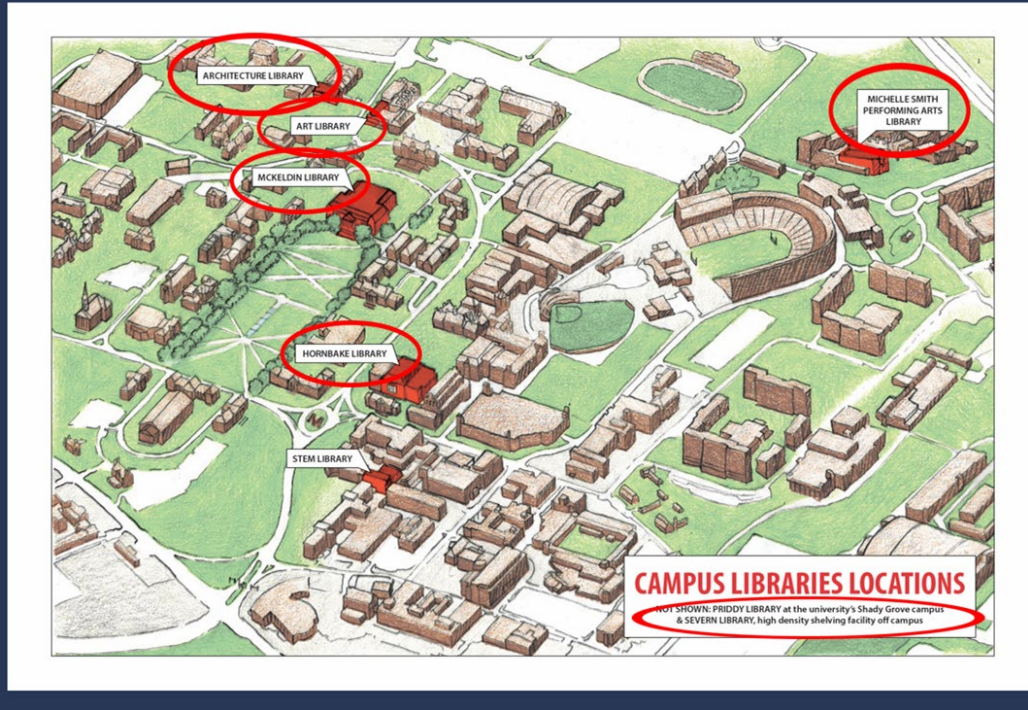
ARTH 488J: Japanese Art in the 20th Century: Empire, War and Occupation

Fall 2024 by Dr. Alicia Volk

- Undergraduate students with various discipline backgrounds
- Generally new to the libraries resources
- [Quote from the syllabus]: “*Our class offers many opportunities to engage with rare original archival materials, an important and exciting aspect of research that is not often available to undergraduates.*”

Library session as a subject librarian

Item locations on campus



Item locations at McKeldin Library



- McK Library Stacks
- McK Library Folio
- McK East Asia Japanese Language Stacks
- McK Current Periodicals

McK Library Folio
 NX163. M53 1998



Library sessions as curator in special collection (Gordon W. Prange Collection)

End of the Pacific War (August, 1945)



August 30, 1945



Censorship on Japanese Print media



The Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD) under the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP) was responsible for monitoring and censoring the Japanese media – books, magazines, newspapers, posters, maps, movies, radio scripts, etc.

Civil Censorship Detachment. National Archives and Records Administration



Library sessions as curator in special collection (Gordon W. Prange Collection)

CCD file copies



- 71,000 books
- 14,000 titles of magazines
- 18,000 titles of newspapers
- 10,000 news agency photographs
- 600 maps
- 250 posters and wall newspapers



Gift Collection (=Donated collections)



- Personal and official letters
- Documents
- Color slides
- Photographs
- Photo albums and scrapbooks
- English-language books published in Occupied Japan



Students-curated exhibition in a special collection's reading room



Onchi Kōshirō

Graphic Artist: Picturing Postwar Japan

Onchi Kōshirō (1891-1955) was one of the twentieth century's most innovative artists. A Japanese pioneer of abstraction and printmaking as well as of book and graphic design, Onchi and his work would be unavoidably impacted by the circumstances of Japan's crushing defeat in World War II and subsequent occupation by American forces. This exhibition zeroes in on Onchi's prolific practice under occupation, when he was committed to reviving the fortunes of Japanese art and culture and reaching new audiences through art and graphic design.

The works on display are drawn from the Gordon W. Prange Collection, the unique archive of the Allied Occupation's print publication censorship operation from 1945 to 1949, which forms part of the Special Collections and University Archives at the University of Maryland Libraries. A strikingly diverse array of book designs and illustrations, some of which have never before been exhibited or studied, offers a vivid glimpse into Onchi's exploratory artistic practice and early postwar Japan.

Curated by the undergraduate students in Dr. Alicia Volk's Japanese Art in the Twentieth Century capstone seminar with the generous support of the University of Maryland Libraries

A stylized graphic illustration on a light-colored background. At the top is a red mountain peak. Below it are green and black abstract patterns. At the bottom is a white chrysanthemum flower. There are also small white butterfly-like shapes scattered around the bottom of the illustration.





Conclusion

- Introduce the libraries resources at the early stage of semester benefited the class
- Students feel comfortable in contacting and communicating with librarians
- Understanding what is special collections and how special collections materials can be used

What's next?

- Another faculty member already interested in doing a students-curated exhibition
- Some interests for similar teaching support activities were generated among the other curators
- Further expand my reach toward the Chinese and Korean Studies faculty members
- Share my experience with other CJK subject librarian and/or special collections curators/archivists