

# NOTA BENE

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Vol 27, No. 1

Fall/Winter 2021–2022

News from the Harvard  
Department of the Classics

## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR BY DAVID ELMER

What a pleasure it is to be back on campus, even though campus life is a bit different than it used to be! There was a time in late spring or early summer when it seemed likely that we could look forward to a return to our old routines in the fall—but a resourceful virus had other things in store. We found ourselves inventing new routines instead, adjusting to regular COVID testing and learning to pace our lectures so as not to run out of breath behind a mask.

Minor inconveniences notwithstanding, the return to campus and to the classroom has been exhilarating. At last we can exchange ideas without having to “unmute” ourselves, and without fear of “glitching!” After so much time spent teaching and learning from a distance, it has been nothing short of thrilling to talk with each other directly, without the mediation of a screen, in classrooms, hallways, and—best of all, because we can do without the masks—in the open air of the Yard.

For me, at least, the most difficult aspect of our “new normal” has been the disruption of our old social rituals. I miss our monthly student-faculty



lunches in the Faculty Club and Friday happy hours in Boylston Hall. But we made good use of this year’s exceptionally fine autumn weather by having a faculty-student picnic under the tent outside Sever Hall and a happy hour in the Barker Center garden. And meanwhile we have kept up a surprisingly brisk schedule of online and in-person talks, workshops, and colloquia. It has been a special pleasure to welcome to campus our new cohort of first-year graduate students (who introduce themselves elsewhere in these pages), and also our second-year graduate students, for whom this is still a year of firsts, in terms of access to libraries, museums, and other campus spaces.

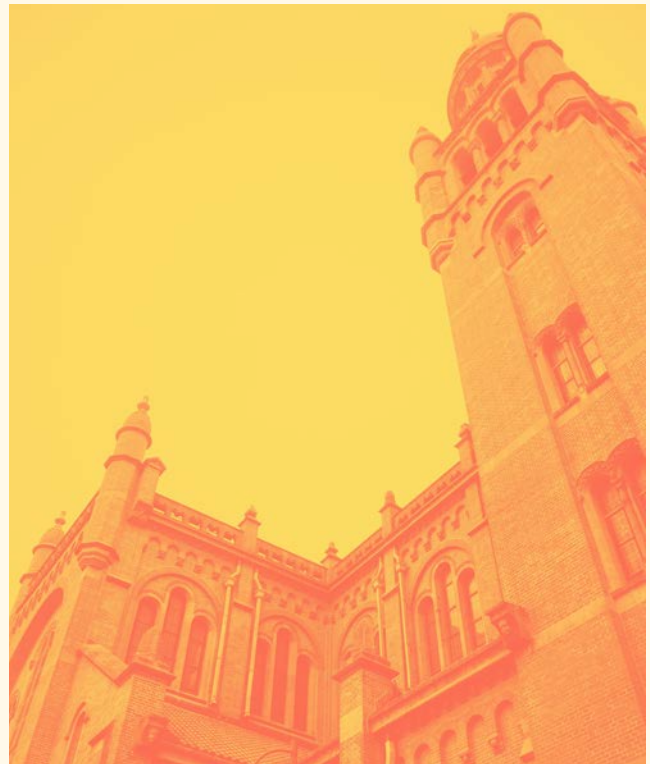
We have been very pleased also to welcome Eric Driscoll and Rachel Philbrick, two marvelous lecturers who have expanded our curriculum with exciting courses drawing on their expertise in Greek historiography, epigraphy, and Latin literature.

Thanks to Rachel and Eric we have been able to offer a rich variety of courses even in the absence of the many colleagues who are on leave this year. They have most certainly earned a break, after working very hard to adapt their courses for remote instruction last year. But rest assured that no one is taking it easy. To appreciate the energy our colleagues have brought to their sabbatical pursuits, look no farther than my predecessor as Chair, Kathleen Coleman, who, having guided the Department with an unerringly steady hand through three of the most tumultuous years in its long history, is spending the year as Professor-in-Charge at the International Center for Classical Studies (the “Centro”) in Rome.



For those of us here in Cambridge, the return to campus has done wonders in terms of renewing energies and a collective sense of purpose. Many exciting initiatives are underway.

Newly redesigned courses taught by Jared Hudson on the history of Latin literature and by Irene Peirano Garrison on Latin stylistics (“prose comp” reconceived) are revitalizing fundamental



aspects of our undergraduate and graduate curricula.

Two interdisciplinary endeavors, Ancient Studies at Harvard and the Premodern Race Seminar, have launched ambitious programs for the year. Following on the tremendous success of our first cohort of funded Summer School students (see “Summer 2021,” p. 12), plans are being made to welcome a second cohort of students next summer.

Indeed, as I settle into the Chair’s office, it is almost all I can do just to keep up with all of the new projects being undertaken by my colleagues—but that is what makes the Department of the Classics such an inspiring place to work and study.

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This issue was designed by Avanti Nambiar.

