

WINTER 2013-14

THE LINK FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

# WAGNER



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VOL. 11, NO. 2

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## Who's the Source for Virginia Woolf?

How a Wagner professor and his wife became the models for two of American theater's most unforgettable — and disturbing — characters.

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## Risk Made Visible

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## Body of Work

Arno Minkkinen's four decades of black-and-white documentary self-portraiture have gained worldwide renown. Shown here: "Self-portrait, Ismo's Stick, Fosters Pond, 1993."



# From the President

## *Signs of Success for the Wagner Plan*



IT HAS been more than a decade since we launched the Wagner Plan, an innovative approach to the undergraduate curriculum that has become the College's signature, our defining feature.

What the Wagner Plan does is to combine a broad-based liberal arts education with experiential learning. We've often referred to this blend as the "practical liberal arts." In the years since it has been in place, the Wagner Plan has brought to us a group of students who participate in their education in an active, engaged way.

Accolades attesting to the Wagner Plan's quality have been coming in strong, but especially during the past couple of years. Pick up the latest issue of *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Colleges guide, and you will find that Wagner is recognized as having four "Programs to Look For," which are all fundamental components of the Wagner Plan. The magazine cites our first-year experience, internships, learning communities (which explore certain issues or problems through an interdisciplinary approach), and our service learning experience as among the best in the nation. The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) calls these areas "high-impact practices" that contribute to the overall quality of an education. Of the hundreds of schools that are ranked in *U.S. News* each year, only seven were mentioned in four or more categories of "Programs to Look For." That is a gratifying recognition, and an affirmation of the curriculum that we've developed and the work that we do.

In this issue ("Back to Class," page 12), *Wagner Magazine* takes you along with

our students to show you the Wagner Plan in action, from internships at the Clinton Foundation, to a learning community studying the cosmos, to a study abroad program in Italy, and more. Reading their stories and seeing first hand how engaged they are in their work demonstrates to me that Wagner students will continue to be leaders in a rapidly changing world. And, there's more.

While you're reading about the Wagner Plan, please look at the sidebar story, "Liberally Educated, Professionally Prepared" (pages 14 and 17). This piece describes a recent survey of employers conducted by the AAC&U. In this survey, they asked employers which skills they prized most in prospective employees, and what it takes to succeed. The results reveal that the goals and outcomes of the Wagner Plan are closely aligned with the attributes employers identified as most important to a successful career. In fact, 94 percent of the employers surveyed said that a liberal arts-based education is the most important curriculum for today's students.

This is all good news for Wagner College and for the Wagner Plan.

When you are next on campus, I would invite you to speak with some of our students and hear what they have to say about their studies. I think you'll be both pleased and proud.

Richard Guarasci  
President

**"94% of the employers surveyed endorsed a liberal arts-based education."**

**THE MORE THINGS CHANGE** A quote in the 1959 *Kallista* could describe Wagner's philosophy today: "Above all, an interchange of thoughts and learning by doing – this is the norm at Wagner." This photograph, which inspired our cover shot, features Walter Baumhoff '59 and Janet Henderson Bird '60.





# From the Editor

## Taking Responsibility

Last summer, I met George Laszlo '72 while he was visiting campus with Ali\*, a 20-year-old college student from Baghdad. While we sat in the Union Atrium sipping tea, I asked George how he had gotten to know Ali. The story he told me was extraordinary.

It all started with a chance encounter on the subway in September 2007. While taking the E train home from JFK airport after a business trip, George gave directions to a fellow traveler. This man then departed, accidentally leaving his backpack behind.

"I knew that if I gave it to the conductor, I would never know if its rightful owner would ever see it again," George says. "Our short connection made me feel responsible to find him myself."

George and his wife, Eileen, did manage to locate this man, and they ended up taking responsibility for much more than the return of his backpack.

It turned out that this man — let's call him Tarik\* — had just arrived from Baghdad, where he had been working as an interpreter and guide for the U.S. military for the past four years without a break. Knowing that Tarik was exhausted, his Army buddies had suggested this vacation trip to the United States. Then, he intended to return to his family — his wife, his son Ali, and his daughter — and continue his work.

But Iraqi militias had already murdered one of his brothers and attempted to kill another in retaliation for Tarik's involvement with the U.S. government. It became clear to the Laszlos and to Tarik's Army buddies that his life was in danger in Iraq, and they persuaded Tarik to stay and seek asylum in the U.S.

George and Eileen took Tarik in for a couple of months, then persisted with him throughout the frustrating two-year bureaucratic nightmare of obtaining asylum. It took almost four more years to get his family out of Iraq, during which Ali survived an attempted kidnapping and saw his best friend murdered.

A week after arriving in New York, Ali told Eileen and George, "For the first time, I feel like a human being." He is headed back to college, his sister is in high school, his father has a job, and his mother is learning English. They live in Queens.

Does George regret picking up that backpack, six years ago? No. "I'm happy for them," he says. "It was worth the effort, and we now have a whole new set of friends."

*Laura Barlament*

EDITOR, WAGNER MAGAZINE

*\*Names have been changed to protect the family's identity. See [thelistproject.org](http://thelistproject.org) for more on the plight of Iraqi asylum seekers.*

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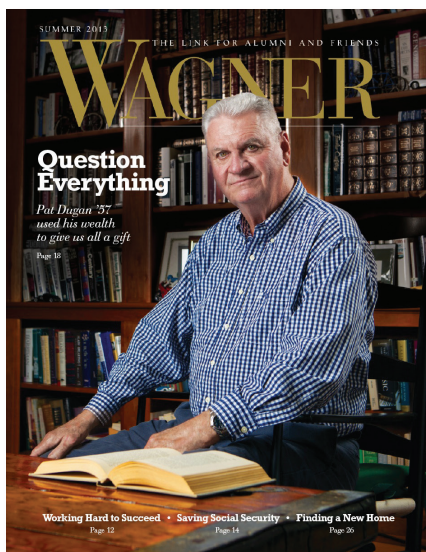
### On the Cover

*Grace Zhang '15 of Irvine, California, who is double majoring in English and government, and Christian Grotewold '15, an arts administration major from Guatemala, served as our models for "Back to Class." Both of them write about Wagner student life for the HawkTalk blog at [hawktalk.wagner.edu](http://hawktalk.wagner.edu).*

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA MULÉ



# From Our Readers



*Editor's Note: A couple stories from the last issue of Wagner Magazine touched a few people beyond our regular mailing list, who read the stories and commented on them online at [wagner.edu/wagnermagazine](http://wagner.edu/wagnermagazine). We hope you'll check out the site sometime, too, where you can find back issues since fall 2010.*

“ Pat often reminded me of John Wayne — tall, robust, handsome, a rumbling gait, and of course courage in the face of all adversity.” ”

## Wagner's John Wayne

THANK YOU to Laura Barlament, the author, for an excellently written article (“Question Everything: Pat Dugan '57,” summer 2013). I worked closely with Pat for over 15 years as the original CFO for PDI, beginning in 1990. Laura and her interviewees have captured Pat beautifully and I have nothing to add except to affirm all that was said. Pat often reminded me of John Wayne — tall, robust, handsome, a

rumbling gait, and of course courage in the face of all adversity. As we know, the courage and adversity for Pat were real, not fiction, and he never shrank from the potential consequences of tough decisions. Thanks and best wishes to Pat and Marion. They look great!

*Brian Boyle*

## A Great Future

GREAT ARTICLE (“Bouncing Back,” summer 2013). I feel Dwaun Anderson has a real future with Wagner. Self-esteem, self-confidence are evident in his performance and his love for basketball. I see only a great future in whatever he chooses to do.

*Sue Minch*

He is amazing.. We love him so much... His Momma is proud of him, watching down from heaven....

*Auntie Mary*

## Choir Pleaser

AGAIN, YOU have created an informative and high-quality edition of *Wagner Magazine* (summer 2013), which also included upcoming events under “Music.” The 300th anniversary choir concert (October 27, 2013, Zion Lutheran Church, Oldwick, New Jersey) was listed and helped attract almost 50 alumni to this excellent concert! The performance was greatly appreciated by the congregation and the alumni — a real “win-win” for them and the choir.

*Gotfred C. Jacobsen '54*

SEDONA, ARIZONA

**WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU** We welcome letters from readers. Letters should refer to material published in the magazine and include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number. The editor reserves the right to determine the suitability of letters for publication and to edit them for accuracy and length.

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# Upon the Hill

*Learning, teaching, giving and achieving on Grymes Hill and beyond*



**LEARNING TO FLY** The study of applied aerodynamics is possible at Wagner, thanks to a Flotek 1440 Low Speed Wind Tunnel in Megerle Science Building. Carly Nicoletti '13, Leobardo Dominguez '15, and Michelle Greenough '15 (*pictured here*) used it to study aircraft icing and its effect on lift, in a research project supervised by Gregory Falabella, associate professor of physics.

## Good Work, Alums

### **Wagner lands in rankings emphasizing post-graduate outcomes**

FOR MANY YEARS, Wagner has enjoyed a good position in college rankings, such as the one published by *U.S. News & World Report*, that rate schools according to criteria like incoming students' SAT scores and class rank, academic reputation surveys, and faculty qualifications and resources.

In 2013, Wagner College got some love from organizations that put more weight on graduates' outcomes.

PayScale, for example, ranked Wagner 59th for alumni salaries, out of more than one thousand colleges and universities nationwide. That places Wagner in the top six percent, based on a survey of 1.4 million bachelor's-degree holders.

*Forbes Magazine* also included Wagner in its top colleges list for the first time in 2013. Produced in partnership with the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, the *Forbes* list emphasizes "output." Major criteria include student satisfaction, post-graduate success, student debt loads and default rates, graduation rates, and student and alumni success in winning national scholarships and completing Ph.D.s. Wagner came in 337th out of 650 colleges and universities in the *Forbes* list.

Bob Herr, Wagner's dean of admissions and financial aid, says that these rankings respond to the increased public interest in the question, "What do I get from my educational dollar?" This question is not only being asked by parents of prospective students, but is also being covered heavily in the media and is a topic President Obama is addressing as well.

"These rankings are really excellent for us," Herr says. "It resonates especially

with parents. They're the ones writing the check. Students are looking at their experience for the next four years, but parents are looking at the future beyond college."

The positive news continues with other ranking organizations. In *U.S. News & World Report's* college rankings for 2014, Wagner was the only college or university in New York State with four or more "programs to look for" — and one of only seven such schools nationwide. Wagner's programs in this category are the first-year experience, internships, learning communities, and service learning.

Wagner placed #24 in the *U.S. News* overall northern regional universities rankings, and it was listed in the Princeton Review's 2014 *Best 378 Colleges* guide for the 10th year in a row. The Princeton Review also ranked Wagner College Theatre #2 among such programs nationwide, the 10th year in a row that WCT has been included in this list.



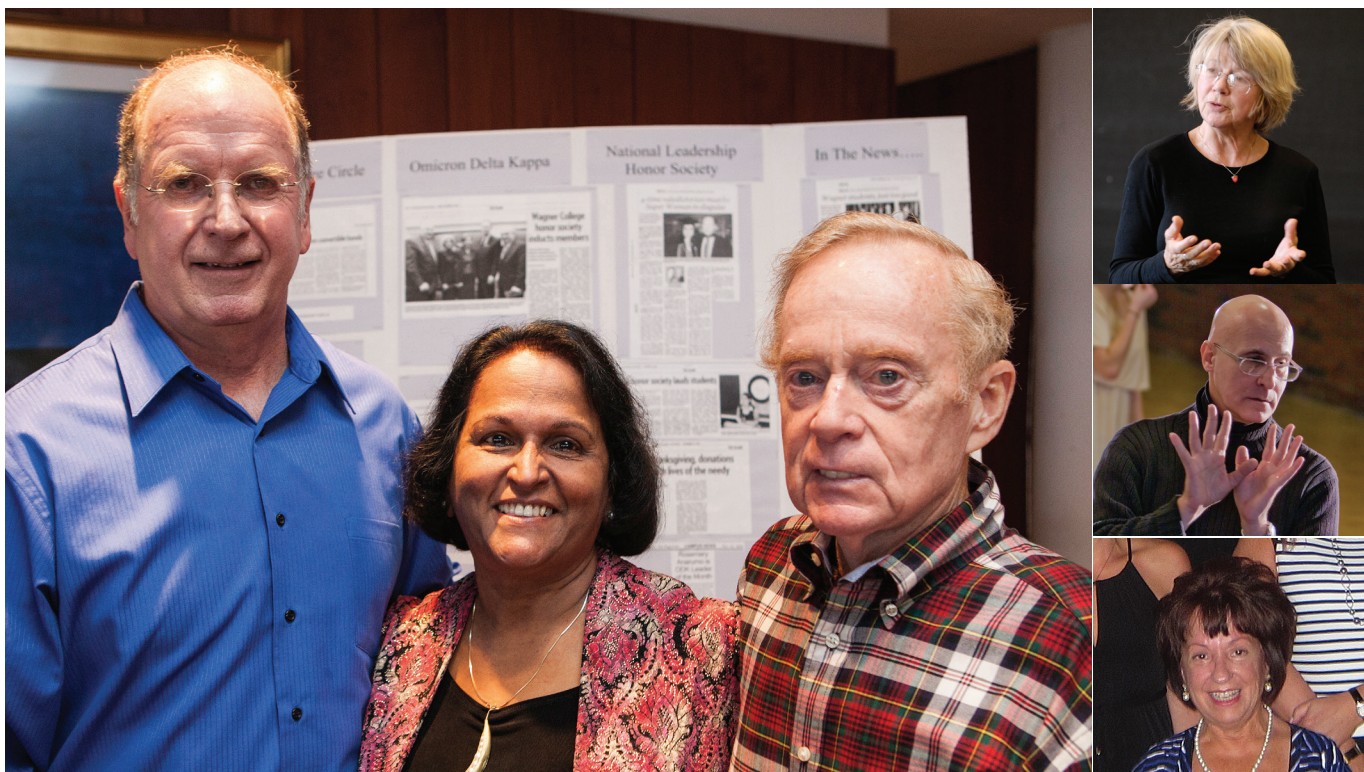
**First the Facts . . .**

12/12/12

DATE THAT THE FIRST TWO MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 2017 MADE THEIR DEPOSITS

8,818

MILES THAT GABRYEL OLOAPU TRAVELED FROM AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, TO BEGIN COLLEGE AT WAGNER



**FOND FAREWELL** Professors Peter Sharpe, Ammini Moorthy, and Joedy Smith stand in front of a poster chronicling Smith's work with ODK. Right, top to bottom: Jayne Dean, John Jamiel, and Margo Governo.

## Looking Back

### Six longtime faculty members retire in 2013

MARGO GOVERNO '78, associate professor of nursing; Ammini Moorthy, professor of biology; Joseph D. "Joedy" Smith Jr., associate professor of religious studies; Jayne Dean, associate professor of economics; Peter Sharpe, professor of English; and John Jamiel, associate professor of speech and theater, ended their tenures at Wagner College in 2013, having given a grand total of 165 years of service to Wagner College.

Governo started teaching at Wagner as an adjunct right after finishing her bachelor's in nursing; she already had years of experience as an RN at Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn under her belt by then. Pushed by her mentor, Professor Jane Bacher, Governo earned her master's and doctorate at Columbia, while teaching full time. Her specialties include psychiatric nursing, community nursing and preventive care, and holistic care.

In the past year, as the National League for Nursing Ambassador for the Evelyn L. Spiro School of Nursing, she helped organize the school's successful application to be named a 2012–16 Center of

Excellence in Nursing Education.

A cell biologist and genetics expert, Moorthy graduated from Kerala University in her native India and completed her Ph.D. at New York University. She taught scores of biology courses at Wagner — so many, in fact, that there was a running joke about students getting a "Minor in Moorthy." She takes special pride in her genetics courses — granting that they were tough, but the students appreciated it when it came time for the MCATs — and in an Intermediate Learning Community, Ethical, Legal, and Social Implications of the Genome, that she created and taught with sociology professor John Esser.



10

NUMBER OF FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS WHO CELEBRATED THEIR BIRTHDAYS DURING ORIENTATION WEEKEND

... Then the Quiz!



