

# The Oaks News

A monthly bulletin from Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection



## Now on View



### In the Museum:

#### Still Life and Landscape

Gudrun Bühl

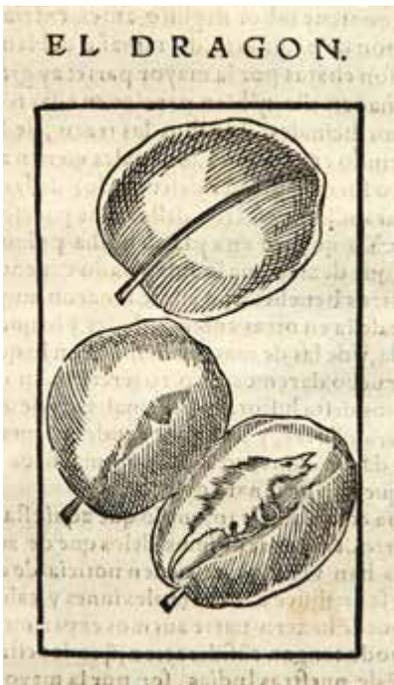
This exhibition of paintings and furniture juxtaposes two distinct yet related artistic genres. In a still life, the artist depicts the world up-close and often in detail; in a landscape, the world is viewed from afar. Despite these differences, the two art forms share common ground—they both represent the world around us. The artworks in *Still Life & Landscape*, all from the Dumbarton Oaks historic House Collection, range in date from the early sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Artists in the exhibition include Claude Lorrain, Jan van Huysum, David Roentgen, Odilon Redon, and Pierre-Auguste

Renoir. *Still Life & Landscape* is featured in the Special Exhibition Hallway, and will be up through August 12, 2012.

## In the Library:

### *Mirabilia*: Remarkable Plants from the Dumbarton Oaks Rare Book Collection

Sarah Burke



#### Featured item

Dragon Fruit

[\*Primera y segunda y tercera partes de la historia medicinal...\*](#)

Nicolas Monardes

1574

In his botanical study of the New World, Nicolas Monardes—a Spanish physician based in Seville—documents some of the extraordinary specimens being brought to Europe by explorers and travelers. In this woodcut, an open seedpod reveals a small dragon. Before exploration of the New World, there was already a European market for “dragon’s blood” derived from Asian plants such as *Pterocarpus draco*. Perhaps Monardes’ “El Dragon” is an imaginative depiction of a New World plant that produced a red juice or resin. Or is this dragon hinting at something more?

Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, in *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (2006), explains the long-held belief that dragons inhabited the New World. Johann Faber (1574-1629), a member of the Accademia dei Lincei, wrote about New World dragons, and explorers reported sightings in Africa and America. Juan Bustamante de la Cámara wrote (in *De reptilibus vere animantibus sacrae scripturae*, 1595) of a New World plant that grew from the bodies of dead dragons and bore dragons as its fruit. Was he inspired by this 1574 image, or do both Cámara and Monardes document the same belief in dragons? Monardes describes the plant as follows: “We opened a leaf where the seed was, and the leaf being opened, there appeared a Dragon made with so much Art, that it seemed as though it had been alive, having a neck long, the mouth opened, the bristles standing up like thorns, the tail long, and standing upon his feet, that surely there is no man that shall see him that will not marvel to behold the figure, made with so much Art, that it seemed to be framed of Ivory, and that no craftsman were so perfect that could make it better.”

