



The Schoenberg Institute
for Manuscript Studies

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARIES

Annual Report

November 1, 2020, to October 31, 2021

Guided by the vision of its founder, Lawrence J. Schoenberg, the mission of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies at Penn Libraries is to bring manuscript culture, modern technology and people together to bring access to and understanding of our intellectual heritage locally and around the world.

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The Year in Review

The Year in Review: Advancing, Engaging, Preserving and Enriching the Study of Pre-Modern Manuscripts

Despite the ongoing tumult and uncertainty due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020–2021 year has been a productive one for the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies. We have been able to build on the momentum established last year to extend and diversify our virtual offerings, which were already very strong before the onset of the pandemic. Additionally, the return of in-person operations to Penn’s campus has allowed us to resume a number of live activities, while continuing to reach new and larger audiences online. The launch of the Penn Libraries’ new [Strategic Plan](#), with its four major pillars, allows us to reflect on how our activities at SIMS further these important organization-wide priorities.

Advance: Advance information equity by opening scholarship and resources to expansive audiences.

SIMS makes a substantive, ongoing contribution to worldwide manuscript research each and every day through established, open-access resources like the [Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts](#) and [OPenn](#). Each of these platforms is continuously enhanced through new data, with the SDBM in particular growing thanks to thousands of contributions of sale catalogue data from outside researchers. The data in OPenn is also providing the basis for the new, IIIF-compatible integrated repository of Penn’s digitized assets, *Colenda*, which will soon supplant the legacy *Penn in Hand* browsing platform. Alongside these rich digital resources, SIMS plays a key role in the promotion of scholarship through the bi-annual publication of our journal *Manuscript Studies*, which appears both online and in print. Currently in its sixth year, the journal is now well-established and, thanks to the efforts of the editorial team, is increasingly recognized as an authoritative venue for research publications on global manuscript cultures. In addition, three new world-leading initiatives are on the horizon, each of which has the potential to bring SIMS’s unique expertise in Digital Humanities projects to bear on a major area of scholarly inquiry.

The year ending on July 1st saw the successful completion of a National Leadership for Libraries Grant awarded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for the planning of Digital Scriptorium 2.0, the successor platform to the original DS database of manuscript images and metadata from dozens of North American Libraries. The 2021–2022 year is an intermediary phase during which the continuation of project planning has been enabled by voluntary contributions by project partners; in October, a preproposal was submitted to the IMLS National Leadership Grant for Libraries program for implementation funding, which, if awarded, would begin in September of 2022. SIMS staff member Lynn Ransom has recently been elected as President and Executive Director of DS, and she and the project team at the Penn Libraries are

developing a new data model and prototype which promise to provide a lightweight, extensible platform and a central access point for manuscript research in the United States.

A second initiative that is gathering pace is the Books as Symbols in Renaissance Art or [BASIRA project](#), which represents a partnership between SIMS and two independent scholars. This database consists of an expanding set of images of codices and book-like objects in the visual arts, expertly tagged to enable fine-grained searching of historical bindings and use contexts. With a Digital Humanities grant from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation awarded in 2019 and matching funding from SIMS, the first phase of this project has successfully concluded. A web-based, back-end content management system is now up and running, having been co-developed with Performant Software Inc., a third-party software developer with DH expertise. Further funds are being sought for the second and third phases of the project, which will allow for public searching and Linked Open Data (LOD) and International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) compatibility.

Finally, we have recently been engaged in preliminary discussions regarding the future of [Fragmentarium.ms](#), a powerful web-based platform for the cataloging and linking of fragments of pre-modern manuscripts. While the platform is currently based at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, the next several years will see its redeployment to a new host institution, and SIMS has been carefully investigating the possibility of adopting the project and its associated scholarly activities. Though the maintenance of such a project entails a significant commitment, it also brings with it the possibility of substantial grant funding and technological synergies with the new DS 2.0 platform.

Each of these three marquee projects, in its own way, takes an existing but limited corpus of cultural heritage images and metadata and transforms it into a more robust resource, accessible to the widest possible audience. Simultaneously, each works to build a content management system that links to established authorities and guarantees discoverable cataloging and metadata going forward. SIMS's unique status as a permanent institute dedicated to the study of pre-modern manuscripts enables it to play a key role in the future of these valuable, long-term projects.

Engage: Expand global impact through intentional and effective engagements with institutions, individuals, and communities.

