

**Ricker Library of Architecture & Art**  
**FY 22 Unit Annual Report**  
**Submitted by Emilee Mathews, Head, Ricker Library**

## **I            Unit Narrative**

### **1.    Activities and Accomplishments**

Ricker librarians, staff and student workers returned to campus, focusing on how to re-engage with users who've grown used to doing without library resources and spaces. We reignited connections by reviving people's interest and awareness of our physical space, by creating a sense of community. We carried on the projects we started earlier in the pandemic to increase awareness and usability via digital content curation and social media, and redirected some of that energy to revamp our space into a much more user-centered configuration. Now our spaces have more variety in seating, better technology, and greater accessibility.

In FY22, Ricker had two librarians for the first time since FY18. Our ability to cultivate relationships with our liaison areas, steward the collections, make connections across campus, and raise the library's profile across the state and country strengthened considerably with our newest librarian colleague Siobhan McKissic. They took the reins on augmenting our collection to be more centered on design and creative practices more largely, with the inaugural materials research collection, due to open to researchers in Spring 2023. Siobhan has also expanded our partnerships across the university and institutions across the state. For example, she worked on the 50th anniversary conference planning task force for the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA), the preeminent organization for art librarianship, whose conference was in Chicago in April, 2022. They presented their work developing Ricker's materials library and partnered with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, EXPO Chicago (a major international annual artist and gallery fair), and Poetry Foundation, to provide complementary programming including exhibits and talks alongside the conference. These exhibits featured a number of items from Ricker's collection, raising our profile as an artists' book and zine collection in the state. This augmented and complemented Emilee's involvement nicely, as she was focused on curating an exhibit of the ARLIS/NA's archival material, held at UIUC's University Archives. Ricker also sponsored a session which detailed the early years of the society with some of the earliest members.

Back on campus: we still carried our momentum from earlier pandemic on our diversity, equity, inclusion, and access focus. For example, we have collaborated extensively with the UIUC student chapter of the National Organization for Minority Architects. Building on

our 100% digital collaboration with this group in 2021, in 2022 we hosted the group in the library for a zine workshop, and collaborated with them on an exhibit and guide to complement their student symposium. This coming year, NOMAS has chosen to focus on architecture publications, and we are at the table for the planning stages. We look forward to ever expanding and growing with our community—especially focused on our students.

We've incorporated pedagogical approaches with our class visits to position the library as a springboard for creativity. This has expanded our audience considerably, and faculty have increasingly asked for our collaborations. While this has started with studio art faculty, it has caught on and now we are working with graphic design, art education, and architecture faculty as well. Please see the Appendix for some examples of student projects.

We have also worked toward embedding the library within research and teaching spaces, and focused on modeling what research can look like in the arts. In Fall 2021, the School of Art & Design approached Ricker to curate a show in their main gallery space. We partnered with the Society for Art Historians and Archaeologists (a student group in A&D) to present materials on creating dialogue between readers and publications. We hosted six classes in the space during the two weeks it was installed, and invited public engagement and interaction. This complemented a talk Emilee gave in the ongoing Art History department's Modern Art Colloquium, in which she highlighted recent research on the relationship between art galleries and art exhibition reviews.

Our impact has been expansive! We've evolved our partnerships and reshaped how the library is seen by how our constituents: as a platform to collaboratively make impact. We've seen this interest across our patrons, from individual faculty to student groups. Working with the library, our users can engage with ideas, further education, and provide models with which to inspire their peers. All while providing multiple opportunities for public engagement. This all fits nicely within UIUC's land grant mission.

## 2. Major Challenges

Our main challenges related to reopening the library under contemporary COVID considerations. Numerous times throughout the year, we had gaps in coverage due to COVID exposures in addition to the usual vacation, sick, and inability to come in to cover scheduled shifts. We onboarded a new librarian into the unit, which further highlighted the challenges in communication and infrastructure due to the lack of institutional memory within the unit, as we had a number of unexpected departures in 2018–2019 with no trace of current procedures. Lastly, we have been addressing the significant backlog of complex serials and cataloging issues that have languished for the last 3–10 years.

