

# Showcasing the world's most beautiful libraries

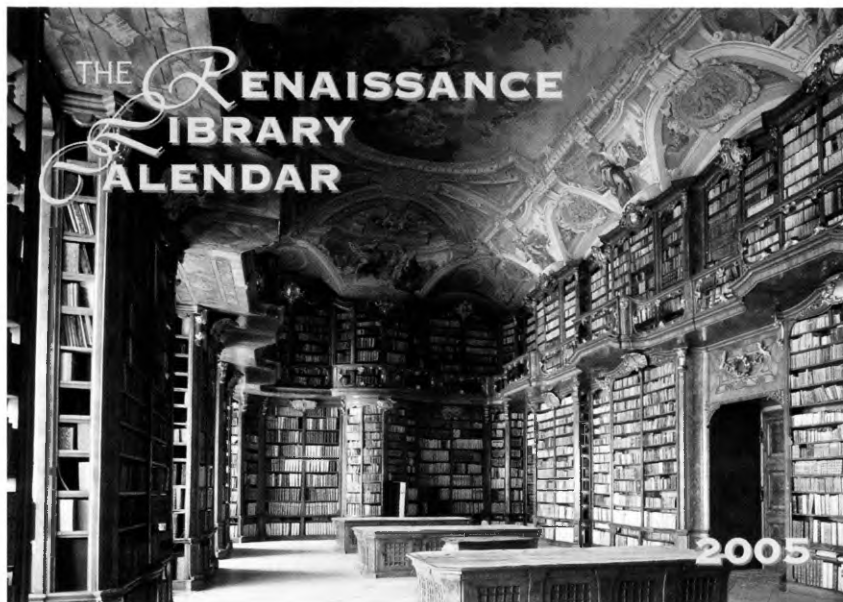
The Monastic Library at Yuso appears in the 2005 edition of the Renaissance Library Calendar as one of the twelve most beautiful and historic libraries in the world. It was selected from nominations by library and information professionals and book lovers in more than forty countries. The calendar contains colour photographs of twelve wonderful old libraries, ranging in dates from 1611 to 1926.

The town of San Millán de la Cogolla, in Rioja, was founded by the hermit monk Saint Millán (473–574). It contains two outstanding old monasteries, Suso and Yuso, both declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1997. San Millán de la Cogolla is also important because it is recognised as the birthplace of the Spanish language, since the first documents written in the Castilian or Spanish language are preserved here.

The library at Yuso, dating back to 1665, is one of the most important in Spain, not so much because of the size of the collection, but the value and age of its documents.

'We are excited and very honoured to be chosen as one of the most beautiful and historic libraries in the world, especially by an international body of book lovers and fellow professionals', said Almudena Martínez, co-ordinadora general at Fundacion San Millan de la Cogolla.

The Renaissance Library Calendar is in its fifth year. The 2005 edition contains libraries from eight countries — Austria, Croatia, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the USA. It is published by ISIM of Stockholm,



Sweden. Each photograph is accompanied by a well-researched, informative text about the history and collection of the library.

Copies of the calendar can be obtained at the Renaissance Library website at <http://www.renaissancelibrary.com>.

#### About the 2005 calendar

The twelve libraries featured in the Renaissance Library Calendar 2005 are:

- St Florian Monastery Library, St. Florian Austria, 1745–1751;
- Suzzallo Library, University of Washington, Seattle WA USA, 1926;
- Hereford Cathedral Chained Library, Hereford UK, 1611;
- Einsiedeln Abbey Library, Einsiedeln Switzerland, 1738;

Central Library of the St Louis Public Library, St Louis MO USA, 1912;

Klosterneuburg Abbey Library, Klosterneuburg, Austria, 1834–1842;

National Library of Malta, Valletta, Malta, 1796;

The Monastic Library at Yuso, San Millán de la Cogolla, Spain, 1665;

City and University Library of Bern, Bern Switzerland, 1794;

Franciscan Monastery of Friars Minor, Dubrovnik Croatia, 1695;

Library of the Boston Athenæum, Boston MA USA, 1849;

Library of the Palace of the Conde d'Obidos, Lisbon Portugal, unknown. ■

## Geelong libraries ranked number one for customer satisfaction

Ninety-five per cent of Victorian residents say public libraries are an essential community service

During August–September 2004, an independent market research company undertook an extensive telephone survey of 300 Geelong residents. This was part of a wider survey of 2300 residents within the boundaries of the eight largest regional library corporations in Victoria.

The objective of the survey was to provide an update on the population's usage, perceptions and satisfaction with public library services.

Nexus Research Pty Ltd found that Geelong libraries received the highest rating for customer services, recording a satisfaction rating of eighty-seven per cent against a state average of eighty-five per cent.

Furthermore, ninety-five per cent of the 2300 respondents from across the state said that public libraries are an essential community service.

Chief executive officer for the Geelong Regional Library Corporation, Dr Peter Mansfield, said the survey results reflect the Corporation's focus on providing high quality products and services.

'We are committed to continually improving our products and services in our fourteen branches and three mobile libraries to meet the needs of Geelong, Golden Plains, Surf Coast and Queenscliff residents. Library membership is free, and we encourage all residents to visit their local branch and become members.'