What percentage of this year's freshman class came from outside of New York State? ANSWER ON PAGE 11



Smith arrived at Wagner in 1982, one year after Moorthy, and promptly took up not only the teaching of Biblical studies but also a leading role with the honor society ODK. The quintuple graduate of Yale (culminating in a Ph.D. in religious studies) received many awards, including the Robert L. Morlan National ODK Faculty Secretary Award. And, the Wagner ODK chapter received the national organization's top award for five years running, from 2002 to 2006.

In 1985, Dean began teaching at Wagner College, having completed her Ph.D. at the New School for Social Research. Besides the regular array of economics courses, she has co-taught a First-Year Learning Community called Money Where Your Mouth Is: Debates on Love, Power, and Money in the Public Forum

After earning his doctorate from New York University, Sharpe came

to Wagner in 1994 with considerable experience both in literary study — especially Southern literature — and in journalism, and he helped the College grow programs in those two areas, adding popular courses such as Growin' Up in Dixie, designing a new minor in journalism, and advising the *Wagnerian* and *Nimbus* student publications.

During most of Jamiel's 18 years at Wagner, he taught all of the acting classes for theatre performance majors — until the program grew too large for one person to handle the whole sequence. During that period, the program has steadily gained in renown (for example, being named one of the nation's top collegiate theater programs by the Princeton Review) and has produced many alumni with successful careers on and off the stage.

Accolades from former students exemplify what all of these professors

have meant to Wagner. "What makes Joedy Smith a great professor is that he takes a personal interest in students," said Sarah Nehm '11, who followed her mentor's footsteps to Yale Divinity School on a full scholarship. "Many years after graduating, I can still lean on John [Jamiel] for advice, help and comfort," said Scott Barnhardt '01, a member of the cast for the Broadway show *The Book of Mormon*.

➔ Go to [wagner.edu/wagnermagazine](http://wagner.edu/wagnermagazine) and look under "From the Editor" to read longer stories about these faculty members, including more comments from their students, their most memorable moments, plans for retirement, and thoughts about the most important developments in their fields of study.

## Advancement's New Chief

### Wagner senior staff member shifts focus



ANGELO ARAIMO was named Wagner College's vice president for institutional advancement as of November 1, 2013. He took over a position that had been filled on an interim basis by Frank Young, former director of major gifts, ever since Vice President Myra Garcia resigned in December 2012.

Araimo is a well-known figure at Wagner, having served since 1994 as vice president for enrollment and planning. Under his leadership, enrollment has grown by 50 percent and the residential

population has doubled. In his new role, Araimo continues his oversight of admissions and financial aid, areas which are under the direct supervision of Dean Bob Herr.

Frank Young retired as of December 31, 2013, after 10 years of service to Wagner College. He had been a part of Wagner's fundraising team since 2000, first serving as vice president of development from 2000 to 2002. He resigned and then returned to the College as director of major gifts beginning in 2005.





**RENEWAL** Left: Tree and roof damage on the Pape House, home of Wagner's Office of Admissions, on October 30, 2012. Right: The same view, almost a year later, on September 5, 2013.

## The Long Haul

**Hurricane Sandy-related fundraising helps Wagner families keep their heads above the financial waters**

JUNIOR NURSING major Audrey White's family did not celebrate Thanksgiving 2013 at home. More than a year after Hurricane Sandy blasted across the Jersey Shore, the Whites are still working to make their Mantoloking home inhabitable again.

On the bright side, however, Audrey is still at Wagner, working toward her degree.

Thanks to alumni, parents, and friends of the College, Wagner raised \$60,000 to address Hurricane Sandy-related needs, such as additional financial aid for seven students whose families were severely impacted by the storm.

Mantoloking, where White grew up and where her mother's family has lived for three generations, was one of the hardest-hit towns in New Jersey. Much of the town is still in shambles,

but the Whites were determined to rebuild their dream home. The family is the first in Mantoloking to have raised their house, installing nine-foot pilings on which the structure now sits to keep it above any future floods. In the meantime, the family has moved from one short-term rental to the next, while dealing with a string of delays in their efforts to return.

For White, it has been a stressful and discouraging year. "I'm still distracted [from school]," she says. "I'm always wondering when I get to go home."

A year after Hurricane Sandy's floodwaters swamped Oakwood Beach in Staten Island, including the home of Hayley Semo '16, she was approaching the storm's anniversary with trepidation. "Now that we're getting closer and closer to the date, there is anxiety," she said in early October 2013. "What if it happens again?"

Nevertheless, she is thriving in her sophomore year at Wagner, for which she also received additional financial aid. Her family's house is almost completely restored, and she is leasing a new car to replace the one destroyed in the storm. She has declared a major

in biology, is in the pre-health program with the ambition of becoming a veterinarian, and is interning at the Staten Island Zoo.

The student-organized relief group WagnerCares has also stayed active in helping the community. Students are volunteering with Project Hospitality's Long-Term Sandy Recovery Team on Staten Island, and WagnerCares is in the process of hiring Wagner students as interns to conduct outreach and gather data on community needs for storm recovery. The organization is also expanding its scope to encompass other causes locally, nationally, and internationally.



**PREPARED** The Whites' house in Mantoloking was lifted onto nine-foot pilings.



## Quote Unquote

“The little things around us can be keyholes into much larger rooms of consideration.”



*Billy Collins*

POET,  
AT THE 2013  
KAUFMAN-REPAGE  
LECTURE,  
OCTOBER 16



**AWARDEE** Arijeta Lajka '16, an English and government major, is Wagner's first Gilman Scholar.

## Heart and Mind

**Top scholarship takes student to a 'newborn country'**

DURING THE SPRING of 2014, one Wagner student is using a prestigious scholarship to live and study at an unusual destination for American undergraduates.

Arijeta Lajka '16 received the U.S. State Department's Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. The first Wagner student to win this highly competitive award for study abroad, Lajka (pronounced 'LIKE-ah') is studying at the American University in Pristina, Kosovo.

An English and government double major with a minor in journalism, Lajka wants to become an international journalist. "Kosovo is a good place to be right now for what I want to do," she says. "They're a newborn country and just came out of an ethnic war not

too long ago." She had already begun working for the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network before going to Kosovo, covering stories such as the participation of Kosovar expatriates in their home country's elections.

But Lajka's interest in the Balkan region is more than just academic. Lajka was born and raised on Staten Island, but her family's roots are in Montenegro, a neighbor of Kosovo. Both are former Yugoslav republics that gained independence less than a decade ago. Lajka is bilingual in English and Albanian, one of the main languages spoken in Kosovo.

Before her departure, Lajka was excited about the opportunity. "It's so close to my heart, because my family is from there. It will be nice to spend a semester with people who speak the same language."

And if she gets homesick, her grandmother is in Montenegro, only a few hours' travel away.



## Remembering the Love

**Students, faculty, and staff mourn the untimely death of campus leader Justin Stevens '14**

SHARING TEARS, music, and laughter, the Wagner community gathered on the night of August 27 to remember Justin Stevens '14, a theater performance major from New Jersey. Stevens had just finished co-leading the orientation program for new students. On the first day of class, August 26, he left campus for a doctor appointment in Manhattan and never returned. His body and a suicide note were discovered by New York police officers in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx the next afternoon.

The news struck a hard blow to the campus, where he was known for his energy and charisma, roles in Wagner Theatre productions, and many gifts of friendship. In early October, Wagner students from Alpha Omicron Pi sorority and the Center for Leadership and Engagement participated in the annual Out of the Darkness walk, sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, raising money for the cause in Stevens' memory.



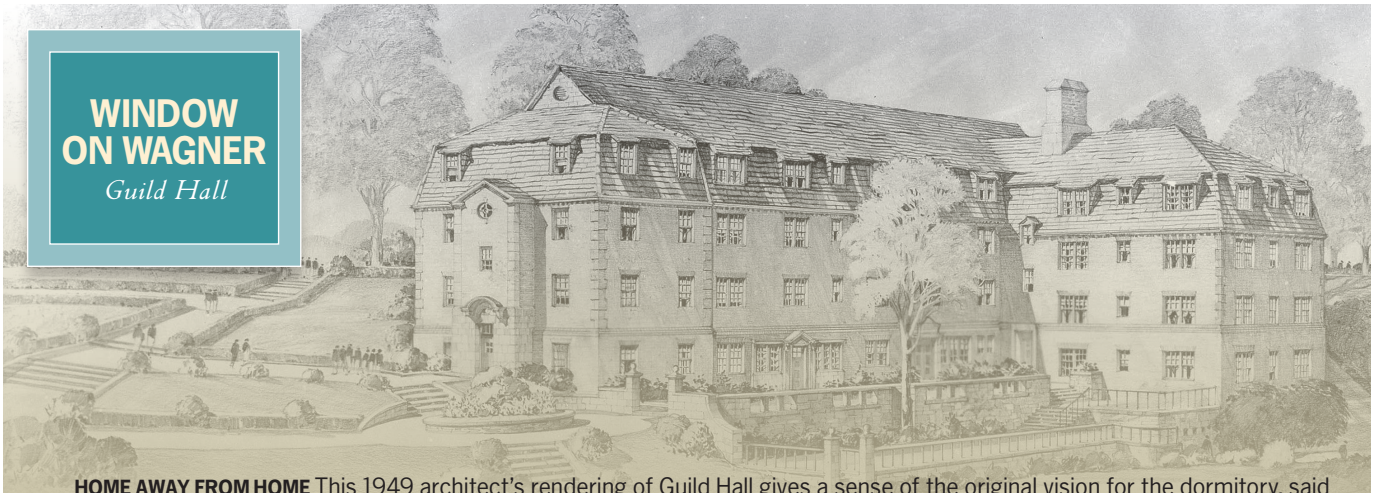
## Quote Unquote

“A marching band can motivate, be uplifting and amplify a sense of commonality to a college and to its students.”



*Jose Diaz*  
WAGNER  
MARCHING BAND  
DIRECTOR  
IN THE  
'WAGNERIAN,'  
DECEMBER 4

## WINDOW ON WAGNER *Guild Hall*



**HOME AWAY FROM HOME** This 1949 architect's rendering of Guild Hall gives a sense of the original vision for the dormitory, said to resemble a large country house in the French Eclectic style.

THE DEDICATION of a new women's dormitory, christened Guild Hall in 1951, marked a turning point in the life of Wagner College.

From its founding in 1883 until the end of World War II, Wagner had been a very small institution — enrollment never broke the 500 mark before 1942 — but with the postwar boom fueled by the G.I. Bill, enrollment nearly tripled in 1946. By 1951, we had nearly 2,000 students.

And it wasn't just soldiers, sailors, and marines returning from the war who were enrolling in record numbers. Women (first admitted in 1933) accounted for more than a third of total enrollment — and the need for new housing was acute.

To design a women's dormitory, we turned to one of our own: noted architect Herbert E. Matz, whose work has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A member of our Board of Trustees from 1936 to 1958, Matz also served in the Department of Church Architecture for the United Lutheran Church. His firm, Bessell & Matz, was also responsible for the design of the Sutter Gymnasium, now a part of the Spiro Sports Center, and a men's dormitory opened in 1957, Campus Hall.

The architectural style of Matz's Guild Hall is difficult to identify. The May 1949 issue of the Wagner

College Bulletin said that “the style of the new dormitory is Georgian, Dutch origin,” but the actual execution is more eclectic than that. It has the identifying architectural features of 15 different styles, but it doesn't entirely fit into any one of them.

“Although it is a big building, what it's really trying to be is a large vernacular country house of masonry construction with a simple fenestration, a broad roof and just a few distinguishing architectural details,” said architectural historian Stephen Engelhart, executive director of Adirondack Architectural Heritage — in other words, the new women's residence hall was designed for “hominess,” not for monumental impact. Engelhart suggested the French Eclectic style as a good description.

At the December 1, 1951, dedication, the program was opened by Ave Holthusen Futchs, president of the Wagner College Guild and daughter of the College's first president, Pastor Adolf Holthusen. It seems appropriate that this dorm, with its homelike architecture, was named for the Wagner College Guild, a group that has provided constant support and helped students feel at home on campus since the College's earliest days on Staten Island.

— *Lee Manchester*

**The Answer**  
QUIZ QUESTION  
ON PAGE 7

60% — the top five states besides New York were New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, California, and Massachusetts.



## MARCHING BACK

### Wagner starts to rebuild a long-lost marching band program

FOR THE first time in almost four decades, the Seahawks are on the march again — on the marching band field, that is.

Inspired by the 2012 football team's success, Vice President Angelo Araimo led the charge to revive a marching band at Wagner. Jose Diaz, who previously served as the orchestra conductor and instrumental music teacher at Saddle River Day School, was hired as the band's director last summer. During the band's first season, 22 students have participated, and Diaz plans to expand that number in the coming years.

Wagner previously had a marching band, which started in the 1940s and existed (with some interruptions) until the mid-1970s. (See "Flashback," page 35, for more.)

Groundbreakers of the revitalized

Wagner marching band include flutist Kendra Best '16, who is also serving as the band's president. The psychology major from Metuchen, New Jersey, leaped at the chance to join the band because, she says, "it has been a huge part of my life since I first joined in fourth grade." She fondly remembers playing with her high school band in the Orange Bowl halftime show and at Disney World's Magic Music Days.

Now with Wagner's fledgling ensemble, she is eager to play at Seahawk basketball games this spring, appear in local parades, and perform a field show for football games next fall. "I enjoy being a leader, and I look forward to the growing of the organization," she says.

"It's so incredibly fun," adds Madeline McKnight '16, a psychology major who plays bass drum and serves as the band's equipment manager. "I look forward to every rehearsal, every game, basically any time we get together."

### Music History Brought to Life

Last summer, Ernie Jackson '87 went back to his roots in classical guitar and pieces of music he first learned at Wagner College for a video featuring a historic instrument in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Met Museum is creating a video series featuring all the playable guitars in its musical instrument collection. Because of Jackson's expertise in the music of the 19th-century guitar virtuoso and composer Justin Holland, he was asked to play the Met's 1860s-era Martin guitar.

Jackson first learned of this music while he was an undergraduate music major studying under Ed Brown at Wagner College. Jackson went on to produce a book and recording of Holland's music, *The Music of Justin Holland, 1817–1887: Ten Solo Pieces Arranged by the Prominent 19th-Century African-American Classical Guitarist* (Cherry Lane Music, 1995).

Jackson has taught guitar, music production, and audio engineering at Wagner College and at Queensborough Community College, where he is now a tenured professor and leads the jazz ensemble. His latest book is *The Only Guitar Book You'll Ever Need* (Adams Media Corporation, 2014).

📺 See the video in display kiosks at the Met or online at [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org), and learn more about this story at [wagner.edu/wagnermagazine](http://wagner.edu/wagnermagazine).





**The nights are cooler, the days grow shorter, and the crisp air is scented with falling leaves. The campus surges with energy as friends reunite after the summer break, and as hundreds of new students search for their niche in this ever-changing social ecosystem — and, of course, for their next class. It's the fall semester at Wagner College.**

***Wagner Magazine* took a peek into the students' learning experiences this fall — whether they are in classrooms, labs, offices, or on the streets all around the city and the world.**

*By Laura Barlament*

# > BACK TO CLASS <

## SCIENCE IN CONTEXT

*First-Year Learning Community:  
Emerging Global Health Concerns*

**F**iona wants to be a dentist; Olivia a veterinarian; Marisa a physical therapist; Mahmoud a physician. How does it start, their first year in college? By pounding down the basics of chemistry and biology, with an English or history class thrown in on the side?

At Wagner, the answer would be yes, sort of, but not quite. They are indeed starting to pound down the chemistry and other specialized knowledge they need to enter the medical professions; but they are also getting a bigger picture on the field, and some hands-on experiences with the populations they someday hope to serve.

Students miss something important when they are taught chemistry alone, says Nick Richardson, associate professor of chemistry. "It's like science in an abstract vacuum without realizing there are consequences, there are real issues that this stuff can address," he says.

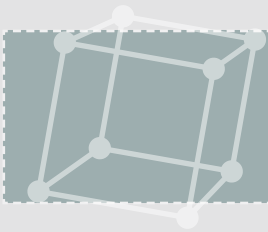
So, the same group of students who are in Richardson's Chemistry 101 are also in a course called Health

and Society, about the social science of health care, taught by Annemarie Dowling-Castronovo, assistant professor of nursing. And they are also in a Reflective Tutorial class, co-taught by Richardson and Dowling-Castronovo, where they integrate the two topics of chemistry and social science by studying real-life issues like hydraulic fracturing, alcohol abuse, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

In addition, the students work with community organizations and health care facilities throughout the semester, thereby gaining experience with the health care system and the people it serves.