In many ways, the “new normal” of online programming has enabled SIMS to double down on its longstanding mission to bring people, technology, and manuscript cultures together. To this end, we have expanded our offerings with two new continuing programs that we hope to make permanent. The first, the Online Lecture Series, began in February 2021 and continues on a monthly basis. This event invites renowned scholars to share their latest manuscript-related research. Our ability to provide external speakers with an honorarium enhances equity by allowing scholars from diverse backgrounds to participate, and has the added benefit of

encouraging high-quality presentations of original material. The Zoom audiences for these events average 100 persons, no small feat in an increasingly saturated online programming environment; the open, non-webinar format allows attendees to pose questions live or via the chat function, furthering a sense of belonging and engagement. The lectures are then made available on the [SIMS YouTube channel](#), transforming them into a permanent scholarly resource with a quantifiable reach. The expertly reviewed transcripts we provide promote access and enhance searchability, differentiating the end result from many other recorded scholarly lectures.

A second new initiative is the weekly [Coffee with a Codex](#) series, which sees a member of SIMS staff presenting a live overhead view of a manuscript from Penn's collection to a small, intimate audience gathered via Zoom. These 30-minute sessions, occurring every Monday at noon, are purposely ephemeral; much like a live curatorial talk or gallery tour, they are not recorded, which enhances the spontaneity and "inclusive-exclusive" feel of the event. Widely advertised on social media, Coffee with a Codex bolsters our reputation as a center for innovative, informative, and fun interactions with manuscripts, facilitated by technology. Apart from the staff time, there is no cost to this initiative, and what began as a nimble response to the circumstances of the pandemic may well become a permanent fixture of SIMS.

The pivot to online events that began in March 2020 led to the first virtual edition of our annual symposium this past November, which we entitled "Manuscript Studies in the ~~Digital~~ Covid-19 Age." Seeking to address the urgent challenges—and also opportunities—brought about by the pandemic, we invited eighteen speakers to discuss current, past, and future digital projects with an emphasis on how isolation from libraries, archives, and each other might be surmounted or confronted. In another first for SIMS, a public call was issued for pre-recorded, five-minute Virtual Lightning Talks, which were made available on YouTube during the conference. This "video poster session" was a resounding success, and the twenty-five talks continue to rack up views online. This is another element that we plan to continue in future years. The low bar for entry makes the Virtual Lightning Talks an effective means of building audiences and alliances. Like Coffee with a Codex, it is a simple but powerful way of engaging with people, regardless of their level of expertise or prior knowledge.

SIMS's multiple fellowship programs represent another tangible means of outreach that engages scholars who might not otherwise have the opportunity to spend an extended period of time on-site at Penn, while simultaneously providing a platform for these individuals to share and disseminate cutting-edge research related to our local collections. Though the SIMS-Katz, SIMS-Italian Studies, and Visiting Research fellowships had to be suspended during the 2020–2021 academic year, we were able to host (virtually) our annual Graduate Student Fellow, and the fellow for the current academic year has begun her project in-person, contributing to the resumption of the vibrant in-person dynamic at the Kislak Center. This year, for the first time, SIMS was also able to host a fellow from Drexel University's LEADING (LIS Education And Data Science Integrated Network Group) program; the resulting project involved the extrapolation of data from the SDBM for the creation of the Name Authorities in Wikidata, an activity that

contributes information from one of our key projects to a global knowledge base. The recent award of a grant from the [Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation](#) will enable this project to continue in 2022.

While the established and evolving resources described above provide information in the form of images and data to vast scholarly and non-specialist audiences, SIMS also has a long tradition of innovating research tools that allow specific research problems to be addressed independently. In this vein, the summer of 2021 saw the launch of [VCEditor](#), a web application that enables users to produce complex, compelling visual models of manuscript collations. An extension of a prototype application developed by the University of Toronto, the tool was produced with the assistance of the Penn Libraries Cultural Heritage Computing department, outside collaborator Alberto Campagnolo, and SIMS Graduate Student Fellow Matthew Aiello. Thus, both in its production and its end use, the VCEditor is an exemplary instance of multi-level engagement. Following an extensive social media campaign, the tool is now being used freely by dozens of scholars worldwide, who can export and publish their collation models at will.

A final effort at engagement is exemplified by the renewal of the SIMS Advisory Council membership. As the institute matures and moves towards long-term planning, our hope is that a smaller but more active membership structure, as well as clearly defined term dates, will bring more focused stewardship and governance to the institute as a whole. This reorganization mirrors the changes made over the past several years to the Advisory Board of *Manuscript Studies*, which now meets twice a year and is provided with continuous updates about matters pertaining to the journal.

