

ARTifacts

 *Art History Program*

COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES

*Art History Newsletter
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Letter from Kathe Hicks Albrecht, Co-editor, ARTifacts

Dear Fellow Alums,

In May I attended the American Association of Museums (AAM) Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) hosted an American University (AU) alumni reception. Liz Raymond (MA '96), assistant director of Development for CAS, and Noelle Bannister, associate director, organized the reception. I collaborated with them to publicize the reception and serve as co-host. While at the conference, we attended a presentation by fellow alum Julie Charles (MA '96), from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA). The session was called "Drawing Visitors In: Research-based Mediation Strategies to Engage Visitors with Objects in Science, Art and Children's Museums." At SFMOMA, Julie uses new, collaborative strategies to engage audiences in the museum, and the results are fascinating. Julie's session and Liz's development efforts on behalf of the university got me thinking about the impact that our alums have on the world and how partnerships often give rise to success. As AU art history alumni make contributions in the world, it is often through professional collaborations, friendships, and networking opportunities with other alums. This concept was reinforced when, at the reception, Jack Rasmussen (MFA '75, MA '83, PhD '94), director of the American University Museum, talked with Julie about possible future collaborations between the American University Museum and SFMOMA.

Such an active alumni network can also benefit current students. Brooke Rosenblatt (BA '99) mentors current AU students interning at The Phillips Collection. Our alums regularly send position listings to post to the graduate program e-mail list, so AU students frequently learn about internships and professional positions through their contacts with our alumni network. And information on museum talks, symposia, and other opportunities sent in by alums helps enhance the graduate school experience. So, thank you for keeping in touch with the department, attending AU events at professional conferences, networking with fellow alums, and forwarding professional information to our current students!

In this issue of ARTifacts, we've highlighted two alums who are "making a difference" in the world, one through exemplary teaching, and another who has developed a program that provides multi-sensory art appreciation experiences for people with cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's and dementia. In these pages you will also learn about our current students and catch up on departmental news as we explore emerging technologies for instruction, encourage the next generation of art history scholars, and discover new approaches to scholarship. I hope you enjoy reading about the art history program. Please keep in touch...and stop by "The Katzen" to catch up in person!

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Art History Program News

The 2008–2009 academic year was tremendously successful. We scrambled before the fall semester to add sections of our undergraduate classes due to a record number of students admitted to the university. The university continues to attract bright and engaged students, but there are more and more of them! In the fall we offered three sections of Art: The Historical Experience, three sections of Modern Art, and two sections of our entry-level Renaissance Art course. Phew! We tapped one of our own art history alums, Lynn Clement-Bremer, to teach one of the courses in the fall. Lynn has taught in the Maryland state college system for several years and was eager to return to AU on the faculty side of the classroom. She is teaching for us this summer, too, and will be back in the fall. Lynn has been a great addition to the program and it is delightful to have her back at AU.

In the Visual Resources Center (VRC), we welcomed four new graduate assistants, so Kathe Albrecht oversaw the work of seven capable assistants. Training this year was done on the “big screen” 42” monitor, our go-to image-management tutorial station. New students picked up quickly on the tasks at hand: image scanning using the flat-bed and slide scanners, records cataloguing, troubleshooting the Madison Digital Image Database (MDID), setting up the digital carts for the classroom, and otherwise assisting faculty and staff with all aspects of visual resources curatorship. On some days, the art colloquium series allowed staff a noontime break and provided insight into artists’ visions and work. A highlight of the series was a talk by artist Jefferson Pinder who discussed his recent video work. His talk was presented in the VRC to a standing-room-only crowd.



Grad students at work in the VRC.

On October 11, 2008, the 6th Annual American University-George Washington University (AU/GW) Graduate Student Symposium in the History of Art was held in the Katzen Arts Center. Four AU graduate students presented their research. Gwen Van Ostern spoke on “Kendall Geers: Politics, Ideology, and the Use of Violence;” Ellie Pinzarrone presented “The Re-Creation of Memory as Practice of Resistance: Faith Ringgold, Betye Saar, and Carrie Mae Weems;” Helen MacDiarmid discussed “May Stevens’ Big Daddy Series: Feminist Art and American Social Realism;” and Gretchen Martin presented “Isabel Bishop’s Women: Public Versus Private Personas.”



From left: Dr. Garrard, Ellie Pinzarrone, and Dr. Broude at the Middle Atlantic Symposium in the History of Art.

In the spring, Angel Reed, Lucretia Young, and Corey Cripe presented their research at the annual Robyn Rafferty Mathias Student Research Conference held at AU. And Ellie Pinzarrone was chosen to present her work at the Middle Atlantic Symposium in the History of Art, held at the National Gallery of Art. This prestigious event is sponsored each year by The Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art and the University of Maryland. Ellie’s paper, entitled “The Re-creation of Memory as a Practice of Resistance: Faith Ringgold, Betye Saar, and Carrie Mae Weems,” was thought-provoking and well-received by the scholarly audience.

Also in the spring, we held our annual celebration of scholarship. The third annual Distinguished Scholar Lecture in Art History was given by Dr. Carol C. Mattusch, who is the Mathy Professor of Art History at George Mason University. As a visiting curator at the National Gallery of Art, she recently developed the remarkable exhi-

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Faculty & Staff News

Dr. Juliet Bellow's first year at AU has been an exciting and enjoyable one. 2009 is the 100-year anniversary of the Ballets Russes' first performances in Paris, which has occasioned several conferences and events in which she has participated. In May, she presented a paper on Giorgio de Chirico's set and costume designs for the ballet *Le Bal* (1929) at BR2009, a major conference at Boston University to commemorate the Ballets Russes' inaugural season. She also presented papers at the Courtauld Institute of Art and the annual Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference this spring.



From Left: Dr. Butler, Dr. Garrard, Dr. Broude, and Dr. Bellow.

Dr. Bellow's upper-level course at AU, "Art and Dance: 1860-1960," allowed her to explore the major issues of her research in the classroom, and she was grateful to her students for their contributions to the course. She plans to spend the summer finishing the manuscript of her book, "Embodying Modernism: The Ballets Russes and the Visual Cultures of Interwar Paris."

Professor Norma Broude has contributed to the scholarly community in many ways this year. Her major new essay, "G.B. Tiepolo at Valmarana: Gender Ideology in a Patrician Villa of the Settecento," appears in the June 2009 issue of the *Art Bulletin*. She also continues to serve as an appointed member of The Feminist Art Project Honorary Committee (other members include Mary D. Garrard, Lucy Lippard, Linda Nochlin, Faith Ringgold, Elizabeth Sackler, and Gloria Steinem). Dr. Broude is a member of the Editorial Board of *Woman's Art Journal* and the Miriam Schapiro Archive for Women Artists Endowment Committee, Rutgers University.

Here at AU, Professor Broude was nominated by the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the University's Outstanding Scholarship, Research, Creative Activity, and Other Professional Contributions Award for 2009. In the department, Professor Broude served as chair of the Search Committee for a one-year full time temporary appointment in non-Western art history. She also served as faculty advisor and sponsor for two of the papers presented at the AU/GW Graduate Symposium on October 11, 2008: Helen MacDiarmid's "May Stevens' Big Daddy Series: Feminist Art and the Tradition of American Social Realism," and Ellie Pinzarrone's, "The Re-creation of Memory as a Practice of Resistance in the Art of Faith Ringgold, Betye Saar, and Carrie Mae Weems." Ellie's paper was subsequently chosen to represent the department at the Middle Atlantic Symposium, held at the National Gallery of Art, March 7, 2009.

Professor Kim Butler published two peer-reviewed articles and an exhibition catalogue essay in spring/summer 2009: "The Immaculate Body in Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling," *Art History*, vol. 32, no. 2, April 2009, 250-289; "Giovanni Santi, Raphael, and Quattrocento Sculpture," *Artibus et Historiae*, no. 59, vol. 30, June 2009, 1-25; and "La 'Cronaca Rimata' di Giovanni Santi e Raffaello," *Raffaello e Urbino* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Lorenzo Mochi Onori, Electa, April 2009, 36-40. Dr. Butler's book project *Raphael's Madonnas: From Poetry to Thievery* is under contract with Brepols/Harvey Miller, with a projected publication date of May 2010. She is honored to be one of two AU faculty members nominated to submit to the 2010 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Stipend competition, and was also pleased to have her co-chaired session on the Senses in Early Modern Europe selected for the 2010 College Art Association (CAA) conference in Chicago.

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bition "Pompeii and the Roman Villa: Art and Culture around the Bay of Naples." Dr. Mattusch spoke on "Pompeii, Mt. Vesuvius, and the Grand Tour."

The evening's program also included the presentation of the Robert and Susan Pence Undergraduate Art History Award. Bestowed each year upon an exemplary senior in the art history program, the Pence Award was presented to outstanding senior Mallory Stock. Each year we look forward to the presentation of the Pence Award and the participation and continued support of Bob and Susan Pence.

In April, the art history faculty announced the winners of the 2009 Carol B. Ravenal Travel Award competition. The award, made possible through the generous support of former Art Department professor Carol Ravenal, is bestowed alternately upon art history MA and studio art MFA students. This year is the first year the Ravenal Award was bestowed upon an art history student. The award provides funds for summer travel for educational or research purposes for returning graduate students. This year's award was divided between two students, Angel Reed and Corey Cripe, both of whom provided excellent proposals for travel to Italy for their thesis projects in Renaissance art. They will report on their work in the fall semester.

In other developments, we are striving to diversify our program to include non-Western art history courses. Two years ago we offered a course in African art and this past year we were approved to hire an instructor for a one-year full-time position in non-Western art. Although we interviewed several well-qualified candidates, due to circumstances beyond our control, the search was not ultimately successful. However, in the upcoming year we will offer one course each semester in Chinese Art. Dr. Xin Wu, assistant curator of Contemporary Landscape Design and coordinator of Asian programs at Dumbarton Oaks, will teach a survey of Chinese art in the fall semester, and a focused, upper-level course in the spring. To support these new courses, graduate assistant Ellie Pinzarrone has been adding Chinese art images to our MDID database this summer. And as a happy addendum to these developments, we've just learned that we have been approved for a tenure-track non-Western position for which a search will begin in the fall.

You may have noticed that AU has a new and impressive online presence (www.american.edu). This past year, AU joined the ranks of institutions with state-of-the-art web sites as we invite the world to experience the university through interactive pages, short videos, rotating photographs, and up-to-the-minute events and activities calendars. As part of the process of improving the university web site, the art history program updated its program information, added a variety of images, increased its direct links to outside resources, and otherwise improved the site. VRC staff Gretchen Martin and Angel Reed analyzed our old web site, comparing it to other art history programs in the United States. Kathe, Gretchen, and Angel then worked with Emily Schmidt at CAS to update and improve our web presence. Thomas Meal assisted with pdfs and image files. Check out the new photos, updated information, and splashy design when you have a chance.

In closing, although we accomplished quite a lot this past year, we are not resting on our laurels. We will welcome a record number of highly qualified graduate students in the fall. And four new assistants will be added to the VRC staff, bringing the total to eight (also a record!). The Dean has asked us to prepare for another big year for the undergraduate program and we are adding more sections of our general education courses once again. Finally, we are planning—with Liz Raymond (MA '89) and Noelle Bannister from the development office in CAS—a fall reception for Washington-area art history alums, similar to the one held in Philadelphia. Check the "Alumni News" section of the art history web site for further details soon.

(continued on next page)

Summer Plans for Current Grad Students

- **Corey Cripe** is conducting research in Italy, France, and Greece under the auspices of two grants from AU. She received both a Mellon grant and the Carol B. Ravenal award.
- **Amy Dean** is interning at the Walters Museum in Baltimore.
- **Maria Mahon** is taking education classes at AU and will also fit in short trips to New York, Atlanta, and Florida.
- **Caitlin Lowrie** is taking a French class at AU and working on thesis papers.
- **Gretchen Martin** is interning at The Phillips Collection.
- **Ellie Pinzarrone** is working in the VRC, helping to populate the MDID database with a collection of non-Western images for fall and spring classes. In addition, Ellie is working on her thesis papers, taking Italian classes, and working on her own art.
- **Angel Reed** has been accepted into a labor-intensive language program in Venice through Wake Forest University. Conveniently located on the Grand Canal near the Academia and the Guggenheim, Casa Artom is particularly well-suited to a student of art history. To facilitate the development of her international Baroque seminar paper into a thesis, she is spending the last leg of her trip in Rome furthering her research on Andrea Sacchi's ceiling fresco of 1629, *Divina Sapienza*, in the Palazzo Barberini. Angel received a Carol B. Ravenal Award in support of her summer research.

Did You Know? *ARTifacts is going GREEN!*

In an effort to be environmentally aware, we will discontinue our mass mailing of *ARTifacts* with this issue. Starting in 2010, *ARTifacts* will be distributed via e-mail and will continue to be available on the art department website at <http://www.american.edu/CAS/art-history/>. But don't panic! If you'd still like to receive the newsletter by mail, please contact Kathe Albrecht at (202) 885-1675 or kalbrec@american.edu.

New Scholarship

Among the Master's thesis papers completed during the last year are:

- **Molly Bloom**, "Giorgione's Concert Champetre: Ironic Renunciation in the Pastoral Genre" (Butler);
- **Lynn Clement-Bremer**, "Berthe Morisot: Images of Modernity and Identity" (Broude);
- **Heather Domencic**, "Straying from the Flock: A Critical Reassessment of the Reception History of Harriet Hosmer and Her *Zenobia in Chains*" (Langa);
- **Margaret Ferris**, "Frida Kahlo: The Masked Self, Self Portrait as Allegory" (Butler);
- **Liza Key**, "Cruelty, Plague, and the Death of the Masterpiece: Robert Rauschenberg and Antonin Artaud" (Langa);
- **Helen MacDiarmid**, "May Stevens' Feminist Art: Portraying Patriarchy and Re-telling Women's History" (Broude);
- **Leah Miller**, "Girodet's 'Atala au tombeau. Littérateur artiste ou artiste littérateur:' A. L. Girodet's Poetry of the Brush" (Broude);
- **Samara Minkin**, "Orientalist Paintings: Colonialism, Gender and Art" (Broude);
- **Amanda Salley**, "Manet-festations of Berthe Morisot as Femme Fatale" (Broude);
- **Kristin Sarli**, "Edward Steichen and the Littler Galleries at 291: An Introduction to Modernism" (Langa);
- **Layla Seale**, "Female Agency and the Quest for a Classical Heritage in the Gonzaga Cas-sone" (Butler);
- **Hope Walker**, "Visual Rhetoric in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's Sala de nove Fresco Cycle" (Butler); and
- **Hope Walker**, "The Praxis of Religiosity in Henry Darger's 'The Realms of the Unreal'" (Langa).

Among those currently in progress are papers by Holly Robbins on the art criticism of Lucy Lip-pard; Ellie Pinzarrone on the art of Faith Ring-gold, Betye Saar, and Carrie Mae Weems; Caitlin Lowrie on Paul Delaroche; and Gretchen Martin on Gustave Caillebotte.

Making a Difference: Gretchen Holtzapple Bender

Gretchen Holtzapple Bender received her MA in art history from AU in 1994, after which she earned a doctorate in art history from Bryn Mawr College. Gretchen has been teaching at the University of Pittsburgh, where she recently received a prestigious teaching award.

From the University of Pittsburgh press release:

Gretchen Holtzapple Bender of the Department of History of Art and Architecture has been named winner of the 2009 Tina and David Bellet Arts and Sciences Teaching Excellence Award. Full-time faculty members who have taught in Arts and Sciences during the past three years are eligible. An awards committee....evaluates nominees' teaching skills based on student-teaching and peer evaluations, student testimonials and dossiers submitted by the nominees.

Bender, a lecturer in modern art and architecture, has been the department's undergraduate advising director since 2002. Among the classes she has offered are an introductory history of world art, several courses in 18th- and 19th-century European art, research and methodology seminars on feminism and art history, and Romantic landscape. She also serves on the Pitt Arts and Sciences writing board.

Bender earned a bachelor's degree in art history, cum laude, at Franklin and Marshall College in 1991, a master's degree at American University in 1994 and a PhD in German art of the Romantic era at Bryn Mawr College in 2001. She was awarded the Doris Sill Carland Prize for Excellence in Teaching from Bryn Mawr College, and at Franklin and Marshall College won the Robert M. and Elizabeth Hatton Landis Art Award and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. Bender is working on a book titled "Tracing Caroline: Gender and the Landscape Practice of C.D. Friedrich."