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## Coming Soon



Cao|Perrot  
Studios,  
*Cloud  
Terrace*

Michael Lee

In one of the most secluded corners of the Dumbarton Oaks gardens, work is underway on the new installation *Cloud Terrace*, designed by landscape artists Andy Cao and Xavier Perrot of Cao|Perrot Studios (Los Angeles and Paris). This commissioned piece is the third in a series of installations, inaugurated by the Director of the Garden and Landscape Studies Program, John Beardsley, in 2009. The installations showcase the work of contemporary artists within the historic Dumbarton Oaks gardens. Located on the Arbor Terrace, Cao|Perrot's design employs billowing masses of wire mesh that are suspended from cables attached to steel support columns and appear to float in midair. The mesh "cloud" is embellished with 10,000 Swarovski crystals and hovers over an elliptical pool, whose surface reflects the suspended assemblage and is framed by a bed of recycled green glass pebbles. The teardrop-shaped crystals are strung individually and attached by hand. *Cloud Terrace* builds upon ideas that Cao and Perrot have explored in previous installations, such as the 2011 *Bai Yun (White Cloud)* in Sonoma, California, to create a hybrid environment that synthesizes traditional categories of art and landscape and explores the aesthetic potential of everyday materials. Cao and Perrot are assisted by architect J. P. Paull (Bodega Architecture, Portland, Oregon) and our very own Walter Howell; a dedicated team of volunteers rounds out the construction and assembly crew.

Cao is a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome (2001-2002) and a Loeb Fellow of the Harvard Graduate School of Design (2010-2011).

Cao and Perrot will deliver a public lecture in the Music Room on April 5, 2012 at 5:30pm, followed by a reception and viewing of the installation.

Image: The installation of *Cloud Terrace* by Andy Cao and Xavier Perrot in progress on the Arbor Terrace. Photo by Francisco López.

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## Special Event

### Joint Reception with I Tatti



To commemorate the first anniversary of the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library and the tenth anniversary of the I Tatti Renaissance Library, Dumbarton Oaks hosted a joint reception with Villa I Tatti on Thursday March 22, 2012. Founded by Bernard Berenson, Villa I Tatti is the Harvard Center for Italian Renaissance Studies located near Florence, Italy. This joint event marks the beginning of closer collaboration between the two sister institutions. The reception was held in the Museum and on the Music Room Terrace; there were two hundred guests, including current and former fellows and staff of the two institutions, many of whom were in DC for the meeting of the Renaissance Society of America. Guests browsed a full display of the two book series, and enjoyed informal tours of Dumbarton Oaks' Renaissance space, the Music Room, led by Curator of the House Collection James Carder. Midway through the evening, Director of Dumbarton Oaks Jan Ziolkowski and Director of Villa I Tatti Lino Pertile addressed the gathering. After poking fun at each other, both men expressed their sincere and common desire to build a future in which the two institutions can exchange knowledge and ideas on a regular basis.

Image: From left: Director of Dumbarton Oaks Jan Ziolkowski, Director of I Tatti Lino Pertile, and Visiting Scholar Allen Grieco.

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## Scholarly Events

### Byzantine Colloquium, “The Social Network in Byzantium”

Susannah Italiano

On March 16-17, a colloquium on the Social Network in Byzantium, the third of a series on notions of the self and social relations in Byzantium, was held at Dumbarton Oaks. The colloquiarchs were Adam Schor (University of South Carolina) and Margaret Mullett, Director of Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks. The colloquium began with a private session for speakers in which political scientist Hans Noel (Georgetown University) described recent developments in Social Network Analysis and discussed with Alex Riehle (University of Vienna) the pros and cons of applying his techniques to Byzantine problems. The papers that followed spanned the period from Rome to the Renaissance and Merovingian Gaul to the Arabian Peninsula, and interpreted networks in very different ways. Shawn Graham used computational techniques and a corpus of brickstamps to look at power and influence in the hinterland of Rome and Constantinople in Late Antiquity. Adam Schor used network analysis to look at the parties around Cyprian in the third century and the ways in which these were viewed by contemporaries. Giovanni Ruffini presented the first study of a new prosopography of the village of Aphrodito in Byzantine Egypt. Catherine Hezser used the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds to provide evidence of connections between some Palestinian and Babylonian rabbinic scholars between the third and fifth centuries CE. Helmut Reimitz investigated the role and interactions of Merovingian elites within Gregory of Tours's alternative conceptions of community in his *Histories*. Michael Bonner explained pre-Islamic trade routes in terms of the networks of Arabian tribes. Margaret Mullett explored the potential of network analysis of the networks of bishops, scholars, monks, and saints. Niels Gaul described the mechanics of career building and marriage networks in the early fourteenth century, and Paul McLean investigated the embeddedness of this Renaissance commercial economy in the political and social ties which connected elite individuals and families. The variety of the societies studied was matched by a vast range of commitment to computational methods, and indeed to network analysis, from the highly committed and competent to the skeptical. The audience included graduate students working on

