

The W. T. Bandy Center for Baudelaire and Modern French Studies at
Vanderbilt University: A Resource for Scholars



Vanderbilt University Central Library

Nashville Tennessee is known as Music City USA, the Buckle of the Bible belt, and the home of the W.T. Bandy Center for Baudelaire and Modern French Studies. The Center is located in the main library of Vanderbilt University and is part of the campus life. Looking at the facade of the Library from the library lawn, the location of the Bandy Center is on the top floor. Scholars come from all over the world to consult material about Charles Baudelaire's life, works, and related studies.



W.T. Bandy Center

The Bandy Center has a spacious and comfortable interior, ideal for quiet study and consultation of materials. The central table is large enough for spreading out project materials and is convenient for small group study. The Center has also hosted conferences, receptions, dissertation defenses, and development events. There is a public computer, Wi-Fi, and staff to assist. The Center has become a Baudelaire workshop, as intended by Dr. William Bandy, who founded the Center in 1968. The Bandy Center is located in the Treasure Room of the library, a highly appropriate location, as former Center director Professor Claude Pichois referred to the Center as the jewel in the Vanderbilt crown.

The focus of the Bandy Center is the comprehensive collection of writings by and about Baudelaire.



Index (Fiche) File

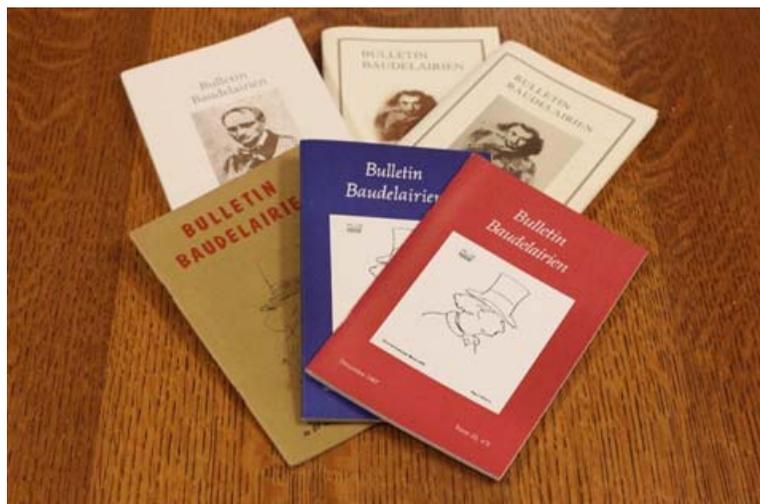
At the far end of the consultation room is a large bank of files for index cards, under the observant photograph of Baudelaire himself. The extensive bibliography was initially compiled in the fiche file (with citations going back to the year 1827), with the example of the journal *Le Moniteur universel*. The books and journal titles are now available through the online library catalogue <http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/> and the Baudelaire Database. The bibliography is compiled from appropriate databases, other bibliographies, and other sources, including citations for journals and books.

When The Center moved from the French Department to the Library in 1982, the library project was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities to catalogue the Center collection and establish the Baudelaire Database. With this grant, the library acquired computer technology, and the first IBM PC in Nashville. The Center's focused database preceded other electronic databases at the Vanderbilt library.



Bandy Center Web Site

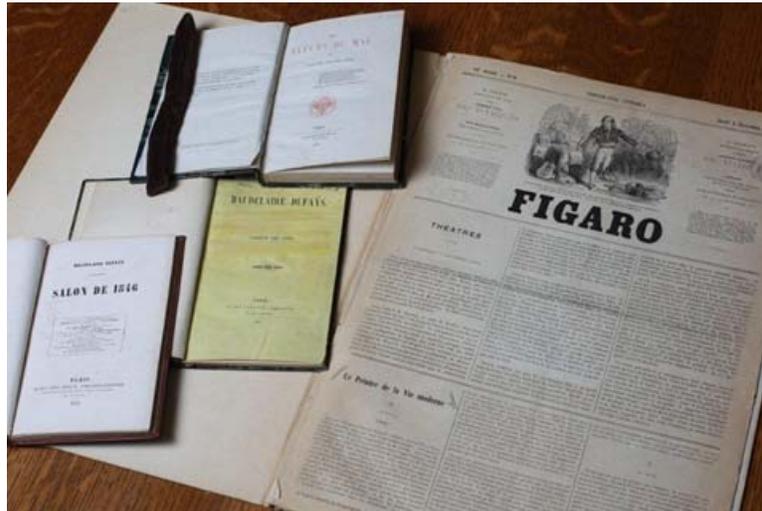
The Bandy Center website <http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/bandy/index.shtml> includes collection information, publications, events, and web exhibitions. Once at the Bandy Center website, you will see the home page. The website also includes the *Recensement bibliographique*, an ongoing and updated bibliography, listed under publications,