# G1 BIOGRAPHIES



**Alex Reed** grew up in Three Rivers, Massachusetts (the Polka Capital of New England), before heading West to earn dual degrees in History and Classics at UC Berkeley, where he worked closely with Carlos Noreña and Emily Mackil on a senior thesis exploring “bottom-up” approaches to cultural change in the ancient Mediterranean. While there, he also took an interest in the history of Latin pedagogy, undertaking archival research on the subject that eventually led to a second honors thesis. Having graduated in Spring 2020, he then spent a year tutoring Classical Languages and World History before finding his way to Harvard, where he hopes to

explore in greater depth the lives and roles of the non-elite, the nature of the ancient economy, and the *longue durée* of Roman imperialism. Beyond the ivy-clad walls of the Academy, he also enjoys hiking, canoeing, and supporting the Boston music scene.

**Will Edwards** grew up between Paris, France, and State College, Pennsylvania. He studied Classical Languages and Philosophy at Haverford College. As an undergraduate, he was able to further cultivate his fascination with the ancient world by spending a semester abroad in Athens and participating in an archaeological excavation at the Palace of Nestor in Pylos. After graduation, Will taught English as a language assistant in France before taking on an administrative role as the Manager of Curriculum and Community development for the Great Books Summer



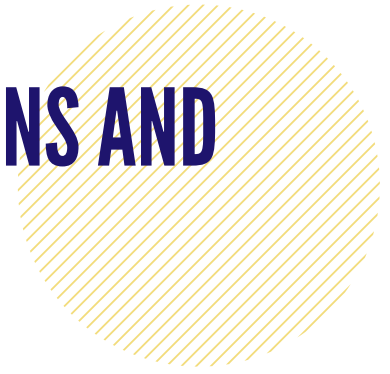
Program. His interest in the interdependence of literary and philosophical discourse in the ancient world, as well as his love of teaching and language study, bring him to Harvard. When he is not in the library, Will can be found playing pick-up soccer, backpacking, and cycling.



**Luby Kiriakidi** was born in Russia, and has lived in Upstate New York and Northeast Pennsylvania. In 2018, she graduated from the College Scholar program at Cornell University with a BA in Classics. Through the Paideia Institute, Luby led six middle and high school tours in Italy and Greece as a Rome Fellow. In England, she completed a Masters dissertation on etymological wordplay in Varro's *De Lingua Latina* through Durham University. Her interest in etymological force in poetry

and philosophy often guides her readings of Greek and Latin literature. In her spare time, Luby cheers on her favorite sports team, *Saturday Night Live*, practices traditional Greek dancing, and explores spoken pedagogy in both living and dead languages.

# GRADUATE STUDENT PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS



## Nadav Asraf

- ["The Mechanism of Noun Incorporation in Ancient Greek." In \*Glotta\* 97 \(2021\): 36-72.](#)
- "The Syntax-Morphology Interface in Ancient Greek: The Syntactical Properties of Morphemes." Paper presented in a panel entitled "Greek and Latin Linguistics" at the Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, virtual, January 2021.

## Julia Judge Mulhall

- "A New Interpretation of a Graffito from the Late Antique Prison at Corinth (=IG IV2 3, 1271)." In *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 217 (2021): 89-94.

## Miriam Kamil

- ["Locus suspectus: The Uncanny Landscape of Invidia's Lair \(Ovid, \*Metamorphoses\* 2.760-764\)." In \*Preternature\* 10.1 \(2021\): 70-89.](#)
- "Locus Suspectus: Uncanny Landscape in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book 8." Paper presented in a panel entitled "Ovid and the Constructed Visual Environment" organized by the International Ovidian Society at the Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, virtual, January, 2021.

## John Kee

- ["Writing Edessa into the Roman Empire." In \*Studies in Late Antiquity\* 5.1 \(2021\): 28-64.](#)
- ["The locus amoenus and the wilderness: landscape in the Kekaumenos and the Grottaferrata \*Digenes Akrites\*." In \*Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU\*, 26 \(2020\): 67-80.](#)
- "A Hero Named for the Frontier: The Landscape of *Digenes Akrites* in Comparative Perspective." A paper presented at the 46th Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, virtual, October 2020.

## Phoebe Lakin

- *"Totus tibi serviet hortus: Nature and Culture in the Second Eclogue of Calpurnius Siculus."* Paper presented at the conference "The Perception of Climate and Nature in Ancient Societies" organized by the Classical Students Association of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, virtual, May 2021.

## Davide Napoli

- ["The Shape of Early Greek Utopia." In \*Classical Quarterly\* 71.2 \(2021\): 1-15.](#)

## Felipe Soza

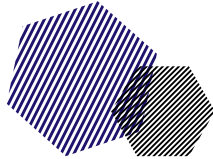
- "Terror of History? The Administration of Time in Independent Delos." Paper presented at the conference "El mundo helenístico: estudios desde América Latina, temas y métodos" hosted by Universidad de Concepción, Concepción, Chile, virtual, September 7, 2021.
- "Thucydides and Sparta's Path to Acme." Paper presented at the "Simposio Internacional de Estudios Griegos Jorge González Förster" with the theme "Tucídides: historia y pensamiento político" hosted by the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Valparaíso, Chile, virtual, September 14, 2021.

