



TIGRES IN SCAENA

(TIGERS ON THE SCENE)

*In his biography of the emperor Augustus (43.4), Suetonius tells us that “even on days not normally set aside for shows, Augustus used to share with the public anything that came to him that was unusual and worth knowing, and would do this extraordinarily enough in whatever place he pleased, as with a rhinoceros at the voting booths, a tiger in the theater (**tigrim in scaena**), and a snake fifty cubits long in front of the Comitium.”**

Dear friends of LSU Classics,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural issue of *Tigres in Scaena*!

Given the strange times which we find ourselves in, it seems fitting to pause to catch our breaths and reflect on the past year, and to reach out to former students and other friends of LSU Classics to share what we’ve been up to—and to find out how you’re all doing, too. An annual newsletter seemed like a good way to do this.

As it has been for everyone, it was an eventful year for LSU Classics. In the Spring, LSU decided to move all instruction online, so the last time most of us saw any of our students in person was March 13th. Over the course of the next two months, we all became virtual experts at Zoom (some more willingly than others).

With the new academic year set to begin shortly, it’s become clear that most of us will be teaching online again this Fall. LSU is doing everything that it can to keep faculty staff, and students safe, and has given those of us who teach a lot of flexibility. Although online courses cannot

compare with the camaraderie created in the classroom, my colleagues and I will use this as an opportunity to try new techniques and re-evaluate what we want students to get out of our classes. My hope is that we all come out of this better teachers, but also that everyone will appreciate the magic that happens within the classroom all the more.

Despite the difficulties of this Spring, however, we have many things to celebrate from the past year—as you’ll see in the following pages. I am delighted to be able to share these with you.

I look forward to hearing from more of you, too, and being able to share our news regularly. Please feel free to send this newsletter to any fellow alums who may not have received it.

I think I can speak for my colleagues when I say that we hope this finds you and your families safe and well.

Kris Fletcher

Associate Professor of Classics and Section Head

Have news? Email kfletc8@lsu.edu to share!

* *Solebat etiam citra spectaculorum dies, si quando quid invisitatum dignumque cognitu advectum esset, id extra ordinem quolibet loco publicare, ut rhinocerotem apud Saepta, tigrim in scaena, anguem quinquaginta cubitorum pro Comitio.*

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Celebrating the Retirement of Professor Batinski

First, we congratulate our colleague **Dr. Emily Batinski** on her well-earned retirement at the end of the 2019–2020 academic year. Emily arrived at LSU in 1986 with a B.A. in Classics (Oakland University), Masters degrees in Comparative Literature (University of Massachusetts) and Classics (Wayne State University), and a Ph.D. in Classics from the University of Colorado-Boulder. She came also with experience teaching at the University of Virginia, University of Pittsburgh, and Miami University.

She published on a wide range of Roman authors, both prose and verse. Among her most well-known works are “Horace’s Rehabilitation of Bacchus” (*Classical World*), “Seneca’s Response to Stoic Hermeneutics” (*Mnemosyne*), and “Lucan’s Catalogue of Caesar’s Troops” (*Classical Journal*). On the strength of this research, as well as of her teaching and service, she earned tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1993.

Not long after, Emily became Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, a position she held from 1995 all the way until 2011. (This was such an unusually long term that the College has since imposed term limits to reduce the stress on those who occupy this demanding position). Chairing such a diverse department is always challenging and she helped steer the department’s ship through some very turbulent waters. She was at the helm for some of the fiercest storms we have faced as a department and university, and provided humane leadership with humor and grace.

When she stepped down as Chair she selflessly took over as Section Head of Classics to help shield her junior colleagues from the burden of excessive service while they were

working on attaining tenure. She held that position until 2018, meaning that she served in a departmental leadership position for the majority of her time at LSU. All the while she served on countless committees in the department, college, university, and discipline.

Perhaps her most significant contribution to LSU Classics was teaching Latin throughout her more than three decades here, and she leaves behind a lasting legacy in the teaching of Latin in Louisiana. She routinely taught upper division Latin courses, while also handling the task of teaching the introductory courses, meaning that most of the students who came through our Latin program took at least one course from her—and usually more. It is no exaggeration to say that many high school Latin teachers in the state studied Latin with her at some point.

In his 68th epistle, the Roman philosopher Seneca—about whom Emily wrote her dissertation and throughout her career—imagines his addressee Lucilius saying ‘*otium,*’ *inquis,* ‘*Seneca, commendas mihi?*’ (“Seneca,” you say, “do you recommend retirement for me?”) To which Seneca replies: *otium tibi commendo, in quo maiora agas et pulchriora quam quae reliquisti*—“I recommend retirement for you so that in it you may do greater and more beautiful things than those you have left behind.” From the bottom of our hearts we thank Emily for her leadership, collegiality, mentoring, and friendship, and hope that she moves on to do *maiora* and *pulchriora*. We are grateful for her years of service and wish her and her husband Chuck well in retirement.

