



“A classic,” Italo Calvino states in his essay *Perché leggere i classici*, “is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say.” But neither books nor material remains speak for themselves: They require discoverers first and then interpreters who explain and evaluate, appreciate and critique them for each generation anew, re-relating the past to the present, and opening them up to new and different traditions. As the following pages will document, the members of Stanford Classics continue to do this extraordinarily well. It is a privilege to be serving as chair.

LIP-CHING



Superiore in Pisa, Sarah Derbew in Kenya led a seminar on “Decolonizing African Literature and Arts in Nairobi,” Justin Leidwanger continues his international excavations in the Mediterranean Sea, and Reviel Netz co-organized a conference on Greek

mathematics at Delphi—to name but four. These activities partly reflect the changing nature of the discipline, its interests and practices, and they testify to the scholarship my colleagues produce: be it on the word “holy” in Homeric verse (Richard Martin), “Animals that self-medicate” (Adrienne Mayor), “Sappho and the Ethereal: A Reading of Sappho fr. 2” (Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi), *Creative Pragmatics for Active Learning in STEM Education* (Michael Shanks), or the origin of cities (Ian Morris) to share a mere sample. It is a particular pleasure to witness the recognition this scholarship receives, as when Josiah Ober was awarded, in Milan, a 2025 Balzan Prize for his work on ancient Athenian democracy and its relevance today.

Returning to campus and more particularly our teaching mission, I recall being impressed last year—when we reviewed our roster of classes—by its depth, width, variety. In addition to the more traditional courses such as the core sequences in the Greek and Latin literatures (for our graduate students in particular) or core skills in archaeology and art history (“Roman Portraits and Persons,” by Jennifer Trimble), our offerings include such classes as Hans Bork’s “Pixels from the Past: Ancient Greece and Rome in Digital Media,” David Cohen’s “Human Rights in Comparative and Historical Perspective,” Miriam Kamil’s “Madness in Greek and Latin

Literature,” and Grant Parker’s “Classical California.” This mix keeps attracting undergraduate and graduate students to our program in solid numbers: This past spring, our commencement ceremony was attended by 165 people, when we were regaled by the reflections of our alumnus Zack Smith (MD, BA ‘14, Chief Resident Stanford University Department of Emergency Medicine) and celebrated such accomplishments as the price-winning senior thesis “The Legacy of *Tragoidia*: Protest Depictions in Broadway’s ‘Hadestown’” by Erica Wood and the bestowal of five doctoral degrees.

This combination of traditional and innovative courses and scholarship is all the more striking, as the size of our faculty has decreased over the years. Since our last newsletter a number of long-standing members have retired and started their next chapters: May the winds favor the onward journeys of professors Andrea Nightingale, Andrew Devine, and Rush Rehm. But may they also favor those of our recent arrivals: Miriam Kamil, who joined us as assistant professor in Latin literature from Bryn Mawr College, and Aaron Brown, Paul Johnston, James Macksoud, and Lizzy Ten-Hove, who are strengthening our program as lecturers in archaeology, history, and literature, respectively. We were also delighted to welcome back Richard Saller upon his return from the office of interim president of Stanford University.

Transitions are inevitable and partly welcome, even. Yet, the cruel loss of Sarah Muller is of an entirely different order. Sarah suffered a tragic bike accident mere weeks after she had arrived on Stanford’s campus. It is hard to describe the shock, harder still to imagine the pain her family and loved ones have felt since that day. Our heartfelt condolences and wishes have been with them, as we have mourned Sarah’s death.

[“The Future of Classics Initiative at Stanford”](#) may exemplify this vivacity: Generously funded by friends of Stanford Classics and begun under my predecessor Walter Scheidel, it has provided the framework for both graduate students and faculty members from near and far to reflect on the role of Classics in the 21st century and beyond, investigating “Institutional Change in the Ancient Mediterranean,” “Global Antiquity: Making Progress?,” “Approaches to the Other in the Greek and Roman Mediterranean,” and “The Futures of Antiquity in an Age of Digital Data and AI.” No less important is the continuous dissemination of knowledge and learning to a broader public, as is the particular mission of our [Eitner lectures](#), which near their twentieth (!) installment, thanks to Peter and Lindsay Joost’s longstanding generous support: last year we welcomed Peter Frankopan from Oxford, and this year we are delighted to be joined by Christopher Whitton from Cambridge.

Yet Stanford Classics is just as active away from its home turf. Giovanna Ceserani co-ran a digital humanities summer program at the Scuola Normale

# Classics Faculty and Staff

It is of some (if little) comfort to know that even in the hardest times we are fortunate to be able to rely on our staff. Their many contributions typically range from the operations and finances to student services and departmental events, and they basically ensure that the lights stay on in building 110. While our outstanding Director of Finance and Operations, Claudia Ortega, will be on maternity leave, we will luckily be able to rely on the expertise of Inge Klaps, who will also continue on in her (former) role as Assistant Director of Finance and Operations in the department of Art and Art History. Moises Correa has been promoted to Finance and Administration Specialist after two highly successful years as Operations and Events Coordinator, for which office we succeeded in winning Simeon Pogue, who joined us from Stanford's Residential Education. Since we are a research and teaching institution, the role of student services manager is rivaled by few in importance, and, here too, we were lucky to secure the experience and talents of Kathleen Jordan-Jump, who came to us from Stanford's Community Standards office, after Yinxuan Gu had left to pursue a graduate degree. The Greeks and Romans knew that no office is better than its occupant, and as chair I am most grateful that the various offices in our department run so admirably smoothly and efficiently. I am no less grateful to Walter Scheidel and John Tennant for continuing their stellar services as Directors of Graduate Studies and Undergraduate Studies, respectively.

As you will realize momentarily, I have merely sketched with the broadest brush the many aspects and facets of Stanford Classics: a more detailed picture will emerge from the following pages.

## **Emeriti**

Andrew Devine  
Marsh McCall, Jr.  
Andrea Nightingale  
Rush Rehm  
Susan Stephens  
Susan Treggiari

## **Chair**

Christopher Krebs

## **Director of Graduate Studies**

Walter Scheidel

## **Director of Undergraduate Studies**

John Tennant

## **Professors**

Giovanna Ceserani  
David Cohen  
Christopher Krebs  
Richard P. Martin  
Ian Morris  
Reviel Netz  
Josiah Ober  
Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi  
Richard Saller  
Walter Scheidel  
Michael Shanks

## **Associate Professors**

Justin Leidwanger  
Jody Maxmin  
Grant Parker  
Jennifer Trimble

## **Assistant Professors**

Hans Bork  
Sarah Derbew  
Miriam Kamil

## **Courtesy Professors**

Christopher Bobonich  
Alan Code  
Charlotte Fonrobert  
Ian Hodder  
Michael Penn  
Bissera Pentcheva  
Caroline Winterer  
Yinqun Zhou

## **Lecturers**

Aaron Brown  
Maud Gleason  
Paul Johnston (Mellon-Fellow)  
Lizzy Ten-Hove  
John Tennant

## **Research Scholar**

Adrienne Mayor

## **Administrative Staff**

Claudia Ortega, Director of Finance and Operations  
Inge Klaps, Interim Director of Finance and Operations  
Kathleen Jordan-Jump, Student Services Manager  
Moises Correa, Finance and Administration Specialist  
Simeon Pogue, Operations and Events Coordinator

### COVER IMAGE:

Stanford Classics community members Michelle Heeman (PhD Candidate), Sophia Wu (Major '25), Nicole Constantine (PhD Candidate), Nicholas Bartos (PhD '24) and Robert Muñiz (Major '26) paid a visit to the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento in July. They spent the summer in Sicily working with the Marzamemi Maritime Heritage Project. Photo Credit: MMHP.

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### Hans Bork

Amazing that summer is already over, and that another academic term is here! This past year has been busy and rewarding. In addition to teaching several standard courses (including the ongoing pedagogy seminar, the Latin Core III course, and my undergraduate Plautus class), I was asked to be the EDGE Faculty Mentor for the Classics Department, as well as the Faculty Sponsor for a CTL Graduate Leadership in Teaching Program conducted by graduate students Micheal Duchesne and Sinead Brennan-McMahon. In addition, I directed undergraduate Sadie Sarkisian's excellent thesis on depictions of hearing loss in the ancient world, and was secondary reader for Sawyer Niehaus' ambitious thesis translation of Plautus' *Captivi*. Some health problems kept me from traveling to much, but I did give several invited talks, and also sat for an interview with Lexie Hennings' *Ancient Hours Podcast*, which was a lot of fun. (And, as a plus, I now have a resource for explaining to people in my family what it is that I do...)

In terms of scholarship, I finished up two different shorter pieces, both appearing this year: one is an article in *Phoenix*, on the somewhat mysterious genre of Roman mime comedy. The other is on "local(e) jokes" in Plautus, and will appear in a volume on ancient mobility. However, the biggest news is that I finished a draft of my monograph, which is a complete rewrite of my doctoral dissertation. Entitled *Making Fun of Plautus: Humor and Abuse*, it argues for a new way of thinking about the many unpleasant aspects of Roman comedy based on the idea that all comedy is inherently disquieting, and that we find transgressions funny only in specific circumstances. The book documents how and why Plautus managed such circumstances, and is

currently under peer review with Cambridge University Press.

My proudest achievements by far have to do with my family: earlier in the summer my daughter graduated from high school, and just a few weeks ago we helped her move to Los Angeles where she is starting college at UCLA. She was accepted to the very selective school of Theater, Film, and Television, where she will specialize in scenic design. In addition, my wife completed formal training for her new job as an oncology RN, and is now working at Stanford hospital. And my son is beginning violin lessons (as well as 4th grade) this year, and tells us that when he grows up he plans to be an astronaut...who also designs video games and "uncovers the mysteries of the cosmos."

### Giovanna Ceserani

Last academic year finally saw the publication of the digital Grand Tour project I have worked on for many years and with numerous collaborators, including many of our students, both graduate and undergraduate. *A World Made by Travel: the Digital Grand Tour* (SUP 2024) is a multifaceted work examining thousands of travels to classical Italy in the eighteenth century. It comprises a monograph, a collection of essays, an interactive database, and classroom resources—all dynamically interlinked. As one reviewer noted, it "is more than a book," though it is also an unusual publication available only online and for free. Our department office wonderfully created a paper model for display on our publications shelf, but otherwise it exists solely as a digital edition thanks to Stanford Digital Press. Working on this project has been a lengthy experiment, and it has been rewarding to know it has

reached thousands of readers and to be invited to present it in a sort of modern Grand Tour with stops at Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Rome, Pisa, Florence, Trento, and beyond. I have launched new collaborative lines of research. Through a new IntroSem I offered this year ("Did Women Travel?") and with a group of graduate students funded through a grant from the Clayman Institute for Gender Research, I began investigating the travels of 900 women tourists we uncovered in the larger project. I look forward to exploring the intersections of these lives with the classical past. I am particularly enjoying how the computational data perspective allows me to attract students to our field in new ways: when teaching about the digital Grand Tour as Bing Professor in Florence this winter, I had a class of one classics major alongside six computer science and STEM majors, who all became passionate about the classical sites and archival materials we explored first through data.

This past year was also my final term as CESTA director, concluding six very busy and very rewarding years leading the center for digital humanities on campus. Taking stock of all that CESTA achieved during this period, I find joy in seeing the vitality of Classics within CESTA's large transdisciplinary community. Just a few highlights: a recent PhD graduate of ours has now established the first digital humanities center in Korea; classics graduates were the most numerous among this year's selected CESTA digital humanities scholars; and a Classics PhD student has served as the graduate mentor for CESTA's undergraduate program over the past five years. My first two graduate collaborators on the Grand Tour Project are now, respectively, professor of Classics at Toronto and map librarian at Harvard.



### Aaron D. Brown

The 2024/25 academic year was full of enriching classroom experiences, progress on several research projects, and new opportunities—my appointment in September as a Lecturer in the Department of Classics being the most exciting development! At the same time, I also accepted a staff position at the Stanford Archaeology Center, where I've been assisting with daily operations and special projects. It is a real privilege to be part of such a vibrant, generous community of scholars and learners, and I thank everyone for so warmly welcoming me to Stanford!

In my first year on “the Farm,” I designed and taught several new courses. In the fall, I offered an undergraduate course on *Foodways in Classical Antiquity*. Highlights included a visit to the Cantor Arts Center for a look at their sympotic pottery and a Roman banquet featuring student-made dishes based on ancient recipes—the *moretum* was a hit! In the spring, I offered another new course, *Etruscan Archaeology*, open to both undergraduate and graduate students. Particularly memorable was a field trip to the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at UC Berkeley, home to the largest Etruscan collection on the West Coast. Students were granted special access to the collection, met with curators and experts in Italic material culture, and examined artifacts firsthand for a research project in the course.

