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The new Sawyer Library opens in less than a year, uniting under one roof the past, present and future of scholarship and learning in the humanities and social sciences. The building integrates historic Stetson Hall and its magnificent reading room with a new, four-story facility designed around the learning experience: increasingly collaborative, interdisciplinary and fueled by connections to both ancient materials and modern technology. For more on the new library, and for memories of the old one, visit http://newsawyerlibrary.williams.edu.
CLASSIC EXCELLENCE

The great article “Three Conversations from 2013” (summer 2013) caught so many of the things that I find admirable about Williams. I have had the opportunity to meet alumni of all ages who experienced a Williams very different from the one I did from 1987 to 1991. Yet across time there is a common theme as deep as the color purple—classical excellence. The Williams I knew was more diverse than each of the classes that preceded mine. The conversations from the Class of ’13, however, demonstrate that “diversity” continues to evolve and blossom in so many forms—caucuses, uniquely designed curricular studies, mentored and life choices. The number of paths open to any Williams student seems infinite, whereas those paths are forged with the guidance of a faculty member, someone on the staff, a family member and/or a fellow student. Reading the stories of these graduating seniors felt like dropping back into a great conversation with a special person—someone I’d known in which you can pick up where you left off, no matter how much time has passed. I marveled at my knowledge of this classical excellence hasn’t waned a bit and that the Williams conversation is ongoing.

—Melissa Fowler ’91, New York, N.Y.

COINCIDENCE CAPTURED

How ironic, in the summer 2013 issue, to read letters responding to Bob Siddiqui’s ’63 article on fotomurals (“Band of Brothers”) at the front of the magazine and to see photographs from the college museum’s collection of Edward Muybridge (“Captured”, whose central subject was Edweard Muybridge. Bob was prescient in both situations. He recalled that President Sawyer would vet every letter and memo sent out as dean. They’d always come back with a little tweak here, a little change there. (This, of course, was before word-processing, meaning the entire memo had to be retyped.) One day a memo came back with the note, “OK as stands.” Professor Dudley Bahlman told me, beaming, “I framed that one.” I took in my junior year, I interviewed Professor Dudley Bahlman. His central subject was Edward Muybridge. Bob was present in both situations.

—Branko Goddard ’92, New Haven, Conn.

LIVING WITH ART

The student art loan initiative (“Living with Art”, summer 2013), where students may have original works of art by Cézanne, Winslow Homer, Marc Chagall and to see photographs from the college museum’s collection of Edward Muybridge (“Captured”, whose central subject was Edweard Muybridge. Bob was prescient in both situations. He recalled that President Sawyer would vet every letter and memo sent out as dean. They’d always come back with a little tweak here, a little change there. (This, of course, was before word-processing, meaning the entire memo had to be retyped.) One day a memo came back with the note, “OK as stands.” Professor Dudley Bahlman told me, beaming, “I framed that one.” Bob was present in both situations.

—Guy Druezo ’75, Anchorage, Alaska.

MAGAZINE OF ART

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LIVING WITH ART

The student art loan initiative (“Living with Art”, summer 2013), where students may have original works of art by Cézanne, Winslow Homer, Marc Chagall and others hung up on their walls, struck me as an excess. The cost of art and other universities has skyrocketed. I would love to see Williams be a leader in the movement to manage the cost of the acquisition, instead of competing to see what luxuries it can provide. Please direct alumni donations to more important funds and needs, and cut the current $58,500 total cost of attending.

—Claudio Zuco ‘89, Washington, D.C.

SNOWY SILENCE

“Ephropology,” the illus-
Eisenson to Succeed Avis as Board Chair

Michael Eisenson ’77 has been named chair of the Williams College Board of Trustees, effective July 1. He will succeed Greg Avis ’80, whose 12-year term expires on June 30. Eisenson came to Williams as a first-generation student and earned both a J.D. and M.B.A. at Yale. He is the CEO of Charlesbank Capital Partners in Boston. He has been actively involved with the college for many years, including serving in leadership roles for his class’s 25th reunion effort and with Williams’s last two comprehensive campaigns. Eisenson also oversaw the work that led to the creation of the Williams Investment Office in 2006. Since becoming a trustee in 2007, he’s gained experience on a variety of board committees, including as chair of the Investment Committee.

Avis’s many accomplishments as chair of Williams’ board include partnering with campus leaders to guide the college through the U.S. financial downturn. He also oversaw a presidential transition and was instrumental in the completion of the Hollander Hall and Schapiro Hall academic buildings and in advancing major new projects including Sawyer Library, the environmental center and renovation of Weston Field. Over the years, he has devoted a great deal of time to getting to know Williams’ faculty, staff and students.

“The position of board chair is a demanding one,” stated President Adam Falk in announcing the change. “As we go about the college’s daily work, it’s worth pausing for a moment to acknowledge that this is made possible in significant part by the often unseen efforts of such particularly dedicated and able people as Greg and Michael.”

Some questions from high schoolers during an Oct. 2 Twitter Q&A with current students, faculty, staff and alumni:

1. Why would you choose Williams over a larger university?
2. What’s the strength of the alumni network for internships in DC?
3. What is college life like in small-town MA?
4. What’s a particular scene that made you stop and think, “Wow, I go to Williams?”

Our favorite answers:
1. Small classes and personal attention from profs is key—as is interactive class time talking with smart peers.
2. The DC alumni network is quite active! Many students spend Winter Study or summers in DC.
3. It’s amazing. Like smart-kid camp. Everybody’s busy and has some secret super power you don’t know about.
4. #askaneph

Check out the entire tweet-up at http://bit.ly/HhbkmL. And be sure to follow @WilliamsCollege on Twitter.

An extensive survey of 4,113 Williams alumni (last spring asked, among other things, how satisfied they are with their lives and what they value most. Some 1,840 Ephs responded, representing 10 classes spanning 1968 to 2008. Their answers indicate alumni are doing what they want to, and liking what they do.

IN GENERAL HOW SATISFIED WOULD YOU SAY YOU ARE WITH YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW?

GENERALLY DISSATISFIED

NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL

SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT

VERY IMPORTANT

ESSENTIAL

IN GENERAL HOW SATISFIED AMONG THOSE WHO ARE FULL-TIME WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING?

NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL

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ESSENTIAL

Raising a family

Helping others

Being well off financially

Working for social and political change

Doing creative and expressive work

Participating in politics or community affairs

Participating in religious activities and groups

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you at this point in your life and career.

Some 1,840 Ephs responded, representing 10 classes spanning 1968 to 2008. Their answers indicate alumni are doing what they want to, and liking what they do.

BY THE NUMBERS

ALUMNI VALUES

Generating $1.13 billion in alumni giving last fiscal year

In the news

The College needs you.

APPLY NOW

In a recent survey, alumni were asked how satisfied they are with their lives and the things that matter most to them. Some 1,840 Ephs responded, representing 10 classes spanning 1968 to 2008. Here’s what they told us.

