I. BEGINNINGS

Ole Worm, Museum Wormianum (Leiden 1655).

II. INCREASING POPULARITY
Ulisse Aldrovandi, De Rarissimis Animalibus (Frankfort-am-Main 1614). Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies, RBC.

Adham J. S. Kirb, Roman College Seicentos Jan Musaeum Celebritassium (Amsterdam 1678). Adam Clessner, Geöffnete Raritäten-und Naturkunst-Kammer (Schkeudzig 1674). Paolo Maria Tartagni, Musæ et galariese . . . del Manfieda Senda (Torremi 1666).

III. TOURISM
Michel Merian, Missale Africana (Rome 1739). Michael Bernhard Valentin, Museum Museorum, volumes 2–3 (Frankfort-am-Main 1714). Venedia Collection, RBC.


IV. PETER THE GREAT
William Faithorne, Engraved Portrait of Peter the Great (Amsterdam 1657). Jacob de Wilde, Syne Antique & Musae Jacobis de Wilde (Amsterdam 1700). Frederick Rausch, Turris Americanae Totius (Amsterdam 1748). Carl W. Gottschalk Collection, RBC.

V. SCIENCE & SPECIALIZATION

VI. INSTITUTIONALIZATION & COMMERCIALIZATION

VII. THE CURIOSITIES CABINET IN THE RARE BOOK COLLECTION
The Rare Book Collection at UNC Chapel Hill dates its beginnings to 1929 and the establishment of the Humanities Foundation for the Study of the Origin and Development of the Book. The RBC presently houses close to 200,000 printed volumes and also includes substantial holdings of original graphics, medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, and historical and textual materials.

The RBC has its own “Curiosties Cabinet,” which was created to house objects not equally accommodated by traditional shelving. Among its contents are noncodex items of significance for the study of the history of the book, a selection of which are displayed in Rooms of Wonder.

REPRESENTATIVE OBJECTS
Egypt
Quipu (Peru).

Africa
Zulu beadwork love letter (South Africa).

Europe
Papyrus roll (Egypt).

Asia
Cuneiform clay cone and tablets (Babylonia).

ROAMS OF WONDER
Ongoing
Historic Rooms and the History and Culture of the State of North Carolina North Carolina Collections Gallery Wilson Library
January 31 to April 13
“The New Found Land”: Engravings by Theodor de Bry from the Collection of Michael N. Joyner
An exhibition of prints from Thomas Harriot’s A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (1585), enhanced with print materials from Wilson Library’s North Carolina Collection and Native American artifacts from the North Carolina Archaeological Collections in the UNC Research Laboratories of Archaeology. ACKLAND ART MUSEUM http://ackland.org
February 12 to March 23
The Cabinet of Curiosities: An Installation
An installation of objects from the Ackland’s collections, curated by members of the UNC course Art History 551: Introduction to Museums Studies.

ACKLAND ART MUSEUM, STUDY GALLERY SECOND FLOOR

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST
An exhibition from the collection of Florence Farrington
Sponsored by the Rare Book Collection
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Melba Remig, Saltarelli Exhibit Room
Wilson Special Collections Library
February 20 to April 20, 2014

From Wunderkammer to Museum: 1565–1865
An exhibition of prints from Thomas Harriot’s A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (1585), enhanced with print materials from Wilson Library’s North Carolina Collection and Native American artifacts from the North Carolina Archaeological Collections in the UNC Research Laboratories of Archaeology. ACKLAND ART MUSEUM http://ackland.org
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Wunderkammern are rooms of wondrous things both natural and artificial, a chamber of objects noteworthy for their beauty or rarity, or their artistic, scholarly, or monetary value. In the 16th century, Europeans began to form Wunderkammern, also referred to as cabinets of curiosities, in the quest for encyclopedic knowledge. Their popularity increased throughout the 17th century, along with world travel and discovery, which enriched them with exotica and new rarities. In the 18th century, a more systematic approach to accumulating natural and man-made objects developed, leading to the modern era’s public museums. However, Wunderkammers might also operate as for paying customers. P.T. Barnum’s Museum, which included living wonders, is an example of how the phenomenon devolved. Publications that cataloged and publicized Wunderkammer collections began to appear with frequency in the 17th century. The extraordinary books in this exhibition, spanning three hundred years, are all from the collection of alumna Florence Fearrington and the Rare Book Collection (RBC) has also provided books, as well as objects from its own “Curiosities Cabinet.” Russia’s Peter the Great, Wunderkammers served various purposes for these different individuals, often functioning as microcosms that enabled an understanding of the larger world.

Many private collections were institutionalized in the 18th century, and by its end, great collections of curios often preferred to establish public museums. However, Wunderkammers might also operate as commercial enterprises. England’s Museum Tradescantianum is a notable early instance of one open to the public by paid fee, its contents later becoming the foundation of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University. In the USA, most cabinets of curiosities were assembled for paying customers, P.T. Barnum’s Museum, which included living wonders, is an example of how the phenomenon devolved.

MacGregor is the author of *The Body and the Artisan: Art and Museums in Early Modern Europe* (2008) and the founding editor of the *Journal of the History of Collections*. 1958 saw the opening of the Ackland Art Museum, the successor to the Penson Hall Art Gallery, established in 1917. Today the Ackland houses over 17,000 works of art from a broad range of time periods and world cultures.

Embracing Harris’s original museum concept, the North Carolina Collection Gallery was created in Wilson Library in 1899 to showcase the state’s history. The Gallery has stewardship of three historic rooms and close to 50,000 objects (including 2,000 transferred from Wilson Library) and offers permanent and temporary displays. Exhibitions from Wilson Library’s other special collections, including the Rare Book Collection, also take place regularly in the Library’s Melba Remig Saltarelli Exhibit Room.

Over 200 years after the establishment of its first “cabinet of curios,” UNC continues to promote wonder and curiosity by sharing its diverse museum and special collections holdings.