

BENNINGTON
spring/summer 2008

75

75TH ANNIVERSARY
YEAR IN REVIEW

June 2008

Dear alumni, parents, and friends,

It has been, by all accounts, a remarkable year for Bennington.

We hosted our largest on-campus, all-class reunion—ever. We gathered in more cities, drawing record crowds, for anniversary events from coast to coast. More than a hundred alumni and parents served as members of various 75th anniversary committees. Three dozen alumni returned to campus to share their work with current Bennington students and faculty. All told, nearly 1,000 alumni, parents, and friends joined us at celebration events since we kicked off the festivities in October.

This issue of *Bennington* honors all that has been achieved during this milestone year. Beginning with President Coleman's articulation of what will be the next step for this College that has been blazing trails since its founding, we look eagerly ahead, emboldened by the collective accomplishments of those who claim Bennington as their own. It is our hope that you'll recognize some of that fearless Bennington spirit in the pages that follow—in the commemorative exhibitions, the oral histories, and the anniversary celebrations, large and small.

In her speech last October, President Coleman said, "seventy-five years ago Bennington burst on the scene promising to bring a new vitality, a capacity for innovation, a daring, and an unspeakable confidence in human possibility." As this historic year comes to a close, it has never been clearer that Bennington has made good on that promise, and that it intends to continue.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paige L. Bartels". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paige" being more prominent and the last name "Bartels" written in a more compact, connected style.

Paige L. Bartels
Vice President for External Relations

Elizabeth Coleman
President

Wendy Perron '69
Editor-in-Chief
Dance Magazine

Lara Taubman '90

Jamie Franklin
Curator of Collections
Bennington Museum

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The following excerpt was adapted from a speech delivered at the celebration of Bennington's 75th anniversary in October 2007.

the bennington curriculum

by Elizabeth Coleman, President

“much of what you have seen this weekend celebrates Bennington’s remarkable history and its very lively present. My job is to talk with you tonight about its future—about a new initiative that we think is worthy of this moment. Bennington is yet again going for the gold.

But to get to what Bennington is doing we need to start with the world. It’s in terrible trouble and that trouble is everywhere, whether we are talking about poverty, the environment, the use of force, health, governance, or education.

- At a time when the wealth of the world is expanding dramatically, horrendous poverty expands at a similar, maybe greater pace.
- Our escalating consumption of energy is unsustainable. Industrialization and

population pressures on the environment are likely to upset the ecological balances of the planet in potentially catastrophic ways. And we in the United States are particularly negligent in developing comprehensive strategies in response.

- Our capacity to improve the quality and the duration of human lives has increased significantly through advances in the health sciences during the last century. Nonetheless the tide of unnecessary death and unspeakable suffering continues to rise

because of our abject failure to distribute adequate medical care.

- On issues of governance it is no longer possible to presume that the greatest challenges to securing human freedom exist in the authoritarian states and the emerging democracies. During the last 10 years, the greatest assault on fundamental democratic institutions—the separation of powers; respect for civil liberties; the rule of law; the separation of church and state—has occurred in the world’s most mature democracy.



a new liberal arts

● In education as well, our position has radically altered. Despite having a research establishment that is the envy of the world, more than half of the American public does not believe in evolution. Mastery of basic skills and a bare minimum of cultural literacy eludes vast numbers of our students. The vital connection between education and a vibrant citizenship, once the bedrock of public education, has atrophied, making the perpetuation of our democracy increasingly precarious.

● At a time when an unparalleled opportunity to influence the planet resides in arguably its oldest living democracy, we see a harrowing predilection for the use of force, matched by an equivalent distaste for nonviolent modes of intervening.

One might imagine that in such a time the public would be galvanized. Not so—beyond a participation in elections, which is itself spotty—there is close to zero evidence of engagement in public life. Adlai Stevenson’s majestic invocation: “as citizens of this democracy you are the rulers and the ruled, the law givers and the law abiding, the beginning and the end” has been reduced to the idea of citizen as taxpayer. Citizenship is, in Hannah Arendt’s succinct words, “the lost treasure” of American political life.

If citizenship has any currency it is typically invoked to emphasize rights and privileges, accompanied by an almost perfect silence with respect to personal, civic, and collective responsibilities. And it is

rights understood as uncompromising, adversarial, isolating, and litigious—in marked contrast to the idea and ideal of the citizen as one who embraces collaboration in a shared identity with others that both respects and transcends differences.

Colleges and universities provide little sustenance when it comes to nurturing the ethical habits and intellectual values of an active citizenry. A relentless emphasis on technical virtuosity characterized by its incomprehensibility beyond a select few; a drastic limiting of the idea of truth to scholarly competence; and a view of the expert as the sole model of intellectual accomplishment continues its dominance. Any criteria that would make it possible to distinguish between the relative values of the subject matters we teach are religiously avoided. Every subject is equal, nothing is more important than anything else. Not surprisingly the number of subjects taught gets ever larger as their domains of inquiry get ever smaller.

In short, the trajectories of specialization, an emphasis on technical mastery, and neutrality as a condition of intellectual integrity leave us unable and disinclined to take on the real-world obligations of citizenship. Such obligations are too open-ended, value laden, and dependent on capacities radically different from those of a narrowly conceived and technical expertise. The challenges of citizenship are not akin to those of choosing a major nor are they compatible with a view of life in which the highest activity is pursuing research in one’s area of specialization.

The aversion within the academy to tackling problems that do not fit neatly into academic categories can scarcely be exaggerated, even when the very foundations on which we exist are under attack. When faith is presented as a legitimate ground for establishing empirical truths, the rule of reason itself—the very idea of the secular—are the real objects of attack and these are the very DNA of public, nonsectarian education.

Nonetheless, beyond some efforts by scientists to push back on the anti-evolution front there is little or no reaction. This seemingly impenetrable detachment is buttressed by the silo mentality endemic to contemporary academic life. It would appear that only biologists are qualified to respond.

The veritable explosion of community service programs on college campuses might suggest a different picture. But wonderful as service is, it often limits the realm of civic action to those issues where the choice of what to do is self-evident and unproblematic, such as teaching literacy, or working in soup kitchens, or building homes in Costa Rica or New Orleans. Meanwhile the more complex challenges of addressing the policies that cause illiteracy, poverty, and injustice remain unmet.

This stopping short of engaging policy issues would be less likely were these community service experiences connected to what is going on *inside* the classroom, but they remain decidedly *extracurricular*. The failure to integrate service into the curriculum, in effect,



BILL CLINTON PRAISES BENNINGTON

At the recent inauguration of the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGIU) in New Orleans, former President Bill Clinton singled out Bennington College for its commitment to making the concerns of the public good an informing principle of our undergraduate education.

"Bennington's commitment is an attempt to go beyond false debate and to say that you can study the basic subjects of the liberal arts and also figure out a way to practically apply them to change people's lives. I really think Bennington's commitment is very important and could spark a lot of other colleges and universities that are not involved in this kind of work to do the same thing," Clinton said.

Bennington was one of about two dozen colleges and universities represented at the inauguration. The CGIU challenges college students and universities to tackle global problems with practical, innovative solutions.

"Bennington's commitment...
could spark a lot of other colleges
...to do the same thing."

Bill Clinton

locates civic-mindedness outside the realm of what purports to be serious thinking and the real business of an education. At bottom, the bedrock of it all, is the disconnect between virtue and intellect, between thought and action, reinforced by the relentless focus on private goods and the atrophy of concern for the public good.

To make matters worse, money is increasingly the measure of all things. Its invasion of politics is well documented. Its invasion of education is no less

pervasive. While college preparedness is the new salvation, it is overwhelmingly valued for its access to a credential that improves job prospects. The idea of student as customer is a match in what it says about values for the idea of citizen as taxpayer. And make no mistake: careerism is as rampant in our elite liberal arts colleges as anywhere else.

Not surprisingly, the dearth of values beyond self-interest manifests itself most evidently in a spectacular deterioration of our political life. What is sur-

prising is that scarcely anyone makes the connection between what is happening to the political fabric of the country and what is going on in our colleges and universities. This undoubtedly contributes to the mood of complacency that prevails within academia regardless of the storms raging outside.

The seeming oblivion by our educational institutions to the mounting crisis confronting the public good is not a function of individual indifference. Many in higher education are increasingly despairing of the state of the world and desperately seeking ways to overcome this disconnect between the world and the academy. Nonetheless, whatever efforts are going on in this direction remain at the margins. The stranglehold of the disciplines with all of their deeply entrenched habits and interests remains intact, constraining all such efforts.

If we are going to get the kinds of transformations of priorities, the redirection of energies that are called for, it is going to take an idea—an idea that can generate unparalleled levels of collaboration between faculty across all divides; new models of the relationship between teacher and student; ways to develop an ongoing and deepening dynamic between the world inside the classroom and the world outside. It will take an idea that gives us the wherewithal to return values to the center of the seats of learning without submitting to ideology, partisanship, or zealotry. We think we may just have such an idea.

In its essentials the idea is very simple. To address the disconnect between the urgency of these unmet challenges and the absence of our response, we plan to use the challenges *themselves* to inform, enlarge, and intensify a Bennington education. That is, we intend 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 of self-evident urgency, complexity, and importance. The emphasis on action is very carefully considered; our goal is not to study poverty, the failures of education, the abuses of force, but to do something about them.

Several labs are currently being offered as prototypes: one in conflict resolution and the uses of force, one on education, and another on the environment. More will be added next year providing a much richer menu of options.

They are called laboratories to underscore the quintessentially open-ended, collaborative character of this work. While they will be led by faculty, it is understood that students will be active participants in determining their direction and outcome. This is not first and foremost a matter of pedagogical

participating are working within the framework of carefully designed and focused deliberation. This means that in contrast to the accustomed model of the expert atop a human pyramid consisting of the more and less non-expert, the field becomes more akin to the easy rolls of the natural landscape.

In addition to Bennington's faculty and students, visiting academics and practitioners from outside the College, including business and political leaders, journalists, and social activists, will be participants in these labs. The labs in essence become organizing centers of an activity that extends throughout the College and beyond. These labs will be offered throughout the four years of a student's education, assuring that individual programs allow for the pursuit of increasingly ambitious and demanding policy objectives.

fundamental. Learning how to listen assumes an importance that is on a par with learning how to talk.

When a primary objective is, in short, educating students to act effectively in the world, it means thinking freshly about what is most fundamental. It means crossing the divides that have shaped curricular thinking for centuries. It means visual and performing artists, scientists, writers, and social scientists joining forces in designing and teaching what are, in effect, *a new liberal arts*.

While much of this initiative will be newly created, much of it will emerge from what is already here. One of Bennington's signature innovations was the invention of a term of study that takes place every year off campus—Field Work Term—whether in a job, an internship, a research opportunity, and whether five minutes away or

“When a primary objective is, in short, educating students to act effectively in the world, it means thinking freshly about what is most fundamental.”

preference, but one of necessity. In the contentious, messy, contingent, constantly changing world of the practical, unlike that of the theoretical, no one is an expert and, while there are those with a vast range of experience, no one has the answers. What you are capable of figuring out as you go—your ability to learn, to adjust, as events unfold—is a good deal more important than what you think you already know.

When the object is deciding on the most effective course of action, the act of leadership is to expand the input of others rather than to contain it. It is extremely likely that the more diverse the perspectives brought to bear, the better the outcome, provided those par-

We anticipate that as the initiative develops, the reach of the College will extend further and further as more and more people come to Bennington from around the world and students increasingly use the world to extend their reach. Bennington becomes the center of an education—its cerebral cortex, as it were—but its campus in effect extends far beyond.

In addition to the labs, an important part of the new curriculum will be courses that teach capacities one needs to master in order to contend effectively with the demands of political action regardless of its particular focus. Improvisation, collaboration, and mediation join the ranks of reading, writing, and mathematics as

across the globe. Important as it is and has always been, the impact of this new initiative will elevate its importance even more.

Reasons for seeking a dynamic relationship between the world inside the classrooms, workshops, and labs at Bennington and the world outside increase astronomically. Field Work Term is the perfect vehicle. Amidst the flood of ideas this initiative has generated, one is to make it possible for every student, regardless of personal financial circumstances, to spend at least one Field Work Term abroad.

Beyond these particulars there is, of course, what Bennington does in its entirety—most notably its formidable

achievement in enabling students to discover and pursue their individual intellectual and imaginative identities, passions, obsessions, dreams. This of course will continue. For Bennington, passionate dedication to the maximum possible development of the individual talent is its life blood. So much the better. For the challenge of an education committed to an ideal of citizenship depends on the power it has to achieve a community of purpose amidst people whose differences are as alive as those things they share.

And it works both ways; it is certain that each student's choices of where and how to focus his or her energies, in any aspect of his or her life, will acquire added complexity, urgency, and conviction when the stakes have been raised. My guess is that every educational institution will find its way of achieving the mix of public and private, individual and community. There is little doubt about how Bennington will do it. Both dimensions, insofar as they are separable, in fact, will be addressed as if nothing else in the world mattered.

In encountering this ceaseless dialogue between the pulls of public


for innovation, a daring, and an unspeakable confidence in human possibilities—what Howard Nemerov, a longtime member of the Bennington faculty, called “dreaming Joseph.” And Bennington delivered on that promise. Its most famous innovation—treating the arts and artists as equal partners in a liberal education—brought a new intensity to that education and embodied and emblazoned the idea of the teacher-practitioner into the fabric of the College.

Given Bennington's very visible and dramatic history in the arts, it might seem at first blush that this is a strange place to take on the challenges of renewing a vital and vibrant idea of citizenship with its inevitable emphasis on the political. But that is to miss the point. First of all, it is past time for the artists to take their seat at the table when policy is being crafted, rather than serving afterwards as cheerleader or pallbearer. Secondly, Bennington is designed to move in the direction where things need to be done, where the stakes are high, where its flexibility, its unusual diversity of faculty resources (as rich in the arts as in the traditional academic disciplines) combined with its small size, and its fascina-


Harvard School of Education: “Given how difficult it is merely to change a college curriculum, which relative to changing the balance among the purposes of higher education, is barely tinkering at the margins, it is hard even to imagine how one might go about the kind of truly radical change that would be necessary if liberal education were to be reconceived as a means to promote problem-centered ways of thinking and to better combine those with discipline-based styles of thought.”

And do not for a minute believe that this idea can prevail without the embrace of the faculty that will design and implement it, which is by no means, nor should it be, a walk in the park. But we have had the courage to begin, and we are going to launch the initiative formally in fall 2008. Ultimately our success will depend on the power of these ideas. On that score I have never been more confident.

Recently I was talking with Bill Rawn, architect and former trustee of Bennington, about this new initiative. He said, “Bennington is right where it belongs. Fifteen years from now everyone is going to be doing this.”