Winning the Bellet award is "tremendously flattering," Bender said, crediting in part supportive colleagues who submitted letters on her behalf as well as her "brilliant and creative" students who add excitement to her classroom. "It's fun to get up every morning and walk into the classroom," she said. "What motivates and excites me to teach is the ability to get to know students individually," Bender said. "I'm challenged to find ways to make the course content exciting and relevant to students." The task is easier when the teacher knows the individual students, she said. In a small class, knowing the students is not so hard. In an auditorium class with hundreds of students, the undertaking is more difficult but not impossible. "There are ways to create an environment where learning is stimulating and exciting," she said, adding that it's her practice to "come out from behind the podium and converse with them in addition to lecturing at them."

Bender... favors an open and communicative classroom atmosphere. "I have the expectation in the classroom that we're all learning and collaborating together," she said, stressing that her students are able to help her see a different point of view. "I'm hopefully inspiring them to know they have their own critical voice," adding that simply because she's read more or devoted more time to her subject matter than her students may have, "It doesn't mean their point of view is less valued."

"My desire to enter the classroom with a sense of humility would seemingly run counter to the perceived identity of the college professor, the authoritative scholar who bestows knowledge," Bender stated in her dossier, adding "a mastery of one's research specialty and discipline can be communicated and shared most effectively through passion, encouragement and approachability."

"I always had the sense teaching would be exciting," Bender said.



Edgar Degas. *La classe de danse* (*The Dancing Class*). ca. 1873–75. Oil on canvas. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

On a bright Saturday morning in May, several senior citizens are gathered around a dining room table, looking at an image of Edgar Degas' *The Dancing Class*. The group passes around a pink tutu and touches the satin ribbons of a pair of pointe shoes. Fingers and toes tap to the soft sounds of *The Nutcracker*. Leading the group is AU alum **Brooke Rosenblatt** (BA '99) and her colleague, Jen Droblyen. Brooke, who is currently the education specialist for Public Programs and Interpretation at The Phillips Collection, and Jen are co-owners of Art/Engage, a social services organization that provides art and culture appreciation classes to individuals with cognitive disabilities, particularly those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Most Saturdays a month, Brooke and Jen—an art educator for Arlington County, Virginia—travel around to residential senior homes to conduct their specially-designed, multi-sensory classes.

Brooke and Jen met in 2005 when Jen joined the museum education staff at the Phillips Collection as the school and family programs coordinator. Both educators were committed to making meaningful, educational programs for their audiences within the art museum context. Brooke had always had a vested interest in adult and senior audiences, while Jen had previously developed an outreach program at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Connecticut, for seniors with Alzheimer's and dementia, and adults with moderate cognitive disabilities who participated in adult day care programs. This program, called Lifetime of Looking, was the basis for Art/Engage. Brooke and Jen had a common purpose in their art education goals and the two collaborated to bring the specialized classes to the D.C. area. The organization officially launched in 2007.

The mission of Art/Engage is to foster meaningful exchanges with cognitively-impaired individuals with the hope of stimulating memories and communication. The participants explore some of the world's most famous masterpieces and experience these works using sensory tools such as props, sound effects, and music. The sessions encourage participants to reflect and contemplate on the works of art to engage them on cognitive and intellectual levels. During group or individual discussions participants socialize, read, sing, and express their creativity by producing art projects related to the artwork. In addition to Edgar Degas, Art/Engage has programs on works by Norman Rockwell, Mary Cassatt, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir; and cultural programs on France and the Netherlands.

Art/Engage works primarily with senior citizens, but the organization has a long-term goal to expand services to residential treatment programs for adults and children with disabilities, hospice homes, adult community centers, and facilities that offer after-school programs. In addition to its founders, Art/Engage currently has a handful of volunteers—including a few AU art history alums—and would love to expand. If you would like to learn more about the organization or volunteer opportunities, please visit the website at www.artengage.org.



A participant in an Art/Engage program on Degas shows her expressive side.



Mother and son participate in an Art/Engage program on Norman Rockwell.

