**Bibliosaurus! Dinosaurs in the Popular Imagination**

DRAFT FOR PRINTING – Labels and Interpretive Text

12/4/23

Introductory panel

The word "dinosaur" did not officially appear in print until 1842, in a British Association for the Advancement of Science report written by Richard Owen (1804-1892). Charles Dickens introduced his readers to a dinosaur in the third sentence of chapter 1 of *Bleak House* in March 1852: "As much mud in the streets as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth, and it would not be wonderful to meet a *Megalosaurus*, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill." In 1854, life-sized models of large, extinct prehistoric reptiles were unveiled in London in 1854. And so the craze began.

Some may think that dinosaurs and their kin became extinct 66 million years ago, yet they have become vivid parts of the popular imagination. Using books, journals, original artwork, posters and other types of media, *Bibliosaurus!* explores how dinosaurs transformed from objects of intense scientific inquiry into everyday figures, appearing in editorials, advertisements, corporate logos, and many other places as well.

*Bibliosaurus!* is composed in large part from the recent gift of the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana to the University of Chicago Library. Additional items have been borrowed from the personal collections of Edward Valauskas and Charles Valauskas.

Concluding panel

Where will you find your next dinosaur? In an advertisement, company logo, cartoon, or a cereal box? Or, between the covers of a novel, on the big screen, or in an editorial?

Every state in the United States has a state fossil, from Colorado's *Stegosaurus*, Kansas' *Pteranodon*, Montana's *Maiasaura*, Nevada's *Shonisaurus*, New Mexico's *Coelophysis*, Oklahoma's *Saurophaganax*, South Dakota's *Triceratops*, and Utah's *Allosaurus*. Illinois’ claim to fame is a unique creature, *Tullimonstrum gregarium*, a 300-million-year-old invertebrate found nowhere else in the world.

*Bibliosaurus!* explores the lasting impact of dinosaurs on the popular imagination. Reconstructions of these long-extinct animals appeared over 170 years ago, and still emerge in the most unexpected places. These creatures have become part of our vocabularies. They are part of our homes, with dinosaur-decorated sheets, towels, dinnerware, blankets, and carpets. Dinosaurs adorn clothing, dance across pajamas, shirts, and underwear. They are literally everywhere. Millions of years since their extinction, they have conquered the planet in an unexpected fashion: on paper and in all types of media.

As an experiment, count the number of times you encounter a dinosaur or other representation of antediluvian life in a single day—visually, or in the course of a conversation, or by reading text. They are no longer hidden in layers of sediment wedged in the pages of a dusty research journal. *Bibliosaurus*, that imaginary creature made of paper and ink, is indeed all around us.

Panel on narrative art

*Narrative art* tells a story. It also reveals what is important to society at the time the art was created. *Bibliosaurus!* includes a variety of forms of narrative art: books and original book illustrations, chromolithographed prints, film posters and animated film images, and comic art.

*Comic art* visually expresses one or more moments of a larger message or story through a single- or a multiple-panel display. A form of comic art - the “cartoon strip” **-** is a uniquely American art form - like jazz. Itallows the storyteller – often the cartoon artist or “cartoonist” – to portray the action of a story and provide character dialog in balloons. Because cartoon strips were serialized in newspapers, the interest of audiences could be drawn out over time. Since the early 20th century, cartoon strips were recognized as a popular form of entertainment and helped drive readership and sales of newspapers. The first poll that George Gallup conducted in 1931 found that the public considered the comic section to be the most important part of the newspaper. In response to the public’s demand, newspaper publishers reprinted collections of cartoons onto pages of the same inexpensive newspaper stock to form a soft cover book - the “comic book.”Cartoonists recognized also that the motion suggested in a cartoon strip, when extended over many individual drawings and captured onto the pages of a book when flipped or onto film when shown in sequence allowed the illusion of movement to be created.

The original drawings in this exhibition were created by some of the most important practitioners of narrative art from a span of over 120 years. The drawings were published in a variety of forms and contexts. All feature dinosaurs as the main subject or driving character of the narrative.

**Kids Crazy about Dinosaurs**

Tombstone labels:

1. *All About Dinosaurs*

Roy Chapman Andrews

New York: Random House, 1953

QE862.D5 A5 1953d HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

2. *Paleontologist Barbie*

El Segundo, CA: Mattel, Inc., 1996

Special edition, The Career collection

QE714.5.P35 1996 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

3. *Flapdoodle* *Dinosaurs: A Colorful Pop-up Book*

David A. Carter

New York, NY: Little Simon, 2001

obl PZ8.3.C244 Fl 2006 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

Interpretive label:

If you are standing in front of this case, it is likely you or someone you know had a childhood fascination with dinosaurs. Children’s books about dinosaurs and fossil hunting abound – many of them with smart design, accessible text, and outstanding illustrations, which are testament to the outsized role dinosaurs play in the popular imagination. Films, games, and toys on the subject are plentiful, too. Many of the objects exhibited in *Bibliosaurus!* played a key role in inspiring and shaping the careers of future paleontologists, such as Roy Chapman Andrews' *All about Dinosaurs* (1953), with its tales of field work in Mongolia, or “Paleontologist Barbie” produced by Mattel and debuted in 1996 as part of the company’s “Career Collection.”