“Bennington is right where it belongs. Fifteen years from now everyone is going to be doing this.” —*Bill Rawn, William Rawn Associates, Architects*



responsibilities and those of private ambitions and aspirations, each student will be challenged to discover in his or her own fashion what it means—and what it takes—to live a good as well as a successful life.

Daring and grandiose for sure, but that is the fate of this College. Seventy-five years ago it burst on the scene promising to bring a new vitality, a capacity

tion with what matters, are the drivers.

It is important also to appreciate that Bennington has reached this ripe old age on its own terms—it has managed to grow up without giving up the restlessness, the passionate intensity that defined its remarkable youth.

This is not to deny for a moment the enormity of the challenge. To quote Ellen Lagemann, former dean of the

So, mark your calendars, check your watches, and fasten your seat belts.”

To view a transcript of the entire speech, or to share your thoughts on Bennington's curricular initiative, visit www.bennington.edu and click on “President Coleman Announces the Bennington Curriculum: A New Liberal Arts.”

DESIGN LABS invite students to change the world

What if your college education didn't end with the phrase "Now go out and change the world," but rather began there?

What if—on your first day of college—you could join with others to start doing the things you most love to do, *and* start solving the problems the world most needs solved?

Design Labs go beyond the bounds of a typical course. They are hands-on, change-the-world workshops—learning communities grounded in complex thought and concrete action. A new kind of course at Bennington, three Design Labs are being taught this year, with more—covering a broad range of topics—planned for fall 2008.

It works like this: In a Design Lab, a small group of students and faculty members come together to grapple with one particular, urgent, real-world problem. For example: How does public education in the U.S. need to change? How can the College reduce its ecological footprint? How do you forge treaties in the face of deeply entrenched conflicts?

Together, students assemble the tools to stake out, scour, and otherwise plumb the depths of the question, asking even more questions along the way. Collaboratively, students use these tools to dream up new solutions that are both principled and pragmatic. In a collaboration and conflict Design Lab, for example, students participate in 20 hours of mediation training, hear about international conflicts from faculty members who witnessed them firsthand, and work with visual arts faculty members to map the structure of conflicts. Students choose an actual conflict or conflict-related issue to address; they propose and critique solutions.

Design Labs have one foot in the world as it is, and one foot in the world as it could be. They pull together the intellectual power, passion, and boldness of Bennington students and faculty members and apply these resources to pressing world problems. And the world talks back: The Bennington faculty who lead the labs tap into the work of visiting academics and practitioners, including business and political leaders, journalists, and social activists whose lives and work have been devoted to these very problems. At the end of the term, students present their work to interested parties outside the College, who offer them feedback and suggestions.

QUESTIONS TACKLED BY STUDENTS IN THIS YEAR'S DESIGN LABS INCLUDE:

Green Projects: Community and Campus

How much energy could you generate by putting solar collectors on the roof of Dickinson? Should vehicles on campus use ethanol for fuel? Is it feasible for the dining hall to buy local food and produce? *Taught by Janet Foley, chemistry, and Kerry Woods, biology*

Collaboration and Conflict

Are we doomed to fight each other forever in wars? Can Nelson Mandela and the former leaders of South Africa provide us with examples for how to participate in significant change? *Taught by Susan Sgorbati '72, MFA '86, dance and mediation*

Rethinking Education

While many of the problems with the U.S. educational system seem obvious, the causes and solutions to those problems are less so. Few areas have been examined so deeply, yet little changes for the better. Many students find school to be narrow and stultifying, a simple means to an end rather than a window to real learning. Why is this? *Taught by Elizabeth Coleman, president, and Ken Himmelman, dean of admissions and financial aid*



SCOTT BARROW

“one foot in the world as it is and one foot in the world as it could be.”

DANCE

at bennington

For 75 years, people at Bennington College have been involved in the art of making dance.

Many have played significant roles in the world of dance; others have carried their love of movement into other fields. Through their talent and passion they have truly shaped the world of dance as it exists today.

7 5 Y E A R S O F M O V I N G T H R O U G H

The following images are a selection from an exhibition of photographs from the Bennington Dance Archives that was on view in Usdan Gallery during reunion weekend last October. Assembled and organized by faculty members **Terry Creach**, **Peggy Florin MFA '89**, **Dana Reitz MFA '94**, and **Susan Sgorbati '72, MFA '86**, the exhibition depicted eight decades of dance at Bennington and captured the spirit that sparked these great artists and continues to inspire young talent in our midst today.



A 1935 dance ensemble pauses for a pose

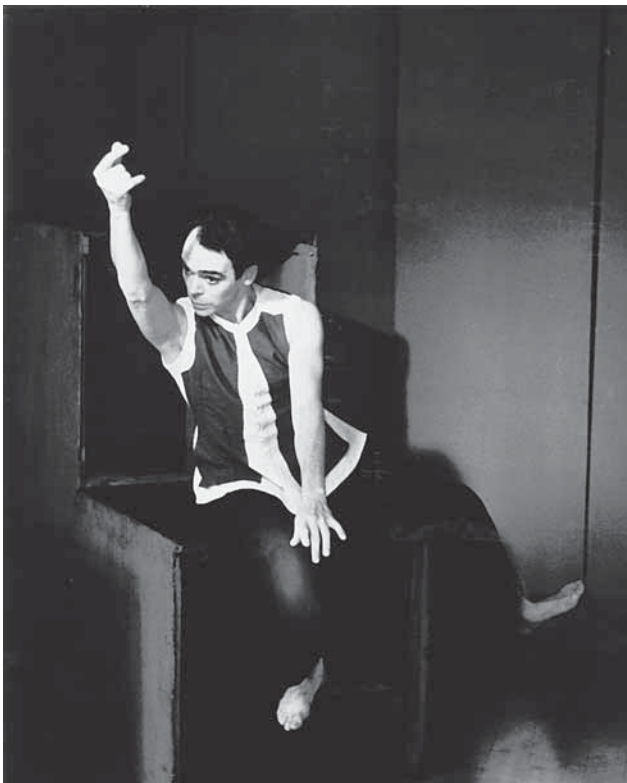


Merce Cunningham and partner, 1937



An exercise in grace and gravity, circa 1940

PHOTO BY BARBARA MORGAN, COURTESY OF THE BENNINGTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES



Charles Weidman performs *Opus 51*, circa 1930



Dancer unknown

COURTESY OF THE BENNINGTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES

COURTESY OF THE BENNINGTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES



Ulysses Dove '70 preparing to take the stage



Bill Bales and dance class in Commons, circa 1960

COURTESY OF THE BENNINGTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES

A SOLID 75

Bennington College Celebrates Its Diamond Year

A dancer, choreographer, and now editor-in-chief of *Dance Magazine*, **Wendy Perron '69** served as the moderator for an alumni panel discussion, "Dance in Colleges: How has it changed? How could it change?" during the College's 75th anniversary celebration last October. In an article for the January 2008 edition of this seminal dance publication, Perron reflected on the events of that October weekend and assessed Bennington's 75 years of influence on modern dance.

Back in the day, Bennington College was instrumental in spreading modern dance throughout the country. In 1932, Robert Leigh, the founding president, went straight to Martha Graham to ask for a dance program. She referred him to Martha Hill, and history was made.

Hill embarked on an ambitious summer intensive, the Bennington School of the Dance (precursor to American Dance Festival), which commissioned new works from Graham, Doris Humphrey, Hanya Holm, and Charles Weidman. It attracted passionate students who then went back to their towns energized to teach modern dance, often within the physical education departments in colleges and high schools. The College's academic dance major, instituted the following year, was given its own department, unlike the dance at University of Wisconsin–Madison, which was under the aegis of physical education.

Last October, when the College celebrated its 75th year, the dance program celebrated its own history. In the Visual and Performing Arts building (VAPA), a photo exhibit honored its beginnings, with shots of Graham and Hill as well as Doris Humphrey, Bill Bales (faculty member 1940–67), Jane Dudley, and many more. Alumni pictured included **Ulysses Dove '70**, **Kathryn Posin '65**, **Risa Jaroslow '69**, **Cathy Weis '70**, **MFA '98**, **Harry Whittaker Sheppard '69**, **Harvey Lichtenstein '53**, **Tina Croll '65**, and myself.

A panel on dance in higher education consisted of alumni who are working dance artists: **Linda (Tolbert) Tarnay '64** of

NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, **Penny (Larrison) Campbell '70** of Middlebury College, **Sandra Burton MFA '87** of Williams College, and **Caitlin Corbett '79** of Salem State College. Representing the current Bennington faculty were Terry Creach and **Dana Reitz MFA '94**. The discussion (which I moderated) revealed that everyone wants more connection with other disciplines and cultures. Campbell spoke about branching out beyond European-based dance. Creach spoke about working with the music and art disciplines and his hope to connect with a physics teacher. Corbett announced that she had just started the first dance concentration in performance and choreography in the Massachusetts state college system. We all cheered.

Three alumni dance concerts displayed a range of styles. High points were **Myrna Packer '74**'s playful and clever multimedia collaboration with Art Bridgman, *Under the Skin*; **Monique Jenkinson '92**'s devilishly precise gloss on Maria Callas, *Mimicry & Flaunting*; and **Selene Colburn '91**'s deeply personal work-in-progress, *The History of the Future*. All three concerts were packed, showing once again how central dance is to life at Bennington.

To this day Bennington's dance program is designed for modern dancers who aim to be professional. The focus is on new work, and more specifically on improvisation. (Clearly if you want to concentrate solely on technique, you would not choose Bennington.) In a class for first-year students that I observed, Terry Creach gave a composition assignment that yielded, for each student, a nucleus of highly individual movement just waiting to be mined for more. In an advanced "projects" class,

Reitz got students talking about their creative process, showing drawings, and questioning each other's plans.

One of the changes over the years at Bennington is the greater number of MFA students. Professional artists like **Sara Rudner MFA '99**, **Keith Thompson MFA '03**, **Paul Matteson MFA '07**, and **Eva Karczag MFA '04** (not to mention Bennington's own faculty, Reitz and **Susan Sgorbati '72**) have gotten their MFAs there. Another is an annual exchange with Movement Research, the enterprising champion of experimental dance in NYC. For a tiny school (about 600 undergraduates) it's had a large impact on dance.

—Wendy Perron '69



the bennington reflections project

to help celebrate its rich history, the College invited its alumni and friends to share their thoughts on Bennington—in the form of oral histories collected over reunion weekend and in written reflections submitted throughout the year. Here are just some of the many voices that gave, and continue to give, life to Bennington.

(choosing)

"I wanted to go someplace where I could compose music and I didn't want to go to a music school where they're going to make you wait four years before you write a note."

—Mary Labbe Gertje '85

"I made a very analytical research into what was available in colleges. I studied five thousand college descriptions and I systematically eliminated everything I knew I wouldn't go to which would be all the military stuff, all the Catholic stuff, any of the religious schools, any of the all-man schools—then I realized that what I had to have was a place where I could dance—but the other criteria was that it had seminars and small classes and that women were respected—and [Bennington] was perfect, perfect."

—Marilyn Lowen '66

"An air of high energy greeted the 83 of us pioneers. Even the setting on an open hilltop was invigorating. The mostly young faculty were also pioneers and must have been just as excited as we were. Right from the start our education became a collaborative undertaking..."

—Asho Ingersoll Craine '36

"On looking back over the decades, I can't imagine what my life would have been if Bennington College hadn't been founded 75 years ago—yegawds I might have gone to one of the few women's colleges existing then, which at that time were just copies or little sisters of the many men's colleges with traditional male curriculums."

—Sally Brownell Montanari '38

(arriving)

(learning & living)

"It gave me a respect for my intellect and there was a sense that if I wanted to do something I would be able to do it in the world. Part of that is being young but a lot of that is fostered by Bennington's respect for the students. The teachers had a good deal of respect for the students; we were treated as equals." —Arlene Heyman '63

"One of the reasons I left high school early was because I was being told in English class that I couldn't critique anything—because I didn't know anything. So, I got here and was in Mrs. Foster's literature class and...one of the first questions she asked the class was, 'Well, what do you think?' And I thought, 'This is absolutely wonderful, somebody actually cares what I think, and believes that I can think.'" —Joan Oates (Holt) Bledsoe '54

"Coming to Bennington was like taking this hope out of a box I'd put it in and letting it see the light. The experience of being at Bennington was powerful enough. But the fact that Bennington affirmed my own—not to sound incredibly cheesy, but it's true—my own hopes and beliefs about education was incredibly meaningful. I'd never seen education like it before. I'd never felt it before. And yet, somehow, I knew it must exist. And it did. And I was there." —Rachel Shirk '04



(life after)

"When I left Bennington I applied to Wharton Graduate School of Business and it's an interesting thing because so often they say that Bennington people aren't really prepared for the business world; we don't take courses in that. But I applied to Wharton and they only accepted seven women in the whole country and I was accepted."

—Charlene Solow Schwartz '54

"Bennington became for me what is almost impossible for a college to become today—a place and an experience that opened doors and windows, allowed for big risks, and encouraged wild creativity. Faculty challenged me to tear down and then rebuild my ideas on a regular basis. I'd like to believe that the fruit of that dialogue is a more thoughtful and measured approach, to both creative problems and the business issues I face on a daily basis."

—David Anthony '96

"I'm sure I wouldn't have done many of the things I have done if I hadn't come to Bennington. Bennington just gets you addicted to learning and using that learning."

—Ruth Ring Harvie '56

"Though genes and early surroundings must have had their influences, my gut feeling is that my Bennington experience is greatly responsible for my liberal stance, for my finding the world an interesting place waiting to be explored, and for my willingness to explore people, places, art, ideas."

—Ann Rothschild '37

"I am grateful for the four years at Bennington. It was the foundation of my adult life."

—Elizabeth (Hubbard) Banker '43

Please visit www.bennington.edu and login to read more or submit your own reflections.

(from the outside)

"You wouldn't know but in the '50s a Bennington girl was something! It was a mark. I think it was a good mark. And even now when somebody says 'Where did you go to school?'—because I'm pretty avant-garde now—and they hear Bennington and they're, 'Oh, that explains it.'"

—Laura Kesselman Skoler '57

(bennington moments)

"I was very much an oddball and at one point I decided that I was going to sleep outdoors and so I had a bedroll and I set myself up under some pine trees over near the house and stars overhead and it was just marvelous. And I'm lying out there in my pretend woods and in the morning, I hear this incredible clanking, clanking, God-awful racket and I popped up in my sleeping bag and the garbage truck was just about to run over me. And, in those days they didn't go 'beep-beep-beep' and I'm shrieking 'Stop, stop' and I'm rolling in my sleeping bag trying to get out of the way."

