

# CLASSICS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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# IN THIS ISSUE

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GREETINGS  
FROM THE  
CHAIR

*Greetings from the Chair*

## VICTORIA WOHL



The spell-checker on my email objects to the neologism Covid and suggests a felicitous correction: Ovid. I've been amused by that every time I've written the word – and I've written the word many, many times over the past two years! In some ways, this autocorrection sums up the past year, as we've undergone the uneven metamorphosis from Covid to Ovid. This process has involved pivoting from online to in-person teaching in the autumn, then back to online at the end of the term, then back to in-person again after reading week. For many of us, as in Ovid's tales of transformation, the result was a distressing sense of disorientation as we shuttled between our normal embodied selves and our online avatars and between encounters with real (though masked) people and with small gray squares. The transition has involved last-minute dashes as we realized that events we thought were virtual were actually live (and last-minute scrambles as events planned in person had to be moved online). The various ups and downs of this metamorphosis have been exhausting for everyone, and I'm grateful to our faculty and students for maintaining such good humour through it all. At this moment I would say we are finally more Ovid than Covid, thank all the gods and goddesses.

The 2021-22 academic year in the Department of Classics was also defined by a second felicitous autocorrect: KAPUT for UTQAP (U of T Quality Assurance Process), the acronym for the cyclical review which the department underwent in 2020-21. I am happy to say that the UTQAP is now officially KAPUT: the department submitted its response to the external review in February and it was accepted by the Committee on Academic Policy

and Programs in April. Much of this past year has been spent working to implement the recommendations of the external assessors, in particular through a major graduate program review. My thanks to Seth Bernard who, as Associate Chair Graduate, took the lead on this review, and to all the colleagues and graduate students who contributed to the process. The resulting revisions to the graduate program are currently wending their way through the various bureaucratic channels and we are hopeful that they will be in place for the students who enter the MA and PhD programs in Autumn 2024. Next year we will be undertaking a similar review of the undergraduate programs under the leadership of Associate Chair Undergraduate Kevin Wilkinson, and we will be soliciting the input of instructors and students (current and past) in that process.

I will spare you more autocorrect fails (among my other favourites: Querulous for Quercus, Hippocampus for Tricampus, CLASSY for CLASSU [the Classics Students Union], and SCAMP for CSAMP [the Collaborative Specialization in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy]). Instead I invite you to read more about the Department's activities this year in the articles below. Thanks to Prof. Jonathan Burgess, newsletter RA Arnold Van Roessel, and Communications and Outreach Assistant Bianca Viseu for their hard work putting this newsletter together.

I close this brief Chair's message by expressing my profound gratitude, first, to the executive committee (Seth Bernard, Ben Akrigg, and Kevin Wilkinson) and the administrative staff (Coral Gavrilovich, Bianca Viseu, and – in this year of three Business Officers – Ann-Marie Matti, Miriam Moren, and Galina Safonenko) for their commitment to and continuous hard work on behalf of the Department; second, to the faculty and students for the dedication of time, energy, and creativity that makes our department so vibrant and our programs so successful; and, finally, to you, the broader community of alumni/ae and friends of the Department of Classics. As we look forward to starting a new year in the autumn, to welcoming new students and postdoctoral fellows, to teaching new courses and undertaking new projects – all, we ardently hope, under the banner of Ovid not Covid! – your continued support means the world to us. Please stay in touch and if you are in the area please do stop by and say hello.



# FACULTY NEWS





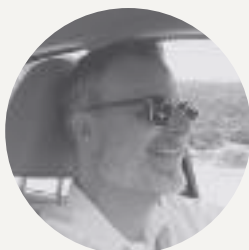
# FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**Rachel Barney** spent time in Oslo and Oxford, which she reports were "both lovely." She was visiting in Oslo for a month giving talks as a guest of the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas at the University of Oslo, which includes the large and lively Ancient Philosophy group. In May and June she gave the Nellie Wallace Lectures at Oxford, a series of six talks on the politics of Plato's *Republic* (series title: "The Just Society and its Enemies"). She was also a Visiting Fellow at Keble College. In November she is giving the keynote lecture at the "Women in Ancient Philosophy" conference at the Humboldt Universitat.



**Seth Bernard** has been awarded a 12-month Chancellor Jackman Faculty Research Fellowship at the Jackman Humanities Institute for 2022-23 for his project "At the Origins of Roman Labour: The Making of a Slave Society in Italy, 500-200 BCE." Additionally, Seth's Falerii Novi Project, investigating a Roman town in central Italy, has been featured in the Italian national newspaper Il Messaggero on several occasions. Updates are available on the project and can be found on Twitter (see the "In the Field and Sea" section of this newsletter for a report on last summer's work at this site). In October Seth organized an online conference on "Climate and the Roman Conquest of Italy," with more than 50 participants from around the world, followed by a hybrid session in April with several participants from North America and Europe in person in Toronto.



An interview with **Jonathan Burgess** about "the corpse of Odysseus" (on the *Odyssey* and the *Telegony*) was published in February on the website *Faculti*. Jonathan is on sabbatical the coming year working on his project "The Travels of Odysseus."

# FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS continued.



**Alison Keith** has been re-appointed as director for the Jackman Humanities Institute for another four years (2022-26). JHI, located at the top floor of the Jackman Humanities Building, advances humanities scholarship, generates interdisciplinary ways to understand human experience, and provides opportunities for scholars. Members of the department have often been and continue to be involved with the institute.



In November **Sarah Murray** with Seth Bernard organized the conference "Morality and Models: Assessing Modern Approaches to the Ancient Economy." For Sarah's archaeological work in Greece, see the "In the Field and Sea" section of the newsletter.



**Martin Revermann** was the 2022 recipient of the Annual Desmond Morton Research Excellence Award, in recognition of his outstanding achievement in research and scholarly activity. In February Professor Revermann delivered his virtual talk, "The Theatre of Science." Martin also this year published a new book, *Brecht and Tragedy: Radicalism, Traditionalism, Eristics*. (Cambridge University Press).



**Kenny Yu** won a Connaught New Researcher Award this year and will be at the Center for Hellenic Studies in the fall working on his project "Religion After Aristotle: Wonders of Myth and Cult in the Greek Scholarly Imagination." He also ran a Jackman Humanities Institute Scholars-in-Residence project this year with five excellent undergrads as research assistants: Lana Glozic, John Liao, Brent Amino, Sheena McKeever, and Esme Newling. The project, "The Logic, Function, and Contexts of Ancient Greek Titles," explored how book titles were created, transmitted, and conceptualized in antiquity, including the relations between ancient titles and the texts they designate, and the dynamics of ancient Greek reading practices.

# 2022 SSHRC INSIGHT GRANTS



Congratulations to University of Toronto Classics Professors George Boys-Stones, Boris Chrubasik, and Victoria Wohl, who were all recipients of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Insight Grants for their respective research.

**Professor Boys-Stones** received an Insight Grant for his project "Clement: an early Christian contribution to ancient epistemology and ethics."

