

aia

New York Society News



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Advocates for archaeology!

This is my first letter to the membership of the New York Society as Interim President. Yes – Interim President. As many of you know, I served as President from 1995 until 2000, and I agreed to step in again because the New York Society is one of the best and most active of all the local societies. So active, indeed, that many potential candidates for President will be off researching, excavating or teaching in places far and wide and could not commit to the time and effort that is needed. But it is not all work and no pleasure – the President of the local society enjoys many opportunities to meet interesting professional and advocational archaeologists and to participate actively in the Annual Meeting. We need your participation to maintain our status as the largest and most active society. I have formed a Presidential Search Committee, including me, Ira Haupt, and Michelle Hobart, and we welcome your suggestions.

The AIA is the oldest archaeological organization in the United States and the only archaeological organization chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1906. Perhaps not incidentally, 1906 is also the date of the Antiquities Act of 1906, the first legislation to prevent looting and destruction of archaeological sites in the U.S. The AIA is also the only organization to welcome both professional archaeologists and members of the general public. Indeed, there are more archaeology enthusiasts than professional members. And we would like to hear from ALL our members, and we welcome the participation of ALL members who are willing to give

of their time and energy. All our activities are brought to you by volunteers – from tenured professors of archaeology to graduate students to archaeology enthusiasts.

The AIA has been in the forefront of the movement to protect archaeological sites from looting and the resultant trade in illegally acquired antiquities. I have purposely avoided the term "illegally excavated" – as one of our colleagues and a staunch supporter of the AIA says, "illegally excavated" is an oxymoron. Education is one of the tools to prevent the plunder of archaeological materials, and we can be proud of the AIA's program to educate the U.S. military being deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. You will surely want to hear AIA President Brian Rose talk about this program at our May lecture.

Our lecture program is outstanding, thanks not only to the excellent speakers we get from the national society, but also because we have so many archaeologists who are willing to share their expertise with us through our own locally sponsored lectures. Our lecture program this spring is stellar and varied. I hope to see many of you at our programs, and I urge you to bring a friend who will be inspired to join the AIA.

Lucille Roussin
Interim President, AIA New York Society

aia New York Society lecture series for Winter 2008

January 28, 6:30

The Haupt Lecture: **“Postcards from the Past: Roman Buildings on Coins”****Martin Beckmann, University of Western Ontario**

15 Gramercy Park South (cosponsored with the National Arts Club, Grand Gallery)

Many famous buildings are depicted on Roman coins. These coins are naturally very exciting for the archaeologist, since they tantalizingly offer a contemporary view of many ancient structures now incompletely preserved – or even of entirely vanished ones. But can we trust such coin depictions? How accurate are they? What can they tell us, and what can't they? In this talk I investigate this problem, focusing on depictions of the Column of Trajan and the Arch of Septimius Severus, pointing out both the great opportunities they present and also the dangerous pitfalls that can befall an archaeologist trying to use them to reconstruct the ancient appearance and function of the monuments.

February 14, 6:30

“Love and Gender in Ancient Etruria”Valentine's Day Lecture: **Larissa Bonfante, New York University**

Institute of Fine Arts, 1 East 78th Street

The ancient Etruscans who lived in central Italy left behind no poems or songs about love and romance, though we know they once had a rich literature. But they did leave behind a great deal of art – wall paintings, statues, statuettes and decorated vases – whose images give us insights into their daily lives, and into their beliefs, hopes, dreams and ideals. These illustrate open displays of affection shown by Etruscans between husbands and wives, and other family members, in life and beyond the grave.

April 3, 6:30

“New Perspectives on the Derveni Krater and Its Ancient Macedonian Context”

Beryl Barr-Sharrar, New York University

645 Fifth Avenue (Cosponsored with the Alexander Onans Cultural Benefit Foundation, USA)

The Derveni krater is a large and elaborately ornamented bronze volute krater discovered in one of a series of undisturbed late 4th-century B.C tombs at Derveni, near Thessaloniki in northern Greece, where it was used as a sepulcher. The author of a recent book about this unusual vessel discusses her dramatic new conclusions that its extensive Dionysian images, based on late fifth-century Athenian art, were manipulated to form a program alluding to the Underworld, the possibility of rebirth, and apotheosis. This interpretation is supported by eschatological concerns documented by other grave goods from these Macedonian tombs, as well as evidence of ritual cremations emulating those of Homeric heroes. The lecture thus demonstrates the affirmative value of knowledge of burial contexts.