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Williams to Host TEDx Event

Galaxy collisions, the philosophy of the mind and pop
Diaspora are among the topics that will be explored
during the college’s first-ever TEDx event, to take place

Six Williams faculty members and three students
will present nine short talks, many of which have
been inspired by or developed from ideas explored in
semester-long Williams tutorials. For these courses,
two students are guided by a professor in an in-depth
examination of a subject. Students develop independent
work—alternately creating and critiquing—and sharpen
their critical thinking skills as they acquire comprehen-
sive knowledge of the subject. TEDx is a program of local,
self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At
a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine
to spark deep discussion and connection.

TEDxWilliamsCollege, to be held from 1 to 5:30 p.m. on the CenterStage of the ’62
Center for Theatre and Dance. A reception will follow in
the CenterStage lobby. Videos of the talks will be posted
after the event. For more information, please visit

First-year Entry Snacks

About 25 first-year students pile into a common room stuffed
with couches, chairs, tables and a TV. Laughter and spirited
discussion quickly fill the air as food is passed around. “Welcome
to Snacks,” says one of the two junior advisors (JAs) who live
with them in a residential grouping called an entry. “How was
your week?”

“Snacks” refers to the food being shared, often as simple as a
batch of cookies. But it’s also shorthand for the gatherings them-
selves—a cornerstone of residential life at Williams—held every
Sunday at 10 p.m. in all 26 first-year entries. Conversations can be
unstructured, or the JAs might ask first-years to take turns sharing
the high and low points of their weeks or telling their life stories.

Meanwhile, JAs are doing important work. They’re paying
attention to subtle cues—two close friends who no longer sit
together, or someone who consistently avoids conversation—
and following up if necessary. Their job isn’t to solve problems
but to serve as allies and resources.

As the school year progresses, the snacks, prepared by the
first-years, become more substantial (a rotisserie chicken with
homemade mashed potatoes and gravy one week; ginger bread
houses another; an ongoing Iron Chef-like competition).

The conversations become more substantive, too.

“We discuss our standards, what we expect of our community,”
says former JA Louisa Lee ’14, who, with Sam Tripp ’14, is now
co-president of the JA Advisory Board. “Freshmen are learning to live
together. For a lot of kids, college is their first time away from home.”

For many, the campus is also the most diverse community
they’ve ever encountered. Each entry is intentionally constructed
as a microcosm of the student body. “They’re safe places where
students become comfortable engaging with and challenging
each other—and each other’s assumptions.”

“It ends up being very little things that have a big impact,”
says Eddie Kelly ’15, a JA in Armstrong. “Like the way we use
language. We have standing rules: Respect each other. Check
yourself.”

Tripp remembers two students in his entry last year. One,
from Jordan, was “very pro-Palestine,” he says. “The other, from
Pittsburgh, was “very pro-Israel. They had some very heated
debates. But they’re still really close friends. They didn’t ever
agree—they just actively wanted to learn from each other.”

JAs are full of similar stories from Snacks: the conservative kid
from the South who was drawn into a conversation about gay
marriage; the home-schooled kid who was having a tough time
adjusting to dorm life; the kid who didn’t seem to take anything seri-
sously but one day opened up about his father’s struggle with cancer.

“You see the Williams community developing during Snacks,”
Lee says. “We embrace diversity, and we are all different.
Snacks pair real faces and stories with those kinds of values.”
“I was heading for a remote castle in some woods, but I couldn't get to it with the Jeep because it was perched high on a rock. So I got out and started walking through the forest. Soon I spotted some woodsmen who looked as though they were taking a break, standing around in a group talking. As I got nearer, it occurred to me they were standing quite close together and looked rather dejected…and they weren't moving much. And if they were talking, they certainly were being quiet about it. Then in a flash I realized I had stumbled on *The Burghers of Calais*, Rodin's famous bronze grouping of six men about to be martyred, just sitting in the woods!”—Charles Parkhurst '35

A Monumental Achievement

By Denise DiFulco

Two Williams legends helped to recover and return some of Europe's greatest art treasures plundered by the Nazis.
“It was one of the most moving moments of my life,” Edsel recalls. “I did not go to that interview expecting Lane to be as cogent as he was.” Faison’s son Gordon, who attended the interview, was in disbelief while his father reviewed pictures of stolen artwork and fellow soldiers featured in another Edsel book, Recovering Da Vinci, and recalled in vivid detail names and anecdotes dating back to the 1940s. Faison’s memory of that time didn’t fail him. All he checked out to be correct.

As Edsel rose to say goodbye and extended his hand, Faison grabbed it, pulled Edsel to his chest and said, “I’ve been waiting to meet you all my life.”

A MONUMENTAL TASK

Hailing from 13 different nations, 345 men and women participated in MFAA activities. No more than 120 served at any given time from 1943 through the 1950s.

The early Monuments officers, who received their orders from Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower to protect Europe’s cultural treasures as the Allies made their way through Nazi lines and across the continent, were the most unlikely of heroes. It was the first time in history an advancing army attempted to mitigate cultural damage while fighting a war, and the men and women charged with this mission were few and ill equipped. Among their ranks were museum directors, curators, art scholars, educators, artists and archivists. Most had established careers and families. Their average age was 40.

Parkhurst was among the early recruits. A Columbus, Ohio, native, he came to Williams with an interest in geology and paleontology but was inspired by Professor Karl E. Weston to major in fine arts and pursue a career in the field. Later Parkhurst received a Master of Arts at his alma mater and then earned a Master of Fine Arts at Princeton University.

Parkhurst was working as a research assistant (he later became an assistant curator) at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1941 when he enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve and served as a gunnery officer in Australia, the European theater, the Indian Ocean and Panama. Given his background in art, he was transferred to the MFAA at the Army Supreme Headquarters in Frankfurt after the Allied victory in Europe, joining a group of more than 30 officers charged with recovering looted artwork, safeguarding it and returning it to its owners.

They worked in extremely poor conditions. “These guys were lucky if they had a field radio,” says Edsel, who interviewed Parkhurst the same day he interviewed Faison in 2006. (“Parkhurst is June 26, 2008, at age 97 at his home in Amherst, Mass.”) The soldiers often had to rely on their wits for food, housing and transportation. Parkhurst found himself rigging jeeps and other vehicles, and his cohorts investigated the 1,036 repositories of looted artwork they located throughout Germany and former German-occupied territories.

Parkhurst spent months excavating art from Neuschwanstein Castle, and his experience building roads and bridges in Alaska right after his graduation from Williams was especially helpful while working along treacherous paths through the Bavarian Alps. He assisted in the packing and shipping of 49 freight cars filled with art hauled from the castle and 13 carloads from another cache. One of his most significant finds was Auguste Rodin’s bronze sculpture, The Burghers of Calais, which had been abandoned in the Nazi’s snow-covered forest surrounding Neuschwanstein, apparently because it was too unwieldy to maneuver up the mountain.