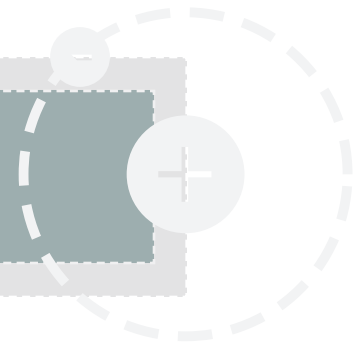
"It promotes them being more critical thinkers," says Dowling-Castronovo. "We discuss questions like, What are you seeing? What does it say in the literature? Does it synch, or are you discovering something that doesn't synch, and how do you go about understanding more about the gap that you've identified?"





## PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

*Intermediate Learning Community:  
Exploring the Cosmos and Our Place Within It*



As Otto Rath, professor of physics, walks in one of the two doors and down the steps to the front of the small auditorium in Spiro Hall, he pauses to look at his students. About a dozen men and women sit scattered across the room. Peering through his thick glasses, the longtime Wagner professor jabs his finger at one door or the other and asks each student, “You came in that door, right?” One after the other, they confirm his guesses. “Ha, I know how you think!” he observes.

After this unusual approach to taking attendance, Rath picks up a piece of chalk and asks, “What do you know about the sun?”

This is Astronomy 108: The Solar System. All of the students are also enrolled in its partner course, Philosophy 205: Philosophy of the Mind. Together, they make up an Intermediate Learning Community (ILC), Exploring the Cosmos and Our Place Within It.

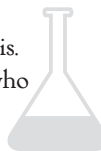
Together, the two courses lead to bigger questions than they would alone — “such questions,” according to the course description, “as, What can we know about the universe and ourselves? Is it possible to know the way the universe exists and the way our minds exist? Does the universe have a purpose? Is there a place for consciousness, and for God, within a scientific view of

the universe?”

It takes a scientifically minded philosopher and a deep-thinking physicist to create a course like this. The philosopher is John Danisi, who was a double major in chemistry and philosophy during his own undergraduate years. He and Rath share a fascination with different views of the cosmos — and a commitment to keep questioning and finding new answers.

In Rath’s lectures, therefore, he not only conveys the facts about the Sun’s makeup, temperature, size, and so forth, but also continually contextualizes them. He tells stories (for example, about meeting the physicist and Nobel laureate Hans Bethe); makes observations (“Absolute truth in nature is very hard to find. You never stop, but you become very humbled”); and recommends readings (like the Saturday edition of the *Wall Street Journal* and a recent essay by a psychologist in the *New York Times*).

While Rath deals with the makeup of the universe, Danisi is exploring what we can know about the nature of the human self, from a philosophical perspective: from the ancient Hebrews and Greeks, through Descartes and Sartre to today’s scientific-materialistic thinkers, who



“whittle away the mind” as a valid way of understanding the human being. “My goal is to restore a place for the mind and for God,” Danisi says.

For students like Paul Passantino ’16, who is still undecided about his major but leaning toward business, this course is mind-blowing and inspirational — so much so that he can’t stop talking about the ideas he’s learning with friends after class.

“That’s why I’m really loving this class,” he says. “We can have different types of views, and I personally believe that Danisi’s philosophy class has helped me with just being able to accept other people’s views. Being able to learn someone else’s views, and make your own opinion on it, that’s the beauty of philosophy, I think. To see how things work, how people think.”

After all, he points out, just as Galileo and Copernicus overturned the received wisdom of their day, today’s students need to keep their minds open in order to discover the next big thing. “As students, we will take everything we learn and find new answers,” he says. “That’s our job, to better ourselves, so we can keep this country and world going, so we don’t just be OK with the normal. We have to keep pushing the boundaries.”



**PRACTICAL CHEMISTRY** Eldona Sainovski and Huda Abuzahrieh build model molecules in Chemistry 101 with Prof. Nick Richardson (left), while also learning about the social context of chemistry in their First-Year Learning Community.



# FIRST CLASS TICKET

INTERNATIONAL IMMERSION  
*The Center for International Studies Abroad*

## BOARDING PASS

NAME OF PASSENGER

Global Learner

FROM

New York

TO

OF

DESTINATION :

BOARDING GATE :

BOARDING DATE :

BOARDING TIME :

04:00 PM

**M**eredith Murphy '16 and Kendall Kulper '16 both came to Wagner College with a strong desire to spend part of their college years exploring other countries. "I've always wanted to study abroad because I loved traveling and being immersed in new cultures," says Murphy.

Yet they are also nursing majors, completing a curriculum that is not normally compatible with study abroad programs. In fact, in recent years, no nursing majors have studied abroad for a semester. But Murphy and Kulper were determined to find a way — and they did. This semester, the two students are in Florence, Italy, with the Center for International Studies (CIS) Abroad, an organization with which Wagner has a consortium agreement.

Yes, Firenze — the capital of Tuscany, the birthplace of the Renaissance, home of the Medicis and Machiavelli, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Murphy and Kulper are living there for three months, taking Italian, history, intercultural communication, and nutrition — the last course the key component of keeping them on track with the Wagner nursing program. Learning from Italian professors, Kulper says, gives her a new perspective on each topic and helps her to feel immersed in the culture.

Kulper and Murphy expect to come home better able to serve patients from diverse backgrounds, whether in the United States or abroad.

"I have met so many amazing people and have started to just touch the surface of what it's like to be from their

cultures and societies," says Murphy, who has a goal of someday working with Doctors Without Borders. "After traveling and studying abroad I will have the communication skills to be a global citizen and be mindful of others."

## Liberally Educated, Professionally Prepared

In these days of high tuition prices and a still-lagging economy, students and their parents have hard questions for higher education: What are we getting from this investment of time and money? How can we ensure that our investment produces positive short-term and long-term outcomes for students?

Wagner College takes these questions seriously, and for years now has taken a leadership role in developing an educational plan — the Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts — that purposefully guides students toward learning experiences that benefit them the most in today's world.

Last year, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (of which President Guarasci is a board member) commissioned a survey to find out what employers think college students need to succeed in today's economy. The top results align closely with the educational aims and outcomes of the Wagner Plan; read about it on page 17.



Meredith Murphy and Kendall Kulper in Budapest





**STARTING A CAREER PATH**  
*Internship at the Clinton Foundation, New York City*



**T**hree days per week this semester, Chris DeFilippi '14 is not making the short drive from his Staten Island home to the Wagner campus for classes.

Instead, the senior major in government and politics gets dressed up and boards a Manhattan-bound express bus at 8 a.m. to arrive at the office of the Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation on 125th Street in Harlem by 10 a.m.

A huge international nonprofit founded by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Foundation employs about 65 interns at its offices and initiatives in New York City. DeFilippi was placed in the scheduling department — a position so privileged that he can't share any details about it with *Wagner Magazine's* readers. Suffice it to say, as DeFilippi points out, that "it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work for a former president." Besides doing a steady stream of scheduling work in the office, he gets to attend special events, like the closing ceremonies of the latest Clinton Global Initiative meeting, featuring speeches by Bill, Hillary, and Chelsea Clinton; and a seminar with the former president, held especially for the interns.

DeFilippi sees this internship as an

important training ground for his career path. "I wanted to take what I've learned here [at Wagner] — leadership skills, communication skills — and apply them to a nonprofit. The Clinton Foundation is the biggest nonprofit in New York City." (In addition, the foundation has a strong connection to Wagner College through Laura Graham '95, who has served with Bill Clinton since his White House days and is now his senior advisor to global programs.)

Why nonprofits? That's been an evolution of DeFilippi's interests. It started in his First-Year Learning Community about dissenting voices in literature and politics. He read Liberian literature and worked in the African Refugee Center located near the Wagner campus, where a large Liberian immigrant community lives.

Then, as a sophomore, he took Feminist Political Theory with Professor Patricia Moynagh. The seminar-style, discussion-driven class was so engaging, and the ideas so inspiring, that he has made the women's equality movement his personal focus. As a gay man who just recently came out, he identifies with women's struggles to gain a voice in society. To that end, he has been working this semester for another nonprofit with

strong Wagner connections, the women's leadership organization Take The Lead, co-founded by former Planned Parenthood Federation President Gloria Feldt and investment banker Amy Litzenberger, whose husband is Robert Litzenberger '64. DeFilippi is building the group's social media presence.

"That's what I do in my spare time — the very little of it," he says wryly.

**B**ack on campus, he meets with his Senior Learning Community's capstone seminar and Reflective Tutorial, where all of his fellow senior majors in government and politics as well as international affairs discuss their internships and work on their senior theses. DeFilippi is writing about the garment industry in Bangladesh, compared with sweatshops in New York City as well as in Milan, where he studied abroad last year.

"That's what I like about the Wagner Plan. Through my learning communities and also being abroad, I found out there's a lot that could be done in the nonprofit sector, and it could bring about great change, with more and more people getting involved."





## DEVELOPING A VOICE

*Senior Learning Community in Philosophy*

**F**our afternoons a week this semester, the four graduating philosophy majors are in class together for their Senior Learning Community. One part high-level philosophy seminar, taught by Professor John Danisi, it's also an intensive writing workshop where the students develop their own theses and learn the disciplines of critical analysis and well-honed writing.

And philosophy majors expect no less, says Professor Sarah Donovan, who teaches the writing workshop, or Reflective Tutorial, portion of the LC. In other majors, seniors complete internships in businesses or other types of organizations. "Philosophy majors want a traditional liberal arts experience, where they're focused on intensive research," she says. During the spring of their junior year, they choose their senior thesis topic, and 100 hours of research time is required during the summer.

One Tuesday afternoon in early October, the group meets in a small Main Hall seminar room for the Reflective Tutorial. The entire class is focused on dissecting a reading that Julia Zenker '14 selected in support of her thesis, in which she intends to critique global trade policy's neglect of human rights issues and propose "an ethic of care," as she calls it.

Sitting at tables facing each other, the students and their professor work methodically through the article, first analyzing its content, and then pointing out its shortcomings. "This is what research is," Donovan remarks. "You see what someone has done, see what's missing, and see what you can build on."

It's a helpful and exciting process, says Zenker. "The research is really interesting," she says. "It's fun and exciting to develop my own theory. It doesn't necessarily have to be something that has been written about before. I can

take pieces from this author and that author and put them together and say, "This hasn't been thought about in this way before, why don't we start thinking about it in this way, and this is why we should do it."

Zenker chose to major in philosophy because she wanted this intensive work on her reading, writing, and critical thinking skills in preparation for law school. At the same time, she has developed a strong ethical stance on social justice issues. In her First-Year Learning Community, she learned to connect her studies of Spanish and philosophy with the practical experience of teaching English to immigrants. Her paper on the topic, "The Moral Obligation to People in a Learning Environment," was selected for publication in the *Wagner Undergraduate Research Journal*.

"I think that really shaped the way that I think about civic engagement and





**FRESH THINKING** Senior philosophy majors discuss their theses in a writing workshop, part of their Senior Learning Community.

issues of social justice,” she says. “And that pushed me toward the trajectory of public interest law.”

**T**his kind of progression, says Professor Danisi, is the goal of a Wagner education: students who become independent thinkers with their own, distinct viewpoint and voice. “Whatever occupation you’re in, you’re dealing with novelty,” he says. “And you have to come up with a solution and your boss is going to say, ‘Well, why the hell are you doing that?’”

“At Wagner, we don’t want to turn out people who are doctoring and lawyering,” he continues. “We want to turn out moral agents, or citizens, who are doctoring and lawyering.”

**TEAMWORK** Philosophy professors John Danisi (*top*) and Sarah Donovan (*bottom, left*) lead the two parts of the Senior Learning Community. Julia Zenker '14 is in the bottom picture on the right.



## Liberally Educated, Professionally Prepared

According to a survey of employers (described on page 14), 94 percent say it is important to provide this type of education:

*“Liberal education provides both broad knowledge in a variety of areas and knowledge in a specific major or field of interest. It also helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as intellectual and practical skills that span all areas of study, such as communication, analytical, and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.”*

Outcomes that a large majority of employers consider important when hiring:

- Ethical judgment and integrity
- Comfort in working with colleagues, customers, and/or clients from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Capacity for professional development and continued new learning
- Interest in giving back to the community

Outcomes on which a large majority of employers say colleges should place increased emphasis:

- Critical thinking and analytical reasoning
- Complex problem solving and analysis
- Written and oral communication
- Application of knowledge and skills in real-world settings
- Location, organization, and evaluation of information from multiple sources
- Innovation and creativity
- Teamwork skills and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse group settings

SOURCE: “It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success” (April 2013). You can view the full report at [aacu.org/leap](http://aacu.org/leap).



KODAK SAFETY FILM

KODAK SAFETY FILM

KODAK SAFETY FILM

KODAK SAFETY FILM

**How a Wagner professor and his wife became the models for two of American theater's most unforgettable — and disturbing — characters**

PHOTOGRAPH, THIS PAGE: EDITTA SHERMAN; PAGE 19: COURTESY FRANK POLACH

FRONT MEZZANINE 7:00 P.M.

Saturday Evening, OCTOBER 13, 1962

# WHO'S THE SOURCE FOR 'VIRGINIA WOOLF'?

BILLY ROSE THEATRE BY LEE MANCHESTER



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BROADWAY

Every college campus has its share of funny, sometimes sensational rumors — stories about famous professors, quirky students, haunted secret passageways, and the like.

Most such legends implode as soon as they are investigated with the slightest bit of diligence. So, what about one particularly juicy Wagner College rumor that has persisted, decade after decade: the one about a Grymes Hill professor and his wife who, the story says, inspired the characters of George and Martha, a fictional history professor and his wife, in Edward Albee's powerful, emotionally wrenching drama, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

The play opened on Broadway in October 1962 and has been a mainstay of the American theater ever since. It won the Tony Award for Best Play in 1963 and was further popularized by the 1966 movie version with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. In 2013, a

**INSPIRATION** Marie Menken and Willard Maas at home in Brooklyn, 1948.

50th-anniversary Broadway production won the Tony for Best Revival of a Play.

"After 'Virginia Woolf' opened, countless people emerged from academia claiming to be the models for George and Martha," wrote Albee's biographer, *New York Times* drama critic Mel Gussow. "Often when Albee would speak on a college campus, ... he would be approached by someone saying, you must have been writing about so-and-so and his wife. How did you know them so well? ...

"Albee has always rejected such

possibilities, except in one instance.

If anybody inspired George and Martha, [Albee] said, it was Willard Maas, a teacher and poet, and his wife, Marie Menken."

So, the Wagner rumor does, in fact, have substance: Willard Maas, a member of Wagner College's English department faculty from 1958 to 1963, and his wife, Marie Menken, were the real-life models for two of the most unforgettable — and disturbing — characters ever produced by the American theater.

How did this come to be?





**W**illard Maas was born in 1906 on an orange ranch in California's Central Valley. He finished high school and started college in San Jose, California, before heading east to New York City around 1934. Maas quickly established himself as a poet, although his two books were met with tepid critical reception.

Maas met and fell in love with Marie Menken, an abstract artist working as a secretary for the Guggenheim Foundation, around 1937. Shortly after the two were married, they faced a pair of traumas: Menken miscarried, and Maas discovered his bisexuality. Though Maas actively and openly engaged in affairs with men for years, he and Menken continued living together as man and wife, at once combative and devoted to one another, for the rest of their lives. In the end, they died within four days of one another.

In the 1940s, Maas and Menken shifted the focus of their creativity when a friend going off to war left them a pawn ticket for his movie camera. For much of that decade and the next, Maas and

Menken were two of the best-known figures in the avant-garde film world — and they were known by even more artists and intellectuals for their parties.

"Willard and Marie were the last of the great bohemians," Andy Warhol remembered. "They wrote and filmed and drank (their friends called them 'scholarly drunks') and were involved with all the modern poets. ... The Maases were warm and demonstrative and everybody loved to visit them."

A onetime roommate, filmmaker Kenneth Anger, recalled their frequent, very public fights.