Class Notes

- **Stephanie Bancroft** (BA '09) has been admitted to both Oxford University and the University of Edinburgh for graduate school. She has decided upon Oxford and will begin classes in the fall.
- **Heather Domencic** (MA '07) recently accepted a position at the Library of Congress where she will be working as a copyright specialist in the Copyright Office, Literary Division.
- **Alejandra Gimenez-Berger** (MA '98) is teaching at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio.
- **Karla Huebner** (MA '02) received her doctorate in art history from the University of Pittsburgh in December 2008. Her dissertation title is "Eroticism, Identity, and Cultural Context: Toyen and the Prague Avant-garde." Karla presented "Surrealism Comes to me in a Dream: The Transgressive Eroticism of the Early Prague Surrealists," at the Surrealism & Non-Normative Sexualities session at the Association of Art Historians Annual Conference in Manchester, England, April 3, 2009. She has been a Visiting Instructor at the University of Pittsburgh and recently accepted a one-year renewable position at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, where she will replace both a modernist and a Renaissance instructor. Because it is primarily a studio department, and on the quarter system, Karla is revamping her 19th-century class for the fall, to be followed by a *fin-de-siecle* class in the winter, and then in the spring she'll teach a Czech modernism lecture class.
- **Allison Leigh-Perlman** (BA '05) completed her first year at Rutgers University (RU) in the graduate program in art history. She is a graduate assistant in the RU museum. Allison also applied and was accepted to take a course with Linda Nochlin at New York University in the spring 2009 semester.
- **Susie L'Heureux** (MA '99) and her husband Tony welcomed baby girl Lila to the family.
- **Stephanie Luksenburg** (BA '07) has been admitted to the Arizona State University master's program in art history. She is eager to begin studying art history again in the fall.
- **Daniel Nie** (MA '87) continues to devote his time to teaching and reports that his art business has had another successful year. DanNie Studio has conducted shows in Maryland, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia during the past year.
- **Alison Pace** (BA '93), has penned a new novel, *City Dog*. Alison thinks it may be her favorite book yet. As she says, "that probably has more than a little to do with the fact that it stars my dog, Charlie."
- **Katie Poole** (MA '02) accepted a tenure-track position (Early Modern art history) in the Art and Design Department at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. She is moving to St. Louis, Missouri this summer and will be living just a few blocks away from **Bryna Campbell** (MA '03) and her husband Mike! Some other exciting news is that Katie's essay "Christian Crusade as Spectacle: The Order of Santo Stefano and the Audience for the Medici Weddings of 1589 and 1608" will be published in the anthology *Push Me, Pull You: Art & Devotional Interaction in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* in 2010 by Brill.
- **Vanessa Rocco** (BA '92) was in touch last year about her exhibition *Louise Brooks and the New Woman in Weimar Cinema*, at the International Center of Photography (ICP). Rocco and her colleague Elizabeth Otto (assistant professor at SUNY Buffalo) recently received the exciting news that the University of Michigan is offering them an advance contract to edit an anthology entitled *The New Woman International: Representations in Photography and Film 1890s to 1930s* (targeted for 2010). The project should be an exciting addition to an expanding field. Rocco explains that she and Otto "will bring together a group of 16 young curators and scholars to focus on the visual aspect of the New Woman construct across national boundaries." Rocco was a visiting assistant professor at Pratt in 2008–2009, while on leave from ICP.
- **Elena Sanchez-Cortina** (MA '05) visited from Mexico City in the spring. Serendipitously, she happened into the Katzen Arts Center during our annual end-of-year luncheon so Elena caught up with faculty, staff, and met some of our current students.

- **Marianna Siciliano** (BA '09) will do a summer internship at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, then return to DC in the fall to begin the Art and Museum Studies graduate program at Georgetown University.
- **Kate Stilwill** (MA '06) recently accepted a position at The Smithsonian Associates, the education arm of the Smithsonian Institution. There she will be working in the Development Department as a development associate/Smithsonian Young Benefactors coordinator.
- **Ginny Treanor** (MA '02) and her husband announced the birth of their first child, Stephen Joseph Polityka IV. Ginny will be returning to the UMD this fall as a teaching assistant after three and a half years at the National Gallery of Art working with her advisor, Dr. Arthur Wheelock. Ginny is working on her dissertation, "Amalia van Solms and the Formation of the Stadhouder's Art Collection."
- **Marissa Vigneault** (MA '02) is moving to Lincoln, Nebraska. She will be a lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Art History at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). Marissa is replacing Christian Mamiya (editor of *Gardner's Art Through the Ages*), who is stepping into an assistant dean position. UNL is starting a graduate program in art history this fall.
- Our newest graduates are **Stephanie Bancroft** (BA '09), **Helen MacDiarmid** (MA '09), **Samara Minkin** (MA '08), **Layla Seale** (MA '08), and **Marianna Siciliano** (BA '09). Congratulations!