*"This project offers a new study of the epistemology and ethics of the Christian writer Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215 CE). The study is conceived as a contribution to our understanding of ancient epistemological and ethical thought; but it is also designed as a case-study in promoting the integration of Christian texts into mainstream histories of ancient philosophy. To this end, it will include not only a study of Clement's thought, but a new translation of the most important relevant text."*

**Professor Chrubasik** received an Insight Grant for "Sealings and Lives of Maresha," in collaboration with Dr. Kathryn Stevens (Corpus Christi College, Oxford University), Dr. Ian Stern (Hebrew Union College), and Dr. Chris J. Young (University of Toronto).

*"Sealings and Lives of Maresha is a project that aims at once to publish, analyse and conserve an individual corpus of great historical importance; to add a significant facet to our understanding of Hellenistic imperialism on the ground, and to create a lasting model for the digitisation and analysis of sealings from the ancient world."*

**Professor Wohl** received an Insight Grant for her project "The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy."

*"Ever since Plato's famous expulsion of the poets from his philosophical republic, 'the ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy' (Rep. 606e-608b) has been the topic of intense scholarly interest. My proposed project seeks to understand the relation between poetry and philosophy by returning to a moment before that quarrel arose. It investigates the poetics of the so-called Presocratic philosophers, writing in Greece from roughly 600 to 400 BCE. These writers invented new ways of thinking about the natural world, human life, and the nature of reality. In doing so, they also conceived new means of expression. The active interrelation between these two innovations is the focus of my project. Through sustained analysis of the Presocratics' use of language, it examines how their literary form shaped their new modes of thought. Further, by tracing key images and ideas in texts of early Greek philosophy and poetry, it seeks to illuminate the Presocratics' experimental poetics by situating them more firmly within their contemporary context. More broadly, it asks how we should conceptualize the relation between philosophy and poetry at a historical moment before their Platonic falling-out."*



## Spotlight on Faculty:

# ERIK GUNDERSON

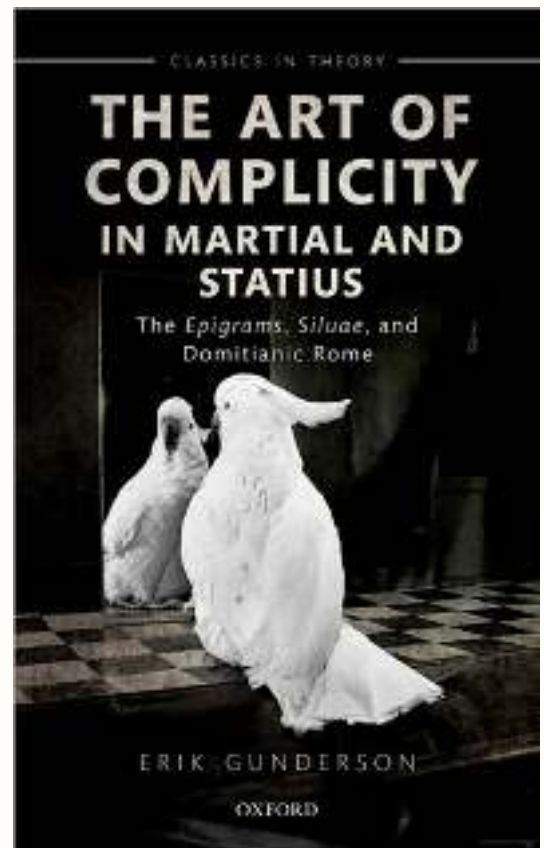
Erik Gunderson's *The Art of Complicity in Martial and Statius* was published last fall by Oxford University Press. A critique of the politics of praise, it merits our supreme and sincere praise.

Erik also shared with us an update on his ongoing major web project "Hipparchia":

Hipparchia is a research platform for students of classical texts. It contains a variety of convenience items as well as some more advanced tools. The search function is a core feature. One can search Greek and Roman literature, inscriptions, and papyri. A search can be by time, genre, and/or location while adding or subtracting items at will. So "archaic epic, less Homer's *Iliad*" is one potential target. Searches can be for words, parts of words, or even all known inflected forms of a word. Phrases or X near/not near Y can also be searched. There are other tools available. Among them are texts and index generators; instant vocabulary lookup and parsing via a click on a word; reverse lexicon lookups. One can also make vocabulary lists: all the words you need to know to read *Iliad* 1, for example.

The more ambitious element of the project involves "semantic vectors". Mathematical models of texts can be generated and then queried. These models let one see that  $\mu\eta\nu\iota\varsigma$  is a neighbor of  $\tau\iota\mu\eta$  in *Iliad* 1 and that both are themselves neighbors of  $\nu\epsilon\mu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\omega$ . Meanwhile the semantic neighborhood of  $\tau\iota\mu\eta$  in Greek literature more generally looks very different from this. Analyses like these are effectively experimental because there are very few humanistic tools that allow one to build the models upon which they are based. Hipparchia is one of the first to simplify the process and generalize it across humanistic texts.

What the models really mean is an interesting problem not just for humanists, but also for anyone in computer science and/or computational linguistics. The place one usually sees this math at work is in product searches: Amazon knows that if you buy A and B that you might be interested in C. So the models "work", but they are also potentially black boxes: why do they work? What is the real significance of changing one of the parameters in a model? Which choices are "good" and which are "bad" and why?



The software can be installed on more or less any platform. There are versions for macOS, Windows, Linux, and BSD derivatives. The source code is freely available and modifiable. Further details and screenshots can be seen at [github.com/e-gun/HipparchiaServer](https://github.com/e-gun/HipparchiaServer). One needs to scroll down a bit to see the screenshots.

ABOVE: *The Art of Complicity in Martial and Statius*  
LEFT: Screenshot of Hipparchia

