# BENNINGTON

winter 2009



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# ON THE COVER:



This rare chopine dates to the late 16th or early 17th century and is an excellent example of a modestly high platform shoe of the period. Some of the more excessive chopines elevated wearers by as much as 50 centimeters. Venetian, late 16th century. Photo courtesy of Bata Shoe Museum. See related story on page 6.

# Design Carol June Jessop

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Direct correspondence to: Bennington Magazine Office of Communications Bennington College One College Drive Bennington, VT 05201-6003

Phone: 802-440-4743 Fax: 802-440-4351 alumnirelations@bennington.edu www.bennington.edu

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Page 53 Susan P. Huggins Dottom Waylie Nr Full; Bottom inset 3co Page 53 Susan P. Huggins Page 55, left to right 1-2. Susan P. Huggins, 3. Schuyler Chapman; 4. Scott Barrow; 5-6. Esther McPhee '10 Page 72 Briee Della Rocca Inside back cover Briee Della Rocca



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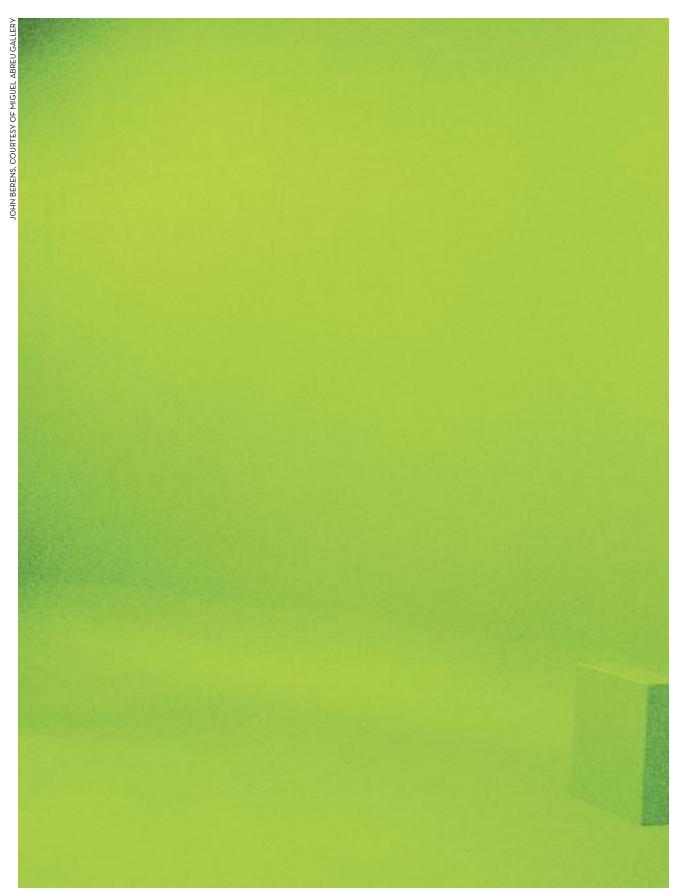
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Photographer and Bennington faculty member Liz Deschenes breaks away from her own photographic tradition for a pioneering style.

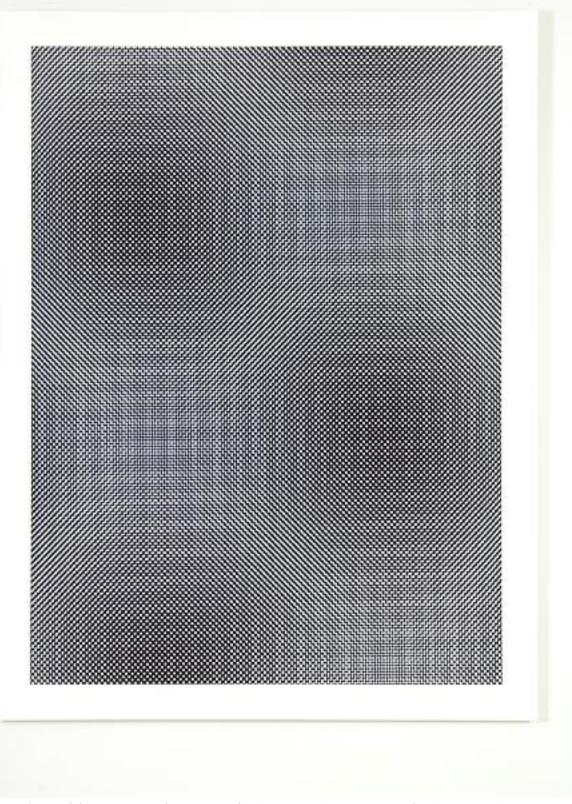
THINK VIBRANT. Think modern. Think expressive. "Difference is all in Liz Deschenes's new work, which continues to explore the overlaps among visual experience, the camera and eccentric photographic processes," The New York Times reported on one of the Bennington photography faculty member's most recent shows. The recipient of an Aaron Siskind Foundation Grant and an "Anonymous was a Woman Foundation" award, Liz Deschenes shares with us pieces from her collection Registration, shown at the Miguel Abreu Gallery in 2007, and other recent work.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York selected one of the photographs from Deschenes's Green Screen series (right) for a group show entitled Color Chart: Reinventing Color, 1950 to Today, which was on view at MoMA in the spring of 2008. Her work also has been exhibited at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; Forum Stadtpark, Graz, Austria; The Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego; The International Center of Photography, NY; Andrew Kreps Gallery, NY; and Galerie Nelson, Paris. Reviews of her work have been published in The New Yorker, New York Magazine, The New York Times, Artforum, The Village Voice, and online at artnet.com, among others.

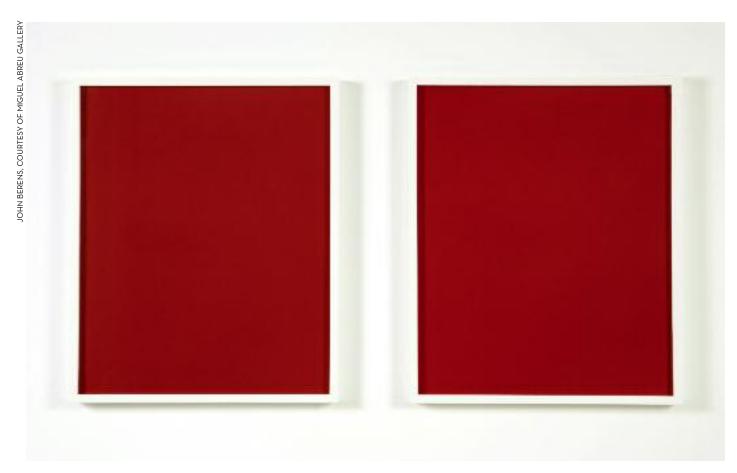


**Green Screen #5**, 2001, UV laminated Fujiflex print mounted on Plexiglass,  $52\% \times 39\% \times 7\%$  inches (133.7 x 100.5 x 2.3 cm).





**Moiré #3**, 2007, UV laminated chromogenic print. Sheet: 54 x 40 inches (137.2 x 101.6 cm). Frame: 60 x 46 inches (152.4 x 116.8 cm).



**Red Transfer** (diptych), 1997-2003, dye transfer prints. Frame: 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 36<sup>5</sup>/<sub>6</sub> inches (50.2 x 92.9 cm). Each sheet size: 19 x 15½ inches (48.3 x 39.4 cm).

Liz Deschenes's photographs are in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others. She joined the Bennington faculty in fall 2006.



# MER SHOES

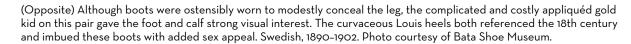
The curator of the Bata Shoe Museum, Elizabeth Ann Semmelhack '86, invites you to expolore one of the most unique museums in Morth America.

re you curious? That is the question Elizabeth Ann Semmelhack '86, curator at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto, is asking you to ask yourself. For if you are, you might consider setting foot in one of the most original museums in North America. Housed in a four-story building, designed by native Canadian and award-winning architect Raymond Moriyama—most notable for conceiving the Ontario Science Center, the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto, and the internationally praised National Museum of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh—more than 13,000 pairs of shoes are waiting to be discovered. According to Semmelhack, the museum's slogan "For the curious" is a reminder that this familiar object—so familiar in fact that it can sometimes be overlooked—still remains a mystery in many ways. "Some people might think that, because they can relate to it so well, there's nothing to learn. So it's sort of a challenge 'to the curious,' to come in and see what can be learned from shoes." And indeed, there is much to discover.

When Semmelhack graduated in 1986, she did not yet know that she was interested in art history or curatorial work but "Bennington was important in making me a flexible thinker," she explains. Following her BA, she went on to do an MA in Western Art History at Tufts University to pursue her interest in "why people made things" and "how these things were given social significance." She continued her studies as a doctoral fellow in Asian Art History at Washington University in St. Louis, where she focused on 18th-century Japanese print culture. Through her study of Japanese prints, she further realized that her interest lay particularly with aspects of dress that could both reflect and impact the culture in which they were used. Semmelhack held various positions at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the IBM Gallery of Science as well as the St. Louis Art Museum. She accepted the position of head curator of the Bata Shoe Museum in 2000.

For the former philosophy, Japanese literature, painting, printmaking, and Indian art history student, no day resembles the next. "That is what I love about this job. On any given day, it's going to be shoe-related but I don't know in which way it's going to be shoe-related. That's very fun." She recounts the tale of a call she received from the local law enforcement that had just located a corpse in a stream. They contacted the Bata Shoe Muse-

um in hopes that someone might be able to identify the shoes found along with the body and to possibly date them. Semmelhack herself was able to date the pair of rubber boots to the early 1900s and, as a result, helped to clear the case.



(Above) This pair of mojari is said to have been worn by the Nizam of Hyderabad, Shikander Jah, in the early 19th century. They are embellished with gold metal thread embroidery, gold sequins, and throat ornaments of rubies, diamonds, and emeralds set in enamelled gold. Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, India, early 1800s. Photo courtesy of Bata Shoe Museum.

# DID YOUKHOW?

- The Bata Shoe Museum, founded by Sonja Bata, opened its doors in 1995. Today it houses more than 13,000 pairs of shoes and related items. Among them: the footwear of Picasso and Marilyn Monroe, Indira Gandhi and tennis player Roger Federer.
- There are 18 muscles in the human foot.
- Fictitious secret agent Maxwell Smart has a telephone built into his shoe.
- 25% of all the bones in the human body can be found in the foot.



"Because shoes are so ubiquitous, I never know who's going to call," she adds. *Vogue*, one day; a murder investigator, the next.

Beyond this daily excitement, working at the shoe museum allows Semmelhack to engage her interests in history, culture, and anthropology: "What I love to do is take this overlooked object and to think about how it can reveal aspects of the culture in which it was won. Around the world, footwear has varied dramatically depending upon culture, climate, social status, and so something that might be considered as humble as a shoe can actually be such an important steppingstone into larger cultural issues." She adds that working as a curator at the shoe museum has also allowed her to shift from a narrow focus on the "maker"—a traditional focal point in art history studies—to the wearer.

In fact, with shoes, you "cannot escape the wearer," Semmelhack explains. "Shoes are some of the most intimate things we wear and our imprints remain tangible long after we have discarded them." When she began her career at the Bata Shoe Museum, one of the first pairs of shoes she worked on originally belonged to a small child in the 16th century. It was stunning, she remembers, because they were still very much shaped to their little owner's feet and she recalls feeling, "There's still a body in there."

In certain cases, shoes do become an integral part of an individual's body. In fact, one of the first exhibitions Semmelhack worked on was a show on Chinese foot binding, a case of the foot and shoe being quite literally made to fit each other and become one. "Everyone seemed to have an opinion on foot binding. Everyone had a reaction," she distinctly remembers. Strangely though, when it comes to high heels—used throughout the Western world and beyond as an item of fashion—"many people wear them unquestionably." In reaction to this double-standard, Semmelhack organized an exhibition on high heels as a complement to the Chinese foot-binding show, which was highly successful and became the topic of her first book, *Heights of Fashion: A History of the Elevated Shoe* (Periscope, 2008).

Beyond an interest in the high heel itself, it is an interest in gender that drove Semmelhack to write this book. The history of the high heel is a long and complicated one that originated with equestrian footwear from Western Asia, she points out. The simple heel was originally invented to help prevent a rider's foot from slipping out of the stirrup. "When heels were first introduced into the West at the end of the 16th century, they were embraced as equestrian shoes for men," she further adds. *High* heels, however, as items of court fashion evolved over the course of the 17th century and only become a highly gendered article of female dress in the 18th century. It is the shift of the high heel's status first as an object representative of a male and somewhat military activity, to that of an object of seduction—for mostly women—that she explores in her book and that keeps her up at night.

Gender issues and dress is one of Semmelhack's current focuses but, as she puts it, it doesn't end there. "There are many things that I am interested in. I'm working on a second book with Reaktion Press in London and they have a series called the "Object Series." The point of the Object Series is to explore an item that was instrumental in shaping the 20th century. Airplanes, factories, and shoes are all part of the equation. "Specifically, I'm looking at the construction of social identity with footwear throughout the 20th century."

With much on her mind, the Bennington alumna is preparing for a number of highly anticipated exhibitions this spring including an exhibition on the innovative technology used to create high-performance Winter Olympic footwear for the Bata Shoe Museum and an exhibition for Harlequin Publishers on the history of their cover art. Lately, Semmelhack has focused her efforts on Renaissance and Early Baroque footwear from 1450 to 1660, for an exhibition including loans from around the world. If you're ever headed to Toronto, pack a pair of walking shoes and stop in for a tour.

Elizabeth Semmelhack has been featured in articles and interviews in National Geographic, Vogue, Elle, InStyle, W Magazine, Women's Wear Daily, Forbes Magazine, The New Yorker, GQ, South China Morning Post, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, The New York Times, The National Post, The Toronto Star, The Globe & Mail, and many others. She has also appeared on NBC's "Today Show," "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," CBC's "Life and Times," and HGTV's "Designer Guys."

PHOTO COURTESY OF BATA SHOE MUSEUM



Elizabeth Semmelhack '86, Curator of the Bata Shoe Museum



Heeled footwear was worn throughout the Near East for horseback riding, as the heel aids in keeping the foot in the stirrup. Examples, such as this, probably inspired the Western adoption of heeled footwear by men in the late 16th century. Persian, 17th century. Photo courtesy of Bata Shoe Museum.



Inspired by a pair of 1920s shoes in the Bata Shoe Museum collection, Christian Louboutin designed this pair of shoes in 2007. Generously donated by Christian Louboutin. Photo courtesy of Bata Shoe Museum.



# a greener choice for a progressive campus

ne of the most innovative, earth-friendly, and structurally appealing heating systems currently in existence, Bennington College's newly constructed biomass plant, complete with a single 400hp boiler, housed in a 5,200-square-foot addition to the College's utility plant, has made it possible for the College to convert its primary heating source from a fossil fuel system to a wood chip, or "biomass," system. The wood chips are a byproduct of local logging, lumber, and forest management, which make them an excellent and locally abundant option as a source of renewable energy for the College.

Director of facilities management William Tronsen estimates that the conversion to biomass will offer overall savings of more than 200,000 gallons of #4 fuel oil per year. This, combined with a number of other energy-saving and recycling efforts initiated by the College, are expected to significantly reduce Bennington's energy for heating usage.

TAKE THE TOUR

# TAKE THE TOUR

Boiler attendant and tour guide extraordinaire
Todd Siclari works an eight-hour shift every day and is the single operator of this pioneering, custom-built plant.



# ONE

# THE UNLOADING BIN

Wood chips are unloaded in the material transfer area. A Keith® Walking Floor in the unloading bin allows the 30 tons of chips to proceed gradually to two consecutive conveyors.