### 3. Significant Changes

We reopened the library in July 2021 after 15 months of being closed to the public. Gate counts continued to languish, and we made changes to our hours and our staffing models as a result. We also devoted concerted effort to marketing and outreach in order to turn around our gatecount numbers, which increased to pre-pandemic levels, although not peak pre-pandemic levels, yet. Our new librarian significantly amplified our presence across campus and in partnership with institutions in the community and the state. We've also been able to augment our service programs by introducing enhanced embedded opportunities and augmented types of instruction that enhance the library's role within art and design education.

### 4. Contributions to Library-wide programs

#### **Outreach and Public Engagement**

Exhibits outside of Ricker:

- "Reviewing the Reviews: What Critics Say about Artists, Link Gallery, School of Art & Design, UIUC, November 1–12, 2021 (Emilee)
- Two collaborative exhibits at Joan Flasch Artists' Book collection at the School of the Art Institute Chicago titled, "In the Library with a Stapler" and "Visual Poetics," April 2022 (Siobhan)
- Kleurovisionen at KAM show Sacred/Supernatural, 2021/2022 (Emilee) (see appendix)
- "ARLIS/NA: You've Come a Long Way!" pop-up exhibit, with University Archives, April 2022 (Emilee)

Events in partnership with other units

- EXPO Chicago x Poetry Foundation x Joan Flasch library, April, 2022 (Siobhan)
- Art history lecture, October, 2021 (Emilee)
- Medieval manuscripts workshops: Crafty Adults with Champaign Public Library, October, 2021 and Mom's Weekend at RBML, April, 2022 (Siobhan)
- [Parable Path](#) with Krannert Center for Performing Arts (Siobhan)
- [Parable Path](#) with [Urbana Free Library](#) (Siobhan)

Events in Ricker

- National Organization of Minority Architects—UIUC Student Chapter, Zine Workshop, April, 2022 (Ricker GA's Tacia Diaz and Xochitl Quiroz)

Exhibits in Ricker:

"Towards Earthseed: New Futures in Parable of the Sower," February–April, 2022  
(Siobhan)

Small Press Fest, October, 2021 (GA Tacia Diaz)

Abla Yaga April–August, 2022 (GA's Tacia Diaz and Xochitl Quiroz)

Celebrating Professor Kathryn Anthony's Books, November, 2021–January, 2022 (GA  
Xochitl Quiroz)

### **Advancement**

- Library Friends Webinar "[Aspen Magazine: Art in a Box](#)" recording and [accompanying guide](#) (Emilee)

### **Collection access and management;**

- Established pilot materials collection. The collection currently holds over 50 items that include tiles, vinyl, woods, fabrics, plastics, concrete, and some early photographic processes. By the end of 2022, the collection will have ~75 items and expand the range of eco-friendly materials and increase the number of materials and tools developed by people from historically marginalized communities. (Siobhan)
- Folio collection vacuumed/dusted, 87 transferred to Oak, all 95 Vault folios were priced and measured, and 254 folios were priced and measured (about 54% of the non-circulating stacks folios) have undergone the same treatment. (Emilee with staff)
- Zine collaboration with Maria Emerson and Mara Thacker (Emilee)
- Transferred thousands of items to Oak, Main, and RBML (Emilee with staff)
- Organized state 9 funds to more accurately reflect appropriate funds and added new endowments as appropriate (Emilee)
- Added three new databases (Emilee)
- Started new GOBI approval plan (Emilee)

### **Student Success:**

- Partnered with two student groups: NOMAS and SAHA to collaboratively further each group's goals in connection with libraries/research/student success
- Invested in 11 x 17 printer, enabling students to complete their assignments (a large majority of which are due on 11 x 17 paper)
- Increased soft seating
- New public workstations
- Sponsored a coffee break for architecture student midterm reviews
- Participated in orientations

### **Organizational development and training;**

- Worked with ODT to have DISC profile and workshop, as well as created a community agreement.