**Reconstructing the Past**

Tombstone labels:

1. *Samovar et Baculot* *dans Parade des Diplodocus*

Samivel

Paris: Paul Hartmann, 1933

QE861.95.S25 1933 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

2. *Le Monde Avant la Creation* *de L’homme ou le Berceau de L’univers*

W. F. A. Zimmermann

Paris: Schulz et Thuillie, 1862

QE711.V63 182 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

3. *Le Monde avant la Création de L’homme*

Camille Flammarion

Paris: C. Marpon & E. Flammarion, 1886

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

Interpretive label:

The first reconstructions of dinosaurs and their natural environs appeared in 1854, in London's Crystal Palace Park. Based on fossil records available at the time, these life-sized renderings were highly imaginative – but they did not always get things right. Predators were often depicted with their prey, for example, despite their natural aversion for each other. Illustrated popular works document the changes in how paleontologists and geologists have interpreted the past over time. Some are fanciful, such as Samivel's *Samovar et Baculot dans Parade des Diplodocus* (1933). Others are dramatic, such as Flammarion's *Le Monde Avant la Création de L'homme* (1886). All demonstrate through extraordinary illustrations the otherworldly nature of life on Earth millions of years ago.

**Laughing with the Dinosaurs**

Tombstones:

1. *Hot and Sweaty Rex*

*Casual Rex*

*Anonymous Rex*

Eric Garcia

PS3557.A665 H68 2005; PS3557.A665 C37 2001; PS3557.A665 A82 2000 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

2. *Dinosauiërs-Seks*

Zap

Hazerswoude-dorp: Mondria Uitgevers, 1993

QE861.95.Z37129 1993 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

3. *The Dinosaurs Are Back and It’s all Your Fault, Edward*

Wendy Hartmann

New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1997

PZ7.H267385 Di 1997 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

4. *Science Made Stupid*

Tom Weller

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985

Q162.W45 1985 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

5. “Missiles and Paleontology: A Proposal”

*The Journal of Insignificant Research*, vol. 6: no.1.3748

Q167.J86 v. 6 no. 1.3748 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

6. *The Dinosaur Joke Book*

Artie Bennett

New York: Random House, 1998

PN6371.5.B3875 1998 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

Interpretive label:

Humor signals the complete integration of dinosaurs into the popular imagination. Dinosaurs give kids something to laugh about in Bennett's *Dinosaur Joke Book* (1998). Paleontological humor of a more adult kind can be found in the rare but ridiculous Dutch book *Dinosauiers-Seks (Dinosaurs Sex)* (1993). Paleontologists also can laugh at themselves, as evidenced by the whimsical paper "Missiles and paleontology: A proposal" which appeared in the *Journal of Insignificant Research*, published for the entertainment of University of Chicago scientists and their colleagues. In Eric Garcia's series *Anonymous Rex*, dinosaurs masquerade in modern society wearing latex humanoid costumes. Wendy Hartmann, author of more than forty children's books, pokes fun at one child's fascination with all things prehistoric in *The Dinosaurs are Back and It’s All Your Fault, Edward!* (1997). By the way, you’ve heard that scientists discovered a new dinosaur that is very intelligent. It’s called a “Thesaurus.” … *Groan!*

**Wonders in Monsterland**

Tombstones:

1. Original artwork for *Wonders in Monsterland*

J. A. Shepherd

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

1. *Wonders in Monsterland*

E. D. Cuming; illustration by J. A. Shepherd

London: George Allen, 1901

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

1. *Animals of the Past*

Frederic A. Lucas

New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1916

QE763.L95 1916

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. *Mighty Animals*

Jennie Irene Mix

New York: American Book Co., 1912

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

QE714.5.M59 1912 HCB

1. “Flatterechse (Ncytodactylus Gracilis)” Chromolithograph print from *Animals of the Prehistoric World in 30 Art Sheets!* F. John. Edited by Theodor Reichardt with text by Wilhelm Bölsche. Hamburg: Kakao-Compagnie, c. 1916

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

1. “Diplodocus Carnegie” Chromolithograph print from *Animals of the Prehistoric World in 30 Art Sheets!* F. John. Edited by Theodor Reichardt with text by Wilhelm Bölsche. Hamburg: Kakao-Compagnie, c. 1916

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

Interpretive label:

In 1865, Lewis Carroll published *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, the story of Alice, who falls through a rabbit hole and enters a fantasy world of anthropomorphic creatures. E. D. Cuming captures this same energy and style but uses dinosaurs in his 1901 work, *Wonders in Monsterland*, the tale of two siblings who travel back to the Mesozoic Era to encounter these and other prehistoric animals. William James Affleck Shepherd (1866-1946), an English illustrator and cartoonist, provided the original artwork.