Announcing the Kenneth and Olympia Falk Memorial Scholarship in Classics

It was with heavy hearts that we learned last summer that **Olympia “Lee” Falk** had passed

away in June 2019. As wife of Classics Professor **Kenneth Sawyer Falk**, she was member of the extended LSU Classics family, and had an LSU connection of her own, having earned a B.A. in Italian language and culture in 1975. Both were natives of Syracuse, NY, where they met; they were married on LSU's campus at University United Methodist Church in 1966.



Ken and Olympia at her graduation from LSU (courtesy Renata Louwers).

As the daughter of an Italian immigrant father and an Italian American mother, Lee traveled to Italy in 1964 and 1965, and those trips helped inspire a lifelong interest in learning more about Italy. Ken also loved Italy, having studied at the American Academy in Rome after serving in the U.S. Army in World War II. He was brought to LSU in 1965 to help rebuild the Classics program, which he did with great success. During this time, Lee studied Italian culture and language, especially Dante and the art of the Florence Renaissance, and became involved in the Louisiana legislature.

Ken's presence on the faculty here at LSU was a crucial stabilizing force in the 1970s,

when enrollments in ancient languages dropped dramatically and there were suggestions that the study of Latin and Greek be eliminated. He saved the program, restored enrollments, and hired a whole new generation of faculty to carry on the tradition of the Classics at LSU.

A generous gift was made by Ken and Olympia's daughter, **Aurelia Renata K. Falk Louwers**, and her husband, **Dr. Timothy J. Louwers**, both of whom also have strong ties to LSU: Renata has a graduate degree from LSU in Public Administration and Tim was a Professor of Accounting in the College of Business from 1998–2005. Touchingly, they asked for memorial contributions to be made to this new endowment in Olympia's name, and then contributed the vast majority of the fund themselves.

The result is the Dr. Kenneth S. and Olympia Falk Memorial Scholarship, which honors the legacy of this husband and wife who were part of the LSU community for decades. This endowed scholarship will benefit students majoring or minoring in the Department's Classical Civilizations Program, especially those who have a desire to study abroad. This generous gift will help our students visit some of the places they study and broaden their perspective on the world around them, and we hope to have many stories in the future to share with you about their adventures and experiences.

This new endowment succeeds the tribute paid to Ken by some of his students from the '60s. After Ken passed away in 1992, Joseph Pierce and Richard De Young created the Kenneth Sawyer Falk Award presented to an outstanding student in Greek. Concerning the qualifications for the original award, Mr. De Young wrote: "Along with the expected academic criteria, I hope those selecting future winners of the award will insist that a commitment to personal discipline, fortitude, endurance, intellectual order, creativity, and an unwillingness to compromise essence or excellence are among the attributes to be

honored. ... I wish .. the recipient [of this award] the joy, wonder, and clarity of vision Dr. Falk demonstrated to me through the embrace of a 'dead' language." The harmony between the aims of the original award and of this new one is a testament to both Ken and Lee's love of and devotion to the study of classical civilizations.

We thank all of those who donated in Lee's name, and especially Renata and Tim, who had the vision to make this endowment a reality. We are humbled by this generous gift and look forward to helping honoring Ken and Lee's love of Italy, travel, teaching, learning, and LSU by continuing to instill the same passions in our students.

Welcoming a New Colleague

Finally, we're pleased to announce that Dr. **Claire McGraw** will be joining the department as an instructor for 2020-2021. Dr. McGraw received her Ph.D. from the University of Missouri in 2019 and is coming to us most recently from Monmouth College. Dr. McGraw works on Roman history, especially the development of the Imperial Cult during Augustus' lifetime. Students in our Latin sequence will be among the first to benefit from the enthusiasm of the newest addition to our program.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to all of our Majors and Minors who graduated in Fall 2019 and Spring 2020!

*BA in Liberal Arts with a
Concentration in Classical
Studies:*

Hope Burnett
Matthew LeJeune
Justin Lightsey
Alexander Weiner

Classical Studies Minor:

Lillian Roques Mayhall
Victoria Pfeifer
Kristina Plunkett

Greek Minor:

Philip Gerarve

Latin Minor:

Philip Gerarve
Jon ('JT') Odell

Congratulations to all of the winners of our annual academic awards!

