Friends of the Library Strengthen UA Collections
By Georgie Donovan
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The University of Arizona Libraries have recently added more than a quarter of a million dollars of valuable electronic and print materials to its collections, in addition to a few extraordinarily rare items for Special Collections.

This spring, the Friends of the Library, an active association that supports the UA Libraries' efforts in acquisitions, preservation and outreach, procured $280,000 worth of materials for the campus.

"Each year, the Friends of the Library purchases many valuable items that strengthen our collections," said Carla Stoffle, dean of the Libraries and Center for Creative Photography. "But this is the largest set of purchases ever made through Friends' contributions and efforts to raise money. We are thrilled at their generosity and many hours of commitment on behalf of the campus at large."

One of the largest purchases is Latino Literature, an electronic database with more than 200 novels, hundreds of short stories, approximately 30,000 pages of poetry and more than 250 plays by Latino writers working in the U.S. Other large purchases include electronic backfiles of The New York Times from 1851-1924 and a limited edition of Aeschylus's Oresteia by Ted Hughes with woodcuts by Leonard Baskin, the final production of Gehenna Press and a masterpiece of American typography held by only four libraries nationwide.

Keeping in mind the campus and departmental priorities for Focused Excellence is continually "one of the most important drivers for deciding what we purchase and in what format," Stoffle said.

Other database purchases include the Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Culture, the Handbook of Optical Engineering and encyclopedias on topics ranging from the Enlightenment to areas such as sex and gender.

Other titles focus on the history and literature of the Southwest, including original 19th-century photographs of scenes and people in northwestern Mexico, the Arizona Territory and New Mexico by photographers such as Alfred Addis, William H. Jackson & Company and W.H. Horne & Company.

All the Friends' purchases aspire to meet the needs of researchers and students across campus working in a wide range of academic fields.

Other significant purchases include:
- a first edition of Agustín de Vetancourt's Teatro Mexicano, 1697-98, an early history of Mexico, including much on New Mexico
- Ashurnham Pentateuch, a facsimile copy of an early medieval western European codex with 63 magnificent miniatures in full color
- a copy of the now-lost original Metz Codex, one of the most important scientific codices of the 9th century
- a facsimile edition of the rich codex, Cantigas de Santa Maria, composed and written by Alfonso X at the end of the 13th century
- backfiles from the Royal Society of Chemistry from 1841 to 1996 (more than 200,000 articles)
- a first edition of Anna Livia Plurabelle by James Joyce, the first book appearance of what would become Finnegans Wake and one of 800 copies made
- a first edition of Howls & Whispers by Ted Hughes
- Gypsy and Other Poems, a rare first edition by James Baldwin and done in collaboration with Leonard Baskin's Gehenna Press which includes an etching of Baldwin by Baskin
- Sonetos de amor oscuro, by Federico García Lorca, a rare first edition of 30 with artwork by Carolyn Trent