

SOCIETY OF FELLOWS



# NEWS

AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

WINTER 2008

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## Letter from the Editor

JAMES L. BODNAR, FAAR'80

In this time of significant change, as witnessed by the unpredictable economy and the historic election, this issue of the SOF News brings together a broad array of contributions from the entire AAR community. Produced over an extended period, they reflect the elaborately diverse influences that make up the institution we share. This institution, beyond its well-loved bricks and mortar, allows all to benefit from the simple notion that a handful of scholars and artists living together in a community can foster and expand the pursuits of each through their day-to-day interaction. This common experience remains unchanged, but the results often change us, our work, our futures, and sometimes significantly.

Articles in this issue of the SOF News look at two historic AAR "re-openings" that were the focus of well-deserved celebrations in Rome. The first of these marks the centennial of the birth of Laurance P. Roberts, and recalls the re-opening of the AAR after World War II. The

second describes the re-opening of the Arthur and Janet C. Ross Library, closed for a year for a comprehensive renovation and expansion. Its rebirth represents the crowning success of Christina Huemer's tenure as the Drues Heinz Librarian. The first re-opening brought the AAR into the modern, postwar Roberts era; the second brings the library into the 21st century.

This issue also emphasizes the work of recent fellows in the arts and literature. One article recounts the experience of an artist simulating communal living in a two-dimensional world; another reports on a digital reconstruction of ancient Rome via a real time three-dimensional model. Two other pieces herald enormous and welcome changes to two of the most important and often discussed aspects of the AAR experience, the food and wine. And yet, these changes are significant, but the essence of the tradition of fellows dining together remains unchanged. Enjoy!

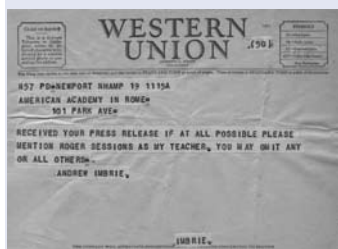
### PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITIONS, AWARDS, REMEMBRANCE

#### 1940S

**Andrew W. Imbrie, FAAR'49, RAAR'68**, composer. Born 6 April 1921; died 5 December 2007. He was 85 years old.

"Please give my best to Mrs. Roberts. I'm very sorry I didn't get the chance to come over and say good-bye, but the hectic business of packing and shipping trunks and selling the motorcycle were more than I had bargained for. I feel that the stay in Rome has been one of the most fruitful experiences in my life, and I shall always think of it with pleasure."

From a letter to the Academy Director Laurance Roberts, June 1949



A 1947 telegram from Andrew W. Imbrie FAAR'49, RAAR'68, indicating the significant respect he felt for his mentor Roger Sessions with whom he studied at Princeton University.

Image courtesy of the American Academy in Rome Archives

#### 1950S

**William T. McKibben, FAAR'51**, classicist. Born 30 September 1916; died 24 October 2007. He was 91 years old.

"The project which I intend to complete is, briefly, to combine philological and archaeological methods in the interpretation of Vitruvius. As a simple example, to compare the situations in which Vitruvius is able to describe things or techniques in language which we can parallel from other technical writers with those in which he is forced to translate Greek or use foreign terms or obscure paraphrases, in order to trace in the process of linguistic adaptation the indices of the technical, to apply one more form of analysis to the distinction and relation of Italic and Hellenistic elements in classical building and classical culture."

William T. McKibben, from his Rome Prize application, 1940. His fellowship was deferred until 1949 because of the Academy's closing during WWII.



William T. McKibben FAAR'51, at Grinnell College, Iowa, where he was Professor Emeritus of Classics

**Martha Hoffman Lewis, FAAR'53**, classicist. Born 8 November 1922; died 27 January 2006. She was 83 years old.

"The subject of my dissertation, on which I am at present engaged, is the membership of the four major colleges of priests under Augustus and Tiberius. I am preparing lists of members of these colleges and am studying the careers of the men who received priesthoods. My analysis will, I hope, lead to a better understanding of the Roman nobility in the early empire."

Martha Hoffman Lewis, from her Rome Prize application, 1951



The Ara Pacis Augustae, Rome. Detail from the altar's processional frieze, representing the chief priesthood of the flamines.

**Joseph Amisano, FAAR'52**, architect. Born 10 January 1917; died 12 April 2008. He was 91 years old.

"...Lennox Square, the John Knox Presbyterian Church, the Peachtree Summit building, the Alliance Theater, the symphony hall and art museum. All stand as monuments to the architectural genius of Joseph Amisano, whose work in the 1950s and 1960s changed the face of Atlanta."

From The South, by B. C. Hall and C. T. Wood, 1995



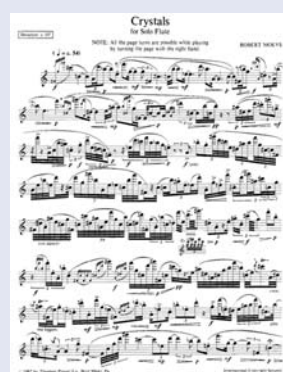
The John Knox Presbyterian Church in Marietta, Georgia, completed in 1967, was the favorite project of Joseph Amisano FAAR'52. One sees the influence of Louis Kahn, who was a Resident Architect during Amisano's fellowship years.

**Dick Bell, FAAR'53, RAAR'75**, landscape architect, is included in Metro Magazine's "Who's Who" list of men and women of high achievement who have made significant contributions to the state of North Carolina (Metro Magazine, Raleigh).

**Robert Moevs, FAAR'55, RAAR'61**, composer. Born 2 December 1920; died 10 December 2007. He was 87 years old.

"After serving in World War II as a pilot in the United States Air Force, Moevs' formative years were spent in Europe... In close contact with the tightly-structured works of Boulez, and stunned by the raw sound of Edgar Varèse, Moevs synthesised these styles into what he termed "systematic chromaticism."

Baker's Biographical Dictionary of 20th Century Classical Musicians



Robert Moevs, FAAR'55, RAAR'61 Crystals for Solo Flute, composed in 1980

**Ann Freeman Meyvaert, FAAR'58**, medievalist. Born 30 June 1926; died 28 February 2008. She was 87 years old.

"Ann's rather short Ph.D. thesis, presented to Harvard's History department in 1956, successfully showed that Theodulf, a Spaniard, had been Charlemagne's ghost-writer for the long Latin polemical treatise bearing the king's name (the Caroline Books) and aimed against the Greek council of Nicea II in 787. It was immediately published in the pre-eminent journal Speculum and established her scholarly reputation."

Quoted from Larry Swain, The Heroic Age



Detail from the apse mosaic at Theodulf's private oratory in Germigny-des-Près (église de la Sainte-Trinité), studied by Ann Freeman Meyvaert, FAAR'58 and Paul Meyvaert

**George P. Garrett, Jr., FAAR'59**, writer. Born 11 June 1929; died 26 May 2008. He was 78 years old.

"I wrote The Finished Man in Rome when I was over there in 1958. And what I would do is every day start out at the beginning and rework up to as far as I had gone and then write some new stuff."

From an interview with George Garrett by Madison Smartt Bell, in Chronicles, June 1998.



George P. Garrett, Jr. FAAR'59 pictured in his office at the University of Virginia, 1963.

#### 1960S

**Lawrence Fane, FAAR'63**, had exhibitions at Zabriskie Gallery in New York City (2006), at Arte Solaria in Piacenza, Italy, with accompanying monograph by Luigi Ballerini: Le machine inadempienti di Lawrence Fane (2006), and at Bigtown Gallery, Rochester, VT (2007).

**Astra Zarina, FAAR'63**, architect. Born 1929; died 31 August 2008. She was 79 years old.

"I'm an architect. I am also by nature a teacher. I love to see people develop, grow, discover themselves. When I work with them, I discover things too."

Astra Zarina



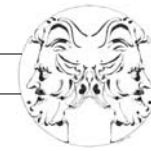
Sketch of Astra Zarina by James Corey

**Ezra Laderman, FAAR'64, RAAR'83**, was elected president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2006.

**Theodore Liebman, FAAR'66**, and **R. Alan Melting, FAAR'70**, merged their firm, The Liebman Melting Partnership, with Perkins Eastman Architects and are focusing on their international practice in Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe.

**Anna Marguerite McCann, FAAR'66**, served on a panel entitled "Deep Water Archaeology: Legal and Ethical Issues" at the January AIA meeting in Chicago.

**Thomas V. Czarnowski, FAAR'68**, was made partner at Gruzen Samton Architects LLP, and is currently working with Foster + Partners on the new Yale School of Management campus.



## Laurance P. Roberts Centenary Celebration

ADELE CHATFIELD-TAYLOR, FAAR'84  
PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME



Photograph: James Bodnar

In a year of many highlights and special events, the 2008 Roberts Centenary Celebration, chaired by Charles Brickbauer, FAAR'57, stands out as exceptional. The weekend of September 30–October 2, 2007, which began as a commemoration of the 100th birthday of Laurance P. Roberts, the extraordinary man who led the academy from 1946 to 1959, grew into something that, we hope, genuinely reflected the breadth of what he and his wife, Isabel S. Roberts, accomplished.

When at the end of the second World War, the trustees of the American Academy in Rome appointed Laurance P. Roberts director, they gave him one assignment: to reopen the academy. We had closed our doors in 1940, and Laurance and Isabel arrived in December of 1946. Laurance had just been discharged from the army. The couple found the property in shambles, without heat, hot water, or furniture. Yet, by June, when the Classical Summer School met for the first time in more than six years since before the war began, the main building was functioning. During the months that followed, the other buildings, too, were brought back to life, one by one.

The buildings were a means to an end: a re-imagined community that became our modern academy of today. Before the war, most fellows were single men under the age of 30, and there were a handful of women scholars who lived and dined in separate quarters. When the fellows arrived in fall of 1947, for the first time their number included women artists. Both men and women were allowed to be over 30, to be married, and to be accompanied by spouses and children. Although (after some trial and error) families generally lived outside our precinct, the academy was on its way to being the more down-to-earth institution it is today.

The Roberts also initiated changes to the fellowships, instituting a Rome Prize in the History of Art (then based in the School of Fine Arts), and they launched our still crucial association with the American Academy of Arts and Letters and

in so doing created the first fellowship in literature. They began a unique and very successful partnership whereby Italian archaeologists, other scholars, and finally artists, were able to win Fulbright Fellowships to the American Academy and became full-fledged, lifelong members of the academy family. Laurance and Isabel Roberts appointed the first residents, including some distinguished artists and scholars drawn from beyond the United States: among them were Elizabeth Bowen, Richard

Krautheimer, Agnes Mongan, and Archibald MacLeish. To quote Martin Brody's essay in the program for the Roberts Centenary: the Roberts "transformed the academy into a hothouse of contemporary artistic production while affirming and redefining its commitment to the study of the past."

The academy's other programs were also broadened and reinvigorated in the 1940s and 50s. With Roberts's encouragement, the newly established International Union of the Institutes of History, Archeology and Art, began sponsoring joint exhibitions of the work of the fellows and students of the many foreign academies in Rome. Also, under the auspices of the Unione, Laurance Roberts offered Ernest Nash a home for his extraordinary photographs of Rome, now known as the Fototeca Unione. The collection includes more than 30,000 negatives. This Fototeca, together with the Academy's own Photographic Archive which has continued to grow over the years, is today an important resource for scholars, artists, and other researchers.