As Parkhurst told the Williams Alumni Review in 1995, shortly after the release of The Rape of Europe, another high point of his service was discovering the crown jewels of the Bavarian royal family, which dated to about the year 1000. He convinced the caretaker of the castle where the jewels were found to tell him where they were hidden: deep down inside a massive tower, in some sort of pantry, behind a wall of shelves filled with jam. As he stated in the Review: “We carefully removed a portion of the shelves to reveal a secret room, and when we crawled in, there were the crown jewels, 15 cases of them!”

FACING THE ENEMY

Faison’s role was no less significant. Also a student of Weston’s, Faison joined the Williams faculty in 1936 before enlisting in the U.S. Navy in 1942. He was stationed in Brantigan, N.J., constructing radar on the college’s radio to track enemy planes, when a call came asking if he wanted to transfer to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency, for “daily involving professional knowledge of art history and travel in Europe.” While the earliest Monuments officers were busy locating, securing and returning art, no one had the time to investigate the bigger picture of German policy, including who was in charge of the looting and who were the players involved.

Francis Henry Taylor, then director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,哄骗了Faison for the OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit. Together with James Plaut, the first director of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and Theodore Rousseau, who later became a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Faison was to uncover the story behind the art thefts. Faison spent months in highly secret, specialized OSS training and then joined Plant and Rousseau at the sab mines at Altus, just east of Salzburg, Austria, where thousands of artworks were stored deep within its tunnels. Among the most valuable items recovered from the mines—those the Nazis insisted were for “safekeeping”—were the 13th-century Ghent Altarpiece by Jan van Eyck, the Altarpiece of the Holy Sacrament by Dieric Bouts and a Michelangelo sculpture of Madonna and child, stolen from the Church of Notre Dame in Bruges, Belgium.
"It’s a very, very beautiful spot," was how Faison described Altaussee in a 1994 Williams oral history interview. He had visualized the salt mines, which had been worked since Roman times, as being underground, but "the entrance was at the top of quite a high mountain.... They start at the top and go down and down and down, spooling out. Colder than you can imagine, and damp and wet."Surprisingly, those were ideal conditions for storing art. "Cold-wet, spreading out. Colder than you can imagine, and damp and wet." ...The mines contained 6,755 paintings (including 5,350 by old masters), 1,039 prints, 230 drawings, sculptures, tapestries, furniture, arms and armor, theater archives, prints, watercolors, sculptures, bronzes, coins, icon works and a variety of other objects of art. There were an additional 11 smaller repositories in the mines destined for display at Linz.

Faison personally interviewed the wife of Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering, Hitler’s second in command. (Faison calls her “Brunhilde” in a diary found by one of his sons.) He also sat face-to-face with Hermann Voss, an art historian and director of the Dresden Gallery, who was special commissioner for Hitler’s art collection. In 13 detailed reports and four Consolidated Interrogation Reports, Faison, Plaut and Rousseau outlined all aspects of the Nazi plans. Rousseau took on the subject of Goering’s personal art collection. Plaut wrote about the organization of the looting under the Einstazstab Rosenberg (a special task force devised by Alfred Rosenberg, chief ideologue of the Nazi regime), and Faison undertook the task of compiling the official history of Hitler’s art collection and the plans for the Führermuseum. The assignment left him “hobbled,” Faison told the audiences he lectured in his final years.

“Looting always accompanies war, but Nazi looting, and especially Nazi art looting, was different. It was officially planned and expertly carried out. Looted art gave a tone to an otherwise bare New Order,” Faison wrote in his report.

He recommended that the Sonderraub Linz, or Linz Special Commission, which collected art for the Führermuseum mostly through theft and forced sales, be declared a criminal organization and its members stand trial. He also suggested that German art dealers and agents who made purchases on behalf of Linz be investigated individually.

"With its immense resources and its official prestige, the Sonderraub Linz tried to bring art under the shadow of the Swastika," Faison wrote in Consolidated Interrogation Report No. 4. "For a time, it did...." ALLEGANCE TO ART

Faison, Parkhurst and many of the other Monuments Men were so deeply committed to their mission that when the American government attempted to transfer German-owned works to the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., they took a stand that could have resulted in military court martial or otherwise jeopardized their professional careers. As many of the plundered artworks began to arrive in 1945 at a collection point in Weisbaden, Germany, for their eventual disposition, Parkhurst and others flatly refused an order from superiors...
to pack and send the items in their custody to the United States. A preliminary list called for the transfer of 102 works from the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, plus works by Watteau, Daumier, Chardin and Manet from other collections. In fact, when Col. Henry McBride, then the administrator for the National Gallery, threatened Parkhurst, telling him he could not afford to take such a position because he had a wife and two children, Parkhurst walked out on him.

“We believed first of all that the language was the same the Nazis had used when they looted, which was ‘protective custody,’” Parkhurst said in a 1982 oral history interview for the Smithsonian Institution’s Archives of American Art. “We thought that was a bad omen, and, secondly, we didn’t think it was right.”

Parkhurst was among the MFAA soldiers who signed the Wiesbaden Manifesto in November 1945, stating, “From our own knowledge, no historical grayness will enable us to long be the cause of so much justified bitterness as the removal for any reason of a part of the heritage of any nation, even if that heritage may be interpreted as a prize of war.” The New Yorker published a story about the Manifesto shortly thereafter, which resulted in a highly public and vigorous debate over the fate of the German-owned art. The works eventually were sent to Washington, D.C., in December 1946 to be held at the National Gallery, where they were displayed in a five-week show visited by a million people. Then they toured some major U.S. cities briefly, where another 10 million visitors had a chance to view them. All were returned to Berlin by 1949.

Parkhurst’s wife, Carol Clark, who is on leave as the William McCall Yackley 1972 Professor of the History of Art and American Studies at Amherst College, says Parkhurst was most proud of signing the Wiesbaden Manifesto and resisting the plan to transfer German art to the U.S. However, like Faison, he’d “still feel he was doing anything out of the ordinary,” Clark says. “He realized the importance of the works, but it was just a job.”

After the Rape of Europa, Parkhurst and Faison began speaking more publicly and openly about their experiences. Each compiled his papers: Parkhurst’s are at the Archives of American Art along with some of Faison’s; other papers by Faison are at the National Gallery and in Williams’ Archives and Special Collections. In a 1999 speech at Columbia University, Parkhurst introduced the Wiesbaden Manifesto, saying, “I have always found this letter a moving document, which cites me even as I read it. Lynn Nicholas commented, ‘The Founding Fathers would have been proud.’”

