

ADVANCE NEWS RELEASE

November 15, 2004

MY HEART IN COMPANY

The Work of J. M. Barrie and the Birth of Peter Pan



An exhibition at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

February 3 – April 23, 2005

“... so I went, laden with charges from my mother to walk in the middle of the street (they jump out on you as you are turning a corner), never to venture forth after sunset, and always to lock up everything (I who could never lock up anything, except my heart in company).”

So states James Matthew Barrie (1860–1937), describing his first venture into London in 1885. This confession provides a clue to the writer’s character — at once a revealing author, and a man who maintained an emotional distance from his admiring readers.

The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Beinecke Library
121 Wall Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

Exhibition hours:
Monday–Thursday 8:30 am – 8:00 pm
Friday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm
Closed Friday March 25

A catalog of the exhibition will be on sale at the Library.

A children’s guide will be offered free to young visitors.

A preview for educators and members of the press will be held Wednesday, February 2, 2005.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE, the creator of Peter Pan, will be highlighted in an exhibition at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University in early 2005. On view will be original manuscripts, photographs, documents detailing the influence of the young Llewelyn Davies brothers on the creation of Peter Pan, and artifacts, including Barrie’s key to Kensington Gardens. The exhibition will open to the public on Thursday, February 3, 2005 and run through April 23, 2005.

The exhibition celebrates the creative life of Barrie and allows visitors to learn about the breadth of his work, while showing off the undeniable charm of Peter Pan. A film series, featuring works based on Barrie plays will be shown on Sunday afternoons in February at the Center for British Art on the Yale campus.

Today, Barrie’s fame is largely based on that iconic work of 20th century drama and children’s literature, “Peter Pan: The Boy who would not grow up” — a cultural juggernaut that flew into the hearts of theater-goers and readers. During his lifetime, Barrie’s greatest reknown was based on a large body of novels, plays, and journalism that made him one of the most popular writers in late Victorian England. Beginning with his best-selling fictionalized memoirs of his childhood in Scotland, *Auld Licht Idylls*, and continuing through such runaway stage successes as “Quality Street” and “The Admirable Crichton,” Barrie was an undeniable superstar at the turn of the 20th century — in England and America.

Always a writer who was interested in the nature of childhood, Barrie’s devotion to the young Llewelyn Davies brothers signaled an experiment with form that produced “Peter Pan.” The success of “Peter Pan,” following its premiere in December 1904, assured Barrie a permanent place in popular culture. “Peter Pan” spawned an avalanche of keepsakes, novelties, and other products — one so great that this creation eventually overshadowed most of Barrie’s other works, including his insightful later plays and essays. The story of Barrie and the Llewelyn Davies family has also entered the realm of legend, having been explored in books, plays, and the recent motion picture, “Finding Neverland.”

The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library holds a significant collection of manuscripts, letters, and personal effects of J.M. Barrie. The majority of these items were collected by Walter Beinecke, Jr., son of one of the three brothers who built and endowed the library that carries their family name.

FOR INFORMATION:

Timothy Young
Assistant Curator of Modern Books and
Manuscripts
Beinecke Rare Book
and Manuscript Library
203.432.8131
timothy.young@yale.edu

In observance of the 100th anniversary of the premiere of “Peter Pan,” and as a tribute to Walter Beinecke, Jr., who passed away at the age of 86 in May, 2004, the Beinecke Library will present an exhibition of the rarest and most treasured items from the Barrie collection. On display will be: documents from Barrie’s childhood, including a manuscript of his first play, “Bandelero the Bandit,” written when he was in his teens; texts for his earliest adult plays, artwork for serializations of Barrie novels; personal photographs, a unique copy of a photo album created for the child of a colleague “The Pippa and Porthos”; and the sole surviving copy of the rarest of Barrie’s works, *The Boy Castaways of Black Lake Island*, a record of the Llewelyn Davies boys’ adventures, created from photographs taken by Barrie.

Among the items that document the creation of “Peter Pan” are: Barrie’s earliest notes for a “fairy play;” manuscripts of *The Little White Bird*, which features the first appearance of Peter, working production scripts for the debut performance that include lighting and staging cues; a rare toy theater of “Peter Pan;” and a host of items that attest to the play’s longevity—posters, children’s books, playing cards, and photographs.



IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXHIBITION THE YALE CENTER
FOR BRITISH ART WILL PRESENT A MINI-FILM FESTIVAL

Yale Center for British Art 1080 · Chapel Street New Haven · Connecticut, 06510

Sunday, February 6, 2005

PETER PAN (1924) The film that put Never Land on screen.

102 minutes. Director: Herbert Brenon. Not rated. This silent version, starring Betty Bronson as Pan was one of the most popular films of the early cinema. Restored with a new orchestral score, it remains fresh and charming today.

Sunday, February 13, 2005

Double Feature!

MALE AND FEMALE (1919)

116 minutes. Director: Cecil B. DeMille. Not rated. This silent adaptation of Barrie’s “The Admirable Crichton” shows off the considerable talents of legendary director DeMille and his newest star, Gloria Swanson.

&

WE’RE NOT DRESSING (1934)

77 minutes. Director: Norman Taurog. Not rated. Bing Crosby and Carole Lombard star in this looser adaptation of “Crichton”. When an heiress’s yacht goes aground, it’s a case of role reversal in order to survive—with plenty of singing and guest appearances from the likes of George Burns and Gracie Allen. (This second feature will start at 3:15)

Sunday, February 27, 2005

PETER PAN (2003) A stunning new version.

114 minutes Director: P.J. Hogan, Rated PG. This captivating live action film features Jeremy Sumpter as Peter and Jason Isaacs as Captain Hook. A spectacular family treat that remains faithful to the original story.

ALL FILMS START AT 1:00 PM · FILMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC