Welcome to the Fall 2004 issue of In Medias Res. This year’s CSA administration has several goals in mind:

- We're hosting an evening with Professor Emeritus Thanasis Maskaleris on Tuesday, November 16. See inserted flyer.

You can check out the new-and-improved website at http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~classics, but remember that it is still under construction.

Speaking of the lecture series, be sure to reserve Thursday evenings in April for our thirteenth annual event. This year’s topic suits the age of the series: Magic and Superstition in the Ancient World.

In late February, we will be hosting a book sale as our annual fundraiser, though we are now expanding it to more of a general “media” sale. This means that you may donate or purchase books, magazines, CDs, VHS tapes, or DVDs. Last year’s book sale was our most successful to date and an expansion to include more media is certain to boost our funds even more, thereby enabling us to sponsor larger events.

If you would like to donate those books you no longer read/want, your VHS copy of Night of the Living Dead, or that embarrassing Marky Mark CD (go ahead – get rid of it), don’t hesitate to contact us at classics@sfsu.edu. We are already taking donations.

And lastly, how thoroughly nerdy would Classics folks be if they didn’t take a trip together to see Hollywood's latest movie, Alexander?! We’ll argue afterwards over which was worse – this or Troy. I suspect the date of viewing will be set sometime in December.

We hope Tyche (Gk. Fortune) smiles on you for the rest of the semester and that you have a wonderful and safe holiday season.

Jennifer Eyl,
President, CSA
The Student Forum on the Ancient World, held on October 9, was a smashing success again this year! This was the ninth time classical minds gathered at SF State on an early Saturday morning to expand their knowledge of the ancient Mediterranean world. Every autumn the SFSU Department of Classics teams up with the Classics Students Association to invite students to present papers on a wide range of topics. This year, we were entertained by exquisite translations and stirring deliveries of Greek and Latin poetry.

After the requisite coffee and refreshments, the morning got off to a rousing start with Samantha Pryzbeck's fascinating multimedia presentation of her paper, *A Study of Two Great Imposters and the People Who Accept Them*. Samantha compared the homecoming stories of Martin Guerre and Odysseus. By examining how the identities of these two men were ascertained as each returned from war, Samantha postulated that perhaps the man who returned to Ithaca was not, in fact, Odysseus, but rather an impostor. She presented compelling evidence as to how and why someone might be able to pull off such a scheme, which should have us all eagerly rereading the end of the *Odyssey* as soon as possible.

Matthew Jones followed with an examination of Roman life in his *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: A Cultural Study*. By using primary sources, Matthew was able to paint a clear picture of how freedmen, slaves, women, and free citizens spent their lives. As a wealth of information exists on the lives of the elite Roman society, it was refreshing to hear some tales of the normal folk. Also, by concentrating on the primary sources and interpreting the information on his own, Matthew provided the audience with an original point of view unsullied by the mountains of modern scholarship on the subject, which is certainly a difficult task to undertake.

The last paper presented that morning was by our accomplished CSA President, Jen Eyl, who won the award for most intriguing title with *Let the Man be like a Woman and the Woman be like a Man: Gender Inversion in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*. Jen described how, in these *Acts*, not only are the masculine and feminine ideals inverted, but there are also many examples of failed men and women (failed according to gender). In order to explain this gender-bending, Jen first discussed what the ideal man was in the classical world, i.e., the *Homeridc Hero*. The *Hero* is virtually invincible and is the active agent in the story; he is the penetrator. She then contrasted the *Hero* to the *Apostolic Man*, who is valued for his patience and suffering. The *Apostolic Man* relinquishes control of his body through his martyrdom; he is the ultimate in passivity. Whew! That was just a tidbit from Jen's paper, but as I'm sure you've gathered, her paper was a titillating experience for all present, and I cannot do it justice in these few explanatory sentences.

During the breaks between each paper, the audience had the pleasure of hearing some beautiful ancient poetry. Joan Sutton and Kelli Stanley, both graduate students in Classics, prepared some gorgeous translations for our listening pleasure. Joan first presented her rendition of Theocritus' *Idyll 11*, where Polyphemus speaks to Galatea, and what a fantastic rendition it was! With her years of experience in story-telling, Joan was able to bring life to poor Cyclops and get some laughs in the telling. Her second presentation brought us to Troy, with pieces from the *Iliad* focused on Helen and Hera, those mischievous women we love to hate.