In terms of my own research, I continue to be involved with several long-term projects in Pompeii, serving as the Assistant Director of the Pompeii Artifact Life History Project (PALHIP) and as a ceramics specialist for the Pompeii I.14 Project (<https://www.tupompeii.org>). While each project has its own distinct goals and methods, both are invested in the reconstruction of social dynamics and consumption patterns within a series of modest, mixed-use properties on the eastern edge of the town. As the PALHIP team and I turn our attention to synthesis and final publication, the Pompeii I.14 Project continues to generate new data through excavation. In June and July, I returned to Pompeii to supervise documentation of the latest ceramic finds recovered by the latter. While there, I also conducted a small side-project using x-ray fluorescence (XRF) spectrometry to determine the elemental composition of alloyed repairs in certain bronze cookwares found at the site. This research is part of a broader investigation into the maintenance, valuation, and longevity of Roman kitchen implements, topics which I explore in my first (in-progress) book on the socioeconomics of cooking in the Roman Empire.

Elements of these projects made their way into a series of invited talks and presentations delivered over the course of the year. In addition to a Lunch Club talk at the Stanford Archaeology Center, I also presented portions of my research at UC Berkeley, Williams College, and the annual meeting of the AIA in Chicago, receiving lots of useful feedback in return. I look forward to many more illuminating exchanges with students and colleagues in the year to come!

I am excited to return to the department with this experience. In June I organized, with colleagues at UCLA and the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa, a week-long intensive summer school in the idyllic setting of San Miniato focused on pre-modern digital humanities, in which four of our graduates excelled. I am currently organizing for the department the first international conference on AI and Classics to take place in November. After that, I will begin my research sabbatical leave in earnest, and I look forward to reporting back on that next year.

### David Cohen

In Spring Quarter 2025 Richard Saller and I co-taught our course on slavery and human trafficking, ancient and modern, with a great group of undergraduates, graduate students, and 2 DCI fellows. The course provides students with the opportunity to consider the experience of slavery and forms of unfree labor and exploitation that were integral to economy and society in ancient Greece and Rome in comparison with the historic experience of slavery in other parts of the world, as well as with the phenomenon of modern day slavery that encompasses tens of millions of persons today. We offer the course every other year.

In June 2025 Dean Arun Majumdar of the Doerr School of Sustainability approved the new Center for Sustainability in Southeast Asia, for which I serve as the director. The Center is located in the Precourt Institute for Energy in the Doerr School. In academic year 2024-2025 I was also appointed as co-director of the Southeast Asia Program in the Asia Pacific Research Center in the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies.



### Paul G. Johnston

Paul G. Johnston received his Ph.D. in Classical Philology, with a secondary field in Comparative Literature, from Harvard University (2023), after completing his B.A. and M.A. at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. Before coming to Stanford, he spent a year teaching at the University of Miami in Florida.

Paul's research focuses on the Greek and Latin literature of the Roman world. Drawing on his training in comparative literature, he approaches texts in both classical languages as products of a bilingual cultural system tied to Rome's governing classes. His work emphasizes the social and literary connections that link authors and texts across linguistic boundaries, showing how this perspective can shed light on broader questions about Roman culture and literary history. It also offers new ways of reading Greek

and Latin works together within a shared Roman cultural horizon. His current monograph-in-progress sets out the theoretical and historical justifications for this approach and uses it to interpret the literary record of the Roman empire, providing a new framework for thinking about the great cultural-linguistic interaction that defined the Roman world.

His interest in bilingualism in the Roman world reflects a broader curiosity about how language and literature shape cultural identity and historical memory. He has published on a range of topics beyond Roman literature, including Greek tragedy, ancient Greek onomastics, and the reception of the classics in the 20th century. His engagement with visual art and archaeology includes a year spent as a Regular Member at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, curating exhibitions at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery and publishing essays for contemporary art projects. In all of these pursuits, he aims to show how the study of the ancient world can speak to enduring questions about identity, cultural interaction, and historical consciousness.

### Sarah Derbew

During the 2024-2025 academic year, I spent my sabbatical year at the University of Chicago. In the Midwest, I gave talks at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University. I also delivered the keynote address at the *Res Difficiles* virtual conference, entitled "Africa in the (Classics) Classroom," and I gave guest lectures at the University of Pennsylvania and the New School in New York. As for publications, I recently co-edited the open-access volume *Classics and Race: An Historical Reader* (University College London Press) with Daniel Orrells and Phiroze Vasunia; we editors wrote the Introduction together, and I wrote an additional chapter and the Afterword.

In terms of service, I happily served as the advisor of the newly-established Stanford Community of African Scholars Alumni (SCASA).





### Miriam Leah Kamil

Miriam Kamil (pronounced KA-mil or ka-MEEL; she's not picky) received her PhD from Harvard University in 2022 after earning her master's at Oxford (2015) and BA at the University of Michigan (2013). She comes to Stanford after teaching at Bryn Mawr and Hamilton College.

Building on her dissertation work on personified emotions in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Miriam's research examines Ovid's subversive poetics. In particular, she is interested in how the poet both upends the reader's expectations for the epic genre and frames his narratives around abuses of power—rather daringly, considering the early imperial context. She presented on the intersection of Ovidian politics and poetics in June at the International Ovidian Society conference in Pisa and will revisit the topic at the upcoming SCS in San Francisco. Miriam is likewise interested in Ovid's presentation of sex and gender, which led to an article considering metamorphosis as a metaphor for emotional responses to sexual violence, published last year in *TAPA*.

Her other projects focus on classical reception and the role of the classics in shaping the modern world. While scholars continue the important work of reckoning with historical abuses of antiquity, Miriam's book, *Queer and Deviant Classics*, takes a different approach by investigating stories of underserved individuals and communities finding empowerment in the classics and drawing on ancient literature and history to further progressive causes. Several related publications are forthcoming, including a book chapter on references to Sappho in the work of Virginia Woolf, an overview of Ovid's myths of gender transformation for the Classical Association's "Queering the Past(s)" series, and an article on feminism in classics for *AJP*'s "State of Play" series.

Finally, Miriam is enthusiastic about taking classics outside the classroom. As a graduate student, she organized a Homer reading group at the Boston Veteran Center, which members of Harvard's classics department have since carried on. Last year, she won a grant from the Society of Classical Studies to host a "Sappho marathon" and poetry open-mic night in downtown Philadelphia. She is excited to find new avenues of outreach here at Stanford.

I also continue to mentor Stanford undergraduates and graduate students from Africa via individual meetings and larger group sessions. In terms of teaching, I co-created and led a three-week seminar in Kenya, entitled "Decolonizing African Literature and Arts in Nairobi," in August 2024 for 13 Stanford students and 4 University of Nairobi students. The photo below depicts one the course activities: a hands-on textiles workshop with an eco-conscious textile company based in Nairobi.

### Christopher B. Krebs

To know in the abstract is one thing, to experience another. One of my teachers once shared with me Benedetto Croce's famous dictum how "all history is contemporary history" (*ogni storia è storia contemporanea*); but the last two years have certainly deepened my understanding of it and changed the

way I look upon the rhetoric, politics, and personalities of the late Roman Republic, on which I continue to spend significant time.

The summer of 2023 saw the publication of my commentary on the seventh book of Caesar's *Gallic War* (a Green and Yellow), just when I was on

my way to start a stimulating year as visiting professor at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Following its appearance, I have given talks and workshops on the implications of its (mostly historiographical) approach to a dozen audiences in the US, Denmark, Italy, and Sweden (and later this year in Germany and Switzerland, where



the Latin teachers associations have organized two small conferences). While I am on the topic of lectures: it was my great honor to deliver the Walsh Lecture on “Two Cultural Critics: Sallust and Adorno, in Conversation” at the University of Chicago (where I also offered a workshop on lexicography), just as I enjoyed lecturing in Pisa, Zürich, Mainz, Aarhus, and Lund (where the photograph was taken) on Sallust, Caesar and Montaigne, and the adverb *carptim* (yes!). I have also continued my efforts to reach beyond the inner circles of academia not just by working with teachers but also by lecturing at high schools as well as at the Stanford Humanities Institute ([Ancient Rome and Its Legacies](#)) and within the Stanford Continuing Studies program (“The Politics of Loyalty: Cicero and the Ethics of Friendship,” “Roman Satire Then and Now: Horace, Seneca, and Juvenal”).

As suggested above, my recent publications have addressed some long-standing interests of mine, while also turning to new authors and genres. Aside from reviews and review discussions (such as “The Limits of Friendship,” in *TLS*), an article in *Classical Quarterly* offers the first interpretation of Tacitus’s elusive description of Sallust as “florentissimus auctor,” another article (in *Histos*) reinterprets Caesar’s infamous pronouncement that “he was (a) Caesar, not (a) king,” reported by Suetonius, as a misunderstood joke. Two further articles are in print, as I type this: “Broad Strokes with Fine Brushes. Pliny, *Paneg.* 25 and two Sallustian Intertexts (*BC* 4, *BJ* 18),” and “The Rhetor’s Wink or: too clever for Sallust (*Inv. Cic.* 5, *Epist. ad Caes.* 2.9.2, *Sall. BC* 14.2),” which are also appearing in *Classical Quarterly* and *Histos*, respectively. The larger project I am currently seeing through with some delay is the *Cambridge Companion to Sallust*, the introduction to which addresses

a question that we ask ourselves too rarely, perhaps: “Sublimely angry, a classic—why read Sallust.”

Together with colleagues from Germany, Italy, and the US, I organized two conferences: on “Rhetoric and Historiography: New Perspectives” (in Rome, with Emily Baragwanath, Andrew Feldherr, and Luca Grillo) as well as “Onwards, upwards into the past? Classics in the political discourse (Methods, Disciplines, Case Studies)” (in Mainz, with Christine Walde).

Upon my return from Pisa, I taught the first and second part of our Latin Core series (“Catiline,” and “Poetry. Dialogic Reading,” respectively) as well as “Advanced Latin Prose Composition” and the Dissertation Proposal Workshop. I also offered our department’s first “bridge course” in September, which is designed to help incoming graduate students advance and accelerate their reading of Greek and Latin. Two further highlights are Sophia Wu’s creative and skillful senior thesis that I supervised (entitled “Epistolary (Alter)Egos: Comparing the Letters of Cicero and Sima Qian”) and the hooding of Dr. Rachel Dubit, after she had defended her clever and delightfully written dissertation “*Defixus Amator: The Littoral Paraclausithyron in Latin Love Poetry.*” I trust that they will go out into the world and use what they have learned to help make it a warmer and more colorful place for all.

### Justin Leidwanger

Archaeology is an act of juggling a long-term research agenda with short term projects and teaching in and out of the field. In fact, I write this update during a brief lull between our summer season in Sicily and fall fieldwork in Türkiye. Following the conclusion of excavation of the famous late Roman “church wreck” a few years back, we have been busy conserving and preparing



A new exhibit featuring the “church wreck” in the historic church on the piazza of Marzamemi opened in 2025.



Robert Muniz and other team members casting and cataloging concretions from the hull of the ship at Marzamemi.



Enjoying a walk during the seminar break with the family and University of São Paulo colleagues Vagner Carvalho Porto and Marcio Teixeira-Bastos (and capybaras!).

those finds for final publication and supporting initiatives to help bring these materials to the public. In the lab, our summer was dedicated to the casting of iron concretions from the site, yielding a series of nails and tools belonging to this marble-carrying ship and its sailors. In the field, our team continues to stretch the boundaries of traditional Mediterranean archaeology: from a diachronic maritime landscape survey of the ports and anchorages along southeast Sicily, to the documentation and analysis of the boats from recent journeys of displacement, to an archaeological view of the ever-persistent plastics that accumulate in these waters. Soon, I will revisit a series of shipwrecks off the Carian coast of Türkiye, which promise to aid our understanding of the emerging political and economic connections that marked the early Hellenistic period. I hope you'll join us in San Francisco in January at the Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America, where many of these projects will feature in collaborative papers and posters.

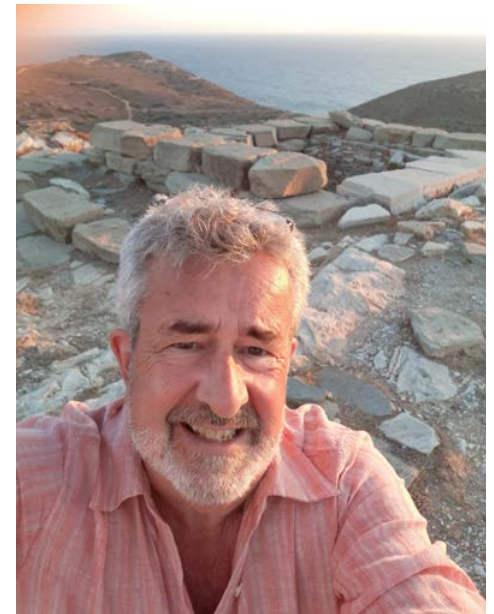
The presentation and publication of our results draws on a large network of scholars through which my Maritime Archaeology and Digital Heritage Lab is always buzzing. Lab members worked with emerging scholars on a co-edited journal special issue on

“Nodes, Networks, and the Emergence of Maritime Empires,” and the edited proceedings of an Archaeology Center conference on computational archaeology is in press this month. But new projects and exciting lines of analysis emerge faster than the reports, and our recent work ranges from modeling circulation flows of marine plastics to Finite Element Analysis of ancient transport jar performance in collaboration with students and colleagues in Oceans and Mechanical Engineering. Part of the fun has been to integrate these projects into my teaching, both to introduce undergraduates to the many facets of Mediterranean archaeology and to engage graduate students in larger research programs. My spring graduate seminar on “Mediterranean ports” took a comparative and multidisciplinary view of harbors that aligned directly with a new lab project on how and why communities made differential investments in their maritime infrastructure.

Traveling to engage with international audiences is for me a highlight in any year, but it was most exciting and pleasurable to spend a few weeks in March as Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology of Brazil's University of São Paulo (thanks to the collaboration of several colleagues there, including Marcio Teixeira-Bastos—whom I met during his tenure as a postdoctoral fellow at Stanford—and the São Paulo Research Foundation). There, I had the opportunity to co-teach (with Elizabeth Greene, their other Distinguished Visiting Scholar) a graduate seminar on maritime archaeology and to see the remarkable archaeology programs and research facilities of USP. Together, Marcio and I are working on several concrete steps to bring our North and South American communities closer together intellectually, beginning with a joint component to a graduate seminar on archaeological networks next spring.

### Richard Martin

Ausonius, recalling his teachers in 4th-century Bordeaux, refers to their “zeal of learning, and the industrious toil of teaching” (as Hugh Evelyn-White translates his Latin: *et studium in libris et sedula cura docendi*). That is pretty much still the basic job description. The *studium* component, for me, over the last academic year included polishing my Sather Lectures book on the micropolitics of Aristophanic comedy, and writing a clutch of unrelated contributions to various edited volumes: on the idea of alliance in Pindar; on Theseus and Athenian cult; on Aesop as a Phrygian; and on the word *hieros* (holy) in Homeric verse.



Teaching, meanwhile, which always demands precedence over *studium*, saw me leading students through two masterpieces of Athenian comic drama (*Clouds* and *Ecclesiazusae*, in the original); the intricacies of historical-comparative grammar via close reading of Homer; the *Iliad* (in translation); and highlights from Medieval Irish literature, also in translation (*aka* “Saints, Warriors, Queens, and Cows”). Individualized tutorials on the Hellenistic poet Aratus and the Byzantine authors Choumnos and Metochites taught me much (if not the students involved).

If you broaden *cura docendi* to include outreach, it might count that I gave a three-day minicourse on Irish myth and literature for the 92nd Street Y ([roundtable.org](https://www.92ndstreetny.org/)); was interviewed at length for a German podcast on Prometheus ([seeseepodcast.com](https://www.seeseepodcast.com/)); kept responding to a never-ending stream of emailed questions about mythology from middle school students assigned to “interview” an “expert;” lectured on the *Odyssey for Structured Liberal Education*; and helped design syllabi for a new set of online courses about ancient literature—all in a day’s work, although odd jobs that Ausonius might not readily recognize. Then again, when you’re the tutor for the emperor-to-be and the Praetorian Prefect for Gaul, you probably don’t need to worry about side-hustles.

Something he *might* have appreciated, though, is visiting sites from the ancient past: my most recent research trip was to the Cycladic island of Paros, home of the 7th-century BC soldier-poet Archilochus (the local museum contains some vital inscriptions about his life), and location for a remarkable “Delion” (shrine of Apollo and Artemis) on a wind-blasted hilltop offering visitors, ancient and modern, a perfect sightline to the sacred island of Delos: *experto credite* (and see attached selfie).

### Adrienne Mayor

It was wonderful to spend spring semester 2024 in Oxford, seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Besides Oxford, I enjoyed a splendid but short, hot trip to Athens in June and two weeks in Morocco: highlights were visiting the Roman ruins at Volubilis, finding fossils south of the Atlas Mountains, and riding camels in Erg Chebbi. In Oxford, I wrote “Animals Who Self-Medicare” for *The Conversation* (May 24, 2024), pointing out that the ancient Greeks and Romans were aware of animals’ knowledge of medicinal plants millennia before

scientists recently began reporting the phenomenon. I also completed “Baby Monsters and Centaur Families: Humanizing Mythic Creatures and Other Extraordinary Beings,” chapter 5 in *Bodies on Display*, ed. Jane Draycott, forthcoming Taylor and Francis later this year.

In November 2024, I was interviewed about the “Ancient History of AI” for German Public Broadcast, Objektiv Media, and in January my article “Scythia: Heartland of Ancient Amazons, Mythology and History” came out in *Ancient History*. In February 2024, Slate asked me to write about “The Chicago Rat Hole: A Modern American Marvel.” A longer version appears in my forthcoming book *Mythopedia: A Brief Compendium of Natural History Lore* (October 2025). Writing this book was a joy, enhanced by working with my talented sister Michele Angel who created 50 illustrations.

I’m delighted that two art museums have invited me to write essays for exhibit catalogs. One is “Warrior Queens” for the Cincinnati Art Museum show *Ancient Queenship: Art, Power, and Presence*, fall 2025. Another essay, “The Persistence of the Amazon Spirit,” is for the Louvre’s “Amazons” exhibit, inspired by my book *The Amazons*. I’ve been involved in the planning for the show, which opens in spring 2027.

The *Smithsonian* (April 22, 2025) published a feature about my work on “Ancient AI in Greek Myth” by Sofia Giannuzzi, and two short pieces, “Talos” and “Pygmalion,” will appear in *L’Intelligence Artificielle: une histoire culturelle*, ed. Alexandre Gefen (CNRS Editions, *Cultural History of AI*). My article on “Metrodorus of Scepsis” is forthcoming in de Gruyter’s *Trends in Classics—Greek and Roman Humanities Encyclopedia*. Another article, “Can Geology Explain the Deadly Reputation



of the Styx River and Shed Light on the Death of Alexander the Great?” has been two decades in the making—now published in *Geoheritage* 17 (2025).

Interviews this past year include an appearance in *Les Amazones*, TV Documentary on France 5 Television, which aired March 7, 2024; the history of fossil discoveries, for Agence France; AI and the Vesuvius Papyri, for *The Economist’s* Babbage podcast; dinosaur fossil legends, for Colorado Public Radio/NPR; ancient fossil legends, for *Discover* magazine; and podcasts for El Pais, Spain, and IFL Science. I’m pleased to report new translations of my books this year, including *Feu Gregeois*,



*Bombes a Scorpions & Cochons Enflammes: La Guerre Non Conventionele dans L'Antiquite*, French, Nouveau Monde, Paris; Russian translations of *Flying Snakes and Griffin Claws* and *Gods and Robots*; and Polish translations of *The Amazons and Gods and Robots*. Current projects involve animals and Amazons and Medusa's petrifying gaze.

### Marsh McCall

During the past year, I taught with great pleasure my Greek Tragedy course, with about 30 students, several of whom became Classics majors and minors.

Alec Studnik was my outstanding graduate T.A.. I also taught seven students in their second term of first-year Ancient Greek, something close to my heart which I first taught 63 years ago. I directed two outstanding senior honors theses for E.C. Wood and Thane Brueschke. E.C.'s "The Legacy of Tragoidia Protest Depictions in Broadway's Hadestown and Thane's "The Xenic Exegesis of Xerxes I Across Ancient Greek, Persian, and Jewish Literature". Both were creative, thoughtful and valuable contributions to classical scholarship. These projects

were arduous undertakings and required painstaking work on the parts of students and advisor. Lastly, I taught a Continuing Studies course on Aeschylus and will teach a similar course on Sophocles in the coming fall.

I continued work on my book for the Wiley Introductions series about Aeschylus and his plays. A first full draft will be submitted this September. And as I write this, Susan and I have just recently returned from a Stanford Travel Study trip I led to Malta and Sicily on a three-masted, square-rigged sailing ship for eight days. It's always a thrill to introduce eager travelers to incredible ancient sites.

### Ian Morris

I had a quietly productive year, plodding away on my latest book. Like most of my big writing projects, this has taken on a life of its own, mutating without me realizing it from a global history of ancient times into a history of growth and an attempt to explain why, in the long run (the last 1.8 million years), we humans have relentlessly increased the energy, scale, and information at our disposal—and, inevitably, where this might take us next. I also finished up a few articles and saw one on the origin of cities come out in the first volume of the *Cambridge Urban History of Europe*.

I had an interesting year in the classroom too. In addition to my normal teaching load, I ran an extra seminar on ancient environmental history—although when I say "ran," what I actually did was sit there while our energetic and capable graduate students organized and directed everything. It was very much student-run and—doubtless because of that—one of the most interesting seminars I've been part of. Lesson learned: I'll just let students do all the work from now on.



I had a similar experience co-organizing a small conference with my equally energetic and capable colleagues Reviel and Walter, who did all the work to make the first of the department's Global Antiquity workshops a tremendous success. Twenty or so comparative historians and archaeologists convened in the seminar room in Building 110 to spend two days discussing the prospects for global ancient history and particularly whether it still makes sense to talk of progress in antiquity. Probably not, I think we decided, but understanding why that's so might be an even more useful question.

My travel schedule finally returned to something like the shape it had been in before the pandemic. I got my fill (and then some) of big professional conferences by attending the annual meetings of the American Economic Association but had much more fun in the company of my colleague Richard Saller and former colleague Joe Manning at a delightful small conference on ancient economics at Northwestern University. I also managed to spend an excellent couple of days at the Santa Fe Institute, one of my favorite places, arguing with historians, archaeologists, physicists, biologists, and mathematicians about whether history is a science. Having flown all the way to Doha for a debate on whether war is inevitable, I reverted to my English roots by hiking across the city in the 108° midday sun, which I don't think I'll do again; and in case that didn't make me feel my age, being interviewed on stage by a student group in Amsterdam and at the Jewish Literary Festival in London reminded me that I've now reached the time of life where people prefer asking me about things I said in years gone by to listening to me go on about things I want to say now. But what could be more fun than talking about myself?

### Reviel Netz

In my previous newsletter submission I noted the darkness of the years of Trump, Putin and Covid. Two years have passed and things are not looking any better. Classics provides a sense of historical depth, which doesn't mean that the present is unimportant. It means that it is worth hanging on for what we value: its time will come.

And so we continue to teach and research the classical legacy. My book, "Why the Ancient Greeks Matter", got published in the Spring of 2025, and I started writing my next book, "The Praxis of Abstraction". It is at a certain remove, indeed abstraction, from our everyday concerns. It starts from the observation: science relies on abstract domains. And it raises a question: how is it possible to think abstract thoughts through a material, concrete reality? We need a social theory of abstraction. I catch Archimedes in the bathtub—and I'm testing the waters, to find the secret ingredient.

Two years ago, in October 2023, I helped organize the conference of the scholars of Greek mathematics in the best place for such meetings—the European Center at Delphi. Even through the current budgetary constraints, we succeeded in raising the funds for our next meeting in the Fall of 2026. Conferences and their inevitable outcome—proceedings—occupy a great deal of a professor's time but their great advantage is that they send you not only to surprising geographies but also on surprising intellectual directions. One such article made me realize that an ancient commentator understood the mathematics of Plato's Theaetetus much better than Plato's modern readers did, precisely because the ancient commentator didn't know much mathematics; another made me raise the question: why do we call the Renaissance as we do? (That is, why do

we keep using the *French* word?—you'll have to read the essay, forthcoming in "Science in the Forest, Science in the Past", to find out!) I also find myself editing a volume myself—something I always tried to resist. The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mathematics will fill a real gap, and I feel confident editing it because of my fantastic co-editors, Michalis Sialaros from Athens and our very own graduate Eun-soo Lee, from Seoul.

Meanwhile, and even as I work through "The Praxis of Abstraction", the contours of the next book begin to form. Perhaps this newsletter should be more interactive, and so I ask your opinion on possible titles. My starting point is the claim that Greek science does owe a great deal to the Greek democratic experiment—and that something similar may be true for the relation between modern science, and the modern democratic experiment. "Is Science Democratic?" Seems to me like a legitimate question (and a possible title for a book). It is not a question others have not considered before, but I don't think it can be addressed without considering both modern and ancient science (which has not yet been done) and, for sure, it is a timely question. To the extent we can, I believe that we, classicists, should speak up for both science and democracy, as both are now under attack. I'll do my part.

