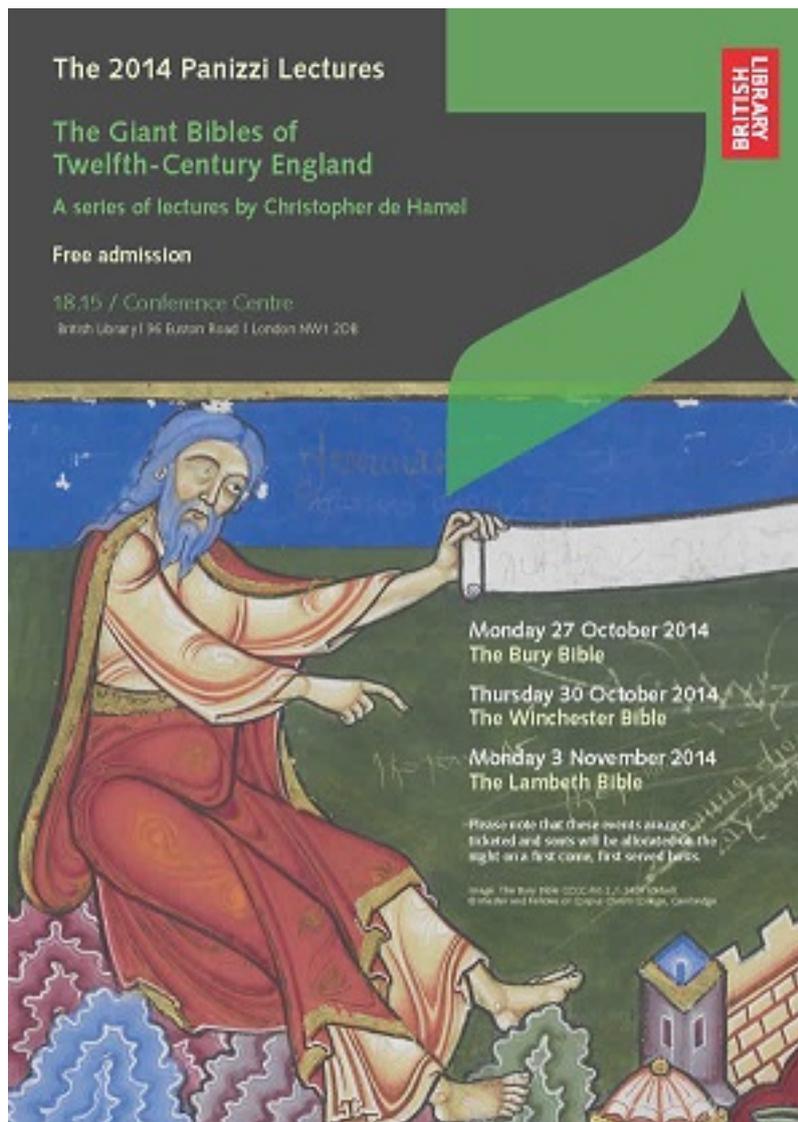


The British Library Panizzi Lectures 1985-2014



1985 D.F. McKenzie: Bibliography and the sociology of texts

1986 T.A. Birrell: English monarchs and their books: from Henry VII to Charles II

1987 K.W. Humphreys: A national library in theory and in practice

1988 Giles Barber: Daphnis and Chloë: the markets and metamorphoses of an unknown bestseller

1989 J.P. Gumbert: The Dutch and their books in the manuscript age

1990 J.B. Trapp: Erasmus, Colet and More: the early Tudor humanists and their books

1991 Bernhard Fabian: The English book in eighteenth-century Germany

1992 Malachi Beit-Arié: Hebrew manuscripts of East and West: towards a comparative codicology

1993 C.G.C. Tite: The manuscript library of Sir Robert Cotton

1994 Iain Fenlon: Music, print and culture in early sixteenth-century Italy

- 1995 David Woodward: Maps as prints in the Italian Renaissance: makers, distributors & consumers
- 1996 Charles Burnett: The introduction of Arabic learning into England
- 1997 Mirjam M. Foot: The history of bookbinding as a mirror of society
- 1998 Roger Chartier: Publishing drama in early modern Europe
- 1999 Glen Dudbridge: Lost books of Medieval China
- 2000 Professor Michael Twyman: Breaking the mould: the first hundred years of lithography
- 2001 Nicolas Barker: 'Things not reveal'd': the mutual impact of idea and form in the transmission of verse 2000 B.C. - A.D. 1500
- 2002 Christopher Ricks: T.S. Eliot's Revisions After Publication
- 2003 Antony Griffiths: Prints for Books, French Book Illustration 1760-1800
- 2004 María Luisa López-Vidriero: The Polished Cornerstones of the Temple: Queenly Libraries of the Enlightenment
- 2005 Will Ryan: The Magic of Russia
- 2006 Christopher Pinney: The coming of photography to India
- 2007 Jonathan J.G. Alexander: Italian Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts in the collections of the British Library
- 2008 Nicholas Pickwoad: Reading Bindings: Bindings as evidence of the culture and business of books
- 2009 Anthony Grafton: The Culture of Correction in Renaissance Europe
- 2010 James Raven: London Booksites: Places of Printing and Publication before 1800
- 2011 Robert D. Hume and Judith Milhous: The publication of plays in eighteenth-century London: playwrights, publishers, and the market
- 2012 Brian Richardson Women, Books and Communities in Renaissance Italy
- 2013 Robert Darnton: Censors at Work: Bourbon France, Imperialist India and Communist East Germany
- 2014 Christopher de Hamel: The Giant Bibles of twelfth-century England