In 1947, Roberts brought Frank E. Brown, FAAR'33 (whose centenary we will also recognize in 2008) to Rome to establish an academy excavation, which he did at Cosa, in Tuscany. Generations of fellows have worked there and in the Cosa Room at the academy, which was also created during these years, and the academy continues to this day to publish the work that has come out of this dig.

The academy's music program in particular blossomed, with the Villa Aurelia concerts, an ongoing relationship with Rome's RAI Orchestra that made possible the performance of fellow's symphonic work's as well as those by residents such as Aaron Copland.

Each of these contributions to the making of the modern Academy was addressed as part of the Roberts Centenary Celebration.

On Monday October 1, Laurance Roberts's 100th birthday, there was a public conference on "Roberts's Rome" with papers given by Richard T. Arndt; Henry A. Millon, FAAR'60, RAAR'66; Martin Brody, RAAR'02; and Richard Trythall, FAAR'67, RAAR'71. Cosa: The Italian Sigillata, Supplements to the Memoirs of the AAR, 2006, by Maria Teresa Marabini Moevs, Italian Fulbright Fellow'52 (the first year such fellowships were awarded), FAAR'64, was presented, with talks not only about the new book but also about the history of the Cosa excavations and the welcoming of Italian Fulbright Fellows into the academy family. There were remarks by Lawrence Richardson JR. FAAR'50, RAAR'79, delivered in absentia by Harry B. Evans, FAAR'73, RAAR'91; Russell T. Scott, Jr., FAAR'66, RAAR'79, delivered in absentia by Thomas A. J. McGinn, FAAR'85, Andrew W. Mellon Professor in Charge; Silvio Panciera, Italian Fulbright Fellow'58, and Maria Teresa Marabini Moevs. A Villa Aurelia concert featured music by Roberts-era fellows and residents; it was followed by dinner in the style of those once given by the Robertses attended by the full community, Roberts family members, and Roman friends.

But mainly the Roberts Centenary celebrated the fellowship that is the academy. Before the public programs, before the concert and dinner party, there was a joyous family luncheon in the Cortile. A single long table ran the length of each of two arms of the Cortile to seat the more than one hundred people in attendance.

For the event, Charles Brickbauer had gathered together members of the Roberts family and their close friends; some of them had visited the Academy years ago, and others knew it only

through often and fondly told stories. In addition, all the fellows were invited who had been in Rome under the Roberts's direction, hoping that the reunited classes of 1947 through the 1950's would take the opportunity to confer with the fellows of 2007–2008. Many came: James Ackerman, FAAR'52; Katherine Geffcken, FAAR'55; James Lamantia, FAAR'49; Maria Teresa Marabini Moevs, Italian Fulbright Fellow, '52; Henry A. Millon, FAAR'60; Mara Bonfioli Panciera, Italian Fulbright Fellow, '59; and Silvio Panciera Italian Fulbright Fellow, '58. Happily, they were joined by fellows from other years, including Jeffrey Blanchard, FAAR'79; Harry B. Evans, FAAR'73; Ronald Filson, FAAR'70; Stephen Kieran, FAAR'81; trustee Michael Conforti, FAAR'76; and Society of Fellows president James L. Bodnar, FAAR'80. Others, such as Robert Venturi, FAAR'56, RAAR'66, and William MacDonald, FAAR'56, sent comments, and Evangelos Frudakis, FAAR'52, gave the Academy a bust of Laurance Roberts that he had sculpted in his studio and cast in Rome during his fellowship years.

One by one, fellows from the 1940s and 1950s and those from the program rose and came to stand at the intersection of the two tables and give a five-minute talk about their work or their time at the academy.

Every single presentation was fascinating, and together they formed a complete portrait of the academy as a joyous, life-altering opportunity and experience that endures and grows over time but somehow always remains the same. Nat Roberts, nephew of Laurance Roberts, spoke especially memorably when he quoted



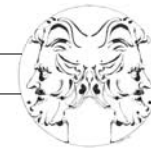
Photograph: James Bodnar

his Uncle's challenge to all new arrivals in the old days: "Do not think of where you've been, but of where you are going, and learn from the people that you'll meet here to form a continuum through life."

The final event of the centenary vividly captures the spirit of the weekend. This was a walk through Baroque Rome, a special tour conceived by Charles Brickbauer, Hank Millon, and Robert Venturi. Led by Millon, it quickly became an ambulatory conversation on art, architecture, Rome and the Rome Prize experience, with contributions by Jim Ackerman, Charles Brickbauer, David Childs, Michael Conforti, and many of the fellows of 2007–2008. This (re)union of members of the Roberts family with Roberts fellows, with the fellows now in residence, and with Rome itself aptly celebrated the timeless qualities Laurance and Isabel Roberts brought to their restoration and the expansion of the academy in the crucial years of the mid-twentieth century: the joy and generosity of spirit, the life of intellect and creativity that is the American Academy in Rome, and for which we will be forever grateful.



Photograph: James Bodnar



## Personal Thoughts on the Library Restoration

CHRISTINA PUGLISI  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PROPERTIES

Can one create new spaces, move walls, remove floors, refinish every surface and design new furniture while strengthening the character of what we have known as the American Academy in Rome Library? What is its unique character and how does it relate to the rest of the McKim Building? This, in essence, is what occupied us for a few years and especially last year, during the ten-month intensive restoration and upgrade of the American Academy in Rome Library, now the Arthur and Janet C. Ross Library.

“Us” consisted of the gifted design team, Architects Cinzia Abbate and Carlo Vigeveno with Engineer Bruno Masci; MEP/HVAC Engineer Luigi De Marco and structural Engineer Marco Barone; Christina Huemer (Drue Heinz Librarian) and her staff, especially Paolo Imperatori and Antonio Palladino; yours-truly and the best client possible, Adele Chatfield-Taylor and the Plant, Planning and Preservation Committee of the Academy, who supported and advised us throughout the project without ever asking for compromises.

The scope of the overall project was fairly broad but at its core was the fact that the Italian authorities had demanded that we install a fire suppression system and remove all desks and

work spaces from the stacks areas which meant that the Library needed to be closed. So, we decided to take this opportunity to expand the project and solve other needs: specifically the need to increase the shelving capacity, create special cabinets for the folios collection and study carrels, create a private office for the Assistant Librarian Denise Gavio, a new work space for volunteers and upgrade the rest of the offices and building systems. Finally the beautiful woodwork in the Linda Bettman Reference Room and Arthur Ross Reading Room on the main floor had not been restored or cleaned in about 90 years and were in dire need of conservation.

We immediately decided that we were going to design and fabricate most of the new furniture needed, such as folios cabinets, bookshelves, desks and study carrels. We wanted to design contemporary furniture specifically for the “McKim” Library and we needed to use metal in addition to wood for conservation purposes. Guided by these two principles, we selected noce nazionale or national Italian walnut already present in the Library and worked in generous dimensions when we used it alone for the desks and much thinner dimensions when we used it “as a skin”, to quote Architect Cinzia Abbate, around the metal folios cabinets.

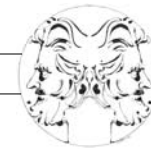
The linear form of the new double study carrels with book shelves on the side was a direct response to the narrow beauty of the old Metropolitana which was going to become our new Reading and Folios Room. The new reference desk, named for the late Andrew Heiskell, turned out to be the most difficult single piece of furniture to design because of its location in the middle of the beautiful historical woodwork in the Linda Bettman Reference Room. It was not until the very end of the project that we finally felt comfortable with our design. We needed to spend time actually working in the Library and watching the old furniture come back to life, after cleaning and re-waxing, before we could design this desk. We needed to, as Adele often says, “watch the light”.

The rest of the project fell into place. We decided on compact shelving to increase shelving capacity; we designed a new mezzanine to gain more space for the offices and created a second Reading Room on the lower level. For this we selected a corner space which never had a continuous use and because of this lacked clear character or relevance. However we knew we could turn it into a relevant part of the Library by anchoring our design around an original McKim table with its chairs and lamps that we needed to relocate from the Linda Bettman Reference Room to make room for the new Andrew Heiskell Reference Desk.

With plans in hand, we went out to bid and began construction in early September 2006. A General Contractor called MarCost, new to the Academy but not to the Architects, won the bid. MarCost turned out to be a very good contractor. Key to the project was Nazzareno Palmieri, the tireless Superintendent who worked every Saturday for ten months, a few Sundays and holidays, almost never lost his cool and consistently went beyond the call of duty. One day, a few hours before the official Cortile Dinner for Fellows and Trustees during Trustee week in Rome, with over 100 dinner guests expected, the Sous Chef Chris Boswell called me in a slight panic because their pasta maker had just broken. The Maintenance Crew had already left for the day so I immediately called Nazzareno who instead of going home, came to the kitchen with his tool box and fixed the pasta maker.

The restoration of the Library brought one major surprise. During the early stages of demolition and structural consolidation we discovered that the main sewer line that passed below the Library space had collapsed and had to be rebuilt. This added a tremendous amount of work and time to the project, all of which had to be absorbed within our schedule making it mandatory from the very beginning to work weekends.





Architect Carlo Vigeveno was the Architect of Record for Construction which meant that his professional liability was on the line while we were carrying out major construction and excavations right below the Fellows bedrooms and studies.

The Director Carmela Franklin was a great supporter and advocate for the project, always finding the positive side of the project even in the face of the dust and noise that the project brought on everything and everybody. She also kept us on schedule by reminding us during her frequent site visits that she had given her word to the Roman community of scholars that we would reopen the Academy Library on time.

One of the great privileges of living and working at the Academy is that it deepens ones understanding of the purpose of the institution, the buildings, the gardens, the community and how it all comes together. This knowledge is fundamental during the design phase of any project

and must continue to guide the project as it unfolds during construction and implementation.

Restoration is a process and each new insight and decision must be checked against the overall project intent. Close attention must be paid to understand the nuances of the evolving project and one needs be ready to refine design decisions, whether it is the amount of shellac to be applied to the original wood or the height of a vertical element for a new railing.

Finally, if everyone involved in the project understands the spirit of the restoration process, then changes can be made without major “change orders” or extra cost. When we uncovered some old rails which had been used to transport coal back in the early life of the McKim building, we were able incorporate them into our floor design as if they had always been part of the project.

Our work completed (including the move of all 120,000 plus books first out and then back in, a painstaking enterprise that was carried out under the supervision of Christina Huemer and her staff), the Library reopened on September 3rd, 2007 to the new Fellows and a week later to our outside readers just as Carmela had promised.

It is always a little sad when a project comes to an end for those of us so intensively involved. But after ten months of noise and loud voices it was now quiet. The readers were back inside the Library, working in silence and the Library was where it belongs, at the center of Academy life.



#### PROJECT CREDITS

**Architects:** Studio Abbate and Vigeveno, Architects Cinzia Abbate, Carlo Vigeveno and Engineer Bruno Masci.

**HVAC and MEP:** Engineer Luigi De Marco.

**Structural Engineering:** Engineer Marco Barone.

**Graphic Design:** 2x4

**General Contractor:** MarCost—Geometra Erminio Marinelli; Project Manager: Geometra Domenico Sabatini, Site Superintendent: Nazzareno Palmieri.

**Building Systems:** BiaSer and GMF.

**Wood Conservation:** Franco Cattani.

**Custom Furniture:** Misura Arredo. (Design Abbate and Vigeveno)

**FF&E:** Trento Arredamenti.

**Compact Shelving:** Carbotti.

**Selected FF&E:** Arquitectonica.

**Lighting:** Baldieri.

**Moving and Storage Company:** Premio SRL.

**Plant, Planning & Preservation Committee:** Vincent J. Buonanno, Chair; Mercedes T. Bass; Adele Chatfield-Taylor; David M. Childs; Carmela V. Franklin; Michael Graves; Mary Margaret Jones; Wendy Evans Joseph; Susan Nitze; Nancy M. O'Boyle; Jessie H. Price; Michael Rock; Billie Tsien.