## Susannah Wright

- ["Nocturnus occurram furor: The 'Night-Mare' in Horace, \*Epodes\* 5 and 17." In \*Preternature\* 10.1 \(2021\): 34-69.](#)
- "Translating Treachery: Representations of Aeneas in Medieval Irish and Welsh Literature." Paper presented at the Harvard Celtic Colloquium, virtual, October 2021.
- "Troy Translated, Troy Transformed: Case Studies in Medieval Celtic Literature." Paper presented at the conference "Enchanted Reception: Religion and the Supernatural in Medieval Troy Narratives" hosted by Ghent University, virtual, June 2021.

# BOK CENTER FACULTY TEACHING AWARDS

The Harvard Certificate of Teaching Excellence goes to outstanding Lecturers, College Fellows, and Preceptors. Recipients from Classics for the Spring Semester of 2021:



Brigitte Libby: GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Ivy Livingston: LATIN 2: Introductory Latin 2

Harry Morgan: CLS-STDY 97B. Introduction to the Ancient Roman World

James Zainaldin: CLS-STDY 164. Science in the Greco-Roman World

# BOK CENTER TF AND TA TEACHING AWARDS

The Harvard Certificate of Distinction in Teaching is awarded by the Bok Center to outstanding Teaching Fellows and Teaching Assistants. Recipients from Classics or for Classics courses for the Spring Semester of 2021:

Supratik Baralay: GREEK 2. Introductory Ancient Greek 2

Xiaoxiao Chen: LATIN 2. Introductory Latin 2

Rebecca Deitsch: GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Sarah Eisen: Classical Archaeology 128. How Houses Build People

Nathaniel Herter: GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Miriam Kamil: Latin 104. *Ovid's Metamorphoses*

Julia Judge Mulhall: GENED 1131. Loss

Keating McKeon (TA): GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Emily Mitchell: GENED 1131. Loss

Davide Napoli: GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Sergios Paschalis (TA): GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Allison Resnick: GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

Anthony Shannon: GENED 1110. Classical Mythology

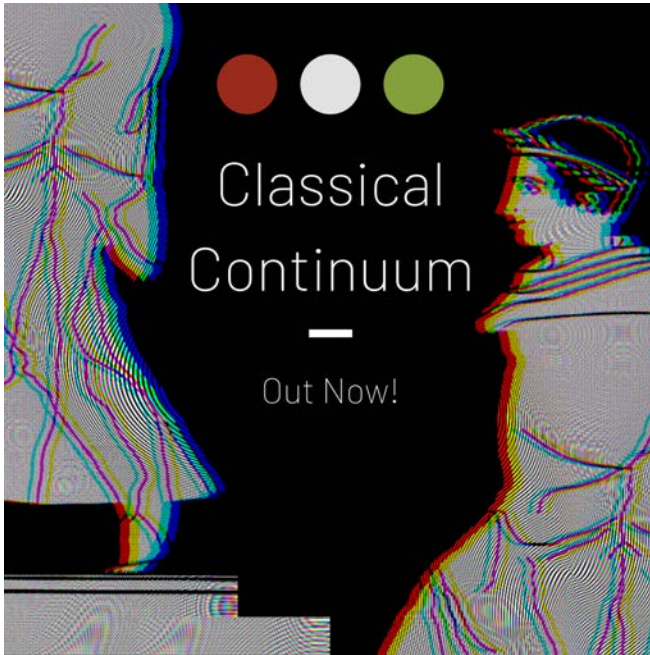
Gideon Unkeless (Landscape Architecture): GENED 1131. Loss



# COMMUNITY NEWS UPDATES



- Professor Jared Hudson has been awarded a Basel Fellowship in Latin Literature for work on his new book project.
- Professor Greg Nagy was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Crete on Friday, December 3, 2021. It is his third honorary doctorate from a Greek university.
- Anna Cambron ('22), a concentrator in Classical Languages and Literatures, and Ben Lafond ('22), a joint concentrator in Linguistics and Classical Languages and Literatures, and are among the Class of 2022 "Senior 48" elected to Phi Beta Kappa.
- This fall, the Mahindra Humanities Seminar "Classical Traditions and Receptions" hosted a talk by Dr. Jeremy Swist (Brandeis University) that is now available on the department's YouTube Channel:  
["Fascist Receptions of Antiquity in Metal Music."](#)



## CLASSICAL CONTINUUM

By Gregory Nagy

A new project I am particularly excited about is *Classical Continuum*, which I envision as a platform for exchanging discoveries and discovery procedures in the world of Classics writ large. I, together with colleagues in the Classics Department and beyond, are members of an informal board of editors who encourage submissions of essays and creative projects, as sketched here. To “get the ball rolling,” I have posted here [an example](#) of the kinds of essays that I myself would hope to submit for open peer review, as tentatively described here.

In this particular example, I write about a problem that has always fascinated me: why is it that the “canon” of the “Lyric Nine” includes only poets who are dated back to a pre-classical era, like Sappho and Anacreon, while it excludes poets who date from the classical era of the second part of the fifth century BCE? The problem, as I explain in my essay, is open-ended, calling for annotations by experts who may or may not agree with the argumentation that I have put together so far.