With the war ended, Faison and Parkhurst returned to civilian life. Parkhurst, disillusioned with America’s attempt to remove masterworks from Germany, did not return to the National Gallery but instead joined the Albright Gallery (now the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, N.Y.) and then taught at Princeton and Oberlin. Years later, he became the director of the Baltimore Museum. Upon his retirement he returned to Williams, where he served as deputy director of special projects at WCMA from 1983 to 1998 and co-director of the museum from 1983 to 1984. He taught at Williams until 1992 and then became director of the Smith College Museum of Art, where he finished his career.

Faison returned to Williams at the war’s end to continue a teaching career that would span 40 years. In addition to chairing the art department for most of that time, he was director of WCMA from 1948 to 1976. Because he and fellow professors Bill Pierson and Whitney Stoddard’35 had been away serving in the war, there were only 19 students enrolled in the art history program when Faison rejoined the faculty. Within a few years, though, that number skyrocketed to 255. Much like Weston before him, Faison was a magnet for students. He was called back into service in 1950 to close down the last remaining collecting point in Munich. This time his wife and four sons came along. Years later he said that what he learned as a Monuments officer helped him as a teacher of art history.

Faison, together with Pierson and Stoddard, eventually trained a generation of prominent curators and museum administrators, and collectively the trio became known as the Holy Trinity of American art. Among their students were Thomas Krens’69, former director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation; John R. “Jack” Lane’66, president of New Art Trust; Glenn Lowry ’76, director of the Museum of Modern Art; Roger Mandle’63, former president of the Rhode Island School of Design; Earl A. Powell III’66, former director of the National Gallery of Art and chairman of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts; the late Kirk Varnedoo’67, former curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art; and the late James N. Wood ’63, former director of the Art Institute of Chicago and head of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

A FITTING TRIBUTE

The script of the upcoming Monuments Men movie follows the trajectory of Edsel’s book, focusing on seven of the original officers who went behind enemy lines immediately after the Allied invasion of Europe to protect artwork from additional looting and destruction during battle and to prevent Nazi soldiers from carrying out orders to destroy everything in their possession as the Reich fell. The cache at the Altusen salt mines was among the repositories saved from bombing.

Matt Damon plays the role of Lt. James Rorimer, Parkhurst’s immediate supervisor. George Clooney, who plays George Stout, co-wrote the script and co-produced the film. As of late October he was not yet doing publicity for Monuments Men and was unavailable for comment, so it remains to be seen to what extent Faison and Parkhurst are visible on screen.

Edsel, who was on location and acted as an adviser to the film, hinted that there might be a glimpse of Parkhurst and Faison’s roles, adding, “I think the things they did are well represented in the film.”

Not that Parkhurst or Faison would be looking for themselves on screen, had they lived to see the movie. As Chris Faison recalls his father saying over the years: “You know, people have said I was a hero, I was great. No. I was put in a great situation. I was put in the middle of history.”

Dennis DiFulco is a freelance writer based in Cranford, N.J.
A Living Laboratory
Williams’ New Environmental Center

A newly renovated and expanded Kellogg House is set to open in the fall. In addition to providing classroom, meeting and study spaces, a reading room, a kitchen and gardens, the building will be home to the Center for Environmental Studies and the Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives. In short, it will be a living laboratory for sustainability.

With fundraising under way, including plans for the Class of ’66 to dedicate its 50th reunion gift to the project, the new environmental center is seeking Living Building Challenge (LBC) designation, the most rigorous performance standard for sustainable design. The center will be one of the most complex LBC projects to date, combining historic preservation, extensive urban agriculture and year-round, often round-the-clock, use. To be LBC certified, the project will have to meet ambitious performance requirements over 12 months of continuous occupancy in these seven areas:

1 site
LEARNING AND GROWING
The building will be located in the central campus corridor, between Hollander Hall and the new Sawyer Library. Edible landscape will offer ample opportunities to learn about permaculture and organic approaches to urban agriculture. The kitchen will support produce preservation and community gatherings.

2 energy
RENEWABLE AND GREEN
Photovoltaic panels mounted on the ground and roof—combined with efficient air-source heat pumps, a tight building envelope and thoughtful use of fixtures and lighting—are expected to produce at least as much energy as the building consumes.

3 water
A CLOSED SYSTEM
A percent of water for drinking, cleaning and gardening will be collected and treated on site. Rainwater captured on rooftops will be purified using ultraviolet light. Low-flow fixtures and composting toilets will maximize water demand, and used water will be treated in sub-surface wetlands. A monitoring system will help building occupants learn about and adjust consumption.

4 health
A BREATHE OF FRESH AIR
Interior spaces will be healthy and invigorating. Large windows will let in light and fresh air, fostering a strong connection to the natural environment. Indoor air quality will be enhanced with the use of non-toxic materials and finishes.

5 materials
SAFE, LOCALLY SOURCED
Building materials will have minimal negative impact on human and ecosystem health. Wood will be sustainably harvested, local and nontoxic. Preserving the historic Kellogg House and using as much salvaged and recycled building material as possible will help to minimize the project’s carbon footprint.

6 equity
HUMAN SCALE, HUMAN SPACES
The center will promote human-scaled interaction, exploration and engagement with its accessible indoor spaces and surrounding habitats and gardens.

7 beauty
PRESEVE AND INSPIRE
Renovation and expansion plans will re-envision in a harmonious and balanced way an eclectic mix of architectural styles accumulated as the building changed purposes and locations in the years since its construction as Williams’ first president’s house in 1794.

To learn more about the Living Building Challenge, visit http://living-future.org/living-building-challenge

For James MacGregor Burns ’39, a lifelong student of the relationship among leadership, ideas and change, the intellectual revolution of the Enlightenment has been an irresistible fascination. In fact, the origins of his new book, Fire and Light: How the Enlightenment Transformed Our World, date to 1949, when Burns was in London studying the British political system during a sabbatical from Williams. Admiring the Great Reform Act of 1832, a major step in the democratization of Parliament, and impressed by the arduous, decades-long campaign for the bill, he saw that it was fueled by ideas traced back to the Enlightenment, including the fundamental principle that all people have the right to participate in their own government. The American founding, central to Burns’ work as political scientist and historian, produced a cadre of thinker-activists that matched Europe’s finest: men like Franklin, Adams, Jefferson and Madison. They shaped a distinctive American Enlightenment and led an experiment that put the ideas of philosophers into practical action to create a republic unlike any the world had known. The Enlightenment values at the heart of the experiment—above all, liberty, equality and happiness—were crucial to Burns’ own theory of leadership as both the motivation for leaders and followers and as the standard by which change could be measured.

But it was only late in his career that Burns sat down to write his Enlightenment book, conceiving it as a vast case study of leadership, ideas and change across two continents and more than two centuries. Ideas in the Enlightenment were like a contagion and were communicated along new networks of a thriving print culture. They spread over national borders and across lines of class, race and gender, overturning old dogmas and inspiring fresh expectations. They spurred creative leadership from the grassroots, from subjects who, enlightened, began to think like citizens and would help lead the challenges to authority that sparked revolutions in Britain, America and France. Fire and Light burns bright with its author’s passion for the Enlightenment’s continued relevance. We are all, he says, its children; and from it we’ve learned to think about ourselves and our societies, about constructing leadership and creating change that fulfills human wants and needs and values. As the crises of the 21st century mount—environmental, political, economic, social—our most powerful weapon in confronting them, he argues, will be the humane and rational program of the Enlightenment.