 aia New York Society lecture series for Winter 2008 *continued...*

April 8, 6:30

The Kershaw Lecture: **“The Illustrated Desert: the Origins of Writing in the Egyptian Desert”**
John Darnell, Yale University

612 Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University (Cosponsored with the Columbia Center for Archaeology)

Although the Western Desert of Egypt is now apart from the oases that lie island-like within its great expanse, the region was once a hub of international trade and interaction between widely dispersed human populations. Interacting both with other groups and with their environment, the early inhabitants of the Western Desert employed an increasingly complex system of rock art images to create places in the desert expanse and began to communicate with other people separated from them by both space and time. These early images, cosmographs that described and thereby supported the solar cycle and cosmic order, ultimately gave birth to the hieroglyphic writing system. During a later period of increased desert activity, non-Egyptian auxiliaries of the Egyptian military borrowed Egyptian signs and rock art techniques and created their own writing system, the earliest precursor of the alphabet as we know it. The precursors of Egyptian scripts, the earliest proto-hieroglyphic inscription, and the oldest alphabetic inscription, are located in the Western Desert, and developed out of activities in that hinterland of the Nile Valley.

May 7, 6:30

“Talking to the Troops about the Archaeology of Iraq and Afghanistan”

C. Brian Rose, University of Pennsylvania, AIA President

15 Gramercy Park South, (cosponsored with the National Arts Club, Sculpture Court)

In 2004 the AIA sent a letter to the US Central Command proposing to inaugurate a lecture program on the archaeology of Iraq and Afghanistan for US soldiers preparing to deploy to those countries. This lecture reviews the history of the program and provides a synopsis of the issues covered in the briefings. Efforts to inaugurate similar programs for troops deploying from other countries will also be discussed.

To view information about lectures and other AIA-NYS matters online, check out our website:

www.library.csi.cuny.edu/roccos/nyaia/nyaia.html.

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)
 snail mail: c/o New York Society News, 217 Manhattan Avenue #7A, New York, NY 10025

ALSO, CONSIDER BECOMING AN ESPECIALLY GOOD FRIEND OF AIA-NYS

The Friends are a small group of archaeology enthusiasts and professionals who go the extra mile to provide the New York Society with the ability to bring you the most extensive lecture program(s) in the AIA. In the past year there were ten lectures. To show our appreciation, we hold two or three private tours for the Friends along with our annual “Living Room Seminar.” Contact the co-chairs for information:

Lynn Quigley (lquigley@plaxall.com) and Jeff Lamia (jlamia@nyc.rr.com – see p. 5 for more on him!)

Spotlight on

New York University's Center for Ancient Studies

New York University's Center for Ancient Studies was created in the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) in 1996 to promote interdisciplinary and cross-cultural study of the past. Its founding director is Matthew S. Santirocco, Dean of the College of Arts and Science and Professor of Classics. The Center does not offer degrees (which are awarded through departments) but rather promotes collaboration among those FAS departments and programs which focus, in whole or in part, on antiquity and its reception in the modern world. These include Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Classics, Comparative Literature, English, Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Philosophy, Religious Studies, the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, and the Onassis Program in Hellenic Studies. The Center also collaborates with NYU's Institute of Fine Arts and the newly established Institute for the Study of the Ancient World. Located uptown, these Institutes are separate divisions of the University and offer

graduate degrees as well as opportunities for post-doctoral research.

The Center's activities (which are supported largely through endowment) include: offering occasional interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as an undergraduate minor in Ancient Studies; sponsoring scholarly lectures and workshops, including annual Lewent Conferences and Ranieri Colloquia; hosting occasional visiting scholars; and offering summer seminars for college faculty from across the United States (in collaboration with the Faculty Resource Network). The Center also offers grants to NYU undergraduates and graduate students for international study on any aspect of the ancient world. These grants, which are awarded on a competitive basis by a faculty committee, have supported students working on literary, historical, and archaeological projects.

