This exhibition celebrates the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta by exploring the language and ideology of constitutionalism (both written and unwritten) and the rule of law. While the cornerstone of the exhibition is The Huntington’s 13th-century draft of the Magna Carta, the exhibition’s themes move beyond Medieval England to explore the relevance of Magna Carta to later English history, the history of the United States, and the modern world, with items drawn entirely from The Huntington’s collections.

**CURATOR TOUR**

July 31 (Friday) 7 p.m.

Inspired by the exhibition “Magna Carta: Law and Legend, 1215–2015,” The Huntington presents a special screening of the 1938 classic film “The Adventures of Robin Hood,” starring Errol Flynn. Prior to the film, Oscar-winning visual effects designer Craig Barron will give a special presentation on how some of the visual effects were created in the film.

**MOBILE PHONE**

“THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD”


time: 7-9:30 p.m.

Join us for an outdoor screening of the animated classic “Robin Hood” from Walt Disney Productions, with pre-show activities and entertainment. Bring a blanket and picnic to enjoy on the lawn.

**LECTURE SERIES: MAGNA CARTA**

Aug. 20, 27, September 3 (Thursdays) 10 a.m.-noon

Join curators Vanessa Wilkie and Mary Robertson for this three-part lecture series that explores some of the major themes of the exhibition. This series also examines the iconic status of the idea of Magna Carta in the modern world, from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 to representations of the original document and “Bad King John” in popular culture.

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT: ‘ROBIN HOOD’**

Aug. 29 (Saturday) 7-9:30 p.m.

Join us for an outdoor screening of the animated classic “Robin Hood” from Walt Disney Productions, with pre-show activities and entertainment. Bring a blanket and picnic to enjoy on the lawn.

**PUBLIC LECTURE: SUPREME COURT JUSTICE STEPHEN BREYER**

September 23 (Wednesday) 7:00 p.m.

The Court and the World: The Supreme Court’s New Transnational Role—Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer will speak about the many ways in which American judges, when interpreting American law, must take ever greater account of foreign events, law and practice—the subject of his new book.

**HAHN & HAHN LLP**

This exhibition is made possible by the generous support of Hahn & Hahn LLP.

The curators also wish to acknowledge Craig Barron, Vince Beggs, Tracey Garvin, Constance Jordan, Daniel Powers, and Westlaw for sharing their expertise.
Magna Carta
Law and Legend, 1215–2015

This exhibition celebrates the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta by exploring the language and ideology of constitutionalism (both written and unwritten) and the rule of law. While the cornerstone of the exhibition is The Huntington’s 13th-century draft of the Magna Carta, the exhibition’s themes move beyond Medieval England to explore the relevance of Magna Carta to later English history, the history of the United States, and the modern world, with items drawn entirely from The Huntington’s collections.

June 13-Oct. 12, 2015  |  Library, West Hall

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens

Curator Tour
July 31 (Friday) 7 p.m.

Every tour is led by one of the curators and will include a brief presentation on the exhibition and a guided tour of the exhibition. All tours are free and open to the public.

Movie Night: "Robin Hood"
July 30 (Thursday) 8:30-10 p.m.

Join us for an outdoor screening of the animated classic "Robin Hood" from Walt Disney Production, with pre-show activities and entertainment. Bring a blanket and picnic to enjoy on the lawn.

Lecture Series: Magna Carta
August 20, 27, September 3 (Thursdays) 10 a.m.-noon

Each lecture will be led by one of the curators and will explore one of the major themes of the exhibition. Registration: huntington.org

Family Movie Night: "Robin Hood"
August 29 (Saturday) 7–9:30 p.m.

Join us for an outdoor screening of the animated classic "Robin Hood" from Walt Disney Production, with pre-show activities and entertainment. Bring a blanket and picnic to enjoy on the lawn.

Public Lecture: Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer
September 23 (Wednesday) 7:00 p.m.

The Court and the World: The Supreme Court’s New Transnational Role—Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer will speak about the many ways in which American judges, when interpreting American law, must take greater account of foreign events, law, and practices—the subject of his new book.

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On the cover: Rare draft of Magna Carta; from an English statute book, 13th century. Robin: Illustration of King John and the barons at Runnymede from Raphael Holinshed’s Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1577.

Related Events
In the 250 years that followed, Runnymede’s historic charter and its promises to barons and the realm would form the solid foundation of an Anglo-American legal tradition that has endured for more than 800 years: the principles that not even a king was above the law, that no man should be deprived of his liberty, or property except by judgment of his peers and the law of the land, and that all were entitled to free, prompt, and impartial justice under the law. In 1642, Sir Edward Coke, the famous common law judge and leader of the opposition, freed Englishmen from the “paternalism” of the Tudor monarchs and repurposed the Great Charter as the center of English law. In the 1760s, William Blackstone, the great legal scholar, famously put forward this notion by reinterpreting Magna Carta as the ancient constitution that undergirded the rule of law, due process, and habeas corpus. By the time the Tudor dynasty rose to power in 1485, Magna Carta was an established and unchallenged feature of English law and governance, known by lawyers and historians in a new world of print. Holinshed’s famous Chronicles—a 1577 history of England, Scotland, and Ireland—present a remarkably balanced account of the events of 1215, and young law students accepted the spirit and precedents of the Great Charter with little debate. But the onset of the English Reformation brought surprising opportunities for a different approach to Magna Carta. Because King John’s original document had been a baronial revolt against his vanquished and forced submission to, the powerful Pope Innocent III, the ancient document is malleable, and throughout the past three centuries, people have repurposed it to suit their own needs and add historical significance to their arguments. Even the U.S. Supreme Court has referenced Magna Carta—187 times, in fact, since 1765. The rights promised in the Great Charter have not always been fully realized, but over the past 800 years, the celebrated document has provided a powerful weapon in the ongoing struggle for justice.