epistolary collections, as well as fellows and staff of Dumbarton Oaks.



## Pre-Columbian Studies Tertulia

### Ruth Anne Philips, "Inca Stone in the Round: 'Boulder Shrines,' Caves, and Waterworks"

Mary Pye

The Pre-Columbian Studies tertulia of March 8 was offered by Ruth Anne Phillips, an art historian and Visiting Assistant Professor at St. Mary's College in Maryland. Her presentation, "Inca Stone in the Round: 'Boulder Shrines', Caves, and Waterworks" outlined the first stage of her project focusing on the juxtaposition of walled boulder, cave, and waterwork elements found at Inca sites such as Machu Picchu and others in the adjacent Sacred Valley of Peru.

"Boulder shrines" consist of large, natural-looking rocks surrounded by fine, often curved and fenestrated Inca walls; these boulders are often subtly carved. Phillips originally focused on the site of Chachabamba, which has impressive open-air water channels and fountains, as well as a possible small cave or opening beneath the walled boulder, but she is now exploring the patterning of these three features at other key Inca sites. We were pleased to welcome over thirty local scholars, docents, and fellows, with many Andean specialists in attendance.

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## On Loan

### Library's Sculpture Loan to Penn Museum Exhibition *MAYA 2012: Lords of Time*

Sheila Klos



Upon entering the library's reading room, scholars are normally greeted by Copan Stela A, a faithful reproduction cast in resin in 2005 from the Peabody Museum's plaster cast of the actual sculpture. Many who enter the room assume it is carved in stone, and so did one of the art handlers who arrived on March 19 to crate and truck the stela for loan to the Penn Museum. "We're going to need more than five guys . . ." Five professionals were in fact sufficient (as pictured at left), and with the weather gods watching over the process, the stela was crated outdoors and taken off to Philadelphia for the exhibition *MAYA 2012: Lords of Time*, which opens in May. Assuming the Maya were wrong about time after all, Stela A will back in the reading room in late January 2013.

Image: Deinstallation of Copan Stela A. Photo by Sheila Klos.

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## Introducing the Dumbarton Oaks Tyler Fellows

In 2010, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection inaugurated a new pre-doctoral fellowship scheme, the William R. Tyler Fellowships. Eligible applicants are Harvard graduate students working on dissertations in art history, archaeology, history, or literature of the Pre-Columbian or Mediterranean/Byzantine worlds. Last month we introduced the second of four Tyler Fellows, Kuba Kabala, and this month we are pleased to tell you about the third.

### Dylan Clark

"Living on the Edge: The Residential Spaces, Social Organization, and Dynamics of Isla Cerritos, an Ancient Maya Port Community"



Whether inland or coastal, ports straddle frontiers—political, cultural, social, linguistic, and economic. They are intentionally located on peripheries, but become centers of mobility and exchange for goods, people, and ideas. Many island and coastal settlements in the Maya lowlands were once trans-shipment points along sea trading routes that extended from Veracruz all the way to lower Central America. Isla Cerritos is one such port community, strategically located on a small island in the Gulf of Mexico, about 90 kilometers north of the ancient Maya city of Chichén Itzá. My

dissertation explores the material expressions of social organization and community dynamics—the ways in which coastal people crafted their communities through social practices such as exchange, production, ritual, and subsistence—through household archaeology recently conducted as part of the Isla Cerritos Archaeological Project. Examining the spatial patterning of material culture in and around domestic architecture on the island in a comparative way, we learn more about the social organization and daily life of the coastal Maya during a particularly dynamic time in Maya history between c. 800 and 1100 AD. This year, I have been analyzing artifacts, shell, and human and faunal osteological remains from our excavations with colleagues at the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán. What is beginning to emerge is a more nuanced vision of the Maya non-elite, or “middle class,” and the ways in which the organization and character of port communities both affect and are affected by their role as settings for all kinds of exchange.

