

Dante Society Newsletter

Volume 13, Number 1

November 2006



Members Convene, Discuss Dante and Islam

On May 20, 2006, members of the Dante Society of America met to assist in conducting the Society's business, engage in scholarly exchange, and share in the fellowship of the world's oldest association dedicated to the study of the life and works of Dante. The Society's 124th Annual Meeting took place at the Longfellow House, where the Society was born in 1881, and members enjoyed both the gracious hospitality of the Longfellow National Historic Site's staff and the perfect May weather, which so often seems to smile on our yearly gatherings. Professors Maria Rosa Menocal, Karla Mallette, and Gregory B. Stone (left to right above) presented papers on Dante's relation to the culture of Islam and were engaged by members in spirited and appreciative discussion.

Next Annual Meeting Set for May 5

The DSA will hold its Annual Meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on Saturday, May 5, 2007. Please mark your calendar. In observance of the 200th birthday of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Professors Wai Chee Dimock, Kathleen Verduin, Christof Irmscher, and Kevin Van Anglen will address the contributions to Dante studies made by Longfellow and his circle of friends. Further information will follow in the spring Newsletter.

Winter Meeting

The Dante Society will meet at the 2006 MLA Annual Convention in Philadelphia on Thursday, December 28, from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. in Commonwealth Hall A-1 of the Loews Hotel. Richard Lansing of Brandeis University will speak on "The Pageantry of Dante's Verse." Giuseppe Mazzotta will preside.

Angels Lift Giving towards Goal

On the verso of this sheet, you will see a list of the many members and supporters who have given to the Dante Society's Capital Campaign Fund. Members who attended the Annual Meeting will recall Dan Christian, who told us how his English students in Baltimore were raising money for our Campaign by selling a Dante essay anthology cum popular music CD they had created. With their repeated donations, Mr. Christian and his students have become Powers in our hierarchy of angelic donors. Such creative and generous giving must surely inspire others to join our ever growing angelic ranks. With every gift we rise closer to our \$120,000 goal, and even now the two-thirds mark is in sight. No gift is too small, and all our contributors are angels, who prove "come ogni dove in cielo è paradiso."

To contribute, please make your check out to the Dante Society of America and mail it to the Dante Society of America, P.O. Box 711, Framingham, MA 01701-0711. Our Campaign Co-Chairs will match all gifts by adding a fourth dollar for every three dollars donated. The Dante Society of America is a non-profit charitable organization, and *all gifts are fully tax deductible*.



Experimental Web Site Invites Feedback

Arielle Saiber of Bowdoin College welcomes feedback from DSA members on the experimental Web site "Dante Today" (learn.bowdoin.edu/italian/dante). The site archives occurrences of Dante and his works in contemporary culture of the twentieth century and beyond. Its goals are twofold: 1) to provide a central access point for said references; and 2) to offer data that students and scholars of Dante can use to think about the Nachleben of Dante's works in terms of reception theory, resonance, and cultural studies. All sightings and citations, as well as bibliographic references, scholarly essays, and student essays, are welcome for consideration. Professor Saiber also invites all DSA members to share, post, and use the site as they see fit.

Exhibition Explores Dante's Fame and Influence through the Centuries

"Dante at Illinois," an exhibition at the Rare Book & Manuscript Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, explores the poet's fame and influence from the fifteenth to the twenty-first centuries. The exhibition, which is free and open to the public, concludes on December 14. Featured items include a 1481 volume with illustrations by Botticelli, a miniature 1629 edition of the *Comedy*, and manuscript material by the poet W. S. Merwin.



A catalog, which includes descriptions of all thirty-two items on exhibit and more than a dozen color illustrations, is available for purchase at the Rare Book & Manuscript Library and can be found on display at the exhibition. To learn more, please visit the library's Web site at www.library.uiuc.edu/rbx/news.htm or write to rbmlref@library.uiuc.edu.

Spring Election Results

Daniela Boccassini and Arielle Saiber were elected to the Council for 2006-09. Todd Boli was returned to the office of Secretary-Treasurer for one year. The Council elected Giuseppe Mazzotta President of the Society for a second three-year term and elected Dana Stewart Vice President of the Society for one year.

