

## *The Yellow Book* Project

The first stage of the 1890s Hypermedia Archive, ***The Yellow Book* Project** is dedicated to publishing an annotated scholarly edition of the periodical's 13 volumes, and to developing interactive research tools and an on-line site for refereed articles addressing *fin-de-siècle* cultural studies.

A Co-Application

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for Joint Participation at the

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### **General Introduction: The 1890s Hypermedia Archive**

*The Yellow Book Project* is the first phase of a larger digital initiative, The 1890s Hypermedia Archive, an on-line instrument designed to facilitate the scholarly study of *fin-de-siècle* culture. The 1890s Hypermedia Archive will focus on visual/verbal/aural relations in a decade significant for its developments in print—book design, typography, illustration, photography, periodicals, newspapers, posters, playbills and advertising—as well as for its developments in the performance arts—music hall, theatre, and the emerging technologies of cinema. In its ideally envisioned form, The 1890s Hypermedia Archive would include the tools for complex searches and comparisons of the period's images and texts as well as searchable audio links to its songs, sounds, and speeches. The Archive would be overseen by an international editorial board of scholars with expertise in the literature, art, and culture of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Future phases of the archive may include a section on Book Design and Illustration and another on Aestheticism and Decadence.

### **Introduction to the Yellow Book Project**

*The Yellow Book Project* will provide the experimental model for the Archive's future development. It will make available on-line all 13 volumes of *The Yellow Book*, published quarterly by John Lane from April 1894 to April 1897. This periodical provides an ideal starting point for The 1890s Hypermedia Archive for three reasons. First, *The Yellow Book*'s brief print run makes the editorial project realizable within the three-year development period we have assigned to it. Second, the cultural significance of this illustrated quarterly is far greater than the brevity of its print run would suggest. The significant authors, artists, cultural and political issues and technological advances represented in its pages provide a rich base for the Archive's future development. By focusing on the production, consumption and contents of this important periodical during the 1890s and beyond, the project will model an approach to the material and visual culture of the *fin de siècle*. Third, *The Yellow Book Project* provides a workable model for the building of collaborative scholarship by including both established scholars and students in its development and use, and by maximizing the potential of the digital environment through the application of the tools developed by NINES for the search, comparison, analysis and manipulation of texts and images.

### **Work Plan**

*The Yellow Book Project* is a three-year project scheduled for completion in 2008. In preparation for the project, work has already begun on a standard web-site for *The Yellow Book*, with a scheduled launch date of April 2005 on the Ryerson University web site. Cathy Matthews, Chief Librarian at Ryerson University, fully supports the project and is currently purchasing a complete set of *The Yellow Book* for use by the research team.

Beginning in April 2006, we intend to make available on-line, four volumes of *The Yellow Book* annually, in quarterly installments. The data store would consist of the entire set,

with Volumes I-IV being put on-line in 2005-06, Volumes V-VIII in 2006-07, and Volumes IX-XIII in 2007-08. Each volume will be transcribed and encoded in XML to permit complex searches and the aggregating of related content. It will be accompanied by editorial glosses and pop-up windows providing commentary on and information about the texts, images, authors and artists. To enhance interoperability and maintain NINES protocol, we intend to follow the model provided in the Rossetti Archive. The commentary will be organized under the following headings: Production and Reception History; Iconographic; Historical; Literary; Biographical; and Bibliographical.

In addition, the site will take advantage of the “Temporal Modeling Project” in the Spec Lab at the University of Virginia by developing a time-sensitive map of London’s *Yellow Book* community. The map will represent the main locations of key contributors to *The Yellow Book*, including authors, artists, publishers, printers, engravers, booksellers, galleries, cafés, and so on. This geographic focus on London neighborhoods and establishments would also be broken down temporally to show ways in which contributors to the journal interacted with each other, where they were during key events of the period, where they went after those events, and so on. Researchers will be able to search out patterns by exploring relationships between a contributor and political events and legislation; they could also choose to focus on certain geographic or temporal fields of activity. This tool will be an important element of The 1890s Hypermedia Archive as a whole because its use will be modeled by guest curators/tour guides, thus providing a venue for on-line scholarship in *fin-de-siècle* cultural studies.

We would also like to explore the possibility of using the IVANHOE model to develop interactive critical exploration on the site. *The Yellow Book* Project could encourage researchers to use gaming tools to explore points of confluence, sites of friction, and patterns of formulation that would be recognizable when different variables are brought into mutual consideration. These signs of pattern or disorder would then encourage the modification of existing theoretical/critical approaches or perhaps suggest new theoretical models or hybrids.

### **NINES Workshop**

Our editorial project will require greater familiarity with the XML mark-up to encode texts in accordance with TEI standards. This schema would wrap portions of our material, establish ready connections to larger environments, and provide an instrument for complex searches. The JUXTA and COLLEX tools will also be important, though we recognize that the visual/verbal nature of the project will pose particular problems with regard to the search, collation, and comparison of images. The workshop would also enable us to work on the temporal modeling specs for our time-sensitive map of London and to consider how the IVANHOE tool might be used effectively on The 1890s Hypermedia Archive.

### **Research Team and Support**

The principal researchers, Dennis Denisoff and Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, who have complementary expertise in *fin-de-siècle* cultural studies, are backed by a team that includes graduate students and other scholars. The project has the long-term support of Ryerson’s English Department, library, and Digital Media Projects Office (members of which have reviewed and contributed to this application). Each principal researcher has funding for this project through grants from the Social Science and Humanities Research

Council of Canada. We have also made an additional application for funding from Ryerson University, an institution with a strong reputation in information technologies.