Preserve: Ensure long-term access to and preservation of the scholarly and cultural record in all forms.

Ultimately, the Lawrence J. Schoenberg manuscripts remain at the heart of SIMS activities, and a constant yet not-always-visible effort is made to study, preserve, and enhance collection items. To that end, a bi-annual collection inventory was undertaken in early 2021 to confirm that, after a period during which most staff were away from the building, all collection items remained in place. Another important initiative, involving several SIMS staff, is the deployment of a process for updating Franklin records of Penn manuscripts with new information stemming from recently published scholarship and tips from social media. A happy consequence of promoting open access is that images from Penn manuscripts are being used increasingly frequently in scholarly publications; however, as authors are not required to inform us of their use of these images, keeping up with new citations requires vigilance. Ultimately, maintaining complete and up-to-date Franklin records for our manuscripts ensures discoverability of valuable scholarship and efficiency for those seeking the latest information on our collection.

The past year has seen the launch of an exciting partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library. While that storied Washington D.C. institution closes for major renovation works, twenty-nine of its medieval and Renaissance manuscripts are being physically housed at the

Kislak Center, while SCETI staff undertake their complete digitization and SIMS staff produce detailed, page-level cataloguing. This partnership will continue until 2023, and once digitization is complete (with a set of images hosted on OPenn and shared with the Folger), SIMS will engage in a robust awareness and public programming campaign, which will include teaching, social media, and blog posts. For the duration of the manuscripts' stay at Penn, physical access will be provided to researchers via a special appointment procedure at the Kislak Center's reading room.

Most excitingly, and despite only a modest acquisitions budget, SIMS has been able to acquire a small number of interesting manuscript items for the collection over the past year. Though these items are catalogued as part of the general Kislak Center collections, they extend the vision and scope of the institute's founding ensemble of manuscripts. Given the University's joint mission of teaching and research, new acquisitions tend to be of one of two types: representative examples of formats, texts, or book-types that aid in teaching; or, in keeping with Larry Schoenberg's focus, instances of scientific or practical works that illustrate the "transformation of knowledge" from antiquity and the Middle Ages through translation, visualization, or illustration. Along these lines, SIMS staff have also been involved in drafting a new collections strategy policy, which forms part of a larger, Kislak-wide initiative to chart our future priorities for new acquisitions.

Enrich: Build the organization's capacity through ongoing assessment and development, informed by a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The pivot towards online activities has brought an unprecedented opportunity for reaching new and diverse audiences. Over the past year, we have comprehensively revamped our website and social media presence, and September 2021 saw the launch of a long-planned SIMS monthly email newsletter. Collectively, this trio of tightly integrated communication tools forms our new, three-pronged approach to disseminating information about our activities and projects. From a technical and organizational standpoint, we have worked to achieve a balance between maintaining the distinct identity that SIMS has built up over nearly a decade, and the need to adhere to library- and university-wide communications guidelines and branding. Collectively, these new outreach tools allow us to steward our established core audience of followers but also, crucially, to build new audiences who feel a sense of connection to the institute and its mission, even if they are located in geographically distant places.

Conference presentations and research publications by SIMS staff also remain a key mode of promotion for the institute, though the circumstances of the pandemic have altered the dynamics of scholarly dissemination somewhat. The Mapping Manuscript Migrations project, officially completed last year, continues to bear fruit through the continued publication of articles that summarize aspects of this truly collaborative, international initiative. Related to this publication activity is the valuable work of SIMS staff on boards and committees of scholarly

journals and societies, including *Fragmentology*, Digital Medievalist and the International Center of Medieval Art.

Teaching also remains at the heart of SIMS enrichment activities. Virtual classroom visits, which allow for live consultations of manuscripts via an overhead camera, continue apace and their appeal is set to grow substantially. After a one-year hiatus due to the impossibility of holding in-person classes at the Kislak Center for most of 2020, we resumed the summer Manuscript Skills course in 2021, albeit in virtual form. This open course included eleven students from local institutions, and the virtual format enabled the participation of students who were not physically present in Philadelphia. In tandem, SIMS staff produced an original, authoritative, and detailed online manuscript skills course on the Canvas platform, which was used by summer students and which will form the basis of a permanent, open-access online course in the future.