Kelli Stanley was in charge of translating the Latin part, and what a job she did! Her first translations were from the *Lesbia Cycle* of Catullus, in which she conveyed the profound and profane aspects of his poetry through her provocative translation, which captured the full meaning of the Latin, and proved to all why the Student Forum is meant for the eighteen and older crowd. She switched tracks for her second presentation, in which she performed three speeches by Dido from Book IV of the *Aeneid*. Kelli truly outdid herself here, she captured the pain, anguish, and love that courses through these speeches in both language and physical performance. Brava Kelli!

And the ninth annual Student Forum on the Ancient World came to an end, but what a ride! We hope to see you all next October, bright and early, for the tenth!

Krista Greksouk,
Graduate Student in Classics

Behind Gallery Walls:
Interning at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology

Doing an unpaid museum internship is one of the requirements for the Museum Studies Masters Program at San Francisco State University, so I decided to go home to Philadelphia this past summer to complete mine. After all, I was accepted to intern at one of the most preeminent museums on the east coast: the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. From June 1 to July 9, 2004, I worked under the direction of Lynn Makowsky,
Keeper (Collections Manager) of the Mediterranean Section. Besides participating in a Roman archaeological dig two summers ago, working with ancient Greek, Roman, and Etruscan antiquities in the museum turned out to be one of my best and most memorable experiences.

From the onset I was treated like the rest of the museum staff. I received basic training in Collections Management, Conservation, Registrar, and Museum Security. With several Museum Studies courses already behind me, I was able to apply concepts I learned in the classroom directly to the museum collections. I participated in several team projects, including cataloging, packing, transporting, and unpacking objects from temporary to permanent storage (this included several thousand ancient Greek artifacts from Cyprus and several hundred nineteenth century reproduction bronzes from Pompeii and Herculaneum), and identifying and cataloging several hundred pieces (whole and sherds) of Roman glass. For me, the best part about working in the museum was that each day was different. For example, one day I weighed Roman marble heads then identified and catalogued Roman glass pieces, while updating the collections database ARGUS, and another day I digitally photographed tiny bronze figurines and giant Etruscan vases for the University of Pennsylvania Museum Loan Network (MLN). In six weeks, I not only managed to gain valuable experience, but also respect for the immense amount of time and energy that goes into caring for and managing museum collections.

In addition to all of this practical experience, I was able to participate in a few special events. One opportunity came during my first week of interning. I was fortunate enough to be present for the unveiling of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games Commemorative Stamp, which was adapted from an Attic Black Figure Lekythos (ca. 550 B.C.E.) on display in the Rodney S. Gallery of Greek Life. The stamp has an orange-silhouetted background with a meander pattern and a beautifully stylized depiction of a Greek runner on it. Interestingly, most people are unaware that the scene this stamp replicates is quite rare. While Lekythos are a common type of ancient Greek pottery, this particular vase is valuable because it reproduces a scene of naked runners on the front that did me in), the time I spent with Dr.Fleming was extremely informative and the whole process of working with the media was a great experience nonetheless.

I could have never guessed how valuable my time working at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology would be. The museum staff, the voluminous collections, even the museum visitors, all taught me the importance of museum education, stewardship, and the conservation of collections. After interning at Penn I really believe that obtaining a Museum Studies education in conjunction with any internship opportunity prepares and qualifies students like myself to work in all aspects of the museum profession - not only behind gallery walls but also in front of them!

Tara A. Kowalski,
Graduate Student
in Museum Studies

Egypt in the West

Paris, London, Berlin, New York, Chicago, San Jose, and Boston are all Western cities that hold relevant compilations of ancient Egyptian art and artifacts. Some of the museums in these cities represent, arguably, the most important collections and exhibitions in the world, outside of Egypt. Visiting the museums of these cities last summer presented me with the opportunity to enhance my personal collection of photography
and literature of ancient Egyptian civilization as well as witness how
the ancient culture cast its shadow on modern American and
European cities.

In addition to the museums' breath-taking relics and abundance
of available literature, the aforementioned cities are great attractions
as places where ancient Egyptian ideas serve contemporary
inhabitants on a daily bases. Examples of this can be seen in New
York, Paris, and London, three cities that maintain genuine ancient
Egyptian obelisks. In New York, visitors of Central Park can quietly
observe Cleopatra's needle – an obelisk from Thutmosis III – in a
cozy isolated area of the park. I sat there for several hours one
afternoon, charmed by the eternal aura of the structure. I was
impressed with the number of people who used the location as a
rendezvous point or as a quiet escape for lunch. The "Needle" is
conveniently located behind the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which
houses a tremendous collection of Egyptian art and artifacts.