—Carrie McLeod Howson '56

(bennington yet to be)

"I feel a forward motion and a substance and a vision in so many ways that I think is so wonderful. It's just so good; I see students who seem much more in focus than I remember us being. People seem to be tremendously at ease and comfortable and solid, and the College too seems that way, the message of the College seems that way. The curriculum changes that are going on, I think, are to be applauded enormously for the worldly vision that seems to be coming into view."

—Terry Connelly Whiting '58

fearless **bennington** spirit

exhibition highlights a bold and



helen frankenthaler '49

by Lara Taubman '90

Known primarily for her abstract paintings,
 iconic artist **Helen Frankenthaler** '49 made a series of sculptures in 1972.

She did this at the invitation of internationally acclaimed sculptor, friend, colleague, and former Bennington College faculty member (1963–65) Sir Anthony Caro. He coaxed her to do this, in part, by making available to her a set of steel wheels that he acquired from fellow sculptor David Smith's estate, a mutual friend who died tragically in a car accident several years before. This group of sculptures, made in just two weeks at Caro's London studio, had been Frankenthaler's only venture in sculpture until that time, and it has rarely been seen.

First shown at the André Emmerich Gallery in New York City in 1972, the work reappeared at Knoedler & Company when the gallery organized an exhibition of it in New York City in 2006. It was this show that Bennington brought to campus for its 75th anniversary celebration last fall. In choosing to exhibit Frankenthaler's sculpture, the College not only honored one of its most celebrated alumnae, it also provided a window into her creative process: this set of sculptures in particular reveals her authoritative approach to art-making, a quality that was cultivated at Bennington.

If Frankenthaler is the ideal portrait of an artist who was at the forefront of this country's most significant visual arts movement, she is no less the epitome of a Bennington College alumna. She was the exemplary Bennington girl. Looking at a photograph taken of her as an art student in her Bennington painting studio—cigarette burning in one hand, beautiful but not preening, strong, defiant, and curious—she stares directly into the camera relaxed but very much alive and aware. Her stare reminds me of the Bennington students I knew in college. The best students possessed the same fire, the same defiant and intelligent look in their eyes, and like Frankenthaler, many have devoted their lives to work in the arts.

That fire was clearly burning bright in Frankenthaler when she undertook the creation of these sculptures. The works proved to be a radical departure from her signature poured oil and acrylic works; works that had firmly established her as a leading figure in the Abstract Expressionist movement. They were also a reflection of a new way of thinking emerging in the New York art world. For the first time, artists were spurning the

issue of medium as a way to terminate Formalism's strict rules and methods. Embracing feminist politics, performance, video, gender issues, and conceptual art as their modes of expression, these artists were making the relationship to materials secondary, or even incidental.

While reviews at the time were mixed, some dismissing the sculptures as sophomoric compared to her usual innovative, sophisticated paintings of the 1950s and '60s, the critics failed to truly appreciate what the artist had achieved. Looking for traces of her extraordinary painting ability, they missed the point that her greatest works came not from the accomplished former works but from the fortitude of the artist who made them. Her work shows that she was always willing to look awkward and vulnerable in favor of learning and challenging herself. In a reminiscence of Frankenthaler's time spent in his studio 30 years prior, Caro says: "(she was)—utterly clear about her direction. She was open, friendly, but always self-contained; she worked fearlessly with new materials in a new environment—it was achieved by addressing the work in her own way, with single-minded focus. The evidence is the sculptures."¹

Having this particular group of sculptures at Bennington has been a stroke of fortuitous coincidence. While not her famous works, this series of 10 steel sculptures is ideal for a Frankenthaler show at her alma mater because they seem to exemplify everything that she learned as a Bennington student. These proficient sketches in steel reveal the bare bones of her fluent creative process as one of rigor and self-realization. She is always ready to forego what she knows for the awkwardness of that which she does not. She respects what she does not know, willing to leave parts silent or unfinished instead of making pretense to a statement that she only half understands. It is evident that she has never lost the most important thing that Bennington teaches: a commitment to discovery, thus rising to the challenge to become an exceptional draftsman in any medium.

All of these qualities are the same ones I was shown by my teachers at Bennington. The foundation of my working process from making pictures to the work I do 20 years later as an art critic and curator are deeply rooted to that platform of



Heart of London Map, 1972

being true to my process and myself regardless of the context, the theory, or the practice. These are ideals that I was taught to bring to every situation—in art as well as in life.

Thirty-six years after it was made, this set of sculptures offers yet another important perspective on Frankenthaler's career and marks a crucial shift between her early and her mature work. The sculptures reinstate the formal aesthetic issues and mastery evident in the first part of her career but also recontextualize her knowledge in the shaky parameters of a new medium. Although she never returned to working in steel, these works mark a new beginning in her career of experimentation in multiple mediums and a desire to engage new ranges of size and expression.

As her career since 1972 has proven, Frankenthaler's work is less about medium and more about the vehicles that drive the work. Her work is about more than controlling mate-

rials; it is her unfaltering personality that commands the medium to conform to her vision, letting it live as it needs to but always within the particular strictures of her mind. Frankenthaler knew instinctively that the art was in the questions, in how long one could hover in the pressure box of the unknown to glean the brilliance that comes from that open space of uncertainty. Her fearlessness of what delineates a sketch or a finished work is the vehicle that allows her to jauntily explore her limits.

Frankenthaler knows that vitality exists where she is not able to anticipate, and so like the most successful artists today she is never beholden to medium. Rather it has always served her needs by firmly denying its tempting seduction through some such nostalgic allegiance.

These sculptures show that Frankenthaler was a master of the creative process in visual art. For a woman approaching the medium of steel for the first time as an already accomplished painter, it makes sense that she drew upon the work of her colleagues. It was not ideas that she sought but experimentation with what was for her a new material. She is resourceful enough to look for information from two of her close and most accomplished colleagues, Caro and Smith, especially since she was working in Caro's studio and had always been encouraged to do the same by Smith. It must have also been moving for her to use steel that was originally

chosen by Smith, which would have undoubtedly influenced her aesthetic and design decisions in creating this work.

Looking closer it becomes more and more evident that there is a great deal of the assured Frankenthaler in these sculptures but one who is in foreign territory. Although she is still strong and confident in her decisions, she uses a light touch. It is a quality already present in her first poured works and throughout the 1950s until she had gathered enough authority to make the paintings of the 1960s. It is difficult as an artist to know what future work for which you are gathering information while continuing to make resolved art, so it is an intelligent decision to use the ease and open-endedness of the sketch until enough information emerges to make definitive statements. Her early works attest to that theory, and it appears she embraced the same method in creating her steel sculptures.

These sculptures show her distinctive presence in the work but also speak the language of her distinct colleagues. She transforms any hesitation she may have felt while simultaneously nodding to her friendship with both Caro and Smith. She joins their conversation using their voice of moving mass around forcefully while challenging them with her delicate lines and quirky shapes.

Yard is one of the more massive works, welding heavy plates of steel together into a form that has the demeanor of a crumpling or blooming flower. The result has a beautifully loose touch leaving the heavy planes in an eternally opening movement. The metal pieces arc slightly downward, revealing their vulnerability, a form that is unsure of its balance but nevertheless demands to exist. Frankenthaler calls attention to Smith and Caro's intense, heavy materials to tell instead a story that holds conceptual weight but that has ambitions to defy visual gravity.

Ten After All features a gigantic drill bit stuck—balancing almost magically—on a small platform, alluding to the raw use of found steel objects that is quintessentially Smith and Caro. She interrupts this influence with a light random line of steel that juts out from the top of the bit with an awkward elegance that might be the balance that keeps the piece vertical.

Envelope, an emotional, pedestal-sized piece, is small enough to clutch with both hands. Its presence begs the viewer to hold it. Enclosed by two of the Smith wheels atop a steel cylinder collaged from two arcs, the top wheel seductively promises closure but its obviously placed weld assures that the vessel will never be securely shut. The case is never closed, so to speak, possibly an indication of the quality of her friendship and dialogue with Smith. It is a touching piece embracing all the best qualities of this series; it is the most poignant expression of her feelings for her friend.

When Frankenthaler was asked by an interviewer what it was like to be a great female artist among so many great male artists, she has always insisted that she is an “artist among artists.” Her ability to dialogue and comprehend ideas visually and intellectually quickly made her an indispensable match with the likes of Clement Greenberg, Jackson Pollock, Robert Motherwell, and others. She remains a notable person and woman by maintaining and demanding excellence in her work. Frankenthaler is a woman of the “old school”—her power exists in her dedication to doing everything well and expecting the same of those around her. The idea of feminism never made a difference to a woman like her because she never believed that her voice was belittled or irrelevant.

Bennington taught me something similar. It is important to know that I am a woman but that I aim to be the best at whatever I set out to do among women and men. I don't need the permission of a movement to be independent or strong, rather I need the strength of my own convictions so that I may always be on the right path, the one that is my own.

Lara Taubman '90 is an art critic and independent curator. She holds an MA in American Studies from New York University and a BA in painting and architecture from Bennington. In 2007, she curated an exhibition entitled “Not Figments of a Madman's Imagination: The Uncanny in Romanian Video Art,” which was first shown at the Florence Lynch Gallery in New York City and will be on view at the Kontainer Gallery in Los Angeles in October 2008. She has written for many art publications including *Contemporary*, *Artnews* and *Artnet*.

¹ Caro, Anthony. *Frankenthaler's Sculpture: A Reflection*. Frankenthaler: Sculpture. Knoedler and Company, 2007.



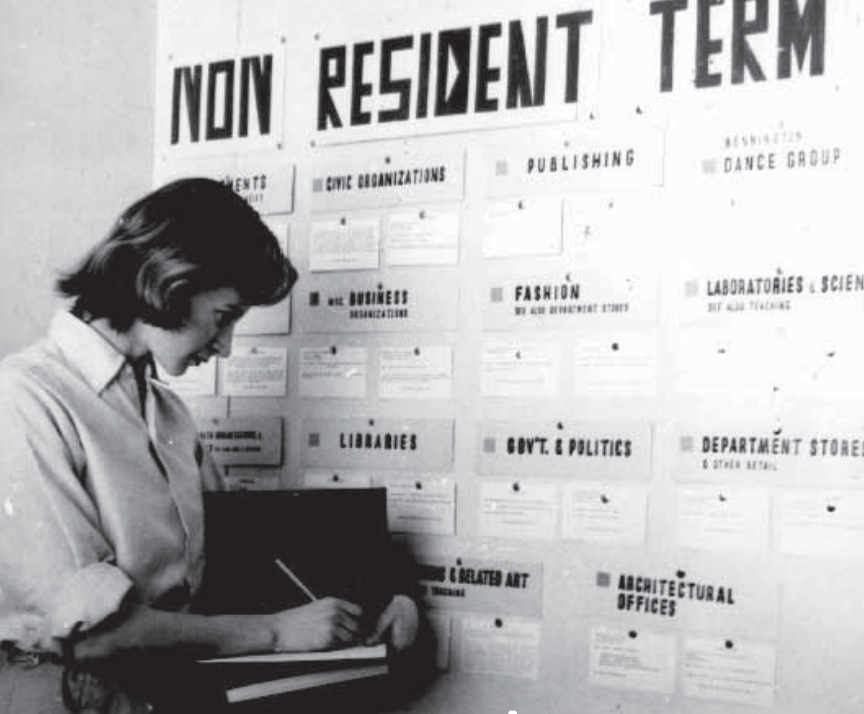
Ten After All, 1972



Envelope, 1972

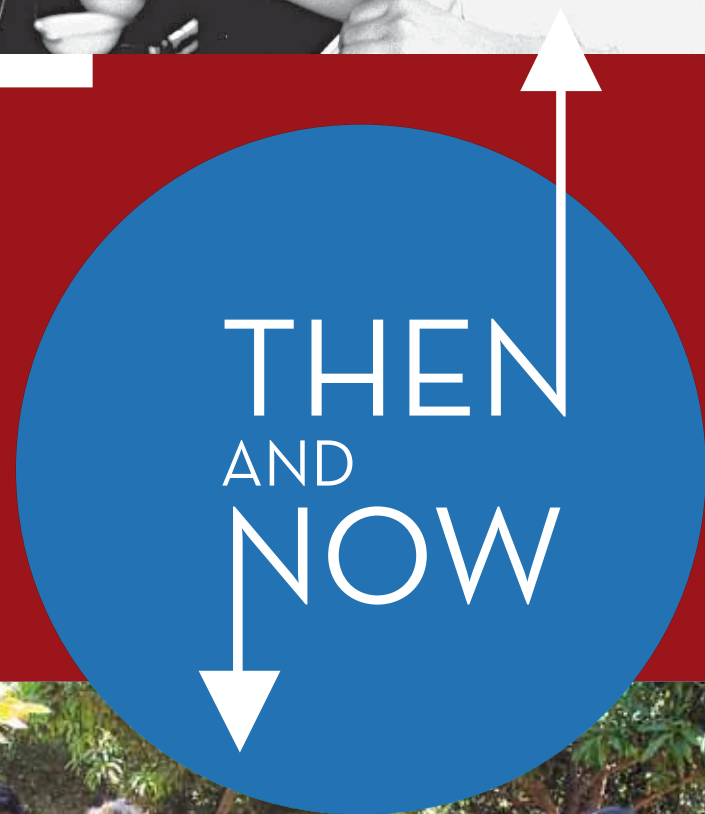


Yard, 1972



FWT

FIELD WORK TERM



The combination of driving passion and learning-the-ropes realism crops up again and again in Field Work Terms past and present. For one of his Field Work Term (FWT) assignments, **David Dibler '07** researched the history of FWT (formerly Non-Resident Term), compiling a collection of historic photos and newspaper articles on Bennington's pioneering internship program. Following are several excerpts from his exhibition, and a few additions.

RICHARD A. HUNT



Jean (Thompson) Vogelbach '46 working in an architecture studio in New York City, 1949.



Sally (Eastman) Drucquer '51 working for the Vermont State Farm Bureau during Non-Resident Term, 1951.

"I think Bennington has gone a long way toward eliminating the supposed split—often, alas, a very real one—between 'education' and 'life,' between the academic and the practical. The winter non-resident term sends students out into the working world for a part of each year, so that they cannot take refuge in the comfortable security of academic superiority."

—Lewis Webster Jones, Bennington's 2nd president, *The Journal of Higher Education*, 1947



LAURENCE J. HYMAN

Lauren Levey '69 working as a general assistant to composer Vladimir Ussachevsky at Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in New York, 1967.



Vala Clifton '64 working as an assistant in occupational therapy for adults and recreation helper for pediatrics at the Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied Diseases. New York, circa 1961.



LAURENCE J. HYMAN

Leslie (Noyes) Cole '67 helping in the construction of a cave exhibition at the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History, 1967.