Bulletin Baudelairien

previously published in the *Bulletin Baudelairien*, from 1965-2005. Over the course of the publication of the *Bulletin*, there were several changes in the design of the cover, but always

featuring a portrait of Baudelaire by 19th century artists and photographers, such as Edouard Manet. The *BUBA* issues, as the *Bulletin* is called, are currently available online, full-text, from the Center's website under publications.



Primary Resources

The primary resources in the Center's collection include first editions of books and journal articles by and about Baudelaire and other French writers. With generous funding provided by the Friends of the Library, the Bandy Center was able to purchase the rare first and unexpurgated edition of *Les Fleurs du mal* of 1857. It was originally purchased by Charles Bristed, an American journalist traveling in Paris in the 1850s and 1860s. This Bristed Edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, became the 3 million and first addition to the Vanderbilt library. The book bears the signature of Charles Bristed on the title page. It stayed in the Bristed family until the early 20th century, and then sold to a book dealer in Massachusetts, then to a European prince for his personal library. It once again came on the book market in 2004 and the Bandy Center was able to purchase this copy from a book dealer in Paris.

The Center also has original journals, one example being the 1863 edition of *Le Figaro* where Baudelaire published "The Painter of Modern Life."



Reference and Secondary Sources

The Center has important secondary sources to assist the scholar with research, for example the *Dictionnaire Baudelaire*, concordances, the Pleiades editions of his works, including an online source, the *Micro-Histoire*, compiled by Professor Raymond Poggenburg, detailing the daily life of Baudelaire.

The Center acquires available translations of *Les Fleurs du mal* and other Baudelaire works. The many translations, in languages such as Finnish, Scottish, Turkish, and various English translations, total more than 30 translated editions, including those in Esperanto and in Braille.



Related Baudelaire Sources

In addition to scholarly works, the Bandy Center collects related texts, such as Baudelaire’s translation of Edgar Allen Poe’s, *Histoires extraordinaires*, to juvenilia literature in the novels *A Series of Unfortunate Events* about the adventures of the “Baudelaire children,” written by Lemony Snicket, the pen name of the American novelist Daniel Handler.

From academic books to popular culture, the Center’s collections have attracted international scholars in search of materials available in one research center.



Ephemera: Luxury

Researchers find the ephemera files especially interesting and unique among library collections. Quotes from Baudelaire’s poetry are widely used to market and advertise a variety of products. From luxury item advertisements for perfume and jewelry,



Ephemera: Food Related

to food related products such as candy, sugar cubes and beverages such as a cocktail from a New Mexico bar called “Hot Baudelaire”

(with the ingredients of Mexican hot chocolate, chili flakes, agave syrup, absinth, and whipped cream), to Baudelaire beer (the brewers from Michigan, were inspired by the Baudelaire line “A breathe of air from the wings of madness”), to the



Ephemera: Curiosities

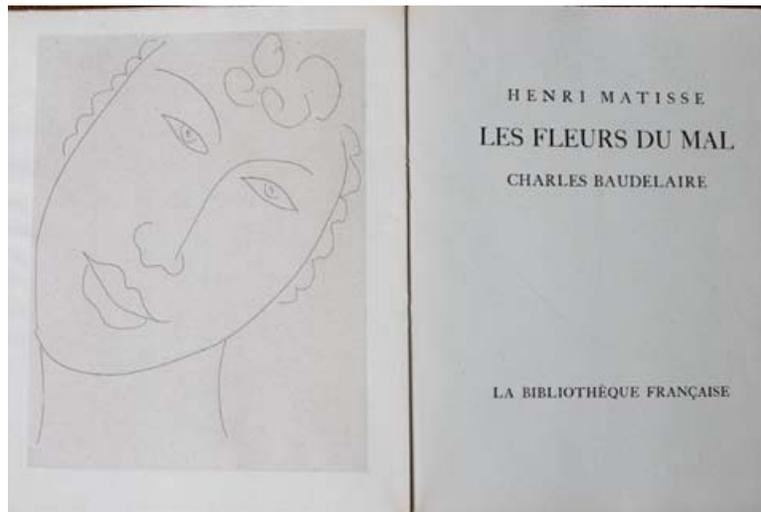
curiosities of Baudelaire’s green hair in *Ripley’s Believe It Or Not*.



