WHO WE ARE

JEREMY FERRIS IS A LIBRARIAN AND ARTIST BASED IN PROVIDENCE, RI.

PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY IS A 142-YEAR-OLD NONPROFIT PROVIDING FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES THROUGH RICH AND HISTORIC PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL COLLECTIONS, EXTENSIVE INFORMATION RESOURCES, THOUGHT-PROVOKING EXHIBITIONS, IMPACTFUL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, AND EXPERT STAFF.

LIZARD RAMONE IN HOT PURSUIT

-A GUIDE TO ARCHIVES FOR ARTISTS AND MAKERS-

WORDS/IMAGES - JEREMY FERRIS
2017
Celestial art halts luxury condo dev., leads to light pollution termination
"Thanks, mysterious and earnest librarian," says Ramone.

Bru-xior, enormous three-headed beast, released from crib of ice
Non-hierarchical prosperity at all time high according to global community

Legislators launch investigation into goats "How are they so great?"
Hi! Thanks for reading this comic book! It was conceived of and printed by the Providence Public Library, working in collaboration with Jeremy Ferris, who created all the illustrations and text.

We work with a lot of artists and designers at our library. One thing we’ve noticed is that some artists can’t make many other humans understand the process of starting research in archives or special collections. Archives have their own vocabularies and rules, and it can be a scary world for the uninitiated. Another thing we’ve noticed is that librarians and archivists enjoy helping people and want their collections to be more accessible, but don’t always know how to reach or work with creative researchers. We’re hoping that this comic book can be a little bridge helping artists and archivists find one another.

This book was written to be general enough that it can be of use to people all around the United States. We’re distributing it locally with an insert describing archives and historical collections in Rhode Island and we’re encouraging colleagues in other places to make inserts about resources in their own cities and states. You can learn more about this comic book, our creation process, and how it's being used and distributed at www.provlbr.org/homework.

The website also has a downloadable version of this book. If you’d like to print additional copies for non-commercial use, feel free to get in touch with us if you have questions or want to learn more.

Angela Divisegna
Curatorial Assistant
Providence Public Library
Hi, you can just leave your stuff at the door and sign in with me. Let me know if there's anything else you want to check.

Am I supposed to be here? The desk downstairs just gave me this and told me where to go.

Yeah, well, I just came in to see if you had the latest issue of Zoomin' Star! The other issue I'm missing has been very good lately.

They didn't have the mag downstairs, but said you might have something to look at. This is the place, right? What is this place, anyway? What's time all about? What's like, perception?

Anyway...
LIZARD RAMONE, RANDALL RUDE, AND A ROBOTIC BUST OF DANTE

CIRC-YOU-LATER!!

HOW DO I GET BACK TO WORK?

IT WAS GREAT. I FIGURED I'D BID ON THE BIDON, THOUGH.

YOU CAN GET MOST OF THEM DOWNSTAIRS, OR PUT IN REQUESTS.

BABYLONIAN CONSTELLATIONS...

ANDREW JACKSON BIOGRAPHY...

"SHORE-TO-SHORE" BROADCAST RECORDINGS...

Oh...

OH...

DO YOU... WANT HELP FINDING THEM?

NO... I THINK I'LL BE FINE. THANKS.

OK, HANG ON, HANG ON. DON'T WORRY, THE ORIENTATION GUY WILL BE UP IN A DAY. WE JUST GOT A GRANT TO GET IT UP AND RUNNING AGAIN. WE'RE THE PERFECT PERSON TO SEE IT IN ACTION.

CRANK CRANK CRANK

IT'S DANTE?

WHIRRRR

WHIRRRR

WHIRRRR

WHIRRRR

WELCOME TO THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BURGERTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY. SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND THE ARCHIVES HOUSE UNPUBLISHED AND/OR RARE MATERIALS WITH HISTORIC AND/OR CULTURAL VALUE.

THE LIBRARIANS AND ARCHIVISTS ARE HERE TO ASSIST YOU IN FINDING THE RECORDS AND INFORMATION YOU NEED.