## VIRTUAL LATIN 101

By Rebecca Deitsch

This summer I taught an online Latin 101 course to listeners of the *Words for Granted* podcast. It was a fun opportunity to craft an etymology-focused language course, and teach outside of the university classroom.

In the spring, Ray Belli—host, writer, and producer of *Words for Granted*—reached out to me and asked if I would be interested in designing a Latin 101 course for him. He had found my name and bio on the Harvard Classics website—very cool! *Words for Granted* is the longest-running etymology and linguistics podcast on Apple, and averages between 20K and 30K downloads per month. During the isolation of quarantine, Ray thought some of his subscribers might like to learn Latin. He was not disappointed!

Ray advertised the course in a podcast episode, and we gained some interested students. While designing the curriculum, I asked the students to send me special requests. Based on their feedback, I created a Latin 101 course, highlighting the ways that Latin influenced English and the modern Romance languages. In our eight 1.5-hour sessions on Zoom, we covered all the normal beginner material. We also talked about word roots, common prefixes and suffixes, sound changes, and other topics appropriate for etymology enthusiasts.



My students were a varied bunch, from all over the US, and from as far away as Australia. I had a retired teacher, an immigration lawyer, a history MA student, and some undergraduates. It made for an exciting virtual environment.

Teaching intensive elementary Latin at Harvard prepared me to design a course framework and assessments with confidence. After a year of teaching on Zoom, I felt completely comfortable interacting with my *Words for Granted* students via this platform. It was great to put the skills I have honed at Harvard into use in the wider world—and I enjoyed going beyond an elite academic atmosphere to share Latin with nontraditional students.

Hopefully, I will be collaborating with Ray and *Words for Granted* again in the future. In the meantime, I am grateful for this opportunity that Harvard Classics made possible!

## LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY FOUNDATION POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS



The LCLF Postdoctoral Fellowship program is currently in the second year of a two-year pilot program. The postdoc is open to all qualified applications from the US and abroad in any area of classical studies, including classical archaeology, Greek and Roman language and literature and their reception, ancient history, and classical philosophy. Details may be found on the [fellowship website](#).

At their fall meeting, the LCLF Trustees voted to extend the program indefinitely beyond the current academic year. Henceforth, candidates are invited to apply for one of the four annual fellowships. The LCLF program has Richard F. Thomas as the executive trustee, as well as Michael Cronin and Adriaan Lanni as trustees.

### Congratulations to the recipients of the 2021–2023 Loeb Classical Library Foundation postdoctoral fellowships!

Below is a list of last year's successful applicants and the projects on which they have embarked:

#### AMY LEWIS

*Scholiastic Approaches to Aristophanes' Frogs*

#### PETER OSORIO

Epistolary Methods in Greek and Roman Philosophy

#### MARIA GIOVANNA SANDRI

Towards a new edition of all the extant Greek treatises on breathings (περὶ πνευμάτων)

#### JAMES ZAINALDIN

Constructing Scientific Expertise and Authority in ancient Greece, Rome, and China



# MEET THE B&E GOULANDRIS FOUNDATION MUSEUM SUMMER 2021 INTERN



## By Suzanne Paszkowski (pictured to the left)

This summer, I had the opportunity to develop an educational project for the B&E Goulandris Foundation in Athens as part of the summer internship program organized by the CHS and the B&E Goulandris Foundation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this internship was done remotely. Over the course of 5 weeks, I worked closely (though virtually) with the museum staff to develop a project for students and museum visitors to curate virtual exhibitions using the museum's collection.

With the increased digital shift triggered by the pandemic, the Modern Art Museum has the opportunity to open up its collection and make it more accessible to a broader audience, including people in the local community and around the world who might not normally visit the Museum and engage with the collection. A key pedagogical approach that aims at engagement and accessibility is that of project-based learning (PBL), in which students/participants are asked to work on a project that has real world applications as they learn the material. (This might be contrasted with modes of learning in which students are passive recipients or consumers of knowledge—think trying to memorize lecture notes—rather than active, engaged participants or co-creators.) With these factors in mind, I proposed that the Museum develop a PBL-inspired project in which students and museum visitors are asked to curate a virtual exhibition using objects from the museum's collection.

As curators, participants in this project will have the chance to draw on and interact with the Museum's collection in an authentic way. They will be responsible for deciding on objects, their arrangement, descriptions, and the overall narrative of their virtual exhibition space. Recent technological developments have made virtually designing an exhibition very accessible: Through my initial research for the project, I discovered ArtSteps, a web-based platform for building virtual exhibitions that was developed by a company in Greece. The application is user-friendly and free of charge, making it ideal for broad use. Together with the museum staff, I outlined the major steps involved in preparing the instructions and museum materials for participants to use in creating their own exhibitions on ArtSteps. We also made plans for the publicity of the project, its promotion in local schools and communities, as well as on social media. Lastly, I pitched the idea of bringing the exhibitions to life in the museum as the culmination of the project. This might take place in several different ways, whether using 3D models of the museum objects, or creating miniature models of the virtual exhibitions to display for comparison in the museum's temporary exhibition space. Either option will give the museum the opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to bringing alternative perspectives and different voices into the museum.

