

Dear Friends of the Conservancy:

This past February a spirited and determined team of botanists could be seen, red tags in hand, working in the unrelenting rain to tag about 2,600 palms.

It has been a productive twelve months, with the palm cataloging project 60 percent completed. Chipper Wichman of the National Tropical Botanical Garden says, “The Merwin palm collection is an amazing assemblage of extraordinary palms that have transformed the ecology of the small valley where they are planted.”

Also proceeding with enthusiasm, the documentary team took a trip to France and filmed William and Paula in their French farmhouse, the first time they have ever let any media enter this private space. The footage is beautiful, and William’s words about France and his life unforgettable.

All this is possible because of the individuals and foundations that guide us with wise counsel and support us financially. We look forward to an exciting 2013 and beyond—and ask for your continued support and heartfelt engagement.

With gratitude,

Karen Bouris
Executive Director



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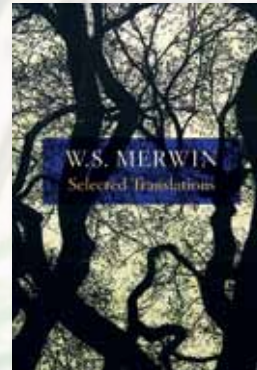
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NEW WORK

THE YEAR IN Translation



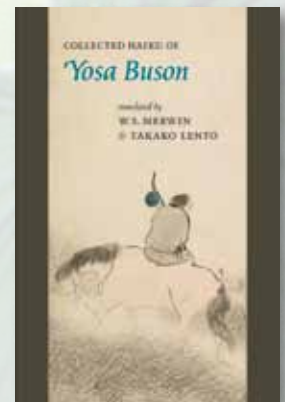
Selected Translations W.S. MERWIN

A compilation of William’s best translations, from 1948 to 2010, with poetry from writers ranging from Persius to Neruda.

Collected Haiku of Yosa Buson

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W.S. MERWIN AND
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An essential volume of world literature and the first complete bilingual translation of the Buson Kushu, a comprehensive collection of the haiku of Yosa Buson (1716–83).



Sun at Midnight Poems and Letters: Musō Soseki

Translated by
W.S. MERWIN AND
SOIKU SHIGEMATSU

Long out of circulation, this reissue is the first translation into English of the work of Musō Soseki, the 13th-century Zen roshi and incomparable designer of the garden at Ryōan-ji in Kyoto.

EXTRAORDINARY

Palms & People

“This is the kind of garden that we want to see: something that is modeled on the forest rather than a botanical garden.”

For three wet weeks we were honored to host the world's foremost expert on palms, Dr. John Dransfield, and his wife, the botanist Soejatmi Dransfield, from South Wales, as they took the lead on the palm cataloging project. With rigorous detail, they labeled 2,600 palms with NTBG's team, which included Dave Lorence (director of science), Matt Lucas (GIS coordinator), and Mauiscape's Olin Erickson.

On the drive from the airport Dr. Dransfield explained, “It's funny: I can't seem to remember the names of people, but I have no problem remembering the names of palms.” And remember names he did. As Chipper, the NTBG's executive director, explains: “Dr. Dransfield is one of the great plantsmen of the world, and his knowledge of palm taxonomy is second to none. Best of all, he has a ‘taxonomic eye.’ This highly refined skill allows him to identify palms at a glance. Where most skilled taxonomists would need to study a species in the field and then go back to the lab and review the published literature and taxonomic keys that are based on unique morphological characteristics, he is able to do this standing in the field, looking at a palm specimen. Having John Dransfield join the team for three weeks is like having a supercomputer that can crunch the most challenging math problems in seconds!”

Throughout the visit, William would join the group to provide species identification and stories, often about seed procurement. He says, “I was afraid they would think the garden was ‘jumbled.’ But they said, ‘This is the kind of garden that we want to see: something that is modeled on the forest rather than a botanical garden.’” The Dransfields had ended up in the Merwins' palm forest through the matchmaking efforts of both Sir Ghillean Prance, director emeritus of Kew Gardens, and Jan Elliott, NTBG board member.

NTBG has bravely undertaken the palm collection project to turn this large and wild garden modeled on the forest—with over 800 species and 3,000 palms—into a true “living collection.” The documentation will help calculate the conservation value—and the palm information will be digitized and available online to scientists worldwide.