LAURENCE J. HYMAN



Linda (Feldman) Brown '69 working as a technical assistant for Equity Theater in New York, 1967. Her work included running lights and building props and sets for productions.



LAURENCE J. HYMAN

Frank Kenneth Wood '68 and **Kathy Halbreich '71** doing independent work in glassblowing at Bennington College during NRT, 1972.

“Bennington has set aside the months of January and February (sans tuition) as Field Work Term, which dates back to the College’s founding, in 1932. Most students leave campus for the duration—some even go abroad—to work at places like television networks, publishing houses, museums and nonprofit groups. The grade is based in part on the student’s interpretive essay and on the employer’s comments. It is possible to fail. While internships are often related to a student’s academic work, this is not a requirement, because the college sees the experience as ‘not just doing a specific job’ but as a way of ‘studying what it is to work.’”

—Joseph P. Fried, “Job Requirement,” *The New York Times*, January 6, 2008



Bob Davis '79 working at the San Francisco Zoo, 1978.



Donna Tartt '86 working at *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine in Boston, with C. Michael Curtis, Senior Editor, circa 1984.



Lucia (Paronetto) Caruana '85 working at Columbia University, New York, circa 1985.



Sandra Carpenter '86 preparing to sedate a wild hog for tagging and tracking, Cumberland Island, Athens, GA, circa 1985.



Three Master Teachers: Paul Feeley and Simon & Herta Moselsio

a special exhibition at the
Bennington Museum honors
their work and legacy

by Jamie Franklin

the Bennington Museum recently paid honor to Bennington College's 75th anniversary and three pioneers in its visual arts program through two exhibitions featuring the work of Simon and Herta Moselsio and Paul Feeley. On display February through May 2008, the exhibitions recognized the College's important and influential role in bringing the visual arts into liberal arts education and the contributions each of these practicing artists and teachers brought to that endeavor.

The following piece is adapted from materials prepared for the exhibitions by the museum's Curator of Collections, Jamie Franklin.

From its very first academic year in 1932–33, the arts have played a significant role in the curriculum and overall character of Bennington College. Unlike most liberal arts colleges during that era, Bennington intentionally placed the visual and performing arts on equal footing with all the other disciplines being taught. Founded on a theory of “learning by doing,” the teaching of art at Bennington has always been a hands-on endeavor. Edwin Park, the College's first “director of art,” described the department's introductory course as an attempt to provide students with knowledge and experience through “actual experiment with a variety of materials revealing the potentialities for expression of form, color, space, sound, movement, texture, weight, etc., and the enlargement of sensory and emotional experience.” Concomitant with this emphasis on materials and experimentation, Bennington's art faculty has consistently been composed of practicing artists, teachers who were simultaneously creating their own work while passing their knowledge and technical know-how on to their students.

Simon (1890–1963) and Herta (1894–1978) Moselsio and Paul Feeley (1910–66) all embodied this notion of the practicing artist/teacher. As three of Bennington’s earliest and longest-serving art faculty members, they were all instrumental in establishing the school’s reputation as one of the most innovative and progressive in the country.

In celebration of the College’s 75th anniversary and in recognition of its important role in arts education, the Bennington Museum organized two exhibitions to honor the Moselsios and Feeley, both of which were on view February through May 2008.

Simon and Herta MOELSIO

The Moselsios came to Bennington College in 1933. Europeans by birth, Simon and Herta moved to New York City from Berlin in 1924 to escape the growing economic crisis of the Weimar Republic. Upon their arrival in the States, they quickly developed a popular critical reputation for their sculpture and ceramics, and were especially noted for the exquisite craftsmanship of their work. It was this reputation that brought them to the attention of Edwin Park, who invited them to join the art department faculty. Upon their arrival, Simon established a sculpture department that was to become a cornerstone of the school’s art division, while Herta developed a place for ceramics as a valid academic pursuit.

The couple’s effectiveness as teachers no doubt stemmed from their early training. A native of Kiev,

Russia, Simon moved to Berlin at the age of 21. It was there that he met Herta, a native of the city and an aspiring art student. At the time, Berlin was home to an extremely vibrant artistic community. The Moselsios learned their craft in the same milieu as the Expressionist sculptors Wilhelm Lehmbruck and Ernest Barlach, printmaker and sculptor Käthe Kollwitz, and Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius. The Bauhaus, which espoused the primacy of form and function, and their relationship to materials, seems to have had an especially profound influence on both Moselsios. Simon worked in a wide variety of media including bronze, stone, wood, and ceramic, and his sculpture is distinguished by a sensitive use of these materials to create forms that are powerfully evocative of the subject being depicted. Through her ceramic work, Herta became incredibly knowledgeable about various clay bodies and their properties and was a diligent student of glaze chemistry. This mastery of materials undoubtedly increased the Moselsios’ effectiveness as teachers, especially in an academic environment where the students learned largely by working intimately with the materials of their particular area of study.

While at Bennington, the Moselsios struck up a strong friendship with

John Spargo, the founding director-curator at the Bennington Museum. Over the years the museum amassed an extensive collection of the Moselsios’ work that is emblematic of their diversity as artists. The recent exhibition was drawn almost exclusively from the institution’s permanent collection. In addition to a sampling of Simon’s best-known sculptures in a variety of different media, one could also see his talent as a painter and printmaker. Simon painted only sporadically early in his career, but he began to pursue the two-dimensional arts in vigor during the last decade of his life. A selection of his paintings on view in the exhibition, including an unusual Expressionist oil from his years in Berlin, showed his familiarity with the most avant-garde movements of the era, such as Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and Color Field painting.

Herta’s work was represented by a selection of her popular ceramic animal figurines. These modestly scaled sculptures range greatly in style and conception, from the bold, muscular form of the *Shire Horse*, with its dramatic gun-metal glaze, to the more whimsical and stylized *Goat*, glazed in a rainbow of variegated earth tones. The show also included a large menagerie of Herta’s miniature bronze animals and figures, many of which were originally conceived in her more familiar ceramic medium. Rounding out the exhibition was a rare example of her functional pottery, a well-proportioned vase with a deep blue glaze with subtle red highlights, and a signed photograph depicting Simon’s sculpture, *Javanese Dancer*, in front of the Whitney Museum.

MATTHIAS TARNAY



Simon Moselsio
and Bennington
student

Paul FEELEY

While teaching at Cooper Union art school in New York in the late 1930s, Paul Feeley happened to meet a recent Bennington art graduate by the name of **Helen Webster Wheelwright '37**. As it turned out, Webster would change his life in many ways. In addition to eventually becoming Feeley's wife, Webster told him about Bennington. Feeley was intrigued and by 1939 had found himself a post on the faculty where he would serve until his untimely death in 1966.

Like Simon and Herta Moselsio, Feeley was very much a working artist who was deeply concerned with the materials of his practice. He approached his paintings and sculptures with an experimental and theoretical outlook. His conceptual bent was made clear in an interview where Feeley mused, "If I could, I would get a painting done without concerning my hand with it. I'd be greatly pleased if I could make a painting into an act of the mind as against an act of craft-skill."

Working in a variety of different styles throughout his career, from figurative, WPA-style murals in the 1930s, before he arrived in Bennington, to experimentation with Abstract Expressionism in the late 1940s to mid-1950s, Feeley was constantly striving to find his own voice and to address the relationship between art and life. It was this openness and continual pursuit of answers that not only led to his success as an artist, but also made him a gifted teacher.

The work exhibited at the Bennington Museum, created late in Feeley's career, between 1958 and 1966, has a coherent and easily recognizable visual vocabulary. He made a name for himself with paintings and sculptures marked by their limited palette of vibrant colors and symmetrical, abstract forms. One of the works in the exhibition, *Calendar*, from February 1964, provides insight into both the man and his art. It was an actual working calendar that Feeley created to organize and record the daily activities in his life. In the boxes for certain days he created thumbnail sketches in watercolor of larger oil paintings to record works that were sold, finished, or being shipped to his dealer. The attention to detail and orderliness indicated by the calendar is also evident in Feeley's balanced, carefully conceived artwork.

Feeley is often associated with other artists with ties to Bennington College, such as **Helen Frankenthaler '49**, who studied with him as a student in the late 1940s, and Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski, colleagues who taught at the College and worked in the Bennington area during the 1960s. Together, these four artists created a formidable cadre of Color Field painters who dominated the American art scene during the 1960s. Feeley worked closely with these figures, and his paintings and sculptures share some of the characteristics of their work, such as the use of raw, unprimed canvas, brilliant fields of color, and abstract forms. Yet Feeley's work from the late 1950s until his death in 1966 is distinctively his own. It brings together threads from many of the various "schools" that dominated American art during that era, including Color Field painting, Minimalism, Pop art, and even a hint of Conceptual art. It was his ability to soak in all these disparate ideas and to make sense of them that made him both a great artist, really a keystone of High Modernism, and a beloved teacher. In addition to his association with artists who were active locally, Feeley also had many ties with the New York art world. As the head of the art division during the 1950s and 60s, Feeley organized several important exhibitions featuring work by the most significant artists of the day including Jackson Pollock, David Smith, Hans Hoffman, Barnett Newman, and many others. These shows were a vital learning resource for the College's students, providing them with firsthand exposure to the most groundbreaking art of the era. Frankenthaler, Feeley's most lauded student, summed up the strength of Bennington College's art division when she stated that "exposure to people who are fully practicing their art does give the learning experience a certain aura and magic."

I don't think the Moselsios' or Feeley's contribution to Bennington College's innovative educational system could be summarized any better.



Paul Feeley in the classroom

TED GOODMAN, COURTESY OF THE BENNINGTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Jamie Franklin is the curator of collections at The Bennington Museum, which was founded as the Bennington Historical Association in 1852. Over the years the museum's mission has expanded to preserve and interpret the heritage of southern Vermont and neighboring regions as well as to provide a venue for the visual and performing arts.

75th Anniversary Celebration TAKES TO THE ROAD

● In many ways, Bennington's 75th anniversary celebration was like a party that you didn't want to end.

Beginning with the largest-ever all-class reunion in October, the celebration then rolled off campus, reaching out to hundreds of alumni across the country. In just three months, the celebration covered five cities and brought together some of our oldest and most recent alumni to honor Bennington's past and to celebrate its future. Here's a brief look at some of the places and ways in which we celebrated.



NEW YORK CITY April 23, 2008, The New Museum

New York City Host Committee

Elizabeth Mason Walbridge '39
Kathleen Harriman Mortimer '40
Pearl Friedman Staller '43
Patricia Newman Nanon '44
Hudas Schwartz Liff '47
Kathleen Oliver Parker '47
Elinor Mannucci '48
Marianne Byk Schnell '50
Barbara Ushkow Deane '51
Frances Wells Magee '51
Nancy Harrow '52 & Jan Krukowski
Harvey Lichtenstein '53
Drue Romano Weild '53
Charlene Solow Schwartz '54
Judith Backer Grunberg '55
Catherine Orloff Morrison '55
Kay Crawford Murray '56
Helen Isaacs Barer '57
Hadassah Houtz Hoffman '57
Lois Landau Mazer-Zelman '57

Laura Kesselman Skoler '57
Priscilla Alexander '58
Jane Eisner Bram '58
Sheila Hirschfeld Jacobs '58
Frances Grossman Bull '60
Arlene Heyman '63
Barbara Goldberg Rohdie '63
Barbara Fisher '68
Roxana Barry Robinson '68
Susan Paris Borden '69
Arthur Becker '72
Rashid Dilworth-Silvera '72
Tina Takayanagi Barnett '73
& Peter Barnett '73
Alexandra Hughes '73
Elizabeth Swados '73
Alan Kornberg '74
Elizabeth Schulz '74
Polly Runyon Wittrock '74
Michael Connolly '76
Margery Perlmutter '76

Marion Markham '77
Vanessa Guerrini-Maraldi
Wilcox '78 & John Wilcox P '08
Jack Bankowsky '81 &
Matthew Marks '85
William Ingraham '82
Marri Davis Moffly '86
Aryn Chapman '95
David Anthony '96
Seth DeCroce '98
Paul Olmer '98
Talesin T. Thomas '98
Garin Marshall '00
Garth Silberstein '01
John Boyd '03
James & Jane Harrison P '07
Jane Donaldson
Michael Hecht
John Kenney
Seth Masters
Deborah Wadsworth





BOSTON

April 16, 2008
The Country Club
(Chestnut Hill)

Boston Host Committee

Carolyn Crossett Rowland '37
Mary Eddison Welch '40
Katharine Evarts Merck '46
Suzanne Eckfeldt Harding '47
Wilhelmina Eaton '50
Rosalind Moger Bernheimer '62
Amanda Spooner Frank '92
Jonathan Schwartz '92
Brendan Frank '94
Joanne Lembo '95
Justin Stone '96
Shazia Bakar '00
Bobbie Knable
Ruth Kennedy Sudduth

CHICAGO

March 4, 2008
Lincoln Schatz '86's Studio

Chicago Host Committee

Ann Meyer Rothschild '37
Karen Johnson Boyd '46
Victoria Woolner Samuels '71
Lincoln Schatz '86
Jenna White '00
Shira Sternberg '05



LOS ANGELES

February 13, 2008
Skirball Cultural Center

Los Angeles Host Committee

Carol Channing '42
Mary Hammond Storer '46
Mary Earthrowl Lewis '57
Tama Alcott Taub '59
Barry Primus '60
Julie Arenal Primus '60
Kathryn Girard '69
Amy Sawelson Landes '76
Marla Chechik Bowron '79
Tim Daly '79
Erik Holmberg '86
Melissa Rosenberg '86
Tracy Katsky Boomer '91
Asad Ayaz '00
Doris Drucker



SAN FRANCISCO

February 12, 2008
Lizland
Liz Mamorsky '60's
Studio/Gallery

San Francisco Host Committee

Helen Webster Wheelwright '37
Suzanne Heller Harris '41
Sue Rayner Warburg '52
Liz Mamorsky '60
Danielle Forestier '66
Carolyn Heimbürger Gannon '67
Kristina Brightenbach Baer '69
Michael Pollan '76
Judith Belzer '78
Paul Cello '92
Monique Jenkinson '92
Kemmo Brown Parr '98



PIONEERS SUPPORT BEN

Betty Dickinson '43 Establishes Endowment for Dickinson Science Building

In January 2008, **Elizabeth “Betty” (Harrington) Dickinson '43**, pioneer, longtime Bennington supporter, and former class secretary, made a \$300,000 commitment to establish an endowment for the care and maintenance of the Dickinson Science Building, a building named in honor of her family's long affiliation with the College. Mrs. Dickinson is the widow of Life Trustee Fairleigh S. Dickinson, Jr., who was a recipient of an honorary Doctor of Letters from Bennington College.