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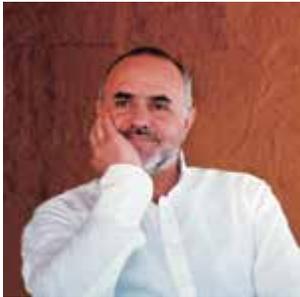
## Visiting Scholars



### Allen Grieco

Allen Grieco (Ph.D. École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales) is Lila Acheson Wallace Assistant Director: Gardens and Grounds & Scholarly Programs as well as Senior Research Associate in History at Villa I Tatti (The Harvard University Centre for Italian Renaissance Studies). Dr. Grieco has published extensively on the cultural history of food in Italy from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries and has co-edited several collective volumes including *Food Excesses and Constraints in Europe*, a special

issue of *Food & History* (2006), *Dalla vite al vino. Fonti e problemi della vitivinicoltura italiana nel medioevo* (Bologna, 1994), and *Le Monde végétal (XIIe-XVIIe siècles): savoirs et usages sociaux* (Vincennes, 1993). Currently co-editor-in-chief of *Food & History* (Turnhout, Brepols), he is also in charge of a bibliographic project on the [history of food in Europe](#) funded by the Mellon Foundation and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. He has taught at Harvard, Florence, Bologna, and has created an English-language graduate program at the Università delle Scienze Gastronomiche, Pollenzo (Italy). Dr. Allen Grieco will be in residence at Dumbarton Oaks as a Visiting Scholar through April 25th.



## Panagiotis Agapitos

Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to welcome Professor Panagiotis Agapitos as a Visiting Scholar in Byzantine Studies through May 1st. Panagiotis Agapitos is Professor of Byzantine Literature and Culture at the University of Cyprus. He has also taught as visiting professor at the Freie Universität Berlin, the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, and Stanford University. Agapitos studied Byzantine History and Literature, History of Byzantine Art and Musicology at the University of Munich (M.A. 1982), and Byzantine

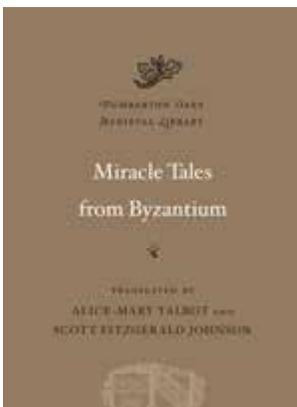
Literature at Harvard University (Ph.D 1990). He has published extensively, including *Narrative Structure in the Byzantine Vernacular Romances* (Munich 1991), *The Study of Medieval Greek Romance* (Copenhagen 1992), *Theodoros Metochites on Greek Philosophy and Ancient History* (Gothenburg 1996), the first critical edition of the thirteenth-century verse romance *Livistros and Rhodamne* (Athens 2006), as well as a volume with translations into modern Greek of Byzantine descriptions of works of art (Athens 2006). His most recent publication is an edited volume, *Medieval Narratives between History and Fiction: From the Centre to the Periphery of Europe, 1100-1400* (Copenhagen 2012). In 2003 he published his Byzantine mystery novel *The Ebony Lute* (Agra Publications, Athens), set in ninth-century Caesarea of Cappadocia (in modern-day Turkey). It was followed by *The Copper Eye* (Agra, 2006, recently published in Italy as *L'occhio di bronzo*, Crocetti 2008), and *Enamel Medusa* (Agra, 2009).