**WILLIAM M. CLARKE ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP IN CLASSICS** presented to a
full-time undergraduate majoring in Latin for
excellence in the Classics: **Celeste Maffei**
(Dec '20)

*Professor Clarke retired from LSU in 1997 after 25
years of teaching. He was an inspiring teacher and
served as a mentor not only to his students but also to
his colleagues. He also taught extensively in the honors
college and his mythology course was legendary. So
much so that people not enrolled in the course would*

*regularly attend. Upon his retirement, a former
student remembered him as a very caring and
inspiring teacher, and asked if he could do anything to
honor and thank Dr. Clarke. He was told that an
endowed scholarship would probably be in keeping
with Bill's commitment to undergraduate teaching.
After a couple of days, this student decided to fund
the entire scholarship himself.*

NED FOLSE AWARD for an outstanding
student majoring in Classical Studies: **Marie
Plunkett** ('21)

This award was endowed by Mary Moffett Aycock in honor of her father. Mary Aycock herself was an exceptional student at LSU who received both her BA and MA in Latin. As this award indicates, her passion for Classics continues, and she takes delight and pride that students' outstanding achievements in Latin and Greek are recognized by this award.

ANDREW AUGUSTUS GUNBY AWARD
for an outstanding graduate in Latin: **JT Odell**
(’20)

This award is given “In memory of Judge Andrew Augustus Gunby, Graduate of the Class of 1871, Scholar, Jurist, and former Member of the Board of Supervisors.” Judge Gunby was a dedicated student of Latin, and was given a prize as the outstanding student in his graduating class in the study of Latin. As a member of the Board of Supervisors for LSU,

Judge Gunby discovered to his dismay that LSU could no longer afford to award a Latin prize to its annual outstanding graduate. In his will, therefore, he left money for the explicit purpose of so honoring, each and every year, LSU’s outstanding graduate in the study of Latin.

STEPHEN P. SCHIERLING AWARD for an outstanding ancient Greek student: **Joseph Bemis** (’21)

This award honors a former member of the Classics faculty at LSU. When he died, his wife and former students established this award as attribute to his work in Classics and in the department. He was a popular and at times irreverent teacher, a tireless mentor of students and an incomparable colleague renowned for his parties, which brought students and faculty together.

FACULTY NEWS

PAUL ANDERSON is probably the only person on LSU’s campus teaching three languages. In addition to regular courses in Greek and Latin, he is also currently the head of the Hebrew section. He is the creator of LSU’s Study in Greece summer program and has been leading trips for several years now. We look forward to being able to offer this opportunity to our students again in the future.

EMILY BATINSKI. In addition to teaching multiple sections of Elementary Latin, she taught all sections of our fourth-semester Latin courses, Roman Historians and Vergil in the Fall and Spring, respectively. She was also the State Vice-President for the Classical Association in the Middle West and South (CAMWS), the largest regional professional organization in Classics.

KRIS FLETCHER. “I co-edited a book called *Classical Antiquity in Heavy Metal Music*, which

came out in the Fall of 2019 from Bloomsbury Academic Press. I co-wrote the introduction with my fellow editor, Osman Umurhan (U. of New Mexico) and wrote a chapter about nationalism and Italian metal bands’ use of Vergil’s *Aeneid* (there are multiple albums based on this poem!). This work overlaps with my piece on “Classics, Heavy Metal, and European Identity,” which was part of a project put together by colleagues in Spain. Before we all moved online this spring I was fortunate enough to give a talk about my research to LSU’s student-run Society for Classical Studies.

In addition to a couple book reviews, I also published an article called “Closing the Door on *Seruitium Amoris* in Ovid, *Amores* 1.6” in the Belgian journal *Latomus*, which was inspired by teaching the poem in our Latin Love Elegy course. I was scheduled to give a talk called “Grappling with Our American Aeneas: Harry Stillwell Edwards’ *Eneas Africanus*” at

CAMWS, but that meeting—like so many things this Spring—was canceled.”

MIKE KATCHMER. “I am currently working on an online version of CLST 2102, Roman Civilization. I have also been involved with the Jubilee Media Committee at Theatre Baton Rouge.”

WILFRED E. MAJOR continued work on several projects this past year. The manuscript for his book about soldiers in the ancient Greek playwright Menander is under review with a press. With the support of Manship Summer Fellowship, he is currently writing an article about how Menander's plays would have been staged, while he is supervising an undergraduate research project about one of Menander's plays. An article about the tension between rich and poor in Classical Athens as it played out in a legal case about a pension for a disabled man is scheduled to appear later this year.

He is preparing to teach a new course on the lives of ancient Greek soldiers in the Fall. He continues to revise and update the digital package for his online course on the history of Greek Civilization. During the COVID-19 lockdown, he enjoyed several Zoom meetings of a Greek reading group with other LSU faculty, which resulted in the completion of an intermediate reader of the Septuagint (Greek) version of the Book of Ruth. He is currently collaborating with Susan Stephens and a pair of graduate students at Stanford University to create new and improved reading materials for students of ancient Greek at the intermediate level. Finally, he and Mike Lippman (University of Nebraska) completed a new translation of the ancient Greek comedy *Men and Their Horses* by Aristophanes and are looking forward to having it performed.