Mrs. Dickinson's impact on the Bennington College community has been widely felt. As a student, she studied the natural sciences and lived in Canfield, Swan, and McCullough. She served as her class's secretary in the 1950s and worked tirelessly to raise funds for Bennington. Her own substantial personal philanthropy to the College as well as support from the Dickinson Family Foundation has contributed greatly to the Bennington experience as it exists today.

Throughout her long career, Mrs. Dickinson worked as a freelance photographer. She was a WAVES member (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) in World War II and was nominated by New Jersey Governor William T. Cahill to be a member of the Senate's Public Health Council in 1972.

That same year, the Dickinson Science Building was built on campus. Designed by architect Robertson Ward, who studied with Mies van der Rohe in Chicago and who also built Bennington's Visual and Performing Arts Center, the building contains six classrooms (chemistry, physics, biology, and electro/chemistry laboratories), as well as faculty offices, a greenhouse, and a herbarium. Courses taught this past spring in Dickinson included *How Do Animals Work*, *Genetics: Principles and Practice*, and *Computer Programming For Musical Application*, illustrating the broad range of intellectual inquiry that happens every day under the Dickinson roof.

The endowment established by Mrs. Dickinson will provide support for enhancing the Dickinson Science Building and the work of Bennington's science faculty and students.



Elizabeth (Harrington) Dickinson '43



BENNINGTON IN ITS 75TH YEAR

Emalea Trentman '36 Honors Her Mother's Role in Bennington's History

In honor of Bennington's 75th Anniversary, this past fall one of Bennington's pioneers, **Emalea (Warner) Trentman '36**, whose sister, **Marian Warner Trotter '39** is also a Bennington alumna, made a gift of more than \$300,000 in memory of her mother, **Mrs. Marian (Tallman) Warner**. A founding trustee (1932–36) and early supporter of Bennington College, Mrs. Warner, along with her fellow founding trustees, is credited with having “kept the enterprise alive against all odds” during the College's beginnings. Not surprising, Thomas P. Brockway—noted Bennington faculty member, 1933–65; dean of the College, 1952–61; and former acting president—referred to Mrs. Warner in his historical account *Bennington College: In the Beginning* as one of “the steadfast during those precarious years.” According to Mrs. Trentman, both of her parents were great supporters of progressive education, and it was in large part her mother's influence that led to the sisters' matriculation at the avant-garde college in the early 1930s.

A member of Bennington's first graduating class, Mrs. Trentman entered in 1932 from the Ethel Walker School in Simsbury, CT, and studied human development, earning a BA in this discipline and in natural sciences. In addition to these concentrations, she especially enjoyed her work in the social sciences with Mr. Brockway. Following her graduation, Mrs. Trentman held various volunteer positions, including with the Christ Church (Georgetown), the Garden Club of America, the Georgetown Garden Club, and numerous other civic organizations.

In 1974, Mrs. Trentman contacted the College with a valuable addition to the historical archives: her mother's papers from the time of her trusteeship at Bennington. In a letter that accompanied these documents, she praised the convictions of the College's founders, noting, “The original group was truly remarkable. Their vision and intelligence should never be forgotten...Those early men and women certainly put their faith and energies in creating the brave new world of Bennington College. I admire them and remember many of them with affection and great respect.”

Mrs. Trentman's leadership gift, in honor of Bennington's 75th anniversary, celebrates both the history of this innovative institution and the exciting direction in which it is heading. It will be used for campus renewal, scholarships, and the development of new curricular programs.



Emalea (Warner) Trentman '36

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ALUMNI SPEAKERS

75TH YEAR SPOTLIGHTS BENNINGTON'S OWN

As part of the year-long celebration of Bennington's 75th anniversary, the Bennington faculty invited an extraordinary number of alumni to return to campus to speak about their work, their memories of Bennington, and the future of their respective fields. Annual academic programs like the **Visual Arts Lecture Series** and the **Adams–Tillim Lecture**, as well as special programs such as the **75 Years of Science** symposium, a young alumni **Literature Gathering**, the **New Works Ensemble**, and the **Senior Conference**, among others spotlighted the remarkable accomplishments of Bennington graduates.



VISUAL ARTS LECTURE SERIES

Mary Barringer '72, widely exhibited potter and sculptor.

Dan Cameron '79, visual arts director, Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans.

Susan Crile '65, professor, Department of Art, Hunter College; painter and printmaker.

Arjun Desai '88, co-partner, Desai/Chia Architecture.

Stephen Frailey '79, chair, Photography Department, School of Visual Arts, New York; fine art photographer.

Perry Hoberman '77, associate research professor, Interactive Media Division, University of Southern California School of Cinema-Television; installation artist.

Helen Mirra '91, artist; associate professor, Department of Visual and Environmental Studies, Harvard University; 2008 Adams-Tillim Lecturer.

Odili Donald Odita MFA '90, widely exhibited painter; associate professor of art, Tyler School of Art.

NEW WORKS ENSEMBLE

Sibyl Kempson '95, performer and playwright.

Melissa Ross '94, company member, LAByrnth Theater Company; playwright.

Matt Swan '95, playwright and screenwriter.

LITERATURE GATHERINGS

Gretel Ehrlich '67, travel writer, novelist, and essayist.

Lee Johnson '07, short story writer.

Chandler Klang Smith '05, writer.

Jason Myers '02, writer.

Valerie Wetlaufer '05, writer.

Alec Wilkinson '74, staff writer, *The New Yorker*.

75 YEARS OF SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

Judith Schneider Bond '61, professor and chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Penn State University College of Medicine; president, American Society for Biochemistry.

Robert L. Davis '79, professor, epidemiology and pediatrics, University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine.

Evan DeLucia '79, professor and head, Department of Plant Biology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Jason Fridley '97, assistant professor, Department of Biology, Syracuse University.

Alexander McAdam '87, director, Infectious Diseases, Diagnostic Laboratory, Children's Hospital Boston; assistant professor of pathology, Harvard Medical School.

Andrew Vershon '79, professor, Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Waksman Institute of Microbiology, Rutgers University.

Peter White '71, professor, Department of Biology, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; director, North Carolina Botanical Gardens.

SENIOR CONFERENCE

Christopher Bishop '72, senior communications specialist, IBM Global Technology Services.

Anthony Cafritz '85, founder/director, Salem Art Works.

Heidi Hojnicky '95, English teacher, Kingswood-Oxford School.

Jacob Perkins '07, sustainability advisor, Be Products.

Melissa St. Pierre '06, associate director, Salem Art Works.

Kryssy Wright '03, freelance lighting designer/technician.

ADDITIONAL ALUMNI SPEAKERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Paul Berkowitz '81, congressional advisor, House International Relations Committee.

Margot Hoerrner '91, vice president for outreach, Friends of the United Nations World Food Program.

Jennifer Mieres '82, director, Nuclear Cardiology, North Shore University Hospital; associate professor, Department of Medicine (Cardiology), NYU Langone Medical Center.

Pril Smiley '65, electronic music pioneer.

Michael Starobin '79, orchestrator and arranger for Broadway and Hollywood shows.

Liz Swados '73, composer, theatrical director, playwright, and writer.

Taliesin T. Thomas '98, director, AW ASIA/Contemporary Chinese Art.

Joan Tower '61, Grammy-winning composer.

Dick Zigun '75, founder, Coney Island Circus Sideshow; playwright, lecturer, and performer.

30s As chairman of Springhouse Gallery, **Dorothy (Sands) Beers '38** continually meets new artists. Recently, she attended the 107th birthday party of her distant relative Yardley Chittick—the oldest living graduate of Andover and MIT.

40s Surprised to be the only Bennington alum in the recent Allied Artists of America Invitational Exhibition at the Bennington Center for the Arts, **Fay (Mowery) Donoghue '41** informs that she has exhibited recent paintings (as Fay Moore) in both New York and at a gallery in Kentucky, which has represented her for 25 years. In relation to the Allied Artists exhibition, Donoghue mentions that she cited Bennington former faculty members Paul Feeley, Stefan Hirsch, and Simon Moselsio in her statement for the catalogue.

Geraldine (Babcock) Boone '44 admits that although she does not own a computer, she reads a great deal about World War II, civil rights, and civil liberties, and spends a lot of time writing to a friend in South Africa.

Barbara (Oldden) Smith '45 remarks that since the Medicare premium for Part B will now be on a sliding scale, depending on income level, and suggests that local and federal politicians be paid in a like manner.

Although they graduated 40 years apart, **Kathryn Michel Dillon '86** and **Dorothy (Barbour) Hayes '46** regularly play tennis together. Dillon's husband, Andrew, and their children "are friends with some of my brood! Delightful!" says Hayes. Hayes also notes that she remains active in the arts: "Still painting—oil, watercolor, pastel, high-fire enamel on copper and collages. Showing here and there and taking commissions."

"It was great seeing my classmates again," declares **Linda Strobel Lion '47**, about coming back to campus in October for her 60th reunion.

Focusing mostly on photography and collages, **Jane (Hopper) Ware '47** remains very active in the art world.

"Absolutely delightful," **Nancy (Lindau) Lewis '49** affirms with regard to the two Prairie Home Companion cruises she has just been on with her sister, **Judith Lindau McConnell '46**. She also recently had a nice visit with **Helen Frankenthaler '49** and **Miriam (Marx) Allen '49**.

It is with great sadness that **Alison (Hennig) Moore '49** reports the passing in September of her husband of nearly 60 years, Thomas E. Moore (USAF Ret). He was buried at Arlington with full military honors.

Leaving Kennebunk, ME, behind, **Mary (Rickard) Paul '49** has just completed a move to Sarasota, FL. "Sarasota offers much in the worlds of art and music," she affirms, and she is pleased to no longer have to endure Maine's endless winters. She hopes to continue her writing and painting there. She volunteers by teaching reading to first graders in a public school.

50s "Would love to have graduated from Bennington, but the alternative is a happy success," **Barbara (Bowles) Coolidge '50** admits. Coolidge graduated from Simmons College in Boston 20 years later. She currently enjoys her life with a "patient" husband, four children, five grandchildren, and many Scottish terriers.

Joan (Walls) Gaffney '50 retired in 2006, after 39½ years in the working world.

Working mostly with juvenile delinquents, **Joanne (Evans) Wehe '50** currently works as a substitute teacher. She is on the Pinellas County School Board, in Florida. She spent her Non-Resident Terms of '49 and '50 with the Navajo and now works with the Sioux Indians. At 78, Wehe is always trying something new. Her endeavors have included parasailing, a master's from Nova University in 1986, and constant travel, including recent trips to Antarctica and the Mediterranean.

Joan Hutton Landis '51's first book of poetry titled *That Blue Repair* will be published this spring. "As Howard Nemerov used to say of my papers—"better late than never,"" Landis comments.

A workshop reading of *My Swan: The Passions of F. Scott Fitzgerald* by **Nancy Harrow '52** took place on April 28, 2008, in the large rehearsal room at Lincoln Center Theater. In addition, Harrow brought her musical drama *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* to the Culture Project in New York City for a limited run in early May, 2008.

Ruth (Becker) Buell '53 is sad to report that her beloved husband died in May. Currently, she is "Uncle Ruthie" on KPFK-FM Los Angeles, CA. Buell's weekly radio show includes stories, music, poetry, and live shows for all ages. Tune in Saturday mornings at 8 a.m. Buell also performs in concerts, leads workshops, and has released three CDs. Additionally, she is a special education music teacher at the Blind Children's Center in Los Angeles.

Frances (Smith) Cohen '53 premiered a major dance work, *Lest We Forget*, October 18–21, 2007, at the Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix. The

2007–08 season marks her 20th season as artistic director of the resident professional modern dance company for the Herberger Theater. This new work was based on the premise: “What if the Holocaust had never happened?” With music by Sergei Prokofiev, original poetry by Marcie Kraft and 10 dancers, it attempted to answer the questions of how some specific shortened lives would have continued, i.e. Anne Frank. This season also offered the 17th annual modern ballet, *Snow Queen*, with a cast of 150 children and 45 adult dancers. In March, *Made in the USA* was performed and in April *Voices* was produced; “using American poets as resource material and with choreography from guest artists and company members,” Cohen explains.

Living in New Jersey and now married for 54 years, **Ruth (Maslow) Fischer '53** has three children and five grandchildren.

Drue (Romano) Weild '53 lives in Pelham, NY, where she is very involved with Philanthropic Educational Organization (P.E.O., www.peointernational.org), which promotes educational opportunities for women. Both her mother-in-law and sister-in-law were longtime members, and Mrs. Weild, who was nominated by friends and colleagues in Pelham, has served as her chapter's president, as a delegate to NY State Conventions and, most recently, as a NY State delegate to the International Convention in Minneapolis, MN, in September 2007. Mrs. Weild's daughter, Kim Alison Weild, a teacher and director of theater, is also a member of P.E.O. Little did seven female students, who started P.E.O. at Iowa Wesleyan University on January 21, 1869, realize that the membership would grow to one-quarter million women throughout the United States and Canada. Through their programs, the P.E.O. has awarded approxi-

mately \$89 million dollars to women through scholarships and low-interest loans in the pursuit of higher education.

Catherine Orloff Morrison '55 is sad to announce the passing of her beloved husband, **William Golden**, back in October. William Golden was a former trustee and a great friend to the College. *Editor's note: Please see Mr. Golden's obituary on page 46.*

Faith (Bancroft) Schrader '55 informs that she has recently spent time traveling the Northeast and then South Carolina with her grandson Derek, before returning to his home in Ohio. Schrader especially took pleasure in the interesting walks, swims, and horseback riding enjoyed along the way.

Having completed the filming of a documentary about her teaching actors, **Suzanne (Stern) Shepherd Calkins '56** informs that she also had a major role in *Harold*, a film that will be released this spring.

Sheila (Solomon) Dobbin '56 is still thriving in Arizona, where she is enjoying retirement. Dobbin and her husband have six grandchildren ranging in age from 2 to 22, and they have just recently been blessed with their first great-grandchild.

Citing 34 years of excellent professional performance, Rockland Community College, Suffolk, NY, promoted **Phyllis (Lipton) Krasnow '56** to the status of Professor Emerita in June 2007.

The New York State Bar Association honored Bennington and Columbia Law School alumna **Kay (Crawford) Murray '56** with the inaugural Kay Crawford Murray Award, during the NYSBA's annual meeting in New York City in Jan-

uary 2008. The award is to be presented annually by the NYSBA's Committee on Women in the Law and celebrates an individual who, in the spirit of Murray, recognizes the value of diversity in the legal profession and is committed to advancing the professional development of women attorneys. Jon Sullivan, the NYSBA's manager of media services, wrote in the January/February edition of the *State Bar News* that Murray is a “trail-blazing attorney of color who has focused significant efforts toward highlighting and helping assuage gender bias issues in the legal profession.”