*All photographs on this spread: Mimmo Capone*



## Arthur and Janet C. Ross

ELIZABETH GRAY KOGEN  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

Arthur Ross (1910–2007) was elected a trustee of the American Academy in Rome in 1982 and remained a member of the Academy family in that capacity and later as a trustee emeritus until his death on September 9, 2007. He was a wise and engaged adviser, bringing his renowned business acumen to the Academy's finance and investment committees, and his love of classicism, learning, and international scholarly exchange and of parks, trees, and gardens to his oversight of the Academy's programs and property. Janet Ross, an artist whom he married in 1984, was a passionate supporter of many of these interests, and also became an integral part of the academy family.

Photograph: Mimmo Capone



At a luncheon celebrating the endowment gift Arthur and Janet Ross made to name the library Arthur said:

"...the library, with its world-scale collection of over 135,000 volumes on art and archaeology, has always interested us, [as has] the reading room, with which we have had a love affair since early on.

"As the years have passed, adding to my devotion to the academy, I began to feel a sense of patriotism and the attraction of supporting this great cultural outpost of our country. We have enough army and naval bases around the world and enough preoccupation with guns and military hardware, so to raise our flag high over the library was an opportunity not to be missed."

Arthur Ross's affection for and commitment to the American Academy was expressed not only in his support for the library but also in his promotion of the fellowships, the creative and scholarly programs, and the place itself.

He endowed the Arthur Ross Predoctoral Rome Prize Fellowship in Ancient Studies, the first winner, Jennifer Trimble, FAAR'98 took up residence in 1997. The ten Arthur Ross Rome Prize fellows since then are Lauren Hackworth Petersen, FAAR'99, William C. Stull, FAAR'00, Karen Klaiber Hersch, FAAR'01, Kristina M. Sessa, FAAR'02, James Woolard, FAAR'03, Justin St. P. Walsh, FAAR'04, Rebecca M. Molholt, FAAR'05, Jacob A. Latham, FAAR'06, Michael J. Johnson, FAAR'06, and Robert Chenault, FAAR'08.

The Academy gathers each spring to announce and introduce the Rome Prize winners at the Janet and Arthur Ross Rome Prize Ceremony. It is the most important event of the year, both a reunion of returning and former fellows and a welcoming of new ones.

Arthur Ross planned and also for many years hosted a fall event for artists and scholars who had recently completed their fellowship year. The Returning Fellows Dinner had an almost therapeutic role, easing these scholars' reentry into life after the academy. This occasion is now organized and sponsored by the Society of Fellows, and serves as an inauguration into this organization of alumni and the continuing fellowship it represents.

In 1990 Arthur Ross launched the international tour of an exhibition of his Piranesi prints at the American Academy in Rome. Today, everyone who visits the academy's New York offices today finds two of the Piranesi prints on permanent view, a gift of Arthur Ross.

Arthur Ross will always be a presence at the Academy in Rome, a part of the place. He supported the restoration of Villa Aurelia, helping to provide the Academy with its ideal setting for public programs, from concerts and lectures to conferences and symposia, and for private retreats and planning meetings, receptions and dinners, and overnight accommodations for guests of the Academy. Finally he will also be remembered always by his elm trees, which that grow in the Chiaraviglio and Triangle Gardens.

### PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITIONS, AWARDS, REMEMBRANCE [Continued from page 2]

#### 1970s

**Jon Michael Schwarting, FAAR'70**, recently published *New York/Milano: Disegno per la città nella regione urbana*.

**Dale Kinney, FAAR'72, RAAR'97**, the Eugenia Chase Guild Professor in the Humanities and Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Bryn Mawr College, concluded a four-year term on the board of directors of the College Art Association in 2007. She was vice-president for the CAA 2007 Annual Conference.

**Laurie D. Olin, FAAR'74, RAAR'90**, has a busy practice, but was able to take his first sabbatical in 34 years and be a Resident in Landscape Architecture at the AAR from March through June, 2008. Recent completed projects include Columbus Circle in New York City, and the Brancusi Ensemble, Targu-Jui, Romania.

**Thomas Walsh, FAAR'74**, in December 2007 installed a 16' cast aluminum sculpture at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts in Santa Rosa, CA

**Martin Bresnick, FAAR'76, RAAR'00**, had his music featured in a concert at the Hill Recital Hall of Birmingham-Southern College in February. Bresnick also spoke at the Provost Forum at the college.

**Azeo Torre, FAAR'76**, has been extensively involved in recovery, planning, and sustainable design in post Hurricane Katrina New Orleans. Torre's firm, Torre/Design Consortium, Ltd was recently awarded the commission to redesign the zoological gardens for the Atlanta Zoo and is involved in the construction of other zoos in Norfolk, Memphis, Palm Beach, Evansville, Peoria, and Oklahoma City. Torre firm recently completed comprehensive city plans for New Orleans and Westwego, Louisiana, and a park and zoological garden for Nanchang, China.

**Gunnar Birkerts, FAIA, RAAR'76**, recently had an exhibition of his work entitled "18 Libraries" in Riga, Latvia.

**John M. Johansen, RAAR'76**, participated in an international conference on "Technology and the City" sponsored by the mayor of Rome and held there on 1 March 2008.

**Jeffrey Schiff, FAAR'77**, is working on a commission for the state courthouse in New Britain, CT.

**Caren Canier, FAAR'78**, had an exhibition of recent work at the Mark Potter Gallery of the Taft School in Watertown, CT, in January–March 2008 (website: www.rpi.edu/~caniec).

**Judith Di Maio, FAAR'78**, traveled to Beijing in 2007 as part of a summer program between NYIT and Tongji. The trip including visits to 2008 Olympic stadium and pool complex.

**John H. Thow, FAAR'78**, composer. Born 6 October 1949; died 4 March 2007. He was 57 years old.

"Mr. Thow's music combined a modernist's approach to rhythm and harmony with an almost Romantic lyricism, and often the music's interest lies in the tension between those contradictory impulses. In other scores, his interests ranged farther afield, and he had a particular fondness for Native American music."

Allan Kozinn



John H. Thow, FAAR'78 Quintet for Winds, composed and performed at the Academy in 1978.

Image courtesy of the American Academy in Rome Archives

**Rudolf Arnheim, RAAR'78**, psychologist of art. Born 15 July 1904; died 9 June 2007. He was 102 years old.

"My daily trips down the hill on the crowded bus greatly refreshed my image of the Baroque buildings, and in my little office on the top floor of the Academy, with its windows open to the blackbird, which on the top of the poplar tree supplied melody to my writing. I wrote in English and thought in Italian."

Rudolf Arnheim, in a 1992 letter to the Society of Fellows



Rudolf Arnheim's influential *Art and Visual Perception*, first published in 1954, in its Italian manifestation.

**Sheila Silver, FAAR'79**, is the recipient of the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Music Composition Prize for her opera *The Wooden Sword*. This award is organized by the University of Connecticut's School of Fine Arts. Her composition *Twilight's Last Gleaming*, for two pianos and percussions, was premiered at the Morgan Library in New York City in November 2007, with pianists Gilbert Kalish and Christian Dahl and percussion by Eduardo Leandro.

**James Stokoe, FAAR'79**, had an exhibit of photographs titled "Architecture of Construction" at the American Institute of Architects Headquarters Gallery from 11 January to 27 March 2008 (website: www.accidentalarchitecture.com).

#### 1980s

**Nelson Minnich, FAAR'80**, was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI to the Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche on 5 February 2007.

**Joseph F. McCrindle, TRUSTEE EMERITUS, 1980–1994**, art collector and publisher. Born 1923; died 11 July 2008. He was 85 years old.

"Reserved and self-effacing, Mr McCrindle moved restlessly through life, traveling constantly, moving from one project to the next..."

From William Grimes' New York Times obituary, 18 July 2008



A cover of the *Transatlantic Review*, which McCrindle founded and edited from 1959 through 1977.

**Thomas L. Bosworth, FAAR'81**, work is the subject of *Building with Light* in the Pacific Northwest: The Houses of Thomas L. Bosworth (Oro Press, 2007). He was a visiting artist at the AAR in November 2007.

**Deborah Stott, FAAR'81**, has retired from the University of Texas at Dallas and hopes to have more time for scholarly work and travel. She is currently working on a book on Cornelia Collonello and her relationship with Michelangelo.

**David LaPalombara, FAAR'82**, was recently appointed professor and director of the School of Art at Ohio University.

**Arthur Ross, TRUSTEE EMERITUS, 1982–93**, investor and philanthropist. Born 25 November 1910; died 10 September 2007. He was 96 years old.

"As the years have passed, adding to my devotion to the Academy, I began to feel a sense of patriotism and the attraction of supporting this great cultural outpost of our country. We have enough army and naval bases around the world and enough pre-occupations with guns and military hardware, so to raise our flag high over the library was an opportunity not to be missed."

Arthur Ross, on the funding of the American Academy in Rome's library renovation



Arthur Ross with his wife Janet, seated at the Academy's WWII memorial in the Cortile.

Image courtesy of the American Academy in Rome Archives

**Pamela Starr, FAAR'84**, was elected secretary of the American Musicological Society. Her term began in November 2007.



## Starlings

ANTHONY DOERR, FAAR '05

By mid-December the air in the shadows has grown painfully cold. Hardly any Italians seem to bring their children outside. When we push our twins through the Villa Sciarra, where stone fauns and nymphs stand in the frozen basins of fountains and two peacocks strut through a chain-link aviary trailed by dozens of pigeons like royal attendants, we are often the only parents strolling babies.

Virgil claims in the *Aeneid* that the Romans dunked newborns into freezing streams to “harden them,” but the few baby carriages we’ve seen this winter contain infants enfolded in snowsuits under down comforters, not so much a baby at all as a pillow with a head and two mittens and two shoes stitched on the corners. On buses older women slide the windows shut as soon as we wheel through the doors. In the supermarket, a woman in an ankle-length parka watches us bag groceries, then gestures at the boys and asks something like “You’re taking them outside?”

How does she think we got there? It’s only 35 or 40°F after all. Try this sometime: Park a stroller in the shade in Rome in the winter. Within a minute an Italian mother will stop. “They must be put in the sun,” she’ll say. Once a pair of ladies took the stroller out of my hands and wheeled it thirty feet across a piazza and positioned it themselves.

Either Virgil was lying or the Romans have gotten soft. We dress the twins in hooded sweatshirts, fleece jumpers. We draw glances of horror. We are parenting daredevils.

Late afternoons, as it’s getting dark, I walk from my studio to 5B and take whichever boy happens to be awake out in the backpack to see the starlings. Tonight, it’s Owen. We head downhill from the apartment, kicking up leaves, the frame of the carrier creaking in the cold. He hums a sustained C-sharp into my ear. We pause beside the piers of the Fontanone where the water is splashing blue and cold across the marble and cross via Garibaldi to look out at the city. A few tourists brave the cold. Traffic throbs past. The view beyond the railing still dazzles me, every time. Rome is orange. The sky is deep-ocean blue. Above the Alban Hills, Venus shines a pale white.