Kathe Albrecht (MA '89) and her husband Mark caught up with Samara Minkin (MA '08) and her husband Trent Gegax in New York City. It was a lovely afternoon visit in the park with twins Hattie and Stella, and their family German Shepherd, Isabella.

Notes from the Field

Holly Robbins (MA Pending) writes:

I'm currently working at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art as the Assistant Registrar, Loans Out. I am one of two people who coordinate all aspects of loans from our permanent collection to museums around the world. We have anywhere from 60 to 80 loans a year, so it's a lot of work, but has so far been a fascinating and rewarding experience.

My main responsibilities include preparing all loan agreements and additional documents for each loan, preparing condition reports for each work of art, serving as a courier for high value or fragile works of art, arranging courier travel for other members of our department, working closely with our conservation department to determine any necessary treatment for works going on loan, and numerous other duties. The biggest thrill for me happened on my first day when I walked into my office in temporary storage and immediately saw a work by Janine Antoni that I am writing about in my thesis—it seemed like a sign that I had come to the right place.

While at AU, I worked at the American University Museum and developed skills that I use every day in my current job. My experience at AU helped make my transition to SFMOMA virtually seamless—for which I am quite appreciative. I would definitely encourage current grad students to consider museum registration when applying for internships and jobs. I didn't know what museum registration was all about until I started doing it, and it has proved to be a fascinating field that offers hands-on access to outstanding art.

Send us your *ARTifacts*

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Dr. Butler continues to collaborate with studio art colleagues to bring in speakers for the Art Department's Critical Inquiry Noon Colloquium. The spring 2009 art history speaker was Joshua Shannon (PhD, University of California, Berkeley), a specialist in the history and theory of art since 1945 and assistant professor of Art History at the University of Maryland (UMD). His colloquium talk addressed the critical issue of abstraction in relation to Donald Judd's sculpture.

Dr. Butler's most enjoyable extra-departmental activities tend to involve her toddler son Jack, with the notable exception of the hang gliding lessons she participated in on the Outer Banks this summer. Adventurous Jack cannot begin hang gliding until he is 4!

This year, **Professor Emerita Mary D. Garrard** finalized her long-awaited book, *Brunelleschi's Egg: Nature, Art and Gender in Renaissance Italy*, which will be published by the University of California Press in 2010. The book examines the gendered discourse of art and nature in the Italian Renaissance, when the philosophical idea of nature changed from its medieval conception as a divine creative female power to the scientific view of the natural world as inert matter. Garrard proposes that this major philosophical shift was both anticipated and mediated by the visual arts. Through selective case studies, she discusses the competition of nature and art as a major current in Renaissance art, bringing a feminist corrective to art histories that replicate the masculinist biases of the period under study. Professor Garrard gave a lecture on the theme of the book, "Art vs. Nature: A Renaissance Competition in the Key of Gender," at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, in April 2008, and at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, in October 2008.

Professor Garrard was interviewed and quoted at length in an article by Mary O'Neill, "Leonardo da Vinci's Brilliance," *Investor's Business Daily*, August 1, 2008. In October, she was invited by *Washington Post* art critic Blake Gopnik to partake in an interview/commentary on Raphael's *Alba Madonna* in the National Gallery, along with Leo Steinberg and Alexander Nagel, "three of the country's most exciting scholars." The three-part discussion was published in the *Post* on Sunday, October 5, 2008 [www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/story/2008/10/03/ST2008100302263.html?sid] Professor Garrard contributed an invited essay to the forthcoming *Centennial History of the College Art Association*, called "Governance and Diversity in the 1970s: CAA and the Women's Caucus for Art." *The Centennial History*, edited by Susan Ball, former CAA executive director, will be published by Rutgers University Press. Dr. Garrard continues to serve by appointment on The Feminist Art Project Honorary Committee, and as a member of the Editorial Board of the *Woman's Art Journal*.