The Aquila Theatre Company is in residence at the Center and presents productions of classical plays both in New York and on national tours, as well as educational programming. In addition, two publications are housed at the Center: the journal of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, *Classical World* (editor, Matthew S. Santirocco), and

Etruscan News, the newsletter of the American section of the Institute for Etruscan and Italic Studies (president, Larissa Bonfante; editor, Jane Whitehead). The Center also supports its own occasional publications. The proceedings of a 2002 conference, "Saving the City: Destruction, Loss, and Recovery in the Ancient World," were published as a special issue of *Classical World* (97.1, 2003). More recently, the Center contributed toward the publication of the catalogue, *Classical Antiquities at New York University*, edited by Larissa Bonfante and Blair Fowlkes (Rome, 2006). A volume co-edited by Kurt A. Raaflaub and Matthew S. Santirocco will be published containing essays inspired by an NYU conference on "Conditions of Democracy: From Ancient Mesopotamia to Modern Iraq," and the proceedings of another conference on Herodotus will be forthcoming in *Classical World*.

This semester's events are listed on the Center's website as they are announced: <http://ancientstudies.fas.nyu.edu/>. Interested individuals can also contact the Center through the website to join its mailing list for information about upcoming Lewent Conferences and Ranieri Colloquia.

-Matthew S Santirocco

KUDOS..... JEFF LAMIA RECEIVES AN AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL AIA

On Friday, January 4, 2008, Jeffrey Lamia was awarded the AIA's 2008 Martha and Artemis Joukowsky Distinguished Service Award at the annual meeting in Chicago. Jeff, who is a member of the New York Society Governing Board and co-chair of the Friends of the New York Society, received the award for his six years of service as treasurer of the AIA. According to the award citation "The skills that Jeff had honed so successfully in the private world of banking and finance were now applied to fiscal management of AIA resources....In recent AIA history, there has perhaps been no one who has made such a positive impact on AIA finances. The result has enabled the AIA to fulfill its multiple missions to its members, to the scholarly community and to the public at large."

But there are many more aspects of Jeff's service to archaeology. His article in a recent national AIA newsletter about his participation in the excavations at Morgantina in Sicily described one of these. In addition, Jeff, a long-time potter, has generously shared his expertise with scholars and students. In New York City, he has demonstrated the mysteries of clay, and vessel forming techniques, including the potters' wheel, with students in the graduate classes of Professor Rita Wright at NYU and in regular workshops for the Columbia Center for Archaeology, directed by Professor Joanna Smith. He has also given workshops at Oberlin College.

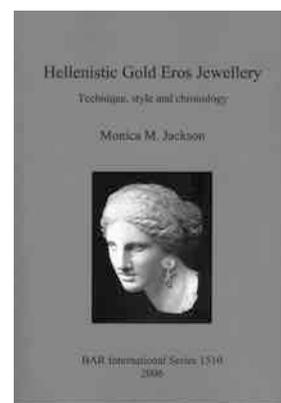
In the photograph here, we see Jeff in another of his recent archaeological activities, assisting Dr. Nick Eiteljorg in The CSA Propylaea Project, a cooperative project to create a single digital resource of information about the building at the entrance to the Athenian Acropolis. In addition to all of this archaeology service, Dr. Lamia pursues his own scholarly research which is the "epistemological foundations of economics; [with] special emphasis on trade and markets in the ancient world,



Archaic Greek history and the appearance and spread of coinage." Although Jeff received an award for distinguished service, I nominate him for an award as polymath extraordinaire! Congratulations, Jeff, from the New York Society!!

- Karen S. Rubinson

*KUDOS also to AIA-NYS member,
Monica M. Jackson for her new book!*



Don't miss the first ever United States TAG in NYC, May 23 to 25

This spring, Columbia University will host the first American meeting of the Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG), The plenary session, entitled Geohistories of the City: Spatial Causality and Urban Revolution, will feature talks by Edward Soja, Ian Hodder, Shannon Dawdy, and the AIA-NYC's own Nan Rothschild.

Other special sessions focus on topics as diverse as thing theory, the transatlantic slave trade, the construction of knowledge, ritual killing (of humans, animals, and objects), post-processual faunal analysis, microcosms and macrocosms, the presence of absence, landscape theory, queer spaces, archaeology and semiotics, archives, the edginess of bounda-

ries... You get the picture. It will also feature artistic and sound events, and – if the organizers can successfully replicate the spirit of its British prototype – an extraordinary party.

If you are interested in helping the cause by volunteering, such offers will be welcomed. Just email: TAG-NYC@columbia.edu.

AIA-NYS members will be extremely well represented at this conference both on stage and off. Come support your fellows, hear some fascinating archaeological talks, and be a part of it all!



Much more information may be found on the conference website:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/archaeology/conference/tag/index.htm>

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