

# aia

## New York Society News



### THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*We've got your feedback and are acting on it!*

Greetings for the new year to one and all. This fall has been a busy one for the AIA-New York Society, and the spring seems to be shaping up quite nicely as well. At this fall's annual meeting we said thank you to Ira Haupt III for his excellent guidance and 11 years of service as treasurer, while electing John Yarmick as our new treasurer. We also renewed some of our officers and welcomed a few new members to our board. To see a full listing please check out our website at [Http://AIA-NYSociety.org/board-members](http://AIA-NYSociety.org/board-members).

Our fall lectures covered a wide array of topics ranging from Paleolithic cave paintings and the archaeological research involved in their discovery to Maya calendars and the archaeology of Bangladesh. In addition, the New York Society participated in the Archaeological Institute of America's first National Archaeology Day event. Working together with PANYC (Professional Archaeologists of New York City) and the Columbia Center for Archaeology, the AIA-NY Society co-sponsored this event at which Nan Rothschild and Diana Wall gave presentations. Drs. Rothschild and Wall shared their thoughts (and some artifacts) from their recent work at Seneca Village in a wonderful afternoon of discussion and discovery. Ashley Anderson, one of the students who worked on the project, has written about her own experience on this excavation in this "deluxe" issue of our newsletter.

In our desire to explore archaeology here at home in New York, in addition to places farther afield, we have added links to our website resources page that include reports on New York City archaeology. In this newsletter you will also find a contribution by Amanda Supthin of the

New York City Landmarks Commission detailing some recent archaeological projects here in the city.

By now you will all have received our survey. We are in the process of evaluating the information, however we can say that 57% of respondents come to 1-3 events per year and that a lecture's subject matter is the primary incentive to attend events. Lectures on Greco-Roman topics are appealing to 81% of respondents but more than 50% are also interested in Prehistory, Ideas and Trends in Archaeology, and Byzantine Archaeology. 60% of members are also expressed interest in participating on excursions to exhibitions outside of New York City proper, and as we begin planning for the 2012-13 season we will take into consideration the feedback we have received and use it to help guide us.

The Friends of the New York Society has also had a successful fall, with two events so far and two more planned for the spring. This group is more robust than ever, and we thank all of those who have contributed and thus make it possible for us to offer the many events that we do.

As you will see in the following pages we have a great line up of lectures for the winter and spring, and on April 25<sup>th</sup> the AIA's Annual Gala will be held at Capitale. This year's Banderier Award will be presented to Dr. Crawford H. Greenewalt, Jr., so mark your calendars, and don't forget to check in with us on line at [Http://AIA-NYSociety.org](http://AIA-NYSociety.org). We look forward to seeing you.

*Paula Kay Lazrus*  
President, AIA New York Society

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## aia New York Society lecture series for Winter 2012

January 26, 6:30 (reception to follow lecture)

**THE JOUKOWSKY LECTURE: “The Magnificent Peutinger Map: Roman Cartography at its Most Creative”**

**Richard Talbert, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

15 East 84th St., First Floor, ISAW (co-sponsored by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World)

Romans – more than any other ancient people – came to realize that maps are not mere factual records but also value-laden documents. Then, as now, maps could even be designed to promote and reinforce values, from peace and civilization to unashamed pride in conquest and entitlement to world-rule.

Scholars recently have developed more sensitive and satisfying approaches to interpreting the cartographic products of pre-modern societies. This lecture deepens insight into the particular case of the Romans by reconsidering the thinking behind the immense Marble Plan of the city of Rome and, above all, exposing powerful meaning and purpose in the so-called ‘Peutinger Map’, an elongated, astonishingly rich, Roman world-map.

February 21, 6:30 (reception to follow lecture)

**“Popular Imagery and Reactions to Spanish Missionization from San Augustine to San Francisco”**

**David Hurst Thomas, American Museum of Natural History**

101 Murray Street, room 118. St. John’s University, Manhattan Campus

This lecture addresses the nostalgia and romance that has long surrounded the Franciscan missions of America’s Spanish Borderlands. From San Francisco (California), through the American Southwest to San Augustine (Florida), mainstream history has constructed and perpetuated an idealized, romanticized version of the Spanish mission in America – complete with Mission Revival architectural styles and reconstructed archaeological sites that sometimes resemble Hollywood stage sets. This presentation draws upon the most recent archaeological evidence from throughout the Spanish Borderlands to suggest some more historically-appropriate perspectives on America’s mission heritage.