Not quite black, not quite gray, in the hand a starling feather shimmers with greens and purples, like a puddle touched with oil. Lovely, but common, too, and the rampancy of starlings more than anything casts them as grimy, despised birds. They take over winter feeders, pave neighborhoods with excrement, feast on the seeds for winter wheat. But above Rome, in winter, they assemble in flocks ten thousand strong and put on shows that take the breath away.

Tonight there are three flocks. They stretch into quarter-mile bands, winding apart, then slowly snapping back together. In one minute they are three separate helices, a heart, a velvet funnel, two falling scarves. A flock swings closer to us, a shower of black against the blue, plunging in coordination—suddenly a thousand birds turn their wing tips to us and are gone.

Here on the Janiculum, Romans supposedly posted an augur or two, priests who would interpret the flights of birds to determine the will of the gods. The birds swing east and it’s time to go to battle. See too many hawks, or not enough, and an inauguration should be postponed. From what I’ve read, Livy’s history of Rome is dotted with good and bad auspices, generals pausing to take them, emperors ignoring them at their peril. Pliny’s *Natural History*, too, is stuffed with omens: comets, eclipses, thunderclaps, birds, fish, spiders, fig trees, natural springs, sneezes, and stumbles portended events. Pliny claimed that ravens

understood the meanings they conveyed in auspices. Eagle-owls signified terrible things to come, and fighting cocks gave the most powerful signs; the manner in which they ate grain determined if state officers could open their homes, and what formations soldiers would take on battlefields. These chickens, Pliny said, held “supreme empire over the empire of the world.”

Down in Trastevere streetlights come on, one after another. The starlings rematerialize, washed in blue, a five-hundred-foot-tall dancer turning flips. I prop the backpack on its stand and adjust Owen’s hat and give him a bottle, wondering what he sees. Maybe you know the history: In 1890, in New York City, a drug manufacturer named Eugene Schieffelin, who wanted to make sure that every bird mentioned in Shakespeare’s plays was introduced to North America, released eighty starlings in Central Park. A hundred and fifteen years later the United States alone has 200 million starlings—and angry wheat farmers and flocks sucked into jet engines and histoplasmosis, a respiratory disease that originates in starling feces. And that doesn’t count the birds in Canada and Mexico.

In Rome there are a million or so. When they’re twirling above the rooftops, hardly anyone seems to notice. Outside the Feltrinelli on Largo Torre Argentina, where almost every night a flock performs arabesques above six umbrella

pinas, I am usually the only person on the sidewalk looking up. The few Romans who do pay attention seem to want them gone. A couple of years ago volunteers tortured a couple of starlings, recorded the distress calls, then walked laps of Termini broadcasting the recordings through megaphones.

Imagine what the birds heard! Strange voices shouting, Ouch! Ouch! Ouch! It didn’t appear to scare them off.

In front of me, in front of Owen, ten thousand birds swerve, check up, and float. Then they plunge. A tourist at the railing asks, in English, “Who’s the leader?” but no one answers. Knowingly or not, we all stand there taking our auspices, reading the omens of the birds. Starling, earthling. How little we understand. Nero had a starling that spoke Greek and Latin. Mozart kept a starling in a cage beside his piano.

The real question, the one that keeps me coming back to this railing, night after night, is, Why do they bother to be so beautiful?

On the street beside me Owen hums as he drinks his milk. He explores the texture of his backpack with his fingertips; he blinks his big eyelids.

Adapted from *Four Seasons in Rome: On Twins, Insomnia, and the Biggest Funeral of the World*, by Anthony Doerr (Scribner, 2007.)





## Flatland Report

WARD SHELLEY, FAAR'06



Photograph: Marc Lins

Flatland was a collaborative art project installed at New York's Sculpture Center.

The main things to know about Flatland are that it is four stories tall and only two feet wide, and that six artists—Pelle Bruge, Eva La Cour, Douglas Paulson, Maria Petschnig, Alex Schweder (FAAR'06), and myself (FAAR'06), decided to live in it around the clock without coming out, starting 29 April 2007. Two members of the group stayed inside Flatlands for 21 days.

The shape of the Flatland structure is schematic, a thin-sliced sculpture revealing a diagram of six people's (temporary) lives pressed between two plates of glass. You can see us all, all the time. It is like living in a giant flat screen TV.

Flatland was designed for living in. It was outfitted with a bathroom, a kitchen, and multi-purpose personal spaces (work and sleep) for each participant. Food was delivered (by Fresh Direct!) so that we could stay in the structure and not come out. This we did, and it was central to the meaning of the piece.

Flatland is a proposition. What would your life be like if your life was different, if things you took for granted were gone and your world was (metaphorically) reduced to two dimensions? This notion falls within the concerns of my work, which has involved creating and living in (grotesquely) alternative architectures. In doing this, I exploit a fundamental aspect of architecture: the mutually formative relationship between subject and object, between people and buildings.

Alex, the Flatlander with a degree in architecture and a knack for aphorisms put it like this; "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."

Another way to look at Flatland is as a short, weird, social experiment. Flatland is a collaborative piece and the participating artists came from distant places. Only one of us knew more than two of the others. So we were not a group of total strangers, but we weren't a family either. Initially, we became a community on the internet. We were aware of the problems we might have coping with each other in this tightly compressed environment and we started working to avoid these on our wiki-page chat room (Our wiki, chat history, and blog of

members' thoughts and feelings are all linked to our web site, <http://www.flatlandproject.com>, which also has lots of pictures.) We divided up areas of responsibility according to interest, and we came up with a system for making decisions as a group based on the Quaker consensus method, which stresses agreement, not majority rules. And the Flatlanders were chosen partly based on their emotional maturity, self-reliance, and tolerance.

We tried to prepare ourselves individually and set up a community that could cope with the confining effects of our new chosen home. We knew it would be extreme; the prospect was in fact a little scary.

Surprisingly, no one ever felt the claustrophobic sense of being trapped that you might expect. The transparent walls dissipated the sense of confinement. When we divided up Flatland into private spaces, the lower ones were chosen first. They would be less private, but less scary too. After a day or two, height ceased to be an issue. There had been a lot of concerned talk about the deadly ladder holes in the floor, tricky to step over and easy to fall through. We never did make them safer; we just got used to them. We got used to it all, becoming as casual as squirrels running along branches. I think we all felt safe.

Surprisingly too, privacy did not seem to be a problem. Flatland was designed to give each person his or her own space, that no one else had to pass through to get somewhere else. True, for seven hours a day, we were on display, and there was no place to hide except the bathroom. But that left 17 hours with no conspicuous observers (you just forgot about the web-cams). Flatland is configured to have eight "dead-ends" and each of us had one. Except for Eva's, across from the kitchen, they made it easy to get on your own. It was easier to be isolated than to be social. In fact, almost the only place one could sit and get physically comfortable was in one's own space. So, as radical as the space we shaped was, its effects were felt most strongly in the social dimension.

The Flatland paradox was this: as close-quartered as we were, it was nearly impossible to gather in a group. Two people could stand face to face, but in the Flatland space, three people together form a line, which is not the shape of congeniality. And four people are just a congestion.

We came to act very independently, but everything one did affected the others. Everything: getting up in the middle of the night to pee, leaving a dirty cup in the sink, even just relaxing with a cup of coffee in the kitchen, you were in somebody else's way. Our social space was about squeezing past each other. Such constant inconvenience required unflagging courtesy and cheerful greetings; anything less could be interpreted as annoyance by the other person. We built Flatland in ten very long, hard days, so we started off exhausted and short tempered. But nothing ever spiraled into a fight. There were occasional hurt feelings and misunderstandings, but they were handled very carefully because we knew we could not afford to let things flare up. Everyone was very tolerant and tried to be considerate, and it was enough. We only had to make it last for three weeks; you cannot over-emphasize the importance of time when assessing tolerance.

Getting together for the pleasure of each other's company was awkward and we only did it when an issue demanded a meeting. We attempted group meals, but they were never casual and expansive; instead, they were valiant attempts at congeniality, clustering around two of the ladder holes, balancing a plastic bowl and a plastic cup. They were short affairs, after which we would slip back to our lairs or pair up to talk a little longer. It was hard to party.

We were creating a society of introverts. We found cooking meals in pairs to be a good remedy for this. Maria became everyone's personal trainer and her sessions were good for the mind and body, central in keeping us together.

Time went by really quickly, but nothing much got done. Our everyday chores took much longer than in the outside

world, but we didn't really notice. It was hard to work, hard even to read. We watched a lot of Netflix DVDs: we even tried to do that as a group but that was unsuccessful. It was uncomfortable for even two people to try to watch a movie together, but we tried it a number of times: it was a way to show that you cared about being together, that friendship was worth the stiff neck.

In the end, I think the struggle came down to this: balancing individual needs and comforts against the need to keep the group cohesive and fluid. One had to take care of oneself, but show openness and caring to the others. We depended on trust, tolerance and displays of good will to get past the friction and misunderstandings that our close-quarters made inevitable.

It was not the goal of all of us to last the whole 21 days. All were free to leave at anytime they chose without drawing any criticism. I think that four of us stayed exactly the length of time we had decided on before hand; the other two had been proceeding open-endedly, and when they reached the point of diminishing returns, they elected to leave.

Adaptation was a struggle for each of us, and each found her/his own way, with a personalized set of results and lessons learned. Some of us felt exhaustion and muscle cramps a few days after we left. We call it "flatlag". Others did not experience this. Some became depressed and (relatively) listless in Flatland. Others did not.

So what is Flatland good for? What is the value in doing something dumb in a difficult way?

Adversity is instructive. You understand the sun best by being in its presence, but you understand its value to you better by having it taken away. Grotesque distortions separate the meaningful from the merely taken for granted. When you reduce the structure and surface of things to the absurd, you are left with meaning and nothing else.

People joined the Flatland project for their own reasons. I did it for the same reasons I make art: hoping for those brief, unexpected views behind the curtain, hoping to re-discover questions I had never answered but had stopped asking. I found a few this time.

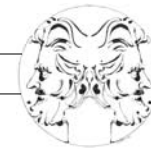


Photograph: Ward Shelley



Photograph: Marc Lins





## Woman Reading to the Sea after a painting by Franco Mondini-Ruiz

LISA WILLIAMS, FAAR'05

There's a certain freedom in the long blue slant  
of its uncaring, in the wind that knocks  
the surface onto rocks, and there's a dent  
made in that wind by the woman who recites  
straight into it, pretending the waves might hear  
or that some larger being that is sea  
or seeing hangs there listening, when sea air's  
so clearly full of its own gusts and grunts,  
inanimate uprisings. In the line  
of no one's sight, her voice lost in the spray,  
she feels a chilling freedom: how the foam  
edges the sheets of zig-zag patterned water  
while gulls' shrill outbursts punctuate the sky  
(one cloudy, sentimental phrase  
or canvas brushed with amber, green, and rose).  
What welcomes, and ignores, and doesn't question?  
Sheer emptiness. It's like a husk  
for her alone. It's like a shell for absence.  
Without an audience, she makes a noise  
swallowed by waves and wind, just as  
the waves themselves—or no, just like the drops  
lost in the waves, which neither care nor keep  
distinctions—sweep out a place  
inside an amphitheatre she imagines  
rising around her, with columns that crash  
instantly, like the white foam that collides  
and shreds its layered castles. Her words drift,  
dissolve, and disappear. A crest  
of words has surged and poured into the sea.  
It doesn't matter now what the lines say.