- Nominated undergraduate student worker Vera Mak, who received the 2021-2022 Outstanding Undergraduate Student Worker Award

### **Diversity, equality, inclusion and accessibility;**

- Continued work on “Towards a Diverse and Inclusive Architecture Library,” awarded Innovation Fund grant for \$12,492.60.
- Staff member Elisabeth Paulus and other members of the DEIA Task Force trained with outside consultant Dr. Ellen Burts-Cooper of Improve Consulting and Training Group to develop and facilitate DEIA trainings Library-wide. Elisabeth completed CITI Program training and facilitated 3 focus groups with other members of the DEIA Task Force
- Worked with Literature and Languages Library and HPNL to craft a Diversity Resident application for an Indigenous Studies Librarian; was not awarded
- Implemented diversity and inclusion training for undergrad workers

### **Reference, research consultations and other information services:**

#### *Krannert Art Museum Exhibition guides:*

- [Hal Fischer Photographs: Seriality, Sexuality, Semiotics](#)
- [To Know the Fire: Pueblo Women Potters and the Shaping of History](#)
- [A Question of Emphasis: Louise Fishman Drawing](#)

#### *ISOA guides*

- [Illinois School of Architecture Fall 2021 Lecture Series](#)
- [Illinois School of Architecture Spring 2022 Lecture Series](#)

#### *Other notable guides*

- [Indigenous Architecture across Abya Yala \(Latin America\)](#)

### **Instructional services:**

Ricker provided the greatest number of instruction services across the Arts & Humanities division, with 33 sessions across architecture, art education, art history, graphic design, and studio art. As another point of comparison: Ricker reached nearly the same number of students as RBML (751 versus 734), despite one third of staffing size

### **Facility management:**

Major leak in February 2022. In addressing program, worked with facilities, preservation, IT, and CMS on transferring folios, and vault quartos, assessing workroom for workplace safety, and replacing affected workstations

### **Assessment**

- Started work on Library Assessment Committee grant for “Investigating User Perceptions of the Architecture Library,” awarded \$4,400.13

## Digital content creation

- Created 31 videos highlighting artists' books and other vault collection to embed in courses, webinars, newsletters and social media

## 5. Progress made on Unit Annual Goals for FY22

- Experimented with increased digital access
- Continued to increase international collecting
- Established a continuous transfer protocol with Main and Oak to alleviate space
- Set up GOBI approval plan
- Made substantial progress on developing and testing pilot materials collection, including acquisition and workflow, programming, curricular integration, support; will open Spring 2023 to researchers
- Partnered with student groups to extend and enrich their curricular experiences
- Improved the physical spaces of Ricker to be more welcoming and student-centered, including a new 11x17 printer and soft seating
- Identified strategies to make lesson plans, pedagogy, and teaching practices more public facing and readily apparent
- Experimented with ways to increase engagement across in-person and digital methods in a safe but fun manner
- Increased teaching capacity and expertise for design disciplines
- Strengthened collections in new areas through concerted attention on design research process and output
- Identified strategies to enrich and deploy initiatives targeted to design disciplines and campus groups
- increased visibility of Ricker library by improving wayfinding within the building.
- Partnered with fellow librarians, liaison faculty, and outside organizations to increase global and societal impact
- Partner with design disciplines to enhance and promote the library as a site of design thinking [in progress]
- Established individual and corporate donor relationships for materials
- Increased the library's profile as a place of convergence
- Ensured that Ricker Library is a welcoming, inclusive workplace environment
- Established strong operating procedures for pandemic open operations
- Continued to invest in policy and guidelines for Ricker Library to ensure all members are well informed and practices are well documented
- Continued to implement actions outlined in Ricker Library "[Anti-Racism Commitments](#)"
- Continued to clean up and reduce redundancies across website and libguides; refresh for more contemporary approach focused on students' needs [in progress]
- Started to formally assess students' use of Ricker Library spaces, resources, collections
- Continued to invest endowment funds impactfully; increased donor relations through partnerships with Advancement

- Streamlined scheduling and hiring processes.

