

HUMANITIES



Seeing Anew



By Dean J. Scott Miller

I ALWAYS make it a point when traveling to visit art museums because I am guaranteed to walk away with new perspectives that complement the experience of being on the road. In March I was presenting a paper at Harvard and stole an hour to visit

the newly renovated Art Museums building. One of the first things to catch my eye, and then to recapture it after I wandered among some examples of humanity's greatest art works, were rough, Romanesque, sculptured stone capitals from the 12th century (right, top). They were mounted on a wall, above the floor level, elevated as they were when they supported massive beams in a French abbey. What immediately struck me were the eyes of the figures, holes carved deep into the limestone so that the effect was pure black shadow.

There is something magical about human eyes. They seem to be a portal to the soul, unlocking the mysteries of the heart. From my ground-level perspective all the hollow eyes seemed to follow me back and forth as I looked up at the carved figures. One capital depicted Jesus, flanked by an angel, meeting two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and His side-long-glancing eye seemed squarely focused

We may sometimes be blessed to notice things of which we have been otherwise unaware, and in the act of seeing something or someone we may engage in a form of worship that brings us closer to the divine.

on me, as if Christ had singled me out in His peripheral vision. In turn, I felt compelled to peer into the seemingly eternal depth of that deep-set eye.

In my course on Asian literary traditions I invoke the Hindu concept of *darshan*: observation as worship. *Darshan* combines the sense of visual wonder and awe (that comes, say, when we stumble upon a beautiful sunset) with the notion that, as a kind of divine

gift, the self-concealing gods may at times allow us a glimpse of themselves. In other words, we may sometimes be blessed to notice things of which we have been otherwise unaware, and in the act of seeing something or someone we may engage in a form of worship that brings us closer to the divine.

The story of Emmaus is an example of Christian *darshan*, wherein the disciples, at first clueless as they walked and talked with a stranger, suddenly received from that stranger the gift of seeing him as Christ in His full resurrected glory. I experienced my own moment of *darshan* while gazing upon the stone carving of Christ. Staring into that eye, trying to discover what was hidden in its depths, I suddenly “saw” Christ gazing upon each of us with a love that, in its transforming power, allows Him to see the deepest corners of our sorrowing hearts and recognize the divinity hiding behind our mortal disguises.

Since that singular moment I now find myself drawn to eyes in paintings. Just around the corner from the dean's office in the Joseph F. Smith Building is an alcove temporarily housing artist Brian Kershnik's *Down from the Cross*, an original, wall-size oil painting depicting angelic hosts surrounding

the mortal companions of Christ as they lower His body to the ground (right, bottom; see also p. 14). Texture jumps from the paint when the angled light shines just right, and the paleness of Christ's skin stands in ghostly contrast to everything else. The central character who confronts us most directly with her eyes is Mary Magdalene, from whose black orbs tears stream and in which we see the void of despair. She is staring vacantly at the man in front of her, presumably Peter, who is helping others lift the body of Christ down from the cross. Each figure is glancing everywhere and nowhere, like a flock of sheep whose shepherd has vanished. This seemingly hopeless scene



once troubled me, but having experienced *darshan* while viewing the medieval sculpture at Harvard, I can now see the divine glory latent in Christ's pale body in this painting, and I know that Mary's tears will shortly be wiped away by her resurrected Shepherd.

As we stumble upon art during the regular course of life, both in faraway places and around the corner, we may come to see it from the varying perspectives of our own evolving paradigms and perceptions. When we collect and display art in our home or workplace, we might remember that perhaps its greatest value is not so much in what it tells the world about us but, rather, in how it serves as a kind of practicum. As we come upon art in the very mundane circumstances of daily life, wandering to and from our errands, we may be blessed to suddenly see that art in a fresh light, from a radically new perspective, or to have it come to influence the quotidian task we are about and elevate it to an errand of beauty, or a source of even greater vision.

(MILLER) BRAD SLADE

(3RD) JAVISIN (LISODPO)

TOP DETAIL, CAPITAL FROM OUTLIER SAINT-JEAN, UNIDENTIFIED ARTIST, C. 1125–1130 CE, HARVARD ART MUSEUMS/FOGG MUSEUM, FRIENDS OF THE FOGG ART MUSEUM FUND.
BOTTOM, DETAIL FROM DESCENT FROM THE CROSS, BRIAN KERSHNIK, 2012.



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Feedback? We would like to hear your views, your memories of campus, or an update on your life since leaving BYU. Please send email to humanitiespr@byu.edu.





A Heavenly Window

Religious icons adorn grand cathedrals, provincial churches, private homes, and—in our day—even car dashboards. In the day-to-day life of a believer, an icon serves as a focal point for personal prayer, as a form of protection against spiritual and physical harm, and as a reminder of the transitory nature of earthly life.

In addition to their eye-catching attributes and the formal place they occupy in Eastern Orthodox Christian worship, icons also fulfill a didactic function. Often considered a gospel for the illiterate, visual images for a long time were the main source of spiritual teaching both at church and at home. From their earliest use in the fifth century CE in Byzantium (modern Istanbul), Christian icons have been perceived as a window into the heavenly realm. Icons direct a beholder's attention away from his or her personal view of physical reality to a higher truth that exists outside of one's psyche and that is accessible only through spiritual vision. *Iconicity* is the term used to refer to the ability of a visual image to inspire such vision, which leads to spiritual change.

—KATYA JORDAN,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF RUSSIAN

Andrei Rublev, *Holy Trinity (Troitsa)*, 1425–1427. Tempera on wood. Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.

LEXICON

mise-en-scène [mizãsen]

noun. A French term for staging, or putting into the scene or shot

IN FILM THEORY, *mise-en-scène* refers to all the elements placed before the camera and within the frame of the film—including their visual arrangement and composition. Elements include settings, decor, props, actors, costumes, makeup, lighting, and character movements and positioning.

—MARIE-LAURE OSCARSON,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL CINEMA



Film still from *Citizen Kane* (1941)



ONSITE

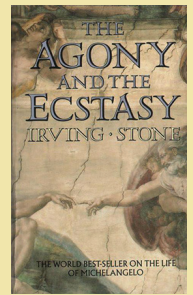
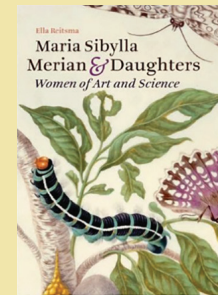
Learning and Interning at the Prado

ART HISTORY STUDENT Nancy Linford (above) traveled to Spain in summer 2016 to intern with the world-renowned Museo del Prado. She worked with the Education Department, which organizes events, lectures, and tours for groups in the community. Linford's main charge was to compile, organize, and digitize

the department's photos and documents. Of the many things she learned from her internship, she says the most significant was how to be more proactive. "This job is very self-motivated," she said. "It's been very humbling as I learn from people who have been working here for years."

BOOKSHELF

What BYU Humanities professors are reading.



Maria Sibylla Merian & Daughters: Women of Art and Science

Ella Reitsma's catalog, which accompanied an exhibition at the Getty Museum, contains magnificent color reproductions of watercolors made by Maria Sibylla Merian, a 17th-century artist, scientist, and businesswoman. Blending art, science, and history, the book tells the amazing story of this unconventional woman, who saw the hand of God in the study of entomology and botany. In Amsterdam she initiated a business with her daughters, engraving, coloring, and selling images of insects and plants. She later traveled to exotic Suriname, where she became the first naturalist to artistically document the country's unique insects and plants.

—MARTHA PEACOCK,
PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY

The Agony and the Ecstasy

In an attempt to explore material unrelated to my research topics of photography and the American West, I recently picked up a thumb-worn copy of Irving Stone's *The Agony and the Ecstasy* (1961), a book of historical fiction on the working life of Michelangelo. Through the use of source material, including Michelangelo's surviving letters, and a sound knowledge of Italian geography, the author deftly weaves together art, history, and the individual—key cornerstones of my discipline. While the narrative has its flaws, it has been a pleasurable read that is close enough to my course material that I have yet to feel the guilt.

—JAMES SWENSEN,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY

QUOTE

“Studying in the humanities affirms that since art comes from thinking, planning, doing, deciding, and adapting, its reception should also involve those acts.”

—JILL RUDY on the 2015–16 Humanities Center theme, “The Work of Art”

FROM THE WORLD OF HUMANITIES

After Suspicion

TRUTH, BEAUTY, GOODNESS: the three great philosophical categories furnish us with three ways to think about the kinds of meanings we derive from literature. And actually, our list of ways could far exceed three. What about vicarious experience? Inspiration? Whimsy? Abstract companionship?

But for a dominant strain of literary criticism, literature is all about truth—or rather, untruth. In 1979 Paul de Man, an influential literary critic, forcefully articulated an idea that

had long become, and still is, commonplace: “Rhetoric is a *text* in that it allows for two incompatible, mutually self-destructive points of view, and therefore puts an insurmountable obstacle in the way of any reading or understanding.” Literary texts, for example, not only lend themselves to multiple interpretations, they often operate in contradictory registers. Therefore, we never truly understand a text, because whatever we think it means, it also (probably) means something very different at the same time.

As an illustration, think of an exasperated parent screaming “Be quiet!” to a group of rowdy children—a tone that contradicts its own command. Or consider a poem that tells us one thing but shows us something else; William Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey,” for example, addresses the subject of poetic imagination, but in romanticizing poverty (as one with “nature”) and describing a subordinate role for women (lauding the poet’s sister, Dorothy, as a mirror for the poet’s self-reflection), it seems also to be a poem about the privileged social position of famous (male) poets.

All literature works this way, de Man argued; all texts mean more than they’re capable of saying. And the point of criticism is to catch texts “in the act” of “meaning.” The philosopher Paul Ricoeur called this approach “the hermeneutics of suspicion.” This school of interpretation had become prevalent with such thinkers as Marx and Freud, he argued, for whom cultural exhibits like literature are made possible by forces they repress, like class conflict and primal human aggression.

Over the past few years, however, this school of suspicion has come to be seen as a text in its own right—one not so much riven by conflict as characterized by an artificial narrowness and, perhaps, a lack of generosity and even a trace of dullness. Rita Felski, a literary scholar from the University of Virginia and one of our BYU Humanities Center guests this year, published an article in 2009 that serves as the 2016–17 year’s theme: “After Suspicion.” In it she speaks of things she began to encourage in her students’ interpretive habits: a proclivity “to describe . . . to look carefully at rather than through appearances, to respect rather than to

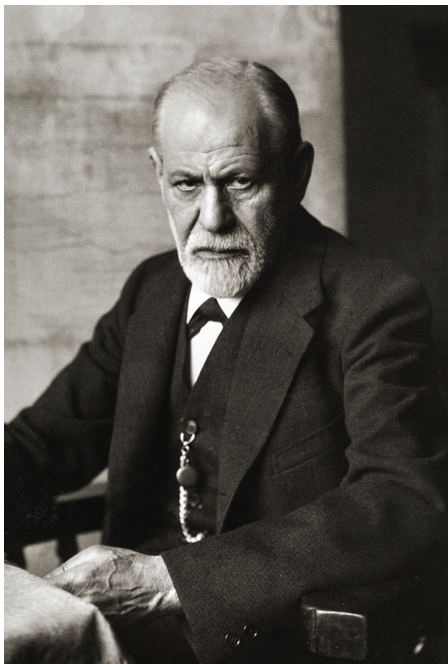
Post-suspicious approaches open new possibilities for how we engage literature. . . . In some cases, it means learning anew how to read.

reject what is in plain view,” and to appreciate the “complexity of appearances.” All these things require that we suspend our suspicions that texts have truths to tell and, more important, truths they obscure.

Post-suspicious approaches open new possibilities for how we engage literature, derive meaning from it, and reflect on what is true—and good, and beautiful, and more—in it. In some cases, it means learning anew how to read.

—MATTHEW F. WICKMAN, FOUNDING DIRECTOR
OF THE HUMANITIES CENTER

The Humanities Center promotes innovative scholarship and teaching in the language, literature, thought, culture, and history of the human conversation.



Thinkers like Freud and others argued that cultural works are made possible by forces they repress, an idea that is reflected in an approach to literary criticism that has been called “the hermeneutics of suspicion.”

Do You Write Like Twain or Emerson?

IN DESIGNING A TOOL to help students write better essays, BYU English professor Pat Madden and graduate students Shelli Spotts and Courtney Bulsiewicz looked to biology for inspiration.

Just like the Human Genome Project maps out DNA to understand the human body, the Essay Genome Project analyzes defining characteristics of essays written by students and compares those characteristics to those from well-known classic and contemporary essayists.

“At times the essay has been considered the ‘stepchild’ to other writing forms,” says Spotts. “However, the essay is not a new writing

tradition; it’s been around for hundreds of years.”

With technical assistance from the Office of Digital Humanities, Madden, Spotts,

use common words and phrases as well as stylistic, tonal, and formal similarities in the writing. Corpus analysis has been previously used for poetry and drama, but the Essay Genome

Not only does the corpus help writers improve their skill, but the research also examines which essayists have had the greatest influence throughout time and whether originality exists.

Bulsiewicz, and a team of students created a corpus of essays from the past 500 years. The essays are analyzed by a computer algorithm that identifies the frequency at which authors

Project is the first to create a corpus for essays.

Anyone can submit an essay or blog post to the corpus. Within seconds the algorithm will share personalized information about the author’s writing style, including a list of essayists with similar styles.

The corpus was designed to compare authors and the evolution of essay subjects through differing time periods and geographical locations. It also traces a writer’s literary ancestors and descendants. Not only does the corpus help writers improve their skill, but the research also examines which essayists have had the greatest influence throughout time and whether originality exists.

“We want students to read many essayists, not only contemporary ones,” says Madden. “Students who are well-versed develop an appreciation for the tradition of the essay, recognize the ways they’ve been influenced, and make personal connections with past and present essayists.”

—NATALIE TRIPP,

BYU UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS



Connecting essayists’ ancestors and descendants, Courtney Bulsiewicz, Patrick Madden, and Shelli Spotts (from left) have built a corpus of essays from half a millennium. By uploading their own work, authors can quickly discover what essayists have most influenced their writing.

To find your place in the Essay Genome Project, upload your essay at egp.byu.edu.

March 2016

March 3

African Studies Guest Lecture

“Zambian Oral Narrative as a Social Performance”

Robert Cancel, University of California, San Diego



March 8

Women’s History Month Lecture

A documentary viewing of *An Ordinary Hero: True Story of Joan Trumpauer Mulholland*, followed by a Q&A

Joan Trumpauer Mulholland, Civil Rights Activist



March 11

Women’s Studies Colloquium

“Socorro Across the Ages: Engaging the Past and Present Experience of Latina Relief Society Members”

Sujey Vega, Arizona State University

Truth in Terms of Beauty

THE JAZZ PHOTOGRAPHY of Herman Leonard offers viewers lessons on seeing the better side of others, said Robert O'Meally in a BYU lecture in March. O'Meally, the Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Comparative Literature and founder of the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University, spoke about how the iconic jazz photographer sought to put his subjects in their best possible light. The lecture was given in conjunction with the Museum of Art's exhibit *Music of Freedom: Jazz Through the Lens of Herman Leonard* and was sponsored in part by Jazz-Blues for the Humanities, a research group in the BYU Humanities Center.

O'Meally spoke about Leonard's photography, jazz in general, and artists in other media who had an influence on or who were influenced by Leonard. One of the crucial components of playing jazz music, O'Meally explained, is that the ensemble is so connected

that it vibrates "as one body," celebrating a "sense of community and collaboration at the same time it is insistent on individualism." Through his photographs of jazz greats such as Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Billie Holiday, and Dexter Gordon, Leonard captured moments of ecstasy, collaboration, quiet thoughtfulness, and a range of emotions and attitudes.

"[Leonard] wanted to try to—as he said at one point—write with light, to use the literal meaning of the word *photograph* and to make music with light."

—Robert O'Meally

He visually preserved the complexities of what went into jazz music.

"He knew he was witnessing history . . .," O'Meally said. "He wanted to try to—as he

said at one point—write with light, to use the literal meaning of the word *photograph* and to make music with light." O'Meally said Leonard saw "the genius in people without qualification," that he seemed to insist on seeing people "as beautiful as they could possibly seem." Quoting Leonard's mantra—always tell the truth in terms of beauty—O'Meally asked,

"How can we treat one another so well that we make them better than they might have been?"

O'Meally found in Leonard great humility, kindness, and a penchant for seeing the best in people. His takeaways from jazz include a sense of a caring community that accepts diverse voices, where "everyone is part of the family. [It] insists on individuality and insists, too, that we breathe together to be one family."

—ALISON SIGGARD ('17)

25 Years of Women's Studies

IN 1991 the BYU Women's Research Institute established the women's studies minor. Though the institute gave way to the Women's Studies Program in 2009, the minor has continued uninterrupted, with two main areas of focus: (1) the way that society affects women's lives, and therefore the lives of men and children as well, and (2) the contributions that women have made to society.

Today women and men from all over campus fill women's studies classrooms, with more students joining the wait lists. From psychology to political science to public health, the students' majors are diverse. "If you think

about business, education, family, law, or sports—whatever interdisciplinary field we might study—all of those different things work differently depending on what gender you are," says program director Valerie Hegstrom. "Understanding the way gender affects women's lives affects what these students do in their majors and individually in their careers."

According to Hegstrom, the discipline is especially important at BYU, where many incoming students are preparing to leave on proselyting missions around the world. "It gives them a kind of cultural sensitivity that your typical 18- or 19-year-old kid doesn't have



yet," she says. "They haven't lived long enough to develop some of those ideas about interacting with each other."

With the education provided by the minor, these students go forth better equipped to relate to others and act with conscious respect for everyone.

—SAMUEL WRIGHT ('16)

March 11

Humanities Center
Guest Lecture

"The Visual
Commons"

Nicholas Mirzoeff,
New York University



March 17

Women's History Month Event

"The First 50 Years of Relief
Society: Key Documents in
Latter-day Saint Women's
History"

Kate Holbrook, LDS Church
History Department



March 18

English Symposium
Keynote Address

"The Questions That
Matter"

Riley Lorimer, the Joseph
Smith Papers

RETIREMENTS

CHERILEE BEUS-DEVORE (Spanish and Portuguese) retired in March 2016. She served a mission to Mexico and received a BA from Weber State. In 1975 she became the head secretary in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at BYU. For 41 years she assisted students and faculty members and touched many lives as she directed study abroad programs to Mexico. She is an avid gardener and violinist.

MICHAEL D. BUSH (Center for Language Studies), who retired in March 2016, spent 20 years in the U.S. Air Force before coming to BYU in 1992. After 11 years as an associate professor of French and instructional psychology

and technology, he was named associate director of the Center for Language Studies. He and his team of students developed architectures for delivering and studying online learning and produced multimedia applications.

K. CODELL CARTER (Philosophy) retired in August 2016. He received bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Utah in mathematics and philosophy and a doctorate in philosophy from Cornell University. He studies the history and philosophy of medicine and science as well as the history of philosophy. He served as the Philosophy Department chair twice and directed several study abroad programs in Vienna.

DAVID A. GRANDY (Philosophy) retired in August 2016. He received his BS from BYU in 1973 and spent almost 10 years in the U.S. Army. He did graduate work at Harvard and studied history and the philosophy of science at Indiana University, where he received his MA and PhD. He taught at BYU–Hawaii until coming to BYU in 2000. He has published several books on the philosophy of science, specifically on motion, space, time, and light.

CHRISTOPHER "KIT" C. LUND (Portuguese) retired in August 2016. He received a BA in Portuguese from BYU in 1967 and an MA and PhD from the University of Texas at Austin. Rutgers University hired him to build a Portuguese program, and the Library of Congress contracted him to produce a catalogue of the Portuguese Manuscripts Collection. He has researched the fields of Renaissance and Baroque Portuguese literature and is particularly charmed by works that, though written in the 16th or 17th centuries, remained unpublished but still impacted the literary canon.

CINZIA D. NOBLE (Italian), who retired in August 2016, received a BA from BYU in 1978 and a doctorate from G. D'Annunzio University in Italy in 1979. Her scholarly work includes her translations of Luciano De Angelis's *That One Peculiar Year* and Raffaele Mantegazza's *The Smell of Smoke* from Italian to English and her book *Incontri con la poesia italiana del Novecento*, which she coauthored with Luciano De Angelis.

STEVEN P. SONDRUP (Comparative Arts and Letters) retired in January 2016. He graduated from the University of Utah and later earned his MA and PhD from Harvard. With ability in nine languages, he has published two books on Hugo von Hofmannsthal, numerous articles examining 19th- and 20th-century literature, and a number of translations. He was president of the International Comparative Literature Association and editor of the scholarly journal *Scandinavian Studies*.

DIANE STRONG-KRAUSE (Linguistics and English Language) retired in August 2016. A specialist in language assessment, she taught introduction to the English language, language testing, methodology in TESOL, and advanced academic ESL courses for matriculated international students. She also served as chair of the Department of Linguistics and English Language.

JACQUELINE SCHUSTER THURSBY (English) retired in August 2016 after teaching at BYU for 20 years. She taught English education and folklore and authored several books. She was president of the Children's and Adolescents' Folklore and Literature Section of the American Folklore Society and president of the Utah Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts.



Cherilee
Beus-Devore



Michael
D. Bush



K. Codell
Carter



David A.
Grandy



Christopher "Kit"
C. Lund



Cinzia D.
Noble



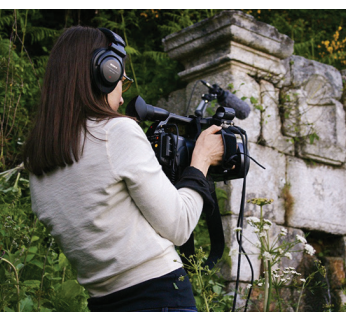
Steven P.
Sondrup



Diane
Strong-Krause



Jacqueline S.
Thursby



March 23

Psychoanalysis Reading Group
Guest Lecture

"Cinema, Immanence, Archive:
Deleuze and Akomfrah on
Immemorial Time and Diaspora"

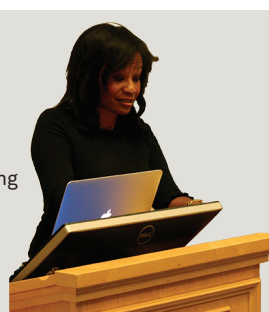
Suzanne Barnard, Duquesne
University

March 25

Women's Studies
Colloquium

"A Chosen Exile: A
History of Racial Passing
in American Life"

Allyson Hobbs,
Stanford University



DEATHS

LINDA HUNTER ADAMS, professor emerita of English and linguistics, passed away July 17, 2016. She received her BA (and the award for outstanding graduating senior woman) and MA from BYU. An associate professor at BYU for 30 years, Adams taught English and editing and influenced thousands of students. She directed the Humanities Publications Center, where she produced hundreds of books and journals, and was associate editor of *BYU Studies* for 15 years. She managed student journals, including *Inscape* and *Leading Edge*, and helped organize conferences, including Life, the Universe, and Everything. She was an editor for *Pioneer Magazine* and also spent a number of years working on the Joseph Smith Papers.

L. GARY LAMBERT, professor emeritus of French, died March 11, 2016. He received a BA from the University of California, Berkeley, an MA from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a PhD



Linda Hunter Adams



L. Gary Lambert

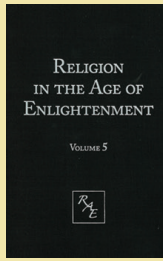


William "Bert" Wilson

from Rice University. His areas of academic focus and research were Voltaire and Rousseau. He began teaching in the French and Italian Department at BYU in 1969 and retired after 34 years in 2004. He also served two terms as department chair. He published a French conversation text, *Pratique, Pratique*, and a monograph for the Voltaire foundation, *Antoine Adam: Voltaire's Jesuit in Residence*.

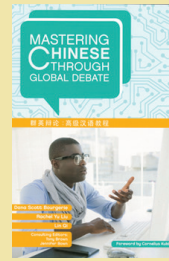
WILLIAM "BERT" WILSON, professor emeritus of English, died April 25, 2016. He earned a BA and MA in English from BYU and a PhD in folklore from Indiana University. He served as the chair of BYU's English Department and as director of the Redd Center for Western Studies at BYU. In 1990 he was named Humanities Professor of Folklore and Literature at BYU. Wilson was director of the folklore program and archives at Utah State from 1978 to 1985 and taught at UCLA and the University of Oregon. He published dozens of articles and books. He was editor of the journal *Western Folklore*, a fellow of the American Folklore Society and the Utah State Historical Society, and a member of the Utah Arts Council.

FACULTY BOOKS



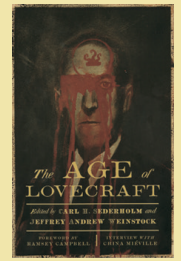
Religion in the Age of Enlightenment, volume 5

Brett C. McNelly



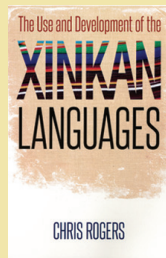
Mastering Chinese Through Global Debate

Dana Scott Bourgerie, Rachel Yu Liu, and Lin Qi



The Age of Lovecraft

Carl H. Sederholm and Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock



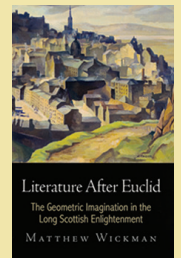
The Use and Development of the Xinkan Languages

Chris Rogers



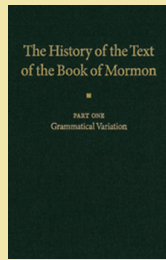
Lecciones de una mujer fuerte Quechua: Ideofonía, diálogo y perspectivas

Janis B. Nuckolls



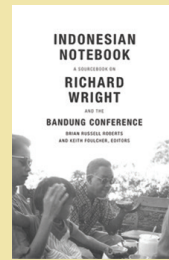
Literature After Euclid: The Geometric Imagination in the Long Scottish Enlightenment

Matthew Wickman



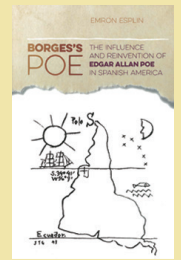
Grammatical Variation, Parts 1 and 2 of History of the Text of the Book of Mormon

Royal Skousen



Indonesian Notebook: A Sourcebook on Richard Wright and the Bandung Conference

Brian Russell Roberts and Keith Foulcher



Borges's Poe: The Influence and Reinvention of Edgar Allan Poe in Spanish America

Emron Esplin

March 31

J. Reuben Clark Lecture in Classics and Classical Studies

"The Virtues of Violence: Amphitheatres, Gladiators, and the Roman System of Values"

Kathleen M. Coleman, Harvard University

April 2016

April 1

Comparative Arts and Letters Symposium Keynote Address

"The Role of Violence in Augustine's Correction of Donatist Error"

Jennifer Ebbeler, the University of Texas at Austin



April 14

Language Fairs in Chinese, French, German, Latin, and Spanish

May 2016

May 26

Washington Irving Lecture

"Americans Rediscover Spain: The Spains Washington Irving Lived"

Javier Villoria Prieto, University of Granada

American Studies

Program coordinator **Kristin L. Matthews** has finished her five-year tenure at the program's helm and will be replaced by **Brian Roberts**.

Asian and Near Eastern Languages

Jim Toronto is serving as president of the Church's Central Eurasian Mission. He and his wife, Diane, shuttle from headquarters in the European side of Istanbul to the borders of China (Kazakhstan). They love the work and report that things are mostly quiet, especially after the recent attempted coup. **Jack Stoneman** led an international symposium in March on the collection of rare Japanese books, manuscripts, and paintings in BYU's L. Tom Perry Special Collections, with three prominent keynote speakers from Japan.

Comparative Arts and Letters

Scandinavian studies had a record number of interns during summer 2016—five in Finland, three in Sweden, one in Iceland, and one in Norway.

English

The creative writing minor completed a productive inaugural year. With 78 students enrolling in the program since September 2015, it became the largest minor in the English Department. **Greg Clark's** book *Civic Jazz* won the 2016 Rhetoric Society of America (RSA) Book Award. He is serving a two-year term as the RSA president. In June, Clark participated in a civic jazz education event with the Marcus Roberts Trio at the Burlington Jazz Festival in Vermont.

French and Italian

Bob Hudson has a book under contract: *Clément Marot, Les Épitres and Selected Autobiographical Verse: A Translation and Critical Edition* (New York: AMS Press). **Daryl Lee** received the 2016 College Excellence in Teaching Award, given annually to a full-time faculty member who has demonstrated excellence in the classroom as evidenced by such things as student ratings, peer reviews, student progress toward learning goals, and content mastery. **Anca Sprenger** edited volume 35 of the journal *Otrante*. **Marc Olivier's** *Dangerous Tweets* project (a Twitter version of the novel *Liaisons dangereuses*) has been featured in Oxford's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses in 5x5*—the first in a series about making language texts more accessible. Olivier

gave a radio interview as part of the project with Oxford. **Ilona Klein** is part of the new Jewish Studies Working Group, which fosters dialogue between colleagues at BYU, UVU, and the U of U.

German and Russian

The German faculty hosted Hermann Weissgärber from the Austro-American Institute of Education in Vienna during fall semester. **Teresa R. Bell** was appointed program review coordinator for ACTFL/CAEP (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages / Council

Studies in Germanic Linguistics. The series is published by the John Benjamins Publishing Company in Amsterdam. She also hosted Arturas Ratkus of the University of Vilnius in Lithuania, who was the keynote speaker at a student-organized symposium on Germanic linguistics.

Linguistics and English Language

Norman Evans was appointed department chair in January 2016. **Dallin Oaks** has cofounded a company called PhraseWorthy, which has produced a web app (phraseworthy.com) that is based in part on his research with structural ambiguity. The app brainstorms ideas for clever wordplays for use in advertising, marketing, headlines, etc. and then provides phrases from which a user of the software can select the most potentially useful phrases for further refining. **Royal Skousen** and **Robin Scott Jensen** received the Best Documentary Editing / Bibliography Award from The Mormon History Association for *The Joseph Smith Papers: Revelations and Translations, Volume 3: The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*.

Philosophy

Travis Anderson stepped down this fall as the department chair. The new department leadership includes chair **Joseph Parry**, who has recently served as associate dean for the honors program, and associate chair **David Jensen**.

Spanish and Portuguese

Vanda Anastácio of the University of Lisbon taught a week-long mini-course titled "What Is a Woman Writer?" and delivered a public lecture on "Rethinking Women's Books and Women's Libraries of the Past Through the Collection of the Fronteira Palace." **Valerie Hegstrom** hosted Anastácio. **Scott Alvord** and

Brian L. Price co-organized several Spanish and Portuguese advisement fairs that were attended by hundreds of our 321 students. **Mara García** kept the Instituto de Estudios Vallejanos active throughout the year with activities and lectures, including "Go Forth to Serve: Spanish-Language Theatre for the Community," "Recorriendo el Perú de Vallejo" by Douglas J. Weatherford, and a cultural night gala event. **Brian L. Price** inducted **President Kevin J. Worthen** as an honorary member of BYU's chapter of Sigma Delta Pi.



In *Dangerous Tweets*, French professor Marc Olivier has reimaged an 18th-century epistolary novel in Twitter form.

for Accreditation of Education Preparation). She was also elected president-elect of the Utah Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German. **Grant Lundberg** was on professional development leave during winter semester 2016. He spent time in Slovenia studying Slovene language policy in education and the influence of English on different varieties of Slovene. Lundberg was appointed department chair effective June 1, 2016. **Laura Catharine Smith** was invited to be the co-editor of a new book series,

Artistically Speaking

Recent Examples of Faculty Work Related to the Visual Arts

Prado Museum Seminar

John R. Rosenberg, Spanish

National Endowment for the Humanities

Each summer the National Endowment for the Humanities funds five-week educational seminars for schoolteachers and college professors from across the United States. John Rosenberg, a professor of Spanish and Portuguese, has directed nine of these seminars on literature and art, the last five at the Prado Museum in Madrid, Spain, for K–12 teachers. Rosenberg's efforts help teachers gain mastery in the subject they are teaching as well as facilitate a support community that helps to improve humanities education throughout the country.



Stealing with Style

Daryl P. Lee, French

Wallflower Press, 2014

Daryl Lee's interest in heist films led him to publish *The Heist in Film: Stealing with Style*. Lee explores the genre's socioeconomic dimensions ("the heist creates a utopian group on the margins of society," he says) as well as its aesthetic ramifications (the heist itself becomes a work of art). In further work he is examining modernist painting in Steven Soderbergh's *Ocean's* movies and the popularity of the British caper *The Lavender Hill Mob* at the 1951 Venice Film Festival.



Broken Vows and Broken Homes

Jamie Horrocks

In the Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies, Fall 2015

In her article "Broken Vows and Broken Homes: The Politics of the Pre-Raphaelitism in Florence Claxton's *The Choice of Paris*," assistant professor of English Jamie Horrocks explores the life and paintings of Florence Claxton. Horrocks reveals previously unknown details of Claxton's life and presents the difficulties of working as a woman artist in the Victorian era. She also discusses the deep critique of British art criticism and the Pre-Raphaelite painters that Claxton offers through her painting.

The Byzantine Churches of Sardinia

Mark J. Johnson, Art History

Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden, 2013

In *The Byzantine Churches of Sardinia*, art history professor Mark Johnson offers the first detailed study of Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture on the second-largest island in the Mediterranean. The University Professor of Ancient Studies, Johnson examines the Byzantine period with a special focus on circular churches, which were often used to commemorate the martyrdom location or burial of notable saints. In February 2016 he presented BYU's annual P.A. Christensen Lecture about the tomb of Constantine.



Black Velvet Art

Eric A. Eliason, English

University Press of Mississippi, 2011

For most of its existence, black velvet painting has been seen as an anti-art, the supreme kitsch that denies everything that traditionally represents good art. In *Black Velvet Art*, English professor Eric Eliason explores several aspects of black velvet painting to show that this art form represents an important development in folk art. His book will be sold at an upcoming velvet art exhibit at Calgary's Glenbow Museum in May 2017. Eliason will also speak at the opening of the exhibit.

Glitch Gothic

Marc L. Olivier, French

In Cinematic Ghosts, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015

Last year Marc Olivier published a book chapter titled "Glitch Gothic" in *Cinematic Ghosts: Haunting and Spectrality from Silent Cinema to the Digital Era*. Olivier's chapter discusses cinematic effects such as unexpected pixilation, chromatic shifts, or other digital distortions that have been used in the making of horror movies. "The jarring spectacle of data ruins is becoming to the twenty-first century what the crumbling mansion was to gothic literature of the nineteenth century," writes Olivier, whose research interests include cinema, photography, and Instagram.

Complicating Heidegger and the Truth of Architecture

Travis T. Anderson, Philosophy

In The Aesthetics of Architecture, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011

Travis Anderson, Philosophy Department chair, combined his interests in philosophy and art in a chapter for *The Aesthetics of Architecture: Philosophical Investigations into the Art of Building*. Anderson's study, "Complicating Heidegger and the Truth of Architecture," discusses the work of Frank Gehry, Antoni Gaudí, and Daniel Libeskind and how their architecture can be used to explore the ideas of Martin Heidegger.

WINDOWS

ON THE

WORLD



Humanities students gain inspiring perspectives on the world as they peruse
the hallways of the Joseph F. Smith Building.

WHEN IT CAME TO selecting and placing art in the Joseph F. Smith Building soon after it was completed, the building committee knew they wanted something that could provide observers an intellectual and spiritual experience. The building itself, which turned 10 this year, was carefully constructed to represent the disciplines and faith studied within—arcaded perimeters recalling universities of old, light permeating all sides and exemplifying the quest for light and truth, a fountain reminding the university community of its spiritual heritage, and glass-panel collages in every department office, reinforcing the theme of light in a variety of languages and traditions.

To augment the rich symbolism of the building the committee first turned to the Middle Ages for inspiration. Philosophy Department chair Joseph D. Parry, who served on the subcommittee for the building's artwork, says four ways of seeing the world in the Middle Ages became the rubric for choosing and placing art throughout the third floor: (1) the *literal* view, looking at the world in its rich detail and beauty; (2) the *typological* view, looking *through* the world to see the source of meaning; (3) the *tropological* view, the moral of a story; and (4) the *analogical* view, looking up to see the world

as an unfolding of God's larger purposes and plans. This is accomplished through a combination of photographs in the hallways and sculptures in the alcoves

For the fourth floor, images were selected to emphasize the differences and discontinuities between the past and the present. "The images depict a lost world, as well as one that is past," says Parry. "Past civilizations in these images are remote but also evoke a sense of wonder at the sophistication of civilizations we have often considered 'primitive' from our modern perspective."