# TWO

# **SORTING & CHOPPING**

The second conveyor into which the chips are dropped contains 1½-diameter holes aimed at sorting the chips. Small chips sift through and too-large chips proceed through to a chopping station. All chips are reunited in a screw conveyor that moves them forward to the bucket elevator.



# **STORAGE**

When they reach the top of the bucket elevator, chips are unloaded into a large concrete storage bin, one that is approximately 20 feet high and that can hold up to 4 truckloads of chips (or 120 tons).



# **REGULATING**

Chips proceed out of the storage area where hydraulic pistons move them onto yet another conveyor (Todd points out, "It's like Mad Scientist!"), which finally drops them into a red metering bin. This bin regulates the flow of the chips to ensure that their distribution into the fan, which blows them into the boiler, is both uniform and efficient.



# **BURNING & HEATING**

In a separate room, the chips are blown into the 400hp boiler and are burned. Undergrate and overfire air control this burn. Heat from the boiler causes steam, which exits through a large system of underground pipes, and is distributed to most of the lower campus buildings.





# **DISPOSAL & CLEANUP**

Deemed one of the cleanest forms of heating, the only waste caused by the biomass plant are steam, which is expelled through a large stack, and hot ash, collected and pushed through multicyclones to finally be stored in a 55-gallon drum. The ash is donated to a local business for use in fertilizer.



To read more about the greening of campus, visit www.bennington.edu.

# **BIOMASS AT BENNINGTON**

- •In an average heating season, roughly 85% of the lower campus buildings are heated by the biomass plant.
- Without the biomass, approximately 2,000 gallons of oil would be burned to heat the campus on a typical December day. The cost to the College would be approximately \$5,200 per day.
- Instead, approximately 18 tons of wood chips are used to heat the campus on a typical December day; and this for an average cost of \$935 per day.
- The waste generated by the biomass is simply ash, the same ash generated when burning wood in a fireplace. About 60 tons of wood chips (2 truckloads) would generate enough ash to fill a conventional-size, 55-gallon drum. Once the container is full, the hot ash is donated to Whitman's Feed Store in North Bennington, VT, which mixes it in with its fertilizers.
- Wood chips are obtained through a "chip broker," who works in connection with saw mills and logging companies to collect wood debris from their processes.
- Any type of wood can be burned in the biomass, although mill chips (2" x 2" x  $\frac{1}{4}$ " or smaller) are considered best. Larger chips and pieces of wood up to 2" x 4" x 18" are burned after they are processed through a 150 horse-power grinder.
- In its first year alone, the biomass plant will save the College nearly half a million dollars.



# somber, bold, scorching,

# BOCK'S BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN

Las Vegas. A counter. A pawnshop. Flustered characters waiting in line to exchange family keepsakes for money. Their life's possessions: spent. Not your typical daily scene—unless you're 10 years old, you live in Las Vegas, and your name is Charles Bock, that is.

Inspired by Charles Bock MFA '97's childhood, Beautiful Children – which emerged from a story composed during Bock's time as a student in the Bennington Writing Seminars program and later graced the cover of The New York Times Sunday Book Review-isn't your typical first book. Indeed, this 38-year-old author and his debut novel (nearly 10 years in the making) have stunned both critics and an industry the Bennington alumnus calls "fickle" and "hard." Novelist A.M. Homes praises the novel as "fast, violent, sexy...near genius" and describes Bock as a "major new talent." An excerpt appears below.

gainst the wall, the boy was sitting maybe six inches from the television, staring right into that idiot box. Absorbed by the flashing images, he was ignoring the voice behind him.

From his relaxed position on the couch, Lincoln continued addressing the back of his son's head, explaining that eight hours was average for labor, usually a lot longer for a first child.

The story's subject kept looking ahead—he'd need glasses eventually, Lincoln knew. For Newell's sake, he hoped it wouldn't be soon.

"The nurses told me, if I wanted to take a break, Lorraine's parents were in with her, she wouldn't be alone. They even wanted to give me a pager. The second anything happened, someone would be in touch."

Shifting in place, Lincoln waded through a memory or two, and reported that he hadn't been able to make heads or tails of the nurse's accent. But he'd known that just like he'd done his part conceiving the kid, he was gonna do his job in the delivery room. Hell or high water, Lincoln was the rock for his wife's fingers to clutch, the flesh for her nails to tear. "I told them straight out where they could stick it," he said, turning up the macho a few notes, adding a bit of drama and bloodlust to this disturbance. "They tossed me right out of Humana Sunrise. Took three guards. I'm kicking and screaming, and they throw me right out of there, right out on my ass."

The last word brought eye contact from Newell—a sudden shared moment, both parties knowing the boy's mother would not tolerate that kind of language, that Lincoln used the word for precisely this reason. The code of men. The bond of fathers and sons. Newell's profile was bathed in the television's spooky halflight, frozen there, as if he were not quite sure how he should be reacting. Lincoln thought he saw a twinkle of bemusement in his son's expression, and for an instant wondered if he was laying it on too thick. But he also saw that he had Newell's attention.

"Oh, I was pissed," Lincoln continued. "Had half a mind to take my pickup right through the front of that hospital. If I'da had my thirty-eight in the glove compartment, I promise you, any son of a bitch dumb enough to keep me from what I love, what I created . . ." He leaned into a crouch. His hands came together in front of him, and his tone was more focused now. "I mean, we got this, this happening here. And you're nervous as shit. We've done the Lamaze and all that, got the breathing down, but it's different. Like going from a complicated game, dress-up and make-believe. It's the real deal here. A man can't help but wonder. The ultrasound says everything's okay but what the hell do doctors know? If they're such good doctors, what are they doing in Vegas, right? You worry, are Drs. Siegfried and Roy gonna pop you out one of them deformed freak babies, with the second head growing out of its neck or something?"

"Dad."

"What? You telling me you wouldn't have liked a twin brother?"

"Twenty dollars, please."

"Deal's a deal, hotshot."

"Kenny's going to be here any second."

"Well, when he gets here, I'll get my wallet."

voice told him to stop torturing the boy. After a moment, Lorraine emerged from the open doorway, working at the clasp of one of her earrings. "And you," she said. "Listen to your father."

She fixed the clasp and started into the living room, toward the kitchen, where she walked in a



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"There are other portrayals of Vegas but a lot of it is nonfiction. Fiction has to do more than report. It has to be emotionally true."

-Charles Bock MFA '97

nervous half circle around the dinner table, looking in each chair. If she was aware of the effect of her little black cocktail dress, she did not let on.

"Your mom sure cleans up nice."

"You haven't seen my purse?"

Lincoln pretended to make an effort to look, quickly got back to business: "This was when big prizefights still took place behind Caesars Palace. They used to build grandstands on top of the outdoor tennis courts, have the fights right out beneath the stars. Your dad didn't have the clout to get tickets then—I never had a lot of friends at Caesars—and you were on the way, so we didn't have any spare bucks for the pay-perview."

As Lincoln spoke, he was aware of Newell glancing down into the shoe box in his lap, the game cartridges he'd been rummaging through when all this started. He was aware of the boy looking up and turning, searching out his mother and making eye contact. Immediately Lincoln knew she'd visited Newell's room, and while he did not know details of their truce, this glance gave him some idea. We all make compromises, it said. This is part of the agreement. This was almost enough to make him guit. To just junk it all and walk away. If this tale didn't truly deserve to be passed down, he would have given up right there. But damn if he was going to hand them victory, be denied the telling of such an excellent tale. His voice filled with forced goodwill, a hint of temper. "So what I'd do. I'd drive up and down I-15, where it runs behind the Strip, have the radio tuned to the sports station for the round-by-round updates. The closest parts of the freeway, between the sounds from the grandstands and the blow-by-blow recaps, it was just like being at the fights."

"What time are our reservations?" Lorraine asked.

"We're fine."

"I just don't want to be late."

Newell's head tilted back ever so slightly, the back of his skull making soft impact against the wall behind him.

"I drove around for a while," Lincoln said, "kind of lightheaded. I was so pissed at myself for getting thrown out of there, letting your mom down. I don't remember driving, just that I ended up pulling into the employee lot at work, I think from

repetition as much as anything. I had a copy of the Lamaze notes in the glove compartment and was going over them." He stopped now, became contemplative, the memory apparent to him as if he were looking at it through a thin sheet of gauze. "You know,

your mom and I, we really didn't have a lot. She'd given up danc-

ing to have you, and my bonus money had been just enough for the banks to let us go into debt for the house. We were getting by, not much more. We had health insurance but it wasn't going to cover it all, and that was just the beginning. Having a kid, you don't know what you're getting into."

Memories had him now, back in those moments, possessing him to the point where his affectations were stripped away, and he spoke candidly, honestly; to the point where he did not notice the changing tenor of the living room—his son going bone still, being sucked into the tale against his will, Lorraine coming to the edge of the kitchen, listening silently, her guard lowering enough to find herself occupied by her own memories, and a different tale of how that night went.

"This guy I know, Stromboli, was working the pit and I remember we talked for a while. Guess I was nervous, because Stromboli, and the craps dealer too, and pretty much every single individual around that table heard about the bundle on the way. I mean I blabbed. Getting kicked outta the hospital. The mutant two-headed flipper baby. If worrying made me a bad guy, and about not wanting a flipper baby—shouldn't I love the kid no matter what? This is to a full table, remember. All kinds of action going on. Money's at play. But you know what, every person around that table was pretty sympathetic. Concerned even. Then they wanted your old man to shut the hell up."

Lincoln chuckled at his own joke; Lorraine interrupted: "You're not wearing that tie."

"Looks that way."

"With that jacket?"

He turned away from her voice, away from the reality of a wife who habitually challenged and corrected his sense of style. "Five's the point," he announced, assuming the barking voice of a croupier. "'The point is five. New shooter here. New shooter coming out.' I figure what the hell, right? Reach into my pocket. When I open my wallet, the damndest thing—this orange and red piece of confetti, I didn't know what it was. It carries up into the air, sweeps up in the air, just the damndest thing you ever saw, it's a butterfly, fluttering, unsteady above the crap table, right in the middle of all that smoke."

The smell of his wife's perfume and the weight of her presence were behind him; her arms wrapped around his neck.

"A moth," Newell said.

"Not many times in your life you honestly come across magic," Lincoln said. "That was one."

"I love that story," Lorraine said.

He looked up, admiring her for a count. She smiled—a bit sadly, he thought, before she broke the moment, straightened something on the adjacent table.

"I took those bones," Lincoln said, with renewed energy. "Straight off rolled myself a four and a three. Like something from the movies. You couldn't have scripted it any better." He felt a catch in his throat. "I'm telling you, whatever I needed, I rolled. It was insane. The crowd was cheering. 'Hot shooter. Make way for the hot shooter.'"

"Why'd you have a butterfly in your wallet?" Newell's face betrayed interest, confusion. "I mean, if it's a moth the story makes sense. But a butterfly?"

"What time's your show?" Lorraine asked.

"Um...Seven-fifteen, I think."

"You'll be home by ten?"

"What if I get hungry and want to get food?"

"You shouldn't get hungry. You had dinner and your dad's giving you money for popcorn and snacks."

"He hasn't given me anything, yet."

"Don't rush me," Lincoln said, laughing. "I'm still trying to figure out why there was a butterfly in my wallet."

"Did or did we not agree, Newell?"

"Mom."

"You get to go out with your friend so long as you agree to be home by ten."

She did not break, no matter how long he studied her. Finally, if Newell did not exactly nod, the blankness of his face registered understanding, an unhappy acceptance of the terms, but acceptance nonetheless. He said, "Ten a.m. it is."

"Young man—"

Let them spar, Lincoln figured, let life and its messy details swirl. Rather than getting involved, instead of paying attention, he returned to a March night that did not feel all that long ago, a night when he had stayed at the craps table for five hours, when he'd won enough money to pay off all of his wife's hospital bills, and had continued to win, rolling so well that expecting baby or no expecting baby, the other players had not wanted him to leave the table, those bastards had wanted Lincoln to rattle them bones.

He'd about had to pull himself away, but pull himself away he had. He'd been exhausted and pumped, reeking with nicotine and drenched with sweat, riding on adrenaline and love and whiskey, while still sort of worried about flipper babies, how the delivery would go, which breathing technique went where.

He had told his son this story many times, it was true, overacting each time, stepping into his overblown tough-guy persona, painstakingly going over the details, ad infinitum, ad nauseam, so many times that he knew Newell was sick of the story, so many times that it was not uncommon for the kid to poke holes in his exaggerations, to roll his eyes, report, *I'm going into diabetic*  shock here. Lincoln knew his son had become inured to how much the story meant to him, knew the emotion that the tale drew from him was repellent to his boy. At the same time Lincoln saw his son tempted, struggling with and repulsed by and suffocating with his own connections to the tale. The safe conclusion was that his dad was a big old softie. A lightweight. And maybe it was true. Maybe he was. Because Lincoln could not help himself. His voice breaking, he recalled the assuredness that overtook him that night on his drive back to the hospital.

"The word *blessing*," Lincoln said, "is flowery and unmasculine. I know."

But on that March night of twelve years ago plus change, be it boy or girl or flipper baby, he'd been sure that the coming child—yes, the very same one who was writhing now at having to hear all this, *you*, *you little pain in the ass*—surely was some sort of blessing. A blessed infant coming from some blessed place.

Even now telling the story made him more sure of it.

And what Lincoln did not say—what his wife did not now or ever correct him on—was that Lorraine had been in labor for only two hours.

He did not report that he'd missed the page from the hospital. That he had not been on hand for the birth—the breech birth.

Not while Lorraine was cut open. Not while his baby was unwrapped from its umbilical cord, forcibly removed from his momma's womb.

The fact is, he'd heard the news with his wife resting in hospital room seven. A glossed-over, secondhand version, accentuated by Jamaican lilts whose loveliness he still vividly heard: Don't feel bad. The childe jes coulden' wait to come into the world.

Newell Ewing would never know about these details. In the same way Lincoln never arrived at the blessed event itself, revisionist history would drop his absence from the story. Instead, what finally was mentioned, the last word in this little tale, was a postscript, a vow made when he had snuck away from his sleeping wife and their room of bounty, and had stood in front of the baby nursery's glass wall. *I will never be able to do enough for my child.* 

The sound of a noisy engine pulling up to the driveway and idling. A wheezing horn. Newell could not move fast enough, shooting to his feet, extending

his palm.

Charles Bock MFA '97 has received fellowships from Yaddo, UCross, and the Vermont Studio Center. His fiction has appeared in Esquire. For a complete interview with Bock, visit the "News" section of www.bennington.edu.



# if you're 18 years old and you want to change the world, where do you start?

by Jen Hinst-White '02

ost of us could rattle off a few first steps. Register to vote, for one. Volunteer at a local hospital, shelter, or school. Join a campus activist group. Take a civics class, and learn how government works.

All excellent suggestions—but not one of them connects what happens within the classroom to what happens in the larger world. The choice is between extracurricular activities on the one hand, and on the other, thought abstracted from action. Why are so many students involved in community service, but so few in questions of what causes poverty, war, ecological disasters, public health crises, and weakening democracy? Or, for that matter, the failure of education itself?

A conversation along these lines had been brewing at Bennington for several years. And in the fall of Bennington's 75th anniversary year, president **Elizabeth Coleman** announced a new curricular initiative. "We intend," she said, "to turn the full force of the intellectual and imaginative power, passion, and boldness of our students, faculty, and staff on developing strategies for acting on pressing public needs." The aim of the initiative, Coleman explained, is to reconnect thought and action, civic virtue, and the most demanding uses of intellect and imagination. And the objective in this radical rethinking of curriculum is not just to study these issues, but ultimately to do something about them.