March 21, 6:30 (reception to follow lecture)

**“The House of Discord: Public and Private Churches in the Age of Constantine”**

**Kim Bowes, University of Pennsylvania**

Schermerhorn Hall 612/614, Columbia University (co-sponsored by the Columbia Center for Archaeology)

The conversion of Constantine marks the advent of public Christianity and, with it, the first distinctively Christian architecture – the Christian basilica. But how successful was Christianity’s new public face? This paper will explore the Christian building and worship that went on outside the basilica – in the home. It suggests that private churches – in homes and rural estates – formed a major undercurrent of Christian life during the faith’s first two public centuries, and acted as a major bone of contention between bishops eager to monopolize church building, and independent-minded aristocrats.

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*To view updated information about lectures and other AIA-NYS matters online, check out our (relatively) new website:*

<http://aia-nysociety.org> and click on the “events” tab.

*Also, save some trees! To share your email with us or to update it, please email us at: [Info@aia-nysociety.org](mailto:Info@aia-nysociety.org).*

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April 11, 6:30 (reception to follow lecture)

**THE BRUSH LECTURE: “Sacred Spaces and Human Sacrifice: The Nasca Lines in their Cultural and Religious Context”**

**Christina Conlee, Texas State University at San Marcos**

15 East 84th St., First Floor, ISAW (co-sponsored by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World)

The Nasca Lines of southern Peru have long been an enigma for archaeologists and lay people alike. Many theories have been proposed about what they were used for and why they were constructed. In the last 20 years archaeologists have learned much more about the ancient Nasca people, and we are now able to understand the lines as an important part of their religion. These were sacred places where ceremonies were performed and offerings were made to ensure fertility and the continuation of society.

May (exact time, date, and place TBA by mailing and email [please send us your email, if you haven't!])

**THE BLUMENGARTEN LECTURE: “New York City’s Triumphal Arches”**

**Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis, CUNY Graduate Center**

The triumphal and honorific arches of Rome celebrated the victories of generals, emperors, and the Roman legions. These arches, located at critical urban junctures, served as a continual source of inspiration for honorific and triumphal monuments in Europe. The use of triumphal arches as honorific monuments continued in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century America, although this transatlantic adaptation has been virtually ignored. Thus, this presentation examines three specific monuments in New York City that utilized and re-interpreted Roman arches for different purposes while considering their urban context and how they became important parts of New York’s architectural framework and landscape. The arches in question will be: the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Arch at the Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn, the Washington Arch in Washington Square Park, and the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, which serves as the main façade and entrance to the American Museum of Natural History.

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Interested in joining the *Friends of the New York Society*? Your additional contribution will not only help us maintain our stimulating lecture schedule, but it will also give you the opportunity to join fellow enthusiasts for private exhibition tours and intimate discussions, often held in a board member’s home. Looking to have a more concrete involvement in the society? We are looking for **volunteers** to help us on lecture days. If you are interested in any of these opportunities, check out the new website (<http://aia-nysociety.org>), and click on the appropriate links provided. We look forward to seeing you online and in person.

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***Also... PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEWSLETTER***

Send news of your own or your colleagues’ excavations, new books, awards,  
or any other items you deem of interest to: Ellen Morris ([efm2110@columbia.edu](mailto:efm2110@columbia.edu))  
snail mail: c/o New York Society News, 217 Manhattan Avenue #7A, New York, NY 10025

## Spotlight on...

### *Excavations at Selinunte*

In 2006, the Institute of Fine Arts – NYU began a new research project on the Akropolis of Selinunte, under the direction of Professor Clemente Marconi and in collaboration with the Soprintendenza BB.CC.AA. of Trapani and now the local Archaeological Park.

Selinunte, located on the southern coast of Sicily, is one of the most important archaeological sites in Italy. From its foundation as a Greek colony around the second half of the seventh century through the middle of the third century BCE, Selinus enjoyed a prosperous existence as reflected in its architecture of notable sanctuaries, temples, fortifications, and houses, which span the Archaic (630 – 480 BCE) through the Early Hellenistic (323 – 250 BCE) periods and are remarkably well preserved.

The current project focuses on a systematic and interdisciplinary study of the archaeology and architecture of the main urban sanctuary on the Akropolis, focusing on two important cult buildings: Temple B, erected ca. 300 BCE at the time of Punic control over the site, and particularly notable for its polychrome remains; and Temple R, dated ca. 570 BCE, and one of the earliest stone temples in the West.

One goal of the IFA mission is to conduct a new architectural study of these new temples; another goal is to explore the archaeological context of these two buildings and the sanctuary, through the first stratigraphic excavations in the area, and the analysis of not only the artifacts, but also the faunal remains, which are providing essential indications about ritual activities.

The excavations have provided important new evidence about the history of the site. A series of prehistoric finds, the first ever unearthed on the Akropolis of

Selinunte, point to the existence of a Bronze Age settlement in the area of the main urban sanctuary. This settlement likely played an important role as a staging point for trade along the Mediterranean Sea route. The site was abandoned at the end of the Late Bronze Age, and it was reoccupied only over the course of the seventh century BCE, with the foundation of the Greek colony. To this phase belong a series of structures with mudbrick walls and clay floors, located in the area between Temples B and R, which count among the earliest structures of the Greek period ever found in Selinunte. Particularly notable is the material culture associated with these structures, which includes Greek, Phoenician, and native pottery, a combination which opens interesting questions about ethnicity and cultural exchange in Selinunte at the time of the colonial foundation.