Infusing the college community with art that bridges the divide between the intellectual and the spiritual was also a driving factor, says former dean John R. Rosenberg, also a member of the building committee. "I think what the artwork does is remind us that beauty matters," says Rosenberg, "that beauty is one way in which God's intelligence is glorious. By surrounding ourselves with thought-provoking beauty that possesses a spiritual quality, we reinforce the fundamental mission of the college."

—KIMBERLY A. REID

To learn more about the symbolism of the JFSB, check out the six-minute video at bit.ly/JFSB_Architecture.

Opposite: Mên-an-Tol, Cornwall, England, 2500 BCE. *Below, Left:* The Atonement Window, Cologne Cathedral, Germany, 1248–1880 CE; *Center:* Glastonbury Abbey, England, 1100–1500 CE; *Right:* Stronghold House, Hovenweep National Monument, Utah, 1200 CE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VAL BRINKERHOFF



"ART HAS BEEN A VERY USEFUL way to historically preserve themes of importance that are sometimes edited out, modified, corrupted by those in charge of the writing. Because art is harder to understand, it's often preserved."

—VAL BRINKERHOFF



ON LOAN FROM THE ARTIST

DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

BRIAN KERSHISNIK, 2012

“CONFIDENCE IN THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS of Christ’s Atonement can at times obscure our appreciation of the creativity, the courage, the risk, and the danger of the collaborative redemptive venture made by Jesus and the Father on our behalf in the actual moments that these events were unfolding. I do not want to diminish the terrible tragic courage that stretched beyond our ability to hope and apparently to the very limits of even Jesus’s hoping [nor to] stand in the way of the depths of this shattering tragedy, but rather to draw out the difficulty of those moments that had to be traversed before the good news of the Resurrection began to shine fabulously through the opening fissures of our fallen and broken circumstance.”

—BRIAN KERSHISNIK



THESE WORKS BY Swedish sculptor Björn Erling Evensen highlight alcoves on the fourth floor of the Joseph F. Smith Building.

THE EISTEDDFOD CHAIR

AN EISTEDDFOD (“eye-steth-vod,” with a “dd” pronounced like “th” in “the”) is a Welsh festival of literature, music, and performance. This tradition can be traced back to 1176, when Lord Rhys ap Gruffydd of Deheubarth held such a festival at his castle in Cardigan. A chair at the lord’s table was awarded to the best poet and musician, a tradition that prevails in the modern-day National Eisteddfod of Wales. Ron Dennis, a Portuguese and Welsh professor, and Leslie Norris, a creative writing professor and a renowned Welsh poet, established an eisteddfod at BYU in 1984. A young student working in the Harold B. Lee Library made the eisteddfod chair, and Garold Davis, then associate dean of the College of Humanities and a German professor, carved the dragon. BYU held its annual short-poetry and long-poetry competitions in connection with the eisteddfod competition. The winner sat in the eisteddfod chair, and the audience, or occasionally the BYU Men’s Chorus, sang a ceremonial song. The first competition was in the Provo Tabernacle, and the winner was a descendant of an early Welsh Mormon. The last formal BYU eisteddfod competition was in 2000.



BOOK WHEEL

CREATED FOR A 2005 exhibit in the Harold B. Lee Library, this book wheel is an adaptation of a Renaissance design by Agostino Ramelli. The overly complex machine would allow a scholar to rapidly move between texts.

CAREER LADDER (ACHIEVER’S CHARM)

VON ALLEN, 2003



THOUGHTS ON THE NEW LIFE

*Intellectual and spiritual engagement can sustain us
through life's challenges.*

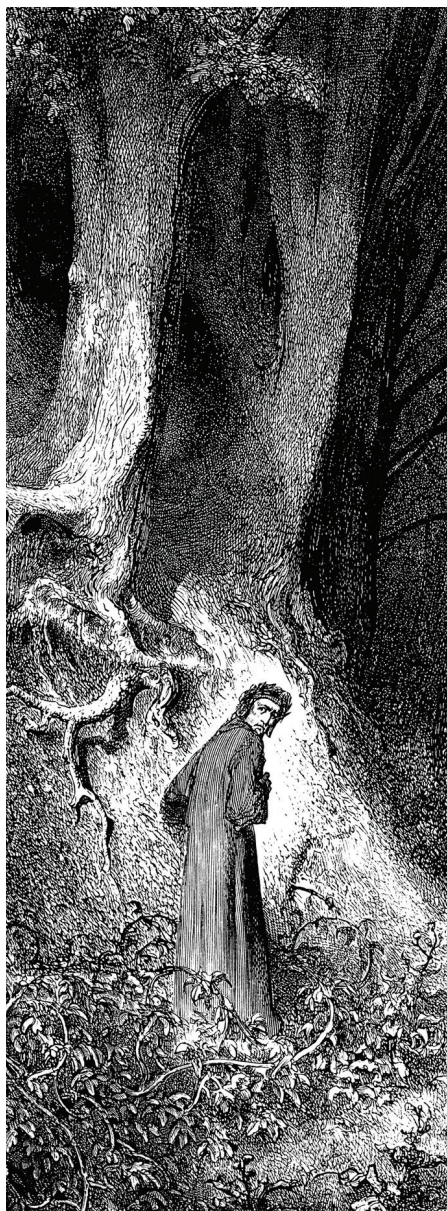
BY V. STANLEY BENFELL

The Apostle Paul defined the Christian life in terms of newness: “We are buried with [Christ] by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). Indeed, throughout Christian history writers have described the new life that comes when we turn our lives to Christ. For much of my professional career, I have studied one of these writers: the great Italian poet Dante Alighieri.

Dante talks a good deal about “the new life,” entitling his earliest book *La Vita Nuova* (*The New Life*). Dante’s *vita nuova* began upon seeing a girl named Beatrice for the first time when he was 9 years old. The new life for him did not signify something like a new career or a new phase of life, but rather he sensed in the arrival of Beatrice something more significant, more vital than anything he had known before. She came to symbolize for him that which exceeded the mundane experiences of his life—a flash of higher meaning, even of the divine—and so he sought her, even after she

*“Midway through the journey of our
life, I came to myself in a dark wood,
/ for the straight road had been lost.”*

(INFERNO, I.1–3)



died at a relatively young age. My own experience with the new life came, like Dante’s, with a spiritual turning, but it was also tied with an intellectual awakening.

When I was in high school I was lazy—slothful at performing my chores, late and lackluster in completing schoolwork, and reluctant to accept assignments at church. Fortunately for me, I applied to BYU when it was a good deal easier to get admitted than it is now. The summer after I graduated from high school, I had an epiphany: I realized that I could not continue as I had done if I wanted to make something of my life. So when I came to BYU as a freshman, I was determined to study and to get good grades. This simple determination to succeed in school bore unexpected fruit: I became thoroughly engrossed in my classes and experienced sustained intellectual engagement.

When I was called to serve a mission in Paris, France, I found myself not only more devoted and more alive spiritually than I had ever been before but also alive to the richness and beauty of the French language and insatiably curious about the fascinating history and culture of the country in which I was living. When I returned from my mission, I found myself not only reading the material required for my courses but also seeking out new books, looking for a quiet moment when I could read something that deepened what I had studied in one of my classes or opened up something

Dante found that he needed to undertake a new journey, through hell, purgatory, and eventually paradise, to recover Beatrice and the new life she represented.

new. This was for me a new life—one of excitement, engagement, and meaning where before I had found only drudgery in school.

As I went on to graduate school, a family, and a career, I assumed that my new life of spiritual and intellectual engagement would continue, not realizing how difficult it would prove to sustain this new life. Dante wrote his work on the new life when he was in his mid-20s. But he began his greatest and best-known work—his *Divine Comedy*—when he was in middle age, and he begins that work by describing his own sense of midlife crisis: “Midway through the journey of our life,” he wrote, “I came to myself in a dark wood, / for the straight road had been lost” (*Inferno*, 1.1–3). He found that he needed to undertake a new journey, through hell, purgatory, and eventually paradise, to recover Beatrice and the new life she represented. When I headed



out to the world, I found it more difficult than I expected to keep on the straight road, to keep that higher meaning—the truth and beauty I love—in my sights. Too often I have found myself lost in a dark wood, wondering how I came there. As I consider this life of seeking, a few lessons stand out.

First, we live in an age in which we increasingly isolate one area of our lives from the others. I may, that is, assume that my spiritual life is one thing, my intellectual life something else, my professional life a third thing, and my family life yet another thing. This I take to be a disastrous error. Since my intellectual awakening coincided with a spiritual conversion, I have always found that my intellectual and spiritual pursuits are inseparable. The Lord tells us to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118), which I take to mean that we must engage both our spirits and

our minds. We are properly suspicious in the Church of intellectuals who dismiss revelation and the authority of spiritual understanding, but should we not be equally wary of those who tell us that they rely solely on spiritual knowledge, that they do not need to do intellectual heavy lifting?

Second, the world is full of beautiful and remarkable things that are worthy of our attention, many of which are found outside of the Utah LDS culture. I have found insight and inspiration from my study of a medieval Catholic poet, and there are countless other books, films, works of art, musical compositions, and so on that are “virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy”; we should “seek after these things” (A of F 1:13).