Reprinted from *Woman Reading to the Sea* by  
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Painting by: Franco Mondini-Ruiz, FAAR'05

## Tasso's Oak

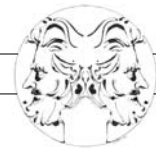
PATRICK BARRON, FAAR'06



Photograph: Patrick Barron

### TASSO'S OAK

Seeming cinder clinker  
your collapse  
prolonged by iron arms  
whose square trunk too  
is splitting, swollen with rot  
reaches in death skyward  
as blackened flecks  
filter silently invisibly  
through the fume-filled air  
the exhalations of  
hospital ductwork  
incessant cars  
huffing unknowing  
(knowing) pilgrims  
that enshroud-embalm you  
enwrap-attack you  
as beer bottles blossom  
amidst snuffed-out cigarettes  
and withered weeds  
all crowd round  
the lopped off remains  
of an interloping shrub  
taken root  
in your crumbling thigh  
near the once shady slope  
(now backed  
with a rampart  
of solemn brick)  
where Tasso  
laid his wrecked body  
grasped soft grass  
touched chill earth  
with knowing fingertips  
gazed at sprawling Rome  
through swaying green.



## Rome Reborn

For more than a decade Diane Favro (Fulbright Resident 1979–80) has been engaged in an exciting and innovative endeavor to make ancient Rome accessible in a virtual format. Peter Holliday (FAAR'95) met with her to find out more about the project.

**Peter Holliday:** What is the “Rome Reborn” project?

**Diane Favro:** Rome Reborn is a real-time model of late antique Rome formally presented to the world by Rome’s Mayor Walter Veltroni on 11 June 2007. Users can navigate through the model with complete freedom, moving up, down, left, and right at will, and entering important public buildings such as the Roman Senate House, the Colosseum, or the Temple of Venus and Rome. Each model has extensive metadata recording the broad range of source materials, such as texts and ancient images, as well as the scholarly advisors and modelers. The American Academy in Rome has a long tradition of archaeological and architectural research, including the promotion of painted, verbal, and

physical reconstructions. The digital Rome Reborn project brings such inquiries into the 21st century and encourages global collaboration. This amazing model allows us to appreciate

individual buildings of ancient Rome within a broad urban context, and thus also to understand how the city took shape over time.

**PH:** How did the project originate?

**DF:** The project began over 10 years ago at UCLA when Professor Bernie Frischer and I established a digital lab to reconstruct historical environments (website: [www.etc.ucla.edu](http://www.etc.ucla.edu)). The operating goals were to allow full interactivity (movement through the models in real time) and to include as much context as possible rather than focusing on models of individual structures. Initial work centered on the Roman Forum as a well-documented and important urban center. With generous support from numerous foundations, including the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the project expanded. Carefully documented high-resolution models of individual buildings are placed within a larger urban model of the entire city inside the Aurelian Wall. The greater city model is based on the famous plaster model of Rome in 320 C.E.

located at the Museo della Civiltà Romana.

**PH:** The Plastico, based on Italo Gismondi’s reconstruction in the museum at EUR. We all use slides of this reconstruction in our classroom lectures. The images are much more evocative than reconstruction drawings, but at the same time we have to point out to students what is wrong, and how new archaeological reconstructions challenge that model. How do you determine what evidence to use?

**DF:** A scientific committee of international experts is formed for each building or urban space. These teams include archaeologists, classicists, architectural historians, historians, and others as appropriate. The scholars work closely with the modelers, most of whom are UCLA architecture graduate students knowledgeable about construction, design, software, programming, and architectural history. The scholars and architects collaborate, carefully selecting the appropriate data and interpretations. All information is documented to clarify the parts of the reconstruction based on archaeological remains in situ, the parts based on extant architectural fragments, and the more hypothetical sections based upon secondary representations and analogues. The aim is not a hyper-realistic depiction, but an informed representation and visualization of current knowledge about ancient Rome. Thus we do not include features that we know existed in the ancient city (such as plantings and painted architectural components), but for which there is insufficient information for a reconstruction.

**PH:** What you have described sounds much more fluid and dynamic than the old Plastico. As the scholarship evolves, so does “Rome Reborn?”

**DF:** Right. An important aim is the creation of a scholarly platform that will allow various researchers to add, comment on, or change the existing model, or provide alternative solutions. This resource would be something like a Wikipedia site, but with a mechanism for vetting the contributions; in effect it would be a dynamic digital publication with peer review.

**PH:** How do you envision your virtual model being used?

**DF:** For me, the process of creating the model is especially informative. Building a model digitally requires the same information as constructing a real physical structure. As a result, the

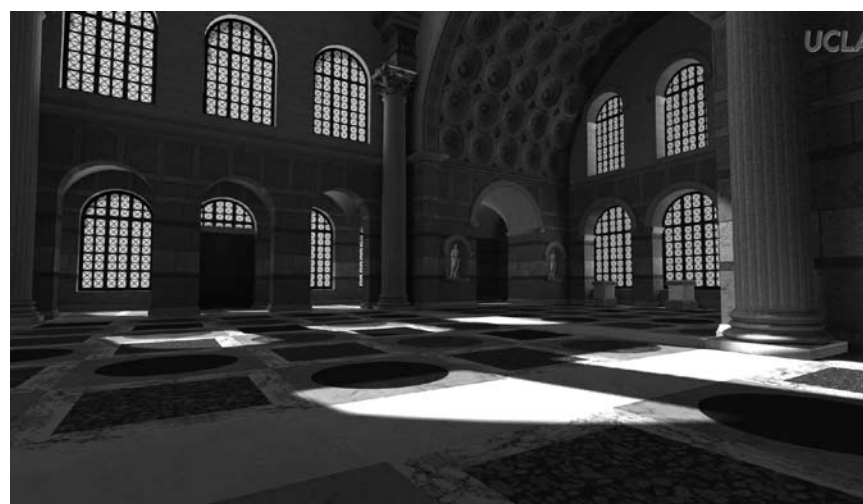
researcher is compelled to consider the ancient architectural environment holistically. In addition, the collaboration with experts in many fields from archaeologists to acoustical engineers to computer scientists, is especially stimulating. The modeled environments are used as humanities labs, where scholars test theories about view sheds, processional movement, construction, acoustics, and other aspects. They are also used as settings for live performances. In addition, these interactive models are invaluable teaching tools used in many different classes, including art history, classics, architecture and urban design. The UCLA Experiential Technologies Center also has a robust outreach program, showing the models to hundreds of K-12 students and general audiences each year. The ability to excite and inform viewers of all ages makes such immersive re-creations particularly compelling.

**PH:** Who will have access to it?

**DF:** The ultimate aim is to have complete open access to the models over the internet. We hope that improvements in web delivery will make this possible in the near future. In the interim, the Experiential Technologies Center at UCLA will soon launch new, lower-resolution models of ancient Rome in different periods on the website, viewable using the free Google Earth application.

**PH:** Will it ever be finished?

**DF:** Like the city of Rome itself, the digital model lives. In contrast to physical reconstruction models of cork or plaster, digital re-creations can be continuously altered and improved. The Rome Reborn model is not a definitive, static model of ancient Rome, but a malleable knowledge representation. In this virtual environment scholars from around the world can conduct experiments, add alternative reconstructions, and visualize new research and findings.



### PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITIONS, AWARDS, REMEMBRANCE [Continued from page 6]

**Jesse Reiser, FAAR'85**, and Nanako Umemoto publication *Atlas of Novel Tectonics* received the Gutenberg Awards' first prize for book design, the Golden Letter. Reiser + Umemoto's 0-14 office tower in Dubai is slated for completion in the spring of 2009.

**Diana Robin, FAAR'88**, published two books in 2007: *Publishing Women in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (U. of Chicago Press) and *Encyclopedia of Women in the Renaissance* (ABC-CLIO Press).

**James Higginbotham, FAAR'89**, curated an exhibition entitled “Ars Antigua: Ancient Pastimes and Passions” at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, which opened 14 October 2007.

**David Mayernik, FAAR'89**, was a visiting lecturer at the Prince of Wales Foundation summer course in Lincoln, UK, in 2007. He designed four new buildings for the TASIS

Schools in England and Switzerland that are under construction.

#### 1990s

**Thomas Cohen, FAAR'92**, won the AHA's Marrare Prize for 2004 for “Love and Death in Renaissance Italy (U. of Chicago Press, 2004).

**Sarah McPhee, FAAR'92**, will be in Rome during the Academic Year 2008 on a Guggenheim Fellowship.

**Donald Erb, RAAR'92**, composer. Born 17 January 1927; died 12 August 2008. He was 81 years old.

*“Any object can be a sound source; found objects such as pots and pans, leaves and running water or various signals which generate pure electronic sound.”*

From a 1969 interview with the Cleveland Plain Dealer



Donald Erb's Reconnaissance album cover, released in 1965

**John R. Clarke, FAAR'95**, published two books in 2007: *Looking at Laughter: Humor, Power, and Transgression in Roman Visual Culture, 100 B.C.–A.D. 250* (California) and *Roman Life, 100 B.C.–to A.D. 200* (Abrams). He is continuing his work on the excavation and publication of Villa A (“of Poppaea”) at Oplontis, near Pompeii.

**Marla Stone, FAAR'96**, spent the fall semester of 2007 as a fellow at Princeton University's Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies

**Gail Wittwer-Laird, FAAR'96**, design for a new park at the intersection of Canal, Varick, and Lighthouse Streets in Lower Manhattan received a Design Excellence award from the New York City Art Commission. Ground was broken for the \$2.5 million park this spring.

**Maria Saffiotti, FAAR'96**, is happy to announce the birth of her son, Francesco William Saffiotti Dale, on 29 September 2007.

**Chuck Close, RAAR'96** is the subject of a documentary film by the late Marion Cajori opened in Manhattan in December of 2007.

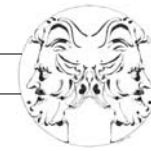
**Paul Davis, FAAR'98**, had solo museum exhibitions in both Varese and Vicenza in 2006. He has completed animations for Mercer

Consulting and a poster for Mike Nichols' Broadway production of *The Country Girl* by Clifford Odets, which opened in March.

**Agnes Denes, FAAR'98**, has received the “Anonymous Was a Woman Award”. Given to a few mid-career women of exceptional talent and achievement, the prize takes its name from Virginia Woolf's famous essay “A Room of One's Own.” Denes gave Otis lecture at Bates College, ME, on 28 September 2007, and participated in the college art museum's “Green Horizon” exhibition. She also gave the keynote address for an environmental conference at the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, on 9 November 2007.

#### 2000s

**Joyce Kozloff, FAAR'00**, and Joan Jonas, **VISITING ARTIST '03**, exhibited their works at SoHo Open Studios in February 2008, and in the exhibi-



## Interview with Pina Pasquantonio

Interview conducted by James L. Bodnar, FAAR'80 on behalf of the Society of Fellows on 1 October 2007.

**James Bodnar:** So let us begin with you describing your personal interest in wine.

**Pina Pasquantonio:** Yes. That started a long time ago. I've always been interested in wine. My grandfather made wine, my father made wine.

**JB:** And where is your family located?

**PP:** My family is from Abruzzo. I've always been interested in wine and I enjoy it very much, so this had been in my thoughts for a long time, to become a sommelier and actually learn the secrets of the trade. But it's a very expensive field to get into and involves a lot of study.

**JB:** Is the education itself expensive?

**PP:** Yes, and you also have to participate in a lot of wine tastings, and those things are costly as well, so it becomes a pretty expensive proposition.

But three years ago, when I celebrated my twentieth anniversary at the American Academy, the academy decided to give me a gift, so they subsidized part of the cost of this course that I took.