## 6. Unit Annual Goals for FY23

### SD1. Pro-active and trusted partners in scholarship, discovery, and innovation

- Establish resource trials and purchasing annual timelines
- Trial e-DDA collection models
- Continue to increase international collections
- Weed reference room to make more user-friendly and make space for materials collection
- Develop and test pilot materials collection, including acquisition and workflow, programming, curricular integration, support
- discuss digitization workflow for materials library with digital services
- make adjustments to materials library/collection and workflow based on test pilot
- increase non-Western design research holdings

### SD2: Transformative Learning Experiences

- Partner with student groups to extend and enrich their curricular experiences
- Improve the physical spaces of Ricker to be more welcoming and student-centered
- Make lesson plans, pedagogy, and teaching practices more public facing and readily apparent [in progress]
- Increase teaching capacity and expertise for design disciplines
- Strengthen collections in new areas through concerted attention on design research process and output
- develop curricular integration for materials library
- partner with student groups to increase use of materials library
- develop more creative, hands-on instructional sessions that bring students back to the library after their initial visits. These sessions will tie directly to student assignments and include student exhibits and displays that create a more welcoming environment by bringing the presence of students' work into the foreground.
- Enrich and deploy initiatives targeted to design disciplines and campus groups
- Make connections between information literacy and design thinking

### SD3: Societal and Global Impact

- Partner with Engineering librarians, the Siebel Center for Design, and Materials Research Lab to expand the materials collection and include more materials developed on the UIUC campus.

- Partner with design disciplines to enhance and promote the library as a site of design thinking
- Establish individual and corporate donor relationships for materials
- Increase the library's profile as a place of convergence
- partner with fellow librarians, faculty, university departments, and manufacturing organizations to increase the number of innovative materials in the collection

#### SD4: FY22 Strategic Investment

- Ensure that Ricker Library is a welcoming, inclusive workplace environment
- Establish strong operating procedures for pandemic open operations
- Continue to invest in policy and guidelines for Ricker Library to ensure all members are well informed and practices are well documented
- Continue to Implement actions outlined in Ricker Library "[Anti-Racism Commitments](#)"
- Continue to clean up and reduce redundancies across website and libguides; refresh for more contemporary approach focused on students' needs
- Assess students' use of Ricker Library spaces, resources, collections
- Continue to invest endowment funds impactfully; increase donor relations through partnerships with Advancement
- adjustments for materials library/collection and workflow based on test pilot and create extensive documentation and staff/GA assignments

### 7. Unit needs to support goals and overall mission

- Training: we plan to have a conflict management training with facilitator Morris Mosley to encourage healthy communication
- Facility: change out shelving, and think through better seating and access to power outlets
- IT: Our 11x17 printer has been challenging to operationalize, we'll need to continue to communicate with IT about that. Additionally, our scanners are very old; we will likely replace them this year.
- CMS: we will continue to de-densify our less impactful collections through continual weeding and transfer of materials with our CAS and CMS partners

## II Statistical Profile

### 1. Facilities

Number of hours open to the public per week:



Summer II 2021: 15  
Fall 2021: 64  
Spring 2022: 54  
Summer I 2022: 35

## 2. Personnel

### Full time Staff

The staff of the Ricker Library in FY22 consisted of:

- Emilee Mathews, Head, Ricker Library of Architecture and Art; Art & Architecture Librarian (faculty, 1 FTE)
- Siobhan McKissic, Visiting Design and Materials Research Librarian (visiting faculty, 1 FTE)
- Lee Whitacre, Library Specialist (civil service, 1 FTE)
- Elisabeth Paulus, Library Specialist (civil service, 1 FTE)