Third, we are frequently distracted in our increasingly fragmented digital world, and it is difficult to devote sustained attention to great works of literature or to interactions with friends, family, and neighbors. We need to find time to unplug ourselves from the world and to devote sustained, careful attention to things that matter most.

While Dante did lose track of the straight road, he never forgot that first sight of Beatrice and the new life she represented for him. For each of us, as BYU humanities graduates pursuing the “new life” of intellectual and spiritual engagement, we also must never forget that first glimpse of Beatrice. As the cares of life threaten to overwhelm us, I hope that a sense of the wonder, the excitement, and the beauty of all truth will continue to beckon and inspire. ■

Stan Benfell is a professor of comparative literature. This essay is adapted from an address delivered at the April 2014 BYU College of Humanities convocation.

The **Art** of the Everyday

A husband-wife team inspires people to get out of their boxes and look around.

By Samuel Wright ('16)

One morning artist Jacqui Larsen rested on a hiking trail near her home, high enough to see the city of Springville sprawled out beneath her. The city was motionless, with few cars to be seen on the roads. Watching the still town, she wondered how many people down there had ever walked this trail, so close to them. Then she turned that question on herself: “How well do I know my own surroundings?”

Three years later, in summer 2016, the Springville Museum of Art displayed *Three-Mile Radius*, a collaborative exhibit with Jacqui—two-time winner of the Utah Visual Arts Fellowship—contributing paintings, collages, and photography, and her husband, Lance Larsen—a BYU English professor and Utah’s poet laureate—contributing poetry.

“The whole project is about understanding one’s environment and what’s close by,” Jacqui says. “We tend to go from box to box—our house box to our car box to our work box—and we don’t see anything along the way.”

When setting out on the project, both agreed to focus their attention within three miles of Jacqui’s studio. Visitors to the exhibit were greeted by familiar landscapes: lean horses, open fields, sun-drenched mountains, cloud-streaked skies. These images were accompanied by those of less-conventional artistic subjects: houses, both new and abandoned; street signs and road construction; even the SOS Drug Company pharmacy, established in 1909 and a Springville sight so common that it often passes unnoticed.

Too often we seek art and beauty in centers of culture, Lance says. “But if you ignore your immediate surroundings in favor of exotic places like Paris or Florence, you’re going to miss out on some of the richest artistic experiences available.”

Mutual Inspiration

The exhibit blurred the lines between poetry and painting. Paintings hung next to plaques bearing poems and paragraphs, often treating the same or similar topics. As the arrangement of their art suggests, the Larsens have worked in paths parallel and intersecting for years.

Lance and Jacqui met as BYU students. “We would collaborate in conversation,” Lance says. “She’ll work out certain problems



Topaz House

Jacqui Larsen

h. 12" x w. 12"

Oil and collage on panel

Green Hut from Topaz, by Lance Larsen

Now that it’s been moved 100 miles north and turned into a storage shed, the hut from Topaz aches for its past. Aches for kanji and tea and crayoned drawings of barb-wire mountains. The hut had a charge back then: keep the Watanabe family safe till after the war. Some wars have no after. These days girls from the cul-de-sac play dress up here. The are lanky and blonde with the promise of high ACT scores and sturdy wombs but smell like overripe cheeses. The hut doesn’t want cheese girls or their parents traipsing in to take a look, doesn’t want neighbors stripping away wallpaper, souvenir swatches of delicate rose. The hut whispers to itself a lot. *Watanabe*, an incantation that cures rheumatism and comforts cats. *Jap Jap Jap*, no longer an insult but the lapping of water in the pond, the love coos of doves.

The hut can’t hold a gun but would like to learn. It has never heard if hari-kari or kami-kaze pilots, but can taste honor in the air. The hut wants to go out in style, kablam and kabluey, and take a certain mountain state with it. Put away your princess gowns, whippers the hut to the girls. Bring me matches, blasting caps, or fireworks with cute names like Little Boy or Fat Man, and leave the rest to me. The hut wishes to be a traitor like Ezra Pound but has no leaflets to distribute, and its seditious broadcasts would have to be sent via pheromones—smell the truth but not know from whence it wafts. The green hut has a soft spot for the haiku of Yosa Buson, which Mr. Watanabe used to chant on summer nights. Sometimes a meadow-lark answered back, sometimes a cricket hiding under a brick.



Sighs Above and Sighs Below

Jacqui Larsen

h. 66" x w. 48"

Oil and acrylic on canvas

Almanac, by Lance Larsen

Arm chairs sighing, old cars and young mothers sighing, graves sighing both before they swallow the dead and after, motes of dust sighing in twisted columns of light, broken crayons sighing to be held once again, sighs of pleasure, sighs of never again in this life, the garden sighing for the shovel, waiting rooms sighing for a little innocent blood, when will it end, sigh sigh sigh, bats sighing to avoid flying into things at night, beets sighing as they're yanked from the ground, PSs sighing at the end of chatty letters, a pyramid of sighs, the sighs of milk going bad, diaries stained with sighs, the sighs of striped cats stretching, the crucifix sighing as it settles against the warm throat, the sighs of shoes left alone on the porch, tea pots sighing, sighs chaste and sighs pregnant, snuffed candles sighing on the mantle, sighs above and below, long sigh, short sigh, screens of drive-ins sighing at the loss of the three-story kiss.

and move from screen to screen instead."

The work to break people out of their boxes extends beyond *Three-Mile Radius*. Impressed by a former professor who deconstructed classroom walls by inviting students into his home, the Larsens host informal living-room discussions with students. They hope to help students find the artistic in the everyday, having seen the blessings of art in their own lives.

"We really value each other's work," Jacqui says. "And that's behind the whole thing. If I'm not able to get anything done during the day, I'll say, 'How was your day?' And he'll say, 'I made progress on this poem,' or, 'I got a new idea,' and I'll think, 'That's wonderful. Something good happened today.'"

Lance adds, "Painters become painters and writers become writers not to make tons of money but because the making of art alters them. As Robert Louis Stevenson says, 'To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive.' Even if all my poems were destroyed, the journey itself would be worth the sacrifice. The way you see the world changes. You become a different person." ■

or questions in her art that are relevant to my poetry and vice versa. We've been each other's sounding board for over 30 years."

That ongoing conversation has been a ladder out of dead ends. When Lance learned about a relocated hut from the Topaz Japanese internment camp, he began a poem on the subject but eventually shelved it. Later Jacqui visited the hut in a Springville backyard and painted *Topaz House*: the house sits beneath a black and red sky, but the windows are painted in golden light, depicting the home as a sacred refuge from the trials its former inhabitants endured. The painting inspired Lance to return to his poem, displayed in the exhibit as "Green Hut from Topaz."

Jacqui likewise borrows inspiration from Lance. Her painting *A Love Story Tilted* features

a line from one of Lance's poems: "This is a love story tilted, a creation myth with stings and wings."

"That poem stood out to me," Jacqui says. "I thought, 'Wow, there's a whole world inside that line.' I was thinking of the home, the family. It's a love story. The family is a creation myth. And then the stings and wings—I love that mix of things going well and things falling apart."

To See Art in the World

"I want this exhibit to inspire people to get out of their boxes and look around," says Jacqui.

Lance adds, "You have to learn how to observe. We've lost the ability to be engaged by [everyday] places. We see them as boring

Art in Practice

From pedagogy to appreciation, art permeates the work and lives of humanities professors.

VISUAL ARTS INFUSE THE HUMANITIES. Whether in or out of the classroom, faculty in the College of Humanities find many ways to utilize, appreciate, create, and gain insight from art. For some, art enriches their lives and their teaching in the classroom. Other professors incorporate art to explain complicated ideas or elucidate concepts. A few even create art themselves, bringing a sense of personal satisfaction and giving them added insight when teaching about art or art history.

ART AS CONTEXT

For some professors, incorporating art into a non-art-related course can be an engaging and effective way to instruct students and expand their exposure to new ideas. Rex Nielson, a Spanish and Portuguese faculty member, teaches literary studies and encourages students to recognize that literature is not produced in a vacuum but in rich and complex cultural contexts. “I regularly try to bring visual texts into the classroom to help my students understand the ways that art (broadly speaking in terms of both visual and literary arts) engages with current events, politics, history, religion, philosophy, etc.,” he explains. Nielson believes that teaching students to read

visual texts becomes a transferable skill that helps them read literary texts as well.

Nielson also uses graffiti from Brazil or Portugal to help students understand abstract concepts. For example, he might share with students a photograph of Brazilian graffiti that reads, “The media belongs to them, but the street is ours.” This graffiti, he says, is a message of representation. Brazilian media, especially television, rarely represents racial and economic minorities—minorities who are ironically in the majority. This message

emphasizes the street as literally a contested zone of competing messages. The very wall that is used to keep out certain demographic groups is thus reclaimed and repurposed by those groups to assert themselves into broader conversations.

Another example is a famous mural painted by Paulo Ito in 2014 before the World Cup was hosted in Brazil. The message captures a sentiment shared by many Brazilians who decried the lavish government spending on stadiums in a country where large segments of the population face hunger every day. The mural helps students visualize tensions within Brazilian media and the government about the purpose and importance of the World Cup competition to Brazil.