The London obelisk, also nicknamed, "Cleopatra's Needle," was
paired with the New York obelisk in Thutmosis' time – Egyptians
built obelisks in pairs. Although the structure rests snugly adjacent
to the river Thames, the location is not as convenient or as
comfortable as that of its twin. Nonetheless, residents find spots to
read or drink in view of the WWII damaged tower. Of the three stone
monuments, the obelisk of Ramses II in Paris is the most pompous
and best kept with glyphs that are far more legible. Located in Paris' Place de la Concorde, this structure is constantly viewed by large
numbers of tourists; it lacks, however, the intimate atmosphere of the
New York and London examples.

I was also able to observe Egypt's influence on the architecture
of contemporary cities. Paris' squares are filled with sphinx replicas,
while in London, buildings like the London House are designed and
decorated according to Egyptian models. In San Jose, the
Rosicrucian museum offers a glimpse of Egypt with an entire square
block built according to the design of an Egyptian temple complex
complete with temples, sphinxes, statues, pylons, a shrine and an
obelisk.

Among the most treasured moments of this summer took place
in monuments that have been relocated from Egypt to the West. In
Chicago, I walked under, through and on top of the mastaba that was
once the tomb of a probable son of King Unas of the fifth dynasty. In
New York, I attempted to decipher the glyphs on the temple of
Dendera just as I did at the Chapel of Osiris in the Louvre in Paris.

Aside from the obelisks, temples, or myriad artifacts, I
appreciated the unification process of Berlin's Egyptian museums
and the Chicago Field Museum's "hands on" area. In the next few
years, Berlin's former politically divided museums will merge in a
newly renovated building. In Chicago, attractions allow visitors to
experience Egypt up close. It is possible to lie in an Egyptian bed,
pull an Egyptian building stone, or play an Egyptian game.

Stephen M. Williams,
Undergraduate in Special Major
with an emphasis on Classics

College students that we are, it is seemingly inevitable that we should find ourselves in some
state of feeling utterly broke. At times we’re reduced to scrounging for change, building up
debt, eating Cup of Noodles and an entire array of cheap food containing so many preservatives that
we would sooner perish before they even begin to mold. Such is the life we lead – some of us for
longer periods than others. So many budding classicists I know are broke and in debt up to their
ears with student loans, traveling expenses, and all sorts of other daily expenditures (like food). It
is the sacrifice we make for wanting an education that reflects our passion for ancient thoughts and
beliefs. With this happy reality in mind, I give you classicists a little pep-talk in a language that
you’ll understand:

“Hodiernum hoc est quod apud Epicurum nanctus
sum - soleo enim et in aliena castra transire, non
tamquam transfuga, sed tamquam explorator -:
'honesta' inquit 'res est laeta paupertas'. Illa vero
non est paupertas, si laeta est; non qui parum
habet, sed qui plus cupit, pauper est. Quid enim
refert quantum illi in arca, quantum in horreis
iacet, quantum pascat aut feneret, si alieno
imminet, si non acquisita sed acquirenda
computat? Quis sit divitianarum modulus quaeris?
primus habere quod necesse est, proximus quod
sat est.”

“The thought for today is one taken from
Epicurus; for I am accustomed to pass into the
enemy’s camp, by no means as a traitor but as a
spy. He says, “happy poverty is a virtuous state.”
Indeed, if it be virtuous, it is not poverty: the
poor person is not he that has little, but he who
desires more. For what does it matter how much
one puts in a chest, how much one keeps in a
storeroom, how much he consumes or lends, if he
looms over another”, if he counts not what he has
but what he wants? You ask, what is the way of
wealth? First, to have what is necessary, and
second to have what is enough.”

