

FIND THE FUTURE



THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
100 YEARS

Revolutionary New iPad App Brings The New York Public Library's Collections Directly to the Public

NYPL and Design Firm Potion Change Reading and Learning with *Biblion: The Boundless Library*. First Installment Features The 1939-40 New York World's Fair

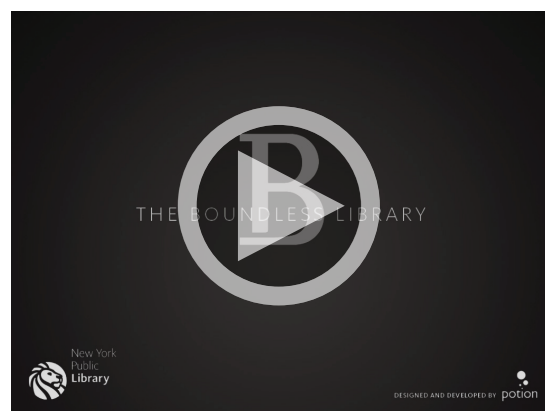


The “world of tomorrow” is here today, as The New York Public Library celebrates its “Find the Future” Centennial with the creation of a revolutionary new iPad app that brings the awe-inspiring power of the Library’s extensive research collections directly into the palms of the public’s hands.

Biblion: The Boundless Library — a modern twist on the Library’s *Biblion* collections magazine — was developed by NYPL and design firm Potion. A free app, it gives users the ability to turn over, zoom in, flip through and explore over 700 items from the Library’s legendary stacks in a in a charted world or “infoscape” of myriad story lines that literally give the content shape and context.

“Much like the 1939 Fair itself, *Biblion* represents a chance to see the World of Tomorrow...Today,” said Henry Jenkins, transmedia scholar, *Biblion* contributor and author of *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. “We need creative people to explore what e-publishing can do that expands the capacities of authors to convey information in powerful new ways, that enhances and broadens the capacity of print to include a wealth of other affordances, and which gets readers thinking about the reading process from new perspectives. *Biblion* takes a bold new step towards achieving all of these goals and it’s fitting that the New York Public Library, one of our most established and cherished national institutions, is helping to guide our progress towards distant horizons.”

The first edition of the app showcases the Library’s 1939-40 New York World’s Fair holdings, one of the collections most consulted by researchers. Located in the Manuscripts and Archives Division at the landmark Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, the records of the Fair Corporation span 2500 boxes of material, from press releases to 12,000 photographs to



Click on the image above to watch the *Biblion* video trailer and get an inside look at the app!

correspondence with every country and corporation that participated in “The World of Tomorrow” Fair.

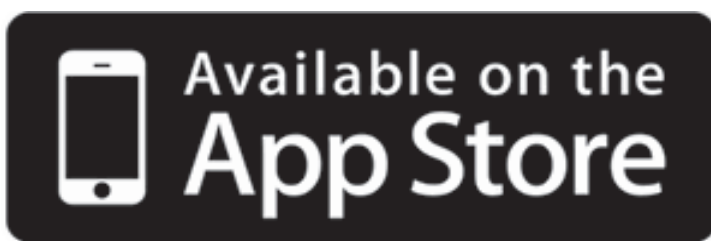
“*Biblion* transfers the physical library experience, where you see the shape of books and understand what’s inside them, into a multi-dimension digital application,” explained Potomac Principal Phillip Tiongson. “We have given the content a shape, so people can intuitively understand what it looks like and want to dive into the story.” Through a groundbreaking layout of information metaphorically based on the Library stacks, users swipe their way through a virtual map of documents, images, multimedia, and original essays by leading scholars who have used the collections, to put the raw materials in context. Readers can even jump from story to story, stack to stack through inter-story connection links. The end result is a multi-linear, immersive experience through the World of Tomorrow, which, like the Library, has something for everyone...from technological innovation, music and pop culture, to a world dealing with war and economic hardship.

For example, in food author William Grimes’ “Gastronomic Tales from the Fair,” he introduces a letter by the wife of the Czech Consul asking to run a sandwich stand. From there, you’re one gesture away from learning about the fate of the Czech Pavilion — and other countries whose place at the Fair reflected dramatic wartime changes. Another user might take a completely different path to learn how French food was unveiled to America at the Fair, forever changing our tastes.