Among SIMS's tangible activities that aim to diversify the field of manuscript studies is our accelerating work on contributing to external Name Authorities, in particular Wikidata: an open, user-contributed, machine readable repository for structured data. Not only does this initiative allow individuals present in the SDBM to be linked to established sets of data, it also involves the contribution of persons present in the SDBM but not recorded in Wikidata—especially women collectors and non-Western authors and patrons—to form the basis of new Authority files. The result is a richer, more representative constellation of historical biographical data, thanks to the sharing of carefully curated SDBM entries. The recent award of a Delmas grant, mentioned above, will enable this work to continue in the year that follows.

A final means of promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion is through the global accessibility of our journal, [Manuscript Studies](#). While the existence of a print edition remains important for the identity and reputation of SIMS, the readership statistics provided by Scholarly Commons, our open-access repository, demonstrate the true global appeal of the journal's contents: since June 2017, nearly 17,000 articles have been viewed or downloaded in 143 countries. This global audience mirrors our adoption of a truly global range of topics, scholarly traditions, and methodologies in the journal's content. However, for the moment, the latest two issues of the journal remain behind a 1-year moving paywall on Project Muse, prior to being added to Scholarly Commons. Accordingly, the journal's editorial team, in dialogue with our publisher Penn Press, has begun a process of fact-finding and assessment over the feasibility of shifting to a gold Open Access model. This change would allow for the free availability of journal content from the day of publication, promoting access and engagement to audiences worldwide who may not have the institutional or financial resources for access via a paid subscription. It is our hope that, within the next year, we will be able to move towards this immediate open access model.

Lynn Ransom
Curator of Programs

Nicholas Herman

Lawrence J. Schoenberg Curator

Programs

New! SIMS Online Lecture Series

- Suzanne Conklin Akbari, Institute for Advanced Studies, and Alexandra Gillespie, University of Toronto, "Growing a Research Network: Approaches to Global Book History (October 15). **Total registered: 204.**
- Imre Galambros, University of Cambridge, "Between Central and East Asia: Chinese Manuscripts from Tenth-Century Dunhuang" (September 17). **Total registered: 156.**
- Laura Cleaver and Danielle Magnusson, Institute for English Studies, University of London, "American Collectors and the British Market for Rare Books c. 1890-1939: Two Perspectives" (June 25). **Total registered: 196.**
- Nicholas Herman, University of Pennsylvania, "Across the Margin: Finding a New Page from Jean Bourdichon's Hours of Louis XII (May 28). **Total registered: 195.**
- Alberto Campagnolo and Dot Porter, Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies, "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations: Symbolizing the Elements That Create Manuscripts and Their Structural History with VisColl 2.0" (April 23). **Total registered: 226.**
- Elly Truitt, University of Pennsylvania, "Translating Experience into Science in the Middle Ages" (March 5). **Total registered: 174.**
- Claudia Rapp, University of Vienna, "The Monastery of Saint Catherine in the Sinai and its Manuscripts" (February 5; in collaboration with the Global Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program). **Total registered: 499.**

New! Coffee with a Codex

Informal weekly 30-minute public Zoom calls to introduce manuscripts from Penn's collections, starting January 25, 2021. **Total registered: 887 (avg. 23 registrations per week).**

Schoenberg Symposium on Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age

Convened: The 13th Annual (Virtual) Schoenberg Symposium, "Manuscript Studies in the Digital Covid-19 Age," held November 18-19, 2020. Eighteen invited speakers, as well as twenty-five Virtual Lightning Talks made available on YouTube. **Total registered: 322.**
Organized: The 14th Annual Schoenberg Symposium (Online), "Loss," to be held November 17-19, 2021. Eighteen invited speakers, as well as nine Virtual Lightning Talks will be featured and made available on Youtube. **Total registered: 339.**

Fellowships

New! Drexel University's LEADING (LIS Education And Data Science Integrated Network Group) Fellowship

- 2021 Fellow assigned to SIMS: L. P. Coladangelo, PhD candidate, Kent State University, "Authority Creation and Exploitation in the Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts." Position held from July 1 to December 31, 2021.

Visiting Research Fellowships

2020–2021 Fellows (*Postponed until 2021-2022 due to Covid 19 campus restrictions*):

- Jennifer Borland, Oklahoma State University. *Ingenious Materiality: The Intersections of Medicine, Food, and Art in Medieval Life*.
- Ana de Oliveira Dias, Durham University, United Kingdom. *CULTIVATE Early Medieval Manuscripts: The Trade and Collecting of Pre-1200 Books and Fragments in North America*.
- Johanna Green, University of Glasgow, *Digitally Communicating the Medieval Book: An Examination of the Potential and Impact of Social Media Content for Public Engagement with the Materiality of Medieval Written Heritage*.

