



BOSTON ATHENÆUM

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"And so with the sunshine and the great bursts of leaves growing on the trees, just as things grow in fast movies, I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer. There was so much to read, for one thing ..."

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

WITH SUMMER AROUND THE CORNER, the Athenæum is bursting with life. Join us for a coffee hour in June, where members and staff can become better acquainted, or for Conservation Evening to learn more about our special collections. Lectures, book talks, and panels are springboards for discussion on Nietzsche, religious plurality, the culture of healthcare, collective memory, one of America's founding families, and more. A trivia night offers a chance to prove your knowledge. And, as always, there's so much to read ...

Elizabeth E. Barker, Ph.D.
Stanford Calderwood Director

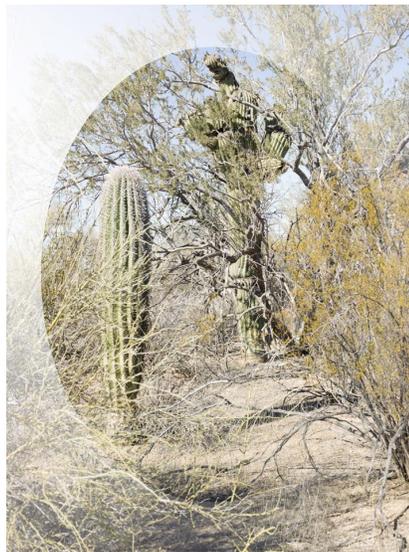
FEATURED EVENTS

OFF STAGE: READING AFTERMATH (A GEOLOGICAL SURVEY)

Thursday, May 4, 6-7 pm

P R Members \$15 Non-members \$20

Geological events are sometimes sudden and violent, like volcanic eruptions or earthquakes. Other times, the actions are subtle and virtually imperceptible. In both cases, these events took place off stage, leaving us with no more than a photograph of the aftermath. These photographs activate our curiosity to "read" sites for the stories, embedded in geology, that implicate us in a relationship to the land. The images evoke the scientific process of examining land as evidence and suggest our existential connection to the natural processes that dwarf our lifespan.



In this lecture, Sharon Harper will present photographs from her series *Geological Survey/Aftermath*. These images contain a visual language and logic that heighten the geological phenomena responsible for their contents. Cross-pollination between the visual languages of different groups of photographs bring them into conversation with each other to tell a broader, ongoing story of land formation.

Sharon Harper holds an MFA in photography from the School of Visual Art in New York. Her work explores the intersection of technology and perception, and is held in the permanent collections of MoMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Harvard Art Museums, and the New York Public Library. She is a recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in Photography and is currently a professor of visual and environmental studies at Harvard.

ADHD'S CHALLENGES AND CONTROVERSIES

Tuesday, May 16, 6-7:30 pm

P F R Registration now open

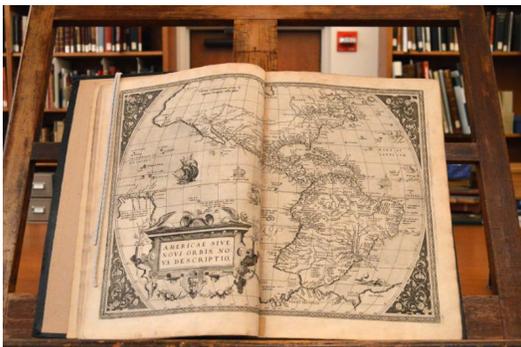
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) poses considerable challenges and provokes intense controversy surrounding its diagnosis, treatment, and frequency. There exists no objective biological or neuropsychological

measure to define ADHD, making diagnosis a challenge, particularly for children, whose symptoms are often exaggerations of behaviors already typical in childhood. ADHD's medical treatment raises concerns, both of misuse of drugs for their performance-enhancing properties, and of side effects of these drugs on young, developing brains. Still, perhaps the most controversial aspect of ADHD is its increasing frequency in the population. Current estimates qualify as many as 11% of children for an ADHD diagnosis, a 43% increase over the past decade. This rise fuels rampant debates over whether ADHD is overdiagnosed. Because ADHD can lead to substantial difficulties in school, work, family, and social activities, it is important to understand these controversies and meet the challenges that can improve the lives of many individuals and their families.

These topics will be discussed by a panel of experts, each of which brings diverse perspectives to ADHD, including a physician (**Dr. Leonard Rappaport**, Boston Children's Hospital), an epidemiologist (**Dr. Kathleen Merikangas**, NIH), a neuroscientist (**Dr. John Gabrieli**, MIT), and a journalist (**Alan Schwarz**, author of *ADHD Nation*). This program is offered in partnership with MIT.