What follows is an excerpt from his book.
CHANGE WAS AT THE VERY ROOT OF THIS NEW ERA, AND KNOWLEDGE AND FREEDOM WERE CHANGED THE TWINNING PRECONDITIONS AND OUTCOMES. Together enlightenment and liberation raised men and women into a condition of possibility, the opportunity to better themselves and their world. And “as the human mind becomes more enlightened” over time, declared the French economist Turgot in 1750, “the whole human race … goes on advancing, although at a slow pace, towards greater perfection.” Revolutionaries and innovators were inspired to push beyond the status quo in politics and government, science and technology, in entrepreneurship and the arts, in philosophy, in every field of human endeavor.

The human mind was where revolution originated. Breaking from a universe in which God was the final answer to any question, Enlightenment philosophers moved attention to human reason, the capacity of the human mind as the measure of all things. Now, as Alexander Pope put it, “[the] proper study of mankind is Man,” especially the human mind and its potentialities.

But Enlightenment savants condemned these shackles on the human mind. They tested received ideas by the new, unflinching standards of empiricism. Science, previously erected on stilts of axioms and premises, was stripped to the ground. As the founder of the new science, Francis Bacon, insisted, “Man, being the servant and interpreter of nature, can do and understand so much only from observation and careful experiment could the grandest theories be built—the “conclusions of thought itself. John Locke rejected the “received doctrine” that men had “native ideas” stamped into their minds at birth. Instead he described the mind of an infant as like blank paper, to be shaped and vitalized by experience and education. In fact, “the difference to be found in the Manners and Abilities of Men, is owing more to their various education than to anything else.”

The empirical assault on dogma was the method not only of the natural sciences but of such emerging disciplines as sociology; anthropology and political economy that studied human life in all its complexities. For over a decade, Adam Smith analyzed financial data from all sources to create his ground-breaking account of the new capitalist economy in The Wealth of Nations.

That fresh spirit of empiricism transformed the Enlightenment’s understanding of the nature of thought itself. John Locke rejected the “received doctrine” that men had “native ideas” stamped into their minds at birth. Instead he described the mind of an infant as like “white paper, void of all characters, without any new ideas.” The mind was all potential, like wax, according to Locke, to be shaped and vitalized by experience and education. In fact, “the difference to be found in the Manners and Abilities of Men, is owing more to their various education than to anything else.” Great care, therefore, “is to be had of the forming Children’s Minds.”

By reasoning, the mind exposed falsehoods and discovered truths and gave birth to far-reaching ideas from an intake of humble facts. Reason equipped men and women to live freely, enabled them to make their own way, to think and act for themselves, even the lower orders of servants and shoemakers, peasants and piecemarkers. And when people began to think for themselves, an English friend of Jean-Jacques Rousseau cautioned ironically in 1792, “when they have carried their temerity of free-thinking perhaps so far as to suspect that nations may exist without monks or tyrants, it is already too late to burn libraries or philosophers.”

IF ENLIGHTENMENT EMPowered THE hUMAN MIND FoR NEW wORLDS Of LIBERTY AND sELF-GOVERNMENT, WHy SHoULd IT nOt ENABLE A COMMUNITY TO GOVERN ITSELF, FREE OF monKS And sTYRANGs? Enlightenment philosophers knew men needed government—that without it, in an anarchic “state of nature,” it was every man for himself, making life, in Thomas Hobbes’s vivid phrase, “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.” But the regimes of that age, whether absolute monarchies or parliamentary governments under aristocratic control, answered not to the subjects’ wants and needs nor to their dignity as human beings. A new doctrine of natural rights—to life, liberty and property, in Locke’s influential formulation—established those values, which belonged to all people by birth, at the bedrock of individual freedom. How were they to be secured under conditions that kept most of the populace voiceless and in subjection?

It became a cornerstone of Enlightenment thought that governments were not, as Locke put it, born of “the Ordinance of God and Divine Institution” and descended from “Adam’s Monarchical Power,” but were the work of men in a time and place and as such could be changed by men. In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson contended that inasmuch as government derived its “just powers from the consent of the governed,” the people had the right to abolish it when it violated its compact with them, as when a ruler, in Locke’s example, “sets up his own Arbitrary Will in place of the Laws.” Such a tyrant was the true rebel, an aggressor in a war against his own people. His abuses of power led to “the Dissolution of the Government.”

Governments, as Locke well knew, did not simply dissolve. Many powerful factors were behind the great revolutionary movements of the era: always the struggle for political power; typically, severe economic and social crises; and, too often, staving religious conflict. But in the upheavals that transformed Britain, America and France in these centuries, the ideas of the Enlightenment were at the center of the action, as both inspiration and end. With them, leaders and their activist followers justified rebellions, explained motives and fashioned visions for change based on the values they risked their lives and liberties to achieve. The American colonies and their activist followers justified rebellions, explained motives and fashioned visions for change based on the values they risked their lives and liberties to achieve. The American colonies in the years before 1776 were a hotbed of debates over representation, self-determination, natural rights and, above all, liberty, the most cherished value in the war for independence. In 1787, with the French government on the verge of fiscal collapse, King Louis XVI himself tried on the robes of Enlightenment philosophy. His controller general declared that the royal principle of “so the king wills, so wills the law” would be amended to “so the people’s happiness wills, so wills the king.” The king’s people were not persuaded and two years later sent deputies to the Estates-General who were genuine men of enlightenment, authors of tracts that challenged royal policies, advocates of legal and economic reforms, members of learned academies and sometimes philosophers themselves. To their own surprise, they became revolutionaries, too, and, “with all the force of a conversion experience,” in historian Timothy Shomaker’s words, began to think that “a new political order and a new system of social values could actually be realized.”

This sweeping ambition could not have been conceived without the Enlightenment and the possibilities it created for transformation. The institutions American revolutionaries established in 1789 and the settlement forged by British statesmen a century earlier after the Glorious Revolution that enshrined the liberties of citizens were no less achievements of Enlightenment thought, the work of leaders who took seriously the intellectual currents of their time and were responding to the rising aspirations of their people.
And their accomplishments stood the test of time. Even the French Revolution, with stages that appeared to fulfill Enlightenment expectations and others that prevented them, remained at the core of French identity and a touchstone of its politics. Still, it was an Enlightenment imperative that, in the words of Jefferson, “laws and institutions” advance “hand in hand with progress of the human mind.” As people became more enlightened and their manner and opinions change with the change of circumstances, their political order must “keep pace with the times.”