## REGINA HÖSCHELE



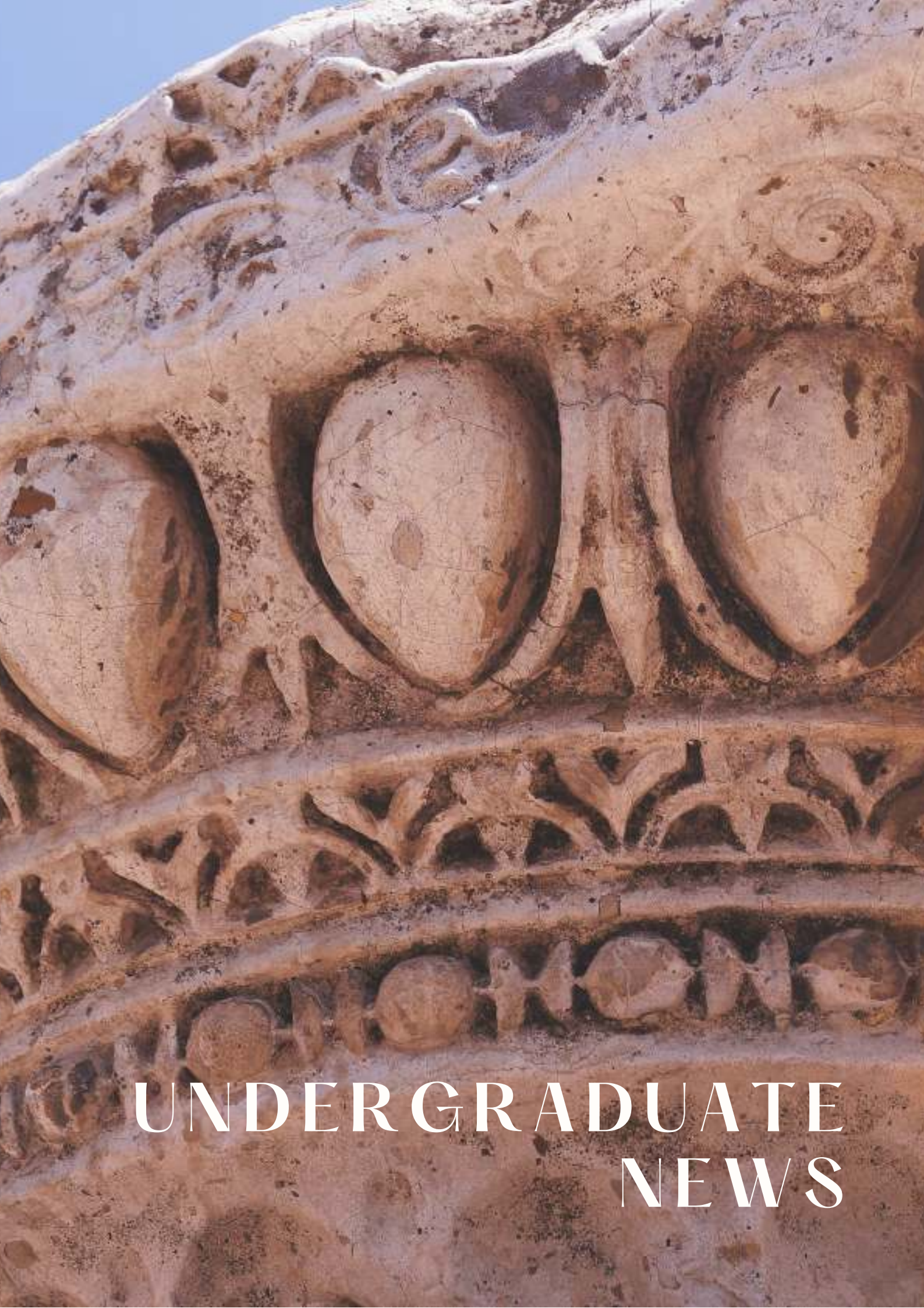
ABOVE: Regina with Peter Bing and Daniel in Paris  
BELOW: Urs Fischer's Wax Statue



**Regina Höschele** was on sabbatical this past year and reports:

This past year I spent a research and study leave in Paris. While enjoying French cuisine and the incredibly rich culture of this city, I completed my monograph on *The Garland of Philip: Greek Epigram in a Roman Cosmos* and turned to my next research project, a study of ancient agalmatophilia. There could indeed hardly be a better place to think about statues and images than Paris, where one encounters them at practically every turn (the *école maternelle* of our 6-year old son Daniel even had an *artothèque*, from which the kids got to borrow the replication of a famous artwork every week – since most of them are located in Paris, we made sure to visit the originals on the weekends). Most memorable was a temporary exhibit at the Pinault Collection in the old Bourse de Commerce, which showed a replica of Giambologna's *Abduction of the Sabine Women* by Urs Fischer, fashioned in wax and slowly melting away (many thanks to Kenny who drew our attention to this amazing piece!). After 1.5 years of Torontonion lockdowns, I was also very excited to give my first in-person papers again, speaking at various universities in France, Switzerland and Poland. Last but not least, I am happy to report that I finally started to fulfill my long-held desire to read Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in Russian (though it will probably take me until my next sabbatical to get to the end of it...).





# UNDERGRADUATE NEWS



## SARAH ANN FLORIO

Outgoing CLASSU President Sarah Ann Florio reports on the year for undergrads:



CLASSU is excited to report that we have successfully made it through another wonderful year. Despite ongoing COVID-19 related challenges, we were able to reopen our undergraduate lounge for the first time in 2 years and see each other face to face again! We had a number of successful events, both online and in-person, including our 3rd annual High School Outreach event for local high school students in the GTA, and our first ever alumni panel. We are also very excited to announce the publication of the 8th edition of our undergraduate journal, *Plebeian*, which highlights and celebrates the academic writings of our student body.

As the year comes to a close, we'd like to give a big thank you to Professor Victoria Wohl, Professor Ben Akrigg, and Professor Kevin Wilkinson. Your tireless support of our endeavours is always appreciated, and we are so grateful for all you do.

### Undergraduate Spotlight

## JOHN LIAO

John Liao was awarded a Critical Digital Humanities Initiative Grant to help explore digitization possibilities for Kenneth Yu's project on the logic and functions of Greek book titles. John gives us an update:



As an inaugural undergraduate recipient of the Critical Digital Humanities Initiative Grant, I was provided monetary support by this fellowship to work with Professor Kenneth Yu on his project investigating the logic and functions of ancient Greek book titles. As this was a digital humanities fellowship, my work's primary goal was to aid in exploring and planning digitization possibilities for the project - specifically, to plan the development of a database for these titles. My specific project I presented at the CDHI showcase in April, however, was more two-pronged. It consisted of a summary of our concerns surrounding infrastructural longevity in digital classics as well as a pilot study of select Greek philosophical book titles (separated into three broad categories: "Pre-Socratic", "Platonic", and "Aristotelian"). For the latter, I was responsible for collecting all of said titles, consulting mainly Diogenes

Laertius and the Suda (with all attached prosopographical data), and analyzing them using a combination of statistical macroanalysis and close reading. This also included creating a very basic formal/grammatical taxonomy of these titles to use as a reference point.



## PLEBEIAN: JOURNAL OF THE CLASSICS STUDENTS' UNION

Editor-in-Chief, John Liao reports on the undergraduate publication *Plebeian*.



As *Plebeian*'s Editor-in-Chief for the 2021-2 year, I am proud to say that *Plebeian* has continued to push the limits of its historical prerogative and exceed expectations at every turn -- this is particularly evident in the journal's continued commitment to expanding its world through the digital landscape. This year, we launched our own [website](#) where we are hard at work transforming the journal into something that is not only digitally -- and thus globally -- available but as accessible as possible, including our commitment to slowly making all present and past papers published in the *Plebeian* available in a readable, scalable, and mobile-friendly web format alongside continuing to offer PDF downloads. We have continued our commitment, as well, to reaching audiences through social media -- not only has attendance to *Plebeian*'s annual Assembly of the Plebs conference continued to be bolstered by advertising through our successful TikTok and Instagram presences, but we have also connected successfully with the Classics community on Twitter by launching our own Twitter account. Volume 8 of the journal itself has also been a resounding success -- we published 6 papers this year from 6 talented and passionate undergraduates in the department, whose topics range from the Bronze Age to Late Antiquity, and delivered another successful online conference where these students were able to showcase their work to a large audience of people from across the world. This particular volume has also been the site of a massive graphic redesign for the journal, including a new colour palette, new logo, new modern-minimal design scheme, and a transition to all sans-serif fonts.