**JB:** How did they know you had this interest?

**PP:** I was given a choice, actually. I was told, "We'll subsidize part of any course that you would like to take," and so I said, "Well my interest is wine." Consider that I was already buying wine for the academy without having any expertise, just trying to go on how cheaply we could get by. Then I started this course, which was simply amazing. It lasts for a year and a half and you're really taken through basic techniques of wine making, you learn all about Italian wine, and all about Italian grapes, and then you do international wines. The final part of the course is matching food and wine, and they teach you all the techniques for doing that.

**JB:** Now, did you travel at all, or was it all done here in Rome?

**PP:** Mostly here in Rome.

**JB:** So no going off to vineyards or—

**PP:** We did. We went to a couple of vineyards, and you could do more as an extracurricular thing, but of course I was working at the same time, and my schedule did not always correspond.

I think about midway through the course I started to set up a little wine cellar here in the academy; buying different kinds of wine, and towards the end of the course, well then I was matching the food to the wine as well, getting the menus and instituting the procedures that we're doing here now.

**JB:** So how do you do that? Do you and Mona, the chef, coordinate ahead of time?

**PP:** No, she gives me the weekly menu, which I ask them to annotate somewhat, because of course if they're saying "chicken," I don't know what the other ingredients are. So they also give me an idea of what it might taste like, and then I match the wine to it. Obviously when you're matching food and wine, every course should have its specific wine, but we simply can't get into that level of expertise here. I usually match the wine to the main course or to the most difficult item on the menu. An additional challenge for me is that I'm on a very restricted budget, so it's not as if I can buy any wine that I like or wines that I have learned about. I buy in bulk from various representatives that I am in contact with and my range is between three to maybe five euros—a bottle, which is pretty good.

**JB:** Very economical.

**PP:** It's very economical if you consider that you'd probably be spending twice as much in a store for the same kind of bottle. Now that I have been introduced to the wine world and various people in it, I get to hear about wines that are good and taste them before they become well known, so I can purchase them before they become too expensive.

**JB:** That's great. What regions do you like the most, and share with the fellows?

**PP:** I try to make the fellows—last years and this years—understand that there's not just Nebbiolo and Chianti and the super Tuscans, so I take them all through Italy. I often like them to taste really specialized wines. For example, last year I introduced them to wines which they would never have heard of and you'll probably not find in the United States. The technique used to make this wine is antique. You let the must ferment on the skins of the grapes very briefly, and continuously add new grapes to the fermenting must. So it's a fresh, good wine.

**JB:** Almost like Côte de Beaune.

**PP:** Exactly, exactly. And there's another one called Susumaniello, which is a particularly old grape that originates in Puglia, if I'm not mistaken. I also introduced them to real Verdicchio, not just the old Fazi-Battaglia with its distinctive bottle, but excellent Verdicchios that have gotten top marks.

I also introduce them to all kinds of grapes and wines from Sicily, which is just a wonderful powerhouse, and wines from Trentino, LeMarche, Umbria, and my own region of Italy, Abruzzo, in fact the entire peninsula. They all come away knowing a little bit about Italian wines in general and this year I hope to do a fireside chat where I'll talk to them about—what I do.

**JB:** Do you ever actually speak with the fellows about what your approach is and your strategies for buying and serving wine?

**PP:** Sometimes at lunch, when it's a particular wine, I'll try to write up something about it but there's so much to do here that I don't always have the time to indulge in that. Last year's fellows asked me many times to organize a tasting, but things were just too busy; I really couldn't manage. But this year when I do my fireside chat, I would like to explain to them about how Italian wines are classified as opposed to French wines, and to give them an idea of the techniques involved in wine tasting, just little things. And then I'll have them taste wines—but nothing famous. Instead, I would like to have them taste something that they might not know about, such as a Taurasi, which is considered the Barolo of the south, and which they might never taste unless they went to Campania.

**JB:** Did you ever spoken with Hank Millon about this?

**PP:** No.

**JB:** Hank—I have heard through the grapevine—used to send an academy vehicle up to the Piedmont periodically to pick up wine, in the years when he was a director.

**PP:** Piedmont is just a fantastic, fantastic area. Le Langhe produces outstanding wines, but they're mostly beyond our price range. I will introduce them eventually to some nice Barolo's, and they've already had a few Barbaresco's. I would also like to have them taste some Lambrusco, because there's a lot to be said for this wine, even though many people think, "Oh, this is sparkling red, so it's disgusting." It most certainly is not if it is matched to the right kind of food.

I take great pride in the fact that last year's fellows were writing down the wines served at dinner and asking me questions about them, and consequently left with a bit of an education on Italian wine—not too bad at all.

**JB:** How large a cellar do we have at the Academy?

**PP:** It's not huge. We have a little climate-controlled area in the cellar—meaning that we have air conditioning in there—so I'm able to keep the wines at a constant temperature. And this year we were able to buy shelves for it, so it looks very nice and is more functional, though it's not big enough. It stores about three months worth of wine. Eventually I would like an authentic cellar where I could store a good wine being sold at a lower cost in bulk, or a wine with excellent aging potential, the kind you taste and think, "This is a good wine; a few more years and it'll be a fantastic wine."

**JB:** Are these wines that you are now buying the kind that age well?

**PP:** No, because there is a rapid turnover. I would like to do that in the future. It would be a good investment for us.

**JB:** So what volume of wine does the Academy go through in a month, approximately?

**PP:** Oh, my goodness. Calculate that at every dinner we serve between 18 and 24 bottles, depending on the number of people present.

**JB:** That's six nights a week.

**PP:** There's no wine served at lunch. But then I also provide the wine that is sold at the bar. I try to keep them distinct.

**JB:** So that's 500 bottles a month.

**PP:** It's a lot.

**JB:** In the course of a year, that's—five to six thousand bottles.

**PP:** I am talking about a lot of money.

**JB:** And that's not including the bar or special events.

**PP:** That's right, because for a special event I'll purchase a specific wine to match the menu.

**JB:** So looking forward, besides buying bottles that age so you can build a better wine cellar, what are your other plans?

**PP:** Well I'd like to build an appropriate cellar that has all the conditions and requirements that you really need. The ideal location, of course, would be the cellar of Casa Rustica, where the wine cellar was located before the academy took over the property. There should be little noise no vibrations and the humidity and temperature have to be controlled and a certain type of lighting installed. With a proper wine cellar we could stockpile things that we know are good or will become excellent. There are so many trustees and friends of the academy who are interested in wine and could help us get donated wine, we could take the whole project a lot further.

**JB:** Anything else you want to add?

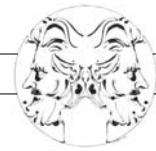
**PP:** I think I've said everything I needed to say—except that I've also become a sommelier in olive oil. Yes. That's my second interest.

**JB:** So tell me a little bit about that for a moment.

**PP:** My family owns olive trees in Abruzzo and produces olive oil, so I became interested in learning more about that as well. In becoming a sommelier, you learn the techniques for making good oil and also how to taste it properly. I have lots of ideas about how to improve my olive grove and the oil we produce in order to eventually bottle it and sell it commercially. It's going to take a few years' work because you need to invest in improvements and then determine when and how you want to harvest it and how many types of oil you want to produce. So that's my next project.



Photograph: James Bodnar



## Rome Fellows 2007–2008

### ARTS

#### ARCHITECTURE

FRANKLIN D. ISRAEL ROME PRIZE

**Frederick Fisher**, Principal-in-Charge, Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects  
*Art Space Collage*



FOUNDERS ROME PRIZE

**Daniel Mihalyo/Annie Han**, Lead Pencil Studio  
*SPATIAL INQUIRY: Looking at Nothing in Rome*



#### DESIGN

ROLLAND ROME PRIZE

**John Cary**, Executive Director, Public Architecture  
*Activist Architecture | Attivismo architettonico*

CYNTHIA HAZEN POLSKY AND LEON POLSKY ROME PRIZE

**Molissa Fenley**, Artistic Director, Molissa Fenley and Dancers  
*The Pattern of the Surface*



#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION

BOOTH FAMILY ROME PRIZE

**Jana Dambrogio**, Conservator, Document Conservation Laboratory, National Archives and Records Administration  
*A Technical Study of Northeastern Italian Monastic Legal and Accounting Documents and Bindings at the Vatican Secret Archives*



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS ROME PRIZE

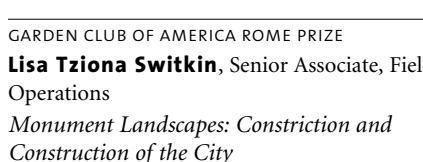
**John Ochsendorf**, Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
*The Preservation of Masonry Vaulting in Rome*



#### LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

PRINCE CHARITABLE TRUSTS ROME PRIZE

**Alan Berger**, Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University  
*Landscape Reclamation and the Pontine Marshes*



GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA ROME PRIZE

**Lisa Tziona Switkin**, Senior Associate, Field Operations  
*Monument Landscapes: Constriction and Construction of the City*



#### LITERATURE

JOHN GUARE WRITER'S FUND ROME PRIZE, A GIFT OF DOROTHY AND LEWIS B. CULLMAN

**Junot Díaz**, Writer and Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
*Tokyo Rose: a novel*

JOSEPH BRODSKY ROME PRIZE, A GIFT OF THE DRUE HEINZ TRUST/AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND LETTERS

**Sarah Manguso**, Writer and Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Writing for Publication, Performance and Media, Pratt Institute  
*The Guardians (a collection of short prose)*

#### MUSICAL COMPOSITION

SAMUEL BARBER ROME PRIZE

**Erin Gee**, Composer  
*Sleep Towards Sound: An Opera in Four Acts*

FREDERIC A. JULLIARD/WALTER DAMROSCH ROME PRIZE

**Yotam Haber**, Composer  
*Music in the Jewish Community of Rome: Research and Composition of a New Work for Mezzo-Soprano and Chamber Orchestra*



#### VISUAL ARTS

CHUCK CLOSE ROME PRIZE

**Daniel Bozhkov**, Artist  
*Eternity's Ephemera: Frescoes of Rome's Daily Histories*



JOSEPH H. HAZEN ROME PRIZE

**Tim Davis**, Photographer  
*(Ill)uminations*



JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER/JACOB H. LAZARUS-METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART ROME PRIZE

**Kate Gilmore**, Artist and Visiting Assistant Professor, Art and Design, State University of New York at Purchase  
*Untitled*

JESSE HOWARD, JR. ROME PRIZE

**Caveh Zahedi**, Filmmaker

### HUMANITIES

#### ANCIENT STUDIES

ARTHUR ROSS PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Robert R. Chenault**, Interdepartmental Program in Greek and Roman History, University of Michigan  
*Rome and its Senators in the Fourth Century A.D.*

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES/ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION POST-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Jackie Elliott**, Assistant Professor, Department of Classics, University of Colorado at Boulder  
*Ennius and the Architecture of the Annales*

FRANCES BARKER TRACY/SAMUEL H. KRESS FOUNDATION/HELEN M. WOODRUFF FELLOWSHIP OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE (YEAR ONE OF A TWO-YEAR FELLOWSHIP)

**John N. N. Hopkins**, Department of Art and Art History, The University of Texas at Austin  
*The Topographical Transformation of Archaic Rome: A New Interpretation of Architecture and Geography in the Early City*

DOROTHY AND LEWIS B. CULLMAN PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Eleanor M. Rust**, Department of Classics, University of Southern California  
*Ex Angulis Secretisque Librorum: Reading, Writing, and Using Miscellaneous Knowledge in the Noctes Atticae*