Students, whatever their area of concentration—the arts, sciences, social sciences, or humanities—will have the opportunity to confront what it means and what it takes to live a life committed to public goods no less than private ones.

Part of this new initiative has resulted in a new course format: design labs. Design labs do not follow a syllabus, nor rely on a single expert to guide the discussion. Instead, a group of students

and faculty come together to grapple with one particular, urgent, real-world problem. Collaboratively, they explore questions within this problem, combining research, analysis, and contact with experts in the field. In the short term, the aim is to develop frameworks that can generate the most effective solutions; in the long term, it is to help students become the sort of people who can actually carry out that perennial commandment of commencement speeches: Now go out and change the world.

When pilot versions of three design labs were launched in 2007—addressing issues of the environment, conflict resolution, and education reform—huge questions loomed. What would happen when action was the driving, organizing principle of a class? Would it intensify the intellectual work, or diffuse it? Were genuine advances aimed at systemic change possible in the brief compass of a term- or a year-long course? What would actually *happen* in such an open-ended and daunting environment?

### A CASE STUDY: THE STORY OF RETHINKING EDUCATION

Rethinking Education, like each of the design labs, began with a single premise—in this case, that the education system in the United States is not working. On the first day of a lab that would span two terms, Coleman and dean of admissions **Ken Himmelman** greeted a group of about 20 students, mostly first-years. As **Liz Meier '11** describes it, the pair "started out by saying 'We're not experts, we don't know any more than you do. But we all care about this issue, so let's do this together.' And we all kind of said, 'What do we do now?'"

From there the lab began to read broadly. They researched private, public, and charter schools; the problems that crop up in

classrooms; issues of testing, tenure, unions, and standards. "It was overwhelming at first," says **Crystal Barrick '11**. "There was no syllabus, no books I had to buy. But it was also really exciting."

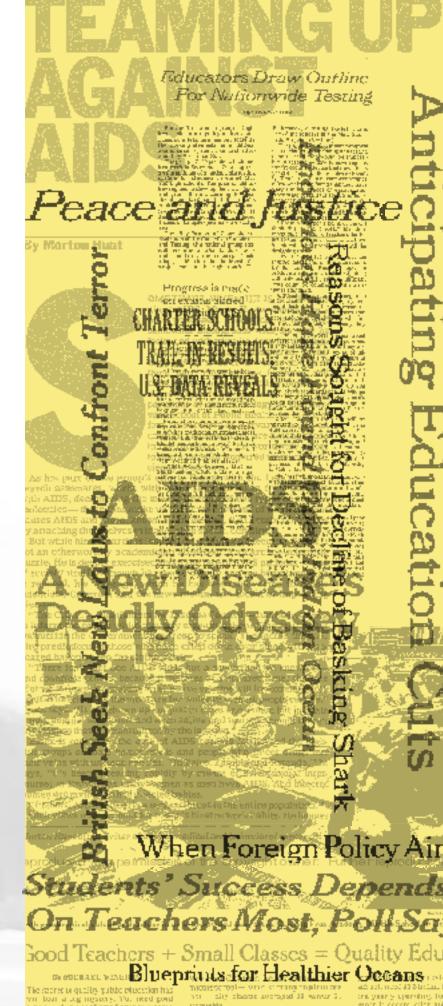
In retrospect, Coleman and Himmelman think the "overwhelming" stage was necessary—not least because it mirrors how things work in the world. Community and global problems don't come equipped with syllabi, either. "If you try to make things manageable," Coleman says, "you miss the great intellectual challenge. If you take something like education and say 'Let's talk about charter schools,' it's not that that's not interesting, but you've already answered the tough questions: 'Where should you focus your energy? What are the changes that will transform possibilities?'"

Amidst this mass of information, the group was searching out the "critical variables"—the most powerful factors in determining whether a given classroom, school, or system works. Most students had opinions on what those variables might be; standardized testing and large classes were favorite targets. But Himmelman and Coleman urged the students to lay assumptions aside and look for evidence. "Many people will tell you," Himmelman says, "that class size is the most important thing in education, and if we could just get everyone in a class of 12, we'd be fine. But the research doesn't bear it out. So that's a variable, but that is not the critical variable. What we're after is how do you know it's a key factor? Don't just tell me you think it is, show me how you know."

And within a month, the group had uncovered research—including a 2006 Brookings Institution report and studies from the Chicago Consortium of School Research—that pointed to their critical variable. "It turns out that what is critical," Himmelman says, "is *teacher quality*. If you're behind grade level in reading, and you have a bad teacher two years in a row, you can almost never make it up without some serious remedial intervention later. You're behind for the rest of your life. A variable that powerful gives you multiple pathways for action. And that's when the students get really jazzed: Now I have a foothold. Now the very hard work begins in making the transition to what do you do with that knowledge."

That transition, however, proved frustrating for many students. In the course description, it had seemed clear. In practice, it wasn't. "We wanted to go out and do something, but didn't know where we should focus our energy," Meier says. "A lot of people really enjoy structure, and having such an unstructured environment your first term here can be totally unsettling. Some of the students checked out and weren't interested, or the format of the lab didn't fit with the way they learn. And that's a natural thing, and I think Ken and Liz were expecting that. It's a pretty different kind of class.

"After the first term some people said, 'Okay, that was fine, but I'm off to do other things,' and others of us said, 'I'm not done. I need to keep going."



# normous Haze Found Over Indian Ocean America's Lost Respect The AIDS Questions That Linger When Foreign Policy Aims and Campaign Needs Clash Study Finds Charter Schools Lack Experienced Teachers

The second-term group was smaller—about 10 students—and arguably more focused. "In the spring," Himmelman says, "we ended up going even deeper on the intellectual side. The students were driving this. They wanted to know: Why do we educate people? To what end? If we don't understand that, we don't want to jump into redesigning systems."

They wrestled with questions of vocational education versus liberal education. Again, they read widely, eventually zeroing in on the writings of Robert Hutchins, Joseph Schwab, A.N. Whitehead, and the educational revolution that emerged from the University of Chicago in the 1930s. They became inspired by The Equity Project, a new charter school in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City, which places effecting teacher quality at the center of its mission and seemed designed to provide a compelling model for what could be transforming change. "The ideas were so powerful," says **Emily Guez '11**, "that it made the class powerful."

By this point, the group had begun to develop a common vocabulary. Network. Framework. Usable data. "Deep thought"—a phrase coined by one of the students, Hector Najera '09, for the type of thinking that "gets beneath" an idea and plumbs its connections to other factors and considerations. It had become clear that this thinking is a necessary first part of action. "The more you see," says Emmet Penney '11, "the more you realize how huge the problem is, and it became so daunting.... We had read a lot more failure stories than success stories"—studies and analyses of actual schools and policies—in which "it wasn't that someone was making a consciously bad decision; it's that they thought their ideas were right and something horrible happened because of it."

The group was wary of rushing into a project that at best might have no lasting effect, and at worst might cause harm. "We kept talking about this culminating idea or project we could do," Penney says. "We wanted it to have so much meaning and not be contrived, like 'here's my posterboard.' And that's a great mindset, but unfortunately nothing really happened with it."

Yet something else was happening. Reflecting on the experience later, Katherine Perkins '11 writes:

You might say that our greatest active accomplishment has been in honing our abilities to read texts with

action in mind, thinking always...about how this particular information might be applicable to other work that we are doing... I wanted a concrete end, a specific, attainable goal. What I realize now is that...we might have accomplished something that felt satisfying in the moment, but the effort would have contained no sustaining value. Instead, this lab has been about establishing means—not ends, but beginnings.

The change the students were making was not yet visible in the world, but it was visible in them. They had learned to approach a situation "with both skepticism and a willingness to find its power," in the words of Crystal Barrick—the student who described the initial days of the lab as "overwhelming." Says Barrick: "I think one of the biggest surprises was learning that even though education is such a large issue, if you do enough research and listen to people who are in the field, you really can figure it out. It's not as hard and scary as it looks." Within a year, she had become fluent in dissecting and discussing data and ideas that she never would have approached in the past: "budgets, finances, political issues."

Toward the end of the year, students met with humanitarian and program-builder Margot Hoerrner '91 and several colleagues whom Hoerrner had met through the Harvard Kennedy School of Government—a small network of world-changers in education, politics, business, and the nonprofit world.

"Our encounter with them," says Perkins, "dissipated any doubt that any of us might have had about the power of networking. They became resources for each other to share ideas with, to offer support, to give and take necessary criticism.... The exciting thing about our group at the end of last term was seeing that potential in ourselves."

### "IT'S TIME FOR US TO ACT."

So where does this leave the 18-year-old who wants to change the world?

The first-year students of 2007-08 are now sophomores, and some were so compelled by their experience in Rethinking Education that they've decided to press on toward action. Crystal Barrick, Emily Guez, Liz Meier, and Hector Najera (who took the class as a junior) are now pursuing a third term of the lab in a group tutorial with Himmelman. "Over this past

# or Decline of Basking Shark

# Il Finds Hostility Hardening Toward U.S. Policies

Europe's Unease With U.S. Alters Britain's Middleman Role

year," Meier says, "we've learned a lot about what people are doing out there and what the problems are, and it's time for us to act on that."

Their action idea is still in development, but early plans include organizing a conference at Bennington on education reform. "Our goal, I think, is to start a conversation on a bigger scale," Guez says. "We learned so much through this one-year process, and it changed our understanding of what is at stake in education. We really want to have that available to many more people."

Other students decided to take what they had learned and move in different directions. Over the course of the lab, Emmet Penney realized that his greatest interest is actually the sociology of violence, and is focusing his Plan on that. Katherine Perkins hopes to use her classes and Field Work Terms to study the arts as an educational or therapeutic tool. "I'm just trying to figure out how to make whatever I do have the greatest ripple effect," she says.

Just as these students' Plans are still unfolding over time, so too is this new initiative. Three new design labs were introduced this year, with more planned for the future. Dean of studies Wendy Hirsch and psychology faculty member Ron Cohen are now creating an assessment tool to help refine the design lab as time goes on.

And new intersections of thought and action, including new types of courses, will certainly arise. As Coleman put it in her speech, "Imagine something akin to a medieval fair—lots going on, in a variety of formats, and all of it tempting." Another new format has already been piloted for fall 2008: Transferable Approaches. Called "modules" for short, these three-week, one-credit classes use a specific subject as a vehicle to teach a particular skill—mathematical modeling, reading cultural codes—that may be applied in a broad variety of disciplines.

It all comes back to equipping the student who wants to change the world, and creating space for that world-changer to take shape. "It's been exhilarating," Meier says, "coming into college with this idea of 'I've got do something, we're going to do something.' It built this camaraderie and idea of obligation, because all these people are here with me too, and there are all these resources in front of us.

"It inspired us to say, 'I'm not just one person. This is a huge thing, but there are tons of people worried about it, and I need to connect to them."

# MORE DESIGN LABS

Rethinking Education was one of three design labs piloted in the fall of 2007. The other two addressed environmental and conflict resolution issues.

Green Projects: Community and Campus. Working with chemistry faculty member Janet Foley and ecology faculty member Kerry Woods, first-year students developed proposals to make the Bennington College campus more environmentally sustainable. "One of the things that students got out of this," Foley says, "was the need to question your sources and not accept opinion as being fact. You can't just say, 'I really think it's better to have sheep grazing on the lawn.' You need data: How much do sheep cost? How much do they eat? Is it sustainable? We probably drove them crazy with that idea. If they said, 'Organic food is better,' we'd ask, 'Well, why is it better? What's the basis for thinking that?'"

Collaboration and Conflict, led by Susan Sgorbati with assistants Jessica Alatorre '07 and Suzanne Brundage '08, sought to develop new models of mapping and resolving conflicts. Among other things, the class staged an extensive mediation role-play based on an actual maritime border dispute between Peru and Chile. "The conversation was lively," says Alatorre, "and the results were not what I would have expected. Typically in high-level negotiations, those invited to participate are also high-level persons. In this case, a portion of the class made the case to also have representation from people lower down, like the fishermen themselves...and [in the end] it was the 'fishermen,' the ones with the on-the-ground perspective, that were able to make one suggestion for how to proceed that really resonated with all involved. From this one day, our class developed a whole new model for conflict resolution that we would like to explore in the future."

Three more design labs were offered in the fall of 2008. Students were especially encouraged to continue pursuing their questions and action ideas through Field Work Term.

**AIDS Pandemic: Science, Cultures, Politics of HIV**, with biology faculty member **Amie McClellan** and anthropology faculty member **Miroslava Prazak**. Students examined the spread of HIV and global reaction to it from several angles, including immunology and human behavior, and defined questions and actions of interest to them.

The Ocean Project, with sculpture faculty member Jon Isherwood and biology faculty member Betsy Sherman. Students employed the close observational methods of both science and visual arts to understand the causes of oceans in jeopardy and to generate new research questions.

Branding Britain: Nation Branding, Identity Perceptions and Foreign Policy, with political economy faculty member Geoffrey Pigman. Using the case study of Great Britain as a starting point, students explored issues of how a nation's global image can affect public diplomacy.



# an unsurpassed COST the new novel by roxana robinson '68



Author of four novels, three story collections, and an acclaimed biography of Georgia O'Keeffe, **Roxana Robinson'68** is also the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the McDowell Colony. A student of Howard Nemerov and Bernard Malamud during her time at Bennington, Robinson's latest novel Cost (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, June 2008) earned her a starred review from Booklist and was named a spring 2008 "Recommended Read" by the National Book Critics Circle. In researching the theme of addiction for this book, Robinson attended Narcotics Anonymous meetings on the Lower East Side in New York. On the topic of heroin, particularly, she admitted in a recent New York Times interview, "It is seductive and dark, and I felt the pull toward it, like walking on the edge of a cliff." Below is an excerpt from Cost.

# HER MEMORY WAS GONE.

It came to Katharine like a soft shock, like a blow inside the head. She was in the yellow bedroom at her daughter's house in Maine, standing at the bureau, getting ready for lunch. She'd just finished doing her hair, smoothing it back to her modest bun, tucking in the small combs to hold it in place. The combs were hardly necessary now, her long, fine hair—still mostly black—had turned wispy and weightless, and no longer needed restraint. But vanity, like beauty, is partly habit, and Katharine still put the combs carefully into her thinning hair, though now they slipped easily out, then vanished, beneath the furniture, against the patterns of the rugs.

Hair done, combs briefly and precariously in place, Katharine looked around for her scarf. It was an old soft cotton one, a blue paisley square. She'd worn it once at a birthday party, and now, for a moment, in her daughter's guest room with its faded yellow walls, the sunlight slanting onto the worn wooden floors, the idea of the scarf and the party seemed confusingly to merge. She had a sudden sense of the party blooming around her—a blur of voices, laughter, a fireplace—a sense of pleasure at being with these people, whoever they were. Green demitasse cups, those tiny tinkling spoons, a tall brass lamp by the fireplace—or was that somewhere else?

She tried to remember herself further into it, but could not. She could not mentally arrive at the event. She stood at the bureau, her mind groping. Everything else about the party—whom it was for, when it had happened, where—had vanished. The small, hard,

bright facts, like nails that should connect it to the rest of her life, were missing. The place where her memory had been was gone, blurrily erased, like a window grayed by mist. Beyond it was unknown space.

Other things, besides that party, were vanishing—the names and places she depended on, the familiar links that made up her past. This was happening gradually, as though pieces of her mind were breaking off and floating away, like ice in a river. She couldn't stop it, she didn't want to think about it.