Graduate Student Fellowship

- 2020–2021 Fellow: Matthew Aiello, PhD Candidate, English, University of Pennsylvania. *Temporal Collations of Medieval Manuscripts Using Bindr™*.
- 2021–2022 Fellow: Halley Nell Swanson, PhD Candidate, Religious Studies, University of Pennsylvania. *The Reception of Indo-Persian Romance Manuscripts from the 14th to the 19th Centuries*.

Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies & Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies Distinguished Fellow in Jewish Manuscript Studies

- 2020-2021 Fellow (*Postponed until 2021–2022*): Shalom Sabar, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Tentatively scheduled for April 2022.

Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies & Italian Studies Fellow in Manuscript Studies

- 2020–2021 Fellow (*Postponed until 2021–2022*): Bryan C. Keene, Riverside City College, January 24–28, 2022.

Publications

Manuscript Studies: A Journal of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies

Subscription and Download Statistics

Full statistics from Penn Press and Scholarly Commons are provided in the Appendix: Publisher’s Report for MSS.

	2021	2020
Print Subscribers (up to 6/1/ 2021)	83	73
Project MUSE (articles accessed (up to 6/1/ 2021)	72	13,663*
Scholarly Commons downloads (up to 11/1/2021)	7282	5258

*As part of their Covid-19 response, Project MUSE provided free open access to its holdings from March 18, 2020, to June 30, 2020. During this time, the number of downloads was 12,853.

Readership Distribution and Full Text Downloads for Open Access *Manuscript Studies* on Scholarly Commons (https://repository.upenn.edu/mss_sims/)

All-time statistics (beginning June 2017)

Total Posted Publications: **88**

Total Downloads: **16970**

Total Countries represented in downloads: **143**

Global distribution map:



Top 10 downloaded Articles from November 1, 2020, to October 31, 2021

Author and Title	Downloads
Lisa Fagin Davis, <i>How Many Glyphs and How Many Scribes? Digital Paleography and the Voynich Manuscript</i>	482
Linda H. Chance and Julie Nelson Davis, <i>The Handwritten and the Printed: Issues of Format and Medium in Japanese Premodern Books</i>	447
Alessandra Petrina, <i>Translating Machiavelli's Prince in Early Modern England: New Manuscript Evidence</i>	440
Anna Dorofeeva, <i>Visualizing Codicologically and Textually Complex Manuscripts</i>	292
Anais Da Fonseca, <i>Replication and Innovation in the Folk Narratives of Telangana: Scroll Paintings of the Padmasali Purana, 1625-2000</i>	287
Sudev Sheth, <i>Manuscript Variations of Dabistan-i Mazahib and Writing Histories of Religion in Mughal India</i>	263
Toby Burrows, <i>Manuscripts of Sir Thomas Phillipps in North American Institutions</i>	252
Eric J. Johnson, <i>Breaking and Remaking Scripture: The Life, Death, and Afterlife of the Hornby-Cockerell Bible</i>	205
Barend Jan Terwiel, <i>Cultural Goods and Flotsam: Early Thai Manuscripts in Germany and Those Who Collected Them</i>	195
Benjamin J. Fleming, <i>The Materiality of South Asian Manuscripts from the University of Pennsylvania MS Coll. 390 and the Ramamala Library in Bangladesh</i>	168

Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts (SDBM)

2021	2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 539 total registered users● 5344 new Entries● 13,393 actions performed on all records (e.g. data revisions, comments, linking Entries, Name Authority creation and review)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 494 total registered users● 7579 new Entries created● 10,312 actions performed on all records (e.g. data revisions, comments, linking Entries, Name Authority creation and review)

Total Entries: **255,087**

Total Name Authority Records: **42,727**

New! Total SDBM Name Authority Records in Wikidata: **9027**

Since January 2020, the CULTIVATE MSS project team at the Institute for English Studies at the University of London and under the direction of Professor Laura Cleaver has been contributing and editing significant amounts of new data, contributing to both the quantity and quality of SDBM data related to selling, purchasing, and collecting habits in Europe and North America from 1900-1945. For more information on the project, visit:

<https://www.ies.sas.ac.uk/research-projects-archives/cultivate-mss-project>.

Grants

Awarded

- The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation Grant, in support of Digital Scriptorium 2.0. Principal Investigator: Sean Quimby. **Amount: \$17,000.**

Active

- National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives Planning Grant, Institute for Museum and Library Services, “Digital Scriptorium 2.0: A National Union Catalog of Pre-modern Manuscripts in US Collections for the Digital Age.” Awarded to the University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Principal Investigator: Lynn Ransom. **Amount: \$100,000.** August 1, 2020–July 31, 2021. No Cost Extension granted until July 31, 2022.