Consider this your Senecanism for the day. If
you ignore the glaring fact that Seneca the
Younger, in all his family wealth, probably
wouldn’t even touch Ramen with a twelve-foot
pole, you will find a message worth thinking
about. (By the way, we’re also ignoring the fact
that Ramen noodles were not a Roman dish in any
time frame, because I’m trying to make a point, and the Ramen is helping.) While Seneca has been attacked for not living his own values, we students should ponder what he has to say about the state of true poverty. After all, I am quite certain that most of us will never escape our accumulating debt and empty wallets, so we should seek comfort where we can find it. Perhaps Seneca can be of some comfort. How, you may ask? In realizing that he has touched upon a truth that many of us are too blind to see. As Seneca says, it is not what we lack that makes us poor – true poverty is shown in not realizing what we already have, and being in excess instead of necessity. In these moments of attending classes and reading our favorite ancient authors, we are gaining invaluable knowledge that is completely priceless. We have all that we need within the pages of ancient Greek and classical Latin. Our pockets may be empty, and on more than one occasion we may have to pass up the lastest fashion, but still we are not poor. In our studies and our own readings, we have touched upon true wealth because we walk a path lined with riches for both mind and spirit, and truly that is enough.

Stacy Sakamoto, Graduate Student in Classics

Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Summer Study

As a recipient of the 2003-2004 Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, I had the opportunity to develop a research project and work (fully funded) for ten weeks this past summer. I chose to work independently with Ross Kraemer (Her Share of the Blessings; Women & Christian Origins; When Jospeh Met Aseneth, et al) at Brown University. My original intent for summer research was to look closely at the relationship between ancient novels and the apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla, considering questions of authorship, audience, and the construction of gender.

The reading list which I designed with Dr. Kraemer’s guidance, however, brought me to another area of research which became increasingly compelling. That is, I looked not only at Paul and Thecla, but also at the broader genre apocryphal Acts, including the Acts of John, Andrew, Thomas, and Peter. In reading the texts in Greek and in discussing secondary scholarship regarding the texts, I paid closest attention to the construction of gender. More specifically, I examined the partial inversion of Graeco-Roman masculinity as expressed in the texts’ imagery.

My findings suggest that the traveling apostle in each text engages in a conflict with a local Greek or Roman official, to redefine masculinity. Simultaneously, the female protagonist in each text exhibits a great deal of personal agency, but only by refuting her traditional female role.

It is my argument that these female characters are literary agents necessary for instigating the apostle’s execution, and thus opening a stage on which the apostle may showcase his new Christian ideology of masculinity. The new ideology of masculinity to which I refer includes traits traditionally associated with women: suffering, patience, endurance, a lack of social honors, and dearth of financial resources. The results of my summer study constitute the basis of my thesis, to be finished this spring.

When not reading or writing, I wandered (on foot and bike) around the Brown campus and through Providence’s fabulous old neighborhoods, took hundreds of black & white photos – then printed them in the darkroom, and made friends with the sandwich makers in the deli downstairs from my apartment.

Jennifer Eyl, Graduate Student in Classics

Interview with Dr. David G. Smith

On a cool and sunny, autumn day in October, I had the chance to meet with the latest addition to the SFSU Classics Department, Assistant Professor, Dr. David G. Smith. What follows is a portion of the interview that took place, presented in Socratic fashion.

Tim: So can you tell us a little about your background and why you went into Classics?

Dr. Smith: When I first came to San Francisco State, I was trying to get into broadcasting and television. You see, I worked at a television station while attending Laney College, but the BECA major at SF State was impacted upon transferring over.

Tim: Interesting. So how did you arrive at Classics then?

Dr. Smith: I don't know quite where I got the notion from, but I always had the idea that being well-educated meant knowing a lot about these old books. I didn't think that I would ever get around to reading them by myself so I considered the major a
possibility. I remember flipping through the University Bulletin and looking at all the possible majors that might interest me, and how much I had enjoyed taking Latin in my high school at Oakland. Eventually, I got around to talking with Dr. Croft (now Professor Emeritus), and she immediately replied that I should be a Classics Major. So I ended up majoring in both Classics and Philosophy.

Tim: How do you feel about being able to live and study in the Bay Area, and now to work as a Professor in the Bay Area? You're really fortunate not to move to a remote place for your career, especially in Classics.

Dr. Smith: Most of the time, I'm usually engaged in the normal routine of teaching and doing research and such, but it does happen every so often while I am sitting at my desk, struggling with a passage, and then realize that I'm actually getting paid to do what I so love. It's a really terrific feeling.

Tim: Do you have any specific career goals? If so, do you mind sharing them?