### CLASSU's Viral TikTok Account

## SAIBA ANAND

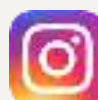
Saiba Anand provides information on CLASSU's flourishing TikTok activity:



Since I took over the [TikTok account](#) our following has been at about 45k followers, with 1.1 million likes! I've focused the TikTok on incorporating Classics and ancient historical content around ongoing trends/themes that are popular on the app, and we've even had a few videos go viral with one hitting 140k views! This summer we're continuing to post content, including introducing some TikTok Lives to our profile, while also reposting the videos to our Instagram so that those who don't have the app don't miss out on anything.



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# GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL NEWS

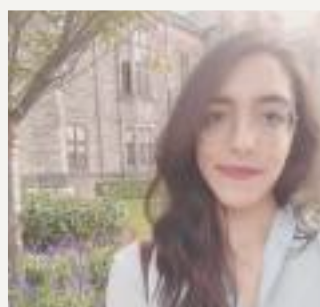




# GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Postdoctoral fellow **Niek Janssen** will be starting a three-year position as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics at Amherst College this autumn.



PhD student **Claudia Paparella** was awarded the Joseph W. and Maria C. Shaw Graduate Scholarship to support her archaeological research at the site of Falerii Novi, Italy.



Congratulations to **David Sutton**, who defended his dissertation, “*Ut Ameris, Ama: Intimacy, Desire, and the Ideal of Pares Amici in Martial’s Rome*,” on April Fool’s Day.



Postdoctoral fellow **Peter Osorio** will be starting a tenure-track job at the University of Maryland, College Park in September of 2023!



PhD candidate **Drew Davis** won the Crake Doctoral Fellowship in Classics at Mount Allison University.



PhD student **Don McCarthy** won a Canada Graduate Scholarships-Doctoral, and has been awarded a John Landon Memorial Fellowship to spend some time in Italy this summer taking part in an archaeological dig and traveling to Capua to look at a series of Latin inscriptions.

# KAT FURTADO

*Classics Graduate Student Union (CGSU) President Kat Furtado provides a report on the year for graduate students.*



The graduate students have once again weathered a year of global upheaval, with war in Europe added to pre-existing sources of stress and anxiety due to the pandemic and the charged political climate it has brought to light. Here in Toronto, the stuttering return to in-person activities came with its own challenges and pleasures. Many more graduate students were back in the city this year. It was a delight to be able to welcome a new cohort face-to-face once more, and to see each other in person again. Our community was strengthened by a renewed physical presence in the Woodbury library, and semi-regular social gatherings as the pandemic permitted. We have not, however, forgotten all that was learned during the lockdowns: the online Woodbury chat (est. summer 2020) is still going strong.

Academically, grad students at all stages of the program had to navigate the pivots between in-person and online learning. Those in coursework proved highly adaptable as they completed their classes amidst changing public health guidelines over the course of each term. Instructors made good use of the innovations brought on by the pandemic, incorporating elements from the previous year(s) online into their in-person teaching, and carefully designing their courses to be as flexible as possible given the uncertainty of the Covid situation. Their extra work, attention, and compassion continues to provide students with the best possible experience. As summer begins, many students are now eagerly resuming research-related travel — getting back to archaeological field work, making use of libraries or archives overseas, attending in-person conferences, etc.

We extend our congratulations to David Sutton, who successfully defended his dissertation on April 1st — no foolin'. Congrats to David, and to the many students who have passed departmental exams, stream exams, or the major field. Congratulations also go to Drew Davis, who won the Crake Fellowship at Mount Allison University for 2022-23, Claudia Paparella for winning the Joseph W. and Maria C. Shaw Graduate Scholarship to support her archaeological research, and Don McCarthy who won the John Landon Memorial Fellowship to support study in Italy. And finally, congratulations to the many students who presented their research at conferences this year. You do your graduate colleagues proud!

Thanks to the graduate student body as a whole for their tireless involvement in the department this year, especially for their participation in the department's revision of the graduate student program in response to last year's cyclical review. We believe that revisions are moving in the right direction to streamline the graduate program, and hope that future students will benefit from the hard and altruistic work of their predecessors. Graduate student participation in this year's recruitment activities is also deeply appreciated, especially as the online nature of these events, coming at the end of the fifth wave, went unrewarded by dinners or coffees on the department. Special thanks go out to the Classics Graduate Students' Union exec, Adam Barker (vice president), Tiphaine Lahuec (treasurer), Claudia Paparella (secretary), and Justin Hamblin-Yule (social chair). Their tireless effort in responding to the program revisions and serving all year as conduits of communication between the faculty and the grad student body was invaluable. Finally, thank you to the department as a whole for its continued additional financial support as the pandemic wears on, and to individual faculty members who have shown compassion and understanding as the effects of the last tumultuous years continue to be felt.



## Postdoctoral Interview:

# NIEK JANSSEN

Arnold van Roessel checked in with Niek Janssen as he finishes his postdoc at U of T and prepares for his move to Amherst College for a three-year position as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics.

### **AvR: What are your current research interests and projects?**

NJ: My research investigates how humorous and critical texts (parody, satire, comedy, invective) interrogate social, legal, and aesthetic norms in Greek and Roman culture. My main project within this agenda is converting my dissertation (*Appropriate Transgressions: Parody and Decorum in Ancient Greece and Rome*) to a monograph. However, I like to keep some shorter-term projects cooking as well: pretty soon, I'll hopefully wrap up an article on gender, community, and satire in the *Conquestio Sulpiciae*, and papers on emotions in Persius' *Satires* and foreign language interpreters in Greco-Roman comedy are in the pipeline as well.



### **AvR: What placed your focus on ancient comedy?**

NJ: The interest in humor goes very far back for me--as a ten-year old I could recite my favorite Dutch stand-up specials by heart. Almost anything or anyone that is trying to be funny or bitingly critical had my automatic attention. As early as high school, I took every opportunity I had to study and write about the funny stuff, culminating in an overambitious thesis on religious satire in Juvenal, Erasmus, and Monty Python. What I enjoy in particular is humor's ability to flip your perspective—even though my research often emphasizes that comedy can just as easily reinforce as subvert conventions. Basically, I believe that ancient humorous research is an under-tapped resource for ancient normative thought, which is more typically studied in the context of more "serious" genres like philosophy, epic, tragedy, and rhetoric.