I MEAN, I DON'T REALLY NEED ANYTHING. I'M JUST CURIOUS.

-- EVEN IF THAT NEED IS JUST A CURIOUITY!!!

CURIOUS PEOPLE WANDER INTO SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ALL THE TIME, WITHOUT A SPECIFIC QUESTION. YOU ARE JUST AS WELCOME AS A HARD COR RESEARCHER WHO WORKS HERE REGULARLY.

ATTENDING JAPANESE FESTIVALS

Christ Wyzetk

BUT...
"...all combined with a list of what's contained in that collection.

Sure, I'll be right back.

William Crapley Coffin became enraptured with the star charts over the North Atlantic, drafted by his navigators while circling the Arctic.

..."
LIZARD RAMONE IN...

LIL' (PAMPHLET) ANGELS ON MY SHOULDER

LIZARD RAMONE WALKS HOME, Pondering the two pamphlets Randall the archivist gave her...

HOW YOU MAY BE ASKING YOURSELF...

WHAT IS “FINDING AID”? CAN'T COMPUTE

YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED!

THE WILLIAM CRAWFORD SALISBURY DIARY COLLECTION

Finding Aid

AFFIRMATIVE

DIARIES?

A FINDING AID IS A HELPFUL TOOL TO FIGURE OUT WHAT AN ARCHIVE HAS IN ITS COLLECTION AND WHAT YOU WANT TO LOOK AT.

A CATALOG, LIKE WHAT YOU LOOK AT FOR THE REGULAR LIBRARY COLLECTION, is mostly a list of what's available. A FINDING AID IS MORE LIKE A STORY.

WHERE A COLLECTION CAME FROM...

WHAT IT CONTAINS...

ITS CONTEXT...

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT...

SO! YOU COULDN'T DROP OUT OF MODERN LIFE...

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT BTPL
FIRST AID... FINDING AID... LEMONADE!!

Hi Randall! Hi! I printed this out for you.

Hi Randall! Hi! I printed this out for you.

Yow, papercut!

Hi! I printed this out for you. Thanks!

Hi Randall! Hi! I printed this out for you.

No way I tried to go on with my smartphone and the touchscreen...

No way I tried to go on with my smartphone and the touchscreen...

...and the popups...

...and the popups...

...slow response.

...slow response.

And I can't figure out now to take notes!

And I can't figure out now to take notes!

THEN AT LEAST CHECK ONLINE FOR PAPERCUT PREVENTION BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO LOOK AT SOME SERIOUS FINDING AIDS!

THEN AT LEAST CHECK ONLINE FOR PAPERCUT PREVENTION BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO LOOK AT SOME SERIOUS FINDING AIDS!

IT GOES A LITTLE SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

IT GOES A LITTLE SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

OR, I MEAN... I GUESS IT'S NOT THAT BAD THIS TIME.

OR, I MEAN... I GUESS IT'S NOT THAT BAD THIS TIME.

CAN WE JUST NOT USE THE ROBOT?

CAN WE JUST NOT USE THE ROBOT?

"WHEN THE SUNLIGHT BURNS, AND THE ELECTROMAGNETIC WAVES FROM YOUR SMARTPHONE TURN YOUR BRAIN TO PORRIDGE, AND EVERY CAR AIMS TO PLow YOU DOWN ON THEIR WAY TO THE STRIP MALL, WHERE DO YOU TURN TO ESCAPE?"

KEEP OUT!

KEEP OUT!

"I BET YOU HAVE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR LOCAL SPECIAL COLLECTIONS OR ARCHIVES, A HAVEN TO SEE AND INTERACT WITH SOMETHING REAL IN THIS SOULLESS VIRTUAL WORLD."

Calls, calls, calls...

Calls, calls, calls...

SIGN...

SIGN...

shuttle shuttle shuffle
It's not uncommon to find special collections and archives in your city. Talk to a librarian—they should be able to tell you what collections you can find nearby. Expect to visit public libraries, colleges, or historical societies.