Next year's project will be particularly exciting, as we will be investigating the area inside Temple R, thus far unexplored. During the 2011 field season, in front of this building, we discovered a female bust: a type very popular in Sicily, often used in association with the cult of Demeter, and thought to represent either this goddess or her daughter Kore. This find, along with other elements, may suggest the identification of Demeter as the owner of Temple R.

- *Clemente Marconi*

Director, IFA excavations at Selinunte



## CUTTING EDGE DOCTORAL RESEARCH FROM GOTHAM'S FINEST

**Caracalla's Baths**

*Maryl Gensheimer of the IFA  
immerses herself in (the study of) imperial baths*



“What is so bad as Nero; what is so good as his baths?” quipped the Roman satirist Martial, reminding us that grand architecture could bol-

ster a ruler's reputation. And indeed, between the time of Nero and Constantine (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE), the emperors built a series of magnificent public baths in the city of Rome to great acclaim. My dissertation is the first comprehensive analysis of the decoration of the best preserved of these baths, those of Caracalla, as well as that decoration's popular reception and its critical role in articulating imperial innuendo.

My project promises exciting discoveries in a relatively unexplored field within Roman archaeology. The imperial baths were the ultimate gift to the Roman people, being massively expensive to build, decorate, and maintain – and yet the finished product of such expenditure is understudied. It is not known exactly how the Baths of Caracalla appeared or how their decoration affected their use and the popular perception of their imperial patron. My work elucidates the manner in which decoration articulated themes of dynastic legitimacy and imperial largess and crafted the emperor Caracalla's reputation and legacy.

To date, my work has included research in both New York and Rome. I have dug, as it were, through various libraries in both cities in order to read all sources concerned with the Baths' modern excavation and ancient usage. I have worked on-site at the Baths of Caracalla, documenting the monument and its architectural decoration still in situ, such as the

well-preserved figural capitals from the central hall, through a series of photographs and measurements. I have also visited, among others, the Museo Nazionale Romano and the Vatican Museums in Rome, as well as the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples, in order to study all decorative materials original to the Baths, such as the famous Hercules Farnese, colossal Aesculapius (god of healing), or extremely fine mosaics depicting athletes.

Future research will continue to reconstruct, in as much detail as possible, the original decoration of the Baths and explore that decoration's connotations for – and reception by – the public. By compiling the evidence for all media (encompassing not only free-standing but also relief sculpture, mosaic, floor inlay, wall painting, stone columns and veneers, stucco, and water features such as fountains) and analyzing iconographical trends, I will demonstrate that the Baths' decoration was a carefully strategized ensemble. Through this study of the monument, its decorative program, and the underlying ambitions of its imperial patron, my dissertation will unveil the means through which identities and meanings asserted themselves in novel ways through the vehicle of bath decoration.

Maryl B. Gensheimer  
Institute of Fine Arts  
New York University  
Ph.D. Candidate



*Figural Capital from Caracalla's bath, Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Roma*



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 UPDATES ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY of NEW YORK CITY
 

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New York City archaeology emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when avocational archaeologists such as Reginald Bolton and William Calver worked to uncover traces of Native American settlements and Revolutionary War-period military sites in an effort to uncover as much as possible before development destroyed the last vestiges of what the region was like before the city. In the 1960s professional archaeologists, such as Dr. Bert Salwen of New York University, began to conduct work within the city and the focus shifted from learning about life before urbanization to the study of urbanization. Archaeology has been conducted in all five boroughs of New York City and now the over 1,300 reports about this work are on-line at

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/html/forms/archaeology\\_reports.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/html/forms/archaeology_reports.shtml)

Archaeology conducted within New York City usually happens through the environmental review process, which mandates that government agencies consider the impact of discretionary actions on a range of resources including archaeological sites. The archaeology completed through this process is conducted by professional archaeologists working for developers and is overseen by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission's Department of Archaeology. For more information about the process please see:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/pubs/avguide.pdf>

These are a few recent projects that have uncovered significant archaeological resources in New York City:

#### **World Trade Center Ship Remnants:**

In the summer of 2010, and again in the summer of 2011, two remnants of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century merchant ship, possibly a sloop, were found during archaeological monitoring of excavation work at the World Trade Center site. AKRF and a team that included maritime archaeologist Dr. Warren Riess of the Darling Marine Center at the University of Maine carefully documented the remnants which were scanned in 3D to digitally re-create the discovery. In addition, the *New York Times* photographed 360-degree views of the initial find and removal. Discussions will soon begin with the 69 groups that expressed interest in the project in determining the next steps for these resources. It should be noted that in the interim, the resources are being kept stable at the Center for Maritime Archaeology and Conservation at Texas A&M in College Station, Texas. For further information or to share opinions about the future of this discovery, please contact the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (<http://www.renewnyc.com/>).