### **AvR: Your thesis considers comedy's and parody's relationship with normativity and decorum in both Greek and Roman works. Can you expand a bit on these ideas?**

NJ: The project leverages humor's intrinsic entanglement with propriety—when we laugh at something, it is often because we find it in some way indecorous, inappropriate, incongruous—to better understand the role “appropriateness” or “decorum” plays in normative thought. In particular, the book explores the decorum judgments by which readers receive one text as parodying another. Even as ancient parodists introduce incongruities into their models, they feel compelled to justify this impropriety by being decorous in some other regard. Parody thus stands in a double, transgressive-and-conservative, relation to the concept of decorum / τὸ πρέπον, a crucial but often unexpressed value in ethical and aesthetic thought. This paradoxical relationship makes parody a productive site for engaging the limitations of decorum as a norm-giving principle, and my book argues more broadly that humor must be taken seriously as a resource to supplement our limited understanding of ancient normative thought. A series of case studies puts parodic texts in dialogue with more “serious”—philosophical, rhetorical, literary-critical—accounts of decorum (e.g. Cicero's *De Officiis* 1, Dionysius' *Lysias*, Quintilian 11). In Statius' *Achilleid*, for example, characters repeatedly seek to justify Achilles' “inappropriately” gendered clothes on Scyros as nevertheless “fitting.” But as circumstances and audiences evolve, so do the arguments about decorum: what was a sufficiently appropriate excuse before now no longer compensates for the hero's sartorial transgression. Other chapters discuss similar dynamics in Hegemon of Thasos, Plautus' *Asinaria*, *Catalepton* 10, Horace's *Ars Poetica*, and Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. Together, these parodic texts reveal the instability of decorum as a basis for normative thought—as a principle of aesthetic judgment and of social in/exclusion.

*continued on following page.*

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**AvR: Your next project is listed as examining the idea of “free” speech in ancient comedy. Can you say a bit more about this work? What drew you to this project?**

NJ: The project comes out of an undergraduate seminar I designed and taught at Yale, which was inspired by the frequent complaints made by comedians, academics, and politicians alike that you “can’t make jokes anymore” in the current social climate. I often found these discussions somewhat boring, even dishonest; but more importantly, they seemed to me to have a very limited understanding of what we mean by “free expression,” why it matters, and what it enables. My second book project, *Madmen, Friends, and Cynics: Comic Free Speech in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, thus turns to comedy as a limit case for norms of free expression. Comedic license is often defended, in antiquity as today, by its supposed social function: comedy “tells it like it is” and “speaks truth to power.” Yet comedians frequently fail to deliver on this promise: they punch down instead of up, reaffirm rather than contest the status quo. So why the continued investment in comedy as a site for free expression? And in what sense can expression be called “free” or “unfree” in the first place? I cover a range of humorists—e.g. Aristophanes, Lucilius, Horace, Julia (filia Augusti), Phaedrus, Juvenal, Lucian—who make frequent, and often cynical, purchase out of claims that their voices are curtailed. Yet in comparing their efforts with those of other prototypical parrhesiasts (the titular madmen, friends, and cynics), they also decenter anxieties about speech’s ability to do or undo harm and invite us to think more capaciously about the ways in which comic speech might be free—and make free.

**AvR: Before coming to Canada, you studied at Radboud in Nijmegen and Yale in Connecticut and soon you will be departing for Amherst College in Massachusetts. How has your experience been this past year working in Toronto?**

NJ: The U of T has been an amazing place to work, and though I am over-the-moon-excited to join my partner at Amherst College, I will be sorry to be leaving so soon. This is an intellectually rich place, and my work has benefited tremendously from conversations with many of you here. In addition to that, though, it has been heartwarming to see how warm a community you have here. What stands out most in this regard is how supportive I have seen the graduate students be to one another, both personally and intellectually; this is something the department should pride itself on, and absolutely not take for granted. I have also loved teaching Virgil to a group of excellent undergraduates, who surprised me with their creativity and skill in translating and adapting *Aeneid* 1 in various media, from manga to computer games. And finally, I’m very proud of the undergrads in my experimental research collaboration DETEXTUS, who are working on a commentary and short article on the *Conquestio Sulpiciae*.

**AvR: How do you spend your time besides your work and research?**

NJ: I love cycling and have really enjoyed exploring the trails around town, through the ravines and along the beaches. I’m sorry to have visited Toronto while it was still inching out of its lockdown, so that I wasn’t able to make maximum use of its cultural resources, its theatres, cinemas, and comedy clubs. Hopefully I’ll be able to come back sometime soon to explore those more!



MATERIAL CULTURE EXPEDITIONS

# IN THE FIELD AND SEA



Falerii Novi, Italy

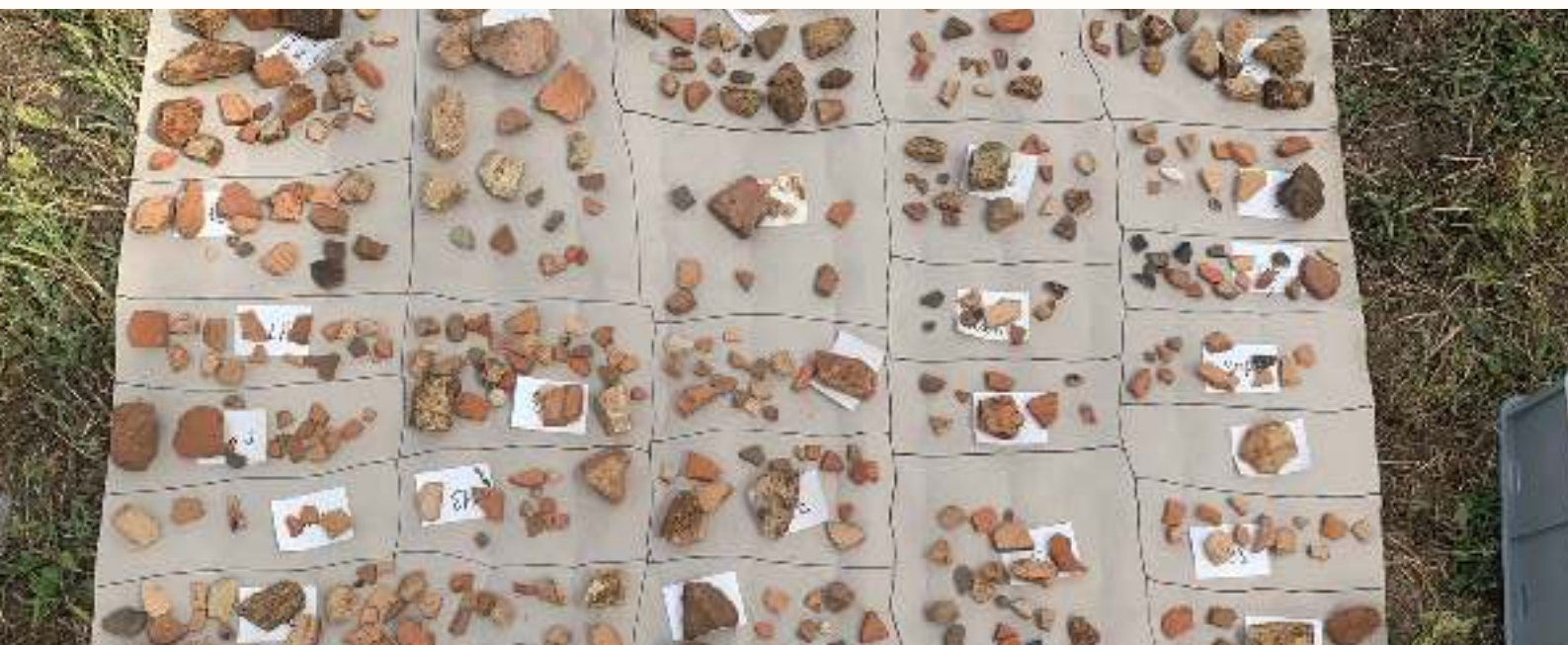


Porto Rafti, East Attica,  
Greece



Maroni Tsaroukkas,  
Cyprus





“ [...] non-invasive survey has revealed an intact Roman city plan below ground ”

ABOVE: Ceramic finds  
RIGHT: Survey fields at Falerii Novi

## FALERII NOVI, ITALY

*Seth Bernard*

Seth Bernard and colleagues, including our own Claudia Paparella, traveled to Italy for two weeks in June of 2021 to carry out a pilot season for a new project at Falerii Novi in the Middle Tiber Valley, an hour north of Rome. Falerii Novi was a colony founded in the lowlying area along the via Amerina in 241 BCE after the Romans conquered the nearby Faliscan center of Falerii Veteres (now Civit  Castellana).

