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Treasures from the world's great libraries

A celebration of libraries and human endeavour

The National Library of Australia is proud to announce a landmark international exhibition, *Treasures from the world's great libraries*.

'This exhibition is our gift to the nation at the conclusion of the Cenenary of Federation and the National Library's 100th birthday. It is a salute to libraries everywhere, celebrating their role in collecting, recording, protecting and providing access to the history of human thought and endeavour. Many of the 140 items in the exhibition are national treasures and have never left their country of origin,' said Jan Fullerton, director-general of the National Library of Australia.

The items from more than thirty-five major libraries in over twenty countries including Australia, will offer visitors a trip around the world and through the centuries of recorded history.

Not to be missed, this once in a lifetime exhibition traces the history of humanity.

Some of the items featured in the exhibition include:

- a priceless *Gutenberg Bible* c.1455 — the first book ever printed in the Western world using movable type;
- Alexander Graham Bell's early drawings produced for the first telephone;
- pages from Charles Darwin's manuscript for *On the origin of species* — the theory of evolution;
- the failed Olive Branch petition to King George III, signed by Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, which sought to avoid the American War of Independence;
- the conclusion to the typescript of Martin Luther King's celebrated *I have a dream* speech;
- the famous $E=mc^2$ manuscript (special theory of relativity) handwritten by Albert Einstein;
- a highly-significant Dead Sea Scroll containing the Ten Commandments (touring for the first time);



Stockholm-Kassel Book of Horns; bound manuscript; ink and pigment on vellum; 23.0 x 18.0cm Call no MS A227
Courtesy of the Royal Library, Stockholm

- JRR Tolkien's original watercolour illustration for the cover of *The Hobbit*;
- Chester Carlson's notebook describing the making of the first permanent 'XEROX' copies in October 1938;
- extremely rare and precious 3000-year-old examples of oracle bones from China;
- A letter from Mahatma Gandhi to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru dated 1932 indicating Gandhi's attempts to communicate with the British government;
- a 1792 manuscript of *La Marseillaise*, the French national anthem;
- Jules Verne's manuscript of *Around the world in 80 days*;
- Charles Dickens' manuscript of *Nicholas Nickleby*, as well as his walking stick and folding cutlery kit;
- Jane Austen's manuscript of *Persuasion*;
- Charlotte Bronte's travelling desk and manuscript of *Villette*;
- The first printing of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* by William Caxton; and

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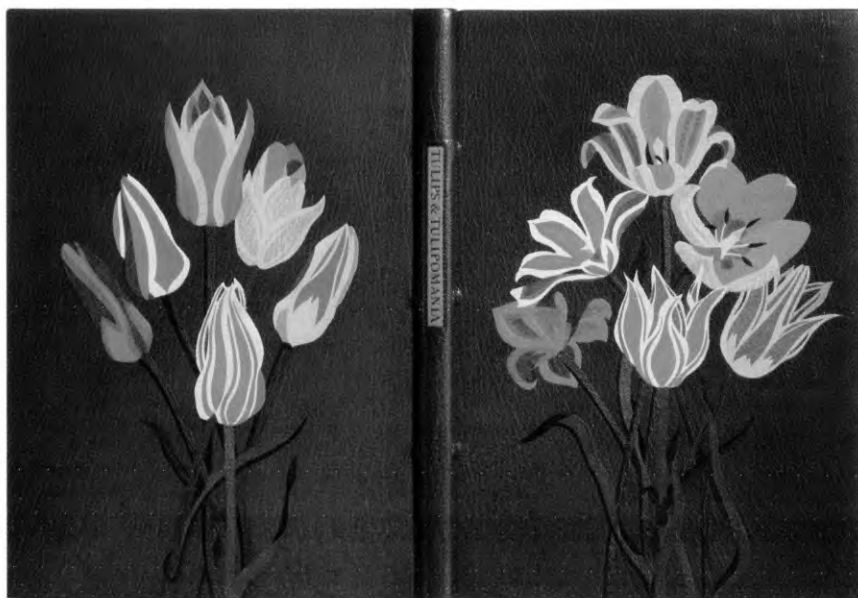
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- • Edward Lear's illustrated version of the nursery rhyme *High Diddle Diddle*.

Nat Williams, director of exhibitions at the National Library of Australia said that the response from libraries around the world has been overwhelmingly positive and generous.

Countries contributing to the exhibition include Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, England, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the United States, as well as Vatican City. Australian collections will be represented by extraordinary items from the National Library of Australia and from the State Libraries of New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria.



Wilfrid Blunt; *Tulips and Tulipomania*; London: Basilisk Press, 1977;
Binding by Jean Gunner 1982; 31.5 x 22.5cm;
Courtesy of Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague

Sponsors of the exhibition include Singapore Airlines, Commonwealth Bank, SBS, *The Australian*, Art Indemnity Australia, and Novatel.

The exhibition will run from 7 December 2001 until 24 February 2002, open daily, except for Christmas Day. As a gift to the nation, entry is free. ■

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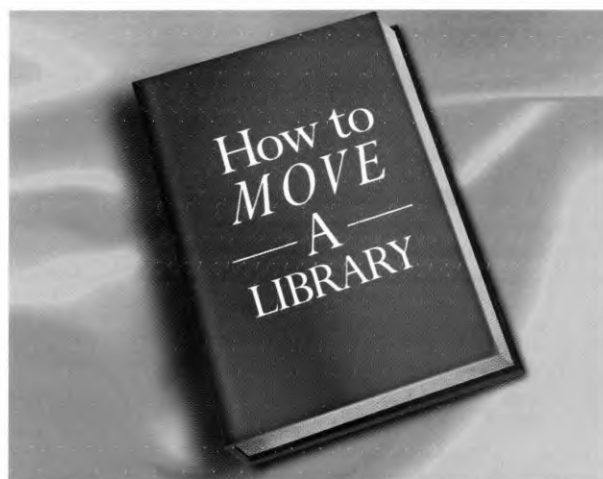
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