### Josiah Ober

Josh Ober has been dividing his time between teaching, research, and directing the Stanford Civics Initiative. Teaching: his most recent courses were "The Origins of Political Thought: Homer to Aristotle" and a seminar on Thucydides—the first one he has taught on his favorite historian in many years. His scholarship has been focused on a series of papers concerning "what Aristotle has to tell us about AI" (more than you might think!) and "Plato on democracy and oligarchy

in the Republic.” His paper on the latter topic was presented at a week-long conference in Geneva, at the Fondation Hardt. The Stanford Civics Initiative has been growing: we will sponsor five postdoctoral teaching fellows in 2025-26; popular SCI centered courses were taught last year by SCI postdocs and lecturers, regular Stanford faculty, and Hoover Institution Fellows. In January 2025, the Civics Initiative launched a national Alliance for Civics in the Academy, aimed at creating a network for college and university instructors in civic education. The Alliance currently has about 200 members. We have launched a program of convenings that bring together instructors from across the country and from a wide range of institutions; a webinar series will begin this autumn.

Josh was recently surprised and delighted (to say the least) to be awarded one of four 2025 Balzan Prizes (each is 750,000 Swiss Francs—\$940,000). The announcement from the International Balzan Foundation, said that Josh’s prize was given, “for his groundbreaking research on the origins and functioning of Athenian democracy in classical times, which has had an influence far beyond the academic world. Ober has identified the factors behind its success using a refreshing, interdisciplinary approach that constantly draws comparisons with the present day, thus bringing these findings into contemporary socio-political debate.” Half of prize money will be dedicated to developing a three-year project aimed supporting the work of younger scholars.

### Grant Parker

Both of my highlights of the past year involve travel, both in the first half of 2025. In the Winter term, I had the privilege of teaching in the Bing Overseas Study Program’s Berlin program. Though I have spent years of study in Munich, Berlin was largely new to me and so offered much to explore.



Grant at the obelisk, Place de la République, Arles (June 2025)

Especially memorable is the Altes Museum in the city center. Designed by the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel for the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm III, in the years 1825-1830, it houses an outstanding collection of Greco-Roman antiquities (*Antikensammlung*) in an imposing neoclassical style. In this embarrassment of riches, the problem visiting with students is how to limit our focus to a coherent set of items. Hard as it is to imagine, the nearby Pergamon Museum, which also displays the extraordinary Berlin collection of antiquities, is scheduled to undergo renovation and repair until 2043, so extensive are the structural challenges.

I came away from the Altes Museum, and others, wishing I could teach an entire course on museums, though one term would merely allow us to touch the surface. So many of Berlin’s museums are concentrated on the Museum Island: adjacent is the Humboldt Forum located in the old royal palace. As someone who has been observing museums for a while, I was so impressed with the design of the Humboldt Forum complex, with its mixture of exhibits upstairs and lecture halls downstairs—and a great view of the city from the roof. Such an institution is only possible in a country which cares about education and cultural resources.

My other notable stay was to the west of the Rhine, in Aix-en-Provence in June. During my weeks there I was able to visit several museums and historical sites going back to Gallo-Roman times. In the last millennium, at a time I was nearing the end of grad school, Greg Woolf's book, *Becoming Roman: the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul* (1998), appeared to much acclaim. It has taken me another 2.5 decades to visit some of the sites discussed. Arles was a particular highlight, of course, what with its 20-metre obelisk, erected by Constantine II in the 4th century: unlike other surviving obelisks, it was made of granite from Asia Minor. What is more, it tapers more severely than the norm. Nonetheless, its form gave it prominence on the spina of the city's Circus, itself an imposing monument, even today. Since the 17th century it has presided over the central square that is now the Place de la République. Too bad it has no inscription. Nonetheless, this obelisk took me back to a topic which first attracted my interest a while back.

### Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi

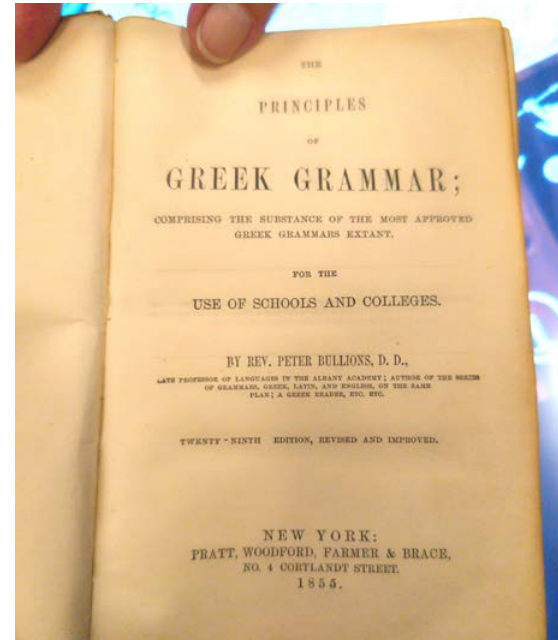
It has been a pleasure to teach seminars in which graduate students from departments outside Classics mixed with our graduate students. This blending has been especially beneficial in Spring 2023, in my seminar *Introduction to Ancient Aesthetics*, where students from Art History contributed particularly exciting views that complemented in unexpected ways those of classicists. In Winter 2025 I immensely enjoyed teaching with Harry Carter (who is writing his PhD thesis in Comparative Literature) a seminar on Chinese Song lyrics and Greek lyric poetry. Juxtaposing and comparing two distant lyric traditions opened up for all of us new avenues of understanding lyric, a notoriously challenging genre in literary theory. In Spring 2025 I co-taught with Reviel Netz, for a second time after almost fifteen

years, a seminar on *Mousike in Theory and Practice*. The fruits of this seminar, the students' papers, have been a most heartening intellectual experience—an injection of optimism for those who believe in the life of the mind.

My book, *Plato Choreographer*, is now under contract with Oxford University Press. The book's main thesis is dual. It argues that Plato's inventive choreographies operate as major vehicles through which the philosopher criticized and undermined the democratic and innovative choral culture of Athens, an essential part of which was dance. At the same time, the book shows that in his large-scale, cutting-edge, choreographies Plato emulated and provoked the artistic innovations of his time while also bringing disembodied concepts into dialectic with embodiment. In doing so, the book sheds new light on the particularities of Plato's metaphysical pursuits. Furthermore, it shows that the philosopher's choreographic thought is particularly relevant to a twenty-first-century choreographer's aspirations.

### Rush Rehm

Happily retired in 2024, Rush continues to write on Greek tragedy, currently grappling with a piece on agency, prophecy, and fate in *Oedipus Tyrannus*. For various edited volumes in the past year or so, he has contributed essays on *Hippolytus* and horses, the Parthenon's East Metope 14, and Greek tragedy and migration. Appalled by the fascism and support for genocide in our benighted states, he has joined various protests, including lobbying in Sacramento to stop the Delta Tunnel project, a water grab boondoggle that will further endanger the Bay/Delta ecosystem. A trip to the John Muir Archives in Stockton (part of Charlie Junkerman's MLA summer course) revealed that the great environmentalist held on to his Greek grammar till the end (photo above).



### Richard P. Saller

I served as Stanford's 12th President on an interim basis through a year of tensions.

### Walter Scheidel

In April Princeton University Press published my latest book, *What Is Ancient History?* My answer is that it was a decisive phase in human development, one that provided the shared foundation of our world and continues to shape our lives today. It was then that the earliest versions of today's lifeways were created and bundled together, from farming, mining, and engineering to housing and transportation, cities and government, writing and belief systems. These processes unfolded all over the world, in Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas, often at different times, sometimes haltingly but ultimately unstoppable, and consequently need to be studied on a planetary scale. A few months later the same publisher issued a 'Princeton Classics' edition of my 2017 book *The Great Leveler*, updated with a new preface that surveys the most recent scholarship. I published several papers on slavery and inequality, partly in collaboration with economists from

Chile and Italy, and delivered a number of lectures in Germany, Italy, the UK and stateside.

I also launched ‘The Future of Classics Initiative at Stanford,’ which seeks to develop and showcase a growing body of ideas about future directions in ancient studies. For the opening faculty-run conference of this initiative, my colleagues Ian Morris and Reviel Netz and I brought together scholars who have applied varied methods to different kinds of evidence drawn from all over the ancient world to explore what ancient historians stand to gain (or lose) by placing Greece and Rome in a planetary context. I have since been expanding my own reading and research plans to cover the pre-conquest Americas, probably the single largest omission from what we usually think of as ‘ancient history’ and currently largely ignored here on campus. But the twin highlights of the past two years were trips to Antarctica and the Arctic Ocean that featured penguins, whales and polar bears.

### Michael Shanks

#### ACTING WITH NATURE

My new book *Archaeologies of Nature: Archive, Performance, Artwork*, written with Gabriella Giannachi, is now complete and in production. Rather than a linear history, the book unfolds archaeologically—artworks as strata of environmental imagination—offering ways to connect with an increasingly precarious world of climate breakdown and extractive excess.

We begin with prehistory not as a remote “before,” but as a resonant layer of the present. Drawing on new archaeological research, we revisit orthodox accounts of the emergence of agriculture in Mesopotamia, early farming communities in Atlantic Europe, and Bronze Age northern petroglyphs. Three themes follow:

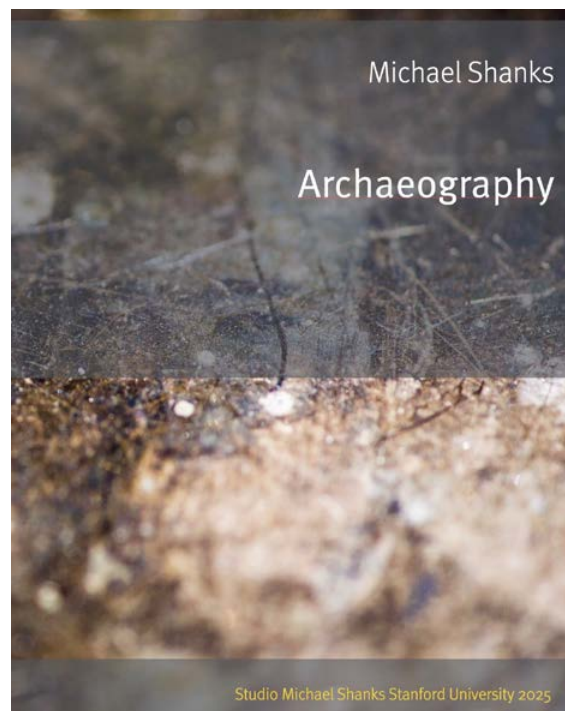
nature-culture entanglemen; place-making and land-marking; and artwork not as expression but as mode of environmental correspondence.

The book proceeds through six strata—Landscape | Presence; Environment | Performance; Ecology | Systemics; Anthropocene | Deep Time; Climate Breakdown | Activism; Immanent Futures. Each shows how artworks have faced and acted with (and against) nature, from Renaissance landscape to twentieth-century ecological and performative arts to contemporary activist and posthuman practices. Artwork does not simply represent nature; artwork enacts nature.

Our account is an archaeology of the concept of nature that takes us back to antiquity and beyond. So this summer I found myself returning to Horace’s rural locales (via a beautiful small-press hand-crafted edition I found in Bell’s Books, Palo Alto), to the genre of the pastoral, to Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, the concept of phusis in presocratic and Aristotelian thought, to an old favorite of mine, Lucretius.

None of this can be described as a reception of antiquity, the term usually used to refer to the study of afterlives of classical antiquity. This is to work within and upon the classical lineages of thought and practice that extend through the Euro-Mediterranean tradition and into the plural Atlantic modernities of the present. This is not a claim of cultural inheritance to be defended, nor a canon to be discarded, but a terrain of post-classical legacy—a living field of translation, adaptation, and contestation.

Alongside writing, I continue my long-running survey of prehistoric, Roman, and early medieval northern Europe—landscapes as choreography of traces, in what Michel Serres called percolating



time and space. A mess of place—deep mapping, as Mike Pearson and I described it back in the 90s. I presented a keynote talk at a conference held to explore the concept of deep mapping in Venice in September.

Deep mapping arises from an archaeological sensibility—a concept I have introduced and pushed to capture a disposition that attends to traces, remains, and recursions across time. This is working in the archaeological imagination, explored in what Mike Pearson and I called *theatre/archaeology*, and in *archaeography*—where the archaeological imagination meets photography. I delivered a hands-on manual and set of portfolios for archaeography at the beginning of the summer. A forthcoming Routledge collection, *Archaeological Sensibilities*, edited by François Richard (Chicago), offers a wide-ranging survey of the concept through anthropology, literary studies, the arts and humanities; I contributed a summary commentary.

Thinking as a form of fieldwork; knowledge enacted, not extracted.

These are also the foundations of another book of mine, *Creative Pragmatics for Active Learning in STEM Education* (edited with Connie Svabo, Chunfang Zhou, and Tamara Carleton), published in April—humanities-informed science.

Acting with Nature, the title of this newsletter, nods to a wonderful new book from science studies scholar Andrew Pickering’s—*Acting with the World*. His argument—that sustainable science must act-with rather than act-on the world—resonates deeply with our findings. He ends with a call to implement ways of teaching the skills and competencies of a sustainable science that acts-with the world. And he says that our book *Creative Pragmatics* offers the essential guidance and leadership for exactly such a future-oriented project.