The large urban site persisted for around a millennium before being depopulated in the medieval period. Now, except for the massive Roman walls, the entire ancient site is invisible beneath agricultural land, but a decade of non-invasive survey has revealed an intact Roman city plan below ground. Archaeological work on the site, by concession of the Soprintendenza archeologia belle arti e paesaggio per la provincial di Viterbo e per l'Etruria meridionale, is a collaboration between Toronto, Harvard University, the British School at Rome, Ghent University, and Cambridge University.



In June of 2021, we carried out a campaign of test pitting and coring across the site to reveal further the chronology and spatial distribution of subsurface remains.

In the pits and cores, the team recovered material of various types including over 2,000 pieces of pottery ranging in date across the entire span of the site's occupation and even including some fragments from possible pre-Roman presence at the site. The results will help with the placement of three large trenches to be opened in June of 2022. We look forward to reporting on this coming season's discoveries in the next newsletter.





# PORTO RAFTI BAY, EAST ATTICA, GREECE

Sarah Murray

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LEFT: A panoramic view of the Bay of Porto Rafti from the southwest (S. Murray)

*Some surprising finds were discovered at a new industrial production site in Porto Rafti Bay by the 2021 BEARS Project on Praso Islet.*

After a hiatus in 2020, the BEARS project was able to get a few people out into the field in summer 2021. Since the pandemic continued to impact travel for many project members – especially Canadians who were still waiting to complete their vaccine sequences through June and July, the 2021 team was very small, only 6–10 people on any given day. We spent most of our time surveying a small islet in the bay called Praso. Extant literature about the islet mentions only a bit of Late Roman/Byzantine material in one corner of the islet, so we did not anticipate that we would find much.

Much to our surprise, we encountered an immense density of surface artifacts when our small team began an intensive survey on Praso. The 20x20 meter grid squares in the southern part of the islet each contained upwards of 10,000 individual surface artifacts: we tried to count them all in a few ‘total collection’ squares, but it often seemed as if the ground would produce more sherds and tiles as soon as we were sure we had vacuumed the unit clean. The site was not datable to a single period, as previous literature suggested. Instead, the finds on Praso included material from the Final Neolithic to Ottoman periods, with almost everything in between. The finds from the surface were very well preserved and included many unusual artifacts: loomweights, figurines, lamps, glass, iron, bronze, and lead, and many groundstone tools including a piece of a big basalt tripod mortar. Beyond these artifacts, an exciting category of evidence we documented on Praso is industrial waste resulting from fiery production processes, both ceramic and metallurgical.

We can't say too much about the metallurgical material without further analysis, but our pottery and tile specialists have already come to a few preliminary conclusions about the tile and pottery wasters. It looks like a prominent regional type of LH IIIC fabric called White Ware – found up and down the Euboean gulf corridor at sites like Lefkandi and Kynos – was produced on Praso: amongst my absolute favorite finds of the project thus far are dozens of wonderfully warped and melty, almost bright green, wasters in White Ware fabric, their surfaces badly vitrified from overfiring in the kiln. We even found what we think is probably a piece of the kiln itself. There are wasters from the Classical/Hellenistic and Late Roman periods, too, but these historical artifacts are bubbly, black, vitrified, and otherwise highly gnarly tile wasters, another thing nobody on the team, including our much-traveled tile specialist, had ever seen in the archaeological record prior to 2021.

There are many questions about life on ancient Praso that are yet to be illuminated by further study and research, but it's already certain that the fires of industry burned brightly on this unassuming little island in Porto Rafti bay during many periods of antiquity.



# MARONI TSAROUKKAS, CYPRUS

Carrie Atkins

Between end of grants, COVID, and babies, it's been quiet on the fieldwork side but we've been working on analysis and publications. We have a publication forthcoming in the *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* in August that is a preliminary analysis of the LBA Anchorage at Maroni Tsaroukkas. The ceramics are being studied by Artemis Georgiou (University of Cyprus) for publication, and we are starting the next phase of the project that focuses on the geoarchaeological analysis of the anchorage and coastline.



TOP: 3D model of the seabed with anchors circled

LEFT: Incoming PhD student in Art, Sheri Kapahnke, taking samples for OSL analysis beneath an anchor, which was covered in a black cloth to keep out light

RIGHT: Classics PhD student Naomi Neufeld recording the anchors





# ALUMNI NEWS

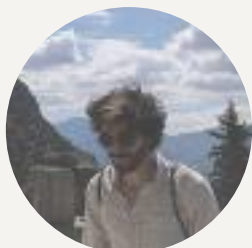
# ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**Rachel Mazzara** will be taking up a 2-year Visiting Assistant Professor position at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University.



In 2022-2023, we will be welcoming back **David Sutton** as a part-time lecturer for the department.



In 2021-2022, we welcomed back **Joseph Gerbasi** as a part-time lecturer for the department. He will be returning in 2022-2023 as a CSAMP postdoctoral fellow.



In 2021-2022, we welcomed back **Ted Parker** as a part-time lecturer for the department.



Congratulations to **David Wallace-Hare**, who is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Exeter.



**Chiara Graf** will begin a new position as Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Maryland.

... and congratulations to our countless other highly successful alumni!



# LETTICIA COSBERT MILLER

*Jonathan Burgess caught up with alumna and incoming PhD student Letticia Cosbert Miller.*

**JB: You are an alumnus with a BA in Classics from the University of Toronto, and you also have an MA in Classics from Western. And you are entering our PhD program this coming academic year. Tell us about your interest in Classics and your experience in the field at different times and places.**

LCM: My interest in Classics really began when I was formally introduced to the field in my freshman year of university. Before then, I can't say that I had an understanding of what Classics was, unless cartoon adaptations of the Odyssey and legend of Atlantis count. But from that moment onward Classics has had a hold on me, shaping the way I engage with the world, whether professionally through my writing and curating, or even the way I read, watch films, and engage with culture more broadly. My undergraduate studies instilled a deep appreciation of language in me, while my graduate studies offered me many opportunities to incorporate contemporary cultural analysis into my intellectual activities. As I embark on a PhD this year I am most excited about directing these various passions and pursuits into my doctoral research.

