

The personal library collection of Anthony Burgess at the Library of the University of Angers

In 1998, thanks to Mrs. Liana Burgess, two large collections of books belonging to Anthony Burgess were donated to the University of Angers library : the first being Burgess's library from his home in Provence in the south of France ; the second being his collection from his home on the isle of Malta.

The works used to be housed in a room intended to evoke the memory of Anthony Burgess thanks to the presence of some of his personal effects : electronic console organ, work table, book satchel, typewriter, and cigar box. The room is now used for other purposes (since October 2014), and all the books have been stored in another location at the University library.

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Nearly half of the approximately 450 volumes of the Provence collection are in the Italian language. The works are basically literature, art books and tourist guides.

The Malta collection of approximately 1800 volumes is, on the other hand, composed essentially of English language works. Some books date from Burgess's youth. There is a collection of *Punch* and some school textbooks.

Among these works, several are worthy of special mention :

- Books dedicated to Burgess by their authors. {phocagallery view=category|categoryid=7|limitstart=0|limitcount=0}

- Editions of works by Burgess himself in English with some translations into other languages.

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The works are generally not annotated except for a few volumes among which is a copy of *Beard's Roman Women*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1976, which has manuscripted corrections and additions.

- Works carrying an ex-libris in Burgess's own hand. The handwriting and the signature content vary according to the date of the book's acquisition. But Burgess nearly always used his given name (John Burgess Wilson) rather than his pen name.

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Examples of Burgess's signature

- Books belonging to his wife and son, Andrew.

Finally, a group of handwritten pages, notebooks and musical works found among the books themselves.

The cataloguing of all the works was completed in the summer 1999 thus allowing clear and direct access to the collection. The classification of the works revealed certain areas of Burgess's interest :

- education
- linguistics : numerous language method books, historical studies of English grammar. We have been able to find some handwritten testaments to Burgess's taste for languages ; two exercise notebooks for Arabic and Russian and some personal notebooks on which Burgess enjoyed writing in the alphabets of these two languages.
- William Shakespeare
- James Joyce
- English, French and Italian literatures
- Science fiction and Detective novels
- Music, along with sheet music, scores and studies on musicians
- Art (books on painting and numerous museum guides)
- Literary criticism with numerous works sent by publishers in bound-proofs

First editions of works by Anthony Burgess, books annotated by him or carrying his signature, as well as books offered to Burgess and signed by their authors are already listed and stored separately (R 80 000-R 80 206. All other books in the Burgess collection are shelved in the Burgess Room (BUR 1-BUR 2007).

See the [Anthony Burgess webpage](#) on the University Library website. You can download the catalogues of the collection, [books](#) and [videos](#) .

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