### Graduate Assistants

**Tacia Diaz**, Graduate Assistant (.25 FTE, funded through state funds, August 16, 2021–May 15, 2022). Duties included:

- Developed and implemented a zine workshop which was included in the student group NOMAS
- Developed ISOA lecture series guide
- Contributed to outreach and marketing efforts
- Collaborated to make Agla Yaga resource
- Improved existing #FromMarginToCenter guides by adding more resources
- Contributed to social media
- Contributed to artists' books and zines collection development
- Created best practices document for exhibits, items on carts and communication
- Answered reference questions through on the desk and via email
- Contributed to instruction activities through developing class visit lists and developing hands on activities, and helping to manage class visits and scavenger hunts
- Created Small Press Fest exhibit

**Xochitl Quiroz** (.25 FTE, funded through state funds, August 16, 2021–May 15, 2022). Duties included:

- Created the following KAM exhibition guides: Women Pueblo Potters, Hal Fisher, and Louise Fischman
- Collaborated on Abla Yaga
- Developed ideas for maker station, including drawing, origami, button making
- Contributed to collection development for BIPOC artists
- Indigenous people's day display and post
- Worked on #FromMarginToCenter Indigenous Art and Architecture

- Created Kathryn Anthony exhibit
- Collaborated on NOMAS symposium
- Whales resources for studio art faculty member
- Researched notable artist periodicals
- Drafted marketing newsletter targeted to undergrads

We also employed a total of 2 graduate hourly students, .125 FTE on endowment funds, and .5 FTE on Innovation Funding, during Fall 2021, and Spring and Summer 2022. The .125 on endowment funds augmented the outreach, collection development and management tasks; the Innovation Funded graduate hourly work was devoted to working with faculty in Architecture to diversify their precedents, case studies, and readings.

### Undergraduate Student Worker Stats

- FTE for undergraduate student workers, with annual wage budget of \$19,538:
  - Fall 2021
    - 3 FTE (based on 37.5 hr work week)
    - 10 student workers
    - 112.5 scheduled hours per week
  - Spring 2022
    - 2.07 FTE (based on 37.5 hr work week)
    - 10 student workers
    - 77.5 scheduled hours per week

## 3. User Services

- Gate Count (as reported during FY22 Sweeps Week programs): 10360
- Circulation (from Alma fulfillment reports): 3258 new circulations and 2055 renewals
- Reference interactions: 1392
- Presentations (from the Instructional Statistics database)
  - Number of presentations to groups (synchronous): 33
  - Number of participants in group presentations (synchronous): 751

## 4. Other statistics

New books and serials processed: 3742

Transfers: 1994

Preservation treatments: 3327

Preservation assessments: 217

Course reserves: 158 items for 22 classes

### III Appendices

Additional resources and links:

[Fall 2021 Newsletter](#)

Exhibits and events



Picture of *Kleurovisioenen* in KAM show Sacred/Supernatural. For a video of the book, see this [link](#).



“ARLIS/NA: You’ve Come a Long Way!” Archives exhibit at ARLIS/NA 50th anniversary conference, Chicago IL



“Reviewing the Reviews,” Link Gallery, School of Art & Design



**NOMAS UIUC** Zine workshop was a HUGE success and a great way to close out NOMAS week! Thanks so much for everyone who showed up and participated. Shoutout to the @rickerlibraryui for hosting, you guys are awesome :)



NOMAS Zine workshop

# *Towards Earthseed:*

## *New Futures in Parable of the Sower*

In 1993, Octavia Butler released the science fiction novel *Parable of the Sower*. The book follows Lauren Olamina, a Black teenager living in the apocalyptic fallout of a water crisis, a raging drug epidemic, and growing inequality in the lead up to the 2024 US presidential election. She has a medical condition that causes her to experience hyper empathy, a powerful but often difficult ability in a violent world. To survive, she develops a creative, self-sufficient, armed, and eco-minded community called Acorn, based upon the values of her own created religion, Earthseed, and its main text, Earthseed Books of the Living.