But now, standing at the bureau, this realization rose up around her, closing in on her like a high breaking wave. She felt as though she were being held helpless and still, while the rest of her awareness slid past her, increasingly fast. Who were you if you had no past? If you existed nowhere but in this room, right now? If your life were being swept away from you?

Katharine stood still, disoriented by the thought. She held on to the bureau with both hands, bracing herself, as though this were a fast current she might be able to resist. She looked down at the hands before her: they did not seem to be hers. They were mottled and swollen, slow with arthritis, the knuckles thick. She'd always had graceful hands, pale, with long narrow fingers. Hadn't she?

She stood without moving in her daughter's yellow guest room, gripping the bureau and looking down at her things as though they might keep her steady: the blue cotton scarf, which was right in front of her; the spray bottle of lavender cologne—the scent reminding her of her mother—missing its cap; a round silver pin etched with leaves—a birthday present, years ago, but

from whom? One of the children, she thought: it still held a strong charge of affection. She saw all these things in front of her, whole, present, while that thought ranged greedily through her mind-radical, bewildering, calamitous—her memory was gone.

Julia, in the kitchen, was making lunch, moving quickly, her movements hurried, slightly inept: having her parents in the house put her on high alert, her pulse thrumming. When they were here, there was not enough of her. She should be everywhere, all the time—in the bedroom, helping her mother find a lost comb; in the cellar, looking for a tool for her father; out on the porch, quickly sweeping it before lunch; in the kitchen, fixing meals.

Julia wanted her parents here—she loved them but their presence altered her gravity. She had to struggle to stay upright. As she swung open the door of the refrigerator, leaning into its chilly radiance, taking out the wrapped packet of ham, the mayonnaise, she could feel the beat of anxiety, the hurrying of her pulse. Down the hall, in the yellow room, were her parents, breathing, speaking, about to need something.

What she felt when her parents were here was something large and unsayable, confusing, nearly unbearable. Affection, anxiety, resentment—although she was an adult, with her own children, nearly grown, and she should long ago have moved beyond this confusion. But her parents' presence still unsettled her. When they were here, the house seemed small and ill equipped, the doors put on backward, the light switches unconnected, a troubling dreamscape where nothing was right.

Deliberately, Julia slowed herself down. She drew a long breath. Relax. Deliberately she took down the blue-and-white-striped plates, set them down on the

twittering of finches in the lilacs. The sun on the tall ferns that crowded the back porch. The long pink grass of the meadow, rippling down to the cove. These were the things her parents were here for. And herself. Her parents were here to see her. They loved her.

She drew another long, calming breath, releasing the clutch of anxiety. She picked up the jar of mayonnaise. Twisting the top, she felt its hidden threads turn smoothly beneath her hands, unlocking the grip of metal on glass, and felt sudden pleasure at the way things worked, at the way one neat circular motion did exactly what it should. A ripple of admiration for the whole mechanized world of gears, cogs, ratchets, levers, pulleys—the physical systems that made things work. It was brilliant, the way people—men, really, engineers were mostly men, despite feminism—had established such ingenious control over the world of objects.

What she wanted was to make her parents happy. It didn't matter when they had lunch, or if the porch had been swept. She unwrapped the damp translucent packet of meat. (There was something indecent about sliced ham, about the look of it, that pink succulence, its clinging moistness.)

Julia sliced a tomato, opening its juicy scarlet core, then lapping the slices in a neat circle on a plate. She opened the jar of mustard, for her mother and herself. Her father's sandwich would not have mustard or lettuce. The list of things her father did not like was legion: Edward viewed the world as a student project offered up to him for correction.

Edward's presence flooded through the house, powerful, demanding, judgmental. At any moment he might appear in the doorway, offering criticism, finding fault. The day before, while Julia was fixing dinner, Edward had arrived in the kitchen with a peremptory

Who were you if you had no past? If you existed nowhere but in this room, right now? If your life were being swept away from you?

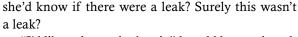
counter. You can't do everything, she told herself sensibly. (Why did good advice come in platitudes?) Her parents enjoyed it here. The visit itself, that was what she was giving them. Julia liked having them here, liked offering them all this, the summer day, the house, with its faintly spicy, cedary smell. The early-morning

request for a flashlight to check beneath the sink in his bathroom.

"Water's dripping onto the floor," he announced. "I want to see what's going on."

"It's probably only condensation on the pipes," said Julia, her heart sinking. "Not a leak." Surely

# "Mordantly funny and desperately sad." -The New York Times Book Review



"I'd like to have a look at it," he told her, as though she hadn't spoken. "Could I have a flashlight?"

He'd stood in the doorway, waiting, while Julia stopped chopping carrots to root through the kitchen drawer. She found a flashlight, but it was dead, and there seemed to be only one new battery—a mystery, since they came in pairs.

"Sorry," she said, irritated at herself. Her father turned without a word and went back down the hall.

It was a fact that the house was shabby, and that many aspects of it were primitive or provisional. Julia and her ex-husband Wendell-both underpaid university professors—had always had less money than her parents, and now that she was single again, Julia had even less than before. Her father, who'd been a brilliant and successful neurosurgeon, had offered her no financial help during the divorce, believing that beds should be made and then lain in. He'd always seemed to take a stern relish in reminding her of her impecuniousness, pointing out the flaws in her house, her life, and the way she ran them. Now that she was poorer it seemed to Julia that he did this more often, as though being poor were merely an oversight on her part, and, if offered enough convincing evidence from him, she would change her mind and decide to be rich.

to the edges. The tangible world: she admired the rich surface of the mayonnaise. Opaque, succulent. How would you paint it, she wondered, and get both the glitter and opacity? Who used that heavy, creamy brushstroke? Chase? Sargent? It all looked like a painting already.

Her father was eighty-eight, her mother eighty-six. Julia loved them, and they were getting old. She didn't think of them as actually old, but as getting old. They were nearing that country, their bodies were less present in the world, they were losing height and weight and bulk. Her parents were being diminished. She could feel them moving away, withdrawing, sweeping out like the tide toward the distant horizon.

Her father appeared now in the doorway.

How is it, she thought, that when we see someone, all the disembodied thoughts and emotions of that person coalesce in that figure, that presence? How does the body carry that dense weight of being?

Her father's body held him, his character within it. If the body was lost, all his thoughts and feelings, his opinions, his irascibility, his surgical skills would be lost, swept into deep space. He would be intact then only in memory—a system so flawed and arbitrary, so unreliable, so wanting. The thought made her panicky. She looked at her father and was struck by her deep knowledge of him, by the way their lives were wrapped

This was happening gradually, as though pieces of her mind were breaking off and floating away, like ice in a river. She couldn't stop it, she didn't want to think about it.

It was the constant threat of her father's appearance, his criticisms and demands, that made Julia feel harried. ("Rattled," her mother would say. "Nettled." She used those old-fashioned expressions. No one nowadays would know what a nettle felt like, the faint silvery irritation made by the leaves against your bare leg.)

She must relax, Julia told herself. Though why was he so rude about her house? And so casually rude, as though finding fault were his right. As though he had some special entitlement to criticism.

She drew another deep breath and laid out the slices of bread on the counter in rows, like bread solitaire. She spread the mayonnaise, smoothing it creamily out around each other's, the many times she'd seen him walk into a room. How she'd longed, she supposed, for his approval.

Her father was now shockingly small, nearly her own height. In her childhood, when she'd first learned him, her father had been immense, massive-chested, towering over her like a cliff. His head was in the upper regions of the air; she'd had to call up to his great height, her own voice tossed and tiny. Even when she'd grown up, her father had been tall. At her wedding, walking down the long aisle of the church, her father remote and distant beside her, in his dark suit, she'd felt his looming, powerful presence.

# "Scarily good." -The Washington Post

But now her father's eyes were nearly level with hers, and his movements slow. Now his forehead rose to the top of his head, and fine white hair ringed his bare pate like a tonsure. His hair was too fine and weightless to lie down, and it stood up wildly, as though blown by a small personal wind. His nose had become bulbous; on his pouched yellowy cheeks were faint brown stains. His small piercing eyes were faded blue, and deep disapproving lines were etched from nose to mouth.

He wore old khaki pants, ponderous white running shoes, and a stained blue windbreaker, zipped up to his chin. He wore the jacket every day, indoors and out, as though it were the only thing he owned. This was not the way he'd used to dress. Julia remembered him leaving for the hospital each morning wearing elegant suits, dull silk ties, soft leather shoes. Now he looked like a poor person, homeless. Which was what age did to you, it stripped you of what you'd had, of your presence in the world. The sight of him like this, shuffling, heavy-footed, in his stained windbreaker, made Julia feel helpless with tenderness.

Her father frowned at her. "Do you have an atlas?" he demanded. "I want to look up where we are."

At once Julia forgot her tenderness, her anxiety. He had restored himself to despot. His manner—autocratic, imperious—never ceased to exasperate her.

"We do have an atlas," Julia said. "I'll get it for you."

She strode into the living room, bare heels thudding confidently on the floor. Crouching by the bottom shelf, where the big books lay flat, she ran her fingers briskly and uselessly down the spines: the atlas, she could see at once, was gone.

She looked further, her gaze ranging back and forth across the shelves, lunch unfinished on the counter, her father standing ponderously behind her, judgment gathering in the silence. The atlas had its own place on the bottom shelf, everyone knew it. Why, right now, her father's frown embedding itself on his forehead, was the atlas elsewhere? More evidence of her inability to run a household. Where could it possibly be, that big ungainly volume?

Julia sat back on her heels. "It's not here, Daddy. Sorry." She made her voice brisk and offhand.

"It's not there?"

"Someone's taken it and not put it back." She stood and headed for the kitchen, head high.

"I wanted to see just where we are on the coast."

Her father shook his head. "You don't have an atlas."

"I do have an atlas," Julia corrected him. "Someone's taken it."

There was a pause.

Edward said, "I don't see how you can say you have an atlas if you don't have it."

"I do have an atlas," Julia repeated. "I just can't find it right now."

Edward shook his head. "I'd call that not having one," he said, almost to himself. "Do you have a map of the region? A local map? I want to see where we are on the coast."

"We're Down East," Julia said. "That's what you say up here. You don't say north or south, you say Down East. Because of the schooners, and the prevailing winds."

"I know that," Edward said. "I know about being Down East. What I want to know is where. I want to look at a map and see exactly where we are on the coast."

"There might be a map in the car," Julia said, though right now she doubted it, "but I'm in the middle of making lunch. Can it wait until afterward?"

What her father made her feel was incompetent: the missing atlas, the absent husband, the shabby house. Don't say anything more, she silently commanded.

She peeled off a translucent slice of ham and laid it carefully onto the bread. Her father waited for a moment, but she did not look up. Frustrated, he turned away. She heard him heading slowly down the hall, the floor creaking beneath his steps.

At once she was ashamed.

Why did this happen? Why did she snap at her father like an adolescent? Why did he unsettle her? She was an adult. She had two wonderful sons, an ex-husband, and a possible new boyfriend; she taught at a distinguished university, she was a working artist, she showed her work regularly at a good gallery. She should be far beyond the reach of her father. But her father, though he himself was dimin-

ishing, still cast a long shadow over her life.



Robinson has been published in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, Harper's Magazine, The New York Times, Best American Short Stories, and Vogue. She currently teaches at The New School in New York City.

# faculty notes

In May, **David Anderegg** was a guest of the Northshire Bookstore at a signing of his book *Nerds: Who They Are and Why We Need More of Them.* 

**Steven Bach**, Bennington faculty member and author of, among others, *Leni: The Life and Work of Leni Riefenstahl* and David Thomson, acclaimed film critic, historian, and author of *The Biographical Dictionary of Film*, took part in an unusual two-person forum at the New York Writers' Institute at SUNY at Albany in October. Bach and Thomson hosted a screening of Jean Renoir's rarely seen *A Day in the Country*, followed by a discussion of the film and other matters pertaining to the international film industry.

Last year, **Barry Bartlett** had a solo show at the Jane Hartsook Gallery in New York City.

A new and expanded edition of **Douglas Bauer's** book, *Prairie City, Iowa: Three Seasons at Home*, was published in November by the University of Iowa Press.

**April Bernard's** essay "Escape from the Ivory Tower" appeared in the *Lapham's Quarterly* Fall 2008 issue on education. She also wrote the afterword for the Signet edition of the *Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*.

Director of the Writing Seminars Sven Birkerts's review of Patrick McGrath's latest novel *Trauma* appeared in *The New York Times*.

A CD of Hungarian folk song settings by Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly featuring **Tom Bogdan** on vocals and **Yoshiko Sato** on piano was accepted by Centaur Records, who will produce and release it for international distribution. The CD was recorded at Bennington College by advanced recording student **Spencer Masterton '07**, under the supervision of **Scott Lehrer** and **Julie Last**.

**Kitty Brazelton** completed a choral commission for a Minneapolis choir, setting lines from Psalm 77 in a framework of singing for joy. *Oh Joy* premiered in September with Garrison Keillor as master of ceremonies.

Over the summer, **Nick Brooke**, **Jenny Rohn**, and **Sue Rees** worked on a MASS MoCA production, *Time and Motion Study and Mass*,

which played in September. Brooke is also working on a new piece called *Border Towns* for the HERE Arts Center in NYC.

In July, **Ronald Cohen** was awarded the 2007 Outstanding Teaching and Mentoring Award by The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues.

Last February, **Thorsten Dennerline** was profiled and interviewed for Danish National Television. He spent his summer at an artist's residency in Belgium, where he also printed stone lithographs off a Mailander press. He was recently offered a show at Galleri Tom Christoffersen in Copenhagen.

**Kathleen Dimmick** worked on a new musical last summer at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada, with partner Quincy Long and other Canadian composers.

Over the past year, Michael Giannitti has designed lighting for *The Piano Lesson* at Virginia Stage; *The Internationalist, This Beautiful City*, and *The Road to Mecca* at the Studio Theatre in Washington, DC; *Private Lives* at the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and *Art* at Capital Repertory Theatre in Albany, NY. Michael was recently reappointed to the Fulbright Senior Specialists Program theater and dance peer review committee.

Last January, Karen Gover presented a paper at the Philosophical Society of Southern Africa's annual meeting at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Over the summer she attended a seminar on Homer and Hesiod at the Center for Hellenic



Nicholas Brooke teaching Musical Composition.

Studies in Washington, DC, and delivered a lecture on Greek tragedy at Rhodes College in Memphis, TN, in the fall.

Five sculptures that **Jon Isherwood** created while on sabbatical in China were exhibited at the Today Museum in Beijing and the Doulin Museum in Shanghai. Other new pieces are on view in Belgravia Square in London. His work also has appeared in recent exhibitions at the McNay Museum in San Antonio, TX, C. Grimaldi's Gallery in Baltimore, MD, the John Davis Gallery in New York, and the Gerald Peters Gallery in Dallas, TX.

During his sabbatical last year **Kirk Jackson** directed *The Busy World Is Hushed* for Actorstheatre, Phoenix, AZ; *Uncle Vanya* for the Old Globe Theatre at the University of San Diego; and *The Internationalist* at the Studio Theatre, Washington, DC. He directed *Art* at Capital Repertory Theatre, Albany, NY, in September.

In June, **Dina Janis** directed, in association with John Gould, a new play—*Penalties and Interest* by Rebecca Cohen—at the Public Theater in New York City.

Jonathan Kline completed a three-year photo history project overseen by the Photographic Conservation at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The finished product was a set of 30 paper negatives and 30 positive salt prints that recreated the paper negative process employed by French and English photographers in the mid-19th century. Yaronit Nordin '09 assisted him in the project.

