

RULE NO 5: THE LIBRARY IS A GROWING ORGANISM AMANDA BELANTARA & A.M. ALPIN



TRANSCRIPT FOR “WELCOME TO THE LIBRARY”

- [Monks Chanting]

- If you can think of this as the, this is the repository of the intellectual efforts of thousands and millions of people who have created this record, this body of material. [Monks chanting] If you can imagine all of their brains humming at the same time. [voices humming]

- Welcome to the library.

- Witamy w bibliotece Bienvenido
la biblioteca Ласкаво просимо до бібліотеки ニューヨーク大学の図書館へよ
うこそ Bine ai venit la NYU Library Vítejte v knihovně Chaõ mừng các bạn đến
thư viện chúng tôi καλώς ήρθατε στη βιβλιοθήκη

- Welcome to the library. [sounds of ocean waves crashing]

- You are standing in a home, [pages turning] a home for ideas [sound Of
someone wondering] curiosity [Hmmm.. どうしよつかなあ?] inspiration [wooden
xylophone] and imagination [Laughter] [whispering voices] The thoughts of
generations linger here, [whispering voices] awaiting to be reawakened in the
minds of readers. [readers whispering] Listeners. [phonograph playing] [analog
projector sound] Viewers. [analog camera snap] Dreamers. [bubbles] [dream-like
whistles] What stories are missing? [typewriter Sounds] What might people ask of
these materials and how might these collections reply? [door creaks] [wooden
staircase foot steps] This library is one of hundreds of thousands of libraries each
with their own stories. [book pages turning] Who brings them to life? [pinwheels
in the breeze] Who can access their information? Who decides what lives within
their walls? What is this living creature, this forest of thoughts. [footsteps in
snow] [birds in the forest] As you travel through the library you may encounter
other objects like this one which are designed to help you explore questions of
invisible labor, [scanner beeps] access, knowledge organization [librarian reads
library call number] and ethics of memory institutions as they decipher what it

means to collect and make available the world's knowledge. [birds chirping in The forest] [pages turning, books creaking] [sounds of library lobby]

- The first thing that I did when I walked into the library was I looked up which I feel like everybody does, everyone looks up and it was just so open and it was just so different.

- I felt a feeling of kind of awe.

- And the walls, the pixelated.

- It was intended to look like digital technology rendered into brass.

- Oh, are they supposed to be like pixels? I thought it was supposed to look kind of like books in a shelf.

- That design that you see on the floor. [classical guitar]

- I mean, to me it always looks sorta like a M. C. Escher kind of, you know puzzle, I guess.

- It kind of invited running across the floor, but that was clearly not gonna be okay.[Laughter]

- My first impression was actually about barriers, [♪ classical guitar ♪] about how many barriers I had to go through to get in. There was the door, then there was the guard, then there was the gate. Three guards in a library seemed excessive.

- When I first came in here, you know, you look up at this soaring space and then you're kind of like, "oh!" and then when you start working here, you're like, "God, what a waste of space!"

- We need more space for the books! More space for the books!

- I like being able to look across the atrium and look into the reading room and just see all these floors of activity. [sounds of library activity] [quiet library stacks]

- When I first started working here, I used to just wander in the stacks and just read for hours. How many places can you go and it's actually just quiet. Not many. [pencil Writing] Not many.

- I think if it admitted a sound, it would be something that I felt in my body, [deep bass sound] like maybe a deep sort of bass sound that, you know, you could kind of feel vibrating. [Heartbeat] [waves crashing]

- I'm impartial to the sounds of the ocean, like I think I'd be floating if I heard that in the library. It just whale sounds everywhere I turn, whale sounds. Just gimme that. [orca and baleen whale sounds]

- I don't know, maybe movie "2001" where the guy's walking into the spaceship. [intense classical music] That's the kind of sound that would make people enthusiastic about the common pursuit of knowledge.

- I mean, the first sound that comes to mind is just like the rustling of the pages. There's like that really smooth sound from those pages like in textbooks, some of those like thick parchment with like the sort of wavy cut edges, just sort of your average paperback bursting out of its bindings. [book pages turning]

- The sound I always hear, I know it's all made up, but the sound I was thinking about is like Tibetan meditation bells. Yeah.

- Air, just like breeze. [wind sounds] That'd be the sound that I'd want to hear.

- Oh, I think a sort of soft hum. A low hum, you know. Yeah. People have always thought of libraries as collections, but more than anything else I think libraries are actually full of people.

- In libraries and archives there's echoes of everything and the people who use them leave their echos too. [voices humming]

- I could be upstairs in a stacks area and suddenly get the feeling or their memory of a person who's like long dead, but they're there with me. Their presence is there.

- As people we have an impulse to record our lives in a way that is beyond us. [voices humming]

- There is something about archives where the people who are in the archives never die. Then there are these moments of invocation of them when they're touched literally, or talked about or brought into conversation, it's a really beautiful way of thinking about death and connection across time. [chime in the breeze] [ocean waves] [page turns]