I found the work on this project over the summer very stimulating. It challenged me to think in new ways about some of the pedagogical principles and practices that I have developed over the course of my time at Harvard, in my roles as a teacher, pedagogical fellow, and curriculum developer for local schools. Museums offer exciting opportunities for public and accessible education:





especially with the virtual shift of the pandemic, everyone with internet access is now a potential museum visitor. This opportunity also comes with its own challenges, such as how to spotlight the museum's collection from among the infinite array of things on the internet, and how to engage specific audiences. My hope is that the exhibition curation project I planned out will succeed in empowering more young people to connect with the museum's collections, express themselves and be heard, and experience the amazing opportunities that museums as cultural institutions have to offer. (This piece originally appeared on the [CHS Greece website](#).)

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## MEET THE MUSEUM OF CYCLADIC ART SUMMER 2021 INTERN

By Greta Galeotti (pictured on next page)

When I saw the opportunity to work as an intern at the Museum of Cycladic Art, I immediately leaped at the chance to learn more about its permanent collection of Cycladic artwork, as well as to experience the inner workings of a museum in the preparation of the upcoming exhibition "Kállos." While my academic focus is on the history of the Greek language and its dialects, I have cultivated an interest in the wider cultural factors that contribute to our understanding of how language changes, maintaining an interest above all in art history and Aegean archaeology. Therefore, I was keen on collaborating with the Museum of Cycladic Art to discover its artifacts and fascinated by an upcoming exhibition which focuses on an eternal and yet extremely current theme, that of Beauty.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this internship was remote. Despite the obvious drawback of not being able to visit Athens and the Museum in person, I thought that these circumstances were

especially interesting for a museum internship, for the pandemic has certainly been a crucial historical moment for these institutions. It was truly amazing to get sneak peeks of the upcoming exhibition, due to open in the fall, and realize the number of artifacts, scholars, and institutions that come together to make such a project possible.

The Museum and the program's coordinators were also incredibly helpful and flexible in accommodating the difference in time and space of our locations, to make this experience as easy and meaningful for me despite the external constraints.



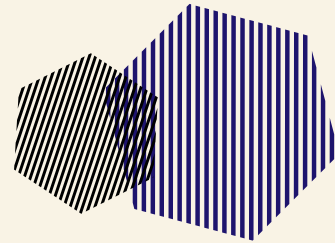
Due to the circumstances, the five-week internship focused on one main project, which was participating in the development of the catalogue for the "Kállos" exhibition. It was amazing seeing it grow from its earliest stages, so much so that, while I worked in English, in some parts it was still the Modern Greek version, which allowed me to get exposure to a language I would love to continue studying. Collating the bibliography for each artifact allowed me to go through the list of pictures and descriptions of each item to be exhibited, which was quite an interesting way of immersing myself in the exhibition, despite it being virtual. The other side of the project was the copy-editing of the various articles that will enrich and make up the rest of the catalogue. This allowed me to really immerse myself in the concept the exhibition explores, seeing it from a plurality of angles and through the voices of many distinguished and creative scholars. I particularly enjoyed learning more about cosmetics and found particularly interesting how gender fit in the research on the representation of beauty in ancient times, which shifted considerably through time.

I am very grateful I got to enjoy this great experience, and I am so looking forward to coming to Athens in the future and to hopefully catch a glimpse of the exhibition in person, and definitely to visit the Museum! (This piece originally appeared on the [CHS Greece website](#).)



## HADESTOWN!

As part of the DIAR (Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism) programming for the 2021 autumn season, students attended a showing of the musical HADESTOWN.



## A TRIP TO THE ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM

Undergraduate classicists attended a special tour of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, to view the exhibition "Titian: Women, Myth, & Power."



# 2021 SUMMER SCHOLARSHIPS FOR LANGUAGE STUDY AND SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY FOR UNDERGRADUATES

By Alex Vega

This past summer, the Department of the Classics piloted two new summer programs: scholarships for summer language study and a Summer Research Opportunity for Undergraduates (SROH).

For the former, the department welcomed four high school and college students—Jade Dinkins (Bard College), Ricarda Hill (Oberlin College), Zoë Sims Rhodes (Park Tudor School), and Sanjana Singh (Boston Latin School)—to take courses in Latin and Ancient Greek at Harvard Summer School. For the latter, the department welcomed a Yale College student, Charnice Hoegnifioh, to conduct research with Professor Irene Peirano Garrison.

Both of the new summer programs are among the department's diversity and inclusion initiatives. Both especially welcome applications from members of groups historically underrepresented in Classics, and from those who hope to make contributions to diversity and inclusion in Classics.