After working on Lincoln Center Theater's production of *South Pacific* last spring, **Scott Lehrer** won an inaugural Tony Award in sound design for his work on the revival of this 1950s musical. Over the summer, Lehrer also finished a record with singer Jason Danieley, began work on a one-man show—*Herringbone*, which stars BD Wong and is scheduled to play at the McCarter Theatre Center—started a new record with Loudon Wainwright, and finished mixing a CD with fellow faculty member **Kitty Brazelton**.

Amie McClellan presented her research titled "Heterozygous Yeast Deletion Collection Screens Aimed at Revealing Essential Hsp90 Substrates and Functions" at the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) summer research conference in July, and her article, "Quality Control

of Protein Folding in the Cytosol," was published this past March in the *Encyclopedia of Life Sciences*.

In September, Mac Maharaj received the prestigious Global Award for Outstanding Contribution to Human Rights from Priyadashni Academy in Mumbai, India. The Academy, founded in 1985 to promote international cultural exchange, education, and a spirit of public service, established the Global Awards to acknowledge the contributions of national and global leaders whose service to humanity has had a significant impact on the world. Nanik Rupani, chairman and founder of the Priyadashni Academy, aimed with the Global Awards to create "India's equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize."

In May, Ann Pibal exhibited a solo show at the Max Protech Gallery in New York City. She also had a one-person show at Schmidt Contemporary in St. Louis, MO, in February and group exhibitions at McKenzie Fine Art in January and *Narcissus* at Geoff Young Gallery in Great Barrington, MA, in May. In October, her work was featured as part of a group exhibition called *Perverted by Theater* at Apexart in New York City.

In June, the Fellows of St. John's College, Oxford, elected **Geoff Pigman** a Member of Common Room in recognition of his academic accomplishments. In August, he presented a paper to a conference on the World Trade Organization and Developing Countries in Pretoria, South Africa. The conference host, the Institute for Global Dialogue, invited Pigman to talk about U.S. trade policy in the context of the rise in power of large developing countries like Brazil, India, China, and South Africa.

In November, **Jonathan Pitcher** was invited to lead a series of seminars at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso in Chile. His keynote lecture will be published as part of a joint Bennington/Universidad Católica volume. He is also about to publish a book, *Excess Baggage: A Modern Theory and the Conscious Amnesia of Latin Americanist Thought*, on how we read Latin American culture, why it's wrong, and how it could be better.

Miroslava Prazak spent most of her sabbatical year in rural southwestern Kenya. Funded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, she studied how the family, a key cultural and social institution, is faring in the midst of the AIDS pandemic. Working in the same communities where she has carried out her research over the past 25 years, she completed an extensive



survey, interviewed many orphans and their caregivers, and studied the contributions various government and charity institutions make to the well-being of the families affected.

In the late spring, a recording of Allen Shawn's *Three Nightscapes* performed by the Palisades Virtuosi, was released on Albany Records, and his opera *The Music Teacher*, with a libretto by his brother Wallace Shawn, was released by Bridge Records. A review in the September issue of *Gramophone Magazine* called the music to the opera "beguiling." He is currently working on a violin concerto for violinist Juliana Athayde and the Rochester Phliharmonic, and has just completed a recording of his new piano music, which will be released in early 2009.

Over the summer, **Rotimi Suberu** presented a paper on Nigerian federalism at a conference on diversity and unity in federal systems hosted by the European Union. He also worked as a short-term co-consultant for the World Bank on a project relating to the political economy of Nigeria's electricity sector.

Kerry Woods has been awarded a fellowship at the National Center for Ecological Analysis to support research into old-growth forests. He also was awarded a \$90,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to expand the facilities of the Huron Mountain Wildlife Foundation. His recent publications include "Predictability, contingency, and convergence in late succession slow systems and complex data-sets"; "An all-taxa biodiversity inventory of the Huron Mountain Club"; and "Living long by staying small: stem layering as an adaptive life-history trait in shade tolerant tree seedlings."

Last summer, **Jason Zimba** gave a talk at Williams College entitled "What math should all students know in high school? Research and debate in national education policy." In July, his article "Inertia and Determinism" was published in the *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. His book *Force and Motion: An Illustrated Guide to Newton's Laws* is expected for release from Johns Hopkins University Press in May.

# **Public Comment on Reaccreditation Requested**

Bennington College is seeking comments from the public about the College in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The College will undergo a comprehensive evaluation November 1-4, 2009, by a team representing the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Bennington College was last reviewed by the Commission in 1999. The Commission is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, and the College's accreditation by the New England Association encompasses the entire institution.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the institution to:

Public Comment on Bennington College Commission on Institutions of Higher Education New England Association of Schools and Colleges 209 Burlington Road Bedford, MA 01730-1433 E-mail: cihe@neasc.org

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs.

Comments must be in writing and signed; comments will not be treated as confidential.

All comments must be received by November 4, 2009.

# alumni & faculty bookcase

### **POETRY**

# Betty K. Aberlin '63, George MacDonald

The Diary of an Old Soul & The White Page Poems (Zossima Press, January 2008)

# Michael Schiavo, MFA '02

The Mad Song (Shires Press, September 2008)

#### Niloufar Talebi, MFA '05

Belonging: New Poetry by Iranians Around the World (North Atlantic Books, August 2008)

# **FICTION**

# Ihsan Bracy '74

Paths of Sanctuary (Cool Groove Press, February 2008)

# Victoria Houston '67

Dead Hot Shot (Loon Lake Fishing Mysteries) (Bleak House Books, June 2008)

# Phillip Lopate, faculty member

Two Marriages (Random House, September 2008)

#### Fiona Maazel MFA '02

Last Last Chance: A Novel (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, March 2008)

# Irina Reyn MFA '06

What Happened to Anna K. (Touchstone, August 2008)

# Stephanie Spinner '64

Damosel: In Which the Lady of the Lake Renders a Frank and Often Startling Account of her Wondrous Life and Times (Knopf Books for Young Readers, October 2008)

The Nutcracker (Knopf Books for Young Readers, October 2008)

### **NONFICTION**

#### Jonathan Lethem '86

Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture
(The MIT Press, May 2008)

# Dunya Dianne McPherson '75

Skin of Glass: Finding Spirit in the Flesh (Dancemeditation Book, April 2008)

#### Kathleen Norris '69

Acedia & Me: A Marriage, Monks, and a Writer's Life (Riverhead Hardcover, September 2008)

# Shelley Seccombe '60 Lost Waterfront: The Decline and Rebirth of Manhattan's Western Shore (Fordham University Press and Friends of Hudson River Park, February 2008)

# **GETTING PUBLISHED?**

Contact the Communications Office by phone at 802-440-4743, by e-mail at communications@bennington.edu, or send a copy of your book to the Communications Office, Bennington College, One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201. Our deadlines are January 1 to be included in the spring issue and July 1 for the fall issue.



# class notes

A Cos Kathleen (Kitchen) Wood '48 and her husband Jim celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in August. For health reasons they've had to temporarily close their bookstore Mountain Mysteries but hope to reopen soon.

Barbara (Corey) Mallonee '49 has moved to Maine. She is writing and illustrating a children's book about a child's early years in an oil boom town in Kansas during the 1920s and '30s.

is sad to announce that she lost her husband Robert in March. They were married for almost 54 years. "Best husband and best friend," she writes. She is still painting and has added monotypes to her creative urge.

**Cynthia (Morton) Hollingsworth '52** has been in touch with **Claire (Radoslovich) Clark '54**. She is very busy sculpting and firing figures in her kiln in Queens.

"Congratulations to Bennington for a spectacular 75 years!" writes **Nanette** (Offray) Rich'52.

Barbara Nelson Pavan '54 was the first recipient of an award named in her honor, the Barbara Nelson Pavan Award for Women's Leadership in Education, presented by Temple University Educational Leadership and Policy Studies department-sponsored 2008 New DEEL Conference. After spending 24 years at Temple University, Pavan retired as Professor of Educational Leadership Emerita. Of the 70 doctoral dissertations that she chaired, 15 received recognition. Many of her students were present at the ceremony. Pavan received her doctorate from Harvard University and became the second principal of the world-famous Franklin School in

Lexington, MA, which was the first nongraded-team teaching school in the United States. In addition to her book Nongradedness: Helping It to Happen (coauthored with Robert H. Anderson) and a number of book chapters, she has articles published in Educational Leadership, Elementary School Journal, Journal of Educational Equity and Leadership, Phi Delta Kappan, Principal, and Urban Education. Her research has three major thrusts: gender differences in school administrative careers, supervision of instruction, and organization of schooling. She has provided training in more than 30 states and regularly presented at major educational conferences. She has served as president and secretary of the Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision. She was a charter member of the Women's Caucus of the PA Association of School Administrators and on the boards of both the National and Philadelphia Councils of Administrative Women in Education. Even though retired, Pavan keeps in touch with many of her students and continues to follow her research interests. Travel, jazz, theater, and attendance at programs sponsored by Bennington and other educational institutions keep her active.

"Still researching and writing a big historical biography," writes Carole (Gewirtz)
Yudain '54. "I feel like Sherlock Holmes, uncovering info and then trying to connect the dots."

Audrey (Goldberg) Olberg '56 says that 2007 was a "good year" for publishing poetry: *Ribbons, Wisteria, Gusts*, and *Red Lights*. She also published her third coauthored children's book. "Life is good!"

**60** is still directing and teaching, and has two new theater arts textbooks coming

out this fall with Smith & Kraus Theatre Books. "Life is good and I'm especially enjoying being a grandmother."

**Ruth Ann Fredenthal '60** exhibited her paintings at the Galleria Michela Rizzo in Venice, Italy, back in November.

Lost Waterfront, a book of Shelley (Carleton) Seccombe '60's photographs, was published by Fordham University Press last February. Since the 1970s, Seccombe has been a photographer in New York City, with the West Side waterfront as the main subject matter. "A lot has changed since I began the process of documenting the dilapidated pier sheds and the fires, which destroyed them; now there is a new park along the Hudson River across the road from my home," she reports. The series of photographs she calls "The Lost Waterfront" was on exhibition at the South Street Seaport Museum in NYC throughout 2006.

Betty Kay Aberlin '63's book The White Page Poems, a year of new responses to George MacDonald's 1880 A Book of Strife in the Form of The Diary of an Old Soul, has just been published by Zossima Press. "The Blonding of America" is in volume 2 of Freshyarn.com and more poems are at poetsagainstthewar.com. A player in musical theater (original companies of Sandhog, I'm Getting My Act Together..., Alice in Concert, and Yours, Anne), revues (Upstairs at the Downstairs), television (40th year "Lady Aberlin" on Mister Rogers' Neighborhood and The Smothers Brothers), radio (on-air host and cofounder, public access station WYEP fm), and film (cameos in three Kevin Smith films: Dogma, Jersey Girl, and Zack & Miri Make a Porno), Aberlin remembers fondly "the

(Continued on page 33)

# FOR THE LOVE OF BACCHUS:

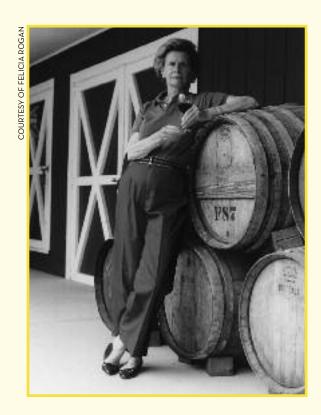
# The Grande Dame of the Virginia Wine Industry Is a Bennington Alumna

becoming the first woman in central Virginia to establish a vineyard and winery might have been a feat to anyone else. However, to Felicia (Warburg) Rogan '49, who, together with late husband John Rogan, founded Oakencroft Vineyard and Winery in Charlottesville, VA, in 1983—the oldest winery in Albemarle County—becoming the owner of an award-winning winery and a tireless promoter of Virginia wines for more than two decades came easily to this industry pioneer and one-time Manhattanite. Even though today she freely acknowledges that when she left her glamorous metropolitan life behind, moved out of New York City, and with her husband's enthusiasm and support—and perhaps a certain *je ne sais quoi* acquired at Bennington—started a small vineyard on his Oakencroft farm, she knew little about how to run a winery.

A student of drama during her time at Bennington, Mrs. Rogan has done the near impossible during her 20 years in a rising and mostly male industry. In 1985, she was unanimously elected first chairman of the Virginia Wine Grape Growers Advisory Board and in 1995, she received the award for Outstanding Achievement for Support of the Wine Industry from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Additionally, Mrs. Rogan has worked as chairman of The Jeffersonian Wine Grape Growers Society for 26 years—a group that is responsible for establishing the Monticello viticultural area and the Annual Monticello October Wine Festival.

Mrs. Rogan has also obtained recognition from the Charlottesville Albemarle Chamber of Commerce and was named "Small Business Person of the Year." In 2005, she was presented with an Annual Tourism Appreciation Award by The Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention and Visitor's Bureau for her passionate leadership in promoting Virginia's wine industry.

Today, the groundbreaking winery has closed its doors after 25 years of producing award-winning wines, as Mrs.



Rogan, who is also a published author and a freelance writer, wishes to focus more time on "simply living" and writing—though she still hopes to help the industry she has been actively involved in for so long. As so many Bennington alumnae before her, following a staggering success in her field, Felicia Rogan has reached a stepping stone in her career and now embarks on a new journey; one that is to be followed with vivid attention by all who know what Bennington's own are capable of achieving.

"I knew wine in New York but you can't grow vines on Park Avenue."



# THE SPIRIT TO SERVE

# Charlene (Solow) Schwartz '54: Business Is Hospitality at its Best

f you asked **Charlene (Solow) Schwartz '54** what got her into the business world, she would respond, quite simply, that she was born into it. Schwartz's father owned an appliance company (above which the family lived), so understanding the laws of supply and demand came as naturally to Schwartz as playing with a

doll. "I was *literally* born above the store. I don't know any other way of thinking," she explains.

While this elucidates how she entered the business industry, it does little to explain her ability to turn any endeavor into a profit—an ability better credited to a strong business sense, a fierce intelligence, an incredible drive, and the persistent will to serve. Helmsley-Spear, Applebee's, Marriott—the names on Schwartz's résumé are among the world's most recognizable commercial franchises. The story of how Schwartz got where she is today—having owned and operated approximately 10 hotels and 5 Applebee's in the last 25 years and now starting construction on the Marriott Springhill Suites in Philadelphia (which she also plans on operating)—is equally remarkable.

Schwartz's story starts at Bennington. "One of the reasons I, and my family, chose Bennington was because it was totally different from all of my background. [...] Bennington offered such a nice, broadening, widening experience. I thought, 'This is going to teach me things that I don't know about.'" Schwartz studied with Paul Feeley, Howard Nemerov, Kenneth Burke, and Catharine Osgood Foster, among others. Of Paul Feeley, with whom she remained deeply connected even years after graduation, she relates, "What he allowed me to do is to develop confidence in something I knew nothing about and to reach out and become speculative," recalls Schwartz. "I would try anything! I put things on canvas that, if I thought someone was judging me, I would never do."

Following her graduation, Schwartz applied to business school and was one of only seven women to be accepted for an MBA at the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton. Wharton was not in the cards for Schwartz however, who ended up following her husband across the country to California and then back to New York, where she eventually pursued a doctorate at Columbia University. "I thought that I was going to have an academic

career. I was very happy in that academic world," she remembers. "I really could have gone either way."