The greatest change of circumstances, which both confirmed and challenged the Enlightenment, was the Industrial Revolution that began to sweep the West in the 18th century. The power of enlightened science and technology, as well as the Enlightenment’s celebration of social mobility through individual achievement and ambition, created what historian Joel Mokyr called the “enlightened economy,” a new economic order that especially empowered the middle classes. They would dominate politics and society in the 19th century. Liberalism was their ideology, championing individualism and personal liberty and free enterprise.

Yet progress in the Industrial Revolution left behind another new class—improvised workers laboring in often subhuman conditions in factories, fields and mines, while living with their starveling and sick families in overgrown cities and squalid factory towns. Philosophy came to speak for these working men, women and children only slowly, at first through utopian thinkers and radical journalists, it was not until 1867, when Karl Marx published Das Kapital, a monument to the Enlightenment’s critical method and empiricism, that Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations was answered by an equally compelling study that centered on the exploitation of labor by rampant capitalism.

Meanwhile, barred in Britain, France and the United States from forming “combinations,” workers searched for their own answers. They realized that among the inequalities confronting them was that of knowledge: ignorance was a tool of capitalist domination. In response, workers leapt to enlisting the instruction and moral uplift that the Enlightenment had met together in reading groups. They devoured working-class journals as well as Voltaire’s essays and Thomas Paine’s Age of Reason. They absorbed the ideas of contemporary thinker-activists like Louis Blanc, a French apostle of organized labor, and Englishman William Cobbett with his plainspoken depiction of the “two classes of men” the industrial economy had created, “masters,” and “abyss dependents.”

At stake for laborers was the full dignity of human beings promised by Enlightenment precepts. They wanted to be treated as men and women capable of reason and of freedom, not as wage slaves or beasts of burden; they wanted to join together in order to fight for their common interests and to have a voice in choosing those who governed them.

Enlightenment was their pathway, the tenacious faith that self-improvement would lead ultimately, through enlightened activism, to improvement in their conditions. And that persistent drive for betterment gradually spread its transforming power until few corners of the earth remained untouched. The 19th-century wars of liberation against Spanish rule that spread across Latin America were led by enlightened generals, including Simón Bolívar, who followed Locke and Montesquieu and others but, equally, embraced the Enlightenment injunction to think for oneself. In the 20th century, anticolonial campaigns in Asia and Africa drew on Enlightenment ideas imported by the Westerners that native peoples now sought to exorcize. Proclaiming Vietnam’s self-reliance from the Imperialist and colonial powers was an Enlightenment statement on human equality and inalienable rights. In South Africa, the anti-apartheid movement appealed to the principles of majority rule and equal rights while its leaders, notably Nelson Mandela, spoke eloquently of a “rainbow nation” of toleration and respect for white minority rights.

The last four centuries have demonstrated that once the flame of enlightenment has been lit, however much it might be repressed or distorted, it cannot be extinguished. Enlightenment remains the most powerful tool for challenging authority and liberating the human mind, an inspiration to leaders and followers worldwide, a method for effective change and a framework of values by which that change can be measured. For these same reasons, the Enlightenment remains a target for authorities of all colorations, who regard ignorance—and in modern propaganda terms, minds force-fed with falsehoods—as the bulwarks of their power, apart from brutal force. But in an age of quicksilver networks of mutual enlightenment that continually widen through news and newer social media, ignorance is a wasting resource.

Even so, as demonstrated by the overthrow of despots in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya in the remarkable Arab Spring launched late in 2010, revolution may put people on the path to freedom and self-government, but many urgent questions about means and ends remain. Enlightenment values of freedom and equality for all of its people? Are freedom and equality complementary or clashing values?

As long as the potential for human betterment—the philosophers’ “perfectibility of man”—persists, Enlightenment will be a living, vital work in progress, a continuing condition of possibility. Its transformative power has always been in the crucial binding of means and ends. It has never been limited to pondering purely abstract ideas nor has it been a guide for the merely pragmatic. To consider a principled outcome has been to consider the method to achieve it. For men and women, Enlightenment is both the destination and the road. It means that people think for themselves and act in their own interests, with reason as their tool and enlightened values to live by and strive for. They become interpreters of their world and shapers of it. “Know then thyself,” Alexander Pope urged when declaring the proper study of mankind.

In the age of the Enlightenment, to seek self-knowledge is to discover humanity.
Internet entrepreneur Mariam Naficy ’91 doesn’t consider herself to be a risk taker. The trajectory of her incredible career says otherwise. By Brittany Shoot
Purging over the analytics, however, she discovered an unexpected sign of life. Minted had hosted an online competition for independent artists to create a “save-the-date” card. More than 60 designs were submitted, and the company’s initial orders came from the 22 winning designs.

Naficy and her team quickly shifted gears, turning Minted into a community-driven marketplace based on design competitions—a model called crowdsourcing. Today, the company does more than $100 million in sales, Naficy says, with indie artists called “Minties” earning more than $100,000 in commissions come from Minted sales.

The eldest daughter of an Iranian father and a Chinese mother who met as graduate students at MIT, Naficy grew up traveling between the US, the Middle East and Northern Africa, attending English and American schools. Her father was a development economist. “So we were always in developing countries that were unstable,” she says. “War, revolution, things like that would cut our trip short.”

The family expected to settle permanently in Iran. But during the revolution of 1979, when she was 9 years old, they were forced to flee like many others. “My dad took me out in the street, and I pictured the night of the revolution, the night the Shah left,” Naficy says. “People thought it was just a lot of fun. They were expecting it to be a temporary thing.”

The family ultimately moved to the US, and Naficy found her way to Williams, where she majored in political economics. During her junior year, she learned that recruiters from investment banks were visiting campus to conduct interviews. It was the first time she’d considered business as a career option, and she came out of several job interviews enthused. She accepted a position at Goldman Sachs in New York, assisting small companies seeking private investors.

The fast-paced environment expanded her眼界 to the workings of a massive, multinational firm. At the time she was dating Michael Mader ’90, whom she met at Williams and later married. When Mader was transferred to San Francisco (he is now the VP of marketing and analytics for Gap Inc. Direct, the clothing retailer’s e-commerce division), Naficy developed the plan for Eve.com. By the end of Eve.com’s first year it had done $10 million in sales. Fortune named it the sixth-best e-commerce site on the web. And brands like Calvin Klein and Elizabeth Arden signed on to distribute their cosmetics and fragrances through the website, which received nearly double the traffic of its closest competitor, Sephora.com.

In 2000, with the Internet bubble about to burst, Naficy, then 29, and her partner raised $26 million and launched the company in 1998. Through its competitions—114 to date—Minted has built a community out of thousands of artists from 43 countries who submit designs and offer feedback to each other. Some are formally trained, but many are self-taught, like Lauren Giovannetti of Dallas, an accountant with a creative streak who learned about Minted on a blog. Chism began submitting pieces in 2009 and, in 2011, had enough design work to leave her job and launch a full-time illustration studio.