"Looking at archival materials allows you to see historic books, prints, letters, and manuscripts that are as unique as you are!" - Groan.

To immerse yourself in arcane manuscripts and reject the garbage of society—come on—these are powers the archives can bring you. Imagine building radical new worlds from ideas and experiences from folk ignored until now. Archives are a tool of destruction and from destruction—regrowth!—no wonder they tossed these...

"So come on down to the special collections that are hiding right in front of you! We're happy to help you discover new worlds, new to you! That is! HA HA!"

Photographic history of the 46-inch Crawford of Verres telescope.

Excellent job, Randall, with the we shall achieve total archives!

Exhilarating.

Hey, what does Dante have a crank and a plug for?

Stay tuned for the smoking revelation!
The librarian and archivist can help you figure out an idea of what to pull ahead of time, even if it's still vague (e.g., old diagrams). Of course, the more definite your question, the easier it is for them to assist you.

And if more thoughts come to you during a visit, you can ask the librarian and archivist to retrieve them while you wait!

Maybe you shouldn’t let that... that... Robo Dante talk right now then!

The choice is all you...

...sorry...

Telescopes.

* * * These brochures produced by BPL's non-defunct marketing department mean to say that there is a huge diversity of types of special collections and archives (from the federal govt down to small communities). Materials within them and their use and users. -- Ed.
LIZARD RAMONE RANDALL RUDE (M.L.S.)
AND A ROBOTIC BUST OF DANTE IN
ARCHIVES ARE CHILL

OUR STORY THUS FAR-
LIZARD RAMONE HAS
WAITED ANXIOUSLY ALL WEEK
TO EXAMINE THE ASTRONOMY
STUFF THAT RANDALL RUDE
HAS PULLED. THE DAY HAS
ARRIVED—LET’S SEE
WHAT THEY’RE UP TO...

DON’T MIND ME, JUST
HAVE A GOOD EYE ON
OUR RESEARCHERS
WHEN HANDLING THESE

OK! ONN.

YEAH, THEY’VE COME FROM
A LOT OF DIFFERENT SOURCES.
WE TAKE CARE IN NOTING
WHERE THEY CAME FROM, HOW THEY’VE BEEN
HANDLED, AND HOW TO STORE THEM.

SHAWNIEE
THOSE BOOKSHELLS
ARE GREAT. LIKE OLD WOOL.

THAT ONE WAS FOUND
UNDER THE REMAINS OF A
SWEDISH WEREWOLF RITUAL.
A KIND OF PRESS, PLEASE.
WE HAVE PENCILS FOR
YOU TO USE.

HISTORY’S PRETTY NEAT.
NORMAL I’M LOOKING
THROUGH ACTUAL TELESCOPES
BUT ONE OF THIS DEVELOPMENT
I CAN’T SEE ANYTHING AT ALL.
I GUESS THIS IS A
PRETTY GOOD SUBSTITUTE.

LIKE THE OLD
DIAGRAMS.

LOOKING AT ARCHIVES CAN BE AN UNUSUALLY
BUT INSPIRING SOURCE FOR PEOPLE
LOOKING TO MAKE CREATIVE,
INTERPRETIVE WORK.

OH WELL I DON’T REALLY
THINK I’M AN ARTIST OR
ANYTHING, THOUGH THIS IS
GIVING ME A LOT OF GOOD
BESIDES TAKING PHOTOS
THROUGH MY TELESCOPE.

AS YOU COME IN MORE, WE MAY FIND THAT THE FORMS
OF RESEARCH YOU’VE BEEN USING DON’T CUT IT
ANymore. IF I DECIDE TO INCORPORATE THESE
HISTORICAL MATERIALS INTO YOUR PRACTICE, KEEP IN
MIND THAT THIS PROCESS CAN BE VERY SLOW.

CLEAR OUT ENOUGH TIME DURING YOUR
APPOINTMENTS TO FIND THE ITEMS THAT
LEAD YOU IN INTERESTING DIRECTIONS.