At the time that *Wonders in Monsterland* debuted, the Theodor Reichardt Cocoa Company in Hamburg, Germany, began to sell its chocolates with collectible chromolithographed prints showing dinosaurs in natural settings. F. John, the artist for the first two sets of print collections published by the German chocolatier, drew inspiration for the art from the dinosaur paintings of Charles R. Knight, done a few years earlier for the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

**Dinosaurs in the Funny Papers**

1. Original art for editorial cartoon

Winsor McCay, 1927

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

Premiering at Chicago’s Palace Theater on Clark Street near Randolph on February 2, 1914, Winsor McCay’s animated film masterpiece *Gertie the Dinosaur* featured the playful antics of a Brontosaurus-like animal. McCay often used versions of Gertie in his art over the years to express concepts such as futility or age as in this editorial illustration.

1. Original art for *Alley Oop* comic strip

V. T. Hamlin, 1942

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

Hamlin’s popular cartoon strip told of the adventures of Alley Oop and other caveman-like inhabitants of the prehistoric kingdom of Moo in the “Bone Age.” Dinny – Alley Oop’s pet - was inspired by the Sinclair Oil *Brontosaurus* and sported an avian head with Tyrannosaurus-like teeth and the plates of a *Stegosaurus* pointing upward along the spine of a forty-foot body to form a “*Cartooonosaurus*.”

1. Original art for *B.C.* comic strip

Johnny Hart, 1965

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

First appearing on February 17, 1958, this long running strip featured cavemen and a dinosaur plus a range of other animals including an anteater, a turtle with his pal “Dookie Bird” riding on his back, *Apteryx*, a snake, and a turkey. Among other ongoing gags, the strip revealed how some important inventions including the wheel, the airplane, and the telephone were developed.

1. Original art for *The World Around Us: Prehistoric Animals*, part of the *Classics Illustrated* series, no. 15, 1958.

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

The seventy-two-page comic book sought to provide insight about dinosaurs to a younger audience through art and text drawn from the work of biologists and paleontologists. This page-one spread was based on the mural done by Charles Knight in 1929 for the Field Museum that showed the Mesozoic confrontation between the horned Triceratops and its deadly *T. rex* adversary.

**Fossil Lovers Arise! Paleontology for the Younger Generation**

Tombstones:

1. *Petrifications and Their Teachings*

Gideon Algernon Mantell

London: Henry G. Bohn, 1851

QE716.G2L66M36 1851 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. *Guide for Beginning Fossil Hunters*

Charles William Collinson

Urbana: Illinois State Geological Survey, 1959

QE718.C655 1959 c. 2 Rare

Inscribed by the author to Edward Valauskas

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. *Digging up Dinosaurs: And Putting Them Together Again*

Aliki

New York: Harper & Row, 1988

QE862.D5 A34 1988 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. Manuscript letter to Edward Valauskas from Elisabeth M. Brouwers

May 1966

*On loan from the collection of Edward Valauska*s

1. *The Dino Expert*

Julie Brillhart

Morton Grove, IL: A. Whitman, 1993

PZ7.B7666 Di 1993 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. *Paleontologist Barbie*

East Aurora, NY: Mattel, 2017

Revised edition, 2017

fQE714.5.P35 2017 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

Interpretive label:

Children and amateurs have taken paleontology seriously, conducting fieldwork that has led to discoveries of fossils and other significant geologic evidence. Gideon Algernon Mantell (1790-1852), a physician and an enthusiastic paleontologist in his spare time, teamed up with his wife, Mary to track down *Iguanodon* and other fossils in Sussex, many from a local quarry in Cuckfield that exposed Cretaceous sediments.

Paleontologists at museums and geological survey agencies have witnessed an influx of queries and specimens from young paleontologists, leading to the publication of guides for ambitious workers in the field, such as Charles Collinson's *Guide for Beginning Fossil Hunters* (1959).

In May, 1966, fifteen-year-old Elisabeth Brouwers was inspired to write a poem on the subject, "Fossil Lovers Arise," which she sent in a letter to Edward Valauskas. Brouwers became a paleontologist for the US Geological Survey, specializing in the study of living and fossil crustaceans known as *ostracods*. Her most important work, “Dinosaurs on the North Slope, Alaska,” appeared in the journal *Science* in 1987.