### John Tennant

I write this having recently returned from the annual Celtic Classics Conference in Coimbra, Portugal, where I delivered a paper (as part of a panel on ancient maxims) on the *Nachleben* of one of the most enigmatic proverbs from Plato’s *Republic*, “If a wolf sees you first, you lose your voice,” as it appears subsequently in the writings of Theocritus, Vergil, and the 4th century philosopher and rhetorician Themistius. Part of my ongoing work on Plato’s engagement with proverbs, the piece will be published in a special issue of the journal *Trends in Classics* and represents a section I simply don’t have the space



for in my forthcoming book, *Proverbial Plato: The Reformation of Discourse in Plato’s Republic*. Another piece that falls into that category is “Speaking Lyrically, Speaking Proverbially” that I delivered at the International Conference on Plato and Lyric Poetry at UCLA last fall, comparing dueling proverbs in various Platonic dialogues with similar proverbs in the poetry of Robert Frost and W.H. Auden, and which will be published in a forthcoming Brill volume. And finally on the publishing front, my article “Sublime Failure,” on the role that “failure” (*hamartēma* in the Greek) plays in ancient conceptions of the sublime, was published this year in the journal *Helios*. This article is part of my second book project which explores instances of “failure” in ancient Greek literature.

My research and writing, of course, provide the fuel to the fire of my passion for teaching Classics to our undergraduate and graduate students, both in our ancient language offerings (Greek and Latin) and in seminars ranging from “The Proverb in Ancient Greek Literature” to “Longinus *On the Sublime*” (which I co-teach with Professor Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi) to a new seminar I’m offering undergraduates this year, “*The Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius.”

Additionally, I find rewarding beyond words my continued service as the Department’s Director of Undergraduate Studies and, indeed, was honored last year to have presided over the largest number of registered Classics majors and minors in recent memory, sixty-four! Whoever thinks that Classics and the Humanities are dead has no idea what they’re talking about. Just let them come to one of the new series of faculty-undergraduate workshops we initiated last year and see firsthand just how engaged our students are with the ancient world. Their jaws would drop at seeing the enthusiastic participants who attended Professor Emerita Susan Stephens’ workshop on papyrology and Professor Richard Martin’s presentation on Homer, Aesop, and “the Lure of Ancient Lore.” Classics is alive and well—indeed, thriving—at Stanford!

### Lizzy Ten-Hove

I was delighted to spend my second contiguous/third total year as a lecturer teaching a smorgasbord of undergraduate courses ranging from beginning Latin to Senecan tragedy to Greek Mythology (with particular gratitude to Matt Previto and Alec Studnik for being my stellar TAs for the latter). I had the additional pleasure



of advising several directed readings over the year, including on Greek tragedy and Ovid's *Heroides*. I'll be spending the autumn quarter working on my latest project, a new textbook for beginning Latin, before returning to teach beginning Latin and Biblical Greek in the winter. Beyond Classics, I've also been continuing my work as a weaver and textile artist, particularly through involvement with local weaving and spinning guilds; worlds will collide later this year at an invited lecture introducing local weavers to the overlapping vocabulary of art, poetry, and weaving in Greek.

### Jennifer Trimble

In 2024-25 it was a great pleasure to return fully to teaching and departmental life, after time away on medical leave. Stanford undergraduates have terrific energies and talents, which means in our classes we can explore new ways of looking at old evidence. In "Ancient Urbanism," we compare and contrast Greek, Roman, and Islamic cities. The ancient Greco-Roman and early Islamic worlds are normally studied and taught as distinct subjects, in different departments, but these three great urban traditions succeeded one another in the Mediterranean and western Asia. We explore long-term continuities and changes in concepts of public and private, religion, gender, street-life and much else. "Roman Gladiators" studies ancient Roman society from the bottom up; we analyze everything from architecture to graffiti, from early Christian writings to burials and bones. A highlight of this course is seeing students with athletic or martial backgrounds excel at reconstructing plausible training regimens for very differently armored fighters.

In graduate advising, I am very proud of two doctoral students who both successfully defended this spring.



(From left to right) Lena Cavicchia, Landon Miller, Robert Muniz, and Andre Brilliant. They're all enrolled in 103G: Advanced Greek—Euripides' *Bacchae*.

Serena Crosson's dissertation is on *Looking through Labor: A Study of Women's Social Relations in Roman Wall Paintings*. Drawing on Social Reproduction Theory, she analyzes depictions of labor and the hierarchical relationships among painted figures, especially women. As a result, Serena deepens our understanding of Roman art, both in how it depicts social inequality, and in how it beautifies and naturalizes that inequality. Guoshi Li's dissertation considers ancient art, and in particular textile images, through the lens of modern digital theory. In *A Carnival of Visual Hiccups: Digital Aesthetics and Textile Images in Late Roman Visual Culture (300-900 CE)*, he explores themes of stretching and tautness, mirroring and self-referentiality, double-sided images, fraying images, and mixed media images. Ultimately, Guoshi offers a sustained critique of naturalism in ancient art. Graduating doctoral students are honored at graduation

in an arcane but meaningful ritual: the hooding of new PhDs. Congratulations, Dr. Crosson and Dr. Li!

As for my own research and writing, a highlight in 2024 was giving two lectures at the University of Washington. One focused on the agency of enslaved people in Roman religion, as seen at a street shrine in Pompeii—part of an ongoing book project. The other explored what ancient Roman *damnatio memoriae* can teach us about modern-day statue destructions. My host was Prof. Sarah Levin-Richardson, who earned her PhD at Stanford in 2009. It is an enormous pleasure to see past students thriving now as productive professionals! Otherwise, I have been working primarily on the publication of excavations at the base of the Palatine in Rome, just south of the Roman Forum. Co-authored with Dora Cirone and Alessio de Cristofaro, and including contributions by other scholars, this volume will soon be published by Quasar.

# Stanford Classics Commencement



## Department of Classics Diploma Ceremony

### Opening Remarks

Christopher B. Krebs, Chair  
Gesue and Helen Spogli  
Professor in Italian Studies,  
Professor of Classics and,  
by courtesy, of German Studies  
and Comparative Literature

### Distinguished Speaker

Zack Smith, MD, (BA '14),  
Chief Resident  
Stanford University Department  
of Emergency Medicine

### Presentation of Prizes & Undergraduate Degrees

John Tennant,  
Director of  
Undergraduate Studies,  
Lecturer in  
Ancient Greek and Latin

### Presentation of Prizes & Graduate Degrees

Walter Scheidel,  
Director of Graduate Studies  
Dickason Professor in  
the Humanities,  
Professor of Classics and History



### Degree Recipients

#### Bachelor of Arts

Diego Burgos  
Marguerite DeMarco<sup>Φ\*</sup>  
Jaden Gonzalez  
Jonathan Merchan  
Katharine Sorensen<sup>Φ\*</sup>

#### Bachelor of Arts with Honors

Thane Brueschke<sup>Φ\*</sup>  
Sawyer E.V. Niehaus  
Sadie Mae Sarkisian<sup>Φ\*</sup>  
Erica Wood<sup>Φ\*</sup>  
Yizhen Sophia Wu

#### Bachelor of Arts and Science

Zoya Garg

#### Minor

Sebastian Alexander Alfonso<sup>Φ</sup>  
Anthony Demostenes  
Argyropoulos  
Sofía Ceva  
Emily Hannah Dickey  
Aerin Eberts  
Will Furlow  
Grace Howe  
Maxton Huff  
Anthony Gerard Laster  
Aristotle Marangu  
Elijah Negrón  
Luke Veit  
Pia Yoon

#### Master of Arts

Lena Cavicchia\*

#### Doctor of Philosophy

Brandon David Bark  
Serena Crosson-Unzueta  
Rachel E. Dubit  
Guoshi Li  
Samuel G.H. Powell

### Departmental Awards

#### Senior Prize

Thane Brueschke<sup>Φ\*</sup>

#### Iris Prize

Sadie Mae Sarkisian<sup>Φ\*</sup>

#### Outstanding Classics Honors Thesis Nominated by the Faculty for University Medal

Erica Wood<sup>Φ\*</sup>

#### Outstanding Classics Honors Thesis in Translation and Performance Studies

Sawyer E.V. Niehaus

#### Outstanding Classics Honors Thesis in Comparative Literature

Yizhen Sophia Wu

#### Dissertation Early Completion Prize

Samuel G.H. Powell

### University Awards

#### J.E. Wallace Sterling Award for Scholastic Achievement

Thane Brueschke<sup>Φ\*</sup>

#### Award of Excellence

Diego Burgos  
Marguerite DeMarco<sup>Φ\*</sup>  
Zoya Garg

#### Frederick Emmons Terman Engineering Award

Erica Wood<sup>Φ\*</sup>

Φ Phi Beta Kappa  
\* Distinction

# Stanford Classics Commencement

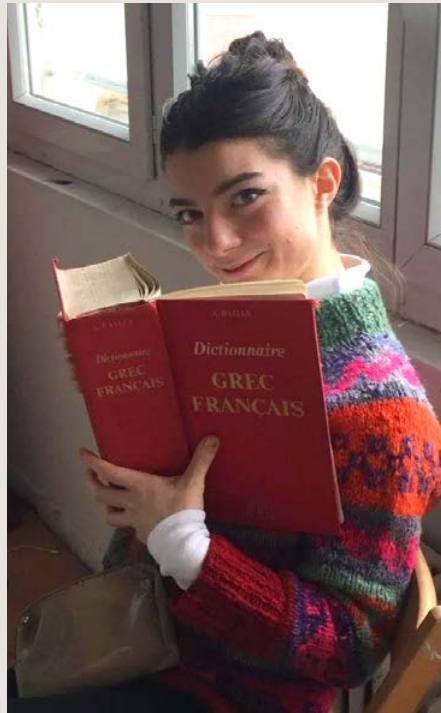


# In Memoriam

## Sarah Müller-Moaty

Sarah Müller-Moaty arrived at Stanford in early January 2024 with a fellowship from the France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and with the prospect of conducting (in the Winter quarter) part of her research for her PhD dissertation on the *Representation of Dance Performances in Greek Poetry, from Homer to the fifth century BCE*. Sarah had received her first degree at the Sorbonne, with specialization in Ancient Culture and the Contemporary World. She then moved to the University of Nanterre, in order to work with Professor Nadine Le Meur-Weissman, who supervised her Masters thesis and was currently the supervisor of her PhD thesis. In 2020 she received a Masters degree in Classics and Digital Humanities from the University of Nanterre and since 2021 she had been working on her PhD.

I met Sarah in October 2022, at a conference in Nanterre, where she told me she would like to spend some time at Stanford. Although our conversation was quite brief then, it was clear to me that she was exceptionally knowledgeable and very passionate about the subject of her thesis. Later I learned that dance was not just the topic of her research in Classics but also a very important part of her life: Sarah was a trained and inspiring dancer. In addition, she was an accomplished musician and a talented piano-player. When she first came to my office, a couple of days after she arrived in the Bay Area, I told her that



she would be welcome to visit my graduate seminar occasionally, if and whenever she wanted to take a break from her dissertation work. I knew that the topic of the seminar (Greek Philosophy on Poetry and the Arts) was not directly relevant to her current work but I thought this would be a good way for her to meet some of our students and to talk with them. She immediately showed immense enthusiasm, joined our first class on that very day, and *never* missed a class after that; she was actively participating, raising questions, and even gave a very thoughtful presentation on a question I had asked students to think about, regarding eros in Greek lyric poetry and Plato.

The parts of her dissertation she gave me to read in the few weeks she spent at Stanford were brilliant. Sarah figured out more clearly and more creatively than anybody else the choreographic schemes inherent

in the descriptions of the dances of the gods in early Greek poetry. Unlike the general tendency of current scholarship to discover orderly geometric shapes in the various divine dances and choreographies, Sarah's unusually observant eye and meticulous reading of the poetic texts shows us how much harmony there is in what may indeed be a disorderly and discontinuous choreographic scheme that allows for a plurality of forms, shapes, and perhaps rhythms to take place at the same time. She had a gift for perceiving multiplicity where other scholars strive for uniformity and the intellectual apparatus to argue for the beauty of the irregular. Her dissertation had the potential to be pathbreaking. I am delighted that a version of her two chapters on *Pindar and the Homeric Hymn to Apollo* are now published in [Gaia:Revue Interdisciplinaire sur la Grèce archaïque n.28](#).

Sarah was tragically killed in a bicycle accident on February 19, 2024 at the age of 28. In the brief time she spent at Stanford Sarah gained the affection and admiration of all those who were lucky to meet her and to interact with her. She was distinctly modest but very confident. She was petite yet her large smile and her expressive eyes filled our rooms. Above all, she was curious and she loved everything she was working on. Her scholarship, her dancing, her music, were all harmoniously living inside her and nourishing one another. She was quietly making a poem of herself.

— Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi,  
Professor of Classics

### Lara Arikan

Last summer, I was in Oxford and Athens with Prof. Josiah Ober. I presented a paper titled “What is the Engineer’s Good?” at the first of two conferences on Aristotle and AI. My paper concluded that the engineer’s good is beauty; that beauty in the senses of harmony, goodness and perfection is the aim of engineering; and that the engineering of AI is unbeautiful and therefore unethical, at least as it is done currently.

The following year was my first of formal study in the humanities. I learned some Greek, and took an excellent class with Prof. Jody Maxmin in Greek art. As a final project for that class I drew a good friend as Ajax on Exekias’ suicide vase, with a sapling as the stood sword. I replaced the armor with a set of priest’s robes. This project meant a lot to me, and I am very grateful to Prof. Maxmin for the opportunity and for her encouragement.

In March, I presented “The Names and Natures of Grannus” at the graduate student colloquium of the University of Virginia. The paper suggested that ‘Grannus’ had been the name of a Gaulish healing-god related to the Irish Dian Cécht, possibly by way of a pan-Celtic archetype that uses water to absorb death from wounded warriors. I took a directed reading on Celtic religion with Prof. Richard Martin in Winter Quarter, which helped me develop these ideas.

I hope to finish my master’s degree this coming year.

### Nicole Constantine

The last two years at Stanford have been busy and rewarding, with lots of opportunities for learning. On campus, this included coursework, TAing Classics courses, and a healthy (or maybe not!) dose of exam preparation.

Off campus, my summers were filled with field work experiences, including two return trips to Sicily to participate in the Marzamemi Maritime Heritage Project, directed by Profs. Justin Leidwanger and Elizabeth Greene. With the team at Marzamemi (which includes Stanford grad students, undergraduates and alum!) I help to conduct underwater surveys of a dynamic coast with a long human past. Partnering with recent Stanford Classics graduate Sophia Wu, I also lead efforts to document and analyze the deposition of contemporary refuse (primarily plastics) into the coastal environment.

The last few years have also provided opportunities to expand my experience with material analysis and publication. Along with my colleagues Beth Minney and Matthew Previto, I worked with Prof. Leidwanger on editing a special edition of *HEROM: the Journal of Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture*. The special issue, called *Nodes, Networks, and the Emergence of Empires: Maritime Connectivity in Transition*, focuses on the relationship between shipwreck and harbor assemblages and changing political, social and economic structures in the ancient Mediterranean. I made my own contribution to the special issue—“Between Harbor and Hinterland: The Akko Harbor and the Galilee in the Hellenistic and Early Roman Periods.”

I have also embarked on a new project with UPenn graduate student Brigitte Keslinke, which will be an open access handbook to the ceramic ware “Eastern Sigillata A,” published by Lockwood Press in 2026. To forward our work, we’ve studied pottery from a variety of Mediterranean sites, including Ephesus, where we attended a workshop with American, Turkish and Austrian scholars in Summer 2024. Later that summer, I made a trip to Munich’s Archäologische Staatssammlung to study a collection



of ceramics housed there that were recovered from a 1st century BCE shipwreck off the coast of Turkey. The study of these ceramics offers valuable information about ancient Mediterranean trade, particularly the circulation of mass-produced pottery during this period of significant socio-economic transformation. I am grateful to the Europe Center at Stanford for sponsoring my research visit in Munich, and to the staff of the Archäologische Staatssammlung for their warm hospitality.

These experiences informed the development of my dissertation project, which will explore the social and economic dynamics of Mediterranean sailing in the Hellenistic period through the analysis of shipwreck material. I am most interested in using this material to understand the ship as a social world distinct from the land, where sailors labored and lived out their daily lives. Indeed, I'm writing this from a terminal at SFO, waiting to board a flight to Turkey where I will engage in survey work and museum study of materials for my dissertation project—including several weeks living aboard a sailboat. I hope to be able to share some exciting results in the next Classics newsletter!

### **Paula Elena Luz Gaither**

Ciao from Roma! I am here currently as a Rome Prize Fellow conducting research for my dissertation *What does an Aethiops look like? An Investigation into the Creation, Display, and Function of the Aethiopian-type in Roman Art*. My research both deconstructs modern



racialized gazes and interpretations applied to the iconography of the *Aethiops* and recontextualizes the material in its ancient Roman context and ancient Roman visual culture, more broadly. I do this specifically through the site of museums as locations for the institutionalization of narratives around antiquity. As my study uses a comparative racialization methodology, it is particularly exciting to have the space to conduct research on my third case study for a full year in Italy. While here, I will be visiting museums throughout the country, while particularly focusing on the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (MANN).

Last academic year, I presented at a conference on *Exploitation and Otherness: Investigating the Nexus of Race, Ethnicity, and Enslavement in the Ancient Mediterranean* in Turin, Italy. I also worked on the two other case studies from my dissertation. The first examines material in the British Museum in London, where I conducted fieldwork in Spring 2024, while the second looks at material in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where I conducted fieldwork in Summer 2025. I look forward to a generative and inspiring year in Rome. It's truly a dream come true.



## Welcome, New PhD Students!

### 2025

#### **Ariella Goldberg**

(Ancient History)

#### **Fenella Palanca**

(Ancient History)

#### **Camilla Piana**

(Language and Literature)

#### **Freya Schlaefer**

(Language and Literature)

### 2024

#### **Uwade (Uwa) Akhere**

(Language and Literature)

#### **Emanuele Cresca**

(Ancient History)

#### **Caleb Matthew Hammond**

(Classical Archaeology)

#### **Claire Hylton**

(Language and Literature)

#### **Michelle Heeman**

(Classical Archaeology)

#### **Lorenzo Salerno**

(Language and Literature)

#### **Ankita Sen**

(Language and Literature)

#### **Ling Hei (Edward) Tang**

(Ancient History)



### Caleb Matthew Hammond

Fresh off my rewarding first year in the Classics PhD program, I flew to Sicily for my third field season with the Arizona Sicily Project at Segesta, an Elymian city that played an outsized role in the power dynamics of the late fifth century BCE. In an effort to win a powerful ally in their conflict with the Greek colony of Selinus, the Segestans allegedly lured the Athenians into the disastrous Sicilian expedition with false displays of wealth. Segesta's subsequent appeals for aid drew Carthage back to Sicily, avenging its defeat at Himera in 480 BCE. With their cities besieged, Greek refugees fled to Syracuse, which grew into the fourth century's largest Greek city. Perhaps as a Hellenizing gesture to impress the Athenians, Segesta had begun constructing its own Doric temple, one of our best-preserved. Digging in the residential quarter, the Arizona Sicily Project, led by Emma Blake and Robert Schon from the University of Arizona, aims in part to analyze the extent and nature of culture change in the private lives of ordinary Segestans during this period.



Following the excavation season, I embarked on a tour of various sites and museums across Sicily. I visited Greek, Phoenician, and indigenous settlements at Selinunte, Himera, Gela, Syracuse, Akrai, Megara Hyblaea, Taormina, Naxos, Palermo, Marsala, Solunto, Monte Iato,

Morgantina, and Cefalù. This tour helped me develop a fuller understanding of the diverse political and physical landscape in which Segesta was maneuvering. Now back home, I am looking forward to my second year at Stanford.

### Michelle Heeman

My first year as a PhD student in Classical Archaeology at Stanford has been marked by transitions and exciting new opportunities for professional growth. In June 2024, I concluded my role at the U.S. Department of the Interior's Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB) in Washington, D.C. and relocated to Palo Alto. Soon after arriving in California, I jetted off to Sicily for my first season with the Marzamemi Maritime Heritage Project (MMHP), co-directed by Dr. Justin Leidwanger (Stanford University) and Dr. Elizabeth Greene (Brock University), where I assisted with the project's investigation of contemporary vessels used to transport displaced peoples to Sicily, as part of a broader effort to document and make visible the material culture associated with these voyages.

In November 2024, I organized a roundtable at the ASOR Annual Meeting on archaeological community engagement in the eastern Mediterranean. The session brought together archaeologists to share their experiences navigating the ethical challenges and political complexities of conducting community-based work in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The session was attended by archaeologists at various stages of their careers, and it was illuminating to learn about the diversity of experiences among the group. Later in the academic year, I began volunteering with the International Dura Europos Archive (IDEA) and the Roman Provinces Project (RPP), supporting efforts to develop teaching and research tools through Linked Open Data (LOD) in a Wikimedia environment.

In the spring, I began training for participation in the underwater activities of the 2025 MMHP field season. I earned several scuba certifications and completed a two-week scientific diving course at Stanford's Hopkins Marine Station in Monterey, CA. Despite frequent entanglements in kelp (and one particularly memorable encounter with a seal that stole my tape measure) I successfully completed the training. I returned to Marzamemi for a second season, taking part in the project's systematic underwater transect survey and continuing work on documenting contemporary boats of displacement.



Thanks to the Department's generous support, I concluded my summer travels with my first visit to Rome. Experiencing firsthand the sites and monuments that I have studied for nearly a decade was exciting and has enriched my understanding of this material. I am sincerely grateful to the Department for providing the financial support that made this possible.

### JJ Lugardo

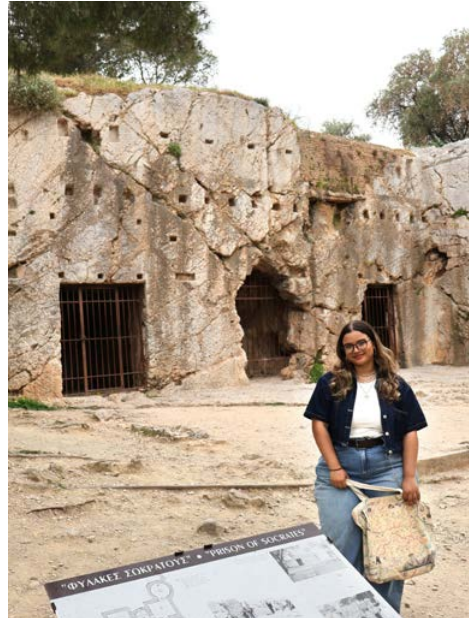
Over the past year, I have been happily engaged in the business of transforming theory into praxis in my research. I officially embarked on my dissertation in October 2024, which took me to Athens, where I spent a strangely satisfying month "prison-hunting." This entailed visiting carceral sites



Spatial and Textual Analysis and as a Community Mentor for the Stanford—CUNY Research Program. From my desk-bound “theoretical scholar” perch, I have been integrating the practical insights, challenges, and feedback from this whirlwind of professional experiences back into my writing.

**Lorenzo Salerno**

This first year of my PhD has been intense and stimulating: the central focus was certainly Latin, with the Latin Core and Latin Prose Composition courses, but I was also able to read a great deal of Greek (for example, through the course on the Language of Homer), as well as take courses in the history of science on Archimedes’ *On Floating Bodies* and on ancient music (both as a performative act and as a mathematical science). These have been particularly enriching in view of my more specific research area. In addition, I had the chance to engage closely with the digital humanities by attending the weekly meetings at CESTA. After passing my German exam, I was also able to serve as a tutor for other graduate students in this language, something that I found especially exciting!



archaeological site of Corinth, where I served as a supervisor for excavations with the American School of Classical Studies—my first official dig and museum work experience (and my first experience trying to project scholarly composure while covered in dust). I returned to the states to participate in Stanford Classics in Theater (SCIT) for its 2025 production *Love is ‘Blinded’*, a modern adaptation inspired by Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and the hit reality TV show *Love is Blind*. To end the school year, in late May, I presented elements of my dissertation work at the Materiality of Incarceration conference in Copenhagen, Denmark hosted by the [Prison Project](#).

in Athens, Corinth, Messene, Delphi, Delos, and Nafplio in an effort to ground my work in the material and spatial realities of ancient incarceration.

In early spring, I returned to Greece to deliver a guest lecture for [students in College Year in Athens](#), titled “Incarceration and the Athenian State: Rethinking Punishment in Classical Greece.” April found me at the

This summer, I have traded the field for the seminar room, working as a Senior Graduate Mentor for the Center for

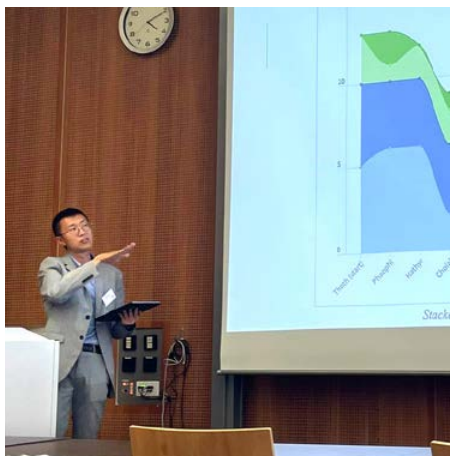


The summer I have just completed was equally intense: first, I attended a summer school in Digital Humanities organized in collaboration between Stanford, UCLA, and the Scuola Normale Superiore (my previous institution, where I completed both my bachelor's and master's degrees). Then, with a project funded by the Europe Center, I spent two weeks in Florence, where I was able to read Latin and Italian mathematical manuscripts from the medieval and Renaissance periods, as well as Greek manuscripts of a musical and astronomical kind (pictured is one of the very few surviving Greek manuscripts with musical notation written above the words!).