A Homecoming Story

The Ortelius Atlas Returns to Cuba



On April 6, in a moving and memorable ceremony, Stanford Calderwood Director Elizabeth Barker and Anne C. and David J. Bromer Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts Stanley Cushing presented to Dr. Eduardo Torres Cuevas, Director of the Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, a precious volume that had been improperly removed from the Cuban institution a quarter century ago: *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Theatre of the World), created in 1570 by cartographer Abraham Ortelius, is

widely considered to be one of the first modern atlases, containing maps of uniform size systematically arranged and bound in a book.

The Athenæum had acquired the rare atlas in 1993 from a Boston-based bookseller. In the summer of 1999, conservators discovered two mutilated ownership stamps indicating that the atlas belonged to the Biblioteca Nacional José Martí in Havana. The volume bore no sign of deaccession (formal removal from a library collection), suggesting that it had been stolen and smuggled out of Cuba, a regrettably frequent occurrence in the early 1990s.

Athenæum administrators initiated correspondence with the José Martí Library, but were slowed by a period of limited contact between the United States and Cuba. We raised the matter again following the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between our nations in 2015.



Following due deliberations and approval by the Special Collections Committee and the full Board of Trustees, Stanley Cushing worked with faculty from Harvard's Cuban Studies Program to arrange to return the volume to Dr. Torres Cuevas during a visit to the university. A snowstorm delayed the originally scheduled visit in February, but on April 6, the sun shone on the long-awaited event. As Dr. Torres Cuevas remarked on the occasion, "We

hope that this process may serve as an example of ethical best practices for libraries and cultural institutions that, as trusted sources of knowledge, are united by a common purpose."



NEW MEMBERS' RECEPTION

Thursday, May 11, 5:30-7:30 pm
M F R Invite-only, RSVP by May 4

This wine and cheese reception offers new members an opportunity to meet fellow members of the Athenæum's energetic, intellectually curious community and explore its labyrinthine building. Questions? Contact membership@bostonathenaeum.org.

DIRECTOR'S COFFEE HOUR

Thursday, June 15, 12-1 pm
M F Registration begins June 1, 9 am

All are welcome to join Stanford Calderwood Director Elizabeth Barker and several Athenæum colleagues for this informal discussion over coffee and pastries in the Long Room, a perfect opportunity to share ideas with the administration and become better acquainted with other members.

ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS

M Members only **P** Open to the Public **R** Reception **F** Free event

A COMPOSER'S SENSE OF PLACE

Monday, May 8, 6-7:30 pm

The **New England Philharmonic Chamber Players** present compositions from New England and abroad. This performance is part of the collaborative series, *Who Are We When We Are At Home?*, sponsored by the **Boston Literary District**.

P Members \$15 Non-members \$30; Registration now open

THE OUTER BEACH: A THOUSAND-MILE WALK ON CAPE COD'S ATLANTIC SHORE

Tuesday, May 9, 12-1 pm

In this lecture, writer and radio broadcaster **Robert Finch** calls upon the literary legacy and history of the Cape's legendary arm to inform a consideration of time spent near the ocean.

P F Registration not required

HE WANTED THE MOON: THE MADNESS AND MEDICAL GENIUS OF DR. PERRY BAIRD, AND HIS DAUGHTER'S QUEST TO KNOW HIM

Wednesday, May 17, 12-1 pm

Author **Mimi Baird** discusses her quest to piece together her father's legacy. Dr. Perry Baird was a rising medical star who sought to identify the biochemical root of manic depression, just as he began to suffer its effects.

P F Registration not required

CURATOR-LED GALLERY TALK

Wednesday, May 17, 2-3 pm

Join **Catharina Slatteback**, the Athenæum's Curator of Prints & Photographs, to discover the wide variety of artistic responses to the urban, rural, and community life of New England.

M F Registration begins May 3, 9 am

CONSERVATION EVENING: A BENEFIT FOR THE CONSERVATION LAB OF THE BOSTON ATHENÆUM

Thursday, May 18, 5:30-7:30 pm

A silent auction to sponsor conservation treatment for treasures from the collection that are in need of special care.