Essay Prize Winners for 2006

The Dante Prize for the best undergraduate essay was awarded to Lisa Caruana of SUNY Geneseo for "The Dynamic Motion of Paradise" and to John Davies of Harvard College for "*Purgatorio* Petros: The *Rime* in the *Purgatorio*"; Ms. Caruana and Mr. Davies will share the prize. The Grandgent Award for the best essay by a graduate student went to Kathleen Chen of the University of Minnesota for "I Heard Cries of 'Mary, Pray for Us': The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Dante's *Purgatorio*." Guy Raffa and Dana Stewart read and judged the essays.

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(\$10,000 or more)
Robert C. Carroll
Joan M. Ferrante
Nancy J. Vickers

Cherubim
(\$5000 or more)
Teodolinda Barolini
Bowen H. McCoy

Thrones
(\$2000 or more)
Douglas M. Doty
Christopher Kleinhenz
Richard Lansing
Giuseppe Mazzotta
Anthony Pellegrini

Dominions
(\$1000 or more)
Brenda Deen
Blaine & Anne Larson

Virtues
(\$500 or more)
Bob Hollander
Rachel Jacoff
Teresa A. Kennedy
María Rosa Menocal
Matthew Pearl
Robert Frank Pence
Guy Raffa

Powers
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Albert R. Ascoli
Corinne Black
Todd Boli
Daniel Chabris
Dan Christian & students
Carlos Gatti
Simon Gilson
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Joan Nordell
Rodney & Sandra Payton
Lino Pertile
Brian Regan
Frank Sciulli
Dana Stewart
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Principalities
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Dante Sessions at Kalamazoo

The Forty-Second International Congress on Medieval Studies will be held at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 10-13, 2007. The Dante Society is sponsoring the following sessions.

Dante I: New Perspectives on Dante's *Inferno*

Chair: Christopher Kleinhenz (Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison)

Kristen Allen (Univ. of Toronto), "'The Foot Fails': Isidore's Etymology of Despair and the Opening Canto of the *Divine Comedy*"

Alessandro Vettori (Rutgers Univ.), "*Inferno* 15: Dante's Poetics of Exile"

V. Stanley Benfell, (Brigham Young Univ.), "Pride, Avarice, and Aristotle in Dante"

Dante II: Dante in the Nineteenth Century

Chair and Organizer: Aida Audeh (Hamline Univ.)

Karl Fugelso (Towson Univ.), "Narrative Space across Six Centuries: Early Modern Illustrators of Dante's Figural Arrangements"

Joseph Luzzi (Bard College), "The First Modern: Ugo Foscolo between Dante and Petrarch"

Nicholas R. Havelly (Univ. of York), "Losing Gianciotto: The Strange Case of William Dyce's *Francesca* (c. 1837)"

Dante III: Perspectives on Dante through the Centuries

Chair: V. Stanley Benfell (Brigham Young Univ.)

Leslie Zarker Morgan (Loyola College in Maryland), "(Mis)Quoting Dante: Early Epic Intertextuality in *Huon d'Auvergne*"

Aida Audeh (Hamline Univ.), "The Innovations and Influence of Gustave Doré's Dante Illustrations"

Thomas Parisi (Saint Mary's College), "The Fictive Anthropologies of Dante and Freud"

Another Dante session at Kalamazoo will be the following, organized by Véronique Plesch and Olivia Holmes and sponsored by the International Association of Word and Image Studies.

Word and Image in Dante's *Divine Comedy*

Chair: Kathleen Ashley (Univ. of Southern Maine)

Olivia Holmes and **Véronique Plesch** (Colby College), "Condescending to Our Faculties: Beatrice and the Beatific Vision"

Benjamin David (Lewis and Clark College), "Giovanni di Paolo's Visual Commentary on Ovidian Figures in Dante's *Paradiso*"

Respondent: Christopher Kleinhenz, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison)

For more details, please go to the Kalamazoo Medieval Congress Web site at www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress.

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Dante Society Newsletter

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