"They would begin drinking on Friday and would continue to drink all weekend, and then on Monday morning, they'd both go back to work and be on time for their jobs. Each weekend was



**THE PLAYWRIGHT** Edward Albee at his Greenwich Village apartment, 1963.

like a lost weekend — well, a found weekend for them, because this was how they could be themselves," Anger recalled. "Watching their arguments was a little like watching Punch and Judy. If I had been able to film their fights, I would have had quite a film because they did the most extraordinary things. Sometimes when they were both quite drunk, they would get up on this parapet overlooking the skyline of lower Manhattan and the river. ... It was scary, but also entertaining"

Anger wasn't the only person captivated by Maas and Menken's homemade drama. Another frequent guest in their penthouse on Montague Street in Brooklyn was the young playwright Edward Albee.

"He used to come here every time to eat and just sit and sit and listen while Willard and I argued. Then he wrote *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*," Marie Menken recalled. "That's supposed to be me and Willard arguing about my miscarriage."

**WELL CONNECTED** Willard Maas (*third from right*) moderates a 1953 symposium, "Poetry and the Film," for Cinema 16, an avant-garde film society. Pictured with him are filmmaker Maya Deren, Amos Vogel of Cinema 16, film critic Parker Tyler, playwright Arthur Miller, and poet Dylan Thomas.





ALL FOUR ISSUES:  
1959, 1960, 1962, 1963-64,  
plus the 1963 supplement, X by X

EDITORS: Charles Berrpohl, Diana Berselli, Norman Black, Janet Furmark, Robert Harson, Daniel Hays, Charles Johannen, Paul Katz, Bert Koetter, Barbara Koriker, Jon Levy, Carol Magnusson, Gerard Malanga, David Martin, Mark McCloskey, Walter O'Connell, Carol Pearson, Gilbert Raposa, Louise Santoro, John Schneider, George Semsel, Alexandra Shepard, Lloyd Sherman, Donald Stewart, Alice Thorpe, Jerry Valley, Carole Walter, Don Weinstein, Linda Werley

FACULTY EDITOR: Willard Maas

# WAGNER LITERARY MAGAZINE



## WHEN 'NIMBUS' EMBRACED THE CREATIVE FERMENT OF NEW YORK CITY

Produced under the supervision of faculty advisor Willard Maas from 1959 through 1964, the *Wagner Literary Magazine* (otherwise known as *Nimbus*) was an extraordinary publication: a student-run magazine that featured some of the biggest names in the artistic and literary avant-garde of its day.

WE'VE COMPILED, IN A SINGLE VOLUME, FACSIMILES OF ALL FOUR ISSUES OF THE WLM, plus a 1963 supplement, *X by X*. The collection includes a thoroughly researched introduction. Paperback copies can be ordered from the Wagner College History online bookstore, at cost + shipping: [lulu.com/spotlight/wagnercollegehistory](http://lulu.com/spotlight/wagnercollegehistory)

### FROM "INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD ALBEE"

By Paul Zindel '58 M'59 and Loree Yerby, students in the New York City Writers Conference at Wagner College  
*Wagner Literary Magazine*, 1962

YERBY: We understand that you are writing a longer play ... called *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*? Can you tell us anything about it? ...

ALBEE: Well, I always give a very vague answer to that because I never know what a thing is about actually until long after I've finished it. The only thing I can tell you about the action is that it concerns the exorcism of a nonexistent child, and that most of the last part of the play is going to be in Latin.

ZINDEL AND YERBY: Oh!

ALBEE: I think it has something to do with ... the substitution of artificial for real values in this society of ours. It's sort of a grotesque-comedy.

**W**illard Maas joined the English faculty at Wagner College in 1958. In 1961, he began serving as faculty liaison to the New York City Writers Conference, a 10-day workshop that had been held on the Wagner campus each summer since 1956. Maas invited Albee to lead the conference's playwriting program.

One of Albee's students that summer was local high school chemistry teacher Paul Zindel '58 M'59, and he interviewed the playwright about his work, including his work in progress, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*? (see sidebar above). This interview led off the 1962 issue of the *Wagner Literary Magazine* — the same magazine that first published one of Zindel's plays, a one-act extract from his first off-Broadway drama, in 1960. (Zindel won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1971.)

Willard Maas had taken over the campus literary magazine shortly after joining the Wagner faculty. George Semsel '59, a Wagner transfer student from Concordia–New York, recalled how

it all began. Semsel had already known Marie Menken from a mutual religious affiliation before her husband appeared on Grymes Hill.

"When the faculty advisor of the college literary magazine, then called *Nimbus*, went on sabbatical, I was asked to approach Willard to see if he would do the job," Semsel recalls. "He said yes. One of the first things he did was change the name of the magazine to the *Wagner Literary Magazine*.

"At the time, the Beats were starting to show up, so he said we should do a whole issue on the Beat Generation. He said, 'The thing to do is have several articles together — one pro-Beat, one anti-Beat, and one in the middle — and send that to all the great contemporary literary figures,'" Semsel says. "Willard had floated around the New York literary scene enough that he knew a lot of people. He could write a personal note to accompany the so-called 'Beat Symposium,' and we would get their responses — and, no matter what they were, if the people were famous, we would publish them."

The "Beat Symposium," fueled by the responses submitted by Willard Maas's many literary acquaintances, kicked off the *Wagner Literary Magazine* in 1959. Contributors included such prominent figures as poet Marianne Moore, theologian Paul Tillich, critic Lionel Trilling, and novelist Norman Mailer, as well as the biggest Beat poets themselves — Gregory Corso, Allen Ginsberg, and Peter Orlovsky.

Terence Diggory, editor of the *Encyclopedia of the New York School Poets*, says that the *WLM* was representative of the New York poetry scene. "The people who had really made the first splash on that scene were the Beat poets — and, of course, the *Wagner Literary Magazine* starts out with a symposium on the Beats. ... I think [Willard Maas] brought a lot of notice to the magazine by starting out with the Beat writers, but then through his connections in the New York art world and literary world, he brought in the first-generation New York poets, especially Kenneth Koch, who had connections with students that he was teaching at the New



School, and that led to a connection with the New York scene.”

The first issue of the *Wagner Literary Magazine* was notable enough to be reviewed in *Newsweek* — and the magazine only got stronger after Maas began working with the Writers Conference, which became the subject of an extensive feature article written for *Time* magazine.

**A**gain and again, Maas was able to capitalize on his connections in the arts world in ways that benefited the college and its students. For instance, a Main Hall auditorium event Maas organized in early 1961 became one of the most talked-about episodes in recent New York literary history.

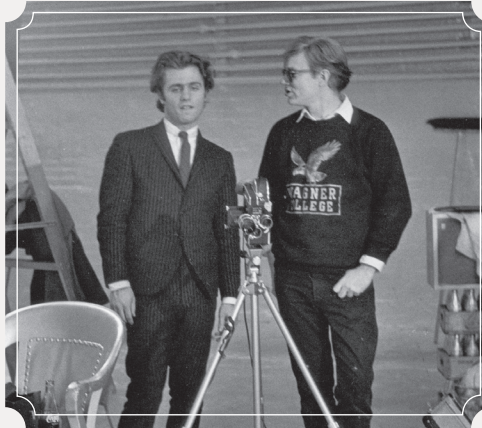
“One of [Maas’s] biggest coups was putting together this poetry reading for the College’s Winter Arts Festival,” recalls Gerard Malanga ’64. “He got Robert Lowell to read for a pittance and paired him with Frank O’Hara — amazing, as these were the polar opposites of the New York poetry scene at the time. Not only that, he included Robert Harson [’63] and me, Wagner undergraduates, to participate as well. This event was the jewel in the crown for Willard, and for me as well.”

Brad Gooch describes the evening in his biography of O’Hara: “It was a snowy night on the Staten Island ferry as O’Hara traveled in the wintry dark to the reading. He fought his discomfort by writing ‘Poem’ (‘Lana Turner has collapsed!’), inspired by a story in the tabloids that day about the actress’s collapse at a party. His reading of the occasional poem a few hours later was a predictable hit with his amused audience.”

Robert Lowell, however, was not so amused — in fact, he seems to have taken offense at O’Hara’s spontaneous approach to poetry.

“When Lowell began his set, he

prefaced his poems by apologizing somewhat disingenuously for not having written a poem on the spot,” Gooch writes. “His implication was that writing poems was not such a casual affair for him.”



**FILMMAKING** Through his relationship with Willard Maas, Gerard Malanga ’64 became an assistant to Andy Warhol.

**‘Willard and Marie were the last of the great bohemians,’ Andy Warhol remembered.**

Events like this, and many others, contributed to Maas’s reputation on campus — but it was his presence as a teacher that really inspired some of his students.

“My memories come from a single graduate class I took from Willard Maas in the summer of 1959,” recalls Jeff Safford ’56 M’60. “The course was British literature, focusing on poets like Gerard Manley Hopkins, the Jesuit priest, and Stephen Spender, the Marxist. I can still recite from

memory select lines from the poetry of both. Maas never revealed an affinity for either the Marxist or the religious emphases of Spender and Hopkins, but he convincingly conveyed his awe of their use of language. ... Willard Maas [was] unquestionably the most scholarly, erudite professor I’d ever encountered up to that point in my collegiate education.”

Bradley Sherman ’65 was particularly entranced by Maas’s classroom presence.

“He spoke in such a way and was of such a nature that I couldn’t imagine where he came from. Certainly not from this planet. Olympus? How he managed to show up at Wagner ... was a mystery,” Sherman says. “I opened my notebook to take notes in his class, listened intently to write down something he was saying, thinking it would be on a test — and when the class was over, the page would be empty. I asked my brother Lloyd [Sherman ’62] about it, years later. He said, ‘Willard never lectured. That was the whole deal. There were far more important things to talk about.’”

George Semsel, himself a university professor later in life, recalls more about Willard Maas’s classroom methodology.

“His classroom manner was casual, yet he always spoke with authority. Often enough, he not only presented the critical issues surrounding a writer but made personal observations and comments along the way — often, based in personal experiences with the person under question. His knowledge was extensive,” Semsel says. “I don’t recall him reading out of notes or outlines. Instead, he would come into the class — often from the Hawk’s Nest, where we had already started a casual conversation about literature — and ask, ‘What (or who) are we talking about today?’ Given a response (he did supply a syllabus), he would launch into his views, often with great joy or, although seldom, with a sharp criticism of the writer in question.”

This was the presence that led the editorial staff to dedicate the 1962 issue of *Kallista* to Willard Maas.





**POETS' SUMMIT** In 1961, well-known poets Robert Lowell (*left*) and Frank O'Hara (*center*) read their work at Wagner College, along with students Robert Harson '63 (*bearded*) and Gerard Malanga '64 (*right*), all brought together by Willard Maas.

But by the following summer, the fabric of Maas's Wagner experience had started unraveling. Perhaps it was a personality conflict with the new English Department chairman and College president — Maas had been vigorously supported by their predecessors. Perhaps it was the unchecked progression of his alcoholism, exacerbated by the bipolar disorder that went untreated until the last year of his life. Whatever the constellation of reasons, the 1963 Writers Conference marked the end of Willard Maas's sojourn on Grymes Hill.

Tony Towle, one of the New York City School poets enrolled in that year's conference, remembers a disquieting conversation he had with a visitor.

"At one of the evening events I asked a guy whether he was in the playwriting or fiction classes — because I knew he wasn't in poetry," Towle recalls, "and he said, 'I'm not at the conference, I go to the College; I'm just here to see what Professor Maas is going to do this time.'"

Maas's misbehavior at that conference made it impossible for President Arthur Davidson to resist the demands from several key administrators for the professor's ouster. Several rounds of correspondence passed back and forth across the Atlantic between Davidson and Maas, who was exhibiting his films in Europe that summer — but the inevitable outcome was the resignation Maas submitted that fall, while he was officially on leave to work on a new book.

For the next seven years, Maas continued teaching, with short placements at Seton Hall, Ricker College (Maine), and Drake College (Florida). He also continued making films, several of them in collaboration with his wife and their friend, Andy Warhol, with whom Gerry Malanga began working in 1963.

But, for Willard and Marie, each passing year seems to have been worse than the one before. Roger Jacoby, one of their friends, described their last months as a "long, drawn-out suicide."

Finally, in early January 1971, *Village*

## 'Virginia Woolf' Comes Home

Join us for a staged reading of the opening scene of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and a panel discussion about the play's connection to Willard Maas and Marie Menken.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 3 P.M.  
WAGNER COLLEGE STAGE ONE  
FREE AND OPEN  
TO THE PUBLIC

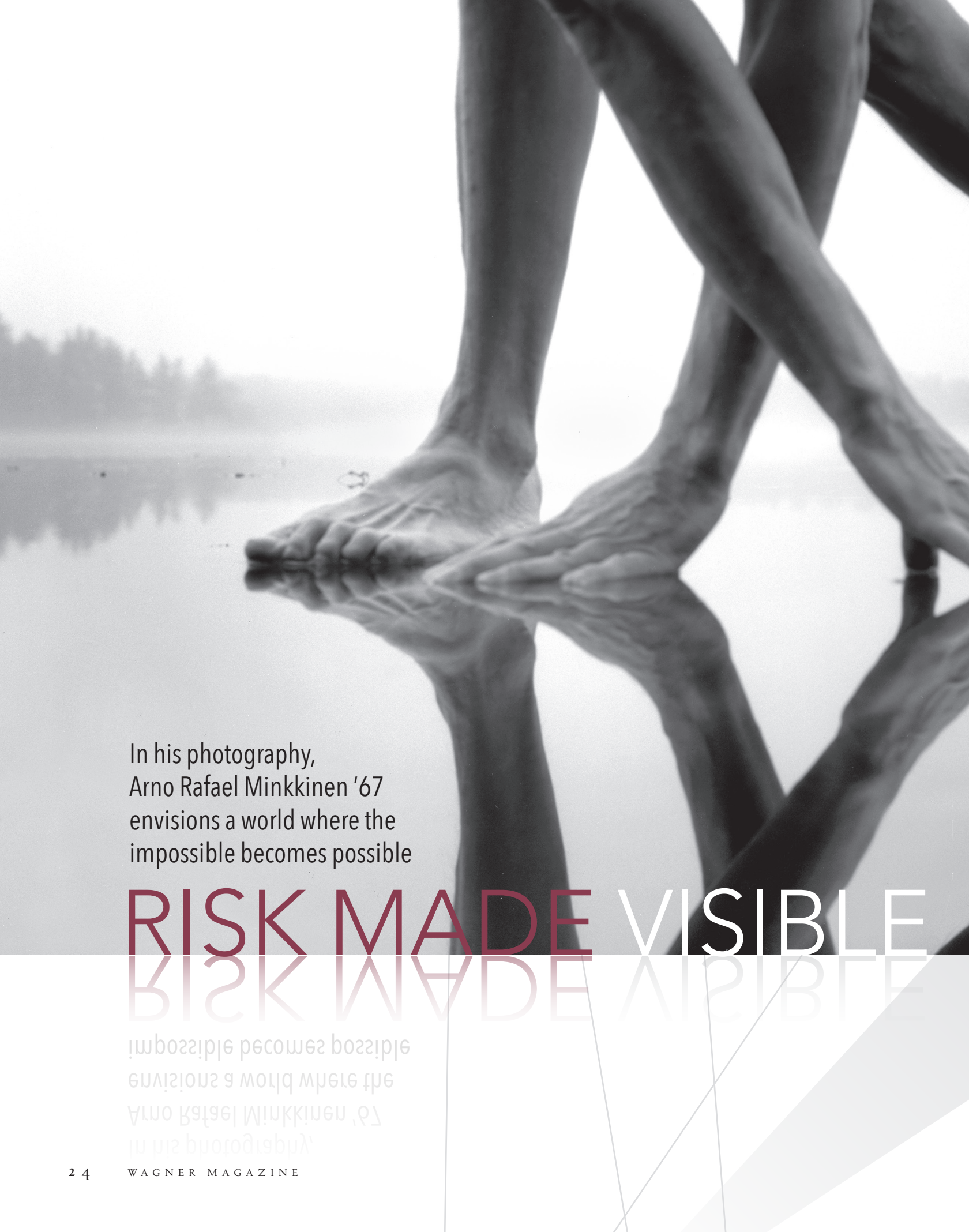
*Voice* film critic Jonas Mekas had the unhappy duty of writing an obituary for his old friends.