**JB: Describe your job experiences, notably in the world of contemporary art, and how they relate to classical studies.**

LCM: Towards the end of my MA I had developed a fierce interest in contemporary art, specifically work being made by Black American artists, and mostly women. I had resolved that I would put Classics, in the institutional sense, aside for the time being and immerse myself in that world as much as I could. I began first by writing for and about artists and exhibitions, and I wrote about what I knew and what was interesting to me, which necessarily included Classics. If I wrote about an exhibition that surveyed the cultural exchange of gold across Medieval Saharan Africa, then there was no avoiding a reference to Orphic gold tablets. When I began curating and developing programming around exhibitions the connections were much easier to



make, as the general artmaking and art patronizing public, in my experience, is eager to engage in classical ideas, whether it be philosophy, mythology, history, or even material cultures.

**JB: Besides academic writing, you have composed and published a lot of essays. Tell us about your interest in writing, both personally and professionally. Describe how certain authors like Toni Morrison have inspired you.**

LCM: I have been a reader, or perhaps bookish is a better term, from as long as I can remember, and that instinctively evolved into an interest in writing. For me, it is the most comfortable form of communication, and truly enjoyable - even though the process of distilling thoughts to paper is often maddening. I would describe myself as an associative thinker, so in many ways rendering visual and sonic mediums like art, music, and film into text is practical and beneficial to my process. My love of reading, writing, and Classics converge in Toni Morrison more so than any other author or intellectual. Surely all who have read her work can attest to her exquisite sentences, world building, and creative imagination, but her use of and improvement upon classical figures, texts, and sensibilities is what distinguishes her and her impact in my life. While there is so much to critique and improve within Classics, an author like Toni Morrison makes that labor viable, and even exciting, for me.

ABOVE: Letticia Cosbert Miller

*continued on following page.*

# LETTICIA COSBERT MILLER

*continued.*

**JB: Various themes are intertwined in your academic work, your personal projects, and your professional experiences. Identify these topics and explain the contexts in which they arise.**

LCM: I very recently completed a yearlong writing residency with Gallery 44, one of Canada's oldest artist-run centres committed to photography and lens-based media. As writer-in-residence I spent much of 2020 and 2021 writing a series of essays that explored the liberties and limitations of water as it is represented in Black visual culture. Of course, classical figures appear throughout, including Odysseus, Aphrodite, and passages from Livy. All essays can be read online, with extended versions available in a forthcoming monograph published by Gallery 44. Working thematically and serially was extremely rewarding, and so I will be embarking on creating another collection of essays exploring *xenia* throughout the Black Atlantic, generously funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, a federal institution that supports the creation of public art.

**JB: Travel is important for your personal and academic explorations. Describe some past and planned trips and how they relate to your academic and cultural interests.**

LCM: Yes, travel is an essential part of identity and my work. I grew up in a family that relished traveling, and I learned from a very young age that it was an important exercise and fundamental to engaging with the world. I was fortunate enough to spend a summer traveling along Sicily's Ionian coast during my MA, and through my writing it is clear that it is an experience I am still grappling with (for better or worse). As part of my previously mentioned *xenia* research I am hoping to spend some time in Senegal, Africa's so-called capital of hospitality, as well as a number of Caribbean islands. I am also excited to see where in the world my doctoral research will take me—somewhere in Greece, I hope!

**JB: What, pray tell, are your ambitions, and desires for your doctoral studies?**

LCM: The leading preoccupation of my work in recent years has been the reception of Classics in Black diasporic contemporary culture, with particular

regard for the application and evaluation of Classical ideas in visual and performance art, film, literature, and critical theory. While I remain open and adaptable, it is my hope to produce and research work that engages in this particular dialogue. Most of all, I am looking forward to simply enjoying the enormous privilege of attending graduate school, and to collaborating and developing relationships with my fellow scholars.

**JB: This all is an intriguing mix of interests. I wonder if you could summarize, bio style, your writing career and its intersection with classical studies and contemporary art.**

LCM: Sure, if you insist. I'm a Toronto-based writer and curator. I will be a PhD student in the Department of Classics at the University of Toronto this coming academic year. My work as a writer is often in dialogue with historical, mythological, or philosophical tropes from the western classical tradition. My academic research interests lie within the reception of Classics in Black diasporic contemporary culture. My writing and editorial work has appeared in the *Toronto Star*, *BlackFlash Magazine*, *Canadian Art Magazine*, *MOMUS*, as well as in publications by Aperture Foundation, the Aga Khan Museum, Gardiner Museum, Akimbo, and others. I have curated exhibitions for Trinity Square Video, The Blackwood, and others. I was the 2020-2021 Writer-in-Residence for Gallery 44, and formerly the Director of Koffler.Digital at Koffler Centre of the Arts. For further details one can see my website. Below is a picture I took that kind of visualizes how my various interests stack up.



ABOVE: Books (L.C. Miller)



## TIM PERRY

Jonathan Burgess caught up with alumnus Tim Perry.

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**JB: You are an alumnus with a PhD in Classics from our department, after an MA in New Zealand. Tell us about your interest in Classics and your experience in the field at different times and places.**

TP: My elementary school was one of the very few in New Zealand where Latin was still taught, and my interest in Classics probably began there. Latin wasn't offered by my high school, but I took it up again as an undergraduate, and added Greek, and just went from there. I was originally planning to study ancient history more than ancient literature, but the Greek and Roman history classes clashed with some required French language classes—French was my other undergraduate specialization—so I ended up becoming a Homerist instead! (My introduction to early Greek poetry was actually via Hesiod, and I'm still trying to work out whether I like Homer or Hesiod better.) I've always had a very broad interest in the Classical world, though, and in my current

position that has expanded into an interest in the Classical tradition and its reception, especially in the medieval and early modern periods, and especially in manuscript and early print culture.

**JB: Now you are an early book librarian at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book library. How did you end up in such an interesting and important job?**

TP: After I finished my PhD, I spent a year at Dartmouth College as a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Classics. I greatly enjoyed my time there, but it also made me realize that a career as a professor probably wasn't for me—I don't think I ever would have been productive enough as a researcher! I was still interested in working in academia more broadly, though, so I decided to do a professional master's degree in Library and Information Science, specializing in academic librarianship. The University of Toronto, where I did my degree, has a very strong Book History program, in which I also enrolled, and that is how I got into the world of rare books. That was also when I started to get to know the Fisher Library (I had never really used it during my Classics PhD, but we have some amazing Classics materials at the Fisher and I would certainly encourage anyone in Classics to come and check them out). I was lucky enough to get a position as a rare book librarian at the University of Missouri shortly after graduating. A few years later, in 2018, a position opened up at the Fisher and I have been here ever since.

**JB: Describe the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library and your duties there, including your work to support members of the Classics department.**

TP: The Fisher Library is the biggest rare book library in Canada—we have about 800,000 books and also large collections of authors' papers (think Margaret Atwood and Leonard Cohen). My position is Medieval Manuscript and Early Book Librarian, which means I work with some of the oldest materials at the Fisher. We have been lucky enough to be able to expand our medieval collections in the past few years, and to expand them into new areas. Up until four or five years ago, nearly all of our medieval manuscripts were religious in nature—Bibles, liturgical texts, etc.—but we now have a small and growing collection of Classical texts, including manuscript copies of Cicero, Persius, and Plutarch. But Classical connections turn up in all sorts of unexpected places—another part of the collection that we've been expanding is non-European manuscripts, and we recently acquired an eighteenth-century Kashmiri manuscript in Persian that preserves a poem on

## TIM PERRY

continued.