Now I am preparing for my first generals and then for the start of my second year, in which I will also begin teaching undergraduates... I am really looking forward to it!

### Edward Tang

2024-25 has been a wonderful year to begin my PhD in Classics. In addition to taking stimulating courses both inside and outside the department, I have been working at Stanford's Center of Spatial and Textual Analysis. Thanks to Prof. Giovanna Ceserani, I also had the opportunity to guide undergraduates in using GIS and mapping systems to tackle historical questions.



This summer was especially rewarding. I attended the InkCode summer school—jointly organized by the Scuola Normale Superiore, Stanford, and UCLA—where I was introduced to current projects in ancient history with a strong computational focus. I then traveled to Spain to participate in an excavation at Los Bañales, a roman site whose isolated setting and eventual decline raise fascinating questions about urban sustainability and urban-rural relations. Experiencing fieldwork firsthand has given me a much deeper appreciation of how archaeological reports are produced and the reasoning behind data collection in the field. Finally, I flew to Cologne to present my paper on letters as moving objects and seasonal mobility at the International Congress of Papyrology. I was delighted to receive generous feedback from colleagues and to learn new approaches to papyri. The panels on Islamic papyrology in particular opened up fresh comparative perspectives on life and society in the ancient Mediterranean.

### From Herodotus to the Rosicrucian Museum: Encountering Ancient Egypt

On September 20, 2025, the first and second-year PhDs enrolled in this year's ancient Greek language sequence made the trip down from Stanford to San Jose to visit the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, home to the largest collection of Egyptian artifacts on public display in Western North America. Led by PhD candidate JJ, the group began their exploration on the museum's lower floors, where they encountered the museum's new AI Thoth Robot. The PhD students quickly gathered around to put Thoth to the test, prompting it with impressively specific questions about ancient history in no fewer than three languages.

From there, we went on a tour through the museum's rock-cut tomb replica modeled after the Beni Hasan cemetery in Middle Egypt. Knowing glances were exchanged whenever the tour guide posed questions about ancient burial practices or religion (clearly a well-prepared audience). After the tour, we took our time exploring the museum's upper floors and diving deeper into the collection before regrouping around 2 pm for a debrief over lunch in San Jose. Overall, the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum provided a memorable and inspiring way to kick off the Greek language sequence for the fall quarter before everyone headed back to Stanford for the day.

**Angelina Sophia Ambrosiou**

After being granted the Chappell Lougee scholarship, I spent 10 weeks of independent summer research on a project that I had written a proposal for. With this grant, I am documenting the ‘life after death’ of 5 artifacts from the ongoing Athenian Agora excavation, accompanying them through their journey from the ground to analysis by specialists, the lab, and to the Stoa of Attalos museum/storage. I am also comparing the artistic styles, motifs, and continuity of the Classical and Hellenistic periods’ legacy to that of the Late Roman and Middle Byzantine periods of the 5th-6th centuries AD. Simultaneously, I am recording and answering questions concerning the context within which these pieces are found, their assemblage, deposition, composition, means of manufacture, use, significance in their society, their destination, and what makes them museum-worthy or not, thereby creating a reflective study as a product of the dig work.

This archaeological season under Field Directors John Papadopoulos and Debby Sneed gave me the chance to gain hands-on experience and great insight working in the field for the first time, digging every weekday from 7am-2pm in the Greek heatwave, familiarizing myself with the physical endurance it takes, and understanding terminology used in the trench. I greatly enjoyed actively engaging with a wide range of materials from pottery, bone, and charcoal, to tile, shell, glass, and slag (waste matter separated from metals during the smelting or refining of ore), as well as putting theory I’ve learned in class into practice by using the flotation method for the study of floral and faunal remains. Additionally, assisting the supervisors in the administrative side of things allowed me to participate in all parts of the process the volunteers don’t usually get to see i.e. cataloguing the “special finds” in the database, taking their dimensions, adding photogrammetry points,



creating and labeling tags, describing “contexts”, using a grid to precisely map the stratigraphy of the pit through which the foundations of the 460 BC Stoa Poikilai (Painted Stoa) lie.

## Congratulations, Honor Students!

**2025**

**Thane Brueschke**

The Xenic Exegesis of Xerxes: Analyzing Xerxes |  
Across Ancient Greek, Persian, and Jewish Literature  
Advisor: Marsh McCall, Second reader: Ian Morris

**Sawyer E.V. Niehaus**

Present Laughter: Slavery, Humanity, and an Accessible  
Challenge to Roman Comedic Convention in Plautus’s Captivi  
Advisor: Rush Rehm, Second reader: Hans Bork

**Sadie Mae Sarkisian**

Solutio Vinculo Linguae: Examining a Pattern  
of Miracles Shaping the Development of Deaf and  
Non-Verbal Stereotypes in Latin and Greek Literature  
Advisor: Hans Bork, Second reader: Reviel Netz

**Erica Wood**

The Legacy of Tragoidia Protest Depictions  
in Broadway’s Hadestown  
Advisor: Marsh McCall, Second reader: Ian Morris

**Yizhen Sophia Wu**

Epistolary (Alter)Egos:  
Comparing the Letters of Cicero and Sima Qian  
Advisor: Christopher Krebs, Second reader: Yiqun Zhou

**2024**

**Lena Cavicchia**

The Rhodopean Pilgrimage: Orpheus and Eurydice  
Resurrected through the Bulgarian Travelogi  
Advisor: Grant Parker, Second reader: Bissera Pentcheva

**Fiona Alene Clunan**

Ancient Armenia and the Aims of Empire:  
Analyzing Roman Grand Strategy  
Advisor: Richard Saller, Second reader: Walter Scheidel

### Bo Hou

Last summer, I enrolled in the CUNY Ancient Greek program, a 10-week intensive course designed for beginners with no prior background in Greek. The program was incredibly demanding and time-consuming, so I had very little time to socialize with friends, except for brief moments on Friday nights or Saturdays. I often found myself studying for at least six hours after class each day, as the translation homework was extensive. If anyone is considering this program, I would suggest being fully prepared, as it requires complete dedication.



Many of my classmates in the program mentioned that you need to put your whole heart into it, and I completely agree. Because of the daily quizzes and cumulative exams every Monday, it's important not only to complete the homework but also to spend time reviewing grammar and vocabulary from previous weeks. I didn't have much opportunity to visit museums, explore New York, or enjoy time with friends due to the rigorous schedule.

The program is emotionally demanding as well, so making friends and studying together for translations was important, as it can feel lonely sometimes. While the experience was challenging, I did build a solid foundation for future Greek studies, though it came at the cost of many nights of sleep deprivation and emotional exhaustion.

I would highly recommend this program to those who are extremely serious about learning Ancient Greek and are ready for an intense, immersive experience.

### Robert Muñiz

During the summer of 2025, I was able to work on Prof. Justin Leidwanger's Marzamemi Maritime Heritage Project thanks to the generous funding of the Stanford Department of Classics.

I have been a member of the project for several summers, and I was happy to be able to continue my work on the concretions excavated from the Marzamemi II shipwreck. As iron objects slowly decay underwater, corrosion products mixed with sand begin to form a protective layer—the “concretion”—which preserves the shape and surface details of the artifacts. Working with Andrea Gobbi, an Italian conservator, I cast well over one hundred of these concretions, a process involving filling the empty spaces inside with silicone to reproduce the metal items' original form. These silicone casts are essentially our only archaeological evidence of the ship's hull, and as such they can tell us a great deal about the specific details of its construction. My work on the concretions will be the subject of a poster presentation at the AIA's annual meeting in January of 2026.

After spending the summer of 2024 performing my project-related work entirely on land, I also welcomed a return to the water, as I was a participant in multiple survey dives. People tell me that getting back into scuba diving after a long time off is just like riding a bike, and I think they're right—a few sessions at the Hopkins Marine Center prior to flying out to Sicily and the rust of twelve diveless months was gone.

My time on the project has been incredibly rewarding, and this was especially true of the past summer. As I inch closer to



finishing my undergraduate studies at Stanford, the opportunity to broaden my horizons beyond philology has been invaluable and has shown me the many paths my future in Classics may take.

### Sasha Walker Barish

Last summer, besides studying for exams, learning some German, and making contributions to a critical edition of Archimedes which Reviel Netz is editing, I received funding from the Classics Department and the Europe Center to attend the Leiden Summer School in Languages and Linguistics. There I was able to hear a variety of lectures on Phoenician, Insular Celtic, and the fragmentary languages of ancient Italy, lectures which have enriched my understanding of linguistic and literary contact in the Roman world.

More recently I have been working on a chapter for a forthcoming edited volume on historical (im)politeness from antiquity to modernity. In July, I attended the Celtic Conference in Classics in July and presented my research about late Latin personal names that take inspiration from Punic.

I've enjoyed teaching at Stanford: in my second year I taught both Intermediate and Introductory Latin, and this summer I was a teaching assistant for Christopher Krebs' high school summer course “Rome and its Legacies,” all of which were great experiences.

Finally, a less serious highlight of my year was co-organizing Stanford Classics In Theater's 2025 production, *Oedipus: Love is Blinded*.

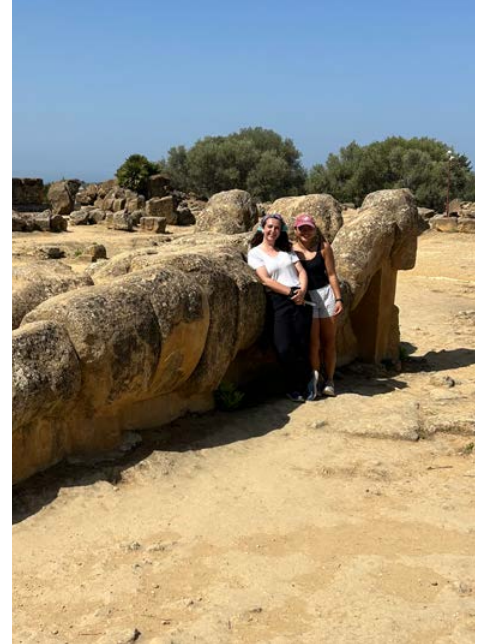
Overall, I've had a fulfilling first two years at Stanford and I've learned a great deal from the faculty and from my peers. I'm looking forward to Year 3, in which I will present a paper about a Latin verse inscription at the SCS annual meeting and get to work on my dissertation prospectus.

### Sophia Wu

This was my second summer on the Marzamemi Maritime Heritage Project led by Prof. Justin Leidwanger and Prof. Elizabeth Greene (Brock University). I returned to Sicily because last year introduced me to the material side of Classics I had always been interested in but had never explored in depth. Scuba diving in the Mediterranean for ancient artifacts has allowed me to be much closer to the culture and the texts of the ancient Greeks and Romans, birthed and shaped by that very sea. Underwater archaeology also offered me the chance to combine my love for the marine environment with my interest in human history. Hovering a couple of feet above the seabed, one can see and feel most literally how ancient material interacts with modern material and with nature. The reefs harbor millennia of history—not just elite

history, but also the history of common people. Sometimes these human artifacts become the habitats of fish, seagrass, snails... I remember seeing an octopus peering at me with giant eyes, half-emerged from its home. Wrapped up in its tentacles were shells, bits of plastic, a fragment of an amphora. It held together in its microcosm the intersection of all my interests.

The project broadened my perspective beyond what is canonically "Classics." I was gifted the opportunity to explore how the discipline interacts with society today. Beyond surveying ancient artifacts ranging from the Classical to the Hellenistic and the Late Roman, the project looks at patterns of modern trash deposition. We used ancient material to translate modern observations and modern movements to interpret ancient processes. By including modern artifacts in the category of "interesting material" we expand "interesting" people and "interesting" time periods to encompass much more. Similarly, by undertaking the recording of contemporary migrant boats, we link ancient maritime activity and its actors with those occurring and living today, and thus assign further significance to both. This experience has made me much more cognizant of the people and stories behind the texts I read in class and has shown me how Classics still tangibly affects and influences modern society in the Mediterranean.



## Classics 105—Food & Drink in Ancient Greece & Rome

This week the student in Classics 105 (Food & Drink in Ancient Greece & Rome) engaged in a little “phenomenological experiment” in which they staged a game of kottabos using 3D-printed *kylikes* out on the Oval. The students had a lot of fun—and got quite competitive!—trying to master the art of launching cupfuls of “wine” (dyed water) at a target in accordance with literary and pictorial evidence. The exercise marked the end of a unit on the classical symposium and sympotic wares. While we obviously weren’t able to replicate the ancient Greek experience of the game in *every* detail, the students did gain an appreciation for the mechanics of the game and how experimental archaeology can help us recover sensory/physical experiences in the past.