"A telephone message told me, Marie Menken died. She died on December 29. Two days later, an early morning, we stood in a small Brooklyn Heights church, a few friends, and we looked at a coffin, and Marie Menken lay in that coffin. There stood Willard Maas, and he was bent and beaten by grief, and few words were said. We knew how closely these two human beings have been together, both in the struggle of life and in their art. A few days later, another telephone message said: Willard Maas died on January 2. Gerard Malanga passed the message, late at night at Max's, and we didn't want to believe it yet, though we both admitted that when we stood there, that morning, in the church, we both had a feeling Marie and Willard were going out together."

And thus passed Wagner College's own George and Martha.

May they rest in peace. ■





In his photography,  
Arno Rafael Minkkinen '67  
envisions a world where the  
impossible becomes possible

# RISK MADE VISIBLE

impossible becomes possible  
envisions a world where the  
Arno Rafael Minkkinen '67  
in his photography





Self-portrait, Fosters Pond, 1989

Story by Laura Barlament

In 1988, Arno Minkkinen '67 was finally able to give up working as an advertising copywriter and creative director. He had won a tenured appointment as associate professor of art at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, securing financial stability for his family and a platform to practice his art, a journey he had begun 18 years earlier.

That year, Minkkinen and his wife, Sandra Hughes Minkkinen '68, also bought a house located on Fosters Pond in Andover, Massachusetts.

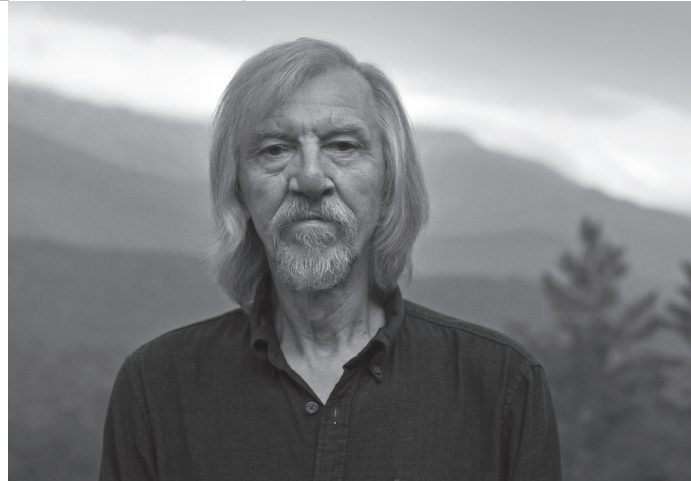
The house was old and run-down, but that didn't matter. Minkkinen not only had a secure position as an artist; he had a muse right out of his back door.

**A**t dawn on Fosters Pond, the sky glows pink and mists rise off the water like spirits. The water is still, and even the birds are hushed.

Only a couple of houses are visible from the dock at One White Oak Drive. A naked man can work alone and unobserved — just as he wishes. His purpose, after all, is not to perform or to scandalize. It is to reveal the timeless unity of man and nature, while letting the camera take the picture.

This is basic to Minkkinen's art: It is documentary. The images are surreal, giving the body magical powers. Yet, there is no post-production manipulation of the image. What you see in the image is what happened in front of the camera's viewfinder and was captured by the negative.

So, it is natural to wonder, how did he do it?



PHOTOGRAPH, RIGHT: ARNO RAFAEL MINKKINEN AT BLACK MOUNTAIN, NORTH CAROLINA, 2013 BY DONN LEVINE



Arno Minkkinen tells the story behind some of his photos, but not all of them. Not this one, one of his most beloved works, “Self-Portrait, Fosters Pond, 1989” (see pages 24–25), where two arms cross between two legs in an elegant symmetry mirrored in the water, on which the body seems to float.

He did almost give it away, in the 1995 documentary “Still Not There.” But, at the film’s preview, he overheard the nine-year-old daughter of his gallery owner whispering to her mother, “You know, when I was very little I used to think he was standing on a crocodile.”

Minkkinen asked the director to remove that scene, saying, “Don’t kill the crocodile!”

“The role of the artist is to renew our lives, but also, in turn, to listen internally to the song of the child within us all,” Minkkinen wrote in an essay about his friend, the filmmaker Kimmo Koskela. “Or, as I like to remind my students, how Brancusi puts it: ‘Unless we see with the eyes of a child, we will make no art.’”

**F**or more than 40 years, Minkkinen has single-mindedly pursued his own unique vision in photography. The journey has not always been easy, and rewards and recognition were slow in coming. Yet, he persisted; and today, many consider him one of the “rock stars” in the world of photography.

“Arno’s work is very individual,” says his New York gallerist, Barry Friedman. “His self-portraits are always nude and in black and white, which gives them a feeling of

timelessness uncomplicated by elaborate colors or visual sleights of hand.

“They are also timeless because there is no obvious school or trend that they attempt to be part of,” Friedman continues. “There are other photographers, like Cindy Sherman, who have turned the camera toward their own



Self-portrait, Fosters Pond, 2000

bodies, but Arno’s style from his first 40 years only shows allegiance to his own vision and not to a particular school. His work constitutes a groundbreaking contribution to contemporary photography.”

Published and exhibited worldwide, Minkkinen’s work can be found in museums from Boston and New York to

Paris and Helsinki. Seven monographs on his work have been published, and he has had more than 100 solo shows around the world. “Arno has had more individual museum exhibitions than most artists can dream of having in their lifetime,” notes Friedman.

The year 2013 has been especially gratifying. During the summer, Minkkinen had one of the major shows at Les Rencontres d’Arles, the prominent international photography festival in Provence, France. Then, at the 11th annual Lucie Awards for international photography, held at Carnegie Hall on October 27, Minkkinen received the prize for Achievement in Fine Arts.

But when it comes time to create new work, it’s still exactly the way he started — just his body, his camera, and his own unique way of seeing and being in the world. In the words of his good friend, the famous photographer Sally Mann, “Everything he does is radiant and clever — but not too clever — and filled with the impudent joy of creativity.”

**L**ast February, a selection from the 40 years of Arno Minkkinen’s photographic self-portraits were on view at Lincoln Center, in conjunction with the Film Society of Lincoln Center’s Dance on Camera festival. One evening, Minkkinen was giving a talk about his work before the screening of scenes from a movie he wrote and now has in development, with the working title *The Rain House*.

The gallery was filled with people



**A STAR OF THE SHOW** Arno Minkkinen '67 was a featured artist at the 2013 international photography festival in Arles, France.

admiring the images and trying to get a word in with the artist — a tall, slender man (that we know from the photographs), whose long, silver hair hangs below his collar and into his eyes, while a droopy mustache and long goatee obscure his mouth. With his square glasses, gray tweed jacket, jeans, cowboy boots, and bright blue polka-dotted bow tie, he looks like a combination of young hipster and senior professor.

Arno Minkkinen is gentle, friendly, and unfailingly gracious to all, despite the fact that he and at least three technical guys are trying, to no avail, to get his PowerPoint presentation to project properly so that he can start his talk. Finally, he decides to wing it. “Technical issues can sometimes happen,” he says philosophically. “You can say that the computer and projector didn’t wanna make friends.”

Then Minkkinen starts to tell his story: He began learning about photography in 1970, when he was hired to be a copywriter for a New York City ad agency that had an account with Minolta. By 1973, he had become a graduate student at the Rhode Island School of

Design, and he figured out the basic tenet of his work: “It’s possible to let the camera take the picture.”

He began putting himself, exposed and nude, in all kinds of places — some of them painful, or even life-threatening. That’s why, he says, he used his own body instead of a model; he could never ask another person to do things like “lean off a cliff or go under the snow for 15 minutes. But you can do it yourself!”

Working for Minolta, he came up with the headline, “What happens inside your mind can happen inside a camera,” and it became his personal motto as a photographer as well: Imagining the scene he wanted, he would set up the camera, pose his body in front of it, and operate the remote shutter release to take the picture.

He often worked early in the morning, before any other people were awake, he tells the Lincoln Center audience — as in the photo “Dead Horse Point, Utah, 1997,” where his legs soar over a canyon thousands of feet deep. To capture his image, he put the camera in a crate at the cliff’s edge and lay on top of it, holding the shutter release in his mouth. Or, as

he describes it: “Camera on milk crate, shutter release in mouth, lower legs until I think they are in the field of the camera’s vision, and then I bite.”

One audience member asks him about a photo in which a hand emerges from Foster’s Pond, holding a pen poised to write on the water’s placid surface. How did he manage to stay under so long that the water reached complete calm for the photograph? “There are some things I don’t tell you,” he replies.

**D**uring a conversation in the studio he designed at his Foster’s Pond home, he reveals that the picture was made for the cover of a book entitled *Writing on Water*, a collection of essays, fiction, and poetry published in 2001 by the MIT Press.

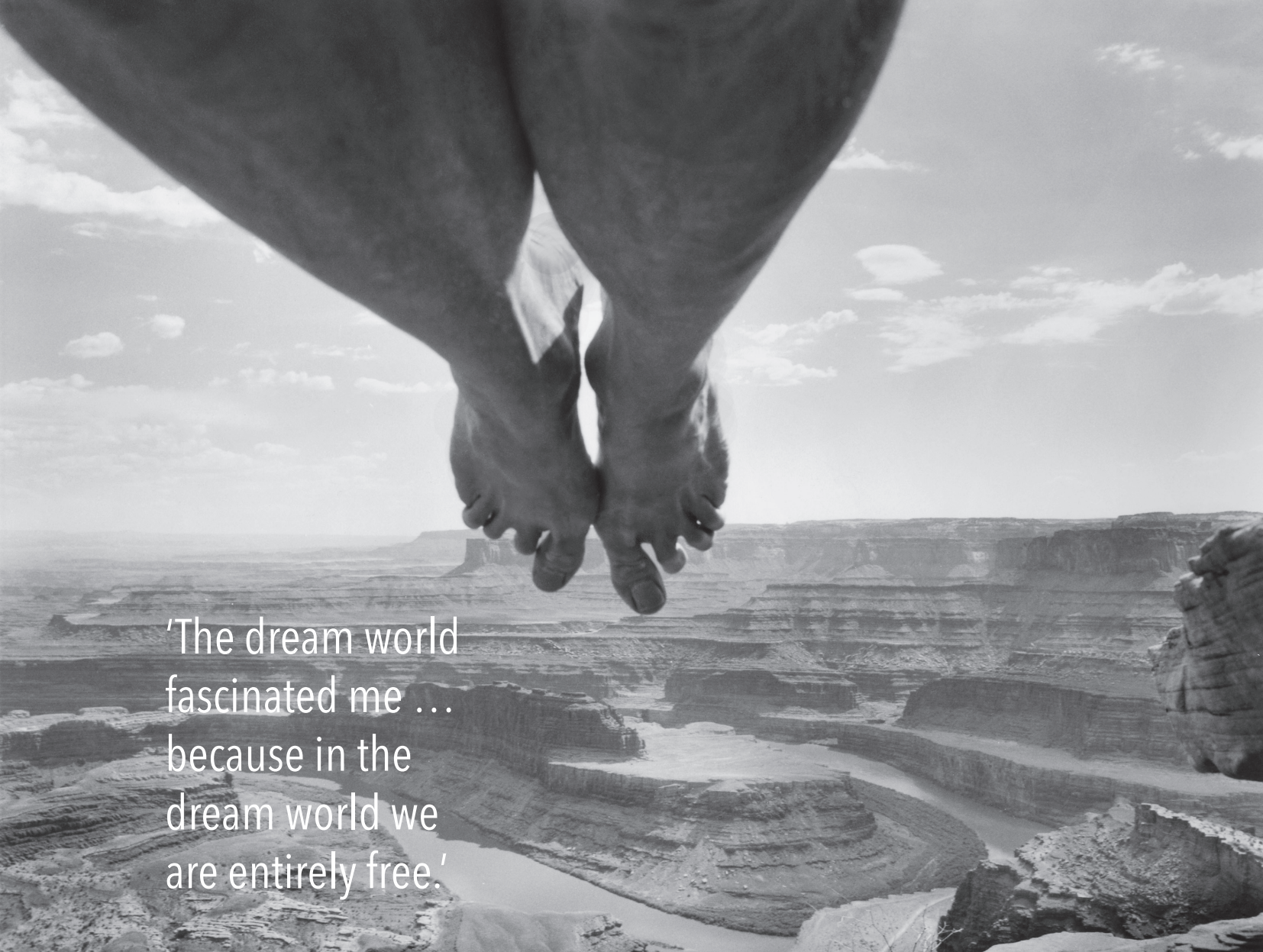
Sandra Minkkinen, his wife and fellow Wagner English major, was a production editor at the MIT Press for more than 20 years. Practical, tough, and well-organized, she guided more than 400 books — on topics ranging from Romanian architecture to surveillance technology — through the editing and production process during her career.

It’s not at all unusual to see Arno

‘Everything he does is filled with the impudent joy of creativity.’

Minkkinen’s art on and in books. Beneath a row of windows and another row of framed photographs in his studio, there are shelves crammed with books featuring his work: novels by authors like Charles





'The dream world fascinated me ... because in the dream world we are entirely free.'

Dead Horse Point, Utah, 1997

Bowden and Michel Houellebecq; photography books (in French, German, Italian, and Chinese as well as in English); books about the body, the self-portrait, light, the black-and-white image, and more.

In Minkkinen's life and work, there has always been a strong connection to storytelling, metaphor, and symbol. Perhaps part of what gives him such an original way of visualizing the world is his ability to see stories in the raw material of life — like a beautiful green stove in another lake house he and Sandra almost bought, but didn't when they found out the stove didn't come with the house; or a colorful woven rug that he accidentally

left at a Helsinki gallery, and in returning to retrieve it fell into the conversation that led to his first job after graduate school. That green stove, that woven rug are more than just objects in Minkkinen's telling: They become signposts and symbols in the journey of life.

**M**inkkinen's original artistic dream, in fact, was to be a writer. Having immigrated with his family to Brooklyn from his native Finland at age six, he dreamed of writing "the great Finnish-American novel."

But first, his father had other plans for him. The elder Minkkinen was a highly, though idiosyncratically, religious man,

born in Japan to Finnish missionary parents. He wanted his youngest son, who was born with a double cleft palate only partially repaired during his infancy, to become a missionary.

Attending public schools in Brooklyn, Minkkinen struggled, especially in English (not until age 10 did he learn to read), but he did have a talent for art and for math, which came easily to him. Art helped him in school — he kept his teachers happy making classroom dioramas and murals, and supplied his classmates with student government campaign posters — but math wasn't satisfying, he says. "I thought life was about the subjective, not about



factual theorems. There was no juice in mathematics.”

In the summer of 1963, he was a counselor at Boy Scout camp in Narrowsburg, New York, when he hitchhiked to a nearby town to see a movie — Federico Fellini’s *8 1/2*. From the surreal opening dream sequence to the wild mix of fantasy and reality that makes up the plot, it blew young Arno away. “I never saw anything like it in my life,” he recalls. “I knew I wanted literature and wanted to write. I wanted to answer that film.”

At Wagner, he started to find his way to that goal. As a sophomore, he started pursuing his own academic interests, and declared an English major, instead of the religion major to which his father had pushed him. “I just opened up to academic pursuits, and I loved it.”

His English professors’ teaching was unforgettable — especially Professor Thomas Kendris, in seminars on Joyce’s *Ulysses* and short-story writing. “Dr. Kendris brought dozens of characters from Joyce, Strindberg, and Yeats to life as if they were actually alive, real folks you got to know,” he says. To this day, a shelf of his extended home library — overflowing with all of Sandra’s books, plus books by Arno’s touchstone photographers, like Manuel Álvarez Bravo and Diane Arbus — contains his well-worn college copies of Yeats and Joyce.

It’s notable that throughout Minkkinen’s decades of self-portraiture, his face rarely appears — and when it is present, it’s blurred, partial, or otherwise obscured. In fact, his body is constantly disappearing into the landscape, or the architecture, or the other person in the picture.

And the most hidden element of the body is the mouth. That is part of Minkkinen’s story.

Take, for example, the photo “Sipilä,

1987.” Minkkinen wrote this comment about that rare image showing his face, but hiding his mouth: “The face is the door to the soul, the mouth especially. It is the source of our speech, our voiced emotions. In my childhood, the mouth had even more significance. It was my Achilles’ heel.”