Completed

- Samuel H. Kress Foundation. “BASIRA: Books as Symbols in Renaissance Art.” Award to University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Principal Investigators: Nicholas Herman (SIMS), Barbara Williams Ellertson (Independent Scholar). **Amount: \$25,000.** March 2020–December 2021.
- Council on Library and Information Resources. “Manuscripts of the Muslim World.” Awarded to University of Pennsylvania Libraries, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and Columbia University. Principal Investigators: Mitch Fraas (SIMS), Caitlin Goodman (Free Library of Philadelphia), and Janet Gertz (Columbia University). **Amount: \$500,000.** April 1, 2018–March 31, 2021.

Submitted

- Pre-proposal for National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives Planning Grant, Institute for Museum and Library Services, “Digital Scriptorium 2.0: A National Union Catalog of Pre-modern Manuscripts in US Collections for the Digital Age.” Principal Investigator: Lynn Ransom. Decision to advance application expected January 2022. Amount to be determined.
- The Digital Beehive. Resubmission. National Endowment for the Humanities, Humanities Collections and Reference Resources. **Amount requested: \$350,000.** Principal Investigator: Doug Emery (with John Pollack as Principal Scholarly Advisor). Decision expected April 2022.

Collections Management

Manuscripts Inventory

2020 interrupted the alternation between a mini-inventory of all codices cataloged and added to the collection within the previous year and a full inventory of all manuscript codices. Since returning to work on-site in February 2021, Amey Hutchins has conducted a full inventory of the Schoenberg collection, confirming the location of all Schoenberg manuscripts.

Notable Acquisitions

- **Galletti Alchemical Compendium**, Germany(?), 1489
Ms. Coll. 1458
https://franklin.library.upenn.edu/catalog/FRANKLIN_9977896331603681
Loose folios of a manuscript on paper, damaged by fire, illustrated with over twenty alchemical diagrams.
- **Hebrew medical manuscript fragments**, eastern Mediterranean, 17th century
Not yet cataloged.
Two fragmentary leaves from a Hebrew medical manuscript with detailed information about plants remedies.
- **Prières de la messe**, France, ca. 1775–1800
Ms. Codex 2032
https://franklin.library.upenn.edu/catalog/FRANKLIN_9977523543903681
A luxurious Rococo-style book for a lay reader's private use during the Catholic Mass, decorated with watercolor illustrations and bright gilding.
- **Al-Qur'ān** / [القرآن], Indonesia, 18th or 19th century
Oversize Ms. Codex 2047
https://franklin.library.upenn.edu/catalog/FRANKLIN_9977882251203681
A complete copy of the Qur'ān, likely copied in southeast Asia, with three sets of dual-page illuminated page surrounds.

Manuscript Digitization & Processing

New Manuscripts Processed

- **20** pre-modern codices
- **3** pre-modern documents, leaves, or fragments
- **2** devotional/liturgical scrolls

Note: Catalogers returned to partial on-site work in February 2021.

OPenn

- **10,664** total manuscripts with *images* and *metadata*
- **1,302,635** unique pages of manuscripts
- **6,101** Penn Libraries manuscripts available for full access (includes 310 LJS manuscripts, 478 Cairo Genizah fragments, 230 Islamic and Hebraic manuscripts from the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, and 2,787 Indic manuscripts)
- **4,563** manuscripts from 49 other institutions, including manuscripts from the Free Library of Philadelphia, Columbia University, a number of PACSCL institutions, several Philadelphia-area colleges and universities and a handful of international libraries
- **\$1,800,000** of taxpayer investment since 2014, matched by represented institutions participating in 6 National Endowment for the Humanities digitization and access grants
- **97** terabytes of data

Teaching & Outreach

SIMS Manuscript Skills Summer Course 2021

Student institutions represented: University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Temple University

Disciplines represented: English, History, History of Art, Music, Religious Studies, Romance Languages (French and Francophone Studies), and South Asian Studies.