#### **City Hall Renovation:**

City Hall, dating from 1803, is one of our nation's oldest city halls and houses the offices of the Mayor and City Council, the executive and legislative branches of government. Designed by architects Joseph-Francois Mangin, an immigrant from France, and John McComb, Jr., a native New Yorker, City Hall has played a significant role in New York City's history, and contains an important collection of American portraits and historic furnishings, including the desk used by George Washington.

During the renovation of the building that began in 2010, the archaeology uncovered architectural features associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century Almshouse and the Bridewell (a prison), and the early years of City Hall. In addition, multiple wells and cisterns were found which were probably associated with these structures. The archae-

ology is still underway and is being completed by Chrysalis Archaeological Consultants and URS Corporation. Given the significance of what has been found to date, in addition to the final report detailing the findings of the archaeological fieldwork and analysis, 3D laser scanning was done while significant features were exposed which will allow them to be digitally recreated. The city is developing a website to convey what has been learned, a permanent exhibit of many of the artifacts that have been found will be installed in City Hall, and exterior signage will be installed so that visitors to the park may learn about its past.

-Amanda Sutphin.

Director of Archaeology  
NYC Landmarks preservation Commission

### ***My Experience with the Seneca Village Project.***

by Ashley Anderson

While it is a challenge to suitably describe my experience with the Seneca Village Project, I can easily say that the summer of 2011 was divine. Spending every single day in nature, surrounded by the kindest of people, laughing until tears ran like rivers down my cheeks, and conversing with inquisitive passersby could not have been more ideal.

Going into this project, I had not one bit of archaeology experience, and when I left, I felt almost like a professional. I felt as though I had discovered a passion within myself that I had not known existed. The story of Seneca Village is quite an emotional one, and I gradually began to develop a deep connection to its rediscovery. On several nights in the beginning of the excavation, I dreamt that our entire crew would sit in the shade of a giant tree, each of us knitting tree branches with canvas-colored hemp yarn. It was a ritual that we happily and

pleasantly approached, bringing our completed tree branches to the directors and fastening them onto a giant tree trunk. It was not until later in the field season that I realized the tree we were sitting under was one that we ended up excavating near. After having these dreams, respecting the ancestral spirits of Seneca Village became a priority for me.

As any seasoned archaeologist will know, a “typical” day in the field does not begin with leisure. We met every morning at seven AM, just as the sun began to shine through the trees. The packing of materials into our director’s green Audi was only the beginning of a day filled with humidity, sweat, and dirt. My fellow interns and I welcomed this routine with ease, never complaining or whining about the work conditions. It was not that we were censoring ourselves; rather, I think that deep down we truly enjoyed how we were spending our days. Yes, it was dreadfully hot; yes, we were sweating profusely; yes, it took weeks to rid our bodies of all of the dirt we were surrounded by. The truth is, it was glorious to feel those things.

More than anything, I will remember and cherish the friendships that were established during those thirteen intense weeks. Everyone on this project got along so well, as though we had known one another for years, and it made coming to the site all the more enjoyable. Suffice it to say, the summer of 2011 changed my life in the best of ways.



Be sure to check out these two new exhibits in 2012! Admission is free, and the themes are fascinating!

***Transition to Christianity:  
Art of Late Antiquity, 3rd-7th Century AD***

December 7 - May 14  
The Onassis Cultural Center  
Olympic Tower, 645 Fifth Avenue  
[http://onassisusa.org/exhibition\\_transitions.php?m=3&h=3](http://onassisusa.org/exhibition_transitions.php?m=3&h=3)



This exhibit brings together 170 objects, including many never seen outside Greece. The themes explored include cultural and religious interactions, urban culture, daily life, the rise of Christianity, early Christian worship, Christian burial practices, and the genesis of the Christian artistic tradition.

*Orans figure. Late 5th-early 6th century. Kavala, 12th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, AK1505*

***Nomads and Networks: the Ancient  
Art and Culture of Kazakhstan***

March 7 - June 3, 2012  
Institute for Study of the Ancient World  
at New York University  
15 East 84th Street  
<http://isaw.nyu.edu/exhibitions>

The first U.S. exhibition to focus on the nomadic culture of eastern Kazakhstan, features over 350 objects dated to roughly the eighth to first centuries BCE.

Included are spectacular animal-style gold works and recently excavated carved and gilded wood objects preserved by permafrost.

*Harness Element. Kurgan II, 5th-3rd century BC., The Presidential Center of Culture, Astana: 558I.*



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