Alexander the Great. And, of course, the reason we have these collections is for people to come and use them! Like all the librarians and archivists at the Fisher, I offer teaching and research support to library users and I'm always happy to have students and faculty come in and use our Classics collections, from medieval manuscripts, to printed books, to the more than four hundred papyrus fragments housed at the Library.

**JB: How has ancient Greek and Latin informed your work with medieval manuscripts and other early books at the Fisher? In particular, what are the various ways that your expertise as a Homerist come into play?**

TP: The Fisher has a large number of books in Greek and, in particular, in Latin—and not just Classical texts, of course, since Latin was the language of higher education in Europe up until at least the eighteenth century—and it is very nice to have found a position where I get to use my language training pretty much every day. I wouldn't say that Homer is a particular strength—our strongest Classics collection is probably the Bagnani Collection of early editions of Petronius—but we do have plenty of early editions of Homer, both in Greek and in translation into a wide array of languages. And I did recently acquire a Renaissance manuscript of an Italian translation of the *Batrachomyomachia* (if that counts as Homer!). I also have an exhibition on the Classical tradition coming up in a couple of years and I'm pretty sure that at least one of the cases will be devoted to Homer and the influence of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, from their ancient reception right down to twenty-first-century fine press editions of the poems.

**JB: It's great to see an international student settle down in Canada. Any comments on your life here? How often do you get back to New Zealand?**

TP: Apart from my two stints down in the US, I have been in Canada since I came to Toronto in 2004 to start my PhD. In many ways, Canada is very similar to New Zealand—they are both Commonwealth countries, and Canada's relationship to the US is much like New Zealand's relationship to Australia—so I didn't find it too difficult to adapt. There are some things I miss about New Zealand though—Lake Ontario is big, but I grew up next to the Pacific Ocean! Most of my family are still in New Zealand, so I try to visit fairly frequently—every couple of years or so—though that wasn't possible during the pandemic. But New Zealand has at last reopened its borders and I'm actually writing this in Porirua, just outside Wellington—my first visit in nearly five years!



ABOVE: Interior of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library



ABOVE: Image from a medieval florilegium, recently acquired by the Fisher Library, that includes fragments of classical authors such as Aristotle, Terence, Ovid, and (rather unusually) Catullus



# JANET MOWAT

Arnold van Roessel caught up with alumna Janet Mowat.



**AvR: What drew you to being Programs Manager at ABC Life Literacy?**

JM: I didn't go straight into this role. I started at ABC in 2019 as a Programs Coordinator, and eventually got promoted to Programs Specialist and then

Programs Manager. I was drawn to the literacy field because I'd previously worked with literacy non-profit organizations in my undergraduate years. I'd really enjoyed the work and it felt natural to return to it after I'd left academia. This Programs Manager role in particular is great for me because it combines many of my interests and strengths, and there's lots of room for me to learn and grow.

**AvR: What does your typical work week look like? What parts about your work interest or excite you the most?**

JM: It's hard to pin down what a typical work week looks like! Here's what last week (as I write) involved:

- Connecting with new contacts I made at a conference the previous week
- Last minute prep & hosting a half-day virtual forum (on critical literacy & social justice in adult education)
- Staff meetings, check-in meetings with colleagues, staff training session
- EMAILS
- Reviewing draft curriculum materials and sending revisions to contractors
- Helping with planning & negotiations for a new program funding agreement

Even with all these activities, though, I'm able to maintain a decent work-life balance. On a typical evening, I'm not working late or stressing about work.

I really like the variety in my job. I love public speaking and have had lots of chances lately to speak

at conferences and other events. I also like writing and editing (especially educational materials), and there's an endless amount of both to work on. The most fulfilling part is probably working with my direct report. She's brilliant and I really like mentoring her and collaborating with her.

**AvR: Do you incorporate any of the skills you developed as a graduate in Classics as a program manager?**

JM: There are so many skills I developed as a grad student that I use in my work now. Some that spring to mind: my ability to pick up new information or skills quickly, attention to detail, ability to collaborate and work independently, leadership, writing clearly, adaptability and public speaking.

There are also some skills that I really struggled with in grad school that have really improved since I started working at ABC: executive functioning in general, stress and time management, and confidence.

I think the difference for me in exercising those skills successfully is the structure of a set workday and workweek, with clear boundaries between work and the rest of my life. I didn't have those clear boundaries as a student and it's so easy to get overwhelmed without them.

**AvR: You mentioned having fond memories of your graduate studies. Is there a certain memory that stands out?**

JM: My fondest memories of grad school always come back to the people. I loved the conversations we'd have in the Woodbury Library, sharing ideas, gossiping, commiserating. It was so much easier to work with a friend sitting nearby, too. I loved the department parties, especially when they ended at a karaoke bar. I loved learning from all the incredible people around me. I loved how we had this built-in social group who were all going through the same experiences and could all rally round to support each other. I really do miss those days, sometimes.

ABOVE: Janet Mowat

# YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

With a curriculum spanning all aspects of the ancient world, U of T's Department of Classics is among the few in North America to promote a truly comprehensive approach to the study of Greco-Roman antiquity. Students benefit from access to research-active faculty, internationally recognized in their fields, as they gain the linguistic, cultural and scholarly expertise essential for an in-depth exploration of two of the world's most influential civilizations. This impressive intellectual richness and vibrancy provides an exciting training ground for the 500 students enrolled in the department's highly-reputed programs. Your gift will continue this proud tradition by supporting a new generation of scholars of ancient Greece and Rome. Please visit the [Department of Classics Giving Opportunities Page](#) to donate.

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## **Department of Classics Departmental Trust**

Donations will support the Department's most pressing needs and priorities, including student support and programming. The Department is committed to promoting greater diversity, equity, and inclusivity in the field as a whole. Funds raised through the Classics Department Trust will also support diversity initiatives for student bursaries, awards and fellowships.

## **Emmet Robbins Memorial Graduate Award in Classics**

Donations will support a scholarship to honour the late Professor Emeritus Emmet Robbins, a compassionate, cultured and gifted Classics scholar and teacher of international renown.

## **John Landon Memorial Fellowship in Classics**

In support of graduate student(s) in the Department of Classics who is pursuing coursework or studies abroad in papyrology or epigraphy, or who wishes to conduct research by consulting other original sources.

## **Kathryn Boshier Memorial Graduate Fund in Classics**

Donations will support a scholarship to honour the late Professor Kathryn Boshier, an outstanding classicist and dedicated teacher.

## **MB Wallace Memorial Graduate Award in Classics**

Donations will support a scholarship to honour the late Professor Malcolm Barton Wallace, an inspiring teacher of ancient Greek language, history and political thought to generations of Classics students.

## **RM Smith Memorial Fellowship in Classics**

Donations will support a fellowship for graduate students in honour of the late Professor R. M. Smith, Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Toronto.

# THANK YOU!





# THANKS FOR READING!

