



Smithsonian Institution Libraries

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Web site: <http://www.sil.si.edu>

Smithsonian Libraries' Web site, 'Galaxy of Knowledge,' has a whole new look

'Galaxy of Knowledge,' Smithsonian Libraries' portal to its collections and to a wide array of exceptional Internet resources, has re-launched with an entirely new look and navigational structure.

"The change involves much more than it's new orderly, contemporary aesthetic," notes Martin R. Kalfatovic, Head of the Libraries' New Media Office, responsible for 'Galaxy's' redesign. "Thanks to a thorough structural reconfiguration, the addition of directional buttons, and a 'quick find' command on the homepage, 'Galaxy' now offers greater ease in navigating the Libraries' extensive educational resources."

By bringing together an immense body of content in a carefully structured format, 'Galaxy of Knowledge' creates a virtual 'space' in which users may fully explore and use the Smithsonian Institution Libraries.

Other changes entail the Libraries' virtual bookshelf of digital editions, cover-to-cover, high-resolution digital replications of rare books, and the Libraries' digital exhibitions. Both are now arranged on the site by category. Also newly available are a host of content additions, which are certain to entice site visitors to use 'Galaxy' for a variety of purposes, from education to entertainment.

"As a steward of a distinguished national collection, the Smithsonian Libraries' continually seeks to enhance its educational outreach," Libraries' Director, Nancy E. Gwinn said. "The redesign of 'Galaxy' was prompted by this ongoing commitment to making our books and manuscripts accessible to the widest audience possible."

'Galaxy' can still be accessed at www.sil.si.edu, and the public will find no change to the location of popular pages. The site also retains its four subject sections: American Discovery, Mosaic of Science, Art and Design, and Industry and Technology.

Individual library homepages and the homepage of the Special Collections Department have also undergone redesign, in order to facilitate access to relevant information for both researchers and the public. These pages will be readily available from most areas within ‘Galaxy of Knowledge.’ Imagery of notable volumes specific to each library have also been added to these pages.

Other highlights include:

- An updated Press Room with downloadable media kit and FTP site, containing images from Libraries’ exhibitions
- An updated ‘About the Libraries’ section to answer organizational, historical, and administrative questions
- A ‘Sitemap’ and ‘Search’ command to help visitors find their way around the site
- A new Development site for potential donors
- A newly designed Special Collections Department site

Normally available only by appointment, and with books and manuscripts kept in secure, controlled environments, Smithsonian Libraries’ collections and the information that springs from research done within its community of 20 branch libraries can now be enjoyed internationally, 24 hours a day, with even greater ease.

The Smithsonian Libraries is a 20-branch system with online exhibitions, rare books, and information services online at www.sil.si.edu. The library catalog is available at www.siris.si.edu. The Libraries serves the Smithsonian and the public with information and reference support. Its collections number 1.5 million volumes including 40,000 rare books, 2,000 manuscripts, 180,000 microfilm and –fiche. The Libraries also holds the nation’s largest trade literature collection, which includes nearly 300,000 commercial catalogs, dating from the 1850s and representing more than 30,000 companies.

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