“Sorry I missed the Anniversary weekend. It looked like a great party,” **Mary Lou (Peters) Schram '56** admits. Schram is giving readings of her book *Taddy and Her Husbands* at local bookstores.

Jane (Leoncavallo) Hough '59 now has Peter Gregson in her life with whom she has moved to Nevada. Hough retired from the State Department Overseas Building Program in 2005. “I love the West!” she exclaims.

Tama (Alcott) Taub '59 is still living in Venice, CA, on the canals. Her preschool is going strong and her granddaughter now attends it: “It is great fun to see her there every day.” She also has new twin grandchildren—two 7-month-old girls. They live in North Carolina, where her son and daughter are both doctors. She was sorry to miss the Anniversary weekend on campus but hopes to attend upcoming events in Los Angeles.

Paula Velsey '59 would love to hear from fellow alumni.

60s After moves all over the U.S. and abroad, **Roa (Roskin) Lynn '60** and

her husband, Bernard Robert Kripkee, have settled in Arlington, VA. Lynn informs she has had a varied career that has included both print and television journalism, writing fiction, writing for the Cultural Section of the Brazilian Embassy in Washington, DC, and government service for the state of Utah. Currently Lynn is the editorial consultant for the Ron Brown Scholar Program, which gives college scholarships and ongoing support to gifted African American high school seniors who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Lynn claims, “without a doubt Bennington’s Non-Resident Term prepared me for a lifetime of interesting work in diverse fields.”

Liz Mamorsky ’60 exhibited her art in a show titled *Liz Mamorsky’s Miniatures: Phantasmagoric Paintings on Amate* at the Future Studio Gallery in Los Angeles from November 10 to December 1, 2007.

As founder and co-artistic director of The Foundation Theater in Los Angeles, **Deborah (Culver) Lawlor ’61** is happy to announce that they will begin their 18th year with the U.S. premiere of Athol Fugard’s latest play, *Victory*, which was directed by her co-artistic director, Stephen Sachs.

Baha’i is as ever **Lisa (Hartmann) Blake ’62**’s *raison d’être*. Additionally, she just returned from a pilgrimage in Haifa, Israel. She sees **Diane (Iandoli) Brandon ’67** often.

Harriet (Alper) Otto ’63 informs that after working for years as a writer but always painting on the side, she has now taken up painting at the professional level and even shows her work. She would love to hear from fellow alumni and invites all to visit her website at www.sigridsomers.com.

Carol (Abbt) Ciscel ’64 is teaching medieval history at Rhodes College in Memphis this year. She reports that her dissertation is not yet finished but is on its way.

Vivian (Bachrach) Glick ’64 informs that she has three children: Melissa, Jennifer, and Adam. Daughter Jennifer has two sons, Jake, 10, and Alex, 5; son Adam has two daughters, Zoe, 10, and Maddy, 7.

Gael Rockwell Minton ’64 is glad to report that she is still practicing clinical nutrition, flute, and farming, more specifically, Community Supported Agriculture for eight families. Her first grandchild Adelaide Exeana Minton, was born on December 11, 2007.

Elizabeth (Richter) Zimmer ’66 is delighted that **Susan Slovak-Stern ’66** has been following her career. After being the dance editor for *The Village Voice*, Zimmer is now reviewing dance and theater for the New York daily *Metro* and is a writer for *The Australian*, among other papers and magazines. She has been working as a “standardized patient” for medical training programs and is looking for a job that comes with health insurance and an office. “My apartment is overrun with books and papers,” she admits.

After 20 years of heading Montessori schools, **Marcia (Green) Gardere ’67** is now the director of the Cooke Center Institute, the research, consulting, and professional division of New York City’s largest provider of inclusive special education services.

From 2004–07, **Lonny Joseph Gordon ’67** acted as dean for the College of the Arts at Illinois State University. Gordon informs that for 2008, however, he will be an artist-in-residence and professor.

Shelley Herman ’67 informs that she designed a collection of necklaces inspired by Frida Kahlo for the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, MN, that was sold in conjunction with their Frida Kahlo exhibition, which ran from October 27, 2007 through January 20, 2008.

Barbara (Lazear) Ascher ’68 taught in the Bennington MFA program and has pub-

lished articles this year in *National Geographic Traveler*, *The New York Times*, *O at Home*, and *Town and Country*. She is currently at work on her new book.

Roxana (Barry) Robinson ’68 is glad to be a member of the 75th Anniversary Committee. Her new novel, which is being published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, is forthcoming. She is currently teaching at The New School in New York City.

“We are finally empty nesters!” exclaims **Doreen Seidler-Feller ’69**. Daughter Scholie works in New York City as a photographer and art coordinator and her son, Shaul, just began college, also in the city. “It’s sweet that they’re together!” Seidler-Feller remarks.

70s Still kindling her love for ceramics—and mixed media pieces—**Elaine Anne Gismondi Serrato ’70** is now looking for a gallery. She is also reaching out to all alumni with publishing or writing experience, especially to those with class years ranging from ’70 to ’79 as well as alumni with disabilities, to help her find a publisher and to assist her with her work on her diaries.*

Madeleine E. Dubrovsky ’72 is currently a French teacher in the elementary school at Columbia University, is working on an acting career, and has just moved into a “great apartment.” She would love to hear from people and admits, “Bennington still is one of my life’s greatest experiences!”

Alexandra (Reed) LaJoux ’72 has released several recordings. Visit www.alexmusicstudio.com to hear her work.

Alexandra O. Hughes ’73 was married on October 2, 2006. “For the first time ever!” she exclaims. Her two stepdaughters and husband deal in Old Masters paintings. The family divides their time between Paris and New York. Hughes is semi-retired from singing and is in the process of writing a book.

Mary Busch '74 is living in Redhook, NY, where she is working on her first novel, which she hopes will be published in the coming year. This all-absorbing task has precluded her from traveling or doing much else. She invites her former classmates to give her a call.

Amy (Sawelson) Landes '76 is busy in Tarzana, CA, keeping all those balls in the air—working, raising two teenage children, and volunteering with her husband, Stan Landes, for Autism Speaks, which raises money to fund autism research. “I do not sleep,” she writes.

The works of architectural photographer **Maxwell MacKenzie '76** were displayed recently in an exhibition entitled *Stone to Steel—Spanish Architecture from the Romans to Calatrava*, at The American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. MacKenzie also gave an illustrated lecture in October 2007, at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Additionally, over the summer he held a signing for his new book of photographs *Markings* in Minnesota—after publishing two previous award-winning volumes, *Abandonings* and *American Ruins: Ghosts on the Landscape*. To see his work, visit www.maxwellmackenzie.com.

Derrik Jordan a.k.a. **Derrik Hoitsma '77** has received a commission this year from the Sage City Symphony in Bennington to write a piece that premiered on February 24, 2008, on campus. The 25-minute piece for string orchestra and percussion titled *Four Unknowns* has four movements with each movement named for a different unknown: “Dark Matter,” “Tipping Point,” “Quantum Chaos,” and “Monkey Mind.” Jordan graduated Bennington with a BA in music and studied with Henry Brant, Vivian Fine, Otto Luening, and Milford Graves. Jordan wishes to send out “a big hello” to all his old friends for those wonderful and memorable days at Bennington.

Creating Karma, **Jill Margot Wisoff '77**'s first feature film, just screened at the

Cape May New Jersey State Film festival. The film's UK premiere took place at the Portobello Film Festival's 2nd Filmmaker's Convention on December 11, 2007, and in August 2008, Wisoff's film will screen at the 2008 Portobello Film Festival—the largest film festival in the UK.

Patricia “Tish” Tyson '78 received a master's in landscape architecture from UMass Amherst and currently works for the National Cemetery Administration in Washington, DC.

80s “It's a big year,” reports **Diane (Peepas) Steiker '80**, who missed the fall alumni festivities, as she's a high school debate coach and just started a new post at the Bronx High School of Science. She informs too that her daughter is graduating high school. Steiker admits it was fun to look through the new alumni directory and wishes her best to all.

Gwen (Ebeling-Koning) Waddington '80 was at the Hamptons International Film Festival in October with her sister, Natasha Sigmund, who works for the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation. There they saw **Mitchell Lichtenstein '78**'s new film, *Teeth*. “Wow!” adds Waddington, “Like Tom Harris, a jovial Santa Claus figure in person, who created the legendary Hannibal, it was jaw dropping to see the tale that unassuming Mitchell has spun!”

An art and drama graduate, **Susan Grossman '81** is still indulging her passion for drawing, most recently with an exhibition entitled *New Drawings*, which was on view in October 2007 at the DFN Gallery in New York City. “Always thanks to Bennington!”

Eve Nathalie Kaplan '81 is remembering her years at Bennington as her 15-year-old daughter, Simone, begins to think about college. Kaplan has a business gilding antique furniture in NYC.

Robin (Goodman) Dash '83 was pleased to announce a one-person show of her art, back in September. *Don't Climb the Pyramids* was on view at the Allston Skirt Gallery in Boston, MA.

“Pilgrim Girl,” one of **Mary Otis '83**'s stories from her collection *Yes, Yes, Cherries*, was positively reviewed in *The New York Times* on December 31, as part of the new Tin House anthology, *Do Me: Tales of Love and Sex*. *Yes, Yes, Cherries* was also selected for the E-online Best Books of 2007. “I want to thank everyone for showing my book so much support this past year.”

Robin Flicker '84 is very saddened to report that **Heidi Schulz '84** passed away on September 29, 2007, after a courageous battle with cancer. Heidi leaves behind her beloved children, Tess and Owen Matthews; the father of her children, **James Matthews '83**; her companion, Michael Updike; her parents, siblings, and many dear friends. “Heidi was an amazing woman, and Bennington remained alive in her mind and imagination long after she left,” Flicker remarks. “It is, therefore, only fitting that she remain alive in the collective imagination of Bennington.” Flicker asks all who knew Heidi to please read a poem (preferably by Wallace Stevens) in her dear friend's honor.

Charrette (Boogaerts) Boyce '85 moved to Christchurch, New Zealand, three years ago with her husband, Roger, a painter and art critic, who teaches at the University of Canterbury. They have a 2-year-old son, Enzo. “It took moving to New Zealand to have a baby!” Boyce jokes. “I have a pilates studio that was built off the back of our house overlooking the Pacific Ocean, where I teach three days a week and play with Enzo the other days. Gorgeous beaches, surfing, and tramping are a regular enjoyment,” Boyce reports. She welcomes emails from her classmates at charrette@gmail.com.

Anthony Cafritz '85 informs fellow Benningtonians that the Salem Art Works folks in Salem, NY, are hard at work on many initiatives for the coming year. GLO, their hot and cold glass shop will continue to grow, and iron symposia will also occur three times over their summer season. The season opener on June 8, 2008, will showcase the talents of a wide array of artists from a multitude of disciplines, including the sound art of Leif Inge from Oslo, Norway. SAWfest on July 19 will host cutting-edge music from across the country such as sculptor/musician, instrument-builders Neptune, and the avant-minimalist strains of Jonathan Kane's *February*. Its newly revamped website, administered by **Boaz Sender '07**, with image content from **Eva Fitzgerald '96**, can be found at www.salemartworks.com. Cafritz also wants everyone to know that, as of this year, Salem Art Works is a recognized nonprofit public charity. **Melissa St. Pierre '06** is the associate director for Salem Art Works and would like to extend a warm welcome to her fellow alums: "We look forward to seeing you out and about on the beautiful, 119-acre Salem Art Works campus!"

90s **Jonathan Kinzel '90** just began a graduate program in dance at Sarah Lawrence College to be completed in spring 2009.

It is "good news all the way around" for **Margot Hoerrner '91**. On January 19, Hoerrner hosted a party at her home in Washington, DC, for Bennington alumni and current students, and she was recently elected to the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, representing 2,000 citizens to the DC City Council and Mayor Adrian Fenty. Her district includes Howard University, the 9:30 Club, the Kelly Miller and LeDroit Park Public Housing units, and a stretch of Georgia Avenue, which will be undergoing transformational commercial and residential redevelopment. Hoerrner continues to work for the Unit-

ed Nations World Food Program, where she has just been promoted to VP of Outreach. She is planning a trip to Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya this spring. Hoerrner invites her classmates to be in touch with her at hoerrner@gmail.com.

Recently named a 2008 NEA Fellow at USC Annenberg's Arts Journalism Institute in Theater and Musical Theater, **Wendy Rosenfield '91** is now a theater critic for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and is still married to Rich Wiener. Together, they have two kids, a daughter and son, 9 and 6. They divide their time between their homes in Pennsylvania and Colorado, but "never, ever run into any Bennington people anymore. I still see **Laura (Gross) Lippman '91**—who recently relocated to Florida, where she is teaching theater at a small private college," Rosenfield writes, "and can't find **Paul Toma '91**'s phone number." For anyone wishing to contact her, Rosenfield's email is wendy_rosenfield@yahoo.com.

Elisabeth Krupp '94 (a.k.a. Eda Kirkpatrick) hopes all is well and misses everyone. She is "happy at home" with her two kids.

William F. Scully '94 has finished his restaurant consultation position at Hunter's, an American Grill in Bennington. There he assisted managers as they hired new staff and implemented new policies, changed the menu, and completed one full stage of reconstruction after the 2005 fire, which destroyed the back portion of the building. He is pleased to leave Hunter's in the capable hands of the new team, and wishes the restaurant much continued success in the years to come. Scully is excited to turn his focus to Pangaea, Powers, Allegro, and the booming catering business that he's been doing in weddings and special events. He thanks all for their continued support.

Back in September 2007, **Thomas Dunn '96** received a Bessie Award (named in

honor of **Bessie (Schonberg) Varley '36**) for his visual design work on **Deanna "DD" Dorvillier '89**'s *Nothing is Importantttt*, which played at The Kitchen in NYC.

On July 14, 2007, **Carrie Cross '97** and **David Choi '96** welcomed Tristan Yoengjae Cross Choi into this world.

Mary Early '97 informs that Evan Reed, a former Bennington sculpture faculty member (1996), is currently a member of the fine art faculty at Georgetown University, where he organized an exhibition of her new work. In September 2007, Early was also recognized as one of 11 finalists for the 2007 Trawick Prize: Bethesda Contemporary Art Awards & Exhibition. In addition, one of her sculptures was acquired last year by the U.S. Department of State for permanent exhibition at the U.S. Embassy in Panama.

00s **Ralph P. Pillischer P '00** informs that son **Matthew Pillischer '00** just celebrated his 29th birthday and married wife Yea Afolabi. **Clark Loro '00**, **Paul Kikuchi '00**, and **Alex Vittum '01** served as best man and groomsmen respectively. After their honeymoon, Matthew commenced study at Temple University Law School, with an emphasis on public interest law, and Yea continued work as a doctoral candidate in sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. Both expect to complete their coursework by May 2010 and currently reside near the Penn campus.