**Godzilla**

1. *Godzilla: Rey de los Monstruos*

Paramount: 1956

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

1. *Godzilla,* original soundtrack

Toho Records: 1978

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

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1. *Godzilla = Gojira*

Tōkyō-to Shinagawak-ku: Nōbasu, 1993

PN6728.G578 1993HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. *Godzilla: Destroy all Monsters*

Toho, 1968

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

*Godzilla* is a fictional Jurassic-age, amphibious reptile, that, after being awakened from slumber by the US testing of hydrogen weapons in the Pacific, decides to destroy Tokyo. In the 1954 Japanese film, *Godzilla* was presented as a combination of *Tyrannosaurus*, *Iguanodon*, *Stegosaurus*, and an alligator packaged in body tall enough (164 feet) to see over the tallest building in Tokyo.

With “atomic breath” and a characteristic disyllabic roar – “Skreeeonk!,” *Godzilla* became a pop culture icon starring in thirty-eight films (thirty-three of them Japanese) and becoming the basis for toys, books and computer games. The film that inspired *Godzilla*, however, is largely forgotten. In *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953), “*Rhedosaurus*” is awakened by the US testing of atomic bombs and destroys New York City.

Over the course many films, *Godzilla* transitioned from a troubled beast – symbolizing what happens when science goes wrong - to a protector of mankind and a father: Baby Godzilla! By the 1970s, *Godzilla* was deemed the “original radioactive superhero” and ranked as the most popular movie monster, beating out King Kong, Frankenstein, Count Dracula, the Mummy, and the Creature from the Black Lagoon.

**The Flintstones**

Tombstones:

1. Original artwork for Betty, Wilma & Barney & Fred in Dino costume, episode 10

*On loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*

1. *The Flintstones*

Carl Memling

New York: Golden Press, 1962

PZ7.M465 Fli 1962 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. *Fred Flintstone at the Prehistoric Zoo*

Hanna-Barbera authorized edition

New York: Modern Promotions, 1972

PN6728.F57 P67 1972 HCB

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

1. Original art for *Flintstone* strip, #441 "Flu ... me too!" (1969)

PN6728.F58 1969 Rare

*From the Edward Valauskas collection of Dinosauriana*

Interpretive label:

*The Flintstones,* created by Hanna-Barbera Productions, was the most successful cartoon television series, until the arrival of *The Simpsons* in 1989. Appearing in prime time from September 30, 1960 to April 1, 1966, *The Flintstones* depicted a suburban family in a prehistoric setting, complete with dinosaurian pets (Dino) and other creatures. Most entertaining about the series was the transformation of modern appliances into their prehistoric equivalents, such as Fred's *sauropod* crane at Mr. Slate's Rock and Gravel Company, Wilma's dragon toaster, a mammoth shower to clean up after a dusty day at work, or the exquisite octopus dishwasher, a cephalopod using its eight arms to take care of dirty dishes after a meal. The series appeared in print in comics, newspapers, and books, long after its television run. *Flintstones* characters appeared in movie theaters, theme parks, and even as vitamin pills.

**Dinosaurs at the Movies**

1. *Godzilla vs. the Thing*

Japanese B2 poster on linen

Toho: R-1980

1. *King Dinosaur*

Poster on linen

Lippert: 1955

1. *The Land Time Forgot*

Lion International: 1975

1. *Gorgo*

French grande poster on linen

MGM: 1961

1. *One of Our Dinosaurs Is Missing*

Buena Vista: 1975

1. *The Lost World*

20TH Century Fox: 1960

1. *Dinosaurus!*

Universal International: 1960

1. *The Beast of Hollow Mountain*

United Artists: 1956

Interpretive label

Dinosaurs are endlessly captivating. Why? Perhaps it is because they are portrayed as paradoxes. Slow in movement and wit and now extinct, they are often used as models of failures in popular culture (see the artwork of Winsor McCay in “Dinosaurs in the Funny Papers” case). However, dinosaurs’ enormous size, strength, and ability to overcome environmental challenges and dominate the planet for 150 million years – seventy-seven times the duration of human existence - has made them enviable pictures of success.

Before modern science cast dinosaurs in these conflicting roles, a variety of cultures encountering the remains of dinosaurs assigned them mystical, magical, and religious qualities and powers and as lead actors in creation stories. Works that responded to the public’s interest in dinosaurs and helped to add to the public’s knowledge of them are featured throughout *Bibliosaurus!* Film posters document in dramatic and artistically bold ways the significance of the dinosaur in the popular imagination.

*All posters in this case are on loan from the collection of Charles Valauskas*