Dr. Smith: Yes, I do have something envisioned and don't mind sharing them. What I would like to do is gather together those people working in my area of research and create a more cohesive community wherein we could share ideas and dialog, and even have our own conferences. My main area of research is in focusing on how the Greeks in Italy and Sicily defined Greek culture, and in moving away from the Atheno-centric model that has been pervasive for so long. The researchers in this area are currently fragmented, and I think this area has very important and far-reaching implications for other parts of the field.

Tim: That is very intriguing, but since we only have so much time and our readers can further read your publications, as well as speak with you, let's move on to non-academic matters. Do you have any favorite cafes or restaurants in the City?

Dr. Smith: I typically stop in at Peet's on the way to work, and get something to eat at Whole Foods when going back home. I don't really have a favorite place in particular since there are so many fine restaurants in the City. Though, I highly recommend the cafe on Cole and Waller. It's one of my favorite places to go and have a cup of coffee.

Tim: What do you like to do in your spare time, outside of academics?

Dr. Smith: For one thing, it's rare that I have spare time, but I do like to spend whatever time I have available with my significant other. When I was much younger I used to do Shaolin Kung-Fu for twenty to thirty hours a week, but I don't really want to get back into that without having the time that I'd like to devote to it. I also really like getting out and exploring the City. I even have a map of all the neighborhoods in the City hanging in my apartment.

Tim: You seem to have an affinity for Strabo. But do you have any favorite T.V. shows?

Dr. Smith: My favorite T.V. shows are ER, 24, West Wing, Will & Grace, Boston Legal and now Desperate Housewives.

And that concludes a small portion of the interview I conducted with the gracious professor. I would like to say special thanks and a warm welcome to Dr. Smith who obliged in giving us an interview on such short notice.

Timothy Chon, Undergraduate Student in Classics/Mathematics
Welcome to New Graduate Students

The Classics Department would like to welcome its incoming graduate students:

Ingolf Barth is a visiting student who studies Latin and Catholic Theology at the University of Tübingen. His hobbies include composing music/symphonies, hiking, sightseeing, and driving.

E. Jay Espino received his B.A. at San Diego State University in Classics, with an emphasis in Classical Languages. His goal is to teach Classics at the university level. In his free time he listens to music and plays the bass guitar, enjoys computer games, and reads early twentieth century American literature.

Jade Middleton studied Classics with an emphasis in Greek at UC Davis, where she also did post baccalaureate work in Classics. She spent the summer of 2002 studying in Greece. Her extra-curricular interests include linguistics and studying design and high fashion.

Rhiannon Powell majored in Comparative Literature and minored in French at UC Davis. Her interest in Classics developed out of recognizing that so much literature is rooted in an understanding of Classics. Her hobbies include 35mm and medium format photography, cooking, riding motorcycles, and reading plays, short stories, and novels.

T. Samantha Przybeck graduated from SFSU with a B.A. in Philosophy and Religion and a minor in Classics. She is particularly interested in studying ancient religion and cult practice. Her goal is to teach Classics at the university level. In her spare time she collects and reads comic books (especially X-Men), she reads & writes fantasy and sci-fi, and works with digital photography.

Samantha Przybeck, Graduate Student in Classics

Announcements

Readers and contributors are needed for Pithos, the annual journal published by students in the Classics Department. Submissions are now being accepted for consideration. Also, anyone interested in volunteering to work on the journal for next semester is welcome. This year’s Editor-in-Chief is Jennifer Eyl and the Chair is Chris Bolton (cbolton@pacbell.net).

Jennifer Eyl,
CSA President
rocketwheel@mindspring.com

CSA Officers of 2004 – 2005

Jennifer Eyl President
Timothy Chon Vice President
Nicole Daenzer Secretary
Krista Greksouk Treasurer

CSA Mission Statement

To encourage the awareness of and interest in Classics at the departmental and university level, as well as in the greater community. We believe that the interdisciplinary nature of Classics lends itself to interest from a broader audience than simply classicists or other academics. Through the organization of lecture series and other events, we hope to show the significance and importance of Classics as a tool for better understanding our present society, whose foundation is largely evidenced in the ancient Mediterranean. We are also dedicated to providing a forum in which students in Classics and related disciplines can interact in more formal ways, thus preparing some for academic careers, while not losing sight of others who wish to learn about our field simply for its intrinsic interest and value.

We hope you enjoyed this latest edition of our newsletter. If you have any comments, contributions, or suggestions please send an email to classics@sfsu.edu.