Today, about half of her workforce and commissions come from Minted sales.

Bruno Brown, a stay-at-home mom from Seattle with no formal design training, had her birth announcements featured in Pregnancy magazine. She calls Minted “the Facebook of designs. I feel inspired, influenced and nurtured by the community.”

In working with the Minties and her 100-plus employees, Naficy says she often returns to a lesson she learned at Williams. “You have to be very clear about what you want in your life,” she says. “Set your own expectations, and you can lead yourself down a path of satisfaction.”

Britney Snow is a San Francisco-based journalist writing for magazines including TMRD, San Francisco and Mental Floss, where she is a contributing writer and editor-at-large. 

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A New Approach to Neuroscience

A mouse is hungry, so it eats. If it’s thirsty, it drinks. If it’s tired, it sleeps. And while these behaviors appear to be carried out with very little thought on the mouse’s part, a complex process is taking place in its brain, telling it what to do. Assistant professor of biology Matt Carter is working to better understand that process.

A neurobiologist, Carter’s latest research, published in the October issue of Nature, shows that specific regions of the brain control motivational behaviors in mice related to food intake. For example, Carter identified a brain region that suppresses appetite.

When these specific neurons are stimulated, mice stop eating even if they haven’t eaten in hours or days. When the neurons are inhibited, mice will eat more than usual.

Carter carried out research using a cutting-edge technique, new to Williams, called optogenetics, developed by scientists at Stanford University a little less than a decade ago. At the time, Carter was working in a lab just down the hall from the researchers, completing his Ph.D., and he was among the first to use optogenetics with living creatures.

The technique involves altering a mouse’s DNA to allow specific neurons to become light sensitive and then implanting optical fibres through which light can be switched—blue to stimulate the neurons, yellow to inhibit them. The effects are temporary. “It’s kind of like operating a remote-controlled car,” Carter says. “At the touch of a button we can turn neurons on or off and observe how a freely moving mouse behaves.”

Unlike any tool previously used in neuroscience, optogenetics is both spatially and temporally precise, targeting the exact neurons involved in a behavior for the exact amount of time necessary to see the effects. “With the older technique—zapping a neuron with electricity—you ended up zapping all the neurons in that region,” Carter says. “Or you injected a drug into the brain to inhibit or stimulate neurons, but the effects lasted for minutes or even hours at a time. With optogenetics you can stimulate or inhibit neurons at millisecond resolution.”

Carter says optogenetics has the potential to be used as a therapy in the future. Making neurons in the brain respond to light could have implications for treating the blind. The ability to stimulate or inhibit specific neurons also could help relieve symptoms of movement disorders such as Parkinson’s disease or prevent seizures in patients with epilepsy.

Optogenetics might also be used to shed light on how, exactly, drugs work on the brain or to develop new treatments for various neurological disorders. In the meantime, he and several Williams students are digging deeper into brain functions related to motivational behaviors. One thesis student, Manasi Apte ’14, is using optogenetics to investigate which neurons in the brain might promote wakefulness and inhibit sleep.

Another thesis student, Allison Graefner ’14, is delving into thirst, a relatively unexplored behavior. It’s one of the first motivational behaviors humans lose as they age, Carter says, and he wants to understand why. “The body always needs water,” he says. “So why does this brain response to light change?”

Carter says his research demonstrates the potential of optogenetics for treating the blind. The technique could have implications for treating the blind, as well as Parkinson’s disease and other neurological disorders. Carter says optogenetics might also be used to stimulate neurons to help treat Parkinson’s disease and other neurological disorders.

In his research, photobaseless, three-light neurons—stained red—are stimulated, resulting in the mouse eating at the expense of any other activity.

Sculptor’s Rock

A recent gift to the college of a Zhan Wang sculpture will bring the ancient Chinese tradition of “scholar’s rocks” to the 21st century—and to Williams’ new library.

The James S. McDonnell Foundation, through its 21st Century Science Initiative, awarded Williams College $602,600 to build and equip a new physics and astronomy laboratory. Funds will also support the purchase of new equipment, as well as salaries for faculty and postdoctoral researchers. The lab will be named for donor James S. McDonnell.

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New Science, Fiction

The characters in the five stories that make up Andrea Barrett’s latest book, “Archangel,” live at the junction of history and science in the early 20th century. Minor players in one story become major players in another. All are members of the scientific community trying to make sense of what in hindsight we will know was profound change but in the moment is less definitive. The stories move backward and forward in time, ultimately span-
ning the period from 1873 to 1939 and covering revolutionary ideas including Darwin’s evolution and Einstein’s relativity as well as nascent efforts toward the discovery of DNA and early attempts at flight. As John Freeman writes in his review of the book for the Boston Globe, “archangel scrambles the notion of progress and reveals, in a

EXCERPT

As Daphne and Edward were using the nets, Henrietta slid an empty bowl beneath a

Daphne, whose lower back now touched Henrietta—-they were leaning over opposite

sides, skirts together, heads and arms apart—said something Henrietta couldn’t

hear. The professor’s wife told Edward to lift his oars once they rounded the rocky point.
The bowls clicked, the edges flashed, and the drops falling from Edward’s oars sparkled

like broken glass. “Look,” said Daphne, pointing down.

Henrietta swallowed twice and leaned farther over the side. The water had

thickened, cluttered, raised itself into disconcerting lumps. Suddenly they were floating on the water but on a sheet of

jellyfish so thick that the oars nearest the surface were being pushed partially out of the water by those below; and so closely packed that when Edward lowered one arm to turn the boat he had to force a path between the creatures. All the boats, Henrietta saw, were similarly

surrounded; the shower formed a rough circle 50 feet wide, quivering like a single enormous mass.

“Tell show rogue!” the professor shouted from the deck above them. “Now

haul! Everyone!” He’d risen to his feet and was standing, his arms held out for balance.

looking so thick at any moment he might pitch into the sea but too delighted to care.

He called out instructions, which his wife repeated more quietly as they stabbed their

oar to turn the boat, he had to force a path between the creatures. All the boats, Henrietta saw, were similarly

surrounded; the shower formed a rough circle 50 feet wide, quivering like a single enormous mass.

John Brown Song!

For years art professor Laylah Ali ’91 has been captivated by the

history of John Brown, the white abolitionist who took up arms to

end slavery and was hanged in 1859 for crimes including treason

and inciting slaves to rebel. But it wasn’t until the Dia Art Foundation commissioned Ali to do a web-based project that she saw a way to create something about Brown and his legacy.

Brown was enlisted in the folk song “John Brown’s Body” (a tune that Julia Ward Howe adopted for her song, “The Battle Hymn of the Republic”). Ali—a painter who has had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, MASS MoCA, and others—imagined a video clip of a single person singing the song as an introduction to her web-based

project for Dia, which seeks out artists who don’t already use the web as a medium for commissions such as this one.