Teresa Wu and Professor Peirano Garrison ran the summer programs, and Jorge Wong and I served as tutors/mentors to the students. Jorge and I held office hours for the students. In addition to going over Greek and Latin, we often provided advice and resources to assist the students with pursuing further studies in Classics. We also talked with the students about interesting aspects of the classical world. For example, we had a really enjoyable conversation with Zoë about horses in ancient Greece and Rome.

I frequently met Charnice, the summer research student, to go over Latin texts, discuss her ideas and research, and talk about Classics generally. Charnice conducted a fascinating research project on ancient Roman cosmetics, with a particular focus on texts by Ovid, such as the *Medicamina Faciei Femineae* ("Cosmetics for the Female Face") and *Remedia Amoris* ("Remedies for Love").

Charnice is a sophomore pre-medical student double majoring in Classical Civilizations and Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry. Her summer research project combined her interests in Classics, science, and medicine. For example, she analyzed the use of medical language in Latin accounts of cosmetics. Moreover, making use of her scientific knowledge, she studied the chemical components of ancient Roman cosmetics and researched the use of spectroscopy to analyze these components. As she analyzed ancient Roman attitudes and practices relating to cosmetics, Charnice considered the



**Charnice Hoegnifioh (left), with mentor Alex Vega.**

important fact that some of these ingredients were toxic (and known to be toxic at the time), and she related her work to present-day concerns about ingredients in cosmetics. She also carefully analyzed Roman ideals for feminine beauty and approached the study of Roman cosmetics through the lenses of feminist theory and social identity theory.

At the conclusion of her project, she presented a poster entitled “The Price of Beauty is Pain: Makeup and Women’s Health in the Roman Empire” at the Leadership Alliance National Symposium. It was wonderful to see her work come together in an excellent presentation. Charnice subsequently presented her work at the Yale Undergraduate Research Symposium, where she won first place in the humanities! Her well-deserved success is a testament to how valuable and impressive her research has been. She has many intriguing ideas on Roman cosmetics, and she has expressed interest in building upon her work and doing research on other intersections between medicine, science, and Classics.

Regarding her experience in the summer program, Charnice said, “Interning under the guidance of Professor Irene Peirano Garrison and Alex Vega, a graduate student in Classical Philosophy, during Summer Research Opportunities at Harvard (SROH) was one of the most enriching educational experiences of my life. I learned so much about the process of conducting Classics research, and I was able to present the culmination of my work at the Leadership Alliance National Symposium due to their endless support, constructive critiques, mentoring, intellectual curiosity, and willingness to embrace the intersections of health sciences and women’s studies in antiquity.”

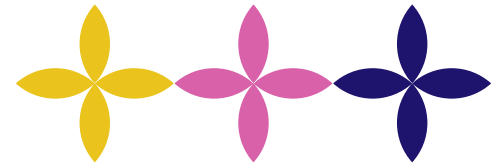
Over the course of the summer, Jorge and I organized several group activities for all the students. At these events, the students got to know each other and build a community. We played games and looked at lots of fun Classics trivia (e.g. “What do you think this classical artifact is?”, “How long would you guess the longest Ancient Greek word is?”). At one of the events, we watched and discussed a performance of *Antigone in Ferguson*, an adaptation of Sophocles’ *Antigone* that seeks to promote meaningful dialogue and racial justice. The Department of the Classics also organized a panel discussion where the students could hear from Harvard faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates; students had the opportunity to ask questions and learn about studies in Classics at the undergraduate and graduate level.

I found it very rewarding to be involved in the department’s summer programs and to work with such a talented and passionate group of students. In my conversations with the students, I was always impressed with their insights, as well as their genuine love of learning and excitement about the field of Classics. I was happy to see how much they had learned over the course of the summer and how their interests in the classical world grew. They are all highly motivated students who have shown excellent skills for studying classical languages and civilizations, and I am excited to see what they accomplish in their future studies. The members of the department involved in the summer program have remained in touch with the students, and it is always great to hear about the students’ continued interest in Classics.

We are looking forward to hosting reunion events with the students and continuing to support them in their classical studies. The department also looks forward to welcoming a second cohort of students in the summer of 2022.

# DIB FELLOW PROFILE: ALEX VEGA

By Avanti Nambiar



Alex Vega, a student in classical philosophy, is the departmental DIB (Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging) Fellow for this year. In his fellowship role, Vega is tasked with organizing the department's new summer program, assisting in the planning of a student conference, and assisting the department with general recruitment. He has been involved with the department's Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Committee.

The summer program is an initiative aimed at welcoming historically underrepresented groups into Classics. Vega has already served as a tutor and mentor for the participants in last year's program. Now, he helps the department accept feedback from previous participants, and is designing the program for next summer. Lately, Vega has been collecting testimonials, arranging events, and helping with general recruitment.

Vega has also been involved in laying the groundwork for a future undergraduate student conference, called Persephone. This planned biennial research conference is intended for outreach. By highlighting a variety of projects, this conference can model the diversity of the field, encouraging more students with unconventional backgrounds to join the discipline. The conference may also introduce students to the content of specific classical courses.