ANDREW HEISKELL POST-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Dylan Sailor**, Assistant Professor, Department of Classics, University of California, Berkeley  
*Prestige, Ambition, and the Writing of History in the Early Principate*

JESSE BENEDICT CARTER/SAMUEL H. KRESS FOUNDATION PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Rachel Van Dusen**, Department of Classics, University at Buffalo  
*Central Apennines: A History of Cultural Change in the Highlands of Central Italy*

#### MEDIEVAL STUDIES

ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION POST-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Florence Eliza Glaze**, Assistant Professor of History, and Co-Director, The Honors Program, Coastal Carolina University  
*Gariopontus and the Salernitans: Medical Texts and Medical Practice in Southern Italy c. 1050-1225*

SAMUEL H. KRESS FOUNDATION PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE (YEAR ONE OF A TWO-YEAR FELLOWSHIP)

**Erik Gustafson**, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University  
*Tradition and Renewal in the Thirteenth-Century Franciscan Architecture of Tuscany*

#### MODERN ITALIAN STUDIES

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES/ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION POST-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Paul Arpaia**, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
*Luigi Federzoni, Standardbearer of Italianità from Liberal to Post-Fascist Italy*

MARIAN AND ANDREW HEISKELL PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Christian Ferando**, Department of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University  
*Staging Neoclassicism*

#### RENAISSANCE AND EARLY MODERN STUDIES

MILICENT MERCER JOHNSEN POST-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Thomas Frederick Mayer**, Professor, Department of History, Augustana College  
*Trying Galileo*

DONALD AND MARIA COX PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Daniel R. McReynolds**, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University  
*Refiguring the Palladian Legacy: Architectural Reform in Eighteenth-Century Venice*

PHYLLIS G. GORDAN/SAMUEL H. KRESS FOUNDATION PRE-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE (YEAR TWO OF A TWO-YEAR FELLOWSHIP)

**Gregory Waldrop**, History of Art Department, University of California, Berkeley  
*Sight Unseen: Priests and Visual Representation in Early Quattrocento Siena*

PAUL MELLON POST-DOCTORAL ROME PRIZE

**Marjorie Curry Woods**, Associate Professor, Department of English, The University of Texas at Austin  
*Weeping for Dido: Male Writers and Female Emotions in the Medieval and Renaissance Classroom*



## Interview with Mona Anne Talbot, Executive Chef

Interview conducted by James L. Bodnar  
FAAR '80 on behalf of the Society of Fellows on  
1 October 2007.

**James Bodnar:** To begin, I would like to ask you about your background and your interest in cooking.

**Mona Talbot:** Okay. I'm originally from Canada. My grandmother was an exceptional home cook, and I learned a lot from her. When I was in college at the University of Victoria, I got a summer job cooking in a reforestation camp in northern British Columbia. I realized that I had a real love for cooking and could possibly make a living at it, and I had had a yearning to go to Europe, so I saved my money that summer and was able to spend the winter in Europe.

When I came back, I went to cooking school in Portland, Oregon. When I graduated, I did an internship at Chez Panisse, in Berkeley, California. That's where I began my association with Alice Waters. I worked at Chez Panisse for about five years and learned everything. It was an incredible experience, all about sustainability, organic food, a great approach to cooking.

And then I decided to go to France, right to the source. I lived in Brittany and cooked in a very small fish restaurant there, and then I was offered a job in Paris, so I came to New York to get a work visa. While I was in New York, I worked a little bit for Eli Zabar for one year.

**JB:** Which location?

**MT:** I worked at EAT and the Vinegar Factory, and then he opened a new restaurant called Across the Street, right in front of Asphalt Green. He wanted to do a Chez Panisse-style restaurant. I was not the chef; it was another Chez Panisse person, but I worked there, too, while I was waiting for my visa to be processed. During that time, I also catered a wedding at the country home of Annie Liebowitz, whose partner was Susan Sontag.

**JB:** That estate is beautiful.

**MT:** Yeah, it was a great, beautiful home, the old Astor estate in Rhinebeck, New York.

Late, while I was in France, I got a call asking if I would be interested in cooking for them privately—coming back to New York and being their personal chef. I decided to stay on in France for six

months, and then I returned to New York and ended up working for Annie and Susan for six years. I worked for them in many different capacities—I catered their private dinner parties; I also catered all of Annie's New York photo shoots for about four years, and did a lot of great collaboration with Susan, and really enjoyed it very, very much. Susan was a resident at the Academy at one time.

**JB:** They were a great couple.

**MT:** After that, I worked for the New York Restoration Project for one year—Bette Midler's foundation in New York City—to help her develop an after-school cooking program for children. I developed the project, but they didn't launch it; they weren't able to at that point dedicate the funding. And Alice Waters asked if I would come back to California and help her with the new school lunch program that she's been devel-

oping for the United States. The model program is at Martin Luther King Middle School in Berkeley. They're designing a beautiful Dining Commons.

I worked with Alice developing recipes and menus, and at the same time I did a lot of private catering. When the Academy job came along, the Dining Commons project had just been delayed for another six months, so she said, "Why don't you go to Rome for six months and help the American Academy find a chef and launch their dining room project?"

So I came to Rome, initially for six months to try to get your dining room open. It took six months before I could even get into the kitchen. There were a lot of rules and the caterer wasn't comfortable with having outside people in her kitchen, so I spent six months finding suppliers, cooking at the Belacci for Carmella the director—doing different dinner parties for her and developing a style that would work for the Academy. Then, on February 26th, we took over the kitchen, and we haven't looked back since.

**JB:** That is a big date, an important date.

**MT:** Yes, it was very exciting.

**JB:** So you have complete control now.

**MT:** Yes, we do. We still have the caterer in the kitchen, who was the previous food service provider, who cooked and provided the waiters, and there are still some employees who work here, but we're hoping to move in a different direction.

So our goal is to be 100 percent organic; we're about 95 percent organic right now. We have suppliers from all over Rome. We're looking to create a relationship with a coffee company, to have a corporate coffee donor; it would be an exciting thing for us to have a special Academy coffee—you know, the coffee bar does a great business. We have a pasta donor who donates organic pasta, and we're looking for water, and also wine. So there are exciting developments.

**JB:** We had some fruit yesterday at lunch—were they from the garden as well?

**MT:** Yes. Those purple grapes were from the Balacci. Uva, they're called. They are sweet, and we make jam with them. The little walnut cookies you ate—the jam in them was made from the Balacci grapes.

We also have a relationship with the Culinary Institute of America. We have interns who come from the CIA and work with us for three months. They are very much interested in Italy and in our style of cooking—Pannise approach and the Slow Food philosophy, and the added bonus of being here at the Academy, which makes it a really interesting experience.

**JB:** I noticed some people here this weekend—I believe they're staying up on the mezzanine level—who are helping out in the kitchen.

**MT:** Lynn McNealy is volunteering—virtually volunteering; we covered his expenses—he's a visiting chef from New York. We also opened our kitchen to our very large Chez Panisse family, and there are a lot of other chefs from all over the United States and in Europe as well who come and work with us, who volunteer their time.

**JB:** I also heard that you had children from the Academy community working with you.

**MT:** We do. This is a really strong component that I'd like to develop even more: I believe that it's important that the fellows feel ownership and are brought together as a family around mealtimes. So, we find tasks that the children can do that are safe and fun and we ask them to come in on Friday afternoons and they do a little bit of work with us.

We also put out beans to be shelled and walnuts to be cracked out in the courtyard, and after lunch, the fellows will often sit there and drink their coffee for an hour or two and shell beans and talk.

There are even fellows that are very interested in cooking. For them, we have a sign-up sheet, they can put on an apron and come in and work with us in the kitchen. We actually put them to work.

**JB:** Now, are all the fellows aware of the amount of effort you put in? Do you ever have a chance to talk to them as a group and let them know about the cuisine?

**MT:** Well, this year we haven't. This may or may not be something that's right for your article, but... there was so much attention given to us in the first six months, that we were asked to keep a lower profile and play things down this news session, let people discover the kitchen in a more natural way. We have individual conversations with them. We are very open. We're more than happy to talk to anybody while we're shelling beans about our projects and philosophy. We will develop this a little bit more, but we haven't made a big announcement about what we're doing, what our goals are. But the food itself is the most important part. We don't want to draw attention to ourselves; we're here to support

the academy. By providing food that's nutritious, delicious and inexpensive, we can support the mission of the Academy. People can come to meals and bring their friends, or residents can come and sit for a long time at the table, shelling beans and sharing ideas, and that's our goal. We really want to integrate ourselves more and more into the academy.

We also love feeding the staff and the faculty, the management. We want them to feel as nurtured, as well as taken care of as the fellows. Part of the Slow Food mission is to promote the idea that food is very democratic and everybody is entitled to eat the same quality of food.

**JB:** Well that's the key to the meals at the Academy also: we leave our baggage at the door, and come together and share as a community.



Carmela Franklin, director (left) with Mona Talbot. Photograph: Joel Katz



Left to right: Alessandro Lima, waiter; Zach Shapiro, intern (San Francisco); Greta Caruso, office intern (NY); Valerio Borganelli Spina, intern (Rome); Gabriel Soare, bartender; Francesca Gilberti, intern (Boston); Mona Talbot, executive chef; Mirella Missenti, pastry cook; Chris Boswell, sous chef; Tsige Tekka, dishwasher; Ashley Morford, intern (Hyde Park NY); Tewolde, dishwasher; Chris Fischer, intern (Martha's Vineyard MA)  
Photograph: Joel Katz



**MT:** Exactly. Yes. And that's the driving force for us: to make people feel welcomed.

Everyone is equal at the table—that's the whole idea behind one long table and the cortile: we're all in this together. Another thing that makes our approach to cooking particularly appropriate for the academy is that the people are very interested in the process, not just the final product. We really need that kind of understanding. We do everything by hand; we don't buy anything premade or packaged. We care enough to do it ourselves and know what's going into it.

**JB:** And is the facility adequate?

**MT:** For the time being, but so much of the kind of cooking that we like to do is over an open fire, spit roasted. Roasting on spits—in Tuscany a lot of people do that. And a pizza oven. In the summer, on Friday nights, we really want to be able to have a pizza party and cook the whole meal outdoors. The garden, I think, is underused. I would love to have more dinners out there.

Under the olive trees, which is just the most incredible place—those are my dreams, and we're making plans for them: big grill, spit roaster, a pizza oven and a sink all outdoors. That's hopefully going to happen in the future. We also need to redesign our dish room. Before, the food service provider brought a lot of food in from the canteen that was precooked and they would re-heat it. Now we're working the kitchen hard. To meet the code, we need to have a separate dishwashing setup. We've planned, to open up the kitchen so we have a place for making pastry and pasta, once the dishwashers are moved out. So that's a big project that's on the agenda for this year.

**JB:** Any further plans?

**MT:** Yes, I think that in the future, I would like to develop two things: First, a culinary student scholarship fund. You know, these students come for three months and we give them room and board, but I would also like to be able to help them with their plane tickets and give them a little pocket money. They're struggling financially, and I think that would enhance the experience. I'd also like, to have a little extra funding to take them out into the countryside and to a couple different restaurants, that kind of thing.

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The other idea that has been talked about by a number of people, is a culinary fellowship to study food history and food culture, which is such an important part of the Italian experience.

**JB:** It's one strength that you could really bring that is lacking in our fellowship program. In the past, we gained no knowledge through the dining experience of the quality of Italian food, it's regional culture, or how it is prepared. In addition, you are bringing this added element, the organic philosophy, which we take for granted in Italy and is definitely less widespread then in the United States.