But when the initial singer was no longer available, Ali decided to extend the invitation to a wider group. She asked relatives, friends, former students, colleagues and even acquaintances to videotape them-

selves and send her the results. “The invitation to sing was a question

about the song and a question about our relation to that time, to slavery, to abolition and our distance from it,” Ali says. “Abolition, formerly a

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W. Anthony Sheppard, professor of music

A chance encounter with a nearly 140-year-old Swiss music box has led professor of music W. Anthony Sheppard to a major discovery about two of the Italian composer Giacomo Puccini’s most well-known operas.

While visiting the Morris Museum in New Jersey with his family in early 2012, Sheppard was drawn to a display of music boxes. One in particular had a tune card with songs listed in Roman letters and Chinese characters. “I’ve taught Puccini’s operas for 17 years,” Sheppard says, “and I’d always told students the story about how he was inspired by a Chinese music box for his last opera, Turandot. I now have to change the story.”

Listening to the music box, a harmoniphone with six Chinese folk tunes pinned to its cylinder, Sheppard had only the vaguest thought that there might be a connection to Puccini. He instantly recognized one of the melodies from Turandot, on its own “exciting enough,” he says. The opera, set in China, was written in the 1920s, but Puccini died before its completion.

Listening further, Sheppard was surprised to recognize two melodies from Puccini’s most famous opera, Madama Butterfly, which premiered in 1904 and was set in Japan. Scholars have long held that Puccini was devoted to writing music that authentically represented the regions in which his operas were set. And so, Sheppard says, “For a century musicologists believed all of the exotic music in Butterfly came from Japan. But no one could find the sources for two of the most important tunes”—the very tunes on the music box in the museum.

Sheppard set aside a book project he was working on and spent 18 months researching the music box and its links to Turandot and Madama Butterfly. Using the tune card, which he says was his “Rosetta Stone,” he tracked down the original Chinese folk tunes and lyrics. The information confirmed his suspicion that Puccini had chosen these two songs specifically to represent his character Butterfly’s eroticism and her memories of her father.

Meanwhile, Sheppard determined from other markings on the tune card that the music box was crafted in Switzerland and sold in an upscale store in Shanghai. Following the Boxer Rebellion, it likely was brought to Italy by Baron Edoardo Fassini Camossi. Sheppard suspects that Puccini visited the baron’s brother while writing Butterfly, and the composer’s letters from that time indicate that he was struggling to find enough music from Japan for the opera. The likelihood that the music box Puccini had listened to in the Fassini Camossi home was the exact box in the Morris Museum became a near certainty when Sheppard made another discovery. He loosened two screws that held the lid over the music box’s cylinder and bellows. On the inside were a drawing of a young woman and, Sheppard says, “writing that looked like someone’s idea of fake Asian characters.” The handwriting and sketches appeared to match those Sheppard found researching Puccini’s manuscripts for Madama Butterfly this past summer. And the drawing of the woman was Puccini’s likely vision for Butterfly.

Since then Sheppard has been lecturing about his findings around the country, and his research was featured on PBS, in The New York Times and in a recent book on American museums, titled Hidden Treasures: What Museums Have But Can’t or Won’t Show You. “What I find particularly amazing are the connections between the two operas,” Sheppard says, referring to Turandot and Madama Butterfly. “Connections no one had noticed before, which this one music box has enabled me to hear.”

—Julia Munemo

To learn more about Sheppard’s discovery, and to see and hear the music box, visit http://bit.ly/SheppardBox.
When I sign my name, it’s Monica, not Mónica. When I order pupusas at my favorite restaurant, the waiter will give my accent an approving nod, as if to say, “You’re one of us.” But it will only take a harder question for me to reveal the lie. I speak Spanish at a remedial seventh-grade level. I can only write this essay in English.

My first-grade teacher saw my potential with English and encouraged my family to continue my lessons at home. To this day, my father speaks exclusively to me in English, even though he cannot fully express himself in it. My mother, frustrated by my rejection of my first language, questions me in Spanish. I answer her in English, unwilling to communicate in the staccato rhythms of a song learned Heritage.

The echo of colonization lingers in my voice. The weapons of the death squads that pushed my mother out of El Salvador were U.S.-funded. When Nixon promised “We’re going to smash him!” it was said in his native tongue, and when the Chicana president he unsheathed said her last words to promote “¡Viva Chávez!” it was said in his. And when my family told me the story of my grandfather’s arrest by the dictatorship that followed, my grandmother stayed silent. Allowing his eyes, I read, understanding that there were no words big enough for his loss.

Monica Torres ’13 is studying digital innovation at Williams, researching how to bridge the tech gap between rural and urban Americans. When she has a spare moment, Torres likes to write. Her poem “An English Carol” was published in the Literary Review of Canada. Torres is also planning to pursue a career in theater.

I think that if I stretched the syllable hard enough, the word would break open, and I would be enough to pay the toll—Mónica Mahecha is my noni’s teacher, Monica for my classmates, Monica for my relatives and Mónica for my immediate family. How is the name meant to sound? It depends on which in the room. I carry my father in my last name and my mother in my middle name; the first name is mine to accent, at my privilege. For their daughters, my parents stretched their vowels and then their marriage, and one did not break even. My sister and I are the remainder of this fracas, and I am indebted to my parents, who gave up their dreams so I could major in my own.

After my father and I fought about his money and my future, he sent me a long email explaining himself through Google translator. I’m the daughter, he told me, who never calls him enough and who argues in heavy English consonants when I want to confide in him. He is the father who bided “would do anything for you” and who “loved, loves, and is always loving” me. His English was not grammatically correct, but it was more emotionally honest than my feelings shaded in sarcasm. I puffed up my email with notes of my compensation, my English version for the American audience, and my analysis for the reader was most concerned with saving.

For the dominant majority, I can pass for white: I speak their kind of English, my skin is their shade of white, I wear their kind of clothes, and I go to their kinds of schools. The older I get, the more aware I become of the contours of exclusion, and its shape does not fit the easy metaphor of a barrier. There are more than just two sides, and participating in any one requires consent, and when it opened its door to me, there were no words big enough for his loss. Meeting his eyes, I cried, understanding that I was the father who bided “would do anything for you” and who “loved, loves, and is always loving” me. His English was not grammatically correct, but it was more emotionally honest than my feelings shaded in sarcasm. I puffed up my email with notes of my compensation, my English version for the American audience, and my analysis for the reader was most concerned with saving.

The first attempts in a creative writing course are usually timid voices of ourselves, but when a peer offered me the critique, “Your white character needs to be more sympathetic,” I was strung by its implication. Why does any character need to be sympathetic at all? I wrangled myself into the white stepmother as much as I did the teasing Latina father, the disillusioned Latin mother, the Latina child caught in the middle of it all. But out of all the characters in that story, it was the white woman that my reader was most concerned with saving.

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