In his own recounting, his mother’s first words on seeing him were a scream, “Take him away!” The gaping hole created by his cleft palate horrified her. During his infancy, the palate was corrected enough to allow him to function, but

not fully reconstructed. His mother was so stressed by the ordeal that she retreated for a time to a sanitarium to recover. Throughout his early life, Arno was acutely aware of his mother’s embarrassment at his “deformity.”

But just as he embraced his own artistic and intellectual interests at Wagner College, he began overcoming his feelings of personal inadequacy as well. “In my sophomore year,” he writes in an autobiographical essay, “I decided to conquer the lip trip and dated only the most gorgeous girls on campus, a different

Sipilä, 1987







**PARTNER** *Left*, Sandra Hughes Minkkinen with some of the 400 books she shepherded through the editing process at the MIT Press; *right*, Sandra and Arno studied abroad through Wagner College's Bregenz Program in Alpine Austria, 1967.

date every weekend.”

For his first attempt, he says, he determined to throw himself upon the mercies of one of the most popular girls at the College. “Would you do me a favor?” he asked. “Would you go on a date with me?” She agreed, and being with her started a revolution in his self-image. He started asking a different girl for the favor of a date every weekend, explaining that it was just for once. He even got a part-time job to support his new self-therapeutic habit. “The beauty and the beast, that’s who we were, that was our secret joke,” he recalls. “In the backseat of New York cabs, the most beautiful girls in the world kissed my scars away.”

The dating carousel stopped when he met Sandra Hughes. If her opinion is to be trusted, then Arno’s appearance was not as beastly as he perceived it to be. For her, he was a dream date — tall and blond and Nordic, her very image of attractiveness. They married in 1969, and worked to make their relationship as egalitarian as possible, she just as committed to her career as an editor as he was to his career as an artist. In fact, for her sake, in 1986 Arno turned down an offer to become a distinguished professor of art in Finland. The family — which by

then included their young son, Daniel — returned to the United States instead, and Arno went back into advertising work for several more years.

During his college years and later in his 20s, Minkkinen underwent further dental treatments and surgeries, attempting “to replace my crazy smile with something more normal.” But, the lingering pain of his mother’s reaction to his appearance continued to influence his work. A former

## ‘Beauty and pain are inseparable.’

student of Arno’s, Chehalis Hegner (now a colleague at the University of Massachusetts Lowell), sees pain at the heart of Minkkinen’s work. “His work for me is about — sure there’s the irony and surreal sense of three-dimensional space — but for me it was the subtle calling out to be seen, and a recognition of the body in pain. The

body can be a metaphor for what’s happening internally.”

“Beauty and pain are inseparable,” Minkkinen himself writes, “as are the polarities of living and dying that guide all of us eventually to that certain terror and grace at the end.”

**T**error and grace are also the polarities that impel Minkkinen’s photography. Or, as another one of his personal mantras says, “Art is risk made visible.”

In a work of art, he explains, “We need to see the risk that somebody is taking. We need to see where the conflict is that makes this work viable. Where are you willing to be fragile and show the insecurity of a chance, to do something that hasn’t been done before?”

Minkkinen’s art thrives in a space where the real and the imagined intersect — where documentary practice meets an imagination of unending fertility and a willingness to do whatever it takes to make the impossible come to life.

“The dream world fascinated me more than anything else, because in the dream world we are entirely free,” Minkkinen has written. “Things happen there that rarely happen in real life. You get to kiss



Wagner College, 2013

beautiful women, fall off mountain cliffs and live.”

During the past year, it seems as if the hard-fought courage to embrace the song of the child within himself has reached a new phase: Full views of his face are emerging from his dream world landscapes. “Life is an arc,” he says. “My latest work is the strongest.” Also opening new possibilities in his artistic practice is his recent embrace of a digital camera. Finally convinced that raw digital images are as reliably documentary as film negatives, he is also enjoying features that this new technology provides, such as a shutter timer that can be programmed to shoot several images in a row while he holds a difficult pose in front of the camera.

“The work is nothing less than exquisite, and inventive, and relentlessly questing down this vision that he has within himself,” says Virginia Morrison, executive director of the Society for Photographic Education, of which Minkkinen is a longtime member. “He doesn’t compromise ever on the craftsmanship. And he never stops working.”

And now, he is ready to show his face. ■



King of Fosters Pond, 2013





# WAGLITE

**MAKING HISTORY** On September 6, 2013, 2,634 fans witnessed the first-ever night game at Hameline Field. The Merrimack Warriors eked out a 42-41 victory over the Seahawks.

## *Hameline Field's illumination beams new energy into athletic programs* *By Cormac Gordon*

It was a landmark evening on campus.

Not just because of the startling dusk-pink skies, either, or the changing leaves and electric views across the Narrows.

On this night, Wagner would host Sacred Heart University in the first Northeast Conference soccer game played under the new lights that now tower over Hameline Field.

And nursing student Sydney McCarthy '15 was excited.

Like many fellow team members studying in the nursing and physician assistant programs, McCarthy's days are crammed with class work and off-campus clinical sessions.

Soccer practice is not priority No. 1.

"A lot of players used to miss [practices] because of their classes and clinical schedules," the scrappy midfielder was saying after the Seahawks defeated SHU 5-2 on the Friday evening in early October. "It affected the way we played. For us, this has changed everything."

McCarthy is a perfectionist by nature.

"She has that extra something," is longtime Wagner coach Mike Minielli's take on her. "Sydney's a very, very competitive kid."

That personality trait explains McCarthy's meticulous approach to preparation for the night game.

"The ball comes at you differently at night under the lights," she explains.

"You have to get used to the way it looks when it's in the air."

But once you get the feel?

"It's great," she declares.

In fact, the new lights have been an improvement in ways the junior had never imagined before they were there.

"Everything is so much easier for us now," she points out. "We can practice at night after classes. We don't have to worry all week about not being able to be there."

But improved team scheduling isn't the only benefit of the \$600,000 project.

"More of our friends around campus can come to the games now," she says. "And because we get to play on Friday nights, it's more convenient for our families to come to see us."



**Quote  
Unquote**

“I can’t be lazy. ... My mom worked three jobs so I could go to private school growing up. How do I wake up and say going to teach for two hours and coming here to coach is hard?”



*Bashir Mason M'13,*  
MEN'S BASKETBALL  
HEAD COACH,  
NEW YORK TIMES,  
OCTOBER 17, 2013. WHILE  
COACHING, MASON DID  
HIS STUDENT TEACHING  
AND EARNED HIS  
MASTER'S IN  
ELEMENTARY  
EDUCATION.

STADIUM 220  
LIGHTS 72  
BY 1500  
THE 108,000  
NUMBERS 90

individual donors  
gave to the project

light bulbs illuminate  
Hameline Field

watts per bulb

watts total

feet in height



Then there’s the bottom line: “We’re a much better team because we can have everyone together more,” says Minielli. “And it’s more fun for the students. Plus, there’s no question there’s more energy for night games, and soccer is sport that thrives on energy.”

Soccer, maybe not coincidentally, had one of its best seasons in years this fall, setting school records for most overall wins (11) as well as most non-conference (7) and most conference wins (4).

But it isn’t the only sport affected in such a positive way by the alumni gift that has been years in the making — the foundations for the lights were installed seven years ago. Football and lacrosse, as well, have gotten a real boost from the scheduling flexibility and the practice freedom of added field time.

Lacrosse often practices at 6:30 in the morning. “Sometimes, we’d have to wait for the sun to come up,” says coach

Matt Poskay.

Now Poskay simply hits a switch. “It’s brought a whole new dimension to campus life,” associate athletic director Peg Hefferan said while watching the win over Sacred Heart on the picture-perfect Friday evening.

That, according to involved alum Marc Lebovitz ’91, was the goal.

Lebovitz, a long snapper on the Division III national championship football team of 1987, helped with the fundraising effort for the lights.

He comes from the era when Wagner football was practiced on the old baseball field where Foundation Hall now stands.

There were no lights for evening games, and no turf football field that could be used for practices without fear of tearing up the grass. There was no real locker room, either; just some cramped space in the basement of tiny

Sutter Gym.

“It’s always been about the students,” says the College Board of Trustees member and president of Romark Logistics. “Just like the turf field and the new scoreboard, the idea was to accommodate the needs of the student-athletes.”

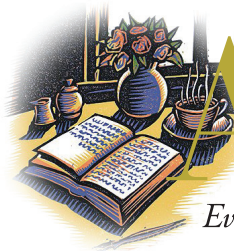
The light towers have also made life easier for Walt Hameline, and not just in his role of football coach.

“The biggest change is in the time allotments for the various activities,” says the College’s athletic director. “Now students aren’t rushed when they come to practice. They can get there early to work out, and stay late if they want to.”

For Wagner athletic team members, the new field availability has even caused something of a buzz on campus.

“All the kids have been talking about it,” says McCarthy, the soccer player. “Everyone loves it.” ■





# AlumniLink

*Events, opportunities, and celebrations for the Wagner family, both near and far*

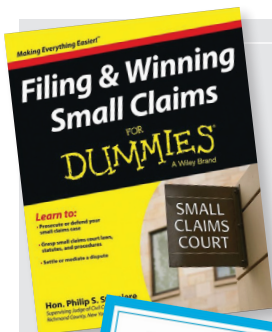


## Falling in Love with the First-Ever Homecoming Fall Festival

We tried something new for Homecoming this year, and by all accounts it was a success. Before the game, the Oval served as the picture-perfect backdrop for the Homecoming Fall Festival, drawing more than 600 alumni, students, faculty, staff, parents, and children for great music, games, food, and drink. The Sons of Origin, featuring Dorian Lake '02, Anthony Babino '09, Christopher Sabol '12 and Steven Babino '13, rocked the crowd while our guests feasted on some of

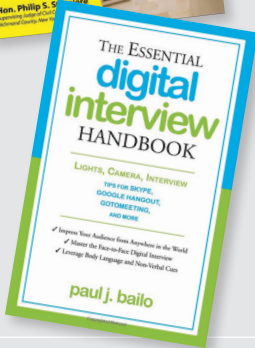
Staten Island's best eats, from Alfonso's Pastry Shoppe, Clove Road Bagels, Cucumber Sushi & Salad Bar, Jimmy Maxx, Joe & Pat's, John's Restaurant & Pizzeria, Lorenzo's, Marie's Gourmet, Moe's Southwest Grill, Muscle Maker Grill, Hungry Sombrero, and Lackmann Culinary Services, Wagner's own dining contractor. We'll be building on this new format for next year and making it even bigger and better — so stay tuned for announcements about Homecoming 2014!





## New & Noteworthy

**Philip Straniere '69** *Filing and Winning Small Claims for Dummies* (Wiley, 2013) Philip Straniere, the supervising judge in Staten Island Civil Court, has been called “the bard of the Staten Island courts,” known for his “entertaining judicial writing” (according to a 2011 profile in the *New York Times*). Now he has written a layman’s guidebook to success in small claims court. If you are in the midst of a minor conflict, or think you may be someday, check it out.



**Paul J. Bailo '90** *The Essential Digital Interview Handbook* (Career Press, 2013) “Like it or not, digital interviews are an increasing reality,” writes *Forbes* blogger Cheryl Conner. Paul Bailo’s book provides tips for how to handle these types of interactions successfully via Skype, Google Hangout, GoToMeeting, and more.

## FLASHBACK



### Wagner College Seahawk Marching Band, ca. 1969

This photo, which identifies the proud drum major as Craig Ferrari '71, came from a scrapbook dating to the years 1968–70, when the band was directed by James W. Hubert. The first marching band was formed at Wagner in the years immediately after World War II. Highlight performances included the halftime show of a Giants NFL game in 1970 and the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade in 1971. By 1976, however, the ensemble had ceased to exist – until this year, when it was revived under the direction of Jose Diaz. (See story, page 11.)

Do you have ideas for “Flashback”? Contact us at 718-390-3147 or [laura.barlament@wagner.edu](mailto:laura.barlament@wagner.edu).

## Upcoming Events

### Alumni Association

JUNE 13–15

#### Reunion Weekend

Celebrate a lifetime of memories! For alumni of all class years, with special recognition for class years ending in a 4 or a 9.

### Campus Events

MAY 22, 4 P.M.

#### Baccalaureate

MAY 23, 10 A.M.

#### Commencement

### Music

FEBRUARY 22, 12 P.M.

#### Black History Month Concert

Wagner College Choir at First Central Baptist Church, Staten Island

FEBRUARY 26, 8 P.M.

#### Choral Tribute to Black Music

Music Performance Center

MARCH 3, 8 P.M.

#### Concert Band Concert

Concert Band Concert  
Staten Island Technical High School

MARCH 9, 4 P.M.

#### Home Choral Concert

Home Choral Concert  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Staten Island

MARCH 13–21

#### College Choir Florida Tour

March 13, 7 p.m.,  
Hope Lutheran Church, The Villages

March 14, 7 p.m.,  
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bradenton

March 15, 7 p.m.,  
Faith Lutheran Church, Sarasota

March 16, 4 p.m.,  
Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church, Naples

March 17, 7 p.m.,  
St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church,  
Port St. Lucie

March 18, 7 p.m.,  
St. Andrew Episcopal Church, Fort Pierce

March 19, 7 p.m.,  
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Winter Park



## Who in the Wagner World Was... **Bradford G. Corbett?**



Better known as Brad Corbett '60, the Bronx native was impossible not to know, in circles from New York to Texas and beyond. He came to Wagner College in 1957, transferring after a semester at Siena. He majored in economics, but (by his own admission, in a 1979 commencement address) was remembered more as an Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity brother and intramural football and basketball nut than as an academic whiz. At Wagner, he met Gunnie Grunde '60, an education major and homecoming queen, and they married right after graduation.

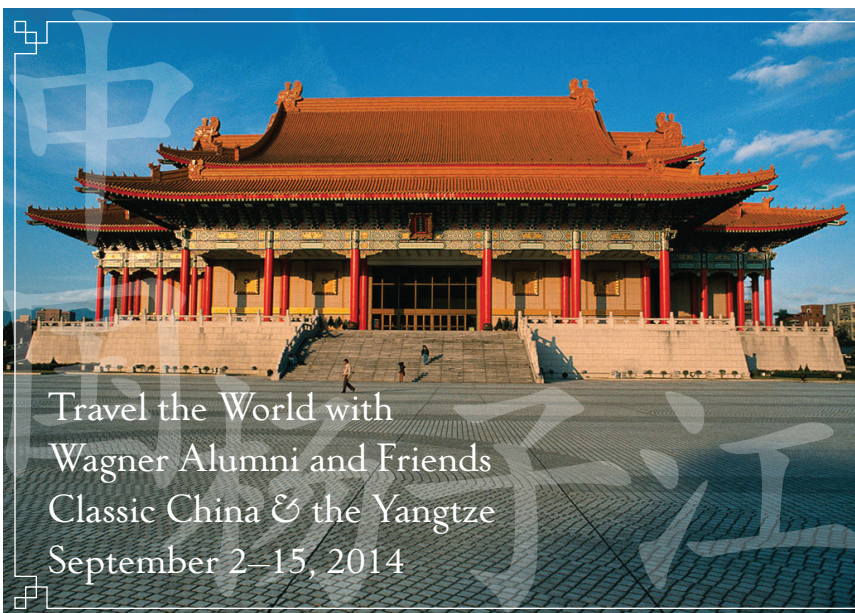
He served three years in the U.S. Marine Corps and then went to work for Allied Chemical Corporation. In 1967, he left Allied Chemical with a couple of his colleagues and started his own business of manufacturing PVC pipe in Fort Worth, Texas. Universal Pipe and Plastics Inc., which he launched with a \$300,000 Small Business Loan, quickly took off the ground. It merged with Robintech and became a \$50 million business in the early 1970s, claiming the title of the largest PVC pipe manufacturer in the world.

Then came Major League Baseball. With a group of investors, of which he was the principal, Corbett bought the Texas Rangers in 1974. He breathed new life into the franchise, packing the stadium but eventually also angering fans by his penchant for trading players and firing managers. However, over his six seasons of ownership, the team progressed from a losing record to four winning seasons, including two second-place finishes in the American League West. He was friends with George Steinbrenner, the legendary Yankees owner to whom he is often compared. After selling his share in the Rangers in 1980, he started another company, which became the world's largest supplier of pipe-sealing systems.