RICHARD WARGA continues to offer his popular CLST 2090, “Greek and Roman Mythology,” every term. This past year, he also taught a course on Greek and Latin etymology,

as well as intermediate Latin. Even before COVID-19, he was teaching our online version of CLST 2101, “Ancient Greek Civilization.”

ALBERT WATANABE. “My intermediate reader on Epictetus’ *Encheiridion* is now available online at Dickinson Classical Commentaries: <http://dcc.dickinson.edu/epictetus-encheiridion/intro/preface>.” He is developing an intermediate reader of Euclid, which should appeal to students of both Classics and mathematics.

MICHELLE ZERBA. “My book *Modern Odysseys: Cavafy, Woolf, Césaire, and a Poetics of Indirection* is being published by The Ohio State University Press in the Classical Memories/Modern Identities series. *Modern Odysseys* explores three major writers in global modernism from the Mediterranean, Anglo-European Britain, and the Caribbean whose groundbreaking literary works have never been studied together before. Using language as an instrument of revolution and social change, C. P. Cavafy, Virginia Woolf, and Aimé Césaire gave expression to the forms of human experience we now associate with modernity: homoeroticism, transsexuality, and racial consciousness. More specifically, I argue that Odyssean tropes of diffusion, isolation, passage, and return give form to works by these writers but in ways that invite us to reconsider and revise the basic premises of reception studies and intellectual history.

I have also accepted an invitation to participate in the Herzog-August workshop on translation and reception studies sponsored by the Bibliotheca Augusta in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, which is being directed by Richard Armstrong of the University of Houston and Alexandra Lanieri of the University of Thessaloniki. Its aim is ‘to theorize a field of Classical Translation Studies.’”

ALUMNAE / ALUMNI NEWS

Katherine Handloser ('19) just finished her first year in the Classics PhD program at University of Texas–Austin. She also had an abstract accepted for a panel run by the Vergilian Society at the annual meeting of the Society for Classical Studies. She will be talking about Bacchic language in the *Aeneid*.

Daniel Catalanello ('14): “I’m teaching 7th-9th grade Latin and Ancient Literature at Liberty Tree Academy in Colorado Springs, following a curriculum based on a Charter school initiative set out by Hillsdale College. I’m seeking AP certification this summer and plan to have my students take the state Latin exam for the first time this coming year.”

Andrew Ficklin ('12): “I graduated from LSU in 2012, then from FSU in 2014. I plan on finishing here at UNC in 2021. Yes, I’ve been painfully slow in pretty much every stage of my education... I’ve been fortunate enough to teach a wide variety of Classics courses, though, and still enjoy each opportunity. I’m currently teaching for the English department, and even redesigned a portion of the course to examine modern reception of Classical myth.

Of course, my primary concern is finishing my dissertation, *Venus’ Other Son: The Figure of Cupid in Augustan Literature and Art*. In it, I examine a short-lived shift in depictions of the god of love. On the one hand, as part of Augustus’ divine family, Amor becomes a poster child for the *Pax Augusta* and Rome’s blossoming golden age. Poetic responses to this new image, however, range from thoughtful engagement to lighthearted redirection and even outright parody. My dissertation thus argues, through an examination of art and text together, that this “Augustan Amor” is a product of numerous, interrelated influences and a nexus for elite discourse on state ideology.”

Erin Keys ('12): “After graduating with my bachelors in 2012 I enrolled in the Holmes program at LSU to work towards a masters degree and a teaching certification. I have been teaching at Sherwood Middle Academic Magnet School since I finished that program. I started with a combination of history and three grade levels of Latin, but unfortunately just said goodbye to my last group of Latin students—for now, at least— due to budget cuts. Thankfully, I also teach World History and much of the curriculum focuses on the classical world so I am still able to share my love of Roman culture and history with my students.

I have also been a proponent of sponsoring student travel to see the things we learn about firsthand and have taken several tours with EF that include the places we studied via our textbooks. Hopefully when travel is safe again we will continue that program!

I have tried hard to convince my students that they should continue with Latin all the way through college so hopefully you have more Latin students headed your way!”

Nathalie Roy ('88, Latin; '92, Comparative Literature) never left Baton Rouge. She taught everything from 4th grade to Advanced Placement Latin at the Episcopal School for 24 years. While there, she developed a STEM integration class called Roman Technology in which students study the products and processes of the ancient Romans through experimental archaeology. Her work on this curriculum was published by the *Classical Outlook* and Cambridge University Press’ *The Journal of Classics Teaching*. Nathalie currently teaches at Glasgow Middle School where she is developing a classical mythology course inspired by the Maker Movement called Myth Makers. She is a National Board Certified Teacher and a finalist for the Louisiana Teacher of the Year Competition. You can follow her on Twitter @MagistraRoy.

We’d love to hear from you! Email news to kfletc8@lsu.edu and find us at LSU Classics on Facebook.