Selected student comments:

- *I really enjoyed the format of the class with the first hour dedicated to the theory, and the second hour being more of a workshop where each student was working on their respective manuscript.*
- *The combination of synchronous and asynchronous work was great; I was able to have my questions answered in class while also being able to refer to the really helpful modules during my own time researching my manuscript.*
- *It was my first time working on a manuscript, and I was so excited! I spent many hours, first looking for a manuscript to work on, and then, researching that particular manuscript.*
- *I don't generally consider myself to be a medievalist, and I wanted an accessible overview to these topics. In this sense, the course was perfectly suited to my needs. I feel I have gained a very solid introduction to a variety of topics.*
- *I loved working in small groups during the sessions on paleography.*
- *Thank you for a great class! It has already been very helpful in my research outside of this course.*
- *I miss in person classes! But this online module was better than most of my online classes this year.*

Penn Courses taught by SIMS staff

- The Art of Forgery: From Cuneiform to Fake News," 100-level undergraduate SAS ARTH class, Spring 2021 (Nicholas Herman).

Penn Course and Student Support by SIMS staff

- Emily Steiner Medieval Worlds class, December 1 and 2, 2020 (Nicholas Herman).

Extramural Courses taught by SIMS staff

- DReAM Lab Course: Digital Surrogates: Representation, Engagement, and Meaning. June 2021. Instructor: Dot Porter. Taught entirely virtually, including one day of displaying manuscripts using the ceiling camera in Vitale II.
- IIIF + Digital Scholarship. Instructor: Dot Porter, on behalf of Lyrasis, September 2021.

Extramural Course and Student Support by SIMS staff

- Rebekah Pratt-Sturges Digital Humanities Class, Northern Arizona University. October 1, 2021 (Dot Porter). Virtual Presentation.
- Rebekah Pratt-Sturges medieval survey class, Northern Arizona University. February 15, 2021 (Dot Porter). Virtual Presentation.
- Bridget Whearty manuscript studies class, Binghamton University, March 18, 2021 (Dot Porter). Virtual Presentation.
- Lauren Schwartz English class, Salem Community College, March 29, 2021 (Dot Porter). Virtual Presentation.

Virtual Classroom Visits

No virtual classroom visits were held this year.

Local Elementary School Class Visits

No elementary school visits took place this year.

Exhibitions

No new exhibitions were opened this year.

Social Media

Website

2021

15,625 views (**158,000** views since 2013)

323 blog posts

79 registered followers

Visitors from **60** different countries

2020

18,892 views (**142,500** views since 2013)

304 blog posts

106 registered followers

YouTube Channel

2021

260 videos in 15 playlists

20,500 views (**105,800** views since 2013)

913 subscribers

2020

260 videos in 15 playlists

18,000 views (**85,000** views since 2013)

660 subscribers

Twitter

2021

4245 followers

8831 Tweets total

2020

3622 followers

[tweet count not available]

Tumblr

2021

15,488 followers

4532 posts

2020

14,821 followers

4286 posts

Facebook

2021

2306 followers

2020

2114 followers

Instagram

2021

1683 followers

727 posts

2020 (new)

1346 followers

396 posts

Extramural Professional Activity

Conference Participation and Lectures

- Toby Burrows and **Lynn Ransom**, “ Mapping Manuscript Migrations: Building and Using a Linked Open Data Environment for Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Studies ,” *Digital Initiatives Symposium*, University of San Diego, Copley Library. Held virtually April 26-28, 2021. <https://digital.sandiego.edu/symposium/2021/>
- Nicholas Herman, session organizer for “Curating the Renaissance Book, On-Line and Off,” Renaissance Society of America sponsored session at the *College Art Association Annual Meeting*, February 2021 (virtual)
- Nicholas Herman, session co-organizer (with Barbara Williams Ellertson) for “The Image of the Book: 1300–1600” at the *Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting*, May 2021 (virtual; re-scheduled from 2020 due to Covid-19).
- Dot Porter, “Virtual teaching pre- and post- pandemic,” Virtual Teaching with University Collections: Lessons learnt & ways forward. Co-sponsored by University of Glasgow Collections Lab, Digital Cultural Heritage Lab & the LTDF Archives Unlocked project, University of Glasgow, October 2021 (virtual)
- Dot Porter, “From Another Point of View: Exhibiting Manuscripts Online and In Person,” video recorded presentation for *The Digital Medieval Manuscript: Expert Meeting* organized by the Centre for the Study of Medieval Manuscripts and Technology (CeMManT), University of Saint Andrews, October 2021 (virtual; recording: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/gNshgpJXcco>)
- Dot Porter, “Introduction to Modelling and Visualising the Collation of Medieval Manuscripts” plus a practical session on VCEditor. *Digital Resources, Manuscripts and Texts: An Online Training Event* hosted by the AHRC-IRC Digital Humanities Research Network, Developing a Digital Framework for the Medieval Gaelic World, September 2021 (virtual)
- Dot Porter, “Books of Hours as Transformative Works,” keynote lecture for *Bindings Across Physical Formats and Digital Spaces*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin Madison, Madison, WI, June 2021 (virtual)

