

My first visit to the lobby of the Ransom Center presented me with an original Gutenberg Bible, one of the magnificent creations of all time. After viewing this treasure, I moved along to discover the world's earliest and most historical photograph taken by Joseph Niepces around 1826, a work I've always known about but never seen. These were both stunning reminders of our history and put me into a different frame of mind. Then the visit proceeded beyond the lobby to the vaults to see selected letters and documents of the 1950's Beat era from writers like Kerouac, Ginsberg, Burroughs and many other contributors to that scene. Even the obscure material was profound and extensive and all of particular interest to me. I knew I was only steps away from other great things of wonder from Mark Twain to John Steinbeck and beyond. Seeing the Magnum archive of photographs was staggering. I selected one tiny subject within this archive, which turned out to be many, many pictures of Martin Luther King.

The Ransom is committed to the idea of having the public share in these treasures through exhibits and also encouraging scholarship by allowing the study of these important materials and subjects. The thought that my working documentation could be in this magnificent repository is a wonderful honor and destination of great respect. I now see that the Ransom Center is the home to end all homes.