**MT:** Yes. Italians are about ten years behind the United States but they will catch up; they are letting go of the old ways because they're more labor intensive, and also there's high yield, higher production when you use pesticides and herbicides. But the farmers that we work with are very much committed to the organic sustainable movement, which, again, fits perfectly with the whole philosophy of the academy and the Janus: looking forward, looking back. That means being modern in our approach to systems and infrastructure but not losing what is important: Italian cuisine. This includes the simplicity, the seasonality and regional styles. We are learning a lot. We're just beginning.

**JB:** So there is various regionalism that you bring to the table.

**MT:** No, no, no. We stick mostly to Lazio, the region around Rome. We're trying not to use too many products outside our province; part of the whole sustainability idea is not importing things from too far away. We do use Sicilian capers, but we get our oil from the hills in Sabina. We're using Castelli Romani lentils. We can look up on the roof and see where all of our products come from. The sweetest strawberries come from Latina. It has been really exciting for us, too. I can put up a map, and look around Rome and see where the best lamb is coming from. We've discovered this particular region.

**JB:** Are many people doing what you are doing here? Are there other people in the region who are working with the focus that you have?

**MT:** I don't think so. I really don't think so. Last year at the Slow Food Conference in Turin, there was a huge discussion about academic institutions. There are pockets of restaurants who are getting caught up in the movement and so are individuals, but there is a huge food service element, institutional food, that isn't taking part. I mean, we just did 100 people for lunch. If 100 people understand what we're doing, that makes a huge impact. I think that this group of academics and artists understand that intellectuality, and also appreciate the way it's expressed. But in general, I think taste education is the way in. This is a pear that's ripe and in season and you taste it and that leaves a lasting impression. People can appreciate that and they will begin to compare all the other pears to that ultimate pear. Or a really good mozzarella, and then a really good bread. That was a huge step for us, finding really, really good bread that people enjoy eating. So everything... comes together and creates a whole.

I think that it's really important that institutions also understand how to do this for large numbers of people on a very tight budget. We can't afford to buy a lot of different cuts of meat or have extravagant ingredients. That fits into Roman cooking. They don't eat big roasts, they eat little pieces of meat and lots of pasta or grains and lots of vegetables and greens and fruit, and sweets on the weekends—you don't eat sweets every single day. It's actually all here. We're learning as much as we're teaching, that's for sure.

**JB:** Well, we—the ex-fellows—are very happy you are here...

**MT:** Thank you.

**JB:** ...because we may not get here very often to enjoy it ourselves, we all care about the people who come now and want to make sure they have not only the experience we had, but a better one.

**MT:** Oh, good! Wow!

**JB:** How long are you going to stay?

**MT:** I've committed to seeing the project through for five years. I think that if it matures enough before five years, after four years—when its ready, I'll know—but I think...

**JB:** You think that's when someone else can take it on?

**MT:** Someone can take it on when all of the systems are a go. We want to build a sustainable infrastructure. So we're training employees who can sustain it. This may be a whole other conversation, but in this industry, when you have semiskilled labor, you tend to just tell them what to do rather than teaching them to think for themselves. But I think it's really important when we have such a noble cause that they really understand. We give them roots. For example the bartender, we're trying to teach him to really understand the why of what we're doing: we want him to own it. The same for the different people we bring in. We're very careful who we bring in, because someday there'll be another chef, but these people will stay. Italians are very loyal and they stay with one job for many, many years.

**JB:** Well you can feel there's a new energy in the kitchen.

**MT:** Oh, good. We think the kitchen is the most fun in the whole academy! We love it when the fellows want to get involved. One of this year's fellows is Italian-American and he came and cooked. He grew up in a big family of Italian cooks and he just had so much fun! He said it brought him back to his grandmother's house. That is a huge compliment to us. When people say, "This reminds me of something my grandmother made," that means they can taste the love. The food itself is delicious, and they can taste how much we care. If the people creating the food are happy and are passionate and committed, then the food comes out better. I think we have that.

One of my goals is to have even more involvement from the fellows. We live in a community, and everyone has responsibilities, but the fellows should be more involved in supporting the academy—not just doing their own work and, exchanging ideas, but also sharing the physical daily life. This is not monastic living we're a family, and there are responsibilities that come with that. I'm not afraid to ask people to help. They just need to be told what to do. Once they do it, they love taking part and being needed. That's how you train kids in the kitchen: you help them succeed. My impression, from the last six

months and with this next group, is that they want to be involved. They want to help.

**JB:** Definitely.

**MT:** I think that you don't want to stop doing for them, but you also want to help them do for themselves. You want to inspire them and teach them and lead them so that they can do more for themselves, so it's a shared responsibility. They are taking care of the academy as well as all the support staff. When I got here, I'd hear rumblings of resentment from the staff, about the way these people come here and everything is done for them, and I think that's a big mistake, that's the wrong direction.

**JB:** And now, if you can make food part of their so-called curriculum or part of their lifestyle in Rome, you will open many doors.

**MT:** Yes. And I think after being around these people—scholars in particular—there's a certain meditation that comes with doing work that is physical. In the gardens as well—as the kitchen...

**JB:** And repetitive.

**MT:** ...and repetitive. And it frees the mind to think in a different way.

Jane Kramer, who was also here last year, is an artist in residence. She says when she's writing something, especially something serious and complicated, she has to have a pot on the stove and every little while she gets up and stirs the pot and cooks a little bit. I think there's something to be said for that. Not everybody works that way, I guess, but I think it helps things flow. We had a lot of comments last year from fellows who thought their work improved after we took over. Not only was the food more enjoyable and nutritious, but for those that participated, it just unlocked a certain thing. I think it makes the academy more of a holistic experience, not just an ivory tower on the hill.

And also, from what I understand, the academy can't afford to maintain that kind of living anymore; it's just not the way the world operates. I'd love to see the academy emerge even further from that. And I think it could happen. I do.

**JB:** Well, with your help here, I think it could.

**MT:** Well, I meant in all aspects of the academy's life.

**JB:** I think you are much more a part of the community than you might even realize.

**MT:** I've always known that, cooking is the heart of any house. You are definitely in a power position when people are digesting what you make. They're not just looking at it on the wall; they're actually eating it and swallowing it. So we know that food has a lot of impact. And we're really proud of what we're doing. We make a mistake and we hear about it and it's all a work in progress. I just want it to be a flowing dialogue, to know that we're connected and that everyone feels that they can come to us and talk about whatever.

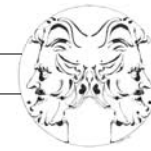
**JB:** What do you want to do next, after this is a success?

**MT:** You know, I don't know. I'd like to be able to help other institutions. When I was working for Alice, who has been one of my mentors for many years, we talked about what I should do next after I left New York and came to California. People—consumers—are demanding higher-quality food and they're concerned about sustainability, and you can get into



Photograph: Joel Katz

the schools and change kids' palates. They start out liking junk food and then you educate their taste. But there's this whole middle level, food service in big institutions. How can you get in there and change that?



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### PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITIONS, AWARDS, REMEMBRANCE [Continued from page 10]

tion "WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution" at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York City, the first comprehensive, historical exhibition to examine the international foundations and legacy of feminist art.

**Peter Waldman, FAAR'00**, became a grandfather twice over in 2007. He also designed a rural prototype school for Huangbeiyu, China, and learning laboratories for higher education in Melbourne, Australia. Peter has been re-reading Tom Andrews' Remembering Tunisia and reports he is "grateful daily for my time in Rome with everyone."

**Stephanie Walker, FAAR'01**, has worked at the National Endowment for the Humanities' Division of Research Programs since October 2007. She has also published "Das Kleinodien buch der Herzogin Aura", on Renaissance jewelry, and The Queen's Sculptures: The Collection of Christina of Sweden, including a chapter on the collection in Rome.

**Vincent Katz, FAAR'02**, curated "Street Dance: The New York Photographs of Rudy Burckhardt", on view at the Museum of the City of New York, 1 February–April 13, 2008

**Peter Osler, FAAR'02**, has been named director of the new Landscape Architecture program at Illinois Institute of Technology.

**Barbara Rosenwein, RAAR'02**, published Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages (Cornell U. Press, 2006); the chapter on Gregory the Great was written at the AAR.

**Paul Shaw, FAAR'02**, gave a talk on lettering in New York City to the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen in the City of New York on 30 October 2007. He also wrote a monograph on W.A. Dwiggins and his design of the Lakeside Press edition of Poe's Tales.

**Joel Katz, FAAR'03**, has a show of his Italian photography and collages, including work in collaboration with poet Randall Couch, opening 11 December at the Open Lens Gallery of the Gershman Y in Philadelphia. He lectured to doctoral students in design at IUAV (Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia) in October.



Randall Couch and Joel Katz: Roma Amor, collage, 25.5 x 19.5", 2008.

**Maureen Selwood, FAAR'03**, participated in a series of launches for Green Is for Privacy, including one at Skylight Books in Los Angeles in March 2008.

**Jenny Holzer, RAAR'04**, has an exhibition at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art in North Adams. "Projections" is on view through autumn of 2008.

**Susan Yelavich, FAAR'04**, saw the publication in 2007 of Contemporary World Interiors (Phaidon), which she began writing during her fellowship.

**Harold Melzer, FAAR'05**, heard the first performance of his Piano Sonata (2008), played by Sara Laimon, in a concert at Symphony Space, in New York City, on 14 February 2008.

**Jackie Saccoccio, FAAR'05**, had an exhibition entitled "Interrupted Grid" at Eleven Rivington in New York City through 9 February 2008.

**Lisa Williams, FAAR'05**, completed her second book of poems, Woman Reading to the Sea (Norton), and won the 2007 Barnard Women Poets Prize. She did a reading from the book at Barnard on 8 April 2008.

**Robert Saarnio, FAAR'06**, urges AAR affiliates to visit Shangri-La and the collection of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art in Honolulu, and would welcome the opportunity to give them a tour.

**Tom Bissell, FAAR'07**, is working on a book about the tombs of the 12 apostles. He participated in the Bennington Writing Seminars and gave a reading from his works on 6 January 2008 at Bennington College.

**Patrick Tighe, FAAR'07** received a 2008 Progressive Architecture Award for work done while in residence at the AAR. The work was featured in Architect Magazine (January 2008).

**Junot Diaz, FAAR'08** reports that Miramax has acquired the rights for a film adaptation of The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao.

**Kate Gilmore, FAAR'08**, was featured in "Girl Fight", an exhibition on view through 20 April 2008 at Artpace San Antonio.

**Laurance P. Roberts, ACADEMY DIRECTOR 1946–60 and TRUSTEE EMERITUS 1973–76**, scholar of Asian art and museum director. Born 1 October 1907; died 10 March 2002. He was 95 years old.

"At the Villa Aurelia social life is focused on luncheon and dinner. Laurance and Isabel are fully occupied between whiles, and are invisible and inviolable; and their guests are expected to conform to this simplest of conventions—and with all Rome at the gate, what could be simpler than for them to efface themselves

pleasurably and profitably every morning and afternoon?"

From Roger Hinks, in his Rome journals of 1933–63, The Gymnasium of the Mind.



Laurance Roberts, at right, with Fellows at the Academy's front gate.

Courtesy of the American Academy in Rome Archives

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Janus, by Robert Regis Dvorak, FAAR '72

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*Antonio Palladino & Norman Roberson circa 1989*