Finally, Vega has been aiding the department in recruiting students to study the classics. In his outreach, he seeks to counter the common perception of Classics as an elitist field. Vega explains that such perception is partly due to the assumption that students without thorough expertise in Latin or English grammar will be unable to enter and succeed. The DIB fellow stresses that the department welcomes and supports incoming students who haven't had the privilege of prior experience in classical language studies.

According to Vega, some textbooks may reinforce a perception of exclusivity, given that they were written a long time ago, and may contain implicitly discriminatory views. Having noted that classical texts have been used to "promote horrible injustices," such as slavery, Vega warned against overly idealizing the classical world.

Vega also said that traditionally, the classical curricula has tended to focus on the perspectives of high-status men. Vega added that Harvard is attempting to incorporate more new perspectives into classical coursework. For example, courses may place a heavier emphasis on topics such as gender, sexuality, and race. In Spring 2022, Harvard is offering a new course called "Classics, Race, and Power" that examines the complex interactions between Classics and race.

The DIB fellow said that classical studies as a whole would benefit from having more diverse perspectives amongst the student body. Through his teaching work, he encourages the formation of collaborative environments, where students can learn from each other. In essence, Vega believes in welcoming a varied pool of students to the Department of the Classics. For all these reasons, Vega says that the work of the DIB fellowship is an important step in diversifying the field, although he feels that there is always more work to be done!

# THE POETRY AND PAINTINGS OF BOB DYLAN

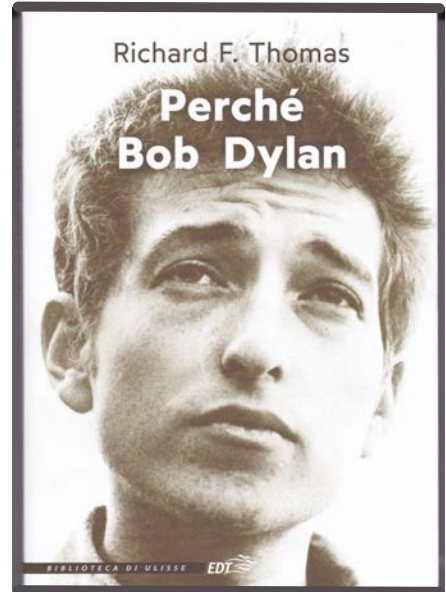
By Richard Thomas

Towards the end of 2017, The Bob Dylan Archive opened for business at the Helmerich Center for American Studies, attached to the University of Tulsa in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

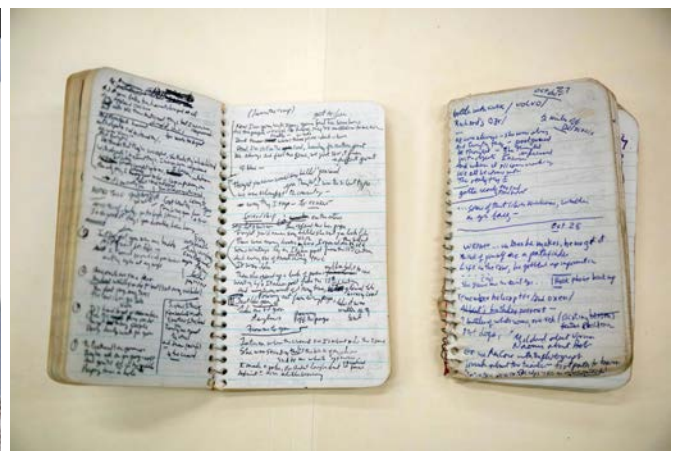
I had known about the Archive for a couple of years before that, and had read about some of the objects there: the business card of Otis Redding, from when Dylan tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade the great soul and rhythm and blues singer and songwriter to do a version of “Just Like a Woman.” A scrap of paper with the phone number of Johnny Cash. The leather jacket Dylan wore the night he “went electric” at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. Even the Turkish bendir drum, once owned by Dylan’s African-American Greenwich Village folk-singing compadre of the early 60s, Paul Langhorne, who claimed it inspired the classic song “Mr. Tambourine Man.” Hmm, not sure about that one.

Many of these objects will be on view in the Bob Dylan Center, which opens in Tulsa on May 10, 2022. What interested me more was another detail: “the archive includes decades of never-before-seen handwritten manuscripts, notebooks and correspondence.”

While writing *Why Bob Dylan Matters* (just out in Italian!), I had gotten access to a draft of the 1975 classic, “Tangled Up in Blue,” written in Dylan’s minute, beautiful hand in a 5” x 3” spiral notebook. I still remember buying my LP vinyl record of the song’s album *Blood on the Tracks* at the start of my second semester of graduate school in Ann Arbor. It is but one sign of the classic status of Dylan, that 45 years later, in 2020, my Harvard students were likewise buying a new Bob Dylan album, *Rough & Rowdy Ways*—once again often in vinyl, while I became the dinosaur with my CDs. The review-aggregating website *Metacritic* placed *R&RW* second only to Fiona Apple’s *Fetch the Bolt Cutters* for



**Richard Thomas's book, *Why Bob Dylan Matters*, in Italian.**



**Artifacts from the Dylan archive**

best album of 2020. In 1975, of course, *Blood on the Tracks* peaked at #1 album in the US.