Lorin Alder '01 is enjoying his new job with Easter Seals/Department for Children and Families, where he teaches life skills to teenagers in foster care. He is living with his fiancée and their two dogs on a small lake near Middlebury, VT.

William and Marilyn Rosskam P '01 inform that their son **Jules Rosskam '01** is
(Continued on page 43)

Now Showing: Brooks Ashmanskas '91

What do Bud Frump, Carmen Ghia, Tommy Tune, and Bob Fosse all have in common? **Brooks Ashmanskas '91**. In his relatively young post-Bennington career, Ashmanskas has held major roles in eight Broadway shows; performed in numerous Off-Broadway and regional productions; received a 2007 Tony nomination for his featured performance in *Martin Short: Fame Becomes Me*; and co-written a musical adaptation of *House of Mirth*. He has much to be proud of, and yet, his demeanor is a refreshing combination of unassuming and appreciative.

At Bennington, Ashmanskas spent his first year saying “yes” to every part he was offered—which made for a very busy theatrical experience and an admittedly reactive academic approach. He notes that this first year was a wake-up call of sorts for him, prompting him subsequently to become much more focused on identifying what he could manage and accomplishing it. As he points out, college is a shifting point in people’s lives—a period when productivity or stagnancy has equal chance to prevail, depending on one’s circumstances, environment, and personal ethos—and Bennington offers students the opportunity to direct their own paths through self-exploration and self-perception.

During this time, faculty members Bill Dixon (music faculty, 1968–95); Phebe Chao (literature faculty, 1973–82, 1984–94); and Nicholas Martin (drama/dance faculty, 1979–91)—a long-time friend and colleague—were important influences. As Ashmanskas observes, “One of the great things about Bennington is the ability for faculty and students to work together closely and to be collaborators in education.” As a result of this partnership

at Bennington, Ashmanskas and Martin have remained friends, working together in performances, including *Present Laughter*, at the Huntington Theatre in Boston, MA, where Martin served as the artistic director from 2000 until this spring.

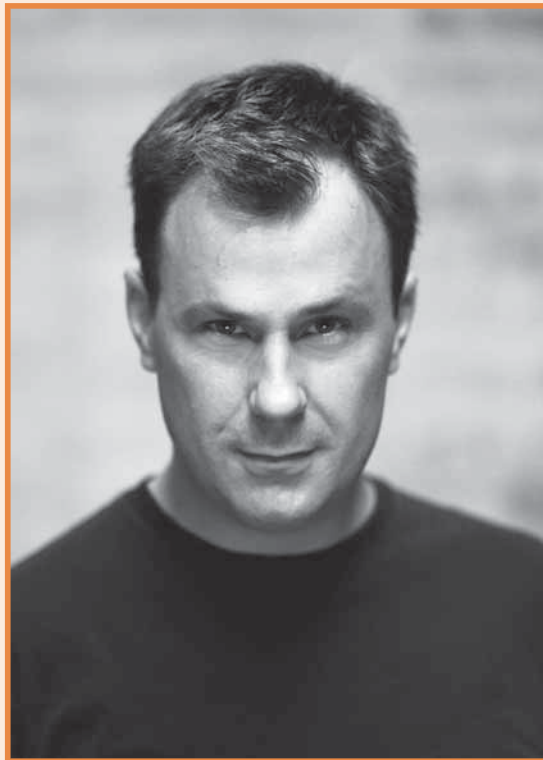
Following Bennington, Ashmanskas garnered a number of

exciting opportunities to work with and make connections with many established directors and actors, and then earned his first Broadway role starring opposite Matthew Broderick and Sarah Jessica Parker in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* a mere four years after graduating. Another Broadway show followed quickly on the heels of that one and, thus, his career had officially begun. Most recently, Ashmanskas could be seen starring in the Roundabout Theatre Company’s Broadway production of *The Ritz* as Chris, a gay-bathhouse fixture caught up in the comic antics of a heterosexual sanitation worker (Kevin Chamberlin) hiding out from his homicidal brother-in-law and of an amateurish cabaret singer (Rosie Perez) in search of her big break.

When asked about his greatest career risk, Ashmanskas quickly responds, “Every time I go on stage.”

With a laugh, he qualifies: “Honestly, as an actor, there is no such thing. Acting *is* a career risk.”

So, what words of wisdom would he pass along to aspiring actors in the Bennington community? “Know who you are and offer that up—and know that is all you have to offer,” Ashmanskas advises. “There are tons of other people out there doing the same thing you are and working just as hard. The only difference between you and someone else is who you are. It is important to stay true to that.”



Tracy (Boomer) Katsky '91: Taking Creative Risks at Nickelodeon

When Nickelodeon decided to give itself a good-natured creative kick in the *SpongeBob SquarePants*, one of the people it hired was **Tracy (Boomer) Katsky '91**.

Katsky joined Nick earlier this year as senior vice president of development and original programming, a new top-level position at Nickelodeon. "They're reinventing themselves—who they are and how they do business—re-examining the rules, opening themselves to all sorts of new ways of looking at the channel...." It's proving to be a refreshing change for this seasoned television comedy veteran.

Katsky traces her first experience in television to a Field Work Term job in which she interned for a TV producer in Los Angeles. That internship led to a paid position after graduation, which Katsky says "opened a lot of doors for me, in terms of meeting people and understanding how the business works."

"If you work in TV, you get invited to a million showcases, so every night I would go to comedy clubs and take home five or six scripts. If you do that regularly, you start to develop an eye. And when you take all that work off your bosses' plates, they're grateful for it." Katsky was promoted, and eventually went to work for producer Gail Berman (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*). Berman became her mentor and invited her to help launch a new company called Regency Television.

At Regency, Katsky served as senior vice president and oversaw the comedy division, where, as she puts it, "we lucked into *Malcolm in the Middle*, which put us on the map as a company and as executives." A string of senior vp positions followed: first at Fox, where she helped to develop and produce *The Bernie Mac Show*, *Arrested Development*, and *Undeclared*, among others; then at HBO Independent Productions.

In the meantime, Katsky had also gotten married, become a stepmother, and given birth to her first child. Then, after three years at HBO, she took time off to tend to her daughter and became pregnant again. "And who wants to hire you pregnant? Well, Nick does." In fact, Katsky was seven and a half months along when she joined Nickelodeon.

As for working at Nick, she says, "It's a little bit crazy. But it's

also so much fun—it's nice to do shows that my kids can watch and enjoy."

In addition to overseeing the production of all Nick's current live action series on the West Coast, Katsky is in charge of all new series development. "Our animated hits are fantastic, and we're so happy that *SpongeBob*, *The Fairly OddParents*, and *Jimmy Neutron* continue to do so unbelievably well," she says. She's

quick to add, however, that the company doesn't want to rest on its laurels. That gives Katsky a lot of room to play with possibilities that would never be considered on the broadcast networks.

"The network comedy business is in a really tough place. It's hard for shows to get any traction—while [other networks] may be embracing new and interesting ideas for sitcoms, they're also scared of those ideas, because nothing is catching on with the audience."

"But for Nickelodeon, the animated shows and the half-hour sitcoms are really where we shine. Nick is all about trying new ideas, trying new ways of doing half-hours, being creative—not having everything be totally the same or be a revamp version of the same five ideas."

Taking risks for creativity is something that Katsky is more than happy to do, and something she connects back to Bennington. "I think what Bennington teaches you is to take personal responsibility for what you do, and for what happens as a whole to whatever group you're working with. TV is a monumental collaboration. For any given show to work, there are writers, directors, set designers, business and financial people, publicity people, scheduling people—you have to be able to work within a giant team structure and also be committed from a very personal place."

"Bennington constantly reinforced that we are the masters of our own destiny—that the energy and time and effort we put into our work had a direct effect on what we got out of it—that we shouldn't be afraid to take responsibility if we made mistakes—that it's not the end of the world, and it's more important to take that step than to be perfect. For that I'm eternally grateful. It's something I look for in other people when I hire. Because it is such an enormously lacking thing in this world."



(Continued from page 40)

due to receive his master's in film from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in May 2008.

John Boyd '03 was in a play at the Vineyard in New York City between October 30 and December 9, 2007. *The Piano Teacher*, written by Julia Cho, starred Boyd along with Elizabeth Franz, Carmen M. Herlihy, and was directed by Kate Whoriskey.

Now an associate editor at Roman & Littlefield Publishers in New York City, **Mary Catherine La Mar '03** obtained an MA from the University of Chicago in 2006.

Having finished her master's and now a PhD candidate at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, **Heidi Ann Sulz-dorf '04** is taking a year off from grad school to live in Buffalo, NY, with her boyfriend. She currently works as an executive recruiter in the health care industry "to pay the bills," she exclaims.

Vanessa M. Grasso '05 is currently living in Brooklyn and attending City College for a master's in secondary English education. She is an ELA tutor at Frederick Douglass Academy II. "Am busy but loving NYC!"

Lucy Skeen '05 informs her fellow Benningtonians that she directed a play written by **Tobias "Toby" Levin '06** and produced by **Emma Givens '07**, titled *This Quiet House*, which showed back in February at The American Theatre of Actors in New York City. Fellow alum **Ryan Biracree '07** worked as sound designer. The play is a new adaptation of the Phaedra myth that was chosen as part of the Riant Theatre's Strawberry One-Act Festival.

Ryan C. Tittle '05 still writes plays and screenplays but now under the name Robert Cole. A website dedicated to his work is now live:

www.walstonecounty.com. The website was designed by **Elizabeth Kessler '03**.

Melissa St. Pierre '06 recently wrapped up booking and performing an East Coast/Midwest tour with label mates Collections of Colonies of Bees and Megafauna (featuring **Joseph "Joe" West-erlund '05** on drums, electronics, and backing vocals), and a recording for Table of the Elements in Milwaukee, WI. Her disc of solo-prepared piano compositions is collectively titled *Specimens* and will ship to independent record stores in the U.S. and Japan on June 17. She will make her debut appearance at South by Southwest Music Conference this March, and will host a record release party on June 19 adjacent to the upside-down trees in the courtyard of Cafe Latino at MASS MoCA in her hometown of North Adams, MA.

Katherine McCrory '07 and **David Dibler '07** are pleased to announce their engagement.

Nicholas "Nick" Neidorf '07 is doing well post-graduation. He has taken up an old hobby again—competitive skiing. "Vermont would have been a good place to keep it up, but I was too busy being pretty

much anything," he writes. Right now he's taking a break from LA and staying with a friend in Virginia where he works at a vegan bakery, of which he is also part owner. There he trained for the Virginia Snowshoe Open, which took place the weekend of February 7. "If I win, it will ALMOST assuage the cost of the bodysuit I custom-designed for the event. It is a special lycra/lurex black unitard with the "Punisher" logo silk-screened on the back," he wrote back in February. "Once a VAPA rat, always a VAPA rat, I guess!" He invites all to stop by his shop, Pretty Girls Make Grains, for a free nondairy cupcake, if they happen to be in central Virginia.

MFA_s

Catherine Sherman MFA '06's poetry chapbook, *The Fox and the Sunflower*, will be published this spring by Finishing Line Press. Visit www.finishinglinepress.com for more information.

If you would like to contact an alumna/us listed in Class Notes, visit www.bennington.edu, click on the Alumni link and log in to the Online Alumni Community or e-mail us at alumnirelations@bennington.edu.

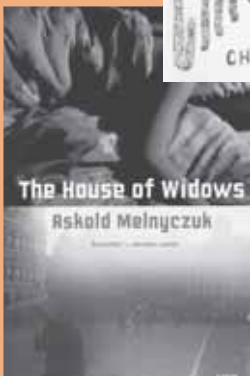
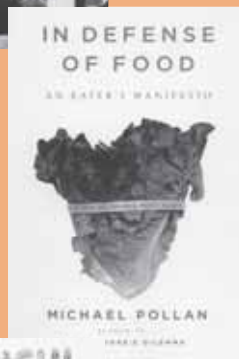
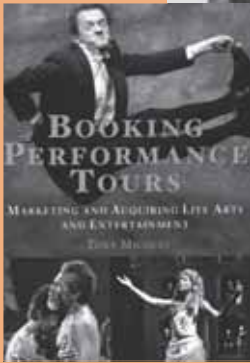
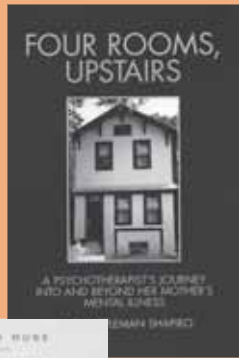
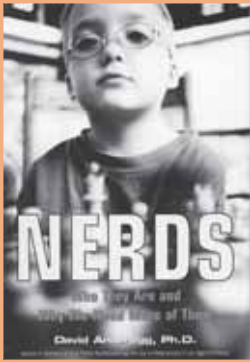
keep us posted!

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 issue and by **July 1** for the fall 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 online publication;
by e-mail to alumlett@bennington.edu; or
by mail to the Office of External Relations, Bennington College,
 One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201-6003

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

alumni & faculty bookcase



NONFICTION

David Andereg, faculty member

Nerds: Who They Are and Why We Need More of Them
(Tarcher, December 2007)

Linda Appleman Guidall-Shapiro '63

Four Rooms, Upstairs: A Psychotherapist's Journey Into and Beyond Her Mother's Mental Illness
(Cold Tree Press, November 2007)

Annabel Davis-Goff, faculty member

Walled Gardens: Scenes from an Irish Childhood
(Eland Press, June 2008; originally published by Knopf, 1989)

James Geary '85

Geary's Guide to the World's Great Aphorists
(Bloomsbury, October 2007)

Judith Jones '45

The Tenth Muse: My Life in Food
(Knopf, October 2007)

Maxwell MacKenzie '76

Markings
(Bergamot Books, 2007)

Elizabeth McPherson

The Contributions of Martha Hill to American Dance and Dance Education, 1900-1995
(Mellen Press, April 2008)

Tony Micocci '73

Booking Performance Tours: Marketing and Acquiring Live Arts Entertainment
(Allworth Press, March 2008)

Michael Pollan '76

In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto
(Penguin Press, January 2008)

Bruce Weber, faculty member emeritus

Emergence of Life
(Zygon, the journal of religion and science, November 2007)

FICTION

Charles Bock MFA '97

Beautiful Children: A Novel
(Random House, January 2008)

Askold Melnyczuk, faculty member

The House of Widows
(Graywolf Press, March 2008)

Arturo Vivante P '88, '89 former faculty member

Truelove Knot: A Novel of World War II
(University of Notre Dame Press, March 2007)

POETRY

Mary Ruefle '74, former faculty member

The Most of It
(Wave Books, June 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.