Many Afrofuturist writers, artists, activists, and readers have looked to *Parable of the Sower* as a guide to imagining the future of our world and ask the question, what is needed to create a future in which Black people live and thrive?

Exhibit in collaboration with Parable Path series  
Included collaboration with Urbana Free Library

**SUNDAY APRIL 10**  
4:00–5:00 pm

### **Too Much, Not Enough: Visions of a New Visual Poetics**

Krista Franklin, Alyssa Moore,  
April Sheridan, Siobhan McKissic



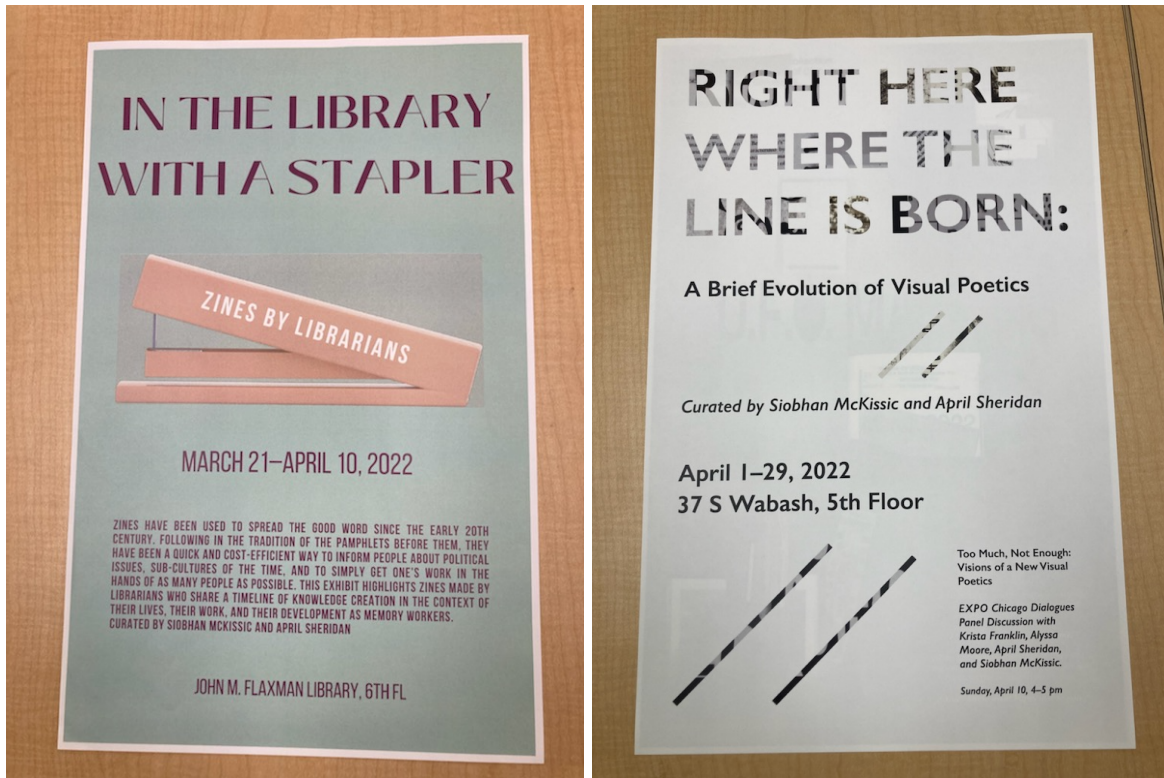
EXPO  
CHGO

NORTHERN  
TRUST

SAIC  
School of the Art Institute  
of Chicago

PO  
ETRY

[EXPO Link w/video](#)



Exhibits in SAIC featuring both SAIC and Ricker collections



[Link](#)

**Making Medieval Manuscripts**

**Moms Weekend Workshop in RBML**  
**Saturday, April 2, 1-3 pm**

**Register at [library.illinois.edu/rbx/](http://library.illinois.edu/rbx/)**

[link](http://library.illinois.edu/rbx/)