I made five or six visits to the archive in Tulsa, in 2018 and 2019, and I was able to transcribe manuscripts and typescript drafts of a few dozen songs, some with ten or more iterations, from some of the 6000 pieces of paper containing drafts of Dylan's songs. Then came COVID, and the archive closed, and will remain closed until the opening of the Center in May. As is true for many colleagues and students, the almost three semesters from March 2020 to June 2021 were not conducive to research. Although, I must say, I enjoyed my three all-Zoom courses last year, and found the format not bad at all for classes of 12–20 students.

Of course, the roster helped. In the fall, Latin 102 "Catullus", and my quadrennial seminar FRSEMR 37u "Bob Dylan" (fifth time around), and in the spring Latin 104, "Ovid, *Metamorphoses*." So teaching, service, and a little Classics research pretty much filled the time, as the Dylan song transcriptions mostly just sat there, vainly beckoning from my own eight 8 ½ x 11 spiral notebooks.

For the current academic year, I was owed a semester's sabbatical leave. At some point, I decided for the second time in my career to take the entire year off. The last time I did that was at the end of six dramatic years as Chair of our department

in 2006—though tranquil on the second floor of Boylston Hall. If anyone tells you we should get rid of departments, come talk to me.

I was determined to try and dispose of purely classical obligations, and to spend the year focusing on the song drafts. As of the time of writing this, in early October, I am immersed in this project: one of pure philological and aesthetic gratification. To read drafts of songs I have known and hard-wired since my teens, 20s, 30s, and so on, and to see how they reached perfection through the process of writing, rewriting, rehearsal, and recording sessions (Tulsa has all this material) has been a delight.

Virgil and Dylan have been the poet and songwriter respectively (more or less the same thing) who have been in my head and my heart across the years. Working on these drafts inevitably leads to some crossover, at least in the imagination. As I read these Dylan drafts, I fondly dream about discovering the papyrus drafts of the *Eclogues*—I bet there were many iterations. Or think of Moeris singing a song fragment of one of Menalcas's (Virgil's?) greatest hits to his young friend Lycidas, as the two go into exile:

M. Immo haec, quae Varo necdum perfecta canebat:  
"Vare, tuum nomen, superet modo Mantua nobis,  
Mantua uae miserae nimium uicina Cremonae,  
cantantes sublime ferent ad sidera cycni."



**Richard Thomas at the Dylan exhibit**



MOERIS: Yeah, and what about these lines, still in draft, that Menalcas sang:  
“Varus, as long as Mantua comes through it all—Mantua, damn! too close to its canceled neighbor  
Cremona—swans will lift your name in song up to the stars above.”

(*Eclogue* 9.26–29)



It is strange not to be teaching, and a good part of me looks forward to returning formally and unmasked to the classroom next year. I am also doing two enjoyable senior theses and graduate specials, on Virgil, Ovid, and Tacitus, so Friday 2-4 pm is purely classical. Additionally, I am staying involved with the Mahindra Humanities Center’s Seminar on Classical Traditions and Receptions, co-chaired with John Hamilton and Adrian Stähli. On October 19, we introduced our third speaker in the seminar’s informal series of presentations on fascist and white supremacist uses of the Classics. Jeremy Swist, Lecturer at Brandeis, presented a paper to the 70 or so in Zoom attendance on the topic “Fascist Receptions of Antiquity in Metal Music.” We look forward to hearing Adrian on Riefenstahl and the Classics.

In October 2019, Bob Dylan opened an exhibition in Shanghai, *Retrospectrum*, a gathering of around 300 of the drawings, paintings and metal sculptures that he has been working on since the 1970s in particular. The exhibition, never on show before, was to then travel around the world and end up at the 200th anniversary of the Brooklyn Museum, in 2024. I was able to get over there back then, but as COVID descended, the show only made it to Beijing before being closed down.

Fast forward to last early fall, when I was asked to work on a symposium that will be part of the new exhibition, scheduled to open on November 29, 2021, at the Frost Museum at Florida International University. As originally planned, it will end up in Brooklyn.

In addition, I was asked to write an essay for the catalogue on a brand new series, *Deep Focus*. Dylan, who turned 80 last year, has not just finished *Rough & Rowdy Ways*, and put out *Shadow Kingdom*, a fantastic live-stream video filmed by Israeli-American director Alma Har'el. Turns out, he's also spent his own lockdown on these paintings. As the press release states, "Dylan selected scenes from films and transformed them into paintings, like film stills, another expression of Dylan's acute ability to fix a moment in time."

And so, for part of the fall, my *gaudium philologicum* was pleasantly interrupted. Not so much by an attempt to become an art critic, but rather to think about the mystery of human genius, which operates at a level beyond comprehension, across different media. Like his songwriting, Dylan's painting and drawing show evolutions interesting and impressive in their own right. I hope you all get a chance to visit *Retrospectrum*. Oh, and Dylan is also back performing, though not in COVID-heavy states. By the time you read this, like some of you, I will have returned to my necessary discipline of seeing more than one concert of the current tour.