But when Schwartz and her husband discovered that they were expecting their first child, she chose to invest herself fully in the upbringing of their children. During that time, she founded

and operated her own small business, buying Levitt-type homes in Stonybrook and renting them out for profit. With her children fully grown, Schwartz became the head of mortgage financing at Helmsley-Spear, where she worked for Harry Helmsley, a man she describes as both "a phenomenal person" and her inspiration in business. Following that assignment, Schwartz founded SOLOW, a hotel management company that bears her maiden name and through which she has owned and operated nearly 15 hotels. "It's like monopoly," she jokes, "you go from houses to hotels."

After 15 years in the business, Schwartz's story took a 180-degree turn. "Someone at that point told me to look into a new chain, which was

called Applebee's," Schwartz remembers. "And it was wonderful. I built and operated five Applebee's." Despite great success—her Applebee's franchises were always among the top performing—Schwartz recounts, "My heart was really into the hotel business more so." So when she was approached by hotel chain giant Marriott, which was looking to buy a plot of land she owned, Schwartz took the plunge. "It's really dynamic. It's exciting. At times, it's even charitable because you're able to do a lot of good things for people. And it's the spirit of this country."

When asked what she credits her success to, Schwartz humbly responds that it's really about choosing the right franchise and following their "guide." With a new Marriott to build, a successful hotel management company to run, yoga classes four times a week, a busy social life, and a deep commitment as a philanthropist to Bennington, St. Mary's Medical Center in Newton, PA, and many other causes, Charlene Schwartz is sure to inspire many who have considered a career in business or hospitality. Her advice to those pondering a lifetime of hospitality and service? "The best thing to do is to find a good franchise, and do the best that you can do knowing what they know."



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(Continued from page 30)

daily modern dance classes, the 'room of my own' at the top of the stairs at Swan House, the beauty of Vermont, and certain beloved teachers, now in the Beyond." She is returning to work writing and painting, and continues, ever so slowly, to absorb the news that Bennington is now coed.

Brannon (Barbara) Heath '64 continues to be a law professor at Touro Law School on Long Island. Her daughter owns a dog business in San Francisco and is a worldclass pro triathlete. Her son is a headhunter in Hong Kong.

# Danielle (Dinah Ruth Schley) Forestier

'66 is no longer looking for bakery consulting jobs. She is putting more time into "grandchild relationships" and pursuing personal interests: "I look forward to the years ahead of real retirement and being able to put most of my energy into learning stuff and making stuff." In the meantime, she likes to do handwork with needle and thread and color, attend the ballet, opera, and theater, and learn new things. Lately, she has taken classes in ballet, Spanish, Excel, and aerial dance. "I'm currently challenged by trying to learn to read, write, and speak Burmese. That country needs more advocates."

# Novelene "Nonni" (Yatsko) Walters '66

writes that she represented Bennington at the official inauguration of France A. Córdova as President of Purdue University. "Ms. Córdova is an incredible woman," Walters reports. She is "an astrophysicist who [speaks] poetically and romantically about space, saying she has always believed 'the sky is *not* the limit." Walters adds that Córdova referenced the traditional "year abroad" in her speech, claiming that "even a month in a place like Malawi can be

invaluable in expanding a student's global perspective." This was "reminiscent of the purpose behind Bennington's Non-Resident Term." Walters also noted that although there is a vast difference between Bennington and Purdue, President Coleman and President Córdova are both similar in that they are pioneers in their fields.

Elizabeth (Richter) Zimmer '66 recently purchased a fabulous carved wooden chair, made by Kathran Siegel '66. This painted chair was on display last year at the Michener Museum in Bucks County, PA (Siegel now lives in Philadelphia). Zimmer lives in Manhattan's Chelsea district and invites anyone who wants to see the chair to e-mail her at ezimmer@rcn.com. She was laid off from her job at *The Village Voice* in summer 2006, and is now freelancing for a variety of magazines and newspapers, including New York's *Metro*.

Lonny Joseph Gordon '67 is an artist-inresidence at Illinois State University. He choreographed *The Merry Widow* back in April while July took him to The Theatre of Changes in Athens, Greece, as well as the Rubicon International Theatre Festival.

In June 2008, *Dead Hot Shot*, the ninth book in **Victoria Kirsch Houston '67**'s Loon Lake Mystery Series, was published in hardcover and trade paperback by Bleak House Books.

**Patricia Woodbridge Dunn '68** writes that she art-directed the film *I Am Legend*, and just returned from four months working on Martin Scorsese's new film *Ashecliffe*.

**Elizabeth Baker Reveley '68** would enjoy connecting with anyone in Hawaii or Japan. She is teaching classes on lomilomi and hot rocks at massage schools in Japan.

Her website is AIMHA.com (Aloha Institute of Massage & Healing Arts).

Daiva Balkus '69 is happy to be retired from a long career with the federal government. She moved from NYC to Alexandria, VA in '79 to join the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and never left, advancing and moving around in several fields within the Agency. She has a wonderful 23-year-old daughter named Ona, who is a recent summa cum laude graduate of Tufts University and is currently completing a year with Ameri-Corps, teaching underprivileged families in DC about nutrition and healthy cooking practices. Balkus returned to the art world after retirement and is now hard at work making ceramics. She was devastated to learn of Sarah Cook Longacre's '69's death; Sarah was a close friend at Bennington but they had taken different paths and lost touch.

and husband Ben S. Devan just welcomed their fourth grandchild, Henry David Devan, into the world. "Hospice work, sailboat, grandchildren—life is full. Fond memories of Bennington," they report.

Andrea (Katz) Vaucher '70 has been working as a journalist and author for the past two decades. After Bennington, she went on to get both her BA and MA from NYU Film School, then became a film critic and film writer, a career that culminated in her position as the European editor and Paris bureau chief for *Variety*. Having burned out in the entertainment business, she moved back to California where, as a semi-retired journalist, she now writes about architecture, design, style, and fashion for various publications, including the *International Herald* 

Tribune, The New York Times, the LA Times, and Town & Country. "I am currently writing a memoir about my father's death—an experience that took place over a period of six months at the end of 2004," she writes. Her first book, Muses from Chaos and Ash: AIDS, Artists and Art, was published by Grove Press.

Joanne (Beskind) Elkin '71 was glad to "toast" the 75th with all the wonderful alumni who benefit from their Bennington years as she has. It's been a busy year for Elkin, who has also started a consulting practice in urban design and development advisory called Treadwell Farm LLC. What she has learned so far: it takes great courage to be an optimist.

"After working at Microsoft for more than a decade, most people seem to enter a second childhood and buy a motorcycle (on my wish list), or climb some uninhabited volcano (Fernandina in Ecuador), but I opted for four more years in college,"

Josef Vascovitz '75 reports. Vascovitz has just finished his BFA in printmaking and painting at Cornish College.

**Ruth (Griggs) Fontana '76** writes that the Bennington New York City event at The New Museum last April was excellent. "Kudos to the 75th Anniversary Committee. I look forward to attending more!"

Claire (Ferguson) Garcia '78 has been teaching classes on black Paris (in Paris) and has been writing about Harlem Renaissance writer Jessie Redmon Fauset. Her husband José is now President of Colorado State University-Pueblo. Their youngest child, José Jr., has just started college.

**Peter S. Lenz '78** says hello to his old classmates and friends at Bennington. He

currently lives in Salt Lake City and practices emergency medicine in a large urban hospital. "I enjoy mountain sports and music with my wife, Carol, and two children, David and Meredith."

80s From 1978 to 2000, Andrew Lyndon '82 taught photography at the Nightingale-Bamford School in New York. Since the day he "retired," he has been busier than ever. "Recently I completed the switch to digital equipment and now print my own work in the digital 'darkroom,'" Lyndon writes. After a circuitous 20-year journey, he is currently associate professor and chair of the animation program at California College of the Arts (CCA) in Oakland, CA. After Bennington, Lyndon received an MFA in painting from Yale University, then moved to NYC, got married, was a painter and truck driver for 10 years, and had a daughter, Isabel, in 1994. He moved to California's East Bay in 1996, and gradually began shifting from painting to film and video, while concurrently working in Pixar Animation Studios' education department, which he did until 2003. While there, he learned about—and fell in love with—animation and cinema generally. He then left Pixar as a regular employee to pursue teaching at various colleges and then found himself at CCA with the opportunity to start a new program "from the ground up." "It's been a wonderful experience, and I often recall my time at Bennington when I need to make a decision about how to structure classes, hire faculty, create working spaces, or think about how students learn and interact. It's a priceless resource and memory." Meanwhile, he shows his videos and animation around the Bay Area and

even internationally, most recently in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Having just attained 'senior member' status with the American Society for Quality (ASQ), Stuart B. Denniston '83 continues to work both as lead auditor for the National Association of Home Builders Research Center (www.nahbrc.org) and as program manager for the Oriented Strand Board Certification Program (OSB). "Lots of statistics and field inspections," he reports. Bette (Goldberg) Denniston '83 continues to work as accounting manager for The Challenger Center for Space Science Education (www.challenger.org), which was founded by the families of astronauts lost during the last flight of the Challenger Space Shuttle in 1986. "Our vision is to create a scientifically literate population that can thrive in a world increasingly driven by information and technology. Our vision for the future is a global community where students command their own destinies by developing skills in decision making, teamwork, problem solving, and communication. This vision is based on a realistic assessment of the skills needed for success in the 21st century," she reports. "Our two boys continue to thrive in school: Torin is almost done with his freshman year at Virginia Tech, and Jared, who is a senior at TC Williams High School in Alexandria, VA, just found out that he has been accepted at Virginia Tech for admission in the fall of 2008." Stuart and Bette may be reached at dennind@comcast.net.

**Eric Ramirez-Ferrero '85** recently left his position as senior technical advisor with Family Health International to become the chief of party and country director of EngenderHealth-Tanzania, an American

NGO. He will lead a new five-year project to promote men's positive and constructive involvement in HIV prevention and reproductive health promotion efforts.

**David Hoppe MFA '86**'s play, *After Paul McCartney*, was produced at this year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival. A one-man show about friendship, art, and how celebrity makes everything weird, *APM* starred Rob Johansen and was directed by John Green. To see excerpts from the play, go to www.afterpaulmccartney.com.

Nicole "Nikki" Rademan '89 often hears from Marianne Henry '87, Teresa Smith '89, Theresa Dayton '89, and Gitana Garofalo '91. "On a sad note, my mother died in an accident in February. As I've been living with my parents since 2003, it's been very hard," she reports.

For those of you who haven't heard from Jeffrey A. Segal '89 in quite a long time, here is the "short" version. After getting his MFA at NYU, he spent the '90s designing lights for theater and dance on a freelance basis and toured the U.S. and Europe as lighting supervisor for the Ballet Hispanico of NY. After 6 years spent touring between 24–30 weeks a year, he took a 5-month break from everything and spent some time hanging out on the central coast of California. He spent the next four-and-a-half years in Los Angeles, working as master electrician for the UCLA Department of Theater. Tired of LA, he then made his way back to New York and landed a job as director of production for Pilobolus, Inc. (a small dance company based in Washington Depot, CT), most notable these days for having performed at the 2007 Academy Awards. "Yes, I was there! Tux and all," Segal confirms. "Having spent the last two-anda-half years working with Pilobolus has given me the amazing opportunity to tour the U.S. and Europe more than ever before. In the last 10 months alone I have managed to be in many U.S. cities, as well as Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, South Africa, Italy, and most recently Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates." Now, another great opportunity has come his way: "I have now just taken on the position of director of production at the Joyce Theater in NYC." Segal would love to hear from anyone in or around NYC. You can find him at jsegal@aol.com or jsegal@joyce.org.

was elected into local Washington, DC, politics to serve as the ANC commissioner for Single Member District 1B11, representing 2,000 citizens to City Council and Mayor Adrian Fenty. Hoerrner's district encompasses Howard University, a long stretch of Georgia Avenue, which is about to undergo major residential and commercial redevelopment, and several square blocks of public housing. She will juggle this elected position along with her full-time job as Vice President of Outreach with the United Nations World Food Program.

Brian Stone '92 won this year's Jessie Ball duPont Music Educator's Award, a major award in Delaware, where he is an assistant professor of music at the University of Delaware. Stone was hired at UD six years ago as an adjunct professor and then became a full-time assistant professor in 2004. Since that time, he has developed a three-ensemble division of orchestral activities involving some 100 students from all majors. UD orchestral concerts feature an immense variety of music, as

well as varied collaborations with choirs, faculty, guest soloists, conductors, opera, and the winners of the music department's annual student Concerto and Aria Contest. The concerts are typically played to houses packed with enthusiastic audiences. Stone started a number of successful new initiatives at UD, including full operas with orchestra, a chamber orchestra that plays off campus, a string orchestra specifically for the needs and desires of non-music majors, student conductor opportunities, and a highly regarded study abroad program in Vienna, Austria.

After nine years in private practice, **Jennifer (Chapin) Woods '92** decided to make a change. She is now working for the federal government as a trial attorney. "The next time you are in Kansas," she writes, "look me up and I'll show you my badge!"

**David O'Brien '93** and his spouse, Renee Waghalter (Brown '95), had a baby in June. Well-wishers may contact them at maieutician@yahoo.com

Thomas C. Morison '94 moved to San Francisco, where he worked as a theater designer at Auerbach and Associates for about seven years. After a few motorcycle accidents and many visits to the chiropractor, he decided to go back to school and get his doctorate in chiropractic. He now lives and works as a chiropractor in Providence, RI. He was married in September 2006 to the love of his life, Hannah Donovan, who is currently pregnant with their first child. Check out his website at www.WickedGoodPosture.com.

Mary (Okie) Brown '65 and David Henderson '96 invite alumni to drop by their used book and vinyl record shop in North Carolina. "If you can't stop by, check it out online at www.aziomedia.com."

Michelle (Dorvillier) Nagai '97 entered the graduate school of music at Princeton University last September. She is working toward her PhD.

"This past year has been a particularly important one for me, professionally and personally," Todd Tarantino '97 reports. Indeed, in October he was married to Carla Bellamy in New York City; a ceremony that was attended by several former classmates and faculty members. "We took a short honeymoon to Costa Rica and then returned to our jobs." Following this, Tarantino had a one-year teaching position in the music theory department of the Manhattan School of Music, while Carla worked as an assistant professor in the anthropology department at Baruch College. In November and December, his composition for piano, "Smoke and Mirrors," was performed in both Boston and New York. In May, he finally received his doctorate in music composition from Columbia University.

Messica Caterina '00 will commence studies at Syracuse University College of Law this fall in hopes of becoming a family law attorney. She will continue to write, record, and perform music (www.jessicacaterina.com) and to endure endless "singing lawyer" jokes.

**Terri Lewin '00** is moving to Philadelphia. "I will be in Center City. If anyone's around and they'd like to hook up, write to me at vandacea@gmail.com."

"I have just moved back to the San Francisco Bay Area from Seattle. My great

friend and fellow alumna Nichole (Legendre) Yamakawa 'OO made the drive with me, through the snow! It was an adventure," Alice Van Ness 'OO reports. She is continuing to teach yoga, which is a fantastic career change she made last year. "I love not sitting at a desk all day and allowing people to relieve that stress." Her plan is to obtain more yoga training in the Bay Area over the course of this year.

After three years of working as a French translator in NYC, **Nicole Macagna '02** began graduate school this past fall at Syracuse University. She has received a fellowship to study international relations.

Aliza Akhtar '03 got married to Khurram Magbool, a graduate of the University of Georgia, on January 1, 2008, in Pakistan. Akhtar is a part-time English teacher and guidance counselor at a high school in Karachi and also works as a host for TV shows. She is currently hosting "Badalta Pakistan" ("Changing Pakistan") on Express News channel and will shortly be producing her own talk show called "Breaking Barriers," which will aim to educate the Pakistani public, especially the youth, to boldly fight commonly held misconceptions in order to achieve their dreams and aspirations. She is also in the process of taking up a travel magazine, called Traveloque, as its assistant editor. Her husband is a businessman who exports textiles from Pakistan. Aliza and Khurram met in Karachi in February 2007 and were married 11 months later. They went to Brazil for their honeymoon and had a fantastic time.