David Anderegg's newest book, *Nerds: Who They Are and Why We Need More of Them*, was reviewed in numerous publications, among them *Houston Chronicle*, *Economist*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Boston Globe*, which describes the book as "a spirited and thoughtful introduction to this culture war: the jocks or 'pops' (popular kids) vs. the nerds...." In addition, Anderegg discussed his book on Vermont Public Radio and *The Bob Edwards Show* on XM Satellite Radio.

The 2007 "100 Most Notable Books of the Year" list from *The New York Times Book Review* counted among its ranks two books by Bennington faculty members: **Steven Bach's** critically acclaimed biography *Leni: The Life and Work of Leni Riefenstahl*, and MFA faculty member **Tom Bissell's** memoir *The Father of All Things: A Marine, His Son and the Legacy of Vietnam*.

In January, **April Bernard's** talk on Jane Austen's novel *Persuasion* was part of the Vermont Humanities Council's First Wednesdays lecture series.

MFA faculty member **Sven Birkerts** was named director of the College's low-residency writing program in February. Following the death of founding director **Liam Rector**, Birkerts was appointed as the program's director.

In September, **Sven Birkerts**, **Allen Shawn**, and former visiting faculty member **Deirdre Blair** participated in the 6th annual Brattleboro Literary Festival.

In fall 2007, **Ron Cohen** was named a fellow of the American Psychological Association for his "outstanding and unusual contributions to the science and profession of psychology." Cohen also served as the keynote speaker at an annual meeting of the Center for Restorative Justice in Bennington.

Liz Deschenes' work *Green Screen #5 (with cube)* was included in the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Color Chart: Reinventing Color, 1950 to Today*, on view from March through May 2008.

Over the past year, **Mansour Farhang** has presented numerous lectures and papers relating to American foreign policy and Iranian political developments across the Middle East, Canada, and the U.S. His articles were published by *Geopolitical Affairs* and *Peace Not Terror*.

Earlier this year **Jon Isherwood** was part of a group exhibition at The Today Museum in Beijing, China, and at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, New Jersey, which won praise from *The New York Times* when it opened in December.

In October, **Jonathan Kline** spoke with an international group of curators and photo conservators at the Metropolitan Museum of Art during a week-long seminar series on 19th-century photographic processes.

In May, **Scott Lehrer** was nominated for Broadway's highest honor: a Tony Award for his sound design of the Lincoln Center revival of *South Pacific*. This nomination came off the heels of Lehrer winning a Drama Desk Award for the same show.

In September, **Mac Maharaj** was among the representatives who helped guide Iraq peace talks during a four-day summit in Finland. In November, he received the Troféu Raça Negra Award in honor of Brazil's

National Day of Black Consciousness. And in February, the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University established the Mandela/Maharaj Scholarship.

Andrew McIntyre spent the summer and 2007-08 FWT at the Max Planck Institute for Mathematics in Bonn, Germany. In November, one of McIntyre's papers was published in *Letters in Mathematical Physics*.

In the fall, **Carol Meyer** received the SUNY-Albany Alumni Association award for Excellence in Education for "her rich career in the field of education, serving as a master teacher, researcher, and center director."

Danny Michaelson's two-year-long collaboration culminated in the presentation of *Benedictus*, a new play that explores U.S., Israeli, and Iranian relationships. Along with former faculty member **Roberta Levitow**, as well as Israeli playwright Motti Lerner and Iranian-American poet and director Dr. Mahmood Karimi-Hakak, Michaelson not only worked on the creative team for the production, but also served as mediator for the culturally diverse group.

Laura Parnes' video work is part of an exhibition titled *Is You Is or Is You Ain't* at the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art. The exhibition runs through July 5.

Mirka Prazak traveled to Kenya to study the rural and poor families of the country's Kuria District. With the help of Kenyan employees and a grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Prazak collected information to analyze how Kenya's policies are affecting the poor in the Kuria District.

In the fall, **Robert Ransick's** *Casa Segura* project was exhibited in New York at Eyebeam, an art and technology center. The *Casa Segura* is a site in the Arizona desert stocked with goods necessary for Mexican immigrants' survival, but also serves as a bilingual web space where immigrants can share their stories on a touch screen interface. In the spring, Ransick, **Joe Holt**, and nine of their students unveiled *The Augmented Library*, an interactive art installation in Crossett Library.

Jennifer Rohn played Reagan in the Vermont Stage Company's season finale production of *King Lear* this spring. Vermont Stage Company is Burlington's year-round professional theatre company.

Andy Spence recently participated in the Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts at the American Academy of Arts and Letters in New York City. Spence's work, *Flicker*, was selected to be purchased through the Academy's Hassam, Speicher, Betts, and Symons Fund. In addition, the Edward Thorp Gallery in New York City exhibited paintings by Spence in a show of new works by gallery artists in May.

Jason Zimba was recently named a fellow of Student Achievement Partners, a New York-based think tank engaged in education policy research, and was awarded the Majorana Prize in theoretical physics, a medal for the best paper contributed to the volume "The Majorana Legacy in Contemporary Physics." In fall 2007, Zimba co-authored a policy brief outlining priorities for U.S. education reform and presented on the state of U.S. K-12 math standards to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in Seattle.



in memoriam

IRWIN J. ASKOW

Irwin J. Askow, who served as trustee from 1976 to 1980, died on February 16, 2008. Askow was also father to alumna Catherine Askow Thompson '74 and widower of alumna Esther Kuh Askow '46. After receiving his law degree from the University of Chicago, Askow pursued a career in law. In 2004, he received the Roger Baldwin Award for lifetime service to civil liberties from the Illinois branch of the ACLU. He was also awarded a citation by the University of Chicago's Alumni Association for distinguished public service. Over the course of his lifetime, Askow was a loyal donor to Bennington College and was close to many of its faculty members and friends.

HENRY BRANT

Montreal-born, avant-garde composer and former Bennington faculty member (1957–80), Henry Brant died April 26, 2008. In 2002, Brant won a Pulitzer Prize for his composition *Ice Field*, and he received two Guggenheim Fellowships over his lifetime. He wrote music for various mediums, including radio and film. He worked on movies *Carny* (1980) and *Good Morning Vietnam* (1987) as an orchestrator and composed music for the 1963 film *Cleopatra*, starring Elizabeth Taylor. Additionally, he was the first American composer to win the Prix Italia.

WILLIAM T. GOLDEN

On October 7, 2007, two weeks short of his 98th birthday, William T. Golden, former trustee of Bennington (1971–76) and trustee, board member, and officer of nearly 100 scientific, educational, and nonprofit organizations, passed away in New York City. Golden has been identified as one of the most influential figures in post-World War II American science and politics. Golden majored in English and biology at the University of Pennsylvania, and, in 1930, entered Harvard Business School. Golden later met Lewis Lichtenstein Strauss, atomic energy commissioner, and eventually became his assistant. Shortly following, President Truman named Golden special consultant to the director of the Bureau of the Budget—a position that marked the beginning of a long and successful career in public affairs. Golden leaves behind his wife, Catherine Orloff Morrison '55, and two daughters.

LORD RICHARD HOLME

On May 4, 2008, Bennington trustee and chairman of the College's International Advisory Council, Lord Richard Holme of Cheltenham, died at his home in West Sussex, England. Since 1959, Lord Holme had been a member of the British Liberal Party, which became the Liberal Democrats. He served as the Party President in 1981, and in 1990 became a life peer. Between 1990 and 1998, he was the party's parliamentary spokesman for Northern Ireland, and served as Chairman of the House of Lords Constitution Committee. In 2000, Lord Holme was appointed to the Privy Council, one of the oldest bodies of the UK's government, which among other things plays a role in that nation's higher education system. Lord Holme also had an extensive career as a businessman, which began at Unilever and ended as Executive Director of Rio Tinto, the international mining company. He also has considerable publishing experience, including a directorship of Penguin Books. Lord Holme was educated at Oxford and Harvard.

NELL (EURICH) LAZARUS

On January 26, 2008, Nell (Eurich) Lazarus, former trustee (1976–1983), widow of former trustee Maurice “Mogie” Lazarus, and stepmother of alumna Carol Lazarus '75 passed away. Over her lifetime, she served as acting-president and academic dean at New College (Sarasota, FL) and dean of the faculty and professor of English at Vassar College. She was also the provost, dean of the faculty, and vice president for academic affairs at Manhattanville College. As an author, Lazarus published such titles as *The Learning Industry* and *Corporate Classrooms*. Lazarus served as trustee for a variety of organizations in addition to Bennington, including Bank Street College, Salisbury School, New College Foundation, and Carnegie Foundation for Advancement Teaching.

PATRICIA (NEWMAN) NANON '44

On February 29, 2008, Patricia (Newman) Nanon '44 died peacefully at her home in New York City. Focusing in social science while a student at Bennington, Nanon studied with Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Hanya Holm, and eventually became a modern-dance patron and pioneer. She founded and directed the Yard, a widely acclaimed summer dance colony on Martha's Vineyard. As the daughter of former trustee Jerome A. Newman, the mother of alumna Victoria Woolner Samuels '71, and as a generous donor—both personally and through her family's foundation, the Jerome A. and Estelle R. Newman Assistance Fund—she maintained a lifelong commitment to Bennington and remained close to many of its faculty members and friends.

JASON SHINDER

On April 25, 2008, renowned poet and beloved MFA faculty member Jason Shinder passed away. Shinder founded the YMCA National Writer's Voice program and acted as the director of arts and humanities for the YMCA of the USA. He authored two volumes of poetry (*Every Room We Ever Slept In* and *Among Women*) and edited many volumes, including *The Poem That Changes America: 'Howl' Fifty Years Later*. The Writer's Voice program offers courses to writers and holds readings at numerous YMCAs across the country. Adrienne Rich, Galway Kinnell, Michael Cunningham, E.L. Doctorow, and Wendy Wasserstein have all taught in the program.

SALLY (LIBERMAN) SMITH '50

Alumna Sally (Lieberman) Smith '50, founder of The Lab School in Washington, DC, and nationally recognized leader in the field of learning disabilities died on December 1, 2007. "The world of special education has lost one of its leading lights," National Public Radio reported. The Lab School has been graduating students for more than 30 years, 90 percent of whom proceed on to college. Smith authored 10 books, the first of which, *A Child's Guide to a Parent's Mind*, she initially drafted during her time at Bennington. She is the recipient of the 1980 Bennington Award for her outstanding contribution to education, the Women's International Center 1990 Living Legacy Award, and the Distinguished Educational Leadership Award given by The

Washington Post, among many others. In 2001, she was honored by the American University in Washington, where she had been a professor since 1976 and oversaw the master's degree program in Special Education: Learning Disabilities.

ARTURO VIVANTE

On April 1, 2008, Arturo Vivante, renowned writer, former Bennington literature and languages faculty member (1980–1989), and father of alumni Lydia Vivante '88 and Benjamin Vivante '89, died at his home in Wellfleet, MA. Vivante is renowned for having published 70 short stories in *The New Yorker* throughout his writing career. His work was also featured in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *London Magazine*, and *The Southern Review*, among many others. Over his lifetime, Vivante was awarded the Katherine Anne Porter Award for fiction, the Richard Sullivan Prize for short fiction, the Italian Communication Award, a National Endowment for the Arts grant, a Fulbright travel grant, and a Guggenheim fellowship.

GRACE (RUSSELL) WHEELER '48

On March 26, 2008, Grace (Russell) Wheeler '48 of Bryn Mawr, PA, died of pulmonary disease. Wheeler's sister, Ella Russell Torrey '47, also attended the College. During her time here, Wheeler was active on the College farm and took classes with some of Bennington's most famous faculty members, including W. H. Auden, Martha Graham, and Peter F. Drucker; Mr. Drucker even called her "the best student" he ever had. She helped establish the Gladwyne Montessori School in Gladwyne, PA; launched a market-research firm whose clients included the U.S. Information Service, the Franklin Institute, and the World Affairs Council; and served as chairwoman of the board of William Penn Charter School in Philadelphia.

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.*

Elizabeth (Shurcliff) Lowell '36
Elizabeth (Evans) Munger '37; P '71, '73
Alice (Rowley) Cheney '39
Anne (Thomas) Conklin '40
Jane (Holmes) Wood '40
Martha (Erskine) Williams '40
Elizabeth (Thornley) Whitman '40
Phyllis R. Epstein '40
Elizabeth (Henry) Boyce '41
Anna (Benedict) Millar '41
Barbara Heywood Brownell '41
Hal Jamison '41
Evelyn (Glass) Shakespeare '43, P '73
Nika (Pleshkova) Thayer '43
Ruth Ells '43
Susan (Lancaster) Flanders '45, P '74
Eleanor White Wright '46

Elinor (Waite) Dolan '46
Narcisse Chamberlain '46
Jean (McKee) Mundt '49
Travis Foote '50
Suzanne (Mosher) Saul '51
Sheila (Gallagher) Arnaboldi '55
Marcia (Margulies) Abramson '59
Sheila (Dickinson) Malnic '61
Cynthia Chevins '76
Paul E. Beyer '84
Kate C. Green '84
Susan Connell Mettaufer MFA '05
Harold Goldstein P '66, '71
Robert Gutman, former trustee
Arthur Ross, friend
Estelle Smucker, friend



*Notifications received by May 6, 2008

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COVER PHOTO CREDITS

Row One (left to right): Sue Rees, Matthias Tarnay, Susan P. Huggins, Susan P. Huggins, Bennington Archives

Row Two: Bennington Archives, Susan P. Huggins, Courtesy of the Knoedler Gallery, Barbara Morgan, Courtesy of Katherine Friesland '07

Row Three: Photographer Unknown, Timothy Hunt, Susan P. Huggins

Row Four: Briea Della Rocca, Laurence J. Hyman, Susan P. Huggins

Row Five: Photographer Unknown, Ted Goodman, Courtesy of Catherine McGath '10, Photographer Unknown, Courtesy of Julia Walker '07

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75th anniversary gifts at work



Raphaela Rose Primus '09, Tyler Twombly '09, Kevin Lackaff-Gilligan '09, Tom Shoemaker '08, and Molly Tarlov '08 perform in *The Figaro Project*, an adaptation of Beaumarchais's masterpiece, *The Marriage of Figaro*. Jean Randich, director; Tom Bogdan, musical director; Sue Rees, set designer; and Katie Kierstead '10, dramaturge.

From lighting to set design to costumes, *The Figaro Project* was entirely produced and performed by current students and faculty members, and made possible through gifts to the 75th Anniversary Fund from our alumni, parents, and friends. Make your gift to the 75th Anniversary Fund today (visit www.bennington.edu and click on "Make a Gift" or call 800-598-2979).

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