English faculty member Jarica Watts’s favorite artists and artworks vary depending on her current research interests. If she is preparing to teach a graduate seminar on World War I, for instance, much of her attention will be turned to art from that period. Several

BELOW: Art can be an engaging way for professors to illustrate cultural context for the concepts they are discussing, such as a Brazilian mural to highlight political tensions (left) or a Rousseau painting to help explain postimpressionism and Bloomsbury aesthetics (right).





years ago Watts taught a class on Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury aesthetics and quickly realized that if she was going to be discussing Vanessa and Clive Bell, Duncan Grant, and Roger Fry, her students needed more than a cursory overview of postimpressionism. “We spent many class periods examining the work of Matisse and Picasso (among others),” she explains, “and I quickly found that correlating skills between visual and verbal arts helped my students generate not only lively class discussions but also lively literary analyses.” The visual perspective also helped the students better understand and process the weighty sensory images Woolf used in her works.

DEVOTION IN ART

Elliott Wise, a member of the art history faculty, explains that for art historians, art is not only something of interest that informs their research; art is the very subject of their research. In addition to teaching the history of art, Wise also explores the historical, religious, political, social, and cultural context that informed the creation of art. He is particularly interested in “devotional art,” works with an important function in the religious practice, meditation, or prayer of viewers.

For example, Wise says, Northern Renaissance artists excel in religious emotion in general but also in their incredible execution of details and texture. From individual gold threads to gemstones, from panoramic landscapes to tiny flowers and pebbles, the paintings of artists like Jan van Eyck still astound viewers. Wise says Van Eyck’s *Ghent Altarpiece* is one of the finest works of the Renaissance, depicting the apocalyptic adoration of Christ as the Lamb of God, while the Godhead, the Virgin Mary, and St. John the Baptist look down from thrones in heaven. This piece helps

LEFT: The art of professors Kerry Soper (top) and Travis Anderson (bottom) is both an expression of their creativity and an influence on their academic work. **RIGHT:** Studying devotional art helps professors and students consider theological concepts as well as artistic accomplishment.

students understand the theology embedded in this grand work and consider the virtuosic details achieved by painters during this period.

EXPRESSIONS OF ART

Some humanities professors not only research and teach art but also create art. Philosophy associate professor Travis Anderson did not originally intend to become a professor; rather, he wanted to be a professional artist. But he discovered that he loved teaching, and now he says his interests in art and the study of philosophy are strongly connected. “As with philosophy, being an artist (and someone who appreciates art) is simply who I am; I couldn’t not love art—or refrain from being philosophical—and remain the person I am.” Whether creating artistic PowerPoint presentations or handouts or teaching courses on aesthetics, creating art permeates Anderson’s life as a philosophy professor.

Kerry Soper teaches interdisciplinary humanities and American studies. From an

early age he enjoyed drawing cartoons and later became a cartoonist in college, which led to his current area of academic research—the history of comic strips. Creating art has influenced his teaching because he is more interested in helping students to understand the artists from different angles beyond just the aesthetic choices they made. For example, he encourages students to look at “the medium they used, the worldview that shaped their sensibility, the training they received, the financial pressures they faced, etc.” Because of Soper’s firsthand experiences with creating art, talking about those facets of art with students has made class discussions more interesting.

Soper says he gains emotional and intellectual satisfaction from the struggle of painting. Creating art deepens his appreciation for other peoples’ creativity in any arts field, which he hopes spills over into his teaching and writing, helping him to understand and appreciate what he studies on a deeper level.

PROFILE

The Spirit of the Law

Committed to principles of faith, Sean Reyes seeks to serve others as a lawyer and attorney general.

ACQUIRING A HUMANITIES education opens up paths that lead in hundreds of directions. For alumnus Sean Reyes, a BYU English degree led to a law degree at UC Berkeley, which eventually led to his current position as Utah's attorney general.

Throughout his career Reyes has sought to retain the spiritual focus of his BYU days, to keep religion present in his work. "I think we talk too little about God, faith, and prayer in government, and I think we talk about it too little in business," he says. Rather than drive a wedge between him and others, Reyes's focus on faith has built bridges with people of other faiths. "I learned that even in very secular environments . . . you can still have a spiritual orientation," he says.

In 2008 the American Bar Association honored Reyes with its first-ever National Outstanding Young Lawyer Award and invited him to speak at a special gathering. In preparation, Reyes wrote his speech and submitted it for the organization's approval. After reviewing it, a few representatives of the organization expressed concern over his many references to God, faith, and spiritual leaders—including David O. McKay, Ezra Taft Benson, and Joseph Smith—fearing that mentioning religion would alienate his audience.

"I think we talk too little about God, faith, and prayer in government, and I think we talk about it too little in business."

"I learned that even in very secular environments . . . you can still have a spiritual orientation."

—Sean Reyes



Utah's attorney general, Sean Reyes, says his BYU humanities education helps him remember that the work he does is all about the souls of people and about the idea of redemption.

Reyes respected their concerns but defended his speech, explaining to them, "I can't properly express my feelings about the law and the noble work we do . . . without acknowledging God, without acknowledging His divine hand and elements of prayer and faith, because that's really what got me here."

The organization agreed, and Reyes went on to give his speech as written. He received a standing ovation, and a number of attendants approached him afterward to thank him for his words. They told him they had never heard God spoken of at an event like this before and that it was a refreshing change of perspective.

"What BYU taught me is to be who you are," Reyes says. "Stand up for the principles that you have."

Reyes credits his humanities training in particular for preparing him to serve other

people. "[It's] all about humanity," he says. "It's about remembering the souls of people and themes like redemption." This understanding supports Reyes as he confronts the darker side of humanity as attorney general.

For instance, Reyes has been concerned about human trafficking since entering the law, but he says he has seen a paradigm shift take place. Legal action has expanded from simple investigation and prosecution measures to include a victim-centered approach. Specific care is now taken to help victims recover from the atrocities of human trafficking and to give them the tools they need (counseling, education, job training, etc.) to rebuild their lives.

Reyes says this experience and others have taught him that if we do not serve others through our careers, "any success you have in business will not be as gratifying or fulfilling."

—SAMUEL WRIGHT ('16)

Alumni tell how BYU and the humanities have made a difference.

A Prophetic Discussion

Mark A. Steele, American Fork, Utah

I LOVE THAT BYU HUMANITIES classes made me think and allowed me to bridge secular and spiritual ideas and experiences.

For an honors humanities course taught by Brian Best, we were reading the *Aeneid*. In a wide-ranging discussion, Brother Best asked about our thoughts on Aeneas's devotion to the gods, sacrificing much on his way to founding Rome. We were uniformly dismissive of the apparently random demands the gods place on him. Brother Best then asked us to compare Aeneas's sacrifices to the sacrifice of Isaac

required of Abraham. The discussion got us thinking deeper about our attitudes regarding whether an act of devotion has meaning and where devotion and belief come from.

At the conclusion of the discussion Brother Best mentioned that we shouldn't base our devotion on personality or individuals and that every time a prophet died, some people left the Church because they were so invested in the former prophet.

The discussion got us thinking deeper about our attitudes regarding whether an act of devotion has meaning and where devotion and belief come from.

That Sunday we woke to the news that President David O. McKay had died. No student in the class had ever known another prophet, so the news was distressing. The discussion in class, however, helped many of us have a context for examining our belief and avoiding discouragement.

The Ultimate Renewable Resource

Wendy L. Smith, Crestview, Florida

THANKS TO MY BYU ENGLISH DEGREE, it's easy to tell stories as an ear, nose, and throat surgeon when recording a detailed history and physical exam or while making an analogy to help a frail elderly patient come to terms with a cancer diagnosis. My love of languages helps me translate Latin "doctor speak" into something patients can easily understand. Because of my appreciation for all things humane, I admire the intrinsic beauty of the swirl of the cochlea or the nerves and arteries in a neck dissection. I use artistic creativity when designing a transposition flap to cover the defect caused by a skin cancer resection on the face.

And then pictures from my Western Civilization humanities classes come to life when I gaze at the golden mask of Agamemnon in Athens or the heartrending Bernini sculptures at the Galleria Borghese in Rome or the Rosetta Stone at the British Museum in London. And I feel my internal universe expand with joy and awe. Being a humanities graduate has become my ultimate renewable resource.

Pictures from my Western Civilization humanities classes come to life when I gaze at . . . the heartrending Bernini sculptures at the Galleria Borghese in Rome.



Merci Beaucoup!

Janice M. Farrell Williams, Pocatello, Idaho

I HAVE MANY FOND MEMORIES of teachers and professors during my years at BYU in the early to mid-'60s. In particular, I easily recall several French teachers who so greatly influenced my education. Harold W. Lee and Rulon

Part of the exam consisted of putting the French national anthem ("La Marseillaise") into the phonetic alphabet.

N. Smithson, who taught French literature classes, made my viewpoint of life mature very early. The love of great literature has stayed with me ever since.

I also remember the French phonetics course taught by Josette B. Ashford, mostly because of her final exam. Part of the exam consisted of putting the French national anthem ("La Marseillaise") into the phonetic alphabet. It was such

a unique problem; just don't ask me to do it today!

After graduation I joined the Foreign Service. With my French background, I served at the American embassies in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. I have many memories of these places and of the people I met who made such a difference in my life.

Thank you, BYU humanities!

Remembering the Forgotten

As a church and a country, we have a responsibility to care for those who have been left out and left behind.