Raania Azam Khan Durrani '03 writes that she was selected as a participating artist for the "Goshogawara wood-firing festival" in Aomori, Japan, for a month-long residency in July. This residency, which featured artists from the world over, offered her the opportunity to work with master potter Ryoji Matsumiya and Mr. Lee Middleman, and was held at the Kanayama pottery. "I am also now the coordinator for the department of ceramics at the Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture, which is a bachelor's degree-awarding art institute in Karachi, Pakistan. I will be at this position until winter 2008. Missing Bennington always!"

Whitney "Whit" Griffin '04 has new poems in *First Intensity*, *Knockout*, and *They Are Flying Planes*. He's also begun a blog about his own literary journal, *Tight*, which can be found at tightjournal.blogspot.com.

Rebecca "Becca" Rideout '04 was granted an award from the Jane Morrison Memorial Film Fund, a branch of the Maine Community Foundation that supports educational opportunities for filmmakers who are in the early stages of their career development. She attended the International Film and Television Workshops in Rockport, ME, for a week in June to further her studies in producing and directing documentary video programming. You can browse her website featuring her freelance work at www.rwrideout.com. The website was designed by fellow Bennington alumnus W.R. Nestor '04, whose own website is www.fuzzy-math.com.

Nina Rudnick '04 has graduated from The Wright Institute in Berkeley, CA, with a doctorate of psychology in clinical psychology. Her areas of specialty are severely emotionally distraught children and eating disorders. "I am currently working at Kaiser Permanente in an intensive outpatient program for people with eating disorders and

plan on continuing my work and training next year at a private recovery clinic for individuals with eating disorders." Her dissertation was entitled "Tourette's Syndrome in the Classroom: Research Review and Elementary School Teacher's Manual." It was designed to assist mainstream elementary teachers to better integrate a student with Tourette's educationally, psychologically, and socially in their classroom. "I am living in Oakland, CA, and also spend a lot of time training capoeira."

In 2008, Margaret "Maggie" Whorf '04 moved back to Los Angeles after spending a year working in Bangalore, India. She currently works as a risk analyst for Yahoo!

**Kate Fox '05** will be leaving her "sweet, simple life on the coast of Maine" to move to Manhattan and begin an MA program in the History of Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture at the Bard Graduate Center.

Danny Herter '06 lives in his hometown of Seattle and is currently choreographing for The Monkey King, which will be playing at the Youth Theatre NW. Danny Herter and The Invasive Species, his new performance and media group, is working on a new project entitled Remote::Control along with fellow alumna Amelia Powell '05. An excerpt will be performed at the Velocity Dance Center as part of an evening presented by Tesee George-Dance Contemporary, in whose work Herter will also be performing. Remote::Control will premiere at On the Boards NW New Works Festival, which will also feature 16 other artist groups from Seattle and Portland. He has recently performed in Cheronne Wong's most recent work sub-Rosa, touring western Washington and

Portland. He has worked previously with Cyrus Khambatta-Phffft! Dance Theater Company and Gerard Theoret, among others. He has also performed in Suzan-Lori Parks' 365days/365plays, presented by On the Boards.

Jonathan Leiss '06 MAT '07 is running away to join the circus. Leiss will be the head teacher with one of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's three traveling shows. He will live on the train and teach in a one-room school for students whose parents work for the circus. Leiss loves trains, looks forward to seeing the country, and is especially excited about working with these wonderful young people.

After going back and forth between New York and London for about two years, Gillian Masland '06 will be moving to the San Francisco Bay Area later this summer to begin a training course in Waldorf Education, with the aim of becoming a Main Lesson Teacher.

# FAs Brendan McCall MFA

'04 has begun directing theater and film since his graduation in December 2003. He is currently in the process of moving to Oslo, where he will the be dean of a dance and theater conservatory, as well as the director of his own company.

Did you ever wonder what happened to the dogs rescued from Michael Vick's fight ring? See **Elizabeth Kennedy MFA '05**'s feature article in *The Monthly – The East Bay's Premier Magazine of Culture and Commerce* on these dogs' improved lot in life. The story came out in May and is linked to from Elizabeth's website, www.elizabethkennedy.org.

# keep us posted!

Bennington loves to hear about what alumni are doing. No news is off topic for Class Notes—the most popular section of the magazine—whether career, family, or travel related. Send us your updates by **January 1** to be included in the spring/summer issue and by **July 1** for the fall/winter issue.

You can submit your Class Note in any one of three easy ways:

ONLINE at www.bennington.edu (click on "For Alumni," then "Class Notes")

for inclusion on the website as well as in print;

BY E-MAIL to alumnirelations@bennington.edu; or
BY MAIL to the Office of External Relations, Bennington College,
One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201-6003

Please visit www.bennington.edu for more recent updates on classmates and friends

Please note: Due to space constraints, Bennington reserves the right to edit and condense Class Notes submissions.

# in memoriam

# Remembering Rebecca B. Stickney '43' (1921–2008)

he entire Bennington community mourns the death of alumna, longtime administrator, and trustee Rebecca B. Stickney, who died on August 21, 2008, after a brief illness. Following her graduation from Bennington College in 1943, Becca worked at the Harvard Medical School on a U.S. government highly classified germ warfare project. She returned to Bennington in 1948 at the invitation of Bennington president Fred Burkhardt to establish an alumnae office. Becca continued to work at the College wearing, as she often put it, "several hats." She served two stints as Director of Admissions for a total of 15 years, directed Public Relations and the Development Office, and established the Student Services Office in 1970. She became Assistant to the President in 1975 and, at the request of Bennington's current president, Elizabeth Coleman, deferred her retirement to work part time in the President's Office. She continued in that role until her death. In 1980, Becca was invited to become a member of the Board of Trustees and subsequently became its corporate secretary.

Becca was not only deeply committed to the well-being of those who studied, taught, and worked at the College, but also to its trees and grounds. The Rebecca B. Stickney Observatory on campus was named in honor of Becca and her love for the natural world. She was often found laboring with the grounds crew planting trees, pruning shrubs, and keeping track of and maintaining the 15 bluebird houses she placed around and about the College's fields and meadows. She was an avid bird watcher and every morning rain, or snow, or shine, she left her campus house, with dog and binoculars, for the two-mile walk to check on that outside world she loved.

In November 2008, more than 200 people gathered on campus to pay tribute to Becca, exchanging memories in a Quaker-style gathering on what would have been her 87th birthday.



# in memoriam

## **ALVIN FEINMAN**

Former Bennington faculty member (1956–1994) and renowned poet Alvin Feinman died on July 11, 2008, after a long illness. He was 78 years old. Mr. Feinman was born in 1929 in Brooklyn, NY, where he grew up and later attended Brooklyn College. He also attended the University of Chicago and did graduate work in philosophy at Yale, where he taught briefly. He taught literature at Bennington for nearly 40 years. His books of poetry include *Preambles and Other Poems* (Oxford Press, 1964) and an extended version of the same volume, titled *Poems*, which was published in 1990 by Princeton University Press.

# **IRENE (MENNEN) HUNTER**

Former trustee (1998–2002), lifelong community volunteer, and philanthropist Irene (Mennen) Hunter died on October 1, 2008. In 1935, Mrs. Hunter graduated from Emma Willard School and in 1939, from Smith College. Over her lifetime, she committed much time and personal resources to schools and organizations, including Bennington. A true pioneer, who earned her pilot's license and was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the national Association of Fundraising Professionals, Mrs. Hunter has left an indelible mark on the various communities in which she was involved.

# **REGINALD SHEPHERD '88**

Reginald Shepherd '88 passed away on September 10, 2008, in Pensacola, FL, after a courageous battle against cancer. He was an acclaimed writer of poetry and nonfiction and had recently completed his sixth volume of poetry and second book of essays, which will be published posthumously. After completing his BA at Bennington College, Shepherd went on to earn MFAs in creative writing from Brown University and the University of Iowa. He published five books of poetry, including Some Are Drowning; Angel, Interrupted; Wrong; Otherhood; and Fata Morgana; and a book of essays called Orpheus in the Bronx. He also edited two anthologies of poetry, The Iowa Anthology of New American Poetries and Lyric Postmodernisms. Over the course of his lifetime, he taught literature and creative writing at Antioch University, the University of West Florida, Cornell University, and Northern Illinois University. His work has been widely anthologized, and has appeared in four editions of The Best American Poetry and two Pushcart Prize anthologies. His honors and awards include grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, the Florida Arts Council, and the Guggenheim Foundation.

The Bennington community extends its deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the following alumni, former faculty members, and friends of the College who have recently died.\*

Margaret Smith Denison '37
Marie Maguire Ryckman '37
Annie-Lloyd Condit '39
Margaret Myers Byrne '40
Peggy F. Wortz '40
Margaret Ensor '41
Helen Levine Koss '42
Katharine Wyman Roll '42
Audrey Schwenk Aldridge '43
Geraldine Babcock Boone '44
Leslie Davis '44
Rhoda Goodman Falk '44

Joann Haimson '44
Lee Avery Poor '45
Marianna van Rossen Hougendyk '46
Georgiana Fust Patterson '47
Joan Funk Root '47
Joyce Wittpenn St. Clair '47
Elizabeth Armes Oakes Webb '47
Martha Dimmock '52
Suzanne Kennedy Brown '53
Faith Hanna-Williams '53
Marjorie Fager Arnold '54
Lucy Byck Shapero '54

Hava Kane Dunn '60
Martha Gold '65
Barbara Reedman Gambier '66
Valerie Arning '70
Mary-Pat Carey '73
Elizabeth Yung McDougal '73
Elisa Torre '85
Kara Doulton '91
Regina Klein Charvat
Janet B. Mann

\*Notifications received by November 7, 2008

BENNINGTON COLLEGE 75th Anniversary Campaign





Dear Alumni, Parents, and Friends,

Six years ago, Bennington College embarked on a capital campaign strong with ambition, rich with ideas, and deeply committed to transforming the lives of its students. Thanks to the generosity of thousands of alumni, faculty, students, parents, staff, and friends, Bennington today is as daring and innovative as ever—and more financially secure.

The 75th Anniversary Campaign, which began in late 2002 and ended with the 75th Anniversary year, was the single most successful fundraising effort in the history of the College: **\$92 million** raised, an astonishing \$17 million beyond the original campaign goal.

Impressive as the numbers are, they do little to convey the power of the gifts, which have literally transformed this College. As our first priority, more students than ever before are receiving aid and being afforded the opportunity of a Bennington education. Our historic campus has undergone a great revival with numerous buildings renovated, grounds recovered, and infrastructure modernized and made more environmentally sound. The campaign has given us the means to achieve our founders' promise to provide an education equally rich in "constructive social purposes" as in "individual self-fulfillment." Now, more than ever, Bennington students—in the classroom and in the field—are addressing the world's great political and social challenges, as only Bennington students can.

These were all ideas once. By your actions, they are now reality.

While it is impossible to do justice to all this campaign has achieved, the following pages showcase a number of its signature projects and the people who benefit most from them—our students and faculty.

Thank you for supporting, strengthening, and believing in Bennington. Your philanthropy keeps us at the vanguard of liberal arts education.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Coleman

President, Bennington College

The 75th Anniversary Campaign was comprehensive; that is, every dollar raised—from annual giving to support for capital projects to gifts for scholarships and the endowment—contributed toward our goal. It is with much gratitude that we thank the 4,539 donors whose gifts large and small ensured the extraordinary success of this campaign that raised an unprecedented \$92 million—\$17 million more than our goal.

The following pages gratefully recognize those donors who contributed more than \$5,000 over the course of the six-year campaign and reflect all commitments made, including gifts, pledges, bequest intentions (calculated at present value), and in-kind donations.

## \$20,000,000 and above

Susan Paris Borden '69<sup>T</sup> and Robert Borden†/Bumper Foundation/ Bumper Development Corporation

# \$10,000,000 to \$19,999,999

Katharine Evarts Merck '46 and Albert Merck†

# \$5,000,000 to \$9,999,999

Penelope Perkins Wilson '45<sup>T</sup>† Laura-Lee Whittier Woods '48†/ LLWW Foundation

## \$1,000,000 to \$4,999,999

Anonymous (2)
Barbara Ushkow Deane '51<sup>T</sup> and
Maurice Deane†/Ushkow Foundation
Estate of Thomas H. Foster†
Judith Rosenberg Hoffberger '54†
Carolyn Crossett Rowland '37<sup>T</sup>†
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Karen Johnson Boyd '46<sup>T</sup> and William Boyd†
Estate of Elizabeth Brown '37†
Elizabeth Harrington Dickinson '43†/
Dickinson Family Foundation
Carolyn Heimburger Gannon '67<sup>T</sup> and
Terry Gannon

Estate of Caroline Welch Huntington '39, P'77
Frances Wells Magee '51 and David Magee† Kathleen Oliver Parker '47 Signa Lynch Read '79 Estates of Oscar and Zelia Ruebhausen Charlene Solow Schwartz '54 Estate of Suzanne Snowden '53

# \$250,000 to \$499,999

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Estate of Charlotte Bowman Estate of Yvette Hardman Edmondson '36 Ruth Dewing Ewing '37, P '74† Lavina Kelly Falconer '40 Nancy Harrow '52 and Jan Krukowski/ Winston Foundation Michael<sup>T</sup> and Sandy Hecht Estate of Andrew Heiskell Arthur S. Hoffman and Hadassah Houtz Hoffman '57, P '87/ Leir Charitable Foundations J. Paul Getty Trust John J.† and Charlotte Kenney Estate of Emily Jamieson Knapp '38, P '80 Alan Kornberg '74<sup>T</sup> Roa Lynn '60 Joan Morris Manning '55 Mount Anthony Union High School Jerome A. and Estelle R. Newman Assistance Fund Elsie Paris P'69, PMFA'07 Henry Dale Smith, Jr., and Deborah Klang Smith P'05 Estate of Estelle Smucker Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union State of Vermont Agency of Human Services Estate of Elizabeth C. Wagner '51 Dotha Seaverns Welbourn '41† Vanessa Guerrini-Maraldi Wilcox '78 and

Elizabeth Hubbard Banker '43

# \$50.000 to \$99.999

A.D. Henderson Foundation Agnes M. Lindsay Trust

John Wilcox<sup>T</sup> P '08

TFY08 trustee; † cumulative lifetime donor of \$1 million or more; F current faculty; S current staff; deceased P Parent; MA Master of Arts; MAT Master of Arts in Teaching; MALS Master of Arts in Liberal Studies; MFA Master of Fine Arts; PB Postbaccalaureate













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Linda Mazer Berkowitz '60
Judith Schneider Bond '61
Frederick and
Anne Schlabach Burkhardt P '62
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Peter Reed Donavan and
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Anne Doolittle MFA '99
Estate of Rosamond Taylor Edmondson '36

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Estate of Joan Hyatt '43 Bradley Jacobs '77

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Seth Masters

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Anonymous

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James Stephen Simon '97T

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Anonymous (4)

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Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation

Joan Greenebaum Adler '40

Jack Bankowsky '81 and Matthew Marks '85

Helen Isaacs Barer '57

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Bruce Berman '74

Estate of Rosamund Reed Bodman '44

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Robert and Catherine Brawer/Ida and William Rosenthal Foundation

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Dance/USA

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Kevin and Janet Dolan

Jane Donaldson<sup>T</sup>

Emily Hornblower Earley '37

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Estate of Phyllis R. Epstein '40

Ford Foundation

Albert F. Freihofer MAT '03T

Judith Gerson '68/

Judith Gerson Charitable Trust

Jane Witty Gould '63

Norman and Selma Greenberg/

H. Greenberg & Son

Judith Backer Grunberg '55/

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Jesse and Dorothy Hartman Foundation

Adria Heyman Hillman '67

Richard Holme, Lord of Cheltenham<sup>T</sup>

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Jerome Robbins Foundation

Takashi Kako P '76

Burton and Anne Kaplan P '85/

Mayer and Morris Kaplan Family Foundation

Barbara R. Kapp '61

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# BENNINGTON COLLEGE 75th Anniversary Campaign

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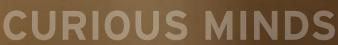
At the center of the 75th Anniversary Campaign are students and faculty: Scholarships for students and support for Bennington faculty. More than anything, this campaign provided the resources necessary to encourage and sustain faculty and students working at the frontiers of intellectual and artistic inquiry. The following pages show the faces of the campaign, and give voice to those who benefited most.