Mrs Catherine Devas

The Panizzi Lectures, based upon the original researches of eminent scholars of the book, have been delivered annually since 1985.

Defining criteria for selection

1. Background

1.1 The Panizzi Foundation was established in 1982, following a donation by Mrs Catherine Devas to establish a Trust Fund whose income could be used to meet the costs of public lectures. The Trustees, whose role is the administration of the endowment fund, comprise the Chairman and Chief Executive of the British Library, plus a member of the Board. The lecturers and their subjects are decided by the Selection Council.

1.2 The 1982 trust deed specifies the charitable objects of the Foundation as follows:

“The advancement of public education by the endowment funding establishment maintenance and support in co-operation with such university as the Trustees may think fit... of a lecture or series of lectures to be delivered each year or every two years... on a subject pertaining to bibliography whether concerning the subjects of palaeography codicology typography bookbinding book illustration music cartography historical critical and analytical bibliography or any subject relating directly or indirectly to any of the above subjects.”

1.3 A separate document of December 1982 entitled “Wishes of the Founder” provides some guidance in the interpretation of the trust deed, specifying that the lectures should be held at the British Library if possible, that they should be published, and that “the lecturer should be chosen for his or her high level of scholarship and should base the lectures on original research”. Beyond this, there are no extant criteria set out to direct the Selection Council in its choice. The Council has operated largely by precedent and tradition; it is now timely to review the situation and seek to establish some clearer principles to guide selection.

2. Current situation

2.1 Since 1985 the Panizzi Lectures have covered a wide and international subject range within the

overall umbrella of historical bibliography. Some have been quite specifically focused, others have taken a broader approach to a theme. Experience shows that the success of any particular series depends not so only on the subject but also on a mixture of other factors including the oratorical skills of the lecturer, the use of images, the extent to which the content is accessible to audiences beyond the lecturer's academic specialism, and the long-term value of the published version.

3. Criteria for selection

3.1 The London venue, the capacity of the BL Conference Centre, and the marketing ability of the BL all suggest that the Panizzi Lectures have the potential to reach a wider audience, and to have a higher public profile, than other established series of bibliographical lectures (e.g. Sandars and Lyell). Expert lectures which showcase new scholarship or summarise recent developments can not only advance the discipline academically, but also bring awareness of its interest to people outside traditional boundaries.

3.2 The aims and objectives of the series might therefore be restated as:

An annual lecture series, held in the British Library, focused around an aspect of historical bibliography or the history of the book, which combines scholarly content with an aim to advance public understanding of the subject. The topic should by preference be one which has a resonance with British Library collections or research programmes.

3.3. Criteria for selection might then be as follows:

Lecturers should –

- Have an established record of research and publication in their field, and be recognised for their expertise
- Be known to have an effective and lively lecturing style
- Be likely to present their lectures in a way which is accessible to an educated but non-specialist audience.

Topics should –

- Fit with the collections and profile of the British Library
- Be likely to attract an expert peer group audience who will be aware of the lecturer's reputation and standing
- Also be likely to attract a wider audience who will be stimulated, by the title and the publicity, to discover more
- Not necessarily be restricted entirely to new research, but accommodate the possibility of synthesising or reviewing existing scholarship as part of the content
- Be likely to produce published versions which will be both saleable and a useful addition to the literature in the field.

3.4 Lecturers should normally be invited three years before they are due to speak, but not more than that.

4. Procedures

4.1 Lecturers will be chosen by the Selection Council and invited by despatch of a standard letter from the Secretary. This will cover dates, administrative details, remuneration and expectations.

4.2 The Secretary will identify a suitable BL curator or subject specialist (in line with the topic of the lectures) to act as an informal mentor and source of advice to the lecturer in using the BL collections, and will facilitate communication between them.

4.3 Selection will normally take place at the summer meeting of the Council for the series three years thence. Council members should submit written suggestions with brief biographical and professional details of possible candidates, to reach the Secretary three weeks before the meeting (i.e. in time to be circulated in advance). It is perfectly in order for members to invite ideas, informally, from around their professional circles and contacts.