Corbett took great pride in Wagner College. He received the Alumni Achievement Award in 1972 and served on the Board of Trustees twice (1972–80, 1986–89).

He died on December 24, 2012, and his funeral was attended by friends from around the world. "He was a very creative, visionary kind of person, and good at fulfilling his ideas, and very hard-working," says Gunnie Corbett. "Like many entrepreneurs, his business was his life."

Contact Editor Laura Barlament at [laura.barlament@wagner.edu](mailto:laura.barlament@wagner.edu) or 718-390-3147 with suggestions for "Who in the Wagner World Was...?"



Comprehensive in scope yet briefer in duration than many China tours, this relaxed, well-paced journey combines monumental Beijing, a cruise on the fabled Yangtze River, fascinating Xian, and cosmopolitan Shanghai in a small group setting (limited to 24 travelers). Pricing starts at \$4,334 inclusive of air (from LAX or SFO), hotels, and most meals. This trip is hosted by the Wagner College Alumni Association, and operated by Odysseys Unlimited Inc.

Learn more at [wagner.edu/alumni](http://wagner.edu/alumni)

# Seahawk Happenings

## Wagnerians getting together across the world



*A Wagner Welcome:* Last summer, Wagner hosted get-togethers for new students and their families. Pictured here is **the Datta family** – incoming Wagner student **Adrienne '17** and her brother **Kenneth** with their parents, **Susan and Subrata**, and President Guarasci. This event was held at the home of **John and Michele Sciarra**, parents of **John Sciarra '06** and **Justin Sciarra '13**, in Newport Beach, California. **Diane Iafe Baldo '84** hosted another gathering in Colts Neck, New Jersey.



*On Tour:* Last March, the Wagner College Choir toured seven cities in Germany and Austria. Pictured here: Warming up at the Salzburg Cathedral under the direction of Roger Wesby, current students and choir alumni **Kathryn Arn '72**, **Lisa Bennett '85**, **Diane Mathisen '79**, **Victoria Ophthof-Cordaro '06**, **Lauren Patsos '07**, **Jacob Shoemith-Fox '09**, **Steven Taylor '11**, **Anthony Babino '09**, **Jonathan Caro '09**, and **Dorian Lake '02**.

*Alumni Connections:* Two groups met in July in far-flung parts of the country: **Rita King '62**, past president of the Wagner College Alumni Association, helped organize an alumni happy hour in Scottsdale, Arizona, bringing out 13 alumni and friends for drinks, food, and conversations; and the alumni of Delta Nu, in particular **Levent Bayrasli '90** and **A. J. Palumbo '08**, hosted the 13th annual Delta Nu alumni golf outing in Old Bridge, New Jersey, drawing 48 alumni and friends. On September 14, the Seahawks traveled to the Carrier Dome to face the Syracuse Orange. More than 115 alumni, parents, and Seahawk fans traveled from as far as Florida and California for a pre-game party.

**Be there next time we're in your neighborhood!** Stay informed about upcoming events by visiting [wagner.edu/alumni/events](http://wagner.edu/alumni/events)

# Upcoming Events

## Music

APRIL 8, 7 P.M.  
**Percussion Ensemble Concert**  
Music Performance Center

APRIL 27, 4 P.M.  
**Treble Concert Choir**  
Trinity Lutheran Church,  
Staten Island

APRIL 30, 8 P.M.  
**Guitar Ensemble Concert**  
Music Performance Center

MAY 1, 8 P.M.  
**Jazz Ensemble's Spring Concert**  
Music Performance Center

MAY 4, 4 P.M.  
**Durufié Requiem**  
College Choir at Trinity Lutheran  
Church, Staten Island

MAY 6, 8 P.M.  
**Vocal Jazz Set**  
Music Performance Center

MAY 10, 4 P.M.  
**Concert Band's Spring Concert**  
Main Hall Auditorium

## Theatre

FEBRUARY 26–MARCH 9  
**The Drowsy Chaperone**  
Main Stage

MARCH 4–9  
**My Soldiers**  
Stage One

APRIL 23–MAY 4  
**Carousel**  
Main Stage

APRIL 29–MAY 4  
**The Dance Project**  
Stage One

## For more information, registration, and tickets:

*Alumni Relations* 718-390-3224  
*Music Department* 718-390-3313  
*Theatre Box Office* 718-390-3259





# ClassNotes

Updates from old friends across the generations

## 1949

The Rev. **Harald Kuehne** wrote of the passing of his wife, **Britta Woodbury Kuehne '50**, on July 9, 2013. "We met at Wagner in 1948, Britta an English major, I a World War II vet. Married November 23, 1950." They had three sons (one of whom died in 1959) and four grandchildren. Harald is a retired pastor in Oceanside, N.Y.

## 1960

**Kenneth Hodgins** hosted his Kappa Sigma Alpha fraternity brother, **Tonnes Stave '58**, at his home in Puerto Rico last January. Kenneth lives in Cross River, N.Y., and is retired from the New York City Board of Education. He taught history and social studies at Stevenson High School.

## 1962

Dr. **Beverly Whipple**, along with many family members and colleagues, attended the inauguration of the Center for Sexology Research: Dra. Beverly Whipple at the University of Puebla, Mexico, in October 2013. The university named the center in honor of Beverly's many contributions to education and research on women's health and sexual physiology.

## 1966

Dr. **Robert Allwyn White** wrote in August that he recovered from a major heart event. Now retired, he lives in Asheville, N.C. Nevertheless, he continues to teach at a local college, and he is the co-owner of a stained glass business specializing in prairie glass and Frank Lloyd Wright designs. "At 70," he writes, "I wish all from Wagner a wonderful journey."

## 1968

**Kurt Landgraf '68 H'08** was profiled on NJ.com as he prepared to retire this winter after 13 years as CEO and

president of the Educational Testing Service. During his tenure, the article said, he turned ETS around from a "near-bankrupt nonprofit fumbling its mission to a \$1.6 billion global concern." ETS conducts 50 million tests in 180 countries annually. Kurt and his wife, Rita Landgraf, will live in Delaware, where she is secretary of the state's Department of Health and Social Services.

## 1969

**Ethel Lee-Miller** announces that her second book, *Seedlings, Stories of Relationships*, is coming out in February 2014. Her first book, *Thinking of Miller Place*, was published in 2007. Find out more at her website, [etheleemiller.com](http://etheleemiller.com).

## 1971

**Leland Jacob '71 M'79** is serving on the curriculum committee for lifelong learning at Molloy College in Rockville Centre, N.Y.

## 1973

**Will Yozaites** and his wife, Terry, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary in June 2013 and became grandparents to their lovely granddaughter, Madison Grace, in 2012. Madison was born to their daughter, Marissa, and her husband, Kevin.

## 1978

**Gary T. Lombardo '78 M'81** has retired after 27 years in the New York City Police Department, at the rank of sergeant special assignment. Along with his wife, Nedra, who is a New York City police sergeant, and daughter Sabrina, Gary has relocated to Holly Springs, N.C.

## 1980

**Claire Regan**, associate managing editor of the *Staten Island Advance*, won the first and third place awards

for spot news presentation from the New York State Associated Press Association in 2013. The awards were presented for two front pages Claire designed for the *Advance* in the week after Hurricane Sandy. Her first-place award is for the front page published on October 30, 2012. Her headline, "It feels like the end of the world," conveyed how she and many Islanders felt as the city shut down and the storm arrived. Her November 1, 2012, front page design won third place.

## 1982

**Randy De Meno**, chief technologist for CommVault, was recognized as a Top 25 Innovator by the tech industry website CRN, as part of its ranking of the Top 100 Executives of 2013. Randy helped CommVault come to market with the latest version of its

data management software platform, Simpiana 10, in March.

## 1983

**David J. Schnorbus** became special agent in charge of the U.S. State Department's Diplomatic Security Service's New York Field Office on September 30, 2013. In this role, he oversees all operations at one of Diplomatic Security's largest and most active domestic field offices. He previously served as executive director for the Overseas Security Advisory Council, a public/private-sector partnership created in 1985 to promote security cooperation between the U.S. Department of State and U.S. private-sector interests worldwide.



Ensign **Keri Muse '13**, one of the U.S. Navy's newest mental health nurses and a graduate of Wagner's Evelyn L. Spiro School of Nursing, poses with her roommate on the flight deck of the USNS *Comfort*, a Navy hospital ship.

## 1989

**Maria Giura** won an Honorable Mention in the Penelope Niven Creative Nonfiction Award competition, conducted by Salem College's Center for Women Writers. The award was given for a chapter from Maria's memoir-in-progress.

## 1990

**Patricia Amis**, a licensed social worker, has found a way to encourage domestic violence survivors, donate money to charities that assist victims, and run a for-profit business at the same time. She developed a logo, symbolic of empowering these survivors, which she applied to a line of sportswear for women called Snatched from the Fire Sportswear. Each item bears the logo, which reads, "SFTF Living Lives Beyond the Sidelines."

## 1993

Dr. **Christina Klein** and Dr. **Diane Klein** '99, sisters who share a dental practice in Staten Island, were recognized by the Oral Cancer Foundation with an award for their contributions to the early detection of the disease process and for maintaining the highest standards of dental practice. They have also received Congressional and Senatorial recognition for their dedication and commitment to the Staten Island community. **Pia Wilson** wrote her first sci-fi play, *Dominant Gene*, and it received a staged reading at Urban Stages last August.

## 1997

**Gail Kelley** and her partner, Nicole Anzuoni, are delighted to welcome their daughter, Charlotte Elise Kelley-Anzuoni, born on March 29, 2013. See *Crib Notes*, page 40, for a photo.

## 1999

**Joe Balsamo**, a former Seahawk football player, combined his interests in sports and technology to create a free fantasy football app, RotoPop ([www.rotopop.com](http://www.rotopop.com)). Unlike other fantasy games, RotoPop allows you to play single NFL games. Dubbing it a "must-have app" for football lovers, an online review says, "The premise is simple: pick a game, challenge a player, draft a team, then sit back, relax and enjoy the game." It was also reviewed in a technology news segment on the History Channel that aired in November. Dr. **Diane Klein** and Dr. **Christina Klein** '93, sisters who share a dental practice in Staten Island, were recognized by the Oral Cancer Foundation with an award for their contributions to the early detection of the disease process and for maintaining the highest standards of dental practice. They have also received Congressional and Senatorial recognition for their dedication and commitment to the Staten Island community.

## 2000

**Janet Anne Wolter Rumble** '00 M'02 and her husband, Morgan Rumble, welcomed their first child, Vivian Leigh, on July 14, 2013. See *Crib Notes*, page 40, for a photo. **Frank**

**Cafasso** '00 M'02 and **Kara McGann** '07 M'09 were married on March 2, 2013, at the Royal Manor in Garfield, N.J. See *Knot Notes*, page 41, for a photo.

## 2001

**Bret Shuford**'s success on the stage led him to a role alongside Leonardo DiCaprio and Matthew McConaughey in a major motion picture of 2013, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, directed by Martin Scorsese. During the past year or so, Bret has worked with some of the most successful actors in show business. In October 2012, Bret sang with Anne Hathaway, Harvey Fierstein, Linda Lavin, Audra McDonald, Raul Esparza, and others at the Joe's Pub fundraiser, *Perfectly Mahvelous*. Earlier in 2013, Bret shared the stage with John Waters, Mickey Dolenz, Beth Leavel, and others in the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra premiere of *Hairspray* in concert. Bret hosts a weekly musical variety show, *Nerdgasm*, at Ktchn restaurant in the Out Hotel on 42nd Street ([Nerdgasmshow.com](http://Nerdgasmshow.com)). He also has a successful YouTube channel and blog, and in November 2013 he premiered his solo show, *Charming: A Tale of an American Prince*, at the Duplex Cabaret. Bret lives with his spouse, actor and principal ballet dancer Stephen Hanna, in their home in the East Village.

## 2002

**Jerome Jaworski** and his wife, Meg, welcomed son Jack on March 28, 2013. The family lives in Oswego, N.Y., where Jerry works as a major gifts officer at SUNY Oswego. **Christopher Kline** '02 M'04 and

**Francie Kontominas Kline** '07 announce the birth of Alexandra Marie on July 4, 2013. **Katie McAvoy** and her husband, Peter Caras, welcomed their second daughter, Blake Marie Caras, on May 26, 2013. See *Crib Notes*, page 40, for photos.

## 2004

**Jennifer DeBruin DiBella** was named the associate education director at Roundabout Theatre Company in June 2013. Since joining Roundabout in 2005, she created the Student Production Workshop, a student-led theater company modeled after Roundabout's professional production process. Last summer, she co-chaired the national conference for the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, and she joined AATE's Board of Directors in July. **Erika Hellstrom** M'04, who is vice president of development and executive director of the Richmond University Medical Center Foundation, returned to the Wagner campus in November for a panel discussion of alumni non-profit professionals. **Renée Marino**, who played Mary Delgado in *Jersey Boys* on Broadway last summer, was cast in the same role in the big-screen adaptation, directed by Clint Eastwood and set to be released in summer 2014.

## 2006

**Dana Guariglia Baranello** '06 M'07 M'10 is the performing arts department coordinator for PS 30 in Staten Island. The school's unusual and thriving performing arts curriculum was featured in the *Staten Island Advance* on October 16, 2013. Wagner first-year students who are

### Keep in Touch!

**Email:** [alumni@wagner.edu](mailto:alumni@wagner.edu)

**Web:** [wagner.edu/alumni](http://wagner.edu/alumni)

**Mail:** Alumni Office, Reynolds House, Wagner College, One Campus Road, Staten Island, NY 10301

**Deadlines:** This issue reflects news received by November 20, 2013. The submission deadline for the Summer 2014 issue is June 1.

**Content:** Wagner welcomes your news and

updates, and we will happily share them with the Wagner family. We ask that you send us announcements of weddings, births, and graduations after the fact.

**Photos:** We accept photos of Wagner groups at weddings and other special events. With the photo, send the names and class years of all alumni pictured; birth date, parents' names, and class years with photos of children; and

dates and locations of all events.

**Photo Quality:** Digital and print photos must be clear and of good quality. Prints should be on glossy paper with no surface texture; they will be returned at your request (please attach your address to the photo). Digital photos must be jpegs of at least 250 pixels per inch; low-resolution photos converted to a higher resolution are not acceptable.



## Crib Notes



1



2



3



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5

**1. Janet Anne Wolter Rumble '00 M'02** and her husband, Morgan Rumble, welcomed their first child, Vivian Leigh Rumble, on July 14, 2013. **2. Christopher Kline '02 M'04** and **Francie Kontominas Kline '07** announce the birth of Alexandra Marie Kline on July 4, 2013. **3. Katie McAvoy '02** and her husband, Peter Caras, welcomed their second daughter, Blake Marie Caras, on May 26, 2013. **4. Gail Kelley '97** and her partner, Nicole Anzuoni, are delighted to welcome their daughter, Charlotte Elise Kelley-Anzuoni, born on March 29, 2013. **5. Rebecca Colucci Kelly '06** and her husband, Samson Kelly, announce the birth of Ryan Daniel Kelly on June 26, 2013.

**We'd love to see your baby's face.**

Please see page 39 for publication guidelines.

## 2006 cont.

taking public speaking with Professor David McDonald come to the school to teach the rudiments of theatrical performance. **Rebecca Colucci Kelly** and her husband, Samson Kelly, announce the birth of Ryan Daniel on June 26, 2013. Rebecca continues her work at Wagner's Office of Alumni Relations. See *Crib Notes, above, for a photo*. **Malual "Joseph" Thuc** and his wife, Martha Deng, came to campus in August to get a copy of his transcript and diploma notarized. They were planning to return to Africa to live and work. They have been living in Philadelphia with their three young daughters, while Malual earned his master's at Villanova.