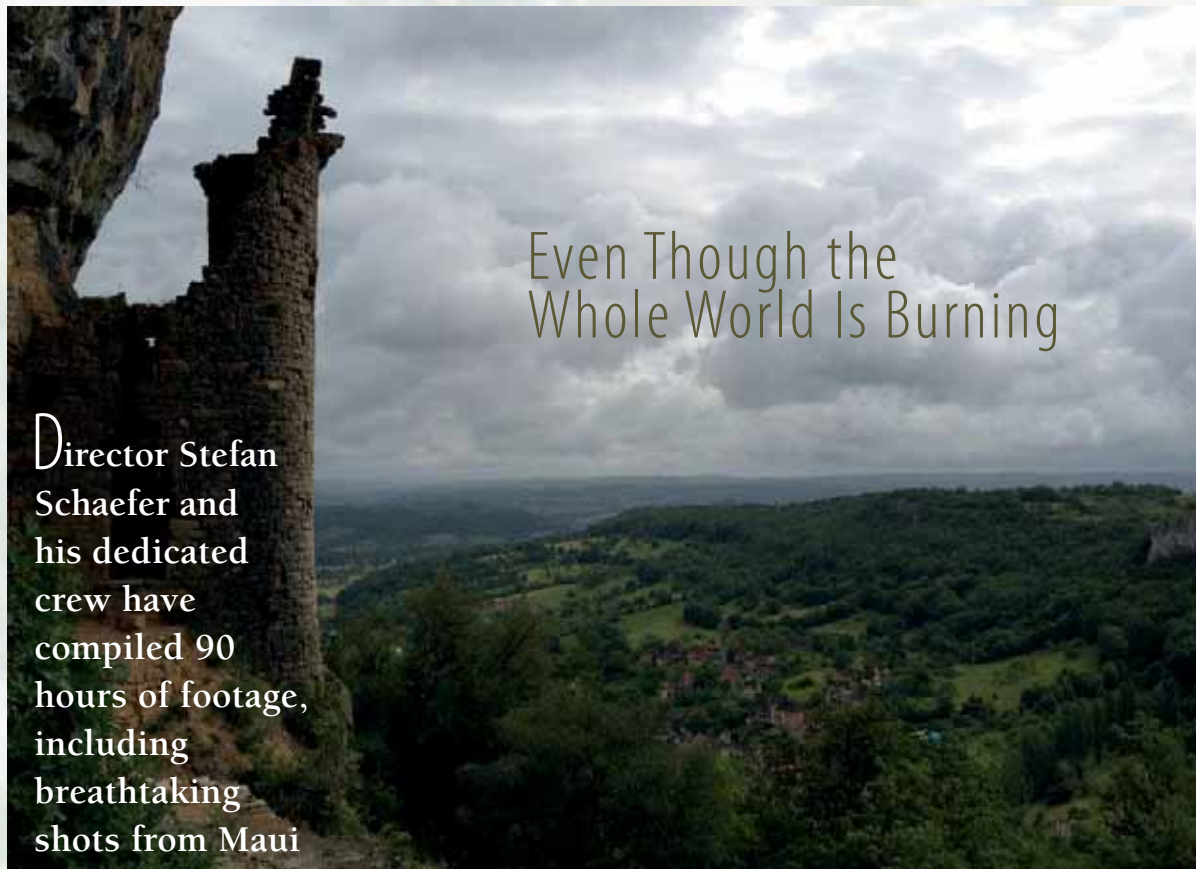
In August the Dransfields will return to complete the remaining identification fieldwork, in part with the NTBG team. We're so pleased they are coming back to Maui.



Protecting the Land & Legacy

The Conservancy has been working on conservation easement parameters, which will be attached to the title of the property, to ensure that the palm forest and home are protected from development thus preserving the literary and botanical legacy of W.S. Merwin.

Guidance in this effort has come from the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust's former executive director, Dale Bonar; its director of conservation, Scott Fisher; and the new executive director, Ted Clement. HILT has been our steadfast partner, and we're grateful for its experience and commitment to conservation.



Even Though the Whole World Is Burning

Director Stefan Schaefer and his dedicated crew have compiled 90 hours of footage, including breathtaking shots from Maui

and the Merwins' French farmhouse.

The NYC-based producer, Williams Cole, continues to gather archival material from places such as the 92nd Street Y and University of Illinois, and is applying for grants to fund the intensive editing phase. They expect to have a cut of the film ready to submit to festivals and show to interested distributors by summer.



During a recent trip to the Berlin Film Festival, Stefan showed an eight-minute sample reel of the film to the head of acquisitions of the Weinstein Company, a successful film studio in Hollywood. "This is breathtaking. Absolutely gorgeous. I can't wait to see more!" he said. Stefan adds, "We feel the same way and, as ever, feel honored to be working on this amazing project."





Two Pulitzer Prize winners, E.O. Wilson (center) and W.S. Merwin, were together at the Sun Valley Writers' Conference August 2012, with environmentalist Greg Carr (right).

The Nature Conservancy

has provided us with stunning aerial-map photographs and GPS points to help us with the palm cataloging. This generous gesture is also an initiative in precise mapping technology. Special thanks to Suzanne Case, Frank Loy, and Mark Tercek at the Nature Conservancy.



IN BRIEF . . . Thank You

Journalist Matthew Gurewitsch wrote a splendid piece about the garden in the *Wall Street Journal* (June 11, 2012) . . . author Jamaica Kincaid visited and is working on a story about palms . . . the Grubins came and interviewed William for a documentary on forgotten languages . . . Tom Sewell took photos at the Hui . . . Gary Greenberg interviewed William about art and science....

The Folding Cliffs

In an intimate setting at the Hui No'Eau, sixty guests gathered to hear William discuss his novel-in-verse, *The Folding Cliffs: A Narrative of 19th-Century Hawaii*. The evening was magical, thanks to a formidable committee of volunteers, including Sandi Stoner, Jan McKinley, Sandra Florence, and Shay Belisle. The evening began with an eloquent introduction from

the writer Robert Becker. Photographs of the palm forest by Gwen Arkin were displayed. A trailer from the new documentary was shown. Book clubs from Wailea and upcountry were in attendance. Thank you to event sponsors, including the Bendon Family Foundation, and the Haynes, Jones, Schaefer Gray, and Stoner families.

In Gratitude • 2010-2012

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