Personal stories include a letter from African American composer William Grant Still, expressing his pride in being chosen to write the theme music for the Fair. There are the colorful attractions, from the wild beasts of Jungleland to the racy ladies of burlesque, from the biggest names of their day — Babe Ruth, Howard Hughes,

Eleanor Roosevelt — to the back office workers who made it all possible. We even use original sources to recreate the City of Tomorrow, Democracy. It’s a complete, 360-degree approach to navigating the collection and putting its items in context for a new and personalized learning and reading experience,

“The Library has always stood at the forefront of new channels of information,” said Paul LeClerc, President of The New York Public Library. “We are excited to present Library users with ever-increasing access to our renowned collections. Through this app, and the countless serendipitous moments of discovery it offers, we open up the world of possibility the Library represents. In the middle ages, the Greek word “biblion” applied to collections of fragments of ancient texts. Today, NYPL’s digital *Biblion* transforms texts — ancient and modern —into a new format for new generations of readers.”



The new app is available for free at Apple’s iTunes store. A web version will soon be available at www.nypl.org. It is the first in a series of apps the Library is planning to release in the coming months.

Click on the image above to download *Biblion*!

Early Praise for *Biblion: World's Fair*

“What’s fascinating to me is... experiencing what it’s like to tool around behind the scenes at a museum or in an archive. The impression is spatial. You chart your own path, find pieces of text, photos or video, and then assemble them yourself into a narrative of the fair.” -- *The Atlantic*, “Did the NYPL Just Build the Magazine App of the Future?” by Alexis Madrigal

“Biblion draws its inspiration from the library’s old *Biblion* magazine about the library’s collections, and it essentially opens up the boxes in the library’s esteemed research collections and places curated items at anyone’s fingertips, literally.” -- *Library Journal*

“... a stunning new app that lets you see a ton of essays, pictures, people, etc and information about the 1939-40 World’s Fair. It’s like a time traveling machine that brings you back to that era.” – *Gizmodo*

“ For those who can’t get up to The Stacks in person, it’s a nifty little way to peruse history from your lap....This could be the start of a beautiful relationship between tech nerds and bibliophiles. – *Gothamist*

“It takes full advantage of the iPad’s touchscreen and doesn’t shy away from sexy visual flourishes. Documents, pictures, and other content in the app is presented in a metaphorical way based on the Library’s stacks. The end result is an app that’s a joy to flip through.” -- *VentureBeat*

The New York Public Library's Centennial Festival is made possible through an endowment established by family and friends of the late Richard B. Salomon, and by Bank of America, The Skeel Fund, MetLife Foundation, The Blackstone Charitable Foundation, Asprey, Wells Fargo, Celeste Bartos, The Wall Street Journal, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Titan, WABC-TV/Channel 7, Penguin Classics, Engine Yard and Gotham Magazine.

About The New York Public Library

The New York Public Library was created in 1895 with the consolidation of the private libraries of John Jacob Astor and James Lenox with the Samuel Jones Tilden Trust. The Library provides free and open access to its physical and electronic collections and information, as well as to its services. It comprises four research centers – housed, respectively, in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building; The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; and the Science, Industry and Business Library – and 88 neighborhood libraries in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island. Research and circulating collections combined total more than 50 million items, including materials for the visually impaired. In addition, each year the Library presents thousands of exhibitions and public programs, which include classes in technology, literacy, and English as a second language. The New York Public Library serves more than 18 million patrons who come through its doors annually and another 25 million users internationally, who access collections and services through the NYPL website, www.nypl.org.

About Potion

Founded by graduates of the MIT Media Laboratory, Potion is a design and technology firm that specializes in interactive experiences. Potion seeks to expand the language of interactive design. We work tirelessly with our clients and always push ourselves to break new ground. Never satisfied to replicate experiences, Potion researches new technologies, new modes of interaction and continually invents new ways of making this work. The company's engineering heritage forces it to justify each move, each change and each decision – grounding its designs in the real world. Potion's design impulse drives it to play, to form and re-form, and to create work that is as elegant as it is innovative. Potion embraces an interdisciplinary process, bringing together architect-programmers, mathematician-writers, designer-musicians, and everything else in between. Potion believes that code is a medium for creative expression – the digital universe should dance and bloom in response to the human touch. It finds delight in the impossible. Potion loves the challenge and the magic. Potion knows that technology, crafted carefully, can be a force of good in the modern world.

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