When American colonists argued that the English crown denied their rights and exploited their liberties, they pointed to Magna Carta, believing the document empowered them to rise up against an oppressive English state. In 1776, Thomas Paine called for an American revolution and framed a constitutional charter along the lines, he said, of England’s Magna Carta. When the framers of the U.S. Constitution met, they did not specifically reference Magna Carta, but by the late-18th century, Enlightenment thinkers believed in the virtues of written constitutions as a clear declaration of freedoms and liberties. The English had their Magna Carta, the Prerogative of the King, and the Bill of Rights; as Americans drafted their Constitution, they revered Magna Carta as the center of English law. When the American founding father Edward Gibbon characterized the English monarchy as the rule of law, due process, and habeas corpus. These represent important continuities between the English and American legal traditions. When Magna Carta, like the American Constitution, remains a working document in debates about liberties, freedoms, and rights, it also has assumed an iconic status in the past two centuries. Modern leaders, actors, and activists constantly rely on it as a powerful source of human rights and inalienable rights. Political cartoons from James Gillray in 18th-century England to Paul Conrad in 20th-century America included references to Magna Carta in their drawings. The ancient document is malleable, and throughout the past three centuries, people have repurposed it to suit their own needs and add historical significance to their arguments. Even the U.S. Supreme Court has referenced Magna Carta—187 times, in fact, since 1765. The rights promised in the Great Charter have not always been fully realized, but over the past 800 years, the celebrated document has provided a powerful weapon in the ongoing struggle for justice.

Exhibitions commemorating Magna Carta’s 900th anniversary will likely be quite different from those of today as thinkers and societies continue to reimagine this document and debate its place in the world. Fueling such worthwhile discussions is perhaps Magna Carta’s greatest contribution to humanity. Venosa Wilke, William A. Moffett Curator, British Historical Manuscripts; Mary Robertson, Former Chief Curator of Manuscripts, The British Library. Pourquoi utilisez-vous cet outil ?
Eight hundred years ago on June 15, 1215, in a meadow called Runnymede not far from England’s Windsor Castle, discontented and rebellious feudal barons forced King John to issue a Great Charter (in Latin a “Magna Carta”) addressing years of financial exploitation, maladministration, and arbitrary governance under the tyrannical rule of a cruel, sadistic monarch. One of the 63 chapters of the charter promised carefully defined reforms of recent abuses and added rights and privileges beyond standard practice for specific groups, mostly the wealthy and socially privileged classes. Others were more cosmetic, focusing on issues pertaining to a feudal world. Still others were directed at “all free men”—a relatively small portion of the population comprising barons, knights, and the free peasantry—and would form the solid foundation of an England that continued to exist for eight centuries. The principles that not even a king was above the law, that no man should be deprived of his life, liberty, or property except by the judgment of his peers and the law of the land, and that all were entitled to free, prompt, and impartial justice under the law, that no man should be deprived of his life, liberty, or property except by the judgment of his peers and the law of the land, and that all were entitled to free, prompt, and impartial justice under the law, was interpreted to guarantee a trial by jury and expanded the reach of the original grant: Chapter 29, the famous “judgment of his peers” and the “law of the land” were interpreted to guarantee a trial by jury and due process, while “all free men” was broadened to include “any man [or woman], of whatever estate and condition he may be.”

By the time the Tudor dynasty rose to power in 1485, a new age had dawned: the Great Charter was no longer understood as a feudal document. Its content was rewritten to fit an increasingly urban, literate, and commercially oriented society. The obvious change—in both words and content—was that the Great Charter was now the product of the monarch, and by Queen Elizabeth’s death in 1603, politicians turned once more to the lessons of Runnymede.

Upon Elizabeth’s death, her Scottish cousin, James Stuart, ascended to the English throne. While the Tudor monarchs had relied on the relationship between the monarch and Parliament, the Stuart kings could rally support and believers to the cause of the monarchy. As the Stuart monarchs were monarchical and despotic, they saw the Great Charter as a challenge to the divine right of kings. The Stuart kings were therefore forced to rely on the support of Parliament, and this led to a series of constitutional crises and struggles for power. The Great Charter was therefore used as a rallying point for those who opposed the Stuart kings, and it became a symbol of liberty and freedom for those who opposed the monarchy.