Professors Broude and Garrard continued to develop and submit grant proposals for a projected exhibition, "The Politics of Nature," tentatively scheduled to open at the American University Museum in the Katzen Arts Center in the fall of 2011. Their earlier, co-curated exhibition, "Claiming Space: Some American Feminist Originators," held at the museum in the fall of 2007, continued to receive reviews and notices long after its closing. See the review by Jim Mahoney in the June/July 2008 issue of *Art in America*, p. 201, and the longer reviews by Josephine Withers in the March 2008 issue of *CAA Reviews*, the on-line publication of CAA, and in the September 2008 issue of *Feminist Studies* (as part of a critical essay entitled "All Representation is Political: Feminist Art Past and Present").

Professor Helen Langa had a very busy year serving as chair of the Art Department (Art History, Graphic Design, and Studio Art) as well as director of Art History and acting director of the Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) program at AU. There was quite a lot to learn about how administration works but both the Art Department and WGS have great faculty so she had a lot of help! In addition to teaching two parts of the American art history sequence, she also squeezed in some writing time,

(Continued on next page)

with her article "Constructing Cultural Democracy: Ideology and Public Art in 1930's America" published in the anthology *The Political Economy of Art: Creating the Modern Nation of Culture* (2008), and another essay, "Seeing Queerly: Lesbian Presence and Absence in American Visual Art, 1890 to 1950," accepted for the *Journal of Lesbian Studies* (forthcoming 2010). She gave a talk at the Steidle Symposium on *Labor's Legacy: Pennsylvania Industrial Art*, held at Penn State University in May 2009, titled "Heroic Men, Vulnerable Workers, Economies of Power: Rereading American Industrial Prints from the Great Depression." Somewhere in between all this, she spent a lot of time playing with her black and gray Schnauzer-Yorkie puppy, Lucky.

In February, while in Los Angeles for the CAA conference, Professor Langa did research at the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives and in July she will fly out to San Francisco to interview an 80+-year-old lesbian artist who was part of the Abstract Expressionist movement in New York during the 1950s. Dr. Langa will also do research at the Gay and Lesbian History Archives in that city. But first, she will take a little time to recover from the past academic year: a week on Monhegan Island in Maine, with a lobstering village and a historical artists' colony from the early 20th century, where the rental houses are former artist's studios and there are 17 miles of hiking trails, migrating birds, seals, and house-size lilac bushes in bloom. And a stop at the Farnsworth Museum, also in Maine, where there are early works by Louise Nevelson that certainly suggest her craggy sculptures might be related to Maine's craggy rock cliffs!

This past year, **Rachel Simons** kept very busy teaching and trying to make some progress with the research she began last summer on *The Morgan Picture Bible*. Next year, Dr. Simons will not be teaching and plans to study Latin, continue investigating the *Morgan Picture Bible's* rich iconography, and read several books that have been waiting patiently on her bookshelves. Also on her wish list is a trip to Europe (perhaps in the autumn) as well as more time on Cape Cod kayaking, beach hiking and lobster ingesting!

Visual Resources Curator **Kathe Albrecht** continues to expand the MDID database at AU, train and supervise the graduate assistants, and help keep the art history program running smoothly. After the 2008 conference season, she took a break from presenting papers, but will chair a session on visual resources at the Southeastern College Art Conference (SECAC) in Mobile, Alabama, in October. Ms. Albrecht recently returned from teaching at the Summer Educational Institute (SEI) at Simmons College in Boston. She serves as co-chair of SEI, which focuses on training visual resources professionals in digital image management. Next year, SEI will be held at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque and center on advanced level training. Additionally, Ms. Albrecht continues her work on the Visual Resources Association Foundation board of directors. The Foundation supports SEI, the Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO) Project, and other emerging education and research enterprises. Kathe's summer travel includes a trip to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), where her daughter is interning with a UAE investment firm. Some of you alums remember Olivia, who grew up in the slide library in Watkins, playing under the light table!



AU Alum Elena-Sanchez Cortina (center left) chats with Dr. Langa (center right) at the end-of-year party.

AU Alums Liz Raymond and Julie Charles catch up at the alumni reception at the AAM Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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