— Aaron D. Brown, Ph.D., Lecturer





### Art 101—The Artist in Ancient Greek Society—and more!

The high point of our Introductory Seminar—The Artist in Ancient Greek Society—was a morning Session at the Stanford Ceramics Studio, designed by Ian Whitehead (BA English and Mathematics; Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Statistics at Swarthmore College). George Tilton-Low (BA Art History, BS Bioengineering, MS Biomedical Data Science, and a gifted potter) offered the students hands-on instruction in throwing vases on wheels. They were an exceptional group: Angelina Ambrosia (a Classics major), won a Chappell-Lougee Scholarship to spend the summer excavating in the Athenian Agora. Miles Kottler (a Classics minor) worked Mexico City as a Chappell-Lougee Scholar; Miles won the Andrea Lunsford Prize for distinction in PWR2 and the Russell Berman Award for excellence in the IntroSem. Roome Becker, Co-President of the Sophomore Class, was re-elected as Co-President of the Junior Class. Shreya Sinha declared a double-major in CS and Classics after a quarter at Stanford in New York. Winston Lee (a Classics major, pole-vaulter, polo-player and sculptor) spent the summer as a Political Studies Fellow at the Hudson Institute in Washington DC.

George Tilton-Low's classmates have left their mark on the department and the university. James Varah (BS Computer Science, BA Art Practice) won the Frederick Terman Award in Engineering. (His mother, Adine Kernberg Varah, General Counsel at SF MOMA, received the Outstanding Community Service Award from the San Francisco Bar Association). Leo Baek (BA Art History and Archaeology) will study Social Anthropology at Cambridge as a Gates Scholar in 2025-26. Derin Kutlay (BS Physics, BA Classics) published "Turk," her project for Art 101, in *The Ilanot Review*, Winter/Spring 2025. The highlight of our spring seminar was a guest lecture by Amir Abou-Jaoude (BA Art History and American Studies) on Robert Mapplethorpe and art of Praxiteles.

Four classics majors won the Award of Excellence from the Alumni Association: Diego Burgos, Marguerite DeMarco, Leo Baek, Zora Garg, and Dr. Samuel Powell was honored with the Community Impact Award.

— Jody Maxmin, Associate Professor

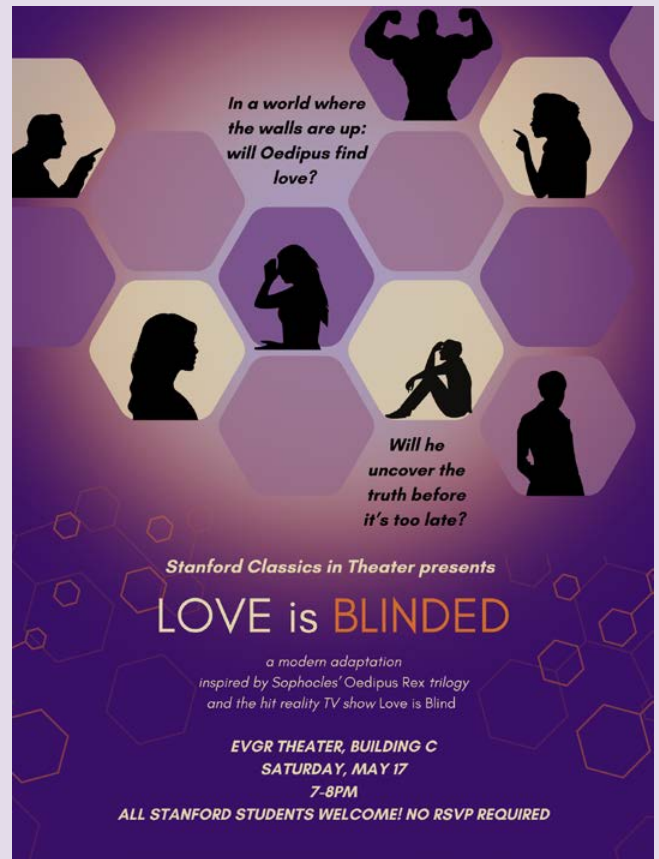


### Classics 102/202 Etruscan Archaeology

I wanted to share with you some pics from our recent field trip in “Etruscan Archaeology” (Classics 102/202) to the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at UC Berkeley on May 2. Students had the opportunity to tour the museum’s collection of Etruscan artifacts (the largest on the West Coast!), to meet with curators and experts in Etruscan material culture, and to examine artifacts firsthand for a research project in the course. It was a fun, illuminating experience for all!

— Aaron D. Brown, Ph.D., Lecturer





## Stanford Classics in Theatre (SCIT)

**Friday, May 19**  
**Saturday, May 20**  
**Pigott Theater**

Stanford Classics In Theater (SCIT) is a community of graduate and undergraduate students who write and perform adaptations of ancient Greek and Roman plays.

In May 2025, SCIT presented *Love Is Blinded*, a comic reimagining of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* as a season of the reality dating show *Love is Blind*, full of Freudian nightmares and mythology jokes. The play was performed in the EVGR theater for an audience of classicists, students, friends, family, and members of the community.

In the spring of 2026, SCIT will return with *The Bacch-AI*, a Silicon Valley version of Euripides' *Bacchae*.

Special thanks to the Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education (VPGE) for their continued financial support through SPICE grants.

## Jacqueline Arthur-Montagne

PhD 2016

Assistant Professor of Classics,  
University of Virginia

Forthcoming book (2026) with CUP:

“Fiction and Education in the Roman World: The Cultivation of the Reader.”

More recently, a special issue of *Arethusa* with fellow Stanford alum Edward Kelting on “Animals under Empire.”

## Beverly Brown Berg

BA History, 1966, PhD Classics 1973

Retired

I retired from teaching ancient history at Linfield in Oregon in 2008. Directing travel study programs for the Vergilian Society since 1996 I have just completed my 19th program, Pannonia. Past locations Egypt, Romania.

## Honora Chapman

BA 1984, PhD 1998

Dean, College of Arts and Humanities,  
California State University, Fresno

Dr. Honora Chapman received a \$5M grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to create a humanities internship program at Fresno State.

This year, over 100 humanities majors completed paid internships.

## A. C. “Al” Duncan

PhD 2012

Associate Professor of Classics,  
UNC Chapel Hill

This past year, I received tenure at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and my first monograph, *Ugly Productions: An Aesthetics of Greek Drama*, was published by the University of Michigan Press.

## Anne Duray

PhD 2020

2024-26 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellow (Placement: National Science Foundation)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

- “Racial Discourses in Aegean

## PhD Placements

### James Macksoud

(PhD 2025)

Postdoctoral fellow,  
Stanford University

### Ümit Öztürk

(PhD 2025)

Postdoctoral fellow,  
American School of  
Classical Studies at Athens

### Samuel Powell

(PhD 2025)

Visiting Assistant Professor,  
University of Puget Sound

### Nicholas Bartos

(PhD 2024)

Adjunct Assistant Professor, UCLA

### Rachel Dubit

(PhD 2024)

Lecturer, Dartmouth College

### Annie Lamar

(PhD 2024)

Assistant Professor, UC Santa Barbara

### Thomas Leibundgut

(PhD 2024)

Co-Coordinator, Swiss universities

Prehistory c. 1900: The Case of the Cupbearer Fresco at Knossos” (2024, *European Journal of Archaeology*)

- “The Peculiar Hellenic Alloy’: Carl Blegen’s Narrative of Greek Racial Development in Context” (2025, *American Journal of Archaeology*)

I have also been selected as a lecturer for the Archaeological Institute of America’s 2025-26 National Lecture Program.

### Robert Eisner

M.A. 1970, Ph.D. 1971

Prof. Emeritus of Classics and Humanities,  
San Diego State University

Writing to agents who handle fiction of various sorts.

### Vladimir Gildin Zuckerman

PhD 2022

Postdoc Researcher, Leiden University

I joined the collaborative project Anchoring Innovation as a postdoc in January. My recent publications appeared in *Polis* (2024) and a piece on the concept of care in Socratic literature is forthcoming in *Classical Antiquity*.

### Don Lateiner

PhD 1972

Ohio Wesleyan Humanities-Classics  
Emeritus

*Silence and Stillness in Heliodoros’ Aithiopia*, CPh October 2025; *Lucian and Alexander: Invective and Fake-News*, ICS 2025; *Invective in Herodotos’ Histories*, C&M 2025 (all forthcoming).

### Jordan John Lee

Bachelor of Arts with Honors

(B.A.H.) 2022

1st-year MD-PhD Student at Emory University

After graduating with my M.S. in Epidemiology and Clinical Research at Stanford in 2023, I returned home to Los Angeles to work as an Epidemiology Analyst for the LA County Department of Public Health and to apply for medical school. I also was able to submit my first first-authored manuscript (“Monthly sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine during pregnancy prevents febrile respiratory illnesses: A secondary analysis of a malaria chemoprevention trial in Uganda”) in *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*. Now, I am proud to announce that I will be furthering my education

at Emory University as an MD-PhD student. I am excited to immerse myself in clinical practice and to continue research in the epidemiology and biology of mosquito-borne infectious diseases. Before heading to Atlanta, I was able to catch up with two of my closest Classics mentors in Professors Hans Bork and Marsh McCall on a warm May week on The Farm!

### **Grace McGinley**

**Bachelors 2022**

*Administrative Assistant @  
DreamWorks TV Animation*

I just started a new job! After two and a half years at the literary management and production company The Gotham Group, I made the jump over to the development team with DreamWorks Animated TV.

### **Santiago Melo Arias**

**MA 2016**

*Director of the undergraduate program  
in Economics at Universidad de los Andes*  
I also teach Greek and Latin at Instituto Caro y Cuervo and Universidad de los Andes.

### **Andrew Monson**

**PhD 2008**

*Professor for World Regions and  
Area Studies in Comparative Perspective,  
University of Würzburg*  
New position (started June 2024) at the University of Würzburg in Germany.

### **Didier Natalizi Baldi**

**BA (Honors) 2022**

*DPhil Student - University of Oxford*

### **Thomas Pendergast**

**Bachelor's 1965, Master's 1966**

*Professor Emeritus*

### **Mark Riley**

**PhD 1971**

*Prof. Emeritus of Classics, CSU Sacramento*  
Vox Clamantis by John Gower: "The

Voice of One Crying" translated with notes by Robert J. Meindl, Mark Riley, and R. F. Yeager 2025. Many editions of shorter Renaissance and Neo-Latin texts. See [academia.edu](http://academia.edu).

### **James Rives**

**PhD 1990**

*Kenan Eminent Professor of Classics,  
UNC Chapel Hill*

My magnum opus, *Animal Sacrifice in the Roman Empire (31 BCE-395 CE): Power, Communication, and Cultural Transformation*, was published by Oxford University Press in June 2024.

### **Alan Sheppard**

**PhD 2016**

*Managing Editor, Goose Lane Editions*

### **Don Taddeo**

**PhD 1972**

I am now retired, having spent a good part of my life in senior university administration and fundraising, with Concordia University, the McGill University Health Centre Foundation and l'université de Montréal. I have and continue to sit on several volunteer boards:

- Chairman of the Board, St. Joseph's Oratory Foundation, Montreal
- Member of the Board, Orchestre Métropolitain
- Member of the Board, Canadian International Organ Competition

I was conferred the [Order of Canada, December, 2024](#):

*DONAT TADDEO, C.M.  
MONTRÉAL, QUEBEC*

*Donat Taddeo is a pillar of his Montréal community. Recognized for his superlative fundraising acumen and volunteerism, he led successful initiatives that far exceeded targets while at the helm of Concordia University's Campaign for a New Millennium and the McGill University Health Centre Foundation. He has also*



Don Taddeo with his wife Brigitte and his twin daughters, Francesca and Julia, taken at the award ceremony at the Governor-General's residence in December 2024.

*left an indelible mark as a distinguished volunteer board member of such prominent organizations as the Jeanne Sauvé Scholars' Foundation, the Lethbridge-Layton-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre, the Quebec Special Olympics, l'orchestre Métropolitain and Marianopolis College.*

I have fond memories of my days at Stanford (1967-1972) and am in touch with classmate Hugh M. Lee, retired professor, University of Maryland.

### **Lela Urquhart**

**PhD 2010**

*Chief Advancement Officer,  
North Carolina Museum of Art*  
Lela Urquhart began a new role as Chief Advancement Officer at the North Carolina Museum of Art, overseeing fundraising strategy and operations for North Carolina's state art museum and foundation.

The Stanford Classics Department is grateful for the generous contributions of all our donors and supporters.

Because of the gifts we receive, our students travel to museums, universities, research centers, conferences, and archaeological sites around the world. These experiences provide opportunities to enhance what they learn in the classroom and to engage in research.

**Thank you for your support!**

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SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

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Send us updates! We welcome contact via the mailing address above, email, phone, and/or in-person visits to campus.

Visit the department's website ([classics.stanford.edu](http://classics.stanford.edu)) for news, events, and updated profiles of faculty and students.

If you would like to receive event announcements via email, please contact us at [classics@stanford.edu](mailto:classics@stanford.edu), and we will add you to the list.

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