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## Publications

### Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library

Scott Johnson

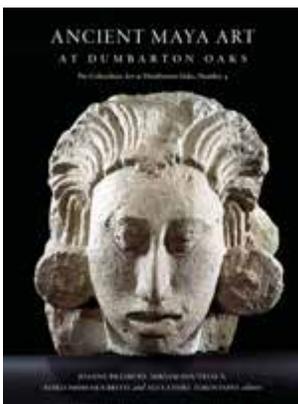


The month of April marks the publication of the new book *Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, the twelfth volume in the burgeoning Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library series. This series publishes medieval texts in three pillar-languages—Byzantine Greek, Medieval Latin, and Old English—all with fresh, facing-page translations into modern English. *Miracle Tales from Byzantium* is special for a couple reasons. First, because it is the first volume of Byzantine Greek in the series to be published thus far. Second, none of the three miracle collections in *Miracle Tales* have been translated into English before. The volume thus provides exciting new access to the general reader interested in Byzantine saints and their miracles. We hope it will encourage new research on these fascinating texts.

The volume covers the breadth of Byzantine writing, representing the three main periods of Byzantium (early, middle, and late). The three texts collected in *Miracle Tales* are: the fifth-century *Miracles of Thekla* (translated by Scott Johnson); the tenth-century *Miracles of the Pege* (translated by Alice-Mary Talbot); and the fourteenth-century *Miracles of Gregory Palamas* by Philotheos Kokkinos (translated by Alice-Mary Talbot). We have deliberately selected these texts to offer as wide a variety as possible of collections of Byzantine miracula (θαύματα). The stories about Saint Thekla concern a saint of the apostolic era who worked posthumous miracles during Late Antiquity at her provincial shrine in a small town of southern Anatolia. The anonymous *Miracles of Thekla* are written in a classicizing register and reflect overarching concerns about the transition from a pagan to Christian culture. The cult of the Virgin of the Source (Pege) was based at a holy spring just outside the walls of Constantinople, one of the most famous Marian shrines of Byzantium. This shrine has also been extraordinarily long-lived, functioning from the fifth century until the present. The anonymous *Miracles of the Pege* are written expressly in a language accessible to the working classes. Saint Gregory Palamas was especially venerated in his archbishopric, the city of Thessalonike, where his relics are preserved to this day—no longer in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia, but in an early twentieth-century church dedicated to the saintly archbishop. The *Miracles of Gregory Palamas* by Philotheos Kokkinos are the work of a gifted writer, who was highly educated and wrote vividly about the suffering of ordinary individuals afflicted with disease, with empathy for the distress and despondency of victims of chronic illnesses.

The Byzantine series of the DOML is edited by Alice-Mary Talbot, former Director of Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks. *Miracle Tales* is first of several Byzantine volumes to appear in the near future, all of which include translations of Greek works not previously available in English. All DOML texts are available for purchase from [Harvard University Press](http://www.harvard.edu/press).

## Off the Press



Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to announce the publication of [Ancient Maya Art at Dumbarton Oaks](http://www.harvard.edu/press), edited by Joanne Pillsbury, Miriam Doutriaux, Reiko Ishihara-Brito, and Alexandre Tokovinine.