Recordings

The Center also collects voice and music recordings, CDs, and films. These recordings include readings of Baudelaire's poetry by prominent narrators and singers, including Léo Ferré, Yvette Mimieux, and Louis Jourdan.

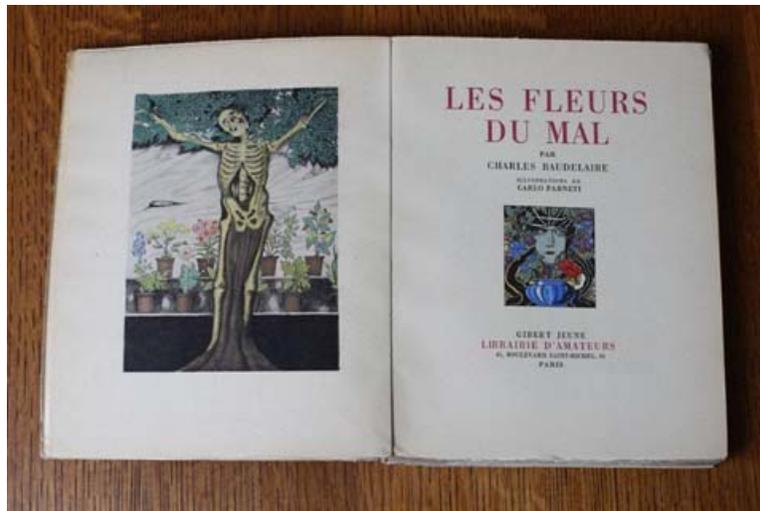
Among the compilations by Dr. Bandy are the *Oubliés et Dédaignés*, which are files of 4,000 names of obscure persons somewhat related to Baudelaire.



Les Fleurs du mal, Illustrated Edition
Henri Matisse, 1947

Les Fleurs du mal has inspired visual artists to express the poems in images. Important editions have included illustrations that complement the poetry of Baudelaire. The Center's collection includes examples of artists' books and illustrated editions of *Les Fleurs du mal*. In 1944 Henri Matisse began to illustrate *Les Fleurs du mal*. The edition was completed in 1947.

Matisse selected 33 poems and illustrated them with portraits of Baudelaire, Apollinaire, a self-portrait, and portraits of female models. Scholars have come to the Center to study this particular edition. Matisse stated that "the drawing should be the visual equivalent of the poem," and intended the images to be seen next to the poems. The Center acquired this signed edition in 2006 with Friends of the Library funding. Only 320 copies were printed.



Les Fleurs du mal, Illustrated Edition
Carlo Farneti, 1935

Another illustrated edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, of 1935, is by Carlo Farneti. He worked in Paris and also illustrated works by Émile Zola, Jack London, and the four volume Baudelaire translation of Edgar Allen Poe's, *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*, of 1928.



“Book as Art” Vanderbilt Library Exhibition
Illustrated Edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*

The Vanderbilt library began this academic year with the exhibition titled *The Book as Art: Beautiful Books*. The web exhibition is available at

<http://exhibits.library.vanderbilt.edu/bookasart/index.php?section=17>

The exhibition included a display of illustrated *Les Fleurs du mal* editions, visually attractive volumes including interesting bindings, and miniature books.

A recent addition to the Center was the artist book titled *The Poor: Six Prose Poems* by Charles Baudelaire, illustrated by George Weinberg in 2010. This particular book, seen in the center of this image, is a good example of how the poetry of Baudelaire inspires our contemporary culture.

As Weinberg explains:

“The blue of the prints is from...an early 19th century proto-photographic chemical process using iron...Hopefully there is a relationship/tension between using a 19th century technology (of Baudelaire’s time) to depict 21st century technologies, like the Nano scale DNA structures...made by IBM scientists.”

The exhibit was accompanied by a digital exhibition, now available on the Bandy Center website.

I invite you to visit the Bandy Center and to explore its many and rich opportunities for research. The Center stands ready to promote the continuing legacy of Baudelaire scholarship.

Fellowships are offered for study in the Center. And we welcome your contributions of bibliographic citations and references.

Yvonne Boyer
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Vanderbilt University