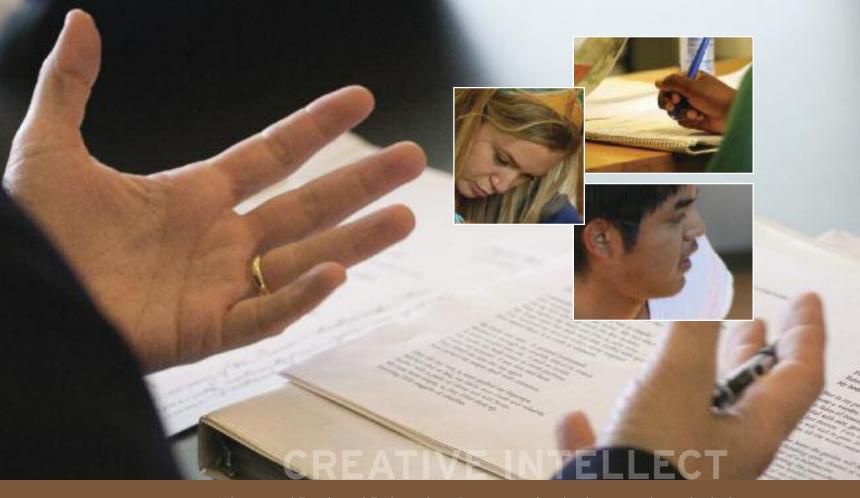






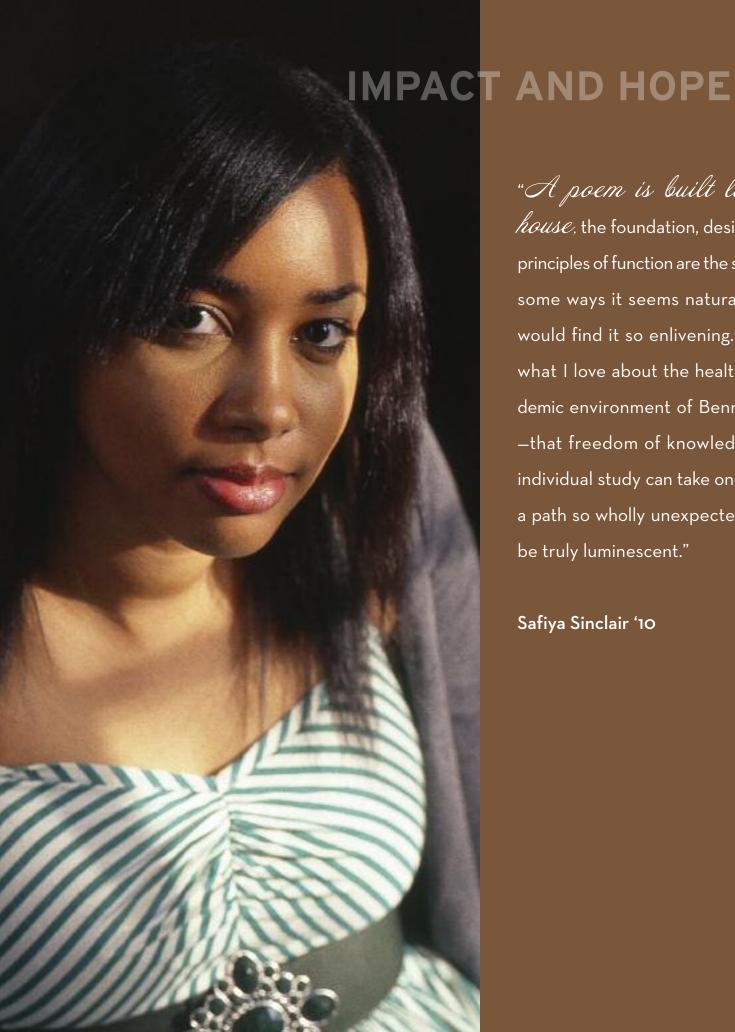






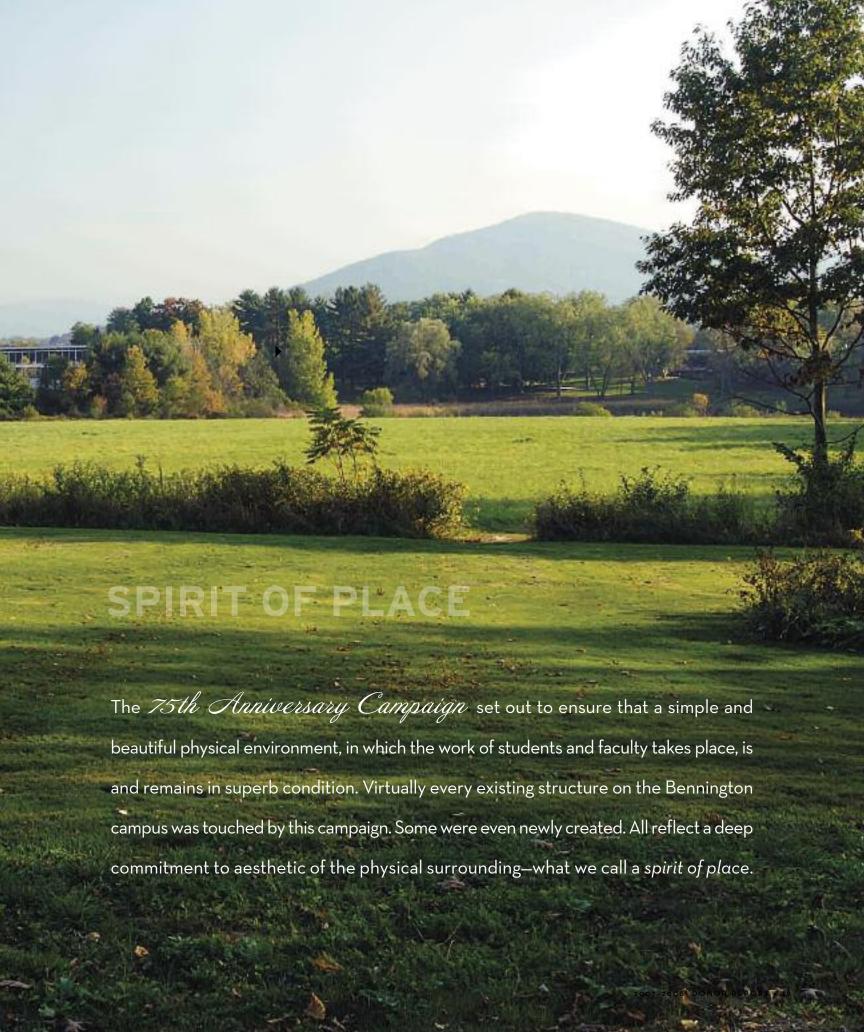
A drive to excel. To go beyond. To change things. Bennington students break new ground every day thanks to this unique educational model that affords them boundless freedom to dream, create, do, play—and thanks to the commitment of those who give every year and make that experience available to them.





"A poem is built like a house, the foundation, design, and principles of function are the same; in some ways it seems natural that I would find it so enlivening. This is what I love about the healthy academic environment of Bennington -that freedom of knowledge and individual study can take one down a path so wholly unexpected as to be truly luminescent."

Safiya Sinclair '10

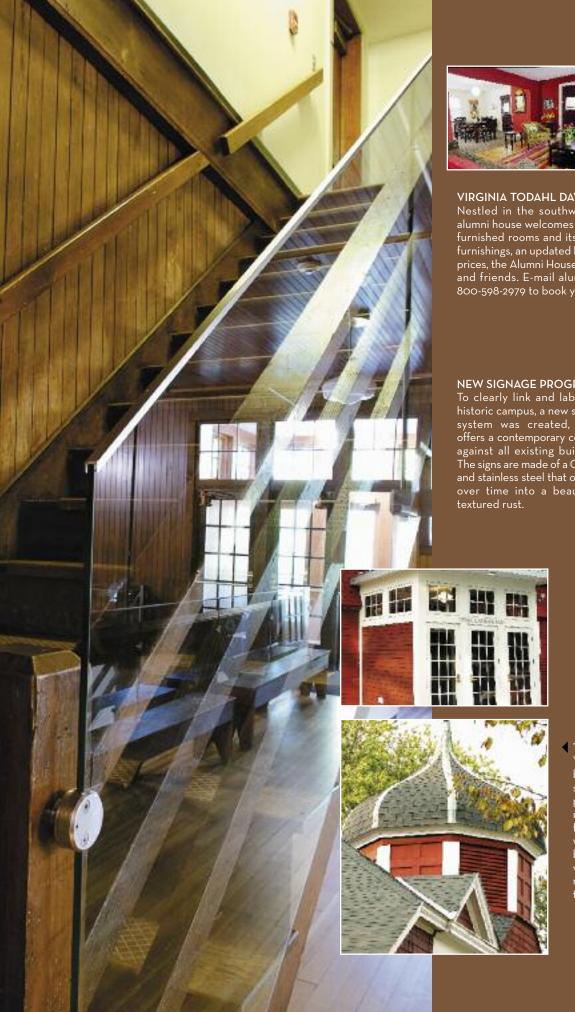




10,000 square feet. A snack bar and a café. A performance space. State-of-the-art sound and lighting systems. These are only a few offerings of the new Student Center that sits between the Fels and Perkins student houses and whose windows turn the building into a beacon at night.

Continuing upgrades to classrooms, labs, and performance spaces have optimized learning across campus: 13 new "smart" classrooms, improved lighting in VAPA, and updated ventilation in Dickinson labs.









# VIRGINIA TODAHL DAVIS '40 ALUMNI HOUSE 🔺

Nestled in the southwestern corner of campus, the Davis alumni house welcomes all visitors to campus with six elegantly furnished rooms and its bookcase of alumni works. With new furnishings, an updated kitchen and bathrooms, and reasonable prices, the Alumni House is the ideal retreat for all visiting alumni and friends. E-mail alumnirelations@bennington.edu or call 800-598-2979 to book your stay today.

# NEW SIGNAGE PROGRAM

To clearly link and label this historic campus, a new signage system was created, which offers a contemporary contrast against all existing buildings. The signs are made of a Cor-ten and stainless steel that oxidizes over time into a beautifully





# THE DEANE CARRIAGE BARN

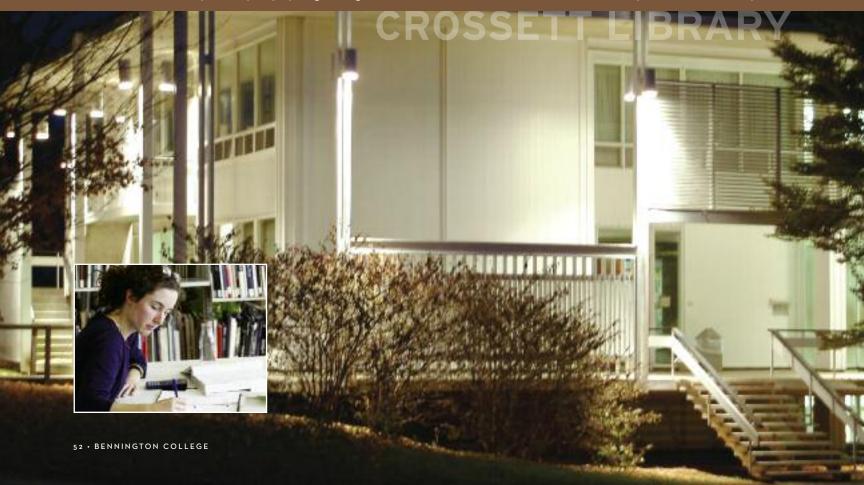
Years of careful restoration have brought the renowned performance space into the 21st century while preserving its distinctive look. With a remodeled music workshop, cherry floors, the addition of a vestibule, entryway, and elevator for maximum accessibility, Deane Carriage Barn provides a versatile space for students, faculty members, and visiting artists to share their work.



Since 2002, six of Bennington's original student houses and two of the 1970s Barnes' houses have undergone careful restoration, including fully renovated bathrooms and kitchens. In addition, the Welling Town House, the off-campus co-op, was equipped with a state-of-the-art kitchen, where residents share responsibility for preparing evening meals.

Throughout this campaign, Crossett Library has benefited from ongoing renovations, technology updates, and acquisition of thousands of new books and journals.

Today, Crossett features more than 925,000 holdings, both electronic and in print, for our students' perusal.





# DONOR REPORT

gratitude.



Dear Bennington supporters,

Looking back on our anniversary year fills me with immense pride—pride in all that this pioneering college has achieved in its 75 years, and pride in the progress that, together, we've made toward securing its future.

Bennington's 75th anniversary celebration was by all accounts a resounding success. Thousands of you came together—on campus and in cities across the country—to pay tribute to a small college known for its big ideas. Even more of you made an annual gift to the 75th Anniversary Fund; gifts that were doubled, or in many cases tripled, through the Trustee Challenge.

For some of you, this was your first gift to Bennington. Others of you increased your giving to mark this special occasion. In both cases, these extraordinary acts of faith resulted in the **single-largest fundraising year** in the College's history. Your generosity this past year also helped us conclude Bennington's most successful campaign effort in its history, the six-year 75th Anniversary Campaign. For all this, I thank you.

It is my great pleasure to acknowledge in the following pages the generous support of our loyal donors and volunteers who contributed to Bennington in 2007–08. Just as I look back on this past year with gratitude, I also look forward with confidence in all that we can do—together—to promise that Bennington's next 75 years will be as remarkable as its first.

With sincerest thanks,

Paige Bartels

Vice President for External Relations













# 2007-2008 DONOR REPORT

# LIST OF DONORS

# JULY 1, 2007 - JUNE 30, 2008

Bennington College is deeply grateful to the following individuals and organizations who supported the College in the last fiscal year. This list recognizes all philanthropy to the College, including gifts and new pledges to the 75th Anniversary Fund, (the annual fund), scholarship funds, endowment funds, capital projects, and special programs.

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# ENCOURAGE LEAD

"You, like those of us here in the early days, are now in the trenches.

You are our Pioneers, the next generation...

You have to make it happen, both for yourselves individually and for the College as a whole."

Rebecca B. Stickney '43
 from her Bennington College,
 1995 Convocation Address

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The entire Bennington community is thankful for the many dedicated volunteers who contributed countless hours to the College in its 75th anniversary year. Alumni, parent, student, and friend involvement hit record highs in this celebratory year thanks to the tireless efforts and the continued enthusiasm and generosity of the individuals listed here.

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While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list, we apologize for any misspellings or omissions. Please inform the Office of External Relations (800-598-2979) of any errors so that we may correct our records.

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