When Americans argued that the English crown denied their rights and stopped their liberties, their appeal to Magna Carta, believing the document empowered them to rise up against an oppressive English state. In 1776, Thomas Paine wrote his famous pamphlet Common Sense, appealing to Magna Carta and the Petition of Right as a basis for independence. When the framers of the U.S. Constitution met, they did not specifically reference Magna Carta, but by the late-18th century, Enlightenment thinkers believed in the virtues of written constitutions as a clear declaration of freedoms and liberties. The English had their Bill of Rights, the Americans had their Constitution, they wrote, and the new charter was to serve as the rule of law, due process, and habeas corpus. These represent important continuities between the English and American legal traditions. When Magna Carta, like the American Constitution, remains a working document in debates about liberties, freedoms, and rights, it has assumed an iconic status in the past two centuries. Modern leaders, actors, and writers constantly rely on it as a powerful source of human rights and inalienable liberty. Political cartoons from James Gillray in 18th-century England to Paul Conrad in 20th-century America included references to Magna Carta in their drawings. The ancient document is malleable, and throughout the past three centuries, politicians have repurposed it to suit their own needs and add historical significance to their arguments. Even the U.S. Supreme Court has referenced Magna Carta—187 times, in fact, since 1796. The rights promised in the Great Charter have not always been fully realized, but over the past 800 years, the celebrated document has proved a powerful weapon in the ongoing struggle for justice.

Exhibitions commemorating Magna Carta’s 800th anniversary will likely be quite different from those of today as thinkers and societies continue to reimagine this document and debate its place in the world. Fueling such worthwhile discussions is perhaps Magna Carta’s greatest contribution to humanity. Venosa Wilke, William A. Moffett Cartwright, British Historical Society

Mary Robertson, Former Chief Curator of Manuscripts
Until Elizabeth's death, her Scottish cousin, James Stuart, ascended to the English throne. While the Tudor monarchy had relied on the relationship between the monarch and Parliament, the Stuarts used diplomacy and force to demand the utmost respect from their subjects, a practice that was met with resistance and resulted in armed conflict. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 brought to the throne William of Orange and Mary, who promised to uphold the principles of the Great Charter. The Parliament had to accept the new monarchs, and in 1689, the Bill of Rights was enacted, further defining the power of the monarchy and setting the stage for modern constitutional governance. The American colonists, who were descendants of those who had fled from the tyrannical rule of England, drew inspiration from the Magna Carta and other English legal documents to create a new system of government that protected the rights of individuals and limited the power of the state. This system, known as the U.S. Constitution, was framed in part on the principles of the Magna Carta, and its influence can be seen in the Bill of Rights, which was added to the Constitution in 1791 to protect individual liberties and rights.

When American colonists argued that the English crown denied their rights and exploited their liberties, they pointed to Magna Carta, believing the document empowered them to rise up against an oppressive English state. In 1776, Thomas Paine called for America to embrace the principles of the Magna Carta and to demand the same constitutional rights that Englishmen enjoyed. The American Revolution was fought in part to secure these rights, and the U.S. Constitution, written in the years following the revolution, was intended to embody the principles of the Magna Carta.

The Magna Carta has proved a powerful weapon in the ongoing struggle for justice. Political cartoonists from James Gillray in England to Charles Willson Peale in America have used it as a powerful source of human rights and inalienable liberties, freedoms, and rights, it also has assumed an iconic status in the past two centuries. Modern leaders, activists, and artists constantly rely on it as a source of inspiration and resistance against tyranny and oppression.
Magna Carta
Law and Legend, 1215–2015

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CURATOR TOUR
July 30 (Thursday) 4:30-5 p.m.
Join curators Vanessa Wilkie and Mary Robertson for a private tour of the exhibition.
Members: $15; Non-Members: $20.
Registrations: brownpapertickets.com or 800-838-3006.

MOVIE NIGHT - "THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD"
July 31 (Friday) 7 p.m.
Inspired by the exhibition “Magna Carta: Law and Legend, 1215–2015,” The Huntington presents a special screening of the 1938 classic film “The Adventures of Robin Hood,” starring Errol Flynn. Prior to the film, Oscar-winning visual effects designer Craig Barron will give a special presentation on some of the visual effects used in the film.
Rhatigan Hall. Members: $9; Non-Members: $13.
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LECTURE SERIES: MAGNA CARTA
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Members: $60; Non-Members: $75.
Registrations: brownpapertickets.com or 800-838-3006.

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT - "ROBIN HOOD"
Aug. 29 (Saturday) 7—9 p.m. (for adults and families)
Join us for an outdoor screening of the animated classic “Robin Hood” from Walt Disney Productions, with pre-show activities and entertainment: Bring a blanket and picnic to enjoy on the lawn.
Members: $20; Non-Members: $20. Ages 2 and under free.
Tickets: brownpapertickets.com or 800-838-3006.

PUBLIC LECTURE: SUPREME COURT JUSTICE STEPHEN BREYER
September 27 (Wednesday) 7:00 p.m.
The Court and the World: The Supreme Court’s New Transnational Role—Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer will speak about the many ways in which American judges, when interpreting American law, must take ever greater account of foreign events, law and practices—the subject of his new book.
Rothenberg Hall. Registrations: huntington.org

HAIN & HAIN LLP
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