## 2007

**Christopher Flanigan '07 M'11** ran the 2013 New York Marathon in 4:22:16. He works for Wagner's Center for Health and Wellness as a peer educator advisor and counselor. **Andrew Keating** has launched a small publishing company, Cobalt Press, based in Baltimore. They publish a literary review and books, and also sponsor writing prizes. Learn more at [www.cobaltreview.com](http://www.cobaltreview.com). **Francie Kontominas Kline** and **Christopher Kline '02 M'04** announce the birth of Alexandra Marie on July 4, 2013. See *Crib Notes, above, for a photo*. **Kara McGann '07 M'09** and **Frank Cafasso '00 M'02** were married on March 2, 2013, at the Royal Manor in Garfield, NJ. See *Knot Notes, page 41, for a photo*.

## 2008

**Ashley Foley** married Greg Avola on September 28, 2012, in New Haven, Conn. See *Knot Notes, page 41, for a photo*.

## 2009

**Ryan Rogers** gave a presentation on her doctoral research at Wagner in October 2013. "It Takes Guts: Intestinal Homeostasis Promotes Longevity in *Drosophila*" was the title of her talk. She is a Ph.D. student in biomedical science at the University of Connecticut Health Center.

## 2010

**Nicole Mahoney** started a Ph.D. program in American history at

the University of Maryland-College Park last fall. Previously, she spent a year in Paris studying French literature in a master's program with Columbia University.

## 2011

**Avery Miller**, who is an assistant account executive for media relations at the Partnership at Drugfree.org, returned to the Wagner campus in November for a panel discussion of alumni non-profit professionals.

## 2012

**Janine Serio**, who is a development coordinator at the Partnership at Drugfree.org, returned to the Wagner campus in November for a panel discussion of alumni non-profit

professionals. **Allison Smeck** taught English in France last year, and this year she is teaching second grade at Brooklyn Ascend Lower School, a charter school in Brownsville, where she named her classroom in honor of Wagner College.

## 2013

**Neal Fessler**, who did his senior internship at *The Late Show with David Letterman*, was hired by the show as a corporate staff assistant. As a graduation present, he was given the #2 spot in Letterman's May 22 Top 10 list, "Things I've learned as a 'Late Show' intern." Watch it on YouTube by searching "Late Show Intern Top 10." **Michael Lebovitz** M'13 launched a new business, Product Cyclor, a website that provides users the ability to organize documentation about all of the products they own. In a story about it in the *Westfield Patch*, Michael explained the system this way: "By organizing your products on our site, we are able to let you know what products will work with yours, when your products or warranties are due to expire, and what you would like next when your current product's life cycle

finally runs out. Basically, Product Cyclor allows you to organize the information you need to make smarter and better buying decisions." Check it out at [www.productcyclor.com](http://www.productcyclor.com). **Jamie Lynn Macchia** won the Miss Staten Island pageant — again. She was crowned Miss Staten Island 2012, and now she is serving in the same role again for 2014, the first person ever to win the contest twice. According to the *Staten Island Advance*, "Pageant winners often re-enter local pageants to get more than one try at the Miss New York crown and, ultimately, the Miss America title." **Patrick O'Connor** was named assistant defensive backs coach of the Wagner College football team for the 2013 season. **Carl-Olivier Primé** was drafted in October 2013 by the Canadian Football League's Hamilton Tiger-Cats in Hamilton, Ontario.



## OUR STRENGTH IS IN THE WAGNER FAMILY

Wagner is family – for students like Carolyn Savoia '17 (pictured with her parents, Joe and Catherine Flanagan '83 Savoia), and for every alumnus and alumna, every parent and friend: You are all part of the Wagner family.

Your gift to the 2013–14 Wagner Fund will help the family tree grow and flourish.

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### Knot Notes



**Ashley Foley** '08 married Greg Avola on September 28, 2012, in New Haven, Conn. **Jeff Greiner** '07 (third from left), **Elizabeth Mele** '07 (fourth from left), and **Courtney Donahue** '08 were part of the celebration.

**Kara McGann** '07 M'09 and **Frank Cafasso** '00 M'02 were married on March 2, 2013, at the Royal Manor in Garfield, N.J. This celebration was a real Wagner family affair – about 50 alumni and staff attended, and six members of the bridal party were alumni.



**Have a wedding photo with "Wagner family"?**  
Please see page 39 for publication guidelines.





# Scott Barnhardt '01

## *Being Part of a Broadway Megahit*

**CLAIM TO FAME:** Scott Barnhardt '01 performs in the ensemble, and serves as the assistant dance captain, for the megahit Broadway musical *The Book of Mormon*, which won the Tony for Best Musical and eight other categories in 2011.

**GETTING THE GIG:** In August 2010, Barnhardt was busy performing and choreographing for regional theaters, when he was called to audition for the final pre-Broadway workshop of *Mormon*. Rushing between rehearsals and auditions, he got the job. Why did he get the call? Years earlier, he had worked with the show's director/choreographer, Casey Nicholaw. Taking a taxi down Eighth Avenue one day, Nicholaw happened to glimpse Barnhardt in front of a Starbucks. "Casey said to himself, 'I have to remember to bring Scott in for the show.' And that's how I got the audition. Right place, right time."

**A MORMON PRIMER:** Asked to describe the show in one sentence, Barnhardt offers: "A pair of mismatched Mormon missionaries get sent on their mission to a small village in war-ravaged Uganda ... And there they learn the true meaning of faith, friendship, and 'Hada Diga Eebowai.'" Barnhardt's missionary has a sweet nickname: Elder Pop-Tarts.

**KEEPING IT FRESH:** Barnhardt knew the script was "amazing, shocking, brilliant, and absurdly funny" from his first read-through, and it has never stopped making him laugh. Plus, he says, he's surrounded by a cast "full of hysterical, insane and gloriously ridiculous people. I'd wager to bet that my dressing room (which we lovingly call '*Das Boot*' as it is a long, submarine-like room that fits five very funny Mormon boys) laughs more than any other dressing room on Broadway. My job rocks. That keeps me inspired."

**ON THE SERIOUS SIDE:** "This show isn't meant to be Mormon bashing, but rather

it uses the Mormon religion to make a bigger statement about the natural evolution of religion in general. What I love more than anything about the show is that it gets people talking about faith, how it works in their lives and what it does for them."

**THE WAY TO BROADWAY:** Growing up in Southern California, Barnhardt fell in love with performing at about age 4, when he saw tap dancing on TV and begged his parents for lessons. He attended the Orange County High School of the Arts and wanted to go to a theater conservatory, but was not accepted. But, he says, "Wagner ended up being the perfect training ground for me... a safe place for me to grow up, become a man, and really learn New York City."

**BIG PICTURE:** At Wagner, he indulged his inner "academic nerd," taking courses ranging from religion to sociology to business to ceramics. "My favorite class to date is still Dr. Kaelber's Death and Beyond religion course, studying the rituals and afterlife beliefs of cultures and religions around the world. And I think all of the academic variety really informed my theater studies."

**BUDDING DIRECTOR:** In 2009, he stepped in to direct The Who's *Tommy* for Wagner College Theatre after the sudden death of Professor Christopher Catts. "That experience has led me to actively pursue more directing work. I don't know if that sort of opportunity would have been presented to me had I gone to NYU or Carnegie, but I am so grateful that Wagner College has given me as much as it has."

**FAVORITE MORMON LINE:** "The one line that always makes me giggle is a *Sound of Music* reference in Elder Price's big power ballad, *I Believe*. 'A Warlord who shoots people in the face What's so scary about that?' Brilliant."

# In Memoriam

*Celebrating lives that enriched the Wagner family*

## Donald M. Fox '64

Donald M. Fox '64, a Wagner trustee and ardent supporter, died on July 13, 2013. A member of the Seahawk soccer team and vice president of the Student Government Association, Fox earned his bachelor's in history from Wagner College in 1964 and an MBA at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business in 1966. With his associates Robert Henderson and Alan Shepard, he started the H. S. Fox Corporation in Dallas in 1985, growing it into the largest reinsurance brokerage of its kind in Texas. He sold the firm to the Marsh and McLennan Companies in 1995.

Fox's many contributions to Wagner College included serving twice on the Board of Trustees, 1985–94 and 2004–13. During the recent recession, he challenged his fellow board members to give students extra financial support. As a result, 10 Fox Scholars received \$5,000 scholarships for three years. Fox was also deeply committed to supporting service-research projects. Between 2007 and 2009, the Fox Family Fund for the Advancement of Civic Engagement Scholarship provided nearly \$100,000 for projects involving a dozen faculty members and hundreds of students that benefited thousands of people in Staten Island, Bangladesh, Peru, and Kenya. "I consider my giving to be my way of paying an IOU the College gave me when I graduated," Fox said, "and I hope that it will be a boost to the faculty."



# In Memoriam

*Celebrating lives that enriched the Wagner family*

## Alumni

Dr. Sidney S. Leeds '40  
Mrs. Virginia Bock Oliver '40  
Mrs. Faith D. Vigurs Grannis '43  
Miss Evelyn R. Grannis '45  
Dr. Alphonse J. Iannacone '48  
Mr. Jay Spadaro '48  
Mr. Harold M. George '49  
Mr. Donald Drown '50  
Mrs. Britta Woodbury Kuehne '50  
Mr. Richard F. McAlister '50  
Mr. Max J. Moretti '50  
Mr. John J. Ford '51  
Mr. Vincent Lombardi '51 M'55  
Mrs. Dorothy Kratzenstein Norris '51  
Dr. I. Gene Schwarz '51 M'53  
Mrs. Emma V. Gustavson de Bastos '52  
Mr. Harry L. Kummer '52  
Mr. Robert B. Fath '53

Mrs. Elizabeth Huf  
Hibbeler-Anderson '53  
Mr. Louis Matura '54  
Mr. Thomas J. Coffey '56 M'64  
Mr. John L. Koushouris '56  
Mr. John A. "Johnny K" Knudson '57  
Dr. Charles W. Needham '57  
Mr. Richard J. Ryan '57  
Mr. Edmund F. Schubert '58  
Mr. Joseph P. Sellitto '58  
Mr. Kenneth E. Goehl '59  
Mr. Richard D. Piccini '59  
Mrs. Judith Ann Madsen Rank '60  
Mrs. Barbara E. Himan Knabe '62  
Mr. Eugene R. Lasinski '62 M'75  
Mr. Frank A. Melos '62  
Dr. Wayne W. Mouritzen M'62  
Mrs. Cyrene Shirley Brown Davis M'63  
Mr. Donald M. Fox '64  
Miss Julia E. Osswald '64  
Mr. Alfred Wickstrom '64

Ms. Louise Pickersgill '66  
Mrs. Barbara Anderson Ebeling '70  
Mr. Brian Ruderman '70  
Mrs. Anita Budke Tietjen '70  
Mr. Ronald P. Vignec '70  
Mrs. Lorraine Wiest Dugan '71  
Miss Sandra Johnson '72  
Mrs. Doris A. U'Sellis Rendt '73 M'73  
Mrs. Virginia Gibson Crouch '76  
Miss Robin Gumbs '77  
Mr. John G. Yates '78  
Mr. Richard R. Baylor '80  
Mr. Joseph R. Fischetti '84  
Mr. Matthew A. Morales M'85  
Mr. David W. Ross '95 M'05  
Mr. Adam T. James '06  
Ms. Kristen Senatore '10  
Dr. Muriel Siebert H'10  
Mr. Kelsey Justin Stevens '14

## Faculty, Staff, and Friends

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Mrs. Gwendoline Frevola  
Mr. Jack Hynes  
Mrs. Lilli A. Landstrom  
Mrs. Gaetana C. Lambiasi  
Mr. Robert H. Manske  
Dr. Arnold Rosner  
Mr. Robert Schlitt  
Ms. Carol A. Zawadzki

## FACULTY REMEMBRANCES

### Professor Emeritus Glenn C. Leach

Glenn C. Leach, professor emeritus of education, died in December 2012 in Manasquan, New Jersey. At Wagner College from 1964 to 1993, he served as professor and chair of the Department of Education and also as director of graduate studies. A lifelong educator, he taught in various New Jersey public schools and was the varsity basketball and soccer coach at Rider College, before earning his master's and doctoral degrees from New York University. He was a leader in several organizations promoting health and physical education, and developed many films and programs in this area. He is remembered for his quick wit, his warm rapport with students and faculty, and his love for children. He was closely involved with the Wagner College Early Childhood Center, even playing Santa Claus for the kids. He is survived by his wife, Vita, three daughters, eight grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.



### Adjunct Professor of Music Arnold Rosner

Arnold Rosner, who taught piano and composition at Wagner from the early 1970s until about 1980, died on his 68th birthday, November 8, 2013, in Brooklyn. According to musicologist Walter Simmons, "Rosner was one of the true maverick composers of his generation." He composed more than 100 works, including eight symphonies (two of which are available on Naxos recordings), three operas, choral and chamber pieces. A close friend of the late Ron Cross, he dedicated his Consort Music for 5 Viols, op. 75, to the longtime Wagner music professor. Many of Rosner's pieces were performed and even premiered on campus by Wagner students and faculty. He received a doctorate in music from the University at Buffalo, and he also taught for several decades at Kingsborough Community College.



### Coach John 'Johnny K' Knudson '57

John A. "Johnny K" Knudson '57 died on January 3, 2014. He retired from Wagner College in 1989 after a 32-year career as head athletic trainer, head coach, professor of physical education, and assistant athletic director. Known for his lifelong friendships with Wagner students and alumni, he was also the driving force behind Wagner's Athletics Hall of Fame. A U.S. Coast Guard veteran, he taught water safety and water sports programs as a Red Cross volunteer. He also traveled the world as athletic trainer for the NIT All-Star teams.



# The Woodwork Angel

*Kindness changes everything* By Amanda Pierce Bruscella '76

It was early in 1976. I was a student who had married before graduating from college, and even though my senior year tuition had been paid by my parents, my husband and I still needed to maintain a home and cover expenses, which included commuting from New Jersey into New York for work and school. Unfortunately, upon returning from our honeymoon, we discovered that Dan had been furloughed from his job with New York City in the fiscal crisis of 1975. Dan was unable to find work, since potential employers knew that he would return to his city job once the furlough ended. I was struggling, too, as I was working and attending my senior year of college classes full time. And then one day, I developed a toothache.

I had suffered for a number of days when one of my professors, Eva Lazar (of the music department), saw my distress and asked what was wrong. Tears in my eyes, I told her that I needed dental care and could not afford it. She asked me if I planned to continue working after I graduated. My answer was yes. She told me she would loan me the money to pay for my care, and I was to pay her back after I graduated and had been able to secure a better job in my chosen field. I gratefully accepted her offer, and I kept my word to this generous woman.

Many years later, I read a story, entitled “Woodwork Angel,” which mirrored the events of my own life. It tells of another struggling college student who comes down with a bad toothache. In this case, it’s a local dentist who helps the student, providing extensive dental care on credit till the student graduates and gets a job. I did not understand the title for the story until it was explained to me by the author. A “Woodwork Angel” refers to someone who is part of the circle of people we interact with, but whose importance is not perceived. Like the woodwork in a home, we see it every day. It may be beautiful, but we never fully notice it. But, when something disastrous happens, these angels enter our lives and their generosity of spirit and kindness of heart change the way we see the world and the people in it.

Yes, I paid my angel back — but even more than that, I determined that I would try to make a difference in the life of another lost and struggling someone, if ever the opportunity presented itself. And true to the promise I made to myself all those years ago, I had the opportunity to help a young person get on her feet after she found herself being abused at home.

In the Gospel of John, Chapter 13, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. It’s my conviction that, just as Jesus showed kindness of heart and generosity of spirit as he lowered himself down to the floor to wash 12 pairs of dirty feet, so we also must render acts of kindness and service on behalf of others. Like a snowball rolling down a hill, you may never know the magnitude of what you start by paying your own blessings forward — but it might just be enough to change the world for someone else.

“When something disastrous happens, these angels enter our lives and change the way we see the world.”

*Amanda “Mandy” Pierce Bruscella '76 retired after 30 years of nursing and moved to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in 2000. She is a nondenominational minister and a faith-based blogger at <http://mandypath.wordpress.com>.*





## WAGNER COLLEGE



### Storm Surge

Professor of Art Bill Murphy captured these images of vessels wrecked on Staten Island by Hurricane Sandy. *Above*: photograph of Great Kills beach; *below*: an etching, "The Grounding of the *John B. Caddell*." This tanker driven ashore in Stapleton became "an iconic image of the hurricane's magnitude," Murphy says. Read more about hurricane recovery, page 8.