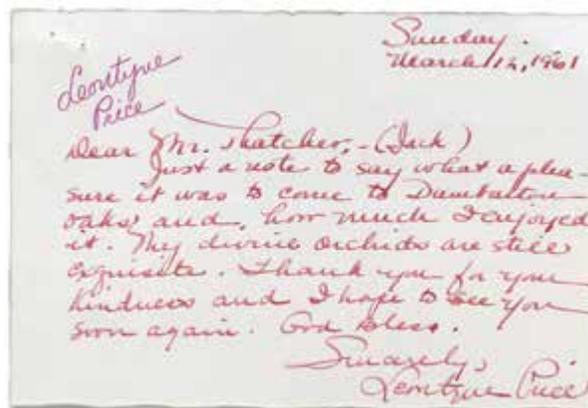
Based on the comprehensive study of one of the most important collections of Maya art in the United States, *Ancient Maya Art at Dumbarton Oaks* is a scholarly introduction to one of the great traditions of sculpture and painting in ancient America. Assembled by Robert Woods Bliss between 1935 and 1962, the collection is historically important, as it was one of the first to be established on the basis of aesthetic criteria. The catalogue, written by leading international scholars of Maya archaeology, art history, and writing, contains detailed analyses of specific works of art along with thematic essays situating these works within the broader context of Maya culture. Monumental panels, finely worked jade ornaments, exquisitely painted ceramic vessels, and other objects—most created in the first millennium CE—are presented in full color and analyzed in light of recent breakthroughs in understanding their creation, function, and deeper meaning in Maya ritual and history. Individual essays address the history of the

Dumbarton Oaks collection; Maya culture, history, and myth; and Maya aesthetics. They also study specific materials (including jade, shell, and fine ceramics) and their meanings. Scholarly yet accessible, this volume provides a detailed introduction to Maya art and culture.

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## From the Archives

James Carder



The famous American soprano Leontyne Price (b. 1927) performed twice for the Friends of Music at Dumbarton Oaks. On January 17, 1957, she sang the role of Cleopatra in a concert performance of Handel's opera *Julius Caesar* with the American Opera Society. On March 9, 1961—the same year that she made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera and a year after she debuted at the Staatsoper in Vienna under Herbert von Karajan—she gave a recital with renowned conductor Thomas Schippers (1930-1977) as her accompanist. This recital included Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* and Samuel Barber's cycle *Hermit Songs*. John S. Thacher, then director of Dumbarton Oaks, had arranged these performances, calling upon his friendship with "Tommy" Schippers to secure the latter engagement. Schippers wrote Thacher: "The only way to deal with Leontyne at this point is to tell her what to do. She has so many parasitic cronies around her now that nothing ever gets done." The documents cited and illustrated here and others pertaining to the Friends of Music at Dumbarton Oaks are retained in the Dumbarton Oaks Archives.



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## DO Conversations Series

Deb Stewart



In March, the DO Conversations series offered several opportunities to go behind-the-scenes at Dumbarton Oaks. On March 7th, the Library's Cataloging and Acquisitions staff had an Open House on level 2. Attendees heard presentations and asked questions

about the work of acquiring, cataloging, and processing library materials. On March 23rd, Director of the Museum Gudrun Bühl and her team guided fellows and staff into the basement store rooms to view Byzantine and Pre-Columbian textiles, clothing, and feather objects from the Dumbarton Oaks collection up-close. And on one spectacularly beautiful day in March, Garden and Landscape Studies Fellow Robin Veder led approximately 25 members of the DO community on a special tour of the Gardens. Participants paid careful attention to the pacing of steps and landings and reported their experiences to Robin for her research.

The series will offer a number of events in April:

**April 12, 3-4pm**

Archives Specialist Rona Razon and other members of the ICFA staff invite Fellows, Visiting Scholars, Staff, and Docents to a workshop on “Archival Practices for the Rest of Us.”

**April 13, 1-2pm**

Gail Griffin and James Carder will offer “Understanding the Need for Change: the Re-Design of the Ellipse and the Tennis Court/Pebble Garden” in the Gardens. This event is open to Fellows, Visiting Scholars, Staff, Docents, and Volunteers. Readers should contact Deb Brown (BrownD@doaks.org) if they wish to be included.

**April 20, 3-4pm**

Sarah Burke and GLS Fellow Miranda Mollendorf have arranged a special rare-book viewing of Robert John Thornton’s fabulous *Temple of Flora* (1799-1812). Because of the small space, this event is open only to Fellows, Visiting Scholars, Staff, and Docents.

Members of the DO community are welcome to post images and discussion on a [blog](#), which is curated by Sarah Burke.

