

David Harris Flaherty Undergraduate Student Library Scholarship 2016 Recipient
By Lorinda Fraser, Faculty of Fine Arts
Award-winning Essay

As a third year undergraduate student pursuing my Honours Bachelors in Art History and Visual Studies, the McPherson Library has been my second home on campus. Numerous hours have been spent in the Reserve Room reading materials for my classes or at my favourite workstation conducting research and drafting assignments. One of the realizations that has surprised me most about pursuing my degree is how much of my time studying the visual arts is spent immersed within the world of words. Whether I am reading or writing, my days are filled with words, most of them discovered within or through the McPherson Library.

This spring I conducted research on the *Bedford Book of Hours* for my Gothic Art and Architecture class. I was interested in how micro-architecture depicted within the full-page illuminations of *Garden of Eden* and *Annunciation* portray the passing of time. As part of my research, I pulled books from the stacks on micro-architecture, Christian iconography, and a comprehensive study of the *Bedford Hours*. I also found supporting materials through the library Subject Guide, online journals, and Oxford Art Online. Within the Reference Collection, I found an additional source detailing the religious symbolism represented within the illuminations as well as books exploring historical notions of understanding, delineating, and displaying time in the Course Reserves. In order to gain a better understanding of the tangible attributes and materiality of such a personal item of devotion, I was able to visit Special Collections to study another fifteenth century Book of Hours, the *Codex Pollick* (ca. 1480-1490). The opportunity to personally hold an object from the 15th century was a special experience and gave me a glimpse into the physicality and spiritually evocative presence of such an object, only imagining how it may have impacted a

devotee in the Middle Ages. After my visit to Special Collections, I then browsed the *Codex Pollick* through the Digital Collections 'Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts Collection' in order to zoom in for greater detail as many of the illuminator's lines and gilding are a mere filament in width.

In 2008, I began my studies at the University of Victoria part time through the Humanities Diploma Program and received training on ways to search for library materials as part of my initial orientation. During my current full-time Bachelors of Arts studies, I received invaluable additional training from the Fine Arts and Humanities Librarian, Tad Suzuki, during a 300-level Art History course. Along the way, I have also received on-the-spot assistance from numerous library staff who have been unfailingly helpful and cheerful, whether I was struggling with a printer or negotiating the myriad of resources mentioned above for the first time. The various forms of materials made available to me through the University of Victoria McPherson Library has provided me with a vast array of resources to work with during my studies and made my Gothic Art and Architecture final essay all the more robust and comprehensive because of them.