Publications

- Nicholas Herman, *Close-Up: Bourdichon’s Boston Hours*, with Anne-Marie Eze (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2021).
- Nicholas Herman, “‘A Matter of Love’: L.V. Randall (1893–1972), Montreal Collector and Academic Visionary,” *Journal of the History of Collections* (2021).
- Nicholas Herman, “Jean Bourdichon’s Boston Hours and the Miniature-as-Object,” in *Beyond Words: New Research on Manuscripts in Boston Collections*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Lisa Fagin Davis, Anne-Marie Eze, Nancy Netzer, and William P. Stoneman

(Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2021), 59–76.

- Nicholas Herman, “A Masterpiece Rediscovered: Jean Bourdichon’s Lamentation from the Hours of Louis XII,” *Colnaghi Studies Journal* 8 (2021): 192–209.
- Nicholas Herman, “Reframing the Past: Viewing Mosaics in Renaissance Ravenna,” in *Ravenna in the Imagination of Renaissance Art*, ed. Alexander Nagel and Giancarla Periti (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 47–81.
- Lynn Ransom, “Mixed Media: The Question of Format in Late Medieval Pictorial Vita Christi Cycles,” in *The Meditationes Vitae Christi Reconsidered: New Perspectives on Text and Image*. Holly Flora and Peter Toth, eds. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021).
- Eero Hyvönen, Esko Ikkala, Mikko Koho, Jouni Tuominen, Toby Burrows, **Lynn Ransom**, and Hanno Wijsman. “Mapping Manuscript Migrations on the Semantic Web: A Semantic Portal and Linked Open Data Service for Premodern Manuscript Research.” *Proceedings of the 20th International Semantic Web Conference (ISWC 2021)*, Springer, October, 2021. [hyvonen-et-al-mmm-2021.pdf \(aalto.fi\)](#).
- Mikko Koho, Toby Burrows, Eero Hyvönen, Esko Ikkala, Kevin Page, **Lynn Ransom**, Juoni Tuominen, **Doug Emery**, **Mitch Fraas**, **Benny Heller**, David Lewis, Andrew Morrison, Guillaume Porte, **Emma Thomson**, Athanasios Velios, & Hanno Wijsman. . “Harmonizing and publishing heterogeneous premodern manuscript metadata as Linked Open Data.” *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, (26 May 2021), 1– 18. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24499>.

Staff Affiliations

- *Fragmentology*: The Journal for the Fragmentarium.ms Project at the University of Fribourg (Nicholas Herman, Editorial Board)
- Biblissima+ (Lynn Ransom, Conseil Scientifique member)
- Digital Medievalist (Lynn Ransom, Executive Board Member, currently serving as Director)
- Digital Scriptorium (Lynn Ransom, Executive Board Member, currently serving as President and Executive Director)
- International Center of Medieval Art (Nicholas Herman, Digital Resources Committee)

Staff & Affiliates

Staff

- Nicholas Herman, Lawrence J. Schoenberg Curator
- Lynn Ransom, Curator of Programs

Associate Members

- Matthew Aiello (University of Pennsylvania), 2020-2021 Graduate Student Fellow (ending June 30, 2021)
- Jessie Dummer, Digitization Project Coordinator
- Doug Emery, Special Collections Digital Content Programmer
- Mitch Fraas, Senior Curator, Special Collections
- Jonah Greebel, Editorial Assistant, *Manuscript Studies* (started August 1, 2021)
- Amey Hutchins, Manuscripts Cataloging Librarian
- Aylin Malcolm, Editorial Assistant, *Manuscript Studies* (ended July 30, 2021)
- Dennis Mullen, Digitization Specialist
- Dot Porter, Curator, Digital Research Services
- Sean Quimby, Associate University Librarian & Director of the Jay I. Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
- Emma Thomson, DS 2.0 Project Manager
- Hallie Nell Swanson (University of Pennsylvania), 2021-2022 Graduate Student Fellow (started Sept 1, 2021)
- Kelly Tuttle, Islamic Manuscript Cataloger, Manuscripts of the Muslim World Project (ended March 31, 2021)

Research Associates

- Alberto Campagnolo, VisColl 2.0
- Barbara Williams Ellertson, BASIRA
- Andrea Zietlow, BASIRA
- Marianna Shreve Simpson, Islamic Manuscripts Consultation