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## Friends of Music



### Fine Arts Quartet

#### Valerie Stains

In March, the Friends of Music presented concerts by the venerable Fine Arts Quartet, celebrating its 66th anniversary year. The distinguished ensemble turned in exquisite performances of three masterworks from the standard repertoire by Mozart, Saint-Saëns, and Schumann, rewarding the enthusiastic audience with a charming encore of a “perpetual motion” movement from a quartet by Haydn.

With the 2011-2012 season drawing to a close on April 23rd, we look forward to welcoming back to the Music Room the extraordinary Boston-based chamber orchestra, A Far Cry. Stay tuned for the announcement of the 2012-2013 Friends of Music season at that concert.

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## Farewells



### Reiko Ishihara-Brito

The entire Dumbarton Oaks community, and the Pre-Columbian Studies program in particular, wish to express our highest gratitude and appreciation for Reiko Ishihara-Brito's contributions to the program during her three years as a Post-Doctoral Associate in Maya Studies. We are particularly grateful to Reiko for her excellent work on *Ancient Maya Art at Dumbarton Oaks, Pre-Columbian Art at Dumbarton Oaks, No. 4* (in press).

### Yuichi Matsumoto

The Pre-Columbian Studies program is very pleased to announce that Yuichi Matsumoto has been offered and accepted a research position at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan. [Minpaku](#), as the institution is known in Japan, is home to the Senri Ethnological Studies (International), a monograph series available here at Dumbarton Oaks. Please join us in wishing Yuichi congratulations on his acceptance of this prestigious position, which begins May 1st, 2012.



Photos by Joe Mills.

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## Staff and Fellows

**Duncan Campbell**, (Fellow in Garden and Landscape Studies) contributed several items to the latest issue of *China Heritage Quarterly*, an e-journal produced at the Australian National University. Issue 28 (December 2011) takes as its focus aspects of the cultural history of the West Lake at Hangzhou and includes Duncan's "The Ten Scenes of West Lake," "The Ten Scenes of West Lake: Poems by Zhang Dai (1597-ca. 1684)," "Sights and Scenes (jing 景)," and "West Lake: The Tradition—Searching for the Min."

An article by **Louis Cellauro** (Fellow in Garden and Landscape Studies) and Gilbert Richaud, "Architecture et Physiocratie au Siècle des Lumières: Les ateliers et les écoles d'architecture rurale de François Cointeraux, 1795-1808" appeared in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 75/1 (2012), pp. 51-74.

**Michael Lee**, (Postdoctoral Associate in Garden and Landscape Studies) presented a lecture, "Engineering Arcadia: The Infrastructural Landscapes of Peter Joseph Lenné in Potsdam and Berlin" at the University of Oregon on February 6, 2012. The presentation was part of the public lecture series "Landscape Histories."

# Good Ink

A recent article in *The Washington Post* by Adrian Higgins, entitled "Hidden Zen," mentioned a visit to the Dumbarton Oaks Rare Book Collection to browse a 1970s facsimile of Philipp Franz von Siebold's *Flora Japonica (1835-[1870])* in the context of research into Japanese plants in DC gardens.

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## Upcoming Events

### Digital Humanities Talk: Bernard Frischer

Friday, April 6

Professor of Art History and Classics at the University of Virginia, Frischer is also Director of the [Virtual World Heritage Laboratory](#), whose mission is to apply 3D digital tools to simulating cultural heritage artifacts and sites as heuristic instruments of discovery.

### Friends of Music Concert

Sunday and Monday, April 22 & 23

A Far Cry

### Byzantine Studies Symposium

Friday-Sunday, April 27-29

"Rome Re-Imagined: Byzantine and Early Islamic Africa, ca. 500-800"

### Miracle Fruit Fellows' Fête

Wednesday, April 2

In connection with *Mirabilia*: Remarkable Plants

### Garden and Landscape Studies Symposium

Friday and Saturday, May 4 & 5

"Food and the City"



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