By Thomas B. Griffith

FOR MANY OF US who lack the skill to paint or draw, the visual arts with which we surround ourselves are less an expression to others of how we see things and more a reminder created by others of what we value. As Dean Scott Miller notes in the prologue to this issue of *Humanities*, the greatest value of art may be how it comes “to influence the quotidian task we are about and elevate it to an errand of beauty.”

From my desk in the federal courthouse in Washington, DC, I have a direct line of sight to a spectacular view of the Capitol. (If you are ever in DC, please come by to see!) Seeing the dome of the Capitol at all hours, especially when lit at night, is a constant source of inspiration—a reminder of the importance of the fragile possibility that is the rule of law. On the wall next to the window that frames my view of the Capitol, and also in the direct line of sight from my desk, I have hung a copy of Maynard Dixon’s painting *The Forgotten Man*. The painting features a dignified but forlorn figure sitting on the curb of a city street while a mass of well-heeled and busy people pass him by, unaware of his plight, unresponsive to his suffering. Although I had a passing familiarity with Dixon’s work from my days as a BYU undergraduate, I only came to love *The Forgotten Man* as the result of an unusual exchange I had years ago with Elder Dallin H. Oaks.

When I was a young lawyer my former mission president arranged for me to meet with Elder Oaks to discuss an important career decision I was facing. I was equal parts excited and nervous at this opportunity, not only because of Elder Oaks’s storied legal career but, more important, because I sustained him as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. When I walked into his office, Elder Oaks greeted me warmly and invited me to sit on a couch in a small sitting area. Now, I’m a curious sort. Actually, I’m nosy, and I am always interested to see how others decorate their work and living spaces. So, in the few seconds between entering Elder Oaks’s office and sitting on the couch, I made a quick and hopefully not-too-noticeable visual survey of the artwork in the room. At first blush, it seemed standard fare for a Church leader. There was a portrait of the Savior, another of Joseph Smith, and a photograph of the First Presidency. But then I was startled by something quite out of the ordinary. Over the couch was a copy of *The Forgotten Man*.

I was taken aback by the prominent placement of this downbeat work of social realism in the office of an apostle. And so, before we began discussing the reason for my visit, I asked Elder Oaks about this painting. The original, he told me, belonged to BYU, and it reminded him of his days as president of the university. More important, however, he said he put the painting in direct line of sight from his desk as a constant reminder that he was called to serve all of God’s children and most particularly those who have been forgotten and left behind. Since then I have been unable to look at *The Forgotten Man* without recalling that powerful lesson.

On their first day in chambers, I have my clerks stand in front of *The Forgotten Man*, and I tell them how Elder Oaks uses the painting to remind him of his responsibility to each child of God. I make the point to my clerks that we, too, have a commitment to those who have been left out and left behind. Not that they will always prevail in court, for sometimes the law requires that the little guy lose, but the law



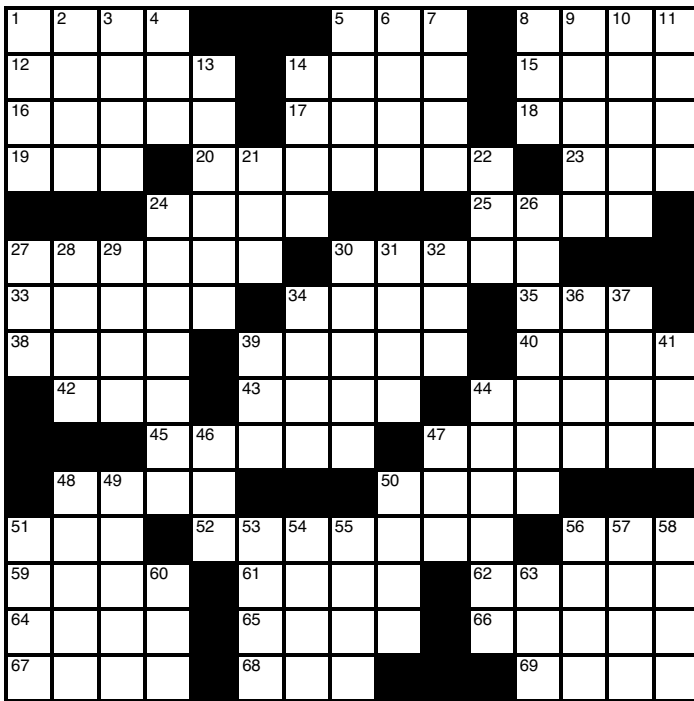
MAYNARD DIXON (1875–1946), *THE FORGOTTEN MAN*, 1934, OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 50 1/8 INCHES. BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART, GIFT OF HERALD R. CLARK, 1937.

requires that those on the margins of society always be treated fairly. In the words of the Declaration of Independence, they are “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights” and are entitled, in the words of the Constitution, to “the equal protection of the laws.” Dixon’s painting, hanging on my wall, helps remind my clerks, and me, of our Constitutional commitment to “the forgotten man.” And on those occasions when our judicial system fulfills that commitment, its work, which is my “quotidian task”—to quote Dean Miller—becomes an “errand of beauty.”

Thomas B. Griffith, a BYU humanities graduate, is a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. He has served as BYU general counsel and as legal counsel for the U.S. Senate.

Artistic Statement

By Fred Piscop



To check your answers, visit us online at
humanities.byu.edu/magazine.

ACROSS

- 1 In ____ (art created for or in a specific place)
- 5 Tennis do-over
- 8 Gorillas and chimps
- 12 Possible response to "Who's there?"
- 14 Painter of limp watches
- 15 Still ____ (type of painting)
- 16 Body of accepted principles in art
- 17 Architectural recess
- 18 Prefix meaning "trillion"
- 19 Like a fox
- 20 Egg-based paint
- 23 Pre-K attendee
- 24 Filly's mother
- 25 "Terrible" czar
- 27 Science of light
- 30 Big name in tractors
- 33 *The Kiss* artist Gustav
- 34 Excessively thin
- 35 Nutritional fig.
- 38 Geodesic ____ (architectural feature)
- 39 Avant-____ (experimental or unorthodox, as art goes)
- 40 Shed one's skin
- 42 Jazz guitarist Montgomery
- 43 *Exodus* author Leon
- 44 ____ noires (pet peeves)
- 45 An order of classical architecture
- 47 Painting on plaster
- 48 Frozen snow queen
- 50 Art ____ (exhibition)
- 51 Altar promise
- 52 *Madame X* painter John Singer ____
- 56 Palette selection
- 59 Middle ____ (when Gothic art flourished)
- 61 Carrot or beet, essentially
- 62 Praying figure, in art
- 64 Trot or canter
- 65 Zoo enclosure
- 66 Like seven Nolan Ryan games
- 67 Air France hub
- 68 Initials for a monarch
- 69 Architectural term that literally means "ship"

DOWN

- 1 ____ on (orders to attack)
- 2 Slanted type, abbr.
- 3 Like artwork 10"x10" or smaller
- 4 GI-entertaining group
- 5 Reindeer herder
- 6 "Or ____!" (ultimatum ender)
- 7 Stadium level
- 8 ____-country (music genre)
- 9 Michelangelo sculpture in the Vatican
- 10 *High School Musical* heartthrob
- 11 Place in the Senate
- 13 In one piece
- 14 Title for Agatha Christie
- 21 Triage centers, briefly
- 22 Shown on TV
- 24 Imitation of the real world, in art
- 26 *The Astronomer* artist Jan
- 27 Green-lighted
- 28 Snow removal vehicle
- 29 Watch display
- 30 An order of classical architecture
- 31 Pulls the plug on
- 32 Art critic's asset
- 34 Italian port on the Adriatic
- 36 Ben-Day ____ (printing technique)
- 37 Graffiti artist ____ Monopoly
- 39 Paintball shooter
- 41 General ____'s chicken
- 44 *St. George and the Dragon* painter Rivière
- 46 Western alliance initials since 1948
- 47 ____ art (art created by science fiction enthusiasts, say)
- 48 Degas, painter of *The Dance Class*
- 49 Trompe ____ (visual illusion in art)
- 50 Honor at a gala
- 51 *Othello* villain
- 53 Gothic ____ (architectural feature)
- 54 Crowd noise
- 55 One-eared seller of one painting in his lifetime, van ____
- 56 Comedic response
- 57 Brigham Young, for one, abbr.
- 58 Suffix with kitchen or sermon
- 60 Pig's home
- 63 Harry's Weasley pal

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Ozymandias

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."



Gods and Kings in Immortal Stone

BAD WEATHER IS OFTEN a photographer's best friend, creating visual drama via moody lighting. Such was my fortune at Nemrut Dagı in southeast Turkey in 2005. The early morning was foggy and bitter cold—a blessing, as other tourists quickly left the site, leaving me and a friend alone at this magical setting. The sun peeked through the fog for just a few seconds for the front cover image. I had more time with the back cover image. The 9-foot-high heads have remained motionless for some 2,000 years atop this mountain temple-tomb, except for an earthquake that tore them

from their bases, which were smaller, stylized bodies. The heads are of various gods and King Antiochus I of Commagene, who constructed this tomb for himself about 60 BCE. The site was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. I used a medium-format (6 x 7 cm) traditional film-based camera (color) for both photographs; they were converted to black and white for a more timeless feel. Framed prints of these photographs hang on the fourth floor of the Joseph F. Smith Building.

—VAL BRINKERHOFF