P Members and Non-members \$40; Registration now open

MULTIPLE CHOICE: EXPLORING RELIGIOUS PLURALITY THROUGH *REV. 23*, A NEW OPERA

Wednesday, May 24, 6-7:30 pm

REV. 23 is an imagining of the hypothetical 23rd chapter of the Book of Revelation by librettist **Cerise Lim Jacobs** and composer **Julian Wachner**. A panel of Buddhist, Humanist, and Muslim chaplains will explore the opera's predominant theme of tension between light and dark through the lens of their faith traditions.

P Members \$20 Non-members \$30; Registration now open

EYE OF THE EXPERT: LEADING THE WAY: INNOVATORS AND PIONEERS AT THE BOSTON ATHENÆUM

Thursday, May 25, 5:30-7:30 pm

Presentation led by **David B. Dearing**, Ph.D., **Carolle Morini**, and **Mary Warnement** on the Athenæum's history as an important incubator for innovation and home to intellectual pioneers.

M R Members \$35

[VIEW ALL UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

PRESIDENTIAL INCIDENTALS



The next time you're in the building, be sure to make a pilgrimage to Upper Pilgrim Hall (located in the art department on the basement level) for a new mini-exhibition, *Presidential Incidentals*. The installation features oddities from the Athenæum's special collections related to the American presidency. Among the objects on view: a pin-cushion made from a scrap of Martha Washington's wedding dress by one of her granddaughters; a mint-condition example of the Martha Washington Dollar Bill

(1886), the only US paper currency to bear as its main image the portrait of a woman; First Lady Ida McKinley's court shoes, painted and decorated by her own hand; the famous 1860 life mask of Abraham Lincoln; and more! On view until September 2017.

NEW ENGLAND ON PAPER: CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE BOSTON ATHENÆUM'S PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTIONS

263 guests attended the April 5 opening of *New England on Paper: Contemporary Art in the Boston Athenæum's Prints & Photographs Collections*, featuring local artists' interpretations of New England's built and natural environments. The exhibition will remain on view through September 3. [Visit our website](#) for a complete schedule of exhibition-related programming, including docent-led gallery talks.



NEWS YOU CAN USE

- **SPRING CLOSURE** We will be closed on Monday, May 29 for Memorial Day.
- **SPRING BOOK LIST** The Athenæum's [spring book recommendations](#) are out! Stop by the library to take home one of our seasonal picks.
- **HIRE A RESEARCHER** If you are unable to visit the library in person, you can hire an Athenæum reference librarian to assist with research using the library's resources. The fee for this service is \$90 per hour. [Contact reader services](#) with questions.
- **NEW FACES** Welcome Elizabeth Jarcy, Cataloging Intern; and Richard Newton, Security Officer.
- **BAG CHECK POLICY** Security staff have initiated a random bag check policy. All members and their guests, as well as staff, contractors, and other visitors, are subject to search. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our community and collections safe and secure.

GLIMPSED AT 10½

New England Patriots wide receiver Malcolm Mitchell made a special stop at 10½ Beacon Street on March 26 as part of his Read Across New England tour. Mitchell spoke about his personal reading journey and his Read With Malcolm youth literacy initiatives, before reading from his picture book, *The Magician's Hat*, which tells the story of a magician whose powers



come from books.

Though he struggled with reading for much of his young life, Mitchell grew to love books while recovering from a knee injury during his sophomore year at the University of Georgia. Sidelined from the field, Mitchell dedicated himself to improving his reading skills while he recovered. Reading was fundamental to his rehabilitation, and books became an important outlet for Mitchell's own curiosity and creativity.

Today, Mitchell is an avid reader, Athenæum member, award-winning author, and mentor to elementary school students. Read With Malcolm's mission is to introduce book ownership to disadvantaged students and to improve literacy in underperforming schools. Learn more at readwithmalcolm.com.

WELCOME! WILLKOMMEN! BIENVENUE! BIENVENIDO!

Help us make the Athenæum a welcoming place for members and visitors from all over the world! We are looking for members who fluently speak languages other than English to record a brief message of welcome for our iPhone app. Please contact Hannah Weisman at weisman@bostonathenaeum.org or 617-720-7617 if you would like to lend your linguistic skills to record a message for BA visitors on Friday, May 19.

WATCH & LISTEN

Missed one of last month's book talks or lectures? Catch up during your daily commute!

Sally Bedell Smith's recent book talk on her biography, *Prince Charles: The Passions and Paradoxes of an Improbable Life*, presented in partnership with the Royal Oak Foundation, is now available for streaming in [video](#) and [podcast](#) format.

Catch up on other previous book talks and lectures [here](#).



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